CHAPTER V: RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

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CHAPTER V

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

(A) INTRODUCTORY

The contemporary history of Vatsarāja’s age has a great proliferation of various changes in religious life. Buddhism had gone from India except in Magadha and the Bod Buddha had been converted into an incarnation of Viṣṇu. Jainism was also declining except in some parts of India like Gujarāta. It was, of course, a time of the triumphant revival of Brāhmaṇical religion. The Vedic mode of worship viz. the performance of daily sacrifices by the householders was now mostly in abeyance. In other words Hinduism had got a new shape consisting of the blend of Vedic and Purāṇic rituals. The Vedic rituals gradually declined in importance while the numerous Purāṇic gods and goddesses got a lot of prominence. A new type of worship i.e. bhakti which was associated with joy, singing, dancing, and prayer had displaced the cumbrous ritual and abstruse doctrine.

With this historical background in view we may now proceed to gather data on religious life whatever available in the RS. However, before dealing with various religions a few remarks about orthodox Hinduism in general would not be out of place. According to the Hindu orthodox way of thinking a religious instructor (= guru) bestows initiation (= dikṣā) on his disciple by telling him the name of the deity to be worshiped. The name of the deity is given in a root formula (= mūlamantra). If the mūlamantra contains the name of Viṣṇu, he is known to be a Vaiṣṇava (the follower of Vaiṣṇavism), if it contains the name of Śiva, he is a Śaiva (the follower of Śaivism) and if there is the name of Durgā in mūlamantra, he is a Śaktī (the follower of Śakti).

(B) ŚAIVISM

The worship of Śiva prevailed in India since a very remote period and Bundelakhanda was a stronghold of Śaivism during Candella regime. Most of the Candella rulers were the devotees of Lord Śiva. The majority of temples at Khajurāho including Kandariya Mahādeva temple, Viśvanātha temple, Mātangaśvara temple, Lalaguṇa temple and Dvīpadeva temple are dedicated

Kālakṣaṇa having a renowned Nīlakanṭha temple referred to in the Ṛgveda (Karpūra. p. 23; Hāsyatī. p. 118) has been known for centuries as an abode of Nīlakanṭha Śiva and is famous for its religio-cultural significance. It is regarded as a purgatory spot where a great to greater sinner, slaughtering even Brāhmaṇas, may be redeemed by its mere touch or even by a glimpse of it. In the period Vatsarājā the pious significance of this temple was not reduced in any way. A plenty of grants and donations made to this shrine in the 12th century A.D. is recorded in the inscriptions of this period. Vatsarājā's two dramas - Karpūracarita Bhāna (p. 23) and Hāsyacūḍāmāni Prahasana (p. 118), were staged on the auspicious occasions of pilgrimage festival of Nīlakanṭha itself.

Lord Śiva is referred to in the Ṛgveda by his following names - Trayaṁbaka (Kīrāta. Verse 1), Lalīṭanāṭra (Kīrāta. Verse 13), Trayaṅka (Kīrāta. Verse 40; Tripura. p. 84), Virūpāka (Rukmi. III. 14; Tripura. p. 84), Trinaya (Tripura. I. 25), Candrāṛddhābhāraṇa (Kīrāta. Verse 2), Jāśānkaśekhara (Kīrāta. p. 4), Candraśekhara (Kīrāta. p. 8; Rukmi. p. 57; Tripura. p. 82).

Navacandraśa (Kīrāṭa. Verses 31; Tripura. IV. 21), Pīyaga-
mayakhaśeakhara (Kīrāṭa. p. 20; Samudra. p. 191), Čandraṛddha-
chāmanī (Kārṇūra. Verses 2, 32), Induśeakhara (Rukmi. IV. 21),
Indumauli (Tripura. I. 1), Candraśa (Tripura. I. 9; p. 90),
Cudāsāṁ (Hāva. I. 1), Kājaniramanapalekhaśeakhara (Hāva II. 14),
Edmahanurddhara (Kīrāṭa. Verse 40), Eknēkapāṇi (Kīrāṭa. Verse 40),
Eknākin (Samudra. p. 180), Triśilapāni (Kīrāṭa. Verse 51),
Triśilavudha (Tripura I. 10), Khandāpara (Tripura. p. 78),
Sūlin (Tripura. I. 41), Sūlapāṇi (Tripura. III. 2), Ekaśvāntpati
(Kīrāṭa. Verse 55; Tripura. p. 83), Ekaśvānti (Tripura. III. 21),
Pramathānatha (Samudra. p. 150), Pramathāchāna (Tripura, IV. 7),
Jagannātha (Kīrāṭa. p. 21), Jagadiśa (Tripura. p. 90), Trijaga-
dguru (Kīrāṭa. p. 20), Eukṛati (Kārṇūra. Verse 23), Eukrati
(Tripura. I. 2), Tripurāntaka (Tripura. p. 110), Andhakēri (Tri-
pura. I. 8), Andhakadhvamāni (Tripura. III. 2), Andhakaśudana
(Tripura. IV. 8), Smaṇhara (Rukmi. III. 14), Milakana (Rukmi.
p. 74), Śrīkana (Samudra. p. 169), Ugra (Tripura. pp. 80, 89),
Rudra (Rukmi. p. 43), Ehega (Kīrāṭa. Verses 4, 58; Tripura. I.
3), Ānkaras (Kīrāṭa. Verses 23, 57; Tripura. p. 115), Śambhu
(Tripura. I. 16, 25), Hara (Kīrāṭa. Verse 31; Kārṇūra. Verses
1, 17), Giriā (Kīrāṭa. Verse 51; Rukmi. II. 12; Tripura. I. 21),
Iśāna (Tripura. p. 80; Samudra. p. 165), Vṛṣadhyaja (Tripura.
pp. 83, 108), Sthānu (Tripura. II. 6, p. 90), Dhūrāṭi (Tripura.
p. 111), Ekaśvāntvā (Samudra. I. 29), Ekaśvānt (Samudra. p.
187), Parameśvara (Kīrāṭa. Verse 22; Tripura. pp. 93, 114) and
Devadeva (Tripura. pp. 107, 108).
Some of these names indicate various traits of Śiva's iconography viz. half lunar orb adorning his forehead (Caṇḍrārdhacūdāmanī etc.), Trisula in his hand (Trisuladoṇḍi etc.), having blue neck due to poison (Nilakantha), his bull mount (Vṛṣadhvaja) and having matted locks (Dhūriāti) and so on.

Vatsaratāja himself appears to be a devout worshipper of Śiva. Most of the benedictory (= nāndī) and valedictory verses (= bharatavākyas) of the RS are dedicated to Śiva. Lord Śiva is said to be the highly worth-worshipping God (=param sevah bharavān) (Kirāta. Verse 31). He is the only God simultaneously possessing the capacity of creating, nourishing and destroying all the three worlds (Kirāta. Verse 58). He can create and destroy even the great gods like Brahmā and Viṣṇu (Kirāta. Verses 22, 23). The power of valour and enthusiasm which causes prosperity may be availed of only through the magnitude of Śiva (Kirāta. Verse. 40). Other gods are the mere components of Śiva and he is the only praiseworthy supreme being of the world (Trīpura. IV. 23).

Śaiva mythology :-

The RS has a rich account of Śaiva mythology. An entire play Tripuradāha Dīma is a perfect recitation as it were, of a well known legend of the destruction of Tripūrī by Śiva. Further a mythical story of drinking poison comes out through the churning of ocean by Śiva may be observed in Samudramaṇṭhaṇa.
Samavakāra. Transfigurating into a Kirāta Śiva’s fighting with Arjuna in order to examine the latter’s prowess and to give him a great weapon is also one of the most famous Śaiva legends which is described in Kiratārjunīya Vyāyoga. The myths of the destruction of Andhakāsura and Vīmadēva by Śiva are implied in his meaningful names - Andhakāri and Samarāhara respectively. His another name Karikṛttivāsa also suggests a legend according to which a demon in the form of elephant entered the city of Yasti in order to destroy the Brāhmaṇas. Śiva killed him and took his hide for use as garment. According to another legend referred to in the Rś (Kirāta. Verse 2) Śiva provided a Ṣūla (pike) to Ambikā by which she could kill demons. The same verse reminds us of one more myth mentioning that Indra’s thunderbolt remained simply painted as it were in his hand on having a mere look at Śiva’s Śūla. Further Tripūradāha Dīna (I. 9) furnishes us with a legendary information of Śiva’s dwelling in cemetery, and Viṣṇu’s existence in the body of Śiva (Tripura. II. 5–6). Vatsarājā indicates the eight forms

11. Mārkandeya Purāṇa. 79.20; Devī Māhātmya. II. 19.
12. 13th Chapter of Yuddhakhaṇḍa in Rudrasaṁhitā of Śiva Purāṇa.
of Śiva (Tripura, p. 83) which seem to follow Kālidāsa in enumerating the eight forms of Śiva viz. earth, water, fire, air, ether (ākāśa), sun, moon and sacrificer.\textsuperscript{15}

Śaiva cults:-

In northern India the four principal sects of Śaivism – Śaiva, Pāṣupata, Kāpālika and Kālāmukha, were in existence during the medieval age. Some of them have been referred to in the RS. It may be noted here that in his bhāṣya on Brahmaūttra (II. 2. 37) Śaṅkarācārya, the prorounder of Advaīta theory, has used the term māheśvara in a general sense of the follower of Pāṣupata sect. As will be discussed presently, Vatsarāja was a follower of the Advaīta school of Vedānta. The mention of Māheśvara (Kirāta, p. 1) by him may be taken as suggestive of the Pāṣupata sect. Moreover, an indirect reference to this sect is found in Tripuradāsa Dima also. Frabodhacandrodava of Kṛṣṇa-miśra (11th century A.D.) informs us about the good hold of Kāpālika sect during that period. But Vatsarāja seems to have not appreciated the same. Thus, though in Kāpālika sect Śiva was to be worshipped with human offerings, lustrous with streams of blood

\textsuperscript{15} Abhihīnasākuntale. I. 1; Rajhuyamāsa II. 35; Mālavikāgnimitra I. 1; (Gavacharana Trividhi has connected the theory of Śiva’s eight forms with Vedic literature. “Śiva ki aṣṭamūrtiyāna auro unakī Vedic prāthabhūmi”. Kosala, Journal of the Indian Research Society of Ayadha. Vol. IV. 1982-83. pp. 75-81).\textsuperscript{16}

B.N.S. Yadav; Society and Culture in Northern India. p. 353; Vasudeva Upadhyaya; Socio-religious Condition of North India. p. 238.
flowing from the stiff threat which was freshly cut, yet our author thinks that Śiva does not like this mode of worship, for he is engaged in the protection of all the three worlds (Tripura. IV. 21).

Further we may get reflection of another Śaiva sect i.e. Kāśmīra Śaivism. Since the theory of Kāśmīra Śaivism, to some extent, is similar to that of Advaita Vedānta, it is but natural for Vatsarāja being a follower of Advaita Vedānta that his philosophical views must have been influenced by the theory of Kāśmīra Śaivism and Advaita Vedānta both. In this connection it will be proper to notice that the Kāśmīra Śaivism is also known by two other names - Trayambaka Śaivism and Advaita Śaivism. Being pronounced by Trayambakāditya it is called Trayambaka Śaivism and admitting the non-dualism of Śiva and jīva it is known as Advaita Śaivism. A careful reader of the may observe that in the opening as well as concluding verses of Kṛśṇaṭārjunīya Vyāyoga, in which mainly we get references to Śaiva ideas, Vatsarāja has significantly recorded the two terms

- Travambaka and Śaṅkarādvaita respectively which seem to have been intentionally applied in order to hint at the both above-mentioned names of Kaśmira Śaivism. It is not unlikely that the author must have had intention to start as well conclude the drama along with the references to both the synonyms of Kaśmira Śaivism.

Vatsarṣija further alludes to some other peculiar concepts of Kaśmira Śaivism. For instance we may take the concept of emancipation. According to Kaśmira Śaivism the final emancipation means the realisation of the identity of Śiva with jīva. Arjuna, a Śaiva follower of the Rg. hesitates to kill a Kirṣṇa perhaps because in his view every jīva is divine (= Śiva) (Kirṣṇa. Verse 40). This is implied by the reply of Kirṣṇa himself in the same context that if Śiva may also die on killing of even Arjuna through his single arrow, it would be the skill of his performance of killing two birds in a single stone (ahante karmalāghavan samvrttaḥ vattava hṛdaya bānaphinne tvam tava guruṣa vyānādito bhaviṣyati. Kirṣṇa. p. 17).

It is also noteworthy here that whereas most of the schools of Indian philosophy maintain the dichotomy between bhukti and mukti (enjoyment and release) the Kaśmira Śaivism

aims at an appreciable synthesis between the two. It is interesting to note that in Kiratarjuna Vyāyoga when Mahendra advises Arjuna to follow the eigher path of bhukti and Mukti (Kirata. Verse. 18), the latter becomes unhappy probably because he was willing to attain the both (Kirata. Verse. 19).

Śiva Worship:

The contents of the RS reveal that Śiva is a powerful, wrathful and impetuous god and is also generous and bountiful. When he is made pleased through worship, every desired object can be attained by the devotee. He happens to come in person even in front of a thief whose pious performances (= sukṛtaa) are matured (Kirata. Verse. 56). Śiva-worship was given high importance. It was believed that in case of increasing the fire of debauchery the only remedy is to serve the (water of) Ganges in the form of Śiva's feet. (Tripura. III. 3). Although some other sources show the prevalence of both types of Śiva worship - image and phallic, however, the RS does not refer to Śiva-worship in its phallic form. It alludes to only image worship (pratibimbam evārādhitam, Rukmi. p. 57). Another indication to image-worship may be seen in the introductory portion of Kiratarjuna Vyāyoga. Thus Sūtradhāra is said there to be a māheśvara (Kirata. p. 1) belonging to the Śaiva sect which

follows the image-worship of Śiva. Unlike Vaiṣṇavas the Śaivas do not favour the descriptions of amorous activities of their deities. Thus on recitation of a benedictory verse full of amorous activities a character called Śtāpaka suggests Śraddhā - 'since you are a follower of Śaivism (= māheśvara) you should read such benedictory verses which are related to Mahēśa and full of vīra rasa (in stead of ānghāra rāsa or amorous description) (Kīrāta. p. 1). Further, according to Arjuna, a Śaivite, even the sight of nymphs (= surasundarīs) is not proper for Śaivas (Kīrāta. p. 4). The principal means of Śiva worship was penance in which all the yama-niyamas were to be followed (Kīrāta. p. 3). To meditate on the sun was also an important part of Śiva worship. It should be noticed here that Śiva and sun had come so much closer to each other that Samba Purāṇa (500 - 800 A.D.) had identified the sun with Śiva and stated that there is no difference between these two gods. In Kīrāṭārjunīya Vyāyoga Arjuna considers the meditation on the orb of sun as a means of Śiva worship (Kīrāta. p. 5). Moreover Gaṅgā worship is also seen closely related to the Śaiva worship which may lead us to the intimate relation between Śiva and Gaṅgā through the latter's origin from the former's matted hair. In the Rṣ Arjuna (Kīrāta. p. 8) and

Narada (Tripura, p. 78) wants to worship Ganga before performing homage to Siva.

Finally it may be noticed that the Siva sects of medieval age disregarded the caste system. According to a contemporary tradition contained in Vivadaranatirtha (13th century A.D.) the Siva Agamas permitted pravrajya even to Sudras. Vatsaraja's Tripuradaha Dima also contains a casual indication in this regard where the fire, produced from Siva's arrow and burning the Tripuri, is said to have been set against the caste system and had made the untouchables touchable (Tripura, IV. 18).

Siva Tantra

Tantric tendencies were increased to a considerable extent in the medieval age and Saivism could not remain unaffected from the same. A few allusions in the RS appear to indicate towards some Tantric tendencies related to the Saivism, Mantra-Tantra (= karmapa) are considered as shameful by Arjuna, a Saivite, in Kiratarjunya Vyasa (mantravagam vriga skara tamapi karmayatra manve. Kirata. Verse. 9) which may obviously suggest that these tendencies must have been existing with Saivism, although they could not always get appreciation.

Further the aim of Tantric religion mostly prevailed on the theory of amalgamation of knowledge and action (= Jñānakarma-
samuccayavāda). Most of the people understood the concept of spiritual endeavour as action in the shape of worship which virtually leads obtaining knowledge. In the RS Arjuna a Śaivite hero, does not like that type of liberation which is to be caused through the Jñānakarmasamuccaya (Kirēta. Verse. 20). As is pointed out above, a reference to the disregard towards caste system on behalf of Śiva (Tripura. IV. 18) may also indicate the influence of existing tantric tendencies in Śaivism; for Tantra does not believe in caste and creed.

(C) VAISNAVISM

Vaisnavism was a prominent sect of Brāhmaṇism in the medieval ages. Some of the early kings of Candeella dynasty including Yaśovarman and Kirtivarman were worshippers of Viṣṇu. Numerous temples like Laksmana temple, Varāha temple, Vāmana temple, Javārī temple and Caturbhujā temple were constructed at Khajurāho by the Candeella kings in honour of this deity.

The RS refers to Viṣṇu under his various names viz. Vāsudeva (Kirēta. p. 3; Rukmi. p. 73), Puruṣottama (Kirēta.

Verse 25; Samudra. p. 158), Acyuta (Samudra. pp. 164, 165),
Kaśyapa (Rukmi. p. 42; I. 26, 27; Tripura. p. 91), Vaikuntha
(Rukmi. I. 17; Tripura. p. 88), Hari (Rukmi. pp. 52, 58; III.
7, 13; Tripura. I. 37), Śāursi (Rukmi. p. 58; IV. 25), Govinda
(Rukmi. pp. 58, 71; Tripura. p. 90), Mūkunda (Rukmi. III. 12;
p. 64; Samudra. p. 162), Indrāvaśaj (Rukmi. p. 65), Īśodara
(Rukmi. p. 73; Tripura. p. 92), Narāyana (Tripura. p. 80),
Kṛśneśa (Tripura. p. 90), Trivikrama (Tripura. IV. 7; p. 113),
Pundarikākṣa (Samudra. p. 152; Nāvya. I. 15), Caturbhūja (Samu-
dra. I. 35), Murāri (Kīrāta. Verse. 21; Rukmi. I. 2, 6; III, 4;
Tripura. I. 8), Muravairin (Samudra. I. 3), Danuvavairin (Rukmi
I. 7), Dānayārin (Tripura. I. 9; Samudra. p. 164), Śravasūdana
(Kīrāta. Verse. 22), Asurēri (Tripura. II. 1), Kamaēri (Rukmi.
I. 22), Madhukāthbhāri (Rukmi. I. 13, 16; IV. 22; Tripura. p. 80),
Madhuripu (Karpūra. Verse 6; Rukmi. II. 21; Samudra. I. 2),
Madhumethana (Rukmi. p. 60; IV. 6; Samudra. p. 150), Pralambāri
(Rukmi. p. 40), Janārđhana (Kīrāta Verses 23, 39; Rukmi. p. 47;
Tripura. p. 89), Ćakrin (Tripura. p. 90), Ćakrapāṇi (Karpūra.
Verse. 7), Ĉārāvanāyi (Rukmi. pp. 40, 58) and Tribhuvanabhātr
(Tripura. II. 2).

A few contexts of the RS indicate some iconographic
features of Viṣṇu. The benedictory verse of Lukmintharana
Thāṃga (I. 2) informs us about the Kaustubha gem which adorn-
ed the breast of Viṣṇu. The disk, sword and bow named Sudarāṇa,
Mandaka (Tripura. II. 4) and Ćārīka (Rukmi. III. 12) respectively
and the mace (Tripura. II. 4), Lotus (Rukmi. III. 7) and garland of mandāra flowers (Rukmi. IV. 25) are also mentioned to be in the possession of Viṣṇu.

**Vaishnava mythology:**

A number of Purānic legends related to Viṣṇu are alluded to in the Rg. From the aforementioned names of Viṣṇu one may get indication to various legends. The destruction of demons in general and that of Mura, Madhu, Yaśtabha, Kāma and Prahlāda in particular is implied in his meaningful designations like Dānusvairī, Dānusvairī, Dānusvairī, Aṣuṣvī, Mūra-ri, Mūravairī, Madhumama, Madhumathana, Madhukai-ṭabhāri, Kāma-ri and Prahlādbhāri. His name Govinda also imbibes a myth as stated in Mahābhārata where Fṛṇa says, ‘I am called Govinda because the earth (= ma), which was lost and lodged in a den, had been found (= avindam) by me in the form of a boar'.

Further the killing of Pāra, Aṣṭāṣura or Vatsāṣura, Keśi, Pātana (Rukmi. IV. 15), Hiraṇyakṣa, Naraka (Saprudra. Var. II. 10), Vṛtta (Karpūra. Verse 7), Kāma and Candra (Rukmi. II. 15) and the winning on Kāliya (Rukmi. IV. 15) and Pāli (Karpūra. Verse 7) are also referred to.

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31. naṣṭāṁ ca dhariṇāṁ pūrvamavindam vai guhāgatāṁ.

govinda itāṁ tenāham devairvābhirabhīstatutah.

MR. Sāntiparva. 342.70, also Dīpārva 21.12.
Some more mythological allusions may be gathered.

A cosmic myth is indicated according to which Viṣṇu sleeps along with his consort Lakṣmī on Śesa in the ocean (Karpūtra Verse 6; Samudra. I. 33). Tārā also called Garuḍa is his vehicle (Rukmi. p. 72). According to another legend once he, in the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, raised up Govardhana mountain (Rukmi. I. 210). Elsewhere he is said to be the father of Gopī (Hāsyā. II. 9) which reminds us of a legend according to which the latter was born from Lakṣmī. The conversation between Kṛṣṇa and Sātyaki in Rukminīharana Thāmrga (p. 70) also contains a myth in which Śiśupāla was granted a boon by Kṛṣṇa of being pardoned even for his hundred offences. The author has referred to one more legend in which Kṛṣṇa (= Viṣṇu) during the annihilation of universe received shelter on a banyan tree (Tripura. II. 7).

Devotion to Viṣṇu:

Vatsarāja pays homage to Viṣṇu in many ways. As is already noticed, one of his plays i.e. Rukminīharana Thāmrga was staged on the auspicious occasion of religious procession to Viṣṇu (= Cakrasvēmin) at Kālañjara (Rukmi. p. 37). The author has dedicated a benedictory verse of Rukminīharana Thāmrga

33. MB. Sabhāparva. 43. 23-24.
34. MB. Vanaparva. Chapter. 188.
(I. 2) to Viṣṇu and praises him as the lord of all the three worlds (Tripura. II. 2); pervading in the entire universe (Tripura. p. 89); as of universal form (= sakalajagadṛṇa) (Samudra. p. 178), omnicient (= sarva-jña) and chief among the tolerant (= kṣaṇinām vara) (Tripura. p. 92). All the gods are said to be handicapped, as it were, without Viṣṇu (Samudra. I. 35). He is a figure of valour and favour (= āaurvakārunya-mūrti) who is not inclined to the destruction even of the enemies (Rukmi. IV. 25) But, of course, bent on doing favours to his devotees (= bhaktajanānugrahagrahitoc Samudra. p. 190).

From the ritual point of view the two sects of Vaiṣṇavas - Śāmarta Vaiṣṇava and Bhāgavata Vaiṣṇava are found there. Those who follow the conventional rituals mentioned in Smṛti literature are known as Śāmarta Vaiṣṇavas while the Bhāgavata Vaiṣṇavas stress upon devotion and self-surrender to their God instead of conventional rituals. There are references to both of these sects in the ŚŚ. Thus Śrutadhāra of the Samudramathana Samavakāra (p. 149) claims himself to be a follower of the Śāmarta and Jñānarāsā in the Hāvacudāmanī Prahasana (p. 139) is said to be a Bhāgavata. Moreover the conversation between Padmaka and Niśthuraka (Samudra. pp. 151-55) may also suggest other two Vaiṣṇava sects - sagunopāsaka and nirgunopāsaka (believers in the god endowed with qualities

and followers of the god devoid of qualities respectively). However, the victory over nirgunopasaka by a sagunopasaka mentioned in the present context indicates the more prevalence and popularity of the latter than of the former.

Further it is to be noted that taking up of ahimsā doctrine from Buddhism was one of the significant characteristics of Vaisnavism during the age of Vatsarāja. A reader of the ES may find the idea of ahimsā well-maintained and thus Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa) is not inclined to the slaying even of his enemies (Rukmi. IV. 25).

Worship of Viṣṇu:

The chief characteristic of Vaisnavism, from the Gupta period onwards, was the worship of various incarnations of Viṣṇu which can partly be traced back even to the Vedic literature. In Bhagavadgītā (IV. 8) we find the resolve of Viṣṇu to incarnate himself from age to age for the protection and preservation of the virtuous and for the destruction of the wicked.

Some contemporary literary evidence of the Vatsarāja's age suggests the popularity of incarnations of this deity. In the 11th century A.D. Yāsemendra composed his Daśāvatāracarita as an independent and self-contained work on the ten incarnations of Viṣṇu. Citagovinda of Jayadeva (12th century A.D.) also dedicated its opening songs to the ten incarnations of Viṣṇu. Further in Naśadhiyacarita (12th century A.D.) Nala is said to have worshipped eleven incarnations of Viṣṇu.

Although the number of the incarnations of Viṣṇu as given in the Mahābhārata and Purānas varies to a considerable extent, in the age of Vatsarāja the ten number of the incarnations seems to have found almost general recognition. In a stanza of Tripuradāhe Dīma (1. 40) Vatsarāja has casually referred to five incarnations viz. Mokhi, Vāmana, Kṛṣṇa, Varāha and Matsya. Some other incarnations like Rāma (Karpura. Verse. 7), Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa are also alluded to. It would be significant to notice that in the abovementioned verse

42. avi vralambāre ! dharmoddhāraya kṛtāvatārā bhavantah. Rukmi. p. 59.
43. Kṛṣṇa, the hero of the Rukminīharaṇa Thāurga, may be taken as an incarnation of Viṣṇu.
of Tripuradāha Dima (I. 40) the author has used the word "so on" indicating other incarnations of Viṣṇu and this suggests that the author was well-acquainted with the various incarnations of this deity although he could not have the occasion of describing them all.

The worship of the Varāha form of Viṣṇu seems to have been very popular during early medieval age all over India. Particularly in Bundelkhand region it could attain the appreciable popularity. It is interesting to note in this regard that a great temple named Varāha-mandira at Khajurāho was specially dedicated to the Varāha form of Viṣṇu by the Candella kings. Further, so many images of Ādi-varāha belonging to the 12th century have been discovered from various places of Bundelakhand. Vatsarāja himself makes a specific mention of Ādi-varāha who had uplifted the earth in the past (āska-ādi-varāha eva kimayaḥ prāguddhṛtakṣmatelāḥ. Kirāta. Verse. 29).

Bhakti (devotion) is supposed to be closely related to Vaisnavism which can be traced back to quite early ages.

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44. Śivaramamurti, C., Ancient India No. 6. 1950. p. 42.
46. Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India. No. 11.
47. De, S.K., Early History of the Vaisnava Faith and Movement
   in Bengal. p. 2.
However, credit goes to Bhāgavata Purāṇa (c. 900 A.D.) for having bestowed an enormous popularity to it in the early medieval age prescribing the nine modes of devotion (= nava-dhā bhakti). The RS exhibits its faith in bhakti by describing Viṣṇu as to be won over only through the devotion (= bhaktīgrhyā (Samudra, p. 159).

A study of the RS reveals that the meditation and the recitation of prayers and mantras were an essential part of Vaishnava worship. The worshippers of Viṣṇu were full of emotions and sentiments. Initially they chanted mantras (probably the well known eight or twelve syllabled Vaishnava mantras viz. 'Om namo nārāyanāya' or 'om namo bhagavate vāsudevä-yāya'). Lastly a handful of flowers or a garland used to be offered to the deity (Samudra, p. 159). The mention of pūjorakaranaś (articles of worship) (Samudra, p. 158) obviously suggests that besides flowers various other things like sandal, turmeric and water etc. were also to be used at the time of worship.

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50. Vasudeva Upadhyaya, Socio-religious Condition of North India. p. 225.
During the age of Vatsarāja the use of mantras had occupied a significant place in Vaiṣṇavism. In the R Ś Vaiṣṇava ascetics are said to fulfill the longings even of lovers through the tantric means (Samudra. p. 152). Rukmini willing to get Kṛṣṇa was believing in a mantra named gaurīmantra or bhavānimantra preached by Subuddhi, a female ascetic (Rukmi. pp. 38, 55). Subuddhi and Suvatsalī both had an over-confidence in the influence of this mantra and according to them if the longing of Rukmini is not fulfilled by this mantra, there is nothing behind it but only the bad luck (Rukmi. pp. 55-56).

Jñānarāja, a vaiśnавite, knows so many mantras. By the influence of a mantra, known to him, the gamblers like Kalākaraṇḍaka were hopeful to win in the gambling (sa hi dvīte ...... mādiya-mantraprabhāvādvijayamānakāhkaṣati. Hāsyā. p. 132) and thus his mantra was highly believed to enchant immediately (na khalu te vilambita-prabhāvo manṭraḥ. Hāsyā. p. 132). Further he knows some other mantras like jvaravitarana-mantra (febrifuge spell) and vaśikarana mantra (spell of bewitchment) (Hāsyā. p. 139).

It may be pointed out here that the growing tantric tendencies of that age must have affected the performance of Vaiṣṇavas which is indicated in the RŚ. Thus, for an instance, the Vaiṣṇavas are charged of ever-clinging with their sensual desires and even of visiting the brothels (Hāsyā. p. 139).
(D) GODDESS-WORSHIP

The ancient cult of universal mother goddess was converted into the cult of Śakti identified with the energy (= Śakti) of Śiva. There has been a wide prevalence of Śakti (devī) worship in India from about 7th century onwards. During the regime of Candellas it was quite popular and some temples built by them at Khajurāho like Causeatha Yogini temple, Devī Jagadamba temple and Pārvati temple were dedicated to the goddesses Mahi-śāsurasamardini (Durgā), Lakṣmi and Pārvati.

Ambikā :-

The PS exhibits the popularity of Śakti worship by means of evoking the principal goddess i.e. Śiva's consort in the benedictory stanzas in most of its dramas. She has been referred to under various names like Ambikā (Kirāta. Verses 1, 2), Devī (Karpūra. Verse 2), Śiva (Karpūra. Versa. 1; Häyä. I. 2), Śambhavī and Upagiripatiputri (Rukmi. I. 1). The remaining body of the text also contains several other names of this goddess such as Bhavāni (Karpūra. p. 26; Samudra. p. 157), Rudrāni (Karpūra. Verse. 10; Samudra. p. 154), Caurī (Rukmi. p. 39), Pārvati (Samudra. p. 157; I. 12), Kātyāvanī (Samudra. pp. 158, 159) and Śīhāra (Rukmi. p. 74). The following three

51. See Handiqui, K.K., Yāsastilaka and Indian Culture. p. 392.
52. KSS. pp. 10-11, 13.
forms of *Sakti* may be seen in the RS:

1) **Ordinary bland form (= Saumya):**

   In this form the goddess is to be simply prayed by the devotees in order to get her grace and to get their desires fulfilled. She is to be invoked sometimes by means of musical performance (*bhagavatī bhavānimūra-vināyati*. *Karpūra*. p. 26), sometimes through hymns (*Karpūra*. Verse 10; *Fukmi*. I. 12) and sometimes through offering flowers (*Samudra*. pp. 154, 155; I. 12).

2) **Fierce form (= Ugra):**

   Under this form the goddess is characterised by her terrible performances. In *Kirātārjuniya Vyāyoga* (Verse. 2) Ambikā is depicted to have shown her fierce form in killing demons.

3) **Sensual form (= Kāmāsakti):**

   The erotic elements had entered into the religious performances of medieval age. *Mithuna* type of sculptures available in the temples of the age are the visible proofs of this fact. The author of the RS also could not escape from this tendency. In the opening verses

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of Kārttīkya Vyāyogā, Candraśāstra Bhāṣa, Rukmi-nilharana Thāmrga and Ṣayacīḍhāmaṇī Prahasana he has furnished various amorous depictions of the goddess with her consort.

**Indrāṇī:**

Indrāṇī has been regarded in India since ancient period as an ideal of wifehood and hence, she has been invoked at the beginning of a Hindu marriage to preside over the ceremony. This tradition is maintained in the Rg and Rukmiṇī, the heroine of Rukmini-nilharana Thāmrga, goes to the temple of Indrāṇī for worshipping the goddess just before starting her marriage ceremony (Rukmi, p. 54).

**Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī:**

Lakṣmī is regarded as the goddess of wealth and good luck, and Sarasvatī of learning and eloquence. The well known traditional rivalry between the two has been referred to in the Rg (Ṛṣya. I. 4). Lakṣmī, the consort of Viṣṇu, has been alluded to by various names viz. Śrī (Samudra. I. 2), Kamāla (Samudra. I. 14; p. 190), Samudraśutā (Samudra. pp. 152, 153) and Payodhiṇī (Samudra. p. 170). Since she was born from the ocean (samudra) as a result of its churning by the gods and...

demons, **Samudra** is considered to be her father, the moon her brother (**Samudra. I. 9**) and the **Gangā** her mother (**Samudra. p. 172**).

**Prthvi** :-

Vatsarāja has attributed **Prthvi** as **devī** and **bhagavatī** (**Tripura. p. 83**) and has indicated her to be the consort of Brahmā (**Tripura. p. 82**). **Sesa** is supposed to be her base and she herself is the backbone for all beings (**Tripura. p. 83**).

**Gangā** :-

**Gangā** has also been regarded as **Bhagavatī, devī** and **mahādevī** (**Samudra. pp. 150, 151**) under her various names such as **Vishnupadi** (**Samudra. p. 150**), **Samudravallabhā** (**Samudra. p. 150**), **Samudrādevitā** (**Samudra. p. 153**), **Suragarī** (**Samudra. I. 6**), **Suradhunī** (**Hāaya. I. 1**) and **Svaragavāhīni** (**Tripura. I. 1**). She is the chief among all the purifying objects (= **pāvanānām śiromaniḥ. Samudra. p. 150**). A commonly known legend recording the spring of **Gangā** from Śiva's head and Viṣṇu's foot (toe) has also been alluded to (**Samudra. p. 150**).

(8) **SUN-WORSHIP**

**Surya** or the sun is an ancient deity and evidences are available for his worship in the Vedic period. As Bhandarkar has quoted, there are two references in **Ṛveda** (VII. 60, 1;
62.2) where the rising sun is prayed by the singer to declare him sinless to Śūña, Varuna and other gods. It is interesting to note that the worship of this deity had been continued with great fidelity even in the age of Vatsarāja. A temple called Śūtragurūs mandira built by the Candella rulers at Khajurāho was independently dedicated to the god sun.

Showing his adherence to the sun Vatsarāja has alluded to this deity in various names - Śūna (Tripura. I. 23), Bhānu (Tripura. III. 7), Āditya (Samudra. p. 149), Arka, Kṛdrapraṣārārakara and Dīnaprīrgha (Tripura. I. 14), Dīnanātha (Hāsya. p. 136), Dīnakhindītha (Tripura. III. 11), Dīnēśa (Kirāta. Verse. 60), Divānaśvara (Kirāta. Verse 20), Pataṅga (Tripura. III. 15), Taruṇa (Tripura. IV. 20), Gāndāgī (Hāsya p. 132), Kharāgī (Tripura. I. 11), Mihira (Kukmi. IV. 27), Māhīra (Hāsya. II. 1), Mahāśāmadītha (Kukmi. IV. 20), Tīṃmatvīja (Samudra. II. 14), Gābhastimālin (Kukmi. p. 45), Sahasrāraka (Samudra. I. 3), and Tarā (Kirāta. p. 5).

Śūrya is shown to be the highly venerable deity. In Karṇaṭacarita Bhānu he is said to be such a god whose feet are touched (served) even by the gods, demons and great men (sūryaśūryanāmīvānāh śaṅkaraḥ bhagavān saṅkaraḥ. Karṇaṭa. p. 24). As

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is already noticed, there are several references indicating the tradition of meditating on the orb of sun (Virata. p. 5; Verses 14, 20; Fuku. IV. 4). Moreover, it is worth noting here that the twelve forms of sun must have been quite popular in the society of Vatsaraja's age. Vijñanesvara, a contemporary Smrti commentator (11th - 12th century A.D.), recites the following twelve names of sun - Dhātri, Aryaman, Mitra, Varuna, Ārya, Bhaga, Indra, Vivasvat, Pusan, Parijata, Tvastra, and Viṣṇu. Vatsaraja has also mentioned the twelve number of sun (= dvādaśacitva) (Samudra. pp. 149-50).

(F) MINOR DRITIES

As will be made clear in the following pages the people at the time of Vatsaraja must have been quite tolerant in their religious sentiments. As a result they had due respect to numerous gods irrespective of the particular sects to which they belonged. This religious feature has been sufficiently indicated in the ES and its author has referred to several minor gods of whom the following may be noted:

Brahma :-

Brahma (Tripura. pp. 96, 111-13; Samudra. pp. 102, 104.

57. Mitaksara commentary on VS. II. 100-102; For these names in various Purānas see also S.N. Ray, Paurāṇika Dharma evam Samaj. p. II. 43.
Ibb; Kirēta. Verse. 23) also referred to as Virañci (Kukmi.
IV. 21; Tripura. pp. 90-93, 110), Pitāmaha (Tripura. p. 86),
Frajāpati (Kukmi. p. 80), Pañkajasambhava (Tripura. III. 19),
Padmajanmā (Tripura. IV. 22), Kamalodbhava (Tripura. p. 82),
Kamalāsana (Tripura. p. 90), Caturānana (Kirēta. Verse. 22),
Hiranyagarbha (Samudra. p. 100) and Surajyeṣṭha (Samudra. p.
103) was not so much popular god as Śiva and Viṣṇu in that age.
But still he was present in the minds of the people as father
god (= ritāmaha) and the god of creation (Kirēta. Verse 22).
The Paurāṇic legend of his birth from the lotus growing from
Viṣṇu’s navel is implied in his meaningful epithets Pañkajā-
sambhava, Padmajanmā and Kamalodbhava. The goose is supposed
to be his traditional vehicle (Samudra. I. 28).

Kārttikeya :–

The worship of Kārttikeya was extensively practised in
ancient India and was continued in the period of Vatsarāja.
So many images of this deity are found at Khajurāho. The
author of the ES has referred to Kārttikeya (Tripura. pp. 86,
107, 108) as Śambhunandana (Tripura. p. 80), Kumāra (Tripura.
pp. 104-108), Viśākha (Tripura. pp. 105-106) and Sadāśaya (Tri-
pura. III. 28). It is implied by the names Śambhunandana and

58. Bhandarkar, E.G., Vaisnavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious
59. KSS. p. 87.
Sadānava that he was the son of Śiva and possessed six faces. It is interesting to note that he is described as superior even to his father Śiva in valour and thus he is said to be worshipped by the devotees forgetting the Śiva's valour (Tripura. III. 28). Peacock is his mount (Tripura. III. 20, 23) and Śakti (Tripura. III. 24) his characteristic weapon. The author has referred to the legend of Śrīttikāya's birth in the forest of Saravana (Tripura. III. 23).

**Ganēśa:**

Ganēśa is not a vedic deity like other gods vis. Kudra, Viṣṇu and Sūrya but is a Paurāṇic deity popularly worshipped in the medieval age. It may be pointed out here that no icon of this deity is discovered prior to 6th century A.D. but from 8th century A.D. onwards it had become a very popular deity. The Ganeśa-worship was given high response in Bundelakhanda. Many images of this deity have been found at Khajurāho. Vatsarāja had no occasion for giving any detailed description.

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61. Vayu Purāṇa. 72. 32-37; Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa. II. 3,10.


63. KSS. pp. 84 ff.
In the ES Kāma (Hāsya. II. 7), the Indian god of love, has been mentioned under various names viz. Kandarpa (Hāsya. II. 2); Tripura. III. 19), Smera (Karrātra. Verse 3; Rukmi. II. 2), Madana (Rukmi. III. 1; p. 57) and Manmatha (Rukmi. III. 11). Being the husband of Rati he is also known as Ratipati (Karrātra. Verse 3) and Ratiramāna (Karrātra. Verse 10). The epithets kusumāyudha (Kīrāta. p. 4; Rukmi. p. 64; III. 10), Puspāyudha (Kīrāta. Verse 1), Kusumaviśālikha (Samudra. II. 1), Kusumāsa (Rukmi. II. 20) and Kusumacāna (Samudra. p. 178) imply that his weapons i.e. bow and arrows are supposed to have been composed of flowers. Some other names like Pāñcabāna (Karrātra. Verse 17) and Makaradvaja (Hāsya. p. 123) suggest the number of his five traditional arrows and his flag marked with the figure of a crocodile respectively. Moreover Smerahara (Rukmi. III. 14) and Kandarpasījanya (Hāsya. II. 9), the epithets of Śiva and Viṣṇu respectively, indicate towards the legends recording the Kāma's burning by Śiva and taking birth from the divine couple of Kṛṣṇa and Rukmini.

64. Bhāgavata Purāṇa. X. 55. 1-2.
Navagrahas:

The rules given in various religious and architectural treatises for the construction of the icons of nine planets, and a number of the available sculptures suggest that the navagrahas must have been widely worshipped in different parts of India.

Vatsarāja, referring to the grahas (Hukmi. II. 11; Nāya, p. 129) has indicated that for fulfilment of the proposed or desired objects it is essential that the grahas should be favourable. It is also interesting to know that, in Tripurārāha Dīma, grahas like Śrīva, Candra, Bṛhaspati, Śukra and Rāhu appear as dramatic characters.

Dikpālas:

According to the ancient Indian tradition each of the eight quarters is guarded by one independent regent and thus these eight guardians of the quarters are known as eight dik-pālas. One may conjecture from the evidence of the sculptures found at Khajurāho that they must have been given due rever-

67. KSS. pp. 89-100.
ence in the society during that age. A.M. Shastri has right-
ly suggested that many of the prominent Vedic gods were reduced
to the status of dikpālas in past Vedic period and none of them
except Śaṅkara (Śiva) was now a cult god.

It may be pointed out here that the eight dramatic cha-
racters of Tripurādaśa Dīma viz. Iśāna (Maheśa), Indra, Yama,
80-81) are the dikpālas themselves. For, all these eight cha-
racters are shown anxious for the burning of Tripuri, and
Maheśa has instructed them to be ready in their respective
quarters (āvi mahendraśayo devāh! sarve mājībhavata nirani-
jadēhīkhaṣu. Tripura. p. 80). Moreover at several places
of the same play (Tripura. l. 15; III. 6; p. 109), they
are also called lokasaṃśa and dīkṣa. Similarly some of the
characters of Saṃudra-mathana Saṃvākāra are also called dīkṣa-
las (Saṃdhu. p. 165). Let us now gather some information on
these dīkṣa.

(1) Iśāna :-

In Tripurādaśa Dīma (p. 80) Śiva uses the word Iśāna
for himself which may indicate towards the Śiva's particular
form which is worshipped as a dīkṣa. A study of the RS reveals

68. Shastri, A.M., India as seen in the Brhadāraṇyak of Varāha-
mihira. p. 162.
that Śiva, as among all the gods so among all the dikpālas also, possessed an eminent position. In view of the other dikpālas he was quite superior. Thus Indra, a dikpāla, considers his own praiseworthy weapon thunderbolt nothing else but merely an influence of Maheśa himself (Tripura. I. 19).

On the other hand another dikpāla Yama also does not consider it proper to bother Lord Maheśa, as long as the other gods are alive, for the battle with demons (kīṁ mṛtamasaraivadyadaityasaramasaṃmaddakalirbhagavantamugrah vyagrikarisyatī. Tripura. p. 80).

(ii) Indra :-

Indra is supposed to be the guardian of eastern quarter which is implied in the expression 'purandarāśā' (Kṛṣṇa. Verse. 5). Vatsarāja has referred to him as Mahendra (Kṛṣṇa. pp. 5-8; Tripura. p. 80), Purandara (Kṛṣṇa.Verses 5, 17; p.4; Rukmi. IV. 21; Tripura. p. 83), Hidajās (Kṛṣṇa. Verse 2; Karpūra. Verse 7), Sahasranayana (Kṛṣṇa. Verse 24; p. 7), Sahasrākṣa (Kṛṣṇa. p. 8; Tripura. p. 79), Hari (Kṛṣṇa. Verse 52), Mahāvyan (Kṛṣṇa. Verse 55), Puruḥūta (Tripura. p. 80), Devarāja (Kṛṣṇa. Verse 59), Suranāti (Tripura. I. 2), Trisadāparivṛṭha (Tripura. IV. 22), Śakra (Karpūra. Verse 6), Vajrapāṇi (Tripura. I. 9), Dambholirāṇi (Samudra. I. 21) Vajrāyudha (Tripura. III. 6), and Trivistapādhiśvara (Tripura. III. 17).

Some of these names like Suranāti, Devarāja, Sahasrākṣa, Sahasranayana and Vajrapāṇi are suggestive of his various characteristics.
such as to be the lord of the gods, possessing thousand eyes and holding thunderbolt in his hand. He is regarded as a highly prestigious deity. According to the contents of the dramas under study Indra could place order even to Śiva (Kirēta. p. 8). Śiva himself declares that he is submissive to the order of Indra (Indraṣaṅdeśavāmaṇḍa .......Tripura. I. 20).

Moreover, several legends are attached to Indra in the Rg. There is a reference to the outraging of Ahalyā's modesty by Indra (Karrura. Verse. 7). Allusions to the well known myth that Indra had cut off the wings of the mountains have been variously made (Tripura. I. 2, 35; III. 17; Samudra. I. 41; III. 10). The destruction of a demon named Jambha by Indra has also been alluded to (Tripura. I. 10) and the killing of the demons Vṛtra, Sāla, and Pura is implied by his various epithets viz. Vṛtraṣīhṛu (Samudra. I. 22), Balaśudana (Samudra. I. 21) and Puraśādara.

(iii) Yama:

Yama (Rukmi. II. 5; Tripura. p. 80; Samudra. p. 191) also called Kṛtānta (Kirēta. Verse 45; Rukmi. IV. 3, 18) and Āmāna (Samudra. p. 191) is represented as the lord of the dead (= pratanātha) (Tripura. IV. 22). He is supposed to be an ending factor of the lives of all beings (= sakalajagat-prāṇāgamaṇa) (Samudra. p. 191) and no one can escape from his grip (Rukmi. IV. 3). It was believed that the dead go to his
city (= krtantanagaram) (Mira. p. 16). As to his iconographic features it is simply indicated that he holds a staff in his hand (Tripura. I. 21; Samudra. p. 191) and rides a buffalo (Tripura. IV. 18).

(iv) Agni:–

Agni was a prominent Vedic god but as suggested by A. M. Shastri, 'the gradual decline in the popularity of Vedic sacrificial cult affected adversely the status of this deity and in the wake of Pauranic mythology he was relegated to the office of a lokapala'.

Vatsaraj refers to Agni (Tripura. III. 7; Samudra. p. 165) by various names such as Hutaśa (Tripura. p. 80), Huta-bhuj (Tripura. III. 11), Śrak Śocihkeśa (Samudra. p. 174), Pāvaka (Tripura. pp. 101, 107), Vahni (Tripura. III. 9; Samudra. p. 191), Śikhin (Samudra. p. 174), Dahana (Tripura. III. 15) and Usarbuda (Samudra. p. 191). He is said to be the chief among all purifying objects (= pavanaśiromani) (Samudra. p. 174) and the mouth of all the beings (Samudra. p. 174) and that of all the gods (= sarvadevamukha) (Samudra. p. 191).

(v) Vēyu:–

Vēyu (Samudra. pp. 169, 175) has been referred to as

Marut (Tripura. III. 7), Pavana (Tripura. p. 107), Prabhãñjana (Tripura. I. 23) and Gandhavâha (Samudra. p. 191). He is said to be unrestrained in dissecting the family of enemies (= ripuvamâ-Viśasane niraḫkuša) (Samudra. p. 191). Ahkuśa is supposed to be his characteristic weapon (Samudra. p. 191).

(vi) Varuna :-

Varuna (Tripura. p. 80; Samudra. pp. 168, 191), the Indian Neptune, has been called Jalapati (Tripura. I. 24), Pâapâni (Tripura. p. 107) and Varâmadhiśa (Tripura. IV. 22). He possesses nāga (naśa) which is his characteristic weapon (Tripura. I. 24) and with which he binds the sinners and demons (Tripura. p. 107).

(vii) Kubera :-

Kubera (Tripura. p. 81; Samudra. p. 169) also referred to as Vittanātha (Karpura. Verse 6), Dhanada (Pirâta. p. 4; Tripura. p. 81; Samudra. pp. 161, 166, 173, 175, 176), Dhanapati (Tripura. IV. 22) and Dhanâdhinâtha (Samudra. p. 190) has been regarded as the god of wealth. Kailâsa mountain is supposed to be his domicile (Karpura. Verse 6). The author has referred to the traditional friendly relations between Śiva and Kubera (Tripura. I. 25). The earliest reference to this tradition may be sought out in Patañjali's Mahâbhâsya on Pâñini. VI. 3. 26 (Second century B.C.).
(viii) **Nirṛṭi** :-

Nirṛṭi (Samudra. p. 191) or Nairṛṭya (Tripura. p. 81) also called Rajanīcara (Tripura. I. 27), Rakṣas (Tripura. IV. 22) and Maunapanayaka (Samudra. p. 191) is the only dīkṣāla who belongs to the demon community as implied by his above epithet. The sword is his traditional weapon (Tripura. I. 27) which is said to be intent for the protection of the world (= jayadrakaparvāṇa) (Samudra. p. 191). He is requested by Nārada for fighting (with the enemies or demons) (Tripura. I. 27). In other texts like Bhāgavata Purāṇa it is said that one who wants to practice black magic against an enemy should offer a sacrifice to Nirṛṭi (Nirṛṭī tvabhicāraṇa vaśeṣ. Bhāgavata Purāṇa. II. 3. 9).

(ix) **Yakeśa** :-

The worship of Yakeśa seems to be largely prevalent in the age of Vataśvāja. The author has depicted Manibhadra (Karpūra. pp. 31, 32, 36) who was the foremost amongst the Yakeśa deities and only next in command to Kubera. He is compared to Lord Śiva in destroying the enemies and providing the welfare (Karpūra. Verse. 23). About his designation it is told that in ancient times there was a belief in the existence of an auspicious jewel called Bhadramani which was in the possession

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of this deity, so he is called Ḍeṇḍibhadra. Historical evidence testifies the wider prevalence of the worship of this deity. It is learnt that the entire northern India was full of the shrines of Ḍeṇḍibhadra in ancient medieval India.

There was a centre of his worship at Pawāyā (old Pādmāvatī) near Gwalior which was containing a large club of his devotees. Somadeva (11th century A.D.) also mentions that people came to the temple of Ḍeṇḍibhadra and made petitions there in offering various gifts in order to attain various fruits.

(G) OTHER RELIGIOUS TRENDS

Religious tolerance:

History of the Vatsarāja's age tells us that there was appreciable catholicity of religious views in the medieval age. C.V. Vaidya has rightly concluded that 'the kings of northern India were tolerant and there are no instances of Śaiva kings persecuting Vaisnavas and Hindu kings persecuting Buddhists or Jainas or vice-versa. Indeed they were so tolerant that

71. Agrawal, op. cit. p. 177.
72. Moti Chandra, Sarthavāha. Introduction. p. IV.
73. Agrawal, op. cit. p. 191.
74. Kathasaritasagara of Somadeva. II. 5. 165-66.
they extended their liberality to the opposite faith.  

It appears that Vatsarāja was highly impressed by the religious zeal of the kings.  

It is significant to note that the Candella kings have put a noble ideal of their religious tolerance which had reached its climax in their regime. Vatsarāja, who has the credit of being flourished under the same dynasty, follows this tradition faithfully. It may be pointed out here that Kṛṣṇa Miśra, another dramatist of the same epoch, could not maintain this ideal and his drama Prabodhacandrodaya is full of hatred and contempt for other religions like Buddhism and Jainism which suggests the author to be staunch Vaiṣṇavite dominated by the fanatic zeal.

The Hs of Vatsarāja reflects an attempt to reconcile the mutual religious animosity. The author has shown his broad religious mentality by means of invoking not only a single particular deity but also various gods and goddesses in the benedictory verses of his dramas like Śiva (Kīrāṭa. Verse 2; Karṇāra. Verses 1, 2; Trīṇura. I. 1-3), Murāri or Viṣṇu (Rukmi. I. 2) and Ambikā (Kīrāṭa. Verse 1) or Śambhayī (Pārvatī) (Rukmi. I. 1). Further, there is a large number of divine characters

75. WMHI. Vol. III. p. 414.
77. cf. HCJ. pp. 181-82.
in his dramas, each of them having an appreciable feeling of
due respect to others. It was but natural for Vatsaraṇja,
being a devout Śaivite, to show the highest reverence to Lord
Śiva. However, it is interesting to note that other gods and
goddesses are depicted being duly regarded even by Śiva him-
self. Thus, for instance, Lord Śiva does not want to take alone
the credit of burning the Tripūrī but he shares it equally
among the other sixteen divine characters (Tripūra. IV. 22).
Brahma and Viṣṇu both are respectable to him. He is willing
to obey the both (Samudra. p. 163) and could burn the Tripūrī
only after getting their permission (Tripūra. p. 86). Viṣṇu
was his another soul (dvitivaḥ kila maṃṣṭaṃ maṃraśīh. Tripūra.
p. 89). He could not listen the slander of Viṣṇu even from his
own son Kārttikeya (Tripūra. p. 80) and was perturbed following
the apprehension of reproach to Viṣṇu by his Nandi (Tripūra.
p. 91). Further in his view the goddess Prthvī is to be
honoured by the entire universe (= saṅkalokamahāsiva) (Tri-
pūra. p. 83). Brahma also considers the order of Maheṣa to
be unimpeded (= avyāhatajña) (Tripūra. IV. 6), and Viṣṇu as
an omnicient and chief among tolerants (Tripūra. p. 92).
Viṣṇu thinks of himself to be obedient of Śiva (Tripūra. II.
4) and he pays regards to Brahma even on being censured by the
latter (Tripūra. p. 91).

At last Vatsaraṇja has made it clear through Viṣṇu that
Brahma, Viṣṇu and Maheṣa are a composite body (Tripūra. p. 93)
and this thought leads us to the idea of Pratimūrti Trimūrti.
(Trinity) which makes a drift from the polytheistic outlook to the monotheistic one.

Another proof of religious catholicity is that the public had freedom to follow any religious sect or more than one sect under the tolerant policy of the state. Jñānarāśi, a character in Hävacakâmäni Prahasana, may be cited as an instance. Though he is a follower of Vaiṣṇavism (= bhāgavata) (Häya. p. 139), yet the customs of some other religions like Jainism and Śaivism are also followed by him. Thus, he knows the Kevali Vidyā (or Kevala Jñāna) (Häya. p. 121) of Jainism. Further his name Jñānarāśi appears to follow a Śaivite tradition. R.C. Bhandarkar has rightly said that 'the suffix 'Ṛṣi' is found in many names of the devotees of Śiva and it seems that the bearers of it belong to the Pāñcālaka or the Kālāmukha school of Śaivism'. In Rukminīharana Thāmṛga also Subuddhi is a female preacher of Caṇḍīmantra i.e. the follower of Śāktism but still she tries to make Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu) available for her female pupil Rukminī; and has become a female ascetic perhaps being inspired by Buddhism because the Hindu rules of

80. Bhandarkar, op. cit. p. 171; see also HSII. Vol. III. p. 405.
asceticism do not encourage to become monk among women.
However all this does not mean that the society was altogeth­er free from religious dissensions, tensions and conflicts.
One may find an indication to such conditions in a description of tussle between Padmaka (a saungopasaaka) and Nisthuraka (a nirgunopasaaka) (Samudra. pp. 152-55).

Donations:

The tradition of offering gifts may be dated back to the Vedic period. According to Manu (I. 80) the gift (= dāna) is one of the principal aspects of religious life in the age of Kali. During the period of Vatsarāja this religious feature was noticeable and it may be corroborated through a large number of references to gifts in the Candella records.

The Rāja of Vatsarāja throws welcome light on this point. The gifts are referred to there as dāna (Tripura. I. 5; p. 75) and pratigraha (Tripura. p. 78). Paramarddideva, the author's patron, is described to be so much liberal that he always used to donate (cf. Hāyaka. I. 4) and took pleasure in making gifts (Tripura. I. 4). A stanza from Samudramathana Samavakāra (III. 13) reveals that to be a donor is the highest prestige.

81. See Upadhyaya, B.S., India in Kalidāsa. p. 349.
83. cf. HCJ. pp. 158-59.
Through the *Bharata-vikya* of *Rukmiṇiharana* Īhārīga the author has wished for unlimited offerings of wealth to suppliants by the kings. Moreover it was considered to be a matter of regret if a prosperous person did not give donations (*kīntu vaibhavociteḥ yanna dānamārabhate bhavaśatadahamupatavya*). For, the wealth without donation is supposed to be like a barren cow for the householders (*Tripura*, p. 75).

It may be pointed out here that among all types of gifts the gift of land has been considered to be the highest act of religious merit in India. According to the ancient law writers a donor of land enjoys bliss in heaven for sixty thousand years. It is significant to note that Paramārd-dideva was quite liberal in offering land grants not only to the people of his own religion but also to those of the other religions like Buddhism. Further to make gifts on various occasions like the eclipse of the sun or moon have been considered to be very auspicious in ancient religious texts. In *Tripuradāha Dīma Sutrādhara* asks *Pāricārāvaka* to wait for the occasions of the eclipse of sun and moon in order to get donations (*Tripura*, p. 75).

Religious pilgrimage has an important place in the Hindu scheme of life and during the age of Vatsarāja it had acquired a great popularity. In this regard it may be added that Laksāmidhara (12th century A.D.) designated the eighth book of his voluminous digest Kṛtyakalpataru as Tīrthaviveca, which is a very systematic treatment on pilgrimage.

Vatsarāja has referred to two religious journeys - Nilakāntavatra (Karpura, p. 23; Hēva, p. 113) and Cakrasvāmīvatra (Rukmi, p. 37) at the time of which the author's three dramas - Karpūracarita Bhēna, Hēvacydēmani Prahasana and Rukmiṇiharana Thēmrga, were staged before the pilgrims. Here the word vatra may be interpreted in two ways -

i) Tīrtha-vatra - Journey to the sacred temples of Nila-kanṭha (= Śiva) or Cakrasvāmī (= Viṣṇu).

ii) Deva-vatra - Carrying of the images of Śiva or Viṣṇu in procession on some auspicious occasions related to these gods. Vasudeva Upadhyaya has rightly suggested that the custom of devavatra was most popular in northern India during medieval age and there was a custom of taking the images of the deity out from the temple and placing it in a chariot for the vatra-yatra.
The custom of pilgrimage has undoubtedly a great social significance. During that age the people of all the higher castes along with the degraded ones including Gaudellas were allowed to visit a sacred place as can be noted from a quotation by Lakṣmīdhara in Tīrthaveścakṣaṇḍa (p. 26) of his Kṛtyakalpataru. The social gatherings at the holy spots must have been helpful in removing the social tensions and caste-exclusivenesses, and in improving the communal harmony among different strata of the society.

Vatsaraṇa has indicated a queer custom of self-immolation of sacred places which was common even in the earlier ages. It was generally believed that if somebody ends his life at a sacred river he goes directly to the heaven. Dhāṅgadeva, a Gaudella ruler, is recorded to have entered into beatitude by means of abandoning his body at the holy confluence of Ganges-Yamunā. In Tripurādharma Dīma of Vatsaraṇa the demons are mentioned to have availed of long life and the state of being not abridged through immersion into the galaxy. (Tripura, p. 102). Further a stanza of Samudramathana Samava-

kīra (II. 9) containing a reference to ending life at a holy place may also suggest a custom among the people to abandon their body at a tīrtha.

Sacrificial rituals (Yajña) :-

As has been noticed earlier the popularity of the Vedic tradition of daily sacrifices had declined to a considerable extent in the society of Vatsarāja's age. However it was not absent totally and was still followed by the orthodox Hindu people. Vatsarāja has furnished us with several sacrificial references in various contexts of his works. In Kirātārjunīya Vyāyoga it is metaphorically stated that Arjuna wants to make an offering of his enemies into the fire in the form of his anger often having awakened (provoked) it. (Kirāt. Verse.8). Balarāma also, in Rukmiṇiharama Thāmriga, alludes to the offering of sacrificial woods (= samid) into the fire (Rukmi. II. 16). Maheśa states in Tripurādāha Dīma that Prthvī makes upper worlds pleased by means of (producing material for) the oblations to the gods and those to the spirits of deceased ancestors both (= kavyakavya) (Tripura. I. 32). Further in the same play mention is made of a vedic sacrifice named Agnistoma (Tripura. II. 3) in which offerings are to be made for Indra and the sixteen priests officiate and the ceremonies of which continue for five days. The author refers to another ancient

90. Monier Williams, A Sanskrit English Dictionary, p. 5.
sacrificial ritual called Aśvamedha (Samudra. p. 166). 'Yaj-
vanāḥ parivṛddha' (Samudra. p. 167), an epithet of moon, is also
a meaningful term which may be explained in sacrificial con-
text. It implies that the moon enters into the water and herbs
on every amāvasā and because of this the animals like cow pro-
vide milk (= gṛta) etc. which is the material for oblation.

Thus he helps the sacrificial performances and therefore is
called the 'best sacrificer' (vaivaranāḥ parivṛddha). Similarly
'dvija parivṛddha' (best brāhmaṇa) (Samudra. I. 47), another
epithet of the moon, may also be interpreted in the same line
as the main duty of dvijas is to perform sacrifices.

Vrata and Anuṣṭhāna 2-

Religious observances (= vrata) and performances
(= anuṣṭhānas) formed an important part of Hinduism in the
medieval age. The observance of vrata was quite popular and
its main feature was fasting (= uposatha) which was finally
broken with a light meal called pṛṇa (Kirāt. Verse. 43).

It may be noted here that the vrata were observed by the

91. See Sharma, Rana Prasada, Paurāṇīc Kośa, p. 92.
92. Some words are missing in the text of the above quoted stanza
and Ravisendana Tripathi seems to be correct in supplying the
words 'rathapārna' to fill up the blanks. See Kiratarjunīva
Vyūyoga. Edited by Ravisendana Tripathi, Chaukhandha, Varan-
individuals of both the sexes. Thus a woman named Viśāsavati is also shown to observe a vrata. (Karṇḍa. Versa 18).

Various types of anuṣṭhānas were performed by the people in order to avoid the imminent calamities or to attain a desired objective. They are to be accompanied generally by Vedic mantras and consist of fasts and offerings of oblation. Vatsarāja has mentioned two types of anuṣṭhānas - Śāntika and Pauṣṭika (Tripura. III. 2). "Those which pacify or neutralize the malignant influences are called Śāntika rites and those which strengthen and augment the beneficent tendencies are Pauṣṭika rites". In Tripurādhāna Dīma Sphutākṣara suggests Viṣṇudāsya to perform some anuṣṭhāna or Śāntikarma for averting the calamity of their master Sarvatōpa. (bhagavan! teṣāṁ krte kimapi karotu aparāṁ Śāntikarmādikam. Tripura. p. 98).

Further Śukrācārya is also willing to perform some anuṣṭhāna averting evil seen through a bad dream (Tripura. p. 109).

(H) PHILOSOPHICAL TRENDS

Advaita Vedānta :-

By the time of Vatsarāja Advaita Vedānta was widely prevalent in India. Referring to the Advaita Vedānta Vatsarāja has expressed his wish in the concluding verse of Kirata-

93a. See in general RV. p. 376 ff.
-rjuniya Vyāyoga that the Śaṅkarādvaite (identification with Śaṅkara) may exist in the mind of the great men (manasi ca mahatām Śaṅkarādvaitasmātām (Kirāṭa. Verse 61). There are some other references to this theory in the text of Vatsarāja's dramas. Thus the author, just after introduction to Kirāṭarjuniya Vyāyoga, has mentioned the terms Indrajāla and Avidvā (suggested from the word avidyamāna) (Kirāṭa. p. 2) which may be taken as suggestive of the māya or avidvā element of Advaita theory. Further he follows Śaṅkara's philosophy in rejecting the combination of action and knowledge (= karmaṁśa- saumuccaya) as a means of liberation (Kirāṭa. Verse. 20) and in accepting that the removal of the darkness of bewilderment (= moha) is necessary for anyone willing to achieve the ultimate target. (mukti) (Kirāṭa. Verse 61; Tripura. IV. 25).

Śākhya and Yoga:

Though the author of the KŚ does not explicitly mention the Śākhya theory yet we can not deny the possibility of some impression of Śākhya-yoga on his mind. In Tripuradvēṣa Dīma we come across a riddle (Tripura. IV. 2) which, if interpreted with philosophical perspective, may be indicative of Śākhya

94. cf. Śāṅkara-bhāṣya on Bhagavadgītā. II. 1-11; also Gagana Deva Girī, Ārimadbhagavadgītā ke Śāṅkara-bhāṣya ke namālocanātmake Adhyayana. pp. 112-16.
metaphysics. In this enigmatic verse there is a mention of sixteen objects to be ultimately reduced to one. This may suggest that the author is tending towards reducing the Sāṁkhya principles in accordance with the concept of monism. The poet states that the sixteen elements are merged into one (śoḍaśa-pyekecatāḥ yatāḥ). This may be interpreted as merger of the sixteen modificants of Śaṅkhya into their cause namely the Ahāṅkāra. These sixteen, from Śaṅkhya point of view, will be understood as the five motor organs, five organs of sense, mind and the five gross elements. Here it will have to be understood that the gross elements will merge into Ahāṅkāra through their merger into the subtle elements. He further mentions that the three will also be disappeared (≡ tṝṣva vāsyanti caṇcatām). Here the author seems to reduce the remaining three elements viz. ahāṅkāra, mahat and prakṛti to the soul in the spirit of the theory of Advaita. To explain, every thing according to Advaita comes out and merges into the supreme reality. The Śaṅkhyas however believe in ultimate duality according to which everything is merged back into Prakṛti which exists as an element other than the soul. Vatsarāja however seems to reduce all material objects into soul which may be indicative of his favour to Advaita and indirectly rejection of Śaṅkhya view of reality of the material world and dualism.

95. Śaṅkhyakārika of Isvarakṛṣṇa. Verses. 3, 22.
Now we can turn our attention to Yoga. As a matter of fact the Yoga system accepts the metaphysics of Śāmkhya with an addition of Śāhara as twenty-sixth principle. Patañjali, the propounder of Yoga, develops the practical aspects of Yoga with a metaphysical basis of Śāmkhya. According to him there are eight accessories of Yoga viz. restraint (= Yama), observance (= niyama), posture (= āsana), regulation of breath (= prāṇāyāma), abstraction (= prāṭyāhāra), concentration (= dhāranā), meditation (= dhyāna) and trance (= samādhi). Vatsarāja appears to have been acquainted with them and he has referred to many of them. Thus in Kṛṣṇaṭunjya Vyāyoga Arjuna, an ascetic, is described to have been weak due to practising Yama and Niyama (Kṛṣṇa. Verse. 12). Further in the venrative verse of Rukminītharana Itśurga (I. 1) the author has furnished a reference to dhyāna. In Hāsayodānamah Prasādana also prāṇāyāma (II. 5), dhyāna, dhāranā (p. 136) and samādhi (p. 140) are mentioned.

Cārvāka :-

As already noticed there were some followers of Cārvāka views in the age of Vatsarāja. Though he does not directly refer to Cārvāka theory anywhere yet in his writing

97. Ibid. II. 29.
the influence of the same may be observed. According to Cārvāka, the sense-pleasure is regarded as the summum bonum of human life. They reject dharma and moksa, and accept only kāma and artha out of the four traditional values of human life. There will be no exaggeration if we say that Vatsarāja's two plays - Karpūrācarita Bhūpa and Hasyacchādamani Prahasana are based more or less on Cārvāka theory. All the characters of these dramas are engaged in attaining the sensual pleasure. One verse each from these dramas (Karpura. Verse. 8; Hāsa. II. 12) may be seen as an instance. Moreover in Tripurādāha Piima (II. 9) the demons are said to practice penance for attaining the Kāma and Artha which may be taken in the light of Cārvāka theory.

The concept of Karmavinākā:

The theory of 'ripening of works, retribution for works done in this life or in the former one' is one of the most significant factors regulating the human life according to the Indian philosophy. There is a common belief that every one is entitled to ultimately get the result of his good or bad activities and Vatsarāja has indicated this through the terms


sukṛtapāka (Kṛṣṇa. Verse. 56) or suktaparināka (Samudra. pp. 179, 190) and pātakapakṣa (Tripura. IV. 4). Through the good acts one gets good fruits while through bad acts one is to receive bad results. Following this concept Vatsarāja states that even a thief can see the God on ripening his pious deeds (Kṛṣṇa. Verse. 56) and those whose ill deeds have been matured are to undergo the bad results meeting with their death very soon (Tripura. IV. 4).

Attitude towards the world:

Many branches of Indian philosophy take the world as a transitory element. Only Brahman is considered to be perpetual and everything of the world is regarded as transient. Therefore all the intellectual beings are preached not to be fascinated with the worldly objects. Indra, in Kṛṣṇa:Arjuna Vyāyoga, explains the non-eternity of the world to Arjuna as follows - 'Neither it is to be that your enemies shall not die, nor it is to be that you shall not expire yourself. Neither it is seen that a rat-devourer cat does not diecease, nor it is that the rats which are alert from a cat do not die. Rather all are liable to depart (Kṛṣṇa. p. 7).

Conclusion

Now the entire discussion can be concluded with following remarks. Śaivism, as the most popular religious sect, was
prevalent in the society. Its followers were turning to follow the ideas of Kaśmīra Śaivism instead of other cults prescribing cruel worshipping method like Kapālikas. This sect was discouraging the caste system. Vaiṣṇavism was dominated by the worship of various incarnations of Viṣṇu and the ancient cumbrous rituals were replaced by the bhakti type of worship which was consisting of joy, dance and prayer. The ahimsa theory of Buddhism and Jainism had taken place in this Hindu religious sect. The Tāntric tendencies of the age had affected adversely the performances of Vaiṣṇavas and consequently many of them were losing their ideal character and were criticised in the society. Religious tolerance was one of the most remarkable characteristic of religious life. However, a large part of the society was giving undue response to the worldly pleasures i.e. artha and kāma due to the influence of Tāntra and Cārvāka.