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YAKSHA CULT AND
ICONOGRAPHY

Ram Nath Misra



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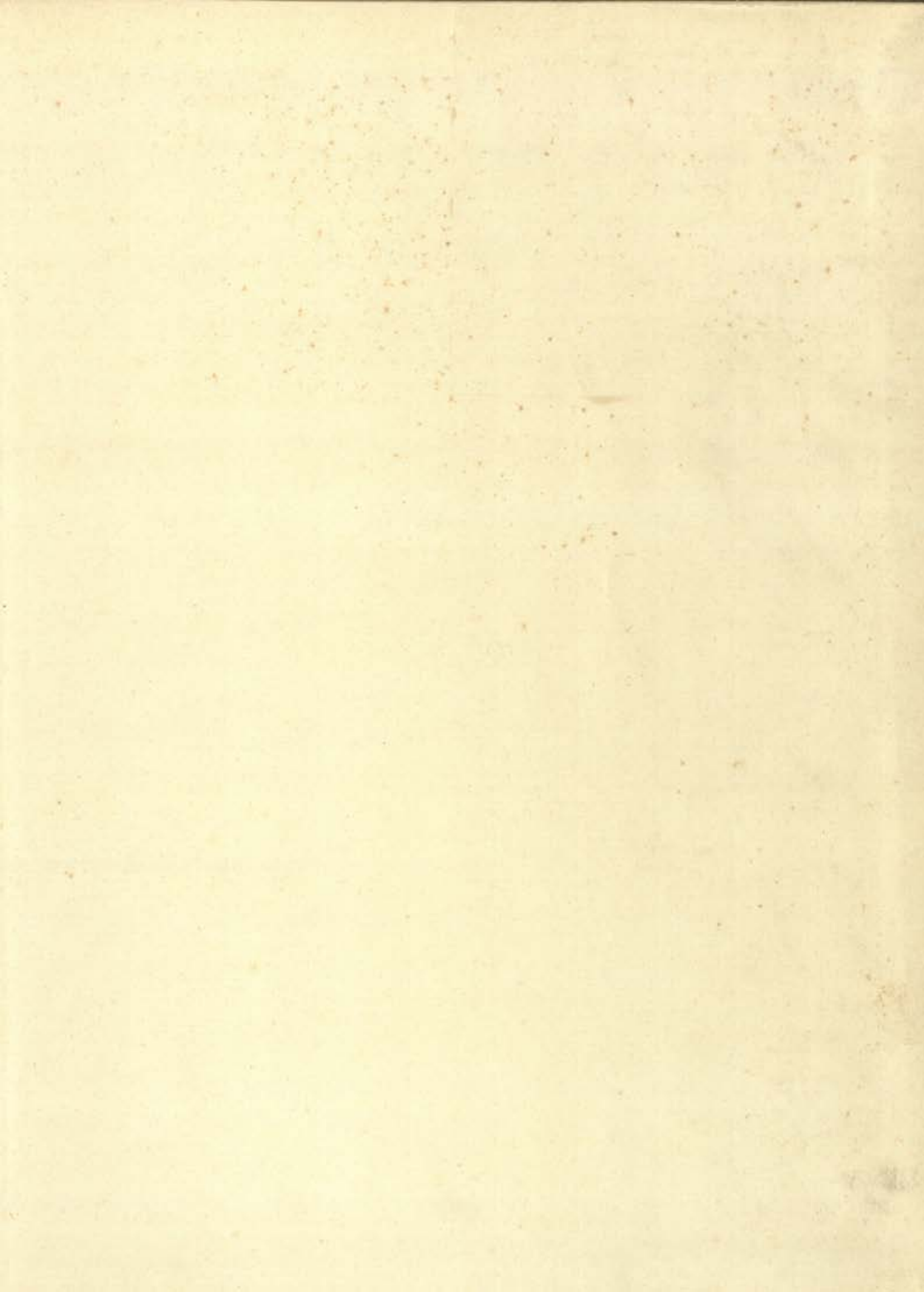
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**Yaksha Cult
and
Iconography**

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by

Ram Nath Misra



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Publishers Pvt. Ltd.***

*Dedicated
to the sacred memory of
late Ananda K. Coomaraswamy*

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Contents

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Preface | vii |
| Abbreviations | ix |
| List of Illustrations | xii |
| Acknowledgements | xv |

CHAPTER 1

Introduction 1

Origin of the Concept or 'Being' of Yakshas 2

CHAPTER 2

The Vedic Yaksha 9

Semantics 11; Setting of the Cult: Ṛgveda 14; Expansion: Later Vedic Period 17; Theological Aspect: Vedic and Subsequent 21.

CHAPTER 3

Development of the Cult 27

Orthodox Literature 27; The Epics 27; The Purāṇas 31; Centres of Yaksha Worship 34; Heterodox Literature: Buddhist Perspective 35; Assimilation and Supersession 35; The Converted Yakkhas 37; The Malevolent Yakkhas 40; The Benevolent Yakkhas 40; The Ambivalent Yakkhas 41; The Neutral Yaksha 42; Worship of Yaksha 42; Jain Literature 45; Yaksha Worship 50; Yakshas in Mediaeval Works 53; Survival and Resurrection 53.

CHAPTER 4

The Yaksha Pantheon 57

Vaiśravaṇa-Kubera 59; The Iconic Derivations from Kubera's Images 71; The Yaksha-pair; Hārīti and Pāncika 73; Subsidiary Yaksha Chiefs 80; Maṇibhadra 80; Pūrṇabhadra 85.

CHAPTER 5

Yaksha-Worship 88

Temples and Sanctuaries 88; Yaksha-Sanctuaries 88; Celestial Abodes 89; Terrestrial Sanctuaries 89; Structured Temples 90; Semi-Structured Sanctuaries 91; Non-Structured Sanctuaries 93; The Modes of Yaksha-Worship 97; Universal 99; Restricted 100; Alternative 102.

CHAPTER 6

Yaksha Iconography 104

Texts 104; The First Phase (Mauryan) 108; Second Phase (Post Mauryan to 1st century BC) 109; Ajakālaka Yaksha 114; Candrā 115; Viruḍako Yakho 116; Gaṅgito Yakho 116; Supavāso Yakho 117; Saciloma Yakho 117; Yakshiṇī Sudasanā 118; Sātavāhana-Kushāṇa Phase 121; Post-Kushāṇa images 125; Ambikā 129.

CHAPTER 7

Allied Motifs 132

Animal-Faced Figures 132; Scenes with Yaksha Folklore 135; Yaksha as a Decorative Motif 137; Terracotta Figurines of Yakshas 138; Śālabhañjikā 140; Dress and Ornament Patterns of Yaksha Images 141.

CHAPTER 8

The Popular Aspect of Yaksha Theology 145

Other Aspects of Yaksha 147; Supernatural Element 147; Maleficence 152; Beneficence 156.

CHAPTER 9

Survivals of Yaksha-Worship 162

Resumé 165.

APPENDIX I

The Guardian Yakshas in the Mahāmāyūrī

APPENDIX II

Iconography of Jaina Yakshas and Yakshis 172

Yakshas 172, Yakshis 174

Bibliography 179

Index 185

Preface

YAKSHAS occupy a unique place in Indian 'tradition' and art history and, as is well known, they have fascinated several scholars in the past, including the great inimitables—the late Professors A.K. Coomaraswamy, V.S. Agrawala and Moti Chandra. So, when I was encouraged to take up research on Yakshas I started with some diffidence. I wish to state now that if this work receives some independent attention, which I hope it will, I would still admit that the writings of these scholars have constantly inspired me and given me insight for further exploration.

Yakshas afford an opportunity to comprehend how something which was conceptually fluid in the beginning, eventually assumed a corporeality invested with character and attributes and through a historical process of transformation, altered so much that what had originally started as a nebulous idea, somewhat enigmatic in its content, ultimately assumed demonic attributes and functions. There is a queer touch of both sacred and profane in the character of Yakshas and their worship; though only "profane" survived through the Vedas and Upanishads to the later historical times. Yakshas require to be seen from various angles matching their many facets. In their fully developed form they characterise 'supernatural' and in that they seem to have borrowed similar features from other demi-gods as they evolved. This ultimately shaped their personality which was not necessarily anthropomorphic. At the same time, the Vedic literature has a 'high god' concept regarding Yakshas which can be seen in the 'etymologies' and 'semantics' of the word 'Yaksha' and its theological aspect. These points have been elaborately discussed in the first two chapters of this monograph with emphasis on a gradual concretisation of their material personality involving attributes of character which made them different from merely 'amorphous'. The third chapter deals with development of Yakshas, their different types and functions as also their worship as evidenced by the sectarian and non-sectarian literature. The next chapter discusses formation of Yaksha pantheon highlighting information on prominent Yaksha chiefs like Kubera-Vaiśravaṇa, Maṇibhadra and Pūrṇabhadra, including the tutelary pair represented by Hārīti and Pāñcika. The images and iconographies of these demi-gods have also been discussed in their reference.

The details of the habitats of Yakshas and the modes of their worship have been documented in the chapter 5 within certain typologies relevant to these points. Chapter 6 discusses iconography and images of Yakshas, including stylistic considerations of phasing them into three broad categories namely: Pre-Kushana, Kushana and Post-Kushana. Yaksha images and reliefs such as: the animal-faced figures, *Śālabhañjikā* motif, decorative figures, terracottas, as also the dress and ornament patterns of Yaksha and Yakshini images are discussed in the chapter 7. Such a staggering of the iconic types of Yakshas became necessary in view of their variety. So, the images falling under the category of the major cult deities are discussed in chapter 4; the remaining in the chapter 7, and those not conforming to any of those types are separately dealt with in chapter 8. It is necessary to evolve a typology of Yaksha images, and as a postscript to these chapters it may be added here that the four major classes of Yakshas, namely: *Mālādhara*, *Sadāmatta*, *Karoṭpāṇi* and *Jrimbhaka* or *Yambhāka* mentioned in ancient texts should define a bulk of the non-cult images of Yakshas. This nomenclature seems to

conform with the variability or difference in the manners of Yakshas' depiction on the one hand and their tradition on the other. As such, the recently discovered Yaksha image from Govindanagar (Mathura), or the one known from Pitalkhora, or the other similar ones in the Government Museum, Mathura and elsewhere, may be designated as the *Malādhara* type. Obviously such images were meant to be installed outside the Stūpas or monasteries with garlands or flowers kept in their depressed portion at the top, meant for picking up by the votaries. The import of the *Sadāmatta* type is obvious. The *Karotpāni* type may define those images or reliefs where Yakshas or Yakshis were shown holding eatables or toilet objects. The *Jrimbhaka* or *Yambhāka* type perhaps stood for the attendants. It thus appears that a classification of some of the Yaksha images conforming to their basic ethos and tradition may be possible by applying these 'definitive' terms in their respective cases.

Having stated this, I wish to record my gratitude to those who have made this work possible: To professor K.D. Bajpai for his encouragement to me to undertake this work; to late Professor K.C. Chattopadhyaya for his help in clarifying certain Vedic passages concerning Yakshas; to professor S. Mallikarjunan for going through the manuscript and offering suggestions for the necessary corrections—mistakes, if any in this work, are mine; to the authorities and the staff of various Museums such as: Indian Museum, Calcutta, Patna Museum, Bodhgaya Museum, Nalanda Museum, Sarnath Museum, Government Museum, Mathura, State Museum, Lucknow, Allahabad Municipal Museum, and National Museum, New Delhi for facilitating my study of the collection in their Museums; to the authorities and the staff of National Library, Calcutta and American Institute of Indian Studies, Varanasi for similar facility at their institutions; to my Publishers: Munshiram Manoharlal and in particular, to Sri Devendra Jain for their keen and active interest in this work as well as their imaginative and skilful handling of this monograph; to Sri Narendra for the line drawings that have been illustrated in this work; and to my wife Bina for her encouragement and constant learned help throughout the period of my work on Yakshas. Amit and Asit grew while this work progressed, and their interest in Yaksha stories, in a way, prodded me on to satisfy their queries, of which I have fond memories.

Gwalior
26 January 1981

R.N. Misra

Abbreviations

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <i>A</i> | <i>Anguttara Nikāya</i> |
| <i>AA</i> | <i>Anguttara Nikāya Commentary</i> |
| <i>ACSB</i> | V.S. Agrawala's introduction to Cunningham's <i>Stūpa of Bharhut</i> |
| <i>Antag.</i> | <i>Antagaḍadasāo</i> |
| <i>App.</i> | <i>Aparājitapricchā</i> |
| <i>AU</i> | <i>Aitareya Upanishad</i> |
| <i>AV</i> | <i>Atharvaveda</i> |
| <i>AV.S.,</i> | <i>Āvaśyaka Sūtra</i> |
| <i>ASI,AR</i> | <i>Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report</i> |
| <i>ASR</i> | See under <i>Reports</i> |
| <i>Bhāratīya Samāja.</i> | J.C.Jain's <i>Jain Āgama Sāhitya men</i> <i>Bhāratīya Samāja</i> (Hindi) |
| <i>BKM</i> | <i>Brihatkathāmañjarī</i> |
| <i>BP</i> | <i>Bhāgavata Purāna</i> |
| <i>BPWM</i> | <i>Bulletin of Prince of Wales Museum</i> |
| <i>BrP</i> | <i>Brahmāṇḍa Purāna</i> |
| <i>BSS</i> | <i>Brihat-kathā-śloka, saṅgraha</i> |
| <i>BSOAS</i> | <i>Bulletin of School of Oriental and African Studies</i> |
| <i>BU</i> | <i>Brihadāranyaka Upanishad</i> |
| <i>Bu.</i> | <i>Buddhavaṃsa</i> |
| <i>BuA</i> | <i>Buddhavaṃsa Commentary</i> |
| <i>BUJ</i> | <i>Bombay University Journal</i> |
| <i>CHI</i> | <i>Cambridge History of India</i> |
| <i>CII (Corpus).</i> | <i>Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum. Vol. II part ii</i> |
| <i>Coomaraswamy I (1)</i> | <i>Yakṣa I</i> |
| <i>Coomaraswamy II (2)</i> | <i>Yakṣa II</i> |
| <i>Coomaraswamy III (3)</i> | <i>Yakṣa of the Vedas and Upanisads</i> |
| <i>CSB.</i> | Cunningham's <i>Stūpa of Bharhut</i> |
| <i>D</i> | <i>Dīgha Nikāya</i> |
| <i>DA</i> | <i>Dīgha Nikāya Commentary</i> |
| <i>DAK</i> | <i>Rosenfield's Dynastic Art of the Kushanas</i> |
| <i>DCB</i> | <i>Bulletin of Deccan College Research Institute, Poona</i> |
| <i>DhA</i> | <i>Dhammapada Commentary</i> |
| <i>Dialogues</i> | <i>Dialogues of Buddha</i> |
| <i>DHI</i> | <i>Banerjea's Development of Hindu Iconography</i> |
| <i>DPPN</i> | <i>Malalasekera's Dictionary of Pali Proper Names</i> |
| <i>Ep.Ind.</i> | <i>Epigraphia Indica</i> |

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|------------------------|--|
| <i>Epic. Myth.</i> | Hopkins, <i>Epic Mythology</i> |
| GB | <i>Gopatha Brāhmaṇa</i> |
| GS | <i>Grihyasūtra</i> |
| HIA | Coomaraswamy's <i>History of Indian and Indonesian Art</i> |
| History | J.C. Jain's <i>Prākṛit Sāhitya kā Itihāsa</i> (Hindi) |
| IHQ | <i>Indian Historical Quarterly</i> |
| JB | <i>Jaiminiya Brāhminya</i> |
| JBORS | <i>Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society</i> |
| JPTS | <i>Journal of Pali Text Society</i> |
| JDL | <i>Journal of department of Letters</i> |
| JIH | <i>Journal of Indian History</i> |
| JIM | <i>Journal of Indian Museums</i> |
| JISOA | <i>Journal of Indian Society of Oriental Art</i> |
| JMPHS | <i>Journal of Madhya Pradesh Historical Society</i> |
| JOI | <i>Journal of Oriental Institute</i> |
| JRAS, | <i>Journal of Royal Asiatic Society</i> |
| JUB | <i>Jaiminiya Upanishad Brāhmaṇa</i> |
| JUPHS | <i>Journal of Uttara Pradesh Historical Society</i> |
| Kh.K. | <i>Kahārayāṇa-Kośa</i> |
| Kathas. | <i>Kathāsaritsāgara</i> |
| <i>Kindred Sayings</i> | <i>The Book of Kindred Sayings</i> |
| KU | <i>Kena Upanishad</i> |
| Lüder's List. | List of Brahmi Inscriptions |
| M. | <i>Majjhima Nikāya</i> |
| MA | <i>Majjhima Nikāya Commentary</i> |
| MASI | <i>Memoirs of Archaeological Survey of India</i> |
| MBh. | <i>Mahābhārata</i> |
| Mh.V. | <i>Mahāvamsa</i> |
| MMK | <i>Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa</i> |
| Mnid. | <i>Mahānidāsa</i> |
| MP | <i>Matsya Purāṇa</i> |
| NK | <i>Nāyādhamma Kahāo</i> |
| PED, | <i>Pali English Dictionary, PTS.</i> |
| NriT | <i>Nrisimha-pūrva-tāpiny-ōpanishad</i> |
| Panini. | Agrawal's <i>India as known to Panini</i> |
| PP | <i>Padmapurāṇa</i> |
| Pv. | <i>Peta-vatthu</i> |
| PvA. | <i>Peta-vatthu Commentary</i> |
| Reports | Cunningham's <i>Archaeological Survey Reports</i> |
| RV | <i>R̥gveda</i> |
| S | <i>Sāmyutta Nikāya</i> |
| SA | <i>Sāmyutta Nikāya Commentary</i> |
| SB | <i>Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa</i> |
| SI | Agrawala's <i>Studies in Indian Art</i> |
| Sn. | <i>Sutta-Nipāta</i> |
| SnA | <i>Sutta-Nipāta Commentary</i> |
| SS | <i>Śrautasutra</i> |
| TB | <i>Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa</i> |
| TP | <i>Triloka-prajñapti</i> |
| TS | <i>Taittirīya Saṁhita</i> |

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|------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>TvS</i> | <i>Tattvārtha Sūtra</i> |
| <i>Ud.</i> | <i>Udāna</i> |
| <i>Ud.A.</i> | <i>Udāna Commentary</i> |
| <i>US</i> | <i>Uttarādhyayana Sūtra</i> |
| <i>VA</i> | <i>Vinaya Piṭaka Commentary</i> |
| <i>Vin.P.</i> | <i>Vinaya-Piṭaka</i> |
| <i>Vishdh P.</i> | <i>Vishṇudharmottara Purāṇa.</i> |
| <i>VPS,</i> | <i>Vipāka Sūtra</i> |
| <i>VM</i> | <i>Macdonell's Vedic Mythology</i> |
| <i>VP</i> | <i>Vāyu Purāṇa</i> |
| <i>VV</i> | <i>Vimāna-vatthu</i> |
| <i>VVA</i> | <i>Vimāna-vatthu Commentary</i> |
| <i>VS</i> | <i>Vāstusāra Prakaraṇa</i> |

List of Illustrations

(Dress and Ornament Patterns based mainly on early images and reliefs:)

Dress

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>Uttariya</i> : | Figs. i, ii |
| Turban : | Figs. v, vi |
| Female Head-dress : | Figs. vii, viii |
| Hair-style: | Figs. xxvii, xxxvii |
| <i>Udarabandha</i> : | Fig. xlii |
| <i>Dhoti (antarīya)</i> : | Figs. xv, xvi, xviii, xxxii, xxxiii |
| <i>Dhoti's frills (paryastaka)</i> : | Figs. xxviii, xxix, xxx, xxxi |

Ornaments

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>Kundala</i> : | Figs. xii, xiv, xliii |
| <i>Lalāṅṅikā (tiklī)</i> : | Fig. xi |
| Tattoo-marks : | Fig. ix |
| Necklace : | Figs. xiii, xvii, xix, xxi, xl. |
| <i>Angada</i> (armlets) : | Figs. iv, x, xli |
| <i>Chhannavīra</i> : | Figs. iii, xxvi, xxxiv, xxxv, xxxvi |
| Bracelets : | Figs. xxxiv, xxxv. |
| <i>Mekhalā</i> : | Fig. xxxviii |
| Anklets | Figs. xxii, xxiii, xxxix |

(Images and Reliefs of Yakshas and Yakshinīs)

1. Kubera from Moosanagar, Kanpur District, State Museum, Lucknow.
2. Kubera, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
3. Kubera, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
4. Kubera, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
5. Kubera, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
6. Kubera, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
7. Kubera from Maholi, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
8. Brahmanical Gods with Kubera, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
9. Kubera with his Consorts, Manoharpur, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
10. Kubera with his Consort and Attendants, Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar.
11. Kubera from Prabhosa, Allahabad District, State Museum, Lucknow.
12. Jain Kubera from Ranimaliya, Chittor District, Rajasthan.
13. Kubera from Katara, Bharatpur District, Rajputana Museum, Ajmer.
14. Kubera from Terahi, Shivpuri District, Archaeological Museum, Gwalior.
15. Kubera, Dhubela Museum, Chhatarpur District.
16. Kubera and Riddhi, from Padhavali, Morena District, Archaeological Museum, Gwalior.
17. Kubera from Modi, Mandor District.

18. Jambhala Maṇḍala from Nalanda, Patna Museum.
19. Jambhala from Sirpur, Raipur District, Archaeological Museum, University of Saugar, Sagar.
20. Jambhala from Varanasi, State Museum, Lucknow.
21. Hariti (in bronze) from Nalanda, Patna Museum.
22. Kubera with Matrikas, Mathura District, State Museum, Lucknow.
23. Maṇibhadra from Parkham, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
24. Maṇibhadra from Pawaya, Gwalior District, Archaeological Museum, Gwalior.
25. Back-view.
26. Yaksha from Patna, Bihar, Indian Museum, Calcutta.
27. Yakshi from Didarganj, Patna District, Patna Museum, Bihar.
28. Back-view.
29. Yakshi from Besnagar, Vidisha District, Indian Museum, Calcutta.
30. Back-view.
31. Bhāravāhāka Yaksha from Sarnath, Varanasi District, Sarnath Museum.
32. Yaksha from Pratapgarh, Allahabad District, Municipal Museum, Allahabad.
33. Yaksha from Sopara, Maharashtra.
34. Details.
35. Yaksha from Bhitā, Allahabad District, State Museum, Lucknow.
36. Details.
37. Details.
38. Yaksha from Kausambī, Allahabad District, Municipal Museum, Allahabad.
39. Yaksha from Rajghat, Varanasi District, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi.
40. Details.
41. Details.
42. Kubera from Bharhut, Satna District, Indian Museum, Calcutta.
43. Candra Yakshiṇī from Bharhut, Satna District, Indian Museum, Calcutta.
44. Ajakālaka Yaksha from Bharhut, Satna District, Indian Museum, Calcutta.
45. Candrā Yakshiṇī, Bharhut, Satna District, Indian Museum, Calcutta.
46. Sudasanā Yakshiṇī, Bharhut, Satna District, Indian Museum, Calcutta.
47. Culakokā Devatā, Bharhut, Satna District, Indian Museum, Calcutta.
48. Yakshiṇī of a Bharhut railing pillar at Bhatanwara, Satna District.
49. Yakshiṇī from Bodhyaya, Gaya District, Bihar.
50. Yaksha from Bhitā, Allahabad District, Municipal Museum, Allahabad.
51. Yakshiṇī from Mehrauli, Delhi District, National Museum, New Delhi.
52. Yakshiṇī, Mathura District, Government Museum.
53. Yakshiṇī from Bhuteshwar, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
54. Yaksha from Pitaikhora, Aurangabad District, National Museum, New Delhi.
55. Yaksha (Bhāravāhāka) Sanchi Stupa, I, Western Gate, Vidisa District.
56. Padmapāṇi Yaksha, Sanchi Stupa I, Vidisa District.
57. Śūtapāṇi Yaksha, Sanchi Stupa I, Western Gate, Vidisa District.
58. Yaksha, Nagarjunakonda, Guntur District, National Museum, New Delhi.
59. Yaksha Torso (Back-view) from Dumduma, Puri District, Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar.
60. Mogarappāṇi Yaksha, Mathura District, State Museum, Lucknow.
61. Yaksha, Mathura District, State Museum, Lucknow.
62. Yakshī, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
63. Yaksha from Maholi, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
64. Yaksha from Nagarjunakonda, Guntur District, National Museum, New Delhi.
65. Yaksha from Nagarjunakonda, Guntur District, National Museum, New Delhi.

66. Yaksha from Ahicchatra, Bareilly District, State Museum, Lucknow.
67. Ghantākarna Yaksha, Gosnakhera, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
68. Yakshī-Vrikshakā, Gyarpur, Vidisa District, Archaeological Museum, Gwalior.
69. Cakresvari from Deogarh, Lalitpur District.
70. Malini (I) from Deogarh, Lalitpur District.
71. Gomukha Yaksha from Gandharval, Dewas District, Archaeological Museum, Gwalior.
72. Gomukha Yaksha from Hathmo, Jodhpur District, Rajputana Museum, Ajmer.
73. Padmavāti with other two Yakshinīs from Tewar, Jabalpur District.
74. Padmavāti from Sarangpur, Raigarh District.
75. Ambika from Patiyān Dai Temple, Satna District, Municipal Museum, Allahabad.
76. Human-beaded Frog : A Decorative Yaksha, Mathura District, State Museum, Lucknow.
77. Vyāla Yaksha, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
78. Gomukha Yaksha, Mathura District, State Museum, Lucknow.
79. Gomukha Yaksha from Tumain, Guna District, Archaeological Museum, Gwalior.
80. Meshasringa Yaksha, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
81. Scene depicting the Padakusala-mānava-Jātaka, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
82. Scene depicting the Vidhurapandita-Jātaka, Bharhut, Satna District, Indian Museum, Calcutta.
83. Door-jamb, Nagod, Satna District, Municipal Museum, Allahabad.
84. Hospital scene, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.
85. Bhāravāhaka Yaksha image from Bhojpur, Bhopal District.
86. Apsara Pancācudā from Tamluk, West Bengal, Indian Institute, Oxford.
87. Terracotta figure of a Yaksha, from Kausāmbī, Allahabad District, Municipal Museum, Allahabad.
88. Terracotta figure of a Yaksha from Kausāmbī, Allahabad District, Municipal Museum, Allahabad.
89. Terracotta figure of a Yaksha from Kausāmbī, Allahabad District, Municipal Museum, Allahabad.
90. Salabhanjikā, Sanchi, Stupa I, Vidisa District.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA, NEW DELHI: Figs. 24-26, 29, 30, 42-48, 54, 56, 68-70, 82.

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Introduction

THE natural propensity of the religious traditions in ancient India towards polytheism gave rise to the development of several cults and philosophies in course of time. But, while the mysteries of genesis and evolution of the major religious systems have been profusely investigated, the democratic or popular theistic cults have not received adequate attention. The popular deities had a world of their own, and in this sphere, the Yakshas, along with several other demi-gods, occupied an important status. There will not be found many deities who had such a diversity of functions and such spectacular ups and downs as the Yakshas. In terms of an unbroken time-span of worship, the Yakshas are again matchless. This dissertation will authenticate that, the Yakshas have a queer blend of what is profound and profane, sublime and mundane, and intellectual and democratic. No doubt the emergence of these demi-gods is shrouded in mystery but the development of their worship including cult, pantheon, temples, images, high-priests, votaries, modes of worship and iconography are not only vivid but comprehensible also. The principal upholders of this faith were the common people; but it embraced other votaries also who represented a cross-section of society. It can therefore be easily deduced that the higher cults enriched themselves at the wilt of these demi-gods; they also chose these and other popular deities an ideal media of communication with the masses as well as the élites of ancient society. The sectarian literature however, has a clear bias which shadows the significance of the elevating roles played by these demi-gods. One by one, the different religious systems made a concerted effort to dislodge and supersede the Yakshas. In the process, several anecdotes about the Yakshas got into their scripture. These anecdotes are of great value; firstly, because they are a folklorist's paradise and secondly, because they reveal a uniformity in the Yakshas' concept and image everywhere. This methodical consistency concerning the Yakshas reflects the universal dominance of the cult which percolated into different systems without any significant change in its core. In spite of several set-backs, the kernel of the belief in Yakshas remained always the same, and exists even today. Yaksha worship, therefore, is not a dead relic of only historical record but a fossilised faith which, by and large, is of contemporary interest.

Eventually, the Yakshas came to be identified as the 'creatures of wild and forest,' the 'remnants of an ancient demonology,'¹ but this was a later concept. Earlier, we have him as a sublime god in the Vedic period. An unconnected and historically segmented study of the Yaksha is bound to result in hasty and ill-founded generalizations, prejudiced and untrue. And such diametrically opposite concepts defining Yakshas require a serious and connected investi-

¹*PED*, sv. Yakṣa.

2 YAKSHA CULT AND ICONOGRAPHY

gation of the evolution of the cult in a wider perspective involving their theology, iconography, pantheon and co-existence with other cults. It is seen that after a strong struggle for survival, this cult spread everywhere in the country and to certain parts of south-east Asia. This ubiquitous prevalence of the Yakshas is equally true of their iconography and their literary tradition. The sculptures of Yakshas are known from several places in all times. As regards their antiquity, the Yaksha sculptures are the earliest known Indian iconic representations and, as such, they have evoked considerable interest amongst scholars. In the field of iconography, again a unified and evolutionary account of them is lacking. There are problems relating to the dating of the Yaksha sculptures, their development and influence with a view to explicating their role in shaping the later iconography and devising several new motifs of art. The diversity of the iconographic features of Yakshas is not fully explored. Also, as regards the identification, a vast material found in literature is still ignored. The analysis of this literary material is pertinent to the problem of iconography, and a proper documentation clearly establishes the fact that in many cases there is no longer any need to denote the identity of Yakshas merely by their place-names. Many Yaksha-figures, inscribed or uninscribed, can be related to the place of their discovery on the basis of several lists available, defining the respective places of Yakshas and their names. The ancient artists found in the Yaksha statues an ideal opportunity for their fancy to run riot; hence, there are animal-faced sculptures which have been considered bizarre and of unusual occurrence when torn out of context. In the Yaksha iconography, even their folklore has been explicated, which seems to establish them as precursors of the later mythological sculptures of higher gods.

Origin of the Concept or 'Being' of Yakshas

A study of the Yakshas is both a lively and a challenging one because of its various angles and diversities, and an articulate study of the concept and the cult of Yakshas makes it desirable to examine the central and peripheral settings in which the whole problem seems embedded. Yakshas have been variously designated either in terms of broad groups or specifically, for instance, *puṇyajana*,¹ *vaiśravaṇakāyika deva*,² *amanussā*,³ *vāṇamantara*,⁴ *deva*,⁵ *bhummadeva*⁶ or *rukkhadeva*.⁷ This group of words indicates that they formed a kindred group—a *devajāti* (*Amara-kośa*, 1.1.6)—along with several other demi-gods such as Deva, Gandharva, Apsaras, Kinnara, Guhyaka etc.⁸ It would be interesting to study how the Yakshas might have derived some of their characteristics, although as a class they stood distinct. The ensuing analysis will make this point clear. Starting with the Gandharvas, it is seen that Yakshas shared their attributes in so

¹AV, VIII.10.28. (*Itarajana* in the *Paippalāda* version); *Mbh.*, XVIII.4.18.

²*Bhagavati Sūtra*, III.7.167, p. 466.

³*Vin. P.*, 1.277; *D.*, I. 116; *S.*, 1.91; *amanussa* is a Yakkha, a spirit, a ghost. The commentary explains that 'they are either Yakkhas or men who having departed desire to return' cf., *Vin. P.*, I, p. 147 note 2. According to the *PED*, *amanussā* is "not human being (but not a sublime god either), a being half-deified and of great power as regards influencing people (partly helpful, partly hurtful)."

⁴US, 36.206. (Jacobi) or *Vyantara devatā*, cf. *Tv. S.*, IV.1-12 which enumerates four orders of gods of Jain pantheon, namely *bhavanavāsī*, *vyantara*, *vyotishka* and *vaimānika* and each of these four classes has ten grades, viz., *Indra*, *Sāmānika*, *Trāyastrīmśa*, *Pārishada*, *Ātmaraksha*, *Lokapāla*, *Anika*, *Prakṛṇaka*, *Ābhiyogya* and *Kilvishaka*. The gods of the *Vyantara* region are Kinnara, Kimpurusha, Mahoraga, Gandharava, Yaksha, Rākshasa, Bhūta and Piśāca. All these seven classes of *Vyantara* gods except Rākshasa live in the uppermost stratum of the first earth: *ratnaprabha*.

⁵*D.*, II.254-257. The word includes other demi-gods such as Nāga, Supaṇṇa, Yakkha, Asura and Gandhabba.

⁶*Pv.*, II.9. cf. also Coomaraswamy, II, addenda, p. 7.

⁷Some of these gods are *naivāsika* gods 'genii loci' in the Buddhist sense of the term. cf. Bailey, H.W., *BSAOS*, XIX, 1957, pp. 55ff; *J.*, V.171 uses a word *bhūtabhavyāni* i.e. fully developed and embryo deities which may include some of the deities of the above list. For *bhavya* as a class of gods cf. *Vishṇu Purāṇa*, III.12.

⁸cf. *BSS*, XIX.140, p. 297 (Yaksha-Karddama).

far as they liked fragrance,¹ possessed women,² and controlled speech, offspring³ and had the same region as their habitat⁴; they both possessed the highest wisdom⁵ as well as great beauty,⁶ and were great music lovers.⁷ The Apsaras, etymologically meaning *ap sārīṇī*,⁸ moving in waters, also had certain features in common with Yakshas. In the Vedic literature these nymphs are often described as frequenting forests, lakes and rivers; in the later *Saṁhitās* their 'sphere extends to earth and in particular trees.'⁹ They, like the Yakshas, inhabited the banyan and the sacred *Aśvattha* trees, in which cymbals and lutes resounded,¹⁰ or else they inhabited the *udumbara* and *plaksha*¹¹ trees. Like Yakshas, dancing, singing and playing were their favourite pastimes.¹² Also, both Apsaras and Yakshas were fond of dice and bestowed luck at play¹³; both were notoriously capable of causing mental derangement.¹⁴ Admirably beautiful¹⁵ as the Apsaras and Yakshīs were, human beings are often described as deriving sexual pleasure from them.¹⁶ The Vedic Rākshasas¹⁷ and Piśācas stood in close proximity to the Yakshas. *Rākshasas* is by far the most frequent generic name in the *Ṛgveda* for terrestrial demons and goblins.¹⁸ Like Yakshas they had feathered or beastly forms.¹⁹ Both are represented as deriving pleasure in destroying offspring,²⁰ just as they had a most uncommon appearance and monstrous deformity.²¹ Their food-habits too were akin. The *Mahābhārata* (XIII.101-60) has it that the food of Yakshas and Rākshasas consist of a mixture of meat and liquor. In the same context (XIII.101.40) it is said that *aguru*, a scent, was

¹Gandharva, *RV*, X.85.40-44 and Yaksha in *Dh. A.*, III.208f; VI.194.

²Gandharvas are said to impart to women an auspicious speech according to the *Yājñavalkyaśrīti*, I.3.71., in the marriage ritual. cf. Kubera, *Mbh.*, III.159.1. ff; Sānti Parva 75.3.

³*Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa*, XIX.3.1 where Gandharvas along with Apsaras are prayed for granting offspring, and Yakshas in the *Vip. S.*, VII.28, p. 84 f.

⁴*Gandharvasya dhruve padam*, *RV*, I.22.14. Sāyaṇa explains *dhruve padam* as *antariksha* and quotes a statement of *Nṛsiṁha Tāpanīyaśākhā*, I.2 that the sky is inhabited by groups of Yaksha, Gandharva and Apsaras. Also *Sn. A.*, I.370 (*Ākāśattha Vimāna*).

⁵Gandharvas are described as the receptacles of secrets, *AV*, II.1.2. and Yakshas are repository of wisdom; they ask questions regarding existence. cf. Yaksha-Praśna, *Mbh.*, III.296-297; *Sn.*, Hare, I.9.10; II.5.

⁶Gandharva *SB*, XIII.4.3.7 and Yakshas in *Meghadūta*, II.19.

⁷Gandharvas are celestial singers in the epics but not so in the Vedic literature. Macdonell, A.A., *VM*, p. 137; Yakshas in *Vv.*, III.4ff; *Vv. A.*, 131f.

⁸Yāska, *Nirukta*, V.13; *RV*, X.10.4. calls them *apyā-yośā* 'aqueous nymphs.'

⁹Macdonell, A.A., *VM*, p. 134; Vedic Yakshas too are immensely connected with waters, cf. *AV*, XI, XI.2.24, *GB*, I.1.

¹⁰*AV*, IV.37.4, 5, for Yakshas, *infra*, chapter 5.

¹¹*TS*, III.4.8; for Yakshas, *infra*, chapter 5.

¹²cf. Yakshas in Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, V.20.47.

¹³Apsaras, *AV*, IV.38; Yakshas in *J*, VI.137; Kathās, IX.17.

¹⁴Apsaras, *AV*, II.2.5; for Yaksha, *Sn.* (Hare) I.10, p. 29; *Caraka Saṁhitā*, Nidānasthānaṁ, VII.11-15.

¹⁵Apsaras, *SB*, XIII.4.3.8, Yakshas, *MMK*, I.200.

¹⁶Apsaras in *RV*, X.95.10-17; Yakshas in *MMK*, II.293; *BSS*, XI.X.75ff and XIX.130ff.

¹⁷Kuvera-Vaiśravaṇa, the king of Yakshas according to his fully developed conception, is earlier called the king of Rākshasas. cf. *SB*, XIII.4.3.10 *Śāṅkhāyana SS*, XVI.2.16-17; *Āśvalāyana SS*, uttarashaṭkaḥ, IV.7; This transformation of Kuvera confirms the statement of Keith, A.B., *Religion and Philosophy of Veda and Upaniḥads*, p. 181 in reference to *S*, I.33, where Piśācas replace Gandharva, that "this is the case where demons have been allowed to obtain a name which is not theirs by their right; and which has been as result of some obscure or vivid contact." This proximity between Yakshas and Rākshasas helps their reciprocal identification. Thus the *Krodhavaśās* 'northern Rākshasas' (*Mbh.*, III.152.20; V.50.24) are implied as Yakshas (*ibid.*, III.155.23). Hopkins has remarked that 'Yakshas and Rākshasas in the account of battle (in the *Yaksha-yuddha Parva*) are exchangeable terms.' The relationship between Kubera and Rāvaṇa, the sons of Pulastya in the *Rāmāyaṇa* is too well known but whereas the former is called Yaksha the latter the Rākshasa.

¹⁸Macdonell, A.A., *op. cit.*, p. 162.

¹⁹Compare, *Suciloma* 'Porcupine' or khara 'donkey' in *Sn.*, Hare, II.5. Gardabha in *Gilgit MSS*, III, part I, p. 16 and Rākshasa in *RV*, VII.104; 18-22.

²⁰*AV*, VIII.6; *J.*, nos. 510 and 513; *Gilgit MSS*, III, pt. 1, p. 16.

²¹Compare Yakshas in the I.33.18; *Rasavāhinī*, pp. 99ff. and Rākshasas in *AV*, VIII.6.

4 YAKSHA CULT AND ICONOGRAPHY

liked by Yakshas, Rākshasas and Nāgas. As for the Piśācas vis-a-vis the Yakshas, some common habits in them may be discerned inasmuch as they ate raw flesh and corpses.¹ These similarities between the foresaid demi-gods in their Vedic conception and the Yakshas in their later conception confirm the view that Yaksha was a compound of different and, in essence, disparate ideas and that Yakshas obtained different attributes of the various demi-gods to evolve their own ultimate and mature personality.

In the epics the Yakshas are found brushing shoulders with Indra in being the opulent repository of wealth, "As lord of wealth, Kubera shared the role of Indra² with whom he shared the northern district . . . Indra rains gold in the Epics³ and his wealth is proverbial; he is sometimes grouped with Kubera Dhaneśvara as contrasted with other divinities."⁴ But soon, Kubera, the lord of Yakshas, supplanted the other gods, e.g., Indra, Yama and Varuṇa,⁵ and became the "norm of exhaustless wealth."⁶

A common list of attendants is encountered in the *Mahābhārata* in connection with the Yaksha-King Kubera and Kārttikeya. Thus, certain attendants of Kārttikeya and Kubera (III. 219.42) are called *Dhanada*⁷ while one attendant of Skanda is called *Vasudā* 'the giver of wealth,' another has the name Pingākshī, an epithet of Kubera.⁸

The Yakshas and Devas are inseparably interconnected by their nature and attitudes as well as in carrying that 'deva' designation.⁹ The elements of tree-worship which had been considerably popular during the pre-historic¹⁰ and the Vedic ages,¹¹ have been found in the Yaksha cult. Sometimes the deity living in a tree has been called *devatā* but can be identified as Yaksha¹² from its various attributes. Besides, there were several common features between the tree-spirits (called *devatā*) and the Yakshas, such as that they granted wishes, and their modes of worship were more or less similar.¹³ Just as trees were the abodes of Devas, they were also the abodes of Yakshas.¹⁴

In the canonical Pali literature Yakshas have been associated with the Kinnaras and Petas.¹⁵ A later Jain work—the *Vividhatīrtha Kalpa* (p. 33) speaks of a Yaksha whose proper name was Kinnara. The art of singing¹⁶ appears to be a common trait of Yakshas and Kinnaras. In the

¹Compare *Piśācas* in *AV*, V.29.9ff; Yakshas in *Visuddhimaggo*, II, p. 665; *Gilgit MSS*, I, p. V. 3; *Jātaka*, III. 132; V.257. However it has been remarked that 'In many respects they (Yakshas) correspond to the Vedic Piśācas though different in many others and of different origin,' *PED*, sv. Yakkha.

²Indra is *Dhanada* and *Dhanapati*, in *AV*, I.32.2.

³*Mbh.*, XII. 29, 22f.

⁴cf. Hopkins, E.W., *Epic Mythology*, p. 146.

⁵ibid.

⁶cf. *Mbh.*, II.52, Appendix I.37.25. For a similarity between Kubera and the Mothers. cf. Hopkins, op. cit., p. 146.

⁷ibid, p. 146.

⁸ibid, pp. 145, 229.

⁹For details, cf. my paper 'A Semantic study of the words Deva and Yaksha,' *Madhya Bhārati*, 1959, pp. 1ff. The words *Yaksha* and *devata* are identical and voluntarily applicable for each other cf. *Kindred Sayings*, I.273, 9. note 1.

¹⁰S.K. Pandey of the Department of Archaeology, University of Saugar, has collected a number of prehistoric rock paintings from Madhya Pradesh, many of which indicate the idea of tree-worship.

¹¹*RV*, X.97; *AV*, VI.136.1; *TS*, II.1.5 (Plants hinder child-birth and their favour is procured by offering an animal victim). Cult of *Vanaspati* in *RV*, X.64.8; cf. also, Keith, op. cit., pp. 184ff and Shinde, *Foundations of the Atharvanic Civilisation*, BORI, Poona.

¹²*Pv.*, II.9. 9. In sculptures also sometimes the god of a particular tree is called *Yaksha*; for instance, *Yaksha Candramukha* of the *Vakula* tree; cf. Sivaramamurti, C., *Amaravati Sculptures*, p. 82.

¹³*infra*, chapter 5.

¹⁴*infra*, chapter 5.

¹⁵The Yakshas 'range in appearance immediately above Petas: many successful or happy Petas are in fact, Yakkhas.' *PED*. sv. Yakkha.

¹⁶*Vv. A*, 131ff.

Jātaka stories there are some instances where creatures having a composite human and equine form have been called Yakkha or Yakkhi.¹ The *Rāmāyaṇa* (IV.42.30) speaks of an Aśvamukhī woman and her *niketa*, 'abode.' The Kinnaras, as a matter of fact, have been included in the Yaksha-kula in the *Lalitavistara* (ch. 6). Hopkins has cautiously assigned Kimpurushas or Kinnaras a place amongst Gandharvas, Yātudhānas and Rākshasas; and these four demi-gods according to him represented four different classes of the Yakshas in the *Mahābhārata* (III.139.5).² Elsewhere,³ in a reference to the four classes of Yakshas, the Kinnaras have been omitted and the list consists of three classes *viz.*, Karoṭpāṇi, Mālādhara and Sadāmatta besides Yambhāka.⁴

No description of the parallelism and correspondence between Yakshas and other demi-gods would be complete without a reference to the Guhyakas. The Guhyakas were the old-timer attendants⁵ of Kubera, the lord of concealment,⁶ and, as such, they possessed mysterious powers over hidden treasures.⁷ For instance, in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Rāma is represented as capable of looking at what was hidden because Kubera, through a Guhyaka, had made available to him an eye-ointment. Hopkins⁸ has surmised that 'Guhyaka' was probably a 'general name for all the spirits of concealment though sometimes (they) made a special class.' The association of Guhyakas with Kubera goes back to the *Atharvaveda* which refers to the milking of universe by Rajatanābha, son of Kubera.⁹ The age of the *Dharmasūtras*¹⁰ witnessed acceptance of Yakshas as the attendants of Kubera, although Guhyakas still continued to enjoy that position. It appears that in failing to dislodge Guhyakas from their propinquity with Kubera, the Yakshas chose to coexist with them as far as the lordship of Kubera and powers over riches were concerned.¹¹ The *Mahābhāshya* of Patanjali mentions Kubera as *Guhyākādhipati*. There appears to be a complete identity between Yakshas and Guhyakas¹² insofar as assumption of a desired appearance,¹³ possession and concealment of riches, and offering service to Kubera are concerned. As regards the lordship of Kubera the Yakshas inherited it from the Guhyakas.¹⁴

The Kumbhaṇḍas were also in the service of Kubera. The name has an interesting etymological interpretation. It is said that they had huge stomachs and their genitals were as big as pots, hence their name.¹⁵

This comparative study of the parallelism and synthesis of the demonological traits of Yakshas and several other demi-gods serves the purpose of obtaining the placement of Yakshas in the class where they really belonged. At the same time it reveals the process through which the

¹*Kurāla J.*, V.222; *Padakusalamānava J.*, III.431ff. for Yakkhini Assamukhi, *infra*, chapter 6.

²The word *cāturguṇa* here may as well be differently explained, cf. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

³*Mahāvastu*, I.25 and II.108.

⁴Yambhāka or Jrimbhaka have been referred to elsewhere also as in the *Jaina Kalpasūtra*, 89; Jacobi, p. 248 note 1, where it is said that they lived in the *tiryaka*-world and like Yakshas served the god Vaiśramaṇa. cf. *Av. S.*, I, p. 257 *Mahāvastu* also makes an interesting reference to Yambhāka class of Yakkhas who were in the service (aññattikarās) of the Kinnaras. The translator remarks that they "do not seem to be mentioned elsewhere, nor can their name be etymologically explained. But instead, these few references undoubtedly indicate that however less known, they were a class of Yaksha alright." cf. *Mahāvastu*, II.108.

⁵*Mbh.*, VI.7.32.

⁶*AV*, VIII.10.28.

⁷*Mbh.*, III.273.9-11.

⁸*op. cit.*, also pp. 144, 148, 189.

⁹*AV*, VIII.10.28. Kubera here is son of Viśravaṇa.

¹⁰Keith, A.B., *op. cit.*, p. 242.

¹¹For Yaksha's power over riches, *infra*, chapter 7.

¹²The *VP*, ch. 69, says that Punyajana, Guhyaka and Devajana Yakshas, all fall under the category of Guhyakas; for more about Guhyakas, see Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 148, Jain. J.C., *Life in Ancient India*, p. 218f. and *Kathāsaritsāgara*, I, App. 1, where it is said 'They are often synonymous with the Yakshas.'

¹³Compare *Mbh.*, III.147.22 and *MMK*, III.626.

¹⁴Kubera on the other hand, was earlier the king of Rākshasas. cf. *SB*, XIII.4.3.10. Such types of adjustment pertaining to different cults and classes are as interesting as they are numerous.

¹⁵*PED*, sv. Kumbhaṇḍa.

6 YAKSHA CULT AND ICONOGRAPHY

concept of the Yaksha and his various attributes might have developed. On the other hand, the origin of the Yakshas' beings finds mention in the literary tradition of India.

In the Epics it is said that Prajāpati-Brahmā created Yakshas,¹ or they sprang from a Cosmic Egg.² Sometimes, the sage Pulatsya is also regarded their progenitor.³ According to the *Purāṇas*, however, Yakshas were the progeny of the sage Kaśyapa whose consort was Viśvā⁴ or Khashā.⁵ In the *Vamana Purāṇa*, this role has been ascribed to Kapila (Kampana) and his consort Keśini.⁶ Krodhā a daughter of Daksha, who was the son of Brahmā, is also mentioned as creator of Yakshas.⁷

These anecdotes about the Yakshas' origin are fundamentally in opposition to the Vedic concept of the primordial Yaksha. Obviously, the Epics and *Purāṇas* seek to explain the mystery of the origin with a patently authoritarian religious and mythological bias. It will be proper, therefore, to consider other areas which may have relevance to the question of Yakshas' origin. It seems that a series of processes achieved the evolution of Yakshas' concept and being; the literary works have a simple explanation for it, but the other sources in this connection were primitive religion and the borrowings from the other demi-gods. The latter has been discussed above; the former is insuperably allied to the popular tradition of worship. The Yaksha cult was a relic of non-Aryan⁸ worship. And the non-Aryan popular tradition coupled with the concept of primitive-religion would have worked together in evolving this deity. It seems likely that the primitive religion in the very beginning contained both the image and popular sentiments about this deity minus his name, from which the final shades of his concept and personality were perfected. Recent researches⁹ have established that in a primitive society, religion embodies worship of the supernatural which, in broad outline, consists of nature-worship, animism, ancestor-worship¹⁰ and the like. Taylor has defined animism as 'belief in spirit-beings.'¹¹ He implies that the soul-concept is at the root of animism. The soul which is the alter-ego in man was apprehended by the primitive man, and he endowed with soul not only men but also the creatures who lived in woods and fields, in air, water and in plants. According to such beliefs, souls turned into ghosts and free spirits after physical death and were held in veneration. To a primitive man the whole world lives; soul animate things and whatever embodies the soul is a spirit-being to be treated with religion or magic or both.¹² This supposition obviously led to the creation and worship of a multitude of nature-spirits associated with trees, mountains, rivers and lakes. Yaksha was one of such spirit-deities. By accepting this imposition of animism and the other elements of primitive-religion, it becomes easier to assume that the primitive religious beliefs, at least, had some, if not the whole, share in framing various aspects of the Yaksha concept. In the literary accounts, passages are not wanting to establish Yakshas as arboreal, aquatic or mountainous deities,¹³ or guardian angels; the last has a reference to the illustrious dead who came to stay as

¹R, VII.4.12-13; VP, ch. 9, p. 35.

²Mbh, I.1.33.

³infra, p. 60 fn. 4.

⁴MP, VI.46; BP, II.6.13; VI.8.24; BP, II.32.1-2, MP, 646.

⁵VP, ch. 69, p. 274; BP, III.7.60, 100-17; 22.41, 41.30. etc. The origin of Yaksha is discussed also in the *Vishdh. P.*, chs. 197-98.

⁶Agrawala, V.S., *Vāmana Purāṇa*, p. 48. however refers to Kapila as the consort of Ulūkhala-Mekhalā of Kurukshetra.

⁷MP, 171.61.

⁸Fergusson, *Tree and Serpent Worship*, p. 244; Coomaraswamy, I, p. 2; Moti Chandra, *BPWM* (no. 3), p. 43f.

⁹E.B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, I; Frazer, J.G., *The Golden Bough*; Lowie, R.H., *Primitive Religion*; Lang, A., *The Making of Religion*; Schmidt, W., *The Origin and Growth of Religion*; Durkheim, E., *Elementary Forms of Religious life*.

¹⁰cf. Hoebel, *Man in the Primitive World*, New York, 1958.

¹¹Tylor, E.B., *Primitive Culture*, I, p. 424; Hoebel, op. cit., p. 528.

¹²Hoebel, op. cit., p. 551.

¹³infra, chapter 5.

the ancestors guarding their men from all sorts of perils.¹ The Yakshas seem to imbibe the idea of the supernatural in their acts, form and appearance, to the widest possible extent. And there is hardly any reason to doubt the impact of primitive-religion on it. How the general traits of primitive-religion moulded themselves into the form of a particular deity i.e., Yaksha, is difficult to reconstruct. The earliest mention of Yaksha is found in the *Rgveda*, but not as a deity inhering in itself the primitive beliefs. What we find there is an intellectual concept in the form of a symbol and abstraction. The semantics of the word *Yaksha* requires an independent study reserved for subsequent analysis. But it suffices here to say that the word might have been of a non-Aryan origin and the high-god concept applied to it in the Vedic period might have been due to the fact that a section of the Aryans upheld it. They, however could not eventually sustain it in that form. And this resulted in the relegation of the Yakshas to the lower ranks from where they had arisen. The ambivalence of attitude defining Yakshas as good and evil in the *Rgveda* may explain the aversion to and espousal of Yakshas by two distinct classes of the Aryans. That the Yakshas were originally non-Aryan deities hardly need be doubted, and his non-Aryan character is reflected by the institution of idol-worship, rituals of the cult, the nature of worshippers and the status of the Yaksha priests vis-a-vis the Vedic priests. These points are briefly elaborated here. The Vedic Aryans were not idolatrous; their gods did not have any concrete personality either. But the other section of the Vedic society consisting of the non-Aryans, were definitely idolatrous. Some of these idolatrous classes have been deprecatingly mentioned as the *śiśnadevas* and the *mūradevas*.² It is likely that the worshipper also carved the images of Yakshas. It is significant that Yakshas' images are the first anthropomorphic representations of any deity in stone and present a uniform iconographic standard in spite of geographical distances between their find-spots. Since image-worship was a pre-or non-Aryan institution and the Yaksha sculptures are the oldest known historical sculptures so far, it may be pleaded that this occurrence is not merely coincidental; it might be indicative of a pattern, flowing from the one to the other. Moreover, a reference to the *Śiśnadevas* in the *Rgveda* and the eloquent association of sex with Yakshas both in the later literature and art, confirm this pattern suggesting that this iconographic feature of Yakshas in their images had a natural derivation from a Vedic non-Aryan institution. Could it be possible to find in the phallicism of the *Śiśnadevas*, the echo of the Yaksha's iconographic trait?³ Although, it may not be said with authority that some sensible Yaksha images did exist in the Vedic society for the common folks, from what has been gathered so far, there is reason to think that some kinds of representation—iconic or aniconic—of Yakshas might have existed in the pre-Vedic times to satisfy the needs of those non-Aryans who also worshipped the *Mūras* and *Śiśna*.

The rituals of Yaksha-worship also indicate its non-Aryan affiliations. The manner in which Yaksha festivals used to be held at the sites of their habitat and the sacrificial offerings of human flesh and blood used to be made in order to please them, presents a grim picture of this atrociously diabolic faith,⁴ different from the cults of typically Vedic deities. A study of the nature of Yakshas brings them nearer to the nature-spirits, demoniacal or beneficent. The Vedic literature presents a short phase of belief in the Yaksha, endowed with a high-god concept. Eventually, Yakshas became pre-eminently folk-deities catering to the worldly needs of people. They were incapable of fulfilling the higher objective of human existence, such as *moksha*, emancipation, for which they were themselves aspirants and worshipped the Brahmanical cult-gods or supplicated to the Buddha, or Mahavira.

These considerations relate Yakshas to the non-Aryan beliefs; the intrinsic material of the Vedas also seems to confirm it. The dual attitude of respect and disparagement towards the

¹*infra*, chapter 7.

²cf. Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, pp. 62ff. and 64f. respectively.

³*infra*, chapter 6.

⁴The offering of piglets is current in the present day worship of Jakhaiyya at Mahavana in Mathura district.

8 YAKSHA CULT AND ICONOGRAPHY

Yaksha in the Vedic literature clearly hints at the ambivalent Aryan reception accorded to them, before accepting them into the regular religious scheme. The Yaksha-priests did not enjoy any respect either, vis-a-vis, the Vedic priests in the same society. The *Maitrāyīṇi Samhitā* explicitly admonishes them, calling them 'thieves,' and indicating that they should be avoided and kept at arm's length. This stage, however, did not last long, and by the sixth century BC, the Yakshas had been accepted in the religious scheme of the Indians, in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism and were accorded the status of demi-gods having their own cult.

The emergence of the concept and the being of Yakshas can thus be related to a series of developments, relating to the primitive religion, non-Aryan beliefs and the spontaneous borrowing of different traits by Yakshas from the other demi-gods of the kindred group. All this saga of growth belonged to the popular tradition which was its cradle. The complex processes leading to the development of Yakshas would evidently have crystallised themselves simultaneously; the whole phenomena of this intricate growth must have been a great achievement in itself, although the point has been summarily brushed aside by the epic and Puranic composers in ascribing Yaksha's creation to some divine, cosmic or Rishic agencies. The acceptance of Yakshas as the divine-beings in the ancient religious scheme had greater repercussions and the whole concept of Yakshas passed through several stages of sublimation and transformation and supersession; and in its sweeping stride, involved itself with the masses as well as the élite.

The Vedic Yaksha

THE foregoing chapter makes it clear that the whole idea of the Yaksha might well have crystallised itself from primitive religions, and the pre-Aryan settlers of India might have been its votaries. The period of the Vedas witnessed startling developments pertaining to Yakshas, including the elevation of Yaksha to the higher philosophic or intellectual planes. The Vedic Yaksha does not necessarily imply a personality to start with, and is more of a word-concept which was subsequently converted into a fully developed personage, invested with the attributes of spirit, form, nature and power. Yaksha enjoys a unique place in the Vedic pantheon. It is a word, neuter or masculine, a concept or a personality, benevolent or malevolent, any divinity or a particular sublime and primordial power, beautiful or invisible; and all these contradictions are *a fortiori* accurate. Several of these aspects of the Yaksha assumed greater distinction in course of time, but their beginnings require attention here. To unravel this mystery, it seems necessary to enquire into the origin of the word *yaksha* itself. It will be seen that the etymology and the semantics of the word help us in vivifying the implicit essence of symbol and connotation that were bound up with this word. The etymology of the word *yaksha* is controversial¹ having attracted the attention of scholars since the twenties of this century. Hillebrandt² supposed that the basic meaning of 'Yaksha' in the Vedas may be 'apparition' or 'opposite.' Keith³ derived it from \sqrt{yaj} 'to worship with offering' and 'honour,' and Sāyana, while commenting upon the Vedic *yaksha*, consistently explained *yaksha* (n) as *yajñam pūjā* or *pūjitam dhanam*, 'sacrificial offering.' The *yaksha* in masculine form, and the *yakshin*, he explained as *pūjyadēva* or *pūjanīya*, 'worshipful deity' (RV, X.88.13; VII.88.6) Coomaraswamy, in agreement with Hillebrandt, as the former has pointed out, has accepted another derivation of the word Yaksha from *yaksh*, 'to honour.'⁴ Thus the opinions converge to explain the etymology of the word *yaksha* as "to honour," deriving it sometimes from the Vedic-*yaksh* and sometime from *pra-yaksh*.⁵ Sāyaṇa and Mādhava⁶ have connected the word 'yaksha'

¹cf. Coomaraswamy, A.K., III, p. 231 referring to Geldner, *Vedische Studies*, III, 126-43; Grassmann, *Worterbuch*; Hertel, *Die Arische Feuerlehre*, 1.43.

²Hillebrandt, A., *Garbe Festschrift*, 19, on RV, VII.61.5. His interpretation is "wesen, Zaubervesen"; cf. Bailey, H.W., *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 1958, p. 154; Bailey comments that "this (meaning) might from context tend to monstrous but it does not seem necessary to introduce magical." Coomaraswamy, II, p. 1 had, otherwise, retained the word 'magical' in his comments on Hillebrandt's derivation.

³Coomaraswamy, II, p. 11.

⁴Coomaraswamy, III, p. 231, says "*yakṣ* in *ātmanepada* forms, and in Vedic *pra-yakṣ* has also the sense, to honour."

⁵ibid, p. 231, Hillebrandt suggests a connexion with Vedic Yaksha in *pra-yaksh* 'to honour,' cf. Coomaraswamy, II, p. 1.

⁶RV, I.132.5. Mādhava, *prakarshēṇ yajant*; RV, III.7.1. Sāyaṇa, *prayaksham prakarshēṇa satatam yastum*

(RV, I.132.5; II.5.1; III.7.1 or I.62.6) with \sqrt{yaj} , and Bailey¹ has pertinently remarked that here "the archaic word has ceased to be familiar and the attempt at interpretation is made by etymology from 'yajati.' It may also be pointed out here that the later Pali commentators also derived the word from \sqrt{yaj} 'to sacrifice' and two relevant citations from them here are (1) *yajati tathā upaharanti ti yakkha* (Vv. A, p. 224) and (2) *pūjanīya bhavato yakkho ti vucchati* (Vv. A, p. 333).

The majority of scholars however, derive the word Yaksha from \sqrt{yaksh} 'to move quickly towards' or 'flash upon.' From this derivation *yaksha* would mean "a momentary appearance of light flashing upon sight"; this sense eminently satisfies the English word 'phantom.'² Rhys Davids and Stede³ have likewise explained the Vedic *yaksha* as "quick ray of light." It is said that they were "swift creatures changing their abode quickly and at will" and in this sense they were 'ghosts.' The Pali Buddhist literature abounds in references which tend to confirm the view that the Yakshas could change their appearance and form or even raise spectacles that did not exist (*Jātaka*, I.102; 233ff; II.89).

So far as the hitherto discussed etymological meanings of *yaksha* viz. 'worshipful deity,' 'phantom' or 'ghosts' are concerned, it has been remarked that these are "consistent with the fact that *yaksha* (m) in Sanskrit and Pali literature generally, is tantamount to *deva* or *devatā*, 'deity,' sometimes in the highest sense and sometimes in lower sense of goblin or spook.⁴

In recent years, new light on this point has come from the researches on the New-Sogdian (Yaghnabi) dialect of the Yaghnab valley. Bailey⁵ has stated that Yaksha therein occurs in the form and meaning of the old India Yaksha, the verbal base in that Iranian dialect being *Yaxš*, 'to appear,' Bailey points out that it is "a word of ordinary life there, without any magical alliances⁶ and can be brought into connection with the old Indian *Yakṣ*." He believes that, with the expansion of Buddhism, the word also travelled to Khotan where it is still used in dual sense of good and evil; its verbal base, as already pointed out, is *Yaxš* which is linguistically the same as *Yaxš* of the old Iranian. This research takes back the antiquity of the form of the word 'Yaksha' at least to the old Iranian linguistic tradition. We are told Indian *Yaksh* and Iranian *Yaxš* are the same, and the etymology explains the meaning of *yaksh* in the sense of 'appearing' which is corroborated by the Sogdian Yaghnabi dialect.⁷ It will not be irrelevant to recall here that as *Yaksha* is often used in a disparaging sense, Coomaraswamy has suggested that it might have had some clandestine association with *Yakshmā*, the abominable fever mentioned in the Vedic literature and may be derived from it.⁸

The *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Vāyu Purāṇa* have also attempted etymological derivation of the word *yaksha*, testifying to the latter orientation of the word as well as the personality of Yakshas. The *Rāmāyaṇa* (VII.104.12-13) relates that Brahmā created being to guard the waters and those who cried *rakshamāḥ* 'let us guard' became the Rākshasas while those who ejaculated *Yakshamāḥ* 'let us gobble,' became Yakshas. According to the Puranic or later belief, Yakshas

Mādhava; *prakarshcna yāgāy*; RV, I.62.6. Mādhava; *Pūjyatamaḥ*. RV, II.5.1. Mādhava offers a present participle for *prayaksham* (*pāḍapāṭha*—*prayaksham*) thus *pradat ayasīlam dhanam*. Sāyaṇa here abandoned the *pāḍapāṭha* in giving "pra-yaksham" thus *prayaksham prakarshcna pūjyam*; cf. Bailey, loc. cit., p. 156, see also p. 155 for his explanation.

¹Ibid.

²Coomaraswamy, III, p. 231.

³PED, sv. Yakkha.

⁴Coomaraswamy, III, p. 232.

⁵Bailey, loc. cit., pp. 154ff.

⁶cf. Jacobi, ff, "As Yaksam means 'magical power,' Yakṣa probably means etymologically 'being possessed of magical power'; and this was without doubt the meaning of the feminine Yakṣiṇī. The original conception of the Yakṣas would therefore be much the same as that of Vidyādhara's a word which etymologically and actually means 'possessing spells or witchcraft.' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, II, p. 809 sv. 'Yakṣa' (Brahmanism).

⁷Bailey, H.W., loc. cit., pp. 154ff.

⁸Coomaraswamy, II, p. 1.

were considered gluttons, hence probably this etymology. The *Vāyu Purāṇa* (ch. LXIX) stresses the malevolent character of Yakshas when it says that the infant born of Khashā moments ago tried to devour the mother and in the process got christened as Yaksha by his father Kaśyapa. It is explained that since the root *yaksh* is used for 'devouring to dragging the elders' and since the child had tried to do it, he was named Yaksha. It follows from these parables, that now emphasis was more on the evil side of Yakshas. Obviously, when the old word-meaning had become obscure or obsolete, fresh attempts were made to provide a façade of etymology to befit the transformed ideology, and these references indicate attempts towards that end.

Semantics

The word *yaksha* occurs frequently in the Vedic literature but its meaning in the earlier references is not clearly explicable. "In earlier texts it has generally been thought to mean 'something wonderful or terrible, not clearly definable.' Hillebrandt... means by the term 'magician, uncouth-being, unseen spiritual enemy, ...' then simply 'supernatural being of exalted character, and finally Yakṣa in the ordinary sense.'"¹ Subsequently, Yakshas represented a class of semi-divine beings,² but not only did the Vedic concept of Yakshas survive but, it was at the same time perfected within the framework of their cult-personality. This semantic development of a concept into a deified personage is found almost complete by the time of the *Gṛhyasūtras*.

The Vedic ramifications of the word *yaksha* should be examined in this light. One of the most prevalent use of the word is as an appellative or honorific and in the scriptural tradition, *yaksha* is virtually synonymous or rather coincident with "Brahma, Mṛityu, Manas, Agni as also Ātman and Puruṣa," and as such it designates that single spiritual principle which assumes multiplicity and diversity of aspects by its immanence in all things, being at the same time manifesting and in this sense recognisable."³ In its adjectival roles, the word *yaksha* qualifies Varuṇa (*RV*, VIII.88.6) and the neuter Brahma⁴ in the earlier tradition; or Indra,⁵ Māra⁶ and Buddha⁷ or Individual Soul⁸ in the later tradition. It also designates anything wonderful or unfamiliar comprising a diversity extending from Brahma of the Vedic works to unfamiliar objects of nature. For instance, in the *Bhūridatta Jātaka*,⁹ we are told, that when the sons of a prince

¹Coomaraswamy, II, p. 1. quoting Hillebrandt, 'Vedische Yakṣa,' 1927.

²*Sāṅkhāyana GS*, 4.9; *Āśvalāyana GS*, 3.4; *Pāraskara GS*, Vāpyādipratishṭhā (tarpaṇavidhi) Appendix I.

³Coomaraswamy, III, p. 239; He further remarks that "the same name is often applied to the Deity under both aspects *ab-intra* and *ab-extra*. In other words there is always a first and second god essentially one but respectively hidden and revealed incorporeal and incarnate, one and many" *ibid*, p. 239, fn. 20.

⁴*AV*, X.7.38; *GB*, I.1ff; *BU*, V.4; *KU*, III.15 and *JB*, III, 203.

⁵*M*, 1.252.

⁶*Mahāvastu*, II, 242. *Sn*, (Fausböll), 448, p. 72.

⁷*M*, I.383. But in the *A*, II.37, he denies that he is a *yakkha*. In the context of *GB*, I.1. *Manmātraṁ dvitīyaṁ devaṁ nirmame* (let me measure out from myself) a second deity of like measurement with myself—and how Brahma-Yaksha eventually created Prajāpati out of himself—Coomaraswamy remarks, "The manifested likeness of Buddha to whom the designation 'great person' is frequently and that of 'Yakṣa' occasionally applied, is in same way *nirmānakāya* and *nimitta*." Coomaraswamy, III, p. 237 fn. 13; see also his "Nirmānakāya" in *JRAS*, 1938.

⁸*PED*, sv. Yakkha, 7; Coomaraswamy, III, p. 235f. explains the phrase in context of the phrase *ātmavata yakṣa* (*AV*, X.8.32); cf. also *ibid*, p. 234, where Coomaraswamy quotes *AV*, X.8.43, 'what spirant genius' (*Yakṣaṁ Ātmavata*) is within the lotus flower with nine openings (the human body) that the knower of Brahma knows, "and drawing attention to *JUB*, where Brahma-Yaksha is said to have chosen the (body of) person and have entered into him (*tām praviśat*) and thus having become" the immanent spirit, *ātman*, within you and other than that which it indwells" he says that this position survives in *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, where Buddha after having described his perfection, concludes "*ettāvata Yakkhassa suddhi tathāgata arhati puralasaṁ*," "such is the cleanliness of Yakkha that deserves your offerings." He also points out that according to *Sn*, the "cleanliness of *yakkha*"... is the same thing as "the cleanliness of man" and "cleanliness of the true Brahman," *Saṃyutta Nikāya* thus manifestly identifies the Yakkha with the true 'self' (*attā*) in the man as distinguished from the empirical 'self' (*attā*) which is "other than the self (*anattā*)."

⁹*Bhūridatta J*, VI.83; *ibid*, p. 89 has *Yakkha* for the unrecognised Bodhisattva.

got horrified while looking at a tortoise which had suddenly emerged, they exclaimed 'what Yaksha is this?'¹ Any unknown beauty, in the same strain, is referred to as a Yakshī, just as a handsome man is said to look like a Yaksha.² Besides this, the word *yaksha* has several other connotations as follows:

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| <i>Wonderful</i> | <i>GB</i> , I.1.1f; <i>SB</i> , XI.2.3.5 ³ ; <i>JUB</i> , IV.20.2f; <i>Chh. B.</i> , I.7.14. ⁴ |
| <i>Mystery or Mysterious</i> | <i>RV</i> , I.190.4 ⁵ ; VII.61.5; <i>AV</i> , VIII.9.8; XI.25-26 ⁶ ; X.2.32—That golden receptacle (has) three stands. In that there is kept a <i>Yaksha</i> who is known to the knower of Brahma; X.7.37-38. ⁷ <i>TB</i> , III.12.3.1. It was mysterious (or wonderful) <i>Tapas</i> which was first born. ⁸ |
| <i>Guile, or Māyā</i> | <i>RV</i> , IV.3.13 ⁹ ; X.88.13 ¹⁰ ; |
| <i>Invisible enemy</i> | <i>RV</i> , V.74.4 ¹¹ ; VII. 6. 15. ¹² |

As explained earlier, Sāyaṇa and Mādhava, have explained the word '*Yaksha*' (n. or m.)¹³ as 'worshipful deity'; just so they derived *Yaksha* from \sqrt{yaj} 'to worship'¹⁴ and both the meanings are consistent with the Vedic *Yaksha* concept.¹⁵ Bailey also takes up this question in the context of some references and says that the later commentators have tried to reinterpret the word when its original meaning had already become obsolete. Bailey has pointed out that the Ṛgvedic verb

¹The term *yaksha* is applied to a wondrous thing in *Jaminiya Brāhmaṇa*, III.203.272; "the Rishis seek to see something of this kind (to know the likeness of Brahma) and Indra reveals to them the tortoise *akūpāra* of boundless dimension."

²*Mbh.*, III.52.16; 61.115; 119.16.

³In discussion relating to name and form—(*nāma* and *rūpa*), *yaksha* is used as an alternative term for *abhya* 'force.' Eggeling, however, translates *Yakṣa* as 'manifestation or elusive representation'—*Phantom Magoris*, *SBE*, XLIV, p. 28; Coomaraswamy, III, p. 239 fn. 19. observes—(here) "name and aspect" . . . the means of intellectual and sensitive cognisation by which the Brahman "descends into these worlds." (cf. *BU*, I.4.7) are described as "two great "mysterious" powers . . . two great Yaksas (*abhve Yakse*), *Abhya* is properly "not-being," and can be equated with *asat*, 'not being' in a good, though awful sense, when praised as possessed by Varuṇa or Agni or the Maruts (*RV*, I.24.6; I.168.9 and 169.3; II.4.5; VI.4.3) or in a dread sense when Heaven and Earth are besought to protect us from it, i.e. from annihilation or death, or when Indra or the Dawn or Agni drives away the 'non-entity of darkness.' Most of these meanings accord with those of *Yakṣa* as a great unseen power, whether for good or evil, but *Abhya* and *Yakṣa* here are not used as if 'name' and 'aspect' denoted individuals so-called; taken together *abhve* and *yakṣe* mean only two mysterious and hidden powers."

⁴also *Gobhila GS*, III.4.28; *Khadira GS*, II.1.3. Commentary explains *yaksha* here as—*yakshāḥ saundaryātiṣāyena sarveḥ stutyo devajātivīśeshah*.

⁵The mysterious connection of *Yaksha* in this passage is revealed due to the connection with *ahimāyā*.

⁶*Yaksha*—'monster' Whitney, op. cit., p. 511.

⁷Whitney again translates it as a 'great monster.'

⁸or, as Coomaraswamy, II, p. 3, translates it—"By concentrated energy I became primal *yakṣa*." see also Coomaraswamy, III, p. 238.

⁹'*yaksham*' in this passage should mean 'guile' since it is used with *ahura*. Hillebrandt translates it as 'uncouth being.' cf. Coomaraswamy, II, p. 1; Coomaraswamy, III, p. 232, however says that—'*Yakṣam* here or in *RV*, V.70.4., might mean 'god' as much as 'offering.'

¹⁰Rightly the 'Sun' (here) is referred to as the 'on looking eye,' outlook of the *Yakṣa* (*Yaksham adhyaksham*); cf. Coomaraswamy, III, p. 232 for details.

¹¹or 'unseen spiritual enemy,' Coomaraswamy, II, p. 1.; or 'god' or 'offering' Coomaraswamy, III, p. 232.

¹²Coomaraswamy, II, p. 2, '*Yakṣa*' in the sense of 'invisible' seems to be contrasted with *citra*, in the sense of 'visible.'

¹³cf. *RV*, X.88.13; *pūjyadeva* 'worshipful deity' or VII.8.6; I.190.4—*pūjitaḥ havir ādikam*; *AV*, XI.2.24 *pūjya svarūpāni*, and such examples may further be multiplied.

¹⁴*supra*, pp. 9-10 and notes.

¹⁵cf. *RV*, II.5.1; I.13.5; III.7.1 and relevant commentary of Sāyaṇa and Mādhava.

yakṣh gives good sense in four passages of the *R̥gveda*,¹ which are as follows:

"Here we have (in) II.5.1, "displaying guarded treasure," (in) III.7.1'—they extend long life in display."² In I.135.5, we have the sense of successful raid with the *dhana* set down. The heroes intent on *śravas* show their victories and display themselves. The act (*karman*, I.62.6) which is most bound up with display is here associated with the *daśa*—"outstanding feat" of the *daśma* 'outstanding' man of powers and skill.³

In some other Vedic occurrences of the word *yaksha*, it is compounded as *yakshadriś* and *yakshabhrit*, and different opinions have been expressed about its real meaning. The former occurs in a verse (*RV*, I.190-4) in praise of Bṛhaspati,—“like a steed, may the Intelligent One hold control.⁴ Sāyaṇa glosses it as “*pūjitaṃ havirādikaṃ dadhānaḥ*,” and Coomaraswamy has observed that it means simply one who proffers sacrificial worship.⁵

The other compound is *Yakshadrish*, 'appearing like Yaksha,' (*RV*, VII.56-16). Coomaraswamy has remarked, in agreement with Grassmann, Geldner and Hertel, that this means 'Yaksha-aspect' rather than with Hillebrandt, that "Maruts are spiers out of Yaksha."⁶ Bailey, however, says that in it "one may see a richly clad chieftain."

Thus, in view of such ramifications of the word *yaksha* it may be said, in agreement with Coomaraswamy,⁷ that the whole content of the word *yaksha* (m. or n.) includes the notion of sudden luminosity, wonderful or 'awe-inspiring manifestation of something normally invisible and mysterious power properly to be worshipped.' Despite variations in the meaning of the word, this view broadly holds good.

One of the most important semantic features of the word in the later Vedic period is the emergence of Yaksha as an 'apparition.'⁸ Indeed, in at least one passage in the *R̥gveda* (VII. 61.5), Yaksha is regarded as 'invisible enemy.' In some other passages,⁹ the *Brahma-Yaksha* is manifestly an 'apparitional being.' A similar idea is expressed in the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* (III. 203) where Indra describes to the Rishis what the Brahma-Yaksha looks like. Ultimately this notion of 'apparition' may have led to the concept of Yaksha as an 'ill-omened portent' or creature in the *Kauśika Sūtra* (IX.3.3).¹⁰ Yaksha was thus being invested with his later garb. This development, evidently, heralded the transformation of Yaksha into a demonic being. Yet it is clear from Vedic literature that in the sense of a deity, he positively lingers there, although in comparison to his later form he is less material, less manifest and incorporeal and, like most of the Vedic deities, symbolic. That this amorphous Yaksha was conceived of as a *Deva* or deity

¹Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 155 *et. seq.*

²cf. F.W. Thomas, *JRAS*, 1946, pp. 1-12, for this translation which has also been quoted by Bailey.

³Bailey, *loc. cit.*, p. 155. He says "These meanings occur in Geldner's *Übersetzung* as in his earlier *Glossar*; with the Iranian evidence they stand confirmed." cf. Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

⁴*ibid.*, p. 154. The glory of Bṛhaspati spreads in *dviloka* and on earth like droves of animal (steed) carrying a Yaksha(?) *Yakshabhrit* is here, horse.

⁵Coomaraswamy, III, p. 236. fn. 10 remarks, "In view of *AV*, X.8.43, where the indwelling spirit or very self in body is called *ātmanav yakṣa* 'that the knower of Brahma knows' . . . *Yakṣabhrit* may well be tantamount to *prānabhrit bhūtabhrit*, and *bhṛt* and *jātabhrit*, as that which is "support of life, being and birth."

⁶Coomaraswamy, III, p. 236; on the same page, fn. 11, he remarks that, "espying the Yakṣa," while it may well imply the vision of something ordinarily invisible, by no means necessarily implies a disparagement of what is seen."

⁷*ibid.*, p. 232. He elsewhere observes, "In any case the idea of wonderful, mysterious, supernatural, unknown of magical power (as also) of invisibility and spirithood are all more or less involved in the early references . . ." Coomaraswamy, II, p. 1.

⁸Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 154. A. Hillebrandt in *Garbe Festschrift*, 19, on *RV*, 7.61.5, thought that it could mean "an apparition" or opposite—"Wesen Zauberwesen," cf. *supra*, p. 9, note 2.

⁹*RV*, VII.61.5, *KU*, III.15ff; *JUB*, IV.20-21.

¹⁰"This idea of ill omen could have arisen from what was essentially uncanny nature (of Yakshas)." Coomaraswamy, III, p. 236. also fn. there.

is clear from several passages.¹ In the early Vedic usage, Devas are clearly distinguished² from demons although sometimes they indeed perform ungodlike actions.³ *Deva*, in all probability was an honourable designation. The same, however, cannot be said of the Vedic Yaksha which carried both good⁴ and evil⁵ connotations. The *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa* (I.1.1ff.) clearly proves the equivalence of Yaksha with *Deva*. Eventually, these honorific terms expanded in meaning till in the *Sūtras*, they attained an absolute parity.

In the Vedic passage, we hardly get any clearer idea of his appearance than that he is prodigious⁶ or effulgent, glowing, rich with lustre and endowed with immeasurable strength⁷ or 'boundless dimensions.'⁸ By reason of this manifested nature, which is always very dim in its material aspect, the Yaksha become, for the first time, familiar to Umā and Indra. But his established position among the demi-gods was still not clear, although in the *Atharvaveda* (XI.6.10) the *Maitrāyīṇīya Upanishad* (I.5) and the *Maitrī Upanishad* (VII.5.8.) he has been classed with the Gandharva, Asura, Rākshasas, Bhūta, etc. However, "the specification of the term to mean a species of spirit, usually associated with Kubera, is not found until the period of the *Gṛhyasūtras*,"⁹ and with this the process of demonising the amorphous Yaksha came to a logical conclusion. This is one of the most interesting phenomena revealed by the study of the semantic development of word.

The stage was now set for a cult of the Yakshas, the rudiments of which had already appeared in the Vedic literature. It is likely that the priestly section organised the Yakshas under Kubera, and finally evolved the theological aspect of the cult in the society which accepted it as a popular religion.

SETTING OF THE CULT: ṚGVEDA

A cult can be defined as, the 'practical expression of the religious experience'¹⁰ and as such it is closely related to the 'doctrine,' 'the theoretical aspect of the religion.' In wider sense, all the actions which flow from and are determined by religious experience are to be regarded as practical expression or *Cultus*. In a narrower sense, *Cultus*, is 'act of acts of homo-religious worship.' As such, the Yaksha cult would mean a 'body of practices and ritual observances associated with the propitiation' of the Yaksha, thus technically entailing the study of the Yaksha, his representations, iconic or aniconic, the modes of his worship, and his worshippers.

The Yaksha cult was a creation of the forces that were latent and silently operative in the substratum of the early Vedic religious life. These forces worked vigorously to recreate an

¹RV, IV.3.13; V.70.4; AV, VIII.10.28 (Punyajana); X.7.38; KU, III.15; JUB, IV.20 etc.

²For the sake of distinction from *Deva*, other, types of deities are called *Mūradeva* RV (VII.21.5) *Śānadeva* (RV, X.99.3) or *Adeva* (RV, IV.22.11) cf. Keith, op. cit., I, p. 75f.

³Gods disturb sacrifices (TS, III.5.1), conjuration against gods (AV, III.26.27; TS, IV.5.10); Gods send disease (Mānava GS, II.14).

⁴AV, X.7.38; (also RV, X.85.5); AV, VIII.10.28 where Yakshas are called *punyajana* and *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa*, I.1ff. for the attitude of high respect. *Ṛgvedic* verb *Yaksh* also gives good sense if associated with Yaksha and the passages of this type are I.132.5; II.5.1; III.7.1.

⁵RV, IV.3.13, V.70.4; *Kauśika Sūtra*, IX.3.3; for the attitude of fear and dislike. This dual attitude persists in Buddhist texts and Jain tales too. The word *Yakshattva* in III.11.94; II.57, II.39; *Pv. A.*, 117, meaning 'spirithood' or condition of a higher demon of Yakkha may also be noted here. These references indicate a position of honour with regard to Yaksha.

⁶RV, VII.56.16.

⁷KU, III.15ff; JUB, IV.20; TB, III.3.12.1; AV, X.7.38.

⁸JB, III.203.

⁹Keith, op. cit., p. 242; cf. also *Śāṅkhāyana GS*, 4.9; *Āśvalāyana GS*, 3.4; *Paraskara GS*; *Pariśishta, Tarpanavidhi*.

¹⁰Wach, Joachim, *Sociology of Religion*, London, 1947.

amorphous word-concept into a sentient being and, later on, a body of practices and ritual observances associated itself with the propitiation of Yaksha. Precisely, a cult developed around him.

The beginnings of the Yaksha cult are found in the *Rgveda*. To make the Vedic Yaksha understandable, the analysis of the references in the *Rgveda* is necessary. This text has the occurrence of the word Yaksha in the following sequence.

1. आत्यो न यंसद् यक्ष् भूद् विचेतहृ । *Rgveda*, I.190.4
2. ना कस्य यक्षं सदमिद्भुरो गा । *ibid*, IV.3.13.
3. ना कस्याद्भुत कृत यक्षं तनूभिः तूनाभिः । *ibid*, V.70.4
4. अमूरा विश्वा बृषणाविमा वां न यामु चित्रं दक्षे न यक्षं । *ibid*, VII.61.5.
5. अत्यासो न ये मरुतः स्वंचो यक्षदक्षो न शुभयंत मर्याः । *ibid*, VII.56.16.
6. य आपिनित्यो वरुण प्रियः सन्त्वामागांसि कृष्णवत्सखा ते ।
मा त एनस्वन्तो यक्षिन्मुजेम यन्धिष्मा विप्र स्तुवते वरुथम् ॥ *ibid*, VII.88.6.
7. यक्षस्याध्यक्षं तविषं बृहन्तम् । *ibid*, X.88.13.
8. Coomaraswamy explains the importance of the *Rgveda*, I.24.7 by relating it to the *Atharvaveda*, X.7. and also the *Rgveda*, X.85.5, thereby explaining that Yaksha here is used in a good sense.¹

In the passages quoted above, *Yaksha*, in 1, 2 is something mysterious, not clearly definable; but in 3, 4 he is dreadful and not someone to be consorted with. In 5, he is "beautiful"; in 6, *yaksha* is an honorific of Varuna, and in 8, in reference to the passage quoted there, *Yaksha* is a primordial chthonic deity. But he is god in 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7, either by overt statement or by implication. In these passages, a striking point is the ambivalent attitude towards the *Yakshas*, viz., the attitude of high respect as in the *Rgveda*, VII.56.16, VII.88.6 and the attitude of distrust and disparagement as in the *Rgveda*, IV.3.13 and V.70.4. This ambivalence, later, became strikingly marked in the twin aspects of the nature of *Yakshas* viz., benevolence and malevolence.

Yaksha is sometimes neuter, as in the *Rgveda* (X.88.13).² Coomaraswamy has said that in the *Rgveda*, IV.3.13 and V.70.4 *Yaksham* will be 'god' in spite of its evil character. However, his material personality is still very much absent. Except for the *Rgveda*, VII.56.16, where *Yaksha* is spoken of as having a beautiful form,³ we find no reference to his looks or to his features. It seems that in the *Rgveda*, although *Yaksha* had come to be accepted as a god, he too was abstract like all the other Vedic divinities. Yaska, in his *Nirukta*, has later explained the physical aspect of the Vedic gods. He says that according to some, gods were like men while others said that they were *apurushavidhāh* "not anthropomorphic."⁴ It is found that *Yaksha*, who in the later Vedic texts has been described as beautiful, has also been regarded 'invisible' in the *Rgveda* (IV.3.13), where we have "Do not (O, Agni) consort with *Yaksha* or any smooth swindler, intriguing neighbour etc."⁵ On the *Rgveda* (VII.6.15), Coomaraswamy says that "Yaksha in the sense of

¹Coomaraswamy, II, addenda, p. 2.

²cf. also, *AV*, X.8.43; *GB*, I.1.1.f; *JUB*, IV.20-21. *KU*, III.15ff. Sāyana has consistently explained *Yaksha* in his commentary as a 'worshipful deity.'

³Agrawala, V.S., *ACSB*, introduction, p. IX. cf. Bailey, *supra*, p. 13. who, finds a reference to a "richly clad chieftain" in the passage . . . K.C. Chattopadhyaya says that here the grandeur of Maruts has been compared to that of the bridegroom having appearance of a *Yaksha*.

⁴Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p. 49.

⁵Coomaraswamy, II, addenda, p. 2, Agrawala, V.S., reads in this a reference to "special places for worship of *Yaksha* known as *Yaksha-Sadana*." *ACSB*, introduction, p. IX, Coomaraswamy says that *Yaksha* here may imply both god or sacrifice and that the inauspicious meaning here depends on the context, not in the thing itself and the meaning is . . . "may we not take part in the rites of the evil men." cf. Coomaraswamy, III, p. 235f.

'invisible' seems to be contrasted with 'citra' in the sense of 'visible.'¹ And in the *R̥gveda* (V.70.4) we have "let us not, O ye gods, of great power, encounter a Yaksha."² Coomaraswamy explains that Yaksha has been regarded here as an invisible enemy of what is being undertaken.³ He is the "unseen spiritual enemy." This invisibility of Yaksha materialised in the later Vedic texts *Jaiminīya Upanishad Brāhmaṇa* (IV.20-21) and the *Kena Upanishad* (III.15ff) where Indra touches the Yaksha or in the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* (III.203) where Yaksha is of boundless dimension having the likeness of a tortoise. The Yaksha changes shape in the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* (III.3.12.1) where it is mentioned as becoming 'glowing' by *tapas*, 'austerities.'

All the same, the Yaksha cult had acquired some standing even in the Vedic age. Agrawala,⁴ quoting the *R̥gveda* (VII.61.5), says that it was a cult of common folks and not of the developed minds (*amūrāvisvā*), these common folks worshipped Yaksha in the special temples dedicated to him and known as *Yaksha-Sadana*.⁵ Some of the tenets of the cult were also being worked out now. In this connection a passage from the *R̥gveda* (X.88.13) is important; it refers to Agni as the lord of Yaksha (*Yaksha syādhyakshaṃ tavisham vrihantam*).⁶ Subsequently, it is found that before the acceptance of Kubera as the lord of Yakshas, Indra and also Skanda were offered that status. But the name of Agni in one of the earliest references in this context is interesting. He could not, however, retain this place.

Of the different aspects that were developed in connexion with Yaksha, the one signifying the idea of possession makes its first appearance in the *R̥gveda* (VII.61.5); here, as Agrawala⁷ has explained, we have the suggestion that "Yaksha should not possess the body of the worshippers." But the dominant note of the *R̥gvedic* Yaksha is one of a benevolent deity. Bailey confirms it adducing four passages from the *R̥gveda* as evidence. He has said that "the *R̥gvedic* verb *yakṣ*" occurring three times and in one nominal derivative gives a good sense if associated with 'Yakṣa.'⁸

The tradition of the adjectival use of 'Yaksha' seems to start in the *R̥gveda* where the identity of names has been achieved between Yaksha and Varuṇa.⁹ Coomaraswamy has corroborated this identity by reference to certain other passages. Thus, he says that in the *R̥gveda* (X.88.13). Sun is mentioned as the "onlooking eye or the outlook of Yaksha; for sun is the eye of Mitra and Varuṇa in (the *R̥gveda*, X.37.1) of Mitra, Varuṇa and Agni in (the *R̥gveda*) I.115.1 and as repeatedly affirmed in the *R̥gveda* "these are aspects of a single essence."¹⁰ Agrawala, on the other hand, finds in the *R̥gveda* (X.88.13) reference to "Agni being the lord of Yakshas."¹¹ If, however, this 'single essence' concept is accepted, it will be easier to explain why later, Brahman, Ātman, Puruṣa or the Buddha and others have been designated as 'Yaksha.'

A review of the position of Yaksha in the *R̥gveda* establishes the fact that Yaksha had been accepted as a god, sometimes an 'apparition' of something dreadful or at other times something good. His followers were gathering around him. His temples might have existed where lower

¹Coomaraswamy, II, addenda, p. 2.

²ibid.

³ibid.

⁴ACSB, introduction, p. IX.

⁵RV, IV.3.13.

⁶ACSB, introduction, p. IX.

⁷ibid.

⁸*Iranica Et Vedica*, p. 155f, in reference to RV, I.132; 5; II.5.1; III.7.1; I.62.6.

⁹RV, X.88.6., cf. also Coomaraswamy, II, addenda, p. 2. The associations indicate that "Varuṇa . . . elder Brahman, unborn, unbeing, is that ground whence there springs up all that is and as Yaksha, the "simplex chthonic Yaksha" of AV, VII.9.26 "is the invisible great spirit that indwells and manifests itself in the Tree of Life . . ." Coomaraswamy, III, p. 234.

¹⁰Coomaraswamy, ibid, p. 232. He says "that Sun . . . is then . . . naturally in AV, X.7.33 the eye of that elder Brahman to whom be the homage."

¹¹ACSB, p. IX.

folks worshipped him. As regard his appearance, he was 'beautiful.' The demoniac aspects were attached to his material personality only when the sublime aspect was eclipsed. But Yaksha as god existed in the *Rgveda*; as also his worshippers and place of worship. Images are not mentioned. Certain references to the *mūrādevas* and *śiśnadevas* do occur but what bearing they had on Yaksha images, if they ever existed, is not known and is too difficult to conjecture.

Expansion: Later Vedic Period

During the last stages of the later Vedic period culminating in the *Sūtras*, the Yaksha cult attained the status which came to stay. But in the earlier phase of this period, the Yaksha seems to be defying the tendency to demonise him. This is amply corroborated by the *Atharvaveda*; the *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Upanishads*. The adjectival use of the word is repeated in this period also, particularly in connection with Brahman,¹ Prajāpati, Manas and Mrityu.² Of equal significance is the emphasis on Yaksha as the primordial or chthonic being. The primordial Yaksha is described in the *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa* (I.1): "Verily, the Brahman was this in the beginning just the Single, Self-existent. It considered, 'I am the great Yaksha, just the one only (*mahad vai yakshaṁ tad ekam evāsmi*). Come, let me measure out from myself a second Deity (*devam*) of like measure with myself (I.4.)' The Yaksha accordingly disappears and is replaced by Atharvan-Prajāpati, who is in his likeness in all respects and whom he instructs to emanate and care for creatures."³ Again a reference to the primacy of Brahma-Yaksha is made in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad* (V.4). "He who knows that Great-Yaksha as the primal born, that is, that Brahman is real, he conquers the worlds." It is as Brahma-Yaksha that Yaksha is regarded as the primal being in the passages above. In some other passages, on the other hand, he was divested of his Brahman designation, but not of his primacy. In the *Atharvaveda* (VII.9.25-26), we have *yakshaṁ prithivyām eka vrata*; in the same text elsewhere (X.7.38), we have a great Yaksha—*mahad Yakshaṁ*—in the midst of the universe, reclining in concentrated energy—*tapas*—on the back of waters, wherein are set whatever gods there be, like the branches of the tree about a trunk.⁴ The *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* (III.3.12.1) explains that Yaksha became primal as a result of *tapas* 'austerities'—*tapo ha yakshaṁ prathamam sambabhūva*. Comparing the primordial status of this Yaksha with those of the epics and Puranas, it appears strange that various stories of the origin of this *svayambhū*, self-existent, or *prathamam*, the first-born god, should have been devised at all.

However, the allusions to the adjectival or primordial roles of Yaksha prove that this deity was occupying an honourable status in the later Vedic works. Sāyaṇa's commentary on certain passages, and some other contexts corroborate this. Yaksha has been explained as *pūjyam svarūpam* by Sāyaṇa in his commentary of the *Atharvaveda* (XI.2.24). Yakshas are called *itarajana*, other folks, in the *Atharvaveda* (VIII.10.28); in the *Paippalāda* version of this text, the word is *puṇyajana*, sacred folks. The later lexicons take these words as synonymous with Yakshas. Despite such vivid descriptions, it is found that even in the later Vedic literature sometimes Yaksha is not properly explicable. Yaksha of the *Atharvaveda* (X.8.14,15) is something mysterious. The same idea is conveyed in the *Jaiminīya Upanishad Brāhmaṇa* (IV.20-21) and the *Kena Upanishad* (III.15) where Brahma-Yaksha manifests itself to Indra, Vāyu and Agni who were unable to discover it. Indra, however, ran upon it but it vanished (*tiro dadhe*). Then Umā Haimavatt explained it as Brahman. Yaksha as something wondrous also occurs in the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* (III.203, 273)—*akūpāro vā ayam kaśyapas samudre antaraṁ mahad yakshaṁ*. The

¹Brahman is Yaksha in *JUB*, V.20; *KU*, III.15ff; *BU*, V.4; *SB*, X.1.3.13.

²cf. Coomaraswamy, III, p. 239.

³Coomaraswamy, III, p. 237, commenting upon this passage, connecting it with the *Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka*, XI.1-2, and *RV*, I.24.7 and I.182.7, he finds an allusion to the tree of life. However, the modified version of this story of the Brahman-Yaksha is given in the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*, II.1.4. and *Aitareya Upanishad*, I.1. where Ātman has substituted the Brahman-Yaksha. Coomaraswamy, III, p. 238.

⁴Coomaraswamy, II, p. 2, also III, pp. 232ff. 'Wherein' here has reference to the *Skambha* of *AV*, X.7.

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (XI.2.3.5) envisages, the similar idea of Yaksha's 'manifestation' or "elusive representation"—*Phantom Magoris*. In many passages Yaksha is in neuter gender like Brahman¹ which indicates the absence of a clear-cut conception of the appearance of the Yaksha. His elusive appearance tries to find some material counterpart in the *Kena Upanishad* (III.15ff) and the *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* (III.203) but even that is not clearly manifested although responsive to the sense of touch in the former. The latter explicates only the 'boundless dimensions' of the Yaksha by comparing him with a huge tortoise. As in the *Rgveda*, Yaksha is a more or less wondrous or invisible being although, by way of comparison, his looks are likened to a richly clad chieftain (*Rgveda*, VII.56.16) or a tortoise of huge dimension.² In these comparisons however two major material modes of conceiving a deity in the anthropomorphic and theriomorphic forms are clearly evident. Later, *Chāndogya Brāhmaṇa* (I.7.14) transformed Yaksha into something of 'beautiful looks,' which may have assisted in formulation of his anthropomorphic appearance.

The great Yaksha of the later Vedic phase is also eulogised as presenting some important cosmological motifs. Commaraswamy³ has brought out the association of Yaksha with the motif of 'Tree of Life' in the *Atharvaveda*, X.7.38 and 26 with a reference to some other Vedic passages; and he has also pleaded that the connexion with 'water' is not contradictory to that with the 'tree.'⁴ An idea about the aquatic abode of Yaksha may be obtained from the *Atharvaveda* (X.7.38, *salilasya prishthe*).⁵ Elsewhere, Sāyaṇa has explained '*Gandharvasya dhruve padam*' (*Rgveda*, I.22.14) as *antariksha* region, and has quoted a passage from the *Nrisimha Tāpanīya*⁶ that the sky is inhabited by groups of Yakshas etc.—*yaksha gandharvāpsarorgaṇa sevitaṃ antarikṣam*. It follows that sky, water and trees were regarded as abodes of Yaksha; Water and Tree have been identified as the cosmic elements in which Yaksha found abode but eventually the cosmic form of these elements was shadowed in the later tradition, and these in their most terrestrial form came to be accepted as Yaksha's abodes. Even then the connexion between the cosmic and terrestrial concepts of water and tree as the haunts of Yakshas is obvious. In the process of transformation, the mystic importance of the cosmic element was lost and 'Water' became ordinary water, not that of the *Rgveda* (X.83(?)6) which bears the primal Germ wherein the Universal deities consort, and 'Tree' the ordinary tree, not the cosmic 'Tree of Life,' the trunk of which contains the universal deities. Agrawala has emphasised the sanctified nature of Yaksha's habitats by adducing passages to show that these were known as *Brahmapura* (*Atharvaveda*, X.8.29-30; *Mbh.*, Sānti Parva, 171.52) on the ground that Yaksha was also known as Brahma.⁷

Some information can be obtained from the early literature about Yaksha priests. The *Sāmarahasyopanishad*⁸ regards the Yaksha-worshippers a despicable; the worshippers thus viewed may include priests also.

Yakshas have been regarded as intelligent beings with an enviable capacity for asking philosophical questions concerning mind and matter. In the *Mahābhārata*, we have the famous *yaksha-*

¹*AV*, X.7.38; *GB*, I.1f; *JUB*, IV.20-21; *KU*, III.15ff. In these passages Yaksha or Brahma-Yaksha, as the case may be, is neuter.

²Compare, *mahad yakṣam*, *GB*, I.1 or *mahākāya*, *Mbh.*, III.297.20.

³Coomaraswamy, III, p. 232f.

⁴*ibid*, p. 232 fn. 5

⁵cf. also *AV*, XI. 2.24 and *GB*, I.1f. '*Salilasya prishthe*' has been discussed by Coomaraswamy, III, p. 234 note 5, which he says, is "the primordial," 'indeterminate fluidity' (*apraketaṃ salilam* of *RV*, X.129.3). A constant association of the primordial Yakṣa with waters is perfectly normal in view of identification of Brahma whose 'world is water' . . . The 'Yakṣa in the water' is a recognised formula, cf. the allusion in *AV*, XI.2.24 where the commentator explains *yakṣam* quite intelligibly as *pūjyam svarūpaṃ* the "worshipful intrinsic aspect . . . of the Brahman." cf. Coomaraswamy, III, p. 243 fn. 5.

⁶also, *Gaṇesapūrvātāpanīya*, I.2.

⁷*ACSB*, p. IX.

⁸*Unpublished Upanishads*, ed. Pandits of Adyar Library and C. Kunhan Raja, 1933, p. 235.

praśna put to Yudhishthira.¹ The Pali works and their *Aṭṭhakathās* have several Yakshas of similar capacity. The tradition of such a *praśnottara-mālikā*, a chain of questions and answers, goes back to the eighteen *mantras* of the *Yajurveda* (XXXII.9.45 etc.) which are known as *Brahmodya*. Agrawala says that Brahma there was synonymous with Yaksha.² The *mantra* in the *Atharvaveda* (X.2.28.23) definitely mentions a *Brahma-Yaksha*, and in the *Atharvaveda* (VIII.9.25-26) we have a *Yaksha-yakṣam prithivyām ekavrata*—in the riddles.

Some individual Yakshas appeared in the later Vedic texts, and probably the idea of a pantheon followed thereafter. The feminine counterpart of Yaksha probably made a beginning during this phase. Coomaraswamy has introduced the concept of femininity in connexion with the Yaksha of the *Atharvaveda* (VIII.9.8). This passage refers to Yaksha as 'stirring' (*ejate*), a word specially connected with quickening of Agni in the womb as for example in the *Rgveda*, V.78.7-8 "in the operation (*vrate*) of *Virāj*...from whom as explained in the *Atharvaveda* VIII.10, all things "milk" their specific qualities; ... and if the *Yaksha* is here Agni or the Sun, ... the Magna Mater must be thought of as *Yakṣi*; *m* and *f* introduces nothing new in principle; the duality is already latent in the Supreme Identity."³ *Yakshī*, however, does not appear in her usual garb; she is not a ravishingly beautiful bewitching woman or a cannibal or enticing ogress or a worshipping devotee of the gods, seeking salvation from them. The femininity has been suggested only by parallel references involving Magna Mater and a birth.

Kubera also emerged during this period, but his lordship over the Yakshas was established only later in the *Gṛhya Sūtras*. In the beginning, he is a *Rākshasa* and the master of robbers.⁴ Alternatively, he is associated with the *Guhyakas*, for we have in the *Atharvaveda* VIII.10.28, a reference to milking of concealment (*tirodha*) out of the universe by 'Rajatanābhi's son of Ka(au)bera.'⁵ This emphasis on concealment connects Kubera with *Guhyakas*⁶ rather than with Yakshas. The latter's subordination to Kubera was, however, established in the *Gṛhyasūtras*⁷ and was retained subsequently. With this acceptance, the process of finding a lord of Yakshas that started in the *Rgveda* where *Yakshasyādhyaksha* in Agni,⁸ was concluded in the *Sūtras*, in the final acceptance of Kubera as the lord of Yakshas. One of the early reference to Kubera is found in the *Jaiminīya Upanishad Brāhmaṇa* (III.41.1) not as the lord of Yakshas but in the list of teachers and as pupil of Jayanta Vārakya. In the later works Kubera was accepted as uncontested guardian of the northern quarter but in the *Atharvaveda* (III.27.1-6) Soma is ascribed that status. In the *Śrī-Sūkta* (7) he has been called *devasakhaḥ*, which may indicate that he was still short of divinity. In the *Sūtras*⁹ his position crystallised and he was accepted as the lord of Yakshas.

Yakshas as a "class of beings" made an unmistakable appearance in the later Vedic period. They were supernatural beings but, as category, they were certainly different from the order of the proper Vedic divinities. They form a class with demons in the *Maitrāyīṇīya Upanishad* (I.4.6) and *Maitrī Upanishad* (VII.6.8) and in various *Sūtras*. In the *Atharvaveda* (XI.6.10), however, their function is protective. The ambivalent attitude towards the Yakshas which was apparent in the *Rgveda* is recognisable in this period also, and covers both Kubera and the Yakshas. In the

¹*infra*, p. 24f.

²*Gāhā aur Palhāyā* (Hindi), *Janapada*, I. (1), January, 1953, pp. 70ff; cf. also Gaur, G.D., *Malhor* (Hindi), *ibid*, p. 75f.

³Coomaraswamy, III, p. 233 n. 7.

⁴*SB*, XIII.4.3.10; *Śāṅkhāyana SS*, XVI.2.16-17; *Āśvalāyana SS*, *Uttarashatkaḥ*, IV.7.

⁵Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p. 337.

⁶Patanjali in *Mahābhāshya* refers to Vaiśravaṇa as lord of *Guhyakas* and his more popular name Kubera does not occur there in the context. *supra*, p. 5, for Yaksha vis-a-vis *Guhyakas*.

⁷*Śāṅkhāyana GS*, IV.9; *Āśvalāyana GS*, III.4.

⁸*supra*, p. 16.

⁹*Śāṅkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, IV.9; *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, III.4; *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra*, *parisishṭe*, under *Tarpanavidhi*.

Śatapathā Brāhmaṇa (XIII.4.3.10), as already noted, Kubera is a Rākshasa and master of robbers. As lord of Yakshas, he is sometimes terrible.¹ In the *Kauśika Sūtra* (IX.3.3) Yakshas are included in a list of ill-omened portents and, as Coomaraswamy² has said, in the later literature Yaksha in plural may be either good or evil, and it can be easily seen how "the idea of ill-omen could have arisen from what was essentially the uncanny nature of" the Yakshas.

The *Sūtras* mark the end of the Vedic period, and they contain material which proves clearly the transformation of Yakshas into demi-gods. Their equivalence with various other classes of demi-gods such as Rākshasa, Gandharva, Pitri, Asura³ and Kinnara⁴ is also evident. This period also offers evidence of *caitya*-worship. In the Buddhist and the Jain traditions, *caityas* occupied an important position. And there is sufficient evidence to prove that many such *caityas* belonged to the Yakshas.⁵ That the *caityas* received worship is proved by the *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra* (I.12.1.3) which refers to the offerings and the sacrifice for *caityas*. Yakshas, according to the *Sūtras*, received oblations in the *Śrāddha* rituals⁶ along with other demi-gods. There were priests who administered the *Vināyaka pūjā*, and performed worship of the Yakshas also.⁷ About some important individual Yakshas, besides Kubera,⁸ who find mention during this period, *Mānava Gṛhyasūtra* (II.14.29) supplies useful evidence. Certain names *viz.*, Bhīru, Jambhaka, Virūpāksha and Vaiśramaṇa are mentioned in this text and these evidently are the Yaksha-names for, they figure on the list of Yakshas in other texts.⁹ Moreover, these gods are certainly not the Vedic gods. Pāṇini also refers to four Yakshas *viz.*, Supari, Viśāla, Varuṇa, Āryamā, while referring to the contemporary social convention of naming.¹⁰ The *Mānava GS* (II.14.28), incidentally, provides interesting information about food and other offerings to these deities; these included cooked or uncooked rice, meat, fish and flour-cakes besides fragrant substances, beverages and different types of wreaths as well as garments.

Kubera, however, was more widely known and his other designations known during this period were *Mahārājā*¹¹ and Vaiśramaṇa.¹² But it appears that he was still not assigned the guardianship of the northern quarter, which became his normal function around this time.¹³ In Pāṇini, however, *Māharāja* is only a *devatā* (IV.2.35) to whom *mahārājabali* oblation, was offered.¹⁴

An important development in this period was the acceptance of Yaksha as tutelary deities in the households.¹⁵ This is indicated by the tradition of naming recorded in Pāṇini in connection with Sevala, Āryamā etc. Āryamā was associated with child-birth.¹⁶ In the rituals of Yaksha worship in Pāṇini and Patanjali we come across mention of their images and temples. Pāṇini

¹ibid, also *Śaṅkhāyana SS*, XVI.2.16-17; *Āśvalāyana SS*, Uttarashatkaḥ, IV. 7.

²III, p. 236 note 11.

³*Bṛīhaddevatā*, VII.68.

⁴*Agni GS*, II.6.7.11.

⁵*infra*, p. 42.

⁶*Śaṅkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, IV. 9.

⁷*Mānava Gṛhyasūtra*, II.14.30.

⁸In his developed form as seen in the *Purāṇas*, he looks much different from his early image and Banerjea has pointed out that the twain cannot be related. cf. Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, appendix A (d), pp. 574-78.

⁹*VP*, Ch. 69; *Mahāmāyūrī*, I. 97; *Kathas.*, III.133 for the first three; Vaiśravaṇa is same as Kubera. Arbman, *Rudra*, p. 58 has attempted an explanation of a number of this "strange variety of names." Keith, A.B., *op. cit.*, p. 242.

¹⁰Agrawala, V.S., *Panini*, pp. 187, 364; the children were named after these gods obviously because they were received as a grace from them.

¹¹ibid, p. 359.

¹²*Mānava GS*, II.14.29.

¹³*J*, VI.259, 265; Agrawala, *Panini*, p. 359.

¹⁴Agrawala, *Panini*, p. 359.

¹⁵ibid, p. 187.

¹⁶cf. *AV*, I.11.1; Lüder's List no. 813; Agrawala, *Panini*, p. 364.

(V.3.99) seems to indicate 'concrete representations of deities.' Here Banerjea precludes the possibility of reference to the Vedic gods; it is more likely that popular gods like Yaksha, Kubera and others might have been meant.¹ The commentary of Patanjali on Pāṇini (III.1.133) throws light on some traits of Kubera's image, stating specifically that the pedestal of the Vaiśravaṇa image was shown raised. The temples (*prāsāda*) of Dhanapati-Kubera are mentioned in Patanjali's commentary on Pāṇini's *Sūtra* (II.2.34). In the temple, musical instruments were played in the assemblage of the worshippers.²

Theological Aspect: Vedic and Subsequent

The sublimity of the Vedic Yaksha will not be fully realised unless esoteric basis for the belief in them is pieced together. The profundity of this belief manifested itself in a theology pertaining to Yaksha-worship. Theology is generally understood as a science of religion dealing with the knowledge of god obtained through reason, revelation or a methodical arrangement of the truths of religion in their natural setting. The theological concepts enunciated in connection with various roles of this deity are of supreme importance clarifying, as they do, the sublimity of Yaksha.³

An important feature in this connexion in the Vedic texts in his association with the speculations on cosmology. In the early Vedic speculation on cosmogony there are two lines of thinking as regards the coming into being of the universe; the one views regards the universe as the result of mechanical production, the work of carpenter's and joiner's skill; the other represents it as the result of material generation.⁴ The early Vedic philosophers made no distinction between the *efficient* and *material* cause of the creation of the universe. Several notions were put forward to explain the creation through the agency of some divine power, and one of these attributes to Yaksha the creation of the *efficient* agency. This Yaksha was created by no one; he was self-existent (*svayambhū*)⁵ or 'single,' in other words, primordial. The *Gopatha Brāhmana* relates that the Yaksha (Brahma-Yaksha) considered, while floating on the surface of the cosmic water, that He was self-existent and alone. He was from Himself and was only Himself. It considers, 'I am the great Yaksha, just the only (*mahad vai Yaksham tad ekaṁ evāsmi*). Come, let me measure out from myself a second deity (*devam*) of like measure with myself" (I.1.4). It thought that It would create another being like Itself and thus It laboured and heated Itself and perspired, and from the moisture, It produced Atharvan-Prajāpati who was instructed to emanate and care for creatures. Here the ultimate source of creation is Yaksha Itself, and Prajāpati is only Its creation responsible for subsequent creations.⁶ In the *Atharvaveda* (X.7) dealing with *skambha* 'frame of creation,' we have riddles in the form of questions and answers dealing with the origin of the universe, and Yaksha is described there as "lying in the middle of creation (*bhuvanam*) who strode in penance on the back of the sea-in it are set whatever gods there are, like the branches of a tree round about the trunk (X.7.38)." Besides the element of water, the motif of 'Tree of

¹Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p. 85.

²*ibid.*, p. 337.

³A very interesting survey of the evolution of the philosophical import of the term 'yaksha' has been made by Wijesekara. He tells that starting from the tenth *Maṇḍala* of the *Rgveda* where 'Yaksha' occurs in a cosmogonic context, it develops finally in the *Suttantipāta*. It imports 'Sudden flash of light,' 'mystery,' magic, 'magical power' in the earlier books of the *Rgveda* in its tenth *Maṇḍala* and in the *Atharvaveda* it develops into a sense of 'wondrous being' and as such it was applied to Hiranyagarbha-Purusha. It is applied to *manas* (*Vājasneya Saṁhitā*), as 'm'rococosmic-psyche.' Upanishads use it in the sense of *Bhuta* or *Atman* as "a mass of intelligence" (*prajñānaghana*) or "a mass of knowledge (*viññānaghana*). It is this idea of the original pure consciousness that seems to be antecedental to the Pali *Yakkha*." Wijesekara, O.H. de. A., "The Philosophical import of Vedic Yaksha and Pali Yakkha," *University of Ceylon Review* 1(2), Colombo, November, 1943; cf. also Keith A.B., *op. cit.*, II, p. 242.

⁴Macdonell, A.A., *Vedic Mythology*, p. 118.

⁵GB, I.1f.

⁶cf. BU, I.4.1ff. for *Ātman* in form of person, who was the creative and efficient agency.

Life' has been indicated here. This simile of tree is used in the context of the origin of the universe in the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* (II.8.9.6) again, which shows that it was also regarded as one of the Prime Movers. In view of this, the associations of Yaksha with the *skambha*, the source of all creation cannot be ignored. In this passage of the *Atharvaveda* Yaksha is represented as the principal primordial source responsible for creation, and the idea is fairly recurrent.¹

In the *Brāhmaṇas* and *Upanishads*, however, this primordial Yaksha was designated as *Brahman*; in some instances, it is the other way about, which must be noted in order to understand the status of Yaksha clearly. Brahman was himself a later creation.² In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (XI.2.3f) we have Brahma-Yaksha, who was there in the beginning. It created gods and made them ascend beyond the earth. Then it went beyond the sphere where It considered: "How can I descend again in these worlds?" It then descended by means of 'name' and 'form,' and it is from these two principles that the universe is extended and he, who knows these two great forces of Brahma-Yaksha, becomes himself a great force.³ This idea of the primal Yaksha (or Brahma-Yaksha) is carried through the *Upanishads* also. The *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad* (V.4) calls Yaksha-Brahma as Real and 'first-born,' and says that "He who knows Yaksha as the first-born—namely, that Brahma is the Real, conquers these worlds." Here again, Brahma designates the Yaksha, who is also Real; by this probably it is intended to be indicated that Yaksha is the final ground of existence in the manner of the *Upanishadic mahāvākya* 'great sayings,' viz., 'Satyasya satya.' In the *Kena Upanishad* (III.32f). Truth is precisely spoken of as the abode of Brahma-Yaksha.

The equivalence of Yaksha with Brahma is again found in the *Kena Up.* (III.15ff), where Yaksha manifests itself to the *Devas* who do not understand it first. It tests the might of Agni, Vāyu and Indra by putting a straw which Agni could not burn, Vāyu could not lift and Indra could not carry. Later, Umā who is allegorised as knowledge,⁴ explains to the gods that it is Brahma (Yaksha). In the passages of this *Upanishad*, this Yaksha-Brahma is a material force and is touched by Agni, Vāyu and Indra (III.27f). It is like 'lightning which flashes forth' (III.29).⁵ It is also called *tad-vana* (it-is-the desire, III.31) and represents mystic doctrine of Brahma-Yaksha. Austerity, restraint and work are its foundations, and the Vedas are its limbs, truth is its abode (III.32f).

In some of the passages quoted above, thus, two aspects of the Yaksha's activity are clearly discernible. Sometimes, he himself is the primordial stuff, the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe⁶ and, in some other cases, he is only the creator.⁷ In the *Atharvaveda* (VIII.9.8), Yaksha is mentioned as stirring, which may be indicative of the critical period of creation by the Yaksha.⁸ On the whole, it appears that Yaksha is either a self-born⁹ primordial deity, or the myth of his coming into existence has not been mentioned at all and he is repre-

¹cf. *AV*, X.8.15, where Yaksha is described as "in the midst of existence." *ibid*, VIII.10.26, has Yaksha 'single on the Earth.' In *BU*, I.2.1, Purusha is similarly spoken of and this idea of Singleness goes for Primordality.

²"The conception of Brahma . . . had hardly emerged in the *Ṛgveda*; Dasgupta, S.N., op. cit., p. 20. One of the meanings of Brahma was 'Great' and it is in this sense that He probably designated Yaksha. The practice survives even now in the popular tradition in which the village deities are sometimes addressed as Brahma (*Barama*) or Deva (*Deo*)."

³The translation is after Eggeling, *SB, SBE*, XLIV, pp. 27-28.

⁴Hume, *The Fifteen Principal Upanishads, Kena*, p. 338 note 2.

⁵This simile explains that Brahma (Yaksha) is something that appears for a moment in lightening and then vanishes from our sight. cf. *The Upanishad*, I, translation Max Müller, *SBE*, I, Part I, p. 152 note 1.

⁶*AV*, X.8.15; X.7.38; *SB*, XI.2.3.5.

⁷*GB*, I.1f.

⁸*supra*, p. 19.

⁹*TB*, III.3.12.1 *tapo ha yaksham prathamam sambabhūva*; *BU*, V.4; cf., also *AV*, XI.2.24. where "to Rudra belongs the Yaksha within the waters."

sented as the being who existed since the very beginning.¹ He was there in the beginning, floating on waters. This first-existent being has been described as non-being (*asat*) or 'one only without a second' and it is said that from that non-being, Being was produced.² Yaksha, the self-existent, is described as manifesting himself in the Atharvan-Prajāpati or Brahman (because in the relevant contexts, he is designated as such) or *nāma*, 'name,' and *rūpa*, 'form.' He is also described as having created the universe and the gods. The Yaksha is also described as revealing itself to the gods who touched it. It had a bright form capable of being felt and touched. The presentation of the material personality of Yaksha (Brahma) is rarely found; it is present particularly in the *Kena Upanishad*. Generally speaking, in the Upanishads sometimes no difference is made between material and immaterial being; Yaksha of the *Kena Upanishad* is a case in point. Similarly in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad* (IV.2ff), it (being) is supposed to reside within the space of heart, having the size of only a thumb. In the early reference, particularly in the *Brāhmaṇas* and *Upanishads*, it is also important to note that Yaksha has been presented both as the first-born (*prathamjam*) and self-born (*svayambhū*).

Another feature of the philosophical concept of the Yaksha is its co-occurrence or equivalence with other gods.³ The interchangeability of the term *Yaksha* is particularly of interest in the case of Brahman and, in several instances, the passages start with the myth of Yaksha who is eventually replaced by Brahman.⁴ In certain references, the case is just the opposite i.e., the passage starts with Brahman who is eventually replaced by Yaksha.⁵ This indicates beyond doubt, that in the final evolution of the concept of Yaksha, Brahman was included, and thus Brahman supplanted Yaksha almost completely.

In the *Atharvaveda*, Yaksha has been twice equated with the individual soul and it is thus conceived as Pure Consciousness⁶ i.e., *prajñānaghana*, 'mass of intelligence' or *viññānaghana*, 'mass of knowledge.' The *Atharvaveda* (X.8.43) describes "The lotus flower of nine doors (human body) covered with three strands (*guṇas*)—"what *ātmanavata* Yaksha is within it, that the Brahman knower knows." Again in the *Atharvaveda* (X.2.31-32) is the description—"Eight-wheeled, nine-doored is the impregnable stronghold of the gods; in that is a golden vessel, three-spoked, having three supports—what *soul-possessing* Yaksha there is in it, that verily, the knowers of the Brahman know."⁷ This idea of pure-consciousness in the *Atharvaveda*, with regard to the individual soul may be connected with the attributes of the *yaksha* of the *Kena Upanishad*. In the *Jaiminiya Upanishad Brāhmaṇa* again, Brahma-Yaksha enters the body of person and becomes the immanent spirit within him and other than that which it indwells.⁸ In this aspect Yaksha again occurs in the *Suttanipātā*⁹ where the phrase *ettāvātā yakkhassa suddhi* is found. In the *Mahānidāsa*,¹⁰ *yakkha* is explained as denoting *satva*, *nara*, *manussa*, *purusa*, *puggala*; *jīva* and *jantu*, and *suddhi* as purification. The phrase thus "denotes the individual soul in identifying *yakkha* with the true 'Self' (*attā*) in the man as distinguished from the empirical 'self' (*attā*) which is other than the self (*anattā*)."¹¹ These passages from Pali texts evidently represent reverberation of the Vedic psychology pertaining to the Yaksha.

In the Vedic period, thus, the philosophical impact of Yaksha is provided by references to the cosmogonical, psychological and adjectival contexts of the word and the figure and those sublime

¹AV, X.7.38; VIII.9.25-26.

²*Chāndogya Upanishad*, VI.2.1ff.

³*supra*, pp. 11ff; 16f.

⁴*Kena Upanishad*, III.15ff; BU., V.4.

⁵GB, I.1.1.f.; SB, XI.2.35.

⁶The idea of Soul as Pure Consciousness later found its expression in the Sāṅhya System of Philosophy.

⁷cf. also *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, I.27.2-3.

⁸Coomaraswamy, III, p. 235, quoting *JUB* (Sic. 24.1.2); 20.3; 23.7.IV.24.

⁹Fausböll, p. 478 and p. 75.

¹⁰II, p. 281.

¹¹Coomaraswamy, III, p. 235.

aspects of Yaksha which could not be sustained subsequently. It appears that on being supplanted by the concept of Brahma, the Yaksha made a diversion towards the *Bhakti* cult and found a ready place there.

Another significant aspect of the Yaksha theology is the belief in the great intelligence of Yaksha, which is attested by the *Mahābhārata*¹ in reference to the Yaksha and Yudhishtira. In the *Suttanipāta*² again, Suciloma, and Ālavaka are represented as inquisitive spirits eager to understand the problems of existence. A dialogue between Dharma-Yaksha and Yudhishtira in the *Mahābhārata* entailing metaphysical, spiritual and cosmogonic enquiries illustrates the intelligence of Yaksha. A commentary on the ethico-philosophical *yaksha-praśna*³ has been provided by Nīlakanṭha. This Commentary gives further proof that the whole discourse is impregnated with deep spiritual import. According to the *Commentary*,⁴ the Sun of the first question of Yaksha is, in fact, the unpurified soul which, according to the answer, is exalted by Brahman, *i.e.*, Veda or self-knowledge, through the practice of self-restraint and other virtuous qualities. Ultimately, the Soul is established in the Truth or Pure Knowledge. Nīlakanṭha has thus observed that the questions have been started for the purpose of ascertaining the truth about Ātman. The Upanishadic view in this connection is that the knower of self transcends sorrow. In the questions, Sun is Ātman, according to Nīlkanṭha, and thus the query as to 'what makes the Sun rise'⁵ is actually 'what makes Ātman rise.' The whole passage is extremely important in the light of the reference in the *Atharvaveda* where no other than Yaksha himself is the "individual soul."⁶ The dialogue again, according to Nīlkanṭha, has spiritual meaning, indicating the need for spiritual sacrifice for acquiring pure-knowledge. However, the Yaksha's questions are of diverse nature pertaining also to learning (III.297.24ff), the divine attributes of the Brāhmaṇas and of other castes and classes, the virtues and vices of human beings, the Vedic lore and cosmogonical enquiries. Among these the cosmogonical enquiries are interesting. Yudhishtira told the Yaksha in response to his query that the universe consists of air alone,⁷ that the sun lives alone, the moon takes birth anew, that the Earth is the largest field. Yudhishtira also tells the Yaksha in the same context that the world is covered with darkness, space is only water, the Sun is fire, the days and nights are fuel, the months and seasons constitute the wooden ladle and time is the cook, who is cooking all creatures in the vessel.⁸

All these answers were accepted ultimately by the Yaksha as correct. The whole parable is important as it provides a clue to the Upanishadic speculations on Yaksha. This Upanishadic Yaksha is known only to the knower of Brahma, and has been mentioned in cosmogonic contexts as well as in terms of the individual soul. No wonder, therefore, that Yudhishtira, the knower of *śrutis* could know not only the answers of the questions of the Yaksha, but ultimately him too.

Buddhist literature also has preserved equally important contexts. In the *Suttanipāta*, again the Yakkhas appear as inquisitive questioners, and put metaphysical questions to the Buddha. Instances of Suciloma, Ālavaka, Hemavata and Sāta may be cited in this connection. In reply to Ālavaka's questions, the Buddha says that 'faith is true wealth, that pursuit of Dharma brings happiness and Truth is Sweetest, while life is best.' He continues that it is by "faith that one crosses the stream of existence, by zeal, the sea, by exertion one conquers pain and by under-

¹III.296-97; for a similar story, *Devadhamma Jātaka*, I.25ff.

²Fausböll, pp. 29ff., and pp. 45ff.

³For the antiquity of such riddles, *supra*, p. 19.

⁴Nīlkanṭha's Commentary, *Mahābhārata*, III.313.45. ed. Ramchandra Shastri, Citraśala Press, Poona.

⁵cf. *MBh.*, ed. Ramchandra Shastri, III.313.45.

⁶*supra*, p. 23; cf. also *KU*, III.31ff.

⁷This view finds expression in the Greek philosophy in the thoughts of Anaximenes who could well have been a contemporary.

⁸cf. *BU*, I.2.4. regarding similar actions of Mrityu.

standing, one is purified."¹ Thus the Buddha inculcates his *Dhamma* whose understanding, it is said, makes one pass away without grief. In this dialogue which was started by the terrible Yaksha, the Buddha preaches his doctrine to influence him. This Yaksha is not like the intelligent Yaksha of the *Mahābhārata* who only elicited the true answers to his questions from Yudhishthira. Obviously, the reason of such difference is, firstly, the temptation to edify Buddhist faith, and secondly a change in the concept of Yaksha in the Buddhist system. Hence the fall of status of Yakkha here. The account of Suciloma Yaksha has the same theme. He starts by threatening the Buddha but ends up as this disciple. His enquiry leads to the preaching of the Buddhist doctrine that many human emotions like passion, hatred, disgust, delight originate in the body from desire and self 'like the shoots of the banyan tree.' 'Those who know it' said the Buddha to the Yakkha, 'cross over this stream of existence and come no more.'² These Buddhist Yakkhas may not be as intelligent as their Brahmanical counterparts but they are at least equally inquisitive.

Some of the Yakkhas have been mentioned in the Pali Buddhist works as *Sotāpāna*,³ while Yakkha Indaka has been described as a *puggalavādī*. Both these words are of great significance. The *Sotāpāna*, 'stream-winner,' is addressed to that lay-disciple of Buddhism who fully understands all the five-*indriyas*, 'senses.'⁴ Thus the *Sotāpāna* Yakkhas reflect the high degree of attainment reached by these spirits. Indaka's case is more interesting as he appears to be an animist,⁵ who wanted to know from the Buddha as to how the soul finds its material counterpart. The Buddha replied to him that the embryo evolves into its final shape by the laws of physical growth and not by soul's decree. He asked the Buddha how, if material is not the living soul, the soul possesses the body.⁶ The Buddha did not accept his view which amounts to materialism, and so preferred to side-track the issue by resorting to a physiological explanation. Similar views were held by Pāyāsī also. Pāyāsī is represented as a 'materialist,' denying the concept of any other world, rebirth, *Karman* and any independent soul-entity.⁷ This Pāyāsī is also known as Serissaka Yakkha⁸ or Serissaka *devaputta* of *Serisa* tree.⁹

In the Buddhist works,¹⁰ Hemavata and Sātagiri are the other Yakkhas who put questions to the Buddha. Hemavata enquired of the Buddha about the origin of the world, and was answered that the world has originated from and is afflicted with five pleasures of senses and mind. These Yakkhas are further told, in reply to their enquiry that through moral virtues the stream of existence is crossed.¹¹

All these passages reflect either the great intelligence of Yakshas or their inquisitiveness in regard to the ethical and existential problems of beings of the world. And the knowledge, thus imparted by the Buddha, makes them wiser.¹² This again is complementary to the concept of the intelligence of Yakshas. In any case, Yakshas are either the repositories of knowledge themselves

¹ *Sn.* (Hare), pp. 29ff.

² *Sn.*, II, 5, p. 47; cf. also the dialogue between Punnaka and Vidhurapandita, *Jātaka*, VI.148ff.

³ Suciloma, Khara; Suciloma is also represented as *Sakaḍḍāgāmi*, 'once-returner,' in the *Sāratthapakāsini*. For the explanation of both these words. cf. *Kathāvatthu* (ed. Taylor, A.C., PTS, London, 1894-1897), I, 2, pp. 70ff.

⁴ *S.*, V.193; 205.

⁵ *Puggalavādin*, *Sn. A.*, I.301. Reference to Indaka Yakkha is important as it reveals that in Buddhism a distinction has been made between the Yakshas who were laymen and those who positively belonged to a metaphysical school like *Puggalavādin*. As is well known, this particular view is refuted in details in the *Kathāvatthu*, I, pp. 15-69.

⁶ *Kindred Sayings*, I.262f; *Sn. A.*, I.301f; cf. also *DPPN*, sv. *Indaka*.

⁷ *D.*, II.316ff.

⁸ *Vv. A.*, pp. 331, 334, 342 etc.

⁹ *Vv. A.*, 331, 333.

¹⁰ *Sn. A.* (Hare), pp. 25ff.

¹¹ *Sn.* (Fausböll), I.9.

¹² *ibid.*, verse no. 176.

or they attain it through their intelligent enquiries. And in both these aspects, they are capable of great knowledge. To this concept of the supreme intelligence of Yakshas may also be added the Upanishadic concept that Yaksha itself was real and could be known only to the knower of Brahma.

Later, Yaksha was relegated to the lower ranks. In his philosophical and psychological contexts, he was replaced by Brahman.¹ One of the reasons for this transformation could be the development of his personality to befit the personal god of the *Bhakti* cult. One of the early references to the Yakshas as cult gods is found in the *Mahānidēsa* (p. 89) where Kubera, Avaruddhaka, Maṇibhadra and Pūrṇabhadra are mentioned. The Yaksha cult as a popular devotional system of the *Bhakti* order was polytheistic. Although monism may be discernible in Yaksha-worship in the later Vedic texts, such grand aspects do not survive in his case during the post-*Sūtra* period. The title *bhagavān*, which refers to the god as a personal deity, is addressed to Kubera² and Maṇibhadra. The exclusive worshippers of Maṇibhadra and Pūrṇabhadra have also been described.³ But a process of transformation and supersession is a recurrent feature of the Yaksha cult. It appears that, due to a lack of self-supporting force, the Yaksha cult wilted under the pressure of higher cult gods and sought for other avenues for its expansion. That explains the lack of a regular and articulated theistic background of the cult. From the position of Single, Primordial Deity, Yaksha became absorbed in the *Bhakti* cult. Later, another mode of Yaksha-worship, *viz.*, the Tantric mode, also made its appearance, and evoked great response.

This Tantric aspect of Yaksha seems to be directly connected with the early concept of Yaksha as 'magical power.'⁴ Yakshas had protective-functions even in the *Vedas*,⁵ probably, therefore, the idea of obtaining control over Yakshas came into being in the later Vedic period. In the Mathura School of art, a large number of statuettes of Yakshas belonging to the Kushana period are found. Their importance has been missed so far. In these figures Yakshas are sometimes represented as fierce-looking creatures (cf. nos. 721, 783, 2500, 2559, 2606) and it is likely that these were regarded as a kind of cult-object for worship. Similar small *Sālagrama* and the *āyāgapatas* of the Jain's are also known. The small statuettes of Yakshas might also have served the purpose of *abhicāra*, 'incantation.' This *tantric* aspect of Yaksha worship is two-dimensional; the first refers to the charms that warded off the Yakshas (*RV*, IV.3.13; V.70.4),⁶ the second refers to controlling them for fulfilment of wishes. Both these forms find ample substantiation.

¹The Vedic and Upanishadic Yaksha may have contributed greatly in the development of the concept of Brahman. In the process, he might have been replaced by Brahman, and at the conclusion of the process he probably revived in the folds of the *Bhakti*-cult.

²*Mbh.*, III.231.33; VI.7.21.

³*infra*, chapter 4.

⁴*ERE*, II, p. 809, *SV*, Yaksha (Brahmanism); also Bailey, H.W., *Indo-Iranian Journal*, II, p. 154.

⁵*AV*, XI.6.10.

⁶cf. ward-rune like *Ājānāṭiya Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*; also *VP*, p. 104 for power of *Śaivas* over Yaksha.

CHAPTER

3

Development of the Cult

THE vedic period witnessed the crystallisation of the material personality of Yakshas, as well as their attributes and their classification in the hierarchy of gods. But the period following it was more spectacular for the evolution of Yaksha's cult. Yakshas had come to stay permanently and could not be wiped out by any effort howsoever strong. The Buddha and Mahāvīra launched a crusade to eradicate belief in Yakshas. These demi-gods were subjected to the command of the Brahmanical cult-gods but, despite such concerted efforts to dislodge them, the Yakshas emerged unscathed from these conflicts and continued to draw massive support from the popular section where they had originally belonged. The exalted character of the Vedic 'Yakshas' was subdued, no doubt, but the diversity of functions now ascribed to them in various spheres was limitless. There hardly appears an aspect of life, during this period, over which the Yakshas were incapable of exerting themselves with benevolent or malevolent designs. The Yaksha cult now incorporated in its fold a large number of individual Yakshas, their cults, functions, provenances of worship, its modes, icons and a popular theology pertaining to the rituals, and a widespread system of belief. This is uniformly reflected by the literary accounts about the Yakshas.

A study of the orthodox and the heterodox literature makes it evident that while there is found a general uniformity about character and attributes of the Yakshas in different texts, there is some variance pertaining to the details. It requires, therefore, an unadulterated narration in which the sectarian bias and individual shades of the different religions could be faithfully retained. In the light of this, we may discuss the Yakshas and their cult as found in the orthodox and the heterodox texts.

ORTHODOX LITERATURE

The Epics

The Epics portray Yakshas as semi-divine beings, more or less divested of their past brilliance which asserted itself only by fits and starts. Their relegation to the lower ranks was an accomplished fact and, as demi-gods, they were linked with others of that class like Nāga, Gandharva, Deva, Guhyaka, Rākshasa and Apsaras. Their association with Rākshasas is very conspicuous and frequent. It is said that Yakshas and other demi-gods did not belong to the *Krita Yuga*¹ and

¹*Mbh.*, III.148.12.

they were brought into being through cosmic,¹ divine² or Rishic³ agencies of creation. The adjectival propositions of Yaksha recur during this phase. As such we have Dharma as Yaksha,⁴ or Vishṇu as *Bṛhad Yaksha*,⁵ or Krishna claiming himself to be the 'lord of treasure' amongst Yakshas.⁶ Yakshas are designated *puṇyajana* which is in the direct tradition of the *Atharvaveda*.⁷ A respectful reference is made to the Yakshas when it is said that the fallen warriors joined their ranks.⁸ These demi-gods are usually represented as benevolent creatures sometimes uncanny⁹ but the malevolence which became their almost essential feature in the Pali works does not seem to have enveloped them in the epics. They were gods of extreme beauty and brilliance, and those possessing such attributes were generally mistaken for Yakshas, for instance Yayāti,¹⁰ Nala,¹¹ Kirāta,¹² Hanumān,¹³ Damayantī,¹⁴ Gangā,¹⁵ and Sītā.¹⁶ Damayantī surpassed the beauty of even the Yakshīs.¹⁷

Evil-minded Yakshas are also known and Tātakā's case substantiates the point. She appears as a violent Yakshī who constantly pestered the people inhabiting Malāda and Kurūsha *Janapadas*; even the sages were not spared by her.¹⁸ But there were others who are represented as devoted creatures, sometimes even listening to the *Mahābhārata-kathā*.¹⁹ The reverent Yakshas waited upon Sūrya whose chariot they followed²⁰ or Brahmā whose assembly they inhabited.²¹ A similar praise is probably meant when he is described as the lord of Yakshas. They also worshipped Śiva on the Muñjavat.²² These otherwise reverent Yakshas did not know of the higher aspects of religion or God. For instance, they did not know of Nārāyaṇa or that whence he had sprung,²³ although they have definite associations with him.²⁴ An exception to it is, however, the context of the *yaksha-praśna*²⁵ where Dharma-Yaksha questions Yudhishtīra on various metaphysical and mundane problems, showing great wisdom.

Yakshas figure in the Epics as great fighters also, with their fight usually ending in their own defeat. One short chapter—*yaksha yuddhaparva*—in the *Āraṇyakaparva* has been devoted to their fight with Bhīma in the *Mahābhārata*. Bhīma vanquished them in many rounds of fight, killing a great number of them including Maṇimat who was a great friend of Kubera. Ultimately, the fight was stopped when Kubera intervened, telling the Pāṇdavas that Bhīma had relieved Maṇimat from some curse. The theatre of this fight is the vicinity of Kailāsa.²⁶ In the *Rāmāyaṇa*,

¹ *Mbh.*, I.1.33.

² *R.*, VII.4.12-13.

³ *Mbh.*, I.60.7. see the *pāṭhabheda*.

⁴ *ibid.*, III.298.10.

⁵ *ibid.*, XII.47.28.

⁶ *ibid.*, IV.32.23.

⁷ *ibid.*, XVIII.4.18.

⁸ *ibid.*, XVIII.4.18; 5.22.

⁹ *ibid.*, III.140-3ff; 170.48; VI.7.32ff.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, V.119.16.

¹¹ *ibid.*, III.52.16.

¹² *ibid.*, III.40.30.

¹³ *ibid.*, III.147.22.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, III.61.115.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, I.92.31.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, III.249.1-2.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, III.50.13.

¹⁸ *R.*, I.23.16f.

¹⁹ *Mbh.*, I.1.64.

²⁰ *ibid.*, III.3.31.

²¹ *ibid.*, II.11.36.

²² *ibid.*, XIV.8.4-8.

²³ *ibid.*, XII.47.11 according to the *pāṭhabheda*.

²⁴ *ibid.*, III.187.124.

²⁵ *ibid.*, III, Chapters 296ff.

²⁶ *ibid.*, III, Chapters 155-72.

Yakshas, led by Mañibhadra, fight against Rāvaṇa.¹ Suṇḍa and Upasuṇḍa are also said to have vanquished Yakshas (and Rākshasas) and taken away from them all their jewels.² This leads to another popular aspect of Yaksha worship, viz. riches. The Yakshas are regarded as stealing jewels.³ Kubera's mountains, such as Mandara and Meru, are made of gold.⁴ His palaces with doors and *prākāra*- 'enclosures,' are all of gold, and embedded with jewels.⁵ Although 'Kubera is chief of the Yakshas,' certain other Yaksha-chiefs like Pingala⁶ and Mañibhadra⁷ are also known from the Epics. It is strange that Nahusha at one place figures as the lord of Yakshas.⁸ Rākshasas also enjoyed their service. The command over Yakshas was bestowed upon Vibhishana. Similarly, millions of Yakshas waited upon Rāvaṇa.⁹ The Yaksha population was very large¹⁰ in which some names occur rather prominently. In this list, Amogha,¹¹ Sthūṇakarṇa,¹² Kimpurusha,¹³ Nalakūbara¹⁴ and Suketu¹⁵ deserve special mention. They figure as distinguished personages different from the general class of Yakshas, like the one enumerated in the *Sabhāparva*.¹⁶ Tātākā¹⁷ and her son Mārīci and a monkey-son of Kubera named Gandhamādana¹⁸ are known from the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

One aspect of the Yakshas that has sometimes been stressed is their so-called immortality. Agrawala has remarked that an "epithet of *yakshapura* is *aparājita*, the same as *amritenāvrita* and *avadhya*. This is exactly what the popular belief about Yakshas was, viz., that they had the power of averting death and bestowing immortal life on their worshippers. The symbol of their deathless nature (*Amrita*, *Avadhya*, *Adhushya*) was the nectar-flask held in the left hand of Yaksha images."¹⁹ In the *Rāmāyaṇa*,²⁰ *yakshattva* and *amarattva* are mentioned together as boons bestowed by gods. Here again a suggestion of the immortality of Yakshas seems to be implied. These instances, however, present only a partial picture for the Yakshas in the Epics are often described as dying or changing form. Bhīmasena killed countless Yakshas²¹; the reason given there is: expiation of the curse of Agastya to which the Yakshas were once subjected.²² Tātākā was killed by Rāma,²³ Sūryabhānu, the door-keeper of Kubera was put to death by Rāvaṇa²⁴ who also eliminated a large number of other Yakshas.²⁵ Sometimes Yakshas had to change their species due to some curse.²⁶ All these instances seem to show that Yakshas were not beyond

¹*Mbh.*, VII.15.1ff.

²*ibid.*, I.204.2.

³*ibid.*, XIV.56.23.

⁴*ibid.*, VI.7.8; XIII.20.7 and 28.

⁵*ibid.*, XIII.20.27 & 34; III.159.34ff; III.157.35ff.

⁶*ibid.*, III.221.22.

⁷*ibid.*, III.140.4.

⁸*ibid.*, V.11.6.

⁹*ibid.*, III.255.12; but cf. III.264.58f; III.259.25

¹⁰*ibid.*, III.158.28; III.140.5.

¹¹*ibid.*, III.221.7.

¹²*ibid.*, V, Ch. 192-93.

¹³*ibid.*, III.155.3.

¹⁴*ibid.*, III.258.15-16; 264.58f.

¹⁵*Rāmāyaṇa*, I.24.4.

¹⁶*Mbh.*, II.10.214-17.

¹⁷*Rāmāyaṇa*, I.24.7-8.

¹⁸*ibid.*, I.16.8; note 498, p. 117.

¹⁹Agrawala, *ACSB*, introduction IX-X.

²⁰III.10-91-92.

²¹*Mbh.*, III.157.42ff; also 158.

²²*ibid.*, III.158.45ff.

²³*Rāmāyaṇa*, I.23.29-30.

²⁴*ibid.*, VII.14.25-29.

²⁵*ibid.*, VII.14.

²⁶*ibid.*, I.24.11.

death, although they belonged to the class of celestial spirits. In fact, their span of life as well as their different calendar is mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*.¹ Therefore it is possible that *yakshattva* may refer only to the various attributes of Yakshas, such as were obtained by Ghaṭotkaca and others after their death, without any suggestion that immortality is one of them.

Such were the Yakshas in the epics. The material relating to their worship, however, is comparatively less, but it seems certain that their worship was achieving sufficient currency now. The epics refer to certain *tīrthas* attributed to some Yakshas and Yakshis. There was one at Kurukshetra² dedicated to a far-famed Yakshiṇī, probably Ulūkhala-mekhalā of the *Vāmana Purāna*. Another such *tīrtha* at Kurukshetra was dedicated to Arantuka, and a dip there brought merit equal to that of performing the *Agnishōma sacrifice*,³ or Arantuka gave the boon of obtaining gold.⁴ There were other *dvārapālas* of Kurukshetra, such as Macakruka and Tarantuka, whose worship was profitable and brought the merit of acquiring 100 cows.⁵ A Yakshiṇī of Rājagriha is also known, to whom sacrifices were offered everyday; and she relieved the sin of 'bhrūṇa-hatyā,' destroying foetus.⁶ Kubera, the chief of Yakshas, had himself hallowed a spot on the junction of the rivers Narmadā and Kāverī which eventually came to acquire the name of *Kauberā tīrtha*.⁷ Some idea of nature of the Yaksha temples can be obtained from the *veśma* or *bhavana* of Yaksha Sthūṇākārṇa in the *Mahābhārata*.⁸ In the hierarchy of cult gods, the Yakshas had a comparatively better status. It is said that the men of *rājasika* type worshipped Yakshas, just as those of *sāttvika* (pure), and *tāmasika* (dark) predilections worshipped Devas, Pretas and Bhūtas.⁹ The Yaksha cult had acquired great importance during the time of the Epics and Yakshas had their exclusive worshippers which was a rare privilege. The *Mahābhārata* refers to *Hairaṇyata Varsha* which was inhabited by *yakshāmugāḥ* 'the followers of Yakshas,' who were also wealthy, handsome, and endowed with great strength and cheerful.¹⁰ These traits correspond well with the Yakshas as well as offer a clue to their nature and attributes. Whether these Yaksha-followers were the adherents of any particular Yaksha is not clear. But certain Yakshas are known to have enjoyed special worship. Maṇibhadra, for instance, was the tutelary Yaksha of travellers and caravans.¹¹ Reference to the Yakshini of Rājagriha has been already made. The original name of Hārītī was Nandā, who was 'a Magadhan tutelary deity.'¹² Shah has attempted the identification of the Yakshini of Rājagriha with Nandā on the basis of the Jain sources. According to him, she took different forms as Revati and Shashṭī of the *Kāśyapa Saṁhitā*, Hārītī of the Buddhists, and Bahuputrikā, the wife of Maṇibhadra.¹³ The other Yakshas, who too found place among the worshipped-ones, were Macakruka, Tarantuka, and Arantuka, a reference to whose habitats on the fringes of Samantapancaka and Kurukshetra is found in the *Mahābhārata*.¹⁴ It is quite probable that they might have been worshipped in special

¹*Mbh.*, VI.7.32ff; XIII.20.22; III.154.15.

²*ibid*, III.81.19.

³*ibid*, III.81.42.

⁴*ibid*, III.81.171.

⁵*ibid*, III.81.7-178.

⁶*ibid*, III.82.90.

⁷*ibid*, IX.46.22-27.

⁸*infra*, chapter 5.

⁹*Mbh.*, VI.39.4.

¹⁰*ibid*, VI.9.6-8; cf. also *yakshasattva* in the *Kāśyapa Saṁhitā*, *lakshanādhyāya*, 28, p. 53. Men who are given to *nitya-dāna*, sleep, fastidiousness in wearing dresses and ornaments, drinking much liquor and taking much food, too much eroticism and happiness are grouped under *yakshasattva*.

¹¹*Mbh.*, III.62.123f.

¹²Coomaraswamy, I, p. 9.

¹³Shah, U.P., *JOI*, III, 1, p. 64. If so, it is probable that the temple was known as Gunasilā; cf. *Bhagavati Sūtra*, I.1.

¹⁴*Mbh.*, III.81.7.178.

temples provided for them. Falling down on one's knees and thus paying respect to Yakshas was a common practice.¹

On the whole, Yaksha cult had spread to the Himalayan region, Hairaṇvata Varsha, Kurukshetra, Magadha, Pāncāla, Malada and Kurūsha Janapadas and Lankā, according to the information preserved in the Epics. The eastern region, which is so commonly represented as the mainstay of the Yaksha worship in the Buddhist and Jain works, does not figure as prominently in the Epics; Magadha, however, finds mention as a centre of Yaksha-worship. The Yakshas' pantheon was not very large either, and there are mainly two important *yaksha-kulas* that find mention now: the first has Kubera with Riddhi² and Bhadrā³ as his wives and Nalakūbara⁴ as son. The second *kula* consists of Suketu,⁵ a pious Yaksha, who had Tātakā as his daughter who was married to Suṇḍa and had a son named Mārti.

The Purāṇas

These works, in their mythological narration, have ranked Yakshas as secondary deities and have much to reflect the assimilation and supersession of Yakshas by the higher cult gods. It is possible to gather an idea of their cult from the incidental references which are abundant but scattered in the *Purāṇas*. Yakshas were regarded as Devas⁶: 'semi-celestial beings,' and they frequently come in contact with various other demi-gods; with some of them they are related matrimonially. Certain Gandharva origins of the Yakshas are also described. A Yaksha assumed the form of a Gandharva: Vasuruci, and had intimate relations with Kratusthālī, the Apsarā, who bore him a Yaksha-son called Rajatanābha.⁷ Another of the Gandharva daughters, Suyaśā, as wife of Pracetas, gave birth to five Yakshas and four Apsarās.⁸ Yakshas are also represented as the offspring of Gaṇas of Mahādeva and called Nairriti folks.⁹ The origin of the Yaksharākshasa tribe is mentioned in some Purāṇas where it is said that they were born of Kapila (or Kampana) and Keśinī.¹⁰ Sometimes, Yaksha is mentioned in the list of Rākshasas.¹¹ In the *Vāyu Purāna*,¹² the marriage of Yaksha Rajatanābha with Bhadrā, daughter of the Daitya Anuhrāda is also referred to. Despite such intercourse between Yakshas and other demi-gods all these classes were not treated as equals. A hierarchy among them has been indicated in a sequence, starting from Gandharvas down to Guhyakas, Yakshas, Rākshasas and Piśācas. This hierarchy was based on the consideration of riches, appearance, life-span, strength, *dharma*, glory, intellect, austerity, learning and bravery.¹³ It is also said that because of the espousal of a different sets of actions at the time of their creation, they assumed different classes and came to stay in their respective forms as a result of those actions. This reflects the Puranic schematisation in respect of them; the demi-gods were bound to their class and change in their order was not possible.

In the *Purāṇas*, Yakshiṇīs were regarded as creatures of great beauty¹⁴ but the Yakshas are

¹*Mbh.*, XIV.64.9.

²*ibid.*, III.140.7; V.115.9.

³*ibid.*, I.198.6 (Gita Press edition).

⁴*ibid.*, III.258.15-16.

⁵*Rāmāyaṇa*, I.24.4ff.

⁶*VP*, Ch. 8, p. 106.

⁷*Br. P.*, III.7.60, 100.17; *VP*, Ch. 69, p. 276.

⁸*VP*, Ch. 69, 10-13, p. 270f; It is strange that sons of Suyaśā were Yakshas while daughters were Apsarās.

⁹*VP*, Ch. 69, p. 278.

¹⁰*supra*, p. 6.

¹¹*VP*, Ch. 69, p. 278, for a reference to Yaksha Akampana among Rakshasas.

¹²*ibid.*, Ch. 69, p. 151-52.

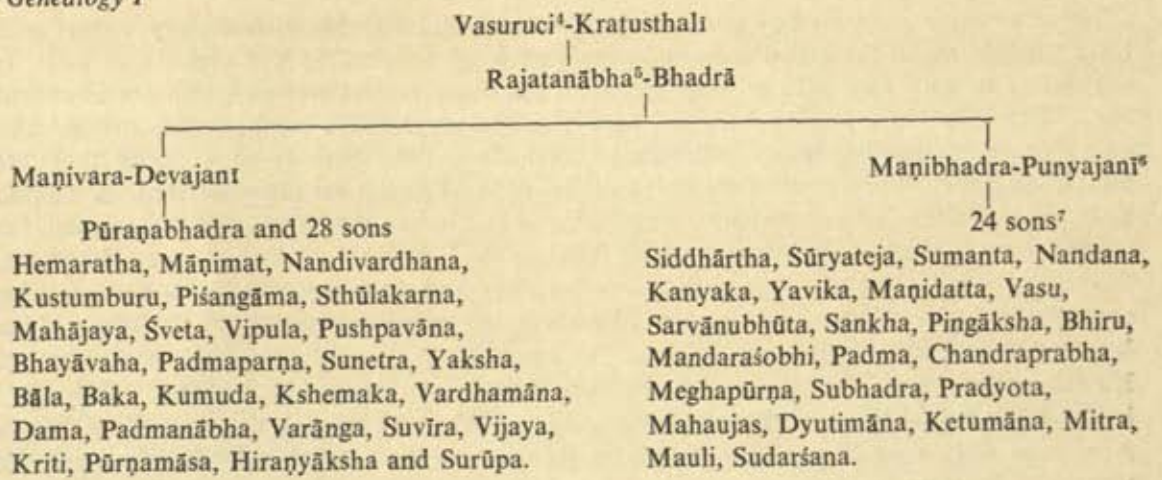
¹³*ibid.*, Ch. 69, p. 279.

¹⁴*ibid.*, p. 270. Kriśāngī and Viśālā, the daughters of Yaksha & Suyaśā.

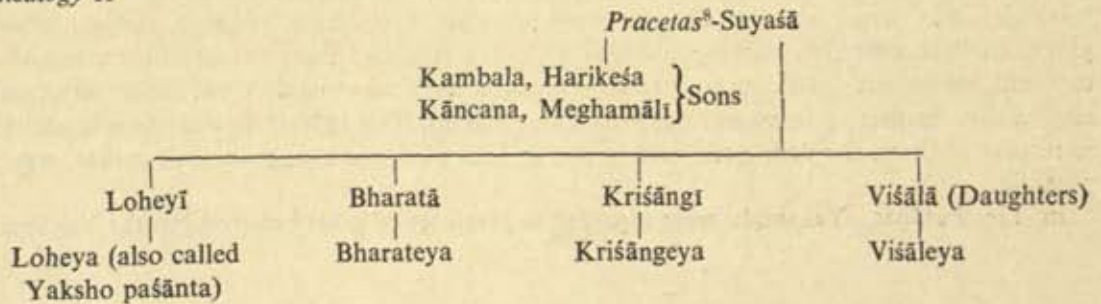
described invariably as creatures of great strength,¹ sometimes possessing very odd and grotesque features. Kubera, the son of Viśravas and Devavarṇinī, had also a rather queer combination of limbs. He, it is said, had the learning of Rishis, the form of Rākshasas, and the strength of Asuras. He is described as having a huge body with a small head, eight teeth, half-body in yellow complexion (*eka-pingala*), strange ear, one big hand and the other small. This grotesque appearance naturally earned him the name *Kubera*, 'of a weird body.' Another Yaksha is said to have had a hideous and ugly appearance, but he changed his shape and became a beautiful Gandharva, Vasuruci. Such Yakshas were generally evil-minded. They ruined *śrāddhas*² and took pleasure in such devilish activities. No wonder that they appeared as enemies of men.³

The Purāṇas, for the first time, present a systematic account of the small and big Yaksha families. The analysis of the description in the *Vāyu-Purāṇa* supplies the following information:

Genealogy I



Genealogy II



¹ibid, p. 270, 273 and 278.

²*Br. P.*, III.10.38; IV.2.26; XIV.4. etc. Although they worshipped *Pitris*.

³*BP*, IV. Ch. 9-10. The story of the Yaksha who killed Uttama, the brother of Dhruva, who, in turn, fought with them and killed a large number of Yakshas.

⁴Himself a Yaksha who married the Apsaras Kratusthali. *Br. P.*, III.7.60, 100.17; *VP*, 69.160.167.

⁵*Br. P.*, II.36, III.7.111; *VP*, 69.160, 167, 276. This Rajatanābha may be identical with that of *VP*, 69.151-2. Mañidhara or Mañivara or Mañibhadra is regarded as his son.

⁶Punyajani and Devajani are described as daughters of Kratusthali, *VP*, Ch. 69, p. 277.

⁷These 29 Yakshas are described as possessing beauty and ugliness in different cases. The name of Pūrṇabhadra separately appears in *MP*, 180.5-9, 82.99; *VP*, 69.12. Harikeśa is described as son of Pūrṇabhadra of *VP*, 69, p. 270 which however, describes him as the second son of Suyasā and Pracetas. They are all described as benevolent and pious by acts. *VP*, 69, p. 277.

⁸*VP*, Ch. 69, p. 270. Suyasā is described as the daughter of a Gandharva. Her sons were Yakshas, but the daughters were all Apsarās.

was the son of Pūrṇabhadra and the grandson of Ratna-(Maṇi)-bhadra. When Maṇibhadra died of old age, steadfast in his devotion to Śiva, he was succeeded by *mahātmā* Pūrṇabhadra. He lived happily with his wife Kanakakuṇḍalā in their beautiful palace on the mountain Gandhamādana. After long waiting and by the grace of Śiva, they had a son who was named Harikeśa. The son was like the full moon and had the beauty of Manmatha, the god of love and beauty. And he was by natural predilection, a devotee of Śiva. Even in play, he would carve Śiva-linga out of clay; he called his friends by the names of Śiva, would stay in the temple of Śiva whom he would worship day and night through all his senses of perception. Pūrṇabhadra did not like this, and wanted him to look after the family estate. In disgust Harikeśa left his father's home and, coming over to Kāśī, he settled at the *Avimukta* region for his penances under an Aśoka tree. He forgot his whole physical existence and worshipped only Śiva, and therefore Pārvatī requested the god to bless him. In consequence, Śiva appointed him his *daṇḍadhara*, 'attendant,' and authorised him to reward or punish people for their good or bad acts. He was named Daṇḍapāṇi; and Sambhrama and Udbhrama were made his associates. He was also authorised to liberate persons, dying at Kāśī, from their mortal existence; during their lifetime he ensured their material prosperity. He would punish sinners, and chase them out of Kāśī. He was settled towards the south of the city,¹ and it was essential for the inhabitants of Kāśī first to pay respects to him before doing obeisance to Śiva. Even sages like Skanda and Agastya, chanted the *yaksha-rajāshṭakam*, the eight verses composed in his praise. It is said that those who heard it were delivered from the cycle of existence.²

The supremacy of Sūrya and Viṣṇu over the Yakshas is also reported from several Puraṇas. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*³ gives the names of Yakshas and others who attended the chariot of the Sun in the different months of the year, in the course of its movement between the extreme northern and southern points. The Yaksha attendants in those months were as follows:

Rathakrit in *Caitra*, Rathaujas in *Vaiśākha*, Rathasvan in *Jyeshṭha*; Rathacitra in *Āshāḍha*, Śrotas in *Śrāvana*, Āpūraṇa in *Bhādrapada*, Susheteṇa in *Āsvina*, Senjit in *Kārttika*, Tārkshya in *Āgrāhayana*, Arishtaṇemī in *Paushya*, Ritajit in *Māgha* and Satyajit in *Phālguna*.

The *Matsya Purāṇa*⁴ tells us that in the cosmic form of Viṣṇu as Vāmana, the Yakshas became the nails of the great God. This was lean period of the Yaksha cult when other gods and their worshippers were trying to wrest from them the popularity that they enjoyed. The Puranic accounts are of great value in such a context.

CENTRES OF YAKSHA WORSHIP

The worship of Yaksha was probably in vogue in the Madhyadeśa, Kurukshetra and Varānasi. The *Vāmana Purāṇa*, especially, has preserved the elaborate accounts of the *Kurukshetra mahātmya* connected with its various *tīrthas* to which pilgrimage was made. It has been surmised that the boundaries of Kurukshetra were determined by the guardian Yakshas whose shrines were situated on the different spots hallowed by them in the ancient city.⁵ The four *dvārapāla* Yakshas

¹The temple of Daṇḍapāṇi, is now towards the north of the city of Varanasi. Another temple, of Yaksha—Vināyaka is reportedly situated somewhere near the famous Vishwanath lane, a busy shopping centre of Varanasi now. There was some clash over the title to this temple which was ultimately settled in court.

²Agrawala, V.S., *Matsya Purāṇa, A Study*, p. 280, points to the existence of a spot even today known as Harasu Brahma in the village Chainpur 5 miles from Bhabua in Arrah district. There is a conical image worshipped on Māgha—Shukla 9 in the year when a big fair is held. Agrawala also identified some Yaksha shrines in the present city of Varanasi and showed the wide prevalence of Yaksha cult there since olden times, p. 280; cf. also Moti Chandra, *BPWM*, III, pp. 53ff.

³II.10, p. 30f.

⁴246.54.

⁵Agrawala, V.S., *Vāmana Purāṇa*, p. 47.

mentioned in the work are *Arantuka*,¹ *Tarantuka*² (or *Rantuka*³), *Kapila* along with his consort *Ulūkhālamekhalā*⁴ and *Pancaka*.⁵ The shrine of these four *dvārapālas* of Kurukshetra were situated in *Prithūdaka* (modern Pehoa) near the *Sannihita* pond, in *Taraori* near *Karnal*, near *Pundarika* and *Muñjavat* and probably at a place named *Jakhala* to the west of the Kurukshetra region.⁶ All these *Yakshas* were respected and visited by the pilgrims, but the *Yakshini Ulūkhālamekhalā*, had a comparatively dominant status. Her full story is preserved in the *Vāmana Purāṇa*.⁷ We are told that her shrine was situated near *Muñjavat* at a spot called *Pushkara tīrtha*. The pilgrims stayed there during only the day-time, and saved themselves from any nightly misadventure. She was fed with oblations of flesh and blood. *Rantuka* (or *Tarantuka*?) the second *dvārapāla* of Kurukshetra, was pleased if one made offerings to *Brāhmanas*.⁸ In the episode of *Harikeśa*⁹ it is related that the offerings to *Yakshas* consisted of flesh and blood, which were the special ingredients of the food of the *Yakshas* who were, by nature, evil.

Such details coupled with the Puranic notices of images and attributes of *Yakshas* hardly leave any doubt as to the existence of the temples and images of the different *Yakshas*. Their shrines, however, were not tolerated by the *Śaivites*, which is clear from the *Matsya Purāṇa* in the legend of the birth of *Vāstu*.¹⁰ The relevant portions of the description tell us of *Rudra*'s encounter with and killing of *Andhakāśura*, subsequent to which another *Yaksha* or *Bhūta* of terrific form appeared from the brow of *Śiva* and wanted to devour the whole world. *Śiva*, on his part, called him *Vāstu* and asked him to live with other gods at a place of his own choosing. *Vāstu*, however, was required to occupy the site, lying with his face downwards,¹¹ and receive for his food the offerings made at the time of *Vāstu śānti* and *Vāstu Pūjā*.¹² The implications of the story are interesting and present the effort of taming of *Yakshas*, and acceptance of his shrines as "models of *Rudra-Śiva* shrines and later on of other gods and goddesses, following the same tradition."¹³

The main note of the *Purāṇas* regarding *Yakshas* is their supersession by *Śaivism* and other faiths. Despite that fact, it continued to flourish; and this is shown by the references to their shrines, and worship, their large families and the terror that they exercised over the minds of people. These aspects of *Yaksha* and his cult are amply borne out by Puranic descriptions. These demi-gods evoked so much awe and fear that their worship could not have been discontinued unless of course this basic attitude of the masses towards them was altered. That, however, was too difficult to achieve.

HETERODOX LITERATURE: BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE

Assimilation and Supersession

Yakkhas by name or by class are much more familiar creatures in the Pali records of the *Buddhists* and a notable difference in them from the earlier or contemporary *Brahmanical* works is that they contain portrayal of the *Yakkha* in the *Buddhist* perspective and its popular form.

¹ *Vāmana Purāṇa*, 34.11.

² *ibid*, 22.60; 34, 24; *Mbh.*, III.81.171.

³ *ibid*, 34.24; *Mbh.*, III.81.178.

⁴ *Agrawala*, V.S., *op. cit.*, p. 48; *Mbh.*, III.81.19, refers only to *Yakshī lokaparīśrutā*.

⁵ *Vāmana Purāṇa*, 22.60. He is *Mācākruka* in *Mbh.*, III.81.178 and *Rantuka* in *Vāmana Purāṇa*, 35.37; cf. *Agrawala*, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

⁶ For these identifications see *Agrawala*, *op. cit.*, p. 48f also pp. 46 and 65.

⁷ 34. 37-48; *Agrawala*, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

⁸ *Vāmana Purāṇa*, 34. 24.

⁹ *MP*, 180. 9-10. The whole idea of opposition to *Śiva* is contradictory to the *Yaksha*-worship. Although *Yakshas* also abhorred such supremacy in some cases generally, they are found serving *Śiva* in various ways.

¹⁰ *MP*, Ch. 252.

¹¹ *MP*, 353, 16.

¹² *ibid*, 252.17-18.

¹³ *Agrawala*, V.S., *Matsya Purāṇa, A Study*, pp. 342-44. *Agrawala* takes *Bhūta* as a synonym of *Yaksha*.

Yakkha worship had considerably increased during this period. It is worthy of note that most of the Yakkhas of the Pali canons are not identical with the *Mahābhārata* or Purāṇic Yakshas; they are additional. Moreover, Pali works multiply the centres of Yakkha-worship to an extent unknown till then. Because the largest number of such centres emerged from eastern India, this region has been suggested as the place of origin of this cult.¹

In the Buddhist Pali and Sanskrit texts, the Yakkhas or Yakshas figure as a class or as individual demi-gods of great might. Many Yakkha chiefs also are mentioned; for example, fortyone Yakkha-chiefs in the *Āṭānāṭiya Sutta*² and twentyeight chiefs in the *Sutta Nipāta*.³ Some Yakkhas, however, figure in pairs, viz., Hemavata and Sātagiri,⁴ Suciloma and Kharaloma,⁵ while others are mentioned as couples, such as Paṇḍaka and Haritā⁶ or Cetiya and Jutindhara.⁷ Some groups of Yakkhas with a train of several thousands of Yakkha-followers are also discernible; for instance, seven Yakkha guards of Jotika *seṭṭhī* of Rājagaha⁸ are mentioned; their names are Yamakoli, Uppala, Vajirabāhu, Vajira, Kasakandha, Kaṭattha and Disāpamukha.

The Yakkhas are not always a degenerate class of demi-gods; several other applications of the word Yakkha are found in the Buddhist texts and commentaries. The word is sometimes an appellative applied to the Buddha⁹ and Sakka.¹⁰ The *Vimānavatthu* commentary (333) explains that the term is applied to Sakka, four regent gods, the followers of Vessavana and to *Purisa* 'individual soul.' Sakka seems to be Indra, for he is known to have destroyed Asuras.¹¹ A Yakkha of the same name is mentioned in the *Samyutta Nikāya*.¹² It has been said that the *Purisa* also is designated *Yakkha*; and it is explained that this is an exceptional use of the term in the philosophical sense, meaning 'soul.'¹³ An interesting definition of Yakkha is found in the *Niddesa*¹⁴ which explains Yakkha by *sata, nara, mānava, posa, puggala, jīva, jagu, jantu, indagu, and manuja*.¹⁵ *Yakkhattam* is also referred to in the Buddhist Pali works.¹⁶ These expressions and nuances are helpful towards a better understanding of the Yakkhas before they metamorphosed into demi-gods. It is clear, therefore, that in a restricted sense, some personages or classes were designated as Yakkhas; and on the whole, *yakkha* was an appellation, and referred to a class of demi-gods,

¹cf. Chanda, R.P., *MAI*, 30, p. 7. This suggestion seems erroneous for two reasons; firstly, as eastern India was principally the field of Buddha's action, the Buddhist works focus attention on that region. Those Buddhist missionaries who went elsewhere found Yakkha worship prevalent there, and they tried to eradicate it. (cf. Himalayan Yakkhas were converted when Majjhantika preached to Aravāla, *Mh. V*, XII.21). Secondly, Pāṇini's references to Yakshas may indicate towards prevalence of this cult in the Northwestern region and *Mbh.*, speaks of Yaksha-worship in Kurukshetra and Himalayas etc. In view of these, eastern India can hardly be regarded as the place of origin of the Yaksha cult which was eclectic.

²*D*, II, p. 205f.

³1.9 and commentary, p. 197. The numbers are conventional. *MA*, II.244 refers to only Maṇi, Maṇicara, Digha, Serissaka and Parajana by names although twentyeight chiefs are intended there.

⁴*Sn.*, I.9.

⁵ibid, II.5.

⁶*Mh. V*, XII.21.

⁷*Mh. V*, commentary, p. 289.

⁸*Dh. A.*, III.321.

⁹*M*, I.386.

¹⁰*M*, I.252, also *MA*, II.277; *Jātaka*, V.73, III.68ff; *DA*, I.264.

¹¹*Jātaka*, V.80.

¹²*S*, I.206.

¹³*DPPN* and *PED*, sv. Yakkha.

¹⁴*M. Nid.*, II.282.

¹⁵There were many interesting references in these canons which identify Yakkha with ethnic groups in the Vijaya legends (*Mh. V*, VII.32) Prince Vijaya finds that the aborigines of Ceylon are Yakkhas, having their chief cities at Sirisavatthu and Lankāpura. These Yakkhas were extirpated by the Prince. The Veddas of Ceylone still regard themselves as the descendants of Yakkhas, cf. Coomaraswamy, I, p. 13; for other references see *ibid*, p. 4 fn. 3, Malalasekera, *DPPN*, sv. Yakkha, says that in all probability the Yakkhas of (Ceylon) were originally considered as humans but later they came to be confused with the non-humans.

¹⁶*D*, II.57; *A*, II.39; *Pv. A*, p. 117.

and sometimes included human beings too. Such uses of the term *yakkha* seem to be rather rare and of an exceptional nature; and usually the word designates a class of being that falls in the general category of demi-gods. There are at the same time, instances of Yakkhas designated otherwise, such as *deva*,¹ or *devaputta*.²

Yakkhas in the texts fall under the category of *Bhummadevatā*, *Amanussā*, and *naivāsikā* (local genii). In the *Jātakas*, the Bodhisattva is often born as a tree-spirit³ and often called a *devatā*, the Buddhist tendency being to restrict the designation *yakkha* to demons, although at many places *devatā* and *yakkha* are synonymous.⁴ The two are sometimes equated⁵ but sometimes distinguished too.⁶ Usually they form a kindred group with the demi-gods such as Devas, Rākkasas, Dānavas Gandhabbas, Kinnaras and Mahoragas.⁷ But sometimes a hierarchy is suggested in which they rank below Petas.⁸ Elsewhere⁹ they rank between Manussa and Gandhabba.¹⁰ The Yakkha concept is evidently permeated with animistic beliefs, and the Yakkhas appear as spirits although not disembodied, living in the trees, lakes, deserts and seas. Incorporating animistic beliefs as the Yakkhas do, it is found that they are endowed with the traits of spirits. The material regarding Yakkhas, as preserved in the early Buddhist works helps us to evolve a typology¹¹ pertaining to their nature. So far, only two types of Yakkhas are prominently noticeable, viz., *beneficent* and *maleficent*. But Pali texts seem to indicate certain other types, designated here as *converted*, *neutral* and *ambivalent*, in addition to the already existing types.

The Converted Yakkhas

The case of conversion relates generally to the malevolent Yakkhas, and it marks a new stage of rivalry with Buddhism which was trying to eradicate the Yaksha-worship. It is observed that Buddha converted some Yakkhas, made others ineffective, and ignored still other Yakkhas who were rather powerful. In most cases, those Yakkhas who were entirely won over have been named e.g., Suciloma; in some cases, those who were rendered ineffective have also been named, e.g., Avaruddhaka. Sometimes this ineffectiveness lasted as long as the Buddha was present, as in the case of Ālavaka and Avaruddhaka. But those Yakkhas who were insurmountable, have been generally ignored and not named. The Buddha seems to have been at a constant war against them and he obstructed and deprecated the fetiches¹² and rituals connected with the Yakkha-worship which will become clear from the instances of Ajakalāpaka, Ālavaka, Makhādeva etc., references to whom will be found at relevant places. The attitude of Yakkhas towards the Buddha, in accordance with this crusade, was of different types; some appear as his enemies and some as friends and counsellors. In the *Ājānāṭiya Sutta*, Vessavana is described as telling that generally 'Yakkhas neither believed in the Buddha nor in his teachings; they were generally of middle or inferior ranks and this rank also contained the believing Yakkhas. The reason for this disbelief was in the very nature of the code of Buddha which professed abstinence from killing, theft,

¹S, I.205.

²Pv. A, 113 and 139. VVA, p. 333.

³Jātaka, I.247, 253 etc.

⁴ibid, III.96.

⁵ibid.

⁶PV, II.9.11.

⁷Paramatthadīpanī, II, p. 56; Jātaka, III.97.

⁸Pv. A, 55. Some of the Petas are called Yakkhas, cf. Pv. II.9.

⁹A, II.88.

¹⁰In the *Gītā* a different hierarchy is suggested in which Yakshas are regarded as superior to Pretas and Bhūtas (cf. *Mbh.*, VI.39.4).

¹¹Masson, Joseph, S.J., *La Religion Populaire dans le Canon Buddhique Pali*, Louvain, 1942, pp. 126ff, refers to "Trois aspects des Yakkha; (1) L' aspect (general) des etre qui de 'passent l' humain, qui sont doues des proprietes surnaturelles; (2) une classe (speciale) des: demi-deux ni plus ni moins malfaisants que d'autres un certain textes; (3) une (qualification) de celte classe comme plutot malfaisante.

¹²J, II.12f., sneezing and the deprecation of the warding off formulae by the Buddha.

inchastity, lying and intemperance and was, therefore distasteful to them.¹ Sometimes the Yakkhas did not hesitate in trying to kill eminent Buddhist disciples, their respectful attitude towards the Buddha notwithstanding. The *Udāna*² contains a story where a Yakkha wished to kill Sāriputta but was restrained by the other Yakkhas. Ālavaka³ and Suciloma⁴ are said to have threatened the Buddha and were pacified only when he answered their metaphysical questions properly.⁵ Besides these inimical Yakkhas, there is the instance of Vessavana who had a sympathetic attitude towards the Buddha,⁶ or Sakka, who counselled the Buddha while he was at Gijjhakūṭa, that he should not spend his time teaching others.⁷ In many cases the Yakkhas are "fallen angels," they attended the Buddha's teaching so that they could attain higher sphere of existence.⁸ Often, on the other hand, malevolent and frightful Yakkhas were tamed by the Buddha or his disciples following which they adopted the Buddhist way of life. Whether this conversion was always final, is difficult to say, for usually with the taming of a particular Yakkha the story ends, and the converted creature is supposed to have lived a pious life ever after. Another remarkable point regarding conversion is the change from bad to good nature. Cases of the opposite kind are not found. It is clear that there were both good and bad Yakkhas and the Buddha made a constant endeavour towards reforming the bad Yakkhas; good ones seem to have already accepted his creed, or, those who accepted his creed were regarded as good. But the taming of Yakkhas was not an easy task for the Buddha who had to bear the brunt of their tussle and defiance. We shall discuss here some typical examples of conversion of Yakkhas.

Ālavaka figures as one of the most prominent Yakkhas in the Buddhist literature. It is said that he defied the Buddha when the Great Being interfered with the rituals and offerings connected with his worship. He tried to fatigue the Buddha by asking several questions, which were, however, all properly answered.⁹ The entire story has been grouped by Watanabe¹⁰ under similar other stories, entitled Kalmāshapāda stories and its three salient features corresponding with the story are (i) cannibalism of the Yakkha, (ii) capture of king and his promise of sacrifice to Yakkha, (iii) conversion. Ultimately this Yakkha was won over by Buddha, and brought to the service of Buddhism, in which form his name occurs in the list of fortyone Mahāyakkhas in the *Āṭānāṭṭiya Sutta*, who protected the followers of the Buddha from danger from the evil-minded Yakkhas. The other converted Yakkhas mentioned in the Pali texts are, for instance, Suciloma,

¹ *D*, III.195.

² *IV.4; Ud. A.*, p. 244. *Paramatthadīpanī*, III.103.

³ *Sn. A.*, I.227ff, *Kindred Sayings*, p. 275f.

⁴ *S*, I.207f; *Sn. A.*, I.303f.

⁵ Some Yakkhas become Sotāpanna; cf. Haritā—Paṇḍaka and their 500 sons (*Mh. V*, XII.21), Khara (*Sn. A.*, I, 301ff), Janavasabha (*D*, II.207); Some have been described as *Puggalavādī*, 'animist,' such as Indaka who questioned the Buddha as to how the soul finds its material counterpart. The Buddha in reply described how the embryo evolved up to its final shape by the laws of physical growth and not by a soul's fiat. (*S*, I.206). Buddhaḥosha calls the Yakkha *Puggalavādī* (*SA*, I.300); Similarly Pāyāsī, also known as Serissaka—*devaputta* has been designated *Puggalavādī*. He had held the view that there was no world other than this, no fruits of action and no rebirth, but he was convinced otherwise by Kumara—Kassapa, *PV*, IV.3; *Vv. A.*, pp. 331-32. These instances give an idea about the philosophical concept of the Yakkha theology.

⁶ *Āṭānāṭṭiya Sutta*, *D*, III.95ff.

⁷ *S*, I.206. The Buddha, however, replied that he was doing it out of sympathy and compassion., *ibid*, also *DA*, I.302; which adds that the Yakkha belonged to the faction of Māra.

⁸ *S*, I.209. (Piyankaramātā), *S*, I.210; *SA*, I.310f; (Punabbasumātā). Many thousand Yakkhas attended the preaching of *Mahāsamaya Sutta*.

⁹ *Kindred Sayings*, I, pp. 275ff; *Sn. A.*, I.217.40., *SA*, I, 326f. In *Sn. A.*, I.228 it is said that these questions were learnt from Kassapa Buddha by Ālavaka's parents who taught them to their son Ālavaka; to guard against forgetting them, he had the questions and answers written on a gold leaf with red paint and stored it in his palace.

¹⁰ *JPTS*, 1909-10, pp. 240ff.

Khara,¹ Ajakalāpaka² (*Ādyakālaka?* Hultzs), Kumbhakaṇṇa³ and a nameless Yakkha who haunted a hall on the outskirts of Benaras, and devoured the casual inmates boarding there, if they sneezed and did not utter the words 'long life' or 'long life to you.' The Bodhisattva, who was born as the son of a trader, Gagga, later established him in five precepts and the Yakkha was appointed a tax-gatherer in Kāśī.⁴ The story of Suciloma is also interesting. The Buddha is said to have been at the *taṃkitamañca* in Gayā, which was the haunt of this Yakkha. Suciloma challenged the Buddha and threatened to throw him beyond the Ganges. He bent his needle-haired body against the Buddha who, in turn, bent his own body to the opposite direction to avoid the former's defiling touch. Subsequently, Suciloma was converted when he asked questions regarding the origin of various persuasions and the Buddha answered him. Suciloma has also been represented as the lay-follower of Kassapa-Buddha and a regular visitor of the *Vihāra* for hearing the *dhamma*. He is described as needle-haired; he developed such hair because he had done an act of indiscipline in the Saṃgha.⁵

Some other malevolent Yakkhas are also mentioned in the Buddhist works, who were converted to Buddhist precepts by the disciples of the Buddha,⁶ the Bodhisattva⁷ or even by the prominent kings⁸ of ancient times. There is a story in the *Mahāvamsa* (X.53ff), regarding the Yakkhinī Cetiya who was vanquished by Prince Paṇḍukābhaya. This Yakkhinī later helped the prince in slaying his enemies.⁹

In some cases, however, Yakkhas seem to have defied the Buddha, and their evil designs were held in abeyance as long as the Buddha was present in person. An instance may be cited here, which relates to Avaruddhaka Yakkha who got permission from Vessavana to devour a boy Dighāyu when the boy was dead. The Buddha helped his parents by instructing them to build a pavilion outside the door of their house where monks recited *parittas*, 'warding rune,' for seven days. On the seventh day, Avaruddhaka came to take away the child but could not do so owing to the presence of the Buddha on the spot.¹⁰ This incident shows that where the Buddha could not convert a particular Yakkha, he rendered him ineffective by his great power. This Yakkha, however, was not converted, although usually when such confrontations occurred they were converted. Some Yakkhas found the teachings of the Buddha so promising that they exerted themselves towards the stage of becoming *Sotāpanna*, 'stream-winner.' Prominent among them are Khara and Suciloma,¹¹ Janavasabha,¹² Haritā, her consort Paṇḍaka and their five hundred sons.¹³

In the types under discussion here, the converted Yakkhas figure rather prominently. Yakkhas of this category should not however, be confused with those Yakkhas, described frequently as attending the Buddha or the other monks instinctively and following a moral path. On the whole, it appears that Yakkhas were tamed and converted either by the Buddha or Bodhisattva

¹*S.*, I.207f; *Sn. A.*, I.305.

²*Udana*, I.7, and *Commentary*, pp. 64ff; *DPPN*, sv., Ajakalāpaka.

³*Bu.*, XII.5; *Bu. A.*, p. 198f. His story is similar to that of Ājavaka and he was brought under control by Sumedha Buddha. For other similar stories cf. *ibid*, pp. 125ff (Nārada Yakkha), pp. 253ff; (Naradeva Yakkha), and *Rasavāhinī*, pp. 19ff.

⁴*Jātaka*, II.11ff.

⁵*Sn. A.*, I.301.

⁶*Mh. V.*, XII.21. Majjhantika converted Paṇḍaka and Haritā, and their five hundred sons. These, however, were not violent.

⁷*Jātaka*, II.11ff; I.137ff.

⁸cf. Rattākhi Yakkha who was converted by the king of Ceylon; his story is given in *Mh. V.*, XXXVI.82ff. For a Lohitākkha Yakkha, cf. *VVA*, p. 224.

⁹cf. Coomaraswamy, I, pp. 20ff.

¹⁰*Dh. A.*, II.237-8. Vessavana on one hand grants Yakkhas the permission to eat corpses and men and, on the other, tells the Buddha how to keep them under control. cf. *D.*, III.204f.

¹¹*Sn. A.*, I.305; They became *sotāpanna* at the end of the Buddha's sermon.

¹²*D.*, II.205ff. He is represented as a *sotāpanna* who wants to be a *sakaḍḍgāmi*.

¹³*Mh. V.*, XII.21.

or in some cases even by the kings. Usually they gave up their wickedness after such conversion.¹ Some even helped the followers of the Buddha² but there were some who defied conversion to the end and resisted the embrace of Buddhism. It is interesting to note that in those cases where the Buddha or Bodhisattva could not achieve success, they only liberated the victim of the Yakkha. In these instances usually, the proper names of Yakkhas have not been mentioned and a reference is found only to their class.³ This was the usual practice but not a rule, and an exception to it is found in case of the Yakkha in the *Gagga Jātaka*, who is not named although he was vanquished and made harmless by the Bodhisattva.

THE MALEVOLENT YAKKHAS

Closely allied with the type of the converted Yakkhas are the malevolent Yakkhas in the Pali works. Often they are found deriving pleasure by hurting human beings. There was a Rattākhi Yakkha whose very sight produced the *jarāroga*. This affliction caused the redness of eyes resulting in death of the victim whereupon the Yakkha devoured him. After his conversion, it was arranged that he would receive offerings at every village,⁴ and keep peace. Similarly Ālavaka also used to put questions to the ascetics who were stranded in his glittering palace, and he would drive those ascetics mad (by entering into their heart) who failed to answer question relating to faith.⁵ The malevolence of Yakshas is exhibited in their food habits, for they took pleasure in consuming human flesh and blood.⁶ Ajakalāpaka was one such Yaksha.⁷ The *Buddhavaṃsa Commentary* mentions Nārada, Naradeva and Kumbhakaṇṇa, the Yakkhas, who were all fearful to behold, and evil in pursuits.⁸ Ālavaka,⁹ Avaruddhaka,¹⁰ and Kharadāthika¹¹ were of a similar disposition. There was also a Yakkha Punnakāla who spread in Abhayapura (Ceylon) a pestilence called *Pajjāraka*.¹²

Sometimes, the malevolence of the Yakkha was averted through certain charms and other aids. *Āṭṭānāṭṭiya Sutta* has been regarded as one of the *parittas*, which warded off the perils created by Yakkhas. It is said that in order to save the disciples of the Buddha from Yakkhas in the remote parts of the forest, Vessavana told the Buddha the *Āṭṭānāṭṭiya* wardrune (*rakkhā*). In the *Sutta* fortyone Yakkha-Chiefs have been mentioned who should be invoked in the event of such danger. As Malalasekera has pointed out, these fortyone gods "are mentioned as a kind of appendix or afterthought . . . in what are apparently mnemonic doggerels." In Ceylon it is still recited in times of illness to ward off the evil spirits.¹³

THE BENEVOLENT YAKKHAS

Not all the Yakkhas were maleficent. The Buddhist records have portrayed them also as bene-

¹cf. Suci'oma.

²cf. Alavaka.

³*Jātaka*, II.89ff; IV.304ff.

⁴*Mh. V*, XXXVI.82ff. *Divyāvadana*, pp. 74, 76, refers to a Lohitāksha Yaksha who was fierce and a killer.

⁵*Sn. A*, I.228.

⁶In this respect they resemble with the Vedic Piśāca; for the latter, cf. Macdonell, *VM*, p. 164.

⁷*Udāna Comm.*, p. 64, explains the etymology as follows; (i) *aje kalāpetvā bandhanena ajakoṭṭahāsena saddhitiṃ baliṃ paṭicchati noannathā*, (ii) *kecipana ajake viyasatte lāpetiti ajakalāpako ti*, *DPPN*, sv. Ajakalāpaka.

⁸pp. 125ff, 253ff, 196ff, respectively.

⁹*Sn. A*, I.217ff.

¹⁰*Dh. A*, II, p. 237.

¹¹*Jātaka*, I.93 (Hindi Sahitya Sammelana ed.); *Bu. A*, 143. He is said to have first asked for the children of the Bodhisattva and devoured them before the Bodhisattva's eyes.

¹²*Mh. V*, XV.63, *Comm.*, 349; *Pajjāraka* has been defined as *unhāsīsabadha*. The event of this Yakkha belongs to the time of Kakasandha Buddha.

¹³*DPPN*, sv. *Āṭṭānāṭṭiya Sutta*.

volent creatures whose grace manifested itself in various areas of human activity.¹ Their protective functions are often dwelt upon. The *Mahāvamsa*² tells of Yakkha Kāḷavela who saved the prince Paṇḍukābhaya during his pre-natal and infant stages from the evil machinations of his uncle who had his eye set on the prince's throne. Sometimes, the whole community benefited from the protective guardianship of Yakkhas. We have the instance of Kuṇḍa who found a resort in a forest near the Koliyana village of Kundiya, and protected the forest.³ The lives of merchants and travellers were often endangered by the evil inclinations of Yakshas and they invoked their help and sometimes got it.⁴ As Yakshas were capable of guarding the human beings from perils they were accepted as tutelary spirits of persons or towns.⁵

Sometimes individual Yakkhas are represented as helping human beings in various forms. It is interesting to observe that if Yakkhas as a class are the enemies of human beings, individual Yakkhas are more often either benevolent or converted to goodness; that is to say, that the Buddhist works clearly distinguish between those Yakkhas who are simply described as Yakkha and those who have proper names. Some prominent Yakkhas found helping human beings are as follows: Kuveṇī (*Mh. V, VII.36*) helps prince Vijaya to kill the invisible Yakkhas of Lankāpura and Sirīsavatthu as has been already mentioned. The Mahāyakkhas, fortyone in number and all named in the *Āṭṭhānāyika Sutta*, are always willing to help holy men and the followers of the Buddha, and they constantly endeavoured to prevent wicked Yakkhas from hurting them or erring Yakkhas from doing evil.⁶ Some Yakkhas appear as the teachers of good morals.⁷ They are willing to save the prospective sinners from committing evil.⁸ There are the Yakkhas who helped human beings to serve the Buddhist faith. In several other instances, the Yakkhas are found coming in contact with human beings, solely with the intention of giving help. For instance, in the *Therīgāthā Commentary* (39) we find the example of Kumbhira Yakkha who transported Bimbisāra to the courtizan of Ujjenī, or the Yakkha of the *Gagga Jātaka*, who was brought to the service of the king of Benaras who appointed him the tax-gatherer.⁹ This indicates that Yakkhas in some cases used to run errands for human beings. They even granted riches to the human beings.¹⁰ They were the liberal dispensers of underground riches and hidden-treasures, with which they delighted men.¹¹

The Ambivalent Yakkhas

Pali literature has thus numerous instances of benevolent, malevolent or converted Yakkhas. The information about two other types *viz.*, ambivalent and neutral is comparatively very meagre. Regarding the ambivalent, it may be said that conversion from one type to the other may in a way represent the ambivalence and there is no dearth of such instances, as will be clear from the earlier discussion. Sometimes a dividing line is difficult to draw in many cases, for, as far as their traits are concerned, some Yakkhas who are malevolent were converted and became helpful; as such they possessed the traits of all the three types at different stages. However, the ambivalent type may be seen in the cases of Āḷavaka and Vajirpāṇi. Āḷavaka, even after his

¹*infra*, chapter 8.

²*Mh. V, IX.22ff.*

³*DPPN*, sv. *Kuṇḍadhānavaṇa, Kuṇḍiya.*

⁴*D, II.356f; DA, III.814; Vv. A, pp. 331ff.*

⁵Yakkha Makhadeva was given settlement at the city-gate; cf. *J, III.203*; cf. also, Shah, U.P., *JOI, III, 1, p. 59f.*

⁶*D, III.204f.*

⁷Coomaraswamy, A.K., I, p. 13.

⁸*PV, IV.1ff; Sānuthera, SA, I.306ff; Dh. A, III.208f.*

⁹*J, II.13f.*

¹⁰*Pv., II.9; Pv. A, 145; Pv., IV.12.*

¹¹*DPPN*, sv. *Yakkha, Paḍakusalāmānava Jātaka, III.300*, contains the story of Assamukhi Yakkhini who told her son a charm which enabled him to find out hidden wealth. This charm was utilised by the son with great benefit.

confrontation with the Buddha, continued to pester the boarders of his glittering palace and Vajirapāni is also found exercising his malefic power against erring persons.¹

The Neutral Yakkhas

As far as the neutral Yakkhas are concerned, their number is small. Some Yakkhas of this class such as Sātagiri² and Hemavata were monks who had erred and, as punishment were born as Yakkhas. In this birth, they do not seem to have evil intentions. These two Yakkhas had been monks in their previous birth, and were born as Yakkhas for wrongly adjudicating in a dispute between Dhammavāḍi and Adhammavāḍi.³ Another Yakkha of neutral type is Dīgha,⁴ who is constantly associated with the Buddhist order and who is regarded as *devarāja*.⁵ These Yakkhas were specially devoted to Buddhism, and led a life of detachment.

Worship of Yaksha

It has been aptly said that the cult of Yakshas arose "primarily from the woods and secondarily from the legends of sea-faring merchants."⁶ Yakshas frequented forests, mountains, lakes, trees,⁷ city-gates⁸ or deserted halls⁹ but probably those abodes of Yakshas are more important where they attracted extensive worship. In this connection, the *cetiya*s¹⁰ which find mention in the Buddhist texts are extremely important. The *cetiya*-worship was a form of Yakkha-worship, and the Buddha is often seen staying at the sites of such *cetiya*s and preaching his gospel. Several reputed and ancient *cetiya*s have been connected with the Yakkhas. Vesālī contained five such shrines *viz.* Gotamaka,¹¹ Sārandaḍa,¹² Sattamba,¹³ Cāpāla¹⁴ and Bahuputta.¹⁵ An Ānanda *cetiya*, in Bhogangara which was later converted into a Buddhist *vihāra* is known from the *Anguttara Commentary*.¹⁶ The Aggālava *cetiya*, originally a place of spirit worship, is represented as the chief shrine at Āḷavi.¹⁷ The Udena *cetiya*, where later a *vihāra* was built and dedicated to Yakkha Udena, lay to the east of Vesālī.¹⁸ All these Vesālī *cetiya*s are described as beautiful spots.¹⁹ Rhys Davids regarded these *cetiya*s as being probably trees or barrows.²⁰ Special mention

¹*infra*, 3.

²He finds mention also in the *Bhisa Jātaka*, IV.197.

³*Sn. A*, I, 195f. They figure as two Yakkha-chiefs; also cf. *D*, II.253.

⁴*D*, III.205.

⁵*MA*, II.244.

⁶*PED*, and *DPPN*, sv. Yakkha.

⁷*infra*, chapter 5.

⁸*J*, III.203.

⁹*ibid*, II.12.

¹⁰For the literature regarding *cetiya* or *cetiya*-worship, cf. Coomaraswamy, *HIIA*, p. 47; Chanda, R.P., *MASI*, no. 30, p. 4f; *JDL*, IV, pp. 51ff; Shah, U.P., *Studies in Jaina Art*, pp. 43ff.

¹¹A shrine towards the south of Vesālī, *D*, III.9; and one of the beautiful spots of the town, *D*, II.102, 118; dedicated to the Yakkha Gotamaka, where people prayed for obtaining children. *Dh. A*, III.246; It was later appropriated for a *Vihāra*. In *Divyāvadana*, p. 201, it is referred to as *Gautama Nyagrodha* in the list of noted places of Vesālī. It has been suggested that the *cetiya* might have been dedicated to Kāla Gotama Nāga (*JPTS*, 1891, p. 67) which suggestion seems to be far-fetched, *DPPN*, sv. Gotamaka *cetiya*.

¹²pre-Buddhist Yakkha-shrine, *D*, II.75.102; *Ud.*, VI.1; *DA*, II.521.

¹³Sattamba or Sattambaka; A shrine (*D*, II.102; *Ud.*, VI.1; *S*, V.259; *A*, IV.309) to the west of Vesālī (*D*, III.9); Originally, like other shrines, it was dedicated to some Yakkha.

¹⁴This was once the residence of the Yakkha Cāpāla, where later a *Vihāra* was made for the Buddha (*Ud. A*, 322f.); cf. *DPPN*, sv. Cāpāla *cetiya*.

¹⁵A shrine to the north of Vesālī (*D*, III.9). This was a pre-Buddhist shrine and according to the commentaries, *SA*, II.128 etc.), was a many-branched *nigrodha* tree where persons prayed to the *deva* of the tree for sons.

¹⁶II 550; also Udena *cetiya*, *Dh. A*, III.246.

¹⁷*Sn. A*, I.344; *SA*, I.268.

¹⁸*DA*, II.554.

¹⁹*D*, II.102; *S*, I.185-7; *A*, IV.309.

²⁰*D*, II.110, note 1; cf. Law, B.C., *Geography of Early Buddhism*, pp. 74ff; Coomaraswamy, *HIIA*, p. 47.

has been made of Udena and Gotamaka *cetiya*s in the *Dhammapada Commentary*¹ it is said that people paid homage to these '*Rukkha cetiyas*' and had their wishes fulfilled.

Apart from these different *cetiya*s, there were many other important regions and places where some prominent Yakkhas found settlement. Paṇḍaka and Haritā, who belonged to the retinue of the Nāga-king Aravāla are associated with Gāndhāra.² Pāṭali had the Ajakalapaka *cetiya* in the town.³ The town Ālavī had a shrine of Ālavaka Yakkha.⁴ Some Magadhan Yakkhas are also known, viz., Maṇibhadda,⁵ who had his '*bhavana*,' '*cetiya*' in Magadha, which was called *Maṇimālaka*.⁶ The Gayā-Yakkhas were Suciloma and Kharaloma.⁷ Rājagaha had two important Yakkhas in the vicinity. One was Kumbhīra of Vepulla mountain, who has been called *Rājagahika* due to his birth there.⁸ The other Yakkha was Indaka who lived on the Indakūṭa near Rājagaha.⁹ Kāśī or Benaras was also a prominent place connected with various Yakkhas.¹⁰

The *Dhammapāda Atthakathā* refers to a Kālī Yakkhini who in a previous birth was one of the two wives of a householder. Kālī got jealous of the other wife, and through successive births, both these women continued the practice of devouring each other's children. This old enmity was put to an end when Kālī was converted by the Buddha, and made a *sotāpanna*. She is said to have chosen a place outside a village, where she was invoked for protecting crops, and eight *salakabhata* were established in her honour.¹¹ Yakshas of some other cities also are known, for instance, Nārada Yakkha of Khemavatīnagara,¹² Kumbhakaṇṇa of Āṭavi,¹³ Vakkula of Śravastī,¹⁴ Udaryā and Kuntī Yakshas of Nandivardhan and Kuntīnagara of Kashmir¹⁵ and the Yakshas of Mathura whose names were Alikā, Vendā, Meghā and Timisikā.¹⁶ The legendary *Uttarakuru*, with its fabulous attributes, has been described as the abode of Yakkhas, in the *Ājānāṭiya Sutta*.¹⁷

The abundant references to the *bhavana*¹⁸ or the habitats of Yaksha and to the offerings¹⁹ made to them indicate that they were widely worshipped.

Some of the most clear instances of worshippers of particular Yakkhas pertain to the followers of Maṇibhadda and Puṇṇabhadda in the *Mahāniddeśa*.²⁰ It is said there that certain classes of ascetics and recluses worshipped them. Maṇibhaddas are mentioned in the *Milindapañho* (p. 191)

¹III.246.

²*Mh. V*, XII.9ff; *DPPN*, sv. Gāndhāra.

³*Ud.*, 1.7.

⁴Neval or Nawal in Unnao district, Uttar Pradesh. According to Cunningham and Hoernle; Law, however identifies the place with Aviwa, 27 miles northeast of Etah, Uttar Pradesh, *Geography of Early Buddhism*, p. 24; Mrs. Rhys Davids says that Ālavī was on the bank of the Ganges (cf. *para-gangaya* of *SN*, p. 32), *Pss. of the Brethren*, p. 408, but Mālelasekera, sv. Ālavī, thinks that the *para-gangaya* is only a "rhetorical expression having no geographical significance."

⁵*S*, I.208.

⁶*S*, I.208.

⁷*S*, I.207; *Sn.*, I.47f.

⁸*DA*, II.686, Sāta of Sātegiṛi and Hemavata of Himavant, p. 686.

⁹*S*, I.206.

¹⁰*J*, I.27, 131f, 255; II.103; III.56f, 132f.

¹¹*Dh. A*, I, pp. 170ff. For another almost similar story; cf. *Jayadissa Jātaka*, no. 513.

¹²*Bu. A*, 263f.

¹³*ibid*, 198ff.

¹⁴*Gilgit MSS*, III, 1, p. 103.

¹⁵*ibid*, III, 1, p. VIII.

¹⁶*ibid*, III, 1, pp. 15ff.

¹⁷*D*, III.199ff; Yakkhas hold their assemblies on Manosilātala, *Sn. A*, I.220; *D*, III.201; *DA*, III.967. The Manosilātala was a locality of Himavā, cf. also *Vv. A*, 131.

¹⁸*Bu. A*, 198, 265; *Sn.*, I.207; *vimāna*, *Sn. A*, I.222.

¹⁹*Mh. V*, XXXVI.82ff; *Sn. A*, I.222ff.

²⁰I.92; In its explanation of the term, *vattasuddhikā* mentions, among others, *Puṇṇabhaddavattikā*, *Vasudevavattikā*, *Baladevavattikā* and *Manibhaddavattikā*. It is notable that Vasudeva and Baladeva figure with the Yakkha here.

together with tumblers, jugglers, actors, etc. Yakkhas were deities worthy of worship, which is suggested even from the etymology of the word *yakkha* in the Pali commentaries which explain the word as derived from \sqrt{yaj} 'to sacrifice.'¹

A large number of Yakkha-*cetiya*s or *bhavanas*, the terrestrial habitats, give us a clue to the extent of the Yakkha influence, from Gandhara in the west to Magadha in the east, including the Koliya and Sakya settlements of Kuṇḍiṇḍi and Kapilavastu and Mallas of Pāvā. The city of Vesālī also had a number of important Yakkha shrines. Eastern India appears to be an important region where the cult and the worship were widely spread. It appears that part of present Rajasthan also was once under the Yakkha influence. The *Vimānavatthu* refers to the legend of Pāyāsī-devaputta (also known as Serissaka-devaputta for he had his Vimāna near a Serisa tree) who is said to have shown the way to merchants of Anga and Magadha who were going to *Sindhusovira* and who were stranded in the desert, which evidently was Maru.²

The votaries of Yakkhas included of kings and commoners, recluses, ascetics, the sea-faring and forest-tracking traders. Yakkha temples and abodes were places of worship, where festivals in honour of the Yakkhas were held. Sometimes Yakkha images of some kind are also suggested in the description of Yakkhas. It is said that the Yakkha Cittarāja was honoured by Prince Paṇḍukābhaya who gave the former a settlement at the lower end of the *abhaya* tank. On the festival days the Yakkha occupied a seat beside the king.³ A Yakkha of the same name is mentioned in the *Kuru dhamma Jātaka*.⁴ The *Jātaka* relates that it was a custom for ancient kings, at the time of *Kāttika* festival, to deck themselves in great magnificence. The kings would stand in the presence of Cittarāja, and they would shoot arrows to the four quarters. In these cases, an allusion to the image is implied. Temples and images of Yakkhas are amply represented in early Indian art, specially of Bharhut. In the light of this early evidence of art, the references to the *bhavana*, or *vimāna*, may be taken to imply the images also. The images may not have been necessarily anthropomorphic. It is quite likely that aniconic symbols to represent the Yakkha might have served the ritualistic purpose. In the bas-reliefs of Bharhut are found various representations of platforms under trees, decorated with flowers, containing the prints of palms and fingers. These have been regarded as portraying the types of worship-platforms of Yakkhas.⁵

Regarding the mode of Yakkha-worship, various references indicate that Yakkhas were creatures of voracious appetite, and one mode of worship was to satisfy it. Yakkhas ate human beings,⁶ and sometimes corpses.⁷ The other objects in this list were goats, rams and the like.⁸

In some cases it becomes very difficult to determine whether certain human beings might have been mentioned as Yakkhas. It is likely that in the transformation of legends, human beings were accepted as Yakkhas. Yakkhas perhaps represent some ethnological traits. The *Mahāvamsa*⁹ relates the story of prince Vijaya who found that Ceylonese aborigines inhabiting the island were Yakkhas. The prince is said to have married one Yakkha-maiden, Kuveṇī or Kuvāṇṇā, and had from her

¹*supra*, p. 10.

²*Vv.*, VII.10; *Vv. A.*, 331f. The State Museum, Bharatpur has recently recorded acquisition of two Yaksha images, one is a late Mauryan torso, the other shows a Mukhalingam also delineating a Yaksha holding a bowl on its head; find-spot-Aghapur. cf. *Indian Museums Review*, New Delhi, 1966, p. 46; see also Agrawal, R.C., Animal faced sculptures from Rajasthan, *Bharatiya Vidya*, XX, XXI, January, 1963, pp. 333-39.

³*DPPN*, sv. Cittarāja. Kājavela, another Yaksha is said to have appeared with the prince on the feast days in a visible form. *Mh. V*, X.104; It is said that Mahāsena afterwards build a *thūpa* on the site of Kājavela's shrine, *ibid.*, XXXVII.44.

⁴*Jātaka*, II.254.

⁵Dr. Moti Chandra, *BPWM*, III, p. 48f.

⁶*Jātaka*, I.3, 131, 233ff; II.11ff; III.132f, etc.

⁷*Dh. A.*, II.237-38.

⁸*Ayakūṭa Jātaka*, no. 347, III.96; When the Bodhisattva discontinued this practice, Yakkha was deputed to kill him. He was, however, saved by Sakka's intervention.

⁹Chapter 7.

two children, Jivahattha and Dipellā. These children are described as the ancestors of Pulindas, Malalasekera has said that "in all probability the Yakkhas (of Ceylon) were originally considered as human, but later came to be confused with the non-human. Their chief cities were Lankā-pura and Sirīsavatthu."¹ Coomaraswamy, however, refers to the Veddas, aborigines of Ceylon, who regard themselves as the decendants of Yakkhas.²

No description of Yakkhas in the Pāli works will be complete without a reference to Kubera or Vessavana who was their chief as well as one of the *Caturmahārājika devas*. He figures in the literature as a great devotee of the Buddha,³ which trait is possessed also by his wife Bhunjaṭī.⁴ Their five daughters, viz., Latā, Sajjā, Pavarā, Acchimati and Sutā,⁵ and nephew Puṇṇaka⁶ also find mention. His kingdom was *Uttara-kuru* containing great cities, parks, and lakes and troops of Yakkhas.⁷ He was the master of Yakkhas⁸ who served him and, in return, got rewards for their service. It is said that Vessavana also obtained the services of savages.⁹ Yakkhas were afraid of him. It is said that if he was angry and looked but once, a thousand Yakkhas would break up and scatter like 'parched peas hopping about on a hot plate.'¹⁰ But Vessavana appears as an office whose incumbents were subject to change. The *Rukkhadhamma Jātaka*¹¹ records installation by Sakka of new king Vessavana on the death of the first Vessavana. Kubera, however, enjoys proverbial luxuries.¹²

In conclusion, it may be stated that Yakkhas were one of the most important subjects of the folklore of the time, which preserves the rich traditions of their character and the worship that was extremely popular then. The main point of note about the Buddhist Yakkhas is their struggle with the Buddha or Bodhisattvas. Buddhism tried to minimise the importance which the cult enjoyed, by attempting to eradicate the customs of cannibalism and offerings to Yakkhas. Sometimes the Buddha and Bodhisattvas succeeded in such attempts, as in the cases of Ajakālaka, Ālavaka, Avaruddhaka and Makhādeva, but wiping them out was impossible. So Buddhism found a niche for the Yakkhas, and accommodated them within its mythology.

Jain Literature

In the Jain literary sources, the information about the Yakshas and their worship compares well with the essential features of the Yaksha-cult elsewhere.¹³ The class of Yakshas has been included among *vyantara* or *vāṇamantara*¹⁴ gods besides Piśācas, Bhūtas, Rākshasas, Kinnaras,

¹DPPN, sv. Yakkha.

²cf. Coomaraswamy, I, p. 13, also p. 4 fn. 3, for other references. A.L. Basham, treats these Vijaya legends in settling the question of Aryanisation of Ceylon and thinks that Jivahattha and Dipellā originated the Pulindas of Malaya; cf. *Studies in Indian History and Culture*, 1964, ch. XIV, pp. 167ff.

³*Atānāṭiya Sutta*, D, III, 194ff.

⁴D, II.270f.

⁵Vv., III.1ff; Vv. A, 131ff. They were all married to Sakka and were great dancers whose skill was tested on the banks of Anotatta.

⁶*Vidhura Pandita Jātaka*, no. 545.

⁷D, III.199f.

⁸Dh. A, II.237, 310; *Jātaka*, III.201; I.12, 25.

⁹DA, III.865f.

¹⁰*Abhantara Jātaka*, II.272.

¹¹J, I.181.

¹²Pv., IV.3.44. *Bhunjāmi Kāmakāmi rājā Vessavano Yathā*; Mh. V, Commentary, p. 676; *Vessavanassa Rājapari-hāra Saḍḍisāṃ*; cf. also, *Vaiśravaṇa dhana Samuditau*, *Vaiśravaṇa dhana pratispardhi*, Speyer, J.S., *Avadanaṣataka*, (St. Petersburg, 1906-9), II.179.

¹³Coomaraswamy has remarked that "Jainism and Yaksha-worship could be as closely interrelated as Buddhism and Hinduism have often been," *Yakṣas*, I, p. 27.

¹⁴*supra*, p. 2, note 4. The second part of the word *vāṇamantara* is "apparently *tara* 'crossing,' the first seems to contain an accusative *vath* of *vāṇamantara* which may be connected with *viha* or *vyoman* 'air' " Jacobi, U.S., 122, note 1. *Vyantara*, has been explained by the commentators as *vividheshu ca śailakandarāntara vana vivarādishu prativasantiyo*, cf. *Tattvārthadhigama Sūtra*, IV, 12, pp. 200-1.

Kim̐purushas, Mahoragas and Gandharvas.¹ The leading gods of all these eight classes have been described in Jain works. Yakshas, however, in their group had thirteen chiefs. Their names are as follows: Pūrṇabhadra, Mañibhadra, Śvetabhadra, Haribhadra, Sumanobhadra, Vyātipatikabhadra, Subhadra, Sarvatobhadra, Manushyayaksha, Vanādhipati, Vanāhāra, Rūpayaksha and Yakshottama.² Kubera appears as their lord, guarding the northern direction.³ But by far the most important Yakshas in the Jain works are Mañibhadra and Pūrṇabhadra, who are described as two Indras, 'chiefs,' of these demi-gods.⁴ The *Triloka-prajñapti*⁵ contains a description of their habitat, identifying attributes, families features and appearance under seventeen *adhikāras*. From this description in the work, it may be seen that the Yakshas had two types of habitats, *bhavanapura* and *āvāsa*, and the *vajra* tree as their identifying attribute. They had twelve chiefs headed by Mañibhadra and Pūrṇabhadra. These two chiefs, called Indras, had two consorts each; Kuṇḍā and Bahuputrā to Mañibhadra and Tārā and Uttamā to Pūrṇabhadra (VI.42, 43), and these consorts were attended by two thousand attendants in each case (32, 33). An island—*vajra*, by name has been assigned to Yakshas (60), and it had two divisions, southern and northern, ruled by Mañibhadra and Pūrṇabhadra respectively (59). The island was divided into five sectors; these sectors have been referred to as *madhya* (mentioned twice), *prabha*, *Kānta* and *āvarta*; and these appellations, sector-wise, were affixed to the word Yaksha, for instance, *Yaksha-prabha* and so on (61). The cities had beautiful fortresses and were surrounded by the forests of *Aśoka*, *Saptacchanda*, *Campaka* and *Āmra* trees (63, 64). The houses in such cities were made of silver and gold and were decorated with the jewels (66). Here these demi-gods lived in opulence, splendour and glory. Their power to kill men and move heavy objects has also been described (92ff). Their chief Kubera is proverbially handsome, just as his son Nalakūbara is reputed for his 'pleasing manners.'⁶

According to the Jain works, Yakshas assumed different roles in relation to human beings. Broadly speaking, three types of Yakshas in this connection seem evident, namely, benevolent, malevolent and converted. The benevolence of Yakshas is a familiar trait. Even in the names of the thirteen Yaksha Chiefs the *bhadra* suffix indicates their auspicious nature. Generally, Yakshas figure as protective deities, fulfilling the wishes of those who worshipped them. The *Nāyā-dhammakahāo*⁷ refers to a Selaga Yaksha who delivered the merchant Jinapālita of Campā from an ogress of Ratnadvīpa. Such protective inclinations of the Yakshas probably led to their

¹US, 36.206; Jacobi, pp. 225-26; Tv. S, IV.12; TP, VI, 25; For the division of Jain demi-gods see US, 36.203ff; Tv. S, IV, 1-12; This work also informs that *vyantara* and *jyotishka* gods have only eight classes—while *bhavana-vāsi*, and *vaimānika* gods have two more classes of *trāyastriṅśa* and *lokapāla* gods (IV.5).

²Tv. S, IV.12. The list of Yakshas varies in different sources, *Bhagavati Sūtra*, III.7.167 offers a list of thirteen Yakshas and the only common Yakshas of the list are Pūrṇabhadra, Mañibhadra, and Sumanobhadra. The names of these three Yakshas also occur in the list of twelve names in the *Kalpāsūtra*, Jacobi, p. 289; *Antag.*, p. 85 refers to Pūrṇabhadda and Sumanabhadda, substituting Moggarapāñi for Mañibhadra besides giving thirteen other names which might as well be Yaksha names. The names in the *Bhagavati Sūtra*, III.7.167; are as follows: Pūrṇabhadda, Mañibhadda, Śālabhadda, Sumanabhadda, Cakka, Rakkha (Chanda, R.P., *JDL*, IV, p. 52 reads Cakshuraksha jointly instead of Cakka and Rakkha in the *Bhagavati Sūtra*), Puṇṇarakkha, Sāvanna, Savvajasa, Samiddha, Amoha, Asanga and Savvakāma. The TP, VI.42-43, has another different list containing only twelve names viz., Pūrṇabhadra, Mañibhadra, Śālabhadra, Manobhadra, Bhadraka, Subhadra, Sarvabhadra, Mānusha, Dhanapāla, Manoharaṇa, Svarūpayaksha and Yakshottama. On comparison it is found that this list contains names of Yakshas many of which are similar to, if not, identical with the *Tattvārthādhigama sūtra* list. This latter list is interesting inasmuch as it reflects the sense of benevolence in the proper names of these Yakshas.

³Av. S, II, pp. 330, 384.

⁴*Bhagavati Sūtra*, 15, p. 734; TP, VI.43. The chiefs of the groups of gods in the different heavens are all called Indras. All these orders of gods except Jyotishka, and Vyantara have ten grades; cf. *supra*, p. 2 note 4.

⁵TP, VI.2ff.

⁶US, p. 117, in the *Yaśastilaka* (K.K. Handiqui), Kubera appears as a drunkard, *anavarata madhupāna paricyuta mati prakāśa vitteśa*. This passage projects him as the lord of wealth too.

⁷IX, p. 127, for a similar story, see *Valāhassa Jātaka*, no. 196.

acceptance as guardian deities, entailing both big and small responsibilities. Kubera is accepted as one of the *lokapālas*.¹ The Jain cosmology assumes that *jagatī* of Jambūdvīpa had four gates, namely, Vijaya, Vaijayanta, Jayanta and Aparājit, and several gods served as the lords of these gates in this system.² Curiously the names assigned here to gates are assigned to gods in the *Arthaśāstra*³ which says that the shrines of these popular gods should be made in the centre of the city. These references taken together help in identifying them with the Yakshas.⁴ The *Vasudevahiṇḍī*⁵ refers to another guardian Yaksha Anāḍhiya by name who is regarded as the lord of the whole Jambūdvīpa. Evidently, these Yakshas discharged protective functions. Some Yakshas also figure as tutelary deities of certain tribes and people. Hiraḍika or Āḍambara Yaksha held that status among the Mātangas and Ḍombas.⁶ Ghaṇṭika Yaksha was similarly worshipped by the Ḍombas in whose ears he whispered the answers to their questions.⁷ The protective function of Yakshas is corroborated by the situation of their shrines on the outskirts of the cities⁸ which were centres of folk entertainment and assembly. It was at the site of such temples that people with any desire to be fulfilled used to go and worship the Yakshas. They granted wealth, or sometimes the whole community was benefited by their act of grace. In the *Parīśiṣṭaparvaṇa*⁹ it is said that a Yaksha Bholā (or Bholaka), pleased with her devotion, granted the old woman Buddhi wealth for her subsistence. Maṇibhadra is known to have put down the small-pox epidemic which raged in the town of Samillā.¹⁰ That shows his controlling power over epidemics and pestilence. A predominantly benevolent Jain Yaksha is Pūrnabhadra. That his worship was extremely popular is proved by the illustrative description of his temple on the outskirts of the city of Campā.¹¹ Jain works refer to malevolent Yakshas also. The *Bṛhat-kalpa-bhāshya*¹² tells of a sick man who could not be exposed for the fear of a Yakshiṇī in Gollā. Surapriya was another such evil-minded Yaksha. It is said that his wooden image was compulsorily painted every year; he punished any default in this obligation with an epidemic. On the other hand, the painter of the image was killed by him on completion of the job so that every artist was reluctant to do the job. An exception, however, was made by this Yaksha in the case of a painter boy who did the job well and got as a boon the ability to paint the whole of any creature seen only in part.¹³

Besides these benevolent and malevolent Yaksha-types, there is the converted type also which figures rather prominently in the Jain works. Usually Yakshas held Mahāvīra and the Jain monks in respect, and were ready to obey their command. The process of subduing Yakshas and converting them to the Jain creed was similar to that followed by the Buddha. Mahāvīra would stay in their shrines or grove,¹⁴ a fight would ensue between them, ultimately resulting in the conversion of such Yakshas.¹⁵ Some Yakshas, however, appear as the worshippers of Mahāvīra instinctively, and their names are found in the list of the important Jain disciples to whom the

¹TP, VIII.303-4.

²Jambūdvīpaprajñapti, I.38-42, XI.340, for feminine counterparts, cf. Av. S, I.169.

³II.4.17, also note on 17, p. 80.

⁴Shah, U.P., JOI, III, 1, p. 59.

⁵ibid, p. 58, note 24.

⁶Jain, J.C., Jain Āgama Sāhitya, p. 443, note 4.

⁷Bṛhatkalpa Sūtra, 1312; cf. Moti Chandra, BPWM, II, p. 47 as footnotes there.

⁸infra, chapter 5.

⁹III.1-45, also, p. XLIX.

¹⁰Pinḍaniryukī, 245-6, p. 83. This Yaksha was promised a festival in his honour and after the epidemic subsided his regular worship began. It is interesting to note that the priest, Devaśarmā, was a Brahmin. He was engaged on regular pay, and he kept the shrine always clean.

¹¹Antag., pp. 2-7.

¹²Jain, J.C., Life in Ancient India, p. 221.

¹³Av. S, I, pp. 101ff; II, p. 353.

¹⁴Av. S, I.282-84; for the cases of Vibhelaga, Kaṭapūtanā and Salajjā.

¹⁵ibid, I.268.

lessons were taught. Among such lists of names, mention may be made of those found in the *Antagaḍadasāo*¹ and the *Kalpasūtra*² which offer the names of sixteen and nineteen prominent male and female disciples respectively. Some of them seem to be Yaksha-names. These disciples were the protectors of their sages.³ They respected the sages for their life of meditation and celibacy.⁴ Among the prominent Yaksha disciples and votaries of Mahāvīra, mention may be made particularly of Bihelaṭa⁵ (or Bihelaga) and Śūlapāni.⁶ The latter was a Jakkha of great power and evil influence. The people visited his *devālaya* only during the day; those who stayed there during night were killed and devoured by this Yaksha. He could afflict persons with seven types of pains '*saptavedanā*,' namely, pain in head, ear, nose, teeth, nails, eyes and back. His laughter produced terrifying noise, and he frightened people by assuming different forms such as elephant, Piśāca and snake. It was within his powers to raise strange spectacles and sights also. Some other Yakshas, however, were intent upon defiling the purity of the monks. The *Bṛhatkalpabhāṣya*⁷ refers to a Yaksha who took pleasure in feeding the Jain monks during night, thereby violating one of their essential vows. But the wise monks were beyond the reach of such tricks.⁸ Ajjunae, who was possessed by the Yaksha Moggarapāṇi, and was killing indiscriminately, was rendered harmless when he confronted Sudamaṣane, a devout Jain who had taken the *aṇu* and *mahāvratas*, i.e., minor and major vows.⁹ Various categories of Yakshas in relation to both Mahāvīra and the Jain monks can be deduced from the literary works. Sometimes Yakshas appear as their disciples and devout worshippers; sometimes they are found testing their vows and rewarding them on successful conclusion of the test.¹⁰ Yakshas are sometimes referred to as pestering the Jain monks or defiling their purity and even going to the extent of physical molestation of the sages.

The twentyfour Jain Tirthankaras had each a pair of Yaksha and Yakshinī who waited upon them. The twentyfour sets of Jain Yakshas and Yakshinis have been enumerated in different texts such as *Rūpamaṇḍana* (VI.12-26), *Vāstusāra* (VS, 149-63), *Aparājitaṭpicchā* (App.: Ch. 221. 10-55), and *Triloka Prajñapti* (TP, IV, 4963ff)¹¹ and on the basis of a comparative study of the works in the same sequence, the list of names is being reproduced here. The list here, follows the numerical sequence as in the *Rūpamaṇḍana* from one to twentyfour, and differences of the names with the corresponding numbers in other texts have been indicated within brackets. It will be seen that many names are similar or identical in different texts. But they do not keep in many cases to the corresponding numbers in the other texts.

The twentyfour Yakshas are as follows:

- (1) Gomukha (Vrishavaktra, *App.*; Govadana, *TP*),
- (2) Mahāyaksha,
- (3) Trimukha,
- (4) Yakshanāyaka (Īśvara, *VS*; Caturānana, *App.*; Yaksheśvara, *TP*),

¹p. 85, *Bhagavati Sūtra*, III.7.167; *Tv. S.*, p. 202.

²Jacobi, *SBE*, XXII, *Jaina Sūtras*, part I, p. 289.

³*US*, pp. 51ff. Harikeśabala was protected by the Yaksha of the *Tinduga* grove. A *Tinduga* park near Śrāvastī finds mention in the *Av. S.*, II.402.

⁴*US*, p. 77, Yakshas etc., "pay homage to a chaste monk who, performs his difficult duties."

⁵*Āvasyakaniryukti*, 485 (in a locality of Vaiśālī in a park named after him).

⁶*Av. S.*, I.268-71; cf. also *Kalpasūtra* (with *Kalpamañjarīkākā*), Rajkot, 1958. Comm. on *sūtra*, 84, II, pp. 176ff. the Yaksha tried upon Mahāvīra, mosquito bite, scorpion and snake bites; bears, elephants, tigers, pigs and *Vetālas* also had their turn. Ultimately the Yaksha tired, and praying to Mahāvīra, himself went away.

⁷Shah, U.P., *JOI*, III, 1, p. 59, note 17. For Yaksha defiling the Buddhist monks; cf. *Pannasampāta Jātaka*, V.100ff.

⁸*Sūtrakṛitāṅga*, II, 2, p. 157.

⁹*Antag.*, p. 90f.

¹⁰*Kathakośa*, pp. 1ff; *Pariśiṣṭaparvaṇa*, III.1ff.

¹¹cf. also, *Acāradinkara* and *Pratiśṭhāsāroddhāra*.

- (5) Tumburu (Tumburava, *TP*),
- (6) Kusuma (Mātanga, *TP*),
- (7) Mātanga (Vijaya, *TP*),
- (8) Vijaya (Asita, *TP*),
- (9) Jaya (Ajita, *VS*; Brahmā, *TP*),
- (10) Brahmā (Brahmeśvara, *TP*),
- (11) Yaksheta or Īsvara (Īsvara, *VS*; Yaksheta, *App.*; Kumāra, *TP*),
- (12) Kumāra (Shaṅmukha, *TP*),
- (13) Shaṅmukha (Pātāla, *TP*),
- (14) Pātāla (Kinnara, *App.*; *TP*),
- (15) Kinnara (Pātāla, *App.*; Kimpurusha, *TP*),
- (16) Garuda,
- (17) Gandharva,
- (18) Yaksheta or Yakshendra (Yakshendra, *VS*; Yakshesa, *App.*; Kuvera, *TP*),
- (19) Kubera (Varuṇa, *TP*),
- (20) Varuṇa (Bhrikuti, *TP*),
- (21) Bhrikuti (Gomedha, *TP*),
- (22) Gomedha, (Pārśva, *App.*; *TP*),
- (23) Pārśva (Mātanga, *App.*; *TP*),
- (24) Mātanga (Gomedha, *App.*; Guhyaka, *TP*),

The twentyfour Yakshinis, the consorts of the above Yakshas according to the analysis as indicated above are as follows:

- (1) Cakreśvarī,
- (2) Ajitabalā (Ajitā, *VS*; Rohiṇī, *App.*; *TP*),
- (3) Duritāri (Prajñāvati, *App.*; Prajñapti, *TP*),
- (4) Kālikā (Vajrasinkhalā, *App.*; *TP*),
- (5) Mahākālī (Naradattā, *App.*; Vajrankuśā, *TP*),
- (6) Śyāmā (Manovegā, *App.*; Aprati Cakreśvarī, *TP*),
- (7) Śāntā (Kālikā, *App.*; Purushadattā, *TP*),
- (8) Bhrikuti (Jvālāmālinī, *App.*; Manovegā, *TP*),
- (9) Sutārikā (Sutārakā, *VS*; Mahākālī, *App.*; Kālī, *TP*),
- (10) Aśokā (Mānavī, *App.*; Jvālāmālinī, *TP*),
- (11) Mānavī (Gaurī, *App.*; Mahākālī, *TP*),
- (12) Caṇḍī (Pracaṇḍā, *VS*; Gāndhārī, *App.*; Gaurī, *TP*),
- (13) Veditā (Virātākhyā, *App.*; Gāndhārī, *TP*),
- (14) Ankuśī (Ankuśā, *VS*; Anantamatī, *App.*; Vairotyā, *TP*),
- (15) Kandarpī or Kandarpā (Mahāmānasī, *App.*; Mānasī, *TP*),
- (16) Nirvānī (Mahāmānasī, *App.*; Mānasī, *TP*),
- (17) Balā (Jayā, *App.*; Mahāmānasī, *TP*),
- (18) Dhārinī (Vijayā, *App.*; Jayā, *TP*),
- (19) Dharanapriyā (Vairotyā, *VS*; Aparajitā, *App.*; Vijayā, *TP*),
- (20) Nādaraktā (Naradattā, *VS*; Bahurūpā, *App.*; Aparajitā, *TP*),
- (21) Gandharvā (Gāndharī, *VS*; Cāmuṇḍā, *App.*; Bahurūpiṇī, *TP*),
- (22) Ambikā (Kūshmāṇḍī, *TP*),
- (23) Padmāvati or Padmā,
- (24) Siddhāyikā or Siddhāyinī.

An image of Padmāvati which was in the Pattainti Dāt temple of Pithaurā,¹ in the Satnā District of Madhya Pradesh and which is now deposited in the Allahabad Museum, contains the

¹cf. *Western Circle Report*, 1920; Shah, U.P., *Journal of University of Bombay*, IX, 2, p. 163, no. 2.

small figures of the twentythree other Yakshinis on the stele and gives their names which are similar to this list; some important variations are represented by the following names:

Saraswati (no. 3), Bhānusi (no. 12), Bhanujā (no. 14) Budhadāghī (no. 21) Prajāpati (no. 22) and Bāhini (no. 23) which all appear to be new names. Still another interesting list of names from Deogarh temples has been discussed by H.D. Sankalia.¹

It seems that both Digambara and Svetāmbara traditions played their roles while standardising the names of the different Yakshas and Yakshinis of their twentyfour Tirthankaras. It is interesting that most of these names do not occur in the early literary works. It may indicate that these names represent an upsurge of the Yaksha cult inspite of the Jain attempts of subordinating it. Many of these Yakshas received a sanctity by virtue of their privileged position. They have been represented in sculptures and paintings, coming from various parts of India specially the central and western parts of the country.²

Yaksha Worship

Yakshas received worship from people at the places of their habitats which were situated on solitary places and in the natural surroundings. There were sometimes special mountains for individual Yakshas. The *Triloka Prajñapti* (IV.144ff) refers to the heavenly mountains Vaitādhyā which had certain peaks, named after Yakshas, namely, Mañibhadrakūṭa, Pūrṇabhadrakūṭa and Vaiśramaṇakūṭa; the last was situated towards east.³ The Jain works refer to a number of Yaksha *āyatana*s 'shrines,' some of which were quite old and *cirātīta* even in times of Mahāvīra.⁴ The *Vipāka Sūtra* supplies an exhaustive list of different Yaksha shrines which were situated in the different cities. The list is as follows:

| City | Yaksha | Park |
|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| Caṃpā | Puṇṇabhadda | — |
| Vaṇiyagrāma | Suhamma | Duipalāsa ⁵ |
| Purimatāla ⁶ | Amohadaṃsi | Amohadaṃsana |
| Sāhanjani | Amoha | Devaramaṇa |
| Kosāmbī | Seyabhadda | Candoyaraṇa |
| Mahurā | Sadansana | Bhandira |
| Padalasaṇḍa | Umbaradatta | Vanasaṇḍa |
| Soriyapura | Soriya | Soriyavadinsaga |
| Rohida | Dharaṇa | Puḍhavīvanasana |
| Vaddhamānapura | Mañibhadda | Vijayavaddhamāna |
| Rajagriha | — | Gunasila ⁷ |
| Usabhapura | Dhanna | Thubhakarasaṇḍa |
| Vīrapura | — | Manorama |
| Vijayapura | Asoga | Nandanavana or Manorama? |
| Sogandhiyā | Sukāla | Nīlāsoa |

¹*infra*, chapter 6.

²Moti Chandra, *Jain Miniature Paintings from Western India*, Ahmedabad, 1949. Many more sculptures and paintings have been published by U.P. Shah and M.R. Majumdar and others.

³On these *Kūṭas* were beautiful palaces provided with golden and jewelled gates, *vedix*, garden and flags. They hummed with gods and goddesses (IV.164-65).

⁴*Antag.*, p. 5, in case of Puṇṇabhadda *caitya* of Caṃpā.

⁵*Av. S.*, I.284.

⁶*ibid.*, II.363; p. 404, the work mentions some other parks also cf. *Av. S.*, II.355ff (Nandana park—Surapriya's *āyatana*; *ibid.*, II.402 (Tinduga Park of Sāvathī); *ibid.*, II.406 (Polasa park of Svetāmbī).

⁷*Bhagavati Sūtra*, I.1; cf. *supra*, p. 30, note 13.

| | | |
|------------|------------|------------|
| Kanagapura | Virabhadra | Seyasoga |
| Mahāpura | Rattapāo | Rattāsoga |
| Sughosa | Vīrasena | Devaramaṇa |
| Sāyaya | Pāsamiya | Uttarakuru |

Some of these Yakshas and their shrines are referred elsewhere also.¹ The situation of the Punnabhadda *ceiya* at Campa is confirmed by the *Aupapātika Sūtra* (su. 3-5) and the *Antagaḍadasāo*. The names of Yakshas in cases of nos. 11 and 13 are however not mentioned. The *Antagaḍadasāo*² supplies the name of Moggarapāṇi as the Yaksha of Rājagriha. Other Yakshas of the Magadha *janapada* are also known. For instance, Saliggāma in the Magadha *janapada* is said to have had a Sumana Yaksha in the Manorama park.³ In the *Vipāka Sūtra* list here, however, Manorama park is assigned to the city of Virapura where the name of the Yaksha is missing. That may locate Virapura in the Magadha *janapada*. Mathura, no. 6 of the *Vipāka* list, had another Yaksha according to the *Āvaśyaka Sūtra*.⁴ His name was Huṇḍika. The name of Maṇibhadda (no. 10) is associated with Mithilā (Varddhamānapura) in the *Vipāka Sūtra* and with Samillā in the *Pinḍaniryukti*,⁵ whereas Śūlapāṇi is another Yaksha of Varddhamānapura (Asthiagrāma) in the *Āvaśyaka Sūtra*.⁶ In the *Vipāka*, Sāketa (no. 19) has been assigned to Pāsamiya Yaksha, while according to the *Āvaśyaka Sūtra*⁷ Sāketa contained the shrine of Yaksha Surapriya, which was situated towards the north-east of the town.

To this list of Yaksha shrines based on the works cited here, some additions can also be made. The *Uttarādhyayana Sūtra*⁸ refers to the Yaksha of Tinduga grove outside Benaras. The shrine of Selaga Yaksha was situated the *vanakhaṇḍa* of Ratnadīpa.⁹ The *Bhagavati Sūtra* provides some 20 names of *caityas* which were situated at different places.¹⁰ It is to be noticed in the *Vipāka Sūtra* that with few exceptions as in case of nos. 4 and 9, the names of the parks containing the Yaksha shrines are not identical with those of Yakshas. The analysis of the *Sūtra* list and its supplementation above goes to show that in many cases there were more than one Yakshas assigned to different cities. The Yaksha temples in such cases may have been situated in different directions of the town or village. Generally in the Jain works, the Yakshas have been assigned northern and eastern quarters.¹¹

Another question of relevance here is whether these shrines of Yakshas contained their images too; if that was not the case, then, what exactly was the nature of these shrines? In some cases, the existence of images cannot be doubted. The *Antagaḍadasāo*¹² refers to standing image of Moggarapāṇi, holding a great iron mace of 1000 *palas*. The *Āvaśyaka Sūtra*¹³ refers to the painting of the image of Yaksha Surapriya. Bhaddā in the *Nāyādhammakahāo*¹⁴ is referred to as worshipping

¹*Āvaśyaka Sūtra*, II, pp. 363, 409.

²p. 86.

³*Vasudevahindī*, pp. 85, 88; cf. Shah, U.P., *JOI*, III, 1, p. 65 note 52.

⁴III, p. 555.

⁵p. 83f.

⁶I, 268.

⁷I, p. 101; II, 355, for his shrine near Samillā.

⁸Jacobi, p. 50, note 1.

⁹*Nk.*, IX, pp. 128ff; VIII, pp. 99ff. The two brothers, Jinapālita and Jinarakshita were stranded near the *Lavana* sea where they were entertained by a malevolent deity who knew their *Avadhī* dialect. When she went to clean the sea for 21 days they came to know of her cannibalistic designs. Later, they were helped by Selaga Yaksha who delivered Jinapālita; Jinarakshita was tempted by the deity and devoured.

¹⁰Shah, U.P., *JOI*, III, 1, p. 62f.

¹¹cf. *Av. S.*, II, 383f. which refers to the *ceiya* of Vessamana to the *n.e.*, of the city where this *pudhavi silāpatta* was worshipped under the Aśoka tree.

¹²p. 86.

¹³I, 101.

¹⁴II, pp. 49ff.



the images of gods including Yakshas, for which act she was rewarded with a child. Similarly, Gangadattā in the *Vipāka Sūtra*¹ is said to have performed all the worship "in the sight of Yaksha Umbaradatta." Evidently, this presence implies an image.

Not all the shrines had the idol of the Yaksha for worship. As Coomaraswamy² has pointed out, "The essential element of a Yaksha holystead is a stone table or alter . . . placed beneath the tree sacred to the Yaksha." In the case of Puṇṇabhadda Yaksha³ it is said that "under the Aśoka tree, somewhat close to its trunk, was kept a *prithvī-silā-paṭṭa*" a large dais of earthen blocks. "It was of goodly proportions . . . and was black . . . It was smooth, massive, eight cornered, (glistening) like the face of the mirror, very delightful and variously figured with wolves, bulls, horses, men, dolphins, birds, snakes, elves, *ruru* deer, *īrabha* deer, Yak-oxen, elephants, forest-creepers and *padmaka*-creepers. It felt as though it were of deer-skin of *ruta* . . . It was shaped like throne and was comforting and comely." From this description it appears that what is said to be the *silā-paṭṭa*, standing for Yaksha Puṇṇabhadda may have been some sort of a throne which was soft and beautiful and decorated on all its parts with various animal and floral devices. It is possible that the vacant seat signifying the invisible presence of the Yaksha may have been kept in the Yaksha shrine for worship. In some cases these shrines of Yakshas were structures too, and were not limited to trees alone. The temples of Maṇibhadra,⁴ Śūlapāṇi,⁵ Umbaradatta⁶ and Surapriya⁷ are such examples.

Giving oblations to the Yakshas was an essential part of the worship.⁸ Sometimes pilgrimages were made to such spots hallowed by Yakshas. The Bhaṇḍiravana of Mathura, which probably contained the *caitya* of Sudarśana Yaksha⁹ as mentioned in the *Vipāka Sūtra*¹⁰ was one of such places where persons used to go for worship.¹¹ The prayers in this case were offered to the Bhaṇḍiravaṭa. In the *Āvaśyaka Sūtra* (I.275) Bhaṇḍiravaṭa is connected with Yakshas: and it is said there that people made pilgrimage to this place of worship in honour of the Yaksha. The antiquity of this *vaṭa* goes back to the *Mahābhārata*¹² which refers to the *nyagrodha* tree of Vriṇālavana which was known as Bhaṇḍīra.¹³

The Tantric modes also found their way into the Jain Yaksha-worship. The instance of the *Kahārayaṇa Kośa* where a Kāpālika tried to please a Yaksha of the Vindhya-giri, has already been cited.¹⁴ *Kuvalayamāla*¹⁵ tells of Siddhas who held control over *mantra*, *tantra*, Yakshinis and Joginis etc. The *Kahārayaṇa Kosa*¹⁶ also refers to Kālasena of Kalinga who had control over a Yaksha named Lingalaksha. This Kālasena was a master of *Trilokapaisācika Vidyā*. Siddhasena

¹p. 86.

²Coomaraswamy, I, p. 17.

³*Antag.*, p. 7; *Vasudevahindī*, p. 85, refers to Yaksha Sumana and his platform under the Aśoka tree which was called Sumana. The description is similar to that of Yaksha Puṇṇabhadda.

⁴*Piṇḍaniryukti*, p. 83f.

⁵*Av. S.*, I, pp. 268ff, for a reference to this Yaksha, see, *Vividhatīrthakalpa*, 17, p. 29.

⁶*Vip. S.*, p. 86.

⁷*Av. S.*, I, p. 101; *NK*, V, 58, p. 69, also refers to this Jakkha's shrine on the mountain Raivataka in a park Nandanavana in the city Dwārka-purī. This Yaksha is said to have lived exercising self-control and practising penances. cf. also *Av. S.*, II.355ff.

⁸cf. *Uttarādhyayana Tīkā* (Jacobi), p. 39, for *unvalyain* to the Yaksha Mayana; also *niveyanapiṇḍa* to Maṇibhadra, Shah, U.P., *JOI*, III (1), p. 61, note 39.

⁹*Jivandhara Cāmpū* (ed. Jain, P.L., Kashi, 1958), pp. 8-17, shows this Yaksha as a deity of Jivandhara whom he helped in his various military exploits. Candrodaya mountain is mentioned as the abode of this Yaksha.

¹⁰cf. also *Av. S.*, III.504.

¹¹cf. *supra*, p. 50. This Yaksha may as well be Huṇḍika whose temple is mentioned in the *Av. S.*, III.554f; also *Vividhatīrthakalpa*, IX, p. 18.

¹²II, appendix I.21.785-815, pp. 403-4.

¹³A *Yaksha-guhā* at Mathura is known from *Abhindhānarājendra Kośa* sv. Jakkhaguhā.

¹⁴17, p. 126f.

¹⁵Singhi Jaina Series, 45, p. 68; cf. also pp. 14, 115, 119 for Yaksha-worship.

¹⁶V, pp. 27ff.

(1181 AD) similarly refers to the *Pañcaparameshī* mantra which was chief of all the mantras, and could be used against the supernatural beings like Yakshiṇīs and others. This mantra also contained invocations to the 24 Yakshiṇīs.¹

Of all the Jain Yakshas, Mañibhadda and Puṇṇabhadda appear by far the most important in their galaxy.² Their importance surpasses that of Kuvera³ who is their lord. Among the families of Yakshas, and not many are known from the Jain works, the most important reference is to Mañibhadra. Bahuputrikā, who was the consort of Mañibhadra, had an independent *caitya* for herself⁴ near Viśālā, probably Ujjain. In the *Vividhatīrthakalpa*⁵ Mañibhadra along with Naṇḍī, Yaśomitra, Dhanamitra, etc. is an emancipator (*itasyoddhāraḥ*). Whether they were his attendants or companions or kinsfolk is not certain. In the family of Kubera, only Nalakūbara is reported and he was a favourite son; other sons are not mentioned.⁶ In any case, Yakshas held an important status in the Jain texts in keeping with their popular worship.

YAKSHAS IN MEDIAEVAL WORKS

Survival and Resurrection

The mediaeval literary works contain information about various aspects of the Yaksha cult. The details in these works are remarkable inasmuch as they show the status of Yakshas in a period following their fateful trial of strength with a host of other gods or deified personages such as Buddha, Mahāvīra and the Brahmanical gods. These works represent survivals which are impressive. Important Yakshas seem to have never lost their hold over the populace and during the period of ascendance of other cults, they suffered only a temporary set-back. This confrontation, undoubtedly, reduced their status, but it could not obliterate them. The incursions of other gods into the realm of the Yakshas never ceased altogether, but Yakshas had an assured place of their own. In the mediaeval works various new names of Yakshas are come across in addition to those which were already known. A mention may here be made of Kālajihva, Vidyutjihva,⁷ Sthūlaśiras,⁸ Virūpaksha,⁹ Aṭṭahāsa,¹⁰ Supratīka,¹¹ Dīptaśikha,¹² Dhūmaketu,¹³ Sātā,¹⁴ Mañibhadra,¹⁵ Kuvera,¹⁶ Nalakūbara,¹⁷ and Prithūdara,¹⁸ who were Yakshas and

¹Shah, U.P., *Studies in Jaina Art*, p. 102.

²They are Indra of Yakshas. cf. *Av. S.*, I.296. These *Yakshendras* worshipped Mahāvīra at Campā where the latter gave them a discourse on *dharma* and *indriyanigraha*.

³For his worship, see *Av. S.*, III.518; *ibid.*, I.194, refers to the *nagari* of Vaiśramaṇa as twelve *yojana*, long. In the *Kahārayāna Kośa*, pp. 19ff, his *āyatana* is mentioned as situated in Gayā; for his worship and propensities, *ibid.*, pp. 340ff.

⁴*Bhagavati Sūtra*, XVIII.2; cf. also Shah, U.P., *JISOA*, XIX, pp. 40ff; where her various manifestations and identifications have been suggested.

⁵p. 4.

⁶*infra*, chapter 4 Information on this point is however available in other texts.

⁷*Kathāsaritsāgara*, Penzer, VII, 70; *BKM*, 252, 452ff.

⁸*Kathas*, IV, 226.

⁹*ibid.*, III, 133; *BKM*, 203, 547ff.

¹⁰*Kathas*, IV.114; *BKM*, 264f, 272, 277.

¹¹*Kathas*, I, 7.

¹²*BKM*, 264, 277. He is son of Pradīptāksha and brother of Aṭṭahāsa. Yakshiṇīs Jyotirlekhā and Dhūmalekhā (*Kathas*, VI.131) are his daughters.

¹³*Kathas*, VI.130.

¹⁴*ibid.*, I.67.

¹⁵*ibid.*, IX.29; *BKM*, 74. He is brother of Kuvera and husband of Madanmañjarī who is daughter of Dundubhi (*Kathas*, IX.12, 29).

¹⁶*BKM*, Ch. VIII, IX.

¹⁷*Kathas*, VI.102; *BKM*, 174.

¹⁸*Kathas*, VI.102; *BKM*, 264.

Vidyutprabhā,¹ Madanamañjarī,² Śringotpādinī,³ Saudāminī,⁴ Jyotirlekhā and Dhumalekhā,⁵ who were Yakshiṅīs. A Sukumārikā Yakshī is known from the *Bṛhatkathā ślokaśaṃgraha*.⁶

Although the Yakshiṅīs known from these works are very few, they appear to be more important than their male counterparts. One of the reasons for their dignified status may be found in the Tantric practices which embraced the Yaksha cult also.⁷ The associations of such practices with the Yakshiṅīs are marked from around fourth century AD and thereafter.⁸ Yakshiṅīs were generally regarded as beautiful creatures. A Yakshiṅī in the *Kathāsaritsāgara* is described as 'a lady of wonderful beauty, surrounded with a hundred ladies-in-waiting, gleaming with brightness like a protecting herb that shines in the night.'⁹ The *Bṛhatkathā ślokaśaṃgraha*¹⁰ refers to the Yakshiṅī Sukumārikā who was extremely beautiful, but she was changed into a 'picture in colours' due to a curse. Her beauty later redeemed her from her lifeless state. Two beautiful maidens "whose measureless beauty seemed capable of maddening the world," were the wives of the Yaksha Mañibhadra.¹¹ But even in their beauty, they could not shed their demoniacal characteristics.¹² Just as beauty was one of the chief attributes of Yakshiṅīs, that of Yakshas was strength.¹³ They tested the courage¹⁴ of human being and rewarded them on successful completion of such tests. We have the story of Niścayadatta whom the Yakshiṅī Śringotpādinī tried to kill, but could not succeed and was herself overcome.¹⁵ Yakshas are also represented as fighting with human beings and being worsted.¹⁶

Yakshas could assume human form under certain circumstances. One of the reasons for such rebirth or the change in form was 'curse.' Instances of Yakshas being subjected to curse are very frequent in the *Kathāsaritsāgara*.¹⁷ The case of Virūpāksha and his wife is interesting in that under a curse he became a mortal on rebirth, whereas his wife was turned into a mortal without being born; they remarried after their descent to the earth.¹⁸ Sometimes, the Yaksha or Yakshi was delivered from the curse by virtue of marrying mortals.¹⁹ The Yaksha-birth was possible for

¹*Kathas*, II.231.

²*Kathas*, IX.12.31; *BKM*, 414.

³*Kathas*, III.186; *BKM*, 482. 170ff.

⁴*Kathas*, VI.114; VI.102, She is daughter of Prithūdara and is betrothed to Aṭṭahāsa (VI.102); cf. *BKM*, 264, 599ff.

⁵*Kathas*, VI.131.

⁶XIX, 75ff, pp. 292ff.

⁷cf. *Jayākhya Saṃhitā* and *MMK* for such references. A fuller description of Tantra in the Yaksha cult will be found later.

⁸*Kathas*, VIII.56. of also VI.118.

⁹ibid, IX.44.

¹⁰XIX.75ff.

¹¹*Kathas*, IX.29. cf. also, *supra*, p. 46.

¹²*Kathas*, VI.118.

¹³ibid, II.52.

¹⁴ibid, ch. XXV.82-88.

¹⁵ibid, III.186. Niścayadatta and his three other partners were Pāśupata ascetics whom, with exception of Niścayadatta, the Yakshiṅī devoured in the court of an empty Śiva temple in the city of Pushkarāvati. cf. also *BKM*, pp. 481ff.

¹⁶ibid, VI.72; sometimes Yakshas in their turn are helped by the intervention of humans, ibid, IX, 13,

¹⁷ibid, I.7. Supratika was changed into a Piśāca by the curse of Kubera; Yaksha Sāta was turned into a lion by curse of Kubera because he married a Rshi's daughter, I.67; another Yaksha suffered a similar fate, I.109; case of Yakhini Sumitrā, VIII.56; Virūpāksha, III.133; these references show that Yakshas assumed both human and animal forms.

¹⁸*Kathas*, III.133.

¹⁹ibid, Case of Sumitrā who marries Nāgaswāmī. In the *BSS* (XIX, 75ff), Yakshi Sukumārikā marries Manohara, and eventually delivers herself from the curse of Kubera whose consort she had originally been. In the same work (V.309ff.) Pūrṇabhadra and his wife Bhadrāvati are subjected to a curse by Kubera whereupon they assumed the form of elephants.

human beings too. A story is told in the *Kathāsaritsāgara*,¹ of Kamalagarbha, a pious devotee of Śiva, and his two wives who alternated in the Yaksha and human forms in the course of their existence. It is quite possible that such stories present a rationalisation of belief in sexual contacts of Yakshas with human beings, reference to which is found in the Jain works.

The *Kathāsaritsāgara* has the story of a Yaksha who gave his genitals to a prince and was cursed by Bhairava for that reason.² The story of the curse by Bhairava shows how Śaivism was still pursuing the Yakshas. It is found that other cult gods were still trying to assimilate the Yaksha cult. Śiva had the authority to grant Yaksha-birth.³ Sometimes the forsaken Śiva temples were appropriated by Yakshas. The Yakshiṇī Śringotpādini⁴ of Pushkarāvati carried out her cannibalistic feast in such a Śiva temple. She devoured three Pāśupata ascetics before she was outwitted by Niścayadatta. These references indicate the subordination of Yakshas in relation to Śiva. Brahmā too comes in association of Yakshas as the helper of a Yakshī who was being attracted by the charms of a Kāpālika who wanted her.⁵ Viṣṇu is no less important an opponent of the Yakshas. So great was his power that he forced worship from the lord of Yakshas, Kubera.⁶

As regards the relations of Yakshas with other demigods, it seems that their group stood in opposition as a class against them. The Nāgas are represented as the enemies of Yakshas,⁷ and the friendship of a Yaksha with Rākshasa Sthūlaśiras brought the anger of Kubera upon him.⁸ References to some Yaksha temples are found in the *Kathāsaritsāgara*. The temple of a Yakshī is described as a "palace of jewels whose splendour produced the light as of fire."⁹ Another temple of the Yakshiṇī Vandhyā is described as being situated in a garden.¹⁰ But by far the most important references are to the temple of Maṇibhadra¹¹ which served as a place for finding out the depravity of unfaithful husbands and wives. These temples may have contained the images of Yakshas. In one instance, however, reference to an image has been clearly made. It was here that different types of persons worshipped Yakshas and got their wishes fulfilled (on successful completion of their worship). The offerings of gifts were almost essential for pleasing Yakshas. An ascetic desiring to become a Vidyādhara, and Devadatta, a gambler, are described as having gone through the act of worship in a corner of a cemetery under a banyan tree during nights. They offered to the tree, rice boiled in milk till the Yakshī Vidyutprabhā, who dwelt in the tree, granted them their wishes.¹² Some virtues such as the observance of *uposhana*, which involved speaking of the truth, circumambulation of the images of god, eating only at the time when the Buddhist mendicants did, have been prescribed among the acts of devotion to please a Yaksha.¹³ The story has an obvious Buddhist touch. Sometimes minor acts of asceticism pleased Yakshas, which is proved by the case of a Brāhmaṇa Somadatta,¹⁴ who made circumambulation of the

¹*Kathas*, VI.130ff.

²*ibid*, IV.226.

³*ibid*, VI.130.

⁴*ibid*, III.186ff; cf. also *BKM*, pp. 481ff. This Yakshini belonged to Gāndhāra, region. Kashmir region too had certain spots of Yakshas, like Yakshadara in Kramarājya (Modern Dyrargul, according to Stein), and a village Sāritaka, which was the habitat of a Yaksha Aṭṭa. cf. *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, V.87 and III.349 respectively.

⁵*Kathas*, IX.12.

⁶*ibid*, VI.71.

⁷*ibid*, VI.70.

⁸*ibid*, I.9, the story of Piśāca Kaṇabhūti who was banished to the Vindhya mountains. In stature he looked like a *śāla* tree. He was, originally, a servant of Kuvera.

⁹*ibid*, VI.118.

¹⁰*ibid*, IX.44, the temple was dedicated to the Yakshiṇī Vandhyā.

¹¹*ibid*, I.162.

¹²*ibid*, IX.17.

¹³*Kathas*, II.231; *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* (V.87) mentions that coins and dinars were thrown in the streams, connected with Yakshas in token of their honour.

¹⁴*ibid*, V.125.

Aśvattha tree which was the abode of a Yaksha. He remained under the tree for a day and a night, and ultimately the Yaksha was pleased with him.¹

The Tantra had already come to grips with the Yaksha cult in the 4th century AD, and in the *Kathāsaritsāgara*, we have a number of instances of Yakshinis controlled by magic and charms to serve as wives of the person practising them. Sometimes, resort to such practice was made for the sake of obtaining wealth.² A story is also told of a Brāhmaṇa Pavitradhara, who had power over a Yakshini Saudāminī, and obtained wealth through her and lived with her. He is said to have controlled this Yakshi by working on a prescribed charm. That even Brahma could not interfere with the working of a charm is illustrated by the incident involving Mañibhadra's wife Madanamañjarī and a Kāpālika.³ The story is important inasmuch as it presents the different aspects of the belief in *tantra* and its effectiveness on Yakshas.

Among the mediaeval works, the *Kathāsaritsāgara* and the *Bṛhatkathāmañjarī* present various features of the Yaksha cult through anecdotes and stories of folklorist interest. They reflect primarily the beneficent nature of Yakshas. In the entire *Kathāsaritsāgara* we have only one reference to a cannibal Yakshi who ate three Pāśupata devotees.⁴ It appears that this cult was popular among the masses; and various stories about Yakshas found in them, prove this. Another interesting feature of the work is reference to some other lords of Yakshas besides Kuvera.⁵

It is thus seen that the ancient scriptural tradition, both orthodox and heterodox, is replete with references to Yakshas. Generally speaking, the image of the Yaksha reflected in them is tainted with their respective prejudices. By reading this vast material along with that found in the secular texts, one can find that there must have existed a core of the beliefs in Yakshas, parts of which crept into the body of the higher cults and broadly speaking, they are complementary to that which is found in the secular texts also.

¹*Kathas*, II.98.

²*Kathas*, I. 118., where Śrīdatta's uncle brought a Yakshi under control by means of magic and got from her five thousand horses and seventy million gold pieces.

³*ibid.*, IX.12ff also, pp. 29, 31, 35, etc.

⁴*supra*, p. 55.

⁵cf. Ratnavarsha (*Kathas*, II.231) and Dundubhi (*ibid.*, IX.12) are the other kings of Yakshas. Their relation to Kubera is, however, not clear. In the case of Dundubhi, of course, it is said that his daughter Madanamañjarī was married to Mañibhadra, brother of Kubera.

The Yaksha-Pantheon

IN several literary works Yakshas and Yakshiṇis have been enumerated singly or in couples or sometimes mentioned in multitudes. It seems that the Yaksha-pantheon was fairly developed and consisted of various Yaksha-deities of primary or secondary importance. References are also found to the prominent Yaksha *kulas* and their chiefs.¹

The development of the concept of a pantheon and families of Yakshas has its origin in the later Vedic period. The *Atharvaveda*² refers to Yaksha as 'stirring' (*ejate*) and that seems to introduce the feminine aspect of Yaksha. In the texts, however, occurrence of Yakshi's 'being' is not noticed before the Epics and *Jātakas*. In the Purāṇas, there is a reference to the birth of Yakshas from Krodhā, one of the daughters of Daksha; the latter was one of the sons of Brahmā.³ These Yakshas came into existence without the aid of the male-principle. But this idea is not held consistently for, in the Purāṇas themselves Yakshas are said to be progeny of Viśvā and Kaśyapa or Khaśā and Kaśyapa. In any case, some families of Yakshas do occur in the Epics and Purāṇas, which involve an elaborate genealogy.⁴ Similarly the Buddhist works mention a large number of Yakshas or individual Yakshas who were subdued by the Buddha at different times. An attempt to present them systematically has been made in the *Āṭṭhānāṭṭiya Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*. This work refers to fortyone Yakkha chiefs who could be invoked by followers of the Buddha in times of distress.⁵

| | | | |
|-------------|----------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Inda | Gandhabba | Yugandhara | Maṇi |
| Soma | Nala | Gopāla | Maṇicara |
| Varuṇa | Surarāja or Sura & Rāja | Suppagedha | Dīgha |
| Bharādvāja | Janesabha | Hiri | Serissaka |
| Pajāpati | Sātagiri | Hetti | |
| Candana | Hemavata | Mandiya | |
| Kāmasetṭha | Puṇṇaka | Pāncālacaṇḍa | |
| Kinnughaṇḍu | Gula | Pajjunne | |
| Nighaṇḍu | Sivaka | Sumana | |

¹*Lalitavistāra*, ch. 6; *supra*, p. 32f.

²*supra*, p. 19.

³*supra*, p. 6.

⁴*supra*, p. 31f.

⁵*Dialogues*, III, Appendix, p. 266; the actual list given consists only of thirtyseven names. For ten more names, cf. *Kindred Sayings*, I, 262-78.

| | | |
|-----------|------------|------------|
| Mātali | Mucalinda | Sumukha |
| Cittasena | Vessāmitta | Dadhimukha |

This list is, however, by no means complete, and many more names may be added to it.¹ These great Yaksha chiefs, as their status would indicate, were probably groomed for serving the cause of Buddhism. They must have evoked worship. Hence probably the need to elevate their status and fit them into the Buddhist hierarchy.

Some more names of Yakshas and Yakshinis are found in the *Gilgit Buddhist Manuscripts*² and the *Mahāmāyūrī*. The Yakshas described in the former are as follows:

| <i>Yakshas</i> | | <i>Yakshiṇīs</i> | |
|-------------------------|---------|------------------|------------|
| Gardabha | Vana | Ālikā | Meghā |
| Śara | Pāncika | Vendā | Timisikā |
| Kimbhira | Mokhala | Anopamā | Prabhāvati |
| Vraja | Antila | Vimalaprabhā | Bhīmā |
| Anila | Indila | Śrī | Haritā |
| Sandhila | Cidala | Śankhī | Mahādevī |
| Caudhula | Vikala | | |
| Vakkula | | | |
| Mañibhadra and his son: | | | |
| Pūrṇabhadra | | | |

The *Gilgit MSS* (III, 1, p. iii), gives the following additional names of Yakshiṇīs.

- (i) Nālī
(ii) Udaryā } Yakshiṇīs of Nandivardhana in Kashmir
(iii) Kuntī, of Kuntīnagara, in Kashmir.
(iv) A nameless Yakshiṇī

By far the most exhaustive list of the Yakshas is supplied by the *Mahāmāyūrī*, one of the five great formula of northern Buddhism, which goes under the collective name of *Pancarakhā*.³ Regarding the contents of the work it has been remarked that "It (the *Mahāmāyūrī*) is a veritable mobilisation of the Buddhist and popular pantheon. It embraces the Bodhi trees of the seven Buddhas, the four Mahārājas, Naravāhana, son of Kubera, the Yaksha guardians of various cities, the twentyeight Mahāyakshas and a host of female divinities who keep watch over the Bodhisattvas from the period of gestation to birth."⁴

Some more names of Yakshiṇīs are provided by the *Manjuśrīmūlakalpa*⁵ which are as follows: Sulocanā, Śubhru, Susvarā, Sumatī, Vasumatī, Citrākshī, Pūranishā, Guhyakā, Suguhyakā, Mekhalā, Sumekhalā, Padmocchā, Abhayā, Jayā, Vijayā, Revatikā, Keśinī, Keśāntā, Anilā, Manoharā, Manovatī, Kusumavatī, Kusumapuravāsīntī, Pingalā, Hārītī, Viramatī, Virā, Suvirā, Sughorā, Ghorā, Ghorāvati, Surāsundarī, Surasā, Guhyottamārī, Vaṭavāsīnī, Aśokā, Andhārasundarī, Ālokasundarī, Prabhāvati, Atīśayavati, Rūpavati, Surūpā, Asitā, Saumyā, Kāṇā, Menā,

¹cf. *MMK*, I.17; *Lalitavistāra*, p. 202.

²cf. *Gilgit MSS*, III (i), pp. 15ff; I, pp. 29ff; in this text the actual number of the Yaksha-chiefs is ten, although the reference is to twelve; to these ten, may be added Mañibhadra, Pūrṇabhadra and Pāncika whose names occur elsewhere in the same text. cf. *Gilgit MSS*, I, pp. 49, 103; the same text (I, p. 49) refers to eighty Mahāyakshiṇīs without, however, naming them. Among the Yakshas, Pāncika is regarded as distinct from the other twentyeight chiefs, cf. *Lalitavistāra*, p. 202; *Divyāvadāna*, p. 447.

³Agrawala, V.S., *JUPHS*, XV, ii, p. 24.

⁴ibid., pp. 24ff. For the list of these names, see appendix at the end of chapter 9, cf. also the author's paper, *Yakshon ki Nāma Parāmparā* (Hindi) *Bhāshā*, March, 1967.

⁵pp. 20-21; also pp. 564ff.

Nandinī, Upanandinī, Lokāntarā. They are all said to have attended the discourse of the Buddha.

In this vast inventory of names of Yakshas and Yakshiṇīs, it appears surprising that the number of couples is extremely small. Even though there is literary evidence of Yaksha couples, such types are totally unknown in the whole range of early Yaksha iconography except for the tutelary pair of Hārīti and Pāñcika.

Although exhaustive lists of Yakshas are found in various literary texts, they are not adequately classified there. The *Mahābhārata* refers to the *cāturguṇa* Yakshas¹ who figure as protectors. Hopkins includes amongst them Gandharvas, Kimpurushas, Yātudhānas and Rākshasas.² But these evidently are the classes of demi-gods, other than the Yakshas. The Sanskrit Buddhist texts are more useful in this connection. For instance, the *Mahāvastu*³ refers to the three classes of Yakshas namely, Karoṭpāni⁴, Mālādhara and Sadāmatta and also Yambhāka.⁵ The last occurs as Jrimbhaka in the Jain *Sūtra*⁶ and in the *Bhāgavata Purāna*.⁷ The latter work explains that their characteristic trait was yawning, from which the term was etymologically derived. In the Jain works, twelve or thirteen classes of Yakshas are mentioned. But there too the list tends to indicate individuals rather than classes. At the most, it may be accepted that these Yakshas were chiefs of their classes and the latter derived their names from the supreme heads.

In the light of the above evidence, it is possible to reconstruct the Yaksha-panthéon. This can be done on considerations of their royal attributes (Kubera), pairing (Hārīti and Pāñcika), comparative authority (Mañibhadra and Pūrṇabhadra), composite type (Assamukhī) and individual authority (Suciloma, Ajakalāpaka, Vajrapāñi). Some of these Yakshas are discussed below.

VAIŚRAVAṆA-KUBERA

In the literary traditions, these are the two important designations of the same deity; Vaiśravaṇa, because he was son of Viśravas and Iḍaviḍā,⁸ and Kubera, because of his grotesque appearance.⁹

Hopkins¹⁰ derives Kubera from \sqrt{kub} , 'to cover'; so does Bedekar.¹¹ Manfred Mayrhofer explains Kūbara (of Nalakūbara) as belonging to "pre-Aryan Religio-stat." In his opinion, this word, like so many other Indian words, is un-Indo-Germanic and should be traced to 'Austro-Asiatic descent.'¹² The non-Vedic origin of Kubera is often stressed, and it seems that his name as well as the attributes came from the pre-Aryan phase and that he gradually rose to divinity. Other etymological derivations of his name have also been given. Cunningham explained the word Kubera, as *Ku vīra*, *Ku* meaning *earth* and *vīra*, the *hero*, thereby, 'hero of the earth'; on a further analysis the compound *Kubera* or *Kuvīra* can be interpreted as 'one who dominates the earth,' *Kuṃ viśeṣheṇa iratīti Kuveraḥ*.¹³ The Purānic explanation¹⁴ of Kubera makes him out to be

¹III.140.5.

²For some generic expressions for Yakshas, *supra*, p. 2f.

³I.25; *Divyāvadāna*, p. 218.

⁴In the Pali Buddhist texts *Karoṭi* appears as a class of spirits, particularly as a name for *Supaṇṇes*. They were so called because their food and drink were called *Karoṭi*.

⁵*ante*, p. 5 note 4.

⁶Shah, U.P., *JOI*, III, i, p. 56.

⁷The word is from *Jrimbha* 'to yawn,' *BP*, III.20.41; the *Padma Purāna*, *Sriṣṭi Khaṇḍa*, V.21 refers to a *Nairrita* named *Yaksheśa*.

⁸*VP*, 59.90-91; *Br. P.*, 2.33. 98-100; also *R*, VII.3.3; *Atharvaveda*, VIII.10.28. *Mānava GS*, II.14.29; In *D*, iii, 201 he is called *Vessavaṇa* because his kingdom is *Viśāna*; also, *Sn. A*, I, 369.

⁹*supra*, p. 31.

¹⁰Hopkins, E.W., *Journal of American Oriental Society*, XXXIII, 1903, pp. 55-70.

¹¹Bedekar, V.M., *Journal of Ganganatha Jha Research Institute*, XXV, 1-4, pp. 445ff.

¹²cf. Bedekar, V.M., *op. cit.*, p. 446f.

¹³cf. Cunningham, A., *Stupa of Bharhut*, p. 22; also, Barua and Sinha, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

¹⁴*Sivamahāpurāna*, 19.31; *Br. P.*, III.8.40-44; *Vāyu. P.*, III.70.39. However in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, VII.13.22-24, 31, it is said that he winked at Pārvatī as a result of which he lost his left eye and his right eye was turned yellow.

kutsita vigraha, of 'grotesque body.' According to Waddell, however, the name is a compound of *ku*, 'the earth,-*pito*,' 'a grain-basket,' (from *pit*, 'to collect') or *piḍa* (to heap together). Thus, it would mean: The Heaper up of (the produce of) the Earth.' This, according to Waddell, would precisely define his attribute as 'the god of Riches.'¹ In the Buddhist texts, such as the *Lalitavistara*,² sometimes Kubera and Vessavana have been mentioned as distinct from each other.

Originally Kubera appears as the lord of Rākshasas and a malefic deity.³ He is probably represented as *Devasakhaḥ* in the *Śrī Sūkta* of the *Ṛgveda*, and regarded as an important agent in the act of milking *tirodhā* 'concealment,' out of the universe, in the *Atharvaveda*.⁴

The *Aśvalāyana Śrauta Sūtra*⁵ associates him with the Piśācas while the *Śāṅkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra*⁶ couples him with *Īśāna*. In these references, he seems to have been more distinctly associated with the Rākshasas and Piśācas in the beginning, rather than with the Yakshas.⁷ In the Epics, these associations of Kubera are further expanded. These mutually incompatible and multi-lateral aspects of Kubera show that his cult-personality and mythology were in the stage of formation in the later Vedic age. As the lord of Yakshas he appears only in the *Gṛhyasūtras*.⁸ But even after that, in the Epics, his strong affiliation with Rākshasas cannot be ignored. There, in the beginning, he appears as the lord of Rākshasas ruling over Lankā and instrumental in the birth of his other Rākshasa-cousins such as Rāvaṇa, Kuṁbhakarṇa and Vibhīṣhaṇa. It is said that in order to please his father Viśravas, he sent him three Rākshasa maidens, Pushpotkaṭā, Rākā and Mālinī who respectively gave birth to Kumbhakarṇa and Rāvaṇa, Khāra and Śūrpaṇakhā and Vibhīṣhaṇa.⁹ Rākshasas were in Kubera's train of attendants, for which reason he is often called *Rakshasādhipa*, *Yaksharākshadhīpa* and *Rākshaseśvara*.¹⁰ One of the chiefs of Rākshasas, Maṇimat, is his good friend.¹¹ Kubera resided on the Gandhamādana mountain in the company of Rākshasas.¹² Just as he was the lord of Yakshas and Rākshasas, he was the lord of Guhyakas,¹³ Nairritas¹⁴ and Piśācas¹⁵ too.

In the *Mahābhārata* Kubera shares various roles with Indra, particularly the guardianship of the east,¹⁶ abode on Mandara and Gandhamādana, and lordship over riches. Indra is sometimes specially grouped with Kubera-Dhaneśvara.¹⁷ As lord of wealth too Kubera shares the role of Indra with whom he shares also the northern district.¹⁸ As Indra is lord of wealth in the earlier

¹cf. Waddell, *Evolution of the Buddhist Cult*, p. 150f.

²ch. VIII, also *Mahāvastu*, III.71, 81, *Nishpannayogāvalī*, p. 63 distinguishes Dhanada from *Vaiśravaṇa*.

³SB, XIII.4.3.10.

⁴VIII.10.28; also Kunhan Raja, C., *Unpublished Upanishads*, p. 459, for Kubera's association with *Jvara* 'fever.'

⁵X.7.6.

⁶I.II.7.

⁷*Harivaṁśa Purāṇa*, III.60.11ff. for, antipathy of Rākshasas towards Kubera. However, Śukra is his minister, R, VII.15.17.

⁸Keith, A.B., *op. cit.*, p. 242.

⁹*Mbh.*, III.258.15-16; 259.1-8; the former has it that Pitāmaha granted divine status and immortality to Vaiśramaṇa because he deserted his father and stuck to his grand-father Pulastya, the son of, Brahmā. The latter had a son, born of a cow, called Vaiśramaṇa, who deserted his father; to take revenge the father begot of himself another son: viśravas. Pulastya's son, a *muni*, disliked Vaiśramaṇa, the lord of Rākshasas. To win Viśravas's favour, Kubera sent three women who became mothers of his brother Rākshasas. *Mbh.*, III.259.5ff.

¹⁰Hopkins, E.W., *op. cit.*, pp. 144ff. The *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, pp. 6-10 describes a Rākshasa attendant of Kubera and his exploits.

¹¹*Mbh.*, III. 158.54.

¹²PP, *Ādikhaṇḍa*, III.51.

¹³*Mbh.*, III.159.29; R, IV.42.22, cf. also Hopkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 144ff.

¹⁴*Mbh.*, IX.46.27; XII.75.12; R, VIII.3.32.

¹⁵Agrawala, V.S., *Pāṇini*, p. 337.

¹⁶*Mbh.*, III.162.4f; also Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

¹⁷*ibid.*, p. 146.

¹⁸*ibid.*, p. 146; cf. also *Mbh.*, III, ch. 43-44: all the attributes of Kubera are here assigned to Indra.

tradition¹ it appears that Kubera derived this trait from him.²

According to the Purāṇas, Kubera was made the lord of Yakshas by Śiva after great penances at the confluence of the two rivers Kāverī and Narmadā.³ The *Mahābhārata*⁴ seems to provide reason for this choice of spot; it is said in the text that Kubera was born in the hermitage of sage Viśravas which was situated in Avanti on the banks of the holy river Narmadā. On the other hand, the *Mahābhārata* elsewhere says that he was awarded Lankā with its Rākshasas, Pushpaka, the aerial car, lordship over Yakshas, and riches, regency of the northern quarter, friendship with Rudra-Śiva, and Nalakūbara, as a boon by Brahmā.⁵ Of these different possessions, Lankā and the aerial car were snatched from him by Rāvaṇa⁶; as a result, he shifted to Mt. Kailāsa⁷ where Viśvakarmā constructed for him a brilliant palace.⁸

One important aspect of the mythology of Kubera is his proverbial lordship of wealth. He is the possessor of one quarter of wealth of the golden mountain Meru⁹ from which he gives money to human beings. This lordship of wealth he shares with Skanda and the Mothers.¹⁰ The gold of Meru which is possessed by Kubera could make human beings immortal, and enable the blind to see.¹¹ Kubera also has the gold of Jambūnada which "too gives immortality to mortals, restores the sight and gives youth to the old."¹² His different mountains and habitats are golden¹³ and, in the same way, his palaces and doors are all golden and jewelled.¹⁴ His various titles in this connection are *Dhanapati*, *Dhanādhipa*, *Nidhipa*, *Vittapāla*, *Vitteśa* and the like, which may be found in the Epics and Purāṇas in reference to Kubera. In the *Mahābhārata*, even his body is mentioned as golden.¹⁵ It is quite possible that the yellow-complexion of Kubera as known from the Purāṇas may have been alluded to here. His *bhavana*, 'palace,' which was made by Viśvakarmā, shines like white, yellow cloud and is edged with gold.¹⁶ Even his celestial *sabhā* is described as resplendent with lofty halls of gold. It glitters with coloured pearls, and is delightful for its divine fragrance.¹⁷ The *Vāyu Purāṇa*¹⁸ refers to the seven *nidhis* in the *sabhā* of Kubera which was known as *Vipulā* and was situated on Kailāsa.

The realm of Kubera befits its master. According to the *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Uttarakuru* was his habitat and a reference to Nalinī has also been made there.¹⁹ His other habitats are Gandhamādana,²⁰

¹Compare Indra as Dhanada or Dhanapati in the *Rigveda*, I.33.2f; *Atharvaveda*, V.23.2.

²*Mbh.*, V.16.33, says that Indra bestowed wealth and lordship over Yakshas, upon Kubera.

³*PP*, Adikhanda, XVII.4-12. Human-beings converted to gods find mention also in the *Āpastamba Dharma-sūtra*, *Kaṣṭhikā G.S.* and Kubera's name occurs in the list; cf. Bedekar, V.M., op. cit., p. 427.

⁴III.87.1-3.

⁵*Mbh.*, III.258.15-16; IX.46.25-27; *R*, VII.3.15-35.

⁶*R*, VII.11.25-50; *Mbh.*, III.259.32ff.

⁷*R*, VII.11.25-50.

⁸*ibid*, IV.42.20-22.

⁹*PP*, Ādikhanda, III.39-40., *Mbh.*, VI.7.8.

¹⁰*Mbh.*, III.219; Hopkins, op. cit., p. 145.

¹¹*Mbh.*, III.247.8f; V.109.20-21.

¹²*ibid*, V.109.20-21; 62.22-25 or it is honey? As giver of money, he appears in *Kahārayaṇakośa*, p. 340.

¹³*ibid*, XIII.20.28; IV.42.19ff; VI.7.2.8.

¹⁴*ibid*, XIII.20.27-34.

¹⁵*ibid*, III.158.27.

¹⁶*R*, IV.42.19ff; cf. also, *Mahāvastu*, III.73.

¹⁷*Mbh.*, II.10.1-4.

¹⁸p. 130. cf. also *Ep. Ind.*, VII.119, inscription no. 729, which refers to Rajendra Coḷadeva I, having conquered the principal mountains which contained nine treasures of Kubera. cf. also *R*, VII.15.16 for Padma and Sankha as personified treasures of Kubera. The *Mark. P.*, pp. 415ff. contains the description of the different *nidhis* with each one's powers.

¹⁹*R*, I.28.26. For a vivid description of Uttarakuru, its cities, lakes, parks, inhabitants and assembly—halls, cf. *Ātānāṭiya Sutta*, *Dialogues*, III.199ff; *Sn. A.*, I.369 for Viśāna, the capital of Kubera.

²⁰*Mbh.*, III.157.34ff; 155.36ff.

Kailāsa,¹ Mandara,² etc. He is said to have shifted to Gandhamādana after being ousted from Lankā by Rāvaṇa.³ It also appears as the abode of Indra.⁴ The place is full of groves of *deodars* and *kadalī*.⁵ Mandāra has been described as lying east of Meru (and also towards its north, south and west).⁶ Hopkins has said that "it is more regularly an eastern hill and probably modern Mandaragiri near Bhagalpur." Its 'western' location implies that its roots extend to the western ocean.⁷ However, Kailāsa has been regularly associated with Kubera. As we have seen, he shifted to this mountain when he was driven out from Lankā by Rāvaṇa.⁸ Kailāsa is situated in the north,⁹ and here the Caitraratha grove was the place where Kubera was consecrated as *Dhanada*. On this mountain is situated the legendary Alakāpuri which has been beautifully described in the *Meghadūta* of Kālidāsa as sitting on the lap of Kailāsa as if its dress: Gangā had slipped off its beautiful body.¹⁰ This was the city of sports and lyrical romance where, besides Yakshas, Kubera also resided.¹¹ The maidens of this celestial city were famous for their beauty¹² and were adept in the erotic art.¹³ The city had Citraratha¹⁴ (Vaibhrāja) grove, the Kalpavṛksha,¹⁵ and beautiful houses; typical among them is the house of the Yaksha who was separated from his beautiful Yakshiṇī¹⁶ as a result of a punishment inflicted by Kubera. The Nandana,¹⁷ Nalinī and Mandākini¹⁸ are the lakes and groves of Kubera. The possessions of Kubera were manifold. He had a special chariot like mountain peaks in height; his horses were endowed with all the noblest qualities and had clear eyes.¹⁹ A mango 'atulaṃba' of Kubera is known from the *Jātakas*.²⁰ He possessed a special weapon, *gadāvudha*, which was like a boomerang.²¹ Kubera is called *Gadādhara* in the *Rāmāyaṇa* also.²² In the *Harivaṃśa purāṇa*,²³ his club is said to have been composed of nails, 'bahukaṅṭakām.' He is also said to have granted a *divyāstra* to Arjuna.²⁴

The family of Kubera seems to have been large. The epics refer to Riddhi²⁵ and Bhadrā²⁶ as

¹ibid, IV.151.1ff; XIII.20.1ff.

²ibid, V.108.9-10.

³ibid, III.259.32ff.

⁴Hopkins, op. cit., p. 10.

⁵*Mbh.*, III.155.36ff; III.157.34ff, VI.7.32ff.

⁶Hopkins, op. cit., p. 10.

⁷ibid, p. 10.

⁸*R.*, III.46. 4.5; VII.11.25-50.

⁹*Mbh.*, XIII.20.7.

¹⁰I.63; II.1-12, Alakapuri is *Vasavaukasarā* in *Rāmāyaṇa*, II.88.26; cf., *Ep. Ind.*, XV, 361, where Lokkigundi town of Vikramāditya VI is compared to the realm of Kubera.

¹¹*Meghadūta*, II.10.

¹²*Meghadūta*, II.3-6.

¹³ibid, II.10.

¹⁴ibid, II.8. This grove is also known as *Caitraratha* (*R.*, II.85.45.) because it was built by Citraratha for Kubera. The leaves of the grove are jewels, and fruits are girls from heaven. Hopkins, op. cit., p. 142; cf. also *R.*, II.85.16.

¹⁵*Meghadūta*, II.11.

¹⁶ibid, II.12.

¹⁷*Mbh.*, III.44.3ff.

¹⁸ibid, XIII.20.7; III.152.10. Anotatta is his lake in the Buddhist works. All these were heavily guarded. *Mbh.*, III.151-52.

¹⁹*Mbh.*, III.158.23-26.

²⁰IV.205.

²¹*Sn. A.*, I.225, the *Mahābhārata*, III.1702, calls his favourite weapon *ashṭapriya*.

²²VII.15.16.

²³III.60.47.

²⁴*Mbh.*, III.42.34.

²⁵*Mbh.*, III.140.7; V.115.9. The *Nārada Purāṇa* (84.12) suggests Śrī as the consort of Kubera. cf., Bedekar, *V.M.*, op. cit., p. 441 note 93, *Mark. P.*, p. 638, couples Kuvera, Lakshmi and Nidhi together while referring to a particular penance *Kim icchakaḥ*, "whatever one wants I will give," a penance in which one binds one's self to satisfy the wish of any applicant.

²⁶*Mbh.*, I.198.6. (Gita Press)

his wives. The wives of Kubera were beautiful.¹ Bhadrā may be yet another name of Lakshmi who, with Nalakūbara, adorned Kubera's court.² At one place in the *Mahābhārata*, Ashtāvakra blesses Kubera saying *riddhimāna bhava*, which may indicate that Riddhi was still in process of being accepted as the wife of Kubera.³ The Buddhist works refer to Bhuñjati⁴ as his wife from whom he had five daughters, Latā, Sajjā, Pavarā, Acchimatī, and Sutā who were all married to Sakka.⁵ Among the sons of Kubera, Nalakūbara and Manigrīva are mentioned. An interesting legend indicating Krishṇa's supremacy over them is found in the *Bhāgavata*.⁶ According to this legend, these two brothers were once engaged in water-sport with their females, naked and drunk, and did not notice the arrival of Nārada. They were cursed to become trees from which state they were delivered only when the child Krishṇa uprooted them while playing. The Tibetan Buddhist works refer to Nakula's (Na-lo-kiu-po) birth which filled with joy a course of gods.⁷

Commenting upon Nalakūbara, Hopkins says "Nala is *nara*, a spirit of water."⁸ Mayrhofer is of the opinion that *nala* probably means a 'son'; Emeneau, says that *nal* means 'good' in South Indian languages and 'when applied to persons or action of persons, connotes excellence, virtue, propriety or beauty.' He suggests that 'Nala' is a formation with Sanskrit primary derivative suffix-a from this south Dravidian base (*nal*), and that the meaning is 'the good man' or less probably 'the handsome man.'⁹ Kūbara and Kubera are distinctly related, hence the name Nalakūbara. In the *Uttarādhyayana Sūtra*, Nalakūbara is mentioned as possessed of 'pleasing manners.'¹⁰ Nalakūbara is represented as the husband of Rambhā, the Apsaras,¹¹ and it is said that he was endowed with the qualities of *dharma*, strength, anger and *kshānti*.¹² The Purāṇas represent him as the son of Kubera from Riddhi.¹³ Various other Indra-named powerful sons of Kubera are also known.¹⁴ Puṇṇaka, the master of a celestial horse as well as a jewel of extraordinary merit, was the nephew of Kubera.¹⁵ In the *Mahāmāyūrī* (I. 40.54) he is mentioned as one of the four great Yaksha Chiefs who guarded the eastern quarter; the other Chiefs are Dīrgha, Sunētra and Kapila. Pūṇaka is identified as a figure of local stories of eastern India for in the *Gāthā* (44) of a *Jātaka* Puṇṇaka calls himself a person from the East.¹⁶

One of the aspects of Kubera which is constantly noticed in literature and art is his lasciviousness. This trait of his character has nothing to do with his otherwise pious attitude. In fact, he is reputed for his penances and austerities in the epics and Purāṇas. He hallowed the spot where he practised penances, and it came to acquire the name of *Kauberatīrtha*.¹⁷ Yet another place of this kind was the confluence of the Kāverī and the Narmadā, evidently modern Onkāreśwara (Onkar Mandhata) near Khandwa (M.P.).¹⁸ He is a great scholar of Dharma,¹⁹ and lectures

¹*Mbh.*, III.249.3 (in connection with Draupadī's beauty).

²*ibid.*, II.10.18.

³*Mbh.*, XIII.20.27; cf. also Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

⁴*D.*, II.270.

⁵*Vy. A.*, p. 131f; *Sn. A.*, I.370-1 for a sister of Kubera.

⁶X.9-10.

⁷Waddell, L.A., *Evolution of Buddhist Cult*, p. 146 note 3, quoting Beal.

⁸Quoted by Bedekar, V.M., *op. cit.*, p. 446.

⁹*ibid.*, p. 447.

¹⁰p. 117.

¹¹*R.*, VII.26.14ff; 31-56; *Mbh.*, III.264.58ff.

¹²*R.*, VII.26.33-34, A monkey-son, Gandhamādana is also ascribed to Kubera, *R.*, I, n. 12.

¹³*Vāyu Purāṇa*, p. 290.

¹⁴*D.*, II.253f.

¹⁵cf., *Vidhurapaṇḍita Jātaka*, no. 545.

¹⁶cf., *CII*, II, (2), p. 148 note 2.

¹⁷*Mbh.*, IX.46.22-27; an *āyatana*, 'temple,' of Kubera at Gayā has been mentioned in the *Kahārayana Kośa*, pp. 19ff. This temple reminds one of the *cetiya* of Pūrṇabhadra, and had all the similar accessories including the *prithvī-silāpatta*, 'the worship platform.'

¹⁸*PP*, Adikhanda, 17.1-20; *MP*, 188.6, 12.

¹⁹*VP*, p. 290. It is said here that he was like Rishi in the knowledge of Vedas. cf. *R.*, VII.3.1-6.

Pāṇḍavas¹ and Dhruva² on it. He had a discourse with Mucukunda on the unity of Brāhmaṇas and Kshatriyas and how that helps in prosperity of the state.³ His knowledge of understanding of ethics does not, however, seem to influence his conduct. The scarce Apsarās such as Mīśrakeśī, Rāmbhā, Cārunetrā, Ghritācī, Menakā and a number of others adorned his assembly.⁴ While adoring Śiva he does not forget to look at the beauty of Umā,⁵ for which he incurs the goddess's wrath. The *Śiva Mahāpurāṇa* relates that he was born as a Brahmana, Guṇanidhi, in the city of Kāmpilya. As he was incorrigibly ill-natured, he was turned out of home by his father. But, later, he pleased Śiva by his austerities. When Śiva along with Pārvatī appeared before him to bless him, he winked at the goddess. Angered, the goddess cursed him to turn yellow in half of his body, including the offending eye. But Śiva granted him the boon to be his friend, besides being the lord of Yakshas and a place near Kailāsa.⁶ He had his eye upon even mortal women's beauty. In the *Yaśastilaka* of Somadeva, we have the instance of Sudattā, a maiden in her nuptial attire, wandering about in the universe and disapproving suitors for her hand on various grounds. She tells Kubera that a confirmed drunkard like him was not fit to converse with a maiden like her.⁷ The sculptures of Kubera also bear out this trait of drunkenness.

This lord of Yakshas had various attendants who lived an equally fabulous life; for instance, Brahmadhāna,⁸ Maṇibhadra (who is also a Yaksha-chief) and the Yaksha of *Meghadūta*. The opulence and beauty of the last Yaksha's possessions are vividly described in the *Meghadūta*.⁹ Kubera's many *senāpatīs* fought for him and preserved his power.¹⁰ Some Buddhist works refer to his *senāpatīs* who presided over the court, during eight days of each month, specially for settling the disputes of Devas.¹¹ Janavasabha¹² and Bimbisāra¹³ (after his death) were some of the important Yakshas who served him in various capacities. He is a hard taskmaster, and some Yakshiṇīs served their arduous and exacting terms for him which sometimes even resulted in death.¹⁴ Any dereliction of duty was severely punished. The *Meghadūta* has an instance of the Yaksha who failed to do his duty and was cursed by him.¹⁵ Sometimes the Yakshas were rewarded for faithful performance of their duties.¹⁶ Kubera has in his service not only Yakshas but also Rākshasas and Gandharvas.¹⁷ His floating palace is carried by Guhyakas and he sits there clothed in jewels and surrounded by many women.¹⁸ The *Mahābhārata* also refers to Dhanada, Hemanetra, Pingala and Amogha as Kubera's servants, and Hopkins has remarked that "their names are his own or convey his attributes."¹⁹ Kubera is also called *Narāvāhana*²⁰ or *Nārīvā-*

¹*Mbh.*, III.159.1ff.

²*BP*, IV.12.2.

³*Mbh.*, Śānti Parva, 75.3. ff.

⁴*Mbh.*, II.10.9-12; III.156.25; XIII.20.19-20.

⁵*Śiva Mahāpurāṇa*, XIX.16f. In the *R*, VII.13.30-31, the story finds an earlier mention. Kubera, it is said there, earned the curse because he pried at Umā with his left eye.

⁶*Śiva Mahāpurāṇa*, Srishti Khaṇḍa, ch. 19ff.

⁷Handiqui, K.K., p. 84. The *Mark. P.*, p. 475, relates about the wine-cup which Kubera gave to Caṇḍikā, when she received gifts from several other gods.

⁸*VP*, 47.18.

⁹II.12-17.

¹⁰*infra*, under Subsidiary Yaksha Chiefs.

¹¹*Sn. A.*, I.197; *Jātaka*, VI.133.

¹²*D*, II.207.

¹³*D*, II.206.

¹⁴*Dh. A.*, I.173; *J*, IV.492; IV.305.

¹⁵*Meghadūta*, I.1.

¹⁶*J*, III.201; IV.298.

¹⁷*Mbh.*, Udyoga Parva, 109.8; XIII.20.21.

¹⁸*ibid.*, II.10.3; *R*, IV.42.22.

¹⁹Hopkins, E.W., *op. cit.*, p. 144.

²⁰*Mbh.*, III.156.25; 168.13; V.193.30.

hana.³ As Hopkins has observed "It is just when he rides his (*Pushpaku*) car that he is described as Naravāhana and as he is never described as being carried by men it is clear that *naras* are spirits."⁴ The *naras* are variously described in the epics⁵ as a special kind of Gandharvas, '*narā nāma*.' It is interesting, as Hopkins has indicated, that 'this epithet is rare in the *Rāmāyana* but common in the *Mahābhārata*, especially in the later passages.'⁶ His mount is sometimes an elephant called *sārvabhauma*,⁷ a feature which Indra also shares. In many sculptures, Kubera is shown riding a man as, for instance, in the Bharhut sculpture of this Yaksha (labelled there as *Kupiro Yakho*).

In spite of such an important status, Kubera was himself dominated by other important divinities. Kubera is himself a *Bhagavāna*⁸ but he worships other deities all the same. With Brahmā he is directly connected through Pulastya and Viśravas and he is often represented in the Epics and Purāṇas as worshipping and receiving boons from him. According to the *Mahābhārata*⁹ Brahmā granted him his wish to befriend Rudra. Kshemendra in his *Samayamātrikā*,¹⁰ however, says that all the affluence of Kubera has no meaning for an austere deity like Śiva and one cannot understand the utility of this friendship at all. Kubera's associations with Rudra-Śiva are extensive. Śiva granted him overlordship of Yakshas. He was present in the *sabhā* of Kubera along with Umā.¹¹ When Ūshanas steal Kubera's wealth, he runs to Śiva for help.¹² In the Buddhist works Kubera is represented as hearing with respect the discourse of the Buddhist monks¹³ and protecting the disciples of Buddhism.¹⁴ In the Jain works he appears as a devotee of Mahāvīra. Kubera is represented as guarding the *devanirmita* Stūpa of Mathura.¹⁵

Regarding the time-span of Kubera's overlordship, the Buddhist works present Vessavana's place as an *office* which changed its occupants from time to time.¹⁶ But in the sacred Lāmā text, *Padamasambhava*, he is described as having perennial youth.¹⁷ In the Brahmanical tradition also he is immortal, although a story of his birth as a Brāhmaṇa of Kampila is found in the *Śiva Mahāpurāṇa* (Shrīṣṭikhaṇḍa, XIX.17ff.)

One of the most important functions of Kubera was the guardianship of the northern quarter in the Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain cosmology. The antiquity of the *Dikpālas* goes back to the Vedic period, but at that time Kubera fails to be mentioned as one of the guardians.¹⁸ He makes his appearance in the *Jātakas*¹⁹ as the guardian of the northern quarter, and this popular tradition seems to have been accepted later, on all hands. Thus, he is one of the *Caturmahārājika* gods, guarding the north: the other gods are Dhatarat̥tha, Virūḍaka and Virūpakka.²⁰ In the

³Sn. A., I.370. This is twelve *yojanas* long and its seat is of coral. *Bu. A.*, p. 249; In the *D.*, III.200, the *Uttarakurus* are mentioned as employing men, women, young boys and maidens as *yākanas*. Kubera is the lord of *Uttarakurus*.

⁴Hopkins, E.W., op. cit., p. 145.

⁵*Mbh.*, II.10.14.

⁶Hopkins, E.W., op. cit., p. 145.

⁷*Rāmāyana*, IV.43.34; V.4.19.

⁸*Mbh.*, Udyoga Parva, 193.47, 49; VI.7.21.

⁹IV.26.

¹⁰*ibid.*, II.10.20; III.258.16; R, VII.13.25-31.

¹¹*ibid.*

¹²*Mbh.*, XII.278.8-12, particularly, 12.

¹³*Gradual Sayings*, IV.35 and 111.

¹⁴*D (Ājānāyīya Sutta)*, III.195, *Dialogues*, III.189.

¹⁵*Vividha-Tīrthakalpa*, pp. 17-18.

¹⁶J, I.182; also, *Siddhānta Saṅgraha* of Narendrasena, VIII.137, p. 201.

¹⁷Bhattacharya, A.K., *Origin and Development of Concept of Yaksha*, p. 1. We got the reprint of this paper from Prof. K.D. Bajpai but the place of publication could not be verified from it.

¹⁸Gopinath Rao, T.A., *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, II, p. 515. He wrongly says that Kubera figured there in the list of the *Dikpālas*.

¹⁹J, II.271-2; III.165-166; V.12; VI.107.

²⁰*Mahāvastu*, III.217, 309; *Lalitavistara*, ch. XXIV; *Divyāvadhāna*, p. 147.

developed concepts of these guardians in the Buddhist works, Mañibhadra is also associated with Kubera as a chief of Yakshas in the guardianship of the northern quarter.¹ The Jain works seem to follow the stereotyped list of the later Hindu mythological texts.² In the Jain cosmology, Kubera, the guardian god, is referred to as living on the Vijayārdha *parvata* of Himalayas.³ The *Arthasāstra* of Kautilya, in the chapter on *Durganiveśa*, recommends building the temples of these guardian deities in the northern sector of the town. The deities are described as Aparājita, Jayanta, Apratihata, Vaijayant, Śiva, Vaiśravaṇa and Āśvins. The gods of this list differ from those of all the other lists. The worship of Kubera as *Mahārāja* finds mention as early as Pāṇini. He⁴ clearly refers to the *bhakti* of Mahārāja who is styled as a *devatā*.⁵ Patañjali has added to it that 'bali' offered to Mahārāja was called *mahārāja-bali*.⁶ These grammarians, however, do not assign any region to Kubera. In the Epics also, we find him assigned to the northern regions⁷ although he guards the east with Indra according to some references.⁸

Kubera enjoyed wide popularity and worship, and his images are quite numerous. As a *laukika*, (folk) god, distinguished from *Vaidika* (*Vedic*) god, he received worship in his exclusive temples where various kinds of musical instruments were played in the assemblage of the worshippers.⁹ His images are also referred to as having a 'raised pedestal,' *Utthitā āsakā vaiśravanasyeti*.¹⁰ Offerings were made to him as *Mahārāja*.¹¹ The *Śāṅkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra*¹² refers particularly to Kubera and Mañibhadra, under the Bhūtas, and suggests an offering of meat, sesamum seeds and flowers to them.

Kubera did not remain confined to the religious system of India alone; he is worshipped in various other forms in different countries.¹³

The different iconographic texts describe Kubera-Vaiśravaṇa as one of the *lokapālas*.

The texts describe mainly two types of his images, viz., four-armed and two-armed. One of such early texts, the *Vishṇudharmottara Purāṇa*¹⁴ says that his images should be made with the following characteristics. "He should be pot-bellied, four-handed, wearing *udīcyā veshā*, 'northern dress,' with armour over the body. On his bearded face, two fangs should be shown. He should hold mace and spear in the right hands and jewel (or pot of jewels) and a pot (of riches) in the left hands. Riddhi, his consort, should be shown seated on his left lap." The attributes of Riddhi and the Śankha and Padma *nidhis* have also been described. His left eye, it is said, should be yellowish-brown in colour.¹⁵ This reminds us of Parvati's curse on him as a result of which one

¹*Lalitavistara*, ch. XXIV., also *Manu Smṛti*, V.96. For the northern quarter, for details cf. Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, pp. 519ff.

²cf. Bhattacharya, B.C., *Jain Iconography*, pp.147-57; Jain, J.C., *Life in Ancient India*, p. 218 note 201 refers to the festivals in honour of Kubera known as Vessamanamaha, and quotes from *Jivābhigama*, 3, p. 281, referring to Kubera as guardian of the northern direction.

³*Siddhāntasāra Saṁgraha*, p. 159 (translation).

⁴cf. Agrawala, V.S., *Panini*, p. 359.

⁵*Sutra*, IV.2.35.

⁶Agrawala, V.S., *Panini*, p. 359.

⁷*Mbh.*, XIII.20.1ff; (Kailāsa, situated towards north) *R*, VII.3.15-17.

⁸*Mbh.*, III.162.4f; Hopkins, op. cit., p. 142.

⁹Agrawala, V.S., loc. cit., p. 337.

¹⁰ibid, p. 337.

¹¹ibid, p. 359.

¹²Coomaraswamy, A.K., I, p. 4.

¹³As *lokapāla* his worship spread to Khotan with the spread of Buddhism. cf. Stein, A., *Ancient Khotan: Serindia*, p. 870, quoted by Coomaraswamy, I, p. 6 note 4, for his workshop in China, Japan, Tibet and Nepal, cf. Clark, W.E., *Two Lamaistic Pantheons*, II, pp. 98, 178, quoted by Bhattacharya, B., *Buddhist Iconography*, p. 361 note 2. In the Tibetan Tantric texts Kubera finds an important place in sorcery and exorcism, cf. Bhattacharya, A.K., op. cit., p. 1.

¹⁴III.53.1-14.

¹⁵cf. also Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p. 339f. and 528f; Rao, T.A.G., *Hindu Iconography*, II, Part II, pp. 535ff. The reason for such prescription as regards the eyes should be found in the story of *Śiva Mahāpurāṇa*, *supra*, p. 64.

of his eyes had turned yellowish. According to the *Rūpamaṇḍana*, Kubera's images should be four-armed and he should be shown holding a club, *nidhi*, citrus and a water-vessel in his different hands.¹ The *Aparājitapricchā*'s description of Kubera is identical.² There are other texts dealing with the two-armed variety of his images. According to the *Brihatsamhitā*³ Kubera should be shown mounted on a human being, should be pot-bellied and have a crown placed on the left side of his head. The prescription of the *Matsya Purāṇa*⁴ is almost similar, with certain additions such as huge body, pot-belly, holding mace, attended by the Guhayakas and eight *nidhis*, wearing *Kuṇḍala*, *sitāmbara*, *hāra*, *keyūra* and *mukuṭa*. One of the earliest iconographic description of Kubera is to be found in the *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, *Parisishṭa*, which describes him as of golden colour, master of *nidhis*, riding on a horse and holding arrow or spear.⁵ According to the *Amśumadbhedāgama*, Kubera should be two-armed, with hands in the *abhaya* and *varada mudra* or, alternatively, holding a club in the left hand. His *vāhana* here is a ram; also recommended were his consorts and two *nidhis* Śankha and Padma, *-bhūtākāraṃ mahābalaṃ* 'in the form of powerful Bhūtas.'⁶ According to the *Suprahedāgama*, this god should have a terrifying appearance, two arms, and hold a club in one of his hands. The *Śilparatna* lays stress on his friendship with Hara (Siva).⁷ He was to be shown riding a chariot drawn by men. He should hold a mace in one of his hands, should be pot-bellied, accompanied by *Aṣṭanidhis* and *Guhyakas* on all sides. The *Pūrvakāraṇa* describes Kubera as *Naravāhana*, accompanied by Śankha and Padma *nidhis*, and holding a club.

Thus, the iconographic prescriptions for Kubera's images present a considerable variety, recommending *udīcyavēsha* or such attributes as mace, spear, club, arrow or the *nidhis*. Among the *vāhanas* (mounts), mention is made of horse, elephant and ram and a human being. The *Brihatsamhitā*, as shown above, prescribes that the crown of Kubera should be shown on the left side of his head, which reminds us of Manibhadra's title *parśvamaulī*.⁸ The *Vishṇudharmottara* lays emphasis on his yellow left eye, preserving the story of Kubera's encounter with Umā, mentioned earlier. These features are evidently based on his early sculptures and to some extent, the substance of his mythology has also been retained there. His images illustrate the points.

Among Yaksha statues, his images are easily the largest in number, and belong to a fairly extended time-span.⁹ Yet, it is surprising that among the Maurya-Śunga phase, Kubera's representations are rare. Even the recently discovered colossal Yaksha statue from Vidisha¹⁰ must be identified with Manibhadra¹¹ rather than with Kubera. The *Rāmāyaṇa*¹² refers to the elephant-mount of Kubera, and the Yaksha images with elephant could represent Kubera. In the mediaeval sculptures this feature occurs prominently. An early example of this sort is the Moosanagar Yaksha-relief [Fig. 1] now in the State Museum, Lucknow. (no. 53. 123) But the argument

¹cf. *Rūpamaṇḍana*, II.37. He is described as *naravāhana* (or *gajāruḍha*, seated on an elephant, according to *pāṭhabheda*).

²ch. 213. 15, p. 545.

³LVIII.57. For his mountain temples designated as Meru, *Meru* and *Kṛilāsa*, *ibid*, LVI.17-21.

⁴260.20-22.

⁵Bhattacharya, T.P., *The Canons of Indian Art*, p. 494, table, XII; cf. also p. 326 for the date of this work which is assigned to the latest part of the *Sūtra* period.

⁶Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p. 528f.

⁷*ibid*, Siva's and Vaiśravaṇa's temples are mentioned together in *Arthaśāstra* (II.4.17) and *Pāṇini*, Agrawala, *Pāṇini*, p. 363.

⁸*infra*, under Subsidiary Yaksha Chiefs.

⁹also, Basarh, *ASIAR*, 1903-4, p. 106; Devalpūr, *ibid*, 1905-6, p. 123; Mirpur Khas, *ibid*, 1909-10, p. 76; Osia, *ibid*, 1906-7, p. 42; Sehetā-Mahet, *ibid*, 1907-8, p. 127; Saīdpur, *ibid*, 1914-15, p. 93 Pl. 58; Sarnath, *ibid*, 1907-8, p. 66; 1914-15, p. 104; Shāh-jī-ki-Dherī, *ibid*, p. 53, Pl. 14b; Trīkṛtī-Bahī, *ibid*, p. 53, Pl. 14, 1910-11, p. 37, Pl. 22 Satna, *ibid*, 1925-26, Pl. LIX, p. cf. also *JUPHS*, II, 21; *Indian Archaeology: A Review*, 1958-59, p. 58.

¹⁰Bajpai, K.D., *JMPHS*, II, 1960, p. 19; Prāmōdā Chandra *Ars Orientalis*, VI, 1968, pp. 157-63; Agrawala, R.C., *Lalit-Kalā*, 14, p. 47, fig. 2.

¹¹*infra*, chapter 6.

¹²IV.43.34; V.4.19.

cannot be stretched too far, because at Bharhut there are inscribed Yaksha-reliefs having elephant as the Yakshas' mount, and the Yakshas there are specifically not Kubera. The first distinctive image of Kubera is from a Bharhut railing-pillar. Here, he has been shown standing on a crouching, grotesque, male dwarf. Kubera's hands are in the *namaskāra mudrā*, pose of supplication, held up to the chest and his left foot is firmly put on the left shoulder of a dwarf while the right leg is a little raised on its toes. He wears a beautiful, turban, a *dhotī* to the knees, with the frill falling to the legs. His ornaments consist of heavy *kuṇḍalas*, three-leafed *aṅgada*, 'armlets', and bangles. An *uttariya-paṭa* falls gracefully from his left shoulder.¹ The inscription at the top of the figure reads *Kupiro Yakho*, the Yaksha Kubera.² [Fig. 42]

Mathura,³ as a single important centre of art, has yielded the largest number of Kubera images. These in the time range of the Kushana to the Mediaeval period presents Kubera alone, (C. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 18, 31, Kt. 55; 138, 240 etc.) or with his consort Hārīti (C. 12, 27, 28, 29; 1694 etc.) or consorts (C. 30) and with a number of devotees (C. 8). The oft-presented objects in the hands are cup and goblet or purse, but nectar-(wine?) vessel (C. 8; 1538) mongoose, (240, 242, 528), lotus-flower (594), *bijaurā*, 'lemon,' and staff (613) are also found. He is sometimes shown holding his hands in the *abhaya mudrā* (613, 1538, 1506). His different sitting postures are found in a variety of forms in his sculptures belonging to the Gupta period, for example, *Bhadrāsana* (1337), European fashion '*Pralambhapādāsana* (1103), or sitting on Kailāśa (C. 9, 138, 254; 1118). The last group of the Mathura sculptures belongs to the mediaeval period.

Among these Mathura images, some need detailed treatment. In one relief [Fig. 2] Kubera is represented as a tree deity, standing under a *Kadamba* tree. He holds a peculiar object in his right hand. This object has lines in a square-board pattern in the appearance of a *caupada*, a game of dice. He holds a purse in his left hand and with these two objects portrays his power over the game of chance. A simpler version of this is found in another free-standing image which has Kubera having the right hand in the *abhaya mudra* and carrying a purse in the left hand. [Fig. 3] In another relief, which is the part of a *torana*, Kubera is shown offering prayers to some deity (not shown here). A dwarf Yaksha attendant is carrying the basketful of flowers meant for offering [Fig. 4]. Kubera's veneration towards the Buddha is well-known, and the instance of the Yaksha of the *Meghadūta* has it that Yakshas gathered flowers for their lord. The *Meghadūta* and its commentaries record beliefs about Yakshas that were prevalent during that time and before it. And a representation of the theme is to be seen in this relief of the Kushana art of Mathura. In another sculpture [Fig. 5] Kubera has been shown holding a purse in his left hand and the right hand, broken, seems to have been held in the *abhaya mudrā*. A mass of flames is shown rising from the shoulders and the head. Coomaraswamy has commented that the 'flames represent fiery energy inherent in a King.'⁴ Later on, this trait was absorbed in the sculptures of Agni.⁵ Some of the sculptures of Kubera represent him as grinning (1432, 1524). The Mathura art presents Kubera as drinking wine in the company of women. In one such example [Fig. 6] Kubera is shown with a group of six persons. Kubera is seated on a rock. Of the other figures on this piece, there are two males, two females and a child. Kubera is drinking from a handled cup, and the female is offering him wine in another similar cup. Behind this female figure, there is another female holding a long-necked bottle. Both these female figures are clad in long-sleeved jackets, skirts and plump shoes which are obviously foreign.

"On the opposite side of the block we find the fat man again in a state of helpless intoxication

¹cf. Barua, *Barhut*, II, pp. 58ff; Barua and Sinha, no. 174.

²Lüders *List*, no. 794 and references there.

³Agrawala, V.S., *Catalogue of Mathura Museum, JUPHS, XXII (1949)* under *Kubera* and *Yakshas* and *Bacchanalian group*. The numbers refer to the sculpture in the Museum so numbered.

⁴Coomaraswamy, A.K., I, p. 7.

⁵*Ainśumadbhedāgama* describes ram as *vāhana* of Kubera. This, incidentally, is the *vāhana* of Agni also in the later iconography. Gopinath Rao, *op. cit.*, p. 523f.

seated on probably a low rock in the centre in *lalitāsana*. His right arm is held by a female figure wearing Greek costume and his left hand by the male figure.² Agrawala says that although the basic idea behind such sculptures may be similar to the Greek Bacchanalian sculptures, in the Indian iconic tradition the association of Kubera with wine and women is clearly found.³

An inscribed sculpture⁴ of Kubera from Maholi near Mathura gives epigraphic proof of his worship. Kubera here holds in the right hand a lemon, and in the left a goblet. A halo is shown behind his head, and prominent moustaches are also shown. The inscription on the image reads: *Mahārājagrihaḥ yakshaḥ dharmānityo vijñāpayati kare devaprasādaḥ*. [Fig. 7]. A reference here may also be made to two pieces in the Mathura Museum. One, belonging to Kushāna period (no. 1346), shows a small figure of Kubera seated in *bhadrāsana*, on the pedestal of the main Buddhist image. This provides iconic proof of the cult-rivalry between Buddhism and the cult of Kubera, references to which are abundant in the Buddhist literature. The other image (no. 138), which belongs to the mediaeval period, shows Kubera holding a cup, sitting on Kailāsa, flanked by a number of worshippers and attendants on either side. In the *parikara*, 'stele,' Gaṇeśa is also shown sitting on a *Vimāna* at the proper right corner. It is really surprising that despite a great variety of types in the Mathura images of Kubera, there is no image of this god there, showing his man-mount, although in the iconic tradition of Mathura art, the dwarf as *vāhana* was well known.⁵ In this matter, Mathura figures appear different from those of the Bharhut tradition.

Some sculptures at Mathura show a group of divinities with Kubera. A panel (Fig. 8) represents Ardhanārīśvara, Viṣṇu, Gajalakṣmī and Kubera in that order. A distinctive attribute of Kubera is the spear held under the left arm-pit, besides the purse in the left hand.⁶ The spear evidently came from the Gandhara tradition of Pāncikas' images. The Gandhāra tradition is seen in another image of Kubera [Fig. 9], where he is shown along with two of his consorts—Lakṣmī and Hārīti. Lakṣmī holds a cornucopia and Hārīti a child. In this case again, Kubera holds a spear in his right hand, the pointed end of which is clear, although its lower part is broken. These two sculptures indicate that, when Pāncika-Hārīti images of the Gandhāra region were accepted in the Mathura art, the Gandhāra tradition had to undergo a change. Therefore, probably the need of showing two consorts, instead of one as at Gandhara.⁶ The Mathura images of Kubera exhibit the following traits: his consorts Hārīti and Lakṣmī, his devotees, his attributes like nectar-vessel, wine-cup, goblet, lotus-flower, staff, lemon and mongoose. The *abhaya* and *varada mudrās*, a grinning expression on the face are the other notable features of his images carved during the Kushāna times. In the Mathura images of later date, *nidhis* were personified and attendants multiplied; otherwise most of the distinctive features of Kubera iconography evolved during the Kushāna phase.

The post-Kushāna phase followed the earlier Mathura traditions although the images multiplied in number. An interesting piece of c. 8th century AD, has come down from Orissa.⁷ It represents Kubera sitting with his consort, and flanked by attendants. Kubera is offering a cup-full of grapes to his consort who has her right hand on another drinking cup filled with grapes (?). The *bhāravāhaka*, atlantes, Yaksha to the left of the relief is a powerful representation of the

¹Catalogue of Mathura Museum, *JUPHS*, XXII, 1949, pp. 194ff. A similar image had been found by Col. L.R. Stacy in 1836. It is in the Calcutta Museum and is described there as Silenus.

²*ibid*, cf. also *supra*, p. 64.

³no. 3232, *Indian Antiqua*, 1947, pp. 8-9, Plate II.

⁴cf. Yakshinis on the railing pillars from Mathura, nos. J.2, J.4, J.5, etc. also, *Paramatthajotikā*, I.370; *Lalitavistara*, ch. 24, p. 390, for Kubera as *naravāhana*.

⁵In some other images, this object under the left arm-pit is a staff (mace?); cf. *ASIAR*, 1916-17, part I, p. 13, pl. VII, d. The right hand is usually in the *abhayamudra* in such images.

⁶For Gandhara's Pāncika and Hārīti, cf. *infra*, p. 73f.

⁷no. Ay, 44, Orissa State Museum, Bhuvaneshwar.

superhuman might which these creatures had [Fig. 10]. Another example of the same period has been reported from Kamban (Bharatpur District, Rajasthan). It represents a two-armed Kubera, seated, holding a *bijaurā*, citrus, in the right hand and a purse in the left.¹ A similar image of Kubera is known from Tumain, and has an interesting feature in that the nudity of the deity is covered with a fig-leaf.² Besnagar has provided another image of this deity, in which he is shown standing, holding a purse in the left hand. The other hand is broken.³

The Pabhosa image of Kubera is a fine specimen of the deity sitting in *lalitāsana* on a couch, holding a cup in the right hand and a mongoose by its neck in the left. An elaborate lotus-halo and two jars of *nidhis* are other interesting features of this piece [Fig. 11]. Although *nidhis* are often found in Kubera's images, *naravāhana*, dwarf-mount, is a comparatively rare feature and is known from an image (no. M. 73) deposited in the Allahabad Municipal Museum. The Eastern Indian art follows the same tradition;⁴ so do the western Indian specimen of Kubera's images. An important addition here, however, is the introduction of the elephant as the mount of Kubera, which is supported by texts like *Aparājītapricchā*, *Rūpamaṇḍana* and *Vastusāra*.⁵ A Jain Kubera image has come down from Ranimalya (Chitor District, Rajasthan) which shows him with his usual attributes, viz. citrus and purse, but he is sitting under a tree, on a crouching elephant [Fig. 12]. He wears an elaborate headdress which has an inset figure of the 18th Jain Tirthankara, the *presiding deity* of Kubera in Jain texts. The stone on which the image is carved is black schist. Another image of this deity from Katara (Bharatpur District, Rajasthan) is almost similar to the above, except for the absence of the Jina figure [Fig. 13]. It is now deposited in the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer.

Several images of this deity are known from Central India, and some of them have certain exceptional features. An image from Terahi shows his four jars of *nidhis* and *drākshakuṇḍala*. The deity here is shown drinking wine(?) from a cup held at the lips. Another Terahi image shows him seated on a lotus-pedestal. The group of divinities on the stele are significant. The conical end of the stele has a *Kamaṇḍalu*-bearing figure (Brahmā); towards its right side, there is a female deity, four-armed, holding a *trīśūla* in one of the hands. On the opposite, corresponding side, is Gaja-Lakshmi. The central image of Kubera is flanked by two attendants holding flutes [Fig. 14]. The Badoh and Padhavali images of Kubera represent him as four-armed; in the upper right hand, he holds a huge moneybag supported on the back; in the lower right hand, the Padhavali image has a mongoose while the Badoh piece shows a rosary. In the left hands, the deity carries jars of *nidhi*, in both the images. The Dhubela Museum image of Kubera [Fig. 15] is also four-armed, but with different attributes. The two upper hands in this specimen hold stalked lotuses, while a cup and a purse are shown in the lower right and left hands respectively. This variety is closer to the Khajuraho tradition of Kubera's images.⁶ A Padhavali-image of Kubera,⁷ now in the Gwalior Museum,⁸ is important insofar as it shows the two-armed deity with his consort, Riddhi⁹ [Fig. 16]. They are

¹*Uttara Bhārati*, VI, 29, p. 47.

²Deposited in the Gwalior Museum; cf. Thakore, S.R., *Catalogue of Sculptures in Gwalior Museum* (hereafter-mentioned as *Thakore's Catalogue*), p. 7, no. 11.

³*ibid*, p. 3.

⁴Indian Museum, Calcutta has some images which portray him sitting holding a citrus in the right hand and (i) mongoose in the left (no. 3912); (ii) attributeless left hand kept in the lap (no. 6943, provenance udaigiri, Orissa; (iii) mongoose in the left hand, no. A III. 51; Di 3; *Cat.*, p. 159; provenance Pewangir, Kamrup, Assam. This last example is etched on a slab; cf. also, Banerji, R.D., *Eastern Indian School of Medieval Sculptures*, pp. 31, 99, 132 and plates.

⁵cf. Appendix.

⁶Thakore's *Catalogue*, p. 8.

⁷*ibid*, p. 17.

⁸*ibid*, p. 46.

⁹cf. Awasthi, R., *Khajuraho ki Deva-Pratimayen*, pp. 232-34.

clasping each other, and are flanked by two female attendants, one on each side, holding a pitcher and *cauri*. This image partly tallies with the description of Kubera and Riddhi as given in the *Vishnu-dharmottara*.¹ Another such image has been reported from Khajuraho and Kubera there is four-armed,² holding lotus, cup and purse. With his fourth hand he clasps *Riddhi* who, in one of her hands, holds a fish. The *nidhis*, donors, and attendants are shown around the *parikara*.

The Maladevi temple at Gyrapur (Vidisha Distt., Madhya Pradesh) has an interesting image of Kubera in that it has a ram appearing along with the deity. Kubera stands on the *nidhighaṭa*, holding a citrus fruit in the right hand and a purse in the left. He is flanked by two attendants, the one towards his right holds a *caurī*, and the other on the left has typical grotesque features e.g. '*sanku-karṇa*.' The ram reminds us of the description in the *Aṁśumadbhedāgama*.

The wine-and-woman association of Kubera, which started at Mathura during the Kushāṇa period, continued unabated. One such image from Modi,³ partly broken now, shows him sitting, holding a cup in the right hand; a female serves him drinks from a goblet [Fig.17].

These sculptures, evidently, add many features unknown so far in the iconic representations of Kubera. An image of Kauberi from Naresar is also known. It is deposited in the Gwalior Museum, and is described in the *Catalogue* (p. 32) as riding on a corpse. All her hands and the head are broken. A devotee sits at her right elbow. (13th century AD, measurements, 24' × 21' × 8').

THE ICONIC DERIVATIONS FROM KUBERA'S IMAGES

Kubera as the consort of Aparājītā was accepted as the *Sāsanadevatā* of the 19th Tirthankara Mallinātha in the Jain works. In Buddhism, his transformation was more complete. In the iconography and literary works, the ramifications of Kubera may be found in the tutelary pair of Hārīti and Pāñcika, and Jambhala and Vasudhārā. But both these emanatory forms of Kubera received independent status, and an attempt was made to divest them of their previous associations. An elaborate legend was developed around the pair of Hārīti and Pāñcika. Jambhala as well as his iconography is treated in details in the *Sādhanamālā* where the deity belongs to the class of Dhyāni Buddhas: Ratnasambhava and Akshobhya.⁴ The text envisages mainly three forms of Jambhala. The first form is elaborate with the description of lotiform *maṇḍala* occupied by Jambhala and Vasudhārā in the centre and eight Yakshas and their Yakshiṇīs distributed over the eight petals spreading towards the four main and four subsidiary directions. All of them were to be depicted in *yab-yum* pose like Jambhala and Vasudhārā.⁵ In one instance,⁶ it is suggested that two identical golden *patras*, leaves, should be carved; one

¹III.53.1-14.

²cf. Awasthi, R., op. cit., p. 236, Pl. 101.

³The image is now deposited in the Yashwant Rao Holkar Chhatra Museum at Bhanpura; cf. *ASI, AR*, 1912-13, pp. 55-56; 1919-20, pp. 94-95.

⁴see Jambhala in *MMK*, I.17; Jambhala, with Sambhala, Kūshmala and others is one of the Yaksha chiefs. With Hārīti, mention of him, is made in *MMK*, III. 608. He is a great Yaksha in the region east of Vārāṇasī, and it is said that those who obtained *siddhi* over him lived in great luxury, III.644. The same work, III.606f. associates him with Pāṭaliputra where Kings worshipped him.

⁵Details of Jambhala in these two classes are similar except for minor variations. cf. Bhattacharya, B., *Buddhist Iconography*, pp. 237-38.

⁶*Sādhanamālā*, verse nos. 284, 285, 289. The Yakshas are Mañibhadra, Pūrṇabhadra, Dhanada, Vaiśravaṇa, Kelimalī, Civikuṇḍalī, Sukhendra and Carendra. They have been conceived of as nude, ithyphallic, embracing their consorts. The eight Yakshiṇīs are Citrakālī, Dattā, Sudattā, Āryā, Subhadrā, Guptā, Devī and Saraswatī. Sometimes there is a minor departure from this enumeration and, instead of Devī and Vicitrakuṇḍalī, Sunandā and Pūrṇasupūrṇa find mention. cf. *Sādhanamālā*, pp. 560, 562. In the *Vistāra-Jambhala-Sādhanam*, the meditation, with its *devatānyāsa* and *aksharanyāsa*, is described in detail along with the *mantra* and the exact mode of chanting them in worship. cf. also *Nishpannayogdvalī*, p. 61, *Sādhanmālā*, verse 297, p. 581.

showing Vasudhārā and the eight Yakshiṇīs and the other showing Jambhala and the eight Yakshas. These leaves should be put one over the other, combining the corresponding numbers. This mode is suggested evidently as an alternative to showing the pair in embrace. The *Sādhaka* is promised success and the attainment of eight *Mahāsiddhis* or regal status over three worlds as reward for his worship of this form of Jambhala and Vasudhārā. In one passage the consort of Jambhala is Prajñā and not the usual Vasudhārā.¹ The attributes of Jambhala are usually described as citrus and mongoose, and he is conceived of as sitting on a pedestal with his legs on a conch and a lotus; he wears a jewelled crown and a garland of blue lotus. The mode of worship is elaborate with prescription of *mantras*, and it is said that if it does not work, the image so made should be offered *visarājikā*, salt, *dhustūraka* along with ash collected from a cemetery. After smearing the image with these, it should be dried with the fire of the cemetery to obtain success.

In the second variation of the placid form, Jambhala is conceived of as a three-headed and six-armed deity holding citrus, goad and quiver in the right hands, and noose and mongoose in the left ones. With the remaining third left hand, he embraces Prajñā who sits on his left.² In the variations of this placid form, Jambhala is simply conceived of as sitting on a cosmic lotus, holding citrus and *nakulī* in the right and left hands.³ His complexion is golden, and he is supposed to grant the status of *mahāpādmapāti* or provide inexhaustible wealth, increasing fortune, freedom from disease, and fulfilment of all desires.

In the third variation of Jambhalā's *dhyāna* he is terrible, and there are five verses dealing with it. Such images of his are called *Krodhamūrti*, and it is said that he assumed the uccūshma (terrible) form, moved by the disappointment of human beings lacking in money.⁴ Accordingly, Jambhala is conceived of as terrifying in appearance, black-complexioned, frowning, holding a skull-cup full of blood, either drinking from it or merely looking at it; he was to be meditated upon as trampling over Dhanada, the *tryambaka-sakha* 'Śiva's friend.' Dhanada lay either prostrate, with face down or vomiting jewels.⁵ The *Krodhamūrtis* of Jambhala, it is said, were revered by gods like Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva or by demons, sages and the Lokapālas. Lakshmi fanned him with a *cāmara*.⁶ In such form, Jambhala is usually conceived of either as a dwarf or an adolescent or simply as a five-year old. As regards the attributes, the description is standard, and refers to him as ithyphallic and having large unpierced ears, eight-nāga garlands and other ornaments.⁷

This form vivifies the rivalry of the Jambhala-cult with the other cults. A special sanctity is conferred on Jambhala by saying that he was revered by the Vedic gods.⁸ However, meditation of this form of Jambhala promised to the devotee the acquisition of respect, intellect, wealth, son, wife, royalty, and the cessation of pains in the after-life. In the verses, Jambhala is addressed as *Mumikumāra*, *Ratnapattana-nāyaka* and single in *Guṇas*. Also important is the passage where it is said that the discourses of Jambhala and Vasudhārā could be followed in worshipping the five Dhyānī Buddhas.⁹

The details furnished here assume greater importance because of the find of a fragmentary Jambhala-*maṇḍala* from Nalanda (Site I); this object is now in the Patna Museum (no. 00063).

¹ Ibid, verse 286, p. 564. This form of Jambhala images is known from Tibet and China; cf. Bhattacharya, B., op. cit., p. 17; quoting Clark, *Two Lamaistic Pantheon*, II, 310, 203 and Getty, A., *Gods of Northern Buddhism*, p. 159.

² *Sādhanaśālā*, verses 287, 288, 290, 296, 298.

³ Ibid, verses 291-95, pp. 569-78.

⁴ Ibid, pp. 570-71.

⁵ Cf. Bhattacharya, B., op. cit., p. 179, fig. 30, for one such image in the Sarnath Museum.

⁶ *Sādhanaśālā*, pp. 570-71.

⁷ Ibid, verse 295.

⁸ Ibid, verse 292.

⁹ Ibid, verse 290.

The images of Jambhala and some other Yakshas and Yakshis are broken. The five Yakshas, inscribed, from right to left are: Civikuṇḍalī, Maṇibhadra, Vajrapāṇi(?) Pratigrahendra(?); the fifth figure in that sequence is broken. Two of the Śaktis have also been shown, Yakshas hold citrus and mangoose, while the Yakshīs hold *dhānyamañjarī* in the left hands, and their right hands are in the *Varada mudrā* [Fig. 18]. The image partially tallies with the description of *Yaksha-śakataṁ aṣṭamaṇḍalaṁ*, found in the *Sādhanamālā*.¹

The images of Jambhala and Vasudhārā have been found in India, particularly from the eastern region.² Such images carry sufficient indication of the transformation of Kubera into Jambhala. The association of Vasudhārā with Jambhala, is, however, quite independent in origin, and the antiquity of this iconic form goes back to the Kushāṇa period.³ Her basic concept is, however, of Vedic origin.⁴ Later she was consorted with Jambhala.

We are illustrating here [Fig. 19], one of the placid forms of Jambhala's image in which he is shown seated in the *pralambhapādāsana*, over a cushioned seat, elaborately dressed, and wearing many jewels and ornaments and crown. He is accompanied by his *nidhis* : *śankha* and jar on the pedestal.⁵ A Lucknow Museum image (no. B. 287) has similar features [Fig. 20] and in addition has the third *nidhi*, i.e. *padma* on the pedestal.⁶

The terracotta representations of Kubera seem to duplicate the iconic characteristics of Kubera's images. In one such terracotta plaque showing his torso, he is pot-bellied, squatting and holds a purse in his right hand. The *śankha nidhi* is shown near his leg.⁷ Another Mathura Museum terracotta (no. 4508, ht. 3½")⁸ shows him seated in *lalitāsana* with a purse in the right hand. (Red clay, Kushāṇa period).

THE YAKSHA—PAIR : HĀRITĪ AND PĀṆCIKA

The motif of the child-devouring deity is of constant occurrence, both in literature and art. Hārītī was one such child-devouring deity, and her counterparts are repeatedly found in the Brahmanical and Jain works. Her legend commonly occurs in different Buddhists texts. Her name finds mention in the Yaksha-pair of Haritā and Paṇḍaka of the *Mahāvamsa*.⁹ In this work, they are mentioned as the parents of five hundred children along with whom they were converted to Buddhism by Majjhantika *thera* in their Himalayan country. Her story is developed and perfected mainly in the Sanskrit Buddhist works through the *Mahāvastu*, the *Vinaya Piṭaka* of *Mūla-sarvāstivādī* School and the *Samyukta Ratna Sūtra* of Chinese *Sūtra Piṭaka* of the Hinayāna School. The last two works are available in Chinese alone, their originals having been lost.¹⁰

¹verse 284.

²For the images of Jambhala; cf. Banerjee, R.D., *Eastern Indian School of Mediaeval Sculptures*, pp. 36, 39, 91 and plates there. For Vasudhārā, see, Agrawala, V.S., *JISOA*, June-Dec. 1939, pp. 13-17; the oldest specimen of Jambhala from Eastern India according to Banerjee, is that discovered at Kurkihara and later transferred to the Indian Museum (no. 3911, *Catalogue and Handbook*, Part II, p. 271, Kr. 1).

³Agrawala, V.S., *JISOA*, 1939, pp. 14ff.

⁴*ibid.*, p. 17.

⁵The image was recovered from Sirpur, during the excavation conducted by the Department of Archaeology of Saugar University; and it is deposited in the Archaeological Museum of the Saugar University.

⁶The image was discovered at Varanasi; cf. *ASIAR*, 1903-4, p. 219, fig. 1. Several other images of Jambhala are in other Museums, for instance, Nalanda Museum image nos. 00110, 00056, 00078, 10998, 00097, 000130, 00068, 10803, 11170, 10995, 00018; Patna Museum image nos. 8359, 9665, 8446 etc.

⁷Red clay, Kushāṇa period, Provenance: Masani Devi, Ht. 3½", 4680 in the register of Mathura Museum for 1958-59.

⁸*Consolidated Report of Mathura Museum*, 1961, p. 47.

⁹XXII.21.

¹⁰For literature on Hārītī, see Getty, A., *Gods of the Northern Buddhism*; Vidyabhusana, S.C., *JBTS*, part I (1897), pp. 25-29; Foucher, *Beginnings of Buddhist Art*, Ch. V and IX; Coomaraswamy, A.K., *Yaksha*, I, pp. 9ff; Bhattasali, N.K., *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, Dacca, 1929, pp. 63-67, Pl. XXV; also, *Avadhāna Kalpalatā* (of Somadeva), I, *Buddhist Sanskrit Series*, no. 22, ed. Vaidya, P.L., Chapter XII, pp. 107ff; *Divyāvadhāna*, p. 447 (Pāncika as a Great Yaksha Chief).

From her stories as described in different works, a complete picture of the development of her cult-personality may be evolved. Under the name of Kuṇḍalā, she was an inhabitant of Veśālī, and gave birth to a hundred sons every year, and ultimately died when her sons were five hundred in number. These children spread a fatal epidemic in the town which continued to destroy the afflicted ones till the Buddha set foot in the city. Another version of the story¹ is to be found in the *Vinaya Piṭaka* of the Sarvāstivādī school, preserved in the Chinese. Kuṇḍalā is there called Huanhsi, 'joy,' and she lives in Rājagriha. Originally, she was a protectress of the people of Rājagriha. But as a result of a spiteful wish in a previous life, she started stealing and killing the children of the city for herself and for her five hundred children. The Buddha ultimately brought her under control by hiding her youngest child, Pingala, in his alms-bowl. To provide for her, he ordained a share of food for her and her children in every monastery. It is said in the story that she was named Hārīti by the people of Rājagriha on account of her habit of stealing children.

The *Saṃyukta Vastu*² contains the legendary accounts of Hārīti in some detail. She is represented there as a daughter of Sāta, the tutelary Yaksha of Rājagriha, and is named Abhirati. She had a brother Sātagiri and was married to Pāñcika, the son of the Yaksha King, Pāncāla, of the Gāndhāra region. She had five hundred children, among whom Priyankara or Pingala was the youngest. In her previous birth, it is said, she had been the wife of a herdsman of Rājagriha and, as she was obliged to dance at a festival even though she was pregnant, she harboured the wish to avenge herself for that unfair compulsion, as a result of which she was reborn as a Yakshiṇī. Thus, despite the protest of Sātagiri, this Abhirati, nicknamed Hārīti, constantly devoured the children of Rājagriha. The people of Rājagriha tried to appease her by offering her gifts of food, incense, flowers, etc. or by cleaning and decorating the town. But their efforts were futile. In the end, the Buddha intervened; he hid her youngest child under his alms-bowl, and made her feel the pain caused by that personal loss. When the Buddha's counsels prevailed upon her, the child was also restored to her. To ensure that she would not return to her old cannibalistic habits, the Buddha ordained that every monastery would provide her a share of eatables. Thereafter, she became a protectress. This goddess appears also in the *Saṃyukta-Ratna-Sūtra* of the Chinese *Sūtra Piṭakam*³ as a protectress and a giver of children.

Her story is found in the accounts of Huien Tsang and I-tsing; the former locates her at about twenty miles north of Taxila.⁴ The latter shifts her to Rājagriha where she is figured as the giver of children and wealth.⁵ I-tsing refers to the image of Hārīti, holding one babe in her arms and some more playing about her. Such an image was to be found in the porch or in a corner of the dining halls of all the Indian monasteries.⁶

Thus Hārīti appears as a Yakshiṇī of cannibalistic nature; her name in different versions is Haritā, Kuṇḍalā, Huanhsi (Sanskrit—Nandā or Nandinī) and Abhirati. She has been associated with Veśālī, Rājagriha and Taxila in different versions of her story. Her sons are five hundred in number and the youngest is Pingala, Priyankara or Chinese Pilengka. It is interesting to observe that in the *Mahāvastu* it is not Kuṇḍalā but her five hundred children who are the bearers of the pestilence that strikes the whole population, including the children. Haritā, as a malevolent goddess responsible for killing and devouring children, is introduced only later. The name Piyankara, as the son of the Yakshiṇī, is found in the Pali text also⁷ where he is a little

¹Bhattachali, N.K., op. cit., p. 65f. quoting *On Yuan Chwang*, Watters, I, p. 216.

²cf. Coomaraswamy, II, addenda, p. 5. He quotes also Peri, N., Haritā, la mere de demons, *BEFEO*, XVII, III, 1917.

³Bhattachali, N.K., op. cit., p. 66.

⁴ibid, p. 66.

⁵ibid.

⁶ibid, p. 66f; cf. also Coomaraswamy, A.K., II, addenda, p. 5.

⁷S, I.209; DA, II.509; *Visuddhimaggo*, 382.

boy-Yaksha. In that context, it is said that his mother hushed him to sleep, when he was whimpering, so that she could hear the monk Anuruddha reciting some verses, at the Jetavana. Any connection, however, between these two Piyankaras does not seem to be indicated.

The consort of Hārīti is Pāñcika who figures as one of the twentyeight Yaksha-chiefs in the Buddhist works.¹ His name also seems to appear in the *Vāmana Purāṇa* as Pāñcālika, the Yaksha of the N.W. region, who relieved love-stricken Śiva of his unbearable grief.²

The story of this Yakshiṇī has been very often recounted in the Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain works with minor variations of detail, regarding names and the locations. Banerjea³ compares Hariti with such Brahmanical or popular goddesses as Jāra, Jyeshthā and Śītālā. Shah, on the other hand, identified her with Revatī, Shashṭhī or Bahuputrikā.⁴ To this list of different popular deities may also be added Kuntī Yakshini of Kuntinagara.⁵ Jarā in the *Mahābhārata*⁶ is called a Rākshasī, and the people of Rājagriha worshipped her by painting or carving her figure on the walls. Her children were also to be painted alongwith her and she was offered flowers, incense, food and drinks. Any person who drew her figure alongwith her children was blessed with plenty, but the one who did not was cursed with poverty. She was particularly fond of the flesh and blood of young babes. Another child-devouring deity is Shashṭhī-Jāta-hāriṇī or Revatī—Bahuputrikā of the *Kāśyapa Saṁhitā*⁷ who could take away or destroy the newly-born babies or cause still-birth. Revatī and Shashṭhī are similar female demons described in the Brahmanical and Jain works. In the *Kāśyapa Saṁhitā*, Bahuputrikā and Shashṭhī⁸ are some of the other names of Revatī. Revatī is said to have acquired the name Shashṭhī because she was sixth in position among her brothers and sisters. She was the consort of Skanda,⁹ who was one of the *grahas*. There is hardly any doubt that she has the characteristics of Hārīti as killer of children. Bahuputrikā, however, in the Jain works, appears as the consort of Maṇibhadra; she was worshipped in a *caitya* of her own.¹⁰

Kuntī of the *Gilgit MSS*, whose haunt was Kuntinagara in Kashmir, also appears as a malefic goddess, like Hārīti. She used to eat the newly-born babes of the Brahmin householders. Ultimately she was pacified by the Buddha who arranged for her food in the *Vihāras*. The *Dhammapada Atthakathā*¹¹ refers to a Kālī Yakshiṇī, who appears as the devourer of newborn children of a lady for whom she had developed hatred in her previous birth. She too was converted by the Buddha, and given a place in the same house where her old rival lived. She remained peaceful ever after that, and, even though she often changed her habitat, her benevolence towards the lady never waned. Another similar story is found in the *Jayadissa Jātaka* (no. 513).¹²

Thus it seems clear that there is no dearth of child-eating ogresses in the folk tradition of different ancient religious systems, and Hārīti's legend is but a standardised version of a stock-belief in such popular deities. They probably existed in the nature of different diseases, as

¹ *Lalitavistara*, p. 202; In the *MMK*, I.44, her *Sādhana* is described according to which in a *maṇḍala* she should be shown with her child Priyankara and consort, Pāñcika; the latter should be shown as *ghora* 'fierce looking.' The same work mentions her along with Jambhala, III.608; cf. also *ibid*, I.17, for her son Priyankara and others in the list of Yaksha-chiefs.

² *supra*, Chapter 3.

³ *DHI*, pp. 102-4, 107-8, 380-83, 503-4.

⁴ *JOI*, III, 1, pp. 64-65, 67; also, by the same writer, Harinegamesī, *JISOA*, XIX, pp. 40ff.

⁵ *Gilgit MSS*, II, XVIII.

⁶ II.18.1-6.

⁷ Shah, U.P., *JISOA*, XIX, p. 40; Many mothers are mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*, III.219.27ff, who were worshipped by human beings desiring children. Some of them destroyed the foetus. cf. also *MP*, 179.19.

⁸ *Kāśyapa Saṁhitā*, p. 99; cf. also *Devī Bhāgavata*, IX.46.1ff; *MMK*, III.667, 680 for Bahuputrikā.

⁹ *Kāśyapa Saṁhitā*, p. 100; she was six-faced; for her iconography see, Shah, U.P., *JISOA*, XIX, p. 38.

¹⁰ *infra*, under Subsidiary Yaksha Chiefs, p. 82.

¹¹ Burlingame, E.W., I.170ff.

¹² *Mark. P.*, 246-268 also describes several sons and daughters of Yaksha Duṣṣaha who along with their children were a source of fear to children, infants and to foetus.

suggested by Banerjee.¹ In them can be seen the personification of different diseases and epidemics such as small-pox, leprosy, etc. Jarā, on the other hand, meant 'old age' which itself is not a very happy situation in the span of life. Hārīti-Kuṇḍalā's association with small-pox or leprosy is clearly supported by the description of the pestilence that her children spread in Veśālī.²

Hārīti's worship received the Buddha's sanction, and spread in the different regions of India and abroad. In the Buddhist texts, she has been associated with Veśālī and Rājagriha as well as Gāndhāra. Hieun-Tsang refers to her *Stūpa*, erected by Aśoka, which had been identified by Foucher with that at Sare-Makhe-Dheri in the Peshawar district.³ It became customary for the Buddhists to instal Hārīti's images in monasteries everywhere. This is corroborated by I-tsing who also attests to the custom of installing Pāñcika's images in a similar manner.⁴ This bears out the widespread prevalence of the Hārīti-Pāñcika cult. About the specific areas of the currency of this cult, the *Mahāvamsa*, as pointed out above, associates her with the Himalayan region; and the *Mahāmāyūrī*⁵ refers to Pāñcika as the tutelary deity of Kashmir; their eldest son is assigned to China (*chīna-bhūmī*), and another son to the *Kuśika* people in the north west.⁶ An inscription of the 5th century AD from the old Madhya Bharat region of M.P. indicates that she was worshipped in that area.⁷ The whole legend of Hārīti, according to Coomaraswamy, "reads more like an explanation or justification of a cult than a true account of its origin; probably this was the best way to provide an edifying sanction for an ancient animistic cult too strong to be subverted."⁸ It is almost an invariable feature of the Hārīti group of stories that the Yakshiṇīs in question were pacified and rehabilitated on the right path.

Hārīti's images and her temples have been reported from different places in India and abroad, notably from Mathura⁹ and Gandhara.¹⁰ Her cult found a way towards China, Japan, Korea and some other countries, which have preserved paintings and sculptures of her. Notable examples among these as described by Foucher are as follows:

1. Hārīti sculptured on the left wall of the entrance corridor of the temple called Chandu-Mendut, near the Stupa of Boro-Budur, (IX century).¹¹
 2. Turfan mural painting of Hārīti.¹²
 3. A large figure probably of Hārīti brought to light by excavations at the desert of Takla-Makan near Khotan. It shows a large figure of a woman "painted in tempera on a coating of mortar in the embrasure of the door of a little Buddhist Sanctuary."¹³
- She was worshipped in China; and I-tsing has referred to the existence of "the portrait of the

¹ DHI, p. 108.

² *Mahāvastu*, I, 208ff. She struck Veśālī with a disease called *adhivāsa*, which was different from the same called *māṇḍalaka*; *adhivāsa* is described as attacking the whole district.

³ Banerjee, J.N., DHI, p. 381; Rosenfield, J.M., quoting Konow, CII, pp. 124-27; however, identifies the spot of her conversion by the Buddha with the *stūpa* "erected eight miles north of Skarah Dheri whence came a notable image of the deity with an inscription imploring that she protect or heal children," Rosenfield, DAK, p. 246.

⁴ *ibid*, p. 246.

⁵ JUPHS, XV, Part II, p. 29.

⁶ *ibid*.

⁷ CII, III, p. 78, the inscription at Gangādhara, Jhārawara, Rajasthan, which refers to the early Calukya kings as *Hārīti-putrānāth*, the descendants of Hārīti.

⁸ Coomaraswamy, I, pp. 9-10.

⁹ cf. Agrawala, V.S., *Catalogue of Brahmanical Images in the Mathura Art*, pp. 73-91, under *Hārīti*.

¹⁰ cf. *Journal of Indian Art*, VIII, no. 62, Pl. IV.2, Hārīti and Jambhala from Gandhara; cf. also Foucher, A., *Beginning of Buddhist Art*, Pl. XVIII.1-2; Bechhofer, L., *Early Indian Sculpture*, II, Pl. 150. Hārīti from Skarah Dheri dated in year 399 (87 AD); Smith, V., *History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon*, Pl. 31, fig. B; Marshall, Sir J., *Art of Gandhara*, Pls. 104, 105, 77, fig. 112; also images nos. G.3, G.8, in the Calcutta Museum which represent Hārīti and Pāñcika from Gandhara.

¹¹ Foucher, A., *op. cit.*, pp. 284.

¹² *ibid*, p. 284 also pp. 271ff.

¹³ *ibid*, p. 285f.

goddess-mother of demon sons, named K-weitsu-mu-chen. As ki-si-mo-jin, Hārīti is known to have reached Japan."¹

Some more sculptures and temples of Hārīti have been unearthed in recent years in excavations at different places, notably from Nagarjunakonda (A.P.)² and Sirpur (M.P. unpublished). The temple of Hārīti at Nagarjunakonda was placed in an enclosure, and was approached by a flight of steps; the shrine was flanked by two bigger rooms; in the shrine there was found a broken image of the deity with the feet hanging down. The excavation of the enclosure provided a stone-bench with an inscription reading *Kāmasara*, 'arrow of love.' Its relevance to Hārīti cannot be explained properly. A deity, who was the giver of children, could also be the giver of erotic desire. But that is at best a speculation. Another inscription on a pillar here records an *akshayanīvi*, 'perpetual burning of lamp,' on the occasion of some *utsava*, festival.³

Hārīti's male counterpart, Pāñcika, was probably not less important, and finds mention in the literary texts either along with the prominent Yaksha chiefs⁴ or as distinct from that group.⁵ The *Divyāvadāna* describes him as lord of a strong army which consisted of giant-like men, mountain-like elephants and elephant-like horses.⁶ The text also describes him as the demolisher of the pavilions of the *tīrthikas*, heretics, at the time of the famous miracle of Śrāvastī performed by the Buddha.⁷ Pāñcika belonged to the stock of the Gandhara Yakshas,⁸ and is represented as son of Pāñcāla, the Yaksha king of Gandhara.⁹ In the *Mcñjūrimūlakalpa*, his name occurs with Hārīti and their son Priyankara, and it is said that a magical circle should be drawn in which Pāñcika's figure should be shown terrible in appearance.¹⁰ Like Hārīti, he also came to occupy a place of importance in the Buddhist *Vihāras*; and I-tsing testifies to the custom of installing the image of a deity, evidently Pāñcika, in the kitchens of the Buddhist monasteries. The deity was carved "in the shape of a man seated on a chair, one foot on the ground."¹¹

Some prominent images of Pāñcika have come down from the Gandhara school of art. Among these, notable are the images found at Takal, Mardan Guide's Mess collection, and the one now in the British Museum.¹² The Takal image of Pāñcika is an impressive specimen, "in sheer bulk and imperious mien."¹³ He sits on a throne, and holds a spear¹⁴ in his left hand; the right hand is broken. The donor-figures and children are carved on the pedestal. These images exhibit Pāñcika as a chief or a war-hero, by displaying his regal demeanour. By and large, his images conform to the descriptions of him in the literary texts.

In the sculptures Hārīti has been shown either with Pāñcika or alone, but always encumbered with children. In the Gandhara art, "most often she is represented as holding on her knees or even suckling her last-born which has caused her to be called the Buddhist Madonna, whilst a number of her sons frolic around her or climbing around her person make her look like an Italian

¹Foucher, *op. cit.*, p. 286f. Pls. XLIX. 1-2 and L. 1, 2.

²*Indian Archaeology: A Review, 1954-55*, p. 22. Pl. XLV, for Hārīti's apsidal temple and her image.

³*ibid.*, p. 22, report on the Site VII.A.

⁴*Gilgit MSS*, III (i), pp. 15ff; *MMK*, I, p. 17.

⁵*Lalitavistara*, p. 202; *Divyāvadāna*, p. 447.

⁶*Divyāvadāna*, p. 447.

⁷*ibid.*, p.

⁸*MMK*, p. 325, however, refers to the worship of Pāñcika and Hārīti in the Vanga-region; cf. Moti Chandra, *BPWM*, III, p. 55.

⁹cf. Coomaraswamy, A.K., II, p. 5.

¹⁰*MMK*, I, p. 44.

¹¹Rosenfield, J.M., *DAK*, p. 246.

¹²*ibid.*, p. 245f.

¹³*ibid.*, p. 245.

¹⁴A lance of Kubera finds mention in a parable reported by Hieun-Tsang about a Turkish prince who wanted to raid a monastery at Balkh and take away its treasures. The Chinese traveller informs that the prince dreamed that his heart was pierced by Kubera's lance and the next day he died. cf. Rosenfield, J.M., *op. cit.*, p. 249; also *supra*, p. 69.

allegory of Charity."¹ The tutelary pair are shown seated on a pedestal covered with coins. Sometimes Hārīti holds a cornucopia which is a symbol of abundance and prosperity. Pāñcika wears leggings, tunic and coat, and is shown fondling his consort. And in all these characteristic attributes they look very much similar to their Gaulish counterpart.²

Rosenfield notes the 'irregularity' in the imagery of Hārīti and Pāñcika figures; this irregularity, according to him, stemmed from the fact that "they were not among the canonical Buddhist icons."³ He observes three types in such images, *one*, in which the pair is shown in a highly 'classical guise' . . . semi-nude, encumbered with many children; *two*, "in which the seated pair is corpulent and highly ornate,"⁴ and *three*, in which "the deities can be closely correlated with two familiar members of the Kushan coin pantheon, Pharro and Ardoxsho. In contrast to the other seated pairs, the male figure . . . (in this third variety) is less bulky, wears a tunic and knee-length leggings, and usually carries a staff with a round finial instead of a spear. The woman holds a cornucopia; the many children of the other groups are here reduced in number; coins and money purses are prominently displayed."⁵

The image-type of Hārīti with Pāñcika could not retain its characteristic features; and underwent a change in the other Indian art-schools, where Hārīti was readily converted into Bhadrā, Lakshmi or Vasudhārā, and Pāñcika took on the appearance of Kubera or Jambhala. At Mathura, the cornucopia of Hārīti became the identifying symbol of Bhadrā-Lakshmi for there is found a literary as well as art tradition to support this.⁶ Similarly, the staff or lance of Pāñcika was replaced by cup and goblet, or cup and purse, to suit the requirements of Kubera's iconography; or, in the form of Jambhala, the images were provided with citrus and mongoose. With such modifications, the Indian schools produced several images associated with Hārīti. At least three types can be distinguished in them, *viz.*, Hārīti with the consort, or alone, or in a multiplied form. In the first variety, some Kushāna sculptures of Mathura show the tutelary pair seated together. Pāñcika holds a purse in his right hand and a cup in the left; Hārīti-Lakshmi holds a flower and is accompanied with a child seated on her left knee.⁷ Another sculpture (no. C. 26, Mathura Museum) represents the childless variation of the above.⁸ The pair seems to have been very popular and the artists of Mathura tried several iconographic permutations of their images.⁹

The representations of Pāñcika-Jambhala in the Sarnath school of sculpture appear a little different from the previous types of images. A votive stūpa (no. D (b) 12) has him holding *bijapūraka* in his right hand, and a mongoose vomiting pearls in the left. Next to him is a representation of Hārīti. Another example, a lintel (no. D(d) 1) is carved with a number of niches in one of which is represented a female figure, probably Hārīti, standing, giving something to her

¹Foucher, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

²*ibid.*, pp. 142ff.

³Rosenfield, J.M., *op. cit.*, p. 246.

⁴For example, cf. Rosenfield, *op. cit.*, fig. 61 (a relief from Kanishka Stūpa); and also Ingholt, J., no. 342, the image from Sahri Bahlol.

⁵Rosenfield, J.M., *op. cit.*, pp. 246-47; for example, cf. Ingholt, J., no. 344.

⁶cf. Agrawala, V.S., *JISOA*, NS, 1967-68, p. 3 and *JNSI*, II, pp. 92-94.

⁷Mathura Museum object no. C. 27; cf. also, *Consolidated Report on Archaeological Museum, Mathura*, Lucknow, 1961, p. 50, no. 4562. Another object no. 69.9. in the Mathura Museum Register, of which only the lower portion is preserved, shows Kubera wearing a stitched coat and holding a cup in the right hand. An animal figure is shown behind the leg of Hārīti. The Lucknow Museum has an object, no. G. 163, which shows the pair along with a row of children below; one child is in the lap of Hārīti. cf. also Patna Museum, image no. 5838. cf. also, *ASIAR*, 1934-35, p. 78, Kubera and Hārīti with seven children. The image is in the Indian Museum, Calcutta.

⁸cf. also Mathura Museum image nos. C. 29, C. 30 which portray the pair.

⁹cf. Mathura Museum sculptures no. 1538 pair sitting in European fashion. Hārīti holds her right hand in *Abhaya Mudra* (Kushāna period), no. 1694: the pair sitting engaged in drinking, Gupta period; 2315 similar; 2329 like 1538 in details; in F 30 Mathura Museum (Kushāna Period), she is accompanied by Kubera, and four children on the pedestal. For one of the earlier representations of the pair, at Sanchi; cf. Marshall, J., *Monuments of Sanchi*, I, p. 245; III, pl. CIII, e. 3.

children who are shown squatting around. Another niche has a female figure holding a lotus in the left hand and a bunch of buds in the right. Two jars have been depicted along with her, which help in identifying her with Vasudhārā. In the last niche is shown Pāñcikā. This piece appears interesting as two consorts of Pāñcikā-Jambhala, have been shown in it.

In the post-Gupta phase, this tutelary pair seems to have influenced the Jain icons in which corpulent Yaksha and Yakshī figures are shown. Such Jain icons in which a child also appears, are usually taken as portraying Dharapendra and Padmāvati, or Gomedha and Ambikā.¹ That they have an unmistakable stamp of the earlier tutelary pair, cannot be doubted. However, among the important post-Gupta specimens of the Hārīti-Pāñcika images, mention may be made of that from Ajanta, Cave II, and the one from Farrukhabad. The former has a separate chapel for it in the cave, and shows the pair sitting together, Hārīti holding a flower and accompanied by her children.² The other image from Farrukhabad (Uttar Pradesh) is now deposited in the State Museum, Lucknow (no. 0.235); in this, the pair is shown seated together; Pāñcika-Kubera holds a cup, and Hārīti a child.

Another variation of the images of Hārīti shows her with her children but without her consort.³ In this aspect, the Yakshīnī has been likened to the Christian Madonna by Foucher. He has pointed out the great popularity of this motif "spread over nearly twenty centuries and over the whole Far-East." According to him the motif is of Buddhist origin.⁴ Some of her sculptures of this type are as follows:

Sculpture no. D. 10 (Mathura Museum) shows Hārīti, seated, holding child in her left arm. The child is seated on her left lap. The child is shown touching her breast. She holds a cup in her right hand, a feature reminiscent of Kubera. Two stalked lotuses are shown rising from the pedestal. The Allahabad Museum has a sandstone image (1.7½" × 1.9", no. 33, mediaeval period) in which Hārīti is shown seated on a lotus in *lalitāsana*, with a (headless) child on her lap. An image of Hārīti has been published by N.K. Bhattasali⁵ which is interesting because of some new iconographic features. The image was discovered at the village Paikpada, P.S. Tangibadi, Distt. Dacca. It is made of blackstone (1.7" × 10"), and represents the goddess seated on a lotus seat, cross-legged. In the two upper hands she holds a fish and a drinking bowl respectively. With her two natural hands, she holds her child in her lap.⁶ As Bhattasali has observed, it shows a novel method of representation of Hārīti. She is usually two-armed, but in this case the number of arms is four. The identification of the deity is rendered convenient by the inscription on the sculpture identifying her as Hārīti. The representation of fish in her right hand is also a unique feature.

Hārīti's bronze images are also known, and in one such specimen from Nalanda [Fig. 21] she is depicted as seated on a lotus, with her child on the lap, and her right foot on another lotus rising from pedestal. The pedestal carries the depiction of a bat and a ball evidently for the child's sport. The image is now in the National Museum, New Delhi (no. 47, 50).

A third type of the images of Hārīti is also suggested from a number of specimens in Mathura

¹Allahabad Museum, sculpture nos. 57, 165, 217.

²cf. Yazdani, G., *Ajanta*, II, pp. 34-35, pl. XXXIX; Gupte, R.S. and B.D. Mahajan, *Ajanta, Ellora and Aurangabad Caves*, Bombay, 1962, p. 166. also p. 233, for the pair in cave 7 of Aurangabad.

³cf. Mathura Museum nos. D. 10, D. 11, F. 34, 35, 37, 40 and 64.7. Also *Consolidated Report*, op. cit., no. 4001 and 4514 (Lady with cornucopia, identified with Hārīti-Bhadra). Lucknow Museum object nos. O.240, and 60. 180. An image of Hārīti has come from Sahri Bahlol and shows her four-armed, holding a cup and a lance in upper hands and a child and a *Kamaṇḍalu* in the lower hands. Two attendants are shown on her two sides. *ASIAR*, 1911-12, pl. XLI, fig. 16.

⁴Foucher, op. cit., p. 279.

⁵Bhattasali, op. cit., p. 67, pl. XXV; cf. also Agrawala; R.C., *Bhāratiya Vidya*, XX-XXI, pl. I, illustrating *varāhi* holding a fish in the left hand. The figure is part of a panel from Abansri and is preserved in Amber Museum Rajasthan.

⁶Bhattasali, N.K., op. cit., p. 63.

and Lucknow Museums. In them, the deity seems multiplied.¹ She is shown generally with the child, and her consort is not associated with her in such images. Images nos. F. 31, 34 of Mathura Museum and no. 241 from the same place but now in the Lucknow Museum, show the deity in her multiplied form. In them are found a collection of three or four figures each holding a child in a different manner. The presence of a child in such sculptures seems to give a clue to the identification of the deity with Hārīti. The number of such sculptures is comparatively small. An image in the Lucknow Museum has three Mātrikās and Kubera sitting in a row. They all have their right hands in the *abhaya-mudrā*; in the left hand the first figure has a flower, Kubera has a purse. The third figure holds a child in her lap and may be identified with Hārīti. The other details are indistinct. The image belongs to Mathura art of Kushana period. [Fig. 22]

The large number of her sculptures shows the popularity of the worship of Hārīti and her legend. Such sculptures must have been in great demand, particularly in the Buddhist *vihāras* where Hārīti had a niche for herself assigned by the Buddha. Coomaraswamy has suggested that monastic offerings to Hārīti "must have been made originally on an altar set before painted icons of Hārīti . . . placed within the refectory." The "altars were made of stone in the form of lotus flower expanded towards sky and with its smooth round centre serving as a table. . ."² Eventually, it seems that this practice was superseded by the installation of Hārīti's images. The discovery of a large number of different types of Hārīti sculptures proves this supposition.

SUBSIDIARY YAKSHA CHIEFS

Besides Kubera and the pair of Hārīti and Pāñcika, there appear also certain other prominent Yakshas whose authority seems to have been well-recognised. Some of them are discussed here.

Mañibhadra

This Yaksha enjoyed an enviable place in the Yaksha-pantheon, and in the cult-hierarchy, he appears to hold a position next only to Kubera. He was known variously as Mañivara, Mañicara, Mañi or Mañimat³ but he is most familiar as Mañibhadra. He shared many titles of Vaiśravaṇa-Kubera, such as *Yaksharāja*, *Yakshendra*, *Nidhipatī*, *Dhanapati*, *Dhānādhipati* and *Dhānādhyaksha*.⁴ As a Yaksha-chief his position is well recognised in the Jain works also.⁵ The earliest references to this Yaksha-chief are found in the epics and the Buddhist works. As a commander of Kubera, he fought and defeated his counterpart Prahasta of Rāvaṇa⁶; he defeated Rākshasas with a force of four thousand Yakshas.⁷ Because his crown had slipped to one side on being struck by the mace of Rāvaṇa, he acquired the nickname—*Pārśvamaulī*.⁸ In the *Māhābhārata*, he is described as living on the mountain *Śvetagiri* and *Mandara*, waited upon by Yakshas of various shapes, wielding various weapons.⁹ Kubera is his overlord.¹⁰ As an exclusive deity of traders and travellers, he has been mentioned in the *Āraṇyaka Parva* of the *Mahābhārata* (64.130; 65.22). Yudhisṭhira paid oblations to him when he went to fetch the treasures of Marut.¹¹ This again confirms his status as the god of travellers and giver of riches. The *Manju-*

¹These images may represent the cult of Mātrikas, but the depiction of children in them leads us to the Hārīti's cult images. For another identification, cf. Agrawala, R.C., *Lalit Kala*, 14, p. 56f. and plate.

²Coomaraswamy, II, pp. 5-6, quoting I-tsing, the Chinese traveller.

³Hopkins, E.W., *op. cit.*, p. 144.

⁴*ibid.*

⁵*supra*, Chapter 3.

⁶*Rāmāyaṇa*, VI.19.11.

⁷*ibid.*, VII.15.1-6.

⁸*ibid.*, VII.15.10-15.

⁹*Mbh.*, III.140.3ff; cf. also, *ibid.*, III.158.54; XIII.20.8.

¹⁰*ibid.*, II.10.14; *Devī Bhāgavata*, XII.10.90. refers to Mañimat, Mañikandhara, Mañibhūsha, Mañisragvin Mañikārmukadhāraka as *senāpatīs* of Kubera.

¹¹*Mbh.*, *Āśvalāyana Parva*, 64.6-9.

śrīmūlakalpa (III.608-611) refers to Mañicara Yaksha of Haimavata who was worshipped by King Bharata, son of Rishabha.¹

That he had a large number of exclusive followers is corroborated by references² to his exclusive worshippers in Pali works. The *Milindapañho*, also tells of certain secrets of this cult which were limited to the fold, and were kept hidden from all others. There is found epigraphic evidence of the existence of the exclusive *Mañibhadra-bhaktas* from an image of this Yaksha discovered at Padam-Pawaya (Gwalior).³

It has been suggested that Mañibhadra was a popular deity in the eastern India as he has been often mentioned in the Pali works of the Buddhists, and the Prakrit canons of the Śvetāmbara Jains.⁴ But the intrinsic evidence of these texts seems to go against the parochialisation of this deity. In the *Samyutta Nikāya* (1.208), his *caitya*, 'shrine,' called *Manimāla*, is mentioned as being situated in Magadha. In the *Mahāmāyūrī* (1.31) Mañibhadra and his brother Pūrṇabhadra are described as the tutelary deities of Brahmāvati, identified with some city in the region of Varṇu or Gandhara. In the *Vipāka Sūtra* the *caitya* of Mañibhadra is situated in the Vijaya-vardhamāna grove at Vardhamānapura, evidently Mithilā, while according to the *Pinḍaniryukt.*, it was situated at Samillā. In the *Sūrya Prajñapti*⁵ a reference is made to the *caitya* of Mañibhadra to the north-east of Mithilā.⁶ However, the evidence of archaeology connects Mañibhadra and his cult with Mathura in north India, and Pawaya in the Madhya-Bharat region from where his images have been brought to light.⁷ The literary sources too associate this Yaksha with the north-western region besides eastern India. On this evidence it may be said that Mañibhadra's cult was prevalent in a fairly wide area in east, north-west, north and central India. In eastern India, however, his worship was comparatively more current. Yet it is interesting to observe that both of his sculptures discovered so far have come from outside eastern India. A temple of Mañibhadra is also mentioned in the *Kathāsaritsāgara* (I.162), but in the absence of any clue in the text, the location of it cannot be decided.

Many Yaksha names with Mañi in the first part of them are known from different sources. A Mañigriva, as a brother of Nalakūbara, is son of Kubera in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (X.9-10). From some other Purāṇas, Mañimat and Mañimantra are also known.⁸ The Ātānāṭiya Sutta of the *Dīgha Nikāya* refers to him as Mañi, the great Yaksha chief. In the *Śrī Sūkta* of the *Rgveda* Kubera has been referred to as *Devasakhā* and Mañibhadra probably as Mañi. A wish is expressed that Kubera, Kīrti and Mañi may grant glory and abundance. A reference to Mañibhadra is also made in the *Śāṅkhāyana Grihyasūtra*.⁹

Mañibhadra's family has also been a subject of casual mention in the literary traditions. Rajatanābha appears to be his father and Bhadrā, his mother.¹⁰ The *Vāyu Purāṇa* tells of his wife Puṇyajani and twentyfour sons.¹¹ In the Jain works, however, the names of his wives are mentioned as Kuṇḍā and Bahuputrā.¹² Madanamañjarī, the daughter of the Yaksha-chief Dundubhi,

¹cf. also *MMK*, I.43; III.549.

²*Mañibhadlavattikā*, in *Mahāniddeśa*, I.89; and *Mañibhaddas* in *Milindapañho*, p. 191. The former appears to be a class of ascetics and recluses. *Mañibhaddas* in the *Milindapañho* are mentioned along with tumblers, jugglers and actors etc., which shows that the followers of this Yaksha were drawn from the folk element of society. cf. also the *Question of King Milinda*, *SBE*, XXXV, pp. 265-66.

³*ASI, AR*, 1915-16, pp. 105-6 and Plate.

⁴Moti Chandra, *BPWM*, III, p. 51.

⁵*supra*, Chapter 3.

⁶Chanda, R.P., *JDL*, IV, p. 52.

⁷*supra*, Chapter 4 (for Mañibhadras' image from Vidisha (Besnagar)).

⁸cf. *Br. P.*, III.7.127-131; *Mbh.*, III.158.54.

⁹Coomaraswamy, A.K., I, p. 4. Quoting Hoernle (*Congr. Int. Orientalists*, 12), he also refers to a story of the Mahā-yaksha Mañibhadra in *MSS*, Coomaraswamy, A.K., I, p. 6 and note.

¹⁰*supra*, Chapter 3; *Br. P.*, III.7.122-125 refers to his mother Mañivarā and his twentythree sons.

¹¹*supra*, Chapter 3.

¹²*TP*, VI.42-43; also *Kathas*, IX.29.

is called the wife of Mañibhadra in the *Kathāsarisūgāra*.¹ She is described as having the habit of roaming about happily with her husband on the banks of rivers, hills and charming groves. In the same context, Mañibhadra is mentioned as brother of Kubera. His daughter Tārāvalī is known from the *Daśakumāracarita*.² Pūrṇabhadra is another Yaksha who usually figures along with Mañibhadra. In the *Mahāmāyūrī* both these Yakshas are described as brothers. Among all these different Yakshas and Yakshiṇīs, the names of two wives of Mañibhadra, namely Bahuputrā or Bahuputrikā and Kuṇḍā are most important. While Kuṇḍā may be an abstraction of Kuṇḍalā-Hārīti of the *Mahāvastu* (I.208f), the other, Bahuputrā,³ appears to be the designation of Hārīti's proverbial motherhood. In other words both the names may be regarded as the two different versions of Hārīti's tradition. Bahuputrā or Bahuputrikā had her own worshippers and her *caitya* existing at Visāla (Ujjain)⁴ is known. A Bahuputsā or Bahuputtaka *caitya* finds mention in the *Digha Nikāya*⁵ also which was in the neighbourhood of Vesālī to the north of the city. The *Commentaries* have added that it was a pre-Buddhist shrine, and it derived this name because here people used to pray to a god of the great *nigrodha* tree for obtaining sons. In the *Kāśyapa Samhitā*,⁶ Bahuputrikā is a synonym of Revatī, a *bālagraha* of the Jain texts, who also appears as an instrument of death to children and therefore called *Jātahāriṇī*. It is quite probable that, in the course of development, this Bahuputrikā⁷ might have been assimilated by Revatī because of similarity of features.⁸ But for this indirect connection of Bahuputrikā with Hārīti, the motherhood aspect apart, there does not appear to be much evidence for connecting them. It is quite probable that this pair of Mañibhadra and Bahuputrikā might have been the predecessor of the Buddhist tutelary pair of Hārīti and Pāñcika or Jambhala, or the Jain pair of Ambikā and Gomedha or Sarvaṇḍa.⁹ However, the equation cannot be emphasised too much because of obvious reasons. Firstly, there is no association of Mañibhadra and Bahuputrikā in the early Buddhist works. Secondly, Bahuputrikā in the *Digha Nikāya* is explained in the commentaries as a Deva, who could as well be male. These two, as a pair, appear only in the *Triloka Prajñaptī* and in the Jain *Cūrṇī* literature at a time when the Hārīti legend seems to have been almost completely formed. However, the analogous nature of Mañibhadra and Bahuputrikā on the one hand and other tutelary-pairs on the other, cannot be just ignored. Kubera and Mañibhadra also have very close relations with each other. There is some evidence to suggest that when Kubera was accepted as one of the *Lokapālas*, some of his functions might have gone to others.¹⁰

The Jain works particularly represent Mañibhadra as one of the principal Yakshas. In the Jain cosmography he occupied the position of a chief, and was thus called Indra along with Pūrṇabhadra.¹¹ But there were other reasons also for his status. He saved people from epidemics,¹² and protected the traders.¹³ In the *Karpūracarita Bhāṇa* (of Vatsarāja) Mañibhadra is the giver of victory in gambling, which confirms his position as giver of wealth. In this work it is also mentioned that he was *vallabha*, 'consort,' of Lakshmi.¹⁴

¹*Kathas*, IX.12.

²ed. G.T. Agashe, p. 82.

³Prof. K.D. Bajpai has supplied the information that a Bahuputrikā *vrata* is observed by ladies in north India.

⁴*Bhāgavati Sūtra*, 18.2; *Mbh.*, IX.45.3 for Bahuputrikā and other benevolent and malevolent mothers.

⁵*D.*, III.9; II.118; *Udāna*, VI.1; *S.*, V.259 and commentaries on two last texts.

⁶p. 99. Nandā, Sunandā and Kaṣapūtanā are also mentioned as afflicting children at different stages.

⁷Her worship is awarded by grant of daughters. *MMK*, II.313; cf. also *Devī Bhāgavata*, IX.46-47.

⁸Shah, U.P., *JISOA*, XIX, p. 40, says that "Bahuputrikā of the Jaina texts can safely be identified with the Bālagraha Revatī."

⁹Shah, U.P., *JOI*, III, 1, p. 62.

¹⁰*Lalitavī tara*, p. 390. Kubera and Mañibhadra have often been mentioned together in the epics.

¹¹*supra*, Chapter 3.

¹²*Fiṇḍaniryukti*, commentary on *su.* 245f. This again brings out another point of his consort's connection with Hārīti. He was therefore, probably a deity having power over the pestilence caused by his wife, Bahuputrikā.

¹³*Mbh.*, III.61.123-124. Also *Dhanapālas*, *Bhaviṣṣata Kahā*, quoted by Sircar, D.C., *JOI*, II, pp. 352, 354.

¹⁴*Rupaka haṅgam*, ed., Dalal, C.D., Baroda, 1918, pp. 31ff.

His shrines are mentioned in different works, and he enjoyed worship in these *caityas* of his own which existed since pre-Buddhist times. Some of his *caityas* may have been in the nature of trees but structural temples dedicated to him are also known. The *Piṇḍaniryukti* (p. 83) refers to his shrine which had a *sabhā* and it was decorated particularly on *ashṭamī* and some other days. In the *Kathāsaritsāgara*,¹ Devasmitā describes to her mother-in-law the shrine of Maṇibhadra, which was established by her ancestors. It was a place where people came and made petitions and offered various gifts. Incidentally, it was also a place where the faithfulness of men and women towards their partner was tested. The *Karpūracarita Bhāṣa* (p. 31) also mentions Maṇibhadra's *āyatana*, 'shrine.'

Some images of this Yaksha are also known² but their number does not thereby reflect the great popularity enjoyed by this Yaksha. One of his images has come from Parkham (Mathura) and the other from Pawaya (Gwalior). They are described below:

Maṇibhadra from Parkham (Ht. 8.8"). This is a colossal image showing the deity standing, wearing round *kuṇḍalas* in the ears, a close fitting necklace and a torque. His dress seems to consist mainly of a *dhotī* which is tied at the waist, the tassel of the *dhotī*, in the *gomutrikā* fashion, falls from the navel to the knees. The Yaksha is pot-bellied; and a scarf is tied around the body between the chest and the belly [Fig. 23]

The image carries an inscription, read by Vogel as—“(ni) Bhadapugarinā (ka) . . . (ga) aṭha . . . pi . . . kuni (ka) tevāsīnā (gomitakena) kaṭā” “Made by Bhadapugarin . . . Gomitaka, the pupil of Kuṇika.”³ The reading of the inscription has been a point of great controversy. Jayaswal⁴ had held that the inscription supplied the name of Ajātaśatru as Kuṇika and, therefore, it should be dated 618 BC. But the whole question of epigraphy and iconography has been examined by Chanda,⁵ who came to the conclusion that the image represented a Yaksha. Agrawala has made amendments in the reading of the inscription following N.G. Majumdar,⁶ and identified it with Maṇibhadra.⁷ He has said that this change in reading would give it the meaning that “(the image was placed) in the *pūga* or guild of Maṇibhadra, an analogy being available in the *gauṣṭhī* of the Maṇibhadra-Bhaktāh at Padmāvati.”⁸ According to him, the inscription was written in two parts, the “first portion running on the proper right side and between the legs . . . recorded the circumstances, time and locality of establishing the image while in the second half portion on the proper left side was given the name of sculptor by whom the image, was made (*Kunikate vāsīnā katā*), a peculiarity of construction also found on the Mansadevi (Jhing ka Nagara Yakshiṇī) image.”⁹ No objection has so far been offered against this reading. Thus the image seems to represent Maṇibhadra at a time when even the images of Kubera were not known. As for his attributes, no clue is possible regarding the objects held in the hands. It seems, however, that the right hand should have been in the *abhaya-mudrā*. The left hand might have held a purse as in the Pawaya image. The image may belong to the late Mauryan or Sunga period.

Maṇibhadra from Pawaya (2.5' × ½' × 1'),¹⁰ inscribed and preserved in the Archaeological Museum of Gwalior: This was discovered at Padam-Pawaya by Garde.¹¹ This headless image,

¹*Kathos*, I.162 also fn. 1.

²An image of this Yaksha is known from Ajanta (cave no. 27); below the figure is an inscription which reads *Maṇibhadrah*; cf. Gupte, R.S., and B.D. Mahajan, *Ajanta Ellora and Aurangabad Caves*, p. 267, inscription no. 28.

³Vogel, *Catalogue*, p. 83.

⁴*JBORS*, V.1919.

⁵Four Ancient Yaksha Statues, *JDL*, IV, 1921.

⁶Agrawala, V.S., *JUPHS*, XXII (1949), p. 178; The name of Maṇibhadra with Naka also occurs of an inscription from Bhita, *ASIAR*, 1911-12, p. 44.

⁷Agrawala, V.S., *JUPHS*, VI (Jan. 1933), part I; *SIA*, p. 117f.

⁸*ibid*, p. 117.

⁹*ibid*, p. 118. Thus the whole inscription according to Agrawala reads, “(Ni) Bhada pugerāna (or rājā) . . . patihāpito . . . kunikatevāsīnā katā.”

¹⁰Thakore, S.R., *Catalogue of Sculptures in the Archaeological Museum, Gwalior*, p. 3 no. 14.

¹¹*ASI, AR*, 1915-16, pp. 105-6 and plate LVII, b and c, Grade dates it to first or second century AD on paleographic and stylistic grounds.

corpulent and pot-bellied, is represented standing on a pedestal, wearing a beautiful multi-stranded necklace and armlets. His dress consists of a small *uttariya* folded on his right shoulder, and *dhotī* worn around the loins and covering the knees. The tassel of the *dhotī* hangs down to the legs. The right hand is broken but from its upward rise it appears to have been held in *abhaya mudrā*. In his left hand he holds a purse [Fig. 24, a, b]. An inscription of six lines on the pedestal reads:

- Line 1 *Rājnyaḥ svāmi śivanandisya Samvatsare caturthe grīshmapade dvitīya 2 divase*
 Line 2 *dvādaśe 102 etasya purvāyai gaushṭhyā Mañibhadrabhaktā garbhasukhitā 3 bhagavato*
 Line 3 *Mañibhadrasya pratimā pratishṭhāpayanti gaushṭhyām bhagavā āyu balaṁ vacaṁ kalyā-*
ṇam.
 Line 4 *abhyudayaṁ ca prītu dīṣatu Brāhmaṇasya Gotamasya kumārasya Brāhmaṇasya Rudradā-*
śasya Śivatradāye
 Line 5 *Śamabhūtisya jīvasya Khajabalasya Śivanemisya Śivabhadrasya Kubhakasya*
 Line 6 *Dhanade vasya dā . . .*

Mañibhadra was identified by Garde as a Yaksha on the authority of Monier William's¹ *Dictionary*. But Mm. H.P. Shastri² rejected this identification and said that the epithet *Bhagavāna* in the epigraph helps to identify the image as Bodhisattva Mañibhadra of the Buddhists. But R.P. Chanda,³ after examining various literary sources, has conclusively proved the image as that of Yaksha Mañibhadra. The inscription of the image is extremely interesting in that it refers to the worshippers of Mañibhadra as forming a guild of their own.

At this early age, it is impossible to find reference to any canon of iconography referring to Mañibhadra's images. In later times from the Gupta period onwards, some references are available which mention the iconographic formula of Mañibhadra's images. But the corresponding images have not been found.⁴ A reference to this Yaksha is also found in the classes of gods in the Vajrayāna Buddhism. The *Nishpannayogāvalī* mentions eight lords of Yakshas briefly. One of them is Mañibhadra and his colour is mentioned as yellow. His representations in the Vajrayāna art, however, have not been encountered. Among the Chinese representations of this group of Yakshas, one is known as Yakshadeva. It might represent Mañibhadra, but the identification cannot be regarded as certain due to lack of any corroborative evidence.⁵

The worship of Mañibhadra has survived till the present times, particularly in Bengal and Mathura regions.⁶ In Bengal it is a deity which controls the epidemics, and is remembered as Manik Pir. Some folk-songs related to him are known. We have been informed of one such song through a Bengali family; the song is as follows:

Subuddhi goyāler kubuddhi juṭilo
Bāślir bhetare dugdho rākhī,
Pir ke phākī dīlo,
Mānik Pir bhobonadīr pāre jābar lāgī.

It is a request to the Mānik Pir to help in getting through the world happily, and reference is also made to the mischief of a cow-girl who deprived the Pir of his share of milk.

¹Agrawala, V.S., *Lokadharmā* (Hindi), p. 136.

²JBORS, December, 1919, p. 552.

³JDL, IV, p. 49.

⁴*infra*, Chapter 6; cf. also *VS*, p. 176 for Mañibhadra's image and iconography.

⁵Bhattacharya, B., *Buddhist Iconography*, p. 380 quoting Clark, *Two Lamaist Pantheons*, II, pp. 102, 313.

⁶'Bira-Baramha,' (Hindi) *Janapada*, 1,1 (April, 1953), p. 68.

It may have been composed evidently for recitation of different unconnected events in which a reference to Mānik Pīr comes only casually without any relevance to those events. Agrawala has identified Manik-Vīra with Mañibhadra.¹ He refers to the list of fifty-two *Bīras* in the *Prithvīrāj Rāso*, and identifies Manik-Rudra with Mañibhadra. This Mānik-Bīra is worshipped at Banaras to ward off floods.² He also found worship around Mathura as Mahāvīra, chief of the *vīras*, and there he is worshipped at a secluded spot near Mehandipur which is eight miles away from Mahuva road (Mandavara Station) near Mathura. It seems that Mehandipur is a distortion of Mañibhadrapura.³ Mañibhadra's image from Parkham was also being worshipped as *Jakhaiyyā* when it was brought to notice by Cunningham. A fair in his honour was held on every Sunday in the month of Māgha.⁴

Pūrṇabhadra

His name signifies abundance and auspiciousness and literary works have described both his worship and mythology. He seems to be as old as Mañibhadra, but certainly not as popular, although both of them have been often mentioned together. A serpent of the name of Pūrṇabhadra is also known.⁵ In the *Matsya Purāṇa* (Ch. 180), he is represented as chief of Yakshas engaged in cruel and violent pursuits, particular to their creed. His son is Harikeśa,⁶ who is different in nature from his father.⁷ Some other texts offer clues to Pūrṇabhadra's family in which Mañibhadra appears in different roles. The *Vāyu Purāṇa* (p. 277) refers to Mañibhadra and Devajani as his parents who have twentyeight other sons.⁸ In the *Mahāmāyūrī*, on the other hand, Mañibhadra and Pūrṇabhadra appear as brothers. Pūrṇabhadra's wives are Tārā and Uttamā.⁹ But he is known to have had only one son, Harikeśa. Other sons of this Yaksha are unknown so far. The *Bṛhatkathā Ślokaśaṅgraha*¹⁰ contains a story connecting him with a Bhadrāvātī Yakshiṇī. Incidentally, the story also presents this Yaksha as an attendant of Kubera, a status in which again he is similar to Mañibhadra. In the work we have Bhadrāvātī who sat on the lap of Kubera and inadvertently hit Kubera with a *caurī*. As she was engaged in thinking about some elephant when this act happened, Kubera cursed her to be converted into an elephant herself. Pūrṇabhadra, who was also in attendance on Kubera, heard the curse and conveyed the same to her. Thereupon, he also was cursed for having shown her sympathy. They were restored to their forms and status only when Kubera remembered them again later.

As regards the worship of this Yaksha, it seems to have flourished even before the time of the Buddha and Mahāvīra. The *Pūrṇabhadda-vattikā*,¹¹ 'followers of Pūrṇabhadra,' are mentioned along with those of Vāsudeva and Baladeva, whose cult is as old as Pāṇini.¹²

The most detailed account of the shrine of Pūrṇabhadra Yaksha comes from the Jain works. There he is represented as one of the chiefs of Yakshas.¹³ His shrine was established at Campā.¹⁴ A full description of his *ceiya*, 'shrine,' based on the *Antagadadasaō*, is as follows:

¹*Bira-Baramha*, (Hindi) *Janapada*, I, 1 (April, 1953), p. 68.

²*ibid*, p. 68.

³This information came to us through Prof. K.D. Bajpai.

⁴*ASR*, XX, p. 40.

⁵*Mbh.*, I.31.12, *Pūrṇadattashtra*.

⁶*cf.* also *MMK*, I.17.

⁷*supra*, Chapter 1; *Skanda Purāṇa*, IV.32.10-11 describes Pūrṇabhadra as *mahātmā*.

⁸*Skanda Purāṇa*, IV.32.7, refers to Pūrṇabhadra as son of Ratnabhadra (equivalent to Mañibhadra, Mani-Ratna); in the *Devī Bhāgavato*, XII.10.90, Pūrṇabhadra is one of the *senāpatis* of Kubera. In the *Gilgit MSS*, I, p. 49 Pūrṇabhadra is regarded as son of Mañibhadra. *cf.* also *MMK*, I.17.43.

⁹*TP*, VI.42-43. The *Skanda Purāṇa*, IV.32. mentions Kanakakuṇḍalā as Pūrṇabhadra's wife.

¹⁰V.309ff.

¹¹*Mahānidāsa*, pp. 89, 92.

¹²Agrawala, V.S., *Pāṇini*, p. 359f.

¹³*supra*, Chapter 3.

¹⁴*Vipāka Sūtra*, p. 3; *Aupapātika Sūtra*, su. 3-5; *Antagadadasaō*, p. 6f; *Vividhatīrthakalpa*, pp. 65-66.

His sanctuary, 'ceiya,' is described as being of ancient origin (*cirātīta* and *porāṇa*) and it was decorated with umbrellas, banners, bells, flags upon flags and brushes of peacock-feathers, *loma-hatthaga*.¹ It had many daises² which were decorated with coloured handprints in *gośirsha* sandal, fresh red sandal and *dardara* sandal. These platforms were also coated with cow-dung. The *caitya* contained many ritual pitchers. On (? beside or above) its doorways were ritual jars (*vandaraghade*) and well-fashioned arches (*toraṇe*). The *caitya* was decorated and littered with the festoons of fresh flowers and smelt of *Kalaguru*, *Kundurukka* and *Turukka*.

Then comes the description of the visitors to the sanctuary. They included actors, dancers, rope-walkers, wrestlers, boxers, jesters, jumpers, reciters, ballad-singers, story-tellers, pole-dancers, picture-showmen.³ The worshippers and the benefits of worship are also described in the text. It is said that many people visited this shrine which was worthy of prayers and worship through various means. The shrine was auspicious, 'devayam' and 'ceiyam',⁴ and granted wishes.⁵ It is also mentioned that the shrine was situated in the midst of a park called *Āmraśālavana* and it had in the centre a big and beautiful *Aśoka* tree. Beneath it there was, "somewhat close to its trunk," a large dais of earthen blocks (*puḍhaviśilā paṭṭae*).⁶ The tree itself was decorated with eight auspicious symbols, flags of different colours, bells, fly-whisks and bunches.⁷ The *puḍhaviśilā paṭṭae* has been described as black like collirium, dark-blue like *nilotpala*; it was smooth, compact and polished like the surface of mirror; it was beautiful and decorated with carvings (*bhitticitta*) such as *ihāmriḡa*,⁸ bull, horse, *naramakara*, bird, serpent, kinnara, etc.

This graphic description of the sanctuary of Pūrṇabhadra near Campā to the minutest detail still leaves some points unanswered; for instance, the nature of the shrine, whether it was structural or non-structural, and secondly, the right significance of the *prithviśilāpaṭṭa* and what it stood for. It has been suggested that probably one or more *Sūtras* describing the shrine are missing.⁹ But that hardly seems possible as this appears to be the stock description of the Jain *ceiya*, found in different Jain texts such as the *Antagaḍadasāo*, the *Aupapātika Sūtra* and the *Rāyapasenaiyam* (*sūtra* 14) and the like. It is difficult to assume that a lapse on the part of one was not only accepted but also perpetuated in other works. From the description, it follows that the shrine was in the nature of a spacious compound within an enclosure, interspersed with *toronas*; big enough to accommodate persons engaged in different sports and pastimes along with the genuine devotees who came for worship with their petition. In fact, as pointed out by Coomaraswamy,¹⁰ structural shrines of the age are known from the Jain works, particularly the

¹Barnett, translates it as "brushes" and Coomaraswamy, I, p. 19 note 5, says that this translation "may be due to the translator's preoccupation with Jain ideas." Pali *Loma-hattha* means "with hair erect, . . . in fear, astonishment or joy. May not the suggestion be here simply 'marvellous to behold' rather than the designation of an object? or could Yak-tail fly-whisks . . . more appropriate in a Yaksha shrine have been meant." Shah, U.P., *Studies in Jaina Art*, p. 55, translates it as brushes of peacock-feathers.

²*Veyaddi*: Coomaraswamy explains it as "an earthen or stone slab altar for the reception of offerings in the essential part of a shrine." cf. *Yaksa*, I, p. 20 note 1. Shah, U.P., op. cit., p. 55, quotes the commentator Abhayadeva, explaining Veyaddi as railing on his authority.

³"Probably those who exhibited scrolls (*yamapaṭṭav*), illustrating the reward of good and bad actions," Coomaraswamy, I, p. 20, note 3.

⁴*Devayam* is 'divine' and *ceiyam* is 'image,' according to the commentators; cf. Shah, U.P., *Studies in Jaina Art*, p. 56.

⁵*Aupapātika Sūtra*, Sūtra, 2 and 3.

⁶*Ibid*, Sūtra 3-5. This *śilāpaṭṭa* has been described as *iśim khaḡḡasamalline*. Abhayadeva, in his commentary, renders it as *mānak skandhāsanna*, which shows that it "rested on a platform, slightly reclining against the stem of the tree since it is said to rest on a *śimhasana*," Shah, U.P., *Studies in Jaina Art*, p. 68, note 3.

⁷Shah, U.P., op. cit., p. 68; a similar *paṭṭa* is described in the *Āvaśyaka Sūtra*, II.384, and in the *Kohārayaṇa Kośha*, pp. 19ff. in connection with Vessamana's *āyatana* at Gayā.

⁸Shah, U.P., op. cit., p. 68, *Vrikah* according to Abhayadeva.

⁹*Ibid*, p. 56, but on page 67 he says that this is, more or less, the "stock description of a *caitya* for all Jaina canons."

¹⁰*Yaksa*, I, pp. 21ff.

shrine of Yaksha Moggarapāṇi of Rājagriha mentioned in the *Antagaḍadasāo*. Providing enclosures to the sacred spots was an ancient practice, and this was evidently followed in case of the Pūrṇabhadrā *caitya* too.¹

His abode (*harmya*, *mandira*) finds elaborate mention also in the *Skanda Purāṇa*.² It is described there as consisting of courtyards paved with shining slabs (*candraśilā*), windows decorated with pearls, multi-storeyed structures (*aṭṭālaka*) studded with diamonds, supported on similarly-built pillars. The walls of the palace were made of glittering crystals and above it fluttered the flags with their jewelled staffs. The palace echoed with tinklings of *nūpura* and pleasing sounds produced by playful peacocks, doves, parrots, geese and beetles. The fragrance of camphor and Kālāguru was there. It also contained beautiful seats and beds in the tastefully decorated *maṇḍapas* hung with drapes; and the panels, showing monkeys picking or parrots nibbling fruits rendered it more beautiful. With all its abundance and splendour, the palace looked, it is said, like the second home of Lakshmi.

The *prithviśilāpaṭṭa* mentioned in the *Antagaḍadasāo*, offers another knotty problem, but Shah's interpretation of it appears to be reasonably convincing. He has given another reference from the *Vasudevahiṇḍī* (pp. 85-88) which refers to a Manorama park in the Magadha Janapada which contained the stone-plaque of Jakkha Sumana placed under an Aśoka tree. This plaque was known as Sumana, and was worshipped by a person, Satya by name.³ The other beautiful *śilā*,⁴ representing Pūrṇabhadrā was, according to Shah "placed under a tree reclining a little (*īsim*) against its stem and deposited on a *siṃhāsana* . . ."⁵ The *paṭṭa* "rested on a *Siṃhāsana* not vertically but horizontally, either slightly raised at the end near the tree or with its one end probably thrust into stem by scraping the latter's surface, which was possibly the meaning conveyed by *īsim khaṇḍa-samallinā*." Such practice in worship is borne out by the evidence of the early art of Bharhut, Amaravati, Bodhgaya and Mathura.⁶ It has also been suggested by Shah that the carvings on the *śilāpaṭṭa* were decorative. 'In the centre might have been the figure of a Yaksha or any spirit or symbol.' To assume the carving of the figure of Yaksha on the plaque is not warranted by evidence. No image of Yaksha has been discovered so far that may go back to pre-Buddhist antiquity. The plaque in itself might have symbolised Yaksha Pūrṇabhadrā and the decoration on it may have been there to lend it an artistic effect. In any case, although the commentators do not explain the significance of *prithviśilāpaṭṭa*, the interpretation of Shah appears plausible. In the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, we have *taṃkīta-māñco*, 'tam-shaped holystead,' of Yaksha Suciloma, which is described as his *bhavanam*, 'abode.' And its analogy with the *prithviśilāpaṭṭa* does not seem to be remote. It has also been suggested by Shah that the *śilāpaṭṭa* was of N.B.P. (Northern-Black-Polished) ware and he compared it with some such N.B.P. *paṭṭas* excavated from Kauśāmbī and Vaiśālī.⁷ If, however, this suggestion is accepted antiquity of the tradition of Pūrṇabhadrā's worship may easily be taken back to about 550 B.C. As regards the later limits of the period of his worship, the clue is supplied by the *Nishpannayogāvalī* of Abhayā-kara Gupta (p. 63). In the text, Pūrṇabhadrā is regarded as one of the eight Yaksha Kings.⁸ He is conceived as holding (like Jambhala), citrus and mongoose in the right and left hands respectively. His colour is regarded as blue. Clark⁹ has referred to an illustration of Pūrṇabhadrā in the Chinese collection, under the deity's name.

¹ *ibid*, p. 22f; *HIA*, p. 67, note 2, where Coomaraswamy says, "most of the *Yakkha-cetiya* . . . may have been sacred trees."

² IV.32.13-25.

³ Shah, U.P., *Studies in Jaina Art*, p. 66.

⁴ Abhayadeva has described that the *śilā* was inlaid with pearls along its borders. Shah; *op. cit.*, p. 69, note 2.

⁵ *ibid*, p. 69.

⁶ Shah, U.P., *op. cit.*, p. 69; Coomaraswamy, I, pp. 18ff.

⁷ Shah, U.P., *op. cit.*, p. 71.

⁸ *supra*, Chapter 4.

⁹ *op. cit.*, II, pp. 102, 313, quoted by Bhattacharya, B., *op. cit.*, p. 380.

Yaksha-Worship

Temples and Sanctuaries

THE tradition of Yaksha temples is fairly old, going back to the time of the *Rgveda* (IV.3.13) where *Yaksha-sadana* finds mention. As in the beginning, Yaksha was also designated Brahma and on this analogy, *Brahmapura* may stand for *Yakshapura*.¹ Generally speaking, the Yaksha-abodes have been connected with different terrestrial and celestial regions. It appears that the worship of Yakshas might have been carried out at his natural habitats, such as mountains, rivers, trees, forests, tanks, houses, gates, and other consecrated spots such as shrines which were specially established for Yaksha worship. The *Mahāvamsa* (XXXVII.40) refers to the practice of erecting *thūpa*, 'stūpa,' at the Yakshasthāna.² These abodes, which were evidently places of worship, have been variously known as *Prāsāda*,³ *koshthaka* (*Arthasāstra*, II.4.17), *veśma* (*Mbh.*, V.193.31), *bhavana* (*Mbh.*, V.192.20), *harmya* (*Skanda Purāna*, IV.32.15f), *devakulikā* (*Pinḍa-niryukti*, p. 83) *caitya*⁴ and *jakkhāyayana*.⁵ Certain words, such as *āyatana*, *devagriha* or *devakula* usually denoted any temple, including those of Yakshas. The word *caitya* is of special importance in this group of words. It is applied to "all edifices bearing the character of sacred monuments . . . but not all *caityas* are edifices."⁶ The tradition of worship also is very old, and can be traced back to the period of *Sūtras*. As the principal cults of India had not developed by that time and as most of the deities mentioned in the *Sūtras* are popular ones,⁷ it is possible that some *caityas* might have been devoted to Yakshas.

A typology of Yaksha abodes can be evolved on the basis of their different places of habitat. The copious references to the Yaksha-shrines might not necessarily mean structured temples in all cases.⁸

YAKSHA-SANCTUARIES

Celestial
Terrestrial : Structured : Temples

¹ACSB, introduction, IX-X.

²J, IV.154, for a Yakkha of a dunghill.

³Pāṇini, II.2.34, *Comm.* by Patanjali; cf. Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p. 338.

⁴DA, II.521 refers to the habitat of Yakkha Sārandada as *yakkha nivāsanaṭṭhāna* and *cetiya*, that was converted into a *vihāra*. For the literature on *Caitya*, see Shah, U.P., *Studies in Jaina Art*, pp. 43-55; Pandit Hansaraja Shastry, *Caityavāda Samikshā* (Hindi) Ambala, VS 2007; Dikshitar, V.R.R., *IHQ*, XIV, no. 3, pp. 440-452.

⁵*Vip. S.*, II, p. 16; The *Sādhnamālā*, II.562-63 refers to a *Yaksha-sakaṭa-ashṭadala padmākara*, over which eight Yakshas with their consorts were to be shown.

⁶Shah, U.P., *op. cit.*, p. 43. The Buddhist literature refers to three types of *caityas*, *uddeśika*, *pāribhogika*, *Śāstrika*; cf. *Mahābodhivamsa*, p. 59 (PTS). In the *Bṛhatkalpa Bhāṣya*, mention is made of *sahammiya*, *mangala*, *sāsaya* and *bhatti cetiya*, Jain, J.C., *Life in Ancient India*, p. 223, note, 246.

⁷cf. Banerjea, J.N., *op. cit.*, p. 70 and note.

⁸For some types of sanctuaries of Vyantara gods, cf. *Siddhāntasārasaṅgraha*, VII.24, p. 157.

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Semi-structured : | Platforms |
| | Gates |
| un-structured : | Arbored |
| or | Mountainous |
| Natural | Aquatic |

CELESTIAL ABODES

Usually, Yakshas are represented as terrestrial demi-gods, but those inhabiting the celestial regions are also known. Their habitat is *antariksha*, 'sky,' in the *Nrisīnhatāpīniya Up.* (I.2). In the epics, they were found present in the heavenly assemblies of Kubera and Brahmā. According to the Jain tradition, they inhabited the *vyantara* region of heaven, hence their designation as *vyantara devatā*. In the Buddhist works, their abodes are described as *ākāsattha*, aerial.¹

TERRESTRIAL SANCTUARIES

The cult personality of Yakshas is magnified mainly through their terrestrial abodes which establish them pre-eminently as the spirits of nature. The copious references to the *caityas* assigned to them in the heterodox literature² lead us to conclude that quite often such hallowed spots developed into centres of worship. This sanctity was sometimes self-acquired but usually it was accorded by the human worshippers who consecrated Yakshas at particular spots. Hārīti is said to have obtained worship in the Buddhist monasteries because the Buddha so ordained. In the same manner, Paṇḍukābhaya is said to have installed Cetiya, Kāvela, Cittarāja and another Yakkhī at places like royal precincts, eastern side of the city, lower end of the Abhaya tank and the South gate of the city respectively.³ In the *Agni Purāṇa*, the temples of Yakshas are assigned to the northern sector of the city.⁴ Consecrations notwithstanding, some Yakshas shifted to more agreeable spots, as is found in the case of Kālī Yakkhīnī. She was established on the rafter of a householder's hut, but finding that place uncomfortable she was lodged 'successively to the flail hut, the water-chatty, the bake-house, the store-room for nimbus, the dust heap and the village-gate.' She found peace only when lodged at a quiet place where she lived happily and discharged her benevolent functions.⁵

As regards the self-acquired sanctuaries of Yakshas, it is likely that some might have developed into *tīrthas*, sacred places. The *Mahābhārata*⁶ refers to the 'famous' *Yakshīnī-tīrtha* at Kurukshetra which might be the same as the one dedicated to Ulūkhaḷa Mekhalā of the *Vāmana Purāṇa*.⁷ The *Kauberā-tīrtha* also finds mention there.⁸ A ford on the *mahāvālukā-gangā* described as *Yakkha-Sūkara-tīrtha* is also known.⁹ That such places had an enormous flow of worshippers is proved by the vivid description of the Puṇṇabhadda *caitya* at Caṃpā.¹⁰ The *Kathāsarit-sāgara*¹¹ however indicates that some deserted places were appropriated by these beings, as was done by Yakshīnī Śringotpādinī in occupying a deserted Śiva temple where she carried out her cannibalistic exploits.

¹*Vy. A.*, p. 134; *R.*, V.1.167, refers to *antariksha* as the habitat of Yaksha; *R.*, V.57.1, mentions them figuratively as 'lotus in the sea that was sky.'

²*supra*, Chapter 3.

³*Mh. V.*, IX, X; cf. also Coomaraswamy, I, pp. 24ff; *Gilgit MSS*, III (i), p. XVIII, also pp. 15ff.

⁴39.12, ed. Baldev Upadhyaya, Varanasi, 1966.

⁵*Dh. A.*, I, 174f.

⁶III.81.7; cf. also *Mbh.*, III.81.42-tīrthas of Arantuka on Saraswati.

⁷*supra*, Chapter 3.

⁸*supra*, Chapter 4.

⁹*Cullavamsa*, LXXII.21, *Transl.*, I.321, note, 1 (Geiger, W., *PTS*, 2 vols.)

¹⁰*supra*, Chapter 4.

¹¹III.86ff.

Structured Temples

One of early notice of a temple is found in the *Mahābhārata* in the case of Yaksha Sthūṇākarna. His temple-*veśma*—is described there as—coloured and washed-*sudhāmritakalepanam*—, decorated with different types of garlands and wreaths, garments and flags which hung in the midst of fragrant odours of incense. This shrine was built of high walls—*prākāra*, gateways—*torana*, and enclosures *vitāna*, and had plenty of drinks and dainties particularly *lājikā*, pop-corn.¹ The temple of Ālavaka, built by the prince and the citizens of Ālavī is graphically described in the Buddhist texts. It was situated at a distance of thirty leagues from Sāvattihī, yet near Vessavanaś shrine in the propinquity of Himalayas.² Provided with walls, gates and *gopuram*, covered with a *kamsajāla*,³ it stood on the ground—*bhumaṭṭham*, near a banyan tree and was known variously as *suvaṇṇa-vimāna*, *rajatamaṇi-vimāna* and *iṭṭhāgāra*.⁴ A shrine of Śākyavardhana, the tutelary Yaksha of the Śākyas is described in the *Divyāvadana*⁵ as *devakula* where different deities 'fell' at the feet of the newly-born Bodhisattva in obeisance. Naradeva Yaksha's *bhavana* along with its *mangala-paryanka*, seat, finds mention elsewhere.⁶ Jain literature also refers to certain Yaksha temples like those of Śūlapāni at Asthikagrāma,⁷ Śankha at Śankhapura⁸ and Surapriya at Sāketa.⁹ Maṇibhadraś temple is mentioned as having inner chambers, doors and gates, which would point to its being a big edifice.¹⁰ Usually, these shrines were outside towns, and were situated in gardens. The *Kathākośa* provides the instance of Śankha's temple which stood at an isolated place within the access of wild elephants. It is interesting to note that the Gujarati commentators have consistently explained the word *Jakkhāyayana* as *āyat thānak dehro*, 'little domed temple,' which is relevant to their shape.¹¹ The evidence of early art and coins supports this explanation. The reliefs of Bharhut, Sanchi and Amaravati present such structures in a variety of forms. A shrine with barrel-shaped dome provided with finials, arched windows and railing, pillars and enclosures is known from Bharhut.¹² A similar barrel-roofed structure is known from Sanchi.¹³ A simple domed-structure with a railing-enclosure also appears there.¹⁴ At Amaravati, a several-storeyed shrine has a barrel roof, and is provided with a series of rich windows and railings.¹⁵ In these different cases, they are provided with stone-dais, decorated with palms, covered with flowers, etc.,¹⁶ and these are encountered in the reliefs. Moti Chandra has identified in them the Yaksha temple forms.¹⁷ In the Punch-marked and tribal coins of ancient India also, some types of domed structures are encountered, some of which may represent prototypes of ancient Yaksha temples.¹⁸ Structural temple architecture was at an advanced stage by the time of the Kushāṇa period, and the reference, in many cases, to Yaksha images may by natural

¹*Mbh.*, V.192.21; 193.31-32.

²*Sn. A.*, I.220,240.

³*ibid.*, I, 222.

⁴*ibid.*, I, 228, 226.

⁵*ibid.*, p. 391.

⁶*Bu. A.*, p. 265.

⁷*Av. S.*, I.268.

⁸*Kathākośa*, pp. 71ff.

⁹*Av. S.*, I, p. 101.

¹⁰*Katha*, I.162.

¹¹cf. Barnett, L.D., *Antag.*, p. 13 n. 5.

¹²Barua, B.M., *Bharhut*, III.XLI.37.

¹³Marshall, *Monuments of Sanchi*, Pl. XVIIIb.

¹⁴*ibid.*, Pl. XXXIVa.

¹⁵Sivaramamurti, *Amaravati Sculptures*, Pl. XV, 1.

¹⁶Moti Chandra, *BPWM*, 3, pp. 48ff.

¹⁷*ibid.*, p. 50.

¹⁸Allan, J., *Catalogue of Indian Coins in the British Museum*, Pl. XV, pp. 122-24; Pl. XIV, coin no. 15; Pl. XV, coin nos. 1 to 11; Trigarta Coins, Introduction CXXXIX, Pl. 29. Coin no. 10; for Punch-Marked Coins, *ibid.*, pp. X, XXIII, XXIV, LIX.

inference, indicate the existence of their temples also.¹ Of particular importance among such temples is that of Ambikā Yakshīṇī, situated six miles south-west of Satna on the Sinduriya hills. It is known as *Patyān dāī* temple. It is a small structure (6½' × 1½' × 7½'), having a flat roof, but complete in all its parts. It contains the images of Gangā and Yamunā along with some *Tīrthankaras* on the *torana*. The main image has been removed to the Allahabad Museum.² The evidence from south India also indicates the existence of certain main or subsidiary temples of Jain Yakshīṇīs.³ In some cases, the epigraphs refer to Yaksha's images, indirectly showing their worship, presumably in temples. An epigraph dated the Saka era 792 (AD 870) refers to the renewal of the images of Yakshīs at Tiruvayirai in Palni taluk in Tamilnad.⁴ Another epigraph of the 19th regnal year of the Rāshtrakūṭa King Krishṇa III (dated c. 957 AD), records the gift of a lamp to the Yaksha by a servant of the queen of Krishṇa.⁵ These epigraphs point strongly, to the existence of Yaksha temples.

Just as reference to the icons provides presumably, evidence for the existence of temples, in the same way, the temples also may indicate the existence of images of the Yakshas. The temples with images⁶ are known in the cases of Citta,⁷ Moggarapāṇi,⁸ Umbaradatta,⁹ Śobhana¹⁰ and Surapriya.¹¹ Temples without icons also seem to have existed, where the paintings of Yakshas or Yakshīṇīs might have served the purpose of worship in place of the icons. A *Yakshī-yajnaśālā*, probably 'temple,' is mentioned in the *Brihatkathā Ślokaśaṅgraha*, where the painted image of Yakshī Sukumārikā was worshipped by the Prince Manohara. Several prescriptions for drawing figures of Yakshīs are known from the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*¹² and the *Jayākhyā Saṁhitā*.¹³

Semi-Structured Sanctuaries

All the Yakshas did not have their independent temples. Sometimes they obtained abodes in platforms or gates which, for classification's sake, we may describe as semi-structural sanctuaries. The use of a platform in Yaksha symbolism is exemplified particularly by Puṇṇabhadda of Caṁpa, Sumana of Manorama park at Magadha,¹⁴ and Kubera at Gayā.¹⁵ Puṇṇabhadda's shrine¹⁶ had probably a walled enclosure provided with gates, but the place of worship was, in all probability, a *śilā* decorated with gems and pearls, perched over a *siṁhāsana*, 'lion seat.' A *sumana-silā* is also known from the *Vasudevahiṇḍī* and has been described earlier.¹⁷ These evidently refer to the worship-platforms. In the *Saṁyutta Nikāya*, the *bhavanāṁ* of Suciloma is mentioned as

¹Coomaraswamy, 1, p. 17f. for different types of temples cf. *HIA*, Figs. 42, 43, 45, 62, 69, 70, 142, of these the first three refer to Bharhut; no. 62 represents the Bodhgaya plaque; nos. 69 and 70 refer a shrine type from a Mathura stone relief; no. 142 a shrine type from Jaggayapetta; fig. no. 70 shows a shrine with gate, inside two jambs and a *caitya* arch with a *śikhara* composed of four horizontal tiers.

²Cunningham, *Reports*, no. 9; Niraj Jain, *Anekanta*, Vol. 15, no. 4, p. 177f.

³cf. Desai, P.B. *Jainism in South India*, pp. 39, 47, 173 (for a shrine dedicated to Jvālāmālīnī at Edehalli in Kadur District, and another to the same deity at Navalgund and Javur in Mysore).

⁴*ibid*, p. 61.

⁵*ibid*, p. 43.

⁶*US*, XII, p. 50 and note.

⁷Malalasekara, *DPPN*, sv. Cittaraja-2.

⁸*Antagaḍadasāo*, p. 86.

⁹*Vip. S.*, I, 7, p. 79.

¹⁰*Parīśiṣṭaparvaṇa*, Canto, 2, story 8, p. xliii; also ix for the source of this story. Although a statue is meant here, the temple has not been mentioned specifically.

¹¹*Av. S.*, I, 101.

¹²pp. 565ff.

¹³Chapter 28.109ff, p. 324; Chapter 26.77-85, pp. 294ff.

¹⁴*supra*, Chapter 4.

¹⁵*Kahārāyaṇakośa*, pp. 19ff.

¹⁶*supra*, Chapter 4.

¹⁷*supra*, Chapter 4.

taṃkita-manca which according to the *Suttanipāta commentary* (I.301), denotes a long slab of rock resting on four upright rocks.¹ This abode also appears to be a platform-like structure.

That the platforms, presented as objects of worship, are known from the early art of Bharhut and Sanchi, and that such objects may have been worshipped, is also upheld by different scholars. It has been said that the "essential element of a Yaksha holystead is a stone slab or altar placed beneath the tree sacred to Yakshas."² In the early bas-reliefs, the following variations of these may be noted.³

1. Stone slab on brick-platforms under trees (Barua, *Barhut*, Pl. XX, 16 and 16a).
2. A platform like a solid mass of stone with carving towards the front, containing garland and leaf-motifs.⁴ (Barua, Pl. XXXV, 28).
3. Four-legged stool under a tree. (Barua, Pl. XXXVI, 30).
4. Stone-slab in the form of a chair under a tree fenced with a stone-railing (Barua, Pl. XLVI, 46; XLVII, 47; XLVIII, 48).
5. A stone slab with an umbrella (Barua, Pl. LIV, 56).
6. A pedestal with finished legs (Barrett, D., *Sculptures from Amaravati in the British Museum*, Pl. XX.a).

Similar types of platforms are noticed also from the bas-reliefs of Mathura. The Jain *āyāga-paṭas*,⁵ 'tablets of homage,' have been regarded as a "further stage in the development of the ancient Yaksha-*sthānas* appropriated by the Jainas in the early centuries of the Christian era."⁶ It is probable that these pedestals and platforms were accepted in the Buddhist worship, from the Yaksha sanctuaries.

Another class of semi-structural sanctuaries of Yaksha consisted of gates, rafters, and the like. In the *Jātakas*, mention is found of the spirits living on the portals of the gate.⁷ Sometimes sacrifices were made for the consecration of the gate, so that the presiding deity of the town may live there.⁸ A Yaksha, living on the city gate, is mentioned in the *Sutana-Jātaka*.⁹ In the Tibetan-sources, a reference is found to a gatekeeper of Veśālī, of Buddha-Bimbisāra time, who was reborn as a Yaksha after his death. A bell was hung round his neck, and he was established on the gate of the city. He agreed to ring the bell in the event of any impending danger in the people of Vesālī.¹⁰ A Yaksha, Madhusugandha, has also been referred to by Coomaraswamy; this Yaksha lived on a gate 'Jivaka' and protected people.¹¹ Thus, this type of abode seems to have been one of the favourites of Yakshas. This was also an accepted fact as may be seen in the monuments of ancient times, and scores of instances are available in art, showing Yakshas guarding the gates of *stūpas* at Bharhut, Sanchi, Mathura and Amaravati. Kubera, Suciloma, Supavāsa, Gaṅgito, etc., are shown on the different gates of Bharhut, standing on their *vāhana*, 'mounts,' in *namaskāra-mudrā*, as if they were fulfilling the duty of guarding the sacred monument. At Sanchi, particularly on the Western gate of the main Stupa [Fig. 55], the capitals on

¹ *Kindred Sayings*, I, p. 264 note 3.

² Coomaraswamy, I, p. 17; such *Yaksha-sthānas* are known today as *thāna* 'places' and are held in respect by the village-folk. cf. Agrawala, V.S., *Bira Baramha* (Hindi), *Janapada*, I, 3, pp. 67ff. Such places are abodes of Bira or Yaksha and contain conical symbols representing them.

³ Moti Chandra, *BPWM*, 3, p. 48.

⁴ The description by Moti Chandra is different, cf. *BPWM*, p. 48.

⁵ For the explanation of these cf. Agrawala, V.S., "Mathura Ayagapatas," *JUPHS*, XVI, 1, pp. 58-61.

⁶ Moti Chandra, *BPWM*, 3, p. 49.

⁷ *Khadirangāra Jātaka*, I.101.

⁸ *Takkariya Jātaka*, IV.155.

⁹ *J*, III-201-203, no. 398. Before being controlled, this Yaksha used to live in a tree.

¹⁰ Coomaraswamy, I, p. 14f; cf. also II *Addenda*, p. 8.

¹¹ *ibid*, p. 7 citing Peri; *BEFEO*, XVII, iii, p. 32.

the pillars supporting architraves contain the prominent and powerful images of dwarf Yakshas in the act of supporting the edifice on their upraised hands. Mathura has also provided a large number of railing pillars with male-figures, some of which may stand for Yakshas.¹ The function of Yakshas as guardians inhabiting gates or houses etc. was a popular feature, and this was brought into the service of different sects to whose gods these different monuments were dedicated.

Non-Structured Sanctuaries

The natural abodes of the Yakshas were situated on 'trees, rivers, hills and charming groves'² or in 'waterless and savage woods full of tigers and apes'³ or on trees, mountains, caves and solitary places rendered dangerous 'owing to their denizens'.⁴ The most numerous instances regarding their habitats pertain to trees and, as Coomaraswamy has suggested, "most of the Yakkha—*Cetiyas* referred to in the Buddhist and Jain literature may have been sacred trees".⁵ Tree-worship in itself was an ancient institution, its antiquity going back to the Indus Valley Civilisation. In the Vedic literature, too, different trees have been mentioned as objects of worship.⁶ In the Buddhist and Jain texts, Yakshas are often mentioned as inhabiting trees and forests.⁷ Maheśvara Yaksha had his habitat in a *Gośirsha Candana* forest.⁸ In the *Udāna Commentary*, a Yaksha, Kuṇḍa, inhabiting a forest named as *Kuṇḍadhānavana* after him, is mentioned.⁹ A city was built there by the Koliyas, and was named Kuṇḍiya. Yaksha temples were usually set in gardens containing different species of trees,¹⁰ although the banyan tree is particularly assigned to them.¹¹ In the *Jātakas*, many Yakkha-legends are connected with the forests which indicate that their cult arose from woods-faring merchants.¹² As creatures of wilds and forests, they were often called *rukhhadevatā*,¹³ tree gods, or *bhummadevatā*,¹⁴ earth-gods. They had great liking for trees like Aśoka, Saptacchanda, Cāmpaka and Āmra which surrounded their abodes.¹⁵ Serissaka Yakkha derived his name from the Serisa tree (*Alibizzia lebbek*) which stood near his abode.¹⁶ Yakshas, associated with the trees like Kadamba¹⁷ (*Anthocephalus Indicus*), Āmra¹⁸ (*Mangifera Indica*), *Aśvattha*¹⁹ and *Tinduga*,²⁰ are also known. In the *Kathāsaritsāgara* it is said,

¹Agrawala, V.S., *Mathura Museum Catalogue*, nos. J.25, 43, 44, 56, 60, 67, 68, F. 10; also 117; 200, 1268. In them, the figures are shown wearing different types of dresses, standing sometimes under trees, holding lotus or other flowers.

²*Kathas.*, IX.12.

³*ibid.*, I.7.

⁴*NK*, II.38, p. 47, *Tv. S.*, IV.12, p. 201, refers to mountains, caves, forests and other solitary places as the haunts of yakshas.

⁵*HIIA*, p. 47; *M. Bh. Śānti Parva*, 69.39-40 has the term *caitya* for trees, cf. also Hopkins, E.W., *Epic Myth*, pp. 6ff.

⁶*TS*, III.4.8.4.; *Chāndogya Upanishad*, VI.11.

⁷cf. *ārāmadevatā*, *vanadevatā*, *Śringātadevatā*, *Gilgit MSS*, III (1) 130.

⁸*Divyavadāna*, p. 41; Deep forest as habitats of Yaksha, cf. *Mbh.*, V.192.20.

⁹cf. *DPPN*, sv. *Kundadhānavana*.

¹⁰*Antag.*, p. 6 refers to thirtythree species of trees besides Asoka tree in the *caitya*-narrative; cf. also *Kahāra-yaṅakośa*, pp. 144ff, for the Yaksha image in the garden of *Kullūgapuranagara*.

¹¹*VP*, Ch. 69, p. 277; *Tv.S.*, IV.12 describes a flag containing *vaṭa* ensign as Yaksha's cognizance; *Kathas.*, I.7, J, III.201f.

¹²*J*, I.233ff; II.89ff; III.132f; V.237.

¹³*J*, III.201; *PV*, II.9; Sometimes *rukhhadevatā* is not specifically a Yakkha, cf. *J*, I.259.

¹⁴*Pv. A*, p. 55.

¹⁵*TP*, IV.63-64; cf. *Kathas.*, V.179, for tree abode of Yaksha, also *Kathākośa*, p. 126.

¹⁶*DA*, III.814.

¹⁷*Sthānānga Sūtra*, VIII.850.

¹⁸*J*, II.271ff; IV.205f; cf. *Śalabhañjikā* under the mango tree at Sanchi, Stūpa II, East Gate, Randhawa, M.S., *The Cult of Tree Worship*, fig. 25-26.

¹⁹*Kathas.*, II.98; II.231; V.125.

²⁰*US*, p. 50.

that the land of king Susheṇa was filled with heaps of gold by the help of Yakshīs who had transformed themselves into trees.¹ The *Rukkhadhamma Jātaka* records how the tree-spirits chose their arboreal abodes in a *Sāla* forest. After the death of the first king Vessavana, a new Vessavana was installed in the office. He sent word to all trees, shrubs, bushes and plants bidding the tree-fairies each to choose the abodes which suited them best, which was carried out by them.² These references exemplify the animistic beliefs which were deeply permeated in the Yaksha cult.³ In the literature as well as in the art of India, Yakshas have often been represented as residing in trees, and it has been suggested by Chanda that the cult of tree-worship arose in Eastern India.⁴ But the early evidence of the Vedic literature in this regard does not seem to support this suggestion.⁵ In connexion with Yakshas, however, it may be assumed that the arboreal abodes of these deities must have found worship. The *Mahāvamsa*, for instance, refers to a Yakkhī residing in a tree, and a temple provided with *vitāna*, shade, has been mentioned with her arboreal abode.⁶

Various representations of Yakshas with trees are known in Indian art. There are certain reliefs at Bharhut⁷ and other places depicting the tree-deities as offering dainties to human-beings. Yakshas inhabited trees, and offered gifts to human-beings. This idea is indicated at least in the first two of the following reliefs. The rest among the following reliefs do not seem to have any Yaksha affiliation although some scholars have tried to find it there.

1. A relief with an inscription—'jabū Naḍode pavate,' shows a tree from which issue two human hands, one holding a bowl and the other pouring water from a pitcher into the hands of a man seated below. Cunningham thought that the scene had no connection with the label, and said that a tree-spirit is shown giving food and drink to a devotee.⁸ Barua, on the other hand, felt that it could be identified 'either with *Sambūla* or *Vessantara Jātaka*'.⁹ Lüders has rejected all these identifications, and has translated the inscription as 'The rose-apple tree on Mount Naḍoda.' The tree in the relief is *Jambū*.¹⁰

2. Another similar scene has been reported by Cunningham,¹¹ which shows a holy tree with an altar beneath it and a standing human-figure in front. Another altar has also been shown in the scene. The man, with projected hand, is receiving a water vessel (*kamaṇḍalu*) and a plate from the two hands of the tree-spirit.

3. Cunningham has reported another relief from Bharhut, bearing the inscription in two lines—'(B) *ahuhathika Āsana (Bhaga) vato Mahādevasa*' "The seat of the lord Mahādeva under the Bahuhastika."¹² Mahādeva has been regarded as a inscriber's mistake for Makhādeva, a Yaksha, known from the *Sutano Jātaka*.¹³ The story of the *Jātaka* is of a king of Banaras who was saved from being devoured by the Yaksha Makhādeva due to the intelligent help of Sutana. The Yaksha had earlier inhabited a tree but was later given a settlement at the city gate. Lüders

¹*Kathas.*, III.25.

²*J.*, I.182; *Kathas.*, I.9 tells of Kaṇabhūti who looked like *sāla* tree in stature. He was a Piśāca, but originally a servant of Kubera.

³cf. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, II, pp. 196ff.

⁴*MAI*, no. 30, p. 7.

⁵cf. Macdonell, A.A., *Vedic Mythology*, p. 154.

⁶*Mh.* V, VII.12, 28.

⁷There are various scenes representing Tree-worship at Bharhut cf. Bharhut pieces in Calcutta Museum, nos. C. 29, C. 50, C. 56; also Barua and Sinha, *Bharhut Inscriptions*, p. 90.

⁸Cunningham, *Stupa of Bharhut*, p. 131, no. 19, pl. XLVIII, fig. 11.

⁹Barua, B.M., *Barhut*, II, p. 162; cf. also Chanda, R.P., *MAI*, 30, p. 6. and Plate; Coomaraswamy, *JRAS.*, 1928, p. 393 for its connection with the story of *Dh. A.*, I, 277f.

¹⁰*CII*, II. ii, p. 170f.

¹¹*Mahābodhi*, p. 13, Pl. VIII, no. 4.

¹²Lüders, *Ep. Ind.*, X. Appendix, no. 907; cf. also Chanda, R.P., *MAI*, 30, p. 6. For another such relief, showing six elephants worshipping an altar under a banyan tree, inscribed as *Bahuhasthika Nigodh Nadode* in two lines, cf. Cunningham, *Stupa of Bharhut*, p. 135, no. 44. Pl. XV, fig. 3.

¹³*J.*, III.201ff.

however, has deciphered the inscription as—'(Ba)huhathika āsana (bhago) vato Mahādevasa.' R.P. Chanda's suggestion about the reference to Yaksha Makhādeva of *Sutano Jātaka* was rejected by Lüders who says that the title *bhagavāna* by "Buddhists... seems to have been given only to the Buddha."¹

4. A scene identified with *Dhonasākha Jātaka*² was also carved on a Bharhut bas-relief, but it is now missing. The label reads—(. . .) *Naḍodapade dhenacchako*—"Trim-boughed banyan tree at the foot of Mt. Naḍoda."³ The story of the *Jātaka* quoted above, relates to the act of killing one thousand princes by a king of Banaras who was later killed by a Yaksha. Lüders has rendered the inscription on the label as 'The dhenachhaka (?) at the foot of (Mount) Naḍoda.' Barua's reading, according to him, is obscure and other variants of *dhona* such as *yona*, *dona*, or *vena*—are found in the Burmese and Ceylonese MSS. of the *Dhonasākha Jātaka*, Lüders was inclined to take *dhenacchaka* as a misprint for *dhenuchhako* in the label, and thus he suggested that the reading may be "*dhenūsakah*, 'the cow-well,' i.e. a well which yielded milk like a cow," but, as Lüders himself has said, 'in absence of the sculpture all conjectures are equally futile.'⁴

At Amaravati also some fragmentary sculptures containing the Yakshas of trees have been encountered. One such relief⁵ shows a human-face on a tree-trunk. Another fragmentary sculpture "shows a head and an upper part of a structure with the top-portion of a tree and probably a heap of coins arranged in cylindrical form in the background. The inscription in Brāhmī script of the 2nd or 1st century BC gives out the identity of Yaksha as "Candramukha... of *Vakula* tree."⁶ In the Mathura School of art, a number of Yaksha and Yakshini figures on railing pillars are shown standing under the *Aśoka*, *Campaka*, *Nāgakesara* and *Kadamba* trees. Various motifs have been identified in them,⁷ such as *Aśoka-dohada*, 'pregnancy or the desire of *Aśoka* tree' and instances of male or female figures are found standing under the trees, for example, J. 7 (Rishyaśringa under the mango tree); J. 9, 15, 33 etc., for the male figures, and J. 9, 17, 20, 26, 55 (*Aśoka-dohada*), 57 and 58 etc., for the female figures. These railing-pillars belong to the Kushāna period. In the Śunga period also at Bharhut, Candrā Yakshī⁸ and Culakokā devatā⁹ are shown standing under the tree. In the art of Nāgarjunakonda¹⁰ is found a beautiful Yakshī, standing on a lion-makara mount under an *Aśoka* tree. Her right hand touches the arm of the left hand in which a bunch of the leaves and flowers of the tree are shown. Her right foot is firmly put on the back of the mount, while the left is upraised and kept on the trunk of the tree at the back. The time of the figure appears to be 2nd century AD. Such motifs were the precursors of the *Śālabhañjikā* motif which became a firm favourite in the art of different ages. Another expression of tree-worship in art was the tree motif within railing. This motif has been found on the early Punch-marked and tribal coins.¹¹

In early art, the tree-in-railing motif is found at Bhaja cave. Many *dhvaja-stambha*, 'flag-staffs,' representing different trees are known, but one such large sculpture from Besnagar¹² representing a *kalpavriksha* is of special importance. This *kalpavriksha* represents the banyan tree enclosed by a railing, exuding bags and vases overflowing with coins. A conch shell and a lotus flower similarly exuding coins are shown in this sculpture. Coomaraswamy identified in them the two *nidhis*

¹ *CII*, p. 180 also note 3 (no. B 81, pl. XXIII).

² *J*, III.106ff.

³ Barua, B.M., *Barhut*, II, p. 121.

⁴ *CII*, ii, op. cit, p. 172f. (no. B. 76).

⁵ Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p. 341, pl. VIII, fig. 5.

⁶ Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p. 342-3; Sivaramamurti, C., *Amaravati Sculptures*, p. 82.

⁷ Agrawala, V.S., *Mathura Railing Pillars*, *Roop-Lekha*, no. 3, 1940, pp. 14-18.

⁸ *infra*. Chapter 6.

⁹ *infra*. Chapter 6.

¹⁰ Ram Chandra Rao, P.N., *The art of Nagarjunakonda*, Madras, 1956, pl. XXXVI; Randhava, M.S., *The Cult of Trees*, pp. 43ff, fig. 43; cf. also *ASI, AR*, 1935-36 pl. XXX, o, d, e, for three similar figures.

¹¹ Allan, J., *A Catalogue of Indian Coins in the British Museum*, Indices VI and VII and references there.

¹² *HIA*, pl. IV, fig. 10; Randhava, op. cit., fig. 3.

of Kubera.¹ Banerjea has suggested that this might have been capital of a column erected before some shrine of Kubera.² The sculpture is dated generally as belonging to the 2nd century BC. There are various representations of trees, and their worship by human beings or animals in the early art; but the instances here have been limited only to those representations which can be connected with the Yakshas.

It is quite probable that just as they inhabited trees, the Yakshas may have dwelt in bushes, bowers and the like. In fact, some ancient images of Yakshas, when found, were being worshipped under the trees, and this supports the claim of bowers as a settlement for Yakshas.³

In the popular belief the spirits are visualised as being capable of entering anything anywhere.⁴ In the Buddhist linguistic usage such spirits were known as *naivasikā* which word originally denoted a monk who settled in a residence.⁵ Gradually it came to acquire a use in the sense of 'local genius.' Yakshas in the sense of *naivasika* of lakes and mountains are also known. The Himalayana region is their regular abode in the epics and Purāṇas where they inhabit several mountains viz., Kailāsa,⁶ Arishta,⁷ Gandhamādana,⁸ Mandara and Śvetagiri.⁹ In the *Vāyu Purāṇa* Yakshas are said to have inhabited the Mt. Jātudhi.¹⁰ The Buddhist texts also mention several Yakkhas and their mountainous abodes.¹¹ Among them, mention may be made of Sātagiri of Sāta mountain,¹² Hemavata of Himavā,¹³ Jutindhara of Udumbara,¹⁴ Cetiya of Dhūmarakkha,¹⁵ Jayasena of Ādipabbata,¹⁶ Haritā and Paṇḍaka of the Himalayas,¹⁷ Indaka of Indakūṭa¹⁸ and Kumbhīra of Vepulla¹⁹ mountain, the last two being the hills outside Rājagaha. As the spirits of nature, Yakshas are connected with the lakes, sea and waters. The Jātakas often refer to them as coming into contact with the sea-faring merchants.²⁰ Yakshas had their sport in the lakes²¹ and were born in water.²² The *Mahābhārata* tells about the merit of living by the side of tanks because they were supposed to be the abode of demi-gods like Yakshas, capable of fulfilling human wishes.²³ The primeval Yaksha has been conceived as lying on waters.²⁴

¹ *Yakṣas*, II, p. 72, pl. 1.

² *DHI*, p. 104; Banerjea also suggests the temple of Śrī as an alternative, *ibid*, p. 105.

³ The image of a seated Yakshi, Siddhāyikā, from Shembattura in the Pudukkottai State, cf. Desai, P.B., *Jainism in South India*, p. 95.

⁴ The spirit-belief is one of the most primitive forms of religion and this belief finds abundant expression in the *Jātakas* in which various types of spirits are mentioned, such as those residing in gateways, I.100; umbrella, IV.3; guarding town, IV.155, 237-8; guarding king, III. 4, VI. 138; dwelling in trees, V.182, 253, IV.97.294; or sea, IV. 100ff; II.302; II.78; or river, II.288f.

⁵ Bailey, H.W., *BSOAS*, XIX (1957), p. 50.

⁶ *Mbh.*, III.140.10ff; II.10.

⁷ *ibid*, XII.2.17; *R.*, IV.40.22; V.1 to 15.

⁸ *R.*, V.56.35, when this mountain pressed down due to Hanumān's weight, Yaksha moved away.

⁹ *Mbh.*, III.155.36ff.

¹⁰ *Mbh.*, III.140.4. ff.

¹¹ Ch. 41, p. 132.

¹² *DPPN*, sv.

¹³ *ibid*, sv.

¹⁴ *Mh. V*, 289.

¹⁵ *Mh. V*, X. 53. The text describes her abode as great pot full with rising smoke.

¹⁶ *DPPN*, sv.

¹⁷ *Mh. V*, XII.21.

¹⁸ *S*, I.206.

¹⁹ *D*, II.257.

²⁰ *J*, II.89ff; III.11 where Manimekhela a sea-deity is a Yakkhi; *J*, I.110 refers to a *yakkhininagara* set amongst the islands. cf. also *DPPN*, Sv. Vijaya, 1.

²¹ *R*, IV.39.41.

²² *R*, VII.4.12-13.

²³ *Mbh.*, XIII.99.8f.

²⁴ *supra*, Chapter 2.

With the lakes and rivers are also connected the different Yakshas. They had their sport in the lakes¹ and were born in water.² The primeval Yaksha has been conceived as lying on waters.³ In many cases the Yaksha sanctuaries were on the banks of water. Reference has already been made to the Yakkha Citta, who was given a settlement on the banks of the Abhaya tank by Paṇḍukābhaya Yaksha Suciloma's sanctuary too was probably near the bank of Gangā, hence his threat to the Buddha to throw him across the river.⁴ In the case of the Yaksha Umbaradatta, it seems that his sanctuary was near the *ghāt* of some river, for Gangadattā is said to have taken a bath before starting on her elaborate worship of the image of this Yaksha.⁵

As regards the location of these different types of sanctuaries, they were generally situated outside the precincts of the city, on the boundaries. In the Jain works, the different Caityas are mentioned as situated towards the north-east of the cities. In the *Samyuktavastu*,⁶ Yaksha Sāta and his son Sātagiri are represented as living outside the city of Rājagriha and protecting the king, ascetics, Brāhmaṇas, the poor, orphans and merchants. Owing to their presence, the inhabitants felt secure, and no famine visited the city. In the *Mahābhārata*⁷ also, Macakruka is indicated as a guardian settled on the boundaries of Samantapañcaka and Kurukshetra. However, certain exceptions to this general belief about the Yaksha sanctuaries being established outside the town, are found; for instance, the *Arthasāstra*,⁸ prescribes that the apartment containing Kubera's statue was to be made inside the northern quarter of the city. Similarly Paṇḍukābhaya is said to have established the habitat of Cetiya within the precincts of the palace itself.⁹

THE MODES OF YAKSHA-WORSHIP

The Yaksha cult had a popular appeal and included in its fold a cross-section of society irrespective of the class, caste, profession or creed of its votaries. The Brāhmaṇas,¹⁰ princes,¹¹ traders,¹² commoners¹³ and tribals¹⁴ belonging to different religious sects affirmed their belief in Yakshas by worshipping them time and again and receiving favours from them in return. Probably for this fellowship in a persuasion they have often been classed together and castigated. The *Bhagavad-gītā*¹⁵ says that only persons governed by the quality of *rajas* quality, and not the *sattva* or *tamas* qualities, worshipped Yakshas. The *Maitrāyīṇī Samhitā* (VII. 8) is more vituperative in its attack, proclaiming that 'those who claimed control over Yakshas and wished to live among the seers should be avoided'; they have been branded as 'thieves'—*prakāśabhūtā vai te taskarāḥ*. A similar criticism is reflected in the *Gilgit MSS*, where the worshippers of Yakshas are denounced as persons disposed to backbiting, cruelty and evil-doing.¹⁶ In the *Lalitavistara* it is said that the persons who had Yaksha, Rākshasa and Kum̐bhāṇḍa as their protectors were not liberated from their

¹R, IV.39.41; *Mbh.*, XIII. 99.8f., for the merit of living on the bank of tanks because they are full of Yakshas and the other demi-gods.

²R, VII.4.12-13.

³GB, I.1.; also *Saṁlasya prishthe*, AV, X.7.98.; *Setumāsriṭa tishṭhanta*, *Mbh.*, III.297.20.

⁴S, I.207.

⁵*Vip. S.*, p. 86; cf. also *J.*, VI.83 for Yaksha in water.

⁶Coomaraswamy, II, *addenda*, p. 7.

⁷III.81.178; III.81.7; IX.52.20.

⁸II.4.17.

⁹*ante*, p. 89.

¹⁰*Kathas.*, V.125; II.98f., *Av. S.*, I.268 refers to Indra-sarmā who was the priest of Śūlapāṇi Yaksha.

¹¹*J.*, nos. 513, 537.

¹²*Dh. A.*, p. 321; *Kathākośa*, 1f; *NK*, II.49f.

¹³*Antag.*, p. 43 (ed. Modi); *Kathākośa*, p. 74f.

¹⁴cf. Shah, U.P., *JOI*, III (1) p. 59 and notes. In the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Ch. 41, p. 131, the *Mleccha* tribes are described as living at the places where Yakshas had permanent abodes.

¹⁵XVI.12.

¹⁶*Gilgit MSS*, I.13.

existence early.¹ The *Yaśastilaka* of Somadeva lists certain customs designated as *muḍhās* 'stupid customs and beliefs'—which were repugnant to Jainism; Yaksha-worship finds mention there.² However the Jain monks were enticed to partake in the *bali*, sacrifice, to Yakshas and be defiled.³ The Jain texts have warned the monks from taking the food touched by wicked persons or offered to gods and Yakshas.⁴

In spite of such discouragement, the worship of Yakshas grew and braved the obstructions in its stride. Any attempt on the part of worshippers to bypass it was apparently disliked by Yakshas. The *Kathāsaritsāgara* preserves the instance of the Vidyādhari Vegavatī who could not marry the prince Naravāhanadatta because she did not fulfill her promise of sacrifice to a Yaksha; when later she married the prince, she arranged a feast in honour of the Yaksha and offered him wine, flesh and dainties amidst the clang of cymbals and music. All the dainties were prepared by Vegavatī herself. The story incidentally indicates that a Yaksha could be instrumental in bringing about a desired marriage.⁵ The *Skanda Purāna* confirms the omni-competence of Yaksha. It is said that the Yaksha Harikeśa drove out undesirable persons from Kāśī; the persons desirous of living in Kāśī had first do obeisance to him before doing the same to Śiva.⁶

The worship of Yaksha is closely allied to the concepts of these inclinations and pursuits. On the basis of these, certain modes or categories of worship e.g., "Universal", "Restricted" and "Alternative," have been worked out in the following pages.

A sect-wise typology of the modes is not possible owing to the broad similarities in this regard found in the ancient religious scheme. This incidentally confirms the popular base of the Yaksha cult. There is hardly any concept in it of the *ahimsā* of the Jains or the Buddhists; also philosophical concepts about Yakshas, particularly in the later times, are conspicuous by their absence. On the other hand, Yakshas were well-disposed towards certain pleasures and their devotees offered them these in order to win their favour. Yakshas were called *Sumanasa* because they gladdened the hearts.⁷ Fragrance attracted them and their habitats were usually fragrant with heavenly perfumes of jasmine and lotus-flowers.⁸ A particular scent designated as *Yaksha-Kardama*⁹ is known, but not approved owing to its Yaksha-association.¹⁰ Yakshas liked flowers of different hues such as red, and white.¹¹ Both honey and spirituous liquors were relished by them.¹² Dances, songs and music were pleasing to them. Bharata has said that a particular instrumental melody—*mārgasāritā*—pleased Yakshas.¹³ Kubera kept the company of great melodists like Tumburu and Nārada.¹⁴ His daughters were skilled dancers and singers, and in their accomplishments they were equal only to each other. It is said that a competition was held on the banks of Anotatta to decide their comparative superiority, and Latā came out as a winner.¹⁵

¹p. 66, also p. 54.

²cf. Handīqui, K.K., *Yaśastilaka and Indian Culture*, p. 253, also note 5.

³ibid, ff. 244, 284 note 3.

⁴cf. Shah, U.P., *JOI*, III (i), p. 59; also, *J*, V.100ff.

⁵*Kathas.*, VIII.24; cf. also Coomaraswamy, A.K., I, p. 10.

⁶*Skanda Purāna*, IV.32.156-76.

⁷*Mbh.*, XIII.101.35ff; They provided all comforts to humans; cf. *PV*, IV, II, p. 66.

⁸cf. Gandhamādana, *Mbh.*, III.155.36ff; 157.34ff; II.10.6ff; *PV*, IV.1.18.

⁹*Amarakośa*, II.6.34; it was made of a mixture of camphor, *aguru* and musk. cf. also *Mbh.*, XIII.101.7ff; *Amarakośa*, II.6.29 refers to five types of *Yaksha dhūpa*, viz., *Yaksha-dhūpa*, *parjjarasa*, *arāja*, *sarvarasa* and *bahurūpa*.

¹⁰*BSS*, XIX.140, p. 297.

¹¹*Mbh.*, XIII.101.35ff; 101.59.

¹²ibid, XIII.101.60.

¹³*Natyāśāstra*, V.47; V.20.

¹⁴*Mbh.*, III.156.25.

¹⁵*Vv.*, III.1ff; *Vv. A*, pp. 131ff. In the *Natyāśāstra*, it is said that *Nātya* came into being to relieve people from obsession with Yakshas.

No wonder that dance and music played an important part in Yaksha worship also. The great crowd at the Purnabhadda shrine at Campā is described as having included musicians, jugglers, dancers, etc.¹ It is quite likely that the devotional trance, a form of possession, might have been an implicit article of this faith; hence probably the emphasis on dancing and singing in relation to Yakshas.

The belief in such temperamental inclinations and skills of Yakshas probably influenced and ramified the ritualistic shades of Yaksha worship which will be discussed now according to the scheme envisaged earlier.

Universal

Certain ceremonial observances of formal nature that were generally followed in the worship of any Yaksha may be termed as representing the universal mode of worship. In this connection it is found that Yakshas received both collective and individual adoration. The Yaksha temples attracted 'large gatherings'² which suggest festivals that might have been arranged at such spots. The practice of holding festivals on the spots hallowed by Yakshas was widely prevalent. Such festivals were known as *Jakkhamaha*;³ those in the honour of Vessamana were known as *Vessamanamaha*. It appears from the *Antogadadasao*⁴ that during such festivals the jesters, jugglers, rope-walkers, musicians and the like must have contributed to the enjoyment of the assembly. The *Acārāṅga Sūtra*⁵ prohibits monks from accepting food at such festivals; which suggests that during such occasions food was offered to Yakshas and their devotees. It is also likely that these offerings may have been non-vegetarian in nature; hence the prohibition on the Jain monks. A *Jātaka*⁶ refers to "strewn fish and meat around courtyards, streets and other places" and the "making of great pots of strong drinks" in connexion with Yaksha-worship, which confirms the nature of those offerings. Some instances provide reasons for holding such festivals. *Jātaka*⁷ refers to the celebration of the *Kārtika* festival, marking the start of the sowing season, in the presence (of an image?) of Yakkha Cittarāja. Apparently, this Yaksha must have been regarded as a promoter of crops. Elsewhere, Serissaka Yakkha is promised a festival in his honour by the traders of Campa for his help in showing the right way to them when they got stranded in a desert while going to Sindhu-Sovira.⁸ The *Mahābhārata*⁹ refers to one such gathering in the *Bhandīravana* of Mathura, where worship was offered to a *nyagrodha*, banyan tree. *Nyagrodha* trees were regular habitats of Yakshas, such arboreal habitats or the other types must have enjoyed incessant worship. Even the Buddha had to accept this practice and he is found counselling the Vajjis not to let their *caityas* fall into disrepute.¹⁰

Several instances of individual worship of Yakshas are also known. In the *Dhonasākha Jātaka*,¹¹ we have a king offering elaborate sacrifice to a tree deity. The grim aspect of such sacrifice displeases a Yaksha, who appears to be against such 'blood-and-flesh' offerings. The *Vasudevahiṇḍī* refers to a man Satya who stood in the *Kayotsarga mudrā* for one night in front of a platform representing Sumana Yaksha to please him.¹² The *Vipāka Sūtra*¹³ has the instance of Umbaradatta

¹ *supra*, Chapter 4.

² *Kathas.*, I.162; *Kathākośa*, pp. 71ff; cf. *supra*, p. 215 (Purnabhadda Caitya).

³ *NK*, I.25.

⁴ pp. 6ff.

⁵ *SBE*, XXII, 11, p. 92.

⁶ *J*, I.255.

⁷ *J*, II.254.

⁸ *VV*, VII.10; *VVA*, 331f.

⁹ II, Appendix I, 21.785, P 15; A *nyagrodha* tree near Bhandīra on the bank of Yamunā river is mentioned in the *Jātaka*, VI.87. The *Av S*, I.275, also refers to the *Bhandīra* *vaṭa*.

¹⁰ *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, *SBE*, XI, ch. I, p. 4.

¹¹ *J*, III.105ff.

¹² cf. Shah, U.P., *Studies in Jaina Art*, p. 67.

¹³ p. 86.

Yaksha whose image was cleaned with a tuft of wool, sprinkled with water and dried, applied with scent, dressed and decorated with costly flowers and garments. All this was done by a trader's wife in order to obtain a child from him. The examples of such individual worship are quite numerous, and they indicate that often this type of worship promoted the practice of accepting Yakshas as tutelary deities of a particular family or community.¹

An essential part of devotional adoration lies in the offerings that are made to the deity. The offerings to Yakshas comprised of flowers, incense (particularly *aguru*),² meat and wine,³ a dish consisting of mixed and cooked cereals, fruits and water,⁴ rice, fish, flour-cakes either cooked or uncooked, fragrant things, beverages and different types of wreaths and garments.⁵ It must be remembered that these objects did not please every Yaksha; some Yakshas, for instance, did not like meat. But in any case the practice of offering them such dainties represented a regular feature.

In the *Antagadadasao*, it is said that prayers were offered at the Puṇṇabhadda *caitya* where meetings were held for worship, veneration, celebration, offering largesse and homage. The *Commentary* by Abhayadeva on this passage explains the significance of these words, explicating that worship was done by means of incense, celebration by means of hymns, veneration by prostration, offerings by gifts of flowers and largesse by gifts of garments.⁶ Although the day or time of worship was a matter of personal choice, certain days like *caturchi*, *ashṭami*, *amāvasyā* and *pūrṇimā*, had special sanctity.⁷ Ajjuna, the florist performed daily-worship of his tutelary Yaksha, and his day began only after he had paid reverence to the Yaksha by falling upon his knees before the deity.⁸

Restricted

This mode of worship was restricted to the followers of tantric tradition, hence the above title. Yakshīṇī or Yaksha *sādhana* has often been mentioned in the literary works of ancient times, and it refers to different modes through which a Yaksha or Yakshī could be brought under control to satisfy the worshipper. This mode is directly connected with the concept of control, different from the concept of grace regarding these demi-gods. And the antiquity of this concept goes back to the Vedic period.⁹ In the *Jātakas* witch-doctors are mentioned who could know and identify Yakshas. The *Padakusalamānava Jātaka*¹⁰ humorously refers to such a devil-doctor, who mistook for a Yakshī a woman who was hiding inside a cave. He uttered a spell and entered the cave and declared that the woman was a Yakshī. In the *Guhyasamājatantra*, the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* and the *Jayākhyā Saṁhitā*, the modes of controlling the different Yakshas and Yakshīṇīs are described. In comparison with Yakshas, their female counterparts figure more prominently in these works. It is said that after the completion of rites, the Yakshīṇīs appeared as mother, sister or wife and fulfilled the wishes of their devotees.¹¹ Yakshas were also controlled by certain

¹cf. Coomaraswamy, A.K., I, p. 15.

²*Mbh.*, XIII.101.40; cf. *Antag.*, p. 86 for gift of chiefest and best flowers to Yaksha.

³*ibid.*, XIII.101.60; *Kaṭhas.*, VI.118; *BSS*, XIII.3-5.

⁴*J.*, III.96; Yakshinis eating fowls and dogs and enticing human beings by their beauty for ultimately devouring them also find mention cf., *J.*, I.326; In the *Kh. K.*, (17) pp. 126ff. reference has been made to a Yaksha-shrine near the Vindhya where Kapalika Jñānakāranda sacrificed to Yaksha four goats bathed and be sprinkled with *cardara*.

⁵*Manu*, XI.96.

⁶*Antag.*, p. 3, note 6.

⁷*NK*, IX.88; *Piṇḍaniryukti*, p. 82.

⁸*Antag.*, p. 86; cf. also *NK*, IX.5, p. 88f.

⁹*supra*, Chapter 2.

¹⁰*J.*, III.304.

¹¹*Jayākhyā Saṁhitā*, p. 295; *MMK*, II.293; III.720, in this passage it is said that the devotee attracts the Yakshī, by living on *bhikṣhā* for three months and offering *guggula* and chanting mantras 8000 times for the same period. On completion of the rites she appears before the devotee as mother, sister, or friend and gives him nectar which produces long life and strength like that of Yakshas.

rituals.¹ The *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*² prescribes oblations for three months, consisting of wood of banyan tree, curd, clarified butter, honey and rice; at the conclusion of such rites, Kubera and a host of other Yakshas appeared and granted the wishes of the devotee by giving him nectar or transporting him to the desired place.

A stock mode, followed in such worship, is described in the *Jayākhyā Saṃhitā*³ under the title of *Yakshiṇī-sādhanam*. It prescribes drawing the picture of the Yakshiṇī on a *kaūṣeya* cloth, depicting different ornaments. She should be offered incense, *guggula*, etc., at midnight for a week. On the seventh day, she would appear through the cloth amid the chanting of charms. The devotee should not be afraid of her. The Yakshiṇī could satisfy the wish of the devotee. The *vaśikaraṇa* (control) of Yakshī could be obtained by offerings of wood of banyan tree, curd, honey, ghee,⁴ or *kumkum*, juice of *dhatūrā*, *arkakshīra*, *lāksharasa* and *mrigamada*.⁵ A list of many Yakshiṇīs who could be satisfied and controlled by these ways is found in the different Tantric works such as *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*⁶ and the *Bhūtaḍamaratantra*.⁷ The latter refers to Surasundarī, Manohārīṇī, Kanakamatī, Kāmeśvarī, Ratipriyā, Padminī, Naṭī and Anurāginī.

One of the essential parts of the Tantric mode of Yakshi-worship lay in drawing her figure on a *paṭa*. The *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*⁸ indicates different types of objects for drawing portraits of Yakshiṇīs, such as painting on a wooden panel for Naṭī; *paṭa* for Tamasundarī, wooden-panel, silk or wall for Guhāsawāminī; silk for Naravīrā, showing her resting against the *Aśoka* tree; birch-bark for Yakshakumārīkā, who should be shown holding a *citron* in the right hand and a branch of the *Aśoka* tree in the other. On the other hand, rites inside a *maṇḍala*, 'magical circle,' for Bhattā, and in a hut under *Aśoka* tree for Manojñā have also been suggested.⁹ The chanting of their respective controlling *mantra* was also essential for the different Yakshiṇīs. For attaining control over Naṭī, the devotee subsisted on milk or meat; for Tamasundarī, the devotee applied oil to his body and washed his hands and feet on the ultimate day of attaining her. The incense and *priyangu* flowers offered in the fire made of special catachu wood, have been suggested for the oblation. These different Yakshiṇīs satisfied the devotees by bestowing upon them, immortality, nectar, riches in dinars, food and clothing.¹⁰ They also provided sexual enjoyment to their devotees.¹¹ The Yakshiṇīs were also invoked for the normal birth of child.¹²

The tradition of controlling Yakshiṇīs has continued till recent times.¹³ The *Karpūramāñ-jarī*,¹⁴ refers to a Siddha—kāpālīka who had the power of controlling Yakshīs; he could drag any Yakshī of his choice to the place of his choosing. There was nothing on earth which was impossible

¹*Vāmakeśvarīmatam*, II.13, 51-53, 76f.

²II.293-94, III.689; cf. also *Sādhanamālā*, II.560f, where chanting of *mantras* for 8 Yakshiṇīs and Jambhala are prescribed which obtain for the devotee kingship or wealth.

³XXVI.77ff.

⁴MMK, III.680-1; also pp. 683-685.

⁵*Vāmakeśvarīmatam*, II.51-53; The *Guptasādhanā Tantra*, edited and translated by B.P., Misra, Venkateshwar Press, Bombay, Saka 1831, describes a Dhanadādevī with Kubera as her *rishi*. It is said that the latter became lord of riches by worshipping her; cf. pp. 57ff.

⁶MMK, I.20-21.

⁷A MSS, of this name in the collection of the Oriental Institute of Baroda, quoted in the *Jayākhyā Saṃhitā*, Introduction p. 29 no. 2.

⁸III.565ff.; cf. also Moti Chandra, *BPWM*, 3, pp. 53ff.

⁹*Vāmakeśvarīmatam*, II.13 for a similar circle with an image.

¹⁰MMK, II.297, also III, pp. 677, 680, 683-85, 720 etc.

¹¹MMK, II.293; *Vāmakeśvarīmatam*, IV.39, p. 113.

¹²MMK, III.686; *ibid*, II.313 refers to Behuputrikā's worship for getting daughters.

¹³The Saraswati Bhavana Library of Varanasi, contains certain manuscripts, where rituals and rites for pleasing different Yakshiṇīs are described. These manuscripts—such as, *Yakshaḍamarām* (MSS. no. 24489), *Yakshiṇīkalpa* (nos. 25376 and 26353), *Yakshiṇīsādhanā Vidhi* (no. 25718) and *Yakshiṇīprayogaḥ* (nos. 25288 and 25364)—indicate the currency of the tradition of Tantric-worship till recent times. cf. *A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit MSS.*, VI, Varanasi, 1960.

¹⁴I.25 (ed. N.J. Suru, Bombay, 1960).

for him, this the Kāpālika claimed before a king. The *Kathākośa*¹ contains the story of a merchant Dhanada from whom fortune had turned its face away. But by no less a personality than a Jina who was his spiritual preceptor, he was told of a charm to win the Yaksha Kapardin. Ultimately, one night in the middle of the fortnight, when he was worshipping with this charm, the Yaksha appeared before him and demanded worship, which was refused. This act proved the steadfastness of Dhanada's devotion towards the Jina and, as a reward, his wealth was restored to him by the Yaksha. The *Kathāsaritsāgara*² refers to the uncle of Śrīdatta who had brought a Yakshī under subjection by means of magic, and obtained five thousand horses and seventy million gold pieces from her. The same work at another place refers to the story of Madanamañjarī, as it was told to Vikramāditya.³ She was the wife of Mañibhadra, and she used to roam about happily with her husband, on the banks of river or hills and in charming groves. A Kāpālika was charmed by her beauty and tried to win her by a spell and offerings put in fire. When the charm started working, she could not be saved even by Brahmā. The Kāpālika continued to attract her by offering oblations in the fire near a cemetery, and drew her by muttering spells while sitting in a circle with a corpse lying there. The Yakshiṇī felt tormented by the charm and she was drawn along by the power of the spell. Before accepting her, the Kāpālika had to go to a tank to rinse his mouth, where he was killed by a Vetāla sent there by Vikramāditya. The story shows that Yakshiṇīs could be controlled even against their wishes; hence an elaborate system of rites and rituals for winning them over. The invisible Yakshiṇīs could be apprehended by using a special type of collyrium.⁴

Alternative

Besides the above, certain other modes are also noticed, which may conveniently be classified in reference to the vegetarian or non-vegetarian Yakshas. Yakshas were pleased by the offerings of goat and rams, and did not appreciate their discontinuance. When a Bodhisattva declared himself against such sacrifice, they made an abortive attempt to kill him.⁵ Meat accompanied with drinks was offered to Yakshas according to the *Mānava Gṛihya Sūtra*.⁶ It depended on the men to satisfy the Yaksha's demands for human flesh. In the *Mahāvamsa* a Yakshiṇī is mentioned as asking the Prince Vijaya for the favour of human sacrifice. She however, was promised a festival in her honour.⁷ The *Mahāsutasoma Jātaka*⁸ refers to the elaborate process of the sacrifice of human beings, which was promised to a tree-nymph if she healed the wound of a king of Banaras. The king said to the deity, that he would bathe the trunk of the tree 'with blood from the throats of 101 princes and would hang the tree with their inwards and offer up a sacrifice of five sweet kinds of flesh.'⁹ The wound of the king was healed and, in fulfilment of the promise, he hanged the princes with a cord from the tree; they revolved, suspended from the tree, 'like withered wreaths of flower in the basket.'¹⁰ In the *Dhonasākha Jātaka*,¹¹ another king, desiring victory in a battle, promised the sacrifice of a thousand kings by putting out their eyes, ripping open their bellies and rimming the circumference of the tree, filling it with blood five inches deep. In the case of *Mahāsutasoma Jātaka*, the sacrifice was offered after the attainment of the wish, while in the case of the *Dhonasākha Jātaka* it was offered in anticipation of fulfilment.

¹pp. 1ff.

²I.118.

³*Kathas*, IX.12ff also pp. 29, 31, 35.

⁴*Jayākhyā Saṃhitā*, p. 323f.

⁵no. 347; III.96.

⁶II.14.28.

⁷*Mh.* V, VII. 20; *AV S.* I.101, for cannibalistic sacrifices to Surapriya Yaksha; a man of the same name finds mention in the *Kh. K.*, p. 261.

⁸J, V.258.

⁹*Jātaka*, V.257.

¹⁰ibid, p. 258. The sacrifice could not come off because of the intervention of another Yakkha.

¹¹*Jātaka*, III.106ff. The sacrifice could not come off as the king was killed by a Yakkha.

This type of worship was prevalent, but probably it was not much appreciated. It failed to come off in at least two instances quoted above. Such customs were deprecated, and Yakshas were sometimes forced to give up their cannibalistic habits. Some Yakshas, however, preferred vegetarian type of offerings which are discussed here. In the *Nāṭyaśāstra*,¹ a sacrifice of *lājikā*, 'paddy,' and *apūpa* 'sweet bread fried in ghee,' is suggested for Kubera and his attendants. Abstention from taking meat was regarded as merit-earning for human-beings. The *Yaśastilaka* records the story of a Cāṇḍāla, who was reborn as the chief of Yakshas due to the merit acquired by not taking meat.²

The universal, restricted and alternative modes of Yaksha worship exemplify the wide variety in practice. Yakshas were believed to be capable of procuring for human beings almost everything of earthly pleasure. Their grace was invoked for attaining material prosperity, well-being, and the efforts to please them took many forms.

¹III.45, p. 29 (Part I).

²Handiqui, K.K., op. cit., p. 419ff.

Yaksha-Iconography

Texts

IN the realm of art, Yakshas have occupied an important status through ages, and their images or different types of representations have been found throughout India. Most common are their independent images, but they also figure in different scenes, or in the form of decorative motifs such as atlantes, sources of lotus or flower rhizomes, *Śālabhañjikās*, or animal-headed devils, the Gaṇas, Kīrtimukhas or grotesque figures. These indicate that in the process of gradually fading out, the Yaksha motif transformed itself into many shapes. Literary references to the Yaksha images or their aniconic symbols are also abundant. The practice of installing Kubera's images is known from the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya and from Pāṇini. The different Jain works refer to the images of Surambara, Surapriya, Umbaradatta, Moggarapāṇi, Śobhana and Maṇibhadra. The image of Moggarapāṇi was made of wood, and it is said that the mace in its hand weighed one thousand *palas*. The Buddhist works refer to the images of the Yakshas, Śākyavardhana and Citta. References to the worship of Yaksha images are found also in the mediaeval works. Amongst them, the *Kathāsaritsāgara* refers to a ruffianly gambler of Ujjainī, who once saw the images of Yakshas trembling due to charms and spells. A painting of a Yakshī is described in the *Brihatkathā-ślokaśaṅgraha*.¹ It is said that prince Manohara went to a *Yakshī yajñasālā*; there he saw a Yakshī painting which was extremely expressive and appeared as if it were moving or speaking. He worshipped her with flowers and incense; and grew passionate, and pulled off her garments, at which she came out from the painted frame. In the *Pādatāditkāṃ*, it is said, that Yakshas looked beautiful not in reality but only in paintings.² Various Yaksha themes are known from art too.³ In many cases, however, Yakshas were represented in aniconic form. Yaksha Pūrṇabhadra in the *Aupopātika Sūtra* and the *Antagaḍadasāo* is a case in this connection. On several seals and coins a *śankha*, 'conch,' is shown, and the symbol may stand for Kubera.⁴ A seal, found at Basarh, shows a *śankha* in outline and a humped bull⁵; another seal, from the same place, shows a conch with the legend—*Śrī Dhanadasya*—indicating that it represented the *Śankha-nidhi* of Kubera.⁶ The Yakshas may also have been represented in the form of hand-prints. Originally, these were probably meant for decorating the abodes of Yakshas. Pūrṇabhadra's shrine was decorated with hand-prints. The *Palāsa Jātaka* (no. 307, III. 16) refers to palm-prints on the tree where the tree-spirit resided. In the Mathura region still the hand and sole impressions are made and worshipped as *Jakhaiyyā* in whose honour various songs are sung. It appears that originally these impressions were made for decoration; but, in course of time,

¹XIX.75ff.

²*Caturbhāṇī (Śringara Hāta)* ed. and transl. Moti Chandra and V. S. Agrawala, p. 84.

³Gupte, R.S., 'The dancing panel of Aurangabad Caves,' *ABORI*, XLII part 1-4, 1961, p. 19.

⁴*DHI*, p. 178, for *śankha* on coins, cf. Allan's *Catalogue*, pl. XL, coin nos. 7, 8 (Yaudheya coins).

⁵*ASIAR*, 1913-14, p. 129 no. 84, Pl. XLVI, quoted by Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p. 180.

⁶*ibid.*

they came to be identified with the Yakshas.¹

The antiquity of image worship in India, as a non-Aryan institution, may go back to pre-Aryan phase.² The Yaksha representations have been connected by Banerji-Shastry with the *Mūradeva* of the *Rigveda*.³ He derives the word *mūrti*, 'image,' from *Mūras*; and has suggested that the term could include the images of Yakshas also. However, *Mūradeva* has been variously explained as 'those who believe in vain gods' (Wilson), or 'those who worshipped images which were lifeless' (A.C. Das).⁴

Image-worship grew during the later Vedic period, and the *Sūtras* refer to *Iśāna*, *Kshetrapāla*, *Mīdhushī*, *Śrī*, and *Dhanapati*, whose images were to be worshipped.⁵ The popular gods find mention also in *Patañjali*,⁶ and *Pāṇini* refers to two types of artists, *grāma-śilpin* and *Rājaśilpin*,⁷ just as *Patañjali* refers to *laukika* and *vaidika* gods.⁸ The Mauryan Kings are known to have made sculptures for collecting gold,⁹ and these images may have included those of Yakshas also. Quintus Curtius has also preserved the information that the army of Porus carried an image of Hercules. Coomaraswamy had suggested that it could represent either *Śiva* or a Yaksha.¹⁰ All these traditions show that, by the times of Mauryan Kings, the Yaksha images had attained a wide popularity, which is proved also by the discovery of some Yaksha-images of the time.

The extant Yaksha images of different periods have presented various problems regarding their iconography, identification, epigraphy and date. These problems have manifested themselves more particularly in the case of the early images of Yaksha. The iconographic texts have not preserved much information on the Yaksha-iconography, evidently because they were composed at a time when Yakshas had ceased to have an independent status. Hemādri however, characterises Yakshas as 'pot-bellied, two-armed, holding *nidhis* in their hands and fierce (due to drunkenness). Their lord, according to him, holds a club.¹¹ Hemādri mentions *Siddhārtha*, *Mañibhadra*, *Sumana*, *Nandana*, *Kanduti*, *Pañcaka*, *Śankha*, *Mañimān*, *Padma*, *Rāmaka* etc., many of whom appear to be new names not found in the texts of different religious sects of India. Some more iconographic prescriptions about the Yakshas may be added here. The *Mānasāra* prescribes the following characteristics of the Yaksha images. It is said that they should be two-armed, two-eyed, huge-bodied, (*Rākshasākāra*) and should be made according to the *navatāla* measurements. They should be shown wearing *kāraṇḍa* crown and *caraṇāmbara*, holding fly-whisk, standing, or seated with right foot straight and the left bent. Their colour is described as black or yellow, and they are mentioned as *bhāragāḥ*, carriers.¹² All the authorities do not agree regarding the *navatāla* measurement of the Yaksha figures. The *Aparājītapricchā*¹³ prescribes six *tāla* for them, whereas the *Bimbamāna*¹⁴ prescribes seven *tāla*. They are to be shown bigger than *Gandharva*, *Pannaga*, *Nāga*, *Rākshasa*, and *Vidyādhara*s, according to the *Samarān-*

¹For hand-impressions as decorative device; cf. Barua, *Barhut*, XLV.37.

²*DHI*, pp. 36 and 107ff.

³Banerji-Shastry, A.P., *Iconism in India*, *IHQ*, 12.

⁴Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p. 65.

⁵cf. Banerjea, *DHI*, p. 69; Shah, U.P., *Studies in Jaina Art*, p. 44.

⁶Banerjea, J.N., *op. cit.*, p. 337.

⁷Agrawala, V.S., *JUPHS*, X, Part I, July, 1939, p. 64.

⁸Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p. 337.

⁹*ibid*, p. 338; Tārānāth also tells of the Yaksha artist employed by the Mauryas; cf. Heeley, W.L., *Indian Antiquary*, IV. The *Rājatarangīnī* (I.151, 159), tells of Kubera and his Guhyakus who helped Dāmodara II Maurya in building a long dam, called *Gudḍavetu*.

¹⁰*HIA*, p. 42, note 5; cf. also Shastry, A.M., *Heracles and the infantry of Porus*, *Journal of Indian History*, April, 1964, pp. 119ff. He suggests that the image may represent a *Dikpāla*.

¹¹cf. Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, pp. 338-39, quoting *Caturvarga-cintāmaṇi*, II, *Vratakhanda*, Part I, p. 138.

¹²Acharya, P.K., *Mānasāra on Architecture and Sculpture*, p. 370.

¹³225.15.

¹⁴A *MSS*, in the British Museum numbered, 550-552, quoted by Mankad, *Aparājītapricchā*, introduction p. cxxxvii.

gaṇa-Sūtradhāra.¹ In the same work, they are also described as drunk.² In the *Pratimā-Māna-Tilaka*, the six-*tāla* measure for children, *senāpati*, Vināyaka and Yakshas has been suggested.³

Some of the Purāṇas also describe the iconographic features of Yaksha images. In the *Vishṇu-dharmottara Purāṇa*,⁴ it is said that Nalakūbara should be shown holding a pot of jewels and having two fangs in the mouth; Maṇibhadra is described as having a form similar to that of Dhanada. It is said that he should not be provided with any *sibikā*. The images of Naravāhana should be shown with his consort according to the *Purāṇa*. According to the *Matsya Purāṇa*,⁵ Yakshiṇī should be shown as being served by Siddhas and Asuras, and having pitchers on both the sides of her image. On the *torāṇa*, it is said, that Deva and Dānava should also be shown.

In the *Śilparatna*,⁶ a Nāgayakshī, holding a *nāga*, has been described. It is said that she should be shown with a coiffure like 'black-cloud,' and prominent breasts. She is bountiful, and visits trees near mountains or cities. She is described as beloved of the Nāgarāja. The *Mānasāra* says that Yakshas should be carved at different places, on the *siṃhāsana*,⁷ *torāṇa*,⁸ palaces,⁹ villages¹⁰ and lintels.¹¹ As the demi-gods in the group of Vishṇu's sculptures, they also figure¹² along with their chief, Dhanada.

In other iconographic texts, there is hardly any information that may supplement the description above. Yakshas figure along with other demi-gods, as attendants of higher cult gods; only a passing reference is made to them. The Buddhist *sādhanas* and the Jain texts have also preserved the description of some of the Yakshas. In the *Sādhanamālā* and the *Nishpannayogōvalī*, the eight lords of Yakshas have been described.¹³ The former work refers to a *Yakshaśakataṃ Aṣṭamaṇḍalaṃ* in which these eight lords along with Jambhala should be shown. In the text, Maṇibhadra, Vaiśravaṇa, Sukhendra and Calendra are described as yellow, Dhanada and Civikundalī as red, Pūrṇabhadra as blue, and Kelimālī as green.¹⁴ Yakshas were to be shown holding citrus and mongoose in their hands. Their Yakshiṇīs have also been described as eight in number,¹⁵ yellow in complexion, holding ears of corn in the right hand, with the left hand in the *Varada mudrā*.¹⁶ *Sādhanamālā* also recommends carving Yakshas with their respective Yakshiṇīs, embracing each other. These deities are important as they might stand for the characteristics of the images existing from earlier time. It may however, be pointed out that both citron and mongoose are abundantly found in the images of Kubera belonging to the Kushāṇa period onwards. The corn and *varada mudra* are not common among the Yakshiṇī images. The *yab-yum* pose, or for that matter, the Yaksha pair, with the exception of Hārīti and Pāñcika, is not met with at all in the early period. There are certain texts dealing with the twentyfour Jain Yakshas and Yakshīs. In such Digambara and Śvetāmbara texts, however, their names or their order in

¹77.64ff. The *Triloka Prajñapti*, IV.92f. mentions the height of Yaksha as being ten *dhanusha*.

²*Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra*, 77.64.

³Chapter 13.95-109; cf. Bhattacharya, T.P., *The Canons of Indian Art*, p. 348.

⁴III.73.12-13.

⁵260.47, 268.52 it says that temples of Yakshas should measure seven *hastas*.

⁶Chapter 25-67.

⁷Acharya, P.K., op. cit., p. 301.

⁸ibid, p. 306.

⁹ibid, p. 183.

¹⁰ibid, p. 45.

¹¹ibid, p. 115.

¹²ibid, p. 197.

¹³*supra*, pp. 71-72.

¹⁴*Sādhanamālā*, pp. 562-63; for a different list, p. 561.

¹⁵*supra*, pp. 71-72.

¹⁶*Sādhanamālā*, pp. 561-63; A Yakshī Anopamā by name is described in the *Gilgit MSS*, I, p. 72. She was to be represented with the Buddha, wearing garland, a *candrahāra*, white garments and various ornaments, holding a *padma* in one hand while the other hand was held in the *abhaya mudrā*. The work is earlier, and may offer a clue to the origin of the iconography of the later Yakshinis of the Vajrayāna Cult.

the serial of twentyfour names are not always the same. Sankalia says that by the time of the composition of the *Nirvāṇakalikā* (8th-9th century AD), the names of Yakshīṇīs had come to be accepted.¹ However, in the different sources available, a uniformity in names is conspicuously absent. In the central Indian tradition, as preserved in the inscribed Yakshī images at Devgarh² and in the Patyan Dai image of Ambika,³ the names are different from each other. The same is the case in the Digambara and Śvetambara traditions.⁴ We have made an attempt to classify the iconographic details of these different Yakshas and Yakshīs following *Aparājītapricchā*, *Rūpamaṇḍana* and *Vāstusāra*. These details are included in Appendix II. It is clear from such details, that in the post-Gupta phase of art, Yaksha and Yakshīs enriched the art-traditions of the Jains. In that scheme, the pantheon of these deities was quite large, and consisted of different hierarchical positions.

Yakshas were depicted in early art mainly in two forms—in round and in relief, which resolve themselves into two different classes with their separate evolution. The chronology of Yaksha images is a controversial point.⁵ Whatever observations have been made in this regard are based either on stylistic considerations or on feature-bound comparisons with other art forms in relief whose dates are more conclusively settled. Such studies have led to divergent views. Early Yaksha sculptures have come mainly from three regions, namely, Patna, Mathura and Vidisha. Among these, the Patna sculptures exhibit a better plastic diction compared to those in the other two places, probably because they were carved under the direct influence of Mauryan power. Scholars have generally regarded the Patna specimens as post-Mauryan because in style these are better-modelled figures than the others, and therefore, less archaic. In short, the aesthetic effect conveyed by different sculptures is more or less the main basis followed in the dating of early Yaksha and Yakshī sculptures; and the consensus appears to be in favour of regarding them as post-Mauryan. For the purpose of dating Yaksha sculptures, some phasing of plastic conventions is necessary; and Mauryan art provides the basis for it. The norms set by the Mauryas are seen in their massive animal figures and the pillars, and it seems that they found further expression in the form of similarly built Yaksha statues. In carving Yaksha images, artists were inspired by the Mauryan plastic diction as well as the hugeness of material form. Stylistically, because the two Patna statues and the Yakshī from Didarganj (Patna) are better modelled and show a superior realisation of anatomical details, equal only to the Mauryan animal figures, they can be regarded as Mauryan. The Mauryan polish on them supports this conclusion⁶ (even though objects of later origin with Mauryan polish are also known).⁷ These represent the Yaksha sculpture of the "first Phase" in our scheme. Subsequent to this phase, Yaksha figures were carved on the railing-pillars of the Stūpas and such portrayals exhibit an altogether different convention in which the massive form and burliness of Yakshas was effectively mellowed. They now appear as subordinated divinities embellishing *stūpas*. The convention is not seen in the depiction of Yakshas before the time of the *Stūpa* of Bharhut which is dated in second century BC. Stylistically, these figures form a class by themselves and may be regarded as belonging to the "Second Phase" in the scheme envisaged here.

The massive and awe-inspiring images of Yakshas continued to be carved during this phase

¹Sankalia, H.D., *Volume of Indian and Iranian Studies*, p. 336, note 5.

²Sankalia, H.D., *DCB*, I, 1940, pp. 157-68.

³*supra*, pp. 49-50.

⁴Sankalia, H.D., *DCB*, I, appendix.

⁵Ray, N.R., *Maurya and Sunga Art*, pp. 48ff; Saraswati, S.K., *Survey of Indian Sculpture*, pp. 52ff; Sivaramamurti, C., *Indian Sculpture*, p. 17f; Agrawala, V.S., *SIA*, pp. 58ff.

⁶After the Sungas wrested power from the Mauryas, central India assumed greater political importance; Patna became unsafe, and art traditions must have dwindled there. If therefore, an independent art school existed at Patna, it could have existed only during the rule of the Mauryas. In the post-Mauryan phase of history and art, central India assumes a dominant role.

⁷cf. Ray, N.R., *Maurya and Sunga Art*, p. 76.

also and they too form a class of their own. In number they are not insignificant. The details of dress and ornaments of these two classes of Yaksha-figures compare well and establish them as contemporary to each other. In the relief-art, however, some innovation, marking an advance were introduced. Accordingly Yakshas no longer symbolized unharnessed energy and strength. Their massiveness was blunted and mellowed to conform them to their newly-acquired role in the Buddhist perspective. The mode of carving them as tamed divinities soon became a convention.

The relief carvings of Yakshas have been reported from several places, and they everywhere emulate the Bharhut tradition of the subdued corpulence of these deities. As regards the other details, it is clear that now the stress was not so much on the personal attributes of Yakshas as on their subordinate status. In keeping with their secondary role, all the Yaksha figures in the Bharhut railings were portrayed as having their hands in the *namaskāra mudrā* with the sole exception of the Ajakālaka Yaksha.

The third phase of this iconic development of Yaksha figures is noticed in the Sañchi Yakshas, which are of two distinct types; the dwarfed and grotesque type found in the case of atlantes figures on the West gate of Stūpa I, and the other type represented by the graceful figures of Yakshas on the western and northern gates of the same Stūpa. Both these convention were maintained during the Kushāṇa period. The atlantes figures of the Yaksha on the West gate of Sañchi (Stūpa I), represent a transformation of the Yakshas' massiveness into a diminutive stature, consistent with their role as the popular deities accepted in the Buddhist creed. These, in their turn, encouraged the figures of dwarf Yakshas which are seen at Pitalkhora [Fig. 54] and Nagarjunakonda [Fig. 58]. This mannerism of style was adopted at Mathura also where the pot-bellied corpulent sculptures of Yakshas were carved in sitting postures [Fig. 63]. These, owing to their prominence, have been erroneously described as those of Kubera. In the phase-study envisaged here, a progressive diminution of Yaksha's original massiveness can be easily noticed. These phases of development were interspersed with older conventions and therefore an incidence of the dominant conventions of one phase in the other cannot be ruled out. But this stylistic regimen helps in establishing at least the limits of the different idioms or mannerisms of art. In adherence to the scheme worked out here, the Yaksha sculptures can be classified into three major categories *viz.*, Pre-Kushāṇa (two phases), Sātavāhana-Kushāṇa and Post-Kushāṇa.

The First Phase (Mauryan)

The tradition of carving out massive figures of Yakshas started at Pātaliputra, the Mauryan capital; and the two Patna Yakshas and the third—a Yakshini from Didarganj—are fine specimens of the Mauryan court art which inaugurated an art-convention of wide influence. These portly figures exhibit a superb realisation of the elemental force which reposed in the Yakshas. The Patna statues (now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, nos. P. 1 and P. 2) were excavated by B. Hamilton in 1812 and were presented to the Asiatic Society of Bengal by J. Tytler in 1821. In the beginning there was some controversy about their identification¹ but Chanda conclusively identified them as Yakshas.² The two statues are inscribed as (i) *Bhage achacha-nī vī ka* (P. 1, [Fig. 26] and (ii) *ya kha sa(?) rvata namdi* (P. 2) according to Chanda. Agrawala identified them with *Bhagavān Akshayanīvikā* and *Sarvatranandī*.³ No Yaksha in any text has been assigned these names, although Nandī and Vardhana as the two Yaksha of a certain Nandivardhana town

¹*JBORS*, V, pp. 88-106, the same volume contains the papers by R.D. Banerji, L.D. Barnett, B.C. Bhattacharya, V.A. Smith, Arun Sen, and H.P. Shastri, on the same problem. cf. also *Indian Antiquary*, XLVIII, 1919, and *Modern Review*, October, 1919.

²*JDL*, IV, pp. 47-84.

³*SIA*, pp. 60, 119; O.C. Gangoly, *Modern Review*, October, 1919, pp. 419-24, identified them with the tutelary Yakshas of the city of Nandivardhana as mentioned in the *Mahāmāyūri*; and Coomaraswamy, *HIA*, p. 17 has accepted the suggestion cf. also his *Yaksas*, I, p. 12.

find mention in the *Mahāmāyūrī*.¹ The identification of the town is not certain either. The Yakshi from Didarganj is another Mauryan sculpture.² She is profusely decked with ornaments, and is comparable only to the other two Yakshas of the same period. She holds a *caurī*, fly-whisk, in her right hand [Fig. 27, 28]. If local considerations are taken into account, the image may be identified with Hārīti. She finds mention as a Yakshiṇī of Rājagriha,³ one-time capital of the Magadha *Janapada*, and the popular tale of her spiteful nature leading to her encounter with the Buddha might have inspired artists to lend her a plastic form. The iconic attributes of Hārīti, associated with her late images are entirely absent in this image, but fly-whisk here illustrates her subdued nature. There is reason to believe that the Kushāṇas popularised her later images which may well have been derived from the representations of Pharo and Arodoksho and her original fierce form was dropped in favour of her more appealing role as a mother and as the consort of Pāñcika.

Second Phase (Post Mauryan to 1st century BC)

The older tradition of carving colossal statues continued more vigorously during this phase. At the same time the relief-art also assumed prominence, and several Yaksha and Yakshiṇī figures carved on railing pillars have been found at Bharhut, Bodhagaya, Pauni, Moosanagar and Kauśambi. Among the free-standing images, those of Maṇibhadra discovered at Parkham and Pawaya have already been discussed.⁴ Another Yaksha image was found at Besnagar with the attribute—a purse—held in the left hand.⁵ This attribute became the identifying symbol of Kubera in the Kushāṇa art of Mathura, but, prior to that time, it is consistently associated with Maṇibhadra, at least in two of his above images which, incidentally, are inscribed and therefore leave no doubt about their identity. In the Bharhut relief of Kubera, his distinctive feature is the *nara*-mount, not purse, and it is therefore likely that at a later stage Kubera assumed the attribute of Maṇibhadra just as he assumed another trait of the latter *viz.*, *Pārśvamaulin*, *i.e.* with crown tilted towards left. This name occurs for Maṇibhadra in the *Rāmāyaṇa* (VII.15.10, 15). Later on, it is attributed to Kubera's images according to the *Brihat Saṃhitā* (LVII.57). The image from Besnagar is impressive (ht. 12 ft.), and in the details of dress and ornaments and the general style, in treatment of plastic volume, it is akin to another Yakshiṇī image from the same site discovered the same year, 1952.⁶ The remarkable similarity in execution of these two images suggest that probably they were conceived by the same artist and were meant to be shown together as a free-standing pair, juxtaposed. If the Yaksha is Maṇibhadra, the Yakshī could be his consort. The texts supply the following names for that Yakshi *viz.*, Devajanī, Kuṇḍā, Bahuputrā and Madanamañjarī.⁷ The image of the Yakshī is tastefully decked with ornaments. She holds a bunch of flowers in the right hand, and the branch of a mango tree, along with its fruits in the left hand.⁸ The Besnagar-Vidishā region has supplied two more Yakshi figures, one of which is now in the Indian Museum,⁹ Calcutta and is well-preserved [Fig. 29, 30] but for her both hands being broken. When Cunningham discovered it, the figure was being wor-

¹JUPHS, XV.II.

²Regarding various suggestions about the probable age of this sculpture; cf. Smith, V. A., *History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon*, Revised by Karl Khandalawala, third, ed., p. 20; Sivaramamurti, C., *Indian Sculpture*, also, Dhavalikar, M.K., *Nagpur University Journal* (Humanities), XVI, no. 2, pp. 216-23.

³*supra*, Ch. 4 also Coomaraswamy, I, p. 9; II addenda, p. 5.

⁴*supra*, pp. 74ff.

⁵Agrawala, R.C., *Lalit Kala* 14, p. 48; Bajpai, K.D., *JMPHS*, II, p. 19.

⁶*ibid.*, pp. 47ff. pl. XLV, fig. 1, 2; Bajpai, K.D., *op. cit.*, p. 19; Pramod Chandra, "Yaksha and Yakshi image from Vidisha," *Ars Orientalis*, VI, 1968, pp. 157-63.

⁷*supra*, pp. 81-82. Agrawala, R.C., *op. cit.*, p. 47 associates her with "some form of Ambikā(?)."

⁸Agrawala, R.C., *op. cit.*, p. 47. fn. 5, says the object in the right hand can not be a *caurī*, *vajra* or flowers. Bajpai, K.D., *op. cit.*, p. 19, also reports an image of a Yakshi from Chopera and a similar sculpture is mentioned by H.N., Dwivedi, *Vikrama Smṛiti Granth* (Hindi), Gwalior, vs 2000, p. 691.

⁹cf. Majumdar, N.G., *op. cit.*, p. 7, pl. II c and d.

shipped as *Telim*.¹ A bust of a Yakshi with hands broken was first noticed by Bakshi,² and it has since been preserved in the Gwalior Museum. The first two Yakshi images from Vidisha seem to be close to each other, from the point of view of ornaments and hair-style. The number and design of ornaments on the neck and bust are similar in them and their hair is inter locked at the back in *dvivenī*, two braids. The third figure, *i.e.* the bust of a Yakshī, is different in respect of ornaments, although *dvivenī* appears in it too.

Several other Yaksha images have come to light from the Mathura region and its vicinity namely, Palwal and Bharatpur. At least two such statues coming from Baroda³ and Noh⁴ and the third one—E. 9—of the Mathura Museum⁵ are very close to the Parkham Yaksha image their ornamentats, size and dress.⁶ In the Yaksha⁷ image from Noh, the legs and the left hand are broken. His right hand is raised upto shoulder in the *abhaya mudra*. He wears a torque and a heavy multistranded necklace whose strings are interwoven at the back and hang there, forming two thick round festoons. The number of these festoons in the Parkham and Baroda images is four.⁸ The other ornaments of the Noh Yaksha are *sapatra-keyūra*, and four bracelets. The dress consists of a *dhotī* reaching below the knees, and an *udarabandha* covering the middle of the torso, and tied at the left side; from here, the two ends of the *bandha* hang down to the thighs, clinging there. These images measure a little more than eight feet. The Baroda bust of Yaksha, when complete, would have measured about twelve feet in height. In details, thus the Noh Yaksha is quite similar to the Parkham example and in the details of ornaments it is close to the Yaksha-bust of Baroda. Besides the Noh image, Bharatpur region is reported to have "about half a dozen Yaksha-Yakshī statues within a radius of nineteen miles."⁹ Two such status in the Bharatpur Museum have characteristic Yaksha-features *e.g.*, huge-body and pot-belly. The third one represents a *mukhalingam* also delineating a Yaksha holding a bowl on his head.¹⁰ The village Biravai in Bharatpur District has provided another such colossal image of Yaksha similar to the other statues of the region, in respect of dress and ornament. Its singularity lies in the depiction of a "long sword hanging on the left back hip of the Yaksha." The sword hangs down tied to a belt worn across the right shoulder.¹¹ The Sarnath Museum has another sword-bearing Yaksha-figure, in which the sword is held horizontally at the head. The image is badly broken.¹²

Palwal near Mathura has afforded a colossal bust of a Yaksha carved in red sandstone. The image is deposited in the State Museum, Lucknow (no. 107). The ornaments shown in the figure are round *Kuṇḍalas*, a torque, a crescent-shaped necklace and four heavy wristlets. The Yaksha also wears a turban. His right hand is raised up to the shoulders, very much like the Noh Yaksha even in wearing four bracelets; he holds in that hand an object described by Agrawala as "conch-like." It may as well be a flower whose petals are now obliterated.¹³

These images prove the popularity of Yaksha cult in this region, which is confirmed by the

¹Cunningham, A., *Reports*, X, pp. 40-45; Smith, V.A., *History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon*, p. 64.

²Bhakshi, K.G., A New Pre-Mauryan Statue discovered at Bhilsa, *Proc. of Indian History Congress*, VIII, 1945, pp. 20-22.

³ASI, AR, 1909-10, p. 76, pl. XXVIII.

⁴cf. Agrawala, V.S., *JUPHS*, VI, II, 1933, pp. 88-89, pl. 1, 2, 3; *Studies in Indian Art*, pp. 114-15.

⁵Vogel, J. Ph., *Catalogue*, p. 108.

⁶Agrawala, V.S., *SIA*, pp. 114-15.

⁷Agrawala, R.C., *Lalit Kalā*, no. 14, p. 48.

⁸The Pawaya Yaksha wears a long necklace of six strands issuing from a clasp tied at the back and two *phullās* are shown hanging from it. Another variation of this form of necklace is found in the image of the Didarganj, Yakshi.

⁹Agrawala, R.C., *Lalit Kalā*, 14, p. 47.

¹⁰cf. *Indian Museums Review*, New Delhi, 1966, p. 46.

¹¹Agrawala, R.C., *JOI*, XVII, I, September, 1967, p. 65 and plates.

¹²Information is based on the photograph seen in the Archives of the American Academy of Benaras.

¹³Agrawala, V.S., *JUPHS*, pp. XXIV-V, 1951-52; *SIA*, pp. 134-35.

details found in the literary accounts of the different sects. The *Mahāmāyūrī* refers to five Yakshas in the region of Rajasthan. They are: Jambhāka of Marubhūmi, Kalmāshapāda of Vaira (Wer, S.E. of Bharatpur) Arjuna, the tutelary Yaksha of the Ārjunyāyanas (Delhi-Ajmer Agra region) Driḍhadhanu, the presiding Yaksha of Varuṇa (on the confines of Rajputana to the west of Delhi),¹ and Serissaka who is described as living within the confines of Marukāntārām.² Among these Yakshas, Kalmāshapāda has definite association with the vicinity of Bharatpur. As regards Mathura, Gardabha,³ Sudarśana,⁴ Huṇḍika⁵ and Viśālāksha⁶ are mentioned as Yakshas of this place. But the images or the text offer no other clues to warrant a clear identification.

Iconographically the Sarnath Yaksha figures furnish some significant details. The collection of Sarnath Museum has the ram-horned head of a Yaksha figure which reminds us of the similar head from the Mathura Museum (object no. 157). Another interesting piece [Fig. 31] shows a *bhāravāhaka* Yaksha,⁷ headless, whose dwarfish stature illustrates a new mode in the Yaksha motif. He wears a torque, a squarish necklace and *sapatra-keyūra*, and has his hands raised upwards in the pose of supporting some thing above.

Sahni discovered a Yaksha figure from Kosam,⁸ which shows a triangular flat necklace, folds of flesh below the breasts, the dhoti and the belt, . . . left hand suspended low and holding probably a purse."⁹ In the right hand, he appears to hold a mace. On the basis of these features this statue can be classified with those found at Parkham and Pawaya.¹⁰

A headless torso of Yaksha image from Partabgarh is deposited in the Allahabad Museum. The arms are broken, but the hands are partly preserved. The right hand seems to have been in the *abhaya mudrā*; the left is kept on the waist. He wears a torque and a triangular necklace of eight strands. The *antariya*, lower garment, is shown tied around the waist below the navel [Fig. 32].¹¹

The images discussed above are of Yakshas or Yakshis alone. A sculpture has come from Sopara which shows a colossal Yaksha, standing with two attendants flanking him. Of the main figure, only the lower part, below the girdle, is extant now [Fig. 33]. The details of drapery on the lower part of the body are clear; there was probably a *vajra* near the left foot of the main figure of the attendants, the one towards the left has interesting details [Fig. 34]. He is turned backwards and is being carried by a grotesque looking figure which has a huge (15") head attached to a dwarfish body. Agrawala calls it "a grotesque lion-faced dwarf (with) protruding eyes and manes."¹² But the figure compares well with the grotesque Yakshas of Mara's army as depicted on an architrave of the *Stupa* at Sanchi.¹³

The identification of the image is not certain. Agrawala, however, has drawn attention to Vishṇu, Asanga, Vira and Pālaka who are mentioned in the *Mahāmāyūrī* as the Yakshas of

¹Agrawala, V.S., *JUPHS*, XV, II, pp. 27-30 and notes.

²*supra*, p. 43f; also Upadhyaya, B.S., *Buddhakālin Bharatiya Bhoogol* (Hindi), Prayag, pp. 148ff, who says that reference here is to the Rajputana desert, for a journey in the region entailed crossing of Candrabhāgā (Chenab) river; and the *Marukāntāra* was sixty *yojanas* in length.

³*Gilgit MSS*, III, I, pp. 15ff.

⁴*Vip. S.*, p. 71.

⁵*Av. S.*, II, p. 555.

⁶*Mahāmāyūrī* mentions him as the tutelary Yaksha of Eka(ra)raksha, near Mathura; cf. *JUPHS*, XV, II, p. 42, note 13.

⁷Sahni, D.R., *Catalogue*, p. 252; no. B. (h) 5; Oertel, F.E., *ASI, AR*, 1904-5, p. 86, fig. 1 D and p. 95, no. 137, for a Yakshi figure from Sarnath; cf. *ASI, AR*, 1920-21, p. 46, pl. XX1b.

⁸*ASI, AR*, 1921-22, p. 46, pl. XX1d.

⁹Agrawala, V.S., *SIA*, p. 116; The *Mahāmāyūrī* refers to Anāyāsa and Anābhoga as the Yakshas of Kausambi, cf. appendix I, pp. 427-28.

¹⁰*SIA*, p. 116.

¹¹cf. Kala, S.C., *Sculptures in Allahabad Museum*, p. 21, pl. 1.

¹²Agrawala, V.S., *SIA*, p. 133.

¹³Marshall, J., *Monuments of Sanchi*, II, pl. 61.

Dwarkā, Bharukaccha, Karhātaka and Vanavāsī respectively.¹

These sculptures present a monotonous mode of depiction of Yakshas, all shown standing, with their huge bulk, holding sometimes different object, but usually dressed in a similar fashion. Some other sculptures present a deviation from that common pattern, and these conform to mainly two classes (i) in which the figures are carved in a seated posture, and (ii) that in which a huge square block of stone is carved on different faces with Yaksha-figures in relief. The image from Sogar² belongs to the former class. Another such figure of a seated Yakshi was discovered at Jhing-ka-Nagra near Mathura, where she was worshipped as Manasādevī.³ The image carries an inscription read by Chanda as

- (i) Sa putehi Kārīto
- (ii) Yakhilāyāva Kunikāte
- (iii) (Vasinā Nāke) na katā

(This image of) Yakshi Lāyāva has been caused to be established by . . . together with his sons, and made by Naka, pupil of Kunika."⁴

The deity is shown seated on a wicker-stool (*modhā*), and is coated with vermilion.

Allahabad Municipal Museum contains another seated image, in which a fierce-looking Yaksha is depicted [Fig. 38] squatting on a seat in the *pralambhapādāsana mudrā*. He wears a crown, round *kuṇḍalas*, a torque, a *nāga yajñopavīta*, and wristlets. A *dhoti* reaching below the knees is also shown. He holds a cup in the right hand; and with his left hand, he is shown hurling down a pig between his feet.

Some of these interesting features are found again in another important sculpture recovered from Bhita.⁵ This colossal piece is in the Lucknow Museum (no. 56-394) and shows two well-carved figures standing back-to-back [Fig. 35]. There are two more figures carved on the sides in which only the heads are prominently shown, while the rest of the body is depicted in a hazy outline on the pillar, the lower portion of which is occupied by the figures of a lion on one side [Fig. 36] and a pig on the other [Fig. 37]. The pig recalls the similarly carved figure on the Kauśāmbī sculpture. The figures are corpulent; and the dress and ornaments are like those in other free-standing Yaksha statues. In this group, one figure holds a water-bottle similar to those held by Maitreya. But the similarity ends there and the figures on other counts, e.g., corpulence, hugeness, presence of a pig like that in the Kauśāmbī-Yaksha and the ornaments, help to identify the figures as those of Yakshas. The images are so conceived that they portray the idea of their guarding the four quarters of the place where the images were consecrated. As the figures are all different from one another, it is probably reasonable to suggest that four different Yakshas have been portrayed here. Their identification is not certain. The *Mahāmāyūrī*, however, refers to two Yakshas of Kauśāmbī—i.e. Anāyāsa and a Anābhoga. To us it appears that the figure holding a bottle may represent Kubera, who has been portrayed along with three other local Yakshas. A pig⁶ is found in another Yaksha image from Kośāmbī mentioned above.⁷ Other features of the image cannot be satisfactorily explained.⁸

Another image of this type, carved on different faces of a block, is deposited in the Bharat kalā Bhavan, Benaras. (Ht. 5' × Wdt. 1.11' × girth round the stomach 6.5'). Agrawala describes it as "representing a triple image. . . on a three-sided block of stone which has a square pedestal

¹Agrawala, V.S., op. cit., p. 134.

²cf. Agrawala, R.C., *JOI*, XVII, I, p. 65, fn. 1. such a terracotta figure from Chandraketurgarh is discussed by Agrawala, R.C., *Lalit Kālā*, 14, p. 48. fig. 5; several seated terracotta figures of Yakshas from Kauśāmbī, Mathura and Ahicchatrā are known and are deposited in the Mathura and Allahabad Museums.

³*ASI, AR*, 1920-21, pl. 18 b; *ibid.* 1922-23, pp. 164-65. The head on the image is regarded as a later addition.

⁴cf. Agrawala, V.S., *SIA*, p. 118.

⁵cf. Joshi, N.P., *Bulletin of Museum and Archaeology*, Lucknow Museum, no. 4, December, 1969, pp. 9-11.

⁶In the Mathura region, there is even now the custom of offering pigs to Jakhaiya.

⁷*supra*, p. 111.

⁸Other Yaksha sculptures in the Lucknow Museum; cf. Upadhyaya, B.S., *JISOA*, X, 1940, pp. 175-90.

below, each side is carved with a standing male figure in bold-belief. The figures are rather dwarfish in stature, plump, and have their hands lifted up as in atlantes Yaksha figures. In between the legs in front, there seems to be a prop-like object of which the purpose is not clear."¹ The figure wears a *kurtā*-like costume but *dhotī* is found [Fig. 39-41]. Agrawala "tentatively" identified the image with Trimukha Yaksha, although he concedes that literary sources offer no such Yaksha-name.² The popularity and wide currency of Yaksha images, and its portrayal as atlantes, support the identification of this image as a Yaksha but calling him Trimukha seems unwarranted. In the Śunga period, bi-view images were made, and images in case of Yaksha have been reported from Chopera and the collection of Gwalior Museum, which have been mentioned earlier. It appears that this image was for a tri-view. Images with similar front and back-views are known from the Kushāna sculptures of Mathura Museum. The *Sarvatobhadrikā* Jain images probably developed from such images. Thus it seems that, far from representing Trimukha Yaksha, the sculpture represents the three-views of some nameless Yaksha. The name of the Yaksha is difficult to relate. In the *Mahāmāyūrī*, Mahākāla is the Yaksha of Vārāṇasī, while in the *Matsya Purāṇa*, Harikeśa Yaksha occupies that place. Both these works are later in origin than the image. The image was found at Rajghat near Banaras, and may represent a local Yaksha.

Banaras figures as a central place of several Yakkha legends in the *Jātakas*.³ The Purāṇas also refer to Harikeśa Yaksha⁴ and his friends Tryaksha, Daṇḍapāṇi, Udbhrama and Sambhrama.⁵ But, early images of Yakshas are rare in this region.

The sculptures described above are amongst the earliest known figures and they also help in establishing the places where they were found as important centres of Yaksha-worship. All these images were provided with pedestals which in some cases are missing, because of the broken lower part (for example, the Patna Yaksha no. p. 2). They are characterised by heavy and stiff features and are carved in round. A slight bend on the straight trunk of the body is sometimes shown by the tilt of one of the feet. Their colossal body must have been awe-inspiring. Coomaraswamy⁶ has correctly expressed the aesthetic quality of some of these Yaksha statues saying—"Magnificently conceived, they express an immense material force in terms of sheer volume; they are informed by an astounding physical energy which their archaic 'stiffness' by no means obscures. There is no suggestion here, indeed, of introspection or devotion; this is an art of mortal essence, almost brutal in affirmation, not yet spiritualised."

The archaic effect of the figures is evident in their modelling. In some figures (Parkham, Noh, Rajghat, Bhita) the different planes of the body have been superposed and interlocked in an unintegrated manner. A spontaneous linear rhythm is found missing in them. Some other sculptures are different in this respect (Didarganj, Pawaya), and exhibit a graceful and well-gathered flow of contours and fleshy volume.⁷

These sculptures also offer clear evidence of the development of iconography. In those sculptures which are not broken, certain attributes like cup, purse, (wine-) bottle and *caurī* are found. A *vajra*, thunderbolt, is depicted in the Sopara image. The statues from Sarnath, Kauśāmbī and Biravai are shown holding a dagger, mace and sword respectively and, as such, they display the *vīra* aspect of the Yakshas. This suggestion is supported by the sculptures in which Yakshas hold

¹Agrawala, V.S., *JUPHS*, XXIV-XXV, p. 189.

²For a Trisira Rākshasa see *Rāmāyana*, III.22.33; III.26; *Devī Bhāgavata*, VI.2.1ff; A three headed son of Tvashṭri, as a *purohita* of Devas, later killed by Indra is known from *TS*, II.5.1. In the *Mahābhārata*, XII.329.23, he is described as reciting *Veda*, drinking and seeing the universe with his three different faces. None of the traits of the image, however, tallies with such descriptions.

³cf. *J*, I, p. 27, 131f, 137, 255; II, 103; III, 96f, 132f, 298ff; IV, 204f, V, 11f, 257.

⁴*supra*, pp. 33-34

⁵*MP*, Chapter 180 also, chapter 183.62-63 for other Yaksha-names e.g. Vināyaka, Kūshemārḍa, Gajaturḍa, Jayanta, Madotkata etc.

⁶*HIA*, p. 16.

⁷Saraswati, S.K., *Comprehensive History of India*, pp. 694ff.

their right hand in the *abhaya mudrā*. The figures holding flower (Palwal) and *āmramañjarī* (Benagar) probably indicate these deities in the form of tree-spirits. Grotesque features are seen in at least two images, Sarnath has supplied the ram-horned head of a Yaksha; and the Sopara image shows an attendant Yaksha having a huge, grotesque face with gaping jaws and bulging eyes. Grotesque features are shown more elaborately in reliefs of Yakshas belonging to this phase. However, in the free-standing images, there are representations of lion and pig, in two instances. Their exact import is not known and it is difficult to say whether these animals appear merely as mounts, or figure as features of some mythic account relevant to the sculptures. Usually, these images are in the *Sthānaka*, standing, pose, but a few seated ones are also found. And, although turban for Yakshas and jewellery on hair for Yakshīs was the usual fashion, two sculptures (Palwal, Kauśāmbī, seated) have a crown or a tiara which probably indicates the elevated status of those Yakshas.

Banerjea¹ infers the representation of Yaksha and Yakshini on the early Indian coins from Ujjaini. He particularly mentions variety *b* and variety *c* of Allan's *Catalogue* of Ujjaini coins which bear two and three figures respectively, still unidentified. Banerjea² had also published a square coin from Ujjaini, which is identical with variety *b* of class 4 of Allan. The obverse of this coin shows two human figures like those of Yakshas dressed in their manner and represented in the same attitude, even wearing *grāiveyaka*. It must be said that Yakshas in early literary traditions do not appear to be associated with Avanti or Ujjaini. The *Mahāmāyūrī*, in its list of Yakshas refers to Priyadarśana, Vasubhūti and Nandi with reference to Avanti or its vicinity. But the tradition is quite late.³ Their absence from the vicinity of Ujjaini is significant. Moreover, Yaksha pairs, in the manner in which they occur on the said Ujjaini coins, were unknown in that period. Gwalior region has produced sculptures carved on front and back-sides of a stone-block,⁴ but these can hardly be described as a pair. In view of this, it is not possible to accept Banerjea's identification regarding the Ujjaini coins⁵ mentioned above.

The reliefs from Bharhut and elsewhere have figures of Yakshas and Yakshīṇīs which are, as a class, contemporary to, but distinct in plasticity from, the class of Yaksha sculptures mentioned above. These reliefs are discussed here.

Bharhut has attracted the notice of a large number of scholars since the Stupa was discovered here by Cunningham in 1873 and excavated by him in 1874 with J.D. Beglar.⁶ Among the Yaksha and Yakshīṇī figures of Bharhut, some are inscribed and are carved on the railing pillars; some other reliefs are not labelled, but from their general style they have been identified with Yakshas or Yakshīṇīs. Sometimes these demi-gods occur as a part of some scene. However, among the Yaksha and Yakshīṇī figures carved on railing pillars, the following may be noted.⁷

AJAKĀLAKA YAKSHA

In the *Udāna* (I.7), his name is mentioned as Ajakālapaka and he belongs to Paṭali city in the vicinity of Pāwā. The *Udāna commentary* gives two explanations of his name. According to it, Ajakālaka⁸ is (1) either some one, making a bundle of goats, because the Yaksha accepted gifts along with a group of goats tied together; (2) or someone who makes men bleat like goats,

¹DHI, pp. 150ff, referring to Allan's *Catalogue*, pl. XXXVI, figs. 1-3.

²IHQ, X, 1934, pp. 723-25 and plate.

³A ceramic pot excavated from Ujjain; the body portion comprises a Yakshī figure; cf. Agrawala, R.C., *Lalit Kala*, 14, p. 49 fn.2. For a terracotta figure of a Yaksha from Ujjain; cf. Coomaraswamy, I, p. 40, pl. 12, fig. 4.

⁴*supra*, p. 113; also p. 109 note 8.

⁵According to K.D. Bajpai, these represent Śiva and Uma. Śiva is a common deity on Ujjaini coins.

⁶Cunningham, *Stupa of Bharhut*, p. iv.

⁷For the image of Kubera from Bharhut, *supra*, pp. 67ff; also, *CII*, II, Part II, p. 73 (B-1).

⁸Barua and Sinha, *op. cit.*, pp. 67ff; Barua, B.M., *Bharhut*, II, p. 59f; III, pl. LVII, fig. 61; Hultzsch, *Indian Antiquary*, XXI, p. 234, no. 93; Lüders List, no. 795.

because people when offering gifts shouted like goats in order to satisfy him.¹

His powers were enormous. When he saw the Buddha seated on his throne inside his mansion he cried *Akkula-Bakkula*, and produced terrific sights. As the commentary explains, he shook the earth, covered it with darkness, raised violent storms and gales which broke mountains and uprooted trees. There was such a commotion in all the Jambūdvīpa as though the final dissolution was near.² This *Akkula-Bakkula* cry has been variously explained. As Barua writes: "The noise (of the terrific commotion) reached the ears of men in onomatopoeic sound '*Akkula-Bakkula*.'" According to some, this jargon was but a Prākṛit from of '*Ākula-Vyākula*.' Some suggest that by *Akkula*, the Yaksha meant he was a ferocious destroyer like a lion (or such beast) . . . and by *Bakkula* he compared himself with a venomous snake or reptile, (still) others suggest that (the expression was *Akkula-Bhakkula*); by the first, he desired to kill and by the second, to devour."³ According to Hultzs, *Ajakālaka* is but the Sanskrit *Ādyakāla*, 'A terrible embodiment of ruthless Unborn Time, destroying living beings, whose essence is immortality.'⁴ But Lüders has said that it is difficult to regard the local Yaksha, a demi-god in the Buddhist period, as a symbol of 'Unborn Time.'⁵ The rendering of *Ajakālaka* as *Ajakalāpaka* has also not found favour. Lüders has said that *Aja* may stand for goat, but *Kālaka*, he derived as a causative of a root *kal* that could as well form the word *Kālayati* or *Kalāpayati*. Perhaps this *Kālayati* or *Kalāpayati* had the same meaning as Sk. *Kālayati*, 'to make some one run before oneself,' 'to persecute,' 'to scare away,' 'drive off.'⁶

A relief of a Yaksha inscribed as '*Ajakālaka*' has been found at Bharhut. Here he is shown standing on a human figure which is shown touching his jaw with his hands, this figure also has the tail of a fish [Fig. 44]. According to Anderson it is a monster with the body of a fish but with human hands thrust into its mouth.⁷ The Yaksha holds a half-blossomed lotus in the right hand; his left hand is in the *Kaṭihasta* pose. Among the Yakshas at Bharhut, he alone does not hold his hands in *Namaskāra mudrā*. He wears the usual dress and ornaments. The element of goat-sacrifice to this Yaksha is of interest. The Mathura Museum has an image (no. 39.2839), which shows a headless Yaksha seated in the European fashion on a long couch; his right hand is broken, but it held a flower whose petals are still intact. In the left hand is placed a bag. There is a pitcher to the right bottom of the figure. Between the legs of the figure is shown a goat-head which is significant in this connection. It may be a late version of this Yaksha in which the iconic form of Kubera has also crept in. The image belongs to the late Gupta period.⁸

*Candrā*⁹

She is carved on the middle face of a pillar (0.5 Calcutta Museum), bearing the label *Cādā-Yakhī*—'The Yakshī Cādā (Candrā); she stands under a Nāga-tree (*Mesua ferrea*) entwining it with her left arm and leg. In the left hand she holds a branch of the tree with flowers and leaves.' By her right hand, she is bending the branch of the tree; her right foot is put straight on

¹ *CII*, II, Part II, p. 74f. *Ud. A.* p. 64 explains, *aje kalā-petvā bardhānena ajak(ṭ)lāsena saddhim baliṃ patī-cchati no anhatā and kecipana ajake viya satte lāpetiti, Ajakalāpako ti.*

² Barua, B.M., *Bharhut*, II, p. 60.

³ *ibid*; cf. also Mahandale, M.A., *Vedic Akkhala Pali Akkula*, *S.K. Belvalkar Felicitation Volume*, Delhi, 1957.

⁴ Barua, B.M., *op. cit.*, p. 60, quoting Hultzs.

⁵ *CII*, II, Part II, p. 75.

⁶ *CII*, II, Part II, p. 74f. also note 1.

⁷ Anderson's *Catalogue*, I, p. 24.

⁸ cf. also Mathura Museum Sculpture no. 1581, showing the bust of a male figure, carrying a ram across his shoulder. Kushana period. A terracotta figure described as a doubtful Yaksha is illustrated by Coomaraswamy, *Yaksas*, I, pl. 12, fig. 4. It shows the figure as holding a ram. Provenance, Ujjain (Kushana Period, Coomaraswamy collection). Sri V.S. Wakankar of Ujjain has informed us of his discovery of a Yaksha figure, the details of which are not known to us at present.

⁹ *CII*, II, Part II, p. 74, B-2.

a pedestal. The pedestal carries a figure variously identified as 'a sheep or ram with hind part of a fish' (Lüders), or as a horse-faced *makara* (Banerjea and Barua). The Yakshī's hair is beautifully decorated with different bands of decorative designs [Fig. 45]. She wears large square *kuṇḍalas*, necklaces, bangles, armlets, *mekhalā* and anklets. An ornament with bead and reel design is worn by her in *upavīta* fashion, and on her forehead appears a round *ṭikullī* with star design. Her left upraised foot is on the head of her *vāhana* [Fig. 43].

Any Yakshīṇī from the literary works with this name has so far not been encountered, although some suggestion have been offered regarding her identification with Cuṇḍā, the Mahāyāna goddess,¹ or the 'Moon Goddess conceived as a Yakshī.'² These are, at best, only remote suggestions, for Cuṇḍā the Mahāyāna goddess has nothing in common with Yakshīṇī except the name, one of whose variants is Candrā, as known from *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*. We have not been able to trace her name in that text in its list of 46 Yakshīṇīs.³ Nor is her name found among eight Yakshīṇīs, who appeared along with Vasudhārā in her *yab-yum* images. About the other identification of the sculpture with the Moon Goddess, there is nothing at Bharhut in the image to show the lunar association of the Yakshī. On the other hand, her mount may indicate her either to be a terrestrial or an aquatic deity. She was probably a local Yakshī, who is carved with the other better known important Yakshas, for elevating her status. Waddell⁴ identified her with Candā Kinnarī of the *Jātakas* (nos. 485, 358), supporting her Kinnarī derivation from her horse-headed mount. According to him, she is represented on the pillar as a wife of Kubera and a precursor of Hārīti. But the suggestion goes against the epigraphic evidence of the image which describes her as a Yakshī and not as a Kinnarī.

Virūḍako Yakho

Virūdhaka Yaksha,⁵ on the south gate, is shown standing straight without any tilt, in the *namaskāra mudrā*, wearing a turban, an *uttarīya* and a dhotī tied at the waist with an additional piece of cloth. The tassel of the *dhotī* drops between the feet with beautiful folds. His ornaments consist of heavy square *kuṇḍalas*, *graiveyaka*, a loose necklace, *triratna* armlets, and *bangles*. He stands on a rock; a sandal-wood tree and lion have also been shown on the pedestal.

Virūdhaka or Virūlhaka is evidently the name of the king of Kuṁbhāṇḍas, the guardian of the southern quarter among the Caturmahārājika gods.⁶ According to Barua, the term *yaksha* has been used in the Bharhut labels in a special sense to denote 'a mighty hero, warrior.'⁷ Hence its use for Virūdhaka, the lord of Kuṁbhāṇḍas.

Gaṅgito Yakho

The Yaksha Gaṅgita,⁸ stands in the *samapādasthānaka* pose, holding his hands on the chest in the *namaskāra mudrā*. He wears a head-gear, an *uttarīya* and *dhotī* with a tastefully decorated tassel falling below the waist in the middle. He wears usual ornaments like other Yakshas, and his mount is a caparisoned elephant.

This Yaksha, like some other Bharhut Yakshas, is still unidentified. Waddell, derived the name as 'Gaṅgīta Yaksha,' the singing Gandharva Yaksha; being shown facing east he was regarded as the guardian king of east.' But this identification lacks authenticity. Barua and Sinha proposed the phonetic identification of *Gaṅgito* with *Gāngeya*, and identified him with a snake-king *Gāngeya*,

¹Desgupta, P.C., A note on Yakshini Candrā of Bharhut Railing, *JIH*, April, 1963, p. 55f; also Bhattacharya, B., *Buddhist Iconography*, pp. 219ff for Cundā.

²ACSB, p. xi.

³*supra*, pp. 58-59.

⁴Evolution of Buddhist Cult, p. 144f.

⁵CSB, p. 20; Barua, B.M., *Barhut*, II, p. 57f; Barua and Sinha, op. cit., p. 65; *CIH*, II, Part II, pp. 75-76.

⁶*D*, II, 207f.; Waddell, op. cit., p. 135f. says that Virūdhaka is a title of Yama.

⁷Barua and Sinha, op. cit., p. 66.

⁸CSB, p. 20; Barua, *Barhut*, II, p. 61; Barua and Sinha, p. 68.

'one belonging to Gāṅges or Gangetic region.' But, as Lüders has pointed out any such reference does not occur in Pali texts, at all.¹ He is evidently a terrestrial Yaksha, which may be seen from his mount, a caparisoned elephant. He is shown standing on an elephant and a tree over which his two feet have been shown. According to Agrawala, he was the male counterpart of a goddess, Gamgāta mentioned in Sabhāparva (11.42) of the *Mahābhārata*.² But a phonetic derivation of the name other than Gamgita is not indicated.³

Supavāso Yakho

The Yaksha Suprāvriśa. On phonological derivations, the name has been rendered as Suprāvriśa.⁴ The Yaksha is shown wearing usual dress and ornaments. His *uttariya* however is larger and more prominent than that of other Yakshas and he wears six bracelets instead of usual four. He is shown standing in a relaxed pose, holding his hands in *namaskāra mudra*, on a kneeling caparisoned elephant who holds a flower, probably lotus, in his extended trunk.

Lüders has observed that his name probably is derived from Suprāvriśa as suggested by Hultsch. As the reading of the label is quite distinct, Lüders is not "prepared to agree with Barua and Sinha who propose to correct it to *Supavāso* merely because a lay-sister bearing the name of Suppavāsā is mentioned in *Anguttara*, I.26." Supravāsa, according to Hultsch, was a deity of plentiful rainfall.

Suciloma Yakho

The Yaksha Suciloma. In the texts his name is also found as Śuciloma (Sk. Śuciloman), 'white-haired.' At Bharhut he is mentioned as a Yaksha but in later times he was metamorphosed into a serpent.⁵ He figures prominently in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*⁶ and the *Sutta Nipāra*,⁷ which tell of his *taṃ*-shaped *bhavanam*, 'abode,' near Gayā. His name is self-explanatory and it is said that as a punishment for his having slept once on a soft rug while he was in a *vihāra*, his body acquired the hair like needles.⁸ According to the texts, when he found the Buddha occupying his seat, he threatened to throw him beyond the Ganga unless his questions were replied to. There follows a philosophical dialogue between the Yaksha and the Buddha at the end of which the Yaksha was converted to the Buddhism. The temple or the habitat of Suciloma has been described in the Buddhaghosa's commentary (*Sn. A*, I.301) as *taṃkīta-maṅco* a *taṃ*-shaped elongated platform, and Barua has explained it as a "cell looking from a distance like a mound, consisting of four pieces of stone-slabs, supporting a larger piece spread over them like a roof." This place was quite dirty on account of spitting, fluid secretions of the nose and other filthy matter excreted by persons.⁹ Suciloma is associated with another Yaksha, Khara, and it has been said that both of them evolved from porcine and crocodile-like animals and reptiles.¹⁰

On a railing pillar of Bharhut *Stupa*, the image of this Yaksha stands gracefully on a pedestal

¹p. 76 note 1; Barua's reference to 'a Buddhist Discourse in the form of Gāṅgeya Sutta' has been rejected by Lüders as 'outburst of imagination.' A Gāṅgā-devatā does, however, find mention in *Maccha Uddāna Jātaka*.

²Agrawala, V.S., *ACSB*, p. xi.

³*Corpus*, p. xiii, 1 i, also xxii 20(e), for a discussion of this Yaksha; cf. *CSB*, p. 20; Barua and Sinha p. 70; Barua, *Barhut*, II, p. 63.

⁴*CII*, II, Part II, Introduction xxiii, 24 (a).

⁵*CII*, Part II, p. 79.

⁶I.207f.

⁷II, 5, p. 42.

⁸*Sn. A*, I, 302, for full story, *ibid*, 301-5 (Suciloma—Sucisadisāni lomāni). At the end of the *Sutta* he again became golden-complexioned, wearing celestial ornaments, *Sn. A*, I.305; cf. also *Acta Orientalia*, XV, p. 101 for an explanation of the word.

⁹Barua and Sinha, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

¹⁰*ibid*, p. 69; also Barua, B.M., *Barhut*, II, p. 61f.

carved with a railing-pattern. His hands are in *namaskāra mudra*, and he wears the usual dress and ornaments. The relief does not bear out the reference to his needle-like hair, mentioned in Buddhaghosa's *Sāratthapakāsinī* and *Madhurattha-Vilāsinī*. However, a stone head in the Mathura Museum (no. 281, height 6½") has hair pointed upwards, like *Suciloma*. Emaciated features and a grin are the other features of this head. On the right side of the hair, above the forehead, a hideous *kapāla* is also carved, indicating probably the terrifying nature of the figure represented. The representation of *suciloma*, 'needle-like hair,' in the object is interesting.

Yakshinī Sudarśanā

The Yakshini Sudarśanā.¹ In the relief, she stands on a fish-tailed *makara*² with right foot firmly set on the mount and the left, raised, placed behind the right one. The index finger of her right hand is raised towards her head, while the left hand holds the *antariya* in the centre at the navel. She wears elaborate dress and ornaments, particularly a thick *antariya* different from others [Fig. 46].

She was 'of beautiful looks' according to her name. She is not known from the Buddhist sources, although Sudarśana Yaksha appears in the Mahāmāyūrī (I.12) as the tutelary deity of Campā. Lüders identified her with Sudarśanā of the *Mahābhārata* (XII.2.4. ff.) who appears as the daughter of king Duryodhana of *Māhishmatī* and the river goddess Narmadā. She appears in the relief as a river goddess (mark her *makara vāhana*) and her association with Narmadā and *Māhishmatī* establishes her as a local deity of Central India. Lüders suggests that "the daughter of river goddess and a wife of a god (*Agnī*) may well have been called a Yakshinī in the language of the time." Although Yakshinis are known as aquatic deities (and hence their aquatic attributes in the different panels), any Yakshī with Sudarśanā as name, associated with water, is not known from other sources. Also the statement of Lüders regarding the daughter of a river-goddess being called 'Yakshī' remains unconfirmed.

Besides these Yakshas and Yakshinis, several other demi-gods and goddesses, called either *devatā* or sometimes not named at all, nevertheless, identified with Yakshinis, are also mentioned in the case of Bharhut figures.³ Sirimā, Cullakoka and Mahākokā are referred to in their labels as *devatās*. Barua identified Sirimā with the goddess of Luck,⁴ and Cullakokā [Fig. 47] and Mahākokā with hunting goddesses on the basis of a reference to a hunter, Kokā, who is mentioned in the *Dhammapada Atthakathā*. He similarly identified Mahākokā and classed her under the tree-goddesses.⁵ He also identified, without reference to any relevant textual authority, another figure (*Barhut*, III, pl. LXV, pl. 76) with Majjhimakokā. She rides a well-caparisoned horse, and stands under a tree, whose upper part only is extant now, clasping it. The identification, however, has not found approval.⁶ As regards the other two Kokā-goddesses, Paranavitana⁷ identifies them with the goddesses Kokanadā and Cullakokanadā the daughters of rain-god Pajjuna of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*.⁸ Barua has identified as Yakshinis certain other representations also,⁹ although these are not mentioned as Yakshinis. The pillar bearing the so-called Alakamandā, was at the village Bhatanwara; now it has been removed to Ramvan Museum (Satna, M.P.).¹⁰ She is dis-

¹cf. CSB, p. 20; Barua and Sinha, op. cit., p. 72; CII, op. cit., p. 79f.

²Rhinoceros-faced makara. Barua, and Sinha, op. cit., p. 72.

³Barua, *Barhut*, II, p. 74f.

⁴ibid, II, pp. 73, 71f.

⁵ibid, II, p. 55.

⁶*Corpus*, op. cit., p. 81 note 2.

⁷*Artibus Asiae*, XVI, 1953, p. 177; he translates Kokanadā and Culla-Kokanadā as 'Lily' or 'Little Lily'; cf. *Corpus*, p. 81 note 1.

⁸Lüders has accepted that Kokā is an abbreviated name.

⁹*Barhut*, III, fig. 68, 82 a (*Sirihikā*), 72 Alakamandā, *Barhut*, II, p. 55.

¹⁰Bajpai, K.D., *New Bharhut Sculpture*, quoted in *Corpus*, p. viii, the paper has since appeared in the *Journal of Indian Museums*, XVII-XX, 1961-64, pp. 33-37.

tinctively portrayed as different from the other Yakshis of Bharhut. She is bedecked with many additional ornaments, such as a jewelled veil falling on her forehead [Fig. VII], and a heavily ornamented tassel in place of the usual tassel of *sārī* which is not shown. She holds a lotus-bud in her raised right hand at her breasts, which again makes her different from other Yakshinis. The design of her ornaments is uncommon in comparison with those of others [Fig. 48]. Apparently she is a woman of authority and her *vāhana*, a dwarf carrying her, directly relates her to Kubera who alone has a dwarf as his mount (besides probably *Ajakālaka*). Below the Yakshini's legs and behind the (*nara-vāhana*, there is the carving of a mountain, which confirms that she is probably connected to Uttarakuru in the Himālayas which was the habitat of Kubera. On the basis of these observations it seems reasonable to identify her with *Bhūñjatī*, the wife of Vessavana as mentioned in the *Dīgha Nikāya*. The text says that she was a devout follower of the Buddha and was seen by Sakka as worshipping the Lord at Salalāgāra, with folded hands.¹ The folded hands are not represented in the Bharhut relief; but as a lady of authority and bearing, she does not fail to impress. The pillar contains an inscription read by Bajpai, as *Soriya thabho dānam* which has been emended as *Sākaya thabha dānam* 'The pillars (are) the gift of Saka (Śakra or the Sākya?).'² Among the un-identified Bharhut reliefs, the broken figure of another Yakshi identified by Barua with *Simhikā* is also interesting due to its ornaments and marks of personal decoration.

Some more railing pillars of Bharhut have been acquired and deposited in the Allahabad Municipal Museum and Bharata Kalā Bhavan, Banaras; each of these museums contains one such pillar bearing female figure identified as Yakshini³ although not so inscribed.

It has been rightly held that in its reliefs the Stupa has remarkably upheld the belief in the guardians of four quarters, and accordingly depicted Kubera towards north and Virūdaka towards south and so on.⁴ Stylistically, these reliefs indicate a further development of the Yaksha iconography. All the Yaksha figures are shown in *namaskāra mudrā*, except that of *Ajakālaka*, and a mount is invariably present in their cases. Yakshini and Devatā figures are mainly represented as *Vrikshakās* 'tree-spirits,' (*Candrā*, *Culakokā*, *Mahākoka*) or as water-spirits (*Sudassanā*). It has been suggested that there are two classes of the Yaksha and Yakshini figures at Bharhut, one, which look like "silhouettes sharply detached from the background," where a better attempt at modelling is also traceable (*Sirimā devatā* and *Kubera*). "A peculiar abstraction is recognised in treatment of feet or of the hands in attitude of adoration which, irrespective of anatomical accuracy, are turned sideways and presented in their broadest aspect." The other class is represented by *Sudarśanā* and *Culakokā*, 'having ample curves and flows and variegated attitudes.'⁵ To Marshall, this difference was because of the existence of two art traditions, indigenous and foreign.⁶ To Grunwedel also, *Kubera* and other deities, standing upon their mounts, appeared 'imitations of Western Asian deities.'⁷ Curt Glasar thought that he could detect Greek influence in the cast of the drapery of these Yakshas and Yakshinis of Bharhut.⁸ Bachhofer has, however, rejected all the foreign comparisons saying that, both in figuration and conception, the comparisons are unwarranted.⁹

Bharhut wielded great influence on the other centres of contemporary art, which is confirmed by the relief and sculptures from Pauni, Bodhgaya, Kauśāmbī, Moosanagar, Rajasan, Amin and other places. During recent excavations at Pauni (Bhandara distt, Maharashtra), a railing-pillar

¹D, II.270f; DA, III.705.

²Corpus, p. viii. b f. and p. 60, no. A. 124.

³Kala, S.C., *Bharhut Vedika*, pp. 9ff. and plates.

⁴Barua, *Barhut*, III, p. 54; *Barhut*, II, pp. 57ff.

⁵Saraswati, S.K., *Comprehensive History of India*, p. 687f.

⁶Marshall, *Monuments of Ancient India*, CHI, p. 625.

⁷*Buddhist Art in India*, p. 50.

⁸Bachhofer, L., *Early Indian Sculpture*, p. 26.

⁹ibid, p. 26, for a detailed description of the anatomical delineation and principles; cf., ibid, pp. 21ff.

was unearthed which contains a hybrid relief of a donkey-headed Yaksha. In depicting this Yaksha Pauni completes what had been omitted at Bharhut. Khara is closely associated with Suciloma in texts¹; but while Suciloma was depicted at Bharhut, Khara finds place at Pauni.² Bodhgaya has also provided some Yakshī-figures, one of which is shown standing on a plain round pedestal [Fig. 49]. She wears an elaborate coiffure besides the usual dress and ornaments.³ Two other Yakshī figures are exhibited in the Bodhgaya Museum; both are in standing posture and one has a lion as her *vāhana*. The State Museum, Lucknow contains railing-pillars from Kauśāmbī and Moosanagar which portray the same Bharhut tradition of relief carving. Kauśāmbī-reliefs are flat while those from Moosanagar have more rounded anatomical contours. In two such reliefs of Kauśāmbī,⁴ Yakshīs have been represented standing cross-legged; one holds a lotus in her right hand (no. B. 731), the other (no. B. 733) is headless and without attributes. A Yaksha (no. B. 732) from the same place is similarly carved and holds a bunch of flowers in his left hand; his right hand is held at the chest. Bhitā in Allahabad district has also provided railing-pillars with stylistically similar reliefs [Fig. 50]. Other such reliefs are known from Moosanagar which is forty-two miles south-west of Kanpur in Uttara Pradesh. There are here three figures of Yakshīs carved on railing-pillars. They are all shown standing without any *vāhana*, and hold flowers. Among the Moosanagar Yaksha figures, one stands with folded hands while the other holds some object at the chest with one hand; the other hand hangs down.⁵ In a specimen in the Lucknow Museum (no. 53. 123), one side of the rail-post has the relief figure of a Yaksha⁶; the other side is carved with another Yaksha figure whose right hand is held near his head, and left hand at the chest. He is accompanied by an undetermined bird. Amin⁷ has provided two pillars, one containing a couple (Yaksha and Yakshi) clasping each other; the Yaksha holds a wine-cup in his left hand. The other pillar portrays a Padmapāñi Yaksha. The pillars are beautifully carved with floral motifs, the like of which are not found elsewhere in the same scheme of delineation. The dress and ornament patterns are identical with Bharhut figures. The Amin pillar with Yaksha *dampati* is one of the earliest representations of a pair in Yaksha iconography.

A Yakshī figure on an octagonal column for Rajasan is also worthy of note on account of a turban on its head.⁸

Among the Yakshī figures, the one on a pillar discovered at Mehrauli is a graceful example in its pose and ornamentation. She stands as a *śālabhanjikā*, under a tree clasping its trunk with her left arm and holding a branch with the other hand. The details of the tree are now missing; so are Yakshī's face, hands and the portion below the knees. But this damage has not completely obscured the beauty of the image. She wears a torque, three necklaces, a six-stranded *mekhala* and a gracefully carved ribbon carelessly dangling down her shoulders and fastened below the navel. All ornaments are distinctive; of the necklaces, first carries a motif of two human heads, the second a square pendant and the third, a round *padaka* with a floral motif. Her hair is done in *dviveṇī* style, and her *dhotī* with its beautifully carved folds, and other details, make the image one of the superb examples of the type [Fig. 51].⁹

¹A Gaṇḍabha Yaksha who troubled people of Mathura finds mention in the *Gilgit MSS*, III, I, p. 15; Gaṇḍabha as a *dvārapāla* of Ālavaka Yaksha finds mention in the *SA*, I, p. 319.

²cf. Deo, S.B. and J.P. Joshi, *Pauni Excavations*, 1972, p. 47, pl. xxv, no. 1.

³Barua, B.M., *Gaya and Bodhgaya*, II, fig. 25a.

⁴These reliefs are now preserved in the State Museum, Lucknow.

⁵Shrivastava, V.N., *Ruins of Moosanagar, Uttara Pradesh*, January, 1960, pp. 27-30. Some of these figures have now been shifted to the State Museum, Lucknow.

⁶*supra*, pp. 67-68.

⁷*ASI, AR*, 21-22, p. 47; 1922-23, pl. V, c; Agrawala, R.C., *Lalit Kala*, 14, p. 50f, pl. XVI, figs. 1 a, b and 2.

⁸*ASI, AR*, 1918-19, Part I, pp. 32-33, pl. IX b. In a Bharhut relief, turban is shown on the head of the Apsara Alambushā. The scene has been identified by Lüders as representing celebrations connected with the birth of the Buddha. It is said that here, the Apsara is impersonating Suddhodana; cf. Lüders, *CII*, II, Part II, p. 102; *CSB*, pl. XV, outer face.

⁹cf. Agrawala, V.S., *JUPHS*, XXIV-XXV, 1951-52, pp. 191-92.

A Yakshī figure, now in the Śunga-gallery of Mathura Museum (no. 00. J 2.4) is another beautiful specimen of art. The Yakshī is shown loaded with ornaments consisting of a torque, three necklaces, the first one with a *tāṅka-cakra*, 'disc,' *keyūra*, 'wristlets,' *mekhalā* and anklets. She stands cross-legged holding in front a ribbon which girdles her back. She wears a diaphanous *antarīya* in spite of which her nudity is clear. Her *vāhana* is a grotesque dwarf with *śankukarṇa* [Fig. 52].

Pitalkhora has several reliefs of Yakshas and Yakshīs belonging to the Bharhut tradition in style and iconography.¹ In one case a Yaksha guard holds a spear, in another, two dwarf and grotesque Yaksha figures with *śankukarṇa* are shown in the pose of supporting the balustrade on their uplifted hands.²

The reliefs discussed above carry the unmistakable stamp of Bharhut style, although they belong to far-flung regions quite away from Bharhut. It seems that the guilds of artists who had worked at Bharhut, spread to different places. Guilds were mobile units of co-workers, and it is quite possible that, after completing Bharhut *stūpa*, artists may have spread out to the regions where they were in demand. This assumption leads to another possibility, *viz.*, sculptures from other places may be dated in the post-Bharhut period. Pitalkhora represents the period of transition from Bharhut tradition to the other leading tradition in Yaksha sculptures as obtained at Sanchi. At Pitalkhora, a dwarf figures of Yaksha carved in round appears for the first time; *śankukarṇa* was already known at Bharhut.³ A transformation in Yaksha iconography was thus in the offing, and it found bold expression at Sanchi in the grotesque figures of the *bhāravāhaka* Yakshas. This evolution has left its traces in the western India, and at Bhājā⁴ and Pitalkhora⁵ similar reliefs belonging to the second century BC are found.

SĀTAVĀHANA-KUSHĀNA PHASE

Representations of Yakshas and Yakshīs of this phase are known from Sanchi, Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda, Mathura and some other places. Independent Yakshī sculptures are now rare; those of Yakshas are quite numerous. Certain epigraphs of this period furnish evidence of Yaksha images being installed and enclosed with railings. A Nasik inscription (Lüders list no. 1143) refers to the setting up of a rail (*veikā*) and a Yaksha by Nandāśrikā. The railing-motif is found carved below the legs of the atlantes Yaksha figures on the Western gate of Sanchi, and it reflects the iconic portrayal of the prevalent convention. An inscribed image of a Yaksha, belonging to this time, has come from Pitalkhora (ancient Pitangalya).⁶ It is inscribed as *Kanhadāseṇa hiraṅkareṇa kata*, 'made by Kanhadāsa, a goldsmith.' The image is important for its grotesque features and dwarfish proportions of the body [Fig. 54]. Its grinning face, fine modelling, hair-style, a bowl supported on head by both the uplifted hands, ornament patterns, particularly the necklace embedded with the amulets in the shape of human heads, all make the figure one of the finest examples of early art. Deshpande points out that *Mahāmāyūrī* refers to the Yaksha Śankarin of Pitangalya,⁷ thereby suggesting the identification of the Yaksha with the image. How-

¹*Ancient India*, no. 15, 1959, pp. 81ff. (Pl. LVII, A-D); two Yaksha figure (a, b) exemplify the *vira* aspect in that they are shown holding spear and sword; other figures appear as attendants, holding *cauri* or casket.

²*ibid*, p. 73, pl. XLIX A; M.N. Deshpande points to their similarity with such figures at Nasik (cave 3) and Bhājā.

³cf. Lüders, *op. cit.*, pl. XXVIII.

⁴cf. Coomaraswamy, A.K., *HIA*, pl. VII, fig. 24.

⁵*Ancient India*, no. 15, p. 73, pl. XLIX, A; for chronology of Pitalkhora cave, *ibid*, p. 70.

⁶*ibid*, p. 81 f, pl. LXI, Similar reliefs of Yakshas are known also from Kanheri, Kondane, Nasik (cave 3), in Western India and Ruanveli and Jetavanarama *dagobas* in Ceylon; cf. Deshpande, M.N., *Ancient India*, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82.

⁷*ibid*, pp. 69, 82, quoting Pramoda Chandra.

ever, the image tallies more with the description of Nalakūbara as found in the *Vishṇudharmotara Purāṇa*.¹ The text describes him as holding a *ratnapātr* in hands. The grinning expression, dwarfish proportions and particularly the mode of wearing *dhoti* connect the image with the Sanchi tradition. Sanchi has supplied several images of Yakshas and Vrikshakās.² Some of the figures have dwarfish and grotesque features; this was a new development during this time. In the other images carved in relief, Yakshas stand gracefully like their Bharhut cousins; in modelling these are different from the preceding type of Sanchi-images. The Western Gate of Sanchi *Stupa* 1 has eight *bhāravāhaka* Yaksha figures, standing back to back, impressive in bulk and volume, but dwarfish in size.³ Their dress and ornaments are the same, although their patterns differ. Some Yakshas are shown grinning, while others have contorted features; all of them support the parts of *torana* above [Fig. 55]. The second type of Yaksha figure, as mentioned above, is seen in the relief of Padmapāṇi Yaksha [Fig. 56]. He stands under a tree, holding a lotus-*phalaka*.⁴ His dress and ornaments are tastefully shown. Another Yaksha-Śūlapāṇi is similarly shown standing beside a tree, holding a long spear in his left hand; the right hand is put gracefully on the waist. His dress and ornaments are different from those of the preceding figure. Of particular interest is his *padmahāra* worn loosely around his neck. His sword (or an arrow-case?) hangs on the trunk of the tree⁵ [Fig. 57]. Marshall has drawn attention to the belligerence in his posture of standing, and suggested that the Yaksha might be one of the *senāpatīs*.

It thus seems that Sanchi represents a continuation of Bharhut tradition in the form of these reliefs. On the other hand, in the dwarf and grotesque figures,⁶ it inaugurates a new type which was retained in the Kushāṇa period and merged in the Gaṇa figures of the Gupta period. Another Yaksha of this type has been reported from Nagarjunakonda. He is a pot-bellied dwarf standing with a *tribhanga*, holding his right hand in the *abhaya mudrā*; in the left hand he holds a bag of jewels(?) [Fig. 58]. In some Yaksha sculptures found near Bhubaneshwar, the Sanchi tradition of dwarf Yakshas repeats itself. Panigrahi discovered six such sculptures, four at Dumduma, and one each at Badgad and Panchgan.⁷ These villages are in the vicinity of Bhubaneshwar in Orissa. Of these, the two Dumduma statues are complete (ht. 5.7"). "Their frontal pose, bulged out bellies, bent knee, broad torques, heavy ear-ornaments, bracelets numbering more than one in each hand... are strikingly similar..." (to the, Sanchi Yaksha figures on the Western Gateway).⁸ Another Dumduma Yaksha statue is similarly carved; it has elaborate knots of *dhoti* at the back and also shows "a scarf with borders of beads worn in form of a cross with a rosette at the point of intersection"⁹ [Fig. 59]. The rest of the specimens are similar to these figures. The Dumduma figures have sockets on the head, which shows that functionally they formed a part of some other architectural piece.

The Mathura images of Yakshas and Yakshinis offer significant features of iconography as evolved during the Kushāṇa period. These sculptures have found their way into various foreign and Indian Museums.¹⁰ Yaksha images of the Mathura school offer a variety of poses and attributes, not noticed so far in many cases. Their grotesque features usually appear

¹III.73.12-13; the text is late no doubt, but so is the *Mahāmāyūrī*. The identification suggested here is only tentative.

²*Catalogue of the Museum of Sanchi*, figs. 30, 31, A25, A26, A43, A57.

³Marshall, J., *Monuments of Sanchi*, II, pl. LIV, LVII, LIX.

⁴*ibid.*, II, pl. L. a; also XXXVI, a, b.

⁵*ibid.*, II, pl. LXVI, a South pillar of the Western Gateway; cf. also, XXIII, LIIB, for other Yaksha for guardian figures.

⁶Marshall, *Monuments of Sanchi*, II, pl. LIV, LVII, LIX.

⁷Panigrahi, K.C., *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneshwar*, pp. 207-8, figs. 4-5.

⁸*ibid.*, p. 207.

⁹*ibid.*, pp. 207-8.

¹⁰Cowsaji Jahangir Collection, Bombay; Museums at Calcutta, New Delhi, Lucknow, Allahabad, Mathura and Patna; also Boston Museum; cf. *Catalogue of Indian Collection in the Museum of Fine Arts*, Boston, Sculpture nos. 21, 1701, 21. 1715 for Moggarapāṇi Yaksha.

prominently. Some images are nude: for instance, no. 453 (Ht. 10" × 1.8") showing a squatting pot-bellied Yaksha with conspicuous genitals. Some other similar figures are assigned to the Gupta Period (like no. 2500 Kumbhaṇḍa Yaksha; no. 783). A Kushāṇa Yaksha, nude but not so conspicuously, is known from Palikhera (no. 721). As carriers also Yakshas occur at Mathura. In the statuette no. 988 is shown a pot-bellied dwarf Yaksha seated in *lalitāsana* carrying a basket in the upraised hands. In one bas-relief no. 15.995 Moggarapāṇi Yaksha holding a *musala* in the left hand, with right hand in *abhaya mudrā*, is shown. The figure is entirely nude showing a drooping phallus. In another specimen, representing bust of Moggarapāṇi Yaksha, he is shown inside an arched *torana*. A mace is in his right hand; his left hand, akimbo, is kept on the belly. His grotesque and corpulent figure has a grinning face [Fig. 60]. Another statuette shows a grinning Yaksha holding a *modaka*(?) in his right hand. With his left hand, he is touching his left ear. [Fig. 61]. Both these statuettes are now in the State Museum, Lucknow. Two stone-heads may also be mentioned in this connection. Of these, no. 2559 is a grotesque male head (Ht. 5½") with moustaches and the other no. 2606 (Ht. 4") is a head with fierce features. A Yaksha bust now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta (numbered there as A. 25034), has bulging eyes and peculiar eyebrows, curves on forehead and extended moustaches. He is shown blowing a conch which he holds at his mouth with both the hands.¹ A bump at the head, representing crown (?) is also noticeable.

Mathura has provided a large number of railing-pillars portraying seductive figures of beautiful maidens. Agrawala identified in them some popular motifs of daily life or festivals.² But these identifications do not account for all the railing-pillars. In these figures maidens are usually depicted as standing on the crouching dwarfs of heavy built, for instance J.4, J.6, J.9; J.44 [Fig. 53] etc., or standing under different trees such as *Kadam̐ba* (J.275 of Lucknow Museum), or *Aśoka* (J.58, J.64, J.26, J.40, J.55, etc.) or *Aśvattha* (J.63.4) [Fig. 62]. These images have attracted the attention of most of the Scholars of Indian Art.³ A stark nudity is their predominant feature, and Coomaraswamy⁴ has observed that it was due to the nature of these deities symbolising 'the auspicious emblem of vegetative fertility.' A marked nudity in the sculptures, particularly Śalabhañjikā, seems to have started from Sanchi and Mathura and continued through various ages.⁵

By the manner in which they are depicted, nude and provocative, they fulfill the role of Mārakanyās as found in the *Lalitavistara*.⁶ By their exhibitionist stances and erotic suggestions, these maidens tried to spoil the *tapa* of the Buddha, but failed to do so. Māra occurs as a Yakkha,⁷ and Yakshīs, it is said, composed his retinue.⁸ The *Gilgit MSS.*⁹ refer to several Yakshīs of Mathura *viz.*, Alikā, Meghā, Vendā, Timisikā. It also refers to a nameless *devatā* of Mathura who appeared nude before the Buddha and was admonished.¹⁰ This tradition stands corroborated in the railing-pillars. The maidens' portrayal, sometimes as Vrikshakās, or as standing on a *naravāhana*, confirms them as Yakshīs and elaborates the Bharhut art tradition. In such images, sometimes the females are depicted holding some weapon [Fig. 62]; similar images are known from Pitalkhora in the second century BC, and illustrate the motif of attendant deities.

Some Yakshas who occur prominently in the Buddhist texts also find depiction in the Mathura

¹The description is based on personal verification. Agrawala calls it pre-Kushana; cf. *Indian Art*, pl. XCI and the description.

²*SIA*, pp. 155-59.

³Smith, V.A., *History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon*, p. 40; Rowland, B., *Art and Architecture of India*, p. 96.

⁴*HIA*, p. 64f.

⁵*ibid.*, p. 64.

⁶*supra*, pp. 74-75.

⁷*supra*, p. 11.

⁸*Mahāvastu*, II, pp. 311-12, 363.

⁹III, I, p. 15f.

¹⁰*ibid.*, p. 14.

art. One such Yaksha is Vajrapāṇi. This Yaksha of the Pali Buddhist texts appears as a mentor of the defaulters of the creed. Buddhaghosa in his *Sumangala Vilāsini*¹ identified him with Sakka. Vajrapāṇi is a Yaksha of great power²—*maharadhikā* (MMK, 503) and *Yakshendra* (I.25) in the *Manjuśrīmūlakalpa*. He is also one of the Yaksha-chiefs (MMK, III. 547). Various incantation-formula have been suggested for winning him over. In the same work (II.290f), it is said that strength and physical likeness of this great Yaksha could be attained by worshipping. We learn that his worship him, on completion, results in his appearance in the wake of storm and cloud-burst, attended by Vidyās, Gandharvas, Nāgas, Kinnaras, Yakshas, etc.³ The devotee is granted skill in various arts, royalty, and the power to disappear at will. He lives a long life and, after death, goes to Vajrabhavana. A *mudrā* named *vajrodbhavā* has also been mentioned in connection with this Yaksha,⁴ and oblations consisting of *aguru* scent have been prescribed.⁵

Coomaraswamy⁶ identified an image (E. 24) in the Mathura Museum as that of Vajrapāṇi Yaksha, but Agrawala has said that on account of the *Vajra* held in its right hand, the figure represents Indra.⁷ However, a statuette (no. 2501, ht. 10½") from Mathura shows a corpulent figure of Vajrapāṇi holding a double-headed *vajra*.

Mathura Museum has an interesting image (C. 3), which came from Maholi [Fig. 63]. It shows a seated, corpulent Yaksha having a huge-body and unusually bulging-out belly. The Yaksha's moustaches are prominently shown. He wears a torque and *kuṇḍalas*. His arms are broken, but from the upward thrust of the shoulders, it seems that these must have been upraised in order to support something (a bowl?) resting on the head. A verification from the image indicated the traces of some carving over the head. The image is erroneously described as that of Kubera. Similar other figures are known from Mathura (e.g., no. C. 6 and 2519), but identification of them as Kubera is far from certain. In light of the above observation, it is safer to regard the image as representing some *bhāravāhaka* Yaksha in line with the Sanchi tradition; the sitting-posture is however, an alteration from that tradition.⁸ The image is an impressive example showing a masterly handling of massive form; the modelling is perfect although the task of handling such an image was no doubt difficult.

Mathura also has other male figures shown standing with or without a tree in the background, holding *cauri* (J.126, Lucknow Museum), garland (J.270, same Museum) flower or fruit (B. 88; H. 81) but essentially they are very similar to each other in appearance, corpulence, ornaments and particularly the design of crown. Iconographically, these also seem to belong to the Yaksha-tradition and in them may be identified, Yaksha, princes or deities. Their exact identification is, however, not possible.

Since the preparation of the *Catalogue* of Mathura Museum, more Yaksha figures have been added to the collection there, in which many iconic characteristics are indicated. An Ahicchatrā terracotta (no. 4791) shows a pot-bellied Yaksha used as a toycart.⁹ No. 4662 is a stone fragment showing a grotesque Yaksha (Ht. 8½" × 6½") stretching the mouth with both the hands. The figure comes from Etawah.¹⁰ No. 4248 is an early Kushāna example representing the torso of probably a Yaksha (4' 6") wearing a torque. The sculpture nos. 4480 and 4549 are more important for details. The former shows a headless Yaksha seated on the head on animal, a lion; part of the

¹2.264; cf. also *Divyāvadāna*, p. 130; *MA*, II, 277f; *Ayakūta Jātaka*, III, 97.

²MMK, I, 36, 166.

³ibid, II.294.

⁴ibid, p. 503.

⁵ibid, p. 297.

⁶*Yakṣas*, I, pl. 15, fig. 2.

⁷Agrawala V.S., *Catalogue of Mathura Museum*, JUPHS, XXI, 1949, p. 145.

⁸A. Similar image, smaller in proportion, is in the National Museum, New Delhi.

⁹cf. Similar terracottas nos. 5100, 5105 from Kauśāmbi in the Mathura Museum.

¹⁰cf. Ahicchatrā Yaksha, *infra*, p. 125.

belly and the feet of the Yaksha are tied with a scarf. The latter shows a Yaksha as a *Vriksha-devatā* amidst leaves of a tree, holding a basket of flowers on his left hand.¹ A terracotta couchant Yaksha (no. 3564) in the Mathura Museum is shown blowing two long pipes held in the hands.

Amaravati² and Nagarjunakonda also have supplied interesting figures of Yakshas. A Nagarjunakonda pillar fragment (National Museum, New Delhi, no. P. 2542),³ contains four figures of Yakshas in various delectable poses. One stands supporting a huge *daṇḍa*, and hence, he may be called *Daṇḍapāṇi*. The other Yaksha sits holding his right hand in the *abhaya mudrā*, or is holding a rosary [Fig. 64]. The third panel has the Moggarapāṇi *Yaksha*, sitting like a *vīra*, while the Yaksha in the fourth panel is shown delightfully occupied in dancing [Fig. 65]. All these figures all well-conceived in form, and have grotesque features.

A unique image of a Yaksha is known from Ahicchatrā.⁴ The image [Fig. 66] is carved on a rectangular block of stone whose upper side must have served as a seat. The knees and the arms and legs of the Yaksha figure served as the legs of the seat. The Yaksha is pot-bellied, and is shown stretching the two ends of his mouth with the index-fingers of both his hands. His hair is arranged in three parts, two on the sides and one in the middle of his scalp; the remaining portions in between show the *sīmāntas*, partings. The big bulging eyes, teeth peeping through the mouth, the moustaches, large ears and deep navel are the other features worthy of note. He wears a *ghutannā*, and his ornaments consist of a garland around the neck and three bracelets. The image carries an inscription reading: *Bhikshusya Dhamaghoshasya dānam Pharagulavihārā Ahicchatrā*.

The Gandhara region has also supplied some Yakshiṇī images.⁵ Those of Hārītī and Pāncika from Gandhara have already been discussed. Among others, there is one figure of a Yakshiṇī standing under a palm tree, on a water-vessel carved with three steps.⁶ Another Yakshiṇī is shown with a lotus and a parakeet.⁷

The Kushāṇa sculptures of Yakshas and Yakshiṇīs are characterised by the development of such attributes as lotus, staff, cup, sitting or standing or crouching postures and smiling or fierce expressions. On the basis of the predominant characteristics, some individual types such as Kubera, Moggarapāṇi or Padmapāṇi Yakshas may also be identified. The Yaksha images in the Kushāṇa period are generally not provided with labels; in some cases, there are inscriptions which indicate that they were worshipped. The seated figures Yakshas in the Kushāṇa art of are comparatively less in number. Yakshas as grotesque-featured dwarfs are also known in this period. Thus it appears that the *mahākāya* concept of Yakshas had been discarded, and they had been reduced to the status of dwarf, losing their previous supreme iconographic importance.

POST-KUSHĀṆA IMAGES

Yaksha sculptures in the Gupta and mediaeval periods are not so numerous. Although Kubera was a popular subject for images during his time, other Yaksha and Yakshi representations are rare. One relief from Uchchahra, in Satna district, shows the bust and head of a pot-bellied Yaksha with elegant coiffure. In the image, he is shown hiding his mouth with his left hand. Another Yaksha figure, standing, identified as Ghantākaraṇa from the big pendulous bells in the ears, has been reported from Mathura. He is pot-bellied, nude, and holds a club in the right hand and a vase in the left. A third eye is also shown on his forehead which connects him with

¹All the numbers refer to the Register nos. of the different sculptures in the Mathura Museum; for another flower-collecting Yaksha (image no. 47, 111, Lucknow Museum).

²*infra*, p. 137.

³Longhurst, *MAI*, no. 54.

⁴Bajpai, *JUPHS*, XXIV-XXV, 1951-52, pp. 193-95.

⁵cf. Ingholt, H., *Gandharan Art in Pakistan*, nos. 359, to 364.

⁶*ibid*, no. 359.

⁷*ibid*, no. 362.

a Gaṇā of Śiva of the same name¹ [Fig. 67]. In the Gupta art, Yakshas either appear as decorative motifs² or in the form of Gaṇās, the story of whose origin and association with Śiva and Gaṇeśa makes them an independent image group. The Pramathas or Ganas were obviously the image types that were derived from the early Yaksha images. These derivations are confirmed by their attributes such as staff, pot-belly,³ and various standing or sitting poses.⁴ The nudity with conspicuous genitals also continued to the Gupta period in the Yaksha images.⁵ But the composite type of figures disappeared. A comparatively small number of Yaksha figures, as also their use as decorative motifs, indicate that they had lost their independent status and merged in the personalities of greater cult gods such as Śiva, Gaṇeśa, the Buddha and Bodhisattvas in the Kushāna and Gupta periods. Therefore, their iconography has not been described in the contemporary iconographic texts which otherwise contain copious material about the other cult gods.

However, that Yakshas and Yakshiṇīs were not entirely eliminated is proved by the emergence of 24 Yaksha *Upāsakas* and Yakshiṇī *Śāsanadevatās* of the different Jain Tirthankaras. Other images of Yakshas and Yakshiṇīs are also known in the mediaeval times. The Museum at Sanchi contains a figure of a demoniac Yaksha (no. A.122) with moustaches, curly hair, beard and long canine teeth. The tongue of the Yaksha is pressed between his lips, and in the ear-lobes he wears large round buttons. Several Yakshiṇī figures from Ghusai, Gyaraspur, Suhania etc. from the Madhya Bharat region are preserved in the Gwalior Museum.⁶ One of the most interesting Yakshiṇī images in the Gwalior Museum comes from Gyaraspur (no. 5/72). The figure in relief carelessly wears a short printed garment around her hips with tassel dropping from it between her thighs. Her hair is beautifully done up at the back. The head is decorated with beaded strings (*mauktika jāla*)⁷ in loops. She wears round *kuṇḍalas* and a close-fitting necklace in three strands containing different decorative devices. From the third, lowest strand drops a pendant between her breasts, dangling down to the left part of her waist. Another loose necklace covers her breasts. The arms, and the legs (below the knees) are broken. The figure wears a smile [Fig. 68]. Such figures with hands on the robe in the act of disrobing (or wearing such attire) are known from the Kushāna art of Mathura also (for example, railing pillars nos. J.26 and J.71).

A large number of Jain Yaksha and Yakshiṇī images are known from different parts of India, particularly Western, Southern and Central India.⁸ The antiquity of these images may go back to 8th century AD. It is significant that among them Yakshiṇīs are more numerous. Also, various Brahmanical cult deities, like Śiva, Kārttikeya, Durgā, Brahmā and Manasā may be comprehended in many of the Jain demi-gods such as Gomukha, Brahmā, Īśvara, Garuda, Kubera, Varuna, Ambikā and Padmāvati.⁹

In the Central Indian iconography of these demi-gods, Deogarh (Jhansi distt.), Pathari (Vidisha distt.), Simhapur (Shahdol distt.), Tripuri and Sohagpur (Jabalpur distt.), are important. Deogarh

¹cf. *Harivaṁśa Purāṇa*; Bhavishya Parva, Chs. 80-83.

²For such Yakshas at Sanchi Museum; cf. *Catalogue of Museum of Archaeology at Sanchi*, nos. A96 Pl. XI, (p. 32f.) of Gupta period; also nos. A115, p. 35, 142, 148, etc., which are early mediaeval.

³cf. Mathura Museum stone fragment no. 4725 of 6th-7th century AD, *Consolidated Report of Archaeological Museum, Mathura*, Lucknow, 1961, p. 59.

⁴For such Pramatha and Gana figures from M.P.; cf. Bajpai, K.D., *Lalit Kala*, no. 10, pp. 21-24 and figs. 1-7; also Banerji, R.D., The temple of Shiva at Bhumra, *MAI*, no. 16, pls. IX, a, b, c X.

⁵Mathura Museum Statutes no. 2500 and 783.

⁶cf. nos. 18/9; 11/3; 18/1; and 17/123, this last figure is a bust of a Yakshiṇī, holding the mango fruit with leaves which might help in identifying her with Ambikā, although lion or children are not shown. 17/128, Yakshiṇī under the banana plant.

⁷*Meghadūta*, II.9. with Mallinātha's commentary as *Śironihita mauktikasara*; cf. also *Raghuvamśa*, XVII.23., *Muktāguṇo-nada antargata Śrijamaull*.

⁸cf. Sankalia, H.D., *A Volume of Indian and Iranian Studies*, pp. 335ff; Shah, U.P., *Studies in Jain Art*; *BPWM*, 3, pp. 63-65, 70; Desai, P.B. *Jainism in South India*, *JIH*, Vol. 35, 1957, pp. 245ff; Bhattacharya, B.C. *Jaina Iconography*, Pl. XXII-XXIV, for Navamuni; Barabhuji and Trishula Caves in Orissa.

⁹*DHI*, pp. 562ff.

alone, as an important centre of Jain art, has yielded more than two dozen such sculptures in round or in relief. The place is scattered with some thirty one Jain temples¹ and, on the temple no. 12, twenty Yakshiņis along with their Jinas have been represented. They are all inscribed. The following Yakshiņis have been identified.²

Four-armed Cakreśvarī (Jina Rishabha); two-armed Saraswatī (Jina Abhinandana); Sulocanā (Jina Padmaprabha); Sumālinī (Candraprabha); two-armed Bahurūpī (Pushpadanta); four-armed Śrīyadevī (Śītala); two-armed standing Vahni (Śreyāmsanātha); two-armed Abhogarohiņī (Vāsū-pujya); two-armed Sulakshaņā (Vimala); two-armed Anantaviryā (Ananta); two-armed Surakshitā (Dharma); two-armed Śrīyadevī and similar Anantavīryā (with Jina Śānti); four-armed Arakara-bhi(?) Kunthu); two-armed Tārādevī (Ara); two more unnamed Yakshiņis (Munisuvrata and Nimi) and four-armed (Padmāvati, Vardhamāna).³

On comparison of these names with the other lists,⁴ it appears that these Yakshinis probably present a local Central Indian tradition different from both Digambara and Śvetāmbara tradition. As far as their dating is concerned, Sankalia regards them to be of 11th century⁵ AD although, according to him, some of these like Surakshitā and Tārādevī may belong to even C. 600 AD.⁶ The difference of names in this list may also indicate that before the standardisation of the names of Yakshiņis, many names were taken into account earlier, but they could not obtain acceptance and eventually these gave way to fresh names. As regards the Deogarh reliefs, the majority of these are shown standing. They are usually two-armed, and their *vāhanas* have not been always shown.

From Deogarh temple no. 19, two more images of Yakshis have been reported.⁷ One represents Cakreśvarī, eighteen-armed, holding rosary, noose, flowers, wheel, and mirror besides other indistinct objects. She is shown in *lalitāsana* on the back of a sitting Garuda figure. Around her on the stele, six female and two male figures, probably Yakshiņis and Yakshas, have been carved [Fig. 69]. Another Yakshi, probably Mālinī or Sumālinī, is shown with a bull mount. She is eight-armed, with all her arms except lower left, broken. The *parikara*, 'stele,' of the image is amply decorated [Fig. 70].

Khajuraho, another centre of art, has yielded many Yaksha and Yakshī figures. Among these, an image of Vijaya holding *gada* and *cakra*, now in the Jardine Museum, may be mentioned.⁸ Gomukha Yaksha appears rather prominently on the four corners of the Ādināth temple, as a four-handed standing figure holding various *ayudhas* and wearing ornaments and *yajnopavīta*. This Yaksha, who was the *upāsaka* of Ādinātha and who had Cakreśvarī as his consort, appears often in the Jain iconography. One of his images is known from Gandharawal of Dewas district in Madhya Pradesh.⁹ In the image he appears as a bull-faced, corpulent deity, holding club and lotuses in the different hands [Fig. 71]. In an image from Hathmo in the Jodhpur district, Rajasthan, a four-armed Gomukha is shown seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus-seat. In his two upper hands and the lower left hand he holds a *parasu*, *nāga*, and citrus, respectively; his lower right hand is in the *abhaya mudra*. A male attendant is shown towards his right [Fig. 72].¹⁰ The Jain icono-

¹Annual Progress Report of Hindu and Buddhist Monuments, Northern Circle, 1918, pp. 8-9.

²cf. VS, pp. 164ff. where some similar names of the Jain Vidyādevīs have been given.

³Sankalia, H.D., DCB, I, March, 1940, pp. 157-68.

⁴supra, p. 49f; and Appendix II.

⁵Sankalia, H.D., DCB, I, p. 163.

⁶ibid, p. 163, fig. 8 and 9 respectively; Sankalia thinks that these Yakshinis may belong to the Svetāmbara sect of Jains. For similar Yakshis at Badami, and Gujarat. cf. Sankalia, H.D., DCB, March, 1940, pp. 185-88.

⁷ASI, AR, 1917-18, Part I, pl. IIb and c.

⁸Agrawala, Urmila, Khajuraho Sculptures, p. 108f; quoting Bhattacharya, Jaina Iconography, pp. 90-119.

⁹Thakore, S.R., Catalogue, p. 46.

¹⁰Several Gomukha images are deposited in the Lucknow State Museum, e.g. nos. 56-418, 56-419 (Mirzapur, shown with his consort Cakreś-varī); G. 385, details similar, Bhagadeva, Mirzapur; the antiquity of this Yakshas figure goes back to Kushāna period in the Mathura sculptures. In one image (no. J.83, Lucknow Museum) Gomukha stands as an attendant, to the top-right part of the stele of a Tirthankara image, which is datable to Kushāna period.

graphy also portrayed the *ashtavasus* like Gomukha, bull-faced. Cakreśvarī and Gomukha appear to have been a popular pair. A twelve-armed image of Cakreśvarī with Gomukha is known from Sonda in Karnataka.¹ Recently a bronze image of Rishabhanātha with this Yaksha pair has been acquired by Nagpur Museum,² from Rajnapur-Khinakhini. A twelve armed figure of Cakreśvarī appears on the lintel of the entrance to the Pārśvanāth temple of Khajuraho. On the corners of the entrance other Yakshiṇī figures are also noticeable. In the ubiquitous band of sculptures on the exterior of this temple, Cakreśvarī, Gomukha, Dharaṇendra and Padmāvati and Ambikā may be identified. Padmāvati also appears in the *mandapa* of the Śāntināth temple along with Dharaṇendra seated under a tree with Tirthankara. The Yakshi holds a child. Padmāvati's image is also found embedded in a *bāvali* behind the Śāntināth temple. She holds a child, a bunch of mangoes, noose and a *pustaka* in her four hands. She occurs also on the left side of the exterior of the Ādināth temple.³ Siddhāyikā Yakshī appears on the main sanctum of the Śāntināth temple. The local Museum at Khajuraho contains a broken image which holds in the only extant hand a noose (*Kamala?*) her *vāhana* is a horse; on the basis of this *vāhana* she may be identified with *Monovegā* of *Aparajitapriccha* (ch. 221, verse 20)⁴ or with *Gāndhārī* of *Vāstusūtra* (p. 188). On the exterior of the Ādināth temple, there is an eight-armed goddess with a swan *vāhana* which finds mention in texts in case of at least four Yakshiṇīs, viz., Vajraśrīṅkhālā, Jvālāmālinī, Anantamatī and Gāndhārī. But it is not possible to decide which one is represented in the figure.⁵ An image of Kandarpā as Mānasī has also been identified on the left exterior of Ādināth temple. She holds in some of her eight hands, *mushtika*, dagger, bow, mace and pitcher. One hand is in the *abhaya mudrā*.

The Dhubela Museum in Madhya Pradesh contains the images of Cakreśvarī, Gomedha, Ambikā and Gomedha. In an architectural piece (no. 599), there is carved a four-armed seated figure of Gomukha Yaksha with the ears and horns of a bull, holding a cup and a pitcher in the extant right hands. To the left of this relief, there is another similar figure with same attributes with an addition of a rosary in the lower right hand. Some other icons in the Museum are also important. The Yakshi Cakreśvarī, (no. 547), four armed, holding *cakra* in both her upper hands, rosary in the lower right and flower in the lower left hand—is a good specimen. She is riding on a Garuda.⁷

Ambikā also finds a prominent place. In one of her images (no. 126), she is shown with her children and her consort; the latter is given an insignificant status on the *parikara*. In another type of her images, she is shown sitting with her consort under a tree along with her presiding deity (82, 227, 158)⁸ All these Dhubela Museum Yakshīs seem to have come from Rewa, or Sinhapur in Shahdol district. Padmāvati Yakshī is known from Sohagpur.⁹

A stele from Tripuri¹⁰ displays several deities with Padmāvati, serpent-hooded, occupying the central niche. The extreme corners are occupied by Yaksha figures. To the right of Padmāvati, is probably Kalika or Vajraśrīṅkhālā, four-armed, holding a lotus, nāga and a *ghaṭa*; to Padmā-

¹Desai, P.B., *Jainism in South India*, p. 131.

²*Anekānta*, XV, 2, p. 86.

³Agrawala, U., op. cit., p. 108.

⁴She has been variously identified as Kandarpā or Mānasī on the basis of the noose (or lotus) held in her hand. cf. Agrawala, U., op. cit., p. 109 note 1. But these two attributes are very common, on the other hand, horse, which is not so common, may help in identifying her.

⁵For certain other views; cf. Agrawala, U., op. cit., p. 109, note 2.

⁶ibid, p. 109, note 3.

⁷Another image of Cakreśvarī, no. 184 is similar; her two lower hands are broken.

⁸For another Ambikā Yakshī image from Sohagpur, cf. Banerji, R.D., *MAI*, Vol. 23, pl. XLI, 1. Padmāvati has also been illustrated here in pl. XLI.2.

⁹*MAI*, no. 23, pl. XLI, fig. 2.

¹⁰Bajpai, K.D., Two sculptures from Tripuri, *Bulletin of Ancient Indian History and Archaeology*, no. 1, 1967, p. 74.

vatī's left is another Yakshī, All the Yakshī figures are four-armed and have their natural right hands in the *abhaya mudrā* [Fig. 73]. Another four-armed image of Padmāvati is known from Sarangapur (Raigarh distt., M. P.). Her natural right hand is in the *varada mudra*, the rest of her arms are broken. Pārśvanātha, her presiding Jina is shown seated on her serpent hood [Fig. 74].

Among the prominent Yakshiņīs of South India, Jvālāmālīnī, Padmāvati, Cakreśvarī and Siddhāyikā may be noted.¹ Particularly interesting are the two images of Siddhāyikā as identified by Desai² from Settīpodavu, near Kilakudi in Madura taluk of Tamilnad. In them her terrifying and benevolent forms have been indicated. In one of the sculptures in a group of images there, she is represented as a female warrior seated on a lion, holding a drawn bow and arrow in the right and left hands. Her lion is shown grappling with an elephant ridden by a male warrior. In another image, her placid representation, she sits on a pedestal in *lalitāsana* holding a fruit in the raised right hand, while her left hand rests in her lap. This Yakshiņī enjoyed a fairly prominent status in Tamilnad, which is proved by an inscription dedicated to her. This belongs to 8th century AD and is engraved in a cave on Pañcapāṇḍavamalai hills in the North Arcot. It states that 'some Naranan caused to be incised the image of *Ponniyakkīyār*, the golden Yakshī,' probably Siddhāyikā. Inside the cave there is also an image of two-handed Siddhāyikā.³

In the Western Indian School of painting various such themes have been recognised, which further indicates the important status of these demi-gods.⁴ Some of these Yakshiņīs, particularly Cakreśvarī⁵ and Jvālāmālīnī, found their exclusive worshippers in the South, where a Tāntric cult, with Elācarya as its founder, developed around Jvālāmālīnī, which is indicated by the Tāntric work *Jvālamālīnikalpa*.⁶ In an epigraph from Sedam, (Hyderabad State) are indicated mystic rites for her worship by the *mahājanas* of that place.⁷ Another inscription⁸ refers to the injunction of taking out her image in procession on the occasion of service of Helācarya. Desai has indicated that the worship of another Yakshī, Siddhāyikā, was also very popular.⁹ Padmāvati was another Yakshī who held an important status and received worship from the royal families and aristocracy, and in south India, her name is often found in the epigraphs from 10th century AD.¹⁰ Some of these Yakshiņīs even acquired the status of Jain Vidyādevīs.¹¹ It is also significant that in the early Yaksha iconography a pair is rarely encountered, while in the Jain system of popular gods as well as their iconography, that is common.

*Ambikā*¹²

Among all the Jain *Śāsanadevatās*, she is most prominent. She is the Yakshiņī of the twenty second Jain Tīrthankara Neminātha, although in sculptures sometimes she is shown with Ādinātha and Pārśvanātha.¹³ Her story is preserved in certain works¹⁴ and her images and traditions of worship are described both in Digaṃbara and Śvetāmbara Jain works. According to

¹Desai, P.B., *Jainism in South India*, pp. 37, 39, 58, 65, 69, 90, 131-32, etc.

²ibid., pp. 58ff.

³Desai, P.B., op. cit., p. 39.

⁴cf. Moti Chandra, *Jain Miniature Paintings of Western India*, figs. 33, 34, 36, 41, 46; also Shah, U.P., *Studies in Jaina Art*; Majumdar, M.R., *JUPHS*, XXIII, Pt. 1-2, pp. 218-27.

⁵*Sripāla Kathā*, pp. 32f, 40f.

⁶*Ep. Ind.*, XXIX, p. 203; cf. Desai, P.B., op. cit., pp. 47, 74ff, 172.

⁷*Ep. Ind.*, XXIX, p. 203.

⁸ibid., p. 201 also *Ep. Ind.*, IV, pp. 136-37.

⁹Desai, P.B., op. cit., under *Siddhāyikā*.

¹⁰ibid., pp. 171ff.

¹¹Bhattacharya, B.C., *Malaviya Commemoration Volume*, Benaras, 1932.

¹²For literature on her cf. Shah, U.P., *Iconography of Ambikā*, *Bombay University Journal*, September, 1940, pp. 147ff; Agrawala, R.C., *IHQ*, Vol. 32, no. 4, pp. 434ff; Desai, P.B., *JIH*, Vol. 35, 1937, p. 245; also *Jainism in South India* by the same author.

¹³Shah, U.P., op. cit., p. 165, fig. 33 and 34.

¹⁴*Vividhatīrthakalpa*, pp. 107-8.

her legend in the *Vividhatīrthakalpa* (pp. 107-8), she fed the food prepared for a *Śrāddha* to a Jain monk breaking his fast. Being afraid of incurring the wrath of her husband for this act, she fled from her house. The act brought good luck to her and her family; but frightened by the approach of her husband, she jumped into a well, and died with her two sons, Siddha and Buddha. Some variations in the legend are also noticeable. According to another version, she belonged to Koḍināra in Mahārāshtra or Girinagara; her name is also given as Agnilā, and her sons are named Śubhankara and Prabhankara. As a result of a good act in feeding a Jain monk, she was reborn as Kūshmāṇḍī, and accepted as a Yakshiṇī of Neminātha. Her husband, who had committed suicide, was reborn as a loin; in the iconography, he seems to figure as her *vāhana*.¹

This Yakshiṇī enjoyed a fairly wide worship. Ujjayanta, Raivatakagiri, Hastināpur, Dhimpurī, Ahicchatrā, Mathura and Pratishṭhāna were some of the places which had her temples, according to Jinaprabha Sūri.² Her images have been reported from different regions from all over India. It seems that different forms of her worship, including Tantric form,³ were prevalent.

U.P. Shah has exhaustively treated the subject of her legend and iconography, and his conclusions may be summed up here. Images of this Jain-goddess may be divided into three groups according to the number of arms they bear, namely, (a) two-armed (b) four-armed and (c) having more than four arms. These are further sub-divisible in the Digambara and Śvetāmbara classes. There may be variations in other forms of Ambika, but lion is invariably her *vāhana*, and her complexion is golden.⁴ Mention is made of her two-armed variety of images in several *dhyānas*, namely, the *Urjjayantā-stava* (V.13), the *Caturvīṃśatikā* of Bappabhaṭṭi, the *Ambikāshṭaka* of Ambā Prasād, the *Pratishṭhā Sāroddhāra* of Pandit Āsādhara and the *Pratishṭhātilaka* of Nemi-chandra. And her images and figures related to these *dhyānas* have been found abundantly.⁵

It seems that the two-armed variety of her images provided a basic model for those of her images with four-arms. In such cases, she has been conceived as holding sword, *cakra*, *āmramañjarī*, citron, noose and goad. The different works giving her *dhyana* in this connection are as follows: the *Trīśaṣṭīśalākāpuruṣa Carita*, the *Pravacanasāroddhāra*, the *Vividhatīrthakalpa*, *Ācāradīnakara*, and the manuscript of *Rūpavatāra Nirvānakalika*.⁶

Her eight-armed forms have also figured in different *dhyānas*⁷ but of great interest is her terrifying form described in the *Ambikā-ṣaṭkaḥ* (Bhairava Padmāvati Kalpa),⁸ in which she is described as *Bhīmanādī*, *Caṇḍikā*, *Caṇḍarūpā*, *Aghorā* and destroyer of the whole of existence. This form of the goddess has been illustrated in an image from Vimala Saha temple at Mt. Abu.⁹

Among some of her important images, the following may be noted:

Ambikā from Patiyān Dāi (Distt. Satna, Allahabad Museum). She is shown standing, flanked by her children. A lion is shown towards her right. Her four hands are all broken. She wears the usual dress and ornaments. On the different sections of the stele, the other twentythree Yakshiṇīs have been shown along with their inscribed names¹⁰ [Fig. 75]. Several other images of this Yakshi are known from other places. In an image now in the Museum at Khajuraho, she is standing, four-handed, with two hands broken and the other two holding uncertain objects. The

¹Shah, U.P., *BUJ*, September, 1940, pp. 147ff.

²ibid.

³*Ambikādevī-Kalpa* of Śubhacandra in MSS. cf. Shah, U.P., op. cit., p. 149.

⁴Shah, U.P., op. cit., p. 149.

⁵ibid, pp. 149ff; for images pp. 152ff; also T.N. Ramchandran's classification. He refers to three *dhyānas* of Ambika—(i) in the laudatory verse recited in Canarese by the temple priest at Jina Kānchi; (ii) in palmleaf MSS. in possession of the temple-priest of the same place (iii) in some more images such as that of Dharmādevī referred to as the Yakshiṇī in place of Ambikā. cf. *Tiruparutikunram and its Temples*, p. 209, quoted by Shah.

⁶Shah, U.P., op. cit., pp. 158ff.

⁷ibid, p. 161.

⁸ibid, p. 162.

⁹ibid, fig. 25.

¹⁰supra, p. 150.

mangoes are shown at both the sides of her head on the stele. A lion is on the pedestal. In the Dhubela Museum, in Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh, there is an image showing Gomedha and Ambikā. Both are seated under a tree, with their presiding deity Neminātha. Ambikā holds a child in her left lap. On the pedestal, five devotees have been shown, two for Gomedha and three for Ambikā.

At Mathura, in one of her early images (no. D, 7) she figures as the principal deity surrounded by Vishnu, Kuvera, Balarāma and Ganēśa.¹ At Khajuraho, her images are also found decorating the outer walls of the Pārśvanāth temple and the doorjamb of the Ādinātha temple. In the latter, she is sitting on a lion, holding mangoes in one hand and a suckling child in the other.

The Yaksha pantheon, thus, was quite large. At the same time, it consisted of different hierarchical positions. Most prolific information about them seems to come from Buddhist sources regarding early phase of Yaksha-worship and from the Jain sources about the later phase. The cult may have waxed and waned due to the inroads of the other powerful religious systems, but it never lost its popularity; it is clear that if the old Yakshas were converted or eliminated, the new Yakshas joined in the ranks.

¹ Agrawala, V.S., Some Brahmanical deities in Jaina Religious Art, *Jaina Antiquary*, March, 1938, pp. 89-92 for some other similar images.

Allied Motifs

Animal-Faced Figures

IN the early art related to Yakshas, composite motifs are found rather abundantly. In all probability, such motifs were meant for illustrating the monstrosity of Yakshas. They are in consonance with the belief that Yakshas could assume any form at will. They also indicate the totemistic origins of the Yakshas, if Yakshas are to be regarded as one of the ancient forgotten tribes. Just as the ancestor-worship, expressed by various rebirth-stories regarding Yakshas, enriched the Yaksha-cult, the totemistic worship also might have contributed towards the same end.

In Indian art, various animal-headed cult-deities are known, for instance, Naigamesha, Ajā, Gaṇesa, Nrisimha and Varāha; but the earliest sculptures in this art-tradition belong to Yakshas. In course of time, such representations were accepted in the iconography. The *Aparājitapricchā* (233. 4-6) prescribes the combinations of animals and birds, humans and animals or humans and birds, for depiction in art.

A much earlier text, the *Lalitavistara* has more vivid and elaborate details of the countless deformities concerning the Māraputras.¹ Among these Māraputras, an explicit reference to Yakshas is also found. Some of the features occur in the Yaksha figures of the second century AD, and these may be related to the contemporary tradition as found in the *Lalitavistara*. The text says that the Māraputras had ears like those of donkey, elephant, lion and other animals; that they had fierce faces, fearful teeth, long tongue, black and angry eyes; their bodies were of different hues, e.g., flaming yellow, black, blue, or blood red. Some of the Māraputras looked emaciated, while others were pot-bellied. Some of them were short of their limbs, and the faces of some resembled those of jackal, donkey, bull, camel, buffalo, *Śarabha* and other animals. Some Māraputras had a single head, others had many; some had the feet above and the head below; their hair were like those of ass, boar, goat, cat, monkey and the like; there were some Māraputras who had hair like needles. Some of them had a composite body (*anya mukhāni ca anya śarīrā*). The description covers a large number of deformities while presenting theri-anthropomorphic types conceived in relation to the Māraputras who included Yakshas also.

The motif of theri-anthropomorphic Yakshas came into existence in the second century BC and is seen at Bharhut,² Bodhgaya,³ and Pitalkhora.⁴ Mathura region has also provided similar figures of the same period. One such representation on a medallion of a railing-pillar shows a human head attached to the body of a frog [Fig. 76]. The corresponding other side of the pillar carries the depiction of a lotus flower, which indicates that both these representations were meant for decorative purpose. This piece is in the State Museum, Lucknow. Another medallion in the Mathura Museum, portrays a nude Vyāla-Yaksha, upper half human and lower half serpent.

¹*Lalitavistara*, p. 223f.

²*CII*, II, Part, II, pl. XXVII (Gokarṇa Yaksha).

³Barua, B.M., *Gaya and Buddhagaya*, II, fig. 45 (Gokarṇa Yaksha).

⁴*Ancient India*, 15, pl. XLIX, A.

His ears are like those of a bull. Serpents' mouth is unrealistic [Fig. 77]. A cross-bar (no. 3513) in the Mathura Museum is carved with the motif of Gokarṇa Yaksha on both the sides.¹ The State Museum, Lucknow, however, has a statuette, representing a figure of a two-armed Gomukha Yaksha, with his right hand in the *abhaya mudrā* and the left hand, akimbo, kept on the waist. The horns (partly broken), big eyes and snout with tongue are clear in the figure [Fig. 78]. The image, stylistically, seems to belong to the Kushāṇa period. In another relief at Mathura (no. 323 Saptarshi mound) a fish-tailed Gokarṇa Yaksha finds portrayal and the nudity here is concealed by a fig-leaf.²

An image of Gomukha Yaksha from Tumain is preserved in the Gwalior Museum, and belongs to circa 7th century AD. The lower part and the right hand of the image are broken. His bull-face is prominent, and a special feature of the figure is the bell hanging from his neck. Moti Chandra has suggested its identification with Ghaṇṭika Yaksha³ [Fig. 79].

Elephant-headed male and female Yakshas are also known. One such figure had been mentioned by Coomaraswamy.⁴ Another representation, of the Kushana period (Mathura Museum bas-relief no. 2335), contains in a band, five such figures.⁵ The Museum has recently acquired an elephant-headed figure which has on the reverse a linesketch of a grinning Yaksha.⁶ The ancient site of Rairh (near Jaipur) has yielded a small terracotta plaque with an elephant faced Yakshiṇī.⁷

Some donkey-faced figures are also known. But as they are late, their Yaksha-connections are not well-established.⁸ A Yaksha bearing a personal name Gardabha is known from the *Gilgit MSS* (III, 1, p. 15). Another Yakkha, Khara, is known from the *Samyutta Nikāya* (I.207). Khara, as a Rākshasa chief, is also mentioned in the *Rāmāyaṇa* (III.21-22). A Mathura Museum fragment (no. 1254) shows the bust of a *varāha*-faced Yaksha holding a long-necked bottle in the right hand, and a basket containing a garland in the left. The figure is carved in round, and may refer to the Sūkara Peta mentioned in the *Petavatthu Commentary*.⁹

Mathura has also provided a head of Meshasṛiṅga Yaksha (Mathura Museum no. 157)¹⁰ [Fig. 80]. Similar depictions in terracotta are known from Kausāmbī also. These terracotta figurines are deposited in the Allahabad Museum (nos. K. 4232, K. 4944). In some other depictions, although the stress is found on portraying queer types of ears, animal types do not occur in them. One such example, represents a Śankukarna Yaksha,¹¹ while the other shows a Ghaṇṭakarṇa Yaksha.¹²

The figures of horse-headed Yakshas and Yakshīs are quite common in the early art. The literary accounts support such depiction. The *Nāyādharmakahā*¹³ refers to a Selaga (Sanskrit-Śailaka) Yaksha who assumed the form of a horse and tried to save two brothers from the evil

¹Bajpai, K.D; *JIM*, IV, 1950, p. 91. pl. III (c); cf. also Sivaramamurti, C., *Amaravati Sculptures*, pl. XVII.4.

²Another relief of Gokarṇa Yaksha from Mathura is now in the Lucknow Museum, no. 55.18., A terracotta figurine in the Allahabad Museum (no. 3669, Kausambi), carried a similar depiction. For a fish-tailed Yaksha, see object no. 55.18 and 56.395, Lucknow Museum.

³*BPWM*, III, p. 47.

⁴*Yakṣas*, I, pl. 23, fig. 1.

⁵Mathura Museum Catalogue, *JUPHS*, XXIII, 1950, p. 140.

⁶We were able to see the object through the courtesy of the Curator. The figure may reflect the popular belief that Yaksha could assume any form at will.

⁷Agrawala, R.C., *Bharatiya Vidya*, XX-XXI, pp. 303ff.

⁸On the basement of the remains of a Gupta temple preserved inside an enclosure at Eran (Distt. Saṅar, M.P.), some Krishna-*tilā* panels are carved. In two such panels, a donkey-faced demon is shown. They represent either a Yaksha or Dhenuka.

⁹*Pv.*, p. 9f.; cf. also *Dh.A.*, II.300f; *DA*, p. 656.

¹⁰Agrawala, V.S., *Handbook of Sculptures* (Mathura Museum), pl. XXII, fig. 26; cf. also Lucknow Museum image no. J. 526 having a horned-Yaksha at the bottom.

¹¹Joshi, N.P., *Mathura Art*, fig. 20.

¹²*supra*, pp. 125-26.

¹³*IX*, p. 127.

designs of an ogress. The myth of a horse-faced Yakshī is older and finds mention in the *Jātakas*.¹ The *Padakusalamānava Jātaka* has preserved the myth in some detail. It relates that the queen of a Benaras king swore a false oath, and became a horse-faced Yakkhī. As a Yakkhī she served Vessavana, and as a reward for her services she obtained his permission to prey upon those human-beings who fell within her sphere of influence. She once caught a rich and handsome Brahmin, and made him her husband. The Bodhisattva was later born to her. She was eventually deserted both by her husband and son.² Her habitat, it is said, was on an island where she had caught the Brahmin after a shipwreck. On this evidence, she may be identified with the *valavāmukha* Yakshīnī of the *Mahāvamsa*.³ Her name in the work is Cetiya, and she lived in the Dhumarakkha mountain near Tumbariyangana in Ceylon. According to the *Mahāvamsaṭṭikā*,⁴ she was the wife of Yakkha Jutindhara. This Yakkhini eventually proved to be of great help to a prince who rode with her into battle against the Yakkhas of Ceylon.

This Yakkhini appears in the early Indian art as a very popular motif, represented at Pātali-putra, Sanchi, Mathura, and several other places. According to Banerjea, she is also to be found on the coins of Agathocles and Pantaleon, the Indo-Greek kings, where she is usually identified as "dancing-girl" wearing oriental trousers.⁵ One of the most conspicuous representations of this Yakshīnī is at Bodhagaya, where, in three scenes, the different phases of the story of the *Padakusalamānava Jātaka* are illustrated.

In the first panel the Yakkhī is holding the hand of a man shown emerging from the forest in a hill-tract. The hill is suggested by the square blocks of stones strewn all around. A tree is shown behind the male figure. The Yakshī is looking at the male. In the second panel they are shown engaged in a game of dice, with the *caupadha* spread in their front. The third panel, depicts the figures of the couple with their Bodhisattva child. The figures are broken, but from what remains, it is clear that the man is fondling the Yakkhī, who stands in the pose of a *Śalabhāñjikā*. Their child is shown playing, towards the left bottom of the panel.⁶

Some of the other representations of Aśvamukhī Yakshīnī are as follows:

1. Mathura Museum fragment of a railing pilaster (no. 191, Ht. 2'). cut in three facets on the front side. The central medallion shows this Yakshīnī, standing and touching the shoulder of a young man, standing by her side [Fig. 81]. He is in the pose of entering into conversation with her.
(Dated in 1st century BC by Agrawala on the basis of chamfered edges of pilaster and heavy turban of the male figure.⁷)
2. On the medallion of the railing of Stūpa II at Sanchi. She is shown carrying her child towards her left.⁸
3. Lucknow Museum relief no. B.208, from Mathura. She is shown in the representation of a scene of *Indāsala guhā*.
4. A similar medallion on a railing pillar from Pataliputra, now in the Calcutta Museum. Early second century BC.⁹
5. Perhaps also at Ajanta cave, no. XVII.¹⁰

¹*Padakusalamānava Jātaka*, III.432; *Kunāla Jātaka*, V.222.

²*ibid.*

³X.53.

⁴p. 289.

⁵Banerjea, J.N., *DHI*, p. 111, pl. IX, fig. 7.

⁶Barua, B.M., *Gaya and Buddhagaya*, figs. 66 a, b, c.

⁷Agrawala, *Catalogue*, p. 34.

⁸Marshall, J., *Monuments of Sanchi*, III, pl. XC. 86b also pl. XCVI.3.

⁹Coomaraswamy, I, p. 40 (description of pl. 12 fig. 1); also Waddell, *Report on Excavations at Pataliputra*, Calcutta, 1903.

¹⁰Coomaraswamy, I, p. 10 note 2 quoting Griffith, pl. 142b.

6. Mandora, Rajasthan: A Gupta period Krishnalilā panel from this place shows the Mt. Govardhana. On it, among the wild beasts, a figure is carved which has been identified with the *Aśvamukhī Yakshī*.¹

Such frequent occurrences of this *Yakshīnī* show her great popularity in iconic tradition.

Scenes with Yaksha Folklore

In the early art, *Yakshas* have occurred in scenes depicting some story. Sometimes, *Jātaka* stories, with a *Yaksha* as the central figure, have also been depicted. At Bharhut, one such depiction illustrates the *Vidhurapandita Jātaka* (no. 545), inscribed as *Viṭura-Punakiya Jātakam*.² It was first identified by Cunningham.³ The *Jātaka* story relates the episode of a noble *kshatriya* *Vidhurapandita* and a *Yakkha Puṇṇaka*. *Puṇṇaka* was the lover of *Irandatī*, a *Nāga*-princess and to fulfill the condition for marriage with her, he went to the *Kuru* country, and won *Vidhurapandita* in a game of dice with the King of *Kuru*. *Vidhura* accompanied *Puṇṇaka*, by holding the tail of the horse of the *Yakkha*. When they reached the Mt. *Kālagiri*, identified with *Vepulla*⁴ (*Vipulagiri*) near *Rājagriha*, *Puṇṇaka* tried to frighten *Vidhura* by holding him upside down and threatening to throw him down the precipice. The sage, however, remained unmoved and, by a learned discourse, won over the *Yaksha*. *Puṇṇaka*, after this dialogue, took the sage to the *Nāga*-world. After marrying *Irandatī* by fulfilling the promise, he brought *Vidhura* back to *Indapatha* and also presented him a jewel of extraordinary merit.

The relief at Bharhut [Fig. 82] illustrates some of the highlights of the whole adventure. In the lower relief the gambling-scene is represented. *Puṇṇaka* is shown along with his horse; a large square jewel decorates his chest. The figure of the king of *Kuru* is broken. In the gateway, on the left of the relief, a standing figure, probably *Vidhura*, has been shown.

In the left lower corner of the middle relief, *Vidhura* is holding the tail of the flying horse and *Puṇṇaka* is starting on his aerial journey. The rocks and trees in the upper portion represent probably the summit of *Kālagiri*. On the right, *Puṇṇaka* is suspending *Vidhura* by his heels upside down. On the left side of the panel *Puṇṇaka* stands with raised hands, probably conversing with *Vidhura*.

In the lower right corner of the relief, both are sitting on a horse on a homeward journey, probably after meeting the *Nāga*-King. *Vidhura* is seated in front of *Puṇṇaka* on a horse. "Thus the sculptor has inserted the group as a connecting link between the events on the *Kālagiri* and the arrival in the *Nāga* world, represented in the upper relief."⁵ *Lüders*, has identified *Vidhura* with *Vidura* of the *Mahābhārata*.

No other *Jātaka* scene with *Yaksha* seems to occur at Bharhut. The attempt of *Barua* to identify *Valāhassa Jātaka* in a Bharhut scene has not found favour. *Lüders* has pointed out that the figure in question actually represents the donor *Suladdha* attended by a groom and a soldier.⁶ A representation of the *Valāhassa Jātaka* is found in the Mathura art. *Bacchofar*⁷ identified the scene on the back of a jamb from Mathura. In three panels from top to bottom, it illustrates the ship-wrecked merchants, in the first panel; in the second panel is carved the

¹cf. *Agrawala, R.C., Bharatiya Vidya, XX-XXI, pp. 303-9.* He also reports horse-faced male figures from Rajasthan. A fragment (no. 5054) in the Mathura Museum register, is reported to have several figures on a *Sūrya* image of mediaeval period. One such figure represents a horse-headed male attendant. He stands in *tribhanga* pose with a *pūrṇaghata* in the right hand, and left hand placed on the thigh.

²*CII, II, Part II, p. 146 (no. B. 55).*

³*CSB, p. 79f; Barua, Barhut, II, pp. 155ff; Barua and Sinha, Bharhut Inscriptions, pp. 94ff.*

⁴*CII, op. cit., p. 146 note 4.*

⁵*CII, op. cit., p. 147.* The *Jātaka* has also been represented at *Amaravati, Amaravati Sculptures, pl. XXIX, 1, 2;* cf. *Gupta, R.S. and B.D. Mahajana, Ajanta, Ellora and Aurangabad Caves, pp. 68-70,* for another depiction of this scene.

⁶*CII, op. cit., p. 22; For Barua, cf. Barhut, II, p. 104f; III, pl. XXVI, 21-24.*

⁷*Early Indian Sculpture, pl. 94; cf. also ASI, AR, 1909, 10, p. 72, pl. 26c; ASI, AR, 1912-13, p. 104, pl. 24, 54.*

escape of those who accepted the Bodhisattva's advice and flew away from the island with a white horse. The third panel shows ghastly Yakshinīs with long fearful tongues, devouring those merchants who had stayed on the island, unmindful of the Bodhisattvas' advice.

Some illustrations of the *Sutasoma Jātaka* (no. 537) have been reported from Mathura. A fragment (no. 431, Ht. $10\frac{1}{2} \times 2'$), shows a human-being carrying a pole on his shoulder. At both the ends of the pole two young boys are shown suspended. A tree is seen in the foreground. There is an expression of fierceness on the face of the Yaksha figure carrying the children. Another panel, (no. J.23) in the Mathura Museum, has on the obverse a broken figure of a man seated on the head of a Yaksha-dwarf. This scene has also been identified by Agrawala, in the *Catalogue*, with that of the *Sutasoma Jātaka*. But it appears that the scene represents only the usual belief in the Yakshas as prompt transporters.¹

In the early art of Bharhut and Mathura, some hospital scenes, with the presence of Yakshas, are also noticeable. In these scenes² Yaksha is associated with monkeys; and this seems to lend a comical effect to the scene represented. At Bharhut, in three medallions, a story has been narrated. The first shows a group of six monkeys in the act of capturing and dragging an elephant with ropes. Among these monkey-figures, two hold a pipe and a drum. In the second medallion, five monkey-figures are sitting or climbing over the elephant, while one is goading him to move. Three other monkeys below are beating a drum and a *mridanga* and blowing a pipe, probably rejoicing at the capture of the elephant. The Yaksha is introduced in the third panel. He is sitting on a stone-seat, with his feet on a foot-stool. A rope tied to the neck of the elephant has a hook which is being attached by a monkey to the left nostril of a Yaksha (not to the tooth as Barua thought). Two monkeys are goading the elephant to move, while two others are playing on drum and conch. One more monkey-figure is holding the finger of the Yaksha. The literary sources, to the best of our information, do not preserve any account that may correspond with the scene. It is likely that the monkeys might be attempting to put down the malefic nature of Yaksha by tickling his nose and cutting his nails. Barua thought that the story in the panel narrates some account of the tooth-ache of a Yaksha which was set right by the monkey—Bodhisattva.³ This suggestion lacks any corroborative evidence. At best, it seems that some comical popular story has been delineated here whose significance cannot be properly established. The presence of monkeys in the scene probably embodies some popular tradition for they are found present along with Yakshas elsewhere also. The Mathura Museum has a railing-pillar⁴ (J.1) with a rectangular panel at the top, which contains two monkeys seated on stools. One is addressed by a grotesque-featured Yaksha who applies his hand to his eyes. The other monkey seems to be busy in curing the eyes of a bird who is perched on a similar stool of wicker work [Fig. 84]. Agrawala has remarked that it is a scene depicting, in a humorous manner, the eye-ward of an animal hospital. He identified the bird as a parrot. But it appears more likely that it is an owl being cured (?) of his day-blindness since, according to popular belief, the owl cannot see during the day.

The occurrence of monkeys in both the scenes, one at Bharhut and the other at Mathura, is interesting. The association of monkeys with Yakshas is borne out by the *Rāmāyana* (I.16.5)⁵ in which it is said that monkeys were begotten from Yakshīs to help Rāma against Rāvaṇa. A son of Kubera; Gandhamādana is also one of the monkeys who served Rāma when the latter went in search of Sitā to the Vindhya.⁶

¹*Paramatthadipani*, V.39 (ed. Müller, E., PTS, 1893).

²CSB, pl. XXXIII, 1-3.

³Barua, *Barhut*, II, p. 171, III, pl. XCVI, XCVII, fig. 148, a, b, c,

⁴*Catalogue*, JUPHS, 1951, p. 3.

⁵I.16.12 according to a *pāṭha*.

⁶*supra*, pp. 63-64. According to the *Divyāvadāna* (ed. P.L. Vaidya) p. 216f. Mathura and its vicinity had a population of monkeys, associated with a Urumunda mountain.

Among the scenes connected with the Yaksha-folklore, mention may also be made of those from Gandhara¹ and Amaravati² in which Yaksha Śākyavardhana, the tutelary deity of Śākya has been shown. The relief slab from Amaravati depicts the scene of presentation of the child Siddhāratha (Buddha) to the Yaksha. Śākyavardhana Yaksha's corpulent figure with folded hands has been shown emerging from a platform below the banyan tree. He is in the act of receiving the child to bless him.³

Gandhara has supplied some more scenes connected with Yaksha folklore. One such scene from Sikri *Stūpa* (now in the Lahore Museum) represents the conversion of Yaksha Āṭavika (Āḷavaka).⁴ In the relief to the right, the royal couple are shown bringing the child Hatthaka Āḷavaka to the Yaksha; the Buddha is in a re-assuring pose. Āṭavika is dishevelled and he places the child on the Buddha's throne. The male figure behind the child re-presents Vajrapāṇi, the Yaksha doorkeeper.⁵ Another relief from Sahri Bahlol is now in the Peshawar Museum (no. 471) and shows the Buddha sitting on the Yaksha's throne in *abhaya mudrā*. The Yaksha stands to the left, about to hurl some object on the Buddha. On the other side, he meekly hands over the child to the Buddha.⁶

Āḷavaka Yaksha figures in a panel from Nagarjunakonda also. The panel illustrates the story as given in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya Comm.*, which says that during the absence of the Yakshas, the Buddha sat on his throne and addressed his females. Āḷavaka rushed to the spot and threatened the Buddha. A dialogue followed between them at the end of which the Yaksha was pacified. The panel shows the Buddha sitting on the throne in the *abhaya mudrā*; a few female figures are shown in the panel; two of them are pacifying the Yaksha who is in a belligerent pose. A male figure (Gardabha, the doorkeeper?) sits near the throne.⁷

Yaksha as a Decorative Motif

The delineations of Yakshas in art present a limitless variety of forms. They occur as atlantes, bearing or supporting some edifice on their hands⁸ or supporting garlands,⁹ or engaged in dancing [Fig. 65] or playing on musical instruments¹⁰ or issuing rhizomes from the mouth¹¹ or navel.¹² Such forms are known from the art of Amaravati. Coomaraswamy has traced similar figures in the early art of Bharhut and other places.¹³ These Yakshas sometimes also form the army or retinue of Māra.¹⁴ But one of the most interesting motifs of Yakshas, known mostly from South India, is that in which grotesque Yakshas contain similar faces carved on their big-bellies. Sivaramamurti has traced the development of this motif at Amaravati and other sites of South India through ages.¹⁵

A four-armed image of a similar *bhāravahaka* Yaksha (11th century AD), is known from

¹cf. Calcutta Museum fragment no. A 23255 (5040).

²Barrett, D., *Sculptures from Amaravati*, pl. VII, lower right corner of the slab; cf. also *ASI, AR, 1928-29*, pl. XLIX, panel for another similar scene.

³cf. Coomaraswamy, I, p. 49, pl. 20.

⁴*supra*, p. 38.

⁵Ingholt, H., *The Gandhara art in Pakistan*, p. 87, no. 126.

⁶*ibid*, p. 87, no. 127.

⁷Ramachandra, P.R., *Art of Nagarjunakonda*, p. 70; cf. also Longhurst, *MAI*, 54.

⁸Sivaramamurti, *Amravati Sculptures*, pl. XXXVII: XIX, 3 (supporting a vase).

⁹*ibid*, pl. XLIII, 2 (seated); XV, 2, 3 (Ganeṣa type); Barrett, *Sculptures from Amravati*, pl. XXXIX.

¹⁰*ibid*, pl. XXIII; Sivaramamurti, *op. cit.*, pl. XXXII, 2.

¹¹*ibid*, pl. LVII, LI, 2; Barrett, *op. cit.*, pl. IX, C.

¹²cf. Coomaraswamy, *Yakṣas*, pp. 24ff.

¹³*Yakṣas*, I, pl. 1, 23; *Yakṣas*, II, pp. 13ff, 24ff, p. 55.

¹⁴Marshall, *Monuments of Sanchi*, I, pp. 114-25; II, pl. 61; Nagarjunakonda, *ASI, AR, 1928-29*, pl. XLIXb.

¹⁵*Amravati Sculptures*, pl. III, 5a (Amaravati), (b) Ghantasala, (c) Sarnath, (d) Ajanta, (e) Mahabalipuram, (f) Kaveripakkam.

Bhojapur in Sehore district of Madhya Pradesh. With his upper hands he supports a ledge above, his lower arms are broken. On his belly a huge additional face is shown, with large eyes, big nostrils and open mouth with thick lips, revealing fangs [Fig. 85].¹

In all the above instances, the Yakshas' malformed physical features have been emphasised.² From these it appears that these Yakshas were precursors of Ganeśa.³

The river goddesses Gangā and Yamunā, who made their appearance in the Gupta art, may also be iconographically connected with the early Yaksha figures. The *Makara vāhanas* of Yakshas and Yakshis are known from the art of Bharhut and Amaravati and have been mentioned at relevant places. A transition from Yakshis to the river goddesses should have taken some time to get accepted. And some figures on the door-jamb reflect this stage of indecision and transition. A Gupta figure from Nagod [Fig. 83] now in the Allahabad Museum shows a Yakshī on a door-jamb standing on a *nara* figure. The door-jamb at the Parvati temple at Nachna (M.P.) also contain Bacchanalian Yakshis and *Śalabhanjikās* which iconographically belong to the Yakshi figure in transition towards the river-goddesses. This transformation was completed during the Gupta period.⁴

TERRACOTTA FIGURINES OF YAKSHAS

The terracotta figurines of Yakshas usually follow the sculptural tradition of representing those demi-gods. These terracotta figures are known mainly from Eastern and Northern parts of India. Coomaraswamy in his personal collection had a terracotta figure from Ujjain, which he described, doubtfully, as a Yaksha holding a ram.⁵ But several terracotta figures have been excavated from the ancient sites of Basarh,⁶ Bhita,⁷ and Patna⁸ which resemble the early stone figures of Yakshas. Among these early terracotta figures, the one probably from Tamluk, now in the Indian Institute of Oxford,⁹ is of special interest. It represents a Yakshī, most elaborately laden with dress and ornaments in which goad, axe, *triśūla* and probably a *dhvaja* embedded in the bonnet on her head may be recognised. She wears heavy round discs in the ears, necklaces, heavy wristlets four in number, a three-banded *mekhalā* with suspended beaded-ribbon dropping down to the thighs. These contain four amulets of small, corpulent, pot-bellied Yaksha-type figures. Two such amulets have been shown on each of her thighs. Her dress consists of "either a 'sleeveless tunic' or a single garment with flounces." Kramrisch identified her with the *Āpsara Panca-cūḍhā* who was produced from the churning of the Ocean¹⁰; Johnston, with the Mother-Goddess *Maiyā*; and J. N. Banerjea and Saraswati, with a Yakshī. On stylistic considerations, the last identification seems to be probable since highly decorated Yakshini figures (for instance, Bhatanwara Yakshī [Fig. 48] are known. Moreover, the presence of four pot-bellied figures as

¹The *Lalitavistara* (ed. P.L. Vaidya), p. 223, describes the *Māraputras* as *Kecit ekaśīrāśca dviśīrshā Yāvatsahasraśīrshā*, or, *ekaśīrā dviśīrā triśīrāśca, yāvat sahasraśīrā bahuvaktrā*. In this figure the earlier Buddhist tradition continues; such grotesque figures find mention also in the *Purāṇas*; cf. Agrawala, V.S., foreword to M.A. Dhaky's *Vyāla*, Varanasi.

²*Lalitavistara*, pp. 221ff for weird and ghastly Yakshas in the retinue of Māra.

³cf. Sivaramamurti, op. cit., pl. XV, 2, 3; IV, 27 for a Yaksha feeding a leonine stag pl. XIX, 2; Yaksha *Dryad* pl. XVI, 3; LXI; Kubera pl. IV, fig. 21; Dwarf Yaksha standing on a gigantic *makara*, pl. LIII, 2.

⁴cf. also Coomaraswamy, I, p. 36; Coomaraswamy also traced the development of the images of Śiva and Bodhisattvas (*Maitreya*, *Vajrapāni* and *Padmapāṇi*) from Yaksha images; cf. *Yakṣas*, I, pp. 28ff; also Agrawala V.S., *Studies in Indian Art*, pp. 123ff.

⁵Coomaraswamy, I, pl. 12, fig. 4.

⁶Bloch, Excavations at Basarh, *ASI, AR, 1913-14, 1917*, XLIII, b, c, d, e; XLV, c, d etc.

⁷*ASI, AR, 1911-12, 1915*; pl. XXII, 9, 10; XXIII, 19; XXVII, 85, 86.

⁸*JISOA*, III (1935), pl. XXXI.

⁹Johnston, E.H., *JISOA*, X, 1942, pp. 94-102; Saraswati, S.K., *Early Sculptures of Bengal*, pp. 98ff. A large number of terracottas are known from Lauriya Nandangarh, some of which betray Yaksha-Yakshini features in dress, ornaments and style. cf. *ASI, AR, 1935-36*, pl. XXII, g-o.

¹⁰*JISOA*, VII, pp. 100-1.

decorative motifs may add to the probability of this identification. Similar figures are known from Kauśāmbī¹ also; and Kala has held that this figure should therefore belong to Kauśāmbī [Fig. 86].

Kauśāmbī terracottas² generally show Yakshas on moulded plaques or as independent figures, holding either some animal or jar. These were used sometimes as the body of a toy-cart also (no. 499). The figures of both Yakshas and Yakshiṇīs are found here. An exact stone prototype [Fig. 38], in the Allahabad Museum, of a terracotta (no. 772) is known. This terracotta figurine shows sunken cheeks, prominent belly and a *kulāh* cap. Kala³ identified the stone figure with the guardian Yaksha of Kauśāmbī on the basis of the *Mahāmāyūrī*. However, the *Dhammapada Atthakathā* (II.300f.) and the *Petavatthu Commentary* (pp. 9ff) do refer to a Sūkara Peta who had a pig-head, and lived on Gijjhakūta near Rājagriha. But his connection with this figure cannot be established. In another terracotta (no. 727) of the Allahabad Museum, a Yaksha wearing a sleeved coat is shown. In another similarly dressed example (no. K, 3236), Kubera is shown nude and holding a cup in the right hand [Fig. 87]. Sometimes, nudity has been emphasised in some terracotta figures of Yakshas [Fig. 88].⁴ The Mathura Museum has the terracotta figures of ithyphallic Yakshas (nos. 61.5; 67.317). Another figurine (no. 5090) there, shows an ithyphallic Yaksha, playing on a fiddle. A hole drilled through its head indicates that it was meant to be suspended from some place. Various poses and types of Yakshas occur in their terracotta figurines e.g., clenched fist (5229, 5264), carriers (3880 Yaksha carrying a female; 3080, similar, but the female is playing a fiddle), Aśvamukhī Yakshī (no. 3031) and Kubera (2095, 2639). The Allahabad Museum terracottas have similar figures of Kubera, holding *bijaura* and cup (Rajghat, no. 2341); or *naravāhana* (Mathura, no. 2436). A Kauśāmbī specimen there exhibits a Yaksha like a triton (no. 3669). Some terracottas are almost the replicas of similar examples in stone. One such example from Ahicchatrā, now in the Allahabad Museum, shows a crouching Yaksha like the one in stone found at Phalgu *vihāra* of Ahicchatra [Fig. 89].⁵ Mathura Museum has a terracotta vase with a spout-shaped as a pot-bellied Yaksha with a leonine and grotesque face. The Yaksha has two applique earrings, and a collar round the neck. His hands are placed below the navel, and small, knob-like stems represents his feet (no. 65.10). These different terracottas belong to the Śunga period.⁶ Several terracottas are known from Mathura also. In one such example (no. 4791) from the Mathura Museum, a seated pot-bellied Yaksha, for use in a toy-cart, is shown. Another shows a Yaksha probably Kubera, seated in *lalitāsana*, holding a purse in the right hand (Red clay, Kushana period, no. 4508).⁷ It is likely that in several cases the terracotta figures might have been prepared as models for the bigger stone figures. But in view of the large numbers of terracotta figures, this suggestion cannot be seriously entertained. In another example (nos. 5229, 5264) a Yaksha is shown with clenched fists. Some grotesque-featured figures, probably representing Yakshas, are known from Ahicchatrā (no. 5159) and Mathura (no. 5111, 5242, etc.).

As in the sculptures, so also in the terracottas, Yaksha figures became rare in the post-Kushana period. However, among the later specimens, mention may be made of a Yaksha figure

¹Kala, S.C., *Terracottas from Kosambi*, p. 20f; Kala holds that the figure's provenance as Tamluk is erroneous. But Saraswati, *op. cit.*, p. 110, note 9, has traced the history of this piece along with its association with Tamluk and Bangal.

²Kala, S.C., *op. cit.*, pp. 31ff.

³Kala, S.C., *Sculptures in the Allahabad Municipal Museum*, p. XVIII.

⁴e.g. Allahabad Museum terracottas no. J. 3362, R. 2104, K. 2564.

⁵*supra*, p. 125.

⁶For another Kosambi terracotta; cf. no. 3982 of the Mathura Museum. It shows a Yaksha wearing a peculiar coat with button-holes, and holding a bird in his hand. On his head is a *mukuta*, bedecked with flowers.

⁷In another terracotta, no. 4680, besides these features a jar with conch-shell is also shown. (Red clay, Kushana).

discovered by Dikshit at Mahasthan.¹ A panel here shows a pot-bellied, dwarfish Yaksha, seated on his haunches, supporting a ledge on both his upraised hands. Dikshit has said that the figure exhibits the style of Paharpur sculptures and terracottas.

Śālabhañjikā

After the brilliant analysis of this motif in literature and art by Vogel² and Roth,³ there seems to be hardly anything that could be added. The word was accepted for a standard description of women bending down the flowery branch of a tree to pluck flowers. In the *Mahāvamsa* (XXX.91; XXX.99), the motif is mentioned as *pupphā-sākhā-dharā*. Vogel has pointed out that Aśvaghosh was probably the first writer to use the term '*Śālabhañjikā*.'⁴ According to the *Rāyapasenaijja*,⁵ such an image was to be carved on both sides of doors, under an Aśoka tree. They were to be shown standing playfully adorned with dress and ornaments. The slender waist and supple bust of their figures have been emphasised here. From the different references to the word in the texts, it appears that the *Śālabhañjikā* adorned gateways, temples, pavilions, carts and chariots. They were also carved or painted on walls and pillars.⁶ The *Śiva Mahāpurāṇa* (Sristhti Khanda, 17.57) refers also to *Śālabhañjikā* holding *dīpa*, 'lamp'; The *Raghuvamśa* (XVI.17) seems to indicate that these figures were applied with paints which could fade away due to lack of attention. This motif is also mentioned as *Uddūlakapushpabhañjikā*, *tālabhañjikā*, *Vīraṇapushpapracāyikā*, etc., but the term *Śālabhañjikā* seems to have acquired greater currency.

The motif has also been connected with the *madanotsava*, 'the festival of arrival of spring,' in the *Mālavikāgnimitra* and its association with *dohada*, 'desire during pregnancy,' is also found.⁷ The motif is particularly connected with the festivals of eastern India⁸ and its antiquity may go back to the last two centuries of the pre-Christian era.⁹

In early art, the motif occurs at Bharhut, Bodhagaya¹⁰ and Sanchi on the railing-pillars or as bracket capitals.¹¹ At Bharhut, both Candrā and Culakokā *devatā* are shown standing under trees. Candrā touches with her foot the trunk of the tree, illustrating the motif of *madanotsava* as described in the *Mālavikāgnimitra*. At Sanchi, this motif is illustrated on almost all the *toranas*.¹² In one such figure she is shown perched comfortably on a blossomed Aśoka tree. Her prominent ornaments and scanty dress revealing the charms of her figure, have been rendered with great artistic vigour [Fig. 90].

At Mathura also the motif was extremely popular during the Kushana art and four types of trees, viz., *Aśoka*, *Campaka*, *Kadamba*, and *Āmra*, are mostly seen in these examples. The *Aśoka* tree, however, was the most popular tree under which various sport-scenes have been sculptured.¹³

¹ASI, AR, 1928-29 (Mahasthan), p. 96 pl. XLII d; also ASI, AR, 1936-37, pl. XVI, figs. a and g.

²Acta Orientalia, VII, 1929.

³Roth, G., 'Shālabhanjikā,' Paper read in the Archaeological Section in All India Oriental Conference, 19th Session, December, 1957, New Delhi.

⁴Buddhacarita, V.52; cf. also Moii Chandra, Architectural Data in Jaina Canonical Literature, JUPHS, XXII, 1949, pp. 70ff.

⁵Dosi, ed., pp. 164-66.

⁶Vogel, op. cit., p. 216.

⁷Harsha-arita, Bombay, 1897, p. 215.

⁸Kāśikā, VI.2.74; Vātsyāyana in the Kāmasūtra similarly mentions other popular Northern Indian Sports as, *deśyakrīdā* in which the gathering or plucking of flowers was an essential feature; cf. Agrawala, V.S., *Pāṇini*, p. 160.

⁹Roth, op. cit., pp. 9ff.

¹⁰Cunningham, A., *Mahabodhi*, London, 1892, pl. VII, p. 12.

¹¹Coomaraswamy, I, pp. 32-36, discusses this motif, along with that of river-goddesses and birth of Siddhārtha.

¹²Marshall, *Monuments of Sanchi*, II, pl. XXIV, XXV, XXVI, XXVII, XLIII, XLIV, XLVIII, particularly that on the east gate, under the mango tree.

¹³cf. Mathura Museum pillars, nos. J. 55, J. 58, J. 64, also 2345.

A *torana-Śālabhañjikā* in the Lucknow Museum (no. 595 a, b), carved to serve as a bracket, is conceived in the spirit of Bharhut figures. The pillar is carved on both the sides with Yakshi-figures which hold the branch of an Aśoka tree. One of these figures also has a *gaja*, 'elephant,' as her *vāhana*.

An example of pre-Gupta *Śālabhañjikā* is known from Eran in the Sagar District of Madhya Pradesh. It was first reported by Cunningham,¹ who also noticed the remains of a ruined *torana*, 'gateway,' in the vicinity. The bust of *Śālabhañjikā* has a tenon at the top which was meant for being inserted in the beam of the *torana*. The figure is carved on both the sides indicating thereby that both front and back views of the figure were meant to be seen. The lower half of the sculpture is broken. The female figure stands on one leg, leaning outwards with one arm passed round a tree for support.

Some figures in *alto relievo*, standing under *Aśoka* and *Āmra* trees, are also carved on the pillars of the *maṇḍapa* at Rāmacandra temple at Rajim.² This motif is also found at Khajuraho and, as a matter of fact, it never lost its appeal in any part of the country.³

Dress and Ornament Patterns of Yaksha Images

Before concluding the chapter, a brief notice of dress and ornament patterns of the early Yaksha-images might be of use in illustrating the iconic points.

Usually, the dresses of Yakshas and Yakshiṇīs, like those of most of the figures of early times, consisted of a pair of upper and lower garments. Both these garments were known from the Vedic period. Among items of male dress, *uttariya* (*RV*, 1.95-7-8), *adhivāsa* (*RV*, 1.140.9) and *nīvī*⁴ were known. The females used to wear *vasana*, 'dress', (*RV*, 1.95.7), *drāpī*, probably embroidered coat' (*RV*, 1.140.9), *upavasana* (*dupaṭṭā?*) and *pratidhi*, 'waist-band' (*AV*, XIV. 1.7). Besides, *adhivāsa* (*RV*, 1.140.9) and *nīvī* (*AV*, VIII.2.16) are also mentioned as lower garments. In the Buddhist literature, Sūtras and the *Arthasāstra*, a number of garments are mentioned.⁵ A *vāravāṇa*, denoting probably a coat-like upper garment, was also known.⁶ In the early literature, head-gear (*uṣṇīṣha*) is mentioned in connection with the *vrātyas*.⁷ Also, Moti Chandra is of the opinion that ladies in ancient times generally wore a long piece of cloth to cover their head, on special occasions turbans were used.⁸

As regards the images of Yakshas and Yakshiṇīs, they were carved as clad, semi-clad or nude. Sometimes, even if they are embellished and laden with ornaments and dress, their nudity is emphasised [Fig. 52]. The turbans are invariably present in the early images or reliefs [figs. V, VI]. The Parkham and Baroda Yakshas have no conspicuous turban, although a *Cūḍāmaṇī*, 'a jewelled band,' is noticeable there. The upper part of the body in Yaksha images contains either an *uttariya*, 'scarf,'⁹ [figs. I, II], or, in the absence of it, an *udarabandha* (as in the Parkham image) [fig. XLII]. The *uttariya* consisted of a large piece of cloth which passed below the right arm and covered the left shoulder, covering in this way also the front of the bust. In the Pawaya image [Fig. 24, back view]. It is shown as falling down to the ankles. Usually, the scarf covered the left shoulder, but sometimes they are also shown as not worn, but simply held on the arms grace-

¹Cunningham, *Reports*, X, 1880, pp. 83ff, pl. XXVIII.

²Barrett, D. and Dikshīt, M.G., *Mukhalingam, Sirpur and Rajim Temples*, Bombay, 1960, pl. 78 and 79.

³Coomaraswamy, I, pp. 32ff, and plates; for, a Yakshi under Śāla tree, from the Gandhara School of Art. cf. Marshall, *Art of Gandhara*, pl. 61, fig. 89 illustrating Yakshi-Śālabhañjikā from the upper Monastery at Nathū.

⁴Das, A.C., *Rigvedic Culture*, p. 214.

⁵Moti Chandra, *JISOA*, VIII, 1940; *Prācīna Bhāratiya Veshabhūsha*.

⁶Shamsastry, ed., p. 89, note 10; also Agrawala, V.S., *Gupta Art* (Section on iconography); *tāramuktāphalopacyamāna vārabāṇa*, in *Harshacarita*.

⁷*AV*, XV.2.1; *Pancavimśa Brāhmaṇa*, XVI.6.13.

⁸*Prācīna Bhāratiya Veshabhūsha*, p. 69.

⁹Kausambi, terracotta, no. 727, Allahabad Museum; Kausambi terracotta no. 3982 in the Mathura Museum; In Allahabad Museum terracotta no. 772, a Yaksha wearing a *Kulāh* cap is shown.

fully [Fig. 44]. In case of the Yakshas of the Western Gate [Fig. 55] neither any scarf nor *paṭṭa* has been shown. From Mathura and Kauśāmbī some images wearing crown [Fig. 38] on the head, or wearing a coat with buttons are known. Thus it appears that besides an *ushnīsha* [fig. V, VI] on head, Yaksha figures also wear on the upper part of the body *uttarīya* or *udarabandha* or coat.

The lower garment was usually a *dhotī*, worn either upto the knees or slightly below it. [figs. XXVIII-XXX, XXXII]. A tassel, arranged neatly in folds reaching upto the toes was invariably indicated. The frill or tassel of *dhotī* is always found skillfully handled [fig. XXVIII-XXXI]. From the early times various fashions of this particular mode were known.¹ The *dhotī* was worn in *vikaccha* fashion [fig. XVI-XVIII, XXXIII]. It appears that this fashion was common in case of both Yakshas and Yakshiṇīs.² Besides, a small *paṭṭa*, 'strap of cloth' was also tied upon the *dhotī* [fig. XXVIII, XXXVIII] at the waist and it served as a belt to keep the *dhotī* at the place. In an image from Mathura [Fig. 52] the Yakshi is shown gracefully holding the *paṭṭa* in her hands, probably in the act of wearing it. The Patna Yaksha images, however, appear a little unusual in case of wearing the lower garment which looks more like a *lungī*. This feature might have percolated here due to the Persian influence. The image has no trace of *kacchā* and recalls the lower part of the costumes worn by the kings and their attendants in the bas-reliefs of Persepolis.³

In respect of the lower garment, the Yakshiṇī figures present an entirely different picture. In the Kushana Yakshī figures, the *dhotī* is most often absent in the reliefs, and the nudity is greatly emphasised. "The Mathura figures have a singular lack of distinction in their aggressive nudity; they exhibit lasciviousness combined with grossness. Whilst Candā, Culakokā and their sisters (at Bharhut, from whom they are derived) have the appearance of heavenly nymphs, these unworthy descendants are merely courtesans exhibiting their opulent charm and gaudy jewellery."⁴ Even in the case of Bharhut Yakshīs, the bust is always bare. But at Mathura, both bust and lower-parts of the body are almost completely found bare. The tradition of nudity of Yaksha figure at Mathura, may be traced to the *Gilgit MSS* (III, 1, p. 14), where an instance is preserved of a Devatā who appeared completely nude before the Buddha. The Buddha, instead of getting upset, put her to shame. Coomaraswamy has explained the nudity of these figures by referring to them as the expression of "vegetative sexual motif," and suggesting that the delineations are symbolic of procreation and fecundity.⁵ A different explanation for the nudity of Yakshiṇī figures, however, has been offered by Sivaramamurti, who says that these figures illustrate the *Subhagā* aspect of women. He corroborates his arguments quoting from the *Meghadūta* and says that the use of beauty-spots of the body in describing its charms through personal names was quite common, for instance, Arālakeśī, Candramukhī, etc., "passion, love and sex are also similarly emphasised in early Indian sculptures by showing prominently the *bhaga* beneath the drapery."⁶ The nudity is greatly noticeable in the Yakshi⁷ and *Śālabhañjika*⁸ figures. Sometimes an effort is made to hide the nudity with a fig-leaf as in case of Kubera from Tumain.

The busts of Yakshiṇī figures are mostly bare, but dress for that part was also in currency since very early times. A *vakshabandha* or *stanapaṭṭa* as *pratidhī* (*AV*, XIV.1.7) was known. Pānini refers to the female upper garment as *ceṭā* (III.4.33). As early as the *Rigveda* (VI.64.2). Dawn is

¹cf. *Cullavagga*, II.29.2: which refers to *Hastīsaundika*, *Matsyāvalaka*, *Catuśkarāṇaka*, *Tālavrintaka*, *Śatavallikā* and *Kāyabandha* modes of arranging the frills. cf. also, Joshi, N.P., *JUPHS*, XXIV-XXV, 1951-52, pp. 248ff.

²Coomaraswamy, A., *La Sculpture de Bharhut*, pl. XX, fig. 52.

³Chand, R.P., *MASI*, no. 30, p. 34.

⁴Smith, V.A., quoted by Vogel, *Acta Orientalia*, VII, p. 224.

⁵*HIA*, p. 64.

⁶Sivaramamurti, *Proceedings and Transactions of AIOC*, Part III, pp. 59-60; Banerjee, J.N., *DHI*, p. 295, ascribes nudity to mythological requirements or to the desire of artists to make nudity repugnant to cultural taste.

⁷Mathura Museum figures no. 783, 453, 2500, etc.

⁸Coomaraswamy, *La Sculpture de Bharhut*, pl. XXXV, fig. 99 and 100.

described as uncovering her breasts, thereby indicating the practice of covering them. In the *Mahābhārata* (Āranyaka parva), Draupadī is mentioned as unwilling to go to the *sabhā* because she was *ekavastrā ekam ca vāso mama mandabuddheh sabhām netum nārhasi māmanārya*. In the *Mahābhārata* (III.61-31-31) again the *ardhavastra*, 'upper garment,' (equivalent to the *uttariya*) of Draupadī is described as having fallen down causing great embarrassment to her. The mode of wearing the *uttariya* has been described in the *Sākuntalam* (I.19). In view of such evidence, it is difficult to believe that these figures are nude because 'partial nudity was a fashion among Indians.'¹ Among the Yakshi figures, it appears that the practice of exposing the lower part of the body was given up after Kushana period. The exposure of bare busts could not be discontinued.

Another aspect of these images is their ornamentation. The images of Yakshis are found abundantly embellished with ornaments all over the body. The ornaments of Yakshas were limited, and consisted mainly of *kuṇḍala* [fig. XV], *angada*, and *grāiveyaka*, 'torque' [fig. XIX]. The Yakshas were also shown wearing thread in the *upavīta* fashion [Fig. 38], with a *nāga*-head? The necklace [fig. XXI] and bracelets [fig. XXIV-XXV] are also found and at Bharhut and their designs are varied and beautiful. Bharhut reliefs show the *prākāravapra kuṇḍalas* of plain cubical shape [fig. XV] although some of the popular variations are also noticeable elsewhere [Fig. 67 bell-shape]. In the image of Kubera from Tumain, the *drākshakuṇḍalas* [fig. XLIII] are prominently shown. Kubera here also wears anklets.

The female-images offer a greater variety of ornament patterns. It appears that the square, punch-marked coins and beads of different kinds were used as ornaments. The beads and amulets appear in necklaces [fig. XIII, XIV, XX, XXI, XL]; other designs are also known in the images of Yakshas [fig. XIX]. The ornaments of Yakshis consisted of *mauktikajāla*, [fig. VII, VIII], 'the strings of pearls and beads covering the head; *kuṇḍalas*, *angada*, [fig. X, XLI], bracelets [figs. XXIV, XXV], *mekhalā* (girdle), of various bands [fig. XXXVIII] and thick anklets [figs. XXXIX, XXII, XXIII]. Among the Bharhut examples, Sudassanā Yakhi is comparatively austere but for her beautiful ornaments [figs. XX, XXXVII]. The ornaments of Bhuñjati (Bhatanwara Yakshi), Culakokā *devatā* and the so-called *Siṃhikā* Yakshī are specially interesting. Bhuñjati wears an ornamental veil [fig. VII] over her forehead and also a necklace [fig. XL] which contains the *triratna* symbol. The *nandipada* symbol appears in the necklace of Candrā Yakshī [fig. XIII]. The so-called *Siṃhikā* has a peculiar *kuṇḍala* [fig. XII] besides the usual *kuṇḍala* [fig. XV] found in the Bharhut figures. Bhuñjati (Bhatanwara) Yakshi, on the other hand, has a neat tassel of beads [fig. XXXI] in place of the usual tassels of Bharhut figures. The beaded strings worn in the *upavīta* fashion are found on many Yakshī figures [figs. III, XXXIV, XXXV]. These sometimes assumed the form of *chhannavīra* [fig. XXVI]. This ornament has been shown in case of Yakshas [Fig. 59] also. It was worn cross-wise in the front and was tucked at the centre and on the extreme corner ends [fig. XXXVI] with the help of floral clips.

The design of *angada* in the Bharhut Yaksha figures is interesting. It occurs in the form of three leaves [fig. IV]. It thus represents either a form of the honey-suckle motif or a *triratna*. Some other forms of this ornaments are also found [fig. X, XL].

The hair-style of the Yakshī figures has been executed with precision and beauty. The mode of tucking the hair at the back in the form of a bun was a common practice. But interlocking the *venī* flowing downwards was another mode [fig. XXVII]. Certain other forms are also encountered. For instance, a *Śalabhañjikā* figure with hair arranged in the palm-leaf [fig. XXXVII] is known from Sanchi. The turban is usually confined to the Yaksha figures, but a Yakshini figure from Rajasana (Muzaffarpur district) has her hair held in a turban.² The Yaksha figures also present some variety in the hair style.

¹Fergusson, *Tree and Serpent Worship*, p. 91f; A different mode of dressing in which the bust is covered with a buttoned and sleeved coat, is to be seen in sculpture no. 2567 of Calcutta Museum; cf. also, Marshall, *The Buddhist Art of Gandhara*, pl. 61, fig. 89.

²ASI, AR, 1918-19, Part I, pp. 32-33, pl. 1Xb; also HIIA, p. 32, pl. XVII.

It is interesting to note that the custom of wearing *ṭikuli* [fig. XI]. and tattoo-marks is found in the Yakshī sculptures. In one case at Bharhut, *ankuśa* 'goad,' marks are found on the cheeks of a Yakshī [fig. IX].¹ These were regarded as marks of personal decoration during this time. Among the ornaments, the amulets with human-head device often occur [fig. XXI] [Fig. 87]. And the practice of wearing leaves and flowers is illustrated in a stone-head in the Mathura Museum (no. 34.2519), in which the leaves of the Aśoka tree are worn in the ears. This stone-head is also remarkable for its grinning expression.

The mediaeval images of Yakshas and Yakshīṅīs are not remarkable from the point of view of their dress and ornament, because they generally followed the stereotypes in such forms. Important variations from them have been indicated on relevant occasions. In the mediaeval images, the upper part either contains an *uttariya* or is shown bare, but *dhotī* is invariably present. The usual ornaments with some variations of designs are also seen. The Yakshīṅī figure from Gyaraspur is interesting in this connection. Besides the usual ornaments, it has a small, *printed* garment, carelessly worn around the hips. The floral motif of the prints is beautiful.

¹Coomaraswamy, A., *La Sculpture de Bharhut*, pl. XXI, fig. 55, for Candrā and Sirimā; cf. Cunningham, *CSB*, p. 39f.

The Popular Aspect of Yaksha Theology

IT has often been said that the Yakshas belonged to the masses or the common people, and the statement is essentially true. The theistic outlook projected towards the Yakshas, had two distinct developments, intellectual and popular. The intellectual aspect presents a mystic and sublime concept of the Yakshas which is intermittent but sufficiently articulate. This aspect has been discussed above.¹ The other, *i.e.*, the popular or democratic aspect of the Yaksha theology will be discussed below. The popular outlook towards the Yakshas is made clear by examining the comprehensive material on them as found in the texts of the different religious systems. The uniformity of belief contained in those texts makes it clear that the Yakshas were not the creation of any one of the different religious systems. On the contrary, they belonged to a commonwealth of ideas flourishing in the masses and were eventually adopted into the systems of different creeds. As such the popular beliefs present the theological aspects which are emotional in appeal as distinct from the sublime and mystic aspects of intellectual theology. The sublime aspects of theology appear intellectual while the mundane or popular aspect of theology is more often emotional or democratic in substance.² Because of its universal appeal, sometimes attempts were made to accord it a sanctified place. We have an interesting instance in Aśoka who, according to Agrawala, took measures to incorporate the worship of the popular gods in to Buddhism as an aid to its propagation. Agrawala thought that this possibility is indicated by a passage—*y(i)-maya kataya Jambūđipasi amisā devā husu te dānī m(i)s-kaṭā*³—which occurs in an inscription of Aśoka. Religious figures like the Buddha himself also sometimes upheld the status of Yakshas in Buddhism. In the *Āṭānāṭiya Sutta*, the Buddha is represented as ordaining that the monks should invoke the Yaksha-chiefs like Vessavana, Hemavata, Sāta, and others in time of need.⁴ It is, however, found that the Buddha adopted a flexible attitude, accepting or repudiating Yaksha worship, according to circumstances.

However, the richest source of Yaksha worship was the popular section of ancient society. This section invested the cult with many tenets and foundations which, due to their recurrent nature, form the basis of the popular theology relating to Yakshas. The richness of its content is found in their various attributes, pertaining to the concepts of their rebirth or their supernatural powers, benevolence and malevolence. While explicating the popular or democratic aspects of Yaksha theology, these concepts also accommodate Yakshas within the folds of the primitive religion which, it is likely, contributed its share in developing the themes of ancestor-worship, nature-worship and Totemistic beliefs in the Yaksha-cult. This is proved by the

¹*supra*, pp. 21ff.

²cf. Macnicol, N., *Indian Theism*, p. 199.

³*ACSB*, p. x; Earlier, the passage had been explained as "during that time the men in India who had been un-associated with the gods became associated with them." cf. Bhandarkar, *Indian Antiquary*, 1912, p. 170; also, Raychaudhuri, H.C., *Political History of Ancient India*, 1953, p. 357.

⁴*Dialogues*, II, 188f.

animal-names of Yakshas, such as Kumbhīra,¹ Khara,² and Gardabha.³ Similarly the ancestor worship in the Yaksha cult is substantiated by numerous references which prove that it was an important constituent of the popular Yaksha theology. As has been previously noted, the belief in Yaksha's immortality is erroneous.⁴ They were mortals like any other mortal creature. Often a personage started receiving worship after his rebirth as Yaksha.⁵ According to a *Jataka* (I.109), the Yakkha state of being could even continue through an extraordinarily long cycle of five hundred births. The reason for such an unusual phenomenon is said to be the "ripening sin." Sometimes bad *kamma* resulted in Yakkha-birth.⁶ A spiteful wish also brought about the same result.⁷ This state could be due to one's own choosing.⁸ Just as bad *kamma* produced Yaksha-birth, good *kammās* also led to the same end.⁹ The Jain works say that Yaksha-birth was obtained by righteous men who practised self-restraint.¹⁰ A Cāṇḍāla named Caṇḍa who lived in Ekānāsī town or Avanti is said to have obtained the status of chief of Yakshas because he had abstained from eating flesh.¹¹ Sometimes, after death Yakkhas were reborn as men, or they became men by simply changing their form. Yakshas enjoyed divine pleasures, and lived in the upper-*kalpa* 'heaven,' for many centuries of 'former years.'¹² That was accomplished as a result of accumulated merits, and on expiry of their lives, it is said they were reborn as men.¹³ In the *Dasakumāra Carita* we have the story of three successive births of Yakshiṇī Tārāvālī, which included human birth also.¹⁴ The instances of conversion of Yakshas into the other forms are also found. In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, it is said that two Yakshas were converted into trees, Yamalārjuna.¹⁵ The *Kathāsaritsāgara* (I.9) refers to conversion of a Yaksha into a Piśāca. The *Brihatkathā Ślokaśam graha* (V.309f.) contains the story of conversion of Pūrṇabhadra and Bhadra into elephants. In another interesting parable in the *Kathāsaritsāgara* (VI.130) it is said that a Brāhmaṇa, Kamalagarbha, or Pratishṭhāna, immolated himself along with his three wives in fire with the object of perpetuating their husband-wife relationship during subsequent births. And they continued alternating between human and Yaksha states of birth. In the *Kathākośa* it is implied that a Yaksha could retain his memory¹⁶ even during a subsequent birth. Before being born as a Yaksha, he had been in his previous births, a merchant, a Brāhmaṇa and *airāvata*, the elephant of Indra. It is related that from some previous state of his existence he carried his

¹D, II.257; DA, II.686.

²Sn., Hare, p. 42.

³Gilgit MSS, III, 1, p. 15; SA, I.319. The cases like this can be supplied *ad nomen*.

⁴However, Yakshas were capable of giving long life, for they possessed *rasa-rasāyana* 'herbal medicines.' cf. MMK, II.564ff; 566ff; III.720; II.294; but *Dialogues*, II.286ff, tells of 10500 Yakshas of different places who gathered to hear the Buddha's discourse. The purpose of such large attendance according to DA, II.509f, was to attain deliverance from the Yaksha-state. However, in the *Vin. P.*, II.207 it is said that *Dhamma* should be taught to Yakkhas in not more than six sentences; otherwise it was an offence.

⁵Gilgit MSS, III.2, pp. 11-12; J, III.201; cf. also Coomaraswamy, I, Appendix I, p. 43, for a Yaksha of a toll-house.

⁶J, II.13; J, I.228 says that those Buddhist monks who, without circumspection use the requisites given to them, may be reborn as Yakkha (ogre).

⁷J, V.11; V.304; cf. also Dh. A, I.171ff.

⁸J, III.431ff.

⁹cf. *Vv. A.*, 133f, Latā Yakkhī was indifferent towards luxuries and anger; she observed *uposatha* and avoided committing sin. As a result of all these good *kammās* she was reborn in heaven and stayed in the *Latā Vimāna*. cf. also J, VI.62ff. (Yaksha mentioned as mighty-being). This Yakkha had seven *vimānas* and lived in luxury as a result of his former good *kamma*.

¹⁰US, III.14ff.

¹¹Handiqui, K.K., *Yasastilaka and Indian Culture*, p. 419.

¹²Jacobi, H., *US*, p. 16 note 1, "one 'former year' consists of 7560 millions of common years."

¹³US, XXXVI.219, p. 227.

¹⁴Agashe, ed., p. 234.

¹⁵*supra*, p. 33 fn. 2.

¹⁶p. 32; cf. also Dh. A, I.172, where this is implied in the description of violence of two women, one of whom was born as a Yaksha.

enmity towards prince Sanat Kumāra. When he saw the Prince, both had a fist-fight in which the Yaksha could not be killed, although he was defeated. The idea of the long life of Yaksha is found here.

That Yaksha could attain many forms or states of being is thus indicated by various references. Likewise, animals could also apparently be reborn as Yakshas. The *Āvaśyaka Sūtra* (I.268) explicitly refers to the Yaksha Śūlapāni who was a bull in his previous birth. The *Dhammapāda Commentary*¹ refers to a Yakshinī (ogress) who had been a cow in each of her hundred existences and, as a cow, she had killed four youths. It is again said in the text² that a woman was reborn as a cat and a dog before being born as a Yakshi.

Thus it appears that the state of being as a Yaksha could be obtained as a result of prayer and austerity,³ spiteful wish, fall from a vow,⁴ a preference for that state, and evil acts. In various anecdotes of Yakshas' births and rebirths, mention is made of both helpful and harmful Yakshas. But it is difficult to decide whether their nature was dependent upon their good or bad *karma* during their previous lives. In any case these birth-stories of Yakshas seem to illustrate that ancestor-worship had its unmistakable bearing on the Yaksha cult. It will be speculative, no doubt, but it is quite possible that the Yaksha pantheon may have evolved as a result of deification of various departed heroes. And no less a personality than Kubera himself appears as a Brāhmaṇa in one of his previous births. It is said that he was made the lord of Yakshas after great penances, by Śiva.⁵

OTHER ASPECTS OF YAKSHA

The different aspects of Yakshas have been discussed in this section under their three main attributes viz., supernatural element, beneficence and maleficence.

Supernatural Element

The belief in the supernatural is found in all the popular religions, and also in the Yaksha cult. It is vividly displayed in the descriptions of their appearance as well as their propensities. These spirits were recognised as the embodiments of superhuman attributes and faculties, and were often dreadful on that account. Their appearance was usually ghastly; whether manifest or invisible,⁶ they were equally hideous. Sometimes they helped human beings without being visible. To quote an instance, the invisible Harikeśa Yaksha of Tinduga forest near ancient Banaras delivered a Jain Sadhu from a difficult situation.⁷ Yakshas could assume any form, and even disguise themselves as other demi-gods.⁸ However the pious and accomplished persons were capable of understanding such disguise.⁹

During coitus, calamity, sleep, anger, fear or ecstasy, they had to shed their assumed appearance¹⁰ evidently because they were off their guard. Their voluntary self-transformation into quadrupeds,¹¹ feathered creatures¹² or reptiles¹³ was possible. The waxing and waning

¹I.120.

²*Dh. A.*, I.172f.

³*US*, III.14ff; Handiqui, K.K., op. cit., p. 419.

⁴*Kathas.*, V.125.

⁵*supra*, p. 64.

⁶*R.*, I.23.24; *J.*, II.12f; Prince Vijaya kills invisible Yakkhas with Kuvēri's help.

⁷*US*, p. 51f.

⁸*VP*, Ch. 69, pp. 160, 167; *Br. P.*, III.7.60, 100.17; also *VP*, Ch. 69, p. 275 the sons of Khasā could assume any form at their will.

⁹*M. nid.*, II.448.

¹⁰*VP*, Ch. 69, p. 277.

¹¹Assumed the form of elephant and lion, *J.*, VI.147; goat, *J.*, I.110, cow; *Dh. A.*, II.120; *NK.*, tells of a Yaksha who first assumes the form of a staff and then changes it to that of a horse. cf. *NK.*, IX.7, p. 39.

¹²Crene, *Mbh.*, III.297, II, but denied that he was a bird, although Yaksha he was. *Mbh.*, III.297.18.

¹³*J.*, VI.147, Puṅṅaka assumes the form of a serpent.

of a Yaksha's appearance finds mention in the *kindred sayings* (XI-3), which records the episode of a Yakkha who was essentially an "ill favoured pot-bellied dwarf." He annoyed gods by sitting over Sakka's throne. He grew ever handsomer and more attractive in proportion to the rising degree of the god's anger, but lost his brilliance and disappeared when he was confronted with humility. This Yakkha evidently fed on anger for his beautiful appearance.

A concealed or transformed embodiment of Yakkha offers some consolation when compared to their actual ghastly appearance, which will be clear from their complete or fragmented physiognomical details. They were huge-bodied,¹ red eyed creatures having *śankukaraṇa*, javelin-like ears.² Their dwarfish stature, fearful faces, blood-red eyes and hunch-backs have also described in addition to their various weapons and their speed like that of the wind.³ The Yakkhas of terrible looks⁴ having weird and ghastly appearance were playmates of Śiva⁵ or waited upon Mañibhadra.⁶ The Dharma Yaksha, figuring in the famous *Yaksha-praśna*, is described in similar strain as 'huge bodied, endowed with unnatural eyes, tall as a palm tree, blazing like sun or fire and irresistible and huge like rock.'⁷ A later work alludes to the huge mouth of a Yakshi, who tried to frighten a man by raising one lip to heaven and resting the other on earth.⁸

These details of Yakshas' ghostly features, added to their complete limb-wise description, illustrate the supernatural conception of their physical form in all its fullness. For instance, Silesaloma is described as being tall like a palm-tree, possessed of a huge head like an arbour, eyes like a bowl, tusk like a turnip, and beak like that of hawk.⁹ Another Yaksha of a super-hideous appearance, which was a combination of huge body, sabrelike tooth, pot-belly, arms like a palm-tree and mouth like a mountain, finds mention in the *Madhurattā-Vilāsini*.¹⁰ Another massive Yaksha having a big face, wide jaws, projecting nose, lips like those of a donkey, pot-bellied, holding a dagger and a mace, is known from the *Rasavāhini*.¹¹ Added to it is the Yaksha-son of Khasā. He had four hands and feet, hair all over his body, a bulky head, the hair over his scalp looking like the *muñja* grass, elephant-like lips, horse-like teeth, big beard, red tongue and huge mouth. This fearful Yaksha, (a bear?) no wonder, ran upon his mother for devouring her.¹² It cannot be denied that, in these forms, animals like elephant, bear, or even birds have been clearly conveyed, although they cannot be identified because they are confounded. This is proved also by some other examples in which such composite forms have been explicitly accepted. An Assamukhi Yakkhi is known from Jātakas.¹³ The *Mahāvamsa* records a narrative of a Cetiya Yakkhi who lived on the Dhumarakkha mountain; when she was chased by Panḍukābhaya, it is said, she assumed the form of a mare: *valvāmukha*.¹⁴ An *asarūpadhārī* Yaksha-Selaga-finds mention in the Jain text.¹⁵ The instances in both the cases are related to accidents at sea.

The Buddhist and Jain texts have offered good or bad *Kamma*, action, as the reason for comely or ghostly Yaksha appearance. The *Uttarādhyana Sūtra*¹⁶ describes Yakshas as glittering like

¹*Mahākāya*, III.157.38, 150.36, 290.20; A Yaksha, huge like a mountain finds mention in the *Kathas.*, II.52.

²*Mbh.*, III.158.27-28; the Yaksha in Vessavana's assembly, cf. also *Mbh.*, III.158.36.

³*Mbh.*, III.110.21-25 (they fed on fat and flesh); III.140.3ff, 170-48, VI.32ff.

⁴*Mbh.*, III.158.51.

⁵*ibid.*, XIV.8.7.

⁶III.140.6.

⁷*ibid.*, III.291.20-21; *Divyāvadana*, pp. 104ff, for other similar huge bodied Yaksha-Rākshasas.

⁸*Kathas.*, IX.44.

⁹*J.*, I.138; cf. also, VI.113; VI.238.

¹⁰*Bu. A.*, p. 199.

¹¹pp. 19ff.

¹²*VP*, Ch. 69, p. 273.

¹³*J.*, III.431ff; V.222.

¹⁴*Mh. V.*, X.53ff. Coomaraswamy, I, p. 10 fn. 3 for the horse-faced Kinnara types.

¹⁵*NK*, IX, p. 128, In the *Nisīthaviśeṣa Cūrni*, gods of Meru are ascribed the canine form on earth; cf. Jain, *J.C., History*, p. 246.

¹⁶p. 60, their hideous shapes find mention in the same works, p. 53.

luminaries, for they were filled with virtues. In the *Samyutta Nikāya Comm.*,¹ similar reasons are assigned for the bad appearance of Khara and Suciloma Yakkhas. Khara's skin was coarse and looked like "tiled roof" while Suciloma's body contained a hairy growth pointed like needles. This was because the former as a monk had applied without permission the community-oil, and the latter had slept over a cosy rug.

The strange and bizarre appearance of some of the Yakkhas is indicated by their names e.g., Kuvaṇṇā,² Kharadāthika³ (donkey-toothed), and Silesaloma⁴ (Sticky-haired), besides Suciloma (needle-hair), and Khara⁵ (donkey).

It would be incorrect to say that Yakshas were represented only with grotesque features, for, several Yakshas as handsome creatures and Yakshīs as damsels of ravishing beauty also find mention. The brilliant-looking Yakshas, because of their golden appearance,⁶ have been figuratively described in the *Rāmāyana*⁷ as lotuses floating on the sea that was the sky. The *Mahāvastu*⁸ refers to numerous beautiful and glorious Yakshas whose brightness dimmed the splendour of golden pillars. Their comely appearance is described in the *Tattvārtha Sūtra* vividly. It says that they were good in countenance, had *manorama*, enchanting and proportionate physique (including pot-belly); their palms, soles, nails, tongue and lips were pink and they wore choicest jewels and crowns on the person.⁹ Their dark complexion is described in the *Triloka-Prajñapti* also, which measures their height as ten *dhanushas*.¹⁰ The *Petavatthu* ascribes their striking appearance to their good *Kamma*.¹¹ Like Yakshas, their female counterparts were beautiful creatures. In the Buddhist and Jain works, they are often represented as enticing men by their bewitching beauty, to enjoy pleasure which often ended perilously for men.¹² A beautiful Yakshi, devoted to her Yaksha, is known from the *Meghadūta*¹³ which describes her as slender, dark-complexioned, having well-set line of teeth, and lips red like the ripe *bimba*. Her heavy breasts made her person slightly bent just as her heavy hips rendered her gait slow. In her beauty she has been visualised as the creator's foremost work of art. So common was the belief in the beauty of Yakshinis that any unknown beauty earned the title of Yakshī inhesitatingly.¹⁴ Even in their beauty they could not shed their demonic characteristics, like the feet turned the wrong way or squinting eyes.¹⁵ The unwinking eyes and a shadowless person were their well recognised attributes.¹⁶

Coupled with the concepts of beauty and monstrosity, another tradition of designating strange and unfamiliar objects as Yaksha is also found; for instance, the figure of a hare on the moon¹⁷ or an unidentified tortoise¹⁸ are so-addressed.

In addition to their terrible or pleasing appearance, Yakshas were repositories of attributes and qualities of character which indicate their superhuman traits. Some Yakshas were like Brāhmaṇa in learning, like Kshatriyas in prowess, like Agni in anger and like Earth in compas-

¹*Sn.A*, I.301-5, At the conclusion of the *Suciloma Sūtra*, their skin became soft.

²*Mh. V*, VII.9-68.

³*J*, I.93 (Hindi Sahitya Sammelan Pub.), 1.93, *Bu.A*, p. 143.

⁴*J*, I.137ff., He came to grips in the Pancayudha Kumara whose five weapons were ineffective against the former's sticky-body.

⁵cf. *PED*, Sv. Yakkha; also our "Yakshon kī Nāma Paramparā," *Bhāṣā* (Hindi), pp. 67-73.

⁶*Mbh.*, III.157.38; V.1938.

⁷*R*, V.57.1.

⁸III.98; II.275; their flaming crest also finds mention cf. *Mahāvastu*, I.162; II.10.

⁹IV.12.

¹⁰*Triloka Prajñapti*, IV.26.

¹¹*Pv.*, II.9. 11ff; IV.3 (Serissaka); IV.1.13, 18-20.

¹²*J*, I.233ff, 289; II.89ff; Barua and Sinha, *Bharhut Inscriptions*, p. 84.

¹³*Meghaduta*, II.19.

¹⁴*Mbh.*, III.61.115; I.92.31.

¹⁵*Kathas.*, VI.118.

¹⁶*J*, V.18.

¹⁷*ibid.*

¹⁸*J*, VI.83, 89.

sion.¹ As swift creatures they could transport themselves or others² to desired places in a moment. But quite often their unobstructed movement extended only to certain specified areas. Tāṭaka's sway extended to one and a half *Yojana* (league),³ and in her domain she pestered the inhabitants of *Mālada* and *Kurusha Janapadas*.⁴ Assamukhī's domain was limited to an area of 150 square leagues. Beyond this she was ineffective.⁵ Sometimes a Yaksha's effective control spread only to the extent of his habitat, as in the case of Makhādeva and his arboreal abode.⁶ These well-defined territories sometimes aroused differences and hostilities. There is an instance of a row between two Yakkhas over the ownership of a corpse that lay between their respective domains.⁷ The belief in the restricted domain of Yakshas is found in the *Nāyādhamma Kahā*, which tells about an ogress of a *Lavaṇa* Sea.⁸ Such superstitions about the limited territorial powers of Yakshas were probably responsible for the attempts to assign them a protective control of every town of ancient India.

Besides restricted sway, other factors like their inefficacy during the day-time also obstructed their omnipresence. Yakshas were nocturnal creatures⁹ who were dazed by the brightness of the sun and thereby rendered ineffective during sunlit hours.¹⁰ During nights, however their haunts were abandoned.¹¹ There were scores of reasons to fear them, one being their omnivorous appetite. The *Vāyu Purāṇa* says that anything that came into their view was devoured; the list includes even Devas, Asura, Gandharva, Kinnara, Piśāca, men, serpents and birds.¹² They could consume the flesh and blood of human beings merely by looking at them. Contrary to it, sometimes they are represented as eating the food passed to them through fire.¹³ They also relished fruits.¹⁴ In the *Triloka Prajñapti*¹⁵ their food is said to have consisted of various dainties and, as is emphasised, not the *Kavalāhāra*.

The mysterious powers of Yakshas were as dreadful as they were unlimited. They could raise fearful spectacles out of nowhere. To vanquish the Buddha, Ālavaka is said to have planted himself with one foot on the Manosilātala and the other on the Kelāsakūṭa, shouted his name which was heard throughout the Jambūdīpa.¹⁶ He raised the semblances of rains, flames, smoke, and terrible sights and creatures.¹⁷ As a last resort he used his special weapon—*Vatthāvudha*—which was made of cloth and was invested with the power of shattering Mt. Sineru, or stopping rains, destroying trees and crops and drying the whole sea for a period of twelve years.¹⁸ *Vatthāvudha* was worn as a part of Yakkha's *uttariya*. Tāṭaka of the *Rāmāyaṇa* similarly possessed various super-natural attributes and Rāma had to break her spell before killing her.¹⁹ Ajakālaka Yakkha also tested the might of his adversary by raising gales and storms which created a commotion

¹R, VII.26.33.

²*Mbh.*, II.10.22; *Tattvārtha Sūtra*, p. 102 (*Sū*, IV.12); *Therīgāthā Comm.*, p. 29; *J*, VI.266; *MMK*, III.567, 189; *BSS*, XIX.130f.

³R, I.23.26.

⁴ibid, I.23.16.

⁵J, III.298, 299; cf. also *J*, I.25; (tank), III.132, 298; (trees and forests) II.102 (lake).

⁶J, III.201.

⁷J, I.131ff., Ālavaka's abode extended to 3 leagues and over it lay the road to Himavā by air, *Sn. A*, I.222.

⁸VIII, pp. 99ff.

⁹R, I.33.18.

¹⁰*Kathas.*, I.77. The same belief is portrayed in *Kathas.*, III.189.

¹¹*Vāmana Purāṇa*, 34.24ff, people stayed away from the shrine of Yakshi during night.

¹²*VP*, Ch. 69, p. 275.

¹³*VP*, p. 51.

¹⁴ibid, p. 121.

¹⁵IV.37ff.

¹⁶*Sn. A*, I.223.

¹⁷ibid.

¹⁸ibid, I.225.f; It was comparable to Sakkas *vajrāvudha*, Vessavana's *Gadāvudha* and Yama's *Nayanāvudha*. Ālavaka's weapon is also mentioned as *Dusāvudha*, *Sn. A*, I.223.

¹⁹R, I.26.19ff; 126.27.

in the Jambūdīpa to the state of final dissolution.¹ But even these colossal capacities of Yakkhas were futile before great men like the Buddha, or Bodhisattva. Mahāvīra is also said to have shamed Śūlapāni's similar feats.²

The other capacities of Yakshas are also recorded. A Yakshī could raise horns on the head of human beings merely by playing a tune on a flute³; another Yaksha could create a tank for bath or provide food from nowhere for human beings or even impart the knowledge of science to them, with the aid of supernatural capacities.⁴ They could also raise fearful⁵ or benevolent rains. An instance of the latter is recorded in the *Jivandhara Caṅpū*⁶ where rains were brought to save the elephants of Jivandhara from a jungle-fire. Some Yakshas could convert copper into gold.⁷

As intelligent creatures they possessed enviable memory as well as knowledge of the past. They could also predict future events with astonishing accuracy. The *Mahāsutasoma Jātaka* refers to Yakkha who recognised the king of Banaras because of their companionship in the latter's previous birth.⁸ The *Kathākośa* similarly tells of Asita Yaksha and prince Sanatkumar who were mutually ill-disposed because the Yaksha had remembered something from their past birth.⁹ Such wonderful memory and the premonitory faculty of Yaksha had its useful aspects also. A Brāhmaṇa is said to have saved himself from serpent-bite because of a forewarning from a Yaksha.¹⁰ Another lady received constant help from a Yakshī, Kālī—in reaping a plentiful crop. This Yakshī had fore-knowledge of the spots where rains would pour profusely and the woman always raised her crops at the advised tracts.¹¹ The belief in the oracular faculty of Yakshas was open to exploitation, and sometimes a person could hide himself and make a prophesy to trick others. An instance of this is found in the *Ummadanti Jātaka*¹² which relates how a king was deceived and persuaded not to go after Ummadanti whom he passionately loved.

Just as the supernatural element is found inherent in Yakshas' character, it manifests itself in their material attributes also. The *Vatthāvudha* of Āḷavaka has been mentioned already in this regard. Vajrapāṇi, another Yaksha is reputed to have possessed a *vajra*, thunderbolt, of 'flaming mass' with which he often terrified *Niganthaputtas*. If a person went to the extent of thrice refusing to answer the Buddha, Vajrapāṇi, it was said, would threaten the defaulter with his *vajra*.¹³ Kubera, likewise possessed a *gadāyudha*, which was endowed with the capacity of falling on the head of many thousand Yakkhas and return to him.¹⁴ The *Mahāvastu*¹⁵ contains a graphic description of Kubera and the other *Lokapālas*, which distinguished them as a class. It is said that they had Deva's span of life, their bliss, their sway, retinue, form, smell, touch, garments and ornaments. The ornaments which they wore in front were visible from behind and *vice versa*. They cast no shadow and were self-luminous. Riding on their bejewelled *vimānas*, they travelled through the air to any place of their choosing.

¹*supra*, Chapter 6.

²*Avasyaka Sūtra*, I.268-71.

³*Kathas.*, III.186.

⁴*ibid.*, V.125.

⁵*J.*, VI.147.

⁶V.23.

⁷*Kathas.*, III.161f.

⁸*J.*, V.257.

⁹*Kathākośa*, p. 32. cf. also *Kathas.*, VI.101 where a Yakshī Vicitrakathā says that her separation from the prince was due to the curse of Nāga.

¹⁰*J.*, III.211.

¹¹*Dh. A.*, I.175.

¹²*J.*, V.111.

¹³*M.*, I.231; cf. also *J.*, III.97.

¹⁴*Sn. A.*, I.225.

¹⁵I.25f.

Several animate or inanimate personal articles of great merit find mention as the attributes of Yakshas. Punṇaka was the owner of a horse which had ears of gold, hoofs of ruby and mail-armour of molten gold.¹ In addition he possessed an unparalleled jewel which afforded in its gleam a kaleidoscopic view of the sights of the world.² Both these attributes find depiction in a Bharhut relief [Fig. 82]. The land of Yakshas contained celestial trees which produced much desired objects, eatables, luxuries and heavenly nymphs.³ It was generally believed that they could share their joys with human-beings making their life easier and pleasant. They possessed certain ointments of miraculous power. An instance is recorded of a man who concluded his pilgrimage of the holy waters with the aid of an ointment given to him by a Yaksha, which saved him from sufferings.⁴ A Yaksha's ring—called *iti*—was capable of averting any calamity.⁵ The rings of Vajrapāṇi and other Yakshas find mention in the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*,⁶ which names them as *pañcamātrā mahāmudrā*, and *pushpamudrā* respectively. An inexhaustible pitcher which provided any desired object is mentioned in the *Kathāsaritsāgara*⁷; this was presented to the woodcutter Śubhadatta by Yakshas for his service to them. Some attributes of Kubera could be of immense help to men because they were capable of bestowing immortality and restoring eyesight and even lost youth.⁸ The assistance of Yakshas could be profitable for having easy access to hidden treasures. There were spells and charms in possession of Yakshas, the knowledge of which could help in obtaining wealth.⁹ These spells were also supposed to ensure health, provide eatables and increase one's prestige.¹⁰

Maleficence

Yakshas were enormously capable of hurting or helping human beings because of their supernatural powers. Several instances of their maleficence have found mention in the literary tradition of India. Some predominant roles of Yakshas portray them as enemies of men. They possessed human beings, devoured them or simply killed them. The total impact of the belief in such malevolent acts of Yakshas must have oppressed the common man's mind. Yakshas delighted in troubling men. They possessed human being by entering into them, and the person's self was completely confounded as a result of such affliction. The possession by these spirits was known as *Yaksha-graha*.¹¹ Originally, the faculty of possession was ascribed to Gandharvas¹²; to Yakshas it has been ascribed only by implication.¹³ The later works offer a copious documentation of such affliction in respect of persons, dead or alive. The *Pañcatantra* records the instance of Yaksha Devagarbha who found a ready abode in the corpse of Chandragupta Maurya.¹⁴ The instances of Yakshas' possession of living human-beings are numerous. They possessed some persons in order to devour them.¹⁵ Ill-treated servants, who were reborn as Yakshas, were likely to possess

¹J, VI.133, 135.

²ibid.

³R, II.85.16.

⁴*Kathas.*, IX.44.

⁵ibid, VI.72; *Divyavadāna*, pp. 104ff, refers to various herbs which grew on the mountains inhabited by Yaksha-Rākshasas. These herbs were of exceptional qualities and are named as—*Sankhanābhi*, *Amogha*, *Sammohini* and *Sanjivani*.

⁶pp. 327, 503.

⁷*Kathas.*, V.3f.

⁸*Mbh.*, V.109.20-21; V.62.24-25.

⁹J, III.300; *Kathas.*, VI.102; III.186ff; IX.17.

¹⁰J, V.257.

¹¹*Mbh.*, III.219.51; *Bhagavati Sūtra*, III.7.164.

¹²*RV*, X.85.40-44.

¹³ibid, IV.3.13.

¹⁴Quoted by, Penzer, N.M., *Kathas*.

¹⁵*Mh. V*, XXXVI.82f (Rattākhī) Lohitākhī Yakkha finds mention in the *VVA*, p. 223; cf. also Punnakāla and his *pajjāraka jvara*, *Mh. V*, XV.63, *Comm.*, p. 349.

their former masters.¹ Jealousy towards a former co-wife also resulted in such a possession.² A Yakshi is said to have possessed her child to set him on the moral path.³ Her story makes it clear that holy men who stuck to the prescribed religious fasts were beyond such affliction. The Yaksha Ālavaka is described as entering the minds of casual boarders of his *vimāna*, abode, if they failed to answer his questions relating to the Buddhist faith. The possession produced restlessness and instant imbalance of mind.⁴ An interesting example of possession by a Yaksha of his devotee is found in the *Antagadadasāo*.⁵ This devotee—Ajjunae—a florist lived in Rāyagriha during the times of king Kuṅika. We are told that his family deity—Yaksha Moggarapaṇi—possessed him on being admonished for his indifference when the florist was tied crosswise by five gangsters who also molested his wife. On being possessed by the Yaksha, he snatched the latter's mace of 1000 *palas*, killed the gangsters and his wife and, in the heat of possession, he ran amuck till Sudaṃsane, a devout Jain, pacified him. The story shows that an afflicted person was likely to lose the discriminating faculty but he was powerless before a person who had strictly adhered to the prescribed *aṇu*, small, and *mahā*, big, fasts.⁶

The state of *Yaksha-graha* was supposed to produce certain symptoms in the afflicted person. Such a victim was thrown into convulsive fits, and sometimes attempted murderous acts.⁷ An interesting elaboration of this belief is found in the *Mahā-Ummaga Jātaka* where such a victim is supposed to bark like a mad dog particularly on the dark fortnight of the fast days.⁸ Several reasons such as, consumption of used food, impurity, staying at lonely places and the invocation of Yakshas, were regarded as responsible for such possession.⁹ Bharata in his *Nāṭyaśāstra* has suggested that the idea of possession should be portrayed on the stage by simulating heavy breathing, trembling, jumping, falling down, perspiring, foaming at the mouth and licking by one's tongue.¹⁰ The prescription of such acting indicates that the meaning of such symptoms was well-understood by the audience.

The prognosis and symptoms of *Yakshomāda* find mention in the ancient works on medicine. The *Suśruta Saṃhitā*¹¹ relates that the *Yaksha-grahas* entered the body of their victims imperceptibly and, to satisfy the *graha*, the victim was offered those objects which Yakshas liked—such as flowers, scent, garments, barley, honey, wine, meat, blood and milk. The possessed person developed certain characteristic symptoms, *viz.*, red eyes,¹² inclination to wear only thin and red garments, great vigour and strength, restlessness, a tendency to insist on granting boons, and disconsolateness. The *Caraka Saṃhitā*¹³ records almost similar symptoms of *Yakshomāda*, and elaborates that the possessed person looked benumbed and drowsy, frequently changed his mind, wept or laughed heartily, and showed a great liking for dance and music. It is also pointed out in the work that such a person spoke mysteriously or abused Brāhmaṇas and physicians. A person under possession was not to be shown any sympathy, on the other hand, certain remedial measures such as hitting him with violent blows and tying palm-leaf and protective thread

¹Motichandra, *BPWM*, 3 p. 47 note 17.

²*Ibid.*, p. 47.

³*Dh. A.*, VI.18ff. (*PTS*).

⁴*Sn. A.*, I.228.

⁵pp. 86-90.

⁶Sometimes Yakshas ill-treated even the Jain monk and nuns. cf. Shah, U.P., *JOI*, III, 1, p. 59 note 27.

⁷*SA*, I.307; *Dh. A.*, under *Sānuthera Vatthu*.

⁸*J.*, V.194; cf. also *J.*, V.254.

⁹*Nāṭyaśāstra*, VII.73f. cf. also Jain, J.C., *Life in Ancient India*, p. 22, Women taking bath in open exposed themselves to Yakshas, according to *Narmamālā*, II.91.

¹⁰*Nāṭyaśāstra*.

¹¹LX.6-9, 22; *Caraka Saṃhitā*, *Nidānasthāna*, VII.11-15 particularly 14.

¹²*Antag.*, 89-90; Ajjunae's eye were red when he has possessed and he fell down entirely exhausted when Yaksha left him.

¹³*Cikitsāsthāna*, IX.20.

around his arms and legs, have been suggested.¹ Owing to its inscrutable nature, the whole concept of possession was open to fraudulent exploitation.² Its sanctity often degenerated into farce and invited ridicule.³

Another important aspect of Yakshas malevolence lay in their man-eating nature, which represents a popularly accepted belief in the folklore. They were supposed to like both meat and spirituous drink,⁴ but human flesh was their choicest delight.⁵ Sometimes they ate even corpses,⁶ or human flesh along with rice.⁷ To satisfy their appetite, they could take recourse to any action. They were cruel by nature and eating flesh was in conformity with the traditions of their *Kula*, family.⁸ They tricked innocent persons with their evil designs, and ate their victims. Gumbiya Yaksha is said to have lived in a forest. He used to poison the travellers by offering them food mixed with poisoned honey so that the victim might fall an easy prey to his cannibalistic designs.⁹ They were capable of spreading epidemics in a city and those who succumbed to it belonged to them.¹⁰ Some Yakshas caught persons who walked into the territory of their maleficent control, and the victim met a sad end.¹¹ Even human infants were not exempt from their evil designs.¹² Some Yakshīs were supposed to entice men by their provocative charm, in addition to raising beautiful spectacles of flourishing townships. Marrying such persons, they lived with them till substitutes were available after which they killed and devoured them.¹³ Sometimes Yakshas' violence was directed towards a certain class. The Yakshī Kuntī of Kuntinagara was notorious for abducting new-born babes of the Brāhmaṇas in the city,¹⁴ while Gardabha Yaksha terrorised the people of Mathura in the same manner.¹⁵ Ultimately they were subdued by the Buddha. People could save themselves from Yakshas with some pluck. The *Sutano Jātaka* records the story of a man-eating Yakkha who could not harm Sutana because he made use of the king's umbrella, slippers and sword, and avoided the shade of the tree inhabited by the Yakkha. Ultimately Sutana subdued the Yakkha by force of reason.¹⁶

It appears strange that such acts of Yakkhas sometimes happened with the consent of Vessavana, who is also represented as indicating methods of rescue from ill-disposed Yakshas.¹⁷ The Yakshas, for their part, served Vessavana and in return received such permission. The Assamukhī Yakkhī is said to have served him for a term of three years;¹⁸ another Yaksha for obtaining the same permission had to serve Vessavana for twelve years.¹⁹ Even in such cruel predictions a Yaksha betrayed his Buddhist bias for he ate only those Buddhist disciples who thought

¹*Vin. P.*, I.147 and notes.

²cf. Moti Chandra, *BPWM*, III, p. 60.

³*Samayamātrikā*, II.85; *Kalāvālāsa*, IX.18.20; cf. Moti Chandra, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

⁴*J.*, I.113.

⁵*J.*, I.3; 233ff; IIIff; VI.284 (monstrous cannibal).

⁶*Dh. A.*, II.237-8.

⁷*J.*, III.201.

⁸*MP*, 180.9-10.

⁹*J.*, III.132.

¹⁰*Mh. V.*, XV.63f., *Comm.*, p. 349.

¹¹*J.*, I.233f; II.89ff.

¹²*J.*, IV.304; Another *Jātaka* (V.12) tells of a Yakshīnī who abducted a child but refrained from devouring him because she developed an affection for him; cf. also *J.*, VI.163; V.12ff, V.304f., *Nāgakumara Carita*, VII.10.10; *Caraka Saṁhitā*, Śarīrasthānam, VI.27, for the *bālagraha* destroying foetus; also *Mbh.*, III.82.90 for the Yakshīnī whose worship relieved the devotee of the sin of destroying foetus.

¹³*J.*, II.89.

¹⁴*Gilgit MSS*, III.1.xviii.

¹⁵*ibid.*, III.1.16.

¹⁶*J.*, III.201ff.

¹⁷*supra*, p. 40.

¹⁸*J.*, III.298.

¹⁹*ibid.*, II.11ff.

that 'no refuge was real refuge.'¹ The permission of Vessavana, however, did not always mean that Yakkha would have his prey. His cannibalistic ventures were often obstructed by Vessavana himself. The *Jayadissa Jataka* explicates this point describing that a Yakkhinī who had obtained such permission after serving Vessavana could not abduct to devour the third child of a queen because she was called back to Vessavana's service.² The Buddha also intervened and saved persons from the Yakkhas, which is shown by the case of Avaruddhaka.³ A *Jataka*⁴ records the episode of another Yakshī's abortive bid to abduct a child. There were two claimants to the child—the real one and a Yakshī. The Bodhisattva-sage arbitrated in the matter and recognised the Yakkhi from her red and unblinking eyes. The child was therefore restored to her mother.

The belief in the cannibalistic nature of Yakshas is found in ancient mode of punishment. Certain Pali texts record the instances of kings who sent the prisoners to their execution by sending them over to Yakshas. This the princes did to save their own lives.⁵ Sometimes Yakshas, as the punishers of evil-doers, were left to decide the guilt of accused persons and kill them by crushing them between the thighs, if the accusation was found to be correct.⁶

The malevolence of Yakshas was dreadful on account of its severity; to escape from it, some charms and spells were also current. By employing certain measures, their evil power could be held at bay. To master the Yaksha, Sutana is said to have asked for the Prince's sword for it is said that "even goblins feared those who had weapons in their hands."⁷ Similarly iron and palm-leaf were tabooed to Yakshas. The child of a prince of Benaras was saved from a Yakkhinī when put inside an iron-cage (*ayogharā*) along with palm-leaves.⁸ The *Kathāsaritsāgara*⁹ also describes a room where Vāsavadattā was confined, and these precautions were taken. Several weapons were hung up in the room. It is said that the mixed gleam of jewel-lamps shed a blaze which protected the child as well as made the room look auspicious. Even the windows of the room were covered with sacred plants. In addition to such warding off devices, certain ward-runes were also helpful in driving away Yakshas. The *Āṭṭānāṭṭiya Sutta* was one such *paritta*,¹⁰ ward-rune. Another was *Mahāmāyūrī* which was a part of the *pañcarakshā* texts accepted in the Northern Buddhism.¹¹ A later manifestation of this type of belief is found in the *Kathāsaritsāgara*¹² which suggests that Yakshas were incapable of troubling persons who had heard the series of twenty-four questions and answers of Vetāla and Vikramāditya. Some Yakshas were capable of inducing sneeze, but those who uttered a formula *viz.*, 'Jong life', were saved from being devoured.¹³ The worship of higher gods was also supposed to protect the devotees from Yakshas.¹⁴ But the *Ayakūṭa Jataka* records the instance of a Bodhisattva whom Yakshas abortively attempted to kill with a blazing mass of iron for he had declared himself against the practice of offering sacrifices to them.¹⁵

¹ibid, I. 3.

²J, V.12.

³Dh. A, II.237.

⁴J, VI.163.

⁵J, III.201ff; Sn.A, I.217ff.

⁶Parīśiṣṭaparvaṇa, II, 8th story.

⁷J, III.201-203.

⁸J, IV.304f.

⁹II.161; cf. also Penzers note in *Kathās.*, II.163, on this practice in India and abroad.

¹⁰supra, p. 40.

¹¹JUPHS, XV, II, p. 24.

¹²Kathās., VI.124.

¹³J, II.12f.

¹⁴VP, Ch. 30, p. 104.

¹⁵J, III.96f.

Beneficence

The Yakshas' beneficence manifested itself in their various acts of grace. Their sway extended to all the departments of human activity and, as such, they were often invoked for help. Generally speaking, the whole notion of benevolent activity of Yaksha comprises of their faculties for imparting (i) wealth, (ii) progeny, and (iii) giving protection. These may be discussed here in reference to their various implications.

The mysterious power of Yakshas over riches was well-recognised and they were regarded as possessing limitless wealth. They were *kamakāmi*, enjoying all kinds of luxuries.¹ The *Kalpasūtra* refers to Jrimbhaka-Yakshas in the service of Vessavana as collecting treasures to deposit them in King Siddhartha's palace on the eve of Mahāvīra's conception.² In the *Petavatthu*,³ the affluence of Ankura Yaksha has been described picturesquely. The power over gold (*suvarnaśkti*) was conferred upon Yakshas by Kubera himself.⁴ Kubera was the lord of riches,⁵ and it is said that he gave away to men a quarter of all the wealth in his possession.⁶

But probably what matters more than the mere enviable possessions of the Yakshas is the belief in their being liberal spenders of riches. In the *Mahābhārata*, Arantuka is mentioned as awarding to his worshippers the merit of obtaining gold.⁷ Mañibhadra, Tarantuka and Macakraka are similarly connected with riches.⁸ It is said that there was a time when Dhanada, Praushthapada and Śukra gave wealth to men.⁹ Yudhishtira is said to have worshipped Mañibhadra, Kubera and others while going to bring the treasures of Maruts.¹⁰ Some Yakshas like Puṇṇaka offered riches to extract some favour. To please a Nāga king he made to him gifts of elephants, horses, mules, chariots and waggons (*valabhi*) filled with all sorts of gems, and these different items of presentation in each case were one hundred in number.¹¹ Puṇṇaka is represented as having had the power of knowing hidden wealth; he knew that the best jewels were to be found at Vepulla near Rājagaha.¹² Elsewhere, another Yaksha who had similar knowledge of the jewels of Malava-country, finds mention.¹³ It is interesting to note that they even stole jewels as though their possessions were not sufficient.¹⁴ However, a happy meeting with Yakshas usually resulted in receiving something. The *Kathākośa* relates that a prince and his friends received one jewel each from a Yaksha. Of these jewels, the sapphire had the efficacy of awarding royalty to its keeper while the other, ruby, could gather provisions for daily use. Eventually the sapphire obtained a dominion for the prince and the ruby brought fabulous wealth to his friend.¹⁵ The same work contains the story of a trader, Dhanada, whose wealth was restored to him by Kaparddi Yaksha.¹⁶ The same Yaksha as bestower of wealth is mentioned in the *Prabandha Cintāmaṇi* also.¹⁷ Sometimes a Yaksha's liberality was quite prodigious as in the case of king Susheṇa whose country was filled with leaves of gold by

¹PV, IV, 3.44.

²*Kalpamañjarī Tikā on Kalpasūtra, Sū, 52 (I, p. 563) Rajkot, 1958.*

³II.9.16ff; cf. *Mbh.*, VI.6.23 for the treasures of Kubera.

⁴*DA*, II.648.

⁵*Mbh.*, V.16.33; VI.6.23.

⁶*ibid.*, VI.7.21; cf. also *supra*, p. 61.

⁷*Mbh.*, III.81, 171.

⁸cf. Hopkins, E.W., *Epic Mythology*, p. 148.

⁹*Mbh.*, V.112.3.

¹⁰*ibid.*, XIV.64.6-9.

¹¹*J*, VI.132.

¹²*J*, VI.133.

¹³*Kathav.*, VI.114.

¹⁴*Mbh.*, 1.204.2, XIV.56.23.

¹⁵*Kathākośa*, pp. 126ff.

¹⁶*ibid.*, p. 1, f. cf. also Parisishtaparvan, III, 1ff.

¹⁷cf. Tawney, C.H., *Kathākośa*, p. 203.

Yakshīs.¹ By imparting the knowledge of spells, they could lead their worshippers to hidden wealth.² But sometimes such hidden treasures went to the rightful inheritor, and Yakshas were supposed to guard it during the interim period. The king of Vatsa, it is said, was presented with a fortune of that nature by a Yaksha who had guarded it.³ If a Yaksha failed in this duty concerning treasures awaiting its disposal, he was punished by Kubera. There is an instance of Virūpāksha Yaksha who had been appointed by Kubera as the chief guardian of an enormous treasures lying outside the town of Mathurā. He was punished by his lord for absenting himself, delegating his job to his companions.⁴ That Yakshīs could be of immense help is proved by *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*⁵ where they are generally supposed to reach the devotees in the roles of mother, sister or wife, and help them in the manner befitting their roles.

The belief in the opulence and liberality of Yakshas took many forms. Gamblers are often represented as seeking their favours wherever stakes were involved. Yakshas were themselves invisible gamblers as well as the bestowers of the skill and luck necessary for winning. A gambling session between Puṅṅaka and Dhanañjaya Koravya which ended in the latter's defeat is vividly described in a *Jātaka*.⁶ The *Kāmasūtra* refers to a festival—*Yaksharātri*; a special feature of this night was the extensive gambling by people.⁷ In the *Karpūracarita Bhāṣa*, Mañibhadra is mentioned as the giver of victory in gambling but it is said that his oppressive expectations of propitiation from the devotee in return for his favour ultimately brought disgust.⁸ But they were worshipped in spite of such greed. A gambler Nāgila propitiated Virūpāksha, and obtained a magic lamp which brought him wealth.⁹ Another ruffianly gambler of Ujjaini is mentioned as wishing to win the favour of Yakshas for the sake of gaining money.¹⁰

Another significant aspect of Yakshas' benevolence is concerned with their capacity to grant progeny. It is therefore strange that these demi-gods were often shown to be devourers of children.¹¹ In the Yaksha-mythology, however, this fertility motif found various expressions coupled with the conventional reliance on them as givers of children. The other ramifications of the motif are provided by the instances dealing with Yakshas' sexual contact with the human beings, their benevolence to the extent of granting genitals, i.e., virility, or their knack of detecting depravity and infidelity of husbands and wives. The instances of such cases are discussed below. The *Vinaya Piṭaka* prohibits monks from sleeping with Yakshīs, which was an offence.¹² But the vow of celibacy did not apply to other men some of whom lived with Yakshīs even taking them as their wives. The *Māñjuśrīmūlakalpa* provides several references indicating that Yakshīs satisfied the erotic desires of their devotees.¹³ In the *Mahāvamsa*, prince Vijaya is said to have married Yakkhī Kuvaṅṅā and had a son and a daughter from her.¹⁴ While Yakshīs were supposed to satisfy human lust,¹⁵ it seems that Yakshas could not achieve

¹*Kathas.*, III.25.

²*ibid.*, VI.114.

³*ibid.*, II.52.

⁴*Kathas.*, III.133ff. In this work Guhyakas also are said to be guards of treasures. *Kathas.*, I, p. 97.

⁵I.293; III.720.

⁶*J.*, VI.137f. It also mentions a song of dice, sung by the tutelary deity of the king for his master's guidance through the game. Various alternatives in choosing a dice and different types of dice such as *Mālikā*, *Savaṭo*, *Bahula*, *Śānti*, *Bhadra* are mentioned.

⁷Motichandra, *BPWM*, III, p. 50; *NK*, IX.88.

⁸*BPWM*, III, p. 60.

⁹*ibid.*

¹⁰*Kathas.*, IX 17; V.179.

¹¹*supra*, p. 155; cf. also *J.*, no. 510; 513; *Nāgakumāra Carita*, VII.10.10.

¹²*J.*, III.298 also no. 196.

¹³*MMK*, II.564ff; Revati is described as a giver of pleasure, cf. II.566, *Kāmahogaratā sadā*, *Kāmadā Bhogadā*, etc., *Vāmakeśvarīmatain*, IV.39, p. 113 records similar tradition.

¹⁴*Mh.* V, VII.9-68.

¹⁵*BSS*, XIX, 75ff; XIV; 130ff; *Kathas.*, II.231; VIII.56.

the converse of it. In the *Rasavāhinī* is found an instance of Jayasena Yaksha who loved the wife of Goṭhiyambara but he could not succeed in his erotic advances towards her.¹ A Brāhmaṇa damsel is said to have kept a tryst with a Yaksha but avoided his overtures by secretly kindling light which was tabooed to the Yaksha.² However, the instance of Yaksha Gaṇḍitinduga having sexual contact with the daughter of a Kosala king is found.³

As a naturally corollary to such belief, Yakshas were supposed to bring about a desired marriage⁴ or grant children. The tales which present Yakshas as punishers of depraved women and upholders of the chaste ones, are also relevant in this context. The statues of Yakshas or their temples served as the spots for ordeals to test the females. The *Parīśiṣṭaparvaṇa* describes such an ordeal undergone by a woman who was justly accused of adultery. It tells of the statue of Yaksha Sobhana of "such sanctity that no guilty person could pass through between its legs." When confronted with the sculpture within the temple, the woman framed an oath which was literally true but essentially false. This completely flabbergasted the Yaksha and, in his bewildered state, he was at a loss to know how to act and she passed through his legs and came out unscathed.⁵ Reference here may be made to the *Rājataranginī*, which affords an instance of a Yaksha who was upholder of faithful women. This powerful and chaste Yaksha lived in a rock, which could be moved only by the touch of a chaste woman. Three crores of depraved women of higher varnas, it is said, tried in vain to move it and the job was finally accomplished by a chaste woman *Candrāvati*.⁶

Another expression of the fertility motif of Yakshas related to their capacity of changing sex. The *Mahābhārata*⁷ describes Śikhaṇḍī who was the elder daughter of a king of Kāśī in a previous birth. To save him from humiliation and disgrace after marriage, the Yaksha Sthūṇākarna compassionately exchanged his sex with him. This deal, however, was disapproved by Kubera who cursed the Yaksha to remain a female for ever, which period was later decreased to last till the life-time of Śikhaṇḍī. The *Kathāsaritsāgara*⁸ repeats the story, changing it only in respect of the names. The Yaksha Sthūṇākarna has been substituted by Sthūlāsiras, the princess is now Vidyādhari and the eunuch prince has been named Prabhākara. The idea of Yakshas' virility is fairly consistent. The *Vāmana Purāṇa*⁹ also refers to Pāncālika Yaksha who took upon himself and endured the obsessive erotic effect of the arrows of Kāmadeva on Śiva. This reveals that erotic afflictions were within the power of Yakshas. Sometimes they projected such emotions towards human beings and sometimes they merely saved others from the pangs of such affliction. It may be pointed out here, that *Samayamātrikā*¹⁰ describes *yaksharāga* as one of the erotic passions along with the reactions produced by it.

In sharp contrast to these motifs, amplifying Yakshas as fertility-deities, a more simple belief in them as givers of children finds greater occurrence. In deference to them, such children were usually named after them.¹¹ Yaksha Umbaradatta blessed Gangadattā the wife of Sāgaradatta with a child, who was christened after the Yaksha.¹² The *Nāyādhammakahā*¹³ and

¹DPPN, sv. Goṭhiyambara (Appendix).

²cf. Jain, J.C., *Bharatiya Samaja* (Hindi), p. 442.

³ibid, p. 443.

⁴*Kathas.*, VIII.24 cf. also, Coomaraswamy, I, p. 10.

⁵Parīśiṣṭaparvaṇ, II, 8th story, *Daśaveliyacūṛṇī*, Ratlam, 1933, pp. 89-91; *Śukasaptati*, ed. Schmidt, Leipzig, 1893, p. 56; *Kathas*, I.162; *Āvaśyaka Sūtra*, III, p. 462.

⁶*Rājataranginī*, I.3'9ff.

⁷*Mbh.*, V. 191, 192.

⁸VII.23.

⁹Agrawala, V.S., *Vāmana Purāṇa*, p. 13f.

¹⁰V. 15,49.

¹¹BSS, VI.61 (Naravāhanadatta); Agrawala, V.S., Panini, p. 364; *Ep. Ind.*, XXXI.205 (Yakshārya); Yaksha Dhanyaśrī, *Bulletin of Ancient Indian History and Archaeology*, I, 1967, p. 61f; published from University of Saugar.

¹²*Yip. S.*, VII.28, transl., pp. 84ff.

¹³II, pp. 49ff.

*Āvaśyaka Sūtra*¹ similarly refer to Bhaddā and Subhaddā who obtained children by worshipping Surambara and Vessavana respectively. In the *Uttarādhyayana Tīkā*,² Guṇamālā is said to have been blessed by a Yaksha with a daughter. It sometimes turned out that the child so granted was unlucky. The child of Gangadattā was subjected to miseries; he eventually took an unrighteous path and passed away. Devadatta of *Nāyādhammakahāo* too was unlucky; he was abducted and killed by a thief. Yakshas sometimes administered some objects which had child-giving propensity. The *Abbhantara Jātaka*³ refers to Vessavana's mangoes having the efficacy of inducing conception. Any child born of eating this mango was destined to become the sole monarch of the earth, which is so unlike the Jain belief documented earlier. The mango tree was a prized possession and was heavily secured with iron-nets extending from the bottom to the top of the tree. In addition, a thousand millions of Kumbhaṇḍa, goblins and the like kept a constant vigil over it. The tree was situated at a place which was hot like the fire of hell (not detrimental to the plant!) and every fruit on it was properly accounted for. An ascetic is mentioned as the regular recipient of four such mangoes from Kubera. The mangoes of Kubera as also the hazards of getting them are also described in the *Suruci Jātaka*.⁴

Besides bestowing children upon their devotees, Yakshas protected the foetus also. Kāḷavela has been ascribed such a function in the *Mahāvamsa*⁵ in the case of Dīghagāminī's son. This case shows that the protective function of the Yaksha did not conclude with the safe birth of the child. On the other hand, it was a permanent responsibility. The Buddhist works usually keep an account of the service of Yakshas from the gestation to the birth of the Buddha. Such a belief in Yakshas as bestowers of children was in spite of their oft-quoted natural inclination to abduct, kill or devour children.⁶

One of the most important functions of Yakshas lay in offering protection to human beings. In consonance with this, they were accepted as tutelary figures. Coomaraswamy has described certain important Yakshas like Śākyavardhana (Dīrghavardhana) of Śākyas, Sāta and Sātagiri of Rājagriha, Jivaka, and the quarternity of Yakshas of Paṇḍukābhaya, who eminently fulfilled their roles as guardian angels.⁷ The Buddhist text *Mahāmāyūri*⁸ contains a large list of such tutelary Yakshas who were assigned to the different ancient Indian towns. Some towns, because of their religious sanctity or for other reasons, had more than one Yaksha guardian. The *Mahābhārata*, for instance, mentions Arantuka, Macakruka, Tarantuka and a nameless Yakshi who guarded Kurukshetra and received worship.⁹ According to the Buddhist and Jain texts almost every city of importance had one or more Yaksha, and in several cases the abodes of Yakshas were known as *Caityas*.¹⁰ Inhabiting the cities or having their special abodes made by their particular votaries, they performed their protective functions in a variety of ways. The seven Yakshas of Jotika *Seṭhī* of Rājagriha guarded the seven gates of his mansion, helped by several thousands of their own attendants in each case.¹¹ Cetiya Yakshi helped Paṇḍukābhaya in battle to destroy his enemies.¹² There were various departments of human activities in which Yakshas' help was invoked and received. They often participated in battles, and helped their

¹II, p. 386.

²cf. Coomaraswamy, I, p. 26.

³J, II.271ff.

⁴V.205f.

⁵IX.22ff; The child was saved by Yaksha at different occasions, *ibid*, IX.84.

⁶*supra*, p. 154 note 12.

⁷Coomaraswamy, I, pp. 14ff; II, pp. 7f, Moti Chandra, *BPWM*, III, pp. 47f.

⁸Appendix 1.

⁹*supra*, p. 30.

¹⁰*supra*, 42f.

¹¹*Dh. A*, III.321f.

¹²*Mahāvamsa*, IX; cf. *Divyāvadāna*, p. 447, where the Yaksha-Senāpati Pāñcika provides the *Caturangabala* consisting of human-fighters, elephants and horses besides mace, noose, wheels and arrows which ultimately helped in victory, and blasting of a fort.

side to obtain victory. They are mentioned as having participated in the battle fought by Siri Sātakarṇi Gotamiputra.¹ The *Kathāsaritsāgara*² similarly has the instance of the help that Yakshas rendered to Vikramaśakti against the king of Siṃhala. These Yakshas were sent to him by Madanamañjari, a Yakshi. The story reminds one of the Vijaya-Kuvaṇṇā legend as found in the *Mahāvāṃsa*.³ Because they were creatures of wilds and woods, travellers often received their help. The *Divyāvadana* refers to the timely help of Maheśvara Yaksha which saved the ship-wrecked men from being devoured by a sea-monster.⁴ In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Kauśalyā is found praying to Yakshas to ensure Rāma's well-being when he started on his journey into the forest.⁵ The Epics represent them as deities of caravans and merchants.⁶ In the *Vimānavatthu Comm.* is found the instance of Serissaka Yaksha who was appointed by Kubera in a desert-tract to guide travellers who got stranded.⁷ Some Yakshas also helped human beings as is found in the Sukumārikā-Manohara anecdote, in crossing over the sea. Yakshas helped people in distress and provided to them sumptuous food and drink.⁸ They were great builders⁹ and, as such, their help could be acquired in such activities. Their activities were all-pervasive. A Yaksha appointed as the tax-gatherer of the king of Kāśī is mentioned.¹⁰ These beings sometimes tested the courage of people and encouraged steadfastness in one's devotion. When Anātha-piṇḍaka was daunted by difficulties to see the Buddha, Sīvaka Yakkha guided him through a fearful cemetery in the night and helped him see the Master.¹¹ Some important personalities, however, did not require their help and were beyond their powers. The Buddha, when threatened by Āḷavaka¹² and Suciloma,¹³ is represented as having told them that 'there was no one anywhere who could harm him.' In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Rāvaṇa is said to have been free from the affliction of Yakshas, but in the *Mahābhārata* he is subjected to a curse by Nalakūbara when the former molested Rambhā. Rāvaṇa could never redeem himself from this curse.

A combination of different benefic or malefic activities of Yakshas presents a predominant feature of Yaksha's nature, viz., contradiction and paradox. If there were Yakshas who ate flesh and blood, there were those who took pains to avert such offerings. If certain Yakshas like Hāriti, Rattākhi, Pūṇṇakāla, etc., spread an epidemic, others like Mañibhadra suppressed it.¹⁴ If some abducted children¹⁵ and ate them, there were others who reared and protected them.¹⁶ Yakshas even granted children, for which they were greatly respected. There were certain predatory Yakshas who killed people out of spite and vengeance¹⁷ but again there were others who cleared people from the sin of killing.¹⁸

Thus it appears that the whole concept of Yaksha can only be understood by an analysis of

¹*Ep. Ind.*, VIII, p. 60, no. 3, lines 8-9.

²IX.31; cf. also, *Kathas.*, VI.72, they fought humans and were worsted; sometimes Yakshas, in their turn receive human help; cf. *Kathas.*, IX.13.

³*Mh. V*, VII.36ff.

⁴Vaidya, ed., pp. 25ff.

⁵*R*, II.25.23.

⁶*Mbh.*, III.62.123; XIV.64.6-9.

⁷pp. 332ff; *DA*, III.814.

⁸*Kathakośa*, p. 126, Yaksha were themselves big gluttons; cf. *MMK*, III, pp. 535-68, 669, 667, 720.

⁹*MMK*, III.607; *Triloka Prajñapti*, IV.92.

¹⁰*J*, II.155.

¹¹*S*, I.211; *Kathakośa*, pp. 1ff.

¹²*Sn.*,

¹³*ibid.*

¹⁴*Piṇḍaniryukti*, p. 83f.

¹⁵*Nāgakumāracarita*, VII.10.10.

¹⁶*Daśakumāracarita*, Ch. IV; Tārāvalī, the daughter of Mañibhadra is said to have saved a child from a cremation place at Varanasi and reared him under the instruction of Kubera.

¹⁷*Vin. P.*, I.146 (III.5.25).

¹⁸*Mbh.*, III. 82-90.

both the intellectual¹ and the democratic aspects of Yaksha worship. There might be found contradictory beliefs connected with Yakshas, but the fact remains that the whole mythology and the theological aspect of Yakshas appeared as a result of an interaction between the enlightened as well as popular sections of early society. In the process, if mystic aspects of Yakshas were developed, the mundane and earth-bound concept also did not lag behind. In the course of time, the popular aspect of the Yaksha theology edged the other out, and came to have an unchallenged sway. This is proved by a lack of intellectual orientation of Yaksha-worship in the later times.

¹*supra*, pp. 20-26.

Survivals of Yaksha-Worship

THE whole account of Yaksha-worship may be concluded with a brief survey of the survival in modern times of the beliefs connected with the ancient Yakshas. This chapter thus contains their description which will be followed by concluding remarks.

Yaksha had great importance and ritual significance in the ancient popular worship and the tradition of their worship has flourished even to this time. People, worshipping Yakshas or claiming descent from them, are still found to the Himalayan region, northern and western India, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The Jakkulus of Andhra claim to be the descendants of the Yakshas. Western Indians worship some village deities whom they call *Jākha* or *Jākhinī*. In Mathura region, the worship of *Jakhaiyā* is still very popular. Kashmir region knows of the Yakshas as *Yech* or *Yach*. According to popular belief in Kashmir, they appear as a sprite smaller than a cat but with feet so small that they are invisible.¹ The number of the Yakshinis is about seventy two in Kutch, and there they are worshipped in the form of white horses.² The Yakshas or Yaksha descendants are known elsewhere also. There are Veddas of Ceylon who regard themselves as the descendants of Yakshas.³ Similarly in Cambodia, certain festivals whose antiquity goes back to 13th century AD, may be directly connected with the Yakshas. One such festival known as '*Ngai-Lan*,' was mentioned by the Chinese ambassador to Cambodia in the first half of the 13th century AD.⁴

A dialect associated with the name of Yaksha is also known as *Yākhā Bhākhā*. It has been explained as belonging to the Chinese stock of languages in the Tibeto-Burmese branch. It is prevalent in the Tibetan-Himalayan region, particularly in the north of Darjeeling and Nepal.⁵ According to a survey conducted in 1921, there were 1086 persons who spoke it. The dialect also figures as the spoken language of the Andaman Islands.⁶ A *lipi*, 'script,' has also been ascribed to the Yakshas in the *Lalitavistara*⁷; this script was known as *Yaksha-lipi*.

As regards the popular mythology and folklore of the Yakshas in the modern period, it appears that they have found their place as fertility of protective deities in which their old ambivalent attitude persists. In Andhra, they appear as deities with *Gāminī*, another deity of the same

¹Crooke, W., *Religion and Folklore of Northern India*, p. 255.

²*Bombay Gazetteer*, I, part I, 456; V.95. 235f., quoted by Crooke, W., *op. cit.*, p. 256.

³ERE, XII.599ff; cf. also Geiger, W., *Culture of Ceylon in Mediaeval Times*, p. 167; for the Veddas of Ceylon., cf. Seligmann, *The Veddas*, Cambridge, 1911; also cf. Piyasena, S., *Yaksaya*, 1953.

⁴cf. Coedes, G., BEFEO, XVIII, no. 9, pp. 8-9; *Journal Asiatique*, V, 1915, p. 58; I am indebted to Prof. K.D. Bajpai for this information.

⁵In Nepal, "The Yakṣa is now called *Khya*. There is a belief in Nepal that the devil *Khya* is endowed with the capacity of bestowing on his favourite whatever amount of money the latter desires to possess. His picture with two jugs holding money appears alone with that of Lakshmi. The devil is still offered sacrifice." Regmi, *Ancient Nepal*, Calcutta, 1969, p. 31.

⁶Tiwari, Bholanath, *Bhashāvijñāna Kośa*; In the *Manjuśrīmūlakalpa*, p. 233, Yakshas are represented as speaking the dialect of Vanga, Samataṣa and the north, or Māgadhi, MMK, p. 331.

⁷Leffman, Ch. 10, p. 126.

class, keeping watch over the village where they are established. In this aspect they are similar to other village deities such as *Ellammā*, *Mariammā*, *Bōdrāī*, *Nigamayyā*, *Poshamnā* and a host of similar other demi-gods. Their priests are "low-class" people represented by *Bainḍla*, *Potraj*, *Pambala* or *Erupla*. They usually appear as neutral deities, not having any intrinsic powers of doing good or causing harm, and are worshipped only for their divine character.¹ In certain other cases Yakshīṅis are regarded as incarnations of Mahākālī, and are known as *Sunkulammā*, *Maremmā*, *Gangammā*, etc. They are the goddesses of backward people, and are worshipped without any icon, on the *grāmapolimeyā*, 'outskirts of village,' in order to save the inhabitants from epidemics such as smallpox, cholera, etc. The usual items of sacrifice offered to them consists of hen, sheep and goats etc. The concept of possession dominates their folk mythology in the Andhra and Karnataka region. If a lady takes a vow remembering some Yakshī, she will be possessed² by her till the vow is complete. The completion of the vow is usually marked with the sacrifice of a healthy animal. The regular *sādhakas* invoke the help of Yakshīs for killing their enemies during a specific time limit. This practice in Andhra Pradesh is known as '*Seṭhabādī*'. But the remedies to it have also been prescribed. A person under *Seṭhabādī*, loses health and vomits blood but can alleviate the danger to his life by worshipping Ādisakti Mahākālī. If the person escaped from the malevolence of the charm, it is necessary for the *upāsaka* to provide an alternative sacrifice; otherwise he, it is believed, was himself devoured by the Yakshīṅī. It is also said that Yakshīṅis do not harm pious men.

The Yakshas figure less frequently, but they are known as servants of Kubera, 'Kuberānucarulū'. They are also regarded as partakers of *amrutham*, 'nectar.' They are worshipped only for pretty favours; *Moksha*, etc., the highest favours, are not within their power.³

Andhra and Karnataka regions have still a community, Jakkulu, at present inhabiting regions near Peddapur in East Godavari district and Tenali in the Guntur district.⁴ The antiquity of this community goes back to 15th century but at present it represents an "inferior" community of prostitutes⁵ or a "theatrical" caste whose other occupations include dancing, singing, performing musical plays and wizardry. Their opera-concerts are called '*yaksha-gāna*', their ballet, *Jakkhinī*, and their musical metres—'*Jakkulu-rekulu*.' the *yaksha-gānas* are simple compositions of melodious rhythms. Besides having a folk vitality of their own, they have also a *tāla* system, which has beats as follows:

1. takītakīṭataka—takīṅāntaka
2. taka-takīṭa kitatakita
3. takīṭatakka—takkatakīṭa—takīṭakīṭata tadhiṅatōm

The history of *yakshagāna* goes back to the 15th century and its first composer was a poet called Prologanti Cenna Saurī. It is said that *yaksha-gānas* should be performed at the places of those persons who wanted children. The Jakkulu community has certain legendary accounts of its origin. According to their story, the community originated from two Yakshas devoted to Kāmavallī, one of the seven daughters of Pārvatī. These Yakshas had been given a number of musical instruments, and the people who worshipped them were dear to them. Thus came a class that was later designated as Yakkula. *Yaksha-gānas* of this Jakkulu community are ballets, while *Jakkini* is mentioned as a form of dance. In these performances

¹cf. Singh, T.R., 'The Hierarchy of Deities in an Andhra Village,' a paper read in the *Sociological Conference* at Lucknow, 1960.

²cf. also Harper, R.B., 'The Hindu Village Pantheon,' *South Western Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 15, no. 3 Autumn 1959, pp. 227ff.

³I am thankful to Sarvashri P.R.V. Murti and C.L. Narain Rao for this information.

⁴They once inhabited certain places which still carry the echo of their proper names, such as Jakkasānikunḍa (Patlikonda Taluk) Jakkulu Ceruva (Gooty Taluk) Jakkalaceruva (Penugonda Taluk) Jakkal Samudra (Hindpur Taluk) etc. I am indebted for this information to Dr. S.V. Joga Rao, Lecturer in Telugu, Andhra University, Waltair.

⁵Penzer, N.M., *Kathāsaritsāgara*, I.26.2., mentions Yakshas as deities of prostitutes.

any story, from epical to local anecdotes of bravery and strength, may be sung and enacted through dance. All these practices of the Jakkulus in Andhra and Karnataka regions are only a restatement of the ancient beliefs regarding Yakshas. They show the continuation of the ancient tradition into the modern period.

In Kerala and Tamil Nadu also the belief in Yakshi persists. Yakshis are supposed to be capable of possessing women during the 4-day period of their "impurity."¹ Late Mr. K. Bharatha Iyer related to us a folk-tale from Tamil Nadu about some woman who had died childless and become a Yakshi.

In western India, the village deities known as Jākhin, Jakhāi, Jokhāi, Nagulāi or Alavantin are direct descendants of ancient Yakshis. They are the counterparts of north Indian *Curels*, and it is said that those women who had died during pregnancy or child-birth, or during the prescribed period of "impurity," assume the form of such malevolent village deities.²

In northern India also, the modern counterpart of beliefs in Yaksha are found. According to folklore, many tanks hold a treasure with a Yaksha in charge of it, but the attempts of finding the treasure are never successful.³ It is also believed that the benevolent field spirits are *Jākh* and their consorts the *Jākhni*. They are also sometimes called *Cora* and *Corani* or *Coradeva* and *Coradevi*.⁴ Crooke has observed that in the folklore *Jākh* is an uxorious husband and he robs his own village to supply the wants of his consort. So, if one sees a comparatively barren village next to one where crops are thriving, one must be sure that the *Jākh* lives in one and the *Jākhni* in the other.⁵ In Mathura, the worship of *Jakheya* or *Jakhaiyyā* is still very popular. In fact, some of the early sculptures of Yakshas, for instance, of the Parkham Mañibhadra, were being worshipped under the name of *Jakhaiya* and a fair used to be held in their honour. Cunningham, who discovered the Parkham image, has said that in honour of this *Jakhaiyā*, a fair was held every Sunday in the month of Māgha.⁶ However, usually, *Jakhaiyā* is worshipped by the "lower" castes, such as sweepers, cobblers, etc. but in the ceremonial night-singing known as *Ratjagā*, various songs of Yakshas are sung which present the malevolent aspects of the nature of this demi-god. Songs like the following are sung on such occasion—

*Jakhai Julhāla, Terī ajab avāj,
Tu māre Khyālai ka paryon.*

On the Sundays of the months of Māgha and Āshāḍha, the aniconic figure of *Jakhaiyyā* represented by a square block of bricks, is worshipped. Animal sacrifice particularly of little pigs is a common feature of that worship.

In Madhya Pradesh, no reference to Yakshas is found in the hierarchy of village gods; no names having similarities with the ancient Yaksha names are found either. There is quite a large number of village gods in worship in M.P., such as Dūngardeo, Muṭuādeo, Dūlādeo, Haradaula, Mātas, etc. Some of these, like Haradaula⁷ and Dūlādeo receive worship during the marriage ceremony; they also offer protection, riches and progeny, but similarities and proximities apart from these with Yakshas are not identifiable. Many deities appear in protective roles,⁸ but either they are nameless or have names different from those of Yakshas.

Among the individual Yakshas mention has been made of the worship of Mañibhadra and Mānik pīr and Harikesa Yaksha as Harasu Baramha in Benaras and also in Bengal and Bihar.

¹I am indebted to my colleague and friend Prof. A. Raman for this information.

²Crooke, W., op. cit., p. 194.

³ibid, p. 69.

⁴ibid, pp. 255ff.

⁵ibid, p. 256.

⁶Reports, XX, p. 40.

⁷Crooke, W., op. cit., pp. 101-2 also p. 125.

⁸ibid, p. 111. quoting *Chindawara Gazetteer*, I, 209.

It will be interesting to see how some of the beliefs particularly connected with Yakshas have survived. The Yāch-Yaksha demons of Hindukush it is said, have their feet turned backwards.¹ Sneezing² is regarded as inauspicious and it is suggested that certain words or charms such as 'long life,' 'chatrapati' (in M.P.) *Alhamdullāh* or *Yarhamu kā Ilah*³ etc. should be used. Sneeze is curiously explained. It is said that a Bhūta enters the mouth and nostrils, and produces the sneeze. Another custom connected with early references is found in the belief of keeping fork, iron, knife, scythe, etc., near the bed of infants.⁴ These practices are palpably similar to the superstitions connected with Yaksha in ancient times.⁵ Keeping feet bare is not always auspicious and implications of it may be traced back to the story of *Sutano Jātaka* where the Bodhisattva warded off the evil influence of Yaksha by using the sandals of the king.⁶ The custom of asking questions and answering them (*Praśnottaramālikā*) still survives in the Malhōrs of the present day.⁷ Similarly prevalent is the belief in the concept of possession by good or evil spirits. In Andhra Pradesh the belief survives particularly in the cases of Yakshīṇīs and according to the popular modes of worship, there are *ojhās*, 'priests' who relieve such possessed persons from the great mental strain. All these prevalent beliefs and practices conclusively prove the folk-nature of the Yaksha cult. They also seem to indicate that many such beliefs may, in the final analysis, be related to the Yaksha cult as regards their origin.

Resumé

Thus it appears that Yakshas played an extremely important role in the popular religion. Like any other cult god, Yakshas have a tradition of folklore incorporated extensively in ancient literature. This ancient literature unmistakably illustrates the status of Yaksha as democratic, popular god with non-Aryan source of origin.

On the basis of the intrinsic material of the literary works of the different ancient sects, it appears certain that Yakshas had sanctified status of cult gods. With all the evidence on the large Yaksha-pantheon, widely distributed images of different times, priests, temples and rituals, it is only proper to accept Yakshas as demi-gods who enjoyed enormous following and worship. The incorporation of the ideas of totemism, ancestor-worship, animism and of cannibalism in the body of belief in Yakshas only adds to this conclusion. It must be remarked here that these ideas of totemism, animism, etc. are not found in the case of Yakshas alone. Even the Vedic religion had a place for these ideas. But whereas the Vedic religion eventually manifested itself in so many forms of philosophies and religious practices, Yaksha mythology did not change itself and continued to flourish with fundamentally the same ideas and forms in many regions from the later Vedic period onwards. Such forms and practices were repugnant to the intellectual mind but they could not be undermined because they had special democratic appeal for the masses. Sometimes the higher *varṇas* or classes of society supported their sanctity. The fold of Yaksha-worshippers included common people such as gardeners, gamblers, prostitutes and villagers, tribals, etc., but it sometimes included also Brāhmins, Kshatriyas and Vaiśyas. Yakshas had the same rewards to offer to all of them without any discrimination as to their caste or creed. These gods satisfied all kinds of wishes of worshippers, and thus attracted a large following. As has been rightly remarked, "a man cannot expect a great incarnation of Vishṇu (or other great deities) to cure his cow, to find his lost purse, nor would public opinion tolerate his going to any respectable temple or shrine with a petition that his neighbour's wife, his ox or his ass may be smitten with some sore disease. A respectable minister will not be found to take an

¹Crooke, W., op. cit., p. 195.

²ibid, pp. 223ff.

³ibid, p. 224.

⁴Crooke, W., op. cit., p. 224.

⁵cf., *Jātaka*, II.155 for exactly similar practice; *Jātaka*, IV.305, for keeping iron by the side of infants.

⁶cf. *Jātaka*, III.202f.

⁷Gaur, G.D., *Malhor*, (Hindi) *Janapada*, I, 1, January 1955, pp. 75ff.

offering or to use his influence in such silly and scandalous jobs with any saint or deity who values his self-respect."¹ Yakshas, on the other hand, were primarily meant for gratifying such mundane wishes and, therefore, found a sufficiently large following.

As regards the high god concept of Yakshas, the whole frame of such concept may seem to go against their ascription of the non-Aryan character to Yakshas. But that inference is only superficial. That such a high-god concept has been attributed to Yakshas will be clear from the adjectival role of the word Yaksha for the Brahman, Buddha, Sakka, Vishnu, etc. Similarly, the acceptance of Yakshas as primordial deity, creator, and cosmogonic or psychological principle also raise their status. It is quite possible that the cult of Yakshas might have been professed by a section of the Vedic Aryans and their descendants. This section might have tried to uphold their beliefs and, in the process sanctified the status of Yaksha, but it could not successfully fight for its cause and eventually *Yaksha* was relegated again to its lovely origins, where it had a safe niche for itself.

It is also interesting that Yaksha-mythology is a combination of contradictions. There are good Yakshas and, at the same time, bad ones. Some Yakshas relish human sacrifice; others specifically hate it. Some are benevolent, some malevolent. If some Yakshas grant children, others take them away; some respect the higher faith, others are strenuously non-believers. Even in these cases it is difficult to ignore the fact that the Yakshas changed their evil nature under the influence of greater cult-gods, such as Buddha, Mahāvīra, Bodhisattva, Jain sages, etc. Those who were not tamed were either rendered harmless or completely eliminated as was done to Tātakā by Rāma. But the influence of their worship cannot be denied. From the literary works it appears that each village or city had its own Yaksha; some larger metropolitan towns like Rājagriha or Mathura or Benaras had even more than one Yaksha.

¹Crooke, *op. cit.*, p. 27 quoting Lyall, *Asiatic Studies*, I, London, p. 120.

APPENDIX I

The Guardian Yakshas in the Mahāmāyurī

The *Mahāmāyurī* is of foremost importance in supplying the names of tutelary Yakshas of a large number of ancient towns. Some of these towns have been identified by Sylvan Levi and V.S. Agrawala.¹ These identifications along with the names of Yakshas have been incorporated here as follows:

| <i>Yaksha</i> | <i>Town</i> | <i>Identification</i> |
|---------------|-------------|--|
| Krakucchanda | Pāṭaliputra | Pāṭaliputra |
| Aparājita | Sthūṇa | In the Malla country, N.W. of Patna. |
| Sāila | Bhadrapura | To the east of Pataliputra, towards the delta of Ganges. |
| Mānava | Uttara | ? |
| Kritālaya (?) | Griddhakūta | N.E. of Rājagriha. |
| Vajrapāṇi | Rājagriha | — |
| Citragupta | Sthitamukha | ? |
| Garuda | Vipula | N.E. of Rājagriha. |
| Vakula | Rājagriha | — |
| Upakālaka | Kapilavastu | — |
| Kāla | Kapilavastu | — |
| Maheśvara | Virāta | Bairat (Old Jaipur State) |
| Kalmāṣapāda | Vairā | Wer, S.E. of Bharatapur. |
| Brihaspati | Śrāvastī | — |
| Sagara | Sāketa | — |
| Vajrāyudha | Vaiśālī | — |
| Haripiṅgala | Malla | — |
| Mahākala | Vārāṇasī | — |
| Sudarśana | Campā | — |
| Vishṇu | Dwārkā | — |
| Dharaṇa | Dhārapati | Bordering on Punjab. |
| Vibhīshana | Tāmraparṇī | — |
| Āṭavaka | Āṭavī | S.S.E. of Śrāvastī. |

¹JUPHS, XV, II, pp. 24-52; Moti Chandra, *Jain Miniature Paintings from Western India*, p. 15, has reported that an illustrated manuscript of this text is deposited in the collection of the Bharata Kala Bhavan, Varanasi. It seems that this *rakasha*-text was in great demand, hence its different types of manuscripts, including the illustrated ones also.

| <i>Yaksha</i> | <i>Town</i> | <i>Identification</i> |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Kapila | Bahudhānyaka | Khokarkot and surrounding territory. |
| Vasubbūti | Avanti | — |
| Bharuka | Bharukaccha | — |
| Nanda | Ānandapura | Wadnagara, N. of Ahmedabad. |
| Mālyadhara | Agrodaka | Agroha, 13 miles N.W. of Hissar. |
| Muñjakeśa | Agrodaka | Agroha, 13 miles N.W. of Hissar. |
| Ānanda | Moraparpaṭa and Āmraparpaṭa | Between Śutudri and Saraswati in <i>Rāmāyaṇa</i> . |
| Śukladānshtra | Suvāstu | Swat river. |
| Driḍhanāmā Manasvin | ? | — |
| Vasava | Vidiśā | Bhilsa |
| Mahāgiri | Girinagara | Saurashtra? |
| Kārttikeya | Rohitaka | — |
| Śatabāhu | Vaiṇvātata | ? |
| Brihadratha | Kaliṅga | — |
| Arjuna | Ārjunāyana | In the region of Delhi, Jaipur and Agra. |
| Duryodhana | Śrughna | N. of Thanesar. |
| Mardana | Maṇḍapa | Mandu Fort? |
| Girikula | Malava | — |
| Bhadra | ? | ? |
| Rohitāśva | ? | — |
| Sarvabhadra | Śākala | Sialkot? |
| Pālitaka | Śautivaka | Prob. at the north end of the ancient caravan route leading from east to Punjab |
| Kūṭadānshtra | Ajitanjaya | ? |
| Vasubhadra | Vesāli | — |
| Śivabhadra | ? | — |
| Bhishapa | ? | — |
| Śiva | Śivapurāhāra | — |
| Indra | Indrapura | ? |
| Pushpaketu | Śilāpura | ? |
| Daruka | Darukapura | ? |
| Kapila | Varṇu | Next to Swat or Sindhu, very near Gandhara. |
| Mañibhadra and his brother | Brahmāvati | In Gandhara |
| Pūrṇabhadra | | |
| Prabhañjana | Takshaśilā | — |
| Pramardana | Takshaśilā | — |
| Karaposhṭha | Bhadraśaila | Iranian. |
| Prathānkara | Rauraka | Capital of Sauvira. |
| Trigupta | Hanumātira | Anūpa, in Saurashtra(?) |
| Nandi and Vardhana | Nandivardhana | 1. Between Jelalabad and Peshawar. 2. Magadha. |

| <i>Yaksha</i> | <i>Town</i> | <i>Identification</i> |
|---------------------------|------------------------|---|
| | | 3. Nagardhana, near Ramtek, N. of Nagpur. |
| Vāyila | Vāyilabhūmi | Between Ghazni and Kabul rivers. |
| Kalahapriya | Lampaka | Lamghan or Laghman |
| Gardabhaka | Mathura | — |
| Kalaśodara | Lankā | — |
| Sūryaprabha | Sūṇa | ? |
| Girimaṇḍa | Kosala | — |
| Vaijayanta and Vijaya | Pāṇḍyamathurā | Madura |
| Pūrṇaka | Malaya | Malabara. |
| Kinnara | Kerala | — |
| Khandaka | Pratishṭhān | 1. A frontier tribe at the limits of Aryan India. 2. In Orissa. |
| Meghamālī | Paundra | — |
| Sukhāvaha | Taraṅgāvati | ? |
| Saṅkarin | Pitaṅgalya | Pitalkhora |
| Asaṅga | Bharukaccha | Broach |
| Sundara | Nāsikya | Nasik. |
| Nandivra and Nandika | Karhātaka | Karad, Satara Distt. |
| Mahābhujā | Kośalī | Tosali? |
| Lambodara | Kaliṅga | — |
| Swastika | Swastikaṭaka | — |
| Pālaka | Vanavāsī | N. Kanara Distt., (Banavasi) |
| Bhadrakarṇa | Taṭiskandha | ? |
| Dhanāpaha | Ṣaṭpura | ? |
| Priyadarśana | Avanti | — |
| Bala | Vairāmaka | Trans-Sindhu region. |
| Śikhaṇḍī | ? | — |
| Gomardana (A place name?) | — | ? |
| Añjalipriya | ? | ? |
| Vaidīśa ? | ? | — |
| Veshṭitaka | Chatrākāra | ? |
| Makarandama | Tripurī | Tewar, Jabalpur Disst. |
| Aṇḍabha | Udumbara | Name of a tribe of Jalandhara and Kangra region |
| Viśālāksha | Ekakaksha or Erakaksha | Aira-Khera (Mathura distt.) |
| Anābhoga | Kauśāmbī | Kosam (Allahabad) |
| Virocana | Śāntimatī | ? |
| Kapila | Kāmpilya | Kampila in Farrukhabad, distt. (U.P.) |
| Ratika | Ahicchatrā | Ramnagar (Bareilly Disst., U.P.) |
| Pūrṇaka | Maṇḍavī | — |
| Vakula | Ujjihānā | Central India |
| Prasama | Gajasāhvaya | Hastināpura |
| Naigamesha | Pañcālī | Passala of Ptolemy; East of Gangā; one of the cities of Pāñcāla |

| <i>Yaksha</i> | <i>Town</i> | <i>Identification</i> |
|-----------------------|----------------|---|
| Driḍhadhanu | Varuṇā | On confines of Rajputana to the W. of Delhi |
| Purañjaya | Yaudheya | A tribe of Punjab |
| Tarārka | Kurukshetra | — |
| Kutarārka | Kurukshetra | — |
| Aholūkhala-Mekhalā | Kurukshetra | — |
| Siddhayātrā | Śrughna | N. of Thanesar |
| Mahāsena | Koṭivarsha | Korygaza of Ptolemy, or in the Pauṇḍravardhana <i>Bhukti</i> |
| Purañjaya | Koṭivarsha | — |
| Pushpadanta | Campā | Bhagalpur |
| Māgadha | Girivraja | — |
| Parvata | Goyoga | ? |
| Suṣheṇa | Nagara | (Pāṭaliputra) |
| Sukhāvaha | Kākandi | ? |
| Virabāhu | Sāketa | Ayodhyā. |
| Anāyāsa | Kauśāmbi | — |
| Bhadrika | Bhadrikā | Near Pataliputra |
| Kaṭankaṭa | Ambashṭha | 1. People W. of Sibi and Tri-garta 2. In East between Kāśi and Tāmralipti 3. Central India, Ptolemy |
| Aśoka | Kāśi | — |
| Maṇḍaka | Ajitañjaya | Towards Punjab |
| Siddhārtha | Akakaksha | ? |
| Maṇikānana | Saindhava | Bank of Indus |
| Kaṭa and Vikāṭa | Kapilavastu | — |
| Vaikratika | Gāndhāra | — |
| Dhruva | Dwārkānilaya | — |
| Mādhyamikīya | Mādhyamikā | (near Chittora) |
| Saubhadra | ? | — |
| Vairāṭaka | Śarapura | ? |
| Jambhaka | Marubhūmi | Rajputana desert |
| Prabhānkara | Kashmir | — |
| Candaka | Jāṭapura | Land of Jats. |
| Pāñcika | Kashmirasandha | — |
| Pāñcika's eldest son | Chīnabhūmi | China |
| Skandaksheti | Kauśika | Kuśika in N.W. |
| Ushtrapāda | Kulinda | Kangra |
| Maṇḍalāsana | Maṇḍala | ? |
| Mārici | Rāmakakshaya | ? |
| Lankeśwara | Kapiśi | Kapisa, Begram |
| Mahābhujā | Bāhli | Bactria |
| Dharmapāla | Khasa | Himalayan tribe |
| Jinarshabha | Tukhāra | Oxus. |
| Hemavata and Sātagiri | Sindhusāgara | Delta of Sindhu |
| Pramardana | Kaliṅga | — |
| Triśūlapāṇi | Tripura | Tewar, Jabalpur Distt. |
| Pāñcālaganḍa | Dramila | ? |

| <i>Yaksha</i> | <i>Town</i> | <i>Identification</i> |
|---------------|---------------|----------------------------------|
| Śukamukha | Āṭavi | — |
| Kimkara | Pātāla | Patalene on the mouth of Indus |
| Prabhāsvara | Puṇḍarīka | ? |
| Śarmila | Mahāpura | ? |
| Prabhañjana | Darada | ? |
| Piṅgala | Ambulimā | Amb, 60 miles above Attock. |
| Mātali | Kāmada | ? |
| Babbaḍa | Babbaḍadhāma | ? |
| Nalakūbara | Kāpisi | (Kapisa) |
| Suprabuddha | Putrivaṭa | ? |
| Sankara | Śakasthāna | Seistan |
| Parāśara | Pāraṭa | Pārada? |
| Piṅgala | Keṭaka | ? |
| Pūrṇamukha | Puṇḍravadhana | Rajshahi Distt. Bengal |
| Karālaka | Uddhiyanaka | Swat Valley |
| Kumbhodara | Kohala | ? |
| Makaradhvaja | Maru | Sandy region of Chitral |
| Citrasena | Vokkaṇa | Beyond Oxus. |
| Rāvaṇa | Ramaṭha | Between Ghazni and Wakk-hana |
| Priyadarśana | Paṭṇīya | ? |
| Piṅgala | Rāśīna | ? |
| Kumbhīra | Rājagriha | — |
| Gopāla | Ahicchatrā | — |
| Alaka | Alakāpura | ? |
| Bāli | Grāmaghosha | ? |
| Nandi | Nandinagar | Nandner, near Ujjaini |
| Vaiśravaṇa | Devatāvātāra | Sankissa, near Farrukhabad, U.P. |
| Vaiśravaṇa | Adakavati | Alakāpuri |

APPENDIX II

Iconography of Jaina Yakshas and Yakshīs

The details contained in the *Rūpamaṇḍana*, *Vāstusāra* and *Aparājitapricchā* have been tabulated here. All these texts give almost similar descriptions of the Yakshas and Yakshīs. Sometimes, some additional details are also found. Those cognizances which are common in all the texts, and those which are additional have been compiled here as follows. Brackets indicate alternative names at the corresponding place in the different lists found in the texts quoted above.

A. YAKSHAS

| <i>Yaksha</i> | <i>Colour, Cognizance mudra</i> | <i>Vāhana</i> |
|--------------------------------------|--|----------------|
| Gomukha | Golden-white, Four-armed <i>Varada</i> , rosary, noose and citrus. | Elephant, bull |
| Mahāyaksha | Black, Eight-armed <i>Varada</i> , mace, rosary, noose, citrus, <i>abhaya</i> , goad, spear | Elephant |
| Trimukha | Black, Six-arms, Three faces and eyes. Mongoose, club, <i>abhaya</i> , citrus, serpent, rosary, battle-axe, conch, wheel, <i>varada</i> . | Peacock |
| Yakshanāyaka (Īśvara, Caturānana) | Black, Four-armed Citrus, rosary, mongoose, goad Serpent, noose, Swan, <i>Vajra</i> . | Elephant, Swan |
| Tumburu | White, four-armed, <i>Varada</i> , spear, serpent, noose, fruit. | Garuda |
| Kusuma | Blue, Four-armed; two-armed fruit, <i>abhaya</i> , mongoose, rosary, mace. | Deer |
| Mātāṅga | Blue, Four-armed <i>vilva</i> , mongoose, goad, noose, mace. | Elephant, ram |
| Vijaya | Green, Two-armed, Four-armed, three eyes Wheel, mace, animal (mongoose?), noose, <i>abhaya</i> , <i>varada</i> . | Swan, pigeon |
| Jaya (Ajita) | White, Four-armed Citrus, rosary, Mongoose, <i>kunta</i> , spear, fruit, <i>Varada</i> . | Tortoise |
| Brahmā | White, four-armed, six-armed, four-faces, three-eyes. | Lotus, Swan |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| <i>Yaksha</i> | <i>Colour, Cognisance mudra</i> Citrus, mace, noose, <i>abhaya</i> , mongoose, goad, rosary, <i>varada</i> . | <i>Vāhana</i> |
| Yakshet (Īśvara) | White, four-armed, three-eyed. Citrus, mace, mongoose, rosary, Triśūla, fruit, <i>varada</i> . | Bull. |
| Kumāra | White, four-armed, Citrus, bow, arrow, mongoose, fruit, <i>varada</i> . | Swan, peacock |
| Ṣaṇmukha | White, four-armed, twelve-armed fruit, wheel, arrow, <i>Khaṅga</i> , noose rosary, mongoose, bow, vessel, goad, <i>abhaya</i> , <i>vajra</i> , <i>varada</i> . | Peacock |
| Pātāla (Kinnara) | Red, six-armed, three-faced lotus, <i>khaṅga</i> , noose, mongoose, vessel, rosary, goad, bow, arrow, fruit, <i>varada</i> . | Crocodile |
| Kinnara (Pātāla) | Red, six-armed, three-faced. Citron, mace, <i>abhaya</i> , mongoose, lotus, rosary, <i>vajra</i> , goad, arrow, <i>varada</i> , fruit. | Tortoise |
| Garuḍa | Black, four-armed, boar-faced. Citron, lotus, mongoose, rosary, noose, goad, fruit, <i>varada</i> . | Boar, parrot |
| Gandharva | Black, four-armed. <i>Varada</i> , noose, citrus, goad, lotus, <i>abhaya</i> , fruit. | Swan, parrot |
| Yakshet, (Yakshendra, Yaksheśa) | Black, six-faced, twelve-armed, six-armed. Citrus, arrow, <i>khadga</i> , mace, noose, <i>abhaya</i> , mongoose, bow, a skin-vessel, spear, goad, rosary, <i>vajrāri</i> (?), fruit <i>varada</i> . | Conch, donkey |
| Kubera | <i>Indrāyudha</i> (five-coloured), four-faced, (One face like Garuḍa), eight or four-armed, <i>varada</i> , battle-axe, spear, <i>abhaya</i> citrus, <i>śakti</i> , club, rosary, noose, goad, fruit. | Lion, elephant. |
| Varuna (Apaṃpati) | White, four-faced, with <i>Jaṭāmukha</i> , eight or six-armed. Citrus, mace, arrow, <i>Śakti</i> , mongoose lotus, bow, battle-axe, noose, goad, serpent, <i>vajra</i> . | Bull |
| Bhrikuṭi | Golden, four-headed, three-eyed, four or eight-armed. Citrus, <i>śakti</i> , mace, <i>abhaya</i> , mongoose, battle-axe, <i>vajra</i> , rosary, <i>mūlaśakti</i> (?), shield, <i>ḍamaru</i> . | Bull |
| Gomedha | Black, three-headed, serpent-like, | Man |

| <i>Yaksha</i> | <i>Colour, Cognizance mudra</i> | <i>Vāhana</i> |
|----------------------|--|-------------------|
| (Pārśva) | six-armed, Citrus, battle-axe, wheel, mongoose, spear, <i>Śakti</i> , bow, arrow, <i>bhriṇḍi</i> , (Fig-tree?) mace, fruit, <i>varada</i> . | |
| Pārśva (Mātāṅga) | Black, elephant-headed or serpent-hooded, four-armed. Citrus, serpent, mongoose, fruit, <i>varada</i> , lotus, noose, goad. | Tortoise Elephant |
| Mātāṅga (Gomedha) | White(?black) two-armed, mongoose, citrus. | Elephant |

B. YAKSHINIS

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Cakreśvarī (Apraticakrā, Cakreśī) | Golden, four, eight, twelve-armed, <i>varada</i> , arrow, wheel, <i>śakti</i> , spear, citrus, noose, bow, <i>vajra</i> , goad <i>abhaya</i> . | Garuda, lotus, or both in combination) |
| Ajītabalā (Ajitā, Rohiṇī) | White, four-armed, <i>varada</i> , noose, citrus, goad, conch, wheel, <i>abhaya</i> . | Iron-seat, Chariot. |
| Duritāri (Prajñāvati) | White, four, or six-armed. <i>varada</i> , rosary, fruit, <i>abhaya</i> | Ram |
| Kālikā (Vajra-śriṅkhala) | Black, four-armed. <i>varada</i> , noose, serpent, goad, rosary, <i>phalaka</i> , lotus. | Lotus, Swan |
| Mahākālī (Naradattikā) | Golden, four-armed, <i>varada</i> , noose, citrus, goad, wheel, <i>vajra</i> , fruit. | Lotus, white-Elephant |
| Śyāmā (Acyutā, Manovegā) | Black (Golden), four-armed <i>varada</i> , noose, bow, <i>abhaya</i> , <i>vajra</i> , wheel, fruit. | Man, horse |
| Bhrikuṭī (Jvālāmālīnī) | Yellow (Black), four-armed. <i>Khaṅga</i> , mace, shield, battle-axe, <i>ghaṅṭa</i> (bell), <i>irisūlā</i> , fruit, <i>vara</i> | Boar, cat, bull |
| Sutārikā (Sutārā, Mahākālī) | White (Yellow), four-armed. <i>varada</i> , rosary, pitcher, goad, <i>vajra</i> , mace, <i>abhaya</i> | Bull, tortoise |
| Aśokā (Mānavi) | Black (or colour of <i>mudga</i> , greenish- black) four-armed <i>varada</i> , noose, fruit, goad. | Lotus, boar, |
| Mānavi (Gaurī) | White (Golden), four-armed. <i>varada</i> , mace, pitcher, goad, noose, lotus. | Lion, black deer |
| Caṇḍī (Pracaṇḍā Gāndhārī) | Black, four-armed, two-armed. <i>varada</i> , <i>śakti</i> , flower, mace, lotus fruit. | Horse, or crocodile |
| Viditā (Virātā) | Green (black), four or six-armed, arrow, bow, noose, serpent, <i>varada</i> , <i>Khaṅga</i> , shield. | Lotus, aerial-car |
| Aṅkuśā (Aṅkuśī, | White (Golden), four-armed <i>Khaṅga</i> , noose, <i>carma-phalaka</i> , goad, | Lotus, Swan |

| | <i>Colour, Cognizance mudra</i> | <i>Vāhana</i> |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------|
| <i>Yakshini</i> | bow and arrow, fruit, <i>varada</i> . | |
| Anantamatī | White, (Blood-red), four or six-armed, Fish, Tiger. | |
| Kandarpī | Lotus, goad, <i>abhaya</i> , <i>triśūla</i> , | |
| (Kandarpā | noose, wheel, <i>damaru</i> , <i>varada</i> . | |
| Mānasī) | White, (Golden) four-armed. | Lotus, Garuḍa. |
| Nirvāṇī | book, lotus, <i>kamaṇḍalu</i> , arrow, | |
| (Mahāmānasī) | conch, <i>vajra</i> , wheel. | |
| Bālā (Jayā) | White (Golden), four or six-armed. | Peacock, |
| | Citrus, spear, a wooden-club | Black-boar. |
| | with iron-head (<i>Mushuṇḍī</i>), lotus, | |
| | <i>vajra</i> , wheel, noose, goad, fruit, <i>varada</i> . | |
| Dhāriṇī | Black (Golden), four-armed, | Lotus, Lion. |
| (Vijayā) | Citrus, lotus, noose, rosary, | |
| | <i>vajra</i> , wheel, fruit, serpent. | |
| Dharaṇapriyā | Black, four-armed. | Lotus, |
| (Vairoṭyā, | <i>varada</i> , rosary, citrus, <i>śakti</i> , | <i>ashṭāpāda</i> |
| Aparājitā) | <i>khaṅga</i> , shield, flower | |
| Nādaraktā | White (Golden), two or four-armed | <i>Bhadrāsana</i> , |
| (Naradattā, | <i>varada</i> , rosary, citrus, spear, | Serpent. |
| Bahurūpā) | <i>Khaṅga</i> , shield. | |
| Gandharvā | White (Blood-red), four or eight-armed. | Swan, Monkey. |
| (Gāndhārī, Cāmuṇḍā) | <i>Varada</i> , <i>Khaṅga</i> , Citrus, pitcher | |
| | (? <i>Kunta</i>), spear, mace, noose, | |
| | <i>Vajra</i> , wheel, <i>damaru</i> , rosary. | |
| Āmbikā (Kūshmāṇḍī) | Yellow, (Golden, Green), two or four- | Lion. |
| | armed. | |
| | <i>āmramañjarī</i> , serpent, noose, goad, | |
| | child, citrus, fruit, <i>varada</i> . | |
| Padmāvati | Bronze-red (Golden, blood-red), | Cock. |
| | four-armed. | |
| | Lotus, noose, goad, citrus, fruit, <i>varada</i> . | |
| Siddhāyikā | Blue, (Green, golden), two or | Lion or <i>Bhadrāsana</i> |
| | four-armed. | |
| | book, <i>abhaya</i> , arrow, citrus, <i>Veeṇā</i> . | |
| Śāntā (Kālikā) | Golden (black); four-and eight-armed, | Elephant, buffalo. |
| | <i>varada</i> , rosary, spear, <i>abhaya</i> , | |
| | <i>Triśūla</i> , goad, bow, arrow, and wheel. | |



Fig. i



Fig. ii



Fig. iii



Fig. iv



Fig. v



Fig. vi



Fig. vii



Fig. viii



Fig. ix



Fig. x



Fig. xi



Fig. xii



Fig. xiii

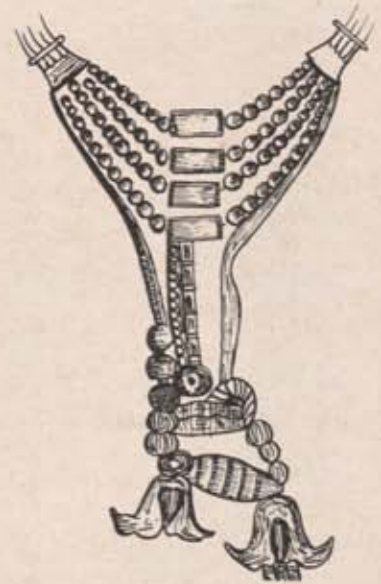


Fig. xvii



Fig. xiv



Fig. xv



Fig. xvi



Fig. xviii



Fig. xix



Fig. xx



Fig. xxi



Fig. xxii



Fig. xxiii



Fig. xxiv



Fig. xxv



Fig. xxvi



Fig. xxvii

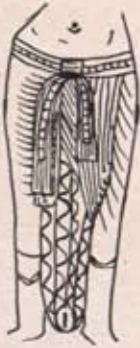


Fig. xxviii



Fig. xxix



Fig. xxx



Fig. xxxi



Fig. xxxii



Fig. xxxiii



Fig. xxxiv



Fig. xxxv



Fig. xxxvi



Fig. xxxvii



Fig. xxxviii



Fig. xxxix



Fig. xl



Fig. xli



Fig. xlii



Fig. xliii



3. Kubera, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura



4. Kubera, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura



5. Kubera, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura



6. Kubera, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura



7. Kubera from Maholi, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura



8. Brahmanical Gods with Kubera, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura



9. (top) Kubera with his Consorts, Manoharpur, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura. 10. (below) Kubera with his Consort and Attendants, Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar





11. Kubera from Pabbosa, Allahabad District, State Museum, Lucknow



12. Jain Kuberā from Ranimaliya, Chittor District, Rajasthan



13. Kubera from Katara, Bharatpur District, Rajputana Museum, Ajmer



14. (above) *Kubera* from Terahi, Shivpuri District, Archaeological Museum, Gwalior. 15. (below) *Kubera*, Dhubela Museum, Chhatarpur District



16. (left) Kubera and Riddhi, from Padhavali, Morena District, Archaeological Museum, Gwalior. 17. (right) Kubera from Modi, Mandasor District



18. (left) Jambhala Mandala from Nalanda, Patna Museum. 19. (right) Jambhala from Sirpur, Raipur District, Archaeological Museum, University of Saugar, Saugar



20. *Jambhala from Varanasi, State Museum, Lucknow*



21. *Hārītī* (in bronze) from Nalanda, Patna Museum



22. (top) *Kubera with Matrikas, Mathura District, State Museum, Lucknow.* 23. (left) *Manibhadra from Parkham, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura*



24. (left) *Manibhadra from Pawaya, Gwalior District, Archaeological Museum, Gwalior.* 25. (right) *Back-view*



26. *Yaksha from Patna, Bihar, Indian Museum, Calcutta*

27. (left) Yakshi from Didarganj, Patna District,
Patna Museum, Bihar. 28. (right) Back-view





29. (left) *Yakshi* from *Besnagar, Vidisha District, Indian Museum, Calcutta*. 30. (right) *Back-view*



31. *Bhāravākha Yaksha from Sarnath, Varanasi District, Sarnath Museum*



32. *Yaksha* from Pratapgarh, Allahabad District, Municipal Museum, Allahabad



33. (left) *Yaksha from Sopara, Maharashtra*. 34. (right) *Details*



35. (left) *Yaksha* from *Bhita*, *Allahabad District*, *State Museum, Lucknow*. 36. (centre) *Details*. 37. (right) *Details*.



38. (top) *Yaksha from Kausambi, Allababad District, Municipal Museum, Allababad*
39. (below-left) *Yaksha from Rajghat, Varanasi District, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi.*
40. (centre) *Details.* 41. (left) *Details*





42. (left) *Kubera*. 43. (centre) *Candrā Yakshinī*. 44. (right) *Ajakālaka Yaksha*. All from *Bharhut, Satna District, Indian Museum, Calcutta*



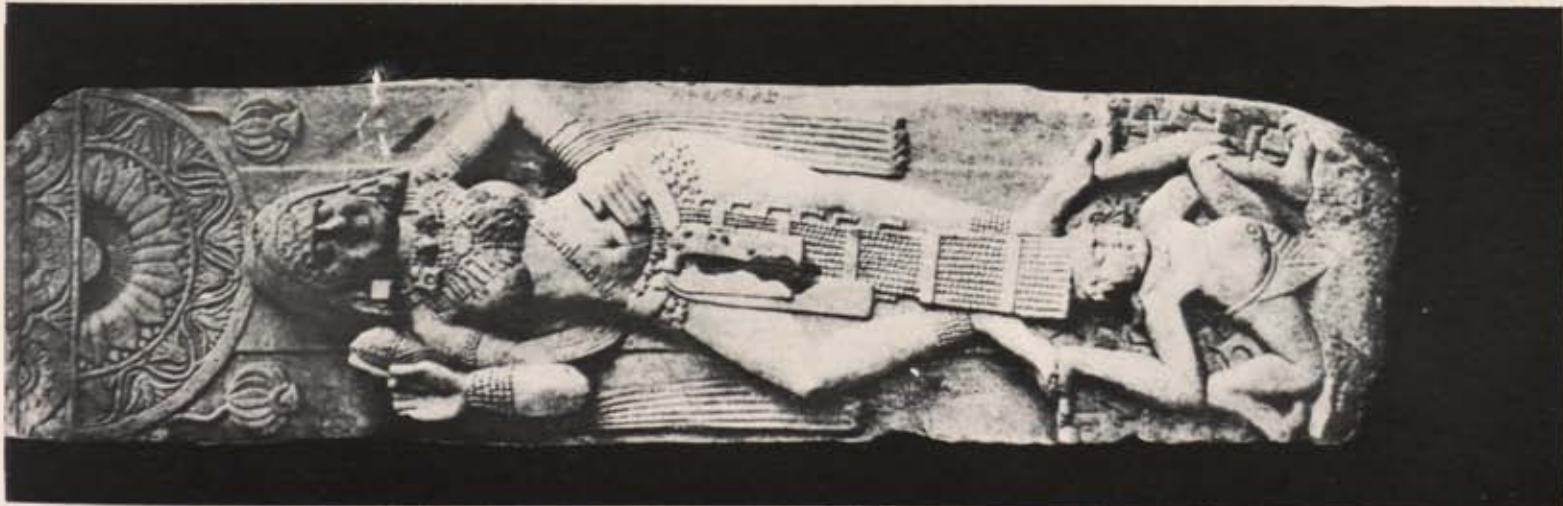
45. *Gandhāra Yakshini*, Bharhut, Satna District, Details of 43



46. *Sulassanā Yakshinī, Bbarbut, Satna District, Indian Museum, Calcutta*



47. Calahokā Devatā, Bharhut, Satna District, Indian Museum, Calcutta



48. (left) *Yakshinī* of a Bharhut railing pillar at Bhatnagar, Satna District. 49. (centre) *Yakshinī* from Bodbhaya, Gaya District, Bihar. 50. (right) *Yaksha* from Bhitia, Allahabad District, Municipal Museum, Allahabad



51. (left) *Yakshini* from Mehrauli, Delhi District, National Museum, New Delhi.
52. (centre) *Yakshini*, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura. 53. (right) *Yakshini*
from Bhuteswar, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura



54. *Yaksha* from Pitalkhora, Aurangabad District, National Museum, New Delhi



55. *Yaksha (Bhāravāhka) Sanchi, Stupa I, Western Gate, Vidisa District*



56. *Padmapāyī Yaksha, Sanchi, Stupa I, Vidisa District*



57. Śūtapāni Yaksha, Sanchi, Stupa I, Western Gate, Vidisa District



58. *Yaksha, Nagarjunakonda, Guntur District, National Museum, New Delhi*



59. *Yaksha Torso (Back-view) from Dumduma, Puri District, Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar*



60. (top) *Mogarappāni Yaksha*, Mathura District, State Museum, Lucknow. 61. (bottom) *Yaksha*, Mathura District, State Museum, Lucknow





62. (left) *Yakshī, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.*

63. (right) *Yaksha from Maboli, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura*



64. *Yaksha* from Nagarjunakonda, Guntur District,
National Museum, New Delhi



65. *Yaksha from Nagarjunakonda, Guntur District,
National Museum, New Delhi .*



66. *Yaksha* from *Abichhatra*, *Bareilly District*,
State Museum, Lucknow



67. *Gbantakarna Yaksha, Gosnakhera, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura*



68. *Yakshī-Vriksbakū, Gyaraspur, Vidisa District, Archaeological Museum, Gwalior*



69. *Cakresvari* from Deogarh, Lalitpur District



70. Malini (I) from Deogarh, Lalitpur District



71. *Gomukha Yaksba from Gandbaraval, Dewas District,
Archaeological Museum, Gwalior*



72. Gomukha Yaksba from Hathmo, Jodhpur District, Rajputana Museum, Ajmer



73. *Padmāvati with other two Yakshinīs from Tewar, Jabalpur District*



74. *Padmāvati* from Sarangpur, Raigarh District



75. Ambika from Patiyai Dai temple, Satna District,
Municipal Museum, Allahabad



77. Vyāla Yaksha, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura



76. Human-headed Frog: A Decorative Yaksha, Mathura District, State Museum, Lucknow



78. Gomukha Yaksha, Mathura District, State Museum, Lucknow



79. (left) *Gomukha Yaksha* from Tumain, Guna District, Archaeological Museum, Gwalior. 80. (below) *Mesbasringa Yaksha*, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura





81. Scene depicting the Padakusala-mānava-Jātaka, Mathura District,
Government Museum, Mathura



82. (left) Scene depicting the Vidhurapandita-Jātaka, Bbarbut, Satna District, Indian Museum, Calcutta. 83. (right) Door-jamb, Nagod, Satna District, Municipal Museum, Allahabad



84. (left) *Hospital scene, Mathura District, Government Museum, Mathura.* 85. (below) *Bhāratavākya Yaksha image from Bhojpur, Bhopal District*





86. *Apsara Pancūculī* from Tamluk, West Bengal, Indian Institute, Oxford



87. (left) Terracotta figure of Yaksha. 88. (right) Terracotta figure of a Yaksha. All from
Kantambī, Allahabad District, Municipal Museum, Allahabad



89. (top) *Terracotta figure of a Yaksha, Kauśāmbī, Allahabad District. Municipal Museum, Allahabad.* 90. (right) *Śalabhanjīkā, Sanchi, Stupa I, Vidisa District*



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Index

(y) and (yn) below, stand respectively for Yaksha and Yakshiṇī

- Abhayā (yn) 58
 Abhaya 97;—pura 40
 Abhirati 74
 Abhugarohiṇī 127
 Abode—of Yakshas 18, 91, 92, 93, 96fn;—in gates 91, 92; in lakes 97; in platforms, 91, 92;—in trees 93-94;—as platform in reliefs 92; see under Habitat, sanctuary, shrine, Temple
 Acchimatī (yn) 45, 63
 Acyutā (yn) 174
 Adakavati 171
 Ādambara (y) 47
 adeva 14fn.
 ādhivāṣa 76fn.
 Ādipabbata 96
 Ādyakālaka 39
 Agastya 29, 34
 Agni 11, 12fn, 15, 16, 19, 22
 Agnilā 130
 Agrodaka 168
 Ahicchatra 169, 171, (y—image of— 124fn., 125
 Aholūkhala-Mekhalā (yn) 170; see under Ulūkhala-Mekhalā
 Ajakālaka (y) 114-15, 150
 Ajakalāpaka (y) 37, 39, 40, 40fn., 114, 119
 Ajita (y) 172
 Ājitā (yn) 174
 Ajitabalā (yn) 174
 Ajitanjaya 168, 170
 Ajjuna 48, 100
 Akshaya-nīvika (y) 108
 Alakā (yn) 171
 Alakamandā 118;—river 33
 Alakāpura 62, 62n., 171
 Ālavaka (y) 24, 37, 38, 38n., 39n., 41, 42, 160; abode of—150n; *dussāvudha* of—150n; iṣṭhāgāra of—90; malevolence of—40; possession by—153; rajatavimāna of—90, relief of—137; temple of—90; vatthāvudha of—150
 Ālavantin 164
 Ālavī 43n, 90
 Alikā (yn) 43, 58, 123
 Allied Motifs: yakshas and —132-144
 Ālokasundarī (yn) 58
 amanussā 2n, 37
 Amaraparpaṭa 168
 Ambasṭha 170
 Ambikā (yn) 79, 107, 126, 128; forms of—130; iconography of—130, 175; legends of—129-130; images of—130-131;—images with Gomedha 128, 131;—'s temple 91
 Ambulimā 171
 Amogha (y) 29, 64
 Amoha (y) 46n, 50—dānsī (y) 50
 Anābhoga (y) 112, 169
 Ānanda (y) 168,—pura 168
 Anādhīya (y) 47
 Anantamatī (yn) 128, 175
 Anantavīryā (yn) 127
 Anāyāsa (y) 112, 170
 Ancestor-worship 6, 145, 146, 165; —and yakshas 145, 146
 Anḍābha (y) 169
 Andhārasundārī (yn) 58
 Aniconic (y) Symbols 104
 Animal-faced;—headed (y) figures 133-135
 Animism 6-7, 165
 Anila (y) 58
 Anitā (yn) 58
 Anjalipriya (y) 169
 Ankura (y) 156
 Ankusā (yn) 174; Ankuśī 174
 Anopamā (yn) 58, 106n.
 Anotatta 45n, 62n, 98;—a lake 45n of Kubera 62n
 Antila (y) 58
 Anuhrāda 31
 Apampati (y) 173
 Aparājita (y) 47;—167.
 Aparājitā (yn) 175
 Appearance of—(y) 19-20, 40, 148, 149; glittering—of (y) 148; golden 149; terrible—40, 148;—of (y) as a class of being 19-20.
 Apraticakrā (y) 174
 Apsaras 2, 3, 31, 32, 33, 120n; common features of—with (y) 3;—in court of Kubera 64; (y)'s birth from—33
 Āpūraṇa (y) 34
 Arakarabhi 127
 āramadevatā 93n.
 Arantuka (y) 30, 35, 156, 159; tīrtha of—89n.
 Ardoxsho 78
 Arishṭa 76 a mountain;—nemī (y) 34
 Arjuna (y) 168
 Arjunāyana 168
 Āryā (yn) 71n
 Āryamā (y) 20
 Asanga (y) 46n, 169
 asarūpadharī 148 a (y)
 Asita (y) 151
 Asitā (yn) 58

- Aśoka (y) 50, 170
 Asokā (yn) 58, 174
aṣṭapriya 62n, Kubera's weapon
 Assamukhī (yn) see under *Aśva-*
mukhī
 Asthikagrāma 51, (y) of—51, 90
 Asura 14
Aśvamukhī (yn) 5n, 5, 41n, 133-
 134, 139, 148, 150, 154—'s figure
 134, from Rajasthan 135n.
Ājānāṣṭiya Sutta 37, 38, 38n.
Ājavaka (y) 167
Ājavi 167, 171
 Atharvan-Prajāpati 23
Atisayavati (yn) 58
 Atlantes 137 (y) as—137
 Ātman 11, 16, 24, (y) as *attā* or
anattā 23
Aṭṭa (y) 55;—of *Saritaka* 55;
Aṭṭahāsa (y) 53, 53n, 54n.
 Attributes—of (y) 125, 149-150
 Avanti 61, 114, 168, 169;—as *Ku-*
bera's birth place 61; yakshas of—
 114
Avaruddhaka (y) 37, 39, 155
āvāsa 46
āyatana—of yakshas 50, 52;—of
Vaiśravaṇa 53n, 86n.
- Babbaḍa (y) 171;—*dhāma* 171
 Badgad (y) image from—122
 Bahli 170
 Bahudhānyaka 168
 Bahuputrīkā 30, 75, 75n, 101n.
 Bahuputrī 46, 81, 82;—*Maṇibha-*
dra's wife 82;—'s *caitya* 30n.
Bahurūpi (yn) 127, 175
 Baṇḍla 163
 Baka (y) 32
 Bala (y) 169
 Bala (y) 32
 Bālā (yn) 175
 Baladeva 43n, 85
bālī to (y) 98
 Bāli (y) 171
 Balibhadra (y) 33n.
 Banaras 51, 113, 147, 155, 166, Tin-
 duga park of—51, 147, (y) worship
 at—113. see under *Varanasi*
 Benevolence—of (y) 15, 46, 47, 56
 156-161
 Besnagar-Yaksha images 109, 110
 Bhaddā 52
 Bhadrā (yn) 31, 32, 62, 63, 78, 81,
 146, 168; *Kubera's* wife—31, 62;
 —*vati* as *Maṇibhadra's* wife 54n.
 Bhadraka;—*Karna* (y) 169;—*pura*
 167; *śaila* 168 *Bhadraka* (y) 46n
 Bhāja 121
- Bhaṇḍira 52, —*vana* 52;—*vaṭa* 52
 Bharadvāja 57
 bhāragāḥ 105, 123,—in Mathura art
 123 see under *bhāravāhaka*
 Bharata 32, 81
 Bharateya (y) 32
 Bharatpur 110,—(y) images 110
 Bharhut-(y) figures 116-119
bhāravāhaka 121, 122, 124,—(y)
 image from Bhojpur 137, 138. see
 under *bhāragāḥ*
 Bharuka (y) 108
 Bharukaccha 168, 169
 Bhaṭṭā (yn) 101
bhavana 43, 44;—*pura* 46
 Bhayāvaha (y) 32
 Bhimā 29
 Bhimā (yn) 58
 Bhīru 20, —*a* (y) 32
 Bhishana (y) 168
 Bhitā 112, 120, (y) image from—112
 Bholā (y) 47
 Bholaka—see *Bholā*
 Bhrikuṭi (y) 173, 174
bhummadeva 2, 37, 93; (y) as—37
 Bhuḥjati (yn) 45, 63, 119, 143;—'s
 dauḥters 63;—*Kubera's* wife 45,
 63
 Bhubaneshwar 122; (y) images from
 —region 122
 Bihelaga (y) 48n. see under *Vi-*
bhelaga
 Bimbisāra 41, —*a* yaksha 64
 Biravai 110, (y) images from—110
 Birth: yakshas'—stories 57, 144, 147;
 —from *Apsaras* 33
 Bodhgaya—yaksha figures 120
 Bodhisattva 44n.
 Bodraī 163
 Brahmā 6, 11, 19, 24, 25; *Brahman*
 16, 22, 22n, 23, 24, 26; *Brahman-*
Yaksha 11n, 17-18, 19, 21, 22;—*a*
Yaksha 126, 172
 Brahmavāti 108
 Brihadratha (y) 168
 Brihaspati (y) 167
 Buddha 16, 27, 36, 39, 42, 43, 53,
 58, 75;—and *Yakshas* 37-40, of
 Mathura 123, *Yaksha's* disbelief
 in the—'s doctrine 37, 38; yakshas'
 enmity towards—'s disciples 38
 Buddhaghosa 38a.
 Buddhist-association of *Yakshas*
 55;—mode of *Yaksha* Worship
 in texts 44;—texts on *Yakshas*
 spread 44;—types of *Yakshas*
 in texts 37; *Ambivalent* 41-42;
Benevolent 40-41, *Converted* 37-
 40; *Malevolent* 40; *Neutral* 42;
Yaksha in—literature 35-45
- Caitraratha 62n., 62
 Caiya 51, 52, 86, 87, 89, 159; (y)
 —42-43, 44, 93-94; *Aggālava*—42,
Ānanda 42, *Bahuputta* 42, 82,
Cāpāla 42, *Gotamaka* 42,
Guṇasilā 30n. *Maṇimālaka* 43,
Sārandada 42; *Sattamba* 42;
Udena 42, 43—*rukkha*-43; twenty
 one—51; *Vaiśravaṇa*—51n;—at
Vesālī—42
Cakreśvarī (yn) 128, 129, 174; exclu-
 sive worshippers of—129; icono-
 graphy of—174; images of—128,
 at *Deogarh* 127, *Khajuraho* 128
Cakshuraksha 46n.
Calendra (y) 106
 Campā 46, 50, 167, 170, yakshas
 of—118.
 Candā 142;—*Kubera's* wife—116;
 —as *Hāriti's* precursor 116;—*a*
Kinnari 116.
Candaka (y) 170
Candana (y) 57
Caṇḍī (y) 174
Candrā (yn) 95;—at *Bharhut* 115-
 116, 143
Candramukha (y) 4n., 95
Candraprabha (y) 32
Candrodaya 52n., *a* mountain
Cakka (y) 46n.
 Cannibalism 154, 155, 165
 Caravan 160, deities of—160
 Carendra 71n.
Caturānana (y) 172
Caturgaṇa 5n., 59;—*Yakshas* 59;—
 distinct from *Yakshas* 59
Cetiya (yn) 39, 36, 134, 159
 Ceylon 45, yakshas of—45
 Caudhula (y) 58
 Chiefs 36, 40, 41, 46, 46n., 57, 57n.,
 58, 58n., 63, 124, 146
Cinabhūmi 76, 170
Chopera 109n., 113; (y) image from
 —109n., 113
Cidala (y) 58
Citta (y) 91, 97
Citragupta (y) 167
Citrakālī (yn) 71n.
Citrākshī (yn) 58
Cittarāja (y) 44, 44n., 89, 99
Cittasena (y) 58, 171
Civikundālī (y) 71n., 106
 Composite motifs 132
 Control 56; over yakshas 100 101,
 100n., rituals to—*Yakshas* 101
 Converted -*Yakshas* 38, 39, 47-48
Cora 164;—*deva* 164;—*devī* 164,—*nī*
 164
 Cosmology 21-22, 47
Culakokā 95, 118, 143

- Culakokanadā 118
 Cult—of Yakshas arose from; 42; 14-17; expansion and development 17-56; Epics 27-31; Buddhist texts 35-45, Jain literature 45-53; Medieval works 53-56; Purāṇas 31-35; Vedic 14-21
 Cuṇḍā 116
 Curse 55
- Dadhimukha (y) 158
 Dakṣha 6, 56
 Dama (y) 32
 Daṇḍapāṇi (y) 34, 113, 125
 Darada 171
 Daruka (y) 168;—pura 168
 Dattā (yn) 71n.
 Demi-gods 2-6, 14,—and (y) 20, 31, 36, 37, 37n., 45, 46, 55, 59n., hierarchy of—31, 37
 Deogarh 127
 Departed Heroes 147; as (y)
 Deva 2, 4, 14, 14n., 30, 37;—jana 5n., —jani (a yakshī) 32, 32n., 85; —sakhah 19; —smitā 83;—tā 37, 118;—tāvātāra 171;—Varṇiṇi 32; 33
 Devī (yn) 47n.
 Dhamma 146
 Dhana (y) 50
 Dhanada (y) 71n.;—servant of Kārtikeya 4; Kubera—4
 Dhanada 72, 106, 105; Indra as—4
 Dhanādhipa 61
 Dhanapati 4, 61, 105
 Dhanamitrā 53
 Dhanapāla (y) 46n.
 Dhanāpaha 169
 Dhaneśvara 4
 Dhanyaśrī 158n.
 Dhāraṇa (y) 53, 167;—priyā a yakshī 175
 Dhārāpati 167
 Dhārīnī 175
 Dharaṇendra (y) 79, 128
 Dharma 28,—a(y) 28;—pāla (y) 170
 Dhenuka 133n.
 Dhruva 64,—a(y) 170
 Dhūmaketu 53
 Dhūmalekhā (yn) 53n., 54
 Dhumarakkha 96,—a mountain
 Dhyānī Buddha 71
 Didarganj 108, 109;—Yakshī identified with Hārītī 109
 Dīgha (y) 36n., 42, 57
 Dīghāyu 39
 Dipella 45
 Dīptaśikh (y) 53
 Dirgha (y) 63,—darśhtrā (y) 33n., —Vardhana (y) 159
- Disāpamukha (y) 36
 Ḍombās 47, a tribe
 Donkey-faced 133 (y) figures
 Dramila 170
 Driḍhadhanu (y) 170
 Driḍhanāma (y) 168
 Duḥsaha (y) 75n.
 Dūlādev 164
 Dumduma 122, (y) image from—122
 Dundubhī (y) 53n., 56n., 81
 Dugaradeo 164
 Duritāri (yn) 174
 Duryodhana 118,—a (y) 168
 Dwārkā 167,—nilaya 170;—purī 52; yaksha shrine of—purī 52n.
 Dyutimāna (y) 32
- Ekakaksha 169
 Elephant 133,—headed figures from Mathura, Rairh 133;—headed yakshīnī 133; Yaksha on an—146
 Ellamma 163
 Epics 27-31 (y) in 27-31
 Erakakaksha 169
 Eruplā 163
 Etymology of (y) 9-11
 Ethnic: Yakshas as—group 36n., —traits of Yakshas 44-45
- Fallen Warriors—as(y) 28
 Feast—in(y)'s honour 98
 Fertility: and (y) 157
 Fish-tailed—(y) figures 133n.
 Folklore: (y)—depicted at Amara-vatī 137, Gandhara 137
- Gajasāhvaya 169
 Gajatuṇḍa 113n.
 Gamanī 162
 Gambling 55, 157
 Gangita (y) 116-117
 Gaṇa 122, 126, (y) born of—31
 Gandhabba 37, 57
 Gandhamādāna 62, 96, Kubera's habitat—60, 61; Kubera's son—63n., 136;—as Purṇabhadra's palace 34
 Gāndhāra 125, 170, (yn) of—55
 Gāndhārī 128, 174, 175
 Gandharva 2, 5, 14, 31, 32, 33;—and yaksha 2-3, 3n., iconography of—yaksha 173
 Gandharvā (yn) 175
 Gaṇḍitinduga (y) 158
 Gaṇeśha 126
 Gangadattā 97
 Gangāta 117
 Gāngeya 116
 Gangita 117
 Gaṅgammā 163
- Gardabha (y) 3n., 58, 120n., 137, 145, 154; figure of—133
 Gardabhaka 169
 Garuda (y) 126, 167, 173
 Gaurī 174
 Gayā 39, 53n.
 Ghaṇṭākaraṇa (y) 125; Mathura image of—133
 Ghaṇṭika (y) 47, 133
 Genealogy 32-33
 Ghorā (yn) 58;—vatī (y) 58
 Girikula (y) 168
 Girimāṇḍa (y) 169
 Girinagara 168
 Girivraja 170
 Gods
 laukika and vaidika 105
 Gokarṇa (y) fish-tailed figures of—133; Mathura reliefs of—133, 133n., terracotta of—133n.
 Gollāṭa 47
 Gomardana (y) 169
 Gomedha (y) 79, 174, iconography of—174; images of 128; relief of—133
 Gomukha (y) 126, 127, 128, 172, iconography of—172, Kushāna images of 127n., Tumain—133
 Grotesque 114, 122, 124
 Gopāla (y) 57, 171
 Gotamaka (y) 42, 42n.,—Caitya 43
 Goyoga 170
 Graha 152, 153
 Grāmaghosha 171
 Griddhakūṭa 167
 Groups—of (y) 36
 Guardian: (y) as—deities 47, 58
 Guhāsvāminī (yn) 101
 Guhyaka 2, 5, 5n., 19n., 105n., —Kubera's servant 19
 Guhyakā (yn) 58
 Guhyottamāri (yn) 58
 Gula (y) 57
 Gumbiya (y) 154
 Guṇanidhī 64
 Guptā (yn) 17n.
- Habitat—of (y) 33, 37, 42, 54n., 88-89, 91, 92, 96. see under abode, sanctuary, shrine, temple
 Hairaṇavata varsha 30
 Hanumānīra 168
 Haradaula 164
 Harasū 164
 Haribhadra (y) 4b.
 Harikeśa (y) 32, 32n., 33-34, 85, 84, 147;—as Śiva's attendant 33-39
 —same as Harasu 164
 Haripingala (y) 167

- Haritā** (yn) 38n., 58, 73;—a *Sotā-paṇṇa* 38n.
- Hārīti** (yn) 30, 69, 71, 82, 89, 96, 109, 158, 160;—'s association with various cities 74, 76, 77n., Buddha's sanction to—worship 76; Child devouring—and her counterparts 75-76; cult of—76; converted—74; legends of—73-75; stupa and temples of—76, 77; typology of—'s images 78
- Hemanetra** (y) 64
- Hemaratha** (y) 32
- Hemavata** (y) 24, 25, 57, 96, 145, 170,—of Himavanta 43n.,—a monk 42
- Hercules** 105
- Hetti** (y) 57
- Himalaya** 96
- Hindukush** 165
- Hiraṇṇika** (y) 47
- Hiranyāksha** 32
- Hiri** (y) 57
- Horned-yakshas**: figure of—133n.
- Honorific**: (y) as—11, 17, 22-24
- Horse-faced**: see under *Aśvamukhī*
- Hospital scenes** 136
- Humans**—born as (y) 55
- Hunḍika** (y) 51, 52n.
- Iconic**—development of (y) images and reliefs 107-108
- Iconography**—of (y) 104-107, 113-114, 131; of Jain (y) & (yn) 172-175; texts on (y)—105-106
- Iḍaviḍā** 33n.,—mother of Kubera 33n.
- Images**: of (y) and (yn) 20;—21, 44, 91, 158; *attributes* of (y)—122, 125, belly tied with scarf 125, conch 123, carriers 123, dancing 137, disrobing 126, genitals 123, garland-bearer 137; grinning 123, lion 124; lotus and parakeet 125, *modaka* 123, nude 123, mount 114; seated 114, *chronology* of (y)—107: First Phase (Mauryan) 108-109; Second Phase 109-120; Satavāhana-Kushana Phase 121-125; Post Kushana Phase 125-131
- Images from**, Aghapur 44n. *Ahicchātra* 124n., 125, Allahabad Museum 112, Badgad 122, Benāgar-Viḍiś 109, 110; Bharat Kala Bhavan 112, 113, Bharatpur region 110, Bhita 112, Biravai 110, Bhuvaneshwar region 122; Central Indian tradition 127, Chopera 109n., 113; Gandhāra 125, Gyāraspur 126, Itawa 124, Jhinga Nāgla 112, Kosam 111, Maholi 124, Mathura 122-125, Mehrauli 120, Nasik 121, Noh 110, Panchagan 122, Parkham 110, Partabgarh 111, Patna 107-109, Pitalkhora 121, 122, Sanchi 121, 126, Sarnath 111, South India 129 (torso 124)—types 124, Uchchāhara 125. Figures of Yakshas and Yakshinis: Amaravati 125, Amin 120, Bodhgaya 120, Kauśambi, 120, Mathura 121, Nāgarjunakonda 122, 125, Pauni 119-120, Rājasa 120, theri—anthropomorphic 132. Reliefs: depication of (y) as tree spirits 94, 95;—from Amin 120, Bharhut 116-119; Bhita 120, Kauśambi 120, Moosānagar Pauni 119, 120, Pitalkhora 121, 122, Western India 121n.,—with (y) and musical instruments 137. **Stylistic Features** 107-108, 113-114
- Inda** (y) 57,
- Indaka** (y) 25n, 43, 96;—puggalavādin 38n.
- Indakūṭa** 43, 58;—near Rājagriha 43
- Indila** (y) 58
- Indra** 4, 12n., 13, 14, 16, 22, 113n., 124, 168;—named sons of Kubera 63;—vis-a-vis Kubera 4
- Indrapura** 168
- Indraśarmā** 97n.
- Irāndati** 135
- Isana** 105
- Īśvara** (y) 126, 172, 173
- Itarajana** 17
- Iti** 132 a ring
- Jain**—Yakshas and Yakshinis 48-49, 126-131;—iconography of yakshas and yakshinis 172-175;—literature on Yaksha cult 45-53;—Yakshas and Yakshini's in Central India 126; Deogarh 127, Dhubela Museum 128, Khajuraho 127, 128, Western Indian paintings 129
- Jākḥ** 162, 164
- Jakheya** 164
- Jakhāi** 164
- Jakhaiyyā** 162, 164, aniconic figure of—164.
- Jakkhāyayana** 90-91
- Jakkini** 163, a form of dance
- Jakhini** 162
- Jakhni** 164, Jakhin 164
- Jakhini** 163: a ballet
- Jakkhamaha** 99
- Jakkhaguhā** 52n.
- Jakkulus** 162, 163 a tribe in Andhra and Karnataka—descendants of Yakshas 162;—Rekulu 163; a musical metre
- Jambhāka** (y) 20, 170
- Jambhala** 71, 71n., 73n., 75, 78, 79, 87, 101n., 106; epithets of—72;—*manda'a* 72-73; three forms of—71-73; *prajña*—'s consort 72
- Jambūdīpa** 150
- Janavasabha** (y) 38n., 64;—a *sotā-paṇṇa* 38n.
- Janesabha** (y) 57
- Jarā** 75
- Jāṭapura** 170
- Jātudhi** 96: a mountain
- Jaya** (y) 172
- Jayā** (yn) 58, 175
- Jayanta** (y) 47, 113, 113n.;—*vārakya* 19
- Jayasena** (y) 96, 158
- Jinapālita** 46, 51n.
- Jinarakshita** 51n.
- Jinarshabha** (y) 170
- Jivahattha** 45
- Jivaka** (y) 119
- Jokhai** 164
- Joiika** 36,—'s Yaksha guards 36
- Jrimbha** 59n.;—ka 5n, 59, 156 see under *Yambhāka*
- Jvālāmālinī** (yn) 128, 129, 174,—'s exclusive worshippers 129,—'s tantric cult 129
- Jyeshṭhā** 75
- Jyotirlekhā** (yn) 53n., 54
- Kākandi** 170
- Kailāsa** 33, 62, 96;—inhabited by Yakshas 33, by Kubera 62
- Kāla** (y) 167
- Kālaghanṭa** (y) 33n.
- Kālagiri** 135: a mountain
- Kālajihva** (y) 33n., 53
- Kālāsena** 52
- Kālāsodara** (y) 169
- Kālavela** 41, 44n., 89
- Kālī** (yn) 43, 75, 151,—'s changing habitats 89
- Kālikā** (yn) 128, 175, iconography of—174
- Kalinga** 52, 168, 169, 170
- Kalmāshapāda** (y) 38, 167
- Kāmada** 171
- Kamma** 146
- Kāmadeva** 33
- Kāmakāmi** 156;—Yakshas as—156
- Kamalagarbha** 55
- Kambala** (y) 32
- Kampana** (y) 31
- Kampilya** 64, 169
- Kamasetṭha** (y) 57
- Kāmavallī** 163

- Kaṇā (yn) 58
 Kaṇabhūti (y) 94n.
 Kanakakuṇḍalā (yn) 34, 85n.
 —Purṇabhadrās wife 34, 85n.
 Kancana (y) 32
 Kandarpā (yn) 128, 175, iconography of—175
 Kanduti (y) 105
 Kanhadāsa 121
 Kanyaka (y) 32
 Kāpālika 55
 Kaparddin (y) 102, 156
 Kapila 6n., 31, 168, 169;—a Yaksha 35,—a Yaksha chief 63
 Kapilāksha (y) 33n.
 Kapilavastu 44, 167, 170
 Kapiśi 170, 171
 Kanagapura 51, Yaksha's park at—51
 Karālaka (y) 171
 Karhāṭaka 169
 Karoḥi 59n.
 Karotpāni 5; etymology of—59n., —class of Yaksha 59
 Kārttikeya 4,—a Yaksha named—168
 Kaṣa (y) 170
 Kaṣaṅkaṣa (y) 170
 Kasakandha 36
 Kashmir 170, Yakshas of—55n., Yakshinis of—58
 Kashmirasandha 170
 Kāśi 34, 160, 170, Harikeśa of—34; Yaksha of—160
 Kassapa Buddha 38n., 39
 Kaśyapa 6, 11,—Yaksha's father 57
 Kaṣapūtana (yn) 47n., 82n.
 Kaṣaṭṭha 36
 Kauśambi 50, 169, 170
 Kauśika 170
 Kelāsakūṣa 150
 Kalahapriya (y) 169
 Kelimāli (y) 71n., 106
 Kerala 169
 Keśantā (yn) 58
 Keśinī (yn) 6, 31, 58
 Keṭaka 171
 Ketumāna (y) 32
 Khaṇḍaka (y) 169
 Khara (y) 25, 39, 146;—Ioma 43; —Rākshasa chief 133; relief of—119-120, sotāpaṇa—38n.
 Kharadāthika (y) 149
 Kharaposhṭha (y) 168
 Khashā 6, 170,—Yakshas' mother 57
 Khotan 10
 Khya 162; Yakshas known in Nepal as—162
 Kimbhira (y) 58
 Kimkara (y) 171
 Kimpurusha, 5, 29
 Kinnara 2, 4, 5, 37;—a Yaksha 169; iconography of—173
 Kinnughanḍu (y) 57
 Kīrti 81
 Kohala 171
 Kokā 118, kokanadā 118
 Koliya 44
 Kosala 169
 Kosali 169
 Koṭivarsha 170
 Krakucchanda 167
 Kratusṭhali 31, 32n., 32;—a Yakshinī 32
 Kriśaṅgī 31n., 32
 Kriśaṅgeya (y) 32
 Kriśṇa 28, 33n.
 Krita (y) 32
 Kritālaya 167
 Krodhā 6;—Dakṣa's daughter 57—Yaksha's mother 57
 Kshemaka (y) 132
 Kshetrapāla 105
 Kubera, 4, 5, 5n., 14, 16, 19, 19n., 20, 26, 31, 45, 53, 53n., 54n., 56n., 58, 78, 78n., 79-81, 85, 96-98, 101n, 103, 104, 105n., 106, 119, 125, 126, 139, 143, 157, 159, 160n., 163,—'s Alakāpurī 62, —'s anger 45, 55, attendants of—64,—Austro-Asiatic descent of the word—59,—'s birth-stories 63; Brahmā's boon to—61; Caturmahārajika god—45, 65;—'s chariot 62,—'s club 62;—'s consorts 62n, 63;—'s curse on Yakshas 54, 54n, 55;—'s daughters 45; were dancers 45n, married to Sakka 45n; Buddha's disciple—45; drunkard—46n, 64;—'s elephant (Sārva-Bhauma) 65; Etymology of the word—59-60;—'s family 62; festivals 66n.,—'s fever 60n;—'s *gaiāvudha* 151;—'s gold 29;—'s groves 62;—'s grotesque appearance 32; guardian of northern quarters 65-66; handsome—46;—'s horses 62; *iconic derivations from*—71-73; iconography of—66-67, 173, Images and Reliefs of—from Badoh 70, Besnagar Bharhut 68, Gyaraspur 71, Kamban 70, Katara 70, Maholi 69, Mathura 68-70, Modī 71, Moosangar 67, Naresar 71, Orissa 69, Pabhosa 70, Padhavali 70, Ranimalya 70, Terahi 70, Tumain 70; Indra and—60-61; Isana and—60;—knower of Dharma 63;—'s lakes 62;—'s lance 77n;—'s lasciviousness 63; *lokapāla*—46, 47;—*lord of Guhyakas* 5, 60, Nairritis 60, Piśaca 60, Rākshasas 19, 60, Yakshas 46, 60;—Mahārāja 20, 58, 66;—'s mango 62;—mountains 29; other gods and—65;—'s palace 61;—'s penances 63, 64;—'s parents 32, 33;—'s possessions 33, 64;—pre-Aryan 59;—in *Purāṇas* 33-34;—'s riches 46n, 61;—'s *sābhā* 61;—'s *senāpatīs* 64;—'s sister 63n;—'s temple 63n, 66, 96;—'s *tīrtha* 30, 63, 89;—'s transformation from man to god 61n;—'s wink at Umā Pārvatī 59n; 64, 64n;—'s weapons 62;—'s wine-cup 64n;—'s worship 66, 66n; see under Vaiśravaṇa
 Kuberānucarlū 163
 Kulinda 170
 Kullūgapuranagara 93n.; Yaksha image at—93n.
 Kumāra (y) iconography of—173
 Kumbhakanna 39;—a Yaksha 40, 43;—of Āṭavi 43
 Kumbhaṇḍa 5, 37, 116, 159;—images at Mathura 123
 Kumbhīra (y) 41, 96, 146, 171, —called Rājagahika 43
 Kumbhodara (y) 171
 Kumuda (y) 32
 Kuṇḍa (y) 41, 46, 93
 Kuṇḍadhāna vana 93
 Kuṇḍā (yn) 46, 81, 82, Manibhadra's consort—46, 81, 82
 Kuṇḍalā 74
 Kuṇḍalā 82
 Kuṇḍiya 41, 44—*a village* 44, 93
 Kuntī (yn) 58, 75, 154,—of Kuntīnagara 43, 75
 Kurukshetra 34-35, 97, 159, 170; Yaksha-*tīrtha* of—30, offerings to Yakshas at—34
 Kūshmala 71n;—*a Yaksha chief* 71n.
 Kūchmaṇḍa (y) 113n.
 Kūshmaṇḍī (yn) 175
 Kuśika 76
 Kustumburu (y) 32
 Kusuma (y) 172; iconography of—172
 Kusumāvatī (yn) 58
 Kusumapuravāsini (yn) 58
 Kūṭadamśtra (y) 168
 Kūṭarārka (y) 170
 Kuṣṭhara (y) 33n.
 Kuvāṇṇā (yn) 41, 149
 Lakshmi 62n., 63, 69, 72, 78, 82, 87
 Lambodara (y) 169
 Lampaka 169

- Lankā 61, 62, 169; Kubera's—61
 Lankeśvara (y) 170
 Latā (yn) 63, 98; Kubera's daughter—45;—'s *Vimāna* 146n.
 Lāyāva (yn) 112; image of—112
 Lingalaksha (y) 52
 Loheya (y) 32
 Loheyī 32
 Lohitākkha (y) 39n.
 Lohitākkhī (y) 40n., 152n.
 Lokāntarā (yn) 58
- Macakruka (y) 30, 35n., 97, 156, 159
 Madanamañjarī (yn) 53n., 54, 56, 81, 102, 160, Dundubhi's daughter—56n.
 Madhusugandha 92
 Mādhyamikā 170
 Mādhyamikiya (y) 170
 Madotkaṭa (y) 113n
 Magadha 43, 44, 51, 81
 Māgadhi 162; Yakshas knowing—162n.
 Māgadha (y) 170
 Mahabhujā (y) 169
 Mahādevī (y) 58
 Mahāgiri (y) 168
 Mahājaya 32
 Mahākāla (y) 113, 167
 Mahākālī (yn) 163, 174; iconography of—174
 Mahākokā 118
 Mahāpura 51, 171
 Mahāsena (y) 170
 Mahāmānasī (yn) 175
Mahāmāyūrī 58; Yakshas and place names in—167-171
 Mahaujas (y) 32
 Mahāvīra 27, 53;—and Yakshas 47, 48
 Mahāyaksha (y) 41, 28, 58; iconography of—172
 Mahāyakshis 58n
 Maheśvara (y) 93, 160, 167
 Makaradhvaṅga (y) 171
 Makarandama (y) 169
 Makhādeva (y) 37, 41n., 150. relief depicting—94, 95
 Mālādhara 5, 59,—a class of Yaksha 59, 168
 Mālava 168
 Malaya 169
 Malevolence of Yaksha's 47, 152-154, 155
 Malhar 165
 Mālīnī (yn) 127; image of—127
 Malla 44, 167
 Mānava 167
 Mānavī (yn) 174
 Mānasī (yn) 128, 175
- Maṇḍala 170
 Maṇḍalāsana (y) 170
 Mandaka (y) 170
 Mandākinī 33, a river
Maṇḍalaka 76n. a fever
 Maṇḍapa 168
 Mandara 62, 96, a mountain;—Kubera's habitat 62; Mañibhadra's—80
 Mandaraśobhi (y) 32
 Maṇḍavi 169
 Maṇḍiya (y) 57
 Mañi 81,—a Yaksha 36n., 57
 Mañibhadra 26, 29, 30, 32, 32n., 33, 43, 46n., 47, 50, 51, 52n., 53, 54, 56, 58, 66, 67, 71n, 75, 80-85, 105, 106, 148, 156, 157, 160, 164, 168;—'s brothers 82,—'s caitya, named Mañimāla 81,—a chief 46, 86;—'s consorts 109;—a deity of travellers 80;—'s family 81-82;—'s exclusive followers 43, 81, 43n.—'s Images 83-84, Pawāya 109, Paḥham 109; as "Indra" among Yakshas 46,—as Kubera's brother 56n; Kubera's servant 80;—as Manik Pir 84, 85, 164;—'s mother 81;—Kūṭa 50; provenance of—'s cult 81,—'s shrine 55, 83,—'s titles 80, *Pārsva-maulin* 80
 Mani-bhūṣa 80n;—cara 81, 57, 36n;—datta 32;—dhara 32n;—grīva 33, 63, 81;—Kānana 170;—Kandhara 80n;—Kārmukhadhāraka 80n;—mān 105;—mat 28, 32, 60, 80n;—mekhalā 96n.;—śragvin 80n;—vara 32, 32n.
 Manohara (y) 158
 Manoharaṅga (y) 46n,
 Manojñā (yn) 101
 Manorama 51, 87, a park
 Mānosilātāla 43n., 150, Yaksha assembly at—43n.
 Manovegā (yn) 128, 174
Mantra 52,—attracting Yakshis 100n.
 Mānusha (y) 46n.
 Manushya (y) 46;—a Yaksha chief 46
 Māra 38n, 111, 123;—kanyā 123;—putra 132, 138n, Yakshas of—'s faction 38n, 111
 Mardana (y) 168
 Maremma 163 a village deity
 Mariammā 163 a village deity
 Mārīci (y) 29, 31, 70
 Maru 171,—bhūmi 170
 Maruts 12n, 13, 15a, 80, 156
 Mātali (y) 58, 171
 Mātanga 47: a tribe
 Mātanga (y) 172, 174
- Mathura 50, 52, 123, 166, 169,—'s images of Kumbhāṅga 123;—Yaksha images 107, 110, 111, 125;—Yakshinis 51, 123
 Mātrika 4n., 80, 80n.
 Mauli (y) 32
 Mauryan—Yaksha images 107, 108-109
 Mayana (y) 52n.
 Meghā (yn) 43, 58, 123
 Meghamālī (y) 32, 169
 Meghapurṇa (y) 32
 Mehandipur 85
 Mekhalā (yn) 58
 Meṇā (yn) 58
 Meshāśringa—Yaksha figures from Mathura and Sarnath 133
 Mīdhushī 105
 Mitra 16,—a Yaksha 32
 Mithilā 51, 81
 Moggarapāṇi (y) 46n, 48, 51, 87, 91, 122, 123, 125, 153
 Mokhalā (y) 58
 Moraparpaṭa 168
 Mucalinda (y) 58
Muḍhā 98 (superstitions)
 Munjakeśa (y) 168
 Mūra105,—deva 14n., 105
 Muṭundeō 164: a village deity
- Nādaraktā (yn) 175
 Nāgara 170
 Nāgarī 53n. of Vaiśravaṇa 53n.
 Nāgayakshī (yn) 106
 Nagulai 164 a village deity
 Nahusha 29;—as Yaksha's lord 29
 Naigamesha (y) 169
naivāsika 37, 96
 Nala (y) 57
 Nalakubara 29, 33, 53, 63, 81, 106, 122, 160, 171; Kubera's Son—31, 63;—'s parents 33;—'s "pleasing manners" 46,—Yaksha's chief 63
 Nalī (y) 58
 Nalini 61
 Nandā (y) 30, 168,—a river 33
 Nandā (yn) 82n.
 Nandana (y) 32, 105,—a park 50n., 52n.
 Nandī (y) 53, 108, 114, 168, 171
 Nandika (y) 169
 Nandinagara 171
 Nandinī (yn) 59
 Nandivardhana (y) 32, 108, 168
 Nandivīra (y) 169
 Nara 109
 Nārada 98,—'s curse on Kubera's sons 63
 Nārada (y) 39n,—of Khemavatīnagara 43

- Naradattā (yn) 175
 Naradattikā (yn) 174
 Naradevā (y) 39n., 40,—’s bhavana 90, 67, 123
 Naravāhana 64-65, 67, 106, 123; Kubera’s son—58
 Naravirā (yn) 101
 nārīvāhana 64-65
 Narmadā 118
 Nāsikya 169
 Naṭī (yn) 101
 nāṭya 98;—originated from Yakshas 98
 nāḍhi—66, 67, 95, 96; eight 33; Kubera’s—61, 61n;—pa 61;—pati 33n;—of wife of Kubera named—62n.
 Nighaṇḍu (y) 57
 Nigamayyā 163
 Nirvāṇī (yn) 175
- Offerings—to Yakshas 34, 44, 55n, 99, 100
 Ojha 165
- Padalasanda 50; Yaksha’s park at—50
 Padma (y) 32, 105
 Padmanābha (y) 32
 Padmapāṇi (y) 122; relief from Amin 120, Sanchi 122
 Padmaparṇa (y) 32
 Padmāvati (yn) 79, 126, 128, 129, 175—’s image from Sarangpur 129, Sohagpur 128, Tripuri 128
 Padmocchā (yn) 58
 Pajāpati (y) 57
 Pajjāraka 40n, 152
 Pajjune (y) 57
 Pālaka (y) 169
 Pālita (y) 168
 Palanīya 171
 Palwal 110
 Pambala 163 village priest
 Pancacūḍā 138
 Pāncaka (y) 35, 105
 Pāncālacarṇa (y) 57
 Pāncālagarṇa (y) 170
 Pāncālī 169
 Pāncālīka (y) 33n, 75, 158, relieved erotic affliction 33
 Pancaparameshḥi 53
 Pancarakshā 58
 Pāncika (y) 33n, 58, 69, 75n, 170,—a chief 58n, 77, 159n, Gandhāra’s—74, 77, images 77-79; Pāncalas—74;—’s terrible appearance 77
 Paṇḍaka (y) 38n, 39n, 73, 96;—a sotāpaṇṇa 38n.
 Paṇḍukābhaya 39, 40, 44, 97;—helped by Yakshas 39
- Pāṇḍyamathurā 169
 Pantheon Yaksha’s—56-87
 Parajana (y) 36
 Pārāśara (y) 171
 Pārata 171
 Paritta 155 a “ward rune” 39, 40
 Pūrṇamukha (y) 171
 Pārśva (y) 174
 Pārśvamaulīn:—Maṇibhadra and Kubera as—109
 Parvata (y) 170
 Pāsamiya (y) 51
 Pātāla (y) 171, 173
 Pāṭali 114
 Paundra 169
 Pāvā 44
 Pavarā (yn) 45, 63
 Pāyāsī (y) 25, 38n, 44—a Puggalavādī 38n
 Peta 4, 37, Yakshas below—37
 Pharro 78
 Pingala (y) 29, 58, 64, 74, 171—Hariti’s son 74
 Pingāksha (y) 32
 Pingākshī (y) 33n;—an epithet of Kubera 4
 Piśaca 3, 3n, 4, 4n, 54n, 55n, 94n, 146
 Piśangāma (y) 32
 Pitangalya 121, (Pitalkhora) 169
 Piyanakara-mātā (yn) 38n.
 Ponnīyakkīyāra 129, Siddhāyikā as—129
 Poshammā 163: village deity
 Possession: see under *Yaksha-graha*
 Potrāj—Yaksha priest 163
 Prabhanjana (y) 168, 171
 Prabhankara (y) 130, 170
 Prabhāvati (yn) 58
 Prabhāsvara (y) 171
 Pracandā (yn) 174
 Pracetas 31, 32n,—a Yaksha 32
 Pradīptāksha (y) 53n.
 Pradyota (y) 32
 Prajñāvati (yn) 174
 Pramardana (y) 168, 170
 Pramatha 126,—images derived from Yakshas 126
 Prasama (y) 169
 Prathankara (y) 168
 Prausthapada 156
 Prithūdara (y) 53, 54n
 Prithvī-śilā-paṭṭa 51n, 52, 86, 87
 Priyadarśana (y) 114, 169, 171
 Priyankara (y) 74, 75n,—son of Hariti
 Punabbasumātā (yn) 38n.
 Puṇḍarika 171
 Puṇḍravardhana 171
 Pūrṇaka (y) 25n, 45, 57, 71, 135, 156, 169; 157 Kubera’s nephew 45, 63;—’s horse 152
 Puṇṇakāla (y) 40, 152n., 160
 Puṇṇarakkha (y) 46n.
 Puṇyajana 2, 5n., 14n., 17, 28
 Puṇyajani (yn) 32, 32n., 81
 Pūranishā (yn) 58
 Puranjaya (y) 170
 Purimatāla 50 yaksha park at—50
 Purābhadrā (y) 32, 32n, 34, 47, 50, 54n, 71n, 81, 85-87, 91, 106, 146, 168,—’s caitya 51, 52, 86-87;—chief of yakshas 46, 87;—’s family 85;—’s followers 43, 43n,—as Indra among Yakshas 46;—Kubera’s *senāpati* 85n;—Maṇibhadra’s son 58, 85n,—’s palace 87,—’s mountain 50;—’s worship 85, 86
 Pūrṇamāsa (y) 32
 Pūrṇasūpūrṇa (yn) 71n.
 Pushkarāvati 55
 Pushpadanta (y) 170
 Pushpaka 61
 Pushpaku (y) 168
 Pushpavāhana (y) 32
 Puirivatā 171
- Rāja (y) 57
 Raivataka 52; yaksha shrine of—52n.
 Rājagriha 36, 43, 74, 156, 166, 167, 171; parks at—50, yakshas of—96, 97; Yakshīnīs of—30, 109
 Rājatanābha 5, 19, 31, 32n, 81;—a Yaksha 32
 Rakkha (y) 46n.
 Rākshasa 3, 4, 5, 14, 37, 97
 Rāmaka (y) 105
 Rāmakakshya 170
 Rāmaṭha 171
 Rambhā 63
 Ram-Horned—Yaksha figures 111
 Kantuka (y) 35, 35n.
 Rathacitra (y) 34
 Rathakrit (y) 34
 Rathasvan (y) 34
 Rathaujas (y) 34
 Ratika (y) 169
 Ratnabhadra (y) 34, 85n.
 Ratnadvīpa 46, 51
 Ratnavarsha (y) 56n.
 Rattākhi (y) 39n., 40, 152n., 160
 Rattapāo (y) 51
 Rāsina 171
 Rauruka 168
 Rāvāṇa 29, 160;—a Yaksha 171
 Revati 30, 75, 82, 157n.
 Revatika (yn) 58
 Riddhi 63, 66, 70, 71,—Kubera’s wife 31, 62
 Rishabha 81

- Rishyaśringa 95
 Ritajit (y) 34
 Rohidā 50; Park of—50
 Rohiṇī (yn) 174
 Rohitaka 168
 Rohitāśva (y) 168
rukhhadeva 2, 93n.
 Rūpayaksha (y) 46
 Rupavati (yn) 58

 Sadāmatta 5,—a class of Yaksha 59
 Sadansana (y) 50
 Sagara (y) 167
 Sāhnajani 50, Yaksha park at—50
 Śaila 167
 Śailabhadra (y) 46n.
 Saindhava 170
 Sajjā (yn) 63;—Kubera's daughter 45
 Śākala 168
 Sakasthāna 171
 Saketa 167, 170, yaksha of—51,
 Surapriya's temple at—90
 Sakka 36, 119, 124, 149,—married to
 Kubera's daughter 63; *vajrāyudha*
 of—150n;—a Yaksha 38
 Sākya 44;—Vardhana Yaksha 159;
 relief of—Vardhana 137; shrine of
 —vardhana 90
 Śalabhañjikā 95; 140-141
 Sambhala (y) 71n.
 Sālabbhadra (y) 46n.
 Sālejjā (yn) 47n.
 Sāliggāma (y) 51
 Samantapañcaka 97
 Samataṣa 162; Yakshas knowing
 dialect of—162n.
 Sambhrama (y) 34, 113
 Samiddha (y) 46n.
 Samillā 51;—Yaksha 51
 Sanctuary—of Yakshas 87-97; celest-
 tial 89, non-structural 93-97, semi-
 structural 91-93 terrestrial 89; also
 97 (location) 92, 100, see under
Abode, Habitat, temple, shrine
 Sanchi 122;—insugurated a new
 Yaksha type 122; Yaksha figures
 of 122
 Sandhila (y) 58
 Śankara (y) 171
 Śankarin (y) 121, 169
 Śankha (y) 32, 90,—pura 90;—'s
 temple 90
 Śankhinī (yn) 58
 Sankulammā 163
 Śankukarṇa 121, 133,—figures at
 Mathura 133
 Śantā (yn) 175
 Śāntimati 169
 Sara (y) 58,—pura 170
 Sarasvatī (yn) 71n., 127
 Śarmila (y) 171
 Sarvabhadra (y) 46n., 168
 Sarvānubhūta (y) 32n.
 Sarvatobhadra (y) 46
 Sāta (y) 24, 25, 53, 54n, 97, 145,
 159,—'s family 74;—a mountain
 43n, 96
 Śatabāhu (y) 168
 Śātagiri (y) 57, 96, 97, 159, 170,
 Abhirati's brother—74; monk—74;
 father of—74
 Satpura 169
 Śatyajit (y) 34
 Saubhadra (y) 170
 Saudāminī (yn) 54, 56
 Saumyā (yn) 58
 Savaṇṇa (y) 46n.
 Savvajasa (y) 46n.
 Savvakāma (y) 46n.
 Sāyaya 51, park at—51
 Selaga (y) 46, 51n, 148
 Senajit (y) 34
 Serissaka (y) 25, 36n, 38n, 44, 57, 93,
 160
 Sevala 20
 Seyabhadra (y) 50
 Saṇmukha (y) 173
 Shashṭhī 30, 75
 Shrine, 51-52. see under *Abode,*
Sanctuary, Habitat, Temple
 Siddhārtha (y) 32, 105, 170
 Siddhāyātūrā (y) 170
 Siddhāyikā (yn) 96n, 129, 175;—'s
 image at Khajuraho 128, Kilkudi
 129, Pancapandavamalai Hills 129
 Śikhandī (y) 159
 Śīlapura 168
 Silesaloma (y) 149
 Simhikā 119, 143
 Sindhusāgara 170
Śiśnadeva 14n.
 Sirimā 118
 Sirisavatthu 36n.
 Śiva 28, 33, 34, 35, 55, 61,—a Yaksha
 168,—purahāra 22
 Śivabhadra (y) 57
 Śivaka (y) 57, 160
 Sivala 75
 Skanda 4, 16;—a *grāha* 75;—a sage
 34;—Ksheti Yaksha 170
 Sneezing 37n, Yaksha association in
 —155, 165
 Śobhana (y) 91, 158
 Sogandhiya; park at—50
 Soma (y) 57
 Soriya (y) 50;—pura 50
 Śrāvastī 90, 167; park at—50n.
 Śrī 105,—a Yakshini 58
Śringāṭa-devatā 93
 Śringotpādinī (yn) 54, 89
 Śrilāṅkapura 36n.
 Śriyadevi 127
 Śrotas (y) 34
 Śrughna 168, 170
 Sthitamukha 167
 Sthūlāśiras 53, 55, 158
 Sthūlakarṇa (y) 32
 Sthūṇa 167;—karṇa Yaksha 29, 30,
 90, 158;—Karṇa's *veśma* 90
 Subhadra (y) 32, 46n, 46
 Subhadrā (yn) 71n.
Subhagā 142
 Subhankara 130
 Śubhru (yn) 58
 Suciloma (y) 3n, 24, 25, 37, 38, 87,
 39, 97, 120, 149, 160;—'s relief
 117-118;—'s temple 117
 Sudarśana (y) 32, 52, 167
 Sudasanā (yn) 118
 Sudattā (y) 71n.
 Sughorā (yn) 58
 Sughosa 51; park at—51
 Suguhyakā (yn) 58
 Suhamma (y) 50
 Sukāla (y) 50
 Śukamukha (y) 171
 Sūkara 139, figure of—133;—*tīrtha*
 89
 Suketu (y) 29, 31
 Sukhāvaha (y) 169, 170
 Sukhendra (y) 71n, 106
 Śukladarśinshṭra (y) 168
 Śukra 156;—Kubera's minister 60n.
 Sukumārikā (yn) 54, 54n., 91
 Sulakshaṇā 127
 Śulapāṇī (y) 48, 51, 90, 97n, 147,
 151; Sanchi relief of—122; temple
 of—90
 Sulocanā (yn) 58, 127
 Sumālinī 127
 Sumana (y) 51, 52n., 57, 87, 99, 105;
 —*silā* 91;—sa Yakshas 98
 Sumanobhadra (y) 46
 Sumanta (y) 32
 Sumitrā (yn) 54n.
 Sumukha (y) 58
 Sumati (yn) 58
 Sūṇa 169
 Sunandā (yn) 71n, 82n.
 Sunda (y) 29, 31
 Sundara (y) 169
 Sunetra (y) 32, 63
 Supari 20
 Supavāso (y) 117
 Supernatural—element in Yakshas
 147-152
Suppedha (y) 57
 Suprabuddha (y) 171
 Supratika (y) 53, 54n.
 Suprāvriah (y) 117

- Sura (y) 57
 Surakshitā 127
 Sūrambara (y) 159
 Surapriya (y) 47, 51, 90, 91
 Surasā (yn) 58
 Surasundarī (yn) 58
 Surūpā (yn) 58
 Survivals—of Yaksha 162-165
 Sūryabhānu (y) 29
 Sūryaprabha (y) 169
 Sūryateja (y) 32
 Susheṇa (y) 34, 170
 Susvarā (yn) 58
 Sutā (yn) 45, 63, Kubera's daughter—45
 Sutarā (yn) 174
 Suvirā (yn) 32, 58
 Suyasā (yn) 31, 32
 Svarūpa (y) 46n.
 Sveta (y) 132;—bhadrā, 45,—giri 80, 96
 Śvetāmbi: park at—50n.
 Śvastika (y) 169,—taka 169
 Śyāmā (yn) 174

 Takshaśilā 168
 Tamasundarī (yn) 101
 Tāmralocanā (y) 33n.
 Tāmrāparṇi 167
 tantra 52,—tantric practices and Yakshiṇis 54, 100-101
 Tārā 85;—Purābhadrā's consort 46;—devī 127,—vai: 146, 160 Maṇi-bhadrā's daughter 82
 Tarangavatī 169
 Taranūka (y) 30, 35, 159, 170
 Tārksya (y) 34
 Taṭakā (yn) 28, 29, 31, 150
 Taṭiskandha 169
 Temples—of Yakshas 20-21, 52, 55 see under Abode, Habitat, Sanctuary, shrine
 Terracotta—yaksha figures 124, 125, 133, 138-140
 Theri-anthropomorphic -Yaksha figures 132
 Timisikā (yn) 43, 58, 123
 Trigupta (y) 168
 Trīmukha (y) 113, 172
 Tripura 169, 170
 Triśira 113n.
 Triśūlapānī (y) 113
 Tryaksha (y) 113
 Tukhāra 170
 Tumburu 172

 Udaryā (yn) 58,—of Nandivardhana 43
 Udbhrama (y) 34
 Uddhiyānka 171

 Udena—a caitya 42, 43
 Udumbara 96, 169
 Ujjihāna 169
 Ulūkhalemekhalā (yn) 30, 34, 89
 Umā 14, 17, 67
 Umbaradatta (y) 50, 91, 97, 99, 100, 158
 Upakālaka (y) 167
 Upanandini (yn) 58
 Upasunḍa 29
 Uppala (y) 36
 Ushabhāpura park at 50
 Ushṭrapāda (y) 170
 Uitamā (yn) 46, 85; consort of Pūrābhadrā 46
 Uitara 167,—kuru 43, 45, 51, 61n., 65n., 119

 Vaddhamānapura: yaksha park at—50
 Vahni 127
 Vaidiśa (y) 169
 Vaijayanta (y) 47, 169
 Vaikratika (y) 170
 Vainvātāta 168
 Vairāmaka 169
 Vairotyā (yn) 175
 Vaiśālī 42, 43, 48n., 74, 92, 167
 Vaira 167
 Vairāṭaka (y) 170
 Vaiśravaṇa 3n., 5n., 19n., 20, 37, 38, 39, 40, 45, 53n., 58, 59-73, 94, 106, 119, 134, 145, 154, 155, 159, 171, —Kāyika devas 2,—Kūṭa 50, —maha 99; see under Kubera
 Vaitāḍhya 50, a mountain
 Vajra 46 an island
 Vajira (y) 36—bāhu 36: a Yaksha
 Vajrapāni (y) 41, 42, 124, 167,—'s images and reliefs 124, 137,—'s *māhāmudrā* 152.—ś power 124,—ś *vajra* 151
 Vajraśrinkhalā (yn) 128, 174
 Vājrayudha (y) 107
 Vakkula (y) 58, 167, 169;—of Śrava-stī 43
 Valāhassa Jātaka 135
 Valavāmukha 134, 148
 Vanī (y) 33n., 58,—dhipatī yaksha 46;—hāra yaksha 46;—vāstī 55
 Vandhyā (yn) 55
 Vanga—dialect of—162, known to Yaksha
 Vāṇamantara 2, 45, 45n.
 Vankeśvara 33
 Vaniyagrāma park of—50
 Varanaśi 113, 160n., 167
 Varānga (y) 32
 Vardhana (y) 168
 Vardhamāna (y) 32;—pura 51

 Varṇu 168
 Varuṇa (y) 4, 12n, 15, 16;—a Yaksha 20, 57, 126, 170, 173
 Vāsava (y) 168
 Vashkāla (y) 33n.
 Vaśīkaraṇa of Yakshiṇis 101
 Vāstu 35
 Vasu (y) 32,—bhadrā Yaksha 168, —bhūti 108, 114;—dā 4;—deva 43n., 85
 Vasudhārā 71, 72, 78, 79, 116
 Vasumatī (yn) 58
 Vasuruci (y) 32
 Vaṭavāsini (yn) 58
 Vatsa 157
 Vāyila (y) 169,—bhūmi 169
 Veddas; 162—a tribe 36n.
 Vegavati 98
 Vendā (yn) 43, 58, 123
 Vepulla 43, 96
 Veshṭīaka (y) 169
 Vessamitta (y) 58
 Vessavana (y) see under Vaiśravaṇa
 Vibhelaga (y) 47n., 48n.
 Vibhishana (y) 167
 Vicitrakathā (yn) 151n.
 Vidhurapaṇḍita Jātaka 135
 Vidīśā 168,—Yaksha images 107
 Viditā (yn) 174
 Vidyādevī 129
 Vidyutjihva (y) 53
 Vidyutprabhā (yn) 54, 55
 Vijaya (y) 32, 47
 Vijayā (yn) 58, 172, 175
 Vijaya—a prince 36n,—pura: a park 50
 Vikāla (y) 58
 Vikampana (y) 33n.
 Vikaṭa (y) 170
 Vikrita (y) 33n.
 Vimalaprabhā (yn) 58
 Vināyaka (y) 113n.
 Vindhyagiri 52
 Vipula (y) 32,—Kubera's Sabha—61
 Virā (yn) 58
 Vira—aspect of yaksha 113, 114, 121n;—bahu Yaksha 170;—bhadrā (y) 51;—pura 50, 51;—matī (yn) 58,—sena (y) 51
 Virāṭā (yn) 174
 Virocana (y) 169
 Viruḍaka 116, 119
 Virūpa (y) 33n.
 Virūpāksha (y) 20, 53, 54, 157,—of Mathura 157
 Viśālā 20, 31n., 32, 53
 Viśāleya (y) 32
 Viśāṇa 59n.
 Vishṇu 28, 34, 55; 165, 167
 Viśravas 32, 33

- Viśālāksha (y) 169
 Viśvā 6
 Viśvakarmā 61
 Vokkana 171
 Vrikshakā 119, 123
 Vriṇālavana 52
 Virility—of Yakshas 157
 Vyāla-yaksha 132-133
 Vyantara-devatā 2n., 45, 45n., 46n.
 Vyāptikabhadrā (y) 46
- Worship: Yakshas—35, 43, 55, 88-103;—eradicating 44n.;—in Puranas 34-35, special days of yaksha—100; typology of modes of yaksha—: Alternative 102-103; Restricted 100-102; Universal 99-100. Worshipers 55-56, 97, 98, 165
- Yaksha: animal-headed deities and—132; appearance of—148, applications of word—36-37, beauty of—28, 149;—between Manussa and Gandhabba 37; birth as—33, 54-55, 146, 147,—'s change of form 146, material personality of—15; cities of—46; classes of—5; control of—55, 56, crowns of—149,—'s dance and music 99 depravity detected by—157-158; domain of—'s power 150;—eastern and northern quarters 51,—eat human flesh and blood 40;—and epidemics 47, 154;—'s and fragrance 98,—'s followers 30,—'s as givers of progeny 157-159, protection 159-160;—'s immortality 29-30, 146; inimical to Bodhisattva 44n.;—'s intelligence 24-26; 151;—'s memory 151;—and music 98;—'s mysterious powers 150;—'s and nature-worship 145; opposite concepts defining—1; origin of—6-8, 27, 28, 35, 57;—'s priests 8, 18, 20, 47n. 163; primordial—21-23; 's sexual contacts and efficacy 55, 157, 158;—theology (popular) 145-161, (Vedic) 21;—tirthas 30, 35, 89; votaries of—44, word—'s semantics 11-14;—*bhāṣā* 162; *dāra* 55n;—*dhūpa* 98n.;—*gāna* 163,—*graha* 152, 153, 163, 165;—Kardama 98;—*lipi* 162;—*pura* 29, 88;—*rāga* 158, *rātri* 157;—*rājāshtaka* 34;—*sadana* 15n, 16; 88;—*śatakam* 106;—*ttva* 14n., 30, 36
 Yakshakumārikā (yn) 101
 Yakshanāyaka (y) 172
 Yakshendra (y) 53n., 173
 Yaksheśa (y) 173
 Yakshet (y) 173
 Yakshi see under Yakshioi;
 —*yajñaśāla* 91, 104
 Yakshin 9
 Yakshini: as beautiful 31, 54, 149; eight—101n., 106, names of 50;—painting 91
 Yakshmā 10
 Yakshonmāda 153
 Yakshopāsanta (y) 32
 Yakshottama (y) 46n.
 Yama 4,—kōli 36;—'s *nayanāvudha* 150n.
 Yambhāka 5n;—a class of Yakshas 59; see under Jrimbhaka also
 Yavika (y) 32
 Yudhishthira 19, 24, 80
 Yugandhara (y) 57



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