CHAPTER II.

VISION
1. Damaru
2. Vīśva-Vajra
3. śnuvā
4. Vajra
5. Agni Pātra
6. Agni
7. Rasi Pāśa
8. Snuk
9. Pāśa

PLATE NO. II
Mudras

1. Varada

2. (i) Suchihasta

3. Gajahasta

4. Gyan-mudra

5. Asocharya

6. (i) Sandarshana or Vyakhyana

7. Chin-mudra

PLATE NO III


CHAPTER II.

VISHNU

Worship of Vishnu dates back to the Rg-Vedic period. Though Vishnu held a subordinate position in the Rg-Veda, he appears to have a great future before him. Importance of Vishnu rose higher and higher till during the period of the later Veda and later on with the rise of the Bhagavata sect, he merged with the Absolute of the Upanishads. *Krsna, the god of the pastoral tribe which was conquered by Indra in the Rg-Vedic period became one with Vasudeva of the Bhagavata and Vishnu of the Vaishnavas. Krsna and Vishnu became the Absolute personified as well as *the cowherd playing flute on the banks of the Yamuna*. His dalliances with the Gopis became well-known in course of time.

Vishnu incarnates Himself to protect Dharma and destroy Evil. His avatars are of three kinds - *purushavatara, Avesavatara and Amavatara*. Krsna and Krsna are supposed to represent Purushavatara of Vishnu for they descended on the earth for the whole of their lives. Paraśurama was an example of Avesavatara, for he was born to avenge the Kshatriyas. As soon as this was accomplished he renounced the world and went to the Mahendra mountains to perform Tapas. The Ayudhas of Vishnu (Sañkha, Chakra, Gada, and Padma) are born in the human forms to fulfill his behests and they are regarded as the Avesavatara. Thus the first avatar is for the whole life, the second is only for a periodic emotion or Avesa and the third form of Avatara represents the birth of only a small part of the Godhead.

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1,2 Radhakrishnan - "Philesophy" 1922 p 124.
3. Ramaarya Avasthi - "Kajuraho Ki Deva Pratimaen Chapter 3 p 60."
God has thus already taken nine births or nine incarnations to save the Earth and according to Vayu Purana they are: (1) Matsya, (2) Kurma, (3) Varaha, (4) Narasimha, (5) Vaman, (6) Parasurama, (7) Rama, (8) Krishna, (9) Balarama or the Buddha and the tenth is the Kalki which is yet to come. But the Harivamsa and the Bhagavata Purana give, a list of six and twentyfour incarnations of the God.

A close study of the Vishnu images made in the chronological order makes it clear that there is a gradual development in his multi-handled images. The Ayudhas develop from simple tapering form of Gada resembling a mudgara to the heavy kumbha shaped round weight at the extreme end for striking death below to the enemy. Similarly the early chakra resembles very much a sunflower with a single row of petals. But the later one has the shape of a beautiful flowery discus, with tassels hanging from the centre. Thus gradually starting from the Gupta period the samkha, chakra, gada and padma became traditionally accepted as the ayudhas of Vishnu in the early medieval period.

Another remarkable trend of the period is to portray gods like the Chakravarti samrata with Simhasana, Chhatra and Chaurl indicating grandiloquence and supremacy. With the celestial powers they combined in themselves all the terrestrial glory of an emperor and thus were held higher than the ordinary being. This tendency of adding earthly grandeur to the gods is discernible from the 6th Cent. onwards.

4. Vayu Purana, Chapter 97, w.72 ff.
7. Dr. K.P. Joshi - Prarambhik Vishnu Pratimae - p 10-14
8. Prof. K.D. Bajpai - Ajanta and the contemporary sculpture.
Thus from amongst the varied depictions of god Vishnu, first of all his two handed images are to be considered. These may be with or without his consort but they carry one or two of the characteristic ñyudhas of Vishnu. Such images have been very rarely found and the identification of a few does remain doubtful to some extent. An image in the Asutosh Museum identified as that of Lakshmi-Narayana shows the consort on the right of the god with ghata in one of her hands and the other is placed on kati. The god who is also two handed has chakra in his right hand while the left hand is on kati.

Another image shows Vishnu and Lakshmi both seated on garuda in Álingana Mudrá. The god is holding chakra and kamal in his two hands.

One Vishnu image preserved in the Allahabad Museum is shown seated on garuda with kamal, chakra in his two hands or the hands are broken. The meg image has been identified on the basis of the Vahana here.

Some times two handed Vishnu images have also been depicted without his Vahana - garuda and these are shown holding gada and chakra, samkha and gada or samkha and chakra.

In the four handed images of Vishnu, the god is depicted in twenty-four minor forms. These twenty four minor forms are distinguished only through the difference in the order of the four ñyudhas of Vishnu. The four attributive ñyudhas or weapons of Vishnu i.e. samkha, chakra, gada and Padma can be arranged in twenty four different permutations which are equal to factorial four numerically e.g. $4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1 = 24$. According to the Sanskrit text Rupamandana a definite combination of ñyudhas should be the identifying factor of one minor form of Vishnu as given in the table. In some cases all the four ñyudhas are given according to the text and these have been put under category 'A'. But at times to provide a variation and a greater variety in depictions one of the ñyudhas has been replaced by some common pose of ñyudha and these are seven in number e.g. vara, abhaya, alingana, suchi, pose, grana.

1. Asutosh Museum, Calcutta. (2) See plates I & II for ñyudhas and Plate III.
2. Room No. 11, Museum, Gwalior. For mudras see Plate III of Appendix.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Lower lt. hand</th>
<th>Upper rt. hand</th>
<th>Upper lt. hand</th>
<th>Lower lt. hand</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
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<td>Chakra</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Amrituddha</td>
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<td>Gada</td>
<td>Sānjikha</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
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<td>Chakra</td>
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</table>

The list according to Rupamandana seems to be correct as in the second list the arrangement of ayudhas is faulty and ayudhas is faulty and ayudhas of Kesava and Pradyumna, Padmanabha and Purushottama and Ashyuta and Janardana are identical.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>1st R. lower</th>
<th>2nd R. upper</th>
<th>3rd L. upper</th>
<th>4th L. lower</th>
<th>Concerts according to Hirad Panocha Aryagama</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Gadha</td>
<td>Padma</td>
<td>Chakra</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
padma or pose, phala (fruit) and chata (pot). Inspite of these variations the god has been given three of the other ayudhas in the remaining three hands. These fall in category 'B' because the ayudhas of three hands are fixed and irrespective of the variation in the fourth hand, their identification becomes definite as the remaining of the four ayudhas should be in the fourth hand. There can be one more category 'C' where two of the four hands have the common poses or ayudhas given above, while the remaining two carry Vishnu's characteristic ayudhas. This leaves a doubt in definite identification and a second alternative is always there. In case of four handed images if the ayudhas in the first and the last hands are interchanged keeping the ayudhas in the upper two hands fixed, it would signify another minor form of Vishnu. Under these three categories Vishnu images would now be described region wise.

Four handed Vishnu images

The description of ayudhas will be given in the clock wise order.

1. Keśava A

The first of the twentyfour minor forms of Vishnu is Keśava. His image having the ayudhas - padma, sankha, chakra and gada (Fig. 41) has been found in the Ajmer Museum. He is sitting on sarula.

---

1. Ajmer Museum
2. Nārāyaṇa—A—Nārāyaṇā stands with his consort Kānti. He carries sākha, padma, gada and chakra.

B—Nārāyaṇā is depicted with his consort who has a lotus in her hand. The god has sākha, had broken, gada and chakra. Another image of the god is shown with sākha, pedal, gada and alingana. His consort carries lotus one of her hands. When shown along Nārāyaṇa carries sākha, pedal, gada and chakra.

3. Madhava: A—god is shown standing having gada, chakra, sākha and pedal in his four hands.

B—Madhava has gada, chakra, sākha in the first three hands and the fourth hand in the abbaya pose. This image depicts Madhava standing with his consort Tushki. He holds gada, chakra, sākha in the first three hands, the fourth hand is in alingana pose.

4. Govinda:—A—An image of Govinda is shown carrying chakra, gada, pedal and sākha.

1. Room 3 Bhuvanesvar Museum, Right out Puri Temple, God alone in Ajmer Museum.
2. Dhubala Museum
3. Pithorvanath Temple, Mount Abu.
5. Ajmer Museum
6. Left out Puri Temple
7. Patiala Museum
5. **Vishnu**: A - Vishnu\(^1\) is in a dancing pose carrying \textit{gada}, \textit{padma}, \textit{sankha}, and \textit{chakra} in his four hands.

B. - The god\(^2\) has first hand in \textit{abhaya} pose with \textit{padma}, \textit{sankha}, and \textit{chakra} in the remaining hands.

6. **Madhusudana**: A - \textit{Madhusudana} is shown with two consorts one on either side of him. He is holding \textit{chakra}, \textit{sankha}, \textit{padma}, and \textit{gada} in his four hands.

B - First hand of the image\(^4\) is broken but the remaining three hands have \textit{ayudhas} as above.

7. **Trivikrama**: A - \textit{Trivikrama} is shown with consort \textit{Shanti}, holding \textit{padma}, \textit{gada}, \textit{chakra}, and \textit{sankha} (Fig 42). The image in the Lucknow Museum shows all the four \textit{ayudhas} in human form.\(^6\) The \textit{chakra}, \textit{Purusha} and \textit{Gada} are on one side and \textit{sankha}, \textit{Purusha} and \textit{padma} \textit{Dharini} on the other side.

\textit{God} is also shown with the consorts, one on either side of him.

One image depicts god with an attendant on either side of him or god alone is shown with the \textit{ayudhas} held in his hands in the above order;

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1. Room 3 Bhuwaneshwar Museum, Delhi Museum
2. Room 2 Gwalior Museum
3. Right out Saa Temple Gwalior
4. Room 1 Kota Museum
5. Malanda Museum, Allahabad Museum, Saa Temple near Vishnu Temple Kirdu. Image in Konark Museum shows the god's \textit{g} foot uplifted and on top is shown Brahma seated, Rajkot Museum.
6. Lucknow Museum
8. Sattam image Saa Temple Aklimagaji
B - Trivikrama (Fig. 43) is depicted with varada or śrīmālā with rosary (Fig. 44 & 45) gada, chakra and sāmāna.

In a few images his consort Shanti has also been depicted beside him.

The image in the Nāthura Museum shows two consorts of the god each standing on either side of him. Some of the images depict the god with the first hand in abhaya or abhaya with rosary or placed on kāti, the other three hands are holding the characteristic avyāhas as given above.

In an image depicting the god with consort his first three hands hold kāmal gada and chakra and the fourth hand is in alingana pose. The consort Shanti has sometimes been given a sāmāna in her hand.

Some of the images depict god seated alone or with consort on a cushion in Lalitāsana with hands having abhaya, gada, chakra and sāmāna.

1. Vishramapad Temple, Gaya, Allahabad, Lucknow, Dhar Museum, first hand broken god alone with two avyāhas Purushas, Room 1 Ajmer Museum. Break out 3m T away from the road side Osian, sanctum gate Vishnu Temple Kadwa, B, Jhala, Sagar, Rajkot and Delhi Museum.
4. Mathura Museum
7. Sri Vishnu Temple Gr. 4 Kadwa, Delhi Museum (God is alone with 4th hand broken.)
8. Sm Temple Chandrābhāgī Patan.
In some of the images first, or third hand is broken while the remaining three holding the characteristic \textit{ayudhas}, they can be identified as a Trivikrama. One image shows god's first hand in \textit{ganes mudra} and the rest having the \textit{ayudhas} in the above order.

3. \textit{Vāmana} - \textit{ayudhas} carried by \textit{Vāmana} are also found in the hands of \textit{Kesava} - the minor form of \textit{Vishnu} and they are \textit{abhaya, nāshika, chakra, and gada}, another \textit{Vēma} image has \textit{ayudhas} in the same order as carried by \textit{Achyuta} i.e. \textit{gada, padma, chakra} and \textit{nāshika}; or \textit{nāshika, chakra, gada} and \textit{varada} pose.

4. \textit{Sridhara} - A god carrying \textit{padma, chakra, gada} and \textit{nāshika} in his four hands may be identified with \textit{Sridhara}.

5. \textit{B} = God is shown with his consort \textit{Kadhā}. He has \textit{varada} with rosary, \textit{chakra, gada} and \textit{nāshika} in his four hands.

In one image, god holds first three \textit{ayudhas} & his last hand is broken.

\begin{itemize}
\item[1.] Room 1 Kota Museum
\item[2.] Sa Temple on the right Chandrābhaiga Patan
\item[3.] 5th Pillar Big "Lord Hanumant Temple Kiredu"
\item[4.] Indore Museum, Kusma Temple Chittor, No rosary
\item[5.] Delhi Museum (God without consort) Right
\item[6.] Sanctum outside Parvanath Temple Abu
\item[7.] Vidisha Museum.
\item[8.] Room 21 Gwalior Museum
\item[9.] Hindola Cenotaph
\item[10.] Allahabad Museum.
\end{itemize}
10. Trivikrama - B - This form of Vishnu takes
the four arudhag in the order - gada, chakra, nadas, and samhita.
No image of this form with the above description has been found.

The god is shown with gada, chakra, nadas and fourth hand broken
or with the first hand in abhaya pose, rest three having arudhag
in the above order.

11. Padmanabha - A - An image of Padmanabha has
samhita, nadas, chakra and gada in his four hands.

b - god is seated on ganapati with his consort

Srikrishna. She has a pencil like thing in her left hand while the
god has samhita, nadas, chakra and ailingana pose.

12. Dhanodara - A - God having nadas, samhita, gada
and chakra in his four hands may be identified with Dhanodara.

14. Vasudeva - God has varada with Varaha, samhita
chakra and the fourth hand is broken.

15. Pradyuma - A - God with chakra samhita, gada
and nadas in his four hands is Pradyuma.

1. Outside Sambitheswara Temple Chittor.
2. Room 1 - Kota Museum
3. Junggarh Museum (First two hands broken) Jaipur Museum
4. Lucknow Museum, Ajmer Museum - (Last hand of the image is broken)
5. Dhar Museum
6. Vishnu gallery Sirla Museum Shopal (as identified by museum authorities).
7. Room 21 Gwalior Museum.
16. Amirudha - A - God is depicted with two consorts one of whom should be Rati. One of the consorts has a Chauri i.e. Fly whisk and the other a Padma i.e. Lotus, in one of their two hands. The god has chakra, gada, Samkha and padma in his four hands.

B - God's first hand is in varada pose holding a rosary or a padma having gada, samkha and padma in other three hands.

18. Adhokshaja - B - The god has varada or abhaya pose having gada, samkha and chakra in his other three hands.

19. Nrsihka - B - The Nrsihka form of Vishnu is known having his first hand in abhaya pose, with padma, gada, and samkha in the remaining of his hands.

20. Achyuta - A - God is shown carrying gada, padma, chakra and samkha in his four hands.

21. Janardana - A - God is shown with two consorts, one on either side of him. His Vahana garuda is on the pedestal. The god carries padma, chakra, samkha and gada. The ten incarnations are depicted in the Prabhavali.

B - God alone is depicted but his lower right hand is broken.

22. Upendra - B God and his consort are shown seated on a grauda which has a human face and body except for the wings and a beak like nose which make him look like a bird. The god carries samkha, gada and chakra in his three hands while the fourth is in alingana mudra.

23. Hari - B - God is shown with two consorts, one standing on either side of him. His Vahana garuda is shown below and the god carries samkha, chakra, padma in three hands while the fourth one is not clearly shown.

Another image shows the god seated in Padamasana with Varada, chakra, padma and gada.

1. Delhi Museum 2. On the wall outside Meera Temple Ekalingaji
6. Caloutta 7. Calcutta Museum. 8. Sm Temple right out Puri Temple, Room 1 Kota Museum Gauhati Museum (Both the right hands are broken)
24. Srikrishna - A - God\textsuperscript{12} has Samkha, gada, padma and chakra in his hands.

Category B - God\textsuperscript{12} with his consort is shown with samkha, gada, alangana pose and chakra in his hands. His Vahana garuda is shown below.

Going through the long list of the depictions of minor manifestations of Vishnu we find that leaving the Sa\textsuperscript{k}araraha and Purushottama forms of Vishnu, which are the thirteenth, and seventeenth forms respectively, all the rest are depicted in the various sites of ancient temples or are found in the museums visited. The depictions at Khajuraho have not been incorporated here. Khajuraho is so rich in iconography that here alone thirteen out of the twenty-four minor manifestations under categories 'A' and 'B' can be found, which include depictions of Sa\textsuperscript{k}araraha and Purushottama forms. Including Khajuraho depictions we can very well say that all the minor forms of Vishnu were depicted.

But the category 'C' is yet to be considered. Identifications of the images under this category are less definite because of the depiction of ayudhas in two hands only pertaining to two possible minor forms. From such images indication about the probable existence of the other minor manifestations of Vishnu can be drawn.

C - 1. V\text{\textacute{e}}sudeva or Ke\text{\textacute{e}}sava - The God\textsuperscript{13} is shown seated in Padma\textsupersana with the first and fourth hands folded on feet carrying samkha and chakra in the upper two.

2. Nar\text{\textacute{a}}yana or Padma\textsupersana - God and his consort\textsuperscript{14} Kashi are shown.

The god has samkha, padma in his first two hands, the third hand is broken and fourth is placed on kati, or he has samkha, padma, alangana pose and his fourth hand is not clearly depicted.

\textsuperscript{11} Kalika Temple Chittoor
\textsuperscript{12} Right and Left out Puri temple
\textsuperscript{13} Authors work on Khajuraho sculptures and their significance
\textsuperscript{15} Outside T near Lingraj T Bhuvaneshvara
\textsuperscript{16} Ghazi Ds Museum, Raipur
\textsuperscript{17} Chaturbhuj T, Chittopr.
3. Madhava or Janardana - God has abhaya pose, chakra, sankha and suchi pose; either abhaya or varada, chakra sankha and fourth hand is broken.

4. Govinda or Sri krishna - God has varada with rosary, gada, padma and ghata or abhaya with rosary, gada padma hand broken and sankha in his four hands.

5. Vishnu or Purushottama - God is seated in Padmasana, his first and fourth hands are on knees and padma and sankha are in his upper two hands.

6. Sankarshana or Madhusudana - God is shown seated in Padmasana with the lower hands folded on feet carrying sankha and padma in his upper two hands.

7. Trivikrama or Upendra - Trivikrama (lower two hands are broken) has first and fourth hands in anjali pose holding gada and chakra in the second and third hands. When shown with his consort Shanti, the god has varada, chakra and alingana (Fig.46) The consort has padma, chakra, veena or pustaka.

Two images depict this god seated in Padmasana having first and fourth hands in varada pose or folded on feet with gada and chakra in upper two hands.

1. Room 3 Bhuvanesvara Museum.
2. Sm T at the back Chandrbhaga Patan, Chaturbhuj T Chittor god has first and fourth hands hidden under dress.
3. Delhi Museum
4. Kumbha T Chittoor
5. Ajmer Museum
6. Mandap Pillar Bahu T Gwlier Fort
7. Terrance Kota Museum
8. Asutoh Museum
9. Ialamanagar Exhibits
10. Sanctum gate Meera T Ekalingaji
11. Lucknow Museum
12. Inner room Amer Museum
13. Ekalingaji, outside Meera T Ekalingaji, Dhar Museum first and fourth hands are broken.
Two images of Trivikrama were found with his leg thrust in the mouth of the demon whose head alone is shown, having gada uplifted in the right hand, chakra in left and with the fist of second left hand he is striking the demon, first hand of the image is not clear, Worshippers and attendants are shown below.

Some of the images have one or two hands broken and they too come under this category e.g. abhaya or varada, gada, chakra broken (Fig.47). With two hands broken the image has gada and chakra in the upper two hands.

8. Vaman or Sridhara - The god is seated in Padmasana with the two lower hands broken holding chakra and gada in upper two hands.

10. Harshikesa or Hari - God with consort Harsha is shown with his first hand broken rest holding chakra and padma with the fourth in alingana pose. The consort has a padma in her hand.

Thus we see that considering C all the twenty four minor forms should have been portrayed.

Thus, the familiarity of the sculptors with all the twenty four minor manifestations of Vishnu in this period can be established beyond doubt.

1. Ambulation Chaturbhuja T, Gwalior Fort, Tank Modhera.
2. Vishnu T Kadiwala
3. Dhubela Museum, Nageswara Kund Badnavar.
4. Chittoor Fort Museum
5. Bhojpur lingaraj T Bhojwesvari.
* Sanctum gate Sm T ahead of Sati Stones Osian, Baroda and Junagarh Museum.
Śayana mūrtis of Vishnu can be divided, broadly, into four kinds.


These can be further subdivided into three categories Utama, Madhyama and Adhama.

**Yogasāyana Mūrtis**

In Utama Yogasāyana mūrtis Vishnu is shown lying on the serpent Sesa, holding his kirita with one hand while the other hand is stretched beside him. His right leg is stretched straight and the left one is slightly bent. Besides Vishnu image the images of Prayakamunis Bhrigu and Markandeya, demons Madhu and Kaittabha and Brahma sitting on the lotus, issuing from the navel of Vishnu should be sculptured. The five Ayudha Purushas (chakra, Gada, Saimika, Dhamusha and Khadga), his Vahana Garuḍa and Vishvaksena and Saptarishis should all be shown standing in Anjali pose; Brahma should be on the south and Śiva on the North in sitting posture.

In the Madhyama Yogasāyana mūrtis the figures of Saptarishis and Vishvaksena are absent, and in Adhama Yogasāyana mūrtis the Prayakamunis and the demons Madhu and Kaitabha are also absent.

No image of Yogasāyana Vishnu has been found.

**Uttama Bhogasāyana Mūrtis**

Such images are four handed with two of Vishnu's hands touching his kirita and lying stretched beside him as in the Yogasāyana mūrtis. About the remaining two hands of Vishnu, nothing is mentioned. Lakshmi should be shown seated with lotus in her right hands and the other is in Kataska pose. Bhūmidevi should be seated on the footside of Vishnu with
Nilotpala flower and Kataka pose. Bhṛigu and Ṛkarṇendya should be on the left and right sides of Vishnu respectively, Brahmā and Śiva on the south and North sides and Ganesā in a niche on the south wall and Durgā on the North, Madhu and Kātaabha are near Vishnu's feet; the five Ayudha Purushas and Garuḍa are on his right, Sūrya is shown above the Garuḍa; on the left of Brahmā are the Asvini-devatas, Tumburu and Nārada as young children and also the Chandra or the moon. The eight Dikpālas and the Apsaras waving Chamara (fly whisks) are also shown.

In the Madhyama Bhogaśāyana Mūrtis Tumburu, Nārada and the Dikpālas are absent and in the images of Adhamu class the pūjakamunis and Apsaras are also absent.

Uttama Virāśāyana Mūrtis:

Also a reclining figure in which one arṣam serves as pillow for Vishnu's head and others have Chakra and Sankha with the fourth hand stretched parallel to his body. Lakṣmī and Bhumidevi are seated on either side of Vishnu's feet; Madhu and Kātaabha, the demons, are shown holding his feet in their hands as if in supplication sages Ṛkarṇendya and Bṛigu are on his right and left; Brahmā is seated on the lotus issuing from his navel, the five Ayudha Purushas, Garuḍa, Chandra and Sūrya and the seven rishis, twelve Ādityas, eleven Rudras, Apsaras, Tumburu and Nārada, the two Kīmāras, Sanaka and Sanat Kumāras, Brahmā and Śiva all are shown on the wall at the back of the shrine.

In case the Rudras, Ādityas, Apsaras and Saptarishis are absent the image is of Madhyama class and if, in addition the Kiṃaras, Sanaka and Sanat Kumāras and the pūjakamunis are also absent it is an Adhamu class image.
Abhichārika Ṛṣyana Murtis:

In this case the image of Abhichārikaśayana Viṣṇu of Ṛtama class depicts him lying on the serpent Adisēsha with a hood having only two heads not raised high and his body is coiled into two turns. Viṣṇu has two or four arms but is lying deep in slumber. There are not attendant deities. If the serpent has one head only and one coil in his body it is Madhyama class image; and if Viṣṇu's image is lying on the bare floor the image is of Adhama class.

The following description of the Śayana Murtis of Viṣṇu shows that the images are of Bhoga and Viṣṇaśayana of the madhyama or Adhama class.

Some of the Viṣṇu images depict the god as sleeping on the serpent Śeṣa with his consort Lakshmi pressing his feet and his śyudhas kept beside him or held in two of his hands, of the remaining two hands one is shown supporting his Kirīṭa (Fig. 48) and the other is sometimes kept on his knee.

One image shows the gada under the serpent hood, the god is supporting his Kirīṭa with upper two hands and is holding sāmha in the fourth. Brahma and Śiva are depicted on top.

Some images of Śeṣa-Sayī Viṣṇu depict the god lying on the serpent, Lakshmi presses his feet and Brahma is shown seated on the Lotus which emerges out of the naivel of Viṣṇu.

1. Vishnupad T Gaya, Rt. out Sm T Puri, Lucknow Museum, Gaya and Chamba Museum.
2. Indore Museum, Image in Ajmer Museum shows all the four śyudhas, gada, chakra and sāmha around Viṣṇu, Sm T to the lt. of Devi T Osian, Jodhpur Museum, Kumbh T. Chittor, Kota Museum—all the ten incarnations depicted in Prabhavali, Rajkot Museum, Junagarh Museum, Modhera.
Vishnu with his Vahana

Images of Vishnu and Lakshmi seated on Garuda carrying one or two of the characteristic syudhas with the remaining two hands in common poses have also been found. Some images show Vishnu and Lakshmi seated on their Vahana garuda but the hands are either broken or not clearly depicted. Two images show Vishnu seated with consort, having first hand on kati, second holding gada, third in slingana pose fourth not clearly shown. Vishnu and Lakshmi both are seated on the Garuda which is shown in flying posture with wings stretched out. The god has samaka and gada in his first two hands, the remaining two are not clearly visible. Lakshmi is carrying padma in her left hand.

Vishnu seated alone on garuda is shown with gada and chakra in two of his hands, the remaining two hands are broken.

Yogasthana Murtis

A Yogasthana image of Vishnu depicts him as seated in Padmasana with the first and fourth hands placed on feet in a yoga posture while each chakra and samaka purpushas stand on either side of him. In one image he has gada and chakra in upper two hands. One very peculiar image of Yogi Vishnu shows him seated in

1. Room 21 Gwalior Museum
2. Indore Museum
3. Sankum Nageswara T. Badnavar
4. Pillar top entrance door to Mandap Chauvarya T. Un
5. Chamba Museum
6. Top frieze Vishnu T. Cinam, Jodhpur Museum's image shows the two purpushas but the hands of the image are broken. The image in Kirtalu shows gada in rt. upper hand of the god lower frieze sanctum gate Big Kirtalu T, Vishnu gallery, Sirla Museum, Shopal - upper two hands are broken.
Padmāsāna with lower two hands folded on feet while the upper two hands folded on feet while the upper two hands held the big Vanamūla in his hands. The god is seated on a Sīhasāna.

A very peculiar image of god Vishnu is found in a small temple at Kiradu showing the god seated on Garuda with gada behind him. Lotusas are hanging in all directions from the wings and back of Garuda. Vishnu is also shown standing with the Naga and Nāgī worshipping him.

Besides the Twentyfour minor Manifestations Vishnu is also said to have been born as some super-animal and some super-human forms to save the world. These are known as the incarnations of Vishnu. It is remarkable to note that the Bhagavata includes Rishabhanātha the first Jain Tīrthaśākara and the Buddha too among the human incarnations of this god. The idea behind inclusion of Rishabhanātha and Buddha amongst the incarnations indicates the religious toleration or unity and oneness of various religions under the universality and superiority of the Hindu religion. The texts give six, twelve and twenty-four

1. Jodhpur Museum - The image is identified as Vishnu by Shri R.C. Agarwal, Supdt. Udaipur Museum.
2. Sm friese outside Sm T near Big Vishnu T at Kiradu.
3. It out Sas T Gwalior Fort.
4. "The Bhāgavata, Agni and Varāha Purānas mention him as one of the incarnations of Vishnu" Jain iconography - B.C. Shattoshastra Chapter I P. 56 to 90
5. The Harivamsa para P. 140-156
6. Vāyu Purāṇa Chapter 97, V 72
incarnations of Vishnu, but generally ten incarnations are found. These ten incarnations have been depicted jointly in one panel or individually. The joint depictions are rare but the individual ones are many and are quite commonly found.


In Calcutta Museum a pillar shaft depicts not only the ten incarnations but also the twentyfour minor manifestations of Vishnu all around the octagonal pillar part.

1. Matsyasvata

Coming to the individual depictions of these incarnations we see that the first one i.e. the Matsya incarnation has not been depicted in the Eastern Zone. Out of the total four images found, three belong to the central zone and one to western. According to Gopi Nath Rao, Matsyasvata should be depicted as half fish and half man with four hands having varada pose and holding chakra and gajahmala, with the fourth hand in abhaya pose. But the medieval temples depict this incarnation as a fish on a pedestal supported by two lotus like wheels.

1. Calcutta Museum; Sanctum gate Vishnu T Kachwaha.
At Gyaraspur all the incarnations of Vishnu are depicted on the pillars and the coping stone of the huge gateway called hindolika. The Matsyavatara is depicted as fish on a lotus leaf.

Sometimes this incarnation along with others forms a part of the Prebhavali of the Vishnu image. But all the depictions are shown as whole fish rather than the half man and half fish according to the texts. At Khajuraho, Vishnu is shown seated in Padmasana with the fish depicted underneath to suggest Matsyavatara.

2. Kurmaavatara

Like the Matsyavatara, Kurma incarnation should also be half man and half tortoise according to the Bhagavata Purana. This image too should be four handed carrying sankha and chakra in upper two with the first and fourth in varada and abhaya poses.

Vishnu's Kurma incarnations have been depicted in three different ways. The first, like the fish incarnation is the Kurma or the tortoise on a lotus leaf either in a panel of ten incantations or in the Prebhavali of Vishnu image.

1. Hindola, Gyaraspur
2. Verandah Ajmer Museum
3. R. Inner Pradak Lak T.
5. Sacetum gate Vishnu T Radwaha, Hindola Gyaraspur in Gate pillars.
The second and probably more common way is depicting
the scene of the churning of ocean (Fig. 49), 50, 51) by the gods
on one side and the demons on the other, the churn is shown as
a big tapering pillar which according to the mythological story
was the Kandāra Parvata or hill and the rope was the serpent
Sesha which both the gods and the demons keep pulling on either
side. In the Udaypur Museum Airavata the elephant of India, the
pot of nectar of Asvata and cow Kuśadhenu which fulfills all desires
are depicted in a panel. The second part shows the Kūma resting
on the hands of the Serpent Sesha with three persons sitting
beside and the churn shown at the back. At Khajurah Tortoise
is depicted as a seat on which Vishnu is seated in Padāsana.

3. Varāhavātara

According to the texts Varāha the third incarnation
of Vishnu may be of three forms - Bhūvarāha, Yajñavarāha and
Pralayavarāha. The last two of these should be depicted in
sitting posture and none of these two forms have been found.

All the images found belong to the category of
Bhūvarāha but these instead of being in accordance with the text
slightly vary from these. The images found can be divided into
two categories - Varāha in half human half animal form and
Varāha completely in animal form.

1. Dr. Friese Konark T, Sm friese of the 3rd Sm T on rt of Devi
   T Utsav, At court Dig Vishnu Airadu, Room Dinal Sahh’s St Abu,
   Ambika T Ījaṭā
2. Room 10 Museum Udaypur
3. Room 21 Museum Udaypur
4. It inner Radak Lak T
The first category of Bhūvarāha has a Boar's face with a human body. The god is shown standing with the left leg flo'd folded, lower right hand placed on kati\(^1\) or is holding 2 padma with gada, chakra and samkhya in the remaining three hands. Prthvi\(^3\) or the earth goddess is standing on the left in first case and is seated on the elbow of the third hand in case of second image. One image has first hand broken;\(^2\) chakra, in the second and fourth hands and Prthvi is seated on the third hand.

A very common way of depicting Varāha incarnation is to show the god standing with the first or the fourth hand on waist (kativinyāṣata) having gada and chakra in the second and fourth hands (in case of the first hand on kati). The same evadhās are shown in the first and second hands in case of fourth hand on kati. The goddess prthvi\(^4\) in both the cases is shown seated on the elbow of the third hand which is folded. Some more such images of Varāhavattra show god's hands in order as kati;\(^6\) gada;\(^5\) Prthvi standing on a lotus and samkhya in the fourth hand of the god; kati;\(^7\) gada, chakra and samkhya in god's hands with Prthvi supported by his Tusk, Prthvi is seated on the elbow of his second hand; Her feet are resting on the samkhya (Fig. 52) kati;\(^7\) second hand broken, chakra and samkhya in third and fourth hands while Prthvi is

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1. 4th hand is broken Patna Museum
4. Bhar Museum (3rd hand broken)
5. Bhatari Puri T.
7. Indore Museum, Room 1 Kota Museum Vishnu gallery, Kirti Museum Bhopal.
seated on the elbow of the third hand, one image has Padma, gada, chakra and sankha. Prthvi is seated on the elbow of the third hand touching the god's mouth with her right hand.

In the Gwalior Museum the god Varaha is standing on the serpent Sesha with first hand on kathi, gada in second and Prthvi seated on the third hand fourth is not clear and Naga and Nagi standing in front in Anjali pose are worshipping him.

Another Varaha image is lifting the goddess Prthvi and is trampling over the demon with his left foot. Due to the demon's cruelties the goddess had been drowning in the ocean. The image in Jhalawad Museum shows Prthvi standing on a lotus, held in the third hand of the god while with one of his hands he holds the tail of the serpent which is sitting below with his consort. God has gada and chakra in the remaining two of his hands.

Two images of the Varaha incarnation have also been found with the consort of the god. In the first one he holds in the first hand his consort's right hand, chakra in second hand, Prthvi is sitting on the third hand and in the fourth hand he has sankha.

1. Ajmer Museum
2. Room 10 Gwalior Museum
3. Room 10 Gwalior Museum
4. Jhalawad Museum
5. Konark Museum
6. Room 3 2 Bhuvanesvara Museum.
A number of small two handed images of this god may also be seen on the small friezes of temples.

Coming to the second form of depiction of Varāha images which are entirely in animal form, we find that Varāha or the Bear is shown standing with all the images of gods and goddesses carved on its body; small image of the Mother Prthvi is shown standing on the right (Fig. 53) or left.

Certain images show greater details. One image in Indore Museum shows the Ten incarnations on the Bear's body. The huge snake Vasuki is lying between his legs, the Nāga and Nāgī in snake hood canopy are shown in worshipful attitude with the Nagi in Aṭjali pose. Gada samkha and chakra ayudhapurushas are shown between the legs and an akṣamala lies between the hind legs of the animal. Image in the Lucknow Museum shows the Nāga and Nāgī (Fig. 54) in aṭjali pose between the legs of the animal, eight Sandigapas and eight Ajamukhas with other seated and standing gods are carved over its body. A female image that of Prthvi stands supporting the Varāha's jaw with one hand, holding the flywhisk in the other.

The image in the Rajkot Museum shows the huge Bear with Prthvi standing on a Kūrma's book praying to Lord Vishnu with hands in aṭjali pose. Samkha, chakra, gada, and padma are depicted on the sides of the Kūrma. The seven hooded serpent

1. Sanctum gate Vishnu T Kadwa, Outside Vishnu T Kadwa, Hindola Gyaraspur, Allahabad Museum - image has gada in first hand, Prthvi on second, Sm T to the Lt. of Devi T Usian, Second Sm T near Devi T Usian, Kalika T Chittor, Kumbhār T Chittor, Verandah Ajmer N.
2. Compound Ganesa's T Ataroo, Jhalawad Museum
3. Indore Museum
4. Lucknow Museum, Gwalior Museum
5. Rajkot Museum
in Anjali pose is rising between the front legs of the Varaha. Prthvi supported by the tusk stands on the right. The Moon and Sun are shown on the right and left tusk of the Varaha. The ten incarnations and the scene of the churning of the ocean is depicted on the back of the Varaha.

4. The Narasimha Incarnation

The story is that Vishnu took this form of half lion and half man to save his beloved devotee Prahlad from the wrath of his own father. Prahlad was the son of King Hiranyakashyapa who in the past had himself been a great devotee of the Lord and had been granted four boons by the god in return of his prayers. The boons were that Hiranyakashyapa would be killed neither by man nor by animal, neither in day nor in the night, and neither inside nor outside his palace, by neither weapons nor in war. Considering himself invincible and immortal, the king became very proud and ordered his people to worship him only and not think of God any more. After some time a son was born to the king. The prince was sent to school where he was reported to have been found praying to Lord Vishnu. The king punished the young boy and threatened to kill him. Even then the son did not give up worshipping god Vishnu. Getting very angry the king tied the young boy to a pillar in his palace and took out his sword to kill him saying "Let me see how your God helps you now". This was the time of the dusk when the sun was setting and so it was neither day nor night, the God emerged from the pillar in the form of half lion half man being neither man
nor animal completely, and tore off the stomach of the king with his paws without using any weapon and sitting on the threshold of the palace thus being neither inside nor outside the house. The half man half lion form was that of Vishnu who was forced to take such a form to save his devotee from trouble and establish truth in this world.

Narasimha is represented in different ways in Tamil and Chalukyan sculptures. When depicted in action of tearing out the entrails of Hiranyakashipu he is known as sthutha - Narasimha; when seated in meditation he is yoga - Narasimha; he is kevala - Narasimha when standing alone and Lakshmi - Narasimha when there is Lakshmi on his lap. In the North Indian sculptures from various states, whether from central India, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal or Orissa Narasimha is represented as dancing with his left leg slightly raised and bent as in ardha - paryaśāka and he is tearing off the stomach of Hiranyakashipu.

The images of the Narasimha incarnation of Vishnu can have two, four (Fig.55) eight or fourteen hands.

The two handed images merely show the god tearing off the stomach of the demon Hiranyakashyapa who is shown lying on the god's folded legs crossed in front. The god is shown seated on an āsana.

He is also shown fighting the demon holding his hand and hair or is holding gada and chakra in his two hands.

One image of two handed Narasimha shows him in anjalī pose or having gada and chakra. He is killing the demon and a dead body is shown lying below.

The four handed images show first and fourth hands tearing off the demon's body, the second and third hands hold a chakra and śankha or gada respectively. Once he is shown fighting Hiranyakashyapa who is standing over the body of Prahlad lying under his feet.

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3. Back outside Pedmanabha T Chandrabhaga patan (4) Om T near Devi T usian
Some of the images show the upper two hands in abhaya pose and holding samkha while the lower two are tearing off the demon.

Krishna images with two consorts are also shown. These consorts Sri and Sarasvati or Bhudevi and Lakshmi are shown standing. In case of the latter image the god is sitting in Veerasana with a band tied round his knees and the consorts are holding kamal and chakra in their hands.

The eight handed image carries gada, chakra, Khetak and other ayudhas along with the two hands tearing off the demon's body.

A fourteen handed image is shown holding the demon's legs in first and second hands, the third hand is tearing off the demon's stomach, three hands are in dance pose, two in abhaya and vyakhyana poses, two hands are holding the demon's two hands in which he carries sword and shield and the remaining hands hold pringa, gada, chakra. (Fig. 56). One of the hands of the image holds one foot of the demon.

5. Vamanavatara of Vishnu.

According to Vaikēśikhanasagama this incarnation should be depicted as a dwarfishmandeformed with a hunched back protruding joints and a big belly (Fig. 57). He is mostly depicted with hands carrying two or more attributive weapons of Vishnu. Majority of the images found tally with Trivikrama's order of ayudhas in case of four handed images. But two handed images of Vaman have been given a bowl and a ghata, apkshma in right hand and left one is broken, Samkha and chakra. The four handed images of Vaman have varada gada, chakra and samkha or padma gada, chakra and samkha.

A very rare image in accordance with the textual depiction of Vaman has been found at Delhi. It has varada with rosary in the first hand, padma, ohhatra or umbrella and chakra.

An eight handed image of Vanana too has been found. God stands under the Chhatra having in his hands, padma, khadga, chakra, samhita sakti with the remaining three hands broken.

6. Parasurama

The sixth incarnation of Vishnu is Parasurama whose two handed images should have parasu and sudbi pose according to Madhyamadatsala while the four handed ones should carry parasu, khadga, charusha and bana according to Agnipurāṇa and Vishnuudham-sottara. But the images found are shown with parasu as his distinctive weapon giving Vishnu’s ayudhaas padma, chakra and sakha in the rest of his hands.

Only three images of Parasurama have been found. A two handed image was found on the gateway of Gyasaapur with padma and parasu in his hands.

The four handed image has first hand broken having parasu, chakra and sakha in other three.

7. Rāma and Scenes from the Rāmāvama

Rāma the seventh incarnation of Vishnu should carry charusha and bana according to Madhyamadatsala while his consort

1. Room 21 Gwalior Museum
2. Bindola Gyasarur, Prabhavali Vishnu Image Verandah Ajmer Museum
3. Dhabela Museum
Sīta should stand on his right and carry the Māla flower in her hand. Lākṣmīna and Hamūnīna should also be depicted in the scene. Images of Rāma do not exactly tally with this description but they beautifully illustrate some of the scenes from the Rāmāyana.

Rāma is shown standing with [dhamusaha]¹ and bana in his two hands.

Rāma² carrying dhamusahaan and bana is shown seated on Hamūnīna who is in a flying posture.

In the first image Rāma³ stands in the centre with Lākṣmīna on his right and Sīta on left, while both the brothers carry dhamusahaan and bana. Sīta carries a ghata.

The Allahabad Museum has preserved one four handed image of Rāma⁴ with Sīta. He is shown in Aśīngāna pose with the first hand broken, bana and dhamusahaan are in second and third hands and the fourth is embracing Sīta. Accordingly to Shri Sīvaramamurti it should be identified as Tripurantaka and Tripurasundari as Rāma is never shown with four hands.

Rāma⁵ is seated on an asana, Lākṣmīna stands behind, Hamūnīna is pressing Rāma’s feet and seven more Vānaras are standing.

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2. Rt out Puri T
5. Rt out Puri T.
As SK-3 is absent here one may say that the scene depicts Rama and Lakshmana in the jungles after SK-3 had been kidnapped by Ravana.

Seven Tala trees have been pierced by Rama with one arrow (Fig. 53). Impressed by his valour Sugriva becomes his friend.

SK-4 is sitting under the Asoka tree in Ravana's garden, Hanumana is shown sitting on the tree and Trijata the good Raksasi or female demon sits in front of SK-3 in anjali pose, a garland bearer and three more figures are shown (Fig. 54).

Rama and Lakshmana are seated on an asana and Vibhishana, Hanumana and two more monkey faced gods are shown facing the god with their hands folded in anjali pose.

Rama and Lakshmana are watching the monkeys who are carrying rocks to throw them in the sea.

Rama and Lakshmana holding bows in left hands are shown shooting arrows. A monkey is carrying a rock and three more monkeys are shown taking part in the battle against Ravana.

1. Sm friese Sm T near Vishnu T Kiradu
2. Sm friese Samaiddhesvara T Chittor, Pillar base of the round mandap facing Sun T Hodhara.
3. Rit out Puri T.
4. Sm friese Sm T near Vishnu Kiradu.
5. Sm friese Samaiddhesvar T Chittor.
Rāma is sitting with Lakshmana's head on his knees as he is lying faint after the arrow of Meghanāda had pierced his heart (Fig. 60). The feathers of the arrow are shown. Some monkeys are sitting around one in front and two at the back with a very sad expression on their faces.

Rāma and Lakshmana are sitting with seven monkeys around rejoicing after the recovery of Lakshmana. The two brothers are blessing the monkeys (Fig. 61).

Rāma is shown fighting Rāvana who has many heads, four fighters of Rāma's army are in front of him.

Rāma and Sītā both are shown seated on the throne. Lakshmana stands behind holding the chhattra. Hanumāna is pressing Rāma's feet and two worshippers are shown in front and two at the back (Fig. 62).

8. Krishna and scenes relating to his life

The eighth incarnation of Vishnu is Krishna or Sīkrishna.

Krishna images depict him as playing flute (Fig. 63) or depict some of the incidents from his life.

Sometimes Krishna the flute player also has an accompanyist manjeera player or two attendants standing beside.

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1. Stona frieze of the 5a T near Visnup T Kiradu, Pillar base of the round mandap T facing the Sun T at Konark.
2. Stona frieze 5a T near Vishnu T Kiradu.
3. Li out Puri T.
7. Outside of the T near Lingaraj Shivaneswara.
* Illustrated in Gandhi Safar ke Puratattva.
-beside, once the attendants are female, one carries a bow and an
arrow and the other a pitcher on her head. Another image shows
two cows, the favourite pet animal of Krishna which stand
watching him while he plays on the flute (Fig. 64).

Krishna plays on flute while an attendant plays on
veena along with him.

1. Another birth scene depicts Devaki lying on
the coiled serpent bed with the serpent shaking her with his
hood. A female attendant is pressing Devaki's feet and a small
baby is lying beside the mother who looks fondly at the baby. There
is no serpent bed instead an ordinary bed is there and besides the
female attendant shampooing Devaki's feet some more heavenly
attendants are shown above rejoicing at the auspicious moment.

2. Sometimes Krishna's birth is depicted when Devaki
his mother is shown lying on a bed inside the prison gates where a
sentry stands to keep watch on the prisoner. Samika and a sangala
kalesa are kept beneath the bed; five gods, two goddesses and two
attendants are shown on top. Other scenes relate the incident when
soon after the birth Krishna was carried away to Gokul by his father

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1. Rt out Puri T (one cow on either side) - Hiche of the 1st Sa
   T on the rt of Bimal Shah's T Mt Abu, Rt out Sa T Eklingaji.
2. Lt Out Padmanabha T Chandrabhaga Patan.
3. Museum, Konark. Dhubela Museum
4. Ajmer Museum Verandah, lower frieze rt out Kesaria Kunwar T Qian.
5. Anurodh Museum Calcutta.
Vasudeva from the prison in Mathura; the gates of the prison opened automatically after his birth and the sentry fell asleep.

Krishna was delivered in Nanda's house whose wife Yasoda had given birth to a daughter the same day as Krishna was born. Vasudeva exchanged his son for the daughter as Kaśa, the king of Mathura was killing all his issues for fear of the prophecy that a son of Vasudeva would bring about the death of Kaśa. One scene shows Vasudeva going ahead across the river Yamuna accompanied by armed attendants.

Baby Krishna is stealing butter from the pitcher and the mother catches him red-handed or Yasoda is churning butter and Krishna attempts to steal it seeing which Nanda and U Yasoda seem to be very much worried at this peculiar habit of their child.

Other scenes from Krishna's life are killing the huge serpent Kaliya while the Nāga god with his two Nāgas stands by in anjali pose. In one scene Krishna holds a padma and a chakra or plain ring while killing the serpent Kaliya (Fig. 65).

Krishna is killing the Bakasura, sucking out the milk of life blood from the female demon Putana's breasts, and is killing the horse and bull demons Kesi and Arishṭa.

1. Handap frieze Chaturbhuj T Gwalior Fort.
2. Lower frieze rt out Kesaria Kumar T Osian, (Vasudeva quietly taking away the child from Revaki's bed) upper frieze Mahadeo T Osian.
3. Handap frieze Chaturbhuj T Gwalior Fort.
4. Roof panel BIMAL SHAN'S T RT Abu.
5. At Cut Furi T.
9. Romm 2 Bhuvanesvara Museum, he is shown standing on the serpent hood Somnath Museum, upper frieze Kesaria KT Osian, Pillar base Modhera T facing Sun T Modhera.
Krishna is shown holding the hind legs of the bull which has fallen face downwards. The image in Amer Museum shows the horse demon Kesi's body broken, yet the demon is trying to bite Krishna's folded left hand. Krishna is striking at him with the right fist held high in the air. An attendant stands watching at the back. Two scenes depict Krishna fighting the bull Kesi with gada or his four handed image has chakra to kill the bull who is resting his hoofs on Krishna's back to push him.

When Yamalavrjuna the two sons of Kubera were cursed to become trees Krishna rescues them by passing between them and uprooting them so that they take their original Gandharva form once again.

Krishna is turning upside down a cart on which two pitchers are kept.

In a similar other scene two birds are shown sitting on the brim of the pitchers.

Krishna is shown holding the Govardhana mountain

1. Amer Museum
2. Allahabad Museum
4. Mandap frieze Kesaria K T Osian upper frieze Mahadeo T Osian
5. Lower frieze rt out Kesaria K T Osian
6. Upper frieze Mahadeo T Osian
on his finger to protect human and animal life from the incessant rains. Krishna is also rescuing the elephant from the jaws of the crocodile. An attendant is shown standing by in angali pose.

Krishna strikes with fists a demon on whose shoulders he is riding; Krishna is wrestling with Kaśīva the king of Mathura while in one scene Vishnu is shown watching the flight of the sitting sat on his Vahana garuda.

Krishna and Balarāma are playing together or the latter watches him (holding gada in one hand) while Krishna performs one of his glorious deeds.

Now we come to the scenes depicting Krishna's dalliances with the Gopis. The first scene depicts Krishna standing surrounded by eight Gopis who have manjeera (i.e. Cymbals) shauri or flywhisks, yerna etc. in their hands and the second shows him stealing away the clothes of the Gopis when they were bathing in the river Yamuna. Love scenes of the milkmaid Kanha and Krishna which have become the famous them of the devotional songs of Meerā.

1. Mandap pillar's shaft I facing Sun T Madhara, upper frieze Mahadeo T Osian, Mandap frieze Chaturbhuj T Gwalior.
2. Mandap frieze Chaturbhuj T Gwalior
3. Upper frieze Kesaria I T Gwalior Fort, Osian
4. Mandap frieze Chaturbhuj T Gwalior Fort
5. Upper frieze Mahadeo T Osian
7. Room 2 Bhuvanesvara Museum
8. Room 3 Bhuvanesvara Museum; At out Puri T.
and Sūrdāsa and also of many mythological and other stories are also not lacking. In one scene he is shown standing under a tree\(^1\) playing the magical notes on his flute, Rādhā stands enchanted near by and two Gopis also stand listening and looking at him.

Rādhā stands on the left and Krishna on the right playing on flute. She stands under the shades of a tree in a dance pose. A Gopi on the left of her is already lost in dancing and is playing at the same time on some musical instrument held in her hands. Two more Gopis stand on the right of Krishna one of whom is playing on the mrdanga while the other keeps dancing to the rhythm.

Rādhā and Krishna are in company of some Gopis and Yaksas. One Yaksas who carries a staff if supporting Rādhā, another carrying a sword supports a Gopi, the third Yaksas carries a veena held in his second and third hands while the first and fourth hands support his head gear, and the fourth Yaksas has first hand in varada pose, fourth resting on his knee and the upper two hands support his head gear.

Another scene shows Bhīshma (Fig. 66) lying on the bed of arrows prepared for him by Arjuna when he was wounded in the battle of Mahābhārata.  

Lastly we come to the four handed image of Krishna the flute player who stands playing the flute held in his first and third hands, while the second and the fourth hold chakra and sanāke respectively. Other incarnations are depicted in the Prabhāvali.

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1. Lt out 1st gate to Puri T.
2. Mandap images supporting the roof Nagesvara T Badnawar.
3. Mandap frieze Nagesvara T Badnawar
Krishna is dancing and playing on flute held in his lower two hands, padma is held in the second while the third supports the roof of the temple.

One six and one twelve handed image of Krishna has also been found and in these the flute is his only distinguishing feature. The first image shows Krishna carrying parasha, kulhada or axe, flute, hana, damusha and ghata. The twelve handed image has most of the hands not clearly depicted. Only flute held in two hands and damusha and hana can be distinguished clearly.

An image of Balamukunda in flying posture has also been found. Two of its hands are in dance pose and other two are not clear.

9. Balarāma

The ninth incarnation of Vishnu is Balarāma according to Sanskrit authorities and the Buddha according to the Chalukya Hoysala School. But here we would consider Balarāma alone as Buddha - the founder of Buddhism is dealt with separately in chapter VIII.

Considering first the two handed images of Balarāma we find that such images mostly depict his drinking wine which

1. Mandap Marr T Eklingsaji
2. Rūt out Puri T
3. Lit out Puri T.
4. Jhalawad Museum
5. Room 10 Gwalior Museum, One-hand-of-Balarāma-is-broken-
   Room 21 Gwalior Museum.
he was very fond of. Thus Balarāma standing under the Nāga hood canopy holds a drinking pot in his right hand pressed against his belly. Two female attendants, one on either side of him, stand with wine jars in their hands. One image shows him with the wine post in right hand and ploughshare, his characteristic ayūdra, in his left hand (Fig. 73). His consort Rēvati or a female attendant stands to his left with the wine jar in her hands in the Museum image.

Balarāma is also found standing under Nāga canopy with his hands broken or holding something not clearly visible.

Balarāma is shown under the serpent canopy holding hala and danda in his two hands; or killing a serpent with gada.

His four handed images are shown with hala, chakra,
third hand broken and the fourth hand placed on kati, varada pose hala, small gada and with the fourth hand broken.

Two images of Balarāma with his consort Rēvati are also found. They both are shown standing under Nāga canopy.

1. Room 10 Gwalior Museum; One hand of Balarāma is broken - Room 21 Gwalior Museum.
2. Room 21 Gwalior Museum; God is seated on a cushion in Lalitāsana Athakṣaṅkha Ḍāraṇāyuspur.
3. Hindola Gyaraspur; Nathura Museum; Prabhāvali Vīraṇa image Verandah Ajmer Museum.
4. Second Sa T near Devi T Osian
5. Upper frieze Mahadeo T Osian
6. Room 2 Ajmer Museum.
7. Lt out Padmanabha T Chandrabhaga Patan.
In the first the god has bowl, hala and katiyalambita pose with second hand broken, consort has kamal and phata in her hands. The second image depicts Kalârâma blessing a child standing beside him holding hala, kati pose, one of his hands is not clearly depicted. Consort has a darpâna or mirror here.

10 Kalâ

The tenth incarnation of Vishnu, Kalâ should be seated on horse back and carry a dhamusha and hane according to Agnipurâna. Kalâ images generally depict the god as seated on horseback holding the reins of the animal in one of his hands.

Other two images show him as riding on horse back with/or two attendants holding a canopy or abhatra over his head. The second image shows a sceptre hanging from the belt on his waist and a garuda is shown flying above.

Many handed images

Vishnu has been depicted with all his ferocity through images having eight, fourteen and twenty hands. These images depict the Vikarâlarûpa of the god and form a separate category by themselves. The arrangement of avudhas is given in clock wise order.

1. Room 2 Ajmer Museum
2. Back outside a Sa T near the road Osian.
5. Back corner of temple beside the road Osian.
6. Room 10 Museum Gwalior Fort.
Vishnu is seated on garuda. Out of his eight hands, the first one is in varakhvaṇa pose, last three are broken and the remaining four have gada, bana, khadga and khetaka.

One eight handed image has padma, gada, chakra, khadga, one hand is in a dance pose, khetaka, sankha and the eighth hand is broken.

The fourteen handed image of Vishnu seated on garuda has padma in the first hand which is also in varada pose (as the lotus stem is pressed between the palm and the thumb) danda, sakusa, sakti, bana, gada, akshamala, one hand in yoga mudra, chakra, dhanusa, ratti, ratta, hand broken, trikuta, the thirteenth hand is in Yogamudra and sankha is in the last hand.

A twenty handed Vishnu image with two hands held in gyan mudra and all the remaining ones broken, has also been found.

Garuda

All the gods and goddesses have been assigned one species of the animal kingdom as their mounts, Vishnu's vahana Garuda and Siva's vahana Nandi are endowed with special significance worshipped and their separate images have been found installed beside their lord's image in a worshipful or complacent attitude.

1. ft out Sas Gwalior Fort 2. Kumbha T Chittor
Garuda is one of the most powerful amongst the bird species just as Bull, Elephant and Lion are amongst the quadrupeds. Hence he is really a suitable mount for Vishnu.

Garuda is either depicted as a bird, or half bird and half-man i.e. having a beak face and wings of the bird but the body of a man. He is also depicted completely as a man carrying his lord on his shoulders. The beak face we get in Garuda images from the 4th cent. A.D.

1. Garuda is generally shown facing his god Vishnu and sitting in anjali pose. Garuda is shown as a man with a nose like a beak and with two small wings on his shoulders (Fig. 68).

1. Room 2 Bhubanesvara Museum; With a halo behind his head—Indore Museum; lower frieze sanctum gate S n T near Vishnu T Kiradu; a Snake coiling round his legs—Image facing Neera T skalingaji.