

Human Terracotta Figurines of Varanasi

NIHARIKA

Varanasi is a city of Gods and Goddesses, traditions and faiths, believes and superstitions. Here, a spring of religious acceptance of theologies flows tremendously throughout the year since millennium. The heartfelt belief of divine God is apparent in the images and figurines of Gods and Goddesses which are collected from the excavations of Rajghat and Sarnath in Varanasi. The artisans of terracotta art practiced their hands on figurines of Gods, Goddesses and on male and female in different postures and attitudes.

Rajghat

Rajghat is a part of ancient settlement of Varanasi, which is still inhabited. It is situated at six kilometers in north-east direction from Varanasi. Greeves (Greeves, 1909, pp. 3-4) and Sherring (Sherring, pp. 19, 34, 291) also accept that the ancient city of Varanasi stood farther north than at present, possibly on both sides of Barna, at a point where it joins the Ganga. On the other side of Barna, we could also locate the signs of ancient habitation at Sarai Mohana. (Narain and Agrawala, p. 17) A sealing of Gupta period with the legend *Varanasyadhistanadhikaransya* was found in the excavations which confirms that the mound of Rajghat beholds the remains of ancient Varanasi. The inhabitation starts from 800 BC and continues till today. The excavations reveal evidences of 800 BC to 1200 AD. More than this, two coins of Sher Shah Suri and Akbar respectively are also collected from its period VI and an East India Company coin was recorded from the top deposit of this site. (*Ibid.*, p. 35)

Rajghat has yielded a rich collection of terracotta figurines, of both human and animal. The specimens collected from the Gupta period exceed in art, merit and abundance and are really capable of proving the classical richness of this period. Many of these figurines are displayed and preserved in the collections of different museums of the country like Central Asian Antiquities Museum and National

Museum of New Delhi; Kala Bhavan, Varanasi; Allahabad Municipal Museum, Allahabad; State Museum, Lucknow; Prince of Wales Museum, Mumbai, Museum and Picture Gallery, Baroda etc.

SARNATH

Sarnath is one of the four most sacred places related with the main events of Buddha's life. It is recorded in a Buddhist text that Buddha himself commanded his followers to visit four places—Lumbini, Bodhgaya, Sarnath and Kushinagar related with his birth, enlightenment (*bodhi*), turning the wheel of law (*dharmacakra-pravartana*) and his death or *mahaparinirvana* respectively. Thus, Sarnath automatically became a sacred place for the followers of this sect from ancient times till date. This place is related with the event 'turning the wheel of law'. After attaining enlightenment at Bodhgaya, Buddha first gave his preaching to five Bhadravargiyas, i.e., the five blessed band at Deer Park (*Mriga-daya or Mriga-dava*) of Rishipatana near Varanasi. The preaching of Buddha's sermon is believed to have taken place in 528 BC. The first datable relic found at Sarnath is the inscribed pillar erected by Asoka in about 250 BC. In the monastery area, buildings of different periods are found which can be dated from Kusana period to Gupta period. Sarnath enjoyed great prosperity in Gupta period and Buddhist religion and art flourished unconditionally at that time. Further, the excavations proved that this place was flourishing during the middle period of 12th century AD too. It was destroyed by foreign invaders in 13th century AD. Several excavations were carried at this place from 1798 to present date. The excavations of Sarnath yielded a rich collection of sculptures, inscriptions and minor antiquities. The stone sculptures have been profoundly collected from Sarnath. They are masterpieces of art and religion and are severally studied and discussed by scholars. But the minor findings of terracotta like figurines, seals, bricks, conical stupas etc. could not get any place in their studies. They are mostly stored in the reserve collection of the museum and only a few are displayed. Here is a description of terracotta figurines-human and animals with all possible details collected from Rajghat and Sarnath.

Mother Goddess

The figurines of Gods and Goddesses collected from the excavations

of Rajghat establish that their worship was prevalent in Varanasi since 800 BC to the present time. Among these, figurines of Mother-Goddess is noteworthy. Seventy-four such figurines are collected from beneath the soil and also from the surface of Rajghat. They are roughly made of clay and then baked. They are made by hand and sometimes by moulds. Their dress (?) and ornaments are shown by applique, cut-marks, ring-punches, pin-head holes etc.

These figurines are mostly naked, the nudity being concealed under the conspicuous girdle shown by long strips of clay or punched circlets etc. Similar to these figurines are collected from Kausambi, Lauria, Ahichchhatra and Mathura and they are referred as '*Mahanagni*' (Agrawala, p. 309). She has been identified as the Earth Goddess (*Dhariti*) by Bloch (Bloch, A.S.R. 1906-07, p. 122). According to Vasudeva Upadhyaya, a child takes his birth naked on the earth and then he hides himself behind the worldly robes and ornaments etc. Probably this theory of nature inspired to create naked figurines of Mother-Goddess. Such terracotta figurines were being made since pre-historic period in Harappan civilisation and such figurines have also been found in Mesopotamia, Egypt and Iran. They were being modelled by hand or mould. Different parts of body were made separately and then they were joined together. Every part of the body was adorned with lots of ornaments as girdle, necklace, arm and ear ornaments etc. by applique, pin-head, punch, cut or ring-marks. These ornaments were also made by rolling the soft clay like different ornaments. Their lips and sometimes breasts were shown with cut and punch marks. The ear and nose were made by pressing or elaborating the soft clay. The naval was also shown by punching or applique. These features were supposed to be eternal. They also show heavy breasts and sometimes a 'fan' like turban or ornament with flowers and leaves, attached with the head, making it unnaturally heavy. But it was probably from the ornaments of pre-historic women. Apart from the Harappan sites, Mathura, Pataliputra, Rajghat, Ahichchhatra etc. have produced many such figurines of Mother-Goddess, who is named as *Mahamata*. She herself was known as *Visnu-Bharya*, *Sarvabhutatma Ishwari*, *Devi*, and *Gaj-Laxmi*. Indian philosophy considers '*prakriti*' (nature) as its root strength and this nature is *Sakti* worshipped as Mother-Goddess. She is worshipped as the origin-cause of this universe or 'Mother-Principle' (Dikshit, A.S.R., 1924-25, p. 72) which was one of the earliest forms of worship among several ancient races of the world. According to Stein, these female figures which are so uniform in

features and style were possibly intended to represent some tutelary goddess. (Stein, MASI, No. 37, p. 38)

Crude terracotta figurines with bird faces are collected from Rajghat. They are also present at many Harappan sites and Patliputra, Ahichchhatra, Mathura, Bhita etc. of historical period. Coomarswamy has designated them as 'Archaic' due to the inconvenience in placing them in any particular period (Coomarswamy, IPEK, 1920; also see Marg, Vol. VI, No. 2, p. 27). This term was further followed by Agrawala while studying terracottas of Mathura (Agrawala, J.U.P.H.S., Vol. IX, p. 13) which are dated of 400 BC. H.C. Kala, C.C. Dasgupta and P.L. Gupta are also of the same opinion. Gordon, in spite of calling them 'archaic', has called them 'primitive' (Gordon, Man, Vol. XXXV, 1935, p.117) and has dated them to 120-80 BC to 1st Century BC. Due to its occurrence from Indus Valley to Gupta period, Kramrisch has given these figurines a new nomenclature, that is 'ageless'. Further, at Rajghat, we get similar figurines from 800 BC to 1200 AD and they are also present with the East India Company's coins at the surface. According to Narain and Agrawala, 'The specimens in almost all cases are fragmentary and their occurrence in all the stratified periods is noteworthy. Their continuity from Period I to Period VI at Rajghat is in conformity with the 'ageless' or 'timeless' definition given by earlier scholars to such 'Mother-Goddess' effigies on stylistic considerations (Narain and Agarwala, *Op. cit.*, p. 40).

These archaic figurines show broad hips applied girdle with punched designs, stumps like legs separated as arch, the arms presumably extended diagonally. They often show spade like head with a pinched out nose. At Mathura, these figurines show beak-like nose. Other characteristics are same to Rajghat specimens. She has been identified as Goddess 'Suparna' or 'Vinata', the mother of the Great Eagle. Similar figurines are reported from Ahichchhatra also. A few of these figurines show a head of snake. Other example of this type is a serpent head and torso, marked with ring-punches and streaks. This is a fragmentary piece between the 'eyes' and 'abdomen'. The eyes are shown with two applique circular dots pierced with rings. Breasts are also shown as round circular plaques and a series of four ring-punches.

Snake figures are also reported from Prahaldpur, Pataliputra [Patna Museum Catalogue, Patna, 1965, p. 223. pl. XLIV (9562)] and Bulandibagh. One similar figure is kept in the Lucknow Museum also. Stella Kramrisch (JISOA, Vol. VII, 1939) has identified this

with 'Mansa', the serpent goddess. But Agrawala and S.K. Srivastava identify it with goddess Earth as she is the queen of snakes and is called '*Sarparajni*'. (Srivastava, pp. 75-76)

One more type of Mother-Goddess is mother and child type. This type is depicted by two figurines at Rajghat and Sarnath. One is holding a baby in her arm and other is holding two babies, one in each arm. She is also holding a bowl (or *dipaka*) (Narain and Agrawala, *Op. cit.*, p. 75) in her hand. In my opinion, this object (not very clear in the figure) must be a bowl, probably of milk which looks more relevant with a mother. If it is considered as '*dipaka*', we can compare them with the crude figurines available at the festival of Diwali, holding two or four '*dipakas*'. Mother-Goddess with baby only has also been collected from Sarnath, Kausambi, Patliputra, Mathura etc.

Thus it is evident that these terracotta Mother-Goddess figures are not ordinary toys, but they were made for religious purposes at Rajghat with other contemporary sites. It has high antiquity and the cult had influenced the modellers of terracotta art. The worship of Mother-Goddess under various names and attribute still continues as guardian deity.

Goddess in Abhaya Mudra

There are nine figurines of a goddess in the posture of bestowing protection, collected from Rajghat and are dated to first-third century AD. One of the Goddess is richly dressed and highly ornamented. She is wearing a *dhoti* or *sari* and a girdle, a conspicuous turban like headdress, ear-ornaments, wristlets and a necklace dangling over the breasts. She is holding a looped end of the drapery near the thigh, may be the loose scarf hanging from the shoulders or a looped position of her *sari*. Her right hand is in the attitude of granting protection (*abhaya*). Other figurine shows elaborate headdress with looped rolls of tressed hair or garland on either side in front and a semi-circular feature at the back. Her ear ornaments are peculiar, as in right ear she is wearing a ring while in the left a rectangular plaque can be seen. Her *sari* is secured by a double zone with hanging loop tucked in front; the folds are finely incised and modelled. She is also holding the ends of her drapery like the earlier one. The necklace and wristlets are noteworthy. Rest of the figurines is so mutilated that these cannot be much described.

Sarasvati

There is female figurine at Sarnath which holds probably a *vina* in her hand, so it is identified with goddess Saraswati by Sri D.R. Sahani.

Kartikeya

There are two fragmentary figurines of Kartikeya. He has a top knot of his hair, while the rest of hair is hanging on either side of his face. A staff or lance seen on the left side may suggest the deity's identification as Skanda-Kartikeya. The second figurine shows this god as riding on his vehicle peacock, with his legs crossed in front of the bird. His left hand is placed on his thigh while the right is upraised near the chest. The plumage of the bird makes a background of the god. Both figurines are well baked to a bright red colour and are dated to Gupta period.

Siva - Parvati

There are three figures of Siva, five of Parvati and a plaque showing 'Siva and Parvati' together. One of the figurines of Siva, shows a halo and damaged ear-ornaments. His locks of hair with a top-knot can be seen. Other figurine shows short curls of hair as covering the head like a wig with a small crest. Long oval ear-rings can be seen. The third figurine is carved as a plaque where Siva is caressing the head of his bull Nandi with his right hand and the left hand is suspended on side. All are dated to Gupta period. A hand modelled head of Siva shows three eyes, the third on his forehead in a vertical position. The pupils are shown with incisions. A semi-circular headdress decorated with frill-marks can be seen. It was slipped with red colour. It is dated to 700-1200 AD.

Another plaque shows Siva and Parvati standing in frontal posture. The god is wearing a small cloth on his lower part and a wig like headdress with incised decoration can also be seen. The goddess is wearing a *dhota* with rich ornaments like necklace, bangles and ear-pendants. She is wearing a tricornate headdress. Similar headdress can be seen on the other figurines of this deity. Siva's vehicle Nandi, the bull, appears in between the divine couple whom they are caressing with their right hand. On stylistic grounds it is dated to 700 AD. The figurines of Parvati show only its head except one, which shows head and bust of a female deity with two combed masses of hair on the sides and a top-knot, with a plaited band pendent from it

in the middle. A pearl necklace and large oval ear-rings can also be seen. This figurine is dated to Gupta period, two to 700-1200 AD and rest of the two are unstratified.

Durga

There is a solitary figurine of Durga killing the demon *Mahisa*. The four armed goddess (upper two hands are broken) is thrusting a javelin into the body of the buffalo-demon whose tail is held by her in the left hand. Her right leg is trampling over the head of the buffalo. She is wearing a plain cloth tied on her waist while the upper body is bare. A closely fitted necklace can also be seen.

Visnu

A fragmentary plaque shows a headless and feetless figure of Visnu with four arms. He is holding a conch-shell in one of his right arms and in left an attribute now unidentifiable due to the damage. The additional left hand is suspended below as holding the *cakra*. The Brahmanical sacred mark 'Swastika' is engraved on his chest. He is wearing a knee-reaching *dhoti*, tied round the girdle and a long sacred-thread (*yajnopavita*). It is an unstratified figurine but on stylistic grounds it may be dated to seventh-eighth century AD.

There is one more plaque showing four-armed Visnu. Head, upper arms, forearms of lower ones and the portion below the thighs are broken off. Incised 'Swastika' on chest, sacred thread, armlets, girdles and folds of *dhoti* can be seen. On stylistic grounds it is dated to the late medieval period.

Ganesa/Ganapati

There are two figurines of Ganesa at Sarnath and only one at Rajghat. All are dated to medieval period. The four armed God is sitting in an easy attitude with his usual attributes which are effaced. His elephant trunk is resting on a bowl of sweets. The Rajghat specimen shows a serpent-*yajnopavita* also.

Naimesa/Naimesi

The number of Naimesa or Naimesi figures are eighty including fifty-five from unstratified area of Rajghat. Only three figurines were collected from Sarnath. The maximum number of the stratified figurines was collected from period IV, i.e., c. 300-700 AD, though

it occurred from the previous and further periods too. These goat faced figures are characterised by their dangling enormous ears with lobes either purported or marked by slits. Usually the face is rendered in two surfaces slanting from each ear to meet at the hooked nose-ridge above the slit of mouth. The projecting trapezoidal top knot on the head is shown by a pressed up flat lump of clay. The figure is flat with thick neck and broad shoulders. Thighs and hands are indicated with cup shapes. Such figurines at Sarnath are only three in number and were collected from Chaukhandi Stupa of Sarnath area, two and one are dated to 3rd century BC and 1st-2nd century AD respectively. The latter one has a hollow body. Its legs and hands are broken and the third one is fixed on a flat surface.

The goat-head figures have been identified to show the god Naigmesa or Harinaigmesi. Variants of the name found in Brahmanical and Jain literature include Naigmisa, Naigmeya, Najamesa, Naigmesin etc. (Narain and Agrawala, *Op.cit.*, p. 86, fn.1) Stone images of this god are several in numbers at Mathura. An early stone slab from the ancient Jain site of Kankali Tila at Mathura represents this deity with his name in inscription as '*Bhagava Nemeso*', i.e., *Bhagavan Naigmesa*. The depiction on this sculpture clearly indicates that the deity has corroboration with child birth. (Buhler, E.I., Vol. II, pp. 314-6; Smith, pl. XVIII, p. 5; Agrawala, JUPHS, Vol. XX, pp. 68-73; Shah, JISOA, pp. 19 ff) This fully corroborates with the Jain canonical accounts where the god is said to be responsible for the change of embryo of Mahavira from the Brahmana lady Devananda to the Kshtriya queen Trisala. (Agrawala, J.A. Vol. II, No. 4) In the Mahabharata and early Ayurvedic Samhitas, he is referred as a brother or another form of god Skanda and the father of many Kumara-grahas who preside over child-birth. (Agrawala, 1966)

Kubera or Jambhala, Yaksha and Kama are represented by one or two figurines at Sarnath. Another fragmentary sculpture shows lower part of a seated cross-legged figure in meditation. Below the figurines head and joined hands of a worshiper, front part of a bull, emblem of Vrishabhanath is also visible. According to Sri Daya Ram Sahani, the seated figurine may be of a Tirthankara of the same name. Most of these figurines are dated to medieval period, except one of Kubera to Gupta period and one of Yaksha to 2nd-1st century BC.

Buddha

Sarnath is very rich in images and statuettes of human; Buddha

naturally being most popular. Buddha images of stone and terracotta are numerous at the site and they exceed in their art and aesthetic sense. Buddha images in various postures are noteworthy. The preaching Buddha image is a sign of Sarnath school of Art. The life events of Buddha are also depicted in stone. The artisans have practiced every event of Buddha's life and his famous postures in terracotta also. The attitude of *Bhumisparsha* (earth-touching), *dhyana* (meditation), *dharmacakrapravartana* (turning wheel of Law), *bodhi* (enlightenment), *mahaparinirvana* (great demise), miracle of Sravasti etc. are shown in this medium. Apart from these, Buddha figurines in standing or sitting posture are also collected from Sarnath. Most of these statuettes are broken and so they are partially found but they exhibit great skill and care taken by the artisans.

Buddha figurines are depicted as plaques and statuettes at Sarnath numbering 20. Main figurines can be described as follows:

A terracotta plaque shows a figure of seated Buddha seeking enlightenment (*bodhi*). The Buddha is seated on a throne in the attitude of touching the earth (*bhumisparsa mudra*). Beneath the throne two half bodied human figures are shown and at the top in left corner Mara's attendants can be seen attacking Buddha. The right side of the plaque is broken and the Buddha figure is defaced. According to Sri Daya Ram Sahani, the half bodied figure of earth-goddess rising from the earth is immediately below the right hand of Buddha, with treasure vase on her hands. On the other side of the base is a daughter of the Evil One in flight. The omission of her lower part below the waist suggests that she is being drowned or devoured by the Earth. Two demons remain to the proper left of the Buddha's head. One of them has a double edged axe (*kuthara*) in his left hand and the other has its head and hands missing. The style of the carving shows that this plaque is made in late Gupta period.

A plaque shows the great miracle of 'Sravasti' displayed by Gautam Buddha. It shows Buddha preaching at the same time at different places to confront the heretical teachers. The Buddha is seated in the centre, expanding the law. The stem of the fully blown lotus on which Buddha is seated is effaced, but the figures on either side of it remain, which are supposed to be Nagas with their upper half bodies visible. To the right and left side of Buddha two attendants are holding a fly-whisk in their right hand, possibly Sariputra and Maudgalyana or perhaps the Bodhisattvas-Maitreya and Avalokiteswara, though their emblems are absent. On either side of

the halo of Buddha, miniature Buddha figures is seated in meditation on lotuses.

Another plaque shows the same seen of cross legged Buddha in the presence of King Prasenjit and the six heretical teachers (*tirthikas*) on a lotus, the stem of this lotus is supported on both sides by serpent deity (*nagas*). At the proper left in the lower corner, a male figure is seated on a low stool facing towards the lotus throne of the Buddha. He is being attended by a parasol bearer (may be Prasenjit, the king of Sravasti) and an elephant standing in front of him. There are three figures in the other corner of the plaque. Among them, the first one is sitting on a stool with his right hand raised to his head and his left hand is on his knee. This figurine is supposed to be one of the six heretics whom the great teacher confounded by his superhuman powers; one of them holds a fly-whisk. Similar scene is illustrated on two bas-reliefs, rectangular capital and a slab at Sarnath.

There are many more plaques at Sarnath which show the Buddha in expounding the law, in meditation and in earth-touching posture and under the Bodhi tree and his *mahaparinirvana* etc. There are a few heads of the Buddha with his usual curls of hair and few probably of Bodhisattvas too.

Apart from these, a plaque collected from Rajghat shows probably the scene of miracle of Vaisali. In this plaque, Buddha can be seen backed by a halo like circular foliage of a tree which is identified as a tree of *asoka* and not that of a bo. A monkey in a mischievous posture is depicted just above the head of the deity. The well-modelled smiling face of the Buddha has his eyes half-closed and his ears are long, as are counted in the sixteen *laksanas* of the great men. The inconspicuous head gear should be considered *usnisa*. It is dated to Gupta period.

HUMAN FIGURINES (MALE)

The artisans of Rajghat and Sarnath practiced their hands on human figurines, both male and female. The male figurines are beautifully carved and they exhibit a skilled depiction of drapery and varieties of hair coiffures. Especially, Rajghat has produced a number of styles in hair arrangements which could get a whole chapter in their description. There are thirty-seven male figurines at Sarnath and many at Rajghat, which are described as follows.

Rajghat has yielded many male figurines in standing position but their heads are broken. There are three pieces of male figurines, one

has its part above the waist and feet missing and two are hand modelled torso. The first one is wearing a short loin-cloth tied with a girdle, the other two show a wrestler's body. These figurines have no traces of drapery. Two nude figurines were collected from Sarnath too. The hands, feet and head are broken. It is not very clear whether these figurines have any co-relation with Jain Tirthankaras.

A figure of squatting male of Rajghat, forms a single mass of its legs etc. which serves as a base. He is wearing a peculiar headgear in a high conical shape at the top and covers the sides of head up to the shoulders. The face is oval in shape. He is wearing discolor ear-pendants and a V - shaped necklace. His hands are placed in front on the lap as holding a bowl which is represented by a conspicuous perforation.

Due to the manner of execution of this figurine, it could be presumed that it was of some utility, but what, is not perceptible. The excavators of this site have written, 'The bottom of the figurine as preserved does not appear to be complete and this happens to be the case with all the five or six specimens found. There is to be noticed broken tenon at the bottom and it is conceivable that the figurine was originally attached to some object, presumably a pot (?). But there is no possibility of the figure serving as a spout for the hole of the bowl is not all through in the specimens (except one).' (Narain and Agrawala, *Op. cit.*, pp. 106-107) A few of these figurines show turban with a prominent rolled knot on the front or conical cap like head dress and a necklace, thick discolor ear pendants etc. All are dated to AD 1st- 3rd century and are red in colour. One of these figurines shows its hands raised in front of the chest. Another figurine of the same date shows a cylindrical head-gear, rimmed below. It has a smiling face. He is wearing ear-pendants and a string of pearls in the neck. Large protruding abdomen with naval are noteworthy, legs are turned inward, a lower garment like *dhoti* is indicated by its folds round the girdle. The figurines have its mould and cast both.

There are six male figurines standing in a frontal posture with suspended hands paralleled to the body. A little dwarfish in proportion, he wears a close fitting drapery (*kancuka*) (and one a short loin cloth). One of these shows a trefoil headdress and a parasol-like hair with parting in the middle respectively.

There are twenty figurines standing in frontal posture with right hand suspended parallel to the body and left placed on the waist (*akimbo*) other features which could be noticed are short loin cloth

and honey-comb hair style etc. Few of these have traces of white paint too.

Eight male figurines are standing with weapons. One figure carries an unstrung bow in his left hand and probably an arrow in the right, another two are holding a staff while three show a sheathed dagger inserted on right in an upper waist belt. Two figurines can be described more elaborately. The standing male figurines have their right legs slightly bent at their respective knees. The hair is dressed in typical *chatrakara*; right ear-lobe cloven, a disc-ring in left ear. He is wearing a necklace, armlets and bangles and a *dhoti* is tied round the girdle. A sheathed dagger is inserted on left in the waist-belt. Right hand is placed on the thigh while the left hangs on his side. All of these figurines are well-baked and sometime they show traces of white paint too.

There are five figurines which carry some round object in their hands respectively. Curly hair parted in the middle and hanging on sides and backed by a top-knot with a suspension hole is noteworthy. Ear-ornaments, necklace, bangle, girdle, *kancuka* and a short loin-cloth need attention. These are of grey, red and light yellow in colour.

Eleven male figurines show different characteristics as one wears a twisted cloth band (*patta*) across the right knee and left thigh or close fitting coat, short *dhoti*, looped *pataka* etc. The ornaments include wristlets, anklets, girdle etc. One of these figures is of a dancer and one of a pot-bellied *gana* too.

There are five figurines showing nude children while six are wearing amulets, two are carrying a ball while two are walking on their knees and hands. The amulets are in the shape of tiger's talon (*baghnakh*) and tortoise. Two figurines of boys are holding a ball in their right hands respectively. The figurines of small children, walking on hands and knees are especially noteworthy. One of these shows an applied neck-string with an amulet on front; long hair locks applied on the nape of the neck are formed into three coils resting on one-another. The head of the figurine of previous type shows his hair dressed in a long tress encircling the head thrice with a decorative band of pearls and issued on top as hanging in twisted shape at the back. These figurines have hand modelled bodies and moulded heads. The well baked figurines show traces of white and red-white paint.

MOULDED PIECES FROM POTTERY

There are six such figurines which were originally parts of some

pottery like a Yaksa figurine was used as a handle. It shows the Yaksa with demoniac face, lolling out tongue and sunken eyes. His left ear, arms and feet are missing, while the right ear is like an animal and is pricked. A prominent necklace of triangular shape can be seen on the chest. The knee-reaching *dhoti* is worn round the girdle with folded loops which is carefully incised and modelled. Other figurines show a grotesque lion-head with wide open mouth and stamped circlets of eye-balls. These can be seen in the opening of the mouth and on its sides too. Grotesque monkey like head with lolling out tongue; highly designed grotesque human face having lion-like ears, eyes and manes with protruding tongue are also noteworthy. There is one torso of a corpulent male dated to Kusana period and nine figurines and a bust are dated to Gupta period. These figurines show differently carved hair-like basket shape, curls of hair or hair hanging on both or one side, crown of melon etc. Eighteen figurines are not dated and are kept in the reserve collection of the museum.

HUMAN HEADS (MALE)

There are many heads at Rajghat showing differently arranged coiffures. Among these seventeen heads depict parasol-like (*chatrakar*) hair style, with or without central parting. One of those shows male head crowned with radiating locks of hair in form simulating the ribs of a parasol; the crest is damaged with a suspension-hole at the back; frizzled locks can be seen falling on both sides in parallel rows. Few of these heads show top-knot with suspension hole, with curly hair descending in parallel tiers, or falling on sides to the shoulders, falling locks on sides taking globular shape etc. A few of these show ornaments and traces of white paint too. All are dated to AD 300-700.

Four of these heads show a parasol like coiffure adorned with a crest jewel or a double roll of hair in the central parting. The most prominent head of this style also shows a top-knot with a suspension hole at the back frizzled locks falling on both sides in receding tiers. The middle of the head dress is adorned with a jewel (*mani*). The figurines with this hair coiffure, sometimes shows ear-ornaments also. All are well baked and dated to the same period.

Five heads of male figurines have *barhabhara* hair style showing curls spread like peacocks weathers. It is described as trefoil coiffure, with the hair combed plain on sides of a raised line of hair in the

middle and descending in superimposed long tresses with coiled ends resembling peacocks feathers. Top-knot with a hole at the back can be seen. A few of these show ear-ornaments and traces of white paint too.

Another five heads show a trefoil style of hair arranged in two side-masses and a top-knot. One of these also shows combed hair on either side of the central parting rolled as to increase the number of side masses to four. All are well baked to red colour with seldom traces of white. Two are dated to the same period while three are undated.

The trefoil hair-style is also shown with honey-comb design, where the side masses of hair having stippling to suggest the cellular structure of the above said pattern. This pattern is shown in three heads. Two are of the same period while one is unstratified.

Style of hair with curls on one side is represented by a single head only where the hair are falling up to the left shoulder. The hair is shown plain on the right. Rectangular plaques in ears and a necklace in the neck can be seen. It is properly baked to red colour.

Five heads show plain *usnisa* or cap like coiffure. There are more heads with matted locks tied up in a top-knot or piled up in receding tiers etc. A few heads with their bust show cap or top-knot like hair dress and ear-ornaments.

Five heads show a hair style of *Ardhanarisvra*, i.e., the left side has spiral curls and the right half, plain plaited hair. This style of hair is described as *Ardhanarisvara* or *Paravati-Parmesvara* type by V.S. Agrawala (JISOA, Vol. XI, 1941, p. 9; 1996, pl. IX, p. 61).

Other remarkable head shows a conspicuous mass of hair in the *dhammilla* fashion at the left side. A remarkable feature in the ophidian ribbon tied round the forehead with a serpent-hood in the centre. This may go to suggest another trait of the *Saivite* iconography of the coiffure representing Siva in his *Ardhanarisvara* aspect.

Another head shows the hair dressed plain with a row of curls encircling the forehead and plaited band with a pendant jewel covering the middle parting. A floral (or serpent-head?) motif is adorning the dressed plain plaits on either side. A raised mass of hair like bun is on the right half while the left half, now broken, was probably plain. It is noteworthy that this specimen has the female style of hair on the right side while the above three has it on the left side of the head.

There are 16 heads of male figurines at Sarnath which are dated to BC 3rd century to AD 10th century and two are undated. Among these there are two heads of a smiling boy collected from Chaukhand Stupa and Sarnath area and dated to BC 2nd – 1st century and Gupta period respectively. These have red slip also. Similar heads of the same date were collected from Pataliputra and Rajghat too. Human head with long ears is also noteworthy.

Only one head is related to medieval period at Sarnath and shows a pointed projection on the crown and a broad band over the forehead. It seems to be a part of a toy. Another example of the same period is a crudely made head with grotesque figure, *chara* over the eyebrows, and eyes are shown by piercing. It has a large hair ornament like *Mang-tika* (Photo No. 5). One more figurine shows worn out crude head with hair above forehead, indicated by parallel lines and beaded dress above by circular grooves. Another remarkable figurine has mustache. There is a sign of crescent on his forehead. The hairs are back combed and the eyes are drawn by piercing. It can be a figurine of priest. Three undated examples are 2.54 cms, 7.62 cms and 3.18 cms in height and show (i) a conical head-dress with applied ears; (ii) head with protruding eyes and ear drawn with incised line; and (iii) and applied ears and head-dress respectively.

HUMAN FIGURINES (FEMALE)

There are seventeen figurines showing standing female with her left hand held *akimbo*, hair carved as trefoil *Valibhrta* style at Rajghat. Their drapery and few ornaments are sometimes visible. All are dated to AD 300-700. One more figurine of the same date shows its both hands suspended while two of the same style are unstratified.

Four figurines are carrying some object (a lotus or bunch of flowers?) in their raised right hand. One of these seeks special attention. This headless and feetless figurine is mould-made but some applied and incised details are treated with hand. Her suspended left hand is holding a corner of her scarf and in her raised right hand she is holding some object which is mutilated. The *dhoti* fastened round the girdle is executed with incised symmetrical lines, both on the front and back. The scarf is worn on the upper body and is hanging from the shoulders on either side up to the knees but leaving the bust bare. The ornaments are applied or incised around the neck, arms and wrists. Hair are also applied and incised.

Two standing female figurines are holding a ball in their right hand. Nine figures are considered as *ankadhatri* woman with a child in her arms. Sometimes she is holding his leg in her hand and the child is putting his hand on her breast. A *dhoti* or plain cloth and different ornaments can be seen in these figurines. Only one figure is regarded as *kridadhatri* woman, carrying a baby in her left arm and a toy in the right.

There are five women figurines in an amorous pose like touching her breast. These figurines also show differently carved coiffures and drapery. Four couples are also figured amorously, but details are not very clear, as very small pieces of these figurines are remaining.

Seven pieces of headless female figurine are there from Rajgat. Only a few of these show ornaments and drapery like anklet, bangle, armlets, wristlets and *dhoti* etc. Nine mould made figurines were collected from Rajghat which are very small in size. Two of these are standing females while the rest are male figurines. Hairs are carved in trefoil; the other figurine has a veil or scarf over her head. She is carrying a fruit-like object in her right hand and probably the falling scarf in the left.

The plaques and figurines showing a male figure are seven in number. One of these is richly ornamented and highly dressed. The double ear-disc rings, necklace, strings of pearls, wristlets, armlets are noteworthy. One of these is in *namaskar* mudra (greeting in Indian style). Among these two are of a dwarfish man (all are dated to AD 300-700).

There are eleven female figures of Gupta period at Sarnath. Among them, one shows middle portion of a standing female with left hand holding a casket. It shows beaded necklace, bangles and armlet. The well carved drapery is also noticeable. It is dated to Gupta period.

The bust of a female figure shows gathered hair in a top knot. Tapering ear-ornaments are also eye-catching. In the Gallery No. 4 of the museum is displayed this figure, showing locks of hair falling at the proper left. One female figurine is very noteworthy as it holds a Veena, so it may be a figure of Goddess Saraswati. All are dated to the same period.

There are few female figurines which show beautiful and graceful body attitude at Rajghat and Sarnath. Some of these have only its lower portion left, the right leg is slightly bent at the knee while the left is placed straight on the ground. The fringes of the drapery are treated as a separate mass and leaves, the thighs almost bare. A

bulbous tassel dangling from the girdle can be seen on her left thigh where as on her left hand richly adorned bangles are resting. She is wearing string of fine pearls round her anklets.

Another figurine in the same attitude is headless. She is wearing a string over her breasts and a necklace is dangling up to the navel, an elaborate girdle of four strings of circular plaques or prominent beads and thick anklets. She is wearing a translucent drapery. Her right hand is suspended near the hip and is adorned with a variety of wristbands and bangles. She was probably wearing similar ornaments in her right hand too, which are only partially preserved. It is presumed by Narain and Agrawala that left ear and a conical pendant in the right, thick torque, pearl necklace are dangling over the breasts and bangles. A scarf is having on her bust from the shoulders. Her headdress is like a trefoil having a central projection with two side masses of hair adorned by streaming bands of 'Srivatsa' symbols. The outer framing of the headdress is achieved by the rich foliage of the palm-tree. (Narain and Agrawala, *Ibid.*, p.100) Similar figurine was collected from Ahichchhatra too (Agrawala, A.I. No. 4. p.115, pl. XXXIII. 27): The hairs are arranged in a well recessed pattern on the fore head. Her left hand is placed on the waist while the right is raised near the era-pendant.

Another plaque shows a female standing in frontal posture with a bicornate headdress of two masses of hair-like cloth rolls. She is wearing large ear-plaques, the right one is shown in a side view. She is wearing a skirt like garment over her lower drapery while hands are placed on the sides of the hip. There is a parrot perched on her left thigh. This figurine is dated to BC 2nd century – AD 1st century. Two more figurines of a later date AD (1st – 3rd) also shows a parrot like this, but it is clearer in execution.

A beautifully executed plaque shows a woman who is holding a lotus flower in her hand which was raised near her shoulder. On her sides and below the feet many rosettes fill the whole area. It is dated to BC 3rd – 2nd century. There are two more plaques which show the same figure with a difference that one of these has its right leg bent instead of the left and is dated to 2nd BC – AD 1st century. One more figure of the same type and date is also there.

A very fine figurine shows a women seated on a *murha* (dwarf legged stool) with her legs suspended. In her front a large vase, preserved only fragmentarily is kept between her legs. The portion above the girdle is missing and as the artifact was found in many pieces and was rejoined so it lacks details of it here and there. The

figure is wearing a *dhoti* slightly below her knees, the folds of the drapery are systematically shown round the hips, thighs and abdomen. A girdle of three strings of beads is finely executed in relief at the back and anklets in the feet. While describing the beauty of this stylistic figurine Narain and Agrawala have written, 'The body of the female is very realistically modelled and displays remarkable plastic accomplishment. The ornate side of the *murha* of wicker work appearing to view under the figure is similarly executed with exquisite fineness, modelled and incised details of its framework showing decorative balusters cane-rims and thick cover-moulding (presumably of cloth or skin) beautified by double bands of rosettes.' (Narain and Agrawala, *Op.cit.*, p. 102) The figurine was made in two parts and then finely joined together. The joining is visible at the backside running through the middle of a false pillar of the ornate *murha* and skillfully obscured by the main applied loop of the lady's lower garment tucked in the girdle. It is hollow from inside.

Similar to this figurine, two figurines were reported from Ahichchatra and Jhing-Ka-Nagra village of Mathura respectively. The first figure was identified as *Vasudhara* by V.S. Agrawala as she has kept her hands on the lid of the vessel but Narain and Agrawala consider it as a musical instrument (*ghata-vadya*). The Mathura statuette, now in the museum, is that of a *Yaksi* as is inscribed on it.

A fragmentary plaque shows a female figure standing to the left of the pedestal. She is wearing a necklace of pearls, bangles and a *sutra* hanging from her left breast over the body as reaching between the legs. Her left hand is suspended while the right placed near the waist, is held in the attitude of *tarjana*. A diminutive girl, perhaps a hermaphrodite, is partially shown standing behind her as carrying some vessel (?) in her right hand. The plaque has a double-line frame perhaps indicating a scene inside a room. Another figurine of the same type is also recorded from this site and both are dated to AD 1st century and are red in colour.

There are many fragments of standing female figurines showing lower portion of the body, torso or its head or feet missing, portion from thigh to foot or knee to foot etc. and they exhibit beautiful execution of drapery and ornaments. Nine figurines of such type are dated to AD (1st-3rd) century.

Rajghat has yielded many figurines of female made out of a finely kneaded clay and were properly baked too. One of these figurines is headless and is standing in a strict frontal posture. Both hands are

held close to hips in the attitude of grasping the hem of drapery. She is wearing a *dhoti* which is secured by a beaded girdle. The ornaments like a double torque, an ornate necklace dangling over the bust and reaching up to the girdle are shown by engravings. She is also wearing four bangles in each of her hands, but the legs are bare. At the back of the plaque is an elaborate feature of the lost coiffure executed in applique showing the flat tress of hair marked with ring-punches. It is slipped with red colour and is dated to BC 600-300 century.

Another figurines of the same date or a little later shows delicately executed head of a female with open eyes, long face and high forehead. She is wearing a close-fitting cap like head-gear with small bulges on sides. The hair on the forehead is dressed in a manner so as to leave it uncovered in the middle in a triangular shape. She is wearing ear-ornaments too.

One figurine shows only lower portion of the body while the upper portion above the knees are broken. She is standing to the front, wearing a *dhoti* with very finely incised folds and large anklets in the feet. This is dated to BC 2nd to AD 1st century. A head of female figurine of the same period is wearing a bicornate headdress which is featured by two masses of hair dressed like cloth-rolls. Large discular plaques can be seen in the ear as ornaments. Both are red in colour.

A plaque of this period shows a female figure standing in strict frontal posture with rich ornaments like ear-plaques, a torque, a three-stringed beaded girdle, heavy anklets, armllets and bangles. She is wearing a spiralled high headdress too. The *dhoti* reaching almost up to the ankles has a feature of superimposed *pataka* like pleats in the centre. The left hand of the figurine is resting on her hip while she is touching her right ear-plug with her right hand (Narain and Agrawala, 1978, p. 99). The figurine was attributed to Kausambi by Moti Chandra (Moti Chandra, 1971, p. 8, fig. 21), but Narain and Agrawala do not agree with him.

Another plaque shows a standing female but the portion below the waist is broken. She is wearing rich ornaments and drapery. The ornaments include a discular ear plug in. A fragmentary plaque of such type shows a head and bust of a female looking to her right, left forearm and portion below the waist is missing. She is wearing a *dhoti* tied round the girdle, a beaded ear-ring, a necklace and profusely incised armllets. Her face is modelled and body is well proportioned. The hair is dressed in a *veni* resting in a coiled fashion at the nape of the neck which reminds the analogy of a coiled serpent

given by classical poets for a lady's particular headdress (Narain and Agrawala, *Op.cit.*, p.109). This grey coloured figurine is glazed with black colour and is dated to AD 300-700 century.

FEMALE HEADS

There are many heads of female figurines which show differently carved hair. Five among these at Rajghat show simple *Valibhrta* hair style with or without central parting. In this style, the hair is twisted in shoot spiral curls, arranged in a circular form in well-defined four bands; the curls in the middle are backed by a crest, somewhat raised. A suspension hole below the crest can be seen on the left side.

The trefoil hair style with a crest-jewel or a plaited plain band in the central parting is represented by seven female heads. One of these should be described as wearing a prominent headdress, which appears as a triangular plain mass with a crest projected at the back like a modern Sikh turban. The lateral masses are of rounded shape and show no attempt to indicate any dressing of hair exposed to view. A sash or ribbon is fastened round the forehead and small pendant hair locks or something like that can be seen on either side above the temples.

The *Bhramaraka* hair-style is recorded from eight female heads. This style shows wing-shaped plaited hair flanking the crest-jewel and a top-knot without a hole. The side hair-masses are extended below as assuming roundish shape near the temples.

The *Barhabara* and honey-comb hair styles are represented by two and three heads respectively. The first shows nicely incised tresses of hair radiating from a crest-jewel in the middle, backed by a crest and descending on sides in a sweep with curly ends. Due to its similarity with peacock's feathers it is named as *Barhabhara-kesa*.

The honey-combed hair style shows neatly carved parting (*simanta*) and then roundish side masses of fine curls indicated by stippling to suggest the cellular structure of the honey-comb pattern. Three figurines show a female head covered with a veil (*odhini*) while two of these are carrying a water pot on their veiled head. All the above figurines are dated to AD 300-700. Four heads show differently carved hair. Three of these are dated to AD 700-1200 and one is unstratified.

HAND MADE FIGURINES

There are twenty-three figurines made by hand and are attributed to the periods IV, V and VI of Rajghat and few are unstratified. Among these only one figurine of a female shows her hands on her breast. She is wearing an applique torque and wristlets. It is broken off below the thighs. Rest of the figurines depicts a male either in standing or sitting posture. Two figurines show a dwarfish male. Both are damaged below the thighs. One of these has a prominent pointed nose with nostrils indicated while the other one has its nose broken off, so it looks like an animal pinched up nose-ridge, with nostrils is indicated. The first one has incised eyes with high eye-brows, a cut-mouth, a double chin and large ears with incision suggesting cloven lobes. The other one has its eyes indicated by pellets fixed and holed. A broad chin, the mouth and ears are similar to the first one. The first one is wearing a turban with high conical protuberance, a collar decorated with notches on it and a lower garment with incised parallel folds tied by a girdle. The second one is wearing a high conical skull-cap, a collar-ornament within incised lines and a *dhoti* with incised vertical folds. A sacred thread is also incised. The breast and naval are indicated with a hole while the first one has applied dots to indicate the breasts and a perforation for navel. It seems to carry a lute in his left hand, of which the incised strings appear on either side of its curved staff in a frontal view. The right hand possibly carried a shell plectrum. In the second figure, the right arm is flexed at the elbow and hand placed on the chest, undigitated left arm is suspended on the side and holds a bowl which is indicated by a conspicuous hole with rim. Both figurines are wearing wristlets and also show two pairs of holes on the inside of ears presumably carried affixed decoration. Both are dated to AD 700-1200.

The hand-modelled figurines also include a headless figure of a boy with arms and feet missing. He is wearing an incised loin-cloth (*janghika*) and a necklace with an amulet of tiger's talon (*baghnakha*). Another figurine of a boy is crudely made and it shows the boy in sitting posture. His arms are folded with his hands on his chest. A fine perforation can be seen on the chest and to indicate the naval. The nipples are shown with applied dots of clay with hole in the centre.

There are two seated figurines of male in European style with right leg suspended and the left crossed at the knee. With the

remaining part of the hand, it could be said that the left hand was resting on the left thigh and right on the chest. There is no trace of drapery on either of these figures. One shows its breasts as indicated by two fine pin-head holes and the other an applied necklace marked by punched circlets. These are dated to AD 300-700 and AD 700-1200 respectively.

Rest of the figurines has only its large-sized heads remaining. These heads show a high, semi-circular head-dress marked with frill-like hair, but mostly this is broken. The fan-shaped big ears are noteworthy where a cup-like, pendant or looped pendant marked with decorative perforation are worn; sometimes a hole is made in the middle of the ear to affix an additional decoration. The forehead is decorated with pin-holes, hair in a trapezoidal manner or row incised vertical lines and a hair-lock dangling on either side of the temples. These are indication of a few ornaments too. Most of the heads have tenon or its remains which indicates that it was fixed to a body-hand modelled or moulded.

Female figurines are 24 in number at Sarnath and they show women in different postures. The mother and child figurines are especially noteworthy, which may be the extension of 'mother-goddess' figurines of earlier period. A few of these figurines show beautiful drapery and ornaments. The great skill of craftsmen is evident in the small figurines which are carefully decorated with beaded ornaments like necklace, garland, bracelet, armlets, bangles etc. One of the moulded figurines shows beautiful execution of drapery which is very realistic. This headless, handless and feetless figurine shows ornamented folds of drapery on its legs and waist over to left shoulder. It is a hollow figure made with a single mould and is modelled by hand on the back. Iron nails marks of inconspicuous use are visible on the back portion. It is dated to AD 1st century.

To conclude, though these figurines are very meagre in number and mostly broken, these are able to throw light on the great skill and care shown by the craftsmen. The different stages of manufacturing techniques are also noteworthy. These are made by single or double mould and the use of coarse or fine clay is also visible. Most of these statuettes seem to be used as toys, but it is surprising to note that what could have been the use of these toys at the monastic site of Sarnath where only monks were residing. It is plausible that the Buddha figurines and plaques were being used for worship of the Great Lord, but what was the use of figurines of Hindu Gods and Goddess and that of male-female and animal

figurines at this staunch Buddhist site? In this regard, it could be presumed that being a great pilgrimage of Buddhist sect, Sarnath was definitely being visited by the Buddhists, but pilgrims of other sects were also visiting this place, may be, as a curious visitor only. Sarnath was basically a great centre of Buddhism, but Hinduism was flourishing at Rajghat at the same time which is proved by the many figurines of Hindu gods and goddesses. The figurines of Brahmanical gods and goddesses might have migrated from there itself and Sarnath could have been a profitable market for the artisans of terracotta. Another reason may be that the working class of the monastery being cooks, gardeners, watchmen, peons and others, must not have been monks only. They must have been the people with their family member and children too. These figurines were for their use as play things or as decorative pieces. It is also possible that few of them were followers of Hinduism too, who had brought these figurines of Hindu gods and goddesses to this place. Whatever may be the reason behind the occurrence of these figurines, it can be said that the 'Sarnathians' were living with religious harmony as we get figures of Buddha, Hindu gods and goddesses and probably of Jain Tirthankas at the same time and place.

The figurines may indicate towards trade relations between Rajghat and Sarnath and there must be a religious conjunction because Sarnath had a very significant and distinguished importance in the life of all Buddhists and Rajghat was village/city where these Buddhist monks of Sarnath were regularly wandering for the want of their daily alms. Either the same moulds were used at both of three places by taking the mould itself at respective sites or else the figurines cast from this mould were distributed through trade channels to other places. These figurines also show different varieties of beautifully carved drapery, ornaments and hair arrangements which could be studied separately. Thus being meagre in number, small in shape and size and poor man's art in a rather cheap material of a bondage for figure because these can be of great help in the study of socio-religious, socio-economic conditions and relations and chronology of this site.

In comparison to Sarnath, Rajghat was not a prolific site as regards to stone sculpture, especially before the medieval period. Sarnath has produced many beautiful and outstanding images of stone in this period but it seems that the clay-artisans were not paying much attention to their art at this place while the artisans of Rajghat were practicing several aspects of art in this medium. The difference between the terracotta human figurines at both of these sites is

noteworthy. Narain and Agrawala see this fact in these words, 'However, the paucity of material in this comparatively ambitious branch of plastic art is largely compensated here by the rich yield of clay pieces of excelling art quality although patronised on a humble folk level. In this respect we may observe that the meritorious place Sarnath occupies in the field of stone sculpture with respect to the contribution to country's art by the cultured city of Varanasi is easily claimed by Rajghat for its terracotta effigies. In fact, Rajghat clay figurines represent an individualistic art style in terracotta that the city of Varanasi appears to have contributed particularly during Gupta times to the art of Northern India.' (*Ibid.*, p. 37). The terracotta figurines of Rajghat are comparable with those of Pataliputra (Kumrahara) (Altekar and Mishra, 1959), Deulpota and Harinarayanpur in district 24 Parganas of West Bengal (Mukhopadhaya in J.O.A.S., Vol. XIII), Bhita, Ahichchhatra (A.S.I.A.R. 1911-12 and Agrawala in A.I. No. 4), Mathura (Joshi and Margabandhu, J.I.S.O.A. New Series, Vol. VIII, 1976-77, pl. XII, fig. 48) and nearby sites such as Mason, Bhitari and others. With all possible comparisons it is observed by the scholars that the so-called Mother-Goddess types can hardly be regarded as bearing a definite religious connotation. Agrawala writes, 'In any case, this much is certain that these statuettes fall under a class of their own quite distinct from other female representations of an undoubted religions or common character.' (Narain and Agrawala, *Op. cit.*, p. 39)

It is also noteworthy that Sarnath has not produced any hand-modelled figurine but Rajghat has produced both-hand modelled and moulded figurines, though both of the sites clearly show the progress in the art and its declining position. Rajghat has shown beautiful use of double mould in BC 2nd-1st century by producing the exquisite figurines of a female seated on a *murha*. The deterioration in the practice of art in the Kusana period is evident at both sites, but a perfect use of mould and hand modelling in a single figure are noteworthy at Rajghat which was probably not used at Sarnath. The Gupta and post-Gupta period has produced beautiful plaques and figurines with depiction of the Buddha in different posture and his life-scones at Sarnath while the beautiful depiction of differently carved coiffures is noteworthy at Rajghat. Use of single mould is prevalent in this period at both sites which produced flat figurines from their back sides. 'The clay employed is finely keeled, containing no admixture of husk or *bajri*. As a rule the figurines

were well baked though there are several examples of ill baking.' This statement for Rajghat is true in the context of Sarnath too but the use of white or red paint is also prevalent at Rajghat which show only a very few examples at Sarnath.

The continuous history of terracotta art in Varanasi was confirmed by the excavations. The period IA has obtained a solitary fragment of clay-figurine representing the hand-modelled archaic Mother-Goddess. The IB period produced more animal figurines than those of human. Period IC again produces Mother-Goddess effigy with an uncanny animal like face which is hand made. Period II has scarcity of terracotta figurines but they still show beautifully draped and ornamented female figurines of goddesses and others. Period III shows a considerable progress in this art. The figurines are now being modelled too. There are specially noteworthy figurines of *Naigmesa* and of goddess Durga killing the buffalo demon in Period IV (c. 300-700 AD) but the next period (V = AD 700-1200) shows the declining condition of this art as a few large sized female goddesses were again figured with hands instead of being moulded. The six and last period of this site still shows the poor workmanship.

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