Traditions current in Mahoba regard Maniya Deo (Devi), a tribal deity of the aboriginal people of the area, as the tutelary deity of the Candelas throughout their history. A shrine dedicated to the goddess exists at Mahaba, where a rude figure is carved on a projecting boulder. There is another small temple of Maniya Devi on the hill of Maniyagarh (Rajgarh), the site of a large ruined fort on the left bank of the Ken river, from the remains of which has been found an image of a female with sword in hand. This has been identified as the figure of Maniya Devi, from whom the 'garh' derives its name. According to Beglar, it does not appear improbable that she was a sort of compromise between the Brahmanical Parvatī and the naked female worshipped to this day by some tribes of Gonds. In the bardic account of Chand also reference is made to Maniya Devi as the goddess of the Candelas to whom they appealed in times of danger.

The extant epigraphic records as well as the numerous temples of the Candella rulers testify to the wide prevalence of the Brahmanical religion amongst them. The Candella kings were generally worshippers of Siva, but the records reveal that they were tolerant

1. I.A.XXXVII.P.137.
2. A.S.R.VII.P.43.
to worshippers of other faiths. Some of the Candella kings appear to have been staunch Vaisnavites. The non-Brahmanical religions, Jainism and Buddhism also received occasional patronage from the Candellas.

To ascertain the condition of religious worship in Jejakabhukti under the Candella rule, we may discuss different sectarian religions separately.

Brahmanical Religion.

A study of the Candella inscriptions reveal that Brahmanical theism in its different aspects beginning from the 'trayī-dharma' (the three Vedas) to the purānic conception of cult divinities was prevalent among the rulers and their subjects. The records are mostly concerned with Brahmanical sects. Invocations are offered to different gods at the beginning and at the end of these records.

In the Khajurāho inscription of V.S.1011 the king is invoked to protect the laws of the 'three Vedas'. The prosperity of the Brahmins in particular was an object aimed at.

\[
\text{पत्तदभुमिपति पर्थ्विम त्रयी-धर्ममहः प्रवर्धताम्/}
\text{नांदतु गो-द्विजनमनह प्राजः प्राप्नोतु मिर्वर्त्तिम/49.}
\]

(Trans.): -

May the ruler of the land protect the earth. May the laws of the three Vedas prosper. May cows and the twice-born rejoice. May the people obtain happiness. ³

But undoubtedly the utmost predominance was enjoyed by the puranic religion with its idea of Trinity (Brahma, Visnu & Siva) as well as its innumerable myths and legends connected with different gods and goddesses.

The importance of 'tapas' (religious austerities) is acclaimed in some records as a means of achieving great power and influence (nirantara tapas tivra prabhavam).  

Religious sacrifices also find mention in a Candella record, though indirectly, by way of comparison with battles waged by Yasovarman. V.17 of the Khajuraho record of V.S.1011 states, 'Yasovarman never tired at the sacrifice, where terribly wielded sword was the ladle, where the oblation of clarified butter was made with streaming blood, where the twanging of bow-strings was the exclamation of 'vasat' and at which exasperated warriors marching in order were the priests, successful with his counsel (as with sacred hymns), sacrificed like beasts, the adversaries in the fire of enmity, made to blaze up high by the wind of his unappeased anger.'

The above description gives us an idea of the procedure of sacrifices, which included oblation of clarified butter by means of ladles on the sacred fire with the exclamation of 'vasat' and the utterance...

5. Ibid., pp.126,131.
of sacred hymns are accompanied by the sacrifice of beasts. Sacrifice to the sacred fire is also mentioned in connection with grants of lands & c., to brahmins in the Mahobā and Charkhari copper plates.

That the Candeila rulers conceded an important place to the Brahmanical religion and philosophy will also be evident from a number of inscriptions recording grant of lands and other gifts to immigrant scholarly brahmins, who were encouraged to settle in the Candeila dominion. Mention of the distinguishing gotras, pravaras, as also of the particular śākhā or carana of the vedic study, to which they belonged, in the land-grants of the Candeilas, indicate that popularisation of the different aspects of vedic studies was one of the objects of the Candeila rulers.

Grants of lands were also considered as acts of piety leading to the increase of religious merit (punya) of the donor and his deceased parents (mātāpitor-ātātmanah). The records sometime mention the particular occasion when donations were made.

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7. For inscriptional references to such occasions for gifts vide ante, chap. XII.
A number of Khajurāho records indicate that lands and dwellings as well as valuable gifts in connection with erection of temples were given not to a single priest but to a number of brahmins (dhanādānyadhamu vasudhādānena samānīteḥ/ saudheṣu sphātikārī kūṭa vikaṭesvāropita brāhmaṇaḥ/). It may be reasonably presumed therefore that there was a regular hierarchy of priests who looked after the diverse affairs of the temple and conducted the daily worship. Some of them were called royal priests or priests of the royal household, who in addition to their priestly functions were occasionally charged with some administrative duties (e.g., Bhatta Yasidhara, the royal priest, was made an administrator of justice, Dharmādhitkāra). Besides the priests mention is made of the temple dancers. The Kālaṇijara pillar inscription in the temple of Nīlakaṇṭha refers to one Mahanāsani padmāvatī, the chief of the dancing girls attached to the shrine. She was of the type of temple dancers (Devadāsīs), dedicated to service of the God for life, found in other parts of India. The same record also mentions one Mahāpratihāra (Chief Door-keeper) Samgrāmasimha, attached to the temple. Evidently he was a temple official, either appointed by the king or by the priests.

8. Ibid. E.I., I.P. 146. V. 53.
9. Ibid., P. 146. V. 56.
VAISNAVISM.

Some of the early rulers of the Candella family including Yasovarman, were devout worshippers of Visnu. The earliest definite reference to the worship of Visnu occurs in the Khajuraho Inscription dated V.S. 1011 (953-54 A.D.). The record begins and ends with invocation to God Vasudeva,— "Om namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya." The king Yasovarman is described here as one anxious to worship the feet of Visnu, the enemy of Madhu (Madhuripu-caranāraṇāhaye yah satraṇaḥ). It records the erection of a magnificent temple dedicated to Visnu, the golden pinnacles of which illuminated the sky, and became, it is said, the object of attraction even for the denizens of heaven. The image, that was installed in the temple, was also a highly valuable one (Vv. 42-43).

This temple has been identified by Cunningham with the Vaishnava temple, known as the Caturbhujā temple at Khajuraho. It is 98' ft. in length and 45' 3" in breadth. The four subordinate shrines are placed as usual at the four corners of the terrace, and a fifth one dedicated to Garuda, the vehicle of Visnu, has however disappeared. Inside the sanctum of the temple is a rare Visnu image having three heads and four arms (4' 1'' high) standing in an elaborately carved torana frame. The middle head of the image is human, but the side ones are those of Narasimha (Man-lion) and Varāha

(the Great Boar) incarnations of Viṣṇu. Other incarnations of the God are also portrayed in bas relief on the door-jamb within the temple. The 'avatāraś' of Viṣṇu, it seems, were highly popular with the Candellas. The Khajurāho inscription of V.S.1011 in its opening verse eulogises the different incarnations of Viṣṇu, viz., Varāha, Vāmana and Narasiṃha, in which forms He relieved the world from the oppression of the demons (Daityas). He is also referred to in the same verse as Śakra and Daityārāti.

The popularity of the avatāra cult will be further evident from the Budāhi ruins which consist of temples dedicated to the Varāha incarnation of Viṣṇu. In the principal group of the ruins may be noticed a Varāha temple with a figure of a boar under a four-pillared canopy. Besides there are two other boar statues, one of which is called the 'Bācchā' (the little pig) in the same group. In the second group of the ruins also there is a statue of the Varāha incarnation. To its left is the image of the Earth goddess (prthivi) and beneath is a Nāga with a twisted body. These ruins, from the inscription found there, may assigned to Devalabdhi, the grandson of Yaśovarman. This proves that this grandson of Yaśovarman imbibed his grandfather's faith in Viṣṇuvism.

There are other inscriptional evidences also which speak of the Candella rulers' leanings to the Vaisnavite faith. In the Deogadh Rock inscription we find that Kirtivarman (A.D.1098) is likened to Visnu (Agadam mútanaṁ Visnum avirbhūtam avāpya yam/ V.3). Kirtivarman is again compared to Purusottama (Visnu) in the Mahābā inscription. Jayavarman (A.D.1117), the grandson of Kirtivarman, according to a Kālānjīr fragmentary inscription (No.2), was also devoted to Visnu. Again the Rock inscription of Viṭarvarman compares the Candella ruler Trailokyavarman to Visnu. It is said that Trailokyavarman (1st half of 13th cent., A.D.) revived the Candella power, which had been submerged in the ocean formed by the streams of the Turuskas, just as Visnu, who lifted up the earth in his Varāha incarnation. (Turuskā kūṁbuddhi magna dhātrī samuddhr̄tim Visnuriva pratānvaṁ).

Besides at Khajurāho we come to notice two temples dedicated to Varāha and Vāmanā incarnations of Visnu. The Varaha temple (20 ft x 16') has a colossal monolithic statue of the boar (8 ft in length and 5 ft high), carved all over with multiple figures of gods and goddesses. The Vāmanā temple also, besides containing the image of Vāmanā (the dwarf),

4’8" high, has the figures of Varāha, Vāmana and Nṛsiṁha carved in the niches within.

Another sculpture of interest is an 11-headed image of Viṣṇu, enshrined in the central niche of the Citragupta or Bharatji’s temple at Khajurāho. The central head is that of Viṣṇu, while the remaining ten represent his ten incarnations.

As for the erection of temples dedicated to Viṣṇu, we have already referred to the activities of Yaśovarman. Similar measures were also undertaken during the reign-periods of some of the later rulers of the family. The Mañ stone inscription of the time of Madanavarman records the erection of a temple to Viṣṇu by the family of his ministers. The record opens with usual invocation to Viṣṇu. Batesvar inscription of the time of Paramardi also uses similar invocatory language at the beginning - ‘Om om namo Bhagavate Vāsudevaya’. It appears that Paramardi extended similar patronage to Vaisnavism, as one of his ministers, Sailaksana erected two beautiful temples one to Viṣṇu and another to Śiva. As for the Viṣṇu temple, v.25 of the inscription records:

"Prāśado Vaisnavastena nirmūtontarvehan-Harim Mūrdhā sprātī yo nityam padamasyaīva medhyaman/".

19. Ibid.,P.208.
20. Ibid.,P.211.
During the reign of Bhojavarmen, Nāna, one of his ministers (saiva), claims to have caused an image of Hari to be placed on the celebrated fort of Jayapura (Ajaygadh) (V.S. 1345-A.D. 1288).1

The numerous temples at Khajurāho including those which are in ruins are attributed to the Candellas. A number of them were dedicated to Viṣṇu. But the names of the Candella rulers who built these temples are not generally preserved in extant records.

In the western group of temples is the shrine of now known as the Devi Jagadambī (Jagadambā) or Kālī temple. It contains an image of the river-goddess Gāṅgā, standing on her vehicle, Makara, which appears to have been substituted for the original Viṣṇu image. It is however not known when this substitution took place. That the temple was originally vaishnava is shown by the image of Viṣṇu carved over the entrance to the sanctum. Another temple in the same group, now known as the Pārvvatī temple, was also vaishnava originally, as the lintel of the sanctum bears on its centre a figure of Viṣṇu, which led scholars to identify it as a vaishnavite shrine. But the Viṣṇu image appears to have been replaced at a later date by that of Pārvvatī or Gaurī, on the pedestal of which is carved the figure of a godhā or godhikā.

In the eastern group there are several mounds making the sites of ancient temples. Some of these must have been vaisnava temples. The ruined temple, now known as Kākra Marh, is identified as vaisnavaite by the finds of the door-frame to the sanctum and its four pillars. A four-armed image of Viṣṇu is enshrined in the Javārī temple, lying close to the Khajurāho village.

The southern group includes a temple near the Jatkārī village, in which there is a large-sized Viṣṇu (9 ft. high).

Sectarian attempts to depict Viṣṇu as superior to Śiva and Brahmā, the two other members of the Trinity are to be noticed in both Candella inscription and sculpture. In V.1 of the Khajurāho record it is claimed that Hari is higher than Hara, as the latter holds on his head Ganga, an offering to the feet of Viṣṇu. On the lintel over the entrance to the sanctum of the Laksman temple at Khajurāho is a figure of Laksī with Brahmā and Śiva to her left and right, as if supplicating the consort of Viṣṇu.

In inscriptions the deity is generally invoked under the names Viṣṇu, Hari and Bhagavāna Vāsudeva; in some records other names also occur, such as, Murāri, Madhava, Puruṣottama, Nārāyaṇa, Ṣpendra, Saurī, Śakra, Daityārāti, &c., as well as the names

of the different forms of his incarnations such as, Varāha, Vēmanā, Nṛsimha and Rāma.

His consort is mentioned as Lakṣmī, Śrī Kamalā &c. Sarasvatī or Puṣṭi, a consort of Viṣṇu is found depicted on the body of the great Varāha image of Khajurāho. The Jatkārī Caturbhūja temple possesses a peculiar sculpture on its outer wall, a lion-headed female. Possibly this is the female counterpart of the Nārāsiṃha incarnation of Viṣṇu.

Some Coins and Seals (attached to the copper plates of some of the later Saiva rulers of the Candella dynasty bear a representation of Lakṣmī. The device may have been borrowed from the Kalacuris whom the Candella rulers defeated. The seals bear in relief the figure of a four-armed goddess sitting in 'Lalitāsana' on a double-petalled lotus (visvapadma) or on a four-legged stool with an elephant standing on an expanded waterlily on either side and holding an upturned pitcher over the head of the goddess. The central image is of Gaja-Lakṣmī, Mahā Lakṣmī or Kamalā, the consort of Viṣṇu. Lakṣmī, when in the company of her consort, is portrayed with two hands, but while depicted singly, she is endowed with four hands and elephants anointing her from both sides. Mahā Lakṣmī, according to the Mārkandeya Purāṇa, is one of the forms of the Great Mother, the consort of Śiva. It is to be noted that the rulers using such seals called themselves 'parama-Mahēśvara' (devout worshippers of Śiva). Hence the use of the Gaja-Lakṣmī symbol did not conflict with their Saiva faith. Moreover it may be mentioned that Gaja-Lakṣmī figures
are noticed in some early seals, coins and relief carvings of the pre-Christian period, even before the rise of the worship of the cult divinities. She was originally a folk-goddess, the presiding deity of beauty, wealth and fortune, and as such, became an object of adoration for all sects and religions in later periods. The adoption of this emblem by the Candella rulers was therefore not due to any sectarian bias but for the continued prosperity of their kingdom.

The mount of Visnu was Garuḍa, but in the Rama incarnation Hanumān (the monkey) becomes his chief devotee. Some Candella coins bear the figure of Hanumān on one side. At Khajurāho is found a large statue of the monkey-god with a short dedicatory inscription, dated 922 A.D., on its pedestal. Another colossal image of Hanumān, head having broken off, has been found from the 'Baniyā kā barāt' ruins of Purāni. Hanumān was also originally a folk-god for strength and vigour, later absorbed in the Hindu pantheon and worshipped to this day as such. It is not surprising therefore that the Candella rulers adopted the monkey-symbol on their coins, and some bulky images, signifying strength and vigour, are found in the Candella country.

It is evident therefore that Visnu worship continued in the Candella country throughout the period of Candella rule, though the predominant religion during this time was Saivism.

Saivism.

Saivism already a popular religion in the north and central India long before the advent of the Candellas. Kalanjjar, which became one of the major strongholds of the Candellas, was popularly known for many centuries as an abode of Nilakantha Siva. It is of interest to note that Yasovarman who, by occupying the fortress of Kalanjjar initiated an era of greatness in the history of the Candellas, ('Jagraya...Kriddyay Kalaajaradrim'), was himself a vaishnavite. But from the time of his son and successor, Dhanga, the Candella rulers became devout worshippers of Siva, and Saivism since then became practically the royal religion in the Candella dominion.

For Dhanga we have the evidence of the Khajuraho inscription of V.S.1059(A.D.1002-03). It opens with the usual invocation to Siva (Oṃ Oṃ namah Sivaya), and also some verses in praise of the different forms and aspects of that god, viz., Rudra, Digambar. Suladhara, Mahaeva and Pasupati. This inscription records that Dhanga erected a magnificent temple of Sambhu, where he installed two lingas, one of which was made of emerald (marakatamayam tungam lingam), and the other of stone. It is stated that the glories achieved by Dhanga were due to the grace of the god, Siva, whom he worshipped ardently.

According to Saiva Puranas, a 'Ratnoja' linga is

installed by votaries on the fulfilment of some cherished object. Dhanga may have set up the emerald linga to mark his attainment of a superior political status.

The temple, referred to in the Khajuraho record as having been built by Dhanga, has been identified with the Visvanätha temple at Khajuraho (89'1" in length and 45'10" in breadth), where the said inscription was found. There is an image of Siva Visvanätha, to whom the temple is dedicated, at the centre of the lintel of the sanctum. The emerald linga has however disappeared and been replaced by one of common stone. The temple has in front of it a smaller temple (31'3" x 30'9") dedicated to Nandi, the bull-mount of Siva. It contains a highly polished colossal statue of Nandi (6'ft. high and 7'3" long).

The Khajuraho record also refers to the distribution of great quantities of gold, grain, cows and money, as well as lands and dwellings to pious brahmins, evidently for the maintenance of the temple and for making regular arrangements for the worship of the deity, installed in it.

There was another temple, dedicated to Siva Vaidyanätha near the Visvanätha temple, from the ruins of which was unearthed an inscription, which is now placed on the wall of the Visvanätha temple. It is dated in V.S.1058 (1001-02 A.D.), and records the
erection of the temple in honour of Śiva Vaidyanātha, by one Kokkaila of the Grahapati family. A number of buildings were given to pious brahmins when the temple was erected as on the other occasion mentioned above.

Besides, there are numerous Saivite temples in different parts of the Candella dominions stylistically attributable to the Candella period. Inscriptional material regarding these temples is however wanting. One belonging to the early group is a small temple dedicated to Śiva, built partly of granite and partly of sandstone on the embankment of the lake called Lalguān Sagar at Khajurāho. Another temple, the largest extant at Khajurāho, is known as the Kandariya Mahādeva temple. In length it measures 102'3", in width 66'10" and in height 101'9", with four subsidiary shrines at the four corners which now no longer exist. Inside the sanctum stands a marble linga. Close to the shrine of Kandariya Mahādeva is another ruined temple of Mahādeva, in which the image of the deity is carved on the middle of the lintel of the sanctum.

The holiest of the Khajurāho temples which is still in religious use is the Mātangesvara temple. The entire floor of the inner sanctum is occupied by a large 'Gaurīpatta' (20'4" in diameter and 4'5" in height), on which is set a highly polished colossal

26. Ibid., pp.147-52.
linga, 3'8' in diameter and 8'4' in height.

One of the finest temples at Khajuraho is the Duladeo (the heavenly bride) temple, originally dedicated to Siva, whose figure as usual appears carved on the lintel over the entrance to the sanctum. But the original image installed in the sanctum was substituted by the linga, now existing.

There is epigraphic evidence of the erection of a temple to Siva at Batesvara, near Agra, during the reign period of Paramardidava by his Chief Minister, Sallaksana. Though the temple has not been identified, yet Batesvara is traditionally famous as a holy place for the worshippers of Siva. The present temple of Batesvara Mahadeva of course does not appear to be very old, but the linga, enshrined in the sanctum of the temple, is of a colossal size, not unlike other lingas of the Candella temples.

The Nilakantha temple at Kalanjar is also a small one, but its importance to the Saivites can hardly be exaggerated. The temple might have been in existence from the Gupta period, but pillars of the mandapa, which belong to the Candella school, indicate that sufficient additions to the temple were made by Candella rulers. Just outside the mandapa of the temple there is a rock-cut reservoir (Kunda) and a

28. P.R.,P.61.
Large-sized figure of Kāla Bhairava (24 ft. high), an attendant of the Siva. According to scholars the Bhairava image is one of the 'īlā mūrttis' (incarnatory images) of Siva.

At Mahobā, the capital of the Candellas, almost all the Hindu temples were utterly destroyed, but Cunningham noticed among the ruins, the remains of a Śiva temple, fragments of the 'argha' of a liṅgam and a black-stone bull (the vehicle of Siva). Another Śiva temple, entirely of granite, was also noticed by him at the village of Rāhilīya, 2 miles from Mahobā. The village is traditionally associated with Rāhil Barm or Rāhilavarman (c.900 A.D.), the great-grandfather of Dhaṅga.

It is quite common to come across invocation to Śiva in the epigraphic records of the period of the later Candella rulers. The Deogadh Rock inscription, Mahobā inscription, Kālaṅjar fragmentary inscription (No.2) and another Kālaṅjar record of Paramardī invoke Śiva thus, "Om Om namah/Siva.

Dhaṅga's devotion to Śiva is pronouncedly proclaimed in V.55 of the Khajurāho record, which states that after living for one hundred years, Dhaṅga ended his life at the holy confluence of the prayāga, while meditating on Rudra (Siva). Besides

30. I.A.XVIII.,P.238
32. Ibid.,P.146.
we find direct evidences of Śiva worship by Vidyādhara, Madanavarman and Paramardi. Vidyādhara is described as a votary of Śiva in the Madampur stone inscription, — "Om Candrasekharā Bhavānyā Triyambaka Tripurāntaka cakṣa Vidyādhāradeva tvam nauti pranataḥ sadā". Madanavarman and his grandson, Paramardi, both are stated to have worshipped the divine husband of Bhavāni before making grants of lands to Brāhmaṇas, as recorded in the Semrā, the Icchāwār and the Mahōḍā Plates. Pratāpa, Madana’s younger brother, who was a very influential person in the court, undertook diverse works of public interest including erection of temples and installation of images of Śiva, Kamalā and Kālī ("Nilakanthām Kamalām ca Kālim nyāvivisatt-sadmasu-śobhanesu yajña srauta neyane").

The long Sanskrit inscription found on a large black stone slab leaning against a pillar opposite the entrance of the cave temple of Nilakantha at Kālējjar is claimed to have been composed by the king Paramardi out of his innate faith on Purāṇi (Śiva).

Ajaygadh Rock inscription of the time of Bhojavarman refers to the erection of a temple (Devālaya) to Śiva Kedāra by one Subhata of the Vāstavvya Kāyastha family, who was appointed as a saciva (minister) and Kosāḍhikārādhipati (Superintendent

33. A.S.R.X., P.100.
34. JASB.1848, P.317, L.27.
35. Ibid., P.313.
The devotion of the Candella rulers to Śaivism is definitely indicated by the assumption of the title of 'Parama-Māhesvara' in their official documents like, the Nānyaura Plate 'B' (Devavarman), Nānyaura plate 'C' and Kālañjar inscription no.4 (Madanvarman), Semrā Plates, Ichchāwar plate Mahobā plate, Pachār plate and Charkhari plate 'B' (Paramardi), Gārāgrant (Trailokyavarman), Charkhari plate 'C' (Vīravarman) and Charkhari plate 'D' (Hammīravarman).

Śiva has been worshipped in the linga form all over India from a very early period. The Candellas also were adherents of the worship of Śiva in the linga form. This is shown by the installation of lingāms made of black-stone, sand-stone, marble and even of emerald, to which we have already referred. The colossal form of the lingāms set up by the Candellas constitutes a remarkable feature which cannot but attract our attention. Mukhalingāms or lingāms with human faces carved on them are not usually met with in the Candella territory excepting one four-faced image (Caturmukha lingām) enshrined on the pedestal in the sanctum of the so-called Brahma temple on the bank of the Khajurāho Sāgar. The four-faced image was earlier mistaken for an image of Brahma. The great lingām of Mālakaṅkha Mahādeva at Kālañjar has two silver eyes fixed on it.

38. Ibid., XXI., P.33.
But the worship of the human form of Śiva was also not unknown to the Candellas, and in some of the temples human figures of Śiva were installed, e.g., in the Duladeo temple at Khajurāho, where the figure of Śiva is carved on the centre of the lintel over the entrance to the sanctum. The linga now enshrined in the sanctum is a substitute for the original image, which cannot be traced. In some other temples also carving of the image of Śiva on the lintel is noticed viz., the ruined temple of Mahādeva situated between the Kandariya and the Devī Jagadambi temples, and Śiva-Visvānātha temple in the western group of the Khajurāho temples. Another noteworthy image of the deity is found in the Devī-Jagadambi temple - a three-headed eight-handed Śiva carved in relief in the lower niche of the western facade. The figure of Śiva is also seen carved on the body of the monolithic image of Boar at the Varāha temple; is carved the image of the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī (Kalyāṇa-sundara-mūrtti). Another image, a four-armed one, of Śiva may be seen on the outer wall of the Jātkāri-Caturbhūja temple.

Śiva is mentioned in the Candella documents in diverse forms depicting the various aspects of the deity. The Khajurāho records give us the following names, — Rudra, Sambhū, Digambara, Śūladhara, Mahēśvara pasupati; Marakatesvara, Vaidyanātha and Chandramaulī; The Samra and Mahoba Plates — Viśvesvara, Bhavanipati and Somanātha; Kālañjar Inscriptions ——
The consort of Siva, i.e., Sakti or Devī, is also often eulogised in the Candella records. She is mentioned in her different names as Maheśvarī, Bhavāni, Girijā, Kālī, Nagendrakanyā, Mahiśāsurasamarddini, Bārati and Pārvvatī. The earliest evidence of Sakti worship in the Candella kingdom is found at Khajurāho in the Chaṇḍāṣṭ Yogiṇī temple, in which there were 65 cells (of which 35 have survived). Excluding the larger cell, the other 64 correspond to the number of Yogiṇīs or female attendants of the goddess Kālī. Cunningham was of opinion that there was a temple in the centre of the courtyard, consecrated to Kālī or Siva, of which no remains have been discovered. Stylistically the temple, built entirely of granite, is assigned to c.900 A.D. Inscriptional evidence regarding the dedication of a separate temple to Kālī may be gathered from the Kālāṃjār fragmentary record, referring to the installation of an image of Kālī in a temple. Some peculiar images of the goddess Cāmuniṇī, a skeleton figure, may also be seen at Kālāṃjār, one beside the statue of Kāla Bhairava, and another near the Nīlkantha.

40. JASB.1848, P.317, L27.
temple. Cāmunda, or Cāmūndī, is one of the Saptamātrikas (others being Brāhmāṇī, Māheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaishnavī, Vāraṇī, & Indrāṇī). According to Varāha Purāṇa however there is another Mātrika, called Yogesvarī, bringing the total number to eight —— 'Aṣṭa-sakti'. On the Ajaygadh fort there are figures of eight saktis, carved in a row on a rock near the Tarhaoni gate. One of these aṣṭa-sakti images again is Cāmunda, as noticed from the inscribed pedestal.

There are some specimens of composite sculpture also, —— viz., Umā-Mahēśvara or alingana-mūrtti, Śiva's marriage or Kalyāṇa-sundara mūrtti and Ardhanārīśvara mūrtti. The last one is particularly interesting, as in this image Śiva and Śakti are merged in one body in a sitting posture, as engraved on the outer wall of the Jatkāri-Caturbhūja temple.

The image of Nandin (a bull), the vāhana or vehicle of Śiva, is almost an indispensable adjunct to a Śaivite shrine. Invariably the figure of the bull is there, either in the mandapa of the temple or in the outer courtyard, with its face turned towards the deity. In some temples however Nandin is more comfortably accommodated in a separate mandapa outside the main temple, but just in front of the main entrance to the sanctum. The sculptural representations of Nandin are seen at Khajurāho both singly and in the company of its master.

42. A.S.R.XXI., P. 47.
Minor Cults.

The survey of Brahmanical worship of the region would remain incomplete without a reference to other Purānic and pseudo-Purānic gods and goddesses, who are mentioned in different records or whose sculptural representations are found.

Let us begin with Ganesā. There is no evidence to prove the existence of the Gānapatyas in the region particularly during the period of the Candella rule. Ganesā is mentioned in the Khajurāho record as a member of the family of Śiva, a parivāra-devatā. Mūsaka, (the mouse), the popular mount of Ganesā is represented in the Khajurāho sculptures. At Ajaygadh we come across a statue of Ganesā (Vināyaka), claimed to have been set up by Gānapati, the minister of Candella Vīravarman, in the Ajaygadh Rock Inscription (V.S.1337, A.D.1281).

Subrahmanya or Kartikeya, another god of Śiva's family is conspicuously absent. But in the row of pillars carved over the fourth cave near the Nīlakanṭha temple at Kālārnār are two armed figures called 'Mahādeo ke putes' (sons of Mahādeva). One of them with bow and arrow in hand, popularly known as 'Bīr Badi'. It seems probable that the people by regarding him as a son of Śiva, identify the image with that of Kartikeya.

43. E.I.,I.,P.140.
44. A.S.R.,XXI,P.52.
45. JASB.,1848, P.321.
Brahmā, an important member of the purānic Trinity, lost his status in the later age, and there is no sect or class owing special and exclusive allegiance to this divinity. In other words, there is no Brahmā cult like the Vaisnavas and the Śaivas. But Brahmā continued to receive offerings from both the Vaisnavites and the Śaivites, and sculptural representation of the god may be noticed in the temples of both the cults. In the Candella dominion also we find figures of Brahmā depicted on the walls of some of the temples. In the Caturbhūja or Lakṣmanāji temple at Khajurāho, Brahmā along with Śiva is portrayed as standing on either side of Lakṣmī, evidently to demonstrate the superiority of Vaisnavism over the other two cults. Brahmā is also seen carved on the body of the Great Boar statue of the Varāha temple of Khajurāho. But in the vāmanā temple is found the image of the god along with his consort, Brahmāṇī. At Dudāhi we come across what may be called a rare specimen of a shrine dedicated to Brahmā. On the lintel of the sanctum is carved a three-headed bearded figure of Brahmā with his mount, goose, supported by 'nava-grahas' or nine planets. The temple contains inscriptive evidence too. In one of the pilgrims' records, the writer pays his homage to 'Caturmukha' i.e., the four-faced god Brahmā, and his consort 'Savitri', and uses the expression, 'Brahmāsāda

47. Ibid., X. Pp. 93-94.
The worship of Sūrya or the Sun-god also appears to be quite popular among the Candiellas. There is a temple known as the Citragupta temple or Bharatji’s temple at Khajurāho, specially dedicated to Sūrya. An image of the deity, 5'ft. high, is installed in the sanctum. It is seen wearing high boots and driving a chariot of seven horses. There is also an image of Sūrya in relief on the lintel above the door-way. Similar Sūrya images on lintel are found in other temples at Khajurāho. On the outer wall of the Jatkārī-Caturdhūja temple is also carved a figure of Sūrya seated in his chariot, his seven horses being shown on the pedestal. There is a small tank at Ajaygadh popularly believed to be sacred to Sūrya.

Inscriptions also refer to the worship of the Sun along with Bhavānīpati by the Candiella kings Madanavarman and Paramardi, while making grants of land to brahmins. The Khajurāho record of V.S.1011 closes with invocation to Savitṛ (the Sun god) - "Namo Savitre", after invoking Vāsudeva. Evidence however is not quite clear to show that the Saura cult prevailed independently on a large scale in Bundelkhand. But as Sūrya of the Brahmanical pantheon is a form of Nārāyaṇa (Savitṛ-mandala-madhyavartti Nārāyaṇa’), his worship was not unusual.

49. A.S.R.VII., P.49.
Revanta and Navagrahas are intimately associated with the solar cult. Several reliefs of Nava-grahas are found in the Candella temples, both Brahmanical and Jaina, viz., Laksmanji temple, Varaha temple and the Ghantai temple. Presumably there was no sectarianism in the propitiation of the planetary deities, movements of whom, it is believed, controlled human fate. There is an image of Revanta, the son of the Sun-god, depicted in bas relief on the basement of the Khajuraho temple (Laksmanji). Besides there are reliefs of 'Aṣṭa-Dikpālas' (Guardian deities of eight directions) in some temples, viz., Kandariya-Mahādeo, Varāha, and Pārvavānātha (Jaina) temples, evidently to guard against the evil spirits. In some temples we find individual figures of Agnī (in the Kandariya temple), and of Yama (in the Devī Jagadambi temple), who also are members of Aṣṭa-dikpālas.

Some icons of Gaṅgā, standing on her vehicle Makara, are noticed in the Candella temples. An image of Gaṅgā is also carved on the body of the Great Boar of the Varāha temple. At the Kandariya Mahādeva temple there are representations of both Gaṅgā on Makara and Yamunā on Kūrma.

The account given above shows that the Candella rulers were ardent worshippers of Brahmanical gods and goddesses, and that their reigns were characterised by noteworthy efforts to propagate their religion.
Non-Brahmanical Cults. Buddhism.

Of the non-brahmanical cults, there is little trace of Buddhism during the Candella period. The only archaeological evidence of Buddhism earlier than the rise of the Candellas is furnished by a large image of Buddha, seated in "bhūsparśamudrā" (touching the earth) on a double-petalled lotus (Viśva-paṭema) seat, found in the Chañḍāi temple site at Khajurāho. On the lotus-petals of its pedestal was inscribed the oft-quoted couplet "Ye dhammā hetu prabhavā tesāṁ hetum Tathāgata...", in characters assignable to 9th cent. A.D. Cunningham took the Chañḍāi temple as a Buddhist shrine because of this find, but later the discovery of a large number of naked Jaina statues from the ruins of the temple led to its identification as a Jaina temple.51

Another indirect reference to the existence of Buddhist worship in the region is noticed in the Chañkhari plates of Paramardideva. While granting an entire village to certain brahmanas, particular care was taken to exclude 5 'halas' of land belonging to a Buddhist shrine.52 It is not known when the endowment in favour of the Buddhist temple was created, or by whom; but that it was respected by the Candella king is an indication of the existence of the religion during this period in however slender form it may be.

Jainism.

Jainism had some hold on the people, particularly the trading community (Sreśṭhins). The Khajurāho Inscription no.3 of V.S.1011, carved on the left door-jamb of the temple of pāncaitalavāṭika, Amravāṭika and Dhāṅgavāḍī by one Pāhila, a devotee of Jñanātha, who claims to have been held in esteem by king Dhanga. The devotion of the 'Grahapati' family, to which Pāhila belonged, is also evidenced by the Darbat-Sāntinātha image inscription of V.S.1852, in which it is found that during the reign of the illustrious Kṛtvārman, son of Vijayapāla, the image of Sāntinātha was installed by a group of his 'hereditary ministers' (kūlamātyavrnda), viz., Pāhilla and Jīju. They were disciples of the Jain teacher Vāsāvendra or Vāsāvacandra. Of these two ministers, Pāhilla may be identified with Pāhila of the Khajurāho record, which also refers, as in the other inscription, to Mahārājaguru Vāsāvacandra. In the Khajurāho inscription however he is not mentioned as a minister, but that he was an influential person in the court of Dhamga probably already a minister, is indicated by the statement that he was esteemed by the king. The same family out of their devotion to the Jaina faith set up an image of Sambhavanātha, as recorded in the Jain image inscription no.8 dated V.S.1215, during the reign of Mahanavarman. It further mentions the name of the father of Pāhilla, Sreṣṭhi Dedu, his

53. Ibid.,I,Pp.135-36.
son, Sadhu Sälehe, and his grandsons, Mahägäna, Mahäcandra, Siricandra, Jinaacandra, Udayacandra and others. Another Grahapati family, devoted to Jainism, is also mentioned in inscriptions engraved on pedestals of some jaina images, at Khajuräho. One of them refers to Sresthi SRI pänïdhara "Om Grahapatyänvaya Sresthi SRI pänïdhara" and another dated in Sälvat 1205 refers to श्रेष्ठी स्क्री पाणिधरा and his sons, Sresthi Tri(Tri)-vikrama, Añhana and Laksmidhara. This was a family of Sresthins or bankers and merchants.

The jaina temples of Khajuräho definitely show that Jainism flourished side by side with Brahmanical cults in the Candiëra territory. It is quite likely that the Jainas here enjoyed royal patronage though it is not known who built these temples. But in architectural style, elegance and details of execution the jaina temples were at par with other Brahmanical shrines there.

Jain temples are situated to the south-east of the Khajuräho village. From the ruins of the Chañtai temples, named after the 'bell and chain ornaments' on its pillars, were discovered several Digambara jaina images. Above the entrance to the temple is an image of an eight-armed jaina goddess riding on Garuda, evidently the 'Säsana-devatä Nirvänä' of the 16th Tirthamkara Säntinätha, whose 'Upäsaka' was Garuda. Besides, at each end of the lintel is the figure of a Tirthamkara. The frieze

56. Ibid.
above the lintel depicts sixteen symbolic representations, referable to the sixteen dreams or conceptions of the mother of Mahāvīra, the last Tīrthamkara.

To the south-east of the Ghaṭādī temple is situated a group of jaina temples, enclosed within a modern compound wall. The parśvanātha temple is the largest and finest of the jaina temples now surviving at Khajurāho (68'2" long and 34'11" broad). Here also is met with an image of a jaina goddess (ten-armed), riding on a Garuḍa, carved on the entrance door of the temple, while on the lintel of the sanctum are seated and standing jaina figures. There is a figure of a bull, carved in front of an ornamental throne in the sanctum, which indicates that it was originally dedicated to Tīrthamkara-Rishavānātha or Ādinātha, the 1st Tīrthamkara. The modern image of parśvanātha was installed as late as 1860 A.D. The outer wall of the temple consists of statues of the Tīrthamkaras, arranged in tiers, and other figures of the Brahmanical pantheon as well. In the Ādinātha temple too, the original image is substituted by a modern image of the same divinity. The pillared niches of this temple represent the principal jaina goddesses holding their respective symbols and riding on their distinctive vehicles.

The Śāntinātha temple, to the south of the parśvanātha temple, is however a later structure, but it was built on the ruins of the old temple and some ancient jaina sculptures are built into its walls. The sculptures include a standing image of Rṣabhadeva
(14'ft.high) with his vehicle, the Bull carved on the pedestal. Cunningham noticed a short dedicatory inscription dated 1027-28 A.D. on the pedestal, which however is now hidden under plaster.  

Among other places in the Candella dominion mention may be made of the Dudahi ruins where in the principal group there are remains of two Jaina temples one of which contains a stark naked figure (12'ft.high), and the other a squatted one with a naked figure standing on each side. In the second group at Dudahi is noticed another Jain temple with a large square pillar 10'ft.high, decorated with naked Jaina figures.  

* At Madampur (24m.S.E.of Dudahi) is a Jain temple with an inscription dated Samvat 1206 (A.D.1149) containing the name of Madanapura.  

* In the fort of Ajaygarh also several rows of small Jaina figures are noticed.  

* At Mahoba we come across a number of broken Jaina statues with their respective symbols. Some of them bear names inscribed on their pedestals----viz., Neminâtha, Sumathanâtha and Ajitânâtha.  

* Date and name of the reigning monarch at the time when the statue was set up are also inscribed in some cases. The earliest of such records noticed by Cunningham is 'Samvat 1169' (A.D.1112). The name of Madanavarman is inscribed on the pedestal of Neminâtha marked with 'shell-symbol' (śankha), dated

58. Ibid.X, Pp.92,96.  
59. Ibid.XXI, P.172.  
60. Ibid., P.46.  
61. Ibid., Pp.73-74.
in Samvat 1211, and of Paramardideva on the pedestal of an unidentified Jaina image dated Samvat 1224.

At Buri Canderi (on the Betwá river), which was an old city founded by the Candellas, to the south of the palace-site Cunningham found 21 Jaina figures, placed against the walls, of which 19 were standing and 2 seated, identified as Supārśvanātha and Candraprabha from their symbols, 'svastika' and 'candra' (crescent) respectively."