

*UMĀ-MAHEŚVARA - AN ICONOGRAPHIC STUDY OF THE DIVINE COUPLE.* A.L. Srivastava, Sukarkshetra Shodh sansthana, Kasganj, 2004, pp. xv + 240, Photographs 62, Index, Glossary, Select Bibliography, Line drawings 64, Hard bound, Price Rs. 2500, US\$ 55, ● 30.

Dr. A.L. Srivastava is already well known for his excellent monographs on early symbols and motifs. The new book *Umā-Maheśvara - An Iconographic Study of the Divine Couple* has added another feather to his cap of academic pursuits. This is an important research work highlighting various aspects a popular form of Śaiva iconography i.e. the combined depiction of Śiva and his consort Pārvatī. Tracing the background of the origin and development of worship of Śiva from the Vedic texts and other early scriptures the author deals with Śaiva family, antiquity of Umā-Maheśvara form in India and also in the adjoining countries. The comparison with other divine couples makes the study further interesting. Beside sixty-two photographs Dr. Srivastava has also used sixty-four line drawings to make his point and iconographic details clear and these line sketches have been drawn by the writer himself. The monograph also explains the attributes, mounts and postures with the support of *śilpa* texts. The Foreword of Dr. N.P. Joshi, renowned iconographer to whom the work has been dedicated augments its dignity. This is certainly a welcome addition in the Indological field and particularly on the Brahmanical iconography.

Although the book has been published by a recently established institute yet the production is praiseworthy and for this success our esteemed friend Dr. N.C. Bansal deserves compliments.

**Prof. R.C. Sharma**