

LOST IN TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION?

The cases of Surpanakha and Wimana
in Java and Bali

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SURPANAKHA-SARPAKANAKA-SARPAKENAKA

- India:
- Sanskrit surpa/úrpa = winnowing basket
- nakha = nail, claw
- Java: Old Javanese, same
- Java: modern, sarpa = snake, kenaka = nail

- She is the sister of Rawana, king of Langka in the Ramayana. He kidnapped Sita, wife of Rama

- N.B. In this power point no diacritics will be used in the names

WINNOWING BASKETS

INDIA

surpa

JAVA, BALI



Differences in shape

- The nails of the raksasi (a kind of demoness) looked according to Indian sources like winnowing baskets.
- In Java they looked more like fishtraps or snakes

FISH TRAPS JAVA, BALI

susug



Surpanakha

- She could assume the outward appearance of a handsome woman
- She tried to seduce Rama and Laksmana, but they did not want her
- The story is told in the translation into Old Javanese (10th/11th cy) of a Sanskrit text by Bhatti (8th cy)



SIWA TEMPLE PRAMBANAN, C. JAVA

Surpanakha, handsome, relief XIIb

Rama and Surpanakha, relief XII,a



Lakshmana rejects Surpanakha, relief XIIe



WAYANG JAVA-SARPAKANAKA

Kedu Cirebon old



Sarpakanaka with short trousers

Surabaya

Ungaran



Sarpakenaka, Cirebon Kasepuhan as snake with long trousers



Surpanaka/Supernakal, very naughty

N. Bali



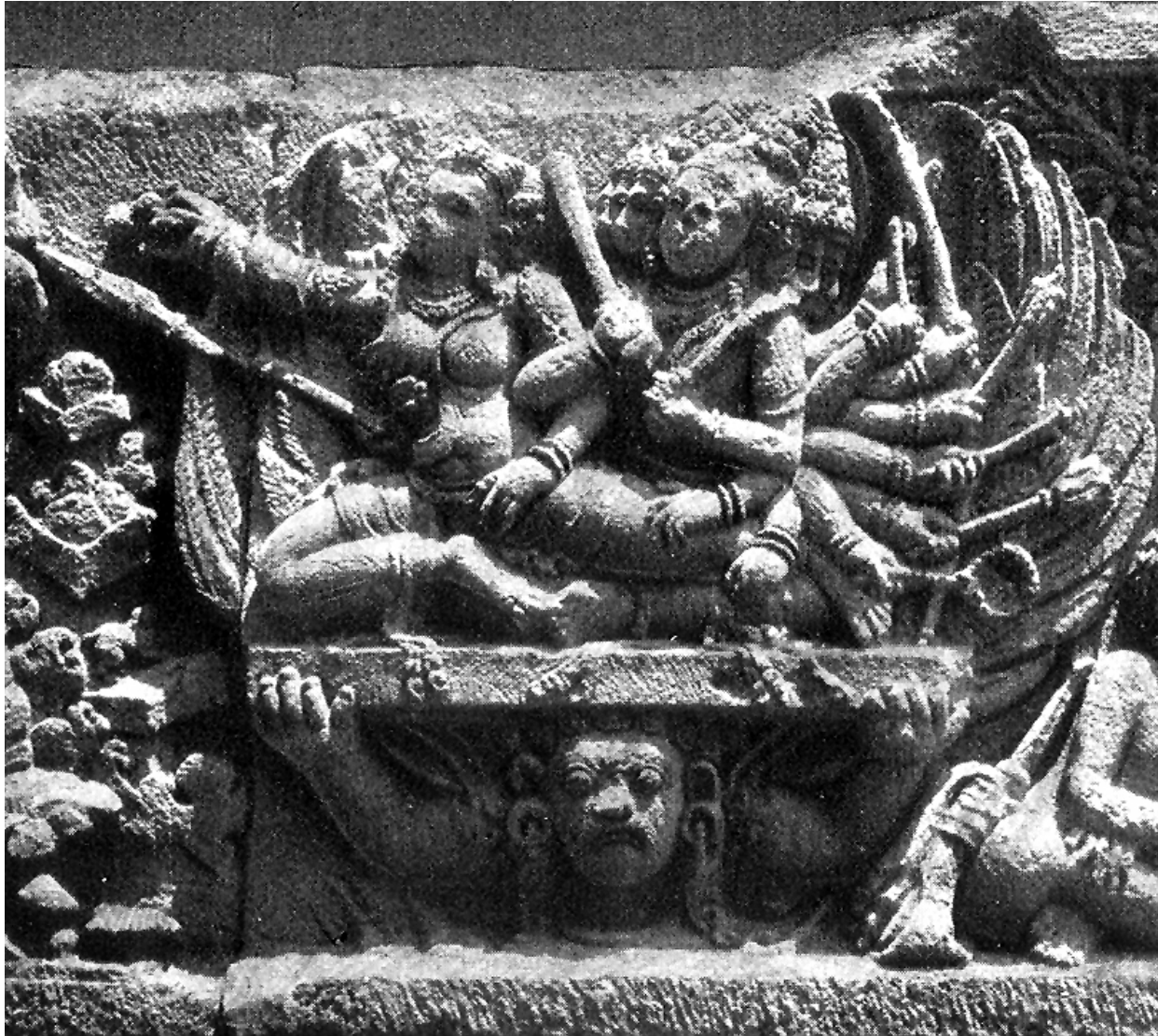
S. Bali



WIMANA-WILMANA-WILMUKA

- Wimàna: Sanskrit, Old Javanese: vehicle of gods and supernatural beings, usually winged because it can fly through the air
- Wwil, wil, Javanese: giant, demon
- Mukha: Sanskrit, Old Javanese: face
- Muka: Javanese: face

SIWA TEMPLE, PRAMBANAN RAWANA, SITA, WIMANA



EAST JAVA, SCULPTURE RAWANA WITH SITA ON WILMANA



WILMANA IN WAYANG JAVA

Ungaran, C.Java

Kasepuhan, Cirebon



Wilmana from Bali

Sukawati (new) Ubud (old), S.Bali



WOODSTATUES

Rawana on Wilmana, Lombok



Rawana on Wilmana, N.Bali





Rawana on
Wilmana, S.Bali

Rama, Sita, Laksmana, monkeys in
wimana on the way back to
Ayodhya, India

