

Chapter - III

Japanese Buddhist Iconography - a Comparative Study

Soon after Buddhism was introduced into Japan, it did not take a long time for it to become the central force of spiritual culture in Japan. As a natural embodiment different aspects of higher culture brought about enormous changes in the life of the people of Japan. Buddhism gave a new shape to the Japanese civilisation. The newly introduced art, iconography, religion and other objects of civilisation had an immense growth following the introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century A.D. Different foreign influences on Japan especially the Sino-Indian influences, contributed to a great extent to the pattern of Japanese life and culture which was based mainly on Buddhism. As a part of Buddhist pantheon, the Brahmanical and Buddhist divinities found their way to Japan from the 6th century.

Buddhism did not enter into Japan directly from India. It had to pass through China and Korea and later this religion did strongly set its roots in Japanese soil. It is quite obvious that when Buddhism passed through the two countries it had absorbed many indigenous ideas already prevalent in those countries. Buddhism which was nourished in China and later found its way to Japan through Korea had developed a new flavour of its own, that was in some respect deviated from the original Buddhism of India.

Buddhism came to Japan from Korea in 538 A.D.¹ when this religion had already flourished in China as an important social order. From that very time the Japanese tried their best to adopt the Buddhist culture in their own soil. During the Asuka period (A.D. 538 - 645 A.D.) , Prince Shōtoku established communication with China. The official contact with China continued upto 894 A.D. During the early Heian period (A.D. 794 - 897 A.D.) Emperor Kammu sent eight great monks (Nittō Hakkō) to China. Two of them were Kūkai and Saichō. Kūkai was posthumously known as Kōbō-Daishi. Hui-Kuo, who taught the doctrine of Chen-Yen in China was the master of this Japanese saint Kūkai. The Chen-Yen doctrine was known as Shingon in Japan. In 806 A.D. Kōbō-Daishi propagated the esoteric or Tantric doctrine which was the main essence of the Shingon doctrine. There are many legends and myths centering round the life and works of Kōbō Daishi.

It appears that China's cultural contact with India started from the 3rd or 2nd century B.C. From 70 A.D. Buddhism migrated from its motherland India to China and this religion became firmly established in the soil of China which was the land of Confucianism and Taoism².

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1. According to some scholars the date of the beginning of Buddhism in Japan was 552 A.D.
 2. Confucianism was the ancient religion of China. The worship of "Two centuries before the two years of the birth of the Christ the individualism divided itself into two branches - Taoism and Confucianism". ERE, Vol. IV p. 12.

From Northern China Buddhism entered into Korea where the Koreans accepted it not merely as an Indian Religion but as an embodiment of Chinese civilisation. The northern kingdom of Korea accepted this religion in 372 A.D. while the southern kingdom received it in 384 A.D. Buddhism established its stronghold in Korea that was instrumental in introducing Buddhist culture in Japan.

The coming of Buddhist monks from Korea with the image of Śākyamuni had a great impact on the Japanese people who at that time could not conceive of any divinity superior to mankind. Thus the message of the Buddha had a great impact on the people of Japan.

The Japanese found the Chinese civilisation much more superior to their own culture and thought themselves to be culturally poorer than the Chinese. Therefore, they tried to improve their ideas of art and other objects of culture by adopting the Chinese culture. They set themselves to modify and absorb the Chinese culture according to their own ideas and also social needs. Japan accepted the Far-eastern culture in its own land. Gradually the Chinese civilisation influenced the entire nation and the life of the Japanese people was moulded by the higher culture with the dissemination of Buddhism throughout Japan, the Japanese art and architecture took a new shape and form. Many temples were erected. Buddhist philosophy and ethics were preached and these had a great

impact on the people in general. The refined form of rituals in the temples were introduced. People were highly impressed by the ritualistic aspect with which the people of the country were not familiar owing to the absence of such form of ceremonies in their indigenous cult of Shintoism.

Along with the growth of Buddhism, the literary, linguistic and artistic activities started in a scale that was unheard of in the past history of Japan. The pictures of Gautama and various episodes and legends concerning the life of Gotama (Gautama) were produced with great enthusiasm. Different Buddhist statues and carvings brought to Japan from Korea and China. In the field of architecture important changes also took place and new development can also be traced in the architectural art. Before the advent of new ideas from the continent, the dwelling houses and the Shinto-shrines appeared shabby looking. Even the ruling ~~xxx~~ class and the nobility used to live in those kind of houses. Now the Chinese style of construction of architectural objects came into existence. They used to follow mainly the Chinese architectural style and models. But in the later phase the Japanese developed their own typical style that had its own excellence as well as an æsthetic value. The Japanese scholars learnt Chinese language and literature. Thus the Japanese were highly influenced by the Chinese. The Sanskrit texts were translated into Chinese by the Japanese priests. From the early period upto 94 A.D. emissaries of students, monks

and various scholars were sent to China at different times.

So it is clear that for the study of Japanese Buddhist art and culture the impact of foreign influence on Japan is an important aspect. A living example of Indian influence can be traced in the existing belief in the image of Bodai-Daruma, who was none else than Bodhidharma of India. But here he is regarded as special deity. General legend says that Bodai-Daruma (Bodhidharma) reach the Chinese soil in 527 A.D. and there he spent more than eight years in meditation staring blank at a wall. At that time he cut off his upper eye-lids in order to remain awake and thereby to avoid sleep, which may act as an hinderance to his meditation. As he remained seated for a prolonged period in a stationery position the lower limbs of his body became weaker and finally lost all strength and, therefore, he could not move his body. In Japan, images of Daruma which has no legs were made to represent this particular state of the body of Daruma. The eyes of Daruma image are kept white, i.e. the eyes are not painted. When some one wishes to have his desire fulfilled, he paints one of the eyes of the image and when his wishes are actually fulfilled he paints the other eyes of Daruma¹.

Another example of Buddhist influence in the folk and urban life of Japan is to be found in one of the aspects

1. The very word 'Daruma' is derived from Sanskrit word Dharma. But in Japan the significance of 'Daruma' dolls are quite different. Here the deity is worshipped as the bestower of success and fulfilment of wishes. Daruma is regarded as the introducer of Zen Buddhism in China.

of New Year celebrations in Japan. In the similar way, the examples of Buddhist influence in Japanese social life can also be studied from the concept of Zeniarai Benten or coin-washing Benten. Sarasvati is called Benten or Benzai-ten in Japan. But in the concept of Coin-washing Benten there has occurred a fusion of Shintoism and Buddhism.

Due to the great distances between the two countries and the immense difficulty of travelling thousands of miles by sea and hostile lands the people of Japan did not have any direct acquaintance with India or the Indians. But the Japanese had a great desire of maintaining relationship with their religious motherland, India. They tried their best to come in contact with the Indians. It can also be referred in this connection that the several Indian deities who were little known or forgotten in China or India are still popular in Japan. The images of shoden or shō-tan or Kangiten, or Ganeśa, Kichijō-ten or Lakṣmī, Benten or Sarasvatī and the Gods of Fire Ka-ten or Agni etc. are the well known Buddhist deities in Japan. Moreover, the great disciples of the Buddha, and the great Buddhist scholar monks such as Rāhula, Ānanda, Nāgārjuna, Bodhisena, Amoghovajra, Vimalakirti, Bodhidharma of India and many other monks of China and Japan have also been deified and worshipped in Japan and the images of these disciples were included in the broader section of the religious art of Japan.

Although there were no direct contact between Japan and India, in a sense Indian influence on every field of Japanese culture had been immense. Prof. B.H. Chamberlain says that "Buddhism brought civilisation" and question of Indian influence on Japan "is vast and somewhat obscure"¹. As it appears it was with the introduction of Buddhism in Japan that the essence of Indian Philosophy and culture as a natural embodiment of that great religion cast a profound influence on Japanese way of life.

It would not be exaggeration to say that amazingly Japan is a living museum of Indian gods known as 'Ien' or 'Devas'. In every corner of Japan Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Sarasvatī, Lakṣmī, Sūrya, Soma and other Brahmanical gods are often enshrined with different Buddhist gods.

The late Nara period witnessed the creation of some of the most beautiful Buddhist statues. For this reason the late Nara period is usually considered to be the golden age of Japanese sculptural activities. Previously, the sculptors had worked mainly with wood and bronze, but now they began also to use clay, lacquer and lesser degree stone. The main stylistic development can immediately be seen by comparing the Fūkū-Kensaku Kannon in the Hokke-dō (middle of the 8th century A.D.) with Shō-Kannon (Nilakanṭha Avalokiteśvara), Yakushi-ji. This Shō-Kannon is the example of the

1. IJ, p. 246.

mature style of T'ang, which display Indian elements. The image has six arms and three eyes like that of the Hindu Śiva. (Pl. V, Fig. 2.)

It is to be noted here that the sculpture or for that matter the art of the early period was tinged with the style of Gupta period art of India. Almost all the sculptures of the Hakuho or the early Nara period bear a strong resemblance with the Gupta period sculptures of India. Actually, the Japanese sculptors of that period imported the T'ang style of depiction which was, however, influenced by the Gupta style of Indian art. The characteristics of the Gupta style was brought to China by Hsuan-Tsang and Wang-Huan-ts'e¹ who travelled to India and brought back with them Buddhist images and various Buddhist texts.

The style of Gupta dynasty exerted a strong influence in the oriental sculpture and Buddhist art as a whole was at that time developing in a purely Indian style. During the T'ang dynasty metamorphosis occurred in the style because a fountain head for the Buddhist art of Japan.

If we look at the Gupta period sculptures what shall appear prominently on those are erectness of body, fullness of form, plastic quality, rhythmic well-proportioned composition, handsome faces, broad chest and hip, construction of waist, fine straight legs, wet-clothing pattern of ~~deepery~~ with beautiful curved lines. These features of the T'ang art are but the characteristics of the Gupta style of Indian art

1. PJA.(S), p. 16.

especially of the sculptures of the Gupta period.

Besides the Shō-Kannon image mentioned earlier the rich and powerful modelling of the Gupta style are also displayed in various pieces of sculptures including a copper repose images of Buddhist triad preserved in the Hōryū-ji Nara. The bronze image of Śākyamuni Buddha of the Jindai-ji also bear a strong resemblance with the Indian images of the Gupta period.¹

ICONOGRAPHIC CLASSIFICATION

From the point of view of iconographic classifications Japanese images were traditionally divided into four broad categories such as (i) Nyorai bu or Hotoke bu (the group of images of the various Buddhas); (ii) Bosatsu bu (the group of images of Bodhisattvas); (iii) Myō-ō bu (the group of images of the fierce-looking deities) and (iv) Ten bu (the group of Deva images).

But division into eight categories have provided a greater scope of more minute classification in which Kannon Bodhisattvas were placed in a separate group allowing us to undertake the differences between other Bodhisattvas and a wide variety of Kannon or Avalokiteśvara images. The heavenly bodies were put under the Sheishukū bu. It has also been very convenient to study the images of the Shinto deities, who have been given place in the group named Rakan or Kosho bu and celebrated priests and monks of India, China

1. HDJBP, p. 21.

and Japan.

The first group, as mentioned above, is known as Butsu or Nyorai or Hotoke-bu, which includes the images of various Buddhas only. The form of these images indicate the features of Śākyamuni after his attainment of Buddhahood. The idealised Buddhas, such as, Amitābha, Bhaiṣajyaguru, Dipaṅkara, Mahāvairocana, Akṣobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amoghasiddhi, and Ratnaketu are included in this section. The Hōryū-ji temple of the Asuka period preserves many of the noteworthy representations of the Butsu or Nyorai images belonging to the Nyorai-bu.

The Nara period is considered to be the golden period in the history of Japanese religious art, especially the Buddhist Art. The excellence in the Art of painting can be well be studied from the Hōryū-ji, murals.¹ (Unfortunately the original paintings were destroyed by a fire in 1949).

On the walls of the golden Hall of the Hōryū-ji temple there were the painting of Amida or Amitābha Buddha and the accessory figures of the deity were of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta. Buddha Ratnasambhava, Bhaiṣajyaguru and Śākyamuni appeared on the other walls. There are, however, different views regarding the identification of the Buddhas of the other walls. We quote below the

1. The well-known Hōryū-ji temple was built near 'Nara' in 607 A.D. The famous technique of paintings on the walls of the Hōryū-ji resembles the style of the paintings of the cave of Ajanta in India.

said views :

According to a collection (13th century) concerning Prince Shōtoku, the arrangements of the various Buddhas in their respective paradise were depicted as follows :

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1) Eastern Mural - Yakushi
(Bhaiṣajyaguru) | - Hōshō
(Ratnasambhava) |
| 2) Western Mural - Amida
(Amitābha) | - Amida
(Amitābha) |
| 3) North-eastern - Shaka
Mural (Śākyamuni) | - Yakushi
(Bhaiṣajyaguru) |
| 4) North-western - Miroku
Mural (Maitreya) | - Shaka
(Śākyamuni) |

According to the Suvarṇaprabhāsa sūtra the deities on the walls should have been as under :-

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) Eastern Mural | - Ashuku (Akṣobhya) |
| 2) Western Mural | - Amida (Amitābha) |
| 3) North-eastern Mural | - Hōshō (Ratnasambhava) |
| 4) North-western Mural | - Minyosho (?) |

There is yet another view. Different sects of the Hōryū-ji temple describe the deities on the walls as -

- 1) Shaka (Śākyamuni) on the Eastern Wall
- 2) Amida (Amitābha) on the Western Wall
- 3) Yakushi (Bhaiṣajyaguru) on the Western Wall
- 4) Miroku (Maitreya) on the North Western Wall.¹

1. PJA (P), p. 16

The appearance of Gautama Buddha after his attaining of Bodhi became the model for giving shape and form of the image of the Buddha. In addition to this priestly robes, the Buddha figures should bear "thirty-two" physical marks. The Kongō-Kyō or the Diamond Sūtra (Vairocana Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra in Sanskrit) which was translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva between 402 and 312 A.D. mentions about "thirty-two" special marks or superior signs of the Tathagata. The Chinese translations of Abhiniskramana Sūtra done in 69 or 70 A.D. for the first time, also mentions about these signs and also about eighty personal signs on the body of prince Siddhartha.

Accordingly, we find that Buddha images in Japan too contain a number of distinctive marks, some of which are as follows :

Snail-shell pattern of the curl of hair known as Rahotsu in Japanese, small tuft of white hair on the forehead that ~~symbolises~~ emission of ray of light (Byokugō in Japanese), golden coloured body, hands should reach below the knees, a halo behind the head, webbed fingers and toes, thousand-spoked wheel marks underneath the feet, mudrā or hand gesture, hanging of thin priestly robe across the chest, partly covered or fully exposed shoulder & etc.

Each idealised Buddha¹ should have his own mudrā, but

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1. Some of the idealised Buddhas in Japanese Buddhism are :
Dainichi Nyorai (Mahāvairocana Buddha), Amida Nyorai (Amitābha Buddha), Yakushi Nyorai (Bhaiṣajyaguru), Ashuku Nyorai (Akṣobhya), Hōshō Nyorai (Ratnasambhava), Fūkū-Jō-Jū-Nyorai (Amoghasiddhi), Shaka Nyorai (Sākyamuni), Jōko Butsu (Dipaṅkara).

in many cases the prescribed forms of mudrās have not been strictly followed. Therefore, many hand symbols or gestures are found to be common to all Buddhas.

Amitābha/Amida

The Amida Figures can be seen principally with nine mudrās. According to the mudrās, Amitābha images are classified into three groups.

The figures in meditation are known as Jō-in-sō. The three kinds of meditation symbols are formed by placing the two palms on the lap of the figure, while the fingers form a circle in three different ways, such as (a) by touching the index fingers with the thumbs, (b) by touching the middle fingers with the thumbs and (c) by touching the ring fingers with the thumbs.

Preaching figures are known as Seppo-in-sō. The Seppo-in mudrā is formed (a) by touching the index fingers with the thumbs, (b) by touching the middle fingers with the thumbs and (c) by touching the ring fingers with the thumbs.

'Coming to welcome' figures are known as Raigō-in-sō. In this Raigō-in attitude the hand gestures are formed :

- (a) by touching the index fingers with the thumbs,
- (b) by touching the middle fingers with the thumbs and
- (c) by touching the ring fingers with the thumbs.

It is said that the souls are of nine-grades. The above

nine kinds of hand gestures are connected with the nine grades of souls who are to be welcomed by Amida.

Nevertheless, the hand-symbols of Amida are found to be different in various other images. As for example, the Amida figure known as Giogo-Shii-Amida installed in the Tōdai-ji temple in Nara, in seated posture depicts Namaskāra-mudrā with two hand folded together.

Two important illustrations are given here in this connection :-

Amida Nyorai and attendants (Pl. II, Fig. 4.)

The statue was made during the Asuka-Nara period (7th century). It is owned by the Tokyo National Museum.

In this representation, the three statues are standing separately on three lotus pedestal. The folds of the drapery of the central deity reminds us of the Gupta style of sculptural design. The hands of Amida exhibit two different postures. The right hand shows Varada-mudrā and the left hand is in boon-giving attitude. The tuft of of hairs of Amida also resembles the style of the Gupta age. The eyes of all the three figures are closed. A round halo behind the head of Amida and the floral design around the entire halo are artistically depicted. The halo of the attendants, made in the pattern of a net, are also

worth mentioning. Five seated Buddhas are seen placed on the halo above the head of Amitabha. The large halo of Amida nicely covers the triad. The height of Amida is 28.7 c.m., while the height of each of the attendant deities is 20.5 c.m.

In a Scroll painting of Amida Nyorai done during the Kamakura period exhibits the reflection of Korean pattern so far as the design of large spot on its drapery and the lotus pedestals are concerned. The deity is standing upon two lotus flowers, each petal of the flower is beautifully painted.

The deity stands erect and exhibits Raigō-in mudra in his two hands. The Raigō-in mudra is shown to denote that Amida has descended from the Western Paradise to receive the dying souls. (Pl IV, Fig 1.).

He is dressed like that of a sage and he wears no ornaments, only one pair of ear-ring is visible. His eyes are half-closed. The halo behind his head is round and rays are emanating from the halo.

His drapery is very artistically painted and the folds are very prominently displayed.

Yakushi Nyorai

Once Yakushi or Bhaiṣajyaguru was the principal deity of the Hōryū-ji temple. Probably from the 11th century A.D. the Saka Trinity or Sākyaṃuni Triad became the main figure of

the temple. Seated image of Śāka or Śākyamuni is made of bronze and the height of the image is 86.5 c.m., whereas its accessory figures, the two Bodhisattvas are a bit higher and the height of each of them is 90.9 c.m. The great sculptor Tōri constructed these images in 623 A.D. The image of Yakushi Nyōrai was constructed in 607 A.D. and it is seated cross-legged in Padmāsana attitude. From the stylistic point of view there are similarities between these two sculptures of Śākyamuni and Bhaiṣajyaguru.

The subjects chosen by the sculptors of the Nara period belong mainly to three categories. In the first category there are the images of Nyōrai or Buddha figures. In some of the Nara sculptures the style of the Gupta period of India is very prominent. The images of the early Nara period bear resemblance with almost all the features of the Gupta period images.

The figure of Yakushi Nyōrai or Buddha Bhaiṣajyaguru illustrated here (Pl.XI, Fig. 1) belongs to the early Heian period. The figure is coloured. It is made of wood. The lotus pod on which the figure stands is also made of wood and is chiselled from a single block of wood.

The height of the figure is 164.8 c.m. and it has a bulky appearance. It exhibits abhaya-mudrā in his right hand. He holds a medicine pot in the left hand. This medicine pot

is a common attribute of Yakushi Nyorai or Healer Buddha Bhaiṣajyaguru. He is generally regarded as the healer of all spiritual diseases or such psychological ailments that hinder the progress of the worshippers to the paths of spiritual achievements. The whole composition of the body and linear arrangement of the drapery are very well proportioned. The elongated ear-ring and the crown of the deity is quite artistic. As usual in the case of the Buddha images, the hairs are depicted in the Rahotsu or Snail-shell pattern.

Kannon-bu

The next important division is known as Kannon-bu in which the images of god or goddess of Mercy (Avalokiteśvara) such as Ekādaśamukha (Jūichimuk Kannon), Hayagriva (Batō Kannon), Amoghapaśa (Fūkū Kensaku Kannon), Sahasrabhuja (Senju Kannon), Caṇḍī (Juntei Kannon), Tārā, Nilakaṇṭha, Cintāmaṇicakra are included in this division. A group with six particular Kannon forms the well-known group which is commonly known as Roku Kannon or Sada Kannon. There are as many as thirty-three manifestations of Kannon or Avalokiteśvara which together form another separate group in Japan. These images are of different types and there are many varieties among them.

In Indian Buddhist Iconography there are 108 forms of Avalokiteśvara¹. Some of them are Hayagriva Lokeśvara, Halāhala-Lokeśvara, Hariharivarvāhana-Lokeśvara, Māyājālakrama Lokeśvara,

1. IBI, pp. 394-431.

Saḍākṣari Lokeśvara, Ānandādi Lokeśvara, Potapada Lokeśvara. In this list Avalokita, Ratnapāṇi, Kṣitigrabha, Amoghapāśa, Amitābha, Cintāmaṇi, Padmapāṇi, Vajrapāṇi etc. There are another fifty-five forms of Avalakiteśvara apart from the above mentioned thirty-three. They are represented ~~in~~ in different forms. They may have one face, two or three or more faces and two, four or more arms with different attributes. There is a confusion regarding Kannon's sex. Kannon is believed to be a female deity and again Kannon is held as a male deity.

Jūichimen-Kannon or Ekādeśamukha Avalokiteśvara has eleven faces. The central head is proportionate with the body of the figure and the other ten subordinate heads are in gradual diminutive form. Among these ten faces the front three faces should be in a smiling attitude and benign in aspect. The faces of the left are fierce looking and the right faces should bear three sharp teeth or fangs which take upward turn. The last face is always a smiling one. Above these faces a small figure of Amitābha is generally placed. There is a legend that Bodhisattva had to overcome eleven hinderances on his way to achieve the Buddhahood. Thus the eleven heads are symbolic of those hinderances.

As Takaaki Sawa mentions in his work¹ the ten subordinate heads should be of the same size as the principal head. In spite of this textual rule, the sculptors did not find it

1. AJEB, p. 32.

convenient to give effect to the prescribed forms as provided in the canonical texts.

One representation of Jūichimen Kannon at the Dogan-ji temple is a unique example of this type of icon. It was enshrined during the middle of the 9th century. The icon holds a pot in its left hand, while the right hand is stretched upto its knee which is completely open. The fingers of the right hand are directed towards the earth. The face shows the mixed expression of both joy and sorrow.

The Japanese are principally the enthusiastic worshippers of the Buddha. Their reverence to the Kannon comes next. Soon after Buddhism entered into Japan, Kannon became a very popular deity. Kannon is the bestower of happiness. Amida-kyō or Amitābha Sūtra or Saddharmapundarika Sūtra mentions the name of Kannon. Apart from these texts, the Darani Josu or Dhāraṇi which is full of descriptions of the Tantric rituals, also mentions about Kannon. Some characteristics of Rudra are also attributed to Kannon.

According to a legendary belief, Amida once tried to save all people from evil acts and place them in the western heaven. But when he returned back from his abode, the western heaven, he saw that there grew many more evil persons than what he experienced before and that is why he felt deep sorrow for the lamentable situation and in an

anguish his head broke into ten pieces. Later Amitābha placed those ten pieces on his main head since then he remained eleven-headed or Ekādaśamukha with twenty-two eyes and two hands. Thus Kannon came to be regarded as the reliever of all sorrows and poverty and he became the god of mercy.

According to the Buddhist cosmological belief there exist many world and in some of these worlds Avalokiteśvara propagated Buddhism. Sometimes he appeared in the form of Bodhisattva. There are also different views regarding the eleven faces of the god. According to one view, there are eleven heads including the principal one, but in the view of others, there are eleven heads of the deity excluding the principal head. Esho, the Japanese Buddhist priest mentioned that Kannon should be twelve headed. Thus there are also different characteristics of different Kannon figures.

Anyway, generally, the eleven-headed Kannon holds a vase in his one hand and a lotus in the other hand. In Japan there are also various other types of Kannon figures. He is depicted as having one face with two arms, sometimes one face with four arms. Six or ten arms are also mentioned. But the mention of eleven-headed and twelve-handed figures is very frequent. There are even thousand armed figure of Kannon. We have also come across nine-headed Kannon. This type of Kannon also finds a remarkable place. Eleven-headed Kannon may also have four arms according to the convention established by a

Chinese monk belonging to the T'ang dynasty. It is said that in India also this form of one four-armed image was seen in a cave temple (unfortunately no further details were available)¹.

Kannon is a bodhisattva, which is why he should be dressed in princely robes and decorated with ornaments and the crown bedecked with various jewels. A small figure of Amitābha is placed in the crown of Kannon. In the Tantric Buddhist ritual of Japan Kannon is placed in the first rank among the important deities.

The figure of a eleven-headed Kannon (Pl.VIII, Fig. 1.) stands on a lotus pod. This figure was made during the Heian period (10th Century A.D.). The ten diminutive heads surround the principal head. 'Kebutsu' is carved on the forehead of each of the diminutive heads. The sculpture is made of wood. The whole composition is elegant and brightness is marked all over this beautiful piece of sculpture. The hands depict two different postures. The palm of the right hand is stretched, while the left hand holds a vase with flowers. One of these flowers is full blown and the other is just a bud emanated from a single stalk. The lotus is a usual symbol of Avalokiteśvara.

Unlike the Chinese eleven-headed Kannon of T'ang dynasty as discussed in this work (see Pl.VII Fig.3), its

1. AJEB, p. 19.

diminutive heads are placed surrounding the central head. The folds of drapery is very well-arranged and carved skillfully. Now this image is owned by the Kaijusan-ji temple in Kyoto. The height of the image is 45.5 c.m.

We may refer to another Jūichimen Kannon or eleven-headed Avalokiteśvara image of the 9th Century A.D. It is made of sandal-wood and owned by the Agency of Cultural Affairs, Tokyo. It also bears almost the similar iconographic features as that of the image described in the foregoing paragraphs. The marked difference is concerning the decoration of the image with ornaments. The image of the Kaijusan-ji has no ornaments on its body, while the image with the Agency of Cultural Affairs is decorated with necklace, armlets, wristlets, bangles and waist-girdle, and the pitcher in its left hand does not contain any lotus flower or leaf.

There is another Kannon known as Yumetage Kannon or the god who changes the evil dream of the devotees into a good one and this Kannon is featured as standing erect with half-closed eyes.

In Nara the figure of Shō-Kannon in the Yakushi-ji temple (Pl.V, Fig.2.) is mainly made for averting the ill-effects of the evil spirits and goblins.

Fūkū-Kensaku Kannon or Amoghapāśa

The Fūkū-Kensaku is another important figure belonging

to the Kannon-bu. There is an example of this figure in the Tōdai-ji temple. The figure has six hands and the principal two hands are in namaskāra mudrā. There is a lasso or Pāśa in his left hand. By this lasso or Pāśa Amoghapāśa holds the devotees (gods and men) and take them to the Bodhi shore or to the shore of salvation. He is the bestower of Bodhi to his devotees. The lasso or Pāśa is the main characteristic attribute of Fūkū-Kensaku Kannon or Bodhisattva Amoghapāśa. But some of the Kensaku Kannon figure can be seen without the lasso.

In Indian Buddhism Amoghapāśa¹ is placed among the 108 forms of Avalokiteśvara who is known as Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara. In the Sādhana he is described as four-faced and eight-armed and stands on a lotus. He carries in his four right hands a Vajra, a sword, an arrow and a bow, while the left four carry the ghantā, the trident, noose and arrow. We may thus find a striking similarity between the iconographic concept of Japanese Fūkū Kensaku Kannon and Indian Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara.

In Kyoto, there is one famous temple of thousand Kannon called Sanjusangendo. In this temple there are 1001 figures of eleven-headed thousand-armed Kannon or Jūichimen Senju

1. "He is four-faced and eight-armed and stands on a lotus. He carries in his four right hands the Vajra, the sword, the goad, and bow, while the four left carry the ghantā, the tridantī, the noose and the arrow" - see IBI, p. 218.

Kannon (Ekādaśamukha-Sahasrabhuja Avalokiteśvara). The figures stand on the pedestal and placed on the rows of gallery-like steps. The central figure of this group is of Avalokiteśvara who is seated in dhyānamudrā. Each of the other 1000 Avalokiteśvara has small heads over the central head and a miniature figure of Amitābha is placed above all the heads.
Bosatsu-bu

The third category of the iconographic classification is called Bosatsu-bu. The figure in this group are of Bōdhi-sattva. In this group Maitreya, Mañjuśrī, Samantabhadra, Ākāśagarbha, Kṣitigarbha, Sūryaprabha, Candraprabha Vaiṣajya-rāja and others are included. They are called Miroku Basatsu (Maitreya), Manju Basatsu (Mañjuśrī), Kokuzō-Bosatsu (Ākāśagarbha), Jizō Bosatsu (Kṣitigarbha), Nikko Bosatsu (Sūryaprabha), Gakko Bosatsu (Candraprabha), Yakujo-Bosatsu (Vaiṣajyarāja), Fugen Bosatsu (Samantabhadra) respectively in Japanese.

Bodhisattva is considered to be the Enlightened Being, who has reached almost the state of perfection, but yet to attain complete perfection. The forms of the Bodhisattva images are given according to the features of prince Siddhartha prior to his attainment of Buddhahood. That is why the images of Bodhisattvas are decorated with princely garments, crowns, various ornaments, such as, necklaces, bracelets, ear-rings, etc. and other jewellery. Bodhisattva images can be seen either as a individual deity or as the attendants of the Buddha.

Among the Bodhisattva figures an exception is found in the case of Maitreya. The Maitreya figures are not seen decorated with princely robes or ornaments etc.

Bodhisattva Maitreya is described in the Indian Buddhist iconographic text Sādhnamālā¹ wherein he is said to be waiting in the Tusita heaven in order to come down to the earth as the future Buddha. Similar descriptions can also be found in several places of the Nispannayogāvalī². In the Sādhnamālā Maitreya is described as yellow in colour and as having the Nāga flower in one of his hands and depicting Varadamudrā in his other hand.

A beautiful piece of sculpture is seen seated on a decorated pedestal. It is regarded as one of the national treasures of Japan. This image belongs to the Early Heian period (9th century). The height of the image is 88.2 c.m. The decoration of the whole pedestal is very attractive.

The deity sits in ardhaparyāṅka attitude holding the right leg pendant and rests upon the pedestal. He wears no ornaments except a pair of elongated ear-rings. The whole composition is very beautiful.

In Japan, Miroku-Bosatsu (Maitreya) is generally

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1. Sādhnamālā was composed in 1165 A.D.
 2. The date of Nispannayogāvalī^ā can be assigned to a date sometime between A.D. 1084-1130. It was written by Mahāpaṇḍita Abhayākara-gupta.

depicted in simple form which is similar to that of the form of the Buddha. Though he is a Bodhisattva his dresses are like those of the robes of the Buddhas. A pagoda carved either on the lotus of his hand or in his crown is the identification mark of Maitreya. There is a belief both in Indian as well as in Japanese Buddhism that Maitreya Buddha would appear on the earth after 5,000 years of the birth of Śākyamuni-Buddha (historical Buddha). According to some other view, after 4000 years of Śākyamuni, Maitreya would have prominent role on the earth. As Maitreya would be the future Buddha, sometimes Bodhisattva Maitreya is also regarded as the Maitreya Buddha. Thus similarities between the iconographic features of the Buddha and Maitreya Bodhisattva can also be traced.

Some interesting features are to be observed in the depiction of the Miroku figures in Japan. One of these features is related to the posture of sitting. Maitreya is to be seen seated cross-legged and also in a peculiar pose called Hanka-shiyui or Hanka-shi-i in Japanese. In this posture the right foot of Miroku horizontally rests on the left knee while the left foot is pendant and it touches the pedestal. The palm of the left hand rests on the ankle of right foot. The right hand lightly touches or about to touch the cheek. This posture makes the whole composition highly artistic as well as attractive to the viewers. The figures of Maitreya

or Miroku in this Hanka-shiyui pose were made during the Asuka and the Nara periods.

It is to be mentioned here that this "half cross-legged in meditation" posture for the Buddhist images was quite popular in Korea from where the first inspiration of image-making was derived by the Japanese Buddhists. In Korea quite a number of images in this posture are existing from the period of Three States to the period of Silla Dynasty.¹ This posture is also to be found in China, especially during the fifth and sixth century A.D.

One of the earliest examples of Miroku image in the Hanka-shiyui pose is preserved in the Chūgū-ji nunnery in Nara (Pl.XIII, Fig.4.). The image was made of camphor wood during the Nara period and it measures 133 c.m. The image is decorated with beautiful halo which bears flame like design. The hair is dressed in a peculiar manner with two top-knots. Unlike the other images of the Asuka period, the Miroku image of the Chūgū-ji nicely proportioned and the image in this interesting posture depicts a beauty of its own. In the similar pose there are also other images of Miroku belonging to the earliest period. One such image is preserved in the Hōryū-ji temple.

Interestingly, one image (Nara period, gilt-bronze, 26 c.m. in height) in the Hanka-shiyui posture preserved in

1. For the discussion on the Korean images, see pp.77 ff. of this work.

the Oka-dera is known as Nyoirin Kannon (Cintāmanicakra). It is difficult to distinguish between Miroku and Nyoirin Kannon so far as their Hanka-shiyui poses are concerned. Images in this pose were sometime called Nyoirin Kannon, but some scholars feel that images in Hanka-shiyui posture should better be called Miroku in meditation.

This beautiful Hanka-shiyui pose is perhaps the exclusive treasures of China, Korea and Japan, created by the artists of these countries possessing praise-worthy imaginative faculty of mind. As compared to Korean Maitreya in Hanka-shiyui it appears that the Japanese sculptors had been successful in representing Maitreya in a more artistically beautiful form. In India we have not come across any such pose in which Maitreya figures were depicted. Most of the Indian images of Maitreya are to be seen as seated in a meditative posture.

Among the earliest images in the Hanka-shiyui posture, the Miroku figure of the Kōryū-ji deserves mention. This unique image is made during the Asuka period and it is owned by the Kōryū-ji, Kyoto. It was made of a single block of wood. The image measures 123.5 c.m. in height. This figure of Miroku sits in beautiful Hanka-shiyui posture, which is said to be the pose of contemplation. The over-sized head, the archaic smile, the "three-peaked mountain" type crown are the special features of this image. The serenity of the face and

sublimity of the whole composition are highly attractive to the viewers. (Pl. XII, Fig. 3).

Another interesting Maitreya figure in an archaic style (Pl. XIV, Fig. 1.) is also cited here. This image is made of gilt-bronze and it belongs to the Nara period and it is dated 666 A.D. The over-sized head and lack of proportion are the remarkable features of this sculpture. The designs incised on the part of [drapery] and its rim also deserve mention. The posture of sitting of this sculpture reminds us of the Korean style of depiction of Maitreya figure.

Mañjuśrī, as described in the Sādhana-mālā, has three faces with different colour, such as yellow, blue and white. He has six arms. In his three right hands he holds a sword, an arrow, and depicts varada-mudrā and in the three left hands he holds the Prajñāpāramitā book¹, the blue lotus and the bow.

In Japan, Mañjuśrī is known as Manju Bosatsu. He is described as the Buddhist deity of wisdom, education and enlightenment. He has a sword in one hand and lotus flower in another hand. The sword signifies that obstacles are removed by cutting the same with its sharp edge.

1. Prajñāpāramitā is a Buddhist manuscript. It contains paintings of Buddhist gods and goddesses.

In an illustration (Pl.X, Fig.1.) the deity is seen as riding on a lion holding the usual attributes in his hands.

Among all other Bodhisattvas, Bhaiṣajyarāja is also installed in the Hōryū-ji temple. The image is made of bronze. There are several other figures which are also important in this respect.

Among all other Bodhisattvas Samantabhadra¹ is described in the Sādhana-mālā as white in colour and has skṛṣṇa Cakra as the recognition symbol. He is affiliated with Dhyāni-Buddha, Vairocana who is also marked by the Cakra symbol. He is depicted either as standing erect or as seated in Lalita, Dhyāna or Bhadrāsana on a full-blown lotus. He generally holds a lotus upon which his family symbol Cakra is shown.

Ākāśagarbha or Kokujo is one of the one hundred and eight forms of Avalokiteśvara. He is identical with Avalokiteśvara excepting that Ākāśagarbha holds lotus flower in the left hand and exhibits Varada-mudrā in the right. Whereas Avalokiteśvara wields a sword in his right hand and holds the stem of a lotus near his bosom with his left hand. Kṣitigarbha is also known as 'Kṣitigarbha Lokeśvara' who finds mention in the list of one hundred and eight forms of Avalokiteśvara. The identification marks of Kṣitigarbha are that the deity

1. IBI, p. 399. "He is one-faced and two armed and sits in Vajrapariyāṅka attitude lotus. He displays the varada pose with his right hand and holds the stem of lotus flower against the chest with his left."

should hold a tray of gems in the right hand and depict Varadamudrā in the left hand.

Myō-ō-bu

The next category of Japanese Buddhist pantheon is known as Myō-ō-bu. In this group the fierce aspect of different gods are depicted. These figures are known as Acalanātha or Fudō-Myō-ō, Trailokyavijaya, Yamāntaka, Mahāmāyūrī, Rāgarājā, Hayagriva, Vajrakumāra etc.

Fudō or Acalanātha is the popular deity perhaps next to Kannon or Avalokiteśvara. The deity is represented in different postures. He is the champion of the Righteousness and is the chief of the five dāvas called myō-ō (The Enlightened kings) and he is believed to be a manifestation of Dainichi Nyorai or Dhyāni-Buddha Mahāvairocana. For combating evils, Fudō is popularly worshiped. He is sometimes called Vidyā-Rāja or king of light and is often accompanied by the two boys called Kimbara or Chetaka. His appearance is fierce and angry. The sword in his right hand is to smite the guilty and the lasso in the left to catch and bind the wicked. He may, however, have four arms and he is standing on a dragon. Behind him there is a glory of flames symbolizing the destruction of evil.

It is believed that the Fudō figures in the group of thirteen Buddhas were used in the funeral ceremonies of the

Shingon sect. Fudō takes charge of the souls after death. The central Buddha in the group is Dainichi Nyorai or Vairocana while the figure surrounded by flames on the left in the lowest row is Fudō who is believed to meet the soul and look after it during the first week. Kokuzō (Ākāśagarbha) and Vairocana remain the guardians for ever.

Fudō is often represented in mystic diagrams, and plays an especially important role in the third enclosure of the Garbhakośa Maṇḍala i.e. a separate mandara (mandala) is drawn with Fudō as the central figure.

Acalanātha is believed to be a very powerful deity. Thus by meditating him one can avoid the internal disturbances. Gradually he became the god of war. To the warrior he is the bestower of success in the battle field. Even the people think that if a flower offered to Acalanāth is preserved respectfully one will be saved from the bullet of a revolver.

The image of Fudō-Myō-ō (Pl.XV, Fig. 1.) is made of wood and curved during the Heian period (11th-12th Century A.D.). This deity is popularly known as Acalanāth in India. Fudō-Myō-ō is considered to be a manifestation of Dainichi Nyorai's (Mahāvairocana) "divine wrath against the evil". Fudō is a powerful conqueror of evil.

But he is fierce looking and as he expresses his wrath against evil beings with his frightening eyes, he also expressed his right hand and a lesto or pāśa in the left hand. The design

of the necklace and the robe he wears are very artistic.

The spoke-like design for ornamentation behind the deity is also noticeable. The height of the seated image is 85.7 c.m. This image, designated as one of the important cultural property in Japan, is owned by Sokoku-ji temple in Nara prefecture.

Another important Myō-ō is Kujakū-Myō-ō (Mahāmāyūrī). In Indian Buddhism Mahāmāyūrī is the goddess of Pañcarākṣā group and is affiliated to Amoghasiddhi. The Sādhana-mālā refers that the worshipper should visualise himself as Mahāmāyūrī who has a green complexion, six arms and three faces, each of which is endowed with three eyes. Her left and right faces are blue and white respectively. She holds in her two right hands the peacock feathers and an arrow. Another right hand shows Varada-mudrā. In the three left hands he has a jewel, a bow and water vessel. Bedecked with wonderful ornaments she appears to be expressing a sentiment of passionate love. She looks youthful and has her seat on the radiance of the moon, and sits in the Ardhaparyāṅka attitude and bears the image of Amoghasiddhi on the crown.

In Japan Kujakū-myō-ō (Mahāmāyūrī) is regarded as the deity of obstacles. He looks identical to Kartikeya since the vehicle of both the gods is peacock. But the attributes in the hands of the two gods are different. Kujakū-myō-ō has four hands, two of which hold two types of fruits. One of

the fruits looks like a lemon and another is like that of a pomegranate. In the other two hands there are a lotus bud and a feather of the peacock. Incidentally, the peacock feather is the common attribute of both the Indian as well as the Japanese Mahāmāyūrī. The Tantric Buddhists have a great faith and holds respect to this deity. They consider that a saint would be saved from all earthly passions and anger by the grace of this deity. The peacock eats up all earthly poisonous grass and plants and thereby maintains health of the earth. Therefore the god, whose mount is peacock, is believed to be endowed with the power of saving the ascetics from all psychological anger and misdeeds and other evils, which cause hindrance to the worshippers in the way of achieving perfection. In the kongobu-ji temple of Koyasan there is a figure of Mahāmāyūrī which is made of wood and it is dated 1200 A.D. Although the peacock is principally of golden colour, various other colours also decorate its body.

Another important deity is Batō Kannon or Avalokiteśvara Hayagriva, who is fairly popular in Japan and he is generally placed in the Kannon-bu. Generally in the hilly areas this god is worshipped with great reverence. Since he is fierce looking, he is also placed in the Myō-ō-bu of the Japanese iconographic groups. Head of a horse is placed over the deity's head which is but a human head. He is sometimes eight-armed and he generally holds sword, axe, cakra, string or thread. The horse-head is either of blue or red colour.

The blue is the symbolic colour of destruction and the white is the symbol of sacredness. It is a general belief that the horse quickly grasps its food and drink Hayagriva Avalokitesvara also quickly removes evil passions and thus helps his worshippers in achieving progress in the path of religion. The Jōruri-ji temple of Kyoto preserves a figure of Batō-Kannon or Hayagriva. It is three-faced and a horse head is placed above the principal head. The central head has three eyes. There is a halo of fire behind the god. The two hands of the figures are folded. An axe and a mace are held in the other two hands.

According to Alice Getty, Batō-Kannon is represented as seated either with the legs locked or the right knee raised in the attitude called 'royal ease'. On his forehead there is a third eye. The hairs stand upright and protruding from it is horse's head, the characteristic identification mark of this god.

In Indian Buddhism Hayagriva's colour is described to be red and he should have eight arms and three faces, each face with three eyes. His right face is blue and left face is white. The same feature is also to be found in the Japanese Hayagriva (Batō-Kannon) images. His legs are arranged in the Lalita attitude or he sits in lalitāsana posture. He is clad in tiger skin and holds in three of his four right hands a vajra, staff and a raised arrow, while the another right hand shows karuṇā pose. One of the four left hands has raised index finger while another hand

touches his bosom and the remaining two hold a lotus and a bow respectively.

Ten-bu

Next important division is known as Ten-bu. In the Ten-bu group mainly the Brahmanical gods and goddesses and deities of Buddhist origin are found to be included. The deities of this group are Bon-ten (Brahmā), Taishaku-ten (Indra), Kichijō-ten or Kissho-ten (Lakṣmī), Benzai-ten or Ben-ten (Sarasvatī), Ka-ten (Agni), Emma-ten or Enma-ten (Yama), Taizan Fukun (Citragupta), Sui-ten (Varuṇa), Makeisura-ten (Maheśvara), Isana-ten (Īśāna), Rasetsu-ten (Rakṣasa), Naraen-ten (Nārāyaṇa), Shō-ten or Kangi-ten (Gaṇeśa), Shamonda (Cāmuṇḍā), Hū-ten (Vāyu), Ji-ten (Pṛthvī), Nit-ten (Sūrya), Gat-ten (Candra), Kumar-ten (Kārttikeya) etc. Hārītī, Mārīcī, Jāngulī are also included in this group. The Vaiśravaṇa-Kubera, Virudhaka, Virūpākṣa, Dhṛtarāṣṭra have also been given place in this group.

Now an attempt is being made to explain the forms and feature of the Brahmanical divinities that found revered places in the Japanese temples in Buddhist garb. Different Brahmanical and Buddhist texts provide the descriptions of the divinities under discussion.

Agni/Ka-ten

Agni, one of the main eight Dikpalas¹ is often represented in the Hindu iconography. According to the Vedic idea, he is the personification of sacrificial fire. If judged from the number of hymns devoted to each vèdic deity, Agni should naturally be considered as one of the important deities among the great trio - Indra, Agni and Soma. Agni is the destroyer of all evils. He is regarded as the Charioteer of the sacrifices and brings the gods in his golden lightning car². He is the son of Dyus (Heaven) and also of Pṛthivī and heaven. As the vedic concept indicates, Agni is considered to be the personification of sacrificial fire.

Many interesting descriptions and characteristic feature of Agni are given in the Viṣṇudharmottara, the Mahābhārata and the Āgamas. There are a number of examples of sculptural representation of Agni that belong to comparatively early period. The image of Agni in the Paharpur basement is depicted as standing with flames that emanate from his sides. The deity has two arms, one of which holds a rosary and other one holds a water vessel. The image of Agni in the Śiva temple at Kandiyr is also highly ~~interesting~~ interesting. It is having

1. "The Hindu concept about the Dikpālas or Lokapālas as the guardians of the quarters or the worlds is very old. In the well-developed Purāṇic mythology the names of the deities and those of the major and subsidiary quarters over which they had their respective jurisdictions, are the following - Indra is the lord of the east, Yama of the South, Varuna of the west, and Kubera of the north; Agni, Nirṛti, Vāyu and Iśāṇa are the respective guardians of the south east and south west, north west and north east". See DHI, pp. 519 f.

2. V.A., p. 373.

two goat heads, seven arms and three legs. According to Purāṇic tradition Agni has goat as his vāhana or vehicle.¹ The Āgamas characterise the god as having four arms, three eyes and red Jatās. His front two hand should depict the varada and abhaya mudrā while the two back hands should hold śrūk and śakti.²

The idea of Agni also found in place of reverence in Japan along with different other Brahmanical gods and goddesses. In Japanese texts, Agni is known as Ka-ten or Kwa-ten. Agni is one of the twelve guardian deities (Jūni-ten) in Japan. He is also depicted as the guardian of south east corner in the Mandaras. In both the Kongō-kai and the Taizō-kai Mandaras Agni is placed in the outer hall. He is one of the four great gods who protect the inner hall of the Kongō-kai Mandara. Encircled with fire, Ka-ten looks like an old hermit with two or four arms, generally holding a bamboo twig having a few leaves, a water vessel, the flaming triangle, emblematic of fire in Brahmanical symbolism, and a rosary. He stands in front of a large flame.

The Butsuzō Zuten mentions that Ka-ten image should assume the figure of an old hermit with two or four arms. His whole body should encircle with flaming fire. A blue sheep may occasionally be seen as his mount. It is interesting to note that the identification symbols of Agni in Brahmanical

1. DHI, p. 525.

2. Ibid, p. 524.

ideas have many features similar to that of the descriptions in the Japanese texts. (cf. Pl. XVI, Fig 2).

Thus the Japanese conception of Ka-ten has some significant similarity with the representation of Agni in some Indian sculptures. The common aspects are the blue sheep as the mount of both Ka-ten and Agni. Ka-ten's body is encircled by flaming fire and that Agni's body emanates long waving flames.¹

Another Japanese text Shosetou-Fudō-ki describes the iconographic features of Ka-ten. Here he is depicted as an ascetic who is observing austerity. In his background there appears the flame of fire. His hairs and beard are white in colour, while his body is deep red. He is endowed with jewelled crown, necklace, bracelet and other ornaments. He wears red undergarments and simple clothes that cover approximately half of his body. In the first right hand of the four-armed Ka-ten there is a triangular-shaped alter. With the three middle fingers of the second right hand Ka-ten holds a hanging garland of beads. A pot is held in the first left hand, while a stick is held in the second left hand. Vienudharmottara in its chapter 56 and verse 1-10 describes the god.²

The various aspects of descriptions about the god is mentioned in two texts are highly similar. Firstly both the

1. HDIJBP, p. 53.

2. Vsd, Pt. III.

texts hold the complexion of Agni as red. The Indian and the Japanese texts mention about flame of fire at the background of the deity. He is dressed like an ascetic.

In Japan, the god is also regarded as one of the twelve guardians of Jūni-ten. In one such representations preserved in the Jingo-ji, Kyoto (painted image, 1190 A.D.), he is depicted as bearded and four-armed. Being clad in flowing garment he is seen standing on a pedestal. He is represented without any mount. One of his right hands holds a triangular object which is placed near his bosom. The other right hand is stretched and it is raised upward. One of his left hands holds stick or trident, the other left hand exhibits a mudrā. Above the image, the seed syllable of the god 'a' in the Shittan script is written inside a circle. Interestingly enough, in the Shittan script is slightly changed form of Siddham or Sanskrit letter.

Agnāyī/Katenhi

The Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka contains the representations of Agni and his consort Agnāyī. The Tripitaka depicts the two deities as portrayed in the Daihi-Taizō-Kai mandara (Mahakarunāgarbha-mandala). Agnāyī is known Ketenko and Katenhi in Japanese Buddhism.

Katen (Agni) is described as an old ascetic. He is bearded and he has four arms. He is depicted as seated in a cross-legged position. Behind his head there appears a halo.

The triangular-shaped symbol of the deity is held by one of his right hands which is placed near his bosom. The other right hand holds a garland made of beads. A mace is seen in his upper left hand, while a small longish pitcher is placed in the other left hand. An animal skin forms his loin-cloth. He is encircled by flaming fire.

Katenko or Katenhi (Agnāyī) Sits on the right side of her consort Agni in the above mentioned mandara. She is also described as seated in an easy pose. Her hands are half stretched and the palms are open. She turns her face towards her right and looks at that direction. Agnāyī wears ornaments, such as bangles, ear-rings, head dress etc. Her robes are very tightly fitted though some parts of the robes are flowing in the air. She is also encircled by flaming fire like that of her consort Agni.

Brahmā/Bon-ten

In the Vedic-Brahmanical concept, Brahmā is the creator of the universe. The Brhatsamhitā describes the god as having four faces and he is seated on a lotus. In latter days, the Matsya Purāṇa and the Viṣṇudharmottara also describe the features of the god in various ślokas. In the Matsya Purāṇa the verses 40 to 43 describe the god as having four heads, holding Kamandalu in one of his hands, either riding on a swan or seated on a lotus. The complexion of Brahmā is

reddish like the bed of a lotus and the deity has four hands. He should be represented as engaged in the work of creation, wearing white raiments, deer-skin and a sacred thread. The Visnucharmottara also gives a similar description of the god¹.

Two sculptural representations from Mathura depict the god according to the descriptions in the texts. In the Mathura Museum figure the four faces are placed on the right and left sides of the central face and the fourth one is depicted just above the central head. All the heads are such as having three eyes. The image is not bearded. But in another representation, only three heads are visible from the front. The other head is probably placed behind the central head.

In Japan, Bon-ten is generally represented with Taisaku-ten (Indra). It is said that they are the protector of Buddhism in Japan and they are also sometimes represented as one of the gods in the Jūni-ten group or the group of twelve protector gods, whose worship became highly popular during the Heian period in Japan (794-1185).

Different Japanese texts have also provided the descriptions of the god. The text Shosetsu Fudō-Ki compiled by Shinjaku describes the god as having three eyes on each of

1. Ved., Pt. III, p. 85.

the four faces, and he has four arms. The first right hand should exhibit a mudrā, while the other right hand should be placed in tight fist in right angle with the body. The first left hand should hold a lotus flower and the other left hand should have a pitcher held in between the middle and index fingers. One stately wooden image of the god in the Lecture Hall of Tōji temple of Kyoto is one of the highly interesting piece of sculptural representation of Bon-ten in Japan. It was made after the introduction of esoteric Buddhism in Japan in the Heian period. The image is seen with four heads and four arms in sitting posture and mounted on four geese. The most important iconographic feature of the god is that the four heads are visible from the front. Two heads are placed on the left and right sides of the principal head and the fourth one is placed just above the central head, so that the worshippers can see all the heads of the god simultaneously. The principal head is depicted with three eyes while the others have two eyes each ^(Pl. XVI, Fig. 4). This image bears some features as described in the Shosetsu-Fudō-Ki. Dainichi-kyō-so, another important text describes the god as having a cluster of hairs. He sits on a chariot supported by seven swans. He has also four faces and four arms. The first right hand holds a rosary. The first left hand has a 'gunji' and the second left hand assumes the 'Om' mudrā. This description is quite similar to that of the descriptions as narrated in the verse of the Viṣṇudharmottara where it is mentioned that the deity

ought to have matted hair, four arms and should be seated on a chariot drawn by seven swans.

Apart from the sculpture of the lecture Hall of the Tō-ji temple there are also a large number of images carved or painted in different other temples, e.g. Akishino-dera, Hōryūji temple, Tosodaiji temple, Tōdai-ji temple and others. Bon-ten is also placed as one of the deities in the Jūni-ten group in the Saidai-ji temple.

The Tō-ji temple also preserves another figure where the four-armed and four-legged Bon-ten is seated on a lotus pedestal in cross-legged position and holds a stick in one of his right hands. He is decorated with necklace, bracelet, armlets and tiara. This painting depicts the deity in typical Japanese fashion. The four heads are simultaneously visible from the front. There are marks of the existence of third eye on the fore-head of each face. The decoration of the outer edge of the halo depicts the flames of fire emanating from all sides of the circle. Two attendants of Bon-ten are also depicted.

The Showa collection of the Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka has given the description of an interesting figure of six-headed Brahmā. The six heads are visible from the front of the deity. The three principal heads are surmounted by three other heads. The figure is four-headed. The deity holds a

spear-like object in one of his right hands. The other right hand probably exhibits the abhaya mudrā. A full blown lotus and a receptacle are held by his left hands. The seed-syllable of the deity is 'Bra'. A painted image (scroll painting) of the deity is preserved in the Komyo-in temple at Koyasan. The figure of the deity is used during the performance of the Zuzō Hokkekyō-bu rites (Saddharmapund^arika rites)¹.

Brāhmī

It would be relevant to discuss here about Brāhmāṇī or Brāhmī who is obviously the female counterpart of Brahmā since the Brhatsaṃhitā a sixth century iconographic text by Varahamihira says "Mothers are to be made with cognisances of the gods corresponding to their names".²

In India Brāhmāṇī is represented as four-faced and four-armed (the fourth face is however at the back and, therefore, it is not visible from the front). This representation is found at a premises on the bank of a large pond known as Markaṇḍeya Sārōvara at Puri in Orissa. One of the right hands of Brāhmāṇī, who is seated in a posture called ardhaparyāṅka, exhibits Vyakhyāna-mudrā. With one of her left hands she holds a child who is seated on her lap. The

1. See Bakshi's article in the Bulletin of the Centre of Japanese Studies, Calcutta-19, Vol.II. June 1985.

2. Brhatsaṃhitā : Chapter 57, verse 56.

attributes of other two hands are, however, indistinct.

In Japanese Buddhist sculptures we have not so far come across any representation of Brahmanī or Brāhmī who is called Bonten-nyo in Japanese texts. The term Bonten-nyo evidently signifies that she is the female counterpart of Bon-ten (Brahmā).

Anyway, the iconographic section of the Taisho Edition of the Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka portrays the figure of Bonten-nyo (Brāhmī). We, however, give below the description of Brāhmī (Bonten-nyo) figure that appears in the Daihi-Taizō-Dai Mandara (Mahakarunā garbha mandala) contained in the Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka.

Brāhmī is placed beside the figure of the Śakrānī who is evidently the female counterpart of Śakra-Indra, i.e. Taishaku-ten. Brāhmī clad in priestly dresses is seen seated on an almost round pedestal in an easy posture (semi-cross-legged). She is decorated with ornaments, such as bangles, armlets, necklace and a head dress. She holds in her left hand the stalk of a full blown lotus. Her right hand, which is in fist, is held little upward.

Ganapati/Kanci-ten or Shō-ten

Ganapati or Gaṇeśa, one of the important deities of the Hindus is regarded as the destroyer of all evils. The elephant-headed pot-bellied god has a very important pantheon

His pūjā preceeds the pūjā of other gods and goddesses. Gaṇapati is generally meant the leader of the Gaṇas¹. He is variously known as Gaṇanātha, Gaṇeśvara, Gaṇapati, Gaṇādhipa, Gaṇanāyaka. As creator or remover of obstacles he has also some other different epithets e.g. Vighneśa, Vighneśvara, Vighnarāja, Vighnavināśana².

Gaṇeśa is a curious deity who has been subjected to many myths and legends of the Brahmanical culture. The Śiva Purāṇa describes^{the} story of the birth of Gaṇeśa. The text states that Umā created Gaṇeśa with the dirt of her body. The Matsya, the Skanda and the other Purāṇas describes the story of the birth of the god in a quite different manner. There are different stories related to the epithets of the god. The title Siddhidātā or Dvi-dehaka are attributed to him. He is called as dvi-dehaka because of the two separate entities of his body, one of human and other that of an elephant.

It is evident from the Konjō-Kai, the Ryō-Kai and the Taizō-Kai mandara that different Brahmanical deities including Gaṇeśa were brought to Japan from China by Kūkai in 806 A.D. But in China this deity lost its popularity and went into oblivion.³

1. DHI, p. 355.

2. R.G. Bhandarkar in his book Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious systems refers that this elephant headed and pot bellied god is regularly worshipped as imp and evil spirit. P. 148-50.

3. See the page 72 of this present work.

In Chapter VIII of Darani-shū-kyō Daihachi, Shō-ten is described as a human being with a elephant head. He is holding a radish in his right hand and trident in his right hand. He is seated with his legs folded. He is decorated with bangles, necklace and precious brocades. (Pl. XVIII, Fig 2.).

Besson Zakki, written by Shinkaku, also describes the god. The meaning of the title of the text is "The description of Divinities". The Daishijuhō-kyō describes the god as wearing heavenly garments. His crown is decorated with seven kinds of jewels. The upper right and left hands hold an axe and a stick respectively. Lower left hand holds a piece of ivory which is perhaps his own tooth, while the lower right hand holds a religious object. Fūkūkenjaku-kyō in its XIII Chapter describes the god as having human body with an elephant head and holding Kongō-shō (vajra) in his upper left hand. His lower left hand is holding an axe, while the upper right and lower right hands are holding noose (string) and trident respectively (Pl. XIX Fig. 1.).

Many other texts, such as, Kanji Soshin-Ho of Fūkū-Sanzō, Bināyaka Shijjihon-Hiyo of Ganko, Kongō-soshin Nensho Kyuo-Hō of Zen Mui Sanzo, Besson-Zakki, Kanji Soshin-Keizohon-Ki of Keishitsu etc. describe the god as six-armed. The first three texts referred the attributes of the six hands as follows : sword, fruit plate, and wheel in the left hands, while bar, string and broken tusk in the right hands. The fourth one

describes the attributes as mentioned earlier but with little variations. (PL. XX, Fig 1).

The fifth text Kangi Sōshin-Keizōhon-Ki of Keishitsu explains that the god holds vajra in his middle right hand and the string in the lower right hand. The descriptions in the 6th one, Konjiki-Ganabachi-Kyō is quite different from the other texts. Here the god is depicted as golden coloured and standing erect on a golden mountain. The trunk is bend to the right. The two left hands are holding a sword and a blade, and the right hands have a stick or vaira and trident.

There is another manifestation of Shō-ten or Kangi-ten. Here the god is represented in his twin aspects - one male and the other female figure embracing each other.

Shijuho-kyō-Giki by Fūkū Senzō describes the twin-image as having human bodies and elephant heads. They are the two divine sex aspects. Male aspect is the manifestation of Danichi or Mahāvairocana and the female aspect is the manifestation of Kannon or Avalokiteśvara, the goddess of mercy. Both of them are regarded as Bināyakas.

Shōten-hi Mandara of Japan portrays the figure of a male and a female Bināyaka. They are depicted as having laughing faces, and standing as facing each other touching each others hands and feet.

The similarities between the Indian and Japanese texts are to be observed in the aspects, such as, elephant head,

decoration with heavenly garments and princely ornaments. He should have an axe and a pot of sweetmeat (modaka) in his hands and one of his own teeth (Svadanta) in one of his hands.

The Viṣṇudharmottara, Āṇsumadhedāgama, the Uttaraka-muka-gama, the Suprabhedāgama, the Rupamaṇḍana describes the god of Brahmanical tradition as four-armed with attributes, such as, his own teeth (svadanta), wood-apple (Kapittha), sweetmeat (Modaka), elephant goad (aṅkuśa), noose (pāśa), snake (Nāga), rosary (akṣasūtra) and lotus (Padma) etc. A mouse is mentioned as his mount. His consorts are sometimes mentioned as Bhāratī (another name of Sarasvatī), Śrī (Lakṣmī), Vighneśvarī, Buddhi and Kubuddhi.¹

In Brahmanic representations also Gaṇeśa is the destroyer of all imps and evils and king of obestacles, destroyer of : : obestacles and bestower of success or Siddhidātā. He is a popular deity among the businessmen of both the countries, India and Japan.

One standing image of Gaṇapati from Whiching may be the first standing image of the type. Here the four-armed god stands in a slightly bent pose (abhaṅga) on a beautifully carved lotus, wearing necklace fitted with bells. He is also wearing a few other ornaments, holding a rosary and his own tusk with his right hands and a cup of sweetmeat and an object which appears indistinct. A snake serves as his sacred thread.

1. DHI, p. 358.

Other features, such as, the nicely arranged jata with a miniature kirtimukha in the centre at the top of the elephant head, the chain ornaments, the graceful pose etc. are demonstrated in a remarkable manner. The above mentioned sculpture bears similarities with the descriptions of the god as found in the Brahmanical as well as in the Buddhist texts.

It is not out of place to mention here that although in Indian Buddhism, Gaṇeśa is held as the creator of obstacles, the Japanese Buddhism, strangely enough, has not viewed Gaṇeśa as the obstacle creator. In Japan, he is highly revered as the giver of wealth. Among the few important images, mention may be made about the embracing Kangi-ten figures preserved in the Japanese temples. (Pl. XIX, Fig. 2).

Indra/Taishaku-ten

Indra or Taishaku-ten another important god of Hindu pantheon is also regarded as an important deity in Buddhism. In Buddhist mythology, he is always subservient to the Buddha, and to the early Buddhists he was subject to death. There is a popular belief in Buddhist faith that Indra or Śakra is the attendant deity of the Buddha. He is also represented in this manner in many paintings and sculptures.

Indra, the king of gods, played a very important role in Buddhist pantheon. Though he is a subordinate god he is

virtually the protector of Buddhism. Thus in China and Japan he is considered as the guardian deity and he is included in the group of Jūni-ten. He is depicted with three eyes and holding in his right hand a vaira which has a sharp point called Dokko, and in the left a cup.

In Japan, the oldest example of the figure of Indra is to be found in the portable shrine called Tamamushi-no-Zūshi which was made in the Asuka period and preserved in the Hōryū-ji temple in the Nara prefecture.

The Viṣṇudharmottara describes the god as Śakra and narrates that he should wear a blue garment and have a golden complexion with the various ornaments on the body. His eyes are going obliquely on the forehead.¹ On the right hands of Śakra there should be placed a lotus and an elephant goad. One of the left hands is to be placed on the back of Śachī and the second is to hold the thunderbolt. The thunderbolt symbolises his anger and by displaying anger he subdues the wicked. Airāvata, the mount of the god is the symbolic of wealth and tusks of his mount are explained as the four very powerful sources of strength, e.g. energy, counsel, suzerainty and exertion.²

Japanese texts, the Sonshō-Bucchō-Shu-Yuga-Hō-Kigi, Shosetsu-Fudō-Ki and others describe the god as having different

1. VSD, Pt. III, p. 73.

2. Ibid.

iconographic traits, such as, the god should be red in complexion, have a tuft of hairs set up in such a manner that it looks like a crown. He holds a stick in his right hand, and his left hand with folded palm is held against the waist. The god is depicted in angry mood.

Kangō-kai-shichi-shū describes the complexion of the god as golden. Interestingly, the Viṣṇudharmottara too mentions the colour of the god as golden.

When Indra and Brahmā appear in Japanese art outside Tantrism they usually are regarded as representatives of all the devas in general. In many cases the devas were carved on the model of the features of Indra and Brahmā and the devas were given the attributes of Indra or Brahmā. In this manner, Indra has had a widespread influence throughout the history of Buddhism in Japan.

Examples of Taishaku-ten images in Japan are numerous. The image of the god in the Saidai-ji Temple at Nara is seen painted as one in the group of the Jūni-ten. The deity is flanked by two attendants who seem to be tiny as compared to the feature of Taishaku-ten. The vehicle or mount Airāvata is omitted in some cases while he is depicted as standing erect, but without any attendants.

One fine example of Taishaku-ten is preserved in the Tō-ji temple, Kyoto. Here the deity is represented as

having one head, two arms and three eyes. He is riding gracefully on a white elephant. (Pl.XVII, Fig.4.).

Śakrāṇī or Indrāṇī/Taishaku-Nyo

The concept of Taishaku-ten's consort is not unknown in Japanese or Chinese iconography. In Japan the consort of Śakra-Indra is called Taishaku-Nyo.

In India the text Viṣṇudharmottara provides descriptions of Śakra-Indra's consort, who is mentioned in the text as Śachī. She is portrayed as seated on the left of Indra. She has four arms. She is also called Indrāṇī.

Although we have not so far come across sculptural representations of Śakrāṇī or Taishaku-Nyo, she is, however, adequately represented in the Mandaras as is evident from the Chinese Tripitaka. One such representation as contained in the Tripitaka is to be found in the Dai-taizo-dai-mandara (Mahakarunā garbha-mandala).

In the above mandara, Śakrāṇī or Taishaku-Nyo is depicted as seated in a semi cross-legged position on a round pedestal. She holds the stalk of a lotus bud in her right hand. Her left hand, which is held near her navel, exhibits a mudrā by pointing the fore-finger towards earth. Her partly folded thumb is held upward while her middle finger touches the thumb. The fingers of Śakrāṇī and Brahmāṇī are placed side by side in this mandara.

Kubera/Bishamon-ten

Kubera or Bishamon-ten is another important god in Brahmanical as well as in Buddhist pantheon.

According to the Brahmanical concept, this deity generally has two long arms. He holds a club or mace in one hand and is not represented as pot bellied. Sometimes he is endowed with four arms. He is quite terrific in appearance and is accompanied by two niddhis, Sankha and Padma. Either a lamb or a human-looking mythical being regarded as his mount. This deity is shown in Northerner's dress and armour. Sometimes he is depicted with prominent moustache and fangs. His consort Riddhi sits on his lap. Kubera holds a mace and a spear in his right hands and a jewel and a pot in his two left hands.

The deity is variously known in Japan as Bishamon-ten, Tamon-ten, Hemmon, Fumon, Shenjumon and Hoppo-ten. He is generally regarded as a warrior. But he is not the god of war. In India also in some representations the god holds a sort of weapon and has a fierce appearance as that of a warrior.

Bishamon-ten is variously described in different Japanese Texts :

The text Kongōchu-Yuga-Goma-Giki describes the god as located in the northern direction and generally depicted on the two demons, wearing armours. He holds a small pagoda on

his left palm and jewelled stick in the right hand. The colour of his body is golden.¹

In India Kubera is one of the four-guardians of the four directions. The same feature is also maintained in Japan. Bishamon-ten is represented as one of the four guardian deities. The names of these four deities are Jikoku-ten or Toho-ten i.e. Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Zoto-ten or Nampo-ten i.e. Virūdhaka, Komoku-ten or Saiho-ten i.e. Virūpākṣa and Bishamon-ten or Hoppo-ten i.e. Vaiśravaṇa-Kubera.² They respectively guard the east, south, west and north.

According to the first volume of the Unkadayagiki, the great king Bishamon-ten should have one head and ten arms. The colour of his body should be red and the colour of his garments should be indigo-blue. His eyes are white. He has two small tusks in his mouth. His uppermost left and right hands are in Varada-mudrā. The second left hand holds a jewelled pagoda. The third left hand has a vajra with ring, the fourth left hand holds a metal wheel and the fifth left hand has an arrow and a string. The second right hand bears a sword, and ^{fourth} ~~the~~ right hand has a bow and the fifth right hand is with a vajra and a spear. He stands on a demon whose left knee is raised and right knee touches the ground.

1. NDIJBP, p. 68. This text is translated by Fūkū or Amoghavajra.

2. NDIJBP, p. 67. The four guardian deities are known as Shi-tenno in Japanese. In Sanskrit they are known as Catur-mahārājā. In Buddhist conception they protect the world from evils. They stand on a rocky pedestal and usually placed in the four corners of the dais in the temples.

The Visnudharmottara describes that the colour of the body of Kuvera is like the colour of a lotus leaf. His Vāhana is a man and there is a necklace resting on the belly of the Vāhana. He wears a beautiful dress and destroys the enemies. His left hand should hold a jewelled vessel and in the right hands there should be a mace and a spear.

He plays an important role in exorcising Shaka who converted and raised him to the priesthood and he thus became one of the important kings of the Yakṣas. As the god of riches his epithet is ghanada. He is depicted as having blue face. He is dressed in armour and carrying a pagoda in the left hand. Sometime he is accompanied by kichijō-ten or Lakṣmī or Mahāsrī.

He is identical with Vaiśravaṇa, the Mahārājah of the west. He is one of the Shi-Tenno or four guardian kings. As a legend says, the life of Shōtoku-Taishi was saved in the battle field by the grace of this god. Prince Shōtoku's strong belief in the guardian gods is understood from the story narrated in the 'Nihongi' that the Prince (when he was known by the name of Umayado) made wooden images of the four kings name Dhṛtarāṣṭra (Toho-ten), Virūdhaka (Nampo-ten), Virūpākṣa (Saiho-ten) and Kubera-Vaiśravaṇa (Hoppe-ten) and tied them in his hair obviously with the hope of receiving the blessings and favour from the these group of gods.

But unlike Indian Kubera-Vaiśravaṇa the Japanese

Bishomon-ten holds a jewelled pagoda and sometimes he has ten hands. It is also another peculiar characteristic of Japanese Kubera. The other feature of Japanese Kubera is that he stands upon three Yaksas. But there is no corresponding form of the god in Japan where the god has three legs and eight feet. Then, again, the Japanese Bishamon-ten sometimes holds like the Indian Kubera-Vaiśravaṇa a bag or sack. The conception of Kubera squeezing the neck of jewel-vomitting mongoose, as it appears, has no parallel in Japan. The pagoda in one hand is an essential attribute in the hand of Japanese Bishamon-ten (Pl. XXII Fig. 1.).

In one representation of the Kyo-Ō Gokoku-ji temple (Tō-ji temple) in Kyoto, a figure of Tobatsu Bishamon-ten stands on the hands of earth-goddess Pṛthivī, who is accompanied by two goblins. The figure of the deity is fierce-looking. His right hand is bare and the left hand holds a miniature pagoda. The elongated four-sided crown of the head bears the effigy of a bird which is the image of bird-king Garuḍa. The ornaments and decoration of his dresses are very beautiful. The image is made of wood, the designs on the image is done with cut-gold leaf. The image measures 189.4 cm in height. It is a unique piece of sculpture of Chinese T'ang dynasty. Now it is owned by the Kyo-Ō-Gokoku-ji temple in Kyoto. (Pl. XXII, Fig. 1.)

Bishamon-ten is also regarded as one of the seven gods of luck. In this aspect he is always shown dressed in

full armour and carrying a spear. But in his other hand he carries a miniature Buddhist pagoda. These two objects show that he is intending to combine missionary zeal and the warrior's spirit. Another important texts like Maka Heishitsuramanava-Daibaketsuraja-Darani-Giki, Darani-Shū-Kyō etc. describe the deity in a quite different manner.¹

Another important statue should be mentioned here (PlXXIII, Fig. 4.). In this aspect the deity is illustrated as standing in a peculiar posture. He stands on a rocky pedestal. He fixes his left hand on his forehead, which makes a shade over the eyes. It means as if he is engaged in watching the distant objects. As he is one of the four guardian deities (Shi-tenno) of Japan his duty is to keep an eye over the capital of the country to guard it from any possible harm which might be inflicted by the enemies.

Kārttikeya/Kumara-ten

Kārttikeya and Kumāra in India or Kumara-ten in Japan also known as kenda (i.e. Skanda) or Ida-ten. He is the son of Daijizai-ten i.e. Mahēśvara. Usually he rides on a peacock. He has one or six faces and has two or more arms.

In the Brahmanical tradition there is a close mythological association between this god and Gaṇapati. But this cult entered into the orthodox Hindu Pantheon at a much earlier date

1, BZZI, p. 133.

than Ganapati. His association with the hybrid form of animal-headed Ganas or Parisadas was quite known to the authors of the Brahmanical texts. His association with war was also fairly old.

The Brhatsamhitā (Chapter IV) describes this god's association with peacock. According to the text, he holds a kind of spear which is his Śakti and he has quite childlike appearance. Generally the image is depicted as two-armed. The Visnudharmottara in Chapter 71, verses 1-18, discusses the appearance and features of the god.¹

In the Japanese text Kongō-kai-sichi-shū, the god is described as blue in colour. He holds a kind of bell in his right hand and his left hand in fist is held against the waist. The Soshetsu-Fudō-ki explains that the god is placed beside Sarasvatī in the Genzu Mandara and he is yellow in colour with peacock as his vāhana. Yet in another text, Daichido-ron, the god is depicted as four-armed riding a peacock and holding a hen and red-flag.

The above descriptions of Indian and Japanese texts prove that there are some common features in the representations of the god in India and Japan, while some dissimilarities are also discernible. In the Daichido-ron, Ida-ten or Kumara-ten holds a hen. The Visnudharmottara too describes that there is a cock in one of the hands of the god. But the

1. Ved, Pt. III.

flag and the bell and the vehicle peacock are common in both the Indian and Japanese texts.

The Konkō-myo-kyō describes Kumara-ten as the 'Devil-God'. Kārttikeya is variously represented in Indian sculptures. A tenth century figure of Kārttikeya hailed from Puri has depicted the god as two-armed and he is standing gracefully in a slightly bent pose. His left hand is placed on a cock which is partly broken. The cock is held upwards by the female attendant placed on the left side of Kārttikeya. His right hand is broken. It possibly held a spear. The peacock with its head turned back is placed on the right. The god wears various ornaments.

The specimens of Ida-ten or Kumara-ten images are very rare in Japan. One of the important examples of Ida-ten's image is from the Sen-nyu-ji temple in Kyoto. Ida-ten is a popular deity and widely known in Japan for his quality of being a very swift runner. A fast runner is compared with Ida-ten and such runner is sometime called Ida-ten.

Kumara-Kārttikeya is also described in the Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka which is preserved in Japan. One of the texts entitled Ten-bu-gyo-zō (Figures of gods) preserved in the Daigō-ji temple of Kyoto, describes the deity as six-headed and two-armed. All of the six heads are visible from the front. He is clad in princely ornaments and is riding on a bird, whose wings are outspread. This bird can be identified as a peacock. But the bird is depicted in the form of a duck. He is seated in cross-legged posture. He also slightly stretches

his right hand. The palm of the left hand is held near his bosom. There are many other examples of the six-headed Kumara.

Various other texts such as the Komyo-in (preserved at Koyasan), Zuzo hokkekyō-bu (Figures of the Pundarika Sūtra rites) and Kannon okē-shin zō (Figures of the incarnations of Avalokiteśvara) depict the deity as single-headed. The deity has four-arms. He is seated cross-legged on his vehicle peacock which is represented in a manner that suggests that the bird is speeding away. The first right hand of the deity holds a stick with an elongated receptacle on which there is a banner. Another right hand holds a bell-shaped object. One of the left hands is depicted as having a trident-like object. A vajra is fitted on this trident. The other left hand is placed on his lap. He wears various types of ornaments and head-gears. The text Shishū goma-honzon-narabini-kenzoku-zuzo also provides the description of the deity.

Lakṣmī/Kichijō-ten

Lakṣmī or Śrī is known to the Japanese as Kichijō-ten, Kishisho-ten or Kissho-ten, Makashiri (i.e. Mahāśrī) etc.

In the Brahmanical iconography the Rk or other Saṁhitās do not mention the goddess. In the Atharvaveda she is described as the sister of gods, "fair-armed, fair-fingered, prolific and mistress of the family"¹. There are many

1. DHI, p. 371.

legends regarding the creation of the goddess, which are described in the Satapathabrahmana. It is a general belief that the goddess bestows her worshippers with all major good things desired by human beings.

As the goddess of wealth she is sometimes associated with Kubera, the god of wealth. There are many other stories related to the origin of the goddess. Iconographic texts collected by T.A.G. Rao in his Elements of Hindu Iconography, describes the goddess as generally having two or four arms and rarely more than four arms. The attributes variously placed in his hands are a lotus flower, a wood-apple, a conch-shell and a pot of necktar, a club, a citron etc.

The Visnudharmottara in Chapter 82, verses 1-16, describes the goddess as standing on lotus. Her two hands are carrying the conch and the lotus. All the limbs of the deity are beautiful and adorned with ornaments. Her colour is like that of the colour of the wet lotus. She has a number of male and female attendants. She is the mother of universe and hence being overburdened with the thought of welfare of the universes cannot rest in peace for a single moment.

Japanese texts contain reference of goddess in different texts, such as, the Butsuzō-Zuten, Darani-shu-kyō wherein Kichijō-ten is described as the goddess of welfare. She stands on a lotus-shaped platform, the skin of her body is reddish-white and she has two arms. She has heavenly robes decorated

with jewels and she holds in her left hand a coloured ball which is the symbol of the fulfilment of desire. Her right hand is flatly stretched forward and five-coloured cloud is seen above her head.

Thus there are many aspects common in the iconographic concepts and descriptions found in the Indian as well as the Japanese texts. The lotus platform or pedestal, the complexion of the body, and different attendant figures are all common in India and Japan.

Apart from the Viṣṇudharmottara different other Purāṇas also illustrate the features and iconographic characteristics of the goddess. Sometimes she is represented in the Gaja-Lakṣmī form. In such representations there should be a pair of elephants seen as pouring out water from two jars. Above the head of the goddess there should be a charming lotus. This form is also known in India as Kamale-kāminī form of the goddess. The examples of Gaja-Lakṣmī are to be found in the monuments of Bharhut, Bodhgaya, Sanchi, Amaravati and in other places, where she is depicted as either standing on a lotus that is seen usually coming out of a pot, holding a lotus in her hand, surrounded by blooming lotus flowers and spreading lotus leaves while being bathed by two elephants.¹

There are numerous examples of the images of Kichijō-ten in Japan. An artistic painting of the deity in the

1. DHI, p. 194.

Yakushi-ji temple at Nara in Japan is one of the important examples of the deity's image (Pl.XXIV, Fig. 2). In the Jōruri-ji temple a unique image of Kichijō-ten is preserved in a zūshi, i.e. a miniature shrine (Pl.XXV, Fig. 1). On the different panels the images of Bon-ten and Taishaku-ten are painted. The image of the goddess in the refectory of the Hōryū-ji temple is seen as standing erect on a pedestal and clad in heavenly garments (Pl.XXV, Fig. 2).

The representations of Śrī-Lakṣmī in Indian art from the earliest known times are seen in a variety of forms. The much mutilated standing female figure found by Cunningham among the ruins of Besnagar along with the banyan capital has been identified as representing the goddess Śrī-Lakṣmī.

The Yakushi-ji temple of Nara, 'Golden hall' of the Hōryū-ji temple, Kōfuku-ji Museum, Hōzan-ji temple also preserve the images of the goddess. In the Hōzan-ji temple Brahmā (called Bomma-ten) and Indra (called Taishaku-ten) are placed as her attendants.

Another fine example of Kichijō-ten image can be found in the Jōruri-ji temple of Kyoto (Pl.XXV, Fig. 1). The height of the goddess is 90 centimeter and she stands upon a lotus pedestal. The figure is made of wood. In her left hand she holds a jewel which is the characteristic attribute of Japanese Kichijō-ten. The figure is well dressed and highly ornamented.

The Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka¹ contains the descriptions of Kichijō-ten. Here the goddess is described as the consort of Bishamon-ten. These two deities are known as Kichijo-tennyo and Bishamon-tennyo.

The goddess looks like a Chinese lady. Her dresses and ornaments are also like that of the dresses and ornaments of a Chinese lady. She sits on a stool-like seat and her legs are pendent. A hoshū (a precious jewel), her recognition symbol, is placed on her left palm, while her right hand exhibits boon-giving posture (varada mudrā).

Curiously enough, there appears a boldly drawn figure of an elephant above the image of the goddess. Kichijō-tennyo is accompanied by her two attendants. They appear to be standing in the midst of the clouds.

Bishamon-tennyo is placed towards the left of the goddess Kichijō-tennyo. He is depicted as seated over the heads of two demons. A small pagoda, a hobo (jewelled bar) which are the common attributes of the deity, are held by Bishamon in his right and left hands respectively.

Nārāyaṇa/Naraen-ten

Nārāyaṇa, or Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa of the Brahmanical religion is another notable deity in Japanese Buddhism. In

1. The Asaba-sho compiled by Shocho (1205-1282) included in the Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka.

Japan this deity is known as Naraen-ten. According to Japanese belief Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa holds unusual strength. He generally rides on Karura i.e. Garuḍa. The figure of Naraen-ten generally has one face with two or three arms or three faces with two arms. When he is three-faced, the left face is of an elephant or lion and the right face should assume the face of a boar. Sometimes he has four or eight arms.

Different Japanese texts, such as the Kongō-kai-Shichi-Shū, Shosetsu-Fudō-Ki provide different descriptions of the god. According to these texts, the colour of the body of the god is bluish-black and his hairs are red. The deity has three faces. The middle face looks like that of the face of the human being and it has three eyes. The two side-faces are like those of the animals. The left one is blue and the right one is white.

In the Brahmanical texts, the Bṛhatsamhitā, the Vaikhānasāgama, there are descriptions of Viṣṇu and his different forms of manifestations. Naraen-ten does not find any important place outside the texts and the Mandaras in Japan. The Japanese Naraen-ten has many feature in common with Brahmanical Viṣṇu.

In addition to our above descriptions we may add that the iconographic concept of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa developed in China in an interesting manner. The Chinese Buddhist

Tripitaka¹, which had been copied and preserved in Japan, contained the description of the deity. The Tripitaka concern had also been an important source of iconographic inspiration in Japan. Therefore, the descriptions in the Tripitaka are accepted in China and Japan alike.

As mentioned in the Tripitaka texts, Visnu-Narayana may have three heads. According to the Jujo-sho (selection of figures) preserved in the Entsu-ji monastery at Koyasan depicts the deity as having three faces. The principal face looks human while the right face is that of an elephant and the left face is that of a boar. Nārāyana is seated on Garuda which has spreading wings. This two-armed deity holds a Cakra on the tip of the fore-finger of his right hand. His left hand holds a serpent. The Daihi-Taizō-Dai Mandara (Mahakarunāgarbha Mandara) also describes Nārāyana with elephant and boar faces.

The figure of the deity in one of the Shika-shō-zuzo (figures copied by 4 masters) is depicted as having three faces. The right face is that of a tiger and the left face is that of an elephant. The middle face, however, looks human. The deity is two-armed. He holds a cakra in his right hand and a snake in the left hand. Seated on his mount Garuda, his right leg hangs below.²

1. Cf. D. N. Bakshi's "Iconography Of Visnu Narayana In China And Japan" in JAIHG, Vol. XIV, Pts. 1-2, 1983-84, pp. 285 ff.

2. Ibid.

The deity is described in the text Shishu-goma-hōnzon narabini kenzaku-zuzō (Figures of main divinities and their attendants of the four-kinds of homa), as having three heads and other objects. Interestingly enough, winged bird Garuda has a face that looks human. The original figure of the deity was drawn in the collection concern in 821 A.D. This Nārāyaṇa figure is used during the 'goma' (homa) ritual. The Kakuzen-shō depicts Nārāyaṇa's principal face as that of a human being, but the other two faces are like the elephants. Different other texts, such as, the Shishu-goma hōnzon-narabini-kenzaku-zuzō; the Kongo-kai-kuedai-mandara (Nine mandalas in the Vajradhātu-mahāmaṇḍala, Ninna-ji temple version); etc. describe the deity as single headed. In this aspect he is described as two-armed and holding either a cakra or a spherical object in one of his hands.

The symbolic representation of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa is described in the Kongō-kai-jue-dai-mandara. In this text the deity is represented by a cakra placed on a lotus. This text also describes the consort of the deity. She is also portrayed in the mandalas. In Japan Viṣṇu's vehicle Karura or Garuda occupies an independent position and this demi-god is placed in the ten-bu group. The figure of Karura is also sometime depicted independently. He is considered to be the king of birds and his food is ryū, i.e. snake or Naga. Karura is represented either as a bird or as having a composite body - the body is that of a human but the head is of a bird.

Interestingly all these human features are quite common in the representation of Garuḍa in India.¹

Garuḍa/Karura

Before we proceed further, we prefer to deal with here Nārāyaṇa's vehicle or vāhana Garuḍa since we find a number of sculptural representations of this demi-god in Japan. Incidentally, such independent representations of Garuḍa are found in different places of India and the earliest specimen of Garuḍa in sculpture is perhaps the Garuḍadhavaja found in the Bharhut railing pillar.

Garuḍa is generally represented with his master in the sculptures. In Buddhism he also found an honourable position along with his master. As he is a mythical bird, many legends are associated with him. He is regarded as the traditional enemy of serpent who are said to be his step-brothers.

In the Viṣṇudharmottara Garuḍa is variously known as Suparṇa or Irakṣya. He has a nose in the shape of an owl. He has four hands. He is furnished with two wings and legs. He holds an umbrella in his one hand and a full pitcher in his other hand. He should generally be made slightly pot bellied and adorned with by various ornaments.

In Japanese Buddhism also he is generally associated with Naraen-ten or Nārāyaṇa. The texts Shosetsū-Fudō-ki, Kongō-Koen-Shifuy-Darani-kyō, Karura-ō-Oyobi-Shōten Mitsugon-kyō, describe Karura as a parrot like bird. He

has a tuft of hair and wings. His beak should be like that of a hawk's beak. In his right hand he holds the snake god who has nine-heads and four legs. The lower limbs of his body is like that of a bird while the upper portion of his body is like of a Deva-king. He is also regarded as the protector of the Buddha and Buddhism in Japan.

One representation of Karura in the Kōfuku-ji temple, in Nara is noteworthy. Here the deity is standing on a rocky pedestal. He is clad in artistic robe. His head has the characteristic of a half man and half bird. Here he is regarded as one of the eight protectors of Sākyamuni. His bija-mantra is 'ga' which is sometimes written in Sittan letter. Another one representation is to be found in the Sanjusangendo of the Renge-ō-in. It preserves a very interesting figure of Garuda. The architecture of the temple resembles the architectural style of the Kamakura period.

In the balcony outside the main temple there are several ancient images. One of these statues is of Karura. Here the deity is playing on a flute. The face of the deity looks like that of a human being but his nose and lips suggest a hybrid character of the deity's figure. He holds the flute with his two hands. There are, however, several other figures in that balcony of the temple.

Sarasvatī/Ben-ten

Sarasvatī, known as Ben-ten or Benzai-ten is a heavenly

being. She is the deity of eloquences. She also helps to gain longevity and to dispel deadly foes. Her very beautiful voice and matchless eloquence are associated with music and that is why she is represented as holding Biwa¹ or Vinā in her hands.

The people of Japan worship this goddess who has as many as fifteen appellations, e.g. Benzai-ten, Bezai-ten, Ben-ten, Benten-Sama, Benzaimini, Myō-ongakuten, Myō-ongten, Myō-onten, Daiben-Dai-Benzai-ten, Daibentenno, Bion-ten, Ku-doku-ten-nio, Miō-on-ten-nio etc.²

In Brahmanical concept she is the goddess of music and knowledge. The river Sarasvatī on the bank of which the vedic lore and hymns developed has some connection with the origin of the concept of the goddess. She bestows on her worshippers with wisdom, eloquence, fortune, wealth etc. There are also many myths and legends connected with the deity. The myths sometimes are associated her with Brahmā and sometimes with Viṣṇu.

Iconographical texts like the Viṣṇudharmottara, the Aṅsumadbhedāgama, the Purvakarnāgama, the Rupamandana etc. describe her as four-armed, white coloured, dressed in white garments and decorated with many ornaments. She holds in her

1. HDIJBP, p. 113.

2. Ibid, p. 109.

four hands any four of the following objects : musical instrument, manuscript, white lotus, rosary, water vessel etc. The musical instrument is an oldest attribute associated with her and the manuscript is a later development.

The Viṣṇudharmottara (Chapter 67 Verse 1,17) describes the goddess that she should be represented as standing and having four hands and adorned with all ornaments. In the left hand she holds a Kamandalu. She should be seen with the feet placed together and a moon like face signifying her beauty. Her hands are carrying vedas and all sciences and śāstras and other books. She is described as possessing the lotus eyes¹ and should be known as having the sun and the moon for her eyes².

The Kamandalu of the goddess should be the vessel containing the heavenly fluid or essence of all śāstras and the rosary in her hand is indicating time. She is described as the personified Śakti of Viṣṇu

In the Bṛhadīśvara temple of Tonjore the two-armed seated goddess is depicted in the Virāsana pose. Right hand of the image is broken, her left hand holds a manuscript and it is placed on her left thigh. Chauri bearing attendants are seen on her either sides. She wears an elongated mukuta (crown) with a canopied projection. She wears different jewellery and a tree appears over the canopy.

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1. Vsd, Pt. II
 2. DHI, p. 377.

The vāhana of the goddess is generally swan, which is also the vāhana of Brahmā. But in some places of India the goddess is often found seated on lion, peacock or ram¹. In Japan she is also sometimes regarded as the consort of Brahmā. The peculiarities can be observed in Japan in regard to the deity's attributes. In Japan she is the goddess of all kinds of flow, viz. the flow of love, music, wealth, fortune, beauty, happiness, eloquence, wisdom, victory and also of children. This idea of associating with all kinds of flow had something to do with her personification as the famous Indian river "Sarasvatī"².

There are various forms of Ben-zai-ten in Japan. She is often depicted as two-armed. Sometimes she is represented as six or eight-armed. When two-armed she is holding Biwa or Vīṇā in her left hand and plays it with right hand (Plxxv, Fig. 3). When eight handed she hold generally bow, sword, axe, string, arrow, halberd, long pestle and iron wheel. The Kankō-myo-kyō (or Suvarṇaprabhāsa Sūtra), Sonyo-Shō or in Ababaku-Shō refer the eight handed Ben-ten. In her eight handed feature she is regarded as the manifestation of Kwannon or Kannon,³ the goddess of mercy.

According to the Brahmanical tradition, the Agni Purāṇa refers the goddess as four or eight-armed, while

1. See page 38 of the present work.

2. HDIJBP, p. 110.

3. HDIJBP, p. 125.

Vāyu-Purāṇa and Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa refer her as four-armed and two-armed respectively. Skanda Purāṇa and Devi-Pratimā-Lakṣmaṇa described the goddess are having blue throat and three eyes.

She is also depicted in the Benzai-Tenno Mandara in Japan. She is placed in the centre of the inner frame and four deities are placed in the four corners. In the outer frame there are nineteen deities.

One eight-armed image of this deity is enshrined in the Enoshima Jinja. In this sculpture the goddess is seen seated on a lotus pedestal. She holds in her hands the attributes such as sword, arrow, stick, rope, disc, javeline and a sceptre. The figure is decorated with green and red, colour. This image is known as Happi Benzaiten. She finds a place among a group of the seven gods of luck. She is also associated with the sea and many of her shrines is often shown in her pictures and statues and she is portrayed as riding or is accompanying a sea serpent or dragon. Her favourite musical instrument is biwa, a string instrument whose shape resembles a mandoline.¹

Another important example can also be described. This

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1. JM, p. 59. Dai-wi-chi-kyō describes Benzaiten as a male deity. "In Indian Buddhist pantheon the deity of Hearing and wisdom par excellence is the male deity named Mañjuśrī, who in the eyes of the Mahā-Yānists is one of the greatest Bodhi-sattva" (cf. Benzai-ten in Indian perspective - Prof. K.K. Dasgupta, Bulletin Of The Centre Of Japanese Studies, Vol. II, No.1).

statue is preserved in the Jingō-ji temple. Here the goddess is represented as eight-handed. She holds different types of attributes in her hands. She holds a padma, an arrow, a bow, sceptre and four other attributes in her eight hands. She sits on a lotus pedestal. Her eyes are half-closed. The halo behind her and the pedestal on which the lotus is placed are beautifully carved.¹

One of the two important figures are the goddess placed in the Kichijō-ten Zushi of the Jōruri-ji temple Kyoto (PlXXVII Fig. 1.). Another figure is now preserved in the Kamakura Museum. Here the deity is depicted as bare-bodied. Occasionally she is attired (PlXXVII Fig. 2).

Saṣthī/Hariti

Saṣthī, the Indian Brahmanical goddess, is a ~~female deity~~ generally depicted as riding on cat. She is the bestower of children and she gives protection to them. There are several legends and stories regarding her origin. All the stories are more or less connected with her love and protection to the children. As for her iconographic feature, she holds two or three children in her lap and a few children stand around her. But she is a folk deity of Bengal and she is little worshipped in other parts of India.

1. AJIBOEMS, p. 140, P. 1-72.

Saṣṭhī's counterpart in Japan is Hārītī, who is variously known as Kariteema, Kishimojin or Kishibojin. She is generally worshipped by the mothers. She is the benevolent deity of the children. From the iconographic point of view Hārītī should always hold a pomegranate fruit in one of her hands. Moreover, numerous children should stand around the goddess. Sometimes she holds a few children in her lap. There are different beliefs regarding the presence of pomegranate in her hand. One of these beliefs is that the fruit has five hundred seeds which symbolises the five hundred children of Hārītī. Hārītī was ^awitch and she used to devour all the children. But by the kindness of Buddha, Hārītī's evil nature was changed and ~~then~~ she became a normal lady and then she was raised to the status of a goddess. She is also regarded as the accessory deity of Sarasvatī. The representation of Hārītī is very few in Japan.

One of the best representations of Hārītī in Japan is to be seen along with a painting of Benzai-ten that appear on the back wall of a Zūshi or miniature shrine (called Kichijō-ten ~~ten~~ Zūshi) (Pl. XXVII, Fig. 1.). The painting is preserved in the Tokyo University of Arts. In this painting, the goddess is seated on a ~~dash~~ with two children on her lap. Two other children are sitting and standing beside her. There is a pomegranate fruit in her right hand.

Another interesting painted representation of Hārītī can be seen in the Daigō-ji temple of Kyoto. Here the goddess holds in her right hand two pomegranates with the twig of the

same tree.¹ A number of children are seen surrounding the deity. The presence of children is, however, very common in the representations of Hārītī in Japan.

Jimmon-ten

Another important deity is Jimmon-ten who is identical with Karitimon or Hārītī. As one of the twenty eight followers of Kannon her image is placed in the main hall of the Rengeo-in.

In the Rengeo-in (Myōhō-in), Kyoto, the painted wooden image of the deity is preserved. It's height is 169.2 cm. The date of making of the image should be sometimes between 1249 and 1256 A.D. (13th century).

In this representation the goddess stands on a rocky pedestal. She wears long robes and turns her face slightly to the right. The inward supernatural power is symbolised by some outward signs, such as, a snake and a horse head with which her head is surmounted.

The eyes of the deity are half-closed. These eyes are made of crystal. While gazing at the image, one is sure to have an impression that the half-closed eyes are but a natural pose for looking at some distant objects. This typical pose of observation is very common among the guardian

1. AJITBOEMS, p. 143.

deities of Japan, whose functions are to guard Buddhism. Incidentally, Jimmon-ten is also a guardian deity of Buddhism in Japan. Interesting enough, the deity holds a pair of symbols in both her hands placed in front of her breast.

The three sides of her halo are decorated in such a manner as if the flames are emanating from her halo. She also wears a tiara and two ribbons are artistically tied with her hairs.

The figure is adequately proportionate. The beauty of the face is noteworthy but it lacks pure feminine expression.

Śiva, Maheśvara, Nilakanṭha, Mahākāla or
Makeishura-ten, Shokyō-Kannon Daikoku-ten

Śiva, Maheśvara, Nilakanṭha, Mahākāla are known in Japan as Makeishura-ten (Maheśvara), Shokyō-kannon and Daikokuten respectively.

Japan conceived various forms of Makeishura-ten. Images of the deity are depicted with two, four, eight or eighteen arms.

The Mikkyos or the Esoteric Buddhists worshipped Makeishura-ten as a guardian god. Makeishura-ten is also identified as Ishana-ten (god Īśāna) who is also seen as one of the Jūni-ten. In the case of Unko in Northern China there was a statue of Makeishura-ten. The god has three

faces and eight arms. He is often depicted as riding on a cow or a bull. The Daichido-ron or commentary on Dai-bon-homya-kyo is called Daijizai-ten in Shin (China)¹. According to this tradition, the god has eight arms three eyes and he rides on a white cow. (Pl. XVII, Fig. 2.).

Makeishura-ten is generally placed in the South-west corner of the out hall of the Taizō-kai Mandara. According to the text Shogetsū-Fudō-ki, Makeishura-ten is placed in the left corner in the Genzu-Mandara. His left hand holds a trident and the face is turned towards right. His vehicle is a bluish-black buffalo.

The Karura-ō-oyobi narrates Daijizai-ten or Makeishura-ten with Takuya Tenno.² The colour of Takuya's body is blue. There he is depicted as three-faced and four-armed. He holds various weapons in his hands. He is decorated with heavenly raiments and various ornaments. He is considered as standing with considerable dignity.

Another important text viz. Sokushitsuritsuzoku-Makeishu-raten-Setsu-Abisha-Hō the deity is described as having three eyes and eighteen arms. Here he is portrayed as decorated with crown and ornaments. Ryū or a dragon should be attached to his body.³

1. HDIJBP, pp. 50 ff. -

2. Ibid, p. 74.

3. BZZI, pp. 152 ff.

Another important form of Makeishura-ten in Japan is Īsāna-ten. In India Īsāna has been considered as the boon-giver. His worshipper is likely to attain "eternal peace of serenity."¹ At a comparatively late period the position of Īsāna in Indian Bhrahmanical concept became inferior. He was considered to be one of the Astadikpālas. According to the Niṣpannavogāvalī, Īsāna presides over the Īsāna corner. He holds triśūla and Kapāla. The Japanese texts Soshetsū Fudō-ki describes the god as having three eyes, colour of his body is blue and his hairs are red. Ornaments made of skulls decorated his body. He holds a trident in the right hand and a cup in the left hand. Another text named Sonshō-Buccho-Shū-Yuga-Hō-Giki describes the god as holding a trident. He has two attendants beside him.

Nilakantha Śiva is another important deity known to the Japanese as Shokyō-kannon (Pl. V, Fig. 2). There is a legend regarding the Nilakantha Śiva. Nilkantha in Buddhism is considered to be a form of Lokeśvara. According to the respective dhyāna given in the Sādhana-mālā. Nilakantha is yellow in colour and the crescent of his Jatāmukta is adorned with the effigy of Amitābha. He sits in the Vajraparyāṅka attitude on a red lotus, on which the skin of black antelope is spread.² He is in Samādhi-mudrā. He carries in his two hands a bowl (Kapāla)

1. HDIJBP, p. 74.

2. IBI, p. 396.

filled with gems. He wears tiger skin and bears no ornaments, while his sacred thread is made of deer skin. His throat shows the blue pill of poison. Two cobras with jewels on their hoods and tails entwined with each other are seen on his two-sides.

In Japanese depiction of Shokyō-kannon or Nilakantha wears on his head a jewelled crown, which bears the figure of Kemuryō Bosatsu.¹ He has three faces, the middle is of a human being and right and left are of lion and pig respectively. He has either two or four arms. Kongō-Cho-Yuga-Shokyō-Daijinhio-Kangizai-Nenju-Giki refers the god as four armed and stands on a lotus flower.

Daikokuten or Mahākāla is the Japanese counterpart of Indian Mahākāla. The worship of Daikaku is quite old in Japan. Kōbō-Daishi too was an ardent believer in this god from ^{as} early as the eighth century. The Mahābhārata describes the deity as a terrific god and destroyer of all evils. The Sādhnamālā describes the god as a terrible deity of Buddhist pantheon and the deity has ornaments of snakes, canine teeth, protruding belly and garment of tiger-skin. He may have one face with two, four or six arms or eight faces with sixteen arms. He is surrounded by a number of terrible looking deities and is seen as trampling upon vajrabhairava in the form of corpse.

Indian Buddhist Iconography provided description of

1. Kemuryō Bosatsu is a variation of Amitābha.

the god who is generally worshipped during the performance Tantric rites of Māraṇa and for the purpose of destruction of enemies.¹

In Japan, there are representations of a peculiar type of deity who is called Daikoku or Mahākāla. He occupies an important position as the household deity of Japan. In this aspect he stands on a rice-bale and holds a hammer. Kōbō-Daishi had a vision of this form of Daikoku as "The Lord of Five cereals"². In sculpture there are mainly three forms of this god in Japan. In the first form he is three-faced and six-armed. In the second form, he appears as an ordinary human being clad in an ordinary dress and holding a bag on his shoulder. Thirdly, he is short legged deity standing on a rice-bale and holding a bag on his shoulder and hammer in his hand.

According to Daihokuten-Jinpō, there are two kinds of Daikoku, one of which wears a necklace, which is decorated with human skulls. He has three faces and six arms. His background is covered with elephant skin. The colour of his face and arms are blue. This figure is quite akin to the Aṇḍhakāsuravadhamūrti of Śiva. Attributes in his hand of this form of Daikoku under discussion are sword and a female sheep in right hands while human head and a sword are depicted in the left hands.

1. IBI, p. 347.

2. HDIJBP, p. 78.

Volume X of Shosetsū-Fudō-ki places Daikoku in the Genzu-Mandara. He has six hands. In this form the right hands of the deity generally hold sword, which is placed on his top, the head of a naked human being, and one end of the elephant skin over the head respectively. While one of the left hand is in the attitude of touching the top end of the sword. Another left hand holds other end of the elephant skin above his head.

Another important Japanese text Butsu Zō dzu-i describe the god in seven forms e.g. : (a) Bhikṣu or medicant Daikokuten, (b) Mahakara-Daikoku Nio, (c) Ōjikara Daikoku, (d) Shinda Daikokuten, (e) Yasha Daikoku, (f) Makara and (g) Sanmen Daikoku.¹ The presence of a variety of images of the god indicates that ⁱⁿ two distinct Japanese social and religious life this god has had immense popularity.

The Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka² presented in the Daihi-Taizo-Dai Mandara an interesting figure of Umā, consort of Daizi-jai-ten (Maheśvara). In this portrayal Umā is seen clad in garlands in the fashion of a Chinese lady. She sits on a crouching animal, whose features are like a cow. She is decorated with various ornaments, such as, ear-rings and a head dress that resembles a crown. There appears a halo behind her head. With her left hand she holds a small trident whose lower end rests on her lap. She looks at Maheśvara who is

1. HDIJBP, pp. 79-80.

2. CBT, Vol. I.

also sitting besides her on a crouching animal which should be a cow (bull). Mahesvara too holds a trident.

Sūrya/Nit-ten

Sun, the visible celestial luminary was also established as a great and important god in the Buddhist pantheon. Different names are attributed to the god in the vedic times, e.g. Savitri, Pusana, Bhaga, Vivasvat, Mitra, Anjamaṇi, Viṣṇu¹. In the ancient times the god was being represented symbolically. The Brhatsamhitā, Viṣṇudharmottara variously describe the god². This god also found a prominent position in Japanese Buddhism. The god is called Nit-ten in Japan.

The Japanese variety of Sūrya is mentioned in the Kongō-Kai Mandara or Vairadhātu Mandala. He is represented neither on a horse nor on a chariot drawn by horses. In the Taizō-kai-Mandara Nit-ten is placed in the Genkongobu-in in the eastern direction. There Nit-ten is seen riding on a chariot drawn by five horses.

Dainichi-kyō-so compiled by Ichigyo depicts the group of Nit-ten comprising of his consorts Seiya (Chhaya) and Biseiya. This group is depicted in the south of the group of attendant of Shaka. Nit-ten is there seen "as riding on eight horses with a wife on either side."³

1. DHI, p. 428.

2. See page 40 of the present work.

3. DHIJBP, p. 85.

Sonshō Bucchō-shū-Yugo-Hō-Giki translated from Sanskrit into Chinese by Zen-Mui and Shosetsū-Fudō-ki, by Shinjaku describe the god in two different way in regard to the dresses and ornaments. But in both the works, the god is described as riding on a chariot drawn by five red-horses. In both the texts god and his consorts are depicted as holding the lotus.

Dissimilarities as to be noted between Indian and Japanese form of Sūrya are as follows :

The Japanese god Nit-ten generally rides on a chariot drawn by five or eight horses as mentioned in the texts. But in the Indian representations the god sun is always represented as riding on a chariot drawn by seven horses. Moreover, in Japan Nit-ten's consorts Seiya and Biseya are always represented with the deity. But in India Sūrya is not always attended by his wives. Apart from these dissimilarities the main features are highly common in Indian and Japanese Sūrya.

Thus we can find that there are many common features of the god in Hinduism as well as in Buddhism. The lotus, the horse, the consort Chhaya are all the common features both in Brahmanical and the Japanese Buddhist Iconography.

In India the sculptural representation of the sun-god was a later development as compared today when he was represented

through symbols. In ancient times the deity was represented by symbols. A wheel, a round golden plate, a lotus flower etc. were the common used symbols.¹

In Japan Nit-ten is generally represented in the group of Jūni-ten or twelve guardian gods. The Jūni-ten figures in paintings are preserved in many temple in Japan. In the Jingo-ji temple, Kyoto, a painted figure of the god as one of the twelve gods of the Jūni-ten group is seen as on a round pedestal.

In his right hand he holds a spherical object which is represented as the celestial planet, the sun. This spherical object is regarded as his symbol sun. His left hand is perhaps holding the corner of his clothes. The deity is clad in beautiful garments and decorated with ornaments. This kind of symbol in the hand of the deity is highly interesting. In Indian representation, however, the deity is identified from the different kinds of symbols, such as lotus flower (in the hands).

Varuna/Sui-ten

Varuna, important among the eight lokapālas, is also incorporated in Indian Buddhism and is known as Sui-ten in Japanese Buddhism. As he was regarded as the god of water he had many names, such as, Jalapati, Yadopati, Amburāja. He is represented as an old man, sitting upon the Makara,

1. DHI, p. 432.

the mythical aquatic animal.

In the Rgveda, Varuna was originally considered as an atmospheric deity. Both the Rgveda and the Atharvaveda consider him as Aditya, and the Purāṇas invariably refer him as belonging to the group of twelve Adityas. His consort according to the Rgveda is Varuṇāni, "who lacks any individuality. However, Rgveda depicts him as the upholder of the physical order and moral order"¹.

Being the lord of waters Varuna causes the rivers to flow. He is naturally invoked as the bestower of rain. In fact, he was considered to be the regulator of the seasons and lord of light and darkness, i.e. day and night. Some other texts describe the deity in various other ways.

A Japanese text Shonshō-Bucchō-Shu-Yuga-Hō-Giki mentions that the god, clad in armour, is placed on the 'south eastern direction of the west facing gate'². A hood of snake appears over his head. He is depicted seated in the knelt down position with four attendants on both sides. He holds a Nāga-string.

According to the Shosetsū Fudō ki Suiten is depicted in the south of the western gate in the Genzu Mandara. The Kongō-kai Sichi-Shū states that the colour of the god is lightblue. His left hand in fist is held against his waist

1. HDIJBP, p. 62.

2. BZZI, p. 145.

and the right hand holds a snake string.

In Japan Sui-ten or Varuna is the Deva king and the deity is included in the eminent group of twelve 'Devakings'. When located in the Ryokai-mandara he is also seen as guarding the inner-hall of the Kongō-kai Mandaras.

His right hand generally holds sword. He is very often seen as riding on a tortoise. His independent image is made as the main single deity for the performance of the ritual called "Suiten-Hō". It is believed that Sui-ten saves people from the danger of the sea.

One of the important representations in Japan is preserved in the Tō-ji temple in Kyoto. He is represented here as one of the Jūni-ten or twelve guardian deities. In this representation the deity sits on a round dais. He holds in his right hand a looped noose which looks like a snake, in his right hand. He is attended by two other accessory deities. He wears various ornaments (PL XXVIII. Fig. 3).

Vāyu/Hu-ten

The Japanese term for Vāyu is Hu-ten. He is a popular god in esoteric Buddhism in Japan. The Viṣṇu-dharmottara describes him as two armed. His two hands hold the two ends of a scarf, while his garment being inflated by the wind. His mouth is opened and his hair is dishevelled. In the outer side structure of the temples of prominent cult gods the images of Vāyu are depicted as riding on a stag.

and holding a flag. In the Kalyanasundara-murti of Ellora, Vāyu is represented among the eight Dikpālas.

There are descriptions of Hū-ten in the texts like Shosetsū-Fudō-ki vol. IX, Karura-Ō-Oyobi-shōten Mtugon-Kyō and the Kongō-kai-Sichi-shū. The first text mentions the god as an old man wearing a crown which looks like a bird's wings and from which hang two tied up strings. The edges of the crown are curved and held upward. He is wearing armour. His right hand in fist is holding a banner. The Karura-Ō-Oyobi describes the god as blue in colour and he is holding banners, while the other text narrates the god as reddish in complexion and his left hand is in fist and the right hand holds a banner. In one of the representations (Pl. XXX Fig. 1.) Hū-ten is depicted as an old man, riding on a deer or antelope (which is the vāhana of Vāyu in India also). He holds a banner in his right hand.

From very early Indian literature also we get the informations of Vāyu. Both the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyana describe the god as father of Bhīma and of Hanumāna, the monkey hero, respectively. Other texts of Brahmanical literature describe the god as two-armed. Generally he has a banner in his right hand and a staff in his left hand. He sits on the lion throne or Simhāsana. The god is variously described in Rupamandana and other Brahmanical texts.

In Japan, there are some important representations

of this deity. In one of the representations in the Sanjusangendo in the Renge-o-in temple, the deity is in the posture of just 'speeding away'. The realistic treatment of the deity is remarkable.

In Japan Vāyu is a prominent member of Jūni-ten group and he became very much popular during the Heian and Kamakura periods. In a remarkable representation in the Jingō-ji temple, Kyoto, the god is represented as one of the members of the Jūni-ten group. In this sculpture Hū-ten is gorgeously dressed and the deity stands on a round pedestal. He holds a spear in his right hand. His face is bearded and it is slightly turned towards his left. He wears a crown like ornament which looks like the wings of a bird. The edges of his crown-like ornaments are curved and directed upwards. The flame-like object around the halo that appears to bind his head, his longish beard and some part of his garment, appear to be "drifted by the blowing wind symbolizing the attribute of the wind-god."¹ (Pl.Xxx, Fig. 1.).

Yama or Emma-ten

Yama or Emma or Emma-ten, the Judge of Hell in Japanese Buddhism is another prominent deity in Japan. According to the Brahmanical tradition Yama^{is} the guardian of the soul. The Visnudharmottara gives an elaborate description of the four-armed god seated on a buffalo with his

1. HDIJBP, p. 66.

consort Dhumrornā on his left lap. He holds a staff and sword in his right hands, while his left hands carry a trident with rosary, and a human face with flames around is being shown on the top of the staff.

The Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka¹ has provided a number of figures of Emma-ten. According to the Tripitaka Yama is known as Emma-rao or Yama Rāja when drawn in the Daihi-taizō-dai Mandara (Mahākaruṇāgarbha Maṇḍala). In this mandara Emma-rao is seen seated on a crouching buffalo and the palm of his right hand is half open, while in his left hand, he holds a long stick whose top end bears a human head over a crescent. In this representation curiously enough, the deity Kālarātri is seen inside Emma-rao². The Tripitaka text has also mentioned about Emma-ten of Kongo Kai Mandara (Vajradhātu Maṇḍala) where the deity is seated on a crouching buffalo being surrounded by a number of deities including Citragupta (Taizanfukun).

Dainichi-kyō (Mahāvairocana Sūtra) says that the vehicle of (Yama) Emma-ten is a buffalo. The colour of the body is as black as that of the thundering cloud. He sits on his mount and holds Danjo-in, i.e. a stick whose top end bears a human head. Other texts, such as Seishō-Bucchō-Shu-Yuga-Hō-Giki, the Shiō-setsu-in and the Shōsetsu-Fudo-ki also variously described the deity.

1. CBI, Vol.I and III.

2. For details about Kalaratri see the pages 178 of this work.

In the Genzu-Mandara Emma is placed on the west of the Southern gate. The fingers of his right palm is stretched and also pointed towards the right, but the end of the fingers are "drawn inside and directed a little upward."¹ He is holding a stick called Sendo-jō in his left hand, while his right palm is rests near his bosom. He rides on a white buffalo and he holds a human head over the crescent of Sendo-jo. In the Taizō-kai Mandara Emma is generally placed in the southern direction.

It is widely believed that Emma-ten is the bestower of longevity, he prevents calamity and confers peace and happiness to the dead. He is also worshipped as one of the deities of esoteric Emma-ten Mandara.

The god is variously depicted in Japan. Sometimes he is represented in benign aspect and sometimes in fierce attitude. The benign aspect of the god is depicted in one figure at the Daigo-ji temple, Kyoto. He is decorated with necklace, bracelet and crown. He is two-armed and riding on a crouching buffalo. In the left hand he holds a stick. A human head is placed at the top end of the stick. In his right hand he exhibits a mudrā. He is represented in sitting posture, his right leg is slightly bent and it is placed on the back of the bull.

Another representation in the Jingo-ji temple, Kyoto

1. HOIJBP, p. 57.

is also worth mentioning. Here the god is depicted as one of the gods in the Jūni-ten group. He stands on a pedestal. He is gorgeously decorated with ornaments and colourful dresses. He has a third eye which is vertically placed on his forehead. The whole sculpture is artistically decorated with flame like halo.

Kālarātri/Kokuan-tennyo

Kālarātri, is an attendant of Emma, who is placed in the class of the minor gods. The Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka¹ enumerates an interesting figure of Kālarātri, who is known in Japan as Kokuan-tennyo as one of the deities of Dai-taizo-dai mandara (Mahakarunāgarbha Mandala). Here the two armed deity is depicted as an attendant deity of Yamarāja, or Emma-rao. Kālarātri possess the complexion of meat-colour. The deity is seen as seated in an easy pose looking at Emma-rao who rides on a crouching buffalo, while his left hand holds a stick with a crescent over which a human head is placed.

Ji-ten/Prthivī

Apart from the Brahmanical texts we find mention of Ji-ten or Prthivī in Indian Buddhist texts also. In India she is known as Vasudhārā. She holds a prominent position in Japan. ^{The} Sādhnamālā describes that Vasudhārā as originated

1. CBT, vol. I

from the yellow germ syllable. She is two-armed. She is generally of yellow in complexion and has one face.

In the Brahmanical iconography she was assigned an important position from the vedic times. ^{The} Visnudharmottara in its different chapters variously describes the goddess. The text narrates that she is a beautiful woman. She is two-armed.¹

In Japan Ji-ten (Prthivī or Vasudhārā) is regarded as one of the gods in the Jūni-ten group (or twelve guardian deities). Many Japanese texts, such as Kyō-jūni-dai-itokuten-hōonbon, Dainichi-kyō-so, Bodaiba-Shosetsū-Ichiji-Chorin-O-Kyō, Daihōkō-Manjuhōri-Kyoshuku-Jizai-Bodai-Juki-Hon, Kenro-Jiten-Giki and Asabo-shō speak about the Ji-ten. Curiously enough, in Japan Ji-ten is regarded as a male deity instead of a female one². But in Indian Brahmanical concept or in Buddhism Prthivī or Vasudhārā is considered to be a female deity. Only the text Kenro-Jiten-giki describes that the deity has both male and female forms. But in Indian Brahmanism and Buddhism she is worshipped as mother-goddess.

Candra/Gat-ten

Candra is another important deity in the Buddhist

1. Chap. 60, 61, 79 & 85.

2. HDJBP, p. 83.

pantheon in Japan where he is known as Gat-ten. He is also depicted in the group of the Jūni-ten. In Indian Buddhism Candra is regarded as one of the nine planets. The Nispannayogā Vati describes Candra as riding on a swan. He is white in colour and holds in his right and left hands the discs of the moon or lotuses.

The Rgveda, the Atharvaveda and the Brāhmanas describe Candra as one of the "Eight Dikpālas". The Viṣṇu-dharmottara clearly describes him as four armed and as possessing a white body and as wearing white garments he is decorated with various ornaments. He should sit on a chariot, which is drawn by ten horses. He is the presiding deity of all stars.

A strange similarity in this concept of heavenly bodies is to be found in the Japanese ideas also. In the Seishukubu, Soma or Candra, as one of the heavenly body, is known as Getsu-yo. The illustrations of the "moon" or "Candra" are very rare in India both in Brahmanical as well as in Buddhist sculpture. In Japan, the Dainichi-kyō-so, the Sonshō-Bucchō-Shu-Yugā-Kigi, the Shosetsū-Fudō-Ki, the Kongō-kai-Shichi-Shū describe the forms and features of Gat-ten. These texts describe the deity as generally riding upon three ducks. He has red hairs and his right hand holds a stick with a crescent at the extreme top of the stick. The deity is popularly represented in the Jūni-ten group.

One example from the Saidai-ji, Nara in Japan and another from the Tō-ji, Kyoto in Japan can be cited here.

In the Tō-ji temple the god is seen standing on a pedestal. He holds a spherical object, which appears to symbolise the moon. Interestingly a small rabbit appears inside the spherical object. This spherical object is the identification symbol of the deity (Pl.XXI, Fig.1.). Another painted image in the Jingo-ji temple, Kyoto, is done on silk. He holds a crescent on the palm of his left hand. He also stands erect and there is no depiction of his mount. A small rabbit is painted over the crescent.

It may not be out of place to deal with Getsu-yō or Candra as one of the numerous heavenly bodies. In this aspect Candra is included in the Seisu-ku-bu of the iconographic classification of Japanese Buddhist deities or demi-gods and others.

The Chinese-Buddhist Tripitaka presents different forms of Candra or Soma (Getsu-yō). We mention below the description of Soma as portrayed in the Daini-Taizō-Dai Mandara, which is contained in the Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka.

Getsu-yō appears in the said mandara in the form of a human being. The figure of Getsu-yō is depicted as seated on a semi-circular pedestal in a cross-legged position and a halo is seen behind the image.

Getsu-yō's figure is decorated with bangles, armlets, necklace, and a crown. In the right hand of the image there is a crescent moon with a drooping small rabbit. The left hand of the image is in fist and it is held near its breast. It is interesting to note that the seed-syllable of Getsu-yō and Gat-ten (Candradeva) is 'Ca'.

Minor deities

Apart from the above mentioned gods and goddesses various other gods of Brahmanical origin are also included in the Ten-bu group. These gods are to be classified as minor gods or demi-gods. Two of these gods are already mentioned. They are Karura (Garuḍa) and Kokuan-tennyō (Kālarātri). These two gods are generally mentioned as the attendant deities of the two principal Brahmanical gods Viṣṇu and Yama respectively.

There are few other gods who are also placed in this group. They are Rasetsu-ten (Rakṣasa), Taizan Fukun (Citragupta), Ashura (Asura) etc.

Rasetsu-ten/Rakṣasa

Rasetsu-ten or Rakṣasa is one of the important demi-gods in Japan. In India this deity is known as Nirrti both in the Buddhist and in the Brahmanical ideas.

The Viṣṇudharmottara¹ describes Nirrti as dark limbed

1. Vsd., pt. III, Chap. 57.

and has a dark face carrying a noose in the hand. She is described as the wife of Virūpākṣa who has expanded eyes, bright face, erect hairs, two hands and a yellow-beard. He holds a majestic staff.

Niṣpannavogāvalī describe the deity as placed in the Nairṛta corner there is the lord of the Rakṣasas (Goblins) called Nairṛti who is blue in colour and rides on a corpse. In his two hands he holds the sword and the khetaka or stick.

In Japan the deity is known as Rasetsu or Nirichī. The texts Sonshō-Bucchō-Shu-Yuga-Hō-Giki, Kongō-Kai-Shichi-Shū, Shosetsū-Fudō-ki describe the deity as holding a sword in his hand and he is in sitting posture. His body is white with a tinge of pink colour. His right hand held against his waist in tight fist while his left hand is assuming the mudrā called ken-in or sword gesture. He exhibits the angry look.

The Jingo-ji temple in Kyoto, Japan, represented Rasetsu-ten as one of the Jūni-ten. Here the deity stands on a pedestal. He wears gorgeous raiments. The corner of his garments swirl in the wind. He holds a sword in his right hand while in his left hand he shows a mudrā. He also wears a decorated crown. It was painted on silk. Its height is 157.3 cm x 57.9 cm.¹

Asura/Ashura

Another important minor god in Japan is Ashura. In

1. HDIJBP, Pl. Fig.

Indian Buddhism also different stories are told by the Buddhist monks regarding Asura. Later on he is regarded as the protector of Buddhist faith.¹

In Japan Ashura is regarded as one of the eight Hachi-bu-shu (eight classes of demi-gods or supernatural being who protects Buddhism)².

One of the representations of Ashura as Hachi-bu-shu is preserved in the Kofuku-ji in Nara. This image is childlike in appearance. It is six handed and he is standing on a rock pedestal. It is made of dry-lacquer (Pl. XXX, Fig. 2).

Citrakupta/Taizanfukun

Citrakupta, the attendant of Yama is commonly known as Taizanfukun in Japan. The idea of Taizanfukun entered into Japan from India through China. This cult became very popular during the T'ang dynasty of China. In Japan during the late Heian period the deity gained more importance.

In the Visnudharmottara he is described as two-handed. He is also placid looking. He keeps one eye on Yama. In his right hand he holds a pen and in the left a leaf. He is controlling the fortune and longevity of human being. Susanoo-no-mikoto is sometime identified with Taizanfukun. Susanoo-no-mikoto is the younger brother of 'Amaterasu Omikami', the

1. PJA(S), p. 161.

2. HDIJBP, p. 145.

the Japanese sun goddess in the Shinto cult.¹ It is also believed in Japan that he is the god of the Taizan mountain.

Taizanfukun is variously represented in paintings, specially in the Mandaras. According to the Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka² Taizanfukun has his due place besides Emma's realm in the Vairodhātu Mandala (Kongō-kai-Mandara).

Thus it is seen that the Japanese iconographic tradition which had its beginning in the 6th century, is highly rich, being represented in variety of forms. Now-a-days Japan is a modernised country with highly developed science and technology. Nevertheless, with its scientific progress it has not forgotten its tradition. She has all the respect for her old culture and traditional values. Buddhism was highly developed in the ancient and mediaeval periods. This religion is also prevailing in modern Japan, with a great force. Even during the post war period creative imagination of the nation took a new shape and form and strangely enough, without being deviated from the traditional customs and manners Japanese people's religious faith continued to remain stronger as ever. This is evident from the mad rush in the temples on the ceremonial occasions. A new religious movement also gained momentum. Some of the new religious organisations are based on Shinto, while other are related to certain sects of Buddhism. Yet there are others which are formed with mixed religious ideas. Many of them undertake various social and cultural activities. Some also have come to engage themselves in substantial political activities.

1. HDIJBP, p. 139, JM, p. 15.

2. CBI, Vol. III.