(a). CONCEPT OF THE MAN-LION

Of the ten avatāras of Visnu, the only one founded on a myth originally proper to Viṣṇu is the Dwarf-incarnation. The three celebrated strides of the Dwarf are rooted in the three steps of the Vedic sun-god Viṣṇu. Similarly the story of the Fish-incarnation is based upon the story of Manu, and the way he was saved from the flood by a great horned fish as narrated in the Sātapatā Brāhmaṇa 1.3.1.1 ff. But unlike these, the man-lion myth belongs to the age of epic poetry. In course of time this Man-lion incarnation of Viṣṇu became so important that a particular Purāṇa like the Narasimha Purāṇa, a quite extensive Upaniṣad like the Nṛsimhatāpini, and a Pāncarātra text like the Nṛsimha Samhitā were composed in honour of this Man-lion incarnation.

The first trace of the myth is found in the Mahābhārata. The Aranyaka Parvan (Ch.100.20) says how the great Lord Puruṣottama having assumed the form of the Man-lion killed Hiranyakasipu, who was a great demon of great prowess (ādidaitya, mahāvīrya). The other references are found in the Nārāyanīya section of the Mahābhārata. In these later references the reason for killing Hiranyakasipu is given though briefly.

1. Though the earliest Vedic reference to Nṛsimha is found out in Taittirīya Aranyaka 10.1.6, it is of the nature of a Gāyatrī and it seems to be a later interpolation.
"I shall kill Hiranyakasipu, son of Diti, because he destroys sacrifice, which is for the benefit of gods."² "By assuming the form of the boar, the Man-lion or the dwarf etc. I shall kill the arrogant enemies of the gods."³

Here in a very simple way without exaggeration and hyperbolic description there is reference to the death of Hiranyakasipu, because he was debarring the gods from enjoying the sacrifice.

Both the Brahmāndā Purāṇa and the Vāyu Purāṇa are rooted in one text — kernel, Pargiter⁴ in his 'Ancient Indian Historical Tradition' and Kirfel⁵ in his 'Das Purāṇa Pañcalakṣaṇa' have come to this conclusion. The story of the Man-lion as narrated in the Vāyu Purāṇa (Ch.67.61-66) is as follows:-

Hiranyakasipu practises penance without food, and with his head bent down for hundred thousand years. Then Brahmā comes to him, and is pleased to offer him boons. Hiranyakasipu wants that he should not be killed by any being; dānavas, asuras and devas should be put on equal footing; and he should be in possession of the supreme lordship of Māruti. Brahmā

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2. Sura - kārye hānisyāmi yajñaghnām Dītinandanām/
   Mbh.12.336.73

3. Mbh. 12.337.36

4. Pargiter, AIHT, p.23

grants him these boons and vanishes. Then Hiranyakasipu attains the position of an omnipotent divinity by defeating the gods. To whichever quarter he goes, gods along with sages bend down before him. This Hiranyakasipu of such a great prowess was torn asunder by Visnu in his man-lion form by his nails which are neither wet nor dry.\(^6\)

The text as given here does not elucidate the conditions under which he should not die; but at the same time it says that the demon was torn off by the nails which are neither wet nor dry; so it is quite likely that the conditions under which he cannot die were known to the masses. From the laconic manner in which different elements of the story are put here, and from the absence of logical sequence we can infer that this is the earliest version of the story after the Mahābhārata.

Though the Brahmanda and the Vāyu are based on one text-kernel, one manuscript, yet two different redactors have worked upon the same manuscript; and there has come to existence two different Purānas. The redactor of the Brahmanda Purāṇa, unlike the redactor of the Vāyu, has improved upon the version of the story as preserved in the text-kernel. The version of the Man-lion myth in the Brahmanda Purāṇa has

\(^6\) Nakhaistu tena nirbhinnā /
Nārdraśuskā nakhāh smṛtāh //
Vāyu (A.S.S.), 67.66
many textual parallels with that of the Vāyu Purāṇa; yet the myth found in the Brahmanda Purāṇa (II.5.13-29) is a version with improved readings.

In the revised version of the Brahmanda Purāṇa the boons are different in some respects. Instead of the boon in the Vāyu that "dānavas, asuras and devas should be put on equal footing", which makes no sense, in the Brahmanda Hiranyakasipu demands that all dānavas, asuras and devas should be under his control and lordship. As to the boon of the Vāyu that he should not be killed by any being, clear cut conditions are added:—he should be killed neither by a wet thing nor by a dry thing; he should be killed neither in day nor in night.

Brahma grants this boon to him though admitting that the boon is of great significance.  

Coming to the version of the story as presented in Brahma Purāṇa (Ch.213.43-79), Harivamsa (I.Ch.31.31-67) and Visnudharmottara Purāṇa (Part I.54.1-52) we notice that Hiranyakasipu puts forth the following conditions under which

7. Mahān ayam varas tātvrto Ditisuta tvaya/ 
    Bd.P. II.5.13

8. So far as the story is concerned, Visnudharmottara deviates a little from the account given in the Brahma Purāṇa and Harivamsa.
he should not die: (i) he may not be killed by gods, demons, men, goblins, Yaksas, Gandharvas or serpents, (ii) the curse of enraged sages must not have any effect on him; (iii) weapons, mountains, trees, anything wet or dry may not be the cause of the destruction; (iv) he can assume the form of any of the gods like Varuṇa, Indra, Yama, Kuvera; (v) he can assume the form of any natural element like sun, moon, wind, fire, water or ether. Brahma grants all these boons; but gods are afraid to hear of this. They approach him in fear; but Brahma tells them that the demon must have to reap the fruits of his penance; Visnu would kill him only after he has enjoyed the fruits of his hard penance.

After having obtained the boons Hiranyakasipu oppresses the gods and the sages. Along with the demons he occupies the heaven; sacrifice meant for gods is enjoyed by demons.

9. According to Prof. Kane some of these elements of the story of the destruction of Hiranyakasipu by Visnu in the Man-lion form are supplied by the story of the slaughter of the demon Namuci by Indra at dawn with the foam of waters, since Indra had agreed with Namuci that "he would not slay him by day or by night, with the dry or the moist, with the palm or with the fist, with staff or bow etc." (S.B. 12.7.3.1-4).

- Kane, H.D. Vol.II, pp.718-19
In Padma Purāṇa (I. Srṣṭikhaṇḍa Ch.47.11-15) and Matsya Purāṇa (Ch.160.11-15) the conditions put forward by Hiranyakāśipu before Brahmā are exactly the same as stated in earlier versions. No new addition has been made.

In the Bhāgavata Purāṇa (VII. Chs.1-10) Hiranyakāśipu's brother Hiranyakṣa was slain by Viṣṇu in his Boar incarnation. So Hiranyakāśipu is greatly agitated with wrath and grief. In his anger and fury against Viṣṇu he orders the demons to kill the sacrificers, and upset the religious order (7.2.10-16). In order to make himself invincible and immortal he practises penance in a valley of mount Mandara. With his arms uplifted and his eyes turned towards the sky, he remains standing on the tips of his toes. He continues tapas for one hundred divine years. Finally the demon is covered with ant-hills, grass and reeds while his skin, flesh, marrow and blood are simultaneously eaten up by a large number of white-ants (7.3.1-16).

When Hiranyakāśipu is engaged in religious austerities, a smoky fire comes out of his head. After having spread in all directions that fire begins to scorch the higher, the middle and the lower regions. The rivers, the oceans and the earth with the islands and mountains are greatly agitated. The planets with the stars fall down from their respective places. The ten quarters and the heavens are scorched with
the fire coming out of the head of Hiranyakasipu. The gods are no longer able to reside in heaven; they are afraid that all the regions will be destroyed (7.3.3-6). Gods praying for help come to Brahmā and tell him that the demon wants to take his position; and that he is determined to upset the laws of the universe (7.3.6-13).

Then Brahmā goes to the demon, tells him that he is pleased with his marvellous penance, and that he is ready to grant him boons. Brahmā sprinkles holy water from his 'kamandalu' on the body of Hiranyakasipu eaten up by white-ants. Then like fire coming out of fuel Hiranyakasipu comes out of the reeds and ant-hills, refreshed and youthful with energy and vigour (7.3.14, 17-23).

Hiranyakasipu speaks out his wish: "let not my death result from any being of Thy creation. Let me not die indoors or out of doors, during night or day, by means of weapons, on earth or in the skies. Let me not be killed by men or animals, by animate or inanimate beings, demons or great reptiles. Grant me matchless might in battle, undisputed lordship over corporeal beings, the glory of all the guardians of the world, and everything that Thou possessest. And let me have all those luxuries as are enjoyed by persons having power of asceticism" (7.3.35-38). Brahmā confers all these boons on Hiranyakasipu and goes back to his place.
After attaining the desired boons Hiranyakasipu acts up to his hostile feelings against Visnu. He rules in heaven in place of Indra. He carries on a tyrannical rule over all beings.

In Śivaite Purāṇas where the Man-lion myth has been taken up just to show the superiority of Śiva-cult over the Visnu-cult, some new conditions also appear. The redactors of Skanda Purāṇa and Śiva Purāṇa too add some new points to the number of conditions under which Hiranyakasipu would not die. In Skanda Purāṇa V. Avantikhanda I. Avantikṣetra māhātmya Ch.77.8-11 the new addition is:— he may not be killed by the Guhyakas or the race of birds; in Śiva Purāṇa 2. Rudra Saṁhitā, 5. Yuddha kāṇḍa Ch.43.16-17 his extra prayer is:— he would have no fear of death from above or below, from Siddhas or thunder bolts.

The Narasimha Purāṇa is one of the oldest and most important of the exant Vaiṣṇava upa-purāṇas. The Man-lion myth takes a different turn in this up-purana. In the version of the story here (Ch.40.1-14) when Brahmā pleased and propitiated with the rigorous austerities of Hiranyakasipu comes to grant him boons, the demon adds some fresh points which are not to be met with in any of the preceding versions. The new conditions which he speaks of before Brahmā are:—

"Let me not meet my death either through wood or through
insects or through slabs of stone; let there be no danger to my life from the Kinnaras or Vidyādharas; let me have no fear from the mothers or the monkeys."

Thus we see that from one Purāṇa to other, the number of conditions put forth before the primeval father Brahmā goes on increasing. Fortified with the power of penance the demon is possession of all that he desires. He is in the most advantageous position and the number of conditions with which the demon has tried to protect himself gradually becomes more and more complex.

**DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF MAN-LION**

The first condition that Hiranyakasipu puts is that he may not be killed by gods, demons, men or goblins. This peculiar condition makes it necessary that Lord Visnu must have a peculiar form—the form of the Man-lion, the combination of the man and the animal.

Then the question arises as to what was the purpose for which the lion was brought into the myth and why did the Lord assume the form of the Lion? In the myths, legends, paintings and sculptures we notice that the lion is the most important motif throughout our country. Lord Buddha who started a revolution against orthodox Hinduism, is referred to as Sākya-Simha (the lion of the Sākya clan) and his preaching of the doctrine is compared to the roar of the lion.
(Simhanāda). As other animals are terribly afraid of the lion and flee away for safety when they listen to the roar of the lion, the false doctrines are supposed to hide themselves when Buddha preaches his sermon. The voice of the master is the roar of the awakened lion to awaken others. The lion is the mount of the Boddhisattva Simhanāda Avalokiteśvara. The same is the case with Jainism. Each of the twenty-four tīrthaṅkaras of Jaina religion has a distinguishing animal emblem. In the Jaina Kalpasūtra Mahāvīra is depicted as sitting on the throne of a lion in the Puspottara heaven.

Like Buddhism and Jainism the Hindu idea of the deity was power. All the myths and legends about the divinities centre upon power. The lion is regarded as the king of beasts (Paśurāja); naturally it is widely accepted as a symbol of royalty and its effigy is adopted as an emblem of kings. The throne on which our kings are coronated, is called Simhāsana (Lion-seat) and it is usually indicated by the representation of lions on the base of the throne; sometimes roaring lions are built up on the upper part of it forming a decorative pattern. The entrance to the palace or the temple

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10. Asis Sen, Animal motifs in Ancient Indian Art - Ch.VI, p.74.
K. Bharatha Iyer, Animals in Indian Sculpture, Ch.10, "The Lion", p.64.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
is known as Simhadvāra. In Sanskrit literature we come across many epithets like Simhadarpa, Simhadhvani, Simhadvaja; the last one refers to the name of Buddha. Another divinity known as Kīrttimukha referred to in Padma Purāṇa and Skanda Purāṇa was born from Śiva for the destruction of Rāhu. Endowed with protruding tongue and flaming eyes it has the face of a lion and it is spoken of as another Narasimha (Nṛsimha iva cāparah). The reference to Kīrttimukha as having the face of a lion indicates its composite nature and also the lion-face suggests its capacity to destroy evil. Take the case of Durgā, durgatīnāśinī. She kills Mahiśāsura, the demon having the form of the buffalo but that victory she achieves when mounted upon the lion. In the conflict between the Devī and the demon the lion symbolises the destructive fury of the goddess. She is well-known as Simhavāhinī. During the Mauryan period the lions appear prominently on the Asokan pillars. The addorsed lions of the Saranātha pillar are intended to bear 'dharmačakra'. In the Mathurā Museum we get an image of Samkarsana Baladeva dated as early as 3rd century A.D. where the upper left hand

of Balarama rests on the lion-crowned plough thus suggesting the Simha-lāṅgala aspect of Balarama. 15 In Gupta age it was not unusual to find in Viṣṇu figures a lion-head adorning the crown and emitting pea leaf festoons from its mouth. 16 In the archeological Museum at Gwalior there is a statue of Viṣṇu from Besnagar belonging to Gupta period. Here in this particular statue we notice a lion-crowned (Simhamukhī) octagonal mace pressed by the upper left hand of Viṣṇu. 17 Many a time we notice the lion face decorating armlets and waistbands, found on sculptured figures. Similarly the lion functions as a decorative feature in architectural units.

In pre-dynastic Egypt the king was represented in battle palettes as a lion seizing and destroying his enemies who were depicted in human form. 18 Besides, the ancient Egyptians used to worship the lion because it represented power (plate II). 19

In Egypt the lion was the symbol of the sun. Ket, Egyptian mistress of heaven rides a lion. Sekhmet of Memphis, the goddess of war is a lion-headed goddess. Egyptian Sphinx combines human head with lion's body. In Persia the mask of Mithra, the sun-god is a grinning and stylised lion-face with rays all around recalling the mane. The resemblance of the mask of Mithra to the solar orb is clear. In Asia Minor too, the sun was represented as a symbol of the sun-king; in the different representations of the sun-king we notice the face of the lion very beautifully surrounded by its manes; and it very much resembled a sun-disc. Ishtar, the Babylonian goddess of war rides a lion. The Cretan mother-goddess had lion by her side. On the Middle Minoan seals she has a lioness by her; on the clay sealings in the central court of the palace of Knossos she is represented between two lions. The lion is also the mount of Cybele (Greek Kybele) who was the mountain-mother, mistress of the trees, lady of the wild beasts and guardian of the dead. Greek goddess Rhea, too is seated on a throne of lion.

20. Mansouri, Ibid., p.18.
21. M.A. Murray, Splendour that was Egypt, p.96; p.117.
23. Ibid., p.64.
24. Sukumari Bhattacharji, Indian Theogony, p.163.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid., p.169.
27. Ibid.
know Ariadne riding in a lion-chariot accompanied by her husband when he returned to Europe after victorious conquests in Ethiopia and India. Britomartis or Diktynnan was accompanied by lions. Hittite thrones had lion supports. Solomon (C. 1000 B.C.), king of Israel is said to have possessed an ivory throne—the six steps of which were flanked by lions; and it had two lions in addition on either side of the seat.

Thus in the various countries of the world in myths and legends, in art, architecture and sculpture the lion plays a predominant role. The lion, the king of beasts (Paśurāja) justifiably represents the power and valour; it is the embodiment of strength and vitality. The king in order to keep his country under his subjugation must be strong and powerful. Likewise the different divinities in order to subjugate evil-spirits must be endowed with strength and prowess. It is the lion which causes terror among one and all. Naturally Lord Viṣṇu has been made to appear in the form of a

29. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
lion for the destruction of the demon Hiranyakasipu. Like a monarch responsible for a peaceful regime in his kingdom Lord Visnu, having slaughtered the demon Hiranyakasipu has brought peace and prosperity to the world.

Next question arises as to why Lord Visṇu has this dual form - half-man, half-lion. Numerous analogies can be cited to show that Visṇu is not unique in this regard. The combination of two forms - man and animal, animal and animal, man and reptiles, animal and reptiles is often found in different pieces of art and architecture.

REFERENCE TO THE RELIGION OF EGYPT

In the primitive religion of Egypt the different divinities were worshipped just in the form of birds and animals. Amon identified by the Greeks with Zeus was famous for his temple and oracle; he had the head of a ram. Bast was worshipped in the form of a cat. The city where her worship was in vogue was named as Bubastis in honour of the divinity. And when Shishak, I, the resident of Bubastis became the Pharaoh of Egypt, there was the wave of cat-worship throughout the country. Thoth, the god of wisdom had the form of a baboon. Nekhebt, the goddess of the South and the protector of the king was adored in the form of a vulture; the vulture with

32. M. A. Murray, The splendour that was Egypt, pp.93 ff.
its outstretched wings, unlike any other bird, gives a greater sense of protection to its nestlings and later on this Nekhebt in the form of a vulture is represented as sheltering the Emperor of Egypt.

When the foreign conquerors like Greeks, Romans and Persians forcibly altered the condition of Egypt, these gods and goddesses previously worshipped only in the shape of birds and animals assumed a dual shape—a combination of man and animal. God Amon who was just worshipped in the form of a ram, now assumed the dual shape—the human body with the head of a ram. Likewise Bast became cat-headed goddess. Thoth, the god of wisdom was represented with the head of an ape. The god of death—Anubis was endowed with a human body and the head of a jackal. Hathor, the sky-goddess was shown as a woman with cow's ears and horns. Horus, the son of Osiris, too was figured with the human body and hawk's head. Sekhmet (the goddess of war) referred to earlier, also was a lion-headed goddess.

**REFERENCE TO THE RELIGION OF GREECE**

Centaur, the Greek monster, is represented half-man and half-horse, from head to waist man and the head has the whole body of a horse.33 Another monster in Greek religion is

Minotaur with the head of a bull and a human body. Harpy, the personification of storm-wind in Greek religion is partly a woman and partly a bird. The Satyr, the divinity of the forest is represented from head to waist as man and from waist to feet as goat. Pan, the god of shepherds, has exactly the same type of representation. The Typhon, the storm-god, an opponent of Zeus has three busts of bearded men and from waist downwards a serpent's body with many coils. Sirens, the sea-nymphs of Greece who used to lure the sailors and put them to death very much like the nymphs referred to in Indian literature, are partly women and partly bird.

REFERENCE TO THE SCYTHIAN ART

The Scythians were a large group of nomads along the shores of Black sea. They were a horde of warriors half-Mongol and half-European. By seventh century B.C. they had firmly established themselves in Southern Russia and Kuban.

35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
These Scythians had a pastoral way of life and it was of necessity closely bound up with the animals. They developed an accurate awareness of the beast world and a far more understanding of it. This knowledge and the interest which they took in it formed their artistic outlook and it led them to evolve an art which is mainly concerned with animal forms. They had an instinct for beauty and the wish to surround themselves with the animal forms in which they took delight.

The Scythians achieved considerable success in the difficult task of showing in a single image the various and often incompatible poses assumed by a single animal in course of its life. They were also very skillful in combining two animals in their representations. In Fig. No.69 (The Scythians, Ch.V) we can mark the figure of an animal whose tail terminates in the head of a snake. Likewise we also come across lion-headed griffin and eagle-headed griffin in their art. A griffin is an imaginary animal with lion's body and eagle's beaks and wings (Fig. No.45, The Scythians). In the lion-headed griffin, the head is that of a lion with beaks and wings of an eagle whereas in the representation of eagle-headed griffin, the head is that of an eagle with the body of a lion. Fig. No.61 Antlered, half-lion, half-human creature fighting a fantastic bird from a felt hanging found in Mound 38.

This figure might well have stepped from the world of the Hittites, but Rudenko links it with the Sphinx, even though the face with its black moustache points to Assyria rather than to Egypt or Eurasia. Its pale blue lion-like body is studded with brown rosettes. It stands upright on lion feet which have large claws. Its long tail is elegantly tucked between its legs, to swing out at the level of its chest in a cluster of leaf-like terminals. A wing rises from the centre of its back, its side feathers forming S-shaped squiggles. Its hands are extended and the newly completed restorations of the fragments show that they are directed at attacking a bird-like figure with a somewhat human face, crowned by either antlers or a large crest.

From these instances of Greece, Egypt and Scythians we come back to Indian sub-continent where in the Indus Valley civilization some seals have been unearthed which show a combination of man-tiger (Fig. No.12). 39 The motif of combination of man and animal, animal and animal etc., has taken a further development in the Vyāla figures of medieval temples of India. The Vyāla is based on deformity of the normal human and animal form. 40 It is a combination of facial parts of a number of beasts. 41

40. M. A. Dhaky, The Vyāla Figures on the medieval temples of India, Foreword, p.5.
41. Ibid., p.15.
According to Aparājita-pracchā (Ch.230.2-3) the basic face of Vyāla is that of a lion with a forehead of antelope, ears of a boar and horns of a ram. The shoulders should resemble those of a horse with leonine curve and feline feet. The Śrījñānaratnakosa in its description of 'Varālika' recommends a basic face of a dog with horns of ibex or ram, neck of a horse and feet of a lion. The Samarāṅgana-sūtradhāra, (a Mālavīya work of the 2nd quarter of 11th century, Ch.75.27-28) Aparājita-pracchā (Ch.233.4-7) and Rūpamālā (a Ceylonese text yet unpublished and of unknown authorship and date)—each of these texts gives a list of 16 kinds of Vyāla though their list differs from one another. These sixteen kinds of Vyāla figures with facial alterations are again multiplied by another sixteen owing to the difference in their poses, thus offering us a repertoire of 256 figures. The architects thus working in the different schools of Orissa, Khajuraho, Western India, Rajasthan and Tamil land in course of time entered into a healthy rivalry in creating new forms of Vyāla shapes placed in different positions and of varied instances.

42. M. A. Dhaky, The Vyāla Figures on the medieval temples of India, Foreword, pp.15-17.
43. Ibid., p.5.
44. Ibid., p.7.
In the structural temples of medieval period, Vyāla appears in a variety of context. In north India it is found at Shamalaji, Roda (in North Gujarat) and in Viśva-Brahmā and Svarga-Brahmā temples of Alampur. They are found in Śiva temple at Kotai, in Kutch, Ambika temple at Jāțat, Sun temple at Tusa in Mewad, Muni Bāwā temple near Than in Saurāstra, Navalakhā Pārśvanātha temple at Pali and Mahāvīra temple at Ghanerav in Gorwad area of Rajasthan. In Central India Vyāla figures are found in Laksmana temple (at Khajuraho), Pārśvanātha temple, Chitragupta and Chaturbhuj temple, Viśvanātha temple, Devī Jagadambī temple, Adinātha temple, Vāmana temple. In Eastern India only in the Kaliṅga style the Vyālas are encountered in the recessed piers of the temples. The earliest such examples are found in the 'talajaṅghā of Rājarāni temple (early 11th century), Brahmaśvara (1060 A.D.), Kedāresvara (mid 11th century) Liṅgarāja temple (3rd quarter of 11th century) at Bhuvarnāsvara. In the 12th century Vyālas do not come to view so often in Orissa. Their last and most notable representations come from the Sun temple (mid 13th century) at Koṅarka,

47. Ibid., p.13.
Thus there are Vyāla figures e.g.,

1. Simha-vyāla (from a temple near Mehsana, from Nadol).
3. Mārjāra-vyāla (Kakanamadha temple, Suhania).
5. Śvāna-vyāla (Kakanamadha temple, Vithoba temple, Vijayanagar, Brahmesvara temple, Bhuvanesvara).
8. Vṛsabha-vyāla (Viśvanātha temple, Khajuraho).
10. Meṣa-vyāla - Vaital Deula, Bhuvanesvara.
11. Asva-vyāla - Sun temple, Konārka.

15. Śisumāra-vyāla - Mahāvīra temple, Ghanerav, Pārśvanātha temple, Khajurāho.


Besides this Vyāla which had a luxuriant growth in India many typical forms like Ganapati (elephant's head joined to human body), Hayagrīva (horse-head with human body), Aśvins (with horse head), Nrvarāha (boar-headed man) akin to Nṛsimha, the man-lion have been elaborated by the redactors of the Purāṇas.

Thus we get an idea that not only in India but throughout the world the power worshipped was a combination of man and animal or animal and animal. Numerous examples of this type in our own country testify to the wide prevalence of this dual form.
(b) THE CULT OF NARASIMHA

The cult of Narasimha was very famous in ancient India. The Visnudharmottara Purana (Part III.121) deals with the adoration and worship of different divinities in different regions of our country. The text points out that the adoration of Narasimha is famous in Madras. The verse in Visnudharmottara (III.121.4) runs thus:

Ayodhyām tathā Rāmam Naimise Dharmam eva ca /
Karnāte Cāsvasirasam Madradesē Nrkesarim //

H. K. Sastri corroborates the statement of this Purana text in his "South-Indian Images of Gods and Goddesses." In South India "the more popular forms of Visnu worshipped in the temples generally refer to his numerous avatāras or incarnations...but of these only five are commonly represented for worship. They are (1) Varāha "the Boar incarnation", (2) Narasimha "the Man-lion incarnation", (3) Vāmana "the Dwarf incarnation" developing eventually into Trivikrama; (4) Rāma, the hero of the Rāmāyaṇa and (5) Kṛṣṇa, the pastoral god and the chief actor in the great war of the Mahābhārata. The other five incarnations of Visnu, viz., the Fish, the Tortoise, Parasurāma, Buddha and Kalkin...are not generally worshipped as the chief deity in a temple.
"Narasimha or Nrsimha, the Man-lion is more popular than Varāha. A large number of families in the south, Brāhmaṇa and non-Brāhmaṇa, own him as their tutelary deity. In Tamil the name is corrupted into Singa (Sanskrit Simha) or Singa-Perumal and in the other vernaculars into Narasa (a contraction of Narasimha)."¹ Thus it is undoubtedly a fact that the adoration of Narasimha was comparatively more popular in the southern part of India. The great Simhācalam temple in Andhra Pradesh built in about the 11th century A.D., the centre of Man-lion worship is a holy sanctuary. Besides the Simhācalam temple, shrines dedicated to Narasimha are seen on the hill tops at Yadavadri (Yaduḍīri, Mysore State) and at Vedadri (near Korukonda, West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh). At Yadavadri the image adored is that of meditating Narasimha whereas at Vedadri it is accompanied by his consort Lakṣmī. And the image at Simhācalam is a combination of both the Boar and the Man-lion, where the deity is popularly described as Simhadri Appana (Simhadri, the father).²


2. Vide Dr. K. Sundaram The Simhacalam Temple, pp. 4-5.
The mantra RV. III. 62. 10 going under the name of Gāyatrī is the mantra par excellence. The mantra reads - "tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dīmahi, dhiyo yo nāh pracodayāt."

"Om let us contemplate the wondrous spirit of the Divine Creator (Savitṛ) of the earthly, atmospheric and celestial spheres. May He direct our minds, that is towards the attainment of dharma, artha, kāma and mokṣa."

In the daily worship the recitation of this Gāyatrī and meditation on it in the morning, noon and evening endow a person with the divine energy. The recitation of this mantra is a sine qua non for a righteous Brahmin. After the Vedic age when Viṣṇu and Śiva came to be adored through their different forms and incarnations, the redactors of the Purāṇa-texts remained busy in coinining the so-called Gāyatrī mantras for all the varied forms of Viṣṇu or Śiva. The old unique Gāyatrī mantra "tat savitur varenyam..." gave place to many different mantras. 3 Though all these

3. Reference to different Gāyatrī mantras for different divinities.

Om ādityaya vidmahe/ Viśvabhāvaya dīmahi/
tan nāh Suryah pracodayāt // G. P. I. 16. 12

Cont'd.
mantras belong to a very late date, the redactors have absolutely no hesitation in designating these mantras as Gāyatrī. This was definitely done to raise the status of the different divinities who had been crowding into Hinduism much later. Thus the Narasimha Gāyatrī composed exactly on the model of original Gāyatrī mantra written in the Gāyatrī metre runs thus -

Vajranakhāya vidmahe/tikṣṇadamstrāya dhīmahi /
tanno Narsimhaḥ pracodayāt // (T.A. 10.1.6-7)

Cont’d.

Om mahākarnāya vidmahe / vakratundāya dhīmahi /
tan no dantī pracodayāt // G. P. I.129.13

Tatpuruṣāya vidmahe / mahādevāya dhīmahi /
tan no Rudrah pracodayāt //

Tatpuruṣāya vidmahe / mahāsenāya dhīmahi /
tan no Garudah pracodayāt //

Vedātmanāya vidmahe / Hiraṇyagarbhāya dhīmahi /
tan no Brahma pracodayāt //

Nārāyanāya vidmahe / Vāsudevāya dhīmahi /
tan no Viṣṇuḥ pracodayāt //

Vaiśvānarāya vidmahe / Lāliterāya dhīmahi /
tan no Agniḥ pracodayāt //

Cont’d.
“Let us meditate on Lord Narasimha endowed with sharpened teeth and nails as tough as the thunderbolt. May He promote our thought.”

Besides the Gāyatrī mantra referred to above, some other mantras recited in the daily adoration of Narasimha come to have added significance. The special mantra which is recited at the time of initiation of the pupil is the bija mantra (seed). It is monosyllabic in nature. The bija mantras are so named because they are the seed of the fruit that is success and because they are the very quintessence of the mantra. They are short, unetymological vocables such as sṛīm, aṁ, yam, vam, lám, phat, etc. Each and every deity has his or her own bija mantra. Hlaum is the bija mantra of Viṣṇu in his Hayagrīva incarnation. Krim is the bija mantra of goddess Kāli. Hṛīm is the bija mantra of Māyā, another name of Durgā. The bija mantras ‘ram’ and ‘am’ belong to Agni and Yoni respectively. Yam is the bija mantra of Vāyu. In the same manner the

Cont’d.

Kātyāyanāya vidmahe / kanyakumārī dhīmahi /
 tan no Durgīḥ pracadayāt // T. A. 10.1.5-7

Sudarśanāya vidmahe / hētirājya dhīmahi /
 tan nasekrah pracadayāt // Tripāda vibhūti mahānārāya- nopaniṣad – 7.39

Dāśarathāya vidmahe / Siṭā vallabhāya dhīmahi /
 tan no Rāmah pracadayāt // Rāmarahasyopaniṣad – 2.36-37
monosyllabic 'ksraum' is the bija mantra of Lord Narasimha.

The famous mantra in the adoration of Lord Narasimha is a 32-syllabic verse in anustubha metre. Nrsmh-purva-
tapInI-Upanisad (2.1-6) refers to this:

Om ugram viram mahaVisnum jvalantam sarvatomukham /
Nrsmham bhisaNam bhadram mrtymrtyum namamy aham //

The terrible, mighty Narasimha burning in all the directions is fearful as well as gracious. I pay obeisance to the great Visnu, the death of deaths.

The more and more the worship of Narasimha became popular among the masses, the mantra chanted in His honour was designated as 'mantraraja' - the royal mantra. It occurred more so when the minor cults developed and they went on glorifying their own cult and deity. In RAmottara tapInI-
Upanisad (5.5,8) and Hayagriva Upanisad (9) the respective mantras are also designated as mantraraja. Thus in Nrsmh-purva-tapInI-Upanisad in edifying and glorifying the mantraraja, the text (1.1) alludes to the fact that the mantraraja is the basis of all creation.

"Sa tapo'tapyata, sa tapas taptva sa etam mantrarajam
Narasimham anushtubham apasyat, tena vai sarvam idam asrajata,
yadidam kinka."

"All this universe was a mass of water. That one Prajapati rested on a lotus leaf. In his inner heart there
arose the desire — "I will create." Then he practised penance. After having practised penance he meditated upon the mantrarāja of Narasimha composed in anuṣṭubha metre. With the help of that mantra he created all this, that exists."

The question of Prajāpati practising penance and meditating before creation is a very early concept which we come across in the Upanisads.

Prāśna Upaniṣad (1.4): "Prajāpati became desirous of progeny. He practised penance. Having practised penance he created a pair—food and prāṇa under the idea, "These two will produce creatures for me in multifarious ways."

Taittrīya Upaniṣad 2.6.1: "He (the Self) wished, 'Let me be many, let me be born. He undertook penance. Having undertaken penance, he created all this that exists."

Maitrāyaṇi Upaniṣad (6.6): "In the beginning this world was unmanifested. When Prajāpati had practised penance, he uttered earth (bhūr), atmosphere (bhuvah) and sky (svār). This is Prajāpati's coarsest form."

Creation is an important act of Prajāpati. For any type of creation he first of all undertakes penance and then the creation follows. In these early Upaniṣads penance is the only means of creation for Prajāpati. But in Nṛsimha-pūrva-tāpinī-Upaniṣad (1.1) along with penance, meditation on mantrarāja (the royal mantra in honour of Narasimha)
becomes the sine qua non for the creation to proceed “tena vai sarvamidam asrjata yadidam kiṃca”—it is the mantrarāja with whose help Prajāpati would proceed in his act of creation.

The Nṛsimha-pūrva-tāpini (2.1) further glorifies the mantrarāja of Nārasimha. The mantrarāja is spoken of as bestowing immortality upon the gods. Once gods became afraid of death, sin and the samsāra. They approached Brahmā who instructed them to recite the mantrarāja of Nārasimha. In consequence of recitation and meditation of this mantrarāja gods overcame death and thus crossed over the ocean of samsāra.

This famous mantra has been glorified in Skanda Purāṇa II Vaisnavakh. (-2) Pūrusottamaksetra māhātmya Ch.28.53. “There has never been nor will there ever be a mantra more effective than this. Only when worshipped with this mantra, Viṣṇu is immediately pleased.

Nāṭṭag parataro mantro na bhūto na bhaviṣyati /
Anen ābhyaṛcito Viṣṇuh prīto bhavati tat ksaṇāt //

4. As pointed out by Paul Deussen, this is influenced by Pañcavimśa Br. 22.12 and Ch. Up. I.4. (vide sixty Upanisads of the Veda, p.318).

5. See also K. V. Gajendraśadkar, Neo-Upanishadic Philosophy, p.24.
Skanda Purāṇa, Puruṣottama ksetra māhātmya (13th century A.D.) Ch.28.22-26 also highly speaks of the religious efficacy of this mantra-rajā. The mantra-rajā fulfills all the four ends of life (i.e. dharma, artha, kāma and mokṣa); and a mere recitation of it ensures the fruit of performing all the sacrifices. Besides, the fruit of visiting all the holy places, the fruit of observing all religious vows (vratas) and the fruit of giving out charity in plenty: all these are attained easily only by reciting the mantra-rajā of Narasimha.

Meditation of this mantra-rajā helps the seers and ascetics to get rid of the attachment of this world. Just by remembering this mantra-rajā one becomes free from the evil influence of unlucky stars; ghosts, demons, goblins and serpents become absolutely powerless for one who recites this mantra-rajā.

6. Eka eva mahāmantrah puruṣārtha caṭuṣṭayam /

Prāptum kāraṇabhūto hi kim punah kṣudrakāmanām //
Eka eva mahāmantrah sarvakratu phalapradah /
Sarvatīrthha pradaḥ sarvadānavrata phalapradah //
Yathā'yaṁ sarvapāpaugha tūla rāser davānalah /
Divyasimhākṛtir devo mantrarājas tathā hyayam //
Enam abhyasya yatayo bhavarojaṁ tyajanti hi /
Yasya grahanamātreṇa grahāpasnāra rākṣasāḥ //
Dākīnayo bhūtavetāla piṣāca uraja grahaḥ /
Dūrād eva palāyante nesate vīkṣitum ca tam //

Sk.P.II. Vaishnavakh. (-2) Puruṣottama- ksetra māhātmya Ch.23.22-26
According to Narasimha-pūrva-tāpanī Upanisad (4.1-2) the mantrarāja of Narasimha is to be followed by four ancillary mantras (aṅgamantras). Like a king followed by his retinue, the mantrarāja is accompanied by four subordinate mantras—

(a) Praṇava, (b) Śāvitrī, (c) Yajurlakṣmī and (d) Nrṣimha-Gāyatrī.

The first aṅga Pranava is nothing other than Om. This syllable represents the whole world. It has four parts

(a u m and the half letter). The first morā i.e., a-sound stands for earth, Rgveda, Brahman, the Vasus, the Gāyatrī and the Gārhapatiya fire. The second morā i.e., u-sound stands for sky, Yajurveda, Viṣṇu, the Rudras, the Tristubh, the Daksīṇa fire. The heaven, the Śāmaveda, Rudra, Ādityas, the Jaṅgati, the Āhavanīya fire belong to the third morā m-sound.

The Soma world, the Atharvaveda, the fire of universal destruction, the Maruts, the Virāj are represented by the fourth (the half letter, half-mora). 7

This syllable is the whole world. The past, present and future—all this is represented by the sound Om. Besides,

7. As rightly observed by Paul Deussen, all this is taken verbatim from the Atharvaśikha Upanisad and adapted to serve the purpose of Nrṣimha-pūrva-tāpanī (2.1) (vide sixty Upanisads of the Veda, p.318).
what still lies beyond the three times, is also the sound Om (Nṛsimha-pūrva-tāpini 4.1). Thus in Nṛsimha-pūrva-tāpini Upaniṣad (2.1, 4.1) we find, the four parts of Om are identified with the earth, sky, heaven and Soma-world and the Atman is said to pervade each of them. Here the symbol Om is identified not only with the Self within the human body, or with the highest Brahman in the universe, but also with both at the same time. This clearly shows that the symbol Om is made to stand for the identity of the microcosm and the macrocosm and thus represents the oneness of the Self and Brahman.

Sāvitrī (i.e., Gāyatrī) consists of eight letters (ghṛṇih Sūrya ēdityah, Taittirīya Aranyaka 10, 15) by which the whole world is pervaded. The person who knows Sāvitrī need not know the Rc or Yajus or any other sāman (mantra).

Yajuralakṣmi consists of twenty four letters. "Om ! bhūr lakṣmīr, bhuvar lakṣmīh / svar kālakarnī, tanno mahālakṣmīh pracodayāt." This is the sacrificial formula Mahālakṣmi, a twenty-four syllabic Gāyatrī. This Gāyatrī represents all that exists. The knower of this Mahālakṣmi (Gāyatrī) attains bliss.

8. Nṛsimha-pūrva-tāpini (4.1) explaining Pranava is borrowed almost unchanged from Māndukya Up, 1-7.

The **Nrsimha-Gāyatri** (4.2)\(^{10}\) is the basic reality of gods and the Vedas. The knower of this knows the nature of basic reality. Thus the knowledge of four subordinate **mantras** - Pravāna, Sāvitrī, Yajurlakṣmi and Nṛsiṁha Gāyatri endows the knower with long life, fame, glory, and prosperity.

Not only the devotees of Narasimha sect harp on this **mantramāja**, but also the Ahirbudhnya Sūkhita, a Pancaśātra text of 8th century A.D. expounds the significance of this **mantramāja** in full three chapters (54-56).

**NARASIMHA YANTRA**

In **Tantrasāra** we come across a considerable number of **yantras**. There are **yantras** like Gāyatri Yantra, Śrī Yantra, Kāli Yantra, Bhubanesvara Yantra, mandala Yantras and so on. Śrī Yantra is the most important of all Tantrik 'yantras'.

\[^{10}\] The Nṛsiṁha-Gāyatri spoken of here slightly differs from the Gāyatri referred to above p. 386. The Gāyatri appearing in Nṛsiṁha-pūrva-tāpinī (4.2) is as follows:-

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Om Nṛsiṁhāya vidmahe / Vajranakāhāya dhīmahi /
   tan naḥ simhah praçodayāt //
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Buddhism uses yantras in a less developed way than Hinduism. In it 'vajra' and 'phurbu' both belong to the category of yantra. Jainism has also Puruskara Yantra and so on.

Yantra is complementary to mantra. It is mantra geometrically represented in certain triangles and curves which are considered to be efficacious in producing the desired objects. It is thought that gods are pleased with their worship by means of yantra. It is considered to be the bodily form and the material representation of the god or the goddess for whom it stands. Therefore Kane rightly observes, "The distinction between the devata and yantra is similar to that between the soul and the body." The 'yantra' may be engraved or drawn on metal, paper or other substances. As there are different mantras prescribed for the worship of different divinities, so there are different yantras for the worship of them.

The yantra helps in restraining and concentrating the mind on a diagram or model deemed to represent the deity. It helps the mental realization of the deity. Most Hindus look upon such forms of worship without antipathy because they serve as

a way of approach to divinity for ordinary unsophisticated people and it is better to have one's foot on the lowest rung of the ladder to higher life than to have it on no rung at all.

Yantras are described in Tantric and other works such as Tripuratāpinī Upanisad (II.3), Kāmakalāvilāsa (verses 22, 26, 29-30, 33), Ahiṃbudhnya Samhitā (Chs. 23-27), Mantramahodadhi (20th taraṅga) etc., The Padma (A.S.S., IV Pātalakhanda, 79.1) and Nāradīya (I.67.31) state that not merely in a temple, but on a Śālagrama stone, a jewel, a yantra, a mandala or images Lord Hari (Viṣṇu) may be worshipped. In Ch.36.5-66 the Ahiṃbudhnya Samhitā describes the procedure with reference to the worship of a Sudarśana Yantra by a king or other personage desirous of wealth and prosperity. Both Nāradīya (I.71.6 ff) and Mantra Mahodadhi (14th taraṅga, 7 ff) provide details of Narasimha Yantra.

The description of the 'Cakra' is closely related to Yantra; in fact it is only a kind of Yantra. This is also thought out to be useful in pleasing the gods. The Tripuratāpinī Upanisad(2) speaks of different effects that a 'Cakra' worshipped in triangular, curvilinear or circular forms produces on the person against whom it is used. It is said to cure diseases, and to secure popularity, success and prosperity. It is also described as enabling a man to entice women, and to paralyse or kill enemies. In fact it is endowed with occult-power which may be used either for
good or for evil purposes. In Tripura-tāpini Upanisad (2)
we come across Śrīcakra, the popular diagram of goddess Śrī. 13

We have the great cakra of Narasimha Anuṣṭubha described
for us in the Nṛsimha-pūrva-tāpini-Upanisad (5.2). This
Cakra is similar to the great Sudarṣana Cakra. At its centre
there is the delivering sign (tārakam)—the syllable which
denotes Narasimha (viz., Om). On the six wings stands the
six-syllabic Sudarṣana-mantra: Om namas cakrāya. On the
eight wings stands the octo-syllabic Nārāyana-mantra: Om
nāmo Nārāyaṇāya. On the twelve wings there stands the twelve-
syllabic Vāsudeva mantra: Om nāmo bhagavate Vāsudevāya. On
the sixteen wings stand the vowels of the alphabet i.e., perhaps
a formula whose lines or words begin with the fourteen vowels
a ā i ū u ō r ū l e a i o au along with 'anusvāra' and
'visarga'. On the thirty two wings stands the thirty two
syllabic 'mantrarāja' of Narasimha composed in Anustubh
metrical. This is the great cakra of Narasimha Anuṣṭubha that
fulfills all desires and serves as a gateway to salvation.
It is consisting of the Rcas, the Yajus, the Sāmans, the
Brahman and immortality. To its east are situated the Vasus,
to the south the Rudras, to the west the Ādityas, to the
north the Viśvedevas, at the nave Brahman, Viṣṇu, Maheśvara,
on its side the sun and the moon. Accordingly the whole
Mahācakra diagram would look something like this:

It is worth noticing that the old Vedic gods lie outside the circle, in the realm of the Mūsās.
The word 'mudrā' has several meanings. It means a posture in yogic practices in which the whole body plays a part. It also means the symbolic or mystic intertwining of the fingers and hands as part of religious worship. Viṣṇu-samhitā VII.43 says that 'mudrā' is so called because it gives delight to the gods and puts demons to flight (mudrā kurvanti devānām rākṣasān drāvayanti ca). Thus various mudrās are employed in arcana (worship), japa (recitation), dhyāna (meditation), kāmya-karman (rites done to effect particular objects), pratisthā (installation), snāna (bath), āvāhana (welcoming), naivedya (offering of food) and visarjana or dismissal of the deity.

The names and number of mudrās differ considerably. Some of the Purāṇas contain an extensive treatment of mudrās. Brahmāṇḍa (Lalitopākhyaṇa Ch.42.1-19) and Agni (26.1-7) deal with some mudrās very briefly. The Brahman Purāṇa (61.55) and Nārādiya Purāṇa (II.57.55-56) refer to eight mudrās whereas the Devi-Bhāgavata (XI.16.93-102) speaks of 24 mudrās at the time of Gāyatrī-japa. The Kālika Purāṇa (66.32-33) states that there are 108 mudrās of which 55 are used in general worship and rest 53 are used on special occasions; but the largest number of mudrās are found to have been dealt with in the Viṣṇudharmottara (III.Chs.32-33). The Jainas and Buddhists have also mudrās. It seems that mudrās in Hindu and Buddhist Tantric works are evolved and influenced by the
ancient Indian dance and drama that find their earliest mention in the Nāṭyasāstra of Bharata and in later medieval works on dramaturgy such as the Abhinayadarpana.

Nine mudrās like 'āvahanī', sthāpanī, sannidhāpana etc. are very very common and they are employed in any kind of worship. Besides Saṅkhamudrā, Cakramudrā, Gadaṁudrā, Padmamudrā, Garuḍamudrā, Vārāhīmudrā, Paraśumudrā and so on are held to be very dear to Lord Viṣṇu. In speaking of Narasimha mudrā Garuḍa I.11.30 states, it is formed by bending the three fingers ending with the little finger, with the thumb and keeping both the hands bent down.14

NARASIMHA SĀLAGRĀMA

With the development of the worship of different divinities like Viṣṇu, Śiva, Ganesa, Sūrya and Śakti, there came into vogue their worship either through images or through symbols which may be of stone or metal. Viṣṇu came to be worshipped through the Sālagrāma pebble,15 Śiva through Narmadesvara.

14. Aṅguṣṭhena kaniṣṭhāntām namayitvāṅgulitrāyam /
Mudreyam Narasimhasya nyubjāṁ kṛtvā karadvayam //
G.P. I.11.30

Nār. P. (71.36-40) too refers to Narasimha mudrā.

15. A Sālagrāma is generally a flintified ammonite shell which is river worn and thus rounded and beautifully polished. The river Gandakī, which is one of the well-known tributaries

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pebble, the Devi a piece of metal or the Svarnarekhā stone (found in a river in South India), Sūrya, a round piece of Sūryakānta (i.e. Sun-Stone) and Gaṇeṣa through the Svarṇabhadra stone.

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of the Ganges, is famous in India for its deposits of Sālayārāmas. Each of these has a hole, through which are visible several interior spiral grooves resembling the representation of the Cakra or discus of Viśnu; and these are in fact considered by the people to be the naturally produced representations of the discus of Viśnu. The Sālayārama is in consequence looked upon as a representative of Viśnu. Remarkable virtues are attributed to it and fabulous prices are often offered to some particular specimens of it. There are treatises on the subject of the examination and evaluation of Sālayārāmas; and there are also, here and there, a few experts to be found even in these days for estimating their value. The number as well as the disposition of the spirals visible through the holes is utilised in ascertaining which of the many aspects and avatāras of Viśnu a given specimen represents and what the value of it is to the worshipper.
The words in the Purāṇa-text as given in Agni (Ch.46), Garuda (I,Ch.45) and Padma (V, Pāṭālakhaṇḍa 78,16-42, VI, Uttara-khaṇḍa 120,52-79) are a little confused and do not seem to confirm to the original. All this is due to the ignorance of later copyists. But through collation, restoration and emendation of the material found in all these Purāṇas, we are definite that a particular Purāṇa text is the basis of all the passages in Agni, Garuda and Padma.

When the worship of the different divinities continued through the medium of symbols and Śāla-grāmas, Viṣṇu came to be adored through the medium of different Śāla-grāmas. This supreme divinity came to be represented by means of twenty four different types of Śāla-grāmas, depending upon the different aspects of the divinity. The Purāṇa-texts-Agni, Garuda and Padma refer to 24 varieties of Śāla-grāma through which continued the adoration of Viṣṇu and his different incarnations. The fish incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu is represented through a stone of the shape of a long-lotus and is marked with lines at the mouth. The stone representing Vāmana is supposed to be of a round and puny size. The Man-lion incarnation of Viṣṇu is represented through a stone with stout chest and three or five dots. It is tawny in colour. 16

16. Prthuvaṅko Nrṣimho vaḥ kapilaVyāt tribindukah

Athava Pañca-bindus tat pujanam Brahmacarinah //

G.P. I.45.17b-13a

Cont'd.
Agni (Ch.47.2) also states, for attaining liberation along with Vārāha and Vāmana Śālagrama, one should adore and worship the Narasimha Śālagrama. "Varāhasya Nṛsimhasya Vāmanasya ca muktaye."

**NĀRASIMHA TĪRTHA**

Like many other tīrthas, Nārasiṁha tīrtha finds mention in the Purāṇa-texts. There is mere reference to this tīrtha in Naradiya (II.46.46), Skanda (II.Vaisnavakhanda 2. Purusottama māhātmya 29.38; VII. Prabhāsakhandha 4. Dvārakāmāhātmya 33.19), Bhaviṣya (Uttaraparvan 130.55) and Visnudharmottara (I.167.19). But the texts like Brahma (Ch.149) and Skanda (V. Avantīkhanda Ch.77 and 83) however describe it at some length. Brahma locates Nārasiṁha tīrtha on the north bank of river Ganges. It states that after killing Hiranyakasipu with all his retinue, Lord Nārasiṁha repairs to the bank of Jautami. There the Lord meets the demon Ambaryya, the lord of Dandaka forest whom He puts to death and thence there comes

Cont’d.

Prthucakro Nṛsimho yaḥ kapilo yas tribindukah / Athavā pañcabindostu pujanam Brahmacārinah //

Padma V. Pātalakh. 78.31

Nṛsimhah kapilah sthūlaacakah syāt pañcabindukah /A.P.46.5

Kapilo Nārasiṁhasca prthucakrah susobhitah /

Brahma caryena pūjya'sāvanyathā vighnado bhavet //

Padma VI. Uttarakhanda 120.60
to exist Nārāsimha tīrtha all famous in the three worlds. According to Skanda V. Avantīkhanda 77.14-16 Nṛsimha tīrtha is located on the bank of river Śiprā. It is there to the north of lake Karkarājā and to the south of Saṅgameśvara.

In glorifying Nārāsimha tīrtha Brahma 149.19 holds, just as there is no divinity superior to Lord Nārāsimha, so there is no tīrtha equal to Nṛsimha tīrtha. In Skanda V.77.24b the line - 'sarvadā sarvakāleṣu punyadāṁ tīrtham uttamam' is also significant in this connection. Brahma (149.15-16) says, in the three worlds nothing is rare for a person who takes a dip in this tīrtha and adores Lord Nārāsimha here. We find the same idea repeated in Skanda when the text (V.77.23-24) asserts: people taking a dip and making gifts here attain the highest abode of the Lord.

NĀRĀSIMHA OR NĀRĀSIMHĪ SILĀ

The Gopatha Brāhmaṇa (2.8) refers to Vasistha silā and Kṛṣṇa sila. Vasistha is said to have resorted to penance at two places in the midst of river Vipās and these two places are known as Vasistha sila and Kṛṣṇa sila. Purāṇa-texts speak

17. Atha khalu Vipān madhye Vasistha silā nāma prathama āśramo, dvitiyāḥ Kṛṣṇasilās tasmin Vasisthah samatapat (G.B. 2.8).

See also H. L. Hariyappa, Rgvedic Legends through the ages, p.275.
of some silās which have attained fame and glory after some important and significant event of the past. Nārādīya (II.67.10-41) and Skanda (II. Vaiśnava-kanda 3. Badarikāśrama māhātmya Chs.3-4) refer to Nārada silā, Mārkandeya silā, Vārāhi silā, Garuda or Vainateya silā and Nara-nārāyana silā. Sage Nārada, sage Mārkandeya and Garuda resorted to penance on certain particular rocks under Badari and those particular rocks became famous as holy places after each of them attained success in their penance. Vārāhi silā is so named because after raising aloft the earth and killing the demon Hīranyakāśa Lord Viṣṇu resided here in the form of a slab. In the same way both Nārādīya (II.67.25-28) and Skanda (II.(.-3), Ch.4.36-50) speak of Nārasimha or Nārasimhi silā under Badari. After killing Hīranyakāśipu when Lord Nārasimha withdrew his anger, the gods and sages prayed the Lord to take up his abode at Viśālā.¹³ Four-armed Lord Nārasimha assumed the form of a slab and continued to reside there in the midst of waters. Nārādīya (II.67.28) states, a devotee taking a dip here and adoring Nārasimha silā does not suffer from the pains of rebirth and attains the world of Viṣṇu.

¹³. Viśālā - The context suggests a river not a town.
A Kalpa is equal to a day of Brahma. It consists of 4320,000,000 human years (vide Pratisarga p.115). Purana texts refer to a number of Kalpas. According to Matsya each Kalpa has been named by Brahma after an important and significant event.\textsuperscript{19} Brahmavaivarta (I.5.5,12) speaks of Kalpas only three in number and they are said to be Brahma, Varaha and Padma (\textit{Brahma Varaha Padmasc\textasciitilde Kalpasc\textasciitilde trivid\textasciitilde mune} - 5). Bhavi\textitha (IV.25,50-53) enumerates 18 Kalpas, whereas both Matsya (Ch.299) and Vayu (I.Chs.21-23) respectively furnish the list of 30 and 33 Kalpas. And it is in Matsya (289.7) and Bhavi\textitha (IV.25,51) that Narasimha or Nrsimha Kalpa finds mention in the list of Kalpas.

Narasimha is primarily a god of war. He fought against the demon Hiranyakasipu and killed him. So in order to achieve victory in the war, adoration of Narasimha is enjoined in the S\textit{\textacutedrastra}. Garuda I.36.23 states, by touching and paying homage to Lord Narasimha a person becomes victorious in war (\textit{\textstampedt nati\textasciitilde narasimh\textasciitilde samgrame vijay\textasciitilde bhavet}). In course of

\textit{\textstampedt 19. \textbf{\textit{\textacutedrasveva hi m\textstampedt\textasciitilde h\textstampedt\textasciitilde atmy\textstampedt\textasciitilde yasmin yasya vidhi\textstampedt\textasciitilde yate / / Tasya Kalpasya tan nama vihitam Brahman\textstampedt\textasciitilde pur\textstampedt\textasciitilde // } \textasciitilde \textasciitilde M.P. 289.12}
relating different occasions for worshipping Visnu's various forms, Visnudharmottara (III.119.7) holds that Lord Narasimha is to be adored when there arises the question of killing one's enemy (Nṛsimham pūjayedeva karmany arivināsane). Besides both Agni (236.24-25) and Visnudharmottara (II.177.1-11) speak of the adoration of Narasimha in the royal household before the army starts for war.

Not only this, when life is at stake either in utter darkness or in dense forest, when there is danger from the tigers, lions, robbers, and enemies or when somebody is under the impact of an evil star or planet, he or she should keep on reciting the name of Lord Narasimha in order to overcome the undesirable situation.  

20 The Mayamata states that the cruel form of Narasimha is installed on mountain tops, caves, forests, or the enemy's territory when the enemy has to be destroyed.

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20. Grahanaksatrapīdāsau devavādāhā atavīṣu ca /
Dasyuwaitinīrodheṣu vyāghra simhādi saṃkate /
Andhakāre tathā tīvre Narasimheti kīrtayet //
Visnudh. P. II.123.3-9

Cf. Vyālakuṇjāra durgesu ripucaur ā bhayaṣu ca /
Pūjayen Nārasimham tu sarvasādhāvināśanam //
Visnudh. P. III.119.13

Recitation of Narasimha mantra too helps sinners to be released from sins. Adultery with the wife of one's preceptor is a crime which is included in the list of mahāpātakas. According to Jayākhya Samhitā (XXV.31-35) a Pāncarātra Vaisnava guilty of this crime is to recite the Narasimha mantra...the number of recitation varying as the crime is voluntary or otherwise.

Tradition preserves a very interesting story as to how through the recitation of Narasimha mantra, the life of high-souled Śaṁkara was saved from the clutches of a wicked Kāpālika. This story of Śaṁkara's encounter with the Kāpālika called Ugra-Bhairava appears in Mādhavacārya's Śrīśaṁkara-dī gvijāya (Ch.11)22. Śaṁkara met Ugra-Bhairava somewhere along the Krṣnā river perhaps at a spot near Śrīsaṁjala (Śriparvata).23 The Kāpālika concealed his own wickedness and in the garb of an ascetic like Paulastya (i.e., Rāvana for abducting Sītā) he approached Śaṁkara with the motive of fulfilling his desire. He greeted Śaṁkara and was full of praise and admiration for him. The Kāpālika

See also David N. Lorenzen, The Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas, pp.32-39.
23. The location is not explicitly stated. In the previous sarga Śaṁkara is said to have been travelling along this river from Śrīsaṁjala.
apprised him of his intention, in order to persuade Śaṅkara to accede to his request Ugra-Bhairava went on extolling the great benefits of self-sacrifice. Here even he attempted to turn Śaṅkara’s own Vedāntic doctrines against him. Just to substantiate his viewpoint he quoted several verses in support of self-sacrifice and finally requested Śaṅkara to present his head for his (Kāpālika’s) interest.

Moved by the plea of Kāpālika Śaṅkara acceded to his request, but aware of the fact that his disciples would never allow him for it, he advised Kāpālika to meet him in secret. Thus both of them sealed their pact and Śaṅkara retired to an isolated spot unknown to his disciples.

In fulfledged Kāpālika regalia, Ugra-Bhairava again approached Śaṅkara to get his mission fulfilled. On seeing the Kāpālika in the form of a Bhairava, the great teacher Śaṅkara resolved to abandon his body. Seated in the yogic posture (siddhāsana) he forgot the whole world in samādhi. With all his fears dispelled Bhairava was ready to strike him with his trident. No sooner did he come near to Śaṅkara, Padmapāda, the disciple of the sage (Śaṅkara) magically could know of it.

Then remembering the supreme power of Man-lion Padmapāda, well-versed in the mantras (mantra-siddha) himself became the man-lion incarnate and was aware of the evil motive of Ugra-Bhairava. Proceeding quickly with his claws, he
tore open the breast of Kapalika and thus saved the life of his preceptor Samkara.

**NARASIMHA SAMGRÄMA AND NARASIMHÄSTRA**

According to Vāyu (II.35.73-87), Brahmanda (II.72.73-87), Agni (Ch.276.10-25) and Padma (I. Srstikhanda 13.173-192) twelve fierce battles are said to have been fought in the past between the gods and the demons. They are Nārasimha, Vāmana, Varaha, Amrtamanthana, Tārakāmaya samgrāma and etc. As regards Nārasimha samgrāma Agni (276.13) states that in days of yore Nārasimha, the protector of gods tore open the breast of Hiranyakasipu with his nails and installed Prahlāda on the throne. In this battle against the demon since Lord Nārasimha played a vital role, it is rightly called Nārasimha samgrāma. And in all the four texts Vāyu (II.35.73), Brahmanda (II.72.73), Agni (276.10) and Padma (I.13.130) this samgrāma is spoken of as the first one (prathamo Nārasimhastu).

The Purāṇa-texts bear witness to the use of some invulnerable weapons in these so called battles of the gods and demons that occurred in the past. In course of describing the Tārakāmaya war, the Matsya (152.32-126) mentions a number of weapons like Gandharvāstra, Muralāstra, Sāllāstra etc. and in that connection it refers to Nārasimhāstra. In the terrible fight that ensued between Indra and the demon Jambha, when the latter assumed the form of an elephant as huge as a mountain, Indra applied Nārasimhāstra
from which several hundreds and thousands of roaring lions came out and rent asunder the body of the magic elephant (Matsya 152, 113-114). According to Skanda (V. AvantiKhanda (-3) Revakhanda 43.53) when the demon Andhaka hurled Garudāstra at Lord Śiva, the latter let out Narasimhāstra to hold the demon in check.

**VRATAS IN HONOUR OF NARASIMHA**

Vrata^24^ or religious observance primarily means the vow or restriction in one's behaviour when one has to take up a religious act. Secondly it entails restriction and specification of food in it. In the Vedic age different religious rites were performed and the same old tradition is handed down from generation to generation to perpetuate the old memory in honour of different deities. In Vedic age, the fire rituals and sacrifices were too expensive for the common man and gradually they were discouraged. Yet the followers of Vedic system enunciated the idea of 'vrataś' and proclaimed that through such vows or 'vratas' one could attain heaven and other worldly objects. The procedure of observing the vow or vrata was made simple, easy and less expensive than the sacrifices. The exponents of Vedicism started to extol the 'vrataś' in place of sacrifices.

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and hence people were naturally attracted towards them. The redactors of the Purāṇas took up this cause and tried to extol the 'vratas' in as many ways as it was possible. Brahma Purāṇa (Ch.29.61) states that the reward that one secures by worshipping the Sun for a single day, cannot be secured by hundreds of Vedic sacrifices.  

The Garuda (I.124.4-10), Agni (Ch.193), Padma (VI.240) and Skanda (I(-1).33) relate stories for glorifying Śivarātrī. Though they admit of some difference, the main outlines are the same in all these stories. According to Garuda (I.124.4-10) there was a king of 'niśādās' named Sundarāsenaka who was once out for hunting with his dog. He begged no animal; through hunger and thirst he passed the whole night in a thickest of trees on the bank of a tank. Underneath a 'bilva' tree there was a Śivaliṅga and in an effort to keep his body at ease he threw down leaves of the bilva tree which fell on the top of the liṅga without his knowledge. In order to put down the dust he took water from the tank and splashed it, so that it fell on the liṅga. Through inadvertence on the liṅga there fell down from his hands one of his arrows and he collected it by falling

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25. Ekāhenāpi yadbhānoḥ pūjāyāḥ prāpyate phalam /
Yathok tadakṣiṇair viprair na tat kratuṣaṭairapi //
prostrate before the liṅga. In this way he bathed the liṅga, touched and adored it and kept awake the whole night. In course of time when he met his death, he was seized by the messengers of Yama. But Siva's attendants fought with them and liberated Sundarāsenaka. At last together with his dog, Sundarāsenaka was elevated to the position of an attendant of Siva.

When different religious sects came into existence, each sect developed certain 'vratas' to be observed by its followers. Like different sects, different vratas e.g., Saiva vratas, Vaiṣṇava vratas, Gānapatya vratas and Śākta vratas had their origin just to suit the followers of different sects. When Narasimha was admitted into Vaiṣṇava pantheon, certain vratas and rituals evolved for the worship of Viṣṇu-Narasimha.

NARASIMHĀŚṬAMI OR NARASIMHA VRATA

Garuḍa as quoted by Hemādri (Gaturvarṣa Cintāmaṇi, Vratakhaṇḍa I. Ch.12, pp.376-380) refers to it. It states that a king or a prince desirous of exterminating the enemy should observe this vṛata. On the 9th tithi he should draw the figure of an eight-petalled lotus and place on it an image of Ugra-Narasimha. The terrible god (Ugra) Narasimha had killed the demon Hiranyakaśipu. In the following verses of the text meditation and adoration of Ugra-Narasimha is enjoined for the very motive of such worship is to make away with the enemy.

The method or procedure of worship finds an elaborate treatment in this long extract where Tantricism comes to our
notice. In the concluding verses it has been pointed out, only when there starts a war or people take to revolution, this vow should be resorted to.

**NARASIMHA DVĀDAŚĪ**

According to Varāha Purāṇa (Ch.42.1-16) this *vrata* falls on the 12th of the bright half of Phālguna whereas Caturvarṣa Cintāmaṇī (Vratakhaṇḍa I Ch.15, pp.1029-30) refers to its observance on the 12th day of the dark fortnight of Phālguna. The devotee should fast on that day, he should instal a pitcher covered with two pieces of white cloth, then a golden image of Narasimha should be placed on a plate made of copper, gold, wood or bamboo according to the means of the devotee. The devotee should put the plate over the jar containing gems inside and after duly worshipping the Lord, he should offer the articles to a Brahmin proficient in Vedic lore.

Both Varāha and Caturvarṣa Cintāmaṇī speak of king Vatsa winning the favour of Lord Narasimha through this *vrata*. When Vatsa is defeated by his enemies and is driven out of his kingdom, he repairs to the forest and takes refuge with sage Vasistha. As per his advice, the king strictly observes the Narasimha *Dvādaśī vrata* and through the grace of Narasimha he obtains the discus of the Lord. With that infallible weapon he exterminates all his enemies and gets back his lost kingdom. Seated on the throne he institutes a thousand of 'Asvamedha' sacrifices and eventually attains the glorious abode of Viśnu.
Narasimha Purāṇa (67.10-11) refers to this vrata. Both Kṛtya Kalpataru (VI. Vrata-khandā p.369) and Caturvargā Cintāmaṇi (Vrata-khandā II Ch.17, p.14) speak of it as culled from Narasimha Purāṇa.

This vrata is to be observed on Thursday falling on the 13th tithi. The devotee should fast on that day, taking his bath in the afternoon he should worship Lord Narasimha with devotion. In consequence the devotee, absolved of all sins, is adored in the world of Visnu.

Narasimha Caturdāśī

This vrata has been alluded to in Padma (VI. Uttarākhandā 174.1-93), Naradīya (I.123.3-13) and Skanda (II. Vaisnavākhandā 2, Puruṣottama-ksetra māhātmya 16.62-66) (In order to kill Miranyakāsinu) Narasimha appeared in the evening of the 14th of bright half of Vaiśākha. In order to commemorate his birth, every year on the 14th of bright half of Vaiśākha Narasimha Caturdāśī is being observed. This is otherwise known as Nṛsimhajayanti. Skanda, Puruṣottama Māhātmya(Ch.16.63-66) states that a person who adores Visnu-Narasimha devotedly on this day is absolved of all his sins committed in millions of re-birth. By seeing or touching, paying obeisance or chanting hymns of praise in honour of Visnu-Narasimha he (or she) is cleansed of all sins, all his (or her) desires are fulfilled and he (or she) attains the fruit of performing a horse-sacrifice.
Anybody who makes gifts or institutes a sacrifice before Visnu-Narasimha that day, is rewarded thousand times in return by the Lord.

A very interesting anecdote is narrated in Caturvarṣa Cintāmanī (Vratakhaṇḍa II Ch.18, pp.41-49) for glorifying this vṛata'. After the death of Hiranyakasipu, with His anger subsided when Visnu-Narasimha is peacefully seated, Prahlāda enquires of Him as to how he is so much devoted to the Lord. Visnu-Narasimha replies that in his previous birth even though he was the son of a Brahmin proficient in Vedic lore, he was attached to a prostitute. Known by the name of Vāsudeva, he was addicted to drinking and he was in the habit of stealing away gold from other houses. Once in the household of the prostitute - Vilāsinī there was a quarrel, as a result Vāsudeva went without food, unknowingly he observed His (Visnu-) vṛata and kept awake at night. It is only because of the influence of this vṛata that in this life Vāsudeva has taken his birth as Prahlāda, so much devoted to Him. The prostitute Vilāsinī too has been blessed with the life of a heavenly damsel on account of observing this vṛata unknowingly.

This vṛata serves many purposes, its observance puts a cessation to re-birth, it endows people with sons, riches, longevity, strength and vigour. Especially for women observance of this vṛata is advisable because it secures for them 'avaidhavya'
want of widowhood and "putraśokavināśana" "immunity from grief arising out of absence of a son or loss of a son."

This 'vrata' involves a lot of restrictions. The person observing this 'vrata' must not tell a lie, he should avoid the sinners and mischievous women; and should remember the splendidous form of Lord Narasimha that day. At noon he should take his bath in the clear waters of a river or a pond, with the help of earth, cow-dung, sesame and 'Āmalaka' fruit he should finish his bath, putting on clean and pure clothes he should carve out on ground an eight-petalled lotus, place upon it a pitcher full of copper and gems, then putting upon the pitcher a vessel full of rice, the devotee should place a golden image of Viśnu-Narasimha along with Lakṣmī. Then with the help of an Ācārya he should duly adore the Lord Narasimha. A number of mantras like Chandanamantra, Puspamantra, Dhūpamantra, Dīpamantra, Naivedyamantra and Arghyamantra etc. are to be recited and for propitiating the Lord sixteen ingredients of worship are to be offered.

The devotee should keep awake that night and he should pass his time in listening to the sacred stories or in reading aloud the Purāṇas. Early in the morning after taking his bath he should once again adore the Lord as specified above and should make gifts to the Brahmins according to his capacity. Cows, land, sesame, gold, bedstead may be offered as gifts; even for the satisfaction of Lord Narasimha a lion made of gold
may be offered to the priest. On the occasion the devotee is desired to feed the Brahmmins and pay them their fees (daksinā). Thereafter praying to the Lord for his welfare and wellbeing, in the company of his friends and relatives he would partake of his food at mid-day.

One important feature of Narasimha Caturdāsī vrata is that people belonging to any caste or creed can observe this vow, there is no restriction for it.

**DIFFERENT IMAGES OF NARASIMHA**

Like the images of different incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu, the image of Narasimha finds place in the niches and on the exterior walls of the Vaisnava temples. Though the texts of Agni (49.4), Matsya (259.31-35) and Viṣṇudharmottara (III.78. 2-13) give details of carving out the image of Narasimha, mainly in sculpture we come across four types of Narasimha image: (a) Stauna Narasimha, (b) Yoga Narasimha, (c) Kevala Narasimha and (d) Lakṣmi Narasimha. The image of Narasimha represented in the action of tearing apart the entrails of Hiranyakasipu is called Stauna; his representation as seated

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26. In South Indian Images of Gods and Goddesses (p.26), H. K. Sastri refers to Ugra-Narasimha. The angry god is called ugra (terrible) Narasimha (Figs. 17 & 18). He however, notes that though the god is called Ugra-Narasimha, he is not represented as may be expected in the posture of splitting open the bowels of the demon Hiranyakasipu.
in meditation is known as Yoga Narasimha; in the posture of standing alone he is called Kevala Narasimha; and with Laksmi in his lap he is spoken of as Laksmi-Narasimha. 27

**INTERCULT RIVALRY AND MUTUAL IDENTITY**

It is usual with each cult or sect to show the greatness of its own deity. Through myths, legends and anecdotes each faith or creed tries to prove the superiority of its favourite deity over other gods and divinities. Hindu mythology is full of intercult rivalry and from time immemorial for supremacy different sects like the Vaisnava, Saiva, Sakta and Ganaapatya go on contending among themselves. In 'Andhaka legend' we notice, when Siva finds it difficult to overpower the demon, he creates the Mātrs; and after the death of Andhaka when Mātrs flout his order and start devouring the whole universe, he resorts to Lord Narasimha to bring them under control. 28 It seems that Andhaka legend is the creation of a time when Narasimha cult was held in high esteem and it is meant only to show the importance of Visnu-Narasimha over the cult of Siva. 29 On the other hand

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29. For discussion on this legend see J. Gonda, Visnuism and Sivaism - A comparison, p.104.
in the Hiranyakasipu-Narasimha legend as depicted in the Śaivite
texts like Liṅga and Śiva, we notice that the creation of
Virabhadra to tame down Lord Narasimha is definitely aimed at
glorifying Śiva cult. In this connection Iyre rightly observes,
"Śarabha, a mythical monster and destroyer of Narasimha is a
Śaivite creation to extol the power of Śiva." 

Even though sects and sectarian gods quarrel in this way
among themselves, the Purāṇa texts preach the glory of one
eternal imperishable Supreme Lord. All those diverse divinities
are held to be the manifestation of the one and the same Supreme
Being. Very often it is asserted that Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva,
are the three aspects of the primeval Lord Nārāyaṇa. For the
creation of the universe of both animate and inanimate beings,
Lord Nārāyaṇa assumes the form of Brahmā, for the preservation
and destruction of the universe he takes up the form of Viṣṇu and
Śiva respectively; Essentially there is no difference among
them. Purāṇa-texts like Brahmanda (II.3.31-131), Kurma (II.4.1-34,
11.107-125); Vāman (36.20-32), Nāradīya (I.6.44-49, 15.58-59),

cf. Ṣantum Hiranyakasipum Narasimhavapusca sah /
Jagaj jinghāsuh samito mayā Śarabha rupinā //
Sk.P. VII. Prabhāsakhanda 24.4-115.

31. K. Bharatha Iyer, Animals in Indian Sculpture Ch.10
"The Lion", p.66.
Varāha (71.1-4) and Skanda (VI.6.247,8-17, VII(-2) 9.143-149) speak of the oneness of all the three - Brahmā, Visnu and Śiva. And in this connection it is very interesting to note when Saura Purāṇa affirms, "Bhairava and Nṛhari are one and the same, through adoration of Nṛhari Bhairava is propitiated and vice versa, there is no disparity between both; he who finds difference in them, goes definitely to hell."32 The Skanda (VI. Nāgarakhandha Ch. 151.45,61) refers to the story of king Suratha who, as per the advice of his preceptor Vasistha instals a Bhairava form of Lord Śiva at Hātakesvara-kṣetra and worships him with Nārasiṃha mantra. In consequence he wins the favour of Lord Bhairava and through his grace he exterminates all his enemies and gets back his lost kingdom.

In Visnudharmottara (III. Chs.354-355) this identity of Nṛhari and Śiva is clearly brought out where Visvaksena, a

32. Ekaiva mūrtirabhavat tayor Bhairava Sārāginoh /
   Kalāgni Bhairavo yo'sau sa eva Nṛhari svayam // 49
   Bhagavān Nṛharir yo'sau sa eva kila Bhairavah /
   Nṛhareḥ pūjanān nūnāṃ prīto bhavati Bhairavah // 50
   Pūjanād Bhairavasyaiva Nṛhari pūjito bhavet /
   Ye paśyanti tayor bhedam māyāḥ mohitā janāḥ // 51
   Niraye te vipacyante yāvad ābhūta samplavam // 52

Saura P. 29.49-52
Pancharatra Vaisnava threatened to death worships Narasimha in a linga and from the linga there comes out Lord Narasimha to give all protection to his devotee. With fire emitting from his eyes the Lord burns down the adversary (grāmsvāmikumāraka) and saves Visvakṣena. Endowed with divine vision Visvakṣena beholds the Lord and chants a long hymn of praise in his honour. The following lines from Visnudharmottara bear witness to it:

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\text{Visnudh. III. 354.18-26.}
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