CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL-CULTURAL OVERVIEW

1.1 HISTORICAL BACKDROP
1.2 PRATIHARAS
1.3 PARAMARAS
1.4 SOLANKIS
1.5 CHAHAMANAS
1.6 GUHILAS

2.1 CULTURAL OVERVIEW
2.2 CONCEPT OF RITI
2.3 CONCEPT OF ALANKAR
1.1
A HISTORICAL BACKDROP

Disintegration of a systematic administration under a single dynastic rule in the post Gupta-Vakataka period was for some time put into order by Harsha of Kannauj (606-647 A.D.). After Harsha, the conditions in India from the time of the arrival of the Huns, to the period of Mahammad of Ghur, seems to be distraught with parochialism, rivalry and anti-nationalism. Many scholars of history subscribe to the view that the medieval period, which follows the post-Gupta i.e. eighth to twelth century and pre-Mughal times, was by and large degenerative and reflects the devaluation of values and systems. In the context of political history it can be seen that smaller geographical regions were broken up that formed principalities, and a number of ruling families came up which controlled, over-ran and annexed neighbouring territories. It is difficult to assess the political lack of nationalism among the contemporary dynasties but the sharing and influences of religion, literature, art and architecture, and so 'culture' in totality reveals strong ties of unity. It is imperative to suggest at this stage that rulers may come, ruler may go, development of culture continues unhampered. So how far political history can support cultural history, and how much truth can be deduced out of it is a question. This difficulty makes the entire exercise of bridging cultural links with political data purely hypothetical and postulation of any theory based on it essentially conjunctural.

Collating the data of Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh viz., temple architecture and literature (Sanskrit, Prakrit, Apabhramsa), treatises on Poetics, texts on architectural theory; politico-historical,
social, mythological themes, inscriptions and above all, sculpture—the most significant outcome will be the affinity, parallelism, sharing and mutual influences.

The following few pages are intended at highlighting the historical phenomena of political and cultural alliance and exchange between the neighbouring geographical regions, which support the phenomenon of Nagar temple architecture and the growth and popularity of devangana imagery on the temple fabric. The attempt is to visualize, the cognate regions of Gujarat, Malwa, Rajasthan, despite their difficult political allegiances as an 'socio-cultural' unit, sharing literary, architectural and sculptural styles, iconography and literary material. Sometimes the political allegiances and enmities support the idea of 'intra relationships' e.g., Pratihara-Paramara, Pratihara-Chandella and Paramara-Chalukya relationship. Much of the stylistic affinity and uniqueness in sculpture, its iconography and architectural styles, appear to be explained on the basis of stylistic symbiosis.

The regions under discussion here are traditionally known as Malwa, Dahala, Jejakabhukti, Gopagiri, Chedi in Madhya Pradesh, Medapata, Sapadalaksa, Uparamala, Marumandala, Arbuda, in Rajasthan; and Anarta, Surastra in Gujarat. This chapter is not going to be a rambling of historical facts, or a listing of genealogies of the kings of the medieval period of the modern day Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. One reason for formulating this chapter on historical backdrop was to create an idea of the concurrent developments in literary and artistic fields, and to highlight the patronage of individual kings in the making of the temples. As for example, the contribution and achievement of kings like Nagabhatta II, Mahendrapala and Mahipala of
the Pratihara dynasty, Bhoja and Udayaditya of the Paramara dynasty, Siddharaja and Kumarapala of the Solanki dynasty; Dhanga and Yashovarman of Chandella dynasty, and so on. Another idea is to highlight the political and cultural interactions which will support the phenomenon of iconographical parallelism and the movement of artist's guilds and architectural styles.

1.2 PRATIHARAS

The Pratiharas are supposed to be geographically and politically connected with Malwa, Marusthali and Mahodaya i.e. Kannanj, the last became their capital from the time of Bhoja I. The kingdom was periodically weakened by the onslaught of the Rashtakuta of Manyakhta during the reigns of Indra III and Krishna III. According to the Cambay plate of Rashtrakuta Govinda IV, his father Indra III had 'completely uprooted the city of Mahodaya', probably some time about A.D. 915-918. Pratiharas regained their lost power by allaying with their feudatories like the Guhilots, the Chandellas of Jejakabhukti and the Chahamanas.

A Chahamana inscription of Bhartravaddha, who was a ruler of Lata, found from Hansot in Gujarat, dated V.S. 813 = A.D. 756, reveals that this prince owed allegiance to the Pratihara king, Nagavaloka identified as Nagabhata I. Other Chahamanas ruling from Pratapgarh in south Rajasthan, namely Mahasamanata Indraraja and Govaka I of the Shakambhari line, about 815 A.D., owed allegiance and acknowledged the suzerenity of Mahendrapala II (A.D. 945-46) and Nagabhatta II respectively. The Pratihara power had reached its summit at the time of
Mahipala I, who had ruled between c.912-942 during whose time the empire had extended to its maximum. Rajasekhara, the court poet of Mahipala, in his book entitled Balabharata or Prachanda pandava, had eulogised his master as the 'pearl jewel' of the lineage of Raghu and the Maharajadhiraja of Aryavarta. The Pratihara power had reached a climax from the time of Bhoja I who had transferred his capital to Kannauj.²

The Chahamanas appear to have acknowledged the overlordship of the Pratiharas until about A.D. 973. Doom was precipitated by the campaign carried out by Sultan Mahmud when the Pratihara ruler Rajyapala was probably on the throne³. According to Utbi, Mahmud, in course of his march through north India during A.D. 1018, devastated Bulandsar and Mathura and reached Kannauj which was protected by 'seven district forts washed by the Ganges, which flowed under them like the ocean'. Many sources converge on the issue of Rajyapala's feeling on the arrival of Mahmud and the enraged Vidyadhara, a Chandella king of Jejakbhukti, slaying him for abandoning Kannauj. The Dubkund stone inscription of the Kachchapaghata ruler, Vikramasimha (A.D. 1188), states that his great grand father Arjuna 'being anxious to serve the illustrious Vidyadhara Deva had fiercely slain in a great battle the illustrious Rajyapala. Another Chandella inscription found from Mahoba, states that 'Vidyadhara had caused the destruction of the king of Kannauj'. Thus the final blow was given by the Chandellas around 1018-19 A.D. to the Pratihara rule who were by then quite a strong power in central India.

It is possible that the only branch of Pratiharas known to Chandellas, had settled at Mandor near Jodhpur, that it was not the one from the imperial Kannauj line which originated from Malwa.⁴ After
the fall of Kannauj, only this line continued until about the fourteenth century. Hence the regions associated with the Pratiharas of the main and the subsidiary branches, range from Malwa to Kannauj to Marwar. The implication of this political phenomenon on styles of sculpture and the architectural programming will be discussed subsequently.

1.3 PARAMARAS

From Padmagupta's 'Navasahasanka charita', written in honour of its patron Sindhuraja, during his reign between around A.D. 995-1010, the reference to the first Paramara king, Upendaraja, is found.

The earliest grants of the dynasty traceable from samvat 1005 i.e., A.D. 949, found at Harsola in Ahmedabad district in Gujarat, records the origin of the dynasty from rulers bearing the name Amoghavarsha and Akalavarsha, alias Prithvivallabha alias Srivallabha. The names Amoghavarsha and Akalavarsha and epithets like Prithvivallabha, were to be found among the celebrated Rashtrakuta rulers of Manyakheta, and this may well be taken as a conclusive proof of the fact that the Paramaras had been descended from the Rashtrakuta lineage. They were Mahamandalika Chudamani of the Rashtrakutas and descended from the same stock. The principle branch of the Paramaras had produced great kings in their lineage like Siyaka, who though called a Mahamandalika Chudamani, had assumed the title Maharajadhiraja, His son was Vakpatiraja, whose son was Sindhuraja, the father of Bhoja, the most celebrated among the Paramara rulers of Ujjaini. The dynasty had held sway in Ujjain and Dhara till as late as A.D. 1305, when Ein-ul-Mulk Multani, a general of Ala-ud-din Khalji had defeated the ruler of Ujjain
and had put an end to the Hindu rule.\(^5\)

A branch of Paramaras controlled the regions around Mt. Abu, Jalor (ancient Javalipura in Jodhpur), Kiradu (ancient Kiratakupa also in Jodhpur state), during the period from V.S. 1099 i.e. A.D. 1022 (mentioned in Vasantgarh inscription of Purnapala, ruler of Arbuda Mandala).\(^6\) Paramaras were ousted from the above regions by the Chahamanas who had ascended to gain considerable power in Rajasthan and had wielded this power till their glory was eclipsed by the conquest of Muhammad Ghouri in A.D. 1192.

The Udaipur Prasasti and the Arthuna inscriptions, eulogise Bhoja's military talents. Under his sway was most of Malwa and Gujarat.

The Arthuna inscription of Paramara Chamundaraja of V.S. 1136, mentions that the illustrious Bhoja was as sublime as the high peaks of the great mount Meru, who had caused the three worlds whitened by his fame, causing fear and destroying his enemies such as the lords of Konkan, Chedi, Gujarat, Lata, Karnata.\(^7\) The Dhara prasasti of Arjunavarman, glorifies Bhoja's empire with the title of Sarvabhuma. In Ganguly's opinion the kingdom of Bhoja extended upto Chittor, Banswara, Dungarpur, Khandesa, Konkana and upper courses of Godavari.

Paramaras had an old enmity with Chalukyas of Gujarat, and Sindhuraja invaded Anahilwada, which was ably resisted by Chamunda. Chamunda's son Durlabhraja, came into conflict with Bhoja, because of the svayamvara of Mahendraraja of Nadol's daughter Durlabhadevi, when her choice fell upon Durlabhraja. This enraged Bhoja and the relations of Paramaras with the Chalukyas strained further. The river Sabarmati remained an unbroken frontier between the Chalukyan domain and the
kingdom of Bhoja.

Bhoja's military career began with Lata, which extended up to modern Surat and up to the kingdom of the Silaharas of northern Konkan. Since Bhoja wanted to control the Nasik-Bulsar passes, he had to first vanquish the Lata king and the Chalukyas of Gujarat as well as Kalyani.

According to the Surat grant of Lata king, Kirtiraja, dated A.D. 1018, it is evident that he was no match for the powerful armies of Bhoja, and being hard pressed by the latter, Kirtiraja left the kingdom and the capital at the mercy of the invader. The literary and epigraphical evidences such as Prabandha Cintamani, the Kalyan plate and the Udaipur prasasti, record Bhoja's victory over Lata. But the annexation of Lata by Bhoja did not last long.

Bhoja subsequently pushed his arms further south. During the ninth and tenth centuries, the Silaharas of northern Malabara coast were feudatories of Rashtrakutas of Manyakheta and later of the Chalukyas of Kalyani. Around 1020 A.D., the Konkan region was swept by Bhoja, since the Thana plates of Arikesari mention him to be ruling in A.D. 1017. Control over the whole of Lata and Konkana may have prompted Bhoja to overcome natural enemy Jayasimha II (A.D. 1015-1042) of the Western Chalukya dynasty of Kalyani. Bhoja entered into an alliance with Rajendra Chola I and Kalachuri Gangeya to consolidate his military strength. Unfortunately they met with defeat. The A.D. 1088 inscription of Jayasimha II glorifies him with glowing success against the allied forces, and further records 'he (Jayasimha) routed the elephant squadron of the Chola king, Gangeya and Bhojaraja',

Bhima-I of Gujarat played an important role in the downfall of
Paramara Bhoja. Vadnagar Prasasti of Kumarpala records Bhima's victory over Bhoja. Somesvara in Kirtikaumudi states the defeat of Bhoja by Bhima. While the Vastupala - Tejapala prasasti states it as proper that upon his attack, the goddess of wealth left Bhoja's heart, Goddess of learning his mouth and the swords of his hands.9

After the defeat of Bhoja by Bhima, both the houses may have come to a compromise. Merutunga in Prabandh Cintamani gives the reference of one Dammara, who was Bhima's ambassador at Bhoja's court. There were many military conquests to and fro between Anhilwad and Dhara. But when Bhoja died, Dhara was sacked by Karna of Kalachuri and presented a golden Mandapika to Bhima which is testified by the Dvyasraya Kavya, sarga IX and Vikramankacharita, sarga X, V.97.

After Mahmud's departure from India, Bhoja attached the kingdom of Chandellas of Jejakbhukti, which bordered the north eastern territory of the Paramaras. In the middle of the tenth century A.D. the Chandella Yashovarman was fighting with the Paramaras of Malwa. Yashovarman was followed by Dhanga (A.D. 950-999) and Ganda (999-1024), who was succeeded by Vidyadhara (1025-1040) - who was known for his bravery and is said to have defeated and killed the Pratihara king Rajyapala of Kannauj. The Kalachuri Gangeyadeva of Dahala, had also to yield to his military force. The Mahoba inscription of the Chandellas record, 'Bhojadeva together with the moon of the Kalachuris (Gangeyadeva) worshipped, full of tear, like a pupil (this) master of warfare (Vidyadhara)'.

H.C. Ray thinks that Vidyadhara even helped Kirtiraja, the Kacchapaghata ruler of Gwalior in defecting Bhoja. One Kacchapaghata
of Dubkund called Prince Arjuna, helped Vidyadhara Chandella to defeat and kill Rajyapala Pratihara. Thus Arjuna remained a feudatory of the Chandellas. But after Arjuna, his son and successor, Abhimanyu, accepted the vassalage of the Paramaras instead of the Chandellas. From the Dubkund (Gwalior) inscription of Kacchapaghata Vikramasimha dated (V.S.1145), H.C. Ray suggests that Bhoja, taking advantage of Vidyadharas weak successors, may have extended his influence in the north upto Dubkund. Ray also opines that Bhoja possibly succeeded in extending his influence in the Kulu valley by taking advantage of the weakness of the Vidyadharas successors.

1.4

SOLANKIS

The Chalukya/Solanki dynasty was established by one Mularaja, whose father hailed from somewhere around Kannauj and married the Capotkata princess by exhibiting his valour. Mularaja usurped the throne and established himself around A.D. 937 and ruled up to A.D. 994. He encountered his contemporaries of Sapadalaksha, the Chahamanas of Shakambhari, Vigraharaaja and the Chalukya king, Tailapa of Telangana.

At this stage the Pratiharas were in power from Gujarat to Bengal and while they remained engaged in war with the Arabs, the Rashtrakuta Indra III of Manyakheta, defeated Pratihara Mahipala, sometime around 915 A.D. This weakened the Pratihara control over the western Indian territory and Mularaja snapped the chance to establish himself. A Chandella epigraph found at Khajuraho claims that the contemporary Chandella ruler, apparently a feudatory vassal of the Pratiharas had placed Kshitipala after his defeat at the hands of Indra III, to be
restored to the throne. The opportunity of weakening of the power of the Pratiharas had undoubtedly facilitated Mularaja to expand his power eastwards, and establish himself firmly in Gujarat.  

Mularaja encountered the Chahamanas of Rajasthan but before both could consolidate their own powers they were overrun by the Mehmud of Gazni, the Turkish invader. When Bhima I encountered Mehmud who had plundered Somnath, Thanesar etc., his army could not sustain, but slowly the Solanki collected their might. The attack of Mahmud of Ghori was forcefully repulsed by Bhima II who ruled between 1178 and 1238 A.D. The Solankis ruled over Gujarat right till 1304 A.D., when the Turkish tide in the form of Alauddin Khilji swept the Solanki power which was then in the hands of Karnadeva II.

Bhima-I consolidated his kingdom and conquered Abu from Paramara Dhandhuka, annexed Bhinmal, but could not assert his supremacy over southern Marwad. He also allied with Kalachuri Karna and defeated Bhoja of Malava. Many land grants are noted in his reign. He had two queens namely Udayamati from whom he had a son, Karna, while he also got attracted by the chastity of a ganika, Chauladevi or Bakuladevi, whom he married and a son Ksemaraja or Haripala was born. (Prabandha Cintamani). The important monuments associated with the reign of Bhima-I are the Rani ki Vav, Patan built by his queen Udayamati, Surya temple of Modhera (1027 A.D.) and the Vimalavasahi, Abu (1031 A.D.)

Jayasimha Siddharaja (C. A.D. 1094-1144)

The most illustrious king of this dynasty is Jayasimha, the son of Minaldevi (Mayanalla) who was coronated at the age of three. Merutuaga writes praiseably about him in Prabandh Cintamani. He reduced
the might of Rakhengara of Saurashtra, and the Girnar inscription of A.D. 1120 informs that Sajjana, the governor of Siddharaja, was governing that area. The Chahamanas of Naddula were feudatories of Jayasimha, is notified by the Bali inscription of Asaraja which was issued in 1143 A.D. But with the Sakambhari branch the relations were more complex. Merutunga in Prabandha Cintamani, and Somesvara in Kirtikaumudi, mention that Jayasimha defeated Arnoraja, and Somesvara says that the only difference between Jayasimha and Vishnu was that the daughter of Arnoraja (Ocean) was taken to wife by Vishnu, while he gave his daughter in marriage to Arnoraja. This information is supported by Prithviraja Vijaya which says one of Arnoraja's queens came from Gujarat. Arnoraja helped Siddharaja against the Paramara Naravarman.

In the military career of Jayasimha, the victory over Yashovarman of Malwa was the greatest. He knew various forms of black magic and he was helped by various yoginis and kiratas. He reached Ujjain and captured Dhara and tied up Yashovarman like a sparrow. With this act he subdued the whole of Avanti and returned. Vadnagar prasasti mentions that Jayasimha 'frightened all the rulers of the earth by the manner in which he fettered the proud king of Malwa'. Even Vastupala Tejpala prasasti mentions, the victory of Jayasimha Siddharaja over the king of Malwa. He has been confered the proud epithet 'Avantinatha' in the Gala inscription of A.D. 1137. By the conquest of Malwa the frontiers of the Chalukya kingdom were extended, bringing it into contact with those of Kalachuris and Chandellas. According to Somesvara, king of Mahoba became frightened on hearing of the destruction of Dhara, submitted to Siddharaja. The story given by Jina Mandana and an inscription from Kalanjara fort, supports the instant defeat of king of
Gurjara as Krishna defeating Kamsa. Expect for the Chandollas, Jayasimha never faced a defeat. He issued a number of stone inscriptions recording his victory over several regions, which testifies the fact that he really captured those areas. The extent of his kingdom ranged from the whole of Saurashtra with its towering Girnar to southern Rajasthan (Asuraja's territory) and Sakambhari or Sapdlaksha of Chahamans, to the Paramara kingdom of Malwa including Ujjain and Dhara.

Siddharaja is considered a great patron of literature, religion and temple construction. The famous Rudramahalaya and the Sahastralinga lake at Patan were constructed by his orders. He patronised Shaiva and Jaina philosophy and practice. The great Jaina scholar, Hemachandra, was his contemporary.

Siddharaja was followed by Kumarapala (1144-1174 A.D.) and he too was a great builder. He replaced the Phase II Shrine of Somanath at Prabhas built by Bhima-I. He built Kumara Viharas at Patan, Girnar, Satrunjaya, Prabhas, Abu, Khambhat, Tharad, Idar, Jalor, Div, Mangrol and a Shrine dedicated to Ajitnath at Taranga and so on.

According to Prabandha Cintamani, Kumarapala was coronated in 1199 V.S. He wielded power over the Chahamanas of Sakambhari, Paramaras of Malawa and some parts of Marawad. He donated a village to a Shiva temple in Chittor (1151 A.D.), this supremacy was acknowledged by Alanadeva in Kiradu (1153 A.D.), Someshvara in Kiradu (1162 A.D.). Inscriptions at Pali in Maravada (1153-1160) and Udayapur in Malawa (1164-66 A.D.) also acknowledge his supremacy.

An allegorical play 'Moharajaparajaya' of Yashapala was written during his reign. He renovated the Somanath temple (1169 A.D.).
Hemachandra wrote 'Dvyashraya Kavya', 'Kumarapala Charita', 'Trishashtishalaka Purusha charita, on the request of Kumarapala.

Another important Solanki king is Bhima II (1179-1242 A.D.) who is also associated with great building activity. Nilakantha Mahadev temple, Miani dated 1204 A.D. is the earliest example. His ministers Vastupala-Tejpala built the famous temples at Abu, Lunavasahi (1231 A.D.).

Thus the literary and religious circle that developed around the Solanki kings in the two centuries speak volumes for the cultural interaction between the fine minds of the contiguous regions. The contribution towards the temple imagery of the literary genuises associated with the royal patrons can be justifiably conjectured.

1.5 CHAHAMANAS

The Chahamanas of Chauhans were a formidable power, can be learnt from the great kavya, Prithviraja Vijaya, a Sanskrit kavya by poet Jayanaka in the lifetime of Prithviraja III, and Prithviraja Raso in Apabramsa, by the poet Chand Bardai, in fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This poem delves into the life and exploits of Prithviraja III, as an episode of absorbing interest from the point of history, medieval chivalry, heroism and humanity, as a model hero belonging to a tradition of long and abiding sustenance.

After the disappearance of the Pratiharas, the Chandellas had succeeded in gaining remarkable power in the east of the central part
of the subcontinent, while the Chahamanas had emerged as a viable power further west, expanding their rule into Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana. They are associated with Sapadalaksaj but it is difficult to trace if they originally belonged to this region or come to settle there from elsewhere. There were Chauhan houses of Bharuch, Sakambhari, Naddula, Jalor, Ranthambhor, etc. of which the Naddula had the upper hand and they contested with Paramara and Chalukya and exercised their command over them. The Naddula king, Ahila, is claimed in the Sunda hill inscription to have defeated Bhima I, the Solanki king of Anahilwada-Patan, (c. 1022-64 A.D.)

The earliest of the Chahamana rulers of Sakambhari of some consequence had been Vigraharaja II whose name is known from the Harsha stone inscription, found upon the wall of a temple dedicated to Mahadeva situated near a village called Haras in Sekhawati area of the old state of Jaipur. The inscription is dated in V.S. 1030 i.e. A.D. 973 and gives the entire geneology of the family from a ruler named Guvaka I. Both the Chahamanas and the Chalukyas had been the feudatories of the Pratiharas, and Vigraharaja won over Mularaja of Chalukya dynasty.

Much of the energy of the Chahamana rulers went in repulsing the attacks of the invading muslims, namely Mahamud of Ghazni and Mahamud Ghori.

The Chahamanas were run over by Paramara Bhoja of Avanti (c. A.D. 1010-1055) who killed Viryarama, the son of Vakpatiraja II.

Chahamanas were great patrons of literature. Even their inscriptions were composed by great poets, who used masterly language and set the
verses to various chhandas, metres, and made them into pieces of literary flourish. Of the Chauhan kings, Ajayapala, Vignaharaja IV and Prthviraja III, were lovers of good literature. Somadeva was the court poet of Vignaharaja IV and wrote Lalita Vignaharaja. Jayamangala, the writer of Sundha inscription, used sardulavikridita, sragdhara, mandakranta, malini, sikharini and harini, metres. A whole lot of writing on Jaina religion, philosophy, theology etc., simultaneously patronised in Prakrit and Apabhramsa languages. The poets of this time were familiar with alankara sastra and made full use of their favourite alankaras.

When it comes to building activity related to temple architecture, it is learnt that Vakpatiraja built temple of Siva at Pushkara. His son Simharaja overthrew the Pratihara yoke and became an independent ruler. He granted a number of villages to the temple of Harshavatha, which was built in 956 A.D. in a village about seven miles south of Sikar. Vignaharaja II built a temple dedicated to goddess Asapuri near Brgukaccha. It is difficult to characterise the Chhahamana style of architecture or sculpture except for the fact that Harshnath temple has some of the finest sculptures of the devanganas engaged in dance, music and other activities.

1.6

GUHILAS

The Guhils or Guhilot of Mewar and later Seshodias, are the most illustrious dynasty to have ruled over Mewar. The Guhila rule was concentrated upon from Chittor, Nagda and Ahar, the major centres of economic and political power in the Medapata region. The Atpur
inscription of Saktikumara, dated in the year 977 A.D. an inscription of Naravahana, the grandfather of Saktikumara, dated in V.S. 1028 (971 A.D.) mentions the name of Bappaka as the ruler of Nagahrada and as a moon among the princes of the Guhila family.

Guhilas entered into a marriage alliance with Rashtrakutas when Bhartripatta married Mahalakshmi, this emboldened the Guhilas from throwing the yoke of the imperial Pratiharas. An inscription of Allata (son of Shaktikumar) found in Saraneshvara temple at Ahar, gives an elaborate account of the administration of Allata, who is mentioned as a Medinipati, who has under him an amatya, a Sandhivigrahika, two akshapatalika, a Vandipati and a Bhishagadhiraja. After Allata the successors of the Guhilas were not very strong, which made it easy for the Chahamanas of Sakambhari, Paramara of Malwa and Chalukyas of Gujarat, to make a head way into the Guhila territory. It becomes evident that some time later the Chalukyas of Anahilwada had gained occupation of quite some area of Mewar since inscriptions indicating grants of land by the Chalukya ruler Kumarapla, about 1050 A.D., would indicate. The issue of a land grant by Kumarapala (1144-1173 A.D.), recorded in a temple at Chittorgarh, proves that the area around Chitor had been under the royal authority of the Chalukyas at this time. Kumarapala had undertaken military campaigns against the Chahana ruler Armoraja and this accounts for a number of land grants made by this ruler in Rajasthan, but there is no account of Kumarapala having come into conflict with the Guhilas.

The temple associated with the Guhilas are the famous Ambikamata temple at Jagat, which bears an inscription of Shaktikumara of 956 A.D. Another inscription of 977 A.D. (V.S. 1034) of the same ruler is found
from Ahar, which refers to his wife establishing a village called Harshapur, a long genealogical list and the economic conditions. At Nagda on the Visnu temple an inscription has been found, dated 1026 A.D. (V.S. 1083) which starts with a veneration to Purushottama. The king's name is defaced. It is significant to note the contiguous nature of Guhila and Solanki territory and the architectural similarity shared by the temple of Kotai in Kutch and Jagat, Ahar, Nagda, Eklingji in the Mewar region.

2.1 CULTURAL OVERVIEW

The tradition of architectural texts written in these regions over a span of four hundred years and the writings on grammar, poetics, fictional and philosophical plays, are ample evidence of the continuous nature of literary activities and exchange of ideas between contemporary thinkers. Samarangana Sutradhara of Paramara Bhoja, written around the first half of the eleventh century A.D., is encyclopaedic in nature. It also testifies that enormous tradition of building activity and rituals connected with Vastusastra and Iconography, Iconometry and nritta hastas and sthanakas etc., were codified and actively practiced. This text is not an isolated example of architectural codification, but is followed by Pramananmanjari of Malla (son of Nakula, favourite of king of Malawa, Bhanu of the dynasty of Sri Munja and Bhoja i.e. Udayaditya Paramara) written in late eleventh century; Apparajita Precha of Bhuvanapala of Patan, written in thirteenth century; Diparnava, Ksrirarnava, Vrksarnava, written in the fifteenth century, are hailing from Gujarat. The influence of Samarangana Sutradhara on the later texts and the burgeoning of active architectural programmes in Malawa,
Gurjaradesa, Arbuda, Medapata, Maru-Sapadalaksa and Uparamala regions, are a phenomena which need to be studied simultaneously. These texts also enlist the features like the spread of a particular architectural style, such as the bhunjja, which originated at Malawa and spread to Gujarat and Maharashtra. Therefore in totality, the corpus of architectural texts, when studied together, provide not only prescribed or traditionally accepted norms but also critical and analytically processed data on contemporary phenomena/manifestations.

In the field of literature we have the writings of poets, dramatists, aestheticians and philosophers which were at once universal and regional in character. In the previous sections, an attempt was made to juxtapose the historical and chronological over-lappings that existed between the Pratiharas, Paramaras, Solankis, Chahamanas and Chandellas, during the two decades from the tenth century onwards. Most kings over-ran the territories of their neighbours, in order to establish their supremacy, but could not annex the captured territory to their kingdoms. Vassalage or governorship was the only political tool to administer the outlaying area. But the fitting corollary to such political skirmishes is the inter-action of the cultural material. Simultaneously in all the above areas there existed styles of sculpture, painting (degeneration of mural and beginning of palm leaf) poetry, drama, dance, music, which were at once universal and regional in character. There existed parallel stylistic and formal concepts of the languages of all these creative manifestations. These trends in different art forms not only decided the character of the form itself but when exposed to a different trend (of its own type) did not fail to absorbs the features of the influencing trend or conversely lend the features of itself to the receiving trend.
The phenomenon of juxtaposition can only strengthen the idea that mutation is possible in visual and literary arts, which can lead to total morphological changes to generate a totally new style.

As stated clearly in the introduction, the literary theories of 'dhvani' and 'alankara' are especially thought-provoking and have developed at the same time as the period of our concern. Thus one is attempting to juxtapose the devangana imagery and the meaning evolving out of it, in larger context of its temple sculptural programming, with the help of theories of meaning put forward by Indian aestheticians. This particular vantage of study is not fully attempted by any scholar so far, although Devangana Desai mentions it with reference to Lakshaman temple at Khajuraho. In my view if we understand the significance of dhvani and alankara in the temporal and spatial context of the medieval period literature, art and architecture, then it facilitates and enriches the scope for interpretation of meaning of the devangana imagery.

Another significant parallel that I would like to point out here is the theory of Riti, which also corresponds with the regional styles of sculptures, and characterizes the various morphological and structural features which distinguish one style from the other. This role of individual creativity at individual level or at regional level, rising up to a high degree of sophistication, have been pointed out by Ratan Parimoo. Recognition of regional styles was already noticed by Stella Kramrisch in her book on Pala-Sena sculpture and by U.P.Shah in his Shamalaji and Akota sculptures. Parimoo enumerates the vrittis, gunas and ritis from Natyasastra onwards, stated in the context of drama, and applied it to sculptural styles which evolve from graceful to vigorous.
Distinguishing vaidarbhi as agramya i.e. sophisticated and cultivated as different from gaudi, which lacks saukumarya and madhurya, he shows parallel features in the styles of post-Gupta sculpture.

Rajasekhara’s Kavya Mimamsa (eleventh century A.D.), is the first text of literary criticism in which a lot of cultural data is found, which throws light on regional, ethnic qualities of people’s language, life style, beauty, language, and so on. He also attempted through his travels, which brought him the title of ‘yayavariya’, to bring a national awareness among the people. Rajasekhara was a court poet of Pratihara Mahendrapala and his son Mahipala. He was called ‘Balakavi’ in the court of Mihirabhoja, the father of Mahendrapala, while Rajasekhara’s father Durdaka was the minister of Mihirabhoja. Two of his plays ‘Balabharata’ and ‘Viddhasalabhanjika’, seem to have been performed in the court of Kalachuri Yuvarajdeva, the latter refers to the coronation ceremony in which heir prince is named Keyuravarsha. Viddhasalabhanjika, is a play in four parts and it was written between around 908-912 A.D. at the Kalachuri court. His other works are Karpuramanjari, a sattaka in Prakrit; Balaramayana, a play based on Ramayana in ten parts, Balabharata or Prachanda Pandava, Mahabharata in the form of an epic play, and Kavya Mimamsa, a text on poetics, specialising on various aspects of alankarasstra. His contemporaries like poets Dhanapala, Soddhala and even Ksemendra, have appreciated Rajasekhara for the delicacy of his compositions, intense expression of emotions, and a reflection of poet’s individuality, kavipratibha.

References to Kavya Mimamsa are found in Bhoja’s (1018-1056 A.D.) Sringara Prakasa and Hemachandracharya’s (1088-1172 A.D.) Kavyanusasana. This inter-relationship of aestheticians views and the
movement of literary ideas from central India to western India supports our view on contiguousness of regions and parallelism of ideas.

Before we turn to the works of Dandin, Vamana, Anandavardhana, Dhananjaya, Mammata and others, a note needs to be taken of 'desi', the rise of the vernacular or colloquial language. It is difficult to exactly trace the origin and development of Prakrit and Apabhramsa literature, but the writings of Avantisundari's Desi Sobdakosa and Hemachandra's Desi Nama Mala, point out the rise of regional modes of expression. Parallel phenomenon can be observed in Sangita Ratnakara of Sarangadeva of thirteenth century A.D., Which distinguishes 'margi' and 'desi' styles of angikabhinaya and expression through body movements.

The Dasarupaka of Dhananjaya, who was the court poet of king Munja of Dhara (974–994 A.D.), is a very significant and specialised codification of the types of dramas that were written at that time. The examples of sattaka (Karpura Manjari), bhana (Chaturbhani), Prahasana (Mattavilasa), pratika nataka (Prabodha Chandrodaya), were extant at that time, and Dhanjaya rightly wrote classifying text on structure, style and form, of all types of dramas for posterity. Especially the allegorical plays draw our attention because (although they are not part of the Dasarupaka), they throw some light on the ability of a trained audience, reader, aesthete to read the meaning behind the symbolism. Devangana imagery as I propose to suggest, is after all a symbolic language and it had to be studied as a potential embodiment of abstract values. The literary tradition seems to have prepared the ground for understanding meaning in all the arts with widest possible interpretative potential.
For this, Alankara sastra played a key role and stimulated aestheticians to write on the intricacy of language and the potential relation, 'sahitya', between sabda and artha.

In the post-Gupta period the importance of alankara is raised by Bhamaha in his Kavyalankara, showed the significance of Vakrokti which in the beginning of the eleventh century, Kuntaka developed to its ultimate form in Vakrokti Jivita. Mahimbhatta, his contemporary in 'Vyaki-Viveka' clarifies 'auchitya' in 'Dosa prakarana'. Alankara Shastra refers to the methodology of poetic expression and its earlier name was 'Kriyakalpa'. Vamana brought it to the intrinsic formal level and declared that 'alankara is not external ornament of a poem but 'sharirin'. This data is applicable to the sculptures of devanganas on temple architecture, which some scholars call 'avarana devatas'. They are in my view most integral to the temple and its sculptural symbolism, even though the original inspiration of its imagery may be secular. Rudratta also belongs to the alankara school. Dhvanyaloka of Ananda Vardhana and Dhvanyaloka locana and Abhinavabharati of Abhinavagupta in early eleventh century, brought about concepts like rasa, dhvani, alankara, sadharanikarana, vasana etc., and explained the whole creative experience on human level. Those aestheticians who followed 'dhvani' and 'alankara' to accept the potential of upama, rupaka and laksana, vyanjana are Ksemendra (Auchitya Vicharacharcha), Mammata, contemporary of Bhoja, (Kavyaprakasa); Ruyyaka (Alankara Sarvasva) and Hemachandracharya, (1088-1172 A.D.) in Kavyanushagana.

The above data is intentionally collated to create a literary world view, simultaneous to the period of the development of devangana imagery on temple architecture, between eighth and twelfth century A.D. in western
India, to propose a possible restructured collateral phenomena in art, literature and culture at large. It also provides a notion of literary criticism and how the potential methodology for unravelling meaning existed in medieval period in the light of rasa, dhvani and alankara. It also provides an interesting insight on Malava as a cultural thrust area, so also Darsarna. Cedidesa, where Rajasekhara flourished and thus was stimulated the literary tradition in the rest of the Western India.
CHAPTER - II

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL OVERVIEW

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

1. K.K.Ganguli - Cultural History of Rajasthan, Delhi, 1983, p.31
2. K.K.Ganguli - ibid, p.32
3. K.K.Ganguli - ibid, p.32
4. K.K.Ganguli - ibid, p.34
5. Mahesh Singh - Ehoja Paramara and his times, New Delhi, 1984, p.27
6. Mahesh Singh - ibid, p.27
7. Mahesh Singh - ibid, p.36
9. Vastupala - Tejapala Prasasti, V.13
10. H.C.Ray - Dynastic History of North India
12. K.K.Ganguli - op.cit. p.28
14. A.K.Majumdar - ibid, p.72
15. A.K.Majumdar - ibid, p.77
16. A.K.Majumdar - ibid, p.77
(b) U.P.Shah - Some Medieval Sculptures from Gujarat and Rajasthan, Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, Western India,

(c) Rasiklal Parikh & Hariprasad Shastri - (Ed) Solanki Kal, Gujarat

18. Solanki Kal, ibid 17(c), p.62
19. K.K.Ganguli, op.cit. p.43
20. K.K.Ganguli, ibid, p.39
21. K.K.Ganguli, ibid, p.40
22. Dasarath Sharma - Early Chauhan Dynasties (800-1316 A.D.), New
Delhi, 1956, Chapter XXIV
24. K.K.Ganguli, op.cit, p.65
25. K.K.Ganguli, ibid, p.66
27. M.A.Dhaky - The Problems on Pramanamanjari, Bharatiya Vidya,
28. Devangana Desai - Sculptural Representation on the Lakshmana Temple
of Khajuraho in the Light of Prabodha Chandrodaya, National Centre
for the Performing Arts, Quarterly Journal, Special issue, Vol.XI,
29. Ratan Parimoo - The Myth of Gupta Classicism and the Concept of
30. (a) Stella Kramrisch - Pala - Sena Sculptures,
(b) U.P.Shah - (i) Sculptures of Shamalaji and Roda, Baroda, 1961
(ii) Akota Bronzes,
32. Baldev Upadhyay - Sanskrit Sahitya ka Itihas, Part I, Kavya Khanda,
33. Baldev Upadhyay - ibid, p.600
34. Baldev Upadhyay, ibid, p.604
35. Baldev Upadhyay, ibid, p.608