

MOTIFS AND MEANINGS

“Islamic Art is an art of not so much of forms as of decorative themes that occurs both in architecture and in applied arts, independently of material, scale and technique” remarks Dalu Jones in her article ‘surface, pattern and light’¹⁸². This statement seems to be partially true, when it comes to the Islamic monuments of Gujarat, specifically Ahmedabad Sultanate period. The architect, *sthapati* and his guilds workers did choose forms to be utilized for the new idiom from the structural tradition but only after making them secular. This led to the transformation of the forms into the decorative motifs, for the purpose of adorning the Mosques and the Tombs. The dependency of architects and the Muslim patrons on the indigenous craftsmen resulted in the continual flow of the Art and Architectural value from both the sides. This led to the formation of a new tradition without disturbing the already existing temple tradition.

The discussion in this chapter revolves around motifs, an important unit of design, which appears on the mosque and the tomb structures of Ahmedabad Sultanate period. The indigenous type of mosque and tomb has lots of borrowings from the already existing and continuing temple tradition of Gujarat, especially Solanki and Waghela period monuments. These borrowings are mainly in terms of technology and ornamentation, which the patrons and the craftsmen could not have helped avoiding, even if they wished to do so, as the craftsmen were mostly Hindus, who were thoroughly trained in the tradition of temple construction. Even if these craftsmen were converted to Islam, their knowledge was still deep-rooted into the temple tradition. Ultimately the façade and the exterior could not produce the image of a mosque to the viewer.

¹⁸²Jones Dalu: “Surface, Pattern and Light”, page no 161, “Architecture of the Islamic World (Its History and Social Meaning)”. Thames and Hudson publication

They inevitably bore the look of a temple from a distance, hence the need of some other device, by the means of which, the architect and the craftsmen could give the monument a look of Mosque, arose. The architectural members like buttresses, hemispherical dome, the arch and the minarets, which are considered as symbols of mosque were used in an emphatic manner, but they were also not free from the indigenous look. The architectural members like buttresses and minarets have been made decorative and structurally strong by using the '*Pitha*' and the '*Upapitha*' of the temple tradition from the ninth to thirteen-century Gujarat. The *sthapati* and his guild workers must have faced a steep task while selecting the right-decorative elements or designs, had to secular by nature. Nevertheless the uninterrupted new architectural tradition of Islamic monuments in Gujarat, with more or less same designs and decorative programme on the mosques and the tombs structures, suggests that whatever the *sthapati* and his guild workers produced was approved by the patron and the architect. On the other hand it is sensed from the standardized decorative programme, that the *sthapati* and his guildworkers were playing safe and selective by using few designs and motifs in their permutation and combinations.

After the invasion of Mahmud of Ghazana in 1025 A.D, the homologous relationship, which existed between the Mohammedans, the Hindus and the Jains became quarrelsome and venomous. The movement of ruthlessly pulling down the temples and heartlessly crushing down the Idols followed this. The architect closely scrutinized the temple spoils thus obtained. He selected only the material, which had only representational motifs and designs on them, for the construction of the edifices of the new faith. Utmost care was taken while selecting the designs, motifs and patterns, less they bear some religious connotations. Other materials were either mutilated or appropriated for using them as rubble in tombs and mosques structure. This movement must have continued for nearly two quarters of the

century. While the process of demoralizing the captives continued, the *sthapati* was a silent observer, who was quietly observing and understanding the changing political scenario and his new patronage. He was the genius who understood the views and needs of his new patron. This was the beginning of a new architectural tradition, without discontinuing the existing temple architectural tradition.

There are varieties of motifs, which were borrowed from the temple's decorative vocabulary. After scanning the monuments it was revealed that organic and geometric designs were the favorites of the Muslim patrons. However the other motifs, which were included in the vocabulary, can be segregated into three categories mentioned below -

- 1) Motifs, borrowed without any alteration and appropriation.
- 2) Motifs, made secular in nature before using them for the mosques and tombs.
- 3) Motifs, seemingly new for the *sthapati* and used with specific symbolism on the mosques and the sarcophagi of the tombs.

Category (1)

One can observe a number of motifs directly adopted in the Islamic Architectural language, without any alteration, for there were no loaded meanings attached to it. Such motifs are numerous, which adorn the interior and the exterior of the mosques and the tombs. The placement of such motifs, when, once fixed in one mosque was never altered for the rest of the monuments in the Ahmedabad Sultanate period. Various motifs like vine creeper, rosette motifs, *ratnaka* motifs, diamond shaped motifs, chequered motifs, merlons as a motifs, lotus petals, a motif combining string of beads with leaf in the center of the semicircle, *gavaskha* like motifs, scroll motifs, *udgama* as a motifs found their place in the decorative lineage of the Islamic monuments. The position of these motifs is stipulated on the temples, but when it came to decorating the mosques, a new space was allotted to them. The motifs were given new hierarchies. For example the *Kumbhi* originally,

has a triangular design at the base in the center dividing it symmetrically. Initially there was a leaf carved in it. The design was full of life and bold. As the time passed, the motif became stylized and devoid of life. The leaf design vanishes yet the motif retains its placement on the *Kumbhi*

The pendants like motifs, borrowed from the wooden architecture and which hang on the lower side of *Khuracchadya* on a *mandovara* of the *Maru Gurjara* temples, are without any specific religious or philosophical meaning. They are just the decorative motifs. The lower portion of the *Khuracchadya* has lotus petals, which too probably do not mean any thing specific. Surprisingly the same lotus petals are carved on the minarets of the mosques on the *Khuracchadya* of the *pitha* and the *upapitha* that basically formulates the base of the minarets. The location of the motifs in both the cases (temples and the mosques) is exactly the same. Beside this, *gavaskha* like motif both stylized and simple occurs in their respective places above the position of the *pitha* and the *mandovara* and that of the minarets.

The designs which are normally seen on the *antrapattika* of the *pitha* and the *mandovara* of *Maru-Gurjara* temples is chequered pattern and a maze of *ratanaka* motif alternated by geometricized floral motifs. These *antrapattikas* probably acted as space fillers. They are profusely seen on the buttresses and the minarets of fifteenth and sixteenth century A.D. mosques.

The *ardhapadma* motif, which runs across on the *bhita* on a particular position and sometimes on the façade of the temple, found a new placement on the mosques. It was depicted as a band on the exterior of the mosque running on all the four walls. This motif also occurs on the same position of the *bhita* of the *Maru-Gurjara* temples and also on the similar position on the minarets.

The scroll motif, which is carved on the bracket of the pillar capitals for the temples, is also repeated on the pillar capitals for the mosques and tombs. *Jalis*, which is considered as the integral part of the Islamic Architecture, was profusely used in the Indian Temple Architecture ever since the Gupta era. At Parvati temple, Nachana, it is seen on the *garbhagriha*, in Chalukayan Architecture, it is present on the *mandapa*. It is also seen at Sas and Bahu temples at Nagda. It is also seen at Kerakot's Siva temple and on the balcony of the Mahavira temple of late eighth century A.D. All these examples are prior to the advent of the Islam in India in the eleventh century A.D., and its rule for next seven hundred years. This highlights that *Jalis* carved on the temples and the mosques of Ahmedabad Sultanate period are purely indigenous in nature, and that its antiquity dates back to Gupta period. The designs on these *Jalis* are varied. Presently we are concerned about the design on the *Jalis* of those temples, which dates between, ninth century, and thirteenth century A.D. Gujarat and Rajasthan. The designs on these *Jalis* ranges from the floral, geometric, and geometricised floral designs. In the wake of Maru-Gurjara renaissance more and more motifs were added. The *Jalis* has *ratana* motif in Siva temple Kerakot and the Sas temple at Nagda dateable to circa tenth century A.D. The Sas temple at Nagda also has geometricised floral motifs on its *Gudhamandapa Jali*. This technique of carving *jalis* seen commonly in Solanki and post Solanki temples matures further in the Sultanate period. This suggests that the knowledge of construction *Jalis* with different geometric pattern was already with the craftsmen of Solanki and late Solanki period. The *Jalis* that are seen on several mosques and tombs have, geometric and geometricised floral designs. Most of these motifs are in the permutation and combination, which is to be seen on the temple surfaces other than *Jalis*. This perhaps, was the suitable area where the artist made maximum use of his creativity. In some of the *Jalis* the single motif is repeated in a single line and another motif in another line. This logic of decoration can be called as 'Amor Martini'. Some times a single motif is seen all

over the *Jali* to give the monument a harmonious feeling, as in the tomb of Sheikh Ahmed Khattu Ganj Baksh. It is quite interesting to observe the fascination for play of light and shade expressed by the artist while working with motifs on the *Jalis*. *Jalis* are predominantly used by the artist as a partition wall in the tombs and for the Zenana Khana; some times they enhance the beauty of lateral balcony as in Ahmed Shah's mosque of Bibi Rani.

Category (2)

Some of the motifs, which did have a symbolic significance in the temple are cleverly delinked from their religious connotation and made into a pure decorative motif only to be utilized for the mosque and the tomb structures. Under this section it is imperative to mention that how the *pitha* and the *vedibandha* of late Solanki and Waghela period temple architecture was made merely a motif and was utilized for the construction of the Islamic Monuments. The *pitha* of late Solanki and Waghela period temples consists of *bhutta* and *upapitha* with several mouldings like *kumuda*, *khuraka*, and *kumbaka* intermediated by *antrapattika*. The *bhutta* and the *upapitha* are the essentials to raise the height of the base of the temple and symbolically it is assumed to be floating on the universal waters and these mouldings keep the temple afloat. But from the decorative view point, the entire *pitha* and the *vedibandha* can be considered as the decorative mantle for the *garbhagriha* right from its base and from architectural point of view it helps to give a broader base to have a lofty *sikhara* constructed. Hence the iconoclasts sanctioned the construction of the *pitha* and the *vedibandha* for mosque's buttresses and minarets. Whatever the meaning was associated with the *pitha* mouldings was neglected and the mouldings were thus used as a decorative element on the mosques. Initially the buttresses and the minarets were not having many mouldings. It is only after the construction of Jammosque of Ahmedabad 1425 A.D. that the mouldings with greater effect started

appearing on the mosque's buttresses and minarets. Coincidentally at the same time, a number of temples were constructed during the Islamic rule in Gujarat, but they were away from the centre of the sovereign power

At Jamimosque Ahmedabad A.D.1425, the usage of *pitha* mouldings as a decorative motif is seen at the half of the height of the minarets and then it reaches upto the terrace level in the monuments of later period. The sequence remains the same, except that, the *kampa* and *pattika* on which *gayathara*, *asvathara*, *narathara*, and *graspattika* are carved on the temples, are plain on the mosques and in some cases they are replaced by the geometric designs. The other *pitha* mouldings and *vedibandha* carry the motifs according to their names

The usage of *pitha* and the *vedibandha* mouldings for the buttresses and the minarets of the mosques might be due to two reasons- (1) It was the only device, which could give the necessary strength to the exteriors of the monuments. (2) This device was not only acceptable from religious viewpoint but also from the decorative purpose. The cascading layer of the mouldings with their respective decorations gave the entire monument a jarring and glittering outlook. The tremendous play of shade and light resulting out of these mouldings contrasted highly with the plain surfaces on the exteriors. This kind of the treatment of the surfaces later on became their decorative logic, and moreover the monument started appearing like temples exteriorly.

Kirtimukha is another motif, which has been used purely for decorative purpose on the mosque. On the temple's *pitha*, a single *pattika* has been decorated by this motif. This *pattika* is called as *graspattika*. The position of this *pattika* and the motif is fixed on the temple Architecture. Often it has been seen on the upper shaft of the pillar alternating with the bead strings, where the bead strings emerges

out of the mouth of the *kirtumukha*. On the mosques the latter placement of the motif is frequently seen, while the other placement on the moulding is not to be seen, as the *kirtumukha* is the demon that was cursed with nonstop urge to eat. The epitome of the curse is that when the demon does not find anything to eat, he starts eating himself. In the end only his mouth remains. This can be paralled with the ever-growing greed of human being to gain more and more materialistic wealth, which should be cleansed before entering the temple. The sheer mythical nature of the element on the moulding of the *pitha* must have prevented the craftsmen to use it on the mouldings for the buttresses and the minarets of the mosque. The change in the placement of the motif was presumed to be useful in secularizing it, hence when it was used, it was either on the canterpillar of the dome or on the upper shaft of the pillar like Tomb of Sayyid Usman. Else it appears rarely in the decorative repertoire of the Islamic Monuments of Gujarat.

Lotus is another motif that has been appropriated for the adornment of the mosques and tombs. On temples it is used as the pedestal of sculptures of different deities, on the ceiling as an umbrella over the deities and the devotees. Lotus is also one of the attributes of Lord Vishnu and Lord Brahma. Thus the sanctity of the element deterred the craftsmen to use it elsewhere, like on the upper corners of the arched entrances, over the windows, and on the centre of the “Mihrab” in the Lotus-pot-chain motif.

The most attractive allied architectural member of the temple is the *torana*. Indian temple tradition has variety of these. They are the most attractive “welcoming sign” in the complex because of its beautiful carvings. ‘*Ililika*’ and the ‘*Andola*’ *torana* were the most popular types of *torana* during Solanki and post Solanki period. These were then used by the craftsmen as the crown of the “Mihrabs” and on the main arched entrance of all the Jamimosques of Ahmedabad Sultanate period. However not much can be said about the presence of

the symbolic meaning attached to the *torana* as a motif in the context of a mosques

Garbhagriha doorjamb is the motif, which has been appropriated and utilized for the adornment of the “Mihrabs” in the mosque, from the temple architecture. The doorjamb has various *sakhas* like *ratna-sakha*, *rupa-sakha*, *lata-sakha*, *mala-sakha*, and many others. The *sakhas* derive their names from the motifs they incorporate into them. These *sakhas* project and recede like *ratha* and *pratiratha* of the *madovara*. The local craftsmen thought it best to utilize the *garbhagriha* doorjamb to delineate “Mihrabs” on the ‘Qibla-Wall’ as it gave them the opportunity to decorate the surface. According to *prasadamandan*, the *dvars’akhas* should be made in the order of 3, 5, 7, and 9. The highest number of *s’akhas* should be carved in the doorframe of the shrine of the deity with the highest rank. Thus the number of *s’akhas* suggested the hierarchy of the divinity. The same approach is seen in the delineation of the “Mihrabs” of Ahmedabad Sultanate period. In the early 15th century, “Mihrabs” of the order of 3, 5, 7 *s’akhas* were carved and from the later half of the 15th century onwards “Mihrabs” of the order 7 and 9 were carved. From the survey of all the Islamic monuments of Gujarat, it has been realized that, there is a decided hierarchy in the usage of 7 and 9 *s’akhas*. The monuments having “Mihrabs” of 9 *s’akhas* was often patronized by the royals and Ulemas, nobles or even saints usually patronized those monuments having “Mihrabs” with seven *s’akhas*. This observation highlights, new interpretations that the *sthapati* made while using *garbhagriha* doorframe, for the delineation of the “Mihrabs” in the mosques from Ahmedabad Sultanate period. It also hints, at the adherence of the *sthapati* to the canonical text’s details, even while working for the new patrons. The only objection that they anticipated from their new patrons was regarding the *rupa-sakha*, so while making “Mihrabs” they changed the order slightly. The *ratna-sakha* and the *lata-sakha* started bearing some other design like floral

and geometric, and it remained un-altered for centuries to come. Highly stylized motif of *stupikas* was used on the first *s'akha* of the "Mihrabs", which is preceded by the small pilarets, crowned by the stylized and lifeless *burnaghata* motif. The favorite designs on the *sakhas* of the "Mihrabs" are creeper enclosing a bud in the circle, stylized form of *kalpavalli*, *stupikas* and the pilarets. Any other motifs never replace these motifs. The *udumbara* of the *Garbhagriha* doorjamb bears small niches with small sculptures of the deities in them. But in context to the mosques when the *udumbara* was utilized, a quadrangle shaped motif was placed instead of the deity. Sometimes, in the later mosques instead of *udumbara*, *Ilhika* or *Andola torana* has been utilized over the "Mihrabs" as a crown.

Jharokhas though do not have any religious connotation added to it, but it has been an important part of domestic architecture of Rajasthan in the medieval periods. This allied architectural member is seen especially in palace architecture from where the royal ladies could witness the proceedings of the royal court. It also helped them to enjoy the events, taking place in the open courtyard while they themselves were in *purdah*. Simultaneously it illuminated the interior with ample light and provided the fresh air. This unit, beside its usefulness, has profuse decoration with intricate designs that it became the obvious choice, of the patrons and the craftsmen, to use the *jharokhas* in the form of the projecting balconies instead of numerous windows. The only difference in the *jharokha* in the mosque and on the palace architecture is that the former one is non-functional and the latter one is functional. The *jharokha* in the palace architecture is constructed on the heights but in the mosques it is barely four feet high above the platform where it has been cleverly alternated with the small windows crowned with stylized *udgamas* from Solanki and post Solanki period, covered with beautifully carved *jalis*. This illustrates, how craftsmen have been able to decontextualize an allied architectural feature to suit the purpose of decorating the exterior of the mosques, during

Ahmedabad Sultanate period. This element was utilized maximum on the northern and the southern walls in the earlier period, and later on it was even used on the “Qibla Wall” as in the case of Rani’s mosque at Paldi-Kochrab of late fifteenth or early sixteenth century A.D. As it is obvious from the frequent use of the *jharokha*, this element served the purpose of decoration and constant supply of fresh air and light. Barring this example, the local craftsmen displayed immense dexterity in carving *jharokha*, as a decorative motif as it is in the case of Muhafiz Khan’s mosque and Tripolia-gate. At this juncture it is imperative to mention about the article written by Shri M. A. Dhaky¹⁸³, in which he has analyzed the turrets of Qazi Hilal Khan’s mosque at Dholka. According to his analysis, the measurement of the *sikhara* of temple and the *Garbhagriha* has been reduced to the smallest fraction. This has helped the craftsmen in deconstructing the meaning of the *Garbhagriha* and the *sikhara*. The article explains in detail how the entire superstructure has been turned into a decorative element to be utilized as the turrets, to which the present scholar fully agrees. The *Sikhara-Sekhari* type of *Vimana*, as a decorative motif has been utilized on the buttresses of the mosque of BahaNekbhakt, Delhi-chakla: Ahmedabad. The interesting coincidence is that, the mosque of BahaNekbhakt is contemporary to the Adinath Temple of Ranakpur, whose *sikhara* is of *Sikhara-Sekhari* type.

Category (3)

Along with above categories a number of innovative motifs are found in mosques of Gujarat, which are not seen earlier in the world of decorative motifs. For this particular section it is imperative to understand the concept of decoration as visualized by the Muslim patrons and the local craftsmen. In a complete survey of the

¹⁸³Dhaky M.A.. ‘The Minarets Of Hilal Khan Qasi Mosque, Dholka’, Journal Of Royal Asiatic Society, vol. XIV, no.1 1972, page no18-24, Asiatic Society, 1-Park Street Calcutta 16.

monuments of Ahmedabad Sultanate period, it was noticed that the entire scheme of decoration depended upon a fixed frame. This frame consisted of a rectangle and an arch within. The empty space on the upper corners was filled with the lotus medallion. This simple frame delineated the decorative program of the exterior. It was utilized while designing the windows, small side arches, entrance door to the mezzanine floor or to the minarets, a niche, as an outer line of the "Mihrabs" and finally to the main entrance door of the Zamaatkhana. If carefully observed, one would notice that this particular frame has outlined even the small niches on the minarets. Here taking the example of, delineation of the "Mihrab", above-mentioned concept will be made clearer. Within the huge rectangle, first they delineated the *prastara*, in earlier stages of development, then came the carving of the *s'akhas* subsequently followed by the small arch. Even this arch has been enclosed within the rectangle decorated by the lotus medallions on the upper corners of the rectangle, like it has been on the bigger arch. The only change that one can see in the entire program is that, in later period instead of *prastara*, *Ilhka* or *Andola torana* has been utilized. This has made the "Mihrab", look more beautiful. The craftsmen further improvised on this frame transforming it into a decorative motif and transferring it to the minarets. This motif (the frame in which the "Mihrab" is carved) enshrines various small geometric designs and sometimes-enshrining Lotus-chain-pot motif. Delineation of such type of motif is best seen on the minarets of Sidi-Sa'id's mosque at Ahmedabad. In some cases these niches carry intermingling and intertwining designs. With various scales this frame is seen on minarets, which often resembles the "Mihrab" on the Qibla-wall. This, if compared to the *Devakos'thas* of temple architecture, certain similarity becomes discernible. But the synonymy of *Devakos'thas* of temple architecture and the perforated windows is more, than to the "Mihrabs", yet it seems that they tend to follow the same genre.

From the survey of the monument, it is realized that craftsmen have not adorned the entire exterior with designs. He seems to have been working both horizontally and vertically on the surface decoration. This can be seen from the treatment of motifs as a pattern running all along the outside wall. The arched entrances and the windows, windows, balconies, buttresses and minarets can be considered as decoration on the perpendicular axis. Whereas small bands with geometric and floral designs running all over the four walls, are the decoration done on the horizontal axis. Despite such programming, the decoration does not seem to be result of "horror-vacui". The craftsmen have deliberately left the empty spaces in-between two adorned surfaces, and thereby contrasting it with exuberantly carved minarets, buttresses, windows and balconies. This is highly in contrast to the over decorativeness of then contemporaneous temple structures, and the Islamic monuments outside India. It is only in the niches on the minarets of the mosques from the Ahmedabad Sultanate period that the yearning for intricate, delicate carvings, mostly organic in nature displayed by the craftsmen and the patron can be seen. The craftsmen clearly hints out his intention by decorating only the specific and important areas both interior and exterior surfaces of the mosque, that his knowledge has been derived from the experience in the temple architecture.

When so much was being borrowed by the craftsmen from the temple tradition, it is very obvious that even patrons must have demanded or recommended some of the motifs to be added to the genre, which should be essentially Islamic in nature, either symbolically or representational. Once these motifs were introduced it was simply continued further by the Sultans of Ahmedabad Sultanate period, for two obvious reasons, one, it could be of gaining recognition by the Khalifas of middle-east countries. Secondly, they themselves might have been interested in getting affiliated with the Muhammadian of the middle-east countries. Such motifs with loaded

meanings are very few, for example the Lotus-chain-pot motif. In Islamic countries hanging oil lamps used to illuminate the interior of the mosques. These lamps used to be hung across the length of the Ibadatkhana by iron-chains. Soon hanging oil-lamps came to signify the mosque, as the pointed arch did. Lotus medallion signified the sunrays emanating from the sun. According to Islamic beliefs glowing oil-lamp signified symbolically the light of knowledge that Islam promised to its followers, like the sunrays eliminating the darkness. Hence it seems that the architect emphasized on this motif to give the Islamic monument, an accreditation of it being a mosque which otherwise looked like temple from a distance, because of maximum utilization of decorative motifs borrowed from Hindu or Jain temples. This invariably resulted into use of the lotus-chain-pot motif. It appears in small niches crowned by the miniature *torana* on the sarcophagus of the tombs, in the niches of minarets and inside the "Mihrabs"

Another loaded motif is the palm tree. Palm tree usually found in desert area, is also easily available raw material for building of that particular locale. This motif is not only the part of the decorative repertoire of Gujarat structural temples- in particular, but is also commonly found in the decorative programme of the mosques. This suggests its association with the Arab country where Islam was born. By including palm tree in the decorative programme on the mosque and the tombs they wished to legitimize themselves as the descendents of Arab-Muslims. When this motif appears on the mosque of Sidi Sa'id at Ahmedabad, this hypothesis gains roots, as the earliest mosque "House of Prophet", was having palm tree as a building material. May be because of the same reasons the craftsmen working under the Sultans of Ahmedabad Sultanate must have carved the motif on the sarcophagus of the tombs. It appears on the Sarcophagus of the tombs of Malik-ut-Tujjur entitled 'Parviz', and his wife, and also on the sarcophagus of the tomb of Pir Shah-i-Ghora, Laxmi-Vilas palace compound, Vadodara. It is quite possible that, it is the same motif that

one finds on the niches of the minarets as an intertwining and intermingling organic designs

These symbolically represented motifs are restricted to the Islamic monuments of Gujarat and were seen decorating these monuments till the Mughal rule in Gujarat. These motifs are not found in the decorative repertoire of monuments of other Islamic countries. Thus to trace the source of origin of above discussed symbolically represented motifs, though important, is difficult.

Beside these, there were many motifs, which on forming designs assisted the construction of the architectural member, for example, *gajatahu* (the Elephant's palate) This motif forms sort of a honeycomb and then is utilized in the construction of, either a ring-dome or a flat ceiling (*Samataka-Vitana*). This feature is common in Solanki temple tradition from ninth to thirteenth century A.D. Gujarat. The *gajatahu* motif probably does not bear any specific religious meaning, but because the motif itself is ostentatious, that its decorativeness was explored further to an extent, that it served the purposes, of decorativeness and assistance in the construction technology. This was probably the reason behind the selection of this particular motif by the craftsmen for the monuments belonging to both Islamic and non-Islamic tradition.

Another motif, which does not seem to be of great antiquity, and is found only at three different sites, is a ceiling slab, which has a seemingly ever-growing organic foliation. It is earliest seen at Sheikh Baba Farid's tomb at Patan of eleventh century A.D. Later, it is seen at Meghanada *mandapa* at Ranakpur and also at the Jam temples on mount Girnar at Junagadh. The former one is of late fifteenth century temple of Adinath and the latter one is probably second quarter of fifteenth century A.D. The motif is actually a *Kalpavalli*, a wish-fulfilling creeper, which is assumed to be the symbolic representation

of entire process development of human being from its primordial form. It seems that this was not objectionable to the Muslim patron Sultan Mahmud Shah “Beghara”, hence it is seen only at the Jamim Mosque of Champaner. However no obvious reasons could be adjudged from the presence of this ceiling slab at the Jamim Mosque of Champaner, except that the delicate carving must have inspired the Sultan to get it carved on this mosque as well. The reasons behind the absence of this motif later on other monuments could be time consumption and it was expensive also

The *ardharatnaka* motif delineated at the lower end of the *kumbha* of the pillar, is another motif that becomes patent with the carvers in the construction of the pillars irrespective of the monument, it is being made for.

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This discussion, through the visual material clearly points out the nature of borrowed motifs and their associated meanings. It was necessary to discuss some of the motif separately to give a comprehensive idea about the decorative logic, among the craftsmen and their Muslim patron. It was also necessary to explain that, all the motifs that are present on the mosques and tombs may not have the same implication as it had on the structural temples of Gujarat. So whenever, any motif on the Islamic Monuments is seen, lots of thought should be put in to understand its presence on a specific position. Many a times there might not be any strong reasons to have a certain motif on a particular place, like a hanging bell. Bell is integral part of Indian way of praying, but it has no symbolic meaning attached to it. Bells often forms a part of festooning, a dwelling place or a religious place, may be, on a festive occasion. Hence on many Islamic monuments of Gujarat, bells are carved on the upper shaft of the pillars, as it is in the case of Jamim Mosque of Khambhat. The colonnade pillars of the Jamim Mosque of Khambhat testify this argument. Another

instance is of *gavaskha* like motif, which appears on the *pitha upa-pitha* and *kapotapalika* of the structural temples of Gujarat, it also appears on the position of the minarets and the buttresses of the mosques of Ahmedabad Sultanate period. There are no specific reasons behind such occurrences. They are the part and parcel of the whole decorative program duly sanctioned by the Muslim patron.

The type of monuments that are seen from early Fourteenth century A.D. to eighteenth century A.D. is to the credit of both craftsmen and the patrons, because of whom a wonderful tradition with a unique amalgamation has existed in Gujarat during medieval times. This chapter clearly puts forward a point, that with whatever limited options they had, they were able to generate a new tradition with their best and sincere efforts.