

Heavenly Musicians of Cave Temples as Liminal Beings of the Sacral-Profane Boundaries

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Abstract

The study deals with the sculpture images of cave complexes located mainly in Southern India carved in the second half of the 1st millennium CE. The focus is on the cave temples of Ellora, where temples of three religions are represented (Jain, Buddhist and Hindu). As well, the images in the nearest Buddhist temples of Vakataka and Kalacuri (Ajanta and Aurangabad), and likewise the caves of the Cālukya (Badami) and Pallava (Mamallapuram) dynasties are investigated. The main purpose of celestial musicians – *gandharvas*, *apsarases*, *kiṁnaras*, and *bhūtas* / *yakṣas* / *gaṇas* – depicted in a *prabhāmaṇḍala* or in a spatial *maṇḍala* of a temple is to honour the object of worship: play heavenly music and bring offerings. Nevertheless, being in the same space with the believer, celestial musicians meet and accompany those who enter the temple and their images are placed in the important focal points of the believer's path from the profane world to the sacral. Thus, saturated with liminal images, the very space of a temple *maṇḍapa* may be interpreted as the liminal space, where spiritual transition takes place: the ascension of a believer from a profane to a sacral space.

Keywords: *gandharvas*, *apsarases*, *kiṁnaras*, *torāṇas*, *mudrā*, cave architecture, Ellora, Ajanta.

1. *Introduction*

It is difficult to overestimate the role of music in Indian culture. Since ancient times music has featured as an important component of religious practice for India's different faiths. Celestial musicians are repeatedly mentioned in the literature,

particularly the *gandharvas*, *apsarases* and *kiṇṇaras*. These figures often appear in the sculpture of the temples of the three religions of early medieval India – Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. What functions do celestial musicians have as liminal beings? What are the differences between celestial musicians in the iconography of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism? Where are these images located? What new meaning might be perceived in these images if they are interpreted according to Arnold van Gennep's theory? This article tackles these questions, among others. Cave temples provide excellent material for research, primarily because almost all the images have been preserved *in situ*. In addition, the space of the cave temple is a kind of liminal zone.

The tradition of cave architecture in India is unique. In no other part of the world have so many large-scale monuments been carved completely out of rock. More remarkably, the rock used is often very hard, such as basalt. Nonetheless, these rock carvings include intricate architectural elements, sometimes bordering on sculpture (for instance the Kailasanātha temple or the *rathas* of Mamallapuram). The boundaries between architecture and sculpture in the Indian tradition are blurred, and often architectural elements are at once also sculptural figures.

The thousand years of the Indian tradition of cave architecture emerged simultaneously with the tradition of building in stone. The practice did not follow strict rules, in this early period rules had not yet been formed and fixed. In many ways the entire period of the existence of rock architecture was a time when traditions were in the process of being established, therefore the iconographic programme of the cave temples is characterised by a great mobility. Yet, at the same time it is also obvious that this architecture is rooted conceptually and at the semantic level in the culture that came before it. In these temples one can see both a reflection of doctrinal prescriptions and autochthonous mythological ideas. One can read the attempts of the central government to influence local cults, yet at the same time one can also find a reflection of the broader development of religious ideas and ritual elements that characterised a particular time. All this is very vividly reflected in the iconography of the threshold imagery of the temples. Of the wide variety of threshold images, which are *dvārapālas*, *nāgas*, *yakṣas*, *mithunas* (or *maithunas*), *makaras*, *vyālas*, etc., this article focuses on heavenly musicians as the most ambiguous personages. Everybody knows that music has a great power to transform spaces. Music always features at the beginning of the rituals that help a person to cross the boundary between the sacral and the profane world in their mind. And heavenly musicians depicted in the temple space play the same role.

My research deals with the sculpture images of cave complexes located mainly in Southern India which were carved in the second half of the 1st millennium CE – from the 5th to the 9th century. This was the epoch of the rise of cave architecture in India. The focus of this article is on the sculpture of the cave complex of Ellora, because here there are temples of all the three religions – Jainism, Buddhism and Hinduism. As well as the images of the nearest Buddhist temples of Vakatakas and Kalacuris (Ajanta and Aurangabad), I also investigate the Hindu caves of Cālukyas of Badami and Pallavas in Mamallapuram. This set of monuments seems to me the most representative: 1. It covers different dynasties of the early medieval period; 2. They are royal monuments (meaning they were ordered by *mahārājas*) and they have the most developed sculptural programmes with a large number of additional figures; 3. The iconography of the three main religions of early medieval India are represented here. By this point the tradition of cave architecture had already been developing for a long time.

2. Citratorāṇas

As regards threshold images, I will focus on the semidivine musicians – the personages of the *citratorāṇas*¹. The frames of the doorways in the cave temples contain many images, along with decorative ornamental design. When I speak about the *torāṇas*, I mean not only the doorframes, but also the spatial *torāṇas* formed by pillars and beams inside the columned hall, the *maṇḍapa*, where the space is overshadowed by bracket figures. Thus, the *torāṇas* are understood in a broader sense.

The sacred space inside the cave temple has, as a rule, a hierarchical structure, which is emphasised by the raising of the floor level and the creation of additional portals – *torāṇas*. The images depicted on “these” *torāṇas* are the same as those that meet the adept at the very threshold of the temple, accompanying him throughout his journey inside the temple. If we consider the classic type of cave temple, it usually has a square or rectangular plan. Its entrance hall, the *ardha-maṇḍapa*, is usually delimited from the profane space by a colonnade or a row of pillars decorated with numerous figures. As a rule, there is also a developed bracket sculptural group similar to the capital of the “Indian type” (the largest bracket figures are characteristic of the cave temples of the Early Cālukyas dynasty of VI–VII CE). After passing through the central doorway, a person enters the *maṇḍapa* – a

1. Acharya 1946, 216-222.

hall for performing rituals. Its space is delimited by pillars, adorned with figures that overshadow and dominate the space.

The sanctuary of the cave temple, which is called the *garbhagṛha*, is always located on the central axis at the far end from the entrance. It is a small cubical room, in which only one person can enter to honour the shrine of the temple. The entrance is decorated with the same sculptural images as that of the entrance zone.

So, these are the threshold images. Yet in fact, they are figures who not only meet the believer at the entrance but also accompany him along the entire path through the temple space to the shrine. They mark the most important “liminal” zones of the temple at which point sacrality is heightened. They serve as a guide from the profane to the sacred, helping a believer make the transition across the borders of sacred space.

Threshold images are participants of the spatial *maṇḍala* of the temple, by being placed on poles, and also an integral part of the relief *maṇḍalas*, in the centre of which is the object of worship. In this way they form a transitional link between the sacred and the profane worlds. And their images are very multifaceted.

3. Indistinguishability of Images

An important thing to note about liminal images is that almost all of them are the same in the iconographic programmes, of Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain temples. In rare cases there might be multiple objects of worship in a temple that are characteristic of a particular religion, but mainly threshold images are images of semidivine creatures. The uniformity of the pantheon of the three religions as regards peripheral characters is a result of a religious policy that included autochthonous beliefs in the pantheon of the dominant religion².

The peripheral characters of the threshold zones are divided into three large groups: 1) *vyantara-devatā* – the semidivine inhabitants of the airspace living between heaven and earth, including *vidyādhara*s, *gandharva*s, *apsara*s and *kiṃnara*s; 2) underground inhabitants connected with the earth, including various *yakṣa*s and *yakṣiṇī*s, *vyālī*s; and 3) creatures associated with water such as *nāga*s and *makara*s.

The images of the threshold zones themselves are semidivine and insignificant and have not provoked much attention from art historians, but they have repeatedly attracted the attention of researchers of Indian literature and tend to have

2. Cohen 1998.

separate chapters dedicated to them in studies of Indian mythology. Besides these, the works of R. S. Panchamukhi³, K. Krishna Murti⁴ and N. G. Tavakar⁵ dedicate some room to the analysis of visual depictions in addition to literary sources. A. K. Coomaraswamy⁶ has also compiled a detailed textbook on the *yakṣas*, which this article will refer to more than once. Comparing the existing literary sources with the images reveals an important difference. It shows that while the literary descriptions often do not coincide and are not uniform across the religions, uniformity develops quite quickly in the visual arts and this can be seen in the iconographic programmes of Hinduism, Buddhism and even Jainism.

For example, images of the *mīthunas* - amorous pairs of semidivine characters - are often depicted in all the religions. This love union reflects the sustainable idea of fertility and the subsequent idea of well-being. As a rule, they play the role of donors, presenting various offerings, such as garlands, fruits, shells or jugs of water and musical instruments.

Traditionally, iconographic images of Indian deities are given certain recognisable attributes. However, creatures of a semidivine nature are often not endowed with such attributes. Therefore, the difficult task of differentiating images can be achieved only by identifying certain formal elements or motifs: for example, if the relief depicts a beautiful man or woman accompanied by a motif signifying glorification, then they are *vidyādhara*⁷ or *gandharva* and *apsarases*. This is also indicated by the flight pose. Since *yakṣas* and *yakṣiṇīs* are closely connected with the earth, in iconography they are frequently depicted standing on the ground. Female characters are mostly leaning on a tree, which reflects the ancient idea of fertility (a stable iconographic motif of the *śalabhāñjika*).

On the other hand, when we see admirers with musical instruments, then, if there are no other obvious signs, they must be *gandharvas* and *apsarases*, since these are the musicians described in the literary sources. However, there are exceptions and, in the reliefs of the temple complexes of Aurangabad and Ellora, you can even see *nāgarāja* playing on *vīṇā*. In this case, his iconography is clearly marked by the presence of a halo formed from the cobra hoods behind his head.

3. Panchamukhi 1951.

4. Krishna Murti 1985.

5. Tavakar 1971.

6. Coomaraswamy 1928.

7. Cf. Mehta 2004.

4. Gandharvas and Apsarases

Gandhavas and *apsarases* are messengers of the gods. They deliver certain ideas to humanity by communicating directly with them and sometimes they even live among people. Many literary works are devoted to such stories, the most famous being Kālidāsa's love stories, including the legend of Urvaśī and Pururavas which tells the story of the relationship between an *apsaras* and a king, and the legend of the beautiful Śakuntalā (daughter of King Viśvāmitra and the *apsaras* Menakī) and Duṣyanta. For this reason, researchers often call them demigods. However, they should be differentiated from the demigods of classical mythology who are born from the marriage of man and God. The Indian *gandhavas* and *apsarases* can live in both the heavenly and earthly realms, contributing to the communication of man with the gods and acting as the vehicles of divine ideas. They are truly liminal beings.

The liminality of *gandharvas* is also emphasised by the fact that they are directly related to the liminal state of *antarābhavasattva*. From Vedic times to Buddhist Mahāyāna there existed the theory of rebirth. In the *Rigveda* there is a phrase: «*gandharva* in a womb»⁸, which is a reference to the condition between death and future birth known as *gandharva-sattva*. This intermediate existence of *antarābhavasattva*, absent among the Theravāda followers who believed that rebirth immediately follows death, appears in the theory of Mahāyāna rebirth and then develops in Tantric Buddhism. This further consolidates the connection between the *gandharvas* and a state of intermediacy or transition. Thus, *mithunas* with musical instruments are known as *gandharvas* and *apsarases* and they can be depicted playing music. Most frequently the *gandharva* will play the *vīṇā* and the *apsaras* the *karaṭālas* (small metallic cymbals).

5. Kiṃnaras

In the visual arts, the regular appearance of the *kiṃnaras* developed in early Buddhist monuments under the influence of *garuḍa* images, as noted by Monika Zin (2008). The contamination of the *kiṃnaras* by these images brought about their eventual transformation. The images became paired figures with musical instruments, half-bird and half-man, dancing on short legs. If a *kiṃnara* plays the *vīṇā*, a *kiṃnarī*, as a rule, strikes *karaṭālas*.

8. Wayman 1973, 218.

As for the written texts of Hinduism, there is no unity when describing the *kiṇṇaras* even later on in their history; sometimes they are attributed a horse's head and a human body or vice versa, sometimes the face of Garuḍa and the wings of a bird, sometimes a human body and animal paws, and so on. The *Mānasāraśilpaśāstra* prescribes to depict a *kiṇṇara* in a demonic form with a human torso, the legs of an animal and an eagle's face with wings. The *Vachaspatyam* writes about a *kiṇṇara* with a horse's head and a human body. The *Viṣṇudharmottara* says that *kiṇṇara* can have either a human head and a horse's body, or a human body and a horse's head. In South Indian treatises, *kiṇṇara* is listed among the eight *parīvāra-devatās* of the Subrahmanya (Karttikeya) temple as a guardian figure, therefore supposed to have a frightening appearance. In this tradition, a couple of *kiṇṇaras*, along with other deities, were usually portrayed next to the main deity, either Viṣṇu or Śiva, on the back wall of the sanctuary (the class of the deity – the highest being *uttama*, the middle *madhyama* and the lowest *adhama* – depended on the number of those who were in a *prabhāmaṇḍala*). Only the *Rūpavālī*, a treatise on Sinhalese painting, describes images similar to those that can be seen in the visual arts. In this treatise, the *kiṇṇaras* are described as having a human torso and the legs of a bird, a beautiful radiant face, a graceful neck with a garland on it and a tufted head of hair⁹.

In Jain iconography, the *kiṇṇaras*, like the *gandharvas*, belong to the *yakṣa* class. Borrowing an image from ancient mythology, the Jains made significant changes: the *kiṇṇaras* in their view have three faces and six arms; their attributes in Digambara iconography are the following: a disc, a *vajra*, a stimulus, a club and a rosary. They are depicted in the *varadamudrā* and their *vāhana* is fish. However, images of this kind did not appear in the iconographic programme of the temples.

Despite the fact that the *gandharvas* and *kiṇṇaras* are mentioned in literary sources as equal in status, one can conclude from the images that there is a hierarchy in place, and that the *kiṇṇaras* occupy a lower position than the *gandharvas*. There are often far fewer images of *kiṇṇaras*, they are located further from the object of worship and depicted on a smaller scale. In addition, of course, it should be noted that in the literature there is no mention of the cult of *kiṇṇaras*, unlike the cult of the *gandharvas*. The texts do not provide any information about how the *kiṇṇaras* were worshipped or what prayers or offerings were made to them. However, the fact that the relief image of *kiṇṇara* is quite unusual in the iconographic programme of the temples adds exclusivity to the image when it does appear, raising its sacred status.

9. This issue is considered in detail in Panchamukhi 1951, 3-15.

6. Divine Singers

Singing has always played a significant role in Indian culture. During my studies of the images of *gandharvas* in the reliefs of Ellora, Ajanta and Aurangabad cave temples, I have noticed one major inconsistency between visual and literary culture. While there are lots of singers in Indian literature, there are no singing figures in sculptures, carvings or paintings. The *gandharvas* are first and foremost described as singers; the *Nāṭyaśāstra* tells us that Bharata created Nārada and *gandharvas* exclusively as singers for Gods, and they were acknowledged as masters of vocal music in Indian mythological tradition.

In the Western artistic tradition, it is customary to depict singers with their mouths open. In the Indian tradition, however, the opposite is true. In fact, there were restrictions on images with open mouths dating from the earliest period in Indian history. This was because open mouths and protruding teeth were traditionally reserved for the depiction of demonic figures. The *Cītrasūtra* of the *Viṣṇudharmottara Pūraṇa* states: «[The depiction of God] with an open mouth can lead to the death of a whole family» (VD III 38. 21)¹⁰. Therefore, due to the fact that depictions of open mouths were prohibited, sculptors were forced to look for another way to represent singing. Since *gandharvas*, *kiṃnaras* and *apsarasas* are primarily depicted in mythology as singers, sculptors had to invent a “singing” gesture, and celestial musicians are often depicted with such a gesture, a fact that is always neglected in existing research. After many years of studying images of Indian musicians, I have managed to identify this gesture and will now elaborate my theory.

Due to the fact that *mudrās* and *hastās* play a very important role in Indian culture, a gesture was the only way to depict singing for Indian sculptors. I was unable to find any mention of such a gesture in literature, so I then started to search for it in depictions of *gandharvas* in the cave temples of Maharashtra. After studying hundreds and thousands of images, I identified a recurring gesture which might be the “singing” symbol: a raised arm, bent at the elbow, with the palm directed towards the object of worship.

According to *The Mirror of Gesture* (Coomaraswamy 1917), there are two gestures that should mean singing – *haṃsāsya* and *saṃdaṃśa mudrās*, originating from the Dakṣiṇamūrti and Goddess of Speech respectively. But this gesture seems to be far from it. «*Saṃdaṃśa* (grasping): the fingers of Padmakōśa’s hand are repeatedly opened and closed. Usage: generosity, sacrificial offerings, [...], worship.

10. Vertogradova 2006.

[...]. According to another book: the middle finger of *Haṃsāsya* hand is outstretched. [...]. Usage: [...] singing (*saṃgīta*) [...]»¹¹. And as for the *haṃsāsya mudrā* it is said: «*Haṃsāsya* (swan-face) [...] the tips of the forefinger, middle finger and thumb are joined, the rest extended [...]. Usage: instructing in wisdom, ritual (*pūjā*) [...] speaking, reading, singing, meditation [...]»¹².

The gesture I identified appears to resemble the so-called *viśmaya hasta*, which primarily signifies astonishment or wonder. The *ardhacandra mudrā* gesture is also somewhat similar, but this gesture is used to greet people of lower castes. Neither of these gestures seems to coincide in any way with singing.

Seeing that there is no literary evidence of such a gesture, I suggest it might have come from real singing practice.

There is some evidence to support this theory. In one of the cave temples of Ellora there is a sculpture of a singing dwarf (in fact there are several similar sculptures, but this is the clearest example). Dwarf images do not have strict depiction laws, and he is shown with an open mouth and the singing gesture I identified: the singing *vāmana yakṣa*. If we assume this gesture to be a *hasta* of singing, then we see that there are a lot of sculptures of liminal creatures that display this gesture and, most importantly, that the majority of them are representations of divine singers and musicians – *gandharvās*, *apsarases* and *kiṃnaras*.

7. Dwarf Musicians

Now I would like to return to the dwarf figures. Their images are the most numerous and they inhabit a large number of liminal zones in the temple: the *torāṇas*, the capitals and corners of *stambhas*, the friezes (*mālās*) on the walls and along the base of the temple.

These dwarfs do not signify monolithically but can represent a range of things. They can be both the *vāmana-yakṣas* or *gaṇas* of various deities, *bhūtas* and *ayudhapuruṣas* (the personification of certain attributes), as well as the personification of certain philosophical concepts¹³. In the space of the temple they are depicted not only holding musical instruments as attributes, but also playing them – they blow into conch shells – *śaṅkhas* and flutes (*suśīra-vādyā*), beat drums of different shapes and sizes (*avanaddha-vādyā*), pinch strings of *vīṇās* of different types

¹¹ Coomaraswamy 1917, 37.

¹² *Ibid.*, 36.

¹³ Vorobyeva 2014, 212-243.

etc. Their images, which are located at the corners of the columns, make up a spatial ensemble.

From the 6th century onwards, a certain type of frieze appears which is made up of dancing and playing dwarfs. This type of frieze comes to be particularly prevalent in South Indian temple iconography. The most characteristic instrument for the dwarves is the *ghaṭam* – a percussion instrument which is fundamentally an ordinary stove pot. All the dwarfs hold different types and sizes of this instrument in their hands.

8. *Threshold Beings and the Aquatic Myth*

Another small observation should be made regarding the threshold images of the temples, which is their connection with the aquatic myth. An analysis of the figures depicted reveals their universally close connection with water. The term *apsaras* in Sanskrit means ‘moving in the waters’, a name that comes from the Vedic idea that there are demonic creatures that inhabit the forest and the water who are closely associated with the moon, which is also reflected in the water. *Apsaras* is a water nymph.

The oldest mythical connotation of *gandharva* is the spirit of water, a monster of the depths. *Gandharva* is also connected with clouds and the sun, and it is precisely through the image of water, and in particular the rain which fertilises mother earth, that the *gandharva* is associated with the idea of abundance.

Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy explores the symbolic role of the element water in the imagery of the *yakṣas* in detail as part of his study of water cosmology and its connection with iconography. He argues that since the life of people depended heavily on water, in particular on the rain fertilising the earth after the dry season, a variety of rituals were designed to summon rain. All the images of the threshold zones are directly connected with water, including the *mithunas* (loving couples) through the idea of fertility.

It is no coincidence that the most popular frame of both doorways and *devakoṭhas* are *makara-toraṇas*, formed by the figures of two fantastical creatures that are particularly closely associated with water (these are sometimes called dragons, sometimes crocodiles, but are essentially polymorphic in nature).

The idea of water cosmology and the images of the aquatic myth are not accidental in the threshold zones. The most important ritual through which the believer had to go regardless of religion was the ritual of purification before visiting

the temple, during which not only the body but also thoughts and soul were cleansed. Thus, the connection of all the images represented on the reliefs of the threshold zones of cave temples with water is deliberate and complements the ritual cleansing the believer performed before entering the temple.

Threshold images mark three worlds – celestial, terrestrial and underground. However, semantically, all the threshold images are somehow connected with water cosmology. Water, both in the sky in the form of clouds, and on the earth as rain, flows into rivers, cleansing and fertilising the earth. In this way, water connects all three worlds. Thus, the temple's *toraṇas* form a kind of *jaladvāra*, passing through which a person receives the necessary ritual cleansing. And it is through *jaladvāra* that water comes out from the symbolic bathing in the *garbhagrha*. The ring structure of the temple action is closed, recalling that it is the circle that is the main figure in the Indian world order. Water, the driving force of nature, also rotates the universe, serving as the beginning and end of everything.

9. Function of the Liminal Musicians

The main purpose of celestial musicians – *gandharvas*, *apsarases*, *kiṃnaras*, and *bhūtas* / *yakṣas* / *gaṇas* – when depicted in a *prabhāmaṇḍala* or in a temple space *maṇḍala* is to honour the object of worship; to play heavenly music and bring offerings. The figures of divine musicians are on a par with garland bearers, donors with jugs and other offerings. Instead of these physical gifts, their offering is music. At the same time, the figures of musicians are the representation of divine music in sacred space – the conception of *divyā dhvani*.

Nevertheless, being in the same space with the believer, celestial musicians meet and accompany those who enter the temple: their images are placed in the important focal points of the believer's path from the profane world to the sacral.

Threshold images mark not only the entrance space, indicating the transition from the profane to the sacred zone, but also other transition zones, where the sacrality of the space is heightened. These are precisely the images that meet the believer or the future adept at the threshold of the temple, serving as a guide from the profane world to the sacred world – accompanying his transition across the borders of sacred space. It is remarkable that the images of the heavenly musicians are the same in the iconographic programme of the temples of all three main religions of ancient India. There are no differences between either the Hindu, the Buddhist or the Jain iconography in the cave temples.

In literary works, peripheral deities are often considered to be the heralds of the gods. They deliver ideas to humanity, communicate with human beings directly and even live among people in some cases. Being liminal deities, they are the vehicles of divine ideas. Moreover, they are closely related to the element of water, revealing a connection with the aquatic myth and the idea of purification.

Thus, saturated with liminal images, the very space of temple *maṇḍapa* may be interpreted as a liminal space where spiritual transition takes place, where the believer transcends the profane and reaches the sacral zone. *Toraṇas* act like transitional points in the temple space, from the entrance to the *garbhagrha* and from the profane to the sacral space. In the darkness of the womblike space the person can feel transformation and achieve mental rebirth.

10. *Conclusions*

The function of divine musicians is as liminal beings, marking the boundaries and threshold zones of the spatial *maṇḍala*.

1. Musical offering – glorification of the deity.
2. Simultaneously, the representation of divine music in the sacred space.
3. The overshadowing of the temple space, and with it the believer.
4. Accompanying the believer on the way to the sanctuary.
5. Purification – connection with the aquatic myth.
6. Apotropaic function – protective magic.

Divine musicians occupy a peripheral position, they are the characters of the mandala rim, often decorating the liminal threshold zones of the temple. These are in many ways intermediate, transitional creatures, many of which, according to mythological ideas, are capable of changing their appearance. This hybridity is primarily a characteristic of the *gandharvas* and *apsarases*. On the other hand, these characters, precisely due to their liminality, easily pass from earth to heaven, from one religion to another.

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Fig. 1 *Śālabhañjikā* with stick zither *vīṇā*. Ajanta, cave №26

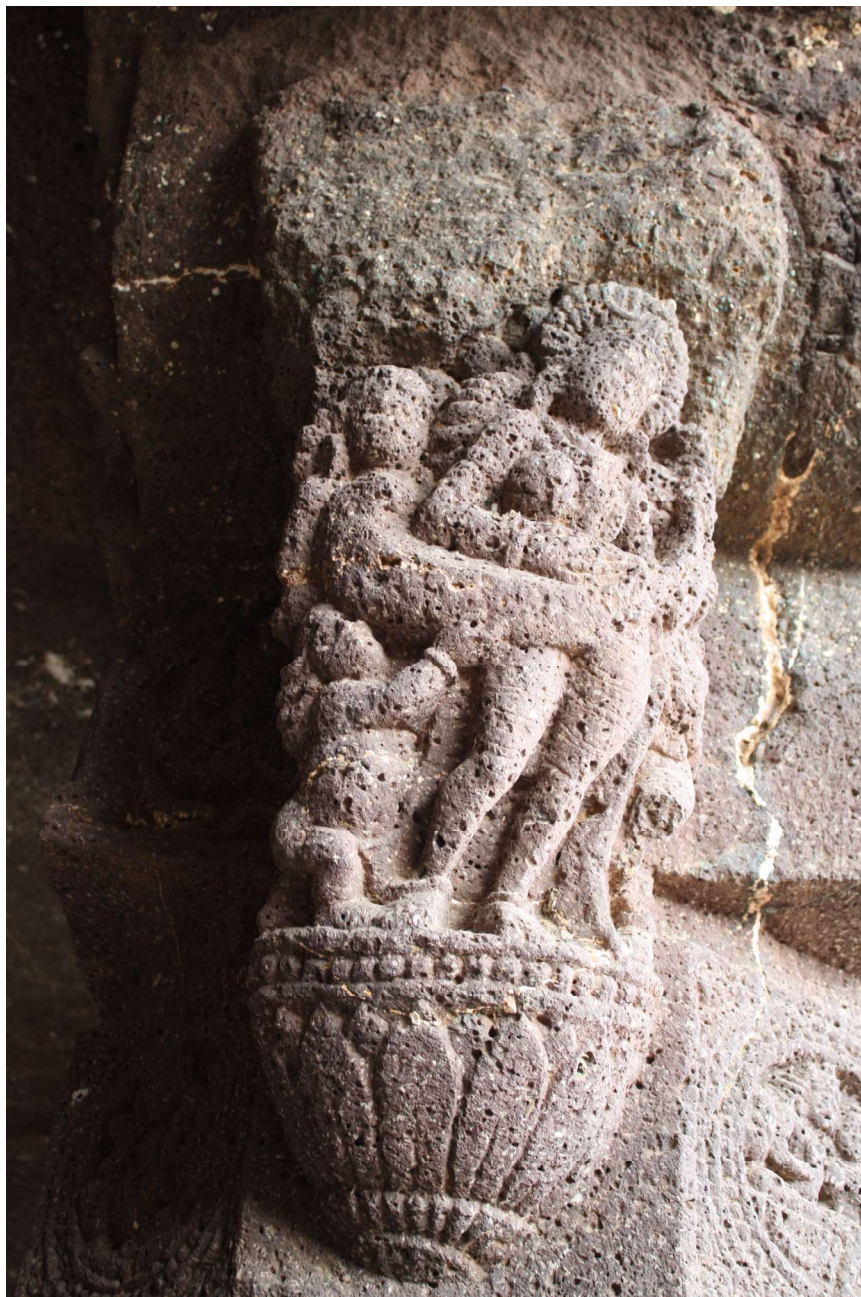


Fig. 2 *Śālabhañjikā* with bow-harp *vīṇā*, Aurangabad, cave №1



Fig. 3 *Śālabhañjikā* with stick zither *vīṇā*, Ellora, Jain cave №31



Fig. 4 *Mithuna: gandharva with ḍamaru and apsaras with vīṇā*, Ellora, Jain cave №33



Fig. 5 *Gandharva* and *apsaras* with 2 types of *vīṇā* (zither and harp)
Aurangabad, cave № 1



Fig. 6 Dance and music scene on *stambha*. *Kinnaras* with singing gesture,
Ellora, cave № 15



Fig. 7 *Gaṇas* with drums. Detail of Śiva Mahāyoga relief panel, Ellora, Kailasanātha



Fig. 8 *Vāmana-yakṣa* with flute, Aurangabad, cave №3

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