CHAPTER-III
CONCEPT OF SCULPTURAL DESIGN

Sculptural art of India occupies foremost place in the history of art. The artists in India attained a high degree of excellence at a very early period. The specimens produced by man are truly marvelous. People find in this specimen an intensity of feeling, a revelation of the powers of the Unseen Existences. This is not apprehended in art elsewhere in the world. "The essential quality of Indian art is its preoccupation with the spiritual object. The approach is no intellectual but spiritual. Art in India did not aim at objective presentation of the human behaviour or social facets of life. It was primarily the fruit of the artist's creative meditation and effort to project symbols of the divine reality as conceived and understood by the collective consciousness of the people as a whole. It is a vast, unending social and religious endeavour of devotees to depict the forms of the gods and goddesses they worshipped."¹ The real significance of Indian art is exposed in the symbolic way, which makes a world of their own.

The objects worshipped by the Hindus are images, and symbols of gods and goddesses, such as sālagrāmas, bāna-liṅgas, yantras, certain animals and birds, certain holy rivers, tree. Besides these, there are several minor objects of local importance and personal predilection,

The Hindu images of gods and goddesses may be divided into two classes, such as the Vaiṣṇava and the Śaiva. The goddesses associated with Viṣṇu and Śiva representing their various divine powers and energies are also worshipped. The images of gods and goddesses are worshipped by the Hindus not only in temples or public places of worship, but also in private homes. The regular Hindu worship of images requires attention to a great many details in respect of ceremonial purity and piety; such worship is only occasionally conducted in many households, even though the rule is that it should be conducted everyday. Every Hindu household possesses its own images of the family-deity (iśṭa-devatās and kula-devatās) and worship is offered to them every day and in many families occasionally they are worshipped.

Classification of images:

Images are divided into three classes, as cala (movable), acala (immoveable) and cala-cala (moveable-immovable). The movable images are those which are made of metal and are easily portable.

The immovable images are commonly known as the mūla-vigrahas or dhruvabera, and are generally made of stone, which are permanently fixed in the central shrine. They are invariably large and heavy images. Dhruvabera images are of three kinds, called sthānaka, āsana and āyana representing the standing, sitting and reclining postures. In case of the
Vaiṣṇava images, each of these three kinds of images are further divided into *yoga*, *bhoga*, *vīra* and *abhicārika* varieties. These varieties of the standing, sitting and reclining images of Viṣṇu are worshipped, respectively, by those who desire to attain *yoga* or spiritual self-realization, *bhoga* or enjoyment and *vīra* or military prowess.

There are another classification of images, which are *citra*, *citrārdha* and *citrābhāsa*. *Citra* denotes image in the round with all their limbs completely worked out and shown.

*Citrārdha* is the name given to the figures in half relief. *Citrābhāsa* refers to images painted on walls and cloths and other suitable objects. Moreover, images sculptured fully in the round in form is called *vyakta* or manifest. When it is half represented, e.g. up to the chest, it is called non-manifest. And those objects like the *liṅga*, the *sālagrāma*, the *bānapa-liṅga*, etc. are also said to be *avyakta* or non-manifest.

No image of gods, other than those of Viṣṇu, should be represented as reclining. All other images might be sculptured either in standing or sitting position, but the image of Viṣṇu alone could be seen in all the three types of postures, viz. standing, sitting and reclining.

There are still another classe of images based upon their terrific (*rudra* or *ugra*) or pacific (*śānta* or *saumya*) nature. The first type of images are always characterized by shape, with long tusks and nails, besides a large number of hands for carrying weapons used in wars.
The images of terrific nature are wide in shape with circular eyes. Flames of fire are seen round their heads; these images are in some cases adorned with human skulls and bones. The *rudra* form of images are worshipped for the attainment of peace and tranquility, to avoid violence of the world. The *sānta* or *saumya* are meant for the attainment of mental peace and welfare of human beings. Among the images of Viṣṇu, Viśvarūpa, Narasimha, Vatapatraśāyī and Paraśurāma are considered to be *ugra-mūrti*, while Śiva as the destroyer of Kāma, of the elephant (*gaja-mūrti*), of Tripura and of Yama is terrific in nature.

The terrific images are not meant to be set up in temples in towns, but must always have their temples outside the town.

According to Gopinath Rao, "The aspects of Viṣṇu in Yoga form, in standing, sitting or reclining must be enshrined in a temple, built far away from the bustle of the village, on the banks of rivers, or at the junction of two or more rivers, on top of the hill and in the forest recesses." The reason for the choice of such places is the calm and quiet surroundings. The *bhoga* form is the best-fitted form in the temple which is constituted within towns and villages. It is conceived to be the giver of all happiness to its devotees, and has, therefore, to be worshipped and prayed to by all sections of men and women belonging to all conditions of life. The *vīra* form of Viṣṇu, a form that is conceived to be capable of giving physical powers, and strength to conquer enemies, the temple is built either inside or outside towns and villages.
The abbcārika form, which is worshipped for the purpose of inflicting defeat and death on the enemies, is looked upon as inauspicious and unfit to be fit for worship in temples built in towns and villages. Therefore, forests, mountains, marshy tracts, fortresses and other such places are prescribed as being fit for construction of temples to enshrine this aspect of Viśṇu. Various places are prescribed for building of temples for different gods. Even different forms of central shrines are also described in the āgamas as suitable for the different deities according to their postures. According to Gopinath Rao, “Temples might be built near tanks, rivers, at the junction of two or more rivers, on the sea-shore in villages, on the tops of valley and at their foot, and temples where great and good men live.”

The temple of Śiva might be constructed in the north-east, north-north-east or east-north-east corner of a village, that of Viśṇu in the west, of Sūrya in the east, of Durgā in the south.

Different kinds of vimanas or domes of the central shrines are mentioned in the āgamas and tantras. Some of them are square (sama-caturāsra) or circular (vṛttta) in ground plan, while others are rectangular (āyatasra) or oval (vṛtāyata). Of these, the square and circular varieties are prescribed for enshrining the sitting and standing figures of deities, while the rectangular varieties are reserved for the reclining image of Viṣṇu.

Varāhamihira, the great Indian astronomer, states that, “the pratiṣṭhā of the various gods should be through the hands of person of the caste, particularly suited to the deity that is to be set up.” Thus, Vaiṣṇava images should be set up in temple by Bhāgavata, that of Śiva by a Brahmana who wears the bhasma, the Maga-Brahmanas should be employed for the setting up of the images of Sūrya. Brahmans should be employed for the pratiṣṭhā of images of Brahmā, Jaina and Buddha, respectively; those who worship the mātr-maṇḍala should alone employ for setting up of the saptamātrakās.

Concept of Hindu images:

According to Hindu concept, the omnipresent God is the father of the universe, and appears to reside in everywhere, also in the loving heart of the devotees. God may or may not be conceived as anthropomorphic in form. The form or the conception depends upon the stage of advancement of the worshipper in the culture of divine knowledge and spiritual wisdom. For a yogin, who has realized the supreme Brahman within himself, there is no need of any temple or any divine image for worship, but for those persons who have not attained this height of realization, various physical and mental modes of worship are prescribed and rules of various kinds are laid down relating to its conduct. The Hindu śaṭtras prescribe image worship to weak unevolved

persons in particular, The Jabala-Upaniṣad distinctly asserts that the yogin perceives Śiva in his heart and that images are meant for ignorant man. Again, the worship of images is said to bring on re-births and is not, therefore, to be resorted to by the yogin who desires to free himself from the circle of birth and death. Accordingly, the images of the Hindu gods and goddesses are the representations of various conceptions of divine attributes. It is mentioned that the concept of the thinker is manifested and concretized by various means, such as speech, pictorial and sculptural representation, the signs and symbols. All these means have been enshrined in the history of mankind for bringing divinity to the common man, lifting him up gradually to sublime height of true divine realisation.

Sculpturally, it may be said that the number of hands in an image represents the number of attributes belonging to the deity. Their nature is denoted by the āyudhas, held in the hands or by the pose maintained by it. The image with many hands is considered to be tāmasic in character. Similarly, the less the number of hands, are less the guṇas. The image may thus be made to approach as nearly as possible the description of the attributeless Brahman. Even in image worship there are thus different grades of evolution. An image, therefore, has to be understood to be a symbol meant to keep before the eyes of the worshipper certain attributes of the deity he undertakes to worship and

4. Rao, Gopinath, ibid, pp. 26-27
upon which he desires to concentrate his thoughts.5

Before the images the worshippers sometimes draw mystic symbols with diagrams of geometric design. This is to be drawn according to the direction given in the śilpa-śāstras. Hindu worshippers of images ignore the outer beauty of an image. The negligence of artistic performance on their part as sculptors always have shown their merits in a careless manner. They gave emphasis on the inner depth of deity rather than outer beauty. If we compare Indian images with foreign ones, the Hindu images are different from that of the Greek images. Symbolism has been the essential feature of Hindu sculpture; the Hindu artist was not averse to secure beauty in his images. As a matter of fact every āgama and tantra insists upon the necessity of making the image as beautiful as possible. When they happen to be ill-made, the fault is attributable entirely to the incapacity of the artist. Varahamihira mentioned in his ‘Brhat-Saṁhitā’ that the ornamentation and clothing should be in accordance with the usage of the country in which the images are made. An image made according to the rules laid down in the śāstras, when it is set up in the neighborhood, bestows prosperity and progress. It is thus required that the outline of the features and the details of clothing and ornamentation should be made to vary from place to place

5a. ibid. pp. 29.

The Brhat-Saṁhitā of Varahamihira says:

desānurupabhūṣaṇāveśālankāra mūrtibhiḥ kāryā /
pratimā lakṣaṇayuktā saṁnihitā vyḍḍhitā bhavet //
according to local usage. In other respects, no variation was allowed.

The materials recommended in the āgamas for the making of images are wood, stone, precious gems, metals, earth and also a combination of two or more of the aforesaid materials.

For the making of images some particular objects are necessary, such as, according to the āgama-śastra, sphaṭika (crystal), padmarāga, vajra (diamonds), vaidurya (cat's eye), vidruma (coral), pashya and ratna (ruby). Almost all the dhruvabera images set up permanently in the central shrines of Indian temples happen to be generally made of stone. There are a few instances of such principal images being of wood; the most famous instance is in the temple of Jagannātha at Puri, Orissa.

Technical terms and symbols:

Indian śilpa-śastra make frequent mention of the hand poses (mudrās), pedestals, weapons, and other objects, which are associated with Indian deities. These have great significance in iconography. Each god or goddess has his or her cognizance symbols, which help to distinguish him or her from other gods and goddesses of the pantheon. The Indian sculptor was thus required to be fully conversant with religious texts, which described the various Indian icons. Every posture of hand is full of meaning, every stance of god is suggestive of some mood; and every object carried by the deities by their hands has some purpose and motive.
Deities have got their own way to sit, stand or be in a laying down posture. The posture of a deity depends upon the suitable mood. If he is in an aggressive mood, he may stand in the alicha posture, with one leg moved menacingly forward; if he is engaged in meditation, he would sit cross-legged, with the side pointing upwards; if he is watching sports, he may sit with one leg pendant; if he is resting, he may be reclining on a couch. These postures are called asanas. Here the word asanas refers to the position of the legs. The pedestal on which a deity sits may represent a lotus, when it is called a padmasana.

The simhasana is a lion pedestal. Indian gods carry numerous objects, like the conch, lotus, mace, wheel, goad, mouse, bow, arrow, sheild, trident, sword, spear, plough, pestle, chisel, battle-axe, fire etc. Some of these symbols are very meaningful. A few of them are described below:

1. Aksamālā: The aksamālā is rosary and made of beads. It may be either of the rudrākṣa variety, in which case it may be associated with the Rudra (Śaiva)-cult, or the kamalākṣa variety, probably associated with Śiva or Brahmā; the rosary is representative of time.

2. Cakra: The cakra or wheel symbolizes the rotation of the world, and also represents the wheel of Dharma. It also stands for air.

3. Citron: This is the seed of the universe.
4. *Danda*: A staff. If Śiva holds it, it is indicative either of death or of Śiva teaching.

5. *Gadā*: The Indian mace. Sometimes it is held in the hand and at other times the hand is merely placed upon the top of the mace. The *gadā* represents 'light'.

6. *Garuḍa*: The Garuḍa is symbolic of the human mind which can soar to the sky in an instant. It is the mind that prevails over the bodies of all creatures.

7. *Jaṭā*: Jaṭā of Śiva and Brahmā represents the variegated Brahman.

8. *Kalaśa*: Vase. The Hindus believe that in the beginning the universe was all water. The earth issued out of the primeval water. Brahmā, the creator of the gods, therefore, carries this primeval water in his vase. (*kamandalu*).

9. *Khadga*: The *khadga* is a sword. It is the symbol of enlightenment.

10. *Kheṭaka*: The *kheṭaka* is a shield. It represents Dharma, which protects like a shield.

11. *Nandi*: The *Nandi* is Śiva's bull and it symbolizes dharma.

12. *Padma*: In the Hindu pantheon, the lotus arising from Viṣṇu's navel represents māhī, the earth. *Padma* also symbolizes water and creation.

13. *Pustaka*: The *pustaka* is a book on palm-leaves. The Hindu god Brahmā holds a sacred manuscript in one of his hands. It is the symbol of knowledge and wisdom.
14. **Trisula** : The *trisula* represents either the triple functions of God, creation, protection and destruction, or the three attributes or *gunas*, viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Trisula is the principal *āyūdra* of Lord Śiva. Also called śūla.

15. **Vajra** : The *vajra* is the special symbol of the Hindu god Indra. With this thunderbolt, he destroys the enemies of *devas*.

16. **Vyāghra-carma** : The *vyāghra-charma* is tiger skin. It represents desire (ṭṛṣṇā).

**Hand Poses**:

1. **Abhaya** : The ‘fear not’ or protection-assuring posture of the hand.
   
   In this hand pose, the right hand is lifted upwards with the palm of the hand, along with the fingers extended, held outwards.

2. **Anjali** : This is the hand-pose of salutation. In this hand gesture, the two hands are folded, leaving a hollow between them. The hands thus folded rest on the chest and are kept parallel to the ground.

3. **Buddha-śramaṇa** : This is the hand pose of salutation. In this, the hand is held at level of the head, with the palm facing up and all fingers fully extended.

4. **Bhūsparsa** : The attitude of touching the earth, calling her to witness the virtue of Gautama. In this hand pose, the right hand is placed over the right knee. The hand, with palm inward, all fingers down, touches the lotus seat below.
V. Bhūtadāmara: The hand pose that inspires awe. In this, the wrists are crossed in front of the chest.

VI. Cīnmaudra: In this hand pose, the tips of the thumb and the forefingers touch each other to form a circle, while the other fingers are kept open. The palm faces outwards. This is the hand-pose of teaching or exposition.

VII. Daṇḍa-hasta or Gaja-hasta: In this hand pose, the arm and hand are thrown across the chest and held straight like a staff (daṇḍa) or the trunk of an elephant.

VIII. Dharmachakra: The hand pose of preaching the law. It signifies the turning the wheel of law. In this hand pose, both the hands are held against the chest, the left hand covering the right.

IX. Dhyāna-mudra: The attitude of meditation. In this hand pose, both hands are placed on the lap, the right hand on the left, with the fingers fully extended and the palm facing upwards.

X. Harinā-mudrā: In this hand pose, joining the thumb with the middle and ring fingers, forms a ring. The index and little fingers are kept straight.

XI. Jñāna-mudrā: In this hand gesture, the tips of the middle or index finger and of the thumb are joined together and held near the chest, with palm turned inward.

XII. Kartarī-hasta: In this hand-pose the hand is kept at shoulder-level. The thumb and the ring finger form a ring and the index and the
middle fingers are kept straight up to look like the horns of a
deer, in which an emblem may be held.

XIII. Kātyāvalambita-mudrā: This is the posture of ease. The arm
hangs loose and the hand is placed on the waist. Also called kāti-
hasta.

XIV. Kaṭaka-hasta: In this hand pose, the tips of the fingers are loosely
joined to the thumb to form a ring. This is done with a view to
inserting a fresh flower in the hand of the icon everyday.

XV. Kṣepaṇa: This is the gesture of sprinkling ambrosia. In this hand
pose the hands are joined to palm, with the tips of the index fingers
touching and turned down towards the vase containing nectar.

XVI. Namaskāra: This is the attitude of adoration or prayer. The two
hands are kept close to the chest, touching palm to palm in an
attitude of prayer.

XVII. Sūci-hasta: In this hand pose, the projected forefinger points to
an object below.

XVIII. Taṇani: In this hand pose, the projected forefinger points to an
object above. It is also used for warning or scolding someone.

XIX. Taṇapa: It is the pose of paying homage. The arm is kept at level
with shoulder. The palm is turned in, and the finger slightly bent
and pointed towards the shoulders.

XX. Uttarabodhi-mudrā: This is the hand pose of perfection. In this
fingers are locked, palms together, with the thumbs and index fingers
touching at the tips, with the fingers extended upwards.
XXI. *Varada*: The hand pose, which confers grace or boon. In this gesture of the hand, the palm of the hand with fingers extended downward is held below the waist, as far as the hands can reach.

XXII. *Vismaya*: This hand pose is indicative of astonishment and wonder. In this hand gesture the fore-arm is lifted and the palm turned inward with the fingers spread out is a circular manner to denote inquiry.

XXIII. *Vitarka*: The *mudrā* of argument. In this hand-pose, the thumb and index fingers are joined to make a ring. All the other fingers are extended upwards.

XXIV. *Vajrahūrīkāra*: This is symbolic of the supreme and eternal Buddha. The wrists are crossed at the chest and hold the *vajra* and *ghanṭā*.

XXV. *Yajña-mudrā*: In this gesture of the hands, the palm of the right hand is placed in the palm of the left hand. Both hands rest on the crossed legs of the seated image. This is the hand gesture of meditation and is also know as *Dhyāna-mudrā*.

**Objects held in the hands:**

*Agni*: Fire. It is used as a weapon of war. It is also used for making offerings.

*Aksamālā*: Rosary of beads. The rosary is usually found in the hands of Brahmā, Śiva and Sarasvatī.

*Amlaka*: Myrobalan; a fruit.
Aikuśa : Elephant goad. It is made of a small wooden handle topped by a strong and sharp petal hook.

Bāṇa : Arrow.

Bhinḍipāla : A short arrow.

Bilva-phala : Wood apple.

Cakra : Wheel.

Cowṛi : Fly whisk.

Damaru : Drum.

Darpana : Mirror.

Dhanus : Bow.

Gadā : Mace.

Ghaṇṭā : Bell.

Hala : Plough.

Jambhūra : Lemon.

Kalasa : Vase.

Kalpalatā : Wish fulfilling tree.

Kamaṇḍalu : A vessel to hold water.

Kartṛi : A small knife.

Kaumudī : Half-moon.

Khadga : Sword.

Khakkara : Alarm staff. It is a long wooden staff with a metal top with a number of metal rings attached to it. Shaken to give warning.
Khaṭvāṅga: A kind of club made up of the bone of the forearm or leg. To the end of this is attached a skull. It is probably a weapon, which comes from antiquity. Sometimes the bone shaft is replaced by a wooden handle.

Khetaka: A shield.

Laddu: A round sweet meat dear to Gaṇeśa.

Mayūrapuccha: Peacock feather.

Mṛga: Deer.

Nakula: Mongoose.

Padma: Lotus.

Paraśu: Battle-axe.

Parīgha: A kind of club.

Pāśa: A noose or rope.

Pātra: Bowl.

Pattika: A layer of the pedestal.

Pustaka: Book.

Śaṅkha: Conch shell.

Śaśaka: Rabbit.

Śrīphala: Fruit of the bilva-tree.

Srūk: A circular shaped sacrificial spoon.

Triśūla: Trident.

Upavīta: Deer skin from over left shoulder, across the body and below the right arm, coming up again at the back to the left shoulder.
Vajra: The thunderbolt, the favourite weapon of Indra.

Āsana: Postures.

Ardhaparyānika: Sitting with one leg folded and other raised with the heel on the seat, the arm resting on the knee.

Ālīḍha: Left leg bent at knee, and right leg straight but slanting at an angle to the back. This is a standing pose.

Dhyānāsana: Seated in Padmāsana in the attitude of meditation. In this sitting position, the legs are crossed, with the soles of the feet turned upwards, resting on the thighs.

Utkatikāsana: A sitting posture in which the heels are brought together and kept close to the bottom, with the back slightly bent for comfort.

Kūrmāsana: ‘Tortoise seat’. Sitting crossed-legged with the soles of the feet touching the bottom.

Pralambapada: A sitting posture with both feet placed on the ground in European fashion.

Yogāsana: Seated cross-legged, with soles of the feet turned upwards, with two hands on the lap, one upon the other, in an attitude of meditation.

Lalitāsana: Sitting on a high pedestal as on a stool, with one leg hanging down and the other folded and resting on a cushion or a pedestal.
Vajrāsana: Sitting cross-legged with the soles of the feet turned upward, the two hands resting on the knees.

Pedestal or Seats: The word āsana is also to denote the pedestal or seat on which an icon is sitting or standing. These are described below-

Anantāsana: It is a triangular seat or stool and is used usually when one views sports.

Kurmaśana: The seat, oval in shape, is in the form of a tortoise.

Padmāsana: It is circular or oval in shape, and generally used for worship.

Yogaśana: The seat is octagonal in shape and is used for in the ritual of worship, sometimes for placing offerings.

Vieśva-padmasāna: It is a Double petalled lotus pedestal.

Siṁhāsana: It is a rectangular seat with four legs shaped like a lion. Often it has a back, making it similar to a modern chair used for kings and gods.

Makarāsana: It is a pedestal shaped like the crocodile.

Musical Instruments:

Damaru: A small drum.

Ghaṇṭā: Bell.

Murali: A flute made from a thin and hollow bamboo.

Viṇā: A stringed musical instrument, the favourite of Sarasvati. It consists of a longish hollow cylindrical shaft, with number of
keys on its sides. A string or wire is attached to each of these keys and they are stretched to be tied at the lower end, where there is a square sounded box. At the upper end is a hollow gound, which serves as a resonator.

The Mount or vehicle: The deities are often accompanied by a 'vehicle' or mount which helps in their identification. The bull of 'Nandri' is the vehicle of Siva, Garuda of Viṣṇu, the parrot of Rati, the goddess of love, and so forth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Different God &amp; Goddess</th>
<th>Vehicle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Śiva</td>
<td>Bull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viṣṇu</td>
<td>Garuḍa (eagle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmā</td>
<td>Goose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durgā</td>
<td>Lion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kāli</td>
<td>Lion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarasvatī</td>
<td>Swan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakṣī</td>
<td>Owl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rati (goddess of love)</td>
<td>Parrot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaṇeśā</td>
<td>Rat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kārttikeya</td>
<td>Peacocok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śūrya</td>
<td>A car with one wheel and seven horses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manasā (The Goddess of snake)</td>
<td>Swan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indra</td>
<td>Elephant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agni</td>
<td>Goat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yama</td>
<td>Buffalo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaṅgā</td>
<td>Alligator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yamunā</td>
<td>Tortoise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maheśvarī</td>
<td>Bull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumariī</td>
<td>Peacock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indrani</td>
<td>Elephant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaisnava</td>
<td>Eagle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varahī</td>
<td>Bull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camunḍa</td>
<td>Corpse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parvati</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gauri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nīrūṭi</td>
<td>Man, ass or camel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varunā</td>
<td>Crocodile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kubera</td>
<td>Man, Goat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isana</td>
<td>Standing on a left leg lifted,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>turned towards right leg, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kept across it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virahbadra</td>
<td>Bull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śayana Viṣṇu</td>
<td>Serpent Śesa.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Tāla system of measurement: In Indian iconometry, the tāla system of measurement is used for sculpture. The face, from the top
of the forehead to the bottom of the chain, is the unit of measurement and is known as the tāla. Each tāla is further divided into twelve angulas, which are further sub-divided into smaller units.

Ordinary human beings are in measure of eight tālas. Navatāla or nine-face length is the generally accepted rule concerning the heights of the images of gods. One Tāla is sub-divided into 12 āṅgulas.⁶

According to the Śukranītisāra IV. 4, the proportions of images are according to their relative height of the figure-up to the root of the hair on the forehead. The generally accepted proportion of nine tāla being that of the gods, 8 tālas would be that of the goddess. Tālamāna, iconometry, now ever is not unanimous on this; according to the 'Vaikhānasagama XXV. Daśatāla, 10 face length of images are those of Brahma, ‘Viṣṇu’ and Śiva; their images belong to the highest of the three sub-varieties of Daśatāla Propotion.⁷ The great goddesses would conform in their proportion with the middle variety of the 10 faces height. The respective proportion depends on the place, which the god holds in the divine hierarchy; the Matsya-purāṇa; CCLIX 1-2, moreover

---

6. Visṇudharmottara, iii, ch. XXXV., cf also Mānasollasa, ch. iii, pp. 200-208.
7. Each ‘proportion’, daśatāla, etc. is sub-divided into 3 varities: uttama, madhyama and adhama, the height, the middle and the least. 102 āṅgulas being the middle height, 124 is the highest, and 116 the least height of a daśatāla image. The Brhad Sāṃhitā, LXVII, dividing the types of men according to their proportion into 5 classes, each 'nyagrodha-pāri-mandala, assigns a height ranging from 96-108 āṅgulas (96, 99,102,105,108) to the respective type of men. These would approximate to the aṣṭa-navatāla types. Further, sub-varieties are also known in South Indian tālamana; Bannerjea, J. N., op-cit. p. 357.
makes the proportion of images correspond's also to these of the types 
on which they are based. The image of Viṣṇu as Rāma or Varāha has 10 face lengths, whereas it has 7 face lengths only when it represents 
his dwarf incarnation (Vāman). Indian iconometry know of nine main verities of proportion of the images ranging from 1 tāla, corresponding to the following total number of āṅgulas successively, 12, 24, 48, 62, 72, 96, 108 and 120. The series is built up by adding 1 tāla or 12 āṅgulas throughout. The total height in each of the types of proportion measurement is distributed in 9 divisions, face, neck, etc. in close correspondence to the Navatāla or standard type of 108 āṅgulas.

Vertical proportion of 4 main types of Indian Images:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Image</th>
<th>7 Tālas</th>
<th>8 Tālas</th>
<th>9 Tālas</th>
<th>10 Tālas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face</td>
<td>12x</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neck</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neck to the horizontal line</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting the nipple (heart)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From these to the navel</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>belly (belly)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thigh</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knee</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leg</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foot</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total height</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Tālā - 12āṅgulas.

X. The figures given the number of āṅgulas.

The Rules are: The proportions of the trunk are the same in the 4 types; the distance from the root of the neck to the genitals is divided into 3 equal parts, in each case; neck-heart, heart-navel; navel-genitals; the thigh and the leg, throughout, are each twice as long. Of equal height, in each canon, are also neck, knee and foot. The actual lengths of these change; the face, however, remains the same, i.e., 12 āṅgulas throughout, but for the Daśatāla. This last and highest standard is built up on the Navatāla, the purest in proportion (1,1/3;1;1;1,1/3;2,1/3;2,1/3), by adding one āṅgula in each section; thigh and leg being as usual twice the height of the 'heart', etc. one āṅgula, moreover, is added to complete the number 120. By these artifices the highest type of proportionate measurement is constructed befitting the highest hierarchy of divine image. It approximates most closely the 'section aurea' in the classical statuary of the west; there the navel divides the total height of the figure and of the perfect human body in this proportion. 8