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Department of History and Indian Culture
University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, India

Osian's (Jodhpur) Contribution to Sculptural Art

Dr. Ambika Dhaka
Assistant Professor
Department of History
Maharaja Ganga Singh University, Bikaner

In the Early medieval period in India, many regional political powers rose to prominence. The Pratihara dynasty occupied significant place in the political history of northern India and especially Rajasthan. They ruled from the second quarter of the eighth century to the first half of tenth century A.D. in Rajasthan. Among the most influential rulers of Pratiharas, we find Nagabhata II under whom the Gurjara-Pratiharas became the most powerful dynasty in northern India. Later, another ruler of same calibre was Mihira Bhoja. Under Bhoja and his successor Mahendrapala I, the Pratihara Empire reached its peak of prosperity and power. The Pratiharas were great patrons of art, architecture and literature. Gurjara-Pratihara are known for their sculptures, carved panels and open pavilion style temples. They were great patrons of Shakta cult and held goddess Bhagwati in high esteem. Pratihar rulers like Naghatt II and Mihir Bhoj were great followers of goddess Bhagwati.

Rare Sculptures at Osian:

We find numerous sculptures of the goddess on Pratihara temples pertaining to Vaishnav, Shaiva and Sakta cults. The Jain temple dedicated to Mahavira is one of the earliest and lofty temples at Osian during the period of Vatsaraj¹. The Harihar Temple No. 1 is situated on the left side of the Osian-Jodhpur road at Osian. It has been identified so by all the previous scholars who have worked on art and architecture at Osian. However, in the light of literary evidences whenever we rethink about the nomenclature of the temple, we get a different picture. On account of the sculpture of Harihar placed in central niche on *bhadrarath* at the back side of this temple, the scholars have identified it as Harihar. But we do not get any literary or epigraphical evidence that establishes a correlation between the