

SCULPTURE INSPIRED BY KĀLIDĀSA

BY

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Curator, Archaeological Section, Government Museum, Madras

WITH A FOREWORD BY

THE RT. HON'BLE M. R. JAYAKAR,

M.A., LL.D., D.C.L., P.C.



कण्ठाश्लेषप्रणयिनि जने किं पुनर्दूरसंस्थे

THE SAMSKRITA AC.
MADRAS

1942

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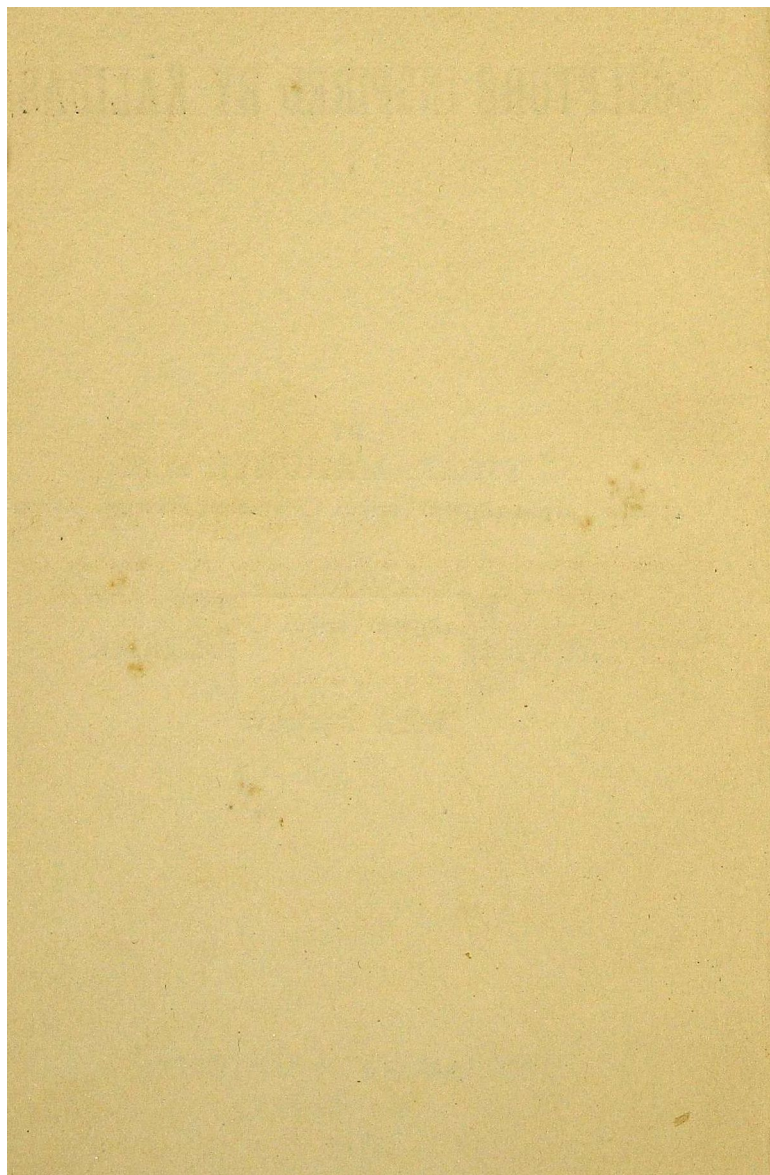
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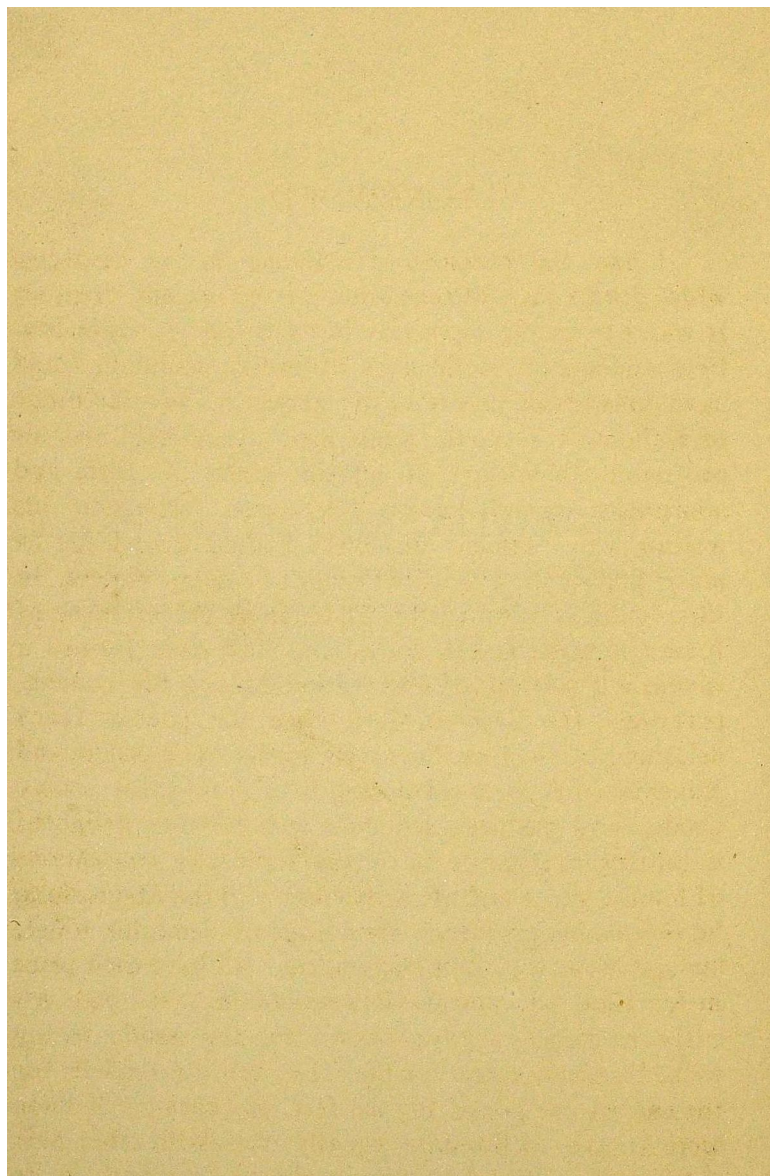


To

F. H. GRAVELY, Esq., D.Sc., F.N.I., F.R.A.S.B.,

*Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras (Retired), a great savant and
true friend of Sanskrit Culture, this work is dedicated as a mark of
respect by his devoted assistant*

C. SIVARAMAMURTI



FOREWORD

I had the pleasure of listening to the discourse which forms the subject-matter of the present treatise. It was a revealing topic rare in its range of originality. Few students of Kalidasa or of Indian sculpture could have done better justice to the subject. The wide range of Kalidasa's aesthetic sense and attainments and his profound knowledge of human grace of form and adornment are well known. Scattered throughout his writings the student discovers a deep knowledge of music and of the exquisite beauty of Indian dances. In fact, Kalidasa's knowledge of feminine gracefulness of form and toilet is well known and must have formed a favourable subject of observation among his contemporaries. He lived in days when the popular fancy delighted to dwell on the lovely forms of Yakshas and Yakshinis and their entrancing lives in mystical snowy abodes, and gradually sculptors and painters delighted in putting in stone or on canvas Kalidasa's conceptions of human grace and attractiveness. In the *Meghaduta*, he reveals his profound knowledge of feminine toilet: buds, flowers, blossoms and tendrils—all have their place in feminine adornment—flowers for the braid, buds for curly ringlets, sportive lotuses for the hands to toy with, fragrant pollen for the face, delicate tendrils for the ear, nature's dyes for the feet and eyes. All these were known to Kalidasa equally well with other soft artifices that make feminine loveliness so superb in its

composition. His poems gave expression to all the knowledge and feelings that were probably the common possession of the cultured men and women of his times and it is perhaps a more true theory to hold that the sculptures reproduced in the present treatise are only instances of an unintentional parallelism rather than that they represent a deliberate design to reproduce Kalidasa's ideas in rock or stone. It is undoubtedly true that these sculptures, whatever their true origin, have caught and perpetuated in a permanent and imperishable form what were only evanescent ideas at his time. The amorous poses of his Yakshinis would have been lost to the gaze of an admiring world so easily forgetful of its geniuses. The sculptures shown in the treatise have been selected with great care by the author and are typically expressive of Kalidasa's ideas—though perhaps not intended for that purpose. It denotes great research on the part of the author, both in the region of sculpture and poetry, to be able to make this critical selection and to identify with passages in Kalidasa's works. It indicates a range of research and scholarship rare in these utilitarian times. We must all feel grateful to the author for his wonderful production. Let us hope that the publication will evoke a new vista of scholarship and enquiry, so fruitful in its consequences on the present age of dead routine and uniformity.

ASHRAM,
WINTER ROAD,
MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY
April 28, 1942

M. R. JAYAKAR

PREFACE

I consider it a delightful privilege to place before the public this beautiful booklet, by my friend and former pupil—Sri C. Sivaramamurti, on behalf of the Saṁskṛta Academy, Madras. This booklet contains the paper which Sri Sivaramamurti read on the Kālidāsa day (29th September, 1941), at Madras, before a distinguished audience, with the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Jayakar in the Chair.

The subject of the discourse in this booklet is “*Sculpture inspired by Kālidāsa*”. To Kālidāsa, the whole of creation is *art* and the *creator* is the *greatest of artists*. To him, the *Ardhanārīśvara synthesis* symbolises the great synthesis of *charm* and *response*—the *artist* and the *art-critic*—*sculpture, painting, music, dance* and *such other arts* on the one hand and *poetry* on the other—*form* and *content*—all *speech* and all *thought*. Readers of Kālidāsa ought to be able to see that he had complete faith in this *great synthesis* and he *lived this synthesis*, through and through, in his life as *poet* and as *man*. Every endeavour to understand and appreciate Kālidāsa in this way is highly praiseworthy. A very successful endeavour in this direction has been made by Sri Sivaramamurti, in this booklet, in a manner which is quite worthy of him, as a talented *artist-scholar*. Sri Sivaramamurti's mind always

dwells in the realm of art and revels in it. He is one of the exceptionally gifted Sanskrit scholars who could expound clearly and sweetly a theme of this kind. How well he has done his work it is for *sahṛdayas* to judge. An eminent *sahṛdaya* adorning the world of politics, the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Jayakar, has given high praise, quite deservedly, in his foreword to Sri Sivaramamurti's artistic sense and work. To this eminent son of Bhāratavarṣa, the Saṁskṛta Academy tenders its grateful and respectful thanks for the foreword he has furnished to Sri Sivaramamurti's booklet.

The sketches illustrating this booklet were all drawn by Sri Sivaramamurti himself, on the basis of several ancient sculptures specially selected by him. Some of the blocks for these sketches were lent by the editors of the Journal of Oriental Research, Madras and the Free Lance Writer in which the particular sketches were published to illustrate Sri Sivaramamurti's articles. The other blocks were all prepared by the Saṁskṛta Academy, Madras. The thanks of the Academy are due to the editors for their kindness in having lent the blocks of the sketches which appeared in their journals.

In the case of this publication also, as in the case of all the previous publications, the Saṁskṛta Academy feels particularly indebted to the Proprietor of the Madras Law Journal Press—Sri R. Narayanaswami Aiyar—for his hearty co-operation and help, in the endeavour of the Academy to print and publish, from time to time, useful matter in a handy and attractive form. The typographical execution and the get-up in

the case of this publication are quite consistent with the high standard usually expected in the books printed in the Madras Law Journal Press, Mylapore.

The Samskr̥ta Academy would like immensely to issue publications of this kind, bearing in mind the significance of the following *epigram*:—

“All *art* is *poetry* and all *poetry* is *art*”.

“न तज्ज्ञानं न तच्छिल्पं न सा विद्या न सा कला ।

जायते यन्न काव्याङ्गमहो भूमा महाकवेः ॥”

Dated 7—7—1942.

(Camp)

Ganapatiagraharam

(Via) Ayyampet,

Tanjore District,

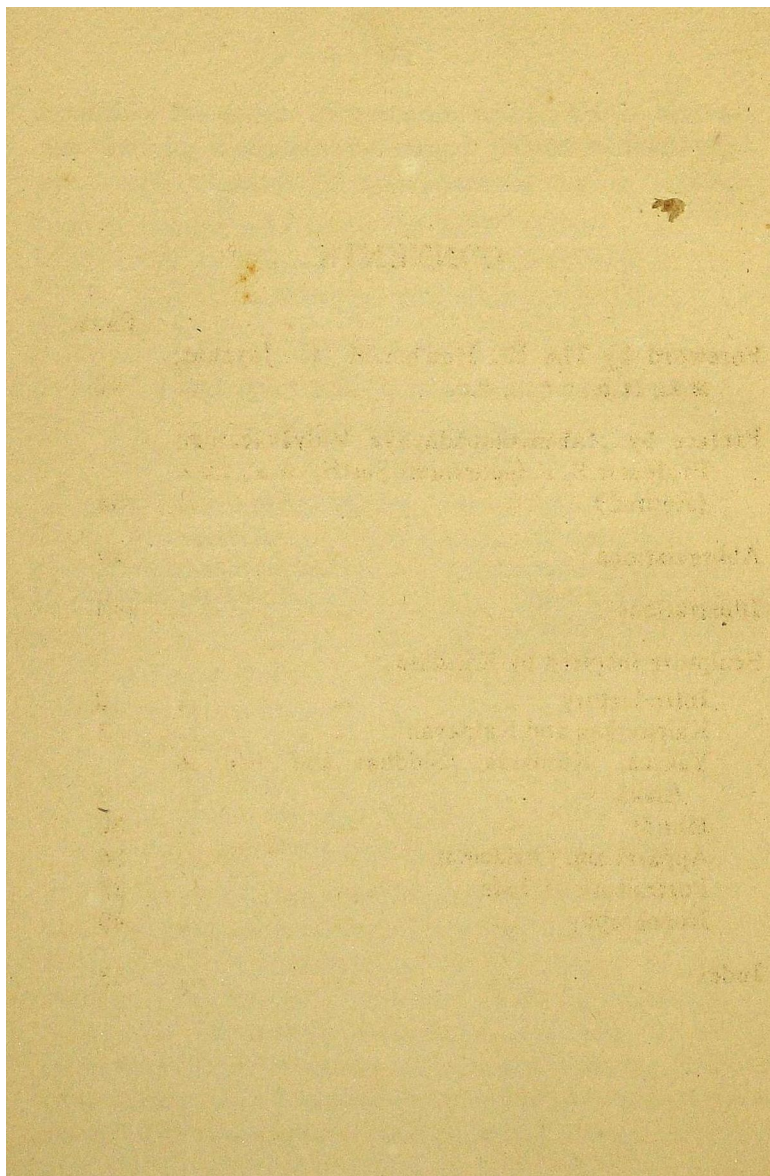
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S. KUPPUSWAMI SASTRI,

President.

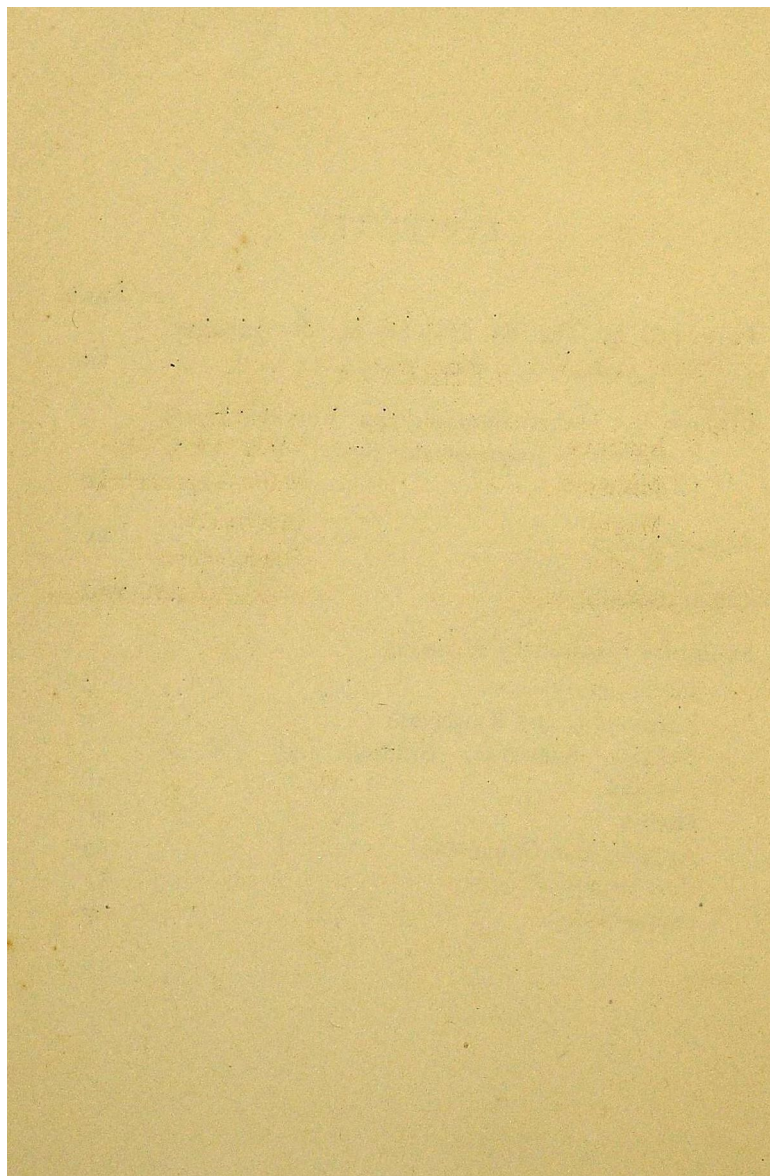
Samskr̥ta Academy,

Mylapore, Madras.



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ABBREVIATIONS

Kumāra

Mālavikā

Megha

Raghu

Śākuntalam

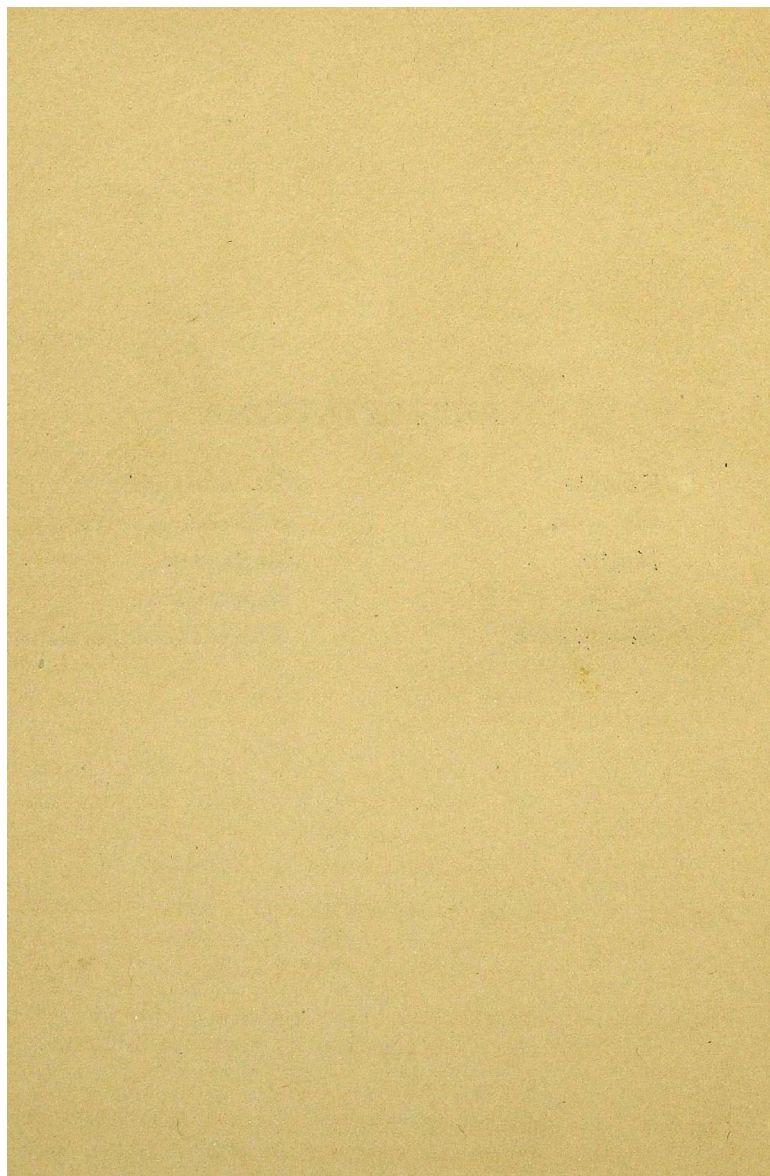
Kumārasambhava

Mālavikāgnimitra

Meghadūta

Raghuvaṃśa

Abhijñānaśākuntalam



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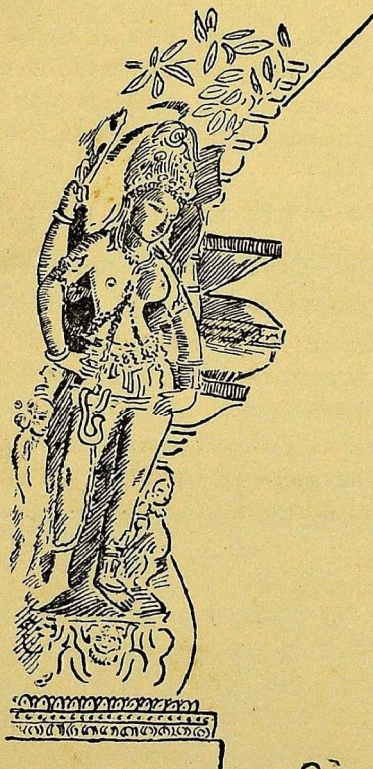
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SCULPTURE INSPIRED BY KĀLIDĀSA



Chiramanu
4th June 33

वागर्थाविव संपृक्तौ वागर्थप्रतिपत्तये ।

जगतः पितरौ वन्दे पार्वतीपरमेश्वरौ ॥ Raghu. i, 1.

INTRODUCTORY*

Kālidāsa is the most beloved of all our poets. His sensuousness has always endeared him to poets and readers alike. Indeed, his writings are so charming that Bāṇa compares them to sweet, fresh blossoms, lovely and lovable—

निर्गतासु न वा कस्य कालिदासस्य सूक्तिषु ।

प्रीतिर्मधुरसान्द्रासु मञ्जरीष्विव जायते ॥ Harṣacarita i, 16.

Fragrant are the memories of his verses. They are enough to inspire the greatest in any field of art. Kālidāsa is a poet to inspire, his knowledge of fine arts being of the highest order. No greater tribute to dance has been paid than that by Kālidāsa who calls it the sweet ocular sacrifice—

देवानामिदमामनन्ति मुनयः कान्तं क्रतुं चाक्षुषम् ।

Mālavikā. Act i, 4.

His musical appreciation is voiced in the line मायूरी मदयति मार्जना मनांसि Mālavikā. Act i. There is perhaps no work of his but has its every page revealing his aesthetic taste. Kālidāsa is not only “the poet’s poet”, but also “the artist’s poet”.

Kālidāsa’s inspiration has been everywhere. In his own time and later, all over the land, his verses were

* Paper read before the Samskr̥ta Academy, Madras on the Kālidāsa Day on the 29th of September, 1941.

on the lips of every devotee of art. Painters and sculptors loved to ponder over his lovely descriptions and inimitable pen-pictures; and they became part of their aesthetic culture. Without an effort these found expression in their works as they chiselled the stone or painted the wall.

The days when Kālidāsa lived were days of popular and ardent worship of Yakṣas. Mauryan, Śuṅga and Sātavāhana art has many beautiful examples of Yakṣas and Yakṣiṇīs. Classical forms of the Supreme Deities were honoured and worshipped. But Yakṣas had a more popular appeal among the common folk. The Megha-dūta is a sublime presentation of the Yakṣa theme.

KALPAVRKṢA AND KALPAPAVALLI

Many an attitude of the Yakṣas and Siddhas described in this lyric has been utilised by the sculptor. The Kalpavrṣa and Kalpavallī became motifs of great absorbing interest and whole rail copings were covered with the lovely meandering creeper with ornaments and silks peeping through its foliage and blossoms.

Contemporary sculptors in the Śuṅga empire working at Bharhut embellished the rail coping with the Kalpavallī motif. Even in distant Daśārṇa the ivory carvers of Vidiśa, the city that Kālidāsa has so tenderly described, have embellished the Sāñchi gateway with the Kalpavallī and pairs of Siddhas and Guhyakas in amorous attitudes. Linked up with the Kalpavrṣa concept is that of the Vanadevatās, kindly spirits that delight in showering gifts on those who seek their bounty. The Divine Tree is often represented in early

sculpture with soft silks, dukūlas, hāras, aṅgadas, kuṇ-
dalas and other ornaments and apparel peeping through
their boughs recalling the lines of Kālidāsa

क्षौमं केनचिदिन्दुपाण्डु तरुणा मङ्गल्यमाविष्कृतं
निष्ठ्यूतश्चरणोपयोगसुभगो लाक्षारसः केनचित् ।

Sākuntalam. Act iv.

Sometimes as at Bodhgaya and Mathura the hands of
the Vanadevatā laden with gifts show themselves from
near the clumps (fig. 5) and answer the lines

अन्येभ्यो वनदेवताकरतलैरापर्वभागोत्थितै-
र्दत्तान्याभरणानि तत्किसलयोद्भेदप्रतिद्वन्दिभिः ॥

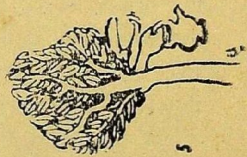
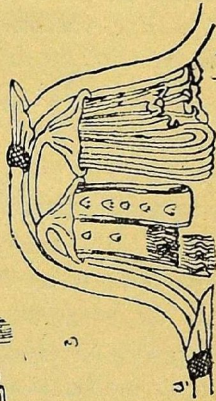
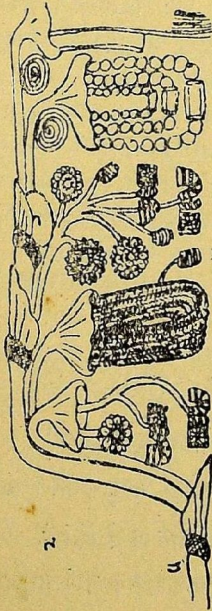
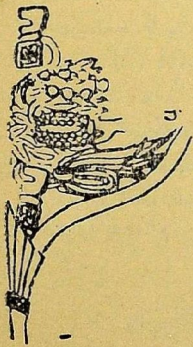
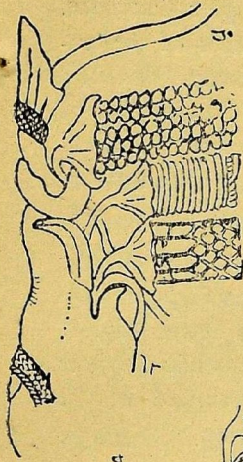
Sākuntalam. Act iv.

The Kalpavṛkṣa or vallī is the storehouse of all ob-
jects of adornment and toilet for the citizens of Alakā.
Kālidāsa enumerates all the materials required for
feminine embellishment and adds that they are all sup-
plied by the self-same Wishing Tree

वासश्चित्तं मधु नयनयोर्विभ्रमादेशदक्षं
पुष्पोद्भेदं सह किसलयैर्भूषणानां विकल्पान् ।
लाक्षारागं चरणकमलन्यासयोग्यं च यस्या-
मेकः सूते सकलमबलामण्डनं कल्पवृक्षः ॥

Megha. ii. 12.

Whether Kalpavṛkṣa or Kalpavallī, the motif is
the same, and at Bharhut, sculpture illustrates every line
of the poet and acts as a commentary. The line
भूषणानां विकल्पान् is explained by a variety of ornaments



Figs. 1 to 5.

like pearl necklaces, golden necklets, patra-kunḍalas, ratnakunḍalas, karnaveṣṭanas at the ends of the tendrils of the creeper or issuing from flowers (figs. 1, 2 and 4). The variegated cloth with flower pattern worked on it and the soft fabric with delicate folds explain the lines वासश्चित्रं and शैमं केनचिदिन्दुपाण्डु तरुणा मङ्गल्यमा-
 विष्कृतम् (fig. 3). Wine, the trainer of the eye-brows in graceful glances of women, is also supplied by the Kalpavṛkṣa मधु नयनयोर्विभ्रमादेशदक्षम्. The madhubhāṇḍa or wine-pot in the śikyā or net issuing from a flower (fig. 4) suggests wine tasted by lovers on moonlit terraces even as the image of the beloved trembled in the liquor poured in caṣakas शशिप्रतिमाभरणं मधु. Ordinary flowers of individual variety are found in their respective places but the Kalpavṛkṣa has an infinite variety on its stem; and this is seen in the different buds, blossoms and fruits on the same creeper in the sculpture (fig. 1). Thus all feminine decorations—Kuravaka flowers for the braid, Kunda flowers for the curly ringlets near the forehead, sportive lotus for the hand to play with, Lodhra pollen for the face, Śirīṣa for the ear and Nipa flowers for the embellishment of the parting of the hair—are all supplied by the Wishing Tree

हस्ते लीलाकमलमलके बालकुन्दानुविद्धं

नीता लोध्रप्रसवरजसा पाण्डुतामानने श्रीः ।

चूडापाशे नवकुरवकं चारु कर्णे शिरिषं

सीमन्ते च त्वदुपगमजं यत्र नीपं वधूनाम् ॥

The tender shoots on the ears of the beloved that maddens the lovers

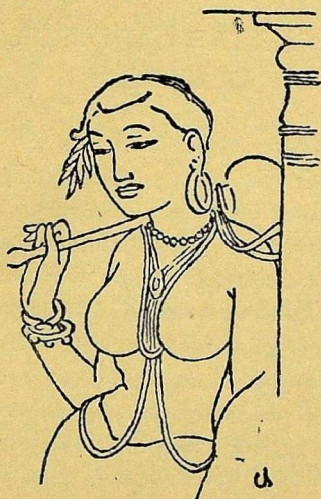


Fig. 6.

किसलयप्रसवोऽपि विलासिनां मदयिता दयिताश्रवणार्पितः ।

Raghu, ix. 28.

(fig. 6.) and the lākṣā die for the foot that appeared like the first shoot of the tree of Love burnt by Hara

प्रथमामिव पल्लवप्रसूतिं हरदग्धस्य मनोभवद्रुमस्य ।

Mālavikā. Act. ii.

are also supplied by the same tree. And the lines

पुष्पोद्भेदं सह किसलयैः Megha. ii, 12. and लाक्षारागं

चरणकमलन्यासयोग्यं च यस्याम् Megha. ii, 12

are illustrated by the tender shoots beside flowers, some to adorn the ear and others to tinge the foot.

YAKṢAS, KINNARAS, SIDDHAS, AND LIFE IN ALAKĀ

Decked in these robes and jewels the care-free Yakṣas spend their times in sport and gaiety. And these heavenly pairs repair to the Kailāsa mountain where the waters of the Mānasa lake produce golden lotuses, where heavenly elephants like the Airāvata sport, where the silken cloths on the Kalpavṛkṣa rustle in the wind. There they sport escaping the heat of the sun in the shade of Mandāra trees growing on the banks of the heavenly river Mandākinī and entertained by her cool water-laden breeze. Here in their pleasure garden, Vaibhrāja, the Yakṣa lovers spend their time daily conversing with their divine damsels and erotic companions along with sweet voiced Kinnaras who daily sing the glories of the Lord of Riches. In this life of ease and pleasure there is no tear-drop except that born of pure joy, no pain other than that caused by Cupid's arrows which only helps to unite lovers, no separation except that caused by love quarrels and no age beyond youth. All these ideas were in the sculptor's mind when he carved scenes that answer this picture of Kālidāsa. Thus great contemporary sculpture in the Sātavāhana realm was inspired by contemporary poetry from the Śuṅga empire. The carving (fig. 7) suggests the picture that the Yakṣa portrays to the cloud in the verse

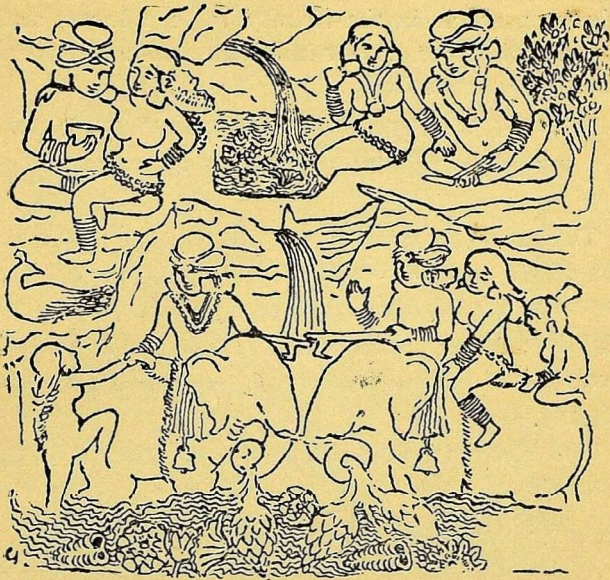


Fig. 7.

हेमाम्भोजप्रसवि सलिलं मानसस्याददानः

कुर्वन्कामात्क्षणमुखपटप्रीतिमैरावतस्य ।

धुन्वन्वातैः सजलपृषतैः कल्पवृक्षांशुकानि

छायाभिन्नः स्फटिकविशदं निर्विशेः पर्वतं तम् ॥

Megha. i, 65.

The elephants sporting in the water recall the line

नदत्याकाशगङ्गायाः स्रोतस्युद्दामदिग्गजे । Raghu. i, 78.

while the peacock in the vicinity of the lovers seated on the rocks brings to our mind the wish of Sunandā addressing Indumatī.

अध्यास्य चाम्भःपृषतोक्षितानि शैलेयगन्धीनि शिलातलानि ।
कलापिनां प्रावृषि पश्य नृत्यं कान्तासु गोवर्धनकन्दरासु ॥

Raghu. vi, 51.

The mountain torrents in the picture remind us again of the line सनिर्झरोद्गार इवादिराजः Raghu. vi, 60 as such water particles are sprayed by mountain torrents पृक्तस्तुषारैर्गिरिनिर्झराणां Raghu. ii, 13; and their presence indicates all that is conveyed by the words अस्मः-पृषतोक्षितानि.

The Kinnaras, who enjoy equally like the Yakṣas and are described as

प्रत्यहं रक्तकण्ठैरुद्गायद्भिर्धनपतियशः किन्नरैर्यत्र सार्धम् ।

Megha. ii, 10.

are suggested by the pair to the right top which has a vīṇa of the harp type—the ancient bow-shaped one with seven strings common in all early sculptures.

The next figure (fig. 8) is a commentary on the lines

मन्दाकिन्याः सलिलशिशिरैः सेव्यमाना मरुद्भि-

र्मन्दाराणामनुतटरुहां छाया वारितोष्णाः ।

Megha. ii, 6.

वैभ्राजारुयं विबुधवनितावारमुख्यासहायाः

बद्धालापा बहिरुपवनं कामिनो निर्विशन्ति ॥

Megha. ii, 10,

The atmosphere itself so full of love and intoxication echoes the verse

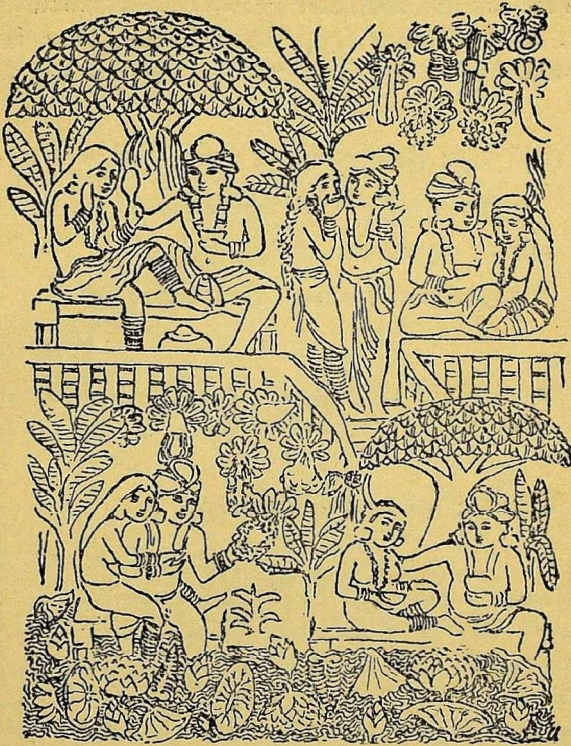


Fig. 8.

आनन्दोत्थं नयनसलिलं यत्र नान्यैर्निमित्तैः

नान्यस्तापः कुसुमशरजादिष्टसंयोगसाध्यात् ।

नाप्यन्यस्मात्प्रणयकलहाद्विप्रयोगोपपत्ति-

र्वित्तेशानां न खलु च वयो यौवनादन्यदस्ति ॥

Megha. ii, 4.

Wine cup in hand, they yet exhibit excellent composure, as the liquor from the Wishing Tree is only Ratiphala, having the fulfilment of love alone as its fruit.

यस्यां यक्षाः सितमणिमयान्येत्य हर्म्यस्थलानि
ज्योतिश्छायाकुसुमरचनान्युत्तमस्त्रीसहायाः ।
आसेवन्ते मधु रतिफलं कल्पवृक्षप्रसूतं
त्वद्गम्भीरध्वनिषु शनकैः पुष्करेष्वाहतेषु ॥

Megha. ii. 5.

The plantain trees near by are golden ones like those around the sportive hillock in the Yakṣa's mansion

क्रीडाशैलः कनककदलीवेष्टनप्रेक्षणीयः ।

Megha. ii, 17,

Wine, the friend of Cupid, the fragrance of which surpassed Bakula flower and which produced lovely dalliant sports (vibhramas) without interrupting love, was tasted by damsels in the company of their consorts, but the lines of Kālidāsa

ललितविभ्रमव्रन्धविचक्षणं सुरभिगन्धपराजितकेसरम् ।
पतिषु निर्विविशुर्मधुमङ्गनाः स्मरसखं रसखण्डनवर्जितम् ॥

Raghu. ix, 36.

have a more flowing commentary at Ajanta where centuries later painters depicted amorous pairs in the act of Madhupāna with grace that would have more

than satisfied and even astonished the poet himself (fig. 9). Here the beloved nestles in the lap of her lord like a lute and reminds us of the verse

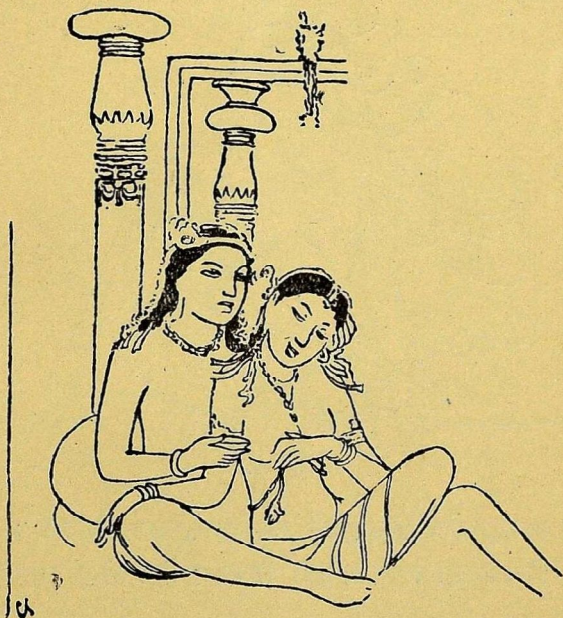


Fig. 9.

अङ्गमङ्गपरिवर्तनोचिते तस्य निन्यतुरशून्यतामुभे ।
वल्लकी च हृदयङ्गमस्वना वल्गुवागपि च वामलोचना ॥

Raghu. xix, 13.

The beloved enthroned in the lap of her husband is as often described by Kālidāsa as she is so depicted

by the painter and sculptor who appreciated his theme.
Such lines as

अस्याङ्गलक्ष्मीर्भव दीर्घबाहोः Raghu. vi, 43,

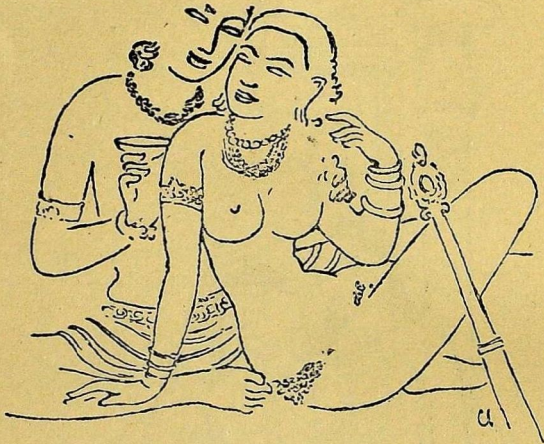


Fig. 10.

and तामङ्गमारोप्य कृशाङ्गयष्टिं वर्णान्तराक्रान्तपयोधराग्राम् ।

विलज्जमानां रहसि प्रतीतः पप्रच्छ रामां रमणोऽभिलाषम् ॥

Raghu. xiv, 27.

are vividly portrayed for ocular appreciation at Ajanta as elsewhere (fig. 10). But the pathos in the verse

प्रतियोजयितव्यवल्लकीसमवस्थामथ सत्त्वविप्लवात् ।

स निनाय नितान्तवत्सलः परिगृह्योचितमङ्गमङ्गनाम् ॥

Raghu. viii, 41.

where the beloved bereft of life lies on the lap of her husband like a *viṇā* with loosened strings, is not less

eloquent in its sculptural echo at Amarāvati in the 2nd century A.D., at Goli in the next century (fig. 11) or at Ajanta three centuries later.

But separation and sorrow are unknown factors in Alakā. This makes the grief of the separated Yakṣa

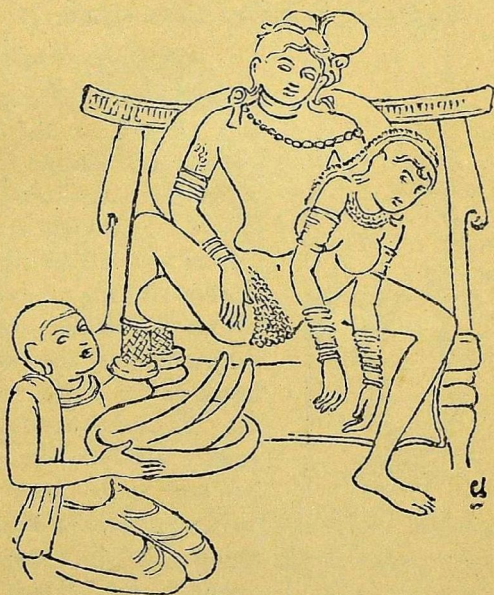


Fig. 11.

all the more poignant. He fondly explains to his wife through his cloud messenger, how cruel Fate having separated them, his only solace lay in the close embrace of his beloved at least in fancy where his emaciated

body, tear-stained eye, deep sigh, longing and affliction met hers in exactly the same state. The verse

अङ्गेनाङ्गं प्रतनु तनुना गाढतप्तेन तप्तं
 सास्त्रेणाश्रुद्रुतमविरतोत्कण्ठमुत्कण्ठितेन ।
 उष्णोच्छ्वासं समाधिकतरोच्छ्वासिना दूरवर्ती
 संकल्पैस्तैर्विशति विधिना वैरिणा रुद्धमार्गः ॥

Megha. ii, 42.

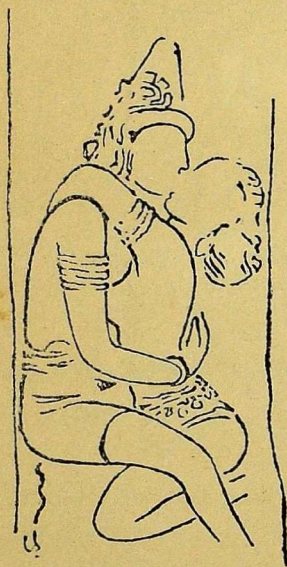


Fig. 12.

has no better explanation than that offered by the masterpiece from Ellora (fig. 12) which an unknown sculptor of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa realm has carved and left as his appreciative offering at the altar of Kālidāsa's Kavitā—poesy. It also answers the close embrace of the Yakṣa pair with the Yakṣa's hands twined fondly around the neck of her lord united with her only in a dream, and even that being scarce the Yakṣa requests the cloud to wait awhile if he found her asleep,

मा भूदस्याः प्रणयिनि मयि स्वप्नलब्धे कथंचि-
 त्सद्यःकण्ठच्युतभुजलताग्रन्थि गाढोपगूढम् ।

Megha. ii, 37.

The Kaṇṭhāśleṣa coveted by the beloved is so described by Kālidāsa in lines like

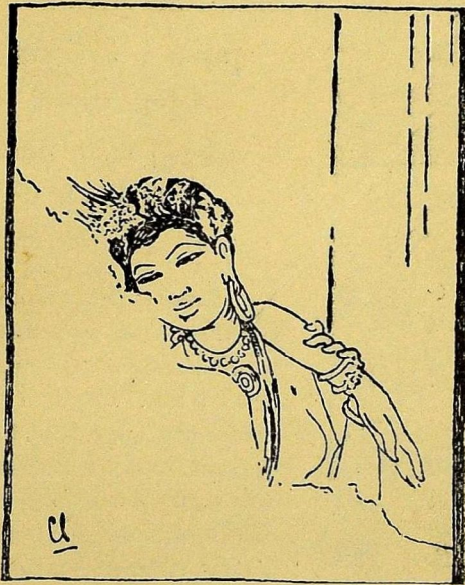


Fig. 13.

कण्ठाश्लेषप्रणयिनि जने किं पुनर्दूरसंस्थे Megha. i, 3,
and तं दधन्मैथिलीकण्ठनिर्व्यापारेण बाहुना Raghu. xv, 56
that the very pathos heightens its glory. The artist at
Ajanta has immortalised Kaṇṭhāśleṣa (fig. 13).

The Yakṣa suggests what his beloved may be engaged in when the cloud approaches her at Alakā. Perhaps she would be engaged in worship or painting his portrait or perhaps addressing the pet parrot in the

cage interrogating the bird whether it remembers its master who loved it so well.

पृच्छन्ती वा मधुरवचनां
शारिकां पञ्जरस्थां
कच्चिद्भर्तुः स्मरसि रसिके
त्वं हि तस्य प्रियेति ।

Megha. ii, 25.

Among the Yakṣīs from Bhutesar near Mathura there is one that almost answers this description. She is a Guhyaka woman looking nude but really draped in diaphanous apparel. She stands on a dwarf, a feature common in most of the Yakṣa representations. Her pet parrot is on her shoulder nibbling at her locks and the cage for the time is in her hand while the bird is out of it (fig. 14). It is noteworthy that in carving this the sculptor had also part of another verse of Kālidāsa in his mind, the attitude of the dancer described in the *Mālavikāgnimitra* which has its echo here.

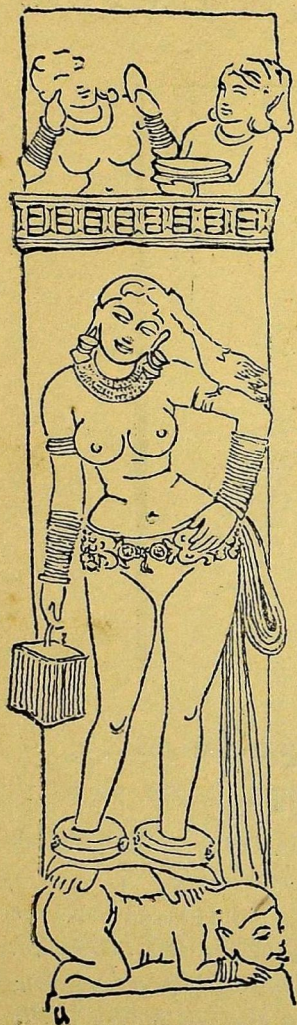


Fig. 14.

वामं सन्धिस्तिमितलयं न्यस्य
 हस्तं नितम्बे
 कृत्वा श्यामाविटपसदृशं
 स्रस्तमुक्तं द्वितीयम् ।
 पादाङ्गुष्ठादुलितकुसुमे
 कुट्टिमे पातिताक्षं
 नृत्तादस्याः स्थितमतितरां
 कान्तमृज्जायतार्धम् ॥

Mālavikā. Act ii, 6.

The series of Bhutesar rail pillars with Yakṣīs appears as though carved to illustrate the amorous reminiscences of the Yakṣa in the Meghadūta. In the top panel there is always a miniature representation of some aspect of sambhoga or love in union of the Yakṣa couple and lower down the Yakṣī stands alone in one or other of her most graceful attitudes.

A carving showing the Yakṣī carrying a madhubhāṇḍa is a tender picture of (fig. 15) the woman whose usual delight in wine the Yakṣa so well knew but which he now knew

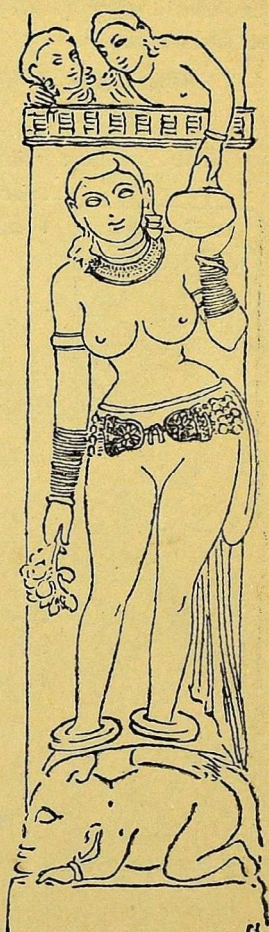


Fig. 15.

she should have given up in her separation and with it her bhrūvilāsa.

प्रत्यादेशादपि च मधुनो विस्मृतभूविलासाम् ।

Megha. ii, 35.

The woman under the Raktāsoka tree, a fine specimen of Kushan art (fig. 16), recalls the line in the Meghadūta.

एकः सख्यास्तव सह मया

वामपादाभिलाषी ii, 18.

Her attitude as she clings to the branches recalls

यस्योपान्ते कृतकतनयः कान्तया वर्धितो मे

हस्तप्राप्यस्तवकनमितो बालमन्दारवृक्षः ॥

Megha. ii, 15.

that of her kicking the tree having no doubt its inspiration in the verse.

नवकिसलयरागेणाग्रपादेन बाला

स्फुरितनखरुचा द्वौ हन्तुमर्हत्यनेन ।

अकुसुमितमशोकं दोहदापेक्षया वा

प्रणिहितशिरसं वा कान्तमार्द्रापराधम् ॥

Mālavikā. Act iii, 12.

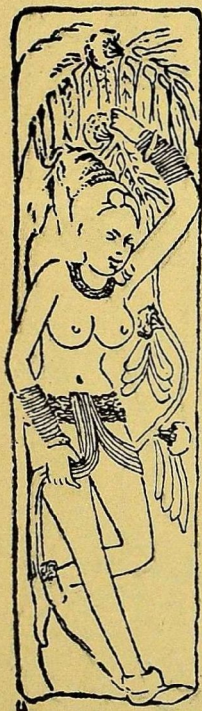


Fig. 16.

The early carving from the Bodhgaya rail showing the lover fondling the foot of his beloved as she

clings to the tree desiring Dohada is reminiscent of Agnivarna's amour

स स्वयं चरणरागमादधे योषितां न च तथा समाहितः ।
लोभ्यमाननयनः श्लथांशुकैर्मैखलागुणपदैर्नितम्बिभिः ॥

Raghu, xix, 26.

The verse

यस्योपान्ते कृतकतनयः
कान्तया वर्धितो मे
हस्तप्राप्यस्तबकनमितो
बालमन्दारवृक्षः ॥

Megha. ii, 15.

has its parallels elsewhere as in the Raghuvarṇaśa,

अमुं पुरः पश्यसि देवदारुं
पुत्रीकृतोऽसौ वृषभध्वजेन ।

यो हेमकुम्भस्तननिस्सृतानां

स्कन्दस्य मातुः पयसां रसज्ञः ॥

Raghu. ii, 36.

In a sculpture from Khiching this motif is found portrayed so late as the 11th century A.D. (fig. 17). But it is a motif which became so popular that the flight of time did not dim its memory.

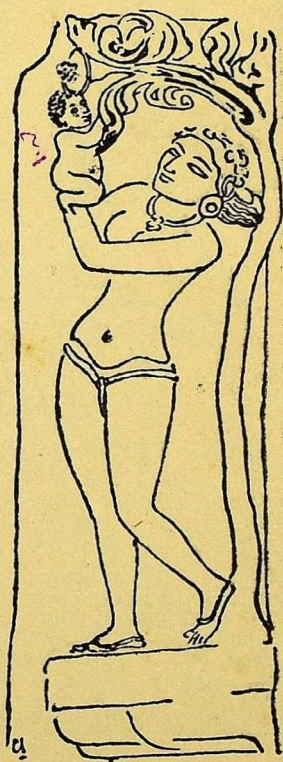
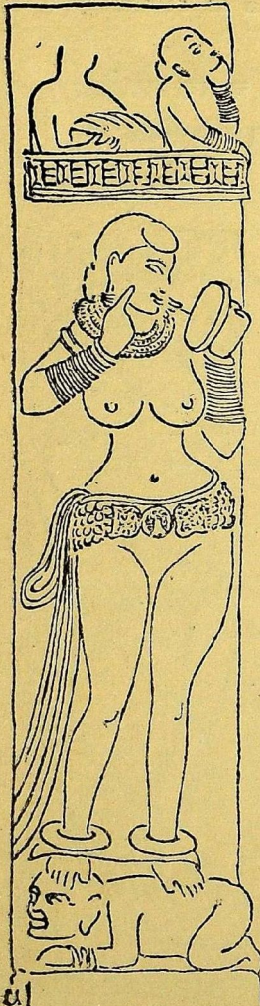


Fig. 17.



The sorrowing Yakṣa as he contemplates a mental picture of his beloved's face pale, half hidden by her uncombed locks, bereft of its full splendour like the cloud hidden by the moon

हस्तन्यस्तं मुखमसकलव्यक्ति

लम्बालकत्वा-

दिन्दोदैर्न्यं त्वदनुसरणक्लिष्ट-

कान्तेर्बिभर्ति ॥

Megha. ii, 24.

cannot forget her usual wont when he was beside her at Alakā and she like the others beautified her face with Lodhra pollen

नीता लोध्रप्रसवरजसा

पाण्डुतामानने श्रीः ।

Megha. ii, 2.

The picture depicting her in this attitude (fig. 18), is among the most beautiful from Mathura and also recalls the line

दर्पणेषु परिभोगदर्शिनीः

Raghu. xix. 28.

Fig. 18.

Eagerly the Yakṣa looks forward to the time when he would reach again his home and unbind the ekaveṇī braid of his beloved signifying her separated condition.

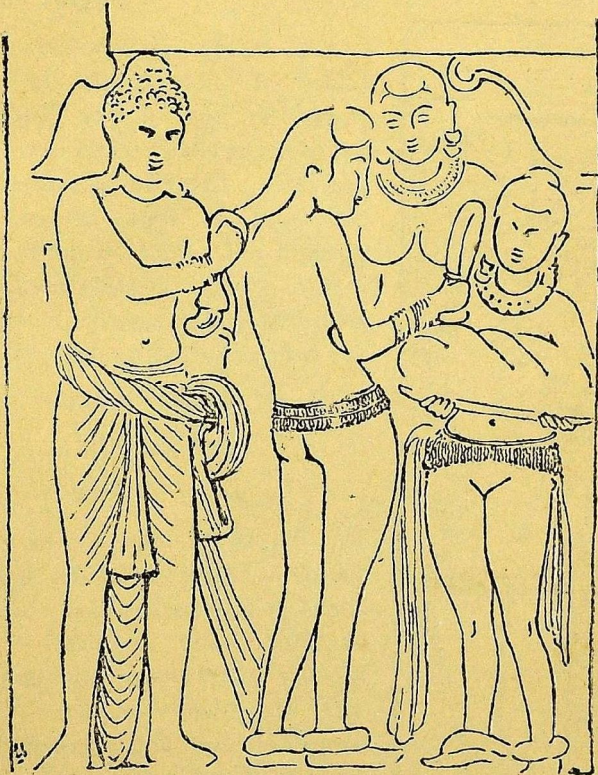


Fig. 19.

आद्ये बद्धा विरहदिवसे या शिखा दाम हित्वा
शापस्यान्ते विगलितशुचा या मयोन्मोचनीया ।

स्पर्शकृष्टामयमितनखेनासकृत्सारयन्ती

गण्डाभोगात्कठिनविषमामेकवेणीं करेण ॥

Megha. ii, 32.

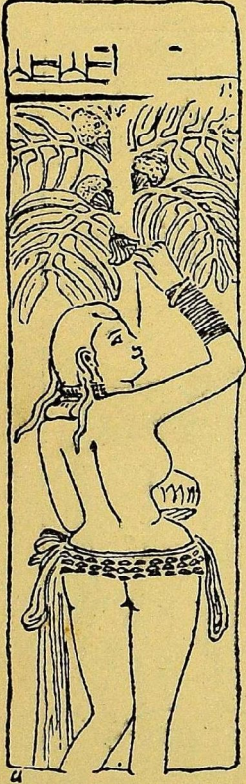


Fig. 20.

A lovely picture of this fancy of the Yakṣa is portrayed by one of the Mathura sculptors of the 2nd century A.D. (fig. 19). Here he is unbraiding the braid as fresh flowers are brought in by the attendants. The Yakṣī is shown emaciated and with just the ornaments requisite for indicating her saubhāgya.

सा सन्न्यस्ताभरणमब्रला

पेशलं धारयन्ती ।

Megha. ii, 33.

These are some of the many pictures suggested by the Megha-dūta and immortalised by the sculptor and painter. The cloud's experiences on its journey to Alakā as the Yakṣa supposes are also recorded by the chisel and brush. Suggestive of the lines

गण्डस्वेदापनयनरुचा क्लान्तकर्णोत्पलानां

छायादानात्क्षणपरिचितः पुष्पलावीमुखानाम् ॥ Megha. i, 27.

is the picture of the flower-gatherer from Mathura (fig. 20). Siddhas, lute in hand, afraid of drenching themselves, make way for the cloud (fig. 21).



Fig. 21.

उल्लङ्घिताद्या

सिद्धद्वन्द्वैर्जलकणभयाद्रीणिभिर्मुक्तमार्गः । Megha. i, 48.

A lovely painting from Ajanta showing Siddha couples flying in the sky studded with clouds and sārāsas (fig. 22) is reminiscent of the verse

अभ्भोविन्दुप्रहणचतुरांश्चातकान्वीक्षमाणः

श्रेणीभूताः परिगणनया निर्दिशन्तो बलाकाः ।

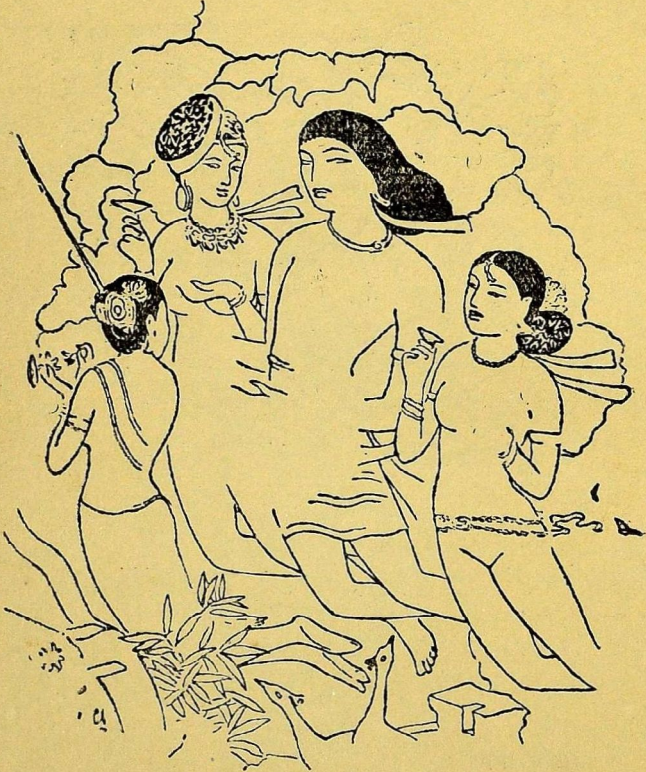


Fig. 22.

त्वामासाद्य स्तनितसमये मानयिष्यन्ति सिद्धाः

सोत्कम्पानि प्रियसहचरीविभ्रमालिङ्गितानि ॥

Megha. i, 22.

The adoration of the Buddha's feet from the Amarāvātī rail (fig. 23) cannot but remind us of the

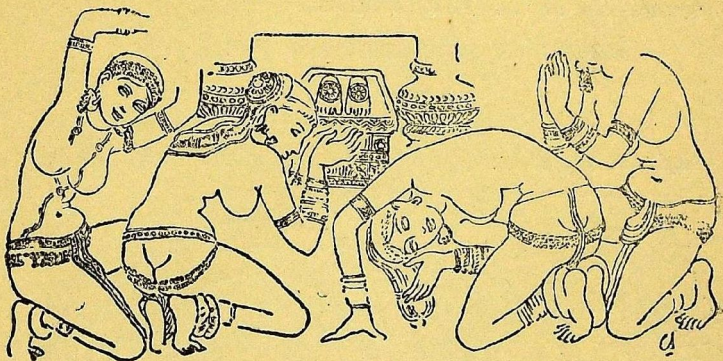


Fig. 23.

reverence shown by the Siddhas to the footmarks of Śiva on the Kailāsa mountain.

तत्र व्यक्तं दृषदि चरणन्यासमर्धेन्दुमौलेः

शश्वत्सिद्धैरुपहृतवर्णि भक्तिनम्रः परीयाः । Megha. i, 58.

Rudrapādas like these are actually carved on the rocky slopes of the mountain Jehngira. Worship of the feet was, as shown by Dr. Jayaswal, earlier than Yāska and both Māheśvaras and Bhāgavatas worshipped such pādas.

वन्द्यैः पुंसां रघुपतिपदैरङ्कितं मेखलासु । Megha. i, 12.

gives the feet adored by the Bhāgavatas.

The gay life of the Siddhas and other divine beings on the Kailāsa mountain and the purpose of the mirror served by the glassy slopes as the tridaśavanitā

—heavenly damsels—attended to their toilet are portrayed at Sānchi (fig. 24) and the sculptor has given a second life to the line of Kālidāsa.

कैलासस्य त्रिदशवनितादर्पणस्यातिथिः स्याः ।

Megha. i, 61.

The raktakaṇṭhī sings to the accompaniment of the vīṇā, the madhubhāṇḍa with cup ready for a fill, beside

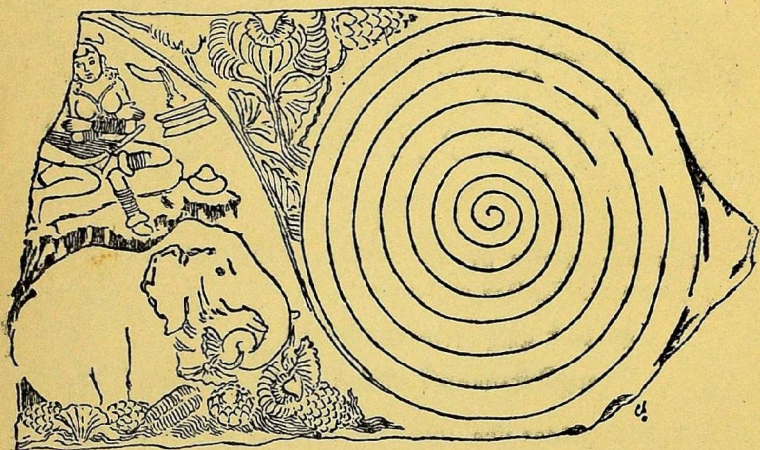


Fig. 24.

her, Airāvata sporting in the lotus-laden Mānasa lake. From a nāgadanta is suspended the toilet box whence the application of all decorative substance is appraised in the grand mountain slope mirror, Kailāsa, the toilet mirror of all heavenly damsels.

The picture of the Kirātas on the same mountain following their game in the company of their wives

वनेचराणां वनितासखानां Kumāra. i, 10.

and enjoying the breeze of the heavenly river wafted by the Devadāru trees that waved the peacock plumes on their heads

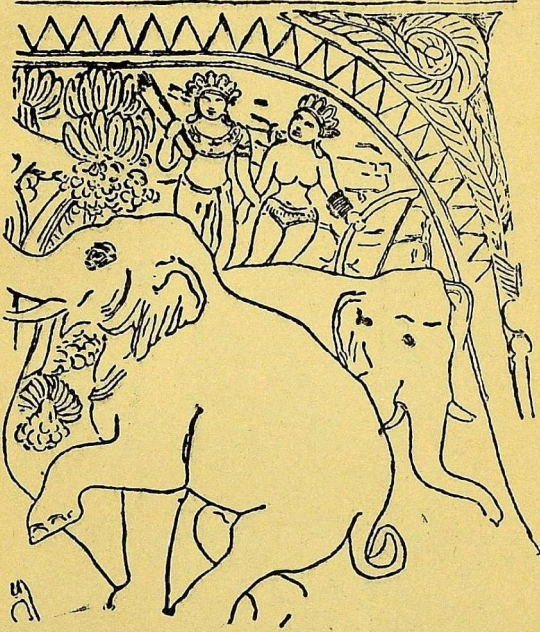


Fig. 25.

भागीरथीनिर्झरशीकरणां वोढा मुहुः कम्पितदेवदारुः ।
यद्वायुरन्विष्टमृगैः किरातैरासेव्यते भिन्नशिखण्डिबर्हः ॥

Kumāra. i, 15.

is splendidly shown in one of the Sānchi panels (fig. 25).

MOTIFS

The Nārīpravekas described by Vālmīki as among the architectural motifs in the Puṣpaka palace of Rāvaṇa occur in all early sculptures and their place is more clearly indicated by Kālidāsa who says that these



Fig. 26.

figures are pillar statuettes. Yakṣī carvings from Jaggayyapeta (fig. 26), from the Bhutesar rail up-rights (figs. 14, 15 and 18), and other figures from Mathura (figs. 16 and 20), not to speak of a host of

others from Bharhut, Bodhgaya are all illustrations of the verse

स्तम्भेषु योषिप्रतियातनानामुत्क्रान्तवर्णक्रमधूसराणाम् ।

स्तनोत्तरीयाणि भवन्ति सङ्गान्निर्मोकपट्टाः फणिभिर्विमुक्ताः ॥

Raghu. xvi, 17.

Generally beneath such figures quaint vehicles answering the description of Vālmiki's Īhāmṛgas occur. The most conspicuous of these is the Jalebha, a common figure in early sculpture. This is described by Kālidāsa

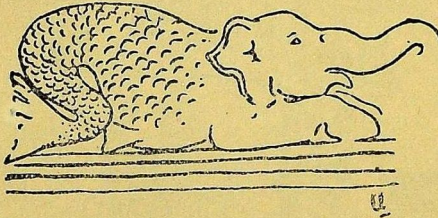


Fig. 27.

as Mātāṅganakra, a word which in unequivocal terms gives the best description of the animal with elephant's head and body of fish. The foliage patterns in Amarāvātī with Mātāṅganakras between them (fig. 27) clearly remind us of Kālidāsa's description in his line.

मातङ्गनक्रैः सहसोत्पतद्भिर्भिन्नान्द्विधा पश्य समुद्रफेनान् ॥

Raghu. xiii, 11.

The toraṇa gateway, the most magnificent creation of Indian genius and of which the best example is to be seen at Sānci (fig 28), is described by Kālidāsa to be as beautiful as the rainbow.

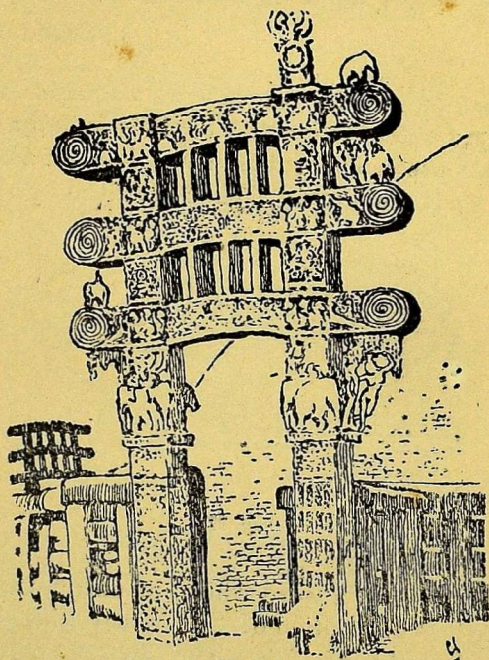


Fig. 28.

दूराल्लक्ष्यं सुरपतिधनुश्चारुणा तोरणेन Megha. ii, 15.

इन्द्रायुधद्योतिततोरणाङ्गं Raghu. vii, 4.

the lines being suggestive as much of the arched structure as the picturesque and colourful minute

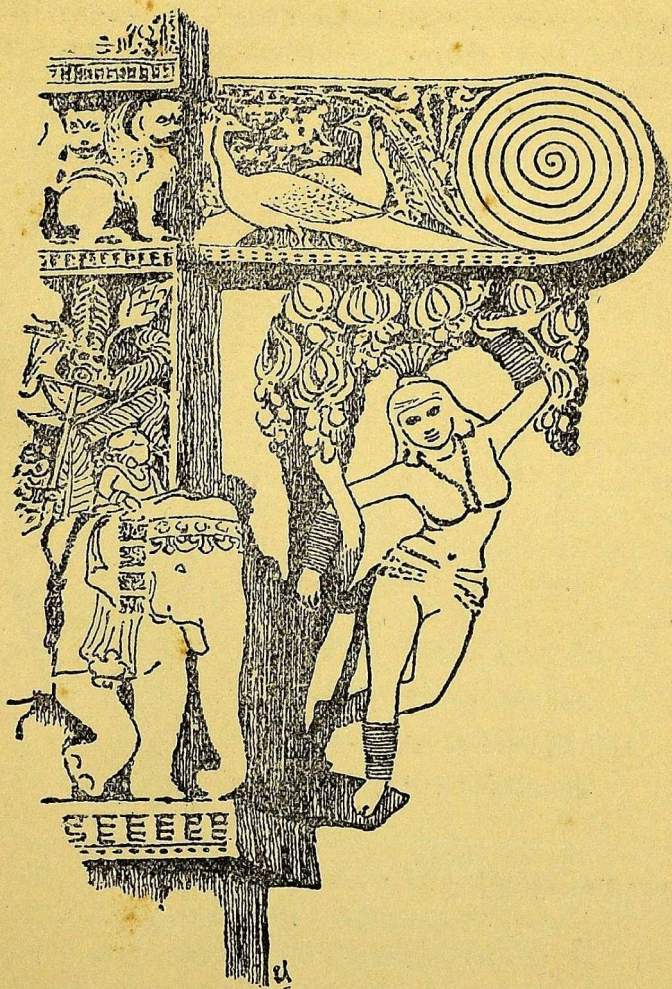


Fig. 29.

carving thereon. It is on these toraṇas that figures of puṣpa-bhañjikā type of toraṇasālabhañjikā¹ answering the description

यस्योपान्ते कृतकतनयः

कान्तया वर्धितो मे

हस्तप्राप्यस्तबकनमितो

बालमन्दारवृक्षः ॥

Megha. ii, 15.

are appended (figs. 29 and 30).

Pūrṇakumbhas or overflowing vases filled with lotuses mentioned by Kālidāsa as flanking doorways are common in early and medieval sculptures. Resting on the dvāra-vedi (fig. 31) they remind us of the verse

तस्याधिकारपुरुषैः प्रणतैः प्रदिष्टां

प्राग्द्वारवेदिविनिवेशितपूर्णकुम्भाम् ।

रम्यां रघुप्रतिनिधिः सनवोपकायां

बाल्यात्परामिव दशां मदनोऽध्युवास ॥

Raghu. v, 63.

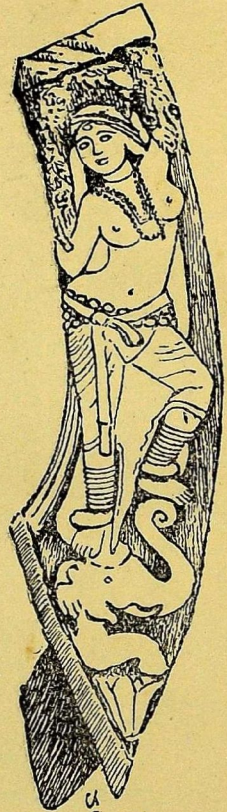


Fig. 30.

1. Torāṇasālabhañjikās are mentioned by Aśvaghoṣa in his Buddhacarita;

अवलम्ब्य गवाक्षपार्श्वमन्या शयिता चापविभुमगात्रयष्टिः ।

विराज विलम्बिचारुहारा रचिता तोरणसालभञ्जिकेव ॥ v. 35.

and attention to this term has been specially drawn by Dr, Vogel in his paper on Sālabhañjikā.

This was such a common sight in the days of the Śuṅgas and the Sātavāhanas that one of the kings of the latter dynasty describes it in one of his gāthās

रथापइण्णअणुप्पला तुमं सा पडिच्छए एन्तम् ।

दारणिहिएहिँ दोहिँ वि मङ्गलकलसेहिँ व थणेहिँ ॥

[रथ्याप्रकीर्णनयनोत्पला त्वां सा प्रतीक्षते आयान्तम् ।

द्वारनिहिताभ्यां द्वाभ्यामपि मङ्गलकलशभ्यामिव स्तनाभ्याम् ॥]

Gāthāsaptaśatī ii, 40.

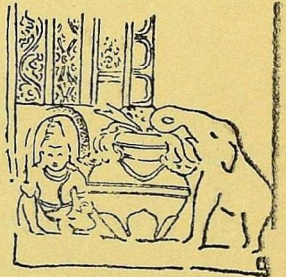
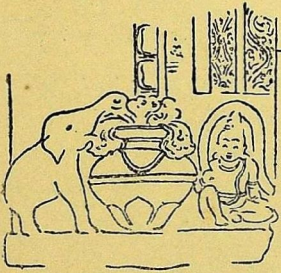


Fig. 31.

The Amarāvati stūpa gateways were flanked by pūrṇakalāśas as may be seen in sculptural representations of the caitya; and in all early, Cālukyan temples these auspicious vases are a feature as also forms of Śaṅkha and Padmanidhis which Kālidāsa describes as

द्वारोपान्ते लिखितवपुषौ शङ्खपद्मौ च दृष्टौ । Megha. ii, 20.

APPAREL AND ORNAMENT

Some of the more familiar modes of wear in early sculpture like the ajina-yajñopavīta (fig. 32)¹, muktā-yajñopavīta² (fig. 21) and necklaces with large central gem³, are directly inspired by Kālidāsa.

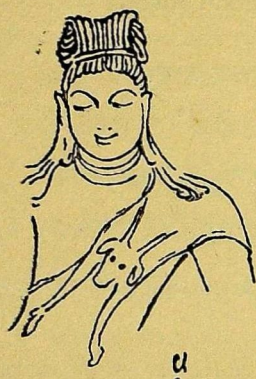


Fig. 32.

The beautiful knot of the kṛṣṇājina yajñopavīta in early carvings forms an excellent sculptural comment on the line

कृष्णत्वचं ग्रन्थिमतीं दधानम्

Kumāra. iii, 46.

Though the original Amaravati slab was lost, one of the drawings by Col. Mackenzie has preserved us a picture of the ajina yajñopavīta with the knot as worn by a sage. Some of the best representations of this are in Gupta sculptures.

-
1. अथाजिनाषादधरः Kumāra. v, 30;
अजिनदण्डभृतं Raghu. ix,
 2. मुक्तायज्ञोपवीतानि Kumāra. vi, 6.
 3. एकं मुक्तागुणमिव भुवः स्थूलमध्येन्द्रनीलम् Megha. i, 49.

This is one of the many sculptural modes noted by Mr. V. S. Agrawala, one of the most gifted of Indian archaeologists and a rare scholar. See f. n. * on p. 43.

PORTRAITURE OF LIFE

Among the familiar scenes from Kālidāsa no one can forget the peaceful āśrama surroundings, with deer frisking about with the least fear of beasts of prey, peacocks repairing to their trees, women sprinkling lājas on princes and young damsels at their toilet rushing to see the welcome to a farfamed beautiful prince—a wonder of his age. All these are portrayed at Sānchi with a careful fidelity to the poet's account. The woman rushing to the window carrying the añjana-śalākā with but one eye stained with collyrium

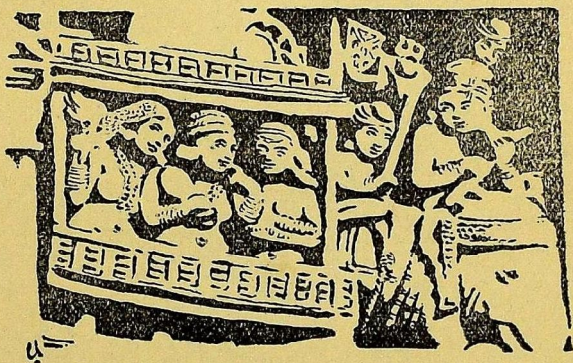


Fig. 33.

विलोचनं दक्षिणमञ्जनेन संभाव्य तद्वञ्चितवामनेत्रा ।
तथैव वातायनसन्निकर्षं ययौ शलाकामपरा वहन्ती ॥

Raghu. vii, 8.

has its illustration at Sānchi where she carries the mirror as well, an object more easily observed in sculpture than the small śalākā (fig. 33). The application

of the alaktaka to the foot and the slipping on it of the nūpura are so illustrated at Amarāvati (fig. 34), as to answer the verse.

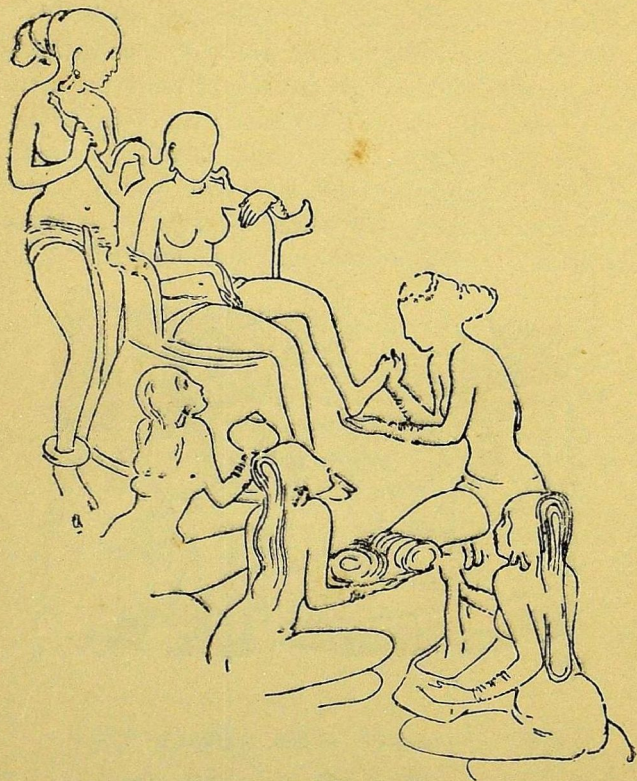


Fig. 34.

प्रसाधिकालम्बितमग्रपादमाक्षिप्य काचिद्द्वरागमेव ।
उत्सृष्टलीलागतिरागवाक्षादलक्तकाङ्क्षां पदवीं ततान ॥

Raghu. vii, 7.

The heat in summer is apparent in the pleasure pond where with the diminishing of water as it recedes from the steps reaching only the waist of women the long lotus stalks appear quite above the water surface



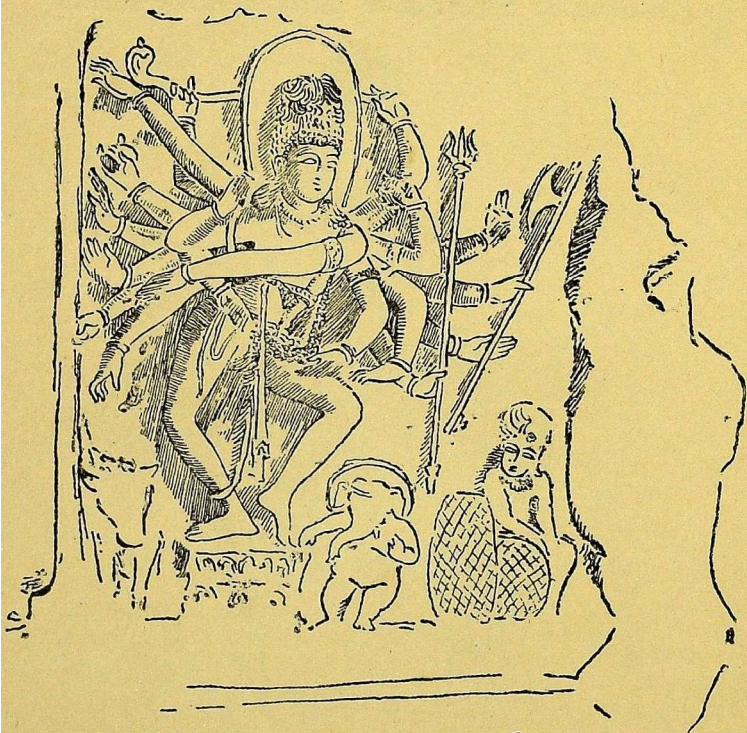
Fig. 35.

दिने दिने शैवलवन्त्यधस्तात्सोपानपर्वाणि विमुञ्चदम्भः ।

उदण्डपद्मं गृहदीर्घिकाणां नारीनितम्बद्वयसं बभूव ॥

Raghu. xvi. 46.

This is figured in a painting in far off Dandan Uiliq, Khotan (fig. 35) where Indian traditions have travelled as also Kālidāsa's inspiration.



Chiramanu
4th June 1933

Fig. 36.

ICONOGRAPHY.

The iconography of the time of Kālidāsa was not so developed as at a later time. But the Elephanta and

Ellora caves are directly inspired by Kālidāsa's iconographic material. At Badami is the figure of Śiva (fig. 36) dancing in Catura pose, with his numerous hands spread out in bhujataruvana fashion.

पश्चादुच्चैर्भुजतरुवनं मण्डलेनाभिलीनः

Megha. i, 39.

This is the precursor of the later Gajāntaka and Natesa types.

Kalyāṇasundara¹, Tripurāntaka², Gaṅgādhara³, Ardhanārīśvara⁴ and Rāvaṇānugraha⁵ are some of the most important iconographic forms of Śiva. His yogic position on the vedī under the Devadāru tree has

1. तस्याः करं शैलगुरूपनीतं जग्राह ताम्राङ्गुलिमष्टमूर्तिः ।

उमातनौ गूढतनोः स्मरस्य तच्छङ्किनः पूर्वमिव प्ररोहम् ॥

Kumāra. vii, 76.

2. संरक्ताभिस्त्रिपुरविजयो गीयते किन्नरीभिः ।

Megha. i, 58.

अतिष्ठदालीढविशेषशोभिना वपुःप्रकर्षेण विडम्बितेश्वरः ।

Raghu. iii, 52.

3. तस्यौघमहती मूर्ध्नि निपतन्ती व्यरोचत ।

सशब्दमभिषेकश्रीर्गङ्गेव त्रिपुरद्विषः ॥ Raghu. xvii, 14.

4. तथा तु तस्यार्धशरीरभाजा पश्चात्कृताः स्निग्धजनाशिषोऽपि ॥

Kumāra. vii, 28.

5. गत्वा चोर्ध्वं दशमुखभुजोच्छ्वासितप्रस्थसंधेः

Megha. i, 61.

रामस्तुलितकैलासं Raghu. xii, 89.



Fig. 37.

numerous sculptural parallels one of them coming from Goli and representing prince Vessantara as a hermit.

Among the forms of Viṣṇu, the boar raising Pṛthvī¹ from the ocean, Trivikrama with raised leg², Śeṣaśāyi Viṣṇu³ and Padmanābha⁴ are noteworthy. All these were favourite motifs in Gupta and early medi-
eval period and exactly answer the description of the poet.

Gaṅgā and Yamunā flank Śiva in Pāla sculpture (fig. 37) in accordance with the description in the Kumārasambhava.

मूर्ते च गङ्गायमुने तदानीं सचामरे देवमसेविषाताम् ।

Kumāra. vii, 42.

The River Goddesses became such a popular motif that they flanked all the gateways of the Gupta temples (fig 38).^{*} Earlier, as shown by Dr. Jayaswal, the motif was a feature in the temples of the Bhāraśivas

1. तत्रेश्वरेण जगतां प्रलयादिवोर्वीम् Raghu. xiii, 77.

2. तेनोदीचीं दिशमनुसरेस्तिर्यगायामशोभी

श्यामः पादो बलिनियमनाभ्युद्यतस्येव विष्णोः ॥

Megha. i, 60.

3. शापान्तो मे भुजगशयनादुत्थिते शार्ङ्गपाणौ Megha. ii, 50.

भोगिभोगासनासीनं Raghu. x, 7.

The seated type is at Badami and Aihole.

4. नाभिप्ररूढाम्बुरुहासनेन संस्तूयमानः प्रथमेन धात्रा ।

Raghu. xiii, 6.

^{*} This feature in Gupta doorways and details of ornamentation like the central elongate gem in hāras and iconographic forms like Kumāra on peacock's back as described by Kālidāsa have been, I learn, discussed in a paper in Hindi by my friend Mr. V. S. Agrawala.

and the Vākāṭakas, great devotees of Śiva. The Prayāgakṣetra assumed an importance altogether un-

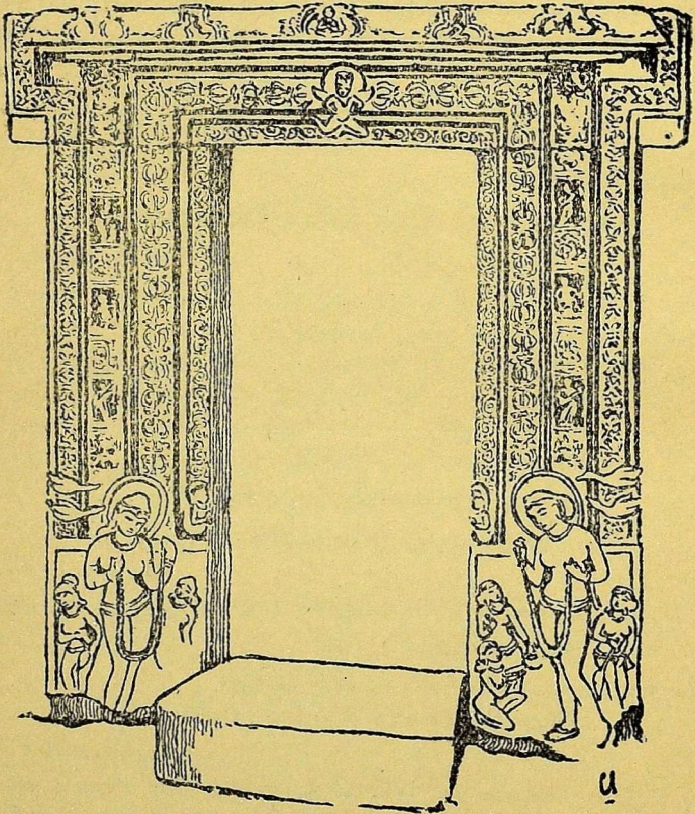


Fig. 38.

known in sculpture before Kālidāsa and his description in Raghuvamśa

कचिप्रभालेपिभिरिन्द्रनीलैर्मुक्तामयी यष्टिरिवानुविद्धा ।
 अन्यत्र माला सितपङ्कजानामिन्दीवरैरुत्खचितान्तरेव ॥
 कचिखगानां प्रियमानसानां कादम्बसंसर्गवतीव पङ्क्तिः ।
 अन्यत्र कालागरुदत्तपत्रा भक्तिर्भुवश्चन्दनकल्पितेव ॥
 कचिप्रभा चान्द्रमसी तमोभिश्छायाविलीनैः शबलीकृतेव ।
 अन्यत्र शुभ्रा शरदभ्रलेखा रन्ध्रेष्विवालक्ष्यनभःप्रदेशा ॥
 कचिच्च कृष्णोरगभूषणेव भस्माङ्गरागा तनुरीश्वरस्य ।
 पश्यानवद्याङ्गि विभाति गङ्गा भिन्नप्रवाहा यमुनातरङ्गैः ॥
 समुद्रपत्न्योर्जलसन्निपाते पूतात्मनामत्र किलाभिषेकात् ।
 तत्त्वावबोधेन विनापि भूयस्तनुत्यजां नास्ति शरीरबन्धः ॥

Raghu. xiii, 54-58.

found a sculptural interpretation of which the best examples are at Gwalior and Udayagiri (fig. 39). The lines

अन्यत्र माला सितपङ्कजानामिन्दीवरैरुत्खचितान्तरेव ॥ and
 कचिखगानां प्रियमानसानां कादम्बसंसर्गवतीव पङ्क्तिः ।

are echoed in the figures of Gaṅgā and Yamunā flanking the doorway, through the flower garland in their hands and the swans that flutter near their halos whose contour appears like that of clouds. In the sculpture from Udayagiri the last verse is convincingly portrayed and the immortality attained by those sanctified by their waters is suggested by the deva fluttering above which reminds us again of the line

तीर्थे तोयव्यतिकरभवे जह्नुकन्यासरखो-

देहत्यागादमरगणनालेख्यमासाद्य सद्यः ॥

Raghu. viii, 95.

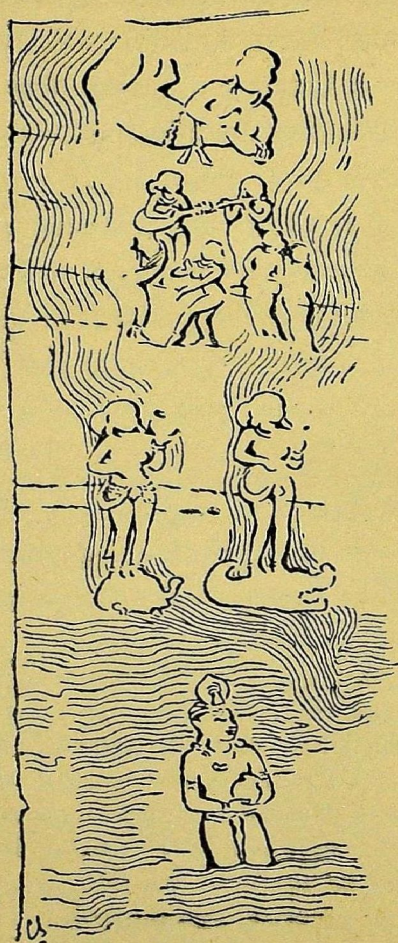


Fig. 39.

The anthropomorphic concept of River Goddesses on their vehicles, the earliest examples of which occur at Amarāvati, has long continued to be a motif of importance and even in late mediaeval gopura doorways of South Indian temples (fig. 40) are found flanking figures of a woman on makara holding a decorative creeper running the whole length of the jamb entwining circular panels all the way along. These figures are a combination of Nāḍīdevatā and Vanadevatā concepts or more strictly Gaṅgā and Sālabhañjikā.

The gateways are also flanked and guarded by seated forms of Śaṅkha and Padmanidhis the principal treasures of Kubera. Kālidāsa says that their figures are painted in anthropomorphic form. These nidhis are represented both symbolically and anthropomorphically; and in the Pallava sculptures from Kāveripākkam

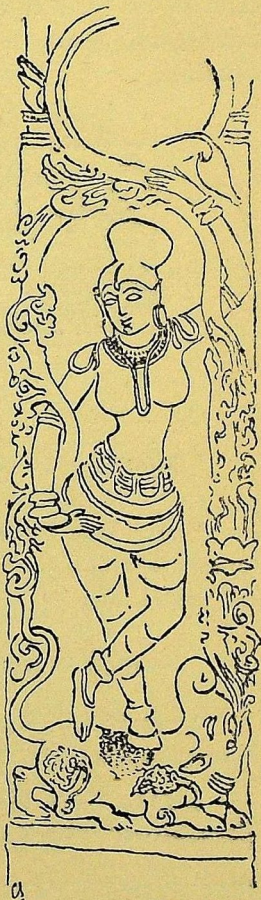


Fig. 40.

(fig. 41) representing the treasures both forms are present, coins oozing from conch and lotus, as in the famous Śuṅga Kalpadruma capital, while dwarf figures are shown beside them, thus answering the line of Kālidāsa

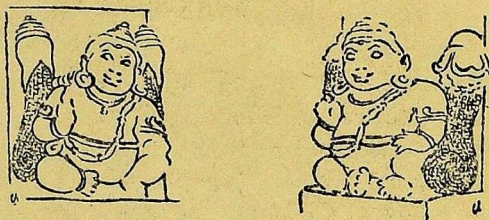


Fig. 41.

द्वारोपान्ते लिखितवपुषौ शङ्खपद्मौ च दृष्ट्वा । Megha. ii, 20

Four Lokapālas are usually mentioned in early literature and Kālidāsa calls one of the Ikṣvāku kings the fifth Lokapāla

—पञ्चमं लोकपालानाम् Raghu xvi, 78.*

In early sculpture at Amarāvati and elsewhere only four lokapālas are shown.

Indra rides his elephant Airāvata to survey his city adorned with Kalpavṛkṣa

* Also यमकुबेरजलेश्वरवज्रिणां समधुरम् Raghu ix, 24.

स पुरं पुरुहूतश्रीः कल्पद्रुमनिभध्वजम् ।
क्रममाणश्चकार द्यां नागेनैरावतौजसा ॥

Raghu. xvii, 32.

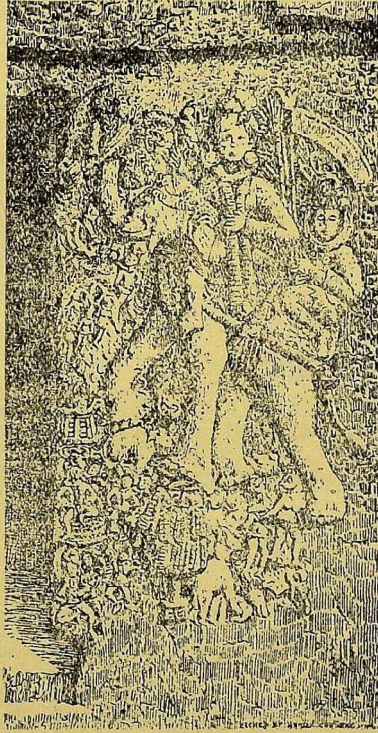


Fig. 42 (After Burgess).

and this picture of Kālidāsa exactly answers the earliest sculpture of Indra in the Bhaja cave (fig. 42). The

flower garland on the neck of Indra and the beautiful turban worn by him remind us of the lines

आमुक्ताभरणः स्रग्वी and

तेऽस्य मुक्तागुणोन्नद्धं मौलिमन्तर्गतस्रजम् ।

Raghu. xvii, 25 & 23.

The back of the Śivagaṇa Kumbhodara is sanctified by the pādārpaṇa of Śiva

कैलासगौरं वृषमारुरुक्षोः

पादार्पणानुग्रहपूतपृष्ठम् ।

अवेहि मां किङ्करमष्टमूर्तेः

कुम्भोदरं नाम निकुम्भमित्रम् ॥

Raghu. ii, 35.

and this has its parallel in contemporary sculpture, the liṅga in the Gudimallam temple (fig. 43). At Trichinopoly cave and elsewhere, in Pallava and Cola sculpture the same dwarf continues as the foot-stool of the Lord (fig. 44 & 45).

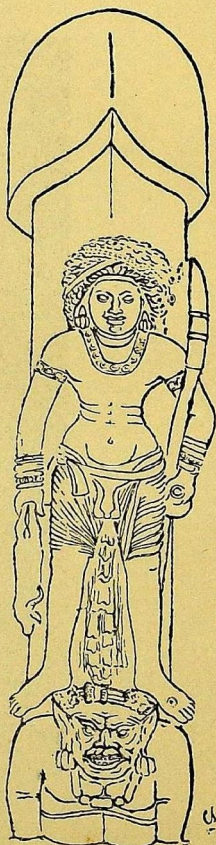


Fig. 43.

These are but a few instances of the inspiration the sculptors of India derived from the immortal lines of Kālidāsa. To enumerate in detail their indebted-



Fig. 44.

ness to this prince of poets is too great a subject for a lecture. I have just attempted to help you to realise vividly, with your eyes, some of the beauties which

you, lovers of Kālidāsa, have again and again read and contemplated on.

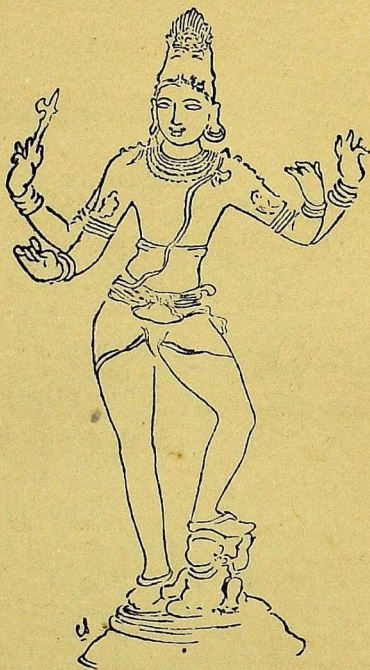


Fig. 45.

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