

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 4. Anahatam   | - Chest (heart) – Nataraja                            |
| 5. Vishuddi   | - Neck – Nandi  |
| 6. Aajai      | - fore head (middle of the space<br>between eyebrows) |
| 7. Sahastaram | - Top of the head – Vimanam                           |

The temple tank will generally be in front of the temple or in one of its side. The Nandavanam (flower gardens) will be on the north and the Gosala (cow-shed) on the south of the temple. Around the Garbhagraham the following Kosthavigrahams are installed. Nirtha Ganapathi and Dakshnamoorthi on the South, Lingothbavar or Vishnu on the back side, Brahma and Durga on the North, Chandeswara shrine will be a near the Niche of Durga. On the prakara around the garbagarham on the backside there will be a Vinayaka shrine on the South West. Muruga in the middle of the backside and lakshmi on the North west. Navagrahas are installed in the north east corner of the outer prakaram<sup>134a</sup>.

## 6.1. GROUND PLAN

The analogy of man's constitution with the temple architecture is a favourite theme of the canonical texts like Sri-Prasna, Vishnutantra, Silpa-ratna, Vatulagama, and Aparajitha –

silpa. The texts insist that the worshipper must approach the temple as if it were the body of the divine.

1. The sanctorum is the head.
2. The tower, the top- knot of hair.
3. The Pavilion, the middle parts of the body.
4. The enclosure, the hands.
5. The entrance tower, feet.
6. The icon in the sanctorum is the personification of mantras

The temple thus becomes the tool for the devotee and a techniques of worship. We may recall what Talmud suggests; " if you desire to perceive the invisible. than perceive the visible"<sup>135</sup>. This is precisely, what the canonical texts drive, as some texts illustrate that,

1. The Base of the temple represents Earth.
2. The sanctorum, the intermediate space.
3. The tower, the heavens.

In the scheme of 'seven worlds', the tower comprises three worlds.

The seat there of - jnana loka.

The pot portion – tapoloka.

And the spire – satyaloka.

It is very interesting to note the projection of temple. Architecture is different in terms of human constitutions. "The Human body is said to be the temple and soul the icon"<sup>136</sup>. This has been found in many texts. The terms used in architecture in all the texts are the names of parts of the human body. Feet, knee, 'thighs' 'belly' 'neck' shoulders, nose, face. ' head' and so on. As a temple is laid out, it is said to picture a man lying down. His feet connote the entrance tower, his genital organ the flag – staff, his belly the assembly hall; his heart, ' the porch' his head, the sanctum and the brows, meet, the seat of icon<sup>137</sup>. Some other interpretation have also been given that the neck as the sanctum and the head as the tower; the heart is the porch where the devotees stands and Look at the icon<sup>138</sup>. Prof . S.K. Ramachandra Rao also advocates that the forehead of man is said to represent sanctum and top of head, the tower. The space between the eyebrows is the seat of the icon. The icon is located in the ajna center. The finial of the tower is unseen above the head, the sahasra region; and the womb of the sanctum at the top of the nose<sup>139</sup>.

So far, I have analysed some of the details regarding the reflection of religious details and philosophical implications from the earliest temples. I have discussed, the important structures, of a temple which create a common link between religious ideals and, the most expressive visual arts

## **6.2. THE GOPURA**

Gopuram – denotes the sthula sariram also called Dehatma or Boothnma. While entering the Gopuram we should remind ourselves that we are not the physical bodies and that in each one of us there is the self (Atma) which is immortal.

## **6.3. THE 'FLAG - STAFF'**

In South Indian temple , we can see the flag-staff close to the dispensing seat. It is usual for the two to be together. The canonical texts refer that the flag-staff have been installed between the sanctum and the dispensing seat. But almost the flag-staff takes the middle position. Even in the intial stage of the orgin of the temple, this flag-staff custom was not prevalent.

The early purpose for the installation of the flag-staff was only to indicate the sanctorum. Even today the main shrines in villages and on highways when they are otherwise indistinguishable have flags on them, that they are places of worship.

Though this interpretation may be accepted one, I think that this is not the only purpose, giving less importance to identify the location of the temple. Much attention have been given to install this flag-staff from the beginning and in due course, it became customary. In North

Indian Temple, it is a practice to fly long and flowing banners from the tower itself. In course of time, fixing the flag-staff became a common feature in temple architecture.

When the flag-staff became permanent detail in the temple, the commencement of festivals began to be signalled by ceremonially hoisting a flag on it. Normally, however the flag-staff will only be a column without the banner. It would only indicate the limit of the consecrated area of the shrine when, occasion demands, a banner would be flown from its top. A building without a flag would be in vain<sup>140</sup>. It also gives some interesting details, about the position, and height of the mast, the type of bamboo that is to be chosen, the colour of the cloth for the banner and so on. The benefit of the flag-mast is here said to be obtainment of all that is desired. The purpose of the flag is the indication of the insignia of the deity, or of the characteristic vehicles of the icon that is within the sanctorum<sup>141</sup>.

Almost the flag-staff was made, of wood, The wooden pole, covered with copper, brass, or even silver plates gilded, is installed on raised stone platform, often square in shape, in front of sanctorum. The top portion of this tall mast will have three horizontal perches. The 'seat' of the flag-staff as well as the mast with perches

came to be highly stylized in South India during the days of the chola and pandiya rulers for the flag was uniquely a royal insignia<sup>142</sup>.

We cannot get a clear idea about the symbolic representation of the flag-staff from the textual accounts, probably because it was a late innovation and not a necessary involvement in the shrine. It was an introduction from royal association, and therefore the usual symbolism is that of victory decorated and elaborately installed would mean a rich and prosperous temple commanding royal patronage; it is a sign of pomp and pride. God is the greatest of kings and the temple is 'His place'<sup>143</sup>.

Some of the religious teachers and preachers are of the opinion the idea that when the flag is hoisted in front of the temple, God as well as devotees will be delighted. Otherwise, according to the texts, demons and goblins would sneak in and make the temple their abode. The three horizontal porches in the top portion of the flag-staff symbolise righteousness, reputation and prosperity, or three divinities.

Brahma, Vishnu and Siva are three Gods. The textual accounts assign Siva to the bottom of the Post, Brahma to the middle portion and Vishnu to the top. While, in the South, the flag cloth is

occasionally tied to the flag-post, it is ever present in the temples of the North, The length of the cloth in the latter case will be equal to the length of the flag-post, which will be fixed to the top member of the tower over the sanctorum.

The flag in the traditional context also means a resolve to exert and a will to succeed. Hoisting the flag suggests setting out to conquer. The devotee coming the temple would have to resolve to conquer his own baser nature, to set out on a war with his own mean disposition; a look at the flag must would be a reminder for him in this regard<sup>144</sup>. It is therefore, has the connotation of hope, desire, especially erotic desire which is physically expressed as erection and the Sanskrit expression is frequently employed in this context, pride, arrogance and will. Whatever raises man to a higher level of understanding and activity is a Dhavaja. It is a call that God is high and above of all<sup>145</sup>. The Characteristic animal and the insignia of the icon on the banner gives a direction to the devotees desire and will. When the devotee lights the banner and lows it, he resolves to raise higher.

The Indian temple is thus a constellation of symbolism. It is an image that is at once relevant to human aspirations and persistent in human thought and actions. The texts of Indian architecture which

provide us with all the details of measurements and parts of the temple and prescribe the rites of installation and ritual of worship also indicate the value of a shrine.

The ritualists have their God in the fire; but the wise folk find him in their own heart. It is dull-witted one that seeks God in an icon. Those who have higher standing see God in everything.

#### **6.4. BALIPEETHA**

Another important structure in the temple complex is the dispensing seat' Balipeetha. It is an indispensable associate of the sanctorum. It is small in size but highly stylized stone seat, installed directly in front of the icon and very closer to the sanctorum. There will be several such seats around the sanctorum in positions determined by the canonical texts.

It is on this balipeetha, food offerings, to the attendant divinities and the guardian goblins are placed, after the main food offering to the icon in the sancotrum has been completed.

Usually we can see that altars are provided in eight directions. But the 'One' in front of the sanctorum is the chief and it will be the most ornate, and stylistically majestic, with several limbs such as the base, cornices, wall surface, with door-lets or niches.

Generally, it is made of hard granite, but it is also built in bricks and mortar. It is also made of metal and when the altar is wooden, it is recommended to be covered by metal sheets<sup>146</sup>. Mud altars were common in those days<sup>147</sup>.

Most texts suggest that the size of the altar should be 1/8, 1/7, 1/5 of the dimension of the sanctorum. Depending on their sizes and shapes altars are divided into several types such as sri- pandha, Padma – Bandha, sri – Bhadra, Sarvato – bhadra and so on. Its incorporation into the Indian temple architecture are hard to delineate. Perhaps, it is a remnant of the Vedic Yupa, and in many temples we do find bali –pithas which are merely crude stone blocks or wooden posts.

In the well known temples also we do find two 'dispensing seats' placed together, one crudely simple and the other stylistically sculptured. The former can be presumed to be the original and the latter a later addition. It also resembles that the stone seat in early days meant to offer animal food, and some canonical texts do contain details of offering which include flesh mixed with turmeric powder.

Though we cannot definitely ascertain its origin, this seat is ritualistically very important. Many of the canonical texts advocate

that a fully architecturally developed temple consists of four limbs: the sanctorum the icon, the tower above the sanctorum and the dispensing seat. Some of the texts illustrate that the dispensing seat as a replica of the lower above the sanctorum. The dispensing seat and the tower above the sanctorum are indeed the same for it is there that the Gods assemble<sup>148</sup>. Indeed the shape of the two closely resemble each other, with the difference that the alter is crowned, by a flat lotus motif, while the tower ends in a round kalasa, surmounted by a spike. And like the tower, the altar may be square, circular or polygonal<sup>149</sup>.

The symbolism of this seat is very significant in religious views. This dispensing seat' represents the meeting place of the active consciousness of the devotee and the passive consciousness of the divinity.

In the projection of the temple-image on the human body, the seat is located in the navel, which esoterically is considered the center of the hub of man's physical existence. Before the devotee enters the porch in front of the sanctorum, he has ceremonially to go round the ' dispensing seat' which act symbolizes centering himself adequately. It should prepare him to receive the emanations from the icon.

## **6.5. LAMP POST**

A dispastambha (lamp post) is another constituent of a temple complex often found in South Indian temples. It is situated either in front of the balipeeta or outside the main gate. The top of this post has a budshaped chamber to receive the lamp.

## **6.6.NANDI**

Nandi, the bull, theologically an essential member of all the Siva temples built or remodelled according to canonic rules, is placed in the open covert yard, the tirumutram, directly in line and height with the sanctorum deity.

It must be borne in mind that the bull was an emblem of jains. Comparatively speaking, both Saivism and Jainism have similar architectural excellence in seventh century itself.

Though ought to be placed only in open air, eventually shelters were erected for the bull in later times the origin of placing the bull, the rishabam appears to have started with the jain. The jain deity, like Siva later, was called Rashabadevar.

## **6.7. THE MUKHAMANDAPA**

In front of the garbhagraha and contiguous to it is the mukhamandapa, sometimes called sukanasi or ardhmantapa, sometimes called sukanasi or ardhmandapa, depending upon its proportion relative to that of the garbhagraha. Apart from being used as a passage, it is also used to keep the articles of worship including naivedya (food offerings) on special occasions.

## **6.8. ARDHAMANDAPA**

The Ardhamandapa is slightly narrower than the garbhagraha and is relieved by the processes and projections. It is projecting central bays on the north and the south have a devakostha with wagon – vaulted top. Southern kostha are usually vacant but originally enshrined an image of Ganasa.

## **6.9. MAHAMANDAPA**

Ardhamandapa is preceded by a rectangular mahamandapa. This is flat roofed and enclosed structure which rises to a height of its interior ground level. It is supported by the pillars. The disposition of the architectural designs of its columns are the noteworthy features of this part.

### **6.10. THE ANTARALA**

Antarala, a narrow passage is connecting the garbhagrha and the mukhamandapa to the mandapa (pavilion or hall). As already stated, in most of the temples the antarala is identical with mukhamandapa or sukanasi.

The nrttamandapa is a big hall used for or congregational religious acts like singing, dancing, recitation of mythological texts, religious discourses and so on.

### **6.11. GARBHAGRAHA**

The most important part of a temple, its very heart as it were, is the garbhagraha or sanctum sanctorum. This is usually square with a low roof and with no doors or windows except for the front opening. The image of the deity is stationed in the geometrical centre. The whole place is completely dark, except for the light that comes through the front opening. Over the roof of the whole shrine is a small tower. This tower is high in the North Indian temples and of low or medium height in the South Indian temples.

### **6.12. THE LINGAM**

Lingam – ‘Li’ in the word lingam indicates Layam (getting in to union) and Gam means ‘comes out’, or manifest. The word lingam

denoted Kuri (symbol) derived from the Sanskrit. Derivative root linga Chitreekarani i.e. that which performs wonderful act, as, God's act of being with all living being and at the same time apart from them, is wonderful.

Linga symbolizes the union of the formless and form. Siva and Sakti and is termed, Karma Sadkyam, which is derived from 'sadd' meaning always, Akyam means worship of the space less indefinable one with name and shape given to it.

Lingam – for purpose of conferring grace on devotees God assumes different tattvas. Siva Tattva, Sadkya (Sivalinga) is formless form. It has no distinct form; yet it has an indistinct form of lingam. 1. Sadakhyam is of five Siva sadakhya. 2. Amurthi sadakhya 3. Murthi sadakhya 4. Karthiru sadakhya 5. Kanma sadakhya. Mahesvara Tatva is of 25 kinds of form in which Siva is worshiped. There include Chandasekaran, Uma Maheswara etc., 'Lingam' means that which creates and dissolves in implies adornment or recreation denoted by the five fold actions creation, protections, destruction, concealment and grace.

Sadakhya is that which is ever adored. God who is beyond thought word and deed and is formless is given a form and given a name to enable devotees to worship and to mediate. Siva

Sadakhyam is Jyodirmayam. Amurthi sadakhyama is also Jyodiramayam but in the form of Divyalingam. Murthi sadakyam is Linga murthi with one face, three eyes and four hands with-deer, fire abhayam and varadam. Karthiru sadakam is Gana lingam with four faces, twelve eyes and eight hands. Kaus sadakam is lingam with five faces, including Esanyam and ten hands. Siva lingam has three parts-one part under ground, four sides representing Brahma the creator, the middle part is eight sided representing Vishnu the protector and the upper part (Lingam is rudra and the circular part with Gomuki (adudaiyar) represent parasakti. The three parts also denotes pranavam OM=A+U+M. Lingam denotes 'Nadham ' and Avudaiyar Bindu' Tattvam.

The Siva lingam in the sanctum sanctorum denotes the aspects of God. Apart from the universe. God is also omnipresent-in land, water, fire, wind and air and in the sun including all stars, moon (including all planets and satellites) and in each soul. Ashtamurthi- He is smaller than the smallest atom and larger than all the universe and beyond that. He transcends all space and time and the word kadavul brings out the immanent and transcendental aspects of God.

Dasakaryam. 1.Tatva rupam 2. Tattva Darshnam 3. Tattva suddhi 4. Anma rupam, 5. Atma Darsanam 6. Atma suddhi 7. Siva rupam 8. Siva darsanam 9. Siva yogam 10. Siva bogam. The

Gopuram, Nandi and Lingam represent Tattvam, Atama and Sivam. (Pasam, Pasu, Pati).

Tirucittrambalam – Nataraja shrine the sanctity of every five Siva temple is supposed to be observed lead is Thillai Nataraja shrine after all the Arthajama pooja every night. The existence of shrines for Nataraja and Govindaraja in the same temple in proximity enables devotees to worship both simultaneously is a unique feature explaining the basic concept of one God. The reclining posture of one and dancing pose of the other denoting the Static and dynamic aspects abode of God.

Sthalam. The places (villages and towns) where temples have been built in strict accordance with the directions in Agamas are sacred and worthy of worship.

Theertham – There are sacred rivers and tanks in the vicinity of temples which are also worthy of worship as they represent the overflowing grace of God. There are normally one, three, five or seven prakarams (avaranam) in the temple depending on its size and importance. The veranam denotes the various stages of a humanbody which act as impediment to our realization of divine bliss.

### 6.13. VIMANA

The principal part, actual temple is called the Vimana. It is always square in shape, and surmounted by a pyramidal roof of one or more stories and it contains the cell in which the image of God or the emblem is placed<sup>150</sup>. The Vimana is generally used to designate "a chariot" or vehicle of the Gods, a moving palace; hence it includes the shrine and spire<sup>151</sup>.

It is the form of the towers of spires called siharas or vimanas which invariably surmount the cells in which the image are placed. It is probably correct to assert that the images of Tirtankaras are invariably placed on oblong or square cells, and those of Hindu deities in square – generally cubical cells, of no great dimension, and that these cells receive their light from the door way only<sup>152</sup>.

The upper part of the tower, to some extent, overhangs its base. It bend unward towards the summit, and is surmounted by what is called Amalaka- a massive circular coping stone which supports a vase called amirtakalasa or amirtakaraka i.e "dew vessel". It represents the roots of the temple tree<sup>153</sup>.

The sanctorum rises above has distinct tiers and the most fundamental tier is nature itself on the earth and over it is laid the

primary plinth or 'base' to be covered by the secondary plinth or seat. The three levels of growth are securely bound by a ritual as well as an engineering device known as a "packing". Above this packed surface is laid the 'bed' of the sanctorum which is seen as the floor.

Walls rise from the 'bed' on all the four sides. The early sanctorum, for example Sanci No.1, 7 and 9 temples were circular or apsidal in shape<sup>154</sup>. A circle signifies the entire universe and a sanctorum is indeed a model of the universe. The Agama texts look upon the earth as being bound by the four directions they advocate that the shape of the sanctorum must be a square with its opening normally facing the East. The spot where the Womb is hidden is the seat of the icon. The icon represents the sap of the temple tree, the four walls would indicate the spreading branches around. The roofs resting over the walls are technically called the "row of doves". The sanctorum is thus a neat model of the growing tree<sup>155</sup>.

Almost the early shrines have flat-roof. But there is an urge towards a superstructure above it, a spiral or pyramidal tower which may be circular or polygonal in shape. The name for this architectural limb in sanctorum. It expresses two connotations.

- 1) that which is without Comparison; and
- 2) that which brings about fruits. The tower over the sanctorum is a physical representation of fire<sup>156</sup>.

Each of the great gods has an amal or material form or object which represents him the eyes of men, by which he is symbolically known. The popular gods have many symbols.

The 'Vehicles' of the gods are practically symbols representing their power presence- the goose of Brahman; Garuda, the monstrous eagle of Vishnu; the bull of Siva; the fabulous sea monster, makara of varuna, who is then depicted as a white man and is described as makarasva. Whose steed is the makara, riding with the head and four legs of an antelope and the body and tail of a fish.

The peacock of Karthikeya, the god of war.

The monkey of Hanuman.

The deer of Vaych.

The elephant Airavatha of Indira

The buffallo and dogs of yama; and many others"<sup>157</sup>.

1. The foundation of the temple is made to represent Earth; 2. The walls of the sanctorum Water. 3. The tower over Sanctorum – Fire. 4. The finial of the tower – Air; 5. And above formless – Ether.

The sanctorum is thus a constellation of the five elements that are basic to this universe. And fire being the active element that fuses the other's the tower becomes an important limb in the structure of the temple.

The first roof of the sanctorum on which the tower rests and rises is overlaid by a single square stone slab known in the exits as "the stone denoting the upper passage of life". The sanctorum is viewed as the head. Right on top of the head is the passage through which the currents of life ascend to the higher realms. The life of the sanctorum ascends to the tower through this stone slab. Around the four corners of this slab are placed the images of the vehicles or emblems that characterize the icon inside the sanctorum. If the icon is Siva – bulls are shown; for Vishnu – Eagles; for Sakti – Lion; for Muruga- peacocks. The vehincls are normally on level lower than their owners. The significance of the deities of vehicles above the sanctorum is that they act as door guardians for the icon on the sanctorum.

Here is an interesting aspect of the tower. The guarding deities stand between the sanctorum and the tower, admitting the forces that descend through the tower into sanctorum. The tower is the inverted

tree. The main mass of the tower represent the spreading, branches and the finial above it, the roots.

Over the stone slab mentioned above, the 'neck' is introduced. And on the neck rests the dome of the tower. The term "Vimana" refers to the structure between the topslab and the finial. Early Vimanas were circular and conical in keeping with the circular shape of the sanctorum. It rises in tiers from one to twelve talas of diminishing circumference until it ended in the point of the finial;

#### **6.13.1. KALASA**

Above the Vimana rests the 'vase' known as Kalasa representing the roots of the invented tree. Agamic texts mention that the original kalasa was born as one of the fourteen precious gems that came out of the milky ocean when it was churned, and they suggest that it symbolizes blessings. The old name for this unit was 'Kama- Kumbha' or the pitcher of desire. In the architectural development of Indian temple this feature arrived late, and its arrival appears to be subsequent to the canonical texts. The early kalasas were probably only stone blocks round or ribbed. They were in the nature of cap-stones that held structurally as well as stylistically the Vimana, especially when it was tall and tapering, as in the North Indian temples.

The copper vases wear later innovation. Some times brass was used, opulence and vanity promoted gilded ones. But the Agama books favour copper. The kalasa is actually a vessel, like the vessel deposited under the sanctorum. And like the latter, this also is made to contain tokens of growth an prosperity, viz., cereals with subtle seeds and nine precious stones. The feature has several members such as the foot- hold which is structurally imbedded in the masonry of the tower, the egg or the belly, ' the neck' the lotus – band ' , 'the rim ' and the 'bud'.

The shape of this unit could resemble the bell, the flower bud, the lamp, coconut, altar or pot. The significance of all these shapes is that it symbolizes the potentialities of life. The ritual of installing the metal vase over the brick and mortar body of the tower is an interesting one. The vase is not bound to the tower by any packing material like mortar or cement. It is only 'fixed by a hollow rod that juts out of the center of the tower an runs through the vase. It is through this tube that the 'tokens' cereals and precious stones are introduced. It is sealed above the body of the Kalasa before the 'bud' rises .

The body has five limbs.

- i) The seat: in the form of a lotus flower whose petals open out completely

- ii) The neck: on which the bulging out 'pot ' which is the next limb rests.
- iii) The brim: or the lid for the 'pot'.
- iv) The flower: which opens upward.
- v) The flower bud: which tapers off to a point.

The bud is actually the central part of the flower whose peripheral petals are separated. It signifies new life and growth<sup>158</sup>.

The Kalasa has an important hidden component, viz, the ' golden person; - Swarna – purusha, who is regarded as the very soul of the temple.

The belly of the Kalasa is made to contain a tiny cot made in silver, copper or sandalwood, over which is laid on a soft- feather mattress the golden icon of this 'person'. His one hand holding a lotus flower over the heart and the other carrying a triple flag. Four little pots made in gold, silver or copper, containing of consecrated water are placed on the four sides of the cot. Near the recumbent 'person' is kept a golden or silver filled with ghee. The procedure of introducing this 'golden' person into body of the kalasa is known as hridaya- varnaka- vidhi<sup>159</sup>.

The entire structure of the Kalasa thus represents the roots of the 'inverted tree'. It bears a correspondence with the 'womb' under the sanctorum. Both are roots, the latter urging the upward growth of an ordinary tree and the former downward growth of the inverted tree. 'The womb', the icon and the finial are structurally co-linear and run along the same axis of divine consciousness. This consciousness in its ascent transforms itself into the icon and materializes into the sanctorum. In its descent it runs through the finial and is concretized as the mass of the tower. Under the ground it is in a dormant, nebulous condition; and in the sanctorum it gets transformed into a world of materiality and activity. In the tower, it rises above this world, before it is absorbed in the Universal consciousness at the peak of the finial<sup>160</sup>.

### **6.13.2. ELEVATION**

Man's approach is one of ascent of matter towards the spirit. But it becomes meaningful only if there is a complimentary process of descent, the divine spirit must flow down into the material. The finial of the tower symbolizes the dual act of gathering of the divine essence from the formless cosmos and communicating it to the main mass of the tower. The essence here acquires a concrete form and then descends into the sanctorum to be focussed in the icon. The sanctorum is man's head, as will be evident in the analogous. The

stone slab over the roof is the top of the head, representing the esoteric passage known as brahmarandra. The hollow tube in the vase is the external projection of the main channel in the human constitution, the sushuma – nadi. The axis on which ' the womb' the icon and the finial are positioned is also the path along which the ascent and descent of vital forces may be achieved<sup>161</sup>.

The shrine thus demonstrates the constellation of the human and the divine currents, matter moves up and the spirit flows down. The devotee that stands in front of the icon is expected to partake in this transaction. The emanations that proceed from the icon must be picked up by faith in his heart.

Devotion is the transformer. The rituals conducted within the shrine involve these ideas, and attempt to facilitate transformation along the horizontal axis of icon – devotee. The devotee represents active matter and the icon passive spirit. There two are brought together in the creative act of worship.

When the Upanishads speak of the inverted tree, they mean the phenomenal world of matter and spirit having its roots in the unmanifest emanation of the Absolute. The reference is to man that is involved in the world of ignorance, passion, desire and activity. Man's roots are hidden in the abstract thousand-petalled lotus, a

centre just above the abstract, head, outside the physical frame. He spreads out into the world and moves away from his roots. He is therefore distressed. The task before him is to discover the roots, and make them the real base for his being and becoming. This means an upward thrust on his part, and a concurrent descent from the source of his being, the, thousand-petalled lotus'.

The yoga texts speak of different psychic centres in the body, pictured as so many lotuses with their petals bent downward, in the normal condition of existence; the adept will be able to reorganize and correct the vital currents inside him so as to give the petals the upward slant. It may be recalled that the level below the 'pot' in the final above the Vimana is pictured as a lotus with petals that droop and spread out, and the level above the 'brim' has a flower the petals of which turn up and close in. The sculptured motifs of lotus flowers with petals positioned thus are commonly to be seen in several aspects of temple structure. The row of flowers with petals turned upward is known to sculptures, as a 'padma-vari'<sup>162</sup>, and the row where the petals are bent down Kumadavari<sup>163</sup>. The petals of the kumuda bloom when the moon is up. The divine grace is the sun, and man's effort is moon. Their conjoint operation is what is pictured in such sculptured pieces.

#### **6.14. THE YAGASALA, PAKASALA AND PUSKARNI**

A Part from these, the temple precincts include a yagasala, (sacrificial shed), pakasala (cooking shed) and kitchen, place for the Utsavamurth (processional images carried during the car festivals), well or a puskarni (tank), flower garden, stores and other essential structures connected with the management of the temple as also the rituals.

#### **6.15. THE PRAKARA**

The whole temple is surrounded by a high wall (prakara) with one main and three subsidiary gates, opening in the cardinal directions. A gopuram (high tower, sometimes called as the Cow-gate) adorns these gateways.

Inside the prakara, there will be minor temples or shrines for the minor deities, connected with the main deity. For instance, in a Siva temple, the minor shrines are dedicated to Ganapati, Parvati, Subramanya and Candesvara. In a Vishnu temple, Laksmi, Hanuman and Garuda find a place. In a Durga temple, Siva, Ganapati and Subramanya will be found.

## 7. SYMBOLISM OF THE HINDU TEMPLES

The temple makes a link between man and God, between the earthly life and the divine life, between the actual and the ideal. As such it has to be symbolic.

The word 'devalaya' which is frequently used to denote a temple, actually means 'the house of God'. It is the place where God dwells on earth to bless mankind. His palace, In fact, there is another word to denote a temple. 'Prasada', which means a palace with a very serene appearance. When looked at this way, the dhvajastambha represents the flagpost on which flies the insignia of the deity. The outer walls, prakara, are the walls of the fort. The gopuram (high tower at the entrance) is the main gateway.

'Vimana' is another word which is often used to denote a temple in general and the garbhagrha (sanctum sanctorum) in particular. The simple etymological meaning is a 'well-proportioned structure' As an extension of this meaning derived from the root-verb ma (=to measure), it signifies God the creator, as a combination of Siva and Sakti, who 'measures out' as it were, this limited universe from out of Himself, the unlimited principle. It further means an

aeroplane. It is the aeroplane of the Gods landed on the earth to bless mankind.

Pilgrimage has an important place in the Hindu religion. A place of pilgrimage is called a tirtha and is invariably associated with a temple. Hence the temple is called a tirtha. The temple helps us a means of crossing the ocean of samsara (transmigratory existence).

Even more significant is the conception that its plan and elevation. Horizontally the garbhagraha represent the head and the gopuram the feet of the deity. Other parts of the building complex are identified with other parts of the body. For instance, the sukanasi (also spelled as sukhanasi or sukanasi) or ardhmantapa (the small enclosure in front of the garbhagraha) is the nose; the antarala the passage next to the previous one, leading to passage next to the previous one, leading to the main mandapa called nirttamandapa) is the neck the various mandapas are the body; the prakaras (surrounding walls) are the hands and so on. Vertically, the garbhagraha represents the neck, the sikara (superstructure over the garbhagraha) the head, the kalasa (finial) the tuft of hair (sikara) and so on.

The six state of advancement of the Atma will be symbolized thus.

1. Rajagopuram main tower – sthulalingam Bhutanma – Cross state of soul.
2. Mahabalipeedam Supreme sacrificial alter – Bhdralingam – Antaratma subtle state of the soul.
3. Kudimaram – Flag staff – Divajalingam – Tatuwatma – soul in elemental state .
4. Mulvar – presiding deity – Sadasivalingam – Jeevathma – Soul of is the pure state.
5. Acarya – Preceptor – Anmalingam Mantaratma soul in mystice state.
6. Paravali – Open space – Akandalingam – Paramatma – Divine soul.

The whole temple is conceived of a sthulalingam. The temple is the place where the supreme siva manifested himself in time of yore to some devotee and graciously continue to show his mercy on persons who offer their prayers there. The temple Sivalinga embodies five forms of linga.

1. The vimana is the sthulalingam
2. The pitha is the sukshmalingam
3. The bindu and nada symbolized pranalingam
4. The Balipeeda is the Badralingam

5. The form worshipped in sanctorum is the murthilingam<sup>164a</sup>.

This chapter has vividly pictured the symbolism of Hindu Rituals in detailed manner and various aspects of temple structures have been analysed . Symbolism in rituals and elegance in temple structures provide spiritual strength to man of worshippers.

## TRACES OF SAIVISM IN TEMPLES

All religions, all the ways adopted by human beings to offer obeisance and adoration to the Almighty are ultimately the same. However, each religion has its own unique characteristic feature. The religion which accepts Siva as the Supreme God is Saivism. The established philosophy of Saivism is Saiva Siddhanta.

Saivism is an important sect of Hinduism. Saivism is perhaps the most ancient religion in the world. Its origin is Pre-Aryan and Pre-Vedic. The excavations at Mohenjodaro and Harappa show that the religion of the people of the Indus valley about 5000 years ago was Saivism or something akin to it<sup>1</sup>. Some of the objects discovered in bulls, Nataraja, Dakshnamoorthy, the Mother Goddess, figures in yogic posture which are all connected with the worship of Lord Siva to this day. Sir John Marshall under whom the excavations were conducted said, " Among the many revelations that Mohenjodara and Harappa have had in stone for us none perhaps is more remarkable than the discovery that Saivism has history going back to the Chalcolithic age or perhaps even further still and that it thus takes its place as the most ancient living faith in the world<sup>2</sup>.

Saiva Siddhanta is the philosophy of the Saivite faith of the Tamil people in South India. Siddhanta means "settled conclusion, the accomplished, the sure, the true end, the ultimate goal, or the end of ends"<sup>3</sup> Gautama Nayay Sutra defines that " Which stands many tests and is finally established is Siddhanta" <sup>4</sup> Saiva Siddhanta defines itself as the cream (telivu) of the Vedas<sup>5</sup>.

The interpretation which says that Saiva Siddhanta is an accomplished end would not go along with the spirit of the Acaryas if its is understood as calling a halt to all further thought. Hence in the spirit of these Acarya, the Siddhanta has to be alert to the views of each generation. In other words, the Siddhanta of each generation would be able to appreciate and enrich his inheritance, to be passed on to the next, only if we say it in the religious and philosophical context of his own time<sup>6</sup>. Rev. G.U. Pope remarks "It is the choicest product of Dravidian intellect. The Saiva Siddhanta is the most elaborate, influential and undoubtedly the most intrinsically valuable of all religions of India"<sup>7</sup>

Re.F. Goodwill says that, "Those who have studied the system unanimously agree that this eulogy is not a bit too enthusiastic or free worded, That the system is eclectic is at once apparent " <sup>8</sup>.

Rev. W.F. Goudie writes " There is no school though and no system of faith or worship that comes to us with anything like the claims of Saiva Siddhanta<sup>9</sup>. This system possesses the merit of a great antiquity. In the religious world, the Saiva system is heir to all that is most ancient in south India. It is the religion of the Tamil people by the side of which every other from is of comparatively foreign origin. As a system of religious thought, as an expression of faith and life, the Saiva Siddhanta is by far the best that south India possesses. Indeed it would not be rash to include the whole of India, and to maintain that judged by its intrinsic merits, the Saiva Siddhanta represents the high water mark of Indian thought and Indian life<sup>10</sup>".

J.N. Farquhar write, "The Saiva Siddhanta possesses by far the richest literature and holds the greatest place in the life of South India<sup>11</sup>".

Saiva Siddhanta is highly rational, religio-philosophi system, pluralistic and monothestic in character. Its distinguishing features are its simplicity, comprehensiveness, self-consistency and realism<sup>12</sup>.

Saiva Siddhanta makes a distincy shift in the relogio-philosophical consciousness of India and represents a unique

reaction, culturally and existentially against the ascendancy of positivism over the Indian mind<sup>13</sup>.

Saiva Siddhanta philosophy is ranked among the perfect, clearest systems of human thought and as such it is held in great esteem and respect by many scholars, because of its own. They may be enumerated and elaborated in great detail<sup>14</sup>.

Saiva Siddhanta is not parochial and sectarian. In the name of God and religion, it does not divide and dissect people. The apostle and propagators of the Saiva religion and philosophy were broad-minded and noble hearted. They had universal outlook and catholicity of view. They taught us that God is love and love is God. They inculcated and insisted upon being kind and merciful, everyone is our kith and kin, with their true feeling. It strongly criticizes and condemns castes and its evils. It appreciates good and virtuous qualities in men but deprecates superiority by mere birth. The proclamation of Saint Sundarar and the profound comment of Sekkizhar on that sacred line of Sundarar, would indisputable and irrefutably uphold the universality of the Saiva religion and philosophy.

Saiva Siddhanta follows natural tendencies and practical methods. Its inculcations are realistically natural and positively practical. It does not advise us to practice any thing against nature. Some religions insisted and compelled people to become ascetics and monks, even from the early childhood. They decried music, dance and other fine arts as well, saying that they would tend to instill in us undue sexual urge. We cannot find any such teaching in Saiva religion and philosophy. It is very liberal, generous and simple. There is no rigid rules, no cruel injunctions and coercive restrictions<sup>16</sup>.

There were many religions and philosophies which have become irretrievably defunct and ingloriously dead. Once they flourished but soon they withered. Saiva religion on the contrary is perennial. It persists and prevails from time immemorial. Passage of time cannot destroy or diminish the importance and excellence of Saivism and its philosophy. Day by day, it is steadily developing and growing. Saiva Siddhanta philosophy is gaining ground among erudite and enlightened scholars of the world<sup>17</sup>.

Saivism has some special features of its own. The ancient temples of Siva in Tamilnadu, with their massive and expansive constructions, abounding in admirable architectural achievements, full of sculptural splendours, their hoary antiquity, impressive sanctity,

natural locality, scientific beauty, and overwhelming divinity, inspire people and infuse piety in their hearts. The spiritual and graceful vibrations emanating from these temples attract and arrest people, and invest them with a spiritual splendor<sup>18</sup>.

Pilgrimage to these temples provides us immense pleasure and divine enjoyment. The mere sight of visit to these temple is heart thrilling and soul inspiring. They purify our mind, elevate our thought and sublimate our life. We forget ourselves, get rid of worldly worries and derive spiritual solace and pleasure, by offering worship in these sacred shrines<sup>19</sup>.

The greatness of Saiva Siddhanta can be gauged, in many aspects. The symbolism of the various forms, images, idols, icons, sculptures in Saiva temples is really a great mine of religious philosophical wisdom and spiritualism. The whole world wonders the image of Nataraja. Besides, there are many other divine forms of the Lord. The symbolic significance of each one of these Godly forms is worthy of contemplation<sup>20</sup>.

Religious architecture and Iconography are intimately connected and they throw substantial light on Hindu religion. It is very essential to define with references, to establish the intercourse

of the architectural art of India with the religions of Saivism, in ancient and medieval periods. It must be said at the very outset that, in the treatment of this Chapter, hardly any detailed references is to be made to the technicalities of early Indian temple architecture, or to its development through the ages, for that it would not throw any particular light on its religious aspect. Instead, after briefly mentioning a few inscriptional references to the now non-existent in Saiva temples and sanctuaries of a very early period, the important groups of Hindu temples affiliated to either of the Saiva religious systems, which can be dated in the Gupta and subsequent periods, will be studied principally from the cult point of view. It should also be stated in the beginning that in this treatment of the chapter some Saivaite matter connected with the temple are to be discussed here.

### **1. SAIVA SANCTUARIES IN EARLY INSCRIPTIONS AND COINS**

The extreme paucity or rather absence of inscriptional evidence regarding the existence of Saiva sanctuaries of the pre-Christian and early post-Christian period has been compensated by a large number of coins and a few seals discovered, mostly in the Northern and Central parts of India. The passage Sivathale Karite found with Panjthar inscription of an un-named Kushana king may, as has been said there, contain a record of the construction of some sort of a Saiva sanctuary by one Moika, devotee of the God. But the

paucity of reference of this character does not mean that Siva was not worshipped in shrines or sanctuaries as in the ancient period.

The obverse device of some uninscribed cast coins has been described by Allan in this way- 'building on left, tree in center, on right female figure to left'<sup>21</sup>. It is highly probable, if not certain, that these devices are more schematic representations of a Saiva shrine, the Sthala Viruksha be the sacred tree of the sanctuary and the Saiva devotee. The figure holding a trident in right hand is possibly male and may represent a Saiva clerical. But the copper coins of the Audumbara chiefs, Rudradasa, Sivadasa and Dhargosa of I century B.C. to little later almost invariably bear on their reverse sides the representation of structural shrines.

Allan's description of the structure as two-storied domed stupa is not correct, and Coomaraswamy is far nearer the truth. When he describes it as domed pavilion, Saraswathi characterizes it as a storied-pavilion shown in relief <sup>22</sup> One of the earliest inscriptions referring to the construction of a temple of Siva with the name Pushpabadrswami and erection of dhvaja in front of it in the 16<sup>th</sup> year of the Ikshavaku king Ehuvala Chantamula by his son Purushadatta, is that of a stone pillar found on the bank of the Krishna at

Nagarjunakonda. The basement of the structure on the river bank was found in course of excavations there<sup>23</sup>.

"It is also in a few early and late Gupta inscriptions, and in some early medieval ones, that we find references to Saiva shrines. The Mathura stone inscription of the Gupta years 61 (380-381 AD) mentions the installation of two Sivalingas, i.e. Kapileswara and Upamiteswara by the Pasupatha Acharya Arya Uditā in the 'teachers sanctuary': Guruvayatana. This Guruvayatana must have been some sort of a structural temple inside which these two Sivalingas are similar. Ones in commemoration of the other departed Pasupatha Gurus were enshrined. The Karamdandha inscriptions of the time of Kumara Gupta II records the enshrinements of a Sivalinga known as Prithiviswara evidently after the name of Prithivisena. A Mantrise, a Kumarametya and latter a Mahabatadivita, a General under the same Gupta Emperor"<sup>24</sup>. An epigraph from Indragarh in Madhyapradesh dated Samvat 767 (710 AD) records the construction of a Siva temple by one Pasupatha Acharya Danarasi, a desciple of Vinitarasi, during the rule of Nannappa, son of Bhahmana, belonging to an early branch of the Rashtrakuta dynasty<sup>25</sup>.

## **2. SIVA TEMPLES OF THE GUPTA PERIOD**

The precise period to which the temple at Nachanakuthara belonged is not known for certain though the stage of their stylistic evolution suggests, the sixth century. Unfortunately these buildings are now ruined, the Parvathi temple at Nachana and the Dasavatara temple at Deogarh being the best reserved. The plans of these temples comprise a square sanctuary elevated on a moulded plinth with access of a flight of steps to the east. The Nachana temple is provided with an ambulatory passage way on all four sides on the sanctuary by walls with pierced stone windows.

Extended Siva temples of the Gupta period are comparatively few and far between the curious and architecturally interesting shrine of about the early fifth century A.D. discovered by Cunningham at Nachana Kuthara in the Baghelkhand region which was locally known in his time as the Parvathi temple<sup>26</sup>. Cunningham did not find any image enshrined within it, but he was struck by its peculiar style of its constructions. It seemed to him to preserve the old fashion of the temples, cut in the rock. It was a flat-roofed structure of two stories, the lower story being surrounded by a roofed cloister closed in front of the entrance door; in front of the door was an open unroofed court reached by a flight of steps rising from the ground. The doorway of the lower story was full of beautifully carved Gupta relief's. The upper

story was quite plain and undecorated. It was most probably a Saiva temple originally.

The second one found by Cunningham in the same place, known even at his time as Mahadeva temple was of a much later date. It was quite different in style from the Nachanekuthara temple, though the door way of the two were similar to one another. It was a square building with a tall slightly curvilinear spire standing on a raised platform like that of Vaishnava shrine at Deogarh. It enshrined a colossal Chaturmuga Sivalinga of 4' 8" high.

The Siva temple at Bhumara, in Nagod District, Madhya Pradesh is much earlier than the preceding one, and may, with some confidence, be placed in the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D<sup>27</sup>. It enshrined an Ekhamukhs Sivalinga in the sanctorum. It had also a flat roof and had a wide covered prathikshna-path all around it. There was a spacious mandapa in front of the entrance door of the sanctorum, and on the four corners, there were the remains of small shrines. This feature perhaps indicating the early stage in the development of the Panchayatana temples noticed above in this chapter. When R.D.Banerji discovered it, it was mostly in ruins, and he had many of the architectural and sculptural pieces removed to Indian museum at Calcutta. Beautifully carved figures of Ganesh, Kirthimukhas, and

deities shown inside artistically designed, Chaitya window-niches decorated the temple<sup>28</sup>.

### **3. SAIVA TEMPLES OF THE PALLAVA PERIOD IN THE SOUTH**

The Pallavas were also the great builders of Siva temples. The reigns of Pallava Kings covered approximately a century and a half, ending towards the middle of the eighth century. During this period the development of Hindu architecture was evidently proceeding at a rapid rate, and there are remains of more than sixty temples excavated under Pallava patronage together with numerous monolithic and structural temples. There is also evidence of a rapid transition from the rock-cut medium via the monolithic phase to structural temple building<sup>29</sup>. Early seventh-century rock-cut temples of the Pallava king Mahendra are found at many sites through out Tamil Nadu and they constitute the beginnings of the Southern phase of rock-cut temple architecture<sup>30</sup>. Mahendravarman I, the first great Pallava ruler, who was originally Jaina by faith, was converted to Saivism by the famous Saiva Saint Appar.

He served the cause of his new religion by the execution of a number of rock-cut Siva temples mostly in the Kancheepuram District of Tamil Nadu. The King known by his virudas Vichitrachitta, Gunavara etc., was one of the greatest and most accomplished rulers

in the history of Tamil culture, and in a sense he may be regarded as the founder of Hindu architecture in South India. During his reign of about 30 years, much of which was distributed owing to his struggles with his neighbours, he could find time for executing such rock-cut Siva temples shown as below.

1. Dhalavanur rock-cut shrine, 16 kms to the south east of Gingee.
2. Rock-cut shrine in Trichirappalli Rock.
3. Mandagappattu 18 Kms to the North west of Viluppuram.
4. Pallavaram, Melcheri, 5 Kms North West of Gingee.
5. Thirukkalukkundram, Pakshithirtham on the way to Mahaballpuram.
6. Bhairavakunda in Nellore District, Andhra pradesh etc.,

Infact, this region of the State of Tamil Nadu is full of rock-cut shrines, the majority of which were affiliated to the Saiva cult, and were built in what is known as 'Mahendra Style'.

The Mamalla style of South Indian architectures mostly confined to Mamallapuram and its environs, was evolved out of the 'Mahendra style', under the patronage of Mahendravarman I. It continued to hold the ground till the time of his grandson

Parameswarman<sup>31</sup>. The extent remains of this style mainly consists of rock-cut models of structural temples mainly of timber constructions<sup>32</sup>. The series of monolithic temples at Mahabalipuram provide a verbal catalogue of the architectonic forms and sacred icons current during the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries in South India.

Despite the fact that this monolithic phase was only transitory 'the rathas -reveal a true sophistication of craftsmanship and an imaginative elaboration of the Southern Indian architectural formula<sup>33</sup>. These rathas are not only of great architectural value from being in a way the proto-types of South Indian temple architecture, but their iconographical wealth, their simplicity appear to have served as models to be aspired after by the religious artists of India. Each ratha present a different appearance, but there are a number of general features they have in common which define the stylistic element fundamental to the Southern Indian temple style<sup>34</sup>. These elements remain constant throughout the history of the South Indian temple architecture well beyond, the Pallava period.

Rajasimha, the grand-son of Narasimhavarman devoted most of his time in constructing of 'Siva temples of stone, brick and plaster'. This was the inaugural of the structural temples in South India. One of the earliest and finest example in the series is found in the Shore

temple of Mahabalipuram. The Shore temple is merely the development of the monolithic Siva temple of the locality known as Dharmaraja ratha in plan section and design. The Shore temple, again, shows clear signs of syncretism. It has two shrines of unequal size on the western and consists of the image of Seshasayee Vishnu, the other on the Eastern side, a fluted column like Sivalinga of large size. The figure of Durga-mahisasuramardhini carved inside a square sunk panel on the breast of huge stone lion on the west of the temple is also worth noting in this connection. Longhurst clearly expresses that the Shore temple emphasizes the syncretism the Saiva, Vaishnava and Sakta elements<sup>35</sup>.

The predominating Saiva element is indicated not only by the huge size of the Linga, and the Vimana over it, but also by the rows of well-carved couchant bulls on the top of the enclosure walls.

Another more important Saiva temple is kailasanatha at Kancheepuram which was completed by Rajasimha's son Mahendravarman III. Longhurst's observations on this type of Pallava architecture is worth quoting. He remarks "the planning and construction of these Pallava temples are instructive to the students of religion, as they clearly demonstrate how Hinduism became more

complex as time went on"<sup>36</sup>. The temple is over-ornamented with numerous carvings illustrating various manifestations of Siva.

Vaikunta Perumal temple, which was built some decades after the kailasanatha in the middle of the eighth century, the Pallava architectural style reaches its most natural expression. George Michell states that 'the elements found in previous schemes are brought together into harmonious and economic ensemble'<sup>37</sup>. For the first time in the Southern structural temple, the pillared hall comes to adjoin the square, sanctuary and its surrounding ambulatory passage ways. This is then set within courtyard whose enclosure walls frame an open portico. Along the internal surface of the outer walls is carved series of important historical reliefs.

At Kancheepuram the diagnostic features of the South Indian temples style, first apparent in the 'rathas' at Mahabalipuram, continue to evolve in the increasing complexity of the individual elements and their combinations.

#### **4. SIVA TEMPLES IN THE CHALUKYA COUNTRY**

The Saiva shrines of the early Chalukya times were being structural in character. One of the earliest such temples was that of Makakutaswara belonging to the 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D. or a little earlier.

A Dharmajaya stamba, a pillar of the victory of religion which can be seen in front of the shrine has an inscription. It refers that the Dharmajaya stamba is an additional grant made in continuation of a previous one to God Siva, as Makutesvaranatha by Durlabadevi probably a step mother to mangalesa(597-608.A.D). Mangalesa, though he was a devotee of Vishnu, was liberal enough to sanction this grant for a Saiva shrine.

From the time of Vikramaditya I, the son of Pulikesi II, the patronage of the Chalukya rulers was mostly diverted to the Saiva Religion with a great deal of catholicity in their religious outlook.

The temple of Sangamesvara was built by Vijayaditya,(697-733.A.D.) and on the direct patronage of Vikramaditya II the famous temple of Virupaksha for it was built for Lokamahadevi, the Chief Queen of Vikramaditya II to commemorate his conquest of Kancheepuram<sup>38</sup>, and were built at Pattadakal. The last two temples especially Virupaksha are elaborate structures where the Dravida style predominates; they are covered all over with numerous carvings illustrative to the Sivayana mythology<sup>39</sup>. Among the numerous aspects of Siva carved in smaller niches on their walls and pillars forming part of their architecture, can be recognized the figures of Lakulisa, Arthanareeswara, Lingodbavamurthi Siva Tandava, etc.,

Another very interesting fact about the Virupaksha temple which has been noticed by Henry, is that the famous monolithic Kailasa temple of Ellora built by the Rashtrakuta ruler Krishna-I is remarkably like the great temple of Lokeswara, both in plan and details, allowing for one being cut in the solid rock and the other being built in the ordinary way on level ground<sup>40</sup>. There is hardly any doubt again about the Chalukyan architecture having been in a way the outgrowth of the early Dravidan style inaugurated by the Pallavas, with an amount of admixture of architectural specialities of the north, which Chalukyan style again partly influenced the rock-cut temple style of Rashtrakutas.

## **5. SIVA SHRINES OF RASHTRAKUTAS**

The Rashtrakutas were also great builders of Siva temples, generally rock-cut ones, the most outstanding of which are the Brahmanical temple groups of Ellora and Elephanta connected with the Saiva creed. Scholars are of having different opinions about the exact date of its excavations.

Fergusson and Dr.Burgess describe them to the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Y.R.Gupta to the first half of the 7<sup>th</sup> C.A.D.<sup>41</sup> and Hirananda Sastri to the Gupta period. George Michell also suggests that these

temples belong to the 7<sup>th</sup> and early 8<sup>th</sup> C.A.D. Archeologists have been undecided as to the age of these temple groups, but I am convinced that both Fergusson and Dr.Burgess are very much at fault in attributing it from evidence of Style' to the 8<sup>th</sup> or beginning of 9<sup>th</sup> century of our era. V.M.Mirashi has suggested that they were excavated in the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D., when the Kalachuri dynasty was at its height in power in konkan and Maharashtra Country where the caves are situated<sup>42</sup>.

His view is based on the ground that all the three kalachuri rulers krishnaraya, Sankarayana, and Buddharaja are described in the kalachuri grants as Paramamaheswaras indicating that they were Pasupatas, and on the presence of the figure of Lakulisa in the recess at the North end of the shrine in the Western Court of the Caves. But the reasons put forward for such an early date of the 6<sup>th</sup> Century A.D., for the Elephanta caves are not convincing.

The spirit and technique of the solid and sublime of these rock-cut shrines appear to place them in the group chronologically with the Brahmanical cave temples of Ellora. George Michell describes that the Chief interest in these excavations is in the scale of their architectural and sculptural components, which achieves monumentality in carved techniques of the greatest sensitivity<sup>43</sup>. The

interior of the elephant caves is no doubt imposing enough architecturally, but their sculptural and iconographic wealth are of exceptional beauty and grandeur. It could have been inspired by the architects and sculptor like those of the magnificent Dumar Lena cave, Rameswara and Kailasa temples at Ellora. The superb and sublime composite bust of Siva and Uma is the central figure in the main cave, and some other aspects of Siva like those of Ardhanareeswara, Gangadhara., the Yogiswara, Nataraja, Kalyanasundra, Ravananugraha, Andhakasurabhada and a few other aspects are masterpieces of early mediaeval relief carvings.

## **6. SIVA TEMPLES OF THE CHOLAS IN THE SOUTH**

It will not be possible for me here to take note of all other Saiva temple groups of the Deccan and South India. References to a few outstanding Siva temples built during the Chola ascendancy in the South, however, is necessary, before some notice is taken of Saivism in mediaeval temple architecture in the Northern, Central, Eastern and Western India.

By the end of eighth century, the major impulse of Pallava and Chalukya architecture had largely ended, to be followed by a period of dynastic unrest, in the South. Towards the end of ninth century the Cholas emerged as the dominant political force in the area. Many

of the early Chola rulers were believers in Saiva faith. Pre-occupied as these rulers were with the consolidation of their empire, the early centuries of the Chola Kingdom saw only the gradual growth of an architectural ideal. The Anvil plates inform us that the chief religious achievement of Aditya I Vijayalaya during his long reign of 57 years (850-907A.D) was the construction of a number of impossible and impregnable stone temples dedicated to Siva along the banks of Cauvery.

Parantaka I was also a great builder of Saiva temples and is said to have covered with gold, the roof of the Nataraja temple at Chidambaram. Sembiam Mahadevi, the Queen of Gandaraditya and mother of Uttama Chola used a great deal of her influence throughout her son's reign and figuring a part of that of his successor Rajaraja I for the construction and enrichment of a large number of Siva temples in second half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. The stone temple enshrining Chandra Mauleeswara Siva at Thiruvikkarai built about 1001 A.D., was one of the last temples, to be constructed due to her religious zeal. The biggest and finest of the Chola Siva temples that were built in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century during the time of Rajaraja -I the Great(985-1014.A.D), and his successor Rajendra Chola(1014-1044.A.D) were those of Tanjore Braghadheeswara and that of GangaiKondaCholapuram Brahadeswara. These two temples are

the landmarks of Indian architecture. The massiveness and grandeur of the Tanjore temple can be understood when we note that the main structure is 180 feet long, and the height of the pyramidal Vimana is as much as 190 feet. Some of the subsidiary structures inside the great temple are of the same period.

Nilakanta Sastri had given graphic description of it with its various appendages, among which the gigantic bull is one of the most striking ones<sup>44</sup>. Percy brown remarks that 'under Chola rulers' as these two imposing monuments testify, the architecture of the South attained its culmination, and with this effort the dynasty seems to have remained content<sup>45</sup>. There are numerous carvings in very high relief illustrating the various aspects and forms of the God, and some beautiful frescoes are also painted on the walls. The Sivalinga enshrined inside the Vimana is a huge one in girth and height which is also the characteristic trait of temples like those of Sivakanchi, Thiruvannamalai, Rameswaram and other places.

The Gangaikondacholapuram Siva temple built within 25 years of the completion of the Brahadeeswara at Tanjore is in a way a copy of the latter in broad outline, though not so virile in character. According to Percy brown, it is 'the feminine counterpart' of the Tanjore temple, though 'possessing a rich and voluptuous beauty of

its own<sup>46</sup>. Two other fairly massive Siva temples of this group, those of Nageswara at Kumbakonam and Airavateshwara at Darasuram, are also representative of Chola architectural style. The Gangaikondacholapuram, Siva temple built within 25 years. It is also of interest to note in this connection that the Darasuram temple has more than one enclosure, two of which are still existing, one or two more having been destroyed.

The Nageswara and Airavateswara temples contain some fine thematic and decorative sculptures and reliefs illustrating the progress of art in the South during the period. George Michell defines that the amount of sculpture on the walls of fences increases and friezes of mythical animals or vyālas are introduced for the uppermost course of the deeply moulded plinth<sup>47</sup>. Another fact of much interest worth noting about this group of temples is that the great temple of Tanjore, as well as such other major and minor once played an important part not only in the religious life of the community for generation onwards, but also exercised a significant influence in its social, economic and cultural life. Nilakantasastri rightly observes, 'As land holder, employer, and consumer of goods and services, as bank, school and museum, as hospital and theatre in short, as a nucleus which gathered round itself all that was best in the arts of civilized existence and regulated with them the humaneness born of

the spirit of Dharma, the medieval Indian temple has few parallels in the annals of mankind<sup>48</sup>.

## **7. SIVA TEMPLES OF NORTHERN INDIA**

The eighth century in the North of India was artistically and politically the beginning of the Hindu decadence which continued its downward course until, after several centuries of ineffectual struggles against the Mohammedan invader. India, under the great, Akbar, once again enjoyed the blessings of a lasting peace and a renaissance began of which Hinduism, purified and strengthened by the ordeal of fire and sword, was again the moving spirit<sup>49</sup>.

The temple of Bashesar Mahadeva located at Bhajra in Kulu Kangra Valley is of great archeological and religious interest<sup>50</sup>. It is of sihara type which is not common in hills. A large stone Sivalinga is enshrined in the main sanctum enclosed within heavy walls. The four sides are projected-the eastern projection sheltering the entrance door. The other three contain each a fairly large chapel, within each of which there is a well-carved image slab. These slabs contain the figures of Vishnu, Ganesa, and Mahisasuramardini. An elaborately decorated pediment on the top of each chapel shows three miniature sikara shrines in relief, the central one showing a sunk circular medallion containing three faces, the one in the middle shown

frontally, the side ones being in relief. This medallion, a very common feature of the temples in the Punjab hills, is locally designated as Bhadramuka. According to Vogel, it may stand for Trimurthi Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, or the God of Siva in his triple form. The second suggestion is correct, for a close observation of these and such other medallions leaves little doubt that, like the so-called Trimurthi of Elephanta, they represent in a composite form the Saumya, Ugra and Uma aspects of the great God <sup>51</sup>.

The temple of Ekalingam at Nagda, about 23 Kms to the north of the city of Udaipur is one of the most famous Saiva, shrines of Northern India. It enshrines the phallic emblem of the God who was regarded as the real ruler of the Rajput state, its Ranas serving as the honoured Dewans of Siva<sup>52</sup>. The original temple belong to 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. was a staunch disciple of the Pasupatha sage Haritarasi of the Ekalinga temple which might have been enlarged by his royal disciple. The temple might have been copiously added to by the subsequent rulers of Mewar. Todd gives an interesting account of it. He says, 'It is of the form commonly styled pagoda and like all the ancient temples of Siva, its siwara or pinnacle is pyramidal, the stone of Ekalinga is of white marble and of ample dimensions-under the open-vaulted temple supported by columns, and fronting the four-faced divinity, evidently a chaturmukha Sivalinga, is the brazen bull

Nandhi of the natural size; it is cast, and of excellent proportions- within the quadrangle are miniature shrines containing some of the minor divinities<sup>53</sup>.

## **8. SIVA TEMPLES IN CENTRAL INDIA**

Much of the Central Northern India from the eighth century onwards was under the influence of the Pratihara rulers. They erected many small temples at various sites. Most of these structures incorporate the characteristic Northern stylistic features. In the middle of the tenth century, pratihara rule was replaced by the Chandella Kingdom which dominated much of central India for the following two hundred years. At kajuraho, one of its capital cities, over thirty stone temples survive which span the period of chandelle rule, providing evidence of a distinctive and coherent architectural movement. George michell beautifully remarks about this group temple of kajuraho, as, "the kajuraho temple mark the culmination of the northern style in its central Indian expression and clearly reveal defineds characteristics in both plan and vertical elevation. The stylistic evolution of the Kajuraho temples attests to the inventiveness of local architectural traditions, which aimed at achieving increasingly complex effects of outer elevational appearance in which the rhythmic modelling of building masses dissolved the barriers between architectural and sculptural forms<sup>54</sup>.

In the Kajuraho temple groups, Visvanatha and kandarya, Mahadeva temples are famous for their elegant appearance and architectural value. Both are, however, architecturally similar, and both stand like many other shrines of the region on spacious raised terraces, having the following components, the ardhmandapa mahamandapa, antarala, garbagraha, all on the same axis. These are reached by a wide height of steps from the ground. Their parts again, though they form an architectural whole, are yet distinct, each having a roof of different height and form. They both have a pradakshinapatha round the garbhagraha, the temples being of and harika type<sup>55</sup>. The smaller temples of khajuraho, both vaishnava and saiva are of nirandhara variety. The nirandhara variety temples have no pradhikshinnapatha around the cell.

The several component parts of both the temples have several kakshasanas raised seats in the projected balconies with sheltering chhajjas, thus admitting subdued light in the interior. The three tiers of the perpendicular walls curving upwards contain numerous reliefs of exquisite workmanship, their subject matter being the surasundaris in various poses the Dikpalas and numerous other divine figures, the erotic, battle and hunting scenes.

The entrance door in the cells, and the walls of sanctum show tastefully arranged reliefs. The door lintel and the jambs contain Brahmanical triad in miniature shrines and figures of Siva being in the middle. The river Goddesses of Viswanatha temple contain the figures of Andhakasura-badhamirithi on the South wall, multi-armed Nataraja on the west, and Ardhanarisvara on the North wall. Kandaryamahadeva show almost similar arrangement, the companion deity on the north wall being different- the multi-armed Triparantaka of Siva.

The raised terraces on which these temples are placed, the upward thrust of their shikharas intensified by repetitions of parallel rows of miniature towers carried on them. Several other devices produce an impression about their great height. The architects here with the help of many such devices have entered the temple a sensation of soaring the heavenwards<sup>56</sup>. Whenever the worshipper proceeds from one mandapa into another, the floor rises by one step, and the image on its pedestal is on a much higher level than the floor on the garbhagraha itself<sup>57</sup>.

The finest Siva temple, kept in excellent preservation is Nilakantheswara at Udayapur, about 48 kms, to the north of Bilasa. It was built by the Paramara king Udayaditya. Its plan and elevation are exceedingly well-proportioned, and though its size is fairly big,

one does not carry the impression of its large dimensions at the first sight. Some characteristic architectural features which are found in it are also recognised in the Dekkanese temples like that of Ambarnatha and others. This remark especially applies to the abrupt slant of the sikara from its high perpendicular base. The sides of the tower are covered with superimposed parallel rows of anga-siharas which are much more numerous than those of the Sikara of the Vishwanatha and Kandrya Mahadeva temples of Khajuraho. It is worthy of note that this peculiarity is also found in many of the Malwa temples of this period, and it may be style traveled to Dekkan from Malwa. The three principle section are garbhagraha antarala and mandapa.

The Machchendranatha, patalesvara and other temples in the Amarkantak region also consist of these sections joined in axial length. The great temple of vVrateswara Siva, at sohagpur, though closely allied to the Amarkantak group temples, represents a further stages in the evolution of the central Indian type, for to the three component parts is added the ardhmandapa or portice, all on the same axis. It may be that the Amarkantak group are as a class earlier in point of date, and the khajuraho temples noted above are later<sup>58</sup>.

## 9. SOME SIVA TEMPLES OF WESTERN INDIA

The prevalence of Saivism in western India from the mediaeval period can be understood from literature and epigraphic sources. It was at kayarohana now known as karvan in the Debohi Taluk of the Surashtra region that Lakulisa flourished in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. The maitraka chiefs of valabhi now known as wala hear Bavanagar ruled over. This region from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Their inscriptions show that they are called as Paramamchhasvara, and it is no wonder that some very interesting and important Saiva temples were built by them or by their subjects, as well as by the dynasties succeeded them in Surashtra, Gujarat and other places.

Nothing is definitely known about the original builder of the celebrated temple of Somnath in South West kathiawar, near the modern town of Veraval, which was destroyed by Mohamud, of kajini in 1026 A.D. S.K.Saraswathi suggests that this temple may be originally a structure of brick and wood of substantial proportions and wealth covered with gold and other precious metals and stones, which lured the intrepid and greedy Muslim invader<sup>59</sup>.

Many other Siva temples that were built in Gujarat and other places in Surashtra religions have been destroyed, and most of the extant are in ruins. One of the still existing shrines is that of

Achalesvars Siva of the late medieval period situated on a peak of Mount Abu at Achlargarh. But two earlier Saiva sanctuaries preserved in a good state require notice here on account of their architectural beauty and other peculiar features. The first is the Nilakantha Mahadeva temple at Sunak in Gujarat, one of the most notable monuments built by the solanki rulers of this region. A copper plate inscription of King Karna of Vikrama Samvat 1148 (1091 A.D.) found at the place records a grant of land for the maintenance of a tank excavated in the vicinity of the temple of Mahadeva of the locality, which appears to have been the present one<sup>60</sup>. Built thus in the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D. it is one of the finest structures belonging to the Solanki group. Axially joined, its sanctorum and mandapa are preceded by an open portico in front.

The mandapa roof is surrounded by tiers of rooflets, each with amalaka and Kalasa finial. The sihara covering the sanctrum is graceful in outline and is surrounded by tiers of angasiharas with double amalaka on both. Inclined kahshasana are placed on the sides of the mandapa, and their spacing is the most artistic and balanced. The walls and pillars are richly decorated with elegant carvings. The other temple, architecturally as well as chronologically belonging to the sunak temple order, is that of jaisalanatha Mahadeva at Asoda; it is another eminent example of this class<sup>61</sup>.

## 10. SOME SIVA TEMPLES OF EASTERN INDIA

Orissa in Eastern India was specially significant for the great popularity of the Saiva and Sakta creeds in the medieval period. Monumental remains clearly illustrate that they are closely connected with the heterodox schools of Buddhism and Jainism, but the Brahmanical Hindu cults were soon to make much head-way there. Tantrism became the accepted religion of many princes and people of the region, and the prevalence of Pasupata Tantra is testified by numerous figures of Lakulisa that have been found in different parts.

Vaishnavism was a little late in making its authoritative appearance in the purushottma-kshetra, known as Srikshetra in puri region under the Eastern Ganga kings; but long before this pasupata Saivism flourished in a great part of orissa, especially in its Ekamra kshetra, Bhuvaneswara and its environs<sup>62</sup>. The Bhuma kara, the kesari and a few other local dynasties, and many of their subjects appear to have been mostly the adherents of Hindu religion. Zeal we owe the construction of so many beautiful Siva temple there. Most of the numerous temples that are still extant at Bhuvanesvara belong to the Saiva creed, and the earliest of them to back to the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

To name and explain only a few among the most famous Siva temples of Bhuvaneswar, one may begin with Parasurameswara well preserved specimen of comparatively small size, a square sanctuary to which was later added, a columned hall with remarkable pierced stone windows. The sanctuary has its outer walls provided with protecting central niches flanked by smaller niches at either side. The superstructure has three vertical bands framing two recesses, and rises in a number of layers. Created by horizontal moldings decorated with arched forms whose interiors have carved figures and faces. Ribbed fruit motifs at either side divide the superstructure into storeys and, in an enlarged and fluted form, the top were with a pot finial above, many of these elements are taken beneath the cornice to decorate the niches on the walls.

On the east face of the tower is an enlarged arch upon a split pair of arches, the interiors of which are carved with scenes from the mythology of Siva<sup>63</sup>. The lintel of the sanctum door consists of a figure of Ravi, Soma, Mangala, Budha, Brakaspathi, Sukra, Sani, and Rahu, Ketu came to be added to them in later times, especially during the period of eastern Ganga rulers. The Navagrahas were almost invariably used to decorate the door lintel of the sanctorum belonging to Vaishnava, Saiva, and Saura cults in Orissa.

The outer surface of the sanctorum walls of the Parasurameswara temple have three niches on the northern, western and Southern sides contained respectively the figures of Parvathi, Skanda-Karthikeya and Ganesa. This is almost invariably the order of the disposition of the Parasvadevatas of the Orissan Siva temples of the medieval period. This is unfortunate that the figures of many of their companion deities were carried away by unscrupulous curio hunters and are now missing. The outside walls of the garbhagraha and the Jagmohana of this temple is full of beautifully carved reliefs, their subject matter being mainly associated with Saivism.

The most beautiful and smallest temple at Bhuvaneswara is that of Mukteswara situated in a place called Siddharanya very near Parasurameswara. It shows some development in Orissan temple style and represents the early phase of architectural activity in Orissa at its maturity. It has been called as the gem of Orissan architecture. On the lintel of one small subsidiary shrine in the temple compound can be recognized the figure of Lakulisa and a few other Pasupata Acharyas sitting on either side of it. According to S.K. Saraswathi the Mukteswara cannot be dated later than the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. It may be even a little earlier<sup>64</sup>.

The temple of Rajarani of a date little later than that of Mukteswara has also on the centre of the lintel of its shrine door the figures of Lakulisa and Pasupatha Acharyas, thus clearly emphasizing its association with the Pasupatha form of Saivism<sup>65</sup>.

Architecturally, however, this temple possesses some exotic features. The chief among them is the shape and disposition of the angasiharas round the exterior of the central part of its Sikaras. This particular mode of using the decorative motif in this manner did not seem to have found much favour with the Orissan architects in general. The 'Orissan Architects' appear to have keener eye for architectural effect, and they took care to make very judicious use of these newer elements in order that they might not be 'obtrusive enough to break up the linear ascent of the main tower'. The Jagamohana of the temple seems to have been left unfinished; the outer surface of its sanctuary walls was profusely filled with magnificent reliefs and decorations.

Brahmeswara is one of the more finished examples of Orissan temple architecture types. According to inscriptional evidence it was built by Kolavati, and dated about the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D. It is of the Panchayatana type, the four subsidiary shrines one on each corner of the quadrangle housing for Sivalingams.

Other architectural features characteristic of this temple prove that the great temple Lingaraja was just one step removed from it in the final development., of the Orissan Temple architecture. Coomarasamy dated this temple complex in the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D. <sup>66</sup> But S.K.Saraswathi puts its date in the end of the same century, on the basis of that of the Brahmeswara<sup>67</sup>. The whole complex is situated within an extensive compound enclosed by massive walls and full of subsidiary structures, some of which like the Bagavathi temple are excellent examples of religious art. The usual Parsuvadevata's - Parvathi, skanda-Karthikeya and Ganesa – are exquisitely carved figures of substantial size, and they add beauty and grandeur to the temple. The God Tribhuraneswara in the shape of an extensive circular basement of his emblem is still being worshipped with great zeal and veneration. Unlike the main object of worship inside the sanctorum of Lingaraja the one that was set up in the architecturally peculiar Siva shrine of Baskareswara for worship as a stone column of substantial height and girth. The Lakulisa – Pasupata cult was well in vogue in the vicinity of this region is fully substantiated by the discovery of a few old caves in a depression near the Baskarewara temple, inside which several early medieval sculptures depicting Lakulisa and his disciples have been discovered<sup>68</sup>.

Mukalingam, a village in the Parlakimedi Taluk of the Gunjam District has a few old Siva temples, one of which now known as Someswara can be recognised the figures of Lakulisa and his disciples or the other Pasupata teachers. Another earlier temple known by the name of Madukeswara still in worship contains the Lakulisa reliefs, and alongwith the Someswara comprises excellent examples of the Orissan type of Indo-Aryan Architecture. The decorative reliefs on them are remarkable for their artistic beauty and excellence.

## **11. MEDIEVAL SIVA TEMPLES OF BENGAL**

We can see some beautiful mediaeval and far between temples in Bengal. The still existence of very few temples does not mean that Siva worship was not much in vogue there during the time. Numerous images of aniconic and iconic aspects connected with that of Siva, as well as several inscriptions, all found in Bengal substantiate the existence of this religion in the country. The Palas were no doubt Buddhas, but their general attitude towards other creeds was one of toleration. The Senas hailing from Karnataka were mostly Saivas, In some of their inscriptions explicit mention is made of forms of Siva and Siva temples.

Thus the Madhainagar copperplate of Lakshmanasana, one of the Sena dynasty popularly known as Parama – Narasimha refers to the forms of Uma Maheswara, Hari-Hara, Aghora and Gajasurasamharamurtis of Siva<sup>69</sup>. The Naihati copperplate inscription of Vallalasena who is described as Paramamaheswara invokes Siva in his Ardhanarisvara form in the first few lines<sup>70</sup>. The Deopara inscription of Vijayasena again refers to the construction of the temple of Pradyumneswara of great height and grandeur by him and to the excavation of a big tank in its vicinity. A verse in this record tells us that the main object of worship inside the temple was a syncretic image, a skillful and artistic combination of Siva-Parvathi and Lakshmi-Narayana<sup>71</sup>.

Among the five temples found at Barakar in the district of Burdwan in West Bengal, two were definitely old. They are listed there as Nos.4 and 5 and of them No.4 is now gone<sup>72</sup>. The description given by J.D.Beglar of this now vanished, No.4 Temple is very interesting, though it is not possible to check it at present.

Standing by itself and facing west, somewhat an unusual feature, it consisted of a single cell sheltered by a pyramidal roof. Its basement mouldings are unadorned by relief carvings. But what is specially to be noted in Beglar's description of the object of worship

inside the sanctum cella. 'It is the figure of a fish lying flat, servicing as an argha to five lingam holes cut in it .....The fish is 5'9" long from the snout to the tip of the tail; 2', 3" wide at the swell below the head; and 1'9" at the junction of the tail. The tail itself is 9" long and by 2'3" wide at its extremity. This enormous fish does not seem to have had any connection with the Matsya Avatar of Vishnu, and assuming the correctness of Beglar's description. It might have been associated with some unique and at present unknown form of Tantric-Saivism in Bengal<sup>73</sup>.

In any case one can unhesitatingly endorse Beglar's observation that 'in the history of Indian symbolism this unique sculpture will occupy a very interesting and important position. The other old monument No.5 in Beglar's account known also as Begunia temple stands facing east within a partially enclosed courtyard, the walls of the latter being later additions or restorations. It consists of a cell and in antarala. The object enshrined inside is Sivalinga on a great yonipitha, 4'7" in diameter. Lying inside and outside the cell, Beglar noticed and listed the images the whole of fragmentary of Ganesa four armed parvathi, four armed skanda-Karthikeya etc., which might possibly stand for the original Parsvadevatas of the Saiva shrine<sup>74</sup>.

Saraswathi , the Goddess of wisdom finds a great deal of architectonic similarity of this old structure of Bengal with the Parasurameswara temple of Bhuvaneswara. According to Beglar's opinion the Begunia temple was built not very long after the date of the early Orissan Siva, shrine<sup>75</sup>. One important feature of this shrine, which could not be noticed by Beglar was the presence of the tiny figure of Rakutesa, in the centre of the front elevations of its Sikaras which feature clearly indicates its association with the Lakulisa-Pasupatha form of Saivism. This is one of the few indications, that this form of Saiva religion was current in medieval Bengal.

One of the finest brick temples of Bengal of the medieval time is that of Siddeswara at Bahulara on the right bank of Darakes'vara about 12 miles distant from Bankura. The object of worship inside the sanctum is a large stone Sivalinga. From Beglar's description, it appears that the temple was a Panchayatana one, with a few other subsidiary brick shrines within a square compound enclosed by brick walls<sup>76</sup>. There were figures of naked Thirthankara standing in the Kayotsarga pose, a ten armed goddess evidently Durga, Ganesa, the last two perhaps representing two of the original companion deities. The presence of a Digambara Jaina figure here affords a clear proof for the existence of Jaina religion in these parts in olden times.

Among the number of temple still standing at Telkupi, they are shortly to be submerged due to the construction of the kangsvati dam in the irrigation project of the state of west Bengal and one at saf Denliya at Bordwan district some were unexpectedly Jaina in their original cult affiliation, but were appropriated subsequently for the use of the Saivas.<sup>77</sup>

## **12. TEVARAPATAL PERTTA THIRU THALANGAL**

The 63 Saiva saint called Nayanmars, praised the lord Siva by their devotional song in various places are called Tevarapatal pertta Thiruthalangal. The Tevarapalpertta Thiruthalangal are 274 in number. The List of 274 Siva temples are closed at end of the thesis.