

M I S C E L L A N E O U S I M A G E S

There are number of images found in the area under study, particularly in the Vijayastambha at Chittor Fort, those could not be included in any of the groups discussed in the foregoing chapters. These images are recorded and discussed under the chapter of Miscellaneous Images.

(i) PANDAVAS

The Mahabharata refers to five sons of Pandu, as Pandavas.¹ The Vishnudharmottara Purana² gives information on icons of Pandavas viz. Yudhisthira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva. Accordingly, Yudhisthira should be made with all royal marks, Bhima should be made without beard and moustache, with fatty body, and Mace in his hand. Arjuna should be shown with a crown and red armlets, and he bears a Bow and an Arrow. Lastly, Nakula and Sahadeva should be made with Sword and Shields in hands.

The Vijayastambha at Chittor Fort fortunately preserves a set of six images representing five Pandavas-brothers with their common wife Draupadi. All the images named and inscribed below the images. All of them have two hands. Yudhishthira holds Sword and Book and Bhima holds Mace and Staff, while Arjuna is shown with an Arrow and Bow in hands. Draupadi carries Lotus in her left hand and her right hand is thrown round the neck of Nakula. Nakula carries Shakti and Dagger in his hands. The left hand of Sahadeva is lost and his right hand is placed on Jengha.

(ii) RIVERS

In the conception of the River as Mother, she is considered as the giver of health, wealth, progeny and purification from the pollutions of sin.³

The Vishnudharmottara Purana⁴ states that Ganga rides on Makara (crocodile) and she holds Lotuses in hands, Yamuna, rides on a tortoise, and she holds a Camara and Lotus in her hands. While the Agni Purana⁵ refers to Ganga with Kalash and Lotus in her hands, and Yamuna with Kalash in each hand. Regarding their vehicles, it supports the description given in the Vishnudharmottara Purana. Saraswati is not only the goddess of inspiration or learning, but she is at the same time one of the seven rivers of the early Aryan world.⁶

A set of three female deities with the names viz. Saraswati, Yamuna and Ganga inscribed below the images, is found on the fourth storey of the Vijayastambha at Chittor Fort. This panel is illustrated in figure 1. Each deity is shown standing in Dvibhanga pose and bears lotuses in both the hands. Saraswati has a swan for vehicle, Yamuna a tortoise and Ganga a crocodile.

(iii) SEASONS

No text has come forward to us describing the Iconographical features of different seasons or their anthropomorphical forms. It is interesting to have such set representing different seasons in anthropomorphic forms. Fortunately, the Vijayastambha at Chittor Fort has preserved one set of six images, representing different seasons of the year. They have their respective names inscribed below the images. All the images are standing in Dvibhanga pose and with four hands.

HEMANT is depicted with bull vehicle in the Mahakal form of Rudra. He holds Varada+Aksamala, Trident and Khatvanga in his first three hands, while fourth hand is lost.

SHISHIR is portrayed as a Goddess with bull vehicle and she holds Varada+Aksamala, an overflowing Bowl, Noose and Kalash in her hands.

VASANT is represented without any vehicle and in the Tri-vikram form of Vishnu. He holds Varada+Aksamala, Mace, Disc and Conch in his four hands.

GRISHMA is depicted with bull vehicle in the Mahakal form of Rudra. He holds Varada+Aksamala, Trident, Khatvanga and Bijora in his four hands.

VARSHA is represented as a Goddess. She holds Lotuses in her upper two hands, and holds Varada+Aksamala in lower right hand. She holds fish in her lower left hand.

SHARAD is represented as a Goddess with bull vehicle. She holds Varada+Aksamala, overflow^{ing} Bowl, Lotus and creacent like Cup in her four hands.

Hemant is illustrated in figure 2, Shishir and Vasant in figure 3, while Varsha and Sharad are illustrated in figure 4.

(iv) GANDHARVA

The description of the Gandharvas is not found in the texts so far, however, the Atharva-Veda refers to Gandharvas as a class of Gods.⁷

An image, with a name 'Gandharva' inscribed below the image, is found on the fourth storey of the Vijayastambha at Chittor Fort. It represents male deity standing in Dvibhanga

pose and with four hands. The lower right and the upper left hands are engaged in holding a Vina. His upper right hand is shown in Varada Mudra, while lower left one carries Mace.

(iv) SHITALA

SHITALA,⁸ is the Goddess of small-pox or epidemics. The meaning of the word, 'Shitala', is 'she who makes cold'. Shitala⁹ is worshipped in the hope that she will preserve her worshippers from this dire disease viz. small pox. She is very popular in Bangal. In Rajasthan and Gujarat, she is worshipped by the all classes of the society. Few sculptural representations belonging to the Mediaeval period are also found from these areas.

The Skanda Purana notes about the form of Goddess Shitala. Accordingly, she has two hands carrying Marjani (Broom) and Kalash. She is shown naked and riding on a donkey or ass. On her overhead, the Winnowing pan should be shown.¹⁰

Bhattacharya¹¹ believes, that the image of Kalaratri, an another form of Kali, might have evolved into the image of Shitala. Kalaratri also rides on an ass or donkey, as Shitala does.

The images of Shitala are found from different places of the area under study, which indicates, the wide spreading of Shitala worship in the area.

An image of Shitala with two hands is found on a parapet of the Gate, in Kumbhalgarh. She holds Trident in her right hand and Kalash in the left one. A donkey is standing behind her as if to act as a support to enable her to recline slightly backwards in her Dvibhanga pose.

Second image with four hands is found in the templet located in the Bhaghela Tank, Nagada. It is interesting to note that she has a Winnowing pan held overhead with her upper two hands, and the lower right hand holds in Vyakhyana Mudra and the lower left hand holds in Yoga Mudra. In addition to all this, she is shown riding on a donkey.

An image of Shitala with ten hands, illustrated in figure 5, is found in a templet behind the main temple at Eklingji. Wherein the goddess is shown seated in Ardhaparyankasana, on the back of her vehicle, the donkey. As this image was retouched with cement and lime difficulty is faced in identifying the articles placed in hands. The details of the articles found in the hands of the deity, is given below:

The upper most two hands are holding a Winnowing pan and placed over her head. The articles placed in the three right hands are not identifiable, while the Sword is placed in one of the right hands. The remaining four left hands carry the Shield, Trident, Human head and Cup as articles.

It is interesting to note that some times Shitala is also found in Buddhist Art. Shitala with a Broom in the right hand and the Winnowing pan in the left, and riding on the back of her vehicle, the donkey, is also found depicted in the sculptural representation of Buddhist Goddess Parnasavari, discovered by Bhattasali.¹²

(vi) THE CHURNING OF THE OCEAN

The great cosmic struggle between good and evil or say between Devas and Danavas (Asuras) is narrated in the Myth known as the Samundra Manthana i.e. the Churning of the Ocean. The Vishnupuranam, the Agni Purana, the Mahabharata and other Epics refer to this Myth in detailed.¹³

An instruction received from Vishnu, the Devas allied themselves with the Danavas in order to obtain the nectar of immortality, Amrita, from the sea of Milk by Churning it. Therein, the Churning stick was the mountain Mandara and the Churning rope, the Ananta or Vasuka the great serpent. The Churning stick was placed on the back of Kurma (tortoise), an incarnation of Vishnu. Round the Churning stick, they twisted the serpent, and the Danavas holding its hood while the Devas its tail.

As a result of the friction caused by Churning, masses of Vapour issued from the serpent's mouth,. In the meantime, the sea of Milk produced butter flavoured by the gums and juices

which dropped from the mountain. From the sea of Milk, thus churned by Devas and Danavas uprose the number of divine personalities and things viz. Surabhi, Varuni, Parijata tree, Apsarasas, Moon, Poison, Dhanwantari, Lakshmi, Ganga, Airavatt etc.

Fortunately, the sculptural representation of the above Myth is found in the niche of the outer wall of the Kalika Mata temple, at Chittor Fort. It is illustrated in figure 6. In this image artist has tried to depict the story as described above.

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