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FOREWORD

THE TEMPLE is the most significant and typical monument of Indian architecture and admirably sums up and represents the subtle values of Indian culture. The earlier shrines were simple enclosures or plain structures like platforms with or without a roof. The elaborations of the temple structure followed the firm establishment of image-worship and the accompanying development of the ritual, which took time to crystallise. The differentiation of architectural form between North and South India was even a later development and it was only from the 5th century onwards that the two regions are seen to follow their individual course of evolution.

The present book dealing with the temples of North India is written by Shri Krishna Deva, an eminent scholar of Indian art and architecture, who has specialised in the study of North Indian temple architecture in the light of traditional shilpa-texts. The terms from the architectural texts have been replaced by popular equivalents, so that they are understood by the average educated reader for whom this book is intended.

The author first discusses the symbolical significance of the temple and then deals with the characteristics of the North Indian temple. This is followed by the story of the temple which is narrated from its origin to its maturity and elaboration in the various regions of North India, indicating the distinctive features of each regional style. In his treatment the author had necessarily to select the landmarks and the representative specimens of each type, since a discussion of all the temples would have made the book very lengthy and discursive.

It is hoped that this book will make the reader better appre-
FOREWORD

ciate the artistic beauty and architectural skill of the Indian temples and their real significance.

I am grateful to Shri O.P. Tandon for assisting us in making the manuscript more easily understandable by the ordinary educated reader.

B. V. KESKAR

New Delhi
February 14, 1969
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*(Cover picture: Mukteshvara Temple, Bhubaneshwar)*
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

SYMBOLISM OF THE TEMPLE

A Hindu temple is a symbol or rather a synthesis of various symbols. It is conceived in terms of human organism which is the most evolved living form. The names of the various limbs of the human body from the foot to hair on the crown of the head are applied in the architectural texts to different parts of the temple structure. Terms like feet, legs, thighs, neck and head denote the anatomical position and function of the structural parts corresponding to those of the human body, and are often used figuratively to emphasise the concept of organic unity in temple architecture.

Evidently, even the most perfect body seems lifeless without the resident soul. To the Hindu, the temple is the abode of God who is the spirit immanent in the universe. The temple, therefore, is known by such terms as devalaya, Shivalaya and devyatana. Hence worship constituting the living use of the temple starts with the installation of life in the form of the deity in the sanctum.

The deity dwelling in the temple symbolises the king of kings and is consequently offered regal honour, consistent with the concept of God as the Supreme ruler of the Universe. Significantly enough, prasada means both a palace and a temple. The deity is provided with the royal paraphernalia of a throne, umbrella and fly-whisk and the worship of the deity is attended by regal pageantry, together with music, dance and lighting of lamps. Just as the royal palace has a throne-room, a private audience-hall and a public audience-hall, the temple has a sanctum, an inner hall and at times an outer hall. In course of time, the temple came to possess many subsidiary structures for the various temple rites and ceremonials. In Orissa a hall of dance and a hall of offerings were added in front of the outer hall, while in South India the enclosures of the larger temples teem with accessory structures like the thousand-pillared hall, the
hall of wedding and the hall of festivities and thus resemble a for-
tified palace.

While dance, music and public ceremonials are conducted in
the accessory structures, the worship proper is offered to the deity
in the sanctum sanctorum individually by each devotee, for the
Hindu shrine is primarily a place for individual self-realisation and
is not intended for mass prayer or congregational worship. The
sanctum is customarily a dark chamber enclosed by massive walls.
Its sombre interior is dimly lighted by flickering flames of a lamp.
This suggests and simulates the mystery that envelopes the universe
and the divine spirit that shines behind the veil of mystery and
pervas and illumines the universe.

Just as the sanctum is a microcosm, so is the whole temple sym-
olic of the universe inhabited by gods, demi-gods, human beings
and animals, which are figurally represented on the temple facades.
The same idea is expressed by the representation on the temple
walls of the eight Regents of the cardinal points. Likewise an
ambulation around the temple symbolically means a perambulation
of the universe itself.

The architectural origins of the several parts of the temple are
significant. The base is derived from the Vedic sacrificial altar,
the plain cubical cell of the sanctum from the prehistoric dolmen,
and the spire from the simple tabernacle made of bent bamboos
tied together to a point.

The sanctum with its massive walls and the dark interior repre-
sents a cave, while the superstructure with its peak-like spire—the
shikhara—represents a mountain and is frequently designated as
the mythical Meru, Mandara, or Kailasa.

The temple is a structure based on the rhythm of proportionate
correlated measurements. It is a tirtha (source of release) in a
concrete, tangible form created by the human mind.

Building a Hindu temple is comparable to the performance of
a sacrifice. It is an offering or an act of pious dedication which
brings merit to the builder and his family and vicariously to the
devotee who visits the temple, and to his relations. The devotee
is not a mere spectator; he perceives and worships and thus fulfils
the two objectives he has in visiting a temple. The ornamentations and imagery on the walls and the total form of the temple are designed to aid the attainment of these objectives.

The temple is a monument of manifestation and all the constituents of the temple plan and elevation partake in it. Thus, the sanctum has usually one door in front and false doors in the form of niches on the central projections of the remaining three sides. Although these are massive, feigned (only symbolically present) doors, the luminous power of the deity or the consecrated symbol of the Supreme Principle is irradiated from within, and revealed in the cardinal niches in the form of the main aspects of the enshrined divinity or the other deities related to the presiding deity. The lesser aspects of the presiding deity find a place in the minor niches, projections and recesses of the walls. The rite of circumambulation is actually a communion with the deity while moving around the images carved on the walls. The sacred carvings on the walls, pillars, architraves and ceilings of the interior compartments, too, have a profound impact on the mind of the devotee. Thus attuned and prepared, the devotee approaches the sanctum and stops at the door which is the last member to show the carvings. The presence of the river-goddesses on the doorframe purifies the devotee of all earthly taints; his mind and soul are now concentrated on the enshrined divinity whose tutelary symbol is carved on the lintel.

Significantly, the sanctum is called the house of the womb, germ or embryo, for it is here that regeneration is effected and the higher self of the devotee is reborn through initiation and self-realisation. A similar purpose is served by the superstructure, the function of which is to lead from a broad base to a single point where all lines converge. The high point of the finial is at the apex of the centre of the sanctum and is the final, conspicuous symbol of the Supreme Principle enshrined in the sanctum.

**Characteristics of the North Indian Temple**

The North Indian temple is characterized by a distinctive plan and elevation. Originally, the temple comprised a square
sanctum and a square or rectangular pillared porch, both covered by a flat roof. Soon after, a covered ambulatory was added round the sanctum and the pillared porch was gradually enlarged to assume the form of a hall, often preceded by an entrance porch. The ambulatory, however, remained an optional member, as shrines without an ambulatory continued to be as common as those with one. In course of time a vestibule was added between the sanctum and the hall and the latter tended to develop lateral transepts for ventilation. For the same reason the ambulatory of the sanctum also developed, in due course, a rear as well as two lateral transepts. Notwithstanding these elaborations, the sanctum continued to be square or rectangular on plan with one or more offsets on each side. The central offset was always given a greater prominence and was frequently ornamented with a sculptured niche. These offsets were carried upwards along the facade from the base to the top of the superstructure and imparted a pronounced emphasis on the vertical lines of the elevation. From about the beginning of the 7th century, the sanctum was roofed by a tall, curvilinear spire (shikhara) which constituted the most striking cognizance of a Northern temple. The spire was initially of 3 vertical projections which gradually increased to 5 and occasionally to 7. All such projections are covered with a mesh of chaitya-dormers and the corner ones display in addition a series of small amalakas at the angles to demarcate the division of the spire into compressed storeys. The spire terminates in a neck-like constriction (griva) which is surmounted by a large ribbed, circular member called amalasaraka, crowned by a kalasha, the pitcher-finial.

In the elevation of a temple, the platform is an optional member, but every temple customarily has a socle consisting of moulded courses. The socle supports the wall which may be plain or embellished with figure-sculptures on one or all the offsets. Evolved temples show more than one band of sculptures, which also occur in the recesses between the offsets. The carved frieze on the wall is surmounted by an eave-cornice or a series of it that separates the wall from the spire. While the sanctum is roofed by a tall curvilinear spire, the mandapa (hall) carries a lower pyramidal roof of horizontal tiers.
The main compartments of the temple are axially articulated and have their independent ceilings. Since the construction is based on the trabeate principle, the ceilings are supported either on walls and pilasters or on pillars with their architraves. The vaulted or domical ceilings are built on the principle of corbelling, sometimes aided by inter-locking flanges. On the stone temples, well-dressed and finely-jointed ashlers were used for the face-stones and rough-dressed or coarse stones for the hearting. The stone courses are laid dry one upon the other and kept in position by their weight and balance, sometimes with the aid of iron clamps and dowels. In the internal construction of tall spires, the weight was reduced by building a series of superposed hollow chambers, held together by the device of tying opposite walls by beams at frequent intervals.

The entrance porch and the mandapa transepts on the developed temples of Central and Western India are invariably enclosed by an ornamental balustrade which is canopied by overhanging eaves. These, together with the frequent clustering in the spire by its sub-multiples, constitute minor traits of the style. But the common and basic characteristics of all medieval Northern Indian temples are the cruciform plan, the continuation of the main projections and offsets of the plan on the entire elevation and the curvilinear spire, the last constituting its most conspicuous feature.

Temples with these distinctive characteristics are ubiquitous throughout North India and are found as far south as the Tungabhadra valley. As a natural consequence of the distribution of the style over such extensive territories, regional variations came into being. Despite a basic homogeneity in essential aspects, the various regional styles followed their own course of evolution and developed local peculiarities and idioms according to the indigenous genius conditioned by their art traditions and political and cultural environs. The regional tendencies appeared in the 7th century, became established by the 9th and the 10th centuries and attained full development during the 11th century. After the 7th century, the evolution of the Northern temples had largely a regional pattern, often influenced by powerful dynasties.
Earliest Structural Temples

Evidence of the earliest known structural temples has been recovered through excavations; these are, however, too fragmentary to give a complete idea as to their form. A circular brick-and-timber shrine of the Maurya period (c. 3rd century B.C.) was excavated at Bairat (District Jaipur, in Rajasthan). The shrine measured 8.23 metres in diameter and was made of lime-plastered panels of brickwork, alternating with 26 octagonal pillars of wood. It was entered from the east through a small portico, supported on 2 wooden pillars and was surrounded by a 7-foot-wide ambulatory with an opening on the east. The whole structure was subsequently enclosed within a rectangular compound (21 mts. \times 13.5 mts.), containing an open ground for the assembly in front of the entrance.

A second example of a Maurya temple uncovered by excavations—Temple 40 at Sanchi—has likewise a consistent plan. It was a stone temple on an apsidal plan, enclosed by an ambulatory and raised on a high, rectangular (26.5 mts. \times 14 mts.) socle, approached by two flights of steps from diagonally opposite sides. The superstructure, possibly of timber, has disappeared. In the following century the socle was enlarged and the temple converted into a rectangular hypostyle mandapa measuring 41.75 mts. \times 27.75 mts., with 5 rows of 10 pillars, approached by lateral flights of steps at one end.

Temple 18 at Sanchi also was an apsidal stone temple probably with a timber superstructure, originally dating from the 2nd century B.C. The present remains of the apsidal temple with its stately pillars and pilasters date from about the 7th century A.D. though the temple remained in use till the medieval period.

Two other temples of a comparable date existed, one dedicated to Sankarshana and Vasudeva at Nagari (ancient Madhyamika) in Udaipur District, Rajasthan and the other, also a Bhagavata (Vaishnava) shrine, at Besnagar near Sanchi in Central India. Both of them were elliptical on plan and were possibly made of timber, but their remains are too scrappy to yield an idea of their elevation and design. In front of the Besnagar shrine stands the famous stone pillar recording that this Garuda-standard was set up
by the Greek ambassador Heliodorus who proudly called himself a Bhagavata (Vaishnava).

Examples next in date of the apsidal plan come from Nagarjunakonda (District Guntur), a site excavated on a vast scale to salvage its antiquities. Recently a few more apsidal shrines, sacred to the Buddhist as well as the Shaiva sect, have been unravelled in addition to temples with large hypostyle *mandapas* dedicated to the worship of Shiva and Karttikeya. They are all of the Ikshvaku period (2nd-3rd centuries A.D.).
CHAPTER II

GUPTA AND LATE GUPTA TEMPLES
(C.400-700 A.D.)

The Gupta age was marked by an unprecedented intellectual ferment and creative upsurge in all branches of arts and letters. Hitherto, temples were largely made of timber or other perishable material. The potentiality of dressed stone was for the first time appreciated during the Gupta period which ushered in an age of temple construction that was characterised by a more reasoned application of structural principles. Under the impact of the bhakti cult or worship of the personal god, which had taken deep root and permeated all the sects and sections of society, temples were built in fair number for the installation and worship of popular deities like Vasudeva and Balarama, Varaha and Nrisimha, Vishnu, Shiva, Skanda and Buddha throughout Northern and Central India and the Deccan of which a handful have survived. The ritual of the worship required basically a sanctum for the deity and a shelter for the worshipper, which were logically provided in the Gupta shrine.

Thus a firm foundation of Indian temple architecture was laid in the Gupta period when the basic, characteristic elements of the Indian temple—consisting of a square sanctum and a pillared porch—emerged. The examples of the evolved Gupta temple also show a covered processional-path for circumambulation which formed a part of the worship-ritual. The earlier examples in stone masonry are distinguished by a flat slab-roof, usually monolithic, while the later temples, constructed of either brick or stone, developed a shikhara. The gradual evolution of the style is traceable through development of the plan and the ornamentation on the pillars and door-frame, the latter introducing new decorative motifs like goblins (ganas), couples (mithunas), flying angels (vidyadharas), door-keepers (dvarapalas) and a significant figure relief in the centre of the lintel, emblematic of the deity to whom the shrine is dedicated.
Plate 1. GUPTA TEMPLE, SANCHI
(See page 9)
Plate 2. Doorway of Parvati Temple, Nachna
(See page 10)
Plate 3. BRICK TEMPLE, BHITARGAON
(See page 11)
Plate 4.  MAHABODHI TEMPLE, BODH GAYA
(See page 11)
The earliest group of Gupta temples, dating from 5th century and showing a single-celled sanctum with a shallow portico resting on 4 pillars in front, is represented by Temple 17 at Sanchi (the site of the famous Buddhist Stupa of the 2nd Century B.C.), the Gupta Temple at Tigawa (District Jabalpur), and the Temples at Eran (District Sagar). A notable feature of these temples is the wider intercolumniation of the pillars in the middle than on the sides. As suggested by the flat roof, square or rectangular in form, the plain treatment of the walls and modestness of size, these temples must obviously have been derived from rock-cut prototypes of which early Gupta examples occur at Udaigiri near Sanchi. In fact Cave-shrine 1 at Udaigiri with a partly rock-cut sanctum and a structural porch of 4 pillars is of the early Gupta type, supporting the aforementioned inference.

Temple 17 at Sanchi is a classic example of lucid diction, perfect articulation and restrained decoration. It is considered to be the oldest structural Gupta temple because of its smaller dimensions, simplicity of construction and absence of vase-and-foliage member in its pillars which show a fluted bell-capital, the latter being an early feature. The temple at Tigawa has a more ornate door-frame and pillars, the latter exhibiting a fluted vase-and-foliage member united with the capital, a characteristic then on of the Gupta order. At Sanchi and Tigawa the pillars are crowned by brackets carved with figures of seated lions, a practice discontinued subsequently. The Vishnu Temple at Eran shows an evolved plan of definite architectural significance in that its sanctum has a central offset on the cardinal faces (except at the front). Its door-frame and porch pillars, however, were lately added, probably in the early Pratihara period (8th-9th centuries). The ruined Shiva Temple at Sakor (District Damoh) appears to be the latest temple of this type; it is distinguished by a closed mandapa and an ornamental doorway resembling in design that of the Shiva Temple at Bhumara (District Satna) belonging to the next group.

The second group of temples, characterised by the addition of a roofed ambulatory round the sanctum and otherwise following the plan of the preceding group, is represented by the Parvati
Temple at Nachna (District Panna in M.P.), Shiva Temple at Bhumara (District Satna in M.P.) and a ruined brick temple at Baigrama (District Dinajpur, East Pakistan). The wall and the roof of the once covered passage of the Bhumara temple have now disappeared leaving an open promenade, while in the Nachna example, the ambulatory is lighted by trellises. The Nachna temple is notable for carrying a square, flat-roofed cell as an upper chamber placed above the sanctum. The plain facade of the Nachna temple was originally relieved by a few sculptured niches and a continuous relief imitating rock-formations and grottos, containing figures of birds and animals. The Bhumara temple is significant for introducing two smaller shrines on the flanks of the entrance steps. Its dado, door-frames, pillars and beams display exquisitely carved scrolls, dwarfs and kirttimukhas.

The next group of Gupta temples, distinguished by the presence of a spire over the square sanctum, is represented, among others, by the Dashavatara Temple at Deogarh (District Jhansi), constructed of stone, and the brick-built Gupta temple at Bhitargaon (District Kanpur), both dating from c. 6th century. These temples showing a rudimentary shikhara, which became the most characteristic feature of the North Indian style of temple-architecture, are highly significant. The Deogarh temple stands on a wide platform, approached by flights of steps on the four sides, and is of the panchayatana (quincunx) type having a subsidiary shrine in each corner. The platform is decorated with sculptured panels between pilasters representing edifying scenes from the legends of Rama and Krishna. The plain walls on the three sides of the tri-ratha sanctum are relieved with recessed panels, each carved with a superb figure-composition within a framework of pilasters and architraves, depicting Vishnu as Sheshashayi, gajendramoksha and the penance of Nara and Narayana. Its shikhara which is but partly preserved was probably pyramidal in elevation and was mainly embellished with the chaitya-dormer motif. The Deogarh temple is one of the earliest to draw on the stories of Rama and Krishna which have inspired Indian artists in all ages. Only a few panels, mostly detached from the platform, have survived, of which ten depict Rama's
stories and two Krishna’s. One of the *Ramayana* panels shows Ahilya, who was turned into stone by a curse, regaining her human form by the touch of the sacred feet of Rama. Another panel depicts Lakshmana cutting off the nose of Surpanakha, the sister of Ravana, for her audacity to propose amours. A third panel shows Hanuman bodily bringing the hill containing the herb that cured Lakshmana of the mortal wound inflicted by Meghanada, the son of Ravana. Of the two *Krishna-lila* friezes, one depicts Krishna as a miracle-child upturning the cart, while the other shows Krishna and Balarama being fondled as infants by Nanda and Yashoda, the latter wearing Abhira dress, resembling the dress now worn by the rural womenfolk of Delhi and Haryana regions.

The temple at Bhitargaon, constructed of brick and terracotta, is a stupendous pyramidal edifice (ht. 21 mts.) of diminishing tiers, raised on a high terrace. It is *tri-ratha* on plan with a prominent central offset on each of the three sides and consists of a sanctum and ante-room (4.57 mts. and 2.14 mts. square internally), connected by an oblong passage. While the sanctum and the ante-room had corbelled ceilings representing domical vaults, the passage and the entrance steps were covered by a wagon-vault roof. The moldings of the podium are bold. The *jangha* (wall) is embellished with large sculptured niches, framed between ornamental pilasters and surmounted by a recessed row of terracotta bands between two prominent cornices. The terracotta sculptures and friezes depict both secular and religious themes, such as divinities like Ganesha, Adi-Varaha, Mahishasuramardini and the river-goddesses, myths and stories representing the abduction of Sita and the penance of Nara and Narayana; and the divine minstrels and the dwarfs. Human and animals figures, fabulous birds and beasts and scrolls and other decorative designs further enrich the repertoire of decoration. The *shikhara*, though incompletely preserved, is a stepped pyramid, embellished with superimposed tiers of *chaitya*-niches containing a variety of heads or busts or full figures, generally human.

The original brick-built Mahabodhi Temple at Bodh Gaya (District Gaya), though heavily encumbered with later restorations,
is roughly co-eval with the Bhitargaon Temple and resembles the latter in essential features of plan and design including the vaulted ceilings of the compartments and the tall lancet window in the upper storey. Its square sanctum carries a lofty (55 mts. high) pancha-ratha shikhara of a straight-edged pyramidal design, demarcated into 7 storeys by bhumi-amalakas and embellished with bold chaitya-dormers and niches framed by pilasters.

The Mahabodhi temple enshrining an image of Buddha in the earth-touching attitude marks the site of the holy tree under which Siddhartha Gautama saw the light and became 'Buddha' or the 'Enlightened one'. The legends associated with this supreme event are graphically narrated in Buddhist literature and are favourite themes of sculpture and painting in India and the Buddhist countries of South-east Asia. After six years of exertion in quest of knowledge the Bodhisattva (Buddha-to-be) undertook rigorous penance and carried fasting to such an excess that he was reduced to a skeleton—a scene realistically depicted in Gandhara sculpture. Realizing the futility of mortification as the path for attaining knowledge, he resumed food whereupon the five companions who had attended on him during the past six years deserted him in disdain and went away to the Deer-forest (Sarnath).

On the eve of the full moon day of Vaishakha the Bodhisattva saw five dreams auguring his Enlightenment. Shortly after day-break he took his seat under the holy tree. It so happened that Sujata, the daughter of the local chieftain, also rose early that day to make an offering to the holy tree of rice-milk which she had cooked after elaborate preparation for the fulfilment of her desire to have a son when she got married. She sent her maid to clean the area round the holy tree and when her maid reported that the tree-divinity had appeared in person, Sujata hurried to the spot and offered the golden vessel containing the rice-milk to the divinity who was no other than the Bodhisattva. Thereupon the Bodhisattva went to the river Nairanjana, had a bath and ate the rice-milk which was to sustain him for the following seven weeks. The scenes of Sujata's offering and the bath in the Nairanjana are depicted in beautiful reliefs on the great stupa of Borobudur in Java.
In the evening the Bodhisattva marched to the holy tree and was offered for seat a handful of grass by god Indra disguised as Brahmin Svastika, who is represented on one of the earliest sculptures at Bodh Gaya.

As the Bodhisattva sat in meditation under the holy tree (one of the popular ways of representing the Master) with a firm determination not to leave the adamantine seat till he had attained supreme wisdom, there arose a storm of conflict in his mind which is popularly represented in plastic and graphic arts as the scene of temptation. The legends say that Mara, the god of desire, sent his charming daughters to tempt the Bodhisattva and when their blandishments failed, he sent his demon army to hurl all conceivable weapons and missiles which also proved futile. Mara, however, did not own defeat until the Bodhisattva called the earth to bear witness to his triumph by touching the ground with his right hand, which is another favourite method of representing the Master, as illustrated by the main image in the Mahabodhi temple.

The most developed among the temples of the post-Gupta period is the brick-built Lakshmana Temple at Sirpur (District Raipur, M.P.), which belongs roughly to the beginning of the 7th century and consists of a square sanctum roofed by a slightly curvilinear massive shikhara, resembling that of the Parashurameshvara temple at Bhubaneswar (below, p. 72) in outline, a constricted vestibule and a pillared mandapa enclosed by a brick wall, embellished with niches framed by pilasters and approached by two lateral flights of steps, the whole resting on a high platform. The sanctum is pancharatha on plan and in elevation and shows a cardinal projection on three sides decorated with a beautifully carved sham door and a vertical row of three elaborate chaitya-dormers over the shikhara. For the rest the faces of the temple are tastefully ornamented with bold designs of niches and pilasters, miniature shikharas and chaitya-dormers arranged in vertical bands which cast pleasing shadows and are intersected by horizontal bands of cornices decorated with small chaitya-niches. The recess dividing the jangha (wall) from the spire is marked with bold diapers. Although the crowning ornaments of the shikhara are lost, heavy bhumi-amalakas indicating
its division into 4 storeys are present on the corner buttresses. With its developed socle mouldings and its stout but slightly incurved shikhara, this temple marks a transition between the Gupta and the early medieval temples, anticipating several features of the latter.

We may also notice briefly the Gupta temples of aberrant types. Among these the temple of Mani-naga (now called Maniyar Math) at Rajgir near Nalanda (District Patna) is a cylindrical brick-structure with shallow offsets at the 4 cardinal points. It is decorated with niches, originally containing stucco sculptures of Ganesha, Vishnu, nagas and an exquisite nagi figure.

The temple known as Stupa Sita III at Nalanda, where the world-famous University was sited, consists of a series of 7 successive accumulations, of which the fifth one dating from 6th century is a panchayatana with its 4 stupas-like corner towers and faces elaborately decorated with niches containing fine Buddhist stucco images. The temple is a solid rectangular structure and its lofty sanctum is approached by a grand flight of steps with its parapet walls embellished with majestic figures of lions.

Mukundara (District Kota, Rajasthan) has a flat-roofed, sandstone temple possessing an ambulatory and resting on well-finished but stunted pillars with distinctive brackets. Standing on a low platform approached by two lateral flights of steps, this temple is notable as much for its cave-like simplicity of construction as for its restrained ornamentation with typical Gupta decorative motifs.

The stone temple of Mundeshvari (old Mandaleshvara) at Ramgarh (District Shahabad, Bihar) is an octagonal shrine (12.20 mts. in diameter) of 8 principal offsets with 4 doorways in the cardinal directions and 4 niches in the corners, each flanked by a pair of smaller niches. The door-frames and niches are adorned with figures and ornaments of the developed Gupta style. The ceiling and the roof of the temple are lost, but traces of a mandapa have survived in front. The temple is securely dated in 636 by an inscription.

We come across yet another type of Gupta temple which, though distinctive, is not very popular. This type is marked by a rectangular shrine with an apsidal rear-end and a wagon-vault roof showing a
gable-end of the chaitya-dormer design. It is represented by only two examples, one at Ter, District Sholapur (Maharashtra) and the other, the Kapoteshvara Temple at Chezarla in District Krishna (Andhra Pradesh). Both are brick-structures, about 9.5 mts. long, and are obviously the structural models of rock-cut chaitya-halls.

A few terraced brick-temples of the Gupta period have also survived. These are high solid structures and in each case the shrine is placed on the uppermost terrace, approached by a flight of steps. The earliest and best preserved specimen is the excavated temple at Pawaya, near Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh, showing three terraces of which the upper two are decorated with a continuous row of ornate pilasters surmounted by a frieze of chaitya-dormers. Terraced brick-temples, decorated with terracotta sculptured tiles continued to be built till the early medieval period. Large temples of this type have been exposed to view at the sites of Ahichchhatra (Ramnagar) in Bareilly District and Paharpur (East Pakistan), the latter being remarkable for its cruciform plan and enormous dimensions.

The later Gupta period appears to have been an age of experimentation in North India. During the 7th-8th centuries, various temple forms were tried and we find a fair number with a flat roof, others with an undeveloped curvilinear shikhara and a few with a pyramidal roof of receding tiers. Small, flat-roofed shrines comprising a tri-ratha sanctum and a portico with two pillars in front are found in Central India, continuing the tradition of the early Gupta temple form. More than a dozen of them have been recently discovered at the sites of Ramgarh, Chhapara and Badoh in District Vidisha, near Sanchi, in addition to a few from the Lalitpur area of District Jhansi.¹ These are unpretentious temples with a simple podium, a wall of large slabs, and a flat monolithic slab-roof each for the sanctum and the portico, the latter being slightly lower. Most of them are smaller than the earliest Gupta temples at Sanchi and Tigawa and are generally simpler in construction, though they have a more ornate door-frame and pillars,

¹P.C. Mukherji, Report on the Antiquities in the District of Lalitpur (Roorkee, 1899).
and display sculptured niches crowned by a pediment on each of
the three cardinal offsets. The pillars of the porch include vase-
and-foliage member at the base, a lotus-band and kirttimukhas and
again a vase-and-foliage capital, surmounted by brackets either of
plain, curved profile or embellished with the foliage characteristi-
cally found in the Pratihara age, representing a quarter lotus.

A variant of this type also occurs at Ramgarh and Chhapara,
displaying a decoration of only pilasters on the wall. Similar
shrines of a slightly later date exist at Kundalpur (District Damoh
in M.P.). The most ornate example of this variety is the Shiva
temple at Mahua (District Shivapuri in M.P.), which combines
the décor of pilasters with sculptured niches on the cardinal offsets.
This temple is also notable for bearing an inscribed record assignable
to the 7th century.

An aberrant variety found at Makanganj, District Mandsaur
in M.P., shows the cardinal offset only on the rear and the wall
decorated with a single niche, surmounted by pediment and inset
with an inscribed slab engraved in the same script as the inscription
on the Mahua Temple. Another temple at Makanganj, with a
square tri-ratha sanctum and a severe plain wall, is remarkable for
its roof which is an incompletely preserved stepped pyramid com-
posed of members decorated with bold chaitya-dormers inset with
grotesque human heads.

The small experimental temples, just noticed, were a sort of
lithic primers and their importance lies in the fact that they con-
stitute links between the Gupta and the Pratihara styles.
Plate 5. LAKSHMANA TEMPLE, SIRPUR
(See page 13)
Plate 6. **Vishwa-Brahma Temple, Alampur**

*(See page 19)*
CHAPTER III

EARLY CHALUKYAN TEMPLES
(C. 500-750)

While the Gupta temples were being built in Central and North India, a brisk building activity was being pursued in a part of the Deccan with principal centres at the early Chalukyan sites of Aihole, Badami, Mahakuteshwara and Pattadakal, in District Bijapur of Mysore State. (Situated only a few miles apart from one another, these are usually overlooked by an ordinary visitor because of their location in an unfrequented interior part of the State. But those who seek to know will find a visit to these places highly rewarding). This movement started about the 5th century and lasted till the 8th and initiated several significant temple-forms which later developed into the highly ornate temples of Belur and Halebid. The earliest temple of this region is the Ladh Khan at Aihole, a distance of 13 km. from Pattadakal. Here we notice that a Gupta form had already been conceived. Of the scores of temples which adorn Aihole, 4 are of outstanding importance for the development of Northern temple-style, viz., the Durga, Huchchimalligudi, Huchchappayyagudi (Temple No. 9) and Temple No. 24, all dating from 6th-7th centuries. The shikhara appearing over these temples is of the early experimental variety, representing a prototype of the characteristic North Indian type. The Durga Temple is a peripteral structure with an apsidal sanctum and mandapa, comprising nave and aisles, enclosed by a pillared verandah, with a portico approached by two lateral flights of steps, the whole raised on a high moulded socle. The mandapa is lighted by elegantly carved, perforated trellises which alternate with niches containing images of deities. The mandapa has a flat roof of two tiers, that over the nave being higher. The apsidal sanctum is surmounted by a heavy shikhara, lately placed, of 3 rathas and more than 2 storeys indicated by bhumi-amalakas. The Huchchimalligudi Temple is a rectangular structure consisting of a square sanctum,
enclosed by a covered processional passage, a vestibule, a pillared hall and a projecting porch. The sanctum is roofed by a curvilinear shikhara. The facade is plain but for a frieze of vase pattern on the parapet of the porch. This is the earliest temple to introduce a vestibule between the sanctum and the mandapa. The Huchchappayyagudi Temple at the same site is a version without ambulatory of the foregoing and shows a more ornate door-frame and superior sculptures found on the cardinal niches of the sanctum. The only temple at Aihole to show a well-preserved shikhara, complete with neck, amalasaraka and pitcher finial, is Temple No. 24 which closely resembles the Huchchappayyagudi, with a similar but heavier shikhara.

Mahakuteshwara, situated near Badami, has a group of temples of which one known as Sangameshwara, comprising a sanctum and a portico, is of some importance. The sanctum displays a sculptured niche in each cardinal offset and carries a stumpy and massive shikhara, partially resembling the early temples of Aihole.

The temple art blossomed further at the last and latest, Chalukyan centre of Pattadakal, 29 km. from Badami, which shows temples of both Northern and Southern styles. As temples of Northern style incorporate some features of the Southern and vice versa, it appears that the architectural conventions had not yet crystallised. Among the temples of the Northern style, those of the Kadasiddheshwar and Jambulinga are the simplest, comprising only a sanctum and a mandapa. The sanctum of each has a sculptured niche on the bhadra-projections and is crowned by a squat and ponderous shikhara. Each carries a prominent sukanasa-antefix over the constricted vestibule and has a latticed window on the lateral sides of the mandapa.

The Kashivishwanath Temple is similar on plan to the foregoing, with the difference that its shikhara shows an advance and is of the pancha-ratha variety, divided into 5 storeys, and its mandapa carries a flat roof of 2 tiers, the higher one raised over the nave-pillars.

The Galaganath is a temple with a conspicuous projection on the 3 sides of the sanctum ambulatory. The vestibule has survived, but the mandapa has disappeared. This is the only temple at
Pattadakal which stands on a moulded platform, decorated with a short parapet design. The shikhara storey is slightly taller and more proportionate and it is complete with a globular ainalasaraka and a short finial. It bears a marked resemblance to the Alampur group of temples in the outline and proportion of the shikhara and in the design of the ambulatory.

The temple of Papanath at the same site is a long low structure with porch, hall, vestibule and sanctum, the last surmounted by a stunted Northern type of shikhara, too small in proportion to the total dimensions of the building, while the vestibule is proportionately larger, almost assuming the dimensions of a court. The main decoration on the wall is a central band of projecting niches, representing a repeated shrine-motif, which, though quite pleasing in itself, shows a poverty of idea. The unbalanced and inorganic plan and design of the temple indicate that it still belongs to a formative and experimental stage.

More significant than the above is the group of temples at Alampur in District Mahabubnagar, adjoining Hyderabad and situated on the bank of the river Tungabhadra. This place has 9 temples, popularly known as the Nava-Brahma temples, of which 8 belong to the Northern style and one (of Tarka-Brahma) to the Southern style. The temples of the Northern style, locally called the Vishya-Brahma, Vira-Brahma, Arka-Brahma, Kumara-Brahma, Bala-Brahma, Padma-Brahma, Garuda-Brahma and Svarga-Brahma, mark the culmination of the Chalukyan architecture and are comparable to the early Pratihara temples of North India in essential features of plan, composition and embellishment. Their layout is more logical and organic than that of the Papanath Temple at Pattadakal over which they mark a distinct improvement. The incongruities of the Papanath Temple, illustrated by the strings of shrine-models of the Southern order (adorning its first floor parapet), are not found at Alampur. The principal decoration of the wall, composed of niches and latticed windows, attains here a lyrical elegance and the modelling of sculptures is more sensitive and less weighty. The heavy mouldings of the podium and the ponderous cornice mouldings, separating the wall from the shikhara noticed at
Papanath, are here subdued and become more architectonic. The *shikhara* is more balanced and shows a better curvature, though it is still *tri-ratha* in design. These are the temples with a distinctive interior arrangement. The vestibule forms an integral adjunct of the sanctum. In front of the vestibule stretches the central pillared nave of the *mandapa* with a higher roof, resembling a clerestory, resting on 4 to 8 pillars and a pair of pilasters. The nave is surrounded by aisles with a sloping roof. A pillared portion is added in front of the *mandapa* only in two cases. Two doorways are usually provided in the interior. In most cases the door-frame shows an extended overdoor design and the tutelary image depicts Garuda, holding the tail ends of adoring *nagas* who form a canopy over the heads of Ganga and Yamuna, appearing on the lower parts of the jambs. The *mandapa* pillars carry ornate brackets, usually ornamented with the typical foliage of the Pratihara age. The pillars, however, differ in details; the central nave pillars of the Vishva-Brahma Temple show the Pallava type of sejant lion motif at the base. The sanctum proper is *tri-ratha* corresponding to the similar design of the *shikhara* and exhibits a sculptured niche on each *bhadra*-projection.

Thus in respect of general plan and design and many typical architectural and decorative motifs such as ornamental, square rafter ends, composition of niches and the niche-shrines of the sanctum transepts and the garland loop pattern surmounting the *jangha* (wall), these temples come close to the temples of early Pratihara age.

The Svarga-Brahma temple has an inscription of Chalukya Vijayaditya (696-733) of the Badami family and the Kumara-Brahma mentions a *Vallabha*, the well-known *viruda* of the early Chalukya kings, in characters of the 7th-8th centuries. These temples, therefore, appear to have been erected under the patronage of the early Chalukya rulers of Badami during the 7th-8th centuries.
CHAPTER IV

TEMPLES OF THE PRATIHARA AGE

The surviving temples of Central India and Rajasthan dating from the 8th and 9th centuries have certain common features, which distinguish them from the preceding and following theistic buildings. As these regions were largely under the sway of the Gurjara-Pratiharas during the 8th and 9th centuries, we may call this style Pratihara. Since the Pratiharas ruled over an extensive empire from Kanauj, the style spread over vast tracts of North India, including the present States of Uttar Pradesh and the Punjab as far as the Himalayas and had its reverberations further east and west. It is but natural that a style so extensive as this should show regional variations and local idioms.

The Pratihara temples of Central India are characterized by a low socle, a simple and relatively stunted spire, a wall decorated with a single band of sculptured niches crowned by tall pediments and an unpretentious plan, generally consisting of only the sanctum and vestibule which in a few cases is preceded by a porch.

The Pratihara temples of Rajasthan, represented by the group at Osian (below, p. 29), have a more elaborate plan and a slightly different design and decorative scheme. As these temples play a vital role in the development of the regional style, their discussion has been reserved for the following chapter on the temples in Rajasthan.

The group of temples at Nareshar, near Gwalior, forming the earliest examples of the Central Indian Pratihara style show a square sanctum with a curvilinear tri-ratha spire of a stunted shape and a constricted vestibule with a simple gabled roof. Their doorway is of the overdoor design usually with three simple bands decorated with scrolls, pilasters and serpents whose tails are held in the hands of Garuda represented centrally on the lintel. The lintel shows short pediments, surmounted by a frieze of chain-and-bell design which continues round the shrine. The jangha (wall)
is plain except for sculptured niches on the central offsets depicting deities like Ganesha, Karttikeya, Lakulisha, Surya and Parvati. The site also has an interesting rectangular shrine showing two major offsets on the longer rear side with the usual sculptured niches and a wagon-vault roof. The group of temples at Batesara, District Morena and the Mahadeva temple at Amrol, both situated not far from Gwalior, are similar on plan, the latter being slightly larger and more elaborate in ornamentation. The Amrol temple has on each projection of its wall a sculptured niche crowned by a short but bold pediment. Its doorway is more ornate, the pilasters being embellished with graceful figures of nymphs and loving couples. These temples anticipate the Teli-ka-Mandir at Gwalior and are datable roughly to the 8th century.

The ruined Shiva temple at Mahua, District Shivapuri, M.P., is comparable in plan and date with the Amrol temple but shows divergence in details of design and ornamentation. This temple replaces the torus moulding of the podium on the central offset by ornate square rafter-ends, a feature characteristic of Central India from earlier times. The wall shows a prominent niche which is confined to the central projection, the remaining projections being plain. A broad recess separates the wall from the spire which repeats the bhumi-amalakas on the flanks of the central offset, as seen on the roughly contemporary temple at Pashtar in Saurashtra and Temple No. IV at Barakar, District Burdwan, West Bengal.

A small shrine at Terahi, not far from Mahua, is slightly later in date with an advanced plan showing a pancha-ratha sanctum with a porch in front. The jangha (wall) shows pilasters of an early Pratihara order on the offsets flanking the central one and dikpala figures in niches crowned by pediments in the corner offsets. The recesses of the jangha are also decorated with tall thin pediments.

The Teli-ka-Mandir at Gwalior is the grandest temple of the Pratihara style, but is exceptional in design. It consists on plan of a rectangular sanctum and vestibule, the former surmounted by a lofty (24.40 mts. high) wagon-vault superstructure. The podium mouldings are simple and bold, but include a recessed frieze of sculptures, representing gods and goddesses in niches surmounted by
richly carved scrolls. The wall at cardinal offsets displays elaborate niche-shrines surmounted by a large pediment or shikhara-motif. The wall also shows smaller replicas of the same design on the corner buttresses. The shikhara portion is composed of two storeys, indicated by lateral amalakas, which are crowned by a wagon-vault roof of two components. On the shorter sides, the central offset of the shikhara shows a progressively widening series of chaitya-dormers, surmounted by an enormous sun-window, crowned by an ornate arch. On the longer sides, however, the oblong superstructure is decorated with a monotonous design of double rows of niches. The temple is entered through a grand flight of steps leading to an elaborate doorway of five bands, in the lower part are carved elegant figures of river-goddesses, flanked by attendants and Shaiva dvarapalas. The doorway of the sanctum proper differs only in introducing Shakta dvarapalas in the place of Shaiva ones, indicating the dedication of the temple to Shakti. The decorative and plastic theme and style together with the palaeography of its short inscriptions suggest c. 850 as the date of this temple which appears to have been founded by Mihira Bhoja (836-88), the most powerful among the Pratihara kings.

In decorative and architectural features the ruined Shiva temple at Indor (District Guna, M.P.) bears striking affinity to the Telika-Mandir temple at Gwalior, with which it is not only co-eval but may even share common authorship. This temple, however, is circular on plan and has a sanctum of twelve offsets: Rising above the bold podium mouldings, the wall consists of ornate offsets alternating with plain angular wall surface, the whole surmounted by the shikhara. The major offsets are decorated with niches which are surmounted by tall pediments and contain images of Ganesha, Karttikeya, Uma and the eight Regents of quarters, which represent fine specimens of the Pratihara art.

The above temples are followed by the Jarai Math at Barwasagar (District Jhansi), and Gadarimal Temple at Badoh (District Vidisha). Both have a rectangular sanctum and niche-shrines on the main

1The Shiva temples at Chandrehe and Masaun in Districts Sidhi and Rewa, respectively, have a similar plan.
offsets as at Teli-ka-Mandir, but unlike the latter, their sanctum is pancha-ratha on plan and in elevation, roofed by a partly preserved massive shikhara. Both have elaborately ornamented pillars and entrance door-frame of five bands, but while the Jarai Math is an unpretentious structure comprising only a sanctum and a vestibule, the Gadarmal Temple adds to these a mandapa with transepts and a porch enclosed by a high balustrade punctuated with projecting elephant heads. The Gadarmal Temple stands on an ample, ornate platform surrounded by seven subsidiary shrines and has lavishly decorated mandapa pillars and is a little more evolved on plan and in design than the foregoing Pratihara temples.

The Chaturmukha Mahadeva Temple at Nachna, in District Panna, famous for its diamond fields, carries over its sanctum a developed Northern shikhara, of pancha-ratha design. The temple preserves only a square tri-ratha sanctum with a plain interior and a richly decorated exterior. The interior, lighted by a doorway in the east and trellis-windows on the remaining three sides, enshrines a powerfully rendered Chaturmukha Shiva-linga, noted for the sublime expression on its four faces.Externally the trellis-windows on the cardinal offsets are surmounted by a pair of niches, depicting Vidyadharas (divine attendants) with their consorts, crowned by pediments of chaitya-dormers. Each corner buttress of the wall shows a niche carrying an image of the Regent of the cardinal point, surmounted by an elaborate pediment. Of five storeys, the shikhara is covered with a developed mesh of chaitya-dormers. All its buttresses project beyond the shoulder of the spire, which is surmounted by a heavy amalaka. While the windows and doorways of the temple are carved with friezes depicting dwarfs, scrolls, river-goddesses and the over-door design in the Gupta tradition, its mouldings and shikhara design, the treatment of the Regents, and decorative architectural motifs like the pediment, heart-shaped flowers, garland-loops and square rafter ends carved with conventional lion heads are in the developed Pratihara style of the 9th century.

The small but well-proportioned Sun Temple at Mankheda (District Tikamgarh, M.P.) is a gem among the Pratihara temples,
roughly assignable to the same date as the above-noted temples. Essentially similar to the Jarai Math in design and ornamentation, the temple consists of a square pancha-ratha sanctum with a shikhara, a vestibule with an ornate roof surmounted by a lion figure and a simple porch. The shikhara is well-preserved and has excellent proportion. Its central offset projects beyond the neck which is surmounted by a heavy amalaka.

The Kutakeshvara Temple at Pathari (District Vidisha) consisting of a Kadamba type of tri-ratha pyramidal shikhara of horizontal tiers, a constricted vestibule and a porch of single bay is as simple as the rock-cut Chaturbhuja Temple at Gwalior, comprising a sanctum with a pancha-ratha shikhara and similar vestibule and porch. Both are assignable to the 9th century, the latter being securely dated to 875 by an inscription pertaining to the reign of Pratihara Mihira Bhoja.

Of the Jaina temples at Deogarh (District Jhansi) Nos. 12 and 15 are best preserved and are referable to the 9th century. Temple 15 is a triple-shrined structure with the roof of each component shrine lost and the plain wall relieved by shallow, sculptured niches surmounted by pediments. The structure consists of 3 tiny sancta (with the usual niche-shrines of the central offsets on their outer face) sharing a common assembly hall which is entered through a porch and a doorway. The 4 pillars and 12 pilasters of the mandapa and the doorframe bear typical Pratihara ornaments. Temple 12 comprises only a sanctum with an ambulatory and a vestibule. Its sanctum is pancha-ratha on plan and carries a heavy shikhara. Its outer decor is distinctive and shows on the wall latticed windows alternating with pilasters, the former inset with shallow niches surmounted by thin and tall pediments. The niches contain relief figures of 24 labelled Jaina Yakshis round the wall which shows door-frame designs on the three cardinal projections.

The Maladevi Temple at Gyaraspur (District Vidisha) is partly rock-cut and partly structural. It is a mature example of the Pratihara style, consisting on plan of a porch, hall, vestibule and sanctum with an ambulatory. Each of its shorter sides shows a
pair of non-functional balconied windows, while the longer sides show three such windows, two projecting from the mandapa and one from the sanctum proper. The sanctum is tri-ratha on plan with a pancha-ratha shikhara of nine turrets which is strikingly similar in design to that of the Shiva Temple at Kerakot in Kutch (below, p. 44). The buttresses of the shikhara extend to the neck which is surmounted by a pair of amalakas and a pot-finial. The roofs of the porch and the hall are pyramidal composed of horizontal tiers. The temple has 2 ornate doorways of 5 bands. The hall doorway shows a figure of Chakreshvari as the tutelary image, while the sanctum door-frame is carved with a row of standing Jinás on the lintel. This temple shows on the wall faces iconographically developed images of Jaina Yakshas and Yakshis some of which are labelled in the characters of the late 9th century. The mature decorative motifs and architectural features combined with the developed iconography would also indicate late 9th century as the date for this temple.

The Pratihara temples of Central India are thus seen to have a simple plan and design, displaying some characteristic ornaments of the style, including tall pediments, a frieze of garland-loops on the top of the wall, a band of nagaś on the door-frame and rich carvings of vase-and-foliage, scrolls, kirttimukhas and a square, ribbed cushion-capital to be found largely on the pillars...

The tiny shrine of Shiva at Jagatsukh (near Manali in District Kulu of Himachal Pradesh) dates from the early 8th century and is among the earliest specimens of the Pratihara style, with its simple tri-ratha sanctum, resembling that of the Naresar group of temples, roofed by a shikhara showing even bolder chaitya-dormers. The earliest temples at Jageshwar and Gopeshwar and the Shiva Temple at Lakhamandal, all situated in the Himalayan hills, are also assignable to the 8th century. Most of these temples comprise tri-ratha or pancha-ratha sanctum roofed by a short, heavy-shouldered shikhara and preceded by a porch, adding sometimes a mandapa in between. Gopeshwar and Jageshwar also have rectangular shrines with wagon-vault superstructure, resembling that of the Teli-ka-Mandir, Gwalior (above, p. 12). To the early 9th century
may be attributed the Basheshwar Mahadeva Temple at Bajaura (District Kulu), which shows an advanced plan and architectural design with a four-faced opening and has elongated statuary of the regional art style. Roughly co-eval with the Bajaura Temple are the wooden temples of Shakti Devi at Chhatrarhi and of Lakshana Devi at Brahmaur in the Chamba region, both enshrining as cult-images bronze figures of Devi, known for their slender and elongated forms. These are the earliest surviving wooden shrines showing a rich repertoire of the Pratihara ornaments and decorative motifs with some influence of the Gandhara style and the arts of Nepal and Kashmir. The rock-cut temple complex at Masrur (District Kangra), dating from the later half of the 9th century, is also a notable Pratihara monument of considerable artistic and architectural significance.
CHAPTER V

TEMPLES OF RAJASTHAN

The earliest dated temple in Rajasthan is the Shitaleshwara Temple at Chandravati, near Jhalrapatan (District Jhalawar), founded in 689. Of this temple only the sanctum and the vestibule, now roofless, have survived. The hypostyle mandapa in front of the vestibule appears to be later by at least a century. The sanctum has prominent niche-shrines on the cardinal offsets. The podium-mouldings are bold and simple, the kalasha moulding being replaced on the cardinals by a band decorated with lotus-scrolls and on some projections by ornate square rafter ends. The wall has a plain surface, punctuated with heavy square pilasters, the latter decorated with a vase-and-foliage motif at the base and capital, a median band of scrolls, a lotus-band of kirttimukhas and geese and brackets of a plain, curved profile. The wall is surmounted by an eave-cornice. The sanctum door-frame was originally of four ornamented bands. Ganga and Yamuna are represented in the sculptural tradition of the Gupta period on its lower part. The vestibule is an oblong compartment with a row of 4 tall pillars and pilasters, showing vase-and-foliage at the square base, ornate octagonal shaft surmounted by vase-and-foliage capital and brackets of plain curved profile.

The surviving remains of the ruined Shiva Temple at Kansua (District Kota), dated by an inscription in 738, indicate that this temple was similar to the Chandravati Temple on plan and in design.

The Harshat-mata Temple at Abaneri (District Jaipur) is a ruined temple of which only the sanctum, shorn of its superstructure, has survived standing on three stepped terraces, while not much remains of its pillared mandapa and porch. The sanctum enclosed by an ambulatory is pancha-ratha on plan. The temple has a sculptured niche on each buttress of the wall. The cardinal niches show Vasudeva-Vishnu, Pradyumna and Balarama-Sankar-
shana, respectively, on the south, west and north, indicating that
the original temple was dedicated to Vishnu. In the sanctum is
now enshrined an image of four-armed Harasiddhi, locally called
Harshat-mata. The faces of the sanctum shell and the uppermost
terrace are decorated with niches, containing religious and secular
sculptures, each surmounted by a large pediment. The sculpt-
ures include romantic themes of dance, music, garden-sport and
love, depicted with rich luxuriousness and a sense of gay abandon.
The socle mouldings are bold and simple and the sculptures show
volume and grace, reminiscent of the Gupta tradition. The deco-
orative motifs, illustrated by the pediment composed of bold chaitya-
dormers, pilasters surmounted by quarter lotus brackets, lumas
and wavy vegetal patterns of palmettes, indicate that this temple
is assignable to the 8th century.

A temple of a comparable design and date but without an ambu-
latory has been uncovered at Mandor (District Jodhpur). It is,
however, badly dilapidated and only the podium mouldings of
its sanctum proper and two terraces have survived. This temple
appears to have undergone many subsequent reconstructions.

The significant group of temples at Osian (District Jodhpur)
belongs to two series, one early and the other late. The earlier
series is represented by nearly a dozen and the later by half a dozen
temples.

The earlier Osian temples are characterised by certain decorat-
tive and architectural peculiarities. They stand on a high terrace
with bold mouldings, usually surmounted by a band, decorated
with a wavy vegetal design. The terrace is punctuated with sculpt-
ured niches which are crowned by pediments and contain images
of Ganesha, Kubera and other Brahmanical gods and goddesses.
The socle-mouldings are bold and simple. The temples are normally
pancha-ratha on plan and in elevation and show sculptured niches
on all the five projections of the wall, but a few temples leave the
projections flanking the cardinal offsets bare. The niches are
surmounted by pediments and are larger on the cardinal points;
the latter display images of family-deities such as Narasimha,
Trivikrama, Varaha, Vishnu or Harihara on the Vaishnava tem-
ples. The Regents are invariably represented on the corner buttresses and other deities like Ganesha, Surya, Chandra, Revanta, Brahma, and Parvati on the auxiliary offsets. Temple 6 and the North-west Temple, however, show respectively, ascetics and apsarases (nymphs) on the auxiliary offsets.

The wall is surmounted by a frieze of chain, above which occurs usually a broad recess, decorated with Krishna-lila scenes on Temples 1 to 4 and with diapers or half-diamonds on the remaining temples. The shikhara, covered with a bold mesh of chaitya-dormers, is invariably pancha-ratha in design and of 5 to 7 storeys. The central offset extends to the neck which is surmounted by an amalaka and pot-finial. The earlier temples are, as a rule, without an ambulatory and consist on plan of a sanctum, an open hall and a porch. The outer bays of the mandapa are provided with balustrades punctuated with projecting elephant's heads, as on the Gadarmal Temple at Badoh (above, p. 23). In many cases the mandapa is of the nava-ranga variety with occasional lateral transepts. The so-called Sun Temple and the oldest temple of the Sachiyamata group have each a pair of tall pillars at the entrance to the porch. At least 3 temples are of the panchayatana type, viz., Harihara Temples 1 and 2 and the so-called Sun Temple, the last-mentioned also showing traces of an enclosing cloister.

The sanctum doorway has 4 or 5 bands, one of which is decorated with an interlacing design of adoring nagas, whose tails are held in the hands of a Garuda figure represented as the tutelary image. The vestibule has a porch resting on 2 pillars and 2 pilasters, the latter usually decorated with elegant figures of apsarases, sometimes surmounted by representations of Vasudeva-Vishnu and Balarama-Sankarshana, both riding on Garuda. The pillars of the vestibule and mandapa are heavily decorated with designs of vase-and-foliage, kirttimukhas, scrolls, and a square ribbed cushion, surmounted by either double roll or palmette brackets. The enclosing dwarf pillars are less elaborately ornamented and usually carry double-

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1D. R. Bhandarkar's numbering and nomenclature have been adopted for the temples at Osian—Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, 1908-09 (1912), pp. 100-15.
roll brackets. The ceilings of the vestibule and the hall are highly decorated, the former with an elaborate design of *nagapasha* entwining Vidyadharas (divine angels).

Among the earlier Osian temples, Harihara Temple No. 3 and the Jaina Temple of Mahavira are of exceptional design. The former is unique among the Osian temples in that its hall-ceiling and roof are of a vaulted design and its platform is quite plain. The temple is rectangular on plan and perhaps had a wagon-vault superstructure.

The Mahavira Temple originally consisted of a sanctum enclosed by an ambulatory, a vestibule, a closed hall connected with an open hall in front, and a porch. According to an inscription, the temple was originally built during the reign of Pratihara Vatsaraja (783-92), a fact borne out by the early form and design of the original members like the socle, interior pillars, hall-roof and latticed windows of the transepts. It is also learnt from epigraphic evidence that an entrance hall was repaired in 956 and an ornamental gateway (*torana*) was added in 1016. The original sanctum has survived only up to the wall-cornice, while the *shikhara* clustered by 3 rows of turrets is a late restoration in the developed medieval style of Rajasthan.

The sculptures on the earlier Osian temples are characterised by a voluminous modelling and rich iconography. On grounds of sculptural and architectural styles, exhibiting striking affinities with the early Pratihara temples in Central India, the earlier Osian temples are assignable to the 8th century, which is corroborated by the epigraphic evidence of the Mahavira Temple and the palaeography of an inscription engraved on the Pipladevi Temple.

The subsidiary shrines of the Mahavira Temple and the Sachiya-mata Temple pertain to the later group of Osian temples, roughly datable to the 10th and 11th centuries. They have a simple plan, comprising a *pancha-ratha* sanctum, a vestibule, a hall and a small porch. The socle-mouldings seem to be more developed and surmounted by an elephant-band and occasionally also a human-band. The wall and the cornice reflect a developed style and a ribbed awning separates the wall from the spire. The spire is
covered by a lattice of chaitya-dormers and its central offset projects beyond the neck which is usually surmounted by 2 amalakas, a characteristic trait of the Central Indian temples as well. The mandapa shows either a bell-roof or a pyramidal roof of horizontal tiers. The wall bears figures of gods, apsaras and the Regents on the 5 projections, and of apsaras, vyalas or ascetics in the intervening recesses.

The main Sachiya-mata Temple is a later and more developed temple with an ambulatory and a large assembly hall with 8 torana-arches and an elaborate ceiling, decorated with 16 bracket-figures. The shikhara is clustered by two rows of turrets. The temple appears to be largely a structure of 1178 A.D.

The Kalika-mata Temple at Chittorgarh, originally dedicated to the Sun-god, consists of a pancha-ratha sanctum with an ambulatory having three transepts, a vestibule, a closed hall with lateral transepts and a porch, all devoid of original roofs. The podium-mouldings are simple and bold, its cornice being surmounted by a band decorated with lotus scrolls, as at Osian. The wall is plain, except for niches crowned by tall pediments. The wall of the sanctum proper shows images of Surya and of the Regents in the niches of the main offsets and corner buttresses, while the auxiliary buttresses are treated as pilasters, carved with sculptures of minor gods like Chandra and the twin Ashvins. The transepts of the sanctum show elaborately decorated heavy tetragonal pillars, carrying double-roll brackets. The closed hall has a lofty central nave. Its ceilings are of the flat type and disposed in registers, decorated with relief figures depicting deities, angels, etc. The pillars are profusely decorated and carry ornate brackets of the double-roll variety. The sanctum door-frame has 4 ornamental bands with Surya as the tutelary deity, the whole flanked by an elaborate figure-composition of gods dominated in the centre by a large sculpture of Surya.

The lunas suspended from the cornice-moulding of its podium, the ornate central pillars of the closed hall, the profusely carved pillars with square ribbed cushions surmounted by double-roll brackets, the projecting elephants from the pillar bases of the seat-
Plate 8. Sun Temple, Osian
(See page 29)
Plate 9. Temples at Badoli
(See page 34)
back, and the long pediments indicate that this temple is not far in date from the earlier group of Osian temples. It is significant that the coffered cusp design appears on a few ceilings here in a nascent stage. The sculptures still retain the Gupta flavour with an elegant modelling and meditative expression. The temple is, therefore, assignable to the 8th century, which is corroborated by an inscription attributing the construction of the temple to one king Manabhanga in the year 7xx of the Vikrama era.

The Kumbhashyama Temple at Chittorgarh is strikingly similar to the Kalika-mata Temple on plan. It shows simple and bold socle-mouldings, but the recessed fillet is decorated with diamonds framed by pilasters. The sculptured niches of the wall façades carry a short pyramidal pediment and display images of gods and goddesses including the 8 Regents. The top of the wall is decorated with a frieze of intersecting garland loops. All its roofs and balustrades are restored together with the lintels, ceilings and most of the pillars of the interior. The sanctum, however, appears to be original and shows bold podium-mouldings, supporting a wall, decorated with sculptured niches on the projections and the recesses, the latter crowned by tall pediments. As all the Regents, except Ishana, are two-armed on this temple which shows many decorative designs typical of the early Pratihara style, it belongs to the same time as the temple of Kalika-mata.

The twin temples at Buchkala (District Jodhpur), one dedicated to Shiva and the other to Vishnu, are smaller and simpler shrines built by the Pratihara king Nagabhata II in 815.

The Kameshvara Temple at Auwa (District Pali in Marwar), dating from the middle of the 9th century, marks the next landmark. It is a fairly ornate temple of pancha-ratha plan and shows a two-storied pyramidal form of superstructure, crowned by a bell-member, of which an earlier form is known from Osian.

The Sun Temple at Varman (District Sirohi) is at present a dilapidated structure, comprising sanctum, ambulatory with three transepts, vestibule, closed hall with lateral transepts and porch. The transepts and the porch are enclosed by balustrades. The roofs and the face-stones of the outer wall are missing. The sanctum
door-frame is of the overdoor design with 5 ornate bands and shows on the lintel an image of Surya which is also repeated on the cardinal niches of the sanctum proper. The interior pillars, which are tetragonal, are plain below and decorated in the upper half with scrolls, kirttimukhas and makara-heads in roundels, carrying a floral frieze and capital, supporting either double roll or Atlantean brackets. The ceilings are either of the early coffered design or flat, but are richly carved with floral ornaments or reliefs of dancers and musicians. As this temple shows some early decorative and architectural motifs such as square rafter ends, overdoor design, elephants projecting from the pillar-bases of the balustrades, it is assignable on stylistic evidence to late 9th century.

The Ghateshwara Temple at Badoli (District Udaipur) consists of a pancha-ratha sanctum with an elegantly proportioned pancharatha shikhara, vestibule with a stepped and gabled roof and mandapa with a pyramidal roof. A proportionately larger detached mandapa with a bell-roof was added in front of the temple nearly a century later. The podium-mouldings are bold and simple. The wall, divided into five projections, is plain and shows a sculptured niche only on the central offset, crowned by a pediment. The central niches display images of Andhakantaka, Natesha and Chamunda, respectively, on the south, west and north. The wall is separated from the shikhara by a recess between 2 cornice mouldings. The central and the flanking rathas of the shikhara project beyond the neck which is surmounted by 2 amalakas, and a pot-finial. The sanctum has a circular ceiling decorated with an elaborate lotus flower with a large pendant. The sanctum door-frame has 5 bands, all plain, except for relief sculptures of which the most prominent is the Natesha as the tutelary image.

The mandapa is entered through a simple but elegant makara-torana and is an open oblong compartment, supported on 4 massive pillars. Two of its pillars are octagonal below, showing on the alternate facets of the octagon figures of apsarasas standing on lotus leaf. These resemble the apsarasas from Khajuraho in postures and details of dress and jewellery. Each pillar-capital comprises amalaka and lotus band and supports a square block, relieved with
figures and surmounted by double-roll brackets. The ceiling, made of two intersecting squares, is elaborately decorated with lotuses, divine couples and 5 floral coffered cusps, of which 4 have lotus pendants and the central one has a pendant, ending in a flying angelic figure.

In the design of the *apsaras* figures and the *makara-torana* and in the treatment of the pillars, ceilings and the *shikhara*, this building anticipates the Lakshmana Temple at Khajuraho and appears to date roughly from the end of the 9th century.

The Ambika-mata Temple at Jagat (District Udaipur) shows an elaboration in design and ornamentation on the above-mentioned temples and is slightly later in date. It is of a developed class without an ambulatory and consists of a sanctum with a *pancharatha shikhara* of 17 turrets, a vestibule with a stepped and gabled roof, a central hall with latticed windows in the lateral transepts, and a porch enclosed by a balustrade. This temple shows a nascent elephant-band between the socle and the podium-mouldings which continue to be simple, but include a recessed fillet decorated with diamonds, framed by pilasters. The wall is highly ornamented and shows on each of the 5 buttresses sculptured forms, those on the cardinal points and corners displaying, respectively, female deities and the Regents in niches, surmounted by a balcony-model design, as at Khajuraho. The auxiliary buttresses are carved with elephants surmounted by *apsaras*, while the recesses show rampant *vyalas* or *apsarases* in enchanting postures. The central *ratha* of the *shikhara* extends to the neck which is crowned by two *amalakas* and a pot-finial.

The roof of the closed hall is pyramidal and composed of diminishing tiers. The ceiling of the closed hall is carved with three cusped and coffered courses terminating in a central pendant, while the ceiling of the enclosing hall is composed of three simple cusped courses, as at Khajuraho.

The sanctum door-frame has 5 ornamental bands as on the Lakshmana Temple at Khajuraho (below, p. 62). This building resembles the Khajuraho temples also in the treatment and décor of the balustrade, pillars, architraves, ceilings, wall and the roofs.
The temple possesses quite a few inscriptions, of which the oldest is dated 961 referring to a repair made to it. To require any repairs the temple should have been built at least 30 years earlier and may plausibly be assigned to circa 925.

The Durga Temple at Unwas, near famous Haldighati in Udaipur region, dated 959, is a very plain pancha-ratha shrine with a battered brick shikhara of a design resembling that of the Jagat Temple.

The Mahavira Temple near Ghanerao (District Pali) has a sanctum, an ambulatory with three transepts, a vestibule, a closed hall with lateral transepts and a wide porch in front. The sanctum is tri-ratha on plan and its wall resting on a plain socle and podium-mouldings, shows niches containing images of two-armed Regents on the corner-buttresses, while the central offsets display balustrades and latticed windows surmounted by a torana design, enclosing a graceful figure-composition of dancers and musicians. The transepts of the mandapa are also alike. The recesses of the wall are carved with the designs of fore-parts of elephants, rampant vyalas and seated dwarfs. The sanctum roof and the hall roof are lately restored, like some members of the interior, such as the door-frames of the inner sanctum and the hall.

As indicated by the bolder modelling of the figures of the Regents which are invariably represented here as two-armed and by the tri-ratha sanctum which is similar in design to the Kerakot Temple in Kutch (below, p. 44) and the details of carving, this temple is assignable to the middle of the 10th century, which is corroborated by the original main image, inscribed and dated 954.

The Mahadeva Temple on the Harshanath hill near Sikar, dating from 956-73, though dilapidated and rooifless now, must have been an architectural landmark, known for the high quality of its sculptures. It comprised a sanctum enclosed by an ambulatory, a vestibule, a pillared hall with lateral transepts and possibly a porch (now lost), with a magnificent torana (ornamental entrance) in front.

The Nilakantheshwara Temple at Kekind (District Nagaur)
is co-eval with the Harshanath Temple and resembles it in plan, design and ornamentation.

Founded in 972, the Lakulisha Temple at Ekalingaji (District Udaipur) is a large but simple structure, comprising a *pancha-ratha* sanctum, vestibule, closed hall with latticed windows in the lateral transepts and porch enclosed by a balustrade. The socle mouldings are simple and the wall is plain, but for two niches in the facade, one inset with an inscribed slab and the other with an image of Sarasvati. The brickwork super-structures of the shrine and the hall have practically crumbled. The sanctum enshrines an image of seated Lakulisha and the sanctum door-frame, showing 2 bands, displays an image of Lakulisha as the tutelary deity, surmounted by 5 niches containing figures of Ganesha, Brahma, Shiva, Vishnu and Karttikeya. The vestibule is a plain oblong compartment with a row of 4 plain pillars and pilasters. The closed hall is remarkable for its octagonal arrangement showing a goddess in a niche projecting from each angle.

The twin Vaishnava temples, popularly called the Sas-bahu at Nagda (District Udaipur), show a fairly evolved style prone to profuse ornamentation. They are entered through a detached *makara-torana* which is not unlike that of the Ghateshwara Temple at Badoli. The larger temple is surrounded by 10 subsidiary shrines, while the smaller one is a *panchayatana*.

Each temple consists of a *pancha-ratha* sanctum, vestibule, closed hall with lateral transepts and porch enclosed by a balustrade. The socle and the podium-mouldings are simple. The wall divided into two registers by a band of *grasa-mukhas* is plain, but for seated sculptures on the cardinal offsets of Brahma, Shiva, and Vishnu, surmounted, respectively, by Rama, Balarama and Parashurama. The *shikhara* is made of brick-work which, though ruined, shows a cluster of minor turrets. The transepts of the closed hall and the interior as well as the exterior of the porch are elaborately decorated with relief sculptures and decorative designs in contrast with the plain walls of the sanctum and vestibule. The relief figures comprise developed images of gods and goddesses including four-armed Regents, erotic figures, *apsarases* and narrative friezes, including
scenes from the *Ramayana*. The pillars, ceilings, architraves and door-frames are of a highly developed design and lavishly ornamented. The two temples are essentially alike with a few differences in details. Thus, while the closed hall of the larger temple has 4 central pillars with as many *makara-toranas* thrown across them, the assembly hall of the smaller temple has an octagonal ceiling with 8 female brackets. The former has exquisitely ornamented latticed windows on the transepts of the closed hall, while the latter shows lateral porches instead. Though the larger temple is more ornate than the smaller one, the two are contemporary and on stylistic considerations are assignable roughly to the late 10th century.

The Mira and Mahavira Temples at Ahar, situated near the city of Udaipur, are contemporary with the Nagda Temples and bear affinity in ornate design to the Ambika Temple at Jagat.

The most representative specimens of the late 10th and 11th century Rajasthan architecture are the group of dilapidated temples at Kiradu (District Barmer of Marwar), of which the temple of Someshwara is the most significant. It shows the usual components of a developed temple comprising *pancha-ratha* sanctum, vestibule, assembly hall and porch, but each part is accentuated and ornamented in the typical developed style of Rajasthan. The socle mouldings of the sanctum include elephant-band, horse-band, and human-band. All the projections of the wall carry figures and rest on a sculptured frieze. The *shikhara* is of the clustered type. The hall is a magnificent structure with an octagonal arrangement of pillars which are tastefully ornamented. Of the remaining shrines, mention may be made of the octagonal *mandapa* of the Vaishnava Temple which shows more ornate pillars, also decorated with sculptures and friezes of angels and surmounted by Atlantean brackets. This temple is about a generation earlier in time than the Someshwara Temple.

From 12th century onwards the Rajasthan style loses its individuality and nearly merges in the Solanki style. The process started at the close of the 10th century when the Abu region of Rajasthan came under the political and cultural influence of Gujarat.
The Vimala Vasahi, like the later temples built at Abu, is a full-fledged Solanki structure and was shortly followed by the near-Solanki temples at Chandravati and Kumbhariaji, which are not far from Abu. During the 12th century a substantial part of Rajasthan, including Marwar and Mewar, passed under the hegemony of the Solankis of Gujarat, whose cultural sway was even more effective and lasting, with the result that henceforth Rajasthan became a province of the Solanki style, as evidenced by the later temples found at sites like Chittor, Ekalingaji, Jalor and Ranakpur, scattered in different parts of Rajasthan. A brief notice, however, is given below of the groups of temples at Kumbhariaji and Abu which form architectural landmarks in Rajasthan, even though they are affiliated to the Solanki style of Gujarat.

Kumbhariaji (District Banaskantha) has a group of Jaina temples, dating from the 11th century, which anticipate the temples of Dilwara, Mount Abu. Built of marble, the temples consist of a pancha-ratha sanctum, a closed hall, a pillared portico and an assembly hall enclosed on three sides by shrine-cells with colonnaded corridors in front. The socle and podium-mouldings are simple. The wall, divided into two registers by a band of grasa-mukhas, is plain, but for projecting sculptured niches on the cardinal offsets surmounted by short pediments. Usually the shikhara is clustered by turrets and is surmounted by two amalakas. The assembly hall has an octagonal arrangement of pillars, the latter being of the composite order. The large circular central ceiling of the hall is composed of 7 concentric rings and a huge central pendant. The flat ceilings of the transept-bays of the assembly hall are exquisitely decorated with edifying narrative friezes and life-scenes of the Jinas in relief. Except for the ornamentation of the pillars which follows the Rajasthan tradition, these temples essentially belong to the Solanki style.

The climax of the medieval architecture of the Rajasthan and Solanki styles was reached in the Dilwara group of Jaina temples at Mount Abu, of which the most important are the Vimala Vasahi and Luna Vasahi, built, respectively, in 1031 and 1230, by Vimala and by the brothers Vastupala and Tejapala, the two ministers of the later
Solankis of Gujarat. Each consists of a sanctum, a closed hall with lateral transepts, a pillared portico and an assembly hall in front, the whole placed in a quadrangular court, surrounded by an enclosure of shrine-cells facing 2 bays of colonnaded corridors. The external appearance of the temple with low roofs and a plain enclosure wall is unimpressive in sharp contrast to the exuberant decoration of the interior.

The Vimala Vasahi, dedicated to Adinatha, shows a lately added entrance hall and a rectangular pavilion showing portrait-sculptures mounted on elephants. Prithvipala, a descendant of Vimala, added the magnificent assembly hall in c. 1150. The hall has lavishly ornamented pillars, surmounted by attic sections, with multic cusped torana-arches in between. The architraves are heavily ornamented and support a circular ceiling of 10 diminishing rings loaded with a bewildering wealth of carvings of which the most impressive are the 16 figures of the Vidya-devis and the magnificently designed central pendant. These rings are further decorated with friezes of elephants, goddesses, dancers and musicians, horse-riders and female dancers, alternating with cusped and coffered courses. The ceilings and architraves of the lateral bays of the assembly hall are lavishly embellished with carvings including narrative and mythological reliefs.

The Temple of Luna Vasahi, built two centuries later, illustrates further efflorescence of the style, accompanied by a richer elaboration of decoration. The elephant court is now incorporated on the rear side within the enclosure. The 8 pillars of the assembly hall are loftier and of different types. Its ceiling, however, is slightly smaller in diameter, but is carved equally lavishly and culminates in a larger and more delicately ornamented central pendant, rivalling the finest filigree work in metal.

These temples indeed constitute marvels of stone chiselling and with their minutely carved door-frames, niches, pillars, architraves and ceilings excel the rest of the ornamented temples of India. Lavish ornamentation, however, was carried here to an extreme, without regard being paid to structural propriety or proportion with the result that the walls of the assembly hall look stunted and
Plate 10. Ambikamata Temple, Jagat
(See page 35)
Plate 11. Ceiling of Vimala Vasahi, Mount Abu
(See page 39)
Plate 12. Temple No. III, Roda
(See page 43)
Plate 14. RANAKDEVI TEMPLE, WADHWAN
(See page 44)
the visitor is lost in a labyrinth of fretted and tracery ornaments with a fatigued mind which looks in vain for respite and poise, two essential qualities of good architecture.

Building activity in the Solanki style continued in Rajasthan till the 15th century. Two noteworthy examples of the later phase of the style are the nine-storeyed Kirtti-stambha (Tower of Fame) at Chittorgarh built by Rana Kumbha between 1440 and 1448, and the Jaina Chaumukha temple at Ranakpur (District Pali), dated 1438, the former unique for its loftiness of design and the latter for its grand conception and titanic dimensions.
CHAPTER VI

TEMPLES OF GUJARAT

A. PRE-SOLANKI ARCHITECTURE

The temples built in Western India represent one of the richest regional styles of North Indian temple architecture displaying distinctive features from the beginning. The temple building activity in this region had a most prolific development under the prosperous reign of the powerful Solanki rulers of the medieval age.

The earliest surviving temple of Western India is the shrine at Gop (District Jamnagar of Saurashtra) dating from c. 6th century. In its present mutilated state the temple has a terraced appearance, the lowest terrace with multiple projections and recesses constituting the platform, the middle one the ornate wall of the outer shell and the upper one the bare core of the sanctum, shorn of the ambulatory. The platform shows simple mouldings surmounted by sculptured niches, while the wall of the outer shell displays a moulded socle supporting sculptured, niched projections in the middle and the corners, with bold friezes of dwarfs in between. The sanctum of the Gop shrine has distinctive architectural features which are exhibited by more than 50 surviving examples in Saurashtra. Distinguished by a simple plan and design with a tall featureless wall, surmounted by a pyramidal roof of stepped courses, decorated with diminishing number of chaitya-dormers, these shrines date from the 6th century and are peculiar to this region. The Gop Temple has preserved two-armed seated images of Ganesha and Parvati in the upper chaitya-dormers of its roof which is composed of two stepped courses. The shrine near the Harshat-mata Temple at Miani, and a shrine of the Bhanasara group, both situated in District Junagadh, have roofs comprising three stepped courses. On the same principle the temples at Visavada and
Khimeshwar¹ (District Junagadh) and Kalsar (District Bhavnagar) show each a roof of four stepped tiers, decorated with chaitya-dormers which gradually diminish in number from 4 on the lowest to 1 on the topmost tier. The latter shrine also introduces lateral amalakas at the corners of the tiers. The temples at Pindara and Navidhrewad (District Jamnagar) exhibit a roof of 5 similar tiers with amalakas at the corners. To the latter shrine were added a hall and a porch in front of the sanctum, the roof top of which is crowned by a large amalasaraka and pot-finial. The largest example of this class is the temple at Bileshwar (District Junagadh). Its superstructure is a tall pyramid of 6 similar tiers, each showing on the corners a cupola-like finial, crowned by an amalasaraka and the pot-finial.

In the Varaha Temple at Kadwar, near Prabhas Patan, which is referable to the beginning of the 7th century and which has an elaborate plan comprising a sanctum with an ambulatory, a closed hall and a porch, the crowning chaitya-ornaments of the Gop type are combined with a sloping roof of two tiers, belonging to a different conception. The Sun Temple at Sutrapada, also near Prabhas Patan, is likewise a temple with an ambulatory and distinguished by the Northern shikhara of a rudimentary form. Forming a landmark in architectural development, this temple is assignable to the middle of the 8th century and is followed by the Roda (District Sabarkantha) group of temples, roughly attributable to the end of the 8th century. In general layout and composition and in the stunted form of the shikhara, the Roda temples resemble the early Pratihara temples, like those of Naresar (above, p. 21). Consisting on plan of a tri-ratha or pancha-ratha sanctum and a porch (except in one case where a mandapa is added in between), these temples exhibit sculptured niches only on the cardinal offsets and are simpler in design and ornamentation than the Osian group (above, p. 29). The Roda temples are followed by the Sun Temple at Bhimanath, near Prabhas Patan, which is

¹This is a newly discovered temple-site situated on the coast of Saurashtra. The author is obliged to M.A. Dhaky, for much new information and many valuable suggestions incorporated in this chapter.
roughly attributable to the early 9th century and resembles on plan the contemporary Pratihara temple known as the Kalika-mata Temple at Chittorgarh (above, p. 32), with this difference that the former exhibits the sloping ceiling, so typical of Saurashtra.

Further evolution of the style is traceable through the Khimrana Temple near Jamnagar and the Shiva Temple of Rani Rajai near Manjal in Kutch, both with panchandaka shikharas and assignable to the late 9th century. The group of small single-spire temples at Miani, each comprising a sanctum and a porch marks the next stage and is closely followed by the temple of Ranakdevi at Wadhwan (District Surendranagar) and of Ganesha at Ghumli (District Jamnagar), assignable to the beginning of the 10th century. Both show a full-fledged shikhara, but the latter is a temple with a tall featureless wall and a covered ambulatory of probably timber (now completely lost), following the tradition of Gop.

The story of the architectural development is carried forward by the Trinetreshwara Temple near Than (District Surendranagar) since demolished, and the Shiva Temple at Kerakot and the Sun Temple at Kotai in Kutch, dating from c. 950. The Trinetreshwara and the Kotai temples have a shikhara of 21 turrets, and an ornate wall, partly resembling in design the Ambika-mata Temple at Jagat (above, p. 35). Unlike the latter, the Kerakot Temple possesses an ambulatory and bears a striking affinity to the Maladevi Temple at Gyaraspur (above, p. 25) in the treatment of the wall and of the spire with 9 turrets. These are followed by the temple of Munibava at Than, dating from c. 975. This is a single-spire temple and is the first building to exhibit on octagonal closed hall with eight angelic brackets. It has a hall enclosed by full-fledged balustrades. Almost contemporary to this was the original temple of Somanath at Prabhas Patan which was followed by the Vishnu Temple at Sander (District Mehsana), representing the incipient Solanki style.
TEMPLES OF GUJARAT

B. SOLANKI STYLE

Generally a Solanki temple has all the essential features of a North Indian temple, but bears the closest affinities to the Rajasthan style. On plan, it consists of a sanctum, a closed hall and a porch which are inter-connected internally and externally. The wall faces are broken by numerous indentations, projected and recessed alternately, which are continued along the elevation, producing a pleasing contrast of light and shade. In larger temples a detached peristylar hall is added in the same axis, often preceded by a torana or ornamental arched entrance. In rare cases the hall has more storeys than one. In elevation the Solanki temple has the usual components of socle, podium, wall, cornice and spire. But the mouldings and decorative ornaments occur in sequence fixed by tradition.

The interior arrangement of a Solanki temple also displays individual features. The halls are peristylar in design and the pillars are lavishly ornamented with figures and decorative designs arranged in a definite order. The hall shows an octagonal arrangement of pillars and in the larger conceptions ornamental arches (toranas) are thrown across its principal pillars. The domical ceiling of the hall, supported on an octagonal frame of architraves over the pillars, consists of diminishing concentric rings, culminating in an exquisitely designed central pendant. The mandapa transepts and the porch are decorated with ornamental balustrades. Thus the Solanki temple is generally akin to the Northern temples of other regions in the treatment of the exterior but is unparalleled in the exquisite design and rich ornamentation of the interior.

The earliest datable building is the Sun Temple at Modhera (District Mehsana), about 18 miles south of Patan, the old Solanki capital in Gujarat, which marks the grandest achievement of the Solanki style. Even in its ruined state it is a majestic conception. Standing on a raised terrace, this temple consists of three separate elements, axially aligned and integrated in a balanced architectural composition. These comprise (1) the main temple complex, including sanctum with ambulatory, vestibule, closed hall with
lateral transepts and porch, (2) a detached assembly hall with a torana in front, and (3) a large flagged tank decorated with numerous miniature shrines. The closed hall has an octagonal arrangement of elegantly decorated tall pillars with ornamental torana-arches thrown across the axial pairs of pillars. The plain walls of the closed hall are relieved by niches containing images of the 12 Adityas. The assembly hall, described as a ‘magnificent pile of pillared splendour’ is a diagonally disposed hall with an octagonal arrangement of central pillars carrying torana-arches, alternately triangular and semi-circular, and is entered from each cardinal direction by a pillared projection decorated with a semi-circular torana. In front of the assembly hall stood a torana, overlooking the tank from which this hall was approached through a grand flight of steps. Dating from 1026, this temple is remarkable as much for its fine proportion and aesthetic appeal as for the harmonious integration of its plastic embellishment with the architectural scheme.

The Modhera Temple is closely followed by the Rudreshwara (Kedareshwara) Temple at Prabhas Patan which is a ruined structure, comprising sanctum with ambulatory, closed hall and porch, with lateral transepts for the ambulatory as well as for the hall. The sculptures on the wall faces, the pillars of the hall and the doorway design are strikingly similar to those of the Modhera Temple, though it is a smaller and simpler building where the octagonal arrangement of the mandapa pillars is conspicuous by its absence.

Of the remaining few Solanki monuments of the early 11th century, noteworthy are the Someshwara Temple at Gorad, Shiva Temple at Sander, Mata Temple at Dhinoj and the main temple of Limboji-mata at Delmal, all in District Mehsana. The Nila-kantha Mahadeva Temple at Sunak, in the same district, is the most developed and best preserved among the late 11th century Solanki temples. The mouldings of its socle show the customary courses and its shikhara is of the usual complex composition. The hall and the porch carry a bell-roof, the former being internally octagonal with a circular ceiling decorated with 12 brackets.

The Dugdheshwara Mahadeva Temple at Madropur (District Kheralu) is practically similar to and co-eval with the Sunak
temple. Another notable contemporary temple is the Lakulisha Temple at Pavagarh (District Baroda), which is strongly influenced by the regional style of Malwa.

A prolific architectural activity was maintained under the active patronage of the Solanki rulers Siddharaja Jayasimha (1094-1143) and Kumarapala (1143-72). Among the early 12th-century temples the Shrikrishna Temple at Valam (District Mehsana) deserves notice on account of the elegant but unconventional treatment of the mouldings and ornamentation on its wall. Among the remaining 12th-century temples most noteworthy are the Navalakha Temple at Sejakpur (District Surendranagar), the Rudra-mala at Siddhapur (District Mehsana) and the double-shrined temple at Viramgam (District Ahmedabad). The Sejakpur Temple is lavishly carved internally and externally, and has a large peristylar mandapa with lateral transepts. Siddharaja Jayasimha is credited with the construction of the Rudra-mala, on the bank of the river Saraswati, which was a magnificent multi-storeyed Shiva Temple with 11 subsidiary shrines, dedicated to the 11 Rudras, occupying an area of 91.45 mts. × 70.10 mts. The mutilated fragments of this grand edifice reveal remains of but a few subsidiary shrines, a torana, 2 porches and 4 pillars of the vestibule of the main temple, showing well carved colossal columns, massive architraves, and torana-arches. Undoubtedly, Rudra-mala was one of the largest and most sumptuously decorated religious monuments in India towards the middle of the 12th century.

Side by side with larger temples, smaller ones with a modest plan, comprising sanctum, mandapa and occasionally a porch were also built, displaying the characteristic decorative and plastic ornaments of the style. Of these the Hingloji-mata Temple at Khandoran (District Mehsana) is precisely dated 1150. The Shaiva Temple of Jasmalnath at Asoda, the Mata Temple at Kanoda, the Chandra-mauli Temples at Kamboi, the Sitalamata Temple at Piludra, the Shiva Temple at Ruhavi and some of the minor shrines of the Limbojmata Temple at Delmal, in the same district, are allied to the Khandoran Temple in date and architectural features. The Kasara Temple in the same district is a triple-shrined structure
with a common octagonal mandapa, but otherwise similar to the
foregoing.

Vadnagar in the same district had a temple comparable in size
and grandeur to the Rudra-mala as is indicated by the remains of
two colossal toranas, one of them in an excellent state of preservation.

The celebrated temple of Somanath at Prabhas Patan was ori-
ginally built during the 10th century and underwent successive
demolitions followed by reconstructions. Thus after the sack of
Mahmud of Ghazni (c. 1025) the temple was rebuilt by Bhima I.
But the grandest form of this temple belonged to the time of Kumara-
pala, resembling the Rudra-mala in design and dimensions. This
was a temple consisting of an inner sanctum, an ambulatory with
three transepts, a vestibule and a magnificent closed hall with three
entrances. It had a lofty socle and a loftier wall, decorated with
two rows of sculptures, the battered and weathered ruins of which
are now preserved in the local museum.

The momentum of building activity was maintained during the
13th century, though towards the latter half of the century the old
vigour and elegance were lost. The Navalakha Temple at Ghumli
(District Jamnagar), belonging to the beginning of the 13th
century, is a richly ornamented ambitious structure having a san-
catum with an ambulatory and three projecting transepts, and a
two-storeyed mandapa of a design, somewhat resembling that of the
larger Sas-bahu Temple at Gwalior.

The later temples, affiliated mostly to the Jaina faith, are situated
on the sacred hills of Shatrunjaya and Girnar in Saurashtra. On
account of repeated renovations these temples have lost their
original character. Nevertheless, the triple-shrined temple of
Adinatha at Girnar (District Junagadh) built by the celebrated
Jaina minister Vastupala is an interesting specimen of architecture.
Similarly the colossal Jaina temple at Taranga (District Mehsana),
originally attributed to king Kumarapala but renovated subsequent-
ly, is impressive for its size as well as its architectural form. Of the
latest Jaina temples those at Ranakpur (District Pali, Rajasthan)
deserve mention as excellent specimens of the traditional architecture
of Gujarat and Rajasthan which flourished till the 15th-17th centuries.
Plate 15. Sun Temple, Modhera
(See page 45)
Plate 16. Larger Sas-bahu Temple, Gwalior
(See page 55)
CHAPTER VII

MEDIEVAL TEMPLES OF CENTRAL INDIA

The early medieval temples of Central India have already been covered in Chapter III dealing with the temples of the Pratihara age. Here we shall notice the developed medieval styles of Central India.

On account of its geographical situation in the heart of the country Central India was open to influences from all sides. This was aided by the ambitious political and cultural activities of the powerful dynasties that ruled over different parts of this region during the medieval period. The Chandellas of Jejakabhukti who supplanted the Imperial Pratiharas of Kanauj, the Kalachuris of Dahala and the Paramaras of Malwa were mighty powers which administered parts of this region simultaneously and competed with one another in the arts of war and peace. There were also lesser dynasties such as the Kachchhapaghatas of Narwar, Dubkund and Gwalior. These powers vied with one another in building temples with which Central India was once thickly studded, but of which only a small fraction has survived the ravages of man and nature. The rich traditions of Gupta art and architecture were kept up by the Pratiharas whose monumental remains in this region have already been noticed in a previous chapter. Between the 10th and 12th centuries the Kalachuris kept the torch burning in the eastern part of Central India, the Chandellas in the central part, the Paramaras largely in the western part and the Kachchhapaghatas mainly in the northern part. The Gupta and Pratihara legacies being common to all of them, their buildings share many a feature of plan, design and decorative scheme. The common constituents of the plan are the sanctum, vestibule and mandapa. On the developed temples the mandapa has lateral transepts and a porch is added in the front. The entrance compartment, be it a mandapa or a porch, is partly enclosed as a rule by an ornamental balustrade which is canopied by overhanging eaves. The sukanasa-
antefix is of the stepped and gabled design and invariably carries a figure of a lion, usually rampant. The shikhara over the sanctum is of 5 or 7 rathas, of which the central one unfailingly projects like a tongue to the neck which is surmounted by two amalasarakas crowned by a pot-finial. The above-mentioned features together with a few decorative designs such as stencil-like incised scrolls constitute the common characteristics of temples of Central India. The distinctive features of the dynastic styles will be brought out, while dealing with their principal surviving monuments.

The temples built by the Paramaras of Malwa are seen to have pronouncedly individual features, derived from external influences. As the territories of the Paramaras bordered on Rajasthan and the upper Deccan and as they had intimate contacts with Khandesh and the Konkan which they are known to have annexed for some time, their buildings are strongly influenced by the Deccani style, so much so that they are affiliated more to the Deccani style than the Central Indian. The Paramara temples of Central India are consequently treated under the monuments of the Deccani style (below, p. 66).

1. KALACHURI TEMPLES

The temples at Bandogarh (District Shah dol in M.P.), dating from the 8th and early 9th centuries and belonging to the Pratihara genre, do reveal certain regional Kalachuri traits, which blossomed further in the Vaidyanatha Temple at Baijnath (District Rewa) and the ruined temple at Binaika (District Sagar), both assignable to the 9th century. The distinctive Kalachuri idiom in art and architecture is fully articulated in the Vishnu Temple at Arjula (District Shahdol), datable to the early 10th century, of which only the door-frame and pillars, lavished with exquisite ornaments and statuary has survived. The next landmark is the Shiva Temple at Chandrehe (District Sidhi in M.P.), which is in an excellent state of preservation.

The Chandrehe temple, which is attributable to the middle of the 10th century, has a remarkable plan and design comprising a circular sanctum of 16 offsets, a vestibule with a stepped and gabled
roof and an open projecting porch, enclosed by balustrades. The temple stands on a moulded platform-terrace and simple podium-mouldings. The wall is plain and divided into two registers by a median band. Each offset of its elegantly proportioned shikhara is decorated with a lattice design of a pristine form with its tongue projecting beyond the shoulder course. The temple shows a plain doorway and plain corbelled ceilings.

The dilapidated Shiva Temple at Masaun (District Rewa in M.P.) is almost a duplicate of the Chandrehe temple. It is interesting to note here that nearly a dozen brick temples of a like date and with a similar plan and design have been found in the contiguous region of the Gangetic plains in the districts of Fīt-tehpur and Kanpur in U.P., and indicate a wide popularity of the circular temple type.

The Shiva Temple at Maihar (District Satna), dating from 960 and locally known as Golamath, marks a further development. The temple comprises a pancha-ratha sanctum, roofed by a tall shikhara of elegant proportion, and a small porch. The sanctum wall has two rows of sculptures adorning all the projections and the recesses. While the lower row shows cult-images and the Regents in the prominent offsets and apsaras and kusalas in the remaining offsets and recesses, the upper row has smaller figures and invariably displays couples.

Of similar date and style is the Mahadeva Temple at Nohta (District Damoh) which has a more elaborate plan comprising a sanctum, a large pillared mandapa and a porch, resting on a platform terrace. The shikhara of the temple has been restored with the original material in an unimaginative manner.

Gurgi, situated not far from Rewa, was a prolific centre of Kalachuri temples, of which fragmentary remains alone have come to light. Noteworthy among these is the famous torana (now kept in Rewa Palace), embellished with exquisite statuary and narrative friezes depicting Shiva’s wedding, and a colossal image of Shiva-Parvati (displayed in a public-park in Rewa). The latter was obviously the principal cult-image of a magnificent Shaiva Temple and the former must have formed the ornamental entrance to the
same or another equally grand Shaiva Temple, assignable to the latter half of the 10th century.

We find traces of numerous temples of similar style and date at Tewar (representing ancient Tripuri, the capital of the Kalachuris in District Jabalpur) and at Bilhari in the same district, which has still preserved the elegant pillared mandapa of the famous Kamakandala Temple.

The Shiva Temple at Marai (District Satna), dating from the late 10th century, forms the next landmark. Though the temple is ruined and roofless now, it stands on a high socle and its wall is quite ornate showing two bands of sculptural decoration. Of a comparable date, but less ornate, is the Shiva Temple, locally known as-Batasha, in a forest near the hill-fort of Ajaygarh (District Panna), having a fairly tall shikhara.

The temples at Amarkantak (District Shahdol), which being the source of the rivers Narmada and Son is a famous place of pilgrimage, are assignable to the 11th century and are noteworthy for their simplicity. They comprise a sanctum with a curvilinear shikhara, a vestibule with a stepped pyramidal roof and a pillared mandapa enclosed by balustrades and roofed by a pyramidal superstructure, made of receding tiers. Except for the Karna Temple, all other local temples are pancha-ratha on plan and in elevation with a plain wall, divided into two registers. The Karna Temple, however, is a triple-shrined structure comprising 3 sancta, each showing a tall shikhara having 7 offsets, with a common mandapa, now completely lost. Each shrine shows a plain wall of 3 registers. Although the temple shows an advanced design in having a saptaratha sanctum, sculptures are almost completely wanting and even decorative motifs are of the simplest variety. Only the cardinal niches of the Amarkantak temples contained sculptures and even their door-frames are devoid of figures and show the simplest ornaments such as stencil-like scrolls and a lotus design.

Most developed among the Kalachuri temples and the one having affinity to the Khajuraho temples is the Virateshwara Temple at Sohagpur (District Shahdol). Its platform is low, but its podium-mouldings and the decorative scheme of its wall and the
sapta-ratha plan and design of its sanctum are similar to the Khajuraho temples. Its wall is embellished with 3 bands of sculptures, and like the developed Khajuraho temples, its uppermost band shows flying angelic figures and the remaining bands display the same arrangement of figures including the 8 Vasus and the Regents. Its spire is unusually tall and slender in proportion and is crowned by 3 amalasarakas instead of 2 and is clustered by two rows of turrets which are so attenuated in height and bulk that the upper attached spires hardly reach half the height of the main spire. The temple has a full-fledged closed hall with lateral transepts and a porch. The closed hall is spacious and internally octagonal with its coffered ceiling decorated with 8 brackets, but it is devoid of central pillars. Externally the hall-transepts are decorated with vyalas alternating with apsarasas. This temple is assignable to the later half of the 11th century.

The last Kalachuri temple to be noticed is the Chausath Yogini Temple at Bheraghat (District Jabalpur in M.P.), dating from c. 9th-10th centuries. This is a rare type of hypaethral circular temple, measuring 35.35 mts. in diameter internally. It has 81 peripheral chapels enshrining images of the 64 Yoginis and allied divinities with the principal shrine dedicated to Uma-Maheshwara, situated in the open courtyard. Only half-a-dozen other Yogini temples are known, 5 from Central India and Orissa and one from Coimbatore in South India. The only Yogini temple with a rectangular plan is situated at Khajuraho and noticed below (p. 60).

Architectural activity was pursued vigorously also under the patronage of the later Kalachuris of the Ratanpur branch. The Mahadeva Temple at Markanda (District Chanda), assignable to the middle of the 12th century, was a grand edifice embellished with three bands of sculptures on the wall-faces of the sapta-ratha sanctum and vestibule as well as the mandapa. The Shiva Temple at Pali (District Bilaspur) is comparable in date, design and sculptural style to the above, but displays only two registers of sculptures. The Vishnu Temple at Janjgir in the same district, assignable to the early 13th century, was a stupendous structure reared up on a lofty platform-terrace, of which only the roofless sapta-ratha sanctum
has survived. The latter has a socle embellished with running bands of elephants and horse-riders and a wall adorned with two registers of sculptures of a decadent style. The old ruined temples at Gandai and Deorbijia in District Drug share the date and design of the Janjgir Temple. The Sheorinarayan Temple in the same district is of a similar age and style, but it is less ornate and has a ruined shikhara clustered with multiple turrets. The Narayan Temple at Narayanpal (District Bastar in M.P.) is practically of the same style but is even plainer and has a single-spire shikhara of an elegant outline and proportion.

2. KACHCHHAPOAGHATA TEMPLES

Under the three branches of the Kachchhapaghatas, which ruled over the north-western parts of Central India, a highly ornate temple-style was developed, with their principal seat at Gwalior and subsidiary centres at Kadwaha (District Guna), Surwaya, Mahua and Terahi (District Shivpuri), Suhania, Padhavli and Mitaoli (District Morena) and Kherat (District Bhind) all in Madhya Pradesh. These temples are distinguished by a low plinth, a double register of sculptures on the wall, low pillars decorated with a pot-and-foliage motif, a doorway of five bands, of which one is carved with a stylized design of serpents and another with a pilaster-design with spiral decorative bands, and a frieze of square rafter-ends, embellished with monkey-heads below the shikhara, which is normally of a medium height. The earlier phase of the style is represented by the temples at Surwaya (District Shivpuri), dating from the 10th century, and its middle phase by the Kakanmadh Temple at Suhania (District Morena), built by Kachchhapaghata Kirttiraja (1015-35). Standing on a lofty platform and surrounded by subsidiary shrines, the Suhania Temple is notable for its size and sculptural wealth and comprises a sanctum with an ambulatory, roofed by a tall shikhara (31 m. high), a grand hypostyle mandapa and a porch approached by a flight of steps. Kadwaha (District Guna) was a prolific centre of the school with remains of over two dozen temples. The latest and largest temple at the site known
as the Murayat, dating from c. 1075, is notable for its simple lay-
out comprising a *pancha-ratha* sanctum, a vestibule and a *mandapa*
with a highly-ornamented treatment of the interior as well as the
exterior. The twin Vaishnava temples known as the Sas-bahu at
Gwalior, the main seat of the Kachchhapaghatas, mark the climax
of the dynastic style.

Of these two the larger one was completed by Kachchhapaghata
Mahipala in 1093. With a simple plan comprising sanctum,
vestibule and a closed hall with three entrance porches, the temple
has grand dimensions and an impressive design showing a two-storied
elevation for the vestibule and the entrance porch and, a three-storied
elevation for the hall proper which has a lofty (about 24.40 mts.
high) bell-roof. The *shikhara* over the sanctum, which must have
been loftier, is lost. Internally the closed hall is a spacious structure
of 12 sides with a circular ceiling supported on 4 massive pillars
and 12 pilasters. The temple is noted for extravagance of orna-
mentation, both plastic and decorative, which covers its exterior
and every inch of its interior. The smaller temple is a modest
replica of the larger one with this difference that it has a ceiling
roof resting on octagonally planned pillars, and has lost the sanctum
totally, but for its highly ornate door-frame.

3. CHANDELLA TEMPLES

As regards the Chandellas of Jejakabhukti, they were the greatest
Central Indian power during the 10th-11th centuries and were
known as great builders and connoisseurs of arts and letters. They
decorated their kingdom with tanks, forts, palaces and temples,
which were mainly concentrated in their strongholds of Mahoba
(ancient Mahotsavanagara), Kalinjar (Kalanjara) and Ajaygarh
(Jayapuradurga) and, to a lesser extent, in their towns of Dudhai,
Chandpur, Madanpur and Deograh in District Jhansi. But the
temples of these places could stand no comparison with those of
the capital town of Khajuraho.

Khajuraho, situated in District Chhatarpur of Madhya Pradesh,
has the distinction of possessing one of the most compact and homo-
geneous groups of Northern temples, built under the patronage of the Chandella rulers. (This site is now very well connected by road from Satna and Harpalpur railway stations of the Central Railway and also by air. Nearby is Panna, famous for its diamond fields, as mentioned earlier.)

Except for the Chausath Yogini, Brahma, Lalguan-Mahadeva, Varaha and Matangeshvara, all other temples of Khajuraho pertain to a cognate style and are manifestations of a distinctive and concerted architectural movement, differing only in details of expression. The temples belong to Shaiva, Vaishnava and Jaina sects, but in spite of divergent sectarian affiliations, the dominant architectural and sculptural schemes are homogeneous.

These temples mark the culmination of the Central Indian building style and reveal certain distinctive peculiarities of plan and elevation. They are compact and lofty temples without any enclosure wall and are erected on a high platform-terrace which elevates the structure from its environs and provides an open promenade and ambulatory round the shrine. All the compartments of the temple are inter-connected internally as well as externally and are planned in one axis, running east-west and forming a compact, unified structure of a size which is by no means very large. The essential elements of the plan, namely, a porch, a hall, a vestibule and a sanctum are present in all temples. In the large temples, however, lateral transepts with balconied windows are added to the hall. While the main hall is a hypostyle structure of considerable height and size, closed except for the balconied windows on the lateral transepts, the porch and the smaller attached hall are low compartments, open on the lateral sides and provided with a continuous stretch of balconied openings of the balustrade design. The larger temples also introduce an inner ambulatory round the sanctum, to which is added another pair of lateral transepts and a rear transept, each with a balconied window for the ventilation of the interior. With two pairs of transepts cutting across the axis, such temples resemble on plan a Latin cross with two principal arms, while the temples without an ambulatory show only one cross-arm. Some of the larger temples also have a subsidiary shrine reared up
Plate 13. Temple No. IV, Roda
Plate 18. KANDARIYA MAHADEVA TEMPLE, KHAJURAHO
Plate 27. Jagamohana of Sun Temple, Konarak
in each of the four corners of the platform-terrace, rendering the structure a complete panchayatana.

Like the plan, the elevation of the Khajuraho temples also has distinctive features. The temple, erected on a lofty platform-terrace, has an emphatically high socle consisting of a series of ornamental mouldings which slope out and grip the terrace firmly, providing at the same time scope for the play of light and shade.

Over this stable and ornate base rests the jangha forming the central zone, which consists of solid walls alternating with voids of the inner compartments. The balconied windows canopied by overhanging eaves admit light and air into the interior and form beautiful openings for the inner compartments. The solid wall spaces in between them are studded with two or more horizontal bands of statuary of exquisite grace and charm, which constitute the most attractive feature of the Khajuraho temples. The deep shadows, cast over the whole composition by the balconied windows, and the light and shade falling over the sculptural bands, following the alternate projections and recesses of the indented plan, indeed create a highly picturesque effect.

Above the central zone of the wall proper, rises the roof consisting of a series of graded peaks that veritably resemble a mountain range (Kailasa or Meru) with which an Indian temple is frequently likened. The several compartments have their separate roofs which rise in a modulated crescendo, from the lowest over the porch to the loftiest over the sanctum. These peaks, arrayed along the axial line, rise and fall alternately, while maintaining their upward ascent, and culminate in the tallest spire which is raised directly over the sanctum. Unlike the superstructures of the porch, and the closed hall and the compartment in between, which are of a pyramidal shape, the shikhara over the sanctum is tall and curvilinear in design with a lyrical outline. The developed local temples are characterised by an intricate arrangement of turrets of varying sizes, attached to the main shikhara at different heights. The clustering together of subsidiary peaks to the main peak not only lightens the weight of the stupendous pile, but also accentuates the soaring effect and intensifies the vertical ascent of the
shikhara. The upward and seemingly restless movement of the volumes and masses of the entire composition and the progressive ascent and descent of the component elements of the superstructure, converging to the highest pinnacle, lend a peculiar rhythmic verticality to the Khajuraho temples.

In all the well-preserved temples of the developed type the central ratha (offset) of the shikhara and often the flanking rathas including corner-offsets extend upwards beyond the neck course, which is crowned, respectively, by a large amalasaraka, a series of cap-stones, a smaller amalaka, and a pot-finial. The extension of the rathas beyond the neck and the occurrence of two amalakas, one larger and the other smaller, on the pinnacle of the shikhara constitute peculiarities of the Central Indian style of temples prominently exhibited by the Khajuraho monuments.

As regards the interior plan, the porch is entered through a highly ornate makara-torana\(^1\) which is profusely carved with minute figures resembling a hanging tracery. The porch is a modest rectangular passage which broadens into a slightly wider compartment or hall both enclosed by sloping balustrade. The structure next in sequence is the main hall with lateral transepts which are provided with balconied windows. In the larger temple the hall shows in the centre four tall pillars carrying a square framework of architraves, which is first turned into an octagon, and then into a circle supporting a ceiling of over-lapping concentric rings. This hall is connected with the sanctum through the vestibule. The ornate door-frame of the sanctum is entered through one or more moon-stones placed on the floor of the vestibule.

With such a simple and functionally effective plan, the interior shows an amazing exuberance of decorative details and sculptural wealth, largely found on the door-frame, pillars, architraves, and ceilings. The cusped and coffered ceilings, representing intricate geometrical and floral designs, the latter frequently showing prominent staminal tubes, exhibit uncommon skill and ingenuity. Even more remarkable than the ornate ceilings are the bracket

\(^1\)The makara-torana is preserved in only three temples viz., the Lakshmana, Kandariya Mahadeva and Javari.
figures of *apsarases* and *salabhanjikas*, tenoned into the Atlantean brackets or ceiling corners, which with their sensuous modelling, charming postures and excellent finish constitute masterpieces of medieval sculpture. In the case of temples with an ambulatory, the wall-faces of the sanctum proper also show two to three bands of statuary over a moulded podium, repeating on a smaller scale the sculptural theme and decorative ornaments on the exterior shell.

Like the exterior, the design of the interior apartments also emphasises the vertical aspiration. Imposing flights of steps lead from the ground to the platform-terrace and from the terrace to the porch and thence to the hall and vestibule which have successively higher floors. The sanctum which is at the highest level is approached from the vestibule through a series of moon-stones.

The Khajuraho temple has pronouncedly individual features. The sanctum is *sapta-ratha* on plan and in elevation, with the cubical portion below the *shikhara* divided into 7 segments showing 2 series of mouldings of the podium and 3 sculptured registers on the wall separated by 2 sets of band-mouldings. The *sapta-ratha* sanctum with the 7 segments for the wall marks the highest development of the North Indian architectural design. Further, the principal lineaments of the elevation directly rise from and basically conform to those of the plan. The numerous projections and recesses of the elevation, following rhythmically the indentations of the plan, produce an admirable contrast of light and shade and all of them converge to the final unity of the *shikhara*, thus intensifying the vertical aspiration of the monument. Rhythmic accentuation, which is the keynote of the Khajuraho temple, is further characterised by a harmonious integration of sculpture with architecture. With an enormous array of five sculptures ever present, the texture of the Khajuraho temple vibrates with an exuberance of human warmth paralleled only on the wall of the Orissan temple.

It has hitherto been thought that all the Khajuraho temples were built within a hundred years, from c. 950 to 1050\(^1\), but a

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\(^1\)Recently S.K. Saraswati has re-examined the question and concluded that 'none of the temples at Khajurao' even those which on account of style may be regarded as the earliest, can be dated prior to the second half of the eleventh century
closer scrutiny reveals that the earliest temple cannot be much later than 850 and the latest may go beyond 1100. There was undoubtedly an older tradition of architecture in granite at Khajuraho and the transition from granite to sandstone must have been accomplished gradually. Further, on a comparative study of the significant details of architectural design, the style and modelling of the sculptures and the development of the decorative motifs and ornaments on the Khajuraho temples, together with available inscriptive evidence, the temples resolve themselves into two broad groups, viz., (1) the earlier, consisting of the Chausath Yogini, Lalguan-Mahadeva, Brahma, Matangeshwar and Varaha, and (2) the later, comprising the rest.

The Chausath Yogini temple, made of coarse granite, is the earliest building at Khajuraho, datable to the last quarter of the 9th century. Standing on a lofty terrace, it is an open-air quadrangular structure of peripheral shrines, of which the one in the back wall, facing the entrance, is the largest and constitutes the main sanctum. The shrines are tiny cells, each entered by a small doorway, and are severely plain and roofed by a curvilinear shikhara of an elementary form. A few simple mouldings on the facade are all the decoration that the temple displays, but in spite of its uncouth appearance and rugged bareness, it possesses an elemental strength and reveals some basic traits of the Khajuraho style, such as a lofty terrace and a wall divided into two registers. Of all the Yogini temples in India, this is the most primitive in construction and is unique in being quadrangular and not circular on plan.

Except the Chausath Yogini, which has a unique purpose and plan and is made entirely of granite, the temples of the earlier group are normally built partly of granite and partly of sandstone and are small structures, each consisting of a square sanctum, roofed by a pyramidal superstructure of receding tiers, a very constricted vestibule and a porch resting on two pillars and two pilasters. The vestibule and the porch have survived only in the Matangeshwar, which is the largest and perhaps the latest example

A.D. "The Struggle for Empire" (Bombay, 1957), pp. 557-76. The present author, however, does not agree with this view.
of its group and is constructed of sandstone. The Varaha shrine, which is a pavilion built of sandstone, also belongs to the same conception. Although this group is characterised by a plain interior and exterior and an austerity of design and ornamentation, some of the basic traits of the Khajuraho style, viz., the inclusion of two *amalasarakas* among the crowning ornaments of the superstructure, the division of the wall into two or three horizontal registers and the accentuation and concordance of the main lineaments of the plan and the elevation are already conspicuously present there.

The later group includes all the other temples of Khajuraho, which are constructed of sandstone in entirety and are distinguished by a developed plan and design and lavish ornamentation, already noted above.

On a comparative analysis of the sculptural, architectural and decorative features of the temples of the later group, it is found that the Lakshmana and Duladeo are endowed with individual features representing the two extremes of the same movement. Thus, while the plastic modelling of the Lakshmana is sensitive and massive, that of the Duladeo is stereotyped, crusty and angular, often showing very shallow relief. While the *shikhara* of the former has a single row of leaning spires and 2 rows of corner turrets, that of the latter is clustered by 3 rows both of leaning spires and corner turrets. Again, the individual *chaitya*-dormers forming the lattice-ornament of the *shikhara* are bold, distinct and of a pristine form on the Lakshmana, while those on the Duladeo are confused and complicated. The Lakshmana, therefore, stands at the beginning of the finer, developed series of the Khajuraho temples and the Duladeo at its fag end. In between are to be placed the other temples. In fact, the typical Khajuraho style begins with the Lakshmana, which is followed by the Parshvanatha, Vishvanatha, Jagadambi and Chitragni, marking the successive stages in the evolution of the architectural and sculptural efflorescence at Khajuraho. The peak is reached in the Kandariya Mahadeva, which represents the grand finale and culmination of the architectural movement. The temples which followed the Kandariya, viz., the Vamana, Adinatha and Javari, keep up the sculptural
excellence of the style but are much less ambitious projects. The Chaturbhuja, which closely follows the Javari, continues the same sculptural and architectural traditions, but the signs of decline are already evident. The Duladeo marks the last glow of the dying flame, as it shows dynamic and vigorous sculptures on the one hand and degenerate, stereotyped and lavishly ornamented figures and art-motifs on the other.

Among the finer sandstone temples of Khajuraho, the Lakshmana, Parshvanatha, Vishvanatha and the Kandariya Mahadeva are the largest and most significant ones, with all the constituent elements of a developed plan and elevation. On grounds of sculptural and architectural styles the Lakshmana Temple is easily the earliest of these. All its mandapa roofs show a pure pyramidal shikhara of a straight contour and crowned by a prominent bell-member, which are early features. The greater relief of scroll-work on some of its pillars and the sinuous grace, voluminous modelling and serene expression of its sculptures are most distinctive. This is the only local temple to show a simple makara-torana of two loops and a sanctum, pancha-ratha on plan and in design. Constructed by the Chandella king Yashovarman in c. 950, it is a Vaishnava temple of the panchayatana variety and is the only one which preserves all the subsidiary shrines and the terrace-friezes, showing a moving pageant of hunting- and battle-scenes, and a large number of female brackets in the interior.

On the basis of sculptural, architectural and inscriptional evidence, the Parshvanatha Temple appears to have been a close successor of the Lakshmana Temple having been built during the early part of Dhanga's reign in c. 950-70. Despite its Jaina dedication, the Parshvanatha Temple bears significant kinship to the Lakshmana Temple in displaying among its sculptures a predominance of Vaishnava themes, including scenes from the romantic life of Krishna. Its sculptures approximate those of the Lakshmana in theme and modelling, but show a better proportion and poise. Architecturally, however, this temple shows an advanced shikhara design and a few distinctive features. It is oblong on plan with an axial projection on the two shorter sides, showing a porch in the
front and an attached shrine in the rear. The transepts with the balconied windows, which are so characteristic of the developed Khajuraho style, are conspicuous here by their absence and the wall is solid and monotonously embellished with three bands of graceful sculptures, with no voids at all to relieve the monotony.

Sculpturally and architecturally, the Shaiva temple of Vishvanatha comes midway between the Lakshmana and the Kandariya, and its importance lies in the fact that it anticipates in plan, design and ornamentation the Kandariya, which marks the culmination of the Central Indian temple building style. Thus, the base mouldings of this temple closely resemble those of the Kandariya. The two temples also agree in the general arrangement and disposition of sculptures. Three sculptural bands of equal size on the wall faces are peculiar to these two temples at Khajuraho; they exhibit a striking identity of sculptural theme inasmuch as the nine principal niches of their faces represent images of dancing 

_**sapta-matrikas**

with Ganesha at one end and Virabhadra at the other. Even the _**shikharas**_ of the two temples are essentially similar in design, though that of Vishvanatha is rather simpler. An inscribed slab found in this temple refers to the dedication of two _**lingas**_, one made of emerald and the other of stone, in a towering temple of Shiva-Marakateshvara, built by the Chandella king Dhanga in 1002. Although the stone _**linga**_ alone has survived, there is no doubt that the inscription refers to the Vishvanatha Temple itself, which, by its architectural grandeur and sculptural exuberance, easily impresses as a monument worthy of a king.

The Kandariya Mahadeva is the largest and loftiest temple of Khajuraho, measuring about 30.48 mts. each in length and height and 20.12 mts. in width, excluding the terrace. Strikingly similar to the Vishvanatha, it is much more magnificent, and its mature plan, design, and dimensions, its superb sculptural embellishment and architectural elaboration—all mark it out as the most evolved and finished achievement of the Central Indian building-style and one of the sublimest creations of Indian temple architecture. Decorated with graded and ascending series of smaller replicas of itself totalling 85, the grand _**shikhara**_ of the Kandariya is an
intricately-ornamented pile, somewhat restless in movement but unified in theme and design. Of all the Khajuraho temples, it has the loftiest base with several elegantly chiselled mouldings, which include two rows of processional friezes teeming with elephants and horses, warriors and hunters, acrobats and musicians, dancers and devotees, and erotic couples. The largest number of sculptures appear on the three registers of its wall and represent an animated array of gods and goddesses, couples and nymphs on projections, and vyalas and nulis in recesses. The sculptures on this temple are conspicuously tall and slender and show the richest variety of nymph-types in lively, often violently agitated postures. As this temple was anticipated by the Vishvanatha Temple, which was completed in c. 1002, it is slightly later than the Vishvanatha and may plausibly be assigned to the later part of Vidyadhara’s reign (c. 1025-50). Colour is lent to this suggestion by the find of a short epigraph on a mandapa-pilaster of this temple, mentioning a king called Virimda, which may have been a pet name of Vidyadhara.

The remaining sandstone temples of Khajuraho are smaller structures without an ambulatory. Of these the Jagadambi, Chitragnata, Vamana and Adinatha are notable, like the larger temples, for the excellence of their sculptures, including the nymphs vaunting their voluptuous charms in an infinite variety of gestures and flexions. The Jagadambi Temple displays erotic couples, which are among the finest sculptures of Khajuraho, distinguished by a rare sensitiveness and expression of intense rapture and absorption, transcending from the physical to the spiritual plane.

The Duladeo is a most developed sapta-ratha temple; it shows a large closed hall with the ceiling embellished with 20 apsaras-brackets, grouped in bunches. Its wall faces carry tedious repetitions of identical images of Shiva and Shiva-Parvati and conventionalized and decadent decorative ornaments. Because of these and many other features of plan, design and ornamentation, the Duladeo is assignable to the 12th century, and marks the last glow of the remarkable vitality for which the Chandellas art and architecture of Khajuraho are justly famous.
Plate 17. Vishvanatha Temple, Khajuraho
(See page 63)
Plate 19. Shikhara of Kandariya Mahadeva Temple, Khajuraho
(See page 64)
CHAPTER VIII

DECCANI STYLE

In the upper Deccan, containing an extensive area between the river Tapi on the north and the upper branch of the Krishna on the south, flourished an individual style of Northern architecture. This region had already established notable architectural achievements in the form of Ajanta and Ellora and although this rock method of expression was drawing to a close, it provided inspiration to a new structural movement of architectural significance. Its most distinctive feature is its shikhara, of Bhumija class, which shows four spines decorated with the usual mesh of chaitya-dormers on the central rathas (offsets), but the quadrants between these spines are filled with miniature shrine-models of diminishing heights arranged in 3 to 5 horizontal and 5 to 7 vertical rows. Another peculiarity of these temples is the prominent sukanasa-antefix exhibiting a sculptured medallion within a conspicuous chaitya-dormer at the base of the spine on each side. This feature is more prominent in the front face which displays a significant aspect of the principal deity enshrined. The mandapa usually shows a nascent form of a bell-roof. The pillars are squat and highly ornamented and show a few circular mouldings as if turned on the lathe, derived from the Chalukyan architecture further south. The wall-faces of the temple are richly ornamented. Though most of the temples are panch-ratha on plan and in elevation, quite a few of them have a star-shaped layout and are built by rotating a square round a central axis. The temples do not, as a rule, possess an ambulatory and consist of a sanctum, a vestibule and a mandapa with three cardinal porches. Triple-shrined temples are not unknown and always possess a common mandapa and a porch.

An early and representative example of the type is the temple of Ambaranath (District Thana). Consecrated in 1060, the temple consists of a sanctum and a mandapa, articulated diagonally along
a central axis and approached by three entrance porches. The mandapa carries a bell-roof, but the shikhara over the sanctum is of the Bhumija style. Of the 9 temples at Balsane (District Dhulia), the triple-shrined temple (No. 1) is most significant and shows all the characteristic features of this style. One of the best preserved monuments of this style is the Gondeshwara Temple at Sinnar (District Nasik) of the early 13th century, which is a panchayatana with 4 subsidiary shrines. The latter shrines, however, are roofed by the normal type of northern shikhara but for the absence of bhumi-amalakas. The Gondeshwara Temple shows relative decline in the plastic quality which is shared by the slightly earlier Mankeshwara Temple at Jhodga (District Nasik). The Jagadamba Temple at Kokamthan and Amrteshwar Temple at Ratanvadi (District Ahmadnagar), belong to a still later phase of this style. Between the 14th and 16th centuries the style deteriorated further, as evidenced by the numerous Hemadpanthi temples, named after a semi-legendary patron of temple architecture called Hemadpant (Hemadri), who was probably none else but the prime minister of the Devagiri raja, Ramachandradeva. These are a degenerate copy of the style marked by a naive simplicity and clumsiness and are scattered over the regions of the upper Deccan and Berar.

This style found particular favour with the Paramaras of Malwa who built in Malwa in Central India numerous temples in the characteristic Bhumija mode. Recent researches of the author have in fact shown that the style originated in Malwa in the 10th century, as is attested by the earliest nucleus of the Amaredhwar Temple at Onkar Mandhata (District Nimar). Temples of this style are spread over Malwa and parts of Rajasthan and Central India and their stray examples are scattered as far east as Chhattisgarh (Mahakosala) and as far west as Gujarat. The finest temples were built at Un (District Nimar) and at Udaipur (District Vidisha). The last, known as the temple of Nilakantheshwara or Udayeshwara after its royal author Udayaditya, is the grandest specimen of Paramara architecture and was started in 1059 and completed in 1080. It is stellate on plan and consists of a sapataratha sanctum, a vestibule and a hall with three porches. The temple,
surrounded by 7 subsidiary shrines, stands on an extensive platform-terrace which was originally approached through a stepped entrance flanked by large figures of Shaiva dvara-palas (doorkeepers). Great ingenuity has been employed in designing the shikhara of the sanctum which is decorated with 7 vertical and 5 horizontal rows of miniature shikharas in each quadrant, providing a picturesque setting for the play of light and shade. The sculptured medallions, inset in bold chaitya-dormers at the base of the central ratha (offset) of the shikhara on each side, forms a conspicuous feature of this monument, which vibrates with sculpture and ornaments of exquisite elegance and vivacity. The voluptuous figures of apsarases represented on the balustrade decorating the three entrance-porches are notable for their grace and expression. This monument is remarkable for its rich ornamentation, the elegance of its accentuated shikhara design, as also for the organic unity and proportion of its constituent elements.

Un shows a group of Bhumija temples numbering about a dozen, but none of them is in a good state of preservation. Except two temples which pertain to the Jaina sect, all others appear to be Shaiva. Architecturally they all belong to a cognate style and have essentially the same plan and shikhara-design as the Udayeshwara Temple, but are simpler. Except for images in the three niches of the bhadras, their wall is plain and divided into two registers by an ornate median band. On the Shaiva temples the cardinal niches invariably display sculptures of Chamunda, Nataraja and Shiva Tripurari, which constitutes a minor trait of the style. That these temples are contemporary with the Udayeshwara is proved by an inscription of king Udayaditya found in one of them, locally known as Chaubara Dera No. 1 which is the only panchayatana temple at the site.

Like Un, Onkara Mandhata in the same district was another prolific centre of Bhumija temples but these are in a more ruined state and are invariably devoid of the superstructure. The earlier nucleus of the Amareshwara Temple here, assignable to the later half of the 10th century, is also in the Bhumija style, while the later Amareshwara Temple, built on a plan and design com-
parable to the Udayeshwara temple is securely dated 1063 by inscriptional evidence.

The Mahadeva Temple at Jamli (District Dhar) is the only Bhumija temple in Malwa which is not stellate on plan. Besides, it is the smallest and plainest shrine of a *pancha-ratha* plan and five-storeyed elevation and appears to be later than the Udayeshwara Temple by just a decade or so.

The Siddheshwara Temple at Nemawar (District Dewas) has a loftier and larger *shikhara* than that of the Udyeshwara with as many as nine vertical rows of turrets, but it lacks the grace and excellence of proportion of the latter. As this temple represents a degenerate phase of the style, attested by the conventionalisation of the plastic and decorative ornaments and the repetition, on the wall faces, of the images of Shiva with identical attributes, it is assignable to c. 12th century.

The Mahadeva Temple locally known as the Malvai Temple near Alirajpur (District Jhabua) is one of the latest temples of the style in Malwa belonging to c. 15th century.

The earliest Bhumija temple in Rajasthan is the Mahavira Temple at Sewari (District Pali). *Pancha-ratha* on plan and six-storeyed in elevation, the temple has a brick-built superstructure and is assignable to c. 1010-20.

The next temple of this style is the Mahanaleshwara Temple at Menal (District Chittor) which appears to be contemporary with the Udayeshwara Temple and is likewise ornate but only five-storeyed in elevation.

The Shiva Temple at Ramgarh (District Kota in Rajasthan) is about half a century later in time than the Udayeshwara Temple and has a similar plan and *shikhara*-design. Its socle, however, is much more ornate showing bands of elephants, horses, lions and humans, while its sculptures reveal an unmistakable impress of the Rajasthan plastic style. Only one of its four subsidiary shrines has survived and shows a peculiar *shikhara*-design offering a new interpretation of the Bhumija mode. When entire, this temple, however, must have been a structure of considerable architectural merit.
The Undeshwara Temple at Bijolia (District Bhilwara in Rajasthan) shares the date and plan with the Shiva Temple at Ramgarh but is nine-storeyed in elevation.

The so-called Sun Temple at Jhalrapatan (District Jhalawar) is orthogonal and *sapta-ratha* on plan with a seven-storeyed elevation, but shows a more complicated *shikhara*-design, combining a pair of half-leaning spires over the central *ratha* (offset) on each side, with the characteristic turrets of the style in their usual positions. The temple introduces elaborate *toranas* at the entrance to the porch and two bands of sculptures on the wall which are Rajasthani features grafted on the Bhumija style. The monument is datable from the end of the 11th century.

Lastly, we may notice two Bhumija temples of the 15th century from Rajasthan, viz., the Sun Temple at Ranakpur (District Pali) and the Shiva Temple known as the Adbhutnath at Chittorgarh, both being late regional versions of the Bhumija style. The Ranakpur Temple, however, has a unique plan and design in that both its sanctum and *mandapa* are polygonal with 8 offsets, embellished with a running band of solar deities seated in racing chariots.

Only two Bhumija temples are known from Gujarat. One of them is the Shiva Temple at Limkheda (District Panchmahals), which is the earliest known triple-shrined Bhumija temple dating from the middle of the 11th century. The other one is the Galateshwara Temple at Sarnel (District Kaira), assignable to the late 12th century, which is a normal example of an ornate Solanki temple but for its sanctum having a peculiar plan with 8 offsets and an exotic *shikhara*-design in the Bhumija style.

The most easterly temple of this style, hitherto recorded, is the dilapidated Jaina temple known as Bhand Dewal at Arang (District Raipur) in Mahakosala, assignable to the late 11th century. Interpreting the Bhumija mode in the regional Kalachuri style, the temple has an ornate lofty socle and two bands of sculptures on the wall. The temple is five-storeyed and is stellate on plan with six offsets, which is quite exceptional.

It will thus be seen that the Bhumija style of Northern architecture originated in Malwa where it was patronised by the Par-
mara rulers and had a wide vogue in the adjoining regions in the east, west and south. The style was equally popular in the upper Deccan in Berar where it survived in a degenerate form until lately.
CHAPTER IX

TEMPLES OF ORISSA

The development of the North Indian temple architecture is well illustrated by the temples in stone of the Orissa style which though mainly concentrated at Bhubaneshwar, Puri and Konarak—all in the Puri District of Orissa (ancient Kalinga)—extend from the border districts of Bihar and Bengal to Ganjam in Andhra Pradesh. Orissa had a distinctive regional style and traditional architectural nomenclature available in the Oriya version. The style seemingly originated during the 7th century with the earlier group of temples at Bhubaneshwar and culminated during the 13th century in the Sun Temple at Konarak. Bhubaneshwar with about a hundred temples was the pre-eminent centre of this style and unless otherwise specified, the examples mentioned here belong to this place.

The Orissan temples broadly pertain to three orders, locally known as the rekha-deul, pidha-deul and khakhara-deul. The sanctum with the curvilinear shikhara (rekha) is called the rekha-deul and the mandapa (jagamohana) with a pyramidal roof of pidhas (tiers) is known as the pidha-deul. In a typical Orissan temple the latter two form the component parts of a single architectural scheme. The later Orissan temple adds in front two more mandapas, known as the nata-mandira (dancing hall) and bhoga-mandapa (hall of offerings), in the same axis. It is, however, to be noted that in the earliest group of Orissan temples, the pidha-deul is wanting and the mandapa is a rectangular pillared hall covered by a low flat roof of two sloping tiers with a clerestory in between.

Temples of the third order, viz., khakhara, are rare, only six examples being known from Bhubaneshwar. These are characterised by an oblong plan and a wagon-vault roof which is a familiar shape in South India, probably derived from the early chaitya-halls. The shape, however, underwent modification in Orissa, where its miniature form, known as the khakhara-mundi, was commonly used
as a decorative architectural motif.

The typical Orissan sanctum and the mandapa are divided vertically into four distinct sections, viz., the pishta (sole), the bada (wall including the podium below and the cornice above), the gandi (the spire), and the mastaka (crowning elements). Of these the socle is an optional member. The earlier temples have a tri-anga (three-divisioned) wall, but the later temples develop a panchanga (five-divisioned) wall by sub-dividing the wall into two registers by a set of mouldings known as bandhana (median bands). The rekha-deul and the pidha-deul are alike up to the cornice and differ mainly in the form of the shikhara, and partly in the shape of the mastaka. The spire of the rekha-deul, however, gradually inclines inwards and is vertically divided into pagas (rathas) which increase from 3 (tri-ratha) in the earlier specimens to 5, 7 or even 9 (pancha-ratha, sapta-ratha or nava-ratha) in the later ones. The spire of a typical Orissan temple has an almost vertical outline with a pronounced curve only near the top. The wall and the spire are square in cross-section throughout, but the crowning members are circular. Other characteristics of the Orissan temple include a general astyler construction, square plan for all the compartments, a plain interior and a lavishly decorated exterior.

The course of evolution in Orissa is towards a greater elaboration of the plan and elevation and increasing sophistication of the ornaments. The early examples with a modest size and squat shikhara and showing naive sculptures and ornaments, mature into elaborate structures of a towering height, embellished with exuberant sculptural and decorative wealth. There is a steady trend towards the accentuation of height, widening the ratio between the size of the sanctum and the height of the spire from 1:3 at the initial stage (Parashurameshwar Temple) to 1:7 in the latest example (Sun Temple at Konarak).

We shall begin with the Parashurameshwar Temple which is the best preserved among the earliest group of Orissan temples, numbering over half a dozen. This temple, measuring 14.63 mts. long by 42.80 mts. high, consists of a tri-ratha sanctum with a stunted curvilinear shikhara and a rectangular pillared
Plate 20. SCULPTURAL DECOR ON KANDARIYA MAHADEVA TEMPLE, KHAJURaho

(See page 64)
Plate 23. VAITAL DEUL, BHUBANESHWAR
(See page 13)
mandapa, roofed by two sloping tiers with a clerestory in between. Its sanctum has a low podium and a wall decorated with a prominent niche on each cardinal offset flanked by two smaller niches, surmounted by a pediment. The sanctum carries a squat, heavy-shouldered shikhara surmounted by a neck and a large amalasaraka. The recessed frieze separating the wall from the spire is carved with figures of couples and other designs alternating with diapers. The cardinal niche is treated as a projecting shrine and shows, on the south and the east, massive and vigorous figures of Ganesha and Karttikeya. The mandapa is a low flat-roofed structure standing on a lower podium and lighted (in addition to the clerestory) by 2 doorways on two sides and 4 latticed windows, one of them embellished with a relief of dancers and musicians of uncommon charm and vigour. Its wall is elaborately decorated with a row of figures in niches, surmounted by ornamental carvings in low relief. The figures represent a variety of Brahmanical gods and goddesses including Shiva, Harihara, Lakulisha, Surya, Agni, Yama, Varuna, Ganga, Yamuna and the seven Mothers flanked by Virabhadra and Ganesha, besides mythological scenes, mainly Shaiva, which are also depicted on the many chaitya-dormers carved on the facades of the sanctum. Several chaitya-dormers contain animal and human heads and busts of Shiva. The two prominent chaitya-windows on the front face of the shikhara are inset with the figures of Shiva as Ravanarugraha-murti and Natesha, surmounted by a large kirittimukha, crowned by a seated figure of Lakulisha. The interior of the temple is plain in contrast with the lavishly decorated exterior. All the doorways are of the overdoor design, the inner one being carved with inscribed figures of the 8 planets\(^1\) on the architrave. On the basis of these and other inscriptions appearing on the temple and on the grounds of architectural and sculptural style, this temple is datable to the middle of the 7th century.

The earliest group of temples is followed by the Vaital Deul, which has an uncommon architectural form, notable for its sculp-

\(^1\) The representation of Ketu is invariably omitted on the earlier Orissan temples.
tural grace and exuberance of decoration. On plan it consists of a rectangular sanctum with a wagon-vault roof and a mandapa similar to that of the Parashurameshwara Temple, with this difference that from its four corners rise subsidiary shrines each with a curvilinear tri-ratha shikhara. The surface treatment of its wall and spire is unique in Orissa. In place of the usual design, the wall shows on the longer rear side, 5 pilasters, consisting of sculptured niches, surmounted by heavy brackets embellished with 2 gaja-simhas (lion on elephant) seated back to back. On the shorter sides 2 identical pilasters are repeated in the corners, flanking a prominent recessed niche in the middle, framed between 2 large ornate pilasters, the whole crowned by a prominent chaitya-window, inset with a figure of Lakulisha on the south and of Harihara on the north side. The corresponding niches on the wall proper contain representations, respectively, of standing four-armed Parvati and eight-armed Mahishasura-mardini. A recessed neck, carved with a frieze of human and divine figures, separates the wall from the spire which is divided into two storeys and is surmounted by a dominating superstructure of two stages with a recess in between. The upper stage represents a plain wagon-vault, surmounted by three crowning members of the usual design. The lower stage is plain on the longer sides, except for an animated frieze of hunting scenes at the bottom, but is carved with a large oval chaitya-dormer on the shorter sides. From the front or east face of the shikhara project as antefix two elaborate and highly ornate chaitya-dormers, the upper one containing a powerful relief of ten-armed Natesha and the lower one an elegant figure of two-armed Surya riding his chariot of 7 horses driven by the charioteer Aruna, who is flanked by Usha and Pratyusha. The niches on the wall pilasters contain images in the middle and sensuous figures of apsarases (nymphs) on the flanks. Thus on the longer western side the central niche represents Ardhanarishvara and the four flanking niches show nymphs in lovely postures. The figures of nymphs are also repeated on the corner pilasters of the two shorter sides, while their larger central pilasters are carved with figures of couples surmounted by a pair of rampant vyalas with riders and warrior counter-players.
A terrific image of Chamunda is the main deity enshrined in the sanctum which also contains figures of the remaining six Mothers flanked by Ganesha and Virabhadra, in addition to Bhairavi and Parvati.

The decorative motifs and architectural design of this temple have attained a maturity and its relief sculptures are more expressive and dynamic than those of the Parashurameshwara with a softer plasticity. This temple, therefore, seems a century later than the Parashurameshwara and is roughly datable to the close of the 8th century.

The Shishireshwara and Markandeyeshwara Temples with a pancha-ratha curvilinear shikhara closely resemble the Vaital Deul in decorative scheme and are contemporary with it.

The Mukteshwara Temple, regarded as a gem of Orissan architecture, marks a transition between the earlier and the later groups of temples at Bhubaneswar. Surrounded by a low enclosure wall, embellished with sculptured niches, the temple is entered through an elaborately ornamented makara-torana which forms a unique and fitting entrance to this small but exquisitely ornate and well-proportioned monument. It retains some of the earlier features, e.g., a three-divisioned wall with only one row of sculptures, a prominent recess dividing the wall from the shikhara and a gradual curvature of the shikhara starting right above this recess. The sanctum, however, is now a full-fledged pancha-ratha on plan as well as in elevation and the mandapa-roof has assumed the form of a pidha-deul, though with a simple pitcher-finial.

The podium has now developed 5 mouldings, while the wall introduces some of the typical Orissan ornaments like the nayikas (females) in enchanting poses, nagas or nagis entwining pilasters and gaja-simhas. The shikhara is of five storeys and shows on the central ratha a beautifully carved chaitya-dormer surrounded by a kirttimukha and flanked by two grinning dwarfs, which constitutes an early form of the bho-motif, characteristic of the developed Orissan style. This is the first temple wherein the shoulder partakes of the projections of the shikhara and the mandapa facade follows the same scheme of ornamentation as the sanctum, with the addition of an ornate
projection on each side, surmounted by a pediment and crowned by a lion figure. These lateral projections, inset with latticed windows, are decorated with vegetal patterns and a frieze depicting amusing scenes from monkey life. This is the earliest Orissan temple to represent all the nine planets on the architrave of the door-frame and one of the few to display decoration in the interior of the mandapa. The ceiling courses of the mandapa are tastefully adorned with reliefs of gods and goddesses including Karttikeya and dancing Ganesha, dancers and musicians, angels and vyalas, scrolls and kirttimukhas, leading up to the figures of the seven Mothers and Virabhadra, enclosing a fine lotus flower, carved on the uppermost coffered member. Many of its decorative and architectural motifs have a parallel in the Pratihara temples of Central India. On stylistic considerations this temple is thus roughly assignable to the middle of the 10th century.

The typical Orissan form emerges with the temples of Siddheshwar, Kedareshwar and Brahmeshwar. The Siddheshwar has a pancha-ratha sanctum, with a five-divisioned wall, sub-divided in the upper part into two registers by the median bands. The lower and upper registers of the wall are decorated, respectively, with khakhara- and pidha-mundis. The complex cornice consists of 7 mouldings. The shikhara above the cornice is clustered by a row of miniature turrets, surmounted by four rampant lions on the central ratha. The corner buttresses have a rounder contour. The main amalasaraka is supported by four squatting figures which are characteristic of the later Orissan temples. The jagamohana has a three-divisioned wall, decorated with pidha-mundis.

The Kedareshwara Temple closely resembles the Siddheshwara. Nevertheless, it shows further advance over the Siddheshwara in that its jagamohana has the crowning ornaments of a developed Orissan temple.

The Rajarani Temple, datable roughly to the early 11th century, represents a unique experiment in Orissa in that its shikhara is clustered by turrets including leaning spires and corner-spires, some of them crowned by double amalakas, like the temples of Western and Central India such as those of Khajuraho. This temple is also notable for its sculptural excellence and profusion of
decoration. With the numerous offset-projections and the correspondingly lodged turrets above, its pancha-ratha sanctum has assumed an almost circular form. The podium, consisting of 5 mouldings, stands on a socle of 3 mouldings, while the wall, above the podium is divided into two registers by a pair of bands. Khakhara- and pidha-mundis are absent on the wall; it displays instead figures of charming nayikas, Regents and erotic couples. The minor facets of these rathas are relieved with rich scrolls and other decorative designs. The recesses between the rathas are carved with vyalas including gaja-simhas in the lower register and with human figures, often erotic, in the upper register. The shikhara is divided into 7 stages by bhumi-amalakas and crowned by an amalasarakata supported by four squating figures. The plain jagamohana offers a glaring contrast to the ornate sanctum. The only decoration on the jagamohana consists of a pair of circular pilasters entwined with nagas resting on a base of gaja-simhas, represented on the entrance doorway and the lateral windows. Its roof, made of horizontal tiers, crowned by a simple pitcher-finial, is similar to that of the Mukteshvara.

The Brahmeshwara is a panchayatana temple securely dated by an inscription to about 1060. The sanctum is pancha-ratha with a panchanga-wall, the wall-friezes being divided into two registers by a single band. The wall is also embellished with khakhara- and pidha-mundis, gaja-simhas, sensuous nayikas and erotic couples on the pattern of other mature temples. The lower registers represent, respectively, the Regent-figures and various forms of Shiva including Aja-Ekapada, Ardhanarishwara and Bhairava. The shikhara is relieved with a row of turrets in relief at the base and with some novel ornaments, including a repetition of the bho design. The corner buttresses are embellished with vertical bands of creepers enclosing animal figures. The jagamohana repeats the decorations of the sanctum including the Regent figures and has, in addition, interesting friezes of dance and music, gathering in front of a preceptor and a procession of birds and animals. The crowning ornaments of the jagamohana are fully developed and include a large bell. Like the Mukteshvara the interior of its jagamohana is also decorated and displays friezes of armed processions and miscellaneous scenes
of worship, discourse by a teacher, etc., on the ceiling courses. The top slab is carved with a lotus in the middle and naga figures at the corners.

The Lingaraja Temple, dating from the 11th century, is the grandest and loftiest (above 36.50 mts. high) temple marking the culmination of the architectural activity at Bhubaneswar. This temple consists of the sanctum, a closed hall, a dancing hall and a hall of offerings, the last two being later additions. The sanctum is pancha-ratha on plan. The lower register of the wall is decorated with khakhara-mundis and the upper with pidha-mundis. The khakhara-mundis contain on the corner rathas figures of the 8 Regents and on the flanking rathas miscellaneous friezes. The pidha-mundis are inset with images of various Brahmanical gods and goddesses. While the recesses of the lower register of the wall are decorated with a variety of vyalas and gaja-simhas, those of the upper register are embellished with graceful figures of nayikas in enchanting postures. The median band and the cornice consist, respectively, of 3 and 10 richly carved mouldings. The great height of the spire, which dominates the entire surroundings by its soaring loftiness and volume, is emphasised by the deeply incised vertical lines of the rathas, a pair of which flanking the central ratha carry 4 diminishing replicas of the spire itself as a decorative pattern. The storeys have increased in number to 10, while the corner-butresses of the spire together with the bhumi-amalakas have developed a novel form, rounded at the corner and rectangular at the sides. The figure of a leaping lion lording over a couchant elephant is conspicuous on the central ratha above the bho. The massive amalasaraka crowning the shikhara is supported by do-pichehha lions at the corners and four-armed seated figures in the middle of the sides. The images of Ganesha, Parvati and Karttikeya as the family deities in the cardinal niches are remarkable for their imposing size and fine modelling.

The jagamohana (ht. 29 mts.) constitutes a grand complement to the sanctum in dimensions as well as in decorative scheme. The tiers of the roof, exquisitely adorned with friezes representing processions of infantry, cavalry, elephants and miscellaneous scenes, are piled in two groups, each marked by a lion above a
bho motif. The crowning ornaments include a bell of enormous size. The mature planning of the whole structure, the proportionate distribution of its parts, the graceful curve of its shikhara, and its elegant architectural and plastic decoration together with its impressive dimensions render this temple one of the greatest creations of Indian architecture.

Temples in the developed Orissan style, typified by the Lingaraja, continued to be built at Bhubaneshwar and other sites in Orissa. The famous temple of Jagannatha at Puri, which is roughly contemporaneous with the Lingaraja, shows the same mature plan as the latter, but is even loftier (56.70 mts. high).

Among the later temples of Bhubaneshwar, the Ananta-Vasudeva founded in 1278 is remarkable in more ways than one. It is the only temple dedicated to Vaishnava worship at this predominantly Shaiva site and stands on an ornate platform-terrace. It continues the developed plan and decorative scheme of the Lingaraja, but the grouping of the roofs over the four compartments in a gradual ascent is more spectacular here. Further, the walls of the sanctum and the jagamohana display images of the Regents as well as those of their consorts.

The culmination of the style was reached in the Sun Temple at Konarak (standing entirely by itself, about 30 km. in a north-easterly direction along the sea-coast from Puri), which marks, even in its ruined state, the grandest achievement of the artistic and architectural genius of Orissa. Built by the Ganga king Narasimhadeva I (1238-64), this temple is magnificently conceived as a gigantic solar chariot with 12 pairs of exquisitely ornamented wheels, dragged by 7 rearing horses. The colossal temple originally consisted of a sanctum with a lofty curvilinear shikhara, a jagamohana (34.15 mts. side × 38.40 mts. high) and a detached dancing hall built in the same axis, besides a number of subsidiary shrines and structures—all enclosed within an extensive compound wall (264 mts. × 165 mts.), pierced with three entrance gates. The sanctum and the dancing hall have lost their roofs and it is only the jagamohana which has come down to us fairly intact with its roof.

The dancing hall which rests on an elaborately carved, square
platform, approached on each side by a flight of steps, guarded by powerful animal figures, exhibits a more balanced architectural design than such a hall of any other Orissan temple. The sanctum and the jagamohana together stand on a lofty common platform, represented as a very richly ornamented chariot resting on a stylobate decorated with an animated frieze of elephants. The faces of the platform, variegated by bold mouldings and offset projections, are studded with an intricate wealth of decorative ornaments interspersed with figure sculptures, often of a highly erotic character. Over the platform stand the sanctum and the jagamohana, each pancha-ratha on plan and in elevation, with multiple minor facets. The sanctum has lost its superstructure including the towering shikhara, but shows three superb images of the Sun-god in the three cardinal niches treated as projecting subsidiary shrines. The battered wall of the jagamohana has a variegated texture enlivened by sculptural and ornamental profusion. The stupendous roof of the jagamohana consists of horizontal tiers grouped in three stages, with life-size female sculptures of great charm adorning each stage. The whole structure is surmounted by an enormous bell achieving an effective contrast of light and shade. This jagamohana is unparalleled for its grandeur and structural propriety in the country. Even the free-standing animal sculptures within this temple compound are admirably integrated into the grand architectural scheme and are remarkable for their strength and vigorous modelling. Majestic in conception and rich in imagery, this temple not only marks the final fulfilment of Orissan architecture, but is one of the sublimest monuments of India.
Plate 24. Mukteshvara Temple, Bhubaneshwar
(See page 75)
Plate 25. Ananta Vasudeva Temple, Bhubaneshwar
(See page 79)
Plate 26. SUN TEMPLE, KONARAK
(See page 79)
Plate 27. Keshava Temple, Somanathapur
(See page 82)
CHAPTER X

LATER CHALUKYAN OR HOYSALA TEMPLES

(c. 1050-1300)

Early in the second millennium a distinctive type of temple-architecture, chiefly employing greenish chloritic schist, developed in the area now covered by Mysore State. Although it is influenced by the Northern as well as the Southern style, it has some individual features which entitle it to be regarded as a separate style. The typical Hoysala temple stands on a high polygonal terrace, conforming in shape to the main building, which is wide enough to be used as a processional passage. The main structure in its simplest unit comprises a sanctum, a vestibule and a pillared mandapa, the last one often fronted by an open pillared pavilion. But many of the temples contain from 2 to 5 such units. The stellate plan of the sanctum or other parts is another notable feature of this type. In the treatment of wall-surfaces, the main principle is horizontality achieved by carved horizontal bands crowned by a sculptured frieze running all round the structure. The spire is stellate on plan and rises above the projecting cornice in diminishing horizontal tiers crowned by a low parasol-shaped finial. The spire does not produce the impression of height, although it also has vertical bands of shrines and niches. The pillars have a characteristic lathe-turned form with numerous mouldings and are surmounted by a ‘four-square’ bracket. But the most distinctive feature of this style is the lavish sculptural decoration, so much so that the temples appear to have been fashioned not by architects, but by craftsmen such as ivory-carvers or jewellers.

The Chenna-Keshava Temple at Belur and the shrine of Hoyaleshvara at Halebid (both in Hassan District of Mysore) built, respectively, in 1117 and 1150, though devoid of their shikharas, mark the maturity of the style with superbly ingenious plastic ornamentation. The Belur temple is entered through a pair of
Gopura-entrances and consists on plan of a stellate sanctum, a vestibule and a large pillared hall, in front of which was added subsequently another pillared mandapa and a number of accessory structures. The central ceiling of the main hall bears a delicately carved pendentive in the centre. The temple is adorned with exquisitively beautiful bracket-figures both inside and outside and with a lavish wealth of plastic and decorative ornaments.

The Hoysaleshvara Temple at Halebid combines two similar structures, reared side by side on a raised common platform, each unit comprising a stellate sanctum, a vestibule and a large pillared mandapa and connected to each other by their adjoining transepts. With its prodigal sculptural ornamentation and intricate geometric and floral carvings, this temple marks the supreme climax of Hoysala art and architecture.

The most typical and complete example of the fully evolved Hoysala style is the Keshava Temple at Somanathapur situated about 38 km. from Mysore city. Built in 1268, the temple consists of three stellate shrines, each complete with its vestibule and spire and arranged on the three sides of a large pillared mandapa, the whole assuming a cruciform plan and standing on a wide platform-terrace, which closely follows the indentations of the main structures. The temple is enclosed by a rectangular cloister of 64 cells with an ornate entrance on the east. While the interior shows intricately carved ceilings and screens and beautifully polished lathe-turned pillars, the exterior is adorned with exuberant sculptured figures and ornamental details of considerable artistic skill. Although the temple is not large in dimensions, it is an architectural gem, notable alike for its balanced composition and faultless proportions combined with plastic exuberance, which is so characteristic of the Hoysala style.
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