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SYNOPSIS

"DECORATIVE MOTIFS OF THE MOSQUES OF
GUJARAT FROM 14TH TO 16TH CENTURY A.D. "

The present thesis was undertaken because the region of Gujarāt has one of the most artistic group of mosques erected during this period. This decorative scheme is largely based on the temple decorations and other motifs in a way to suit the need of Islamic taste.

Considering the richness and varieties of motifs and their compositions it was thought to study these decorations in details. The data collected was so much that it was decided to confine the present study in a time bracket of 14th to 16th Century A.D., because the mosques of this period represent a homogeneous group with common characteristic in architecture as well as decorations. This was possibly due to stable power of Gujarāt Sultans and the continuity in artistic traditions.

In the study carved decorations are taken up. These are classified in groups of

- A. Geometric
- B. Floral
- C. Symetric Floral Designs
- D. Arms and Weapons
- E. Miscellaneous ~~Objects~~ ^{Forms}
- F. Decorations of architectural components.

In ^{the} collection of this data, on the spot study of important representative mosques was undertaken. Their decorations were recorded in drawing and photography. For this purpose the mosques at Ahmedābād, Dholka, Cambay, Chāmpāner, Broach and Pātan were studied.

The study is divided in an introduction, and five chapters.

INTRODUCTION

Introduction begins with the explanation for the selection of this subject. Then previous work and the problems are discussed. This is followed by a description of research method, and at the end short summary of results is given.

CHAPTER - I

Chapter first deals with the political History of Gujarāt. It begins with the conquest of Ala-Ud-dīn Khilji (1298 A.D.) and describes the dynastic history of Khilji's and the Sultans of Gujarāt, and their successors. This chapter provides the political background from the whole study.

CHAPTER - II

The second chapter provides general information about Islamic Architecture in India and Gujarat in particular. Here details of the architectural characteristics of mosques

are given for understanding the decorative scheme of the structure as a whole. The detailed description of architectural components like (1) Step, (2) Porch, (3) Minars, (4) Pillars, (5) Windows, (6) Architraves, (7) Ceilings, (8) Arches, (9) Mehrābs, (10) Mimbar, (11) Back Support behind Mehrābs, (12) Balconies, (13) Merlon (Kaṅgra) are noted, because the decorations on this component are studied in details in the thesis.

CHAPTER - III

In this chapter the study of motifs is undertaken under the heads of following motifs.:

(A) Geometric

(1) Bands, (2) Triangles, (3) Squares, (4) Circles, (5) Hexagons, (6) Octagons, (7) Swastika.

(B) Floral

(1) Flower Petals, (2) Creepers, (3) Interlaced Creepers.

(C) Symetric Floral Designs

(D) Arms and Weapons

(E) Miscellaneous ^{Forms} Objects

(F) Decorations of architectural components.

These motifs are described in details of the variations in forms, compositions with their motifs and their changing

patterns in the decorations as a unit. As such various units in varieties of ultimate patterns and designs are separated and described in details.

CHAPTER - IV

In this chapter overall evaluation of the motifs is attempted. Thus the notions behind variations in forms, their multiplication with their motifs and resulting patterns are studied. The basic scheme of the planning, a particular motif in a particular form and in a particular composition is examined.

CHAPTER - V

This is a concluding chapter. It describes the conclusions on the history of the designs and their possible interpretations.