

KALYANASUNDARAMURTI

The Legend of the marriage of Lord Shiva and Parvati, the daughter of the God of Himalaya (Himavan), are recorded and described in great detailed by the Puranas,<sup>1</sup> however minor variations are found in these descriptions. The Devas and Brahmanas were troubled by the asura Taraka, and none other than an offspring of Shiva could overpower the asura. Sati, the consort of Shiva was dead, and Shiva did not have a wife. So Shiva can have no progeny in this situation. So the Devas got interested in marriage of Shiva. On the other hand, Sati, the daughter of Deksha and the consort of Shiva was reborn as Parvati to the God of Himalaya, and she was practising penance for getting Shiva as her lord. Kama, meanwhile induced by the Devas, tried his artifices upon Shiva, who burnt him to ashes in a fit of anger. At the end the Devas prayed to Shiva to remarry, and Shiva ultimately yielded to their prayers. Such account of marriage of Shiva and Parvati is found in the Puranas viz. the Shiva Purana,<sup>2</sup> the Padma Purana,<sup>3</sup> the Varaha Purana<sup>4</sup> and the Linga Purana.<sup>5</sup>

The Agamas referred to the sculptural representation of the marriage ceremony of Shiva and Parvati, as the Kalyanasundaramurti and described as under.<sup>6</sup>

In the marriage scene of Shiva and Parvati, Kalyanasundaramurti, Shiva and Parvati should be shown as central figures facing east. Vishnu and his consorts Lakshmi and Bhumi acting as parents, should be ready to pour water in the ceremony of giving away the bride to the bridegroom i.e. Kanyadana. In the foreground, Brahma should be shown seated and performing the ceremony of homa. In the background, and at the various distances, eight Vidyasvras, Dikpalas, Siddhas, Yakshas, Rishis, Gandharvas, Matrikas and other guests; Gods and Goddesses should be shown standing in Tribhanga pose with his front right hand stretched as to receive the right arm of the bride, Parvati, and his front left hand should be in Varada Mudra. He should carry Battle-axe and Mriga in the remaining hands. The right arm of Parvati should be stretched out to receive the hand of Shiva. Brahma performing Purohita's rites, should be shown with his usual attributes and pose, and seated on the ground in front of Shiva.

Three beautiful sculptural representations of the Kalyanasundaramurti, are found and noted in the present work. Those of, one is found in the Gangodbhav (Kunda) at Ayad (Panel-1) and two are in the Kumbhashyam temple, Chittor Fort. In the Kumbhashyam temple, one panel is found in the Sabhagruha (Panel-2) and second one is found in the exterior and on the western wall of

of the plinth of the temple (Panel,3). Hereafter, these panel numbers are used in the description.

The Kalyanasundramurti represented in panel 1 and panel 3, are illustrated in figure 1 and figure 2. In all these panels Shiva holds Trident and Cobra in his upper hands and his lower right hand is joined with the right hand of Parvati. In panel 2, the left hand of Parvati carries mirror, while in the remaining panels article placed in her left hand is lost. In all these representations, Brahma is seen seated between Shiva and Parvati and casting oblation in the fire.

It is interesting to note and something rare, that, in panel No.1, the six earthen pots placed one upon the other and making column or stambha, is found depicted on either side of the couple. It is also found in the panel No.3, however, only two earthen pots are used for the purpose.

Another interesting feature is also noticed in these three panels of Kalyanasundaramurti. In panel No.1 & 2 Parvati is shown standing on the left hand side of Shiva, while in panel 3, she is shown standing on the right hand side of Shiva.

KRISHNA-RUKMINI AND

MADHAVA-TULASI VIVAH (Marriage scenes)

Krishna and Madhava, both are referred to as the forms of Vishnu, amongst the Chaturvimsati-murtayah. The goddess Rukmini and Tulasi both are, associated with the Lord Vishnu,

as a consort. In the Puranas, different legends telling their association with Vishnu or his forms are found.

The following account of the marriage of Krishna and Rukmini is found in the Vishnupuranam.<sup>7</sup> The king Bhishmaka had a son Rukmin<sup>6</sup> and a beautiful daughter Rukmini. Krishna felt in love with Rukmini and wanted to marry her. However, her brother Rukmin<sup>6</sup> did not like it and so he managed her marriage with Sisupala. But on the eve of the nuptial, Rukmini was carried off by Lord Hari, i.e. Krishna, and there was big bettle between Krishna and the parents of Rukmini. Krishna destroyed all and killed the enemies. But at the request of Rukmini, he spared her brother Rukmin. Thereafter, Krishna married Rukmini.

Tulasi and her association with Lord Vishnu is too well known to comment. Tulasi is found commonly worshipped by the Vaisnavas in the form of plant. It is upto that extent that no Hindu would like to hurt Tulasi plant. It is said in the Puranas that, the Tulasi was the product emerged at the time of the churning of the ocean. In the Devi Bhagavata and Shri Jaiminiy Asvaghparva, the significance of Tulasi plant, and its association with Vishnu are given in detailed.<sup>8</sup> In one account<sup>9</sup> it is also said that, a woman named Tulasi engaged in religious austerity for a long period, and asked as a boon, that she might become the wife of Vishnu. Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu, knowing of this, cursed Tulasi, and changed her into the plant. Vishnu, however, comforted his follower Tulasi, with the asurance that he would assume the form of Salagarama, and be with her all the time.

Another popular story is known to us. Accordingly, it is narrated like this. The king Jarandhar was creating troubles for Devas. Due to the Shilashakti i.e. Pativrata-dharma, of his wife Vrunda, he was immortal. Vishnu found a solution, he assumed the form of Jarandhar and went to Sati Vrunda. When she came to know the fact, she cursed him and changed him as stone. In the revenge, Vishnu also cursed her, and changed her into the plant. Later on, this stone is being known as Salagrama and the plant as Tulasi.

Various accounts on the relations of Rukmini and Tulasi with the Lord Vishnu are found, however, no textual reference on the sculptural representation of these incidents has come forward. Fortunately, two sculptural representations, presenting the marriage scenes of, Madhava-Tulasi Vivah and Krishna-Rukmini Vivah, are found in the Sabhagruha of the Kumbhashyam temple, Chittor Fort. The inscription dated Samvat 1505, is found on the pedestals of these images. This inscription tells about the stories presented in the images viz. Madhava-Tulasi Vivah and Krishna-Rukmini Vivah.

The panel presenting the scene of Madhava-Tulasi Vivah is illustrated in figure 3. The bride, Tulasi is seen standing on the right hand side of the bridegroom, Madhava. The lower right hand of Madhava is joined with the right hand of Tulasi. His remaining three hands are lost. The left hand of Tulasi is held in Kati hasta Mudra. Brahma, as Purohita, is shown seated

in front of the bridge and the bridegroom, and offering oblations in the sacred fire. A coloum of three earthen pots is depicted on either side of the couple.

The panel presenting the scene of Krishna-Rukmeni Vivah is illustrated in figure 4. The lower right hand of Vishnu is joined with the right hand of Rukmāni. His upper right hand holds Mace. His left hands are lost. Rukmāni has mirror in her left hand. Rukmāni is shown standing on the right hand side of Vishnu. Brahma, as Purohita, is shown seated in front of the bridg and bridegroom, and casting oblations in the sacred fire.

R E F E R E N C E S

- 1 Rao, T.A.G., EHI, II/I pp.337-38.
- 2 Shiva Purana, Rudra Samhita, Parvati Khanda, II, ff.
- 3 Padma Purana, 45 ff.
- 4 Varaha Purana, see, EHI op.cit. pp.337-38.
- 5 Linga Purana, ch.99-103;
- 6 EHI op.cit.pp.337-42.
- 7 Vishnupuranam V/26, pp.387-8.
- 8 Sandesara U.J.Dr., 'Tilasi', Ahmedabad, 1986, pp.48-49.
- 9 Wilkins, N.J., Hindu Mythology, Calcutta, 1982, p.471.