THE ANIMAL IN INDIAN ART

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In tropical countries where man has to live in contact with nature or in dwellings which open out into nature, the contact with the animal world is richer than in temperate climates. Hence Indian art is rich in representations of animals. On the other hand the number of animals which can be tamed to do work or at least be brought up to become trusted co-inhabitants is small. The number of wild animals whom man is afraid of or has to fight for his life or health or whom he hunts for meat or because they are dangerous to his economy, is also limited. Further the average men were interested in such animals whose special behaviour inspired sympathy or fear in them and whom they, therefore, elevated to gods or demons or their companions, particularly the nature-gods of Fertility, Spring and Death. Some of them thus became popular symbols and were related to deities and ideas with which they did not, at a first glance, appear to have anything in common. The different traditions of the peoples and religions of the Indian Sub-Continent and their differing temperament within different classes and times led to a highly diverse reaction to this development. This reaction ranged from most uninhibited and finest observation of nature to a total indifference and blindness towards nature.

However, the history of religion in India, a reflection of a complicated social history, is badly entangled and full of contradictions. The Vedic Religion of sacrifices of the Aryans was in contrast with the overwhelmingly matriarchal fertility-cults of the aboriginals. Buddhism and Jainism which were originally intellectual middle-class philosophies, adapted during their missionary activities common popular deities and popular fairy tales. The classical Hinduism developed out of a fusion of Vedic Gods and rituals and primitive fertility gods and mother-goddesses and their cults. Buddhism and Hinduism were influenced by fertility rituals, originally hostile to brahmins, namely Tantrism. Greek and Iranian cults, too, made their own contributions. Finally Islam came as the faith of the victors, though in many ways it adapted itself to the country. Then not only the foreigners but also the nobility and the rich citizens ignored many of the prejudices which governed the remaining circles of people. Thus concessions by the orthodoxy became necessary for which one had to invent one's own legends.

The result was that the same animal species could appear in apparently most contradictory roles because these roles had originated from quite different layers of the Indian tradition. For example the pig is considered unclean not only by the Muslims but also by the Hindus. Still the boar appears as an incarnation of the God Vishnu and as a late Buddhist Sun-goddess. He is the animal featuring in the ritual hunts of the nobility in the Deccan and Rajasthan and was also the animal on the coat of arms of a number of important ruling families. The horse is a royal sacrificial animal, a noble animal for riding and is yoked to the carriage of Indra, the king of gods and of the Sun-god Surya. But it is also the form adopted by a wicked demoness (as our nightmare). The lion, originally a foreign symbol of royalty, became, as in Europe, the animal on the coat of arms of the native nobles and also the riding animal of the Goddess Durga (or the Tibetan Kali-Lhamo). Finally it also became the symbol of the peaceful Buddha, of the sympathetic saviour Avalokiteśvara and of the ascetic Jaina saint Mahavira.

The animals which we often come across are : 1. Insects : bees, butterflies; 2. Molluscs : snails; 3. Fishes; 4. Reptiles : lizards, snakes, tortoises, crocodiles; 5. Birds : eagles, falcons, vultures, owls, ravens, crows, fighting-cocks, hens, swans, geese, ducks, parrots, peacocks, herons, kokilas, hoopoes and turkey-cocks; 6. Animals of prey : lions, tigers, bears, panthers, cheetas, dogs, cats, ichneumons, rats; 7. Domestic animals : elephants, horses, camels, (Zebu)-oxen, sindhi-cattle, water-buffaloes, rams and goats; 8. other mammals : rhinoceros, nilgais, stags, does, antilopes, gazelles, jackals, pigs, mice; 9. Fable animals : garudas, kinnaris, griffins, dragons, Ganda-Berundas, vyalis, makaras, hippocamps, sphinxes, stag-sphinxes.

The zenith of animal representation was during the times when Indian culture and art rejuvenated itself and full of enthusiasm entered a completely new phase of development. These were the last few centuries before the birth of Christ as well as the 5th century in the North and the 7th in the South and finally the 16th–17th century in the South under the Vijayanagar kings (break-through of folk art in later Hindu culture) or under the great Moghul Emperors with a resonance at the Rajput courts of Rajasthan, Central India and the Himalayan foothills in the 16th–18th century. In all these cases the art emancipated itself from the bonds of traditionalism and admitted uninhibitedly and full of surprise the wonders of creation. It was in these blessed times that the artists, encouraged by their patrons, buried themselves, full of love, in the innumerable forms of animal life. However, occasionally one comes across a work where a representation of an actual experience breaks through the rigid bonds of conventions like a breath of fresh air.

The first phase of animal representation is found in the reliefs of the Buddhist stupas of Bharhut and Sanchi. In Bharhut the representation is struggling to find form and is expressed clumsily while in Sanchi (end of 1st century B. C.) it is already depicting with surer hand the folk-tales on the stone-fences enclosing the dome which actually enshrines the relics. The tales are adapted for Buddhist propaganda in such a way that the hero either due to skill or cunning, or due to self-sacrifice, acquires moral merit which would lead to his rebirth as a Buddha (therefore Jataka = story of a previous birth). A number of these stories, however, deal with animals like elephants, stags, buffaloes, peacocks etc. One tells of an ape who bridged a river by hanging between two trees on either side of the river in order to enable his band to escape the hunters. He himself is, however, shot. Another tells of a leader of a herd of elephants who secures the life of his herd by offering himself to a pregnant queen who desires his six wonderful tusks. Even where the fairy tale is about ordinary mortals or demons, there is an attractive background of tame or wild animals, for example in the Jataka of the generous prince Vessantara; the hermitage scene unveils a naive rural community of man and his environment in which the animal is almost as important as the man, and is sometimes portrayed as a better being. The same is the case with the hunting friezes in the Jaina cave hermitages of Udaigiri in Orissa, in particular of the Rani-ka-Gumpha. Obviously with the spreading of urban culture, the emphasis on nature retreated into the background. The emphasis on nature is least apparent in the elegant Jataka reliefs (Chaddanta and Vessantara Jatakas) on the stupas of Amaravati (1st-2nd century), Nagarjunakonda (3rd century) and among others at the Eastern coast of Andhradeśa and in the wall paintings of the rock monasteries of Ajanta (5th–7th century). Here human life predominates, even outside in the gardens, and with it domestic and lap-animals. The birds are the only remnants of open nature.

In classical medieval Hinduism this uninhibited representation of nature allowed under the guise of religious or semi-religious themes, is more and more superseded by a rigid pedantic iconology of pictures of different gods and special myths which left little free play for the observation of nature. However, some of the most glorious representations of nature were made in the transition period (5th–8th century) before the new mythical visions were finally fixed. This was specially true of the South which was then ultimately opened to Hinduism. In the North they predominate in the popular terra-cotta reliefs of provincial temples (of Ahichhattra, Suratgarh, Rajghat, Paharpur etc.) and also on the walls of the beautiful Gupta temple of

Nachna-Kuthara. In the South, there are the rock reliefs of Mamallapuram (near Madras) and those of the cave temples of Badami, Ellora and Elephanta (6th–8th century). In Mamallapuram, the old harbour of Kanchi (Conjeevaram), a rocky wall belonging to the earlier fortress of the harbour was transformed into an enormous relief (the so-called descent of the Ganges) which (according to the epic Kiratarjuniya of Bharavi) depicts God Śiva as he reveals himself in the primeaval forest to the hero Arjuna in the mask of an aboriginal hunter (kirata). Not only the adoring lower deities swarm round the hermitage of the hero Arjuna, but also families of elephants, stags, does, lions, apes, mice etc. A cat with its raised front paws is portrayed in the role of a pious ascetic while the mice hop around her hindpaws, unconcerned. There are a few smaller rocks in the neighbourhood which have been shaped in the form of lice-picking apes and resting does. A mutilated group of rocks rises from the sandy surface, south of the fortress. The bigger ones of these were chiseled into the "Five Pandava" temples and the smaller ones into the shapes of cattle, lions and elephants. In the cave-temples of Mamallapuram, Badami (then capital of the Chalukya Empire) and also of Ellora (the first capital of the Rastrakutas) and Elephanta (Gharapuri near Bombay), once capital of the Konkan, we still find innumerable lovely animal figures even though they are completely subordinated to the divine scenes. These animals are relegated to a narrow frieze at the base in the temples built in the middle ages. The elephants, lions, horses and camels sometimes appear in long rows and sometimes as parts of the armies marching and of processions. Herds of cows and different types of semi-demoniacal snakes, birds, fishes etc. are shown in the myth of the young shepherd God Śri Krishna. We know of a very few portrayals of nature belonging to the transitional period of the early Islam rule. One such is in a Vasanta Vilasa Ms (Baroda) where a lion is chasing a doe in the forest or where highly conventional fishes indicate a river.

It was only under the Moghul emperors (16th–18th century) that a rich representation of animals, based on a loving observation of nature, again unfolded itself. These conquerors, of Turkish origion, were used to a permanent living in the open. They loved to rest in gardens, their castles were semi-tent cities. They spent the greater part of their lives in field marches, inspection tours and hunts, and thereby developed a lively power of observation and knowledge of nature. The emperor Akbar (1556–1605) even elevated this observation of nature to a sort of confession of faith, a worship of the Glory of God in the wonders of his creation. His son Jahangir (1605–27) pursued this observation with an almost scientific curiosity. However, this interest

diminished under the ceremonious Shahjahan (1628–58) and the bigotted Aurangzeb (1658–1707), but the love of gardens and tame luxury animals remained alive even under the later emperors who were no more than puppets in the hands of their grandees and seldom left their palaces.

Akbar's life obviously was so full of lightning field marches, battles, sieges, raids, executions and victory celebrations, as well as chases on horseback in between the marches that the number of actual illustrations of hunts belonging to his time is small. But all the illustrations in his annals, contemporary Persian and Hindu traditional epics and books of didactic fairy tales are full of searching observations of nature : lions and tigers, bears, rhinoceros (found quite often in those days), stags, does, gazelles, foxes, jackals, elephants, horses, apes and birds of many types, snakes, ants, etc. are illustrated as occupying dwelling places in the open or living in caves, chasing and being chased, fleeing in herds across the plains, flying in swarms through the air against the golden evening sky, taking part in fairy tales (like the faithful bear who kills his sleeping master with a stone in order to drive away the fly sitting on him). Then there are illustrations of hunters armed with either bows and cross bows or muskets or bow strings chasing the antelopes on horseback and fighting the lions on foot with a sword in one hand and a thick bandage around the other arm.

Under Jahangir the war scenes gave way to hunting scenes which were portrayed in more detail than was the case so far. Moreover, fairly large individual animal studies by such famous painters as Mansur, Nadir-uz-Zaman, Govardhan etc. were made for book miniatures. They worked minutely to every smallest detail of anatomy, to every hair and feather, to every line of a butterfly or of a wing of some bird. Among the animals shown were many foreign animals like musk-oxen, East-Asian does, turkeys and others which were presents from foreign monarchs. In addition, there were portraits of particularly valued riding horses, elephants, hunting falcons, fighter-cocks, parrots etc. The latter began to predominate since the middle of the 17th century. During the endless battles of Aurangzeb (who personally considered painting as idolatry) in the Deccan, illustrations of hunting scenes enjoyed a certain amount of popularity with the courtiers and officers. Here the types of animals became more and more conventional. The patrons were apparently more interested in their own portraits than in those of the wild beasts. A new development were pictures of night hunts where the wild beast was blinded with the help of search lights. The method was learnt apparently from the Bhils, the jungle inhabitants of Central India. But the "Bhil-hunts" depicted on many miniatures were no closer to ethnographical

reality than the "Wild Men" of our Middle Ages or the shepherds of the Rococo.

The animal representation of the later Moghul period has influenced contemporary Hindu art which technically depended on the official art of this period but remained quite independent emotionally. This was particularly true of the Rajput courts. It too repeats the hunting scenes and portraits of valued favourite animals. Besides, the same style was used in religious and poetic texts which seemed to be naturalistic but in reality were full of mystic and erotic symbolism (for example herds of cows were shown as crowds of believers comparable to the sheep in Christian symbolism; peacocks appeared as announcers of rain, love and God Krishna; parrots etc.).

The boundary line between the wild and domestic animals remained vague as the same animals lived wild in the fields or jungles and were likewise associated with human beings: elephants, cattle, dogs and cats, falcons, parrots and other birds, even lions and cheetas. They must be tamed first and then held under constant control. Otherwise they become wild again, if nobody cares about them. This is the case even today with the old cows which no longer give milk but which nobody dares to kill and which, left to themselves, are a public nuisance. By living together with human beings the animals acquire a special purposefulness. The biggest impression is certainly made by the elephant who is shown as the riding animal of kings, generals, high priests betrothed couples, standard bearers, carriers of pictures of gods, as the representative of a military type (one of the four basic units of the old Indian army) and as a working animal. We also find him throughout the course of Indian art, on Buddhist, Jaina and Hindu monuments individually or as a part of all possible scenes ranging from daily life to parades and battles. In the Buddha legend, an elephant turned berserk bows before the kindness of the Exalted One. The armoured turrets which used to be carried on the back of the war elephants in Greek and Iranian art appear very seldom in Indian art, but are found on a few Greco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek medals. Even the Moghul Emperors preferred to give their battle orders sitting in open throne haudas (elephant saddles). They had to be visible inspite of the danger of being exposed to the arrows and granades of the enemy; otherwise their troops would have either fled or joined the enemy camp.

The horse was the second important riding animal. In ancient times, it made it possible that the chariots of the Vedic Aryan nobles could conquer India. It remained the royal animal and was sacrificed with most ceremonial ritual during the Aśvamedha Yajña performed by the "World Conqueror"

(chakravartin). The Gupta Emperor Samudragupta even made a memorial statue of one of his sacrificial horses. Since the great invasion of the nomads in the centuries around the birth of Christ, the chariots, another of the four units of the traditional army, were superseded by cavalry corps. The Indian riding horses for the first time appeared on the gold coins of the Gupta Emperors. Horseman's art played an important role in the North-west under the Pratihara, Shahi and Chauhan kings, as is reflected on the coins. The commemorative slabs of the Rajputs, descendants of some medieval clan in Islamic times, mostly show the relief of a rider along with the women who had let themselves be burnt alive with his dead body. Perhaps the prototype of these columns came from Central Asia (Caucasus, Altai) and the horse representations sometimes remind us of those of the Chinese under the Han dynasty. As the Indian horses were gracefully built and were not suitable to carry heavily armed knights, horses from Central Asia and Arabia were imported in large numbers. This trade was completely in the hands of Arabs and Persians. We have a slab with the relief of a rider dressed in a coat of mail shirt belonging to the 8th–9th century (Jageśvar, Himalaya). From the 12th century men of high nobility wore plate armour of a type which was far superior to the standard Char-Aine of the 17th–18th century. Their horses, too, were dressed in plate armour (Somnathpur Temple, Kiradu commemorative slabs). Besides these, in the North also horses and ponies were popular. We find them not only on the temple friezes, but also as the riding animal of a lower Jaina Goddess Acchagupta (Akota bronze find). The cavalry played a deciding role in the battles of the Muslim dynasties of India and also in the Maratha battles of the 18th century. Consequently, horses became quite common in the later miniature paintings. For parade purposes they were richly painted like the elephants in colours of red, green and blue. The ladies of the harem, too, appear to have been excellent riders. We have enough miniatures of ladies as polo players and hunters controlling the horse with the skill of a cowboy.

Camels are far more rare in the Indian art. Being desert animals, they thrive only in the Thar of Rajasthan and in the bordering provinces of Sind, Punjab, Western Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Saurashtra. They are also found along the dry belt of land stretching through the high plateau of the Deccan east of the Western Ghats down to Mysore. Their figures are occasionally found on the socle friezes of the temples in Gujarat and Rajasthan. Camel riders are depicted more often on the commemorative slabs for dead people. They are also found on the throne terrace of the emperor of Vijayanagar (16th century) in Kanara (South Deccan) and on the Somnathpur Temple

in Mysore. They are seldom seen on miniatures, the exceptions being the portraits of the princes of Bikaner, Jodhpur and Jaisalmer and a Bhagavata-Purana Ms. from Punjab (18th century). However, wagons pulled by camels are a rarity in art.

Oxen and buffaloes were for the middle class and the farmers what elephants and horses were for the nobility. Since the earliest times we come across the most important types of oxen, the Malwa-ox (Zebu) and the Sindhi-ox, both with fat humps. The former, of a gracefulness in comparison to which European bulls and cows look like stupid tramples, may to some extent explain the Indian worship of the "holy cow" and of the Nandi bull, the companion of the supreme God Śiva. He is, well fed, really a glorious animal with nice, intelligent eyes. The Sindhi ox with his huge, protruding horns, is likewise of an admirable breed. We have small clay figures not only of both types of oxen but also of the two-wheeled farm-carts pulled by them, from the ruins of the Indus culture at Mohenjo-Daro, Harappa, etc. The Sindhi ox is found even today. In Jataka scenes, we see oxen harnessed to the farmer's ploughs or grazing in the fields. Similar depictions are found on the medieval temples, particularly in the reliefs of Lord Krishna's youth and of the legend of the Jaina Tirthankara Neminath where the ox is yoked to his wedding chariot. When Neminath hears the fearful bellowing of the animals to be killed for the feast, he gets frightened of the marriage and at the last moment decides to become a monk and finally a holy man. In the late Gupta temple of Mandor, we find for the first time a Persian wheel which is turned by oxen (the animal figures are, unfortunately, badly damaged). All these motifs in a wider perspective once again appear in Hindu and Muslim miniature paintings : there are scenes of cattle in the stable, on the meadow, in the thin forest, drinking at the river, on the way home to the village, in a cloud of churned-up dust, being milked etc.

The water buffalo, shapeless and almost black, known even in the Pre-Aryan culture, plays a similar role. He has been appearing in the cult-representations since at least the first century but became popular in the daily scenes only in Islamic times, particularly in Rajput paintings and in terracotta reliefs of Bengal. There he has been shown in the meadows or buried upto the muzzle in water, often with a small heron on the back which is picking out the insects and worms nestled in his damp hard skin.

Sheep and goats, although quite frequent, play no important roles in the art. They may be seen grazing, tended by shepherd boys, in the Moghul miniatures belonging to the late 16th and early 17th century. These are to a great extent copies of Persian models. Finally, in the miniatures from

the Punjab-Himalaya, Gaddi shepherds may be seen, sometimes playing the flute, wandering down the valleys with a large flock of sheep with fat tails. Some miniatures show sheep carrying little sacks in which salt, corn etc. were bartered between Tibet and India.

Finally come the "lap-animals" consisting of tame does and gazelles in the gardens of princesses, lap dogs, cats and parrots, unchained on the hand or the shoulder of their mistresses, or in cages shaped like a cheese-bell. Parrots (lovebirds as well as the bigger green ones), although mostly kept by the lower middle class of people, played a special role in the life of the ladies of the harem and courtesans which led them to become the symbol of Rati, the Hindu goddess of sensual pleasures.

Wild pigs and geese have played a great symbolic role in ancient art and literature. However, domestic geese can be authenticated in the late miniature paintings only. Mandarin ducks which were presents from abroad have been portrayed by the court painters of Jahangir. Rats, mice, snakes, toads and frogs were less popular domestic companions and cats and ichneumons were trained for fights. Since bee-farming is being introduced only now, wild honey was then exclusively eaten by jungle tribes; bees, therefore, occupy a very humble place in the religious and literary symbolism.

The princes formerly used elephants in tiger and lion hunts. This was because the elephants with their mighty bodies could not only break a way through the thickest forest but also offered a certain amount of protection to the hunters. These big cats, inspite of their great agility, could reach the haudas only with difficulty so that the hunter had enough time to finish off the attacking animal with a shot from close range. Quite often the elephants themselves intervened in the fight, holding the lion or the tiger with their trunks, flinging him to the ground and trampling on him. The elephants were also trained to lure and catch other wild elephants. While pictures showing hunting scenes are found more frequently, those showing catches are rare. They are mostly from Mysore and some from Burma. Some rulers kept tame lions and panthers in order to make an impression on the audience, for example in a miniature the Moghul emperor Jahangir is shown stroking the manes of two reclining lions on either side while listening to the speech of an ambassador. Cheetas, a particularly slim and quick species of big cats, were sent like hunting dogs to kill and retrieve wild animals. They had their own attendants and two-wheeled wagons in which they were driven to the hunting grounds.

Hunting dogs played a subordinate role. Their species is similar to the types represented on European medieval pictures and wall-hangings and

to a certain extent to the present "Pie-dogs" (Paria dogs). When well kept and well fed, the Indian dog was also a beautiful and courageous animal. We even know of a few memorials—from pre-British times—which the princes erected for their faithful dogs. The dog of the noblest of the heroes, Yudhisthira in the national epic of the Mahabharata, was supposed to have been accepted in Heaven bodily together with his master (portrayed also in the illustrations of this popular myth). But generally the dogs were considered unclean and were merely tolerated. They were kept by the lowest castes only. The pie-dogs, therefore, are miserable half starved animals, cowards and aggressive when cornered.

Animal fights were a popular sport, mostly animal against animal. Fights between man and animal were only exceptional cases. Berserk elephants, tigers and lions were also employed as executioners of rebels and high ranking prisoners of war. Volunteers listed themselves to fight lions, partly on bets which were made sometimes between drunken mercenaries of the army, partly also in the hope of attracting the attention of the ruler and getting a post as officer. As may be expected such duels often ended in tragedies. However, a victor was felicitated like a successful Torero in Spain today, for example Sherafghan-Khan, the first husband of the famous Moghul empress Nurjahan. Already before the Emperor Jahangir became interested in Nurjahan he was involved in a conspiracy and executed, for suchlike dare-devils rarely have a long career. Risking everything they lost their lives in duels, in battles or in political intrigues. Similarly the lives of the Mahauts (attendants) of the elephants were endangered when the elephants, excited to the utmost and on heat, were put into the arena to fight each other or to fight lions and tigers. In the collision of the beasts they were easily flung down, trampled or torn to pieces. To help them to escape from the arena in an emergency, other men stood watch with fire brands and fire works on long poles in order to frighten the animals. Lions and tigers were also matched against buffaloes and bulls, and it was uncertain whether the great cat would kill the bull or would be taken by him on his horns, ripped up and trampled. Rams were made to run against each other, cocks without artificial spurs had to fight among themselves and ichneumons were made to attack cobras. However, such illustrations are found seldom. Cock fights which are a true popular passion in Indo-China and Indonesia, appear more as children's entertainment in India. Fights between the ichneumons and the snakes are a speciality of the snake charmers. Though modern tourists are quite familiar with them, in Indian art we come across them rarely and rather late (South Indian temple reliefs of the 17th century for example at Trivandrum).

Animals play a far more important role in religious and secular symbolism. Almost all Hindu gods, at least in some of their revealed forms, have their origin in pre-Aryan jungle deities. All these gods have their accompanying or riding animals like in ancient Greece Zeus had the eagle, Athene the owl, Aphrodite the pigeon, or like many gods of the Orient. Quite often the prototypes of these gods came from very ancient times when the deity was experienced more in the animal than in the human form. Sometimes the animal head alone was left on the otherwise human form, as in ancient Egypt. For some gods, however, the relationship between them and their animals depended on their function, e.g. the Vedic king of heaven, Indra, appeared on an elephant, the riding animal of the kings; or Kalkin, the fighting savior, rides on a horse like a general. In the case of others, the relationship is more allegorical; e.g. the corpulent god of knowledge, Ganeśa, allows his elephant body to be carried by a tiny mouse, the allegory being that not only the elephant is clever and capable of overcoming all hindrances but the mouse, too, is nimble enough to nibble its way through everywhere. Similarly the Buddha or the Jaina World-teacher Mahavira are not lions; but the word of their teachings penetrates like the voice of the lion (sinhanada) which cannot be simply ignored. This symbolism, as it is the case also with us, penetrates worldly art as expression of human feelings. Flying geese indicate longing, peacock and parrots sensual love, does elegance, cows gentleness, Śiva's bull devotion, etc. This symbolism also led to the creation of mythical animals by means of the crossing of all possible creatures, such as were known in Near Eastern art, especially in Ancient Iran.

The main deities of Hinduism are the final product of a gradual assimilation of innumerable local cults which were identified with a Vedic "Aryan" god—hardly playing a role in today's cult practices—, his different aspects determining psychological or sectarian varieties, or as his incarnations in one of the successive, created worlds. The legends concerning the deities are often absurd. So are the explanations of adapted cult images, added later on and the myths invented for the purpose. However, in each case a certain basic idea predominates. Thus the bull, the fertile male animal, was the original concept of the highest God Śiva or Mahadeva of the Pre-Aryan pantheon. The God is also worshipped as a phallic ascetic or simply as a phallus (today however stripped of all its sexual characteristics). In this case the bull, Nandi, has become his riding or accompanying animal and his statue cowers before every sanctury of Śiva. Though the cow is sacred, it does not normally represent any deity. She became the image of the "Mother of the Universe" because of her importance to the national wealth

(during a time when the country was not yet overpopulated) and because she was a means of payment to the Brahmin class. However, representations of the "divine cow" belong to the last centuries (specially in Maharashtra). Instead, Śiva's wife (creative power) Kali-Durga has a lion and sometimes a tiger as her riding animal. Originally the tiger must have been her riding animal because Kali-Durga is a goddess of the mountains and jungles. Sometimes she appears also as an owl, maina bird or a bee. But as the martial virgin, killer of Mahishasura (the water buffalo demon) she became the goddess of kings and her tiger (or rather the tigress) was superseded by the royal lion. The buffalo as the symbol of fertility, is the animal of the Pre-Aryan inhabitants of the South. In the long run Mahisha was acknowledged only as a demon (a Centaur or human figure with the head of a buffalo). On many South Indian reliefs the goddess, in a hieratic stern mood, is seen standing on the severed buffalo head of the demon. On most idols she is stepping down from her lion on the buffalo from the wound of whose neck the conquered demon escapes. On the other hand, Śiva in a wild dance is portrayed tearing an elephant demon to pieces and wrapping his skin round him. In a gracious posture Śiva and Parvati (i.e. the mountain goddess Kali-Durga) hold a small antelope in their hands or more correctly allow its hind legs to balance on their fingers. Kali (Chamunda) is surrounded by howling jackals when she appears in the fire of the cremation ground. The children of Śiva and of the great goddess are the six headed Karttikeya (Subrahmanya) with a peacock for his riding animal, and the elephant-headed Ganeśa or Ganapati (meaning the Master of Ganas, the jungle demons) with his mouse. God Śasa Ayyanar whose shrine in South India has a number of clay figures of horses, is associated with Subrahmanya.

In the system of Vaishnavism (of later Aryan origin), Vishnu, the god of heaven, is accompanied by the eagle Garuda (originally an independent Sun-God like the Egyptian Ra). In Indonesia he is still shown as a real bird. In India, however, he is represented as a (winged) human figure with the head of a bird or at least with a beak. Garuda is an enemy of all snakes. In hellenistic Gandhara art the Ganymede-motive is so altered that the beautiful cup-bearer of Zeus is replaced by a snake goddess desperately defending herself against Garuda. As the primeaval God, as the creator of Brahma, the actual creator of the world, Vishnu sleeps, between the cyclic appearance of the world, on Ananta, the snake of Eternity within the chaos. Vishnu's wife Śri-Laxmi, Goddess of wealth, fertility and luck stands or sits on a lotus often surrounded by other lotuses which carry elephants, pouring or sprinkling water on the head of the Goddess. This ceremony indicates

her crowning as the Goddess of Heaven. The incarnations of Vishnu follow a sort of pre-conceived drawinistic principle of evolution. In the form of a fish the God fights the snail demon. As a tortoise, he enables "the churning of the primeaval ocean" by supporting the world-mountain Meru which is used as a twirling stick. As the primeaval boar (Adivaraha) he lifts the Goddess of the Earth, i.e. the dry land, from the primeaval swamp. As half human and half lion, he saves his devotee Prahlada from his Śaivite father Hiranyakaśipu (a sectarian legend with a political background, i.e. the liberation of North India from the Huns). As Rama, the hero of the popular epic Ramayana, he fights with the aid of an army of monkeys and bears (totems of jungle tribes) the demon-king Ravana of Lanka (later identified with Ceylon) who had abducted his wife Sita. His faithful follower, Hanuman, the king of the monkeys (grey-haired, black-faced species of apes) himself, became a popular deity as helper of the poor in distress who dare not take their humble requests to Rama, let alone Vishnu. As in one mighty leap he had brought, for the hero wounded in the battle, a mountain top of the Himalaya covered with healing plants, he is considered a protector from illness. A demon in the disguise of a golden doe had lured Rama away from Sita in order to deprive her of his protection. In the Middle Ages the Sun-God Surya merged with Vishnu (as Laxmi-Narayana) and emerged as Surya-Narayana. During the first eight centuries of the Christian Era, Surya, as a half Scythian warrior holding a lotus (symbol of life) and seated on a chariot drawn by seven horses (days of the world), enjoyed great popularity with the nobility (often descendants of foreign conquerors).

The gods of the original Vedic religion later played only subordinate roles as protectors of the eight directions of the horizon (Lokapalas or Parivara-devata). Those who did not have an accompanying animal were now assigned one. On the North side Soma (moon) and Kubera (demon king of the North, protector of the treasures of the earth) received a horse. On the North-East side Iśana or Rudra (a form of Śiva) and in the South Yama (God of Death) a bull; in the East Indra (king of the lowest heaven) the wonder elephant Airavata; in the South-East Agni (fire) a goat; Virupaksha (another form of Siva) in the South-West a demon; in the West Varuna (God of Water and Justice) a crocodile; in the North-West Vayu (Wind-God) an antelope. Brahma, the most ambitious of the Vedic gods, was degraded to the position of the priest of the pantheon and received a goose, his wife Saraswati (protectress of wisdom) a swan or a peacock. Saraswati was once the most important of a group of river goddesses. She too was superseded by the goddesses of the holy river Ganges (the Ganga) standing

on a crocodile (Makara) and Yamuna (Jumna) standing on a tortoise. Crocodiles (gharial) and huge tortoises actually live in these rivers. In the course of time this symbolism has been transmitted also to other rivers like the Narmada, Krishna and Tungabhadra. Statues of Ganga and Yamuna have their honoured places on either side of the richly decorated entrance to the sanctuary in the temples.

The river goddessess belong to a relatively small number of predominantly lower, Pre-Aryan folk deities which were neither absorbed by the higher deities nor merged into the swarm of the divine crowds (Gandharvas and Kinnaris or Kimpurushas, i.e. Harpies) nor into the anonymous mass of earth and water deities. Another similar group is represented by the frightful "Mothers" whose circular temples in the lonely jungles witnessed human sacrifices and secret sexual rites. The Seven Mothers have their names derived from those of a number of higher Hindu gods, such as Indrani from Indra, Vaishnavi from Vishnu, Kaumari from Kumara = Karttikeya etc. and are accompanied by their animals or had themselves (in ancient times) animal heads. Another group of Eight Mothers, together with Rudra (a terrible form of Śiva), as the ninth formed a mystic cult circle, while a third group consisted of the Sixtyfour Yoginis.

The mass of old folk gods consisted of the Yakshas and Yakshis (dwarfs and elves, the latter often being Dryads), the Rakshasas and the Rakshasis (giants) and the Nagas and the Naginis (snakes and water nymphs). As deities of fertility they often appear as courting couples (mithuna). The Yakshas and the Yakshis had sometimes horse heads or were Centaurs. The origin of this feature is not clear as the Pre-Aryan inhabitants did not know horses. Perhaps the origin was the fear of the horse-carriages of the conquerors and later their riding horses. In scenes on Pre-Christian terracottas we find such horse-headed demonesses seducing men so as to misuse them sexually and then devour them. The last shrine dedicated to such a horse-headed deity is the wooden temple of Hirma Devi (the giantess Hidimba of the Mahabharata) built in the 16th century near Manali in Kulu. Today she is considered the Goddess of the river Beas and an incarnation of Kali. Possibly the rite of offering statues of horses to the many graves of obscure "Mohammedan Saints" (in most cases votives in the hope for children) may be a survival of a former Yakshi cult. Of the snake deities Cobras were considered water nymphs (Naga, Nagini) and mostly represented as beautiful girls (with the upper body of a snake above their heads) who like our nixies pulled young men into the water. The Nagarajas (King cobras) with five, seven or nine heads were supposed to be deities of rivers and lakes, but

also of bad weather and protectors of wealth (dragons). The remaining snakes (sarp = serpens) were considered earth deities. In South India many cult stones (Nagakkals) are found dedicated to them. Both types of snakes form, individually or in loving embrace (Nagamithuna), the socle decorations of many temples. A particularly beautiful group is carved in the middle of the already mentioned relief "Descent of the Ganga" near Mamallapuram, in a rock crevice which changed into a water fall during the rainy season.

In the Buddhist art which bloomed before Hinduism, besides the Jataka illustrations and (often only indicated) scenes of the life of Buddha, the Nagas and the snakes play an important role and are depicted as deities converted to the "True Doctrine" and then devoted to its service. The Nagas can be recognised only by the snake head visible above the human head and the Yakshis by the dwarfs they stand on or by the trees in which they hang. Generally they are depicted as guardians or worshippers. During her conception the Buddha's mother dreamt of her son in the form of a white elephant. White elephants (Albinos) were consequently considered lucky, were sought after by the Buddhist kings and thus became the cause of bloody wars. The four carriage drives during which the Buddha experienced the suffering of the world and the happiness of the ascetic, were the cause of his renouncing the material world. He fled from his palace on horseback. A king cobra protected him during ascetic practices which preceded his enlightenment. He proclaimed his doctrine for the first time in the deer park of Sarnath near Benares. Some other animals (elephants, snakes etc.) are mentioned in various episodes during his wanderings as a beggar monk and as a preacher. At his death not only men but also animals, demons and gods grieved. According to the tradition of later Buddhism, the Prajnaparamita, "the Bible" of the Mahayana, was entrusted by Buddha to snake gods, until the Saint Nagarjuna recovered it in a reliquary from the depths of the sea and published it. Now the Buddha, mightier than the gods, was portrayed as sitting or standing on a big lotus which is supported by Nagarajas. Still later, particularly in Bengal, South-East Asia and East Asia, a super pantheon came into being which conceded a very humble place to the Hindu gods as the conquered or the servants; but it downgraded also Gautama Buddha as one among a swarm of earthly Buddhas above whom mystic Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and their wives and even a primeaval Buddha (Vajradhara) were raised. Below them a whole system of protectors of the religion and the world, of incarnated magic formulas, demons, devils etc. was developed. Some of these, apparently moulded after the images of Hindu gods, Iranian and jungle deities, were provided with animal heads or similar animals as

companions. Thus Hayagriva and Paramaśva have horse heads (perhaps adopted from a Central Asian nomadic cult); the sun-Goddess Marichi (Aśokakanta) and the Goddess Vajravarahi have swine heads. Manjuśri sits on a lion, Samantabhadra on an elephant, Vajradharma Avalokiteśvara has a peacock, Nilakantha Avalokiteśvara two snakes, Simhanada Avalokiteśvara a lion, let alone the incorporated Hindu gods. The bird Garuda, holding snakes killed by him, crowns many pictures serving for cult and meditation purposes.

Similarly Jainism, another religion with ascetic and missionary tendencies (still flourishing in Rajasthan and quite important in Bihar and Kanara), has accommodated a number of animals in its iconography. To the twenty-four World Teachers (Tirthankaras, Jinas) whose life time is supposed to go back to the earliest ages known to astronomy, Jainism has alloted Yakshas and Yakshis as servants as well as Hindu Gods (Dikpalas) with their animals. Vardhamana Mahavira, the last Tirthankara, was a contemporary of the Buddha and has a lion as his emblem. His, perhaps historical, predecessor Parśvanatha has a cobra and the first (really mythical) Tirthankara Rishabhanatha or Adinath has a bull. Others (who are seldom cited), have an elephant, a horse, a buffalo, a rhinoceros, a boar, an antelope, goat, ape, falcon, dolphin and conch-shell. Naturally the Hindu gods too have animals assigned to them. It is said of Paraśvanatha that like the Buddha during his ascetic exercises he too was embraced by a protecting king cobra. Mahavira, the son of a respectable nobleman, was believed originally to have been conceived in the womb of a brahmin woman but later carried into the womb of his real mother by the animal headed Yaksha Naigamesha or Naigameshin.

The conch trumpet plays a significant role in the Indian cult; it is the same used by the Tritons of Greek mythology and even today by the fishermen on remote coasts of the Mediterranean. It is the very conch-shell the demon of which God Vishnu once fought during his incarnation as a fish. The behaviour of the crows was observed as omens and recorded in separate illustrated books (kakarutaśastra).

As in every culture, this symbolism had further effects on the literary metaphors (mentioned already in passing), particularly on those of erotic-lyrical style, on heraldry, and moreover, on the decorative motifs of buildings, furniture and objects of daily use. Erotic lyrics are found in the frescoes of the Buddhist cave monasteries of Bagh and Ajanta, only lightly concealed under the Jataka themes. In the temples they are found more in individual figures

and ornamental motifs (tree-goddesses, divine nymphs, river goddesses, the gods of love and sex Kama and Rati, the beautiful aspects of Kali-Durga and Lakshmi, flower tendrils with dwarfs, monkeys or birds). In the later centuries suchlike erotic lyrical themes dominated a whole group of illustrated poems in Sanskrit, Hindi, Bengali, Oriya, Telugu, Kanarese, Tamil etc. which dealt partly with the Indian song of songs (Gitagovinda) and partly with the songs relating to the spring season (Vasantavilasa), all the seasons (Caturvarsha), months (Baramasa) and times of the day (Ragamala) or the different moods of the lovers and their beloveds (Nayikabheda). The animals play a special role in these poems, particularly the peacocks who with their cries announce the arrival of the rainy season or the time of love (May in our country). They are also the symbols of the God of Spring (Vasanta) and of Śri Krishna, the God of Divine Love. Herons, flying or nesting in the trees, symbolise similarly the rainy season; parrots and pigeons being in love; Kokilas longing; does, monkeys, cats and ants the playfulness of lap animals. In Islamic poetry the Kokila is replaced by the Bul-bul (nightingale). There we also come across the hoopoe, the mythical messenger between King Solomon and the Queen of Saba.

India has not known shield heraldry in the Western sense of the word; however, there existed a heraldry of ensigns, banners, state seals and coins. Ensigns were of the type once common in Ancient South West Asia and North Africa which continued to exist in a changed form in the signs of the Roman legion and in a diluted form in our procession banners. A rod, from which hung bands, carried a diagonal ledge which had a flat heraldic figure of the bird Garuda or the monkey Hanuman, of a lion, a bull, a boar, a doe, an antelope, peacock, fish etc. Naturally there were other symbols too : lotuses, "The Wheel of the Law" (for the Buddhist doctrine), stupas, the sun and the moon, gods and goddesses etc. The monumental pillars with statues, symbols or animals of gods and goddesses in front of the temples served the same purpose. The banners of the Moghul emperors and later those of the Nawabs of Oudh used for the decoration of their palaces in Lakhnau, were crowned with fish symbols. Very famous were the pillars of the Maurya Emperor Aśoka, which bore his engraved edicts; they were crowned by a bull, a lion or a group of lions (e. g. at Sarnath) or sometimes had an animal frieze on the abacus beneath the head of the column. However, on slabs, purely religious symbols were predominant, particularly Śiva's lingam. A small stele from Karvan (situated to the south of Baroda), shows a Near Eastern "tree of life" between two caricatured capricorns. The composition vaguely reminds us of Achamenian metal work and perhaps this stele is

a remnant of the first invasion of the Scythians into Gujarat. Although horns of capricorns are found nailed unto the wall in many Kali temples in the Himalaya, they are never represented in Indian art. Many medieval steles show at the bottom a donkey covering a naked woman on her knees. This symbolises the punishment in hell for all those who are condemned for misusing or robbing pious donations. These animal symbols also appear on temple walls, stupa gates (at Sanchi, the peacocks of the Emperor Aśoka), city walls and gates of old Hindu cities, but still more frequently on buildings from Islamic times (lions, two lions with one head, double eagle, fabled animals, fishes).

We find the same symbols on the seals of the rings with which the ten thousands of copper plates engraved with documents on loans, tax exemption, land gifts and other affairs were held together. These plates drawn up by the rulers contain their genealogies interspersed with historical allusions; they are for us the most important source for nearly two thousand years of Indian history. As the number of symbols was limited, people varied them in individual details. The animals were shown in front view, right or left side views, lying, sitting or springing, with claws or wings drawn in or outstretched, with hair or feathers smooth or bristled up. These impressions seem to originate partly from the lids of the vessels and partly from the cords which once must have held together pieces of documents long fallen into decay. Among them we also find seals of princes, city administrators, generals, judges, tax officials, abbots etc. The seals themselves were carved out of semi-precious stones. They were very seldom (only under Western influence) made out of gold, silver or copper. Often they were mounted on rings. However, the most interesting were the Steatite seals of the Indus Valley culture (3000 to 1500 B. C.). They were square, as opposed to the round or oval seals of the historical period. A great majority of them show animals, predominatly Sindhi cattle, Zebus, rhinoceros, tigers, elephants, antelopes, crocodiles etc., probably with a religious meaning. Other seals represent scenes from religious cults and mythical figures. However, nothing conclusive can be said as the inscriptions on the seals still remain undeciphered inspite of numerous attempts at their interpretation.

Related to the seals are the coins, particularly beautiful in the time of the Indo-Greeks, Scythians, Parthians, Kushanas and the Guptas (around 200 B. C.–600 A. D.). They deteriorated quickly and again reached a high artistic level in Islamic times. In a period of only punchmarked money, a cock is already shown on the reverse side of a singular coin of Sophytes (Subhuti) who was a Satrap of Alexander in Punjab. Indian copies of Greek drachmas which were once prevalent in the whole of the Orient (up to South Arabia

and the Characene i. e. lower Mesopotamia), were naturally embossed with the picture of an owl, the symbol of the goddess. Most of the Indo-Greek coins have Greek deities on their reverse but it is questionable how far they were actually meant to represent the Bactrian and Indian counterparts of these gods. Pictures of elephants and bulls appear on the seals of later Greek kinglets. These seals are partly square and similar to the lead coins of the Satavahana kings of the Deccan, on which also a horse transformed into a mythical creature (and named after the city Hippocura) is represented. Garuda is a common symbol of state among the Vaishnavite Gupta emperors. The picture of an emperor riding a horse (since Skandagupta) seemed to be inspired by an army reform while fighting the invasions of the dangerous nomads of Central Asia and those of a tiger fight by victories in Assam. Saśanka of Bengal, the fanatic champion of Saivaism in the 7th century, introduced Nandin, the bull of Śiva while Adi-Varaha Bhoja (9th century) of the Pratihara Dynasty introduced the bear incarnation of God Vishnu. On most of the Kushana and Gupta coins we come across animals only as companions of various deities. Most predominant is the bull (standing or sitting) of Śiva, the tiger of the Devi (Kali-Durga) and the peacock of Karttikeya (= Skanda, similarly on the coins of Skandagupta). During the period of the decay of numismatic art in the Middle Ages, the seals of the copper plate inscriptions were repeated on the coins. The Shahi Kings of East Afghanistan and of the Punjab added the figure of a rider to the pictures on their coins. The same was done by the Chauhans of Rajasthan. But not the Gupta coinage rather the Central Asian tradition set the model for the steles dedicated to the dead. The figure of a rider was even reproduced on the coins of the early Islamic conquerors and was only replaced in the 13th century by the characteristic Islamic type of coins embellished exclusively with inscriptions. Two exceptions to this have been discovered so far : the coins with a circle of zodiacal animal pictures of the great Moghul Jahangir (1605–27) which, of course, showed lion, bull, ram, fishes etc., and some coins of Tipu Sultan, the last Muslim ruler of Mysore, who loved to compare himself with a tiger and hence included this animal in his coinage.

We had already mentioned heraldic enblems on temples, pillars and fortresses. More important was this symbolism in architecture, royal furniture and handicrafts. This symbolism reflected on the one hand the sanctuaries as being magic symbolic images of the cosmos. On the other hand it justified the role of the sovereigns claiming to be not only the fictitious descendants of the gods and mythical heroes but also the representative of the cosmic order, the Chakravartin.

If the sanctuaries, whether Buddhist, Jaina or Hindu, built in wood, clay, brick or stone, were supposed to be microcosms then it was logical that their structures had to conform to the macrocosm as imagined in that period, and the regions of the same had to be indicated through suitable statues, reliefs and paintings. Hence the later stupas and Hindu temples were shown as being borne by lions and/ or elephants whose bodies rose out of cavities in the floor or out of the base of the structures. Later, these were superseded by processions of lions, horses and elephants with or without riders. In other temples we find friezes of snakes, individually or in pairs representing the earth. Yakshas, human scenes, divine nymphs and gods are shown at a higher level. Subsequently, friezes of wild ducks (hamsa) surrounded the upper parts of the temples or palace walls. Goddesses of the holy rivers Ganga and Yamuna, rocking gently on their animals, kept watch at the entrance to the sanctuaries of the highest deity. In the earliest art sphinxes served as base of the pillars. In the Pallava temples of South India (7th-9th century) the pillars are borne by squatting lions (similar to the resting lions of the Romanesque art). On the capitals of these pillars we first see resting lions, sphinxes, or elephants, then enamoured popular godlings sitting on elephants, horses, lions, or lion and stag sphinxes or griffins. Later art had springing lions or mythic animals and semidivine riders sitting on the abacus as supports for the ceiling girders. In the South Indian architecture since the late 16th century, these rising animals (often bigger than life size) with their riders concealed the pillars in front of the gigantic blocks of stone which bore the immense weight of the massive stone slabs above the whole broad procession road. Pillars were connected by complicated arches, stylized flower wreaths growing out of the mouths of crocodiles and dissappearing into the mouths of demon masks (kirtimukha). Or the wreaths are transformed into snakes which a Garuda holds in his beak or at other places into crocodile's tails dissolving into luxuriant foliage. Even on temple towers we find the same springing lions.

Also the platform on which the sanctuary was placed, was guarded by snake-kings in all the variations from an indigenous royal figure with a many-headed Naga hood to (in Gandhara and Kashmir) the hellenistic sea dragons with or without human upper body. In Mamallapuram, the outer court of the "Beach-temple" is enclosed by a low wall crowned with the statues of resting bulls. Later, this frieze of bull statues was repeated on the high walls between the gigantic Gopurams (gates to the temple courtyard) and after that on the roofs of the entrance halls of the temples. Statues of (once seven) galloping horses (days of the week) and elephants stand in front of the Sun-

Temple of Konarka, which (indicated by the reliefs of huge wheels) symbolises the chariot of God Surya.

A related symbolism applied to the thrones of the gods and rulers and to the chairs of persons of royal blood. The common man and even a nobleman, sat in the hot climate on the floor eventhough rugs, cushions or carpets might have been spread out. Chairs and thrones were really platforms on which one sat with one or both feet dangling or with feet folded under one's self. They were made with or without back-rest for one or more persons. The throne of the ruler was naturally the lion throne (Simhasana) with lion legs and lion heads on the hand rests. Until recently it was still quite common in the courts of the Maharajas and is substantially the same type which was used by the Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt. In case of the thrones of God Vishnu and also of those rulers who are considered to be incarnations of Vishnu (for example the King of Nepal), the legs are shaped as Garudas. In contrast, queens used a throne of wild geese flying out sidewards. The most famous is the peacock throne of the Moghul emperor Shahjahan which had on its canopy the figures of peacocks made of jewels. It is supposed to be standing today in the Gulistan palace of Tehran. However, only the gold and the jewels were derived from the throne of Shahjahan. The actual design is of the reign of Fathali Shah (around 1800) and the peacocks do no longer exist. The rear of a purely Indian throne consisted of two rods which held a halo (Prabha) crowned by an arch with a Kirtimukha-mask. Jutting out on both sides of the backrest of the throne there were figures of elephants, dragons, crocodiles and, lastly, rams and stags representing the symbols of earth, water and air meaning "the three worlds" of the Universe. The stag was originally a Central Asian symbol of Highness, so much so that in the finds of Noin Ula (Mongolia, 2nd century B. C.) even the harness of the royal horses had artificial stag horns. In Indian symbolism the stag quickly degenerated into a fabled animal. Stag feet (Plinius mentions them in India) continued to exist in architectural symbolism (for example at the Stupa of Sanchi) till the beginning of the Christian era.

In dresses and jewellery (which mostly developed from real flowers) animal symbolism is found less often than plant symbolism. The statue of a Bodhisattva from Takht-i-Bahi (Peshawar District) bears over the temples a crown with winged dragon figures. This might be of Greek or Iranian origin. Crownprinces and also Bodhisattvas sometimes wore a small lion skin or panther skin over the shoulder and two boar tusks as an ornament for the neck. In North-Western India, helmets in the shape of elephant and lion heads were

popular. The Greek conqueror Demetrius (about 180 B.C.) wore a helmet made from an elephant head. Sword and dagger grips with animal heads are known to us of Moghul times. Cannons too were decorated with a dragon head (at the mouth or the tail-end) or sometimes their handles with crocodiles and fishes. Hamsa saris (about 6–10 meters of 1 meter wide cloth draped into a dress) in women's garments were very popular. In these, figures of wild geese in circles, squares, rhombuses or creepers were woven in gold or silver, as the wild goose was considered a symbol of female beauty. Her "waddling" was regarded to have similarity with the gait of such women whose legs and feet were weighed down with heavy ornamental rings. The swinging of the hips so caused was considered an erotic charm like the effect of high-heeled shoes today.

In this context something remains to be added about the fable animals. The Makara, a crocodile whose hind body dissolves into a wild design of feathers or foliage, is the most common. His snout often reminds us of the tusk of an elephant but the head and the upper body could easily be that of a capricorn or of an antelope (for example when the sign of the capricorn in the Zodiac is meant to be shown). A Vyali is a lion with the head of an elephant (often on pillars). We find sphinxes and griffins in all possible variations, particularly in pre-classical art. There are such with faces of lions, hawks and human beings, with horns of a capricorn, antelopes and stags with or without wings, with lion's feet or bird's claws, with the hind quarters of a mammal, a bird, a fish or in the form of a leaf design. On the Satavahana coins of the Deccan we find horses with the end of the tail formed into a dragon head. Ganda-Berunda is a special type of monster (particularly on the arms of pre-Islamic Deccan). He was a sort of a griffin who carried through the air elephants in both claws as if they were a small loot. Kimpurushas and Kinnaris were birds with human upper bodies considered music-loving inhabitants of paradise (identical with the real human inhabitants of the Kunawar region of the Western Himalayas). The Sun-Bird Garuda, the riding animal of Vishnu, is an eagle with a human head or alternately a winged human with the beak of a bird. Kirtimukha (shining face) is the mask of a demon found on temple walls, pillars, arches, columns, sometimes devilish and sometimes with the face of a dragon or a lion. In Indonesia (named Kalamukha), it is often shown with wings and reminds of the winged sun-disc of Ancient Egypt.

All this has not yet exhausted our theme. It would be worth the trouble to go deeper into all that loving observation of nature and all the symbolism

which had once made Indian life rich and meaningful. Many traditional cultures, including ours, have been dying a slow death or carried on as ossefied, but sacred national tradition. Modern India has by and large little appreciation of nature. Only individual artists have felt and still feel the old deep-rooted affinity with nature as the great poet Rabindranath Tagore or the unique paintress Amrita Sher Gil who died young or the artist Shiavax Chavda.

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