

CHAPTER: V

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF BUDDHIST ART AND ICONOGRAPHY OF WESTERN INDIA

“The Sanskrit word ‘Kala,’ for the term ‘Art’, served a specific function, covering the many varieties of creative expressions, such as painting, sculpture, poetry, music, dance and architecture.”¹. The relation between art and religion has been emerging hand in hand from the dim recesses of pre-history. There can be no great art, or great periods of art, without an intimate link between art and religion. Even in antiquity, man noticed that art “educates while entertaining”. They also render art its power of suggestion. The set of these issues inevitably leads the researcher up to the question of human nature, which is what determines the qualities of art. The simple word ‘art’² is most usually associated with those arts which is distinguished as ‘plastic’ or ‘visual’, but properly speaking it should include the arts of literature and music.

Indian art is an expression of Indian life and thought attuned to its vast natural background and its socio-religious traditions. It is not exclusive or sectarian in the narrow sense of the term. Its style, technique or general tenor has nothing to do with any particular religious outlook. It is fed and fostered upon a vast storehouse of Indian traditions, symbols and designs. The term Hindu, Jaina or Buddhist art is but a popular nomenclature to distinguish one group of monuments, including Sculpture, painting, cave-temples and architecture, etc., from another standpoint of the predominance of one or the other religious theme. Hence, by Buddhist art is meant popularly those monuments and paintings which have for the main purpose the edification or popularization of Buddhism.

Fortunately in Western India, there are innumerable monuments representing different phases of Buddhism and these help us to visualize the trend of Buddhist art through the ages. The artists of western India, who created the valuable treasures of the art world, were the inheritors of ancient tradition that painted and decorated palaces, temples and caves. The artists followed the theories, principles and techniques, which were preserved through oral traditions by several generations. The artists were also inspired and guided by the principles and techniques described in texts such as the *Chitrasutra* of the *Vishnudharmottarra Purana*, *Pratima laxanama*,

Aryamanjusrimulakalpa, etc., which preserved the ancient art and pass it on in its purity to the subsequent generations. Indian art is often classified as religious art, though it will not be appropriate to say that all Indian art is purely religious, but we can see some of it belong to various religions. The art, in general, was inspired by life, by reflecting upon human beliefs and aspirations; and by celebrating moments and events of life.

Though 'art' has not been referred in words in the texts, the evidence of the sole surviving monuments and artefacts would be significant to establish it. According to Fergusson, the proof of the existence of wooden building is that the oldest construction in stone, was built by copying the framework and joining of timberwork.

From the *vedic* period, Indian civilization had the carpenter, the wheel-wright, the blacksmith, goldsmith, the painter, the weaver, the carvers on wood and ivory and the fabricators of other necessary objects. The remarkable unity and consistency has been the main characteristic of Indian art. In spite of regional variations and individual styles, the works produced in diverse geographical and cultural regions shared certain common values, concepts and techniques. Those regional varied manifestations nevertheless, contributed to the richness of Indian art, and their mutual influences gave birth to multi-faceted development of Indian art. The Art was not the classical paintings of the caves only but the paintings created by the village craftsmen and artists kept alive the ancient traditions. Their exquisite themes inspired by life around them, painted in their homemade bright colours employing indigenous styles have enriched the cultural diversity of India.

Buddhism as a Theme for Art:

The emergence of the Buddha image, one will have to recount legends connected with worship of the Buddha, in the canonical and ancillary literature of the Buddhists. The Buddha when asked by Ananda (the *Mahaparinirvanasutra*) as to how he should be worshipped after his release or *mahaparinirvana*, he answers saying, 'he should be worshipped like a *Chakravartin*'. The same honour is extended to other dignitaries in fellowship including the ordinary monk (*Sramana*). This meant that a Stupa/s be erected over the carnal remains (*Dhatu*), after the cremation. Respecting his wish the eight recipients of the ashes collected after the cremation and distribution of them

amongst the contestants and the arbiter, eight Stupas were erected at different places over the urns containing the ashes.

As the Stupas had the carnal remains of the Buddha, these are popularly referred to as *Dhatugarbha*. With a phonetic change, the word *Dhatugarbha* becomes *Dagoba* that denotes a stupa. The stupas are of four types as,

1. Those raised over the Carnal remains (*Sharira/ Dhatu*),
2. Over the objects of personal use like the begging bowl (*Paribhoga*),
3. In fond memory of a significant incidence (*Uddesha*), and
4. After fulfilment of a vow (*Kama*).

Historically, it was *Sarvastivadins* who probably fashioned the earliest image of the Buddha in the 1st Century BC as noted by Professor A. K. Narayan. For the pious mind of a Buddhist, Shaky Buddha once he had attained *Parinirvana*, was in a state which was beyond the range of the lingual descriptions. Thus, the Buddha, never would be portrayed with the help of a brush of the painter, the chisel of a sculptor or the nimble hands of a potter. These initial portrayals of the Buddha must have broken ground for the Mahayanists, who were also the great protagonists of the *bhakti* doctrine, to conceive a full range of the three levels of the Buddha imagery.

None of the rock-cut monasteries prior to 4th century CE, and other examples, show any Buddha image although hundreds of rock-cut caves were made throughout India during the first few centuries CE. And, in those caves, it is the stupa that is the object of veneration, not the image. Images of the Buddha are not found in Buddhist *shailagrihas* (rock-cut complexes) until the times of the Kanheri (4th5th century CE) and Ajanta examples (c. 462–478 CE).

Rock-cut cave Art of Western India

Art in India includes architecture. Most of the works of art are the architectural members of temple or shrine as the sculptured architectural pieces dating back to the 2nd BC and artistically built over a few centuries. The oldest rock-cut caves in India were excavated during the regime of Priyadarshi Ashoka and his grandson Dashgrath (272 BC-232BC). These seven caves were cut in Nagarjuna and Barabar hills (District-Gaya). More than 1200 caves were carved in about 75 centres many of them are bestowed with inscriptions. The caves of western India have an extra ordinary

appeal and aura. Most of the rock-cut monuments were carved out during the rule of Satavahanas. During the Kshatrapa epoch in c. 200-400 century CE several caves have been carved. The most important among these excavations are the caves at Junagadh, Sana, Talaja, Dhank, Jhinjhurijhara and those at Khambalida. Many of these belong to the Kshatrapa period.

The art of western India can be considered as that of Hinayana stream of Buddhism especially in Gujarat. It is noticeable that Buddha figures are absent from the caves of Gujarat. The traits of Mahayana Buddhist art could be seen from 450 CE. in western India. Whereas Maharashtra is very rich having Mahayana Buddhist caves, ornamented with the sculptures, paintings and finely excavated caves, Gujarat, comparatively, has only one group of caves ie, Khambalida caves belonging to Mahayana phase. The Buddhist sites of western India have been examined here from the various aspects of art in the present work. I have studied the architecture through an artistic point of view. The *chaityagrihas, stupas*, façade, pillars and *viharas* have been analysed here keeping in mind, as these are the representative of Buddhist art. For Buddhism, the database consists mainly of inscriptions and sculptures.

The earliest Buddhist architecture consists of shrines and monasteries cut into rocks's sides to house itinerant religious groups during the rainy season. The first examples are those of the *Ajivika* sect, exemplified by the Sudama and Lomas Rishi caves near Gaya. These clearly show elements of earlier wooden construction and have barrel-vaulted roofs supported on raked pillars and an arched facade. The interiors of the caves are highly polished and consist of two chambers: a shrine at the end (circular and domed) and an adjacent hall (roughly rectangular and vaulted).

This style was soon to be copied in the Buddhist rock-cut architecture of Western India. The rocky mountains of the Western Ghats (stretching from Gujarat to southern Maharashtra) contain the most extensive architectural remains of the period. Earliest examples are to be found in Gujarat like Khapra-kodia, Bawa Pyara caves and Uparkot and in Maharashtra, Bhaja but the most impressive construction from this period is at Karla, with other important sites at Bedsa, Pithalkora, and Ajanta. The sites usually contain one or two *chaityas* (shrines where monks worshipped and meditated) and numerous *viharas* (where they lived).

The caves of Maharashtra are usually situated at the head of creeks in Konkan. The excavations include arrangements such as water cisterns, rock-cut beds and pillows were required for a resident community. A great number of solitary cells for hermits with halls for lectures and meetings and *chaityas* or temples with relic-shrines not out of proportion in number or size to the dwelling places. Outside the caves are reservoirs for water, a separate one for each cell, and couches or benches for the monks to recline on, carved out of the rock like everything else. The rock-cut temple and monastery tradition continued for many centuries even alongside structural monuments and the excavations especially at Ajanta and Ellora became monumental and intricate.

While discussing the rock-cut cave art of Western India I took into consideration, the following main pieces of architecture, which are worthy of consideration and scrutiny.

1. Viharas or monasteries
2. Chaitya halls or temples
3. Stupas or Topes
4. Facades
5. Stambhas or Pillars

Viharas or Monasteries

The *viharas* were meant as places of residence for the monks. The *Vihara* had a central Hall. One could enter this hall by a doorway from a veranda in front.

Natural caves or caverns began to be selected for the dwelling of the monks or ascetics during the rainy season known as *vassavasa* when a long journey was not possible. One of the early Buddhist texts states: "as in olden times the *bhikkus* dwell now here and there, in the woods, at the foot of trees, on hill sides, in grottoes, in natural caves, in cemeteries, in forests, in open lands and in heaps of straw". The same text also informs us "there were some *viharas* and monasteries but these were thatched; in the cold season they were cold and in the hot season hot"³ On the request of the *bhikkus*, the Buddha was said to have allowed the monks to use *guhās* or caves among the other five kinds of dwellings.⁴

The beginning of rock-cut technology in the Western India has been noticed at Ajanta, Bhaja, Kanheri, Kondavite and Pitalkhora, Talaja, Bava Pyara, Khapara-Kodia, Sana

etc. and this goes back to the 3rd century BC. Many of the early residential cave complexes were without a prayer hall (*chaityagriha*). The rock-cut technology initiated by the Buddhist architects during the 3rd - 2nd centuries BC. It is interesting to note that the evolution of rock-cut cave art in Western India the early Hinayana caves were small in dimension, having no pillars to support the ceilings. I would like to emphasize that late Hinayana caves of western India, though not embroidered with the sculptural and architectural beauty, some of them have inscriptions which are valuable for the epigraphic records to help in dating them. These late Hinayana caves are located at Kanheri, Junnar, Karad, Kuda, Mahad, Shelarwadi and Nasik in Maharashtra and Jhinjhurijhar near Siddhasar in Saurashtra and Kadiya Dungar in Rajpipala District. In Gujarat many caves belong to late Hinayana period. Kadashvari and cavappeared from the 1st century CE because of the lack of patronage that had been mainly fostered by royalty and merchants. This in turn was due to the decline in trade on the coastal port towns of Gujarat. A new feature has been seen here, are brackets incorporating figures. These were to become prolific in later Indian art. The arches above doorways imitate wooden forms and are similar to the arches seen at Buddhist *chaitya-grihas* of this period. There are narrative friezes sculpted at the entrance to the cells. These are deeply cut and present the sense of the overflowing abundance of the world, which is seen at contemporaneous Sanchi. The headdresses, ornaments and the style of the figures are also very similar to that of the Sanchi toranas, or gateways.

These included yakshas, yakshis and Lakshmi. While stupas with sculpted railings were made in central India, vast rock-cut temples and viharas were hewn out of the hills of western and eastern India. The railings of stupas and cave exteriors presented images of the world as seen around us.

The presence of some form of decoration in the caves is an indication of changes in their construction as compared to the earlier period. It would seem as though the stress here was in the construction of residential space for monks and not as much on the decorative element. It was during the 5th - 6th centuries CE that the rock-cut technology was resumed in Gujarat as in Khambalida caves. Khambalida, if regarded as the finest specimen in Gujarat because of the beauty of the sculptures on the front wall.

In the early Hinayana phase caves were used for reside during *vassavas* or rainy season but after the rules have been soften and the caves were used also as Chaityas or halls of worship. There are many such *chaitya* caves at Khambalida, Sana, Talaja, Nashik, Bhaja, Bedsa, and Karle etc. In Gujarat Sana, Khambhalida are important Chaitya halls (fig.5.30). One of the largest of them and the only one that now presents any remains of ornamentation is the Ebhal Mandapa. I noticed at Talaja the remains of stupa inside Ebhala Mandapa. Probably Ebhala Mandapa was a chaityagriha. This large cave had four octagonal pillars in front, but none inside to support the roof, nor has it the wall that usually divides such excavations into an outer veranda and an inner hall and while outside the entrance there are wells or tanks on both sides and several chambers. The general arrangements of the caves are indications of their Buddhist origin, perhaps these are contemporary of those of Nasik or Kanheri, if not to a still earlier one than even the first century of CE. No remains of sculpture, such as other caves of Gujarat's later Hinayana caves.

The chaitya of Karle (5.18) is the most impressive specimen of massive rock architecture. Monasteries or *Viharas* were excavated near the chaityas. We have three *viharas* of this kind at Nasik. Chaitya is a large hall with a number of columns. The *chaitya* of Karle was the most famous because it is one of the largest chaitya-griha of India. It is 40 metres long, 15 metres wide, and 15 metres high. There are 22 rock-cut caves at Bhaja of which *chaitya-griha*, or prayer hall, was excavated in the 2nd century BC. The scale of the hall is impressive. It is 55 feet by 26 feet (16.8 metres by 7.9 m) and rises to a height of 29 feet (8.8 m). Pillars, which run along the walls of the cave, provide a circumambulatory passage around the stupa. The pillars lean inwards in imitation of wooden architecture. Above, wooden ribs have actually been added to copy the appearance of free-standing buildings. The *chaityas* of Maharashtra are usually in the form of an apsidal hall. In the apsidal end a stupa is placed and the rest of the hall, flanked by rows of pillars, is meant for congregation.

At Bedsa cave, the grand *chaitya-griha* is partly hidden from the profane world outside by a large section of rock. The magnificent *chaitya-griha* was made in the 1st century CE. The pillars inside are the earliest seen pillars rising out of *purna-ghatas*, or “vases of plenty”. This became a common motif of Indian art.

Ajanta Cave 9 is a *chaitya-griha* of the 1st century. The façade has figures of the Buddha, which were added in the later period. In the meantime, in the 1st century B.C., near the east coast of India, Jaina rock-cut caves were being excavated under the rule of King Kharavela in Orissa. These depict the pan-Indian spread of ideas and motifs at that time. A shared philosophic and artistic tradition, from the west to the east of India, is displayed here. The Hinayana *chaityagriha* is apsidal on plan. The architrave above is prominent like that of any other early Hinayana *chaitya*. There are few stone beams on the ceiling above the stupa as well as on the outer face of the *chaitya* arch. The stupa at Ajanta cave 9, measuring 8 ft. stands in the apse, with a round hole at the top for *harmika*. The important feature of Ajanta cave 9 is particularly that there are two octagonal hanging pillars on the left; the third pillar was in the process i.e. just trimmed in a square vertical block.

The most important part of these monuments are the *stupas*. The *stupa* was a large round structure built over some relic of the Buddha. In western India, several beautiful stupas carved out of rock or built of burnt brick. Stupas at Sana (fig.5.5), Talaja and Khambalida in Gujarat and at Ajanta, Ellora, Kanheri, Karle, Bhaja and Junnar in Maharashtra, are the finest examples of stone stupa.

During early Buddhist times, stupas were composed of a semi-spherical dome with a parasol placed on top. The dome covered a square base with a small receptacle in the centre containing relics, while a space for circumambulation was defined around the dome. This basic format underwent changes as stupas were introduced in other cultures. The earliest archaeological evidence for the presence of stupas in North India, dates to the late 4th century BCE. These are all pilgrimage *stupas*, it means that they were built outside the domains of monastic complexes, at pilgrimage sites. Although we have no material evidence of earlier stupas, Buddhist scriptures claim that stupas were built at least a century earlier. It is possible that before this time, stupas were built with non-durable materials such as wood, or even as burial mounds, in which case archaeological detection would be nearly impossible.

The shape of a facade was first made in imitation of wooden architecture in the Barabar Caves of the Ajivikas. Soon, it was to be a pan-Indian motif in Buddhist, Jaina and Brahmanical monuments. It continued as a decorative motif in Buddhist temples even through in the medieval period. The Bava Pyara and Talaja caves are

important caves of Gujarat as they consist of the chaitya motif or façade on front wall. The Talaja caves are remarkable for its north-west face. There are fragments of a modified form of the horse-shoe ornaments and of the Buddhist rail pattern above the front of the cave in Ebhal mandapa (fig.5.6) a rare examples of the caves having facade. Though, very simple unlike those of the facades of the Buddhist caves in Maharashtra. It may be said that the façades of Bava Pyara caves and Talaja caves belong to the primitive stage of the development of the façade ornamentation of the caves in western India.

In the words of Kantilal F. Sompura, in Gujarat "nearly all the caves, with the exception of the Khambalida caitya cave, are devoid of decoration at the facade."⁵ Facade of Bhaja is a horseshoe-shaped arch. In the facade, human figures are made leaning over balconies. At Pitalkhora, the façade and veranda of the *chaitya-griha* have many couples, filled with robust vitality. These are the "yakshas" and "yakshis" of early times, who are now seen together as loving couples.

The façade of Karla shows six couples, larger than life and filled with robust vitality. These are the *yakshas* and *yakshis*, who embody the abundance and fertility of nature: the forces that ensure the continuity of life. They were seen individually in the gateways of the stupas of Bharhut and Sanchi. Here, they have come together as *mithunas*, or loving couples. Their closeness to each other in natural affection symbolises the completeness of the world, of the harmony of the natural order. The figures do not attempt to faithfully copy the human body. They are idealised forms, presenting the symbolic essence of human life. They are full-figured and firmly fleshed. They graphically display the quality of *prana*, or inner breath, of Indian art.

At Bedsa, on the pillar capitals are animals with riders, as are seen in the contemporaneous Sanchi stupa gateways in central India. It is a vision in which men, women and animals are in harmony with one another and with the world around them. The figures are self-assured. The side walls of the veranda have horseshoe-shaped arches, commonly termed *chaitya* arches, rising upwards to create an impression of a four-storeyed structure. The interior, dimly lit by light passing through the jali (window) in the front, is simple. Besides images and sculptures, the cave contains the stupa. The pillars around it and in the hall are plain.

These magnificent *chaitya-grihas* are not only important for their architecture but for the sculpture also. For the Indian artist, the rock contains in its heart the divine. It is for him to remove that which hides the image from our sight, to reveal the sacred nature of the hill. One can imagine how stupendous the task must have been to create such rock-cut shrines. Great care and planning would have been required at every stage of the enterprise. The cutting of the rock began from top to bottom: creating the spaces and leaving stone for pillars to be shaped later. Even as the stone was hewn to create the structures, the work of finishing the walls and carving detailed sculpture was taken up. This process is revealed by unfinished caves.

The figures on pillar capitals are full of the ease and natural grace of life as seen on the pillar capitals of the *chaitya-griha*. They are warm and uninhibited, and men and women are seen with their arms around one another. These sculptures show the position of women in the society as easy and free as men in ancient India. The figures are beautiful as the bodies are carved in exact proportions so their appearance seems lively. The head dresses, waistlines, ornaments, flash of the figures and even trunks, eyes, big ears of elephants are given the expertise of the sculptors.

Pillars are an essential part of architecture. The pillars in the caves of Gujarat are almost simple except those of Uperkot caves (fig.5.25). Artistic features are lacking in the caves. In Western Indian caves, the types of pillars can be studied as Chronological indicators. Each type explains a certain period of time. When compared to the artistic works these important part of monuments indicate not only their contemporaneity but the inspirational features with one another. The pillars in the Buddhist caves of Gujarat are very important from the artistic point of view. Whereas the caves are almost plain, the pillars have beautiful carving. The pillars of Uperkot are the model of carved pillars. In the Uperkot caves shapes also varies.

In Khambalida caves a few traces of intricate carving on pillars (fig. 5.31) can be noticed. The pillars of Khambalida, definitely would have had a fine carving but due to waters they are completely eroded.

In Karle, it has two pillars in front. One pillar has a representation of the Buddha (fig.5,1), the earliest one in western India. The pillars are generally octagonal with a pot-shaped base and an inverted-lotus capital. These octagonal columns would persevere in Indian architecture even until the 21st century. *Viharas* were generally

provided with a pillared porch leading to a courtyard surrounded by monastic cells. Ajanta Cave 10 is the earliest chaitya-griha here and was made in the 2nd century BC. It has many similarities to other excavations of that period.

In the earlier two periods, there was a concentration of Buddhist sites in the region of Saurashtra, but in this period, the evidences point to the existence of the Buddhist community in the area of northern Gujarat, namely Taranga, and in Kutch as well. The major site belonging to this period is the site of Devnimori (fig.5.32) which is the only Buddhist site in the region that has to its credit an entire Buddhist complex. Excavations at the site brought to light a *mahastupa*, four votive *stupas*, *avihara* and a *chaityagriha* or an apsidal temple. A number of Buddha images in *dhyanamudra* and other decorative architectural pieces were also recovered during the excavations.⁶ This site is discussed in detail in chapter two of the thesis.

The other site in northern Gujarat, located at some distance from Devnimori is that of Taranga. An image of the Buddhist goddess Tara⁷ is housed in a small shrine located by the side of a ravine at the foot of the Taranga hill. The cave locally known as Taran Dharan Mata Mandir contains seven images, two of which have been identified as Avalokiteshvara images, one of them being Padmapani.⁸ The features of other deities are not so clear and it is difficult to identify them. However, the images should belong to the *mandla* of Tara as Buddha and vajrapani, etc.

In the region of Kutch the Buddhist caves found at the site of Siyot have been dated to 8th century CE to 11th century CE. Most of the caves were simple and small, and the main cave has a door and faces north. One of the chambers, chamber C, has a *pradakshinapatha* or circumambulatory path in the rear end, and in chamber A the entrance door facing west has a niche. Excavations at the site brought to light more than a thousand fragments of clay sealings. Of these, fifty were intact, and on one fragment, the upper remaining portion contains the figure of a spire of a temple.⁹ In the coastal east and southern area, after Kadia Dungar in the preceding period, the other Buddhist site is at Kampiya village in the Navasari taluka of south Gujarat.

The Bawa Pyara caves *chaityagriha* had four pillars supporting a flat roof, and the cave is 19.68 feet wide and 4.92 feet deep, and the cave has a nearly semi-circular apse on the west. The *chaityagriha* has a veranda in front of it, through which we can enter the two cells, one on each side of the principal hall. There are six pillars in the

veranda and each has *simha* brackets to the roof, the facade (fig.5.11) of which has very crude *chaitya* window ornaments. At each end of the veranda are winged *simhas* carved in low relief on the walls.¹⁰ While one site was located in the Gir hill range, another site dated to the Mauryan period is a vihara located in the Barda hills at Ghumli.¹¹

A cave at Jhinjuri Jhar has two octagonal pillars with square bases and capitals. These pillars are connected to the pilasters by a low screen covered in the fashion of a Buddhist rail of large pattern.¹²

The site of Talaja has more than thirty caves excavated out of a single hill and the site is located about two miles from the confluence of river Shetrunji and the sea. The site has a rock cut *chaityagrha* and contains remains of a hemispherical free standing stupa with the top capital like moulding decked with *vedika* and *chaitya* window ornament.

Twenty eight *viharas* found here were residential apartments and the largest of them, known as Ebhal Mandapa, has four octagonal pillars. It also has pillars in front but none inside to support the roof. There is absence of any partition wall that would divide the structure into an outer veranda and an inner wall as we usually see in other caves of western India.

The site of Sana caves at different spurs are approached by rock cut stairs, and of these the northern arm is called Munda which has eighteen caves and forty seven cells, the eastern arm is called Ravto with fifteen caves and thirty cells, and the southern arm with ten caves and twenty two cells is known as Champagalo.⁵³ This site contains three *chaitya* halls as well, but the caves are devoid of any ornamentation. Here too, in the Champagalo hill, the largest vihara is known as Ebhal Mandapa, which originally had six pillars in front, and as in the case of Talaja, no pillars inside.¹² A number of tanks were noticed near the *viharas*,¹³ indicating the site being settled by monks for a longer period and not on a temporary basis.

It would seem as though the stress here was in the construction of residential space for monks and not as much on the decorative element. The sheer numbers of caves that have been found within the region of Gujarat are an indication of occupation of these *viharas* by a large Buddhist community. Thus, it is noticed that Buddhist architecture

came to include space for worship and rituals particular as is evidenced by the presence of the *chaitya* halls. But the tradition of excavating shelters mainly for accommodation of monks dominates cave architecture in the late Hinayana phase exemplified by the site of Kadia Dungar. This is also the only site that testifies to the extension of the Buddhism towards the eastern part of Gujarat. Concentration of Buddhist Sites, while on the one hand the spatial expanse of Buddhist sites was witnessing an increase; on the other hand, a concentration of sites was occurring in and around Junagadh and the Gir hills. While the site of Bawa Pyara was the only evidence pertaining to the existence of Buddhism at Junagadh, in this period a number of new sites came up namely- Khapara Kodia, Uparkot, Boria stupa and the brick built vihara at Intwa, demonstrating a concentration of Buddhist sites here.

The site of Khapara Kodia (fig. 5.22) is located behind the hill with the Uparkot caves' and at a little distance from the road enteling the city. The chambers are cut in an east west longitudinal ledge of trap rock, in which the eastern part is somewhat narrow or constricted and serves to emphasise the two basic wings of rock excavations on either sides. The two prominent component wings of the caves comprise the more or less compact oblong western wing, provided with a grid pattern of water tanks within and a roughly 'L' shaped wing essentially fashioned to serve as habitational apartments. The site has large water tanks and a well developed system of water storage and utilization. (fig5.22) Located at a distance of about three kms each from Junagadh are the sites of Boria and Intwa. At the stupa site of Boria a relic casket was recovered, which contained four reliquaries enclosed one within the other of terracotta, copper silver and gold. Pieces of stone railing, umbrella and other parts that crowned the stupa were also found at the site¹⁴. The vihara at Intwa was a quadrangular monastery located three kilometres north of Girnar, and the site of Boria stilpa is 3 kms to the south of the foot of Girnar. The stupa had a brick core which was about 29.52 feet in height, a central brick paved courtyard, a flanking verandah and ranges of cells made of large bricks in mud. Other quadrangular brick structures were noticed which were two on one flank and one on the other of this monastery and it was an impressive establishment. ¹⁵ The Intwa vihara and stilpa at Boria are the first pieces of architectural evidence pertaining to the use of bricks in the construction of Buddhist sacred sites.

Thus it is clear that the maximum number of sites of Buddhist association were to be found in Junagadh and its immediate vicinity. This is the only area where one comes across a stupa independent of a *vihara* or any other Buddhist structure in its vicinity. The concentration of Buddhist sites at the Girnar hill and its surrounding area seems to have been economically viable to be able to support such a large number of monks living in and around modern day Junagadh. The establishment at Khapara Kodia was by no means small, and when taken together with the Bawa Pyara caves as well as the vihara at Intwa, it is clear that this area had a strong Buddhist presence, not seen elsewhere in Gujarat. The edict at Junagadh also stands testimony to the importance of this area, as in the Gupta period the royalty inscribes it yet again. This then brings us to the next issue, which is the presence of the royalty and the role played by it at sacred sites.

Rock-cut caves Art of Maharashtra

Rock-cut excavations need not be grand undertakings, and the presence of individual or paired cells is a common feature of early Buddhist cave architecture, seen at sites such as Nasik, Manmodi, Tulja Lena, and Kuda. Nearby to these cells is a larger monastic residence partially filled with *debris*. This cave consists of a *mandapa* originally surrounded by cells on all of its three inner sides. These cells appear to have been roughly square in shape and lacked rock-cut beds. Presently, remnants of nearly obliterated walls suggest the general ground plan of the cave. These caves, though simpler in form than the apsidal caitya hall, further secure Buddhism as the original religious affiliation of the site, as evidenced by the commonly seen usage of rock-cut architecture for habitation by ancient mendicant communities. Ornament of the cave are consistent with other Buddhist rock-cut architecture dating from the first to second centuries CE.

Twenty-five of the rock-cut caves of Ajanta are *viharas* and are the finest of monasteries. Four of the *viharas* belong to the 2nd century BC. Later, other caves were excavated during the reign of the Vakataka rulers who were the contemporaries of the Gupta Rulers. Some of the most beautiful *viharas* belong to this period. The finest of them Cave 1, of the Mahayana type consists of a veranda, a hall, groups of cells and a sanctuary. It has a decorated facade. The portico is supported by exquisitely carved pillars. The columns have a square base with figures of dwarfs and elaborately carved

brackets and capitals. Below the capital is a square abacus with finely carved *makara* motifs. The walls and the ceilings of the cave contain the most exquisite paintings.

The *viharas* of Ellora (fig. 5.16) dated 400 CE to 7th century CE are of one, two, and three storeys and are the largest of the type. They contain sculptured figures and belong to both Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism.

Chaitya grihas or halls of worship were built all over the country either of brick or excavated from rocks. Ruins of a large number of structural Buddhist *chaitya grihas* are found in Gujarat and Maharashtra. Some of the most beautiful rock-cut caves are those at Ajanta, Ellora, Bhaja, Karle, Bagh, Nasik (fig.5.8) and Kanheri. Some of the chunar sand-stone rock-cut chaityas of Bhaja, Kondane, Karle and Ajanta, all in Maharashtra state are earlier excavations and belong to the first phase or Hinayana creed of Buddhism and are similar to the brick and wooden structures of Ashokan times. Some of the chaityas show that wood had been used in the roofing and entrance arches. The chaitya at Bhaja is a long hall 16.75 metres long and 8 metres broad with an apse at the end. The hall is divided into a central nave and an aisle on either side flanked by two rows of pillars. The roof is vaulted. The rock-cut stupa in the apse is crowned by a wooden harmika. The chaitya has a large arched torana or entrance with an arched portico. Karle is one of the greatest rock-cut *chaitya grihas* or prayer halls and is the largest to have ever been carved out of rock.

The chaitya has a double-storeyed facade and has three doorways in the lower part. It has an upper gallery over which there is the usual arch. The walls of the vestibule to the chaitya hall are decorated with sculptured figures of couples. The pillars separating the central nave from the aisles have a pot base, an octagonal shaft, and inverted lotus capital with an abacus. The abacus has exquisitely carved pairs of elephants kneeling down, each with a couple in front and caparisoned horses with riders on them. The stupa at the apse end is tall and cylindrical with two tiers of railings around the drum. It is crowned by the original wooden chhatra. This is the most beautiful of the chaityas. The second phase of Buddhist architecture is marked by the Mahayana creed of Buddhism seen in some of the excellent rock-cut chaityas at Ajanta in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra excavated between 5th C.E. and 9th century C.E. during the rule of the Vakatakas, the Guptas and the Rashtrakutas.

The caves are at different levels and have stairs leading down to the stream. Five of the thirty caves are chaityas or sanctuaries. The earlier group of two caves dated 2nd century BC belong to the style of Kondane and Nasik caves.

The *chaityas* have a vaulted ceiling with a huge horse-shoe shaped window or chaitya window over the doorway. They are large halls divided into three parts - the central nave, apse and aisles on either side separated by a row of columns. The side aisles continue behind the apse for circumambulation. At the centre of the apse is a rock stupa with large figure of Buddha, sitting or standing. A remarkable feature of these Chaityas is the imitation of woodwork on rock. Beams and rafters were carved in the rock though they serve no purpose. From the unfinished caves, we get an idea of the method of excavation. Starting from the ceiling, they worked downwards. Solid blocks were left to be carved into pillars. After finishing the veranda, they excavated the interior. Tools used were the pick-axe, chisel and hammer.

The most perfect of this group of *chaityagrihas* is cave 19. Excavated at the end of the 5th century CE it is similar to the other chaityas in its plan and ribbed vaulted ceiling except for its single doorway and elaborate ornamentation. It has a pillared portico in front leading into a courtyard with the walls on either side heavily sculptured with figures. The interior pillars are well decorated with cushion shaped capitals. The corbel brackets are richly sculptured. The drum of the central stupa is elongated and carved. Projecting from the drum is an arched *nasika* or niche with the figure of a standing Buddha carved in it. The rounded dome of the stupa is surmounted by a *harmika* and three tiers of *chhatras*, diminishing in size and supported by figures on four sides. On top of the *chhatras* and touching the ceiling is another small stupa with a miniature *harmika*. The facade of the cave is exquisitely carved. The chaitya-window has figures of *yakshas* and richly carved, friezes on either side. Two figures of standing Buddha flank the entrance. The walls of the hall and the ceiling of the aisles is richly painted with figures of Buddha, floral motifs, animals and birds.

On the other hand the rock-cut caves at Nadsur, Nenavali, Ganesha Lena No 19, Ajanta No 8, and Pitalkhora, though comprising red and green bores, the craftsmen have succeeded in maintaining high standard of cave architecture in spite of the major flaws similar to those of Ahmednagar caves. *Viharas* or monasteries constructed with brick or excavated from rocks are found in different parts of India. Usually built to a

set plan, they have a hall meant for congregational prayer with a running veranda on three sides or an open courtyard surrounded by a row of cells and a pillared veranda in front. These cells served as dwelling places for the monks. These monastic buildings built of bricks were self-contained units and had a Chaitya hall or *Chaitya mandir* attached to a stupa - the chief object of worship.

Some of the important Buddhist *viharas* are those at Ajanta, Ellora, Nasik, Karle, Kanheri. The Hinayana *viharas* found in these places have many interesting features which differentiate them from the Mahayana type in the same regions. Though plain from the point of view of architecture, they are large halls with cells excavated in the walls on three sides. The hall has one or more entrances. The small cells, each with a door have one or two stone platforms to serve as beds.

Brick Monastic Monuments of Western India

A change in the technology from rock-cut to brick has been noticed in free standing brick settlements which began in western India from the 3rd century BC up to the 7th century CE. Rock-cut technology had to give way to brick because the former could only be located where natural rock was available whereas, bricks could be used anywhere, i.e., plains and hills. These brick monuments can be studied in their different forms ranging from *chaityagrihas* (prayer hall), *stupas* and *viharas* (monastery) of the Buddhist faith. We begin our discussion with the *chaityagrihas* built in bricks, as these are the earliest brick structures known in the region under study.

In all probability, keeping in view the textual traditions and taking into account the methods delineated therein, the architects of western India normally selected a suitable site in close proximity to where building materials such as stone were available or, near the river bed for collection of alluvial soil for making fine bricks and mortars. The availability of water needed for construction and lime deposits also determined the choosing of a site. Alternatively, the hilly tract was also often selected as the terrain served as a good foundation for the buildings saving a lot of expenditure on making the foundations. The selection of the place, therefore, for Devnimori and other sites of Western India was appropriate for the construction of the monasteries.

We have some evidences on how stupas were to be built in the literature of the Buddhists. It is significant to note that the techniques involved and the process of building a stupa has been fully explained in Buddhist texts like the Mahavamsa¹⁶ datable to 3rd century CE. According to it the stupa construction should be supervised by a superintendent of works called as Kammadhitya or Navakarmika. The first step was to select a proper site for the proposed stupa. Next, this site was to be marked by putting a post on the ground. On an auspicious day, the people and the King were supposed to attend the site for laying the foundation stone. The foundations were to be filled with pulverised stones mixed with slabs. This system contributed to the making of a solid base for the construction of a hemispherical dome. The text further adds that a *Pradaksinapatha* was to be provided all around the dome, which was to enable the pilgrims to circumambulate the dome.

In the second stage, the drum was supposed to be constructed with bricks and then encased with stone for stability. It can be said that for the early stupas. The *anda* was constructed of mud which was covered with brick or stone. After that a *harmika* with a post in the centre, crowned by umbrellas was to be kept as the last stage of construction. The text continues to describe that a second Pradakshinapatha around the base of the stupa was to be constructed subsequently. Railings of wood or stone were to be erected around the *pradaksinapatha* and *harmika*. To reach the drum, a *sopana* or staircase was to be constructed. The *Mahavamsa* also suggests that the stupa construction must be considered as a collective project, in which everybody joined hands and its completion, the text says, was to be a source of joy for ever.

The *chaityagriha* at Devnimori in Sabarkantha district of Gujarat is datable to the 3rd – 4th century CE. This apsidal *chaityagriha* was on a raised large brick platform a metre high with moulded sides which probably provided for additional strength to the structure. A hall and four small votive stupas have been also constructed in this area on the southern side of *vihara*. Its plan is different in plan. The floor was paved with flat, rectangular slabs of green schist. Wet clay paste has been used as binding material.

The stupa at Devnimori is a *sharir* stupa as it contained the relics of the Great Teacher. The stupa is a massive structure with two square platforms on which the stupa rested. It is measured 25.8m×25.8m at the base and 11 m. high from the ground.

The stupa was built of mud and bricks. According to the excavators, the core of the stupa was never disturbed after it was built. The lower platform of the structure served as *pradakshinapatha*. The lowest course has bricks of square- pattern with alternate grids made deep. The next course is decorated with a floral pattern (vine-motiff?). The platform is divided into eleven bays by twelve pilasters decorated with “Indo-Corinthian” capitals. The face of the platform has several recesses and mouldings and stands 7'10" above on a foundation of concrete. The lowest portion was a tiny moulded cornice made by rounded bricks. The whole stupa was decorated in this manner.

The second platform is also square in shape and has ten pilasters on each side. 5 images of seated Buddha in *dhyanamudra* have been decorated under arched niches flanked by pilasters with Corinthian capitals. The central arch is bigger than the rests and adorned with lotus prattles *ghatapallava* motif and lions seated in their haunches. These were alternated arches with medallions.

The hemispherical drum of the stupa was damaged. According to Sompura¹⁷ the seal showing the stupa with two bodhisattvas gives a glimpse of what the intact stupa may have looked like. Mehta and Chaudhary see the similarities among Devnimori and those at Mathura, Nandangarh and Ghantasila¹⁸. The important thing about the plan of the stupa is it's consisting of a series of chequered- pattern enclosing a volute within which is placed the casket.

Devnimori, Intwa, and Boria *stupa* in Gujarat and Sopara, Pauni and Ter etc. in Maharashtra are the brick *stupas*. On the basis of available archaeological evidence the spread of Buddhism in Vidarbha, in Maharashtra can be dated to the Mauryan period, especially during Asoka's reign. Excavations at Pauni (Bhandara district) (Deo and Joshi 1972), Adam (Nagpur district) (Nath 1989: 97), and Bhon (Buldana district) (Deotare et al. 2007) unearthed evidence of stupas.

A Brick-built Buddhist Monastery has been recovered at Vadnagar, belonging to the 3rd -7th century CE., within the fortified area of Vadnagar. The monastery was a burnt brick construction and had two small votive *stupas* in the northeast corner. These votive stupas were constructed c. 5th century CE. One is square while the second is circular. An open central courtyard around which initially nine cells were constructed. The arrangement of cells around the central courtyard creates a swastika-like pattern.

A narrow veranda attached to an entrance platform from the north side had two flights of steps from the east and west. Two votive stupa also have been found.

Intwa Brick stupa Located at a distance of about 3 kms each from Junagadh are the sites of Boria and Intwa. At the stupa site of Boria a relic casket was recovered, which contained four reliquaries enclosed one within the other of terracotta, copper silver and gold. Pieces of stone railing, umbrella and other parts that crowned the stupa were also found at the site.¹⁹ The Intwa vihara and stupa at Boria are the first pieces of architectural evidence pertaining to the use of bricks in the construction of Buddhist sacred sites. The maximum number of sites of Buddhist association were to be found in Junagadh and its immediate vicinity. This is the only area where one comes across a stupa independent of a *vihara* or any other Buddhist structure in its vicinity. The vihara at Intwa was a quadrangular monastery located three kilometres north of Girnar, and the site of Boria stupa is 3 kms to the south of the foot of Girnar. The stupa had a brick core, which was about 29.52 feet in height, a central brick paved courtyard, a flanking veranda and ranges of cells made of large bricks in mud. Other quadrangular brick structures were noticed which were two on one flank and one on the other of this monastery and it was an impressive establishment²⁰

The relics found in the Sopara mound (fig.5.33) show that in the second century after Christ, Sopara had workers of considerable skill and taste. The bricks are of excellent material and the large stone coffer is carefully made, the lines are clear and exact, and the surface is skilfully smoothed. The crystal casket is also prettily shaped and highly finished. The brass gods are excellent castings, sharper and truer than modern Hindu brassware. The skill of the gold and silver smiths is shown in the finely stamped silver coins, in the variety and grace of the gold flowers, and in the shape and tracery of the small central gold casket.

In the excavations in *Hidimba Tekdi* at Mansar at the depth of 3.90 m built right-over the bed rock, portion of a brick built stupa having diameter of 8.0 m was located. The size of the bricks is 46x22x7 cm. On the eastern side, a staircase was made on the sloping contour of the original hill. In view of the undulating ground and in order to approach the stupa, the ground was rammed with earth up to a height of 1.55 m. and a wall having extent 38 courses was raised. The evidence of fallen debris in a particular fashion indicates that this stupa was destroyed by an earthquake.

Immediately after the destruction of stupa I, another stupa was built, this time by creating rectangular boxes which were filled up with small boulders, brick bats and earth. The size of the boxes vary from 2.50 x 1.50 m and 2.50 x 1.10 m. In one of these, 34 courses of bricks measuring 42x22x8 cm, were exposed. The base and knob of a lime stone relic casket were recovered from the area of this stupa. Apparently these two stupas were constructed during late Maurya and Early Sunga period. Also of this period, on the southeastern corner of Hidimba Tekdi, a brick built 8 m long (north-south) and 5.50 m wide (east-west) oblong chaitya has been exposed. On its northern side, there is a long, 0.80 m wide pedestal for idol, whereas the entry is from the west.

Pauni in (Maharashtra) is a very important Brick *stupa*. The excavation has revealed the remains of two stupas built during the pre-Christian period. One of the stupas, built of bricks with an original diameter of 38.20 m. and enclosed by wooden railings, was enlarged by 3.20 m. in diameter. In a subsequent reconstruction which was effected during the 2nd century BC the wooden posts were replaced by pillars and an outer railing cardinally placed gateways in stone. Some of the railing pillars are inscribed and carved with figures of yakshas, yakshis, nagas and symbolical and decorative designs in the typical Sunga style. The other stupa built partly of baked and partly of mud-bricks and subsequently strengthened by a brick-revetment, measured 41.6m. in diameter and was a plain structure, though it yielded in the centre a painted reliquary pot containing bone-fragments within a *kunda* surmounted by a wooden post. The latter stupa is assignable to *circa* 1st century B.C.-1st century CE.

The stupa of Ter in Maharashtra, is a large brick stupa. The base of the stupa is 26m. in diameter resembling a *chakra* on plan with *pradakshinapatha*. Another stupa is Adam located in Nagpur district. This is a mud stupa consisting of *medhi* and *anda* with basal remains of harmika. Ringstone for supporting *yashti* of a *chhatravali* was found.

It may be remarked that when Buddhism disappeared from the province, it was succeeded not so much by Hinduism which has tradition of image worship, as by the soberer and more cognate religion of the Jains. The most marked feature, however, in the religious history of Gujarat seems to have been a persistence in an ascetic atheism, antagonistic to the wild polytheism of the Hindu religion. It may have been the

prevalence of some such feeling among the early inhabitants of the province that led to the puritanical simplicity in the forms and the almost total absence of ornament that characterise the early groups of caves in Gujarat.

It is evident that at early times large monasteries existed both at Junagarh and on Mount Girnar. But by the time some of those had been occupied by Jain or Hindu and converted into their temples except a few fragments just under the scrap of the Uparkot, and at Naudurga temple. These were probably the oldest caves in Gujarat,—or perhaps in India, with the exception of those at Barabar, which were excavated during the reign of Ashoka himself, few of these may be contemporary. Next to them, probably comes the upper range of caves on the east side of the town, but within the walls at Bava Pyara's *math* or Monastery.

The front is partly destroyed, but has still three square pillars, chamfered at the necks. On the facade is the only fragment of carving, a semi-circular arch in very low relief with a cross bar across its diameter,—forming, perhaps, the earliest example of the "chaitya-window ornament," that in later times became so fashionable as an architectural decoration, seen in the Buddhist caves of Maharashtra.

Mai Gadechi, under an old Hindu or Jaina temple, long since converted into a Muhammadan mosque, is another rock excavation, 26 feet 8 inches wide and 13 feet deep, with a cell in one end. It has two octagonal pillars inside, with capitals that have been sculptured, but have been defaced by the Muhammadans. In the front, it has two square pillars with *Shardula* struts or brackets. It is not clear, however, that this has been a monastic abode, and from some points of likeness to another excavation in the Uparkot it seems probable that this may have been a garden retreat with a bath in front, now filled up, and built over by the shrine of a Muhammadan saint.

Ellora, The largest and most varied group of Cave Temples in India, are the finest examples of the works of all the three sects—Buddhism, Brahmanism, and Jainism. Beginning at the extreme south end of the series, where the oldest are situated, we find a group of Buddhist caves, apparently ranging from about CE. 350 to 550, and popularly known as the Dherawara May be a corrupt form of Therawara.

The first cave is of no great interest, except as perhaps one of the oldest *vihara* or monastery with eight cells inside for monks, four in the back and four in the south

side. It is 41 feet 6 inches wide and 42 feet 3 inches deep. The front has all fallen, except one pillar near the south end. Outside, in the south end of what may have been a verandah, is another cell or room.

The second is a large and interesting cave, and was, doubtless, a chapel or hall for worship. Fat *gana* or dwarf figures, often in grotesque attitudes have been carved at the entrance. At the north end of the veranda is a fat squatting figure with a high and elaborate headdress or *mukuta*, a jewelled cord over his breast, and a bouquet of flowers in his right hand, attended by a *chauri*-bearer with his fly-flap. Right and left are small figures of Buddha sitting, with attendant *chauri*-bearers. On the south was probably a similar female figure, but only the attendant is left, and a *gandharva* or cherub holding a garland over her head. These figures are often met with, and may be conventional representations of the prince who executed the cave, and his wife, or possibly Suddhodana and Mayadevi, or (as in the Ajanta paintings) of Shakra or Indra,—a favourite divinity with the Buddhists and Jains, and represented as almost a servant or attendant on Buddha, with his wife Sachi or Amba.

Two tall guards or *dwarपालas* stand by the door with lofty head-dresses and aureoles, *gandharvas* or cherubs over their shoulders, and a female figure with an aureole or *nimbus* behind her head, standing between the *dwarपालa* and the door.

The front wall is pierced by a door and two windows, and much of the remaining wall, together with the jambs of the windows, is covered with sculptures of Buddha. The cave is peculiar in having lateral galleries along each side, and, exclusive of these, measures nearly 48 feet square. The roof is supported by twelve massive columns arranged in a square, with elegant cushion capitals and high square bases, of the type found at Elephanta, standing on a platform raised about 18 inches above the front and side aisles which are about 17 feet high. Except the four in the back row, they have little dwarf figures on the upper corners of the square portions of the shafts; above these they are circular and fluted, while the spaces between the dwarf figures and a belt below them are covered with rich and varied designs.

The side galleries have each four pillars in front, of a different design, while the fronts of the galleries are carved with florid work and musicians. In the five compartments of the back of each gallery are as many Buddhas seated in the same attitude as the colossal one in the shrine, and with his usual *chauri*-bearers, the one on his right hand

usually holding also a lotus-bud. These side galleries were perhaps an afterthought, for in that on the north side some of the figures are quite unfinished.

The *dwarपालas* of the shrine are large figures, 13 to 14 feet high: that on the left or north side is Padmapani, very plainly dressed, with his robe fastened round the waist by a string; his headdress is the *jata* of plaited hair worn by ascetics; he has a small image of Amitabha Buddha as a crest on the front of it, and holds a *mala* or rosary in his right hand, and a lotus-stalk in his left. The other (on the south side) perhaps Indra, as is almost always the case, has a very richly jewelled headdress, with a small *dagoba* on the front of it, bracelets, armlets, a thick jewelled Brahmanical cord or *Yagyopavita*, and a small bouquet of flowers in his right hand. Both are attended by two pairs of flying *gandharvas* above, while about midway up the wall are others with curly wigs, bearing garlands. A female devotee is there between each *dwarपालa* and the door with a flower in her right hand.

The shrine contains a colossal Buddha seated on a throne borne up at the corners by lions. His feet rest on a nearly circular plinth; his hands are in the *dharmachakra mudra*, and through the palm of the left hand passes the corner of his robe. This attitude, as well as a few others, are repeated scores of times. His head, always represented as covered with curly or woolly hair, and with a pile of them on the top, is surrounded by the usual *nimbus*. On each side of it are *gandharvas*. *Chauri*-bearers stand at each end of his throne as attendants, who are just the duplicates of the warders outside. And on each side wall is a colossal standing figure of a Buddha. His right hand hangs down, and has the palm turned out; the left is bent upwards, and holds a part of his robe. In the corners next to these are four worshipping figures, one above the other. This cell is dark, but one of the least damaged of the sort here. The nose of Buddha has been broken off, probably within the last few years.

On each side of the shrine is a double cell in line with the side aisles. In the outer of these, and all over the front wall, are many figures of Buddha in different attitudes, with his attendants—the largest figure, however, being of a female on the front wall, right opposite to the north *dwarपालa* of the shrine, and with similar head-dress, and lotus attended by two smaller females with lotus flowers. It may be Maya, the mother of Buddha, or his wife Yashodhara, or probably Tara—a female counterpart of

Avalokiteshwara or Padmapani,—all of whose symbols she possesses. In other places, too, we find Padmapani attended by a female, and frequently by two may be Tara.

The horse-shoe-shaped arch, representing the window of a *Chaitya* cave, the Buddhist-rail pattern, and the *dagoba* in bas-relief, which are almost the sole ornaments in the early Buddhist caves at Bhaja, Beḍsa, Kondane, and Nasik, have in this, and in the other caves here, almost entirely disappeared; we find only two small *dagobas* in relief over an image of Buddha in the cell on the south of the shrine, and a third on the end of the south gallery. This and the profusion of imagery would seem to indicate a late date for the cave. Moreover, though evidently intended, like the *Chaitya* caves, solely as a place for worship, it has not the arched roof so general in such caves. It is very difficult to fix an age for it, but it can be dated to the fifth or seventh century, as the carving may have been continued down to the seventh century.

Proceeding northwards, between the last cave and the third is a water cistern, now filled up with earth. The third cave, somewhat lower down in the rock, is a *Vihara* or monastery. The cells for the monks have been twelve, five on each side and two in the back,—but the front one on the south side is now broken away. Between the two cells in the back is the shrine,—smaller than in the last cave, and the figures more abraded, but otherwise almost exactly the same; the uppermost of the four supplicants in the corners, however, has no attendants. On the north wall of the cave are two small sculptures (one of them just begun) of Buddha and attendant *chauri*-bearers.

There is a window in the front wall, north of the door, which has been divided by two colonnades, both broken. It is bordered outside by a neat florid pattern. In the north end of the veranda is a chapel containing a Buddha with his legs crossed in front and, as usual in most of the caves, with his hands in the teaching *mudra*. He is seated on a lotus, the stalk of which is supported by small figures having snake or *naga*-hoods over their heads,—the males usually with three, five, or seven hoods, and the females with one or three. This sort of seat is known as *apadmasana*, or lotus-throne. Buddha is attended, as usual, with two *chauri*-bearers, the one on his left having a *jaṭa*, or headdress of plaited hair, with long locks hanging over the front of his shoulders, and a lotus in his left hand. Above their heads are *gandharvas*, or Indian cherubs. On the right of this apartment is a much-damaged copy of the pictorial litany of the Aurangabad caves, but on a much smaller scale.

The next four or five caves are somewhat difficult to arrange satisfactorily; they are so damaged that it is not easy to say how many of the apartments were separate caves, or how many belonged to one. The lower floor of the next as No.4. It is much ruined, the whole of the outer half of it having disappeared. It measured 35 feet wide by 39 deep up to two pillars and pilasters with capitals having drooping florid ears, the shafts square below, and the necks having 32 flat flutes. Behind these is a cross aisle, and at the left or north end of it is a prominent figure of Lokeshwara seated like Buddha, with high *jaṭa* headdress, a small image of Buddha as a crest on the front of it, and his locks hanging down upon his shoulders, a deer-skin over his left shoulder, a *mala* or rosary in his right hand, and clasping a lotus to his left thigh. He is attended by two females, one on his right hand with a rosary, the other holding a flower bud. Above the first is a standing Buddha, and over the latter another seated cross-legged on a lotus, with his right hand raised and the left down.

In the wall are doors to two cells and the shrine. The *dwarpalas* are carved with elaborate headdresses, and a dwarf stands between each and the door. In the shrine Buddha is seated in the usual teaching attitude with a *nimbus* behind his head, and the foliage of the sacred Bo or Bodhi-tree rising from behind it. The *chauri*-bearers in this case stand behind the throne, and are only in *bas-relief*. The tall attendant on his left is richly dressed, and wears a jewelled cord like the Brahmanical *Yagyopavita* across his breast; the other is destroyed.

In a cell on the south side of this cave is some sculpture. The west side is broken away, and blocked up by a mass of rock that has slipped down from above. The figures are principally Buddha with attendants, and a female with a rosary, &c.; but to the west of the door is a Padmapani, and half of what has been already described in the last cave as a sort of litany, only that here there are two supplicants in each case, and that a smaller flying figure of Padmapâni is represented before each group.

At the entrance of the left aisle is a chapel which contained a sitting figure of Buddha, now quite destroyed. In the shrine at the back is a large seated Buddha with attendants, and on each side the door, in arched recesses, are attendants separately; Padmapani, on the north side, attended by two small female figures with headdresses resembling royal crowns. The other figure is more richly bejewelled and similarly

attended, while above *gandharvas* or cherubs on clouds bring garlands and presents to them.

Connected with this cave on the south side is another shrine, over the Cave No.4, but the rock having fallen away it is inaccessible without a ladder. This shrine contained the usual image of Buddha and attendants: also a female figure holding a lotus-stalk, with her attendants. Round it was a passage or *pradakshina* for circumambulation, as in Hindu temples. From this passage and the vestibule in front several cells were entered. The half of the shrine, however, has slid down, and now blocks up the west side of the front cell of the Cave No.4 just below it. Northwards from this we enter a hall with a stair landing in it from the cave below. This hall, of which the west side is entirely gone, is 26 feet from north to south, and 28 from east to west. On the east side it has three cells, and on the north has been separated from a still larger and very lofty hall by two pillars and their corresponding pilasters, of which only one pillar and pilaster remain. The central hall was 26 feet wide and about 43 feet in length, exclusive of the antechamber at its east end, cut off from it by two pillars and their pilasters, as was also another hall on the north, 27 feet by 29, similar to that on the south, with three cells in the back, and as many in the east end, all with very high steps (*see* Plate LX., fig VI.).

The antechamber in the front of the shrine is filled with sculpture. On the north end is a female dressed exactly in the garb of Padmapani. On the south end is a similar female figure, supposed to represent Sarasvatî, the goddess of learning, with a peacock at her left hand; below it a pandit reading. Neither of these are seen in the Plate No. LXI., which represents this façade. In it on the left, or north side, of the cell door is Padmapâni with his usual attributes, and two *gandharvas* above, and a male and female attendant below. It is not so clear who the corresponding figure of a *dwârpâla* on the right may represent, probably Manjuśrî. Both are tall, carefully executed in all their details, and the figures by which they are accompanied, and the foliage above their heads, are of very considerable elegance. The frame work of the door of the cell is simpler than is generally found at that age, and in better taste than in most examples of its class. In the shrine is a large image of Buddha seated, with the usual attendants. On the side walls are three rows containing, each, three Buddhas with their feet turned up, while below them on each side are worshippers and others.

On the north side of the front hall, a passage, divided from a balcony or small cave by two pillars. Ninth cave has a well-carved façade, as seen from the south, which it faces. It consists of a small outer balcony and an inner covered portico, separated by two pillars, square below, octagonal above, and with drooping-eared capitals. On the back wall are two deep pilasters or attached column, with the compressed cushion capitals of the Elephanta cave style. These divide the wall into three compartments: in the centre one is a seated Buddha with four *gandharvas* above; in the left one is Padmapâni with two female attendants and two fat *gandharvas* above; in the east one is Buddha's other usual attendant, whether Indra, Manjusri, or Vajrapani, with two females, & c.

The shrine has the usual *dwarपालas* and their attendants at the door; and inside is the seated Buddha with his attendants, but in this case Padmapâni has *four* arms, holding the *châuri* and the lotus in his left hands: and over his shoulder hangs a deer-skin. At his feet are small figures of devotees, and behind them is a tall female figure with a flower in her left hand, and a *gandharva* over her head. The other tall male attendant has a similar companion on his left, with a lotus flower and a rosary in her hands.

On the wall, at the south entrance to the *pradakshina*, is a sculpture of Saraswatî, somewhat similar to the one in the cave above. Opposite is a cell, and in the passage two more, while behind the shrine is a long, raised recess with two square pillars in front.

The outer room is 28 feet by 17, with a slightly raised platform filling the west end of it. On the north side is a chapel on a raised floor with two slender columns in front, on the back wall of which is a seated Buddha, with attendants dressed nearly alike, with Brahmanical cords, necklaces, and armlets, but no *chauris*, the one on Buddha's left holding in his hand a three-pronged object, which is half of what we shall find as his frequent cognizance in other caves,—the *vajrâ* or thunderbolt, whence he may be styled Vajrapâni. On the west wall is Padmapâni with the female figure that we find so frequently associated with him.

Coming out of this by the large opening on the south side, just under the ninth cave, we find on the face of the rock to the west, but partly broken away, a sculptured group of a fat male and female, the latter with a child on her knees, and attendant, which we

find in other caves, and have supposed to represent the parents of Buddha, and himself as an infant, in fact, a Buddhist Holy Family.

A few miles west from Dhank, towards the village of Siddhsar, in a ravine called Jhinjuri-jhar, are five plain caves cut in calcareous sandstone. Probably there have been others further up the ravine; but, if so, the decay of the rock has destroyed all trace of them. The furthest to the south has been a veranda facing east, with two cells. The third has two octagonal pillars in front, with square bases and capitals. The pillars are connected below with the pilasters by a low screen, carved in front with the Buddhist rail of a large pattern. This is the only trace of ornament about these caves. The last to the north is much larger, and has had six square pillars in front of a narrow veranda. It had an open area inside measuring 13 feet by 20, from which the roof had been cut out, similarly to what remains of a very extensive excavation known as Khengar's Palace at Junâgarh. Around this central court it appears to have had a number of cells with a corridor in front of them. In another ravine to the west of this, and running into it a little to the north-west, are other caves, but they are so plain that we need not occupy space describing them. See Second Archaeological Report, p. 150.

Rock-cut apartments were discovered at the bottom of a descent on the north of the Jama' Masjid on the Uparkoṭ (fig.5.17) or fort of Junagarh. They are of considerable interest, for though somewhat defaced, they manifest a high style of art. The example is, the beauty of design and richness of carving those of the six pillars in the lower hall. A deep tank or bath about 11 feet square, with a covered veranda on three sides of it; that on the west side is occupied with a built seat like the *asana* for an idol, possibly for laying the garments upon while bathing. Over the bath the roof is open, and round the opening a wall still stands a foot or so above the ground-level. The pipes for the water come down the wall from the surface, pass the front of this seat, and enter a small cistern near the entrance door at the south-west corner. The water must have been raised from some well in the neighbourhood and conveyed to the supply pipe; and the small cistern may have been formed to assist in filtering the water pure into the bath.

The corridor on the south side is supported by two columns with spiral ridges on their shafts, octagonal plinths, and carved bases and capitals. The shafts of two

corresponding attached pilasters on the north wall are divided into three sections each, having the grooves or ridges running in opposite spirals.

In the north side over the bath is a large aperture or window into the next chamber. This apartment is entered from the northeast corner of the bath-room. It is a large chamber, 35 feet 10 inches long by 27 feet 10 inches wide, with six columns supporting the roof; the area between the first four of these, like that in the bath-room, is open to the air above, with a surrounding wall on the surface of the rock. It is also open to a hall below; and the four columns have been connected by a thin low parapet wall, about 20 inches high and 6 inches thick, now entirely destroyed. The rest of the area is occupied by the corridor on three sides, and by the space on the north where the remaining two pillars stand. In the walls on the north east, and west sides are stone bench recesses divided into long compartments, with a base moulded in architectural courses below, and a frieze above, ornamented with Chaitya-window and chequer carvings. The four pillars round the open area are square, the other two are 16-sided, and have been carved with animal figures on the abaci.

In the north-east corner a door leads into a small apartment which has a hole in the roof blackened with smoke, and which may have been used as an occasional cook-room, to prepare warm drinks, for those who had been enjoying the bath. By the side of this apartment a door leads to a stair descending to the entrance of the hall below.

This lower room measures 39½ feet by 31 feet, and had evidently been filled up long before the one above it, and is consequently in a better state of preservation. It has been elaborately and very tastefully carved. On entering it we come on a platform on the left side, slightly raised and nearly square, with two short pillars on its west side, supporting a frame above, descending from the roof. What this was meant for is hard to say, unless the depression within was intended to be filled with cotton or other soft substance to form a dais or a seat.

Except on the west side, the remainder of the walls is surrounded by bench recesses, divided at regular intervals, as in the apartment above. Over these recesses the frieze is ornamented with Chaitya-windows having the Buddhist rail in the lower part of the opening, and two figures looking out of each; in many cases two females with something like "ears" on their head-dresses, but too indistinct to distinguish what they represent.

The four columns in the south end of this hall are larger than the two in front of the supposed dais, but the bases of all are alike; and the bodies of the capitals are similar. The rich bases have been already alluded to, and the drawing, where the original pattern has been truthfully restored from the different fragments still left entire, will give a better idea of them than could be done by any description.

The capital carved with lions couchant at the corners, and in the middle of each is a lion, facing outwards, with a human figure on each side of it. The body of the capital consists of eight divisions round, indicated by the breaks in the ledge at the bottom, on which the human figures of the different groups stand. Most, if not all, of the figures are females, nearly nude, and some standing under foliage. They have been cut with considerable spirit, and in high, almost entire, relief: unfortunately, many of them have been much damaged, some even since the room was excavated. In the two smaller columns, the principal member below the body of the capital is carved with the heads of animals, mostly elephants and goats or rams. On the larger columns, the corresponding member is not so deep, and is a serrated torus. At the back or west side of this hall are two small rooms; that on the south with a single door, the other with three entrances between jambs slightly advanced, and with a projecting frieze.

On the north side of this is an irregular excavation, These rooms could have been no part of a monastic establishment; and the example of the old Mehal, just to the north of this, suggests that they may have been either a sort of garden-house belonging to the palace, or possibly the bath and pleasure-house of another palace now interred under the debris that covers the whole of the Uparkoṭ. The style of carving is not unlike much that has been found about Maṭhura, and which I feel disposed to attribute to about the fourth century CE.

This cave is described here because locally it forms one of the group, but from its age, probably belonging to the fourth century, it belongs to the second division of Buddhist caves according to the classification. One of the largest of Talaja caves, the only one that now presents any remains of ornamentation, known as the Ebhal Maṇḍpa,(fig.5.6) and measures 75 feet by 67.5, and is 17.5 feet high. This large hall, without any cells in its sidewalls, has four octagonal pillars in front, but none inside to support the roof. The wall is absent that, at Ajaṇṭa and elsewhere, usually divides such excavations into an outer veranda and an inner hall. Probably it is a place of

assembly or religious instruction, or a *dharmashala*, to preach the doctrines to the people. Outside the entrance are wells or tanks on both sides, and several cells. On the facade of Ebhal mandapa, like Bava Pyara caves of Junagadh, the fragments of a very primitive form of chaitya-window ornament, the Buddhist rail pattern, are found but this is the only sculpture now traceable among these caves.

The others are small plain caves not meriting description. In one of them is a dagoba or stone cylinder with hemispherical top of a very simple type, the base only entire, and the remains of the *torana* or capital still attached to the flat roof of the cave. The dagoba and general arrangements of these caves are sufficient indications of their being Buddhist works; and though we have no very definite means of determining their antiquity, yet from the simplicity of their arrangements, and except that already mentioned on the facade of the Ebhal Maṇḍap from the entire absence of sculpture, such as is common in all the later Buddhist caves, we may relegate them to a very early age, possibly even to that of Aśoka or soon after.

Bodhisattvas, have achieved enlightenment but have chosen to stay in this world to help others, are important figures in Mahayana Buddhism. By contrast, Buddhas are defined as beings who have achieved enlightenment and entered *nirvana*. During the Kushan dynasty (c. 2nd century BC and 3rd century CE), sculptors developed distinct ways of depicting each of these figures. These visual cues allowed worshippers to identify whether a figure was of Buddha or of a bodhisattva. As the Buddhist pantheon expanded, artists developed more specific iconography for individual Buddhas and bodhisattva.

Buddhist Art and Iconography of Western India:

The study of the art and iconography of the Buddhist deities of western India, especially of Gujarat is in its infancy. With the exception of a few works of scholars, little has been written on the subject, and it is only by persistent research, and by a comparative study of the sculptures and paintings preserved in various museums of India as well as in the Buddhist cave temples of western India, that one can arrive at a comprehensive knowledge of Buddhist gods and their evolution during the process of transmission from northern India to western India.

Unlike earlier examples, figural sculpture of the Buddha became more common both in the *chaitya* and the *vihara* cells. At Ajanta, this was complemented by fresco paintings, many remarkable examples of which have survived to this date, demonstrating that mural painting also had a long tradition in India. Some Iconometric measurements have been given in the canons to carve a perfect piece of art from stone or in a painting.

Indian Canons of Iconometry

The Indian canons of iconometry or *pratima lakshana* follow a complex system called *talamana*²¹ for the measurement in correct proportion of an image or *pratima*, in which the basic units are called *angula* and *tala* and the latter stands for the length of the palm. The *angula* is either a fixed length (*manangulam*) or a proportion (*dehalabdhangulam*). A piece of sculpture may be made according to one of the ten main divisions of proportions. Each main division can be further subdivided into three other types. A basic type is the *madhya navatala* (or the standard nine face-length). The face is of length one *tala*, (or twelve *angulas*) the length from throat to navel is two *tala*, from navel to top of knee is three *tala*, from the lower knee to ankle is two *tala* making a total of eight *tala*. One *tala* is distributed equally between the heights of foot, knee, the neck and topknot. The *nava tala* thus has a total of nine *tala* units, in height (108 *angulas*). There are two other types in the *nava tala* division. The *uttama nava tala* type is four *angulas* taller and the *adhama nava tala* type is four *angulas* shorter. The four *angulas* are distributed evenly between the heights of the foot, the kneecap, the neck and the topknot. The *angula* unit (*dehalabdhangulam*) that we discuss here is a proportional unit, and figures of different sizes can be made following the same proportion. The system makes use of the fact that persons with disproportionately larger face length appear shorter and persons with disproportionately shorter face appear taller. Dwarf figures are made following a *chatusra tala* or a four *tala* system where the total height is four times the face length. Canons of iconometry describe ten divisions from the *eka tala* (or single *tala*) to *dasa tala* (or the ten *tala*).

We find that the surviving texts do not follow this system uniformly. A second system must have got superimposed on this ancient canonical system and both the systems are found in the texts. We shall illustrate with some examples of the possible origins

of this dual system of proportions in the texts. In Indian art the important figures in a group are often represented as taller figures and inferior beings are represented as smaller figures. To such smaller figures a lower *tala* is often prescribed. However, if both the larger and the smaller figures were to represent deities of equal rank (say Siva and Vishnu) then strictly speaking they should be made in the same proportion, or in other words in the same *tala*. To the sculptor then it would involve using different lengths to represent the *angula*—a larger size for the *angula* of the taller figures and a smaller size for the *angula* measure of the smaller figure and both figures may occur in the same sculptural panel. To overcome this difficulty sculptors would have recalculated the size of face, limbs etc., maintaining the same proportion for figures of different heights.

Taking the larger figure as standard and assuming that it is in standard *nava tala* it would have a height of 108 *angulas*. Other figures could be made in different sizes but in the same proportion. A shorter figure could be made in the same proportion but with a height of only 96 units where the unit may be equal to the *angula* of a standard *nava tala* figure. A much larger figure also made in the same proportion could be of height 120 *angulas* of the standard figure. Twelve *angulas* (10x12) make ten *talas* or *dasa tala*. This larger figure may be reckoned to be made according to the second system in *dasa tala* even though its proportions would be close to the standard *nava tala* figures. Then its face would not be 12 *angulas* but more. These examples illustrate the possible origin of the second system. This second system has also got mingled in the texts with the first system. When the proportions of a figure are given in *dasa tala* one has to check carefully whether it belongs to the first system or the second system. If it belongs to the first system, its face length would be 12 *angulas* irrespective of its total height. The existence of the two systems in the texts has not been fully realised so far by scholars. We shall call the first system the pure *tala mana* system and the second system the derived *tala mana* system.

The different texts give the iconometric measurement often using both the systems. The measurements relate to height, width and sometimes the circumference of the different parts of the figure. Even though there is a lot of variety in measurements between the different texts, we claim that there are certain common general features. First the face length is equally divided between the fore-head, nose and nose-to-chin irrespective of the system. Secondly the pubis (base of the male organ) is the midpoint

of the height of a nude figure. In other words the distance from the sole of the feet to the pubis is equal to the distance from the pubis to the topknot. Thirdly deities are prescribed a higher *tala* compared to human figures. One may interpret it as belonging to the pure *talamana* system or the derived system depending upon the text as well as the theme. Fourthly children will be represented in a lower *tala* like the *chatusra tala* (four *tala*) of the pure system. The face length will be comparatively large for children. There are a few exceptions to the general features that we have described but we are not sure of the authenticity of such texts.

In *Shilpa - Shastra* the *madhyama navatala* (standard height of nine-face lengths) is normally used for images of celestial beings such as Yakshas, (fig.5.34) Apsaras and Vidhyadharas. Here, the height of the image would be nine talas (with each *tala* divided into 12 *angulas*) or a total height of 108 *angulas*. The *angula* (literally 'finger') is a finger's width and measures one quarter of the width of the shilpi's fist. The value of the *angula* so derived becomes a fixed length (*manangulam*), for all practical purposes, for that image. All other measurements of the image are in terms of that unit. The text describes the characteristic features of the five categories of men.

- i. Hamsa (108 *angulas*) should be strong, with arms resembling the king of serpents, with moon-white complexion, having sweet eyes set in a good-looking face; and with lion-like waist and swan-like majestic gait. The deities are depicted in Hamsa category of style.
- ii. Bhadra (106 *angulas*) is learned, is of the colour of lotus; with full grown tapering round arms, hairy cheeks and elephant like step. The rishis, gandharvas, vidhyadharas, ministers and family priests are depicted under this category.
- iii. Malavya (104 *angulas*) is dark like a mudga –pulse (kidney bean?), good looking ; with a slender waist, arms reaching up to the knees, broad shoulders, broad jawas and a prominent nose like that of an elephant. The kinnaras, nagas, rakshasas and domestic women are depicted under Malavya category.
- iv. Ruchaka (100 *angulas*) is high souled, truthful and clever. He is of autumn-white complexion and strong with a conch-like neck. Yakshas, vaishyas and prostitutes are depicted under this category. And,
- v. Sasaka (90 *angulas*) is clever reddish dark and of a slightly spotted colour; with full cheeks and sweet eyes. The tribal chiefs and sudras are depicted as Sasaka.

As regards the female figures, they too fall under each of the above five categories. The figures of corresponding category (say Hamsa, Bhadra etc.) too should be depicted in proportions that are applicable to that category. But the size of the female figures should be smaller than of the male figures appearing on the same canvass or surface. Her height should be made to reach the shoulder of the man placed near her, in proportion. Her waist should be two angulas thinner than that of a man. On the other hand, her hips should be made wider by four angulas. The breasts should be rendered soft, charming and proportionate to her chest.

The finished mastery in execution and the majestic serenity of expression of the image of Buddha came to be adopted and locally modified by Siam, Cambodia, Burma, Java, Central Asia, China and Japan, etc., when these countries adopted the Buddhist religion.

Sculptures

Current research indicates that Buddha images in a portable form, made of wood or stone, were introduced, for the first time, at Kanheri, to be followed soon at Ajanta Cave- 8 according to Dhavalikar, Jadhav, Spink, Singh. While the Kanheri sculptural art dates to 4th or 5th century CE, the Ajanta's has been dated to c. 462–478 CE (Spink). The Buddha figure or the image of the Buddha appears only after the 2nd century C.E. And therefore one is really surprised to see that in the whole multitude of the members of his family, his associates and direct disciples the host of divine and semi-divine demi-gods and gods perched on their flying mounts or the gods accompanying him on the ladders of semi-precious stones visiting village deities who suddenly appear in human forms in folded hands or surrounded by the inimical fierce looking members of the army of the Mara or approached by Nagas and elephants in a forest or even in very sombre scene of his renouncement, he is not to be seen. His presence is suggested by the parasol and chauris, by the wheel of law, the Peepal tree under which he sat before his enlightenment and the Stupa itself that carried his carnal remains in its womb. Prof. Vidya Dehejia calls this phenomenon as his Unseen Presence. It is only during the Kushana period that his figure or image appears on their coins, on the casket carrying his relics, in narrative panels and as an image that is offered worship in a monastery.

Indian figurative art is therefore not mere portraiture of the specific; but is a symbol pointing to a larger principle. The image or the painting of the Buddha could be seen as that of the Buddha the historical prince Siddhartha Gautama and Sakyamuni. But, it is more than that. The Buddha –figure is the embodiment of all the compassion, pathos, and grace in absolute. Often, certain symbols surrounding the Buddha-image are meant to express its message. For instance, the idea of reverence and holiness could be represented sometimes by the Bodhisattvas gods and goddesses, surrounding vegetation, flora, fauna, *yakshas*, *gandharvas*, and *apsaras* each playing a specific role in a narrative way as the narration of the *Jataka* stories at Ajanta; or it may be the simple statement of peace and enlightenment suggested through the symbols of the Buddha such as the Bodhi tree, seat, umbrella, sandals, footprints etc. The Buddha image is, thus, at once particular and universal. The spirit and soul of the Buddha is contained in the body of the particular but impersonalized form; the serene mood of compassion it portrays is everlasting and universal.

Bhaja Cave 18, is remarkable for sculptural representations on the right wall of the veranda, identified as (fig.5.40) Brahmanical deities. One shows a royal figure driving a chariot through the skies. The horses trample underfoot a large, misshapen demonic figure. This may be the earliest surviving depiction of Surya, representing the sun, who vanquishes the demon of darkness.

The sculpted figures of Kanheri (fig.5.53) display the robust health and vitality of the earlier figures at Karle. The style of the sculpture also has similarities with the contemporaneous art of the Mathura region in northern India.

At Pitalkhora caves, the panel on the right wall has been identified by scholars as the earliest known depiction of Indra, who rides an elephant. As in other reliefs of the Sunga period, the carving here is not very deep. The style is very similar to the moulded terracotta of this period. The elaborate headdresses, garlands and jewellery are typical. It is important to remember that, as with other early Indian sculptures, these would originally have been covered with plaster and painted. Indra continued to be popular in Buddhist art in subsequent centuries. He is also depicted as the one who, along with Brahma, receives Siddhartha on a cloth when he is born from the side of Queen Mahamaya.

At Kondane caves, in Maharashtra, the figures have been delicately modelled and are graceful. There is a sense of natural ease in the depictions of these times. The men and women Youthfulness and vitality of the figures and their animals, are beautifully depicted at a great height, on the pillars in the front of the magnificent chaitya-griha at Bedsa. The style of the figures here has similarities with the contemporaneous sculpture of the Mathura region of northern India. The men and the women have a sense of the breath and movement of life. They display individual postures and have gentle expressions. Colossal Buddhas, who are later additions to the chaityas, of Ajanta are of the 5th or the 6th century. Later caves at this site present the pantheon of deities of the subsequent period of Buddhism.

In course of my research here, it is not my objective to take a survey of the Indian figural and decorative sculpture. Theoretically speaking, scholars like Coormarswamy, Bhandarkar and others do not make divisions of Indian art such as Buddhist, Hindu or Jaina. As such there won't be any figural or decorative sculpture which can be called as Buddhist as such. There are ways of human form, conceived and depicted in a given period such as Maurya, Shunga or Gupta. But sometimes you can make an observation as done by Coomaraswamy, that the Shunga art is an art full of vegetation. Thereby he means that in case there is some empty space left in the composition, say of a sculptural panel then it is covered by vegetation. Before the *Chitrastotra* developed the conventions regarding Talamana in connection with different types of human or other figures that are part of a composition, the things were apparently left to contemporary conventions. They become standardized during the Gupta period.

Human figures do occur in the Gupta period. Human figures do occur in compositions that are basically religious and divine for example in many of the intrusive images at Ajanta, the figures of *upasakas* do appear though in a very small scale. But there are sometimes assemblages of *upasakas* that are introduced dramatically in a *garbhagriha* along the side walls as in the case of some of the caves at Ajanta and Aurangabad are some decorative motifs that do occur in Maurya, Shunga, and Gupta period. Very noteworthy instances appear on the exterior of the stupas of Gupta period. The festoons that encircle the top portion of *anda*, the medallions that decorate the crossbars of the railings attract the attention of even a casual visitor. But when it comes to the sculpted and painted motifs at Ajanta especially that decorate the pillars

and the ceilings are exceptional. Lotus medallion is a motif that features from very early times in Indian Art but their expression on the ceilings at Ajanta is simply unique. It is perhaps because of the vagaries of nature that the evidence in paint has disappeared at other places.

It is sometimes surprising to see, as in Cave no. 1 that even crowns could be a decorative element besides the very common decorative elements such as the *Kalamukha*, *Makaratorana* and the *Ganas*. All these decorative patterns get altogether a different level of significance when these are painted. For e.g., the round and square design or the round and diamond design can be identified as the *Marakatamanikya* pattern because of the colour that these geometrical patterns carry. It would be a completely independent subject to discuss, if the variety of *vyalas* such as *Manushya*, *Purusha*, *Hasti*, *Simha* and others are put to scrutiny from the art historical point of view. However the stupas, *Chaityagrihas* and *viharas* can be said to be the main components of the Buddhist architecture. One more can be added and i.e., the ancient bund which is the only piece of this type of architecture in the Buddhist context. The specimen is from Kanheri of a bund made of stones to make an artificial dam to provide perennial water for the cave complex downstream. This dam was constructed by one Purna, a lay follower in 2nd -3rd century C.E.

Aurangabad caves III was earlier to cave I. In Cave III the artist seems to have decorated with surprisingly neat and organized designs of fretwork, scrolls, panel of couples, tassels, flowers, geometrical designs, and highest point of perfection and consummation."²²The Buddhist Rock-cut caves in Gujarat are among the most ancient to be found in India, as well as the most numerous, they are far from possessing the same interest that attaches to many of the other groups found elsewhere. There is not among the 140 caves in this district one single Chaitya cave that can for one instant be compared with the great caves of this class that exist on the other side of the Gulf of Cambay. There are numerous cells, which may be called chapels, 15 to 20 feet in depth, containing *dagobas*, but in most cases without internal pillars or ornament of any sort. The *Viharas*, too, are generally either single cells or small groups of cells, with a pillared veranda, but seldom, if ever, surrounding a hall, or having any important architectural combination. Sometimes, indeed, the excavations are expanded into halls of considerable dimensions, 50 or 60 feet square, but then generally without cells or pillars. They seem, in fact, to have been plain meeting

houses or *dharmasalas*, and these type of caves are devoid of all ornamentation and are of the plainest kind, and what sculpture is found upon them, does not represent any religious belonging.

The Iconography of seated Buddha of the Mathura school was contemporaneous with a second important school of Kushān art, that of Gandhāra in the northwest, which shows strong Greco-Roman influence. About the 1st century CE each area appears to have evolved separately its own representations of the Buddha. The sculptors of Mathura school were inspired by the earlier yaksha (male nature deity) figures, and this is evident in the colossal standing Buddha images of the early Kushan period resemble the yaksha images as the shoulders of Buddha image are broad, the chest swells, and the legs are firmly planted with feet spaced apart. Other characteristics are the shaven head; the ushnisha (bun of hair) indicated by a tiered spiral; a round smiling face; the right arm raised in abhaya-mudra; the left arm akimbo or resting on the thigh; the drapery closely molding the body and arranged in folds over the left arm, leaving the right shoulder bare; and the presence of the lion throne rather than the lotus throne. Later, the hair began to be treated as a series of short flat spirals lying close to the head, the type that came to be the standard representation throughout the Buddhist world.

We can observe the folds of robe finely carved. Most of the earliest known images of Buddhas and other Buddhist deities were produced in northwest India during the Kushan period about six hundred years after the religion was founded. The Kushans descendants of nomads from various parts of Central Asia had settled in parts of Bactria to the northwest of India and ultimately used this stronghold to form an empire that included eastern Parthia the Kabul Valley the Gandhara region of present-day Pakistan and parts of Kashmir and northern India. Although the exact dates of the Kushan period remain controversial it is now generally agreed that the 1st through 3rd centuries CE encompass the height of their rule.

There were two major centers of Kushan culture each with its distinctive style: art from the region of Gandhara shows the impact of Hellenistic and Roman sculpture owing in part to the sustained effect of Alexander the Great in that part of the world while art from the city of Mathura in Uttar Pradesh displays a traditional Indian aesthetic. Whereas Gandharan art had a strong influence on early Buddhist art in

Central Asia and is also briefly reflected in the earliest Chinese Buddhist material. Mathuran art had a more profound impact on the development of Buddhist art in India and Southeast Asia.

This large standing Buddha which can be dated to the late 2nd or early 3rd century CE typifies the art of Gandhara. The Buddha wears the traditional garments of an Indian monk: a long cloth known as a dhoti wrapped around the waist is covered by a large shawl draped over his shoulders a portion of which is held in his left hand. The hem of the skirtlike dhoti is lower than that of the shawl helping to distinguish the two garments. Western prototypes are evident in the series of thick heavy folds that obscure the underlying physique as well as the treatment of the Buddha's facial features and his wavy hair.

Some Basic Iconographic Elements of Buddha Images

Iconography is the study of the imagery or symbolism of art. To understand how to read the iconography it will be better to understand the message that the work conveys. In Indian art, divine images, icons of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and other deities are typically represented in a frontal, static and symmetrical way. The icon communicates to the viewer through a symbolic, pictorial language of postures, gestures, bodily marks, and associated objects. Every icon carries with it a set of symbols from this pictorial language which conveys to the viewer the meaning of the icon.

Signs of this pictorial language include:

- Posture of sitting body (asana).
- Posture of standing (sthana)
- Position of the hands (mudra).
- Position of the arms (hasta)
- Sacred bodily marks of the Buddha (laksana)
- Attributes -- objects held by or belonging to the figure

By observing these symbols we can identify or differentiate individual Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and other divine beings and denote an entire catalogue of associations. In particular, in this section we will examine in detail the symbols of *mudra*, *asana*,

lakshana, and attributes. This will help us to become more familiar with images of western Indian art.

The Iconography of Buddha Figure from Gujarat

Representations of Buddha figures may be widely diverse in style but will generally have a core set of iconographic features in common. Some of these iconographic elements are associated with the Buddha's figures special physical marks (*lakshanas*). The most common and significant of these are the *urna*, the *ushnisha*, and the elongated earlobes. Other iconographic features include specific symbolic hand gestures (*mudra*) and seat positions (*asana*). *Chhatra* (umbrella), *Prabhamandala* (Halo), *Ushnisha* (bun of hair), *Urna* (tuft of white hair or a mark on the forehead or the third eye) calm facial expressions, usually left shoulder or both the shoulders covered with a robe, different Mudras (symbolic gestures of hands), different sitting postures as- vajrasana, ardhaparyankasana, pralambhpada etc. and standing postures are the significant iconographical features for Buddha images.

Lakshana: 32 lakshanas or special bodily features and 80 minor characteristics have been referred in Agams and other pali canons. are important part of the iconography of Buddha. Some of these are symbols of various aspects of the Buddha's spiritual character whilst others present the concept of his beautiful and perfectly proportioned body that is an outer reflection of inner spiritual power. These lakshana can be noticed in the ancient Indian concept of the Mahapurusha or 'Cosmic Being'²³ A samabhanga (standing) bronze image of Buddha have been found from Vala, belongs to Ancient western Indian school of Art. The image confirms the prevalence of the western Indian school of sculpture. Both in metal and stone and images have been found from several sites of western India which represent the art of 6th -12th century CE. The bronze figure from Bhuj has all the iconographic elements. Buddha in this figure standing with the hand gesture of *abhaya mudra*. Facial expressions are wearing a calm smile as usual. Ushnisha with curly hair, Urna between the eyebrows, elongated earlobes and half closed eyes are the essential features of the image. It looks like a miniature copy of colossal standing Buddha images of Ajanta. A thread like line is from the left shoulder to the right side of waist is supposed to be *yagyopavita*[#] # Majumdar M.R., Chronology of Gujarat, 2010,p.215. but it should be the line of a side of the robe which is depicted here hanging from the left side from the waist up to

the ankle. Though there are several examples of Buddha and other Buddhist deities wearing yagyopavita in Orissa especially in Orissa state museum and at Ajanta cave no.22. The image is inscribed at the pedestal in the Brahmi characters of 7th century. The description about a Bhikshu Nagasingh who dedicated the image in memory of mother-like Bhikshuni.

Art and Iconography of Tara from Gujarat

I used elements of visual analysis to compare how the human form or other decorative forms are represented in these different sculptures and then relate these differences to the context in which they were made. Several images of Buddha, Avalokiteshvara, Tara were carved in Western India. Many intrusive sculptures have been carved on the plain walls of the early caves and can be dated stylistically to the 5th to 8th century CE. Panels such as the 'Litany of Avalokiteshwara' panel, Manushi Buddhas panels, trinity panels, Shravasti miracle panels, panels of Mortal and based on the *jatakas* and scenes from Buddha's life are the beautiful and fine examples of Buddhist sculptural art. Many caves of western India are blessed with sculptural decoration.

As far as Buddhist art of Gujarat is concerned, Gujarat is not so much blessed with the sculptural art and painting. A few specimens are there in Gujarat at Khambalida caves, the life size sculptures of Avalokiteshwara, images of Tara at Taranga hills of Mehsana, bronze images of Buddha kept in Museums, a beautiful image of Simhanada Avalokiteshwara kept in Gandhi Smriti museum of Bhavnagar and terracotta images of Buddha found from the Buddhist sites of Gujarat such as Devni Mori and Vadnagar Buddhist Monastery.

The study shows the addition of many iconographic styles from Khambalida to the last Buddhist cave of Maharashtra and vice-versa due to movement of skilled sculptors and craftsmen among these Buddhist sites of western India.

Many iconographical features were added and changed due to the durability and condition of rock at all sites. The criterion for including an icon in this work has been whether or not it was found within Gujarat and Maharashtra at its greatest extent during 1st century B.C. to 8th century CE. The method of deciding what sculpture or painting to include and the term "Buddhist Iconography" to designate it, appears to have been vindicated by the observation of icons and styles shown in these art pieces.

The images of Buddhist deities found at Ajanta, Ellora and the cave temples of Western India show signs of immature *tantra* and may be assigned to a period before the 7th century CE although some of the paintings and sculptures are of long antiquity. It does not seem that the *tantras* were very popular with the Buddhists of Western India or that they were influenced by the teachings of the *tantra* which was mainly a product of Eastern India.²³

Taranga is a three peaked hill in the Mehsana District of Gujarat. On the peaks above, there are tiny white *chhatris* and a little shrine to Devi Tarana mata from whom the village derives its name. Dr. Gadre found nine Buddhist images including one of Avalokiteshwara Padmapani from the site. One standing image of Tara (locally being worshipped as Taran Mata belonging to the period of c. 2nd-3rd century CE) and next to the cave cum temple another important image of Tara (being worshipped as Dharan Mata) has been found. Below the Dharan Mata image on the pedestal was found the Buddhist creed inscribed in characters of c. 9th - 10th century CE. Therefore, the image belongs to the period of Gurjar-Pratihara as having features and attributes of ancient Western Indian art. The idols in the temples of Taranmata and Dharanmata are basically of Buddhist goddess Tara. There are a few images found from here and the broken terracotta images of Buddha, four carved images of Dhyani Buddha on a stone plate, stone and brick walls inside rock shelters are some of them.

I am explaining here the Buddhist deity Tara through these sadhanas concluded in Sadhanmala. The Mahayana Buddhist goddess Tara is conceived as saving her devotees 'from eight terrors' (Ashtamahabhaya). Mahayana or Vajrayana goddess concepts seem to have influenced the iconography of some Hindu goddesses. For example In Hindu Tantras goddess Tara's attributes and iconography seem to have been influenced by the Buddhist Tara.

Tara probably entered Buddhism around the sixth century CE. According to Buddhist tradition, Tara was born out of the tears of compassion of the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara. Tara is also the consort of Avalokiteshvara.

The first one image of Tara (fig.5.46) is found in standing posture. In a manuscript of 11th century from Bengal '*Prajnaparamita*' its description has been given as: "Latadeshe Tarapure Tara" (A picture of the deity has also been given. The right hand of the image is downwards and the left hand is holding a lotus. It is carved out of

basalt stone. Its features are not so clear and as the image is being worshipped, it is not possible to examine it. As far as my observation is, it belongs to 2nd-3rd century CE.

The second image known as Dharan Mata (fig.5.44) is seated in Lalitasana (the diamond lotus position). Her posture is one of grace and calm. Her right hand makes the boon-granting gesture and her left hand is in the protective mudra. In her left hand, Tara holds an elaborate lotus flower that contains three blooms. A long stem observing the remaining part of the image. The first is in seed and represents the past Buddha Kashyapa; the second is in full bloom and symbolizes the present Buddha Shakyamuni; the third is ready to bloom and signifies the future Buddha Maitreya. These three blooms symbolize that Tara is the essence of the three Buddhas. Hair style and the crown is very beautiful. An important feature of the image is its ornamentation. We see a *hasli* a thick garland long enough to go through the breasts up to the navel. Dhyanī Buddha (Amitabha) is seated on the lotus seat on a very thick lotus stem surrounded by lotus leaves within the *abhamandala* or halo.

Tara's sitting under Amitabha Buddha instead of Avalokiteshwara shows Tara's origin from Amitabha Buddha not from Avalokiteshwara. Both the sides of Amitabha Buddha there are garland bearers and below the seated Amitabha Buddha. There are images of Avalokiteshwara on the right side and Vajrapani on the left side. Dr. Gadre interprets the images as Maitreya who holds flower. Gadre even recognises the flower as Nagkeser? According to Gadre: if it is right then on the right hand side of Tara there should be the images of Mahamayuri and on left side under Vajrapani there should be Jangulini. We also see in the image Hayagreeva holding *danda* in his hand. Hayagreeva is under the image of Mahamayuri. Devi's left side we see there the image of Ekjata having four hands seems sitting on a tiger. She holds in her right hands bows and arrows.

This image of Tara is a fine specimen of sculptural art of 8th -11th century CE of Gujarat. It is beautifully carved out of schist stone. A perfect feminine body has been carved, in a correct proportion that makes it lively. Tara is sitting in a *Lalitasana* a comfortable posture. Though we cannot see its original facial expressions due to the changes made by local people such as eyes lips etc. yet other features are quite visible to evaluate the image from the artistic point of view. The deity is ornamented with intricate carving of ornaments from the coiffure till the ankles. The sculptor has

carved even a thin cloth from her waist which is noticeable. The breasts slightly turned and lifted to the left shows the position of waist and breast changes according to the sitting posture. Not only the image of Tara, in the *mandal* (group) of Tara and other deities is beautiful but other deities of the *mandal* also have been carved beautifully.

Gadre assumes her as Varad Tara. Most important the symbols of Buddhism have been carved under the seat of Tara. These are :-*Chakra* (wheel of Dharma or religion), *Hasti* (elephant), *Ashwa* (horse), *Mani* (rubi), *stri* (lady), *Grihpati* (man) and Parinayak or *parichayak* (servant).with an Inscription of the famous Buddhist lines :

Ye dharma hetu prabhava hetu tesham Tathagato I

Tesham cha yo nirodh evam vadi mahashramanah II

According to the language and dialect it must belong to 8th- 10th century CE.

The Art and Iconography of Manjusri and Avalokiteshwara Padmapani at Khambhalida, Gujarat;

The Buddha image is seldom represented alone. Often Buddha is accompanied by at least two Bodhisattvas. One of these Avalokiteshwara Padmapani. Iconographic representation of Avalokiteshwara as an ascetic appears to have established early in the Buddhist caves of western India.

Padmapani, as a name for Lokeshvara, is very much a Sanskrit term coming out of the Sutra and Mahayana tradition of Buddhism. The common Sanskrit names for the deity in Vajrayana Buddhism are Lokeshvara, Avalokita, Avalokiteshwara, Lokanata and Mahakarunika. Later there are several names for specific forms of Lokeshvara - peaceful, wrathful and in-between have been given. It is interesting to note that in the study of Art history the term Padmapani is almost exclusively used with reference to sculpture and not painting. The general description of Padmapani is of an attendant of Buddha, peaceful male deity, seated or standing, wearing a crown, jewels and heavenly garments, holding a flower, or stem of a flower in the left hand that blossoms at the level of the shoulder. Peaceful deity appearance and bodhisattva appearance are the same. Any figure that fits this description could also be called a

'lotus holder' without drawing a connection to Lokeshvara. It is common practice to identify any figure described in this way as a Padmapani even if it is not.

The sculptor and the patron are very particular so the Lokeshvara form has a deerskin over the left shoulder and Amitabha Buddha on the crown of the head. Manjushri will have a sword or book. Vajrapani will have a vajra scepter in hand or placed atop a flower blossom. Maitreya will have a water flask, stupa or wheel. The remaining four of the Eight Bodhisattvas will appear in a generic way as simply a peaceful deity holding a flower blossom in the left hand. The Sixteen Great Bodhisattvas are treated in a similar way with the most well known of the figures having a recognizable attribute with the remainder in a generic form. This also holds for paintings where the bodhisattvas are commonly depicted such as when accompanying Amitabha Buddha in the pureland of Sukhavati. Ellora caves appear to be a unique example of iconography in progress not only in Buddhist context but in Hindu and Jain also.

The only rock-cut sculptural evidences of Buddhism in Gujarat are there at Khambalida caves, two life size Images carved at the entrance of the chaitya hall. According to the iconographic features these images are of Bodhisattvas, one is Avalokiteshwara Padmapani and the other is Vajrapani. It is difficult to identify the image of Vajrapani because the images are badly eroded, thus, attributes of the image are not very clear.

While examining I observe the image I found some attributes of Manjusri (fig.5.51). First, I noticed that the jatamukuta of the image resembles with that of Manjusri. Though other attributes are not very clear to identify the image. Within jatamukuta an image of Amitabha Buddha is also carved. To identify the image I studied Sadhanmala where I found the description of Manjusri with his Mandala. All Bodhisattvas have their accompanying deity/deities.

The mandala correlates with the description given in Sadhanmala²⁴:

Peetavarnam vyakhyanamudradharam ratnabharanam ratnamukutinam
vamenotpalam simhasanastham akshobhyakrantamaulinam chandrasanam
chandraprabham bhavayedatmanam l

*Tato dakshin parshwe sunkarbeejasambhavam sudhankumaram
nanaratnabharanojjwalam ratnamukutinam sarvadharmekapustakakakshnikshiptam
samputanjali purvakam tishthet l*

*Vamaparshwe yamarihi krishnavarnahukarbeejodbhavah vikritananah mungarhastah
pingordhakeshah nagabharanbhushitah l Tato dakshinaparshwe chandraprabha
suryaprabhou purvadidigbhage vairochanaratnasambhavamitabhamoghasiddhayah,
aagneyadikoneshu lochana-mamaki-paandara-tarashcheti l*

According to the dictum the principal figure, Manjusri wears ratnamukuta (crown of jewels) sits on a seat of lotus. According to the figures of mandala the principal image should be identified as that of Manjusri. Manjusri in the mandala has been shown as of Yellow complexion, in vyakhyana mudra. In the left of Manjusri there are Chandraprabha in devotional attitude and in the right Sudhanakumara holding a sacred book of all religions and a ratnamukuta on his head. In front of the left side of Manjusri there are Yamari who is ugly and of black complexion, and in front of the right side Chandraprabh and Suryaprabha.

Four Dhyani Buddhas except Akshobhya with their Shaktis or consorts are also there. Other figures are of *ganas* and devotees.

Though Manjusri 's other attributes like sword and book are not seen in this mandala or panel yet this is very clear after keeping in mind, other figures and attributes like Sudhanakumara holding a big book in the right side of Manjusri, that this is Manjusri for sure.

Iconography of Avalokiteshwara Padmapani

The entrance of the *chaityagriha* of Khambalida caves is flanked with two sculptural carvings of Bodhisattva Avalokiteshwara Padmapani(fig.5.52) and Vajrapani with their mandala. These figures of Avalokiteshara and Vajrapani can be clearly identified on the basis of sculptural parallels from Mathura art and the Bodhisattva figures from western Indian Buddhist caves. The figures are weathered due to waters in the area. Their facial expressions are totally absent due to erosion. The figure represented here corresponds to the description for Avalokiteshwara Padmapani and Vajrapani given in Sadhanmala²⁵. The description is:

*Sa cha sharatkandgaurah jatamukuti shirasi amitabhdhari sarvalankarbhushitah
ratnasimhasanopari sasradalapadmasthah lalitakshepah dwibhujai kamukhah vamen
padmadhari dakshinenamritdharaswadwaradah satvaparyankasinah l agratastara
kanakashyamavarna unnatapinapayodhara sarvalankarabhushita
utpalakalikasannakaradwayarpitanetra l*

*tadanu sudhanakumarah kanakojjwalah ratnabharno ratnamakuti
vamakakshavasaktakamalakah kritanjali putah l*

*tadanu bhrikuti jatamukutini murghni chaityalankrita kanakojjwala
raktavastraparidhana dakshinahastena namaskaram kurvana aparenakshamaladhara
vamarabhyam tridandikamandaluvyagra l*

*tadanu hayagrivo jwaladbhasurah pingalorghkeshah nagabharano raktavarnah
lambodaro vyaghracharmambarah dandahastah levam panchatmakoh bhagavana
bhavaniyah saparivarah pujayitavyoapyevamvidhah*

We can identify Avalokiteshwara according to the Iconography given in this verse. Two female figures are standing by both the sides of the principal figure. As sadhanmala gives the reference of Avalokiteshwara having jatamukuta (head dress made by hair and jewels) in which an image of Amitabha is seen. He is fully ornamented and sitting in lalitasana on the seat of jewels and lion (ratnasimhasana).He has two arms and one face and holding lotus in his left hand.

Tara of black and golden complexion is standing on his right side with full youth. To his left there is Bhrikuti with jatamukuta on her head and joined hands in namaskara gesture.

Sudhanakumar is standing on right side holding lotus in his left hand and on the left side hayagriva is standing whose stomach is big and hair is yellow. His look is wrathful.

Though the facial expressions of mandala are not clear due to erosion but we can trace the deities according to their appearance. This identification can be applied for other forms of Lokeshwara.

Figure of Tara is almost eroded but Bhrikuti can be seen easily. On the background of the mandala a tree is carved and it is in good condition. Devotees are also in the first

row. Therefore, it is a beautiful mandala panel. Khambalida caves belong to circa 5th -7th century CE.

At Ajanta, Ellora and Kanheri there are various depictions of Avalokiteshwara. At Kanheri there is a beautiful image of eleven headed Avalokiteshwara. This special feature, given to Avalokiteshwara, perhaps to show his might or to show him as omnipotent god. In cave 67 at Kanheri in a panel both the Bodhisattvas are depicted as chauri-bearers or as attendant to Buddha. In cave no.3, 67, 89, and 90 Avalokiteshwara is depicted without lotus in his hand. Sometimes other attributes are added to the deity such as rosary and water-flask etc.

As in this panel Avalokiteshwara is attended by the female deities in the same way In Kanheri, and caves of Maharashtra he is shown being attended by Tara and other female deities. There are five panels of Bodhisattvas and Taras at Kanheri. In the panels, Avalokiteshwara is flanked with two female deities. Tara can be identified as she holds full bloom lotus with a long stem and the other have been identified by Gokhale as Bhrikuti. Iconographic development of the deities can be seen at Kanheri because the Buddhist settlement belong to late Hinayana period to late Mahayana Period

The Art and Iconography of Simhanada Avalokiteshwara

This beautiful Image of Simhanada Avalokiteshwara has been kept in Bhavnagar, Gandhi smriti museum. More information about where it has been found from is not available. Here I will discuss its artistic and Iconographic features.

Two bodhisattvas are identified by the fact that they, at times, ride lions: one is Manjushri, the bodhisattva of wisdom, who is frequently shown on this mount; the other is Avalokiteshwara, who sits a lion in the Simhanada form, or Avalokiteshwara of the Lion's Roar. In both, the roar symbolizes the intensity of the moment of enlightenment. The lion's recumbent pose and the position of the bodhisattva, who is riding sidewise, suggest that this sculpture can be identified as Simhanada Avalokiteshwara,(fig.5.54) although the requisite seated Buddha in the headdress is missing. Moreover, the raised right and pendant lower leg are often found in representations of Bodhisattva Avalokiteshwara, who takes the pose in the well-known Water Moon form, in China the most popular manifestation of this bodhisattva after

the tenth century. The earliest textual reference to this rare form of Avalokiteshvara is found in the Sadhanas, the great iconographic compendium assembled by the Indian monk Abhayakaragupta in the eleventh century. This form of the Bodhisattva of Compassion is thought to have had the ability to heal diseases. A few Indian examples showing this form of the bodhisattva are found from the eleventh and twelfth century.

*Simhanadabhattarakam Shweta jatamukutinam trinetram dwibhujam
tapaswiveshadharam maharajalilaya sthitam vamahastadutthitapadmopari
jwaldumrghakhangam dakshine sitatrishulam sitafaniveshtitam vame
nanasugandhipushpeh purnam shwetakapalam amitabhamukutinam
sfuratapanchatathagatam mahanirmanarupinam dhyayat.*⁷

"...red lotus with eight petals, above, ... a white lion with the head pointed to the right and the face looking in an upward direction; with red hair hanging down and adorned with jewel ornaments. Above that, ... is a moon disc, above is ... the Lord Simhanada, with a body white in colour, one face, two arms. The right hand is in the gesture of giving refuge extended above the right knee. The left is supported on the seat behind the back. Slightly to the right of the body, not touching is a green trident raised upward with a white snake entwined. On the left side, above a white lotus is a sword blazing with fire and a white skull cup filled with various sweet smelling flowers. With the skin of a *krishnasara* covering the left breast; having a lower garment of red silk and a Brahmin cord, without all the other ornaments, having the vestments of an ascetic, seated with the two feet in the manner of royal ease."

The image of Simhanada Avalokiteshwara is a beautiful image from the artistic point of view. The image is carved out of basalt stone. The image's length is about 12' and width about 6'. The deity is sitting in a relaxed position on a full-bloomed Lotus seat (simhasana) which is situated on the back of two sitting lions. There is an image of stupa on the right side of the deity. The deity is in relaxed mood with half closed eyes. Amitabha Buddha can be seen in the jatamukuta (crown made of hair). However, some of the attributes are absent such as trident and skull-cup but the basic features are the same. This image belongs to 10th -12th century CE observing its style. Simhanada Avalikiteshwara images are found in Bengal belonging to Pal period.

Buddhist Rock-Paintings in Gujarat and Maharashtra

There are, in all, seven depictions of stupas chiselled and painted on the inner vertical surface of the rock- shelters of Gambhirpur near Idar of Gujarat. These rock - paintings show signatory association with religious, cultural and artistic activities of the region. In shelter - 15 the stupa is painted with geru (red soil used to colour). It is flanked by chhatra- yashti (umbrella). The pataka is drawn with red lines. Shelter - 15 is not well preserved. The stupa was outlined with red colour and painted white inside. Artistically shelter number 14 and 15 have finer paintings than that of other shelters paintings. The harmikas and chhatra-yashtis are drawn finely. The *chhatra* has been drawn in moon shape. Shelter - 16 has three stupa figures. These stupa figures are important as we can get an idea of contemporary stupas. For red colour *geru* and for white colour perhaps limestone has been used to paint the figures of stupa. There are a few words in Brahmi letters can be discerned above it. Paleographically examining these letters we can assigned these paintings to the period of 4th – 5th century CE.

Although no actual specimen has survived in Gujarat, the literary and circumstantial evidence also make a silence for the existence of painting in the province during the ancient period. The most ancient surviving discourse on the art of painting in the Sanskrit language by common scholarly consensus was compiled in Kashmir. This is the famous Chitrasutra of the *Vishṇudharmottarapurāṇa*, most likely redacted not later than the seventh century. It is the most comprehensive text on the theory and practice (as well as Brahmanical iconography) of the visual arts, particularly painting, that we have from ancient India. Most of the caves of Gujarat belong to Hinayana phase. And in western India Painting occurred in Mahayana phase as we can see in the caves of Maharashtra.

In this research I am analyse the murals of Ajanta, Pitalkhora and Kanheri caves of Maharashtra. Ajanta is the most ornamented cave to have marvellous paintings. Painting is a very complicated art. But in comparison with murals the technique of murals is complicated.

All the murals, of the Ajanta caves date from nearly 600 years later, during a second phase of construction. India was at the height of all art in the reign of fifth-century Gupta dynasty. The age is said India's golden age, when in the Gangetic plain, some of the greatest master pieces of Indian sculptures had been chiselled and Kalidasa was

writing his great plays. This period dates the rich picture cycles of wall painting in caves one and two. Here among handsome princes and bare-chested nobles, princesses with tiaras of jasmine languish love-lorn on swings and couches, while narrow-waist dancing girls of extraordinary sensuousness, dressed only in their jewels and girdles, perform beside lotus ponds. Very different images of stark ascetic renunciation – a shaven-headed orange-robed monk lost in meditation, a hermit seeking salvation or a group of wizened devotees straining to hear the words of their teacher also have been painted. But the portraits of bodhisattvas of otherworldly beauty, elegance and compassion, eyes half-closed, swaying on the threshold of enlightenment, are dominating and caught in what the great historian of Indian art, Stella Kramrisch, wonderfully described as "a gale of stillness".

Cave 10 contains a supreme treasure that has only recently been identified: fragments of the oldest surviving painting of the life of the Buddha and an image of the first sermon at Sarnath. Next to the latter lies a depiction of the legend of Udayana, a tale of two rival queens, one virtuous and one evil. The most dramatic and best preserved scenes however show two Jataka stories: the "Shyama Jataka" is about a forest dweller who was fatally hit by the poisoned arrow of the king of Varanasi. Next to it is the "Chaddanta Jataka", which tells of a virtuous six-tusked elephant that is killed at the instigation of a jealous and vindictive queen.

In illustrating these stories, the artists of Ajanta make us known about an age about by portraying the costumes of this very early period: the king of Varanasi, for example, wears a white cotton tunic wrapped around the waist with a kamarbund or belt, while on his head he wears a turban. He has a bow and a full quiver of arrows. His guards are bare-chested and are armed with spears and bell-shaped shields decorated with half-moons and shining suns. The turbans of the different ranks are shown with great care and seem to be an important indicator of status, the different materials – some with red or gold stripes, others pure white – and the different styles of wrapping are delineated with the greatest care. In Sanchi, the images are animated joyful while here there is sadness in the programme of painting, which is concerned with justice, peace, and non-violence: one image tells of a war breaking out over the Buddha's relics – something that went totally against the grain of everything he taught.

There is also something very different in the style of these faces. Their physiognomy and the world in which they are depicted may be utterly Indian, yet the artist's long, bold brushstrokes, the use of perspective and three-quarter profiles, the play of light across the large brown eyes and cheekbones, and the technical aspects of the work with its choice of pigments and use of lime mortar all show a hint of Hellenistic influence.

So realistic are the faces of the people depicted that we feel 3D experience to be portraits of real individuals. There is none of the idealisation or otherworldliness you see in the later images of the bodhisattvas. Instead there is something deeply hypnotic about the soundless stare of these silent, often uncertain, Satavahana faces. Their fleeting expressions are frozen, startled, as if suddenly surprised by the king's decision to lose his arrow or by the nobility of the great elephant breaking through the trees. Perhaps the most disconcerting thing about the people in these murals is that they appear so familiar. Two thousand years after they were painted these faces convey with penetrating immediacy the character of the different sitters: the alert guard, the king caught in the excitement of the hunt, the obedient son fetching water. Indeed, so contemporary are the features that it seems we are living in that world and these sitters belong to our world.

The paintings of Pitalkhora appear on the pillars and side walls. They bear a strong resemblance to the Ajanta style of painting. The images of the Buddha show gentle expression and soulful eyes. One of the best preserved murals is a devotee who is shown with a traditional headgear. Strong resembles with Ajanta style of paintings; Gentle expression and soulful eyes; Depiction of contemporary costumes and attires; Focus on spiritual aspect, not mundane life.

In the paintings of Buddha here on pillars show halo and Chattris (umbrellas). Buddha in standing pose. These are the paintings on walls of Pitalkhora. The sitting Buddha in vajrasana and a beautiful lady of dark complexion is also depicted here in white clothes. Buddha wears in these murals white cloth covering the left shoulder. In the following picture we can see the paintings on the ceiling. These paintings as well as sculpture and architecture of the caves are in bad condition due to many reasons. It seems that these are floral motifs painted in circular design like those of Ajanta (fig.5.57)

**Table: Buddhist Companion Deities of
Major Buddhist sites of Gujarat and Maharashtra:**

Khambalida Caves Gujarat:						
Right 3	Right 2	Right 1	Cheif Deity	Left 1	Left 2	Left 3
	Sudhankumar	Tara	Manjusri	Hayagriva	Bhrikuti	
Sudhanakumara	Chandraprabha	Suryaprabha	Avalokiteshvara	Chandraprabh	Yamri	
Taranga Hill: Taran Mata Mandir						
?	Vajrapani	Bhuddha	Tara	Padmapani	Bhuddha	?
Dharan Mata Mandir						
		Padmapani	Amitabha Buddha	Vajrapani		
		Mahamayuri	Tara	Jangulini		
		Hayagreeva		Ekajata		
Ajanta, Cave 2						
		Avalokiteshwara Padmapani	Buddha	Vjrapani		
Ajanta, Cave 4						
		Avalokiteshwara Padmapani	Buddha	Vjrapani		
Ajanta cave 19, Gandhakuti						
		Avalokiteshwara Padmapani	Buddha	Vjrapani		
Aurangabad, Cave 1						
		Avalokiteshwara Padmapani	Buddha	Vjrapani		
Aurangabad, Cave 2						
			Buddha	Vajrapani		
	Squating Lajja Gauri	Bodhisattva	Buddha			
Aurangabad, Cave 3						
		Avalokiteshwara Padmapani	Buddha	Vjrapani		
Aurangabad, Cave 6						
		Probably Bhrikuti	Padmapani	Tara		
		Female	Vajrapani	Male		

Aurangabad, Cave 7						
	Jambhala	Avalokiteshwara	Vidyarajnis	Standing Buddha	Hariti	
		Avalokiteshwara	Gajalakshmi	Vajrapani		
		Hariti?	Tara	Bhrikuti?		
		Avalokiteshwara		Tara		
Aurangabad, Cave 9						
Buddha in Parinirvana Mudra and four armed Avalokiteshwara Padmapani.						
		Nagraja	Buddha	Nagraja		
Ellora, Cave 10						
		Padmapani	Buddha	Manjusri		
Kanheri, Cave 67						
			Buddha	Tara		
	Vajrapani	Tara	Avalokiteshwara	Bhrikuti?		



Fig.5.1, Karla Pillar



Fig. 5.2, Chaitya griha at Bedsa, pune, 1st century CE.



Fig.5.3, Chaityagriha Lenyadri, Junnar,Maharashtra.



Fig. 5.4, Chaityagriha, Ajanta



Fig. 5.5, Sana Stupa



Fig 5.6, Talaja facade



Fig.5.7, Facade of Pitalkhora, Maharashtra, Fig.



Fig. 5.8, Nasik caves, 2nd century CE,



Fig. 5.9, Facade of Karla caves, Pune



Fig.5.10, Façade, Bedsa caves, Pune, Maharashtra



Fig. 5. 11, Facade of Bava Pyara caves, Junagadh



Fig.5.12, Façade, Cave No. 9 Ajanta



Fig. 5.13, Pillar intricately carved Cave No.2, Ajanta



Fig.5.14, Ellora, Facade of Vishwakarma Cave No. 10,



Fig.5.15, Bhaja, Chaityagriha, Cave No. 10, Pune, Maharashtra



Fig.5.16, Three Storeyed Vihara, Ellora



Fig. 5.17, Junagdh Uparkot caves double storied

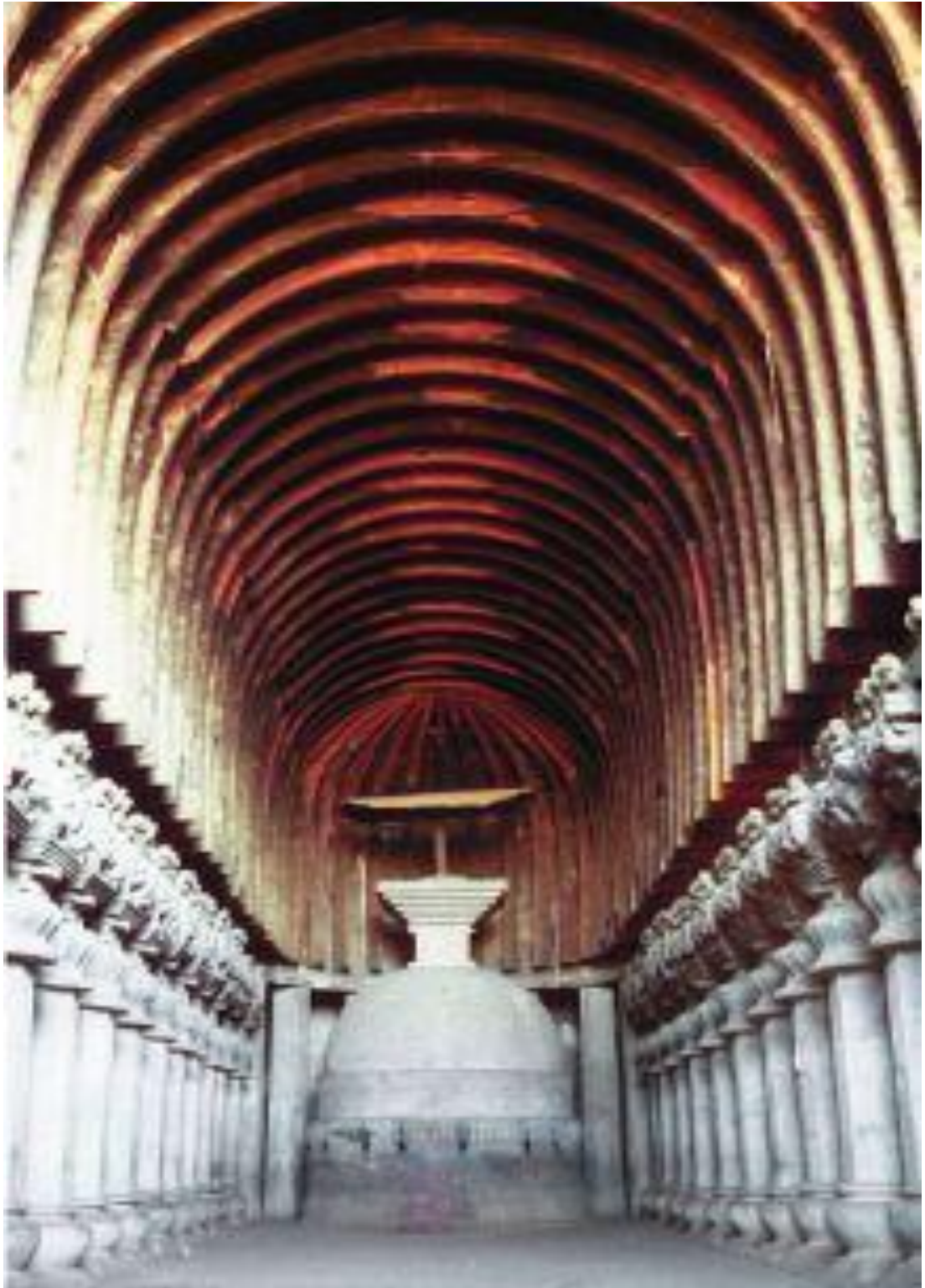


Fig.5.18, Karla chaitya-grihas, 1st to 2nd century CE.



Fig.5.19, Kanheri, Chaityagriha, Mumbai, Maharashtra,

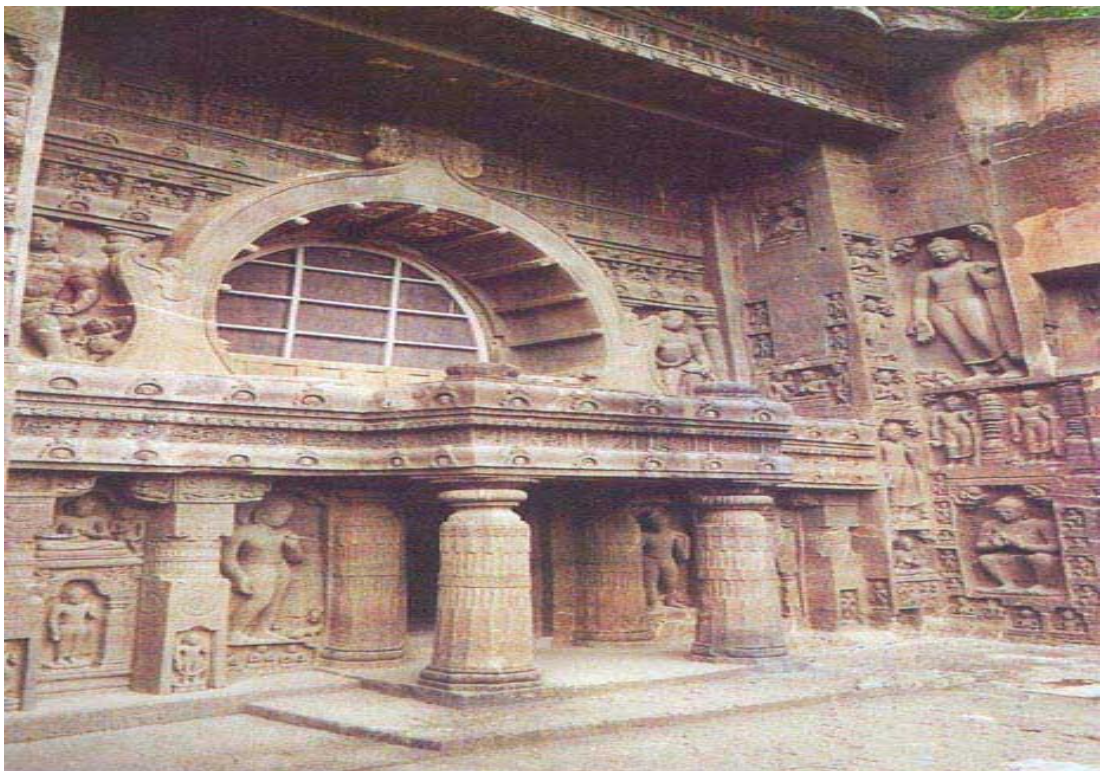


Fig.5.20, Facade, Cave 19, Ajanta



Fig.5.21, Well of Khapra Kodia caves, Junagadh, Gujarat



Fig.5.22, Khapra Kodia caves, Junagadh, Gujarat



Fig. 5.23, Pandu Lena, Pillars



Fig.5.24, Sana caves pillars



Fig.5.25, Pillars of Uparkot caves,Junagadh,Gujarat



Fig.5.26, Bava-Pyara, pillars, Junagadh



Fig.5.27, Uparkot cave, pillars ornamented with Mithuna



Fig. 5.28, Pillar with four lions on the capital, Karle Caves, Pune, Maharashtra



Fig.5.29, Uparkot chaitya motif

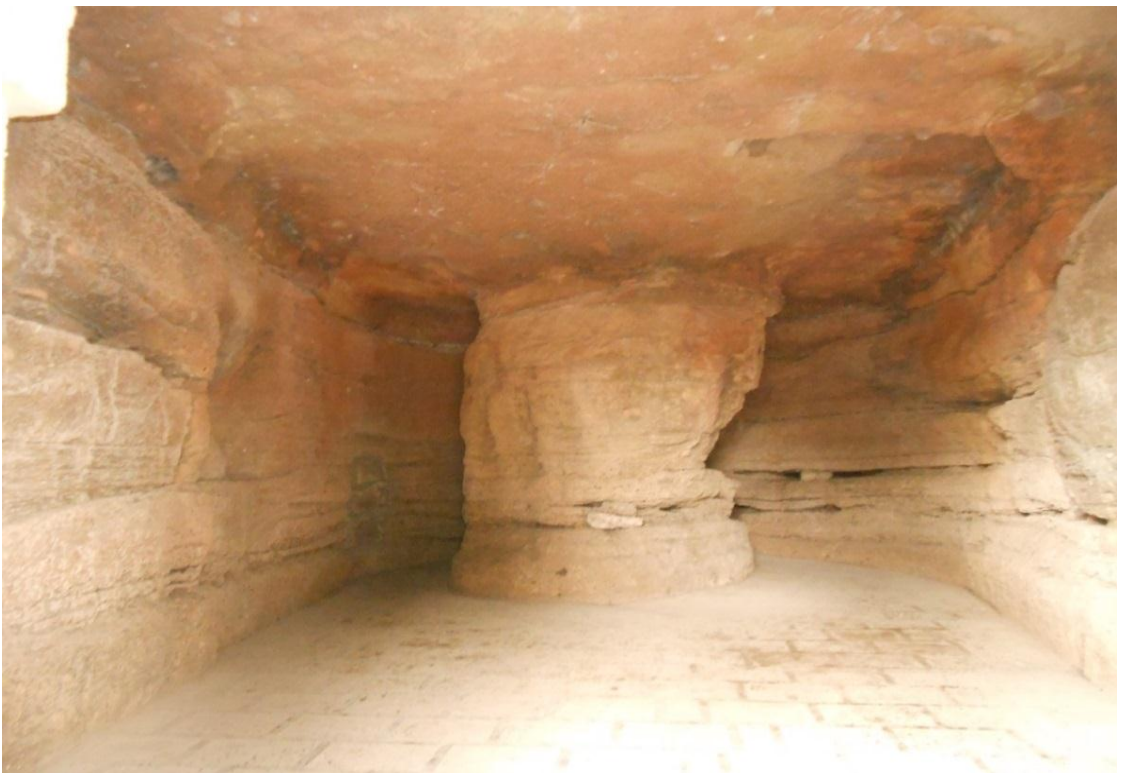


Fig.5.30, Khambhalida, remains of stupa



Fig.5.31, Khambhalida, pillars



Fig. 5.32 Devanimori Artistic reconstruction of the settlement



Fig.5.33,Brick stupa of Sopara, Maharashtra

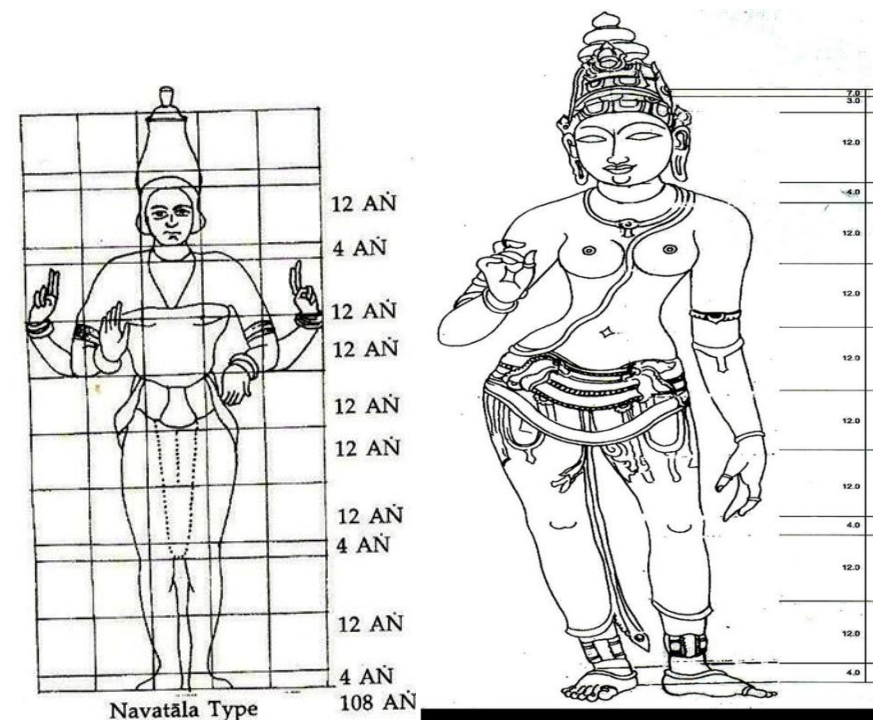


Fig.5.34, Measurements for man and woman images



Fig. 5.35, Bodhisattva , Cave No. 23 Ajanta



Fig. 5.36 ,The earliest depiction of Indra, Bhaja caves, 2nd century B.C.

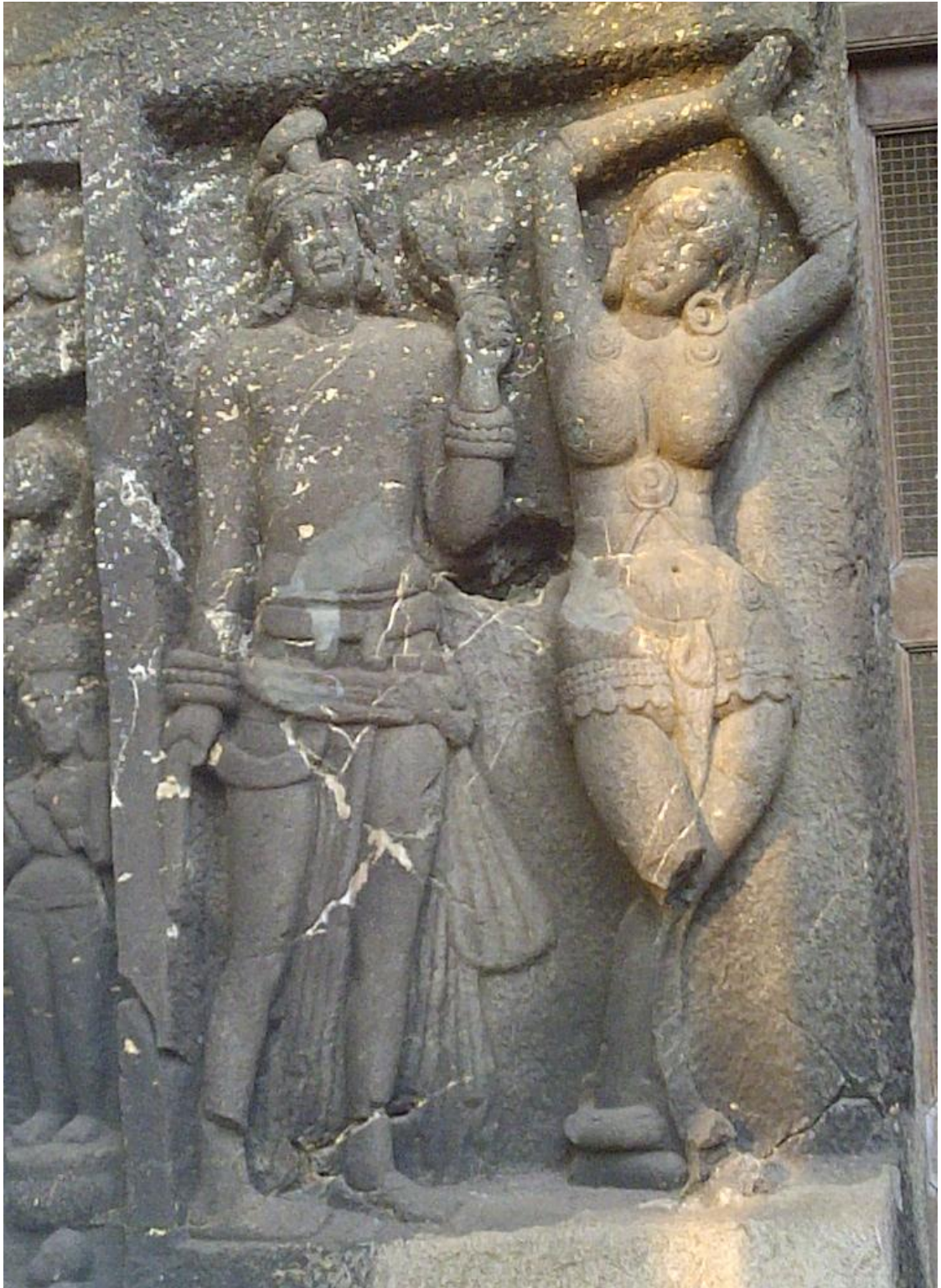


Fig.5.37, Mithunas, Karle chaitya-griha

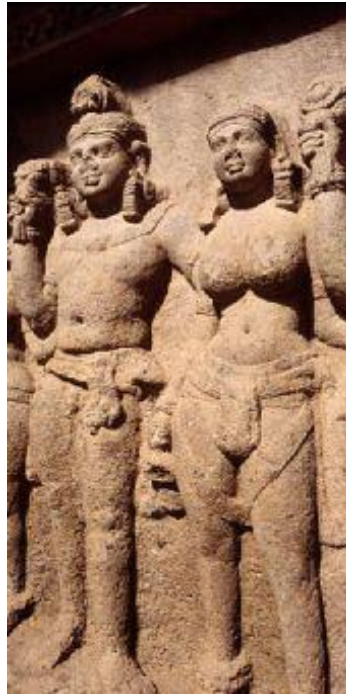


Fig.5.38, MITHUNAS, CAVE 3, Kanheri, 2nd century CE



Fig..5.39, Elephant riders, pillar capitals, Karle chaitya-griha.

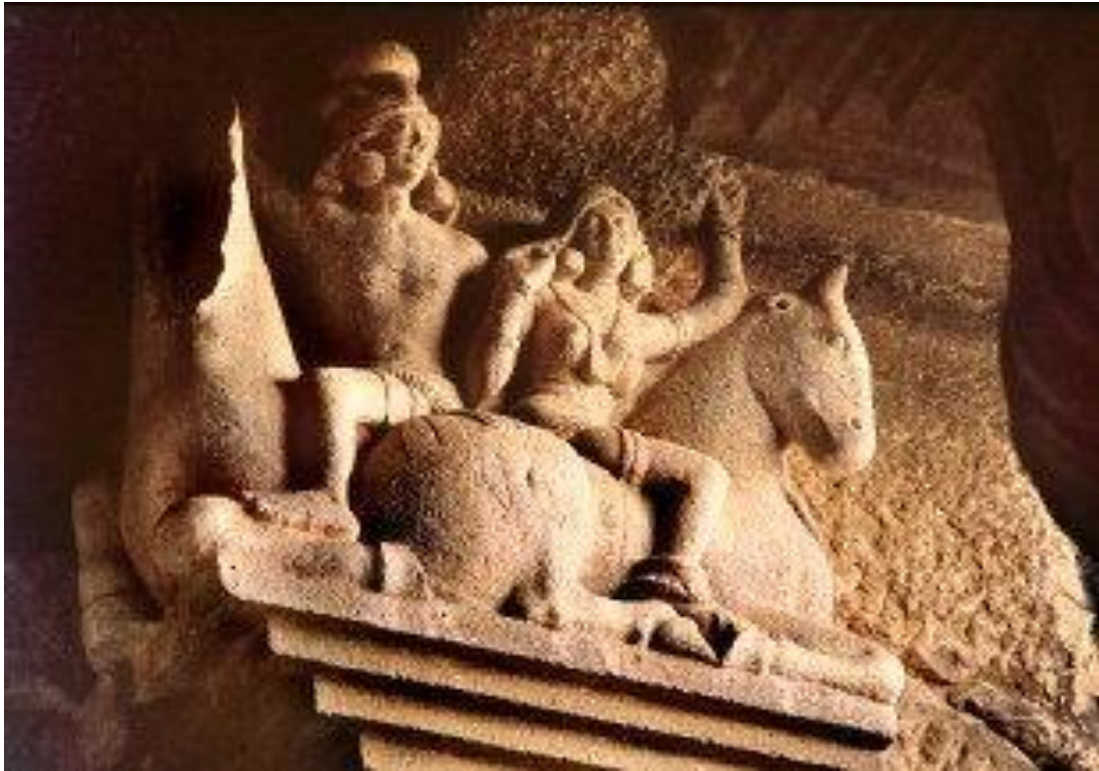


Fig. 5.40, Riders on horses atop tall pillars, Bedsa, 1st century CE.



Fig.5.41, Fragments of sculptural art from Siyot caves, Gujarat, antiquities



Fig..5.42, Buddha head from Devnimori



Fig.5.43,Image of Buddha, Mathura school of Art, Vadnagar



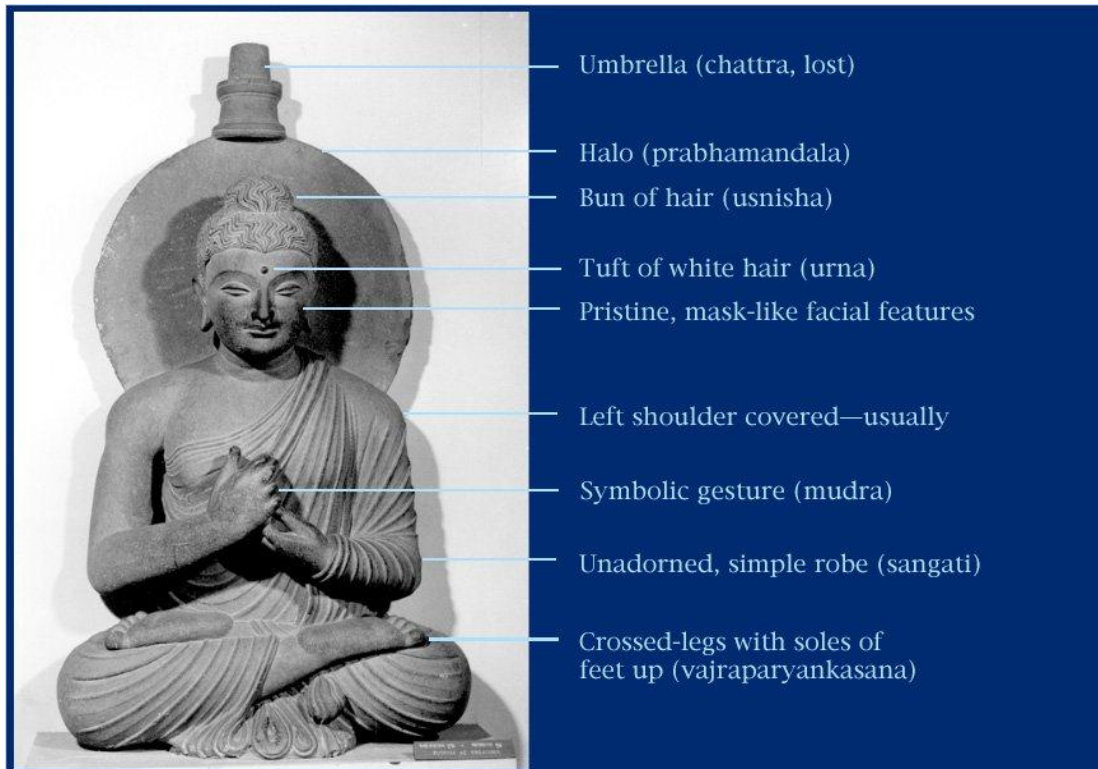


Fig.47, Iconographical features of Buddha image

Mudras (hand gestures)



Bhoomisparsh Mudra



[Abhayamudra](#)



Dharmachakramudra



[Varadamudra](#)



Dhyan Mudra



Vitarkamudra



Ardhaparyankasana



Lalita-asana



Fig. 5.48, Asana Pralambhpadasana or Bhadrasana



Fig.5.49, Bhuj, Kachcha : A bronze image of Buddha belonging to 6th -7th century CE. (Fergusson Museum)



Fig. 5.50, Dhyani Buddhas in Jogida ni Gufa, Taranga Hill, Gujarat



Fig. 5.51, Bodhisattva vajrapani with his mandala, Khambalida caves, Gujarat



Fig.-5.52, Avalokiteshwara Padmapani with his mandala, Khambhalida, Gujarat



Fig.5.53, Eleven headed Avalokiteshwara ,Kanheri caves,Maharashtra



**Fig. 5.54, Image of Simhanad Avalokiteshvara, Bhavnagar, Gandhi Smriti
Museum**



Fig.5.55, Rock-cut Paintings, Idar, Gujarat



Fig. 5.56, Pillar carved and painted Cave no. 16, Ajanta



Fig.5.57, Ajanta,Cave No. 17 Mural



Fig. 5.58, Paintings of Buddha on the pillars of Pitalkhora



Fig. 5.59, Kanheri cave Painting

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