

D I V I N E C O U P L E S

Generally, the various Godheads with their consorts or female partners, are also occupying places on the outer wall or inside the temples. Sometimes, they are also found in the niches of the stambhas, step wells or other monuments. Very few texts have given descriptions on the images of such divine couples. Alongwith the couple images of major Godheads, few couple images of minor deities are also traced in the area under study.

(i) BRAHMA AND HIS CONSORT

In the Vishnudharmottara Purana,¹ the description of Yugma-murti of Brahma and Savitri, is given. Accordingly, Brahma is described as sitting on a petal of a lotus and Savitri is placed on his left lap. Savitri has the colour of Sun and carries a Rosary in her hand. Nothing is mentioned about the attributes of the remaining hands.

Kantawala² S.G. narrated the episode from the Mātsya Purana, and stated that the Goddesses Satarupa, Savitri, Saraswati, Gayatri and Brahmani were born of Brahma and they reckoned as his daughters. It is further stated that Brahma married his daughter and enjoyed her romantic company for a very long period and Manu Svayambhuva was one of their sons. He has also quoted from Rig-Veda and Sutras, that Savitri is the daughter of Sun.

A beautiful representation of Brahma and Savitri is illustrated in figure 1. It is found on the fifth storey of the Vijayastambha, Chittor Fort. The name, 'Brahma-Savitri rup' is inscribed below the image. It is a seated image in Ardhaparyanka asana. Savitri is sitting in Ardhaparyanka asana on his left lap, and her left leg is shown hanging vertically. The first three hands of Brahma carry Varada@Aksamala, Ladle and Veda, while his fourth hand placed around the waist of his consort, Savitri. Savitri has also thrown her right arm around her lord's neck and her left hand carries lotus. The swan vehicle is also depicted on the pedestal of the seat. Almost identical two images are found, one in the ruined temple located near the Samadhiswar Mahadev temple, Chittor Fort, and second one in the Jatashankar temple, Chittor Fort.

Two such images seated in Ardhaparyanka asana and without vehicle are found, one in the Jawar Mata temple, Jawar and the another one in the Charbhuj temple, Udaisagar. Two more images

of this type portraying the couple standing in Dvibhanga pose are also found, one in the Kukadeswar Mahadev temple, Chittor Fort and second one in the Sasabahu temple (No.1), Nagada. The swan vehicle is depicted in both the images.

An image representing couple standing in Dvibhanga pose from the Ratneswar temple, Chittor Fort, is illustrated in figure 2. The lower right hand of Brahma is lost. Ladle is depicted in his each upper hands. His lower left hand is placed on his consort standing on his left side. His consort, Savitri holds lotus in her left hand and her right hand is placed on Brahma.

One beautiful representation illustrated in figure 3, is found on the northern outer wall of the Mira-Ka-Mandir, Ayad, near Udaipur. Therein, in the centre, Brahma-Savitri is depicted, while on the right hand side of the couple Saraswati and on the left hand side Gayatri are found depicted. Savitri is shown seated on the left lap of Brahma. In this representation hands of all four deities are broken, however Saraswati holds Vina and Gayatri Lotus, which are clearly seen.

A group of images, wherein Brahma with his two consorts is represented, is found on the sixth floor of the Vijayastambha, Chittor Fort. Images found in this representation are having their respective names inscribed on the pedestal. Savitri is

shown standing on the right hand side of Brahma, and Gayatri on his left hand side. Brahma is depicted seated in Ardhaparyanka asana. He has two hands carrying Varada Mudra and Kalash. Savitri is standing in Dvibhanga pose and with a Chowrie in her right hand and her left hand held in Lola Mudra. Gayatri is also standing ⁱⁿ Dvibhanga pose and with the same attributes as found with Savitri. No vehicle is found.

(ii) SHIVA OR MAHESVAR AND HIS CONSORT

Uma-Maheswar form is the allegorical representation of the amorous union of Shakti or energetic principle with the Shaktiman or the Being with the energy.

The Matsya Purana³ has described the Yugmamurti of Shiva-Paravati in details. Accordingly, one left hand of Shiva should be shown as if it is reposing on the shoulder of Parvati and the remaining left hand should touch her breasts, and his right hands should carry Lotus and Trident. Parvati should be shown pressing her body against the left body part of Lord Shiva and looking at his face. Her right hand should be either placed on Shiva's shoulder or scratching her own navel with her nails, while her left hand should hold a Mirror. Jaya, Vijaya, Ganapati and Karttikeya should also be depicted on either side of the couple.

According to the Vishnudharmottara Purana,⁴ Shiva and Uma should be seated together and embracing each other in the Uma-Mahesvara Murti. The God should have Jetamukuta with crescent moon and be two armed, holding a Nilotpala flower in the right hand and embracing his consort with the left hand. Uma should have a handsome bust and hips, should embrace the Lord with the right hand and carry a Mirror in the left one. Both the figures should be sculptured very beautifully. Describing Uma-Maheshvara Murti, the Aparajitapruccha⁵ and the Rupamandana⁶ state that Shiva should have four arms carrying a Trident and Bijora in the right hands, a Snake in the left hand while with the other left hand he should embrace his consort. Uma holds Mirror in her left hand. In the foreground, Nandi, Ganapati and Kumara and emaciated figure of the recluse Bhringi, should be given importance.

An image illustrated in figure 4, confirms the description found in the texts. It is found in the niche on the outer wall of Jain Mandir at Ayad. Shiva is seated in Ardhaparyanka asana and Uma is also seen seated in Ardhaparyanka asana but on the left lap of his Lord. He holds Bijora, Trident and Cobra in his first three hands, while his remaining left hand goes around the waist of Parvati or Uma and touches her left breast. Her right hand is placed around Shiva's neck and left hand carries mirror. Shiva's right leg is resting on the back of his Nandi.

In the foreground of this image and on the right hand side of the couple Karttikeya with Shakti in his right hand and riding on peacock is depicted. While on the other side Ganapati is depicted.

More than fifty three images representing Uma-Mahesavara Murti or Shiva-Parvati Murti are found in the area under study. Many of them confirm the textual injunction, while others do not. More or less they are depicted as described the illustration given in figure 4. In some cases the couple is seen seated in Ardhaparyanka asana, while in some cases, they found standing in different poses. Most of the image are with the bull vehicle.

The find spot and location of images, representing group of Uma-Maheshvara Murti or Shiva-Parvati-Murti, are enlisted as under.

Sr. No.	Find spot and location.	Remarks.
1	2	3
1 to 3	Shiva temple near Delhi Gate, Udaipur.	
4	Jivansvarup Mahadev temple, Udaipur	
5 to 7	Giri-Ka-Math, Udaipur	
8	Rajarajeswar Mahadev temple, Debari, Udaipur	
9	Indreswar temple, Achalgarh	

1	2	3
10	Templet located near Gaumukhi, Chittor Fort	
11 to 17	Achaleswar Mahadev temple, Achalgarh	
18	Coutyard, Madavaji temple, Madavaji, near Abu.	
19 to 21	Bhimaparneswar temple, Udaipur	
22	Baradari 1, Sec.5, Nauchoki, Rajnagar	
23 & 24	Vishnu temple, Rishikesh, near Abu	
25	Lakulish temple, Eklingji	
26	Mira-Ka-Mandir, Eklingji	
27	Sasabahu temple (No.1), Nagada	
28	Sabha Khanda, Ratneswar temple, Chittor Fort	Illustrated in figure 5. Alongwith the bull, the lion is also depicted below the image of Devi.
29	Fifth storey, Vijayastambha, Chittor Fort	Illustrated in figure 6. The name Uma-Mahesvara is found inscribed below the image.
30	Jawar Mata Temple, Jawar	

1	2	3
31 & 32	Templet, located near the Baijnath temple, Sisarama	
33 & 34	Annapurna Mata-Ka-Kund, Chittor Fort	
35	Templet, located near the Samadhiswar temple, Chittor Fort	
36	M.B.College Museum, Udaipur	
37	Museum of Archaeology, Udaipur	
38	Jatashankar temple, Chittor Fort	
39	Dilapidated temple, near Mahakali temple, Udaisagar	
40	Vishnu temple, Rishikesh near Abu	
41	Dvarkadish temple, Achalgarh	
42	Indreswar temple, Achalgarh	
43	Bhuvaneswar Mahadev temple, Rishikesh near Abu	
44	M.B.College Museum, Udaipur	
45	Courtyard, Vishnu temple, Rishikesh, near Abu	
46	Temple located opposite to the Main temple, Eklingji	

- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| 47 | Kumbhashyam temple, Chittor Fort | Illustrated in figure.7
The left hand of Parvati is shown rested on the head of a person which is not identifiable. |
| 48 | Baradari 1, Sec.9, Nauchoki, Rajnagar. | |
| 49 | Templet located in the compound of the Charbhuj temple, Jawar | |
| 50 | Baradari 2, Sec.1, Nauchoki, Rajnagar | The couple is shown as going out in a boating excursion. |
| 51 | Mira-Ka-Mandir, Eklingji | |
| 52 | On the outerwall, Kalika-Mata temple, Chittor Fort | Illustrated in figure 8. |
| 53 | Vaikunthanath temple, Eklingji. | |

(iii) VISHNU AND HIS CONSORT

From very early period, Lakshmi is referred to as a Goddess of prosperity. She is being associated with Vishnu from an early period, eventhough, their images in the Alingana-Mudra or as Yugmamurti or even otherwise are neither referred to in any of the early texts on iconography, nor any image found prior

to the close of the Gupta period.⁷ In the early period, she is first associated as a consort with the Sesa-Narayana form of Vishnu, and thereafter only she is found associated with Vishnu or his other forms.⁸ The Vishnudharmottara Purana⁹ mentions that the Goddess Lakshmi should be shown near Hari in divine form, wearing white garments and all her ornaments, and should have two hands carrying Lotuses or she should be shown seated on the left lap of the Lord or on Garuda. When she is shown as a consort or wife of Vishnu, she should be represented with a celestial and matchless beauty. In the Jayakhya Samhita, Lakshmi is referred to as not only consort of Vishnu but also of Vaikuntha.¹⁰ Rao¹¹ states that, according to the Sanskrit texts, Vishnu in the form of Narayana is represented in the company of Lakshmi, usually she should be shown on the left of the Lord. And she has thrown her right hand round the neck of her consort in Alingana Mudra whose left hand in turn embraces the Goddess round her waist. A Lotus should be placed in the left hand of Lakshmi. The Ayudhapurushas viz. Conch and Disc, Brahma and Shiva with Anjali Mudra and Garuda should also be sculptured alongwith the couple of Lakshmi-Narayana. The Rupamandana¹² has also described the Yugmamurti of Lakshmi-Narayana more or less as stated above. Vishnu should carry his traditional attributes in hands.

In the area under study, the images representing Lakshmi-Narayana form with little variation in attributes of Vishnu, are found. In these images, Lakshmi is seen on the left of Vishnu or seated on the left lap of Vishnu. She holds Lotus, sometimes Shriphala in her one of the hands. Garuda and other deities are also seen in most of the images. These images are of two types standing and seated.

These images are grouped on the basis of the attributes found depicted in the hands of Vishnu. These images are named after the names referred to in Caturvimsatimurtis of Vishnu.

The find spots and locations of the images are as mentioned in the following list.

Sr. No.	Find spot/location	Remarks
1	2	3
	<u>Lakshmi-Narayana</u> (Narayana:Conch, Lotus, Mace & Disc)	
1	Museum of Archaeology, Udaipur	Illustrated in figure 9. The miniature images of Dasa-avatars, are also depicted in the Prabhamandal of the image.
2 to 4	Rupanarayanji temple, Pulan <u>Lakshmi-Trivikram</u> (Lotus, Mace, Disc and hand embracing Lakshmi)	
5	Kumbhashyam temple, Chittor Fort	Illustrated in figure 10.

- | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-------|--|--|
| 6 & 7 | Vishnu temple, Rishikesh,
near Abu.
<u>Lakshmi-Trivikram</u> (Varada+Aksamala, Mace, Disc and hand
embracing Lakshmi) | |
| 8 | Fifth floor, Vijayastambha,
Chittor Fort. | Illustrated in figure 11.
The name Lakshmi-Narayana
is inscribed below the
image. The lower right hand
is partly damaged, however
broken Aksamala is clearly
seen. Attributes placed
in upper two arms support
it being a Trivikram form
of Vishnu. |
| 9 | Jawar Mata temple, Jawar.
<u>Lakshmi-Adhokshaja</u> (Lotus, Mace, Conch and hand
embracing Lakshmi) | |
| 10 | Sasabahu temple (No.1),
Nagada, near Eklingji.
<u>Lakshmi-Shridhara</u> (Lotus, Disc, Mace and Conch) | |
| 11 | Main temple, Eklingji.
<u>Lakshmi-Padmanabha</u> (Conch, Lotus, Disc and hand
embracing Lakshmi) | |

illustrated in figure 12 is from the Adbhootnath temple, Chittor Fort, wherein Indra holds Lotus, Thunderbolt and Goad in his first three hands. His fourth hand goes round the waist of Shaci. Shaci holds Lotus in her left hand, and right hand is thrown round the neck of Indra. No vehicle is found. This representation partly confirms the description found in the Vishnudharmottara Purana.

(v) YAMA AND HIS CONSORT

The Vishnudharmottara Purana¹⁴ has referred to Dhumorna as a wife of Yama. It is said that she should be seated on the left lap of Yama. Yama holds Staff, Sword and Shield in his first three hands, and the fourth hand should be placed on the back of his wife. The right hand of Dhumorna is to be placed on the back of Yama and the left hand holds a beautiful Citron. The buffalo is given as a vehicle to them.

A couple of Yama and Dhumorna is illustrated in figure 13, found on the Adbhootnath temple, Chittor Fort. Both are shown standing in Dvibhanga pose, and no vehicle is seen. The Lakhani (?), Staff and Cock are found in his first three hands. His fourth hand is thrown round Dhumorna's waist, who is standing on his left side. Dhumorna carries Lotus in her left hand, while her right is thrown round the neck of Yama. No vehicle is found.

Almost identical image of Yama and his consort is illustrated in figure 14, is from the Chandraprabhuji temple, Chittor Fort. However, in this image buffalo is shown near the foot as a vehicle. And Dhumorna holds dagger in her left hand, which is shown resting on her thigh.

(vi) VARUNA AND HIS CONSORT

It is said in the Vishnudharmottara Purana,¹⁵ that, Gauri, the wife of Varuna seats on the left lap of Varuna. Varuna holds Lotus, Noose, Conch and a vessel of Jewels in his four hands. Gauri holds Lotus in her left hand and right hand is placed on the back of her consort.

An image, wherein the couple, Varuna and Gauri, shown standing in Dvibhanga pose, is illustrated in figure 15. It is found on the outer wall of the Adbhootnath temple, Chittor Fort. Varuna holds his lower right hand in Varada Mudra and one Jewel is also found depicted in the palm. He holds Noose, and Goad(?) in the upper right hand and upper left hand respectively. His lower left hand is thrown round Gauri's waist. Gauri has thrown her right hand round Varuna's neck and left hand carries Lotus. The Parsavanath temple at Chittor Fort also preserves one such specimen, which is represented in figure 16.

Two more images are found, one on the outer wall of Vijayastambha, Chittor Fort (Figure 17), second one on the Ratneswar temple, Chittor Fort (Figure 18). However, in the image from

the Vijayastambha, Varuna holds Varada+Aksamala in his lower right hand, and in the image from Ratneswar temple, Varuna has lost his lower right hand.

(vii)VAYU AND HIS CONSORT

According to the Vishnudharmottara Purana,¹⁶ Vayu has two hands., holding the ends of his Garment. His Garments are puffed up with wind. His wife Shiva stands on his left side.

Vayu and his consort are seen standing in Dvibhanga pose in the figure 19. It is found on the Adbhootnath temple at Chittor Fort. Vayu holds Varada+Lotus, Banner and Banner in his first three hands, while fourth hand is thrown round his consort's waist. His consort holds Lotus in her left hand and has also thrown her right hand round the neck of her consort.

(viii)KUBERA AND HIS CONSORT

As stated in the Vishnudharmottara Purana,¹⁷ the Goddess Riddhi, wife of Kubera should be represented as sitting on his left lap. Her right hand is on the back of the God and the left one bears a vessel of Jewels.

One image is found on the outer wall of the Adbhootnath temple, Chittor Fort, wherein Kubera and on his left his consort are shown standing in Dvibhanga pose (Fig.20). Kubera holds his lower right hand in Varada Mudra and a small Jewel is also depicted in the palm. He holds Purse (niddhi) in his upper

right hand. An article in upper left hand is not identifiable. His lower left hand is going round the waist of his consort. On other side, she has also thrown her right hand round his neck. She holds Lotus in her left hand.

(ix) GANAPATI AND HIS CONSORT

The Matsya Purana states that Ganapati has two consorts Riddhi and Siddhi, sitting on either side of Ganapati. Rao refers to Buddhi and Siddhi as a consorts of Ganapati.¹⁸ However, while describing Uchchistha Ganapati, Rao¹⁹ refers to the nude Devi sitting on his lap, and the name of this Devi is Vighnesvari.

Samadhiswar temple at Chittor Fort preserves one image representing Ganapati and his consort, (Fig.21). Therein Ganapati is shown seated and the Goddess or consort is also shown sitting on his left lap. This image is partly mutilated. A mutilated figure of lady holding some indistinct object in hands perhaps pot, is also found on the right hand side of Ganapati. If, she is to be considered as his consort, than this figure representing Ganapati with two consorts.

One image of Ganapati with two consorts, one sitting on his each lap, is also found on the Adinath temple, Achalgarh. The Kumbhashyam temple, at Chittor Fort, has also preserved such image.

An image found on the Charbhuj temple, Udaipur, representing Ganapati with his one consort seated on his left lap. It is a seated image in Ardhaparyanka asana and with mouse vehicle. The first three hands of Ganapati, hold Tusk, Battle-Axe and Lotus, and his fourth hand is holding Kapitha and also goes round the waist of his consort. The right hand of his consort is thrown round Ganapati's neck and left hand holds Lotus.

(x) SESA (NAGA) AND HIS CONSORT

Two images representing Sesa and his consort are found, one in the Kumbhashyam temple, Chittor Fort (Fig.22) and one is preserved in the M.B.College Museum, Udaipur (Fig.23). The image from Chittor Fort represents Sesa with two hands, holding Lotus in right hand and the left hand is placed on the thigh of his consort. His consort holds an arc-shaped instrument in her hands. Both are seen standing in Dvibhanga pose. The image preserved in the M.B.College Museum, is a seated image in Ardhaparyanka asana. Both of them have a cup in their right hands. The article in the left hand of the female is lost, while the left hand of Sesa is placed on his consort's left shoulder. Near the right leg of Sesa, a female attendant with a wine jug is depicted.

In both the images, their cobra hoods are seen rising above their heads.

REFERENCES

1. Vishnudharmottara Purana, III/63/1-3.
2. Kantawala, S.G., 'The Brahma-Saraswati episode in Matsya Purana', JOI, Vol.VIII, 1958-59, pp.38-40.
3. Matsya Purana, 260/=12-19.
4. Rao, T.A.Q., EHI, 'II/I pp.132-34.
5. Aparajitapruccha, 213/25-27.
6. Rupamandana, 4/27-29.
7. Desai, Kalpana, Iconography of Vishnu, p.31.
8. Ibid., p.31.
9. Vishnudharmottara Purana, III/82/2-3 and III/85/48.
10. Quated from Desai, Kalpana, op.cit. p.31.
11. EHI, I/I, pp.258-59.
12. Rupamandana, 4/34-35.
13. Vishnudharmottara Purana, III/50/2-5.
14. Ibid., III/51/1-5.
15. Ibid., III/52/1-5.
16. Ibid., III/58.
17. Ibid., III/53.
18. Matsya Purana, see EHI I/I pp.44,62.
19. EHI, I/I, pp.54-55.