5000 YEARS OF ARTS AND CRAFTS IN INDIA AND PAKISTAN
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A SURVEY OF SCULPTURE, ARCHITECTURE, PAINTING, DANCE, MUSIC, HANDICRAFTS AND RITUAL DECORATIONS FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE PRESENT DAY

SHANTI SWARUP

With 5 colour plates and 246 illustrations in monochrome

D. B. TARAPOREVALA SONS & CO. PRIVATE LTD.
Treasure House of Books
210, DR. D. NAOROJI ROAD . . . . . . . BOMBAY-1
Preface

The art-history of India and Pakistan has been the theme of many a book written by scholars here and in the West. But they are generally specialised works. The purpose of this book is to present in a single comprehensive volume the various aspects of Indian art, the major as well as the so-called minor, in a short and simple outline, and also to interpret in some measure its exotic forms appearing in the course of its progress and development during the last 5000 years. The first chapter deals with the salient features of Indian history in its different periods, laying particular stress on the general cultural aspects. The rest of the book discusses the varied artistic expressions in separate chapters in order to bring out an integrated picture of each one of them. In such a treatment of the strivings of the human life-time repetitions have become occasionally unavoidable. For the sins of omission I beg my readers to bear in mind the enormous sweep taken by this book in a limited space.

I wish to take this opportunity of expressing my deep sense of gratitude and indebtedness to the many scholars and writers in the field of Indian art from whom I have learnt much. I also thank the various individuals and associations who have given me permission to use illustrations in their possession.

Azamgarh, India
3rd November 1967

Shanti Swarup
CONTENTS

1 · INTRODUCTION · Page 1

2 · SCULPTURE · Page 21

The Indus Valley Civilization. The Vedic Culture. The Maurya Period. The Early Classic Period (Bharhut, Bodh-Gaya, Sanchi, Bhaja). The Kushan Period (Gandhara, Mathura). The Later Andhra Period. Golden Age of the Guptas (Mathura, Sarnath, South India, Aihole and Badami, Mamallapuram, Ellora, Elephanta). The Medieval Period: South India (Chola Period, Pandya Period, Vijayanagar Period, Nayaka Period); The Deccan (Chalukya-Hoysala Period); South Indian Bronzes; Eastern India (Bengal and Bihar, Orissa); Central India (Khajuraho); Western India (Rajasthan, Gujarat, Kathiawar). The Contemporary Scene.

3 · ARCHITECTURE · Page 64

The Indus Valley Civilization. The Vedic Culture. The Buddhist Period (The Mauryas, Architecture under the Sungas and Andhras, Sanchi, Bharhut, Bodh-Gaya, Rock-cut Architecture of Early Buddhism, Bhaja, Karli, Viharas, Building Art under the Kushans, Gandhara, Mathura, Buddhist Architecture in South India, Amaravati). The Early Hindu Period (The Guptas, The Chalukyas, Rock-cut Architecture of Mahayana Buddhists, the Hindu Temple, Beginnings of Dravidian style, Rock-cut forms in Final Phase, Ellora). The Later Hindu Period: Dravidian Forms (The Cholas, The Pandyas, the Vijayanagar Phase, The Nayakas, the Chalukya-Hoysala Phase); Indo-Aryan Forms (Orissa, Khajuraho, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Kathiawar, Gwalior, Bengal). The Indo-Islamic Period: The Sultanate Style (the Slaves, the Khiljis, the Tughluqs, the Sayyids and the Lodis, the Surs); Provincial Styles (Bengal, Jaipur, Gujarat Malwa, the Deccan); The Mughal Style (Delhi, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Lahore, Lucknow, the Punjab, Rajasthan and Central India). The British Period. The Contemporary Trends.

4 · PAINTING · Page 129

Pre-historic. Early Historic. Frescoes (Ajanta, Bagh, Badami, Ellora, Sittanavasal, Tanjore, Vijayanagar, Cochin-Travancore). Miniatures: Pre-Mughal (Bengal and Bihar, Gujarat, Mandu, Jaunpur, Rajasthan, Orissa); Mughal Painting; The Deccan States; Rajasthani Painting (Mewar, Marwar, Jodhpur, Bundi, Malwa, Kishangarh, Jaipur); Pahari Painting (Basohli Style, Eighteenth Century, Guler Style, Kangra Style). Modern Schools. Pakistan.

5 · DANCE · Page 170

6. MUSIC  Page 191

7. HANDICRAFTS  Page 212

8. RITUAL DECORATION  Page 237
GLOSSARY, Page 243
BIBLIOGRAPHY, Page 251
INDEX, Page 261
ILLUSTRATIONS

COLOUR PLATES

A. "A Queen’s Toilet," A fresco from Cave XVII at Ajanta.  
   Facing page 128

   140

C. "Red Blossoms," by Mansur.  
   148

   156

E. "Blindman’s Buff," by Manak.  
   164

MONOCHROME ILLUSTRATIONS

Between pages 64 and 65

I. 1, 2. Front and back views of dancing girl, Mohenjo-Daro.  
   4. Terracotta seal, Mohenjo-Daro.  
   5. Female terracotta figure, Mohenjo-Daro.  

II. 1. Lion-crowned Capital of the Asoka Column.  
   2. Parkham Yakesha, Mathura.  
   3. Yakshi from Didarganj, Bihar.

III. Fragments of stone hedges from the Stupa of Bharhut.

IV. 1, 2. Two Tondi of the stone hedge, Stupa of Bharhut.  
   3. Chulakosa Devata, Bharhut.  
   4. Kuvera Yaksha, Bharhut.

V. 1, 2. Sculptures on pillars, Bodh-Gaya.  
   3. Architraves of North Gate, rear view, Stupa of Sanchi.  
   4. A love scene, Bodh-Gaya.

VI. Sculptures from the Great Stupa of Sanchi.

VII. 1. Sun-god from Bhaja.  
     2. Standing Buddha from Takhti-Bahi.  

VIII. 1. Buddha statue from Katra.  
      2. Bodhisattva from Mathura.  

IX. 1, 2. Two door jambs from Bhutesar.  

X. 1. Bacchanalian scene, Mathura.  
    2. The Seven Buddhas, Mathura.

XI. 1. Outside of post from the outer railing, Amaravati.  
     2. Inner side of jamb from the outer railing, Amaravati.  
     3, 4. Tondi of post of outer railing, Amaravati.

XII. The Boar Incarnation of Vishnu, Udayagiri.  
    2. Vishnu on Sheshnag, Deogarh.

XIII. Sandstone torso of a Bodhisattva, Sanchi.

XIV. Standing Buddha, frontal view, Mathura.  
     2, 3. Celestial Couples, Cave-temple No. 3, Bedami.


XVI. 1. Marriage of Siva and Parvati. Cave No. 29, Ellora.  
     2. Ravana Shaking Mt. Kailasa, Cave No. 29, Ellora.

XVII. 1. Siva dancing the Lalitam, Ravana-kakali, Cave No. 14, Ellora.  
      2. Maheshamurti, Cave No. 1, Elephanta.

XVIII. 1. Siva-Nataraja, Cave No. 1, Elephanta.  
       2. Andhakasura-vadhya-murti, Cave No. 1, Elephanta.

XIX. Horse-court, Vishnu temple, Sri-Rangam.  
     2. Hoysalesvara temple, Halebid.


XXI. 1, 2. Madanakai images in dancing pose from the Chenna Kesava temple, Belur.

XXII. Siva-Nataraja, Bronze, Tiruvelangadu, Madras.

XXIII. 1. Uma, Bronze, South India.  
       2. Krishna-Deva-Raya and his two queens, Tirupati temple.
XXIV. 1, Woman writing with a stylus, Bhuvaneshwar. 2, Wut-houze, Konarak.

XXV. Close-up of an embracing couple, Temple of the Sun, Konarak.

XXVI. 1, Sculpture on the west facade of the south-west corner of Kandariya Mahadeva temple, Khajuraho. 2, The kiss-up. Close-up of sculpture, Khajuraho.

XXVII. Sculpture from Khajuraho.

XXVIII. Carved marble ceilings, Tejpal’s temple, Mt. Abu.

_Between pages 128 and 129_

XXIX. 1, General view from the east, the Great Stupa of Sanchi. 2, Marble bas-relief, Amravati Stupa.

XXX. 1, Gupta temple, Sanchi. 2, Interior of Chaitiya hall, Karli.

XXXI. General view, Durga temple, Ahole.

XXXII. 1, Facade of Cave No. 19, Ajanta. 2, Interior of Cave No. 19, Ajanta, showing pillars and dagoba.

XXXIII. 1, The Shore Temple, Mamallapuram. 2, The five ratanas, Mamallapuram.

XXXIV. 1, South-east view of Kailasaanath temple, Kanchipuram. 2, Cave No. 16 (Kailasa), Ellora.

XXXV. 1, West corridor, Rameswaram temple. 2, South Gopura and golden lily tank, Madura.

XXXVI. 1, The Great Temple, Tanjore. 2, Kesava temple, Somnathpur.

XXXVII. 1, General view of Lingaraja temple, Bhubaneswar. 2, The temple of the Sun-god, Konarak.

XXXVIII. Kandariya Mahadeva temple, Khajuraho.

XXXIX. 1, Marble pillars of Vimala Shahi temple, Mt. Abu. 2, Part of the screen of arches at Quwat-ul-Islam mosque, Delhi.

XL. 1, Qubt Minar, Delhi. 2, Close-up of Qubt Minar, Delhi, showing carvings.

XLI. 1, Tomb of Shams-ud-din Iltumish, Delhi. 2, Alai Darwaza, Delhi.

XLII. 1, Atala Mosque, Jaunpur. 2, Sher Shah’s tomb, Sasaram.

XLIII. 1, Jami Masjid, Ahmadabad. 2, Perforated window, Sidi Sayyid Mosque, Ahmadabad. 3, Gol Gumbaz, Bijapur.

XLIV. 1, Ibrahim Rauza, Bijapur. 2, The Tomb of Humayun, Delhi.

XLV. 1, Buland Darwaza, Fathpur Sikri. 2, Throne pillar, Diwan-i-khas, Fathpur Sikri. 3, Palace of Birbal, Fathpur Sikri.

XLVI. 1, Southern gateway to Akbar’s tomb, Sikandra. 2, The Great Imambara, Lucknow.

XLVII. 1, Mausoleum of Itmad-ud-Daulah, Agra. 2, Detail of Itmad-ud-Daulah’s tomb, Agra.

XLVIII. 1, Interior of Diwan-i-khas, Delhi. 2, Jamis Masjid, Delhi.

XLIX. 1, The Taj Mahal, Agra. 2, Interior screen, Taj Mahal, Agra.

LI. The modern architecture of the new city of Chandigarh.

LII. Palace scene, fresco from Cave No. 17, Ajanta.

LIII. 1, Indra, gandharvas and apsaras, after a fresco from Cave No. 17, Ajanta. 2, The Great Bodhisattva (Padmapani), fresco from Cave No. 1, Ajanta.

_LXXII. 1, Illustrations from Uttaradhyayana Sutra. 2, Illustrated wooden bookcover of a painted palm-leaf mms. 3, Illuminated palm-leaf mms._

LIV. An illustration from the Razm Namah of Khwaja Inayatullah.

LV. A prince hunting, by Ali Quli.

LVI. Portrait of a nobleman, from “Album of Jahangir.”

LVII. The Himalayan Cheer Pheasant by Ustad Mansur.

LVIII. Princess in a garden, with her attendants.

LIX. 1, Illustration from Bham Datta’s Rasa-mangal by Devitas. 2, Krishna and the Gopis.

LX. Wives of the Mathura Brahmans carrying food to Sri Krishna.

LXI. Radha and Krishna sheltering from the rain.


LXIII. 28 different gestures of the single hand used in dancing.

LXIV. Gestures of the combined hands used in dancing.

LXV. 1, Musical accompaniment to Kathakali. 2, Kathakali dance pose. 3, Kathakali mask and head-dress.

LXVI. 1, Kathakali dancers in traditional costume and make-up. 2, Chathunni Panicker and
ILLUSTRATIONS

LXVII. Shanta Rao in a Bharata Natyam pose.
LXVIII. 1, A Manipuri dance pose. 2, Sitara Devi in the Nataraj dance of the Kathak School.

Between pages 192 and 193

LXIX. 1, Folk dance on Holi. 2, Female folk dancers of Assam.
LXX. Indian musical instruments.
LXXI. Indian musical instruments.
LXXII. Indian musical instruments.

Between pages 208 and 209

LXXII. Gold embroidered Kashmir Shawl.
LXXXIII. Woollen carpet from the Punjab.
LXXXIV. 1, Silver Casket in which the Address to Lord Harris was presented. 2, Brass salver, from Uttar Pradesh. 3, Spice box of Mora-
dabad work.

Between pages 224 and 225

LXXXV. 1, Surahi of Bidri-work. 2, Damascened tray from Sialkot. 3, Silverware from Kutch.
LXXXVI. Examples of Indian enamelled ware.
LXXXVII. Old Indian Jewellery.
LXXXVIII. Old Indian Jewellery.

Between pages 232 and 233

LXXXIX. Examples of pottery from Lucknow.
XC. 1, Carved wooden screen, from Ahmadab-
dad. 2, Carved window in Deodar wood. 3, Carved door in sesame wood, from the Punjab.
XCI. Wooden door Carved in Deodar wood, Punjab.
XCII. Carved ivory and tortoise-shell casket, from Vizagapatam, and side panel.

Between pages 240 and 241

XCIII. Carved ivory and horn writing case, from Vizagapatam.
XCIV. 1, Carving in Sandal-wood, from Trava-
core. 2, 3, Two sides of a powder-horn made of buffalo horn inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl.
XCV. Ritual decorations.
XCVI. Ritual decorations.
1 INTRODUCTION

INDIAN art is an immediate expression of Indian civilisation as a whole. It represents beliefs and philosophies, ideals and outlooks, the materialised vitality of the society and its spiritual endeavours in varying stages of development. To understand the art of India, therefore, it is necessary to estimate the formative influences that have gone into the moulding of the aesthetic sensitiveness of the people.

Before India was partitioned off into two dominions, that is, India and Pakistan, it was one unit with a history of some five millennium years. As a sub-continent of Asia it has an area exceeding one and a half millions of square miles. The vastness of the land has produced varied facets of nature. Zones of inaccessible mountain heights, flat alluvial plains, thick impenetrable forests, high tablelands and arid deserts are the outward aspects of this triangle of land, bounded by the Arabian Sea in the south-west, the Bay of Bengal in the south-east, and the rocky curtain of the Himalayas and its off-shoots topped with gleaming ice-peaks in the north and north-west. From the Himalayas issue forth the great fertilising waters of the Indus, the Ganges, the Brahmaputra and their tributaries, flowing over the plains of Northern India, which comprises also the sandy deserts and rocky plains of Rajasthan in the west, and the tract covered by the Vindhyan ranges towards the south. The region lying to the south of the Vindhayas and extending as far as the Krishna and the Tungabhadra rivers is the Deccan Plateau, which together with the far south beyond the last named rivers, makes up what is commonly called Southern India. These two principal divisions of the country are separated from each other by strong natural barriers consisting of rivers, hills and forests. In these physical environments man has had to adjust himself to the intense heat of the tropical sun, the exuberance of the rains, and the exhilarating coolness of the winter, succeeding in cyclical measure. Life itself developed amidst the swift ripening crops, plants and flowers, deep glens of crowded forests, lakes, rivers and rocks, all in inexhaustible forms and throbbing with the intensity of life. All this has permeated the mind and heart of the people of India with an exalting experience in which Nature emerges as the symbol of their awe and veneration. Nature, therefore, has its own role to play in the evolution of India's culture, not only as a cohesive force but also as the physical root of her deeper impulses.

The Indian sensitiveness, however, has not developed in isolation. From the dawn of history, India has been the meeting place of peoples and cultures, interacting upon one another—coalescing, absorbing or conquering. The principal movement of men and ideas, no doubt, came through the gaps in the mountains on the north-western bounds, but others found their way from the side of the open seas. They came in successive waves of invasions, in many instances making this land their home, and in the process of settlement, stimulating or retarding the course of its history and emotional energy within an Indian environ-
ment which itself kept changing. The historical process of social intermingling in the national pattern began with the Aryans displacing the established Dravidian inhabitants partly by conquest and partly by the quiet acceptance of many of their beliefs. The other participants in this process of intermingling were the Parthians, the Greeks, the Sakas, the Kushans, the Huns, the Turks, the Afghans, and the Mongols. They had all brought their own intellectual and emotional experiences and during their career as sovereigns of the land had sought to impose them upon the people they had come to. But as the original impulses were exhausted, their institutions, traditions and ideals yielded to the psychological compulsions of an Indian consciousness, and then having merged within a national thought inheritance either died out or took new forms. But while these races ruled, their definite cultural tendencies were so prominently stressed that their periods have given rise to characteristic phases of the Indian civilisation, all linked up no doubt by a basic unity of thought which is so unmistakably articulate in her creative strivings.

Nothing definite is yet known of the achievements of the pre-historic man in India. But judging from the implements of copper and stone that have come to light from the various parts of the country, we may accept that for ages before the story of human culture in India is historically traced, there had been a striving after a better and more settled life in the country.

We enter the limits of the historical period with a civilisation known as that of the Indus Valley which flourished, according to the recently accepted chronology, from the end of the first half of the third millennium B.C. to about the 17th century B.C. It covered a wide area extending from Makran in the west to Rupar on the Sutlej at the foot-hills of the Himalayas in the north, and Lothal in Gujarat in the south. But its most important sites were Harappa in Western Punjab and Mohenjo-Daro on the lower Indus in Sind. It was an urban civilisation, in a very high state of social and economic development. Its predominantly mercantile society probably had cultural relations with ancient Sumer and Mesopotamia with whose civilisations it bears a striking resemblance. We have not yet been able to probe with any amount of certainty the spiritual mind of these people, because the pictographic inscriptions on the Mohenjo-Daro seals so far discovered have not led us to any definite conclusion. But there is evidence to indicate that a conscious formation of the Supreme Preserver in the form of Siva-Pasupati and of the Supreme Creator in the form of Female Energy were perhaps present in the Indus Valley, whose people offered worship to them both in human and symbolic expressions. This civilisation is believed to have been overrun by the pastoral Aryan emigrants overflowing from Iran who about 1400 B.C. founded their first settlements in the Punjab.

The Aryans who came to India were a war-like semi-nomadic race who were organised in clans and tribes and lived in fortified wooden villages. They had their vision of the Transcendent Reality in Nature which they worshipped in its grandest and most sublime aspects. Their earliest literature, the Rig Veda, contains many hymns of both admiration and propitiation addressed to their gods who are but the personification of the different phenomena of Nature. But they had also learned to distinguish between the smaller gods of Nature and the Supreme Creator to whom different designations are applied. Sacrifice performed with faith and accompanied with prayer was the symbol of the Aryan act of worship. It implied an offering by man of all that he himself is and has to the powers of the Godhead—
a complete self-giving of the lower and the finite for the attainment of the Higher and the Infinite.

In the course of their expansion eastwards, down the valleys of the Ganges and the Jamuna, during the later Vedic periods of Atharvaveda-Samhita, Sama-veda-Samhita, Yajurveda-Samhita as well as the Brahmanas and the Upanishads, the Aryans waged a relentless war against the indigenous people and overwhelmed their already highly evolved civilisation by their continuous onslaughts. Though the pre-Aryan inhabitants continued to offer resistance for several centuries they were in the end conquered. Only in South India they lived undisturbed for a considerable length of time and succeeded in preserving their culture. Slowly, the Aryans widened the area of their civilisation to include the whole of Northern India which they called Aryavarta, the Aryan country. Here they established their own small tribal states which later developed into kingdoms with hereditary monarchies.

But out of the conflict of races a civilisation was gradually unfolded which, although designated Aryan, bears also the influence of the thoughts and traditions of the pre-Aryan peoples of the country. The worship of nature-gods and the performance of simple sacrifices by the head of the family in the fashion of the Rig Veda were now replaced by ritualistic worship, often symbolic, conducted by a special priestly class known as Brahmans. Popular superstitious belief in nature spirits, spells and incantations found a place in the sacred canons. The rise of the Brahmans led to the development of a full-fledged caste-system in the new Indian social organisation, dividing the society into distinct classes of men: the fair-complexioned Brahmans (priests), Kshatriyas (warriors), and Vaisyas (yeomen), distinguished from the dark-skinned Sudras (the indigenous serfs). In course of time the divisions became hereditary and the rights and duties of each caste were rigidly regulated. It may be noticed that the formation of the caste-society was preceded by a considerable intermingling of the blood of the dark-skinned indigenous population and of the fair-skinned Aryan, and there was even a wide acceptance of the non-Aryan people into the Aryan fold. Of the four castes, the Brahmans enjoyed the greatest power and prestige. Their word was held as law, their decisions were the decrees of Providence, and as the exclusive custodians of the spiritual knowledge they alone claimed to know the secrets of the ceremonial extravagances.

But while the Brahmans conducted a soul-less, mechanical and pompous pietism, a group of forest hermits and wandering ascetics, opposed to their religious externalism and conventional theology, was making a searching enquiry into the nature of the Ultimate Reality and its relation to the Individual. The Aranyakas and the Upanishads constitute a body of literature which embody their vigorous spiritual efforts. They evolved an intellectual conception of Godhead, held that the Universe is a manifestation of the Supreme Reality, 'of Brahma, the infinite divine power which is identified with Atma that which after stripping off everything external we discern in ourselves as our real and most essential being, our individual self, the soul.' These thoughts are the doctrinal basis of Hinduism, and in their growth towards the future have ever inspired the several religious movements which were the outcome of reaction against the formalism and exclusiveness of the Brahmanical system. It must be emphasised here that Hinduism could not

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1 Winternitz (Vol. 1, page 250), quoted from Deussen's Philosophy of the Upanishads, translated by A. S. Geden, 1906, p. 39.
always live up to the highest ideals. However, the greatest epochs in its history have been those in which it has striven its hardest to realise them in the varied creative expressions of the life of the people.

The hermits had not concerned themselves with Vedic gods. But another section of the society, mainly among the common people, showed a predilection for certain deities already known to the Rig Veda. One of the deities was Rudra, the Vedic storm-god, who was identified with Siva-Pasupati of the Indus Civilisation and came to be regarded as the Great God (Mahadeva); Vishnu, a solar deity, later identified with the hero Krishna, became the centre of a new monotheism. A number of other gods also claiming allegiance arose in this period. Soon the old Indo-Aryan pantheon disintegrated. The Vedic gods either merged with the local tutelary deities (Yakshas and Yakshinis) of the masses or were re-born as minor characters in the elaborate pantheon now created. Evidently in this decisive period of Indian history a civilisation had slowly developed which was a synthesis of the thoughts and traditions both of the Aryan and the pre-Aryan peoples.

The epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, introduce us to conditions prevailing in the Indo-Aryan society of the later periods. Although their first redactions are believed to have been made about 200 or 300 B.C., they speak of the time much earlier than the time of their earliest compositions. From them we know that politically the ideal of supremacy was that of universal dominion in which the conquered kings were reduced to vassalage. The local tribes were assimilated into the frame-work of the four castes, which although now more definitely established had ceased to have any rigidity. The supremacy of the Brahmanas, however, was not touched. Blood sacrifices were sometimes still offered to some of the gods, but a new feeling of pity for all living beings gradually tended to diminish their importance. With the growing recognition granted to popular cults and beliefs theistic movements gathered force. The new gods became popular and along with them appeared the spirits of waters, herbs, trees, etc. Most of the deities were elaborately anthropomorphised and this led to the increasing use of images. Such dominating conceptions of Hindu thought as Karma, Maya, Mukti and Rebirth became some of the most important religious beliefs of the new society.

Another outcome of the revolt against the formalistic interpretation of the ideals and institutions of the race and man's restricted right to enjoy them, was the emergence in the 6th century B.C. of two new religious movements, Jainism and Buddhism, led respectively by Mahavira and Buddha. Their genesis lay in the doctrines of the Upanishads, but they made religion intensely personal and reflected it in the day to day conduct of life. They solemnly called the people away from the ritualistic religion to the ethical religion of Truth, Non-Violence and Renunciation.

Buddhism and Jainism were not in fact new religions, but new advances on the spiritual path which were not entangled by vain intellectual speculations or metaphysical presumptions. Both the Buddha and Mahavira set their faces against the religious conventions and rituals, against the tyranny of priests and castes, and called upon mankind to insist only on the development of an ethical earnestness in life. Their boundless love and compassion for all living beings, their message of equality to all men, and their assurance of ultimate freedom to every individual filled men with an unprecedented quickening of hope and aspirations, and unsheathed a creative energy which found an almost immediate expression in an unparalleled outburst of cultural activity. The result was that soon Buddhism
and Jainism grew into mighty challenges to the orthodox Hinduism. Buddhism, on account of the tireless energy of its teacher and the striking appeal of his message, attracted a larger audience, composed mainly of kings, the middle classes and the masses, than Jainism which found its followers mainly among the richer mercantile classes.

Politically, the 6th century B.C. is characterised by the absence of any paramount power. The whole of North India was parcelled out amongst a large number of states, the prominent ones being Kosala, Magadha, Vajji, Malla, Vamsha, and Avanti. Magadha rose to be the most important and powerful state, first under Bimbisara and his successors and then under the usurpers, the Nandas. The invasion of the Punjab by Alexander the Great in 327-26 B.C. while opening India to the influence of the Hellenic and Iranian civilisations gave also an opportunity to Chandragupta to organise the north-western part into one political unit and then to link it up with the Nanda empire under the effective imperial authority of the Mauryas (322-236 B.C.). The empire reached its greatest moment of political, intellectual and artistic development in the time of Asoka Maurya (273-236 B.C.), whose reign is spoken of as a kind of Buddhist period in Indian history. But although his life was one of dedication in the service of Buddhism he was not intolerant of other religions. He took definite steps to suppress the popular customs and cults, but continued to style himself the ‘Beloved of the gods,’ no doubt the gods of the Aryan-Indian religion. He, however, utilised Buddhism as an imperial policy through which he aimed at giving his empire a visible unity of culture by erecting stupas (Buddhist relic shrines) and pillars bearing his edicts and sermons. Two of the earliest inscriptions have been found in Mysore which formed the southernmost limit of the empire of Asoka. Beyond it there were the independent southern kingdoms of the Cholas, the Cheras and the Pandyas, maintaining the friendliest of terms with the Maurya empire. The Buddhist missionaries of Asoka therefore found an easy access into peninsular India. This was incidentally one of the earliest cultural penetrations from the north into the South where what we call the Dravidian civilisation was evolving independently of the Indo-Aryan influences. The organisation of the society in the South was under totemic clans and economically its interests were predominantly maritime, for this region had established intimate trade relations with Mesopotamia, Egypt, Palestine and the Mediterranean coasts.

The Maurya regime soon proved unpopular. Its despotic methods as well as the policy of hostility to the Brahmanic beliefs and forms of worship led to revolts. Many of the outlying provinces became independent and seceded from the Empire. An important secession was that of Kalinga, the eastern province of the Empire. A number of the princes of the royal family too set up their own sovereign states. The central government at Pataliputra was weak under incompetent rulers and proved incapable of protecting the integrity of the Empire. The final coup de grace was given by General Pushyamitra Sunga of the Imperial army who as leader of a strong Brahmanic reaction against the Buddhist monarchy of the Mauryas, assassinated his master and himself ascended the throne of Magadha in 184 B.C. With Pushyamitra commenced a new age in which Hinduism reasserted itself and rehabilitated the strictly orthodox ceremonies, rituals, sacrifices and the supremacy of the Brahmanas. The great ‘Asvamedha,’\(^1\) performed by Pushyamitra Sunga...

\(^1\) ‘The sacrifice of a horse.’ It was performed only by kings, and implied that he who instituted it was a conqueror and King of Kings.
mitra was considered to be so remarkable an event that it has been alluded to in
the works of Kalidasa.\footnote{1} It was also in this period that Sanskrit learning was re-
vived, the great epics were re-edited and the earliest Puranas were systematised.

But the fanatic zeal of the Sungas must have cooled off under Pushyamitra's successors who are known to have adopted such a tolerant policy in religion
that the Buddhists were allowed to decorate the stupas at Bharhut and Sanchi,
to whose enlargement and enrichment even the rulers contributed. In the meantime a psychology of ritualistic worship had been accepted in the religion of Buddha.

This provided an opportunity for art to play a very significant role not only in widening the physical horizons of the religion, but also in the rendering of
the specific contents of the Buddhist myths and legends, and its thoughts and ideas in
visual forms. Many of the bas-relief panels on the stupa gateways and railings
at Sanchi became the votive offerings of powerful trade guilds and unions of craftsmen, through which the industrial life of the country, including maritime trade,
was at this time greatly developing. The increased material prosperity led to the
growth of towns, the popularity of urban life, and the formation of a rich sophis-
ticated society whose men and women, imbued with an intense feeling for Nature,
enjoyed the pleasures of life in all its gaiety and vivacity. All this we find depicted
in the art of this period. From Bharata's Nātya Shastra also we know that the arts
of music and dancing were held in high esteem by the people of all classes.

Even from the days of the Master, the Buddhist Church or the Sangha had been
getting its principal material support from the rich agricultural householders and the
commercial communities. With the passage of time the dependence increased which
is nowhere so apparent as in the Satavahana empire of the Northern Deccan. The
Satavahanas, an Aryan people of Brahmanic descent, had risen into prominence in
the first quarter of the first century B.C. in south-eastern Maharashtra. Later, they extended their power to Andhadesha, a region at the mouth of the Godavari
and the Krishna, and populated by an ancient Dravidian people with whom as
the years rolled on the Satavahanas got completely merged. Slowly they built up
an empire the bounds of which extended from sea to sea over a region comprising the
whole of southern India except the extreme southern kingdoms of Chola, Chera
and Pandya, and a great portion of Central India in the north. Their authority
lasted for a period of nearly 300 years which is of supreme importance in the growth
of an Aryan-Indian civilisation in the south. The Maurya extension of the author-
ity to the south which was also followed by an infiltration of ideas from the north
had failed to bring the two regions effectively together in thought and culture
because the influence of the Imperial Government had been too shortlived. But a
mission which Asoka could not fulfil was adequately achieved by the Satavahanas
who, mainly on account of their cultural background and the geographical position
of their empire, brought South India into the composite structure of Indian civilisa-
tion. They also repulsed the invasions of the Saka hordes and created in their
dominion a climate of peace and prosperity wherein trade flourished in its towns
and ports. To its western coasts came the Roman fleets in search of spices, dia-
monds and pearls, and from its eastern ports ships sailed to Ceylon, Burma, Malaya,
Java and Annam. The eastern coast gathered its prosperity also from the wide
river valleys of the Krishna-Godavari emerging out into vast fertile plains. Here deve-

\footnote{1} The greatest poet and dramatist of India. The date of Kalidasa is however unsettled. A number of scholars think
that he adorned the Gupta court in the 4th century A.D. There are others who place him in the Sunga period. Some even
argue that there was more than one poet who bore this name as an honorary title.
lopped a prosperous bourgeoisie society happy in the exuberance of joy and passion. Its members were the greatest patrons of Buddhism and continued at Amaravati, Goli and Nagarjunikonda, the inspiration and traditions of Bharhut and Sanchi in increasingly elegant forms. At many other places in the empire also, including the conquered Sunga territory in the north, they endowed shrines and monasteries where the monks who had vowed to be homeless could live together and meditate on the words of the Blessed One. In the Brahmana rule of the Satavahanas, Vaishnavism and Saivism would naturally flourish. The worship of Siva and his vehicle, the Bull Nandi, under many names, was very popular at this time. Serpent worship in the form of Naga was also prevalent. But the Satavahanas were so catholic by temperament that they extended their charities also to Buddhism. They had cave-monasteries excavated for the monks and also gave away villages to Buddhist establishments for their maintenance.

While middle India under the Sungas and their successors in power, the Kanvas, and the Deccan under the Satavahanas, were growing on a common cultural heritage, the north-western borders of the country lay at the mercy of barbarian hordes and alien invaders. The first to swoop down upon the Indian soil were the Greeks from Bactria (Turkestan and Northern Afghanistan), who having reduced to submission a large area of Afghanistan, the Punjab and Sindh, established their own settlements in the conquered territories, mixed with the Indian blood and then succumbed to the influence of their new environments by becoming adherents of the Indian faiths of the Buddha or Vishnu. A horde that supplanted the Greeks was that of the Sakas who had been driven away from their homes in Central Asia by another nomadic horde and forced to migrate south. They descended upon the country menacingly and conquered the lower Indus region and western India (styled Scythia by Greek geographers) and from there spread to many parts of India about the middle of the first century B.C. Shortly afterwards, a part of the Scythian territory came into the hands of the Pahlavas or the Parthians who, though Iranian nomads encouraged Hellenistic civilisation and art in their empire.

About A.D. 65/78 the Kushans, a section of the Central Asian Yueh-Chi tribe, destroyed the Indo-Parthian power and under their outstanding leader Kanishka (A.D. 78-123) established an empire of their own which extended from Kashmir and Upper Sindh in the north and north-west to Bihar in the east. Beyond India the Empire included the Trans-Pamir region, the Oxus Valley region and the stretch of land between the Hindukush and the Indus comprising Herat, the Kabul and Helmand Valley regions, now covered by Kabul, Ghazni and Kandahar provinces of Afghanistan and Seistan and Baluchistan. Kanishka, a foreigner by birth, became an Indian and Buddhist by choice. Already in the past the religion of the Buddha had received marked favours from the Bactrians, the Parthians and the Scyths, but the Buddhism of which Kanishka became a devotee and a patron for its propagation was infused with a new life. It became theistic. The Buddha was elevated from the position of a teacher to that of a Saviour God whose representation in anthropomorphic form began to be worshipped by his devotees; a whole system of Bodhisattvas and other deities was evolved whose images were worshipped like the icons of the Brahmanic deities; and instead of release from passions as a means of salvation, prayer, devotion, faith and charity became the guiding principles of life. In its new form, styled as the Mahayana, to distinguish it from the old Hinayana creed, the religion spread far beyond the borders of the
country and enlarged the visual contents of the Buddhist myths and legends, reflecting influences either from the Hellenistic-Roman and Scythian sources (in the Gandhara region, in the valley of Peshawar) or from the purely Indian (at Mathura in the eastern parts of the Empire where the sensuous freedom of Sanchi achieves maturity).

Mahayana Buddhism continued to influence the aesthetic outlook of the Indian people even after the Kushans had ceased to rule. But there came a change in the character of the monarchy when Vasudeva, the last notable king of Kanishka's line, became a convert to Saivism. It throws an interesting light on the religious condition of the post-Mauryan period for we find many of the foreigners who ruled parts of India in succession not only embracing the Indian faiths but also adopting Hindu names. The country, however, was encouraged and sometimes forced to follow the manners, ethics and religious theories of the rulers. It was this imposition of a system of social tyranny that aroused the national consciousness for the eradication of the living canker in the north-western corner. This task was performed by the Gupta emperors under whose 200 years' of rule (A.D. 319-510) the country saw the zenith of the Hindu imperial tradition and of the civilisation we have called Aryan-Indian.

The Guptas were originally feudal chiefs whose principality during the days of Kushan supremacy was in all probability confined to Pataliputra. But they gained an enormous accession of prestige and power when the first king of the line, Chandragupta, entered into a matrimonial alliance with the powerful Lichchhavi clan whose republican administration controlled portions of Bihar and Nepal. Within a few decades the Guptas completely annihilated the various alien conquerors, and succeeded through war and diplomacy in bringing the whole of northern India, including Gujrat and Kathiawar, the north-eastern Deccan, eastern Bengal, Assam, the hill districts of Garhwal and Kangra and the tribal states of the Punjab within the sphere of their imperial influence. They also drew the Vakataka rulers of the central and western Deccan (successors to the empire of the Satavahanas) into their political system by marriage. To this empire that the Guptas built up, they gave a well-knit administrative system whose enlightened character guaranteed freedom of religion and mode of life to all people and ensured peace and order everywhere in the country. From the colonies, the southern dominions of the Empire, and the ports through which the eastern trade with China and Indonesia was briskly carried on, a continuous flow of gold kept filling the royal coffers which enabled the Gupta rulers to gift away several thousands of crores of sovereigns to their subjects and tax them as lightly as possible. Already the Hindus had been freed from the Kushan social tyranny; their military tradition had been raised and their culture rehabilitated. An atmosphere was, therefore, created for the resurgence of a national spirit that provided ideals for a great cultural renaissance in the country. This, coupled with the personal patronage and scholarly encouragement of the Gupta rulers, led to the materialisation of a creative and aesthetic enthusiasm in the country which contributed elegant literature and produced virile art.

In the sphere of religion Hinduism attained a varied and vigorous form. A devotional faith in the great god Vishnu, venerated most by the Guptas, brought a truly revolutionary change in the spiritual behaviour of the society. Vishnu became a dynamic faith giving and hope inspiring Saviour of humanity, and the sculptures of this period reflected this unity of man and his gods by fashioning
the latter as beings akin to men. Among the favourite incarnations of Vishnu were Rama and Krishna. Krishna, however, became the more popular of the two and was totally identified with Vishnu as a Supreme God. In the Bhagavad Gita Krishna is the One Final and Absolute God. Siva remained the “Great Ascetic” but no less potent and popular. The ceremonials and rituals of the Tantra cults, worshiping the power aspect of the Supreme (Sakti), were also well established in this period. Buddhism and Jainism continued to flourish. Their devotees enjoyed complete freedom of worship. Private and royal gifts to Buddhist monasteries and Jain temples are on record. We have it from the Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hien that Buddhist monastic life was vigorous. Classical Sanskrit, the accepted language of the refined society, played its own important role in the theological and philosophical activities of the age through the recitation of the great national epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, and the final recension of the major Puranas.¹ So great was the influence of Sanskrit that for even the Buddhist writers Sanskrit, instead of Pali, became the medium of communication. The purpose of redactions in the Puranas obviously was to weed off the foreign elements and ideas which the Greeks, the Parthians and the Kushans had imperceptibly introduced into Indian life. From the point of view of religion, the epics and the Puranas provided the people of India with noble examples of sages, saints and kings in ideals of human conduct, and abounded in a rich system of religious and social teachings—catholic enough to include the worship of all creeds inside Hinduism. Similarly, the Buddhist literature of the time presented a new Buddhist thought and ideology, crystallised into what is known as the Yogachakra, which coupled with the Mahayana ideal of compassion expressed a supremely refined, sensitive and profoundly spiritual vision of the Buddha as seen in the art of this age.

But even the great and the glorious Gupta Empire came to an end. It could not long survive the shock it received from the incursions of the Huns nomads from Central Asia, one of whose leaders, Toramana, was already safely entrenched in the Punjab. They advanced massacring, burning and looting as far as Bihar and Malwa. The cities fell into ruins, numerous monastic establishments were destroyed, the rich merchant classes disappeared and consequently Buddhism and Jainism suffered a setback. In the sixth century the Empire broke up into a number of small military states, mainly under the Maitrakas in Valabhi, the Maukharis in the Indo-Gangetic Valley, and the later Guptas in Magadha and Eastern Malwa. The Gupta civilisation, however, did not die out altogether. It recovered under the short-lived empire of Harshavardhan who reconstituted the Imperial authority, exercising sway all over northern India (A.D. 606-647), and gave the country the benefits of an enlightened administration.

Contemporaneously with the Imperial Guptas a powerful dynasty, that of the Vakatakas, had established itself on the ruins of the Satavahana Empire and ruled a considerable portion of the Deccan until about A.D. 500. Later about A.D. 550 the great Chalukyas of Badami became the dominant power in the Deccan. The Chalukyan supremacy, however, was not left unchallenged. A power that carried on a series of ferocious wars with the Chalukyas for mastery over the Deccan was that of the neighbouring Pallavas which had grown in the Dravidian region about the 4th century A.D. The two powers between them dominated

¹ There are eighteen Puranas which constitute a sacred literature of ancient India. Literally meaning ‘old stories,’ they contain Hindu mythological stories, old folklore as well as real histories of royal dynasties, the last in the form of ancient prophesies to emphasise the antiquity of the Puranas.
South Indian history for a period of over three hundred years. But the Chalukyas lost power to the Rashtrakutas whose powerful chief Dantidurga laid the foundations of an empire in A.D. 757, which in the days of its greatness extended from south Gujarat, Malwa and Bundelkhand in the north to Tanjore in the south; and the Pallavas succumbed to the Cholas about the close of the ninth century A.D. The Cholas were one of the three states in the region south of the rivers Krishna and the Tungabhadra. The other two were the Cheras and the Pandyas. They were very ancient Dravidian states being mentioned in Asoka's edicts.

The period under review for the South is more eminently noted for a great cultural ferment that ultimately established a system of Hinduism which became common to both the north and the south. In this period the South Indian Saiva (Adiyars) and Vaishnava saints (Alvars) combined to uproot Buddhism and Jainism from the South and to restore the worship of Hindu gods. They sought to achieve their objectives by arousing among the masses a feeling of passionate devotion for their deities through verses composed in the language of the people. They sang of 'devotion and the happiness of dwelling in the presence of God and of seeking His Grace.' Much earlier powerful theistic schools worshipping Siva and Vishnu had entered the South from the North through the powerful literary influences of the Epics and the Bhagavata. But now they took a more intellectual form and became highly productive in the cultural life of the people. The Pallavas gave further impetus to the Brahmanical Hinduism of the North by establishing Saivism as the state religion. Valuable Vaishnava and Saiva literature, accepting the Gupta mythology and iconography as the basis for the new theological doctrines, became popular; Sanskrit established its sway; and Kanchi became the seat of Sanskrit learning in the South and as sacred a place as Kashi of the North. Soon a truly unified civilisation having a common language and script, system of worship and social outlook infused a new life into the country, which was neither Aryan nor non-Aryan but Indian, and the old definition of Bharatavarsha was revised and extended to include the whole of the South as well.

The new spirit expressed itself amazingly in an unprecedented development of art. The gorgeous massiveness of the excavated or structural temples of the Pallava, the Chalukya and the Rashtrakuta epochs, generally based on the best later Gupta traditions, is unparalleled in art. The temples created an architecture which was to be the basis of all the styles of the South; and the sculptures and paintings adding rhythm, power and charm to these ravishing creations gave new meaning to the religious thoughts.

In the North it was only a superficial political cohesion that Harsha had given to the country. His death, therefore, signified the removal of the visible symbol of unity, which was quickly followed by the disruption of the empire and the North breaking up into small principalities. The political leadership passed into the hands of the Rajputs who were a new military aristocracy of a very mixed origin. They were the former princes, feudal barons and administrative or army officers of the foreign races like the Sakas, the Pahlavas and the Huns who had come to India, settled in the country, merged with the older population, and gained admission into the Hindu fold. In their pride and haughtiness they constructed imaginary pedigrees and claimed descent from the old Hindu gods Surya, Chandra, Agni, etc. The principal Rajput clans, spreading southwards and east from their original homes in the west and establishing their little kingdoms on a semi-military

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1 The land of Bharata, a king famous in Puranic traditions.
basis were the Gurjara-Pratiharas of Kanauj, the Chandellas of Jejakabhuuki (modern Bundelkhand), the Solankis of Gujarat, the Paramaras of Malwa, the Kalachuris of Chedi (Eastern Central India) and the Chauhans of Delhi and Ajmer. In the confusion following the death of Harsha, the eastern portion of his empire, also including Bihar, Bengal and Orissa, broke up into petty chieftainships under the Palas, the Senas, and a number of local dynasties. These dynasties were the new masters of the destinies of India. Their ideal was chivalry, fighting their main occupation, and civil strife a daily habit with them. There was so much mutual rancour and jealousy and endless bloody war among them that they were completely indifferent to the larger national interests of the country and even the idea of unity to resist the foreigner was generally non-existent among them. Freedom from the threat of foreign aggression for a period of over 500 years, from the Huns to the first Turk invaders of India, had bred a feeling of complacency in the country and there was hardly a stimulus for building a national honour even among the Rajputs.

The weakness of the political system had its effect on the social life and culture of India. In the religious sphere great changes took place. Buddhism, which had been slowly losing ground since the 6th century A.D., ceased to be a religion of the people by the beginning of the 9th century. In the 11th century, the traveller Al Biruni found it confined only to Bihar and Bengal where it prevailed in the form of Tantricism, a syncretic assimilation into Buddhism of many elements of Hindu origin. In this aspect of Buddhism, known as Vajrayana, the concept of Sakti or the female energy of Bodhisattva, and verbal formulae or mantras by means of which the numerous deities could be summoned by the devotee and compelled to give up their spiritual attributes played a great role. The reasons mainly responsible for the decline of Buddhism were the zeal of the Brahmanas and their dominion over the masses mind through a complicated and elaborate ritual, and the inclination of the society in the Rajput age more towards gallantry and heroism than to piety and non-violence. Buddhism was now slowly absorbed into Hinduism and the Buddha himself was included in the Hindu pantheon as an incarnation of Vishnu. As Elliot, the historian of Buddhism, points out: 'The line dividing Buddhist laymen from ordinary Hindus became less and less marked, distinctive teaching was found only in the monasteries: these became poorly recruited....

Even in the monasteries the doctrine taught bore a closer resemblance to Hinduism than the preaching of Gotama and it is the absence of the protestant spirit, this pliant adaptability to the ideas of each age which caused Indian Buddhism to lose its individuality and separate existence.'

Jainism continued to flourish in the extreme west, Gujarat and Rajasthan. But the dominant creed of India was Hinduism which received a vigorous impetus with the growth of new popular forms and philosophies. Many sects and cults offering loving faith to Siva, Sakti and Vishnu, who were the major deities, and to numerous other gods and goddesses who were identified with them, sprang up into existence. It must be emphasised that these cults and sects were all basically identical in their general outlook and differed only in the nature of their deities and the performance of their prescribed rituals. Gradually there grew a spirit of strong sectarianism and the leaders of each religious group wishing to overpower their rivals not only cited the authority of the Vedas to uphold their individual doctrines and practices, but also competed among themselves to win the favours of the princes. The rulers themselves, keen to enlist the support of these leaders whose influence over the masses was tremendous, raised temples all over, lavishly
showered gifts on them and set up cliques of priestly supporters. The ascendency of the Brahmanas in the Hindu social structure was thus complete. Meanwhile, the temple became a place for the observance of rigid formalism and crass superstitions. A religion of rituals developed in which the blessings of the gods had to be won by prayers and sacrifices and their wrath propitiated by ceremonies—sometimes unwholesome, grotesque and orgiastic. The path of liberation became the religion of prescribed deeds and rites, and every aspect of life came to be strictly based on traditions laid down in innumerable religious texts. The scholastic theoreticians even prescribed the smallest details of the work of the artists and artisans who raised the shrines for gods, and the priests surrounded them with numerous rituals of prayers, invocations and ceremonies.

It was Sankaracharya who in the 8th century launched a vigorous onslaught on this barren ritualism that had displaced real religion. He gave his own commentaries on the Upanishads, provided Hinduism with the doctrine of monism and tried to purge the land of grosser forms of worship. A result of his crusades was that Buddhism disappeared from the country and Jainism withdrew into the background.

Upon this scene of clan conflicts and religious antagonism descended the might of Islam which had by A.D. 711 built up an empire extending from the frontiers of China to the shores of the Atlantic. The Muslim conquerors came to India first in A.D. 712 when Muhammad ibn-Kasim marching at the head of an army of the Arabs gained a foothold in the lower Indus valley for the Umayyad Caliphs. But further Muslim advance was held up by the inhospitality of the country and the difficulties of getting effectual aid from far off Baghdad, so that the Arab conquest became, as the historian Stanley Lane-Poole observes, only 'an episode in the history of India and of Islam, a triumph without results.' Nearly three centuries passed till the attacks were resumed on the country late in the 10th century. This time the move was made by the Seljuq Turks who poured into India from their cradle-land in Central Asia, from the north-west side. Their task was easy. The frontiers were weak, the Indian side ill-organised, and the national consciousness very much enfeebled on account of the lack of any political integrity in the country. In A.D. 1000 Mahmud started his annual forays from his kingdom of Ghazni and easily led his warriors, eager alike to obtain wealth and to destroy idolatry, far into the Gangetic valley and down south to Somnath in Kathiwar. These were merely raids of devastation, and the general conditions remained as heretofore except for the disappearance of the Hindu dominion from the Punjab.

Another century elapsed before the Muslims again marched into India in 1191. But the same incapacity to create an organised resistance on the part of the Hindus, which had earlier failed to stop the avalanche of Muslim power, frustrated once again their efforts to check Sultan Muhammad of Ghur, a neighbouring principality of Ghazni, and his slave governor, Qutbuddin Aibak, on their victory marches. The result was that the 13th century had hardly begun when the Muslims had nearly built up an empire in India which included the Punjab, the Gangetic plains, and Bengal. The Rajput soldiers no doubt fought with vigour and energy, but they fought singly, without unity or organisation, with a military system that was out of date, and for a cause which was nothing better than the upholding of clan or class interests. And so, a hundred years more and India down to Mysore lay at the feet of the Muslims. The Hindus at first could not visualise the future that lay in store for them. They had thought that the Muslims would be absorbed
INTRODUCTION

into their society in the same manner in which the earlier invading hordes had been amalgamated. But this was not to be. The Muslims, proud of their religion and culture, not only established an imperial unity in the country which radiated from Delhi, but looked down on the people of India as heathens to be held in check by a policy of reckless terrorism and economic exploitation.

The history of the Delhi Sultanate, prior to the appearance of the Mughals, is one of conspiracies, violent strifes for power and murders and of weak and dissipated rulers, succeeded sometimes by capable men, following in quick dynastic succession. The first of the dynasties is known as that of the Slaves which produced two Sultans of remarkable ability, Iltutmish and Balban, who carried the Muslim arms up to Ujjain in Central India and Bengal in the east. A still more aggressive militarism developed first under the Khiljis and then under the Tughluqs who overran the whole of India down to Madura between 1294 and 1326. The Delhi Empire, however, was soon rocked by rebellions. A number of new and powerful Sultanates under Muslim rulers were established at Jaunpur, Malwa, Gujarat, Bengal and in the Deccan. The sack of Delhi by the conqueror Timur of Samargand further reduced the empire of Delhi to the dimensions of a small principality. The disintegrating tendencies worked with so much force that it became impossible for the Sayyid and the Lodi Sultans of Delhi to check it and when the Mughals under Babur invaded India in 1526, Delhi could hardly offer any real resistance. Thereafter began another period of rule by Turkish Muslims which once again gave new directions to India’s history.

Although the direct effect of Muslim dominion on Indian soil was the loss of political power by the Hindus, an assessment of the first Islamic empire cannot but take note of the tremendous effect it had upon the evolution of Indian culture which makes the Islamic conquest a momentous event in the history of India. The main contribution of the Sultanate dynasties was the religion of Islam, which on the doctrinal side emphasised the unity of God, implying complete rejection of the worship of deities, and on the social side asserted a conception of human equality. Being the religion of the dominant power, which sometimes even enforced it at the point of the sword among the subject races, conversions from Hinduism to Islam were many and continuous. Hinduism as such, however, withstood the shock and kept on progressing. Impelled by a defensive feeling of insecurity the Hindu states of the north and the south organised resistance to Islam and their rulers became the staunch champions of their religion as were the Muslim sovereigns with regard to Islam. There were even great reform movements in Hinduism which first arose as a protest against the ‘Advaita’ doctrines of Sankaracharya and then as a reaction of the Hindu mind to the catastrophe of the Muslim conquests. They all proclaimed that truth is greater than religion, and laid emphasis on the personal God, who was accessible in his boundless love and mercy to every genuine devotee, irrespective of caste, creed or race. A fervour of devotion-ism developed, venerating Vishnu in his incarnations as Krishna and Ram, as the gods of all-embracing love. The Vaishnav creed was expounded throughout Northern India in the language of the people. Divine bliss was idealised in terms of human love, and the eternal sports between the Lord and the individual soul, represented by Krishna and Radha, gave rise to a wave of mystic emotions which were carried by Vidyapati, Mirabai, Chaitanya, Vallabhacharya and a number of other saints to all corners of the country. It also supplied immense impetus to literature and art. Although monotheistic doctrines and beliefs in the equality
of all men before one God are found in the Upanishads it can scarcely be denied that the emphasis which the leaders of the reform movements attached to them was directly the consequence of the impact of Islam on Hinduism. Impressed by the simplicity of the Muslim creed and its rigid insistence upon the oneness of God led them all to condemn caste distinctions, polytheism, idolatry, ritualism, and to plead for true faith, sincerity and purity of life.

Simultaneously, the Muslim Sufi orders, Muslim writers and poets showed a strong inclination to assimilate Hindu practices and doctrines. The administration itself inclined towards a closer collaboration with the Hindu population. While nowhere was the supremacy of Islam surrendered the Hindus were admitted into the bureaucracy and the army. Hindu music, dance and literature were given due honour at the courts and Hindu motifs in art blended more and more with the Islamic arts.

When we come to think of Islamic art seeking expression on Indian soil, we find it the antithesis of all that has been seen so far, postulating a clash of two divergent ideals, 'a conflict of realism with idealism, of the material with the visionary, of the concrete with the abstract.' To understand its character we must look into the background.

The fabric of Islamic art is raised in the regions of deserts and oases, where the sense of space is determined by the infinite stretch of sandy expanse and the endlessness of the cloudless sky, and the feeling by the cruelty and economy of a stern Nature. They have all strongly impressed themselves upon the consciousness of the people inhabiting those regions. The Muslim mind, therefore, in its earliest phase is found to be characterised mainly by 'the transcendence and masterfulness of the Reality, the insignificance of man and his works, the stretches of emptiness between instants of time and points of space, the sense of directness moral and intellectual, the periodicity of passionate energy and pathetic lethargy, the abstractness of thinking logical and geometrical, the absence of plastic feeling, the devotion to pure ideas and abhorrence of iconism and anthropomorphism, clarity and definiteness in seeing outlines, infinite elaboration of detail, a mystic faith in the immutable order of nature, a quiet resignation and a calm dignified submission to divine will.' This consciousness inevitably manifests itself in the religion and art of Islam. The earliest Islamic mind, however, was not itself creative aesthetically. Its arts truly emerged only after the original Arab consciousness was coloured and diversified by the Syrian, Byzantine, the Sassanian-Persian, the Turkish, the Mongol-Chinese and the Indian traditions.

The basic forms through which the Islamic feelings are realised in art are the pillared hall and the dome resting on pillars. An important aspect of Islamic art is the religious ban put upon the depiction of human and animal forms on account of Islamic prohibition against idolatry. Muslim sculpture, therefore, has been purely ornamental and a very significant contribution of Islam to the art of India has been in the field of geometrical, floral (arabesques) and calligraphic designs.

But while in North India Islamic culture made a decisive penetration into the Hindu fold the same cannot be said of the South, mainly because Islam failed to attain the status of the religion of the dominant power there. We saw how with the fall of the main branch of the Chalukyas the sovereignty of the Deccan had passed into the hands of the Rashtrakutas. They were a great military power and

1 T. Chand, Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, pp. 241-42.
waged frequent wars not only against the Eastern Chalukya kingdom, but also against the other powerful kingdoms of the South. The Rashtrakutas, however, soon exhausted their energies in wars and the Chalukyas slowly gathered strength. In 973, Taila II of the Chalukya dynasty overpowered the Rashtrakutas and laid the foundations of a new ruling house known as the Chalukyas of Kalyani. Taila was no doubt an able ruler, but he had to encounter a formidable rival in Rajaraja (A.D. 985-1012), the great builder of an extensive Chola empire, by extensive conquests. Rajaraja even humbled the Chalukyan power. The old glory of the Chalukya house, however, continued for some time more, but the end finally came in 1190 and the whole of the Deccan came to be divided between the Yadavas of Devagiri, the Kakatiyas of Warangal and the Hoysalas of Dorasamudra.

The Cholas remained the leading power in India from 985 to the middle of the thirteenth century, controlling also northern Ceylon and temporarily part of Bengal, Burma, Malaya and Sumatra. The three hundred years of the Chola rule constitute a period of brilliant oceanic policy, and of outstanding artistic achievements. With the growth of cult rituals vast courts and halls were added to the temples, which grew into temple towns where the gods kept court like kings. Even musicians and dancing girls were housed within the temple enclosures. Dancing developed as a great art, sacred to Siva Nataraja, its patron god. Towards the close of the 13th century the Chola Empire broke up, enabling the Pandyas to extend their authority. But neither the Pandyas nor the three great Deccan powers, the Yadavas, the Kakatiyas and the Hoysalas, were militarily strong enough to withstand the Islamic onslaughts which came from the North in the early 14th century. Sultan Alauddin Khilji's army general Malik Kafur overran the land upto Madura (A.D. 1306-1313), completely destroyed the political structure of the South and plunged the land into a state of utter chaos.

But it took a mere twenty-five years for the South to stabilize itself under a new state which came to be known to history as the Vijayanagar Empire, the successor to the glorious traditions alike of the Chalukyas, the Hoysalas, the Pallavas and the Cholas. The empire continued for over two hundred years, and as Vijayanagar was the outcome of a strong national feeling of the Hindus of South India to expel the Muslims from that part of the country it remained to the last day of its existence essentially a military state with a strong theocratic bias. It became the centre of a virile Hindu culture and its impressive and richly decorated temples are proofs of the intense religious sentiments that animated the people at this time.

Simultaneously a Muslim state grew up in the Deccan under the Bahmani dynasty which carried on a continuous war against Vijayanagar. The policy of the Bahmani kings was to encourage immigrants from Western Asia who arrived in ships to the ports of Western India to take up employment in the Bahmani administration. While the policy helped to maintain the Islamic character of the state in administration as well as in art in which the Persian accents dominated, it led to mutual dissensions and feuds, culminating towards the end of the 15th century in the break-up of the kingdom into five states of Bidar, Berar, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golconda, which often united only for the purpose of opposing the Vijayanagar power.

The conquest of Delhi in 1526 by Babur, originally Timurid ruler of Far-ghana, then of Samarcand, and still later of Kabul, inaugurated in India a period of rule by the Mughals who were Turkish foreigners, but very much Iranian in
culture. Babur succeeded in smashing the powers of the Lodi Sultans and the Rajput Ranas of Mewar. His son Humayun established a shaky authority over Bengal, Malwa and Gujarat, but was expelled in 1540 by Sher Shah Sur, who seized the throne of Delhi and established a Sur-Afghan empire which lasted for fifteen years. Meanwhile Humayun passed his time in exile at the court of the emperor of Persia. He could return only in 1554, but now even more Persianised in outlook. The Iranians who came with him or followed him, formed a ‘nucleus for the Persianisation’ of the Mughal Court.

Humayun’s son Akbar (A.D. 1556-1605) represents the climax of the constructive political endeavours of the Muslims in India. He was a great empire builder and the cardinal conception of his administrative genius throughout was to give India a political and cultural unification by the fusion of the Hindus and the Muslims in the many spheres of their corporate life. He pursued a definite policy of conciliation with the Hindus, entered into alliances with the Rajputs, married Hindu princesses, employed Hindus in high ranks and revoked iniquitous laws and taxes imposed on the Hindus by the previous Muslim rulers. The style of life at his court was enriched with Hindu features, and the Emperor propounded an idealism in art which was an expression of a composite Indian culture. The essential principles of his policy were maintained by his successors Jahangir and Shahjahan, but deliberately violated by Aurangzeb (A.D. 1658-1707) on account of the resumption of an orthodox Muslim policy. But even with Aurangzeb it remained his constant concern to consolidate his empire into an inviolable integrity.

Though the Mughal emperors were first and foremost the architects of a vast empire their contributions to all forms of cultural activity must under no circumstances be overlooked, for the new trends in the intellectual sphere which had their beginnings in the Turko-Afghan periods came to natural flowering in the reign of the Mughals. Culture during the Mughal period was state inspired, dependent almost entirely on imperial patronage. The political prestige of the Mughal emperors and their fame for generosity and infallible good taste attracted poets, scholars, thinkers and artists from all parts of Asia to their courts. Under their enlightened patronage Indian genius reached a high level in the realm of Persian, Sanskrit and Hindi literature. The peak was achieved in the poetical works of Tulsidas, Surdas, and Keshavadas which supplied spiritual sustenance to the people. The period witnessed the culmination of the Indo-Islamic expressions in art. Richly creative, it took possession of painting, architecture, crafts, and music, and in its progressive Indianisation achieved brilliant results. The quality of the arts in each instance was grandiose and ambitious, reflecting an unexampled spirit of luxury and splendour that pervaded the life of the court and of the nobility in the 16th and 17th centuries.

The intensity of Aurangzeb’s religious zeal generated forces hostile to the Empire. It roused the Marathas to lead a war of national resistance, created discontentment among the Sikhs, and caused a serious outbreak of anti-Imperial reactions all over. Soon the empire disintegrated. The Rajput princes withdrew to their own states, the Marathas extended their authority northwards, the Punjab fell into disruption, Nadir Shah from Persia sacked Delhi, and the provincial viceroy, chief among whom were those of the Deccan, Oudh and Bengal, asserted their independence. The titular Delhi Emperor himself had to accept in 1803 the tutelage of the British, who had now become the next upholders of the doctrine of the unity of India.
The decline of the imperial ascendency was reflected in art which though still keeping up the process of Hindu-Muslim rapprochement, was lacking both in vitality and refinement. Architecture became cheap and over-ornate, and painting survived with mere superficial richness at the courts of the Nawabs who took delight in sentimental romances and foppishness. The fashions of the nobles encouraged manufacturers of cloth and artistic goods to keep up the traditions of the handicrafts. An art that flourished most in the sensuous atmosphere of the courts and overwhelmed it by its spiritual appeal was the North Indian Kathak style of dancing.

Artistic energy which had manifested itself with such brilliance at the Mughal courts in the 17th century radiated its influence to the Hindu states of Rajasthan and the Western Himalayas, where both in architecture and painting, the classic Imperial style was adapted to the taste of the princes. But while the Mughal art embodied a purely aristocratic and sensuous spirit, this late phase of Hindu art intimately tied with the life of the people was dominated by indigenous feelings for Nature, by romanticism and a genuine Vaishnava mysticism whose symbol was the divine love of Krishna and Radha.

By the end of the 18th century the creative energy of Indian art of the Islamic phase had completely exhausted itself. The assimilation of the classical Islamic influences into the ageless traditions of India had obviously achieved fullness and Indian art in Mughal style had passed the peak. The time had surely come for a fresh import of new ideas and ideals. This came from the contact with Europe.

The Europeans arrived in India from the sea side. The earliest to come were the Portuguese traders who established their settlements at Goa, Diu, Daman, and other places on the coastline. They were followed by the British merchants who erected fortified places at Surat, Madras, Masulipatam, and Fort William; the French who settled at Pondicherry and Chandernagore; and the Dutch who built factories at Cochin, Masulipatam and certain other stations. But the business settlements and factories actually concealed the political designs of their masters, who made them their bases for further territorial acquisitions in the country. The European merchants effectively intervened in the affairs of the states, took sides, and perfected a method by which political power could be exercised through puppet sovereigns. Ultimately, the British emerged as the superior power in the colonial competition, and by 1803 became the real sovereigns of practically the whole of India. The Mughal court, however, still had great prestige with the masses. The British, therefore, had for some time to pretend to exercise their authority under the firmans of the Mughal Emperor who actually lived on their pensions. And for the same reason the new rulers had also to respect the Mughal civilization.

But all this did not deter them from importing Western cultural elements into the country. Already the Portuguese had introduced the late Renaissance and Baroque art of their country into their settlements, and the French had impregnated the Indian princes and the aristocrats at a number of places all over the country with their own 18th century tastes in matters of palace and house decoration.

The British, on their part, had a number of important buildings designed according to the style of architecture that was being practised in England. With the architectural modes, sculptures and paintings too found their way into India, and along with them came their artistic standards and moral and aesthetic laws, which succeeded in vitiating the Indian mind to such an extent that it became a stranger to its own inheritance.
In 1858, after the suppression of the first Indian war of independence, the British Parliament took over the administration of India from the East India Company, the name given to the British trading organisation, and pledged itself to develop the country towards modern Western civilisation and democracy. About the close of the 19th century, however, a movement for national regeneration began to take shape in the country. A strong nationalistic feeling aroused in the people a sense of pride in their history and prepared them for a renewal of their destiny. The urge to re-build the life and the society and to rehabilitate the national greatness found expression in many endeavours. One of them was represented by the awakening of the community to its art heritage. Two Englishmen, Lord Curzon and Mr. E. B. Havell, took the lead in freeing Indian art of the influences of the decadent Western concepts and tried to turn the eyes of the Indians to all that was truly glorious in their own past. Their efforts forced the enlightened section of the Indian society to a certain amount of heart-searching, and inspired an entire generation of artists to perceive new directions in their own traditions. But their strivings failed to emerge as a living force. As the original inspirations flagged, the pupils of the pioneers became mere wholesale imitators of the ancient ideals and in doing so tended towards the sentimental. This art could not appeal to a generation of young moderns who were seeking to bring about a political and social revolution in the country. But when due mainly to the revolutionary enthusiasm of the time and the dynamic leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, the national pride and dignity which the Indians had lost for many centuries reasserted itself, and India became independent of the British domination in 1947, a new spirit came to permeate Indian thought and feelings which is cosmopolitan in ideas and ideals and truly national in its interpretation and assimilation.

Thus for 5,000 years of unbroken succession India has consciously striven towards the development of a culture that has given value, character and distinction to her civilisation. Again and again in her history her spirit has been strengthened and her intellectual resources augmented by the assimilation of new ideas and ideals whose beauty and power, depth and richness, have in every phase flowered forth in the language of art. The expressions have no doubt been varied, but underlying all the bewildering variety of Indian art, there may be discovered a fundamental idealism which is far more persistent than the apparent diversities of forms and styles evolved. What after all is that idealism?

As we have seen, from very early times, the Indian mind carried on an epic quest for the profundities of God and Life and for everything that concerned human destiny. The great religio-philosophical systems that from time to time emerged in consequence of this, while individually proposing their own solutions to the problems of life and thought, invariably saw the Supreme Divinity manifesting itself in all existing things, creating, sustaining, preserving and receiving back into itself again all worlds. And they all proclaimed that man could become that Divinity, become a god, become one with God, become the ineffable Brahman. This was the Transcendent Truth to which the way of access for the philosopher was through his intuition and for the artist through his vision.

In classic Sanskrit treatises the artist has been given various names. He is known as the Sadhaka (Achiever), the Mantrin (Wizard), the Yogi (Mystic). All these words collectively signify the peculiar aesthetic bent of the Indian mind, realising itself in the effort of the artist to represent through colour and plastic forms his inner experiences rather than any external idea of the thing seen by
him.’ The aim is not observation but contemplation, not so much the recording of the visual experience that is in truth but Illusion, as the manifestation of the Spirit that lies behind the sensuous appearance of things.

But the search after the interior profundities is never complete unless the artist is also able to discover the significance of life and life processes in harmony with the Spirit. Life being essentially a spiritual progression the artist has also to symbolise a soul in action. He has, therefore, to integrate the movement of an inner consciousness with the representation of the phenomenal universe around him. Indian art is as much real as any other art. Only the term ‘reality’ has a different meaning for the Indian artist. The reality which has ever been his main pre-occupation consists in relating the forms of the visible world with the intrinsic reality that belongs to the forms.

The ideal thus being primarily spiritual and emotional and only secondarily secular and rational, portrayal of the mere perfection of physical structure, as with the Greeks, was never the highest artistic aim in India, nor was it ever glorified by the Indian artist. He, on the other hand, considered that even the perfect human figure could not fully manifest the higher spiritual values of life, nor contain within himself the attributes and qualities of the Divinity, who is philosophically ‘Supersensuous, Infinite, Unconditioned and Absolute.’

In his endeavour, therefore, to give to such abstract conceptions a local habitation in art forms, the artist adhered to the tradition of a supremely creative imagination. He consciously placed before himself an ideal, which was not based upon the contemplation of the human form, but upon meditation of the Divine form whose nature was described in the scriptures. It is a ‘Yoga’ for the successful realisation of which by the artist, Sukracharya said: ‘The spiritual vision is the best and the truest standard for him. He should depend upon it and not at all upon the visible objects perceived by the external senses.’ For the same reason, even when representing human beauty, the conception of beauty was not borrowed from the idealised human forms, but from idealised Nature. In this way suggestion and symbolism became the language of Indian art and the artist gave an idealistic and symbolic character to his art creations.

Consequently, the figures in the best periods of Indian art are considered not in their fine exterior or anatomically perfect form, but in the degree of their efficacy as plastic figuration for imitating Divinity or any spiritual conception that pervades and animates them. The supreme function of art lies in the distinctive power of its suggestiveness. Energies are concentrated in the super-human figures so transforming their aspect that considered on the basis of actual appearance they suggest attributes and possibilities beyond the range of mortals. Taking the well-known example of the image of Maheshamurti from the Elephanta cave, one will be struck by the grand and stupifying majesty of God whose three heads, although anatomically inconceivable, are a simple symbolic device to represent the unification of the three different aspects of the Supreme Being. Similarly, in the ample hips and full breasts of the woman in sculpture, we perceive not the physical charm of the female form, but the majesty and mystery of the Divine Mother. The portrayal of the same Reality makes flowers and plants surge in curves unforeseen by physical Nature, yet significant of a life which belongs to a ‘psychological Nature.’

Superficially viewed, a considerable amount of the work of Indian artists exhibits an intensely sensuous awareness of life. By many people the sex symbolism

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1 Sukranitisara, 4.4.147-151.
in Indian art has even been misconceived. The message, however, which even such works invariably convey is that there is no aspect whatever in existence, animate or inanimate, in which we should not perceive a projection of the personality of Divinity. In the vision of existence the Indian artist has always believed that there is no part of it that may not be symbolic of the integrated approach between the Spirit and the Matter. In the voluptuous figures of women in the secular scenes at Ajanta and Bagh, in the chaste nudity of Yakshini figures or in the vigorous grouping of dancers caught in the gay abandon of movement at Sanchi, and in the lovely and passionate conjugal embraces of the man and woman at Khajuraho and Konaaraka, life has been seen in all sincerity as only the field and condition for the Spirit to fulfill itself. The love of man for woman or for Nature are one with his love for God, and no distinction has ever been drawn between the two.

Faith and discipline largely helped form the artist's vision. The Silpi-Yogin (mystic-artist) of the scriptures is asked to go through a course of rigorous spiritual discipline before he may be permitted to learn the elements of his crafts. He should purge his mind of all the impure passions that blur his views, 'he should understand the Atharvaveda, the thirty-two Silpasastras and the Vedic mantras by which the deities are invoked...he should be one who wears the sacred thread, a necklace of holy beads and a ring of sacred “Kusa” grass on his finger, and delighting in the worship of God, faithful to his wife, avoiding strange women, true to his family, of a pure heart, and virtuous, chanting the Vedas, constant in the performance of ceremonial duties, piously acquiring a knowledge of various sciences.' He should follow the course of Nature, be in sympathy with the inner law of teleology that binds man with the animal, vegetable and the inanimate world, should discover by his contemplation the inner secret of his teleology as transformation and aim at the expression of man with the co-operation of the life that flows through Nature. To the traditional Indian artist art was not the medium to give vent to aesthetic impulses, but an aid to, and a means of spiritual progress, therefore, in practice, an invocation to the divine Spirit. The rishis said: 'Worship Siva only after yourself becoming Siva.' By practising the Yoga in the right Spirit the artist-seeker grew in his spiritual stature, and in this context the material advantages were meaningless to him. That explains why the ancient artists remain unknown to us and also emphasises the truly national character of Indian art.

This is not of course to suggest that the arts were not cultivated also as individual accomplishments. But whoever the artist was, he had to respect the tradition and translate his aesthetic impulses in complete agreement with the ideals of the community. Ideals of formal beauty entered even the decorative arts and other lesser arts. The craftsman's workmanship in rhythmic forms, the simple expressions of delight of the folk musician and dancer, the variegated patterns of the rich floral and geometrical motifs of the Rangolis, are all inspired by an idealism wherein the thought, the life and the aspirations of the community may be seen sincerely reflected.

1 Manasara Silpassastra, 1.
SCULPTURE

The earliest known phase of Indian art belongs to the Indus Valley culture (from about the middle of the 3rd millennium B.C. to about 1700 B.C.) which was brought to light in the nineteen-twenties by the sensational discovery of a great civilisation that existed there in a mature form contemporaneously with the ancient culture of Mesopotamia. Excavations at Rupar in the Punjab, Lothal in Gujarat, and at a number of other places in their vicinity confirm the first dramatic revelations of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro which are its principal sites. The culture disclosed at these sites is essentially urban, the pre-eminence of which can be judged from the scientific lay-out of the magnificent cities, the excellence of the materials used in the construction of the houses, whose comforts included bathrooms, upper storeys and wells, the existence of temples, assembly halls, granaries, barracks, workshops, hostels and market places, an almost modern drainage system, beautiful personal ornaments, use of gold, silver, lead, copper, tin alloys, precious stones, cotton and wool and the domestication of animals like the humped bull, the buffalo, the sheep, the elephant and the camel. The discovery of two seals of the Mohenjo-Daro type in Elan and Mesopotamia and of a cuneiform inscription at Mohenjo-Daro offer evidence of the fact that there was at least cultural intercourse between these countries. A question that cannot yet be answered definitely concerns the religious belief of the Indus people. But a study of the fragments discovered on the sites has led scholars to believe that the religion of the Indus people was the lineal progenitor of Hinduism. The cult of the Divine Mother, approximating to the Sakti worship of the later times, appears to have been widely prevalent. The worship of a male god identified with Siva-Pasupati and of the phallic emblems also prevailed in addition to the worship of trees, animals and the sun.

The Indus Valley Civilisation

It was natural that arts and crafts should flourish greatly in a society so highly developed socially and economically. For the present we shall confine ourselves only to the study of sculptural art which was concerned largely with the representation of forms in relief as well as in the round. The materials are limestone and bronze besides terracotta. The last named probably belongs to a popular folk art tradition, while the developed and stylised achievements in stone and bronze represent an art of the sophisticated section of the society. The Indus sculpture, however, does not mark the beginnings of plastic art in India, as it is much too mature and subtle to be the earliest effort in such practices. At Harappa, Mohenjo-Daro and other places, we are confronted with an art of such high quality that it may safely be said to be based on the accumulated artistic experience of ages.

Among the many small fragments of sculpture brought to light, the most aesthetically striking are the two mutilated torsos in limestone from Harappa.
The first carved in red sandstone is a male torso, completely nude. The head and the arms, which were made of separate pieces and were socketed into the torso, are now missing, and the legs from the thighs downwards are broken. The statuette is posed frontally with the shoulders thrown back and abdomen slightly prominent. The modelling, refined, naturalistic and truthful, is particularly impressive in the interpretation of the soft quality of the flesh which has been done with great plastic subtlety. It exhibits a sensitive rendering of volume implying a mature sculptural tradition.

The other Harappa statuette, carved in greyish limestone, represents a dancing male figure, perhaps originally ithyphallic, four-armed and three-headed, as suggested by John Marshall. The head or the heads and the arms fitted separately through socket-holes down the thick neck and the shoulders are missing, and the legs broken away. It appears that the figure in its undamaged state stood on its right leg and the left leg was drawn up high in front while the upper body was turned to the left to counterbalance the swing. Though similar to the first torso in technique and modelling, it does not show the same regard for anatomical detail; yet the supple and gliding contours endow the image with a vital dynamic quality.

Imbued with the same sophistication which we recognise in the two Harappa statuettes is the bronze figurine of a dancing girl found at Mohenjo-Daro. The urge to draw out the metal into long wires probably accounts for the disproportionately long legs and arms and the peculiar shape of bangles and head-dress. The figurine, however, is not without a naturalism in modelling as can be seen in the treatment of the back, the hips, the buttocks and the legs, which are marked by a sensuous quality and alertness in movement.

Inspired by a different kind of feeling for form are a number of limestone and steatite statues, also from Mohenjo-Daro. They probably belong to a hieratic tradition. The single steatite piece, seven inches in height, is the best preserved of them all. It represents the head and shoulders of a man, the face wearing a short beard and a closely cut moustache, and the body draped with a trefoil-patterned shawl passing round the left shoulder and under the right arm. The way in which the glance of the eyes is directed to the tip of the nose is suggestive of meditation (Yoga) and has led scholars to identify it as the image of a deity or priest. The nose is straight, the mouth full, and the forehead extremely low. It, however, lacks the naturalism of the Harappa statues, the whole body being rigidly compressed into garments. This statue and the other bearded heads found at Mohenjo-Daro have some counterparts in the statuary of Sumerian art. But the similarities which consist mainly in the general compactness of the bodies, in the plastic treatment of the heads in hard planes and in such technical details as the inlaying of the eyes with shell are only superficial and do not suggest any real affinity with the contemporary Sumerian figures which are distinguished by short thick necks supporting broad skulls.

The statues from Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro which we have examined suggest the basic attributes of Indian sculpture of subsequent ages. In the degree of realistic representation, particularly the Harappa group, and in modelling and characterisation, the figures at both the places anticipate the iconographic and the stylistic elements of the later periods of Indian art.

The plastic art of the Indus Valley culture includes a wide variety of terracotta figurines as well. They are of both animal and human forms. By far the most numerous in this collection are the female images of what has been taken to be a
mother-goddess. Although primitive in looks they do not suffer from any lack of attention to detail and finish. The technique of pinching out the form by the hand while the clay was still soft and of the application of separate pellets of clay for the head-dress, eyes, nose, lips, breasts and ornaments, which are elaborate as well as large in number, was universally applied.

Probably the most characteristic among the objects found at the Indus sites are the numerous small square steatite seals with carved designs along with pictographic scripts. They were apparently used for sealing compacts and as amulets though their precise function is still a matter for conjecture. The subject of the engraving is an animal figure whose head and body are shown in profile, and the horns, eyes, and sometimes the hoofs, are frontally depicted—a method adopted by the artists to portray the most significant and complete impression of the animal. As Benjamin Rowland puts it: 'The animal seals are among the world's greatest examples of an artist's ability to embody the essentials of a given form in artistic shape. These are not portraits of any individual bulls, but universal representation of a species.'

Some of these animals are fabulous, such as unicorns and chimeras, but the living beasts are represented by bulls, buffaloes and bisons, which most frequently appear on the seals. Occasionally elephants, rhinoceroses, tigers, crocodiles, and antelopes are also seen portrayed.

Viewed from the aesthetic view-point, the representation of these animals achieves the same perfection as the human statuettes from Harappa. The physical forms have been rendered meticulously in naturalistic detail, and in the best engravings, such as the representation of the humped bull, the sustained animality and majesty of the beast is effectively conveyed through its mighty body surging with pent-up energy.

Apart from the animals, certain other motifs and designs on the seals are relevant to the later history of Indian sculpture. On one of them we find a three-faced horned deity seated in a Yoga posture, and surrounded by a number of wild beasts. Marshall recognises in this representation the prototype of the Hindu god Siva. As a motif only, the most significant aspect of this seal is that in it we have the earliest manifestation of an outstanding attribute of Indian iconography which lies in suggesting superhuman potentialities by adopting such devices as multiple heads and limbs. Frequently tree designs appear on the seals, the linear stylisation of which and the peculiar mode of rendering the leaves are related to examples coming later. On other seals representations of horned goddesses in trees anticipate the tree spirits that figure in the historical periods of Indian art.

Thereafter intervenes a period of 2000 years, separating the Harappan phase of art from the earliest historic phase known to us. This period saw the arrival of the Aryans in India, their gradual absorption into the main stream of Indian civilisation and the Indian population, and the emergence of all the great religious systems that have ever after dominated the art and thought of India and of a great part of Asia.

The Vedic Culture

Hinduism developed as a system of belief in the first millennium B.C. when the Vedic Aryan culture which consisted in the worship of the great powers of

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1 Benjamin Rowland, Art and Architecture of India, p. 17.
Nature by means of hymns and sacrifices without idols or temples was gradually but deeply influenced by the Dravidian faith of the indigenous population of India, which had evolved cults of the phallus, of mother-goddesses (Yakshas, Yakshinis and Nagas) and other Nature spirits. In the worship of their cults, the Dravidians employed images which must have been moulded in the simplest and the crudest shapes out of the very earth they stood upon. By the time of the Upanishads (800-600 B.C.) Hinduism had developed its principal aspects, wherein we encounter a ritual of sacrifice, the practice of a disciplined life and the concept of Release through Knowledge. The later Hinduism saw also the acceptance by the Aryans of the Dravidian doctrine of transmigration of souls through endless re-incarnations in various living forms as a result of good or bad conduct, the concept of life of asceticism and ecstatic meditation (Yoga), and the development of a devotional theism.

Indeed, by the 6th century B.C. Hinduism had developed a philosophy so subtle and a ritual so complicated that it got divorced from the life of the ordinary men and women. Such a state of affairs was bound to evoke a reaction in favour of a more humanistic approach towards religion. Among the various revolts which thus sprang up, the two most important were Buddhism and Jainism. While preserving the essentials of the traditional Aryan way of life they provided an opportunity of personal salvation to the individual without resort to priestly ritual, and taught that liberation from re-birth could be obtained by following the right belief, right thought, right speech, and right action.

The Vedic Aryan culture, concerned as it was with metaphysics and abstract speculation, was not favourable to the development of a monumental plastic art. The inheritance of the Aryan traditions therefore prevented the growth of the arts in the earliest phase of Buddhism, known as the Hinayana. All forms of art were, according to the teachings of the Buddha, expressions of and lead to desire and therefore should be shunned by one who aspires for the final goal. The monks were expressly forbidden to paint pictures on the walls of the monasteries or to indulge in the art of sculpture. But we may assume that from the last days of the Indus Civilisation a continuity was maintained in Indian art traditions. We have, however, no concrete evidence of such continuity in sculpture until we come to the age of the Mauryas.

**THE MAURYA PERIOD**

The rise of the Mauryas as a ruling dynasty represents an important landmark. During the chaos following the collapse of the Greek power which had been established in Northern India in the wake of Alexander’s invasion, Chandragupta Maurya became the first historical paramount sovereign of an empire that extended from the north to Central India. Asoka was the most illustrious of the Mauryas. He embraced Buddhism and adopted it as the state religion to serve a convenient Imperial policy which was to achieve world conquest not by force but through the Law and Peace of the Buddha. The intense Buddhist missionary activities that thereafter followed covered several countries of Asia, and in India encouraged in the field of art the development of distinct sculptural styles.

What we know as the art of the Maurya period is, on the one hand, the officially patronised art of Asoka which is a development of the traditional art with possible impressions of Perso-Hellenistic influences and on the other, the
less mature form perpetuating the earlier indigenous art of the country. Centuries of plastic practices in such impermanent materials as wood and clay had preceded the achievements of this period which now took up stone as a medium of expression with such perfect skill and mastery that it indicated a long and accomplished practice in stone-carving.

The court art of Asoka is best seen in the whitish grey sandstone columns named after him and erected by him all over his empire either to mark a sacred site associated with Buddha's life or to commemorate a great event. On many of these pillars are inscribed the famous edicts of Asoka propagating the 'Dharma' (Buddhist Law) and indirectly preaching the Imperial sermons to his people. Rising to an average height of about 40 feet, the pillars in their most developed state, are tall tapering monoliths with sculptured capitals, incorporating a series of fluted petals in elongated shape (which falling together take the form of a bell, commonly known as the Persepolitan Bell) surmounted by a circular abacus ornamented with animal and floral motifs in relief, and a crowning animal sculpture in the round, which is usually the lion, bull, or elephant, represented singly on the early capitals, but grouped on the later ones.

The remains of about ten such pillars, some in a perfect state of preservation and others fragmentary, have been discovered. For bold designing, technical skill, and expressive symbolism, Asokan pillars hold a high place in the history of Indian art. For workmanship alone they are among the marvels of art. But it is in the massive Buddhist conception poised on the top that the artist has shown the greatest imagination and skill. The animals which are the main features of the scheme are superb creations, simply and realistically modelled and informed with a distinctly lively and natural expression. The Bull capital from Rampurva (now in the National Museum at New Delhi) and the Lion capital from Sarnath are among the most impressive pieces. The Rampurva bull bears a plastic quality which is strikingly similar to the one we recognise in the portrayal of animals on the Indus seals, both in the precise modelling and in the quality of naturalistic representation.

Compared with the bull, the lion figures on the other capitals exhibit a somewhat conventional approach in representation. By far the most celebrated of the lion capitals is the one at Sarnath which originally stood in the Deer Park, scene of the Buddha's first sermon, as an outstanding monument to the power and brilliance of the Maurya art. The four addorsed lions above the abacus, which bears carvings in bold relief of a striding elephant, a galloping horse, a walking bull, and a prancing lion, symbolic of the guardians of the four quarters, are in treatment more stylised than the smaller figures whose spirited realism appears in strong contrast with them. Nevertheless, the crowning lions with their intense muscles and swelling veins, have been invested with a power and 'flexible naturalism' which is very much Indian in spirit.

In its original form a gigantic stone wheel, the Dharma Chakra (the Wheel of Law), crowned the top of the lions, meant to symbolise the proclamation of the Law in the four quarters.

The obvious relationship of these edict pillars combining the bell capital with joined heraldic animals, with columns found in the palace architecture of Achaemenid Iran in the ruins of Persepolis has often been stressed to suggest borrowings from the Achaemenian prototypes. Similarly, in the vividly realistic modelling of the smaller animal figures some scholars recognise a style related to
Greek tradition. And they regard it as not unlikely that the workmanship of the monuments was carried out by sculptors of Graeco-Iranian origin. Such opinions, however, are based merely on conjectures. There is no doubt that the Maurya emperors had many contacts, both political and cultural, with the Greeks and the Persians, particularly with the great Seleucid kings who may be described as successors of Alexander the Great and of the Achaemenids of Iran as well. But in design and conception the Asokan pillars are so truly Indian and Buddhist that their affinities in stylistic execution with the West Asiatic traditions may easily be explained, as Coomaraswamy observes, by accepting the possibility of ‘inheritance of common artistic traditions.’

It is not certain whether all the Maurya columns were erected by Asoka or whether some of them that might be standing from before his time were appropriated by this sovereign for his use. The latter possibility is suggested by the Rupnath and Sassaram Edicts and by the Pillar Edict No. VII where Asoka says:

‘This script on Dharma must be engraved where either stone pillars or stone slabs are (available).’

Another group of figures, tentatively ascribed to the Maurya period, are best exemplified in the Besnagar Yakshi (Indian Museum, Calcutta), the Parkham Yaksha (Mathura Museum), the Didarganj Yakshi (Patna Museum) and the two headless figures from Patna. Cast in colossal proportions these standing grey-stone statues are characteristically Indian in form, drapery and ornamentation. But they have been the subject of considerable controversy as regards their dating on account of some wide divergences in their technique and artistic expressions. The Parkham Yaksha, more easily admitted to belong to the Maurya phase, is comparatively crude and stiff. Conceived as frontal in treatment, the figure with all its superhuman size, tremendous volume, and massive portliness, loses much of its appeal from lack of any co-ordination of the details in modelling. We notice the same archaic heaviness in the two headless statues from Patna and in the Yakshi figure from Besnagar, although the forms are more rounded and the linear contours smoother.

But representing entirely different plastic and aesthetic conceptions is the gigantic Yakshini figure from Didarganj, which is suggestive of a long established tradition. Although it has the frontality and something of the stiffness of the Parkham statue, there is a highly sensitive rendering of the limbs and an almost successful realisation of a full and voluptuous form pleasingly integrated into an organic whole. For its advanced technical aptitudes and highly accomplished plastic treatment this statue has sometimes been chronologically placed in the same period as the Sanchi Yakshinis coming later.

THE EARLY CLASSIC PERIOD

The Mauryas were followed by the Sungas as the chief ruling power in the North in 184 B.C. Magadha was the centre of their empire which extended to Malwa in Central India. Another dynasty by the name of the Satavahanas rose into prominence in south-eastern Maharashtra in the first quarter of the first century B.C. and soon assumed sovereign authority over a region from Andhradesha through the Deccan to the Western Ghats and upto Central India. Art, under the patronage of these two houses, entered a phase of intense creative activity, which combined
SCULPTURE represents an indigenous artistic movement, with its principal source of sustenance in the religion of the Buddha.

Early Buddhism, as indicated earlier, was not favourable to the growth of the arts. Its austere religious ideals and notions of spiritual deliverance through asceticism had encouraged in it a tendency to regard the arts only in their sensual aspect. Even an attractive literary form for the presentation of the Dharma was not approved. The need, however, to gather mass support for the religion compelled Buddhism to keep at bay its hedonistic views on art and to employ a language well understood by the common people. It was easily done. In welcoming the non-Aryan elements of society within its fold Buddhism had to give recognition to the popular cults of the soil and of Nature and to their beliefs, practices, and modes of worship. It soon led to the development of a Buddhist pantheon which was peopled by the fertility spirits and godlings of the earliest Dravidian religion, and so much were they venerated in Buddhist ritualistic practices that their presence in the monuments of early Buddhist art is not merely for decoration but as principal characters in the mythology of Buddhism.

Equally significant are the implications of the doctrine of re-incarnation which early Buddhism accepted. It meant stressing the ‘unity of all life’ and the ‘identification of man with nature through the very forms of life through which the Buddha and man had passed before their final birth into the human world.’ It evoked intense and warm feelings of kinship and affection for plant and animal lives whose many details were meticulously recorded in the arts of the period.

Artistically, the productions of the Sunga and the Andhra periods, known in the history of art as ‘Early Classic,’ mark a stage in the gradual progression from an archaic phase of expression towards sophistication and increasing elaboration of the final development of Indian art. The primitive directness and solid volume of the earlier periods will now be found co-ordinated with a flowing linear rhythm which extends also to depth.

This early phase of classical plastic art had several prolific centres of activity throughout the country. The principal monuments are the carved railings and gateways surrounding the Buddhist shrines, commonly known as stupa, at Bharhut, Sanchi and Bodh-Gaya in the north, and the rock-cut decorations of the early cave-shrines of Bhaja, Kondane and Pithalkhora in Western India. The majority of the sculptures are executed in varying degrees of relief, arranged in oblong, square, round and half-round panels in accordance with the demands of architectonic decoration. Never attempting to interpret the spiritual ideals in terms of form, the purpose of the artist was to give expression to the basic principles of Buddhism in the simplest and most expressive language which he could command, and this he did by portraying stories of the historical phase, and of the previous incarnations of the Master, the Bodhisattva as he was then known, when in either animal or human form he was acquiring merit that enabled him to attain Buddhahood in his final human life.

The scenes portrayed in these sculptures are both numerous and varied. The important events in the life of the Buddha are narrated in association with elaborate representations of royal processions, trees, animals, lakes, rivers, boats, chariots, bullock-carts, dancers, musicians, and a great variety of the symbols of royalty. But amongst the most prominent decorations are the carvings of the Yakshas (guardians of the mineral treasures hid in the earth), the Yakshinis (female counterpart of the Yakshas, and a sort of Indian dryad) and the Nagas (semi-divine beings,
serpentine in form), originally associated with forests, trees and still waters as spirits and genii in non-Aryan India. In large size and in bolder relief than figures of other compositions, they cling to or project from the entire surfaces of the railing posts, or else almost fully modelled in the round they act as brackets. The Yakshini, which is a fertility symbol and stands for the life-force of the tree, is frequently found as holding a tree branch or standing with one leg entwined around the trunk of a flowering tree. Such representations may be interpreted in the light of the ancient texts describing the power of lovely women to coax trees into bringing forth flowers and fruits by embracing the trunk or kicking it with their feet. This woman-and-tree arrangement is one of the most pleasing motifs and has continually figured in Indian art. She exhibits the features that India has always cherished in the female body—full and firm breasts and fully rounded thighs. But as the art movement advances she assumes a form more highly sensuous, which later is made to suggest the most essential role of woman, that of motherhood.

In these sculptures we do not come across the figural representation of the Master. His actual likeness was regarded as too sacred to admit of representation. It had been religiously ordained that 'on the dissolution of the body, neither gods nor men shall see him,'¹ and there were definite injunctions in Buddhism against depicting the human form of the Lord. Such restrictions on portraiture, therefore, gave rise to symbols to represent his mortal presence. The symbols, however, were taken directly out of the beliefs of the people and customs prevailing in the society. His nativity is often illustrated by the lotus, bull, elephant or by a pair of elephants spraying water from jars held in their trunks over the seated or standing figure of a lady which is identified as that of Maya Devi, mother of the Buddha (because from ancient times the lady in the motif was meant to represent the fertility goddess and the elephant the rain-bearing clouds); his flight from the palace at dead of night is represented by showing his favourite horse Kanthaka riderless; his Enlightenment is symbolised by the Bodhi Tree under which he attained Illumination; the preaching of the sermon is suggested by a Wheel motif,² because in preaching the doctrine the Buddha only set in motion once again the Wheel of the Law; and the final act in the life of the Buddha, the Mahaparinirvana or his passing away, is symbolised by the stupa or the funeral mound with a parasol superimposed on it to suggest his universal supremacy. His presence is also shown by other symbols as the throne on which he sat, the platform on which he walked, his footprints and the lotus. Or he may be present even by not being alluded to at all through any concrete symbol (Jetavana Jataka from Bharhut). Not until the 1st century A.D. when the artistic urge triumphed over the scruples of the mind did the Buddha appear in person as a god simultaneously at Mathura and Gandhara.

The method of presentation is that of continuous narration, that is, the various incidents of a story taking place at a particular site are all grouped together in one and the same relief composition, regardless of the sequence of time. The basis of connectedness is the locality where the incidents are said to have taken place and the progress of the story is suggested by repeatedly showing the figure of the principal actor. Chronological sense is thus eliminated altogether and the story is visualised as a whole. A single medallion from the railing at Bharhut will serve to illustrate the method of the artists. It represents the Ruru Jataka.

¹ Dialogues of the Buddha. Translated by Rhys Davids, p. 54.
² The Wheel is associated with the Sun-god in Hindu mythology and appears as an emblem of power held in the hands of god Vishnu.
suicide having thrown himself into the Ganges was saved by the Bodhisattva, who was present there in the form of a golden gazelle. However, the miscreant betrayed the presence of the superb creature to king Brahmādatta. But instead of trying to escape from the captors, the Bodhisattva approached the hunting king and enlightened him about the ingratitude of the man he had saved from death. In the panel the story is related in three consecutive episodes: the stag rescuing the drowning man, king Brahmādatta drawing his bow at the stag, and the king making friends with the stag—the sameness of locality synthesising the narration into one unit.

Some noticeable conventions were also employed by the Indian artists to tackle the problem of third dimension. For the sake of a clear outline, the artists sacrificed depth and placed the figures above one another on the ground of the relief instead of presenting them according to optical perspective. Nor is the size of the figures conditioned by optical impressions. The figures are large or small in accordance with the importance of other persons or objects with which they enter into relation. Similarly, the visibility of the objects is also determined functionally and not as the eyes perceive. The artist represents what his mind knows to exist rather than what the eyes see. And thus the artist narrates the story as only a heroic legend could be narrated in a timeless and spaceless visualisation of objects and events.

**Bharhut**

One of the principal monuments of the early classic period was at Bharhut in north-central India. Now, except for the remnants of the railing and the eastern gateway, which are preserved in the Indian Museum at Calcutta and in a number of European and American collections, there is nothing left of the original stupa. An inscription on the gateway records its erection during the supremacy of the Sungas—‘Suganam raje’ (184 B.C. to 72 B.C.). The workmanship of the sculpture, however, varies considerably in quality and technique, which may probably be explained by the fact that at least the sculptural art was a work extended over many years and executed by many different craftsmen from all parts of India.

The stupa was originally the primitive idea of a burial mound. After the passing away of the Buddha his ashes, following an ancient custom reserved for the remains of nobles and saints, were enshrined under a number of such artificial hillocks of earth and bricks. Later the stupa was adopted by the Buddhists as the symbol of the Buddha’s achievement of Nirvana as also of his outward and visual manifestation. And in no time, the hemisphere-shaped tumulus erected on sites which had been sanctified by the presence of the Buddha during his life-time, or where the body relics of the Master or of other Buddhist saints were buried, became objects of cult worship, around which the monks and the lay-worshippers performed the ritual of circumambulation, keeping the stupa always on their right as they moved.

The processional path around the Bharhut stupa was fenced in by a circle of balustrades of massive stones with openings at the four cardinal points which were decorated with pillared gateways. The railings and the gateways were probably constructed first in wood and later worked in stone in the wood-carver’s technique. But for some still undiscovered reason, the Maurya technique of polishing the stone so that it acquired a glossy surface is not found in the Sunga or the later art.
The Bharhut reliefs carved on the gateway and the railing display narrative scenes from the historical and legendary lives of the Buddha, or illustrate incidents of contemporary social life and the current religious concepts and tendencies. One will find here men, women, ascetics and traders, attired and bejewelled according to their station in life and engaged with dignity in their particular callings. There is no battle theme or a scene of conflict and suffering. But there are festival events in abundance revealing a healthy indulgence in the pleasures of the material life. The landscapes show trees and forests, lakes and rivers and a large number of animals, both real and fabulous. The lions and elephants, among the known animals, are popular motifs. In the portrayal of animal life the artists exhibit such an intimate knowledge of the types and habits of the various jungle beasts that, as Fergusson remarks, "some animals such as elephants, deer and monkeys are better represented there than in any sculpture known in any part of the world. . . ." Here is also an abundance of flowers and creepers carved, as a rule, with remarkable delicacy and fine workmanship. We find medallions filled with floral motifs, and coping stones adorned with the wavy creeper design that glides along the entire length, binding together the various events sculptured over the surface.

Single images, in very high relief, sculptured on the upright pillars add to the richness and variety of Bharhut decorations. Among the large individual figures, whose names are inscribed in Kharoshthi script, are Kuvera, guardian of the north and king of the Yakshas, Sirima, goddess of fortune, and Sudarsana, guardian of still waters. The females generally stand on horse-faced crocodiles or three-headed lions, while Yakshini figures like Chandra and Chulakoka are seen entwining the trunk of the tree with the left arm and leg, and clasping a bough with the right hand.

At Bharhut we find the Indian artists seeking out a more durable material than wood in which to give expression to their artistic urge. The very low and flat reliefs, the exquisite precision of carving and the meticulous attention to detail, make it appear likely that the sculpture and architecture of Bharhut are imitations in stone of the earlier work in wood. The art of Bharhut, therefore, shows the characteristics of the transitional period and carries on the stylistic and technical traditions of the earlier phase. But a distinct progressive movement in the plastic diction may be noticed in the quiet ease in attitudes of the figures which comes of an attempt on the part of the sculptors to invest them with a rhythmic sway in the same leisurely assurance as that of the gently flowing creeper.

Bodh-Gaya

The next important landmark in the history of early Indian art is the stone balustrade from Bodh-Gaya that originally enclosed the area where the Buddha walked after the attainment of Enlightenment beneath the Bodhi tree. Thirty pieces of the structure can still be seen. The carvings consist of decoration of the uprights and railing medallions, and depict Jataka stories or male or female heads and heraldic animals. Chronologically the Bodh-Gaya reliefs belong to about the early part of the first century B.C. Although the exhaustive manner of narrating the stories as was the fashion at Bharhut has here dwindled into abbreviations, and the artists rely only on the most indispensable elements to convey the import of the stories pictured, the sculptural art of Bodh-Gaya is certainly

more elegant and orderly than that of Bharhut. The images have now been handled to suggest freer movements and prouder gait, and for the first time there is a more fleshy and softer modelling of the form intended to endow it with a rhythm which is perceptible not only along the surface but also deep into the form.

**Sanchi**

The most interesting of all the monuments which early Buddhism has bequeathed to the land of its birth are the stupas at Sanchi, in central India. As at Bharhut the stupas are encircled by processional paths which are enclosed by massive stone railings. The grounds of the greatest of these stupas, known as the Great Stupa, is entered by four lofty gateways (Toranas) set approximately at cardinal points. But unlike the enclosure at Bharhut the Sanchi railings are unrelieved by carvings of any kind and the sculptural decorations appear only on the gateways which represent the final maturity of the artistic trends already described.

The mound of the Great Stupa dates as far back as the time of Asoka but the gateways were put up in the later half of the 1st century B.C. under the patronage of the Andhra rulers. All the four gateways are of similar design. But tectonic and stylistic considerations indicate that they were not all executed at the same time. The southern gateway was probably the earliest votive offering and it was followed, in order, by the northern, the eastern and the western gateways. But there is evidence to show that not many years intervened between the building of the first and the last of the gateways, for the name of a donor, 'Balamitra, the pupil of Ayachuda,' appears on both the gateways.

The best preserved is the northern gateway, although from the iconographic and artistic points of view, the eastern Torana is the most notable. It appears, as the inscriptions record, that in the decoration of the monument as a whole and in the ornamentation of the individual portals many hands and different groups of craftsmen were employed who evidently carried out their assignments in sections and worked independently. We, therefore, find at Sanchi much diversity of style, inequality of workmanship and lack of any unified iconographic scheme. 'Yet,' as John Marshall points out, 'with all their diversity of style and inequality of technique these sculptures are essentially homogeneous and readily recognisable as the products of one and the same school.'

Each gateway consists of two square pillars ending in massive sculptured capitals, which in their turn support two vertical posts through which three slightly arched horizontal stone beams seem to pass. The capitals are adorned with groups of elephant figures or with the forefronts of lions set back to back, or standing dwarf Yakshas. Adjoining the capitals are figures of Yakshinis, gracefully reclining against a mango bough, enclosed as a spandrel between the uprights and the lowest architraves. Smaller figures of Yakshinis stand on the architraves immediately above them with elephants or lions set on the volutes on either side, while the other open spaces between the three tiers of the architraves are filled with figures of horsemen, elephants with riders and lions. The top of the gateway is crowned with the 'Wheel of the Law' (Dharma-Chakra), supported on elephants or lions and flanked on either side by a Yaksha holding a fly whisk in his hand, and the 'Trishul' or trident, symbol of the Buddha, the Dharma (Law), and the Sangha.

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(religious order). For the rest, the faces of the pillars and the superstructures are elaborately carved in bas-relief with illustrations of the Jataka legends, scenes from the historical life of the Buddha, representations of real and fabulous animals and birds and of flowers and plants.

Although in these reliefs, as in the relief-sculpture at other places in this phase of art, the aim of the sculptor was to serve the Buddhist Church, the art of Sanchi lays emphasis on an animated picture of Indian life. With effective eloquence the artists portrayed the contemporary life in its varied forms and phases and with all its ceremonial pageantry. The panels are thronged with tumultuous groups bursting forth as it were in a spirit of frolicsome freedom or boisterous excitement. But be the figures at rest or borne along in surging crowds, or dancing with exuberant joy, they are invariably touched with a glow of religious impulse. Even behind the strongly mundane and sensuous character of the reliefs, the spiritual quality of the art has not been lost.

Artistically, the Sanchi carvings belong to the same class as Bharhut art, but they mark a decisive sculptural advance. The artist has now mastered both depth and dimensions, so that he can present his variegated compositions with greater freedom of bodily movement and visualise the figures at various angles and in multitudinous attitudes and poses. The forms and figures are no longer conceived singly as separate units in the composition, but several of them are grouped together in well-defined spaces, and we now look at each scene in its entirety and not in its integral parts.

Some of the Sanchi images are conceived and executed in the round. A well-known example is the figure of the Yakshini seeming to play a part in the support of the gate. Marking an advance over the Bharhut abstractness of a mere fertility symbol, the fulness of the Yakshini's body at Sanchi is highly voluptuous. There is no suggestion of constructing the form by a joining together of the individual parts. The limbs, on the other hand, are welded into a unity and the form vitalised by a dynamism that surging through the living tree extends into the form. Accordingly the body now shapes out as a pleasing and integrated whole, suffused by a gentle yet crisp movement that is visible in every part of it.

Everywhere at Sanchi, the artist has handled the ornamental patterns, particularly motifs taken from the plant and animal world, with mastery skill. Landscape as such has not been favoured, but the many varieties of trees, flowers and creepers, or animals and birds, which have been treated in their most essential aspects, are so cleverly utilised to serve as a 'stage design' in the progress of the main story that they remain amongst the greatest beauties of Sanchi. Among plants the favourite one is the exquisite lotus design, symbol of the divine birth, good fortune and the Buddha himself. The representation of the jungle stories is no less interesting. It is expressive of a clear and bold insight into animal character and is illustrative of a marvellous skill in technique.

Bhaja

During this early period the traditions of Buddhist art percolating through the kingdom of the Satavahanas travelled also to Western India where in wild gorges and cliffs along the steep Ghats a regular development of the technique of rock-cut chambers was already making progress. The caves at Bhaja, near Poona, are among the earliest of the series. In one of the vihara (monastery) caves we have
some interesting relief-sculptures, which could roughly be attributed to the same period as the Sanchi reliefs. But in their powerful naturalism and treatment of certain motifs, like male and female head-dresses, they suggest stylistic affinities with the art of Bharhut. In the handling of compositions of crowded figures and in their relatively much freer movements the sculptures even indicate an advance over the Bharhut traditions, but they appear curiously clumsy when compared to the contemporaneous Sanchi reliefs.

Among the Bhaja sculptures the two most famous are the representations of Surya (Sun) and Indra, carved on either side of the doorway of a vihara. The sun is depicted as driving in a four-horse chariot across the sky, trampling over two grotesque female figures described as amorphous powers of darkness; Indra is shown as sitting on his mighty elephant Airavata, striding majestically and vigorously over an archaic landscape. Although Surya and Indra are Vedic deities, their presence in a Buddhist monastery can only be explained by suggesting that they appear here as symbols of the Buddha’s spiritual and temporal power. But the main interest of these reliefs lies in the surging plastic mass that seems to be wrestling itself from the rock which imprisons it. There is an inherent quality of unbounded expansiveness in the theme of these reliefs that brooks no limit of any regular frame and carries itself as far as the rock allows.

The early classical phase in Indian art, as described above, represents a creative and formative epoch in which well-grounded foundations were laid of the trends and tendencies that were later to give to Indian sculpture a look that is highly intellectual and urban. However, the progression of the aesthetic movement from the early classic to the next great art periods of the Kushans and the Guptas was a slow and gradual process, characterised mainly by the shifting of emphasis from the predominantly naturalistic and sensuous forms to creations marked more and more by idealised restraint and mature sensuousness. The fulfilment was achieved in the Gupta period (A.D. 319-510). But the inauguration of the age of maturity was witnessed in the Kushan period of Imperialism, which at its greatest moment in history held sway over present day Afghanistan, north-western Pakistan and north-western India. Artistic activities were fairly widespread in this period, and the important centres were the Gandhara region (in Pakistan) and Mathura in the Kushan dominion, and Amaravati in the lower Godavari valley in South India under the domination of the later Andhra rulers.

THE KUSHAN PERIOD

The rise and growth of the Kushans as a political power (1st century A.D. to 3rd century A.D.) coincided with some great religious and cultural ferments in the country. Though Buddhism was still the predominant religion, the passage of time had dulled the enthusiasm of the Buddhists for the monasticism implied in the earlier ideal of passionless search for truths. It no longer remained a code of ethics, but became a popular religious system. The Hindu psychological truth prevailed at last that the human impulse craves for something concrete through which to adore for salvation rather than to explore the void metaphysical subtleties. The belief in a God that could be visualised in the likeness of living things created the first great schism within the Buddhist movement and was responsible for the establishment of the rival Mahayana and Hinayana schools. In Mahayanism
Gautam Buddha\textsuperscript{1} was elevated from his position of a teacher to that of God and came to be regarded as the embodiment or incarnation of a principle. Buddhism thus became theistic and sanctioned the worship of the Great Teacher as the manifestation of Infinite Light. Kanishka, as the royal supporter and patron of Mahayanism, holds as great a place as Asoka had held with regard to Hinayanism.

In art these changes were reflected firstly in the creation of an iconography peopled by the various Bodhisattvas and the Buddha. Bodhisattvas, according to the Buddhist tradition, are beings who are in the process of attaining Buddhahood but have not yet attained it. Buddha himself was born as a Bodhisattva innumerable times before he achieved perfection at Gaya.

Artistically, while previously Buddha's presence was indicated by symbols only, the seated or the standing Buddha with varying 'Yogic Mudras' (gestures of contemplation) now began to capture the imagination of the artists. But the artists never followed a definite model, because the Buddha was no longer regarded as a historical personage, but was conceived as the Maha-Purush (Great Person or Superman) and Chakravartin (Universal Emporer or alternatively World-teacher). The Buddha image, therefore, represents a dogmatic conception. As a Great Person and as Universal Teacher, the Buddha assumed the physical emblems which characterise the body of such a being. The thirty-two major signs of superhuman perfection included the protuberance or 'ushnisha' on the skull, the 'urna' or tuft of hair between the eye-brows, and marks of the Wheel, Trishula, etc., on the palms and soles. In the initial stages, however, the Master represented is only the idealised vision of the various artists and not the standardised individual. Standardisation came afterwards. But a general agreement with regard to dress, pose and appearance had definitely begun to manifest itself.

Another innovation in the art was a departure from the Bharhut and Sanchi traditions in the method of relief narrative: instead of depicting the separate episodes of the story within the framework of a single panel, the artists now began to illustrate them in a sequence of panels. But the reliefs are of minor importance in this period. The artistic urge of the time expressed itself in increased plastic penetration of large sized sculptures, boldly carved in the round or high relief and with greater vitality.

The two important centres of artistic production under the Kushans—Gandhara and Mathura—represent two completely distinct categories. While Mathura continued to grow in the traditions of the indigenous schools, Gandhara employed a distinctly foreign technique.

\textbf{Gandhara}

The earliest mention of the Gandhara region is available in the Behistun inscription of Darius (516 B.C.) when the land formed part of the Achaemenian Empire. The territory is next referred to during the conquest of the Persian Empire in 327 B.C. by Alexander the Great. The actual rule of the Macedonian Greeks lasted only until the death of Alexander which occurred in 323 B.C., and the territory was soon acquired by the Mauryas who converted the people of the land to Buddhism. Gandhara, however, remained mostly under foreign domination and the

\textsuperscript{1} The mortal Buddha is known by his personal name, Siddhartha, by his surname of Gautam, or as Sakyamuni (the sage of the Sakya clan).
Persians, the Greeks, the Sakas, the Pahlavas and the Kushans came to settle there in large numbers. By reason also of its geographical position—situated on the great trade routes between Europe and Asia—this region witnessed the confluence of several streams of culture which made for the emergence of a style of art that gave the Gandhara sculptural art so distinctive a look that it can easily be set apart from all other Indian types. The subject-matter is no doubt Indian, but plastically Gandhara art reflects influences from a variety of foreign sources, the strongest among them being Hellenistic-Roman and Scythian. Under a mistaken belief the term Greco-Buddhist was originally applied to the sculptures of this school which have come mainly from Jalalabad, Bamiyan and Hadda in Afghanistan, and Peshawar and Taxila in Pakistan. There are, however, strong reasons for holding that the Gandhara productions were actually executed by workmen practising in the traditions of Roman workmanship, specially in its late and provincial style.

With very few exceptions the sculptors of this school devoted themselves to illustrating the Buddha legend. Jataka stories are still represented, but much more common are representations of the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas. It is in fact claimed for the Gandhara sculptors that they were the first to establish the type and form of the anthropomorphic Buddha. Independent images of the Buddha, either seated or standing, occur very frequently, but they also may be seen in human form as the central figure of historical compositions. A study of the images would show that while the Gandhara artists have followed the Indian traditions of iconographical formulae, they have rendered their Buddha in the likeness of the divine figures of the Greco-Roman pantheon. Briefly, the imported elements are the halo, hair arranged in wavy curls, straight profile, classic cut of the eyes, the curve of the lips, and supple and deep folds of the garment arranged in the fashion of a Roman toga. The image of the standing Buddha from Takht-i-Bahi in the Frontier region bears an unmistakable resemblance to the Greek Apollo type in the execution of the head and the pose, and with the Roman statue of Augustus in the rendering of the drapery. The same Greco-Roman elements can be observed in the representations of the seated Buddhas with legs crossed in characteristic Yoga posture. The Bodhisattva type is represented as Prince Siddhartha—a young man in princely attire wearing a turban, jewellery and a muslin robe (Bodhisattvas from Sahri-Bahlol and Takht-i-Bahi). Many Buddha and Bodhisattva figures have also been given moustaches. The relief compositions adorning the stupas and monasteries and narrating stories mainly from the life of the Buddha or from the legends of his earlier incarnations, illustrate the same mixing of the realistic methods of Roman craftsmanship and the conceptual point of view of Indian tradition as that seen in the independent statues.

It is impossible to fix the exact chronological sequence of the Gandhara images owing largely to the absence of any helpful inscriptions on the monuments or sculptures. The stylistic considerations too have not been very helpful. It is generally accepted that the earliest sculptures were carved in blue schist and green phyllite, but later stucco or lime plaster was the favourite medium. Both stone and stucco images were enriched with paint and gilt. Clay figures were also embellished similarly. A number of reliquaries containing corporeal fragments of Buddhist saints have been discovered in the Gandharan ruins. The one excavated at Shah-ji-ki-Dheri near Peshawar is believed by many to be the actual metal relic box deposited by Kanishka himself. The lower band of the drum is adorned
with images in relief and the top with free standing statues of the Buddha flanked by figures believed to be representations of Indra and Brahma.

The Gandharan representations of the Buddha, patterned on the humanistic Classic forms of Western art, failed however to interpret the perceptions of Indian Buddhism and contributed but little to the sum-total of formal and aesthetic achievements in the field of Buddhist sculpture. Quite obviously the character of this art was much too foreign to express the inner meaning of the Buddha image. It was, therefore, left to the artists of the Gupta period, when the national genius of the country was more fully expressed than at any other time in history, to suggest the spiritual quality of the Enlightened one by truly Indian ideals. But it has to be admitted that this phase of Indian art was not without its contributions. The main value of its productions lies more in the field of iconography than in aesthetics. It increased the illustrative material of Buddhist myths and legends and helped in evolving the icon of the Buddha to which it gave its own stamp.

Gandhara art virtually came to an end with the invasion of the Huns in the 5th century A.D. Although its echoes continued as late as the 7th century in Kashmir and some remote centres in Afghanistan, Gandhara art never took any real hold on the ancient sculpture of this land because the purely representational art of the West and the truly Indian conceptions of idealistic art had no common meeting ground anywhere.

Mathura

Exactly contemporaneous with the Gandhara movement is the great period of Mathura’s florescence. Mathura was an ancient and important town, twice capital of independent kingdoms in the pre-Mauryan period, provincial capital of the Mauryas and the Sungas, winter capital of the Kushan emperors and a great mercantile centre from ancient times owing to its situation at the converging point of important trade routes from Gandhara province in the north-west, Pataliputra in the east and Bharukachchha on the west coast. It was a most sacred place of pilgrimage for the Hindus, Buddhists, and Jains and also a great centre of learning and art where the indigenous and the foreign elements freely mixed to stimulate a truly Indian artistic consciousness.

A few stray and isolated finds of inscriptions and sculptures take the history of the art of Mathura back to 200 B.C., and a number of dated fragments from the 1st century B.C. establish Mathura’s close stylistic links with Bharhut and Sanchi. Mathura art is, therefore, an outgrowth of the styles of the archaic period. In fact, as Coomaraswamy points out, ‘the most obvious characteristic of the Kushan school in Mathura is that it represents in the main a direct development of the older Indian art of Bharhut and still older art of Besnagar.’

The history of Kushan sculpture begins with a portrait statue, identified by an inscription that it carries: ‘The Great King, the King of Kings, his Majesty Kanishka.’ This standing royal figure whose head and arms are missing, radiates with its long coat, heavy boots, mace and club, an impression of authority and tremendous physical power. The ‘harsh angular rigidity’ of its upright posture, however, is unlike other examples of Kushan sculpture and suggests Scythian inspiration. Two other portrait sculptures found at the same site where the statue of Kanishka was discovered, represent different stages of this expression. It
may be interesting to note that these three statues are the earliest surviving examples of portrait sculpture in India.

The first purely Indian representations of the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas were created by the sculptors of Mathura. These images provided the starting point for the artists down to the Gupta period to work towards the development of a classical idiom of form dedicated to religious art. One of the earliest images of the Buddha to be carved at Mathura is a more than life-sized standing figure of Sakyamuni but shown as a Bodhisattva, probably out of deference to the old scruples against the figure portrayal of the Master. Discovered at Sarnath, it bears an inscription recording its dedication by a certain Friar Bala in the third year of the reign of Kanishka. Another image from Sarnath, closely similar to the above, may also be dated about the same period. Among the Indian type of seated Buddhas, the Kutra Bodhisattva is one of the best representations. It is, however, not the earliest of its type. The statue, although expressly called a Bodhisattva in the inscription, has all the attributes of a Buddha. He sits upon a double-tiered seat, supported by three lions, in the canonical cross-legged position. All these images are carved from the mottled red sandstone quarried at Sikri, near the Kushan capital.

The Mathura sculptors were much more careful than their Gandharan contemporaries in the representation of the iconographic marks. The iconographic details are now fuller and more prominently displayed. The artist is specially careful to represent the signs of superhuman perfection on the palms and soles. The Master, as he now appears, has his head closely shaven and never covered with curls; the ‘ushnisha’ is fully revealed taking a spiral form and no attempt is made to disguise it as at Gandhara; and there is no moustache. Instead of being seated on a lotus as in Gandhara work, the Mathura Buddha rests on a lion throne, and when shown in a standing attitude there is often a seated lion between the legs, identifying the subject as Sakyamuni— the Lion of the Sakya race. The right hand is generally raised up to the shoulder in Abhaya Mudra, the gesture of re-assurance and of blessing; the left hand rests on the thigh in seated figures or supports the folds of the robe on the hip in standing figures. The upper part of the body is only half-covered, the right shoulder being left bare, exposing very broad shoulders and breasts which are curiously prominent. The drapery, which consists of an upper garment and a lower, clings closely to the body and is arranged in schematic folds in a delicate fanlike manner as at Bharhat.

In the initial stages, the voluminous forms and massive proportions of the Buddha images, specially of the standing ones, as well as their draperies are reminiscent of the colossal Yaksha figures of the Maurya period, and a link with the indigenous traditions of image making is very distinctly indicated. But, in course of time, the robustness of form may be seen giving way to a gradual and conscious move for refinement and elegance. The body gets supple and the face is endowed with a warm radiant expression. However, the idealised representation of the Great Teacher is yet to come. These images express only ‘mundane dynamic force’ and completely lack the spiritual grace and gentle repose of a divine being. Even the fully open eyes, round and full cheeks, ample mouth and the smiling countenance, fail to suggest the inner contentment and spiritual introspection of the Buddha’s nature.

The Mathura finds have also yielded several female forms. The fronts of the uprights of the railings surrounding the various relic sites have been carved in
bold relief portraying graceful, round-breasted, narrow-waisted and full-hipped figures of women identified as Yakshinis. They may be seen in various alluring poses: standing under Asoka trees or leaning against one with a raised hand artfully holding a branch; bathing under waterfalls or adorning themselves with flowers and leaves; in each case the faces radiant with the ‘happiness of fulfilled women.’ At first they appear nude except for the heavy jewellery. But on closer observation the delicately transparent muslin robe may actually be seen accentuating the sensuousness of their warm living flesh. The figures themselves are expressive of so much voluptuousness that they surpass anything seen hitherto in Indian art. In fact, in the refined solidity of the physical mass and in the greater freedom of movement leading to charmingly erotic gestures and attitudes the reliefs mark the culmination of a tendency already seen at Sanchi and Bharhat. These images are anything but religious. But if we remember that the Kushan artist was playing his part at a time which was marked by a reaction against the monasticism of the earlier Buddhism and also note that the Sangha itself had come to depend more and more for its material wherewithall on the wealthy bourgeoisie society which showed a decided preference for the rapturous enjoyment of life, we will understand why the plastic sense in art at this period is so much steeped in the physical. In the changed environment the artist took his inspiration from an ideal which was a compromise between the life of the world and the life of restraint preached by Buddha, with both of which he chose to adorn the House of God under a common roof.

The backs of the rail pillars are decorated with narrative relief panels from the Buddhist legends or with a wide variety of hybrid animals and sea-monsters. Some unusual groups of stumpy dealing with scenes of drunkenness and intoxication, classed as Bacchalian, still puzzle the experts. There is nothing to connect them with the religion or myth of the time. It is, therefore, possible that the motif was inspired by some foreign source. Hellenistic or Assyrian influence may also be seen in another sculptural composition known as ‘Herakles with the Nemean Lion,’ in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. But beyond an occasional borrowing of themes or a crude imitation of the Romanised drapery seen in some Buddha images of the second and third centuries there is little to indicate any strong awareness of the Western traditions in Mathura art. The technique and vision remained always characteristically Indian and whatever influence may have come from outside was drawn and absorbed into the main stream of Indian art traditions out of which emerged the classic art of the Gupta period.

THE LATER ANDHRA PERIOD

Simultaneously with the Gandhara and the Mathura movements of artistic development, flourished a quite separate school in the lower valley of the Krishna river under the patronage of the later Andhra rulers. Andhradesha had embraced Buddhism as early as the 3rd century B.C. and judging from the initial attempts exemplified by a carving from the stupa at Jaggaýapeta near Amaravati, we may safely conclude that the Krishna-Godavari region had already developed a flourishing tradition of Buddhist art in the first century B.C. Stylistically somewhat akin to certain Sanchi reliefs, the carvings on the Jaggaýapeta slab are so very low and flattened that they hardly seem to come up on the surface. But they have been distinguished from the Sanchi carvings by graceful elongation of the forms of the figures and a more precise and sensitive modelling of the limbs.
Amaravati

The Jaggyapeta traits attain their fullest expression in the succeeding centuries. Ruins of great stupas have been found at Nagarjunakonda, Goli, Gummadidirru, and several other sites. But the most magnificent achievement of the later Andhra period was the Great Stupa at Amaravati. Begun as early as 200 B.C., the original structure underwent many additions and renovations in the course of the centuries. The railing and the casing slabs of the imposing dome of the stupa, which were covered with elaborate carvings and exquisite bas-reliefs in the greenish-white limestone of the region, are usually ascribed to the period between A.D. 150 and 250. An area of nearly 17,000 square feet was originally filled with sculpture. Today, except for the fragments of railings, pillars and slabs used for the exterior casing (preserved in the Government Museum in Madras and the British Museum, London) the remains of this great monument are lost for ever.

The subjects of the reliefs embellishing the casing slabs and the outer and inner faces of the rails, include fine rendering of flowers and foliage as purely decorative arrangements, and Jataka stories and scenes from the life of the Buddha, both as Sakyamuni and after the Enlightenment. A number of free standing Buddha images have also been found. It appears that even though the later Andhra Buddhists were inspired by the Mahayana doctrines, they continued to attach sanctity to the old Hinayana emblems as is evidenced by the presence of the Buddha through symbolical portrayals as well as through images in anthropomorphic form. The Amaravati version of the seated Buddha comes close to the figures of Sakyamuni in Yogic pose being developed at Mathura. But here he is more deeply ascetic and severe, and not at all massive as in the Mathura type. In the standing Buddha image, Gandharan influence is suggested by the treatment of the drapery, though the loosely hanging folds have now been rendered in an ordered rhythm of lines.

The subject matter of Amaravati sculpture and of those from the Krishna-Godavari valley of this period, is no doubt intended to be religious. Their purpose is to feed and stimulate the faith of the devotee by a visual presentation of the legends of Buddhism. But it is significant, "how religion is being used as a pretext for the purpose of singing a wildly enthusiastic, rapturous paean, of worldly life." It is not primarily the narration of an edifying tale, nor the portrayal of a life of renunciation, nor even the representation of the permanent values of life which one witnesses at Bharhut, Bodh Gaya, Sanchi, Bhaja and elsewhere; rather, here it is the description of the innocent joys of worldly existence that seems to hold sway over the whole tenor of the story. Every scene is full of the movement and excitement of riotous festivities in which youthful figures of men and women, tall, slender and attenuated, and in a variety of attitudes and bends join hands in an exhilarated enjoyment of life. And as if to counterbalance the high tension of the movements, there are alluring female forms whose heavy hips, firmly rounded legs, coquettish looks and elegant languor seem to lend an even warmer sensuousness to the joys and delights of the worldly life.

Coomaraswamy describes Amaravati art as 'the most voluptuous and the most delicate flower of Indian sculpture.' There is no doubt that the interest of

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1 A new chronology of the Amaravati sculptures has been suggested by Douglas Barrett in a recent work. He proposes a chronology extending from the 2nd to the 4th century A.D. for the entire development in the Amaravati region.


3 Ananda Coomaraswamy, History of Indian and Indonesian Art, p. 71.
the artists has now come to stay on the dream-like rhythm of the forms, the playful
sway of the bodies, and the music of the softly gliding contours. But compared
to the lewd sensuousness of Mathura the concept of beauty at Amaravati is refined
by a gracefulness and a sense of the sweetness which only represents a quest for
the sinless joys of life. ‘A strong feeling is evident for what might be called the
blossoming, innocent soul—force of the flesh, and this has become, in turn, the
vehicle of pious emotions.’

The art of the Krishna-Godavari valley manifests its greatness in one more
direction. For the first time, Indian art becomes conscious of psychological states
and learns to find appropriate expressions for the powerful emotions of the human
heart, mainly through the facial lineaments. This quality has lent a highly dramatic
element to the scenes.

Technically, the Amaravati reliefs have a more complex composition than
anything seen hitherto. Using the Bharhut and Sanchi device of continuous nar-
rating, the compositions here are organized as patterns of dynamic movement,
knit together in a supremely fluent rhythm by a most sensitive and easy manipulation
of the chisel. The mastery of technique on the part of the artists is further revealed
by their ingenious arrangement of figures and settings in a number of planes,
the confident handling of foreshortening and the clever rendering of the attenuated
beauty of the figures within a sure and decisive outline. Certainly, for mere plastic
achievement Amaravati reliefs have seldom been excelled anywhere.

The Amaravati style developed at Nagarjunikonda with no decline in quality.
The stupa at Nagarjunikonda, which takes its name from the famous Buddhist
Church father, presumably dates from the same period as the Amaravati stupa and
its reliefs were carved as late as A.D. 300.

The influence of the art of the Krishna-Godavari region was widespread. Bud-
dhist images of the Andhra type of the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. are known to have
extended to Ceylon, Champa (modern Indo-China) and to Sempaga in the Celebes.

GOLDEN AGE OF THE GUPTAS

With Amaravati we come to the close of the older phase of Indian artistic
traditions. In the period now beginning we witness the blossoming out of an
aesthetic consciousness in which the established tradition finds its most supreme
expression. This period has been described as the Golden Age of the Guptas.
As a culture epoch the period of the Guptas is extended to include the reign of
Harshavardhan of Thaneshwar (A.D. 606-647) under whom Gupta civilisation
recovered for a while following the interregnum after an invasion by the Huns.

The Guptas (A.D. 319-510) with their wealth and power provided the physical
medium for the development of an outlook in the country which was national, lofty
and magnanimous. It, therefore, quite naturally produced an atmosphere for a
brilliant efflorescence of Indian genius in all fields of human activity, especially arts
and literature, which attained the utmost limits of refinement. ‘The Gupta period
may well be described as “classic” in the sense of the word describing a norm or
degree of perfection never achieved before or since, and in the perfect balance and
harmony of all elements stylistic and iconographic—elements inseparable in
importance.’

This period also witnessed a re-orientation of the spiritual outlook of the race which had felt the impulse of the great intellectual ferment. Puranic Hinduism, with its three main deities, came to the forefront: Vishnu, as the incarnation of Brahma, the Creator in his benevolent qualities; Siva, symbolising the Supreme God as Creator, Preserver and Destroyer; and Sakti, the Consort of Siva, both as Mother and Destroyer alternately. While Saivism developed in the south and south-east and Saktism in eastern India and in some parts of south-west Malabar, Vaishnavism, with its emphasis on Krishna as its main exponent, flourished mostly in the northern and central parts of India. Popular worship was given formal sanction and temples and images in dedication to each of these cults appeared in profusion. Though the Guptas were by religion Brahmanical with special predilection for the worship of Vishnu, they showed exemplary tolerance for both Jainism and Buddhism. Mahayana Buddhism, however, was so much affected by the birth of new thoughts and ideologies that it slowly started passing through a process of intellectual absorption into Hinduism, paving the way ultimately for the assimilation of the Buddha himself into the medieval Hindu pantheon as an incarnation of Vishnu.

It was under the same intellectual influence that a reshaping of the plastic ideologies came into being. A process of long and consistent formation of traditions through the preceding centuries had prepared the ground for the emergence of a style in which several continuous trends and tendencies, mainly from Mathura and Amaravati, find their logical and glorious culmination. But the heritage itself is subjected to such a heightened intellectual convention that it gives the sculpture of the Golden Age a supremely refined and sensitive and a profoundly spiritual quality not so far achieved. The passionate addiction to the mundane world, or the sensuous freedom that we see at Mathura and Amaravati are now replaced by a new artistic vision which goes beyond the world of senses and tries to record revelations of higher and deeper truths. Art is henceforth only a 'vehicle of transcendental forces and sculpture is accepted as Coomaraswamy observes 'as a medium of conscious and explicit statement of spiritual conception.'

In the sculptural compositions of the Gupta period, marked as they are by a finished mastery of execution in the perfectly classical idiom, the human figure acquires a new significance. It becomes a receptacle of all inner dynamism. The human body, as given form now, is no more a means of expression by itself. It is now a medium for the exploration of the 'form of the movement of life.'

With this new importance given to the human body, vegetative devices recede into the background. They either disappear altogether from the compositions or are relegated to the borders. But the gliding movement characteristic of vegetation clings to and permeates the human figures, now entirely modelled in terms of this eternal rhythm. It is the ceaseless flow of life that may be recognised in the unending flowing movement of the lotus scroll. Now the same movement passes on to the human body. 'Within the body this movement belongs to the physical as well as to the inner life. The movement of the inner life as well as that of the vital currents is identical with the vegetative movement. While in this aspect the body becomes plant-like in swaying rhythm and plasticity, it is the vessel of the movement of the physical and of the inner life.'

restrained grace of the body shines out with a glow and vibrancy that arises out of the conquest of the mind over its physical aspect.

Inside this human frame the deity was invited to reside, but not until certain distinct transformations in respect of modelling and attributes had been effected. It has always been the attempt of the Indian artists to symbolise their concept of a god or a superman by a highly evolved imagery. This feature was present in the early Buddhist art, and was seen in experimental stages at Mathura and Amaravati. Under the Gupta civilisation the process reaches its consummation and a clearly defined iconography is evolved although the culmination was achieved in the Middle Ages. In order to ensure the divine ideality of a conception canons of proportion and appearance of the figures as well as their attributes were formulated. An elaborate system of symbolic gestures, attitudes, weapons and instruments, and attendant figures, already known, were further developed for determining the character and quality of the various gods, so much so that the cult objects became primarily nothing but the consecrated symbols of the divinities. The four faces of the god Brahma represent the four Vedas, his arms the four major quarters. The four faces of Vishnu stand for knowledge, strength, sovereignty and power, and his eight arms typify the four major and four minor quarters. The five faces of Siva are symbolic of the five gross elements, earth, water, heat, wind and the sky, known individually as Mahadeva (eastern), Bhairava (southern), Nandivaktra (western), Umavaktra (northern) and Sadasiva (on the top). The three eyes of Mahadeva are the sun, the moon and the fire. His ten arms stand for the ten quarters. The various poses in which the hands of the images are shown (‘mudra’ and ‘hasta’) stand for the assurance of protection, fearlessness and tranquillity, for the bestowal of boon or benediction, for the giving of explanation or exposition, for true knowledge, asceticism, warning, threat or astonishment. The hands carry certain attributes symbolic of the power of the deity. The water vessel in one of the hands of Brahma stands for the primeval waters from which spring all the movable and immovable beings, and the rosary in another hand of the god indicates eternal time. The discus and the mace in the two hands of Vishnu symbolise solar energy which destroys all evil forces and physical power, the conch in the third hand stands for creative force and the lotus in the fourth for created universe. The club and the citr us in the hands allotted to Bhairava symbolise death and the numerous atoms which are the seed of the whole world. The mirror and the lotus assigned to Uma symbolise pure knowledge and renunciation. Other instruments in the hands of deities are the ploughshare and pestle, indicating Time and Death, the bow and the arrow symbolising Yogic fire, and the sword and shield standing for renunciation which severs all ties, and lack of true knowledge respectively. Skull drums are in the hands of demonic deities. The skin garment of Brahma symbolises Sacrifice, and the spotted tiger skin worn by Siva stands for Desire. The long garland hanging down the neck of Vishnu is the principle which binds the whole universe, the crescent on the forehead of Siva is the divine essence, and the snake the divine anger. The snake which adorns the body of Siva may also stand for the principle of ever-renewing life.

The deities are often shown as riding their particular mounts (‘vahans’). The seven swans driving the chariot of Brahma stand for the seven worlds and the purity of soul, the Garuda (the bird which is half man and half bird) of Vishnu is symbolic of the mind present in all rational beings, the bull of Siva typifies strength, virility and majesty, the tigress of Kali is suggestive of her destructive
fury, and Airavata, the white elephant of Indra, is the rain-bearing cloud. In the case of standing images different kinds of stance are met with. They are called 'bhangan,' that is, flexions or attitudes. These are samabhanga, abhanga, tribhanga, and atibhanga. The samabhanga denotes the equiposed body where the right and the left of the figure are disposed symmetrically and the pose is firm and erect. It implies repose and a gracious mood. In the Abhanga the figure is slightly bent both in the upper and the lower halves of the body. It indicates a sportive or reflective attitude. When the figure is bent three times with the head inclined away from the trunk between the hips and neck, and the lower limbs from the hips to the feet taking a turn in the reverse direction, it is the tribhanga pose. The atibhanga is an emphasised form of the tribhanga, the sweep of the tribhanga curves being considerably enhanced. The last two poses are suggestive of animating passions.

An art depending so much for its expression on the spiritual ideals could not have much use for jewellery and garments. But the little that is tolerated of such superfluities is only to further reveal the inner in outer forms.

Even if the vegetative patterns are practically non-existent in the compositions of the period, human form itself is modelled in imitation of all that is beautiful in Nature. The face was given an oval shape, the forehead and the eyebrows followed the curve of a bow, eyes were drawn in imitation of the eyes of a deer or a wagtail or a fish or a lotus or a lotus petal, according to mood, the nose resembled a sesame flower or the beak of a parrot, and for the portrayal of the soft and moist lips in their fulness the red and luscious 'bimba' fruit was the ideal. The neck was drawn in imitation of the conch-shells or the neck of a goose, the thigh resembled an elephant's trunk and the arms the trunk of a young plantain tree or a stalk of lotus. The long sensitive fingers were given the form of budding cham-pak flowers. The various body parts, thus borrowed from Nature, were co-ordinated in a most naturalistic manner so that the whole figure, youthful, vigorous, elegant, and sensitive, appeared to glow with a supreme sense of the flow of life and of beauty.

Thus was born a new spirit in the Indian art movement, which took a clear and explicit direction in the Gupta classical phase. It set the standards of vision and techniques of art which were followed for about a thousand years in India and greatly influenced the art movements in the neighbouring lands.

Although much of the Gupta sculpture is now no more with us, the few examples that have survived the fanaticism of the foreign invaders rank with the world's supreme religious images. The Buddha images are amongst the most notable creations of the period. If earlier the figures had developed physically they now attain a character which reflects the achievement of Supreme Bliss. The face in the relaxed luminous body shines with a spiritual ecstasy and the smiling countenance captures a sublime sense of calm, contemplative joy aloof from earthly delights.

Mathura

Buddha statues of the Gupta period have been discovered at Mathura which continued to be a flourishing centre of Buddhism. One of the earliest is a 5th century figure which although retaining the heavy solidity and volume of the previous works, differs from the Kushan prototypes in several respects. The erect
standing image of Sakyamuni, carved according to a fixed system of proportions, is now entirely clothed in the monastic robe the folds of which persist as a net of parallel loops. There is much delicacy in the modelling of the head and the rhythmic relation of the interlocking planes imparts a sense of spiritual introspection to the face in place of 'the mask-like coldness of the Gandhara Buddha.' An interesting feature of the Mathura Buddhas is the carved halo, the ornament consisting of a central lotus bordered by concentric rings of foliate forms.

Sarnath

Another active centre of Buddhist sculpture in this period was Sarnath where both standing and seated Buddha types were evolved. By introducing an extremely delicate and refined treatment of form and volume, and by discarding the folds of the drapery which was transformed into a completely transparent sheath-like garment that reveals the form of the body beneath it, and in the case of standing figures by slightly breaking the body on its own axis to give it a certain litheness and moving quality, Sarnath records a greater advance of the new aesthetic ideal. One of the noblest and finest creations of the Gupta sculpture is the high-relief statue of Buddha found in the ruins of Sarnath. Carved from a light sandstone it represents the Master enthroned and expounding his First Sermon, while below the pedestal two groups of kneeling monks are seen worshipping the Wheel of the Law, the symbol of the enlightening wisdom. In spite of its rigidly static pose, the modelling achieves almost abstract perfection. The restraint and repose of the vibrant body, the expression of an inner serenity and outer compassion, and the divinely lit smile on the ethereal countenance are executed with such mastery of skill that it can easily be regarded as one of the greatest achievements of Indian art of all periods. Rene Grousset describes an image like this as representing "an art so inspired by intellectualism as to be a direct expression of soul through the purely ideal beauty of form." Exquisitely carved halos are a feature of the Sarnath Buddha statues as well.

Mathura and Sarnath jointly typify the Gupta classical tradition. Its reverberations were felt all over the country in varying degrees. At several places, mainly in central India, an enormous amount of Hindu, Buddhist and Jain sculptures have been found, many of which, in quality, can take their place along with the best from the more famous centres. From Besnagar a relief of the goddess Ganges, from Gwalior reliefs of flying Apsaras, from Sondani the slab representing a Gandharva couple soaring in the air, from Khoh the Eka-Mukha Linga, and from Bhumara a variety of sculptures, reveal the same sculptural conception, poise and grace as are seen at Sarnath. A monumental early 5th century carving comes from Udayagiri. It is a colossal rock-cut relief of the boar incarnation (Varaha) of god Vishnu rescuing the Earth Goddess from the Chaos in the presence of adoring gods and saints. The mighty two-armed god treads with his left foot on the coils of the Naga having a canopy of the two layers of thirteen snake-hoods, his right hand resting on his hip, and his left on his knees. He has just lifted up the goddess from beneath the waters with his right tusk. In its fundamental character the sculpture is close to the Surya and Indra reliefs from Bhaja. The massive dynamism of the god rises into gigantic appearance in a language of pure plastic form, and is free from any measure or restraint. But the power of the Indian artist

reaches its zenith in the well-balanced composition of forceful energy combined with the quiescent attitude of cosmic majesty.

The mythological and epic reliefs from the Dasavatara temple at Deogarh (Jhansi district, Uttar Pradesh) also reflect, plastically as well as spiritually, the impact of the best Gupta classical traditions. Sanchi continued to be an active centre of image making well through the reign of Harshavardhan, and some excellent Buddha figures were produced at this place. One of the finest surviving examples is the mutilated torso of a Bodhisattva. Like other Buddha statues it has been most sensitively modelled and achieves exquisite finish in the carving of details.

Aesthetically as impressive as the stone figures are the metal sculptures of this period. The colossal bronze statue of the standing Buddha from Sultanganj (Bengal), in a gesture conveying fearlessness, recalls the Sarnath finish in the smoothly rounded attenuation of body and limbs which shine out through the transparent drapery. Ideologically too, the link with the Sarnath statues is evident in its majestic bearing and tranquil suavity. Another notable Gupta bronze is the figure of Brahma from Mirpur Khas in Sind (Karachi Museum). Inspired by the Sarnath ideals it possesses the same smooth sensuous elegance as seen in the Sultanganj Buddha.

But soon after the death of Harshavardhan in A.D. 647 the classical ideal declined. The political disintegration of Northern India was followed by signs of numbness in artistic practices. The sculptors dwelt only on 'reminiscences of the past,' and the general sublimity of conception that had up till now dominated the Indian artistic scene came to be missed more and more in art. By the 8th century, although individual masterpieces can still be traced, the bulk of sculpture is generally characterised by a 'coarsening of the plastic texture,' lacking both in the beauty of definition and of expression.

South India

It is in the South, however, that we find the major glories of Indian sculpture taking form. Although the period of abundance and elaboration came only after the end of the Gupta era, the Southern contributions in sculpture during the Gupta classical phase are by no means insignificant. They belong to a number of Buddhist caves that were excavated at Ajanta, Aurangabad, and other places by the Dravidian peoples of the South, in the wake of the national aesthetic consciousness prevailing in northern India. The caves are adorned with innumerable high relief statues of the Buddha, either standing or seated, in the facades, in the triforiums, over the aisle pillars in the halls, on the walls of the monastic caves and in the pillared niches in the stupas in the ambulatory of the nave. Some of the other sculptural decorations relate to the Yaksha and the Naga groups. These reliefs in their fine plastic content and treatment approach the classic quality of Sarnath. A number of them, particularly from Ajanta, are endowed with so much elegance and poise that in the exalted refinement of modelling they may well rank with the more well-known specimens of the Gupta era. However, there is little of the spiritual to be felt here.

In the 6th century a great cultural ferment vital for the development of sculpture was taking place in South India. The surging force of Brahmanism

1 St. Kramrisch, Indian Sculpture, p. 77.
which was slowly gaining ascendency among the Dravidian peoples now got into full swing. A popular religious movement propagated through the regional languages aroused, throughout the South, a feeling of passionate devotion for the gods Siva and Vishnu. Already a vast mythology had been built up in the North around these two deities who had been conceived in varied and glorious aspects. This had led to the development of an elaborate iconography, filling Indian sculpture with many theological conceptions. The South accepted this mythology and iconography in a more intellectual form.

To his worshippers in the South, Siva became the Great God (Mahadeva, Mahesh) the Supreme Ascetic (Yogesvara), the Creator (Sadasiva), the Destroyer as well as the Regenerator, the Time (Mahakal), the Lord of the Dance (Nataraja), the Supporter of the Moon (Somanath, Chandrasekhara) and of the Ganges (Gangadhar), the Victor over Death (Mrityunjaya), the Beneficent (Siva), the Terrible (Bhairava), the Lord of the Demons (Bhutanatha). Siva’s consort Parvati was accepted as the Great Goddess (Mahadevi), the Great Force (Mahasakti) of Creation (Maya), the glorious (Gauri), the devoted wife (Sati), the virgin (Durga), the Great Mother (Uma, Ambika) and also the terrible (Bhairavi), black (Kali) lady of death (Chamunda). Both Siva and Parvati came to be regarded as the archetypal lovers. They are Spirit and Matter, the primeval parents of the universe, out of whose union the worlds are born. But even the Great Goddess is no more than an aspect of the Great God, who is both male and female (Ardhanaarisvara) and ultimately neither one nor the other.

The worshippers of Vishnu too gave him many forms. He is the Lord of Paradise (Vaikunthanatha) who is conceived as reclining on the great Serpent of Eternity (Narayana-Anantasayan), from whose navel the lotus grew which produced Brahma, the Creator. He is also the Great Preserver and Upholder of the Universe who manifests himself in the form of his earthly incarnations to redeem the world from unrighteousness. Of these forms the most frequently represented in Indian art are those of Rama, Krishna, Varaha, Narasimha and Trivikrama.

Several kings and dynasties were won over to these popular religious movements. They were the Chalukyas of Badami, the neighbouring Pallavas, the Rashtrakutas, and the Cholas, the Cheras and the Pandyas of the far South. They were deeply stirred by the new ideas and ideals and gave expression to their feelings in amazingly prolific artistic activities. Perhaps for no other devotional interest was a greater passion manifested than for temple building and image making which were alike employed by the Southern builders for high spiritual purposes.

**Aihole and Badami**

The Chalukyas were, as Hermann Goetz observes: ‘not so much creators as mediators in the field of art.’ They did not evolve any independent art of their own. Their contribution lay only in combining the Gupta classicism with the trends prevailing locally and thus giving shape to a Deccan idiom. The beginning of the Chalukyan phase is seen at Aihole which was an important centre of structural temples of stone. In the temple reliefs, treated softly and delicately, the sensitiveness of the Gupta style may be felt mingling with the general character of the Andhra idiom. But the impact of the Gupta ideals at its best on the southern plastic conventions can be seen at Badami where in the escarpment of the cliffs, the Chalukyas

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1 Hermann Goetz, *India*, p. 123.
excavated a group of four cave temples dedicated to Hindu and Jain faiths. Caves III and IV are specially embellished with mighty figures of Vishnu in all his glory and images of gentle goddesses on walls, pillars and brackets. Viewed in plastic terms, the principal figures of gods are characterised by powerful bodies, emphasising a concentration of energy that seems to rise from deeper and more vital sources. But while in the relief of Vishnu on the serpent Ananta in cave III, this energy lies pent up within the limits of the body, in the majority of the reliefs at Badami, it appears ready to break forth any moment into forceful gestures and divine fury. This is most powerfully expressed in the relief of Vishnu as Trivikrama in Cave IV. As a complementary to the dynamic gestures of the male figures the gracefully spirited bodies of their celestial mates represent a new image of womanly beauty. The swelling roundness of the Yakshini pattern is discarded altogether in favour of an animated slenderness that embodies a character ravishing in its feminine bearing and divine in its spirituality. In this manner the Amaravati ideal of beauty attains a new poise.

An artistic movement of great significance for the later development of South Indian art flourished under the patronage of the Pallava rulers who had emerged as an important ruling power in the South in the 7th century. Their architectural activities cover two distinct phases—the earlier consisting of rock-cut shrines (A.D. 610-690) and the later devoted to structural buildings (A.D. 690-900). In both of them the Pallavas have left magnificent sculptures.

**Mamallapuram**

From the first phase date the excavated temples (mandapas) and monolithic shrines (rathas), the latter carved out from single large boulders as sculptural replicas of contemporary structural buildings. The more highly developed of these rock-cut shrines were erected and adorned by the great king Narasimha at his overseas port of Mamallapuram (Mahabalipuram). The interior ornaments consist of sculptured relief panels illustrating legends from Hindu mythology, while images of Hindu deities set in niches decorate the exterior of the temples. Most of these reliefs are architectonic in their structure. Whether they depict Vaishnavite myths or Saivite deities they are placed in rectangular frames vertically set. The figures also assume tall and slender forms, apparently a contribution from the style of the Later Andhras whose artistic traditions were inherited by the Pallavas. Indeed, it is the Amaravati ideal that determines the character of the Pallava sculptures. They have all the beauty of its gracefully attenuated figures, with the same emotionally expressive poses and gestures and similarly knit together by a dynamic rhythm. The figures, however, are no longer languorously relaxed. They now possess a more notable sense of restraint and a still more dignified aloofness, thus echoing the ideals of the Gupta epoch.

But the most impressive amongst the Mamallapuram reliefs and perhaps the finest piece of bas-relief to be seen anywhere is a representation of the mythical ‘Descent of the Ganges’ on the entire face of a cliff measuring about 90 feet in length and 30 in height. Wrongly identified as ‘Arjun’s Penance,’ it is actually a visualisation of the austere penance of the sage Bhagiratha and the descent of the river Ganges from heaven to the earth. It is a vast epic in stone, conceived and composed in epic grandeur. Both sides of the huge vertical cleft in the centre of the boulder are covered with scenes of intense life activity, comprising gods in the skies, ascetics
in meditation, nymphs, dwarfs, Nagas and semi-divine beings in their respective domains, warriors in groups, elephants with their young ones on the march, monkeys at play, tigers and lions crouching, and a host of other living objects, all in life size, expressing gratitude to Siva for his great gift to the world, and hastening to behold the miracle of the coming down of the heavenly stream. It is an extremely graphic picture of life and the entire scene pulsates with joy, liveliness and pious rapture.

In spite of the crowded composition that rushes unrestrained over the entire surface of the rock, everything is balanced and well integrated. Nothing seems out of place. The relief is so graded that the figures seem to emerge clear from the flat face of the rock. Every piece representing life has been touched by vigour and animation, and the figures in their movement have been endowed with a restrained grace, poise, and elegance, not always seen in Indian art. Stylistically, it has one very prominent feature. It is a composition truly inspired by the quality and character of the material itself. A prodigious rock wall has been turned into a field for the enactment of a cosmic event, its unlimited conception transcending the limits of any regular frame. And then on its whole face are projected the participants in the play, each one of whom has been realized from the very inmost life of the rock, the urge of the rock taking form into figures that combine latent energy with repose, austerity with dignity, magnificence with sublimity, without insisting on details.

At Mamallapuram there are also sculptures in the round of bulls, elephants, lions, deer and of a family of monkeys with the male picking the lice off the female. They were all intended to be considered a part of the main composition of the 'Descent of the Ganges.' The animal figures at Mamallapuram particularly have been rendered with a loving care and understanding of their inherent nature. So amazingly naturalistic and realistic are their representations that Benjamin Rowland feels compelled to write: 'No more perfect realizations of living animal types are to be found anywhere in the sculpture of the Eastern world.'

In comparison with these the reliefs from the structural temples of Kanchipuram (8th century) which belong to the second phase of Pallava art, mark a visible decline. The compositions appear over-crowded and the figures lack the vitality and pliancy of the Mamalla period.

Ellora

Pallava art played a considerable role in the shaping of the medieval cave sculpture of the South. It influenced the Chalukya phase and later when the Chalukyas were conquered by the Rashtrakuta dynasty of North Deccan, the tradition of the sculpture of Badami stamped with the Pallava idiom was carried further up and achieved fulfilment at Ellora and Elephanta. The cave temples dedicated to Siva and Parvati at Ellora (Ravana-ka-Khai No. XIV, Dumar Lena No. XXIX, Rameswar No. XI, and Das Avatara No. XV) and likewise the Mahayana Buddhist shrines in imitation of them, are conceived on impressive scales. Their interior is adorned with mighty figures and reliefs, assigned roughly to the 7th century. The sculptures, which are perfectly modelled, reveal powerful forms the epic might of which seems to transcend the limits of the physical frame. And yet the dynamic energy and passion animating each figure has been basically

sublimated by a superhuman serenity. These figures, playing their own spectacular roles in the mythical events, fill compositions that appear to break forth in intensely powerful activities of gods and goddesses. In every theme it is some supreme psychological moment, either of exaltation or of fury, of tenderness or of destruction, that has been chosen for representation and invariably dramatized with superb artistry. One of the masterworks of Hindu art, to be seen in the Das Avatara cave, is a relief visualising the revelation of Vishnu in his incarnation of the Man-Lion (Narasimha): the terrible form in which he appeared to the tyrant-demon Hiranya-kasipu. Interpreting this relief Coomaraswamy writes: 'It would be difficult to imagine a more splendid rendering of the well-known theme of the impious king who met his death at the hands of the avenging deity in man-lion form. The hand upon the shoulder, the shrinking figure with the mocking smile that has had no time to fade—what could be more terrible?'

The greatest and artistically the richest of all the temples at Ellora is the Kailasanath temple. This monument to Siva was a dedication of the Rashtrakuta rulers who started building it in the reign of Dantidurga (A.D. 735-57) and gave final touches to it towards the close of the 10th century. Built and carved from the top downwards through a hundred feet of rock, the enormous Kailasa monolith (164' × 109' in a court 276' × 154') stands in solitary grandeur from the surrounding rocks. For the boldness of its conception and the magnificence of its execution, the Kailasa temple is a marvel of the art of the sculptor and the architect both. But its plastic decoration is a supreme creation of human art. The main body of the temple is supported by a grand frieze of deeply carved elephants, lions and tigers, whose eyes, ears and trunks and even the creases in the animals' hide beneath the throats, have been most realistically and vividly rendered. Standing high on this platform are the pavilions and balconies, encrusted with a profusion of sculptured figures and ornaments, surrounding a great ornate tower over the main hall. Superb carvings depicting a wealth of symbolism, mystical imagery, episodes from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, cover all the free surfaces of the monument. Indeed, Ellora has few equals in the sculptural art of the world, both for its conventional iconography as well as for the astonishing perfection of representation of natural forms and motifs.

A superb fragment among the sculptures of Ellora relates an epic struggle between Rama and the demon Ravana. Ravana finding himself defeated in the fight with Rama flies to the mount of Kailasa, the abode of Siva. There placing himself beneath the mountain, the demon with his multiple arms, indicative of his manifold powers, is seen making a tremendous effort to lift it up. The mountain feels the tremor of the violence, and Siva's consort Parvati is startled by the shock and so is her maid-servant who is running about in panic. But Siva, serene and unmoved, sets order in the turmoil by an effortless and elegant gesture of pressing down with a foot the Kailasa upon Ravana's head, thus imprisoning him in the bowels of the mountain. The entire scene has been dramatized with intense force and imagination, and the execution shows an extraordinary command of plastic technique.

Stylistically, the physiognomical form at Ellora is governed by Pallava idiom. The figures of Siva and Parvati, with their long and pointed faces and tall and slender proportions, recall the figures of the gods at Mamallapuram. Moods are conveyed through poses and gestures rather than through facial expressions.

1 A. Coomaraswamy, The Dance of Siva, p. 69.
The emotional effect, however, is heightened by a clever manipulation of space, light and shade. The Kailasa sculptors tried to echo the emotions of each figure, and very well succeeded in doing so by setting the action in deep box-like hollows and by a subtle grading in the staging of light and dark effects. As Stella Kramrisch admirably puts it: ‘Depth and darkness are parcelled out according to the demands of psychological suggestiveness with which the artist invests each single figure.’

**Elephanta**

The Rashtrakuta sculpture reached its maturity at the cave-temple of Elephanta, near Bombay. It is also perhaps the last of the great achievements of architectural sculpture in Western India. The interior contains ten enormous and spectacular reliefs of the Siva-Parvati legend. But the most inspired masterpiece, at the end of the nave, is a gigantic carving of Siva-Maheshamurti in his three fundamental aspects. The central image of the three-headed-bust represents the supreme form of Siva Mahadeva; on one side of it in profile is the satanic head of Bhairava, Siva the terrible, and balancing it on the other side is the gentle face of Uma, his consort, representing Sakti. The central head, shoulders and chest are sculpted in a higher relief than are the other two reliefs, which are carved as ‘shadows, incomplete reflections of the central reality.’ The central face is rounded, thick lipped, and heavy lidded, visualising the august sublimity and omniscience of the great God. The grim looking face on the spectator’s left has a vertical protuberance between the eyes, indicative of Siva’s third eye, a curling moustache and protruding fangs, depicting the terrific aspect of the god. And the female head at the right is full-cheeked with thickly carved sensual lips, representing the whole life force of the feminine principle. Flawless in its elemental dimensions this sculpture is the most complete embodiment of the iconographic concept it signifies. The figure can be felt emerging from the deep niche in which it is carved and thus ‘one is made to feel the potentiality of the unseen, the possibility that the whole image will slowly emerge from the box in which it appears. And therefore one knows that this is an image of God making himself manifest. The dynamic quality of the sculpture is transmuted into the dynamic quality of reality. And as the great central head emerges, creating in the process all of the universe, it brings with it, on either side, the source of its energy and the power of its destruction.’

There are other powerful sculptures like Nrittamurti, Siva dancing, Andhakasuravadhamurti, Siva gloriously destroying Andhaka, the king of demons, Gangadharamurti, Siva supporting the three-headed figure of the river goddess on his head, Ardhanarisvaramurti, the fundamental conjunction of the male and female principles of the universe in the anthropomorphic form of Siva-Ardhanari, Umadevamurti, the divine couple Siva and Parvati sitting together, and Kalyana-Sundaramurti, Siva, ‘the smiling god conscious of the transience of Maya’ at the moment of his marriage ‘with the goddess, with Maya, with the great Illusion without which there would be no world.’ They all perpetuate the Ellora style and their sculptural qualities uniformly reveal the unique genius of the South Indian artist in the perfect balancing of sensuality and detachment and in the extraordinarily able transfiguration of plastic forms into the vision of a god.

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THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

The classical movement in Indian art, which rose to its highest in the Gupta period, and progressed serenely during the succeeding centuries, began to disintegrate in the 9th century. An increasing complication of forms of iconography, a tendency towards great elaboration of fixed canons and an over-valuation of mere technical accomplishments, led to a prolific production of iconic or ornamental art in a strictly mannered style. The human figure continued to be the principal motif of medieval sculpture. But while in the Gupta phase it was a creation of the artist's vision of Divinity, it now came to be fashioned entirely according to rigidly prescribed iconographic norms of proportions, characteristics, symbols, and gestures. The scholastic theoreticians laid down the details of image making, but the priestly class, quoting copiously from ancient sacred texts, developed them into more complicated details to suit their own interpretations of theology. Sculpture in this way became hieratic and it was no longer a product of the individual experience of the artist.

It is not, therefore, in the making of images of divinities that the medieval sculptor found the fulfilment of his artistic urges. Rather, it is in the decorative field, in the treatment of motifs not controlled by canonical regulations that his supreme achievement lies. Apart from shaping out the cult images the sculptor was also called upon to embellish the innumerable temples that were being built every day all over the country with a rich and varied wealth of carvings. Here he was given a free hand so that, while he left the innermost sanctuary, where the cult image was enshrined, severely plain in order not to disturb the devotee in his meditation, he moved unhampered and completely relaxed inside the other chambers of the shrine and over the exterior walls, plastering them thick with friezes of human and animal figures and of floral and geometrical devices in a seemingly unending succession. It is through them that the medieval artist reveals his creative genius and truly produces an art of subtle charm and sophistication. Among the figure sculptures, which continually recur, are the female forms endowed with a strangely disquieting sensuous energy, and the rampant leogryph, a combined human and animal device. Elegant scrolls of foliage, clustering round the pillars, are also as frequently seen.

The character of Indian art after the classical phase records changes in some other respects as well. The medieval sculpture is no longer distinguished by plastic volume, but acquires a linear sharpness. Sculpture has also become the necessary and vital part of architecture. In fact, in the medieval conception architecture is but sculpture on a colossal scale and the whole temple begins to look like a giant carving with its surface covered and differentiated by ornamentation.

From the 9th and 10th centuries onwards, Hindu art conquered and dominated almost every corner of the country. Although with wider distribution local schools developed in course of time, sculptural movements, irrespective of stylistic variations, took more or less the same directions everywhere and were inspired by the common medieval characteristics. The lavish sculptural output of the medieval period, however, may conveniently be studied on regional basis where each developed a distinctive style, typology, and imagery of its own. In South India a brilliant flowering of the classical idiom, as modified by the Pallava style, was witnessed during the Chola and the Pandya regimes; from the middle of
the 14th century the Hindus of Vijayanagar and from the 17th century the Nayakas of Madura, introduced a new enrichment in sculpture; in the Deccan a vigorous artistic activity took place under the later Chalukyas after 973, and under the Hoysalas of Mysore from the 11th to 13th centuries; in Eastern India, Bengal and Bihar, under the patronage of the Pala and the Sena dynasties (A.D. 730-1197), constitute one artistic region, and Orissa another; in Central India Khajuraho witnessed considerable artistic activities under the Chandella rulers; and in Western India, Gujarat, Kathiawar and Rajasthan represent an artistic zone of special richness and delicacy.

SOUTH INDIA

Chola Period

The Chola period of South Indian history, from the 10th to the middle of the 13th centuries, is regarded as the golden epoch of medieval times. It was the period of political stability and economic prosperity as also of the culmination of the impulse and achievement of artistic endeavours in South India. The Chola rulers were devotees of Siva and built a number of temples dedicated to their god. The greatest king of the dynasty was Rajaraja Sivapada Sekhara (he whose crown is the feet of Siva). He raised a magnificent temple of Siva at Tanjore about 1000. His son Rajendra I found a new capital, Gangaikonda-cholapuram, and erected another fine temple there. These and the other Chola temples have been embellished with a considerable wealth of sculpture on the wall surfaces of the foundational parts and of the main towers. The basements of the Tanjore and the Gangaikonda-cholapuram temples consist of panelled recesses occupied by full length statues of deities from the Hindu pantheon in the way it is arranged in the raths at Mamallapuram; and in another level a frieze of unfinished busts of lions decorates the space under the lowest row of niches. The divine figures are in high relief, almost gigantic in proportion and very powerfully built. But although the individual works like the Dancing Siva are suggestive of warmth and dynamic animation, taken as a whole, the stone sculpture of the Chola period is found wanting in the chaste refinement of the classical period and is often even dull and crude in execution. In the Chola period we may also notice the beginning of a voluptuous treatment of the human figure. The relief work ceases to appear as such and resembles statuary in the round.

Pandya Period

During the regime of the Pandyas, who became the principal power in the South with the fading out of the Cholas, the architect’s skill was diverted from the main body of the shrine to its supplementary or outlying portions. This development led to the erection of high outer walls with tall gateways topped by high pylons called Gopurams. The sloping sides of these provided the basis for plastic embellishments in which the main elements are “the mystic and many-weaponed deities of the Saiva pantheon” in infinitely multiplied and repeated representations. In these manifold forms and compositions the Pandya sculptures are characterised by slim and soft elegance but without the animated warmth that distinguishes the Chola style.
Vijayanagar Period

From the middle of the 14th century a glorious enrichment in the cultural life of southern India was introduced by a new power which established the Hindu empire of Vijayanagar as a bulwark against the Islamic invasions from the north. The Empire, extending from the river Krishna to Cape Comorin, lasted for over two centuries from 1336 to 1565. Its capital was Vijayanagar, a city known all over Asia for its fabulous wealth and legendary splendour. Here and at other places in the Empire the aesthetic aspirations of the people, moved by a new spirit, found expression in a virile architectural activity which brought into being temples, halls, enclosures and gateways, all adorned with sculptures and pillars of exquisite workmanship. Indian architecture, remarkable in all periods for the wealth of its applied decoration, reached at this stage of its development 'the extreme limit of florid magnificence.' ‘It is a record in stone of a range of ideals, sensations, emotions, prodigalities, abnormalities of form and formlessness, and even eccentricities, that only a super-imaginative mind could conceive, and only an inspired artist could reproduce.’

Much of the fantastic beauty of the Vijayanagar temples was produced by their pillars and piers, which were sculptured into the most complicated compositions of motifs, such as furiously rearing horses, rampant hippocryphs or upraised animals of a supernatural kind. Often of heroic proportions this interesting group of statuary is chiselled entirely in the round.

A number of temple structures during the Vijayanagar epoch were erected at Tirupati, Lepakshi, Srisailam, Kanchipuram, Tadpatri (A.D. 1550-60), Vellore (A.D. 1560), Chidambaram (north gopuram, A.D. 1520), and other places. But some of the principal structures are found in the city of Vijayanagar itself—the Vitthala (A.D. 1513-65) and Hazara-Ram (A.D. 1515) temples, and a few other buildings obviously of a secular order. The Vitthala temple, dedicated to Vishnu, is by far the most ornamental building, every stone of which, whether granite or the dark green chlorite, has been chiselled into patterns of bewildering intricacy. But while the spirited chargers and the fantastic monsters of the Vitthala sanctuary are very impressive, they do not excel in animated vigour the hippocryphs and dragons of the Vellore pillars. There is a recurrence of the sedent lion motif, in the Pallava style, in the centre pillars of the Kalyan Mandapa at Vellore. But even this archaic element has been treated with such elaboration that it perfectly fits in with its more florid environment. The ‘hundred-pillared-mandapa’ in the Vardarajaswami temple and the ‘thousand-pillared-mandapa’ at the Ekambteswaranatha at Conjeeveram (Kanchipuram) also preserve in their columns a fantastic grouping of imaginative statuary carved with extraordinary dexterity.

Sculpture in the Vijayanagar style found impressive utterances in South India long after the Empire had disintegrated. A notable example is the central pillared hall (mandapa), popularly known as the Horse Court, of the 16th century temple at Sri-Rangam. Here we see an entire colonnade of furiously fighting steeds, each nearly nine feet in height and executed with so much precision and sharpness that it appears to have been wrought in hardened steel and not in stone. The rampant animal motif as a decorative element in architecture, which had its earliest phase in the Pallava buildings, seems to attain finality in fantastic extravagance at this temple.

Nayaka Period

The most famous of the post-Vijayanagar structures is the Sundaresvara-Meenakshi shrine at Madura. It was constructed by the kings of the Nayaka dynasty, who had after the fall of the Vijayanagar Empire established themselves in the far south in the 17th century. By this time the Dravidian temple architecture had entered the final stage of its development. The two most pre-eminently decorative elements of the great Madura temple are its gopurams and pillars. The surfaces of the gopurams are covered from top to bottom with a very large number of images of the Hindu pantheon, important only iconographically. There is hardly any aesthetic merit in this sculpture which is carved rigidly and executed poorly in mere mechanical adherence to technical recipes. Probably nowhere are the pillars in so much abundance as in this temple. Their number is two thousand. Forming part of the mass of each pillar are life-sized figures of a rampant dragon, a deity, or the donor of the temple. The figures are elaborately carved, and display a plastic sensibility not seen outside. The rearing dragon, which is the most common motif, retains its spirited curves although somewhat controlled and stylised.

A small but delicate example of this last period in Dravidian style—the period that has been described as one of ‘very brilliant decadence’—is the Subrahmanya temple, erected in the court of the great Siva temple at Tanjore in the 18th century. It is considerably much more embellished than the larger 11th century building at its side. Its plastic ornamentation is so delicately wrought that it has justly been compared to the work of a goldsmith in stone. The sculptured details, moreover, pulsate with so much animation that even in the reckless exuberance of decoration it is still an exquisite example of the Dravidian school.

THE DECCAN

Chalukya-Hoysala Period

The creative vitality of Southern India in an extremely ornate form found another expression under the Later Chalukyas and a new dynasty of rulers called the Hoysalas of Mysore. The line of the Chalukyas was restored by Taila, a rebel feudatory of the Rashtrakuta Empire in 973. But by the 11th century, the Chalukya power declined, and one of their vassal families, the Hoysalas, carved out an independent kingdom of their own (A.D. 1022-1342) in the southern provinces of the Chalukya Empire. The Chalukya-Hoysala phase was a period of unprecedented temple-building activity. The most notable of these temples are found at Kukkanur, Lakkundi, Ittagi, Gadag, Kuruvaru, Haveri, Hangal, Bankapur, Dambal—all belonging to the Chalukyan period, and at Belur, Doddra Godavarli, Halebid and Somnathpur, built during the Hoysala period. A most remarkable feature of the temples is the unrestrained application of sculptured forms which covered the entire wall surfaces. The star-shaped pattern of the Hoysala temples gave the sculptor added scope for the employment of his skill over a larger area. The basement of these temples, which follows a fixed order of decoration, is carved from end to end into a series of bands filled with a rich variety of sculptured designs. The successive tiers from the ground consist of a procession of elephants, speeding horsemen, succession of scenes from the
epics, a continuous line of ‘yalis,’ hippopotamic monsters, spouting spirals of foliage and a running pattern of ‘hamsa’ (a kind of goose). The wide upright space on the walls of the shrine above the basement are decorated with ornate niches within which are placed elaborately sculptured images of gods under foliated canopies. The tower too is not without its rich sculptured texture. The pillars, capitals and brackets, ceilings, doorways and jambs also received similar attention from the Hoysala artists.

The temple of Hoysalesvara (A.D. 1141) at Halebid is an outstanding Hoy- sala monument for the prodigality of its sculptured ornamentation. Almost the entire field of Hindu mythology with the utmost detail is illustrated here, and the decorative motifs are superimposed in frieze upon frieze running horizontally throughout the entire composition of the temple. Following the conventional sequence of decorations during this phase of art the lowest space on the basement is occupied by numerous borders, containing an unending defile of elephants, next a row of lions, then a tier of horsemen, and in a still higher zone lively groups of fantastic creatures in sequences of dramatic narrative scenes. The central space is filled with a frieze of divinities, each splendidly apparelled and complete with attributes and symbols, in height half the size of life, and all modelled in exceedingly high relief. The decorations of the upper space are mainly architectural in character and consist of ornate niches and foliated canopies with images of elaborately chiselled celestial beings placed within them. The continuity of the sculpture gallery is interrupted by four gateways the surroundings of which display designs of exceptional workmanship and ingenuity. Extravagantly fanciful creations of door-keepers in heroic proportions stand on either side of each entrance. The lintel above the entrance, a broad panel 12 feet long and 3 feet high, is even more ornately carved in a singularly animated manner to unfold episodes from mythology.

Equally picturesque is the Kesava temple at Belur, originally built in 1117. Its horizontal strips are nearly as alluring as at Halebid. A number of continuous bands rising one upon another in well-defined courses on the outer walls of the central hall depict caparisoned elephants on the march, beaded ornamentation surmounted by lion heads at regular intervals, scroll-work in which are enclosed tiny human figures in various moods, and a row of female figures posed in rhythmic dancing attitudes in highly ornamental niches. Over these is a line of pilasters alternating with some of the most delicately carved female figures and another line of miniature turrets, lions and elegantly executed human figures. The outer walls of the main shrine and the vestibule have been similarly embellished with a number of exquisitely carved images of gods and goddesses set at long intervals in horizontal order. Unlike the treatment given at Halebid where the deities seem to be elbowing one another for space, the Belur artists arranged them in more comfortable positions. The sculptural representations on the perforated screens between the exterior pillars of the main hall is an elaboration in this temple not found elsewhere. For sheer beauty of figure composition in relief, they have few peers in Hoysala art. One panel represents King Vishnuvardhana sitting in court and his Queen seated below to the right of him, listening to a dissertation by a holy man.

The most magnificent of the Belur sculptures are to be seen in the figure brackets that decorate the capitals of the pillars, four in the interior of the central hall and thirty-eight at the sides of every screen on the outside. The figures, enshrined within leafy aureoles, are popularly known as Madanakai images. Each
of them is secular and female, depicting with extreme delicacy and refinement the sculptural realisation of a full and voluptuous form. Whether it is the dancing girl completing her toilet, or the maiden teaching the bird to talk, or the woman waiting anxiously for the arrival of her lover with a betel in her left hand and a syringe filled with liquid in the right, or the lady beating time with a drum, each one stands in an easy and rhythmic posture and with all the grace and charm a woman is capable of displaying. Their highly skilled workmanship and finish resembling that of wax also entitle them to be considered as remarkable works of art. It seems as if each pillar was entrusted to a team of artists who vied with one another in producing an individual masterpiece. The other pillars too of the central hall arrest immediate attention by the rich variety of their designs and the intricacy of ornamentation. One such column in the central hall is known as the Narasimha pillar. The long shaft has been carved both horizontally and vertically into a repeating pattern of niches with towers and pillars to match. Each one of them enshrines a deity so small in size that it must have required exceptional patience and skill to carve out the many details.

The material of most of the Chalukya-Hoysala shrines is a greenish or bluish-black chloritic schist, a very fine-grained stone yielding softly to the chisel and especially suited to the execution of minute and intricate carving. It has the added quality of getting hardened by exposure to the air. In the hands of the Hoysala sculptors it received the delicate handling of the sandal-wood carver, the ivory worker and the goldsmith. One is indeed overwhelmed with wonder at the superb minuteness of the craftsman's technique and the astonishing elaborateness with which each detail of the relief work has been touched. The Hoysala sculpture, however, is consciously ornamental. Most of the figure modelling is highly stylized and without much expression.

**SOUTH INDIAN BRONZES**

Art in the South was helped by yet another medium, the bronze, which as a means of 'fluid and dynamic expression,' attained its fullest possibilities under the Chola rulers. The roots of the tradition go back to Buddhist art in the South. But metal-casting, as a distinctive school, developed from the 9th century when the wave of Saivism had swept over the whole of South India and art was entirely a dedication to the Hindu religious ideals.

The fashioning of metal images arose from the desire of the devotees to take out representations of their deities in procession. The stone-carved deities, being heavy and unwieldy could only be worshipped in the shrine. But the replicas in metal of the original in the sanctuary, known as 'Utsava Murtis,' could easily be carried in procession on festive days with pomp and ceremony, and thus allay the religious hunger of even those who longed to see their God but could not approach the shrine on account of the rigours of religion. In addition, the practice of presenting donative images led many a devotee to offer metal images as gifts to an existing shrine, which were placed in minor shrines or corridors. Many small bronze images were also set up for worship in private houses. The demand for metal images was, therefore, great and this brought into existence an organisation of highly specialised craftsmen, known as 'Sthapatis,' who strictly adhered to the traditional practices and prescribed principles, both as regards the technical process and the designs of the types and patterns.
The method employed in casting these bronzes is known as the cire-perdue or the 'lost-wax process.' The image was first modelled in wax and then covered with a soft clay mould. After the clay had hardened, the wax was melted out and molten metal poured into the clay mould. When the metal had set and cooled the mould was broken and the image was given its final chasing and burnishing.

The majority of the southern bronzes take for their themes different iconographic conceptions of Siva. The most famous and dramatic conception is that of Nataraja, the Lord of the Dance. To the Indian imagination, Siva's dance is a personification of the cosmic activity, the movement of elemental energy within the universe. It is a symbolisation of the process of Nature, of the Universe in Action and Dissolution. In its material expression, it represents the supreme effort of the human mind to grasp the meaning of life. This plastic type, more than any other, expresses the unity of the human consciousness, for it represents equally religion, science and art. This unity has illumined the imagination of the philosophers of many races; but the Indian Nataraja may well be claimed as the clearest, most logical and impassioned statement of the conception of life as an eternal Becoming. Innumerable representations of the Nataraja are scattered all over the South. A number of superb examples are also preserved in the various museums of India and of foreign countries. They are all very much related to one another in style and treatment. The finest examples belong to the Chola period (10th to 13th century). Encircled within a halo of flame, symbolising Nature that is inert and which Siva galvanizes into activity, the deity is shown vanquishing the demon of Illusion, represented by a dwarf figure, whom he kills by a touch of his right foot, while the left leg swings in the air signifying the release of the soul from the cycle of re-birth. With one hand he sounds the drum, symbolic of Creation, the second is raised in the Abhaya pose, assuring Divine Protection to all Creation; the third hand bearing the flame is indicative of Destruction and Change; and the fourth extending towards the feet tells of the path of Emancipation. The image from the district of Tanjore expresses with extraordinary forcefulness the concept of the Absolute in action. In the rhythmic disposal of its poses it is so perfectly balanced that even in dynamic movement it appears in tranquil restfulness.

The female energy of Siva is illustrated in the various iconographic forms of Uma, Gauri, Parvati, and many others. They represent a happy fusion of the cherished ideals of feminine beauty, that is, firm breasts and slim waists, with aristocratic grace, though one sometimes gets a hint of affected refinement in their exquisitely rendered forms. The devotees of Siva, including the saints, like Sundara Murti Swami, Appar Swami, and Tiruvannamalai-Sambandha Swami, are also frequently represented. These images of Siva saints are so eloquently expressive of the spirit of devotion to their chosen deity that they may as well be regarded as plastic representations of the idea of mystic devotion itself. Vaishnava images are less frequent, but some fine examples are known; the most popular forms include Krishna as Kaliya-Mardan (killing the snake), or as a child (Bala-Krishna), Rama and his family group, Vishnu and Lakshmi, and Hanuman. They are all distinguished by a feeling of litheness and animation which is the supreme quality of all the South Indian bronze images. By the 16th century, however, the elegant ease of the Chola-Pandya works had almost disappeared from the bronzes, and their only moving characteristics are dignity and decorative beauty, so well illustrated in the figures of Krishna Deva Raya of Vijayanagar and his two queens in the Tirupati temple.

1 A. K. Coomaraswamy, Bronzes from Ceylon, Chiefly in the Colombo Museum, p. 10.
Writing on the quality of the bronzes, O. C. Gangoly observes: 'In the absorbing serenity of expression, in the rhythmic sways and the dynamic symmetry of the poses, above all in the moving and generalised forms of an original yet artistic anatomy, the bronzes of this school translate the abstruse conceptions of Brahmanic philosophy, into which the artists have skilfully mingled their own meditations, their prayers, and all the hopes of their lives. To know them and to appreciate them is to receive an initiation into a new world of plastic dreams not revealed in any of the masterpieces of Greek, or Renaissance bronzes.'

**EASTERN INDIA**

**Bengal and Bihar**

Bengal under the Pala dynasty remained Buddhist. But it is a late Buddhism that had assimilated into itself many elements of Hindu origin, such as, the concept of divine emanations and feminine energy of Sakti as expounded in the Guhyasamaja Tantra. It placed reliance on magic and spells, and offered worship to the mystical Dhyani Buddhas in place of the mortal Buddha. This phase of Buddhism, described as Tantric Vajrayana, became the chief source of inspiration of many of the cultural efforts of medieval Bengal, and in the realm of art exercised a powerful iconographic and stylistic influence. The Palas were superseded by the Senas (A.D. 1150-1280) who patronised the Hindu Brahmancial faith. But Bengal continued to grow in her consciousness of Sakti, so that the Tantric idealism was the guiding motive for her creative activities. The deities are innumerable, each growing from the 'Void,' i.e., the formless transcendental into a mystic syllable and then into a special god or goddess who, in turn, is the force behind some aspect of the world process.

From Nalanda, the site of the great Buddhist university centre, and many other places in Bengal and Bihar numerous images have found their way to various collections. The usual subjects recur: in Buddhist art, representations of the crowned Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Taras (female energies); in Hindu art, a wide range of Saiva and Vaishnava images. Carved in hard black stone or bronze, these sculptures generally perpetuate the classical style of Sarnath in its elegance and sensuous grace. They are, however, wanting in any deep feeling. For, especially in the Sena period, it is a superficial elegance that pervades the over-elaborated stiff bodies, clothed luxuriously and be-jewelled elaborately. Technically, the most striking thing about them is the great precision of execution and smoothness of surface. Some of the metal idols, finely chased and inlaid with gold and silver, particularly display a workmanship of exceptional beauty.

**Orissa**

Sculpture in Orissa is typically Brahmanical and can be studied in a number of great temples of Bhuvaneswar (Parasuramesvara, Vaital Deul, Muktesvara and Lingaraja), Puri (Jagannath) and Konarak (Surya) ranging in date from the 8th to the 13th centuries.

The decorative workmanship at the Parasuramesvara temple is exhibited in a varied display of fruits and flowers, birds and animals, delightfully depicted.

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either in scenes or integrated into a variety of designs. Two very boldly conceived and effectively executed relief types at the Parasuramesvara, Vaital Deul, and the Muktesvara temples are floral patterns either trailing from the tail of a bird or issuing forth from a jar in a quick rhythmic sweep. Exceptionally vigorous pieces of relief sculpture can be seen in the representations of the singing and dancing dwarfs carved on the perforated stone windows of the pillared hall at Parasuramesvara. The artists were particularly profligate in their ornamentation of the exterior wall surfaces of the tenth-century Lingaraja temple. The statuettes are full of life, alluringly modelled and languorously posed. Equally pleasing are the luxuriant grace of the floral designs, intricate traceries and scroll work, specially those with animal insets.

But the temple of the Sun at Konarak displays perhaps the finest efflorescence of the Orissan sculptors. It represents the climax of their efforts to harmonise decorative sculpture with the architectural ensemble in all its glory and magnificence. Erected by King Narasimha Deva (A.D. 1238-64), the temple is designed to resemble the Sun-god's celestial chariot borne on immense wheels and drawn by richly caparisoned horses. The basement platform as well as the facades of the hall proper are covered with sculptured friezes reflecting the Joy of Life on earth and the energizing power of the Sun, Arka, the Giver-of-all-Life. Speaking of the shrine Coomaraswamy observes: 'It is a hymn to life, a frank and exquisite glorification of creative forces.' Many of the Konarak sculptures are of a highly erotic character. There are rows and rows of entwined bodies, mainly human, in the most moving forms, and engaged in a great variety of amorous activities. It is an aspect of Indian art which puzzles many. But it would be well to understand that the delineation of the act of love on the walls of the Sun temple, as also elsewhere during this period, is not mere sensuous imagery. It is even more the expression of a highly sophisticated enquiry into sex relations, and a symbolic manifestation of the profound emotional urges of man. During the medieval period the imagery of the Hindu saints was based on the allegory of personal love to illustrate the devotion to the gods, and the poetry of the period achieved its culmination in Jaideva's Gita Govinda which sang of love between man and woman, garbed as Krishna and Radha. It was also during this period that several philosophical doctrines claiming attainment of spiritual deliverance through sensual enjoyment in a most dispassionate manner were being spread through the Kaula, Kapalika, and the Tantric sects. In their various rituals the woman assumed the role of Sakti (life-force) while the male initiate became Siva, and together they attained the ecstasy of realisation of Divine Grace. In Tantric thought sex came to play an unprecedented symbolic role. The act of love was interpreted as typifying that ultimate state where the Individual and the Universal are no longer separate, but become one, and the human experience of the Joy of physical union was seen as a symbol of the supreme Joy of God in the act of Creation. This tendency manifested itself in sculpture in the frankly erotic scenes. It also seems that the Konarak sculptors had been fascinated with the idea of the Sun as the universal fructifying force, for 'the figures seem to receive the mysterious inflow of the power from the great Sun, almost as though they knew that the power comes from the beyond but is realised through the act of receiving, or the coming in of the force into one.'

But perhaps artists with superb plastic imagination executed the monumental standing statues of female musicians playing on flute, cymbal, drum, and strings,

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1 Mall Raj Anand, Marg, Vol. XII, No. 1, p. 57.
placed high up on the roof galleries of the hall from where they seem to sing to the heavens. Distinguished by a rare luxuriousness of mood and appearance their massive rounded beauty, presented in movements designed to capture their all-sided charms, has been carved with ‘relish and inspiration.’ Each one is an enchantress, exquisitely graceful, tender and serene. No less magnificent than the portrayal of the erotic couples and the celestial musicians are the sculptures of animals. The elephant was the heraldic symbol of the kings of Orissa, the Gajapatis—Lords of Elephants. The elephants, therefore, dominate the entire layout. Some stand alone and others move in a stately procession in a bottom frieze running round the entire temple. For plastic quality and liveliness the representation of the colossal horses is of incomparable merit. There are also deer, antelopes, geese, ducks and boars, all amazingly life-like. In some of the niches of the arcade are representations of fantastic hybrid creatures.

A number of images of the Sun-God Surya also adorn the Konarak temple. Although in their general conception, the figures belong to the tradition of sculpture in the Gupta period, they lack the breath of life and are rigid and stiff.

CENTRAL INDIA

Khajuraho

The great Brahmical temples constructed at Khajuraho in Central India (A.D. 950-1050), by the Chandella Rajput sovereigns have many features in common with the Orissan temples, but have been more sumptuously and elegantly treated. Originally there were about eighty-five temples, dedicated to Siva, Vishnu, or Surya, in the architecture of which the aspirations of humanity striving for heaven, were symbolised as rising across the mass of lofty Sikharas pinnacles. The metaphysical significance was further manifested with the transformation of the vertical ascent into scenes of imagery and allegory of profound meaning. Today there are only twenty-five temples remaining. The Kandariya Mahadeva is the largest of all and carries nearly nine hundred images which are architecturally part of the walls, pillars, and ceilings.

Contrasting with the excessively plain treatment of the Orissan interiors the insides of the Khajuraho temples are remarkably well provided with numerous sculptured ornaments. But it is the exterior walls which are even more richly overlaid with sculptured groups in parallel friezes carried round the entire building. Peopled with groups of statuary moulded in high relief, they combinedly present dramatically moving pageants of superbly conditioned forms. They depict divine personages in elegant attitudes, women endowed with the loveliest forms, composite mythical lion shapes, besides many other types of animal and vegetative devices. Indeed, in the intensity of his vision the Khajuraho craftsman created the whole cycle of life, in its smallest detail, and endowed stone with the appeal of living tissue. Among human figures the female images prevail, their provocative warmth expressed with more than human curves and amplitude. To accentuate the sensuousness of their breasts and belly, the artists resorted to the exaggerated elongation of their arms and limbs and introduced waves and curves in their garments and jewellery. The Khajuraho group of temples being a manifestation of the same religious feelings which had spread to Orissa are lavishly embellished with
‘mithuna’ groups, in even greater profusion than at Konarak. But they are replete with such tenderness that seldom do the faces reflect mere animal lust.

The recessed ceilings of the Khajuraho temple mandapas are singularly beautiful and most ingeniously treated. The design is usually an arrangement of richly cusped intersecting circles, each with its bold pendant dropping from the centre. Over its surface sculpture is most liberally inserted wherever a resting place has been found. The capitals of the supporting pillars and the substantial architraves above the capitals are also profusely covered with plastic ornamentation. Above and below the capitals are the contorted forms of grotesque dwarfs, accompanied by rampant griffins at the angles and full-blooded female figures of enchanting grace and loveliness adorning the spaces between them. The architraves are equally overlaid with figure compositions of a spirited character.

WESTERN INDIA

Rajasthan, Gujarat, Kathiawar

The medieval art movement witnessed another development of extreme loveliness in the western region of the country, comprising Rajasthan, Gujarat and Kathiawar, in the temples of which may be discerned an afterglow of the Gupta ideals. A manifestation of the movement is seen in a number of fine temples in Rajasthan, where the most representative group was erected at Osia, near Jodhpur, from the 8th to the 11th centuries. They are comparatively small structures, yet in the variety and profusion of their applied decorations may be felt the power of the full, deep tones of religion.

Following the Gupta decorative order, the capitals and shafts of the Osia pillars are most cleverly carved with a veritable lace-work of foliate motifs, manifesting that fondness for the ‘blossoming trees, the trailing verdure and the lotus lilies’ which forms the chief characteristic of the aesthetic temper of the time. With the same amazing skill of composition, the artists portrayed, with symbols and images, many details from the myths and folklore in their carvings on the jambs and lintels of the doorways to the sanctums. In fact, it was here that the creative impulse of the sculptor achieved its most inventive quality. On the lintels are carved out the planetary divinities and below are the ornamental niches decorated with select mythological incidents. The panels down the jambs are covered with members of the Hindu pantheon. The intertwined coils of the snake-god Sesha outline the doorway, and the river goddesses Ganga and Jamuna, who flanked the upper angle of the doorway in the Gupta temples, now figure at the base of the jamb.

Another expression of the aesthetic consciousness prevailing in Western India is witnessed in Gujarat and Kathiawar where temples of a singularly ornate and exquisitely refined workmanship were erected at Modhera, Somnath, Mount Abu and other places, mainly under the patronage of the Solanki rulers from the 10th to the 14th centuries. This was a period of general affluence for Western India on account of a brisk trade going on between the Eastern and the Western worlds through its ports. It was also an era of prolific building activity. The royal patronage was no doubt the driving force for the architectural movement, but the temples really stand as splendid monuments of the faith of the community, which impelled by a spirit of passionate devotion to religion, offered voluntary
subscriptions and contributions of skilled labour to raise them. The Jain temples of Mount Abu are the most famous of the sanctuaries. Two of them, the Vimala temple of the 11th century and the Tejpal temple of the 13th century, both in white marble, are unsurpassed for the delicacy and intricacy of their decorative sculpture in which religious forms luxuriantly mingle with rich creations of fancy. The exterior walls of the temples have of course received their generous share of plastic decorations, but it is in the interior of the columned halls that some very charming effects of carving have been produced. Here every available space is elaborately embellished with a ceaseless repetition of sculptured motifs by artists who were perhaps in their most capricious and inventive mood. The treatment of the vaulted ceiling is ornate beyond description. Made up of many concentric rings, it depicts rich friezes of human figures and animals, alternating with equally elaborate courses of ornamental repeats. In the Vimala temple ceiling, there is a border containing the forefronts of one hundred and fifty elephants in close rank, a course of images in niches, and over them a range of dancing figures, another of horsemen, and yet another level of figures sculptured in an endless dance rhythm. Placed athwart the lower rings of the dome are a series of brackets with representations of Jain goddesses of learning. The dome itself culminates in a grouping of richly carved pendants like a huge and weightless flower-like substance, its material flashing all around a pearly radiance. The effect is certainly spectacular and to behold this ceiling is to enter a sphere of dreamy lustre. But the quality of the temple's marble has been so much spoilt by the elaborate fretting, and the extremely profuse decorative details have been refined with such conscious intent that the very exuberance of ornamentation tends to mar the warmth of life in it.

That is as far as Indian sculpture could go. Evidently, the age of impressive utterances ceased in the 16th century in the South and even earlier in the North. The 19th century witnessed a sharp decline in the sculptural traditions of the country. Temples were still being constructed and lavishly covered with sculptures, but the creative energy had generally become a spent force, and in style and technique it scarcely ever reached even the fringe of the traditions which it sought to imitate. And as the century drew to a close, Indian art appeared to have lost its inherent vitality to such an extent that it ceased to have the capacity to stir the onlooker.

THE CONTEMPORARY SCENE

The contemporary Indian sculpture could not be in a worse state. It has no clearly defined form or character, nor has it any living contact with tradition. It is still in a transitional phase and has yet to find its roots.

Art in our times is recognised to be highly individual. The artist who was till recently fulfilling a vital need of the society suddenly finds himself isolated and, as it were, dethroned from the high pedestal of honour. In his isolation he is obliged to earn his living either by taking to other professions or turning occasionally to painting. The rising price of materials, lack of facilities for maintaining a studio and inadequate patronage are other serious economic problems facing him. He is also confronted by the new spirit of the age, the modern art forms and philosophy of art coming largely from the West and the compelling force of his own traditions demanding from him a careful synthesis of ideas and experiences. Sculpture has thus become a difficult art and there are not many among the artists
who feel quite equal to it. Even the works of talented artists vary from year to year and work to work. There is yet another factor which influences the character of modern sculpture. It is the passion for extreme non-objectivity that sometimes degenerates into a mere intellectual deliberation.

Among the notable Indian sculptors, Deviprasad Roy Choudhury is one of the best known seniors. "His work, obviously Rodinesque in its romantic overtones, is neither modern nor Indian. But it bears testimony to his intensely ritual and vigorous imagery and to the genuineness of his inspiration. The dynamic earthiness of his figures and the exuberant subjectivity with which he renders them trace his spiritual lineage to Michelangelo rather than to his own anonymous ancestors who created Ellora and Elephanta."1 Ramkinkar Baij is another artist from Bengal whose fame rests on his monumental concrete sculptures at Shantiniketan. His compositions, including his abstractions, are uniformly enlivened by strength and typical Indian lyricism. Sankho Chaudhuri has been known for long for his work in wood and stone and has been experimenting with metal for some time. But whatever material he uses, he imparts to his astonishingly simple sculptures a rare fullness and grace without the least sentimental import. Dhanraj Bhagat is another artist capable of expressing himself in several different media and on any scale. His compositions based on the human figure reduced to its barest essentials take the form and movement of plant life: taut, attenuated and quaintly rhythmic.

Among the other outstanding sculptors of today who deserve special mention are Chintamoni Kar, Prodosh Das Gupta, Amarnath Sehgal, N. G. Pansare, S. K. Bakre, Pochkhanawala, Dhanpal, Sunil Paul, Davierwalla, Pramode Chatterjee, Sridhar Mahapatra and Bhabesh Sanyal.

3 ARCHITECTURE

As in sculpture the supreme genius of India has been splendidly realised in her architecture as well. As one of the principal visible records of her spiritual and material environments through the ages, of the life concepts and aspirations of her people and of the personal exaltation and pride of her rulers, the architecture of India, in its continuity, takes into itself the whole content of a culture. But as the rich pageantry of its architectural greatness moves on, the religious and racial barriers seem to break down and what we see is only the materialisation of the knowledge and skill of the Indian craftsman aiming to achieve perfection. The prevailing intellectual consciousness of the time is no doubt the directing hand, but it is only the effort of craftsmanship that embodies it in truths for all time.

The Indus Valley Civilisation

The earliest phase of Indian architecture belongs to the Indus Valley Culture (roughly from about the middle of the 3rd millennium B.C. to about the 17th century B.C.). The most important sites are at Mohenjo-Daro in Sind and Harappa in Western Punjab, where extensive cities have been found buried in the soil of the regions bordering on the river Indus. From the excavated remains it is evident that the cities at that early period were systematically laid out on a plan in which wide and almost straight streets were crossed by others at right angles. They were well provided with an elaborate system of brick laid drains which flowed down every street, and into the main drains ran smaller channels from buildings on either side. The buildings have been identified as houses, market halls, store-rooms, baths and shops. The normal plan of the houses of well-to-do people appears to have been based on a courtyard to which access was gained by a door, usually from a side alley. Round the courtyard, or on two or three sides only, were grouped rooms of varying sizes, including bathrooms with very well made brick floors and adequate arrangement for drainage. Stairways, implying upper storeys or at least flat roofs, were common. In some instances beam-holes for definite upper floors have been found. The ground storey was composed entirely of baked bricks and the additional storey largely of wood. No building has yet been discovered at these sites that can be identified as a temple. However, an interesting structure at Mohenjo-Daro is the great public bath, which considering its association with a pilastered hall and several sets of rooms or cells, may have been used for ritual ablutions. The Indus Valley buildings represent a very plain and functional architecture. They are of monotonous simplicity and completely lack any architectural ornamentation. But the finished quality of the materials employed and the high standard of their manipulation is indeed astonishing.

For reconstructing a picture of the building art between the end of the Indus Valley civilisation and the first Indian empire under the Mauryas we have
1. Front and back views of famous dancing girl, Mohenjo-Daro (Copyright, The Archaeology Survey of India).

2. Male limestone torso, Harappa.

3. Terracotta seal, Mohenjo-Daro.

4. Terracotta monkey, Harappa.

5. Female terracotta figurine, Mohenjo-Daro (Courtesy, Bharat Kala Bhavan).

1. Lion-crowned capital of the Asoke column (Sarnath Museum).

2. Parkham Yaksha, Mathura (Mathura Museum).

Stone hedges from the Stupa of Bharhut. *Top and Upper Middle:* Outer and inner sides of stone hedge. *Lower Middle:* Frieze from stone hedge. The scene to the right, Dubhinya Makkala Jataka, shows a street with a well from which passers-by used to draw water for their animals. One day when the Bodhisattva was passing the well he gave a drink to an ape sitting near the well, tortured by thirst. But the ape proved ungrateful and tried to frighten the Bodhisattva by making ugly grimaces and finally soiled him. *Bottom:* Fragment from stone hedge. The scene depicted here apparently represents episodes of the Dubhinya Makkala Jataka. Indian Museum, Calcutta. (Photos, India Office),
1, 2. Two Tondi of the stone hedge. Sutra of Bharhut. 1. Represents the Dream or Conception of Maya, the future mother of Gautama. She dreams of the Buddha ascending in the shape of a white elephant. During the pregnancy the guardians of the world guard her couch. The lamp denotes night-time. 2. Represents Ruru Jataka. A suicide having thrown himself into the Ganges was saved by the Bodhisattva, who was present there in the form of a gold gazelle. However, the miscreant betrayed the presence of the superb creature to King Brahmadatta. But instead of trying to escape from his captors, the Bodhisattva approached the hunting king and enlightened him about the ingratitude of the man he had saved from death. Indian Museum, Calcutta (Photos, India Office).


1.2. Sculptures on pillars, Bodh-Gaya.

3. Architraves of North Gate, rear view, Stupa of Sanchi.

Sculptures from the Great Stupa of Sanchi.
1. Sun-god from Bhaja.
2. Standing Buddha from Takht-i-Bahi.

(All photos copyright, The Archaeological Survey of India).
1. Buddha statue from Katra (From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*).


1, 2. Two door jambs from Bhutesar, c. 130 A.D.
(Copyright. The Archaeological Survey of India).

3. The standing Buddha from Mathura, 5th century A.D.

2. The Seven Buddhas. Fragment of a frieze, Mathura (Photo, Provincial Museum, Lucknow).
1. Outside of post from the outer railing, Amaravati.

2. Inner side of jamb from the outer railing, Amaravati.

3. Tondi of post of outer railing, Amaravati, representing a musical entertainment.

4. Tondi from post of outer railing, Amaravati, depicting Nagas worshipping the Relics of the Buddha at the Stupa of Ramagrama.
1. The Boar Incarnation of Vishnu, Udayagiri.

Sandstone torso of a Bodhisattva, Sanchi (From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*).

2. 3. Celestial Couples, Vaishnava Cave-temple No. 3, Badami (Copyright, The Archaeological Survey of India).
“The Descent of the Ganges,” Mamallapuram
(Copyright, The Archaeological Survey of India).
1. Marriage of Siva and Parvati (Kalyanasundaramurti), Cave No. 29, Ellora.

2. Ravana Shaking Mt. Kailasa, Cave No. 29, Ellora.
1. Siva dancing the Lalitam. Sculpture on north wall of Ravana-kakhai, Cave No. 14, Ellora.

2. Maheshamurti, Cave No. 1, Elephanta.
1. Marriage of Siva and Parvati (Kalyanasundaramurty), Cave No. 29, Ellora.

2. Ravana Shaking Mt. Kailasa, Cave No. 29, Ellora.
1. Siva dancing the Lalitam. Sculpture on north wall of Ravana-kakhai, Cave No. 14, Ellora.

2. Maheshamuri, Cave No. 1, Elephanta.
1. Siva-Nataraja, Cave No. 1, Elephanta (Photo, E. S. Mahalingam).

2. Andhakasura-vadha-murti, Cave No. 1, Elephanta (Photo, E. S. Mahalingam).
1. Horse Court, Vishnu temple, Sri-rangam.

2. Hoysalesvara temple, Halebid.
Madanakai images in dancing poses, from the Chenna Kesava temple, Belur (Photos, A. K. Banerji).

1. Woman writing with a stylus, Bhubaneswar (Copyright, The Archaeological Survey of India). This sculpture is now presumed to be from Khajuraho.

2. War-horse led by a warrior and trampling on an asura. Free standing sculpture, Konaraka (From Havell's Indian Sculpture and Painting).
Close-up of an embracing couple, from the Jagmohan, Temple of the Sun, Konarak. (Copyright, The Archaeological Survey of India.)

2. The kiss. Close-up of sculpture, Khajuraho (Photo, Shama Kilanjar).
A beautiful sculpture from Khajuraho (Copyright, The Archaeological Survey of India.)
Beautifully carved marble ceilings, Tejpal's temple, Mt. Abu (Photos, A. L. Syed).
to depend on literary evidence and on conjectures, because hardly any architectural relic of the period has hitherto been unearthed. The reason for such absence appears to be that the constructions were built mainly of mud, bamboo, reeds and wood—the materials most easily available in the plains and forests of North India to the Aryan immigrants who had no tradition of monumental architecture. Yet, it can scarcely be denied that architecture was one of the arts to which the Indo-Aryans gave considerable attention. There is a vast body of contemporaneous ritualistic and philosophical literature referring constantly to the existence of an architecture, which from the descriptions should have been in a high state of excellence.

The Vedic Culture

From the information contained in the Vedas, we gather that the earliest settlers lived in huts of round and square shapes and occasionally in tower-like structures, surrounded for protection by a bamboo railing, the upright posts of which supported three horizontal bars. After some time the houses became richer and more spacious, comprising a central hall and a number of rooms which served for storing and living purposes. Sacrificial halls and fire-altars in diverse artistic shapes and forms are also mentioned in the Vedas. They were all constructed around a framework of bamboo. Even the royal residences had thatched roofs.

In the epics (Ramayana and Mahabharata) there are picturesque descriptions of a variety of architectural constructions, such as 'abode of gods,' assembly halls, balconies, porticos, arched gateways, two-storeyed buildings, and amphitheatres. It is noteworthy that stone is only occasionally referred to as a building material. A perusal of old Pali literature shows that a science of architecture, viz., 'Vattuvijja,' was in practice and it guided the architects in building relic-shrines, palaces, and assembly-halls. Of special significance are the references to temples with curvilinear roofs (Kutagaras). That wood was generally applied to architecture before and during the career of the Buddha is evident from the accounts of guilds of craftsmen practising in this material in the Jataka legends, and the representation of houses and palaces in the Buddhist reliefs of the first century B.C. at Bharhut and Sanchi. The bas-reliefs, though carved at a later date, are almost faithful records of the building art of the earlier centuries. Indeed, the architecture of the Maurya, Sunga and Early Andhra periods is itself an imitation in stone of the earlier wooden structures. It is presumed that only towards the middle of the first millennium B.C. stone had begun to replace the wooden forms in order perhaps to give the urban areas more stable and durable protective enclosures. The earliest stone walls still standing are the ramparts of cyclopean rubble masonry at Rajgriha (in the state of Bihar), the ancient capital of Bimbisara (544-493 B.C.).

THE BUDDHIST PERIOD

The Mauryas

The splendour of power that the Mauryas tried to create is reflected in an account of the capital city of Pataliputra (near Patna) given by Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador accredited to the Court of the Maurya emperors about 300 B.C. The city occupying a parallelogram, about ten miles in length and two miles in
breadth, was girded by a stupendous wooden wall pierced with loopholes for the archers. The wall was topped by over 500 towers and provided with as many as sixty-four gates. Within the enclosure was the royal palace, which consisted of a series of hypostyle halls that in plan and in decorative treatment appear to be, as suggested by some scholars, inspired by the Achaemenid palaces at Persepolis in Iran. The Imperial residence was still standing when the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Fa-Hien saw it shortly after A.D. 400. He makes a mention of the royal palace, 'the different parts of which he (Asoka) commissioned the genii to construct...'. Indeed, the walls, doorways, and the sculptured designs so much impressed the traveller that he felt sure they could not have been wrought by human hands. Fragments of the wooden fortifications of the Maurya capital have been excavated at Bulandi Bagh. In its original construction the structure appears to have consisted of a double row of massive palisades of teak beams nearly 14 feet apart, interlinked by horizontal timbers, and probably filled with earth.

The decisive application of stone to constructional work set in under emperor Asoka Maurya, who about 255 B.C. inaugurated Buddhism as the religion of the country. And thenceforth in the fulfilment of his mission of Dharma Vijaya—Conquest of the World through the Law and Peace of the Buddha—he had the teachings of the Master engraved on rocks and devised an even more impressive monument in the form of monolithic pillars to proclaim the Good Law. His intention evidently was to institute a permanent record of the establishment of Buddhism and to indirectly preach the royal sermons to his subjects. The pillars, originally set up at about thirty places, but now found only at Kolhua, Sankasya, Rummindei, Rampurva, Lauriya-Nandangarh, Sarnath, Sanchi, and Saledgarh, represent the main architectural achievements of the Asokan age. The typical piece consists of a plain but completely smooth, slightly tapering, shaft from thirty to forty feet in height, and arising out of the ground without a base. The top, which is about two feet in diameter, is crowned with a sculptural decoration from Buddhist symbology. In course of time the pillar grew taller and taller and the capital developed a more elegant appearance. Though set up in the vicinity of some Buddhist building or stupa, they are architecturally unrelated to any particular composition and are designed as self-contained monuments to stand in open space.

The one unique quality which characterises all the stone productions of the Asokan period is their extremely lustrous polish. In the case of pillars, the technical skill of the chisellers achieved its greatest effect and the grey sandstone monuments shone out with a finish resembling a fine enamel. The superior workmanship of the columns is further marked by unerring precision of modelling, fine proportions, and well-balanced conceptions. Apparently, these pillars may appear to be reminiscent of the Achaemenid columns, but the likeness is only superficial. For, in the first place, the symbolism these pillars are intended to represent is completely Indian; and secondly the foreign impact, if any, in their execution is hardly more than a mere inspiration since there is evidence of indigenous talent adept in the technique of giving brilliant polish to stonework. It is, however, not unlikely

1 The pillars represent the great trees of the forest which have been worshipped from very early times. A suggestion of such worship may be seen in the bas-reliefs of the Bharhut railing (150 B.C.) where tall palm trees are conventionally placed at the sides of some of the scenes. The setting up of columns in front of sanctuaries is also an ancient Indian practice. The animal decorative motifs are drawn from the Vedas and Buddhist sources. The four principal animals, the elephant, the horse, the bull and the lion, are symbolic of the four quarters of the universe, being guardians of the east, the south, the west and the north respectively.
that a group of foreign craftsmen already known for their skill in the construction of the columned halls of the Iranian rulers was brought into the service of Asoka to collaborate with the Indian craftsmen in fashioning the Emperor's projects.

Another Asokan production of much significance from the point of view of technique is the series of rock-cut sanctuaries in the Barabar and the Nagarjuni hills, near Gaya in Bihar. They contain a number of inscriptions which show that they were donated for the habitation of certain Ajivaka ascetics, followers of the Jain religion. Most of them are plain chambers with highly polished walls. The two most notable of the hermitages are the Lomas Rishi and Sudama caves, each consisting of a circular cell with a hemispherical domed roof attached to a barrel-vaulted ante-room with side entrances. Architecturally their main interest lies, firstly, in being the earliest known examples in India of the rock-cut method and secondly, as representing a particular type of contemporary structure that must have existed in wood and thatch. The exterior entrance to the Lomas Rishi cave is specially interesting as it is an exact imitation of the gable end of a wooden structure of that time, with two posts inclined slightly inwards and supporting a curved roof fixed on rafters.

Yet another manifestation of the building art of the Asokan era is the Stupa, which on account of its structural significance greatly affected the course of Indian architecture. The stupa is a massive hemispherical relic mound, crowned by a stone umbrella and surrounded by a balustrade. The stupa, however, was not unknown in India before the time of Asoka. It was originally a simple burial mound of earth and bricks erected by the Vedic Aryans over the fragments of bones and ashes of chiefs and kings or a holy personage. Following this custom, the ashes of the Buddha himself, after his Great Departure, were enshrined under such tumuli.

Nevertheless, the stupa had not prior to the time of Asoka acquired any sacred character among the Buddhists. There is no evidence of veneration paid to relic-mounds in the pre-Maurya period. It was probably Asoka who in search of striking monuments for the materialisation of his Imperial policy thought of the stupa as an effective means of influencing the minds of his people. So, from the time Asoka divided up the existing body relics of the Buddha and erected monuments to enshrine them the stupas became objects of cult worship. They became the symbol of the passing away of the Buddha into 'Nirvana' and the relic shrine itself enabled the devotees of the religion to think of the Great Teacher as an immanent reality. Gradually, in Buddhist art and religion the stupa came to be accepted as a sort of architectural body representing the Buddha himself.

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1 The names given to the various parts of the stupa are too clearly reminiscent of the Vedic ritual terminology to leave any doubt as to their origin. The lofty terrace, surrounding the monument at the base was called 'Medhi,' the processional path in Vedic rites; encircling the stupa on the ground level was a second processional path enclosed by a massive railing known as 'Vedika,' the Vedic term for sacrificial ground; and its cross bars were called 'Suchi,' suggesting 'Sucha,' roots of a sacred grass which were scattered on the sacrificial ground as part of the Vedic rituals. The stupa was invested with an elaborate cosmic symbolism which was likewise drawn from Vedic traditions: the hemispherical shape of the stupa was taken to mean 'the architectural replica of the dome of heaven, enclosing the world-mountain rising from earth to heaven'; the super-imposed umbrellas on top became symbolic of 'the succession of higher heavens losing themselves in the transcendental absolute'; the railing covered by a coping stone was interpreted to suggest the circulation of the stars, of the hours, of the seasons, around the world-mountain; and finally the circumambulatory rite performed by the pilgrims around the sanctuary took the same directions which describe the course of the sun and stars through the heavens.
Architecture under the Sungas and Andhras

Most of Asoka's stupas have long since disappeared. Those that can still be traced were enlarged and embellished in such a manner in the later centuries that nothing of the original foundations can be seen today.

The policy of religious imperialism pursued by Asoka could not long be kept up after his death in 236 B.C. The Empire soon disintegrated and when it broke up finally in 184 B.C., the greater part of the country came under the control of the Brahmanical dynasties. The Sungas became the chief ruling power in north and central India, while in the south the Andhras (kings of this line are referred to as the Satavahanas) held sway over a considerable part including the Deccan. But although Buddhism was no longer the religion of the ruling powers, it continued to maintain its hold on a large and important section of society, as a result of which the monks formed themselves into rich and influential organisations and the Buddhist art movement prevailed unabated.

Sanchi

The initial steps in the movement consisted principally in giving a more refined and impressive appearance to the stupa by replacing the impermanent materials of which these monuments had hitherto been built with others of a more stable nature. The most representative of the movement as a whole is the Great Stupa of Sanchi (Central India) the original foundation of which was raised by Asoka. Later the patronage of the Andhra rulers made possible its enlargement to nearly twice its previous size by encasing the brick tumulus in stone, and placing a terrace around it, access to which is provided by a double flight of steps. The timber palisade which had surrounded the Asoka structure was replaced in the last decades of the 1st century B.C. by a massive stone railing. It consists of octagonal posts, nine feet high from the ground level, through which are pierced three horizontal bars, each two feet wide. Over all is placed an immense beam. The railing is divided into four quadrants by entrances, adorned with imposing gateways, lavishly ornamented with reliefs. The top of the dome is surmounted by a superstructure consisting of a square railing, enclosing a pedestal from which is raised a triple umbrella, signifying the reign of 'Dharma.' Today, in its enlarged state, the Great Stupa covers an area of 120 feet and rises to a height of 54 feet.

The railing is regarded as a very characteristic feature of Buddhist architecture. It stands for protection and usefully serves a decorative purpose. The Sanchi railing is a particularly impressive production on account of the largeness of its proportions and the solid simplicity of its treatment. Equally distinctive is its method of construction. Each part of the railing is an imitation in stone of the wooden original. The joints in particular are reminiscent of the carpenter's technique. This feature is suggestive of a formative epoch in the use of stone as a building material and also of the persistence of the old practices of the craft in the mind of the builder although his hands were now handling new materials.

The entrance archways (Toranas), though forming an important part of the structural scheme, were really decorative additions, constructed mainly for the accommodation of sculptures. On account of the profusion of ornamentation the constructional part of the toranas is not easily distinguishable from the ornamental. Detached from the sculptural overlay the actual framework, however,
comes to view as a comparatively simple affair. It consists of two stone pilasters, surmounted by sculptured capitals, which in their turn support a super-structure of three slightly curved stone beams with volute ends. Separating the architraves from one another are square blocks set in pairs vertically above the capitals; and between each pair of blocks are three short vertical props. A number of sculptures are artistically utilised as supporting brackets. The gateways rise to a total height of 34 feet and have a width of 20 feet at the broadest point.

Like the railings, the original gateways were of wood and the stone replacement has the elegance of timber construction without of course the technical workmanship. It is, therefore, a marvel that these structures standing alone without struts should have stayed in position for some two thousand years.

All the four gateways to the Great Stupa are alike in general structure though a period of some fifty years passed in their construction. The first to be erected (in the later half of the 1st century B.C.) was probably the southern gateway, followed by the northern, eastern and western entrances. All of them appear to have been executed by a local school of artificers who carried on their trade in the neighbouring town of Besnagar. They were not all masons, experts in handling stone, but workers in the minor and applied arts. In view of the rich ornamental features and the rather immature constructional compositions, it may be assumed that at this period the applied arts were more highly developed than the technical.

Adjacent to the Great Stupa is another significant monument (Stupa III) of the same character and design but of smaller proportions. This stupa is distinguished by a more hemispherical contour of the dome, which is of a slightly later and more developed type. It has a balustrade running along the edge of the substructure and a detached gateway in front of the stairs to the terrace. This gateway, stylistically similar to the western gateway of the Great Stupa, is the latest of all the five toranas on the site and was added probably about the beginning of the Christian era.

**Bharhut**

The most important stone structure of the Sunga period is the Stupa of Bharhut, about a hundred miles south-west of Allahabad. In size, the Bharhut stupa was only about half that of Sanchi. But in marked contrast to the solid simplicity of the latter, the Bharhut stone-work displays rich plastic adornment. Only fragments of the railing, gateway and pillars now survive. Architecturally, they are massively built and evidently imitate in stone a previous wooden construction. The gateway is the only remaining example of four similar portals. Although less heavy and displaying much that is artistic, it has a far less impressive design than the gateways which were shortly afterwards erected at Sanchi. Incidentally, the Bharhut gateway is the earliest known example of the torana architecture.

**Bodh-Gaya**

At another Buddhist site, namely, Bodh-Gaya, a great balustrade was erected in the early first century B.C. to enclose in a vast quadrangle the Bodhi Tree and the Chankarama (the promenade consecrated by the Buddha as he first walked on this spot after his Enlightenment). Although stylistically in line with the Bharhut railing, the one at Bodh-Gaya is slightly smaller in size and less massive
in general dimensions. Likewise the heavy pillars are now slender and the coping stones narrower.

**Rock-cut Architecture of Early Buddhism**

With the establishment of Buddhist monastic orders and the practice of pilgrimage to holy places coming into vogue, the organisation of the ‘Sangha’ had, even before improvements had been effected to the stupas, begun to feel the need of having sheltered places. These were intended to serve the purpose of enshrining the facsimiles of the stupa, of facilitating the performance of rituals, of catering to the convenience of lay-worshippers and of providing accommodation to the Buddhist priests and monks where they could meet, worship or meditate on the words of the Blessed One. Thus appeared early in Buddhist architectural movement the temple and the monastery. The earliest structures being buildings of wood and thatch have unfortunately disappeared, but we have very interesting imitations of the same in edifices which were carved out of the almost perpendicular cliffs of the rugged hilly ranges in the western parts of India. There are as many as twelve hundred excavations of this nature distributed in a dozen or more of similar cave settlements. The appeal of rock-architecture lay in its permanence and in its association with religion and tradition, as from the earliest times the natural grottos had been the abode of hermits. Later, when religious practices developed from asceticism to monasticism, monumental rock-cut assembly-halls, in place of single rock-cut cells, became the inevitable requirements of the ‘Sangha’.

The execution of these retreats followed the sculptural rather than the architectural method. After the vertical surface of the rock had been smoothed off, the facade of the hall was marked out in outline and the operation was carried out by tunnelling wooden bolts into the cliff. It was the practice to first cut and finish the ceiling and the roof and then to quarry downward. As a form of architectural expression the excavated cave recesses, consisting of large halls and chambers, are classed amongst the most remarkable examples of religious architecture, noted both for sophistication and creative quality. There is no external view except the frontage which is often ornamented. But the interior, particularly of the sanctuaries, has afforded the rock-cutter so varied and imaginative a range in architectural fashioning that within their pillared aisles, ‘there is something not only majestic but magical, as if they were the abode of spirits or supernatural beings, the carved and painted images on their walls giving substance to this impression.’

The production of these rock-hewn monuments covers a very long period and represents the achievements of the Buddhist, the Hindu and the Jain faiths. Its rudimentary beginnings date from the 3rd century B.C. when chambers were carved out in the Barabar Hills; and it continued to be practised until the 2nd century A.D. when a period of inactivity, spread over three centuries, set in. The rock-cut form of architecture revived again about the 5th century A.D. after which it was carried on for several hundred years and finally drew to a close in the early medieval times. In association with the Buddhist religion, the rock-architecture falls into two distinct phases mainly on account of stylistic reasons. The earlier, lasting until the 2nd century A.D., is the phase of Hinayana Buddhism which regarded the Buddha only as a mortal teacher and in its arts ordained that his presence should only be symbolically attested and not by the representation of his bodily form.

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ARCHITECTURE

The later phase, beginning about 450 A.D., was impressed by the Mahayana theology which elevated the Buddha to the rank of a god and permitted his portrayal in art as a manifestation of the Eternal and Universal Buddha. The final form of this expression was seen in the 7th century A.D.

Viewed broadly the two phases of the Buddhist rock-cut architecture display no marked variance in the architectural arrangement of their place of worship. The Buddhist temple, usually referred to as the Chaitya, is a long vaulted hall with an apsidal end, lighted and ventilated by a large horse-shoe shaped window over the main entrance. The chaitya-window will be seen to be the most frequently used decorative device in Buddhist architecture. As an artistic and effective method of introducing light this form of opening is indeed a most interesting architectural conception. The interior of the chaitya is divided longitudinally into a broad nave for the congregational service, and aisles on either sides for the purpose of processional movements and circumambulation by means of a double row of pillars. The pillars, however, have no functional role to play. Although apparently appearing to be an integral part of the constructional scheme they bear no load. At the apsidal end is a stupa, the principal object of worship, which has also been carved out of the natural rock.

The Hinayana phase in chaitya-halls is represented at Bhaja, Kondane, Pitalkhora, Ajanta (Cave No. 10), Bedsa, Ajanta (Cave No. 9), Nasik and Karli, probably executed in the order enumerated. In this phase particularly we find the architecture in stone slowly evolving itself out of the wooden forms, and the earlier the execution the closer is the resemblance to the wooden originals. Taking the interior pillars as an example, they will usually be found to slope inwards at a considerable angle as wooden posts would slope to give strength to a structure; and so the greater the slant of the pillars the nearer the relation to its wooden prototype. The pillars themselves, in all the earlier examples, appear as imitations of plain wooden posts, without either capitals or bases. It was only towards the end of the style that stone architectural features were incorporated and the pillar emerges in very elaborately ornate shapes. Similarly, the shape of the chaitya-arch progresses from indiscernible curves to refined and florid forms when it arrives at maturity.

Bhaja

Bhaja is the site of the earliest chaitya-hall datable in the early part of the 2nd century B.C. But although it is one of the first of such architectural formations in rock, strangely enough the workmanship emerges in a fully mature state. Its cuttings are perfectly planned and unbelievably accurate, indicative no doubt of the fact that it was actually the wooden structure that had been repeated in rock. The architecture of Bhaja, however, was so intimately associated with woodwork that the entire frontal aspect, consisting of a spacious and elegant portico, doorways, and the chaitya-window, was originally constructed of wood. In the interior also the closely ranked roof ribs were once wooden.

Karli

By far the most complete production of the Hinayana type of chaitya-halls is at Karli. Supremely artistic and the most impressive yet discovered the Karli chaitya was excavated in the first century B.C. A rock-cut screen, having
three entrance-doors and a pillared clerestory above forms the front face of the vestibule to the hall. Inside the vestibule the greater part of the inner frontage is taken up by the arch of the horseshoe chaitya-window. These, together with sculptured figure compositions on the entrance wall, and two massive free-standing columns topped by lion groups that originally supported the ‘Wheel of the Law,’ one on each side of the facade, once gave a very impressive approach to the chaitya. Today they stand in a dilapidated state and only the interior is in a slightly better preserved condition, the architectural content of which makes it a profoundly moving sight. It has the normal architectural elements—the colonnade, the vaulting, and the sun-window—but individually they have been so well treated and at the same time so effectively combined and integrated that the moment one steps into this great hall, incidentally the largest of the chaitya-halls, one cannot fail to be deeply impressed by the almost heavenly and majestic grandeur of the Karli interior. Of the thirty-seven closely set pillars forming the colonnade only those in the ambulatory of the apse are plain octagonal shafts as in other halls of the series; but the fifteen, on either side of the nave, are most elaborately decorated. Each pillar rests on a vase-shaped base and supports a lotiform bell capital, the projecting abacus slabs of which carry vividly carved groups of elephants with male and female riders on their backs. Architecturally the figured groups have been so carefully worked that they produce the effect of a continuous sculptured frieze of great charm. Above the striking statuary rises the arched vault, about 45 feet above the floor, and from its semi-darkened space an air of divine mystery seems to descend upon the stupa under the semi-dome of the apse. The ceiling is finished with pieces of wood attached to the surface by means of plugs or socketed into grooves. It is, however, in the manipulation and treatment of the sun-window that the architect showed his creative excellence. The endeavour of the designer was to so subdue and modify the glare of sunshine in the interior as to make the entire inner atmosphere appear diffused in a soft luminous light. This the architect achieved by skilfully streaming in the sunshine through the wooden grille of the sun-window and letting it fall gently on the stupa from where it travels off in subtle modulations through the surrounding pillars to disappear into the unseen depths of the mountain.

The sacred shrine of the Buddha was now fully conjured up in which even today can be felt an intensely overpowering religious emotion. ‘The imagination’ writes Havell, ‘must fill in what is now wanting in this noble deserted assembly hall of the Sangha—the painted banner hung across the nave; the flickering light from the lamps reflected upon the glittering surface of the Stupa, and losing itself in the vaulted roof above; the bowed figures of the yellow robed monks, solemnly pacing round the relic shrine and chanting the sacred texts or seated on the floor in meditation or grave debate; the pious laymen looking on from between the close-set pillars of the nave, and following the sacramental path along the outer ambulatory.’

With Karli, the best in Hinayana chaitya technique came to an end. Kanheri, excavated in A.D. 180, represents the period of decline. Architecturally, its chaitya-hall is only a decadent copy of the Karli shrine.

**Viharas**

In close proximity to these shrines is found another architectural form of the Hinayana Buddhist phase. It is the monastery or Vihara where the monks
resided and led pious lives undisturbed by worldly distractions. The viharas as we see them today are more or less facsimiles in rock of structural monastic houses which had originally stood in the open in more impermanent materials and have now disappeared. A typical vihara is a square central hall, corresponding to the open courtyard of the style prior to the rock-cut architecture, flanked by individual cells for the monks extended further into the rocks on three sides of the hall. The hall space is generally uninterrupted by any formation of pillars. It is entered by a doorway in front of which is a vestibule or porch. The viharas, however, follow no regular design.

One of the oldest of the monks' quarters is Cave No. 12 at Ajanta. A more elaborate type particularly in the treatment of exteriors is seen at Nasik (1st century A.D.). Interesting variations in the carvings of the portico pillars and doorways are particularly noteworthy.

Rock-cut viharas, dating from the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C. and dedicated to the Jain faith, have also been found in the eastern part of the country at Khandragiri and Udayagiri hills in Orissa. There are in all thirty-five excavations (locally known as Gumpa). Two of the caves consist of single cells only, a few combine several cells with a courtyard and a portico, while the larger ones have galleries of chambers carved on two levels. A number of Jain viharas have curious exteriors, shaped like the head of a tiger (Bagh Gumpa), cobra or frog. Architecturally, the more developed monasteries are characterised by intricate carving on the facades of the pillared verandas.

Building Art under the Kushans—Gandhara

An art movement of a very different order emerged in the region towards the north-west of the country with important centres in the Gandhara province (today in Pakistan) and at Mathura near Delhi. The Kushans were the political masters of the region (1st century to 3rd century A.D.) who for lack of a notable civilisation of their own had taken over from the Indians the Buddhist ideals in religion and from the Hellenistic-Roman and Scythian sources the characteristics and structure of their art. Kanishka, the most renowned of the Kushan emperors, was an active patron of Mahayana Buddhism. And so, getting the protection of the emperor and the support of the wealthy merchants, the Buddhist population of Gandhara expressed its devotion to the creed by establishing a very large number of monasteries on the hillsides around Peshawar and Rawalpindi, and in the Swat, Kabul, and Baluchistan valleys. These Gandharan religious establishments were planned as complicated groupings of courts, open to the sky, surrounded either by a range of small chapels containing votive stupas and Buddha images or by cells for the monks, larger chambers to serve as assembly halls or refectories, kitchens, and baths. But whatever the planning of the monastery the central feature of the establishment was the stupa enclosed within a square or circle of small halls housing devotional objects of the monastery. The best known of the monasteries are at Shah-ji-ki-Dheri, Bagh-Gai, Haibak, Jamalgarhi, and Takht-i-Bahi. They are constructed of stones of varying sizes arranged in a diaper fashion. And in their designs, certain elements, such as, the Corinthian capitals, pediments, entablatures, and mouldings were appropriated from foreign architectural modes.
The stupa in Gandhara marks a gradual development from the traditional hemispherical mound on a platform to a structure of more inspiring height and character. The architects obtained this effect by raising the stupa proper on a tall platform, approached by a monumental flight of steps, while the stupa itself was composed of a series of successive drums and surmounted by a superstructure of harmika and finial of a many-tiered umbrella. A further elaboration of the stupa was achieved by plastic ornamentation of the base, drum, and dome in accordance with the Mahayana belief. The most famous of the stupas was the one raised by Kanishka at Shah-ji-ki-Dheri, near Peshawar. The stupa has disappeared but it has been graphically described by a number of Chinese travellers who came to India in the 6th and 7th centuries A.D. According to their descriptions it consisted of five storeys of stone rising to a height of 150 feet; then a richly carved wooden harmika of 18 storeys and an iron mast took it to a total height of nearly 700 feet. It was regarded as a Buddhist wonder of the world.

Although the Gandharan style of architecture continued to be practised for as long as the Kushans were the supreme rulers of the land, it made no permanent contributions to the building art of India owing to its lack of power and real character.

**Mathura**

The theistic character of Buddhism found another stronghold at Mathura where numerous buildings were constructed. However, it is only from the accounts of Chinese visitors like Fa-Hien and Huien-Tsang that we get an idea of the architectural magnificence of the days of Kanishka and his successors. The reason is that the temples and monasteries of Mathura were so thoroughly demolished by the Mohammedan invaders who overran the country a few centuries after, that it is not possible to select any one structure as belonging to the Kushan times.

From Mathura, Mahayana Buddhism was carried further into the Gangetic plain, where universities, sanctuaries, and monasteries grew up at a number of sites. Today they are in most instances in ruins. A Buddhist shrine at BodhGaya, whose foundations were probably laid in the Kushan period, is architecturally important for a series of brick arches and vaults with which the original structure was embellished. In some of these arches the bricks were placed edge to edge, and in others, horizontal courses of bricks alternated with others placed upright. The bricks were joined with lime mortar. Incidentally it is one of the few occasions when the Indian builders experimented with the arch before the Mohammedans introduced the true arch in the 13th century.

**Buddhist Architecture in South India**

In much the same manner as in other parts of the country, a tradition of Buddhist art flourished in South India mainly on the eastern sea-coast on the lower courses of the Krishna and the Godavari rivers. There are extensive Buddhist remains of stupas with surrounding monasteries on several sites which roughly cover a period of five centuries from 200 B.C. to A.D. 300. The principal ruins have

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1. Harmika—the pedestal on top of a stupa in which the shaft of the honorific umbrella was set.
been discovered at Jaggayapeta, Bhattiprolu, Ghantasala, Goli, Gudivada, Amaravati and Nagarjunikonda. Most of these stupas have now almost completely disappeared from their sites, but we get a fair idea of their impressive appearance and highly artistic character from the carvings on the fragmentary portions of the marble slabs with which they were originally decorated.

Amaravati

The noblest of these monuments was at Amaravati. But today it is so largely demolished that only a conjectural picture of the structure can be drawn from a study of the faint traces of its ground plan and the representations of the stupa itself on the surviving pieces of its richly sculptured marble covering. It appears that in its earliest form, which is ascribed to about 200 B.C., the foundations and the body of the stupa were built of brick, and later, in the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D., it was completely renovated and embellished with great richness. In its final shape the base of the Amaravati dome at ground level was 162 feet across and its overall height was between 90 to 100 feet. It was surrounded by the traditional railing, but the four openings in it leading to the ambulatory enclosure were devised like open porticoes flanked by lion columns. Around the dome there was an upper processional path with rectangular projections at the four cardinal points, opposite each of the entrances, displaying a row of five slim pillars carved with representations of Buddhist symbols. This path also had a balustrade which consisted of uprights joined by solid rectangular panels. Except for the upper part of the dome, over which plaster painted white had been applied, the rest of the drum and parts of the two railings were covered with greenish white limestone and sumptuously carved with bas-reliefs depicting incidents from the many lives of the Buddha, decorative floral roundels and animal friezes.

The other South Indian stupas, although varying in dimensions, were planned and completed in the manner of Amaravati.

THE EARLY HINDU PERIOD

The fourth century in India's history marked the beginning of a new era, which eventually witnessed the culmination of a great intellectual and spiritual expansion and the unfolding in its highest form of the aesthetic genius of the people in the fields of music, literature, drama, and the plastic arts. In the art of building decisive innovations are discernible both in its character and in the structural procedure. Architecture is no longer a translation into stone of wooden prototypes. It is now conceived entirely in terms of dressed stone masonry. The round forms are replaced by horizontals or verticals. The construction consists of pillars and pilasters, horizontal beams and lintels, and flat roofs with gargoyles to let off rain water. The ceilings are composed of alternating stone slabs placed diagonally, brackets are employed to support the beam of the roof, and where vaults are unavoidable corbelling is the rule. The columns have many varieties. There are square pilasters, octagonal, sixteen-sided and round columns, plain, fluted and helical. The capitals develop with the 'vase and flower' motif. Lastly, elegance in the proportions and nobility of appearance are the other outstanding features of the new architectural sensibility.
The Guptas

It was in this formative epoch that the temple, in the strictly Hindu sense of a 'house of god,' was first evolved. Although the Hindu way of worship in its revived form had already taken root in Indian society about the beginning of the Christian era, Vaishnavism, Saivism and Saktism, the Hindu creeds of devotion to Vishnu, Siva, and the Mother-goddess respectively, took final shape under the patronage of the Imperial Guptas, who as leaders of the renaissance were keen to popularise the veneration of the Hindu deities. The new spiritual consciousness gave impetus to the raising of stable religious edifices for enshrining the image of the deity. In its simplest variety the Hindu temple of the Gupta times is a sanctum of stone: a small square dark chamber called the 'Garbha-griha,' literally womb-house, within which dwells the divine image, covered with a flat roof and a porch in front. The porch is sometimes an open structure of two or four pillars or of two columns between two lateral walls. The interior walls of the garbha-griha are completely bare of any ornamentation and without any other opening except the doorway connecting the porch. Contrasting with the plain walls of the interior, the outer walls of the entrance are often exquisitely carved with bands of relief figures and scroll ornaments. This plan forms the nucleus of all temple building in India.

A number of such shrines, dating from the fourth to sixth centuries, have been found at various places in Central India. The principal examples are the Vishnu temple of Kankali Devi at Tigowa in the Jabalpur district, the Narasina and other shrines at Eran near Bhilsa, temple No. 17 at Sanchi, Siva temple at Bhumara in Nagod, Parvati temple at Nachna in Ajaigarh, and a group of nine rock-cut sanctuaries in the Gupta tradition at Udayagiri in Bhopal. They are all comparatively small structures. The Tigowa temple is a square structure of 12½ feet side enclosing a cela of 8 feet diameter, while the porch projects in front to the extent of 7 feet. The portico pillars belong to the Gupta mode: each one consisting of a many-sided shaft rising from a plain square base and surmounted by a vase-shaped capital and above that by a massive abacus which has been adorned with carved lions. This temple, however, does not display any marked architectural perception. The Buddhist temple Number 17 at Sanchi, on the other hand, reflects in its well balanced proportions and appropriate ornamentation the classical character of the creative epoch which produced it. The importance of the cela in relation to the portico is beautifully kept in view by making it slightly higher, slightly broader and slightly longer than the porch. In a further evolution the Hindu temple structure was raised on a broad platform, reached by a short flight of steps on one side (Bhumara and Nachna temples) or on all the four sides. It was also provided with a processional path around the outside of the sanctum, the one at Nachna being an enclosed passage while at Bhumara it was an open promenade. The interior arrangements of the rock-cut chambers at Udayagiri are similar to the structural examples but their significance lies in the treatment of the rock facades which display rich carvings.

A beautiful little structure in the early Gupta style at the moment of its maturity, is the temple of Siva at Deogarh in the Jhansi district. It probably dates from the sixth century, and has several features which mark it out from the rest. The shrine, placed in the centre of a square terrace five feet high, originally had its upper part carried upward in the form of a pyramidal tower. Instead of the usual
single portico in front of the garbha-griha it had four porticoes, surrounding the cella on all its sides, each with a flat roof, supported on a row of four pillars. All the porticoes and the summit are now in ruins. Its main doorway is also typical of the extremely ornate type of portal that is now beginning to make its appearance. Here it is so overladen with decorative additions that the projecting lintel-cornice, which is characteristic of the temple entrances of this period, is almost obscured.

The Chalukyas

Almost at the same time when the Hindu 'house of god' was in a formative stage in the North under the Gupta rule, another experimental stage in the development of the temple structure was witnessed at Aihole, near Badami in the Deccan. Aihole, now a decayed village in Bijapur district, was a city of temples, dedicated both to the Hindu and Jain faiths, in the 5th and 6th centuries when the Chalukyas were the rulers. There are about seventy temple buildings at Aihole and they together represent an architectural movement that was inspired by the community's vigorous search for a suitable structural expression to meet the growing needs of the creed. In line with the Gupta temples, those at Aihole have flat or slightly sloping roofs; but where they differ significantly is in the treatment of the structure in front of the sanctuary which at Aihole assumes the character of a pillared assembly hall or Mandapa. Another interesting new element is the small upper storey or tower (sikhara) rising above some of the temples. The oldest temple at Aihole is the Ladh Khan (after a former peasant occupant) dating from A.D. 450. It is a square flat-roofed building into which light is admitted through perforated stone grills on the northern and southern sides, while on the eastern side there is an open pillared porch. The interior consists of a hall, which resembles a pillared pavilion, containing two square groups of columns, providing a double aisle all around, and the cella for housing the god's image which is simply a room built against the back wall of the main hall. In this temple we come across for the first time the massive bracket-like capital with an expanded floral abacus forming a necking for the bracket. This improvement afterwards became the usual feature in the architecture of southern India. Another Aihole structure moving towards the development of the completed temple design is the Durga temple. It is an apsidal structure obviously derived from a Buddhist chaitya-hall. A flat roof with stone slabs over the nave replaces the barrel vaults; the inner colonnade is transformed into the sanctuary, and in place of the chaitya ambulatory it has a passage formed by the colonnade of a verandah running round the shrine. Over the apsidal end is a short pyramidal sikhara which was evidently added subsequently.

With the structural edifices at Aihole may also be studied the four cave-temples at Badami, excavated in the escarpment of a hill overlooking the town. Three of them belong to the Brahmanical faith and the fourth to the Jain. One of the Brahmanical halls bears an inscription to the effect that it was prepared in A.D. 578. It is probable that except the one belonging to the Jains, the others were quarried near about the same time. The Jain temple was added nearly a century later. The temples are all planned similarly: a pillared verandah, a columned hall and a small square cella cut deep into the rocks. The facade design has no interesting architectural feature, but inside their darkened halls the walls, pillars and brackets are so richly carved with decorative patterns and mighty figure com-
positions in high relief that to some extent they help to hide such defects in planning as inapt proportions of the pillared halls and the often unsymmetrical arrangement of columns.

**Rock-cut Architecture of Mahayana Buddhists**

The fascination for rock-cut forms stimulated the Buddhists as well, who after a long period of inactivity conducted once again from the middle of the 5th century an architectural movement which now attained final development. Their efforts are represented at Ajanta, Ellora, Aurangabad, and a few scattered places in the hilly regions in the west of India, where chaitya-halls and viharas were excavated and embellished with a richness which only shows how the pure atheism of the earlier Buddhism had given way to an overwhelming idolatory of the deified teacher. In the architectural arrangement of the chaitya halls this later phase of Buddhist art adheres to the traditional formation and the only departure observable is in the stylistic treatment of the productions, which was necessitated on account of the changes in the outlook of the votaries. The Mahayana chaityas now present an opportunity for the display of an iconography which is profuse, far richer in design and more finished in execution. In every portion of the architectural scheme appears the image of the Buddha, in either the sitting or the standing pose, and invariably carved superbly in bold relief. The viharas, on the other hand, were so converted as to serve the functions of both the monastery and the house of prayer.

The chaitya-caves No. 19 and No. 26 of Ajanta belong to this period, of which the former is the earlier and the finer of the two. In Cave No. 19 the essential basilican plan has been maintained, but the pillars take a distinctive shape. The round shafts of the pillars are richly patterned with bands of foliate ornaments and are topped with cushion capitals and ponderous brackets. The closely spaced capitals then provide an almost continuous triforium frieze of deeply carved reliefs. Over all rises the vaulted roof, elaborately embellished with a wealth of figure sculpture which is made to cover every possible space. The character of the stupa in the ambulatory completes the magnificent paean in stone in honour of the Blessed One. It has been elongated to reach almost the summit of the vault and the face of the domical portion has been made into a pillared niche and canopy to contain a large image of the Buddha. The facade is no less elaborately decorated. It has only one doorway in front of which is a free-standing portico, the elegantly carved pillars of which are of the same order as those of the nave. Above it is the familiar chaitya-window. The other chaitya-hall, No. 26 of the series, although a fine production by itself, tries to compensate for the lack of architectural correlation of its parts by an excessive multiplication of figure sculpture.

The most important production of the whole Buddhist series at Ellora is the chaitya-hall No. 10, known as the Visvakarman cave. It is contemporary with the Mahayana chaitya-halls at Ajanta and its interior is planned and decorated in the same manner. But an important alteration can be noticed in the treatment of the exterior which by no means adds to the nobility of the facade. The chaitya-window has been reduced to a small circular opening, below which is a transverse foliation carried across on an architrave supported on two pillars.
A unique structure of the Gupta period is the temple at Bhitargaon near Kanpur. Dating from the 5th century it is one of the few surviving examples of Indian architecture in brick. It is raised on a high plinth and contains a cella connected to a porch by a passage. Domical brick vaults cover the porch and the cella, while the passage has a barrel vault. Its tall tower-like superstructure, rising in diminishing stages, was probably originally finished by a hull-shaped roof, which occasionally features in temple architecture several centuries later. Stylistically, the temple bears some resemblance to the original sanctuary at Bodhgaya. But its special interest lies in the general construction of the temple, the proportions of which are quite satisfactory, and in the very skilled treatment of the outer surfaces where by introducing deep string courses, sunk panels, and horizontally aligned chaitya-arches for accommodating figure subjects in terracotta, the builder was able to achieve light and shadow effects in appropriate measure.

The Hindu Temple

The shrines of the Gupta times should, however, be considered merely as a prelude to the monumental religious edifices that arose later. By the later half of the 7th century, the temple architecture in its medieval aspect had begun to take shape, and the features that gradually evolved reflect the devotee's mental attitude towards the 'house of god.' The image is symbolic of the Supreme Principle that dwells in a womb-chamber enclosed and surmounted by the mythical world mountain—Meru. The mountain itself being the place of assembly of the gods, their mansions girdle the womb-chamber level upon level, which in the architectural scheme of the temple are represented by numerous niches, recesses, alcoves and altars within which are enshrined gods in sculptural forms. To further ensure the metaphysical qualities of the production a comprehensive theory of structural procedure was laid down in various builders' manuals or Shastras. Most elaborate rules and astronomical calculations determined the selection of the site, the laying out of the plan, the size, proportion, elevation and decoration of the temple, and the type of structure suitable for a particular deity. Even the selection and laying of every piece of material of which the temple was built was governed by ritualistic considerations. The temple plan was laid out on a square, which was divided into a number of smaller squares, dedicated to the gods, concentrated around the Universal Man. In the completed structure the great gods (Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Ganesh, Surya, and later the Devi) were enshrined in the projecting chapels and the eight protector gods of the horizon along the adjoining sections of the temple walls in the eight directions of space. The temple was orientated according to the nature of the divinity dwelling therein. It may face east, west or less frequently other directions. The hall and accessory buildings lie in front of the entrance and lead up to it.

The Hindu ritual being individualistic and not congregational, the porch in front of the garbha-grihā had fully served, in its early stages, the purpose of the priest-in-charge. Gradually, with the elaboration of rituals and the growing

1 For instance, the temple of Kali should be constructed facing north and at a great distance from the village; that of Siva should be placed with its back to the village, and likewise the temple of Narasimha (the lion-man), a fierce aspect of Vishnu, should also face away from the village. Such temples are meant to ward off demons and disease. But Vishnu and Lakshmi in their benevolent aspects should be allowed to radiate their powers throughout the village in the four directions.
importance of the temple as the spiritual centre of the community from where the religious and social life was regulated, it became necessary to provide it with a suitable shelter which could accommodate a larger congregation of devotees. The porch, therefore, developed into a pillared hall or mandapa. It soon became more and more spacious and often more than one mandapa was constructed. The halls were filled with chanting and music. In them philosophic discourses were held, religious stories recited, and religious dances performed. In some of the earlier temples the mandapa was not connected with the main shrine and there was a definite open space between the two. But later they were joined together by an intervening chamber, called Antarala. Leading up to the main mandapa is another structure which is the porch or Ardha-mandapa. Such structures of approach, with their roofs rising in regular graduation from the lowest over the porch to the highest point over the sanctum, are symbolic of the mind's pilgrimage, step by step, along the path of Final Release.

The most conspicuous feature of the temple as a whole is the pile of its towering superstructure, the sikhara. It developed from the upper storey of the early shrines soaring upwards in a pyramidal form through a progressive increase in the number and amalgamation of storeys. Several theories as to the origin of the sikhara have been advanced. According to some, the sikhara is the natural evolution of the Buddhist stupa gradually becoming elongated from the semi-globular mound. On the other hand, a few scholars maintain that the idea of the sikhara may have been borrowed from the tall covering of the procession chariot which, with the image of the deity inside, was carried about on ceremonial occasions. There may also be some truth in the suggestion that the conception of the sikhara took its birth in the primitive expedient of giving protection to the Vedic altars, for keeping off the rain water, or in giving to the Aryan temple of Agni (fire-spirit) a structure through which smoke from the sacred Fire could escape. But there can be little doubt that the structural effect of the sikhara has been derived from the bamboo and thatch constructions of the Vedic Aryans to which symbolical decorative forms were added afterwards.

A close examination of the sikhara will show that the surface is often treated with a repetition of the same architectural motif, that is, the sikhara will be found to be composed of miniature replicas of its own shape, of several sizes, and proportioned to its scale. An analysis of the temple structure generally will reveal that this principle applies to the other parts of the structure also. Around each constituent part of the building miniature multiples of the architectural themes will be found rhythmically disposed and repeated. By means of this artistic ingenuity the designers succeeded in imparting a very effective and dignified architectonic character to the whole shrine. They conveyed symbolically the likeness of the Life structure, and in the stressed verticality of each member the Godward endeavour of the human spirit.

It is at Aihole that the beginnings of the sikhara are observable in its various temples dating from about the 6th century. One of the earliest is the Durga temple tower which is almost straight-sided until it reaches the apex where it is inclined inward to support the fluted finial. Two other sikhara formations can be seen in the temples of Mahakutesvara and Malegitti Sivalaya at Badami where the towers have octagonal domical finials and are surrounded by tiers of miniature shrines. The manifest primitive simplicity of their design points only too clearly to a very early stage in the process of sikhara evolution. Gradually, two main concep-
tions of the sikhara—one may even say, two main orders of temple architecture—in course of full formation begin to emerge: the one known as the Dravidian style (Dravida), being developed in the Tamil regions of the south of India; and the other assuming a separate form in the north, known as the Indo-Aryan style (Nagara). The sikhara in the former is a terraced pyramidal tower, crowned with a circular or octagonal dome, technically called the Stupika or miniature stupa; whereas the northern type is distinguished by its bold curvilinear spire with ribbed Amalaka—fruit of Vishnu’s blue lotus, which caps the tower and carries the Kalash, symbolising the Jar of Nectar. A third type known as Vesara is a combination of the above two styles, the barrel roof of which is reminiscent of the old Buddhist chaitya-halls. It is restricted to Western India and the Deccan, but does not appear to have long been in fashion.

**Beginnings of Dravidian Style**

The history of the Dravidian style begins with the contributions of the Pallava rulers who were the most powerful ruling princes in the South from the 7th century to the 9th. The Pallavas were great builders in stone and their achievements deeply affected the course of architectural development of the South. Their productions can be grouped into two classes, belonging to two distinct phases. In the first phase (A.D. 610-690) the examples are wholly rock-cut, and in the second phase (A.D. 690-900) they are wholly structural.

The Pallava rock-architecture takes two forms, identified as Mandapas and Rathas. The mandapa is an open pavilion, excavated in rock, and takes the shape of a simple pillared hall with one or more cubicle cells containing the image or representation of the deity recessed in the back wall. The ratha, literally meaning a chariot used for the conveyance of the image of the deity during processions, refers to a monolithic shrine which is an exact replica in granite of certain religious structures common at that time.

Examples of the mandapa, produced during the reign of Mahendravarman I, constituting the earlier period of the first phase, are represented at Pallavaram, Vallam, and Tirukkalukkunram near Chingleput, Dalavanur, Mandagapattam, Singavaram and Melacheri near Gingee, Kilmavilangai near Arcot, Tiruchirapally, Bhairavakonda near Nellore, Vijayavada, Undavalli and Mogalrajapuram on the Krishna. Each consists of one or more cubicles containing the Linga, the representation of Siva, and is faced by a pillared hall or porch. The pillar shafts are square in section except for the middle third which is chamfered into an octagon. An immense and heavy bracket provides the capital. An innovation was attempted in the temple of Anantasayana at Undavalli by replacing the plain single storeyed structures with multi-storeyed pillared halls. But this only resulted in the structure getting more complex without any real architectural advancement. At Bhairavakoṇḍa, however, a marked development is observable, for here the pillar emerges in its characteristic Pallava style. The capital and the shaft are given a more sophisticated design, and while the pillar itself is placed on the head of a sitting lion another figure of the animal is introduced in the capital.

The second stage in the development of the earlier phase of the Pallava architecture was reached mainly during the reign of Narasimhavarman (A.D. 640-668) when in addition to a series of mandapas, a number of monoliths were also executed. Almost all the examples of this stage are found at Mamallapuram,
on the sea-coast below Madras. The mandapas, though of the same character and proportions as those of the previous group, display a most interesting approach in execution on account of a general introduction of figure formation in the architectural scheme. Not only do the pilasters and mouldings act as a frame-work for figure sculptures but the sculpture itself is so designed that it equally well serves the architectonic purpose of the construction. The pillars which continue to be the principal elements in the mandapa composition here attain maturity. They are now even more elegantly designed—with bulbous capitals and figures of seated lions forming the lower half of the shafts.

The series of monolithic temples called rathas, popularly known as the ‘Seven Pagodas,’ form one of the interesting landmarks of Indian art. Quarried out of the granulitic outcrops on the sea coast, each is obviously a sculptural replica of a separate type of contemporary religious building which was built largely of wood. Although architecturally in the same style as the mandapas, they represent a ‘most enigmatical architectural phenomenon in all Indian Art’ because we do not yet know why the temple builders undertook to copy with such infinite patience the existing architectural types. They are five in number, and with one exception, exemplify either the Buddhist viharas, or the chaitya-halls. The former is well illustrated in the Dharmaraja ratha, which consists of a square ground plan with pillared verandahs, a terraced pyramidal sikharā above, and a bulbous stupika at the top. The latter finds its faithful interpretation in the Bhima and Sahdeva rathas, which are oblong in plan and rise to two or more storeys, each with a barrel roof and a chaitya gable end. Draupadi’s ratha represents a third type of building. It imitates a thatched structure, the overhanging curvilinear roof of which rests on columns.

The monuments, particularly the chaitya type, marked a decisive step in the architectural movement of South India. It has been suggested that we are to see here the beginnings of the gopurams, the lofty tapering towers forming the entrance gateways to the later Dravidian temples. Another characteristic feature of the Pallava style may be seen in the gavaksha (small dormer window) motif of chaitya arches framing busts of deities that crown the entablature.

With Raja Simha of the Pallava dynasty coming into power, the architectural movement in the South took a new turn. The builder, in order to give a grander and more elaborate appearance to the temple and to have more freedom in the choice of the place where he could raise the structure, gave up the rock method and took to the art of structural building. The 8th century in the history of Pallava art was, therefore, devoted to the raising of several major monuments of dressed stone. The Shore temple, standing close to the sea at Mamallapuram, is the first structural example of the Pallava period. Its arrangement was not according to custom. As the door of the sanctuary opened to the east, facing the sea, the mandapa and the entrance gateway had, of necessity, to be placed at the rear. But unusual though the plan is, it is quite clear that in its square lower storey, and in the terraced pyramidal towers crowning the shrine and the porch, the Shore temple is but a development of the monolithic rathas of the previous phase. However, a new stress on the height and slenderness of the sikharā is noticeable in the soaring pinnacle over the stupika, showing the obvious effort on the part of the builders to improve upon the vihara structure of the Dharmaraja ratha. The sikharā gets an even more refined architectural treatment in the magnificent Kailasanath temple at Kanchipuram (Conjeevaram). The pyramidal tower rising in several well proportioned storeys has rhythm in its mass and elegance in its outline. But the ‘perfected
maturity' was yet to come. A decade later the temple of Vaikuntha Perumal, another one at Conjeevaram, was built in which the Pallava architecture reached its most developed form. Although conceived on a larger scale than the Kailasanath, its principal parts, which were separate in the previous example, have now been very skilfully amalgamated into one architectural whole. Inside the high outer wall enclosing the composition are the cloisters with a passage for processions continued right round the central structure, which consists of the sanctuary and its pillared hall joined together by a vestibule. Over the sanctuary rises the pyramidal tower in four storeys, each with a passage round its exterior, a cella in the centre and a corridor encircling the lower two of these for circumambulation. Such hallmarks of the Pallava style as pilasters with huge rampant lions in prominent relief are employed throughout wherever such a structural form with an ornamental support is required.

**Rock-cut Forms in Final Phase**

While progress was being maintained in the sphere of constructional architecture, the rock-cut form of expression did not entirely go out of fashion. The 'solemn mystery of the great colonnaded caverns' still held fascination for the more imaginative among the priests and artists. It was, however, reaching the limits of its expression. The Pallava contribution to rock-architecture in the final phase has already been discussed. As part of the same movement two more localities witnessed the rock-cut forms in their ultimate manifestations. One is Ellora, where along the west face of a hill in Western India, excavated halls under the Mahayana Buddhists had already been in course of production for two hundred years, and the other is the island of Elephanta in the harbour of Bombay.

**Ellora**

Ellora, the capital of the first Rashtrakuta emperors, who were the successors of the Chalukyas, was a place sacred as much to the Brahmans and the Jains as to the Buddhists. Between the 7th and the 9th centuries, therefore, the Brahmans and the Jains embarked on the mission of excavating religious edifices in a spirit of enthusiastic devotion to their great gods. The Brahmanical group at Ellora consists of sixteen excavations, numbered 13 to 29. The principal examples are the Ravana-ka-Khai or 'Abode of Ravana,' the Das Avatara or the 'Ten Incarnations of Vishnu,' the Kailasa or 'Siva's Paradise,' the Ramesvar, the Dumar Lena, sometimes called Sita-ki-Nahani or 'Bath of Sita.' Although most of the shrines follow the same architectural plan as the neighbouring Buddhist examples, they resolve themselves into four different types: the first has a pillared portico and a cella beyond (Das Avatara); the second is similar to the preceding but is distinguished by a processional path around the cella (Ravana-ka-Khai and the Ramesvar); the third has the shrine, although isolated, standing in a group of halls arranged on a cruciform plan (Dumar Lena); and finally the fourth type in which the structural example is copied in all its details.

The final type is represented by only one example, the Kailasa. It is closely related to the Pallava shrines, yet it is unique. Instead of an interior excavation, which had been the practice so far, the creators of Ellora boldly undertook the most stupendous task of chiselling in the solid rock a large scale structural temple
complete in every detail. And unlike the structural methods employed so far, the process of cutting the irregular mass into shape was undertaken from the top downwards into the sloping hill-side by artists, who with amazing technical skill and fertility of imagination, conceived and treated Kailasa as an object of sculpture on a grand scale rather than a piece of architecture. It is only when we realise that the ground plan of the Kailasa covers an area of nearly 300 feet and rises to a height of 109 feet and about 30,000 cubic feet of rock had to be quarried or chiselled out in the building of it that some idea of the magnitude of the undertaking can be conceived. Unquestionably, the Kailasa is the most astonishing single work of art executed by the Indians in any period of history and as an example of rock-architecture it stands unparalleled.

The Kailasa composition as a whole is divided into four parts, namely, the body of the temple itself, the entrance gateway, an intermediate Nandi shrine, and the pillared cloisters surrounding the courtyard. The main temple, however, is the most distinguished part. It occupies a parallelogram approximately 150 feet by 100 feet, with sections of its two-storeyed sides projecting at intervals like transepts. It is placed, like the other main elements of the Kailasa composition, on an enormously high base, which at first sight has the look of a ground storey. The central space of the side walls of the plinth is occupied by a deeply carved frieze of elephants and lions that appear to be gracefully supporting the massive superstructure on their backs. The essential plan of the temple is that of a cela, preceded by a large square porch supported on magnificent columns. Over it rises the pyramidal spire in three tiers, surmounted by a shapely cupola reaching up to a total height of ninety-five feet. Around the sanctum are carved five lesser shrines, each an elegant reproduction on a reduced scale of the main theme.

A detached shrine, standing on a highly decorated lofty base in front of the main temple to which it is connected by a bridge, accommodates the Nandi—Siva’s Bull. The opposite side of this shrine is joined in the same manner with the double-storeyed gatehouse. On each of the two remaining sides of the Nandi shrine stands a gigantic monolith bearing the Trishul, the ensign of Siva, and guarded by beautifully carved life-size elephants. And finally a cloister composed of a colonnade of pillars runs round three sides of this vast structure, over which are assembly halls and cells. Pilasters and pillars in the characteristic Pallava style are in evidence throughout the architectural scheme. The Dravidian character derived from Mamallapuram is also unmistakable in the terraced spire.

Taken all in all, the Kailasa temple is a picture of unearthly beauty and supreme harmony. ‘Standing within its precincts and surrounded by its grey and hoary pavilions, one seems to be looking through into another world, not a world of time and space, but one of intense spiritual devotion expressed by such an amazing artistic creation hewn out of the earth itself. Gradually one becomes conscious of the remarkable imagination which conceived it, the unstinted labour which enabled it to be materialised, and finally, the sculpture with which it is adorned; this plastic decoration is its crowning glory, something more than a record of artistic form, it is a great spiritual achievement, every portion being a rich statement glowing with meaning. The Kailasa is an illustration of one of those rare occasions when men’s minds, hearts and hands work in union towards the consummation of a supreme ideal. It was under such conditions of religious and cultural stability that this grand monolithic representation of Siva’s Paradise was produced.”

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The Jain productions at Ellora are five in number (Nos. 30 to 34) and occupy the northern horn of the ridge. One of these, the ‘Small Kailasa,’ represents a modest copy of the great Brahmanical temple. The rest are of the excavated variety, two of which, the Indra Sabha and the Jagarnath Sabha, are worth mentioning. They are both double-storeyed. A study of the interior of the Indra Sabha confirms the view that it was the practice in rock-architecture to complete first the upper storey and then to take up work on the lower portions. In this case, parts of the ground floor are blocked out, but left unfinished, while the upper storey is complete in all details.

Another remarkable monument in which the very substance of the rock was infused with subtle spiritual visions was wrought by the hand of man at Elephanta. The age of its great cave shrine is still a matter of conjecture. It has, however, been recently ascribed to the middle seventh century. The temple proper is a pillared hall, a little over 90 feet on a side, with six rows of six columns ‘supporting’ the roof of the cave. The basic plan of Elephanta is cruciform, a shape to be found in the Dumar Lena cave at Ellora. But Elephanta’s main deviation from the Dumar Lena is in the position of the lingam shrine which is set in a side aisle instead of opposite the main front. Also the main hall of the Dumar Lena is not flanked by such elaborate wings as are found at Elephanta where the pillars are so aligned as to produce the nave, aisles, and wings on either side. The pillar forms, with high square base, growing into round channelled neck, and surmounted by flat, ribbed, cushion-shaped capitals, belong to the Dravidian type and are similar to the Ellora examples. But the superiority of the Elephanta is in the character and quality of its magnificent sculptures which appear fused with the rhythmical unity of the shrine.

THE LATER HINDU PERIOD

The temple architecture reached its final stage of perfection in the medieval period. It emerged with a distinct characteristic: indivisibility of architecture and sculpture, executed with superb technical skill. The composition and outline of the image-house was not only overlaid with a luxuriant profusion of carvings but the temple itself was visualised in a plastic pattern. Indeed, sculpture became so vital a part of the medieval architecture that every aspect of the structural form tended to grow into a figure, and the aesthetics of Indian architecture rested largely on its harmonisation with the plastic idea.

In the architectural appearance of the temples there is little to differentiate in the forms employed by the adherents of the different religious beliefs. They all used the same style, no doubt with necessary modifications to meet their ritualistic needs. So far as the two major creeds of Hinduism were concerned, a three-pronged trident motif on the finial of the sikhara, a phallic emblem or lingam in the cela and an effigy of the sacred bull Nandi in front of the main entrance signified a Siva temple; whereas a disk or wheel above the spire and a statue of the deity inside the shrine, fulfilled the symbolic requirements of a Vaishnava temple. It is also not possible to make any clear geographical division between the Indo-Aryan and Dravidian styles of temple-building. The Dravidian type may be found extending towards the north and the Indo-Aryan types of religious buildings are known even in the far south. But while the Dravidian form flourished dynastic-

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ally, the Indo-Aryan style of architecture, on account of a much wider area of distribution, developed regionally, each region manifesting its own particular qualities, no doubt impressed at every place by the same ideals, principles and forms of art.

**DRAVIDIAN FORMS**

**The Cholas**

The impulse and spirit of the Pallava architectural performances was bequeathed to the Cholas under whose stable rule of three hundred and sixty years (A.D. 907-1267) a marked development in the Dravidian style took place in the Tamil land. A number of constructional masterpieces are attributed to them. The earliest buildings dating from the 10th century, located mainly in and around Pudukkottai and South Arcot, display in their architectural character a period of evolution in style, which while treasuring the traditions is yet conscious of the progress it has to make with regard to the undeveloped ideals. They are conceived, therefore, on the pattern of the Pallava and Chalukyan structures, but noticeably simplified in treatment: a one-storeyed pillared hall, an attached two-storeyed sanctuary crowned by a central third storey and a domical finial. The heraldic lion motif of the Pallava style was at this stage eliminated from the pillars and pilasters and new elements of adornment were brought in by introducing in the capital a neck moulding where it joins on to the shaft, and by expanding the plank of the abacus so that combined with the flower-shape underneath it attains a striking appearance.

A century afterwards, the style further evolved, as the great temples of Tanjore and Gangaikonda-Cholapuram clearly testify. The temple at Tanjore, known as the Rajarajesvara temple, a dedication to Siva, was erected by the mighty Rajaraja (A.D. 985-1012) about the year 1000. It is regarded as the largest and the highest project of its kind hitherto undertaken in the country. Its dimensions alone speak of the magnitude of the work and the ambitions of its builders. The principal structure, composed of several buildings combined axially, is 180 feet long and has a tower rising 190 feet high. Undoubtedly the main feature of the entire composition is the sikhara. In the elevational aspect it consists of a vertical base, covering a square of 82 feet side, from which a vast pyramidal pile is led up in a diminishing formation of thirteen zones to be crowned by a domical finial. Apart from its massiveness, impressive as it is, much of its power and beauty lies in the simplicity of its parts and their proportionate and graceful adjustments. The surfaces of the sikhara have been particularly manipulated to impart it a quality of soaring verticality by allowing its horizontal zones to be dominated by the vertical disposition of the ornamental shrines. The same intention can be seen in the scheme of decoration of the basement which in the manner of Mamallapuram rathas, is divided horizontally by a massive overhanging cornice into two levels, each consisting of ranges of pilasters and free standing figures of deities filling in the deeper recesses. It will be noted that the temple is only a very large enlargement of the most elementary form of a Hindu sanctuary, but what makes it "unquestionably the finest single creation of the Dravidian craftsmen"¹ is the wonderful blending of mass and verticality which had not been achieved in such effective manner before.

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The other great Chola building is the temple of Gangaikonda-Cholapuram near Kumbhakonum. Erected in 1025 by King Rajendra Chola, it was intended to out-trial the Tanjore temple in richness and grandeur. It is in much the same style as its predecessor and its tall pyramidal vimana follows the Tanjore type. But in place of the severe straight lines and planes of the earlier example, almost melodic curves have been introduced in the contours of the sikhara to convey a feeling of graceful loveliness in contrast to the epic might of the Tanjore shrine.

The Pandyas

With the weakening of the Chola authority, the Pandyas became the dominant political force in the south of India. They occupied the regions comprising the modern districts of Madura and Tinnevelly with parts of Travancore. The new rulers were not great builders, but the Pandya period (A.D. 1100-1350) is notable for a new architectural tendency coming into prominence. Upto this point it had been the practice with the craftsmen to concentrate their best attention on the body of the temple itself, especially the vimana. But with the advent of the Pandyas the main interest of the architects was diverted towards giving a highly artistic character to the supplementary or outlying portions of the temple scheme. Sentiment was the principal reason for this diversion. It was religiously believed that the house of god howsoever poorly built could not, if once a deity had deigned to dwell in it, be pulled down or re-built or changed in appearance by making structural improvements. The southern regions were not wanting in buildings of marked holiness, although possessing no particular artistic merit. In order, therefore, to stress the sanctity of such shrines as well, the builders started ennobling their environment. This they did by erecting Prakarams or high outer walls and lofty Gopurams or gateways rising above everything else. In the larger temples concentric walls complete with watch towers were built, the whole giving the temple confines the appearance of a fortress-city. The walls were almost plain and in the nature of purely functional structures. But in contrast the gateways were utilised for so much enrichment that in course of time the gopurams became the principal feature of the Dravidian temple architecture.

The plan of the gopuram is the same as that of a vimana with this difference that it is oblong in shape and is crowned by a barrel-vaulted uppermost storey. The whole often reaches a height of more than 150 feet and is entered by a rectangular doorway, about 25 feet high, in the centre of its long side. The gopurams may be classified into two categories: in the one the sloping sides are relatively rigid and straight and, therefore, their decorations are architectural in character, usually consisting of pillars and pilasters; in the other category the sides are curved and concave, which make possible a more florid surface treatment realised with figure motifs.

Most of the Pandya gopurams belong to the first category. An early example can be seen in the temple of Jambukesvara near Tiruchirapally (Trichinopoly). But later and more characteristic examples of the Pandya gopurams are the Sundara Pandya gateway at the above mentioned Jambukesvara temple (about A.D. 1250), the eastern gateways of the Chidambaram (about A.D. 1250) and the Tiruvannamalai temples (A.D. 1300) and the gateway of the temple at Kumbhakonum (A.D. 1350). In their structural design they bear several features

1 Towered sanctuary containing the cella enshrining the deity.
of the preceding style of the Cholas. The Chidambaram gopuram, in particular, has its lower storeys shaped on the pattern of the Tanjore vimana. An advancement in the design of the pillar and the capital of the Dravidian order is represented by the pillar-framed projections adorning the gopuram surfaces: the abacus of the capital develops into exceptional proportions; the flower shape underneath the abacus gets a scalloped edge; and the corbel of the bracket overhanging the capital is elaborated into a moulded pendant.

A complete temple ascribed to the Pandya period is that of Ayiyavatesvara at Darasuram in the Tanjore district. It has a plan very similar to the two great temples of the Chola period, but in the general architectural treatment, particularly in the design of the pillars and capitals, it represents an elegant rendering of the Chola style. This one Pandya temple, in fact, implies the intention of the period to replace the robustness of the Chola productions with an ornate and more gracious effect which ultimately led to the extravagant richness of the style witnessed in the Vijayanagar epoch.

The Vijayanagar Phase

The Hindu empire of Vijayanagar was the outcome of that revolutionary movement in the South whose one aim was to stem the rising tide of the Mohammedan menace to which the rest of India had already succumbed. It was a mighty empire, famous for its opulence and luxury; and its capital city Vijayanagar, was the centre of the political and cultural life of the South from about the latter half of the 14th century to the middle of the 16th century. During this period a new consciousness was born: there was a sense of great audacity and daring, a feeling of ‘exultant invincibility’ that aroused people to a life of greater fulness. The temper of the age was reflected in its architecture. In and around the city of Vijayanagar many religious and secular buildings were produced under princely patronage. In the case of religious architecture a practice developed to accumulate groups of structures of moderate proportions about a small and inconspicuous central shrine of greater antiquity in place of the single large compositions of the preceding period. This change in the character of architecture was necessitated on account of the elaboration of temple rituals. The temple deity, as the symbolic personification of divine presence, remained enshrined within the cella where he was worshipped by the devotee. But as he was also being envisaged in medieval times in the capacity of the highest temporal authority, he was treated and honoured like the living earthly sovereign, giving rise to the development of such additional cult rituals as levees, breakfasts, public receptions, evening amusements, annual marriage celebrations, and participation in festivals. Accordingly, a number of separate shrines, pillared halls, pavilions and other annexes, each serving a special purpose, were erected at appropriate places around the main edifice which was the focal centre of the entire scheme. One such subsidiary structure is the Amman shrine dedicated to the consort of the deity of the principal temple; and another is the Kalyana mandapa, an open pillared pavilion, meant for the annual marriage celebrations of the deity and his consort. Yet another feature of the development of the Dravidian style to be traced from the Chola and Pandya epochs, is the building of large Mandapams or pavilions supported by groups of monolithic pillars. The mandapams are of two types: long corridors flanked by raised platforms extending from the principal gopuram to the sanctuary or
winding round the garbha-griha; and ‘thousand pillared halls,’ a sort of expanded Kalyana mandapa for special temple ceremonies, dances and dramatic performances.

An additional architectural richness in the Vijayanagar temple type has been achieved by the extravagance of the pillared decorations. Not only are the columns profuse in number, but many of them have been carved into such fantastic figural forms of rare beauty that they alone can enable one to identify structures of this style. The pillars may stand singly or be devised in a clustered arrangement of delicately shaped small-scale pillars encircling the central column. The pillar design may also consist of cubical motifs alternating with wide bands and chamfered or be composed of a series of miniature replicas of the shrine placed in zones one above the other. Almost all these different types of pillars have ornamental brackets forming part of their capitals.

Many beautiful shrines were erected during the Vijayanagar phase. Perhaps the most splendid building in the city of Vijayanagar is the Vitthala temple which Coomaraswamy described as the finest building of its kind in Southern India. It was begun by Raja Krishna Deva Raya (A.D. 1509-1530). But so elaborately conceived was this temple that it could never be completely built even by his successors. There are six separate structures, mostly in the form of pillared halls, which constitute this temple. The largest of them is the principal edifice which consists of an open pillared portico in front, a closed assembly hall in the middle, and the sanctuary in the rear. The whole composition is placed within a quadrangle which is surrounded by cloisters formed by a triple row of pillars and is entered through three gopurams. The most striking feature of the main temple is the immense hall with its range of pillars, fifty-six in number, each 12 feet in height. Each one of the piers has been sharply cut into lavish patterns of astonishing richness. The same exceptionally high artistic treatment has been given to the other structures within the Vitthala temple enclosure.

Another exquisitely ornate temple belonging to the city of Vijayanagar is that of Hazara-Ram. There are also the remains of many other buildings, obviously palaces, only the lower portions of which have escaped the destructive zeal of the Mohammedan conquerors of the city. Two of these, the ‘King’s Audience Hall’ and the ‘Throne Platform’ originally had their beautifully coursed and moulded high terraces surmounted by pillared pavilions above which rose pyramidal roofs. We have it from contemporary writings that the buildings were several storeys in height and covered with gold sheets and costly cloths.

Many more structures in the Vijayanagar style arose in other parts of the empire, mainly at Vellore, Tadapatri, Kanchipuram, Chidambaram (north gopuram), Ramayam and Sri-rangam.

The Nayakas

When at last the empire of Vijayanagar disintegrated, the Nayakas of Madura set up another Hindu kingdom further south. In order to stabilize their position the new rulers sought the favours of the influential priestly class, and spent vast sums of money to improve and expand the already existing shrines. This was as the Pandyas had done. But under the Nayaka patronage, beginning from the 17th century, this kind of building procedure received still greater encouragement as a result of which a large number of ancient temples were enlarged into structural
complexes of great magnificence. In the course of the expansion, however, a systematic planning was rarely put into practice. In some cases the temple formation is so unsymmetrical that as a whole it fails to produce an elegance of design or any unified architectural effect. But taken individually, certain features in these temples have, no doubt, great artistic merit. Two of them are particularly notable: the gopurams and the pillars. During the Madura phase the gopurams attained the peak form. Much of their imposing effect is produced by the immensity of the dimensions of the structures which completely dwarf the central shrine. A certain number move up to as many as 16 storeys and reach a height of nearly 200 feet. Their elegant upward sweep is richly patterned by the lines of the diminishing storeys in horizontal tiers carried across the lines leading vertically. The surfaces have been plastered thick with floral and figure subjects. Coming to the pillars, probably in no other phase of the Dravidian style are they found in such profusion as in this. Indeed, the chief glory of the interior of the shrines is their pillared corridors. Although not so richly designed as in the Vijayanagara style, they carry its tradition. The pillars are of four kinds, consisting of a square moulded and patterned example, the rampant dragon, the figure of a deity, and the portrait of the donor, each supporting massive superstructures in which crouching dragons and foliated brackets predominate. Most of the figures, however, have little structural value, as they are held up only by attachments to the pillar shafts.

The important temples of the Madura phase are exemplified by the shrines at Madura, Sri-rangam, Jambukeswara, Tiruvurur, Ramesvaram, Chidambaram, Tinnevelly, Tiruvannamalai, and Srivilliputtur. Of these the most famous is the Madura temple, which is typical of the Dravidian style in the Nayak idiom. It has two separate sanctuaries, one dedicated to goddess Minakshi and the other to her consort Siva. The surrounding high walls of the principal enclosure to the temple have four immense portals, one in the centre of each of its four sides. The eastern gopuram communicates with a long pillared avenue, leading directly to another gopuram forming the entrance to an inner enclosure also having four gateways, similarly placed but smaller in size than the preceding portal. An appreciable portion of the second enclosure has a flat roof covering. Inside, there is yet one more covered court with only one entrance on the east which leads to one of the two sacred shrines, consisting of an assembly hall, a vestibule, and the cella, the last being surmounted by a small sikha. The other shrine is attached almost to the rear of the first within a minor enclosure with two gopurams. An artificial reservoir of water, known as the 'Pool of the Golden Lilies,' gives a picturesque frontage to the Minakshi temple. Everywhere within the enclosures are huge corridors having colonnades of pillars, into which numerous chapels and halls open. The 'Hall of a Thousand Pillars,' covering a large area of the outer enclosure is an important and spacious structure; so is the Padu or Vasanta mandapam, commonly known as Tirumali's Chaultri. They have no architectural exterior, but are remarkable mainly for the seemingly unending range of columns arranged symmetrically. Each one is elaborately sculptured, often with unreal and strange motifs.

Evolved and planned in much the same style as the one at Madura, is the temple of Sri-rangam near Tiruchirapally. Although the major portion belongs to the 17th century, there is evidence to indicate that the ruling dynasties in the earlier centuries had also made their contributions to it. It is by far the largest
of the South Indian temples as it encloses an area of over a quarter of a square mile and consists of seven concentric enclosures and thirteen gopurams.

Very similar are the temples of Jambukesvara (within a mile of the Sri-rangam temple), Ramesvaram (at Ramnad), Chidambaram, and others of the group. The long spacious pillared corridors at the temple of Ramesvaram specially distinguish it among the Southern temples. They not only completely surround the temple but form avenues leading up to it. Their combined length has been calculated to measure 3000 feet. The beautifully decorated pillars are closely set and each rises elegantly to a height of nearly 12 feet. The 18th century Subrahmanya temple at Tanjore is yet another gem of the Madura phase. Its architectural effect, however, is produced not so much by the proportions of its structure as by the minute decorative craftsmanship with which its shafts, mouldings, capitals, bases and the entire surface have been profusely and richly engraved.

The Chalukya-Hoysala Phase

A style of temple architecture clearly influenced by the Dravidian traditions and yet possessing so distinctive a character as to be regarded a separate style flourished in a large area of the Deccan from the 10th to the 13th centuries. It evolved under the later Chalukyan kings (10th and 11th centuries) and matured under their successors in power, the rulers of the Hoysala dynasty (A.D. 1022-1342). It is sometimes referred to as an 'intermediate' type of architecture, related both to the Dravidian and the Indo-Aryan traditions. But this is not correct for only very insignificant elements of the Northern style may be found occasionally introduced in the typical buildings of the Chalukya-Hoysala phase. Broadly speaking, the style may be said to have found its starting point in the temples of the early Chalukyas at Aihole, Badami, and Pattadakal. But when it finally developed in the Mysore region, where the majority of the buildings in this style are to be seen, its architectural composition manifested a distinctly individual approach.

One of the principal features of the style at its maturity relates to the plan and general arrangement of the structures. The central building of the temple (Gudi, Basti) in its simplest form consists of the usual compartments: the cella attached to a vestibule (Sukhanasi), which connects with a central hall (Navaranga), very often preceded by an open pillared pavilion (Mukha-mandapa). But it is in the actual architectural planning that the Hoysala temples are different from others. Instead of consisting of a single cella with its pillared hall, they are now multiple shrines grouped around a central pillared hall, and laid out in the shape of an intricately designed star. In a large number of cases the structures are double temples, having most of their essential parts in duplicate, and quite frequently they are triple, quadruple and even quintuple in plan. The sikhara towers over each cella and carries upward the indentations of the ground plan. But the upward progress is radically modified by an arrangement of horizontal lines and mouldings which resolve the tower into an orderly succession of tiers, diminishing as they rise to terminate at the apex in a flat parasol-shaped finial. The tower, however, does not impress by its size, because not only is it reduced by making each tier shorter, but even the horizontal lines and mouldings lose their emphasis under the over-bearing effect of sculptural details worked on all the tiers. In fact, a characteristic feature of all Hoysala temples is the comparative dwarfishness of the whole structure.
The Hoysala style attains a few more distinguishing characteristics. Sandstone is given up in favour of the more tractable chloritic schist. The temple structure is raised on a high platform which is spacious enough to leave a terrace all around the building. The open pillared hall is widely extended and the space between the parapet and the roof is closed by perforated stone screens. The pillars take a special shape owing to the practice of the masons to fashion the monolithic blocks by turning them on a large lathe. It has resulted in the shaft and the capital being converted into a series of rounded horizontal mouldings with the base left square. Its polished look is further enriched by the imposition of sloping bracket stones, sculptured into images, on the turned capital. In the treatment of wall-surfaces accent is laid on horizontality which is emphasised by plinth mouldings, lintels, and horizontal co-ordination of all vertical motifs. Above all, these temples are decorated with an increasing wealth of sculptured ornamentation. In this phase of temple building the Hoysalas, it seems, deliberately gave their structures an embellishment hitherto unknown, evidently aiming to achieve sculptural extravagance at the cost of architectural beauty. These temples, therefore, become the 'sculptors' architecture' rather than full-scale architectural compositions. Here decoration dominates every inch of the building and every structural line is an excuse for carving and multiplication.

The temples of the earlier phase (Later Chalukya) are located in the upper valley of the Krishna, the Tungabhadra and the Bhima. The best of them are at Kukkanur, Lakkundi, Ittagi, Kuruvenati, Haveri, Hangal, Bankapur, Dambal and Gadag. In their planning these temples have not yet taken the stellate form and they are all laid out on the principle of right lines and right angles. The tower design is a compromise between the sikara of the Early Chalukyan type with its plainly defined storeys on the one hand, and the closely moulded tiers of the Hoysala examples on the other. The superstructure forming the apex of the tower is faceted, double flexured bell-shaped. The pillars are turned on a lathe. A notable feature is the decoration of the temple doorways. Their structural frame-work consisting of a pilaster on either side and a moulded lintel and cornice above has been superbly embellished with sculptured patterns of figures and foliage. The surface treatment of the exterior walls is pleasingly ornamented with pilasters, half-pillars, and replicas of the pillars of the open hall in front, and ornamental shrines projecting at appropriate intervals.

A further eighty-eight temples in Mysore are known to belong to the Hoysala phase. The most representative of the style is the Kesava temple at Somnathpur, about twenty miles from Seringapatam. It is a triple shrine of small dimensions, stands on a high platform, and occupies the middle of a cloistered courtyard. Its plan, which is in the shape of a cross, consists of the main pillared hall in the centre, at the western end of which are the three shrines, one in axial alignment with the hall, the others projecting laterally, thus producing its cross-like form. The individual parts are so well-balanced and finely proportioned that the whole presents a remarkably unified structural plan of impressive grandeur, and no element is out of place.

An earlier and larger example of the Hoysala style is the group of temples at Belur erected in 1117. Its principal structure, surrounded by a number of minor shrines, is the Kesava temple. Even without its superstructure, the Kesava temple, as it stands today, reveals a conception of exquisite beauty. Its composition, consisting of the cella, a central hall and a small square vestibule connecting the
two, is arranged on the customary cruciform plan. The whole has been raised on a platform which closely adheres to the contour of the structure it supports. To complete the architectural unity of the temple very graceful exterior shrines are attached to the projecting sides of the sanctum. Significantly enough the Belur structure has been treated in the same manner as the temple at Somnathpur built a century and a half later. But it is distinguished by a comparative simplicity and elegance of plastic ornamentation. The images of gods and goddesses set horizontally along the outer walls of the main shrine and of the vestibule are fewer in number and at longer intervals. Above the richly sculptured low railing which surrounds the navaranga are twenty perforated stone screens, ten of which are geometrically treated and the rest delicately carved to represent stories from the Puranas. Of the various elements that constitute the central hall the closely spaced pillars, forty-four in number, immediately attract attention by the intricacy of workmanship and the minuteness of the execution with which each one has been chiselled.

The Hoysalesvara temple at Halebid (in the Hasan district) is another principal example of the style which exhibits all the virile imagination and decorative skill of the Indian artists. Built in 1141-82, it is far bigger than the temples at Belur or Somnathpur and it also surpasses all others in the exuberance of plastic embellishment. It is a homogeneous structure of two complete temples standing side by side. Each temple has the same dimensions and is cruciform in plan. Acute angular projections and right angles characterise the temple exterior while closely set pillars fill the narrow halls of the interior. Although the temple has a definite architectural approach in its execution, it appears to be principally concerned with the exposition of monumental plastic art of extreme richness and bewildering appearance.

INDO-ARYAN FORMS

Orissa

The temples of Orissa, dating from the 8th century to about the middle of the 13th century, provide a study in one of the earliest movements in the Indoiryan style of architecture. But while the Orissan art remained predominantly Northern in character, it was often influenced by the Dravidian traditions because a part of the region in which the Orissan movement flourished was closer to the South Indian manifestations. The main group of the over thirty temples of Orissa is concentrated in the town of Bhubaneswar, the most important building being the temple of Lingaraja. Another Orissan shrine in which the style reached its maturity is the temple of the Sun at Konarak.

In the Orissan builder’s manuals the temples are classified as Rekha and Bhadra. The rekha has a conical beehive-shaped spire; the bhadra, a terraced pyramid. The rekha is divided into elements entitled shin, trunk, neck, and skull, analogies that suggest that the temple was regarded as a ‘microcosm’ of the Cosmic Man. The sanctuary is known as Deul, joined in front by a square assembly hall, described as Jagmohan, corresponding to a mandapa in other parts. These two edifices combinedly constitute the Orissan temple structure. The sanctuary is usually formed by a structure of the rekha order and the jagmohan by that of the bhadra order. Gradually, as the temple ritual developed, other buildings, notably the Nat Mandapa (Dancing Hall) and Bhog Mandapa (Hall of Offerings),
were added one after another to the front of the jagmohan, thus presenting in the larger examples a succession of ancillary halls. Standing on a plinth the halls were invariably of one storey, and in their elevational aspect each consisted of two parts, a cubical portion (bada) below, and a roof (pida) above.

One of the most remarkable features of the Orissan temple is the difference in the treatment of the exterior and the interior. The walls inside are plain and completely devoid of any ornamentation, and the ceilings too have been treated in a simple manner. But there is not even an unconscious echo of these austere interiors when the same workmen came to indulge in their artistic tastes in the fantastic enrichment of the exterior walls. Outside, the inventive imagination of the carvers revelled in the covering of every inch of the surface of the walls with that exquisite plastic decoration of infinite variety which just falls short of the miraculous. The Orissan temples as a whole are also distinguished by an absence of columns. But in some of the larger halls, a group of four solid piers, one at each corner, may be found introduced to support the roof.

One of the earliest buildings in the Orissan mode is the temple of Parasuramesvara (about A.D. 750) at Bhuvaneswar. It is a small structure and consists of a deul and jagmohan. The tower is of the rekha order, capped by a wide fluted Amalaka and is an improved enlargement of the sikhara type seen in the Gupta period sanctuaries at Aihole. The jagmohan, a low rectangular pillared hall, has a doorway in each of its three free sides, the western doorway being flanked by relief figures of young dancers and musicians, so grouped together as to form pierced latticed windows in stone.

The other temple belonging to the early phase, the Vaital Deul (completed about the 9th century A.D.), derives its architectural conception from a different tradition. Its gabled tower with a row of sikharas bears an unmistakable impress of the Dravidian style.

An edifice that represents the fully developed Orissan temple type is the Lingaraja temple at Bhuvaneswar. It consists of all the four chambers required for temple ritual: the deul, the jagmohan, the nat mandapa or the dancing hall, and the bhog mandapa or the hall of offerings, all disposed on the same axis, extending from east to west. The deul and the jagmohan were built first, sometime in the tenth century, and the other two structures were erected in the 13th century. The deul with its graceful tapering tower, standing out prominently in the entire composition, is undoubtedly the most imposing feature of this temple. In its elevational aspect, the sides rise vertically for nearly one-third of its height, entirely merging in its structure the cubical cella, and then the contours speed up into a pronounced curvilinear shape for a distance of a hundred feet, above which rests the fluted disc, crowned by a vase shaped finial bearing the trident of Siva. Its soaring effect is greatly enhanced by the vertical lines of the strongly emphasised ribs and similarly treated lines of miniature deuls (small scale replicas of the tower itself), filling in the recessed chases. The sikhara now attains the complete beehive shape in the balanced formation of which the Lingaraja manifests the magnificent fulfilment of the Orissan ideal. By this time, the art of plastic decoration as applied to architecture had fully evolved, so that the numerous decorative elements, including figure and floral compositions, with which the outer walls of the temple have been treated were executed with luxurious and yet orderly exuberance.

Another notable example of the Orissan style is the famous temple of Jagannath (about A.D. 1100) at Puri, a considerably larger building than the Lingaraja.
raja, and built on the same principles. Except, however, for its imposing proportions
the temple has nothing to impress with for the architectural treatment is heavy
and lifeless and it lacks the dignity and poise of the great temple at Bhubaneswar.

One of the finest endeavours of the Indian builders and the grandest achieve-
ment of the Orissan style is the temple of the Sun at Konaraka. Built in the reign
of King Narasimha Deva (A.D. 1238-64), it stands in a class by itself. It illustrates the
finality and maturity of the Orissan style of temple architecture. Every part of the
temple, large or small, was not only perfect in itself, but so systematically co-ordinat-
ed, that the temple of the Sun presents an architectural unity hitherto unknown. In
its conception too, the temple represents the supremely creative enthusiasm of its
builders. The god Surya has been traditionally visualised in Hindu mythology as
blazing across the heavens in his fiery golden chariot of seven horses—an allegory
which the Konaraka architects so splendidly tried to express in the temple form.

The building, therefore, has been designed like a chariot. The base of the
structure is a massive platform with twelve giant wheels fixed on either side of it.
In front is a wide flight of steps flanked on the sides by seven colossal statues of
horses, poised as though actually whirling along the paths of heaven with the god's
chariot. On this high terrace was raised the temple building in two conjoined parts:
the jagmohan and the deul, the latter rising to a height of 225 feet from the ground.
Confronting the main entrance was the nat mandapa, a detached structure, square
in plan and with a pyramidal roof. The entire composition was enclosed by a high
wall, having entrance gateways on three of its sides.

The temple now lies in ruins. The deul is only a stump of masonry, and all
that remains of this truly noble monument is the massive jagmohan, which today
even in its considerably damaged condition reveals glimpses of the splendour that
once belonged to Konaraka. It is conceived as a great cube of masonry measuring
100 feet side and 100 feet high. But much of its grandeur lies in its richly designed
pyramidal roof of the bhadra type. It rises in three distinct terraces, receding as they
reach the apex, which is gathered up into a massive circular finial, fluted, curved and
moulded like a lotus. The two lower terraces are emphasised by six and the upper-
most by five string courses, producing a pattern of horizontality that successfully
relieves any feeling of rigidity in the mass. To add to the richness of the appear-
ance, the builder not only filled up the wide spaces between two tiers with amazing life-
like statues, but also moulded or chased every portion of the exterior with almost
every conceivable motif known, so that the temple at Konaraka becomes a fine ex-
ample of the skill of the Indian craftsmen who could combine the most extraordinary
richness of decoration with an astonishing largeness of architectural conception.

But it was tragically left unfinished. Perhaps it was so daringly conceived that
it could never actually achieve completion. 'Some of the large sculptured blocks in-
tended for the summit lie at the foot, not only unbroken, but unbruised, whereas had
they fallen from such a height they could not fail to show signs of serious damage.'

Khajuraho

Perhaps the extraordinary group of temples at Khajuraho in Central India,
sums up all that is best and most elegant in the Indo-Aryan style of architecture.
Originally there were eighty-five temples of which only twenty-five now still stand,
and even they are not used for worship. Built during the supremacy of the Chandella

1 Percy Brown, Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu), p. 129.
Rajputs, their constructional period covers a mere hundred years, from A.D. 950 to 1050. The Khajuraho temples, therefore, do not testify to the progressive development of an architectural movement but represent only a phase in the history of Indian temple architecture when people, in one of the highest and most intense moments of spiritual feeling, were stirred to a singularly rich creative effort to raise monuments of supreme magnificence.

The temples are a tribute to several beliefs, some of them being Saivite, a few Vaishnavite, and the others Jain. None of them is of any great size. The finest and the largest of the group is the Kandariya Mahadeva temple, which is only 109 feet in length and 59½ feet in width externally, and has a height of 116½ feet above the ground, or 88 feet above its own floor. This temple, like the others in the group, stands on a high and solid masonry terrace. Differing from the Orissan temples, the formal unity of the Khajuraho structures is maintained in a compact whole and not through a conjoined group of separate buildings. Here the successive halls and the sanctum share a common basement storey, the contours of their roofs culminate in the lofty spire of the garbha-griha, and every part is so incorporated as to form a complete architectural unity. The ground plan of the Khajuraho temple type takes the shape of a cross, with the sole entrance at the east at the foot of the cross, and one or two transepts radiating from the cella. The temples have the usual compartments: the ardha-mandapa, the mandapa, the antarala, and the garbha-griha; and in the more developed examples, the transepts or mahamandapa with a processional passage around the sanctum. And over all is a grouping of domical roofs, sweeping up in regular gradation from the lowest above the entrance to the highest above the sanctum, surmounting the whole. Although the Khajuraho temples do not rely on height for their extremely pleasing appearance, their peculiar appeal lies in the trend towards an upward direction. The verticality is everywhere in evidence, but is particularly emphasised in the curvature of the sikharas. A refinement peculiar to the towers here has been obtained by repeated superimposition of miniature turrets or Urusringas on the sides of the main sikhara, which in effect thus presents a clustered arrangement of sikhara upon sikhara, so coherently and rhythmically disposed that a movement of vertical ascent appears beautifully accelerated as they mount up towards the ultimate peak. To stress the upward impulse there are also several bands of projecting mouldings completely encircling the temple structure which provide a gorgeous embellishment of vertically inclined passages of light and shade.

In general, it could be said that the magnificence of the Khajuraho shrines depends on the beauty of proportions, elegance of contours and a perfectly harmonious blend of the structural and decorative elements. With the introduction of sculptured bands on the central zone of the temples a synthesis of architecture and sculpture was beautifully achieved. The life-like forms of ideal human beings and divine personages, superbly moulded in high relief, in two and sometimes three parallel friezes, not only serve well their decorative purpose, but filling in the wall spaces between the frequently occurring shaded balcony windows they seem to uphold from their bands the giant structure of the house of god.

**Rajasthan**

A development of singular richness in the Indo-Aryan style of temple-building was witnessed in Rajasthan during the three centuries from the eighth
to the eleventh and in Gujarat and Kathiawar from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries. In the period under review Rajasthan flowered with temples. Unfortunately, a large number of them suffered irreparably owing to the havoc caused by the early Islamic invaders. Scores of these temple halls were dismantled by the conquering hordes and the fragments appropriated for building mosques at Delhi and Ajmer. But from the still surviving monuments we get to know of an architectural movement which was distinguished by the variety of design, elegance in execution and rich plastic adornment. The group of temples at Osia, near Jodhpur, belonging both to the Brahmana and Jain faiths, exemplify this movement. They are all comparatively small structures, but architecturally each one displays individual features in conception as well as in composition. A number of them, including two shrines dedicated to Harihara (8th century) and one dedicated to Surya (10th century) belong to the Panchayatana class, a designation suggesting a complex composition wherein four additional shrines were attached to the main sanctuary by a cloister. The Harihara temples are raised up on plinths, have open pillared halls, and their sikharas follow the early Orissan type. The Surya temple, which is the most graceful of the entire group, is in a general way structurally similar to the Harihara group, but its frontage was given an original treatment with the addition of two tall fluted pillars rising from the ground level. The spaces between the pillars on the porch were originally filled with stone screens of exquisite richness. A Jain temple dedicated to Mahavira consists of a sanctum, a closed hall, and an open porch which is preceded by an elaborately carved gateway, evidently an 11th century addition to a structure that appears to have been first built at the end of the 8th century. The temple of Sachya Mata represents the 12th century innovations to the Osia group. In the centre of the hall an octagonal space has been marked out, with a pillar at each angle, which support a shallow dome. The Osia pillars belong to the Gupta order. The frequently repeated motif of a vase wreathed in foliate detail adorns the capital and the base, while flutings, recessed angles or bands of tracery are piled on the shaft.

**Gujarat and Kathiawar**

An extension of the cultural movement prevailing in Rajasthan reached Gujarat and Kathiawar, where under the stable rule of the Solanki dynasty many large and beautiful shrines were erected manifesting one of the richest and most artistic forms of the Indo-Aryan style of temple architecture. The majority of the structures were erected between 1025, the date of Mahmud of Ghazni's expedition to Somnath, and 1298, the period of final subjugation of this region by the Muslim rulers of Delhi. Although many of these building undertakings were inspired by the Solanki rulers of the land some of the best efforts were financed and patronised by the aristocrats of the realm, who were more often than not passionately devoted to the Jain faith. Moreover, every single member of the community took a personal interest in these constructions and sought to subscribe according to his maximum capacity, so that each of these magnificent monuments, originally jewel encrusted, stands as a record in stone and marble of the spontaneous expression of the spiritual and aesthetic sensibility of the entire community. Unfortunately, a large number of the finest temples are in ruins today and entirely devoid of their one time splendour due not only to the fury of the conquerors, but also to a devastating earthquake at the beginning of the 19th century. But the remains are a proof of the
Gujarati mason’s passion for architectural form and finesse. Untiringly for over three hundred years he kept on producing a religious architecture which is notable for many important and new structural features.

The general structural scheme of these shrines is in conformity with the established building plan of the Hindu temples, namely, the cella and the pillared hall. But it is in the treatment of these conventional parts that the architect showed imagination and considerable artistic ability. In some formations, generally the earlier ones, the two parts are united together to form a parallelogram, and in others they are organised on a diagonal plan. In both plans the sides are interrupted at regular intervals by projected or recessed chases, forming either straight-sided or rounded angles. In the elevational aspect, the temple scheme is divided into three horizontal zones. The first is the basement, patterned into mouldings and string courses, carved with repeating motifs of horned heads, elephant fronts, horses, and human beings. The central portion is the wall face of the temple, reaching up to the cornice, and is similarly adorned with niches and tabernacles, containing bas-relief images of gods, goddesses, and saints, as well as of musicians and dancers. The final zone is the superstructure covering the pillared mandapas with a low terraced roof or surmounting the shrine portion by a sikharas. The sikharas is of a very distinctive shape as it is composed of a clustered arrangement of turrets, each a replica in miniature of the main tower, and each in such high relief as to be almost detached from the fabric of the central structure.

Columns form an important feature of the interior planning of these temples, and their treatment lends them an unique peristyle character. Groups of beautifully carved pillars are so ingeniously arranged that they leave an octagonal area or nave in the centre of the mandapa, while outside this they are so spaced as to constitute aisles. Each pillar is divided horizontally into decorative zones thinning by stages to finish in a richly sculptured bracket-capital. The nave columns are lengthened by the addition of upper dwarf columns, also bearing bracket capitals. The interval between the upper and lower capitals is filled by angular struts of white marble, each carrying an image carved in high relief. These dwarf columns, with the architrave above, support the highly ornamented central dome which consists of a ‘shallow bowl-shaped ceiling formed by a succession of overlapping courses.’

In contrast to the early traditions of keeping the interior of the ‘house of god’ as plain and featureless as possible, every surface of the inner side of these western temples is an open protest against this ‘plastic prohibition.’ The artist’s chisel has found its way into all but the most sacred chambers, and every inch of the available space has been profusely decorated with rich and intricate patterns of human and animal figures.

Among the most famous examples is the 11th century Surya temple at Modhera in Gujarat. But it is in a very damaged condition today. It has lost its tower, the roofs of its mandapas have mostly crumbled, and its surrounding structures generally are in ruins. Yet even in this state of decay the temple impresses us as a monument of incomparable loveliness. Facing the rising sun which endows this soft golden-brown sandstone edifice with an air of supreme spirituality, the aesthetic merit of the building lies not so much in its elegant design, as in the very skilful layout of the various parts of the shrine and its accessories which produces the effect of an entirely organic plan. The temple has two separate structures: an open pillared hall on the one hand, and an enclosed rectan-
regular building containing the assembly hall and the shrine on the other. But the two seemingly distinct portions of the structure are linked with each other by a narrow passage, and beautifully harmonized into an architectural unity by following a very careful horizontal scheme for its decorative elements.

The art of the region found its culmination in the renowned Jain temples of Mount Abu in Rajasthan. The most distinguished of them are the 11th century Vimala temple and the 13th century Tejpal temple. They are constructed entirely of white marble brought from a distance of twenty or thirty miles and carried up a hill four thousand feet in height. The temples are produced in the architectural mode prevalent in these parts. The exterior gives no hint of any special architectural merit, but the interior of the pillared hall reveals a domed ceiling of unusual splendour. Supported on a circular arcade of dwarf pillars, joined by cusped arches, the dome rises in several concentric rings to culminate towards the apex in a grouping of pendants. But so profuse are the surface decorations and the carvings so intricate and elaborate that the structural properties, not only of the ceilings but also of the arches and the pillars, are completely obscured beneath them. ‘It is,’ as Coomaraswamy observes, ‘one of those cases where exuberance is beauty.’

Architecturally the two temples are very much alike though the Tejpal is not a copy of the Vimala temple. The Tejpal dome is a particularly true example of its kind. The beautiful pendant hanging in the centre of the vault has the lightness and elegance of a glass chandelier. The shafts, mostly circular in section, are evenly diapered with moulded and ornamented patterns. The Tejpal temple, however, has not the robustness of its predecessor and represents the decadent phase of the Solanki style.

There are other Jain temples of the same quality at Girnar in Junagarh, Satrunjaya near Palitana, and at a number of other places, belonging to the 16th and the 17th centuries. Built often on hill-tops, the temple buildings are so numerous that the sacred sites on the ‘mountains of immortality,’ as they are called, are rightly termed temple-cities. The arrangement of the sanctuaries depends on such level spaces as the contours of the hills provide, and the temple-cities do not follow any specific plan. Except for the introduction of such features as subsidiary shrines grouped around the central one, double storeys and pillared cloisters round the larger examples, there is no major departure in the principles of construction of these temples from those followed in the earlier examples. Another noticeable development in temple building is the frequent production of the class of sanctuaries known as Chaumukha or four-faced, used for enshrining four-faced images of Jain saints or Tirthankaras, placed back to back, so that each image could be seen and worshipped from each of the four cardinal points. Since such a requirement could only be fulfilled in a shrine chamber with four doorways the architects effected a structural alteration by designing the temple on a cruciform pattern with an opening on each side.

**Gwalior**

Another centre of the building art in Western India, in the Indo-Aryan style of architecture, is within the perimeter of the Fort at Gwalior. In this group of largely ruined structures only three temples are of importance. The earliest

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1 A. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 112.
of these is the Teli-ka-Mandir of the 11th century. The building as seen today has not the elements of a fully developed temple structure, and consists only of a sanctuary comprising a tower together with a porch and a doorway. Its one very unique characteristic is its oblong shape, and the same plan is repeated in the inner chamber as well as the porch. The oblong formation also shapes out its upper part, necessitating a superstructure similar to the vaulted roof of a Buddhist chaitya hall, with sun-windows at either end, a keeled ridge with finials, and pillared arcades inspired by the nave columns of the chaitya.

The other two outstanding temples of the group are the large and the small Sas-Bahu temples. Both follow the same architectural style, but the smaller of the two is only a simplified and reduced copy of the other. The larger temple dedicated to Vishnu in 1093 today stands in disuse and ruin. Only the main hall or mandapa now remains. On the exterior this hall picturesquely divides itself into three storeys of open galleries defined by massive architraves. Undoubtedly, it is from the skilful designing of the elevation that the temple derives all the glory. The facades are so devised as to be projected into successive planes of light and shade provided by columns set at regulated intervals. The low pyramidal formation of the damaged roof exhibits the same vivid effects with its numerous setbacks and recesses. The interior, in spite of the three storeys of its external elevation, is a single large chamber as high as the building itself. The effect of open spaces, however, has been spoiled on account of the necessity of introducing four gigantic stone piers to support the huge mass of masonry of the roof.

**Bengal**

Bengal with its traditions of wooden houses and thatched huts offers some new and interesting architectural modes in the Chandimandapa (literally, porch of goddess Chandi) and temples. The country being deltaic, there are everywhere deposits of clay suitable for the manufacture of bricks. The Bengali mason, therefore, used moulded bricks to beautify temples and multiplied the number of pavilions and spires to make them more imposing. In addition, a luxurious growth of the jungle was responsible for a gradual evolution of the Bengal architecture into a form suggested by the wooden and bamboo cabins of the forest dwellers. This is particularly shown in the sloping roof, curved eave and a pointed arch style. A very characteristic form has a square plan and vertical walls, but the lines and planes instead of being horizontal are here carried across the front, in a series of parallel curves, bent in the form of a bow. Such an application of the curves has specially affected the form of the roof which gets a parabolic contour. Over this curvilinear roof is sometimes erected another miniature tower, the upper portion of which forms into a kind of sikhara. The 18th century temple of Vishnupur, in the district of Bankura, may be cited as an example of this class of architecture. Another typical form is illustrated in the temple at Kantanagar near Dinajpur (A.D. 1704-1722) and repeated in the Dakshineshwar temple in recent times, designed in the form of wooden raths (chariots), arranged in tiers of bent cornices, mounted at corners with miniature curvilinear sikharas.

Another important development of the Bengal building art flourished at Lakhnauti under the patronage of the Pala and the Sena rulers (A.D. 730-1197). The buildings of the city were, however, systematically despoiled by the Mohammedan conquerors in 1197, and the materials were utilised for raising their own
mosques and mausoleums at Gaur. But from an examination of the remains incorporated in the Mohammedan buildings it would appear that the masons had frequently made use of the trefoil arch, supported by characteristic pillars, in buildings which they shaped out of a fine textured grade of black basalt stone.

**THE INDO-ISLAMIC PERIOD**

The establishment of the Muslim power in India in the 12th century replaced the old with a new order. It introduced a movement of ‘Islamisation’ in the country which was destined to influence profoundly the course of Indian history and to give new directions to the established ideas and assumptions of the people. In the realm of art it brought in fresh principles and practices so that a new trend in architecture commenced, which has come to be known as Indo-Islamic.

The development of Indo-Islamic architecture continued for nearly six hundred years. During this period numerous structures, impressed with varied and more or less successive experiences, were erected by a people whose passion for building was insatiable. A number of fundamental differences in the indigenous and Islamic approach to building art have been pointed out. The Hindu building was conceived as a solid scaffold for carved figure compositions expressing the whole multiplicity of life; the Muslim structural form was plainly defined and the ornamentation was confined exclusively to conventionalised patterns achieved by breaking up the wall surfaces. The Hindu builder had to follow at every stage of his work a code of hieratic and conventional rules; the Muslim craftsman continually experimented with new techniques and practices. The indigenous architecture having originated in the wooden structural forms was of the trabeate order, while the arch and the dome were the keynote of the Islamic building art.

These differences, however, only manifest the contrast in the spiritual and aesthetic perceptions of the two peoples, which were embodied in their typical structures. Architecturally, the advent of Islam did not inaugurate a wholly new style of building art in the country, nor did it cause a decisive break in the continuity of the Indian movement. On the other hand, the new faith re-shaped the Indian tradition and endowed it with fresh and powerful creative impulses. Several factors contributed towards the evolution of a satisfactory synthesis. In the first place, although the fanatical early Muslim champions of Islam destroyed the finest of the Hindu shrines when they came to India, they had been deeply impressed by the magnificence of Indian monuments. After the devastation of Mathura, the conqueror Mahmud of Ghazni (A.D. 998-1030) wrote to a friend: ‘There are here a thousand edifices as firm as the faith of the faithful, nor is it likely that this city has attained its present condition but at the expense of many millions of dinars, nor could such another be constructed under a period of two centuries.’ And so great was his admiration for the skill of Indian craftsmen in the handling of stone that among the numerous captives that Mahmud took away, there were many masons who helped to build for him the famous marble and granite mosque in his own country. In the second place, as the early Muslim conquerors of India were soldiers and not artists they were of necessity compelled to employ the indigenous craftsmen, who had no training in the architectural procedure of the Saracens, nor had they seen any original masterpieces of the purely Islamic architecture which could be held up as examples to them. And so, while the Indian builders had to work under Islamic dictation and seek inspiration from the archi-
architecture prevailing in Persia and Arabia, where brick, plaster and rubble were the building materials, they preferred to look up to their own achievements to serve them as models when planning a mausoleum or a mosque. The Indian masons no doubt accepted some of the general principles of architecture from Western Asia, as also certain essential constructive measures, but they worked them out in accordance with their own technical processes and with their own materials. The Muslims themselves realised the advantage of masonry formed of dressed stone and perceived the excellence of the indigenous methods and principles of construction. In fact, such was the spell of the indigenous art that the Muslims unconsciously began to adopt and assimilate the Indian rules and conventions of building, and frequently also its symbolism, in their most solemn and stately structures. Thus, in course of time, was evolved a ground common to both the Mohammedan architect who brought with him principles and practices from Syria, Egypt, Northern Africa and Sassanian Persia, and the indigenous Hindu mason, who possessed an extraordinary synthetic power. Consequently, the Indo-Muslim architecture, as Havell writes, was only 'a continuous development of Indian building traditions proceeding from altered social and political life, changes in religious ritual and symbolism and in the structural requirements evolved therefrom.'

There is evidence of the synthesis of the ancient Indian and Muslim techniques in such a motif as the arched niche or mihrab which is a distinctive feature in Muslim architecture. According to Havell, it is essentially an Indian motif. It was originally the temple niche of the Buddhist and the Hindu from which the sculptured representations of the deities were torn away and removed, and which, lanced or trefoiled, was retained to serve as mihrab in the converted or newly built mosques. Similarly, the 'bulbous' dome, according to the same authority, is another Indian contribution to Muslim architecture. The Arabs who had recruited their earliest masons from Rome, Byzantium, and Persia, discarded the more cumbersome domes after the fashion of the West, and adopted the Buddhist form and system of domical construction after the builders of the Gandhara districts had been employed in Persia and the neighbouring countries. The fashioning of the finial was also in accordance with the Hindu and Buddhist symbolism of Kalasa and the lotus flower, in place of a mere spike as was the case in the pure Arab dome in Egypt.

But while we may agree that a good many of the constructive elements of Muslim architecture in India suggest an essentially Indian origin, the purity of outline, the perfection and proportion of the interior spaces, and their plain simplicity, verging on severity, were peculiarly Islamic characteristics. The Law of the Quran forbade any sculptural decoration, so the only plastic embellishments in which the Muslims of India indulged were the carving and painting of texts from the Holy Book, and the use of Persian and Arabic geometrical and floral motifs (arabesques) for surface decoration, which they did in endless combinations and with remarkable aesthetic sense. Also in their taste for co-ordinating the main elements so as to form an unified and pleasing architectural composition, the Muslim builders showed great structural ingenuity.

The architecture of the Indo-Muslim phase may be classified as religious and secular. Buildings of a religious nature consist of mosques and mausoleums; and those of the secular order include houses, mansions, pavilions, palace-forts, tower-gates, underground rooms, wells, halls, offices, workshops, bazaars, barracks, stables, and gardens.
The mosque or the masjid is the most important Mohammedan building. It fulfils the practical needs of the religion which believes in community worship. It is basically an open space (Sahen) enclosed by a pillared verandah. In its elaborate form it is a rectangular courtyard, surrounded by pillared cloisters (Liwans) with several entrances from the outside. The liwan on the west side (the direction of the holy city of Mecca) takes the form of a vast pillared hall, with a wall at the back containing a recess or alcove (Mihrab) to indicate the direction for prayer, and a pulpit (Mimbar) to the right. Often the hall has a screened section for women. The chamber enshrining the mihrab, being the most sacred part of the mosque, is also architecturally the most important. The sahen and the liwans lead up to it, and over the central space or the nave a dome is raised. A screen of arches is also built in front to form a facade. It was the constant endeavour of the architects to co-ordinate these two important elements, the dome and the facade, to present an architectural coherence. A high tower or minaret for the muezzin summoning the faithful to prayer is also an essential constituent of the mosque structure.

The monument erected over the resting place of the dead is another class of building of a religious order; and some of the finest expressions of Indo-Islamic architecture have been through mausoleums (Maqbara). Situate almost always in the centre of a beautiful garden, often with magnificent gateways, the mausoleum consists of an imposing structure of a vaulted hall roofed over by a towering dome. The tomb proper is often enshrined in an underground chamber while a cenotaph stands under the dome. Generally, the western wall of the tomb-chamber contains a mihrab, but the larger mausoleums have mosques attached to them. The mausoleums of saints are in addition surrounded by pilgrim halls and other tombs. In accordance with the practice of the race the mausoleums were usually built during the life-time of the persons whose bodies were finally intended to rest there, and served as pleasure resorts for themselves and their friends during their life-time. But when once used as a place of burial, sounds of revelry would for ever cease to be heard there.

Historically, the Indo-Muslim architecture has three main divisions. The first, known as the Sultanate or the Imperial phase, refers to the structures raised by the Turkish and the Afghan rulers whose reign lasted for about three centuries and a half. During this period six Mohammedan dynasties succeeded to the throne, one after another, as the principal ruling power of the country, with the city of Delhi as their capital and also as centre of the Muslim world in the Indian sub-continent.¹ In the development of Indo-Islamic architecture in this phase, Delhi and its environs, where Muslim accent was more dominant, naturally occupied an important place. For this reason, though distinctive developments took place at other places as well, it is to Delhi that we must constantly refer for almost every stage in the architectural evolution.

After the death of Alauddin Khilji in 1316, the central power was at times weak, and the outlying regions frequently refused to owe allegiance to Delhi. Political independence encouraged the growth of their own individual trends in art. Consequently, in architecture they proceeded to develop a form of building art which was expressive of their own local ideals and peculiarities, though no doubt conditioned by the extent of influence exercised by Delhi on their political and cultural life. These regional manifestations of the Indo-Islamic building art have been classed

¹ Slaves 1206-1250, Khiljis 1290-1320, Tughluqs 1320-1414, Sayyids 1414-1451, Lodis 1451-1526, Suris 1540-1553.
separately and described as Provincial. The third of these divisions is marked by the brilliant achievements of the Mughal emperors. It flourished from about the middle of the 16th century till about the beginning of the 18th century, when the foundations of the Mughal empire itself began to crumble.

THE SULTANATE STYLE

The Slaves

The earliest phase came into being with the architectural activities of the Slave dynasty. As a contemporary chronicler relates, it was the practice of the Mohammedan invaders at this time to demolish every fort and town, temple and similar structures, during their victory march and then to build mosques and mausoleums using the dismantled parts of the buildings they had destroyed. Qutbuddin Aibak was the first of the Slave rulers of Delhi. According to his chronicler Hasan Nizami, 'the conqueror entered the city of Delhi. The city and its vicinity were freed from idols and idol-worship, and in the sanctuaries of the images of the gods, mosques were raised by the worshippers of One God.'\(^1\) It is recorded by another contemporary authority that materials of as many as twenty-seven temples, within the neighbourhood of Qila Rai Pithaura, were utilised by Qutbuddin Aibak to build the first mosque called Quwwat-ul-Islam or Might of Islam. The mosque as it originally stood consisted of a spacious rectangular courtyard, surrounded by pillar cloisters, and a wall on the western side adorned with mihrabs. The pillars, obviously torn from Jain and Hindu temples, are profusely carved in the most elegant style. In some instances, the figures which had adorned the shafts in their original setting have been cut off as offensive to Muslim sentiments. But idolatrous ornamentation on the less visible parts still stands intact.

The main glory of the mosque is in the red stone screen of magnificent arches projecting across the entire front of the sanctuary. It is pierced by five openings—a large central archway and two lesser archways on both sides of it, each finely pointed with ogee curves. This arched facade, a truly noble and graceful conception, is the only Mohammedan contribution to the mosque. The indigenous workmanship, however, is betrayed by the manner in which the arches have been formed. It is not the true arch with radiating voussoirs, originally formulated by Roman engineers, and later developed by the Mohammedans in Persia. It is, on the other hand, an arch put together on the principle of corbeling out. The Indian masons carried up the sides of the arches in horizontal courses as far as they could, and then enclosed them by long slabs meeting at the top. The lacework of graceful carvings with which the entire surface is covered reveals again the impress of local artistry, which devised the Arabic inscription friezes in the fashion of Hindu flower scrolls. In 1230, Iltutmish extended the mosque area by lengthening the screen of arches and enveloping the entire structure within a very spacious quadrangle.

Even more spectacular than the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque and a monument with more pronounced Islamic forms and ornaments of great beauty, was the gigantic tower of red sandstone and marble, known as the Qutb Minar, standing near the Mosque. Its foundations were laid by Qutbuddin Aibak, and when completed by his successor Emperor Iltutmish, it became a remarkable architectural monu-

\(^1\) Hasan Nizami, *Tajul Masir*: included in 'the History of India by Its Own Historians,' edited by Sir H. M. Elliot and John Dowson, p. 219.
ment. Intended first as a place from which the muezzin could summon the Faithful to prayer, it later came to be regarded as a Tower of Victory, erected, as the engravings upon it testify, to cast 'the shadow of God over the East and over the West.'

Nearly 48 feet in diameter at the base and about 238 feet in height, the Qutb Minar tapers to a width of nearly 10 feet at the top. The tower originally consisted of four storeys, with a boldly projected balcony at each stage. The uppermost storey in the original composition was a circular kiosk crowned with a domical roof. But renovations at later dates have resulted in its reconstruction and the production of an additional storey both of which are poorly conceived. In the lowest storey, the projecting ribs which form the flutes, are alternately angular and circular; in the second only circular; and in the third only angular. The fourth storey is plain and round, without any artistic merit. Between the storeys are richly sculptured raised belts on which inscriptions from the Quran and titles of the Emperor have been boldly and beautifully carved. The monument's most attractive features are the balconies, and the method designed for their support displays great engineering and artistic skill. Following the Islamic architectural fashion of stalactite vaulting, a cluster of miniature arches or small alcoves, with brackets in between, elegantly support the projections. Taken as a whole, the Qutb Minar is an impressive conception, for in the soaring character of the immense and lofty tower, in the quality of its powerfully adjusted volume, and in the vivid colour of the red sandstone, it is possible to see here the royal designer's abounding sense of elation at his fast growing power.

Another early mosque, attributed to Qutbuddin Aibak and Ilutmish, is the Arhai Din Ka Jhupra at Ajmer. Built in the same manner and style as the mosque at Delhi, but on a much larger scale, its pillars, architraves, roofing stones and the domes remind one of the Jain temples of Mt. Abu and Girnar. Ilutmish adorned the front of this sanctuary with a screen of seven arches, which impart a very grand and imposing appearance to the facade of the mosque. The curves of the arches are firmer and more decided than in the earlier example. The delicate surface decorations are now predominantly Islamic. The changing course of the art is also marked by the addition of fluted minarets, one on each side, above the parapet over the main archway.

Ilutmish, by erecting a mausoleum over the remains of his son Nasiruddin Mahmud, and his own mausoleum (A.D. 1235), introduced a new type of building in the architecture of India. The mausoleum of Ilutmish, situated behind his mosque extension at Delhi, is a square chamber of 42 feet side, with a series of three mihrabs adorning the western side on its inner face. There are entrance doorways on the remaining sides. Its domed roof, most of which has now fallen down, was raised on the squinch system, by projecting a small vault with an arch on its outer face, across the upper part of the angles of the hall. This was one of the first attempts to devise an effective means for resting the circular base of the dome over the rectangular frame of the hall. The interior of the hall is very richly and elaborately engraved with inscriptive motifs in Kufri, Tugra, and Nashtaliq characters, besides geometrical and conventional patterns. The decorative scheme is remarkable for a very fine application of Hindu art to Islamic purposes.

The mausoleum of Emperor Balban (A.D. 1266-1286), erected about 1280 to the south-east of Qila Rai Pithaura marks a definite progress in the field of Indo-Islamic architectural practices. The square domed hall has an archway on the four sides, and each arch, for the first time in India, is produced on the principle of
radiating voussoirs. It is a significant structural innovation and suggests the workmanship of master-builders from Islamic countries.

The Khiljis

A number of distinctive features were added to the Indo-Islamic architecture under the Khilji rulers of Delhi. Alauddin Khilji's building project included an extension of the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque, which was conceived on such an ambitious scale that the scheme could not progress beyond unfinished groundwork. A relatively small portion, however, was carried to completion fully incorporating the new tendencies. It was the southern entrance hall to the courtyard of the mosque and is known as the Alai Darwaza or Gateway of Alauddin. The structure, as it now stands, is a cube of 55 feet side in plan, with a very low dome. In the middle of each side is a doorway containing a tall arch very gracefully proportioned and outlined by an engraved band of inscriptions, while the underside is fringed with small scallops which end in flower buds. The outer faces of the walls are divided into two storeys, richly decorated with trellis windows and arched recesses. The ornamental designs on them, clearly reminiscent of the Hindu and Jain art, are so intricately executed in a combination of red and yellow sandstone, white and black marble, and blue schist, and the colour scheme so carefully planned, that the building easily becomes an outstanding work of Islamic art. In the interior arched pendentives introduce an even more artistic and advanced style of ornamentation.

From the character of its architectural and decorative treatment and the very competent manner in which the Islamic structural procedure has been applied, it is obvious that some fresh influence had begun to make itself felt at this stage in the Indo-Islamic art practices. This evidently came from Western Asia, where under the rule of the Seljuqs, the first centuries of the second millennium witnessed a brilliant phase of the Islamic architectural culture. When the power of the Seljuqs could not withstand the ferocity of the Mongol raids and the Empire dissolved, it brought in its wake great insecurity of life and property. The people moved to other countries, and some of those skilled in learning and arts came to Delhi, which was at this moment establishing its repute for wealth and influence, taste and culture. Among the refugees were many architects of note who joined hands with Hindu masons in designing and executing the famous gateway. Very similar in substance and treatment to the Alai Darwaza is the mausoleum of the saint Nizamuddin Auliya at Delhi.

The Tughluqs

The Khilji rulers were succeeded by the Tughluqs, who ruled Delhi for nearly a century (A.D. 1320-1413). They appear to have been keen builders and their architectural undertakings include a number of mosques, tombs, buildings of public utility and three capital cities. With the Tughluqs, however, a marked change came over the spirit of the Indo-Islamic architecture, for in this phase a lavish display of ornamentation gave place to sobriety and austere simplicity of design. This was on account of the puritanical sentiments of the rulers and their simple soldier-like character.

The major work of Ghiyasuddin Tughluq (A.D. 1320-1355), an old stern warrior, is the city of Tughluqabad in Delhi, founded near the earlier Mohammedan
constructions. The project combines the city with a citadel. It is in ruins today, but its importance lies in being the first of the 'great complexes,' comprising a palace, fort and city, which became a characteristic feature of the later Indo-Islamic architecture. Behind the moat surrounding the citadel, arise high sloping walls, of massive stone masonry, with several tiers of defence ways, colossal bastions projecting at close intervals, and innumerable loopholes for the archer. The walls run for a distance of four miles.

Near the citadel, within the courtyard of a miniature fortress, complete with bastions, stands the red sandstone mausoleum of Ghiyasuddin. The pronounced slope of the outer walls, inclined at an angle of seventy-five degrees, is a very striking feature of the tomb building, for the battering effect constitutes a landmark in the development of the Delhi style. In the centre of each side is recessed a tall pointed archway set beneath a lintel to carry the weight, thus combining for the first time in the construction of such openings two systems of support, the arch and the beam, the structural conventions respectively of the Mohammedan and the indigenous workman. The beam, however, served only an ornamental purpose. In its dome of white marble we can observe the beginnings of the characteristic Indo-Islamic-type. It is a single dome having no empty space between its inner and outer surfaces, but in design has a pointed or 'Tartar' shape. Undoubtedly a work of robust expressiveness, this monument is indicative of the new trend towards stern simplicity in architecture.

Firuz Shah (A.D. 1351-1388), the most prolific of the Tughluq builders, wrote about himself in his autobiography: 'Among the gifts which God bestowed on me, His humble servant, was a desire to erect public buildings.' During his reign, therefore, he undertook a very large number of building projects, including cities, forts, palaces, mosques, tombs, and a variety of other public buildings. They were, however, all produced in a style markedly dissimilar from the architectural mode prevailing previously. The deviation was a direct consequence of the failure of the experiment in the change of capital during the previous regime of Muhammad Tughluq (A.D. 1325-1351). It greatly reduced the finances of the state, and brought about a scarcity of skilled builders, who had dispersed in the confusion that followed the transfer of the government to the Deccan; and so in the time of Firuz only a plain but serviceable style could be afforded and the material had also of necessity to be cheap. Instead of the finely coursed and well finished sandstone ashlar, the ruler had now to please himself with a rough masonry, consisting of random rubble-work and undressed monoliths. The buildings carry a general effect of massiveness, and almost completely lack ornamentation. Although they reveal a certain surface finish that was obtained by painting brightly with white colour, the architecture of Firuz has no distinctive quality.

The most important production of Firuz Tughluq's time is the great fortress-city of Firuzabad. The site of the Kotla Firuz Shah, as the city is called, covers an extensive area on the banks of the Jamuna at Delhi. It is surrounded by high battlemented walls and contains monuments of a varied nature, like palaces, private residences, a Hall of Public Audience, pavilions, baths, tanks, barracks, armoury, servants' quarters, and a large and imposing mosque, besides a number of smaller places of prayer, all spaced out on a symmetrical plan. Although it was only an elaborate form of the traditional type of Imperial domain prevailing in parts of Asia, it must be said to the credit of Firuz Tughluq that he was the first

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man to lay the foundations in India of a palace-fort, in all its essential principles, which were later developed with such magnificent effect by Akbar and Shahjahan.

Another architectural contribution of Feruz Tughluq is the range of buildings known as Hauz-i-Khas, consisting mainly of the Sultan's mausoleum. It stands on the banks of an artificial lake in Delhi. The monument, square in plan with gently sloping sides, two of which have shapely arched openings, a shallow and slightly pointed dome, and in the interior squinches in each angle to support the dome, is distinguished by a quiet dignity. The beautiful friezes of carved stucco both in the interior and on the outside were added much later by Emperor Sikandar Lodi.

The mausoleum of Khan-i-Jahan Tilangani, the Prime Minister of Feruz, is also a building of considerable significance. Although the outer walls are in conformity with the fortress idea (incidentally the last of such walls), it is the building itself which starts a new tradition influencing fundamentally the architecture of the tomb for the next two hundred years. In place of the square base, which had hitherto been the case, the tomb of Tilangani takes the form of an octagon, is enclosed within a verandah, and covered by the usual dome. Each side of the octagonal verandah is adorned with arches and a wide eaves-board projecting over them. A range of cupolas on the roof, over each octagonal side, is another distinctive feature of the tomb.

The Sayyids and the Lodis

After the sack of Delhi by Timur, the Imperial throne was seized first by the Sayyids (A.D. 1414-1431) and then by the Lodis (A.D. 1451-1526). During this period the tomb was the only important architectural expression and a very large number of them, ranging from simple open pillared pavilions to imposing structures surrounded by walls, were erected by the rulers and the court dignitaries within the neighbourhood of Delhi. The tombs took two different structural forms. The one, designed on the pattern of the Khan-i-Jahan Tilangani mausoleum is exemplified by the tombs of Mubarak Sayyid, Muhammad Sayyid, and Sikandar Lodi. In the last example an innovation in dome construction was introduced by building two domes, one within the other with a distinct space between the two. This double-dome device helped to present a loftier picture of the exterior. It was followed in the later buildings. The other tomb form, confined only to the 15th century, is square in plan. It has no verandah, but in order to give a decorative character to the façades it is elevated in two and sometimes three arcaded zones. The façades contain a central recessed archway with a door, flanked by zonal arched recesses made into openings like windows. Some of the more important tombs of this form are designated as Bara Khan Ka Gumbad, Chota Khan Ka Gumbad, Bara Gumbad, Dadi Ka Gumbad, Poli Ka Gumbad, Tomb of Shihabuddin Taj Khan, and Shish Gumbad. In addition to the dome, most of the buildings of both the groups are surmounted by a range of pillared kiosks rising above the parapet. Some of the tombs have mosques attached to them. Moth-Ki Masjid, however, is an independent mosque, built by the prime minister of Sikandar Lodi. It is characterised by fine proportions of the five main arches of the façade, imposing domes, tapering turrets, and towers in two storeys at the rear corners.
The Surs

In 1526, after the decisive battle of Panipat, the Lodi dynasty gave way to the Mughal conquerors who heralded the dawn of a new and spectacular architectural phase in the country. The Lodi style, however, continued to be practised for some years more, and a last bright flicker of the same shone during the Afghan Sur interregnum (A.D. 1540-1555) when the usurpers temporarily succeeded in dethroning the Mughals. To the transition period belongs the beautiful Jamala mosque near Delhi, finished in 1536, when Humayun, the second of the Mughal emperors, was master of Delhi. Although it does not mark any structural development on the Moth-ki-Masjid, it is apparent that the architects were aiming to achieve a more refined workmanship and were making use of better materials.

Sher Shah, the founder and the most outstanding ruler of the Sur dynasty, was a prodigious builder. His tomb at Sasaram in Bihar represents the fulfilment of the Lodi style. Based evidently on the Lodi examples from Delhi, it has been amplified with so much imagination and skill that in its architectural qualities it easily surpasses all that had previously appeared at the imperial capital. Standing on a 300 feet wide square foundation, consisting of a stepped basement and a tall terrace above, the upper surface of which is designed like an ample courtyard, is the mausoleum, an octagonal structure, in three stages, crowned by a broad low dome. The whole forms an immense pyramidal pile of diminishing tiers, splendidly placed in the centre of a great artificial lake. The tomb chamber, surrounded by arcaded corridors, is a big vaulted hall, generally plain, the only ornamentation being the delicately carved inscriptions on the western wall. Substantial pillared pavilions at each corner of the terrace complete the composition.

But the mausoleum, for all its solid massiveness, is still an unique expression of sober magnificence. It is stately and dignified, simple, solemn and sombre; there is a sense of graceful balance as it seems to float on the face of the waters; and as the spectacle of a building where a remarkable architectural coherence has been obtained by the harmonious flow of its major elements into the central majesty it is no less than an inspired achievement. Another architectural gem of Sher Shah's period, and the one that ushers in the beginning of a new building era under the Mughals, is the Qila Kuhna Masjid. It is erected within the walls of the Emperor's Delhi citadel, the Purana Qila, a walled enclosure with mighty bastions and gateways. In the architectural scheme the mosque is rather a large scale repetition of the Moth-ki-Masjid and the Jamala Mosque. But it displays a richer imagination. The facade with its five arched openings is a refined composition of uniform structures, richly ornamented with marble mosaic and patterns in coloured inlay. The interior is distinguished by the five bays that are elegantly proportioned, the arches and arcades in excellent arrangement, the mihrabs with tasteful plastic enrichment, and the ingenious application of squinch, stalactite, and a cross rib and semi-vault of unusual design to support the roof.

PROVINCIAL STYLES

While Islamic architecture was taking shape at Delhi under the Turkish and Afghan sovereigns, the capitals of the provincial kingdoms were also witnessing many distinct architectural expressions of much beauty and original quality under the patronage of their local Mohammedan rulers. Although basically subsidiary
to the Imperial style, the little kingdoms manifested in their buildings their own architectural characteristics, such as cloisters that surround the courts, elaboration of interior galleries with short square pillars, bracket capitals, horizontal archways, and roofs of flat slabs. Among some of the important factors which determined the character of the provincial styles were the length of association of the province concerned with Delhi, the prevalence of an already developed indigenous art tradition, contact with experienced foreign craftsmen, unusual climatic conditions necessitating special treatment and the availability of building material.

Bengal

Bengal, with its vast deltaic region of the Ganges, came early under the Muslim occupation (A.D. 1202). But as the earliest building efforts were confined merely to a wholesale conversion of the existing Hindu structures to suit the needs of Islam, more than a century elapsed before Bengal could exhibit a distinct structural mode under the Islamic influence. Brick, timber and bamboo, being the only principal building materials available here, the Mohammedan architects readily adopted the indigenous brick style with sparse decorations in black marble and schist, and such local features as the use of square brick pillars of stunted proportions, the curvilinear form of roof and carved or moulded surface decorations, besides elaborating a pointed-arch style of their own. The architecture of Bengal is found mainly at Pandua (Adina Masjid, Eklakhi Masjid, Eklakhi tomb,—the mausoleum of Sultan Jalaluddin Muhammad), Gaur (Dakhil Darwaza, Tantipara, Daras Bari, Nattan, Chamkan, the Gunmant mosques, Chhota Sona Masjid, the mausoleum of Makhdum Akhi Sirajuddin and Bada Sona Masjid), Trebeni, Bagerhat, and other places.

The Adina Mosque of Pandua, built in 1358, is the largest and most important Mohammedan building in Bengal. Planned in the conventional style it stands within an immense rectangular courtyard bounded on all sides by numerous arched recesses and arched ways and is surmounted by a parapet, above which may be seen the domes on the roof, one over each bay, totalling 306 in all. The most striking portion of the mosque is the central nave, designed like a big hall. It was at one time covered by a superb arched vault which has now fallen down. The frontal screen too, containing a pointed entrance archway, has almost completely disappeared. The pride of the sanctuary, however, is the gracefully executed central mihrab in the form of a trefoil arched alcove contained within a rectangular framework, above which rise several tiers of mouldings and panels exquisitely inscribed with arabesques and calligraphic texts. It is apparently a copy of the niche found in the Buddhist and Hindu places of worship in Bihar and Bengal.

In another interesting monument at Pandua, known as the Eklakhi tomb (A.D. 1425), the Islamic mode woven completely into the local style comes into view. The building is a simple square substructure, surmounted by a plain hemispherical dome. Octagonal turrets adorn its four corners and a horizontal string-course, carried centrally across the facade, creates an effect of two storeys. The influence of the indigenous tradition can be seen in the curved cornice, and in the dividing of the facade into a series of projecting and recessed chases, obviously inspired by the framework of the wattle cottage. For the next hundred years this tomb served as the model for the Islamic architects of Bengal.
The Dakhil Darwaza, built about 1465 at Gaur, is a spectacular triumphal arch of immense proportions. Although a brick construction and adorned only with terracotta ornaments, consisting of such motifs as flaming suns, rosettes, hanging lamps, fretted borders and decorative niches, it is as grand an object of its class as any of its kind found elsewhere.

Jaunpur

The mosques of Jaunpur represent another local development of the Imperial school. The state of Jaunpur had formed the eastern bulwark of the Delhi empire. But after it had thrown off its allegiance to the Imperial authority in the beginning of the 15th century, the capital city of Jaunpur, under the enlightened Sharqi rulers, became famous as a seat of Islamic learning and arts, and was specially noted for its sympathetic understanding of Hindu culture. In the field of architecture too, the monuments show an interesting synthesis of Hindu and Muslim structural ideas.

The best monument in the Jaunpur style is the Atala Mosque, erected in 1408 on the foundations prepared by Firuz Shah Tughluq, thirty years before. As its name suggests, the mosque was built on the site of the Hindu temple of Attala Devi, the remains of which were utilised in its construction. Planned in the orthodox style, it consists of a square courtyard, surrounded on three sides by spacious cloisters and the sanctuary on the western side. The cloisters are five aisles in width and rise up to two storeys. The middle of each line of cloisters is interrupted by handsome gateways. But the facade to the sanctuary is unquestionably the most impressive part of the whole building. In the centre rises an imposing construction, shaped like a pylon, with sloping sides, its height being 75 feet and its width at the base 55 feet. Within the pylon is a great arched recess, containing the entrances to the nave and also the arcaded window openings, beautified with tracery patterns. Two more similar pylons, but on smaller scale, have been constructed on either side of the main pylon. The same frontal effect has been given to the three gateways in the cloisters as well, thus lending balance and rhythm to the whole composition. Although a large number of the architectural features of the Masjid are derived directly from the Tughluq buildings, they have no doubt been adapted and blended to present a distinctly individual composition. The pylon formation of the facade is the keynote of the style, and as Havell suggests, the remarkable artistic ingenuity which the Jaunpur architects showed in designing the facade may have been inspired by the Hindu temple gopurams.

The Jami Masjid, completed about 1470, is the final culmination of the style, but very like the Atala Mosque in its essential features. The latter served as a model for three more mosques at Jaunpur, namely, the Khalis Mukhlis Masjid, Jahangiri Masjid and Lal Darwaza Masjid, by none of which was it excelled in design.

Gujarat

No other form of Indo-Islamic architecture is so indigenously Indian as the one that flourished in Gujarat, to which the patrons and the craftsmen jointly contributed. There are two main reasons for this particular character. Firstly, the rulers of the Ahmad Shahi dynasty, whose founder had renounced Hinduism
to save his life, were too much imbued with the ideals and traditions of the people they sprang from to repress their influence. Secondly, the indigenous labour of Gujarat, on which the Muslim over-lords had almost entirely to depend to aid them in carrying out any building schemes that they had in view consisted of accomplished artisans who had for generations built some of the most remarkable Brahmanical and Jain temples. And when these craftsmen were required to direct their genius to the creation of mosques and tombs, their own racial and artistic consciousness continued to determine the course of their work and the quality of their craftsmanship. Consequently, although in intention the Mohammedan building had to be Islamic, it always remained close enough to the idiom of temple architecture.

The Gujarat style as such resolved itself in the first half of the fifteenth century. It represents a logical development of the earlier Islamic structures which belong to a phase of demolition and reconversion and bear evidences of being only experimental and inventive. This was the time of Khilji and Tughluq rule through governors. The chief monuments of this initial phase (A.D. 1300-1411) are the mausoleum of Shaikh Farid and the Jamai Masjid at Patan, the Jamai Masjid at Broach, the Jamai Masjid at Cambay and the Masjid of Hinal Khan at Dholka.

With the reign of Ahmad Shah I (A.D. 1411-42) began the phase of early consummation in the provincial style of Gujarat. The finest example of this development is the Jamai Masjid of Ahmadabad, completed in 1423. The building is a clever combination of Jain details with the Muslim idea of magnitude. Its greater size is not obtained by increasing the dimensions of its parts but by a re-duplication of forms according to the Jain fashion. The facade to the sanctuary is its most significant part. Here, by placing the screen of arches in the centre with the pillared porticos on the wings, the architect has skillfully combined two different facade conventions, and thus achieved a superb balance between solids of the wall surface and voids of the colonnade. The interior of the sanctuary exhibits an equally noble structural design and shows even more of the temple influence. It is a simple rectangle 210 feet by 95 feet and is filled with some three hundred closely set tall slender pillars. They are symmetrically arranged into a series of fifteen square bays, each covered by a dome, of which the three in the middle are larger and considerably higher than the others. The central compartment or nave mounts up into three storeys, the upper two being composed of pillared galleries, while the side aisles, designed on the same principle as the nave, rise to two storeys. The building inside is illuminated by a diffused light through a very clever arrangement of clerestory windows, so that no direct light of any kind can penetrate.

The mausoleum of Shaikh Ahmad at Sarkhej (A.D. 1451), laid out in conjunction with a mosque, a feature now beginning to develop, is the largest of its kind in Gujarat. It is an enclosed building, contained within a long range of arcades fitted with perforated screens. In its interior planning it takes the form of pillared cloisters, surrounding the central tomb chamber. The domed hall is enclosed by a series of tracery screens, cut into chaste and elegant patterns.

About the end of the 15th century, the architecture of Gujarat entered its final and classic period of perfect balance and magnificence. Mahmud Begarha, who ruled from 1459 to 1511, built not only the new cities of Junagharh, Kheda and Champaner, but adorned them as well as Ahmadabad, with splendid mausoleums, mosques, palaces and several other structures of secular and utilitarian value. Outstanding among the monuments is the Jamai Masjid at Champaner, a
building displaying a remarkable symmetrical appearance obtained by the skilful combination of architectural details. In plan and general arrangement it is modelled on the style of the Jami Masjid of Ahmadabad, but it has been greatly enriched by giving a more sophisticated shape to its pillars, by designing beautifully moulded buttresses on the western wall, and projecting imposing entrance pavilions from three sides of the outer containing walls.

The beauty of the Jami Masjid and of the other Gujarat buildings of this phase lies, however, mostly in their exuberant ornamentation. This phase is particularly notable for its carved stone-work. The outer walls of the Jami Masjid which surround the sanctuary and the courtyard have been pierced by tracery openings of a singularly attractive design. For extremely delicate carvings, almost jewel like, the Rauza of Rani Sipari (A.D. 1514) at Ahmadabad is regarded as one of the most elegant structures of the world. But the perforated stone screens seen on the walls of the sanctuary of the Sidi Sayyid Mosque (A.D. 1515), also at Ahmadabad, have given this otherwise insignificant building a world-wide reputation. Screens of a similar kind were a favourite method of decoration in the hands of the Gujarati craftsmen, but never before were they treated with so much artistic sensitivity and technical skill as in this mosque. ‘It would be difficult to excel the skill with which the vegetable forms are conventionalised just to the extent required for the purpose. The equal spacing also of the subject by the three ordinary trees and four palms takes it out of the category of direct imitation of nature, and renders it sufficiently structural for its situations; but perhaps the greatest skill is shown in the even manner in which the pattern is spread over the whole surface. There are some exquisite specimens of tracery in precious marbles at Agra and Delhi, but none quite equal to this.’

The Gujarat buildings of this phase are also distinguished by the design of their minarets. Forming an essential feature of the mosque facade, they either project from the centre, one on each side of the main archway, or they find a place at the two ends of the frontage. Towards the close of the phase the minarets at the angles cease to function as such and take the form of mere solid ornamental turrets. The minarets are invariably beautifully carved and adorned by delicate eaves and brackets.

In a region of so much aesthetic sensibility even such minor architectural undertakings as the step wells and baulis—deep, long, and stairsed reservoirs of water—were also treated artistically. The pillars, capitals, railings, wall-surfaces, and cornices of the baulis have as profuse ornamentation as is found in the mosques and the temples.

**Malwa**

Malwa during the period under review was a region in the western centre of the country. It had been conquered by the Khilji rulers of Delhi, but had emerged as an independent state in 1401 under the Ghuris who were originally its governors. Dhar was its ancient capital, but King Hushang (A.D. 1406-35) shifted it to Mandu. The provincial style of Malwa, therefore, manifested itself both at Dhar and Mandu. It was inspired principally by the architecture of the Imperial capital. It was also from the Delhi region that trained workers were brought, who were only too glad to accept the new assignments on account of the declining authority

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of the Tughluqs. Accordingly, we see reproduced in the Malwa buildings, the architectural elements of the Delhi monuments, such as the battering wall and the pointed arch of the early Tughluqs, and the dome and roof of the Lodis. But in the numerous palaces, mosques, tombs, pavilions, balconied turrets, colonnade terraces, and rest houses, which the Malwa Sultans built, several new elements were also introduced to give to the Malwa style a distinctive character. Thus appeared long and imposing flights of steps leading to entrances of the buildings, now raised on higher plinths, artistic combinations of such structural systems as the arch and the pillar-and-beam, and brilliant colour effects obtained either by the use of coloured stones and marbles, in which the country around was rich, or by the use of gorgeously painted tiles.

The earliest phase of Malwa architecture is represented by the Kamal Maula Masjid (A.D. 1400), and the Lat Masjid (A.D. 1405) at Dhar, and by Dilawar Khan's Masjid (A.D. 1405) and the mosque of Malik Mughis at Mandu, which were constructed out of the temples the conquerors had demolished. In order, however, to disguise the temple origin, the builders introduced certain improvements, for instance, interposed pointed arches between the pillars in certain central portions of the scheme, so skillfully executed that they seem to emerge out of the pillars.

The next and the more integral phase of Islamic architecture in Malwa began with the establishment of the capital of the kingdom at Mandu (A.D. 1406). It is represented by structural forms noted for originality and massive elegance. The important monuments are grouped at one place: the Jami Masjid, the mausoleum of Sultan Hushang and the Ashrafi Mahal with the Tower of Victory. The largest and finest monument of the group is the Jami Masjid. It covers a square of 288 feet side, and is prolonged on the eastern side for another 100 feet by a projecting domed entrance hall and a wide flight of steps. The high plinth of the building is utilised for constructing a series of arched chambers to serve as a public inn. Beyond the entrance hall, the inner arrangement of the building consists of arched arcades on all the four sides, the eleven openings in each side leading to columned halls within, those in the north and south in three aisles, in the east in two, and in the west in five. The arches are plainly designed and yet the repeating rows of them have been so rhythmically adjusted, and the graceful lines, curves, and planes have been so competently disposed throughout, that an air of stately majesty seems quietly to enhance the sacred purpose of the sanctuary. A further effect of restrained grandeur was introduced when the builders covered the entire formation of the roof with three domes, and a symmetrical pattern of cylindrical cupolas, one over each bay of the interior, to measure up exquisitely with the dome on the gate-house.

Adjacent to the western wall of the Jami Masjid stands Hushang's mausoleum. Though conceived and partly built by Hushang himself, it was completed by his successor in 1440. The entire structure is a heavy pile of white marble, conveying by its size, by a certain austerity in the use of materials, and by the sombre arcades, a mood of profound contemplation.

Facing the Jami Masjid is the Ashrafi Mahal, dating from the early years of Sultan Mahmud I (A.D. 1436-69). In its original condition it consisted of three distinct structures—a college or madarasa, the royal mortuary chamber, and a Tower of Victory taking the place of the turret towards the north-east angle of the college building. The whole structural complex is now in ruins, but there are
enough fragmentary remains to show that in its original condition it was sumptuously embellished with elegant carvings and inlaid patterns in choice stones.

Two other buildings at Mandu belong to this phase. One is the Hindola Mahal, the Swing Palace, so called on account of the pronounced batter of its side walls. The structure, with its rather illogical designing and incongruous proportions, stands in strong contrast to the ‘vivacious and fanciful mood’ displayed by the other building, the Jahaz Mahal, the Ship Palace. The latter has none of the solid massivity of the former. Instead, the building is throughout elegantly designed, gracefully fitted with an arced front, recessed arches, open pavilions, airy kiosks, overhanging balconies, cool corridors, and is sumptuously emblished with gay friezes of brightly coloured glaze over its surfaces.

Finally, there came a phase in the building activity of Mandu which was inspired by the romantic ardour of the rulers and their life of ease and luxury. A number of luxurious retreats were erected, taking the form of summer houses, palaces and pavilions, arranged in groupings of compartments around a central courtyard in which fountains played, while arced loggias roofed with fluted domes rose above. Such were the edifices now known as Baz Bahadur’s Palace, Rupmati’s Pavilion, Nilkantha Palace, and Chisti Khan’s Palace, all manifesting a highly sentimental outlook on life, but none of them possessing any architectural merit.

The Deccan

Across the Vindhya in the Muslim kingdoms of the Deccan, a style of Islamic architecture flourished which was of a distinctly independent character, because unlike the architectural behaviour prevailing in other provincial capitals, it had in its evolution almost completely ignored the existing architectural traditions of its own regions. Instead of seeking roots in the Dravidian and Chalukyan modes, its creators had preferred to take their inspiration from foreign sources. A very significant fact determined this behaviour. The founder of the first independent Muslim dynasty in the Deccan, the Bahmani, was a Persian adventurer to whose state had flocked, among others, a large number of Persian engineers, artisans, and skilled workmen who were very proud of their Persian culture. In practice, however, the architectural trends thus arriving from distant Persia fused with the Imperial modes of Delhi, which too had arrived in a mature state in the Deccan in the time of Sultan Muhammad Tughluq during the exodus of the inhabitants of Delhi to the proposed new capital at Daulatabad (about A.D. 1330). And so although in several important instances buildings were erected in the Deccan which were in design, construction, and intention purely Persian, there is a long series of monuments which indicate the manner of gradual amalgamation of the two systems into a final form.

Two features of the style emerge into prominence. One is most strikingly expressed in the shape and proportion of the dome which slowly assumed the bulbous or ‘Tatar’ form. The other feature is displayed in the process of decoration which was done in the purely Persian fashion of surface treatment. Delicately glazed tiles, in which green, yellow and white predominate, are combined in various brilliant schemes of floral ornamentation or conventional arabesques to give a most colourful effect to palaces and tombs. Mosques, however, are plain and austere looking.
The building art under independent Muslim rule in the Deccan began in 1347 when Alauddin Bahman of the Bahmani dynasty threw off his allegiance to Delhi and established his capital at Gulbarga. The Jama Masjid at Gulbarga is one of the most interesting monuments of its class in India. Completed in 1367, according to an inscription, its great peculiarity is the absence of an open courtyard as the whole area is covered by a roof. Inside, it is a vast range of broad squat cloistered arches, forming sixty-eight bays, each roofed over by a small dome. Over the spacious nave of the sanctuary the lofty main dome, elevated on a high square clerestory, is another powerfully original composition. But, undoubtedly, the archways are the most boldly conceived formation and fully compensate for lack of outstanding aesthetic qualities in the mosque. A number of Bahmani royal tombs were also erected at Gulbarga. But in their battering walls, recessed archways, battlemented parapets and low domes, they exhibit characteristics derived from the Tughluq tombs at Delhi.

In 1425 the capital was transferred to the city of Bidar. The principal architectural productions of the later Bahmani regime at Bidar consist of palaces and mosques, a madrasa or college and the royal tombs. The palaces are in ruins today, but from the remains it is evident that they once wore a resplendent look, on account of brilliant schemes of mural paintings and coloured glazed tiles. The mosques, on the other hand, are sombre, and unlike the Gulbarga mosque follow the orthodox plan of an open courtyard, pillared sanctuary and nave surmounted by a dome. A notable monument is the madrasa erected in 1472 by Mahmud Gawan, a Persian scholar, who tried to reproduce a building exactly similar to the one he had known in his native land. It was a three-storied construction containing lecture halls, library, mosque, professors' quarters, and accommodation for students. For its effect, however, the building relies entirely on its surface treatment and not on the beauty of its structural forms. The walls are enriched with colourful schemes of floral devices, conventional arabesques or decorative inscriptions by means of brilliantly glazed tiles. What the builders produced here was, therefore, not architecture but applied art and the madrasa owes its character more to the art-craftsman than to the mason.

The twelve royal tombs at Bidar represent the 'rational development of the Deccani style.' In their structural character they are mere elaborations of the Gulbarga mausoleums, but a few original features have found their way into the style. An innovation may be noticed in the formation of the dome which stands on an octagonal drum rising above the large square building of the tomb. It is massive in shape. There is also a slight constriction in the lower contour, displaying the first attempts to catch a bulbous form. The Persian influence shows itself in the remains of superb coloured tile-work.

Between 1490 and 1512, the Bahmani Empire broke up into the smaller kingdoms of Bidar (Barid Shahs), Golkunda (Qutb Shahs), Ahmadnagar (Nizam Shahs), Berar (Imad Shahs), and Bijapur (Adil Shahs), each called after its capital. The development of tomb architecture at Bidar was kept up by the Barid Shah rulers (A.D. 1487-1619). The finest of their tombs is that of Ali Barid, whose dome now plainly shows the bulbous shape in formation. The building is also very largely designed to provide a foundation for the imposition of coloured tile work.

A phase of the Deccani style flourished at Golkunda (A.D. 1512-1687) also. Its building efforts represent an excellent series of tombs all of which have
been designed in accordance with the Bahmani tombs at Bidar. But here an
element of frivolity was introduced with the addition of many meaningless ar-
tectural decorations, like fanciful pinnacles and flimsy battlements, which only
succeed in destroying the restrained grandeur of the tomb building. A further
architectural elaboration may be noted in the creation of full blown bulbous
domes with the addition of a calyx formation of a massive plastic order at the
base. Another Qutb Shahi structure of considerable dignity and grace is the
Char Minar erected in 1591 at Hyderabad as a triumphal archway. Elevated on
a square plan, the composition consists of four spreading archways, one in each
side of the ground storey, and four minars, one at each corner. The upper struc-
ture rises in a series of diminishing storeys, which although elaborately embel-
lished with several purposeless features, display much graceful inventiveness in
their decorative schemes.

Bijapur developed the most refined and constructionally competent ar-
thitecture, particularly during the last hundred years of its existence. Scores of
buildings including mosques, tombs and palaces were erected at Bijapur both
by the rulers and their subjects. Undoubtedly the most characteristic feature of
this architecture is the dome. In buildings of average proportions it is almost
spherical in shape and rises out of a petal formation at the base. The other
distinguishing elements of this style are the turrets finished with domes surmounting
the principal angles of the building like slender minarets, the fuller and more
graceful curves of the arches, substantial masonry piers instead of pillars, and
projecting cornices supported by closely ranked decorated brackets. All these dis-

tinctive elements have been adorned with singularly graceful sculptured patterns,
some of which though perhaps derived from the Bahmani buildings have been
further enriched.

One of the earliest Bijapur monuments is the Jami Masjid, built by Ali
Shah I (A.D. 1558-80). It was never completely finished, yet, in spite of all that it
lacks, it is considered to be one of the finest examples of the Bijapur architecture.
It is notable for its powerful simplicity, the refined shaping of its hemispherical
dome, and a carefully planned decorative scheme which has substantially enriched
the architectural character of the mosque. The dome and the clerestory were
particularly embellished with appropriate architectural ornaments.

Another monument, exemplifying the glory of Bijapur architecture, is
the Ibrahim Rauza, the mausoleum of Ibrahim Adil Shah (A.D. 1580-1627), built
by himself. It consists of a tomb standing at the eastern end of an oblong terrace
and a mosque facing it at the western end. The constructional arrangement of the
mausoleum follows the usual tomb formula. But for sheer technical accuracy
and skilled artistry in the placing and combining of the various elements of the
composition, and for the most elaborate ornamental carvings of original and
intricate patterns, the Rauza reaches a high place in the range of Indian archi-
tecture. In the decorative scheme the outer wall surface of the tomb chamber has
received the greatest attention. Each wall is spaced into an arcade of three shallow
arches and these are enclosed by a system of borders and panels of graceful shapes
which are filled in by arabesques, repeating diapers or traceried inscriptions, all
of exquisite designs.

The third great monument of Bijapur is the Gol Gumbaz, the name given
to the mausoleum of Muhammad Adil Shah (A.D. 1627-57). The mausoleum building
is a vast composition, but so well proportioned are its main elements, comprising
the great square mass below and the large hemispherical dome above, that only
for its immense scale and constructive boldness it may be regarded as one of the
proudest achievements of the Indian builders. Its supplementary elements too,
like the arch, cornice, arcade, foliated parapet, and fluted drum, which are in them-
selves works of art, are so disposed upon a framework of simple structural forms
that they produce a most elegant and harmonious effect. It is however in the
construction of the dome, considered to be the largest domical roof in existence
(outside diameter being 144 feet), that the artist revealed his astonishing structural
abilities. In Fergusson’s words: “The most ingenious and novel part of this dome
is the mode in which the lateral or outward thrust is counteracted. This was
accomplished by forming the pendentives so that they not only cut off the angles,
but that their arches intersect each other, and form a very considerable mass
of masonry perfectly stable in itself; and by its weight acting inwards, counter-
acting any thrust that can possibly be brought to bear upon it by the pressure of
the dome. If the whole edifice, thus balanced, has any tendency to move, it is
to fall inwards, which from its circular form is impossible; while the action of
the weight of the pendentives being in the opposite direction to that of the dome,
it acts like a tie, and keeps the whole in equilibrium, without interfering at all with
the outline of the dome.”

The Bijapur architecture continued to maintain its high structural character
till its last days. The end came not from decay, but by the building activity ceasing
abruptly on account of the conquest of the state by the Mughals.

THE MUGHAL STYLE

The Mughals, as indicated before, had appeared early in the 16th century
on the Indian scene, with Babur, the Timurid ruler of Farghana and Kabul,
defeating the Lodi Sultans of Delhi and the Rajput Rajas of Mewar in 1526-27.
His son Humayun made unsuccessful attempts to subjugate Bengal, Malwa, and
Gujarat, and after a temporary dethronement and exile in Persia, succeeded in
1555 in recovering only a part of what he had lost. But after the period of this
initial instability the Mughals finally managed to get a strong foothold in the
country and with it the Indo-Islamic architecture entered its most fascinating
phase. The forms in which it emerged were of unusual brilliance and splendour
and infused with the finest character. Several factors contributed towards this
development: the wealth and vigour of the Great Mughals, the prevalence of
relatively peaceful conditions in the country, and the pronounced aesthetic tempe-
rament of the rulers who were all men of culture and keenly interested in archi-
tecture. Thus under a fresh Imperial patronage, and under very auspicious circum-
cstances an architectural movement began in the country wherein both the Hindu
and Mohammedan craftsmen joined together their inventive and artistic faculties
to create dreams in red sandstone and marble. But while local influences affected
quite moderately, the fancies and tastes of the individual patrons were in no way
less significant in shaping the general architectural character of these buildings.

Although Babur in his ‘Memoirs’ relates that a number of building projects
were undertaken by him in India, and from another contemporary writer we learn
that Humayun, his son, adorned his capital with many splendid edifices, no build-
ing of any consequence known to be Babur’s or Humayun’s has yet been identi-

fied. But the fugitive Humayun's personal contacts at the court of Shah Tahmasp served as the means of bringing into India the art traditions from Persia which we find revealed in the monarch's mausoleum.

The tomb of Humayun in Delhi, constructed under the direct supervision of his widow Hajji Begum, from the year 1564 onwards, is one of the earliest architectural achievements of the new ruling dynasty. The building, square in plan, stands in the centre of a wide and lofty sandstone terrace, the sides of which contain a range of archways each opening into a small room for the accommodation of visitors. The four principal sides of the mausoleum are almost alike, each face consisting of a central rectangular fronton containing an arched recess and flanked by smaller octagonal compartments each having similar but smaller arched alcoves. And finally a graceful double dome, and numerous pillared kiosks having cupola roofs scattered all around it, crown the entire structure. This dome is an unique architectural expedient as it is composed of two separate but well spaced shells one within the other. In its interior arrangement the building has been devised into a group of compartments instead of a single cell as heretofore. Another innovation is the introduction of a spacious and lovely garden surrounding the mausoleum building. As Percy Brown puts it, 'this monument ... represents an Indian interpretation of a Persian conception.' The shape of the dome and its construction, as also the arched alcoves and the complex of rooms and corridors in the interior planning belong to Persian traditions. On the other hand, the admirable blending of the pink sandstone masonry with white marble and the fanciful kiosks with elegant cupolas belong to Indian workmanship. But these two traditions were synthesized by the builders in this structure as is evident from the fact that the exterior and the interior designs of the building have been carefully harmonised to blend into a lucid composition, and its various parts have been appropriately placed and perfectly proportioned. On the whole there is rhythm in the structure, and the mausoleum for the first time in Indo-Muslim architecture impresses not by its strength but by its magnificence and greatness.

If Humayun's tomb is eclectic, architecture under his great successor and son Akbar displays a character which is a complete synthesis of the indigenous and foreign elements. Akbar's architecture is typical of the policy of a truly national ruler, whose one great objective was the establishment of human and cultural relations between his Hindu and Muslim subjects. He had seen the Hindu architecture of Rajputana (Rajasthan) and was deeply impressed by the living craft traditions of the Indian artisans. Therefore, in the construction of buildings that he patronised Akbar brought about an assimilation of the Hindu and Muslim traditional elements and became the main inspiration behind the creativeness of the age.

Akbar was a prolific builder. His principal material was sandstone of a rich red colour with frequent use of white marble for more effective underlining of the architectural forms. The principle of construction followed was mainly of the trabeate order. The dome was given the Lodi touch. The pillar shafts were usually many-sided, with the capitals designed as bracket supports. Ornamentation was introduced by carving or inlaying patterns of variously coloured sandstones, marble and schist. Interior walls and ceilings were often painted.

The style of architecture evolved by Akbar first came to the fore in the fortress palace of Agra. He built two more palace-fortresses, one at Lahore and the other at Allahabad. But it was at Fatehpur Sikri, his new capital near Agra,

that he congregated the greatest of his monumental works. Here, on a ridge of cliffs, grew up a variety of edifices, a great mosque with seminaries, palaces, audience-rooms, offices, all arranged in appropriate settings of gardens, fountains and pavilions. None of them is of large dimensions, nor even are the gardens extensively laid out. Yet every structure is so boldly original and the contributions from various sources are so ingeniously coordinated that these little gems of architecture at Fatehpur Sikri present in their totality a truly and fully matured style.

The buildings may be grouped into two classes: those of a religious character including the Great Mosque, its triumphal gateway or Buland Darwaza, and the tomb of Salim Chisti; the rest are secular buildings, and are of three kinds—palaces, offices, and structures of a miscellaneous order.

Among the palaces, the richest and the most beautiful are those of Jodh Bai, Mariam Sultana and Birbal. Of these, the residence of Jodh Bai is most fully representative of the character of palace architecture of the period. While the exterior consists of high and plain walls, the interior arrangement is made up of an almost symmetrical range of groups of self-contained apartments facing a square quadrangle to which entrance is available through a guarded gateway. Most of the apartments are of two storeys, with corridors and passages on the ground floor, and open terraced roofs, screened by parapets, at regular intervals on the upper floor. The communication arrangements are so compact that each portion of the palace is easily accessible to its inmates. Some of its structural features, particularly the design of the niches and brackets as well as the shape of pillar shafts, have been obviously brought in from the temple architecture of Western India. But it is in the application of the decorative elements and in the richness and quality of its carved ornamentation that the pronounced Hindu taste is unmistakable. The other palaces have been treated with the same exquisite delicacy of workmanship and adornment as in Jodh Bai's palace.

Of the administrative buildings, the most distinctive is the Diwan-i-Khas, or the Hall of Private Audience, built in 1575. It is a single lofty chamber, which is externally like any other secular edifice. But in its interior arrangement it has a novel theme in its throne piller, which is as artistic as it is unique in conception. It consists of a large circular platform, shaped like a flower, supported on an immense cluster of brackets forming the capital of a richly carved column which occupies the central portion of the hall. From the platform, which reaches to the level of the upper windows, causeways radiate to the four corners of the hall to connect with narrow hanging galleries which go round the hall. On every Friday, the Emperor sat on this elevated capital and listened to discussions in which his counsellors and learned men of different religions participated.

The most beautiful part of Fatehpur Sikri is that formed by the group of buildings of a religious character. It includes the Great Mosque, enclosing the tomb of Akbar's patron saint Salim Chisti within the courtyard, the mausoleum of the feudal lord Islam Khan on the northern side, and the mosque's southern gateway known as the Buland Darwaza. The mosque designed on the orthodox plan is a perfectly symmetrical conception with an open courtyard of extensive dimensions, pillared cloisters on three of its sides, and the sanctuary on the western end. The facade to the sanctuary consists of an alcoved fronton in the centre and pillared arcaded wings on both sides of it. Three doorways in the vaulted recess lead to the nave, which is a square hall covered by a large dome, and leading
out of it through archways are aisles with smaller domes as their roofs. A variation on the usual formation has been obtained by the open spaces of the nave, picturesque grouping of pillars in the wings, and introduction of side chapels towards the middle length of the aisles. It was in the embellishment of the interior surfaces, especially in the nave and the adjacent compartments, that the craftsmen were at their best. Nowhere in the buildings of Akbar's reign is the carved, painted and inlaid ornamentation so fantastically rich and colourful as in this building.

About 1601, after the victory over Khandesh in the Deccan, Akbar built the Buland Darwaza, the magnificent gateway to the mosque. It is distinguished by its imposing height dominating even the mosque and by the bold projecting facade with the arched and domed recess in the centre gradually narrowing in parts until finally reduced to a man-height doorway at the rear. Crowning the whole of the facade is a handsome perforated parapet behind which rises a range of kiosks. It is unquestionably one of the finest efforts of Akbar's reign. It was meant to produce an effect of great power without being 'weighty or pretentious.' The classic simplicity of its lines helps to present that appearance. It was in the maturest mood of his life that Akbar designed this gateway as the following message inscribed on the outer facade clearly indicates: 'Jesus Son of Mary (on whom be peace) said: The world is a bridge, pass over it; but build no house upon it. Who hopes for an hour, hopes for eternity. The world is an hour. Spend it in prayer for what follows is unseen.'

The single-storeyed low marble mausoleum of Salim Chisti, on to which the Buland Darwaza opens, is like 'a pearl set against the plain red sandstone.' Its effect, in fact, depends not so much on its architectural scheme as on the delicate marble of which it is constructed and the fanciful manner in which the pure milk white material has been handled.

Akbar started building his own mausoleum at Sikandra, about six miles from Agra, but it was completed by his son Emperor Jahangir in 1613, eight years after he had ascended the throne. There is a legend that the general ground plan and the foundation storey had already been built when Akbar died in 1605 and that the construction of the storey immediately above was directed by Jahangir. Certainly the clash of temperaments, between the dynamic master-builder of Fatehpur Sikri and the relaxed ease loving aesthete who succeeded him, is clearly indicated by the contrast between the substantially conceived powerful substructure of the ground storey and the light and fanciful composition of the upper floors which lack in weight and firmness. The building is pyramidal in form, rising in five diminishing terraces. It consists of, first, a massive foundational terrace with arches recessed within its sides and an arched alcove interposed in the centre of each side; then above it, red sandstone pavilions in three diminishing stages, richly ornamented with kiosks, and finally crowning the whole, a white marble enclosure with delicate trellis work of the most beautiful patterns, and graceful kiosks above each corner. It is not known whether the unroofed terrace at the top, in the centre of which is the exquisitely carved cenotaph, was intended to be covered with a dome, but even as it is it does not appear to be incomplete.

A carefully laid out vast Persian garden, enclosed within the tomb's perimeter walls, surrounds the building. In the middle of each side of the enclosing wall is a gate-house; of these the southern entrance is a remarkably fine structure on account of the pleasing proportions, boldly inlaid ornamentation, and the four elegant white marble minarets above each corner.
Another architectural achievement of Jahangir’s reign is his tomb at Shahdara, near Lahore. The convention set by the previous Mughal tombs is followed in this mausoleum too, most of which was constructed after his death by his consort Nur-Jahan. It is now a one-storeyed structure, with octagonal minarets in five stages rising up from each corner of the ground floor. It was originally surmounted centrally on the roof by a marble pavilion, which has since fallen down. The monument, however, is distinguished mainly by the brilliant splash of colour over its surfaces through the use of fresco painting, inlay, and mosaic tiles in the Persian style.

The tomb of Itmad-ud-Daulah, father of Nur-Jahan, by whom it was built at Agra in 1626, is an outstanding monument, heralding the sumptuous building epoch of Shahjahan. Integrated into a formal garden scheme of lawns, fountains, tanks, flagged pathways, and cypress trees on all sides, stands the tomb building with an octagonal minaret at each angle of the central structure and a small pavilion upper storey rising above the roof. It is constructed entirely of white marble, and covered throughout, for the first time in India, with a mosaic in *pietra dura* in which precious stones like lapis, onyx, jasper, topaz, and cornelian were inset in lovely floral forms into the marble. This building for the exquisite finish of the marble work and the extreme delicacy of the decorative treatment truly achieves the acme of mausoleum style in its most elegant and glorious aspect.

With Shahjahan (A.D. 1627-1658) began the 'lyric age' of Indo-Muslim architecture. The force and the constructive craftsmanship of the style under Akbar gave way now to a delicate elegance and over-refinement in structural design and an extravagant prettiness in decoration. The change in the architectural sensibility was evidenced first by a change in the building material, stone yielding place to marble which Shahjahan easily got in unlimited quantity from the quarries of Makrana in Rajasthan. As Governor of Gujarat, Shahjahan had probably been deeply impressed by the beautifully carved limestone gems of architecture found there. Therefore, when he became the Emperor the accent shifted from the red sandstone, which continued to be used for sub-structures and subsidiary buildings, to white marble of fine textural quality which henceforth appeared extensively in palaces and tombs. The emperor's individual sensibility imparted a further enrichment to the new material by artistically manipulating it to a high degree of perfection. He also introduced certain new architectural elements, particularly noticeable in the shape of the arch which is now often foliated, usually in each instance by means of nine cusps, the dome which is bulbous in outline and constricted at its neck, and pillars which have tapering shafts, voluted bracket capitals, and foliated bases. In the decorative sphere the art of *pietra dura* applied to graceful foliations and other ornamental devices achieved almost sensuous loveliness in the exceptionally splendid creations of the great builder.

Shahjahan started his building activity by demolishing some of the stone structures in the Agra fort and erecting in their place such elegant edifices in marble as the Diwan-i-Am (A.D. 1627), Diwan-i-Khas (about A.D. 1637), and the Moti Masjid (A.D. 1654), the prettiest of all. The appeal of this last lies in the gracious proportioning of the arcades in the facade, the skillful contrasting of these with the colonnades of the cloisters and arched entrances, the elegant form of the kiosks over the parapet, the carefully balanced dome which subtly accentuates the horizontalism of the structure, and lastly the extremely decorative
appearance of the building material. Among other marble palaces and pavilions erected at Agra were the Khas Mahal, the Shish Mahal, the Nagina Masjid, and Musamman Burj. Similar replacements in marble were also effected in a group of palaces at Lahore.

Shahjahan undertook an ambitious range of constructions in the year 1638, when he decided to transfer the capital from Agra to its original seat at Delhi and began to lay out the city of Shahjahanabad. One of the important undertakings was the building of a palace-fortress for the Emperor's own residence, which provides a study in the palace building art in its maturity. The 'Imperial city' is in the shape of a parallelogram, and is surrounded on all sides by a high and fortified wall of red sandstone, with a most noble gateway on the western side. The inside consists of a market place, barracks, servants' houses, accommodation for those attached to the Court, Naubat Khana, royal residences, pavilions, etc.—all planned out in a very systematic and uniform manner.

Shahjahan lavished his finest art on palaces, baths, and halls, which are arranged in rectangles or squares, with wide open spaces, and ornamental gardens laid out between two structures. Two of these, the Diwan-i-Khas and the Rang Mahal are of exceptional richness in their architectural and decorative treatment. The Diwan-i-Khas is a hall of private audience and the Rang Mahal a luxurious bathing establishment. Both the buildings, representing the peak of Mughal opulence, have the same broad architectural features. Each is a single storeyed open pavilion having a facade of foliated arches related to the intersecting arcades of engrailed arches in the interior, graceful kiosks rising from each corner of the parapet, and square or twelve-sided piers supporting a flat highly decorated ceiling. It is the ornamentation in which the splendour and exuberant elegance of these buildings is truly reflected. There are perforated screens, arches of lattice work, arches picked out in gold and colours, and gilt, coloured, and inlaid patterns of floral scrolls covering every portion of the building.

Another eminent structure at Delhi, erected by Shahjahan, is the Jami Masjid. Ranking as the largest mosque in India, it is architecturally remarkable for its size and proportionate manipulation of its various parts. Its lofty plinth, approached by a seemingly endless flight of steps, its immense quadrangle and the manner in which its principal elements, including the three bulbous domes of white marble and tall minarets, have been disposed give the whole composition a strikingly picturesque and imposing appearance.

A monument erected in memory of Shahjahan’s consort is the Taj Mahal at Agra. It is the 'vision beautiful' materialised in marble. But unique in its loveliness as it is, the Taj would lose half its charm if taken out of its beautiful setting. Its ornamental gardens, with their long row of cypresses, water-courses with fountains, and an elevated lotus pool, have so perfectly been harmonised with the general architectural scheme that they have given the mausoleum a jewel-like enrichment, so that the picture of the Taj becomes a picture of a memorial of matchless beauty.

There has been a controversy as to the possible architects of the building. Some have suggested that the principal hand was that of a Venetian. But the character of the building itself, and also the contemporary records, in which names of the chief craftsmen have been given, go to prove that the Taj is the final culmination of the building art as practised by the Mughals, and is thoroughly Indian in its spirit. It will, however, be admitted that calligraphists, decorators,
and builders from Baghdad, Bukhara, Shiraz, and Samarqand were invited. But they all had to submit to the patterns and models prepared beforehand by indigenous master-builders.

The mausoleum rises on a terrace whose corners are adorned with minarets of the most exquisite proportions. The tomb building itself is a simple composition, both in proportion and shape. But it is the melodic disposition of the various parts, their lucid combinations and the perfect manner in which each part is inter-related in the total unity that make it as great a work of art as a work of faith. Its crowning glory is the great central dome which seems to rise with exquisite grace and subtlety from the base. It is Persian in design but displays a more refined and chaste craftsmanship. Under the dome is a beautiful screen of lovely trellis work of white marble which makes the enclosure for the tomb chamber. The interior arrangement of the compartments in the Taj follows the pattern of Humayun’s Tomb at Delhi.

Much of the ‘ethereal and dream-like lightness’ of the Taj lies in the choice of the materials and the process of decoration. The quality of marble used here is of such a nature that it is extremely susceptible to the slightest changes in the light, thus all the time ‘picturing the passing colour of the moment.’ But the principal enrichment is obtained by the exquisite plastic treatment of the screens, arabesques in pietra dura, scroll work, diapasons, and sprays of floral forms, all beautiful in design and satisfying in colour. All this together with the gracious character of the building as a whole makes it a most feminine monument.

The peak had been achieved. The next great ruler Aurangzeb (A.D. 1658-1707) added a few pretentious buildings, but it is clear that the style of architecture had reached a point from where it must decline. The unsettled political conditions of the country and the sectarian prejudices of the Emperor led to the weakening of the Indian architectural movement as a whole. It now lacked that touch of vitality and spirit by which the monuments of the earlier period had been distinguished. The structural form has become stiff and uninspiring, and the excessively complicated ornamentation does not embellish the building but only continues a tradition artificially and mechanically. Its cheapness is emphasised by covering brick with marble stucco. A building which so graphically depicts the declining conditions is the Bibi-ka-Rauza (A.D. 1678), the mausoleum of the wife of Aurangzeb at Aurangabad, in the Deccan. It is merely a very inferior copy of the Taj. Its proportions are compressed, the domes lack fluidity and the floral stucco designs are spiritless.

An impressive monument of the period is the Badshahi Masjid at Lahore, erected in 1674 by Aurangzeb’s royal engineer. Its architectural character follows the design established in the time of Shahjahan. The new tendencies are, however, evident in its general appearance, which though retaining strength and solidity is austere and sombre and in ornamentation lacks the creative quality of the earlier period. Only its great triple marble domes, of the bulbous variety, superbly designed and executed, add magnificence to a structure otherwise lacking in high aesthetic character.

After the death of Aurangzeb, the empire collapsed. The provinces asserted their independence and the Imperial treasury was without money. The emperors were mere puppets in the hands of the nobles at Delhi, until in 1803 they had to accept the British tutelage. Building activities practically ceased. The Moti Masjid at Mehrauli near Delhi (A.D. 1709), in white marble, and the Zinatul-Masjid at
Delhi (A.D. 1710), in red sandstone, are among the last imperial monuments. All subsequent buildings were the creations of nobles. Safdar Jang, the grand wazier of Ahmad Shah of Delhi, erected about 1753 the last big mausoleum at Delhi. Built in red sandstone with marble slabs it is a poor imitation of Humayun's tomb with alterations which combinedly produce an unsatisfying effect. The decadence is apparent in the 'narrow and vertical tendency' of the structure as a whole, and the consequent absence of rhythmic disposal of parts.

Under the British rule, Emperor Bahadur Shah (A.D. 1837-57) attempted a renaissance of red sandstone architecture. But the Mughal style had obviously reached its last stage. The vitality and elegance of the art of the Great Mughals had yielded to a frivolous and feeble style.

**Lucknow**

The end of the style actually came at Lucknow, the new nerve centre of a cultural efflorescence under the Nawabs, during the later half of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries. A large number of structures, both religious and secular, were erected here which although often impressive can in no way be classed amongst the outstanding monuments of the country. They all represent the style at a stage when art had ceased to be creative. The buildings, therefore, reveal only a 'purposeful magnificence' in which there is complete loss of refinement and restraint and whose ornamentation is without dignity. The rulers had their own difficulties: limited financial resources, non-availability of marble or even good sandstone, and deteriorating craftsmanship owing to ceaseless political disorders. The workmen had, therefore, to revert to a brick and rubble foundation faced with stucco which enabled them to produce buildings of large dimensions and imposing appearance at less cost and in shorter space of time. The Great Imambara with its mosque, courts, and gateways is one such building which is remarkable mainly for its grandiose proportions. The Rumi Darwaza or 'Turkish Doorway' is another example of the decadent architecture at Lucknow. It is a 'frivolously petty' structure devoid of any character or refinement.

**The Punjab**

Another late form of the Mughal style developed contemporaneously with the Lucknow productions in the Punjab under the Sikh rulers. The general design of the monuments follows the Mughal pattern, but certain structural embellishments like the multiplicity of kiosks ornamenting every angle, prominence or projection, the fluted dome generally covered with brass or copper-gilt, carved brackets, and arches enriched by means of numerous foliations, so frequently occur that they become a distinctive badge of the architectural style adopted by the Sikhs. The principal example is the Golden Temple at Amritsar. It has all the features of the style, with the interior richly decorated with floral designs either embossed in metal or painted in tempera by the Kangra artists living at the Sikh court.

**Rajasthan and Central India**

About the time the Mughals were giving shape to their architectural fancies Indian architecture found patronage among the Rajput princes as well, who
built a number of palaces and similar structures at several places in Rajasthan and central India. The style of architecture that flourished in these parts was basically indigenous, but greatly transformed by Mughal forms and decorative details. The interior arrangement included a large Darbar Hall, a court of assembly, and a complex of apartments connected by passages, while the exterior had such picturesque elements as hanging balconies, long loggias supported on rows of elaborately carved brackets, pillared kiosks with fluted cupolas, perforated stone parapets, endless arcades forming the upper storeys, engraved arches, latticed openings, and considerably projected curved cornices. Among the principal examples of the style are the palaces at Bikaner, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Orchha, Datia, Udaipur, and the city of Ambar (Jaipur), built mainly during the 16th and 17th centuries. The palace of Bharatpur belongs to the 18th century. They all occupy extensive areas. In their compositions they lack an orderly character, but display a romantic treatment in design and elegance of detail. Besides exquisitely carved balconies, windows and doorways, figure sculptures and religious or erotic murals were also introduced in ornamentation. The embellishments, however, create on the whole a picturesque but frivolous effect.

A palace, differently designed and constructed, is the Man Mandir, built at Gwalior, just before the advent of the Mughals in India. Its architecture is more or less indigenous in character, but because of its joyous colourings, spirited decorative patterns and such fanciful structural forms as fine rounded bastions, balcony kiosks, round and foliated arches, intricately moulded pillars, and finely perforated lattices, it is a distinctive example of decorative architecture. It is not unlikely that from its architectural treatment Akbar borrowed a number of ideas for his palaces at Agra and Fatehpur Sikri.

In the south of India the influence of Mughal art had been less felt than in the north of India. The Marathas were the dominant power there in the 18th century and very much proud of their national tradition. The fundamental structure of their buildings, therefore, retained the local character, although it could not escape being impressed with Mughal and late Rajput innovations. They built a number of temples, bathing ghats, pilgrim houses, and founded new capitals at Satara, Kolhapur, Poona, Nagpur, Indore, Baroda, Ujjain, and Gwalior. The Maratha house is constructed of white-washed timber with brick fillings over a solid stone basement around one or several courts. The Mughal-Rajput influence can be seen in low cusped arches, beautifully carved ceilings and doors and wall niches filled with paintings. The Maratha temple maintains the traditions of the medieval Western Chalukyan sanctuary though often incorporating the Mughal arch and cupola and a small bulbous dome rising from lotus petals.

THE BRITISH PERIOD

By the end of the 18th century, the last phase in the Indian art of the Islamic period had come. The Mughal architectural style had exhausted all possibilities of evolution and elaboration. An opportunity for a new creative striving was, therefore, suggested. And it came with the arrival in the country of the Western colonialists. The Portuguese were the first to introduce the art of their country by building churches, monasteries, residences for governors, convents, and fortified factories at Goa, Bassein, Daman, Diu, Cochin, Cannanore, and Calicut. The Dutch, Danish, French, and English settlers also built forts, factories, and
settlements along the Indian coast. The influence of European building art, however, on Indian architecture went hand in hand with the political influence a particular power wielded in the country. The French ascendancy at the courts of a number of Indian princes led to an indiscriminate mixing up of French decorations with elements of Mughal style at Seringapatam, Tanjore, Vellore, Satara, Hyderabad, Bhopal, Nagpur, Gwalior, Baroda, and Jaipur. The British engineers designed a number of buildings based on the architectural style of their country in Calcutta (Old Mission Church 1770, St. John's Cathedral 1787, Warren Hastings' Belvedere House, Government House 1802, Ochterlony Monument), Bombay (St. Thomas Cathedral 1672-1718, Mint, etc.), Madras (Fort St. George, St. Mary's 1680) and Banaras (Queen's College). The European fashion was imitated by the Nawabs of Bengal at Murshidabad, and of Karnatak at Vellore, who built palaces in the late Georgian mode to be found at Calcutta. The Nawabs of Oudh and the Nizams of Hyderabad were the next to succumb to European influences. The foreign impact at Lucknow was so deeply felt that it led only to a confused medley of Western and Eastern forms and ornamental designs. Triangular pediments, Corinthian capitals, and Roman round arches were combined with fluted domes, ogee arcades, and arabesque foliations. Thereafter, styles known as neo-Gothic, Norman, and neo-Italian found their way into India and dominated the Indian scene.

It was, however, in the last quarter of the 19th century that a wave of enthusiasm for the revival of the indigenous style of the country set in. The initiators of the movement were a handful of Englishmen who surveyed the surviving monuments of the country and called attention in a sympathetic manner to the salient points in Indian architecture. And so in a spirit of conviction in the nobility of Indian artistic traditions a number of structures were erected all over the country in which indigenous features were liberally utilised. The Curzon Museum at Mathura, Government buildings at Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Bikaner, the High Court and the Senate House at Lahore, the Gateway of India and the Prince of Wales Museum at Bombay, and the Victoria Memorial Hall at Calcutta, were some of the outstanding monuments which skilfully combined both the Indian and Western modes of architectural expression. The last achievement of this revival movement was the vast structural complex of New Delhi (A.D. 1911-30), designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Edward Baker in a mixed Indo-European style.

THE CONTEMPORARY TRENDS

Indian architecture is still passing through stages of transition. With India achieving independence in 1947 the time came for thinking out a definite architectural policy for the country. The present burst of public opinion is in favour of a national style. But no one is yet clear what this national style ought to be. The beauty and spirit of the traditional art has led the official efforts to introduce Chaitya arches, Chhatris, Hindu columns and domes in several recent Government buildings. International modern trends emphasising utility and functionalism have led to the establishment of new norms and nuances in Indian architecture as exemplified at Chandigarh, the new capital of the East Punjab, planned and designed by the famed French revolutionary architect, M. Le Corbusier. Chandigarh has not the expressionist luxuries of traditional Indian architecture, but it is a great experiment in evolving a form of expression related to the life of the
people it serves. Among the characteristic elements of this architecture is the incorporation of sun-breakers in the facades of the buildings, the extensive application of 'Jali' patterns in the facades and interiors of buildings, and the inter-mingling of unhewn stone wall surfaces with walls of plain bricks or cement.

Today much new construction is going on in India. Huge research laboratories and educational institutions, factories, homes for living, both low-cost and otherwise, offices, hospitals, shops, and markets, and a host of other buildings are to be seen rising in both the urban and rural areas. But everywhere now it is the human and the social approach that is the determining spirit behind the forms, designs, and expressions of contemporary Indian architecture.
"A QUEEN'S TOILET"

A fresco from the upper part of the first pilaster in the right aisle of Cave XVII at Ajanta.

(From The Paintings in the Buddhist Cave-Temples of Ajanta by J. Griffiths)
people & places. Among the outstanding features of this architecture is the incorporation of non-permanent elements of new buildings, the extensive application of Jali (latticework) in the cladding of the facades of buildings and the interplay of stone with other materials such as brick or cement.

Given such new conditions, new thinking is needed in India. This research highlights different and educational possibilities. Cities offer living, both low-cost and otherwise, offices, hospitals, etc. It is a fact that such buildings are to be seen rising in both the villages and cities. The essence here is the human and the social approach. This research is directed towards the human, designs, and experiences of contemporary urban architecture.

"A Oberse Test"
1. General view from the east, the Great Stupa of Sanchi.

1. Gupta temple, Sanchi.

2. Interior of Chaitya hall, Karli (From Early Indian Sculpture by Bachhofer).
1. Facade of Cave No. 19, Ajanta.

2. Interior of Cave No. 19, Ajanta, showing pillars and dagoba.
1. The Shore Temple, from the south-west, Mamallapuram (Copyright, The Archaeological Survey of India).

2. The five rathas, Mamallapuram (Copyright, The Archaeological Survey of India).

2. Cave No. 16 (Kailasa), Ellora.
1. West corridor, Rameswaram temple
   (Copyright, The Archaeological Survey of India).

2. South gopuram and golden lily tank, Madura.
1. The Great Temple, Tanjore.


2. The temple of the Sun-god, Konarak. (Photo, Raj Bedi).
Kandariya Mahadeva temple, Khajuraho.
1. Marble pillars of Vimala Shahi temple, Mt. Abu.

2. Part of the screen of arches at Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque, Delhi.
1. Qutb Minar, Delhi.

2. Close-up of Qutb Minar, Delhi, showing carvings (Photo, A. L. Syed).
1. Tomb of Shams-ud-din Ilutmish, Delhi.


2. Perforated window, Sidi Sayid mosque, Ahmedabad.


(Photos Copyright, The Archaeological Survey of India.)
1. Ibrahim Rauza, Bijapur.

2. The Tomb of Humayun, Delhi.
1. Buland Darwaza, Fatehpur Sikri (Photo, A. Aziz).
2. Throne pillar, Diwan-i-Khas, Fatehpur Sikri.
3. Palace of Birbal, Fatehpur Sikri.
1. Southern gateway to Akbar’s tomb, Sikandara.

2. The Great Imambara, Lucknow (From Salt’s Views of India).
1. Mausoleum of Itmad-ud-Daulah, Agra.

1. Interior of Diwan-i-Khas, Delhi.
2. Jama Masjid, Delhi.
1. The immortal Taj Mahal, Agra (Photo, R. J. Chinwalla).

2. Interior screen, Taj Mahal, Agra.
The modern architecture of the new city of Chandigarh (Photos, Dolly Sahir).
Palace scene. Fresco from Cave No. 17, Ajanta
(Photo, A. L. Syed).
1. Indra, gandharvas and apsaras. After a fresco from Cave No. 17, Ajanta.

THE desire of the Indian to sustain his arts and crafts on the basis of a philosophical idealism has given a very picturesque origin to the art of painting. The Vishnu-dharmottaraya, compiled in the 7th century A.D., describes a legend in this connection. Narayana, the Supreme Being, was engaged in practising austerities when the celestial dancing girls (Apsaras) tried to frustrate his pious endeavour with an amorous display of their physical charms. Discerning their purpose Narayana conceived of a plan to cure the damsels of their vanity. He took the juice of a mango tree and using that as paint drew an imaginary picture portrait of a nymph, large eyed and delicate, with a form so filled with grace that no goddess or woman could surpass her in beauty. Having seen her the apsaras went away in shame. The beautiful woman whom God had thus painted and created by infusing into it the golden breath of life was Urvashi, who became the ideal type of feminine beauty. Afterwards Visvakarma, the Divine Architect, was instructed by Narayana in the art and science of painting so that he might teach the art to the peoples of the earth.

In the Chitrakshana ('Characteristics of Painting'), a compilation of ancient date, and having evidence of being based on pre-Buddhist tradition, is told a different legend of the origin of the art: 'It was in the ancient days,' so runs the tale, 'when men lived to a ripe old age; and there flourished in that time a very pious king named Bhayajit, under whom all were pious and therefore prosperous. But there came before him, one day, a Brahman who complained: 'O King, there is certainly sin in your kingdom. Why, otherwise, should my son have died an untimely death? Please return my son to me from the other world.' The king demanded the return of the Brahman's son from Yama, God of the dead, who refused, and a battle ensued in which the king defeated Yama. Brahma, the creator, thereupon appeared and said to Bhayajit: 'Life and death accord with a man's karma: Yama is not to blame for what occurs. So now, draw a picture of the Brahman's son.' The king obeyed. Brahma imparted life to the picture and once again addressed the king: 'You were made capable of drawing this picture of the Brahman's son only by my grace. It is the first picture in the world. So now go to the divine artificer, Visvakarma, who will teach you everything of the science and technique of painting.'

Taking our clue from these mythological traditions of the birth of the art it would be reasonable to suppose that portrait painting was probably one of the earliest forms of painting in India, and the art itself took its origin in the symbolic representation of supernatural powers of gods and goddesses employed in sacrificial ceremonies. The desire in the loving devotee's mind to please these powers may also have suggested the need for the colouring and embellishment of the

symbols and the images, thus giving rise quite early in the development of the art of painting in India to a decorative art as well. That such paintings have always occupied a significant place in the scheme of Indian cultural life is evident from the survival of the ageless tradition of picture drawing on walls, doors, floors, and earthen vessels in the homes of rural India. The village folk, nourished on myths and legends of magical, animistic, fetishistic, and other primitive significance have always found elevating topics in the rendering of the religious themes, floral, geometrical and animal subjects, whose unsophisticated candour and colourful appeal has never failed to stir even the most critical.

Pre-Historic

The earliest remains of painting in India belong to pre-historic times and have been discovered in the ancient caves at Mirzapur in the Vindhya Hills, and on the sandstone rock at the mouth of a series of caves near the village of Singhanpur in the Raighar district of Madhya Pradesh. The drawings in the latter place are in burgundy red, mauve and pale yellow of various figures, including men, birds, and animals together with geometric designs of uncertain significance. Some of the animals, such as a pig, an elephant, and a hare are realistically drawn and are shown in spirited action. Scenes like a huge bison being hunted down, tossing and goring a number of its pursuers, or a buffalo in agony after being wounded with spears, display in their portrayal a feeling for the dramatic. In Mirzapur paintings too hunting scenes are the principal themes which have been as dramatically rendered as at Singhanpur. The fact that in some cases the drawings appear to have been superimposed on older drawings gives strength to the suggestion that the work belongs to various periods. But it has not yet been possible to ascribe any precise date to the paintings. The most that can be said is that they probably represent a phenomenon of the Palaeolithic period.

Early Historic

Thereafter, a hiatus of thousands of years intervenes before we come to an authentic example of painting, properly and strictly so called, of the historic period. The oldest so far known are the wall-paintings of the Yogimara caves of Ramgarh Hill in Sirjua in Madhya Pradesh, belonging probably to the second century before the Christian era. A close investigation reveals a series of concentric panels depicting a variety of subjects—chariots, elephants, nude human figures grouped round a tree, and animals being hunted down—scenes not very different from the earlier archaic remains. Borders with repeating patterns of aquatic life enclose the main drawings which are in red and black paint.

Yogimara frescoes, however, are only poor examples of the art expression of the time for the literary sources indicate the existence of a comparatively developed art of painting. We have it from early Buddhist records that paintings added to the gaiety of the popular festivals in ancient India. No town or village festival was complete unless the streets were made gay with pictures painted on the house fronts or on scrolls and banners hung on temporary screens of bamboo. There are frequent allusions in early Pali and Sanskrit literatures to ‘Chitra-shalas’ (picture halls) in palaces and to the skill of the kings, the aristocracy and their ladies, in drawing and painting. The Vinaya Pithak, a Pali Buddhist work dating
from the 3rd or 4th century B.C., makes several references to the palaces of King Pasenda containing galleries of mural paintings. In the Jatakas and many Jain classics there are descriptions of exhibitions of paintings and of painters’ guilds. A few more literary testimonies that shed light on the general character of painting in ancient India may also be here conveniently referred to. Mural paintings are often described in the Ramayana. A whole scene in the first act in Bhavabhuti’s masterpiece Uttar Ram Charita, composed in the sixth century, is devoted to an interesting description of a series of pictures illustrating the story of Ramayana painted on the walls of the palaces and pavilions and in the gardens, evidently for the pleasure of kings and the education of the people. Ancient India, in fact, was so keenly alive to this aspect of cultural education that painting appeared prominently in every list of sixty-four ‘Kalas’ (arts). ‘The study of a good picture,’ according to the Vishnudharmottaram, ‘helps one to fulfil one’s duty by becoming a better citizen, and to attain liberation from the expensive and enslaving demands of the lower nature.’

Painting in the Gupta period achieved the culmination of a very ancient tradition. It appears certain that techniques and traditions of painting had already been extensively investigated and formulated before the Gupta era set in. Vatsayana’s Kama Sutra, a work assigned to the 3rd century A.D. but a compilation of older materials, gives an exhaustive account of the theory of painting. An exposition of Vatsayana’s ‘Sadanga’—the six canons of painting—are elaborately summarised in the commentary of Yasodhara. They are:

- Rupa-bhed, the knowledge and distinction of forms and appearances
- Pramanama, proportion proper to the different types
- Bhava, representation of the action of feelings in form
- Lavanya-Yojanam, infusion of grace, charm, beauty or artistic quality in the painting
- Sadracyam, imitation of likeness
- Varnikabhanga, knowledge and preparation of colours and artistic use of materials and implements

Yasodhara adds, ‘These arts avail to awaken passion in others and for pastime.’ The Buddhist frescoes of the later period demonstrate that every painter faithfully observed these canons. Art for art’s sake was, however, unknown in ancient India. The religious attitude of the artist dominated his work so much that the purpose of his art was only religious and could not be conceived mainly as aesthetic. The Vishnudharmottaram classifies painting according to the suitability for temples, palaces, and private dwellings and differentiates between true, lyrical, and secular paintings.

It would thus appear that a highly advanced form of aesthetic expression in painting was always in existence, although it may not be possible in a consecutive survey of Indian painting in the earlier periods of its development to point out every time concrete records of the art. India has lost much to the ravages of time and climate and only fragments remain here and there from which we may trace the development of the art, very often broken and interrupted, in the period before the country came under the occupation of the Muslim powers.

FRESCOES

It may be recalled here that by the beginning of the Christian era, Buddhism had become the most popular religion of the country and had radiated
also into the continent of Asia. Everywhere it stimulated culture and brought about far reaching changes in the spiritual and aesthetic outlook of the nation. Religion has no doubt gone a great way in moulding the artistic sensibility of the people, but perhaps nothing else has supplied the aesthetic impulse in so marked a manner as the creed of Buddhism. Culturally and artistically, therefore, the Buddhist period of Indian history became a highly creative era and Indian pictorial traditions reached new heights of achievement in the frescoes at Ajanta and Bagh. The idiom of Ajanta may also be seen at Bamiyan in Afghanistan, Sigiriya in Ceylon, in the banner paintings of Tibet and Nepal, in the Tung-Huang caves of China, and at Horiuji in Japan.

Ajanta

Out of the twenty-nine caves at Ajanta, excavated in a rocky perpendicular wall, about 250 feet high and sweeping in a semi-circle of half a mile, only a few now preserve the progressive record of the 'golden age of Indian painting.' But when it is realised that some of these cave-halls measure about sixty feet square, affording surfaces for painting not only on the roofs and walls but also on the massive pillars, the paintings that still remain represent a good measure of the record. The paintings resolve themselves into a number of distinct groups, representing various styles, periods and schools. Sometimes two sets of murals, placed in similar positions, within one and the same cave, are separated by more than a hundred years. In cave No. X alone four centuries appear to have elapsed between the first paintings and the subsequent portrayal of other Jatakas. The pictures are, however, bound together into one whole by the unity of theme and not of treatment.

The themes of these paintings are almost exclusively Buddhist religious lore, dealing with incidents in the previous incarnations of the Buddha and the legends associated with him. These were intended purposely to inspire the devotee with the realised ideals of the Buddha's many existences in which he repeatedly gave his life or made other sacrifices in order to provide the world with a message of boundless compassion for all living things. Therefore the artists who were members of secular artisan-guilds working under the supervision of monk-overseers, known as navakarmikas, carefully chose their subject-matter for its engrossing and dramatic appeal. But without detracting from the sacred purpose of these frescoes they also integrated the larger and fuller life of the material world into the religious themes and thereby imparted an intensely humanistic character to their paintings. There are, therefore, intimate glimpses at Ajanta of the throbbing and colourful everyday life of the period, which have been painted invariably with unflinching fidelity to truth. There are scenes from the life of the crowd with all its splendour along with the life of the devotee dedicated to devotion, piety and faith. Kings and queens surrounded by wealth and power, and ordinary men and women in the glory of youth and engaged in the realisation of the moral sources of life, attract our attention. The whole processional movement of man's story—the child at the mother's breast, the infant at play, the youth at his pleasures, the torments of the soul and the final tranquil enlightenment—decorate the granite walls of Ajanta.

The Enlightened One himself is not depicted in isolation but in action in the midst of the peoples of the world. Ajanta indeed is the picture of a society where renunciation and enjoyment were perfectly attuned and where every aspect of material life was an aspect of the divine. As Coomaraswamy so admirably states: 'Bodhi-
sattva is born by divine right as a prince in a world luxuriously refined. The sorrow of transience no longer poisons life itself; life has become an art, in which... the ultimate meaning of life is not forgotten... but a culmination and perfection have been attained in which the inner and outer life are indivisible.\textsuperscript{1}

The woman with her airs and graces particularly enthralled the artists who caught every curve of her supple body, every glance of her eye and every gesture of her hands with consummate artistry. But be it the unadorned beauty of the classical phase or the voluptuous, delicious, and seductive woman with her lovely coiffures of the later periods, it is the dynamic fullness of her life that bestows on the paintings an unbroken power to charm the beholder. The inspired artist used the Woman as his principal decorative asset, imparting to her figure a dignity of the human soul without denying her the qualities of sensuous appeal. Even in her nakedness, her portrayal is superbly chaste and lovely, for she is there not as an individual but as the embodiment of the supreme power of womanhood.

It is unfortunate that a considerable number of the masterpieces have deteriorated with the passage of time. But Ajanta has even today everything that lifts ordinary art 'out of the process of transience into the realm of imperishable beauty.' Speaking in a general way, here is a remarkable perfection of workmanship, expressiveness, and harmony. The narratives display a phenomenal range of conception, depict subtle characterisations, and the scenes are painted with exquisite refinement of decorative details combined with deep understanding of the colour values. But Ajanta is essentially an art of line. For the superb drawing renders more than the mere outline; it embodies modelling, relief, foreshortening and all the essential elements of the art. And so carefully has the line been varied, qualified and gradated that a strong feeling for living warmth is easily evident in these paintings. ‘It is doubtful whether any artist has equalled the Buddhist painter in his capacity for analysing the complexities of the human form and then rendering in his picture what is essential by means of a simple line. Strong, confident and emphatic in its meaning, this method of artistic interpretation was utilised with consummate skill by the painters of this classic age.'\textsuperscript{2}

The early paintings of Ajanta, attributed to the first century B.C. (early Andhra period), have survived on the left and end walls of Cave IX and on the left and right walls of Cave X. The principal painting in Cave X is devoted to the Shaddanta Jataka, which depicts the story of the Buddha's sacrifice of his tusks during his incarnation as an elephant. The story is developed in a long horizontal field in which the events are arranged episodically like the carved Jatakas on the cross-bars of the Sanchi gateways. The scenes are occasionally interrupted by a tree, a building, or a group of rocks that vaguely mark off one scene from the other, but the episodes flow smoothly in a linear way. Although they are the earliest of the paintings they do not suggest the beginning of a tradition. On the other hand, in the 'wonderfully naturalistic recording' of the elephants and in their perfectly easy movements these frescoes reveal a mature phase which obviously has centuries of development behind it. The colours employed are yellow, ochre, terra verde, lamp black, and white of lime.

Paintings of Caves XVI and XVII and of the two walls in the 'Hariti Shrine' of Cave II, besides others, represent the second group of Ajanta paintings executed in the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. (the Vakataka period). Here archaic art

\textsuperscript{1} Coomaraswamy, History of Indian and Indonesian Art, pp. 90-91.

\textsuperscript{2} Percy Brown, Indian Painting, p. 73.
develops into the classical: the figures are now drawn with sureness, composition and colour schemes achieve perfect balance, emotions and moods are eloquently expressed by pose, gesture, and glances, and the sensitive observation of life reaches the highest pitch. These paintings, in fact, 'belong to the full maturity, the complete realisation of a culture when man sees himself and his society as perfect instruments of life's purpose.' One of the subjects in Cave XVII represents Indra and his entourage of Gandharvas and Apsaras, celestial musicians and dancers, flying to greet the Buddha at the time of his visit to the Tushita Heaven. One of the most difficult impressions to convey in the field of art, that of speed in motion, is probably more subtly conveyed at Ajanta than anywhere else. The figures in this painting glide with airy lightness and animation like the clouds towering behind Indra. The effect of effortless flight is imparted by the direction of the bent legs and by the jewellery sweeping backwards. The paintings in this group are no longer composed in horizontal ribbons, but are spread over the whole surface of the wall in single and complete compositions.

The majority of the murals at Ajanta belong to the 6th century (late Gupta period) which is the final phase of its creative activity. They are the best known of the paintings, but the style has the characteristics of a decadent art which has moved from refinement to mannerism. The drawing gets romantic; the eyes are elongated and heavy; the head is bent in sentimentality; rich and varied curls fall on both sides of the head; the jewellery is especially displayed; and in the dramatic poses of the fashionable women there is an extra emphasis on youth and sensuality. However, a sense of ineffable detachment mingles with the sophisticated elegance of a carefree life and its exaggerated luxuriousness. 'Fundamentally such an art is no more a glorification of life, it is an escape from hard and inexorable realities into a dream world, artificially cultivated by the privileged class at the expense of the rest of the people, or even merely fancied.'

The most famous of the paintings is that of the Great Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Padmapani) which for all its uneven quality reveals the full delicacy and mellow sensitiveness of the Gupta art. The Bodhisattva holds a blue lotus in the right hand, stands in a setting teeming with all creation, animal, human, demonic and divine, reverently surrounding the Supreme Deity of Compassion. The figure in the tribhanga (thrice-bending) posture gently swings with a lyrical and dreamy quality. The angelic and majestic face is suggestive of a feeling of profound pathos and renunciation and yet spread over it is unending mercy and gentleness. The art is one of perfect visualisation of enlightening insight (avalokita). It is the supreme serenity toward life and toward the task of conquering it that is voiced by the ensemble of this fresco, by the attitude of its central figure, and by the Bodhisattva's relation to the rich and colourful background of creatures from all the spheres of the universe surrounding him in delight and devotion—much as the divinities on the railings and door steps of the early stupas surround the central dome, the symbol of nirvana.

Though murals continued to be executed up to the eighth century, the 'power and poetry' of Ajanta had abruptly disappeared towards the close of the sixth century. Thereafter Ajanta ceased to have an art capable of illuminating the dark recesses of the mind.

1 Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray, Painting of India, p. 27.
The technical process of the frescoes appears to have been the same everywhere: ‘The surface of the hard porous rock was spread over with a layer of clay, cow dung, and powdered rock, sometimes mixed with rice-husks, to a thickness of from three to twenty millimetres. Over this was laid a fine coat of thin lime plaster which was kept moist while the colours were applied, and afterwards lightly burnished. It should be observed that practically all sculptures and sculptured surfaces were coloured in the same way with a thin plaster slip and coloured. The underdrawing is in red on the white plaster surface, then comes a thinnish terra verda monochrome showing some of the red through it, then the local colour, followed by a renewed outline in brown and black with some shading, the later employed rather to give some impression of roundness or relief than to indicate any effect of light or shade. The bold freedom of the brush strokes seems to show that all the work was free hand, or if any use was made of stencils, freely redrawn.’

Bagh

The frescoes at the Bagh rock-cut monasteries in Gwalior are the other important remains of the Buddhist school of painting in India. The paintings seem to belong to one period, and to be contemporary with the closing years of the Ajanta glory. According to a recent evaluation they probably date from the second half of the sixth century. But their mood and style is not similar to Ajanta. The Bagh murals are frankly of a secular nature and religion is only incidental. Stylistically, the lovely Bagh figures are more tightly modelled than at Ajanta. A damaged fresco in the verandah of Rang Mahal, Cave IV, representing a group of girl musicians and dancers gathered in a circle round a male dancer, is an attractive example of the art.

The two Chinese pilgrims, Fa-Hien and Huien-Tsang, who travelled through India, the former about A.D. 400 and the latter from A.D. 629 to 645, have written about a number of buildings at widely different places, many of them decorated with wall paintings both on the interior and exterior parts. Numerous other literary sources also indicate the existence of a mural art in the sixth century and afterwards. But the actual remains of fresco painting subsequent to the Ajanta and Bagh are lamentably fragmentary, for the simple reason that much painting of the fresco character had been executed on structures of wood or other perishable materials and with the passage of time they fell into a state of decay. The ruthless Muslim invasions too played their part in the virtual disappearance of such paintings. However, the broken chain in the history of fresco painting in India is now being slowly linked up with the few examples which have been found at Badami, Ellora, Sittanavasal, Tanjore, and at Cochin and Travancore in the far South.

Badami

In 578 the ruling house of the early Chalukyas selected a fine cave temple (now called No. 3) at Badami, for dedication to the god Vishnu. The rulers adorned it with sculptures and embellished the surfaces of the walls and ceilings with paintings. Fragments of the paintings still survive on the porch of the temple. Although the interpretation of the subjects of the fragments varies the theme is undoubtedly Brahmanical. Stylistically too, we are confronted with a tradition which is different

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1 A. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 89.
from that of Ajanta. The Badami forms are modelled so softly and sensitively that the transitions from tone to tone are hardly perceptible. This may to some extent be due to the technique used at Badami 'where the smooth lime plaster was placed on a rough mud base as at Ajanta, but the colours were applied in fresco secco.'

Ellora

The technique of Badami was used in the paintings of the Kailasanaath temple at Ellora. The most important of the paintings survive on the ceiling, in two layers or perhaps three, and on the inner side of the architraves of the western mandapa. The earliest layer on the ceiling is probably contemporary with the period of the temple's dedication and dates from 750 to 800. The principal fragment consists of flying deities and dwarfs, and a deity on a mythical monster making obeisance to a central figure now lost. The mode of expression is more linear than it is at Ajanta and Badami, and there are suggestions of mannerism in the light, fashionable, and sometimes superficial elegance of the figures. The same qualities are sought to be introduced in the extensive series of wall paintings in the Indra Sabha, a Jain shrine at Ellora excavated about the middle of the ninth century. The upper layer of paintings in the Kailasanaath temple contains a representation of Vishnu and Lakshmi surrounded by Garuda. In date or style, this too does not appear to be far removed from the earliest fragments.

Sittanavasal

The shrine of Sittanavasal, in the midst of the Pallava country, on the southern bank of the river Kaveri, is the cultural product of an age which is noted for the swift decline of Buddhism and for the rise of a great Saivite re-action against the doctrine of Jainism. It was, therefore, against heavy odds that the shrine was carved out of the rock by men who were contemporaries and friends of Mahendra-varman I, the great Pallava ruler (A.D. 600-625), and dedicated to the Jain faith. It appears to have been renovated between 815 and 862 and the renovation may have included painting or repainting of the shrine and the verandah. Though long accepted as exemplifying the art of the seventh century, a re-consideration of the style of the paintings that can still be seen on the ceilings, the capitals, and the upper parts of the pillars, has precluded a date earlier than about 850. The principal subject is a grand fresco which adorns the whole of the ceiling of the verandah. The composition represents a lotus pool in which fish, geese, buffaloes, elephants, and three male figures who may be human or divine, holding in their hands the lotus flowers and leaves they are apparently gathering, are sporting. On two of the pillars of the facade are paintings of devadasis dancing among clouds. The style of Sittanavasal has poetic beauty and merit both in drawing and colouring. The drawing has been done with power and freedom in dark red on a lighter red ground and the decorative possibilities in colour of the multiple lotus flowers and buds set off against the leaves have been fully exploited.

Tanjore

Another important series of wall paintings surviving in South India is to be found in the huge Siva temple, the Rajrajesvara or Brihadessvara at Tanjore,
completed about the year 1000 by the great Chola ruler Rajaraja I. In six of the
chambers of the shrine the paintings belong to the seventeenth and eighteenth
centuries, and in the other six the late paintings have broken away to reveal frag-
ments of an earlier layer of paintings contemporary with the monument’s original
adornments. The subjects are devoted to the Saivite religion in which Siva is
represented as Nataraja. Some of the panels illustrate the life of the famous
saint Sundara Murti Swami. In style, poses, gestures, and facial types they follow
the patterns set by the Chola bronze images; the outline, though swift, is controlled
and has no flourish or display; and the colour is bright but only supplementary.

Vijayanagar

A fairly good number of paintings from the hands of the Vijayanagar
craftsmen have been preserved on the ceiling of a temple at Tiruparuttikunram
near Kanchipuram. There are two groups of fragments, separated in date by
some two centuries, the earlier belonging to the late fourteenth century. There
is some vitality in these flat friezes the later phase of which is more prominently
noticed for its two-dimensional texture. The extensive murals of the Lepakshi
temple (A.D. 1538), illustrating Saivite themes, reveal a distinctly rich quality of
naturalness, simplicity and warmth, which is closer to folk art.

Cochin-Travancore

Clearly a decline in the deeply expressive and creative phase of the fresco
art in India had set in. We notice a decided inclination towards the fanciful and
decorative possibilities of the art and the tradition of a virile and intense expres-
sion which had been the characteristic of Indian painting in the early centuries of the
Christian era faced a virtual eclipse. The murals in the Mattancheri Palace at Cochin,
and in the Trichakrapuram Palace and the Padmanabha Temple in Travancore
represent the late style version which is merely ornate and sumptuously decorative.

MINIATURES

Pre-Mughal

Besides walls, ceilings and the like, other materials were also chosen in
India for the realisation of the artistic ideals through painting. Fragile palm
leaves were the general material for manuscripts, both religious and secular, until
they were supplanted by paper after the late fourteenth century. It appears that
the practice of illustrating and illuminating manuscripts was widely prevalent in
India even long before the Mughals established a new relationship between the
text and the miniature. A fair number of such manuscripts have survived, all
from Northern India, which gives us some idea of the type of painting that
flourished in the pre-Mughal phase. Manuscripts of Bengal and Bihar represent
one centre and those from Western India represent the other principal centre.

Bengal and Bihar

With the decline of Buddhism in North India in the eighth century and the
steady rise of Hinduism in the South, the religion of Gautam Buddha survived
only in Bengal and the neighbouring province of Bihar as a force to reckon with until its final annihilation by the Muslim invasions of the 12th century. We must remember that the Buddhism that was now prevailing was based on Tantric idealism in which feminene deities, magic spells and rituals were playing the major role. It was, therefore, the Vajrayana Buddhism which was the principal source of inspiration to the artists of this region. Here under the patronage of the Pala rulers (from about the middle of the 8th century to the middle of the 12th) bronzes and manuscripts were produced, the portable examples of which (and with them the Pala style itself) were carried to Nepal and Tibet in the Himalayan region. Less than two dozen palm leaf illustrated manuscripts containing texts sacred to Tantric Buddhism have survived. None of them is earlier than the 11th century. A leaf measures about 22" by 2½", and the paintings set in the text rarely exceed 2½" by 3½". The leaves were invariably threaded on cords and bound between wooden covers the insides of which were also painted. The illustrations consist of scenes from the life of the Buddha and the Jatakas, and representations of Buddhist divinities, stupas, and famous places of pilgrimage all over India. Taken collectively these miniatures are a mere prolongation of the late Gupta style. The art is, therefore, characterised by deft and sinuous lines, rich and glowing colours, and the same admirable distribution of figures as at Ajanta; but the scene is much more crowded and much less emotional in content. The figures are depicted in the manner of the ideal forms of Pala sculpture, having the same feeling for superficial elegance and sensuality.

Gujarat

Another centre of miniature painting in classical India flourished in the western parts of the country. It has a very individual style. As the majority of the extant examples in this style come from Gujarat, where the artists were employed mainly in the illustration of works devoted to Jain legends and religious philosophy, the stylistic tradition has also been known as Gujarati or Jain. But there is no doubt that the same style of manuscript illustration that was practised in Gujarat was also prevalent, with local variations, in Rajasthan, Mandu (Malwa), Jaunpur (U.P.), and possibly many other contiguous districts. The paintings are important not only for their intrinsic merit, but also for the influence they exerted on the future development of painting in India.

Gujarat has always been a prosperous region and its wealthy Jain merchants have been the most generous patrons of art and literature. The custom of having religious manuscripts copied and illustrated regardless of expenditure was widely prevalent among the Jains between the 12th and the 16th centuries. The Jain monks got their rich laity to establish libraries (Bhandars) where an enormous number of religious manuscripts and a few on secular subjects are still preserved. The earlier among these manuscripts (from the 12th century) are on palm leaves, and the later (beginning with 1400) on paper which in size and format imitate the long narrow pages of the earlier palm-leaf manuscripts. The miniatures, which are not originally and decoratively associated with the text but are inserted in the spaces left blank by the scribe, consist of square or rectangular panels of the full height of the page. Only in very rare cases is the whole page used.

The early paintings on palm-leaf are characterised by simple compositions and elementary postures of the human figures, set on a brick red or blue back-
ground, with yellow, white, and occasionally green completing the palette. As
the expression is sought by purely linear means we find a primarily flat representa-
tion lacking depth, though in a few miniatures a sort of rudimentary modelling
may be seen attempted by a thin wash of colour. Then from about A.D. 1350
considerable advances in stylistic conventions become apparent. Instead of mere
images of deities, monks, or donors, religious episodes begin to be represented,
lines become thin and wiry, details are drawn with remarkable precision, and all
attempt at modelling is finally given up.

Though paper was known in India as early as the 12th century, palm-leaf
continued to be in use until about 1450. Paper, however, became the more popular
material by 1400, and the earliest illustrated manuscript we have on paper is a
Kalpasutra of 1370. Paper allowed opportunities for full page illustrations and
for more elaborate compositions. But a superb sense of decorative detail is per-
haps the most distinguishing quality of miniatures on paper. The miniatures are
now framed within border illustrations, consisting of floral and geometric designs,
landscapes or animal patterns. A more ornate effect is given to the paintings
by a bold massing of vibrant colours, very profuse use of gold, and very rich
designs in clothes and other textiles. The most well-known representatives of this
sumptuous phase are the Kalpasutra (the most magnificent in the Devasano Pada
Bhandar at Ahmadabad, 1475) and the Kalakacharya Katha. The former deals
with the life of Mahavira and the latter describes the adventures of Kalaka, a
Jain monk, who in order to avenge the abduction of his sister, a nun, by the king
of Ujjain invited the Sakas from Seistan. A sense of lively and vigorous movement
is unmistakably conveyed through these paintings.

Certain peculiar stylistic features constantly occur in the paintings through-
out the long period of the growth and development of the Gujarat style. The
head, for example, is invariably drawn in three-quarters profile. The nose is sharp
and pointed. The eyes are set close to each other, the farther eye protruding beyond
the outline of the cheek. Men have broad chests and narrow waists, while the
women are always full-hipped. Trees, rivers, animals and clouds are rendered in
a highly stylised manner. The treatment of architecture is often summary.

Although many individual Gujarat style paintings display a certain charm in
their linear wiriness and brilliant colour patterns the artistic merit is not always
very high. There is to be found a noticeable emphasis on narration rather than
on accomplished expression, on mere elaboration of decorative details rather
than on the beauty of form. In the monotony of execution the illustrations tend
to become mechanical, and all qualities of liveliness and vitality often cease to
be visible in the gilded display of extremely decorative devices. But ‘there can also
be little doubt that for sheer exuberance, opulence, and richness there is no painting
in India which is its equal.’

Gujarat had come under the domination of independent Muslim Sultans
in the 15th century. As the rulers were partial to Persian culture the Gujarati
manuscript illustration style was naturally influenced by certain Persian features.
In a considerable body of manuscript illustrations Persian influence is apparent
in such motifs as curling clouds, spray-like trees, certain decorative patterns, and
the lavish use of gold. In a very few isolated examples, like the Devasano Pada
Kalpasutra, the ascendancy of the Timurid characteristic is definitely traceable in
the decorations of the border panels. But on the whole, this influence was so

weak and limited in extent that it did not noticeably affect the trends of manuscript illustration style nor evolve a new approach to painting anywhere in the 15th and 16th centuries.

**Mandu**

An interesting variation of the parent style prevailed at Mandu where in the reign of Sultan Mahmud Shah Khalji (A.D. 1436-69), a paper manuscript of the *Kalpasutra* was written and illustrated in 1439 at the fort of Mandu. The manuscript is of the usual oblong format, the text written in gold on a crimson ground, and separated into two halves by floral vertical borders. The miniatures are generally painted on the right half of the page. In contrast to the usual Gujarati style manuscripts, the Mandu *Kalpasutra* is characterised by careful draughtsmanship and elegant finish. The line has a sensitive, lyrical quality and the colour is specially fine. Local features are discernible in costume details and female facial types. There are also other manuscripts from Mandu, but there is hardly anything to distinguish them from the ordinary paintings of the Western Indian style.

**Jaunpur**

At another Muslim capital, Jaunpur, a fine manuscript of the *Kalpasutra* was illustrated in 1465, in the reign of Sultan Husain Shah Sharqi. It was painted in the parent Gujarati style but with local variations in costume details and facial characteristics. It has the same careful workmanship that we find in the Mandu *Kalpasutra*. But its great appeal lies in the borders of the pages which have been elaborately decorated with designs of birds, animals, and flowers.

**Rajasthan**

The Gujarati manuscript illustration style was practised in Rajasthan also in the usual highly conventionalised manner. There are not many paintings in the parent style that can be definitely assigned to this region. One of the earliest is an excellent palm-leaf manuscript of the *Savaga-Padikkamana Sutta Chinii*, painted at the fort of Aghata (modern Ahar near Udaipur) in 1260 during the reign of Guhlila Tejahsimha of Mewar. Perhaps the finest of the early paper manuscripts from Rajasthan is the *Supasanadhachariyam*, written and illustrated in 1422-23 at Devakulavataka in Mewar. The thirty-seven illustrations, elaborately rendered, appear full page. The fact that these two manuscripts were prepared in Mewar confirms the view that this state was an active and probably one of the predominant centres of painting in the Western Indian style.

Although the characteristic Gujarati style continued to be in vogue till about 1583 (when dated examples of pure Rajasthani school begin to appear), it is from about the middle of the 16th century that we begin to observe a new outlook influencing the mannerisms in art. An interesting illustrated manuscript of the *Mahapurana*, prepared at Palam near Delhi in 1540, clearly represents the first attempts at abandonment of several of the stereotyped conventions of the parent style. The protruding eye is now absent, there is a more realistic composition than had hitherto been attempted and significant changes in costume
"A STUDY OF AN ELEPHANT"

This picture is unsurpassed as a piece of elephant portraiture. The inscription "Amal Dakkan-niyan" means that it was possibly painted by a Deccani painter. It is finished in every detail and the vigour of its draftsmanship is only matched by the exceptional quality of its glowing tints. The head of the animal is drawn with real power and one almost gets the impression of the great majesty and the slow and measured dignity of this mighty beast.

(Reproduced from Studies in Indian Painting by N. C. MEHTA)
work and lasted in extent that it did not noticeably affect the result of manuscript illustration style nor evolve a new approach to painting anywhere in the 13th and 14th centuries.

Mandir

An interesting variation of the parent style prevailed at Mandir where in the reign of Sultan Mahmud Shah Khalji (A.D. 1335-48), a special manuscript of the Panjarnat was written and illustrated in 1333 at the fort of Mandir. The manuscript is of the usual folio format, the text written in gold on an ivory ground, and separated into two folios by floral vertical borders. The illustrations are generally painted on the right half of the page. In contrast to the usual Chalukya style manuscripts, the Mandir Panjarnat is characterised by simple decoration and scene divided. The line has a sensitive, typical quality and the colour is generally thin. Local features are discernible in women’s clothes and female facial types. They are also other manuscripts from Mandir, but there is hardly anything to distinguish them from the ordinary paintings of the Western Indian style.

Jaisalmer

At Jaisalmer, Mandir, capital, Jaisalmer, a fine manuscript of the Kalpasutra was illustrated in 1357 in the reign of Raja Subodh, It was written in the usual Jaisalmer style but with some variation.

Rajasthan

The Jaisalmer manuscript illistration style was practised in Rajasthan in the same steady conventionalised manner. There are not many parallel in the manuscripts that can be definitely assigned to this region. One of the earliest hand manuscripts of the Surya-Purana is preserved at the fort of Ajmer (modern Agra), near Jherkar, in the Panjarnat of Narayan. Perhaps the most interesting manuscripts from Rajasthan is the Supplement to the Surya-Purana, illustrated in 1637 in the Devakulakishan of Merwara. The text and the illustrations reproduce the parent style, appear till now. The fact that these manuscripts were written in Jaisalmer confirm the view that this style was the most characteristics style of the parent style in the Western India.

Although the characteristic Gojerati style seems to be in vogue till about 1590 (e.g. several examples of late manuscripts (now to appear), it is from about 1640 onwards that the later manuscripts begin to appear. A new outlook following the manuscript texts. The first known illustrated manuscript prepared at Jaisalmer, 1540, clearly represents the first manuscript of the style, which fulfilled the stilted conventions of the parent style. The result is a more realistic representation than had hitherto been attempted and significant changes in manuscript
extraordinary vitality for several centuries. And in the 15th century, Persian art had reached its zenith at Samarqand and Herat. Painting was one of the principal aesthetic activities and was patronised by the rulers as an art of the court. The Persian style of painting by itself was a product of a tradition constituted by three main elements: the Mughals (A.D. 1230-1360), the Timurids (A.D. 1357-1500), and the Safavids (16th century). The synthesis was brought about by Bihzad, the greatest artist of Persia, in the later years of the 15th century. And it were the artists of this tradition who were the first court painters of the early Mughal rulers.

The Persian tradition as it had now developed was notable for its sumptuously decorative effects produced by lively colour patterns and the inventive qualities of fluent calligraphic lines. In its two-dimensional world, one is introduced to flowers, trees, mountains, clouds, birds, and animals, the realism of which is glorified into exquisite forms of fairyland. There is sometimes even a deliberate departure from nature in order to create a vision of romanticism. Shading and perspective are almost completely absent. It is an art full of conventions and ideally suited for manuscript illustrations.

By the 15th century, the prestige of the Persian traditions had risen to such heights that it is surprising to find that a proper atmosphere for their introduction into India could not be provided by the earlier Muslim rulers of Delhi. The initiative in this direction was taken by the Mughals. The new rulers, gifted with keen artistic temperament, defied the religious ban, and rising above the puritan scruples gave protection to the art of painting as a court accomplishment. Babur, the founder of the Mughal line, came from Central Asia where he had acquired the refinement of Persia. A great lover of nature and poetry, he admired calligraphists and painters. In his delightful ‘Memoirs’ he has left a few criticisms of the works of some of the great artists of Herat, including Bihzad, whom he describes as ‘the most eminent of all painters.’

The next ruler Humayun, as his half-sister Gulbadan Begam informs us, was a creative genius, and it was he who actually introduced Persian painting into India after his return from Persia where for years he had lived in exile at the court of Tahmasp, the second Shah of the Safavid dynasty. During his stay in that country he had got acquainted with the two Persian masters, Mir Sayyid Ali and Khwaja Abdal-Samad who were disciples of Bihzad. They were two of the most accomplished painters of the Safavid school. They were brought over to India by Humayun, were awarded titles and accorded high social status. The two artists continued to live on in India after Humayun’s death and played a major role in the development of Mughal painting at the courts of Agra and Delhi. The first Indian painters of the court were not only greatly influenced by them but actually derived their inspiration and traditions from Persia.

But undoubtedly it was the enthusiasm of Akbar that really laid the foundations of the Mughal school of painting in India. He was a great ruler with liberal views and deliberately followed a policy of peace with all. Politically he sought to develop an Indian nation by his alliance with the Rajputs, who in turn helped to Indianise a court that nevertheless retained its predominantly Persian character. His approach was intellectual, and as in regard to the politics of the empire so in the realm of arts he consciously set himself on the path of careful synthesis of the foreign and Indian elements. Akbar is known to have shown keen interest in painting since his childhood when he was a pupil of the great Abdal-Samad. A miniature signed by Abdal-Samad, and preserved in the Gulistan Library,
in Tehran, shows Prince Akbar presenting a painting to his father Humayun. The painting must have been a work from the prince's own hand. A passage in *Ain-i-Akbari* refers to Akbar’s appreciation of painting: ‘From his earliest youth, he has shown a great predilection for this art, and gives it every encouragement as he looks upon it as a means both of study and amusement.’ In later years he came to regard painting as a mystical experience, as is clear from his well-known utterance on the subject quoted by Abul Fazl in *Ain-i-Akbari*: ‘There are many that hate painting, but such men I dislike. It appears to me as if a painter had quite peculiar means of recognising God; for a painter in sketching anything that has life, and in devising its limbs, one after the other, must come to feel that he cannot bestow individuality upon his work, and is thus forced to think of God the giver of life, and will thus increase his knowledge.’

The sympathetic attitude of the emperor encouraged artists from various parts of the country, such as Gujarat, Rajasthan, Gwalior, and Kashmir, and from other countries as well, to come to the Imperial Court to carry on their art activities under an enlightened patronage. Akbar employed them in the Imperial atelier where they worked and were trained under the Persian masters, Mir Sayyid Ali and Abdal-Samad. Their work was inspected weekly by the Emperor himself who liberally rewarded them for their good work. There were nearly one hundred and fifty artists. The names of a number of them are known from their signatures on the paintings, and a few others are mentioned by name in the contemporary chronicles. A perusal of the names shows that the Mohammedans formed hardly one quarter of the total list. The rest were Hindus, including a number of artists belonging to the lower castes. Among the Mohammedans some were probably Indians.

The Indian pupils, no doubt, soon mastered the finesse and technical excellence of Persian paintings. Paying a generous tribute to them Abul Fazl remarks: ‘Their pictures surpass our conception of things; few indeed in the whole world are found equal to them.’ The success of Indian artists may well be realised from the fact that they were commissioned by the Emperor to illustrate Persian literary works.

In course of time it was inevitable that the Hindu artists who had learnt and acquired socompetently the characteristics of the Persian school would carry over into the Mughal style their own mental attitude towards their work as well as the inherited stylistic features of Indian art. Therefore although it is the Persian concept which is apparent everywhere, we would also find, on a closer examination, features other than the Persian mingling increasingly with the elements of the parent style. The indigenous tradition may be seen asserting itself in a new realism that begins to take the place of a purely pictorial intention, in the greater vigour and intensity in the enactment of the drama, in a more natural representation of distance and atmosphere, and in the increasing employment of Indian characters, costume, architecture, and foliage. Abul Fazl’s complimentary remarks about the Hindu artists’ grasp of the conception of things serves to suggest that the court placed value on the projection into art of a mental vision which the Hindu artists communicated to the pictures commissioned to them.

In this manner started an intermingling of the Persian and Hindu streams. A third element also began to mix with them with the arrival of a Jesuit Mission from the West at Fathpur Sikri in 1580. The missionaries presented to Akbar a copy of Plantyn’s Polyglot Bible containing many Flemish engravings, and also
a few Italian prints. Akbar showed great interest in the European pictorial art and both Akbar and his son Jahangir adorned their palaces with Christian pictures. These pictures were also constantly copied by artists in the Mughal court. Soon European pictorial art made such a vivid impression on the Indian mind that long before the end of the 16th century Western influences had also begun to make their mark on the Mughal style of painting. Western schemes are apparent in the introduction of winged figures, in the representation of the drapery, in the sunset and cloud effects and in the greater naturalism of human and animal figures.

As regards the subject matter Mughal art was confined mainly to the illustration of manuscripts of Persian classics, chronicles and tales. Translations from the Sanskrit of Indian epics and romances were also illustrated. Portraiture was a favourite subject throughout the entire history of Mughal painting. Although hints of a mystical feeling may sometimes be detected in the miniatures of Mughal art it was generally the secular tradition that determined the character and intentions of Mughal painting. It was never inspired by any spiritual purpose, nor was it ever employed as means for the lyric expressions of life in a religious setting. Mughal painting was very much worldly in conception. Probably the 'crown of the Faithful' prevented the artist from investing his works with that note of idealism that manifests the deeply mystical quality of Indian art. He was a mere retinue of the court, only too keen to create a product which would please the cultivated eye of his princely connoisseur. He, therefore, took his themes from incidents connected with the magnificent court life of the time. He depicted scenes of Darbar, hunting, and camp life, of armies on the march and of battles and sieges, both from history and contemporary life. We find in large numbers drawings of animals and birds, and the artists made frequent use of this theme to the glory of their patrons who were keen huntsmen. Visits of princes and princesses to saints and their disciples appealed also as a theme to the Mughal artists who never failed to avail of the psychological situations inherent in them. But as the artists had no associational contact with the common man they hardly ever represented any facet of his life. Indeed, Mughal painting is a frankly secular art, very much aristocratic in outlook and entirely disdainful of the democratic folk appeal.

The Mughal art in its beginnings may be studied in the paintings of the \textit{Hamza-Namah}. Akbar was a great admirer of Hamza stories, the adventures of Amir Hamza, uncle of the Prophet Mohammad. The production of an illustrated \textit{Hamza-Namah}, therefore, became his first painting project. The series originally contained 1400 paintings, though scarcely one-tenth are known to survive today. Each page of the \textit{Hamza-Namah} measured about twenty-seven inches by twenty and served as the mount for a painting on cloth of nearly the same size. On the contemporary testimony of Badaoni we know that fifty artists took fifteen years to complete the paintings. The initial stages of the undertaking were presided over by Abdul-Samad and Mir Sayyid Ali. It is believed the work was actually finished some time between 1579 and 1582. There is considerable variance in the style of the earlier and the later works. In the early miniatures Persian-Safavid influence is eloquently apparent in the striving after a deliberate pictorial effect and the restraint in movement. Later, however, the pages are more and more filled with energetic movement and war scenes, whose violence frequently overflows the margins. The landscape and the foliage with their vigorous
realism tend to be un-Persian. A glowing colour scheme, often unpleasingly strong, is another departure from the characteristic Persian traditions.

Indian realism becomes very obvious in the Anwar-i-Suhayli (1570: School of Oriental Studies). Although the compositional conventions and decorative elements are Persian, the animals are treated with greater naturalism than their counterparts of the Persian school. And so are the trees which with thicker foliage are closer to nature than the delicate Safavid leaves, and the waves of the river which are more violently tumultuous than what is seen in the Persian pictures. In a few early manuscripts—Gulistan of Sadi (1581: Royal Asiatic Society Library) and the Diwan-i-Hafiz (1582: Chester Beatty Library)—the animals and birds, shown in their natural surroundings, have been depicted with great sympathy. But more Indian in feeling is the portrayal of animals and birds in the Tutti-Namah, where the romance of the parrot has been treated as if it were a human story.

As Akbar's tastes matured, the progress of the style was reflected in a greater blending of the heterogeneous elements. The illustrations of Razm-Namah and the Ramayana represent this tendency. Razm-Namah, a translation into Persian of the great Hindu Epic the Mahabharata, is one of the most interesting literary works of Akbar's period. Several copies of the manuscript were produced. The most sumptuous of all is the one now in the library of the Maharaja of Jaipur. Made at the command of Akbar himself it was translated and illustrated with one hundred and sixty-nine full-page miniatures between 1582 and 1588. Several painters were engaged on this project. As was the Mughal practice, nearly all the paintings are by more than one hand—one artist made the composition by sketches (Tarraha), the second applied colours (Aml), and the third who was a portrait painter gave the final touches to figures and faces (Chehra-numa). Daswan, originally a palanquin bearer, was one of the outstanding painters whose name appears on the margins of twelve of the best miniatures. He was a master of draughtsmanship and surpassed every one in figure and animal drawing. He studied life very intensively and put all the vivid details on the page. Basawan was another Hindu painter of the Razm-Namah who commanded great respect as an artist. Abul Fazl says that he was unsurpassed in making the original sketch of the picture, painting faces, blending colours and taking likenesses. He was also one of the first artists to take interest in the Western technique of picture making as can be verified from several pages of the Darab-Namah (British Museum) and Baharistan dated 1595 (Bodleian Library). In the latter work Basawan shows himself a master of perspective drawing.

The themes of classical literature gradually gave place to themes of history. The words of Daniyal, the drunkard son of Akbar, are indicative of the changing mood: 'We are tired of the old wearisome tales of Laila Majnun, the moth and the nightingale. Let the poets and the artists take for their subjects what we have ourselves seen and heard.' It is in the changed subject matter that Mughal painting under Akbar can be seen in its most mature style. The painters illustrated such important historical works as Tarikh-i-Alfi (begun in 1582), Tavarikh-i-Khandan-i-Taimuriya (Khudabaksha Library, Patna, c. 1586), Babur-Namah (British Museum, 1595 to 1600; National Museum of India, 1597; State Museum of Eastern Cultures, Moscow, last decade of the 16th century), and Akbar-Namah (Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 1605). The illustrations from Babur-Namah represent the early but already completed Mughal style of Indian painting. They strictly follow
the text of Babur's 'Memoirs' and give vivid and dramatic descriptions of battles, hunting parties, and camp life of the time. Their compositions are carefully completed and extremely lucid. The style is realistic and the details of events and the atmosphere are, as a rule, correctly depicted. Particularly outstanding are the drawings of animals and birds whose characteristic features have been faithfully recorded. A sharp observation of the surrounding life is also displayed by minute costume details and the general architectural character of the buildings. Western influence is conspicuous in a number of miniatures with the introduction of isolated figures of foreigners in European costume and arms. Colouring is intense and subdued in tone, and the colour schemes perfectly balanced and attractive in subtle contrasts. Abul Fazl notes that experiments were made in the preparation of colours and the mixtures of colours had been specially improved.

The trends of Babur-Namah achieved fulness in the Akbar-Namah. Although preference for the tradition of Timurid art is apparent, for instance, in the treatment of hills, the introduction in the foreground of a great many figures and other realistic details in the unified and often dramatic compositions, there is a clear departure from the strictly Persian conventions. It may be noticed in 'realism' which is the most prominent characteristic of the illustrations to this manuscript. Vivid and animated scenes of contemporary history in which Akbar plays the dominant role have been rendered with great minuteness.

By the last decade of the sixteenth century a very interesting category of illustrated manuscripts, mainly Hindu, had come into being. In them we meet most strongly expressed one of the special qualities of Mughal painting: its infusion into the treatment of natural scenes of a spirit of intimacy and wonder. The animals have a buoyancy and the plants a grace and abundance; and the human figures an absorption with unmundane things which is in complete contrast to the historical works which we have been considering or to the realism of the miniatures under strongest Western influence. There is no doubt that this vision of the world as an illusion required the use of more transparent colours in the manuscripts.1 Outstanding among them is the jog Vashisht (1602, Chester Beatty Library) in which the atmospheric effects of Indian mysticism have been represented with particular care and sympathy. Another closely related manuscript in spirit is the Nafahat al-Uns (1603, British Museum) containing biographies of Persian mystical saints.

The truthfulness and dramatic force of the miniatures, particularly of the later period of Akbar's reign, is enhanced by a tendency towards portraiture of the principal characters. For portraiture Akbar had a special leaning. It is stated in the Ain-i-Akbari that His Majesty himself sat for his likeness and also ordered to have the likenesses of all the grandees of the realm prepared. An immense album was thus formed: 'those that have passed away have received a new life, and those who are still alive have immortality promised them.' Portrait painting, however, developed speedily under the next Mughal Emperor, Jahangir.

The reign of Jahangir (A.D. 1605-1627) is generally regarded as the Golden Age of Mughal painting. He was a man of keen aesthetic sense and loved painting since the days of his viceroyalty. As a prince, he had been in close touch with his father's workshop of painters, and had employed Aqa Riza, an Iranian painter of note, in his personal service. On ascending the throne he took over several painters from his father's studio along with the Imperial Library comprising Persian,

1 Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray, Painting of India, p. 96.
early Mughal, Hindu, and European manuscripts and pictures. His ‘Memoirs’ and the accounts of the Jesuits and other Europeans who came to his court contain many references to the interest and pride he took in the artists’ works. He treated his court painters with affection and friendship and frequently honoured them with rewards and titles. He also supervised their work, criticised and encouraged them. He laid claims to connoisseurship when he wrote: ‘As regards myself, my liking for painting and my practice in judging it have arrived at such a point that when any work is brought to me, either of deceased artists or those of the present day, without the names being told to me, I say on the spur of the moment that it is the work of such and such a man. And if there be a picture containing many portraits and each face be the work of a different master, I can discover which face is the work of each of them. If any person has put in the eye and the eyebrow of a face, I can perceive whose work the original face is, and who has painted the eye and the eyebrow.’

In the thirteenth year of his reign, the ‘Memoirs’ record: ‘On this day Abul Hasan, the painter, who has been honoured with the title of Nadiruzzaman, drew the picture of my accession as the frontispiece to the Jahangir-Namah, and brought it to me. As it was worthy of all praise, he received endless favours. . . . At the present time he has no rival or equal.’ A little afterwards, writing about Mansur, he observes: ‘Mansur is also a master of the art of drawing and he has the title of Nadir-ul-Asr. In the time of my father and my own there have been none to compare with these two artists.’ Abul Fazl does not mention them in his book. Obviously, they came into prominence in the time of Jahangir. Other famous artists of the Jahangir period, examples of whose works survive, are Daulat, Bishandar, Govardhan, PadaRatha, Inayat, Hasim, Muhammad Nadir, Manohar, and others. These artists were, no doubt, masters of their means of expression, but to what they had already inherited from the previous reign they added a few more formulas from European art. These appeared in a better appreciation of the perspective, in the halo around the head, and in the gradual approach to the idea of subordination of parts to the central theme.

But while artists of both Persian and Indian origins were combining to evolve a genuine synthesis of the Persian, Hindu, and Western traditions, it was Jahangir’s personal taste that determined the course of Mughal painting in his time. Perhaps nowhere is the Emperor’s artistic inclination more clearly indicated than in the composition of his picture albums (Muraqqa) in which are mounted his personal collection of paintings and calligraphy. Paintings from these albums, as well as individual miniatures and stray leaves from a handful of manuscripts which were illustrated during his time, show that themes which had been popular among artists in Akbar’s period had now given way to different subject matters. The aim of Jahangir’s painters was primarily to depict portraits, the personal preoccupations of the Emperor and incidents of the chase.

A large number of paintings from Jahangir’s period are, therefore, portraits. The commonest examples are those of the Emperor, members of the royal family and the aristocrats of the realm. The Mughal artists had other models too: holy men, saints, dancing girls, soldiers, lovers, calligraphists, and painters. Although group portraits were Favoured under Jahangir, the artists generally confined themselves to representation of single figures. The typical Jahangir portrait is a full length standing figure, the face in either profile or three-quarter view, against a background extremely quiet and subdued in tone. The portrait itself would oc-
asionally be untinted except for a delicate shading to give it an effect of visual
reality. Stiff and formal though the portraits may appear to be, they have been
drawn with so much sincerity and feeling that the Mughal portrait painter has
rivalled the best master in the wonderful power of character delineation. He has
been specially successful in bringing out the inner man and not simply his out-
ward likeness. But apart from the consideration of revealing expression, the
paintings deserve the deepest respect for the calligraphic flow of the drawing and
the subtle colouring and shading of the features. Group portraits are a ‘mosaic
of separate portraits skilfully assembled.’

The same elaboration of realism which distinguishes the portraits can be
seen in the animal and bird studies of the time. Jahangir had inherited in full
measure Babur’s love of nature and he commissioned artists to depict for him
portraits of rare animals and birds. Some of the finished sketches of animals
and birds signed by artists like Mansur, Padaratha, and Inayat can be seen in various
museums and they show to what heights of achievement the Indian miniaturist
had reached under the Grand Mughals. ‘Whether for observation or for sympa-
thetic treatment it would be hard to find anything to surpass the best of this work.’

The Himalayan Cheer Pheasant’ (Victoria and Albert Museum), ‘Turkey-cock’
(Victoria and Albert Museum), and ‘Falcon’ (Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay),
each believed to be by Mansur, are superb creations both for the accuracy of
details and insight into the character of the creatures. To the quality of creative
representation was added a most delicate sense of colour and fine brushwork. The
glory of the Mughal artist may once again be seen in the ‘Bullock-chariot,’ painted by
Abul Hasan, who has sketched the subject with great feeling and captured all
the innate charm of the well-matched pair of bullocks striding along joyously.
Artists also represented incidents of field sports in their most thrilling moments.

The Mughals loved blossoms and plants in bloom, and the artist’s brush
was constantly requisitioned for portraying the likeness of anything beautiful
and novel in the realm of nature. Although Jahangir had many flower studies
made, only two of them have so far come to light. The floral paintings of Mansur
have been referred to in a passage in the Emperor’s ‘Memoirs’: ‘Those that Nadir-
ul-Asr Ustad Mansur has painted are more than 100.’ The picture entitled ‘Red
Blossoms’ is the most well-known example of Mansur’s floral paintings. But it is
only the exquisite plant which is done by Mansur Naqar, the designer, for
in keeping with the Mughal practice, the illuminated panel on either side of it and
the floral border are executed by two hands who were working in collaboration
with the principal artist. The plant with its delicate leaves in dark green, and the
matchless red blossoms swaying gracefully on stalks contrast delightfully with
the yellow background. The artist creates a magic world of landscape in which a
dragon fly and a butterfly, throbbing with life, hover gently over the blossoms.

The idea of mounting pictures with margin decorations that had been extensively
worked out by the Persians and adopted by the Mughal miniaturists was especially
developed by the artists of Jahangir’s court. The Muraqqa miniatures are sum-
ptuously enclosed within a framework of golden flower arabesques or even whole
landscapes. All the flowers of the Kashmir valley and many of those of the
gardens in the plains—lilies, tulips, irises, daisies and poppies—are there around
the picture. Often small and delicate figures of birds and butterflies have been
introduced to make the border embellishments more effective. The specimens of

"RED BLOSSOMS"

This is the only example yet known of Mansur’s floral paintings and is signed “Jahangirshahi, the work of the slave of the Presence-Chamber, Mansur Naqqash.” It is enclosed within a floral border executed in gold against a background of deep blue. Apparently the picture is the product of two or more hands working in collaboration: the plant is from the brush of Mansur Naqqash, the illuminated panel on either side of it is executed by the illustrious calligraphist, Mulla Mir Ali of Herat. Probably the floral border was done by some third artist.

(Reproduced from Studies in Indian Painting by N. C. Mehta)
candidly be expected except for a deliberate desire to give it an alluring visual quality. Soft and塞尔 though the portraits may appear to be, they have been drawn with no trace of dexterity and for that the Magical painter has rivaled the best master in the wonderful power of character delineation. He has been specially successful in bringing out the inner man and not merely his outward likeness. But apart from the consideration of drawing, organization, the portraits deserve the deepest respect for the calligraphic style of the writing and the subtle rendering and shading of the features. Group portraits are a novelty of separate portraits unified as one.

The same characteristic which distinguishes the portraits can be seen in the animals and birds sketches of the time. Whether from the buds of the tree or its branches, they have the first sketches of animals and birds signed by a master like Mansur. Fedarishan and I have seen in various manuscripts and they were to set the standard and become the basis of illumination in the Indian manuscripts and reached under the Great Moghul. Whether for observation in the greatest of their paintings, it would be hard to find anything to compare the best of them.

The famous Mani Madhav, Pahari and other manuscripts (Arunachala Raja Madhav, etc.) are the result of the same careful observation and the same as the other manuscripts. The selection of a master and the choice of the animals and plants in the garden and in the setting of the pictures have been referred to as portraits in the Emperor's Memoirs. Those that Naddir Shah had Mansur has received are more than 100. The picture entitled "Raja in the Rose Garden" is the most well-known copy of Mansur's and paintings. The rose is a distinctive feature of the painting and the animal pictures have been referred to as portraits in the Emperor's Memoirs. Although he had many manuscripts, he also visited the text and interpreted it. The most famous ones in the famous parts of the land are the "Mugho" paintings of the south island. The detailed knowledge of the same style of painting and the painting of the animals and plants have been introduced to serve the literary purposes.

calligraphy mounted on the leaves of the Muraqqa have even more elaborate decorations. In the floral patterns surrounding them figures and scenes are beautifully worked in. They illustrate hunting scenes, various crafts and occupations, and include portraits of calligraphists and painters engaged in their activities, and even the Emperors and their courtiers. In one of the leaves Daulat, one of the foremost artists of the period, has portrayed four of his leading colleagues: Abul Hasan, Manohar, Bishandas, and Govardhan. The principal remnants of the Muraqqas are in the State Library of Berlin and in the Imperial Library at Tehran. Some leaves have also found their way into the various museums of the world. Containing a wealth of ornamentation and touched with a delicate sense of colour, harmonising with the central colour scheme, these border decorations are a complete work of art in themselves. Margins with figural scenes continued to be executed after Jahangir, but none has the inexhaustible richness of floral decorations of the Jahangir period.

Certain new characteristics became apparent in the Mughal style as it developed in the later years of Jahangir. The Emperor is raised to a superhuman level, with the head surrounded by a halo, and absorbed in mystical thoughts. He may be seen in the company of religious teachers or even in the zenana. Scenes of religious discussions too begin to appear. The figures are of a somewhat larger size than in the early works of the Jahangir style. The outline flows more delicately and a softer diffused light pervades the scenes.

It was a striving after perfection in drawing and fine brushwork that was aimed at by the artists of the Jahangir period. The same tendency was maintained under Shahjahan (A.D. 1628-58) in both separate miniatures and manuscript illustrations. There was, also, no striking departure in technique. Portrait painting continued to be popular in the court. It was in fact one of the most fashionable activities of cultured living in Shahjahan’s period. Many portraits of the Emperor were painted at this time. With the grandees of the realm it was a status symbol to keep painters in personal service and thus many portraits of the noblemen have come down to us. A large number of portraits of lovely women, obviously of high rank, are also available. These portraits, though somewhat conventional in treatment, display graphic craftsmanship at its best. They are highly finished and the exquisite grace of youthful beauty has been delightfully presented with an added delicacy in the drawing.

Some of the most accomplished portraits of Shahjahan’s period are those of saints and holy men. ('Group of Ascetics,' British Museum; 'Dancing Dervishes,' Spencer Churchill Collection). They depict marvellous characterisation and testify to the skill and psychological depth of the artists. The artists who distinguished themselves during this period are Bichiter, Rao Chitraman, Anup Chatur, Mohammad Nadir, Honhar, Balchand, and Pak, besides several masters of the Jahangir period.

The miniatures of the Shahjahan period depict also the pomp and glitter of court life with all the sumptuous paraphernalia. The picture entitled ‘A Darbar Scene’ gives a vivid idea of the splendour of the Mughal Court, its elaborate etiquette and its supreme elegance. The Emperor’s or the princes’ life was sometimes depicted against settings of outdoor scenes as in the ‘Meeting of Prince Murad and Nazr Mohammad’ (Bharat Kala Bhawan) and the ‘Emperor Hunting’ from Shahjahan-Namah (Windsor Castle). The landscape background of mountains, lakes, trees, and camps that seem to melt into the distance, has a poetic quality
about it that engulfs the entire composition. The minutest details, the naturalism of which is inspired by European art, have been most carefully recorded. The richness and luxury in colouring and composition show that finesse has achieved the highest point of perfection. But the extreme sensuousness of pigments and the extravagant use of gold reflect also a 'sense of over refinement,' which contains germs of decay of the tradition.

In the reign of Aurangzeb (A.D. 1658-1707), though the output of painting continued to be maintained, the Imperial ateliers suffered from neglect. The puritanical ruler refused to take the interest his predecessors had taken. Most of the paintings, therefore, lack the high quality of the Akbar, Jahangir and Shahjahan periods, but nevertheless some excellent portraits were executed. A number of fine studies of the Emperor, representing him from his boyhood till he became a very old man, alone or among the troops during his campaigns in the Deccan, exist. But it cannot be supposed that the art received the personal encouragement of Aurangzeb. Some pictures of the grandees and officials, including a number of dignified equestrian portraits, are also available which show that painting still had the support of the courtiers.

After the death of Aurangzeb, the brush continued to be handled by artists remarkably well for some time more. But the art was marked by growing lifelessness. There was a return to stereotyped poses and formal gardens. Rich ornamentation with a greater use of gold became popular. Subjects glorifying scenes of love, harem life and debauchery, music, drinking and dancing predominated. Only occasionally competent compositions showing something of the former glory are met with. Some good examples belong to the reign of Farrukhisiyar (A.D. 1713-1719). The painting entitled 'At the Well,' reproduced in *Mughal Miniatures* (Lalit Kala Series of Indian Art) is a splendid 18th century work.

The Mughal school, properly so called, lingered on till the time of Shah Alam II (A.D. 1759-1806). In his reign portraits of historical personages were always in demand at the Mughal Court. The artists, therefore, kept in their possession such portrait types or tracings of the old miniatures which were handed down in the artists' families from generation to generation and new copies were regularly prepared with their help. Many such copies were made in the time of Shah Alam. But the finish and quality of drawing of the earlier periods could not be captured in any one of them and the paintings remained as mere lifeless imitations of the older miniatures.

**The Deccan States**

During the formative period of the Mughal style a school of painting flourished actively in the Deccan states of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golconda, and continued independent of the Mughal court painting till far into the 17th century. Although under Jahangir and Shahjahan there was fairly close relationship between the Imperial courts of Delhi and Agra and the courts of the Deccan Sultans, it was only during the latter half of the Mughal period that the Deccan school was increasingly influenced by the Mughal style. The Deccan states also had long and intimate political and economic connections with Persia. The ruling house of Golconda had a Persian origin and employed Persians in senior posts of administration. Several Bijapur rulers, who were enthusiastic patrons of the arts, invited Persian painters to their courts. It is, therefore, not surprising to find Persian
traditions playing a significant role in the development of the early Deccan school. But while the landscape idiom and several decorative formalities are distinctly Persian, the costume details and stylised plants belong to the North Indian tradition of the pre-Mughal painting which was flourishing in Mandu. The miniatures of Tarif-i-Husain Shahi, produced possibly between 1565 and 1569 at Ahmadnagar (Bharat Itihas Samshodaka Mandala, Poona) and those of Nujum-al-Ulum dated 1570, from Bijapur (Chester Beatty collection) exemplify an effective mingling of the Persian and indigenous elements, bringing together the sensuous line and daring brilliancy of the one and the rough vigour of the other. A series of Ragamala (musical moods) paintings from Bijapur and Ahmadnagar, illustrating stronger connections with the northern traditions, are among the other striking examples of the early Deccani style. Something of the same quality is recognizable in a number of miniatures, identified as Golkunda work of a rather later date. Those found bound up in a Diwan-i-Hafiz (1643, British Museum), represent scenes of palace life in which dancing girls are seen performing acrobatics. The compositions have been lavishly enriched with gold, the figures are adorned with a profusion of jewellery, and the architecture has been given a symmetrical and unfunctional treatment.

We have a number of accomplished portraits from Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, and Golkunda representing ‘Mohammad Qutb Shah’ (A.D. 1611-26), ‘Poet in a Garden’ (Golkunda, 1605-1615, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), ‘A Courtier’ (Bijapur, 1615, British Museum), ‘Ibrahim Adil Shah’ (Bijapur, about 1615, British Museum), and various other subjects. Stylistically, the figures reveal considerable power and intensity which distinguish them from the average Mughal portraits. The ‘Study of an Elephant’ has been identified by N. C. Mehta as done by a Deccani painter. As a piece of elephant portraiture it has been considered unsurpassed. ‘The picture is finished in every detail and the vigour of its draftsmanship is only matched by the exceptional quality of its glowing tints.’

Speaking of the technique of the Mughal painters, Wilkinson writes: ‘Paper was made in India, generally of cotton, jute, or bamboo; other paper was imported from Persia. It was carefully prepared and burnished smooth, often with an agate. In the actual execution of the miniature, the method usually employed, both by the court painters and in the provinces, seems to have been fairly uniform at all periods and was the same, mutatis mutandis, as that of the mural painting of antiquity. The drawing was first sketched in outline, usually in red, and corrected with lamp-black; it was then covered with a thin preparatory coat or priming of white. The outline was then retraced and the colours applied. The pigments were extracted mainly from various minerals, lapis lazuli, cinnabar, orpiment and others; but some were of vegetable origin, such as indigo or mung; a few, like lake or kirmiz, from insects; the gold was from pounded gold-leaf. The pigments were tempered with gum-arabic or glue. Brushes were of various qualities, the finest being from the hairs of young squirrels’ tails (as, in Persia, from kittens). The whole miniature, when completed was again burnished from the reverse side. It is unnecessary to describe the variations from the usual methods, or to detail the other processes connected with the preparation of miniatures and manuscripts, but mention should be made of the practice of copying by means of pincings. Tracings were drawn on very thin portions of skin, the contours being pierced with small holes; these were dusted with powder, reproducing the outlines, which had to be at

1 N. C. Mehta, Studies in Indian Painting, p. 106.
once drawn over. Copying by this method was an important part of the painter’s training.\footnote{1}

**RAJASTHANI PAINTING**

Painters from Western India who had been recruited into the Mughal imperial atelier to help in the execution of the *Hamza-Namch* under the guidance and superintendence of Persian masters must have, after the work was finished, gone back to their homes in Gujarat and Rajasthan enlightened by a new outlook. Many of them were undoubtedly artists who had been originally trained in the old tradition of the Gujarati manuscript illustration style. It was, therefore, natural for them, on return, to seek to introduce the Mughal outlook and approach in their works which they again took up in the style they had practised before joining the imperial court. However, the precise relationship between Mughal and Rajasthani paintings is still very controversial and whatever conclusions we may draw today, particularly with regard to the history of Rajasthani painting of the 16th and 17th centuries, is liable to revision in future. As the position is at present, the first evidence of Mughal impact according to Indian scholars is unmistakably apparent in a group of paintings represented by the illustrations of *Laur-Chanda* (Punjab Museum, Simla), the *Chaurapanchasika* (N. C. Mehta Collection), the *Krishna-Leela*, the *Gita-Govinda* (Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay), and the *Bhagavata Purana* (Bharat Kala Bhawan, Banaras, and several other museums). They exhibit great skill in the handling of the brush. A transparent treatment is evident in the depiction of the drapery. There are also rich and sumptuous colour effects. With these qualities they reveal the glory of the early Rajasthani school. The provenance of this group has not yet been correctly ascertained. Indian critics have assigned them to Rajasthan, Jaunpur, Delhi, or Malwa, while Douglas Barrett and Basil Gray believe that Mewar is their only possible source. A date somewhere in the last quarter of the 16th century has been accepted for the paintings by the latest Indian opinion.

Two Jain manuscripts from Gujarat, the *Sangr ahani Sutra* of 1583 (Muni Punyavijayaji Collection) and the *Uttardhyayana Sutra* of 1591 (Museum and Picture Gallery, Baroda) bear stylistic similarities with the group of paintings mentioned above. They show the characteristics of the phase of transformation under Mughal influence. The protruding eye, a hallmark of Western Indian painting, disappears, the draftsmanship becomes considerably smoother though some angularity is still noticeable, the treatment of the architecture is more varied, and the men wear contemporary costumes of the Akbar period including the typical “apatli pagri”.\footnote{2} Hindu works were also illustrated in this Gujarati version of the early Rajasthani style. One of the finest series is from the *Gita-Govinda* (1600, N.C. Mehta Collection). The paintings still show a preference for simplicity, but each has a dance rhythm pervading the entire composition. It is a quality unknown to Gujarati paintings.

Indian painting in Western India was thus evolving a new style. A great majority of the paintings of this style come from Rajasthan, though the earliest known dated examples cannot yet be assigned with any amount of certainty to this region. It is, however, with a set of Ragamala paintings done in 1605 by one

\footnote{1} *Indian Art*, edited by Richard Winstedt, pp. 132-133.

Nisaruddin at Chawand, in the mountainous regions of Mewar, that we come to the first dated paintings that definitely belong to a Rajasthan provenance. At present, they form part of the collection of Gopi Krishna Kanoria. They are powerful paintings interpreting themes of melodies in a style which still retains vestiges of Western Indian tradition. Bright colours, large staring eyes, pointed chins, and formalised trees, establish their connection with the Gujarati manuscript illustration style. But gradually as the Mughal tradition was widely and deeply accepted, the art of Mewar achieved a refinement without losing its individual quality in the process. This is a significant fact because Mewar appears to have been the most important centre of the Rajasthani school in the 17th century. Marwar was another place where painting flourished in this early phase of Rajasthani style. By the 18th century the art of painting had spread to every princely court and every feudal estate of Rajasthan. Bundi, Jaipur, Kishangarh, Jodhpur, Bikaner, and Kotah thus became the new centres of the Rajasthani school.

This school is essentially Hindu in feeling. It is inspired by a renaissance of the popular Hindu culture in the garb of Vaishnavism which from the 15th century was dominating the art and literature of the country. The movement carried in its wake the worship and adoration of a personal deity who could be accepted as the pattern of an ideal hero or heroine. Its leaders were poets whose recitations of the mythological lore in the dialects of the people stirred the innermost depths of the common consciousness. It subsequently stimulated the aesthetic sense of the community and prepared the ground for the growth of a new art form, which in its pictorial aspect visualised the lyrical grace of contemporary Hindi poetry, and represented “the mystical symbol of the mutual longing of God and the human soul.”

The principal themes, therefore, of the Hindu artist who was one of the people were taken from folk-lore, mythology, ballads, romantic poems, and music. The love story of Krishna and Radha, as representing God and the Individual soul, in union and separation, was the favourite motif. And as the artist also desired the religious truths to appeal to society, he drew his imagery from the everyday life of the masses. In this respect the Hindu artist covered a larger field than the Buddhist and adopted a line of approach different from the Mughals. The Hindu artist not only interpreted in line and colour the dramatic incidents from the fascinating legends of the country, but also portrayed all that is best in the emotional life of the Indian people. He brought the gods down to the level of the common man’s life, actually humanising them in his paintings, so that Rajasthani painting is really a picturisation of the simple life of the common man, his work and play, his joys and sorrows, his beliefs and customs, and his home and field life, in the picturesque background of his religious faith and ritual.

The illustrations to the Ramayana and the Bhagavata Purana, the representations of the various types of heroes and heroines and their erotic sentiments, the visualisation of nature’s moods, and the dramatic atmosphere suggested by the musical modes are the other principal themes of the Rajasthani school.

It was the picturisation of such an intangible thing as the spirit and character of melody (Raga) that really provided the artists with unlimited opportunities for artistic treatment which they usually executed with singular tenderness and lyric imagination. There are many thousands of pictures of the Ragamala series. The almost perpetual burden of such paintings is an emotional situation based on some

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1 Arnold Bake, ‘Kirtan in Bengal,’ Indian Art and Letters, XXI, 1.
phase of love—the longing and suffering in separation or the delight and happiness of reconciliation. The tender love lyrics written at the back or on the top of the pictures draw out the passionate intensity of the situation. It is perhaps the verbal and graphic descriptions of the melodies that provided the basis for illustrating them. The compositions, however, for particular modes are generally constant. Todi Ragini is always represented by a charming woman standing in an open landscape in the brilliant noonday sun, clothed in a snow-white sari. In her hands she holds the veena, and the deer in the neighbouring pastures stand entranced as she plays on it. The imagery is expressive of a woman whose youth has inspired love in the hearts of young lovers who cluster around her. Ragini Madhu Madhavi is represented by the pleasant rumbling of thunder in the monsoon clouds, presaging rains, peacocks overwhelmed with joy and the princess pining to rest again in the arms of her absent lover. The character of Ragini Bhairavi is pictured in the image of the unmarried heroine who like Parvati, enchanted by the vision of union with her lover Siva, is absorbed in worshipping him. Mehga Raga, reminiscent of the atmosphere of rain falling on the parched earth, is depicted by the dance of Krishna among the maidens of Braja holding out hope and the vision of a new life. The mood of Bilawal is evoked by the heroine who gets conscious of the pangs of love by a vision of her own beauty in the mirror. There are similar other pictures of ‘visualised music,’ each one pulsating with life as only a great piece of poetry could. According to the exposition of Sir William Jones, ‘the artists were able to recall the memory of autumnal merriment at the close of harvest; of reviving hilarity on the revival of blossoms and complete vernal delight in the month of Vasant; of languor during the dry heat and refreshment by the first rains which bring a second spring to the Indian season. The inventive talents of the Greeks never suggested a more charming allegory than the lovely families of the six ragas, named in the order of seasons—Bhairava, Malva, Sri-rag, Hindole or Vasant, Dipaka and Megha: each of whom is wedded to five raginis or nymphs of harmony—presenting wonderfully diversified images for the play of the artists’ genius.’

Women have been one of the principal motifs of Indian art, but they inspired the Rajasthani painter differently from the way their counterparts inspired the Ajanta artist. The Ajanta women are apparently of an erotic type, charming and sentimental, representing a society which was a highly sensuous and sophisticated aristocracy. The Hindu artist on the other hand depicted her as a heroine, emotional and delicate, innocent and proud—a mirror of the thoughts and feelings of the common people. Physically she is the true ideal of female beauty. She has large lotus eyes, firm and round breasts, thighs round and smooth, slender waist, rosy hands, and tresses falling in heavy plaits.

**Mewar**

Although Mewar was the most important centre of the early Rajasthani school, the ‘Golden Age’ of Mewar art came about the middle of the 17th century in the reign of Jagat Singh (A.D. 1628-1652). Several illustrated copies of the Bhagavata Purana, including the one painted by Sahabadi in 1648 (Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona), the Ramayana in the Sir Cowasji Jehangir Collection, Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay and another in the Saraswati Bhawan Library at Udaipur, written and illustrated at Chittor in 1651, and the
splendid Ragamala set in the National Museum of India, New Delhi, are some of the finest works of the period. The Rasikpriya of Keshavadas in the Bikaner Darbar Collection, the Gita Govinda paintings in the Prince of Wales Museum, and the Sur Sagar in the Collection of Gopi Krishna Kanoria, are also mid-17th century manuscripts.

The illustrations portray incidents mainly from the life of Shri Krishna and his frolics with the gopis, the hero and heroine themes of contemporary Hindi poetry, and the pictorial representations of the Indian musical modes. The illustrations from the Bhagavata and the Ramayana are conceived and executed on a wider canvas and the hundreds of figures over-crowding the scenes play their roles against the background of the social life of the time. Scenes from rural life, marriage ceremonies, processions, dance and music parties, and life of the palace are convincingly and feelingly depicted. In the treatment of human figures we notice that the faces are in profile with prominent noses and fish-shaped large eyes, and are somewhat squat and expressionless. The portrayal of birds and animals shows their Gujarati origin though the Mughal influence can be felt in the realistic treatment of horses and elephants in the manner of the Shahjahan period. The landscape lacks the naturalism of the Mughal school; but it has an idealistic and imaginative character which reveals unsurpassing beauty even in its conventional treatment. The architectural settings bring to mind the Mughal period and consist mainly of domed pavilions and turreted parapets. The tree forms though generally stylised can at times be seen in the naturalistic manner of the early Mughal period. Hills and rocks also follow the Mughal style. Brilliant colours are used with unusually glowing effects and lively action is captured within vigorous lines.

There is little dated material to follow the progress of the Mewar school after 1652, but judging from a Ragamala series and an illustrated Bhagavata Purana, which in all probability belong to the period between 1652-1698, it appears certain that the rich traditions of Mewar painting were continued up to the close of the 17th century. The popularity of the art in the 18th century is obvious from the tremendous output of the Mewar school, but it was now rapidly losing its charm and aesthetic merit. Although the old themes were not neglected, other popular subjects like portraits of rulers and courtiers, realistic studies of horses, elephants and dogs, and court, harem, and hunting scenes were executed in large numbers and repainted from the same tracings. But the glory of Mewar painting had come to an end and the productions are crude and clumsy.

**Marwar**

Only very fragmentary evidence exists of a school of painting in Marwar in the 16th and 17th centuries. The definitely dated materials of the 17th century that we have show the popularity of the Mughal technique in the well-balanced compositions, neat drawing and sophisticated colour schemes. The reason for the strong Mughal flavour appears to be the presence of Muslim artists trained in Mughal traditions in the court. In the 18th century, however, Marwar developed the pictorial art on its own lines and the Mughal stylistic trends began to get into the background. The most popular themes were the Ragamala and the hero-heroine motifs, and studies of women in amorous attitudes.

1 The cowherd damsels and wives with whom Krishna sported in his youth.
Jodhpur

Jodhpur represents one of the principal seats of the Marwar school. From the time Raja Udaï Singh (A.D. 1581-1595) made his peace with the Mughals, the early Rajput trends in art went out of fashion at the court bringing in in their place the pure Mughal style. The architecture was influenced by Fatipur Sikri and painting by the Imperial Mughal technique in its full force. By the middle of the 18th century, it is obvious that the Mughal style had been completely accepted by the Jodhpur artists. We come across a number of portraits whose careful draughtsmanship, delicacy of colour scheme, and costume and ornament details, reveal the influence of the best Mughal formulae. After 1750, the Rajput elements began to emerge once again and the Mughal elements more or less disappeared from the scene. Though in all technical matters the later Rajput artists continued to show a preference for the Mughal techniques, the art slowly changed into a genuine Rajput art. The ‘linear rhythm was intensified, the colours began to glow brightly and men’s and ladies’ fashions assumed a fantastic extravagance. Turbans grew to high funnels, coats and skirts stood off like bells, ladies’ eyes were elongated over the temples to the hair, their breasts and buttocks protruded like cups, whereas the waist was drawn in like that of a bee, the movements swung in a wild dance, the colours glowed like jewellery.' The most important of the Jodhpur illustrations are equestrian portraits of the royal house and the nobility.

Bundi

The rise of the Bundi school may be traced to the 17th century, but only very few specimens are known to exist of the early Rajasthani school. They reveal elements of Mughal painting as well as a certain indebtedness to Mewar. Gradually, Bundi evolved such a rich tradition that by the middle of the 18th century its school achieved a distinctive and independent status. The collection of Bundi paintings from the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, a fragmentary Ragamala series in the Collection of Gopı Krishna Kanoria, and a set of Rasikpriya paintings, are generally distinguished by lyrical feelings, careful finish and brilliant colours. In seeking to stress the emotional content of a romantic situation the artists made full use of the picturesque Bundi landscape—its green hills, thick forests, and brimming lotus ponds. The 19th century Bundi art found painters taking delight in music, dance, and drinking parties and in the gaiety of palace life.

Malwa

Malwa, though outside Rajasthan in the geographical sense, was another centre of Rajasthani painting. A set of paintings of the Amarasataka, executed in 1652 at Nasratgarh, and a dispersed series of Ragamala paintings done in 1680 at Narsynga Sahar, are among the finer works definitely assignable to the Malwa provenance in the early Rajasthani style. The miniatures show finesse of brushwork and the figures of men and women are touched with great delicacy and feeling. Gorgeously flowering trees and creepers in varied and romantic aspects or architectural motifs in well patterned compositions make for decorative backgrounds which form vital parts of the paintings. Artistically Malwa seems to have included Bundelkhand, as would be clear from a Ramayana set (National Museum

"BULLOCK CHARIOT"

This picture is by Abdul Hasan Nadir-Uz-Zaman, the greatest painter of Jahanir's time, and son of the celebrated Persian artist, Aqa Raza of Herat. While the heads of the bullocks with their rather wild expression are drawn more after the Persian or rather the Chinese style, the treatment of their bodies is absolutely Indian. In the corner of the front panel of the chariot is inscribed "Rajim Abul Hasan," indicating the authorship of the picture. The technique of the picture is purely Persian though the subject-matter is entirely Indian.

(Reproduced from Studies in Indian Painting by N. C. Mehta)
Jodhpur

Jodhpur represents one of the important schools of the Marwar school. From the time when 13th century, (a.d. 1231-1285) made his peace with the Mughals, the early Rana of Jodhpur, to the end of his reign at the court belonging to their place the rival Mughal style. The courtly style was influenced by Fatehpur Sikri and painted by the master painters of that school, known as the Fathehpuri style. By the middle of the 16th century, it is clear that the Mughal style had been completely accepted by the Jodhpur school.

In the late 16th century a number of paintings were made which show a careful draughtsmanship, delicate use of color, and ornamentation details. Special attention was given to the details of clothing, weapons, and ornaments. The style is known as the Jodhpur school. Later, the Mughal style was influenced by the Fathehpuri school, and the Jodhpur school was the link between the two schools.

Important in the development of the Jodhpur school are the paintings of the 17th century. The style is characterized by its dramatic compositions, the use of light and shade, and the vivid colors. The Jodhpur school continued to influence the development of Indian art until the 18th century.

"Rajput Charitam"

Rajput Charitam is a novel which was written in the 18th century and is considered to be one of the greatest works of Rajput literature. It was written in the Rajasthani language and is a historical novel that tells the story of the life of a Rajput prince.

The novel is set in the city of Jodhpur, and it tells the story of the life of a young prince named Bhanwar Singh. The novel is known for its vivid descriptions of Rajput life and for its portrayal of the Rajput nobility.

The novel is divided into several parts, each of which tells a different story. The novel is known for its rich descriptions of Rajput life and for its portrayal of the Rajput nobility.
of India, New Delhi), and the *Ragamala* series (Boston Museum) which bear Bundelkhandi inscriptions but whose paintings are done in almost the same style as that prevailing in Malwa.

**Kishangarh**

Kishangarh developed as one of the most important schools of 18th century Rajasthani painting. An off-shoot of the Jodhpur school, the Kishangarh idiom rose around the personality of Raja Samant Singh, a follower of the Vallabhi sect and a devotee of Lord Krishna. Under the assumed name of Nagri Das he composed devotional poems which were co-related with a magnificent group of paintings. Among the court painters the name of Nihal Chand is the most famous. His chief claim to fame must lie in the invention of a new and very striking facial type for portraying Krishna and Radha and in very rare cases a few privileged female attendants. The facial type, though idealised, is extremely lyrical in the beauty content. The most popular subjects of the paintings are the walks of Krishna and Radha revealed amorously and yet tempered with refinement. Stylistically, the artists remain indebted to the Mughal ‘technical innovations and linear purity,’ but the paintings in general conception and sentiment are purely Rajput. Colour patterns are often used symbolically.

**Jaipur**

Jaipur is yet another centre where the Rajasthani school of Indian painting achieved the highest excellence in the 18th century. Intimate relations existed between the ruling family of Jaipur and the Mughals during Akbar's and Jahangir's reigns, and so there was a constant interchange and absorption of notions and influences between the two in fields both of architecture and painting. But the two traditions never really integrated till at least the closing years of the reign of Mirza Raja Jai Singh I (A.D. 1625-1667). The general composition and decoration of contemporary Mughal art and the male costume of the Imperial Court went side by side, rather superficially, with the simple composition, the flat treatment of the figures, the lack of perspective and female costume of the Rajput tradition. The Mughal influence in painting at Jaipur was the strongest in the period between Mirza Raja's death and the middle of the 18th century. It was during this period that the bigotry of Aurangzeb had forced many of the finest Mughal artists to seek refuge in the state courts. A very charming *Ragamala* series in the Baroda State Museum, assignable in all probability to the minority years of Swai Jai Singh II (A.D. 1692-1699), confirms the active participation of these artists in the Jaipur court. There is a long series of paintings, belonging to the first half of the 18th century, which stand very near to the Mughal tradition, and yet retain the fundamental simplicity of composition, the flatness of figures, and the essentially lyric character in the representation of themes which are inspired by Hindi literature or Hindu religion. By the middle of the 18th century the Mughal finish at its perfection, blending with the Rajasthani style, was creating an atmosphere of serene charm in the paintings.

Jaipur paintings, from the time of Swai Pratap Singh (A.D. 1778-1803) experienced an entirely new outlook. Imperial Delhi was in disgrace and decline. It, therefore, ceased to make any genuine impression on Rajput art. It was
also the time of general lawlessness and insecurity and of the laxity of morals and immense luxury. It, therefore, gave rise to a new approach to religion for easing a conscience in turmoil. For instance the Raslila of Krishna became ‘an earthly erotic amusement’ for which the myth offered a mere prentice. All this was reflected in painting. Although it retained its conventional expressions, it became an extravagantly decorative art.

**PAHARI PAINTING**

When Ananda Coomaraswamy introduced Rajput painting to the world in 1912-16, he indicated its main centres as ‘Rajputana and the Punjab Himalayas.’ We saw how in the states of Rajasthan (Rajputana) art developed as an expression of ‘a spiritual and literary revival of Hinduism.’ The same movement achieved culmination in the Himalayan region where Rajput painting blossomed in its most lyrical forms. The ‘Punjab Himalayas,’ like Rajasthan, was divided among numerous small principalities dotted over the rich valleys of the Chenab, the Ravi, the Beas, the Sutlej, and the Jamuna. The states were Jammu, Basohli, Chamba, Guler, Kangra, Mandi, Kulu, Suket, Bilaspur, Nurpur, Jasrota, Mankot, Tehri, Garhwal, and a few others. Most of these were situated amid snow-clad mountains and exquisite woodland scenery. Their rulers were hereditary Rajput families, related amongst themselves by marriage or other family ties.

The conquest of Kashmir in 1586 by Akbar made a great impression on these hill chieftains and they all hastened to offer their submission and presents to the Mughal Emperor. They were treated generously and a friendly relationship was maintained between Delhi and the Hill States. There was not much Imperial interference with their administration, nor was their freedom checked in the quarrels which they constantly carried on with their neighbours. Luckily, the wars did not engage all the attention of the rulers. They were simple folk, gentle, gay and pleasure-loving by temperament. There was peace and joy in their lives and their surroundings were full of the most picturesque aspects of nature. Their literature was the expression of a passionate sincere religion which sang of the love story of Krishna and Radha as symbolic of the soul’s devotion to God. In this way they grew up in an atmosphere which was full of romantic suggestions, arousing in their hearts an intensity of feeling which could only find repose in art.

It would thus appear that the painting of the Hill States, described by the generic name of Pahari art, was not a sudden development nor unrelated to the life of the people. It was, on the other hand, deeply rooted in the feelings and experiences of the human heart, and fully saturated with the hillman’s poetry, music, and religious beliefs. The cult of Bhakti was its driving force; the devotional poetry of the saints was the basis of its visual expression; and the love-story of Krishna and Radha was the source of its spiritual experience. In the words of Coomaraswamy, it was an ‘immediate expression of the Hindu view of life . . . the product of a whole civilisation.’

Love is the inspiration and the main preoccupation of the Pahari school. Whether the paintings portray the boyhood pranks of Krishna and his cowherd companions or his amours with Radha, ‘the pageant of the seasons,’ or the modes of music, the principal theme is always provided by the love of man for woman or of woman for man, symbolised by Krishna and Radha in the relation of lover and

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beloved. The earlier phase of Pahari art, no doubt, frankly and vividly portrays the joys of sensuous love and loudly proclaims the ferocity of passion, but as the style develops, this kind of love is more and more interwoven with feelings of spiritual exhilaration. Love continues to be conceived as the only adorable ideal, but its true emotional position is visualised not in the mere force and flow of passion, but in the quiet blending of the love scenes with religious mysticism which fundamentally establishes the identity of the Pahari pictures.

Thus love is sublimated and passion is treated serenely. And for this reason even though the Pahari artists took romantic delight in the depiction of love, lovely feminine forms and their ardently passionate moods, they never allowed sex to lose the quality of subtlety and refinement. It was always ennobled and only suggested with great tenderness. W. G. Archer has drawn our attention to the presence of sex symbolism in Pahari painting. While woman restless with longing for her lover is the recurring subject matter of the paintings, the introduction of such incidental objects as clouds, rain, lightning, storm, trees, flowers, pitchers, turrets, birds, and animals, is used as poetic symbols to suggest the final crisis. A girl gently swinging against a background of an impending storm is the picture of the passionate mood of woman pining for her lover. The spear-shaped branches of trees laden with flowers are poetic parallels for upsurging love. An image of embracing lovers is the creeper entwined about a trunk while streams with tossing waves vividly evoke the flow and force of passion. The presence of twin pillows, twin lotus flowers, twin pitchers, bottles, towers and turrets around the love-sick lady, indicate with exquisite discretion the desire for passionate union with the lover. Clouds, lightning, and rain evoke memory and desire. The black buck, the peacock, the swan, the hawk, and the snake are symbolic of the lover, and the love-sick heroines are shown playing with them. Paintings of lovely ladies gazing at clouds and birds are usually of women parted from their lovers and longing to meet them.

The artists also fully utilised the symbolic association of colours to interpret the romantic situation. Yellow, orange and red are the colours of spring and of the season slowly ripening into summer. The trees are laden with flowers of brilliant hues and men and women in celebration of the Holi festival throw orange and scarlet colours at each other. The colours typify the amorous languor of the lovers, the warmth of their passions, and their longing for each other. While yellow indicates sublime love, delicate pink stands for pure love and the bright red represents a passionate love. Krishna is usually draped in yellow or orange, the nodding and swaying lotus in the stream, echoing the agitation in a woman’s heart, is pink coloured, and the scarlet grounds, curtains, pillows, transparent scarfs, etc., have sexual implications. Blue is the colour of Krishna as also of the rain clouds lit up by flashes of lightning. It is the colour of the drapery of the woman desirous of union with her Lord, of the heroine going out to meet him, or of the moon-lit atmosphere when in its pale light the woman sets forth to seek her lover.

W. G. Archer has picked up a painting to illustrate this tendency. It shows Krishna, the divine lover, ‘sitting on a terrace engaging a duenna in light hearted chat. Below him stretches a field with ripening crops and by it stands a village beauty, notable for her fluid grace and scarlet skirt. Scarlet is supremely significant, for behind the house are ranks of red storm clouds, their colour establishing an intimate connection between the girl loitering in the field and the passionate meeting which will presently ensue when Krishna has concluded his banter.’
The most popular themes for illustration were taken from the vast range of Hindu religious thought and mythology. The Ramayana of Tulsidas, the Bhagavata Purana, dealing with the life of Krishna, and Jaideva’s Gita Govinda, the symbolical love song for Krishna, were very popular with the Pahari artists. Bhanu Datta’s Rasamanjari was another favourite text. Though Krishna is not mentioned in the text of Rasamanjari he was introduced in its illustrations to represent the hero in the role of the ideal lover. The Pahari painters also included in their repertoire subjects from Siva-Parvati lore, the stories of Nala-Damayanti and Savitri-Sat�avana, and the ballads and popular love tales of the Punjab. The eight types of heroines classified by the Hindi poets according to their physical and mental traits, nature, moods and sentiments and their emotional responsiveness in particular situations were the subject matter of a number of paintings. A deep love of Nature in all her varied manifestations also inspired the artists to paint themes on seasons and musical modes. Living amidst the snow-capped mountains and bubbling rivulets of tempestuous torrents, winding through scenes of verdant glory, the Pahari artists painted Nature as they saw and felt it. They treated it with superb effects and designed it to serve as ideal settings for human emotions and activities. It has, however, to be admitted that the Pahari pictures of scenic grandeur though pretty, lack the stirring appeal of some of the better Mughal miniatures. But in the portrayal of animals and birds the Pahari artists infused them with so much character and intensity of feeling that they appear endowed with an emotional life of their own worthy of being understood and explained through the medium of artistic intuition and expression.

Indeed, one can hardly exaggerate the charm of Pahari pictures. The melodious lines flowing effortlessly and rhythmically and yet so precisely, have given a new meaning to the epics and love-lyrics. As Coomaraswamy observes: ‘This vigorous archaic outline is the basis of its language. Wiry, distinct and sharp as that golden rule of art and life desired by Blake: sensitive, reticent and tender, it perfectly reflects the severe self-control and sweet serenity of Indian life.’ Next, it is the softly glowing colour patterns that give to the Pahari works their cool and refreshing look. No doubt the earlier pictures show warm hues, but they are generally symbolically conceived. The painters loved pure colours like yellow, red and blue and with them created truly remarkable visions of undreamt loveliness. The quality of the Pahari painting is aptly summarised by W. G. Archer in his book Indian Painting in the Punjab Hills: ‘The resources of art were exploited not for descriptive realism but for inducing a poetic trance. The rhythmical qualities of line were employed for achieving a sense of cadence. Colour was sometimes used symbolically to suggest, as in the case of scarlet, the ardours of love. Even landscape was treated as a forest of symbols in which each image whether of trees, flowers, rivers, rain, birds or animals contributed its element of poetic suggestion. Elsewhere in India, painting had developed the expressive qualities of line and colour, but nowhere outside the Punjab Himalayas were there achieved such exquisite renderings of subtle ecstasies of romance.’

Basohli Style

At present our knowledge of a distinctive Pahari school of painting earlier than the 18th century is very meagre. The only evidence we have of the survival

1 A. Coomaraswamy, Rajput Painting, p. 22.
of a tradition has been traced to an illustrated manuscript of the last decade of the 17th century from Basohli. The manuscript is the <i>Rasamanjari</i>, a 15th century Sanskrit work on erotics devoted to the hero-heroine theme. It was painted in 1694-95 by one Devidas for Raja Kripal Pal of Basohli, who ruled from 1678 to 1694. There is at least one more manuscript of the <i>Rasamanjari</i>, illustrated in the same style, though no exact date or Hill State has yet been assigned to it.

The Basohli style, as we find it in the reign of Raja Kripal Pal, is already completely evolved and, therefore, it is all the more unfortunate that we cannot, on the available evidence, provide any helpful solution to the origin of the style. It appears that the court of Basohli had offered patronage and comparative freedom to artists from the plains who had been forced to migrate from the court of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb on account of his hatred for the arts. A similar welcome to artists from Mewar and Malwa may have also introduced the Rajasthani elements in this Hill State. But while we may accept that artists trained in the Mughal style of Aurangzeb or influenced by it had been largely instrumental in the development of the Basohli style, the style itself is so strongly individual that the Mughal influence alone or even an awareness of the Rajasthani miniature art cannot account for its unique quality. It was, therefore, probably the assertion of a strong folk art tradition in conjunction with the Mughal technique that gave birth to the Basohli school.

Basohli paintings are the expression of primitive vigour and fierce vitality. The artist states his facts clearly and broadly but his method is intensely passionate. There is no soft, sentimental approach in love making; rather it is conceived of as a savage passion. Bold lines and brilliant hot colours, organised skilfully in contrast, are eloquently expressive of the intensity of the moods. Yellow, orange, blue and red are particularly moving. Gold and silver paints are also liberally used for embroidery, ornaments, and dress. Very thick white paint imparts a glowing effect to pearls and necklaces. Dark green beetle’s wings cut into diamond shaped pieces are applied on the jewellery to give an emerald effect. The Basohli face, typed according to a peculiar formula, is drawn with a sloping forehead, high nose, and large almond-shaped eyes. Women’s eyes blaze fiercely with passion and their shapely figures, adorned with ornaments, are carefully exposed through transparent drapery. The landscape is treated decoratively. Tree forms are stylised, and so are the blossoms and foliage with sunlight playing through them in subtle decorative patterns. Lovely conventions have also been used in the treatment of horizon, clouds, lightning, and rain.

**Eighteenth Century**

This kind of painting very well suited the temperament of the Hill Rajas—‘ardent, romantic, brave to a degree, colourful, impetuous and rugged like the hill fastness in which they dwelt.’ The style, therefore, soon spread to other Hill States like Nurpur, Mankot, Suket, Bilaspur, Nalagarh, Guler, Kangra, Chamba, and Mandi, where in the early 18th century ateliers grew up, all practising the Basohli style and introducing local elements in it. Extensive sets, each comprising more than a hundred miniatures, were prepared of the <i>Rasamanjari</i> (Kasturbhai Lalbhai Collection), the <i>Bhagavata Purana</i>, the <i>Ramayana</i> (Raja Raghbir Singh Collection, National Museum, New Delhi), the <i>Gita Govinda</i> (divided between Lahore Museum and National Museum, New Delhi), and the <i>Baramasa</i> and
Ragamala (Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Metropolitan Museum, New York and Bharat Kala Bhawan, Banaras) themes. A number of portraits of the Hill Rajas, their consorts, concubines, courtiers, servants, astrologers, learned men, soldiers, and sadhus were also painted. But we now notice a serene quality gradually replacing the intensity of the 17th century Rasamanjari miniatures. Passion is still the dominating emotion but it is now expressed with some tenderness. Colour retains its brilliance but it now glows softly. The Basohli style, however, continued to be the norm till about 1740, when changing political conditions in Northern India vitally affected the art of miniature painting in the Punjab Hills.

After Aurangzeb the Mughal state had grown corrupt and inefficient. It had lost its prestige with India and also outside. The country famous for its riches was now exposed to the menace of a foreign invasion. In 1739 Nadir Shah of Persia invaded India, and when he went back, he left the country ‘bleeding and prostrate.’ The pleasure-loving Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah could do nothing to save the situation. In 1750 began the dismemberment of the tottering Mughal empire, and the Punjab governor surrendered to Ahmad Shah Abdali, the king of Afghanistan. With Punjab went the Hill States, but in the ensuing struggle for power between the Afghans and the Marathas the Punjab region fell into so much disorder and anarchy that the Hill-chiefs, for all practical purposes, became independent. In these chaotic conditions the Northern Plains were no longer considered a safe place. A mass movement, therefore, began of traders, merchants and artists who sought comparative security in the Hill States of Bilaspur, Nadaun, Guler, Nurpur, Basohli, Jammu, and others which were less likely to be in the way of the foreign invaders.

Guler Style

In this way a number of the Mughal artists of the Muhammad Shah period brought a late version of the Mughal style to the courts of the Hill-chiefs. The new arrivals mingled with the local artists and were greatly influenced by the atmosphere of the Hills. They became more lyrical. But their refinement left its own mark on the work of the state artists who gradually abandoned the ‘savage intensity’ of the Basohli school. Soon a new outlook was born which became the fashion all over the Hills. Two states appear to have been the more important centres of the new school of painting—Jammu and Guler. The works produced in the changed style belong to what is known as the middle period of Pahari art, which preceded the third and the final phase of the art starting from Kangra. It covers three decades from 1740 to 1770, and has been described as the Guler style or the pre-Kangra style.

A large group of portraits represent the Jammu idiom. They are all of Balwant Singh, the ruler’s younger brother. One of his most important portraits (Central Museum, Lahore) was done by Nainsukh, whose father Pandit Seu was probably a refugee artist from the Plains. The painting, dated 1748, shows the prince listening to a party of musicians. The new style at Guler is also represented by portraits of the members of the royal house in the reign of Govardhan Chand (A.D. 1745-1773). A number of miniatures devoted to the Krishna legend are associated with the Guler portraits. They are painted in the finest quality of the style of the middle period, but it is not yet known with certainty whether they belong to Guler or any other State. Stylistically Jammu and Guler miniatures are so close that a possi-
bility of Nainsukh himself, or his disciples, working at Guler also and producing the paintings in question cannot be ruled out.

Both at Jammu and Guler a marked Mughal influence can be seen in the paintings. But while an attempt at adjustment with the Mughal style is very obvious at Jammu, a synthesis of the Mughal and Basohli schools is more satisfactorily realised at Guler. The drawing is light and fluid and the composition naturalistic. Pose and gestures play important roles in the portrayal of individuals, and the face becomes the index of character. Along with these new features persist the qualities of the warm and rich Basohli palette.

### Kangra Style

By 1770-75 the middle period of Pahari art passed into its final phase when a new idiom of artistic expression was devised which is known as the Kangra style. The style developed simultaneously all over the Hills though it got its name from Kangra which had become the chief centre of the new style in the later 18th and early 19th centuries. It was a period when Kangra enjoyed unchallenged supremacy over other Hill States. The ruler, Raja Sansar Chand (A.D. 1774-1823), symbolised the new greatness, power and influence. He had also a taste for the arts. On the evidence of the English traveller Moorcraft who visited his court in 1820 it would appear that he had given employment to a number of artists.

Two separate groups of paintings are attributed to the Kangra style. Apart from the difference in quality, the two groups are distinguished on the basis of differences in the female profile. The first of the two facial types has been called by Karl Khandalavala as the Bhagavata type from the fact that it appears in a famous series illustrating the *Bhagavata Purana*. ‘The face is well modelled, and shaded so judiciously that it possesses an almost porcelain-like delicacy. The nose is small and slightly upturned and the hair is carefully painted.’ This type is also found in a *Gita Govinda* (mainly in the collection of Tehri Garhwal Darbar), a *Satsaiya* (in the above collection), a *Ragamala* (National Museum, New Delhi) and a *Baramasa* or Twelve Seasons (Lambagraon Darbar Collection). Many separate paintings belonging to the Bhagavata group have also survived. The famous ‘Blindman’s Buff’ by Manak (in the Collection of Tehri Garhwal Darbar) is considered by some to belong to this group. Undoubtedly this group represents the best of the Kangra paintings.

The other type is known as the Standard type. It has a flat face, straight nose in line with the forehead, long narrow eyes, and sharp chin. There in no modelling of the face, and the hair is treated as a flat black mass with no shading. In all likelihood the state of Kangra appears to be the place where the Standard female facial type was evolved. This type became more popular in the Kangra style and was adopted in nine out of ten of the Kangra pictures.

The beauty of the female body is a dominating feature of the Kangra pictures. All else is secondary. ‘The focal point of the Kangra school consists in the flaming beauty of woman. The life of an Indian woman as lived in the idyllic land of love and expressed through the twelve months, the six seasons and the twenty-four hours of the day provides the rich texture of Pahari paintings. Passionate love enriched by devotional feeling inherent in the heart of a woman towards the man she loves imparts colour to the charming brocade of the painter’s art. Woman in these paintings alone is real... The man lives and shines under her
light as a moth captivated by the warmth of the flame. We do not gather any lasting impression of male beauty in Kangra paintings. But the kaleidoscopic beauty of a woman’s body, the delicacy of her form, the radiance of her face and the indescribable loveliness of her life are subjects in which the Kangra painters excel.¹ The rhythm and the gliding grace of the female form is reflected in the landscape which is treated almost poetically to convey the intensity of the romantic situations. The approach thus being essentially lyrical the Kangra pictures are further characterised by delicate flowing lines, minute decorative details, and glowing colours.

The art of Kangra Valley acquires deep meaning if viewed in its cultural perspective. The symbolism conveys to us a sense of reality, and the superhuman world of the artist’s fantasy no longer appears ludicrous. The style has a unique sense of freedom and is closely connected with the soil. There is no self-consciousness, no studied emotions, no attitudes. It is free from the stresses of exaggerated personality and deliberate individualism, and the painting is nothing but music in colour. The emotions it seeks to portray are registered with astonishing truth. The technique is limited and we find the painter employing set formulas in the portrayal of features, limbs, and landscape. Yet the effect is beautiful, for the forms that evoke it are truly vital, transcending the limitations of mere technique. It is here that lies the greatness of Kangra art.²

The main versions of the Kangra style are those of Bilaspur, Garhwal, Chamba, Guler, and Mandi. It is not, however, always possible to fix the provenance of a miniature.

Though Kangra remained the main style of the Punjab Hills till about the middle of the 19th century, the best works belong mainly to the last quarter of the 18th century. Some good works were produced as late as 1820, but the grace and vitality of Pahari art was beginning to decay. Patronised by the Sikhs the Kangra style in yet another expression lingered on even after 1850, but the spirit was obviously spent up and the rhythm and lyricism had altogether disappeared. It became pompous, degenerate, and superficial and was no more invested with colour and life.

MODERN SCHOOLS

Thus the 19th century witnessed the fast disintegration of the old pictorial traditions of the country. The best in the Mughal and Rajput traditions petered out and quite early in the century what little remained of the indigenous art took a new form under the patronage of European merchants. By 1770, the British mastery over Bengal was assured. A large number of artists, unable to find employment with the Indian nobility, had begun to work for the new rulers who wanted to adorn the walls of their houses with paintings done in the manner of the West. The painters, yielding to material considerations, quickly modified their styles to suit the tastes of their European patrons and produced a number of miniatures and portraits. But the artists were mere copyists whose works were generally crude and lifeless.

It was the time of an increasing European vogue. The English-educated Indian, in a mood of indiscriminate acceptance of everything Western, developed such a sacred respect for Victorian ideas on art that for a temporary period he

² M. S. Randhawa, Kangra Valley Painting, p. 4.
"BLINDMAN'S BUFF"

Belonging to the Tehri-Garhwal school of painting, it is signed on the reverse "painted by Manak" (Manak ki likhi). It is one of the finest and most characteristic of Manaku's creations and depicts Krishna and his cow-herd companions playing a game of hide-and-seek on a full-moon night along the verdant banks of the Jamuna.

(Reproduced from Studies in Indian Painting by N. C. Mehta)
light as a mock euphoria led by the warmth of the sun. We, do not possess any lasting impression of mere beauty in Kaegang paintings. But the Romanticism beauty of a woman's body, the clothing of the peasant, the radiance of the face, the individuality of the flower, the landscape which the Kaegang painters tried to portray. The rhythm and the play of light and shade a certain form is reflected in the landscape which is treated almost preferably to show the harmony of the romantic situations. The approach thus being acceptable, they make the Kaegang painters are further characterized by deliberate, more intense, more decorative details, and glowing colors.

The art of Kaegang painters requires deep meaning to be viewed in its natural perspective. The spectator must be prepared to a sense of reality and the superhuman world of the Kaegang style is otherworldly and appears hallucinatory. The style has a unique sense of freedom and it is closely connected with the soil. There is no self-consciousness, nor an individual enterprise, nor attitude. It is true from the stress of creating personality and democratic individualism, and the painting is nothing more than colour. The emotions and the works of the Kaegang painters are registered with sensitizing marks. The technique is limited and we find the print employing set formulas of the traditional, decorative, and landscape. Yet the effect is marvellous, for the form that spoke it is truly vital, transcending the limitations of form technique. It is here that the Kaegang style of Kaegang painters.

The only method of the Kaegang style are those of Jackson, Courbet, Courbet and Manet. It is not possible to be the representative of Kaegang painters.

Kaegang painters continued the "French Impression" since the 1860s. "Landscape of nature" occurred in 1860s. It developed in France towards Italian 19th century. French painters made an impact on Japanese art. The "landscape of nature" became more popular by the 1860s and 1870s. The Japanese art was influenced by the Western landscape painters. The Japanese artists began to paint landscapes with more attention to natural settings. This style gained popularity in Japan.

MODERN SCHOOLS

This 19th century witnessed the last disintegration of the old traditional traditions of the country. The best in the Bikan and Rangaku traditions passed on and remained in the century with little influence of the innovations until that a new force under the umbrella of European scholars in Japan. By 1770, the British mission to Japan was established. A large number of artists, unable to find employment with the Japanese nobility, had begun to work for the new rulers who wanted to modernize their country with painting done in the manner of the West. The painters quickly adopted European patrons and produced a number of miniatures and portraits. But the artists were more copyists whose works were generally mediocre and tedious.

It was the time of an increasing European taste. The English-educated Indian in a mood of indiscriminate acceptance of everything Western, developed such a taste for Victorian ideas on art that for a temporary period in

2. ibid., p. 19.
refused to believe that there could be found any real basis of a national culture in the soil and traditions of his own country. It was generally considered that Indian art was not based on reality and was extremely poor in technical skill. The artist himself was so thoroughly over-powered by European culture and technique that he turned for inspiration to the Greek ideals of art as explained to him by Englishmen, and took delight in producing pictures which were mere imitations of cheap European art. In the schools of art attached to the various universities of India, Italian masters were accepted as models to be followed by the students and the curriculum of education placed emphasis on European techniques and methods. However, an assessment of the work produced in this period shows that the artists could not well assimilate the lessons they were being taught and only evolved a style that was curiously bastard.

A talented representative of the new taste was Raja Ravi Varma who achieved tremendous popularity in India for his picturisation of mythological subjects. His oleographs, competently drawn, reached a wide public. But his works were photographic and devoid of all aesthetic merit. Even at best they could not get beyond mediocrity. As an art-critic says: 'His pictures invariably manifest a most painful lack of the poetic faculty in illustrating the most imaginative Indian poetry and allegory: and this cardinal sin is not to be atoned for by any kind of technical skill in the execution.'

A continuance of this state of affairs was bound to have fatal consequences for the life and growth of the national art. But by a queer accident of history, it was an Englishman who gave a turn to the tide. E. B. Havell, Principal of the Calcutta School of Art, recognised the grievous wrong done to the cause of Indian art by the imposition of foreign ideas and unintelligent admiration of Western art. He realised the futility of making the Indians copyists of Greek and Roman models and pointed out how destructive of all artistic vitality such imitative efforts could be. He had a deep reverence for India's past and through his writings sought to help educated Indians to a better understanding of the achievements and ideals of their own art heritage.

His efforts and encouragement soon brought about, as Havell himself describes, 'a re-awakening of the artistic soul of India.' The man who lit the torch of awakening was Abanindra Nath Tagore who gave form and character to the revivalist movement known in its historical setting as the Bengal school of Indian painting. Determined to regenerate once again the art-life of the country by capturing the ancient artistic ideals and by producing something truly Indian in style and spirit, Abanindra Nath, assisted by Nand Lal Bose and a small group of immediate associates, went back for inspiration to the Ajanta frescoes and the Mughal, Rajasthani, and Pahari miniatures. Like their great predecessors they found an inexhaustible range of subjects for their imagination to take shape in the religious, legendary, and historical literature of the country and took care to give expression to them in a genuinely Oriental idiom. Western representationalism and technique were completely abandoned. From oil painting they returned to water colour and values were placed on the linear beauty and visual vividness of the earlier days. With the emphasis always on Oriental traditions, Chinese and Japanese paintings too, a short time later, began to be studied, and the Indian artists adopted certain mannerisms of these arts as well. Abanindra Nath Tagore was himself deeply influenced by the calligraphic quality of Chinese paintings and the colour technique of Japanese works and his painting shows a synthesis of various traditions.
But the movement, which was intended to be aesthetic, could not escape being deeply influenced by a feeling of nationalism which ultimately weakened the ideals with which it had started. The patriotic zeal of the people fighting a war of Independence, offered but artificial stimulus to the further progress of the art, and from the thirties of the present century the art movement lost much of its impetus. The later followers of the Revivalist school lacked the power of visualisation of the pioneers. They adopted not only the technique and language of the Ajanta, the Rajput, and the Mughal artists, but also began to copy the ideological and social contents of their productions. And they got so much engrossed in imitation that they became incapable of giving anything new or original. They became involved in set techniques and approved moulds which were not creative. Lifeless picturisation of historical and mythological subjects, instead of interpretation and subjectivism, became the key-note of the follower's works.

Fortunately, however, about the same time a new movement, a new search for the Spirit of Truth, was being launched in the country by a set of talented artists who really belonged to the Revivalist school at its best, but had consciously set themselves to the task of re-interpreting the old forms and translating their thoughts and visions in various new modes and possibilities. Modernism in Indian painting, in the sense of opening up of new paths and discovering new principles of artistic expression was thus ushered in by 'rebels,' but by the exponents of traditionalism themselves. It was really the appearance of a new outlook rather than a victory of the one form over the other.

Gaganendra Nath Tagore, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Nand Lal Bose, and Jamini Roy were its great pioneers in the Calcutta group. Gaganendra Nath, who was strongly influenced by the achievements of the Impressionists of France, daringly experimented with pleasant cubistic manipulations. In subtle brush work he portrayed the various pictorial possibilities of light and shade of Indian life in terms of new idioms. Rabindra Nath Tagore struck out a new note in expressionism. He was greatly impressed by the West but he kept his individuality by the richness of line, true Indian colours and movements. His paintings are what an art-critic years ago aptly termed as the 'subconscious products created in moments of subjective trance, when his adult personality takes rest to make room for child personality to romp and play.' The fantastic animals, the sad faces of beautiful young women, the haunting looks of the male profiles, even the landscape, are reflections of a great poet's sub-conscious mind. With Nand Lal Bose the old Indian conception of form no doubt remains the ideal, but his inspirations led him to experiment with remarkable success with diverse techniques and media of expression. Under their guidance a number of younger artists in the Calcutta group came in the field and started to develop with vigour a synthesis of Eastern and Western manners. Among the first members of the coterie were Ratnash Maitra, Gopal Ghose, Subho Tagore, and Padmin Das Gupta.

Jamini Roy, after trying his hand in the European academic traditions, later in the manner of the post-Impressionists and Picasso as well, and for some time painting in the style of the Revivalist Bengal school, struck out on his own in 1921 and strove after a more vigorously expressive style. He wanted the clear line and unabashed colour. So he fled to his village to take inspiration from the ageless folk art traditions of the countryside. With his urge for a simple, vigorous, and coherent statement of form, he felt a growing understanding between himself and the humble village artisans, which finally became the determinant of
his style. Out of the ‘pat’ and the scroll, the pottery and the clay dolls, he fashioned his own incisive, individual and unmistakable style. Jamini Roy is now after expressive forms in the simplest compositional schemes. Using the form and brush of the village artists, his aim is to represent ‘the inherent idea of the object distilled from its concreteness.’

In quite another way, Amrita Sher-Gil, whose short span of life ended at the age of 29 years in 1941, introduced a new vision in Indian painting. Deeply imbued with the Spirit of Ajanta, which she acknowledged as ‘that really great and eternal example of pure painting,’ and equally influenced by Cezanne and Gauguin on account of her training at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, she boldly employed the Western technique, form, and colour for recreating the Indian themes, particularly the miserable and the pathetic aspects. She saw life all around her as ‘one long frustration, unquestioning acceptance or resignation.’ One always senses in her pictures an ‘indefinable melancholy’ burdened with inevitability. Asked as to why she had chosen to depict only the sad and the dark side of Indian life she replied: ‘I wish to be an interpreter of the atrocious physiological misery that abounds in our country and which has made a profound impression on me. Art, it is my conviction, must be connected with the soil, if it is to be vital.’ Sher-Gil’s major contribution, however, is as a brilliant organiser of form and colour, which alone she felt could express the emotional content of her being. She was concerned with the subject matter of her pictures only ‘to the extent to which a scene or a model provided a suitable vehicle for form and colour. To her every picture was just an expression of form and colour and she gave labels to her pictures, only as a means to distinguish them from each other.’¹ She had a very original colour sense and obtained her effects less by play of light and shade than by the enamelled translucence of the pigment itself. Indeed, the pristine purity of the oils linked to a genuine but disciplined emotional approach singles her out as a great Indian painter. It may be said that probably few artists have succeeded more than Amrita Sher-Gil in giving original forms to Indian traditions. Her works have given a great impetus to modern art in India and the inspiration to go forward in experimental directions.

The lead given by the great pioneers has been accepted with force and fluency by young contemporaries all over the country, who are making individual search of new subjects, new angles, new patterns, new arrangements of form and colour. Hebber is still maturing his own sense of colour and movement within the influence of Amrita Sher-Gil. Chavda has developed an rhythmic harmony of motion in his paintings and an individual colour grouping, mainly decorative. Raza’s painting is the work of a visionary poet. His talent, deeply rooted in the Indian soil, is now taking form under French skies. Ara, Akbar Padamsee, Rawal, Hazarnis, Samant, Gaitonde, are some of the other contemporaries of the Western group infected with the same uneasiness.

The works of Shaloz Mukherjea and George Keyt represent perhaps the most individual synthesis of the Indian impulse and the Western idiom. Among the other great artists who like them have borrowed from the West to add to their own vision of the East are Husain, Gujral, Kaushik, Kulkarni, Sanyal, Bhagat, Mago, Kanwal Krishna, Ram Kinker, Bendre, Ram Kumar, Jahangir Sabavala, Krishna Khanna, Frank Wesley, and Makhnel Dutta. Another group of young artists who have gone back for inspiration to the powerfully expressive forms of

¹ Karl Khandalavala, ‘Amrita Sher-Gil,’ The Indian Annual, 1948.
the folk-art includes Sheila Auden, Sreenivasulu, P. L. Narasimha Murti, Paidi Raju, Rajiah, Rajaji, Devayani Krishna, Abani Sen, and Badri Narayan. These and a few others are the people with a passion for artistic integrity. In their works one is bound to note a spirit of striving after the fundamental principles of Indian art. There is a sincere appreciation of the experiences of the West, but at the same time a deep consciousness of the rich heritage of tradition is also noticeable in their products. With delicate sensibility they have shown themselves capable of playing with form and colour in a manner which is remarkable for its 'Indianness', originality of ideas and of technique.

But in spite of the efforts of these artists it is on the whole a bewildering scene on the contemporary canvas. There are the 'traditionalists' who want to continue certain forms and characteristics of the Ajanta, Mughal, and Rajput arts because they feel that they alone contain the essence of the Indian spirit. There are the 'representationals' who follow the academic and impressionist schools of Europe. In a general way this group includes artists who put faith in photographic naturalism and those who base their creative endeavours on impressions of nature transformed by the intensity of their own visions. The 'neo-primitives' express themselves through the medium of the folk-art tradition, but not without revealing their own insight and imagination. Indeed, the simple, sincere and virile forms of the folk-art have so much fascinated an influential group of artists that the folk idiom appears to have found a very secure place for itself in the art-life of the country. The 'experimentalists,' however, are the most unaccountable lot because their experiments result in all sorts of new, freakish, and capricious ways of visualisation.

It must be conceded that the days of mere copying the past are now passed and the old motifs are no longer found suitable. We now find among the artists an urge to create new themes, new forms, new norms of beauty, and new ways of giving expression to them. They claim themselves to be adventurers and explorers, aware of new visions and values and wanting to organise form and colour in different novel and uncommon patterns. But as the Indian art-critic A. S. Raman points out: 'Modern art in India has been mostly derivative because of its dependence on the Ecole de Paris without the latter's intellectual base. That is why it has been of no significance, judged in the context of the developments, in the art world since the sixties of the last century. It has no future at all unless it says something new and enduring in a language understood all over the world. This is of course not possible at all, if our so-called modernists continue to produce something that can only amuse the Westerner and annoy the Indian.'

Pakistan

As a general observation it may be said that the artist in Pakistan is giving up the traditional and stylised for a realistic approach in art. The few young artists who have recently returned from Europe are deeply impressed by the modern movements of painting there and are constantly experimenting with new Western techniques.

There appear to be two distinct groups area-wise in painting: West and East Pakistan. In both the groups the art is secular, and the subjects for that reason tend to be either landscape, figure composition, or abstract designs. The older academic group in West Pakistan is led by A.R. Chughtai who concentrating
1. Illustrations from Uttaradhyayana Sutta, Western Indian school. Top, a hunting scene; Bottom, penance of a Thirthankara.


3. Illuminated palm-leaf mms. depicting the monkey miracle of the Buddha, Pala period, 11th-12th century. (Courtesy, Bharat Kala Bhavan).
Yudhisthira, Krishna, and the Pandavas hold a great feast at Hastinapur before the horse is set at liberty. From the Razm Namah of Khwaja Inayatullah.
(From The Journal of Indian Art and Industry)
A prince hunting, by Ali Quili, Mogul school (From The Library of A. Chester Beatty).
The Himalayan Cheer Pheasant, by Ustad Mansur, Mogul school, early 17th century. The Wantage Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum.
1. Illustration from Bhanu Datta's Rasamanjari by Devidas, Basohli school, A.D. 1694, National Museum, New Delhi.

Wives of the Mathura Brahmans carrying food to Shri Krishna. Pahari (Kangra) school, 18th century (From Rajput Painting by Ananda Coomaraswamy).
Radha and Krishna sheltering from the rain, Pahari (Kangra) school, late 18th century (From Rajput Painting by Ananda Coomaraswamy).
1. A painting by Jamini Roy.
   (Courtesy, Bharat Kala Bhavan).
1. Pataka (flag)—it is mainly used to represent the beginning of a dramatic representation, benediction, cloud, night, etc.
2. Tripatana (three flags)—thunderbolt, flames of fire, etc. It is also used when a character speaks aside to another on the stage.
3. Ardhapataka (half flag)—leaves of trees, arrow, knife, etc.
4. Kartaramukha (scissors)—separation, death, etc.
5. Mayura (peacock)—bird in general creepers, etc.
6. Ardhachandra (half moon)—a phase of the moon, prayer, meditation, etc.
7. Arala (cooked)—drinking, cyclone, etc.
8. Shukatunda (parrot's beak)—throwing of arrows and spears, etc.
9. Mushti (closed fist)—fixed intention, grasping, fight, etc.
10. Shikhara (peak)—refusal, drawing of something, etc.
11. Kapitha (wood-apple)—milking a cow, holding a flower, etc.
12. Katakamukha (joint of a bracelet)—plucking flowers, offering betels, etc.
13. Suchi (needle)—unity, God, rod, circular movement, scolding, etc.
14. Chandrakala (a phase of the moon)—moon, river, cudgel, etc.
15. Padmakosha (lotus bud)—fruits, buds, balls, etc.
16. Sarpashirsha (snake's hood)—snake, offering libations of water, etc.
17. Mrigashirsha (deer-head)—animal's head, beckoning, etc.
18. Simhamukha (lion's head)—elephant, lion, etc.
19. Kangula—larks, areca-nut, cocoanut, etc.
20. Alapadma (full-blown lotus)—full-blown flowers, fruits, full moon, etc.
21. Chatura (sly)—something small, gold, musk, eye, oil, etc.
22. Brahamara (black bee)—black bee, parrot, cuckoo, crane, etc.
23. Hamsasya (swan's head)—auspiciousness, painting a portrait, etc.
24. Hamapaksha (swan's wings)—to denote the number six, covering, etc.
25. Sandamsha (pincers)—offering presents, number five, etc.
26. Mukula (bud)—lily, taking meal, holding small things, etc.
27. Tamrachuda (cock)—cock, crow, writing a manuscript, etc.
28. Trishula (trident)—represents the number three, trident, etc.

28. DIFFERENT GESTURES OF THE SINGLE HAND USED IN DANCING
(as mentioned in the Abhinayanadarpana)
1. Anjali (joined palms)—salutation, offering presents to gods, etc.
2. Kapota (pigeon)—salutation, modesty, etc.
3. Karkata (crab)—blowing conch-shells, pressing down, etc.
4. Svastika (cross)—crocodile, big creatures, etc.
5. Pushpaputa (palmful of flowers)—offering flowers to gods, accepting fruits, etc.
6. Shivalinga (image of God Shiva)—the idol of Shiva.
7. Katakavardhana (pair of bracelets)—carnation, marriage, worship, etc.
8. Kartarivastika (pair of scissors)—hill-top, tree, branches, etc.
9. Shakata (cart)—a demon, carriage, etc.
10. Shankha (conch shell)—a conch-shell.
11. Chakra (discus, wheel)—a wheel.
12. Samputa (box)—covering, box, etc.
13. Pasha (noose)—quarrel, noose, chain, etc.
14. Kilaka (wedge)—affection, love-affair, light talk, etc.
15. Matsya (fish)—fish, etc.
17. Varaha (boar)—a wild boar or other wild animals.
18. Garuda (king of birds)—birds.
19. Nagabandha (pair of serpents)—a serpentine noose.
20. Khatva (bedstead)—bedstead, palanquin, etc.

GESTURES OF THE COMBINED HANDS USED IN INDIAN DANCING

(as mentioned in the Abhinayadarsana)
1. Musical accompaniment to Kathakali.

2. Kathakali dance pose.

1. Kathakali dancers in traditional costume and make-up (Photo, A. L. Syed).

2. Chattunni Panicker as Nala and Mrinalini Sarabhai as Damayanti in “Nala Charitam,” traditional Kathakali (Courtesy, Mrinalini Sarabhai).

3. Panicker as King Nala and Shivashankar as the kamsa in “Nala Charitam” (Courtesy, Mrinalini Sarabhai).
Celebrated dancer, Shanta Rao, in a classical and traditional Bharata Natyam pose (Photo, M. Desai).
A Manipuri dance pose (Photo A. L. Syed).

Sitara Devi in the Nataraja dance of the Kathak school (Courtesy, Sitara Devi).
on sincerity and a human approach continues to give magic and life to his canvases. His followers, however, with over-emphasis on technical proficiency and repetition of increasingly sentimental productions have greatly reduced the aesthetic merit of their works. The Mayo School of Arts at Lahore, growing under the shadow of Chughtai, has effectively revived both the design and the feel of Muslim traditions in calligraphy, choice of colour, and beauty of pattern. Some women artists of the Punjab, often markedly influenced by modern European masters, have shown remarkable originality in their work. Sughra Rababi, Razia Sirajuddin, Asghari Manzoor Qadir, and Razia Ferozeuddin have achieved considerable success in depicting emotions with intense colours and well finished technique.

Interesting as the work of the West Pakistan group is, it hardly compares with the brilliance displayed by the second group of East Pakistan. Zainul-Abedin stands out as the greatest of the artists belonging to this group. ‘An excellent draughtsman with bare economy of line he can conjure wonder out of nothingness and make of all the world an enchanted place.’ His drawings inspired by the Bengal famine of 1943 combined exceptional pictorial merit with acute realism and rudely awakened the conscience of the people to the depths of the great tragedy. He has touched happier subjects in his later works. There is about his paintings now a normal mingling of love and delight, of sorrow and sympathy, but the whole scene is dominated by feeling and purpose.

Besides Zainul-Abedin, Safuddin Ahmad, Anwarul Haq and Khwaja Shafiq Ahmed may be regarded as representatives of the modern trends in Pakistani art in the second group. With competent control over line and colour they are seeking newer modes of self-expression; and even in experiments one can detect the subtlety of design. A painter who is boldly employing the Western idiom with confidence is Zubeida Agha. She has devoted herself completely to abstract art and in the concrete realisation of the symphonies in colour she speaks to us in a language of pure thought and philosophy. A newly discovered artist of Pakistan is Jehangir who has already attracted attention with his water colours which he finds most suitable with which to catch the rare in landscape beauty.
DANCE

T IT IS easy to imagine that dancing came to man as the earliest and the easiest means of expressing the exhilaration of the spirit. With each new event in human life, the mood and the faith of man must have tended to form into movements expressive of the inner rhythms. But gradually, as the movements developed into formalised idioms, and dance came to play its own role in the disciplining of emotions it became a medium for expressing the exaltation of life. In India the refinement went much further. Here the movements developed and broadened into a search for the Divinity, into a conscious effort to understand the Manifest and reach the Unmanifest. Indeed, in the purpose and aspirations of its fundamental passions, Indian dancing came so much to be linked with spiritual conceptions that it became not merely the supreme manifestation of physical life but also the supreme unfoldment of the spiritual state. Every step, every movement, and every gesture became an expression of the spiritual. And the dance of India came to be regarded as a divine art meant only to enkindle emotions expressive of the highest and the purest sentiments of the human heart.

The first glimpse of the dance is given by the great god Siva. The Hindu philosophers have conjured up the course of the universe as an expression of the Cosmic-Dance. Siva himself is the eternal Cosmic-Dancer, and among the greatest of his names is Nataraja, the Lord of Dancers and Actors. He is the Supreme Yogi whose Dance visualises the unity of Being. He is the Creator, Preserver, and the Final Hope of man, whose dance radiates all movement within the Cosmos and lifts humanity from the temporal to the eternal realities.

The Supreme Life dancing in the complete oneness of soul and body is symbolised once again in the dance of Krishna and Radha, the Eternal Lovers. While Siva is Nataraja, Krishna is Natwar. He is the embodiment of spiritual love leading the soul, in the process of dancing, on the path of liberation. The love-play in the rhythm of the dance of Krishna and the ‘gopis’ is not an historical event but an expression of the poetry of Eternal Life representing the craving of the Individual Soul (Jivatama) to join the Divine Soul (Paramatama).

It is against such a deeply philosophical and religious background that the dance traditions originated and developed in India. It was accepted as the vehicle for communicating the dominant concepts of man’s faith and was nurtured in the temple, where the rhythms of the dance wove into the architectural fabric of the sikhara rising to the region of the gods. What was creative in man was offered to the Supreme Creator and his efforts codified into a comprehensive doctrine.

The traditional history of the dance in India is well known. It is believed that Brahma, the One Creator of all, gave the Natya Veda as the fifth Veda out of the original four Vedas to the great sage Bharata, the father of Indian dance and dramatics. Bharata produced a play for the delectation of the gods and performed it before Siva and his consort Parvati, which so much pleased them that
Siva asked his ‘gana’ Tandu to teach the sage the principles of His Cosmic dance. Parvati taught her own dance to Usha, wife of Anirudha, the grandson of Shri Krishna. Usha later instructed the ladies of Dwarka in the art, and they in their turn taught it to the Saurashtra women from whom it spread all over the country.

Whether we accept these legends or not we cannot but admit that dancing in India is of great antiquity. The discovery of a greyish limestone torso from Harappa in a dancing posture, and of a very lively bronze statuette representing a nude dancing girl takes back the history of dancing as a cultivated art to the 3rd millennium B.C. In the Vedic age dancing was only a communal activity and formed part of the religious ceremonies. There are frequent references in the Rig Veda to ritualistic dances and musical instruments accompanying such performances. In Sayan’s commentary on the Rig Veda the following renderings occur: Nrityamany Asmitah for dancing gods; Jagama Nrityatey, Nartanaya Karmani, Gatra Vikshepaya for body movements in order to dance; Nrityantah for when dancing. At the end of the Asvamedha Yagya women are mentioned as dancing round the sacred fire with water pots on their heads, beating the ground with their feet and singing, ‘This is honey.’ By their dances they were supposed to endow the sacrificers with might.

The dance continued to be a sacrificial rite in the time of Asoka and supplied rhythm and harmony to Buddhist sculpture from its earliest phases. In the meantime dancing was also creeping into the more sophisticated levels of culture. An inscription belonging to the 2nd century B.C. from the Hathi Gumpha cave at Udayagiri shows that King Kharavela of Orissa was an expert dancer and had arranged a performance of Tandava for the delectation of his people. A number of carved panels from the cave temples of Khandagiri and Udayagiri show both men and women dancers in the act of making offerings to the sacred symbols of the Jains.

By the time we come to the Gupta era of Indian history dancing had become a necessary element in upper class culture, and the ladies of the royal and aristocratic households practised it as an accomplishment. Stage performances by professional dancing girls were also popular at the courts and the more elegant among the dancers were ‘loved, praised and eulogised’ by the young rich.

The earliest known codified work on the dance and dramaturgy is the Natya Shastra of Bharata Muni written somewhere between the 2nd and the 4th centuries A.D. He quotes earlier authors and refers to four regional variations of the art, namely Avanti, Dakshinatya, Panchali, and Odhra-Magadhi, and gives valuable information about their ‘clever and graceful gestures.’ In a valuable Tamil work, Silapadikaram by Ilango, written about the same time as the Natya Shastra, there are elaborate descriptions of the dance, governed by the same rules as laid down by Bharata, suggesting one unified school of dancing all over the country. Abhinaya Darpana of Nandikesvara is another work of importance and was written within 100 years of the Natya Shastra. A codified gesture language was already in use when Kalidasa wrote his dramas as would appear from the way the dancers in his plays make gestures in accordance with the flavour or sentiment to be expressed in order to portray a particular action.

From all this we can justifiably presume that a mature and classical form of dance was prevalent in the country even in the remote past.

The practice of dancing in temples as part of the daily worship had also developed early. A special class of women who had dedicated their lives to the
service of the Lord of the temple to which they were attached, and their dance performances, formed an invariable part of the temple rituals all over the country. These women called Devadasis took part in the religious dramas, and with their songs and dances infused the rhythm of devotion into the hearts of the devotees. And so genuine were the interpretations of the noblest visions which these Devadasi dancers presented that the poses, gestures, and rhythms of their formalised dance movements were permanently recorded in the temple sculptures.

Dancing received a fresh impetus with the development of the devotional cults in the country, using music and dance as the principal means of approach to God. In the South, Saiva iconography developed into the Nataraja, and the poets in the North sang with passion of the flame of love between Krishna and Radha, which was interpreted to the people through the medium of dance and drama. All this led to an unprecedented growth of cult rituals so that in the medieval period, dance-halls (Natya-mandapas) were almost always provided in the larger temples where beautiful young Devadasis displayed their art before the idols. Sometimes even the queens participated in the ritual dances like Santale, the senior wife of Vishnupardhana Hoysala. The temple of the Sun at Konarak has numerous relief carvings of these women in dancing poses. The pillars of the temple of Sittanavasal are similarly profusely adorned with statues of dancing Devadasis. Unfortunately, for various reasons, mainly social and political, the cult of the Devadasi is now extinct almost everywhere in the country.

With the ancient civilisation of India coming into contact with the crossbow, the catapult, and the firearms of foreign science, patronage for the art of dancing received a serious setback. During the 600 years or more of the Muslim rule in India: while a number of the traditional arts and crafts developed and were enriched the glorious tradition of the classical dance slowly languished and died in the North. The Mohammedans gave it the status of low sensual entertainment, perceiving only the physical charms of the dancer as she whirled about the music of the Imperial ‘naubatkhana.’ Emphasis shifted from the spiritual to the physical and prostitutes took to dancing as an easy means to gain the favour of the Turk, Afghan and the Mughal lords. The dance of India lost its emotional and spiritual appeal and expressed only the lower sentiments of passion. It soon came to be tainted as something low in society, and became a tabooed art for respectable women. However, even in this age of dancing girls and courtesans the Kathak style of the North maintained its emotive aspects, although tending to become more and more secular. There were also certain communities among whom dancing was a profession, and who maintained a rich and varied tradition of it. Abul Fazl specifies in the Ain-i-Akbari the names of such communities: Murakiya, Dadhi, Natwa, Bhagatiya, Bhanvaiya, Kanchani, and Kurtaniyas.

The South retained the old dances in their classical purity, having enjoyed comparatively greater protection from foreign invasions on account of its geographical position and also because it received sustained patronage from the successive generations of the Hindu ruling families. Many artists from the North took refuge in the South and continued to teach and protect dancing. In fact, one of the great arts of the later middle ages in the South was dancing, sacred to the Lord of Chidambaram. Bharata Natyam as it is danced today was more or less formulated about this time.

An unconscious surrender to the deeper rhythms of life has made the masses of India dance from the earliest times. They have danced through the various
periods of history from Kashmir in the north to Cape Camorin in the south, from Saurashtra and Maharashtra in the West to Manipur in the east, undisturbed by the political upheavals going on in the cities and towns and unaware of the learned treatises on the art.

Moving through a glorious past the classical traditions of Indian dancing are even now in a state of transition. The scene has shifted from the temple to the stage and the impact of an entirely different social environment is also being felt. Although the ancient heritage continues to be the inspiring source, attempts are being made to re-vitalise the traditional dances of the country by presenting them in a manner governed as much by the classical techniques as by the interpretations of their creators. The artist feels that true emotions can never be faithfully rendered unless he tells the story in a manner that reflects the mood and life around him. In recent years, in the sudden overwhelming desire to understand the arts of the country, the number of artists experimenting and progressing on their deeper inner impulse to create has been considerably increasing. Great pioneers like Uday Shanker, Ram Gopal, Gopinath, Rukmini Devi, Menaka, and Mrinalini Sarabhai have not only revived the old Indian dance forms but have also adapted them to the conditions of the modern age, interpreting the ancient art to new eyes. Uday Shanker’s famous ballets ‘Labour and Machinery’ and ‘Rhythm of Life’ have a strong sociological content, depicting modern ideas in traditional gestures and movements. Among purely classical themes, Rukmini Devi’s ‘Kumarasambhavam,’ Kalidasa’s immortal epic, is a modern choreographic reconstruction of the ancient classic.

Today there are four main systems of traditional dancing in India, namely, Kathakali, Bharata Natyam, Manipuri, and Kathak, besides a few less known forms, flourishing in different regions of the country. But although they all conform to the codes laid down in the Natya Shastra they have, in the course of their development, imbied movements from the local folk traditions and also assimilated influences from foreign sources infiltrating through trade or invasions.

Certain principles have been laid down in the art treatises for the realisation of the supreme ideal of Beauty, which is the aim of all artistic practice whether it be dance, drama, music or any other art. Of these the principle of Rasa holds the most important place. The object of all arts is the evoking of Rasa. Rasa or sentiment (though not an exact synonym) in dance is the enkindling in the spectator of a state of bliss or pure joy which is aesthetically aroused by the dancer’s portrayal of Bhava or emotions. Bhava has to be distinguished from the emotion which is the outcome of a coherent experience of the senses in a concrete situation and condition. In the latter case the quality of emotion is personal whereas in a dance it is impersonal. The dancer may make us experience all the emotions in turn by treating the various aspects of life—delightful or disgusting, exalted or lowly, cruel or kind, obscene or refined, actual or imaginary—but in each case the final effect that would be left on the mind of the spectator would not be that of the emotion depicted, but an abstract impersonal experience of aesthetic beauty and delight. Rasa would thus be intuitively realised.

The Rasas are now generally accepted to be nine, namely, Sringara (love), Vira (heroism), Karuna (compassion), Raudra (anger) Hasya (humour), Bhayanaka (fear), Bibhatsa (disgust), Adhahuta (wonder), and Shanta (tranquillity). When we speak of the different forms of Rasas, however, we do not mean that Rasa is qualitatively or quantitatively divisible into so many species, but that the nine
Rasas are no more than the various colourings of one experience, and are arbitrary terms of rhetoric used only for convenience in classification. . . .

To evoke Rasa in the spectator the dancer has to provide the favourable conditions by a deliberate treatment of life. That leads us to another very important law of dancing. The dancers are enjoined to cultivate a complete mastery of the language of suggestions so that representations of the situations and emotions to be portrayed should be absolutely faithful and independent of the performer's own feelings. In Indian dancing, for this reason, the action is not simply the expression of man's subjective emotions, but becomes also an objective realisation of the movements and expressions around, through the use of a highly developed technique of symbolic and suggestive gestures, known as the language of gods in Sanskrit treatises. Every object and emotion has a gesture to represent it and every gesture is pregnant with deep symbolic meaning.

This is a singularly significant aspect of Indian dancing. Its gesture language, as codified in the Sanskrit texts of Natya Shastra and Abhinaya Darpana, is based on a thorough knowledge of life and nature and is almost a perfect medium for the interpretation and portrayal of emotional experiences and situations. The dancer while depicting the objects with his limbs manages at the same time to evoke the natural and appropriate feelings in his face and connects them through his eyes and emotions with the objects represented, so that where the hand is the glance goes, and where the glance is the mind goes. Thus the art of a great dancer depends foremost on the success with which a life she or he can express. According to the Natya Shastra, amongst the greatest virtues that a dancer must possess, the first is the 'grace of repose,' implying a merging of the Self of the dancer into his art, into what he is creating for the moment. In order that the form of an image or an emotion may be interpreted fully and vividly before the mind the dancer must not only see the image and feel the emotion but should also meditate through a spiritual vision. In this way the relative positions of the dancer and the spectators become artificial because the dancer in the exposition of a story is not the narrator but a person who is experiencing and realising the situation in the same impersonal way as the spectator watching him and thus enjoying the joy of Rasa himself. As Dr. Coomaraswamy renders the point: 'If he is moved by what he represents, he is moved as a spectator and not as an artist . . . Excellent art wears the air of perfect spontaneity . . . that is an art which conceals art.'

Before entering into a discussion of the various dance forms it would be useful to bring out in a general way the meaning of three words—Natya, Nritta, and Nritya. The word Natya is synonymous with Abhinaya and means the communication of human activity as a whole conditioned by the expression of Rasa. It has an element of drama. Abhinaya is of four kinds: Angika Abhinaya which involves expression through gestures of limbs, including the use of hands and fingers which are of vital importance. Vachika Abhinaya is expression by words and involves the use of poetry and song. The musical accompaniment and the singing of the dancer are both vehicles of Vachika. Aharya Abhinaya is costume and make-up. The fourth aspect is Satvika Abhinaya. It is the outer mode of an inner experience and is the main thing in the dance. It is the ability to interpret and to show even physically such temperamental states as paralysis.

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1 A. K. Coomaraswamy, Dance of Siva, p. 32.
fainting, change of voice, trembling, change of colour, and many other effects caused by the fundamental sentiments. Nritta conveys a sense of pure joy of movement and rhythm. Its beauty lies in the effective rendering of the rhythmic patterns by graceful movements of the limbs. A full fledged dance includes Nritta also, although it is possible to have Nritta devoid of all Natya. Nrittya is that part of dancing in which an act of physical communication, accomplished through the use of suggestive facial expressions, codified hand gestures, and symbolic body postures, is expressive of Bhava.

Kathakali

Of the four main dance systems probably the most evolved is the Kathakali dance of the west coast. Although popular in almost every part of South India it is on the palm-fringed beaches and the backwaters of Kerala that this system of dancing has preserved some of the purest traditions of Hindu Nrittya. Kathakali, in its present form, is not more than four hundred years old, but its roots can be traced to a period of civilisation of very ancient date, considering that it has certain primitive elements in its rhythm, music, make-up, dress and ornaments, and considering also that it gave birth, at a distant date, to the Javanese and Kandyan dances. Actually, the classical dance art of Kathakali represents a blending of the Aryan and Dravidian cultures for in the course of its development it has absorbed various elements from the social and religious practices of these ancient peoples and shaped out its technique based on them.

A number of dances, dramas, and dance-dramas, associated both with the Aryan and the Dravidian cultures, are known to have existed in Kerala prior to the genesis of the colourful complex dance pattern we know today. Probably the earliest of them is the Chakiar Koothu, believed to have been introduced into Kerala by the Nambudiris, the early Aryan immigrants. It is performed only by members of the Chakiar caste, who are hereditary temple dancers and master story-tellers. Their art consists in the recitation of a story in a quasi-dramatic style, with eloquent declamation, suggestive facial expressions and hand gestures, and is accompanied by drumming and playing of cymbals. Kudiyattam and Patahkam are the other stylised dances that came to Kerala as a result of Aryan influences. Dances forming part of the Dravidian culture are ritual dances, associated mainly with the cult of Bhagavati (Sakti). The most important of them are Mutiyettu, Tirayattam, and Tiyattam, in which the dancers, attired and adorned in colourful costumes and gorgeous head-dresses, sometimes even with masks and paints on their faces, depict the triumph of gods over demons, while the Chenda (cylindrical drum) provides the music. These are the principal sources whose symbols of sounds, gestures, make-up, music, and ritualism went into the making of the Kathakali dance-dramas. Some elements of the socio-religious dances of the Nambudiris, the martial dances of the Nayars (Dravidian representatives of the land), and the folk plays of early and medieval Kerala, were possibly also borrowed to build up the Kathakali dance system.

As the dance traditions developed the Nambudiris and the Nayars themselves helped in the moulding of the Kathakali system by 'refining the mystery celebrations' of their festivals. About the middle of the 17th century a dance-drama known as Krishna Attam, one of the early forms of the Kathakali tradition

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1 Venkatachalap, Dance in India, p. 100.
in its formative stage, was evolved by the Zamorin of Calicut. It is believed to be based on Ashtapadiyattam, a folk dance-play modelled on the Gita Govinda of Jaideva. The Krishna Attam provided the inspiration for the creation of another dance-drama, the Raman Attam, by the Raja of Kottarakara. Soon followed several other dance-dramas, written on the pattern of the Raman Attam, and relating to the themes from Hindu mythology, particularly the Mahabharata, Bhagavata and Siva Purana. When in this way the Raman Attam art had widened its field, the style of dance-play known as Kathakali really emerged. The Travenous royal house bestowed its special attention on it, enriched it by its literary contributions, and organised a royal troupe of Kathakali actor-dancers. Even kings and princes considered it a privilege to participate in a Kathakali performance. Thus under royal patronage Kathakali developed and prospered for about two hundred years when about the middle of the 19th century, as a result of general apathy towards all art that was Indian and a craze for only European expressions, the very existence of Kathakali became precarious. In 1930, however, a saviour appeared on the scene in the person of Vallathol Narayan Menon who established a centre of art and culture in Kerala and ushered in a period of Kathakali renaissance. Today Kathakali is a great and fascinating art. Gopinath, Kunjlu Kurup, Krishnan Nair, and Krishnan Kutty, are some of its great votaries who are doing much to popularise it in the country.

Kathakali, literally meaning story-play, is a composite art made up of the elements of dance, drama, and music. It is the narration in pantomime of the story of gods, goddesses, heroes, and demons from Hindu mythological lore, mainly the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, and the Puranas. As Kathakali belongs to the category of religious dances most of its stories are moral in texture, the motif being the depiction of the struggle of the good against the evil and the ultimate triumph of the Holy over the Unholy.

The principal Kathakali characters are broadly classified as:

Full Satva: Characters detached from materialism, such as saints, sages and divine beings.
Satva Rajas: Virtuous kings and heroes.
Rajas: Worldly rulers who have greed, vanity and lust.
Tamas: Evil characters in the form of terrifying demons.

These characters on the Kathakali stage are distinguished by variations in costume and facial make-up. The Natya Shastra lays special emphasis on facial colouring in the expression of moods and sentiments and as aid to Abhinaya. Some of the sentiments are allied to certain colours; for example, the erotic mood with light green, the terrible with black, the violent passions with red, and the yellow with the marvellous. The impersonation of the human actors into the shape and form of gods or demons was deliberately enjoined in the Kathakali technique with a view to achieving greater harmony and rhythmic concord in their appearance, mood and acting. The characters in Kathakali being all mythological the convention with regard to make-up and costumes is based either on imaginary conceptions or derived somewhat from the magical cults of the Dravidians of a remote past. The principles of modern dramatic realism cannot, therefore, be applied to the Kathakali make-up which may appear fantastic and grotesque.
The transformation of the Kathakali actor into a ‘symbolic mythological personality’ is almost a ritual. The actor has to cultivate one or the other of the principal types and has to submit to a prolonged toilet, which begins in the Green Room hours before the performance so that he would ‘grow into the rhythmic possibilities of the part he is to play by a kind of gradual process of involvement into the atmosphere of the symbolic character.’ Really, so elaborate and complex is the technique of make-up that the ‘Patukaran,’ the recitor, who is also the make-up artist, is one of the most valued members of the Kathakali troupe.

The make-up consists of a white outline with Chutti, a mixture of rice, flour, and lime, cleverly done in relief on the sides of the face from ear to ear, and painting of the face within it according to the requirements of the character depicted, following rigidly the traditional colour schemes. Holy characters have fewer lines of Chutti than the evil ones, who often have pieces of paper stuck along the cheekbones and below the eyes.

The principal mask types are classified as Paccha (green), Kati (knife), Tadi (beard), Kari (black) and Minukku (smooth), evolved to invest the noble, heroic, and demonic characters with appropriate expressions. The divine personages, heroes, and noble kings, are given a light pea-green pigment within the white Chutti, while the eyebrows are stylized with black paint, and the lips are painted crimson (Pachha). The wicked characters, who are painted with a more elaborate form of green, have red prongs drawn on the forehead, an oval red and white design on the nose, a fantastic upturned moustache design painted in red above the lips, white balls the size of marbles fixed on the tip of the nose and forehead, and a pair of ivory fangs placed in the mouth under the upper lip (Kati). Bearded characters (Tadi) are of both good and evil types depending on the colour of the beards they wear. The make-up for women, impersonated by males in Kathakali, is far less elaborate. No Chutti outlines the face. In case of good characters, the smooth, light buff colour is applied over the face, the lips are beautifully shaped in red, and patterns of white dots adorn cheeks and forehead (Minukku). Black colour is used in the make-up of she-demons, with orange-red crescents painted on the cheeks and forehead, red and white floral designs on the nose and chin, and fangs projecting from the mouth (Kari).

All the characters except sages wear voluminous flounced skirts and long-sleeved jackets. A profusion of ornaments, such as necklaces, armlets, waist-bands, and bangles, add considerable beauty to the costume of the Kathakali actor. The crowning piece is the majestic head-dress carved out of wood, and embellished with gold foil and inlaid jewels.

As Kathakali weds Natya to Nrittya, gestures and facial expressions in singular fulness and purity play major roles in the dance. The entire story is set in the framework of dance and Abhinaya, wherein the tenderest and the most violent emotions are idealised and expressed on the face in harmony with the rhythm of the dance and the melody of the music, with a vividness which more than compensates for the absence of the spoken word. The absence of dialogue is most noticeable in Kathakali. The songs are sung by singers in the background but are simultaneously interpreted by the actors with such masterly ease of Abhinaya that every scene is realistically painted and every shade of the emotion is eloquently displayed. Indeed, so complete and rich is the language of facial expressions and hand gestures (‘mudras’) that entire epics are described in pantomime in full pictorial splendour which beckon up faithful visual images of the grandeur of the
proud mountains, of the flowers dancing in the breeze, the vanity and majesty of the peacock, the lazy lakes slumbering among the silent woods, and of the hungry lion in search of some prey. Out of the twenty-four basic ‘mudras’ mentioned in the Hastha Lakshana Deepika, acknowledged to be the basis for Kathakali ‘mudras,’ more than 700 ‘mudras’ have been evolved in the course of the development of the dance. The actor has to undergo strenuous training for a period that may last for twelve years, during which time the head, glances of the eyes, eyebrows, neck, heels, toes, ankles, thighs, waist, sides, hips, arms, cheeks, and eyelids are all trained in a variety of movements that lend subtle shades of expression to all the emotional qualities of the mind that the dancer wants to display. At his best the dancer loses himself completely in his art with a singular spontaneity in the dynamic force of his movements.

Characterised by dignity, vigour, and dramatic movements, the rhythmic excellence of the Kathakali dance has perhaps evoked more admiration than any other dance form. In it the whole story is set in a framework of supreme rhythmic assertion of human vitality in which poses, gestures, indications and movements, all blend together to tell a story graphically and perhaps to bring to the mind the inner visions of divine glory.

The Kathakali dance-drama is a spectacular open air show performed in the compound of a temple or in a nearby courtyard. Without the usual painted curtain or ornate settings and effects, the stage is about sixteen feet square—a kind of ‘pandal’ almost on the ground level, decorated with fresh leaves and flowers, and lighted with a big five-feet bell-metal oil lamp flinging fantastic shadows all around. A beautiful cloth, twelve feet long and eight feet wide, made of rectangular pieces of silk of the most vivid colours, is held by two boys before the lamp. The eager spectators sit in front on a matted floor. A full performance of Kathakali lasts from dusk to dawn. At sunset, the vigorous beating of a large drum summons the villagers to the recital. After the drumming has died away, the singers from behind the curtain offer invocatory verses in praise of the gods and two dancers execute a devotional dance called Thodayam. This is followed by a pure dance executed by a virtuous character and his partner. The curtain is then lowered revealing amidst a loud flourish of drums and conches the characters consisting of almost a dozen dancers, two singers and four instrumentalists who chant and play behind the actors. The orchestra consists of the Chenda, a cylindrical drum hung from the neck of the player and beaten on one side only, the Muddalam, also a large drum played on both sides, and gongs and cymbals. The gongs indicate the principal periods and the cymbals spirit up the rapid movements. The interval between the presentation of the actors and the actual opening of the story is taken up by a musical display by the Chenda and the Muddalam players lasting for about three hours. The opening scene of the dance-drama begins with the hero and the heroine emerging from behind the curtain, carried forward by the two boys, the heroine describing her feelings to her partner or both enacting some episode in the language of the ‘mudras’. At the same time the voices of the singers and the instrumentalists, playing in unison, provide a weird and yet a most fascinating background of rhythmic sound to the dance.

**Bharata Natyam**

What is today commonly known as Bharata Natyam is only a form of a more comprehensive dance system of that name. Bharata Natyam actually in-
cludes all forms of dances and dance-dramas which are in keeping with the Shastric injunctions of the sage Bharata. There are four main variations to which the principles and techniques of the Bharata Natyam system are applicable: the Sadir Natya, the Kuravanji, the Bhagavata Mela Nataka, and the Kuchipudi. In popular connotation, Sadir Natya is the Bharata Natyam, and it is the most widely recognised and extolled facet of the dance.

In its purest style the Sadir Natya is found in the Tamil districts of South India. For centuries it was performed in the temples as a solo recital by one or two dancing Devadasis, who had dedicated themselves to the deities of the temple. This was no mere formality but a real dedication at the altar of the Supreme Lord, where they danced in a spirit of joy inspired only by intense spiritual emotions. Evidence based on epigraphical inscriptions shows that the Devadasi cult existed in Tamil Nadu as early as the 9th century A.D. According to an inscription in the Brihadesvara temple at Tanjore, built about 1000, Rajaraja, the reigning monarch, is said to have attached four hundred dance artistes to this temple. Numerous other temples with dance halls attached to them were erected all over the South. Here the original traditions of Bharata Natyam were preserved intact for several centuries by successive generations of kings, who gave unstinted patronage to the Devadasi system by bestowing generous endowments on dancers and their teachers, the Nattuvanars.

It may be pointed out here that unlike other dance systems the Bharata Natyam did not derive its character from regional folk styles. It was, on the contrary, based entirely on the Natya Shastra of Bharata Muni. Even in the face of frequent Mohammedan invasions and disturbed political conditions in South India in the medieval period, the basic ideals of the Bharata Natyam strictly adhered to the ancient principles and maintained their purity throughout. It must, nevertheless, be admitted that the texture and complexion of the dance have somewhat yielded to changes in response to local demands and the atmosphere of new surroundings.

A process of refinement was commenced in the time of Achyuthappapa Nayaka, King of Tanjore (A.D. 1572-1614). It reached its culmination in the 19th century when the present tradition of Sadir Natya was created by the four great artist brothers, Chinnayya, Ponnaiah, Vadivelu, and Sivanandam, during the time of Sarabhoji, the Maharaja of Tanjore. They were the sons of Subbaraya Nattuvanar, the famous dance teacher, and pupils of Dikshitar, the great music composer. The four brothers were themselves regarded as ideal Nattuvanars, having as good a knowledge of music as of the dance and able also to perform dances and to impart training in the art to others. Unfortunately, while the Bharata Natyam was finally shaping out, the Devadasi system, which in the past had been its greatest asset, fell from its original religious glory to become a plaything of passion. From heights of spiritual experience it came down to catering to the mere sensuous thrills. The patronage of the royal courts declined and the popularity of the dance was now confined to a few rich marriage parties. With this, corruption gradually crept in. It was obvious that the art needed new life.

The revival came with the cultured artists from respectable families coming out boldly to present expositions of the dance in its classical purity and brilliance. Kalanidhi, Rukmini Devi, and Balasaraswati, are the pioneers who contributed substantially to the understanding and appreciation of Bharata Natyam. Shanta, Ram Gopal, Kamala Laxman, Mrinalini Sarabhai, Radha Sri Ram, and A. Sharda
are some of the other great exponents of the art at present. It is now a popular and noble art. The Kalashtra of Adyar and the Indian Institute of Fine Arts at Egmore are among the prominent institutions giving proper training to young artists.

The Bharata Natyam, being primarily an art of Bhava, Raga and Tala (time measure), has, in its Sadir form, two definite elements harmonised into one: Nritta and Nrittya. In the Nritta aspect a series of formalised poses, where every sequence is refreshingly beautiful, are strung together just as words are in a poem. These stylised movements are known as Adavus—the basic dance units of Bharata Natyam. Each Adavu consists of short rhythmic and co-ordinated movements of the body, the limbs, the head, hands, and feet. Every Adavu has three essential elements: a Sthanak (the basic standing posture), a Chari (the movement of the legs), and a Nritta-hasta (the decorative hand gesture).

When a theme is added to the Nritta of Bharata Natyam it becomes Nrittya, interpreting and expounding the words and ideas of a song by explicit gestures, voice, and such external manifestations of emotions as smiles and tears. This is the second basic part of Bharata Natyam. Here the dominant element is Bhava conveyed through Abhinaya or acting. Satvika Abhinaya is the vital part of a dance for it expresses the essence of Rasa. The Sadir Natya has love or Sringara as its fundamental sentiment. Smt. Rukmini Devi Arundale explains this preference by pointing out that ‘the essence and culmination of all emotion is in the stillness that holds in its silence the ultimate release of the hidden light. This is Satvikam. Naturally, the ultimate union that brings peace is preceded by the search of the lower for the higher. This search is through love alone. Hence the portrayal of this sentiment in the ‘nayika-nayaka’ bhavas, of the eternal as woman and man.’

The Bharata Natyam performance is divided into five parts. The first item is always the Alarippu which is the shortest and simplest item of the dance. It is in the nature of an invocation to God. In a fantasia of beautiful and expressive poses like the blossoming of a flower, the neck, eyes, and hands are slowly and rhythmically moved to give a display of pure Nritta, with the feet keeping time in consonance with the soft background music.

The Jatiswaram is a more complicated item of Nritta and follows the Alarippu with beautiful rhythmic foot movements and appropriate gestures of eyes and neck, while the drummer playing pleasing notes on the Mridangam keeps time. Beauty is its only aim. It has no mood or sentiment.

In the third item, Shabdam, Abhinaya comes into play for the first time. A Shabda means a song in praise of the glory of a god or king. In this item the underlying meaning of a song, which will generally describe the qualities and great deeds of the hero, are expressed by means of postures and dance movements, set according to Tala or time measure.

The Varnam is the central and most difficult item of the Bharata Natyam and demands the highest degree of skill and talent from the artist. It seeks to bring out the best in pure Nritta and Abhinaya, alternating in the first movements and then combining towards the climax, wherein Raga, Bhava, and Tala are perfectly synchronised. In this aspect of the dance the meaning of the words of the song are expressed in Bhava and, therefore, Abhinaya is most elaborately and dramatically expounded. One single line of a song is sung and the dancer in

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1 Rukmini Devi Arundale: Indian Dance, p. 15.
quick fascinating gestures and fast changing foot movements interprets the same in different new ways, lending charm and novelty through every change.

The background music of Bharata Natyam is usually set to songs in Sringara Rasa. The songs, known as Padams, are rich in the sentiments of love—the divine love of Krishna and Radha, Siva and Parvati, representing the yearning of the human soul for the Supreme Being. Most of these songs are in Telegu and were composed by great South Indian poets between the 16th and 18th centuries. Among them the most well-known are Kshetrajna, Ghanam Sinayya, Bharathi, Muthutandavar, and Thyagaraja. A number of songs of Jaideva from Gita Govinda have also been included in the Padams. The Padas of Kshetrayya and the Asthpadis of Jaideva are considered ideally suitable for Abhinaya, because on account of their leisurely tempo they give ample scope for the dramatisation of various shades of emotions beautifully exemplified in these poems.

The Tillana is the last step, which is pure dance with graceful foot rhythm whilst the body executes alluring sculpturesque poses and attitudes. The Nritta is performed in different Talas and is set to various Ragas. The Tillana Adi Tala, depicting Krishna as the Blue God, is one of the most picturesque numbers in this category.

Both male and female dancers of the Bharata Natyam are garbed in a ‘dhoti’, or a ‘sari’ often worn in the manner of a ‘dhoti’. The male dancer’s torso remains bare except for a necklace; his female counterpart wears a ‘choli’ or tight fitting bodice. Both are partial to jewellery, such as necklaces, armlets, ear-rings, or wristlets; the woman in addition often adorns her hair with flowers.

A pair of cymbals and the Mridangam are the chief musical instruments to accompany the dance.

Kuravanji

A variation of the Bharata Natyam is the Kuravanji. It is in the form of a ballet involving a number of characters. Its theme is a short story. The heroine, who is the chief dancer, suffers love pangs for the hero who is either the presiding deity of the temple or the patron king. The story at last ends with the fruition of love. There are twenty such Kuravanjis, the oldest being the Kutrala Kuravanji, which was composed in the 18th century.

Bhagavata Mela Nataka

Bhagavata Mela Nataka and the Kuchipudi are the other main variations of the Bharata Natyam. They are practically identical in character, both being dance-dramas in which the dancers themselves speak and sometimes sing also, and both are fully permeated by the sentiment of devotion. Unlike the Kuravanji and Sadir Natya, in these dance-dramas only men are allowed to take part and they render no other theme but the Vaishnavite stories. The Bhagavata Mela Nataka originated in Tamil Nadu, while the Kuchipudi took birth in Andhra Pradesh. But both attained maturity in the 16th century when man’s spiritual evolution took the form of love and devotion for the Supreme Being.

The traditions of the Bhagavata Mela developed at Melatur, a village in the Tanjore district, and it is here that this tradition mainly survives today. In their present form the Bhagavata Mela Natakas are twelve in number, each an
exposition of some popular Puranic lore. In their rendering the principles of Nrittya and Natya as expounded by Bharata Muni are strictly adhered to. But it is also conventional to introduce Nritta pieces into the drama, which is done by allowing the main characters to execute such items as the Alarippu or Jatiswaram at any stage during the progress of the play according to their fancy. Further embellishment in the shape of comic items is also occasionally added to the drama between acts and scenes. Today, although a general deterioration in the standard of the shows may be noticed, one cannot remain unimpressed by the high aesthetic appeal of the Bhagavata Mela Natakas, which are invariably accompanied by music of the purest and highest classical traditions.

Kuchipudi

The Kuchipudi dance-drama is an outstanding aspect of Bharata Natyam. In the 16th century, Sidheynendra Yogi was a great devotee of Lord Krishna. He wrote Parijataapaharana and then, so the story goes, he came to the village of Kuchelapuram (now named Kuchipudi), gathered a group of Brahmana boys and with their help produced and presented the play on the life of Krishna. The Yogi later took a vow from the Brahma boys of the village by which every male member pledged himself to practise the art and enact the play at least once every year. The oath was honoured and the art has thus been preserved by successive generations of the originally privileged Brahmana families of Kuchipudi. But the traditions of this drama survive only in the town of its birth.

Besides the story of Sri Krishna, a number of other themes have also been added to the repertory of the Kuchipudi dance-dramas and dances. The Bhagavata Purana, the Gita Govinda of Jaideva, the Krishna Leela Tarangini, the Golla Kalapam, the Padas of Kshetrayya, and the Kritis of Thyagaraja are the other sources of inspiration.

In the technique of its rendering the Kuchipudi excels in the co-ordinated blending of all the three aspects of the Indian histrionic art: Nritta, Nrittya, and Natya. The additional element of Vachika Abhinaya makes the Kuchipudi not merely a dance but a dance-drama. Solo dance items, in the form of Nritta or Nrittya, independent of the main theme, may also be added by way of decorative effects. Items of pure dance are similar to the movements of the Nritta of the Sadir Natya and include Puja Nrittya, a dance of invocation, Jatiswaram, Tillana, and Kannakole, an item composed mainly of footwork. As in the Bhagavata Mela Natak, the music used in Kuchipudi is of the purest Carnatic tradition.

Mohini Attam

Mohini Attam, evolved and practised in Kerala, has a tradition parallel to that of Bharata Natyam. Though it follows closely the art of Natya as described in the Natya Shastra of Bharata and in technical structure resembles the Bharata Natyam, its idioms and expressions are coloured considerably by the virile Kathakali traditions. Being an art-expression suited to the genius of the fair sex, it is intended for performance by women alone, and has more grace and sensuousness than its deeply poetic counterparts of Tamil Nad and Andhra. It is more a Nritta type, though there is plenty of Abhinaya in the interpretation of stories like the Gita Govinda. The music used in Mohini Attam is classical Carnatic which mostly
describes the gentler and softer emotions of love, beauty of grace, of the agony of separation, and of the joy of union of lovers, cleverly conveyed in the gesture language similar to that of Bharata Natyam.

**Manipuri**

The state of Manipur in Eastern India is the home of one of the most picturesque and graceful classical dance forms of the country, called Manipuri after the place of its origin. It is not spiritual like Bharata Natyam, nor is it characterised by the thrilling realism of the Kathakali. Manipuri, on the other hand, is the very essence of Nature expressing its varying moods in all its joyous exuberance and spontaneity. The people of Manipur, intensely aware of the sense of unity of life with the free and unfettered Nature around them, regard Nature as the mantle of Divinity Itself. Their dance, therefore, has its roots in Nature worship. Festivals, particularly those following the seasonal variations, give the people of Manipur occasion for dancing wherein their awareness of the glories of Nature invested with their religious temperament finds an unrestrained outlet.

A legend, some five hundred years old, tells of a devastating famine in the Naga area caused by the pranks of the evil spirits. The goddess of Might taking pity appeared before the tribal chief and ordered propitiation of the gods with music and dance. The young and old, men and women, all joined in the ceremony as a result of which the evil spirits had to flee and the elements were pacified. Nature smiled kindly on her children and a rich and bounteous harvest burst forth in the fields. And since then, it is said, the people of Manipur have taken to dancing as a religious duty as well. But we have yet to find out when and by whom the well-known Manipuri style came to be introduced in this far eastern corner of the country. It appears that the Manipuris, in accepting Vaishnavism in the 18th century, adopted classical canons and wove them into the already existing folk modes of the Ras dance sequences. This is evident from the fact that the Manipuri, as it has evolved today, has elements of local folk dances and at least one of its forms, the Lai Haroba, indicates borrowings from the Natya Shastra of Bharata. In our time, it was Rabindra Nath Tagore who discovered the subtle charm innate in this dance and using the Manipuri technique in the various dances of Shantiniketan introduced it to the world outside.

With the spread of Vaishnavism the worship of Krishna and Radha became the dominant form in the Manipur region. Every village there has a Thakur-ghar, the presiding deities of which are Krishna and Radha or Krishna and Balaram or Krishna and Chaitanya and attached to the temple is also a Naach-ghar (dancing hall). Inside these halls or outside against the rich and colourful background of hills and forests, the Manipuris dance episodes from the story of Krishna and Radha to the accompaniment of songs from the Padavali of Jaideva or other Vaishnavite poets. The theme of each dance has its source of inspiration in the loves of the Divine Lovers and the songs and sentiments have the flavour of adoration.

The Manipuri is a simple gestural dance form. The concept of Abhinaya, the subtle symbolic gestures, or even the rhythm of the Raga have no place in this dance; only graceful movements of the limbs, soft and sweet, tender and languorous, interpret the lyrical flavour and the devotional sentiment of the stories of Radha and Krishna. The footwork, though swift and rhythmic, is characterised by abrupt leaps and bounds in tune with the warrior spirit of the Naga inhabi-
tants. But the body itself glides with remarkable ease in circles, and the arms move sideways to weave delightful patterns of the gentle breeze playing with the soft ripples of the quietly flowing river.

The dances are sometimes accompanied by a chorus from the background, or sometimes a lone singer chants a melody. The orchestral accompaniment consists ordinarily of the Khol (a kind of drum played for this particular dance), the Manjira (cymbals) and the flute, though in recent years a few stringed instruments have also been included.

The costume of the Manipuri dancer is gorgeous in the extreme. A scintillating skirt in green or dark red with small pieces of mirror, gold and silver tinsel stitched into it, embroidered tassels dangling at the sides, close fitting jackets of velvet to match, and conical caps with bands of pearl trimming hidden under a thin white veil, is the attire of the female dancer. The male dancer is dressed in an equally picturesque costume of a pleated ‘dhoti’ in vivid colours, usually saffron for Krishna, embroidered tassels crossing his chest from shoulder to hip, terminating in wide flaps, and many bright jewels. The Rasila is the principal and the most popular dance of Manipur. In a series of elaborate dance sequences, supported by songs from the Padavali of Jaidava and other Vaishnavite poets, the Rasila runs through the whole gamut of Shri Krishna’s playful frolics. In the charmed woodlands of Brindaban, we see him roaming with Radha, playing a rapturous melody on his flute, the agitated maids of Braja seeking Him in vain, and then Krishna multiplying himself into many Krishnas, dancing between each pair of maidens in a ring. The dance has a restraint and dignity befitting the spiritual significance of the theme, and there is a complete absence of sensuous implications or baser sentiments. In fact, every step of the dance reveals the self-effacing ecstacy of the devotee in his communion with the Lord.

The Lai Haroba, meaning, ‘making merry with the gods,’ is the oldest known form of the dance of Manipur. It is a dance-drama composed of solo, minuet, and group dances, which depict stories from the Mairang Parba—a great Manipuri epic. These stories are woven round Khamba, the poor boy, enamoured of the princess Thaibi, popularly believed to be the incarnations of Siva and Parvati respectively. In the group dances, in which sometimes as many as a hundred or more dancers take part, the rhythm and movements are vigorous, almost bordering on the primitive.

The Chalan-Gathan is yet another spectacular group-dance of Manipur. It marks the advent of Vaishnavism in Manipur and is truly a ‘Kirtan’ dance. A party of men with musical instruments sing the Kirtan and dance first with slow steps, and then as the music rises in tempo leap and whirl, the leader displaying quick and intricate foot patterns, while the drummers beat difficult ‘Talas’ on the Khol.

Every season has its dance in Manipur. The most popular of these dances are the Dol-Jatra in Spring and the Jhulan with the advent of the monsoon.

The dances of Manipur, classical or other, express great strength, and reveal a fascinating display of rhythm, lyricism, drama, and grace, making them one of the most appealing dance forms of India.

**Kathak**

The Kathak is the classical dance-art of North India and is popular in Uttar Pradesh, parts of Rajasthan, the Punjab and Madhya Pradesh. The dance
in its present form represents a rich and varied record of traditions and ideas and a precious heritage of a synthesis of cultures. About five hundred years back this dance was an unsophisticated folk art with its roots in the religious and spiritual sentiments of the people. A community of musicians and dancers, known as Kathakas, from whom this style of dancing gets its name, danced on festivals and participated in daily temple rituals. Indifferent to the technical or the classical aspect of the dance, the earliest Kathakas considered dancing as a charming sacrifice and offering to the deity.

Gradually this tradition was elaborated. The resurgence of Vaishnavism in the middle ages led to the efflorescence of poetry, music, dance and drama and as described earlier, a rich art heritage was built up around episodes from the lives of Krishna and Radha. Several communities of dance-artists like Kurtaniya, Dadhi, Natwa, Charan, Kalawant, Rasadhari, besides the Kathakas, evolved a glorious tradition of dancing which bore the impress of Vaishnavism and the character of Kathak in style, technique and form. The Kathak which was thus elaborated was generally in keeping with the technique laid down in the Natya Shastra and contained all the three elements of Nritta, Nrittya and Natya.

Frequent foreign invasions of the northern parts of the country brought in new influences and developed an outlook that made deep impacts on the indigenous dance forms. The strongest influence was that of Islam. It percolated through the patronage which the Muslim royalty and nobility extended to Kathak dancing as an interesting form of social entertainment, and through the arrival from Persia of a large number of professional dancing girls who were retained and patronised by the feudal lords. These circumstances led to modifications and adjustments which the Indian artists had now to make in order to please their new patrons. The result was that the old Indian form swung towards greater sophistication and sensualism. The dance migrated from the temples of gods to courts of rulers and by the middle of the 18th century the Kathak began to find settled homes under the Muslim rulers.

For some time, however, there was no departure from its essential fundamentals and the art tried to retain its Hindu sentiments and feelings. In its technical evolution it generally adhered to the lines laid down by the old ideals, incorporating only here and there the bold gestures of the hand, usually symbols of Muslim culture. But under the dominating influence of the court it had soon to assume more or less a secular character and become a purely decorative and an excessively elegant art. The spiritual meaning and the philosophy, of which it was the vehicle, were forgotten and with the consequent relegation of dancing to the socially ostracised it degenerated from real art into a poor exhibition of lifeless techniques.

But its inherent fire could not so easily be extinguished and it was once more revived and restored to its honoured position. Although the laurels for revitalising the Kathak style go both to Lucknow and Jaipur, it is the former place which has been its home for more than a century. About the middle of the 19th century the great dancer Maharaj Thakur Prasad came with his three talented

1 Ancient works on Hindu Natya define a Kathaka as a narrator of Kathas or stories in poems from the epics who also graphically describes them by appropriate explanatory gestures and movements. The sage Valmiki, author of the Sanskrit Ramayana, mentions Kathakas as a class of people who specialised in the art of story-telling. Tulsidas, writer of the Hindi version of Ramayana, has referred to Kathak in his Vinayapatrika as conveying the sense of dance. The word Kathak is also mentioned in a number of other literary and grammatical works and lexicons compiled in ancient times.
nephews Bindadin, Kalka Prasad, and Bhairon Prasad to the court of Wajid Ali Shah and was employed as the Court Dancer. The king himself became a disciple of the great master and showed so much respect to him that he allowed him to sit next to him in the Court. Maharaj Bindadin, the eldest and the most gifted of the three brothers, was not only an eminent dancer but also a devotee of Shri Krishna and a poet of great repute. He composed beautiful Thumris and wove his art into patterns of north Indian music, so that the Kathak dance came to be known as the art of Thumri in rhythm. Soon a systematic and dynamic technique was evolved with a greater stress now being laid on Bhava.

The art was further developed by Achchan, son of Kalka Maharaj, and his younger brothers, Lachhu and Shambhu. Among the other great inheritors of the Kathak tradition, the most well-known names are those of Birju Maharaj, Kumari Damayanti Joshi, Menaka, Kumudini, Sohan Lal, Mohan Lal, Jai Lal, Maya Rao, Rani Karna, Sitara and Gopi Krishan.

The technique of Kathak involves Nritta and Nritya. The first, that is Nritta, is a pure rhythmic form, concentrating on graceful movements, swift and forceful footwork and speed and tempo. In this aspect of the dance, gestures do not convey any mood. They only allude to the sentiment of a story by foot rhythm. The Nritya of Kathak renders the meaning or import of a song through appropriate facial expressions and elegant and meaningful movements of the hands. The song accompaniment for Kathak has changed from time to time according to the predominant character of the dance during its evolution. Beginning with Kirtan and Dhrupad, it next adopted Hori, Dhamar, Pad, and Bhajan and eventually as a result of Muslim influence the layout of the dance had to be based on the amorous themes of Thumri, Dadra, and Ghazal. When interpreting a Thumri, the dancer would sing a line of the song again and again, modulating his voice to suit the different Bhavas he wishes to create and project, and at the same time his face, particularly the eyes, would mirror the Bhava he has in mind. The Nritya of Kathak has one more aspect, the Gat. Here there is no word nor song, but only expression—the dancer taking an idea and interpreting it through suggestive and allusive facial expressions, stylised movements and stances. It may, however, be admitted that the Abhinaya in the Kathak probably has not the richness of Bharata Natyam or Kathakali, and its gestures are few and simple. Yet it has a language of rhythm which is highly subtle and intricate and as much capable of evoking the Rasa as any other Indian classical dance form.

The orchestral accompaniment necessary to a Kathak dancer are a pair of Tablas for giving the beats of the Tala, and the Sarangi for playing the melody.

The traditional costume of the Kathak dancer, for both men and women, consists of tight ‘pyjama’, ‘kurta’, and a loose pleated over-robe. The head-gear is frequently a turban or a small embroidered boat-shaped cap. Some women dancers prefer a full-skirted ‘lahanga’. There are no masks. The modern tendency is to borrow the costume concept of Bharat Natyam.

Orissi

Yet another great classical system of dancing is the Orissi dance which has only recently been accorded recognition as a traditional art of equal status with the four other schools of dancing. The Orissi dance has been through a long process of development. It is known to have existed before the 2nd century B.C.
when King Kharavela ruled over Orissa. Later it flourished under Vajrayana Buddhism which contributed vigorously to the evolution of culture and the arts in Orissa. The door jambs, lintels and architraves, in a number of Buddhist shrines, carry carvings which include figures of men and women dancing in a set style. Even some of the gods and goddesses of the Buddhist pantheon have been represented in dance poses in these sculptures. In the 8th century, Brahmanism established itself and Bhubaneswar became the centre of the Siva cult. Numerous temples were erected all over the state and adorned with exquisite dance carvings which appear inspired by the postures and flexions of the traditional dance of Orissa. With the multiplication of temple rituals the Saivite temples became the chief promoters of the dance art. Dancing girls (Maharis) were dedicated to the temple deities, and for nearly a thousand years, from the 8th to the 17th centuries, they kept up the dance rituals and helped to sustain the traditions of the Orissi dance in the temple of Jagannath at Puri and at other temples in Orissa. In the 17th century a class of boys called Gotipuas were trained in the Orissi style to dance in female dress at religious festivals. With the passage of time the art of the Maharis and the Gotipuas began to lose its purity and with it its merit. The contemporary exponents, however, are trying hard to save it from further deterioration and may well be said to have succeeded in restoring the beauty of the original art of the Orissi system.

Although the Orissi dance includes both the Tandava and the Lasya styles, the energetic and the gentle respectively, it is essentially the Lasya which is the predominant aspect. In its technique it embraces both the Nratta and the Nrittya elements, though in different measures in the different items of the Orissi repertory. This being a highly stylised dance, its range of steps, poses and movements are all based on classical codified works. The Orissi Nrttya has a devotional import but mostly in the Sringara Rasa or the erotic mood. Its songs are pure and classical and its instrumental accompaniments are the Mardala, which is a drum, Gini or a pair of cymbals, and the flute.

The costume of an Orissi dancer consists of a Pattasari, (a sari made of indigenous silk) of bright colour; a kanchula, traditional colourful blouse which is embellished with imitation stones; a ‘nibi-bandha’, an apron with frills, which covers the hips and is tied in front; and a ‘jhabha’ or length of cord which has tassels at both ends and is tied like a waist-band. The dancers wear a number of ornaments both traditional and classical.

Folk Dances

The spirit of rhythm truly lives in the countryside where life throbs with natural gaiety and dancing is a divine command. Originating in the hunt and harvest festivals of the ancient ancestors, when the demons, the spirits, and the gods were invoked or appeased through dance, the folk dancers retain much of the vitality and emotional exuberance of the primitive man. The simple folk of the country dance for sheer fun, for the fertility of the crops, for luck in the chase, for protection of the marriage bed, and for summoning and dispersing the forces of Nature. Dance to them is the creator, the preserver, the guardian, and the friend. Presenting no set theme or stylised completeness and technique, the folk dances of India are characterised by simple joys and sorrows of life, a sense of light-hearted freshness, under-currents of gratitude or fear for the supernatural
powers, and plenty of simple, vigorous, rhythmic movements proceeding out of the free and natural inner urge for creative self-expression.

Folk dances danced as a minuet are rare, though not infrequently there is a dance leader who has a special part to play. As a rule the dances are performed by a group or groups of people, all of whom move in the same way. Usually the sexes are segregated except in the case of a very few communities, particularly the aboriginal tribes.

Although, in their endless variety of themes the folk dances of India have captured almost the whole gamut of human emotions they may in general be divided into three main classes: religious and ritual; social, including dances associated with harvest, changing of the seasons, and important family events; and lastly, martial. It is, however, usually very difficult to place a particular dance exclusively in any one of these three main classes, as most dances, though predominantly religious or social, bear many traces of other themes.

We may describe here a few representative examples of the surviving folk dances which have delighted the countryside through the ages.

The mask dances of rural Bengal, presenting a beautiful blending of classic and religious motifs with unsophisticated forms of folk expressions, have cultural and artistic significance as well as social and recreational values. There is a variety of masks of divine and supernatural beings, such as gods, demons, and evil spirits, as well as masks of animals and men. The human masks depict characters such as cultivators, labourers, dandies, whilst the animal masks represent tigers, elephants, horses, oxen, bears, and other animals. Expressively painted by the village potters, some of the masks are made of earth, some of paper-pulp and others of wood. Amongst the most popular mask dances of ritualistic character are those still seen at Mymensingh in which the central figures are Mahadeva and Kali and the themes are taken from the Puranas. The dance of Kali is an exposition of that aspect of the Great Power which withholds all things unto Herself. Her mask is painted blue, streams of blood issue forth from the sides of the mouth, and she holds swords in both hands. The beat on the Dhak (a big drum) starts slowly, and as the dance proceeds, the tempo rises and the rhythm becomes more and more frenzied. The entire performance is a deliberate symbolic representation of a joyous battle against the hindrances of life.

In the Kurseong district of West Bengal the Bhutias and Tibetans have a form of duet dance in which two persons form one character in a combined way in order to portray the character of a lion or a yak. The dancer in front holds the mask, while his partner moving in unison immediately behind manages to wag the tail. The steps are so well matched that the dancers seem to move like one while circling or jumping.

A social dance enjoyed in a religious background is the Garba dance of Gujarat. As water is scarce in this part of the country, the water pitcher, ‘garbi’, in which women carry water from the well, has been traditionally worshipped. During the Nava Ratra festival, when the worship of Kali and other goddesses is kept up for nine nights, the ‘garbi’ pot, painted with earth colours and illuminated by a light placed within it, is ceremoniously kept in the house. At nightfall, the village girls bearing their own ‘garbis’ on their heads, move from house to house and dance around the household ‘garbi’. The women of the house sing the first line of the ‘garbi’ song which is repeated by the rest in chorus. Beating time by clapping their hands rhythmically they bend sideways gracefully at each clap, and move
upwards and downwards or to the sides while the hands sweep in beautifully formed gestures.

Inspired by the divine melody of Krishna’s flute, the Raslila or Krishnalila dances of Gujarat form an important part of the religious and social life of the people there. On moonlit nights, giving that sense of dreamland so necessary to plunge the spectators into the spirit of the dance, the gaily dressed girls as well as men dance after the Garba style in gracefully adjusted steps. These dances owe their beauty, vitality and grace to the songs synchronising with the movements, and to the peculiar time beats and rhythmic patterns.

Religious motives, however, do not always provide the occasion for gaiety in the life of the Indian. As from very ancient times, the average Indian living in villages has strongly believed in the propitiation of the spirits of Nature; a number of the major epidemic diseases have their own presiding deities. Whenever there is impending danger of an area being affected the women gather to offer prayers and perform ritual dances to please the gods. Behind all the frenzied rhythmic movements of the dancers there is an underlying spiritual purpose which also helps to give courage to the weaker spirits.

The rain dances, popular almost everywhere in India, emphasize once again the ritualistic character of folk dancing. The Indian peasant living close to Nature is inevitably much affected by the changing of the seasons and the coming of the rains. In the South, rain dances to induce the gods to give rain is considered a sacred ceremony. As the dancers get more and more carried away by the fervour of their religious enthusiasm, the dance gathers speed and vigour and is marked by striking virility and rhythm.

The rich and varied pastoral folk dances of India depict, through the medium of gracefully charming movements of the limbs, the reaping and harvesting of plenteous crops, symbolising life fighting joyously its eternal battle of struggle for existence. Any bright moonlit night draws the young people out to dance, who never tire until they have expressed themselves in all shades of emotional experiences.

The most energetic of the pastoral dances is probably the Bhangra of the Punjab. The season for the Bhangra starts with the sowing of wheat and concludes with the Baisakhi fair when the golden crop is harvested. Responding to the drum beats, the young men of the village gather in some open field and move in circles until the drummer, with the drum hanging from his neck, beckons the dancers to a higher tempo of movement. On the sides of the drummer stand the leaders of the dance who come forward at intervals and sing lines from the traditional folk songs of the Punjab, while the dancers swirl around with more and more abandon and higher and higher steps clapping their hands and exclaiming, ‘Oooh! Oooh! Balle! Balle!’

The Ahirs, the Kahars, the Chamars, and the Dhobis of the North have their own store of dances which they perform to celebrate a wedding or the birth of a child. Characterised by elemental directness, spontaneity, and sincerity, their’s are purely social dances. They move vigorously in circles, their steps are rapid and regular, and as the drum beats get louder the rhythm of the dance sways them in a spirit of boisterous abandon.

There are many tribal societies living in different stages of development in the remoter parts of Orissa whose members must dance to satisfy their need for ritual and their love of rhythm. There is a saying among them that the tribe
that dances does not die. The Konds are the most numerous of the Orissa tribes. Deep in every Kond heart is the belief in the sacred and fertilising power of human blood. Although the practice of human sacrifice has now ceased to exist, the ritual of sacrifice still survives and a buffalo is offered in place of a human being. The sacrifice is the occasion of a great deal of dancing. Putting on strange masks, the tribesmen dance while escorting the buffalo to its doom, mediums in a state of spirit-possession lead the way, each assuming the most fantastic positions and contorting his body in token of ecstasy, and a great crowd of ordinary folk follows brandishing sticks, spears and swords, leaping in the air, running to and fro, jumping up and down to create a scene of savage confusion.

The Santhals are a highly organised people with a strong social sense. Amongst the most popular social dances are those associated with courtship. On full moon nights the girls of the community, adorned with flowers, assemble under a spreading banyan tree. Meanwhile the young men with musical instruments come forward singing, and demand the commencement of the dance. The two groups then form their lines, linked arm-in-arm, and guided by the time beats on the drum they sway to and fro in rhythmic unison, symbolising the joyous harmony of conjugal life. The spirit of sweet delight, however, is never defiled. The glory of the ordered movement produces a condition in which unity and cohesion of the community life are at a maximum.

War dances are a survival of the martial past and are usually practised today by a few aboriginal tribes as symbolical of events which they desire to be successfully accomplished. The Naga hill tribes of Assam have a rich repertory of dances which are mostly warlike in character and present abstract conceptions of the hunt. During their spring festival celebrations they emerge donning resplendent head-dresses and with thick coats of paint on their bodies. A number of brass ornaments hanging across the chest, a plaited basket decorated with bison horns on the left arm, and a spear in the left hand, complete their elaborate toilet. The dance itself embodies in a picturesque manner the agile and vigorous movements of warriors engaged in mortal combat, and in the dramatisation of the thrills and surprises of the duel a fantastic and extravagant imagination comes into full play.

But the war dances of the Velakali in the South have an epic grandeur and powerful rhythmic vitality. In quaint and impressive costumes, with gleaming swords and ornamental shields, the Velakali actors stage the great battle of the Mahabharata as an act of adoration to god, while vigorous martial music in the background lends classic dignity to the beautifully rhythmic performance.
6 MUSIC

The Indian word for music is ‘Sangeeta,’ which was originally meant to include more aspects than one. Even as late as the 13th century, Sarangadeva, the noted authority on music, wrote: ‘Music denotes song, dance and instrumental melodies.’ It is the unity of basic inspirations which has been expressed in the unity of music. Music in this connotation, even more than the plastic arts, has had a special place in the cultural life of the people of India. It has helped to build up an emotional and spiritual consciousness in the people and has led to an understanding of the deeper values of Life. As an art, it has aimed at the expression and embodiment of an ideal of Beauty. Throughout the ages the music of India has thus been truly vital to her civilisation.

According to the most ancient legends and traditions Indian music is supposed to be a revelation of the Divine Grace. It is said that before the creation of the Universe an all-pervading sound emanating from Brahma, the Arch Creator, rang through space and that became the first musical sound ever produced. Indian mythologies are steeped in fascinating legends of gods and goddesses who are believed to be its authors and patrons. One legend ascribes to Siva-Nataraja the origin of the science of music and dramaturgy. Of the seven fundamental notes five are said to be derived from the five mouths of Siva, while the other two are attributed to the mouth of Uma, his consort. Sarasvati is regarded as the patron goddess of music and is depicted as sitting on a white lotus with a Veena in her hands. In the court of Indra, the Lord of Heaven, Gandharvas are the singers, Apsaras the dancers, and Kinnaras the performers on musical instruments.

This would show that from the earliest times music in India was closely interwoven with the religious and ritualistic beliefs of the people. For a study of the evolution of Indian music we must, therefore, go to the very beginnings of religious singing. The earliest chants we know of are the Rig Vedic hymns, composed in the north-western parts of India by the early Aryan settlers to glorify their gods. The hymns were simple in form, poor in poetical content and emotions, and in delivery more like recitation than singing, because the chanting was done on one note only, the Udatta, the raised note. It was much later that singing came to pivot around a second note as well, the Anudatta, the not-raised note.

The next important stage in Vedic music came with Saman chants, when the Sama Veda was composed from which Indian music derives its source. Much of the text, which was borrowed from the Rig Veda, was recast to give it a richer poetical sense. A more melodic musical scale was also evolved by establishing an intra-tone (Svarita, sounded grace) between the raised and the not-raised notes. The Vedic music was thus invested with a new lyrical quality.

Other influences towards the creation of a finer melodic sense in music were at work too. A number of musical instruments had been invented which were used as accompaniments. The Vedic Index refers to a very wide variety of
instruments in use in Vedic times. Stringed instruments, represented by the Kandaveena (a kind of lute), Karkari (another lute), Vana (a lute of hundred strings), and the Veena (the present instrument of that name), were popular as accompaniments as they helped to register the notes and distinguish them with greater accuracy. Instruments of percussion included the Dundubhi (an ordinary drum), the Bhumi-dundubhi (an earth drum made by digging a hole in the ground and covering it with hide), and the Vanaspati (a wooden drum). Among a number of wind instruments of the flute variety there were the Tunava (a wooden flute) and the Nadi (a weed flute). There was also the Aghati, a cymbal for accompanying dancing. By the time of the Yajur Veda several kinds of professional musicians appear to have arisen for lute players, drummers, flute players, and conch-blowers are mentioned in the list of callings.

To the development of the Indian musical culture, however, the non-Aryan inhabitants of the country made perhaps a greater contribution than the Aryans. The early Aryans regarded music as a kind of magic to be kept at a safe distance and, therefore, music did not receive that recognition in their society which it already had amongst the Dravidians and the other pre-Aryan races of the country, with whose fertility cults music and dancing were particularly associated. We have it on the authority of a verse in the Atharva Veda that the native population was much superior in respect to the art of music than the early Aryans. Vedic music, moreover, was too grave and rigid, and too exclusive a prerogative of an esoteric priestly class to be accepted by the people in general. The music of the pre-Aryan inhabitants of the land, on the other hand, was possessed of a rare wealth of emotional appeal and enjoyed greater vocal liberties as it had neither the rigidity nor the seriousness of the Vedic hymns. In the cultural assimilation following the Aryan influx, a synthesis of the music of the two races in which the indigenous melodies played a major role is a highly significant fact in the evolution of Indian music. On account of the growing popularity of the folk forms many compositions of a sacred nature, now based on folk tunes, began to make their appearance in the field of religious music. The scholars of the period took up the varied expressions of folk melodies and reshaped them to suit the taste of the cultured classes. The new society, in fact, accepted folk music with so much fervour that the Aryan music no longer revolved merely round the ‘ritual liturgy’ but became melodious and expressive of the moods and aspirations of the community. The musical texture of the Aryan genius was thus vitalised with a new outlook and became pregnant with great possibilities. Soon the refined folk music emerged as a new type of music which came to be known as the Marg, meaning chaste or classical. Marg music was fondly believed to be the creation of the gods and considered as the music of contemplation and prayer. As it was formed in the tradition, style, and note structure of Vedic music it acquired the nobility of the latter. Being associated with rituals it laid stress on codification and accuracy of pronunciation as well. The music of the masses, sung by them in different regions in their own dialects and for their pleasure, was known as Deshi or folk. It ‘did not observe any rules of intervals, scales and melody mould.’

It is difficult to follow the lines of musical development subsequent to the appearance of Marg on account of the scanty material at our disposal. There are frequent references to musical theory and practice in the early Brahmanical and Buddhist literature, from most of which only a vague idea of the development of the musical tradition can be gathered. The Ramayana alludes to the singing
1. Folk dance on Holi, the advent of Spring (Photo, M. Desai).

2. Female folk dancers of Assam (Photo, Darshan Lall).
Indian Musical Instruments
of ballads and to the music of stringed, percussion, and wind instruments. The Silapadikaram (2nd. century A.D.), a Buddhist drama in the Tamil language, contains some of the earliest expositions of the musical forms then current, their constituent notes and scales. In the time of the Imperial Guptas music thrived in the courts of the princes—some of the rulers were themselves great musicians and composers. The dramas of Kalidasa make frequent references to music. In fact the development of the drama after Kalidasa meant also the development of music as all Indian dramas are essentially operatic.

Among the oldest surviving expositions of the theory of Indian music the most important is Bharata's Natya Shastra, believed to have been composed between the second and the fourth centuries A.D. From this it appears that by about the 4th century music had definitely advanced beyond the mere liturgical forms, and by formalising and incorporating the regional melodies and the musical practices of various other peoples Aryan music had established itself on a more popular system. Bharata following Dattila, an earlier writer on music, classifies melodies under a new name of Jatis (species) and mentions eighteen Jatis of melodies which he says were sung on the basic scales of the Veena, comprising seven notes. In the manner of Datilla, he also gives a classification of melody types according to the number of notes used, thus giving us the ingredients for the structure of a melody. Bharata indicates, for the first time, the flavour and the sentiment of each of the Jatis.

In the evolution of music the next step from the Jatis was towards Raga. But the word had not become current in the time of Bharata although for all practical purposes Jatis provided the genus out of which Ragas have been derived. We come across the word Raga, as understood in all later works of Indian music, for the first time in Matanga Muni's Brihaddeshi, which as its name implies is a comprehensive treatise on Deshi or indigenous music. Chronologically, the work stands between the fourth and the seventh centuries. Matanga regards Raga as one of the seven classes of songs (Geetis) prevalent in his time. Distinguishing between Geetis and Ragas, Matanga says: 'Music which uses attractive note compositions with beautiful and illuminating graces constitutes "geeti" and music in which the four Varnas, i.e., the values of duration, ascent, descent and movements, are gracefully combined to form a pattern should be known as Raga.' He drew up certain rules for the regulation of the Ragas and stated clearly that no Raga can be formed by less than five notes. Matanga also for the first time refers to and defines the role of Deshi music. He says: 'Folk music supplies an epitome of the principle upon which the musical part is founded.'

The Raga system attained maturity by about the tenth century and dominated the music of the entire country. The older forms of melodies, however, continued for some time longer. The last exponent of the older musical tradition was Jaideva who flourished at the end of the 14th century.

A significant phase in the history of Indian music came with the religious revival movement of the Bhakti form of worship. Associated with the theistic and popular cults of Vishnu and Siva the movement appeared as a revolt against the austere intellectualism of the Brahmanic philosophy. It aimed at making religion more humanistic and more accessible to the people by bringing into religion a personal god with whom an emotional personal relationship could be established. It emphasised worship by prayer and absolute faith in which songs became the outpourings of a real devotion. The revival was spread far and wide by means of
song. The seventh and eighth centuries of our era in the South and the period covered by the last quarter of the fifteenth and the first quarter of the sixteenth centuries in the North witnessed a great musical outburst among the masses. This was indeed a very potent force in the growth and development of music. It brought into Indian music many feelings and experiences of the people which were expressed lyrically in their own regional languages. It enriched the regional styles and gave new impetus to music.

The advent of the Mohammedans into India introduced a new and virile influence in the music of the country. Music was the one art which the zeal of the early Muslim invaders did not destroy. On the contrary, probably one of the richest contributions to its development was made by the Turk and the Afghan and later by the Mughal rulers of India. Many of them and their officers were zealous lovers of music and extended enthusiastic patronage to it. Among the greatest pioneer-patrons was Hazrat Amir Khusrau, the famous Persian poet, musician, soldier, and statesman, associated with the reign of Sultan Alauddin Khilji (A.D. 1296-1315). By a judicious mixture of Persian and Indian models Amir Khusrau originated many new and finer variations of the Ragas and invented new instruments. Indian music, nevertheless, retained its traditional character and the principles of its Raga composition. By adopting new Ragas tinged with Persian airs Indian music was not lost in the maze of refinement.

Music was one of the glories of the reign of Akbar, the great Mughal emperor. In his time music was specially cultivated. The Court teemed with musicians of various nationalities. Abul Fazl, the court chronicler, devotes a whole chapter to it in his Ain-i-Akbari, wherein he records the names of thirty-eight masters of music, both vocal and instrumental. In all Hindu courts music was an integral part of life. The courts of the Deccan maintained an army of musicians, Golkunda as many as 20,000.

Of the several musical types current in the 16th century, Dhrupad was the most favoured melody in the courts because apart from its intrinsic beauty it was characterised by a spirit of regal majesty and grandeur which actually reflected the mood of the princely courts. Dhrupad was originally a traditional melody into which were woven the prevalent folk musical patterns. In the process of refinement at the hands of many masters it had acquired the polish, embellishment and serenity of the classical form and in the time of Akbar entered a rich lyrical phase. Swami Hari Dass, a great saint, was a superb Dhrupad vocalist. But it was his great disciple Mian Tansen, a jewel of Akbar's court, who enriched and dignified the structural beauty of the Dhrupad by fusing with it many elements of alien origin.

After the death of Akbar music continued to receive the patronage of the Mughal emperors Jahangir and Shahjahan. They showed the same zeal for music which their great ancestor had shown, and helped to preserve its high standards. The court of Shahjahan especially saw the zenith of Mughal glory not only in pompe and splendour but also in the field of music. A number of celebrated musicians were attached to his court and were honoured by him. Several new musical ideas were developed and opportunities were provided for giving expression to them.

It was also in this period that the spirit of decorative refinement which had made its way into every phase of life in the post-Akbar period made definite inroads into Indian music and gave it an agile and lyric sweetness. The musician
freed himself from the puritanical rigidity of the Dhrupad and devoted his talents to the greater development of pure tonal structure. Soon the Dhrupad went out of fashion and its place was taken by a style of music which came to be known as Kheyal, having far greater freedom in the matter of improvisation than was permitted in the Dhrupad. About five centuries earlier Amir Khusrav had tried to reshape a regional folk song as Kheyal, and later in the 15th century Sultan Husain Sharqi of Jaunpur had striven to popularise it. But their efforts had not met with success as the musicians and patrons were not inclined to accept this new style in music. Kheyal, however, easily developed and prospered in the romantic and sensuous atmosphere of the later Mughal courts and became a popular new style of music. Kheyal received its greatest patronage under Muhammad Shah Rangeela, one of the last Mughal emperors, in whose court lived Shah Sadaranga and his son Adaranga, the two highly talented creators of music in the post-Akbar period. They gave the Kheyal style a distinct form, content, and richness. Though the Kheyal created by Sadaranga was almost similar to the Dhrupad and possessed the same gravity and slow gait it soon developed on its own lines.

The end of the 18th century witnessed an era of joyous worldliness and frivolity in society. The urge of creativity led to forms in which elegance mingled with excess of ornamentation. Poetry, painting, architecture, and music became more and more ornate and were designed more to tickle the fancy than to inspire lofty emotions. In music this attitude was reflected in the development of such vocal styles as Thumri, Tappa, Dadra, and Ghazal, 'which pleased the ears and touched the heart, but not the soul.'

In the new environment Dhrupad naturally became unfamiliar. The traditions, symbols, and imagery of Hindu mythology which had formed the literary contents of the Dhrupad were less understood now. It led to the weakening of the devotional character of the Dhrupad music and loss of the power it had commanded. In practice it became a slave to mere technique and formalism.

During the last days of the Mughal Empire, more particularly after its downfall, the court musicians travelled to several princely states. Of these Gwalior, already known as a great centre of music, Jaipur, Udaipur, Rampur, Alwar, Lucknow, Baroda, and Hyderabad, were the prominent places where musicians were welcomed and given patronage and encouragement. The performers were mostly Muslims unable to read the original books of music. But by constant practice and study of the Persian translations of the old Sanskrit texts, they helped in the evolution of the music of India by occasionally giving new interpretations of the Raga, by modifying a note here or emphasising a note there, or even by adding new graces. In course of time schools of interpretation arose which came to be known as Gharanas. They became custodians of distinct family styles. Every Gharana tried to preserve its own particular style, and knowledge became a guarded mystery to be revealed only to one's kith and kin. The Gharana system is also current in the South where it is known as Sampradayas (traditional practices).

The British rulers could not own Indian music as the Mohammedan rulers had done prior to them. They took little interest in it and hardly gave it any patronage. Nor were the people much interested in music because from the days of Muslim rule classical music had lost its contacts with the life of the common man. It prospered under the patronage of the princes and the nobility and catered only to their tastes. Music had come to be identified with such professional sec-
tions of the society as were looked down upon and the people did not any more regard it as a respectable art. There were individuals who understood music and continued to be its votaries, but only on an individual plane.

Fortunately, this unhappy situation did not last long. A renaissance in the field of music was led by Bhatkhande and Vishnu Digamber. Bhatkhande, an eminent scholar of music, dedicated himself to the task of establishing music on a more scientific footing by systematising the musical composition of the masters of various recognised schools and making it available in a kind of notation. Vishnu Digamber was another great scholar who devoted himself to the preservation and development of a living musical culture of India. It was largely due to his efforts that music ceased to have the stigma of licentiousness attached to it and the better educated among the Indians accepted it as an elevating cultural activity. Rabin德拉 Nath Tagore experimented with 'harmonious combinations of apparently inconsistent or temperamentally divergent or structurally incompatible ragas into happy and melodious compositions.'

Today, music in all its forms—Dhrupad, Kheyal, Thumri, Dadra, Tappa, Ghazal, and many others, is prevalent in the country and each has its own region of popularity depending upon the historical and social traditions of the people. The formation of the Sangeet Natak Akademi by the Government of India in 1953 is in a way a new continuation of the centuries old tradition of state patronage to the arts, particularly to dance and music. For the present the Akademi has set about to record the various forms of music peculiar to each region, to catalogue, collect, and whenever possible to arrange to publish various manuscripts on music. By organizing festivals of music, the Akademi has also tried to give it its due place in the national life.

**Carnatic Music**

Although there is one Indian music there are two distinct forms of it depending on the two ways of working it out. They are distinguished as the Southern or the Carnatic system and the Northern or the Hindustani system. Basically they do not differ. Both have a common origin and tradition and both are based on the principles stated in the ancient Sanskrit treatises on music. Before the Muslim influence coloured the music of the North the main difference between the two systems lay only in the basis of classification of the Ragas. A cleavage, however, between the two systems was seen with the introduction of Persian melodies into Indian music. While music in the South continued to preserve its traditional purity, the music of the North under Muslim influence not only adopted and assimilated many new melodies from Persia, but also imbibed the courtly mood and the somewhat sensuous tastes and inclinations of the rulers. At times this infusion of the Persian into Indian elements led to crises in the field of music. But whenever these crises were detected patrons of music in North India were not reluctant to invite scholars and musicians from the South to come and help in resolving them. Thus we find Pandariika Vitthal, Bhavabhatta and Gopal Naik going over to Delhi and other centres of music in North India to try to re-arrange the northern Ragas according to the southern system.

The two forms have, therefore, tended to coalesce into one unified system. The spirit of unity reveals itself in many ways. For both Raga development is the basis and goal of musical expression. Both systems are agreed on the notes in the
octave and the basic structure of their composition. For some Ragas in the North there are corresponding Ragas in the South, though the nomenclature is not always the same. Each form has also drawn upon the other as often as possible. It is, however, only in the rendering of the Ragas, the enunciation of the tones, the use of flourishes and decorations and the method of voice production that differences are reflected in the music of the two systems. Fundamentally, the differences are not vital and are merely those of emphasis on the basic sentiments and the mode of presentation.

Like the North Indian music, the music of the South too underwent many changes during the 16th and 19th centuries at the hands of reformers. But the first real effort at systematising the Carnatic music on the lines followed today was undertaken by Raghunath Nayaka, the ruling prince of Tanjore in the 17th century, and his Prime Minister Govinda Dikshitar. They reconstructed the theory and practice on which modern South Indian music is based and incorporated many North Indian Ragas in this (Carnatic) system. The advent of Thyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar, Shyama Shastri, and Kshetrajna late in the 18th century, heralded the most glorious period in the evolution of South Indian music. Tanjore probably has been one of the best musical centres of South India. It was here that Thyagaraja, the most revered name in the annals of South Indian music, composed and sang his songs. He was an original musical genius whose Kritis and Kirtanams are still sung all over the South. To him the music of the South owes the Sangatis—the art of developing peculiar variations upon a particular melody. Dikshitar’s compositions are reckoned as priceless gems in the repository of Carnatic music. But his greatest contribution lies in a most skilful slow manipulation of the Raga structure which gives sufficient staying quality to the melodic centres of the Ragas and thus enhances their charm. Among other master-musicians and composers of the South, Shyama Shastri is the best in the delineation of emotions inherent in the Ragas, and Gopalkrishna Bharti is undoubtedly the greatest composer of recitative music who enriched his creations by drawing copiously upon folk music.

The Scale

The scale current today throughout India contains seven notes or Svaras which in order of ascent are Sadja, Rishabha, Gandhara, Madhyama, Panchama, Dhaivata, and Nishadha. Their sol-fa initials, also current in every vernacular in India, are Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni. These seven notes form a cluster known as Saptaka. Of these notes, Sa and Pa, are always constant and unmodifiable, while the other five notes are modifiable with delicate and indefinite variations of pitches. The musical interval is the Shruti which is even smaller than the semi-tone of Western music. Twenty-two such intervals are accepted in actual practice. A note when it stays on its proper interval is called Shuddha or unmodified one. When such an unmodified note leaves its usual interval either towards its previous or successive interval, it becomes a Vikrit or modified note. A note can have as many modifications as there are intervals between it and its previous and successive intervals. Thus when the note goes downwards from its original Shruti place it may be flat (Komal), flatter or flattest; or it may be sharp (Tivra), sharper or sharpest when the note goes higher than the Shuddha. An expert manipulation of these intervals is capable of giving an infinite variety of scales.
and offers great possibilities of development in regard to musical formation. These varieties form the base on which the edifice of Indian music is built.

**The Raga**

Every Indian song or piece of music is set in some Raga. The conception of Raga is one of the basic principles of the system of Indian music. It is not a tune, air or melody, as it is commonly understood. It is in fact a peculiar conception to which other systems of music cannot furnish any exact parallel. Literally, Raga is something that colours the mind with a certain definite feeling—a wave of passion or emotion. In a special sense, Raga is a tonal composition of musical notes having a sequence, form, or structure of a peculiar significance. The ancient authorities have generally defined the nature of the Raga as a ‘particular arrangement of sounds in which notes (Swara) and melodic movements (Varnas) appear like ornaments and enchant the mind.’ Melodic movements are of four kinds—repetition of the same sound, ascent, descent, and ascent and descent mixed. Strangways, a modern authority, defined Raga as ‘an arbitrary series of notes characterized, as far as possible as individuals, by proximity to or remoteness from the note which marks the tessitura (general level of the melody), by a special order in which they are usually taken, by the frequency or the reverse with which they occur, by grace or the absence of it, and by relation to a tonic usually reinforced by a drone.’ In other words ‘Ragas are different series of notes within the octave, and are differentiated from each other by the prominence of certain fixed notes and by the sequence of particular notes.’ We may perhaps more correctly transcribe Raga in English as the melody mould or melody type.

According to ancient musical theory there are three important notes in the Raga, that is, the starting note (Graha), the predominating note (Amsa) and the terminating note (Nyasa). The Graha and the Nyasa have almost lost their significance today. But the Amsa, also called the Vadi (literally, the speaker), is the all important note and indicates, manifests or expresses the general character of the Raga.

In course of time Ragas have undergone many changes and some have from time to time even dropped out from current practices. A number of the surviving Ragas have become so elaborate and complex that they have lost their original structural forms and today their note compositions are very different from those given in the ancient texts.

Ragas have been grouped and classified from the early days of their evolution. The classification, however, has always been a controversial point in Indian music. Different schools have different systems of classification. The Northern and Southern systems have their own ways of classification. Sometimes individual musicians have their own systems. Basically all the Ragas that are sung or played by the artists are classified under three main heads. There are Ragas that contain all the seven notes of the octave, that is, Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni. They may all be unmodified (Shuddha) or modified (Vikrit) or unmodified and modified mixed together. The notes need not be used consecutively in the execution. One or two notes may be dropped in the ascent, but in that case at least seven Shuddha or Vikrit notes, as prescribed, should be used in the descent of the complete variety. Ascent and descent, in a straightforward, stepwise or a spiral manner, are necessary for a Raga. Secondly, there are Ragas using six notes, and lastly, Ragas using only five notes, Shuddha or Vikrita, in ascent and descent alike.
Another method of classification, though far from perfect, has been adopted by Bhatkhande and has been generally accepted by musicians and scholars. Of the ten main scales (That) of the North Indian or Hindustani school of music, Bilawal, similar to the major scale of C of the West, is accepted as the fundamental scale. It contains all the seven notes and is the source of more than twenty Ragas. It is known as Shankarabharana in the South. The second scale is known as Kalyan (Shanta Kalyani in the South) which uses all the notes of Bilawal with the fourth accentuated, and includes about twelve Ragas. Khambaj (Kambhoji in the South) is the third scale which contains all the notes of the second scale with the seventh flattened and comprises about ten Ragas. The fourth scale is Bhairon (Mayamalava Gouda in the South) which uses all the notes of the first scale with the second and the sixth flattened. It gives birth to fifteen Ragas. The fifth scale is Poorvi (Ramakriya in the South) in which all the notes of the fourth scale are retained with the fourth sharpened. It has twelve Ragas. Marva (Gamanakriya in the South) is the sixth scale which retains all the notes of the fifth scale except the flat sixth which is replaced by an unmodified one. It is the base of twelve Ragas. The seventh scale is Bhairavi (Todi in the South) in which all the notes except Sa and Pa are flattened. It has at least three Ragas. Asavari (Natbhairavi in the South) is the eighth scale which is evolved by substituting the flat second of the fourth scale by an unmodified fourth. It accounts for about eight Ragas. The ninth scale known as Kafi (Karaharapriya in the South) is formed by replacing the flat sixth of the eighth scale by an unmodified sixth. It is the base for thirty-six Ragas. Todi (Saiva-Pantuvavudi in the South) is the tenth scale which is evolved by retaining all the notes of the seventh scale except its accentuated fourth which is replaced by the unmodified one.

Along with this classification yet another grouping devised on the basis of male and female principles is also observable. It is one of the earliest methods of dividing the tunes. Sarangadeva in his Sangeeta Ratnakar, while giving names to the melodies gave masculine endings to some and feminine to others and thereby sowed the seeds for the classification of tunes as Ragas(male) and Raginis (female). The terms, however, do not suggest any marked difference. At present the generally accepted conception of Ragini is as a 'graceful minor, diminutive or abbreviated form of a Raga.'

In the Carnatic system, all Ragas are first classified into two main classes, parent or Janaka Ragas also called Melakartas, and derivatives or Janya Ragas. The Melakartas number seventy-two and are formed by variations of the seven notes of the gamut in regular order, ascending and descending. These seventy-two are again divided into two classes by the use of the sharpened fourth. The Janya Ragas, numbering about 400 or 500, in general use in the South today, are formed by combining in various ways five or more of the notes used in the parent Raga under which they are grouped.

It has been stated earlier that after the Aryans had settled in the country and agriculture had come to occupy a place of importance in their lives, they adopted many of the religious beliefs, seasonal rites and festivities connected with the fertility cults of the indigenous population. The Aryans also borrowed the melodies of the ancient tribes and refined them to celebrate their own rituals and seasonal festivals. As specific seasons and hours of the day and night were fixed for the performance of the different festivals, religious rites and ceremonies, music related to them came to be associated with such periods of time. In the
beginning there were six Ragas and they were associated with the six appropriate seasons of the year. They were Bhairava, Megha, Panchama, Nat-Narain, Shri, and Vasanta, and they were meant to be sung in the summer, rainy, autumn, early winter, winter and spring seasons respectively. Raga Bhairava was associated with the festival for the worship of Siva, originally held in the months of September and October, but later shifted to the months of April and May. It thus became the melody of summer time reminding men of the anger of Siva, the God of destruction. Megha, meaning cloud, was the melody of the rainy season representing the exuberance of joy among the agricultural people with the coming of the rains. Shri, which also is a name of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, was sung in the winter season soon after the harvest. Vasanta Raga, arousing emotions of joy and hilarity with the appearance of blossoms, is the song of the spring (Vasanta) season. Similarly, Raga Panchama was allocated to the autumn months and Raga Nat-Narain to the early winter season. The allocation of the six Ragas to the six seasons, however, was not strictly adhered to for long and they have been changed off and on.

Apart from this traditional association of Ragas with seasons, a very unique characteristic of Indian music is the assignment of special hours of the day or night for the singing of a particular melody. Psychologically, the word Raga, meaning passion, suggests the idea of mood. According to the Indian theory of music, the Raga form in its structure represents a distinctive mood, association or atmosphere of the human mind or of Nature, and there is an inherent quality in each Raga which enables it to call up and evoke the particular feeling in mind or in its physical environment. The Ragas thus emerge as the ‘suggestive sound pictures’ of the various aspirations, emotions and sentiments, expressing and arousing a particular union of the passions of the body and the mind both in man and in Nature. It is, therefore, fitting that each melody should have its special time suitable for its singing. Indeed, so important is this aspect of Indian music that in the ancient texts singing of melodies at hours appropriate to them is strictly ordained. It is stated that melodies are liable to be killed if sung at inappropriate hours and whoever listens to them (at wrong hours) courts poverty and shortens his span of life. The rules are slackened on occasions of marriage, gifts, hymns to deities, and stage performances by the order of the king.

There are many interesting stories, some as recent as four or five decades ago, which testify to the power of music to move the elements in Nature, in man, and in animals. The last time Megha was sung by Ustad Zakiruddin Khan of Udaipur at the first music conference in Baroda in 1916, ‘much to our amazement,’ writes Atiya Begum who was present, ‘a sudden storm brewed, the rains poured in torrents and the disturbance lasted for a couple of hours.’ The late Ustad Mohammad Ali Khan, the last descendant of Tansen, when challenged in 1928, played the Deepak Raga on a Rabab in the temple of Hanuman at Gaya with the result that the flames generated by the Raga burnt a portion of the musical instrument, which has been preserved in the temple and is still worshipped. Whatever may be the truth in these stories there is no doubt that the Raga singer in India has successfully adapted music to the seasons of the year, the hours of the day and the moods and emotions of man and Nature. It has been rightly pointed out that the melodies appear pleasant and attractive only when sung at appropriate hours.

1 Atiya Begum, Sangita of India.
2 Hamid Husain, Guidastai-Thumari.
As Narada, a writer of musical texts believed to have lived sometime between the 7th and the 9th centuries A.D., has remarked: ‘Curious indeed are the names of the Ragas.’ The names, however, yield important data for the origin and history of the Ragas. At the first stage melodies took their names from the dominant or prominent notes used in them, like Raga Sadj from the note Sadjia, and Raga Gandhari from Gandhara. Later, the melodies derived their names from the names of tribes, both indigenous and foreign, who by combining their musical traditions with those of the Aryans, had helped to build up a rich and colourful musical heritage in India. The Sakas, Takkas, Malavas, Abhiras, Savaras, Gurjaras, Pulindas, Bhairavas and Dravidas, were well-known tribes, some of them in a high stage of civilization in ancient India. They contributed Ragas like Saka, Takka, Malava (still current by the name of Malvi and by its derivative Malava-Kaisika, now vulgarised into Malkous), Abhiri, Saveri, Gujiri, Pulindi, Vairavi, and Dravidi respectively. Sometimes, names of Ragas were derived from geographical place names and regions. For example, Raga Saurastri (vulgarised as Sorath) is a gift of Saurashtra, and Raga Vangala, a melody referred to by Matanga, has come from Bengal. Often music derived prestige from cult and cult worship and the Ragas were given names after some god or goddess. Raga Kedar (a name of Siva), Kamod (one of Siva’s names in Tantra was Kama, ‘that which is desired’) and Durga (name of Diva’s consort) apparently owe their names to the devotion of Siva’s worshippers. Raga Jogia is from the Yogi or mendicant. Many flowers, birds, and animals appear to have lent their names to some old melodies which they inspired. These have now become extinct in the Hindustani system though some of them are still retained in the South. Sometimes individual composers, musicians, and patrons of music have added their names to their musical creations. The Ragas created by Mian Tansen preserve his memory by bearing the prefix Mian. Raga Jaunpuri is so called because it was composed by Sultan Husain Sharqi of Jaunpur (15th century).

Embellishments and Graces

After formulating the basic canons of melodic compositions the ancient theorists of Indian music laid down that good music should also be fully expressive, its meaning should be clear, it should be properly set to rhythm, it should possess the harmony of the combined sounds of flute and the human voice, it should have fineness of expression in the upper and lower notes, it should be infused with grace, charm, beauty, sweetness, and it should possess the requisite embellishments and graces. Of these, the embellishments and graces are the most essential parts of Indian music. Bharata has gone so far as to say that a ‘song without embellishments is like a night without the moon, a river without water, a creeper without flowers and a woman without ornaments.’ Embellishments in Indian music are known as Alankars, and like Varnas, from which they are derived, have been classified into four main groups: the simple vocalisation which returns either to the note from where it starts or to the tonic; the ascending embellishment which moves up from one note to a higher one; the descending embellishment which comes down from one note to a lower one; and the moving embellishment which is an elaborate vocalisation combining in itself all these three Alankars.

1 Sangitamakaranda, pp. 18, 56.
A melody is also adorned with the use of graces or Gamakas. They are improvised musical phrases and curves of sounds which add variety to the melody. The more common graces are about ten in number. Mirh is one of them, which is a graceful glide from one note to another so that we recognise one musical utterance and one continuity of sound. Embellishments and graces are used in the Western system as well but they are not so elaborate as in Indian music. It is natural that in Europe, where many notes are heard simultaneously, grace should appear as an unnecessary elaboration added to the note, rather than a structural factor. But in India the note and the microtonal grace compose a closer unity, for the grace fulfills just that function of adding light and shade which in harmonised music is attained by the varying degrees of sonance. The Indian song without grace would seem to Indian ears as bald as the European art song without the accompaniment which it pre-supposes.\(^1\)

**Time Measure**

To achieve a rhythmic character in music, it is essential that the musical sounds should follow one another at regular and appropriate intervals of time. It is claimed, and rightly so, that in the use of innumerable rhythms and time measures, both simple and complex, Indian music stands unrivalled. The time measures of the music of other countries constitute but a fraction of those used in India.

Since poetry rather than prose was the principal medium of thought in this country in ancient and medieval times and everything was learnt in verse, chanted to regular rules, musical time measures in India have naturally developed from the prosody and meters of poetry. Great stress has always been laid on the exact time value of syllables in verse. As there is no accent in Indian poetry, the time length is all important. This may account for the great development of time measure in Indian music.

The Indian word for rhythm is Laya, which is a natural harmonious flow of vocal and instrumental sounds governed by the stressed and the unstressed. It has been defined as ‘the expression of the instinct for order in sound which governs the human ear.’ There are three varieties of rhythm— Vilambit, Madhya, and Drut, corresponding to the slow, medium, and fast tempos respectively of Western music. When the Laya and the Matras (time-unit) are fixed then it is said to be a Tala. In other words, a Tala or time cycle is ‘rhythmic time measured in Avartas (bar) of a specific length composed of specific time-units.’ The rhythm of a Tala is made prominent by Bhari or stress and Khali or wave of hand, at suitable intervals within each Avarta. There are three kinds of stress beats, the strong, the medium, and the weak. Of these the strong accent or the Sam, accentuated by the Indian drums, is the most important. It is said that Bharata, the author of Natya Shastra, discovered thirty-two kinds of Tala in the song of the lark. Later on, Sarangadeva mentioned one hundred and twenty different varieties of Tala.

In course of time other Talas were introduced in India, most of which are still current. About forty Talas are in use at present, but fifteen amongst them are popular.

Tala and Laya in music, although used for two different purposes, the former for measuring rhythmic time and the latter as an ornamentation, really go side by

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1 A. K. Coomaraswamy, Dance of Siva, p. 76.
side. For good music it is essential that not only the component melodious pieces should follow one another at regular and appropriate intervals, but that there should also be a proper blending of the notes to create the melodic rhythm.

**MUSICAL FORMS**

**Dhrupad**

There are various kinds of melodies in use both in the North and the South. The two most important in the Hindustani system are known as Dhrupad and Kheyal. Dhrupad is essentially divine music. Its songs refer to the various aspects of the Godhead and the Universal Goddess, and aim at expressing devotion towards the Divinity in many ways and forms. Dhrupad compositions, therefore, mainly sing the praise of gods and goddesses. Kings, patrons, and heroes have also inspired eulogistic themes in Dhrupad singing. Occasionally, descriptions of seasons, and of the nude body of a woman of perfect beauty and grace, comparing each of her limbs with the wealth of Nature, transcending all sexuality, will also be found in Dhrupad songs. The chief Rasa-types or sentiments depicted in the Dhrupad are Vira, Sringara, and Shanta, that is, heroic, amorous, and serene. The singing is guided by a fixed set of rules rigidly followed. The style is very masculine, and the music is developed in a slow and restrained movement of verbal and emotional dignity with the utmost economy of ornamental flourishes.

**Hori-Dhamar**

Akin to Dhrupad in spirit is the Hori-Dhamar style of music. Originally, Dhamar was a folk song of Mathura and its environs, places associated with the early life of Lord Krishna. Hori-Dhamar, therefore, relates to Krishna's pranks and his amorous adventures with Radha. Though in structure and mode of presentation Hori-Dhamar is like the Dhrupad, it uses a few more graces and a particular rhythm which gives it a characteristic movement and swing.

**Kheyal**

The style of music known as Kheyal conveys the idea of imagination, which also symbolises its spirit. Kheyal is less rigorous, less bound by rules, and enjoys greater freedom than the Dhrupad in its exposition. It makes use of many embellishing devices which the Dhrupad lacks, such as graces, flourishes, trills, tremors, and jerks. It also permits greater elaboration which takes the form of 'Tan', a running glide over notes permuted and computed. Kheyal is the dominant style today and is sung both by men and women. Among the outstanding styles of Kheyal singing mention may be made of the schools of Gwalior, Delhi, Patiala, and Agra—different from one another in the technique of exposition of the Ragas.

**Thumri**

The other important vocal styles are Thumri, Tappa, Dadra, and Ghazal, each characterised by erotic subject-matter, and soft graceful notes. Thumri is associated with the Nawabs of Oudh. Wajid Ali Shah, the last of the Nawabs,
is regarded as one of the best composers of this type of song. Thumri limits itself to amorous feelings and its charm lies in its ability to convey musically as many shades of meaning as the words of the poem can bear. It is the expression of the mood therefore which is the soul of Thumri performance. Its music is lively and tunes fascinating, and it requires a feeling heart, an imaginative temperament and a sweet and flexible voice to bring out all its beauty. Thumri has travelled far and wide from Lucknow and Banaras. The Lucknow style of Thumri is chaste, artistic, and rich in luxurious details. The Banaras Thumri has been tremendously influenced by local dialects and the folk music of the neighbourhood, the Kajari and Chaita. Another style of Thumri gaining popularity in recent years is the Punjabi Thumri which is also influenced by its local folk music.

The dominant theme of many of the songs, especially of Kheyal and Thumri, is love in all its aspects. Sometimes love is allegorised as Divine Love but the words are always sincere and passionate. In most of the compositions the expressions of love and desire, hope and despair, are through the medium of a woman. She would beseech the lover to be gracious, lament his absence, complain of her inability to meet him due to the watchfulness of the mother-in-law and sister-in-law. She would entreat her female friends for their assistance in arranging a meeting with the lover, ardently longing for the union in the rainy and spring seasons and welcoming the cawing of the crow which portends the coming of the lover.

**Tappa**

Erotic in theme like the Thumri, the words of Tappa are woven round the love story of the legendary Heer and Ranjha of the Punjab. It was perfected in the courts of the Nawabs of Oudh and developed a great deal in Bengal. All the Ragas of Indian music, except the heavy ones, are used in Tappa and also all the graces. The charm of Tappa singing consists in the quick execution of various permutations and combinations of the notes of the scale.

**Ghazal**

Ghazal, born as a literary product of the 19th century Urdu, was soon adopted as a style of music by professional dancing girls. It has now come to stay as a favourite melody. Ghazal has intense emotional appeal and depends for its successful rendering on correct accent and a good voice.

**Dadra**

Dadra, another variety of music, has a style bearing close similarity to Thumri. They have the same theme, structure, treatment, and exposition. But they differ from each other in Tala, the time measure, the tempo being faster in Dadra than in Thumri. The Dadra styles have developed in the neighbourhood of Lucknow and Banaras with the same differences as are found in the Thumri.

**Tarana**

Tarana is a different type of music. Some scholars suggest that Amir Khusrau being a foreigner and not able to follow the difficult and high flown
Sanskrit of the Hindus, sometimes left out actual words from songs and employed some meaningless words instead, such as ta, na, ri, num, dri, etc., for their tonal values. However, such syllables are now the basis of Tarana compositions. Tarana singing follows a strict time measure and requires great ability and skill. At the present time, almost all the Kheyal singers sing it for variety and change.

Bhajans and Kirtans

The temple provides one of the greatest inspirations to music. Bhajans and Kirtans are the two most popular forms of religious music. The music of Kirtan, though simple and highly emotional, has no classical bias. Sung collectively, it has moved the masses to great emotional heights under the spiritual impetus provided by the saint-leaders of the Bhakti cult. The Kirtan of Bengal is a kind of dramatic sonata based on the various episodes from the life of Krishna and Radha, and develops from phase to phase and from emotion to emotion. In the Carnatic system, the Kirtan is a kind of music which is akin to the Dhrupad.

Kawwali, Mercia, Soz and Nat

Abhangas and Ovis are religious songs peculiar to Maharashtra. Kawwali, Mercia, Soz, and Nat are the counterparts of the Kirtan and Bhajan for the Muslims. The Mercia is the song describing the battle in which the grandsons of the Prophet were killed. It is chanted in a recitative manner in the mornings during the Moharram festival. Kawwali is distinguished by its quick and lengthy passages up and down the scale and well punctuated choruses emphasising the main theme of the song.

Kriti and Kirtanam

Like the North Indian music, Carnatic music also has many varieties of compositions. The Kriti and the Kirtanam are the most developed and important varieties. The three main parts of the melodies are called Pallavi, Anupallavi and Charnam. The Pallavi contains the main subject of the melody, and the Kriti or the Kirtanam is begun and concluded with the Pallavi. It is in the Pallavi that the expert shows his skill which consists in the improvisation of modulations and in the grouping of the notes of a particular Raga in all possible ways. The difference between the Kirtanam and the Kriti is that the parts of the latter are not so clearly marked off from one another as are the parts of the former. Also, in the Kriti the singer is allowed to introduce variations of the musical theme, called Sangatis. Sometimes there will be as many as twelve different varieties of the same Pallavi. Kritis and Kirtanams are invariably devotional songs. Thyagaraja was very fond of Kritis and he greatly improved them. Kriti occupies the same place in the South which the Dhrupad holds in the North. They are alike in subject, spirit, and the importance they have in their respective systems of music.

Padam and Javali

Other varieties of melodies are known as Padam and Javali. They are like the Kriti in composition and method of rendering, but differ in the subject
matter of the songs. The theme of almost all the Padams is some love episode in the life of Krishna, and it therefore assumes a devotional aspect. Javali, on the other hand, is much more sensuous in concept and spirit. It is full of amorous feelings and is lighter in tone than the Padam. What Kheyal is to the North, Padam is to the South, though the theme of the latter may sometimes be more serious. Similarly Javali is akin to the Thumri of the Hindustani system.

Tillana

Another relatively unimportant variety is called Tillana which is similar to the Hindustani Tarana. This is more or less like the Kriti but without the words.

Ragamalika

There is also a kind of song called Ragamalika, the corresponding music of which in the Hindustani system is known as Ragamala. The Ragamalika and Ragamala consist of a series of Ragas, all linked together like a garland of melodies into one composition. The different Ragas used in the composition are so selected and placed that the whole appears like one unified melody.

Music in India is the ‘unfolding of the melody’ built around the central theme. It is a bare idea in the beginning, but advancing rhythmically it grows and develops as the artist elaborates the theme by varying the melody in countless different ways and blends it at the same time with his own personality. ‘It is the contemplation of an experience leading to its expression and representation in tonal warps and woofs, harmonised in themselves, and forming a fine design with a feeling of purpose.’

For a Raga development the artist usually sings or plays the Alap, which is the overture, the introduction to the piece, and is also known as Nayaki. It is a simple musical progression advancing rhythmically wherein the vocalist with some meaningless musical sounds (like tun tana, ne, te, teri) attempts to reveal the Raga idea in its purest and most abstract elements. Alap is never sung or played to Tala (beat) but to Laya (larger rhythm) and it has no rhythmic accompaniment. The Alap is always begun in slow tempo, gradually changed to the medium, and terminated in the fast tempo.

The other part of the Raga development is done by song which is the presentation of the melody rhythmically and is known as Gayaki. The success of the true artist lies in the skilful interweaving of both the Nayaki and the Gayaki so as to present music as one integral form.

Words in Indian classical music are not accorded any special value and they are always brief and scarcely audible. The reason is that words in musical compositions are mainly used for conveying musical sounds and only incidentally for any sense or meaning. Words as medium of music merely serve for organising the form with tonal shades and seek to represent a mood rather than narrate a theme.

Folk Songs

No system of classical music belongs to the masses though there exists a folk form which is a direct and spontaneous expression of the total personality of

the people. Every season and every festival, every occupation and social occasion, has its heritage of folk songs, in which rhythm is invariably well marked and the song is sung to a recognised tune. Chaitee, Sawnee and Kajari in Uttar Pradesh catch the seasonal moods of summer and the rains. The fascinating lift and rhythm of the Baul and the Bhatiali in Bengal speak of the boatman’s occupation and longings. Povadas are Marathi, and Karkhas Rajput war songs. In South India Kavadi Sindhus are songs of the pilgrims carrying their little decorated yokes to the great temples. Bilhari and Nondi Sindhus, sweet and sad, move the rustic hearts of the South Indian farmers and the cartmen to intense pathos or joyfulness. Sohar in Uttar Pradesh and Holar in the Punjab awaken warmth and joy in the hearts of the countrywomen every time a new child is born. Birha and Bideshia, Jhoori and Mohna, with their sad vibrating notes, are the deeply passionate songs of love, tragic and unhappy but abounding in immortal love.

Lacking both the restraint and dignity of the classical varieties, and also their graces and ornamentations, Indian folk songs are yet rich in sentiment and powerfully expressive of feelings. The words of the songs are always simple and precise, adorned with homely similes and metaphors, and meters natural and rhyming. Set against the rural background of the country this perfectly artless music is closely linked with the very springs of life and reflects the culture and thought of the unsophisticated peasantry. As Devendra Satyarthi puts it: ‘The villager in India, in his inspired moments, succeeds to celebrate a true marriage between words and music as he takes to the time-honoured songs and ballads; connected together, his song may make a full epic of village life, with a story simple and enduring like the earth and the characters which grow like the wheat and paddy in his fields. Work and leisure recall the old memories; his imagination takes a flight bringing every time a new fire to his immemorial similes and metaphors, bringing every time a warm grace to the outline of his every day life.’

**MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**

According to the ancient texts on music, ‘the song has for its soul the sound, which on the other hand is sustained by the instruments.’ The musical instruments of India have, therefore, a history which is as old as that of her music. A seven-keyed flute denoting seven note places along with a stringed instrument of the Veena species and a few percussion instruments have been found at Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, which go to show that fully developed musical instruments were in use in the country even before the coming of the Aryans. In the Vedas both the Veena and the Mridanga, the latter possibly as a rhythmic accompaniment, are mentioned. The Jatakas frequently refer to the Veena, the Venu (flute), and the Mridanga. In the sculptures of Sanchi and Amaravati and in the paintings of Ajanta there are represented instruments almost identical with those in use at the present day. All this goes to show that from very early times instrumental music has occupied a place of honour in the cultural life of the country. Indian music being vocal in texture has been partial to instruments the sounds of which could approximate most to the human voice and serve as an aid to it. ‘The instruments must speak,’ say the Indian musicians, and those that do not bring out the resemblance of human voice are termed somewhat contemptuously as Sushkam Vadyam (dry instrumentalism). Pure instrumental music, therefore, in ancient India was not

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much valued and instruments were conceived and designed only as an accompaniment. It was during the Mughal period that we find musical instruments receiving a prominent and independent place in the music of the Court.

Most of the musical instruments are no doubt Indian inventions. But the people have at various periods in their history accepted foreign instruments and adapted them to suit their own musical requirements. The adapted musical instruments coming mostly from Arabia or Persia are chiefly confined to the North. Most of the early musical instruments still remain in use and have not altered their ancient form even in the smallest detail. The frescoes of Ajanta and various old sculptures prove this even more conclusively than the descriptions given in the old Sanskrit texts.

The ancient Indian music scholars have classified instruments under five heads: Tata, Bitata, Sushira, Anabadjva and Ghana. Tata and Bitata are stringed instruments, the former being played with the stroke of fingers or a plectrum, and the latter with the bow. Sushira are wind instruments. Anabadjva are those instruments the faces of which are covered with skin and are played either by hand or by sticks. Ghana are those which are made of metal. This classification which is similar to the classification of musical instruments prevalent in ancient Greece and Rome, is still accepted.

Apart from the drum, the varieties of which number more than 287, the largest variety in Indian musical instruments is found among the strings. Among them the Veena is regarded as the most characteristic instrument of the nation. Its sound is closest to the human voice and it lends itself most beautifully to all the graces of Indian music. It is mentioned in the oldest Sanskrit texts. Names of the various types of the Veena and their sizes are given in the Rik Samhita. In Naradi Shiksha, a book written in the 1st century A.D., the Veena has been equated with Vedic music and Venu with popular music. Bharata Muni refers to two kinds of Veenas, the one with seven strings played with the fingers, and the other with nine strings played with a plectrum. In the sculptural reliefs of Amaravati a dancer can be seen playing a seven-stringed Veena resembling the present day Sarod. In another musical text belonging to the 7th century eighteen varieties of the Veena are mentioned. Today only four or five of them are known.

The Veena of North India is known as Been or Mahati Veena. The South Indian instrument is called Sarasvati Veena and is used both for accompaniment and for playing melodies independently. The instrument consists of a large peashaped bowl hollowed out of one piece of wood, with a very intricate arrangement of strings and frets. The North Indian Veena has a mellow and sweet tone, while the sound produced by its South Indian counterpart is somewhat metallic. The Kinnari Veena is an instrument referred to in a 7th century musical text and is still used by some of the tribal people.

The Rabab, Sarod and Sitar are instruments of the Veena species, differing from one another only in shape and structure. They are all played with a plectrum. According to some scholars the Rabab is a modified form of the older instrument, the Rudra Veena. But nothing definite can be stated about its origin. The great Tansen played it and in course of time it has undergone many changes. Another name for the Sarod is Swar Veena. It looks like the Rabab and produces powerful vibrant tones. The invention of the Sitar is credited to Amir Khusrau who found the Veena too complicated to handle. It has probably originated from an ancient, three-wired Veena. Later, one of the descendants of Tansen in the 18th century
Indian Musical Instruments
1. Megh Raga (Courtesy, Bharat Kala Bhavan).

2. Deepak Raga, Rajasthani miniature, early 17th century (Courtesy, Bharat Kala Bhavan).


4. South Indian Vina.
A superb example of Patola work

(From The Journal of Indian Art and Industry)
introduced three extra wires in the Sitar of Amir Khusrau and thus raised the number of wires to six. Some time afterwards one more wire was added to the six. Sitar playing is very popular in North India. It is capable of producing beautiful and subtle melodies for the soloist.

The Sur Been is like a big Sitar without frets. It is played by rolling a rod of ebony over the wires, and striking them near the bridges. A similar instrument from South India is called Gottuvadyam. The Sur Singar, evolved in the 19th century on the basis of the Rabab, is its modern descendant. Its tone is rich and mellow.

Indian music is always played or sung to the drone of the Tambura as a subordinate instrumental accompaniment. It controls the pitch of the music and ensures stability. The Tambura belongs to the lute tribe, but without the frets. It is a long and graceful instrument with four very long strings fitted with simple resonators. The strings are pulled by the fingers one after the other in continuous succession.

Stringed instruments of the Bitata variety are played with a horse-hair bow. They include the Sarangi, Esraj, Dilruba, Taoos, Sarinda, Chikara, and a few others. These are now admitted to be instruments of Indian origin. The violin is also believed to have an Indian origin by several foreign scholars. Among the bow instruments the Sarangi is very popular as an accompaniment to singing. It is made from one block of wood hollowed out and has a parchment covered belly. It has four main strings, three of gut and one of brass, with nearly eighteen sympathetic wires running under the main strings. The Esraj is the Bengal variety of the Sarangi. It is a little smaller than the latter and all its strings are of brass. The Dilruba is a little bigger than the Esraj. They are both Muslim derivations from the Sarangi. The Taoos or Mayur is a kind of Dilruba and takes its name from the peacock-shaped resonator.

Among the oldest of the wind instruments are the buffalo and brass horns. Madras and Bengal are noted for the latter variety. The horn is known as Sringa, Komiki, Kalahay in the North and in the South as Kombu. The horns are used for signals, processions, and festivals. The conch-shell or Shankha is also a very ancient wind instrument and is held very sacred.

The Bansri or Vansuri (flute) is a very widely known musical instrument in India. It is also called Murali or Fillagori. In ancient times it functioned as an instrument for providing the drone, long before the Tambura came to be used for the purpose. The unison of the voice with that of the Veena and the flute was stressed and commended as an ideal musical combination. As an independent musical instrument its soft delicacy of its utterances is extremely pleasing. There are two kinds of flutes in use, the transverse and the vertical.

The Shehnai and the Nadaswaram, the former a little shorter and played in the North, and the latter longer and popular in the South, are two of the most highly developed reed instruments. The Shehnai of today is identical with oboes found in Sumerian tombs of the 2nd millennium B.C. Shehnais and Nadaswarams are made of wood or metal. The Nadaswaram is played in a high pitch and the Shehnai in a medium pitch. Their clear piercing notes, rendering all the graces of Indian music, produce melodic effects of a highly sensuous quality.

Among the instruments of percussion the Mridanga takes the first place. It is one of the most ancient and important of the musical instruments for keeping time and rhythm. Some of the drums we find sculptured in the carvings at Sanchi,
Konarka and Khajuraho, belong to the Mridanga variety. ‘Mridanga’ means ‘earthen body,’ and it is possible that its body was originally made of mud. Today, it is made of wood. It is shaped like a barrel about two feet long, with a girth of about three feet in the middle. Its two heads, covered with parchment, are tuned in unison either by tightening or loosening the leather braces enclosing small cylindrical blocks of wood, which are either pushed nearer to or farther away from the head which is being tuned. Because of its deep resonance it is found to provide a suitable and sonorous accompaniment for the Dhrupad and Hori-Dhamar styles of music. In the South the Mridanga accompanies all types of music.

The Tabla takes the place of the Mridanga in the northern and the central parts of India. The Tabla-bayan has evolved from a leather-covered percussion instrument popular in pagan Arabia and later among the Muslim population of Mecca. It appears the Muslims brought with them to this country their favourite instrument (Tabl) and improved it on the lines of Indian varieties. As a musical instrument the Tabla was found to be softer and sweeter in character than the Mridanga and hence it served as a very appropriate background for the mellow Kheyal. Both the Mridanga and the Tabla are based on the same principles and are played almost in the same manner, the difference being only in the structure of the instruments. In the case of the Tabla, the two faces of the Mridanga are set up on two separate small drums instead of being fixed on one. Various styles or schools of Tabla playing have been developed by different families of musicians. The most important of them are the Lucknow, the Farukhabad, the Banaras, and the Punjab styles.

The Nagara, Bheri or Nakkar, is a large kettle-drum beaten with two curved sticks. It was known as Dundubhi in ancient times. It is generally used for religious purposes. The Dhol is the wedding drum of India, played either with the palm of the hand or with sticks. Made of wood bored out of the solid, it is cylindrical in shape and has its two heads covered with skin.

The Damaru, Nidukku, Udukku or Budbudaka have legendary associations with Siva’s Cosmic dance. Its ancient shape is still the common drum of the Kumaon hills where it is known as Hulkka. Shaped like an hour-glass it has a small stick or a piece of lead or a pea attached to a string which is wound round the middle. The stick or the piece of lead or the pea strikes on the drum heads alternately as the holder in his right hand turns the drum this way or that.

A number of cymbals made of brass, copper, or bronze are also in use. They are called Manjira, Jalra or Kaitala.

Until recently the orchestra, as it is understood in the West, was quite foreign to Indian music. But a combined instrumental group was not unknown in India. We have evidence of the existence of some kind of ensemble during the Gupta period. It was customary for a band of instrumentalists to be in attendance whenever the royal party went out on excursions. In recent years attempts at the formation of an Indian orchestra on purely melodic lines have been made by some of the noted instrumentalists. Ustad Alauddin Khan, as a leader of the Maihar band, did some pioneer work in this direction. Boral, Timirbaran and Shirali, to name only a few, have also made valuable contributions towards the popularity of Indian orchestral music. At present the Delhi Station of All India Radio is maintaining an orchestral unit which periodically broadcasts selected Indian melodies. The conductors, Ravi Shanker and T. K. Jayama Iyer, are distinguished musicians trained in the noblest traditions of Indian music. They are
both acquainted with the basic principles of Western music as well and are not averse to making experiments by adopting and introducing some of the features of Western music into the Indian system. The Indian films have given direction in a new kind of orchestration which visibly betrays the influence of Western music to a marked degree. Orchestras of Indian instruments, however, cannot be justified, unless it be accepted that polyphonic music, that is, music which makes use of several instruments playing distinct melodies, represents a progress on monodic forms, that is, music made essentially of one melodic development whether this be played by one or several instruments. Music to be true to itself must be national in character, and in keeping with the classical traditions of a country. At this stage we are bound to ask ourselves whether a music which has been built up and perfected through ages of refined civilisation and creative genius can really enrich itself by harmonizing along lines of the music of the West. It is obvious that the traditional Indian music with emphasis on psychic moods and spiritual states offers greater possibilities of successfully expressing the subtle and delicate human emotions by its process of improvisation rather than by harmonisation.
HANDICRAFTS are a major element in the cultural heritage of India. They are, like the other manifestations of Indian art, a product of the material and spiritual circumstances of the society and a creation woven out of the spirit of dedication to Beauty. In their varied forms they reflect a religious-philosophical idealism, a joy in the appreciation of radiant ornamentation, and an imagination that draws upon every phase of God's creations. The handicrafts of India are thus truly symbolic of the fulfillment of the emotional urges of her people.

The scriptures say: 'Atma Sams Kritir Vaba Shilpani'— 'handicrafts are the surest means of the salvation of our souls.' It was, therefore, to emphasize the highly sacred concept of the vocation that the ancient Indian craftsman traced his descent from 'Visvakarman, Lord of the Arts, Master of a thousand handicrafts, Carpenter of the gods and Builder of their palaces divine, Fashioner of every jewel, First of Craftsmen, by whose art men live, and whom a great and deathless God, they continually worship' (Mahabharata). This picturesque origin provided all the sanctions and stability to his occupation. It gave him a model to live up to and ensured a high degree of craftsmanship in the creative purpose of his endeavours. But while a dynamic striving after Beauty principally determined the character of the functions of the artist-creator, the craftsman never lost touch with the streams of man's life. 'Beauty was not an isolated item, it was an integral part of one's intimate life. Whatever the article in use, no matter how mundane, it had to be beautiful. Decoration was not an end in itself. It had to serve a social purpose.\footnote{Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, Indian Handicrafts, p. 6.}

Indian handicrafts have thus emerged out of the very substance of the basic intentions of human life. This has endowed it with a strength which has enabled it to survive the fury of men through the darkest periods of history, and the collisions of widely divergent cultures and beliefs. Through the centuries there has been a ready responsiveness to influences from whatever sources they came and a willingness to assimilate them into the ever growing fabric of national tradition. Beginning as a joint creation of the Aryan and the Dravidian genius, the handicrafts of India were first impregnated with the Greek and Central Asian influences, then they saw a blending of the Hindu and Islamic forms of designs, and later even the absorption of Western elements. With every impact a freshness and inventiveness was introduced into the older procedure and a new vigour and life was infused into the great heritage. Into it also went a 'million coloured strands of tradition' filled with myths, legends, episodes, beliefs, practices, rituals, symbolisms, songs, and dances.

It is in this vast background that lie embedded the sources of the decorative motifs of Indian handicrafts. The two main elements that can be discerned are the
Islamic ornaments in which all natural forms are reduced to conventional arabesques or ingenious geometric patterning, and the other, the more exuberant and imaginative vision of the indigenous Indian, which uses the natural forms such as animals and human figures, with greater freedom.

During the past few generations the spirit of India, vitalised by a new outlook has been yearning towards greater achievements. Conscious of a new vision she is now evolving a world of new ideas and ideals. With it, however, her faith in the norms that had evolved the craft tradition is fast growing dim. This being a machine-dominated age in the country's history her traditions and customs are receiving a merciless treatment and the very existence of many of her valued handicrafts is threatened. Indeed, handicrafts seem to be out of place in the present-day living conditions. The craftsmen are now scattered, their products cannot compete with machine made goods, and they themselves are made to realise that they have lost their former importance in society. Yet loyal to the traditions of the heritage the few that still pursue them are seriously devoted to their work. They are a people contented with their frugal way of living and derive happiness from the expressions of their creative strivings. It is for this reason that even in a state of decline India still retains her precious impulses of beauty and artistry in her textiles, metal work, jewellery, pottery, dolls and toys, wood, horn, ivory and stone works, papier mâché, leather, mats, inlaying, and a number of other crafts, through all of which the inspired craftsmanship of the artisan asserts itself in lovely creations.

**Textiles**

Exquisite poetry in colourful fabrics, both cotton and silk, has been woven by the weavers of India from very remote ages. It is now generally accepted that there was hardly any technique or art in fabric making that was not known to the Indian craftsman of the past. Cotton was known to the Babylonians as 'Sindhu,' and to the Greeks as 'Sandon,' establishing its origin in the Sindhu Valley. The discovery of a fragment of a madder-dyed fabric at Mohenjo-Daro, sticking to a silver vase, would lead us to believe that a true cotton fabric with ornamentation existed in India at least as far back as the 3rd millennium B.C. There are passages in the Rig Veda from which we may safely conclude that the art of weaving was known and carried to a high state of excellence in Vedic times. One hymn refers to Agni (Fire) for light regarding the mysteries of sacrifice, but the language used is that of weaving: 'I know not either warp or woof, I know not the web thy weave.' In another hymn we find, 'Day and Night spread light and darkness over the extended earth like two famous female weavers weaving a garment.' The Rig Veda makes special mention of sheep and wool, 'Urnavati' and 'Avik' respectively. The Indus Valley was considered the home of Urnavati and was famous for its wool and wool-cloth. There is also a reference in the Vedas to the shiny gold-woven cloak (Hiranya-drapi) and in the Mahabharata to the 'Manichira,' probably a South Indian fabric with pearls woven into the fringe. Cotton, silk, and woollen stuffs were in common use when the great Epics were written. Silk is mentioned in the Buddhist Jatakas. The Pali literature presents a rich picture of the textile art of the Buddhist period, and describes fabrics including the famous fabric of Banaras known as 'Kaseyaka' and the woollen blankets of Gandhara of a bright red colour. One such blanket, worth a lac of rupees, was given away as a gift by the king of Kosala.
The Greek physician Ktesias (400 B.C.) alludes to Indian cotton cloths, decorated with patterns by a combination of resist-dyeing and hand-painting, and notes their bright colours and their popularity with the Persian women of Susa and Ecbatana. Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador to the court of Chandragupta Maurya, testifies to the Hindus' love of dress in ancient India when he says: 'In contrast to the simplicity they observe in other matters, they love finery and ornament. They wear dresses worked in gold, adorned with precious stones, and also flowered robes made of fine muslin.' In A.D. 14, the geographer Strabo, taking as his authority Nearchus, the admiral of Alexander the Great, writes of the 'flowered robes' of India. A reference to dyed and printed fabrics in the 4th century is given in the Vulgate (Job XXVIII, 16) and quoted by Pope Gregory (A.D. 590-604). It says that Wisdom 'may not be compared with the dyed colours of India.' During the reign of Julius Caesar Indian silks and muslins were so much in demand in Rome that Pliny moans: 'At the very lowest computation India, Scires, and the Arabian Peninsula drain from our Empire yearly one hundred million sestertia, so dearly do we pay for our luxury and our women.' In A.D. 437 a temple dedicated to the Sun-god was built in Malwa by a company of silk weavers. It was repaired in A.D. 473-74 and the memorial inscription throws much light on the silk craft conditions of that date. 'Just as a woman, though endowed with youth and beauty and adorned with golden necklaces and betel leaves and flowers does not go to meet her lover in a secret place, until she has put on a pair of silken cloths, so the whole of the region of the earth is adorned by the silk weavers as if with a garment of silk, agreeable to the touch, variegated in colours, pleasing to the eye...' In many early sculptures women are represented both in richly embroidered brocaded robes and in muslins so fine as to fully expose their forms, and the lines of the folds of gold edgings traced across their bodies are the only evidence of their being clothed. An examination of the cloths worn both by men and women painted on the walls of Ajanta caves indicates an extraordinary variety of decorative designs and a highly developed sense of weaving technique. The usual colour of these cloths is blue, indicating knowledge of the indigo dyeing process. Some cloths have diagonal stripes—in places merging colours, soft and dark tones, exactly similar to the effects produced by the resist-dye technique.

In the Gupta period fine cloth with a beautiful goose pattern is referred to by Kalidasa as forming the dress of Parvati. In the 7th century, Bana refers to costly textiles manufactured by the tie-and-dye process in a variety of designs. Egyptian mummies are known to have been wrapt in Indian muslin. A few years ago a fragment of an 8th century resist-dyed cotton cloth was discovered by Aural Stein in Central Asia. Innumerable fragments of India made resist-dyed cloths have also been discovered in tombs at Fostat in Egypt, and many of the motifs found on these cloths are identifiable with the amazingly rich ornamentation on the costumes worn by men and women in the Jain miniature paintings of Gujarat.

Muhammad Tughluq in the 14th century kept at Delhi five hundred weavers to make silk and gold brocades for use by the ladies of the palace and for distribution as royal presents. Under Mughal patronage the textile art and industry of India grew to great heights. Both Akbar and Jahangir took keen personal interest in the development of the art. There were state arrangements for the manufacture of magnificent silks and brocades of innumerable varieties and designs. The skill of the weavers and embroiderers of Delhi was such that the finest products
of Persia, China, and Europe tended to recede into the background and found no sale. Bernier, who came to India in the 17th century, says: ‘There is in Bengal such a quantity of cotton and silks that the kingdom may be called the common storehouse for those two kinds of merchandise, not of Hindustan or the Empire of the great Moghul only, but of all the neighbouring kingdoms and even of Europe.’

Unfortunately, the Mughal fabrics of the 16th and 17th centuries are now rarely to be seen, though the beauty of their vivid colours and designs can be studied in the Mughal and Rajasthani miniatures. Some of the textile pieces we know are of Jahangir’s reign—tent panels embroidered in silk and gold on velvet, velvets painted in gold, painted waist clothes, all ornamented with floral and delicate designs. The painted muslins and cotton cloths were also everywhere highly prized for the purity and brilliance of their dyes and the fineness and softness of their material.

After the arrival of foreign traders in the 16th and 17th centuries references to elaborately painted cottons become frequent. Various textile fabrics took English names which have an Indian origin. Chintz from Hindi ‘Cheent,’ meaning spotted or variegated; Bandana from ‘bandhana’, the process of dye-dyeing, and Shawl from Hindi ‘Sala’. Among other names by which the Indian cottons came to be known are Indiennes, Calicuts (later calicos or calicoes) and Pintados. There is an interesting reference in Evelyn’s Diary under the date ‘1665 December 30’: ‘I supped at my Lady Mordaunt’s where was a room hung with Pintados full of figures, prettily representing sundry trades and occupations of the Indians.’ According to a French poem of 1658, Indiennes figured among the goods sold at the annual fair of St. Germain in Paris.

This priceless heritage of art has not been lost to India. The hereditary Indian craftsman, protected by rigid caste laws, continues to transmit from father to son the experiences and traditions of the crafts in their original beauty and characteristics. Today, the textiles of India form the largest and the most important class of art-crafts of the country and play a vital role in her national economy. There is hardly a village which has not its colony of caste weavers where the master weaver sitting at his simple loom under the spreading shade of a tree works up dreams in fabrics by hands schooled by generations of skilled work.

Certain factors have contributed to the preservation and development of the various forms of art-fabrics in India. Prescriptions of rigid social codes have ordained individual styles of decoration, colours, and designs for different occasions and different communities. Auspicious occasions like marriages, festive seasons and sacred ceremonies have called forth from the Hindus the use of particular clothes in brilliant shades of various colours. The Mohammedans, prohibited from wearing pure silk, have to wear another type of fabric known as Mashru and Himru, which are a mixture of cotton and silk and in appearance as pleasing as silk but still within the ‘permitted’ classes. Temple rituals have always claimed the finest products of the loom. Brocades and printed and painted curtains have been used as temple hangings from earliest times. Court patronage too helped a great deal in the creation of exquisite fabrics. The Emperors and their nobility were lovers of the arts and by richly rewarding the artists, they encouraged the development of a tradition of increasing enrichment in design and technique. When the local artists came in contact with foreigners fashions and designs underwent a change. There was a constant flow and fusion of indigenous and foreign arts,
particularly from Java, China, Bukhara, and Persia during the Mughal period, which succeeded in combining the delicacy, charm and conventionalism of foreign designs with the strength, virility, and character of Indian patterns. A desire to capture the markets of countries outside India also led to such adaptations of local patterns and colours as would meet with foreign approval. This factor also resulted in the further assimilation of new symbols and motifs into the indigenous designs. We can even today trace influences of Persian embroidery in the Farukhabad prints, the Masulipatam curtains, and the Shikargah brocade saris of Banaras. The modern trend is to retain the traditional motifs and to base the designs on rhythm and balance.

The earliest colours used in India were vegetable and stone dyes. Occasionally precious stones were also ground and used in the manufacture of rare fabrics. Synthetic dyes have now come into general use. The colours used in Indian textiles are not without significance. They symbolise something which is either concrete or abstract. Green stands for youth and life. Till the beginning of the 19th century it was got by a combination of indigo (blue) and yellow—by dyeing the latter over the former. In 1809 the first permanent green dye was invented in France and from there it came to India. Red is the colour of joy and happiness, of passion, virility, and strength. It was obtained from the madder root or cochineal insect which was specially bred for the purpose in some parts of the country. Yellow means cheerfulness, intellectualism, and the life-giving rays of the Sun. It was easily obtained from turmeric roots. Blue symbolises peace, the atmosphere, the sky, as well as heaven. Indigo was the only source of this colour. Purple stands for wealth and material possessions.

The most spectacular of all the dyed fabrics is the Patola from Gujarat. It was among the choicest exports in the 15th and 16th centuries from the great textile centres of Surat to the markets of Samarqand, Bukhara, Baghdad, Basra, Damascus, Rome, and other capitals of Europe in the West, and to Java, Bali, and Siam in the East. Everywhere it was honoured as a special bridal garment on account of its exquisite floral designs and beauty. The Patola is seen at its best in the silk wedding ‘saris’ of the women of Kathiawar. The craft in rudimentary stages is said to have been introduced by the Arab settlers. It was subsequently taken up by the weavers of Champaner who came and settled down in Surat sometime about the 15th century and developed the art of Patola weaving. Though the industry is today run mainly by the Hindu weavers they have still to depend upon the descendants of the original Arab settlers for the dyeing of the threads. The making of Patola is a difficult and complicated process. The fabric is woven with pure silk warps and wefts that have been separately tied and dyed by a special colouring process known as Bandhana, that is, the tie-and-dye process or knot-dyeing. After the silk warp has been dyed in the lightest colour, the dyer, keeping in mind the design to be produced, draws across it some lines in pencil at measured intervals in such a way that the patterns in the finished product emerge in weaving on both sides of the material. The marked spaces are tied tightly with cotton thread through which the dye will not penetrate. The yarn is then dyed in the next darker colour. The process is repeated and continued till the darkest colour is reached. The weft is also treated in the same manner. Then the threads are stretched and arranged in the loom by the weaver and woven into artistic patterns of elephants, flowering shrubs, human figures, and birds in red, white or yellow, on a background of dark blue-green. The Patola colour designs are rich and yet soft,
A fine example of Bandana or Tie-and-dye work
(From The Journal of Indian Art and Industry)
Printed cotton from South India

(From The Journal of Indian Art and Industry)
Woven silk shawl from Bangalore

(From The Journal of Indian Art and Industry)
1. Design of Baluchar Eutedar sari.

2. Embroidered cap from Kutch (From The Journal of Indian Art and Industry).
1. Silk embroidery, the design being after a fresco from Ajanta.
2. Silk embroidery (Reshmi-bharat-kam).

(From The Journal of Indian Art and Industry)
Gold embroidered Kashmir shawl

(From Masterpieces of Industrial Art and Sculpture)
Woolen carpet from the Punjab

(From The Journal of Indian Art and Industry)
1. Silver casket in which the Address to Lord Harris was presented.

2. Brass salver from Uttar Pradesh (From The Journal of Indian Art and Industry).

3. Spice box of Moradabad work (From The Industrial Arts of India by G. Birdwood).
and are so finely mingled that they seem to flow into one another. The triumph of the Patola craftsman lies in harmonising the colours and in the simplicity and treatment of the decorative details. The same method of dyeing yarn is used for 'Telia' rumals from Pochampalli and for the weft threads in 'Utkal saris' from Orissa, as well as for the 'Mashrus' of Hyderabad.

Chunari is yet another fascinating dyed fabric of the country. It is the garment symbolising youth and romance, love and married happiness. It figures most in Indian folk songs and love lyrics. Chunari is worn as a wedding scarf by the woman of Gujarat, the Rajput belle throws it over her embroidered skirt, the Sindhi woman decorates her 'ghagra' with it and the Khoja uses it to drape her head. But to the Hindu woman everywhere in the country it is an auspicious bridal garment. The fabric may be silk, cotton, or satin and is coloured by the Bandhana tie-dyeing process. The patterns are usually geometric arrangements of dots, squares, zigzags or circles in vivid greens, yellows, reds, and indigo. Elephants, birds, flowers, and dancing females performing the Garba are some of the other motifs with which the picturesque Chunari attains its highest artistic perfection. Today it is a village craft carried on mostly by women (called Bandhani) in Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Saurashtra. The cloth is folded several times and pressed on a wooden block having blunt nails projecting from it in the required pattern. The operator picks up the raised portions, ties them tightly with strings coated with resist paste, and then dyes them according to the Bandhana process.

Another type of colour work is the resist block-printing. India is said to be the birthplace of the block-printing industry. It is at least of remote antiquity. It has now been proved that coloured chintz were in common use even as far back as 400 B.C. The art of block-printing in conjunction with resist dyeing was known in India long before the Mughals arrived in the country. However, it achieved new heights after the indigenous artists had come in contact with Persian craftsmen. The charm and virility of Indian designs combined with the delicacy and minuteness of Persian patterns to develop into a new and lovely craft. During the 17th century the Indian chintzes were very popular in England, France, Holland, Italy, Portugal, and Germany. They were used for mantles, dresses, wall-hangings, coverlets, and table-cloths. Charles I of England was very enthusiastic about them and ordered large quantities of the prints from various centres of manufacture because each had its own peculiar characteristics and appeal.

The technique of block-printing and painting is almost exclusively applied to cotton. In its most primary phase a resist paste of lime and gum or oil and beeswax may be printed from wood-blocks; the cloth is then dipped in colour, and when the resist paste is subsequently removed a white pattern on a coloured ground remains.

Indian chintzes are known by various and interesting names, such as Pintados, Chints, Palampores and Indian Calicoes. The Palampores of Masulipatam, used generally as curtains or bed covers, have a wide fame and are considered amongst the most original printed textiles of the country. They were regularly imported into Europe from the end of the 17th to the beginning of the 19th century and received the patronage of royalty. The designs of the Palampores are varied and interesting, and as a work of art can be classed with the finest carpets. Those intended for use by the Mohammedans as prayer mats are of the Mihrab (arch) type. The design consists of the 'Persian Tree of Life,' covered with flowers and birds resting on its boughs and animals below its shade; the earth
is figuratively represented by a triangular mound of boulders, beneath which a straight line is sometimes drawn to depict rivers and seas with their countless forms of aquatic life. Hindu mythological subjects, particularly scenes from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata are designed on the Pallampores intended mainly for use as canopies in Hindu temples or as banners carried in front of religious processions. This latter kind is manufactured largely in Kalahasti. The other main centres of Calico printing are Sanganer in Jaipur, Ahmadabad, Cutch, Madura, Tanjore, Lucknow, Farukhabad, Kanauj, Kotah, Gwalior, Ratlam, and Indore.

Among the richest handloom products of India are the Brocades. They include a large variety of textiles in which designs and colour harmony are produced by weaving warp and weft threads of different colours and materials. Brocades may be of pure silk (Amru) or of a mixture of silk and cotton (Himru). A very high level in Himru production has been reached at Aurangabad, Surat, and Ahmadabad. Among pure silk brocades none is more beautiful than those from Surat which have floral sprays all over the ground and conventional trees on the borders. Undoubtedly the most prized brocade is the Kimkhab— the ‘fabric of dreams.’ It is the interweaving of silk and gold or silver wires in a rich variety of colours and floral patterns making it a highly ornamental fabric of India. History says that they were taken from India to Babylon where the princes and the noblemen vied with one another in the gorgeousness of their dresses. The Kimkhab ranges from types in which the metal threads are very sparingly employed against a background of white or coloured silk, to forms woven entirely in gold, or entirely in silver. Banaras, already famous for its fabrics before the Gupta period, is still the chief centre of its manufacture where lovely Kimkhabs of extreme richness are produced in the highest traditions of craftsmanship. The design of the hunting scene (Shikargah), once produced in Banaras Kimkhabs, was considered to be unique. Murshidabad, Chanderi, Ahmadabad, Aurangabad, and Tanjore are the other places noted for their beautiful brocades. Lovely gold ‘saris’ resembling Aurangabad work are woven in Burhanpur (Madhya Pradesh). Both Trichinopoly and Tanjore Gulbadans often contain so much gold wire that they may also be categorised under Kimkhabs. The making of gold and silver threads used in weaving is a highly specialised craft (Kalabatun). The wire is beaten out and flattened until it becomes finer and finer and then it is twisted round a silk thread foundation.

The delicate muslins of India, called ‘Ab-i-rawan’—flowing water, and ‘Bafte-hawa’—woven air, by the poets, have been the classic performances of Indian weavers. A rare muslin used to be produced in Dacca which when laid wet on the grass was rendered invisible, and because it thus became indistinguishable from the evening dew it was named ‘Shabnam’. At present the chief centres of these fabrics are Dacca, Mysore, Hyderabad, Jaipur, and Banaras. But the place of honour goes to Dacca where up to the eighties of the last century the Dacca weaver produced probably the finest muslins in the world. In 1650, the famous French traveller Tavernier was so much impressed by the quality of muslins that he wrote: ‘Some clothes were woven from thread of such extraordinary delicacy that a single pound of cotton could be spun into a length of 250 miles.’ Flowered muslins having a succession of small flower sprays that have been worked out with unequalled grace and lightness of touch and arranged in a variety of ways to produce extremely delightful effects are near miraculous achievements of
the Indian craftsmen. A very popular and artistic arrangement is called 'Panna Hazara'—the thousand emeralds, because the sprays of flowers are arranged in such a way as to produce the effect of jewels in their settings. In the Dacca muslins the borders are decorated with figure designs. In an exquisite piece coming from Dacca the design of swans has been woven with extreme delicacy of manipulation in bright yellow, soft pink, and indigo blue. The Jamdani or figured muslins have also been the pride of Dacca.

The art of the Baluchar silk fabrics from Murshidabad, flourished greatly during the days of the East India Company which helped in the development of new designs. The presence of Jain merchants in the vicinity of the town of Baluchar from which the textile derives its name, was also greatly responsible for its high artistic excellence. The end pieces of the Baluchar Butidars were richly decorated with flowering trees, and in addition with such motifs as a woman smoking a 'huqqa,' or riding a horse or European traders in an architectural setting. At times, whole historical scenes from Mughal or Rajput periods were depicted. The body of the fabric itself was covered with 'butis' like so many enamel jewels laid flat on a dark background. The colours used are deep blue, ivory white, crimson, and old gold. Silk 'saris' similar to the Baluchar fabrics have recently been produced in Ahmadabad and Banaras.

Embroidery

Embroidery is an ancient art of India. Embroidered garments and needles are mentioned in the Vedic texts. It is found depicted at Ajanta where there are seen men wearing embroidered coats with diagonal stripes of green or geometric bands alternating with floral ones. Today all over the country distinctive kinds of embroidery are done by the women of different castes and classes. But it has attained its highest development in the northern and north-western parts of India. It is more commonly found amongst the peasants and the tribals, especially the migratory ones. Some of the examples seen in the hilly parts of the country are of a very advanced order. The graceful scrolls worked by the women of Manipur on their garments in satin-stitch are indicative of the highest art conceptions. Most of the tribal people produce gorgeous embroidery designs by using silk stitches as well as mirrors, shells, beads, and metallic pieces. The Todas of the Nilgiris work up elaborate geometrical patterns in different hues on the long white cloth they wear. Badlan embroidery in which minute gold and silver dots are disposed at intervals over the entire surface in various floral designs comes from Lucknow. The Phulkari Chadars, executed in darning stitch with floss silk on woolen or cotton materials to produce bold sprigged floral designs, are a speciality of the Punjab. In one kind of chain-stitch work, known as Sisidar of Kathiawar, small pieces of mirror glass are introduced into the embroidery and used mostly for skirts and bodices. The embroidery of Chamba, a hill state in the south-western ranges of the Himalayas, has a unique quality. Scenes from the Krishna Leela, Ras dances, ancient legends, and the pictorial representations of Ragas and Ragnis are reproduced in vivid colours on the 'rumals' (scarfs) in the traditions of the Kangra Valley paintings. The Chikan work of Lucknow, done in white or cream cotton on muslin, represents the most elaborate form of purely indigenous needlework. The entire embroidery is done from the wrong side but the material that is being embroidered is so fine and transparent that the pattern shows on the right side
like a shadow. In the brilliantly designed and colourful women's skirts and children's caps from Cutch we find the peasant artistry at its best. The beautiful Kasida embroidery from Dacca and Banaras is done in gold, silver, or moonga silk in darn and satin-stitch on muslins. The embroidered pieces depict geometrical patterns, animals, birds and flowers which are almost always worked very delicately in rich colours. The same delicacy and richness may be seen in the Kanthas of Bengal. The Kanthas are quiltings made up of layers of discarded 'saris' stitched together and then embroidered with different designs by means of coloured threads drawn from the borders of the 'saris.' The common colours used are red, black, yellow and blue, and the chief stitches are darning, satin, loop, and for the outlines, stem and split. The workmanship is so fine that it is often impossible to distinguish the right from the wrong side of the Kanthas. Their ornamentation and purpose are denoted by various names. Baytan, used as wrap for valuables and books, has rows of human or animal figures in its wide borders, a lotus in the centre, and trees, flowers and leaves in the corners. Arsilata, wrap for mirrors and combs, has its surface covered with creepers, lotuses and trees. Rumal is the scarf ornamented with a variety of motifs around a central lotus. Durjani is a wallet cover with an embroidered border and a lotus in the centre.

The embroidery on the wool fabrics of Kashmir is of historical and universal fame, and the delicacy and deftness of the Kashmir craftsmen in this line is yet unrivalled in the world. The manufacture of shawls in Kashmir in the days when Bernier travelled in India was done on a 'prodigious scale and brought her extensive wealth.' Unfortunately, the quality has deteriorated in recent years, and fine old examples can be seen only in museums or in private collections. Birdwood says: 'The few Cashmere shawls shewn in the Prince of Wales' collection are superlatively fine, some of the usual cone or shawl pattern, others snuff-colored, of softest texture inwrought with gold. One is worked with a map of the city of Srinagar, the capital of Cashmere; the streets and houses, gardens and temples, with the people walking about among them, and the boats on the deep blue river being seen as clearly, in the quaint drawing of a medieval picture, as in a photograph. Another shawl, more soberly coloured, is one mass of the most delicate embroidery, representing the conventional Persian and Cashmere wilderness of flowers, with birds of the loveliest plumage singing in the bloom, and wonderful animals stalking round, and wondering men.' Kashmir shawls are produced in two different ways, the 'Till' or 'Kanikar' and the 'Amlikar'. 'Kanikar' has the design elaborated on the loom, while the 'Amlikar' is hand embroidered. Whether woven or embroidered, a Kashmir shawl is almost always made of many small pieces, which are first separately prepared and then joined together so skillfully as to defy detection. The genius of the weaver, however, reveals itself in the delicate ornamentation of the border and the ends, adorned with such favourite patterns as the wind blown cypress, cone, or clustering flowers. Today Delhi, Amritsar, and Ludhiana also produce good shawls.

The other woollen textiles are the blankets, Namdas, and Gubbabs. The Kathiawar blankets are woven and then embroidered with figure and geometric designs. Namdas, a popular part of Kashmir embroidery, are made of a mixture of wool and cotton pressed into a fabric like felt and ornamented by appliqué work. The pure white Namdas of Jodhpur and Jaipur are regarded as exceptionally fine specimens of the craft. The Gubbabs of Kashmir are a kind of patchwork made

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1 G. C. M. Birdwood, Industrial Arts of India, p. 367.
from different pieces of tattered woollen garments which are first thrashed and
dyed in various colours and then carefully joined together and interspaced with
embroidery. The finished products can be used as a rug, diwan cover, or coverlet,
and are much admired for their rich colours and exquisite floral patterns.

Carpets

Some time ago it was believed that India learnt carpet weaving from Persia.
But the methods and designs of the Indian carpet weavers are so peculiarly indigenes and so easily distinguishable from those of other countries that the theory has now been almost given up, and it is admitted by all that carpet weaving is one of the ancient and principal industries of India. It was a great industry under the Mughals. Terry, in his voyage to the East Indies in 1655 says: ‘They (Indians) make likewise excellent carpets of their cotton wool, in mingled colours, some of them three yards broad and of a great length. Some other rich carpets they make all of silk so artificially mixed as that they lively represent those flowers and figures made in them. The ground of some others of their very rich carpets is silver or gold, about which are such silken flowers and figures most excellently and orderly disposed throughout the whole work.’ Today Agra, Mirzapur, Amritsar, Kashmir, Bikaner, and Jaipur in the north and Ellora and Masulipatam in the south, are some of the places where the finest carpets in India are made. While Agra carpets are noted for enormous weight and solidity, those made at Jaipur have beautiful finish, excellent wool and splendid colours. Carpet weaving in Kashmir has evolved such patterns of leaf and flower as may not be found anywhere else in the world. In these designs both the local and Persian influences have blended. The hill people of Almora make beautiful carpets which have geometrical patterns or dragon figures, indicating strong Tibetan influence. Warangal is famous for its silk carpets which are so woven that they change colour according to the direction from which they are seen. They are further noted for their delightful and intricate geometric and floral designs. A Warangal carpet of the sixteenth century exhibited at one of the London exhibitions was highly admired as a supreme example of the greatness of the Indian weaver. There were 400 knots to every square inch of it, giving a total of 33,00,000 knots for the entire surface, and so complicated was the pattern that a change of the needles had been required for every knot. The large cotton Durris of Rajasthan, striped in red, green, yellow, blue and black, are marvellous examples of the skill of Indian weavers in harmonising the most prismatic colours. Woollen Durris are also made. The people of Darjeeling and Nepal weave strips of thick woollen cloth which are used as rugs after they have been sewn together.

Metal Work

The skill and subtlety of the craftsmanship of Indian artisans who display
great delicacy and ingenuity in chasing, ornamenting, and engraving patterns on
various metals have been richly admired in the highest terms everywhere in the
world. Metal craft is indeed not only one of the most ancient but also one of the
most developed crafts of India. The razors, chisels, fish-hooks, and spear-heads
found at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa testify to the antiquity of the craft. At
Mohenjo-Daro, a bronze statuette of a dancer was found which reveals excellent
casting by the cire perdue process. But whether or not iron and its manufacture were understood by the Vedic Indians, their descendants in the Mauryan age had undeniably achieved great excellence; while a little later under the Guptas their skill was equal to turning out such masterpieces as the Iron Pillar at Delhi. It shows that the Indian craftsmen knew the process of making rustless steel in the 4th century A.D. Gold cups are frequently alluded to in the Rig Veda. During the period of the great Epics, we find richly ornamented metallic vessels in universal use. In Kautilyas’s *Artha Sastra* (400 B.C.), elaborate rules are laid down for the testing of metals and the ways in which they may be alloyed. Metal mirrors with handles of Hellenistic type are to be seen in the frescoes of the Ajanta caves. The craft received much encouragement from the Mohammedan rulers, under whose patronage several new modes of ornamentation in gold, silver, and iron were adopted. Today metal craft is an extensive industry practised almost all over the country, and so diverse are the products of metal that next to weaving perhaps the largest number of craftsmen are employed in this industry.

In the variety of the designs, in the excellence of the cast and the rich colouring which gives to the articles a gold-like lustre, Banaras brassware has not been surpassed by similar products of any other town in India. Plates, water goblets, trays, cups, salvers, shields, betel holders and various other articles of Banaras are famed for their beautiful form and chased mythological images.

The brassware of the incomparable Moradabad craftsmanship, both plain and ornamental, are universally admired. The elegant shapes of the vessels with their rich floral patterns specially speak of the artistic taste and ingenuity of the makers. Here tin is soldered on brass and incised through to the brass in floreted designs, which sometimes are simply marked by the yellow outlines of the brass and at others by graving out the whole ground and filling it with a blackened composition of lac. The graceful and delicately cut brass screens, betel boxes, and small boxes, covered with the most intricate tracery, from Ahmadabad, the temple bells in stately architectural shapes from Madras, and the bold forms of lamps from a number of places in the South, are some other living examples of the most superb artistry of the Indian artisan. The brass work of Nellore, Madura and Tanjore is famous for elaborately inwrought ornamentation. Some are simply etched, and others deeply cut in mythological designs or diapered all over with the leaf pattern.

Kashmir is well known for its parcel gilt silverware. ‘Surahi’, a water goblet of very ancient and extremely graceful form is a famous Kashmir product. It has been widely praised. The delicate foliated scrolls deeply graven through the gilding to the dead white silver below give the object an iridescent pearly bloom. Gold and silver tea-sets, house-boat models, bowls, and vases with diffused floral designs, traced beautifully all over, are the other pieces from Kashmir which elicit our spontaneous admiration for the skill of the craftsman. Workmanship of a high order in gold and silver is still carried on in Lucknow, Jaipur, Tanjore, Tirupati, Bangalore and the districts of Gujarat whose beautiful gold repoussé work is much sought after. Rose water sprinklers, bowls and trays with small sprigs of leaves and flowers hammered out in relief, receive a high finish from the hands of artists whose efficiency is born of life-long devotion to the craft in Tiruchirapally and Coconada. In Poona a very bold form of repoussé is used, while in Cutch a beautiful but intricate floral design in shallow repoussé is preferred. In Baroda the article is first made in richly carved wood, then the silver or copper plates are held over the surface and hammered until they assume the pattern given to the wood.
Calcutta provides a form of ornamentation in which rural scenery is depicted on a frosted surface.

Even the soldiers have succumbed to the charm of ornamentation, and the emergence of the art of damascening or Koftgari seems to have taken its origin from the desire to decorate the weapons of war. Damascening as its name suggests had its home in Damascus, from where it was later brought to India directly from Kabul and Persia. Damascening is the art of encrusting one metal into another in the form of wires, which by under-cutting and hammering is thoroughly and beautifully incorporated with the metal which it is intended to ornament. In the pre-modern days when the weapons of war were few and simple, the craftsmen spent a busy time in ornamenting swords, shields, daggers, and similar other objects. Akbar was keenly interested in the art and gave his personal attention to the royal armoury and to the decorating of the weapons made therein. With a change, however, in the methods and materials of destruction the demand for damascened weapons has naturally waned and the skill of the craftsmen has been diverted mostly towards the ornamentation of articles of domestic use, such as spittoons, ornament boxes, betel boxes, ‘surahis’ and ‘hooka’ bases.

Today, Gujarat and Sialkot in the Punjab, Jaipur, Alwar, Sirohi, Travancore and Bidar are renowned centres of damascening work. Damascened elephant goads, daggers, swords, shields and helmets, made of carved steel, from Jaipur and Alwar exhibit superior artistic talent. The manufacturers often take great pride in etching out verses from the Koran, spells, poetical passages, and prayers for good fortune by skilful wire inlay. The art of Travancore craftsmen in damascening consists in the making of floral designs of strongly Dravidian style, with gold wire beaten into roughened steel.

Damascening in silver is called Bidri and is one of India’s oldest cottage crafts. Taking its name from Bidar in Mysore state it has a prominent place in Muslim cultural traditions. The prevailing custom amongst the Mohammedans in Hyderabad of presenting Bidri ware to the bridegroom at the time of marriage is responsible for its flourishing trade conditions even today. Among the wealthier sections of the community no dowry is considered complete unless it includes a complete set of Bidri ware from bed-legs to spittoon.

The ground material of Bidri ware is an alloy of zinc with small proportions of copper, tin and lead. The melted alloy is poured into moulds which are broken open when the metal has cooled and the shapes have solidified. The surfaces are smoothened and rubbed black with a solution of sal-ammoniac and saltpetre. In Uttar Pradesh blue vitriol is also added. The designs are then delicately etched on the black surface with a steel point and chipped off deftly to receive the silver inlay. Lastly, very thin silver foil is hammered into the etched motifs so that the lustre of the inlay stands out strikingly against the ebony hued surface. The violent colour contrasts and a feeling of depth lend Bidri articles their special charm. The designs are mainly traditional like the imitation of the poppy plant—a pattern of great artistic merit. In recent years the craftsmen, who are mostly Muslims descended from families who practised the craft for centuries, have drawn much inspiration from the frescoes of Ajanta, the sculptures of Ellora, and the great fort at Bidar itself. Whereas previously only a few articles like ‘hooka’ stands, betel boxes, goblets, flower vases, and trays were decorated in the Bidri fashion, now items like book-ends, menu card holders, tea pots, cigarette cases, ash-trays,
decanter-stands, and fruit dishes are available in Bidri work. Other seats of Bidri manufacture are Lucknow, Purniah, and Murshidabad.

Meenakari, or the art of enamelling on metal was well-known in ancient India, and traces of it have been found at Taxila. It reached a high state of perfection in medieval times under the patronage of the Mughals. The craftsmen of this period were so clever that they could transcribe the details and beauty of a miniature painting in each piece of enamelled jewellery. The backs of ornaments were specially enamelled with beautiful birds, flowers, leaves and trees in their natural colours. The enameller lent his art also to the various types of arms in use in those days. Though with the downfall of the Mughal Empire the royal support was withdrawn the vogue for enamelling persists. The patterns are also generally the same. But commercialisation of the craft and demand for cheaper articles has led to the deterioration of this art and the present work lacks the delicacy of finish or intricacy of design which are found in the old pieces of the 16th and 17th centuries.

Today the art of enamelling is practised in several parts of the country. But it flourishes most at Banaras, Delhi, Lucknow, Rampur, Alwar, Kashmir and Jaipur, where it is used as a means of decorating ornaments as well as other articles of daily use.

Meenakari is done on gold, silver and copper. Three forms of enamelling are recognised. In the first form the enamel is simply applied to the metal to be ornamented like paint applied to the canvas. In the second form a design is etched on the surface of the metal or hammered out of it, and then translucent enamels are laid over it. The third style is by means of encrustation which is very ancient and admits of two forms—Cloisonné and Champlevé. In cloisonné, the patterns are raised on the surface of the metal by means of wires or strips of metal welded on to it. The designs thus outlined are afterwards filled in with the enamel by fusing on the colouring glaze to the metal. In the Champlevé form the metal is engraved or chased, repoussed or blocked out in such a way as to provide depressions in which the enamels are embedded. The colours are applied in the order of their fusibility, those that can stand the greatest amount of heat being used first. This method is generally used in India.

Besides the above mentioned forms, a form of enamelling, known as Quasi-enamelling, is practised at Pratapgarh and Ratlam. The process consists of melting a thick layer of green or deep blue enamel on a plate of burnished gold, and while it is still hot, covering it with thin gold cut into mythological or hunting scenes, in which a delicate net-work of floral scrolls, elephants, tigers, peacocks, parrots, etc., are conspicuously represented. After the enamel has hardened the gold work is etched over with a graver so as to bring out the details of the ornamentation.

The enamels of Jaipur rank above all others and are of matchless perfection. The type of workmanship is of Champlevé. The art was introduced into Jaipur by its ruling prince in the 16th century who brought the enamellers from Lahore, where they had originally come from Persia. The craftsmanship of Jaipur is unequalled in design and in the purity of its colours. In case of the richest and best work only a narrow band of the metal separates one colour from another. It has been remarked: ‘The colours employed rival the tints of the rainbow in purity and brilliancy and they are laid on the gold by the Jaipur artists with such exquisite taste that there is never a want of harmony.’ The art is mostly confined to the production of scent-holders, ornaments of various designs and shapes,
1. Surahi of Bidri-work.
2. Damascened tray from Sialkot.
3. Silverware from Kutch.

(From The Journal of Indian Art and Industry)
Superb example of Indian enameled ware
(From Masterpieces of Indian Art and Sculpture)
plates and betel boxes. Red, creamy white, green, and yellow are the most popular colours with them and the designs consist mainly of flowers and creepers. Sir George Birdwood speaks of a little perfume box from Jaipur which was covered all around with a representation of Krishna, followed by pretty cows and their fair shepherdesses, wandering through a grove of wide-spreading trees, with birds singing among their branches. He also describes a writing case, shaped like an Indian gondola, the stern of which is figured like a peacock, the tail sweeping under the boat, irradiating it with blue and green enamels, brighter even than the natural iridescence of a peacock's tail.

The enamels of Kashmir have also received considerable fame. The type of work is of the nature of cloisonné. The basic material consists of gold, silver, brass, or copper and the design includes the shawl pattern, the arabesque style, the rosette pattern, and the mosaic style. The Lucknow and Rampur style is an etched out pattern on silver in which the enamels applied are green and blue with small patches of yellow, brown, and orange. The etching is very minute and consists of animal forms surrounded by flowers and creepers. In these works there is a complete absence of human or divine figures on account of the artists being Mohammedans.

Jewellery

Jewellery, like the other branches of Indian craftsmanship, is not only expressive of the characteristics of the race but is the last word in elegance. The refinement is born of centuries of cultural forces set against man's love of beauty and adornment, so that the Indian jeweller with his creative mind has conjured up an endless series of patterns within tradition to decorate the human body. No wonder they have produced a dazzling effect on the minds of the beholders. Megasthenes was struck by the contrast between the Indian peoples' love of sumptuous ornament and the general simplicity of their lives. Birdwood writing in the last century remarked: "In nothing indeed do the people of India display their naturally gorgeous and costly taste so much as in their jewellery and jewelled arms which are not only fabricated of the richest and rarest materials, but wrought likewise with all the elaborateness, delicacy and splendour of design within the reach of art."

This craft has developed in India in a highly traditional and religious background. The Code of Manu enjoins the wearing of ornaments on special occasions. The use of certain ornaments is by force of custom and religious beliefs a necessity even for the poorest. Amongst the Hindus in the northern parts of the country the 'bicchwa' (toe ring) and glass bangles must be worn by every married woman whose husband is alive. Among the Muslims and even among the Hindus the wearing of the 'nath' or the nose-ring is obligatory, especially at the time of marriage. In Bengal, an iron bangle, and in the Punjab and Gujarat, ivory bangles are worn as a religious duty. Rigid conventions require that particular material should be used for different categories of ornaments and separate designs for the different limbs. The Sulkasastras have laid down codes for suggesting the spiritual qualities of icons by a refined symbolism of ornaments.

1 G. Birdwood, The Industrial Arts of India, pp. 250-251.
2 The fifth century B.C. is supposed to be about the time when it was composed, but the rules and precepts it contains had probably existed as traditions long before.
The jeweller's craft in India is, therefore, of the highest antiquity. It may sometimes be possible to find the continuation of even the most primitive jewellery amongst the aboriginals who still inhabit this peninsula. A marriage necklace of Coorg worn even today is made up of tiny black beads connected by very small links of gold chains, identical to the one discovered at Mohenjo-Daro. Similarly the ‘vor’ worn by the women of Rajasthan at the parting of their hair has its counterpart at Harappa. The Mohenjo-Daro specimens show that gold, silver, bronze, and copper were in common use 5000 years ago. The ornaments include bracelets, pendants, and necklaces, in some cases even decked with precious stones like jade, jasper, carnelian, agate, and amethyst. The simplicity and accuracy of construction, their polish and beautiful finish, and the refinement of the colour scheme make them pieces of real art.

Jewellery of much beauty and variety, worn by the deities, is constantly mentioned in the Rig Veda. A very high stage of finish and design appears to have been reached during the epic period of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The forms of jewellery are mentioned in detail and in their name, the mode of use and possibly in design also they very much conform to those that are in vogue today. In the Ramayana Sita is represented as arrayed in jewelled butterflies and other bright ornaments in her hair. Her ears are resplendent with gems. She has bracelets and armlets on her arms and wrists, a golden belt binds her slender waist and golden anklets her well shaped ankles. The Code of Manu contains a description of the jeweller’s crafts and mentions fines for bad workmanship and stringent punishments for the crime of debasing gold. A drama, The Toy Cart, written about the same time as Manu’s Code, gives a description of a jeweller’s workshop where craftsmen examine pearls, topazes, emeralds, sapphires, and other jewels. Some set rubies in gold, some cut shells and others turn and pierce coral. A dialogue in the play has reference to the skill with which ornaments are made in the analogy of flowers and fruits. The old vocabulary of Amarkosha, compiled by Amar Sinha, one of the nine gems of the court of the great Gupta emperor, Vikramaditya, gives a long list of names of crowns, crests and tiaras for the head, rings, flowers, and bosses for the ears, necklaces of all shapes and patterns, girdles, anklets and rings for the fingers. All the names it gives are still the current names of jewellery in India. In Kalidasa’s Shakuntala there is definite evidence leading us to believe that the making of high class jewellery was in a highly developed state. There are numerous references in the play to girdles, made mostly of gold alternated with different coloured gems.

The sculptures of Sanchi, Bharhut and Amaravati, the paintings in the caves of Ajanta, and the sculptures from other places show the exuberant splendour of the art of jewellery-making in ancient India. Numerous representations of the deities and heavenly bodies illustrate the early use of tiaras, necklaces (sometimes hanging in festoons), armlets at the elbows, bracelets, anklets, and other forms of jewellery. The finds at Taxila are particularly noteworthy as they show Greek influence in Indian jewellery. The pieces include necklaces, pendants, ear-rings, bracelets, clasps, rings, hairpins, and many others of various designs. They are generally elaborately and exquisitely finished.

The Mughals were great lovers of the art and introduced new ideas in it. Even though they did not evolve new patterns the art of jewellery-making, under their patronage, attained heights of superb craftsmanship. One of the greatest contributions of the Mughals lay in the field of embellishment, and even a plain gold
Handicrafts

ornament was so well finished that it became a thing of real beauty, grace and originality. Since Islam prohibits the representation of human figures the existing practice of engraving human motifs on ornaments went out of fashion. Several new modes of adornment were, however, evolved which conformed to Islamic beliefs. The front of the ornament was hollowed and set with precious stones held in place by a band of purest gold. Its back was enamelled with beautiful birds, beasts and flowers. The ends of many ornaments were shaped to resemble the heads of animals or fish. The ends of the ‘karas’ (round bracelets) had lion’s or elephant’s heads, the ‘jhoomar’ (head ornament) a peacock’s head, and the pendants the fish’s head. The Muslim emblems of the crescent and star also appeared prominently in the ear-rings.

Through the upheavals following the decline of the Mughal dynasty the craft of the jewellers, like the other arts and crafts of the country, suffered for want of proper patronage. The British rule in India brought in new influences from the West, and the fashions in jewellery once again underwent many changes. Later, the resurgence of the national spirit introduced another radical change. It led to the abandoning of foreign fashions and a revival of the ancient and Mughal patterns. Today, the standard of craftsmanship is kept at the highest level at many centres in the country.

Lucknow, Delhi, and Jaipur, having been the centres of Muslim culture, abound in old pieces and still offer some of the choicest specimens in imitation of these old ornaments. The art of enriching both the back and the front of gold jewellery with enamels is still carried to high technical perfection in Jaipur. Middle-class Hindus like to wear gold ornaments with religious symbols enamelled on the front. The pattern is chiselled and engraved in sunk relief on the jewel and the hollows filled with transparent enamel in brilliant hues, particularly red (derived from copper and iron), green (from copper), and opaque white. The best examples in the purest Hindu style are those from Mysore and Sawantwadi which possess great value in elegant simplicity and superb craftsmanship in the rich elaboration of details.

An interesting branch of the silver and goldsmith’s craft is filigree work of which Karimnagar in Andhra, Murshidabad in West Bengal, Cuttack in Orissa, Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh, and Kashmir are the most important centres. It is usually done in very thin silver and has an extremely delicate look. The Cuttack work, in particular, has attained surprising skill and delicacy and is identical in character with that of Arabia, Malta, Genoa, Norway, Sweden and Denmark and with the filigreed work of ancient Greece and Byzantium.

Pottery

The master-potters of the world are the Indians who have worked in clay to produce a remarkably beautiful style of pottery. Birdwood says: ‘Truest to nature in the directness and simplicity of its forms, and their adaptation to use and purest in art, of all its homely and sumptuary handicrafts is the pottery of India.’ It is also of the highest antiquity, since perhaps no form of Indian handicraft has such a long tradition of artistic attainment as the pottery. Way back to the Indus Valley civilisation incised polychrome and glazed pottery of pleasing and varied shapes, with rich decorative designs in black or red, filled, enriched and

1 G. Birdwood, The Industrial Arts of India, pp. 387.
illuminated every nook and corner of the Indian home. The glazed Indus pottery is the earliest example of its kind in the ancient world. It appeared in Mesopotamia about 1000 B.C. and much later in Egypt. But one is ever struck by the variety in shapes, beautiful workmanship, and the advanced technique of the pottery of Mohenjo-Daro, the specimens of which are almost without exception evidently the work of people trained for long in a well-established craft. The most popular design which occurs on the pottery found at the Indus Valley site is a chain of intersecting circles. Another common design is the tree pattern. A novel form of ornamentation on earthen pots and vessels can be seen in the pottery of the Gupta period. A hundred varieties of animal heads have been used to decorate the spouts and surfaces of clay pots. In the sculptures of Buvanesvar the form of the Kalash, treated with great taste as an architectural decoration, draws our attention once again to the excellence of the potter's art in ancient India.

Although a higher development of the art of pottery has been confined mainly to the making of jars, flower vases, bowls and similar other objects, on account of the orthodox Hindu prejudice that pottery is easily defiled and must be destroyed when once used, a high level of exquisite craftsmanship can be discovered in even the most ordinary household articles produced by the artist-potter of India. It is always the beauty of the form, the perfect line and symmetry of the article which he seeks most. The ornamentation is subordinated to shape, and decoration is used only to add to the beauty and dignity of the form. Today, in every village the hereditary potter may be seen sitting by his wheel ‘moulding the swift revolving clay by the natural curves of his hands’ and turning out products in the same classical forms as are represented in the paintings of Ajanta.

Painted pottery, both glazed and unglazed, is known throughout the whole of India, but that of the north exhibits a superior craftsmanship, fascinating in its exuberant pictorial and decorative schemes with hundreds of scintillating motifs. The painted flower vases of Khurja, with the free and bold brush work in all colours, are specimens of fine porcelain goods in very graceful shapes. Delhi, Rampur, and Gwalior too are places noted for beautifully painted glazed pottery. Delhi has perhaps the most picturesque tradition in its blue turquoise pottery. At Alwar pottery is made of such a thin layer of clay that it is called ‘Kagazi’ (like paper). Following Persian models, Jaipur produces pottery with an admixture of green leaves and brown and yellow flowers. Kashmir produces an unusual variety of pottery salt cellars, wall vases, and niche jars in rich jade green. The potters of Nizamabad (Azamgarh) in Uttar Pradesh have developed lovely silvery floral ornamentations which they etch on the dark surfaces of their articles after baking it and rubbing into it an alloy of mercury and tin. The charm of their tea sets, flower vases, plates and bowls, lies as much in the simplicity and symmetry of form as in the unique and artistic application of decorative motifs. Pottery in red burning clay from Chunar, also in Uttar Pradesh, is equally well known.

Burhanpur pottery has an old reputation. It is an ornamental glazed earthenware of a brown ground colour diversified with decorations in light yellow lines. In the farther south, Vellore, North Arcot, and Kumbhakonam are famous places for glazed pottery. The glaze is either a clear emerald green or deep dull brown. Black pottery, painted with a special preparation of yellow earth mixed with other substances, has been made in Madura for ages past.

There are two varieties of painted pottery: one is painted or stained before firing and the other painted, lacquered or stained after firing. The black and red
pottery of Madura for example is smeared with lac over the stained surface. In Rajasthan, pottery is sometimes coated with many layers of differently coloured lac and the colours can be seen through the pattern.

In all these classical performances of the potters there is that perfect correlation of line and colour which could only have been inspired by the most sensitive interpretation of Nature. But not indifferent to the changing tastes and requirements of the people the Indian potter has added many varieties to the traditional shapes and designs and adopted new patterns of decoration. But here again as in other handicrafts, the truly creative personality of the artist always assimilates the external influences to develop a new and more refined art.

Dolls and Toys

Dolls and toys for worship or for decoration, and as playthings for children, have a continuous history in India which can be followed from the earliest times. Plastic practices in toymaking appear to have begun with the terracotta figurines that have been found in enormous numbers at all the sites inhabited by the Indus people. They include interesting and ingenious playthings. Little clay carts drawn by pottery rams, whistles (shaped like birds), rattles, figures of men, women, birds, and animals, are some of the toys of the Indus Valley Culture. Small animals climbing up a pole, a bull with a nodding head, a monkey nursing a baby, and a little toy bird with its beak open, evidently singing, are the other interesting toys of the period. Toys with a fairly complicated mechanism like figures moving up and down a string, the progress of which could be accelerated by manipulating the cord, were also manufactured. Besides toy bullock carts, a copper passenger cart with a canopy, obviously for protection from sun and rain, has been excavated at the Harappa site. Solid hand-made toys of blackish or reddish clay representing beautiful human figures and curious dwarfs with a variety of strange faces, or animals like trumpeting elephants and seated monkeys with human bodies, belong to the Mauryan period and establish that the tradition of toy making continued unbroken.

A new contribution to toy making was introduced with the use of moulds in the Sunga period. The beginnings of this process are noticed in the making of solid heads only in moulds, and then placing them on hand-made bodies. After some time the entire body of the toy was cast in moulds and hand-made toys gradually ceased to be manufactured. Another interesting variety of toys is the plaque in relief, examples of which are seen at Mohenjo-Daro, but are missing during the intervening period. A few excellent examples of these have been excavated at Kausambi. One beautiful plaque depicts the well-known story of the romantic escape from Ujjaini of Udayan, the king of Kausambi, along with Vasavadutta, the daughter of the Ujjaini king. That the Mohenjo-Daro traditions in toy craft were fully alive at Kausambi is again borne out by the discovery of a large number of toy carts yoked to various types of birds and animals. These toys, usually of reddish clay, are generally well made and depict even minor details.

The artistry of the Sunga period declined during the Kushan period when hand-made toys again began to be manufactured in large numbers along with the moulded toys. Though the subject, the material, and the colours did not change, the finished products were often crude and lifeless. On account of the presence of foreigners as rulers in the country the influence of foreign dress is sometimes notice-
able in the toys of this period. Some very good specimens of ivory toys have been
discovered in the north-western part of the sub-continent. One of the earliest
ivory statuettes, a beautiful doll, datable to the first century A.D. has been discov-
ered at the ruined ancient Italian city of Pompeii, where it appears to have been taken
by Roman traders from India. Toy making in wood was also introduced at this
stage in Kashmir.

In the Gupta period toy craft once again developed into artistic excellence.
The life of the people, in all its varied aspects, began to be represented in toys which,
for the first time, tried to catch ‘expression’ on human faces. Human figures with
their hair arranged in a hundred ways, dressed in varied folds, jewellery in artistic
details, and armour and uniform equipment of all kinds, document the cultural
history of the period. Gods and goddesses also served, in larger numbers than
before, as motifs for toys and we find clay representations of Surya, Vishnu, Siva,
Parvati, Ganesh, Hanuman, Rama, and other deities, rendered beautifully and
artistically. Curious dwarfs playing on drums, horsemen, boars, tuskers with
raised trunks, tortoises and crocodiles are available in excellent forms.

During the medieval era, a phase of decadence set in in the toy craft of the
country. The toys retained their old forms, but the faces were no longer the index
of the inner emotions and art became lifeless ornamentation. The romance and
splendour of the courts of the Rajput princes inspired the toy makers to produce
marionettes and horsemen. The advent of the Muslim rule was also not helpful
in the development of the toy industry on account of the religious prohibition in
Islam against the making of animal or human figures. Toys as playthings for
children, nevertheless, continued to be manufactured. The general make-up of the
toys underwent changes in keeping with the medieval court manners. Long
hair combed back over the nape of men, turbans, trousers, etc., were the result of
this influence. A new subject, the ‘bhisti’ or water-carrier, appeared and the
beard found a place on the toy’s chin. Counterparts of musicians dressed up in
the traditions of the court, or the woman singer with four male instrument players
also found their way into the toy market. Marble copies of the Taj were popular
toys as decoration. The representation of the Mughal emperor and his Begum
as beautiful dolls became essential items of marriage presents in many communities
in the northern parts of India.

In the southern parts of the country the toy industry flourished under the
Hindu kings of Mysore and Vijayanagar, where finely chiselled ivory and sandal-
wood toys of all descriptions were made in large numbers.

With the establishment of the British rule in India some new figures and
scenes entered the field of toys and dolls. The European soldier with the rifle,
the European lady with a parasol, and the army musical bands and their players
became very popular. The household of the white barra-saheb came to occupy
a place among the sets of Lucknow toys. The introduction of motor cars, bi-
cycles, railway engines, and aeroplanes, in clay or wood, marks the consciousness
of a scientific age in India. With our modern civilisation geared for war, models
of tanks, submarines, and armoured cars too have become the delight of small
children. In the post-independence era, the toy maker also has hastened to keep
in line with the national awareness and sense of pride of the people by offering
them among other things, models of the Asoka Lion Capital, and the Delhi
Red Fort with the National Flag mounted on it, and busts of famous national
leaders.
Toys and dolls for children’s amusement or for decoration are sold all over the country and all the year round. They reflect the religious beliefs and ceremonies and the social life and customs of the people. Each festival offers some characteristic figures from the Hindu pantheon which are treated with reverence by old and young alike. Even children playing with these images of gods and goddesses are aware of their religious significance and offer worship to them in their own way. Image makers of Maharashtra get busy weeks before the Ganesh Chaturthi turning out beautiful and artistic clay figures of Ganapati by the thousands for the festival. In the Carnatic on the Gokul Ashtami day a clay model of Gokul, where Krishna appeared, is made, complete with the infant Krishna and Balaram, the demoness Putana, and even the donkey braying outside the city walls. Everywhere in the country Dasehra is the occasion for the clay figures of Rama and Hanuman, just as Divali is the special time for Lakshmi and Sarasvati images. Banaras toy-makers make a special display of exquisite pieces of Sarasvati in clay on the occasion of the Vasant festival.

From Mughal times Lucknow has been the centre of the toy industry, producing popular clay figures of quaint types and great beauty, painted and dressed up in muslins, silks, and spangles. They usually depict the domestic and social life and represent the servants of a household, men and women of different castes and communities engaged in their callings, the Nawab with the dancing girl and the party of musicians, and the farmer with his bullocks, and a large variety of North Indian birds. The models of fruits also made at Lucknow are so true to nature that they defy detection. The craftsmen of Bengal exhibit plastic talent of a high quality. The most life-like representations of Lakshmi on her owl, Sarasvati with her Veena, Ganesh with his elephant’s trunk, the peasant, the fisherman, the milkman, the hermit, and the farmer in their typical costumes and with their various appendentures, are admirably modelled by the potters of Krishnanagar (Bengal). The figures are made from plaster moulds, but the details are carefully worked in by the artists individually. The costumes are tailored or woven to fit the size of the toy and the other accessories, like the fish-net and hoe, are skilfully made from bits of bamboo, wood and string. An interesting piece in clay from Bengal is the figure of Goddess Kali in her terrible aspect with her huge red protruding tongue. Another toy from Bengal with both the Hindu and Muslim versions is the Alladi in papier maché. It is the figure of a fat woman, elderly and silly looking, but in such joyful mood that the sight of her is enough to make one smile. A toy, favourite with little girls, is the complete set of working pots and household utensils, both in clay and metal.

Wooden toys are popular in all parts of the country, and an important section of the Indian wood-carving industry devotes its attention to the production of dolls, mythological figures, icons, and characters drawn from the traditional dances and dramas. From Banaras come individually or in groups such well-known figures as Rama, Hanuman, Siva, Ganesh, Krishna playing on the flute, Mirabai and others in the traditional colouring and style and even with ancient decorations and sect marks. Toys from Orissa represent the images of gods in the Jagannath temple at Puri. From Mewar come two wooden pairs of gods—one representing Rama with his bow and arrow and Hanuman facing him, and the other depicting Siva and Parvati. A toy from Jaipur shows in lacquered wood the anointing of the Hindu bride immediately before her wedding. A crow and a parrot, regarded lucky, also form part of the setting. Another interesting Rajas-
than wooden toy is the image of Gangavati, of which two versions exist—the Muslim and the Hindu. Manipuri dance figures in traditional costumes, usually in red or green, and with feathery ornaments are made both in wood and clay. The vivid colouring of the lacquered wood is one of their chief charms.

South India is rich in exquisite toys made of sandalwood. Craftsmen in Bellary, Madura, and Mysore make beautifully carved figures in teak and red sandalwood. The painted wooden toys of Kondapalli are unique for artistic merit, colour and attractiveness. The caparisoned elephant and the men riding on it, a set of figures representing the different occupations of the village community, models of animals, dancing figures, temples, huts and incarnations of Vishnu, are some of the most popular toys. They are magnificently painted in typical old Indian range of colours—brick-red, ochre, olive-green, indigo and black and display an excellent plastic quality.

Mysore is well known for ivory toys of considerable delicacy. On account of their high prices they are more suitable as drawing-room decorations than as playthings for children. The motifs generally seen are richly adorned elephants, state gondolas in gala trim, tigers, cows, peacocks, all carved as statuettes. Hunting, festive and ceremonial scenes, and mythological subjects carved in relief, are the other ivory pieces of art.

Metal toys have been popular in the country from very ancient times. In early Indian literature there are frequent references to the Danta-puttalika (ivory doll) and the Loha-puttalika (metal doll). Metal toys are chiefly made of polished brass. They represent a variety of subjects like temple chariots, bullock carts, scenes from Hindu mythology and individual figures of animals. Banaras has long been famous for its shining brass toys.

Richly dressed cloth dolls and marionettes are made at many centres in the country by women.

**Wood Decorations Applied to Architecture**

Indian craftsmen have used wood as one of their mediums of expression for centuries. In ancient India the carpenter held an important place in the social life of the village and was called the Sutradhar or 'the holder of the line,' that is, a key man. He made chariots for the warriors, and was also by profession a driver of chariots both in peace and in war. Carpenters are mentioned in the Rig Veda. In the time of Manu they were sufficiently numerous to be recognised as a separate caste. That wood-carving was not an insignificant art is proved by the fact that the Brihat Samhita and the Silpasastras, ancient treatises on the science of astronomy and mechanics respectively, give full directions as to the selection of trees for felling, for seasoning the wood, and for manufacturing the different articles required. On account of the perishable nature of wood, there are, however, no surviving remnants of the past glories of the Indian wood-carver's art. But from the accounts coming down to us in various historical and literary works it may safely be assumed that wood decoration as applied to architecture has been for a long time a very popular and highly developed art of the country. Its influence is evident in ancient Indian architecture. The richly carved gateways and window screens found in the earliest monuments and many of the rock-cut temples of the South manifest a wooden origin in structural details.
Examples of pottery from Lucknow (From The Journal of Indian Art and Industry).
1. Carved wooden screen, from Ahmadabad.
2. Carved window in deodar wood.
3. Carved door in sesame wood, from the Punjab.

(From The Journal of Indian Art and Industry)
Wooden door carved in deodar wood, Punjab.

(From The Journal of Indian Art and Industry)
Carved ivory and tortoise-shell casket, from Vizagapatam and (top) side panel (From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*).
Today Gujarat, Kathiawar, the Punjab, Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Mysore, and Travancore abound in wood-work of a high quality and excellent workmanship, each one displaying regional characteristics of its own. They all portray multiple technical ability, and a sense of extreme delicacy in the superbly carved designs. The door frames, lintels, and shafts are often to be found carved with mythological scenes, framed in traditionally designed long scrolls in relief. In the temples and palaces of Mysore, Bellary, and Madura, elaborate wood-carvings in the South Indian style create the effect of fine sculpture or painting. The wood-carving inside the Darbar Hall of the Amba Vilas Palace and the beautifully carved door leading to the big Dasehra Hall of the Mysore Palace are exquisite examples of the art. At Nasik, famous for its old carved timber houses, there is not a beam, door, window, bracket or cornice which does not show a highly artistic treatment of the sacred lotus in the carved out motifs. In Madhya Pradesh it is not uncommon to find, even in small villages, houses with carved teak doors on which floral designs are delicately chiselled with considerable beauty, taste, and skill. In Gujarat and Rajasthan, the craftsmen work out beautiful perforated tracery and flower carvings on window shutters, window balustrades and door screens. The doors and windows of houses in the Punjab exhibit some very lovely carvings in wood. But the Khatam-Bandi style of ceiling is the sole monopoly of Kashmir and has so far remained unimitated in any other place in the world. It consists of small pieces of carved wood fitted in frames in geometrical designs to adorn ceilings of houses and roofs of river boats.

Wooden sculpture of a very high order is an integral part of the cottage architecture of rural Bengal. This sculpture is to be found mainly in the cornice brackets where the head and the trunk of an elephant or two women joined arm-in-arm are the common motifs.

**Home Art Wares and Furniture**

In ancient India and even in medieval times, things of utility in everyday life were hand made, and therefore every such object was more or less a work of art. Craftsmanship entered into the most ordinary household goods and enriched them with individuality, alluring designs, and artistic finish. In this way a tradition of high aesthetic sensibility was established in every home and life was endowed with an essence of Beauty. The modern Indian is an heir to that great heritage.

Wood has been fully employed in making various articles of household use. It is available everywhere and lends itself easily to artistic treatment. Woodwork is, therefore, fairly widespread in India. Today, cabinets, writing boxes, pen trays of ebony as well as palm and areca-nut, are made at Monghyr; tables, chairs, and other furniture at Bareilly; and bowls, oval boxes, and cups, painted in colours, are manufactured at Banaras so artistically as to leave nothing to be desired. The artisans of Nagina in the district of Bijnore specialise in floral designs delicately chiselled on ebony boxes, pen cases, ink stands, book covers, caskets, picture frames, and walking sticks. Wooden cradles—carved, coloured and gold gilded—for swinging the temple gods, are made at Jodhpur. Amritsar and Bhera in the Punjab are centres of carving in shisham wood and produce ornamented chairs, tables, bedsteads, and screens. The carvers of Amritsar enjoy the highest reputation as skilled wood-carvers. Udaki is best known for a remarkably
flat style of work in arabesque design on wood. The wood-carving in Mysore and Coorg is a highly decorative art mostly using celestial motifs. Madura was long famous for a simple and elegant style of incised blackwood tables. Malabar turns out charmingly engraved coconuts.

Walnut trees grow in abundance in Kashmir. Articles made of the walnut wood, which has a lovely grain and colour, are the speciality of that place. Floral designs in engraved or raised work, accurate to the smallest detail, are seen delicately wrought on cigar boxes, jewellery boxes, cabinets, trays in the shape of the chenar leaf, table-tops, folding screens, table-lamps, and collar boxes. Beautiful furniture for the drawing room and dining room are also manufactured there.

But the fragrant sandalwood is best suited for working out minute details. Its smoothness enhances the delicacy of the workmanship. The chief centres of sandalwood carving are Ahmadabad, Surat, Shimoga in Mysore, Travancore, Tiruchirapally, Tirupati, Madura, Kanara and Coimbatore. These places are well-known for artistic wall calenders, folding screens, paper-cutters, toys, picture frames, boxes, album boards, and ornaments, which are decorated with beautiful floral designs and scenes from mythology, the latter encircled by intricate foliage worked out with the finest chisels. In the Surat and Ahmadabad work the foliage is large and deeply cut, interspersed with figures of mythological interest. In Mysore carving the foliage is thrown out in fan-like sprays with the tips rolled up. The mythological figures are placed within canopied panels.

Ivory as a medium for the artist-workman is peculiar to India, which has been one of the world's largest suppliers of ivory from a very early date. An inscription at Sanchi, recording the dedication of a bas-relief by the guild of ivory workers of the nearby city of Vindasa, goes to show that the ivory craftsmen had attained a high status in the social pattern of ancient India, which could only have been possible on their having attained superb workmanship. Today, the chief centres for the manufacture of ivory goods are Amritsar, Patiala, Delhi, Banaras, Surat, Ahmadabad, Travancore, and Mysore. Sitting on the ground at the doors of their humble cottages and using only the simplest of tools—a knife, a chisel, and a few files—the ivory carvers of India shape out and carve articles of unbelievable beauty and delicacy. The carvers in ivory mostly follow the local trends in architecture, sculpture, iconography, and painting. The South Indian carvings, in general, reflect the Dravidian style while those of the north, the Rajput.

For sheer elegance and fine craftsmanship, the ivories of Mysore and Travancore are highly prized. Besides images and statuettes, utility and fancy articles like caskets, doorways, panels, chairs, howdahs, and thrones of ivory, have been the speciality of Mysore and Travancore for a long time. The artists work so minutely and delicately that they almost seem to 'paint' beautiful jungle scenery. The ivory images are usually of gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon and icons of the Catholic Church. Famous Greek sculptures, like those of Venus and Jupiter, are also copied in miniature ivory by the craftsmen at Trivandrum. The Hindu images are carved in conformity with the standards laid down in the Silpasastras.

One of the earliest uses to which ivory was put in the South was in the making of thrones and palanquins for royalty. The ivory throne presented by the Maharaja of Travancore for the coronation of Queen Victoria evoked great admiration in England for the arts of India. Vizagapatam is the best known place for veneered ivory work. Combs from Rajkot, knife handles from Kathiawar, spoons from
Baroda, powder boxes, buttons, and umbrella handles from Ahmadabad and Surat, and bangles from Cuttack, are some of the delightful examples of the work of the ivory craftsmen of India. They display the characteristic finish, minuteness and ingenuity of true Indian art. Amritsar, Patiala, Ambala, and Ludhiana in the Punjab produce delicate but durable ivory articles. Ivory-inlaid centre tables, with legs carved in imitation of an elephant trunk, are special products of the ivory carvers of the Punjab. In Bengal, Calcutta and Murshidabad are known for minute ornamentation. The ivories of Delhi are also popular. Mats from strips of ivory are woven in Delhi, Bharatpur, Murshidabad, Tipperah, and Sylhet.

Beauty is combined with utility in baskets, fans, mats, and rural toilet boxes which are made of bamboo, rattan canes, reeds, grass, coconut and date palm leaves, all over the country. Beautiful chairs, tea-sets, stools, and shoe-racks are also produced in various designs by the deft fingers of the artisans who have inherited the skill of generations. Mat weaving is one of the principal art-crafts of Mysore. But mats from Tinnevelly have great artistic value. Dr. Bedie writes: 'Tinnevelly mats of the first quality are generally uncoloured, or with one or two simple bands of red and black at each end, and they may be made so fine that a mat sufficient for a man to lie on can be rolled up and packed into the interior of a moderate sized walking stick.'

Horn work is another indigenous cottage industry of India. It is distinguished by fine craftsmanship and high finish. Among the different kinds of horn used for making a variety of articles those of the buffalo and the bison are found most suitable for artistic treatment. Rhinoceros horn is also much prized but is a somewhat scarce material to come by. Sambhar or deer horn is used by different types of horn workers, such as comb makers, furniture makers, and inlay workers. The famous places of horn craft are Cuttack, Hoogly, Jaipur, Vishakhapatnam, Sagar, Trivandrum and Kottayam.

**Inlaying**

Inlaying, an art bewitching in appeal, is a complementary craft to carving. There is evidence that inlaying as an art was known to the people of India in the past. The use of shell as inlay was a craft commonly practised at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa. The use of marble inlay and mosaic work was very popular under the Mughals and led to excellence in the costly art of 'pietra dura,' in which precious stones were inlaid in marble in the most astonishingly delicate flower patterns.

Inlaying in various woods, of ivory, bone, or metal, is also a very high class decorative craft that had achieved astonishing results in medieval India. It consists of inlays of large pieces of these materials or of fine wire. The best work of inlaid ivory may be seen in the Golden Temple at Amritsar. In Mysore ivory inlaying in rose-wood or ebony is a fashionable form of this art. Travancore today offers some of the best specimens of inlaid work in metal. But one of the most noted works in inlaying is the Tarkashi work of Mainpuri in Uttar Pradesh. Minute coils of copper or brass wires are twisted round the point of a needle and hammered into wood to form delightful geometric and floral patterns intricately running in all directions in endless profusion with unbroken regularity and symmetry. Among other places famous for expert inlaying, Jalandhar is known for ivory, bone and brass on shisham wood, and Monghyr for ivory in ebony.
Leather

Leather was one of the earliest materials with which the primitive man furnished his household including the kitchen where the utensils were of the hides of animals. It was only when the Aryans had fairly settled down in the plains of India with its profuse abundance of grains, vegetables, and fruits that impurity began to be associated with animal skin, the feeling later culminating in the sacred injunction of non-violence. However, leather shoes and boots were in common use in ancient India and our attention is frequently drawn to them by the ancient texts and statues. The art of making shoes developed under the Mohammedans. In the days of the kings of Oudh a great industry in gold-embroidered shoes flourished at Lucknow. The Nawabs would not allow the shoemakers to use any but pure gold wire. Today, the growing demand among the fashionable section for embroidered foot-wear is sustaining the craft, though more or less in a decayed form. Ladies' slippers of reddish leather with curled fronts and low sides, lined with red or green velvet, and ornamented with tinsel gold or silver embroidery are made at Banaras, Rampur, Lucknow, Agra, Delhi and Jaipur. These are among the finest and the most artistic examples of the art of leather craft in India. But nothing could be prettier or more dainty than the shoes and slippers made at Hyderabad which are embroidered with gilt copper. Camel saddles, water-bottles, pipes, embroidered bridles, belts, and powder flasks are some of the other utility objects of leather from Bikaner. In addition to the usual hides and skins, crocodile and snake skins, both of which are durable and fascinating, are also used in the making of brief cases, wallets, and hand-bags.

Papier Mache

Perhaps the most alluring examples of the art of papier-maché are the products of the Kashmir craftsmen. This industry was very prosperous in Mughal times when Kashmir supplied the best quality of paper to the rest of India. The silky texture and glossy appearance of Kashmir paper was found very good material for painting and for writing state documents. Today, with the growing vogue for artistic goods, the craft of papier mache is making great strides in Kashmir. Papier mache articles are made of pounded waste-paper mixed with starch. Several layers of paper are pasted on the mould before the pulp is laid on it. Again layers of paper are pasted and this process is repeated until the article is of the proper shape and thickness. While still damp, it is wrapped in a piece of muslin and covered with a layer of plaster of Paris. It is rubbed gently until the surface becomes smooth and then the ground colour is painted. On this background the pattern is painted in water colours. When the article is dry it is glazed with a transparent varnish. Besides such fancy goods as powder bowls and toilet-sets, a great demand has also arisen for flower vases, trays, finger bowls, book-ends, lamp-stands and screens, each one of which is artistically and decoratively painted with floral designs. Some of the best known examples contain beautiful paintings in the traditional Mughal style. An interesting papier maché product is the mask in various designs, colours and shapes. They are used in dances in Bengal, Orissa, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Besides Kashmir, Lucknow, Agra and Muzafarnagar are the other important centres of the craft.
ADMITTEDLY the creation of things for use is the basic motivating force in the practical operations of man. But amazingly enough his endeavours have never been merely utilitarian. An unconscious desire to beautify all that he has or does has led him to seek the elements of Beauty and to integrate them with the purpose of his living. Since the day man began to give shape to the materials provided by Nature for meeting his rudimentary requirements, he has never been able to resist the inward urge to adorn and beautify his possessions and surroundings.

We have seen how the activity of art in India is closely related to the religion of her people. They have created representations of the Divine Spirit and evolved sacred rituals to enter into relations with the Divinity. The ornamental instinct, however, has been such a compelling impulse in man that even the rituals have developed a highly decorative character, and in course of time they have become extremely elaborate, varied, and full of symbolic meanings. Images are required to be duly consecrated and ceremoniously enshrined before they become objects of worship. For the preliminary consecration of an image a pavilion should first be erected and furnished with ornamental arches whose tops should be covered with branches of sacred trees. Garlands and banners of various colours should be hung in the various parts of the pavilion. Inside the pavilion an earthen altar should be raised and it should first be sprinkled with sand and then covered over with Kusa grass on which the image should be placed with its head and feet resting on the pedestal. The image should then be successively bathed with various kinds of waters, including a decoction of the twigs of a number of sacred trees and water from sacred places in which earth raised by elephants and bulls, earth from mountains, ant-hills, confluences of rivers, lotus ponds, etc., are mixed, and with scented water in which gold and precious gems have been placed. While the bathing ceremony is going on trumpets should be sounded, Ved ‘mantras’ (Vedic hymns) should be uttered and sacred fires should be burnt whose flames should not turn from right to left and whose burning faggots should not emit frequent sparks. After the bath the image should be decked with new cloth and ornaments, worshipped with flowers and sandal-paste and the priest should lay it down on a well spread bed. When the image has slept its full, it should be roused from sleep with songs and dances, should again be worshipped with flowers, garlands, sandal-paste, and sounds of conch-shell and trumpets. Then at a time fixed by the astrologers the image should be carefully taken inside the sanctum from the pavilion, keeping the temple to the right, and placed in its most sacred chamber after making profuse offerings to the deity. The daily ritualistic ceremonies around the divine presence of the idol are as magnificent a spectacle as those at the time of the installation. The light of the innumerable brass or golden lamp-stands throwing fantastic shadows in many colours all around, the choir singing the praise of
god to the accompaniment of a great number of instruments, dedicated dancing girls transmuting their physical sense into the Spirit of the temple, and flowers and incense wafting all the fragrance of the Heaven make the spectacle a 'masterpiece of refined showmanship.'

This is how the Indian, in full consciousness of the power of decorations and ornaments, has paid his homage to God. But a very striking feature of the Indian life, particularly of the Hindus, has been the 'socialisation of the arts.' Artistic decorations are as much a part of his social or socio-religious life as they are of his ritualistic practices in the temple of God. Indeed, the Indian has responded to the instinct for artistic embellishment in his everyday life with so much vigour that there is no fast, festival or social event in the family which is not celebrated with all the traditional decorative ritualism. Semi-religious or social occasions like those associated with the changing of the seasons, the return of peace and plenty after the dark days of the monsoon, the birth of young shoots at the close of winter, the ripening of the paddy or the golden wheat, the return of the great legendary king Mahabali with the coming of the harvest season in Kerala, or such family events as the naming ceremony of the child, the reception of an honoured guest to a meal, the weddings, the first entry into a new house, or even the dawning of a new day, have all inspired the people to indulge in a luxurious ornamentation of the floors and walls of houses and courtyards with patterns of singular charm and graceful variety. The women specially pour their very gleeful souls into the work and transform the cold bare surfaces of the walls and floors into a glowing mass of decorative designs with mere powder and pastes.

This particular kind of ritual decoration is practised throughout the whole of India. One has only to step into the home of an orthodox Hindu during festivals or on auspicious days to discover the startling beauty of the art. But in its most developed form, it is found in Bengal, Orissa, Madras, Maharashtra and Gujarat—practically in regions along the coast line. It is not seen so well executed or in such variety in the inner parts of the country. It is indeed a remarkable fact that the art should have found the most fertile field only along the sea-coast.

This art is known by various names in the different parts of the country: Alpona in Bengal, Jhunty in Orissa, Kolam in the South, Rangoli in Maharashtra, Sathia in Gujarat and Chowk-pujan and Sona-rakhna in Uttar Pradesh, Alpana in Bihar, and Mandana in Rajasthan. Decoration and ornamentation being the motive force for much that women do and also on account of the artistic instinct very much alive in them, this art of decoration is more or less their monopoly and has come to be regarded as essentially a feminine art. The girls start receiving their first schooling in the art from the elders of the family when hardly six or seven years of age. They soon become quite adept at it, and in their turn, teach them to their daughters and grand-daughters. Thus the art has continued and lived through the ages. But although some of the patterns are very much conventionalised the art has been maintained in a fluid tradition, and the spirit behind it is capable of manifesting itself in infinite variations. Very recently the Kala Bhawan at Shantiniketan has introduced this form of art as a subject of study in its arts curriculum. But that is an exception. Nowhere else does it form part of the regular studies.

We are not yet in a position to establish the antiquity of the art of ritual decoration. 'Rangavali,' meaning creepers painted in colours, is mentioned in some of the ancient Sanskrit texts. Vivid descriptions of the beauty of these
designs and the techniques of working them out are given in Sanskrit works like *Kadambari* and *Tilakmanjari*. Detailed descriptions of Alpona drawings are found in old Mymensingh ballads and other Bengali works. A few Bengali writers have pointed out that the lotus flower designs of Alpona are an exact continuation of the lotus designs employed at Mohenjo-Daro. There are scholars who have suggested that the motifs found in Alpona drawings are hieroglyphic in character.

These decorations are executed free hand on the plane surface of the courtyard or the floor of the house, which is usually of earth, or on the streets by the main doorway in Gujarat, Maharashtra, and the South. They are also executed on low wooden seats—the Patas—and over the rounded body of the sacred water pot.

The materials of the artists are few and simple. Powdered rice, white limestone, chalk or flour, dry or mixed with water to form into a white paint, are usually the only materials. There is no need for a brush—the nimble finger tips of the artists serving the purpose. A quantity of the powder or a little piece of cloth dipped in the paint is held with the tips of the thumb and fingers of the right hand and then slowly, carefully and almost religiously, a design is executed, in clear, fresh, white lines by a harmonious movement of the fingers.

Although white is the generally accepted colour for these decorations other colours are also used on important occasions to further enrich the patterns. Broken bits of leaves supply the green colour, marigold petals and powdered turmeric the yellow, powdered red brick gives the red colour and charcoal the black. In the South and Maharashtra minute particles of coconut husks and sand are also pressed into service.

Each piece of decoration consists of two classes of designs, the ceremonial and the purely ornamental. The ceremonial designs are traditional and always in keeping with the occasion that is being celebrated. In such designs figures of birds, fish, and animals, both real and legendary, sometimes with riders and sometimes without, sun, moon, stars and chariots, combined into many pleasing arrangements, have their place of honour. For example, on the occasion of the worship of Manasa, the goddess who presides over snakes in Bengal, or on the Nagpanchami festival in other parts of the country, the Alpona and Rangoli designs and patterns must include figures of snakes. The most important festival in honour of Lakshmi in Bengal takes place in the month of Aswin (September-October) on the full moon night. Paddy is regarded as the chief wealth and the symbol of prosperity, and since Aswin is connected with the ripening of the early winter paddy Lakshmi is regarded as the presiding deity of the crop and an elaborate form of decoration is executed to worship her. ‘Charan’ or the foot-marks of Lakshmi, the goddess of Fortune, who is fondly believed to enter the house on this day, and a creeper to represent the paddy, are important motifs of the Alpona associated with this worship.

In the South, women make a ‘Shiva Peeth’ Kolam on Mondays, a ‘Kalipeeth’ on Tuesdays, a ‘Swastik’ on Wednesdays, and ‘Lakshmi Kolam’ on Fridays. In South Kanara even the kitchens and farms are decorated with Kolam designs. Conch shells, ‘gada,’ ‘gopads’ (cow’s foot-marks) are important motifs of the ceremonial side of the Rangolis. The scorpion, supposed to symbolise human suffering, figures in the Chowks of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar to ward off evil influences. The figure of a fish, regarded as an auspicious object by the Hindus, is a very favourite motif and appears in almost all cases where water is shown or where different kinds of animals are depicted. In Bengal, figures of the vermilion casket,
'baju' (an ornament for the upper arm), 'nath' (an ornament for the nose), bangles, and ear-tops, are objects of Alpona decorations connected with the worship of married women. Some Alponas involve as many as forty different objects, before each of which a flower is offered, and a song and a rhyme recited on important occasions. These designs, though sometimes markedly crude and stiff, are interesting and surprisingly refreshing.

But the purely ornamental part of these decorations is most fascinating as it constitutes a very real means for the expression of the heart's yearning for Beauty. On the occasion of the reception of a distinguished guest the place where the guest sits and dines, at weddings the place where the bride and the bridegroom sit for the ceremonies, at religious worship the place where the idol is to be worshipped, or on the coming of a new dawn the courtyards, are decorated with beautiful patterns and designs which are not traditional but fresh creations of the artist's mind and unfettered by any convention or rules of ritual decoration. The designs are mostly geometrical or floral but of superb execution. The girls vie with one another in excelling the others' works and create many beautiful patterns of art.

There is an endless variety of geometrical designs which has most probably originated in the simple enjoyment of lines and forms. Some of the designs are very simple, just a network of lines, but very cleverly and artistically done. Sometimes colour effects are introduced to enhance their beauty. On auspicious occasions clay lamps glow in the centre of them, and in the South they are filled in with brightly coloured flowers and leaves.

It is in the execution of floral designs that the richness and glory of this art is to be seen at its best. Motifs taken from the plant world are handled with exquisite taste and great skill, and proportions and details are carefully portrayed. In almost every instance the artists show an admirable observation of Nature. The lotus, India's national flower, is in every part of the country a very popular motif. It is the symbol of the Divine Seat, and is also the Tree of Life and Good Fortune. Many beautiful and intricate designs of the lotus are drawn and variously interpreted so much so that they do not always appear to be strict representations of the real lotus we see every day. But they are fine works of art by themselves. The lotus is particularly designed to adorn the standing place for the newly wedded couple and to provide a place of dignity for the idol to be worshipped.

Besides the lotus other flower motifs with an infinite variety of designs and colour schemes are also carefully adapted to the shape of the object to be decorated. Creepers with graceful curves are a very favourite source of inspiration and there is always room for the artist to show her artistic ability in ornamentation.

Among the Malayalis there is an interesting form of decoration for festive occasions. A model of a gay flower bed with white powder and coconut husks is laid out on the ground of the outer courtyard by the main doorway. It is called Phook Kolam. The Malayali damsels fill it with beautiful flowers of as many varieties and colours as possible and make designs of rare charm. The golden age of Kerala history is coincident with the reign of 'the great and good King Mahabali.' He symbolises prosperity, and every year in the month of the harvest Kerala celebrates in his honour one of the loveliest festivals known as Onam. It is said that even the gods were jealous of the popularity of this king and cast him into the nether regions. But so deep was his people's sorrow that Mahabali was allowed to visit them once a year to gladden their hearts with his presence. So every house in Kerala wears a gay and festive appearance when Onam comes
Carved ivory and horn writing case, from Vizagapatam.
(From The Journal of Indian Art and Industry)
1. Carving in sandal-wood, from Travancore (From *The Industrial Arts of India* by G. Birdwood).

2. 3. Two sides of a powder-horn made of buffalo horn inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl (From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*).
again, and beautiful Kolam designs filled with richly coloured flowers are everywhere in abundance. During the Deepavali week the Gujarati girls make a thousand and one Rangolis with a variety of designs and colour schemes, both inside the house and on the streets, in the night time for the town folk to see and rejoice in the morning.

In Maharashtra and the South, it is a daily ritual for the ladies of the house to make Rangolis and Kolams in the courtyard and on the ground outside the house by the threshold. They sprinkle fresh cow-dung on the recently swept ground and execute designs of Kolam and Rangoli with white powder of rice or limestone or chalk. No particular design is prescribed. The girls draw pleasing floral and geometrical patterns from their imagination and display real artistic power.

In Rajasthan the Mandana patterns impart a picturesque beauty to the open grounds which are cleaned up and finished with cow-dung in crimson red, obtained by mixing Rati (red earth found locally there). The background of the Mandana motifs is prepared in black, chocolate, blue, or green. As white is the colour much favoured for drawing the patterns, chalk dissolved in water or rice paste mixed with water are generally used. ‘Chokas’ or squares, single and interwoven, have greater importance on ceremonial occasions, while polygons and circles abound on festival days.

The most obvious quality of this art is the note of simplicity and spontaneity about it. Inspired by religious ideas and spiritual experiences, as well as by the aesthetic instinct born of the creative impulse of man, it is the purest and the most sincere form of art, and is characterised by the unsophisticated candour of its creators. For this reason although there is a complete absence of perspective values, or set conventions of pattern and design, there is yet in these compositions of two dimensional flatness an ample power of realistic delineation which is of the true expressionistic type. They have a naturalistic appeal not in the sense of photographic realism, but in an altogether different sense of the term, wherein we may speak of naturalism or realism as representing all the details actually in existence—not only those the artist can see at the moment, but those he knows are there, although not in view from a given angle and at a given time.

Unfortunately, in an enthusiasm to relish only the more sophisticated arts of the country, we have through ignorance, neglect and apathy, refused to give to this simple art of decoration the rightful place in the domain of art which most surely belongs to these unique creations. The truth is that as a spontaneous self-expression of the people, of the joyous experiences of their lives, and of the beautiful ideals, this art is as sublime, aesthetic, and human as the more elaborate arts of the country. Whether one chooses to label it as childish or grotesque, the cult of Beauty is ever there to cheer us and provide the nearest thing to pure pleasure. As an art it is as vital in nature as it is sincere in expression and, therefore, it also truly represents the art traditions of the country.
GLOSSARY

*Abacus*, a level tablet on the capital of a column supporting the entablature.

*Abhaya Mudra*, gesture of reassurance and of blessing. The right hand is held palm outward and the fingers extended upward.

*Advaita*, a school of Hindu philosophy which asserts that God is the sole-existent and universal soul and besides Him there is no second principle.

*Agni*, fire as a deity.

*Airavata*, the white elephant, the vehicle of Indra and symbol of the rain bearing clouds.

*Aisle*, lateral divisions running at the sides of the nave.

*Alankars*, embellishments in Indian music.

* Alibaba*, vaulted recess in wall.

*Amarak*, flat, ribbed, disc-shaped stone at the summit of the Indo-Aryan type of spire.

*Ambika*, identified with Uma, a name of the consort of Siva.

*Ambulatory*, processional path.

*Ananta*, ‘the infinite’ as the symbol of eternity; serpent with a thousand heads which is the couch and canopy of Vishnu.

*Antarala*, intervening chamber between the cella and the open pillared hall.

*Apsara*, heavenly nymph.

*Apse*, the semi-circular recess at one end of a building.

*Arabesque*, decoration in low relief with fanciful intertwining of leaves, scroll-work, etc.

*Arcade*, row of arches supported by columns.

*Architrave*, the lowest division of the entablature resting immediately on the abacus of the column.

*Ardra-mandapa*, porch or compartment in front of the main hall of the temple.

*Ardhanareshvara*, an aspect of the Great God, who is both male and female, and ultimately neither one nor the other.

*Ashlar*, squared stonework in regular courses.

*Atma*, the soul; the supreme soul.

*Atiha*, play.

*Avalokitesvara*, the great compassionate Bodhisattva who sacrificed his Nirvana in order to serve his fellowmen.

*Bhat*, cubical portion of a temple up to the roof.

*Balcony*, balustraded platform projecting from the wall of a building.

*Balustrade*, fence, railing.

*Bandhara*, the tie-and-dye process or knot-dyeing.

*Baramasa*, twelve months, paintings depicting the march of the seasons reflecting changes in nature and in the life of people.

*Baroque*, style characterised by freedom of line and fantastic, grotesque, decorative effects.

*Barrel-vault*, vault with a semi-cylindrical roof or ceiling.

*Basalt*, hard dark green or brown igneous rock.

*Bas-relief*, shallow carving.

*Basti*, central building of the temple in the Deccan.

*Bastion*, projecting part of a fortification.

*Batter*, inclination of a wall from the perpendicular.

*Battlement*, wall or parapet on top of a building with regular openings.

*Baulis*, deep, long and staired reservoirs of water.

*Bazaar*, market.

*Bhadra*, temple spire designed like a terraced pyramid (Orissa).

*Bhagavata*, one of the Puranas, dedicated to the glorification of Bhagavata or Vishnu. The most popular and characteristic part of it is the tenth book which narrates in detail the history of Krishna.
Bhagavad Gita, 'the song of the Divine One.'
A celebrated episode of the Mahabharata in which Krishna is the chief speaker and expounds to Arjun his philosophical doctrines. Bhairava, 'the terrible destroyer' who takes pleasure in destroying—a name of Siva.
Bhairavi, 'the terrible,' a name of Siva's consort.
Bhakti, devotion, self-abandonment in love.
Bhangas, body posture.
Bhava, emotion as represented in a work of art.
Bodhisattvas, beings who are in the process of attaining Buddhahood but have not yet attained it; emanations of a Dhyani Buddha.
Bracket, a projecting support to hold up the lintel, a roof, a balcony, etc.
Brahma, Brahman (neuter), the supreme soul of the universe, self-existent, absolute and eternal, from which all things emanate and to which all return.
Brahma (masculine), chief of the Hindu triad; the supreme spirit manifested as the active creator of the universe.
Brahmanas, each of the Vedic collection of hymns has its Brahmans which contain ritual texts of early Hinduism.
Bulbous, shaped like a bulb, nearly spherical.
Burj, tower.
Buti, the generic term for flowers.
Buttress, support built against a wall.

Canopy, covering over a niche.
Capital, top part of a column, pillar or pilaster.
Cella, small chamber in the temple for the principal image or symbol.
Cenotaph, sepulchral monument.
Chaitya, Buddhist shrine of any kind.
Chaitya window, a large horseshoe shaped window in a chaitya.
Chakra, sacred Wheel of Law (Buddhist); discus of Vishnu.
Chamfered, furrowed or grooved.
Chandra, moon as a deity.
Chankrama, promenade of Buddha at Bodh-Gaya.
Chauttri, pillared hall attached to outside of Dravidian temple.
Chaumukha, temple for enshrining four-faced images of Jain saints, placed back to back.
Choli, bodice.

Cire-perdue method, the lost-wax process.
Cierestory, upper division of the walls of a building or upper storey, with its own row of small windows for light to enter building.
Cloister, covered corridors or passages usually surrounding an open square.
Colonade, range of columns placed at regular intervals.
Coping stone, the stone which tops a wall, balustrade.
Corbelled arch, opening in a wall, held together by projecting stones, each farther than the one below, until the top block of stone completes an arch-like opening.
Cornice, horizontal moulded projection crowning a building.
Cruciform, in the form of a cross.
Cupola, small dome.
Cusped arch, an arch the curve of which is built up by smaller curves.

Darwaza, door.
Deul, the sanctuary (cella and its tower) in Orissa.
Devadasis, temple dancing girls.
Dharma, conduct, morality, law, virtue, function, character, principle, habit.
Dharma Chakra, Wheel of the Law (Buddhist); the symbol of the enlightening wisdom. The Wheel is also associated with the Sun-god in Hindu mythology and appears as an emblem of power held in the hands of god Vishnu.
Dhoti, garment of the Hindu male worn from the waist downwards.
Dhyani Buddhas, a further step in the development of Mahayana Buddhism is the creation of five mythical Buddhas, known as Dhyani Buddhas of the Four Directions and the Centre of the Buddhist Universe. They are always represented as seated on a full blown lotus and in the meditative pose. Their emanations in the form of Bodhisattvas and their female principles are responsible for creating everything found in existence.
Dormer, projecting upright window in a sloping roof.
Durga, 'inaccessible', the consort of Siva.
Eaves, the projecting edge of the roof.
Eka-Mukha Linga, linga (phallic emblem) with
a mask of god Siva.
Engrailed, an arch having arcs within its curves.
Entablature, the portion of a structure that
surmounts the columns and rests upon the
capitals.

Facade, the exterior front or face of a building.
Filigree, ornamental work of fine gold or silver
or copper wire formed into delicate tracery.
Finial, finishing portion of a pinnacle.
Flexured, curved or bent.
Fluting, vertical channelling on the shaft of a
column.
Fresco, method of painting pictures in water-
colour laid on wall or ceiling before plaster
is dry.
Frieze, middle division of entablature; hori-
zontal broad band of sculpture filling this;
band of decoration elsewhere.

Gable, triangular upper part of wall at end of
ridged roof.
Gaja, elephant.
Gamakas, graces and ornaments in Indian music.
Gana, attendant of Siva.
Gandharva, celestial musician of Indra’s heaven.
Ganesh, elephant-headed god, son of Siva and
Parvati; he is the god of wisdom and remover
of obstacles.
Ganga, the sacred river Ganges, personified as
a goddess.
Garbha-griha, literally womb-house: the san-
tuary within which dwells the divine image;
the most sacred part of the shrine.
Gargoyle, projecting water spout.
Garuda, a mythical bird, half-man, half-bird, on
which Vishnu rides.
Gauri, ‘the glorious,’ a name of the consort of
Siva.
Gavaksha, a blind window or niche in the shape
of the chaitya-arch.
Ghagra, woman’s colourful outer garment
shaped like a full-skirted petticoat.
Gharanas, schools of interpretation in music.
Gita Govinda, a lyrical poem by Jaideva on the
early life of Krishna as Govinda. It is an
erotic work, and sings the loves of Krishna
and Radha, and others of the cowherd
damsels, but a mystical interpretation has been
put upon it.
Gopis, cowherd damsels and wives with whom
Krishna sported in his youth.
Gopuram, entrance gateways of Dravidian
temples developed into lofty tapering towers.
Guhyasamaja Tantra, rules and rituals of Secret
Communion.
Gunbad, a domed structure; a dome alone.

Hansa, goose, swan.
Hanuman, a celebrated monkey chief of divine
origin and with superhuman powers; he is a
conspicuous figure in the Ramayana.
Harmika, the pedestal on top of a stupa in
which the shaft of the honorific umbrella is
set.
Hasta, hand pose.
Hellenic, ancient Greek.
Hinayana, early phase of Buddhism with em-
phasis on the doctrine rather than on the
worship of the Buddha as a Saviour God.
Hippogryph, a fabulous animal represented as
a winged horse with the head of a griffin.
Hiranyakasipu, a tyrant-demon who persecuted
his son Prahlada for worshipping Vishnu.
Holli, the Hindu festival of colour throwing.
Hooka, smoking-pipe with long flexible tube,
smoke being drawn through water in vase
to which tube and bowl are attached.

Indra, the god of the firmament, the personified
atmosphere, who governs the weather and
dispenses the rain.

Jaali, any lattice or perforated pattern.
Jagmohan, assembly hall preceding the sanctuary
of an Orissan temple.
Jamb, upright portion of a door, window frame,
holding the lintel on top.
Janat Masjid, congregational mosque.
Jatakas, stories of Buddha’s previous births in
either human or animal form.
Kailasa, Siva's Paradise.
Kalash, symbol of the Jar of Nectar; in temple architecture an ornamental pot found in finials and capitals.
Kali, a goddess, the fierce and bloody consort of Siva.
Kalyana mandapa, in Southern Indian temples the pavilion where the marriage of the deity is celebrated.
Karma, the conception of the quality of actions in one of the successive states of a person's existence determining his fate in the next.
Kashi, ancient name of Banaras.
Kesava, a name of Vishnu or Krishna.
Kinnaras, mythical beings with the form of a man and the head of a horse; they are celestial musicians.
Kiosk, a small pavilion generally on parapet or roof.
Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu; he played a major role in the Mahabharata, and in the character of the Divine One delivered the celebrated song Bhagavad Gita. His consort is Radha who is the type of the human soul drawn to the ineffable god Krishna.
Kurta, a loose shirt-like male garment.
Kuvera, chief of the Yakshas, god of wealth, and guardian of the north.

Mahabharata, the great (war of the) Bharata; the great epic poem of the Hindus.

Mahadeva, Mahesh, 'the great god'; a name of Siva.
Mahadevi, 'the great goddess'; a name of Devi, the consort of Siva.
Mahakal, 'the great time'; a name of Siva as the great destroying and dissolving power.
Mahal, palace.
Maha-Purush, 'the great or supreme male,' the Supreme Spirit.
Mahayana, later theistic form of Buddhism with emphasis on divine Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.
Mandapa, temple cult hall.
Maqbara, mausoleum.
Masjid, mosque.
Matra, unit of time-measure in music.
Maya, illusion, deception, the unreality of worldly things.
Mecca, holy city of Muslims in Arabia.
Meru, mythical world mountain on which is situated the heaven of Indra containing the cities of the gods, and the habitations of the celestial spirits.
Mihrab, the arched recess in the western wall of an Indian mosque, indicating the direction of Mecca, and towards which the worshippers turn for prayer.
Minbar, pulpit in mosque to the right of Mihrab.
Minar, a tower, a spire.
Minaret, turret of a mosque, whence the people are summoned to prayer.
Miniature, picture in illuminated manuscript; small scale minutely finished portrait usually on ivory.
Mirth, graceful glide from one note to another in music.
Mithuna, couples in erotic pose.
Moulding, a projecting continuous element on a wall.
Mrityunjaya, 'the Victor over Death'; a name of Siva.
Mudra, symbolic hand position.
Mukti, final release from worldly existences.
Murti, cult image, sculpture.

Nagara, Indo-Aryan style of temple architecture characterized by curvilinear spire.
Nagas, semi-divine spirits of water, serpentine in form.

Nala-Damayanti, the story of king Nala and his virtuous wife Damayanti is one of the episodes of the Mahabharata.

Nandi, the sacred Bull, Siva's vehicle.

Narasimha, an incarnation of Vishnu as half-man and half-lion.

Narayana, a name of Vishnu under which he was first worshipped.

Nat Mandap, dancing hall, usually the middle structure in an Orissan temple.

Nataraja, Siva as Lord of the Dance.

Naubathkhana, place for orchestral music at the main entrance.

Natwar, Krishna as the Supreme Dancer.

Natyashastra, treatise on dance.

Navaranga, central cult hall of the Chalukya-Hoysala temples.

Nave, the central or main compartment of a temple, distinct from the aisles.

Niche, recess in a wall for a statue or ornament.

Nirvana, extinction of worldly desires and escape from transmigration; death of the Buddha.

Ogee, a form of moulding showing in section a double continuous curve, concave below passing into convex above.

Panchayatana, complex composition of temples wherein four additional shrines were attached to the main sanctuary by a cloister.

Parapei, a small low wall at edge of a roof.

Parvati, 'the mountaineer;' a name of the wife of Siva.

Pasupati, 'Lord of creatures;' a name of Rudra or one of this manifestations.

Pendentives, triangular surfaces by which a dome is supported on a square compartment.

Pietra dura, inlaid mosaic of hard and expensive stones.

Pilaster, square pillar, partly built into, partly projecting from a wall.

Pinnacle, pointed termination.

Prakarams, high outer walls of a south Indian temple.

Puranas, scriptures of Hinduism, they contain mythological stories, old folklore, as well as real histories of royal dynasties, the last in the form of ancient prophecies. There are eighteen Puranas and a number of secondary Puranas.

Pyjama, silk or cotton trousers tied round the waist.

Pylon, tall monumental gateway.

Qila, fort.

Quran, the Mohammedan scripture.

Qutb, axis or pivot.

Radha, consort of Krishna.

Raga, melody-type.

Ragamala, Ragamaika, musical composition of many ragas.

Ragini, secondary raga.

Rama, Ram, hero of the Ramayana and an incarnation of Vishnu.

Ramayana, the adventures of Rama, the oldest of the Sanskrit epic poems of the Hindus.

Rasa, flavour, sentiment; the substance of aesthetic experience knowable only in the activity of tasting.

Ras, Rasila, the dance of Krishna with the cowherd maidens. It is symbolic of the craving of the Individual soul to join the Divine soul.

Ratha, lit., a chariot; applies to the monolithic shrines of the Pallavas at Mamallapuram.

Rauza, a Muslim tomb, often of a saintly person.

Ravana, the demon king of Lanka in the Ramayana.

Refectory, dining hall in a monastery.

Rekha, Orissan temple with conical beehive-shaped spire.

Reliquary, receptacle for relics.

Renaissance, revival of art and letters in Europe under the influence of classical models in the 15th century.

Repoussé, ornamental metal work, hammered into relief from reverse side.

Rosettes, rose shaped ornament.

Rudra, the Vedic storm-god.

Sadasiva, the Auspicious creator.

Sakti, the power aspect of a god, and thought
of mythologically as his feminine complement; the consort of Siva, both as Mother and Destroyer alternately.
Sakya Muni, the sage of the Sakya clan, a name of Buddha.
Sam, principal beat of a time section in Indian music.
Sangatis, variations of theme in Carnatic music.
Sangha, Buddhist religious order.
Saptaka, the seven notes of the gamut.
Saraswati, goddess of music.
Sari, the Indian woman’s one-piece principal attire to cover the body from head to feet and tied around waist.
Sastra, a rule, book, treatise; any book of divine or recognised authority.
Sati, wife of Siva.
Savitri-Satyanarayana, the story of Savitri, the devoted wife of Satyanarayana, who made Yama, the king of the dead, to restore her dead husband to life.
Sesha, the snake-god with a thousand heads.
Shia, a Muslim sect.
Sri, enharmonic interval or note in music.
Siddhartha, the personal name of Buddha.
Sikhara, spire or tower.
Silapasastras, the treatises on mechanics; it includes builders’ manuals.
Silpi-Yogin, philosopher-craftsman.
Srima, goddess of fortune.
Siva, the third deity of the Hindu triad and the supreme god of his votaries. He is known under many names, both as the great destroying and the reproductive power.
Somanath, a name of Siva.
Squinch arch, arches placed diagonally at the angles in the interiors of domes to connect from square to round.
Stalactite, system of vaulting remotely resembling stalactite formations in a cave.
Stellate, arranged like a star.
Sthapatis, master craftsmen.
Stucco, kind of plaster or cement for coating surfaces.
Stupa, Buddhist relic shrine.
Stupika, a circular or octagonal dome, resembling a miniature stupa, crowning the tower of a Dravidian temple.

Subrahmanya, a name of Karttikeya, the Hindu god of war, used specially in South India.
Sudarsana, guardian of still water.
Sudras, the servile caste amongst Hindus.
Sufism, a philosophical system based mainly on Islam with emphasis on pantheistic mysticism.
Sukracharya, an ancient Indian sage.
Sunni, a Muslim sect.
Surya, sun as a deity.
Swara, diatonic note in music.

Tandava, the dance of Siva (masculine and energetic).
Tala, time measure in music.
Tantra, rule, ritual. The title of a numerous class of religious and magical works, representing a later development of religion. The chief peculiarity of the Tantras is the prominence they give to the female energy of the deity, personified as Sakti.
Torana, gate of the enclosure of a Buddhist stupa.
Trabeate, use of pillars or posts to hold up a lintel or roof.
Transept, cross or transverse compartments of a building.
Trefoil, arranged in three lobes.
Triforium, gallery usually in form of arcade above the arches of the nave.
Trishul, a trident; trident emblem of Siva; in Buddhism symbol of the Buddha, the Law and the religious order.
Trivikrama, a name of Vishnu.
Turrets, small towers.

Uma, 'light'; a name of the consort of Siva.

Upanishads, esoteric doctrine. The third division of the Vedas attached to the Brahmana portion. The object of the treatises is to ascertain the mystic sense of the Vedas. They contain the beginnings of metaphysical enquiry into the origin of the universe, the nature of the deity, the nature of soul and the connection of mind and matter and thus lead to the full development of Hindu philosophy.
Ushnisha, protuberance on head of the Buddha, emblematic of his divine knowledge.

Vaikunthanatha, a name of Vishnu.
Vajrayana, the final and esoteric phase of Mahayana Buddhism.
Varnas, melodic movements.
Varaha, the boar incarnation of Vishnu.
Vault, arched roof.
Vedas, holy books of the Indo-Aryans which are the foundation of Hindu religion. They are four in number: Rig, Atharva, Sama and Yajur. Each Veda is divided into two parts—Mantra, consisting of prayers in hymns, and Brahmanas containing liturgical and ritualistic writing in prose.
Vestibule, ante-room.
Viharas, a Buddhist monastery.
Vimana, towered sanctuary containing the cella enshrining the deity.

Vishnu, in Rig-Veda a solar deity. Later, the second member of the Hindu triad, the Preserver, and to his votaries the Supreme Being. His power has been manifested to the world in a variety of forms called incarnations in which a portion of his divine essence was embodied in human or supernatural forms possessed of superhuman powers.
Vishvakarma, patron deity of the craftsman.
Volute, scroll or spiral.

Yakshas, Dravidian nature spirits attendant on Kuvera, god of wealth.
Yakshis, female counterparts of the Yakshas, associated with fertility.
Yalis, hippopotamic monsters.
Yoga, communication with the ‘all-pervading spirit’ by practice of ecstatic meditation.

Zenana, women’s apartments.
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INDEX

Abdal-Samad, 142-144
Abhinaya, 174-175
Abhinaya Darpana, 171, 174
Abul Fazl, 143, 145-147, 172, 194
Abul Hassan, 147-149
Achaemenian, 25, 26, 34, 66
Achchan, 186
Achuthappa Nayaka, 179
Adaranga, 195
Aduvi, 180
Adi Shahi, 116
Adina Mosque, 110
Adiyars, 10
Advaita, 13
Adyar, Kalakshetra, 180
Afghans, 2, 16, 103, 162
Afghanistan, 7, 33, 35, 36, 132, 162
Africa, 102
Agla, Zubaida, 169
Agha Fort, 140
Agni, 10, 80
Agra, 119, 122, 123, 142, 203, 221, 236
Agrawala, Vasudeva Saran, 164
Ahmadabad, 112, 113, 139, 218, 219, 222, 234, 235
Ahmadnagar, 15, 116, 150, 151
Ahmad, Safuddin, 169
Ahmad Shah, 111, 112
Ahmad Shah Abdali, 162
Ahmed, Khwaja Shafig, 169
Ahirs, 189
Ahole, 46, 77, 80, 91, 94
Ain-i-Akbari, 143, 146, 194
Airavata, 33, 43
Airavatesvara temple, 88
Ajigasgarh, 76
Ajanta, 20, 45, 71, 75, 78, 132-135, 138, 154, 165-167, 214
Ajivika ascetics, 67
Aimer, 11, 97, 105
Akadami Sangeeta Natak, 196
Akbar, 16, 108, 119-122, 142-146, 152, 157, 158, 194, 214, 223
Akbar-Nama, 145, 146
Akbar’s tomb (Sikandra) 121
Alai Darwaza, 106
Alarippu, 180
Alauddin Bahman, 116
Alaiddin Khan, Ustad, 210
Alaiddin Khilji, 15, 103, 106, 141, 194
Ali Biruni, 11
Alexander the Great, 5, 24, 26, 34, 214
Ali Bard’s tomb, 116
Ali Shah I, 117
Allahabad, 69, 119
Aimora, 221
Alpana, 238
Alpona, 238-240
Alvars, 10
Alwar, 195, 223, 224, 228
Amaravati, 7, 33, 39-42, 47, 75

Amarakosha, 226
Amar Sinha, 226
Amarasataka, 156
Ambala, 235
Ambar, 126
Ambika, 46
Amir Khusru, 194, 195, 204
Amritsar, 125, 220, 221, 233-235
Anand, Mulk Raj, 93
Ananta, 47
Anantasayana Temple, 81
Andhakasuravadhamurti (Elephanta), 50
Andhra and Sunga sculpture, 27-29, Later Andhra, 38-40
Andhra Pradesh, 181
Andhras, 6, 26, 27, 31-33, 46, 47, 65, 68, 133
Annam, 6
Anup Chatur, 149
Anwar-i-Sikhiy, 145
Appar Swami, 57
Apoor, 35
Apsaras, 44, 129, 134, 191
Agra, 146
Arav, 167
Arabs, 12, 14, 102, 104, 210
Aranyakas, 3
Archer, W. G., 159, 160
Arcot, 81, 86, 228
Ardhanarisvara, 46, -murti (Elephanta), 50
Arha Din Ka Jhoppa, 105
Artha Sastra, 222
Arundale, Rukmini Devi, 179, 180
Aryans, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 23, 24, 65, 67, 80, 85, 175, 191-193, 199
Aryavarta, 3
Ashrafil Mahal, 114
Ashutpadiyatam, 176
Asia, 7, 9, 12, 15, 16, 23, 24, 26, 102, 106
Asoka, 5, 6, 10, 24-26, 31, 34, 66-68, 171
Asoka Pillars, 25-26
Assam, 8, 190
Assyrians, 38
Asvamedha, 5, 171
Atala Mosque, 111
Atharvaveda-Sambisa, 3, 20, 191
Atiya Begum, 200
Atlantic, 12
Auden, Sheila, 168
Augustus, 35
Aurangabad, 45, 78, 124, 218
Aurangzeb, 16, 124, 150, 157, 161, 162
Avanti, 5

Babur, 13, 15, 16, 118, 142, 145, 146
Babur-Nama, 145-146
Babylon, 213, 218
Bacchanalian motif, 38
Bachhofer, L., 39

261
Bactrian, 7
Badauni, 9, 46-48, 77, 80, 91, 135, 136
Badauni, 144
Badshahi Masjid, 124
Bagerhat, 110
Bagh, 135
Bagildad, 12, 124, 216
Bagh-Gai, 73
Bahadur Shah, 125
Baharistan, 145
Bahmani, 15, 115, 118
Bai, Ramkinlar, 63
Bak, Arnold, 133
Baker, Sir Edward, 127
Bakre, S. K., 63
Bala-Krishna, 57
Balaram, 183, 231
Balasarowati, 179
Balban, 13, his mausoleum, 105-106
Balchand, 149
Bal, 216
Baluchcar, 219
Baluchistan, 7, 73
Balwant Singh, 162
Bamiyan, 35, 132
Banasar, 204, 210, 213, 216, 218, 220, 222, 224, 231-234, 236
Banaras, 149, 152, 162
Bangalore, 222
Bankapur, 54, 92
Bankura, 100
Barabar Hills, 67, 70
Bara Gumbad, 108
Bara Khan Ka Gumbad, 108
Baramula, 161, 163
Bareilly, 233
Barid Shah, 116
Baroda, 126, 127, 195, 200, 222, 235
Baroda, Museum and Picture Gallery, 152, 157
Baroque art, 17
Barrett, Douglas, 39, 134, 146, 148, 152
Basawan, 145
Basohli, 158, 160-163
Basra, 216
Bassein, 126
Baz Bahadur's Palace, 115
Beas, 158
Bedsa, 31
Bekstein, 34
Bellary, 232, 233
Belur, 54-55, 92-93
Bendre, 167
Bengal, 1, 8-11, 15, 16, 52, 58, 100, 110, 137, 138, 164, 165, 188, 204, 205, 220, 225, 231, 233, 298, 299
Berar, 15, 116
Berlin, State Library, 149
Bernier, 215, 220
Besnagar, Yakshi 26; Ganges 44, 69
Bhadra temples, 93
Bhat, 167
Bhagat, Dhananjay, 63
Bhagavata, Bhagavata Purana, 10, 141, 152-155, 160, 161, 163, 176, 182
Bhagavata Mela Nataka, 179, 181-182
Bhagavati, 179
Bhagatya, 172
Bhairava, 49, 66, 50
Bhairavakonda, 81
Bhairavi, 46
Bhairon Prasad, 186
Bhaja, 27, 32-33, 39, 44, 71
Bhajans, 209
Bhakti cult, 193
Bhakas, 43
Bhangra dance, 189
Bhanu Datta, 160
Bhavani, 172
Bharitya Muni, 6, 170, 171, 179, 182, 183, 193, 201, 202, 208
Bharata, Natya, 172, 173, 178-182
Bharath, 181
Bharatpur, 126, 235
Bharatvarsha, 10
Bharhut, 6, 7, 27-34, 36-40, 65, 66, 69
Bhairakchhina, 36
Bhaktihande, 196, 199
Bhattiprolu, 75
Bhavabhattera, 196
Bhavabhatti, 131
Bhera (Punjab), 233
Bhilsa, 76
Bhima ratha, 82
Bhima river, 92
Bhitargaon, 79
Bhopal, 76, 127
Bhumara, 44, 76
Bhutanatha, 46
Bhutias, 188
Bhuvaneshwar, 58, 93-95, 187
Bibi-ka-Rauza (Aurangabad), 124
Bible, Plantyn's Polyglot, 143
Biichler, 149
Bidar, 15; tombs 116, 223
Bidri work, 233
Bihar, 7, 8, 9, 11, 52, 58, 65, 67, 137, 138, 238, 239
Bihazad, 142
Bijnor, 15, 77, 166-177, 150, 151
Bikaner, 126, 127, 153, 155, 221, 236
Bilaspur, 158, 161, 162, 164
Bimbisara, 5, 65
Bindadin, 186
Birbal's Palace, 120
Birdwood, G. C. M., 220, 225, 227
Birju Maharaj, 186
Bishandas, 147, 149
Blake, 160
Bodh-Gaya, 27, 30, 39, 69, 74, 79
Bodhisattva, 7, 11, 27, 29, 34; Gandhara 35; Mathura 37, 45, 58, 132, 133; Avalokitesvara (Padmapani), 134
Bodleian Library, 145
Bombay, 50, 83, 127
Bombay, Prince of Wales Museum, 147, 148, 152, 155, 156; Sir Cowasji Jehangir Collection, 154
Boral, 210
Bose, Nand Lal, 165, 166
Bose, Phananandra Nath, 129
Boston, Museum of Fine Art, 151, 157
Brahma (deity) 36, 41, 42, 45, 46, 79, 129, 170, 191
Brahma, Brahman (Supreme soul), 3, 18
Brahmadatta, 29
Brahmanas (caste), 3-7, 11, 12, 182
Brahmanas and Upanishads, 3
Brahmanism, 3, 5, 7, 10, 41, 45, 46, 57, 58, 60, 68, 77, 83, 187
Brahmaputra, 1
Brata, 154, 184
Brahaddesha, 193
Brahadesvara temple, 179
Brahadrat, 232
Brindaban, 184
British, 16-18, 126-127, 164, 195, 227, 230
Brouch, 112
Brown, Percy, 53, 84, 86, 95, 119, 133
Buddha, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 24, 25, 28-39, 41, 44, 58, 65-67
Buddha, 71, 72, 73, 78, 132-134, 138
Buddha images, 34-37, 39, 43-45, 58, 78
INDEX

Buddhism, 4-12, 24, 27, 33-34, 38, 41, 58, 66, 68, 70, 71-74, 78, 83, 131-132, 137-138
Buddhist art, 22-40, 43-45, 58, 65-75, 78, 132-135, 153
Bukhara, 124, 216
Buland Darwaza, 121
Bulund Bagh, 66
Bundi, 153, 156
Buruhanpur, 218, 228
Burma, 6, 15
Byzantine, 14, 102

calcutta, 127, 165, 166, 222, 235
Calcutta, Government House, 127
Calcutta, Indian Museum, 26, 29, 38
Calcut, 126, 176
Cambay, 112
Cannanore, 126
Cape Camorin, 53
Camatic, 231, music 182, 196-197, 199
Carpets, 221
Celebes, 40
Ceylon, 6, 15, 40, 132
Cezanne, 167
Chaitanya, 13, 141, 183
Chaitya, 21-72, 78, 81, 82, 100
Chakhar Koothu, 175
Chalan-Gathan, 184
Chalukyas, 9, 10, 14-15, 46, 48, 52, 54, 66, 77, 83, 86, 91-93, 135
Chalukya art, 46-47, 77
Chamars, 189
Chamba, 158, 161, 164, 219
Champa (Indo-China), 40
Champak, 112
Chamunda, 46
Chandellas, 11, 52, 60, 95
Chanderi, 218
Chandernagore, 17
Chandigath, 127
Chandimandapa, 100
Chandra (god), 10
Chandra (Yakshini), 30
Chandra Gupta (Gupta), 8
Chandra Gupta (Maurya), 5, 24, 214
Chandra, Moti, 139
Chandra, Pramote, 152
Chandrasekhara, 46
Chankrama, 69
Charan, 185
Char Charminar, 117
Chatterjee, Pramote, 63
Chattopadhyaya, Kamaladevi, 212
Chaudhuri, Santhu, 63
Chauhans, 11
Chauhans, 212
Chauhans, 59
Chaurapanchastika, 152
Chawand (Mewar), 153
Chedi, 11
Chemb, 158
Cheras, 5, 6, 10, 46
Chester Beatty Library, 145, 146, 151
Chidambaram, 53, 87-91, 172
China, 8, 9, 12, 66, 74, 132, 165, 216
Chingleput, 81
Chinnaya, 179
Chisti Khan's Palace, 115
Chittakshetra, 129
Chittor, 154
Christian, 69, 76, 144
Cholass, 5, 6, 10, 15, 46, 51, 52, 56, 57, 86-88, 137
Chota Khan Ka Gumbad, 108
Choudhury, Debraprasad Roy, 63
Chowk-punj, 238

Chugthai, 168
Chulakok, 30
Chunar, 228
Cire-perdue casting, 57
Cochin, 17, 126, 137
Coconada, 222
Coimbatore, 234
Conjeeveram, see Kanchipuram
Coorg, 225, 234
Corbusier, M. Le, 127
Corinthian, 73
Curzon, Lord, 18
Cutch, 218, 220, 222
Cutiack, 227, 235

Dacca, 2, 18, 219, 220
Dahuri, 172, 185
Dadi Ka Gumbad, 108
Dadra, 204
Dakhil Darwaza, Gaur, 110
Dakshineshwar, 110
Dalavanur, 81
Daman, 17, 126
Damascening, art of, 223
Damasus, 216, 222
Dhanyati Joshi, 186
Dambal, 54, 92
Danish, 126
Daniyal, 145
Dantidurga, 10, 49
Darab-Nama, 145
Darsamuram, 88
Darius, 34
Darjeeling, 221
Dasavatara temple, Deogarh, 45
Das Avatara temple, Pallara, 83
Dasavant, 145
Datia, 126
Dattula, 193
Daulat, 147, 149
Daulatabad, 115
Davids, Rhys, 28
Davies, 63
Dhancan, 1, 6-9, 13-16, 26, 46, 48, 54, 68, 77, 81, 91, 115-116, 150-151
Delhi, 11, 13, 15, 16, 73, 97, 103-110, 113-116, 118, 123-124, 140-142, 152, 158, 203, 214, 220, 224, 227, 228, 234-236
Delhi Sultanate, 13
Deogarh, 45, 76
Descent of the Ganges, Manallapura, 47-48
Deussen, 3
Devadasis, 172, 179
Devagiri, 15
Devakulavatika, 140
Devasano Pada Bhandar, Ahmadabad, 139
Devi, 79
Devadas, 161
Dhanpal, 63
Dhar, 113-114
Dharmaraja ratha, 82
Dhob, 189
Dholka, Masjid of Hila Khan, 112
Dhrupad, 194-195, 203
Didarganj, 26
Dhikshitar, Muthuswami, 179, 197
Dhikshitar, Govinda, 197
Dinajpur, 100
Dilawar Khan's Masjid, 114
Diu, 17, 126
Diwan-i-Am, Agra, 122
Diwan-i-Haiz, 145, 151
Diwan-i-khas, Fatehpur Sikri, 120, Agra, 122, Delhi, 123
Dodda Godavalli, 54
Dolls and Toys, 229-232
Dorasamudra, 15
Dowson, John, 104
Draupadi ratha, 82
Dravidian, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 24, 27, 45, 46, 54, 81-82, 84-91, 93, 94, 175, 192
Dumar Lema, Sita-ki-Nahani, 48, 83, 85
Durga, 46
Durga temple, Aihole, 77, 80
Dutch, 17, 126
Dutta, Makhon, 167

Earth Goddess, 44
East India Company, 18
Ecbatana, 214
Eglmore, Indian Institute of Fine Arts, 180
Egypt, 5, 102, 214
Ekambaramath, 53
Eka-Mukh Linga, 44
Ekklaki Masjid and tomb, 110
Elan, 21
Elephanta, 19, 48, 50, 63, 83, 85
Elliot (Sir Charles), 11
Elliot, Sir H. M., 104, 107
Elloa, 48-50, 63, 78, 83-85, 136, 221
Embellishments and Graces (Music), 201-202
Embroidery, art of, 219-221
Enamelling, art of, 224-225
England, 17, 217
Englishmen, 18, 126, 165
Eran, 76
Europe, 17
European, 17, 144, 146, 147, 164-165, 166, 176

Fa-Hien, 9, 66, 74, 135
Farghana, 15, 118
Farukhabad, 210, 216, 218
Fathpur Sikri, 119-120; Great Mosque, 120-121; 143, 156
Female Energy, 2
Ferguson J., 30, 113, 118
Ferozuddin, Razia, 169
Firuzabad, Kotila Firuz Shah, 107
Firuz Shah Tughluq, 107-108, 111, 141
Flemish, 143
Folk dances, 187-190
Folk songs, 206-207
Fort St. George, Madras, 127
Fort William, 17
France, 217
French, 17, 126-127
Friar Bala, 37

Gadag, 54, 92
Gaitonde, 167
Gajapatia, 60, 141
Gandhara, 8, 28, 33-36, 39, 44, 73-74, 102, 213
Gandharva, 44, 134, 191
Gandhi, Mahatma, 18
Ganga, See Gauges
Gangadhar, 46
Gangadharamurthy, 50
Gangai Konda Cholapuram, 52, 86-87

Ganges, 1, 3, 12, 29, 44, 47, 61, 74, 110
Ganesh, 79
Gangoly, O. C., 58
Garba dance, 188
Garba-grhita, 76-79
Garhwal, 8, 158, 164
Garuda, 42, 136
Gateway of India, Bombay, 127
Gauquelin, 167
Gaur, mosques and mausoleums, 101, 110
Gauri, 46, 57
Gautam Buddha, See Buddha
Gay, See Bodh-Gaya
Gavalisha, 82
Georgian, 127
Germany, 217
Ghanasala, 75
Ghanan system, 195
Ghazal, 204
Ghaeni, 7, 12
Ghiyathuddin Tughluq, 106-107, mausoleum, 107
Ghose, Gopal, 166
Ghur, 113
Ginger, 81
Girnar, 99, 105
Gita Govinda, 59, 152, 155, 160, 161, 163, 176, 181, 182
Goa, 17, 125
Godavari, 6, 33, 38-40, 74
Goeze, Hermann, 46, 134, 155
Golden Temple, Amritsar, 125
Gol Gumbaz, Bijapur, 117-118
Goli, 7, 39, 75
Golkunda, 15, tombs, 116-117, 150, 151, 194
Golla Kalapam, 182
Gopalkrishna Bharati, 197
Gopal Naik, 196
Gopi Krishan, 186
Gopinath, 173
Gopurams, 82-84, 82, 87-91, 111
Goswami, O. O., 206
Gout, 187
Govardhan, 147, 149
Govardhan Chand, 162
Grammarian, 26
Gray, Basil, 134, 146, 148, 152
Greco-Buddhist, 35
Greco-Roman, 35, 38
Greeks, 2, 7, 9, 19, 24, 26, 35, 58, 65, 165, 213, 214
Gregory, Pope, 214
Grouset, Rene, 44
Gudavada, 75
Guhila Teliyanshi, 140
Guhyasastra Tastra, 38
Gujarat (Punjab), 223
Gujarat, 2, 8, 10, 11, 13, 16, 21, 52, 61, 97, 98, 111-113, 122, 138, 139, 143, 152, 153, 155, 188, 189, 216, 217, 222, 223, 235, 238, 239, 241
Gujarati painting, 138-140, 153
Gujral, 167
Gulbadan Begam, 142
Guibarja, 116
Guider, 158, 161-164
Gulistan of Sadi, 145
Gumnadidir, 39
Gumpa (Orissa), 73, Hathi G., 171
Gupta, Prasad Das, 63, 166
Guptas, 6, 8-10, 30, 36, 38, 46, 47, 51, 60-61, 76, 79, 131, 134, 171, 193, 222, 226, 230
Gupta sculpture, 41-45, temples, 76-77
Gurjara-Pratiharas, 11
Gwallor, 1, 44, 49, 126, 127, 135, 143, 195, 203, 218, 228
Hadda, 35
Hadis, 141
INDEX

Haibak, 73  
Haji Begum, 119  
Halebid 54, 55, 93  
Hamid Hussain, 200  
Hamza-Naham, 14, 152  
Hangal, 54, 92  
Hanuman, 57  
Hau, Anwarul, 169  
Harappa, 2, 21-23, 64, 171, 221  
Hari Dass, 194  
Harshavardhan, 97  
Harshavardhan (also Harsha), 9-11, 40, 45  
Hasan, 93  
Hasan Nizami, 104  
Hasim, 147  
Haitha Lakshana Deepika, 178  
Hauz-i-Khas, 108  
Havell, F. B., 18, 72, 102, 111, 165  
Haveri, 54, 92  
Hazaris, 167  
Hazarra-Ramu temple, 53, 89  
Hebben, 167  
Hellenic, 5, 7, 8, 38  
Hellenistic-Roman, 35, 73  
Helmand Valley, 7  
Herakles, 38  
Herat, 7, 142  
Himalayas, 1, 2, 17, 158  
Himaayana Buddhists, 7, 24, 33, 34, 39, 70-72  
Hindi, 16, 153, 155, 157, 160  
Hindola Mahal, 115  
Hinduism, 3-5, 8-14, 23, 24, 41, 47, 59, 85, 153, 157, 158, 170, 226, 229  
Hindukush, 7  
Hindus, 12, 15-17, 53, 102, 143, 146, 153  
Hindu temple, 12, 76-77, 79-100  
Hiranyakasipu, 49  
Huen-Thang, 74, 135  
Holland, 217  
Home Art Wares, 233-235; wood 233-234, ivory 234-235, horn, bamboo, reeds etc. 235  
Honhar, 149  
Hogpm, 235  
Hori-Dhamar, 203  
Horuiji, 132  
Horse Court (Sri-rangam), 53  
Hoysaleswara, 55, 93  
Humayun, 16, 109, 118, tomb of H. 119, 142-143  
Huns, 2, 9-11, 36, 40  
Husain, 167  
Husain Shah Sharqi, 140, 195, 201  
Hushang, 113, mausoleum 114  
Hyderabad, 117, 127, 195, 217, 218, 223, 236  
Ibrahim Adil Shah, 117  
Ibrahim Rauza, 117  
Ilango, 171  
Ilutnurs, 13, 104-105, mausoleum, 105  
Imad Shams, 116  
Imambana, Lucknow, 125  
Inayat, 147, 148  
Indian idealism, 18-20  
Indo-Aryan architecture, 81, 85-86, 93-100  
Indo-Islamic architecture, 101-126  
Indonesia, 8  
Indore, 126, 218  
Indra Sabha, Ellora, 85, 136  
Indus, 1, 2, 12  
Indus Valley Culture, 2, 21; sculpture, 21-22, seals, 23, architecture 64, pottery 227-228, dolls and toys, 229  
Inlaying, art of, 235  
Iran, 2, 25, 26, 34, 66, 67  
Iranian, 5, 7, 15, 16, 146  
Islam, 124-15, 53, 97, 101, 105-106, 141, 185, 213  
Islam and Hinduism, 12-14, 16-17  
Islamic art, 14  
Italy, 217  
Italian, 144  
Itmad-ud-Daulah's tomb, 122  
Ittagi, 54, 92  
Jabalpur, 76  
Jagapathi, 38-39, 75  
Jagannath Temple, 58, 94, 187  
Jagarnath Sabha, Ellora, 85  
Jagat Singh, 154  
Jahangir, emperor, 16, 144, 146-149, 157, 194, 214, 215  
Jahangiri Masjid, 111  
Jahangir-Naham, 147  
Jahangir's tomb, 122  
Jahaz Mahal, 115  
Jaideva, 59, 176, 181-184  
Jai Lal, 166  
Jainism, 4, 5, 9-12, 24, 41, 47, 62, 67, 70, 73, 77, 83, 85, 96, 97, 136, 138, 139, 152  
Jaipur, 126, 127, 145, 153, 157, 185, 195, 218, 221-225, 227, 228, 231, 235, 236  
Jaisalmer, 126  
Jai Singh I, 157  
Jai Singh II, 157  
Jalalabad, 35  
Jalandhar, 235  
Jamala mosque, 109  
Jamalgarhi, 73  
Jambukeswara temple, 87, 90-91  
Jami Roi, 166-167  
Jami Masjid, Ahmadabad, 112  
Jami Masjid, Bhopur, 117  
Jami Masjid, Broach, 112  
Jami Masjid, Cambay, 112  
Jami Masjid, Chandrapur, 112-113  
Jami Masjid, Delhi, 123  
Jami Masjid, Gulbarga, 116  
Jami Masjid, Jaipur, 111  
Jami Masjid, Mandu, 114  
Jammu, 158, 162-163  
Jama, 3, 61, 107, 158  
Japan, 132, 165  
Jasrota, 158  
Jatakas, 26, 32, 35, 39, 65, 131-133, 138, 213  
Jatiswaram, 180  
Jauipur, 13, 111, 138, 140, 152  
Jayama Iyer, T. K., 210  
Java, 6, 175, 216  
Javali, 205-206  
Jehangir, 169  
Jejakabukhti, 11  
Jesuits, 143, 146  
Jesus, 121  
Jewellery making, art of, 225-227  
Jhansi, 45, 76, 227  
Jhuni, 238  
Jodhpur, 61, 97, 126, 127, 153, 156, 157, 233  
Jog Vashisht, 146  
Jones, Sir William, 154  
Junagarh, 99, 112  
Kabul, 7, 15, 73, 118  
Kahars, 189  
Kaiasanath temple, Kanchipuram, 82-83  
Kaiasa temple, Ellora, 49-50, 83-84, 136  
Kakatiyas, 15
Kalachuris, 11
Kalabasti, 218
Kalahacharya Katha, 139
Kalanidhi, 179
Kalawati, 185
Kali, 42, 46, 79, 188
Kalidasa, 6, 171, 173, 193, 214, 216
Kalinga, 5
Kalya-Mardan, 57
Kalika Prasad, 186
Kalpataru, 139, 140
Kalyanasundaramurti, Elephanta, 50
Kama Sutra, 131
Kamala Laxman, 179
Kamal Mala Masjid, 114
Kanara, 234, 239
Kanauj, 11, 218
Kanchan, 172
Kanchipuram (Conjeevaram), 10, 48, 53, 82-83, 89, 137
Kandahar, 5
Kandarpaya Mahadeva, 60, 96
Kandyan, 175
Kangra, 8, 158, 161, 162, 163-164
Kanheri, 72
Kanishka, 7, 34, 35; statue of K. 36, 37, 73-74, 143, 158, 202-222
Kankali Devi temple, 76
Kanoria, Gopi Krishna, 153, 155, 156
Kanpur, 79
Kantamagar, 100
Kanthaka, 28
Kanthisa, 220
Kanu, 7
Karachi Museum, 45
Kar, Chintamoni, 63
Kari, 177
Karimbazar, 227
Karli, 71-72
Kashi, 10
Kashmir, 7, 36, 143, 148, 158, 220-222, 224, 225, 227, 228, 230, 233, 234, 236
Kasturbhai Lalbhai Collection, 161
Kathakali, 173, 175-178
Kathakas, 183
Kathak dance, 17, 172, 173, 181-186
Kathiawar, 8, 12, 52, 61, 97, 216, 219, 220, 233, 234
Katt, 177
Kaula and Kapalika sects, 59
Kausambi, 229
Kausik, 167
Kautila, 222
Kaveri, 136
Kawali, 205
Kerala, 175, 176, 182, 238, 240
Kesava temple, 55, 92
Keshavadas, 16, 155
Keyt, George, 167
Khajuraho, 52, 60-61, 95-96
Khali Mukihi Masjid, 111
Khandagiri, 73, 171
Khandalavali, Kari, 163, 167
Khan-i-Jahan Tiliangani, 108
Khanna, Krishna, 167
Kharoni, king, 171, 187
Kharsiddhi, 30
Khas Mahal, Agra, 123
Kheeda, 112
Kheya, 195, 203
Khitis, 13, 103; architecture 106, 113
Khoj, 44
Khurja, 228
Kilmavlangai, 81
Kinker, Ram, 167

Kirtan, 205
Kirtanan, Kriti, 205
Kishangarh, 133, 157
Kolam, 238-241
Kolhapur, 126
Kolhua, 66
Konarak, Sun temple, 59-60, 93, 95, 172
Kondane, 71
Konds, 190
Kosala, 5, 213
Koth, 133, 218
Kottarakara, Raja of, 176
Kottayam, 235
Kramnesch, Ste., 41, 45, 50
Krupal Pal, Raja, 161
Krishna Atam, 175-176
Krishna Deva Raya, 57, 89
Krishna, Devavani, 168
Krishna, Kanwali, 167
Krishna-Leela, 152
Krishna Leela Turangini, 182
Krishnagar, 231
Krishna river, 1, 6, 10, 38-40, 53, 74-81, 92
Katkareja, 181, 197
Ktesias, 214
Kuchipudi, 179, 181-182
Kudiyattam, 175
Kufri, 105
Kukkanur, 54, 92
Kukkar, 167
Kulu, 158
Kumar, Ram, 167
Kumbhakonum, 87, 228
Kumudini, 186
Kuravend, 179, 181
Kurseong, 188
Kurtanivas, 172, 185
Kurup, Kunchu, 176
Kuruvatti, 54, 92
Kushans, 2, 7-9, 33-36, 73-74, 229
Kushan sculpture, 34-38, architecture, 73-74
Kutty, Krishnan, 176
Kuvera, 30

Lauchu, 186
Ladh Khan temple, 77
Lahore, 119, 123-124
Lahore, Central Museum, 161, 162
Lahore, High Court, 127
Lahore, Mayo School of Arts, 169
Lai Haroba, 183, 184
Lakhnau, 100
Lakkundi, 54, 92
Lakhmi, 57, 79, 136
Lal Darwaza Masjid, 111
Lalit Kala Series of Indian Art, 150
Lambagraon Darbar Collection, 163
Lane-Poole, Stanley, 12
Lal Masjid, 114
Later Andhra sculpture, 38-40, architecture, 74-75
Laur-Chandra, 152
Lauriya-Nandangarh, 66
Leather craft, 236
Lepakshi, 53, 137
Lichchhavi, 8
Linga, lingam, 81, 85
Lingaraja temple, 58-59, 93-94
Louis, 13, 16, 103, 108, 109, 114, 118-119
Lomas Rishi cave, 67
London, 221
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London, British Museum, 39, 141, 145, 146, 149, 151</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London, Victoria and Albert Museum, 145, 148, 162</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lothal, 2, 21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucknow, 125, 127, 185, 195, 204, 210, 218, 219, 222, 224, 225, 227, 230, 231, 236</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludhiana, 220, 235</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutyens, Sir Edwin, 127</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonian Greeks, 34, see also Greeks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madanakai images, 55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madaras (Bidar), 116</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh, 233</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madras, 17, 82, 127, 222, 238</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madras Government Museum, 39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madura, 13, 15, 52, 54, 87, 89-91, 218, 222, 228, 229, 232-234</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magadh, 5, 9, 26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mago, 167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahabharata, 4, 9, 49, 65, 145, 176, 190, 212, 213, 226</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahadeva, 4, 42, 46, 50, 188</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahadevi, 46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahakal, 46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahakuta Vena temple, 80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahapattana, Sridhar, 63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahaparinivana, 28, 29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahapura, 140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra, 6, 26, 230, 238, 239, 241</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharishi, 187</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahasakta, 46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahavira, 4, 97, 139</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahayana Buddhism, 7, 8, 9, 33, 34, 39, 41, 48, 71, 73-74, 78, 83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahendrawarman I, 81, 136</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahesh, 46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maheshamurti (Elephantana), 19, 50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahim I (Malwa), 114</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahmud Begarha, 112</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahmud Gawan, 116</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahmud of Ghazni, 12, 97, 101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahmud Shah Khalji, 140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainpuri, 233</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mairang Parbha, 184</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mailatras, 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maityra, Rathin, 166</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makrana, 122</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malabar, 41, 234</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaya, 6, 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malegiti Sivalaya (temple), 80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malik Kafur, 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malik Mughis mosque, 114</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mallik, 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malwa, 9-11, 13, 16, 26, 113-114, 152, 156, 157, 161, 214</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamallapuram (Mahabalipuram), 47-49, 52, 81-82, 84-86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manak, 163</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mansura Silpastra, 20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandagapattnam, 81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandana, 238, 241</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandapa, 47, 53, 77, 80-82, 88, 90, 93, 98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manili, 158, 161, 164</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandu, 113-115, 138, 140, 151</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur, 183, 219</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipuri dance, 173, 183-184</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Markot, 158, 161</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man Mandir (Gwallor), 126</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandhar, 147, 149</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mansur, 147, 148</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man, code of, 225-226</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marathas, 16, 126, 162</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariam Sultana’s Palace, 120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall, John, 22, 23, 31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marwar, 153, 155-156</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masulipatam, 17, 216, 217, 221</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matanga Muni, 193</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathura, 8, 28, 33, 34, 36-44, 73-74, 101, 203</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathura Museum, 26, 127</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattancheri Palace, 137</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maukharis, 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maura, 5, 6, 24, 26, 29, 34, 36, 65, 222, 229</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maura sculpture, 24-26, 26, 65-67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mausoleum, 103</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Maya', 4, 46, 50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maya Devi (Buddha’s mother), 28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maya Rao, 186</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mecca, 103</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medieval sculpture, 51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediterranean, 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meenakari, 224-225</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megasthenes, 65, 214, 225</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mehta, N. C., 151, Collection, 152</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melacheri, 81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melatur, 181</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menaka, 173, 186</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menon, Vallathal Narayan, 176</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercia, 205</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meru, 79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mesopotamia, 2, 5, 21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal Work, 221-225, brassware, 222, silverware, 222</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newar, 16, 118, 140, 152, 153, 154-155, 156, 161, 231</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelangelo, 63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minakshi temple, 90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miniatures, pre-Mughal, Bengal and Bihar, 137-138, Gujarat, 138-140, Manda, 140, Jaunpur, 137-140, Rajastm 140-141, Orissa, 141; Mughal, 141-150; Deccan States, 150-152; Rajasthani, 152-158; Pahari, 158-164; Modern, 164-169</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mint, Bombay, 127</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minukku, 177</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirabai, 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirpur Khas, 45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mir Sayyid Ali, 142-144</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirzapur, frescoes, 130, carpets, 221</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern painting, 164-169</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modhera, 61, 98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moghalrajapuram, 81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammad Ali Khan, Ustad, 200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammad, the Prophet, 144</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohammad Nadir, 147, 149</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohan Lal, 186</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohenjo-Daro, 2, 21, 22, 63, 213, 221, 226, 228, 229</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohini Attam, 182</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monghyr, 233, 235</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongol-Chinese, 14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongol, 2, 106, 141</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moorcraft, 163</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moradabad brassware, 222</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moscow, State Museum of Eastern Cultures, 145</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosque, 103</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moth-Ki-Masjid, 108, 109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moti Masjid, Agra, 122, Mehrauli (Delhi), 124</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Abu, 61-62, 99, 105</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mritalin Sarabhai, 173, 179</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrityunjaya, 46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mubarak Sayyid’s tomb, 108</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mughal painting, 141-150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhammad Adil Shah, 117</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhammad ibn-Kasim, 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhammad of Ghur, 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhammad Sayyid’s tomb, 108</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhammad Shah (Rangeela), 162-195</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhammad Tupliq, 107, 115, 114</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukherjea, Shailoz, 167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muktesvara temple, 58-59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muni Punyavijayaji Collection, 152</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INDEX

Murakya, 172
Muraqqa miniatures, 147, 148-149
Marshidabad, 127, 218, 219, 224, 227, 235
Marut, P. L., Narasinha, 168
Musamman Burj, Agra, 123
Musical instruments, 207-210, history, 207-208, classification, 208, stringed, 208-209, wind, 209, percussion, 209-210, cymbals, 210, orchestra, 210-211
Muslims (Mohammedans), 12-14, 16, 74, 88, 90, 97, 100-104, 109-110, 112, 141, 172, 185, 194-196, 205, 215, 222, 223, 227, 230
Muthuswami Dikshtar, 197
Muthutandavar, 181
Muitnya, 175
Muzaffarnagar, 236
Mysore, 5, 12, 52, 54, 91-92, 218, 227, 230, 232-235
Nachtine temple, 76
Nadaun, 162
Nadar Shah, 15, 162
Nafahat al-Uni, 146
Nagara, 81
Nagarjun hills, 67
Nagarjunikonda, 7, 39, 40, 75
Nagas (spirits of water), 7, 24, 27, 44, 45, 48
Nagas (hill tribe), 183, 190
Nagina (Bijoree), 233
Nagina Masjid, Agra, 123
Nagod, 76
Nagpur, 126, 127
Nagri Das, 157
Nainsukh, 162, 163
Nair, Krishnan, 176
Nala-Dumayani, 169
Nalagh, 161
Nalanda, 58
Nambudris, 175
Nandas, 5
Nandi, 7, 84, 85
Nandikovara, 171
Nandivaktra, 42
Narada, 201
Narasimha, 46, 49, 56, 79
Narasimha, king of Mamallapuran, 47
Narasimha, king of Orissa, 59, 95
Narasimhavarman, 81
Narasina temple, 76
Narayana, 129
Narayana-Anantasayin, 46
Narayana, Badri, 168
Narsyngah, 125
Nashtiaq, 105
Nasik, 71, 73, 233
Nasiruddin Mahmud, 105
Nasratgarh, 156
Nataraja, 15, 46, 57, 137, 170, 172, 191
Nattuvanars, 179
Natwa, 172, 185
Nayya, Nritta and Nirrtta, 174-175
Natya Shastra, 6, 171, 173, 174, 176, 179, 182, 183, 185, 193
Navarmanikas, 132
Navaranga, 91
Nayakas, 52, 54, 89, 90
Nayars, 175
Neff, Muriel, 50, 85
Nellore, 81, 222
Nepal, 8, 132, 138
New Delhi, 127
New Delhi, National Museum, 25, 145, 155-157, 161, 163
New York, Metropolitan Museum, 162
Nihal Chand, 157
Nikanta Palace, 115
Nisaruddin, 133
Nizamabad (Azamgarh), 228
Nizam Shahs, 116
Nizamuddin Aulia's mausoleum, 106
Nrittaalurti (Elephanta), 50
Nur-ul-Ulum, 151
Nur-Jahan, 122
Nurpur, 158, 161-162

Ochterlony Monument, Calcutta, 127
Old Mission Church, Calcutta, 127
Onam, 240
Orchha, 126
Orissa, 11, 52, 58, 60, 73, 93-95, 141, 171, 187, 189, 190, 217, 218, 238
Orissi dance, 186-187
Osiya, 61, 97
Oudh, 16, 203, 204, 236
Oxus Valley, 7

Pachha, 177
Padamsee, Akbar, 167
Palam songs, 181, 205-206
Padaranga, 147, 148
Padmanabha, 137
Pahari painting, 158-164
Pahlavas, see Parthians
Pak, 149
Palas, 11, 52, 58, 100, 138
Palestine, 5
Pali, 9, 65, 130
Pallitana, 99
Pallavaram, 81
Pallavas, 9, 10, 15, 46-49, 51, 53, 81-84, 86, 136
Pamirs, 7
Panchayatana temples, 97
Pandia, 110
Pandivas, 5, 6, 10, 15, 46, 51, 52, 57, 87-89
Panipat, 109
Pansare, N. G., 63
Papier Mache, craft of, 236
Paramaras, 11
Parasaramesvara temple, 58-59, 94
Parrjatapahara, 182
Parkham Yaks, 26
Paris, Ecole des Beaux Arts, 167, 168
Parthians, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 35
Parvati, 46, 48-50, 57, 76, 154, 160, 170-171, 184
Pataliputra, 5, 8, 36, 65
Patan, mausoleum and mosque, 112
Pathak, 175
Patia, 203, 234, 235
Patna, 26, 65
Patna, Khudabaksha Library, 145
Patna Museum, 26
Pattadakal, 91
Pattukar, 177
Paul, Sunit, 63
Persepolis, 25, 66
Persepolitan Bell, 25
Persia, Persian, 15, 16, 26, 34, 35, 102, 104, 115, 116, 118, 119, 124, 139, 141-147, 150, 151, 162, 185, 194, 196, 214, 216, 217, 221, 224
Perso-Hellenistic, 24
Peshawar, 8, 35, 73-74
Picasso, 166
Pitalkhora, 27, 71
Pithor, 214
Pochampalli, 217
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pochkanawala, 63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poli Ka Gumbad, 108</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pompei, 230</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pondicherry, 17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poona, 32, 126, 222</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poona, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poona, Bharat Itihas Samshodaka Mandal, 151</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poornam, 174</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal, 217</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese, 17, 126</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pottery-making, 227-229</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prataparudra, 141</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pratapgarh, 224</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pratap Singh, Swai, 157</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puducherry, 86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pundarika Vithal, 196</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab, 12, 15, 16, 21, 64, 125, 160, 162, 168, 189, 204, 219, 225, 233, 235</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab Himalayas, 158, 160</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purana Qila, 109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puranas, 6, 9, 41, 93, 176, 188</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puri, 58, 94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purna, 224</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pushyamitra Sunga, 5, 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qadir, Ashghari Manzoor, 169</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qila Kuhra Masjid, 101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qila Rai Fithauria, 104, 105</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen's College, Banaras, 127</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qur'an, 102, 105, 141</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qutb Minar, 104-105</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qutb Shahs, 116-117</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qutbuddin Aibak, 12, 104-105</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque, 104, 105</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rahabi, Suhgra, 169</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radha, 13, 17, 59, 141, 153, 157, 158, 170, 172, 181, 183, 184</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radha Sri Ram, 179</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raga, 193, 194, 198-201, classification, 198-199, association with seasons and hours, 199-200, names, 201</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radhamala pictures, 153-154, 155, 156, 157, 162, 163</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramamalika, 206</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raghunath Nayaka, 197</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raja, 168</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raja Ragbir Singh Collection, 161</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajaaraj, 15. 52, 86, 137, 179</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raja Simha, 82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan, 1, 11, 17, 22, 61, 66-97, 98, 119, 125-126, 138, 140-141, 143, 152-158, 161, 217, 221, 229, 233, 238, 241</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthani painting, 152-158</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajendra I (also Rajendra Chola), 52, 87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajah, 168</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajkot, 234</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajputana, see Rajasthan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajputs, 10, 11, 12, 16, 118, 142, 158</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajrajeshwara temple, 86, 136</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rani, Paidi, 168</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rama (also Ram), 9, 13, 46, 49, 57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raman Anantam, 176</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rama, A.S., 63, 168</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramayana, 8, 49, 49, 65, 131, 145, 153-156, 160, 161, 176, 192, 226</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rameswar, 83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rameswaram, 89-91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ram Gopal, 173, 179</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramnath, 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rampur, 195, 224, 225, 228, 236</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rampurva, 25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randhawa, M.S., 164</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rang Mahal, Delhi, 123, Bagh, 135</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangoli, 228-241</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rani Kama, 186</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rani Sipari's Kaiza, 113</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rao Chitraman, 149</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rao, 173-174</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rasadhari, 185</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rasanagari, 160-162</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rashtrakutas, 10, 14, 15, 46, 48-50, 54, 83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ras, Rasila, 158, 183, 184, 189</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rasikpriya, 155, 156</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratha, 47, 52, 81-82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radam, 218, 224</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ravana, 49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ravana-khai, 48, 83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ravi, 158</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ravi Shankar, 210</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ravi Varna, Raja, 165</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raval, 167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rawalpindi, 73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raza, 167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Razm-Namah, 145</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reka, 93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renaissance Art, 17, 58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revivalism in painting, 165-166</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rig Veda, 2, 3, 4, 171, 191, 213, 222, 226, 232</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritual Decoration, 237-241</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock-cut architecture, 70-73, 78, 83-85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman, 6, 8, 35, 38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rome, 102, 104, 214, 216</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowland, Benjamin, 23, 40, 48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Asiatic Society Library, 145</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudra, 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumi Darwaza, Lucknow, 125</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rummindei, 66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rupar, 2, 21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rupnath's Pavilion, 115</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rupnath, 26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabavala, Jahangir, 167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sachiva Mata temple, 97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadaranga, 195</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadasiva, 42, 46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadar Natya, 179, 180</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safavids, 142, 145</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safdar Jang's Mausoleum, 125</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saggar, 235</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sahabri, 154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sahdeva ratha, 82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sahri-Baholi, 33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saivism, 7, 8, 10, 41, 47, 52, 56, 76, 85, 96, 137</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sakas, 2, 6, 7, 10, 35, 139</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saket, 4, 11, 21, 41, 30, 58, 59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saktism, 41, 76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sakyamuni (Buddha), 34, 37, 39, 44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salengarh, 66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salim Chisti's Mausoleum, 121</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samant, 167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samat Singh, Raja (Nagri Das), 157</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samurqand, 13, 15, 124, 142, 216</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sambhuda-Samhita, 3, 191</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanchi, 5, 7, 8, 20, 26, 27, 31-32, 34, 36, 38, 39, 40, 45, 65, 66, 68-69, 76, 234</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanger (Jaipur), 218</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sangha, 6, 13, 38, 70, 72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanghram Sutra, 152</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sankaracharya, 12, 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sankhaya, 66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sams Chaud, Raja, 163</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santale, 172</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santals, 190</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanskrit, 6, 9, 10, 16, 18, 130, 144, 161, 174, 195</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanyal, 167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanyal, Bhabez, 63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>Page Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarabhoji, 179</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saracen, 101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarangadeva, 191, 199, 202</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarasvati, 191</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarawati Bhawan Library (Udaipur), 154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarthak, 25, 37, 44, 45, 88, 66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sas-Bahu temples, 100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sassanian-Persian, 14, 102</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satara, 126, 127</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satavahanas, 6, 7, 8, 9, 26, 32, 68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satia, 238</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sati, 46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satrunjaya, 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satya, 163</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satyarthi, Devendra, 207</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savagha-Padikkomana Sutta Chuni, 140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savitri-Satyavatam, 160</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sawantwadi, 227</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sayan, 171</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sayyids, 13, 103, 108</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale (music), 197-198</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scythian, 7, 8, 35, 36, 73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schgal, Amarnath, 63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seistan, 7, 139</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seleucid, 26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seljuk Turks, 12, 106</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sempaga, 40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sen, Abani, 168</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sena, 11, 52, 58, 100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate House, Lahore, 127</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seringapatam, 92, 127</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sesh, 61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven Pagodas, 82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seu, Pandit, 162</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shabdam, 180</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shah Alah II, 150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahjahan, 16, 108, 122-123, 149-150, 155, 194</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahjahanabad, 123</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahjahan, 150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shah-ji-ki-Dheri, 35, 73-74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shah Tahmas, 118, 142</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaikh Ahmad’s mausoleum, Sarkhej, 112</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaktunala, 226</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shambur, 186</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shantha, 179</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shantiniketan, 63, 183, 238</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharada, A., 179</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharul, 111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sher-Gil, Amrita, 167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sher Shah, Sur, 16, 109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sher Shah’s tomb, Sasaram, 109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shias, 141</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shishabuddin Taj Khan’s tomb, 108</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shimoga, 234</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shirali, 210</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shiraz, 124</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shish Gumbad, 108</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shish Mahal, Agra, 123</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shore temple, 82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shyama Shastri, 197</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solanki, 233</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarn, 210</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siddhartha (Buddha), 34, 35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidhystendra Yogi, 182</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidi Sayyid Mosque, 113</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sigiriya, 132</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sultan Lodi’s tomb, 108</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikara, 60, 77, 80, 81, 82, 85, 86, 91, 97, 98, 100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikhs, 16, 125, 164</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikor, 37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silpasadakram, 171, 193</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silpasastras, 20, 225, 232, 234</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silpi-yogin, 20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sima, Punjab Museum, 152
Sinayya, Ghanam, 181
Sind, also Sindhi, 2, 7, 45, 64
Singharam, 81
Singharpur paintings, 130
Sirajuddin, Razia, 169
Sirima, 30
Sirohi, 223
Sir, 226
Sitara, 186
Sittanavasal, 136, 172
Siva, 7, 9, 10, 11, 20, 23, 41, 42, 46, 48, 49, 50, 52, 54, 57, 59, 60, 76, 79, 81, 83, 86, 90, 94, 137, 154, 160, 170, 171, 184, 191, 200, 201
Siva-Maheshamurti, Elephanta, 50
Sivanandam, 179
Siva Nataraja, 15, 46, 57, 137, 170, 172, 191
Siva-Pashupati, 2, 4, 21
Siva Purana, 176
Slaves, 13, 103: architecture, 104-105
Small Kailasa temple, 85
Sohan Lal, 186
Solanki, 11, 61, 97, 99
Sonanath (Siva), 46
Sonanath, 12, 61, 97
Sonanathpur, 54, 92, 93
Sona-rakhi, 238
Sondani, 44
South Indian Bronzes, 56-58
Spencer Churchil Collection, 149
Sreenivasulu, 188
Sri-vangam, 53, 89-91
Srisailam, 53
Srivilliputhur, 90
Stein, Aural, 214
Sthapatis, 56
St. John’s Cathedral, Calcutta, 127
St. Mary’s, Madras, 127
Strabo, 214
Strangways, 198
St. Thomas Cathedral, Bombay, 127
Stupa, 5, 6, 27, 29, 31, 39, 67, 68, 69, 74, 75, 80
Stupika, 61
Subbaraya Nattuvanar, 179
Subrahmanya, 94, 91
Sudama cave, 67
Sudarsana, 30
Sufism, 14
Suket, 158, 161
Sukracharya, 19
Sukranisvara, 19
Sultanganj, 45
Sunatra, 15
Sumer, 2, 22
Sundara Murti Swami, 57, 137
Sundara Pandya, 87
Sundaresvara-Meenakshi, 54
Sunga and Andhra, sculpture, 27-29, architecture, 68-69, 74-75
Sungas, 5, 6, 7, 26, 27, 29, 36, 65, 68, 229
Sumris, 141
Sun Temple, Konarak, 59-60, 95
Supasanahachariyam, 140
Surat, 17, 216, 218, 224, 235
Surdas, 16
Surs, 16, 109
Sur Sagar, 155
Surya, 10, 35, 44, 58-60, 79, 95, 97, 98
Susa, 214
Sutlej, 2, 158
Svat, 73
Sylhet, 235
Syrian, 14, 102
INDEX

Tadi, 177
Tadpatri, 53, 89
Tagore, Abanindra Nath, 165
Tagore, Gaganendranath Nath, 166
Tagore, Rabindra Nath, 166, 183, 196
Tagore, Subho, 166
Talai, 15, 54
Taj Mahal, 123-124
Takht-e-Bahi, 35, 73
Tamil, 81, 86, 171, 179, 181
Tandu, 171
Tanjore, 10, 52, 54, 86-88, 91, 127, 136, 179, 181, 197, 218, 222
Tansen, 194, 201
Tantricism, 9, 11, 58-59, 138
Tappa, 204
Tarana, 204
Taras, 38
Tarif-i-Hussain Shahi, 151
Tarikh-i-Afif, 145
Tawarikh-i-Khandan-i-Taimuriya, 145
Tavernier, 218
Taxila, 35, 226
Tehran, Gulistan Library, 142-143
Tehran, Imperial Library, 149
Tehrani, 158
Tehri Garhwal Darbar Collection, 163
Tejpal temple, 62, 99
Telugu, 181
Telika-Mandir, 100
Terry, 220
Thakur Prasad, Maharaj, 185
Thameswar, 40
Thyagaraja, 181, 182, 197, 205
Thunris, 186, 203-204
Tibet, 132, 138, 188, 221
Tigawa, 76
Tillana, 181
Tillana song, 266
Time Measure (music), 202
Timirbaran, 210
Timur, Timurt, 13, 15, 108, 118, 139, 142, 146
Tinnellely, 87, 90, 235
Tipperah, 235
Tippera, 175
Tirthankar, 99
Tiruchirapally (Trichinopoly), 81, 87, 90, 218, 222, 234
Tirujiyana-Sambandha Swami, 57
Tirukkutukuran, 81
Tirumalai's Chautari, 90
Tiruparuttikunram, 137
Tirupati, 53, 57, 222, 234
Tiruvannamalai, 87, 90
Tiruvur, 90
Tiyattam, 175
Todas of Nilgiris, 219
Torana, 9
Toy Cart, 226
Travancore, 87, 137, 176, 223, 233, 234, 235
Trebent, 110
Trichakrapuram Palace, 137
Trishul (trident), 31, 34
Trivandrum, 234, 235
Trivikrama, 46, 47
Tughluqabad, 107
Tughluqs, 13, 103, 106, 107, 108, 114, 116
Tugra, 105
Tulsidas, 16, 160
Tungabhadra, 1, 10, 92
Tung Huang caves, 132
Turkestan, 7
Turks, 2, 11-16, 103
Turk-Nama, 145
Udai, 233
Udayagiri, 44, 73, 76, 171
Udaipur, 126, 140, 195
Udai Singh, 156
Uday Shanker, 173
Ujjain, 13, 126, 139
Uma, 46, 50, 57, 191
Umanakhesvaranurti, 50
Uma Vaktra, 42
Umayad Caliph, 12
Undavalli, 81
Upanishads, 3, 4, 12, 14, 24
Uru, 204
Urvasi, 129
Utsa, 170
Utsava Murits, 56
Uttar Pradesh, 223, 228, 233, 238, 239
Uttar Ram Charita, 131
Uttaradhayana Sutra, 152
Vadivelu, 179
Vaikunthanath, 46
Vaikuntha Perumal temple, 83
Vaishnavism, 7, 10, 13, 17, 41, 47, 76, 85, 96, 141, 153, 183, 185
Vaikal Dev, 58-59, 94
Vajji, 5
Vajrayana Buddhism, 11, 58, 138, 187
Vakratukas, 8, 9, 133
Vallabhi, 9
Vallabhabharya, 13
Vallam, 81
Vamsa, 5
Varaha, 44, 46
Vardarajaswami, 53
Varnam, 180
Vasudeva, 8
Vatsayana's Sadanga, 131
Vattu-Vilja, 65
Vedas, 2, 3, 11, 20, 42, 65, 67, 170, 171, 191, 192
Vedic culture, 4, 23-24
Vedic gods, 4, 33
Vekali, 190
Vellore, 53, 89, 127, 228
Venkatachalam, 175
Vesara, 81
Victoria Memorial Hall, Calcutta, 127
Vidrapati, 13
Vihara, 32, 72-73, 78, 82
Vijayanagar, 15, 52, 53, 57, 88-90, 137, 230
Vijayavada, 81
Vimala temple, 62, 99
Vinayaka Pithak, 130
Vindhyas, 1, 115
Vishakhapatnam, 235
Vishnu, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 41, 42, 44, 46, 47, 49, 53, 57, 60, 76, 79, 81, 83, 100, 135, 136
Vishnuvarma, 129, 131
Vishnu Digambar, 196
Vishnupur, 100
Vishnurauthana Hozanala, 55, 172
Visavakaran, 129, 212
Visvakaran cave, 78
Vithala temple, 53, 89
Vizagapatam, 234
Vulgate, 214
INDEX

Wajid Ali Shah, 186, 203
Warangal, 15, 221
Warren Hastings' Belvedere House, Calcutta, 127
Wesley, Frank, 167
Wheel of Law, See Dharma Chakra,
Wilkinson, 151
Windsor Castle, 149
Winstedt, Richard, 152
Winternitz, 3
Wood Decorations Applied to Architecture, 232-233

Yadavas, 15
Yajurveda-Samhita, 3, 192
Yakshas, 4, 24, 26, 27, 30, 31, 37, 45
Yakshis, Yakshinis, 4, 20, 24, 26, 27-28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 47

Yama, 129
Yashodhara, 131
Yoga, 19
Yogachakra, 9
Yogeswara, 46
Yogi, 18
Yoginara frescoes, 130
Yuch-chi, 7

Zainul-Abedin, 169
Zakiruddin Khan, Ustad, 200
Zamorin, 178
Zimmer, Heinrich, 40, 134
Zinatul-Masjid, Delhi, 124
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