

and dancing, and completes his meditation and worship with single-minded concentration.¹⁴ Song is performed according to the Brahmanical musical rules in the *Gāndharvaśāstra* in which stories relating to Śiva are sung in public (PS and GK). Dance is performed according to *Natyaśāstra* comprising all possible motions of the hands and feet, accompanied by a song.¹⁵ The *Natyaśāstra* also instructs aspirants on how to address the religious orders in dramas.¹⁶

In the *Niśvāsamūkha*, the introductory book of *Niśvāsātattvasamhitā*, where sages ask how *liṅga* worship is to be performed and what is the fruit of worshipping with singing and dancing, Śiva *Nandiśa* reveals how they will obtain the infinite pleasures of the *Ganas*, supporters of Śiva who reside with him on mount Kailāsa.¹⁷ The *liṅga* worship so important for the Pāśupatas appears to be attested on the Mý Són pedestal, where an ascetic performs *liṅgapūjā*. (Fig. 4) The iconographic representation of *liṅga* worship with dance and music by Śaiva ascetics [possibly Pāśupatas] is often found in Indian stelas.¹⁸ (Fig. 5)

Based on his study of the Indian inscriptions, David Lorenzen has noted emblems and instruments of the *Kāpālika* ascetics who later emerged within the Pāśupata sect. These are: *khaṭvāṅga* or skull-sticks, drums, trumpets or other musical instruments, *karnikā* or earrings, necklaces, ashes, and sacred threads.¹⁹ Nirajan Kafle's translation of *Niśvāsamukha* (4.2) also mentions these markers for the unorthodox *Atimārga* system of the Pāśupatas.

Indic mediaeval Sanskrit dramas such as *Mattavilāsaprahasana* (c. 600-630 CE)²⁰, *Mālatī Mādhava* (c. 725),²¹ *Kuṭṭanīmata* (9th century),²² *Caṇḍakauśika* (c. 900-950)²³ *Prabodhacandraloka* (c. 1050-100)²⁴ all frequently mention Pāśupatas and their successors the *Kāpālikas*/ *Kālamukhas* and their practices. *Mattavilāsa* portrays a Pāśupata by the name of Babhrukalpa,²⁵ Satyasomā, a *Kāpālika* (as Mahāpāśupati) and his partner a dancing *Kāpālinī* called Devasomā. It describes how the hedonist was engaged in wild dances, parties involving the consumption



of meat, alcohol, and enjoying sexual intercourse with his partner.²⁶ It also describes a Pāśupata (v. 20):

His robe is tattered and second-hand,
His hair a wild and tangled mess,
Around his neck a withered garland,
His body covered with dust and ash,²⁷

Kuṭṭanīmata tells us the fondness of Bhāvaśuddha, a Pāśupata *ācārya* from Vāraṇasī for dancing girls and building a magnificent mansion for the dancer Anaṅgadevī. People tauntingly called her *ācāryani* ('wife of the *ācārya*') due to her relations with *ācārya* Bhāvaśuddha.²⁸ Given the nature of the worship of the Pāśupatas, these *ācāryas* needed women for the rituals that gave importance to dance and music.

The literary accounts create a Pāśupata landscape that includes dance, music, dancers, and musicians along with the practitioners. Indian epigraphy attests the involvement of Pāśupatas in dance and music rituals in temple worship across India.²⁹ Several other *Kālamukha* priests are described as experts in drama and music.³⁰

Spread of Pāśupata cult

In spite of the Indian law books prohibiting Brahmins from overseas travel, which was considered to be ritually polluting,³¹ several Indian inscriptions testify to the fact that the Pāśupata ascetics emigrated from North India

Fig. 4 Mý Són E1 Pedestal relief of a possible Pāśupata ascetic performing *liṅgapūjā*? (River Books)



Fig. 5 *Liṅga* worship with dance and music, Chandella period, 11th-12th century Khajuraho, M.P. India. (w- 235cm X ht- 32cm) National Museum Delhi [Acc no. 82.226].