

CHAPTER VII

CONTACTS AND CORRELATIONS

Throughout the history of human race diffusion of cultures has played vital role in determining the cultural changes of various people. From time immortal man has borrowed, adopted and evolved his culture from his environments of nature as well as other human societies. Such borrowing and adaptation of cultural traits from one people to another has constantly enriched various cultures. But whatever is borrowed is not imitated without at least some modification. In fact, the borrowed traits are re-casted to suit the needs of the borrower. Religious beliefs, geographical environment and sometimes even independent thinking play important roles in re-casting the cultural traits to make them cogent to their own ways of life.¹ Some times, this re-casting becomes drastic, but sometimes, it creates new cultures. New meanings are given to borrowed traits as they pass from culture to culture.

The cultural traditions of art and architecture of Devanimori are the outcome of such a process of adaptation and its re-casting to suit the Buddhist need. Hence, after thorough descriptions and analytic study of architecture and art of Devanimori, now it will be interesting to trace the

origin of their evolution, gradual spread, and final adaptation at Devanipori.

Impacts of such intercourse reflected in Architecture, Art as well as some other antiquities are studied here.

The main architectural remains of Devanipori are the Stupas and the Viharas. As already mentioned above (Chapter IV : Architecture), the Stupa at Devanipori was a lofty solid structure of burnt bricks and mud masonry having two or more square tiers and surmounting drum, and dome crowned by the umbrella. All these architectural features were decorated with Buddha images, arches, medallions, pilasters and horizontal friezes of cornices.

For a comparative as well as relative study of the Stupa at Devanipori, it is necessary to trace in short the development of later Gandharan art of Afghanistan and north-western regions of Indian continent and Sind.

It is a well-known fact that Gandharan Art and Architecture has been divided into at least two broad phases - earlier and later. (Although scholars like Marshall², Ingholt³ etc., have sub-divided these phases into four sub-phases). The earlier style is marked by more elements of Hellenism, while the later one has less of it. The earliest nucleus of this art was confined mainly to Peshawar Valley and its surrounding area west of Indus, where the indispensable schist and other fine grained stone was easily available. But gradually during the

later period, this art school was spread over much wider area from Taxila to Swat Valley⁴ and Bactria⁵. The other off-shoot (a bit later) of late Gandharan art extended along the Indus river and reached upto Sind where burnt brick Stupas were erected. But in Sind, the "indispensible"⁶ schist and other fine grained stone was not available easily, hence stone was replaced by easily available alluvial clay. The Swat valley where stone could be quarried easily, the medium remained the same.

But the radical change came in the form of the structure. The height of the Stupa was increased in proportion to its square base. As a result, the lower platform on which the hemispherical drum and dome were raised, was now split up into receding tiers.⁷ The Stupas of Sind as well as Swat Valley were raised on high square platforms with the surmounting drum mounting up in series of superimposed tiers. The four sides of square platforms and the drum were adorned with ornamental arcades of corinthian pilasters with typical Indo-Corinthian capitals which supported the decorated frieze of cornice. According to Percy Brown, Stupas of Sind were decorated "much in the manner of similar structures in the frontier tract of the upper Swat"⁸.

The Stupas of Mirpur-Khas, Thul-Mir-Rukhan, Jarak and Sudheran in Sind and Top-dara, Tokar-Dara, Amluk-Dara, Sankar-Dara etc., in the Swat Valley are the closest allies of Devanimori Stupa. But the Stupas from Sind differ slightly in

shape, size, plan and scheme of decorations. Yet some of the basic decorative motifs are common, their general layouts differ. (Details of this study follows in following pages). The following table showing the comparative dimensions of all these structures will be interesting.

<u>Name of Stupa.</u>	<u>No. of plat-forms</u>	<u>Dimensions of base</u>	<u>Total Height</u>	<u>Drum</u>
Devanimori	2 or more	86'x86'	37'	Damaged elongated hemispherical?
S I N D				
Mirpur-Khas	1	53'-6"x53'-6"	55' (approx.)	Very elongated Tower.
Thul-Mir-Rukhan	1	66'x66' (damaged)	60'	Cylindrical Tower with receding tiers, Three cornices.
Sudheran	-	98'-6"x76'-9"	-	Highly damaged.
Jarak	-	85'-6"x85'-6"	-	No details available.

S W A T V A L L E Y

Top-Dara (Haibatgram)	1	52'x46' : H.13'	45' (approx.)	Dia. 36½' & 28½" One main tier two sub-tiers & two cornices.
Gumba Tuna	1	52'x52'	45'	One main tier three sub-tiers one cornice.
Birkot	2	70'x70'	-	Dia. 26'. Two tiers. (Best preserved Stupa)
Amlukdara	1	113'x113' H.28'	Atleast 100'	Three tiers. Two cornices. Dia. 71'

<u>Name of Stupa.</u>	<u>No. of plat- forms</u>	<u>Dimensions of base.</u>	<u>Total Height</u>	<u>Drum</u>
Najigram	2	68'x68'	50' (40' pre- served)	Dia. 35'. Two tiers. Two cornices.
Shinasi	1	75'x75'	50'	Dia. 44'. One tier. One cornice. One recess.
Jurjural	3	53'x53'	-	Dia. 33'. One main tier, two sub- tiers, one cornice.

From the above table, it will be marked that almost all Sind Stupas are having only one platform, and their drums or 'towers' are fairly elongated to such an extent that they cannot be described as hemispherical. They can be classified as cylindrical and tapering near the top with hemispherical dome. Most of them except Thul-Mir-Rukhan are highly dilapidated. The decorative friezes of cornices of Thul-Mir-Rukhan which were projecting out in relief are also missing. (Only few feet is preserved which is illustrated by Henry Cousens in "Antiquities of Sind")^{8A}. But whatever is left shows three superimposed slightly receding tiers of the fairly elongated cylindrical drum and parts of damaged hemispherical dome⁹. Each tier was decorated with Indo-Corinthian pilasters in relief which supported the horizontal frieze composed of decorative moulds¹⁰ similar to those of Devanimori. The lower square platform is destroyed.

The Stupas of Sudheran¹¹, Jarak¹² and Depara-Ghangaro¹³ are having single square platform surmounted by high cylindrical

drums and probably hemispherical domes. But out of all these Sind Stupas, Stupa of Mirpur-Khas is considered to be an ideal representative of this group. This Stupa is basically of the same type. But unlike the Stupa of Thul-Mir-Rukhan, about 14' of its base platform is intact. But in plan, it differs from Stupa of Devanimori. The Mirpur-Khas Stupa has a shrine-room in its western side where it has a small antechamber with three niches in its three sides, probably for installing some images. Moreover, this side is decorated with small friezes of human and animal figures in small panels. Each of the other three sides - north, east and south - had five niches arranged in bays flanked by pilasters in relief. Three central niches had seated Buddha images in Dhyanamudra, while the end niches near corners of the Stupa were filled with lattice decorations. Above these niches were arranged the Chaitya arches. But unlike those at Devanimori, they are devoid of any decorative patterns in relief.

From this comparison, it will be evident that Sind Stupas differ from the Devanimori Stupa in following aspects:

1. Platform numbers
2. Form of the drum
3. Scheme of decoration
4. Layout of decorative patterns.

But, inspite of these differences, their basic motifs of decoration are the same as far as architectural details are concerned. (This is discussed on the following pages where art of Devanimori is compared).

The Stupas of Swat Valley are another group which have some similarity with the Stupa of Devanimori. But, unlike the Stupa of Devanimori, these Stupas are made of stone, because suitable stone was easily available there. The Swat valley Stupas have generally one fairly high platform (15' to 25') and cylindrical drum with hemispherical dome. Like other later Gandhara Stupas of Sind, these Stupas were also decorated with pilasters in relief (rectangular in cross-section). These pilasters supported the projecting cornices¹⁴.

The cylindrical drums of these Stupas are exactly similar to that preserved at Thu'-Mir-Rukhan. Particularly, those of Shinasi¹⁵, Amluk-Dara¹⁶, Shankar-Dara¹⁷, Tokar-Dara¹⁸, and Top-Dara¹⁹ are still almost intact. Most of their pilasters are ruined. But the Stupa of Top-Dara near Haibatgram is more interesting. Here, parts of cornice and pilasters in relief (with one pilaster having intact capital) are preserved well. Particularly, the fairly high pilasters (about 8' to 9')²⁰ is almost exactly similar to that of Devanimori. But unfortunately, no details of decorative cornice are available.

Here, it should be noted that these Stupas had no Buddha images thereby suggesting that they were probably Hinayana Stupas; whereas those with the images belonged to the Mahayana. The provenience of Indo-Scythian coins²¹ from many of these sites is also interesting.

After this comparative study of architecture, it will be now interesting to correlate and compare the art style of Devanīmori.

The foremost and the most important art piece of Devanīmori is the Buddha image. As already described above, all Devanīmori images are in seated posture of Dhyānamudrā (Meditation) only. In Gandhāran art, Buddha images are found in various postures of Abhaya, Pravachan, Bhumisparsha etc. And in panels depicting Jatakas, we have various positions of Buddha according to the story of that particular scene. The terracotta Buddha images from Jaulian Taxila²² are typical terracotta images in Dhyānamudrā. The very first glance at these clearly indicates that they are far different from Devanīmori images. The Jaulian group has typical realistic rendering of figure and drapery. The face has a heavy features of jaw, flabby cheeks and thin lips, like their predecessors from Takhta-i-Bahai²³, Sahari Bahlol²⁴, Sidi²⁵ and other sites. The rendering of physical features of Gandhāran images are more akin to western realistic style. As a result, the fold and frills of the drapery of Gandhāran images are more realistic. The typical folds of Gandhāran style are best depicted in images from ^{2 a}Chozasāda, Dault²⁶, Sahari Bahlol²⁷ and Takhta-i-Bahai²⁸, from which the style of ribbed lines of drapery has been derived. Gradually, during later phase of Gandhāra Art rendering of drapery folds was done by incised lines also. This type of rendering of drapery was commonly used along with realistic drapery style as at Sahari Bahlol etc.²⁰.

The hair style of Devanimori images is depicted by two methods : (1) Wavy incised lines, and (2) Spirals. The wavy hair style is a typical Gandharan feature noted at Sirkri³⁰, Shahji-ki-dheri³¹, Sahari Bahlol³² etc. At Devanimori, we have only two heads with stylized representation of wavy hair (Fig.27). The representation of hair in spirals is a step towards Indianization. In later Gandharan School when Indian influence became more and more prominent, this hair style was adopted as at Takhta-i-Bahai³³ etc.

But the most prominent and outstanding difference between Gandharan and Devanimori images is the representation of the body. The Gandharan style had a more realistic body with rather an athletic look (as at Takhta-i-Bahai, Sahari Bahlol, Taxila etc.), while the Devanimori images have rounded muscles and typical Indian body proportion of slim waist, broad shoulders and rounded muscles³⁴.

The terracotta images of Mirpur-Khas can be considered the nearest parallels of Devanimori. In spite of their common origin and close alliance, they have some differences which clearly indicate that the Devanimori images were prepared by some other artists whose art was evolved from Gandharan Art, but the impact of that tradition was fading.

At Devanimori, all images are in seated posture of Dhyanamudra only, but at Mirpur-Khas, images from the main niches only are in Dhyanamudra. The remaining images are either in Bhumisparsa or Dharmachakra mudras³⁵. There is

some difference in their cushion seats also. Devaninori images are seated on cushions lined with horizontal bands of lotus petals, while Mirpur-Khas images are seated on sprouting lotuses - modelled in realistic form. Only one image having straight combed hair³⁶ is seated on a cushion resembling to that of Devaninori. Some of the Mirpur-Khas images are seated on four-legged stools also.

Devaninori images are finished with only one paint - cream; while Mirpur-Khas images are painted elaborately, robes in red, complexion in gold, and eyes and hair in black³⁷.

There is difference in rendering of drapery also. Devaninori images can be classified into two groups: (a) having both shoulders covered and (b) having one shoulder covered. But, all Mirpur-Khas images have both shoulders covered. There is difference in rendering of folds and frills. Devaninori folds are depicted by single or double incised lines or in few instances ribbed lines. At Mirpur-Khas, folds are depicted with incised lines only, and that too not with so much accuracy and details.

But, the main difference lies in the modelling of body. Devaninori group has clear cut well proportionate features. At Mirpur-Khas, some of the images have proportionately bigger heads and lean bodies³⁸. Their rendering of feet and fingers is also not so accurate. Among Mirpur-Khas, group eyes of some

of the images are fairly open, while those of others are half-closed. All Devanimori images have half-closed eyes (Ardhamāṭita-Netra). Those of the Mirpur-Khas have got a peculiar ^f feminine look. Unlike Mirpur-Khas group, Devanimori group has no haloes or nimbuses. These haloes are similar in all images except one (straight hair image). Instead of a circular band of square and rounded rosettes, it has a scroll band of a floral motif which is not there at Devanimori³⁹.

But, inspite of these differences in plan and elevation of the Stupa and modelling of the images, Stupas of Sindh group and Devanimori Stupa seem to have some affinities probably due to a common medium and origin.

Though the scheme of decorations and its lay-out is different, the basic motifs of Acanthus and Laurel leaves, chequer design and some geometric compositions are common⁴⁰. This is quite obvious, because the Stupa of Devanimori and the Stupas from Sindh and Rajasthan (Badopal)⁴¹ derived their traditions from the Gandharan School of north-western provinces of Indian sub-continent and parts of Afghanistan.

In short, the difference lies in the method of expression - both in decoration and image modelling - but not in the basic forms of motifs.

From the above comparative and relative study, it will be evident that images of Devanimori are almost completely

in Indian Tradition. But, the decorative features of the Stupa are derived from the Corinthian order of Greco-Roman tradition which was adopted and Indianized to some extent by the Gandharan artists. This tradition was assimilated by the Devanagiri artists.

The origin of the Corinthian order is already discussed in Chapter V.

The corinthian order was invented by the Greeks, but they did not use it so frequently. But the richness of its decorative appeal was much more suitable to Roman tendency of richness of decoration, and vigour⁴². Romans adopted and employed this order in their temples spread in Roman empire right upto Syria (Baalbek, etc.). The most excellent Greek example of Corinthian order is the temple of Jupiter at Athens⁴³, which is a typical example of natural tenderness of Greek art. In development of Corinthian capital, Romans not only systematized the double range of leaves and strengthened the angle spirals, but they also adorned the bell more effectively by vigorous sprouts of acanthus leaves. The "V" shaped cross section of Greek leaf was flattened by the Romans⁴⁴. As a result, the tenderness was replaced by forceful spinal lines to depict vigorous sprouting, which emphasized more on serration, and lobes of the leaf⁴⁵.

The Syrian examples of these capitals on the temple of Bacchus at Baalbek and at Palmyra etc., are the prototypes of

the Gandharan School. According to Rawlinson Kanishka who was a patron of Buddhism invited artists and craftsmen from Syria and Asia minor⁴⁶. Hence, it seems that these artists who worked for Indian demand Indianized the Greco-Roman forms to suit the Buddhist architecture. The following members of architecture seems to have been derived from Greco-Roman art.

- 1) Corinthian capital
- 2) Acanthus, Laurel, and Olive leaf motifs.
- 3) Bead and Peel mould.
- 4) Dentils.

In India, Corinthian capitals were utilized for various purposes:

- 1) dividing the subjects of panels
- 2) for flanking the images
- 3) for purely decorative purposes.

For first purpose : Sikri⁴⁷, Takhta-i-Bahai⁴⁸, Jamalgarhi⁴⁹ etc.

For the second purpose : Karamar⁵⁰, Jaulian etc.⁵¹

For the third purpose : Top-Dara⁵², Jamalgorhi⁵³

Taxila etc.

The Gandharan prototype of Devaninori capitals are also fretted with acanthus leaves sprouting up in single or double rows. (At Sikri⁵⁴, Takhta-i-Bahai⁵⁵, Karamar⁵⁶, Barikot⁵⁷ (Swat)). But, unlike Devaninori type, some of them have

top volutes of Ionic style. Majority of early Gandharan pilasters are half round in section and have fairly high capital with broader top. But the rendering of acanthus leaves is not so powerful like their best specimen from Barikot⁵⁸ or Jamalgarhi⁵⁹.

At Devaninori, acanthus leaf is utilized on almost all architectural features such as capitals, moulds, arches medallion and even the dentil, in various shapes and sizes as independent enclosed motif or string course bands. In Gandharan art, acanthus leaf is the most popular motif. It is used even as representation of Dress (Kinnar figures : Karachi Museum).

Sahari Bahlol : (1) at top of a panel⁶⁰

(2) very prominent alto-relievo band.

Jamal Garhi : Horizontal mould⁶¹.

(Lahore Museum) : Flat band in relief⁶².

(Karachi Museum) : Foliage-skirts of Kinnar figure⁶³.

Takhta-i-Bahai : Stylized form⁶⁴

(Peshawar Museum) : In prominent relief on capital⁶⁵.

The second popular decorative motif is the laurel leaf. At Devaninori, it is used in two forms and ovolo moulds. In Gandharan school, it is used as various decorative features.

Taxila (Dharmarajika Stupa) : horizontal flat band⁶⁶.

Jamal Garhi : Vertical band⁶⁷.

Sakuri Bahol : Vertical mould⁶⁸.

Takhta-i-Bahai : Vertical mould, decorated in incised lines⁶⁹.

The Olive leaf is also represented in stalks to decorate plain surfaces, both in Gandharan art as well as Devanimeri.

In Gandharan art, it is encountered at following sites:

Dharmarajika (Taxila) : At bottom of panel⁷¹.

Daulat (Mardan Dist.) : In circular plan on halo⁷².

Takhta-i-Bahai : As votive Stupa decoration⁷³.

From these comparative and relative studies of architecture and art, it seems that the style of art and architecture of Devanimeri is basically influenced by Gandharan art. Actually, according to Marshall⁷⁴ and H. Ingholt, the last phase of Gandharan art is marked by terracotta decoration which were the product of increasing demand of decorations of square tiers of the Stupas. The tendency of repeating the same decoration in bays between pilasters became more and more popular during later phase of Gandharan Art. One offshoot of Gandharan School spread and developed in Swat Valley parallel of which developed in Sind. But, in Sind and Gujarat the favourite working medium of stone was not available easily hence the easy medium of clay was adopted.

But during this process, the art of the Madhyadesa^A inflicted its effect. The Buddha images of Devanimeri are the products of this blending of these two traditions, although

the basic decorative motifs of Greco-Roman art and architecture remained almost the same as in the main nucleus of Gandharan Art.

Other contacts of Devanipori are reflected in coins, pottery, etc., also.

The Kshatrapa coins indicate that during early centuries of Christian Era, this site was linked with Ujjain. And the Mastraka coins are the clear testimony of the contacts with Saurashtra.

The amphora sherds clearly indicate that Devanipori had contacts with Roman world as well. These wares might have been imported through some port on the Arabian Sea - either Broach or Cambay⁷⁶. In recent excavations at Nagara Amphora sherds were found along with early historic antiquities belonging to second century A.D.⁷⁷. Existence of famous Red Polished Wares also indicates western contacts.

Thus, it can be concluded that Stupa of Devanipori was an outcome of later Gandharan Art and Architecture. This Gandharan influence most probably came through Sind where Stupas like Mirpur-Khas, Thul-Mir-Puthan, Jazai, Sudhoran etc., were erected almost on the same style with some variations. Though Gandharan influence is clearly evident in the decorative features like capitals, cornices etc., the Buddha images seems to be a product of Indian impact. Thus, due to

its strategic position on the highway - linking North India and the ports of Arabian Sea⁷⁸ - Devanagiri had two way influence, direct western impact through the ports and Indianized Gandharan impact through north-western frontier of Indian sub-continent.

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