

CHAPTER-VIDEVANGANA SCULPTURAL IMAGE STUDY PART-II - POST GUPTA AND
MEDIEVAL DEVANGANAS - THEIR INDIVIDUAL MOTIF ANALYSISFOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

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CHAPTER - VII

MEDIEVAL WESTERN INDIAN SCULPTURE -
MODELLING THE MEDIEVAL FORM AND STYLE

- 1.1 POSSIBLE SOURCES FOR THE FOUNDATION OF SCULPTURAL STYLE IN
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1.1 POSSIBLE SOURCES FOR THE FOUNDATION OF SCULPTURAL STYLE IN WESTERN INDIA DURING 8TH CENTURY A.D.

When confronted by the 8th century devanganas on the pillar capitals of Roda in Gujarat, one gradually begins to dissect and discern the sculptural data of fifth, sixth and seventh centuries to formulate their stylistic lineage. This issue has been raised by U.P. Shah who points out that art under the Kshatrapas during the first four centuries of the Christian era as parallel to the Kushana art of Mathura and sees its extent in Sindh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Nasik, Khandesh, Bombay and parts of Malwa¹

The sites of Dev ni Mori and Shamlaji in Gujarat and Dungarpur and Udaipur in Rajasthan, have yielded important examples which call for a stylistic assessment. A large number of sculptures of this area portray Matrⁱkas or the Mother Goddesses. A particular regional style that flourished in this area binds them into a homogenous tradition of robust naturalism. This robustness can be traced back to the Madhyadesa art of Barhut and Sanchi and the Saka - Kushana - Satavahana schools. Rightly pointed out by P. Pal "the females are clearly descendants of the portly yakshis of Mathura ^{and} on the amazoniaⁿ donatries^o at Karla and Kanheri of the early centuries of the Christian era, but they are no longer as monumental and earthly as their ancestors."²

While assessing the western Indian sculpture of the sixth century, the influence of Gupta classicism can neither be overlooked nor over emphasized. Shah and Pal in their above mentioned articles respectively mention that there is a link between Deogarh, Udaigiri, Mandasaur and Sondhani sculptures with Shamlaji, Kotyarka, Amzhara, Jagat, Mt. Abu and other such sites in Dungarpur - Udaipur areas. Shah goes further

in observing that in the treatment of the heavy and some what stunted and sturdy bodies, the Mandsa^ur and Deo^ugarh artists have followed the traditions not of the Saranath school but of Western India, which again inherited the traditions of the Madhyadesa art of Barhut and Sanchi and of the Saka - Kusana - Satavahana schools. The art of Mandsa^ur and Deo^ugarh, though of the Gupta age, broadly sixth century A.D. is not derived from the Saranath school and now with the evidence of Samalaji, Devni Mori, Amzhara etc., discovered in the last few years, we are led to believe that like Saranath, a separate school, covering a region roughly comprising of Deo^ugarh, Eran, Shamalaji, Amjhara (whole of old D^ungarpur state) parts of Abu region and north Gujarat. Kalyanpur and Mandsa^ur were already centres of sculpture during the fifth and sixth centuries A.D.³

Going by the numismatic evidences, Gupta rule in Gujarat was shortlived, it lasted for less than a century, and no Gupta coins after Skandagupta have been found in the area. From Devni Mori only Ksatrapa and later Vallabhi coins were found, while Gupta coins were totally absent.⁴

Concluding from here, the magnitude of the so called Gupta classicism exemplified by the ethereal Buddha images, would be misleading. Hence the realisation of a less sophisticated but earthy and voluptuous forms of female figures hailing from Udaigiri, Deo^ugarh, Sondhani and Mandasur in connection with the D^ungarpur-Udaipur Matrikas, (the characteristic style which the Roda Devanganas are going to inherit) represents a phenomenon of 'stimulus diffusion' rather than 'actual transmission', because they are far removed in time from each other. It is also the question of relevance of the Gupta Brahmanical sculpture

rather than Gupta Buddhist sculpture.

The concerted influence of Sunga - Satavahana style from Karla, Barhut and Sanchi represents the Konkan and Madhyadesa styles fusing at Western India in which the role of Mathura or Saranath has already been minimised. This allows us to view the salabhanjika figures placed on the Stupa gate-ways etc., as the predecessors of the devanganas of the temple mandovara. Even their formal conception, ornamentation, dignity and grace amidst a general earthy voluptuousness, shows clear affinity with Roda capital figures which were first noticed by U.P.Shah in a small article.⁵

For the stylistic analysis of the post Gupta sculpture in Western India we have chosen the salabhanjika/devangana motif. This motif is an important stylistic typology to link Dungarpur - Udaipur area on one hand with Gupta tradition, and the Konkan i.e. Karla, Kanheri, Elephanta, Shivdi style on the other. Since Western India is geographically situated at such a receptive juncture, that it absorbs a contiguousness with Konkan and Malwa at the same time. This larger parallelism has not been pointed out before. Though many have seen this link in the light of Shamlaji, Tanesara group of Matrikas, for sixth century sculptural activity by Sara Schastok, U.P.Shah, Khandalawala, S. Gorkshakar. On my part, I am trying to extend it to the eighth century sculptural development, which is analogous to that of architecture as well. It would be worth while to suggest the contemporaneity between Shivdi matrika, which has been identified as Skanda Mata, with Shamlaji matrikas, Kotyarka matrikas, for the similarity between their drapery tying pattern and folds, ornaments, hair style; the pulling of the child at the earing and his robust gana-like look wearing kakapaksha hair style on the

head, are very striking,⁶ The similarity is so unmistakable that Gorakshakar writes 'but for its find spot and difference in the stone, the image could be easily accepted as from Shamlaji'.¹ Gorakshakar accepts the affinity and contemporaneity between Shivdi and Shamlaji, and also the influence of Shivdi (the loop type waist band) in the drapery at Shamlaji, and their independent growth in western India, but does not specify the magnitude of high Gupta classicism and its inheritance absorbed by this school. Gorakshakar finds it difficult to lend credence to the theory that disbanded groups of sculptors from Ajanta moved in to provide labour for the new undertakings, which were coming up in the region of Bombay Islands. The Parel Ashtamurti and Gharapuri Maheshmurti are products of the distinctive local guild and outstanding examples of contemporary sculptural art in this area.⁷

Exploring and assessing the stimulus that Ajanta sent to the surrounding area in terms of style and iconography, I accidentally observed the Vita - Nayika - Nayaka group on the doorways of caves 4,5 and 20 at Ajanta, which represents a portly, dwarfish comical figure carrying a wavy, crooked walking stick, Kutilaka, and dallying with the Nayika or attending upon the couple. It is not easy to assess whether Ajanta sent this stimulus to Mandsaur Khilchipura pillars, Kekind and Roda, where this image type is emerging, but the commonality in representation cannot be overlooked. The element of sringara and hasya overlap here, along with it the entry of theatrical themes into artistic illustration. This also throws light on the contemporary secular life which became the source of subject matter for the contemporary dramas. The course of transmission of this iconography from Ajanta to Roda is a matter of three hundred years but its immediate dissemination to Mandsaur region and then to Kekind is not an insignificant matter.

While exploring the secular subject matter even Deccan influence from Amaravati and Nagarjuna Konda should also be explored, since they assign a significant role to the bracket salabhanjika and couples or mithunas which punctuate the narrative scenes from the life of Buddha. The characteristic dandapaksha or nupurpadika posture is seen at Nagarjun konda which carries forward at Ajanta and also to Roda. Number of other imageries are also found at Deccan.

Now the step by step development of sculptural style, especially of the female form, which is broad at the pelvic region and wearing a transparent drapery with one edge of its inner layer hanging from the side, are characteristic. Roda Devanganas also have the same drapery and so also the ornament hanging on the thigh which the Kotyarka matrikas also adorn themselves with. The links can also be drawn in the dhammilla type of hairstyle in which a huge bun is tied over the head encircled with some beaded ornament. Infact this style continues from Deogarh and carries on right upto Abaneri in western Rajasthan upto eighth and ninth centuries. The dupatta so characteristically flying over the head of the gandharvi at Sondhani, and hanging from the right arm of the chamardharini from Akota of mid 8th century A.D. is seen at Kotyarka, Amjhara and finally at Roda too. One can recall the repetition of the Padmapani like flower—holding female figures from Mandsaur, Amjhara and Roda. Despite the ornamentation which is rapidly increasing, the female form has a serene grace and dignified countenance which looks poised, demure, and a bit distant or withdrawn. The treatment of the form which slowly begins to give way to a swaying S curve, leading to a tribhanga, is dense and smooth, allowing organic unity and rounded volumes to pulsate with life. The later phase sculpture

gives way to ossified form, a feature which will be discussed slightly later.

The period between sixth and eighth century witnessed the rule of the great Harshavardhana of Kannauj in Northern India. In the west the Gurjara - Pratiharas under Harichandra and his sons, consolidated their political power and fostered cultural activities, which suffered a temporary setback during the Hun inroads. The seventh century was also the age in which Maitraka power was at its height. Siladitya I, Dharmaditya came to the throne towards the close of the sixth century (sometime after A.D. 580). He was a man of learning and piety and also a greatlover of art with the result that cultural activities received a great impetus so that they continued to flourish during the next century.

In Lata, the period was marked by the rule of the Gurjaras of *Bharuch* and Nandipuri which began sometime in the latter half of the 6th century A.D. The boundaries of the Maitrakas of Vallabhi in the north and Malwa in the north-east, can be very well imagined. If the founder of the Bharuch line was one of the sons of Harichandra^S of Bhinmal and Mandor, as appears likely, then relations with Marwar too would be certain, so that these parts formed a cultural unit.⁸

1.2 A BRIEF SURVEY OF REGIONAL STYLES.

After surveying the immediate post-Gupta sculpture style at various sites in Western India, we need to concentrate on the major ninth and tenth century stylistic groups, which bear the general features of the medieval form but internally or provincially bear the stamp of individuality.

Marumandala shows a continuous stylistic development with Osia in the eighth century, Auwa, Lamba, Harsha in the ninth century, and Kekind, Phalodi, Pali in the tenth century. In the Medapata region Jagat and Chittor have sculptural examples from eighth and ninth century, while the full culmination of their regional style comes in the tenth century. Chittor has an unsevered stylistic development which in itself can be studied to illustrate the beginning of the medieval idiom and the degeneration of it in 13th and 14th century sculpture.

Medapata curiously has more contiguity in style with Gurjara than Maru, and therefore Tusa, Ahar, Eklingji, Nagda are sites where the influence of Maru is much less. In itself, Medapata under Guhila dominion, and even before, shows a rich efflorescence of sculptural development in conjunction with architecture.

The Upamala region has its own variation of Maha Maru style seen at Menal, Amvan, Badoli and Atru, which have sophistication and superior carving.

The north Gujarat comes into action more spiritedly with the rise of the Solankis of Anhilpur Patan, while the style of architecture and sculpture that developed in this period (not necessarily under the aegis of the Solankis) saw the major confluence of two strong stylistic trends, the Maru and the Gurjara. This confluence does not have its political parallel with the glory of the Solankis, although the later rulers like Siddharaja and Kumarapala, were not only great patrons of sculpture but also were wielding power over a wide area infiltrating into Malawa as well as Gopagiri. The major sites of Maru-Gurjara⁹ style of architecture and sculpture are Modhera, Patan, Siddhapur, Abu, Kumbharia, Vadnagar,

which are within the diameter of the capital itself. The outlying areas where this influence transmigrated are Kiradu, Chittor, Atru, Ghumli, Sejakpur, Than, Prabhas patan etc. In Kutch already there is a presence of Gurjara style of the earlier centuries at Kotai, Kerakot and Kanthkot, which gives a clear scope for the development of Maru-Gurjara in the adjoining area of Saurashtra.

Paramara style in Malawa and Vagada is particularly significant for its distinct identity observable at sites such as Mandasaur, Arthuna, Jhalrapatan, Indore, Udaypur and so on. The Kiradu, Chotan in the extreme Western part of Rajasthan, represents the Paramara idiom retained even though the style passes on to Maru-Gurjara phase.

The central Indian style is represented by the Dahala region temples of Nohta, Marai, Damoh, Gurgi, Sohagpur which designate Kalachuri-Cedi idiom. In the Jejakabhukti region the major sites are situated at Khajuraho. The sculptures of Chandella style evolve out of the Cedi style and so the tradition of sculpture is quite evolved in this region. In the entire sculptural contingent from Central India the most unique style is represented by the sculptures of Kadwaha, Terahi, Gyaspur, Padhavli, Sohania and Gwalior, the Gopagiri style of Kacchapaghatas. Their sculptural form has plasticity but a bloated-up look. The proportions are bulbous and contours are rounded. This make their style distinct and noticeable as well.

Before plunging into discerning the stylistic typologies and the development of a generic stylistic idiom of a sub-region or a dynastic region, it is imperative to note that the manner in which the iconography—imagery of the devangana has developed, style does not follow the same

path. Even for that matter architecture. In my view sculptural form has its own path, its own manner and its determinism is intrinsic or immanent. It develops irrespective of imagery, architecture gives it scope and direction but there too, it grows on its own without getting hampered. Thus sculpture grows into its being on medieval temple architecture by finding its place on mandovara, pillar, devakostha, vitana and such other places by which the entire temple gets draped and symbolically enriched.

1.3 DEFINING THE 'MEDIEVAL' FORM

The sculptures of western and central India should be studied in stylistic and geographic homogeneity and not in isolation. The common heritage of this vast area, must be considered a prime force behind the widespread use of simpler motifs and modes of expression. The kindred patterns are due to the presence of itinerant craftsmen, who travelled from site to site.¹⁰

The sculptural styles of medieval period between the eighth and twelfth centuries stem out of the combination of local idioms and Gupta heritage which can be identified in the Gurjara Pratihara style at Osia, Roda, Kekind, Telika Mandir (Gwalior) and finally at Kannauj. But regional styles also branch off from the common heritage received from Gupta and Gurjara - Pratihara which eventually lead to dozen stylistic types or variations from site to site and region to region. Even though the homogeneity can be felt in their general disposition but carefully observing their proportions, physiognomy, coiffure and ornamentation, posture and gesture, the individual trends can be discerned. Broadly classifying the styles of most prominent type (a) Harshagiri, (b) Badoli (c) Tusa, Jagat (d) Kiradu, Modhera (e) Khajuraho (f) Kadwaha,

(g) Pali (h) Lotesvara (i) Chittorgarh emerge significantly. The Maru Gurjara combination offers yet another range of sculptural styles represented by the images on Rani ki Vav, Sunak, Sander, Abu, Modhera-Nata mandapa, Badoli-Nata mandapa; Gwalior, Bahu temple and Ghumli, Navalakha temples.

Stella Kramrisch writes in 'Indian sculpture', that the western schools have two major trends namely, Gujarati and Rajput. The qualities she ascribes to them are (a) Strained motion, over-stressed curves and a tendency to become angular (b) The curves of the limbs and body frequently deflect from the convex into the concave, and this the more the later the date of the relief, (c) The slender and rounded limbs are bent in sharp angles and seem to split the linear composition into many fragments. Their joints act at the same time as so many centres where nervous energy is bundled up and from where it radiates to its next station, (d) The treatment of accessories like jewellery have a tendency to become flat and sharply edged, or else by contrast the volume of such devices is even exaggerated and gives them an undue prominence, heavy, intricate and dissociated from the body and from the plastic context as a whole. (e) The material of the major part of the sculpture (white marble) lent itself to being worked to the utmost possibilities of nervy fragility. Over wrought gestures and positions express an almost unbearable inner tension more and more stressed, but also increasingly rigid as time goes on. (f) The central Indian trends or sculptural styles are mingled with the tendencies of east and west. The Chandella sculpture does not have the nervous elegance of the western most branch or the earth bound futility of the Rajput type. An intensity, near to violence, clasps the modelling with sharply curved outlines. This is

flattened out or else it congeals under its tightness. The modelling is stagnant and renders the softness of the flesh to control it from flattening out.¹¹

Above enumeration of Stella Kramrisch's perceptive formulations on 'medieval' quality of life of sculptural form, indicates various stages of development, which are almost nearing stagnation. Our aim is to discern the qualities of sculptural styles, which are in transition and are about to get heavy, drowsy, flat and angular. This gradual movement towards degeneration will be concentrated in analogous geographical regions. Apparent similarity in figure conception of Udaipur-Dungarpur region of sixth-seventh century with Osia and Roda sculptures of eighth-ninth century, clearly signify that the short, heavy and fleshy type of figure, having broad pelvic region and full round breasts with a heavy hairdo, was followed as a model in this region. At Osia though, one comes across a different variation of the broad pelvic type, which is the short torso long-legged one. On the Harihara-I doorway such figures are placed in svastika pada. They are slender armed compared with the Roda Temple-6 devanganas. But their coiffure is very heavy and imposing.

The other type which is broad and full but more elongated than the previous one, with a not so broad pelvic region is found at Jagat, Tusa and Kekind. In fact the Tusa sculptures can be compared with Lakshmana temple sculptures of Khajuraho, while Kekind figures are really very slender. They are tall, well composed, dynamically charged and highly plastic. Their sophistication is unique. It hints at a guild which was masterly but rare. Jagat and Tusa sculptures can be called 'sculpture of environment' in Focillionion conception,¹² because they are not bound by rathika frames; they move about, bend and flex their

bodies over their axes. They articulate the body movements creating ever changing profiles. When studied singly or in totality of the other sculptures on the jangha, they appear to move in rhythmic undulations.

1.4 ANALYSIS OF SOME MAJOR STYLISTIC TRENDS

The fascination for the female form in medieval sculpture on the temple begins from the ninth century at sites like Osia, Harihara group I (Fig. 1-4) where the figures of the devanganas are as large as the sculptures of the deities. While on Gadarmal temple at Badoh Pathari (Fig. 6,7) the small devangana image is sunk inside a niche along with heavy foliage and geometric decorative motifs, making it inconspicuous. At other places like the temple doorway and the adjoining pillars of Osia Surya temple, one finds the representation of the nadidevi and salabhanjika, as the spirit of nature, surrounded by a rich foliage. Here the figure and the foliage merge with each other and are not bound by any boundaries. The vrksaka stands coyly, swaying her body to one side of the tribhanga, while the large leaf of the foliage vegetation, emerging all around her head, covers it like a chatra. The figural proportions of this image are tall, slender legs, short torso and broad pelvic region, topped by proportionate breasts. The face is round and fleshy, while the hairdo is prominent and centrally placed. The drapery covering the lower body is diaphanous and inner hem of the cloth is hanging from the left side of the waist. The chained waist ornament, like mekhala with two chains hanging upto the knee, is typical of Osia and an identifying feature of Rajasthan school.¹³

It is noticeable that the eighth and ninth century sculptures at Osia have a monumentality of conception, which will soon vanish in the

tenth century and later. But Osia is the first site where sculptures occupy the mandovara, and begin to pulsate the space of the ratha, pratiratha, karna walls with their presence. They begin to absorb light, and create shadows as the sun's rays change their direction, imparting ever-changing fabric design to the architectural edifice. One has only to wait for the tenth-eleventh century development of the mandovara, to fathom the skill of the expert sculptors and architectural planners.

The Ghateshvar Mahadev Temple at Badoli serves as an intermediary step, between the sculptural interpretations of Osia and the later, more flamboyant styles of Harshagiri and Jagat. Post Gupta overtones still persist but are not so strong, even though the overall handling of the imagery is reminiscent of Osia.

The imagery of the devangana is not represented on the mandovara, which is bare save for the central bhadra niche, but the pillars have some of the finest examples of 'space as an environment' represented in the gestures and postures of the devanganas. According to Focillon¹⁴ the 'space as an environment' is indicated when there is scattering of volumes, interplay of voids, sudden and unexpected perforations, modelling of multiple, tumbling of planes which absorb light and shade. Thus on the pillars the 'space as an environment' experiment begins at Badoli which will in tenth century capture the whole mandovara and run riot with the sculptural form. (Fig 235)

The figures represent vibrant youthfulness. The forms of the gently curving bodies flow into each other, and there are no sharp angles to break the movement.¹⁵ The proportions are more streamlined, but the solidity of the mass is prominently discernible. The smooth finish of

the surface create the finest tactile urge, evoking the feel of real flesh.

The three dimensional projection of the devangana figures from the shaft of the pillar, emerge out of the main stone mass and turn around the axis, in sudden and surprising manner. This kind of flexion and axial movement in the body is for the first time found at Badoli which is probably the first ever attempt made by any sculptor at animating the human form.

The crispness of the figural contour, precision in rendering the details of the face, ornaments and hairdo, and the general treatment of the solid human flesh, seen at Badoli are also observable at Atru. The Atru master sculptors, have chosen a very tall image as the model for the devangana figures. (Fig. 226) The only difference in Badoli and Atru sculptural proportions is the slender, ethereal almost vapourous 'content' of the stone mass of the Atru figures, which is distinct from Badoli. More example of Badoli idiom are likely and have to be located, but by itself this style leaves a strong imprint.

The Harshagiri sculptures after renovation, have now been installed on the inner side of the sanctum. The devangana figures at Harshgiri are the epitomes of beauty (Fig. 219). They are devanganas, vrksakas, sangita-vadinis and devotees, who stand in venerating postures. A new facial type was introduced here which was accepted at Gyaspur and Khajuraho. The flexions and sudden projections of the body movements as found on Badoli, are not to be seen here. They are mostly standing in a relaxed contraposto, striking trysra, dvibhanga, tribhanga and such other postures. They remain strongly alligned to the wall surface, but breathe a gentle air of relaxed mood. The langour of the 'medieval'

stylistic idiom, has arrived at Harshgiri as the devangana sculptures exhibit a degree of *loosened* mass. It is often noticed that even though the contours are sharp and details are minutely worked out, the form is still contained and collected, which restrains the undulations, suggests modelling by a more accent, slight movement which does not break the continuity of planes. Thus at Harshgiri, there is a lingering of classicism which is relaxing the restraint of the classical form.

In the context of Harshgiri, Atru and Khajuraho, one observes a 'mannered' style emerging.¹⁶ With the suppleness of the medieval sculptural form, the attenuation and elegant poise of the tenth century sculptures, represent the height of medieval idiom. (Comparable to 'maniera' of Mannerism in European Art)¹⁷ which is a phenomenon of post classical stylization.

Lanius observes Harshgiri and Jagat sculptures as direct descendants of the Badoli style, and not an isolated phenomenon on the basis of some similarity of the ornaments and rendering of details like beads etc. But I beg to differ here since Lanius has got carried away by the minor details and over-looked the general conception of form, proportions, volume, movement and inner *quality* of the organic. Extending the idea of the mannered style of medieval sculpture two features need to be highlighted :

- (1) the axes, profiles, proportions and volumes, sculpture conceived as figura serpentinata.
- (2) space as an environment, activation of movement within the form, and the total vibration of the architectural surface.¹⁸

The Ambika temple at Jagat represent the high sophistication of early tenth century in Medapata region. Jagat is seen at the end of an era, which represents the last stage of individual stylistic innovations, for from this time on, the figure become more and more stereotyped.¹⁹ This may be partially true, because at Khajuraho and other sites of Central and Western India etc., the style is still going to keep our attention engaged, for its individual idioms represented by Totesvara, Pali, Gurgi, Kadwaha, Arjula and such other sites.

The Jagat sculptures, like the Badoli and Harshgiri, are not bound by rathika frames. (Fig. 134) They stand on a tiny pedestal, and above each of them are found couples, gandharvas, rishis etc. The figures are bulky and heavy, they are tall but not supple like the Harshgiri figures. But the flexions of their bodies, especially in kanduka krida and markatacesta, are more three dimensional and bend around the axes. The quality of carving is highly crisp, including the representation of ornaments, hairdo, drapery and body contours.

The sculptures of Tusa (Fig. 160) Surya temple, in my view, are more energetic, charged with movement, and contain a bulky yet dignified form. The terseness of the sculptural volume is more discernible in Tusa devangana sculptures than Jagat. Their postures, e.g., of the kandukakrida and alasa, are highly charged, the body *flexions and* movements are exaggerated, and extended much beyond the figure, thereby activate the mandovara space. For Jagat, Lanius has rightly observed, that they have begun to show a slight boredom and lethargy, as they preen and pose across the walls *like the bird's plumes.* The forms have become more architectural, and the vitality and spontaneity of the preceding centuries have begun to disappear, to be replaced by a certain regimentation, stiff angularity

and mannered portrayal.²⁰

This is especially true of the 'Maru-Gurjara' sculptural style, a homogenous style, which developed out of the amalgamation of Maru and Gurjara, probably by a family of sculptors and sthapatis, which was carried on for at least five hundred years in Western India. This merger has wide implications which not only indicate the high drama of stylistic coalescence in architecture and sculpture, but also give birth to a new style. The Maru-Gurjara sculptural style, can be studied at Rani ki Vav, Modhera, Kiradu, Chittorgarh, Sejakpur, Sunak and then in various stages of deterioration. The Maru-Gurjara mandapa and garbhagriha mandovara are very characteristically designed, with elaborately patterned rathikas, vyalas, diamond and foliage motifs, which punctuate the niche figures containing deities, dikpalas and devanganas. This overwhelming response of the architecture, at integrating sculpture within its fabric, binds the sculpture within its boundaries. But the sculptors design the forms in such a way that they do not feel limited, and quite often the figures bend, sway and turn with their limbs jutting out of the boundary spaces. This can be observed at Rani ki Vav, (Fig. 161) Chittorgarh, Kiradu (Fig. 37) and Sunak (Fig. 173). The Maru-Gurjara idiom as it is represented at Kiradu, can be placed in between Jagat and Modhera, which mark a century between mid tenth and mid eleventh.

The Kiradu style has its unique ponderosity of mass and a stylization, which overshadows the Parmara idiom. The same situation is observed at Modhera. The sculptural styles are many on one and the same site, despite the homogeneity of iconographic programming of the Sun temple. It is quite probable that one of the silpis may have come from Kiradu and the rest from adjoining Patan, Jagat and local geniuses.

The Rani ki Vav sculptures could be called the right specimens of medieval style, as represented by Maru-Gurjara. The proportions are slender, contours are smooth, physiognomy is sharp and angular, represented by two or three guild styles. But the innervation of the form as Stella Kramrisch would observe, makes the motion strained, and the plasticity gives way to a flacid form, heading towards oscification. The sculptures of late eleventh century onwards found on Sander, Ghumli, Sejakpur (Fig. 42), Abhapur (Fig. 43) Kumbharia, Chittorgarh, represent the degenerate stage setting into the medieval style. The sculptures of the devanganas, are articulated with exaggerated movements, flexing the body around multiple axes in the figura serpentinata mode, but this does not elevate the nature of the form. The plastic form of the figure and the ornament, are both rendered with the same precision and aloofness which recalls the arrival of oscification. Such a representation is peculiar not only to Maru-Gurjara, but even in central India this is observable.

While discussing the Central Indian sculptural style, one often takes Khajuraho as the major example, and neglects the other areas of the adjoining Dahala, Gopagiri, Kacchapaghata and Daksina Kosala, which are also equally significant, and show trends of individual innovations.

The sculptures of Gurgi (Fig. 181) Kadwaha (Fig. 199), Suhania, Padhavli, represent an understanding of form, which is not tense as suggested by Kramrisch for the Western Indian Gujarati style, but flacid and unanimated. The figures are bulbous, flesh deposited in such a way that arms and legs do not taper at the ends, while the waist is not capable of much exaggerated movements. Although Gurgi and Kadawaha do represent highly complex figural structure, which verges upon coming

to life due to their life likeness. In terms of organic unity, Gurgi sculptures are equally masterly, compared to the sculptures of Lakshmana or Kandariya Mahadev at Khajuraho.

Rightly observed by Parimoo²¹ in the light of the mannerist concept of figure serpentinata, Khajuraho sculptures have contortions and swirling body bends around the axes, and extension of the body movements in all the directions in space. The mandovara has been filled up by two or three horizontal bands of sculptures. The principle of 'figure serpentinata' can be observed in the light of figures placed along each of the vertical bands of ratha, pratiratha, salilantara, karna articulations. Comprehending the whole wall in totality and the individual sculpture in detail, they appear to vibrate and pulsate the surface of the temple wall with movement that generate from the brahmasutra or the axis of the individual figures. Thus 'figura serpentinata' at individual level, gives rise to the dynamism on the entire mandovara. The absorption of light and creation of deep shadows, with ever changing contours, is also the fundamental programme for the Khajuraho masters.

It is thus clearly evident that at Khajuraho, 'the tone has been set for the sculpture to dominate'. The stone yielded to the chiselling instruments and the hammering hands of the carver, much as it yielded to the yearning emotions of the lovers, especially the nayikas. The principle of 'sthira' and 'gati' in the male and female sculptures suggests the idea of conjugation of two opposite principles.²²

Depiction of the female torso from its back (Fig./77) in complex tribhanga and body bends, bearing mannerist elongation and attenuated proportions, have been observed by Parimoo as a preoccupation of the

Gurjara-Pratihara masters, and its continuation in various figures of the later styles in central India. The Pratihara ideal of feminine beauty epitomised by Kannauj matrikas, can be observed at Vadaval, Gwalior-Teli ka Mandir and Khajuraho.

The individual style and idiom of a region can be observed on the figural sculptures and proportions of Sohagpur, Pali, Kodai, Terahi, (AIIS 429.44) Kadwaha, Janjgir and some more centres in Central India. Qualitatively, they may not be of a superior standard, but in terms of various guild mannerisms, these temple sculptures lend a significant meaning to the whole phenomenon of style and its orthogenetic growth.

R.N.Misra in his study on Dahala sculptures has brought to light a number of references dealing with silpis, vijnanikas, rupakaras who assisted the sutradharas.²³ He distinguishes the specialisation of measurer of proportions, sculptors, carvers and designers. Names of generations of Kokasa family sthapatīs, have been brought to light by him. In the light of our data, such an information makes the problem of individual style alive and fatho^m able.