CHAPTER V
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In India, terracotta and bronze are also commonly used in making Gaṇeṣa images. In Indonesia, however, no Gaṇeṣa of terracotta is found but images of the deity in bronze, like India, are numerous.

I. Terracotta

Because of being easily available, ductable and inexpensive, clay has popularly been used in India and even elsewhere in the world for making artifacts, for rituals and decorative purposes or play things of children from ancient times onwards. S.C. Kala has rightly observed that "The tradition of worshipping clay images on the eve of important festivals such as Devali and Dasetera has come down even to the present day". It may be surmised that terracotta Gaṇeṣa figurines may have served a religious purpose.

Terracotta images of Gaṇeṣa have been discovered from different parts of India, e.g. Chandraketugarh (Bengal), Andhra Pradesh, Maharastra, Mathura, Thanesar (Haryana) etc.

The earliest probable example of the god in terracotta of the 1st century A.D., identified as Gaṇeṣa with consort, was found from Chandraketugarh. S.S. Biswas describes the specimen as follows:-

The terracotta toy-cart depicts the elephant god with a female companion, probably his consort. The latter is decked with turban and earrings. By her right hand she held a ladduka before his trunk and her left hand clings to
a tusk. The diademed head of the deity dominates the composition. The presence of his consort in anthropomorphic form and the ladduḍa justify his identification as Gaṇeśa. 8

If due credence be given to the view mentioned above, the terracotta in question is the earliest example representing the god along with Śakti. 9 In the stone sculpture, however, this tradition may be traced back only up to the Gupta period. 10

In most of the examples, the god is represented as seated in ardhaparyāṅka pose, having two hands, holding modakas in the left, on which the trunk dips, and an indistinct object in the right hand. But in the specimen preserved in the Asutosh Museum (Acc. no. PH. 93), the bowl full of modakas is held in the right hand instead of the left. His left hand holds some indistinct object. The trunk is turned to right picking the modakas. The god is seated as usual in ardhaparyāṅka pose.

In the specimens of Andhra Pradesh, the god turns his trunk to right although the modaka is held in the left hand. His trunk being turned towards right touches the indistinct object held by the right hand. The god is two-handed and seated as usual in ardhaparyāṅka pose. The specimens are dated to 5th-7th century A.D. 11

In one terracotta image of Gaṇeśa preserved in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi (Acc. no. 1606) (Pl. VII), assignable to the 6th century A.D., the god figures as peculiar for he is seated with both the legs horizontally bent and the soles of the feet touch each other. This sitting pose is not
common in Indian sculpture. This specimen is one of the two examples representing the god seated in this pose. The other is of stone reported from Andhra Pradesh, assignable to Viṣṇukundin period. Remarkable to mention that this posture is the most favourite in Indonesian sculpture. Almost all images of Indonesian Gaṇeśa are seated in this pose.

The hood of snake forming the nāgopavīta placed on the left shoulder of the god represented in the above-mentioned terracotta image, is also peculiar to the Indian sculpture. This feature is reminiscent of that of Indonesian sculpture, in which the knot of the nāgopavīta is constantly placed on the left shoulder of the god.

In this terracotta the god holds danta, aṅgamālā, paraśu and bowl of sweets respectively in the four hands in the pradakṣiṇā order. The trunk is as usual turned to the left touching the bowl. Like other specimens this image is also crudely finished and devoid of ornaments.

Of the terracotta specimens, two examples preserved in the Mathura Museum (Acc. no. 54.3867 and 71.6) do not show clearly whether the god is represented as seated or standing for the lower part of the body is badly broken. In the former, the hands of the god are also broken while in the latter, the god clearly has two hands but the right one is partly broken while the left holds sweet bowl into which the turnk dips. It is remarkable that the hood of the snake forming the upavīta (Acc. no.71.6) is resembles the upavīta of the image preserved in the Bharat Kala Bhavan mentioned above, peculiarly placed at the left shoulder of the god.
Dancing Ganeśa is also depicted in terracotta. The example is found in Paharpur (Bangladesh), assignable to the 8th-9th century A.D. The god is presented as having four hands, holding a bunch of flower and a goad in the upper left and right, while the normal left rests on the thigh and the normal right is held in gift-bestowing posture. His vehicle, a mouse, is seen in between his legs. The god dances as usual in catura pose.

II. Bronze

The images of bronze were probably very useful for the purpose of religious processions and easy portability. During a festival, the god may be tastefully bedecked and placed on a mount, carried in procession around the main streets of a city or village settlement.

Ganeśa images in bronze from Tamil Nadu share their geographical traits with those of stone examples of the mentioned region. For example, the typical karanḍa-mukutā, the disposition of the slim trunk which runs down vertically for most of its length on the paunch and finally curves to touch the sweets in the left palm, the waist band which is typically treated as falling in small "U" in between the thighs and many others, have much in common with those of the images in stone of the mentioned region. These features may be seen in the examples from Government Museum, Madras (AIA. Pl. 637), Tanjore Art Gallery (AIIS.162.77), Śiva temple at Pattisvaram, Tanjore (EHI, Pl. XV.1), Thanjavur (MES. Pl. 139) etc. In these examples, the god is standing slightly
bent, having four hands and holding common attributes like danta, paraśu, aśamālā and a single modaka.

The standing Gaṇeśa image from Jambukeśvara temple, Thiravanaiikka, Thiruchi district (MES. Pls. 143-4) shows unusual feature. He has less elongated and not so slim trunk, an upavīta of cobra (which is very rare in the sculpture from south), a bowl heaped with modakas and a long handled axe vertically placed on the ground - all of these are not usual. His jaṭāmukuta which is symmetrically treated sideways is also an uncommon feature in the Tamil sculpture. So also the disposition of his back hands which are disposed lowered rather than uplifted and a string of beaded-pendents going round the head and waist of the god are peculiar. As the image shows unusual feature, R. Nagaswamy suggests that "This image could have been brought either from Bengal during the campaign of Rājendra Cholā I (A.D. 1020) or by his successors during their conquest of Kalinga".20

A seated image along with his Sakti from the South (particular provenance is unknown), assignable to 15th century A.D., preserved in the National Museum, New Delhi (Acc. no. 67.72) (Pl. XXXIII) is also notable. Coming from the South, probably from Karnataka as indicated below, the god is characterized by highly emphasized pot belly touching the seat while sitting. The conical shape of the headdress and the disposition of the Sakti's legs dangling down are also typical features of southern sculpture. Other features of the image like the shape of the trunk which is short in size with most of its length coiling and holding laddu in the tip, the presence
of the mouse and the use of udarabandha of cobra, are also uncommon in the Tamil sculpture both in bronze and stone. Some other details like the treatment of the knot of the cobra, the moulded conical crown and the end of the girdle falling frontally on the pedestal, are however reminiscent of the details of an image from Mysore (Pl. XXI). Hence, the image probably comes from Karnataka. The presence of the mouse and udarabandha of cobra in the image also indicate in the same direction.

Interestingly, the god is two tusked and ten-armed holding a laddu in the normal right and a danta in the normal left while embracing his Śakti. The other hands are shown carrying a gada, triśṭīla, aṅkaśāla and other objects which are not easily identifiable.

A bronze Heramba-Gaṇapati, a five elephant-headed god mounting on a powerful lion with two of his hands posed in abhaya and varada, datable to 15th century A.D., comes from Nilayatakshiyamman temple, Nagapatanam. The rest of the hands carry a paraśu, pāśa, danta, aṅkuśa and other objects which are indistinct. His vehicle, the lion, is represented as walking to left with his head turned to left and shown frontally.

The same form of the god is also seen in the stone sculpture from Ādipurīśvarar temple (Tiruvorriyur) and Chidambaram. These images including that of bronze share some common features. They, however, differ in the following aspects -

(i) In the example from Ādipurīśvarar temple, the god is seated on the pedestal which is supported by a lion
represented as walking. In the other two, however, their pedestals are absent.

(ii) In the bronze images, four of the five heads of the god are placed as facing the four cardinal points and one is depicted centrally on the top, while in stone, each two minor heads flank the main one.

The difference in the depiction of the five heads of Heramba-Gaṇapati in bronze and stone may be explained by the fact that in the former medium the god is treated in the round and in the latter he is provided with a back-slab making it impossible to show the four heads in the cardinal directions. However, coming from the South, they have the same typical characteristics of details, such as the conical headdress, slim trunk and belly touching the seat.

Two bronzes from Achutrajpur (Orissa) are referred to by Debala Mitra.25 One of the two is dated to the 9th-10th century A.D., while the specific date of the other one is not known but it is supposed to be slightly earlier. They are seated in ardha-paryāṅka having four hands. The former image holds sweet-balls, radish, hatchet and modaka-bowl in his respective four hands, while the other one shows rosary, hatchet, tusk and modaka-bowl. The former has a pierced halo while the latter a solid one. The crescent usually used on the crown of the images of the god coming from East India (Bihar and Bengal are included) may be seen in the former but is absent in the latter. The seating pose of the god, in which, the left leg is bent at the foot, is a rare feature in the stone images from this region. Usually the left leg is flatly
placed on the seat (Fig. 94).

The disposition of back hands is also different as compared with that of stone images dated to 9th-10th century. In the stone sculptures, the back hands of the god are usually lower than the normal ones, while in the bronze in question, his back hands are raised up. However, the regional features shown by these bronzes are that the god is represented as having a high crown and short trunk. The coiling trunk looking like putting a modaka into the mouth is typical of the images of this region. We, thus, see that these bronzes betray both conventional and non-conventional feature.

In Bihar, bronze images of Gaṅeśa are known to have been obtained from a number of places in the state. One of them coming from Belva in the Saran district is interesting. The god is seated as usual in an easy posture, has four arms carrying a rosary in his front right, a battle-axe in the back right, a flower in the back left and bowl of sweets in the front left hand to which turns the trunk of the god, relishing the sweets in the pot. Interestingly, the god is seated on a miniature lotus emerging from the drum over which is placed a liṅga. This is a very rare example where Gaṅeśa is associated with Śiva-liṅga. However, this is not without significance. It is well known that liṅga is one of the forms of Śiva and Gaṅeśa is the son of Śiva. Gaṅeśa is thus, associated here with a liṅga.

A bronze Gaṅeśa preserved in the Raipur Museum, Madhya Pradesh also shows some remarkable features. The god is seated as usual in ardhaparyāṇa but the left leg bent
horizontally is treated unusually as flat. In the sculptures from East India, however, this disposition of the leg is very popular. The ardhayogapatta goes round his right leg vertically bent. This also makes the god unusual in the sculptures from North India. "As is usual in the case of northern figure of Gaṇeṣa, there is a bowl full of modaka which he is picking up with his trunk most of its length running horizontally". But in the sculptures from Orissa, ardhayogapatta is very usual.

From Himachal Pradesh there are some bronze examples. However, they do not betray any stereotyped traits which may constitute the style of the images of the god geographically. Only in two images from Brahmaur and Chamba respectively, the god wears similar type of headdress but different in details. In the former, the headdress comprises of three crescents with the central one enclosing the medallion which is treated predominantly, while in the latter, the crescent is absent and the medallion is less predominant. This kind of headdress, as already referred to, is the result of impact from Kashmir.

The other image from Himachal which deserves to be mentioned is the one from Pahari preserved in the National Museum, New Delhi. The god is seated as usual in sukhāsana on a high throne. He holds a lotus in his upper right hand and axe in the upper left; the lower right is disposed in abhaya while the corresponding left has a sweet-ball. It is interesting that the god is attended by two mice. This feature is unique for no other example is depicted as such in Indian
sculpture. In the Indonesian bronze images, however, this
feature occurs; even more than two mice are depicted sometimes
(NMJ.532, Pl. XXXV.b).

Bronze images of the Hindu deities, and particularly of
Gaṇeśa, are very rare in Western India (of the period under
review). One example (the particular finds spot is unknown), now
preserved in the National Museum, New Delhi (Pl. XXXIV)
assignable to the 15th century A.D., deserves to be mentioned.
The god is seated in sukhāsana on the cylindrical seat, having
four hands, holding probably danta in the normal right,
modakapātra in the normal left, paraśu in the upper right and
lotus in the upper left. The trunk is as usual turned to the
left touching the object held by the left hand. A crest is
discernible on the head of the god. This is a feature commonly
seen in the Gupta and early mediaeval sculptures, but its
recurrence in the 15th century seems to be somewhat unusual.

Another very interesting feature of this bronze image
is that the snake which usually serves as an upavīta forms a
necklace on the chest of the god and then coming from behind the
shoulder and the back, its head touches the anklet of the right
foot. Two female figures are standing flanking the god. They
are probably Rddhi and Buddhī, the two consorts of the god, the
embodiment of success or prosperity and intelligence, as referred
to in the Matsya Purāṇa. Behind the god, there is a trefoil
backslab surmounted by stūpikā. This kind of backslab is unusual
in the sculptures from West India but is commonly seen in
sculptures from East India.

The bronze images of the god, thus, show him as seated,
standing and dancing as we find in stone also. The geographical characteristics of the stone images are generally retained in the bronze of the respective regions but the adoption of some typical features of a region in bronzes of a neighbouring state, indicating impact is also observable. That tantricism made its impact on the depiction of Gaṇeśa probably in the hills of Chamba displayed in the exhibition held at the Prince of Wales Museum in collaboration with the Heras Institute, St. Xavier's College, Bombay, 22nd August-2nd September,'82.37

III. Indonesian bronzes

More than two dozen Gaṇeśa images of bronze are known from Indonesia.38 For the sake of convenience we have grouped them under the terms: usual, unusual and unique.

A. Usual images

The usual features of Gaṇeśa images in Indonesian sculpture are already mentioned, i.e., if the god is seated, his both legs are horizontally bent and flatly placed on the seat, with the soles of the feet touching each other; when standing he is disposed in samabhaṅga, having four hands, holding a danta and a bowl in the normal right and left constantly and aṅgamālā and paraśu in the back ones and in very rare cases he also holds mūlaka and triśūla (in bronzes) and pāśa, câmara and lotus (in stone). His jaṭāmukuta is frequently fronted with ardhacandraṅkapāla. A snake serving as upavīta is knotted on the left shoulder of the god. These are
the usual and typical features of Gaṇeśa in Indonesian sculpture both in bronze and stone. Also usual but found only in East Javanese sculpture is the use of the skull-ornaments. However, these ornaments are rare in bronze. 39 Mouse, the vehicle of the god, is usually present in the bronze images but absent in stone. In the bronze preserved in the National Museum, Jakarta (Pl. XXXV.b), the god is attended by four mice, two of which are depicted on the front of the pedestal facing each other, while the other two are shown creeping on two other sides of the pedestal. The use of back slab topped by a parasol is also usual in bronze but not in stone. However, in Indian sculpture, especially from South India, this feature is usual in stone 40 but not in bronze. In the bronzes of Bihar, Bengal and Orissa, however, this feature is commonly seen in the Buddhist images but not in those of Gaṇeśa. 41

A characteristic feature of the bronze images of the god in Indonesia is that he holds the attributes in a much more elegant and artistic way than in stone (Fig. 197 & 207).

One standing image preserved in the National Museum, Jakarta (Acc. no. 535; Pl. XXXVI.c) deserves to be mentioned particularly. The god figures as usual but he might have been attended by another figure which is now missing. The traces of the feet of the missing figure remain visible on the pedestal at the left side of the god. It is hard to identify the missing figure. The rear of his head of the main figure (Pl. XXXVII.c) is bedecked with a rosette, a rare ornament in Indonesian sculpture but one which usually occurs in the bronzes from South India, though its design may be different. 42
B. Unusual images

Two images belonging to this category are preserved in the National Museum, Jakarta (Acc. no. 8434/c.42 and 534a). The former is so small (2.5 cm high) that the details of attributes and ornaments of the god are indistinct. The god is seated in ardhaparyāṇa and having four hands. As already pointed out the ardhaparyāṇāsana for the god, though quite usual in India, is very rare and unusual in Indonesia. Moreover, his pot belly is emphasized touching the seat. This again is unusual but it is very common in the sculptures from South India.

In the latter (Acc. no. 534a), the god is unusually seated in sukhāsana on the lotus seat, with his right leg supported by a smaller lotus (Fig. 240). It is remarkable to mention that the disposition of the left leg (flatly placed on the seat, showing no bend at the foot) resembles that of the images from East India. It is also unusual that dānta and bowl are respectively held in the left and right normal hands rather than in the right and left. The trunk is peculiarly turned to right touching the bowl. The head of the nāga usually making knot on the left shoulder of the god emerges above his right ear. In India, this feature occurs once in the images from Dinajpur, preserved in the Asutosh Museum, Calcutta (Acc. no. T.163; Pl. VIII). The headdress which is conspicuously treated sideways is also unusual in Indonesian sculpture. Thus, the impact of the East India sculpture is quite evident.

In the other image (from central Java, particular findspot is unknown, datable to c. 830-870), the god holds dānta and bowl in the normal left and right hands and a radish
and **trisúla** in the back right and left hands respectively. He has a crescent unusually adorning the side of his **jaṭāmukuta**, whereas the usual ornament is **ardhachandrakāpāla** fronted on the **jaṭāmukuta**. As usual the god from Java is seated with both legs drawn up onto the seat of his lotus throne, with foot soles together in the typical Javanese way. Regarding the shape of the throne, Pauli Lunsingh et al have aptly observed that it is a Javanese attempt to imitate a throne of a southeast Bangladesh bronze.46

Another image is preserved in the Ethnographic Museum, Leiden, from Central Java, dated 9th century A.D.47 The god is unusually seated in **ardhaparyāṅka** with an ascetic's band (**yogapāṭṭa**) (Fig. 248). The left leg bent horizontally is disposed resembling the typical disposition of seated Gaṇeśa from East India. Regarding the throne on which the god is seated, the scholars mentioned above observe

This kind of elaborate throne, in which the actual cushion is elevated by supports in the form of lions pouncing on the back of an elephant, with a pleated cloth hanging down from the seat, is found in the bronze sculpture from the Comilla and Chittagong districts in Bangladesh.48

C. Unique Images

There are three images which may be regarded as unique, for they show peculiar features which are not to be found elsewhere even in their own area or region. Two of them are preserved in the National Museum, Jakarta, while the third one is in the Telangu temple, Bali.
1. National Museum, Jakarta

(a) Acc. no. 7953/c.42. The unique feature of this image is the protective gear of the head and the trunk as if he were a war god. It is shaped like a bell when seen from the back (Pl. XXXIX.a) and along the projecting seat when seen from the front (Pl. XXXVIII.a). Also the face of the god is carved like that of a horse. Only because the trunk is discernible curved to the left touching the bowl held by his left hand, he is recognised as the elephant headed god. He is seated as usual, having two hands, holding a bowl in the left but the right is broken. His upavīta and anklets resemble rope and his armlets unusually resemble a snake.

(b) Acc. no. c. 41. This image from Central Java is not well-finished. The details of the dress and ornaments are indistinct. But he is clearly seen standing having two hands. The hands are disposed in aṅjalimudrā. This feature does not occur elsewhere. The figure is thus carved like that of a devotee and betrays very crude workmanship.

2. Telangu temple, Bali

The image is still under worship. The god is shown seated conventionally as usual in Indonesia and has two hands (Pl. XL). The unique feature of the image, however, is a keris held in his right hand (Fig. 22). The left hand holds the bowl as usual. Keris is a traditional weapon which was used in ancient times in warfare. The possession of this weapon by the god is not without significance. Probably the intention of the artist to put the keris in the hand of Ganeśa was to represent
him as possessing a natural power to destroy the enemy (obstacles of his worshippers). The image may be dated to 15th century A.D. on stylistic grounds.\textsuperscript{49}

To sum up, we thus see that the bronze images of Ganesa from India and Indonesia share some common features as well as betray distinctive characteristics. The bronzes from the latter seem to be affiliated to East and South India than other parts of the country. Thus the conclusions derived from the study of the sitting posture, the upavītā, the scarf and other features of the stone images of the two countries made in the preceding chapter is corroborated by the bronze image also. The unusual and the unique features of some of the bronzes, however, reveal that the Indonesian artists were not slaves of tradition and convention but also made innovations to create interesting examples now and then.
Notes and References


2. Kala, op.cit.


4. Sharma, op.cit., p. 126; Figs. 42, 42.2, 42.2A.

5. Ibid., p. 126.

6. MTR.71.6; MTR.54.3867.

7. Mohinder Singh, "Terracottas from Thanesar", Ajaya-Sri: Recent Studies in Indology (Prof. Ajay Mitra Shastri Felicitation Volume), Editor: Devendra Handa, pp. 403-9; Fig. 57.


9. In the Mahācaitya from Amaravati, Sarma observes that Gaṇachipa is accompanied by Gaṇeśā (see Sarma, opcit., p. 127). However, the god in this coping of the Mahācaitya is not in his standarnized form, so that Coomaraswamy names the figure as elephant-headed yakṣa (see Coomaraswamy (1971), p. 7.

10. GAE, Pl. 3.a.


12. RLK, p. 36.


16. MES, p. 137.

17. The others are (i) upavita of strings, (ii) suspended sash on both sides of the hips, (iii) holding single modaka.

18. AIIS.92.11; AIIS.91.68; LCT, Fig. 75; LCT, Fig. 220.

19. MES, Pls. 141-142; MES, Pl. 1.145.
20. EHI, p. 139.
21. EHI, p. 57.
22. Ibid., Pl. XIII.
23. MCT, Pl. 311.
24. EMI, Pl. IV.7.
27. Ibid., p. 56.
28. Sivaramamurtti, *Indian Bronzes*, Bombay, 1962, p. 32, Fig. 21.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Mathur, Asha Rani, (ed.), *The Great Tradition — Indian Bronze Masterpieces*, New Delhi, 1988, p. 104, Fig. 2; p. 113, Fig. 12; Ohri, V.C., *SWH*, Fig. 4.65; Sivaramamurtti, *Masterpieces of Indian Sculpture in the National Museum*, Delhi, 1971, Pl. XXIV; Sharma, B.N., "Pahari Bronze", *Art of Himachal*, Editor: Ohri, Simla, 1975, pp. 15-25, Fig. 8; Aryan, K.C., *Polk Bronzes of North Western India*, Delhi, 1973, Pl. 78-79; Vis. G. Figs. 18, 46.
32. Mathur, *op.cit.*, p. 104, Fig. 2; Ohri, *op.cit.*, Fig. 4.65.
33. Sivaramamurtti (1971), Pl. XXIV; Mathur, *op.cit.*, p. 113, Fig. 12.
34. Sharma, B.N., *op.cit.*, Fig. 8.
35. There are, however, some other deities like Kṣemaṅkārī, Gajalakṣmī etc. which are sometimes shown with two lions. Depiction of the lañchana twixt may be seen in Jain images also.
36. 260.55.
37. Vis. G., Fig. 46.
38. Most of the known examples are preserved in the National Museum, Jakarta, i.e., Acc. nos. 527, 528, 529, 530, 531 (c.33), 532, 532a, 533, 533a, 533b, 534 (c.39), 534a, 535, 5573, 5829, 7953 (c.42), 8434(c.42), 8589(c.41); others in the Sasana Budya Museum, Acc. no. E.18; Telangu temple
Bali; DAI, Pl. 25; DAI, p. 81; DAI, Pl. 23, p. 95; there is one image in the National Museum Jakarta without Acc. no.

39. For an example of Gaṇeśa bronze with skull-ornament see GAE, Fig. 34.a.

40. AIIS.92.11; BHJ. Pl. 21.6.

41. Kempers (1933), Figs. 4, 16, 17, 30; Mitra, *op. cit.*, Figs. 41-45, 48, 49, 59.

42. MES, PIs. 23, 25, 49, 53.

43. SOI, Fig. 61.

44. SOI, p. 217.

45. DAI, Pl. 25.

46. DAI, p. 77.

47. GAE, Pl. 32.a; DAI, Pl. 23.

48. DAI, p. 75.