CHAPTER XIII.

ART AND ARCHITECTURE.
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The culmination of Indian art and the architectural genius of her people found expression in the development of the construction of a temple—the abode of God, to perfection. The most organic of forms—the human frame, and the perfect abode of Spirit was the fundamental concept of a Hindu temple. "The Spirit demands a body for its expression and the body attains significance when it is infused with the Spirit". Temple is thus compared to Purusha—a human body and the Spirit is the God Supreme installed therein. Hence the various parts of a temple were named after the various limbs or parts of a human body. Dr. Bhanderkar rightly remarks that "the main current of Indian Craft tradition is non-sectarian in character". He further adds that it would be an offence to characterise any style as Buddhist or Jain or Hindu. The temple may be dedicated to Hindu, Buddhist or Jain deity but the structures for all are equally magnificent, beautified with various geometrical designs and charming Apsaras, Gandharvas and Sārākulas.

Rising from the smaller heights of the base to the Ardhamandap, Mandap and then from the Bhikara to the Amlaka—the crowning piece, one seems to be climbing heavenwards over the mythical mountain "Meru", which stands like a pillar separating the heaven and the earth and to which a temple is compared.

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2. Ibid., P.17.
A temple is also called Prakāśa which means a palace. In ancient India the king was supposed to represent and possess certain divine elements and just as in the “regal authority” the ruler of a people, rested faith for protection and security; similarly in the “Sacred Majesty”- the ruler of the Universe, man reposed faith for well being happiness and for gaining Supreme knowledge. Both were offered “Rājapachhīras” i.e. regal services and thus was felt the necessity for accessory constructions like Ardhamandap, Bhogamandap and Natamandap.

The accessory structures too in their turn enhance the importance of Holy of Holies and testify to the expression of added dignity which it commands by virtue of its holding the position as the home of the godhead invoked. The main structure stands firm, firm, as the faith of the faithful and all bloom into beauty through the hands of the artists. In the beauty of the proportions and contours and the liveliness of the ornamental images which lie scattered in every nook and corner of the temple, lies its enormous appeal.

HOW THE TEMPLES WERE CONSTRUCTED.

It is a matter of great surprise to modern architects how huge blocks of stone were raised to such heights and then fixed without mortar or cement. This problem baffles even the expert engineers of today and in the absence of present mechanical devices, it must have been very difficult indeed. But the sculptured panels on the temple walls themselves, throw light on this. It seems there were two ways of constructing such temples.

(1) A sculptured panel fixed in the temple of Siddha Mahâvira near Puri suggests a very ingenious device. It is quite likely that the artisans had to construct inclined wooden panels supported on posts as the temple rose in height. Over this the heavy and carved blocks of stone were carried by one, two or more labourers, as the weight may be, by slinging the stone blocks on a strong pole after tying them by means of ropes (i.e. a Behangi pole).

(2) The unfinished carvings on the Mohini temple which stands on the south bank of the Hindu Sarovara in Bhubanesvara, suggest through the mere outlines sketched on its walls that the designs over temple were sometimes carved in situ after the structural construction was complete.

STYLES OF TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION:

In India there are three main styles of temple construction.

1. Nagara
2. Vesara, and
3. Dravida.

1. Nagara:

Temples built in Nagara style are square from the basement to the 5ikhara and end like a pyramid on a square base.

2. Vesara:

Vesara is circular from the basement or from the neck of the structure to its top. Perhaps due to the fragility of structure the last
two styles were not common or it may be due to the fact that greater perfection had been achieved in the first form of construction.

3. **Dravida**

Dravida is hexagonal or octagonal from above the neck to the end of the Sikhara.

None of these styles is the monopoly of any one part or area in the country. Nāgara style can also be found in the south as can the Vesara and Dravida and vice versa.

**COMPONENT PARTS OF A TEMPLE.**

Whatever the style of construction each temple had certain component parts. These were the Ardhanaṇḍap, Mandap, Vedī and Antarāla or the Garthagrha.

1. **Ardhanaṇḍap**

The Ardhanaṇḍap is a long rectangular passage having oriel windows on both the sides to provide light. The passage leads to the square hall or the Mandap. In very small temples however, the Ardhanaṇḍap has been discarded or reduced to a negligible length consisting of the Torana only. Torana is a beautifully carved gateway leading to the Ardhanaṇḍap in some cases (Fig. 237) and to the Mandap in case of certain other temples (Fig. 238).

2. **Mandap**

The Mandap is generally a square hall having four or six pillars. But in case of the Chauvārya temples at Un, the Vishnu and the Sun temples at Kadiru and the pavilion facing the Sun Temple at Modhera t

1. Gateway to Mandap Teli T Gwalior Fort.
the Mandap is circular having eight octagonal pillars\(^1\) (Fig. 239). It was and is even today, used for congregational worship or for the audience to sit together at the time of religious discourses in the temples. Here the Havana can be performed, Kirtana can be held and the Mahānāchāni can dance while the enthralled audience watches the performance. It has a roof of pyramidal, horizontal tiers lower than the sikharā.

3. **Vedicā**

The Mandapa and the Garbhagṛha were joined together by the Vedicā or the Antarāla (i.e., the vestibule) with sometimes had steps leading to the sanctum.

4. **Garbhagṛha**

The fourth and the last is the Garbhagṛha, the holy of holies or the soul of the Purusha, to which temple was compared. The sanctum of the temple harboured the image of the godhead invoked and could be entered through the gate\(^2\) (Fig. 240). The Garbhagṛha is a small dark square room with no decorations on its inside walls. Amidst these plain surroundings is kept the imposing benign and beautiful image of the all pervading God Almighty. This interior darkness made visible by the dim burning of lights inside the parcel of space, suggests beautifully the idea of mystery that envelops the universe and the spirit that

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1. Octagonal pillars of Mandap Chauvarya T Un.

2. Sanctum gates Vishnu T Kiredu and Chauvarya T Un.

moves behind the veil of mystery.

But the temples of Puri consist of a Vimāna (i.e., the towered sanctum) and the Jagamohan—which is the square Mandap in front of the towered sanctum. The Natamandap or the dancing hall and the Bhogamandap—the hall for offerings, were added later to the Jagamohan part of the temple in Puri. The halls and the tower were constructed on a raised plinth consisting of a cubical part below and a pyramidal part above. The imposing tower with its tall curvilinear portion, flat ribbed disc and the final stoned majestically behind the smaller pyramidal roofs of the Jagamohan, the Māta and the Bhogamandaps.

Sikharas—

The towering minaret over the sanctum, called Vimāna in Puri temples, was known as the Sikharas in others. The Sikharas, vertically consisted of eight component parts:

1. First was the vast terrace on which the construction stood. This was called the Māla meaning 'the root'.

2. Second was the socle of the temple, technically called Mahāraka—i.e., the base or the floor of the main shrine.

3. On the base were built the surrounding walls called Janghā. Janghā in the medieval temples was the most decorated part of the temple covered with various beautiful sculptures, decorative motifs and geometrical designs.

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2. Krishna Deva—"Temples of North India", Chapter I, p. 3.
4. The Kapota were the projecting cornices gradually leading upwards to the edge of the wall. The cornices became less pronounced after a certain height to give place to the sculptured images which were inserted in the main body of the walls.

5. Fûnduk As the Janghâ ended, the Šikhara started, gradually leading upwards till it became a small square, octagon or a circle according to its style of construction. The spire of the Šikhara had three, five or seven vertical projections.

6. The Gala or the neck made over the narrowed top of the Šikhara served as a resting place for the circular fluted top which looked like a huge Chakra made in stone.

7. The circular fluted top was called the Āmalasāraka. Now the temple neared completion.

8. Over the Āmalasāraka was placed the crowning symbol, the auspicious Kalasa, Kumbha or Šula i.e. the finial.

Some of the temples (e.g. the Vishvanath, Lakshman, Kandariya and Pārvanath at Khajurāho) had a double circumambulatory passage i.e. narrow path round the Garbhagārha between its outer and inner walls, and another all round the outside of the temple on its large plinth. These were known as the Sāndhāra Prāsāda. But the temples with only one outer abulatory (all round the temple itself) passage were called Sīrandhāra Prāsāda. But for a few very big ones (at Khajurāho in Madhya Pradeś) most of the temples visited were

Mīrandhāra Prāsāda. As the rate of circumambulation is actually a communion with the deity, the importance of this circumambulatory passage is great.  

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1. Krishna Dvâra "Temples of North India" Chapter I, p. 3.
Pillars and Ceilings

The Pillars and the Ceilings of the Mandap in a large number of temples are singularly beautiful. The eyes feast on the rich carvings, geometrical designs and the beautiful sculptures on the pillars and the ceilings.

The octagonal pillars in the Chauvári temples at Un (Fig. 239 and 241), the pavilion facing the Sun temple at Modhera and the Dilwara temples at Mount Abu are treasures in themselves depicting religious, social and decorative sculptures on their sides. This does not imply that the pillars of other temples lack in decorations. All mandap pillars beautify the surrounding structures to a degree but the ones mentioned above are gems in themselves. Reference must be made here to the richly carved ceilings of the mandap of some of the temples visited. Highly decorated ceilings which automatically draw the attention of the visitor are to be found in the temples of the central and the western zones. The Nagesvara temple at Badnawar has a circular mandap hence its ceiling consists of eight concentric circles which gradually diminish in size till the last circle is of the size of a big ball. Around the smallest circle four semi-circular petals like those of a flower are made. The third circle has seven and the fourth has twelve petals. The fifth and the sixth circles have a network design to relieve the monotony of the repetition. The seventh and the eighth circles again have the same design of petals of a flower, this time increasing in size and number both (Fig. 242). But for the two intervening circles of network design, the roof would have given the impression of a huge Zinnia flower.

1. Broken Pillar piece Gwalior Museum
Harbadeśvara temple at Una, has a square ceiling for its mandap. Its ceiling has a border of big eight petalled flowers carved in stone. Each flower has two small concentric circles in the centre, from which emanate eight triangular pieces on eight sides containing the design of eight bifurcated petals of a flower. Like the circles, there are two concentric rows of petals also.

The central square slab in the ceiling of the Kesariṇī Kunsar temple at Osian shows a Gandharva in flying posture within the eight petals of a lotus flower. There is an inscribed circle with the design of a broad chain around the flower and then there are the four corners of the square slab. All around there are Nāga and Nāgās shown single or in couples. They have their long serpentine bodies so entwined with each other as to make a design of squares joined together with interlacing links of a chain.

Ceilings of the Mandap and the Verandahs all round the Bhana Shah and the Vimal Shah temples at Mount Abu present not only a large variety of square and circular designs as well as images of gods and goddesses, Apsaras, armies and village scenes, but also show the skill attained by the master builders in carving marble to perfection (Figs. 135, 142, 144, 146, 147, 148, 149, 219, 220, 221). Seeing them one is so moved as to say: "This is the work of Viśvakaraṇa himself and not human beings." According to the designs the ceilings can be broadly categorised in two varieties—(1) Ceilings having square or rectangular designs and (2) Ceilings having circular designs.

The Vimal Shah temple presents two very beautiful examples of square ceilings. The first has nine hanging lotus pendants carved
in a square in three rows, each row having three lotuses. The lotuses have a single row of eight petals around the central seed box which is conical. There are two concentric circles divided in eight equal parts encircling the lotus petals at some distance. These circles are in their turn surrounded by eight semi-circular curved petals. Each petal has four hollowed parts attached to a knob. The hollowed out space gives the impression of an upturned lotus fountain. All these nine lotus fountains are attached to each other by a diamond shaped square divided into a pattern of four leaves (Fig. 243).

Another square ceiling has a central lotus with three or four rows of petals each row having eight petals. The lotus is surrounded by a set of four hollowed out petals which in their turn are encircled by similar petals eight in number. All round this central design are made in an encircling square big lotuses with a single row of large petals. There are sixteen such lotuses arranged in a square. Around the lotuses are flowery patterns with Kinnara Couples in the centre (Fig. 244). It may be pointed here that while the former ceiling (i.e. Fig. 243) was carved in a single block of marble, this one has two blocks joined together so cleverly that only a very careful observer can detect the joint.

The rectangular ceiling in the Ahama Shah temple has a still more intricate design. It starts from a central Lotus encircled by squares having three five & seven hollowed out petals. Each petal is subdivided into six parts. The square of twenty-four petals is further surrounded by rectangles of beautiful flower patterns. These rectangles gradually increase in size having fourteen, twenty-two and
thirty flowers respectively (Fig. 245).

Another rectangular ceiling in the Vimal Shah temple has a scene depicting a male figure dancing in centre with a horn in his right hand. One couple is shown dancing on either side of him also having horns in one of their hands. Two female figures are shown dancing horizontally over the heads of these five and two females dance below their feet. Female cavaliers are shown all round as if guarding the merry making party (Fig. 246). But for the horns in the hands of the dancing party it could very well have been, the Rasā Līlā scene with Krishna in centre having a flute in his hands.

Coming to the circular designs in ceilings we find the Lotus design repeated here too. In the centre is a lotus pendant surrounded by eight triangles having eight bifurcated petals. Two similar rows of bifurcated petals are made in gradually increasing circles divided into six and eight triangular parts respectively. All round this central flowery pattern are three rows of hanging lotus pendants having eight, twelve and sixteen lotuses respectively as the size gradually increases. The last circle contains pointed leafy pattern. On the four corners are shown four Kīthunas couples seated on a lotus leaf with one of their hands kept on the shoulders of each other, while the remaining hands are folded on the chest perhaps in Gyan Mudrā (Fig. 247).

The central lotus, having three concentric circles divided into triangular parts as described above, is here surrounded by eight

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1. Vimal Shah T Mt Abu.
similar lotuses smaller in size as they don't have the third and the biggest circle around them. All these nine lotuses are surrounded by a party of musicians and dancers. Next comes the circle with a chajān design followed by another circle having a small lotus pendant varied by circular pendants or knobs in between. In this row the skilful hands of the master builder seem to have saved a little as two lotuses have come close together in the end leaving no space for the circular knob and one of the lotuses (the third from the two lotuses together) is either incomplete or broken (Fig. 248).

The central lotus in this ceiling is one having a thousand petals (Sahastradal Kanal). The last two rows of its big petals are decorated with two rows of square flowery design having a circle in its centre. This square design is further repeated in the third circle. Then follow two concentric circles with scallop design on a bangle-like band. On the four corners sits Goddess Lakshmi with one elephant standing on either side of her. Peculiarly enough the elephants are facing away from the goddess (Fig. 249).

Starting from the biggest circle we find in this ceiling pattern sixteen Jain goddesses (most probably Ārūḍha, which are

1. Vishal Shah T Mt Abu,
2. Rasna Shah T Mt Abu,
sixteen in number) shown standing around with their Vāhanas and Āyudhas. Then follows the design of cusped circles in triple rows. The third row consists of twenty-four lotus pendants with hollowed out petals around them. Then come eight rows of concentric circles gradually diminishing in size till the central lotus is reached, which again hangs down like a pendant¹ (Fig. 250). A similar ceiling in the Vimal Shah temple, though less elaborate, has eight Yakshīṇī figures around it shown in various dance poses. Over the heads of the Yakshīṇīs eight lotuses hang like pendants. Two concentric circles are made having eight semi-circular petals further divided into four smaller ones. These circles are decorated with a lacy pattern on their outer edges. In the centre hangs a small lotus² (Fig. 251). This ceiling has an octagon in which is carved a circle with a flowery design and after that follow three concentric circles having dancing Apsaras — thirty-two in the first, twenty-four in the second and twelve in the third and the smallest circle. The design ends with the Lotus in centre³ (Fig. 252).

1. Mandap Bhama Shah T Mt Abu.
2. Vimal Shah T Mt Abu.
Similarly this square ceiling has four Kinnara couples in its four corners and then follow two circles of dancing Apsaras. The first circle on the right top shows two separate pairs of seated female figures listening to the discourses from two Rishis. The central circle here contains the statue of Santināth seated in Padmāsana with two deers holding a Chakra (wheel or law) carved below his seat\(^1\) (Fig. 253).

\(\text{Chakresvarī} \) is shown seated in Padmāsana holding chakra in her upper two hands. Below her seat the Nine pots of gems are kept and one attendant stands on either side of her. All round Chakresvarī, are carved eight standing male gods whose figures are too small to show their Ānudhas clearly in the picture. In between these gods' couples are shown in various poses. Thus a beautiful octagonal design is made. On the four corners four goddesses are shown seated\(^2\) (Fig. 254).

The ceiling in Rama Shah temple shows three rows of sculptured images on top and below a Chakra in the centre, which has two rows of sculptures on its right and left. The sculptured scenes show armies on the march with elephants, horses, armed infantry and Pīlakī bearers. In the centre of the Chakra an image of a Jain Tīrthaṅkara is shown seated in Padmāsana in a temple whose Sikhara is

\[1. \text{Vimal Shah T Mt Abu.}\]
\[2. \text{Vimal Shah T Mt Abu.}\]
clearly visible\textsuperscript{4} (Fig. 255).

The ceiling of the Ambika Temple at Jagat shows an eight petalled flower with a circle in the centre. The central circle contains a dancing image with two musicians, while on the eight petals of the flower are carved eight goddesses seated in Padmasana\textsuperscript{2} (Fig. 256).

Two more ceilings found in this temple are worth mentioning. One has a square block decorated with flowery designs. In the centre are carved two circles. The bigger one contains four human images who are holding the hands and legs of each other in such a way as to make a circle. The inner circle contains a sun-flower carved in stone\textsuperscript{3} (Fig. 257). A similar ceiling has in its central circle one face carved in the centre with four male figures carved around it in such a way that on turning the picture the same face can be adjusted on the top of each body. It seems that they are doing some physical exercise or performing jugglers' feats\textsuperscript{5} (Fig. 258).

Beautifully decorative and somewhat similar in designs as those of the ceilings of the Dilwara temples at Mount Abu are the

\begin{enumerate}
\item Dhama Shah T Mt Abu.
\item Ambika T Jagat—(The Ayudhas in their hands are not clear).
\item Ambika T Jagat.
\item Ambika T Jagat,
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ceilings of the Jain group of temples known as Sīta Beesa Devari, at Chittor.

The first one has the flowery pendant in the centre having concentric circles, decorated with trefoil cusped circles, all round it. Sixteen small flowers are made in between the cusped trefoil design. The largest circle has bifurcated leaf pattern with sixteen holes in place of the sixteen flowers of the smaller circles (Fig. 259).

The second ceiling has the lotus pendant with the hollowed out eight petals of a flower around it. Then follows a circle with flower designs having sixteen flowers in all, next is a circle of sixteen triangular leaves and the third one is the circle having cusped trefoil circles in two rows. Sixteen dancing Apsarās were shown round but at present only fourteen are there (Fig. 260). (Two seem to have fallen down as is proved by their pedestals which are still in tact).

The outer walls of the temples are decorated with beautiful sculptures of various designs besides a large number of images and gods' icons, sometimes carved in the round, in one or more rows. The female figures with slender waists and heavy breasts, while the male figures with their straight limbs and broad chests remind us of

1. Jain 2 Chittor.
2. Sīta Beesa Devari Chittor Fort.
the lives of our ancestors a few hundred years ago. The sculptures add to the grace and majesty of the temples whose outlines have a rising crescendo, falling and rising higher and higher till the Sukhārā is reached. "The Sukhārā is the last halting point". The super structures of the Mandap and Mahāmandap stop here for the height of the Sukhārā can not be crossed by them and the Sīkharā starts. From a distance the Sīkharā with its Aśūlmanjaris, with its Uromanjarīs, Uromanjarīs and Śringas gives the impression of a large "bud about to open". The Gavāksha-windows adorning the Sīkharā all round offer a beautiful play of light and shade.

GENERAL FEATURES OF TEMPLE SCULPTURES.

It is essential to add here a few words about the icons and sculptures on the walls, pillars, and ceilings (in case of Abu temples) of the temples. The icons show a great deal of influence of Tantrism on Hindu and Buddhist icons. This influence is conspicuous in the North-east going right up to Nepal and Tibet. It is not discernible at all in the regions south of Narmada river. The apparent reason for it seems to be that the southern people were more conservative. They strictly adhered to the Śaṅkara iconographic principles. Moreover Buddhists migrated to the North and so did the Kaulas, Kāpālikas and the Tantrics.

So far as the impact of North Indian Art and Architecture on the South East Asian Countries in concerned, it is remarkable that the traits of Guptas, Gurjara-Pratihāras and to some extent those of the Pālas were imbibed but the more significant impact is of the South Indian art styles. The Indian cultural styles and trends did not remain confined to the boundaries of this country, they also migrated to the South East Asian Countries during the past Gupta Period. From the 7th to the middle of the 9th century A.D. Kannauj was a very important centre of Art and Architecture and the traits of plastic art of Kannauj were imbibed by the artists of the succeeding periods.

Just as the Sanskrit and Prakrit languages and the Brahmi script were adopted by the people of Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, Indo-China and Indonesia similarly the art styles developed under the Pālas, the Gurjara-Pratihāras, the Pāllavas and the Cholas spread all over the vast region of South East Asia.

For the iconographic study of the Puranic Pañchadevas numerous remains of plastic art discovered at the various sites in North India—particularly Madhya Pradesh—furnish a rich and variegated material. It is interesting to note that many of the iconic details of the Pañchadevas and their associates, as found in the relevant texts are met with in the sculptures from this area. A few intricate dhyānas of some of the deities can be noticed in several sculptures.

* Indian cultural relations with South East Asia—Prof. K.D. Bajpai (Published in the cultural Forum on Vol. II No.3-4(1969), P-70-76.
* (Prof. K.D. Bajpai) Brahmical Sculptures in Madhya Pradesh.
The previous beliefs that the multiplicity of hands in the Brahmanic deities began after Gupta age may be given up in view of several multi-handed Gupta images.

The sculptural material of the period under review tends to indicate that the Vaishnava and Śaiva cults had an upper hand over other Brahmanical cults.

The idea of amalgamating various factors of Buddhist pantheon are also noticed in the Brahmanical iconography of the post Gupta period. This can be seen in the syncretistic images e.g. Śrīva- Nārāyana, Viṣṇu-Śiva -Śrīya or Harihara pitāmaha etc. The sitting postures and various attitudes of hands apart from the meditation attitude or Dhyāna mudrā, are very clearly discernible in the Vedic-Purānic pantheon.

The development of the Buddhist pantheon into Tantric phases- Vajrayāna and Mantrayāna, from about 700 A.D. also had considerable influence on the Vedic religion.

The indication of multi-headed and multi-handed deities with various Ṛṣudhas can very well be compared with Buddhist-Tantric deities e.g. Bodhisattvas, Tārā, Pāramitā, Mārīchī, Herambha etc.

This influence was mostly seen in the statues of eastern India and parts of Madhya Pradesh. The development of the Śaṅkta cults in the areas of central India and Orissa imbued a good deal of inspiration from the Tantric beliefs of the early medieval period. Several names found on the pedestals of the Yogini images found at Bheraghat, Gurgi, Khajuraho and elsewhere and also certain peculiar Ṛṣudhas given in the hands of the goddesses are not found in the Śaṅkta texts dealing with various goddesses.
The life-like figures seem to resonate with energy from the surface which they touch and not only from that of the wall of the temple but from any surface, be it one's own body. This liveliness could be put in them as a result of the through practice of Anagha Nyasa by the sculptors. Anagha Nyasa was the "sense of touch which was given a training and purpose of the highest order in ancient India". This was the result of Sadhana or the patient, continued and devoted practice of years together. It would not be too much to assert that the sculptors were duly rewarded for their Sadhana in successfully producing the masterpieces of art (Figs. 190 & 261).

The tall slender lady standing with her figure curved, bending slightly to the left, holding her thick plait of hair seems to have been lost in thought and entered into the world of dreams. Her plait is done in a unique but beautiful style. The two attendants, one male and the other female are there to guard her and to help her (Fig. 190). The other lady less tall but equally beautiful slightly heavier in body, is busy pulling out a thorn from her foot. Artistically she has put her left hand over head while the right one is trying to hold the thorn between the finger and the thumb, feeling of the slight pain is also shown on her face. An attendant stands below with a knobbed and pointed thing in his hand to assist her (Fig. 261). Her plaied hair twisted artistically, her Karnaphulu and jewellery all bespeak of the skilled architect.

P. 304 (1946).

3. Ambika T Jagat.
Equally beautiful, lifelike, loving and benign are the
gods' icons. Their expressions, poses and Āyudhas all speak of their
minds. The angry look shown sometimes on the faces of Bhairava, Śiva
and Chāmunda provides a deep contrast to the affectionate, benign and
sweetly smiling faces of Ambikā, Pārvatī and Viṣṇu. The images in dance
poses are shown in action, portraying all kinds of expressions. The
fluttering garments and flying postures of the Vidyādharas—gods
make them appear featherlike in weight and they seem to be flying even
if they are shown without wings.

The dresses, jewellery and coiffure show pronounced
influence of those worn in the respective province where the temples
were built\(^1\). Garments are rare and so fine in texture that they are discernible only if they are printed or embroidered or can be seen at their
hem carved on the limbs of the images. The Kirīta, Karanda and Jatī
Mukutas of the gods add height and dignity to them, while the chignons
of different shapes and designs worn by minor gods and men add balance
and proportion to the images.

Images are shown standing erect with weight of the body
equally divided on both legs, with a slight bent or with triple and
excessive bends. These postures were known as Samabhanga, Abhanga,
Tribhanga and Atibhanga respectively.

Temples have been "transmuted into carvings and images\(^2\),
to illustrate fully the meanings of the Prāsāda". They seem to represent
symbolically all the world with its animal and human beings, all
permeated as if by the presence of the Supreme. If the hunting and

\(^1\) "The Hindu Temple"—Stella Kramrisch Vol.II P.306.
\(^2\) " " P.318, 384.
battle scenes, Nīthuna couples as well as others related to worldly activities signify the Samsāra or the mortal world, those related to the Sārdulas (Fig. 261); the Apsaras, Ashtadikpālas, the Seasons personified, Navagrahas and gods and goddesses signify the Svarga or the heaven above. These images seem to "carry dance in their hands, flight in their legs and sentiment or detachment in their faces".

**DECORATIVE DESIGNS.**

The decorative motifs all over the temples (mostly in their small friezes) consist of geometrical designs, floral patterns, heads of the dragons with flaming eyes, rows of elephants or geese and the creeper designs (Figs. 262). The Gavākṣha windows on the Śikhara from a lattice or network of intricate and beautiful workmanship. The twelve large wheels in the Konark temple not only show that the temple was designed like a huge chariot of the Sun god, but also add enormously to the magnific beautiful carvings of the temple which are carefully repeated on the sides and spokes of the wheel (Fig. 263).

**DYNAMISM.**

Sculpture in general is the art of the static, depicting one mood, posture or action only. But the deft sculptors of the medieval period put dynamism in their images, they seem to be engaged in action. The sculptors striking with the hammers held high in their right hands while the chisels are in their left ones (Fig. 272); two Pālakā bearer with their left legs placed in front (Fig. 273); four men pulling the cart tied to a rope, to help the bullocks carry the heavy stone piece with the fifth man pushing the wheel with an iron rod from the back of the cart.

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1. Śivara and Basanta (shown as a goddess and god couple) in the Victory Tower Chittoor.
(Fig. 245) or one man in front and one at the back of the cart assisting the bullocks as given above (Fig. 247); two women holding the rope tied to a big churn which has been put in the big pitcher containing curds seem ready to pull the rope and start churning (Fig. 223); the Pratihārī at the palace gate as if peeping out; the restive horses in the stables; the carefree elephant stepping out of the gate dangling his trunk; the army marching with its foot soldiers, cavaliers and elephants; or another army actually engaged in fighting with an angry elephant trampling on a horse’s head, whose tail he has caught in his trunk and archers standing on their chariots discharging arrows on their opponents facing them likewise on chariots (Fig. 241); band of musicians playing on the Harp and the Flutes, one man singing with the right hand on his ear and left one held high while the female dancer is dancing in tune (Fig. 206); the hunter pushing his dagger in the stomach of an angry lion who was standing on his hind legs in an attempt to attack his enemy (Fig. 211), are some of the scenes which clearly show men and animals in action.

Even the expressions on the faces of gods and goddesses, men and women are so distinct and evident that they create similar feelings in the hearts of the onlookers. Tender feelings of the hearts like love, happiness, contentment and joy are in clear contrast to the ferocity, ruthlessness and anger of the Saṁhāra mūrtis of Śiva, Bhairava and Chāmundā.

PERSPECTIVE.

A most striking feature of the sculptures of the medieval
period is the element of perspective introduced by the artists. This
unique feature seems to be one of the most important characteristics
of the medieval Indian sculptures. This unique conclusion is based
mainly on the depictions of some small figures in between or at
one side of the main figures shown singly or in groups in panels. The
ceiling square here depicts a marching army in its first row. Between
the second and the third horses of the army, small figures of two
Falakr bearers are shown carrying a sick man in the Falakr.
Evidently these Falakr bearers have receded to the other side of the path
or the road to give way to the marching army (Fig. 247 first row on top).
Similarly in the sixth row of the same panel as dancing party is shown on
either side of Gajalakshmi who is seated in the centre. Near the legs
of the female dancer in each party two small seated figures are shown who
seem to be watching the scene from some distance. Same idea of
perspective is shown by depicting two rows of soldiers marching side
by side (Fig. 247 third row from the bottom and also the first second and
third rows on turning the picture). The small figures of the Pratihar
peeping from the big city or palace gate also shows that the gate
has been left behind at some distance by the marching cavaliers,
elephants and foot soldiers (Fig. 235). Similarly in gods' icons also,
as well as, in certain big male and female images smaller figures
are depicted by their sides perhaps to convey the idea of perspective.

EROTIC SCULPTURE:

"In the whole range of Indian thought, the ruling idea
is 'Unity' which is best expressed in the harmonious relationship of
of body and spirit. A fundamental aspect of the Hindu faith from
the Vedic period onwards had been "the belief in the Universe as the
outcome of the cosmic union between the male and the female". The
Yoni and the Lingam symbolise the creation of the world. Their union
represents Karma (action). And just as our human love is seen as a
symbol of the great love of the Supreme God, so the joy of physical
union reflects the limitless joy of the Deity in creation. In the
embrace of his beloved a man forgets the whole world—everything both
within and without; in the very same way, he who embraces the self knows
neither within nor without. These must have been the thoughts which
inspired the sculptors to put the so-called obscene scenes or the
Erotic sculptures on the walls of the temples.

Mithuna couples or man and woman shown in close embrace,
form the decorative designs on the lintels of the entrance gates
leading to the temples or to the sanctum of the temples all over the
North India. Even the temples of the strictly abstemious Jain sect
depict such couples in abundance. Hence it is evident that in the past

1. Studies in Sanskrit texts on Temple Architecture with special
reference to Tantra Samhócyana. N.V. lallaiya Part I Introduction,
P.6.
2. "Of Kamakala" Nulkraj Anand as article in Marg Vol.I
June 57 No.3 P.4 (Editorial).
4. Quoted from Bhādārayàka Upnishad by Shri Nulkraj Anand
in his article "Of Kamakala" Marg Vol.II June 57 No.3 P.50.
5. Shadap Nageswara T Radnawarj Chauwarya and Nilakantheswar T
Unjelti T Gujalter Vishnu T Keshwara Nairanirat T Schagpur Mahadeva,
Vishnu and Devi Ts Osian Vishnu T Kirda Ambika T Jagat;
Sun T Medhara Rinal Shah T Abu; Sun T Konark; Angaraj T
Shuvaneswara; Puri T.
no obscenity was attached to such depictions, moreover, the polarity of the male and female has been shown in much of our creative art.

"Love-life or family life is a necessary condition of humanity at a certain stage." It was because of this realisation that the Aryans had divided a man's life into four Āśramas of which the Grāhasthāārāmya formed a necessary part and the depictions of the tender feelings of man for woman are as natural on temple walls as the animal figures, marching armies, dancing Apsārās and flying Gandharvas. Temples, were the symbolic representations of the Earth or the Bhū of which sex life forms a definite, an important and a sacred part.

Another explanation for depicting such scenes can be that they were placed on the temples to test the sincerity of the devotees, while the sincere ones would stand the test of looking at such scenes, unmoved and would proceed on to the sanctum ahead the hypocrites would turn back yielding to their senses and leave the temple without bowing down to the god-head placed in the sanctum. Just as the self is sought by complete control over the senses, the sanctum can also be reached only by those who have conquered their senses and have become jīteṇḍriya or Jina. To be jīteṇḍriya does not mean that you become masters of your senses by unnaturally crushing the desires because this would lead to secret longings and would hinder spiritual progress. On the contrary healthy enjoyment of the various pleasures of life leads

1. Quoted from Śrīvaṁśāvatāraṇyaka Upnished by Śrī Mārkraja Aham in his article "Of Kamakāla"-Marg Vol.X June 57 No.3 page 50, 46.
2. "Of Kamakāla"-Mārkraja Aham an article in Marg Vol.X June 57, No.3 P.47.
to an earlier and easier conquest of self. "Naksha\textsuperscript{4}, according to Vatsayana, could be attained only through Artha, Kama and Dharma". "Dharma, the practice of social righteousness, Artha, the pursuit of prosperity, Kama, the pursuit of pleasure and Naksha, the striving after liberation, were all considered complementary as well as exclusive of each other".

A careful study of all the North Indian temples reveals that though Kithuna couples are found in almost all the temples (Temple at Buda Gayā being a single exception) in small friszes or on temple gates, such scenes are found in the large sculptures of the temples at Bhuvanesvara, Kuri and Konark in Eastern Zone as well as at Khajuraho in the Central Zone. These are the zones where Siva and Sakti worship had been prevalent and still prevails. The Drama "Prabodh Chandrodaya" (which was staged in 1065 A.D. in the court of the Chandella ruler Harisinghara) draws attention to the prevalence of certain Saiva sects referred to as the Kaula and Kapālika cults\textsuperscript{2}.

In the 10th Cen. A.D. was founded the doctrine of Yogini. Kaula by Nātşyendranātha. "Kaula-mārga is the path of controlled enjoyment of sense objects because Yoga and Bhoga are one\textsuperscript{3}. Kapālikas were also known as Mahārattin, Mahābhairavānisāsana, Parasvesvara-siddhāntin and Somasiddhāntin. Bhavabhūti in his play Kālīśakti also refers to Kapālikas who lived in close association with their Yoginis also called Kapālavanitas. Certain postures in the erotic scenes suggest Yogic postures\textsuperscript{4} rather than sexual postures. The Kapālikas also

\begin{footnotes}
1. "Of Kasakali"- Nīkṛjak Anand-Marg Vol.\textsubscript{1} June 57 No. 3 P. 52.
2. "Kaula Kapālika cults at "hajuraho" by Pranod Chandra-article in "alit Kala Akademi No.1, 2nd April, 55="March 56 Vol.\textsubscript{1} June 57 No. 3 P. 98-105.
3. "Kaula Kapālika cults at "hajuraho" by Pranod Chandra-article in "alit Kala Akademi No.1 2nd April, 55="March 56 Vol.\textsubscript{1} June 57 No. 3 P. 98-105.
4. Rt and Lt Vishvanath T Khajuraho."
\end{footnotes}
believed in the release from Mayā through full enjoyment rather than rejection, like the Sādhaka of Tantric beliefs.

Sir John Woodroffe¹ the Tantric scholar says¹—

“The Sādhaka is taught not to think that we are one with the Divine in liberation only, but here and now, in every act we do. For in truth all soul is Śakti. It is Śiva, who as Śakti, is acting through the Sādhaka. When this is realised in every natural function, then, each exercise thereof ceases to be a mere animal act and becomes a religious rite—a Yajña. Every function is a part of the Divine Action in Nature.”

Harrison Foreman² also refers to the practice of entering into the ‘Obscene Idol House’ by the Lāmi after he had reached that stage of spiritual training where he thinks he can look upon the flesh without being moved emotionally by such sights. In this Idol House life-like figures are depicted in most lewd postures and beautifully women specially trained in the arts and wiles of womanhood begin to deceive before him. The Lāmi sits in Bhūmisparsa Mudrā studying his own reactions. If he remains unmoved, he has certainly conquered his senses, otherwise he has to go back and prepare himself again for this “post graduate” examination. By depicting such scenes the temples also tested the sincerity of the devotees. If he passed the test, he was ready for the direct communion with the gods, if not he has to redouble his efforts at self mastery.

¹. “Of Kāmakalā” Mulkraj Anand article in Mārg Vol.X June 1957 No.3 P.61 Also Śadhannāla Vol II
Passages in the Ŭtikal Šhand, Ṛgvi Purāṇa and the Brahma Samhitā support the view that such obscene figures were intended to protect the structures against lightening, cyclone or other visitations of nature.

ZONAL DIFFERENCES.

From a distance all temples appear to be similar in their massive constructions, in the contours of their Śikharas and in their decorative designs, but viewed carefully from close quarters certain differences become evident. These would be dealt with zonewise as follows.

Eastern Zone—

Visnupād temple at Gayā was the first temple visited in this zone. It is a big temple spreading in a large area, but instead of being a single shrine it consists of a large number of smaller shrines within the same campus. Once the structure must have been quite imposing but now, covered in coatings of white wash and moss, it has lost much of its grandeur. The images too are so soaked in oil that often it becomes difficult to identify them.

Temple of the Viṣṇu at Bodha Gaya is a very massive and magnificent structure. Its tall Śikhara and solid walls are very impressive indeed, but the eyes vainly search for the decorative designs and beautiful sculptures found in abundance in the temples of this period. Here they are conspicuous by their absence.

* The Jagannath temple at Puri and Lingaraj Temple at Bhubanesvara in this zone as well as Ekalinga temple, Devi temple and Mahābhir temple of Osian in Rajasthan at Osian are like the Visnupād Temple in this respect.
The cornices or the Kapota are there all round the temple walls but they do not serve as Pātha or the pedestal of many images, only a few are inserted here and there. The huge gate to the Mandap (the temple has no Ardhamandap even though it is very large) has no beautifying Toraṇa. The Garbhagṛha is very large and roomy and a huge image of the Lord Buddha is installed there. But once the devotee enters into the sanctum, the world recedes into the background. Only the presence of the Divine is felt there and the raised right hand of the Lord in Abhaya Mudrā seems to shower all heavenly blessings and grant fearlessness to the devotee. The half closed or Ardhaniśīlāgka eyes of the Buddha are looking inward, but as the devotee kneels in front milk of human kindness seems to flow all over him from the same eyes making him fearless or Nīrghaya in the presence of the Divine.

The temple at Bodh Gaya is a singular exception where not a single Nīlakaṇṭha couple or Erotic sculpture is found either on its walls or on the Mandap and sanctum gates.

Another striking feature in the temples of Eastern Zone is their plain ceilings brent of the decorative pendants or flowery designs found so commonly in the temples of central and western zones.

Architecturally, the temples at Bhuvaneshvara fell in three broad categories which are locally known as— the Rekha, Pidhā and Khākhara styles of construction.

(1) In the Bākha Deul (temple) the spire impresses as one continuous parabola.

(2) Pidhā Deul is a temple in which the roof consists of horizontal platforms having pyramidal roof with receding steps. The Bāta and the Bhega mandapa were added to these and the structure was complete.

Both the Bākha and the Pidhā Deul are square in plan—thus belonging to the Kāgara style of construction, but they have projections externally dividing the wall into three Rathakas. The plan of these three Rathakas is known as Triratha and as the number of Rathakas increases the plan becomes Paṭharatha or Septaratha.

Vertically the Deul can be divided into four principal parts—
(1) The Pīghta, (2) the Bāga, (3) the Gandi and (4) the Hastaka.

(1) Pīghta is the flat base or the platform over which the structure stands. It is absent in many temples of this area.

(2) Bāga consists of, primarily, three parts built on the pīghta or the base. They are the Pābhāga or the foot, the Jangha or the shin and the Baraniya a set of mouldings demarcating the Bāga from the Gandi. But later on these three parts of the Bāga which made it Trianga were further subdivided into five, making it Panchānga and adding two parts to the Jangha – the Tala-jangha or the lower wall and the Upara Jangha or the upper wall. These were technically known as the Bāndhanā.
The Rekha and the Pidhā Deul are similar up to the Baranda and even if they differ, the difference lies only in the proportions of the various parts. But after the Baranda the two styles assume their distinctive characteristics.

(3) Gandi, like human torso, stands in a temple for the main body of the Śikhara leaving the base and the crowning parts thereof. In the Rekha Deul the Gandi is a continuous curve or a prabala while in the Pidhā Deul it is pyramidal having horizontal steps receding gradually towards the end.

(4) Mastaka on top comes the Jñānil, the crowning parts consisting of the Analaka and the Kalasa. But these two are joined to the main Śikhara by an abacus technically called Becki.

Some of the later temples of Pidhā style give recessed vertical walls in between the horizontal tiers, technically called the Kanti. The crowning parts of a Pidhā Deul are the upturned, bell-shaped Ghanta, Analaka and the Kalasa.

In the Eastern Zone also falls the massive Konark temples of the Sun god unparalleled by any other in majesty and grandeur. The Ṛtasaṇḍap and Bhogasaṇḍap here do not form the necessary parts of the main temple itself but are separate adjuncts on the front and back of it. Similarly at Modhera, where another famous Sun Temple is to be found, we find a separate circular Mandap attached to the main shrine by a small passage. It seems that this adjunct in the front served the purpose of the Ṛtasaṇḍap and Bhogasaṇḍap both.
In the Central Zone the first group of striking temples visited was the two Chauvāryā temples at Un. These are called Chauvāryā because of the four entrances that the temples have—three lead to the Mandap and the fourth was the door leading to the Mandap and the fourth was the door leading to the sanctum hence four entrances. These temples are circular in shape. Unfortunately the sanctum of both have fallen along with the Śikhara hence under the present circumstances it is difficult to say whether the sanctum and the Śikhara also were circular or not. May be that the temples belonged to the Vṛṣaṇa style of construction. The four jambis of these temples also show five images instead of the common three of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Mahāesi.

Besides the main sanctum the temples also have many niches or smaller sancta inside their walls harbouring other statues. But the first Chauvāryā temples near the bust stand at Un seems to have been a Jain shrine as the images scattered all round and two kept within indicate.

The Teli temple at Gwalior is also striking as it presents a marked contrast to the North Indian temples of Madhya Pradesh which generally belong to the Nāgara style of construction.

The first thing that strikes a visitor is the Gopuram style of its Śikhara having the Chaitya in between with two horn-like projections at both ends. Immediately one is reminded of the temples of the south.

striking
The other striking feature about this temple is big niches
with tall gates on the three sides of the temple. To match these three gates one finds the fourth gate in front leading to the inside of the temple. Initially the niches must have harboured huge statues of gods but at present they are bare, though yet majestic.

Like the Chaukāya temples at Un, the Śēś temple at Gwalior also has entrances more than one. Another peculiarity of this temple, resembling those at Un is the inside smaller sancta in the walls to enshrine other gods as well.

Most peculiar is the gallery all round the Mandap having steps leading to it. This must have been made to accommodate the large gathering which could not be seated in the Mandap.

The Mandap of the Bahu temple near by is octagonal in shape and in other respects (e.g. having more than one entrance and niches through no gallery) the temple resembles the neighbouring Śēś temple.

The temples of most of other sites visited in this zone belong to the usual Nāgara style.

**Western Zone**

Śiwa temples fall in the Western Zone. Here the Devi temple and the Nāhinī temple consist of a group of adjacent temples standing within the same campus like the Vishnupād temple of Gaya in the Eastern Zone. Similar is the Skalinga temple near Udaipur harbouring a large number of smaller shrines within its bounds.

The Vishnū temple at Kiradu resembles the Śēś temple at
Gwalior or the Chaukhandi temples at Un, in as much as, it has three entrances and round mandap with eight pillars, though its sanctum was square- thus conforming to the Nagara style of temple masonry construction.

The Jain group of temples at Abu fail to create the majestic and magnificent impression which the other temples mundhara do at the very outward appearance. These temples now have flat round plain sikharas perhaps due to the frequent repairs and plastering that they had to undergo. Only the Parsvanath temple has sculpture on the outer walls of the temple, all the rest are plain and quite unimposing when viewed from outside. The other reason to build such temples was most probably a precaution against the depredations of the iconoclasts. It is due to their unimposing exterior that the temples did not attract attention and were saved from the destructive hands of the invaders and today they stand as the much cherished treasure of a nation and the world at large.

Once you step inside the Torana, which itself is a beautiful piece of sculptured floral and geometrical designs, you are completely disillusioned. You rub your eyes and open them wide to have a look around. In a trance the mind seems to have travelled to a fairyland of white marble. Enveloped in extreme wonder your eyes skip from roof to roof, pillar to pillar and image to image. Could it be the human hands which executed all this or was it done with Superhuman help? The question remains unanswered for the time being. Only late in the silence of the night when you pause to think over the mastery and dexterity of Indian architects- the vast panorama of all the temples
scattered over the North passes in front of your eyes and the truth
drums on you.

These temples like most— if not all, of the Jain temples
in India are dedicated to the first and the last two Hirathaikaras
of the Jains—the Brahmanyth, Varsvanth, and Mahāth, but like most
of them the Bhima Shah and Bimal Shah temples harbour small indepen-
dent shrines for each of the Twentyfour Hirathaikaras. So also the
two large temples at Girnar have small shrines for all the twentyfour
Hirathaikaras.

The Ambikā temple at Jagat was perhaps meant to be a
Pashūtan shrine but the four smaller shrines instead of being on the
four ends of the same rectangular base of the main shrine are on the
left of the Ambikā temple.

The small temple standing in front and facing the Ambikā
temple has two sets of steps—one in front and the other at the back,
leading to the verandah all round the sanctum which seems to have been
in the centre of almost the square base of the temple. The verandah
must have served as the covered circumambulatory passage all round the
shrine. There are two latticed oriel windows, closed with the stone-
slab having a neat design formed with curved lines, to provide light and
air, at the same time keeping the birds away from the inside of the
temple. Unfortunately the sanctum has fallen down and only thing visible
is the slabs of stone lying topsturvy. Similarly planned seems to have
been the Bahu temple at Naga which lies in the vicinity on the main road
leading to Udaipur. This temple too had two sets of steps, the sanctum
in the centre and oriel windows like those of the small temple facing
the Ambikā temple at Jagat just described.

The Śiva temple at Nagda has three entrances like the Śiva temple at Gwalior. It has an octagonal mandap having large oriel windows all round. But its most peculiar feature is the two niches in the sanctum. All other temples have only one niche as well as one image in the main sanctum. All other gods’ images in other temples are sheltered under separate niches inside the walls of the Mandap but there are no niches in the walls, instead there are two in the sanctum.

The Kālīkā temple at Chittor, perhaps of slightly later period has Sun and Moon carved on the two main pillars of its Mandap. This might have been done to indicate that the temple was initially dedicated to Śūrya or the Sun God.

The Vastupāl temple at Girnar shows its peculiarity in harbouring two Jain Chaumukhas in the two attached Mandaps on either side of the main Mandap which is in the centre. Though said to be of the Medieval period the sculptures in the temples show definite signs of decay. They lack the refinement and finish of their contemporary temples. Specially when compared to the marble temples of Abu, these temples shows none of the dexterity, appeal and beauty of the Dilwārā temples at Abu. Even the sculptures on the outside walls which are of red stone, now appearing black due to moss and devastations of nature, very much fail to impress a visitor, due to their lack of finish and refinement.
The Saulakhī temple at Ghumli must have been an imposing structure once, having large arched windows and a majestic Sikha. But unfortunately the Sikha has fallen and only the Mandap supported on beautifully carved massive pillars stands to tell the tale of its past glory and grandeur.

The Sun temple at Modhera is similar to that at Konark in as much as it has an adjunct to it. While the temple at Konark has a Natamandap at the back, that at Modhera has a Bhogamandap in front. Both have beautifully carved massive pillars supporting the roof of the mandap which unfortunately in case of Konark temple, has fallen down.

The large tank with the Torana gate standing in front of the Sun Temple at Modhera is a peculiarity to this site. Other temple sites too have lakes and tanks to be in accordance with the rules prescribed by the Sastras but they are not always perhaps never, in front of the temple as it is at Modhera.

The Sūrya Kunda at Modhera is an imposing structure by itself. Even to this day it has water which is covered with green moss on top but which turns out to be crystal clear as soon as the moss is removed. The water is said to have healing quality for many a skin diseases and is considered sacred by the village folk of this area.
Like the Konark and the Hodhera temples there was a Sun temple in Kashmir also. It was called the Kārtanda Temple as Kārtanda is another name of the Sun. At present the temple is said to be in a much ruined state and as such could not be visited.

It can very well be concluded, in the end, that these temples not only supply us with the information regarding the engineering skill or architectural knowledge of our ancestors in the past but also corroborate a great deal of the historical facts and findings about India in the centuries gone by.