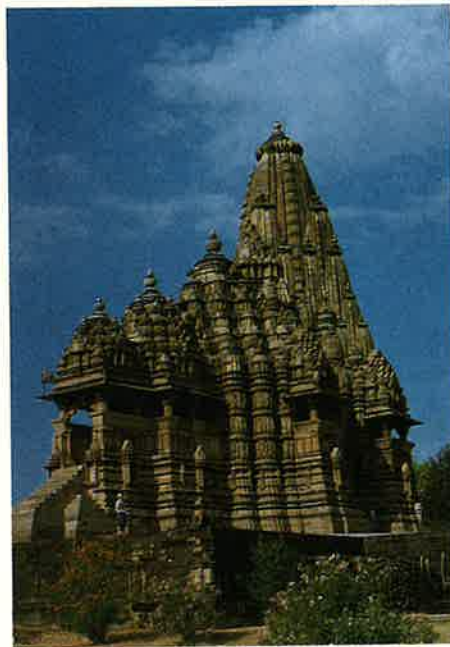


National Committee

**MONUMENTS AND SITES
INDIA**



I ICOMOS

CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE LOS MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES

MONUMENTS AND SITES
INDIA



National Committee
11th General Assembly

MONUMENTS AND SITES INDIA



Consejo Internacional de los Monumentos y Sitios
Conseil International des Monuments et des Sites
International Council on Monuments and Sites

This is one of a new series of ICOMOS
Scientific Publications released on the occasion
of its 11th General Assembly in Sofia, Bulgaria,
5-10 October 1996, sponsored by the Central Cultural Fund
and Sri Lanka National Committee of ICOMOS

The other volumes in the series are:

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First published in 1996 by the Sri Lanka
National Committee of ICOMOS - for the
International Council on Monuments and Sites,
with the financial assistance of
the Central Cultural Fund of the Government of Sri Lanka and UNESCO.

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Typesetting: Institute of Computer Technology,
State Printing Corporation and Alliance Française

ICOMOS National Committee: India

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Printed in Sri Lanka by the State Printing Corporation,
Panaluwa, Padukka

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ISBN 955 - 613 - 086 - 1

Central Cultural Fund Publication No. 199

Central Cultural Fund, 212/1, Baudhaloka Mawatha,

Colombo 7. Sri Lanka, Telefax 94-1-500731

Cover and Frontispiece: Kandariya Mahadeva Temple, the most impressive of the temples in Khajuraho

Foreword

Monuments and Sites of Mankind are but the memory of Man. These stand testimony to the life and style of the people through many generations. Sri Lanka is no exception to this characteristic of human nature, as our Monuments and Sites record a continuous history of a people from the 5th Century B.C. to the present day. We are proud that six of our sites have qualified to be among the three hundred and thirty cultural items listed by UNESCO to be World Heritage Monuments.

As chairperson of the Central Cultural Fund which is looking after such a rich heritage of world stature, we are proud to note that the Central Cultural Fund has been able to sponsor the publication of 20 volumes covering the Monuments and Sites of 20 different countries in the five continents of the globe. We believe that by the dissemination of the knowledge concerning the heritage of different peoples, the world will be richer in sharing such experiences that have so far been confined to each nation.

We take this opportunity to congratulate the 6,000 or more members of the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) for their dedicated service to the world and for providing professional guidance to each nation to safeguard their monumental heritage for the sake of generations to come. We also wish the 84 Member States of ICOMOS, every success in their deliberations at the 11th General Assembly of ICOMOS in Sofia, Bulgaria to be held later this year, for which occasion these volumes are being published.



Prime Minister's Office,
Sir Ernest de Silva Mawatha,
Colombo 3, Sri Lanka.

Sirimavo Dias Bandaranaike
Prime Minister
Sri Lanka

17th April, 1996

Avant-propos

Les Monuments et les Sites historiques ont représenté, au cours de l'histoire de l'humanité, la mémoire de l'homme. Ils témoignent de l'existence et du style de vie des peuples à travers les générations. Le Sri Lanka ne fait pas exception à cette caractéristique du genre humain puisque nos monuments et nos sites racontent l'histoire de notre peuple depuis le 5ème siècle av J.-C. jusqu'à nos jours. Nous sommes fiers que 6 de nos sites aient été sélectionnés parmi les 330 articles culturels listés par l'UNESCO comme Monuments du Patrimoine mondial.

En tant que Président du Central Cultural Fund ayant à coeur l'intérêt d'un tel héritage d'importance mondiale, je suis heureuse de savoir qu'il a été possible de patronner la publication de 20 volumes se rapportant aux Monuments et aux Sites de 20 pays différents des 5 continents du globe. Je suis convaincue que c'est grâce à la diffusion des connaissances concernant les héritages culturels des différents peuples que le monde pourra s'enrichir du partage de telles expériences jusqu'alors confinées à chaque pays.

Je saisis cette opportunité pour féliciter les quelque 6 000 membres du Comité International des Monuments et des Sites (ICOMOS) pour leur service dévoué au monde et pour l'assistance professionnelle apportée à chaque nation en vue de la sauvegarde de leurs monuments dans l'intérêt des générations à venir. Je souhaite également aux 84 états membres d'ICOMOS tous les succès dans leurs délibérations lors de la 11ème Assemblée Générale d'ICOMOS à Sofia, Bulgarie, qui se déroulera à la fin de cette année et à l'occasion de laquelle ces livres ont été publiés.



Sirimavo Dias Bandaranaike
Premier Ministre
Sri Lanka

Bureau du Premier Ministre,
Sir Ernest de Silva Mawatha,
Colombo 3, Sri Lanka

17 avril 1996

Preface

Although ICOMOS had its birth in Europe over thirty years ago, it is only now that it has spread to the ends of Africa, America and Asia/Oceania. It has now a membership in 84 countries, and more nations are fast appreciating the professional value of this International Body.

The steadfast effort of ICOMOS is to see that the highest principles of conservation are applied to the Monuments and Sites of the World. It is precisely for this reason that ICOMOS has been able to interest twenty countries in the five continents of the world to record their efforts so that the rest of the world could share their rich experience in the science of conservation.

The organizers of the twenty publications take this opportunity to thank the Editors of these volumes for giving generously of their time and for collaborating in this major exchange of knowledge.

Prof. Lakshman Alwis
President
ICOMOS, Sri Lanka

Ms. Sita Pieris
Editor-in-Chief
ICOMOS, Sri Lanka

Dr. Roland Silva
President
ICOMOS

Colombo, 17 April 1996

Préface

Bien qu'ICOMOS soit né en Europe il y a un peu plus de 30 ans, c'est seulement maintenant que son action a pu s'étendre aux frontières de l'Afrique, de l'Amérique et de l'Asie/Océanie. Il possède aujourd'hui 84 pays membres et un nombre rapidement croissant de nations rendent hommage à la valeur professionnelle de ce corps international.

Le constant effort soutenu par ICOMOS est celui de veiller au respect des grands principes de conservation des Monuments et des Sites historiques mondiaux. C'est pour cette raison précise qu'ICOMOS a su intéresser 20 pays des 5 continents du globe à prendre notes de leurs efforts pour que le reste du monde puisse partager leurs riches expériences dans le domaine de la science de la conservation.

Les organisateurs des 20 publications saisissent cette opportunité pour remercier les éditeurs des 20 volumes qui ont si généreusement donné de leur temps pour cet échange majeur de connaissances.

Prof. Lakshman Alwis
Président
ICOMOS, Sri Lanka

Mme Sita Pieris
Rédacteur en chef
ICOMOS, Sri Lanka

Dr. Roland Silva
Président
ICOMOS

Message


The story of conservation is as old as the civilization of the human race. If ICOMOS has in recent years collated ideologies and codified precepts, it is the research and experiences of man that they have sensitively brought together.

The ancient chronicles of Sri Lanka like the Dipavamsa and the Mahawamsa as well as technical texts like Manjusri's Vastuvidya Sastra are attempts to record unending tales of scientific experience that have enriched the sum and substance of its human tradition. The data of unwritten experience is yet another source that the professionals of today should attempt to glean from traditional craftsman and village elders. These researches would extend from city planning to monastic layouts, to monuments and interiors, to furniture and even to items of regal wear as crowns and the setting of the gems upon such jewellery. These texts and traditions are valuable not only for creation but also for the conservation and safeguarding of their quality through time.

I wish the work of the world body in the conservation of Monuments and Sites every success and congratulate them for this attempt to collate such information from the different ends of the earth.

Ministry of Cultural and
Religious Affairs, Sethsiripaya,
Battaramulla, Sri Lanka.

3rd May 1996



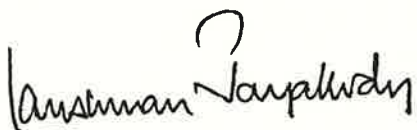
Lakshman Jayakody
*Minister of Cultural and
Religious Affairs,*

Message

Les origines de la conservation sont aussi anciennes que celles de la civilisation humaine. ICOMOS a depuis de récentes années regroupé des théories et codifié des règles de conduite permettant ainsi une approche intelligente des recherches sur l'homme et de ses expériences.

Les anciennes chroniques du Sri Lanka comme celles de Dipavamsa et Mahavamsa ainsi que les textes techniques comme le Vastuvidya Sastra de Manjusri sont des tentatives de récits scientifiques impérissables qui ont enrichi l'ensemble et l'essence même des traditions humaines du pays. Les faits provenant d'histoires qui n'ont pas été écrites forment une autre source d'information que les professionnels d'aujourd'hui devraient essayer de recueillir auprès des artisans traditionnels et des anciens du village. Les recherches s'étendent des plans de villes aux conceptions monastiques, des monuments et intérieurs au mobilier et même aux accessoires vestimentaires comme les couronnes et la disposition des pierres précieuses les ornant. Ces textes et ces traditions sont de grande valeur non seulement pour notre histoire mais aussi pour la conservation et la protection de leurs qualités à travers le temps.

Je tiens à souhaiter aux membres du corps mondial de la conservation des Monuments et des Sites tous les succès dans leurs travaux et je tiens également à les féliciter pour leur effort de collection d'informations en provenance des quatre coins du monde.



Lakshman Jayakody
*Ministre des Affaires Culturelles et
Religieuses, Sri Lanka*

Ministère des Affaires Culturelles
et Religieuses
Sethsiripaya, Battaramulla
Sri Lanka

3 mai 1996

ICOMOS National Committee - India

Careful selection plays an important role when compiling material on monuments and sites in India. This is because of the vast number of edifices which lie scattered across the country, some celebrated for their splendour, some frequently visited for their easy accessibility, and others which are obscure yet full of historic and architectural interest.

It is not possible to cover the entire spectrum of the known 20,000 odd monuments in India. Even those protected under the ASI run to some 3676. For the purpose of this present volume, we have selected not so much the well-known monuments of India as the true representative ones, but monuments ranging from early Buddhist stupas and rock cut caves, classical Hindu temples, medieval forts and palaces, Islamic mosques and mausoleums, to Renaissance churches and to neo-classical, colonial, buildings. This assortment will indicate the immense diversity of architectural styles and historic influences which fashioned India's physical cultural heritage.

Achala Moulik

President,

ICOMOS National Committee

Comité national ICOMOS - Inde

Le territoire indien est parsemé d'un très grand nombre de monuments, certains célèbres pour leur splendeur, d'autres fréquemment visités car d'accès facile, d'autres enfin, méconnus, mais d'un intérêt historique et architectural certain. Préparer une compilation sur les monuments et les sites de l'Inde implique donc une sélection attentive.

Il est impossible de couvrir tout l'éventail des 20 000 monuments anciens répertoriés en Inde. Le nombre des seuls bâtiments qui se trouvent placés sous la protection de l'Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) s'élève à 3 676. Dans le cadre du présent volume, nous n'avons pas tant sélectionné des monuments célèbres de l'Inde qu'un certain nombre d'édifices véritablement représentatifs de l'immense diversité des styles architecturaux et des influences historiques qui ont façonné le paysage culturel de ce pays : de premiers stupas bouddhistes à des bâtiments coloniaux néo-classiques en passant par des grottes taillées dans le rocher, des temples hindous classiques, des forts et des palais médiévaux, des mosquées et des mausolées islamiques ou des églises Renaissance.

Achala Moulik

Président

ICOMOS, Comité national de l'Inde

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Sanchi

The transformation of Emperor Ashoka (269-236 BC), from an aggressive warrior whose desire to extend his domain drove him to inflict cruelty, to the ascetic ruler who preached non-violence, is one of history's poignant dramas. The last of his wars was in Kalinga where hundreds of thousands were slain, taken prisoners or perished. Though Ashoka's empire stretched now from Karnataka to the Himalayas and from Assam to the Hindu Kush, the carnage of Kalinga stayed in his soul, seeking a great atonement.

The great stupa at Sanchi is a symbol of the atonement of this great emperor. Rarely does history provide so poignant a spectacle of a ruler's remorse for the misery he has caused in the wake of his ambitions.

While the scenes of the battle field at Kalinga haunted Ashoka he turned for guidance to a Buddhist philosopher, Upagupta of Mathura, who told him about non-violence and the rightful path and perhaps the transience of all conquests and Kingdoms. It is always the awareness of mortality that compels men, with zest for life, to seek immortality. As Prince Siddhartha had unravelled the riddle of existence, so now Ashoka

followed in his Master's footsteps to give meaning to life.

He entered the Buddhist order as a lay brother and then became a monk. Another warrior-emperor, Charles V, who was Holy Roman Emperor, King of Spain and ruler of the newly discovered Americas, also retired to a monastery at Yustes at the height of his power. While Charles V gave up an empire to contemplate the Supreme Being, Ashoka sought to transform his realm. He used his Civil Service to propagate the new laws of ahimsa and righteousness. "Everywhere in my dominions the Commissioners and the District Officers every five years must proceed on circuit, not only to execute their ordinary duties but give instruction in the law". The Secret Service of Chandragupta was pressed into the work of reporting the progress of religious activities in the realm. To instruct the people, edicts were carved on rocks and were translated into practical policy by Ashoka, in his concern for his subjects, and a reverence for life extending to animals as well. Not content with educating his subjects, the Emperor sent emissaries to Lanka, and the Far East, to spread

Buddhism. With Buddhism went the culture of India.

Ashoka was a great builder, Travelling many centuries later in India, Fa-Hien marvelled at the remains of Ashoka's vast palace at Pataliputra. While these have disappeared, what remains are his pillars and stupas which enshrined the relics of the Buddha and Buddhist saints. The most famous one is at Sanchi, near the ancient city of Vidisha.

The foundation of the religious centre at Sanchi was laid by Emperor Ashoka in the 3rd century B.C. He may have chosen this place because his queen Devi was a merchant's daughter from Vidisha. The location of the hill may have been another reason. In his zeal to spread Buddhism, Ashoka is said to have opened seven out of the eight edifices built over the mortal remains of Lord Buddha and redistributed these remains for a large number of stupas erected under his command. The great stupa was to serve as the nucleus of a monastic community. The proximity of Vidisha with its prosperous inhabitants would be the source for obtaining both devotees and funds.

Sanchi itself was a flourishing Buddhist centre, with several monasteries, temples and stupas. Ashoka's consort Devi had built a monastery at nearby Vidisagiri, where her son Mahendra stayed before embarking on his mission to Shri Lanka. The one stupa built by Ashoka was originally a low structure of brick, half the diameter

of the present edifice. Large bricks were used in the construction. It was hemispherical in shape with raised terraces at the base. These were enclosed by a wooden railing with a stone umbrella on the crown of the edifice.

With the decline in Maurya power, the stupa was damaged but restoration activities were undertaken by the people of Vidisha. The original brick edifice was encased in stone and there was a general enlargement of the stupa. A high terrace was built to serve as a processional path as well as balustrades at its ground level, berm, staircase and the harmika, Minor stupas were also repaired in the Sunga period, The Satavahana period also witnessed more additions and ornamentation of the structures. At the same time, similar stupas were built in nearby Bharhut of which all that remains are massive yet beautifully carved gateways and railings.

The chief characteristic of the stupas was the square railing encircling a pedestal upon which reposed the triple umbrella. While the stupa has an austere grandeur, the four elaborately carved gateways constructed in the 1st century B C. during the Satavahana rule stand as splendid sentinels in four directions. The gateways are carved in detail with episodes from Lord Buddha's life as well as events depicted in the Jataka tales. The significant events and the miracles depicted, form a complete chronicle of Buddhist lore and essential tenets of its creed. The gateways are topped by



Fig. 1. Vaisali - Asokan pillar

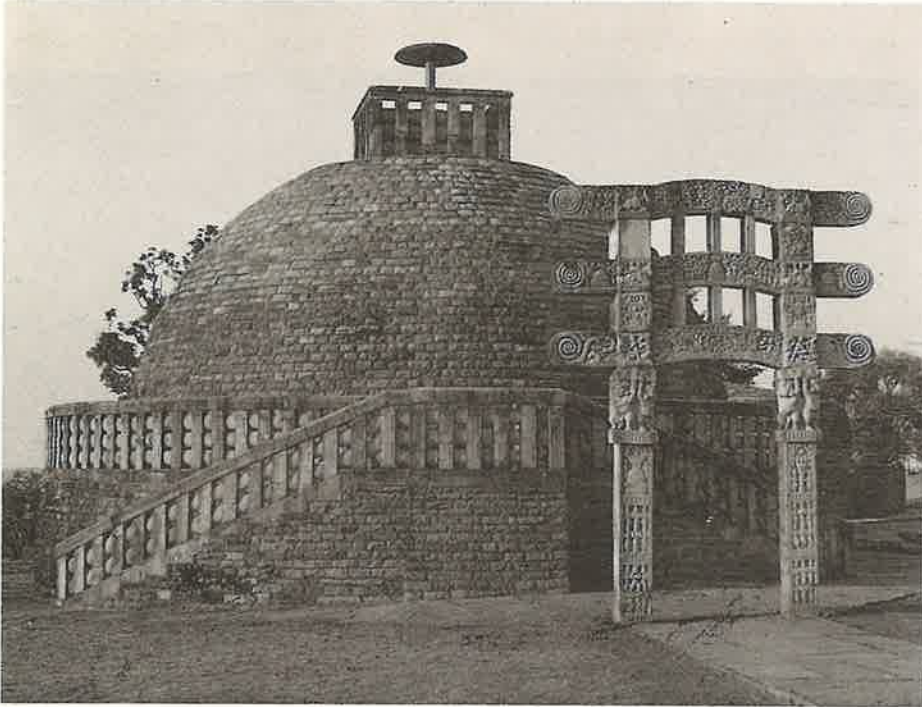


Fig. 2. Sanchi - stupa.
Fig. 3. Sanchi

carved capitals and the symbol of dharma - chakra.

The earlier Christian era saw turmoil and disruption in the region when building activities were hindered. The Gupta period ushered in a creative period when four statues of Lord Buddha, seated under canopies facing the four entrances of the main Stupa, were built. Temples were built in the Gupta period as well, displaying the classical grace and simplicity of this era. Sanchi continued to flourish up to the time of Harsha (606-647 AD) on whose death North India again fell into turmoil. However, as a monastic centre, there was little disruption here until the Hindu revival when Brahmanism led to the decline of Buddhism in the land of its birth.

Sanchi, as a World Heritage Monument, is a link between Hindu and Buddhist cultures. The style and design of Sanchi have been emulated in those lands where Buddhist culture has taken root, revealing the affinities of these outwardly divergent traditions.

At about the same time that Ashoka consolidated his empire, another young man became the first Emperor of China by annexing one province after another to form a united realm. To protect his new empire from invaders from the Steppes, he built the Great Wall. To quell feudal fragmentation, he centralised government machinery and codified Chinese laws. The Chinese called him Qin Shi Huangdi or First Sovereign Emperor Qin. Not very different from the sovereign

Mauryan Emperor Ashoka at first glance in their quest for territorial hegemony. In the quest for truth, in remorse for past cruelties to seek perhaps assurance of eternal life, Ashoka embraced the teachings of Lord Buddha with a passionate commitment. He sent his son and daughter as emissaries abroad and inscribed the Buddha's teachings on rock faces and pillars.

Emperor Qin was also haunted by thoughts of the hereafter. At an early age, he chose the site for his mausoleum near his capital at Shaanxi province. Legend has it that the Emperor's last resting place is a vast place filled with art treasures including a model of the universe made of gold, silver, pearl and jade. This mausoleum is guarded by terracotta figures of 8000 soldiers, ready for battle to defend the sovereign Emperor's last resting place. They are armed with wood and bronze weapons which are still sharp after 2200 years. The faces of the clay soldiers reflect the different ethnic groups which comprised Qin's vast empire of Scythians, Mongolians and Caucasians.

Qin's empire continued as did Ashoka's, but the demarcations of Ashoka's were known by pillars and stupas, and Qin's by the clay army of multiracial faces.

Ajanta, Ellora and Elephanta

Lord Buddha had instructed his monks to go into retreat occasionally to meditate. Buddhist monks found this a practical suggestion in the monsoon season when it was difficult to traverse lonely and sometimes inaccessible terrain in search of alms or disciples. Their remedy was to build shelters for this season of retreat.

The most characteristic feature of the Deccan was the rock hewn viharas or monasteries sculpted out of the rock face of hills. The practice of scooping out dwellings from living rock is not characteristic of India alone.

Building temples, monasteries, storehouses out of living rock is not a speciality to ancient India alone. Other civilisations used existing rock formations to carve out various types of edifices.

Five centuries before Ajanta and Ellora, the Nabatoeans moving in from the Arabian desert into Jordan, built an imposing city from living rock. Strabo the Greek geographer described how caravans carrying frankincense from Arabia, gold from Egypt, spices from India, silks from China, ivory and slaves from Nubia crossed this city "like armies on the

march." Since Greeks were the main traders and travellers on this route, they called the city "Petra" which means 'rock' in the Greek language. The stone used was tawny and rose coloured. Temples, tombs and amphitheatre were carved out of these dramatic rock formations. Men of different cultures passed through Petra. The carved edifices bear the imprint of these native styles - Assyrian, Egyptian, Greek and Roman. There are Corinthian pillars and Romanesque facades, Assyrian lions and Roman gods carved out of the sheer, steep pink cliffs. Beyond these cliffs opens the vista of a plateau where the people of Petra built houses and markets filled with sound and movement.

In time this Rose City also slipped into obscurity as Romans annexed Jordan and caravans were diverted to the Red Sea. Earthquakes disrupted ancient edifices and Crusaders of medieval times found in Petra a suitable citadel where a fort was built and then abandoned. Bedouines living on the fringe of the desert found in the beautiful ghost town a home of their own.

Unlike Ajanta and Ellora, Petra's rock hewn temples and houses were

not used as places of religious retreats but as the centre of trade, commerce, acquisition of wealth and interchange of ideas, which made it a great metropolis of the ancient world. Designers of Ajanta and Ellora chose the solid rock face and not existing caves for their use. Chisel and pick have hewn away the trap, through openings intended for windows and doors, leaving the stone meant for designing pillars and stupa. The usual form which the viharas took was that of a central hall or chapel with cells, retractors and other chambers clustered around it. The monks' cells small and austere with stone couches serving as beds and in the refectories too stone tables were used for meals. Water from springs was stored in stone cisterns. There is the hint of a basilica in the formation of these caves with a central nave and rows of pillars forming aisles. There was usually a stupa crowned by an umbrella in the apse.

The caves are in the forms of viharas of chitya-grihas which are monasteries, or sanctuaries. These were begun two centuries before Christ and went on until the 7th century A D.

Ajanta mirrors the flowering of Buddhist sculpture and painting and received prominence during the Vakataka and Gupta periods. Princes and merchants of nearby kingdoms sometimes gave donations for the excavation or embellishment of some caves. Some of the paintings were from the Satavahana period. Peace and prosperity ensured the right

climate for artistic activity. When the warring rulers of the Deccan - the Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas and Yadavas - threw the area into disruption, this creative continuity was broken, and the monks may have had to abandon the caves which fell into disuse and then obscurity, until an adventurous British officer explored one of the caves and revealed to the world one of the greatest treasure houses of painting, that in realism, composition and perspective anticipated Mantegna, Tiepolo and Filippo Lippi of the Italian Renaissance.

Painting was a widely practised art in India. There are numerous references made in Sanskrit literature to paintings and portraits. Banabhatta's *Kadambari* described the painting of the walls of the palace of Ujjain. The traveller Hiuen Tsang has described Buddhist monasteries full of paintings. The connection between the murals of Ajanta and Sanskrit literature is very close, but predominantly the theme is buddhist, depicting episodes from the life of the Buddha and his disciples, as well as events from the Jataka tales. In the process, however, we get an idea of the contemporaneous scene in cities and villages, of dress and hairstyles, postures and countenances. Indeed the panorama of life, both religious and secular, are reflected in the tempera paintings of Ajanta.

"On the hundred walls and pillars of these rock-carved temples, a vast drama moves before our eyes: a drama played by princes and sages and heroes, by men and women of



Fig. 1. Ajanta - cave no. 19.

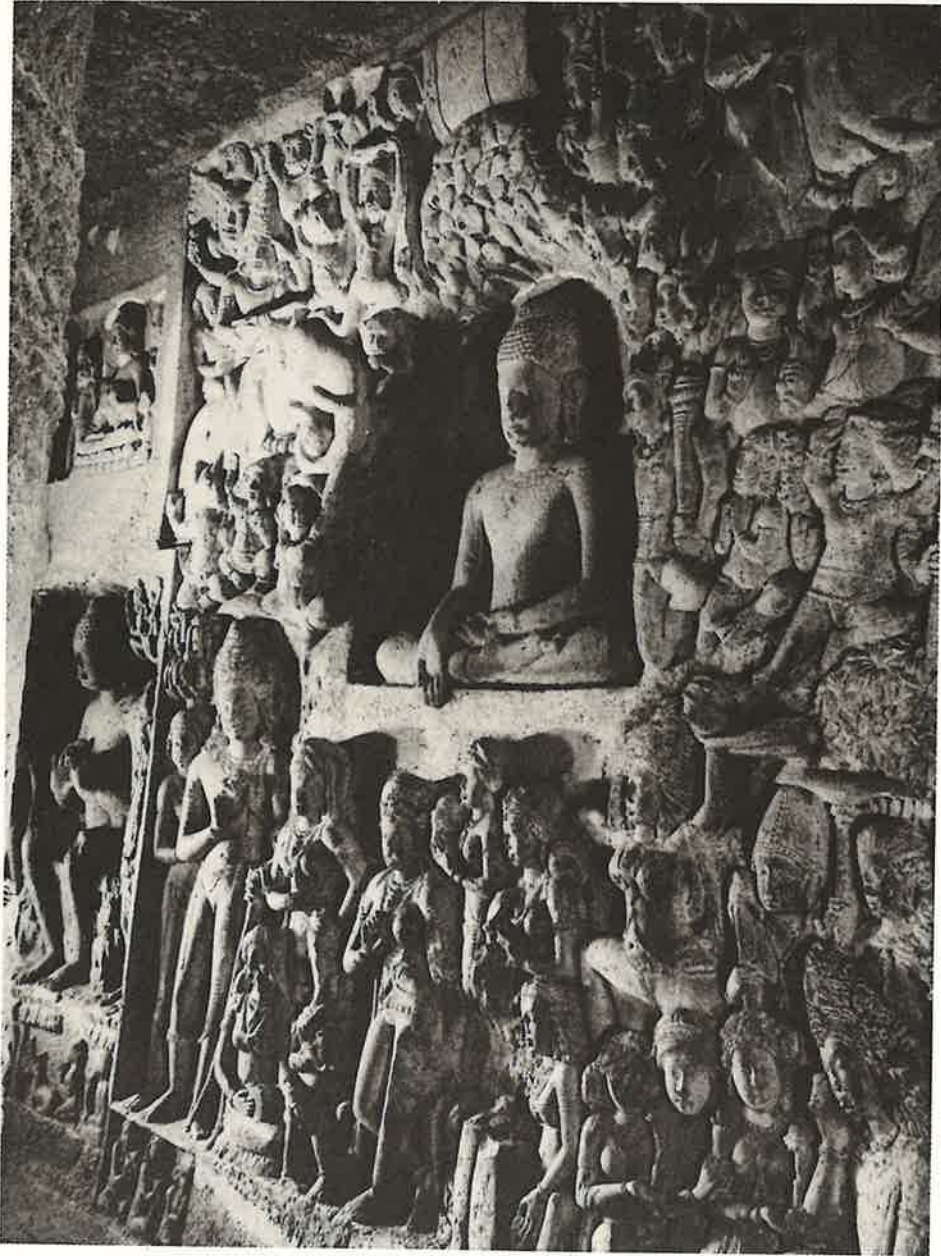


Fig. 2. Ajanta - cave no. 26

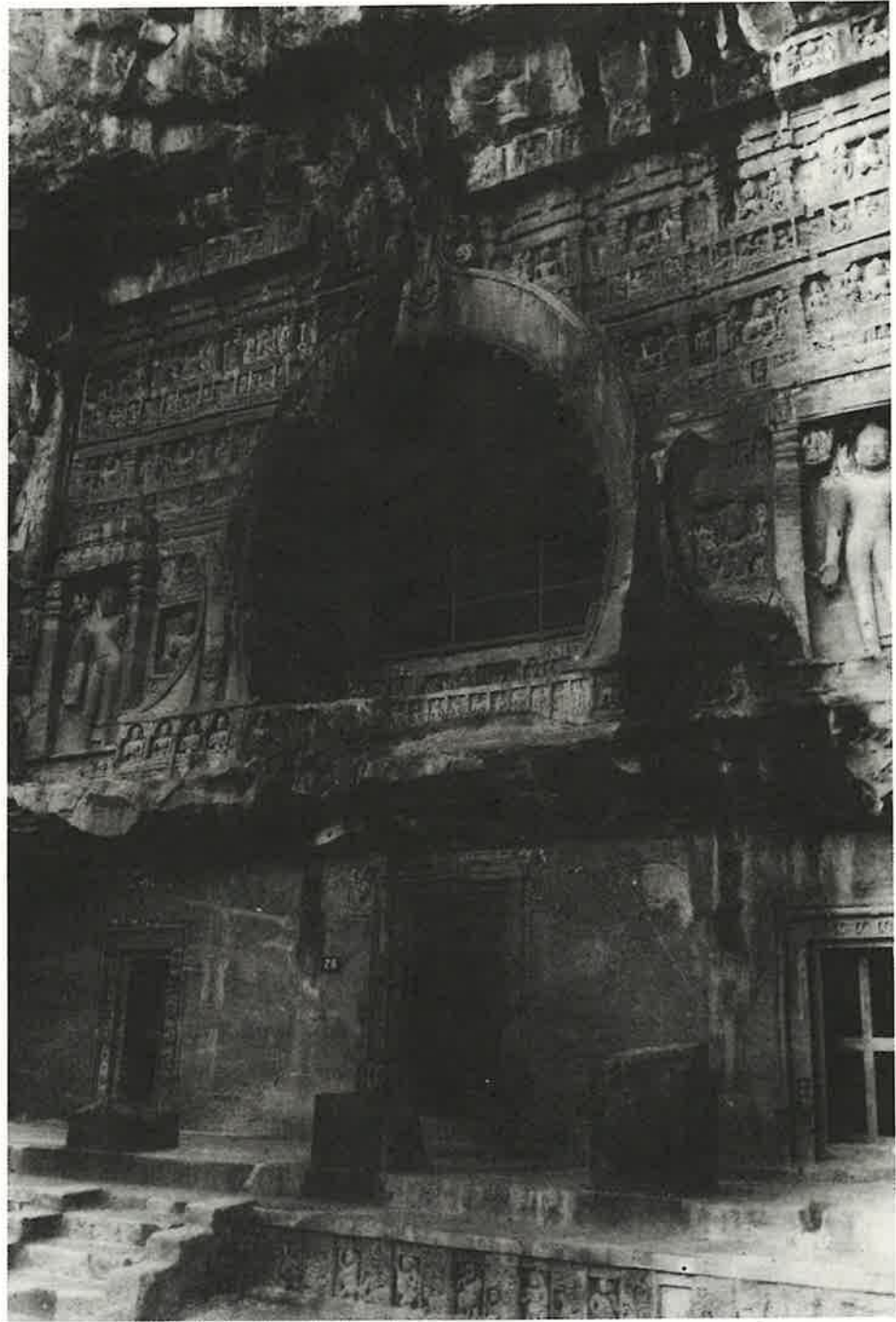


Fig. 3. Ajanta - cave no. 26.

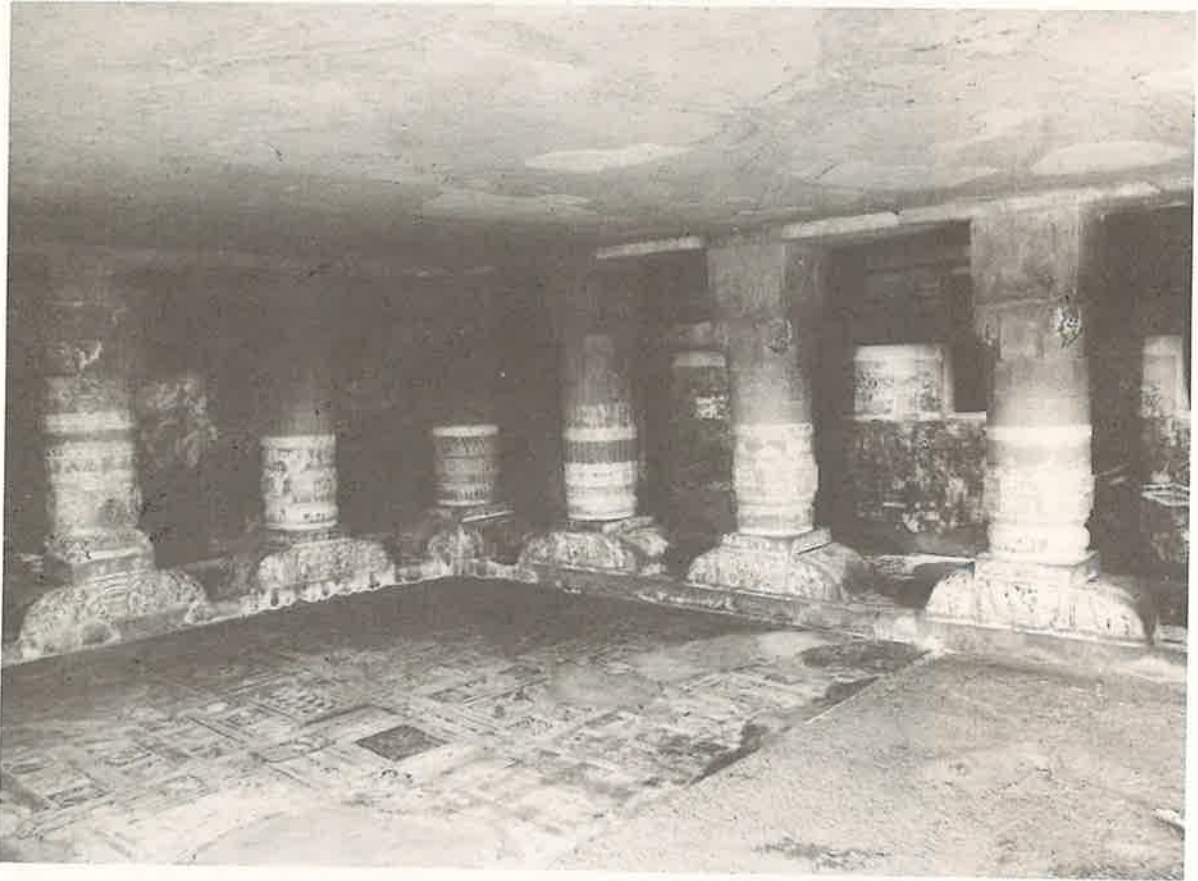


Fig. 4. Ajanta - cave interior

every condition, against a marvellously varied scene, among forests and gardens, in courts and cities, on wide plains, and in deep jungles, while above the messengers of heaven move swiftly across the sky. From all these emanates a great joy in the surpassing radiance of the face of the world, in the physical nobility of men and women, in the strength and grace of animals and the loveliness and purity of birds and flowers. "(W. Rothenstein).

The tempera method was to spread upon the surface of the rock a layer

of clay, cow dung and rice husks. Over this was given a coat of white lime plaster which was kept fresh while paint was applied from pigments made of ochre, terraverte, lime, kaolin, gypsum, lamp black and lapis lazuli. The technique was adopted by other nations as frescoes similar to Ajanta in theme and texture have been discovered in Dandin Ulig at Khotan. Indian painting and sculpture went to China on the silk and Buddhist route.

Ellora gives a different view of the late classical era. Situated near the



Fig. 5. Ajanta - cave no. 26, tempera painting

Yadava capital of Devagiri, some of the caves are Buddhist and are contemporaneous with those of the late Ajanta caves. A cave contains a colossal statue of Lord Buddha. Then there is a transition from Buddhism to Brahmanism as exemplified in the cave of Dashavatara. In a two storeyed structure with chapels and courtyard the reliefs on the walls no longer reflect the compassion and serenity of the Buddhist spirit but the awe, even terror, of the Shakti tradition, of the mother goddess in her terrifying form. There are lighter scenes too - of the marriage of Shiva

and Parvati, the courts of Indra and Jagannath.

The most splendid cave in Ellora is the one, called Kailasa. Hewn out of a sloping rock wall, the solid monolith was fashioned into a temple dedicated to Lord Shiva. The central courtyard is surrounded by small chapels and preceded by a square hall. In front of this is a hall on which reposes a statue of Nandi the bull, the vahana of Lord Shiva. The three buildings and doorway are connected by a flying bridge. The shrine itself is supported on the backs of elephants. On the wall are friezes



Fig. 6. Ellora



Fig. 7. Ellora - Ravana lifting Kailash



Fig. 8. Ellora - cave no. 32



Fig. 9. Elephanta - Trimurti

depicting scenes from the Ramayana and Puranas, centred around the episodes around Shiva. Indeed the very formidable structure of the cave, suspended as it were in the air and the stone pillars, evokes the grandeur and serenity of the personality of Lord Shiva. As an architectural marvel it has never ceased to awe the spectator, The monarch who had it built - Krishna I (756-776 AD) of the Rashtrakuta dynasty - ensured his immortality in

this paen of praise to a noble god.

After the grandeur of Hinduism, there are caves depicting the other worldliness of the Jain sect. These caves are, however, less ethereal than Kailasa cave but are gracefully proportioned and ornamented.

These caves at Ellora give an idea of the material wealth of the kingdoms as well as the synthesis of various philosophies and creeds which formed a composite cultural pattern.

The Elephant Caves in the island capital of the Konkan Mauryas off the coast of Bombay completes the Trinity of the rock cut caves that form part of the World Heritage Monuments of India. It was built at the same time as the Ellora caves. The name Elephant is given to the island of Gharapuri after a huge statue of an elephant was found there in early British colonial times. There are seven of which the most impressive is the one containing the statue of Mahesha-murti. There are similarities with Ellora sculpture in the depiction of events centred around Lord Shiva, the epics and Puranas.

It was the golden age of sculpture of Western India when powerful dynasties gave an epoch of peace and prosperity which is an essential prerequisite of art.

Buddhist Rock - Cut Caves

Apart from the rock-cut caves of Ellora and Ajanta there abounded similar structures in Western India, nestled among the rugged Western Ghat hills. These caves hewn out of rocks consist of horizontal strata of amygdaloid and cognate track formations. These strata end in perpendicular cliffs offering a suitable surface for rock architecture. These unique formations were ideal for monastic retreats in which each cave is a self-contained habitation comprising living quarters and prayer houses known as a chaitya. The chaityas have a large vaulted hall with an apsidal end. The stupa also carved out of the natural rock was located in the centre of the abode.

It is interesting to note that the rock caves of Western India have a remarkable identity with the architecture of Roman basilicas. These styles may have travelled to India on the silk caravan route which stopped at Petra in Western Asia which are also hewn out of rocks.

Apart from the rock retreats with their square halls there were Buddhist monasteries known as Viharas comprising a central square hall fronted by a vestibule. Radiating from the central hall were separated

cells for the monks. Originally the shape and formation of the monasteries resemble the chaityas but as the Buddhist order grew the imperative of more extensive accommodation led to the modification of the earlier and simpler chaityas into the more elaborate viharas. Instances of these rock architecture are the Buddhist retreats at Bhaja, Kondane, Karla, Pittalkhara and Nasik. (Figs. 1 - 6).

Among the rock-cut caves of the Gupta period, those of Udaigiri are remarkable for the grandeur of their construction and style. Nine rock-cut caves of Udagiri are rectangular niches with sculptures carved out of the rock face. Others are in the style of cave temples with rectangular shrine chambers carved out of rock fronted by a pillared portico. The lintels have panels of the two river goddesses while the doors are flanked by dwarapalas or door-bearers. The cave of Udaigiri in Madhya Pradesh was built in the reign of Chandra Gupta-II, in the 4th century.

While these are the rock-cut caves of central India, similar types exist in the Andhra region such as the *Anantasayana Gudi*, *Adisomanapalli*

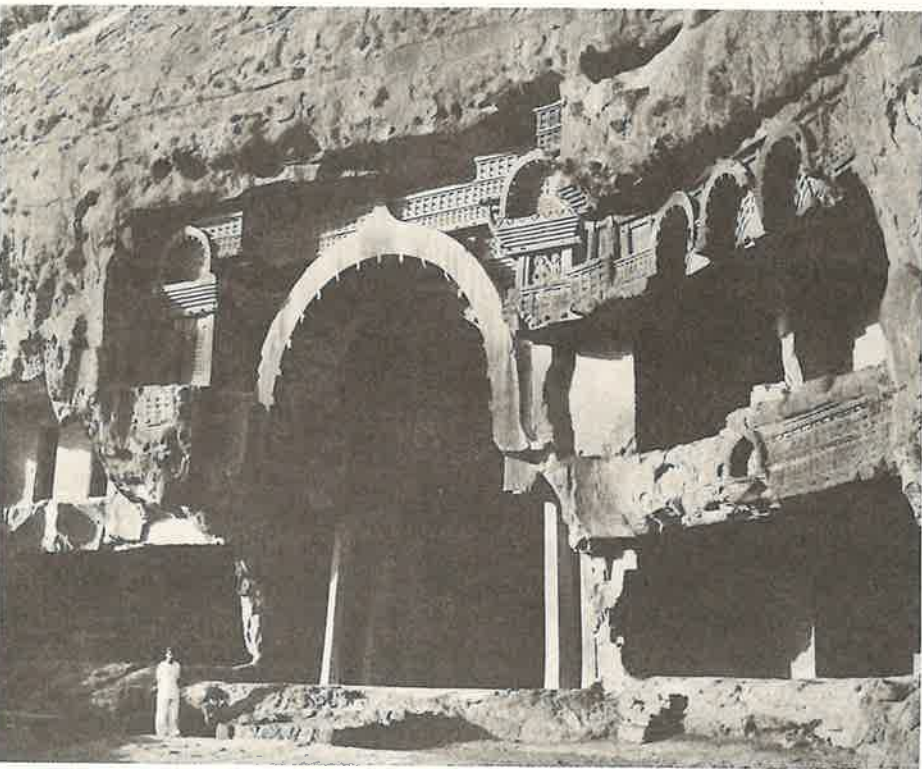


Fig. 1. Bhaja-facade of Buddhist cave
Fig. 2. Bhaja-grand view of chaitya cave

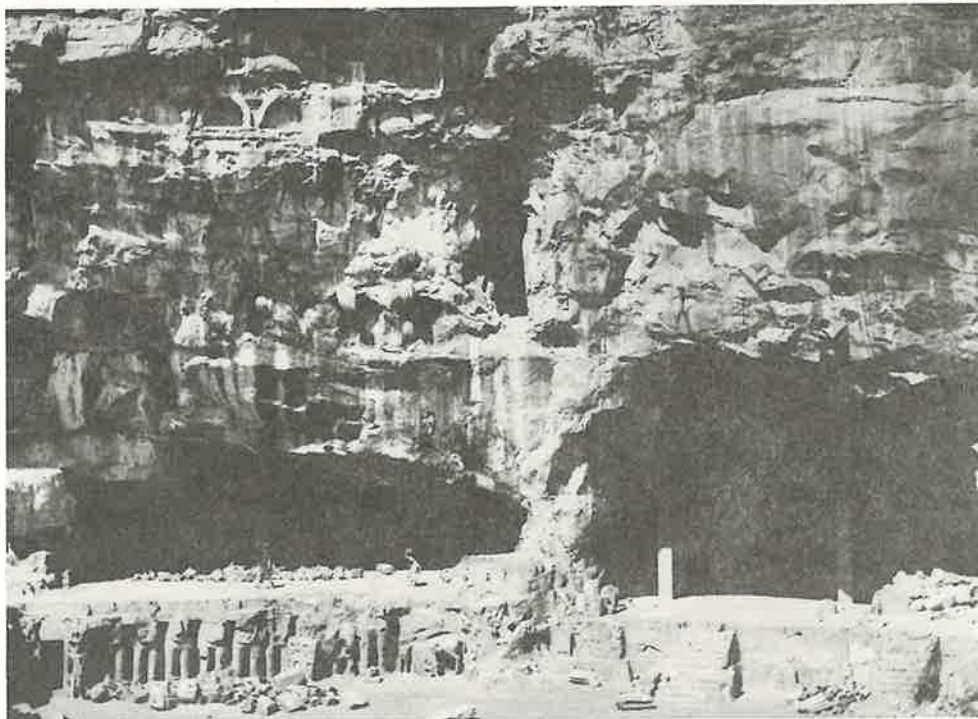
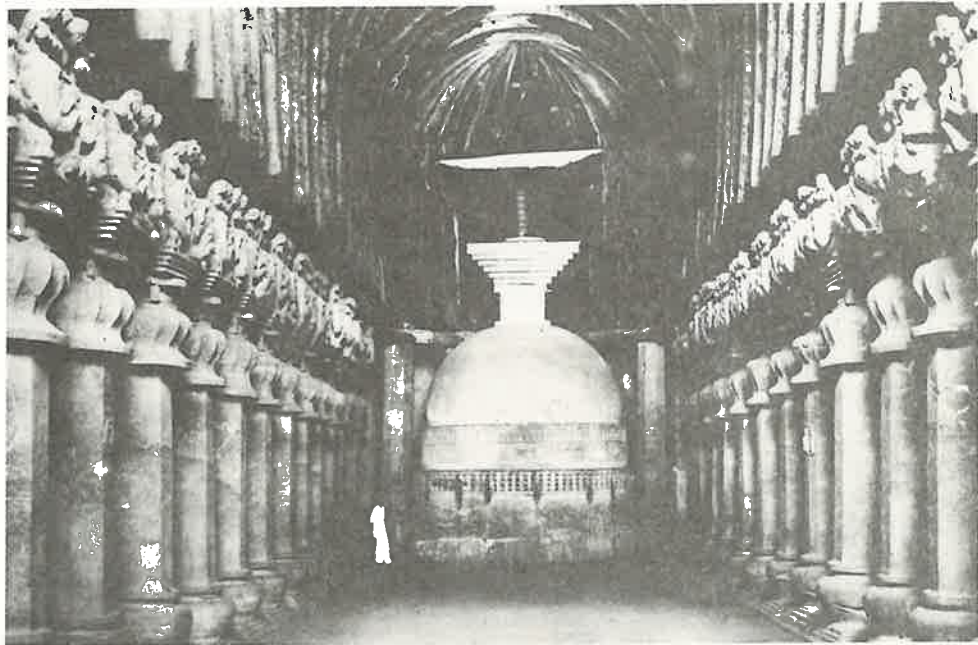


Fig. 3. Karla - cave no. 1

Fig. 4. Pittal Khara - view of the caves



Fig. 5. Pittal Khara - view of doorway with two yaksha dwarapalas

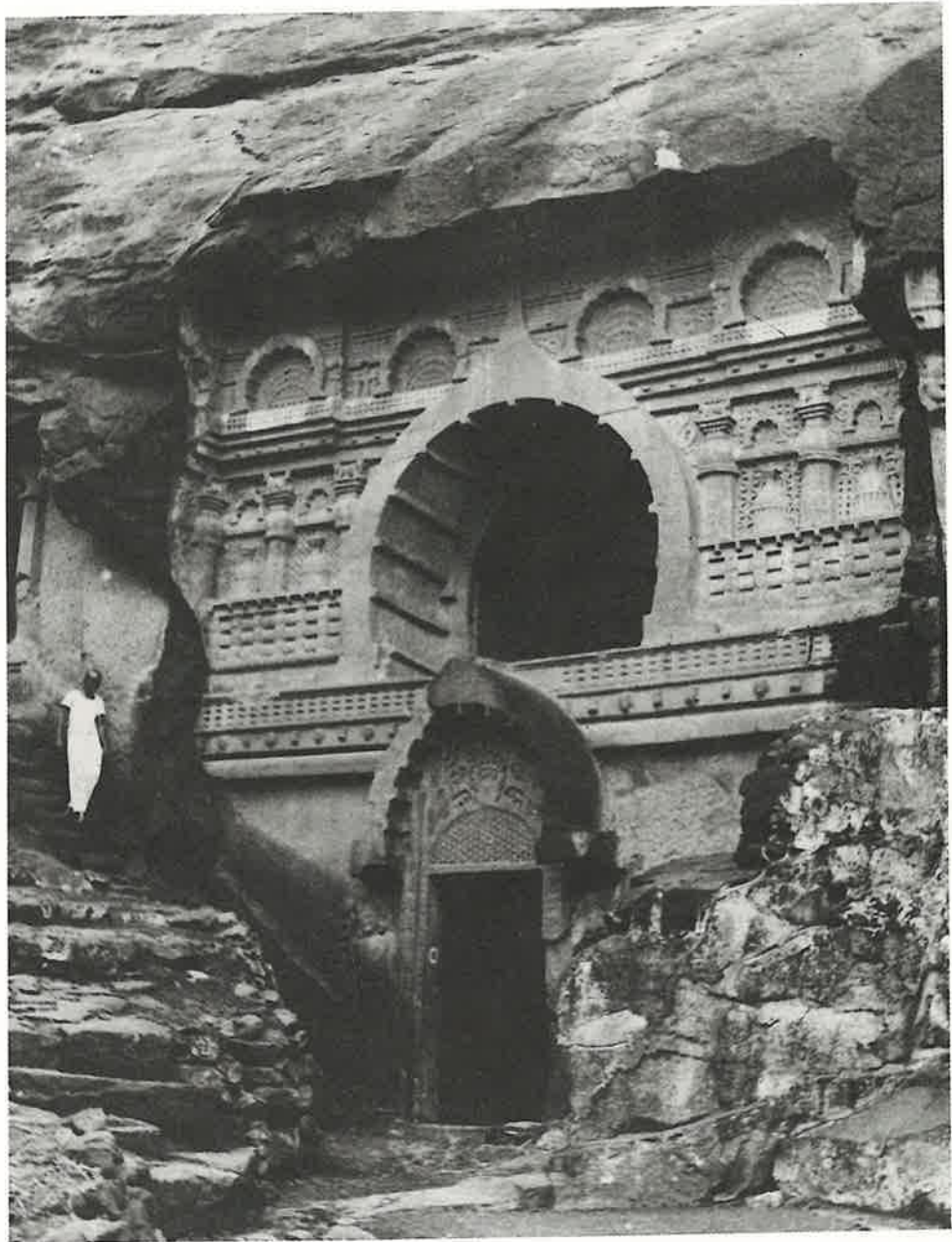


Fig. 6. Nasik - cave no. 18.



Fig. 7. Udaigiri Varaha

(in Karimanagar District) which is excavated out of a sandstone hill *Undavalli*, *Panamada* and *Sitarapuram* on the north bank of the Krishna River. Though originally inspired by the imperial Guptas these were built under the patronage of the Eastern Chalukya dynasty.

The style varies from the simple conception of the earlier rock to the more ornate designs comprising two rows of pillars and pilasters, Ornamental cornices of the facade are decorated by the Kudus while the pilasters are separated by decorated toranas.

Bhairava Konda temple at Kottapalli in Nellore District has 8 cave temples similar in style to those of the Krishna District.

There were also monolithic rock temples in North India as may be seen in *Dhamnar* where caves were excavated out of laterite hills in the 8th century. The styles were similar to the central vimana projecting into a Mandapa. The shikharas and Amalakas are different from the southern caves with large flat amalakas on top.

Further north there are rock temples at Masrus in Kangra district called Thakurvara built in the 9th century. Here the temple is carved out of a massive rock resembling those of the Pallavas in the south. Here the principle shrine stands in the midst of eight subsidiary shrines known as the Asthavarivas. The principal shrine is level with the mandapa while the shikhara rises from the flat roof.

The last of the rock caves and

unique in its style is the monolithic temple at Kolgong in Bhagalpur District which is hewn out of a massive granite boulder.

Early Temples of South India

Aihole, Badami, and Pattadakal

The Western Chalukyan dynasty founded by Pulakeshi I in the sixth century A D. with Vatapi (Badami) as their capital ushered in a brilliant epoch in the history of Karnataka. This powerful dynasty ruled over the Deccan for nearly two centuries. The earlier kings, Kirtivarman I and Pulakeshi II, succeeded in bringing the Deccan under Chalukyan rule. Under Kirtivarman II the empire reached its apogee before the Rashtrakutas subdued them.

Like many southern dynasties, the Chalukyan rulers were not only empire builders but were also vigorous patrons of the arts who encouraged and sported the artists and craftsmen whose experimentation and innovation gave a new dimension in architecture. It is in Chalukyan times that the transition designs took place. Master architects were encouraged to experiment with different techniques and designs. Innovation in temple architecture was carried out in three great centres - Aihole, Badami and Pattadakal besides Mahakuta which are all located on the banks of the river Malaprabha in the Bijapur district of Karnataka.

The Galaganatha temple resembles the temples of Alampur (Andhra Pradesh) and is typical of the early Chalukyan tradition. The Sangamesvara, Mallikarjuna and Virupaksha temples represent the three different stages of evolution of Dravida Vimana style by the systematic extension on an axial plan. The classic Virupaksha temple is an elaboration of the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchipuram.

The sculptural art of the early Chalukyas is a fusion of richness of details with a graceful style. The finely proportioned sculptures of Mithuna, Dikpalas and Nataraja in the central ceilings, gracefully carved Durga, Nataraja, Lingodbhava, Ardhanarishvara, Gajasuramardana, Tripurari, Andhakasuramardana and other Shaiva sculptures, Vishnu as Varaha, in a variety of moods, the Trivikrama episode, Vishnu seated on Garuda and other forms are representative of the blending of vigour and delicacy in Chalukyan sculpture which seems to incarnate stone into vibrant living forms. In these temples, we see for the first time the narrative panels illustrating various episodes from the epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata and



Fig. 1. Aihole - Durga temple

also from Bhagavata, Kiratarjuneeya and Panchatantra, being introduced.

The notable temples of Pattadakal are the Kadasiddeswara, built in the 7th century A D. in the classical mould of Dravidian temple architecture with garbagriha, astylar rectangular mandapa and Dwarpalikas flanking these. The temple is built on an elevated plinth with five mouldings.

The Jambulingeswara temple is also attributed to the 7th century.

The builders innovated a sukanasa projecting from the shikhara and over the mandapa. The figure of Shiva's mascot, Nandi the bull, is found in the mandapa.

The Galagantha temple was built a century later in the style of rekahnagara-prasada, on an elevated plinth with three ornate mouldings. The outer walls had panels or devakoshthas.

The Sangameswara temple built in the early 8th century remains

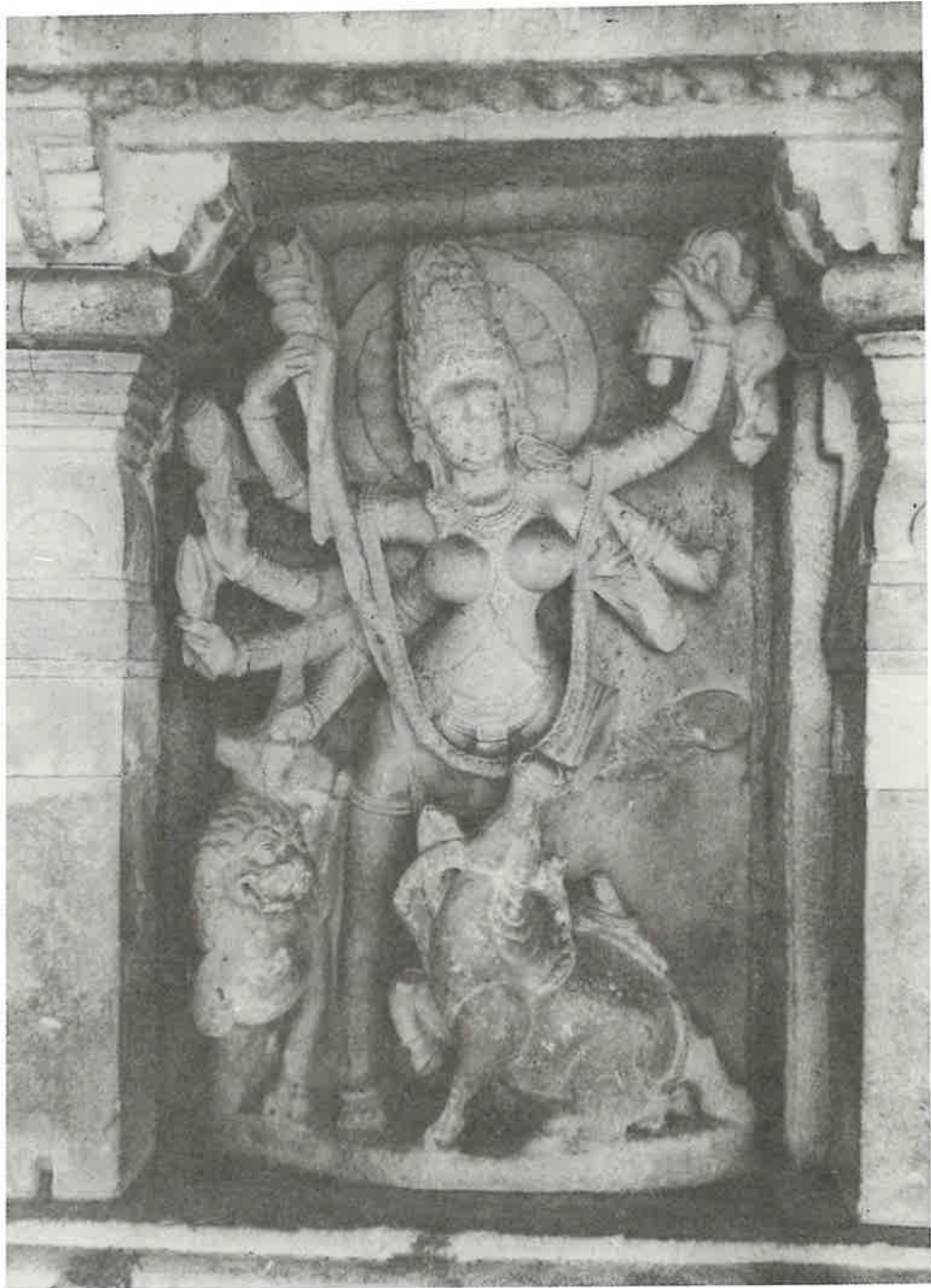


Fig. 2. Aihole - Durga temple, Mahishasarmardani

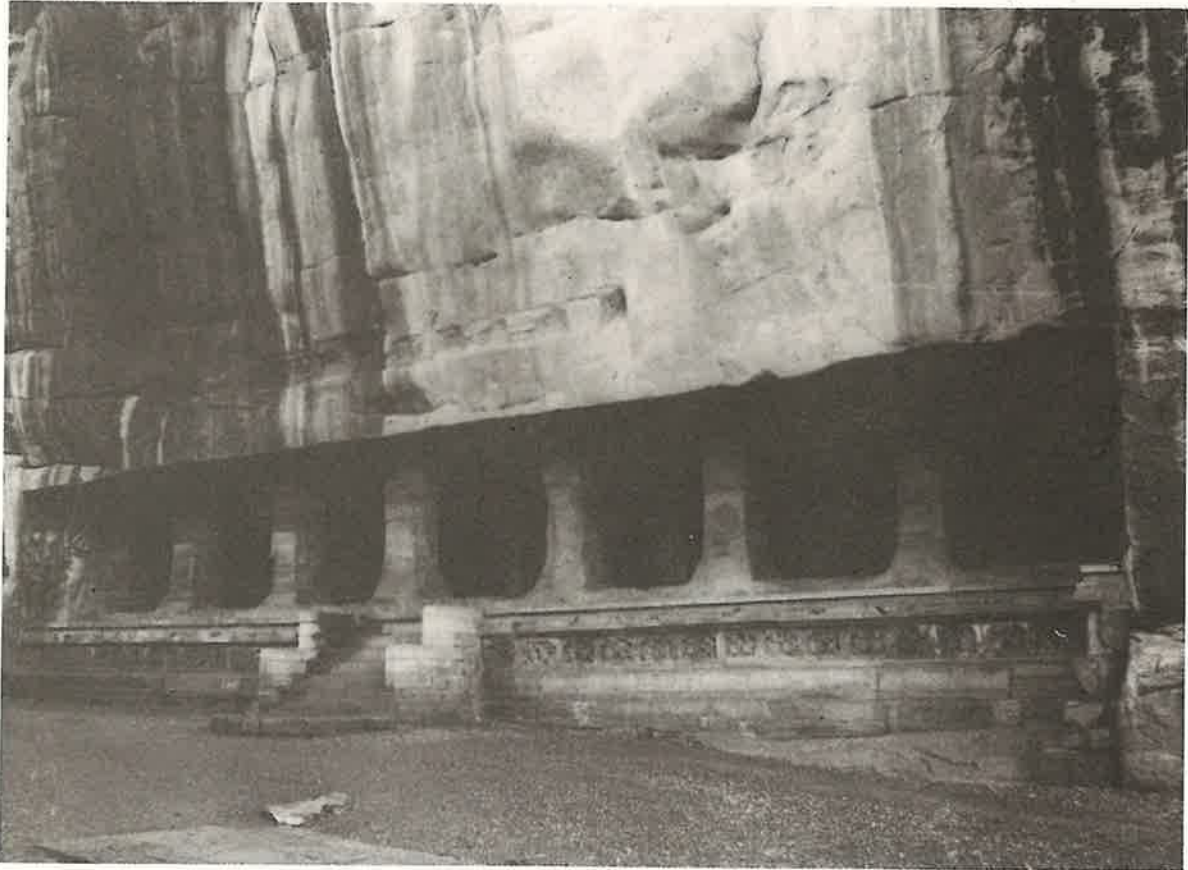


Fig. 3. Badami - cave no. 3, general view

incomplete as may be seen from the unfinished sculptures, but follows the others in conception and style.

Kasi Visveswara temple was the last to be built in the early Chalukyan style, with flying figures and dwarfs. The Mallikarjuna temple was built by Rani Trilokya Mahadevi to celebrate the victory of her husband King Vikramaditya II over the Pallavas. In plan, embellishment and sculpture it resembles the other temples. Virupaksha temple is also built under the auspices of the chief queen. Having defeated the Pallavas, the Chalukyas were however influ-

enced by their temple architecture and sculptural art while similarities may be found between the Virupaksha and Mallikarjuna temples with those at Kanchipuram. Nevertheless the Pattadakal edifices are representative of a rich and ornate style of Dravidian architecture.

The entire interior of Virupaksha temple is embellished with fine carvings and sculptures. Episodes from the Ramayana (abduction of Sita), Mahabharata (Bhishma lying on the bed of arrows), Bhagavata (Krishna lifting the Govardhana mountain and Kiratarjuneeya (Arjuna



Fig. 4. Pattadakal - Mallikarjuna temple

Fig. 5. Pattadakal - Papanatha temple details.

receiving the Pasupatastra from Shiva) are depicted on the pillars of the sabhamandapa and the pilasters here have the sculptures of amorous couples and Rati and Manmatha. Flora, fauna and geometrical patterns adorn various parts of the temple. Door jambs with their delicate carvings, pillars and pilasters with various types of capitals and carvings on their faces, lintels relieved with animals, birds and architectural motifs, ceilings depicting divine beings and the majestically standing Dwarapalikas all unfold a rich world of plastic art before the connoisseurs and attest the heights reached by the Chalukyan sculptors.

The Nandi Mandapa situated to the east of the temple is a square pavilion open on all four sides. It houses a large image of Nandi, on a raised floor. Its flat roof is supported by four pillars and short lengths of walls whose outer surfaces are carved with attendant figures and kinnara-mithunas.

Distinct from the group of Brahmanical temples, both in time and space, this Jaina temple (locally called as the Jaina Narayana) was built in the 9th century A D. during the reign of the Rashtrakuta king Krishna II. This three-storeyed temple, with the two lower storeys being functional, is the last in the temple series at Pattadakal. Certain features exhibited in this temple became, in the course of time, essential elements of the temples of the Kalyani Chalukyas.

The Acropolis or 'high city' overlooking the city of Athens had as

its presiding deity the goddess Athena. Her 40 foot statue was installed in the Parthenon. The Acropolis with its commanding height was a walled citadel guarding the city around 1500 B C. Later, temples were built, with sacrificial altars. The great Greek statesman, Pericles, ordered that a temple should be built to honour the goddess of the city of Athens. Around the 5th century B C a marble temple of doric columns standing in a serene symphony gave the Parthenon an imposing majesty. The subsidiary temples around the Parthenon were no less imposing. The Acropolis with its many temples containing within them exquisite marble sculptures of gods and goddesses, men and women, friezes and pediments symbolised the glory of the Periclean age. It was a place of worship, with the elaborate, aesthetic rituals in which the Greeks specialised. As in all Graeco-Roman centres, temples stood in harmony with secular buildings as well.

The same impulse which led the Chalukyas to build the temples of Pattadakal was what made Pericles build the Parthenon and its attendant temples. The common impulse for the creation of beauty and worship of beauty led people of different cultures and different epochs to build monuments to immortality.

As Pattadakal sustained the ravages of time and damage so the Parthenon and Acropolis suffered as the sun burnt down on the Greek Empire, as Byzantine, and Bulgar rulers held sway over Greece. Finally came the Turks who

despoiled the artistic treasures and used the temples and buildings for their own use. Even the British did not spare the Parthenon. In their zest for classical antiquities, marble statues and members were removed en bloc until a free and independent Greece sought to recapture its ancient heritage.

Chalukyan

Structural temples of India evolved from the rock-cut structures and retreats of earlier eras. The ancient town of Aihole in north Karnataka was one of the earliest centres of temple building. These temples have a flat roof which resemble the early Gupta ones. The shrine of the deity was an integral part of the structure and later on the tower or shikhara was added to distinguish the temple from other secular structures. Later the 'garbhagriha' or sanctum was attached to the body of the temple and this together with the tower comprise the central area of the temple known as the vimana. The temples of Aihole have features that indicate that they were the first of these temples. There is a hint that the earliest designs had towers with mouldings which grew simpler as the shikhara ascended giving the impression of the stepped pyramid. Thus we see the development of the Hindu temple with its distant spire growing out of the apsidal structure of Buddhist prayer halls. Remnants of the Buddhist art are still retained in panels which depicted Lord Shiva doing the thandava nritya. The arch extended and became the roof of the

mandapa in the interior of the temple.

Apart from the Durga temple at Aihole, we see a similar evolution of Dravidian temple architecture in the town of Badami some fifteen miles from Aihole which was the city of the Chalukyas. The temple of Mahakuteshwara built around 600 A D is small in dimension but it already shows a definitive evolution of the tower or shikhara and an octagonal panel surrounded by towers of the miniature shrine. Slightly further from the Mahakuteshwar temple is the Malegitti temple which also indicates the form of a new and growing style of the Dravidian school with its thick monolithic pillars, heavy bracket capitals and pendulant cornices. Here the austerity of the Buddhist prayer halls has already given way to the beginning of ornamentation in the forms of panels and niches. Though unrefined, it has the freshness of innovation.

The earlier temples of Aihole and Badami find a fuller expression in the group of temples at Pattadakal. The Chalukyan capital was shifted from Aihole to Badami and later to Pattadakal in the course of which the temple architecture also evolved with the transfer of power to these different towns. It is significant that when the Chalukyan reign rose to its zenith under the Kings Vijayaditya (C. 696-730), and Vikramaditya - II (C. 730-740), the temple of Pattadakal flourished in the first half of Vijayaditya's reign. In the ten temples of Pattadakal we see variations



Fig. 6. Mahabalipuram.

existing among the temples. While the Papanatha, Jambulings, Kaddasiddeswara, Karinath temples are of the Indo-Aryan style those of Sangamesvara, Virupaksha, Mallikarjuna, Golaknath, and Somneshwar are in the Dravidian style.

Pallava Architecture

The Dravidian style of architecture under the Pallava dynasty assumed a style distinct from those of the Chalukyas. The Pallavas (600-699 AD), however, set the tone and trend for later and more elaborate temple architecture of the succeeding dynasties such as the Cholas (900 - 1150 AD), Pandyas (1100-1350 AD), Vijayanagar (1350-1600 AD), and finally the Madurai school (AD 1600-1800 AD). It is as if the Pallavas provided the foundation and basic features of the Dravidian style which later was embellished and elaborated by other schools of architecture.

The Pallava region stretched from Kanchipuram to Thanjavur. However, it is in Mahabalipuram that the most renowned temples of the Pallava school grew.

Mahabalipuram

Ports have been the melting pots of history. Here princes, scholars, merchants and sailors met to hasten commerce, naval expeditions, exchange ideas or recount adventure. Ports are seen and written about. They are the starting points for cross fertilisation of cultures. Mahabalipuram is one such port.

Periplus of the Erythrean Sea as well as the Greek geographer

Ptolemy mentions this rich port on the Coromandel coast of India. In the early Christian era Mahabalipuram as well as Pondicherry were established centres of trade. It was therefore natural that the Pallava rulers from the fourth century AD onwards selected this port as their capital.

South India was known to the nations west of the Arabian Sea. Trade with Yemen and the Red Sea had commenced from early times. Hiram of Tyre sent the "ships of Tarshish" to bring in ivory, apes and peacocks. They also wanted spices (pepper, ginger, cinnamon), rice, silk, muslin, corals, beryls and pearls. The pamphlet of Periplus gives a lively picture of the Mediterranean world's trade with southern India. Coins found at Cranganore and Madurai indicate that these were Roman trading centres which brought in wine and gold from Europe. Tamil Kings employed these sturdy Romans with their formidable swords as trusted bodyguards.

Earlier the Pallavas' seat was at Kanchipuram but they were always on the move as they were frequently at war with neighbouring kingdoms. Nevertheless it was a creative period when devotional poets and mystics added a new richness to Tamil literature. Mahendravarman was an innovator of new styles in architecture, particularly in temples. His artistic energies went into drama, music and painting. His innovative mind devised new forms in building; instead of building temples of stone and brick he made use of existing



Fig. 7. Mahabalipuram.

stones to make the rock cut caves at Mahabalipuram. He wrote a lively work in Sanskrit - *Mattavilasa-prahasana*. The *Mandagapattu* inscription describes him as a man of intellectual curiosity. But he was a practical ruler as well. The *Mahendratataka* tank was excavated to provide vast quantities of water for irrigation as well as storage when the rivers ran dry.

His son *Narasimhavarman I* was not content with his kingdom alone. He waged wars, defeated *Pulakeshi* of *Badami* and invaded *Sri Lanka* to install his protege on the royal throne

who had in turn helped him to defeat *Pulakeshi*. It is interesting to note that in the seventh century AD three great rulers dazzled their contemporaries *Harshavardhan* of *Kanauj*, *Pulakesi* of *Badami* and the *Pallava Narasimhavarman*. The conquests brought him the title of "*Mamalla*" or champion and the city of *Mahabalipuram* was called thereafter *Mamallapuram*. As for all kings and conquerors, what makes them immortal are not their wars but their works in peace. So it is with these great *Pallava* rulers.

Mahendravarman began the work

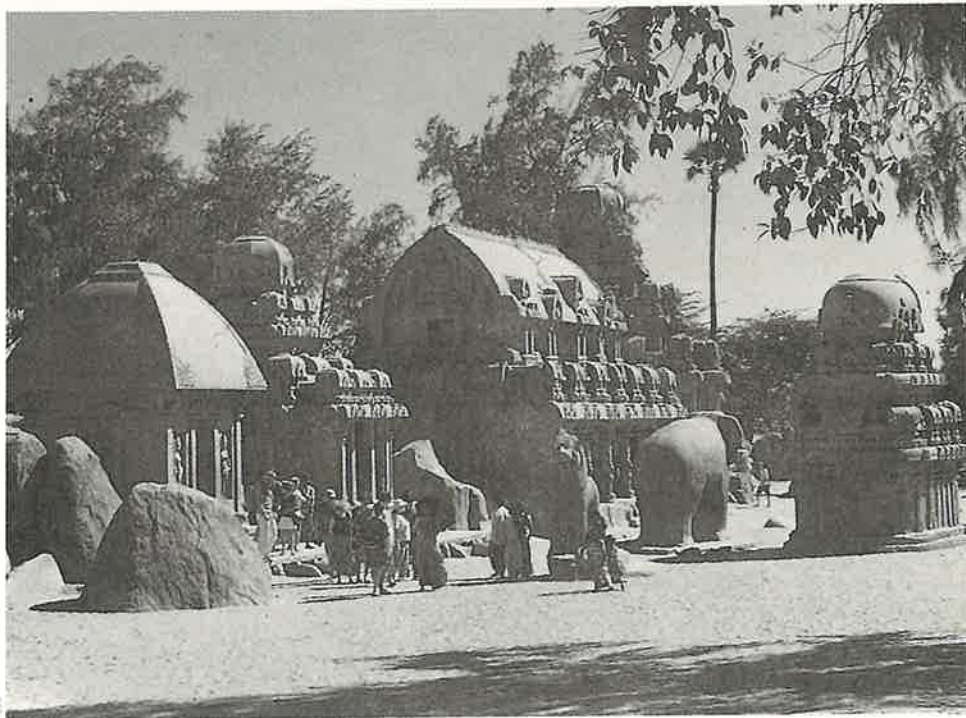
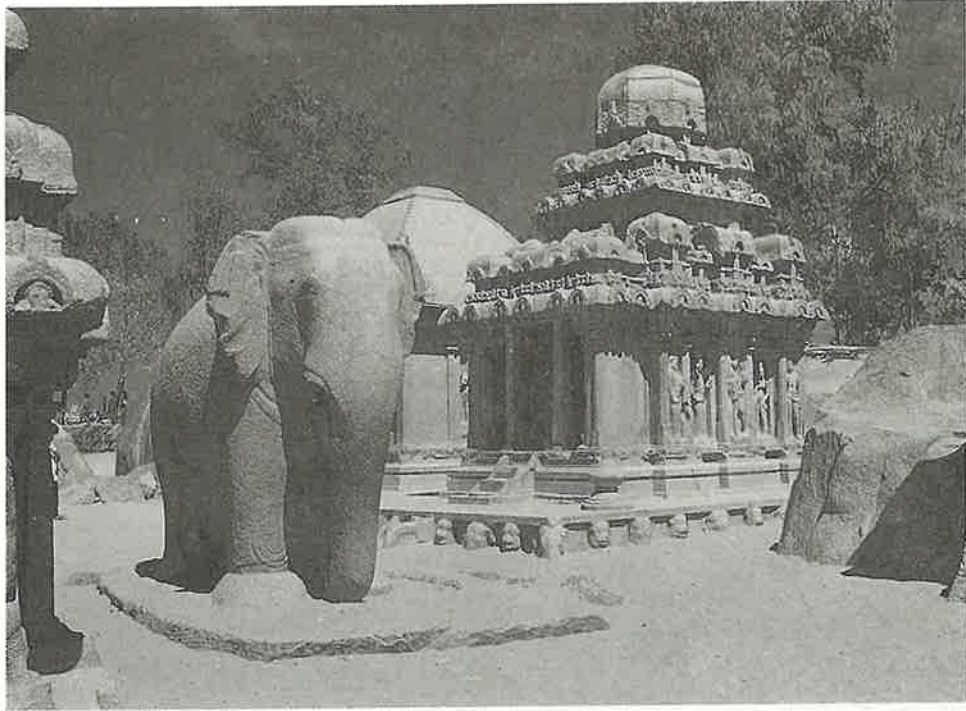


Fig. 8. Mahabalipuram
Fig. 9. Mahabalipuram

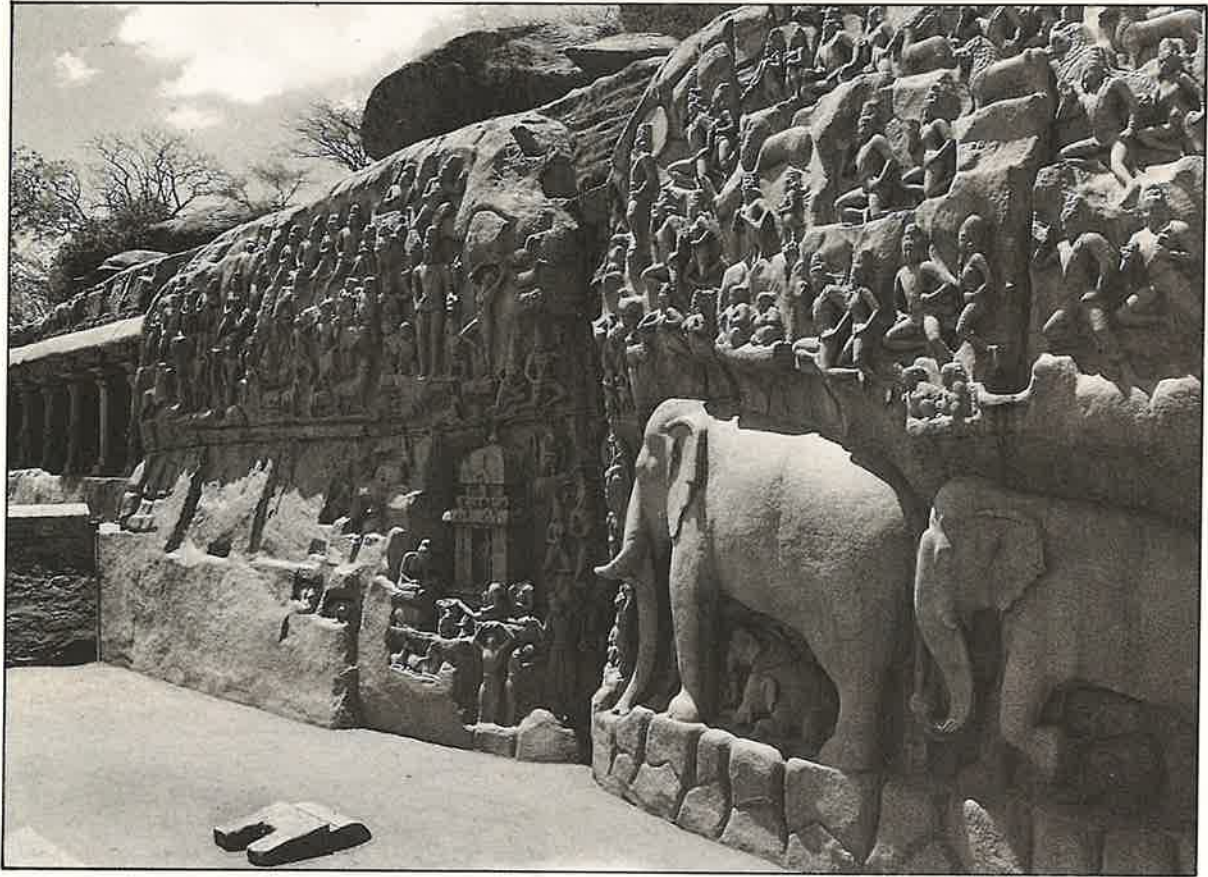


Fig. 10. Mahabalipuram

of the rock cut caves at Mahabalipuram. His son Mamalla continued them and they were brought to a simple, elegant fruition by Narasimhavaraman Rajasimha. The rock cut caves have chaityas with simple casements but the guards to the entrance or *dwarapalakas* are burly with horns and clubs to intimidate, it would seem, the trespasser. The human figures are also heavy featured and substantial limbed but without embellishments.

However, even within the Pallava style there are variations, as if the stones themselves reflect the different

personalities of the monarchs who touched them with their spirit. This is noticeable in the cave temples which were excavated from granite, gneiss and charnokite masses. The Mahendra designs have a simple form with a front *mandapa* with several square cells at the rear. The facade pillars are simple, with a simple base, octagonal shaft and heavy corbels. The caves are austere plain. As time progressed and the impulse for ornamentation grew, cult figures were carved into walls and panels. The pillars had seated lions and fluted shafts. The

shrine projected into the pillared mandapa where a wooden or stucco image was worshipped. These simple structures are called mandapam type temples while the monolithic temples are called rathas, resembling the rathas as base, fluted shaft, and taranga potika. The shrine proper projects into the pillared mandapa. The object of worship was either a wood or stucco image or even a painted panel on the rear wall. The caves were once plastered and painted as indicated by the remnants. These cave-temples are known as mandapam in Tamil.

Monolithic temples known as rathas were found only at Mamallapuram. They were the exact models of vimana, as the South Indian temple shrine is known. As carving the rock, like charnokite, into monolithic temple form is a tedious process, many of them are unfinished.

The cave temples in the styles of Raja Mahendra and his son Mamalla are found in Mamallapuram. Among them the notable ones are the Varaha-mandapam, Mahishasuramardini-mandapam and the Paramesvara Mahavaraha Vishnugriha (Adi Varaha) caves. These are in the Mamalla style. While the Atiranchanda cave temple Salvankuppam is of the Mahendra period.

Varaha-mandapam: This gracefully carved cave has a facade with two pillars with a seated lion base and an ornamental cornice. There are four sculptured panels of Varaha raising the earth from the ocean, Gajalakshmi seated on a lotus,

showered by elephants, Durga with four arms, and a Trivikrama defeating the demon king Bali. This cave belongs to the era of Narsimhavarman.

Mahishasuramardini-mandapam: This triple celled cave temple was dedicated to Lord Shiva as may be seen from the Somaskanda panel carved on the rear wall. The other panels are of Seshasayi Vishnu, and Mahishamardini. Both the panels are vividly depicted.

Adi Varaha Cave: This cave temple is known from the later inscription as Paramesvara Mahavaraha Vishnu-griha and possibly completed by Paramesvaravarman I. There are panels of Varaha, Gajalakshmi, two representations of Vishnu, Ganga-dhara, and Brahma. There are also portraits in stone of the monarchs Simhavishnu and Mahendravarman.

Of the nine monolithic temples found in Mamallapuram, the most important are the five rathas. These are dedicated to the five Pandava brothers of the Mahabharata. These monuments were carved out of a single rock-foundation. The architect had adopted the hut design at the base and the customary tritalavimana at the highest. The existing boulders were used for carving sculptures in the round.

A novel feature of the rathas is the choice of all known forms for plan and elevation. The Draupadi-ratha is a simple hut-like kutagara structure, the Arjuna-ratha, a dvi-tala vimana with a mukha-mandapa. The Bhimaratha, a rectangular shrine with

a salakara, wagon-vault roof, Dharmaraja-ratha with a tritala-vimana and having functional shrines in all the talas, the Nakula sahadeva-ratha with an apsidal plan and elevation indicate the experimental tendency of the architects.

Bhima-ratha: The plan of the ratha is rectangular accommodating a salakara with large nasi. This shrine possibly was intended for the reclining form of Vishnu.

Dharmaraja-ratha: This is a tritala-vimana. On plan it has a square sanctum with a pradakshinapatha around. All the three talas have functional shrines. The topmost shrine has a Somaskanda panel at the rear wall. Each tala is marked by a hara of miniature shrines. The sikhara is octagonal. There are many sculptures depicting various forms of Shiva, Vishnu, and other gods, besides secular sculptures. On the top of the sculptures are found label inscriptions in the Pallava Grantha script giving the birudas of Narashimhavarman like Sri Narasimha, Bhuvanabajanath, Sri Barah, Atyantakama etc. "Though unfinished, it is one of the greatest architectural achievements of the Pallava period. The rythm of its receding talas has never been excelled. Its perfect proportions and the shapeliness of each component generate a sense of architectural transcendence that goes well beyond its formal origins."

Nakula-Sahadeva ratha: This is apsidal from top to bottom. This form was later preferred for the structural temples in this region.

There are three types of bas reliefs carved on the rock face.

Arjuna's penance is carved on a large rock made by two boulders with a fissure in between. The structure is depicted as Arjuna's penance to obtain the pasupata-astra from Shiva. On the right side of the fissure is a figure performing penance by standing on one leg while Lord Shiva stands in front granting the boon. The scene also shows animals, sages offering worship in front of a small temple of Vishnu, flying gandharava and kinnaras all around. The fissure is with figures of Nagaraja and Nagini. Sun and moon are also depicted. Arjuna's penance was a favourite theme among the artists of the early Chalukyan period. The Pallavas may have borrowed this from them.

The other bas-relief, identified as Krishna-mandapam, depicts Krishna lifting Govardhana hill to protect the cowherds from the storm raised by Indra. The sculptured rock depicts an intricate pastoral scene, comprising not only the Lord and his brother but gopas and gopis, engaged in dairy activities. It has a vivid and realistic aura.

Structural temples in ancient south India were built with brick, mortar and wood. These edifices are mentioned in Sangam literature while the excavation at Nagarjunakonda has yielded the remains of such brick temples. The Mondagapattu inscription of Mahendravarman is categorical in stating that he constructed an abode for the trinity using stucco, metal wood or brick,

indicating that the cave-temple was the first temple in stone. Structural temples built of stone began during the reign of Paramesvaravarman I.

Narasimharvarman II Rajasimha began constructing structural temples using dressed stone blocks. The earliest such temple may be the Mukundanayanar temple at Mamallapuram, which is a simple construction with a sanctum and a mandapa in front. The temple has no sculptures. Another example of this type is the Olakkanesvara temple at Mamallapuram. Here the cult images of Yoga Dakshina murti, Tandavesvara, and Ravana-anugrahamurti are introduced on the exterior of the wall.

The first major structural temple that was attempted during the Rajasimha period was the Shore Temple. It is a complex of three temples - a small tritala-vimana facing west (the Rajasimhesvara), a larger, east facing vimana (the Kshatriyasimhesvara), and interposed between these two, an east facing oblong, flat-roofed manadapa-shrine called the Narapatisimha Pallava Vishnu-griha housing the reclining Vishnu mentioned above. Enclosing these are prakara walls with openings, all later constructions. The exterior wall of the shrines are punctuated with pillars with rampant lion and other animal bases. The inner surface of the prakara wall once contained panel sculptures, which are now worn out. The sanctum contains a Somaskanda panel. Unlike other temples of his period, the highest is more accentuated. This

temple is the culmination of the architectural achievement of the Pallava dynasty.

Recent excavations to the north and south of the Shore Temple reveal that even before the Shore Temple was built rocks were being sculpted to represent religious themes. There is a monolithic Bhuvanaraha, reclining image of Vishnu and the base of a Durga shrine with deer, a square socket possibly to accommodate a manasthamba (victory pillar) were erected. An apsidal structure with steps were built around the miniature shrine and Bhuvanaraha. The excavation has also revealed a massive bulbous capital with titles of Rajasimha inscribed on it. The inscriptions found on the top course of the apsidal temple reads "sri Rajasimha yaha kshtrasimha iti visruta punyakkirtijian Brahesvara" indicating that it was inscribed during the reign of Rajasimha, and on the base of the Bhuvanaraha the inscription reads "Sri Rajasimha Sri Ranajaya, Shri karan, Shri Chitra karmukha", all titles of Rajasimha.

Kanchipuram

The temples of Kailashnath and of Vaikuntha at Kanchipuram built around 700 AD shows the development of the temple architecture of Pallava school with embellishments around the main structure as well as the development of brackets, capitals and pillars. If one compares the pillars or stambhas of Mamallapuram with that of Kailashnath temple at Kanchipuram built a century later, one sees the enhanced ornamentation of a different type of

pilasters and pillar with the heraldic lion with four limbs raised. While the heraldic lion is visible in the Shore temples of Mahabalipuram, its form evolves in a more regal fashion to keep pace with the enhanced political power of the Pallavas. The capital of the Pallavas shifted from Mahabalipuram to Kanchipuram which was also a centre of intellectual and spiritual life. Even after the Pallavas had disappeared from the political scene Kanchipuram remained the centre of Dravidian culture not only in its temples but in its spiritual vigour.

The temple of Ekambaranatha represents the evolution of Dravidian architecture from the early simplicity of the Pallavas to its embellishments and structural development. The shikhara is an example of the more elaborate and decorative shikharas which were to develop in subsequent centuries.

Chola Temple Architecture

Various dynasties strove for supremacy in South India and particularly in the Tamil country in the late 9th century, out of the welter of wars and strife between the Pallavas, Pandyas, Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas and Cholas. The last dynasty triumphed over the others and eventually became the supreme power in South India. The Cholas ruled for almost three centuries and in their imperial mood built the temples which bear testimony to their greatness not only as an imperial power which extended to Sri Lanka in the south and Burma in the east

but to their prodigious patronage of the arts.

Notable Chola temples are found in the district of Pudukottai, Sundareswar temple at Thirukottalai, Vijayalaya temple in Northamalai and the triple temple of the Moovarcoil in Kodungalore. In these temples we see the gradual evolution of the Chola style which began with a resemblance to the simplicity of the Pallavas and moved on to reflect the grandeur of later Chola culture both in their embellishments and dimensions.

The Chola temples were built of dressed granite rocks which were coursed and *enquared*. The Chola craftsmen adapted the workmanship of the Pallava craftsmen in the size and quality of the materials used. However, the new dynasty as well as the stimulus that came from enhanced political power and expansion of both the territorial and cultural horizons were reflected in the very rhythm and style of the middle Chola period. Sometimes, there is even an echo of the Chalukyan temples in the Chola structures especially in the shape of the domical finial of the shikhara or tower which has double towers present in the temples of Badami and Pattadakal. The early Chola temples have a mandapa with its pillared hall leading to the vimana and then the garbhagriha. The shikhara is of medium size while the cornices of the mandapa hall is low. The exterior of the later Pallavas indicate new forms. The Chola craftsmen and architects dispensed with the Pallavas' lion symbol while



Fig. 11. Kanchipuram - general view of Kailash Nath temple
Fig. 12. Suchindram tank of the temple



Fig. 13. Brihadishvara temple



Fig. 14. Brihadishvara temple

adding to the structures of the pillars and capitals. As the Chola power grew so were there corresponding increases and mythological anecdotes. Apart from sculptures of deities a new form was adopted by the Chola craftsman in the form of griffon heads resembling the gargoyles which are found in Gothic cathedrals of Europe. Apparently this was a way of depicting the subjugation of evil by the edifice devoted to a godhead.

Brihadishvara Temple, Thanjavur

The town of Thanjavur, now a district headquarters in the state of Tamil Nadu, stands on the eastern

bank of the river Vadavar, a tributary of the life giving Kaveri which flows through a terrain of verdant rice fields. It may have been the richness of the soil, and the presence of the river, which drew successive settlements to the granary of the south. The bounty of the land freed people from routine rigours, giving time and effort for the creation of an enduring culture.

In eras when mankind derived his certitude and consolation from worship of the Supreme Being, temples and churches and mosques formed the kernel of civil life, and became the repository of creative energies.



Fig. 15. Brihadishvara temple - Tanjore painting

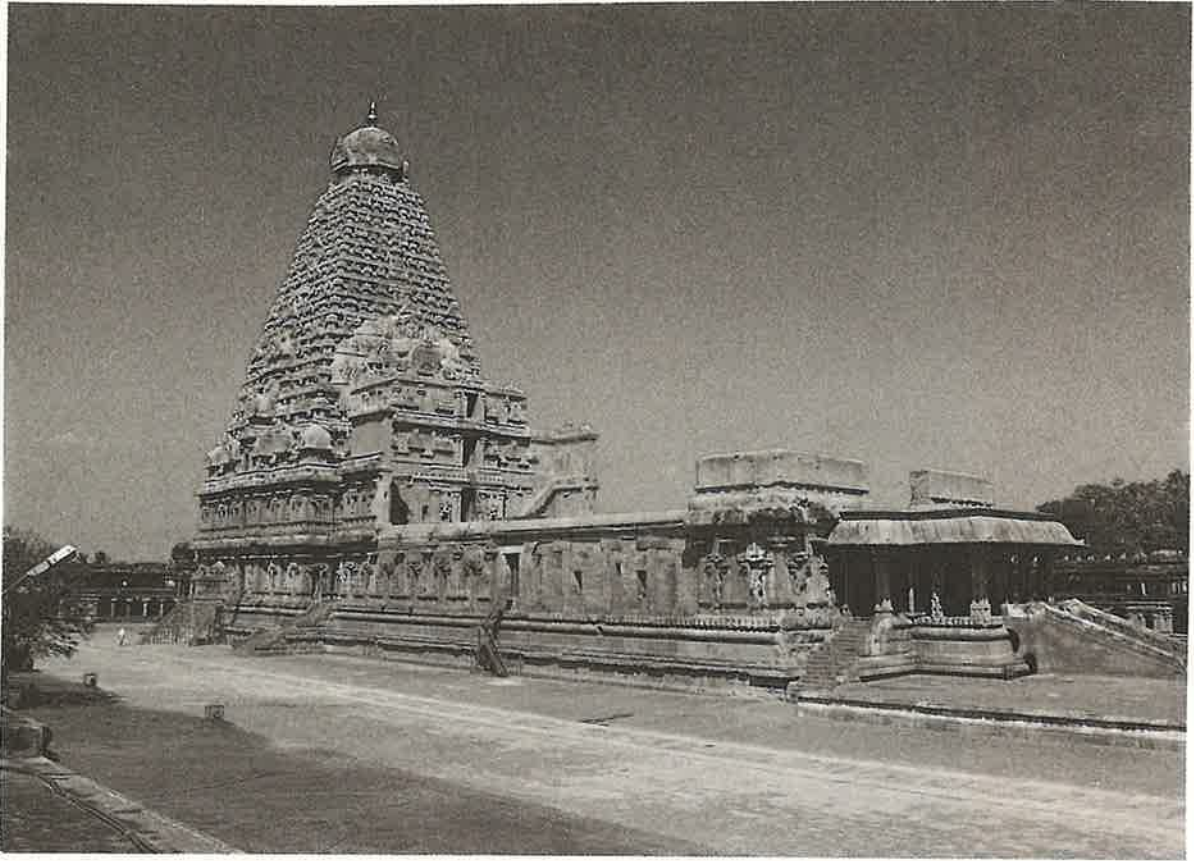


Fig. 16. Brihadishvara temple

Even before the Cholas made Thanjavur their capital, the town was the centre of religious activity in earlier Pallava times. The name of the town itself had undergone changes; it has been variously known as Alakai, Alakapuri, Vijapuri, Kuberapuri and Thanjai. Successive dynasties called it different names, as Pandyas, Pallavas, Muthariyars struggled for hegemony over this strategic and bountiful territory.

Finally it was the Chola King Vijayalaya who won Thanjavur from the Muthariyars in the year 850 AD, and made it his headquarters. Power

brought stability and prosperity as well as imperial ambitions. Within a century the great grandson of Vijayalaya had established in Thanjavur the greatest kingdom of South India.

It is a frequent paradox of history that great conquerors, after winning major battles and establishing strong realms, strive to leave behind memorials of their rule, which serve as a permanent chronicle of their personalities and deeds. Ashoka who perpetrated carnages in his youth, propagated edicts of peace, Pope Juliano Rovere who laid waste

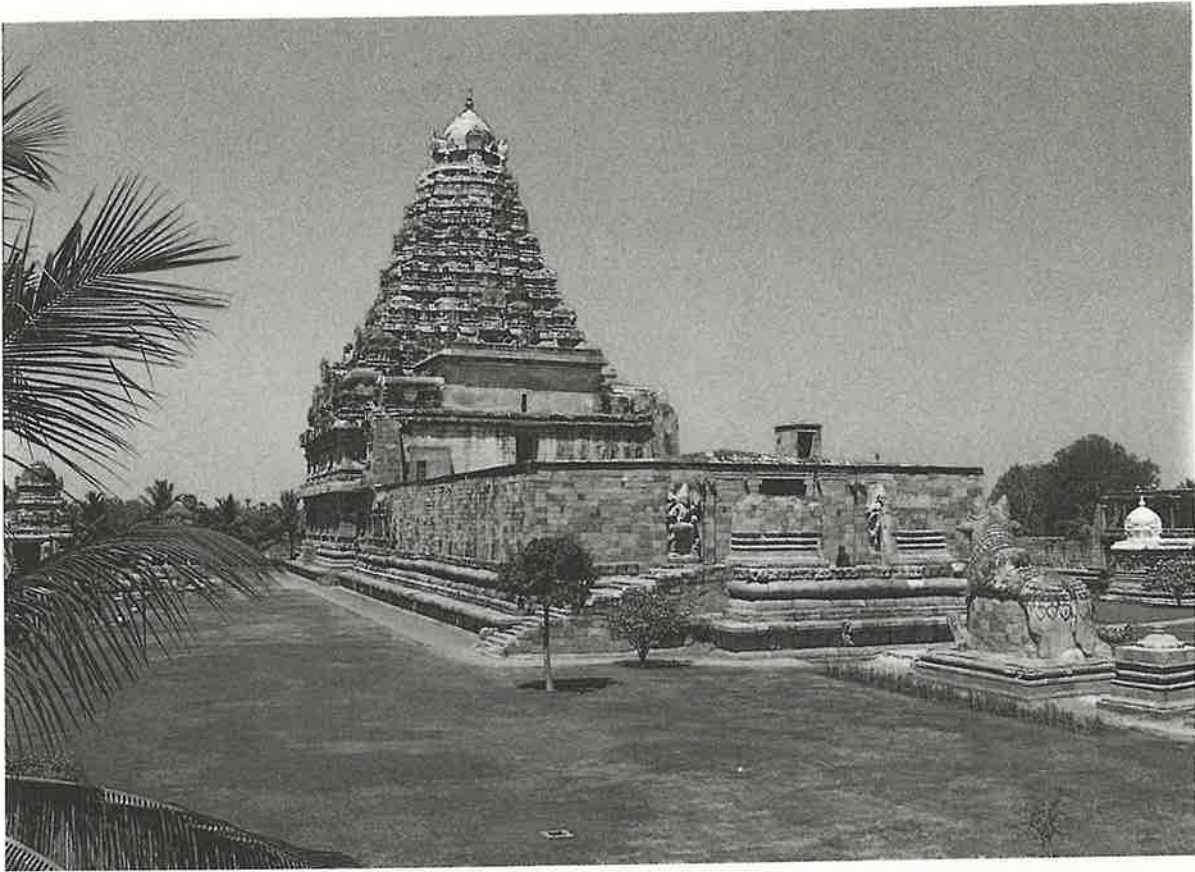


Fig. 17. Gangaikondacholapuram - general view

central Italy, commissioned Michelangelo to build a new St Peter's basilica, Peter the Great, the ruthless moderniser of Russia built the beautiful Peterhof, Philip II of Spain his Escorial. Rajaraja Chola who waged wars to crush the Rashtrakutas and Pandyan, and who sent naval expeditions to the Far East conceived of a great temple to Lord Shiva. While scholars know of his military triumphs, and students of government his able administration, the ordinary people remember him as the builder of the Brihadishvara Temple.

Percy Brown, the art historian, has described this great monument as "The largest, highest and most ambitious production of its kind" and "a landmark in the evolution of building art in South India." He describes the vimana of the temple as a "touchstone of Indian architecture as a whole."

Standing before the Brihadishvara temple, the visitor and scholar alike are awed by the massive proportions as by the simplicity of design. We begin with the vimana, with its balanced and graceful proportions, its high plinth and a pyramidal tower

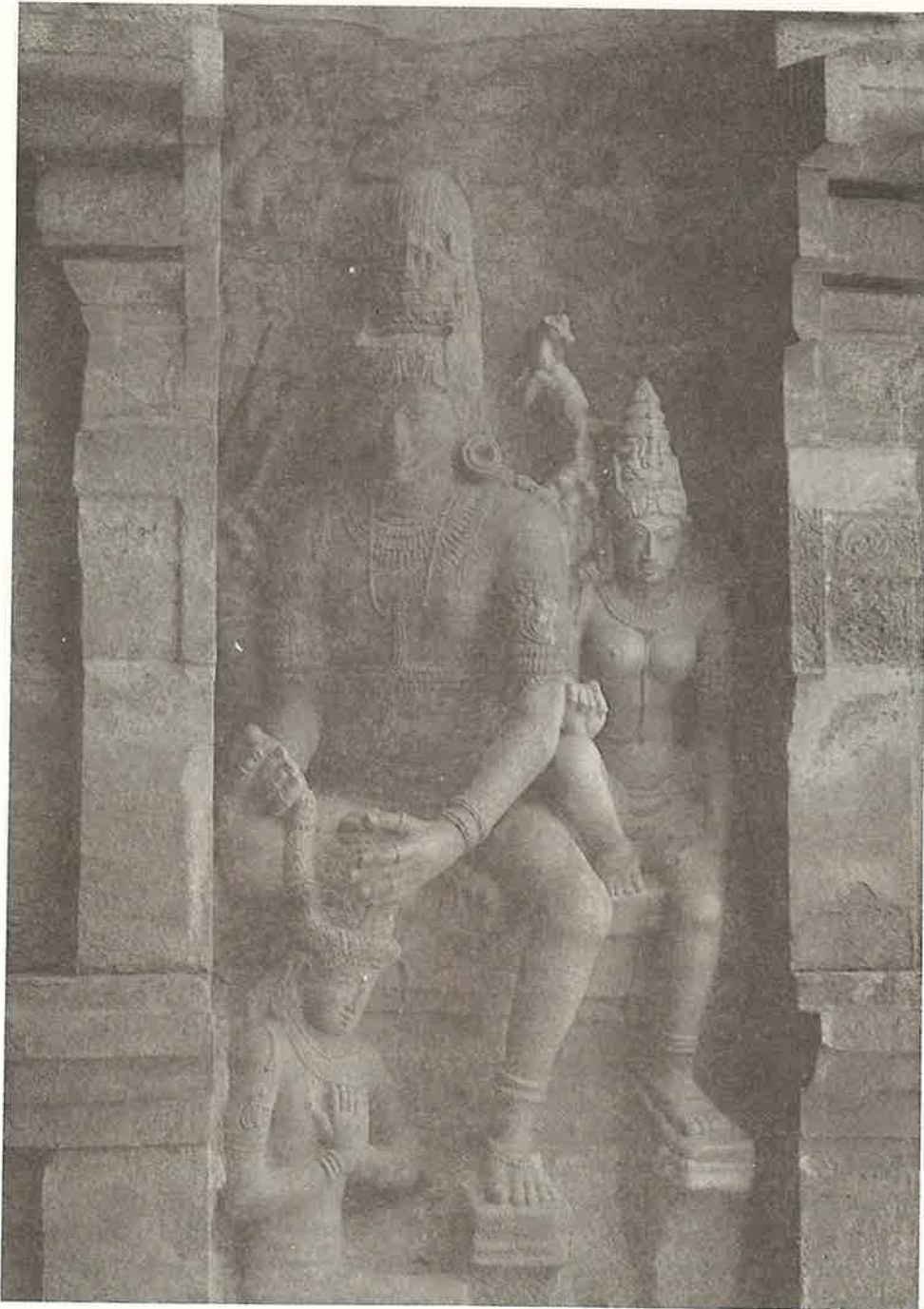


Fig. 18. Gangakondaicholapuram



Fig. 19. Kumbhokonam - Ramaswamy temple



Fig. 20. Chidambaram - Devi temple

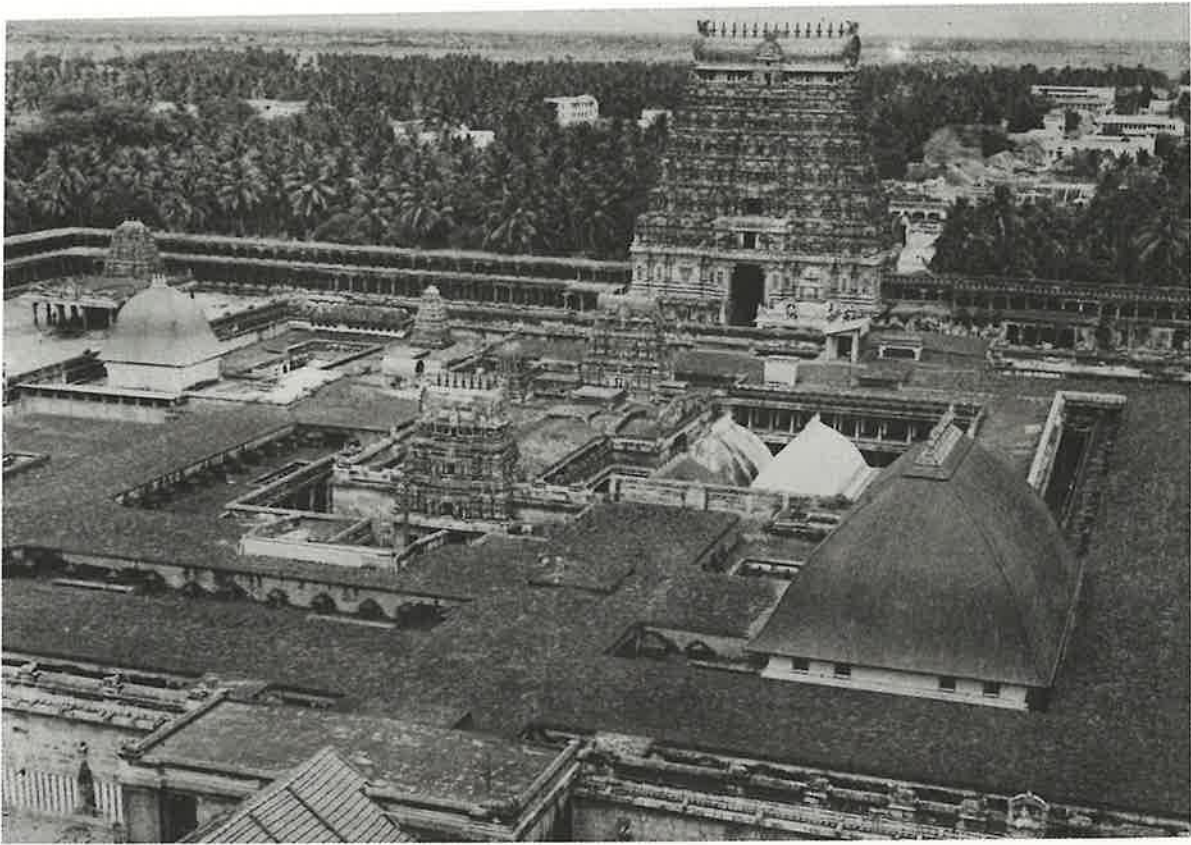


Fig. 21. Chidambaram - Nataraja temple

capped by a single stone of 80 kg. which was lifted by an inclined platform. Two nandi or bulls, the vahanas of Shiva, are placed at four corners. the shikharas are crowned by finials of copper of imposing height.

The central edifice stands within an inner prakara with a gopura in the east and three torana on the western, northern and southern sides. The gopura-dwara on the east is called Rajarajan thiruvasal, while the outer gopura is called Keralantakan thiruvasal. The cloistered prakara consists of small shrines dedicated to ashtakipalas.

The main edifice is also called Rajarajeshwaram Udaiyar and stands at the centre of a large courtyard. The garbhagriha is to the west with ardha, maha and mukha mandapas and a detached Nandimandapa. The shikhara to the south is called Dakshinameru.

Sculptured panels on outer walls and balustrades described scenes from the Puranas and epics, in which the victories of Lord Shiva are depicted as analogous to those of Rajaraja Chola.

The inner and outer circum-ambulatory walls around the sanctum contained murals painted al fresco.

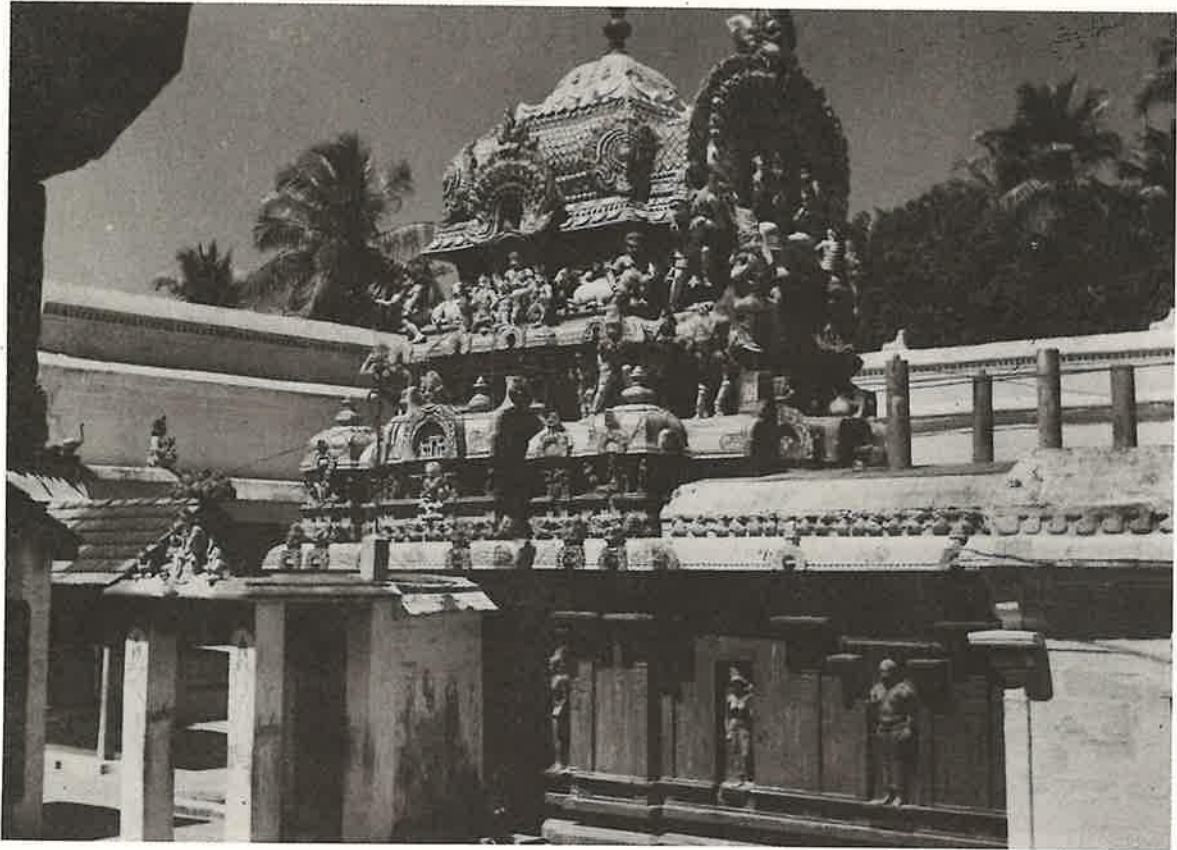


Fig. 22. Kumbhokonam - Nageswarami Temple

On these murals using soft colours, were depicted contemporaneous scenes with legendary ones. Later the Nayaka rulers who came as fiefs of the Vijayanagar kings superimposed their more vivid colours on the paintings of the Chola artists.

Brihadishvara temple is rich in iconography and inscriptions providing a chronicle of events regarding achievements, financial arrangements, donations, and impressions of the contemporary scene.

The architects who executed the design were Perundachchan,

Nittavinoda and Kandaraditta.

It is incredible that this massively constructed and elaborately ornamented temple, with a wealth of sculptures was completed within six years, that is from 1004 A D to 1010 A D. Upon completion of this splendid temple, inscriptions describing the rule and achievements of the great Rajaraja Chola commenced in 1011 A D.

The Brihadishvara temple is a landmark in Indian architecture, commemorating the reign of a king who was warrior, administrator and patron of the arts, While it is unique

in style and conception, its deceptive simplicity led others to emulate it. Rajendra Chola, the son of Rajaraja, built a smaller replica at Gangaikonda Cholapuram.

Gangaikondaicholapuram Kondai

Raja Raja's son Rajendra I ruled from 1018 to 1033 A D and moved his capital from Thanjavur to a place which he called Gangaikonda-cholapuram (meaning that Ganga was brought to the city of the Cholas). Rajendran I wished to have a distinct identity of his own and pursued this end by building a new capital as well as a new temple to Lord Shiva. While Rajendran's bustling new capital city is now a backwater, the temple to Lord Shiva remains to tell the story of Rajendran Chola's greatness. The temple of Gangaikonda-cholapuram does not have the grand dimensions of the Brihadishvara at Thanjavur but has a grace and dimension reflecting the prosperity of the reign. Though Rajendran Chola seems to have built this temple for his private worship the temple is surrounded by a high wall and interposed with bastions. The temple was also used for state functions with its imposing assembly hall or mandapa with many pillars. The pillars in this temple resemble collonades encircling the garbhagriha. Like the Brihadishvara temple, the one at Gangaikonda-cholapuram has a vimana which is a high pyramidal structure with a shikhara that gives the idea of domical finial. The harsh grandeur of the Tanjore vimana is here softened by sculptured curves.

The square base of these Chola temples resemble those of Hoysala temples of Belur and Halebid. The architecture of the Cholas with its grandeur and richness was the reflection of Chola rule itself.

Pandyan Style

The decline of Chola power in the 12th century led to the rise of the Pandya kingdom in the Tamil country. the Pandyas ruled this region for two centuries but were more concerned with civil administration and territorial expansion than with building activities. The architectural development which took place during the Pandya period was the evolution of the gateways to the temples, the prakarams or the walled enclosures and finally the gopurams or temple portals which became, in some cases, more imposing than the temples themselves. The gopuram was an oblong building which became a tapering tower with tiers of sculptures ascending to the pinnacle. While the vimanas have a rounded tower, the gopurams have a vaulted roof. The Pandya gopurams were simple in design and later added embellishments with moulded pendants, scalloped edges and corvets. The temple of Chidambaram is also built during the Pandyan era as were the temples of Tiruvannamalai, Kumbhakonam and Airavateshwara at Darashpuram. While the temple of Jambukeshvara reflects the influence of King Sundara in its simplicity the later three show the ornamentation in the

designs of pillars, capitals and bases of the later Pandyan times.

Hoysala Styles

The Tamil country was the scene of rivalry between the various dynasties mentioned earlier. Further north in what is today Karnataka state, there was a peaceful transition from the reign of the Chalukyas to the Hoysalas. Indeed it was a gradual transition from the graceful simplicity of the Chalukyas to the exquisite harmony of the Hoysalas. The Chalukyan temples had simple interiors while the outside walls were decorated with sculptures.

The imperatives of structure and the impulse for embellishments were harmonised to form a style that was both utilitarian as well as decorative. The pillars and pilasters were well prepared but they were also used for sculptures and designs. The designs of doorways also underwent a change with moulded lintels having sculptures of figures and foliage carved with intricate details. The Hoysalas also added their own touch to the construction of Shikharas which are supported from the substructure consisting of the vimana walls by projecting cornices. The pillars of the Hoysala temple are rounded, and attached to this rounded and polished pillars are sloping bracket stones fixed to the pillar capitals. As Hoysala art developed so too did the designs of these pillars which were elaborately sculptured.

The first impression of Hoysala temples especially at Belur, Halebid, is that structural building and

architecture have been subordinated to exquisite craftsmanship with an almost feminine grace. The Hoysala temples are not so much buildings as sculpture unified with the structure. The Malnad area of old Mysore abounds in the rich finely carved temples depicting Hoysala grandeur at Belur, Halebid, Somnathpur and Lakundi.

Early Temples of North India

In the interval between the Maurya and the Gupta period there was an artistic stagnation similar to the period in Europe between the fall of Rome and the rise of Byzantium. The Maurya period had seen a fusion of styles which was the result of the Hellenic influence on India represented by the Gandhara School. The inactivity lasted well into the 4th century A D. In this interregnum the Andhras in the south and the Kushnas in the north produced an artistic school of their own. With the establishment of the imperial Guptas when a large part of India came under their rule there was fresh artistic creativity in India. The creative energies of the people under the patronage of the Gupta rulers found expression in new forms of structural activity accompanying architectural innovation.

The decline of Buddhism and the revival of a vigorous Hinduism which personalised the concept of deity required a suitable habitation for the deity. This was the impetus for the first rock-cut temples leading on to the structural temples which gather a cumulative majesty until the time of the Islamic invasions.

As stated earlier, the Gupta period

saw the flowering of fresh artistic inspiration eloquently expressed in the new form of structural temples. Temple architecture grew in this period with many variations though the fundamental principles remained such as a sanctum or garbhagriha for housing the deity and a pillared porch or mandapa for the worshipper. The pillared roof gave way to spired shikharas. The embellishment and decoration of the shikara, the door fronts, door jambs, lintels, pillars and the base of the temple are a reflection of the times of political stability and prosperity which provided a favourable environment for artistic activity. The Gupta temple at Sanchi is the earliest of the North Indian temples followed by the temples at Tigawa, Eran, Ghunara, Nachna and the Dasavatara temple. As Gupta rule spread and prosperity accompanied political stability the dimensions and decorations of the temples increased with a fusion of secular and spiritual themes. The Lakshmana temple at Siripur is an illustration of this.

Since temples were the centre of activity, both religious and secular, it was no longer necessary to retreat to hills for carving out rock caves.

Palaces as well as temples came to be built out of bricks with terra-cotta sculptures for decoration. The temple at Pawaya in Gwalior District is an illustration of the ornate North Indian temple architecture of the Gupta period.

By the end of the 8th century North Indian temples were built in a cruciform plan with curvilinear shikharas and extended mandapas which lead to the sanctum or garbhagriha. Sculptured figures ornamented temples, often depicting secular themes on these religious structures. The earlier North Indian temples which have a square sanctum bound by a three-layered shikhara can be seen at Naresar and Batesara. The Shiva temples at Amrol and Malwa resemble these with heightened ornamentation. Jageshwar Dham temple is also an illustration of this style.

The northern or Indo-Aryan style of temple architecture is quite distinct from the Dravidian styles which flourished in Pallava and Chola eras. The earliest temple activity of this style was in Orissa which spread to central India and then to Rajasthan and Gujarat. This early style spread also to the northern Deccan which came under the artistic influence of the North Indian school.

In Orissa the main group is concentrated in Bhuvaneshvar where there were upto thirty such temples. The temples of Jagannath at Puri and that of the Sun Temple at Konarak are illustrations of the flowering of this style. While it is possible that the North Indian style may have

taken inspiration from the Chalukyas of the 7th century A D., it developed its own characteristics. It is possible that cultural exchange with the early Chalukyas may have influenced the territories ruled by the Eastern Gangas whose capital was at Ganjam. The Kalinga style introduced a jagmohan along with the mandapam. These two structures were the special characteristics of the Kalinga style. Along with these two structures were also the natya mandir as well as the bogh mandir. The temple rises in several storeys from the Deul to the Bada, to the Amla and then to the Kalasa. One of the special characteristics of the Orissa temples is the austere and simple interior while the exteriors of the temples are highly embellished with carvings, statues, patterns and designs. It is interesting to note the development of the shikharas or towers of the temples. The Orissan school of temple architecture from the early period of 750 AD to the later period upto 1250 AD saw a development of structural styles and variations.

The temples of the Indo-Aryan style are :

Early Period (750 - 900 A D)

Parasurameshvara	at Bhuvaneshvar
Vital Deul	at Bhuvaneshvar
Uttareshvara	at Bhuvaneshvar
Isvaresvara	at Bhuvaneshvar
Sutru Ganeshvara	at Bhuvaneshvar
Bharateshvara	at Bhuvaneshvar
Lakshmaneshvara	at Bhuvaneshvar

Middle Period (900 - 1000 A D)

Mukteshvara c. 975	at Bhuvaneshvar
Lingaraja c. 1000	at Bhuvaneshvar

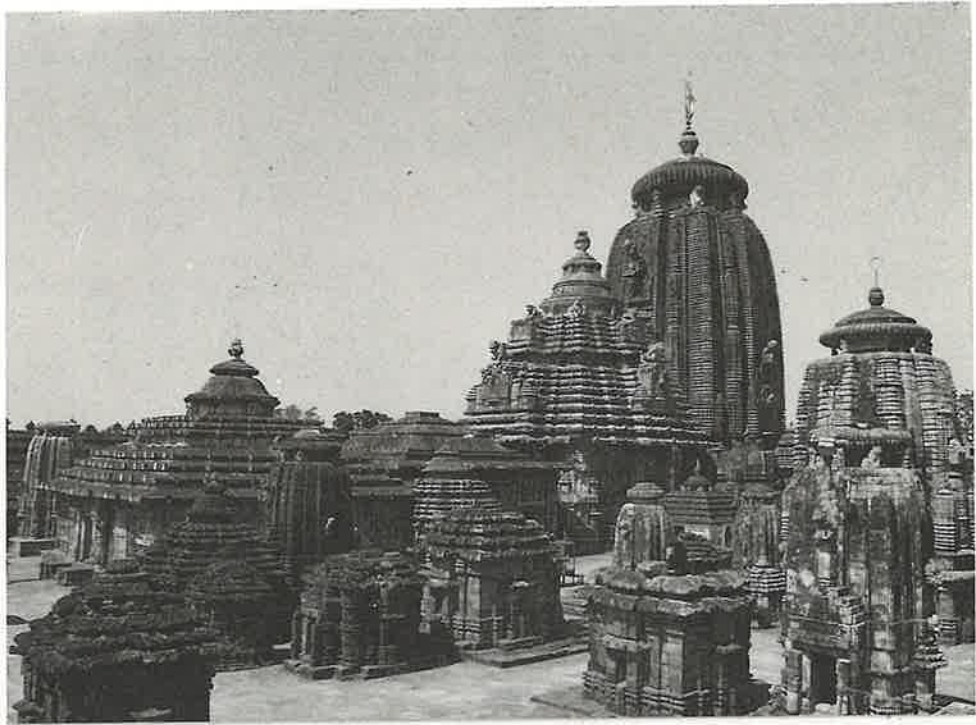


Fig. 1. Bhubaneswar - Lingaraja temple

Fig. 2. Bhubaneswar - Parasurameshwar temple

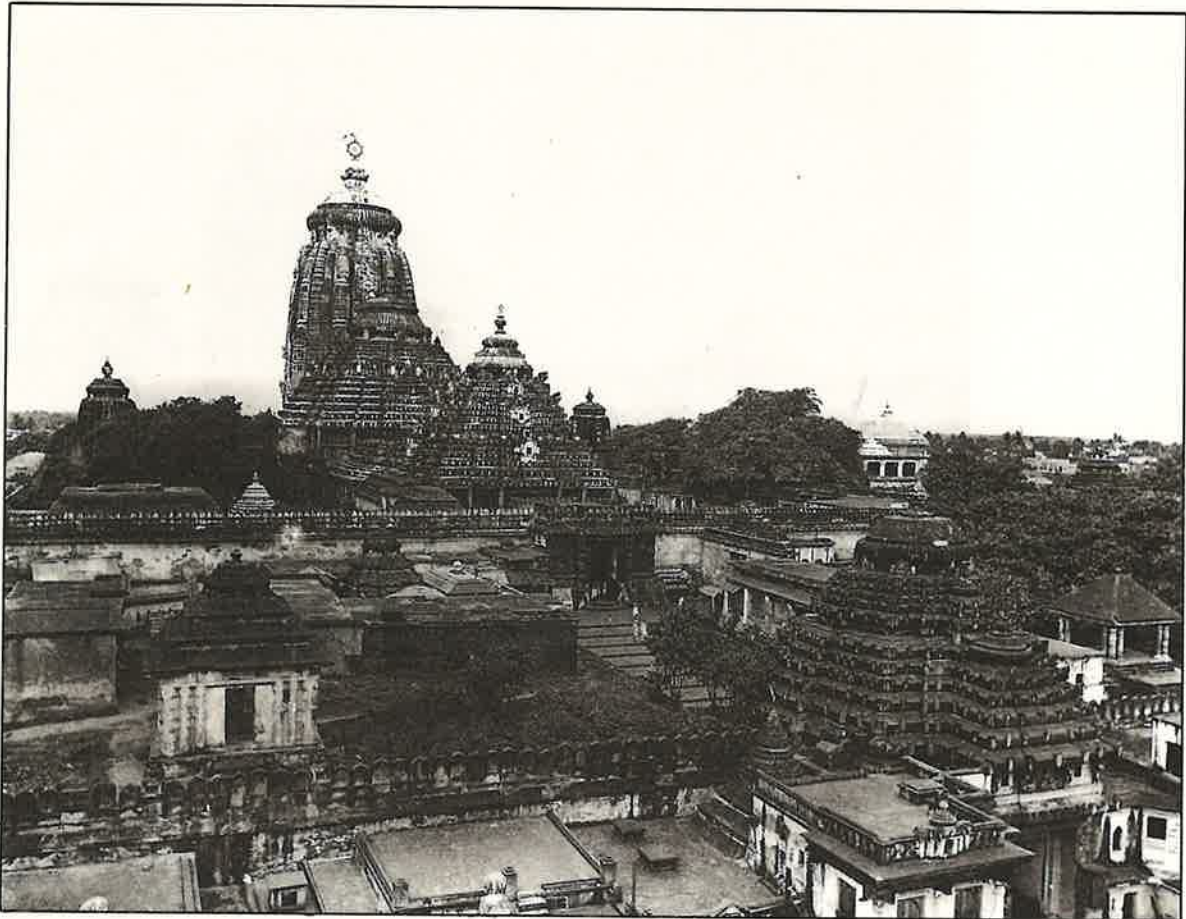


Fig. 3. Puri - Sri Jayanath temple

Brahmeshvar c. 1075 at Bhuvaneshvar
 Rameshvara c. 1075 at Bhuvaneshvar
 Jagannath c. 1100 at Puri.

Later Period (1100 to 1250 A D)

Ananda Vasudev at Bhuvaneshvar
 Sidhesvara at Bhuvaneshvar
 Kedaresvara at Bhuvaneshvar
 Jamesvara at Bhuvaneshvar
 Meghesvara at Bhuvaneshvar
 Siri Deul at Bhuvaneshvar
 Someswara at Bhuvaneshvar
 Rajarani at Bhuvaneshvar
 Temples of Sun at Konarak
 (c. 1250 A D)

The evolution of these styles may

be seen from the early temple shikharas at Aihole (500 AD), Pattadakal (600A D), Osia (820 AD), Pal temples of Belgal (950 AD), Bhuvaneshvar (1000 AD), Gujarat (1000 AD), Khajuraho (1000 AD), Jogda Nasik (1100 AD), and Kangra (1200 AD).

Konarak

Konarak lies on the shores of the Bay of Bengal. This magnificent temple is shrouded in a legend from the Puranas which says that Samba, the son of Krishna, seeking a cure from leprosy, erected a temple in



Fig. 4. Bhuvaneshvar - Mukteshwar temple

honour of the Sun-god Surya who cures all skin diseases. More likely it was originally built by the powerful ruler of Kalinga, King Narasimha-deva as his thanksgiving for a cure.

The site was located in a manner designed to greet the Sun-god as he rose from the sea in the eastern sky. In gratitude too he called his son Bhanudeva after the Sun-god.

The temple is built in the shape of a vast chariot drawn by the seven caprisoned and celestial horses of the Sun-god. The chariot has 24 wheels,

each elaborately carved and also serving as the platform for the garbhagriha and mandapa. The sanctuary or garbhagriha has a curvilinear tower. The outer walls are kanika paga, followed by anuratha paga. The central portion is raha paga. The entire cupola is called mastake comprising kalasa, khapuri, amla and ghanta beki. The terraced steps are potalas descending to the verandah, the upper jangha, bandhana, tala jangha and pabhaga.

Three types of stones were used in

construction; chlorite for door frames, laterite for platforms, staircases and foundations while the remaining structures were built with Khondalite. The poor quality of the last named variety has caused speedy erosion but the nonavailability of stones locally, left no other option but to bring whatever stones was possible to transport.

The grandeur of the temple at Konarak emanates from two factors - the size and design of the temple edifice and the sculpture which embellishes walls and cornices. Every theme is chosen to decorate; gods and goddesses, musicians and dancers, animals and birds, floral and geometrical motifs. There is also the presence of sensual scenes of lovers and courtesans. The contemporary scene is captured in the depiction of courts, royal hunts, military expeditions and the daily routine of the king.

The abundance of erotic sculpture as in Khajuraho is a demonstration of the mood of the times - joyful, secure, luxurious and hedonistic. In such settled times there was time for romance and amorous intrigues, for a candid display of carnal themes. Another favourite topic for sculpture are elephants in various poses and activities, since both in war and peace, they were valued for their services. There are scenes too of hunts and caravans, of people going on pilgrimages, of mendicants and soldiers.

The platform of sanctum sanctorum in temple I, the upana platform of the bhogamandapa is

carved in rich, fine detail and speaks of an age that was free and unfettered, in the belief in earthly pleasures, and a love of the tangible, visible world. There is little preoccupation with the next world or immortality. It is significant that the deities worshipped are the nine planets which are said to control destiny and for this it is necessary to propitiate them for a better existence. Horses and elephants seem more interesting than celestial beings. The god whose figure dominates Konarak is the presiding deity - Surya or Sun-god whose detailed life size status reflects the awe and interest he inspired. This awe came no doubt from the daily spectacle of seeing it rise from the rim of the sea every day, its radiating arms resembling the seven horses which draw the chariot of the sun across the sky.

The figures which were part of the Konarak temple walls reflect the magnificence of the art of this period. We see the statue of Surya, the Sun God, who is slim and commanding, attended by graceful minions. There are figures of Agni, the fire god, who is serene and plump (not quite what one would expect of a fire god) and Yama looks well fed and not sinister. There are intricate figures of Makara who is the vehicle of Ganga and Jamuna. There is a curvaceous figure of a veena player with a hint of diaphanous dress and a plethora of filigree ornaments. We see one woman figure playing the dhol and another beating cymbals. Apart from Makara, there is the head of Shardul



Fig. 5. Konarak

or the mythical lion and next to him, a celestial beauty. On one bracket figure, we see for the first time the sculptured figure of Lord Jagannath, with Shakti by his side and the king and queen looking on.

There are mythical animals such as Vyal and Gajavyals in prancing poses. There are duets of amorous couples either suggestive or overt in their erotic postures. There are marriage scenes where the women are neither shy nor sad but smiling in anticipation.

The sculptured figures of Konarak have the richness of the



Fig. 6. Konarak

European baroque and effusions of the rococco.

The worship of Sun-God is not characteristic of India alone. The Sun was an object of veneration even in ancient Egypt. Ramesis-II built one such temple to the Sun at his capital of Thebes. This religious and political capital reached its zenith during 1600 BC to 1100 BC when Egyptian territory stretched from the Euphrates to Sudan. Pharaohs built temples, pyramids, giant figures on the banks of the Nile. Lines of statues line the short stretch from Luxor to Karnak, which like

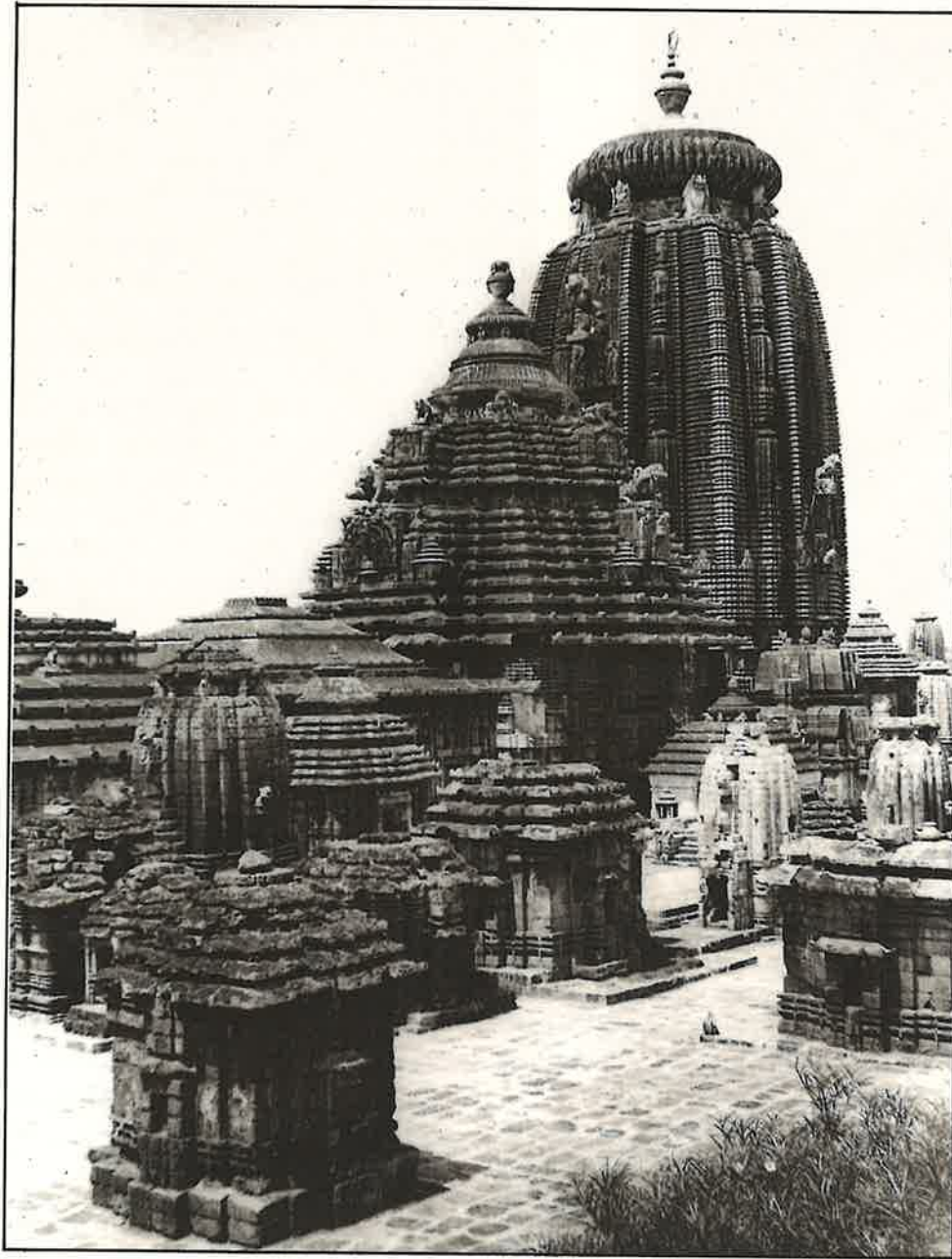


Fig. 7. Bhubaneswar - Lingarajah temple

Konarak was the seat of a temple complex, where a large temple was dedicated to the Egyptian Sun - God, Amun-Re, while smaller ones were of lesser gods. Not unlike the Hindu temples, the ones at Karnak have halls, courtyards, sanctum sanctorum. Across the river are tombs hidden among the hills where the Pharaohs of the New Kingdom built their resting place, with their possessions. In one such tomb, Ramesis-II is buried with his favourite wife, the beautiful and celebrated Nefertiti.

The sun was an object of veneration to all early civilisations. The rising sun was welcomed as an end to darkness, the giver of light and warmth, the source of energy. Even if other gods differ in roles and nuances, the Sun God remained a common object of adoration and awe, whether in India, Greece, or Egypt. Here we see the universality of themes binding the heritage of diverse people and cultures.

Khajuraho Temples

As Orissa had a profusion of temples expressed in the grandeur of Konarak so too did central India produce temples of the Indo-Aryan style most notably in Khajuraho. These temples were built during the supremacy of the Chandella rulers who were as noted for building of irrigation tanks and public works as much as for temples. The concentration of temples at Khajuraho may have been done with the intention of having a central seat of religion in which the Brahminical school could co-exist in harmony

with the rising Jain sect. The similar impulse to build utilitarian work for the civic good of the populace perhaps spilled on to the temples which resemble not so much spiritual inspiration as secular aestheticism verging on an ornate hedonism. It is possible that this hedonism may have been inspired by the distant drums of iconoclastic invaders who had already started pouring in from the North Western passes of India. The idea of building these temples in a secluded area of central India might have been done for the purpose of holding esoteric rituals far from the path of the early Islamic invasions.

Nestled among the valleys and ravines of Bundelkhand stands Khajuraho, once the capital of the Chandellas in early medieval times. The Chandellas were at first feudatories of the imperial Pratiharas who rose to eminence after the disintegration of Harshavardhan's dominion. The Pratiharas took time to consolidate; the Rashtrakutas in the west and the Palas in the east challenged their hegemony. The Chandellas assisted their overlords until ambition overcame them and they vied for power in central India as well. Yasovarman was the first of the Chandella princes to carve out a separate kingdom for himself. After assisting his Pratihara overlord to regain Kalanjar fort, he kept it for himself.

The Chandellas were great builders and patrons of art, and under them central India experienced a renaissance of art not quite as magnificent as under the imperial



Fig. 8. Konarak - Sun temple

Fig. 9. Konarak - Sun temple (A.D.1250), interior

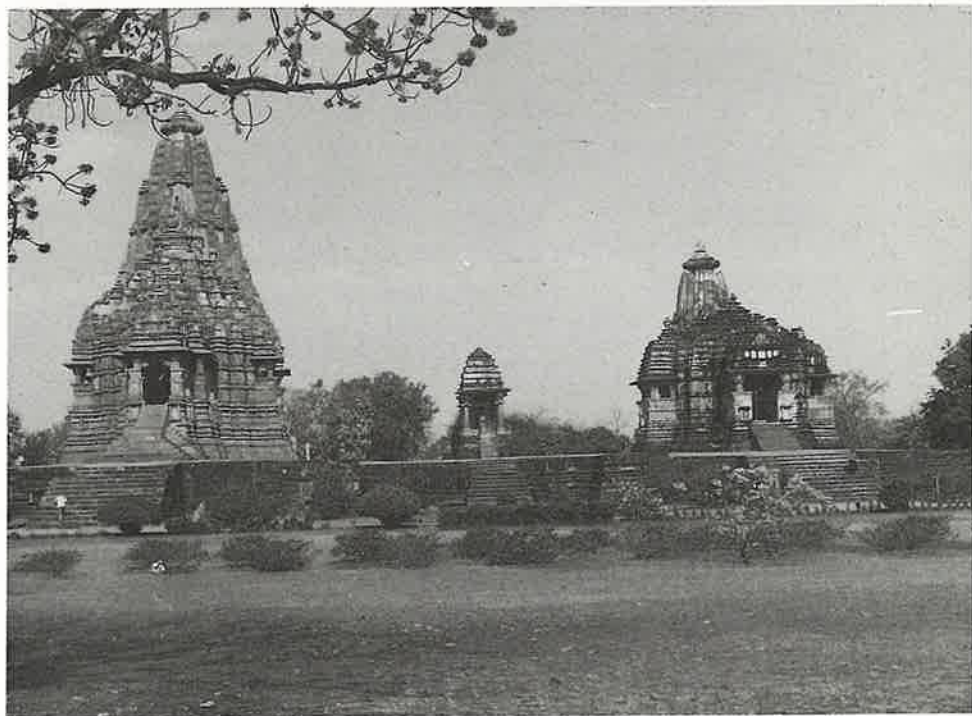
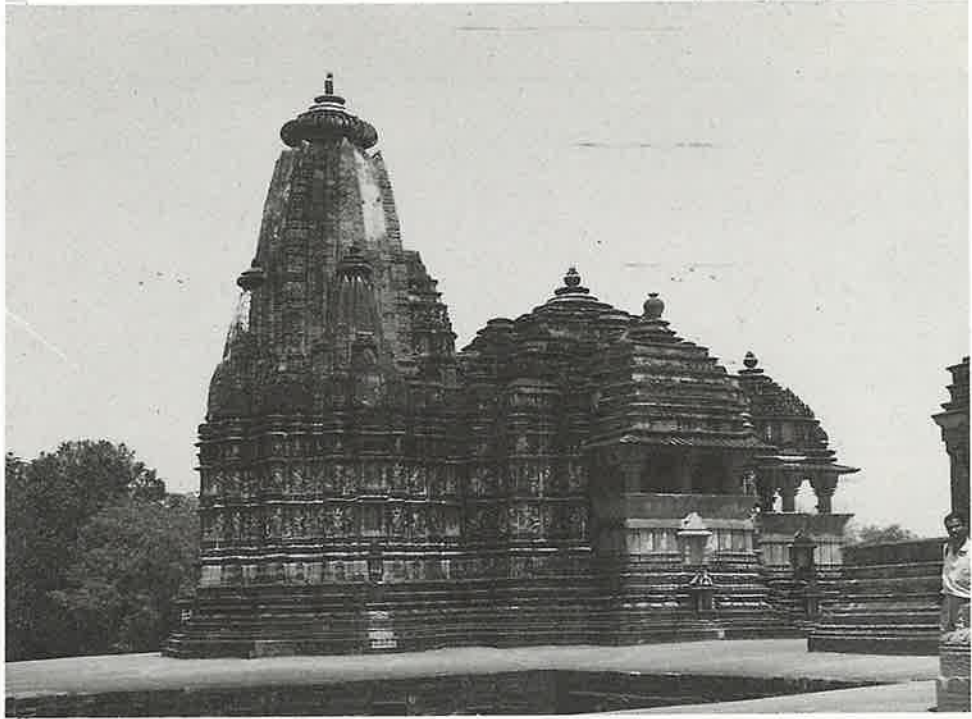


Fig. 10. Khajuraho temple
Fig. 11. Khajuraho temple



Fig. 12. Khajuraho - Lakshmana temple



Fig. 13. Khajuraho - standing female figure from Parshwanatha temple

Guptas, but which was nevertheless a rich and creative period. Yasovarman's quest for independence was consolidated by his son Dhanga who made his kingdom the most powerful in North India with his domain extending from the Narmada to the Ganga. Like many sovereigns of his day (11th century), Dhanga was both a warrior and a patron of arts and builder of temples. Dhanga's son Ganda also followed the family tradition but it was Vidyadhara who brought the Chandellas to their acme of power and influence. He was one of the few rulers of India to offer resistance to the onslaught of Mahmud of Ghazni especially for the fortress of Kalanjar. The onslaught from Afghanistan however proved to be too strong and one by one, the Hindu states declined in both power and eminence. The Chandellas left their capitals and retreated to hills and forest palaces as a refuge from the turmoil that swept India.

Khajuraho stands today as a testimony to the halcyon days of the Chandella realm, representing a distinct pattern of art and temple architecture of its own.

The temples here are slender and tall, reposing on a high platform called jagati where the worshippers circled the temple. The construction-plan is simple with a ardha-mandapa acting as entrance, the mandapa as the hall with antarala leading to garbhagriha or sanctum. The more important temples have mahamandapas which comprise casement windows. These windows lead into the interior apartment where there

are statues. Others have lateral and rear transepts. Minor shrines are present in the larger temples which if five in number are categorised as panchayatana. The temples have high adhisthanas or basements that are ornamented. The roofs are terraced with different levelled peaks of which the highest is the central tower or shikhara. The makara-toranas are entrances ornamented by crocodile motifs, sloping balustrades resting on squat pillars.

The exterior of the temples are highly adorned, relying also on proportion and symmetry for their grace than on embellishments. This is the case in the Lakshmana temple, accredited to Raja Yasovarman or Lakshmanavaraman as he was called. The intricately carved entrance porch is particularly noticeable.

Two of the grandest temples, the Vishwanatha and Parshwanatha were built by Raja Dhanga, while his son Ganda had constructed the Vaishnava temple. King Vidyadhara who followed constructed the stupendous Kandariya Mahadeva temple, the most impressive of the temples in Khajuraho.

The temple sculptures of Khajuraho and Konarak have similarity in the vibrance that they have brought to stone. There are three types of sculptured figures the cult images, the attendants and guardians and then the celestial beings whose varying forms and postures decorate the outer and inner areas of the temples. These celestial beings have however come down to earth to live and act as

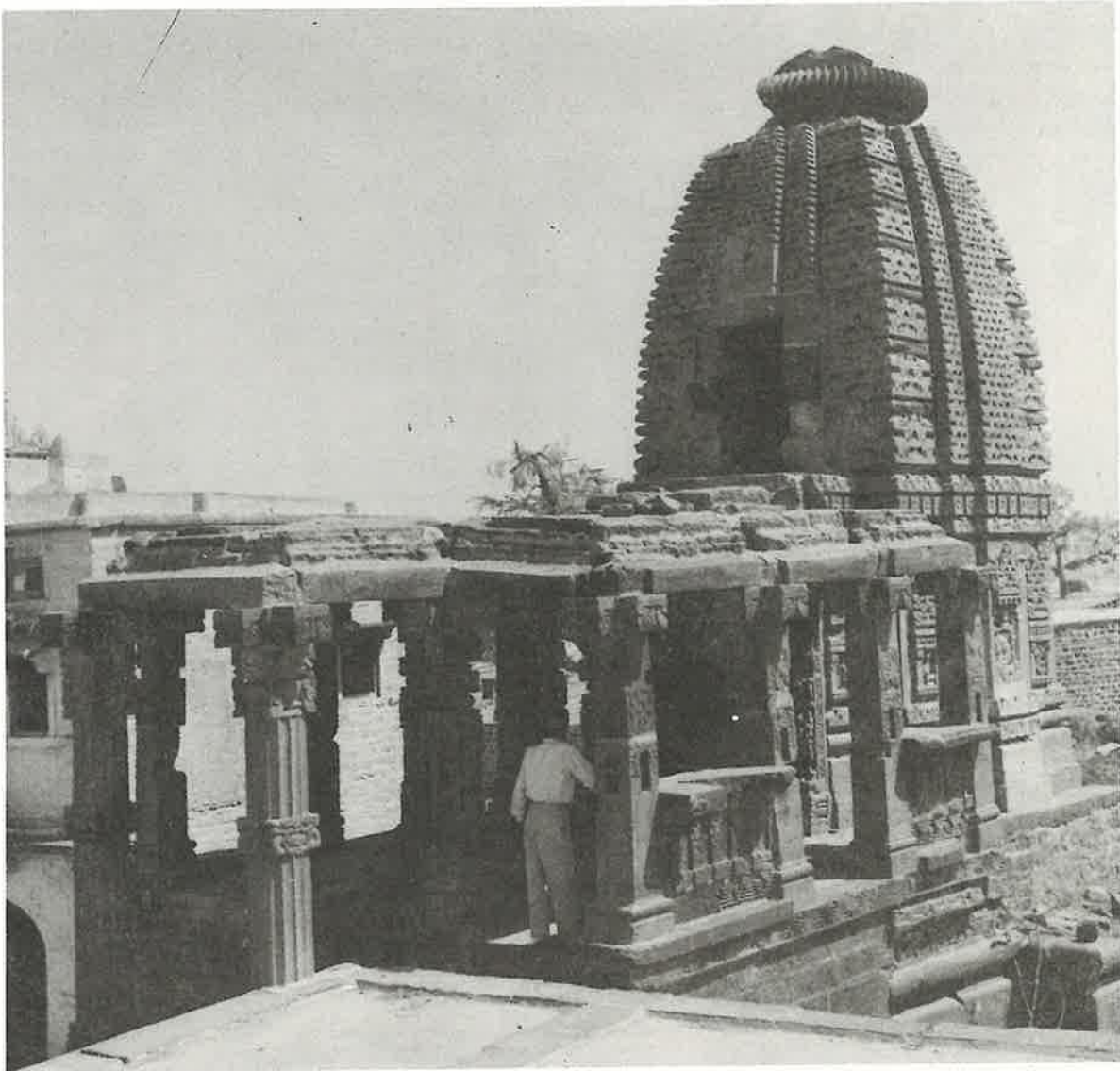


Fig. 14. Rajasthan - Osian (Sun temple)

ordinary mortals.

In an age of classical discipline both in literature and sculpture, Khajuraho like Konarak, broke the norms and created images which have given both fame and notoriety to these temples.

The Kandariya Mahadeva temple

rises like a cluster of pillars, carved and chisselled with mobile figures. The embellishments on pillars on the southern facade are representative of the joyous mood of the temple of the 11th century.

In contrast, the Brahma temple is simple, almost austere, with an



Fig. 15. Modhera - Sun temple, nritya mandapa

unadorned exterior and tiered tower. The Javari temple is also simple though with ornamental lower towers.

Kandariya Mahadeva temple is the culmination of ornamental grandeur, surpassing both Vishwanath and Parshwanath in height, decoration and motifs. Its central shikhara is high and rich with carvings, resembling late Gothic structures in their intricate effusions.

The sculpture of Khajuraho is, like

Konarak, joyously sensual, revealing a hedonistic attitude in the forms created out of stone. The figures are not representative of gods and goddesses in attitudes of piety but to men and women caught in everyday postures sometimes amorous, sometimes mundane, at times coquettish, at other times even crude - but all vibrant with a warm humanism that anticipates the Italian Renaissance.

The sculptures at Lakshmana,

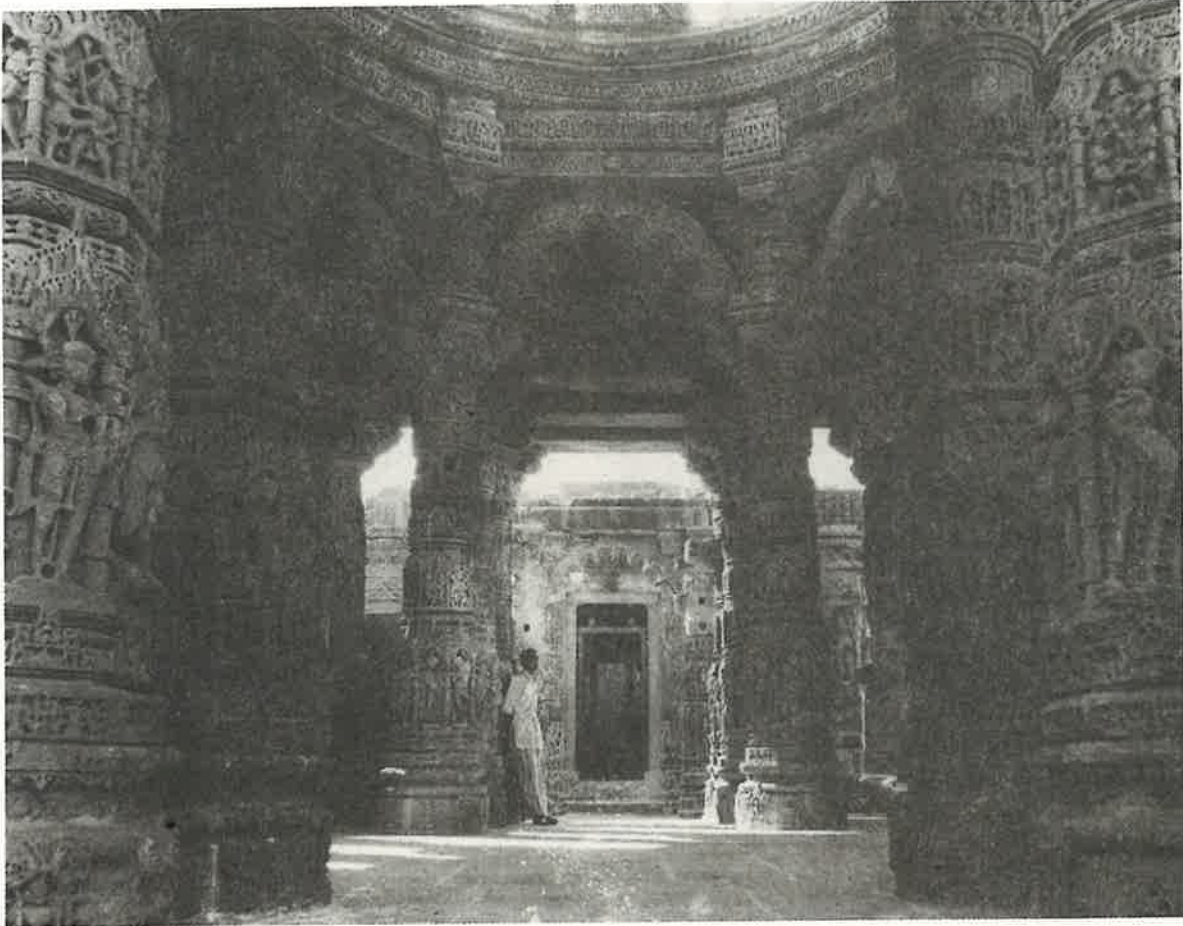


Fig. 16. Modhera - of the Sun temple, nritya mandapa

Parshwanatha and Vishwanatha temples are in the classical mould, with both discipline and grace. In Jagadambi and Chitragupta temples, the figures are more exuberant and carnal. This mood deepens in the Kandariya Mahadeva temple where exaggerations in poise and posture are evident. The progress from exaggeration to decadence is demonstrated in the Chaturbhuj temple.

Khajuraho overwhelms the visitor with its intricately carved structures,

the effusions of figures and animals and the totality of grandeur in the clusters of temples. Glancing past the erotic scenes and postures one wonders what led the master sculptors to descend from the sky aspiring shikharas to these earth bound, carnal depictions.

One wonders if the Chandellas who ruled central India abounded in humour and vivacity tinged with a subtle rebellion against the religiosity of the Jains. Does the rumbunctious gaiety of the Khajuraho sculptures



Fig. 17. Rani-ka Vav



Fig. 18. Rani-Ka Vav

mock at the pallid piety of austere people, especially the holy men who had renounced the vanity of garments. Did the chandella sculptors show that the dividing line between the nude and ascetic men and earthbound, carnal couples was very thin? Or was it an illustration of Rabindranath Tagore's words -

"My liberation lies not
In an ascetic's life
I shall find fulfillment
In a thousand bonds of delight."

It may also have been that the Chandellas had heard the distant drums of Ghazni and Ghoris from

where invaders had come plunging into India in an orgy of plunder and carnage. Perhaps the sculptured temples were an act of defiance against fate, and history, and against the iconoclastic fury of the invaders.

Fortunately, the temples which grew around the temples saved Khajuraho as they saved Sanchi, Ajanta and far away Angkor Wat. The invaders never penetrated beyond the ravines and forests and so these areas, like Sleeping Beauty's kingdom remained dormant for centuries. Until rediscovered by another alien race.

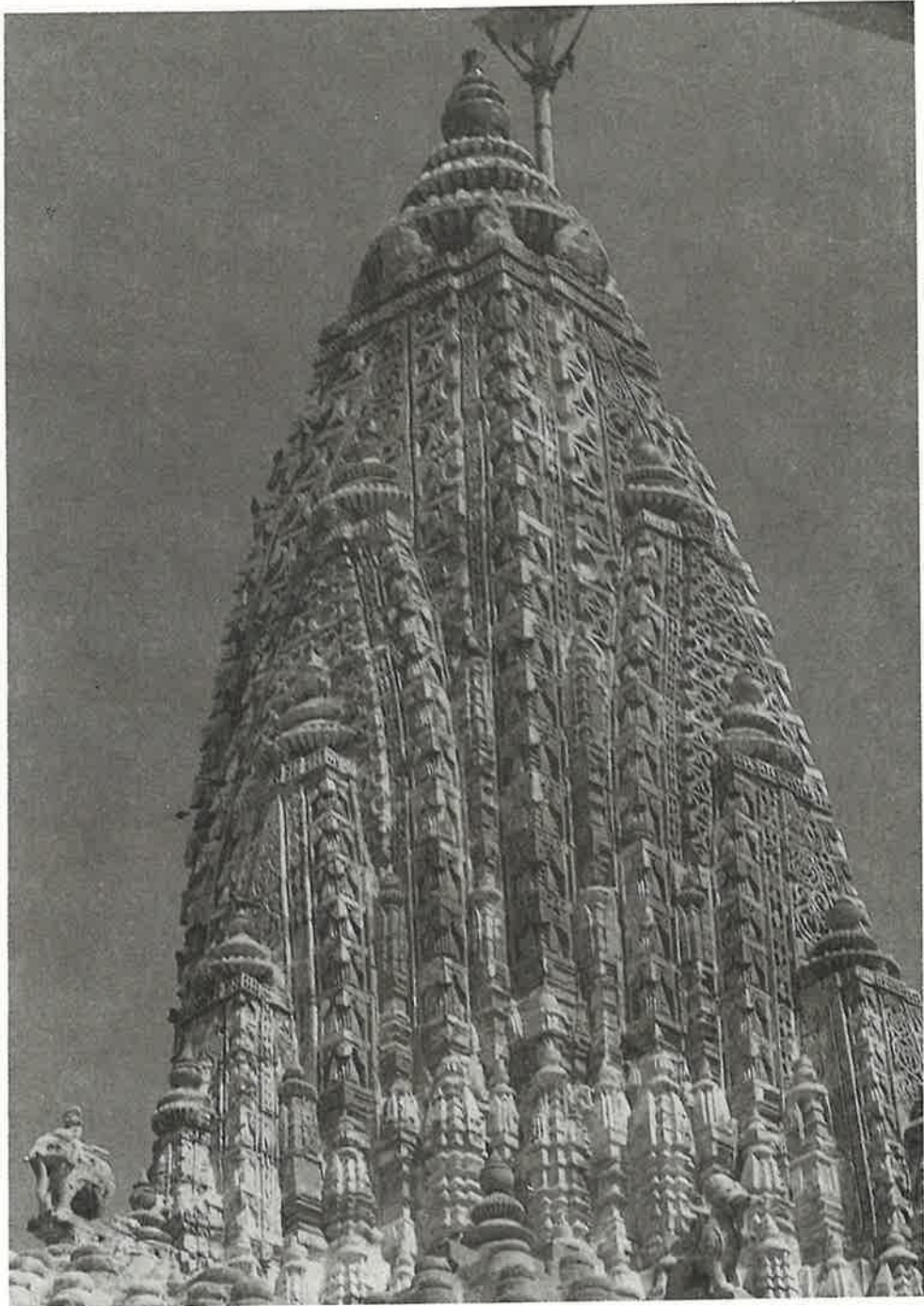


Fig. 19. Dwarakadeesh

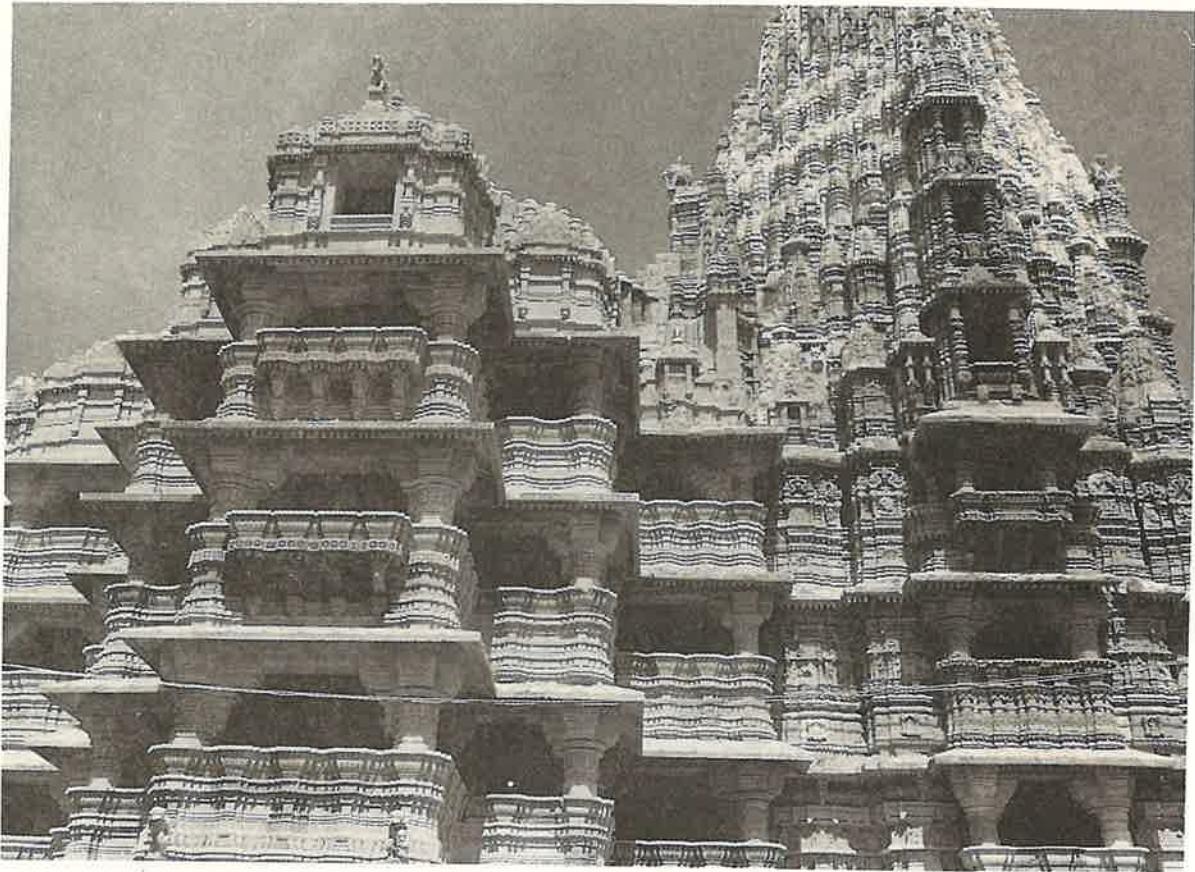


Fig. 20. Dwarakadeesh

Temples of Rajasthan

As the temples of central India were built far from the path of the invasions of the Turko-Afghans so the temples of Rajasthan suffered for the very reason that they stood at the gateway of India. A few that remain testify to the exquisite beauty of Hindu craftsmanship from the 8th to 11th centuries. It was a time of aesthetic ideals which drew its inspiration from the later imperial Guptas. The late Gupta literature with its emphasis on the beauty of form and the grace of manner had an effect on the fashioning of places of

worship in Rajputana. We see the exquisitely carved temples of eight pillars and again at Malade temple whose embellishments and designs of floral motives and filigree patterns speak of a high degree of craftsmanship accompanying an aesthetic inspiration. The village of Osia near Jodhpur still has 16 temples of the 8th and 9th centuries whose elegance of form and originality of conception is still a marvel today. The most notable of the temples at Osia is the one dedicated to the Mahavira whose ornate torana or great embellishment has inspired similar toranas of the

central Indian temples. There is still evidence that the temples of Osia were used not only for worship but for civic gatherings since the temples had a sabhamandapa where a large number of townsfolk met to discuss secular matters as well as to worship. The 17th century baroque style of Europe could have been influenced by the intricate stylised and sometimes flowered sculpture which make the doorways of the Osian temples so well-known.

Gujarat Temples

Some of the finest examples of the Indo-Aryan style of architecture are to be found in the area which is now in the modern state of Gujarat where the Solanki dynasty created a period of peace and stability in the region extending from Katiawar, to Kutch and some parts of Rajaputana. The commercial prosperity of the region due to the maritime commerce of Gujarat with the Middle East facilitated the generation of income and prosperity for artistic and building activity. The speciality of the Gujarat monuments lies both in the twin virtues of the strength of construction as well as delicacy and beauty of style. Not only were the Solanki rulers themselves involved in building activities but their ministers and administrators also participated in the promotion of material cultures in a manner which has led art historians to compare them to the Medicis of Florence. The brothers Vasthupala and Tejapala of early 13th century contributed to a large measure of the temple building

activities of Gujarat. Though defined as Solanki temples, the artistic output was a collective effort of the entire population which had wealth and leisure to devote to artistic creation.

One of the most celebrated temples of Gujarat is the Sun Temple at Modhera which was an important habitation of the Modh Brahmins from which this area is said to have derived its name. Situated on the banks of the Busmavati, the temple actually comprises three parts - the temple proper or what in Orissa would be the jagmohan with the nrityamandap and the suryakund. The nrityamandap is reached by a steep stair-way into a pillared hall leading to the mulaprasad or the main temple which contains the sanctum or garbhagriha. As the temple is dedicated to the Sun God the structure of the temple is so designed as to catch the rays of the rising sun from the pillared hall into the interior. The Modhera temple is famous for its highly ornamented toranas as well as the vigorous beauty of the pillars which support the structure. The special feature of the Gujarat temples which indicates that it was a gathering hall as much for secular as for spiritual purposes is the presence of a sabhamandapa separated from the garbhagriha by a line of four pillars. The shikhara is low and forms an integral part of the main structure.

Another unique temple in Gujarat is the Rani-ki-Vav which is a step-well in the form of a temple situated in ancient Anhillia Patana known today as Patan. A stepped corridor

leads down from the ground level to an underground tank. At regular intervals descending to the tank are pillared pavilions at each storey. Along the walls, flanking the staircase as well as within the walls of the well are finely carved statues and images of various deities though Vishnu and Parvati are found predominantly. In fact the god Vishnu is depicted in all his eight incarnations. The panels of the walls are covered with simple and graceful images.

Tradition has it that the Dwarakadeesh Temple at Dwaraka was originally built by Vajraanbha, the grandson of Shri Krishna. This, however, cannot be verified. What is known, however, is that during the period of temple building activity in Saurashtra the existing temple of Shri Krishna may have been first erected. However, the temple has undergone many additions and alterations in subsequent centuries as may be seen from the varied architecture and sculpture of the temple. The temple stands on the highest level of the town and is enclosed by a large courtyard within which there are smaller temples. There is no high pedestal or Adhishtana for the main temple as the floor of the temple begins from the pavement of the courtyard. The essential features of a temple, the mandapa, antarala and garbhagriha are present. As in Modhera so at Dwaraka the mandapa has no walls but has a large number of pillars - 60 in all - to support the high roof of the mandapa. The garbhagriha has a circumambulatory

part along with it while the soaring shikhara is completed by amalaka and kalasa such as were found in the Orissa temple.

Architecture of the Vijayanagar Empire

The Vijayanagara Empire was the vigorous bastion of Hindu culture at a time when Islamic kingdoms had established themselves in most parts of North India. It therefore fell to the Vijayanagara rulers and people to preserve Hindu culture and traditions in the area from the River Krishna to Kanyakumari. The capital of this great empire was at Vijayanagara which is now called Hampi.

Hampi or Pampakshetra is a land hallowed by history and legends. According to tradition this is the Kishkindha of Ramayana, where Bali and Sugriva fought their mortal battle, and where Rama waited while Sugriva went in search of Sita. Tradition again insists that Malyavanta hill where Rama waited is on the road to Kampli, now a sugar manufacturing town. Rock cut edicts of the Ashokan era have been found here as well. Then came the Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas, Hoyasalas and Yadavas.

The rise of the Vijayanagar Empire began in a strange manner with two brothers, Harihar and Bukka who had been taken prisoners by Mohammed-bin Tughlak. In Delhi they embraced Islam and were accepted as loyal adherents, because

when rebellion broke out in Karnataka against the Sultan's rule, these two brothers were sent to maintain order. This they did. They also declared themselves free of Delhi, gave up Islam and established a new kingdom of which Vijayanagar became the capital in 1336 A D. With power came territorial gains which brought greater authority.

Devaraya I gave his daughter in marriage to Firoz Shah and his son Devaraya II consolidated the kingdom. Nicolo Conti, the Italian traveler who visited Vijayanagar has described the splendour of the capital, the colourful festivals, and the luxurious life style of the monarch. Abdur Razzak the traveller from Herat also marvelled at the magnificence of Vijayanagar, of the citadel, of the markets laden with jewels, silks, flowers, and sparkling streams flowing through the city.

Vijayanagar's prosperity continued, while squabbles broke out between the Sultanates of Bijapur, Golkonda and Bidar. Seizing the opportunity the Portuguese also established a colony at Goa but were on friendly terms with the Vijayanagar kingdom with whom they traded in jewels, horses, velvet,

and damask.

The kingdom rose to its zenith under Krishnadeva Raya who ascended the throne in 1509 A D.

Domingo Paes and Hernan Nuniz visiting Vijayanagar in its heyday have left vivid descriptions of a fabulous empire.

The Vijayanagar Empire rose to its zenith under the great Krishnadeva Raya who was an intrepid commander of armies, a scholar, administrator, poet and a generous patron of art, music and sculpture. It is under him that the finest monuments of Hampi were built. Vijayanagar was a well defended citadel with seven lines of fortification that made invasion almost impossible though the defences were indeed broken at the battle of Takikotta. Within the citadel is a remarkable collection of monuments that can only hint at the splendour of the imperial city of the 15th century.

Vijayanagara produced many great rulers of which the most celebrated is Krishnadeva Raya under whose reign the empire reached its zenith both in regard to territory and artistic achievement. The special feature of the Vijayanagara architecture was the grace, harmony and balance of construction, a fusion of decoration and vigour which reflected the mood of the people and the magnificence of its rulers. Just as Europe was experiencing the efflorescence of the Renaissance, at about the same time the Vijayanagara Empire was at its zenith, so we too find a vital Hindu revivalist spirit in the religious and

secular buildings of Vijayanagar. Indeed there is a combination of both the classicism of the Renaissance as well as the Baroque in the mood of Vijayanagar architecture.

The spirit of Hindu revival led to the elaboration of ceremonies and rituals which necessitated structural expansion of the temples and palaces. It was also an age of prosperity when Vijayanagara was the recipient of the wealth of the Indian peninsula. This too was reflected in the richness of sculptures on pillars, ceilings and the arches of the monuments. Since the Vijayanagara Empire extended from the banks of the Tungabodra and Krishna to the lands end of India at Kanyakumari, much of this territory is dotted with buildings of the Vijayanagara era - palaces, forts and temples. However, it is in Vijayanagara city that the most resplendent aspect of the Vijayanagara architecture is displayed.

The first to appear before us is a large square structure with a simple exterior and an embellished interior of stucco work, ornate corridors and balconies. This has been identified as the Queen's Bath. Nearby is the King's Palace enclosure. Within this is the Mahanavami Dibba where music and drama entertained the court during Navaratri. Travellers of Krishnadeva Raya's time describe the magnificence of this area. Even from the existing walls of the tiers, animals and court scenes are carved. A small chamber on the eastern side has walls which contain friezes depicting foreign embassies at the

court, as well as contemporaneous social scenes.

The King's Audience Hall stands to the west of Mahanavami Dibba. This was the highest building within the citadel, said to be a hall of hundred pillars whose remains can still be seen. There are platforms built in green chlorite with lotus designs and wide steps. Other steps lead to what was the Ladies' Apartments from where they could watch the proceedings of the Court as well as festive occasions. There are remains of a platform where sacrificial fires were lit before a shrine. In front of the Audience Hall is a large area where the citizens of Vijayanagar came to partake in the festivities of Navaratri, and where the royal pomp and panoply were displayed to inspire both awe and respect.

Temples on the Hemakuta Hill

Hemakuta hill rising south of the village of Hampi and located to the right of the Virupaksha temple complex is the location of many temples, shrines and mandapas. These monuments are reached through a large gateway facing the east which is reduced at the base. These Saivite temples, built in a style different from that of the Vijayanagar architecture are assignable to the pre Vijayanagar period. The most interesting among them is a group of temples on the northern slope of the hill. Most of these temples have three sanctuaries placed around a common hall (trikutachala) and superstructures of stepped pyramidal variety (Kadamba-nagara-sikhara).

Two of the largest temples on the lower slope face north towards the river. Each of them have three small, square sanctuaries that open off a central, columned ardha mandapa which is extended in the north as a porch with an overhanging eave. Interiors of these temples are plain except for the columns with double capitals and angled brackets. Externally, the basement mouldings are cut sharply. Massive, main walls are adorned with horizontal bands. Pyramidal superstructures over the sanctuaries have dome-like sikharas with pot like tupis. One of these temples has an inscription stating that Vira Kampiladeva (a local fourteenth century chief), built the Shivalaya and installed in it three lingas. The epigraph suggests that these two and another triple shrined temple facing east which are almost identical, belong to the decades immediately preceding the establishment of Vijayanagar.

Immediately north-west of these two temples is another similar shrined temple facing east. It is the most ornate of the temples on the Hemakuta hill. The outer walls here have shallow pilasters positioned at regular intervals, dividing the exterior into narrow bays. The three storeyed superstructures over the sanctuaries are fashioned in the southern style in their first storey. The door jambs and lintels of this temple are relieved with bas-reliefs of dancing Ganesha Devi, elephants and the conch-flowers, the first two sculptures indicating the Saiva affiliation of this temple.

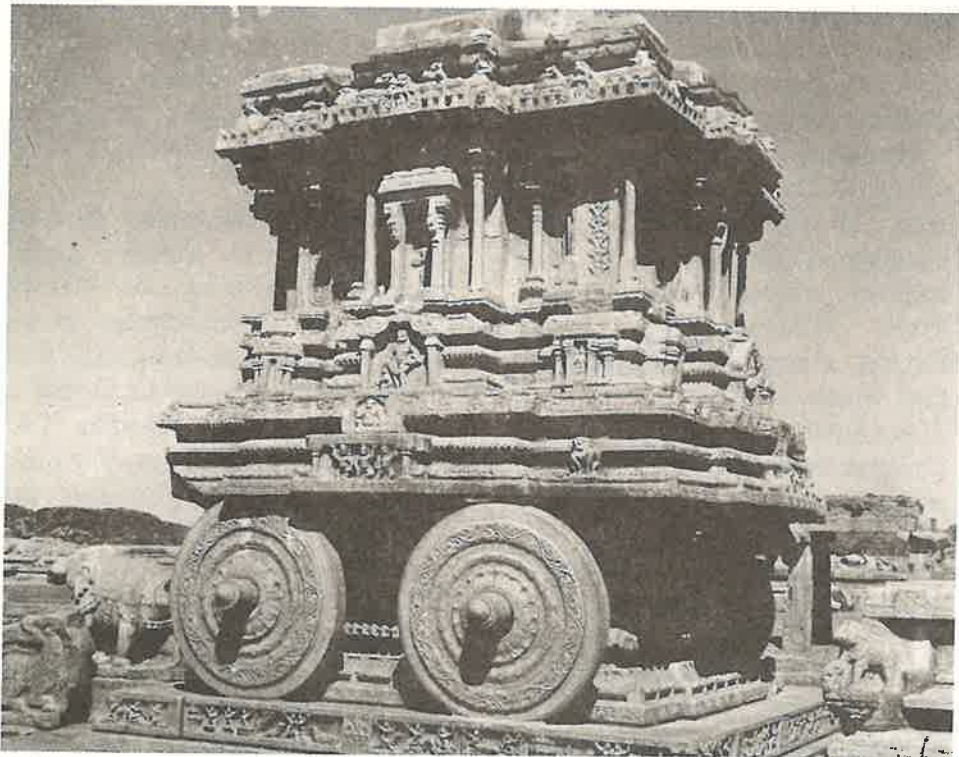


Fig. 1. and 2. Hampi - Vital deo temple ratha

To the north-east of the above temple is a well finished double shrined stone temple facing east. Abutting the north side of this temple is another small temple built in sand stone. Its garbhagriha and antarala have a continuous moulded basement including a short curved cornice of an early type with arched openings. The first two stages of the superstructure are in the southern style and the square, domical roof has four worn out *nasika* projections.

Situated on the Kampli Road, the Ganigitti temple is one of the earliest dated monuments at Hampi. According to an inscription on the base of the nearby lamp pillar, this Jain temple was built by Iruga, the minister of Harihar II in 1385, A D when an image of Kunthanatha was consecrated.

Facing the north, the temple has a sanctum, an ante-chamber, a columned hall and another columned hall with an attached subshrine facing east. There are porched entrances to the temple on the north and east. The interior is massive and unadorned except for the columns which have enlarged capitals, and the decorated doorways.

The exterior of the temple is plain. The stone superstructure over the sanctum is a stepped pyramid of six diminishing stages. The neck moulding is square and the low square roof is domical. The brick parapet with stucco figures on the roof of the north porch now damaged is a later addition. Immediately in front of the temple are the remains of a gateway and the stone lamp

column. This slender, tall monolithic column stands on a square stone pedestal.

Situated in the middle of the Royal centre, the Hazara Rama temple complex is contained in a rectangular enclosure with gateways on the east and north containing porches both inside and outside. In an inscription engraved on the basement mouldings that flank the main entrance to the columned mandapa is mentioned the name of Devaraya, and certain architectural features. The main temple is therefore assigned to the reign of Devaraya I (1406-22 A D). This temple was dedicated to Vishnu in the form of Ramachandra, but the pedestal in the sanctum is at present empty.

Facing the east, the main temple consists of a small square sanctuary, an ante-chamber and an enclosed, square columned hall with porches on three sides. The open porch to the east is a later addition. The interior is massive and yet simple except for the treatment of the mandapa columns whose shafts are elaborately sculptured with images of Vishnu in various incarnations and aspects.

The exterior of the temple is by contrast elaborately finished. Sides are projected into bays with alternating recesses. The basement mouldings are intricately carved. The wall surface above is relieved with niches flanked by Vaishnava *dwarapalas* and well proportioned decorative pilasters. The exquisite and artistic bas reliefs that cover the rest of the wall areas are mostly devoted to illustrating the Ramayana



Fig. 3. Hampi - Hazara Ram temple (detail of carvings)

epic. The brick superstructure over the sanctum is divided into successive storeys each with pilastered walls. It has a dome-like roof. The projection on the front face of the tower is arched. The porches leading into the mandapa have pillars with finely finished capitals and brackets as well as carvings on their shafts.

The minor temple (Devi shrine) to the north of the main temple has two sancturies opening to a small hall and a porch to the east, which is a later addition. The elevation of this

structure resembles that of the main temple though here the carving is finer and on a small scale.

The Kalyana mandapa at the northeast corner of the courtyard was built in the reign of Krishnadeva Raya according to an inscription dated 1521 A D. Being posterior to the enclosure walls, this structure hides many of the bas reliefs on their inner surfaces. The outer face of the enclosure walls on the east, north and west sides are covered with friezes depicting parades of elephants, horses being led by

attendants, soldiers in martial displays and dancing women and musicians. The inner face of these walls is also partly covered with carvings divided into panels depicting episodes from the Ramayana.

Situated to the north of the image of Lakshmi-Narasimha, the Krishna Temple was built by Krishnadeva Raya to celebrate his victory in Orissa. According to an inscription in this temple, the image of Balakrishna which the king had brought from Udayagiri, was installed in this temple in 1515. Built in Vijayanagara style, this large temple, together with a Devi shrine and a number of subshrines is enclosed by high cloistered prakara walls. There are three entrances in this enclosure, on the north, east and south with dilapidated temple towers.

This temple has a sanctum and an ante-chamber both surrounded by a circum-ambulatory path, a closed columned hall and an open hall (mukha mandapa). A small pavilion abutting the middle of the eastern side of the Mahamandapa was probably intended to house an image of Garuda. There are pillared entrance porches to the north and south of the closed hall. The flight of steps are flanked by balustrades in the form of mythical animals. Likewise, the flight of steps leading to the open hall are flanked by elephants.

The exterior has a long, low elevation, with continuous basement mouldings. Regularly spaced wall niches are flanked by pilasters, as well as single pilasters standing in

pots and carrying miniature pavilions on top. The intermediate surfaces are adorned with fine bas reliefs of Balakrishna, Hanuman, etc. The superstructure above the sanctum is a two-storeyed brick and plaster tower with a hemispherical sikhara.

Generally known as Ugra-Narasimha though referred to also as Lakshmi-Narasimha in an inscription, this massive image at Vijayanagar represents the fourth incarnation of Vishnu. An inscription carved on a nearby slab states that Krishnadeva Raya, the illustrious ruler of Vijayanagar made a grant in 1528 A D for the worship of this deity.

Hewn out of a single granite boulder, this vast, monolithic image is enshrined within a high walled enclosure with an entrance doorway on the east. Symmetrically arranged a socketed pillar base on the ground and atop the enclosure indicate the existence of a wooden superstructure. It is a four-armed image seated in yogic posture under a seven hooded serpent, the three coils of which form the pedestal below. An arch emerging from the lion mask above the serpent's hood is supported on two free standing ornate columns flanking the god, all wrought out of the monolith. The giant statue has an awesome aspect ascribed to the leonine incarnation of Vishnu.

Built in the first half of the 16th century AD, the Pattabhirama temple was also called the Raghunatha temple according to the inscriptions dated in 1534 A D and 1539 A D issued during the reign of Achyutaraya and engraved in this temple.

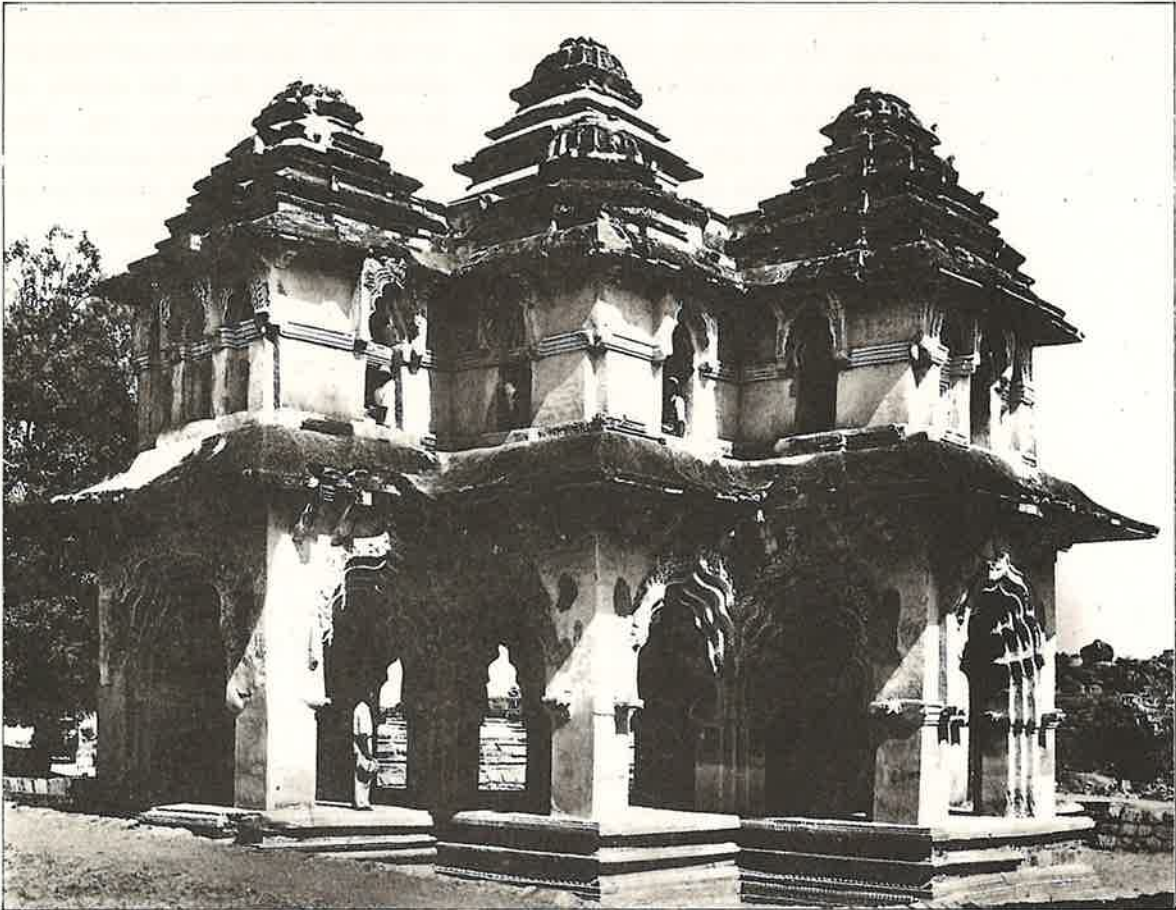


Fig. 4. Hampi - Lotus Mahal

Facing the east, this large temple, together with a smaller, minor shrine to the north-west and a separate open pillared hall, stands in the middle of a rectangular enclosure. The main entrance to the complex on the east side has a lofty tower and there are two small entrances on the north and south. The main temple has on plan a sanctum, an ante-chamber, both surrounded by a circum-ambulatory path, a closed columned hall with porches on the north and south and an open columned hall.

Situated at the southern end of

the Sule bazar, this large temple, which is a typical late Vijayanagar structure, was constructed by Hiriya Tirumala, the brother-in-law and Chief Minister of Achyutaraya. An inscription of the northern gopura records that the temple was consecrated in 1534 A D, when the image of Vishnu as Thiruvengalanatha was installed in the sanctuary.

The Vitthala temple is dedicated to Vishnu. This temple represents the archetypal Vijayanagara architecture, and is ascribed to the reign of

Devaraya II. Numerous inscriptions within the temple dating from 1513 A D to 1564 A D indicate that substantial additions were made to the temple during the reigns of Krishnadevaraya, Achyutaraya and Sadashiva. This area is irregular and is popularly known as the 'Zanana' enclosure. The enclosure consists of tapering walls of great height built with huge stone blocks and earth and rubble. Access to the enclosure is through small doorways one each in the east and west walls and three in the north. It encloses various structures, like, the basement of palaces, a two storeyed pavilion, a vaulted rectangular structure and watch towers.

The *Water pavilion* is a ruined palace structure set within a rectangular tank at the south-west corner of the enclosure. The tank once had corner pavillions suspended over the water. This structure was originally reached by a bridge on the south. The basement of the structure which was once submerged in the water is carved with fish to create an illusionary effect.

The *Lotus Mahal* is located to the east of the water pavilion, a celebrated two storeyed pavilion locally known as the 'Lotus Mahal'. It is a synthesis of the Hindu and Muslim architectural styles. In plan, it is an open pavilion on the lower level, and partly enclosed with windows and balcony seating on the upper level. Divided into squares, the structure is projected and recessed with geometric regularity. The ground floor has an ornate

basement and 24 square pillars carrying recessed and foliated arches. There are remnants of medallions in the spandrels of arches, scroll work along the outlines and simbha mukha decorations at the apex. The ceiling consists of a number of vaults and domes symmetrically arranged. A staircase on the north side leads to the upper storey. The ceilings here are also in the form of octagonal and vaulted domes. Both the storeys have an overhanging, double curved eave carried on brackets. The super-structure consists of nine pyramidal towers with ribbed or octagonal domed roofs.

The *Magazine* is Identified variously as guards' quarters or store house or magazine. This vaulted rectangular structure stands in the northwest corner of the enclosure. Its exterior is plain with only a single opening in the middle. Small ventilation holes are placed high up in the wall, the interior has a raised arcade on four sides that looks down on a central rectangular area. The pointed vault is carried on eight cusped arches.

There are three *Watch Towers* positioned in the walls of this enclosure, surveying the approaches to the royal centre. Two of them are square and the third one is octagonal on plan. Stair-cases lead to the upper storeys which have projecting balconies.

The mint, the Commander-in-Chief Danaik's enclosure, the water pavilion, quarters for the women guards, the apartments of the royal ladies which has the beautiful Lotus

Mahal give an idea of the aspects of secular life in Vijayanagara. The open space where stood guards, horses, palanquins, elephants and chariots are now empty but must have been pulsating with life and colour in the heyday of the empire.

By the late 16th century, the high noon of the Vijayanagar sun had passed. The armies which had conquered lands in the east and south were now in retreat when faced with the more organized Muslim hosts of Ahmednagar. The great city fell to the invaders, while the ruling elite fled to Penukonda, Chandragiri and then Vellore. The rulers of Bijapur and Golkonda annexed the rich territories, which were again seized by the Nizam and Hyder Ali in turn.

As in all places in India, the temples remain places of devotion and interest even after the palaces have been abandoned to time. The glory of Vijayanagar and Hampi still lives in the pujas performed in the temples of Virupaksha and Vitthala built by kings whose names are now part of history. These Vijayanagar rulers preserved the great Hindu madihars of Karnataka literature, music, art and architecture.

The monuments of Hampi invite comparison with the Roman Forums of Italy. Both bear testimony to great realms when political power was allied to an outpouring of architecture. As Hampi has its royal enclosure, so the Forum has its Curia, where the Senate deliberated on policies. Here Julius Caesar declined to wear the Crown and Cicero waxed eloquent.

Like Hampi, the Roman Forum grew over time into a congerie of temples to Apollo and Pollux, the Senate building, shops and market piazzas. Orations and jeers, victory parades and murders, were all enacted in this area, flanked by the Capitoline, Palatine and Aventine hills.

This was the heart of a great empire and when the barbati (Goths, Hunds, Vandals) came, they plundered and destroyed. Hampi too endured the same fate when treachery gave the invaders access to the seven rings of fortifications that protected the royal town which like the Forum was a blend of religious, political and social life and a memorial to those able, prodigiously gifted men who made both the Roman and Vijayanagar empires possible.

Madurai School

The Vijayanagara empire was similar in role to the Byzantine empire which had kept alive the arts and learning of the Graeco-Roman world while the rest of Europe had been plunged into the chaos of the Gothic and Vandal invasions. Just as the fall of Byzantine in 1435 led to the dispersion of its culture to Rome, precipitating the Renaissance, so too did the disastrous fall of Vijayanagara in 1565 lead to the dispersal of Hindu culture further south where there was an exquisite flowering of architecture, literature and music centred in Madurai. While the Vijayanagara dynasty itself disappeared, its feudatories remained loyal to the memory of Vijayanagara



Fig. 5. Madurai - Meenakshi temple, southern gopuram

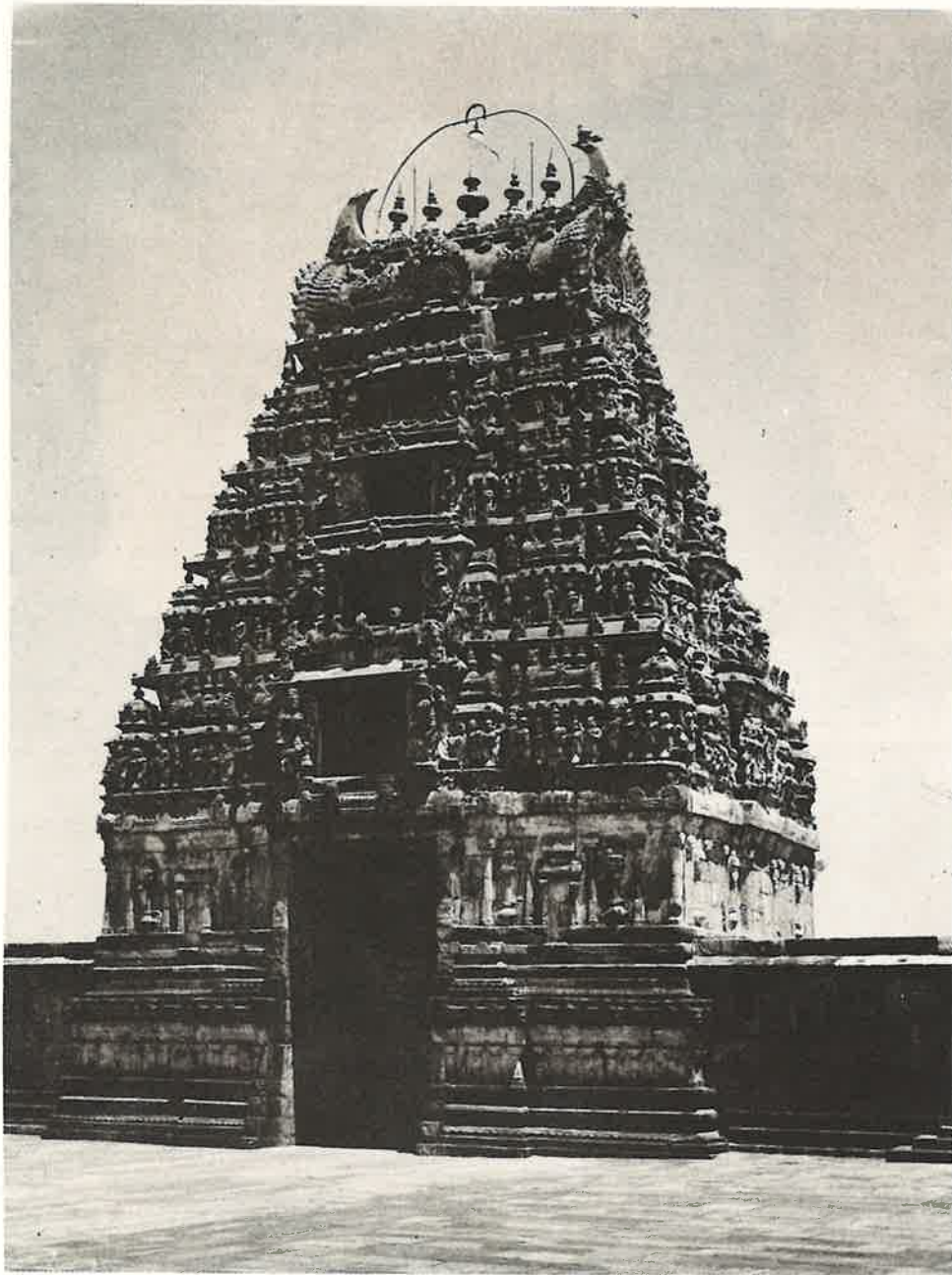


Fig. 6. Belur - Chennakeswar temple, view of the gopuram from inside.

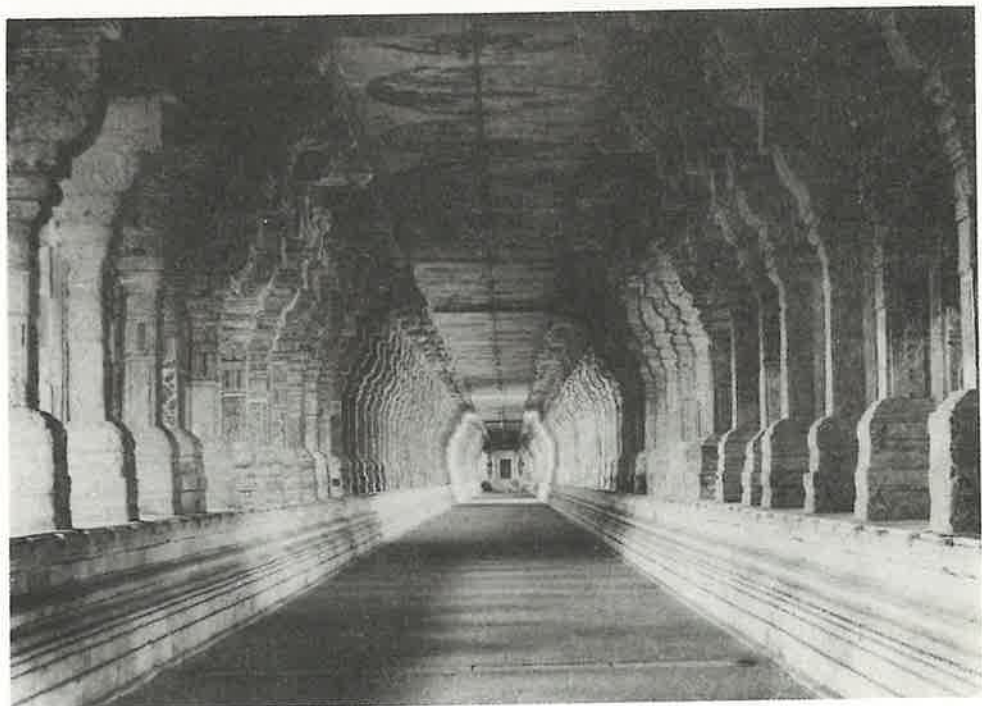
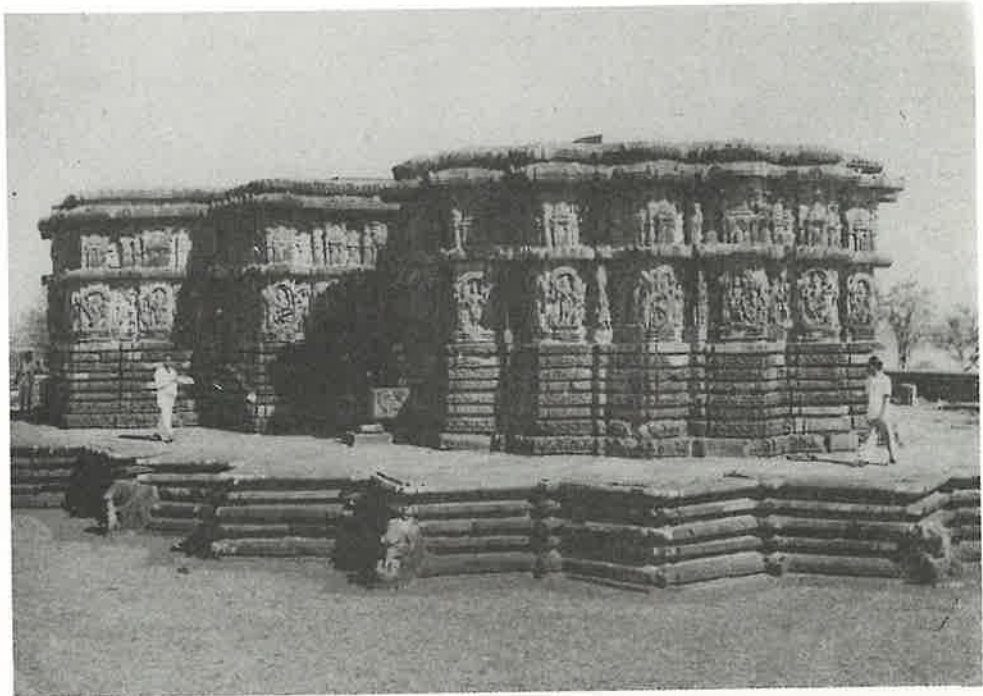


Fig. 7. Helebid Kedereshwar temple
Fig. 8. Rameswaram



Fig. 9. Belur - Chennakeshwar temple

and continued to be the bastion of Hindu culture and tradition. The greatest of these feudatory chiefs was Thirumalai Nayak who ruled Madurai from 1623 to 1669 and under whose patronage many of the great buildings were erected. Not only did the Vijayanagara Nayaks build afresh with new inspirations but repaired and expanded existing structures, endowing them with larger dimensions and decorations with a renewed vigour.

When it would appear that Hindu rule had received a mortal blow with the fall of Vijayanagara and the consolidation of the Mughal rule, paradoxically the ritual and fervour of Hinduism gained a new momentum. The architecture of the temples of this later period reflected these tendencies. The inner sanctum of the temple remained secluded where the deity was installed in splendid solitude. The rituals and worship were carried out in the mandapas. The inner part of the temple consisted of two flat-roofed towers one adjoining the other and covering a large rectangular space. Within this was the sanctum around which was the richly moulded gilded cupola. The mandapas led to a series of open courtyards enclosed by high walls. The courtyards or the Prakaram was the place where the faithful congregated before and after the prescribed ceremonies. The outer courtyards were also places of public ceremonies when the deity was taken out of his outer sanctum to be worshipped and to give benediction on certain days to the populace. The

ceremonies and functions within the temples led to the elaboration of courtyards with pillared halls, subsidiary shrines, small gopurams and arches. In time the courtyards were also covered and subsidiary deities installed if found necessary. Since the temples had now become the focus of both temporal and spiritual activities of both governance and faith, of discussions and devotions, the amenities of the temple were expanded to provide large and beautiful design tanks where the faithful performed their ablutions and areas where the faithful were fed after fasting ended after the long ceremonies. The main temple was often enclosed by gopurams which were a combination of entrances and towers, pyramidal in shape but which end with a horizontal band of sculptures and finials. Each thala or storey of the Gopuram is exquisitely and minutely carved depicting a legion of legends in the lives of gods and mortal heroes. In time the magnificent and ornate Gopurams became more imposing than the temples themselves. The Gopurams also provided accommodation for guards, tower keepers and caretakers.

The profusion of pillars in the later Dravidian temples may have been dictated as much by the climate of the southern-most region of India as by artistic style. Since temples were now places of worship, music performances and intellectual discussion, sustained over many hours of hot days and balmy nights, it was necessary to have both light

and air within these precincts. Hence the necessity to erect the pillars instead of solid walls so that the vagrant breeze from sea and river could enter the temple courtyards. Pillars become the focal point of ornamentation with designs of every kind, whether they were square mouldings or round, rampant dragons and lions radiating brackets, ornate curves and corbels. Sometimes, sculptured figures of merchants and nobility were also installed in the central pillars. As the importance of the donors grew, entire pillars were given to depict their likeness and these were called portrait pillars. The most splendid expression of the later Vijayanagara temple architecture may be seen in the Meenakshi temple at Madurai with its magnificent Gopurams and the rich and ornate temple dedicated to the goddess Meenakshi who is one aspect of the goddess Durga. There are shrines to Meenakshi, Lord Shiva and lesser deities. There is also "a pool of golden lilies river", a man made tank measuring 165 ft by 120 ft., where the faithful had baths before worship and which is fronted by one of the great gopurams.

Apart from the Meenakshi temple of Madurai there are similar temples of this style in Srirangam near Tiruchurappalli, Suchendram in Travancore and Rameshwaram at the extremity of the peninsula. The predominance of pillars can be seen in the corridor of the Rameshwaram temple where curved and bounded pillars stretching

from the ceiling in brackets constitute most of the corridor.

Monuments of Kerala

The monuments of Kerala reflect both the geography and history of Kerala.

The Padmanabhaswamy Temple at Trivandram with its seven storeyed gopuram and tank in the foreground resembles the temples of Madurai of the 18th century.

At *Padmanabhapuram* we see the place which is built in the traditional Malabar style with pointed gables dormer windows and long corridors. The gable roofs allowed the flow of rain water during the heavy Kerala monsoon and the long corridors provided an airy passage for the townsfolk to sit there both for worship and social intercourse. Though the kingdoms of Kerala were close to Tamilnadu, they show different influences inspired as much by climate as by local materials. The dimensions are smaller and lack the grandeur of Chola or Vijayanagara styles. They have however a graceful harmony in their square Vimanas, in their ornamental Vedika, the Khanthas with floral designs and the Kumudha which has lion-heads. The Adhithana is decorated with female figures. The finishes and plinth is made of laterite stone blocks raised well above the ground. The

special feature of Kerala temples is the Namashkara Mandapa.

Temples of this style are found at the *Vadakunatha temple* at Trichur, *Rama Temple* at Tripiyar, the *Madathilappan Temple* in Erattayappam which were built at the same time. The Madathilappan temples had a three storeyed Vimana built in a high Adisthana. The temple was built in Chera times but has similarities with those in Tamilnadu.

The secular monuments of Kerala have a variety that reflects the history of Kerala. The first groups who came across the Arabian Sea through the west-coast were the Phoenicians and later on Arabs whose buildings do not remain but whose influence is seen in the maritime culture of coastal Kerala and in their commercial activities.

It is to Kerala that the first European colonisers came in search of spices. The Mattandari palace in Cochin with its timbered halls and sloping tiled roofs was built first by the Portuguese traders and then elaborated by the Dutch traders who came after the fall of the Iberian Empire.

Fleeing from the persecution of the Spanish and Portuguese inquisition

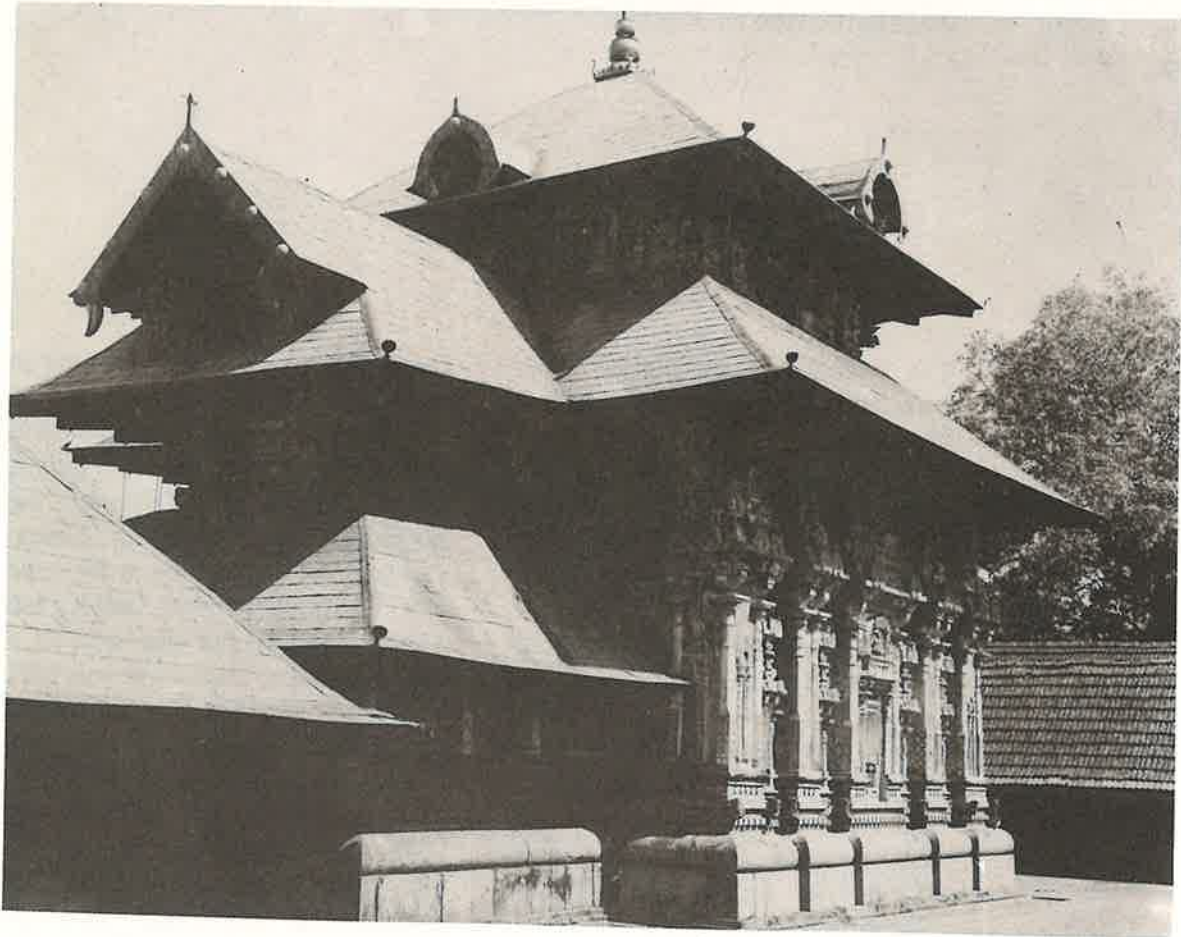


Fig. 1. Trichur - Vadakunatha temple

came the Sephardic Jews who were given safe passage by the Rajas of Cochin and built their synagogues in this cosmopolitan town; the Katavumbhagam synagogue, the Tekumbhagam synagogue and one close to the Rajas' palace. The chief synagogue is 40ft. long and 30ft wide though the customary synagogue had sacrificial altars in Cochin this was dispensed with. The flooring of the synagogue was made from the blue and white tiles brought by traders from China to Cochin.

Women sat in galleries which were separated by screens while the men sat beyond this segregated portion. The courtyards resemble the architecture of Andalusia in Southern Spain from where most of the Jews came in the 15th and 16th century.

Churches of Kerala

The traditional belief is that St Thomas the Apostle came to Kerala soon after the crucifixion of his master and from that time the Christian community grew in Kerala. Since the churches which had its



Fig. 2. Cochin - Mattandari Palace
Fig. 3. Mattandari Palace painting.

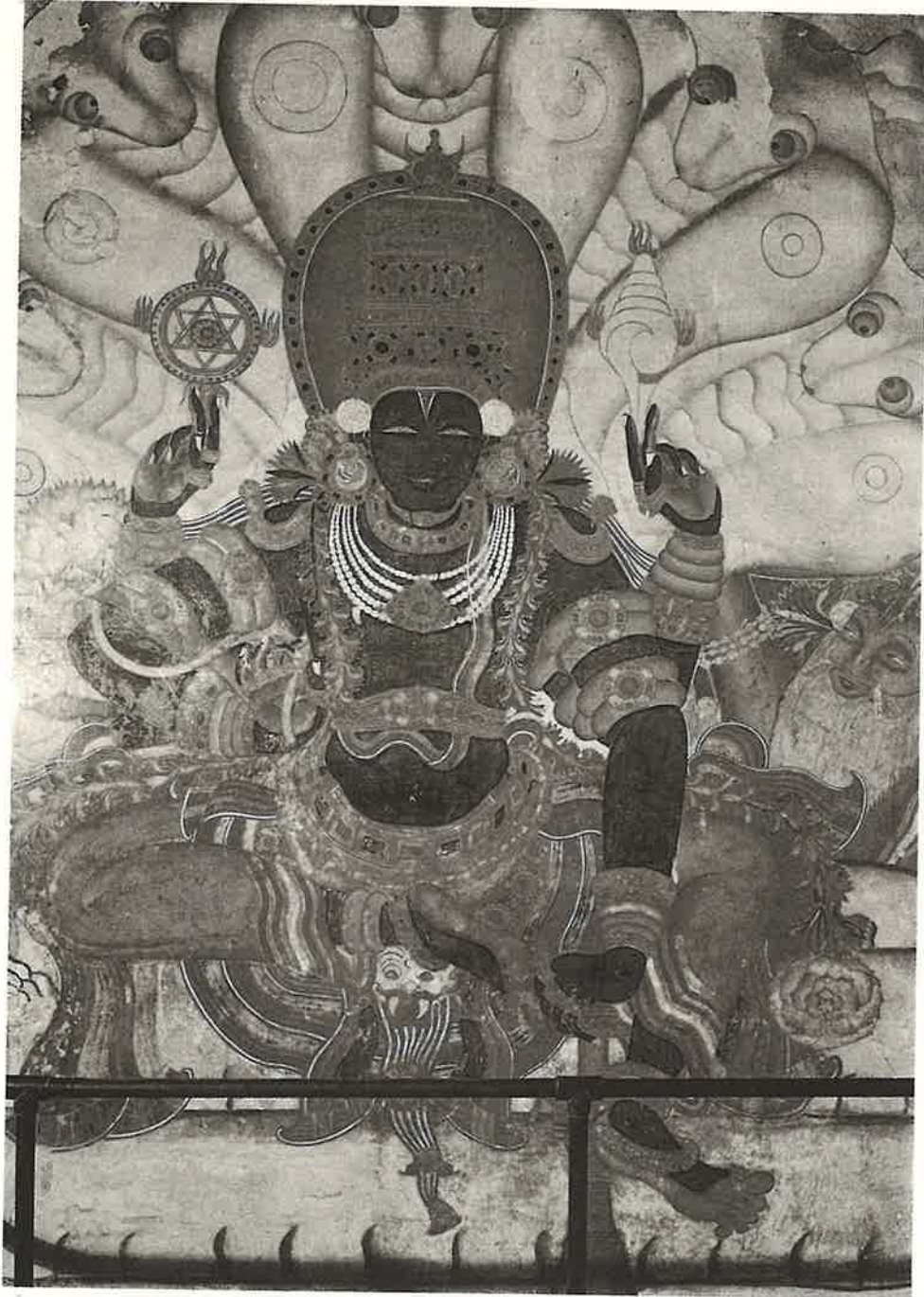


Fig. 4. Cochin - Mattandari Palace painting



Fig. 5. Cochin - Mattandari Palace painting



Fig. 6. Cochin - St Francis church



Fig. 7. Cochin - St Francis church interior

infancy in and depended on eastern or Syriac rituals, the first converts to Christianity came to be known as Syrian Christians. Unfortunately the churches of this era do not survive and it is only with the advent of the Portuguese that we find the construction of European style churches. Since the Arabs had patronage from the Zamorin of Calicut it is the Raja of Cochin who gave assistance to the Portuguese. The churches at Cochin -the Santa Cruz cathedral and the church of St Francis - are representatives of 16th century architecture which prevailed in Portugal in a mixture of late renaissance and early baroque styles. These churches have twin spires above square towers, a sharply pointed arch at the centre upon which reposed the crucifix. The ornamentation is as much influenced by Kerala temples as that of Europe.

Temples of Jammu and Kashmir

The monuments of Kashmir are a mirror of the history of Kashmir which again has been determined by the geographical factors of this land. Though much of Kashmir lies in a valley 6000ft high and is linked by snowbound mountain ranges and passes which are negotiable only during summer months, it was nevertheless not an isolated outpost of India but a vital cultural centre of the subcontinent. Lying as it does at the cross-roads of many regions, Kashmir was exposed to many influences which resulted through cross fertilisation into a flowering of a syncretic culture.

The earliest influences came from the Greeks whose emissaries found their way from Takshila and Bactria to the Kashmir Valley. Thereafter came the Buddhists of Central Asia. While the main land of India became detached from Buddhism during the Brahminical revival of the Gupta period, Buddhism attained a fresh lease of life in Kashmir. Since the rulers gave patronage to Buddhism, Kashmir also became a halting place for the silk caravans which came from China and across Central Asia. It is on this silk-road (also the Buddhist road) that the idea

of many civilisations were exchanged and assimilated. The first of these Buddhist monuments can be seen at Harwan near Srinagar and Ushkar near Baramula. The Kushan dynasty originating from Central Asia adapted the Buddhism of Kashmir and gave it a vigour and freshness in the 2nd century A D. The physical remains of this synthesis of Central Asia and Buddhism can be seen in the site at Harwan which lies in between the waters of the Dal Lake and a magnificent range of mountains as its backdrop. Here, among the terraced slopes of the mountains the Buddhists built their monasteries, Chaityas and temples. The stupas were three storeys resembling the stupas of Gandhara which also stood on the Silk-Road, The Chaityas or the prayer halls were usually built on the highest terrace while the other structures lay below. The Chaitya hall had an apsidal end resembling in structure the rock architecture of South India. The Chaitya hall of Harwan with its rectangular courtyard and circular apse and oblong kneef resembles the structures that were at the Gandhara city of Sirkup in Takshila dating to the 1st century B C. These structures

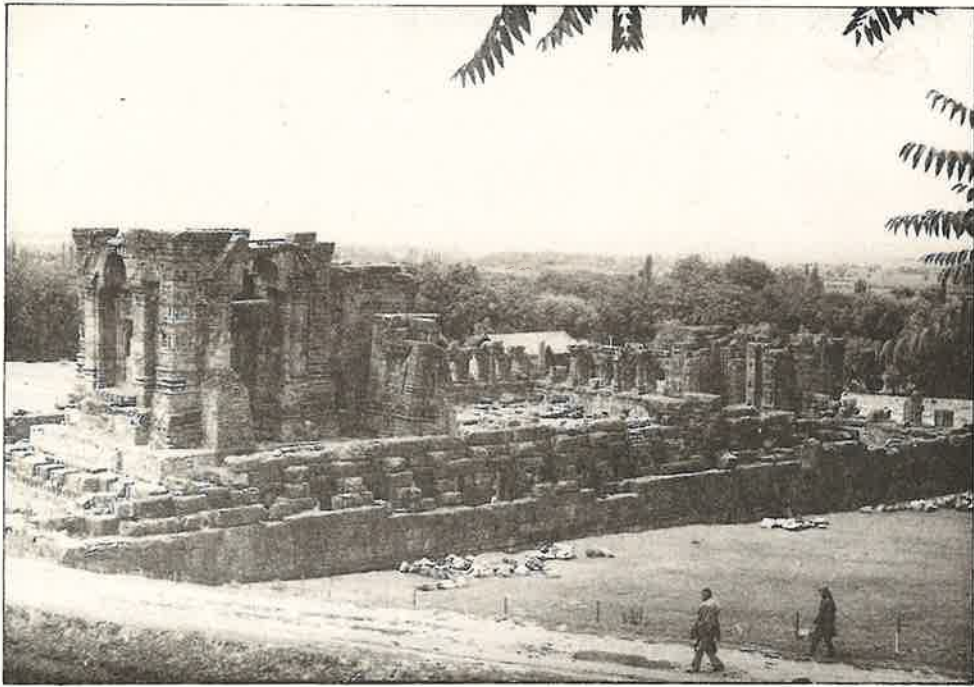


Fig. 1. Kashmir Martand
Fig. 2. Kashmir Martand



Fig. 3. Kashmir- Martand

resemble those of Gandhara in style but were built of local materials - mainly mixed pebbles and mud. The process was developed by reinforcing the wall of pebble by blocks of stones in regular intervals. This again developed in the 6th century A D to a rubble masonry. The surface of these rude walls was covered by terracotta tiles and panels which serve both utilitarian as well as decorative purposes. The terracotta tiles at Harwan were moulded

with a design which bears resemblance to motifs of many civilisations the Greek Swan, Sassanian bird, Assyrian lion, Roman roset, Persian walls, Chinese calligraphy and Indian Elephant. The figures of many professions and races indicate that the Kashmir Valley was the melting pot and cross-road of many cultures in the early Christian eras.

After a lull of a few centuries a new cultural era began in Kashmir,

several centuries after the flowering of the classical civilisations of the Guptas. There is no material evidence of the transitory period. It is therefore a sudden departure indeed like the burst of a new culture when we see the magnificent buildings with their grand and classical preparations, their finish and style. It is no coincidence that the period of great building activity and their majesty coincide with the reign of Lalitaditya who ruled from 724 to 760 A D. This king appears to have been a true cosmopolitan figure of the classical world which stretched from Gandhara to Rome. He was a patron both of Buddhism and Hinduism but with a definite inclination for the Graeco-Roman world which under the onslaught of Gothic invasions from the North and the Saracens from the South, retreated to the safer haven of Asia. Minor for a period of quiet revival.

It is a mystery as to how there was a sudden departure from the modest structure of earlier eras to the buildings made of massive blocks of lime-stones which had to be quarried, transported over hilly terrain, dressed and then used for construction. These huge blocks of lime-stone were then fashioned into temples which echo Graeco-Roman architecture with pillared porticos, peristular arches columns and colonnades. Indeed, at first sight the temple of Avanteeshwara built by King Avantivarman resembles in form and style the great reigns of the Parthenon and Paestum. It is most likely that the Hellenic style which

had fused with Indian tradition and flourished at Gandhara now percolated into Kashmir.

There are of course variations which were evolved from other influences due to Lalitaditya's contact with Central Asia. The methods used for bonding of the masonry by mortars and joining by doubles had come from Egypt, Persia, Greece and finally the Romans who had perfected the use of mortars.

As in Gandhara so in Kashmir the first monuments of this hellenic style were Buddhist. The earliest examples of this are found near Srinagar in the Shiva temple of Puranadhishtana (known now as Pandrethan) the Parihaspura. The excavations had revealed that these were important monastic centres where the Buddhist monks lived, studied and worshipped within living quarters (Viharas), prayer halls (Chaityas) and votive stupas. In these monuments the columns have a resemblance to their Doric counterparts. It is interesting to note that the great temple dedicated to the Phoenician God Baal in Baalbek in Lebanon resembles the Hellenic and Buddhist monuments of Kashmir.

Hindu monuments do not resemble their counterparts of the plains of India. The Hindu temples consisted of a central shrine with a sanctuary where the deity was installed. This central structure was placed within a rectangular courtyard surrounded by a cellular peristal and an imposing gateway which was the entry point. Here we see the influence of the Buddhist monasteries of Gandhara



Fig. 4. Kashmir - Avantipur

rather than the temples of North India as are the arches and pediments. The pyramidal roof which can be seen at the Pandrethan and the Sun Temple at Martand were sometimes built of wood and were sloped, like Gothic gables which were dictated by the snow-fall of the Kashmir valley as well as the abundance of timber.

The Hellenic influence seen in the edifices built during the reign of Lalithaditya underwent changes in architecture in the reign of Avantivarman a century later. the

temples of Rudresa near Srinagar, the Shankaracharya Temple at Takht-e-Suleman (now called Shankaracharya Hill) and Narestan shows the influence of the Gandhara style which came to its fullest development in the Sun Temple at Martand near Anantnag. Here again we see the central structures posited in a huge courtyard with its columns in cellular peristyle and an impressive gate-way. The Hellenic style underwent variation in the pyramidal roof, mouldings and the sculptures. The proportions, balance and a feeling of

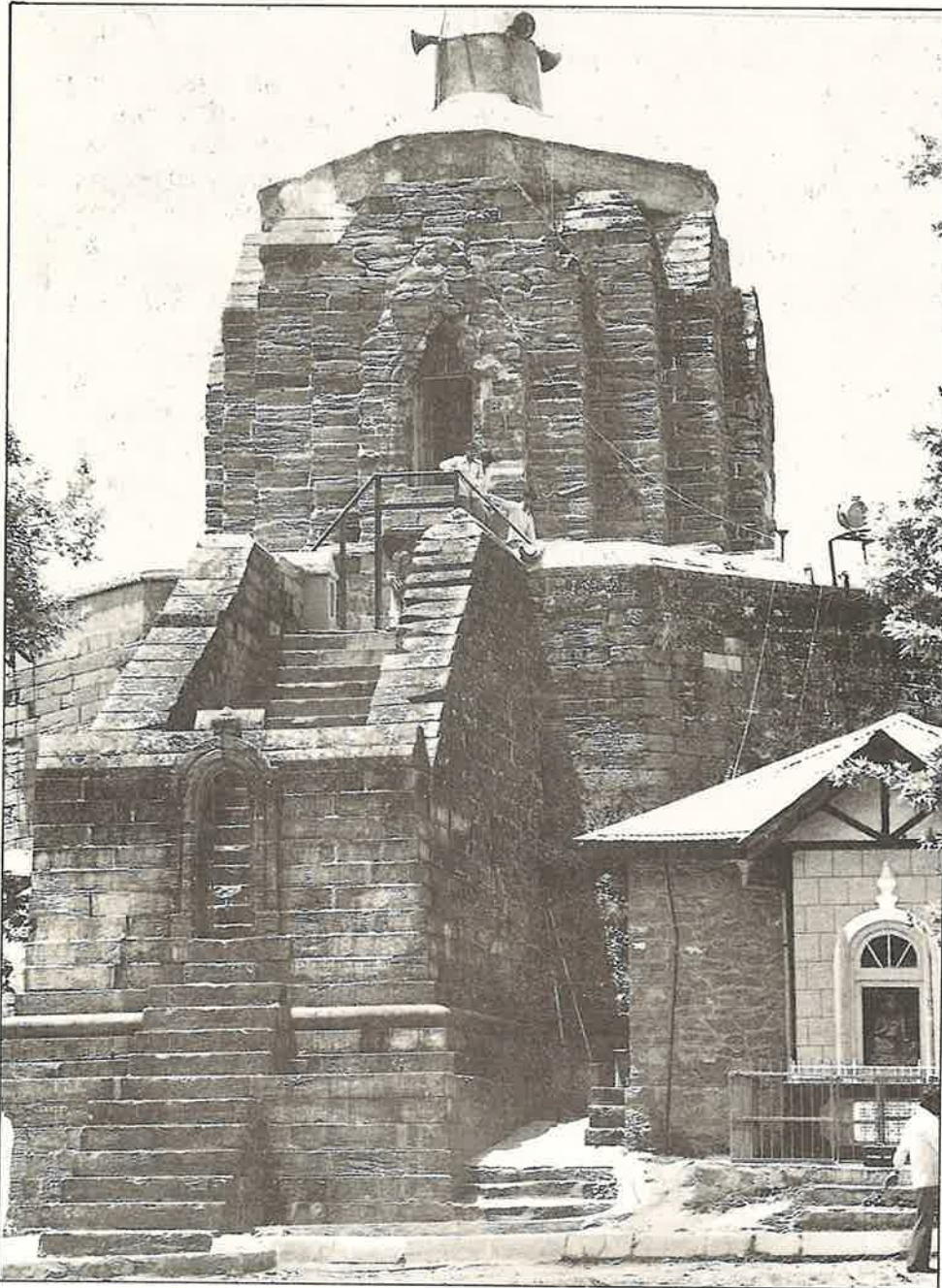


Fig. 5. Kashmir - Srinagar Sankaracharya temple



Fig. 6. Kashmir Payer - general view of the temple

space bear the imprint of Hellenic architecture.

The same principles of balance, proportion, harmony and space but on a larger scale and more imposing are in the buildings of the reign of King Avantivarma (855-853) both in their Shiva Temple of Avanteeshwara and the Vishnu Temple of Avanthiswamy. While the inspiration is the same the development of craftsmanship brought to the monuments of Avanthivarman a delicacy of finish and graceful embellishments. Avanthivaraman's successor Shankarvarman also built temples to Shiva at Pathan named after himself Shankangaureesh.

By the end of the 10th century the great age of classical buildings in Kashmir ended with changes in the fortunes of the rulers when fresh invasions from the north-west affected not only the architecture of Kashmir monuments but the social life of its people.

Ladakh Gomphas

The cosmopolitan character of Buddhism may be seen in the diverse types of buildings which it inspired from Hellenic style sculptures and monasteries of Gandhara and Kashmir to the very different edifices of Ladakh.

The Gomphas and monasteries of Ladakh are unique in themselves and combined the influences of both India as well as Tibet since Ladakh was and is on the cross-roads of these two cultures. The high mountainous terrain of Ladakh influenced the style of the Gomphas with their high walls and their steep sloping roofs to

facilitate snow to fall off. The severity of winters compelled the building of high austere walls. The ornamentation, therefore had to be in the interiors of the monasteries which are famous for their paintings. The imposing Gomphas of Hemis, Spituk, Lama yuru and Thipse have similarity of design and construction using the local lime stone while intricate timber work and paintings illumine the interiors. The Gomphas had courtyards where the brief spring and summer was celebrated with religious festivities by both the monks and the local populace.

Fatehpur Sikri

The conjunction of planets in the mid-sixteenth century may account for the advent of remarkable sovereigns who shaped the destinies of their realms. Of these-Elizabeth I of England, Ivan the Terrible of Russia, Henry IV of France, Philip II of Spain - the greatest seems to be Akbar, Emperor of India.

Like his contemporaries, he extended his realm by conquest, consolidated it by administration and guaranteed a period of prosperity when whispers of its fabled wealth drew adventurers from across the seas. But Akbar did something more: he tried to unite his disparate subjects in a unique manner, displaying a sagacity and tolerance rare in that age of bigotry and religious strife. Elizabeth of England was a part of the English Reformation and its principle beneficiary, since the marriage of her mother, Anne Boleyn, to Henry VIII, was one of the causes of the break with the Papacy. She made, therefore, no effort to conciliate the Catholics and nurtured the dissident faith fervently. Henry IV of France was born as the Prince of Navarre. His mother had been an ardent Protestant, but to secure the throne of France, he

embraced Catholicism with the cynical remark, "Paris is worth a Mass". Ivan of Russia used and abused the Orthodox church as it suited him, sometimes secular, sometimes theocratic. None of them equalled Akbar in the breadth of vision and flexibility of action.

The culmination of this eclecticism is to be found in Fatehpur Sikri, now a ghost town redolent with memories but once a vibrant city of victory and a citadel of the religion of man.

Many theories have been advanced to explain Akbar's secularism. Perhaps the best explanation lies in the circumstances of his birth.

Fleeing from one princely state to another, the dispossessed Humayun had no alternative but to accept the proffered hospitality of Rana Virsal Prasad of Amarkot. Though the Rajput princes were the traditional foes of the Moghuls, and though the Rana could have made political capital by holding the fugitive Emperor as hostage, the Rana refused to abandon his own code of chivalry. Not only did he give Humayun and his young wife shelter, he also ordered his courtiers to accord the throneless Humayun every dignity and honour. While Hamida

Banu awaited the birth of her child, Humayun and the Rana discussed joint expeditions of mutual benefit.

Amidst this atmosphere, shorn of religious bigotry, the great Akbar was born on the 15th October 1542. Maulana Chand, the astrologer in the household of the Amarkot ruler, predicted the future glory of the child who was born "at a glorious moments such as does not happen once in a thousand years."

Akbar was not unaware of these events. There remained within him, a deep respect for the chivalrous Rajputs who had given his parents protection at the time of his birth.

Not that this prevented him from undertaking relentless campaigns against the courageous Durgavati of Gondwana and the Rana Pratap of Mewar. Had the Rana submitted to Akbar and acknowledged his sovereignty, Mewar might have been spared the terrible carnage.

For this wanton violence, some responsibility may rest with his chief Rajput wife, Jodhabai, and her relatives including Man Singh of Amber who resented the hauteur and disdain displayed by the Mewar rulers towards Man Singh.

Amidst violence and carnage, territorial aggrandisement and imperial dreams, another force was at work within Akbar which was manifested at Bhera, a hunting ground by the banks of the Sutlej in 1577. He changed in a few days from a hedonist ruler to a pilgrim in search of eternal verities. Leaving Bhera, where he donated generously to the poor, Akbar returned to

Fatehpur Sikri where he summoned Shaikhs and Sayed, ulemas and avirs to show him the oath of truth. Dissatisfied with their doctrines he summoned other religious leaders to enlighten him. He prepared himself to know the essential tenets of Hindusim, Jainism, Christianity, Zorasturism and asked to cull out relevant messages for his subjects. Unlike Ashoka the other great emperor of India, Akbar was not in quest of truth as part of self enlightenment. Rather he sought to evolve a religious synthesis that would weld his disparate subjects into one cohesive unit. He realized that religions kept men apart and ascribed the priestly class with this divisive role. If priests were terminated as intermediaries between man and his creator, Akbar thought, the root of strife would be removed. Why not embody in himself the dual role of both temporal and spiritual leader of the realm? With this purpose in view, Akbar gave the first of his theological sermons from the main mosque of Fatehpur. By this, he increased the antagonism of orthodox Islam. He then invited the Christian missionaries from Goa, to delve into their creed for a timeless truth and entrusted the education of his heir to a Jesuit so that the future Emperor of India might learn to respect all religions. But just as the ulemas disenchanted him, so too did the Jesuits whose purpose, it was soon apparent, was not to enlighten Akbar but to convert him to Christianity.

Akbar next turned to Zarathushtra

for illumination. A Parsi priest Dastur Meharji Rana from Gujarat initiated Akbar into the rituals of fire worship and "a perpetual flame" was supervised by Abul Fazl.

It was, however, the riddle of existence, the mysteries of life and death that fascinated Akbar and to delve into these he turned to the Vedas and Upanishads. Two Brahmin priests initiated him into Hindu philosophy. Along with theoretical explorations came the adoption of Hindu forms such as the wearing of sacred thread and the tilak on the forehead. When his mother, Hamida Begum died, Akbar shaved his head and performed Yajya ceremonies for the departed soul.

Intellectual tolerance was followed by practical measures. Akbar abolished the iniquitous jizya tax on Hindus and the coercive conversion to Islam of prisoners of war. He was equally stern with Hindu malpractices; forced sati was abolished. He once rescued a Rajput rani from jauhar and brought her to his court.

In 1582, Akbar called a council of learned men to seek their concurrence for establishing Tawheed-i-Ilahi, a monotheism which synthesised all religious ideas.

Monotheism was not new to India. Sankaracharya had preached Advaitavada more than six centuries earlier. This centralised creed, however, was dictated by political imperatives.

"For an empire ruled by one head it was a bad thing to have the members divided amongst themselves and at variance one with the other.

There is discord between the many kinds of religious laws observed in the Mughal territory, some being not only different in form, but hostile to others..... We ought therefore to bring them all into one but in such a fashion that they should be both one and all with the great advantage of not losing what is good in any one religion while gaining whatever is better in another. In that way, however, honour would be rendered to God, peace would be given to the peoples and security to the Emperor".

The Council approved this unique, unheard of till then, philosophic formula. However, neither, the fervent Muslims nor devout Hindus took the new religion seriously. Since Akbar detested religious coercion, he did not push his new religion onto reluctant souls. So Din-i-Ilahi remained limited only to a few thousand followers, of whom most were Muslims. The only notable Hindu was Raja Birbal.

Din-i-Ilahi has been called a 'glorious failure' because it failed to attract sufficient adherents which would entitle it to be called a recognized religion.

In the judgement of civilisation, fortunately, numbers do not signify. Akbar's attempt to unify his subjects under one creed places him as a unique ruler, not only in that age of religious intolerance and wars, but even in this professedly more tolerant period. Troubled by religious turmoil, Henry IV of France and Elizabeth I of England were not able to rise above doctrinal feuds nor

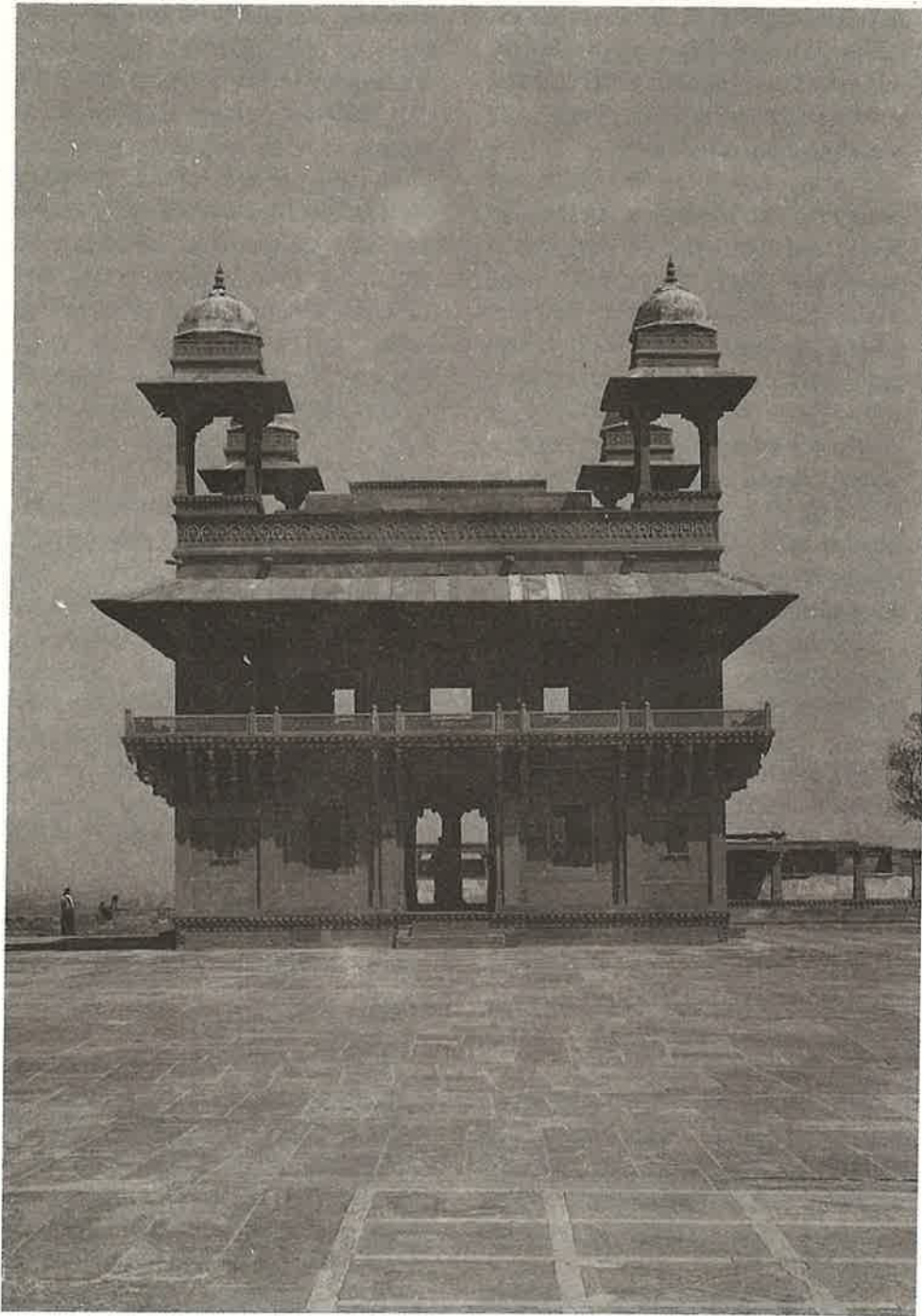


Fig. 1. Diwan -i-Khas

devise so ingenious a code for secular harmony. This intention of subordinating religious doctrine for the peace of the realm places Akbar as a visionary who was several centuries ahead of his time.

The symbol of his dream is Fatehpur Sikri.

Not far from Agra and the fabled Taj Mahal, on the periphery of the upper Vindhyan range stands the village of Sikri where Rajputs, Turks and Afghans inhabited it in turn and made it into a frontier station. Among these inhabitants was Shaikh Bahan-ud-din Chishti whose son Shaikh Salim Chishti brought renown to the garrison village in a singular manner.

While the Chishti family settled there, the Timurid dynasty which ruled from Delhi thought of no more than bestowing a garden or well on Sikri. It was Akbar, who linked his life and fortune with the Chishtis and made Sikri famous.

In 1562, Akbar began the policy of conciliation by his marriage to the Princess of Amber. The Rajputs had been the traditional foes of the Afghan and Mughal rulers. By bringing them into the imperial fold, Akbar hoped to win their loyalty and support. Hindu princesses had been married to Muslim rulers before but it was under compulsion and involved conversion. Emperor Akbar allowed the daughter of Raja Bhar Mal Kachwaha of Amber to practise her own religion.

Soon after, in 1565, the construction of Agra Fort began and men came to quarry the north

western escarpment of the Fatehpur ridge. There stone cutters came and settled around the hermitage of Shaikh Salim. Hearing of the Shaikh Salim's piety, Akbar visited the holy man in the winter of 1568, and asked him to bless him with sons. Though he had many wives, no son had survived.

Shaikh Salim assured Akbar that he would have three sons, and asked that one should be named after him. On 30th August 1569, the Princess of Amber bore the long awaited heir to the Emperor, then aged twenty seven. The son was named Salim, after the holy man. Later he became the Emperor Jahangir. The jubilant Akbar gave to this Rajput consort the title of Maryam-zamani (Mary of the Age) and lodged her in the specially built Rang Mahal on the ridge of Fatehpur Sikri. Other wives bore more sons - Murad and Daniyal. In gratitude to Shaikh Salim, Akbar ordered the construction of palaces, villas, pavilions, durbar halls and offices at Sikri in the summer of 1571.

Under the enthusiastic supervision and at times the personal participation of the Emperor, (who according to the traveller Monserrate, quarried stone alongside workmen) the work at Sikri proceeded swiftly, the red sandstone of which was easily cut and dressed. As the construction of the city neared completion in 1572, Akbar led his army to conquer Gujarat, and returning to Sikri renamed it Fatehpur (Fateh meaning Victory in Persian and 'pur' meaning town



Fig. 2. Fatehpur Sikri - Buland Darwaza

in Sanskrit).

The name itself reflected the theme of cultural synthesis which was dear to him, and Fatehpur Sikri was for twelve years the symbol of his policy that he conceived of. The reforms and policies which made Akbar's reign one of the greatest in India.

Like all fortified towns, Fatehpur was encircled by battlements, and impressive gateways which faced other cities - Delhi Darwaza, Agra Darwaza, Gwalior Darwaza and Ajmer Darwaza. Though Akbar's father fought Sher Shan, he emulated Sher Shah's design of Purana Qila.

Entering Fatehpur Sikri from the Agra Road, one passes the cloisters of an old caravanserai. From here one passes open fields and comes to a red sandstone pavilion known as Tansen's Baradari, where the great musician is said to have lived and practised his ragas.

The Naubat Khana is in a walled enclosure where musicians beat drums as the Emperor strode to the Diwan-i-Khas. The Diwan-i-Khas or Jewel House is celebrated now for the ornamental pillar which could be said to be a symbol of Akbar's reign. The slender pillar is like a stalk which blooms into three layers of a lotus blossom. The pillar is chiselled with designs representing different faiths. Nowhere in that age of bigotry could be found so eloquent yet graceful a symbol of religious synthesis. The pillar seems to say that all paths lead to one end, the awakening of consciousness and realization. Within this was the once beautiful Diwan Khana-i-Khas where

Akbar kept his books, listened to these being read, seated on a platform, covered with rugs and cushions. Here, he received emissaries and discussed politics and religion. The court is surrounded by an extensive collonade with gardens around it.

The great Emperor sat in the Daulat Khana, where he heard petitions and dispensed justice as compassionately as he could. Nevertheless an executioner as well as an elephant stood nearby if an evildoer had to be punished. Montserrat assures us that the Emperor seldom resorted to these extreme measures.

Humayun returned from his Persian exile with a train of Persian craftsmen and artists who brought to India a new style soon to synthesise with Indian schools. The fusion of these two traditions is best seen in Fatehpur Sikri where the sculpture and architecture was made to reflect the eclectic tastes of the Emperor. The grandeur of the Daulat Khana, the quiet grace of the Harman Sara (royal seraglio), the Palace of the Princes, are examples of the robust new style.

The citadel of Fatehpur Sikri extends over an area of almost ten kilometers. It is enclosed on three sides by high battlements supported by frequent bastions. Nine gates are placed at intervals: the Delhi Gate, the Ial Gate, the Agra Gate, the Surajpol, the Chandrapol, the Gwalior Gate, the Tehra Gate and the Ajmeri Gate.

The Agra Gate is the main

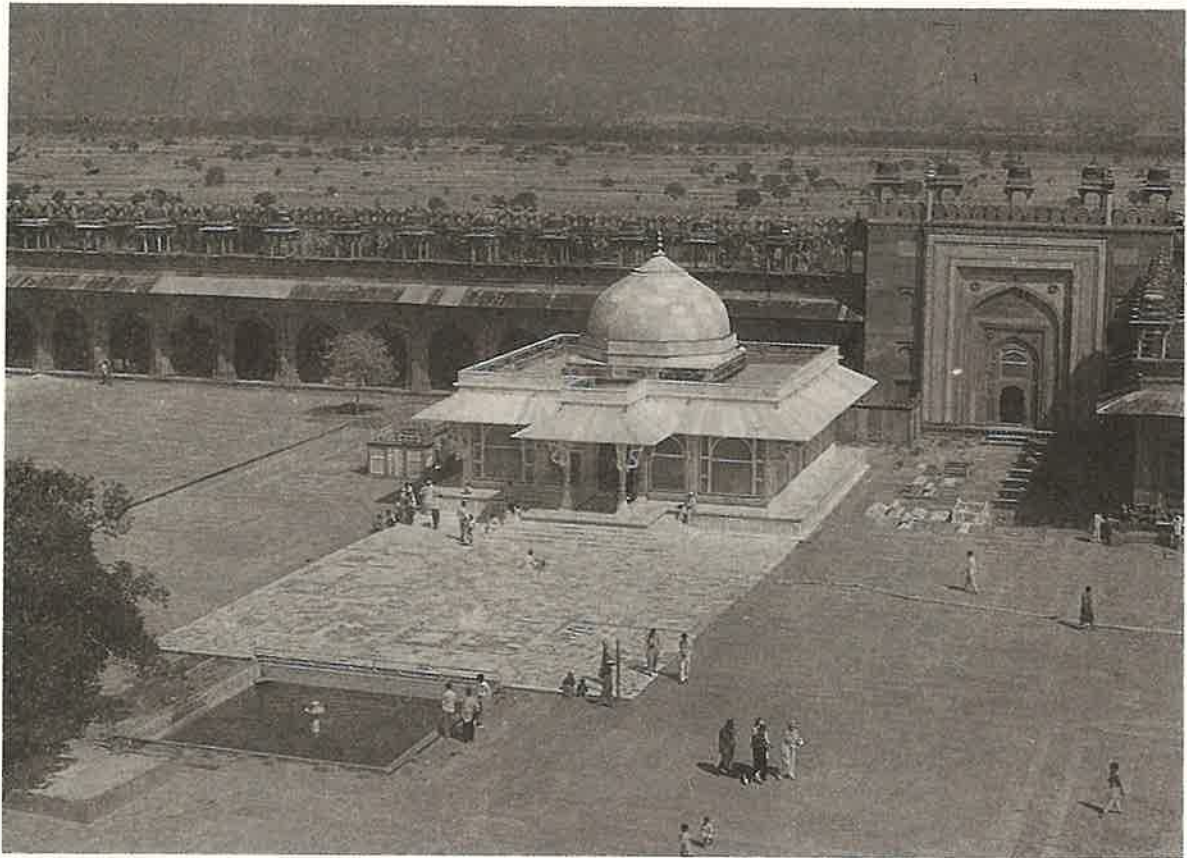


Fig. 3. Fatehpur Sikri

gateway. The road from this gate leads to the Diwan-i-Am of the main palace complex. The royal court, and residential palaces of the royal family are located on the top of the ridge. To the west of the royal enclosure is a religious complex commonly known as Jami mosque. Within this area is a simple sepulchre where Shaikh Salim Chishti is buried. The eastern gate of this complex is known as Badshahi Darawaza while the massive southern gate is the Buland Darwaza. The habitation on the ridge extended up to the Agra Gate. On the east as well as on the

west it reached up-to Chor Khirki - as may be seen by the existing structures, ruins and excavated remains. Houses of the nobility may still be seen on the ridge - particularly those of Abul Fazl and Faizi, the Hakim, the Baradari of Tansen.

The township is built of red sandstone. For masonry, the rubble form was used, while dressed slabs were used for veneering and roofing. Brick was also utilised for construction of domes.

The citadel of Fatehpur Sikri comprises a large number of buildings which are remarkably well



Fig. 4. Fatehpur Sikri - Panch Mahal

preserved after four centuries.

The Mint or Karkhana stands on the right side of the road leading to the Diwan-i-Am quadrangle. This is a quadrangular construction with a large central court. Since gold, silver and copper coins were found in this building it has been called the Mint.

Two bay deep colonnades with

stepped and sloped entrances and arched passages have been found within the central courtyard. Judging by the ornamental iron horse shoes found here, it is believed that the area may have been the site of the royal stables.

One of the principle buildings of the imperial harem was the Panch

Mahal, the palace of Akbar's chief consort, Jodha Bai. It is a stately building in Rajput style, with massive lintels, corbelled balconies, columns and capitals with Hindu motifs. This is the only occasion where an edifice constructed by a Muslim ruler was of Hindu inspiration. The Emperor was Mughal, his Empress Rajput. A synthesis of the two was to inspire the Empire.

The Hawa Mahal is another tribute to Hindu architecture, though similar edifices existed in Persia as well. A secluded garden belonging probably to the zanana is by this edifice. It is believed that this Rajput style villa was built for the princess of Jodhpur who married the future emperor Jahangir in 1585. The Rajput ladies gathered here to see their Mughal lord and Emperor perform homa.

The Diwan-i-Am is surrounded by a colonnade of the hundred and eleven bays broken at the west by the Emperor's platform, a cantilevered building with a concave roof. Akbar appeared before his subjects every morning and dispensed justice.

The Khwabgah Palace within the spacious royal enclosure contains Akbar's private apartment. The first room on the ground floor contains numerous shelves for keeping books, documents or valuables. Traces of paintings are still seen on the walls. Behind this, is a chamber which according to one theory was used by a Hindu priest attached to Akbar's court. Originally, the walls were entirely decorated with fresco paintings and gold lettered

Persian verse.

The Turkish Sultana's House is one of the beautiful edifices of Fatehpur Sikri and had been described as a "superb jewel casket". It contains a single apartment surrounded by a verandah. It is a richly embellished building with elaborate carvings on its brackets, friezes, pillars, pilasters and the dado panels, depicting trees, flowers, and birds by a screened pathway, traces of which are still seen.

Close by the Diwan-i-Khas on the west side stands the Treasury building which probably contained strong rooms for the safe custody of valuable and jewels.

At the corner of the Treasury building is a square platform covered by a domed canopy. Its ornamental torana arches are remarkable for their delicacy and fine execution, the design being derived from the medieval Jaina temples of western India. This was said to be the Astrologer's Seat.

Almost opposite to the Diwan-i-Am, is a five storeyed pavilion, called Panch Mahal. This is a pyramidal structure raised on columns and having flat roofs in each storey. Each successive storey diminishes in size and the top-most storey consists of a pavilion covered with a domed roof. The building is remarkable for the innovation as is shown in the varied designs of the columns.

Sunehara Makan is an elegant two storeyed structure embellished with paintings. It has four rooms, surmounted by an open pavilion. The

brackets of the verandah are adorned with sculptures. It seems to have derived its name from Akbar's mother Mariam Makani. The whole building was originally covered with fresco paintings and gilding and was hence called the Sunehara Makan or Golden House.

Jodhabai's Palace is a large edifice built in Rajput style, with a blend of Persian ornamentation. It consists of a large open courtyard with colonnaded verandah. The central block on the east forms the main entrance of the building and on the west is a small shrine supported on richly carved pillars.

Birbal's House is a two storeyed building, highly ornamented with carvings both inside and outside. The construction indicates Hindu architecture with Persian style decoration. This building is said to be the house of a notable courtier in Akbar's Court.

Veneered by white marble, with carved delicate plants is a veritable jewel casket, called the tomb of Sheikh Salim Chishti, who was in a way the creator of Fatehpur Sikri.

Though Fatehpur Sikri is unique as a synthesis of two cultures and creeds, another citadel-city far away in southern Spain invites comparison with Akbar's dream.

Legends have it that the Moors were evicted from the citadel palace of Alhambar because they made it more beautiful than Allah's paradise. Set against the snow capped Sierra Nevada, this citadel was the seat of the Nasirid emirs who ruled Granada for three centuries. 'Al-hambra'

means red in Arabic and denotes the colour of the battlements and walls that encircled a unique collection of palaces, courtyards, halls and gardens.

As the Spanish sovereigns of Castile, Leon and Aragon began the Reconquista to evict the Moorish Kingdoms which had been established in southern Spain from the 8th century by the 'Moors' or Arabs from North Africa. Seville fell, followed by Valencia and Cordoba. In the year 1491, as Ferdinand and Isabella prepared to send Columbus to India, only Granada remained outside the purview of their joint crowns. In 1492 after a prolonged seige Granada was conquered. As Boabdil, the last Nasirid king rode out of the Alhambra, he stopped to sigh. That spot is still known as 'el ultimo suspiro del Moro' or the last sigh of the Moor.

The Christian Spaniards discovered the exquisite beauty that lay behind the grim russet walls with twenty-five watch towers. In the Court of Lion and Court of Myrtles are graceful and serene, reflecting statues and figures in the limpid pools of fountains. The Sala del Embajadores, or Hall of Ambassadors, the Hall of Three Sisters, reveal a skill in inlay works, stucco, delicate and ornate stone carvings that echoes Islamic traditions in India and Western Asia.

Coming originally from desert lands, the Moors were as obsessed by water as the Moghuls. The halls of bath were as splendid as the throne rooms in the Alhambra. The fountains and water canals, gardens

and pavillions were part of this thirst. The surging, snow fed river Daro slaked the needs of the Grenadines for gardens.

Since Islam prohibited likeness of man most of the designs were arabesques and geometrical patterns brought to a delicacy of colour and form which may also be seen in the works of Agra and Fatehpur Sikri.

The beauty and stateliness of the Alhambra is unique but there are echoes of the Grenadine citadel in that of Fatehpur Sikri. The Timurid Moghuls and Nasirid Moors built the citadel for defence but once their security was ensured, they delved within to create a paradise of stone.

Taj Mahal

Rarely has the ideal of immortal love been carved in stone. Rarely have monarchs, in search of new kingdoms and glory and erecting arches and towers, left a memorial to their love. Shah Jehan, Emperor of India, husband to several wives, possessor of a vast and varied harem, built the Taj Mahal over the tomb of his favourite wife, Mumtaz Mahal, and ironically, this mausoleum became his claim to immortality.

Perhaps something in Mumtaz Mahal inspired this exquisite mausoleum. She was merciful in an age of cruelty. Many, under orders of execution, were reprieved through her intercession. While her aunt, Empress Noorjahan, ruled over an Emperor and his domain, this gentle Empress followed her husband in camp and died exhausted after bearing fourteen children in nineteen years.

Shah Jahan was at Burhanput, conducting a battle when Mumtaz died in child birth at Burhanpur, at the age of thirty-eight. She was given a temporary burial there and after six months, her body was brought to Agra, where a site was located on the bank of the river Jamuna near the

mansion of Raja Man Singh. Shah Jahan purchased this piece of land from the Rajput King and gave him an alternate site. A small enclosure was built over the grave surrounded by gardens.

Lost in grief, court chroniclers report, the Emperor gave up the luxuries of royal life, and oscillated between thoughts of renouncing the throne and pursuing grandeur. Perhaps the Taj Mahal was the sublimation of his grief, or perhaps it was the culmination of the Moghul love of building.

"The Moghuls built like Titans and finished as jewellers." This is amply demonstrated by the early Moghul buildings of Akbar's time to those of Shah Jahan. Agra Fort begun by Akbar bears the stamps of a strong, practical personality, of a citadel designed to withstand sieges and repulse attacks of Rajput and pathan foes not yet reconciled to the Timurid dynasty's occupation of the throne of Hindustan. Jahangir succeeded to a throne thoroughly secure from external threats. His style was less formidable, more aesthetic, but not yet with the almost feminine grace that Shah Jahan imparted to his creations in the Agra

Fort. The Taj Mahal was of course the pinnacle of this jewelled finish in architecture. Such a costly piece of construction was only possible in a realm renowned across the seas for its wealth.

The work began shortly after Mumtaz's death in 1631. Masons and craftsmen, architects and engineers, were summoned from various parts of India to participate in this architectural enterprise. Men came too from Iran and Central Asia, and some say, even from Italy, such as Geronimo Veronio. But it was entirely Indian in conception and execution.

The edifice was built mainly with bricks, red sandstone and marble. In the main mausoleum, the brick work is thinly veneered with a superior quality of marble while in the remaining building, the veneering was done with red sandstone. The marble was quarried from Makrana in Rajasthan, while the red sandstone used for the exquisite inlay work, semi-precious and precious stones were imported from different parts of the world; jade and crystal from China, turquoise from Tibet, amethyst and sapphires from Ceylon, coral from south India, cornelian and onyx from Rome, lapis lazuli from Persia, jasper from Punjab and diamonds from the panna mines of central India.

This great architectural enterprise took seventeen years to execute and fifty lakhs of rupees to build.

The beautiful inscriptions carved on the mausoleum in Thulth script were done by Abdul -Haq-Shirazi,

entitled Amanat Khan. The inscription in Naskh script on the sarcophagus of Mumtaz Mahal is reported to have been designed by a poet-calligrapher Khwaja Ghiasuddin.

Seldom has a sepulchre pulsed with such life and warmth. Shah Jahan ensured the vernal memory of his wife by giving the structure an ethereal, almost bridal appearance. Even the gardens are located differently from other tombs which were placed in the centre of a charbagh. Taj Mahal is located to the side of the gardens. It is a masterpiece of architectural style, in conception, treatment and execution. Here, the tomb architecture reached its climax. The conception as usual takes the form of a garden tomb. The layout of the garden is in traditional Charbagh pattern (having four quadrangles) but the position of the tomb is not in the centre but it is situated at the extreme end unlike the other Islamic tombs. This gave a more natural setting to the Taj Mahal, and the vista of spacious gardens.

Shan Jahan, the engineer, saw to the hydraulic system for the fountains which sprinkled water on the lawns, and ensured the durability of the edifice by laying a foundation of rubble masonry well above the river level.

The entrance to the Taj Mahal overlooks a large quadrangle surrounded by arcades. This is now usually called a forecourt, but it was then a caravanserai where travellers halted. This court has three entrance gates on the east, west and

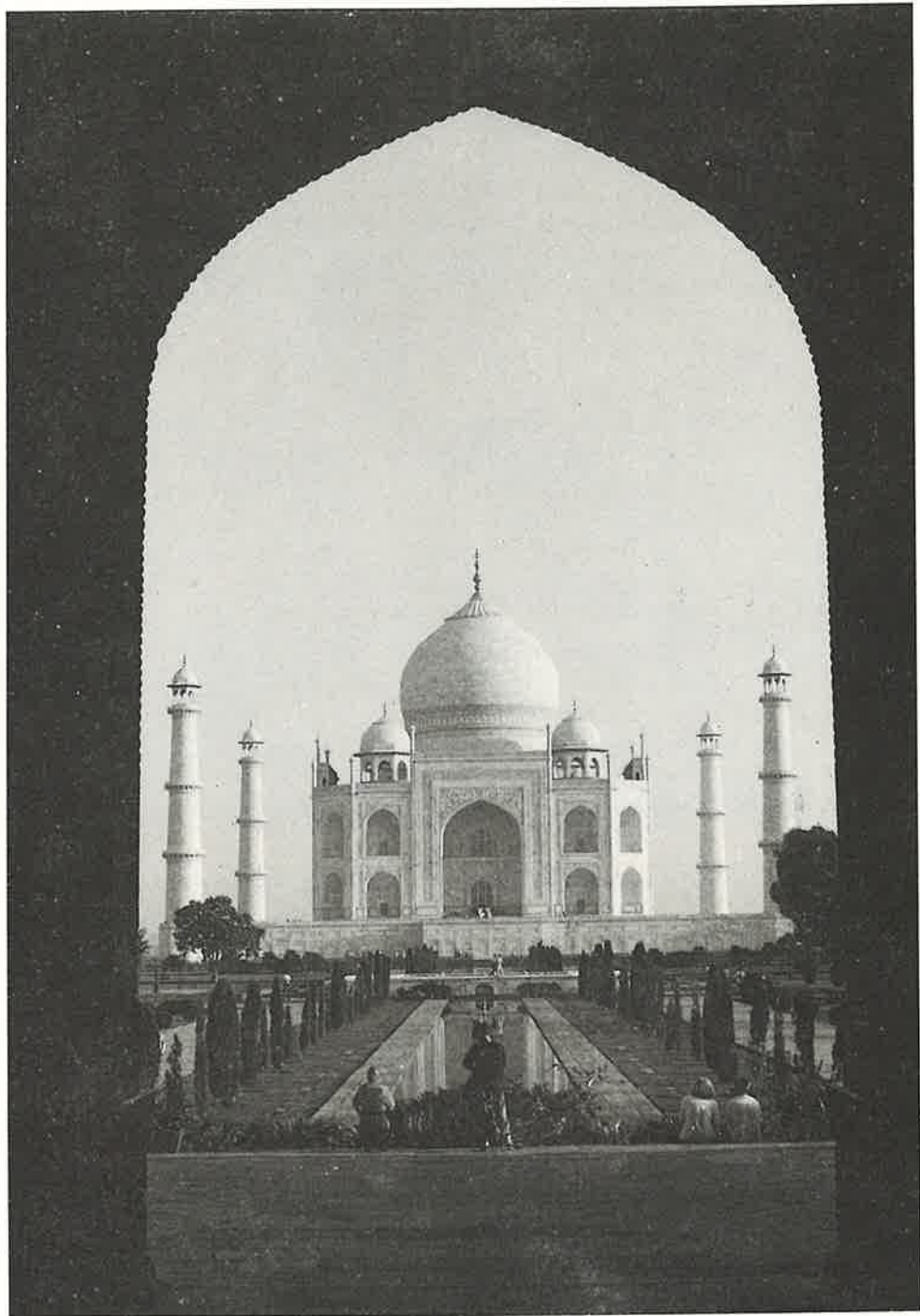


Fig. 1. Agra - Taj Mahal, the majestic entrance of the main complex

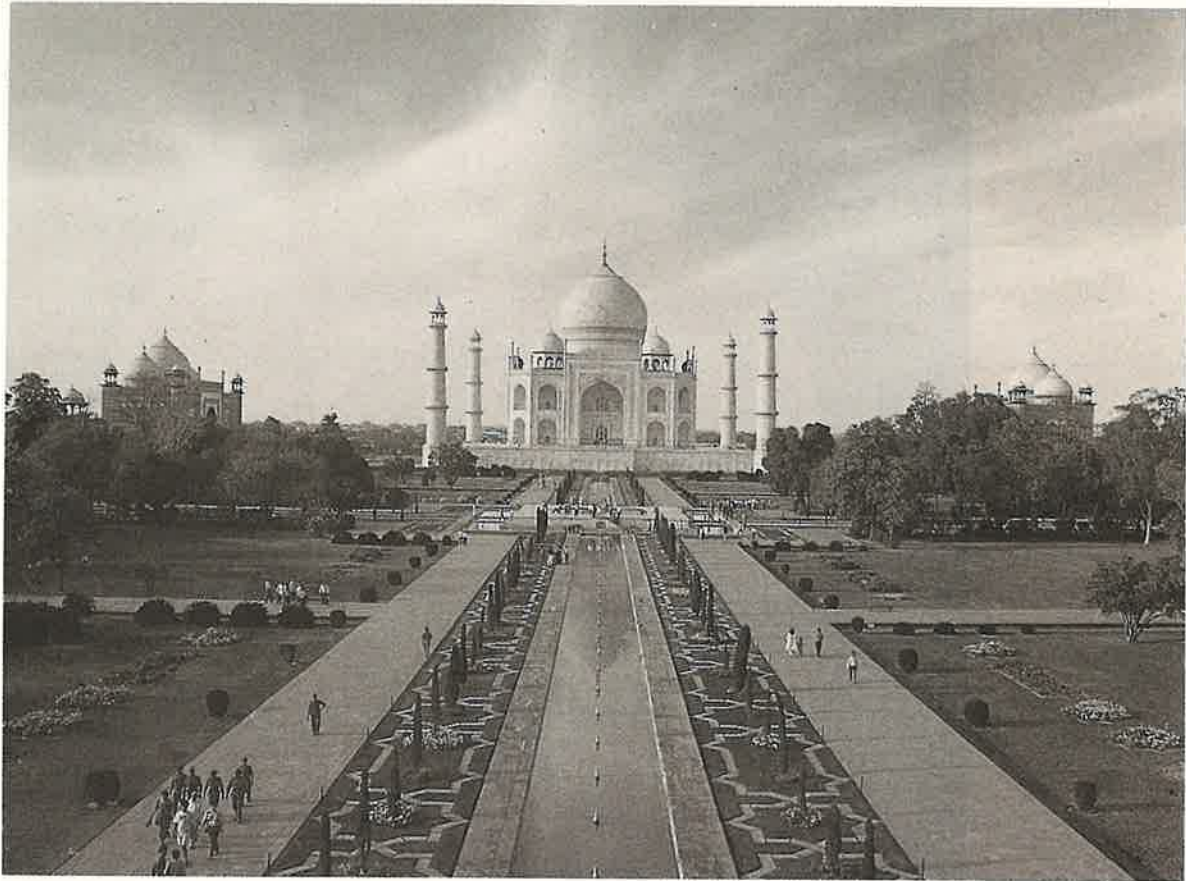


Fig. 2. Agra - Taj Mahal - flanked by two buildings of similar design

south; the southern gate is called Siddi Darwaza.

The majestic entrance of the main complex built in red sandstone overlooking the forecourt in front and the beautiful charbagh pattern garden at the back, is impressive by itself. The facade has a vaulted arched recess set within a rectangular frame, with similar but smaller alcoves in two storeys on each side and an octagonal turret surmounted by a domed pavilion at each corner. The red sandstone surface is inlaid with white marble and semi-precious

stones. Inscriptions in black marble give it a touch of the sombre, a reminder of its status as a mausoleum.

The Taj Mahal itself is situated at one end of the garden and is flanked by two buildings in red stone (on either side) of similar design. One is a mosque on the west side and a mehmankhana on the east. They do not obtrude on the Taj Mahal but offer instead a strong contrast to the central edifice which is set on a high marble platform like many temples, and with four slender

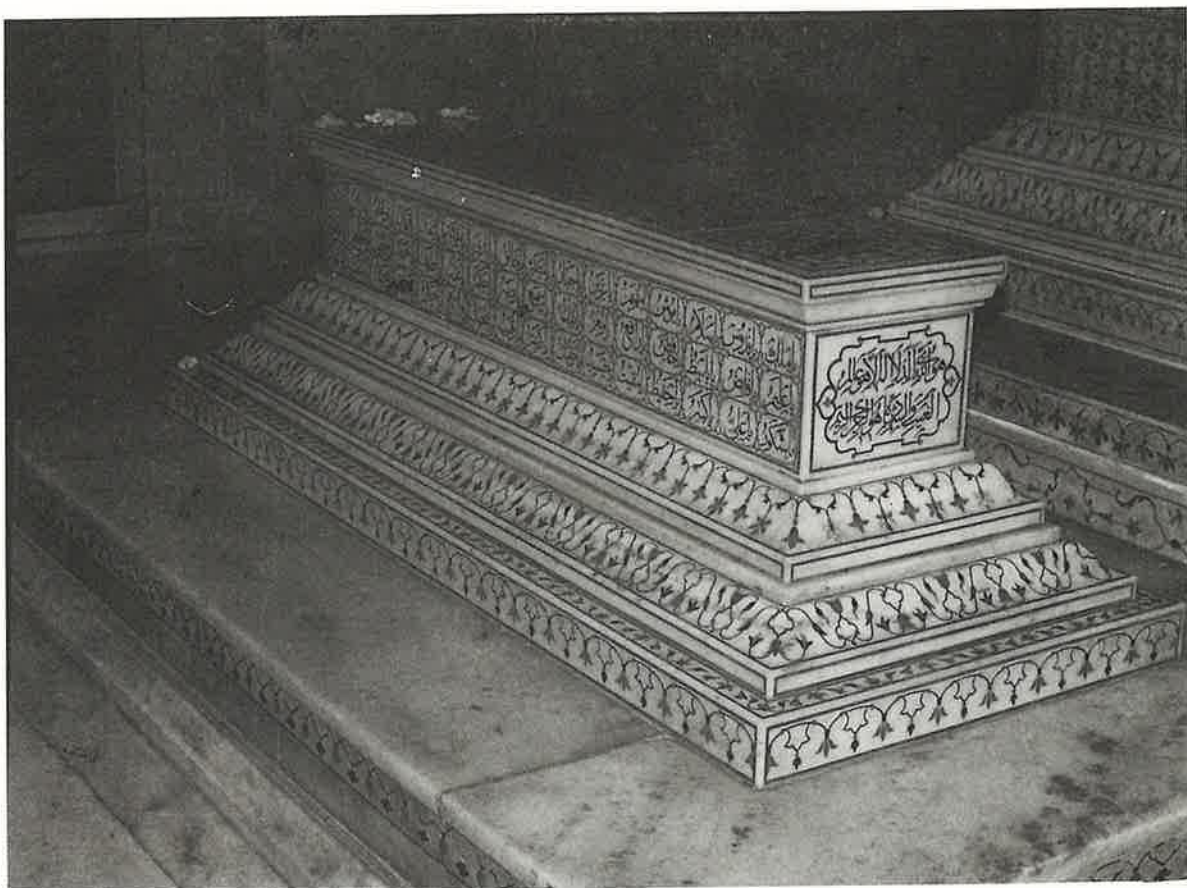


Fig. 3. Agra - Taj Mahal, sarcophagus

marble minarets standing like silent sentinels by its side, with small domes that echo the central cupola. Below the cupola are two smaller ones, flanked again by thin pillars. The marble facade comprises of four arches on each side of the central arch. This gives the building an air of lightness, almost of a marble honeycomb, poised on a marble platter. The intricate ornamentation of the recessed arches brings a diversion to the blanched stateliness.

The central hall is octagonal shaped where the sarcophagus

reposes, encircled by exquisite marble screens that resemble lace. This hall is surmounted by a vaulted ceiling upon which reposes the famed bulbous dome placed on the centre of a high drum. The kiosks with hemispherical domes on four sides remain unobtrusively in the background.

In its totality, the Taj Mahal is a building of unsurpassed grace and paradoxes. Large yet seeming to be ethereal, fretted with inscriptions, wreathes and arabesques, it seems to be chaste and unadorned, embellished with a riot of colours

that emerge from jasper, cornelian, amethyst, agate and lapis, it seems to be echoing with the purity of marble. Standing solid, it is seen as "its gracious outline partly mirrored in the still water of wide canal, a fairy vision of silverwhite like the spirit of purity seems to rest so lightly, so tenderly on the earth, as if in a moment it would soar into the sky". (E. Smith)

Below, in the crypt where the imperial lovers lie united in the hereafter as in life, we see the sepulchre. "No words can describe the chastened beauty of the central chamber seen in the soft gloom of the subdued light which reaches it through the distant and half closed openings that surround it."

Soon after the completion of the Taj Mahal, the alarm sounded in Shah Jahan's realm, as his sons made bid for the imperial throne. Shah Jahan's heir and favourite son was Dara Shikoh, who as Emperor might have become the greatest of the Moghuls for he was a philosopher and soldier, merciful and eclectic, with a vision that matched Akbar's. But Aurangzeb, the third son, following in his father's footsteps, destroyed his brothers, imprisoned his father and installed himself on the throne of India after "wading through a sea of blood".

Sitting on the pavilion of his prison in Agra fort, which Shah Jahan had completed, continuing the work of his father and grandfather, he gazed across the river to the tomb of his consort. The Taj Mahal has survived gory dynastic battles and

upheavals to remain one of the greatest treasures of mankind.

The urge to build mausoleums is as old as mankind's existence. And they vary from the ancient pyramids of Egypt to the 17th century Taj Mahal. As art is an attempt to defy morality and time, so mausoleums are built to travel beyond this time dimension into another.

Some 80 pyramids line the west bank of the river Nile, and the oldest are on the 21 mile stretch from Giza to Dahur. The most dramatic one is the pyramid of Pharaoh Khafre at Giza before which sits the giant and enigmatic statue of the Sphinx - 'half beast, half god, but never a man'.

Legends are legion of the pyramids; of the thousands of slaves who toiled and died in the effort to build the resting places of their Pharaohs. Many are the tales of the treasures that lie within these ancient tombs, as well as the wives and attendants who were forced to accompany these monarchs in their journey to the hereafter. These accounts drew tomb-robbers over the last 5000 years to plunder the treasures and unravel the secrets of the tombs. What remains a wonder and mystery is how engineers and slaves managed to build these huge structures with an accurate knowledge of construction, proportion, stability, and alignments with the sun, indicating knowledge of geometry and astronomy.

The massive enigmatic mausoleums of Giza and Memphis have little in common in structure or aesthetics with exquisite edifices such

as the Taj Mahal. They do however reflect a common desire of man to ensure a fitting resting place in the hereafter.

Agra Fort

Agra is a place crowded with events, and wrapped in legends. Situated in Doab the land between two rivers - Ganga and Yamuna, this area is in Brajabhumi, where the life and legends around Lord Krishna were enacted. Kamsa, the Raja of Mathura is said to have built a fort as well, where prisoners of state were kept. Agra, not far from Mathura and Delhi may have witnessed the events described in the Mahabharata. The rumours of fratricidal wars, between the Kauravas and Pandavas drew many princes to become partisans in the great battle of Kurukshetra.

Agra itself does not figure in the Epic. The name may have been changed in later epochs. Agra could be a derivative from the word 'age' or 'forward' in Sanskrit. Agra is also identified with 'Aggrames' mentioned by the Roman traveller Quintus Curtius. Temples and monasteries, stupas and sculptures of Hindu and Buddhist origin have also been found. The powerful kingdom of Mathura must have spread its dominion over this area as well, both in the epic period and in the classical age. Kanishka, the Kushan who became a Buddhist may have built Buddhist structures here. Later on, it

was called Badalgarh by Rajput princes who built a fort as a gateway to Rajasthan.

The advent of Afghan invaders gave a new dimension to Agra as to its strategic importance. Mahmud of Ghazni attacked the Rajput fort but did not stay there. The Lodis returned to Agra and fortified the existing citadel, founded the town of Sikandra, and died in the fort. His son Ibrahim lost it to the new invaders of India the Turko-Moghuls under Babar.

After defeating Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat and occupying Delhi, Babar sent his son Humayun to occupy Agra and seal its treasury. It is here too that his battle with the Rajputs under Rana Sanga took place. but before that he took a vow to never touch wine if victory was his.

Established as Badshah of a vast and rich Hindusthan, Babar was nevertheless nostalgic about the flowers and streams of Ferghana. Indeed, the non-availability of musk melon caused this warrior to burst into tears. The tears were responsible for the gardens he decided to lay out near the fort, where water in channels came from the Jamuna. The garden Gulafshan was also called

Arambagh. Around this Babar built a new residence of apartments, audience halls and baths. His nobles followed suit and Agra became a city of streams and gardens. Babar died at his Agra palace in Arambagh near the gardens he so loved.

Twenty-four year old Humayun was crowned at Agra in December 1530. His accession did not give him peace; Sher Shah challenged his power and battles began once more, both between Humayun and Sher Shah as well as between Sher Shah's sons. Humayun was now a fugitive, moving from place to place, fleeing from the formidable forces of Sher Shah until victory came at the battle-fields where the wars of the Mahabharata were perhaps fought.

Agra became the Moghul capital in the reign of Akbar, who took up residence in the old citadel of Badalgarh. It is from Agra that Akbar governed his vast realm; hearing petitions, dispensing justice, planning campaigns and propounding new religions. Though Fatehpur Sikri is more connected with him, it is Agra which he made the imperial capital and where he died. He had already indicated that his last resting place be at Sikandra. The sturdy red mausoleum was built in harmony with Akbar's personality.

Jahangir established himself in the citadel designed and begun by his father. John Hawkins, an emissary from James I of England, describes the Emperor's rituals of giving audiences and dining with the ladies of his harem. State business was conducted in the evening at his

private apartments. A more vivid description of the court of Jahangir has been left by James I's ambassador, Sir Thomas Roe. Jahangir's second consort Nur Jahan, who ruled both the Emperor and his empire, brought her aesthetic taste, especially to the Samman Burj, the Jahangiri Mahal, and the mausoleum of Itimad-ud-Daulah.

Jahangiri's death ushered in a series of fratricidal intrigues for which the Moghuls were now famous. After disposing of the eldest brother and the nephew who was the rightful ruler, Shah Jahan made himself Emperor of India. The Agra fort was expanded during his time bearing the grace and elegance for which his buildings were renowned.

It is here too among the places he had built that he passed the melancholy days of his incarceration.

The citadel continued to be the Moghul palace but never regained the vibrancy it had in the reign of the three great Moghuls. The fort is three kilometers in circuit and is surrounded by a double wall of red sandstone, with flanking defences, towers, turrets and crenellated battlements. Crossing the moat one enters the inner area of the fort through the Delhi Gate, a massive structure of red sandstone ornamented with white marble. These made it an impregnable citadel. The Hathi Pol is thus called because of the presence of two stone elephants mounted by the two figures of Jayamal and Patta who defended Chittorgarh so heroically when Akbar besieged that fort. In memory

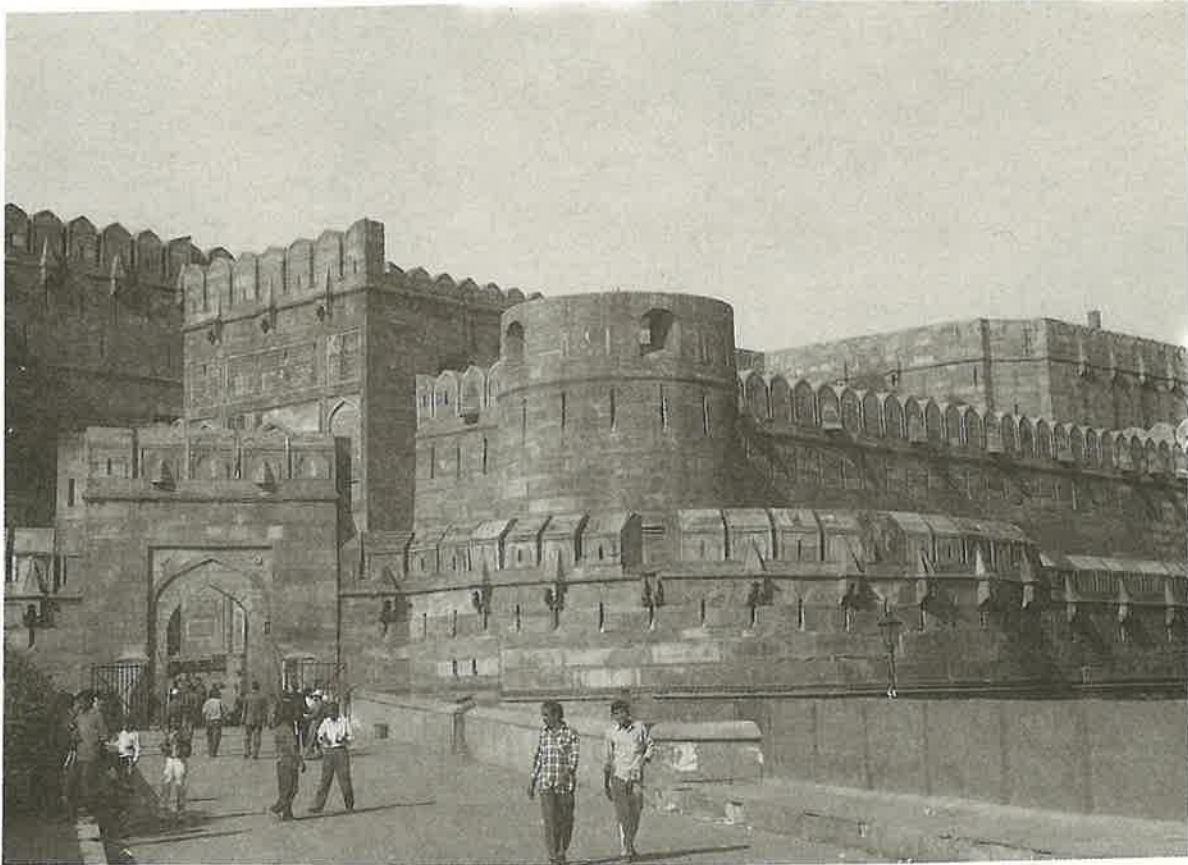


Fig. 1. Agra - Fort

of the noble warriors the Emperor immortalised them in stone.

The Akbari Darwaza is also known as the Amar Singh gate named after a prince of Mewar who had tried to kill a courtier. He was himself killed as he tried to flee through this gate. A wooden draw bridge is attached to it and there is a stone - paved road with sharp curves. While the main purpose was defence, it was also ornamented with glazed tiles tessellated work in white marble and with fresco painting and bas relief.

Akbar's Palace is situated at the

south-eastern corner of the Agra Fort between the Bangali Burj to the south and the Jahangiri Mahal to the north, overlooking the river from the residual portions. It may be seen that it once consisted of a spacious courtyard surrounded by large rooms. The palace was built in red sandstone. The Bangali Burj formed a part of the palace. Its construction is of the trabeate order, but occasionally a four-centred arch is used as an embellishment. In spanning a square of rectangular rooms the local tradition has been adopted, by which diagonal beams

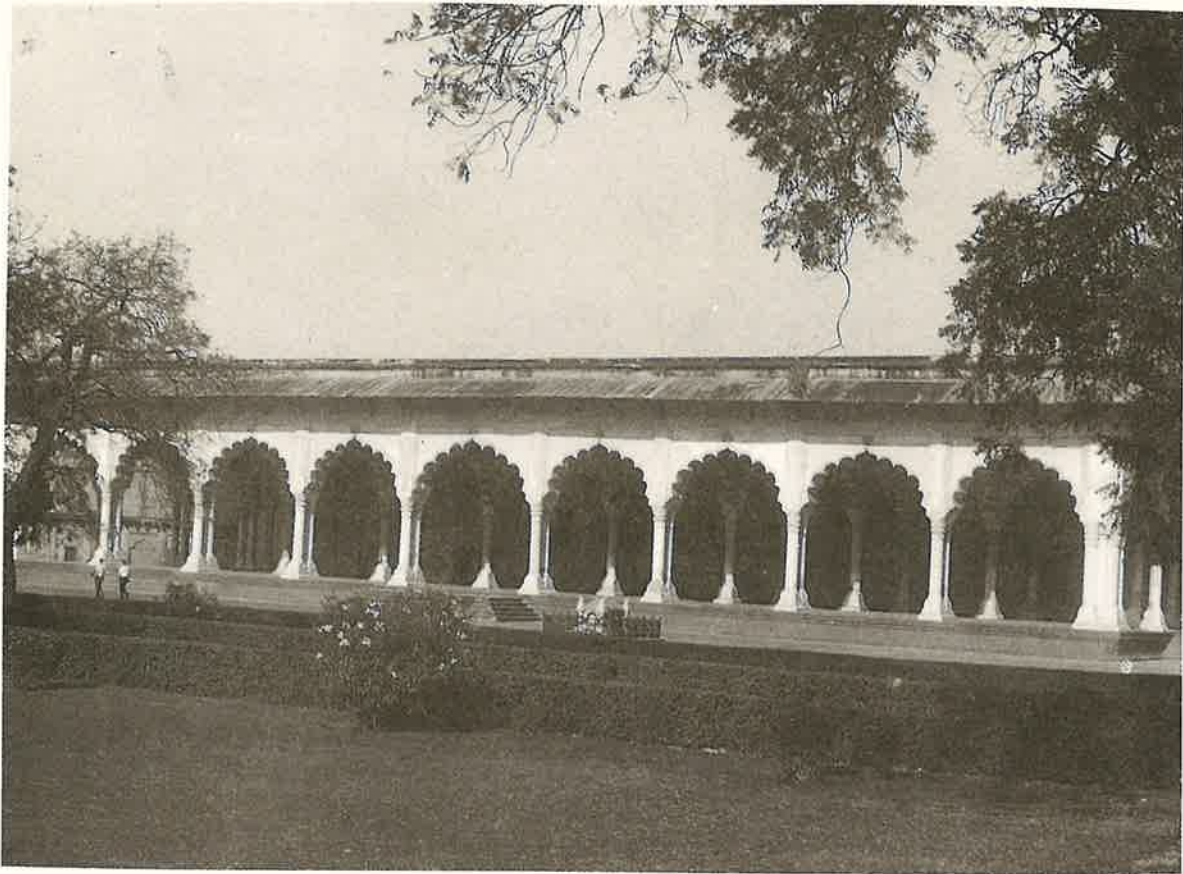


Fig. 2. Agra - Diwan -i- Khas

are placed at the angles of the square. This has been connected into an octagon which in turn is made into a square again by placement of cross beams. The simplicity of wall surfaces is relieved by the string-courses, carving work and by double brackets and eaveboards.

The Jahangiri Mahal, situated on the south-east corner of the Agra Fort overlooks the Jamuna and the surrounding moat. It is adjacent to the Akbar Mahal in the north. It is a double storeyed structure consisting of two courts, two vestibules and four wings varying in construction

and design. Houses for retainers are on the south wall which are elaborately embellished with fine intaglio stucco reliefs. The central court facing the north has a hall intricately carved in floral and geometrical designs including Hindu motifs such as lotus, chakra, and pendant bells. The flat roof is supported by four pairs of struts decorated with heads of elephants. On the south side of the central court there is a drawing-room covered by a vaulted ceiling.

The Jahangiri Mahal is characteristic of the Akbari style of Mughal



Fig. 3. Agra Fort - Amar Singh Gate

architecture. Reflecting his policy of state, the design of his buildings is a fusion of the Hindu and Islamic style in architecture. Fresco paintings in gold and silver and intaglio incised work encrusted with stucco reliefs adorn the inner surface of the walls in which the Hindu-Islamic styles prevail. On the west side, the inner court faces a hall which has in its walls oblong niches with ornamented borders.

Khas Mahal or the Aramgah or Private Hall is situated to the east of the Anguri Bagh adjoining the eastern boundary wall of the Agra

Fort, overlooking the Jamuna and moat. In the north is the Samman Nurj and the Shish Mahal while to the south is the Shah Jahani Mahal. Shah Jahan erected the Khas Mahal (Aramgah-i-Muqaddas) which comprises a portico and private audience hall, flanked by pavilions on both sides. These are in white marble. The roof of the hall is mounted on arches rising from the piers and abutments. The walls are decorated both with dado painted panels, and carved recessed panels.

Near the Khas Mahal is a pavilion made of white marble with curved



Fig. 4. Agra, Fort - Mussaman Burj



Fig. 5. Mussaman Burj

cornices. The roof and curved sides are covered with gilt copper sheets. This was the residence of Jahanara Begum, the eldest daughter of Shah Jahan.

The south pavilion, built of red sandstone and veneered by marble stucco was known as *Bangale-i-Darshan-i-Mubak* from where the Emperor Shah Jahan showed himself to his subjects every day.

The *Anguri Bagh* is a rectangular court in front of the *Khas Mahal*. On the other three sides it is surrounded by two storeyed red sandstone

buildings which consist of a series of rooms. Shah Jahan attached a grape garden to the *Khas Mahal*. On the eastern side of the quadrangle there is a small marble tank. It is believed that earth was brought from Kashmir in order to facilitate raising of grapes. This garden is typical of house gardens of Moghul medieval India.

The *Mussaman Burj*, an octagonal tower, was built by Shah Jahan for his wife, *Mumtaz Mahal*. The site was occupied by an octagonal red sandstone edifice constructed by

Akbar which was subsequently demolished by Shah Jahan to enable him to build his own design. The Burj is made of marble and with two storeys.

The ground floor consists of a court paved with marble octagons in the style of draught boards. The hall of the Samman Burj has a shallow cistern with a fountain which is finely carved inlaid with precious stones. It was here that the imprisoned Shah Jahan died. The pillars are made of marble while the walls are of lakhauri bricks veneered by white marble and decorated by carving and inlay work.

The Diwan-i-Khas was the private audience hall of the Emperor. Thomas Roe, the accredited representative of England had some of his meetings with Emperor Jahangir at this place. Many foreign emissaries have recorded the delicate splendour of this hall.

Mina Masjid stands to the south west corner of the Diwan-i-Khas. It is built of plain white marble and is austere in style. Its court is paved with alternate squares of marble and jasper. It is believed that the mosque was built for nocturnal prayers.

The Nagina Masjid echoes the design of the more imposing Moti Masjid and may have been built by Aurangzeb, emulating the older one.

The Diwan-i-Am is situated within a great quadrangle and is encompassed by the imposing walls of the Akbari gate on the south. It is surrounded on three sides by arcaded cloisters. There is a large hall and a throne room. The hall is also locally

known as Chahal Satun. The hall opens on three sides. The hall is covered by a flat roof supported by forty pillars. The roof and pillars are made of red sandstone, plastered with white marble. The Moti Masjid is situated on a high ground sloping from west to east on the north side of the road passing through the Mina Bazar to Khizri Gate just in front of the north gateway of Diwan-i-am's enclosure. This Masjid stands on an elevated platform of red sandstone while its interior is entirely comprised of white marble.

Moti Masjid, as the name implies is made of white marble and has the luminous delicacy of pearl. Echoes of the Taj Mahal are already heard here in the graceful proportions and in the harmony of construction of cupola and minarets. This was where the deposed Emperor meditated when permitted although he had built it as his private place of worship.

If Agra fort with its beautiful, stately edifices is the culmination of Moghul glory, the chateau of Chambord built by King Francis I is the fruition of the French renaissance. The cluster of gabled windows, towers and turrets have the appearance of a gothic fairy tale castle, in contrast to the classical simplicity of the walls in pale grey stone.

Chambord was a city in itself, half citadel and half palace. It is built on an enormous square block with massive circular towers on each corner. Though fortified, the castle was more of a royal residence than a defence edifice. The pinnacles and

turrets, windows and balustrades are wrought in stone, embellished and sculpted by artists gathered from several countries over which the French prevailed. After the French overran Italy in the early 16th century, both Louis XII and Francis I brought with them artists and craftsmen from Italy, notably a versatile man like Leonardo da Vinci who probably designed the dual marble staircases and arches at the centre of the keep.

The castle was built on the Loire, as the citadel of Agra was built on the banks of the Jamuna. This facilitated every day use of water, travel on boats along the Loire valley where the French monarchy and nobility built numerous mini castles and pleasure houses.

While the fort of Agra has a solemn majesty attuned to Moghul power and royal despotism, the chateau of Chambord reflects the aesthetic, flamboyant hedonistic personality of Francis I whose patronage of artists and craftsmen such as da Vinci, Benvenuto Cellini ushered in the French renaissance. Chambord was the scene of pleasure - of dances, soirees, hunt parties, romantic intrigues as well as political ones. Here Francis, and after him Henri II with his famous mistress Diane de Poitiers and Queen Catherine de Medici, played on the chessboard of European politics. Today it remains as a testament to the wealth and versatile genius of the French renaissance kings.

Another imperial citadel, resembling Agra Fort in many ways,

is to be found in the Kremlin of Moscow. Indeed, the word Kremlin means citadel in Russian.

The construction of the Kremlin began in the 14th century when the power of Kiev and Novgorod shifted gradually to Moscow. The young Russian state had to face the aggression of the Swedes from the west and the Tartars from the south east. Prince Alexander Nevsky had defeated the Swedes in 1240 and Prince Dmitry Donskoi routed the Tartars at Kulikovo in 1365. It became clear to the rulers that the capital had to be shifted to Moscow so the Rurikid dynasty left its original seats at Kiev, Vladimir and Novgorod.

At first the Kremlin was a crude wooden structure surrounded by a wall of spiked wood. Then a clay wall was constructed. In style and material the Kremlin resembled the fortified towns of medieval Russia Kiev, Vladimir, Novgorod, which were austere and simple, with the sole purpose of repulsing attacks of marauding tribes from the Steppes. Prince Vassily II consolidated the power of the Muscovite state. The Metropolitan of the Russian Orthodox church also transferred his See from Kiev to Moscow. The expansion and improvement of the Kremlin reflected the consolidation of the Muscovite state.

Vassily's son, Prince Ivan III, married a woman who was to change the flavour and temper of Muscovy. She was called Princess Imperial Zoe Paleologue, niece of the last Byzantine Emperor. Zoe had been a

ward of the Pope in Rome, after the fall of Constantinople in 1453. When she married Prince Ivan, it was with a furious ambition to revive something of the grandeur of the Byzantine Empire. Her first step was to change her husband's title to "Tsar" - or Caesar - to elevate his status and insisted that the nobles or Boyars genuflect before the Tsar. She introduced Byzantine customs and dress, and advocated the abolition of the seclusion of women which the Tartars had introduced into Russia.

A product of Graeco-Roman culture of the Renaissance, Zoe also brought to Muscovy, painters, sculptors and architects to beautify Moscow, and make it more like a European city. Wooden churches and palaces gave way to stone constructions. The most dramatic transformation was that of Kremlin into a palace-cum-fortress. Zoe had brought with her two architects from Italy-Fiorovanti and Solerio. These two men rebuilt the walls of the Kremlin with red bricks, brought classical proportions and designs to what had been a chaotic cluster of small rooms. The large halls, marble floors, fluted columns and wide staircases of the Russian citadel were inspired by the Italian Renaissance. The Russian touch was retained in the cupolas of St Basils' Church, and other towers that were once symbolic of Russian power.

After Tsar Ivan III and Tsarine Zoe, Ivan IV (or the Terrible) added apartments and ornamentations to the Kremlin. It is here that Ivan the

Terrible planned the strategy for "gathering of the Russian lands" or annexation of the remaining city states under the suzerainty of Moscovy. It is also here that he retired after the death of his wife Anastasya, and threw his heir Tsarevich Dimitry from the ramparts. The usurper Boris Godunov too set up his residence here during the Time of Troubles.

The Romanov dynasty which followed the Rurikids in 1613 gave the Kremlin the appearance and ornamentation of European palaces, with crystals, glass, silver, porcelain from France, Bohemia and Italy. Pockets of medieval Russia remained - like the Terem or Zanana but most of it had the opulence of a Versailles and sombre Romanovs, and when the Winter Palace was attacked by the Bolsheviki, fugitive Romanovs took shelter within the Kremlin.

While Chambord and Agra Fort have become archaeological monuments after their royal occupants died, the imperial Kremlin remained the headquarters of the Soviet rulers of Russia. Indeed the Kremlin was synonymous with Communist power and the Kremlin and Red Square were the central focus for Soviet life.

The royal character of the citadel underwent a change, but not the purpose, because the Kremlin has remained, even now, the centre of governance. It is a rare example of a historical monument that is still in use, as awesome now with emanation of power as it was in the days of Tsarist absolutism.

Churches of Goa

Gomantak was an outpost of the Vijayanagar Empire when the Portuguese under Alfonso Albuquerque conquered this part of the western coast of India. Portugal, under the monarch Manoel el Sabio or Manoel the Wise, was at the height of power and prosperity. Bartolomeo Dias had circumnavigated the globe and had established a small colony at the southern tip of Africa naming it the Cabo de Bueno Esperanca or Cape of Good Hope after surviving storms at sea. The Portuguese conquistadores had carved an Empire in the New World of which Brazil was the centre. Goa was now their entry to the Far East, the entrepot for gold, spices and silk. Indeed Goa was el dorado, the golden.

Portugal shared with her Iberian sister, Spain, a century of discoveries, power and creativity. What darkened this effulgence was the Inquisition that had struck roots in the Iberian peninsula.

The proselytizing zeal of the Inquisition came in the Portuguese galleons where along with the conquistadores and merchants came sombre priests to convert 'the heathen'. At first the Catholic

Portuguese stayed their hand; their real enemy were not the Hindus but the Muslim kingdoms of India, 'the infidels' whom they had fought for seven centuries. Then, as more territories came under their sway and the colonies in India were recognised as the road to the eastern trade and colonies (Malacca and Macao), the Portuguese government instructed the conversion of Indians as a necessary corollary of colonial rule.

To a little nation that had been a part of Castilian Spain until the 11th century (when a grateful Alfonso VI bequeathed the province of Portugal to his able general Henry of Burgundy who married his illegitimate daughter Teresa) the power and prosperity achieved under Kings Joao and Manoel gave the Portuguese a zeal and certitude, and a belief that they alone knew the rightness of things. The Inquisition was a reflection of this attitude. So are the churches, built in the heyday of Portuguese glory when Goa was truly eldorado or golden.

To this policy we owe the existence of the beautiful old churches in Velha (or old) Goa; Bom Jesu, Se Cathedral, St Francis of Assisi, and the Convent attached to



Fig. 1. Goa - Se Cathedral church

Se Cathedral.

Se Primacial of Se Cathedral was begun as a small chapel built of mud and straw under the order of Alfonso Albuquerque after his conquest of Goa. Originally the chapel was dedicated to St Catherine on whose name day the victory was won. A more solid construction began shortly after. The period of the new construction saw the rise and fall of Portuguese power but the grandeur of the early spirit remained. The cathedral lies west of the great square called Terreiro de Sabaio with a facade facing east. The graceful

courtyard is reached by a flight of stairs, Despite its Portuguese origins the facade is inspired by the churches of Tuscany. There is a large portal and a huge tower which overlooks the city. This served as both belfry and watch tower when sudden attacks from Adil Shahi armies were not rare. The church has a vaulted ceiling and is in the shape of a cross with chapels on four sides. At the baptismal font of black marble, St. Francis Xavier baptised many converts. The principal chapel is large and ornamented with engraved pillars and pilasters. The images of



Fig. 2. Goa - St Francis of Assisi



Fig. 3. Goa - St Caitano's church



Fig. 4. Goa - Bom Jesus church

Nossa Senhora d'Esperanca (Our Lady of Hope) Christ Crucified and St Catherine stand in the centre with statues of St Peter and St Paul on other side. The gilded altars and retables which can be found in the churches of Lisbon and Burgos were transplanted in India but these could not withstand the onslaught of tropical monsoon and heat.

There is also an impressive choir extending from the foot of the altar to the high railing. Thrones for Archbishop and Governor indicated the intimate connection between

Church and State.

The Church of Bom Jesu was begun after the heyday of Portuguese stay but not the proselytizing zeal of the Iberian peninsula. The fact that Portugal then was under the inflexible Spanish rule of Philip-II explains why the church was built mainly for administering sacraments and for baptism of converts where, a contemporary traveller states, hundreds of Konkan people came to be baptised. It is said to be one of the stateliest churches to be raised in Asia; "vast and magnificent with



Fig. 5. Goa - Bom Jesu church, interior.

ornaments suited to its greatness." Its elaborately carved facade is part Doric and part Corinthian. Made of black granite it is almost as broad as it is high. The facade is divided into four parts. The interior is of Mosaico-Corinthian style galleries for the high ranking fidalgos, high windows, gilt walls, were painted and described by Tavernier. The ceiling is highly embellished.

The most notable characteristics of Bom Jesu Church are the sarcophagi of illustrious Portuguese who were connected with the religious life of Goa. One is of Dom Hieronimio Mascarenhas, Captain of Cochin and Ormuz, who financed the building of the church. The other is of St. Francis Xavier who brought militant Christianity to the east, travelling from the coast of India to that of China in the quest for converts. His sarcophagus remains an object of veneration even after four centuries.

The altar, high and broad, is dedicated to the figure of infant Jesus or Bom Jesu after whom the church is named. Infant Jesus has long been regarded as the maker of miracles. Sharing a slightly less important place of honour is St Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order and the moving spirit of the Counter-Reformation in Europe.

It is significant that these churches built by an alien colonial nation and glorifying an alien creed are cared for and preserved in India with as much veneration as a temple. Nowhere else is the tolerance and eclecticism of Hindus more amply demonstrated than the honour which

is accorded to churches and mosques, spread over a vast subcontinent.

The churches of Goa naturally have connections both in architecture, and sentiments with those of Mediterranean Europe, in the post Renaissance period. The soaring Gothic cathedrals of medieval Europe are not to be seen in the east because no European power of northern Europe came then to the Far East or Southeast Asia. But the Renaissance inspired churches of Italy, with their classical forms, their Romanesque facades and portals, their gilt retables and altars, their chapels on the side dedicated to various saints and martyrs, are to be found all over the Mediterranean lands. The grace of the Siena Cathedral or that of San Pietro in Vincoli or Santa Maria della Grazia or the churches at Oporto and Belem were built on a less lavish scale since many were the claims on the church and state. In Goa it was necessary to awe and inspire the Konkani population with the majesty and splendour of the new religion, to offer solace as well as privileges to the quest of souls for Christ. Thus we see them larger, sometimes more ornate, than their counterparts in Italy or Portugal, but in spirit it is the fusion of the classical world and that of Renaissance Europe, when the Hellenistic forms combined with the piety emanating from the church, planted in a soil that was new yet receptive, willing to be persuaded yet stubbornly Indian, simplicity warring with ornamentation. The spirit of an early colonial culture has been left in

a tranquil ambience for continued
and undisturbed piety.

Forts of India

Rajasthan

The forts of India act as milestones of Indian history reflecting in their structure and design the historical forces which shaped them. The earliest existing forts which have survived the onslaught of time and invasions are to be found in Rajasthan. These massive structures hewn out of the mountain ranges were sometimes cities in themselves, serving as store-houses of arsenal, a vantage point for fighting and a sanctuary for the populous. These formidable Rajasthan fortresses were built to withstand the fury of Turko-Afghan invasions which began from the 11th century and continued right upto the later Mughal period. Since Rajput chiefs and princes did not acquiesce and accept Turko-Afghan suzerainty emanating from Delhi or Agra, their political policy shaped their buildings as well.

However grim and massive the forts were, the local craftsmen and artisans who were not engaged in warfare beautified their private apartments as well as the public Durbar halls with mirror work, paintings, carvings, marble screens to soften the rigours and periodical combats. The sombre granite walls,

bastions and ramparts are in total contrast to the almost feminine grace and delicacy of the interiors. Local materials were invariably employed by carving, quarrying and by expanding to the stony landscape and colours were obtained from vegetables and minerals abounding in the countryside. Living amongst the unbroken grace-browned tombs of the desert the people of Rajasthan compensate the lack of colour in their natural surroundings by decorating their homes and cloths with prodigious use of bright vanity colours. So too in contrast were the pavilions and fountains found within courtyards where the cascading waters was a refreshing contrast to the arid landscape surrounding the building.

The forts of Chitorgarh, Mewar, Jaisalmer, Ranthambore, Nahargarh, Jodhpur and Gwalior are examples of the medieval Rajput forts of India.

West Coast

The forts of the western coast which began to take shape in the 15th century is once again a mirror of the history of these areas. The Zamorin of Calicut as the Raja of Cochin, Quilan, Cannanore, Vadhkan,

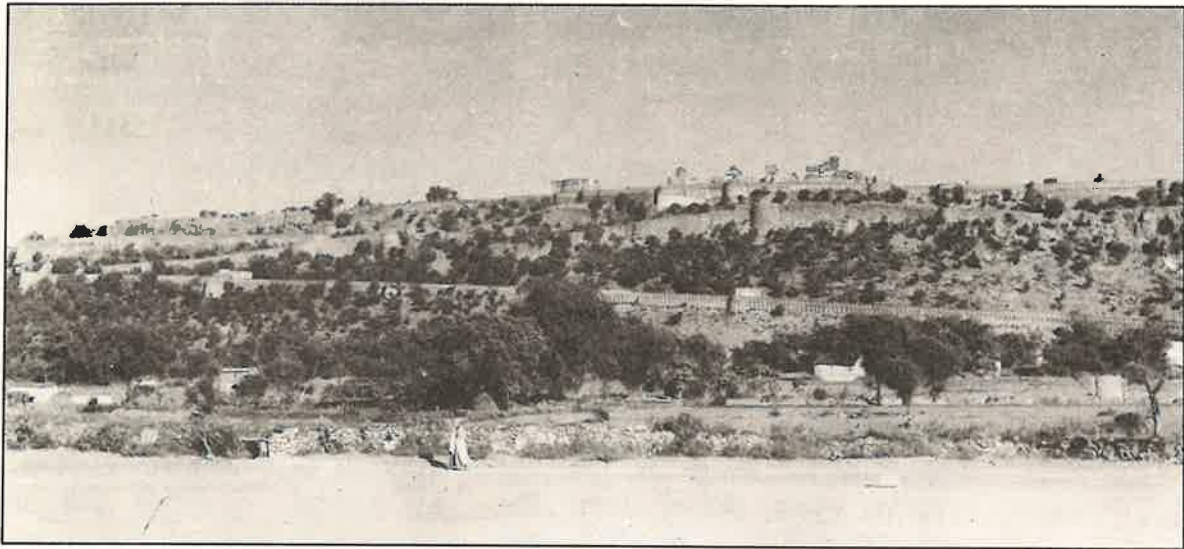


Fig. 1. Chitorgarh - general view of the Fort

Honnavar and Goa built forts as a safeguard for their own security and that of their principalities. Though the Arab traders, coming from Jerda and Cairo came in search of spices the local Rajas could not rule out the possibility of invasions. These forts were at first low in height and did not have the massive proportions of their Rajput counterparts who had to withstand the organised armies of Afghan generals. These small compact forts served as offices administration centres as well as arsenals for the local chiefs. The Vijayanagara fort at Vellore still has sculptures and ornamentation of the Vijayanagara period. The Kerala fort of Bekal on the other hand is set amidst picturesque surroundings along the coast.

The Portuguese aspirations grew with the development of the spice trade and the necessity to maintain strategic forts was recognised as the

earlier forts built by local chiefs expanded and were fortified against serious warfare.

The fort of Sant' Angelo at Cannanore built by the Portuguese overlooking the harbour and Bay of Cannanore is an example of the evolution of the forts of the West Coast.

Imperial Forts

The arrival of the trading companies from Europe opened a new chapter in Indian history and marked a watershed in Indian political and cultural life. These forts built by the East India Company of the British or the French East India Company or those of the Dutch or that of the Danish bear the imprint of more organised and systematic warfare which the traders and soldiers of these nations brought from Europe to India.

The first of these forts is the Fort



Fig. 2. Chitorgarh - Tower of Victory



Fig. 3. Gwalior - general view of the Gwalior Fort

Fig. 4. Golkonda Fort (AP) - general view showing the steps

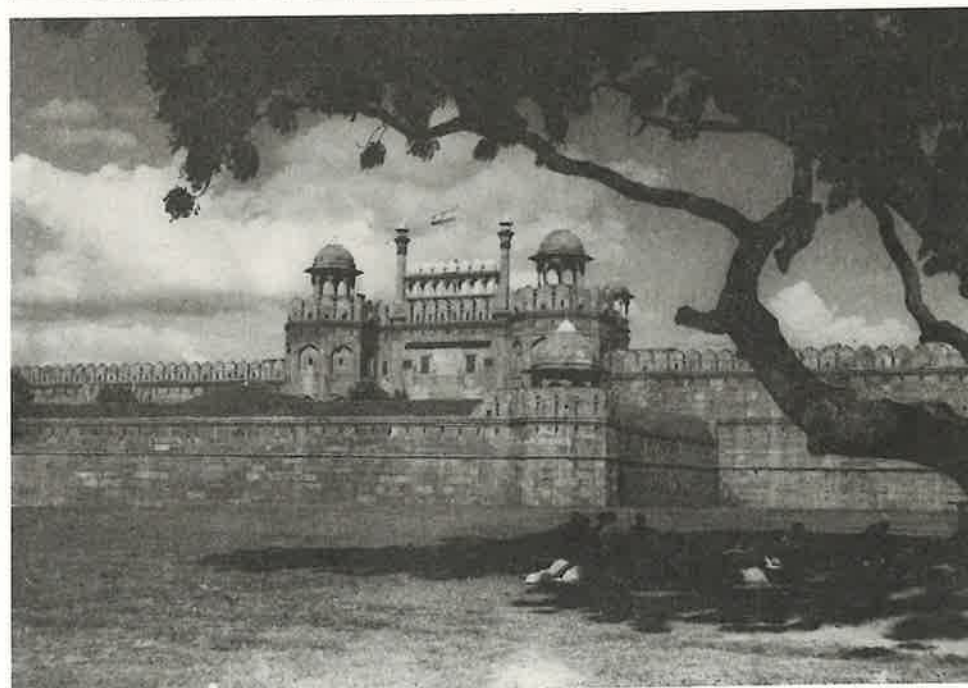


Fig. 5. Mandu - ruins of Mandu
Fig. 6. Delhi - Red Fort

St George of Madras built on the the arrival of the East India Company. This fort was intended to be something more than a store-house or arsenal and centre of resistance. It was within the walls of the fort which enclosed a large expanse of land, in a way, that the first European colonial administrative offices, the residence of the Govenner, officers' barracks for soldiers and churches were built. There was no intention or attempt to integrate the local people into these forts as was the case in Rajasthan or Kerala. The central buildings of Fort St George with its classical preparations, pillars, balconies and rotundas were reproductions of the stately mansions of the aristocracy of the late 17th century. Fort Agwada of Goa is a transition from the typical self-contained Indian citadels to the many colonial forts built by colonial powers in the late 17th century. While Fort Sant' Angelo was built with the courtesy of the local Raja and as a concession to the Portuguese Viceroy, Fort Agwada with its grim laterite walls and sturdy ramparts was built by the Portuguese after the conquest of Goa (since Goa was the important centre of their eastern Empire enroute to Macao and Malacca) to defend themselves against Arab traders as well as the growing Dutch menace. Apart from offering security for the nascent Portuguese colony the Fort Agwada also housed the officers of the Inquisition.

Fort William of Calcutta was built soon after the Fort St George and

named after the Dutchman who became king of England in 1688. We see a successful attempt of the British to build the nucleus of their domain in these well organised forts which may not have had the sombre grandeur of the Rajasthan citadels, or the picturesque beauty of the west-coast fortifications but which reflected the efficient organisation and the ultimate commercial imperial purpose with which the British came to India.

Monuments of Delhi

The story of Delhi is steeped in legends, and myths, until history takes over.

The city of Delhi is first heard of in the myths and legends which are the prelude to written history. The epic Mahabharata describes Delhi as 'Indraprastha' where the five Pandava brothers built their gorgeous capital after their hundred Kaurava cousins banished them from Hasthinapura, the capital of a powerful North Indian Kingdom.

Standing on the bank of the Jamuna, Delhi is not far from the city of Mathura which is associated with the birth and frolics of Lord Krishna, but her history has a different flavour. Ancient Delhi or the fabled Indraprastha is revered, but its actual location has not been established. Purana Qila, or the old fort of Delhi has yielded painted greyware pottery which correspond to the Mahabharat era - that is - 1500 to 1200 B.C. The five villages ascribed to the five brothers Indrapath, Panipat, Bagpat, Sonerpat, and Tilpath are also within this area. Meerut, said to be the site of Hasthinapur is also nearby.

While Mathura became the capital of the Central Asian Kushan dynasty,

Delhi remained unknown and apparently untouched by the art and sculpture of the Kushans, who moving along the Silk Road, absorbed the aesthetic traditions of Buddhism as well as the message of peace and compassion. Little of that rich Kushan culture is to be found in the excavations at Purana Qila.

A curtain of silence wraps Delhi for more than a millennia until the Tomar Rajputs made their capital on the banks of the Jamuna. The origins of the Tomar Rajputs is also shrouded in mystery as well as legends which give them the status of being descended from the moon god. It is not unlikely that the Rajput tribes were descended from the various warrior clans from North and north west which swept through north India. Excavations at Lal Kot, a citadel of early Tomar and Chauhan era, reveal the physical remains of that advanced material culture. It may be surmised that the celebrated Rajput hero, Raja Prithviraj Chauhan, made Lal Kot his capital until his feud with his cousin Raja Jayachand threw open the gates of this region to the various Islamic armies which were sweeping across Asia and Europe, from Cathay to the

gates of Vienna. While Spain and Sicily experienced the benevolent rule of the Moors from Damascus, Baghdad and Tangiers, India's invaders came from Afghanistan and modern Uzbekistan and Tadjikishthan.

The first known monument of the new rulers of Delhi is the famous Kutub Minar, not far from the citadel of Lal Kot, built in commemoration of his victory by Kutubuddin Aibak in the 12th century.

The Minar is a victory tower, a gigantic cylinder in which every tier is embellished by calligraphy that assumes an artistry of its own. Built in reddish brown sandstone, this huge tower has a harmony and balance which characterises most Islamic monuments, enabling them to "begin as Titans and end as jewellers". A closer scrutiny shows that the nearby structures were built of pillars and corbels removed from Hindu temples which were built before. Some have interpreted this as iconoclasm while others maintain that usage of sacred Hindu parts was a wish to incorporate in their building the legacy of two cultures.

The Delhi Sultanate saw a succession of dynasties radiating from the Turco-Afghan homeland accompanied by construction of edifices and superimpositions by those who came after.

The Siri Fort was built by Allauddin Khilje in the fourteenth century while the mausoleums and madrasa of Haus Khaz were built by Allauddin and later by Feroz Shah in the fourteenth century. These

dynasties did not remain long enough to evolve a distinct style of their own and they give the impression of hastily constructed edifices rather like caravanserais of their central Asian homelands.

It is with the Lodi monuments that we see the aura of power and stability that this dynasty had achieved within two centuries. Sijander Lodi first began the construction of the massive edifices which were to serve as mausoleums for the departed rulers. The massive circular domes, the arched entrances, the vaulted walls, resemble the monuments of Samarkhand and Bokhara. The walls built of buff granite and compact ramparts as well as the neat stables give the idea of a martial race ever ready, on the move for swift marches and manoeuvres. The octagonal structure built by Mohammed Shah for himself however denotes the high degree of architectural skill that this period's craftsmen and builders possessed. Delicate arched pavilions stand next to the brooding grandeur of the tombs of Sikander and Ibrahim Lodi.

Today the Lodi monuments stand silent amidst the verdant beauty of the Lodi Gardens, a daytime haunt for early morning joggers and leisurely evening strolls.

Ibrahim Lodi was the last of his dynasty. His vast and clumsy army was routed at the battle of Panipath in 1526 by a young prince who having failed to regain his principality of Ferghana became in time Emperor Babur of India who brought the mixed legacy of Ganghis

Khan and Timur through the Moghul dynasty to India.

Babur was too busy consolidating his newly won realm to think of buildings. What he did miss in "this rough and barbarous land" were the mountains and streams, rose gardens and the vineyards of his dear Ferghana. After a rough battle, this gaint of a man wept like a child on hearing that he could not relax with a glass of wine and a slice of melon!

His son, the scholarly, dreamy Humayun, spent his youth and early middle age fleeing from his father's adversaries in India. In the interlude an Afghan chief Sher Shah Suri ruled north India better than Humayun could have done. Apart from many other important constructions including the Grand Trunk Road which connects Bengal to Punjab, Sher Shah built Purana Qila, the early citadel of Delhi, with a stately grace. Humayun eventually defeated Sher Shah but continued to use Purana Qila as his residence. It is here in the hexagonal shaped library that Humayun, hearing the cry of the meuzzin at twilight, came hurrying down to prayers, to slip and fall to his death.

The spirits of the able administrator Sher Shah and the scholarly Humayun seem still to prevail over the serene ambience of Purana Qila.

Humayun's son Akbar was the greatest Moghul and one of the greatest rulers of India. In memory of his father Akbar built the graceful tomb of Humayun which is a precursor of the later Taj Mahal.

The mausoleum bears the imprint of the Central Asian style in the massive central vault but which is lightened by the minars flanking the central edifice. The dome is circular, well proportioned and was ornamented with blue tiles for which the Lodis were famous. These tiles, turquoise in colour, were inspired by the buildings of Isfahan where Humayun spent many years, eluding the search parties of his rival Sher Shah. Indeed it was during his Persian exile that the future Emperor of India brought into the architecture and painting of Hindusthan, the grace and delicacy of Persian traditions. From Humayun's time we see a significant departure of styles from the solid grandeur of Turkish masonry to the graceful harmony of Persia which finally culminated into the immortal Taj Mahal.

Humayun's tomb, like Humayun's life, was attended by melancholy and a poignancy which remained even while he was a powerful emperor. It is here in the raised platform of the tomb that the sons of a future Moghul Emperor - Bahadur Shah Zafar - were beheaded by the victorious British commander who broke the seige of Delhi during the upheaval of 1857. It is also here that the gifted Dona Shiko, son of Shah Jehan is buried.

Of all the monuments of Delhi, it is the Red Fort which bears the imprint of imperial grandeur, a sense of fleeting glory as well as a feeling of resilience. The Red Fort has survived four centuries of change and turmoil and continues to

be an inspiration to the new builders of Delhi.

The Red Fort is the creation of the Emperor Shah Jahan who was one of the great builders of India and the world. While he is principally renowned for the creation of the Taj Mahal, his interest and taste in architecture was wide and has left an imprint even in Kashmir.

Like the Kremlin of Moscow, and the Alhambra of Granada, Red Fort or Lal Qila, is a vast citadel with numerous buildings, both religious and secular. Like the other two citadels, Red Fort has a wall of red sandstone encircling the congerie of buildings which vary in style, colour and proportion, usage and inspiration. A shallow moat surrounds it. As the visitor passes under the Naubat Khana he is awed by the vista which leads to the beautiful pavilion that was the Emperor Shah Jahan's audience hall or Diwan-i- Am. The throne was of marble, inlaid with precious and semi precious stones. From the Diwani-i-Am one can see the other structures - the graceful Hamam or bath house, the ladies hall or Zenana, the Khas Mahal for the Empire the fragile looking but very durable Moti Masjid or Pearl Mosque. Most exquisite is the Diwani-i-Khas where the Emperor received special visitors. It is probably here that Shah Jahan received the first European visitors who wanted to set up trading posts in India, and listened to reports from various parts of his empire, including the intrigues of his troublesome son, Aurangzeb. We can

imagine that here too Shah Jahan discussed politics, art and metaphysics with his heir and favourite son, Dara Shikho, whose murder may have changed the course of Indian history.

The Red Fort like the Kremlin and the Alhambra continued to be in use even after its builders departed. This fort was the residence of the Moghul emperors and therefore became the rallying point during the upheaval of 1857. And it is here that Subhas Chandra Bose wished to lay siege and end British rule. Perhaps in deference to his wishes and the symbolism that the Red Fort acquired, the Indian flag was raised here on the first Independence Day. The Red Fort embodies the very spirit of Delhi now 'as it did four centuries ago.

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