# TEMPLES OF SOUTH INDIA

## INTRODUCTION

As a religious institution and place of worship, the temple in India has had a hoary past. As a structure that enshrines a god or some other object of veneration, circumambulation (pradakshina), adoration and worship (puja), it has had a varied growth in different parts of the subcontinent. This was according to the local needs and credal requirements and subject, of course, to the interplay or exchange of thoughts and ideas. Though fundamentally the basic elements of the temples and the worship in them derived mostly from Vedic and Puranic sources, in course of centuries they assumed different styles and patterns during their diffusion over wide areas from the cradle centres of the great Indian religions in north India. The rise of the protestant cults of Jainism and Buddhism during the pre-Christian epoch and the development of their own versions of the legends, creeds, forms of deities, rituals and the like, resulted in their adaptation of one kind or another of the temple form and its adjuncts as suited the object of their particular worship and its glorification, for essentially the temple in its form and layout depended on the object of veneration installed and the method adopted for its worship. The three creeds being indigenous, and not exotic, had not to derive the basic forms of their temples from anywhere except from their-own land of origin. All the three, while retaining the common Indian plans and elevations, and the native principles and techniques of construction, had, however, to show their credal distinctions by suitable adaptations of their forms and through emphasis on the features of the cognitions of the respective creeds in the general make-up and content of the Structure.

The builders or the craftsmen—stapatis and the silpins—who belonged to the same guilds of artisans, had common principles and setj methods of design and construction and they worked in collaboration with the priesthood which knew’ the rituals, the nature of the objects of veneration, and the modes of their worship. They together determined the forms of the temples with such modifications as suited the respective cases, as also the fixation of the features of the principal deities and the decorations of the structure with iconic and other sculptural embellishments. As a result, the Vastu, Silpa and Agama text and canons as described in the Sastras were evolved. All that was known and necessary in the creation .of the temple and the conduct of worship therein was codified. Thus to the Indian mind the indigenous architecture remains basically and essentially Indian. It cannot be sub-divided into what is usually attempted to be made out as ‘Hindu’, ‘Jain’, or ‘Buddhist’ architecture.

The organized religions, Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism, did, in their early stages of growth, spread into the southern peninsula across the Vindhyan barrier of mountains and forests, because of their own vitality, in successive waves, merging into the religions of the south which had viable cultures, social patterns, traditions and religious beliefs of their own, not to speak of a language that could flower into its own literature, independently of every other factor. A greater impetus to these contacts was ‘given by the Mauryan conquests that reached the northern borders of the Mysore plateau, beyond which Asoka, the great patron of Buddhism, recognised viable, stable and organized kingdoms of the far south, with their own indigenous culture. He treated them as friendly neighbours across the border among whom he could spread his message through his southern administrators.

The tradition of rock-cut architecture and excavation into living rock of chaityas and viharas of the Buddhists initiated by Asoka near Gaya was soon taken up in the trap rock regions of the- Deccan and western India, reproducing aspects of contemporary brick-and-timber originals which, because of the perishable nature of the fabric of their construction, did not survive the march of time. This expression of forms of architecture and -sculpture througa the permanent medium of stone, adopted earlier by the Buddhists, then by the Hindus and the Jains, has enabled the monuments to last for centuries and give us a fairly good idea of

what the contemporary religious architecture and sculpture in general was. The brick-built stupas and chaityas, which are in essence temples, in the eastern. Andhra and northern Karnataka regions, too, have survived because of the adoption of stone for their protective casing and sculptured veneer, not to mention the stone railings which totally imitated timberwork in their joinery and fixtures. In these cases stone cannot be said to have gone into actual construction which was still of brick. These stupas and chaityas show their own distinct regional characters as against their compeers in north and north-western India.

“From the sixth and seventh centuries A.D., the Hindus and Jains of the south too adopted the stone medium, and started excavating rock-cut cave-temples, or carving out rock-cut monolithic temple forms, and ultimately building them of stone. We have a long series of such stone temples created in close succession and extending uninterruptedly through the past thirteen centuries surviving in their thousands all over the peninsula, more to the far south where most of them are still in use. The ‘comparative freedom from foreign invasions and disruption in this part of India and the relative strength of the kingdoms and society were some of the contributing factors. Even the early Hindu and Jain temples came into being under the royal patronage of the rulers of the three great empites of the south—the Chalukyas, the Pallavas and the Pandyas—along with the lesser kingdoms wedged in between. The spirit was soon caught up by the nobility, the mercantile corporations and the agricultural trade, and artisan guilds that flourished during those times.. The result was that a chain of temples, great and small, studded every village and town of the south, which thus came to be known as the land of temples. The temples were documented by their own expressive and detailed inscriptions, again in their thousands. Temples from the Chola times (ninth-tenth centuries) became the very hub of the rural and urban life in all its aspects —

religious, cultural, social, economic and educational—and thus became the repository of all that was best in fabric, architecture, sculpture and other arts.

Buddhism almost went into complete eclipse soon, the Hindu temples tc. a greater extent and the Jain ones to a lesser extent predominating. There had been, of course, a natural interchange of ideas and usages among the three during their periods of development and growth in the region on a matrix that was essentially indigenous. The Buddha, for instance, was adopted as the ninth of the ten incarnations of Vishnu in the Hindu pantheon in place of Krishna, who came to be considered as the whole aspect of Vishnu. This is testified by a Pallava inscription of the seventh century A.D. in one of the early cave-temples at Mahabalipuram. Then again, Buddhist fantric rituals percolated into the Hindu modes of worship. The Jains had by then established their Sangas at Madurai, and even earlier their creed of the Digambara persuasion had centred principally in Sravana-Belagola in Mysore with its affiliates and branches—the guchchhas—radiating into Andhra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Hinduism witnessed a great revival under the Saiva saints (Nayanmars) and the Vaishnava saints (Alvars) who were soon defined and became part and parcel of the pantheon and in the ritual and calendar of festivals. Sankara, the great philosopher and teacher, also reformed the popular Hindu creeds—the Shanmata and the model of the related worship. With such a background the growth of temples and organised temple worship became truly phenomenal.

The southern temples with their characteristic tiered vimana shrines, major and minor, their axial and peripheral mandapa adjuncts, which are flat-roofed halls, and the towering gopura entrances form a distinct class by themselves as against the northern prasada temples with their curvilinear superstructures, the crowning amalaka and mandapas with rising tiered roofs. That the vimana form in its various plans and elevations built of brick-and-timber had been already developed in the south before the seventh century will be only too evident from the maturity shown by the first monolithic replicas as reproduced in the so-called rathas of Mahabalipuram and the earliest of the stone structural vimanas. The mandapa. forms are likewise evident from the cave-temple types, while the gopura in its simplest form is also to be found in the early temple units. They could not have arisen in stone spontaneously

The prevailing maritime contacts with the regions of the east in the Indian Ocean, which were actuated more by trade and emigration than by motives of political aggrandizement and were, therefore, peaceful and the resultant emigrations of colonists, lent much to the contemporary make-up of the religion, culture, art and architecture of these lands. South Indian temple architecture, sculpture and iconography may be said to have had а great share in this. In fact, it may be said that many of the greatest achievements in the fields of religion, art and architecture are said to be found in regions beyond the cradle centres of the great religions in south India—as at Thanjavur and Madurai, and in other lands as in Java and Cambodia.

Thus in an integrated scheme of a study of the temples of India, the southern temples have perforce to be studied independently in order to understand not only their origin and mode of development through time and space into the varied regional styles, but also the similarities and differences and the mutual influences of Ње їмо great traditions, northern and southern. An attempt has been made in the following pages to portray in outline the temples of the south. Since even the simplest architectural and art terms of European classical origin, often employed in the description of Indian temples, are inadequate and not always apt, the barest use of Indian technical terms of common Sanskrit origin for the most important parts, as used in the Vastu and Silpa manuals, has been made. The terms most of which are familiar to temple-goers of the south are riot only explained in the course of the running description bur also collected in a glossary at the end, so that they can eventually be put to a more purposeful use. Lx

## THE BEGINNINGS—EARLY TEMPLES

THE cULT of worship of objects or phenomena considered super-human in a specified manner and in specified places has been one of the traits of mankind from very remote times. The early form of such practices can only be deduced from literary evidences, traditions and material relics. That have come down to us in the course of the centuries. A fairly vivid picture of life and organised worship in the ancient Tamilakam, the country of the Tamils, in the southernmost part of the peninsula that included what is now Kerala also, is supplied by the earliest available literature in Tamil, dating from the commencement of the Christian era, if not before it. The extant portion of this vast literature embodies in itself earlier and contemporary traditions, many of which still persist.

The material evidence would be the numerous megalithic monuments of diverse variety and shape that have survived. These monuments which are funerary or sepulchral in character are, by far, the largest group of extant early monuments in the south and are very widely distributed all over the area south of the Vindhyas. These monuments, characterised by the association of large stones, reveal by their character and contents a highly evolved material culture, as can also be deduced from the numerous references found in the early Tamil literatures of the Sangam epoch and later. Here is mention of the erection and veneration with accompanying ritual of the monuments raised in honour of the dead, for example, the nadukal or \*stone-erection'. This culture which had its beginnings somewhere in the middle of the first millennium B.C., if not earlier, prevailed in the south till the middle of the. First millennium A.D. and continued in some modified or restricted form for centuries thereafter. In the same body of literature we also get glimpses of other gods and spirits worshipped by the common people, as also their religious practices prevalent, perhaps, much before the advent of the great proselytizing religions of Brahmanism (more conveniently denoted as Hinduism), Jainism and Buddhism, not to mention another important religion, that of the Ajivikas. The. worship of local gods and the animistic worship of spirits inhabiting trees, rivers and hills, or of the guardians of villages, cities, cross-roads, sea-shores, and river ports or ghats, lakes and tanks were similar in essence to what obtained in north India (Yakshas, bhutas and devatas), where we have the classic instance of the infant Buddha being taken soon after birth to the shrine of the Yaksha Sakya Vardhana.

THE HYPAETHRAL TEMPLES 1

The worship of trees as the abode of spirits and gods was once

very popular. These spirits were associated with many trees, such

as the A! (Banyan), Arasu (Pipal), Irarti (Zizyphus or the Jujube),

Ilanji, Kadamba, Pala (Jack), Vakai' (Albizzia), Vanni (Prosopis),

Velli (wood-apple), Vembu (Neem), Vengai (Pterocarpus), etc. The

Kadamba tree is said to be the abode of Murugan (Kartikeya), and

the AI (Banyan) that of Siva. The Ahananuru, one of the earliest

Tamil works, describes a Banyan tree in worship as surrounded by

a brick enclosure and to which offerings were madc. This would

appear to be an instance of a tree-temple or vriksha-chaitya that

was not particularly Buddhistic. The Tamil epic Silappadikaram, a

work somewhat later in point of time, however, mentions a Podi-

manram, or temple of the Bodhi-tree, a vriksha-chaitya of Buddhist

affiliations designated as Bodhi-ghara (Bodhi-grika) in Buddhist

literature. All these would constitute a class of hypaethral temples,

that is, temples open to the air and devoid of a roof over the

object of worship.

1 Open temples, with no roof.

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From archaeological evidence, it would be clear that this concep-

tion of tree-worship is very ancient, dating back to ће Harappan

times. As in the south, so also in north India there Are references

in early Buddhist texts to their existence even prior to'the Buddha,

In Buddhist literature such tree-shrines, with or without a temple

structure and not specifically Buddhistic, are referred to. as

rukka-chaitya (vriksha-chaityas or chaitya-vrikshas) or tree-temples,

while those around the Bodhi-tree that had become sacred to the

Buddhists are called Bodhi-gharas. The Bodhi-tree at Uruvela was

considered sacred, even before Buddhist times, as the abode of a

devata or divine being (Yaksha) to whom offerings were made and

from whom marriage and fertility boons were prayed for. The

honour or worship offered to other sacred trees was similar, as, for

example, in regard to the offering of flowers and garlands, bathing

or purification with scented water, spreading of clean sand around

their bases or building of platforms (varam) or other roofed

galleries round tlieir trunks to enable perambulation and the per-

formance of the other functions and rituals as mentioned above.

Sometimes even railings or enclosure walls were constructed and

decked with flags, buntings and parasols.

Since construction around the sacred tree was meant not only to

be honorific but also to meet the needs of the rituals of worship, it

took definite architectural shapes in different plans. This is evident

from the sculptural representations in relief of Bodhi-gharas in

north and south Indian Buddhist sites, dating back as early as the

second century в.с. The Bodhi-ghara is always represented as a

high gallery, open or roofed, immediately surrounding the Bodhi-

tree and the yajrasana at its foot, with definitely posed entrances,

Into the enclosed sacred area, the Bodhi-manda. In Asokavadana,

the emperor Asoka, in fulfilment of his vow, is stated to have

poured scented water from a thousand vessels by mounting on an

enclosure (varam) which he had erected on all the four sides of the

celebrated Bodhi-tree at Bodh Gaya. Of the two Amaravati versions

of the Bodhi-ghara in south India, one is intact, though poorly

preserved, and the other is fragmentary. The former, essentially

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square in plan, with the ends of the sides extended slightly beyond

at each intersecting corner, has an unusually high second floor or

gallery over the ground level. This was perhaps made accessible, as

should be the case also in the othér examples, by suitably placed

flight of steps not seen in the relief representations. On plan. it

would have four sets of eight pillars each at the four corners, four:

of each set occupying each of the real corners, while four more are

placed in advance of each set in two pairs in front of the corners.

The other Amaravati relief is triple-storeyed and circular on plan.

This too has tall pillars on the ground floor, supporting the two

storeys above. The celebrated Bahuputra-chaitya of Vaisali, which

was one of the Buddha's favourite resorts during his many visits to

Vaisali, is depicted on one face of'an Amaravati stele," to indicate

Vaisali in the narrative depiction of the Buddha's last visit to that

place, though he did not stay at this chaitya that time. This part

of the scene has three trees, with the bases of two of them enclos-

ed by a railing. The most prominent one on the right, with the

railing round it, is shown as being worshipped by two devotees,

one with folded hands and the other holding out a baby towards

the tree. This has also an inscription below it, calling it “Bahu-

putra-chaitya of Vaisali”. This would be a rendering of a vriksha-

chaitya with a simple railing denoting its antiquity, for the stele arid

the inscriptions are of post-Asokan times. According to Buddha-

ghosha, this was a many-branched tree where people prayed for

sons. The depiction accordingly of one praying for the boon, and

the other, having obtained it, presenting it in gratitude and for it

to be blessed further is appropriate.\*

In short the Bodhi-ghara structures around the principal object

of worship would thus anticipate the cloister galleries (or dalans)

1 Ancient India, Nos. 20 & 21, pp. 168-177. ү

2 The Arasu (Pipal) tree, often combined with the Vembu (Neem) on river

banks, or tank bunds, or other sacred spots, is even today an object of worship

and perambulation by those desirous of progeny, and this Asvatranarayana-

pradakshina, as it is called, is considered to be beneficial on Mondays which

are also new-moon days. The Arasu is also considered sacred to Vishnu—

Naryana or Janardhana and the pitris, or departed manes, whose blessings are

to be invoked for good progeny.

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round the roofed temple structures, or vimanas, often more tham

one-storeyed, enshrining the object of worship. These cloister gal-

leries are designated in the Tamil inscriptions-and texts as malikai

(malika) as also in the Silpa and Agama literature on temple

architecture. The only. difference is that while the carly examples

surround hypaethral shrínes which are not covered by а roof, the

later malikais surround roofed-shrines or vimanas containing the

object of worship or the deity.

The very ancient and deep-rooted cult of tree worship continued

in south India, particularly the Tamil country, even after organized

temple worship of the Hindu cults had grown. This would be seen

in the association of religious places, or sthalas, with particular

trees, the, sthala-vrikshas, along with a particular water course,

river, lake or tank, the sirtha. A place of important pilgrimage ‘is

even now called a sthala, or a tirtha, and a sacred place must neces-

sarily have a.combination of sthala, vriksha and tirtha, along with

the murti, or god-head. For example, the sthala-vriksha in Chidam-

baram is the Titlai (Aquillaria), in Jambukesvaram (near Tiruchi-

.rapalli) the Jambu, in the Ekamranatha at Kanchi the Amra, and

in Madurai the Kadamba. There are numerous.such instances, and

they are mostly Saiva in association. Further the early Tamil works

associate particular trees, such as the Kaval maram (totem trees)

with kings and ruling chiefs. The Panai, the Atti and the Vembu

were, for example, the emblems, respectively, of the Chera, Chola

and Pandya kings.

The other type of hypaethral temple brought into vogue by the

Buddhists was the stupa, often, called maha-chaitya. Before its.

advent in the south, the stupa which had begun as a low hemisphe-

rical solid dome or anda had developed into one where the anda

was raised over a distinct cylindrical drum, the medhi. The medhi,

being of a larger diameter than the anda above, provided a narrow

eircumambulatory passage, pradakshina, often with a low balustrade

on its edge at a higher level in addition to the one on the ground

level at its base. The balustrade was formed of vertical panels or

“slabs morticed between upright pillars planted at intervals. The

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medhi was often projected as offsets on the four cardinal sides in

the shape of small platforms, the ayaka platforms for the place-

ment of offerings in simpler cases of the stupa. In other cases,

flights of steps were provided for access. In some other cases, the

ayaka platforms had each a set of five tall pillars planted on their

outer edges. These were called ayaka pillars. On the top of the arida

is the harmika square on plan and enclosing an umbrella (chhatra)

or a series of them (chhatravali). The whole structure is often sur-

rounded by a railing with plain openings on the four sides, and

not the elaborate torana entrances as at Sanchi. The brick-built

stupa had its anda and medhi and the ayaka platforms. In the

earlier and simpler examples, these are merely plastered over, with

a large looped garland girdling the anda picked out in stucco as an

adornment. In others of the Krishna valley and adjacent areas,

they were encased by a series of curved slabs of the local limestone

—the marble-like soft Palnad limestone—that can be quarried into

thin and large slabs and easily carved. The railing was also of the

same material and carved likewise. The carvings consist of scenes

from the various legends about the Buddha and also his life-story,

besides other ornamental and decorative sculptures and motifs.

While the earlier larger and smaller stupas were solid and some-

times massive, the rest were semi-hollow and had adaptations of

internal structural designs of brickwork with plans like the spoked

wheel, the Swastika, square within circles, ctc., with the interspaces

packed with rubble. All these were expedients designed to conserve

brick and at the same time enhance the strength and stability of

the structure which was to bear the weight of the immense hemi-

sphere and also of the casing of limestone slabs. These independent

stupas or maha-chaityas containcd relic caskets preserving frag-

mentary portions of the relics of the Buddha, or some other great

master, suitably hidden and sealed inside.

The ruined maha-chaitya at Amaravati had its foundations laid

in Asokan times. It was subsequently enlarged and encased with

carved and sculptured limestone slabs with a stone railing. In the

earlier phase here, as in the stupas at Bhattiprolu, Jaggayyapeta

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and "Garikapadu, the ayaka-platform alone came to be more elabo-

rately sculptured in its stone casing as compared to the rest of the

drum. This was consistent with the fact that the ayaka extensions

served as altars for placing flowers, lamps and offerings by the

devotees. The drum had more or less plain slabs with little carving,

except perhaps for the low-relief pilasters at the edges. These

pilasters carried animal figures over their bell-shaped capitals. In

addition, there were figures of devotees flanking the Buddha's

symbols. Even during subsequent renovations the sculptors devoted

greater attention to the ayaka platform, as in the case of the other

stupas elsewhere. The parapet slabs of the' circumambulatory

Passage over the medhi had their inner faces finely carved as in the

maha-chaityas of Nagerjunakonda, Jaggayyapeta, Ghantasala and

Pedda-Ganjam. These slabs were morticed between uprights placed

at intervals over the outer circumference with a running moulded ,

, coping on top. The stone railing dating earlier than 200 B.c. was

also enlarged in the course of reconstruction and emerged in its

final architectural and embellished form between A.D. 150 to 200.

"After this came the last phase of embellishment of the stupa when

many of the earlier sculptured casing slabs of the basal parts were

reversed and their erstwhile unsculptured inner faces trimmed and

covered with some of the finest sculptures. This was done during

the period A.D. 200 to 250.

The large maha-chaitya of Nagarjunakonda, built early in

Ikshvaku times, belongs to the class of uncased sfupas. Its brick-

work has been mostly plastered over, and the anda decorated by an

immense garland ornament in stucco. But unlike the Amaravati

stupa which was built solid, this stupa had а central column with

-eight radial walls meeting a peripheral circular wall, thus producing

the appearance, on plan, of a cart-wheel with its hub, spokes aud

felly. There was a second concentric outer wall with furthér projec-

tions of the radial walls between it and the inner circular wall, the

two circular walls forming, respectively, the bases of the anda and

the medhi, while the inner cross-walls-with fillings between them

afforded the necessary structural support. It probably also had an

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outer circular railing. Many of the other stupas in this area had

stone casings With sculputures and they also invariably had a stone

railing. The ayaka platforms, though generally seen in the stupas of

this area, are not noticed in the stupas at Ramatirtham and Sali-

hundam, while they are seen only on one side of the rock-cut stupa

at Sankaram. Likewise in the case of the Buddhist stupas on the

east coast, lying between Nagarjunakonda and Amaravati on one

side and Salihundam on the other, stupas like those at Sankaram

have the ayaka platforms on one of their sides,

Yt is to be noted in this context, that while the Amaravati stupa

revealed below its levels urn-burials, the site of Nagarjunakonda

has shown the prevalence of the stupas with almost contemporan-

eous megalithic monuments. Such associations of megalithic sites

and stupa sites are numerous in the Deccan, Andhra and north

Mysore areas, roughly coinciding with the southern tracts of the

Mauryan empire and the regions where Buddhism, among other

northern religions, had a greater influence. This perhaps gave rise

to the cult of the worship and reverence of the stupa, which is

essentially funerary in content as well as by association. This was

easily assimilable in this area which had an earlier megalithic

tradition. For the same reason, therefore, one can assume that

stone, which was primarily associated with the dead and the cult

of tlie dead for many centuries, could be adopted in the make-up

of these essentially brick-built stupas, either as a protective veneer

or as a surrounding enclosure or rail, and in columns that were

free. standing. or structural supports. However, in constrast to the

highly developed technique of brick construction, the structural

patterns in stone were elementary and did not extend beyond

simple casing or joining, as in the rails and balustrades, of cross-

pieces. or slabs with tenons to morticed uprights. This was pure

imitation of timberwork, a simulation of carpentry in stone. Actual

stone construction involving structural principles of design, support,

coursing and breaking of joints, counteraction of thrusts and loads,

had not yet been developed.

In the extreme south, beyond the southernmost reaches of the:

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Mauryan empire, where, according to the Asokan inscriptions, the

Tamil kingdoms of the Cheras, Pandyas, Cholas and Satyaputas

flourished, there is almost a paucity of Buddhist stupas. But con-

temporary literature speaks of Buddhism, along with the three

other religions from the north which appear to have had a stronger

hold in this area, particularly Hinduism and Jainism. The Ajivikas

are heard of even towards the close of the first millennium A.D.

and perhaps they merged into Jainism, which was predominantly

Digambara, and had strong footholds in the southern Mysore or

Kannada region also.

The megalithic cult was popular and worship and veneration of

funerary monuments are frequently described, particularly the

nadukal or stone erection (menheir or megalith) with offerings in-

cluding toddy and animal sacrifice, keeping lamps lighted, and

oblations of large quantities of boiled rice in heaps (perumchoru or

pavadai). The dead, atcording to the literary evidence, were believ-

ed to have become stone itself which had acquired divine proper-

ties. A stone could be a hero, a warrior, a king, or even an ordinary

person. Women who immolated themselves on the death of their

husbands, at a time when the cult of chastity and faithfulness was

spreading fast, were given memorials in the nature of -sati stones,

later called in inscriptions toru or masatikkal (maha-sati-kal). Such

memorial or sari stones, belonging to the'second-third centuries A.D.,

are found with inscriptions and sculptural reliefs in the Andhra

sites, particularly at Nagarjunakonda, and are called chhaya-khabas

or chhaya-khambas. These are also common in the Kannada

country and across the borders in the peripheral regions of the

Tamil country from the fourth century onwards. The early Tamil

works speak of such a stone erection or nadukal in many contexts

on which were written, evidently with ochre paint and brush, or

later inscribed the name and exploits of the dead person it repre-

sented. This object of worship was surrounded by an enclosure,

and a spear and shield were planted in front, and offerings of food

and toddy were made. This instance of hypaethral temple is re-

presented by a similar ancient construction on the Rangasami Peak

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in the Coimbatore district, with a menheir or upright stone, having

a trident or trisula planted in front and surrounded by a rubble

wall.

The sculptured hero-stone slab or virakal, so erected in memory

Of, or over the grave of, the dead Него, was often flanked on

either side, in front of the sculptured slab stele, by two more lateral

slabs and\*the whole topped by a horizontally laid roof-slab, thus

enclosing a roofed space. The formation can be called a dolmen-

shrine because it comprises three orthostatic slabs and a roof slab,

like a dolmen, but contains the sculptured figure, that is venerated,

on the inner face of its back wall. Such shrines called Armanmar

kovil abound in the western districts of Tamil Nadu, in.the Kongu

area, and the adjoining districts of the Mysore plateau on the west

in the Karnataka area. Besides the relief sculpture they Carrry ins-

criptions of the seventh-eighth centuries and later.

Temples as places of worship—the podiyil or manram, or murram

—had objects of worship that were very often mere mounds or

platforms—medai—under a particular tree in the village. Sometimes

they were trilithons of a stone-slab placed over two uprights—the

terri which survive even today in some remote parts. Some of the

platforms had a post, or kandu, representing the deity planted over

them. These shrines are described as kandudai-p-podiyil, meaning

the common place ОЁ worship where the kandu is installed. From

some of the brief descriptions in the earliest Tamil works, we learn

that the kandu, as the abode of a deity, stood in a pillared hall,

or podiyil, on a platform that was cleansed and smeared with

water and cowdung by young women who, after a dip in the

bathing ghat, lighted an ever-burning lamp near the kandu. We

are also told that many came here to worship with offerings or

bali.

The Buddha-pitikai or Dharma-pitikai as the object of worship

by the Buddhists is referred to in the Tamil epic, Manimekalai.

From its brief description it would appear to have been a circular

padma pitha, or seat of expanding lotus petals, mounted over a

square plinth, also witli a lotus petal base, the whole evidently of

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brickwork. A solitary example of a Buddha-pada, the tiruvadi (or

punya-pada) of the master, as an object of worship, has come up

from the recent excavations of the ancient Chola port city of

Kaveri-p-pattinam at the mouth of the river Kaveri. It is а carved

slab of Palnad limestone of about the fourth century A.D. and

perhaps formed the top piece of a brick platform. It was probably

originally installed in a shrine for worship. These two instances

would show that, in the absence of stupas as objects of worship in

the Tamil country, it was the Buddha-pitikai and the Buddha-pada

that were worshipped till the much later advent of the iconic forms

of the Buddha in stone or other materials.

Recent excavations in the Gudimallam temple in Chittoor on the

Tamil Nadu-Andhra border have revealed tbe fact that the Zinga

with its pitha, both of sandstone, were originally hypaethral in the

second century B.C. А brick shrine enclosing it came up in the first-

second centuries A.D. to be replaced by a stone apsidal one, much

Jater. The brick shrine was apsidal too (Dr. I.K. Sharma).

THE ROOFED TEMPLES

Where roofed structures were built enshrining such platforms,

cult objects, symbols or iconic representations, they imitated secular |

buildings in the plan and style of construction. The only difference

was that the temples were made of more permanent material, like

brick and wrought timber, more lavishly decorated with plaster,

stucco, carving and painting, and often larger in dimensions in

contrast to the humbler mud-and-wattle-walled, thatch-roofed

houses of the common folk.

None of these temples has survived in the Tamil land though

we have enough word pictures of these simple or storeyed cons-

tructions in the Tamil Sangam classics. One, for example, describes

a temple with high brick walls and wooden beams, containing in-

side, on its back wall, the painted picture of the deity or Kadavul

that was worshipped, indicating that it was either a mural painting

or a stucco figure, or sometimes a carved wooden plaque that

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THE BEGINNINGS—EARLY TEMPLES 17

constituted the principal object of worship in the more sophisti-

cated temples of the time. Such temples or shrines, mostly of brick-

and-timber, are variously designated in the Sangam works as

Kottam, Nagaram, Koyil and Palli. Evidently these names indicate

different plans and styles of construction. The epic Manimekalai

speaks of temples built of brick and having imposing entrances or

gopuras. Some of these temples were storcyed mudums, and these

included memorial shrines also. The custom of building such me-

morial shrines, called Palli-p-padai in Tamil, continued суеп in the

ninth and tenth centuries A.D. as testificd by the Tamil and

Kannada inscriptions.

In the ancient Tamil country cf the far south, as. its early

literature also reveals, various gods are represented as presiding

over different tracts of the country, namely, the.hilly, the sylvan

or pastoral, the riverine or agricultural, the desert or arid zones,

and the littoral or seaside.Such gods were Scyon, Mayon, Ven-

dan, Valiyon, Korravai or Kadukal. There were, in addition, other

minor gods. It was in the centuries preceding and following the

Christian era that the dynamic religions of the Vedic Hindus, the

Jains, the Ajivikas, and the Bauddhas of the north made definite

and vital impacts on the cultural, linguistic and religious substra-

tum of the south. This also coincided with the extent of the

political map of the Mauryas, with the extreme south beyond its

limits maintaining a strong indigenous core with a viable culture,

language and a fast-growing literature under organised kingdoms.

The incoming people found it expedient to cultivate the local

languages in order to expound better their ideas of religion and

ritual and actively contributed by taking a large share themselves

in the growth of the literature and grammar of the Tamil language.

There are many among the Sangam pcets, who were Brahmins or

Jains. The same happened to the Kannada language a little later.

Thus, the impact resulted in the importation and infusion in

various degrees of new thoughts and ideas by the incoming reli-

gious cultures, as also а simultaneous absorption of much that

was local. The phenomenon that occurred as a result of such

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impact of the culture and religions of India in the countries of the

Far East such as Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia and Indo-

nesia, producing a synthesis of godheads and local modified

versions of the legends, iconography and ritual, occurred here also

more or less. For example, Hinduism, particularly in the Tamil

country, which included much of Kerala also, became eclectic by

absorbing the local deities and concepts in the pantheon and

ritual, or by identifying them with many of its own. The local

Mayon was identified with Krishna or Vishnu, Valiyon with

Balabhadra, Korravai with Durga, Seyon or Murugan with

Kartikeya, and Vendan with Indra. The Sangam and post-Sangam

poetry extending up to about the seventh century Speaks of

temples—Kottams, Nagarams and Koyils—dedicated to these

gods, besides temples for Siva, Indra's mount—Airavata, and his

thunderbolt Vajra, the celestial boon tree- Kalpataru, the Sun and

the Moon. The beginnings of the slow evolution of Agamic wor-

ship are also to be found here. Similar, but to a much lesser

degree, was the effect in the case of local Jainism, which was

mainly and for long Digambara, and Buddhism. Iconic forms of

Siva, Vishnu, Surya, Kartikeya, Sri, Durga and other gods were

also evolved. This synthesis, in effect, resulted, after due growth

during the five succeeding centuries (between the eighth and the

thirteenth), in the contribution of the south to the common

heritage of India of unique forms and concepts, for example, the

form and concept of Siva as Nataraja and Dakshinamurti, Devi as

Lalita, the bhakti cult of the Nayanmars and Alvars—the Saiva

and Vaishnava hagiologists—and the great philosophies of

Advaita, Visishtadvaita and Dvaita of Sankara, Ramanuja and

Madhva. The same can be said of the contributions of the south

to Jainism and Buddhism of later times.

No remains of these gods, mostly painted or carved in wood, or

of their temples of brick-and-timber, have survived in the far

south. This was because of the perishable nature of the fabric of

which they were made.

The northern half of the peninsula which comprises the Deccan

THB BEGINNINGS—EARLY TEMPLES 19

and the Andhra and Kannada areas, that is, roughly those parts

that came under the. Mauryan empire, naturally imbibed more

from the penetrating cultures, religions and languages (Prakrit and

Sanskrit) than others, This resulted in the delayed development of

its indigenous literatures which thus do not supply much material

regarding the purcly local traditions and beliefs of the very carly

times. But many contemporary material relics indicating the rcli-

gious forms and places of worship are extant and have come up,

as in north India, in the latest excavations. Though the Bud-

dhist relics are more numerous, recent excavations in Nagar-

junakonda have revealed the existence also of Hindu temples

side by side, siowing the popularity of the Saivite, Vaishnavite,

and other cults. These relics also reveal the fact that the

temples or shrines had a c»mmon plan, design and mode of

construction, irrespective of the creeds to which they belonged.

The credal dilierence was marked only by the gods or objects

that were installed for worship and their appropriate symbols

or other plastic representations that formed the decorative

elements of such temples. Jainism seems to havc had more

congenial homes in the Kannada, Tamil and Kerala areas. In

their plans their religious structures, particularly their temples,

did not dilfer much from those of the Hindus, a feature that

has persisted through the centuries to the present day. The

traces of Buddhist temples that were perhaps fewer have been lost

in these areas, though a number of Buddha images of later periods

have been found in diíferent parts of south India. Had their tem-

ples survived, they too would not have differed much in form

from the Hindu or Jain temples of those days.

Architecturally, these simple shrines, replicas of contemporary

secular dwellings, were square, oblong, circular, elliptical and

apsidal, rarely hexagonal or octagonal, and were built of timber

or brick. Such religious and secular structures are indicated in the

early bas-rclief sculptures belonging to the centuries immediately

before and after Christ, e.g. Barhut and Sanchi in the north and

Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda and other places in the south.

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They have already been indicated as being plans in the representa-

tion of tree-temples or vriksha-chaityas, Buddhist stupas, and

Bodhi-maridas (Podi-manram in Tamil). MD

The square buildings have their roofs converging to a point

(kuta), the circular or octagonal ones likewise have domical roofs

(kuta), the oblong ones. have vault-like or wagon-top-like (sala)

or occasionally gabled roofs (sabha), as in Sitamarhi and Sone

Bhandar, and the elliptical ones have inverted keel-shaped roofs

with a long ridge and a number of finials (also called sala). The

front view of the apsidal structures can be noted in many of these

relief sculptures.

From the extant literary descriptions, from the sculptural repre-

sentations in relief, and from the.few excavated relics (as, for

example, the circular shrine at Bairat, others at Nagarjunakonda

and Salihundam, and the standing ones in Chejerla and Ter in

Andhra and western Deccan), one can infer that the roofs of

these brick-and-timber structures were either supported on their

pillars, the intervening spaces being covered by screen walls, or

they were raised totally on their walls with the pillars, if any,

‘represented only as ‘ornamental pilasters externally. Often the

brick-wall had an internal system of pillars standing close to them

to form additional supports for the beams and timbering of the

superstructure and the roof. The entire structure was often built

over a solid masonry platform or adhishthana.

The apsidal Guntupalle chaitya (second century A.D.) is wholly

brick-built. The entrance has brickwork jambs into which a

wooden door-frame was fitted. The roof was evidently a vault

made up of corbelled brickwork that was plastered and perhaps

also cribbed inside with wooden ribs and cross pieces—on the ana-

logy of an earlier rock-cut chaitya of the same plan. The remains of

another chaitya noticed near Vidyadharapuram, near, Vijayawada

are of like nature. A somewhat better preserved stupa-shrine or

stupa-chaitya, where the central object of worship was the represen-

tation of a stupa, has come up from the excavations at Salihundam

(Srikakulam district, Andhra Pradesh). The circular chaitya is

THE BEGINNINGS—EARLY TEMPLES 21

brick-built. The massive wall has a stepped up base provided with

a narrow vestibule for approach in front, resembling the antarala

of later temples. Several subsidiary shrines of identical shape also

exist there.

In Nagarjunakonda and other Andhra Buddhist sites, the brick-

built chaitya temples are associated with vikaras or monasteries,

where they are often found as apsidal structures on either side of

the passage behind the main vihara entrance, or are found in pairs

in front of the major stupas or maha-chaityas, which were them-

selves open or hypaethral temples, facing each other. Often one of

them enshrines a stupa and is called stupa-chaitya. The other

enshrines the feet or, later, figures of the Buddha, and is known as

Buddha-chaitya. Independent apsidal chaityas or temples, the ear-

liest- of that type, were also known in Nagarjunakonda. A circular

structure too, that possibly enshrined a Buddha image, has been

noticed in Nagarjunakonda. In a few other cases the shrines have

a square plan.

The excavations in Nagarjunakonda have also revealed large

non-Buddhist teniple complexes of the Ikshvaku kings (third and

fourth centuries A.D.) dedicated to Siva, Vishnu, Kartikeya and

Devasena. They have mostly four-sided or apsidal garbha-grihas

(sanctum) built over an elevated plinth with a large pillared man-

dapa in front of them, a raised platform at the fore part of the

mandapa indicating a ranga-mandapa, and often an ambulatory coürt

round the mandapa. The whole is enclosed by a brick-wall with

entrance on the frontiside (east or west) on the gopura pattern,

with simpler additional entrances on the south and north sides.

The pillars of the mandapa were made from Palnad limestone,

rectangular in section, chamfered at the corners for some length

from a point above the middle height of the shaft, and terminating

again-in an apex of a rectangular section. On top is cut a wide

rectangular notch for fitting the wooden beams, which were mostly

longitudinal. Over the beams, the local vein schist slabs, called

Macherla slabs, were laid, and this ceiling was, perhaps, covered

over by a brick-and-mortar terrace. The apsidal shrines, sometimes

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in pairs, are entirely brick-built. Only sometimes as in the Pushpa-

bhadrasvami temple, the superstructure is supported by a parallel

row of limestone pillars set inside the straight sides of the apse

with similar pillars arranged in a semi-circle at the rear curved end,

the pillars carrying longitudinal beams over the parallel sides and

Short curved beams over the rear pillars. The intervening spaces

between the pillars were walled up. In front of the shrines there is

often a rectangular ardha-mandapa interposed between the shrine

and the pillared maha-mandapa. The maha-mandapa in some cases

is often extended laterally by one or more bays and, in some ins-

tances, there were pillared cloisters (malikai or malika) inside the

enclosure walls surrounding the court round the three sides of the

maha-mandapa. The temple complexes have a single main shrine or

sometimes more than one main Shrine. The single shrines are

oblong, square or apsidal in plan. In cases with multiple shrines

there are some examples with two shrines, both apsidal, and others

having both rectangular and apsidal shrines. The walls of the tem-

ples do not appear to have been adorned with much sculpture.

While the mandapas had flat roofs, the shrine superstructures,

Particularly of the apsidal ones, were gaja-prishtha, i.e. with form

resembling the hind-quarters of an elephant. It cannot be said for

certain whether the square and oblong shrines were vimana forms

with the typical storeyed Superstructure as found in the later

vimanas of the south. One cannot fail to notice from the remains

of this extensive site a close similarity between the Buddhist and

non-Buddhist types in architectural traditions.

The Kartikeyasvami temple had a square brick-built shrine

facing east with a closed rectangular ardha-mandapa of bricks in

front. Its longer axis north-south was preceded bya closed maha-

mandapa with six rows of five pillars each. Another temple of

Kartikeya, to the north of the Pushpabhadra temple, had a rectang-

ular closed mandapa with a sguare pedestal close to its hind wall

at its centre, and 2 pillar at each corner. It suggested a pillared

mandapa shrine. The image in the Pushpabhadrasvami temple,

eferred to by that name in the inscription on the dvajasthamba as

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\*Mahadeva Pushpabhadrasvamin', was enshrined in an apsidal

garbha-griha.

The icon of Ashtabhujasvamin, according to the inscription relat-

ing to its installation, dated A.D. 278 was of wood, eight-armed,

and was installed on a stone pedestal that carried the inscription.

The inscription on a conch (sankha) found at the same site also

bears the same name. The temple with its two sanctuaries, one

Oblong and the other apsidal, each with a pillared mandapa in

front distinct from the independent one of larger dimensions at

the rear, had a dvajasthamba surmounted by the chakra emblem of

Vishnu.

The east-facing temple complex on the river bank and close to

the village of Putlagudem, near the old ferry ghat, is interesting,

in that in the court on the south and north sides of the pillared

maha-mandapa were found the basements of pariyara shrines, all

brick-built and topped by thin stone slabs forming the floors of the

subsidiary shrines of sguare, circular, and octagonal plans.

Similar brick temples of the post-Ikshvaku and pre-Chalukyan

(sixth century) period, have been excavated in the submersible

Srisailam project area in Vivapuram, Rungapur, Gumakonda,

Kudavelli and Siddesvaram, all in the Kurnool and Mahboobnagar

districts. The shrines are invariably square on plan with or without

an attached ardha-mandapa in front. The lingas are of rolled natu-

ral sandstone pebbles with or without linga-pithas. The spout of the

latter where present is oriented north. Otherwise the consecrated

image alone appears to be of stone, while the construction was of

brick-and-timber. The soles (adhishthana) are of moulded bricks

and moulded, parts of the superstructures too have come out in

the excavations (Dr. R. Subrahmanyam and Dr. I. K. Sharma).

Fortunately there are two apsidal shrines of this period: of

original Buddhist dedication and subsequent conversion to the

Hindu creed, still existing in their entirety. They are the Trivi-

krama temple at Ter in western Deccan, and the Kapotesvara

temple at Chejerla, in coastal Andhra. Both are dated earlier than

A.D. 600, but not earlier than A.D. 300. Of the two, the Kapotesvara

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may be the earlier one judged from the stylistic and architectural

points of view. This temple built of large-sized bricks shows no

external pilaster markings on its wall, except at the two front ends

which are not original. Internally the ceiling of stone slabs is

supported by a system of ten stone pillars, ranged five each along

the straight sides of the apsidal structure and spanned by thick

stone beams, in contrast to the Nagarjunakonda structures which

had wooden beams, thus marking an advance in the use of stone

in construction and thereby indicating a later date. The vaulted

brickwork sikhara is supported inside by uprights of either brick-

work or stone and, perhaps, also by fillings in between over the

ceiling slabs. The cornice moulding (kapora) and the clerestory-like

griva as well as the blunted ridge of the sikhara shows a backward

slope. i

Recent excavations have revealed that the original foundation of.

this temple was Saivite and not Buddhist, later converted into

Saivite, as was hitherto believed.

The Ter temple now containing a Trivikrama image shows more

advanced features. It is entirely brick-built, without internal pillars

or ceiling slabs, and the sikhara ridge is quite horizontal. Exter-

nally the wall surface is relieved by pilasters with evolved capital

components. Internally the vault is formed by a system of corbel-

ling-in of the successive courses of brickwork from all sides, thus

gradually diminishing the gap and ultimately closing it on top. This

mode is called kadalika karana in Indian Silpa parlance. The front

end of the sikhara of the Ter chaitya shows the barge-board and

barge-plate with a median transverse supported on -four pilasters,

and a centrallight-opening, all in imitation of timber orginals,

“while the Chejerla sikhara facade shows the relief of a shrine. In

these respects, these approximate to the motifs of the sikhara

facades of the Visvakarma at Ellora and the Nakula-Sahadeva

Ratha in Mamallapuram.

CHAPTER III

EARLY ROCK ARCHITECTURE

ROCK-CUT CAVE-TEMPLES—LAYANAS (BUDDHIST)

SIDE BY side with the Predominantly brick-and-timber architecture

of early times, there arose a movement at the time of Asoka which

resulted in a series of temples and other religious resorts being ex-

cavated into living rock. Being made of more permanent material,

these have survived to the present day. Since they are faithful

imitations of the contemporary brick-and-timber structures which

Served as their models, they reproduced, at least in their frontal

and interior aspects, all the architectural details of the period, thus

enabling us to form an idea of what the fronts and interiors of

contemporary temples and places of worship were like. This phase

of excavating, what are called layanas into rock and creating

partial or total imitations of Structural examples cannot be called

architecture, which essentially implies construction by building up

of components. They can only be regarded as sculpture on a large

scale, more Conveniently designated as ‘rock architecture’, or

‘architectural Sculpture’. The phase of rock architecture. extended

approximately over a period of More than a thousand years from

‘the time of Asoka, and is found scattered over different parts of

India, the latest of them belonging to the close of the tenth

century.

The earliest caves excavated by Asoka and his grandson Dasaratha

into the very hard local rock (quartzose-gneiss) are in the Barabar

and Nagarjuni hills near Gaya. They were dedicated to the Ajivi-

kas. The most important examples of this group are the Sudama

XNyagrodha) and the Lomas Rishi caves. These two caves exactly

reproduce the plan of the Suddhamma Deva Sabha in the Barhut

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relief. This series of caves indicates that the simplest form of such

temples consisted of a circular cell or shrine alone, as at Guntu-

palle (see below); the porch, or mandapa was added laterto

accommodate worshippers. This mode of rock architecture shifted

In the next century mainly to the softer trap formations of the hills

of western India or western Deccan where, between 200 в.с. and

A.D. 200, a number of Buddhist excavations were made. They in-

clude chaitya halls, which were really temples or places of worship,

the object of worship being a stupa representing the Buddha, апа

viharas, or monasteries, each with a number of cells opening into a

large central assembly-hall. Such examples are found in the vicinity

of Poona and Nasik, and at Ajanta and Aurangabad. The choice of

this area was due to the fact that the softer trap rocks were more

easy to work on than the hard granites or gneisses, as in Gaya.

Such places of worship were also excavated into the softer rocks on

the Eastern Ghats, lying in the northern coastal districts of Andhra

and the southern districts of Orissa, as in Guntupalle and San-

karam, both cut-in and cut-out, the examples in Orissa being the

Jain caves of Khandagiri and Udayagiri. Among these the Bud-

dhist cave at Kondivte in Salsette, the Tulaja cave in Junnar, near

Poona, and the cave in Guntupalle in Andhra bear comparison

with the Sudama and Lomas Rishi caves near Gaya.

Beyond the Bombay-Poona region, where the soft trap rock

formations were exploited for excavation of chaityas and viharas,

further north and north-west, the laterite hills as in Junagad,

afforded the venue for such excavations; laterite when freshly

exposed being equally soft and tractable. Further south, beyond

Konkan, in the Kerala area, west of the ghats, again abounding in

Jaterite, it was excavated into, though as cave-tombs of megalithic

association in corresponding times.

The rock-cut chaitya at Guntupalle is not far removed from the

Gaya caves in point of time. It is a stone yersion of a circular hut

with a cupola-like domed roof of thatch or sheet metal resting on

a wooden frame-work resembling an inverted basket, and enshrin-

ing а monolithic stupa as the object of worship in the centre, а

EARLY ROCK ARCHITECTURE 27

circumambulatory passage all round, and a porch in front of its

doorway. The porch framing the entrance shows similar imitation

of timberwork in stone, including the torana arch above the lintel.

The Buddhist cave-temple in Kondivte is of similar design where

the circular shrine or garbha-griha is occupied by a solid stupa

leaving only a narrow circumambulatory passage or pradakshina

all round within the shrine and occupying the end of a rectangular

hall or mandapa, with a flat roof as the shrine itself. The Tulaja

cave in Junnar is also an excavation after the model of a circular

chaitya. The main roofing dome rests on a ring of twelve plain

octagonal pillars, instead of on a circular wall—as in the other

examples —enclosing a central stupa, both surrounded by a

circular aisle, or pradakshina, which is. half-domed.! The circular

garbha-griha of the Suddhamma Deva Sabha in Barhut is a bas-

relief representation of the same model.

The other chaityas are mainly apsidalin plan, consisting of a

long rectangular hall like a nave, terminating at the farther end

into an apse with often two narrower aisles on either side, each

separated from the nave by a row of pillars and extended round

the apse as a circumambulatory passage round a stupa, also hewn

out of rock and occupying the centre of the apse. The doorway in

front is a huge threshold with an arched window on top. In front

of the facade of the hall, a transverse verandah with frontal pillars

is often cut. The structures after which such excavations were made

were, therefore, essentially apsidal temples. Such an apsidal or

chapa form resulted perhaps from the coming together of a circular

shrine and a rectangular assembly-hall, which were originally dis-

tinct from each other as in the examples already described.

At Ajanta, in the Deccan, out of the thirty excavations, six con-

sisting of two chaitya halls (Nos..9 and 10), and four viharas (Nos.

8, 12, 13 and 30), belong to the early group, and are of the same

type as some Buddhist excavations at Bhaja, Karle, Kondane,

——

1A temple of a similar structural plan has come to light in the excavations at

Bairat, near Jaipur.

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Pithalkora, Nasik, Kanheri, etc. These belong to the period bet-

ween the second century В.С. and the second century A.D. The rest

belong to the period after the fourth century A.D. They were ex-

cavated in the time of the Vakatakas, mostly between A.D. 450 and

600. The last ones were excavated around A.D. 650. The activity in

general, and particularly the embellishments, however, continued

till the times of the Rashtrakutas in the eighth-ninth centuries A.D.

The early chaityas are large, apsidal, with an elaborate facade,

having horse-shoe-shaped windows on the top of the entrance, and

the interior divided into a central nave and lateral aisles by two

rows of columns. The aisles continued round the apse as a circum-

ambulatory passage. À rock-cut sfupa, in the apse portion, formed

the object of worship. The ceilings of the aisles were either flat or

vaulted, the whole modelled after timber constructions.

Thc viharas were astylar halls, with a number of monk's cells

excavated into their three side walls, the hall having one or more

main entrances in front.

The rock architecture of the second phase consists of two apsidal

chaityas (19 and 26). It is similar to the earlier type but has a

Buddha figure prominently standing out in front of the stupa in

the apse, under a nasika or arch projected from the drum of the

stupa. This suggests that the form of the stupa itself was conceived

as a circular shrine with a domical roof, and a projected vaulted

entrance porch in front in the shape of a sukhanasika, conforming

to the vesara type of temples of later periods." The viharas, except

those unfinished or destroyed (3, 5, 14, 23, 24, 28 and 29), combine '

the characteristics of monasteries and shrines in them, the latter

aspect becoming more prominent. Thus these abodes of stone, or

hill-abodes, called Sailagriha in an inscription datable between A.D. :

450 and 525 in Cave 26, would become vihara-chaityas, if we eguats

the term chaitya with the shrine containing an object of worship,

called also devakula, ayatana, vimana, dhama, mandira, etc. In fact,-

the inscription in vihara 16, datable between A.D. 475 and 500, —

p would bear comparison with the similar and smaller Nalanda brick

stupas. ;

BARLY ROCK ARCHITECTURE 29

calls it a chaitya-mandira. `

These viharas generally consist of an outer verandah or porch,

corresponding to the mukha-mandapa or agra-mandapa of the

temple complexes, a pillared hall (sometimes astylar), correspond-

ing to the maha-mandapa with a shrine or garbha-griha at its rear,

often with an ardha-mandapa, or transversely rectangular ante-

chamber intervening between the shrine and the main hall. When

the. hall has pillars instead of a central nave and lateral aisles

pattern, the arrangement of a central square enclosed by four or

more pillars—the others forming a peripheral series—would suggest

a ranga-mandapa on the model of or anticipating the Chalukyan

navarangas. Into the lateral walls of the maha-mandapa ог hall and

sometimes also into the hind walls cubical cells are cut for the

priestly monks. These are fewer in number than those in regular

monasteries—rock-cut and brick-built—thus suggesting that their

use was restricted to the monks of higher ranks only, or to the

priestly order immediately connected with the actual ritual worship

in the principal chaitya. Often there are additional Chaityas or cells

on ejther side of the principal one on the rear wall of the hall, and

- also in the lateral walls of the front porch, or agra-mandapa. Even

tbe two-storeyed excavation (Cave 6) has essentially the same plan.

The sanctum contains а large figure of the Buddha, often with

other sculptures in the ardha-mandapa. In the case of Cave 27, the

ardha-mandapa is advanced into the maha-mandapa. The arrange-

ment of a succession of mandapas, one behind the other, with one

or more shrine cells at the rear, is on the pattern found in the brick-

temple complexes of the Ikshvaku period in Nagarjunakonda that

preceded these later excavations in Ajanta.

The hindmost part of such an axial group—consisting of the

rectangular ante-chamber and square sanctum behind it, some-

times partly advanced into it—is found repeated mostly as the plan

in the Hindu and Jain rock-cut cave-temples of the Chalukyas,

Pallavas, Pandyas and other dynasties of south India, who con-

tinued rock-cut architecture from the sixth to about the first half

of the tenth century A.D. or even later, as in Ellora. In a few cases,

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as in the Ajanta examples, the cave-temple has a large and almost

square. mandapa, corresponding to the hall with the sanctum

behind, the transverse rectangular ardha-mandapa being eliminated. :

In a temple complex with such an axial arrangement, the sanctum

does not appear to have had a superstructure of the pyramidal

type. These cave temples, including the chaitya-mandiras, may as

well be called mandapa-temples as they are designated in later

inscriptions. The excavation of lateral shrines on either side of the

. main shrine all in a line, with a common mandapa in front, is one

line of elaboration, while the other line would be the excavation of

additional shrines into the lateral walls with all the shrines opening

into a common hall or verandah as is often found in the verandahs

or ante-chambers of the Ajanta viharas. Both the modes are found

developed in the later cave-temples of the Chalukyas, Pallavas,

Pandyas, and other contemporary dynasties of the south.

The Buddhist rock architecture of Ellora (in all twelve excava-

tions) concentrated at the south end of the hill, as also the excava-

tions at Aurangabad mark the culmination of the series, and they

continüe the earlier tradition of western India.

The Ellora Buddhist group falls into three sub-groups, the

earliest being Caves 1, 2, 3 and 5, dating from round about the

- fourth century A.D. Caves 4 and from 6 to 10 are assignable to the

sixth-seventh centuries A.D. Caves 1l and 12, which are unique,

belong to the seventh century A.D. In contrast Caye 1 in. the first

series is simple and perhaps an experimental excavation. Caves 2

and 3 are essentially similar to each other. They have a verandah

or agra-mandapa, with a'door behind leading into a pillared hall

and an ardha-mandapa. While the maha-mandapa- of Cave 2 has

lateral galleries on either side, that of Cave 3 is without them.

The shrine cells behind both contain a seated Buddha. The shrine

of Cave 2 has two lateral cells with an ante-chamber or ardha-

mandapa. There are monastic cells on the lateral walls of the

mandapa of Cave 3. Cave 6, the largest among single-storeyed

excavations, consists of a verandah and a pillared hall with 22 cells

on its walls. Behind the pillared maha-mandapa is a transverse

EARLY ROCK ARCHITECTURE 31

ante-chamber or ardha-mandopa, with a Buddha shrine in the rear.

Cave 4 is two-storeyed. The ground floor consists of a hall, an

ante-chamber and a shrine behind, with additional cells on either

side of the shrine and on the lateral walls of the hall. The upper

floor is ruined and a pradakshina-patha and two , cells alone аге

extant. Cave 8 has again a large hall with three monk-cells on the

north wall. The shrine behind, fully cut out, “hasa pradakshina-

patha, and an ante-chamber in front. It contains.a seated Buddha,

On the north wall of the pradakshina-patha there are monastic

cells.

Cave 6 as usual has a verandah and a hall bchind, having a

lateral hall on the south with six-cells. At the rear of the main hall

there are an ante-chamber and the shrine. Cave 7 has behind its

verandah a hall with four central pillars and twelve unfinished cells -

on its three side walls. The central shrine at the rear is flanked on

one side by a Prajnaparamita and its door-frame is moulded, thus

denoting that it is the main shrine.

Cave 9, strictly speaking, is a long hall or mandapa, with a. pro-

minent sculptured facade—a poor imitation of Cave I0. The back

wall is divided into three bays Бу. four pilasters, the central bay

containing a sculpture of the seated Buddha simulating a shrine,

while the lateral bays contain attendants. .

Cave 10 (Visvakarma) is a large chaitya similar to those at

Ajanta with pillars and aisles and balconies in front of the arch:

opening. The pillars are simple and the sculptures few. The-apse

consists of a siza with a shrine of the seated Buddha cut into it,

thus indicating the stupa form to be a circular vimana (vesara) with

the deity inside. The drum of the stupa has twelve panels all round,

ten of which contain miniature Buddhas. The arch on the facade is

very elaborate and different in design from that found in Ajanta

and elsewhere. Its trefoil arches, and the udgamas and the amala-

. kas; recall similar motifs characteristic of contemporary and later

Brahmanical temples in the northern style.

Caves 11 and 12 of the seventh century A.D., called ‘Do-tal’

and “Tin-tal', respectively, are perhaps the largest of this class of

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Buddhist excavation, remarkably original in their plans and storeys,

containing interesting iconographic sculptures and architectural

embellishments. Though both are three-storeyed, the “Do-tal’ cave

was so called since its ground floor remained buried. A similar

rock-cut cave excavation, now called Anantasayanagudi in Unda-

valli on the south bank of the Krishna, also belongs to this class.

It is perhaps of the Vishnu-kundin times and was meant originally

for a Buddhist dedication.

The Aurangabad cave-temples include a chaitya of the earlier

„Ніпауапа phase and a number of viharas (eight in two groups) and

other less important excavations, all belonging to the seventh

century A.D.

In all these excavations the roughness of the texture even of

finished surfaces necessitated a plaster coating to render it smooth.

Further embellishments came by way of rich paintings of which

we have many extant as the celebrated paintings of Ajanta.

CHAPTER IV

LATER ROCK ARCHITECTURE

` ROCK-CUT CAVE-TEMPLES—LAYANAS

(HINDU AND JAIN)

IN THE beginning of the second half of the millennium after Christ,

the Brahmanical and Jain creeds too started adopting the rock-cut

mode of temples. This caught on quickly and in the last four cen-

turies of the millennium a vast number of such temples had been

created all over the south, from the Deccan to very near the Cape.

These, incidentally, are far more numerous than similar excavatioris

in the north. The majority of these again are Brahmanical. The

Jain ones are fewer. The inauguration of this mode of rock-cut

temples for the Brahmanical and Jain gods commenced with the.

coming to power of three great empires. in the peninsula—the

Chalukyas of Vatapi (Badami) in the Deccan region, with their

collateral branch of the Chalukyas of Vengi (or the Eastern Chalu-

kyas) on coastal Andhra, the Pallavas of Kanchi on the eastern

coast, and the Pandyas of Madurai in the far south. The best and

maximum output in this direction came during the three centuries

between A.D. 550 and 850,- when these three powerful kingdoms

were not only keen political rivals but were also close competitors

in the patronage of art, architecture and literature. While the early

Chalukyas of Badami were replaced in the middle of this period

by the Rashtrakutas of Manyakheta, the Pallavas and the Pandyas

continued ‘to hold sway. right through: The intervening minor and

‘subordinate dynasties, wedged among the three imperial powers as

buffer states, also took part in the activity and contributed to this

movement in their respective regions.

There had been 2 lingering tradition of a taboo on stone for

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sacred and secular structures, because of its long local association

with funerary erections, as has been noted before. This was appar-

ently broken almost simultaneously by the Chalukya King

Mangalesa, and his contemporary the Pallava King, Mahendra I.

Mangalesa excavated Vishnu Cave-temple No. III in Badami, in

commemoration of and in association with the Narayana-bali:

ceremony (shraddha) of his departed and beloved brother Kirti-

varman in Saka 500 (A.D. 578), as the related inscriptions say.

Mahendra I, perhaps taking the cue, excavated his first cave-temple

at Mandagapattu (south Arcot district) for the Hindu trinity—

Siva, Vishnu and Brahma. While Mangalesa chose the finely-

grained and horizontally stratified soft sandstone cliffs of Badami

(Bijapur district), the new capital, Mahendra I chose the very hard

close-grained granite rock of Mandagapattu, far away from his

capital. In Mangalesa’s case, though the excavation of a cavé-

temple for a Hindu god and the carving of Hindu sculptures on it

were altogether novel credal innovations, the mode was -only a

perpetuation of the earlier tradition of excavating such cave-temples

into deliberately chosen soft rocks like sandstone, trap or lime-

. stone that had been in continuous existence from Mauryan times

in north, central and western India as also the Deccan.’ Thus,

his craftsmen had the advantage of the long acquired know-how

of such cutting into sandstones and carving them, which had been

developing for nearly a millennium. The first cave-temple was, as

a result, bold and: ambitious in design and of larger dimensions.

Close on Mangalesa's first cave-temple followed other similar cave-

temples of the Chalukyas in Badami, Aihole, and other places, all

excavated into the same soft rocks.

In the case of Mahendra, the excavation into hard rock and

carving of the cave-temple and sculpture would almost be an inno-

vation; since there had been no precedents, except those of Asoka

and Dasaratha in the Barabar, Nagarjuni „and Sitamarhi hills,

near Gaya, some nine hundred years before. Since then the practice

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“1 Jn fact, the Guptas had earlier excavated cave-temples for the Hindu gods

in the sandstone cliffs of Udaigirj near Vidisa.

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LATER ROCK ARCHITECTURE 35

and tradition had been totally given up or forgotten: and not

attempted in that long interval of-time and space. In such a con-

text, Mahendra’s gloating over bis first achievement in his inscrip-

tion on the Mandagapattu cave-temple became quite meaningful. -

The inscription states that “this brickless, timberless, metalless

and mortarless abode of Lakshita was caused to be made by King

Vichitrachitta for Brahma, Isvara and Vishnu.” The small inscrip-

tion is important also in that Mahendra’s work was a departure

from the contemporary usage and tradition in the: matter of the

creation of a stone-temple without resorting to the usual materials,

such as brick, timber, metal and mortar. What was even more

significant was that it was a departure from the process known

till then of excavating into deliberately chosen soft rocks. This

was followed by more cave-temples being excavated by him into

the hard rocks of the south. They are all of a simpler design and

less ambitious in size, because of the hardness of the new rock

material of hitherto unknown potentialities that involved greater

labour, invention of new tools and skills in cutting, and longer

time to complete.

Thus one may say that the Chalukyas and the Pallavas inaug-

urated two parallel traditions in the south. The succeeding dynasties

in the Chalukyan region of the Deccan, north Mysore, and coast-

al Andhra continued the choice and use of soft stone rocks for

their cave-temples and later for their structural temples. Those that

came after the Pallavas and their contemporary Pandyas, who also

excavated into hard rocks of their area, continued to choose and

employ likewise hard rocks for their rock-cut and structural

temples further south.

The result was that these two parallel traditions continued in the

south in the respective regions till the advent of the Vijayanagar

Empire in the second half of the fourteenth century, which soon

embraced in its ambit both these regions and in fact soon extend-

ed practically over the whole of south India. The soft stone tradi-

tion of the northern region almost came to an end and the use of

hard “stone for temple construction became almost universal,

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though the regional styles and distinguishing characters that had

developed up to that time in either region were generally maintained.

The three centuries covering the rock-cut phase in the Brahman-

ical and Jain temple architecture coincided also with the great

revivalist movements of the Hindus and the continuing hold of the

Jain sects on some sections of the people. With the commencement

of the seventh century, and in the wake of the revivalist move-

ments of the Hindus, great changes were wrought and the bhakti

cult developed. In the Tamil land the Saiva and Vaishnava hymnist

saints, the Nayanmars and the Alvars became wedded to the Vedic

traditions and traversed the whole area visiting shrines, singing

hundreds of devotional hymns in Tamil and rousing the people.

This also resulted in the reformation of the extremist Saiva creeds

of the Kalamukhas, Pasupatas, Mahesvaras, Saktas and the like, it

curbed the strong hold that Jainism had on the people and, almost

led to the decline of Buddhism.

Jainism had all along been having a great hold on the Telugu and

Kannada regions as a result of the patronage it received from the

kings and the rich mercantile groups. The Kannada area continued

` to be the centre of south Indian Jainism from where the various

guchchhas. branched out into the Tamil and Telugu areas. It was

again in the first half of the ninth century that the great Hindu

reformer-philosopher, Sankaracharya, appeared on the scene, re-

fined the existing creeds and their practices, established the six

malas (the Shanmata, viz. Ganapatya Kaumara, Saura, Saiva,

Vaishnaya, and Sakta) on a sound basis, and propounded the great

and universal philosophy of Advaita. It is a curious fact that these

“Tock-cut or stone-built temples of the period, though created by

great kings or with their patronage, were almost totally ignored by

the contemporary Tamil hymnists. This was perhaps because they

were innovations that avoided the use of traditional materials of

architecture and sculpture and as such militated against the sam-

pradaya. Evidently, it took them time to become acceptable.

The output in terms of rock-cut temples of the Pallavas and

after them the contemporary Pandyas and minor dynasties like the

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Muttaraiyars of the Thanjavur region in between, and of the rulers

in the Kerala area is far greater in hard rock than it is in softer

rocks of the Chalukyas, the Rashtrakutas, the Eastern Chalukyas

and the Telugu Chodas of the Deccan and coastal Andhra areas.

The Pallava cave-temples form a more coherent series and as such

can be considered first.

THE PALLAVA: MAHENDRA STYLE CAVE-TEMPLES

The simple cave-temples of Mahendra (c. A.D. 580-630) consist

of a pillared verandah with shrine-cell or cells cut into either the

rear or the side walls of the verandah or hall, depending on which

way the main facade of the verandah or mandapa faced. Thus in

mandapas facing south or north, the single shrine-cell or cells were

often cut into the lateral walls so as to face cast or west, while in

mandapas facing east or west, the shrine-cell or cells were cut into

the hind wall of the mandapa. These, as all rock-cut architecture,

are necessarily designed to show the interior aspect of the struc-

tural monuments they imitated. They are essentially of the mandapa-

type of temples. The cave-temples excavated by Mahendra are

authenticated by his own inscriptions which are very often single

dedicatory verses or string of his titles. Such temples are ten in.

number. Nine of them are: the Lakshitayatana dedicated to the

Trimurti at Mandagapattu, the so-called Pancha Pandava cave-

temple at Pallavaram (now converted into a Muslim dargah), the

Rudravalisvaram, or Cave-temple No. II at Mamandur dedicated

to Siva, the Kal-mandapám cave-temple at Kuranganilmuttam,

very similar to the Pallavaram cave-temple though unfinished and

without Pallava inscriptions, the Vasantesvara or larger cave-tem-

ple at Vallam, dedicated to Siva, 'the Mahendra-Vishnu-griha cave-

temple at Mahendravadi, the Vishnu cave-temple or Cave-temple

No. I at Mamandur, the Satrumallesvaralaya cave-temple at Dala-

vanur dedicated to Siva, and the Avanibhajana Pallavesvara-griha `

cave-temple at Siyamangalam. All of them are located round about

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the Pallava capital of Kanchi and the port town of Mahabalipuram

(Mamallapuram) in the Chingleput, north Arcot, and south Arcot

districts—comprising the Pallava home province of Tondaiman-

dalam (the region situated to the north, west and south of modern

Madras). The Lalitankura Pallavesvara-griha, or the upper rock-

cut cave-temple at, Tiruchirapalli, is the solitary one farthest from

the capital, situated in the Chola mandalam on the bank of the

Kaveri up to which boundary Mahendravarman inherited: the

kingdom from his father, Simha Vishnu. This cave-temple is also

the only example excavated near the summit of the hill,while the

rest are nearer to the base of the rocks. The unfinished rock-cut

temples at Vilappakkam (north Arcot district) and Aragandanal-

lur (south Arcot district) would also, on stylistic grounds, belong

to the Mahendra style.

Where there is. only a single cell behind the mandapa, there are

four pillars and pilasters on the facade of the rectangular mandapa,

two pilasters in antis at the two extreme ends against the side

walls, and two pillars in the middle—all equally spaced. The facade

is longer with four, six or eight equally-spaced pillars between the

extreme pilasters and with three, five, or seven shrine-cells. The

pillars are all massive, short, square in section at the base and top,

with the middle third of the height octagonal in section. They carry

massive corbels with bevelled. or curved ends, sometimes with the

faces carved as a series of rolls, the taranga, with a median flat

band, the patta. A massive beam is cut above the corbels, but

there is no well-formed cornice projection, or kapota, the rough

rock brow itself. acting as one. The faces of the square sections of

the pillars are adorned with large circular lotus medallions often

inscribed inside a square. The mandapa may be divided by an inner

longitudinal row of pillars and pilasters into two sections, front

and rear, indicating the mukha-mandapa and ardha-mandapa por-

tions, though both may be of the same width and of the same type,

corresponding to the facade row. Where there are no inner pillars,

the differentiation is indicated by the varying floor-levels or. ceiling

heights.

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A flight of about three rock-cut steps from the floor of the man-

dapa leads to the simple shrine-entrance which is cut projecting a

little into the mandapa. The shrine often shows a moulded pedestal,

or adhishthana, and the wall'is cantoned at its two front corners

by four-sided flat pilasters with two more in between, each of the

inner pairs flanking the shrine entrance. Often these two inner

pilasters form also the two jambs of the simple doorway with a

low lintel across and.a sill eut at the top of the flight of steps

below. The door-frame, if distinct, is again simple and unadorned.

The pilasters carry in some cases distinct capital mouldings and/

corbels, or potika, on top. A beam and flexed overhanging vornice

or kapota is cut on top. The kapota is adorned by semi-circular

kudu ornaments, with a flat shovel-shaped finial above.

The shrine doors are generally guarded by relief sculptures of

two armed drarapalas, or gatekeepers, one on each side. In the

earliest cave-temple where the shrines for the trinity—Brahma, Siva

and Vishnu—are but deep plain niches cut into the rear wall, the

two dyarapalas are found one on either side of the facade of the

mandapa. The Vasantesvaram at Vallam, the Vishnu cave-temple

of Mahendravadi and Mamandur and the Avanibhajanas cave-

temple at Siyamangalam are examples of cave-temples with a

single shrine-cell cut into the hind wall of the mandapa. The Rudra-

valisvaram of Mamandur and the Kalmandakam cave-temple at

Kuranganilmuttam are examples with three shrine-cells, as at

Mandagapattu. The four additional cells, two on each lateral wall

of the ardha- and mukha-mandapas of the Kalmandakam temple,

are later additions to the original scheme of three cells on the rear

wall. The Pallavaram cave-temple has five shrine-cells, while the .

unfinished Vilappakkam cave-temple has seven shrine-cells. The

similar unfinished Aragandanallur cave-temple, with four pillars

and two pilasters on the facade and in the hind row, would indi-

cate five shrine-cells on the rear wall still uncut. Thus the number

and disposition of shrines on the rear wall would correspond to

the pillars of the mandapa in front, each shrine-opening coming in

between two equally-spaced pillars, or à pillar and a pilaster. This

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along with the equal inter-columniation would contrast with the

. arrangement of the wider central nave and the narrower lateral

aisles of the earlier Buddhist examples followed by the contempo-

rary and later examples of the Chalukya-Rashtrakuta series.

The facades as well as the shrines of the Kalmandakam, Rudra-

valisvaram, Vasantesvaram and the Vishnu cave-temples of

Mahendravadi and Mamandur face almost ‘east, while those at $

Mandagapattu, Vilappakkam and Siyamangalam face almost west.

Pallayaram is the only example in the series where the mandapa

facade and shrine-cells face south: The Lalitankura and Satru-

malla cave-temples at Tiruchirapalli and Dalavanur are examples

with the mandapa facing south and the shrine cut into the lateral

wall—the eastern one at Tiruchirapalli and the western one at

Dalavanur—so that the shrines face west and east respectively. In :

the Dalavanur cave-temple the larger mandapa, with a single row

of pillars and pilaster on the facade, indicates an inner division

of the front and rear portions of the mandapa by a difference in

the floor levels. The shrine on the western wall of the ardha-man-

dapa part is cut with a small porch-like pillared mandapa in front

of it. This too is rock-cut and stands on the floor of the ardha-

mandapa on a distinct plinth at a still higher level. In the case of

the Tiruchirapalli cave-temple, an inner row of pillars and pilasters

is cut very close to the hind wall with a narrow passage in between

it and the wall. The cell on the east faces west into the front part

of the mandapa between the inner and outer rows of columns.

This is a feature not quite Pallava, but rather reminiscent of the

cave-temples in the Pandyan country, for example, the one at

Tirupparankunram. Incidentally, the Lalitankura Pallavesvaram

cave-temple of Tiruchirapalli is the southernmost Pallava cave-

temple nearer to the borders of the Pandya territory. The lotus

medallions. on the top and bottom cubical parts (sadurams) of the

pillars, which are absent in the earlier cave-temples of this series

like those at Mandagapattu, Pallavaram and Kuranganilmuttam,

and the Siva caves at Mamandur and Vallam, are to be found in

the later ones of the series as in the Vishnu cave-temples at

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Mahendravadi and Mamandur. The Siva cave-temples at Tiruchira-

palli and Siyamangalam have, in addition, other motifs incised in-

side circular medallions, such as makaras, kinnaris, matanganakras

(combination of an elephant and a makara), and pushpa-lata

and patra-lata (scrolls of leaves and flowers). The Siyamangalam

cave-temple has small relief panels of Sculpture on top of the

pilasters. \

The shrine-cells, ог garbha-griha, in all these cases are empty

and do not contain either a rock-cut linga or linga-pitha, as-is

common in the Pandya, Muttaraiyar and Chalukyan cave-temples.

They do not have in fact any appropriate sculpture of the deity in

worship —Siva, Vishnu or other gods—to whom the temple accord-

ing to the inscription is known to be dedicated. Often there are

traces of lime plaster with a painting over it on the hind wall indi-

cating that the object of worship was a mural painting of the god.

Sometimes one finds a slight relief of a pedestal cut at the base of

the hind wall indicating that the deity was done in stucco, or lime

mortar and painted, or was a wooden panel with a carving set

into a sunk chase on the wall.

These Mahendra temples are noted also for the absence of other

kinds of sculpture even in the mandapa part, except those of the

dvarapalas. These dvarapalas are found at either end of the facade

of the mandapa in the Mandagapattu cave-temple. In the Dalavanur

and Siyamangalam cave-temples, the dvarapalas are found not only '

on either side of the mandapa facade but also on either side of the

shrine-entrance inside. In the rest of'the series, these are found

only on either side of the shrine-entrance. In the case of the Vishnu

cave at Mamandur and the cave-temple at Pallavaram, there are

dyarapalas neither on the flanks of the mandapa facade nor on the

flanks of the shrine-cells. The dvarapalas either face full-front or

are in semi-profile or half-turned towards the shrine-door and

stand resting on a massive club entwined by a serpent. In Siya-

: mangalam the two outer dvarapalas are, however, depicted as

warriors inside separate niches at either end of the mandapa facade,

while the two flanking the shrine-entrance are of the usual form.

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The Tiruchirapali upper rock-cut cave-temple of Lalitankura is

unique in thatit has a large group sculpture forming a panel on

the western wall of the mandapa directly opposite the shrine and

depicting Siva as Gangadhara. The Siyamangalam . cave-temple is

unique even atherwise, in having small sculpture panels on top of

the facade pillars and pilasters in place of the lotus medallion The

two panels on top of the two pilasters depict, respectively, a danc-

ing form of Siva, or Tandavamurti—perhaps the earliest such

representation in Pallava sculptures, and Siva and Uma standing

with the bull behind them depicting the form called Vrishabhanti-

kamurti.

Mahendra’s son Nargsimhavarman Mamalla (630-68) and his

lineal successors, Mahendravarman II (668-72), Paramesvara І.

(672-700), and Rajasimha. (700-728). continued. the- tradition

started by Mahendra I and excavated a number of cave-temples in

the Mahendra style in the course of the century. They are the

Orukal mandapam at Tirukkalukkunram, the Kotikal mandapam

at Mahabalipuram, the Narasimha 'cave-temple at Singaperumal

Kovil, the Ranganatha cave-temple at Singavaram, the Dharma-

raja mandapam or Atyantakama Pallava's cave-temple at Maha-

balipuram, and the Atiranachanda mandapam cave at Saluvankup-

pam, near Mahabalipuram—all in the Chingleput district of Tamil

Nadu, except Singavaram which is.in south Arcot.

The Singavaram and Singaperumal Kovil cave-temples are dedi- `

cated to Vishnu, the Kotikal mandapam to Durga and tho rest to

Siva. While none of the Siva cave-temples contain a rock-cut linga

in the sanctum, the two Vishnu cave-temples have in the sanctum

stucco figures of the deities now modernised. The Kotikal man-

dapam of Durga has no sculpture of Durga inside the sanctum,

though the dedication is indicated by the female dyarapalikas on

either side of the shrine-entrance as also by the name Of the tem-

ple. The Atiranachanda mandapam of Rajasimha, the Jast of the

series, alone contains a bas-relief panel of. Siva as Somaskanda,

with Uma and Skanda sitting beside him and Brahma and Vishnu

standing on either side of the group behind. The carving of such a

LATBR ROCK ARCHITECTURE ‘ 43

bas-relief in place of the earlier traditional painting, or stucco-

relief, or woodcarving of the principal god of the sanctum appears

to have been started in the time of Paramesvaravarman I

(672-700). Two more such Somaskanda reliefs are found carved

on the hind wall of the mandapa on either side of the shrine-

entrance. It would appear that while Mahendravarman I broke the

tradition of the wooden and brick-and-mortar temples and exca-

vated temples in stone, he could not go far enough to change the

traditional material of which the principal deity in the. sanctum

was made. ‘This had to wait for a few decades till Paramesvara-

varman І, in the last quarter of the seventh century, introduced

for the first time among other innovations the carving of the prin-

cipal deity as a relief on the back wall of the shrine. In Raja-

simha's cave-temple, the Atiranachanda mandapam, a black

polished, fluted or sixteen-sided stone linga (dhara-linga) also came

to be planted on the floor of the sanctum in front of the Somas-

kanda relief on the hind wall. This indicated the commencement in

the Pallava territory of the installation of the formless linga to

represent Siva.

In most respects this series of post-Mahendra cave-temples

resembles those of Mahendra in plan and design and other general

features. But one observes a tendency for the pillars and pilasters

‘to become thinner and taller, sometimes flatter, with an oblong

section. The space between them is equal but wider. The kapota

over the facade -is still an undifferentiated, projecting rock-ledge

over the beam. All the’ cave-temples of the series have single

shrine-cells: cut into the rear walls, with the frontage projecting

more into the mandapa. The only example with tripie shrine-cells

is the Dharmaraja mandapam or Atyantakama Pallava's cave-

' temple where the two lateral shrine-cells are simple excavations,

which are perhaps later additions; without definite shrine-front, as

is found in the case of the main central one. All these cave-temples

have only two pillars and two pilasters on the mandapa facade, and

a similar set behind inside the mandapa wherever there is such а

demarcation of ardha- and mukha-mandapas, as in the Ranganatha

44 - "TEMPLES OF SOUTH INDIA

cave-temple, the Orukkal.mandapam, and the Dharmaraja manda-

pam. The pillars have the top and. bottom: sadurams ~and inter-

Vening kattu, while the pilasters are uniformly four-sided as in

Mahendravarman's cave-temples except that in. the Singavaram

Ranganatha cave-temple the pilasters like the pillars are demar-.

cated and have lotus medallions on the saduram faces. This cave-

temple is the only example in the series which has an outer pair of

dvarapalas at either end of. the mandapa facade. The inner pair

flanking the shrine entrance is in.common with the rest.

"There are generally no other sculptures in the mandapa beside.

the dvarapalas.In the Orukkal maridapam, however,,there are

relief sculptures of standing Brahma and Vishnu on the rear wall,

one on either side of the shrine-entrance and beyond the dyara-.

palas. In addition there are twa fine, bold, life-size reliefs of dvara-

pala-like sculptures, one on either. end wall of the mukha-mandapa.

In the Singavaram. cave-temple; as at Siyamangalam, there are

small panel reliefs of two female devotees on top of the pilasters

of the inner row. j

- The last series of Pallava temples dated after А.р. 730 are small

and less interesting. They mark the decadent phase-of this type of

rock architecture in Tondaimandalam. The Kilmavilangai 'cave-

temple is the only example in the Pallava kingdom of Tondai-

mandalam of a rock-cut cell without a rock-cut front mandapa; but

“such cell-shrines are more common in the Pandya and Muttaraiyar

and Kerala areas, most of them contemporary with the late, post-

700 A.D. Pallava period. The cell contains on its hind wall a fat

bas-relief of standing Visbnu. The two smaller cave-temples at

. Vallam on the rock below Mahendra's Vasantesvaram cave-tem-

ple, оле dedicated to Vishnu and the other to Siva, have very thin :

pillars carrying bevelled corbels on the mandapa facade, the mandapa

itself being narrow and the shrine-cell behind very, small. An ins-

cription in script of the seventh century reading ‘Pa(1)lava-per-

araisaru" meaning ‘Pallava emperor’ has since been found in the

Vasantesvaram cave-temple in Vallam. This and the other almost

similar excavation, both below the larger Mahendra- cave-temple,

LATER ROCK ARCHITECTURE 45

are rather feeble attempts, considering the fact that they are rather

crude, small in proportion and shallow in depth.

THE PALLAVA: MAMALLA STYLE CAVE-TEMPLES

Mahendra's great son and successor Narasimhavarman I

Mamalla (630-668), in addition to excavating some Mahendra-

style. cave-temples like the Orukkal mandapam and the Kotikal

mandapam described earlier, initiated anew and more ornate

series of cut-in cave-temples. This was in addition to his unique

invention of totally cut-out monolithic temple-forms, /or vimanas,

the so-called rathas, and some open air bas-relief compositions of

considerable size and superb quality, all confined to the great

Pallava port-city of Mamallapuram or Mahabalipuram. These

ornate cave-temples that Mamalla initiated were mostly com-

pleted in stages by his immediate successors for two Benerations,

who also created a few monuments, in the same Style and at the

same place. The outstanding development discernible in these is a

fuller representation of their mandapa facades, their interior

decoration and the replacement of the square massive pillars and

pilasters by typical pillars with ornate' bases and full capitals

and all the moulded members of the “order”, thus making the stone

copies more true to their contemporary Structural originals in

brick-and-timber.

The adhishthana, or plinth, shows all the usual mouldings as

could be seen in the finished examples. The mandapa facade bas а

fully represented entablature, or prastara, which constitutes all the

architectural parts coming over the beam and including it, as

against what is seen in the Mahendra-style cave-temples. The pras-

tara is fully finished with a flexed kapota, or ап eaves-like cornice

projection, decorated by horse-shoe-shaped kudu arches, The

prastara has also a string of miniature shrines above it, all of ob-

long plan, often with a barrel-vaulted roof, the sala, while in the

later examples, the sala string ends at either extremity in similar

. miniature shrine models of square plan with a four-sided domical\_

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roof, the kuta. The entire string constitutes what is called the .hara

with inter-connecting lengths of cloister. The pillars generally con-

form to the wooden prototypes, but are taller and slenderer and

have their bases often shaped into squatting lions. The top of the

shaft ‘has the variously moulded capital members such as the

malasthana, the padmabandka, the kalasa, the tadi, the kumbha, the

pali and the phalaka or abacus, the last-mentioned one omitted in

some cases, and the topmost me ber carrying the corbel or potika,

with curved profile and roll ornamentation, or faranga, with a

median plain patta. rur

Their mandapas are often demarcated into front and rear sections

by an inner row of pillars. The shrine-fronts, ong, - three or five,

are at the rear of the innet mandapa, project more into the man-

dapa, and have all the angas of a vimana-front, namely, moulded

adhishthana, pilasters, or kudya-stambhas, with capital components

as detailed above and prastara, with well-formed kapota and kudu

decorations. The further superstructure of the vimana is not shown,

as in a depiction of the interior aspect of a mandapa with the

sbrine-behind, the upper parts of the vimana would not be visible.

The prastara of the shrine-front abuts on the mandapa ceiling.

"There are eight such cave-temples in various stages of comple-

tion: the Koneri mandapam, the Varaba mandapam, the Mahisha-

mardini mandapam (locally called Yamapuri mandapam), an

unfinished cave-temple next to the Koneri mandapam, the Pancha-

Pandava mandapam, the Adivaraha cave-temple called Paramesvara

Mahavaraha Vishnugriham in its inscriptions, and the Ramanuja

mandapam. Of these the Varaha and Ramanuja mandapams have

undivided mandapas, while the Koneri mandapam and the Adi-

varaha cave-temple have their mandapas divided into ardha--and

. mukha-mandapas by an inner line of pillars. The Mahishamardini

mandapam is peculiar in that its principal central shrine is pre-

ceded by a square and a pillared portico projected into the larger

mandapa, as in the case of the Dalavanur cave-temple. The Pancha-

Pandava mandapam records an attempt to cut a square central

shrine with a surrounding cloister in the form of a mandapa having

LATER ROCK ARCHITECTURE 47

two rows of pillars running all round. The Varaha mandapam

and the” Adivaraha cave-temples have each a single shrine-cell

while the Mahishamardini and the Ramanuja mandapams have

three shrine-cells in them; the Koneri mandapam has five in a row

behind the mandapam.

The Mamalla-style cave-temples show a marked advance over

the Mahendra type in plastic decoration also, in having a wealth

of large and fine sculptures in addition to the usual dyarapala

sculptures. These are often synoptic, narrating important Puranic

legends. The Varaha mandapam, which is the most complete cave-

temple and has been preserved in all its parts, contains bas-relicf

compositions of Bhu-varaha and Trivikrama inside large panels

on the side walls of its mandapam. Its back wall has:two more—.

one on either side of the projected shrine-entrance, carrying

panels of Gajalakshmi and Durga. The front and side walls of the

projected shrine-front have niches with dvardpala sculptures. The

manner in which the boar-head of Bhu-varaha merges at the neck

imperceptibly with the human body is a masterpiece of art not

equalled by similar representations in the Gupta and other sculp-

tures. The central shrine is now empty, but perhaps once contained

painted or stucco representation of Narasimha. Almost identical,

but more artistic and graceful delineations of Gajalakshmi and

Durga are reproduced in almost the same positions on the rear

wall panels on either side of the projected shrine-entrance in the

Adivaraha cave-temple. In addition, the front wall of the projec-

ted central shrine of the Adivaraha cave-temple has three niches

each on either side of the entrance containing other sculptures. The

niches flanking the entrance contain dvarapalas. The two central '

wider niches, one on each side have sculptures of standing Vishnu

and Harihara, respectively. The extreme ones on the north апа.

south show a Nagaraja or Adisesha in human form with a five-

headed serpent-hood and a portrait sculpture in graceful tribhanga

posture, The south and north walls of the mukha-mandapa contain

large reliefs of standing Brahma, and Siva as Gangadhara. Similar

panels on the south and north walls of the ardha-mandapa have

48 TEMPLES OF SOUTH INDIA

almost life-size royal portrait groups of the Pallava Kings Simha-

vishnu and Mahendra with their queens and consorts and with

label inscriptions over them indicating their identity. The main

sanctum contains a modern stucco form of Varahamurti. This

temple is in use for worship, while others are not. The bas-relief

sculptures of Durga on the south and Gajalakshmi (?) on the.north

side walls of the Ramanuja mandapam have been totally chiselled

off in later times by the Vaishnava occupants as also the three

shrine-fronts and their dvarapalas of this original triple-celled Siva

cave-temple. The back wall of the central shrine retains traces of a

Somaskanda group. The Mahishamardini'cave-temple contains on

the two side walls of its mandapa two of the most celebráted and

famous Pallava sculptures, namely, Durga as Mahishasuramardini,

mounted on a leaping lion and battling with Mahishasura and his.

hordes on the north, and Vishnu as Anantasayin in yoga-nidra, or

contemplative sleep, on a serpent-couch on the south. Besides the

beauty, grace, vigour and agility depicted in Durga, the clever

synthesis of the buffalo-head and human body of the demon

Mahishasura would equal only that of the Varaha-form mentioned.

above, not to speak of the defiance and haughtiness depicted by

hisstance and demeanour even in the animal face. All these

sculptures would thus constitute some of the earliest extant repre-

sentations of the respective forms and as such afford valuable

material for a study of the development of early iconography in

“the south.

Recent research (by Lockwood, Siromoney and Dayanandan—

“Mahabalipuram Studies") has established that the dvarapalas

of the Pallava cave-temples Saivaite and Vaishnavite, are really

ayudapurushas, or defied personifications of the appropriate wea-

pons of Siva (Sula and Parasu, i.e. trident and axe) or of Vishnu

(Sanka and Chakra, ie. conch and discus), which are shown on

the headgear of the concerned dvarapala. Also it has, been de-

monstrated that the original dedication of the Mahishamardhini

cave-temple was to Vishnu, subsequently made Saivaite in the same

century by the introduction of the large Somaskanda panel, on the -

LATER ROCK ARCHITECTURE 49

lined wali of the shrine, in place of the original Vishnu 'that was

perhaps a painted stucco. Appropriately enough the two dyara-

Palas wedged in a curious паппег into the narrow spaces on either

. Side of the shrine's door-jamb, were afterthoughts likewise, modi-

fied for the Saivite re-dedication as also the two flanking shrine-

cells on either side in the Trimurti pattern, Vishnu occupying the

place of precedence in the central cella in the original scheme.

Though not strictly cave-temples like his Atiranachanda man-

dapam, other creations of Rajasimha Pallava (700-728) in the series

of rock-carvings found in Mahabalipuram and neighbourhood are

the Yalimandapam at Saluvankuppam, a hamlet to the north of

Mahabalipuram, familiarly called \*tiger cave', and similar orna-

mental pavilions. These would stand apart from either group of

cave-temples described above. The Yalimandapam is a small,

oblong, shallow pavilion, or mandapa, excavated on the eastern

face of a boulder facing the sea with its moulded adhishthana and

a facade of flanking pillars which are adorned at their bases by

rearing or rampant lions or vyalas, cut over a lower platform re-

ached by a flight of steps. The whole structure is surrounded by an

arched frieze of eleven large vyala heads, mistakenly called “tiger

heads’. To the south of the pavilion, and carved on the rock face,

are reliefs of two elephant fronts with howdahs over their necks, a

dvajastambha in between, and a horse at the south extreme. The

northern face of the rock is roughly carved out into a large squat-

ting lion front with a small square niche cut into in its bosom

enshrining a relief panel of Mahishamardini. The Yalimandapam

obviously served as a resting-place of the processional idols or the

royalty during festivals.. This, even the name of the place—Tiru-

veluchchiyur —found in the inscriptions, would suggest. A smaller

replica of the Yalimandapam is found on the surf-beaten boulder

to the south of the Shore temple.in Mahabalipuram. To the north.

of the temple is another larger rock called the Mahishamardini

rock with a large lion face and Durga niche in its bosom.

In passing, mention may be made of the two celebrated open-

air bas-relief compositions of large group sculptures on the face

SIT TEMPLES OF SOUTH INDIA

of the massive rocks in Mahabalipuram. They are Arjuna's Pen-

ance and the Govardhana-Krishna scenes. The compositions are

both synoptic and narrative of the respective themes. Arjuna's

Penance depicts the scene of Siva granting to Arjuna as a boon

the desired weapon—Pasupata— sought by the latter through

the performance of a severe penance. The depiction is. after the

description of the scene in Bharavi's Kiratarjuniya. The Govar-

dhana-Krishna scene depicts Krishna as holding up the hill to

afford shelter to the displaced gopas and gopis with their/child-

ren, cattle and other belongings, when they had to flee their homes

as a result of a great deluge of rain and stone brought down by

the irate Indra. The depiction is quite powerful and realistic. А

unique south Indian note is struck by the introduction of Krishna's

`. favourite gopi, Nappinnai, huddling near him in the group and

distinguished from the rest of the women in the scene by her

dress, stance and attendant lady. The Krishna-Nappinnai theme

“is special to the earlier and contemporary Tamil literature and

tradition.

PANDYA AND OTHER NON-PALLAVA

CAVE-TEMPLES OF THE SOUTH

In Pandimandalam farther south, comprising mainly the modern

districts of Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Tirunelveli, Kanyakumari,

Trivandrum and Quilon, and the southern parts of the Puduk-

kottai area now forming a district, the Pandya contemporaries

of the Pallavas started rock architecture soon after the pioneers,

that is to say from after the middle of the seventh century. They

continued the activity for over three centuries till they, like the

Pallavas, were. overthrown by the rising Cholas of Thanjavur.

Their cave-temples in the southern half of Tamil Nadu and the

adjoining Kerala area: are far more numerous than those of-the

Pallavas. `

, The Muttaraiyar chieftains, who had their kingdom astride the

Kaveri in the traditional Cholamandalam, viz. Tiruchirapalli,

LATER ROCK ARCHITECTURE 51

Thanjavur and the southern half of the south Arcot districts, and

who owned allegiance alternately to the Pallavas and Pandyas,

left in the latter part of the period quite a few cave-temples in

their area. These are found at Tiruvellarai, Narttamalai, Kun-

nandarkovil, Puvalaikkudi and other places, all in the Puduk-

kottai and Tiruchirapalli districts. Their cave-temples too are

the type of mandapas with simple shrine-cells and are much akin :

to the Pandya cave-temples in the same area, The Atiyaman, or

Adigaiman chiefs, ruling in the Kongu area of Salem and Coim-

batore districts, bordering on the Tiruchirapalli district, have

excavated two fine cave-temples in Namakkal. They are dedicated

to Vishnu and are noted for their fine sculptured panels.

These cave-temples, numbering about sixty in all, are, like the

Pallava examples, excavated into the hard, local rocks and are

essentially similar to the Mahendra-style excavations in plan and

design. But they also show certain characteristic features of their

own, incorporating in the process a few features peculiar to the

. Chalukyan examples, particularly in respect of their sculptural

make-up and iconography.

They, like the Mahendra-style cave-temples, consist of a man-

dapa with one or more: shrine-cells cut often at the rear, but in

some cases excavated into the side walls of the mandapa, as in the

lower rock-cut Pandya cave at Tiruchirapalli and the cave-temple

at Tirupparankunram, near Madurai, among others. They have

massive pillars on the facades, essentially square in section at the

base and top, with an octagonal middle section, carrying heavy

potikas or corbels, usually with а straight bevel, resulting in an

angular profile. There are, however, some examples with pillars

of other types and corbels with a curved profile and taranga

moulding. The cave-temples, all, lack a well-defined kapota in

the architrave over their mandapa facades, as is also the case in

the Mahendra-style cave-temples.

Some of the excavations are merely shrine-cells Scooped

directly 'into the rock face, without a rock-cut mandapa in

front. Such cave-temples are numerous inthis region and very

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rare in Tondaimandalam. . í ye

The cave-temple at Malaiyadi-k-kurichi (Tirunelveli district)

would appear to be the earliest known Pandya cave-temple of

the mandapa-type with a single shrine-cell on the rear and con-

taining a foundation inscription of the seventeenth year of Pandya

Maran Sadaiyan in the second half of the seventh century. The

inscription mentions the cave-temple significantly as kal-tiru-k-

koyil or the sacred stone temple’, echoing the pioneering idea

for this region as found in Pallava Mahendravarman's inscription

at Mandagapattu in Tondaimandalam. The rock-cut cave-temple

at Pillaiyarpatti; (Ramanathapuram distríct) with an inscription

in an archaic script would also be one of the early Pandya cave-

temples, as also Siva Cave-temple III at Kunnakkudi in the same

district which has another short inscription in the same script

calling it Masilisvaram. The Vishnu (Narasimha) cave-temple at

Anaimalai (Madurai district) has а foundation, inscription giving

the Kali year 3871 (А.р. 770) and referring to its excavation bya

minister of Pandya Maran Sadaiyan, alias Parantaka. The large

cave-temple at present famous as the Subrahmanya temple at

Tirupparankunram near Madurai was excavated earlier and later

re-modelled by. another Pandya minister and his wife in the Kali

year 3874 (A.D. 773), according to their foundation inscriptions

there. There is a complex of four cave-temples on this northern

face of the Tirupparankunram rock and one of the above inscrip-

tions mentions the excavation of a separate Jyeshtha cave-temple

also, which is of the cave-cell type, without mandapa in front.

The other two excavations: on either side of the larger mandapa-

type cave-temple and above the level,of. the Jyeshtha cave-shrine

should be of a somewhat later date. One of these containsa base

relief of Gajalakshmi, and the other, a group comprising Devi as

Bhuvanesvari and her attendants.

The well-known rock-cut cave-temple at Sittannavasal in the

Pudukkottai area (Tiruchirapalli district), containing the celebra-

ted early mural paintings in fresco, is an example of a Jain cave-

temple of the eighth-ninth centuries. This, according to a long

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LATER ROCK ARCHITECTURE 53

Verse inscription associated with it, was re-embellished by a cer-

tain Ilan-Gautaman alias Madurai Asiriyan and a structural

mukha-mandapa added in front, all in the reign of Avanipa-

sekhara Sri Vallabha Pandya (c. 815-862). This contains 'bas-relief

Jain Tirthankara sculptures on the hind wall of the shrine and in

the niches on the lateral walls of the mandapa in front. This

cave-temple is a typical Pandya version of а Mahendra-style cave-

temple, with the facade pillars carrying taranga corbels.

The eastern cave-temple at Malaiyakkovil, the upper Siva cave-

temple at Tirumayam, the cave-temple at Mangadu, the Malaik-

kolundisavaran near Rayavaram, the Jyeshtha, the Gajalakshmi

' and the Bhuvanesvari cave-temples in Tirupparankunram, and the

cave-temple at Vizinam (Vizhingam), among others, are examples

of simple cave-shrines of the Pandya-Muttaraiyar-Ayvel vintage of

the non-Pallava series.

Among the cave-temples that have the shrine-cell on one of the

lateral walls of the mandapa may be mentioned the Satyagirisvara

orSiva cave-temple at Tirumayam, the southern caye-temple at

Malaiyakkovil, the Siva cave-temple at Tirumalapuram (Tirunelveli

district), and the Umaiyandar cave-temple on the southern face of

the rock at Tirupparankunram. In the case of some cave-temples,

like the Siva cave-temple at Malaiyadippatti, the cave-temple at

Pillaiyarpatti, and the cave-temple in Muvaraivenran (Ramanatha-

puram district) the shrine part occupies, as it were, a corner of the

oblong mandapam, which thus encloses it on two sides—in front

and on one of the flanks, suggesting a partial copy of a model with

а central shrine and a surrounding mandapam with а greater part

'ofitin front. Such a plan is not to be found conimonly in the

Pallava examples except in the case ofthe Pancha-Pandava manda-

pam of Mahabalipuram ind the unfinished Cave-temple IV at

Mamandur. The cave-temple at Trikur, near Trichur in Kerala, is

L large excavation of a square chamber with a Zinga at the centre.

Cave-temples with shrine-cells cut into both the lateral walls of

the mandapa are exemplified by the lower rock-cut cave-temple

at Tiruchirapalli and also the larger cave-temple, called the

| 54 TEMPLES OF SOUTH INDIA

Subrahmanya temple, on the north face of the hill at Tirupparan-

kunram. This has also a third shrine cut into the rear wall of the

mandapa, in addition to the two thus excavated into either end

wall of the mandapam.

While the mandapa-type facade pillar with a cubical base and

top and an octagonal belt in between is the general rule, as in the

Mahendra-style cave-temples, there are often variations. For ex-

ample, in the Melaikkovil at Kudumiyamalai capital components

like the kalasa, kumbha, etc. are cut on tops of the facade

. columns. In the Vishnu cave-temple at Malaiyadippatti the pillar

bases are shaped into squatting lions. The corbels of the Malai-

yadikkurichi cave-temple are peculiar in that the ‘arqnga rolls are

cut as incurved curls, a feature indicating Chalukyan inspiration.

What is more interesting in these cave-temples is their varied

sculptural content and iconographic forms, some of which are the

first to appear in the southern cave-temples of Tamil Nadu and

Kerala. They are Ganesa, the Saptamatrika and Jyeshtha. The

Ganesa and the Saptamatrika cults would thus appear to have

come into the far south from the Chalukyan area through the

Ganga region, before they penetrated the Tondaimandalam of the

Pallavas. These two are not to be seen in any of the Pallava cave-

temples, till they make their first appearance in the structural

temples of Rajasimha Pallava (700-725) as, for example, in the

Kailasanatha at Kanchi. In the far south, Ganesa is to be found

inthe cave-temples at Pillaiyarpatti, Kudumiyamalai, Malaiyak-

kovil (southern cave-temple), Tirugokarnam, Kunnandarkovil,

Tiruvellarai (Siva cave-temple), Devarmalai, Tirukkalakkudi,

Tiruchirapalli (lower cave-temple), Tirumalapuram, Kunnakkudi,

Muvaraivenran, Tirupparankunram (larger cave-temple), Sevilip-

patti, Kunnattur (Nilakanthesvara), Virasikhamani and Aritta-

patti. The Saptamatrika group is met with in the cave-temples at

Tirugokarnam, Malaiyadippatti, Tirukkalakkudi and Kunnattur.

While many of the cave-temples dedicated to Siva have a rock-cut

linga with a pitha in the shrine, there are others where the iconic

forms of Siva are represented as bas-reliefs on the rear wall of

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| 1. Amaravati—Stupa (See Page 12)

2. Mahabalipuram—Dharmaraja Ratha (See Page 102)

3. Ellora Kailasa Vimana Superstructure (See page 108)

4. Mahabalipurm—Shore Temple (See page 111)

5. Kanchipuram—Vaikuntha Perumal Temple (See page 117)

6. Tiruvalisvaram—Valisvara Temple (See page 123)

7. Narttamalai—Vijayalaya Colisvaram (See page 123)

8. Sravanabelagola—Chamundaraya Bastı (See page 1 25)

9. Kambadahalli—Panchakuta Basti (See page 126)

10. Nandi—Bhaga Nandisvara Temple (See page 126)

11. Badami —Malegitti Sivalaya (See page 131)

12. Patadkal — Mallikarjuna Temple (See page 132)

13. Thanjavur Brihadisvara Vimana (See page 140)

14. Darasuram—Airavatesvara Vimana (See page 147)

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15. Chidambaram—Nataraja Temple Gopurams (See page 157)

16. Lakkundi—Kasi Visvesvara Temple (See page 154)

17. Tiruvannamalia—Arunachala Temple Main (East Gopuram)

(See page 150, 181)

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the sanctum, There is often a small cistern or pit cut into the floor

of the sanctum below the projected channel-spout of the top of

the linga-pitha or image pedestal to receive and collect the abhi-

Sheka water. This feature is unknown in the Pallava temples,

whether cave, monolithic or structural, but is found in the

Chalukyan area and in the far-off temples of the Dieng Valley in

Java (Indonesia). The linga-pitha is generally square, but octagonal

in the eastern cave-temple at Malaiyakkovil. In the Siva shrine of

the Tirupparankunram cave-temple, there is a Somaskanda panel

on the rear wall, as in the Pallava cave-temples of the close of the

seventh century and subsequent structural temples. In the cave-

temples at Piranmalai and Tirumalai (Ramanathapuram district)

.it is only Siva and Parvati (Umasahitamurti) seated, without

Skanda. The rear wall of the shrine of the Umaiyandar cave-

temple at Tirupparankunram contains a relief of Ardhanari-Siva

while in the case of Ladan Kovil cave-temples at Anaimalai,

dedicated to Subrahmanya, he is shown with his consort in the

central shrine.

‚Ви for the single exception of the eastern lateral shrine in the

Subrahmanya cave-temple, Tirupparankunram, containing a bas-

relief of Somaskanda on its rear wall after the familiar Pallava

pattern, the reliefs of Umasahitamurti (Siva), without Skanda, in

the Pandyan cave-temples is significant. Such icons found for

example on the rear wall of the shrine in the cave-temples of

Piranmalai and Tirumalai (Ramanathapuram district), and on

the north wall of the rock-cut front mandapa of the Kunnandarkoil

(Pudukkottai district) cave-temple are reminiscent of the Siva-

Parvati wedlock, or vaivahika form of Minakshi-Sundaresvara,

prevalent in that region.

In the lower rock-cut cave-temple at Tiruchirapalli (Pandya),

while the two lateral shrine-cells are dedicated to Siva and Vishnu,

the rear wall of the mandapa has five niches enclosed by pilasters,

the central one with Brahma and tbe others with Ganesa, Subrah-

manya, Surya and Durga. With Siva and Vishnu, these would

form the gods of the Shanmata grouping which Sankaracharya is

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stated to have re-established after reformation of the extant ritual

practices. Sankara is reputed to be the Shanmata sthapanacharya,

the Shanmatas being Saiva, Vaishnava, Sakta, Kaumara, Saura and

Ganapatya. The grouping in this cave-temple would indicate also

а super-imposition of the Shanmata deities on the pre-existing

Trimurti concept of Siva, Vishnu and Brahma, inaugurated by

Mahendra Pallava in his first Mandagaputtu cave-temple. The

larger cave-temple at Tirupparankunram takes in five-out of the

six deities, excluding Surya, for the two principal lateral shrines

are dedicated to Siva and Vishnu, while a third, for Durga, has

been cut out of the rear wall at its centre with the two recesses

on either side having sculptures of Ganesa and Subrahmanya. In

the comparatively fewer Vishnu cave-temples dedicated solely as

such and in the Vishnu shrines of other cave-temples, the stand-

ing, seated and, more often, reclining forms are met with as the

main sculptures. The standing form occurs in the Vishnu shrine

of the Tiruchirapalli lower cave-temple, the sitting form in the

Vishnu shrine of the larger Tirupparankunram cave-temple, and

reclining form in the Vishnu cave-temples at Tirumayam, Malai-

yadippatti and Tiruttangal (Ramanathapuram district), and in the

eastern or Ranganatha cave-temple at Namakkal (Salem district).

The other cave-temple at Namakkal has Narasimha in the

sanctum.

The MelaikKovil Siva temple at Kudumiyamalai, the Satyagiri-

svara or Siva cave-temple at Tirumayam, the upper Siva cave-

shrine in the same place, the Gokarnesvara.cave-temple at

Tirugokarnam and the eastern cave-shrine at Malaiyakkovil are

associated with inscriptions on musical notations in what is called

the Pallava-grantha script as also colophons in the old Tamil

script, as indicated by the label Parivadini-e inscribed on them.

While the actual notations, or remnants of them, are to be seen in

the first two cases, they have disappeared in the rest. The extant

colophons indicate that the art of the Parivadini (a stringed lute)

called Vidya-parivadini was enunciated by a Gunasena, and the

notations were got inscribed for the benefit of the votaries by a

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king who was a great Saiva or Paramamahesvara, and a disciple

of Rudracharya. While the Satyagirisvara cave-temple at Tiruma-

yam is thus connected by the presence-of the musical inscription

with the others above, it has besides, as one of its dvarapalas

flanking the shrine-entrance, a portrait sculpture of a king or chief-

tain which is found also in the cave-temples at Kunnandarkovil

and Devarmalai within 48 km from it in the same district

(Pudukkottai). What is more, itis also found in the Siva cave-

temple at Virasikhamani in the far-southern Tirunelveli district

and in the cave-temple at Kaviyur, near Quilon in Kerala. These

would indicate a similarity of origin, namely, Pandya, and a proxi-

mity of date. The cave-temple at Tirunandikkara with a south-

facing mandapa facade and an east-facing shrine inside on the

western wall of the mandapa is celebrated for the remains of ancient

fresco paintings of the same period as Sittannavasal and Tirumala-

puram of Pandya vintage.

The Siva cave-temple called Vagisvaram at Malaiyadippatti was

excavated by Videl Vidugu Muttaraiyar in the 16th year of Pallava

Dantivarman. The adjoining Vishnu cave-temple of a later date

was also perhaps a Muttaraiyar excavation. The cave-shrine called

Paliyilisvaram at Narttamalai, another Muttaraiyar excavation,

dates a few years before the seventh year of Pallava Nripatunga in

the late ninth century. The same may be said of the Puvalaikkudi

cave-shrine, which was excavated by a certain Amarunri Mutta-

raiyar- The Vishnu cave-temple at Tirumayam, containing the

reclining - Vishnu group, is a natural cavern converted into a cave-

temple with the addition of the facade pillars and other features by

а queen.of Perumbidugu Muttaraiyar and would date some time

later than the Siva cave-temple of Satyagirisvara adjoining it. A

few others like the Mangadu cave-shrine and Malaikkolundisvaram

cave-shrine in the same area, as also the cave-temples at Tiruvel-

larai,-can be attributed to the Muttaraiyars.

The cave-temples at Trikur, Irunilamkodu, Kottukkal and other

places in the northern Kerala region are of the times of the. rulers

-of the Chera country, while those in the southern parts, in the

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Quilon and Trivandrum districts of Kerala, and the Kanyakumari

district of Tamil Nadu, or Venadu and Nanjilnadu as they are

called, are perhaps mostly of the Pandya affiliation. Because of

lack of specific authentication and of the fact that Kerala was

under more than one dynasty during the period from the middle

of the seventh to the middle of the ninth centuries to which these

cave-temples belong, it would be more correct to give them the

regional nomenclature of Kerala than to call these all ‘Chera’.

The connected political history of the Cheras of the second period

after the earlier Sangam epoch starts from the middle of the ninth

century.

The two Vishnu cave-temples at Namakkal, one dedicated to

Ranganatha or Anantasayin, and the other to Narasimha, are,

according to their inscriptions, excavations by the Atiya king,

Gunasila of the line of the Adigaimans known earlier from Tamil

literature. They belong to the first half of the eighth century and

contain some fine sculptures. The inscription in the Ranganatha

cave calls it Atiyendra-Vishnu-griha and is unique in that it gives

an apt description of the various figures in the iconographic group-

ing round Anantasayin. The sculptures are noted for their .sharp

delineation and vigorous poses and flexions that are quite distinct

from their Pallava compeers.

The Western Gangas of Talkad in south Mysore, following the

Chalukya-Kashtrakuta idiom, have left two unfinished cave-temples.

in the hard rock at Melkote near Mysore.

In addition to the incorporation of the Chalukyan traits noted

above, these southern cave-temples, essentially following the

Pallava Mahendra-style and hard rock tradition, also reproduce

many iconicforms that are fóund in the Pallava rock-cut and

structural examples. The more-important ones are the reproduction

. of Durga with a devotee cutting off his own head in sacrifice, a

common Pallava form, reproduced near the Vishnu cave-temple

at Tiruttangal, and the Mahishasuramardini group, as at Maha-

balipuram and Saluvankuppam, reproduced with variations in the

Vagisvaram cave-temple at Malaiyadippatti. The Bhu-varaha and

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Gajalakshmi forms are found in the cave-temples at Tirupparan-

kunram and the Trivikrama form along with Bhu-varaha in the

cave-temple at Namakkal, The other iconographic forms so repro-

duced are Lingodbhava, Harihara, Subrahmanya, Vishnu with

Garuda in human form, Narasimha, and the tandava forms of

Siva.

The Kerala cave-temples of a rather indeterminate authorship,

however, form an important landmark in southern cave architec-

ture combining as they do the features of the Pandya and the

Adigaiman cave-temples of the adjoining territory and like them

are essentially of the Pallava Mahendra-style model both in their

granite rock material and the plan and technique of excavation,

though with an import often of some Chalukyan motifs. The

incomplete Branthanpara excavation demonstrates the familiar

Pallava technique of rock excavation as at Mahabalipuram, follow-

ed in the Pandya-Muttaraiyar-Adigaiman areas, as at Narttamalai,

Mangadu and other places. The cave at Vizhinam, of the rock-cell

type without the front mandapa and characteristic of the Pandya-

Muttaraiyar region, is unique in having on either rock flank of its

door-opening, reliefs of Siva in chatura tandava with Parvati in

attendance on one side, and Siva with bow as Kirata, followed by

a dwarf gana on the other. These bas-relief sculptures are more

akin to the Pallava than to the neighbouring Pandya forms. At

Irunilamkodu, another simple diminutive single-cell excavation

without any facade or front porch, is a fine sculpture of Yoga

Dakshinamurti in a majestic pose on the south wall, with an atten-

dant rishi and disciples below, while the Zinga proper is placed in

a small niche cut into the western wall over a platform. The other

cave-temples are those at Tirunandikkara and Kaviyur. These are

examples of typical cave-temple pattern with cell and front

mandapa. Likewise there are those at Kallil, Trikkur, Kottukkal,

Ailurpara, Tuvarangadu and Bhutapandi, the last two to the south

of Vizhinam, near Kanyakumari. Some of these cave-temples are

unconventional in so far as the relationship between the orient-

ation of the temple and the placement of the dyarapalas and other

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attendant niche-deities are concerned. The Trikkur cave-temple, for

example, has a north facing facade with the only opening on that

side; the corbels are of the double-volute type as in the Chalukyan

style and the deity inside the shrine faces east as indicated by the

water-spout of the linga-pitha projected on the north. The dvara-

palas are cut almost in the round out of the side walls.on the

eastern and western sides, a little behind the median east-west axial

line. The linga-pitha is often'a structural addition, though mono-

lithic examples cut out of the same rock as the cave itself are

known. At Kaviyur and Tirunandikkara the style is, as in early

Pallava cave-temples, without the original rock-cut linga but with

lingas planted into sockets of the” shrine-cell. We have square

sockets on the floor into which the square-sectioned lower part, or

brahmabhaga, of the linga is inserted, and the pitha assembled

round its exposed base, as is found to bethe case in the Pallava

cave-temples, a feature starting from about A.D. 700. In Ailurpara

and Bhutapandi, the Zinga is an integral part of the cave and is

rock-cut as in the Pandya-Muttaraiyar examples. The placement of

Hanuman as one of the two dvarapalas in the cave-temple at

Kottukkal recalls the similar feature found in the Pandya cave-

temple at Kunnattur, near Madurai. ES

IHE CHALUKYA AND RASHTRAKUTA CAVE-TEMPLES

3 OF THE DECCAN 1

The: Chalukyas of Badami from the middle of the sixth century

A.D. and the Rashtrakutas of Manyakheta who supplanted them

effectively in the middle. of the eighth century, together with the

Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi have left a number of cave-temples in

the region between the Tapti and the north Pennar rivers, extend-

ing from coast to coast. The Chalukyas of Vengi were a collateral

line that had independently started ruling the Andhra coast from

the commencement of the seventh century under Kubja Vishnu-

vardhana,.the intrepid brother of Pulakesin IL, and continued

:throughoutthe period. The cave-temples are to be found at

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Badami, Aihole, Ellora, Bhokardan, Elephanta, Jogeshvari, Poona,

Arvalem (Goa), Mahur, Advisomanpalli, Vijayawada, Mogulraja-

puram, Undavalli, Sitaramapuram, Penamaga and Bhairavakonda.

While the Chalukyas were mostly of Hindu persuasion, though

they encouraged the Jain creed, the Rashtrakutas and many of the.

Western Gangas were votaries of Jainism. As such one could

perceive a congruity of purpose, technique and the raw material

chosen to stabilise Hinduism and foster Jainism and perpetuate

their traditions at the cost of Buddhism which was having till then

a greater hold on the rich, lay, agricultural and mercantile sections

of the people.

The choice of all these dynasties was the local soft stone forma-

tions, viz. sandstone, as in Badami and Aihole and in most other

places, laterite, as at Arvalem on the extreme west coast, schist as

at Bhairavakonda, and trap on the north-west Deccan and western

India around Aurangabad, Poona and Bombay. The Western

Gangas alone despite their Chalukyan affinities as stated before

made a deviation in that they excavated into the hard local granite.

as at Melkote (Mysore).

The eastern branch of the Chalukyas, ruling from Vengi, though

excavating into soft rocks, followed a different mode and design

in their cave-temples which took in what was prevalent in eastern

- Andhra and northern Tamil Nadu, or Tondaimandalam, with

Pallava affinities, thus inaugurating what was jo be a distinct

Andhra tradition, as opposed to what the Badami Chalukyas did

for Kannada tradition and culture.

The. Chalukya-Rashtrakuta domination of the areas to the west

resulted in the upper Deccan affiliations becoming quite distinct

from what obtained in the lower Deccan, thus exhibiting two

regional idioms. This was because the -northern zone lay nearer

the sites of the earlier Buddhist cave art and rock architecture. The

skills and traditions that had prevailed for more than eight

centuries among the local guilds of craftsmen thus continued in the

generations that took up Hindu and Jain rock architecture and

cave art. Rock architecture was also sustained longer as a mode in

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the northern zone. It developed more vigorously particularly under

the Rashtrakutas as could be seen from their enormous output

and such large-scale compositions as the caves at Elephanta,

Dhumarlena and Jogeshvari, not to speak of the monolithic

carvings of the Kailasa temple, and the Jain Chota Kailasa and

the Jain Chaumukh in tbe Indra Sabha complex. But rock architec-

ture soon became a mere second to structural stone constructions

in the southern zone of the Chalukyas as would be seen in the

sequel. This was due to the fact that with the facility of quarrying

the soft sandstone blocks, dressing and catving them more easily

with the help of the skills acquired, coupled with the urge to con-

struct stone temples on the models of brick-and-wood originals,

the stone workers of the Badami-Aihole-Pattadkal area soon

trained themselves into guilds of stapatis that could build temples

better instead of carving them out of rocks. The structural crea-

tions of the Rashtrakuta period are, however, less pretentious, of

medium or small dimensions, and less well-finished as comparéd

with their rock-cut monuments.

The lay-out plan of the cave-temples varied from the structural

temples in the successive rise in floor levels of the axial mandapas

and shrine, in the much raised level of the sanctum floor, though

the ceiling level throughout remained thc same, The development

of these non-Buddhist cave-temples can be divided into five or six

stages or patterns. In the first group would be those that follow

the scheme generalised by thelater Buddhists in that area, namely,

the vihara-chaitya type, with a cella and a frontal pillared hall. The

second would be those with a triple cella at the rear and lateral

dispositions, each with a pillared facade. in the form of an ardha-

mandapa, the whole fronted by a common larger hall, or maha-

mandapa, and a narrower agra- or mukha-mandapa, again with a

pillared facade. Thirdly, there would be those which show or tend

to show the side shrines in the form of chambers containing panel

sculptures and Saptamatrika shrines with a regular or principal

sanctum at the rear, which is sandhara or one provided with a

circumambulatory passage round it, with ardha-and maha-niandapas

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LATER ROCK ARCHITECTURE 63

often having vedi parapets. A Nandi-mandapa is also to be seen in

front in some cases as-in-the Lankesvara cave at Ellora (Kailasa

complex). The fourth type is exemplified by the structures where:

the principal shrine has no cirumambulatory passage, that is,

nirandhara; the ardha-mandapa has sculpture panels on its side

walls, and the large maha-mandapa is pillared and with or without

side shrines. Often there is an additional mykha-mandapa. The

Saptaniatrika shrine, or niche, is cut independently outside the

main cave-temple, usually on its left flank, while there is a Nandi-

mandapa in front, as in Ellora Cave 22. The fifth group would be

that where the sandhara pattern with circumambulation develops a

sarvatobhadra sanctum cell, with door-openings on all the four

sides, fronted by a series of two or three mandapas, and, in the

most advanced type, having an additional agra-mandapa that con-

tains sculpture panels of Ganesa, Durga and other forms on ane

side and the Saptamatrikas on the other side of the agra-mandapa.

Lastly, there are the examples which, like the more southern forms,

have in front the transversely oblong halls—the ardha- and mukha-

mandapas, without any vedi parapet for the latter, and where the

pillars carry the sculptures on their shaft portions instead of on the

bracket region as female figures that are usual in other cases. -

Thus the main varieties observed in the Chalukyan cave-temples

are with individual variations: the nirandhara type where the

shrinc-cells are devoid of a circumambulatory passage as at

Badami, the sandhara type, with shrine-cells having a circumambu-

latory passage zi a iiio.a, Ramesvara, etc., the frikuta type with

triple shrine-cells as at Aihole and Ellora, and the sarvatobhadra

type with shrine-cells having door-openings on all the four sides as

at Elephanta, Ellora and Jogeshvari. The sandhara and saryato-

bhadra forms are the most outstanding. In the sarvatobhadra types,

as seen in the Dhumarlena at Ellora, the principal cave at Eleph-

an fa, and in the cave at Jogeshvari, the outer mandapa cut out of

the rock tends to have at least three open passages on the three

sides, while the fourth at tbe rear forms the one ending in tbe

parent rock,

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cave, mandapa-type also finds its structural analogues particularly

in temples of the south-west Deccan, west Mysore and the Konkan

and Malabar coasts down to the times of the Ikkeri Nayaks of

the seventeenth century. The provision of more aisles or bays

parallel to the central nave with only one extreme bay at either

end of the longitudinal axis finds its application in structural

temples where the lateral bays, with pillars or walls of diminishing

height from the centre, carry successively stepped down, slopy- or

-flat roofs. Such early structural temples are the Ladkhan in Aihole

and the Kallamatha in Badami. It would be evident that this

feature in rock architecture is after the contemporary and earlier

brick-and-timber structural models. The Ramesvara facade at

Ellora would also indicate the prototype or archetype of mandapa

of mediaeval structural temples. The projected porches have

bench-like platforms with seats and lean-backs between the pillars,

the kakshasanas, their exterior view being parapet-like with a vedi

form and dwarf pillars and other decorations and sculptures. As a

result the intercolumniation of the facade is not generally equal,

the central pillars having a wider interspace than the lateral ones.

In Badami there are four 'cave-temples excavated at various

-heights on the vertical scarp of the sandstone rock. These are

reached by a natural incline in front with steps. The earliest and

largest one is Cave III excavated by Mangalesa in. A.D. .578 and

dedicated to Vishnu. It is cut at the most commanding height

visible from the valley in front. Cave-temple I, which is of medium

size and is Saiva, and tbe smallest Cave-temple II, which is Vaish-

naya, are cut at lower levels, the former being almost near ground

level. Cave-temple IV, also small but Jain, cut near the top of the

` rock, came much later than the other three which belong to the

last quarter of the sixth century. These cave-temples consist of a

rectangular pillared mukha-mandapa preceding a. more or less

square pillared maha-mandapa with a shrine-cell at the rear end.

The ardha-mandapa that should intervene between the shrine and

` the maha-mandapa is not distinct, and is taken up by the rear bays

of the maha-mandapa. The facade opening is wide and sufficiently

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high. The facade pillars are tall and massive, often of a square

section, carrying corbels, or potika, supporting the beam. The

massive overhanging ledge over the beam forms eaves or cornice,

the kapota, with ribbing and cross-pieces imitating a frame-work

carved on its curved underside. The beams over the potika, as also

the underframe of the kapota, are often strutted, as it were, by

bold. caryatid-like supports of human, celestial or animal figures

sculptured almost in the round. The inter-columniation between

the two central pillars is wider than that between the others. The

ceilings of the mukha-mandapa or agra-mandapa are sunk into

regular four-sided coffers by thick cross-beams that are filled with

carved medallions in relief. The inner pillars, especially of the inner

row of the mukha-mandapa, though square at the base, are of a

circular ‘section above, complete with the moulded capital com-

ponents, viz. the vase-shaped kalasa and the cushion-shaped

bulbous kumbha, to mention only the most prominent ones. The

pillared maha-mandapa, as already stated, has a wider nave at the

centre than the lateral aisles, and the inner pillars are polygonal in

section. A functional division of the mukha-mandapa from the

central hall is shown by the introduction of a screen wall stretch-

ing to about a fourth of the width from either end between the two

mandapas with the front pillars and pilasters of the maha-mandapa

fitted in the central gap. The higher floor-level of the central nave

would suggest a central clerestory roof, rising above the roofs of

the side aisles as could be seen in the structural examples referred

to before, though in this rock-cut model the ceiling is of even

height right through. Cave I has a monolithic linga-pitha and is

slightly later in póint of time. Cave II would be slightly later than

Cave III which has only a monolithic pitha for the original Vishnu

image. The recessed kantha ofthe plinth of the mukha-mandapa

facade in Cave III shows paired pilasters;interposed between the

gana groups while in Caves Land II the gana friezes are continu-

ous, There are no Vaishnava friezes on the ceiling in the front

mandapa of Siva Cave I while they are present in the earlier Caves

JI and III, which are Vaishnava. The Jain cave-temple of a still

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later date is replete with Jain sculptures and cameos, while the

other three are noted for some of their bold wall sculptures, mostly

subsequent additions.

In respect of the-sculpture panels, even in Cave III of Badami,

‘the earliest of the series, it has been demonstrated (by A. Lippe)

on the basis of technical and stylistic evidence that, they, barring

the Vaikunthanatha (seated Vishnu) and Varahamurti, are not

coeval with the cave excavation, but additions, made at a slightly

Játer time, about the middle of the seventh century, possibly after

the period.of Pallava occupation of Badami by Mamalla.

Of the two .rock-cut cave-temples at Aihole (Bijapur district)

while the óne called Ravalagudi is dedicated to Siva, dating about

A.D. 700, the other one ofa slightly later date ís a Jain temple.

Both are excavated into the low sandstone dutcrops, and mark the

latest of the early Chalukyan or Western Chalukyan series in their

home districts. Though smaller than the Badami cave-temples,

these are interesting from the point of view of plan, design апа.

sculpture. The pillars are more slender and have the usual capital

components of the ‘order’. The Ravalagudi consists essentially of

an almost square mandapa with a large principal cella of almost

equal size on fhe rear, and two more, wide, lateral shrines, thus

making a trikuta plan. While the rear shrine has a rock-cut linga,

the lateral shrine on its right is dedicated to the Saptamatrikas and

attendant deities, and the one on the left to other forms of Siva.

The slightly projecting dividing wall-strips between the mandupa

and rear shrine, leaving а wide entrance in between, carry the

dvarapala sculptures. On the facade on either flank on the rock

wall are niches containing the sculptures of the two nidhis—

Sankha and Padma. The Jain cave-temple has a front mandapa

which is more pronouncedly rectangular, and conforms, to the

typical mandapa-type cave-temple pattern.

The high trap-ridge at Ellora which had afforded the venue for

a series of Buddhist excavations described earlier, now provided a

scope for Hindu and Jain works. The Brahmanical cave-temples,

occupying the central section of the hill and the parts higher up,

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belong to the period of the Chalukyas and their Rashtrakuta

successors. The Hindu excavations, designated as Caves 13 fo 29,

are mostly Saivite in character and fall into two distinct chronolo-

gical series, the earlier series being more after the models of the

preceding Buddhist excavations characterised by’ the general

absence of a rock-cut image or symbol like the Zinga in their

sanctums. There are, of course, variations of plan and content in

some. Cave 16 is the Kailasa complex, where the main part is the

monolithic vimana temple of- Kailasa with cave-temples on the

scarp of the circumambulatory passage as in the case of the Lankes-

vara. (16a). The later series are more after the models of the south

and often contain an image in their sanctum, a rock-cut linga

pedestal with sometimes a rock-cut Nandi also.

The pillars in these caves are of a varied nature and design and

are square or octagonal in section, or, generally, of the kumbha-

yalli type with full vases and excrescent foliage at the middle height;

or they have cushion-shaped kumbha mouldings in their capitals.

The corbels, where present, are either simple or ornate. The

cornice, or kapota, over the facades and shrine-éntrances is decora-

ted by horse-shoe-shaped kudus which are small nasikas. The door-

frames have elaborate over-doors and carry, as the utfaranga on

top, miniature representations of the southern vimana-type shrine

or the northern sikhara or prasada shrines. The Ramesvara (Càve

21) would represent the earliest of this group. The facade "of

the rectangular mukha-mandapa has four short, bulky, ornate

pilars, and two pilasters at either end rising above a highly

decorated vedi parapet, or dwarf wall, interrupted in the middle

between the two central pillars to provide the entrance doorway.

The transverse length of the rectangular portico, Or mukha-

mandapa, wbich is carried across the entire front of the excavation

has further extensions, one at either end in the form of a side

shrine or chamber. Behind the mukha-mandapa is the pillared

maha-mandapa, the two central rows of pillars wider apart form-

ing the nave, with the sandhara sanctum at the rear, while the

extreme ones, which are closer to the central ones, form the aisles

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leading to the circumambulatory passage round the sanctum. The

sanctum entrance is guarded by huge dvarapalas. The pillars have:

the kumbha mouldings. In thé matter of shrine location, even

with the modifications effected, it is yet in keeping with the

Mahayana Buddhist shrines already excavated at Ellora. The

exhibition of the bhuta gana friezes in the facade dwarf wall and

the bracket figures, on the other hand, would take this excavation

closer to the Badami group, thereby indicating the first quarter of

the seventh century as its date. Caves 20, 22, 23 and 24, adjacent

to this, would also belong to about the same period.

The Ravana-ki-kai (Cave 14) is of a simpler plan, with a large

pillared mandapa and a sandhara shrine at its rear. The doubling

of the front row of columns affords a mukha-mandapa-like

verandah in front of the nave leading to the shrine, the aisles con-

tinuing as the circumambulatory passage round the shrine. The

pillars are of the kumbha-valli type. Оп either side of the shrine-

entrance, there are a number of carved images, including the two

dvarapalas. On the mandapa walls, and carved in the recesses bet-

ween the pilasters, are sculptural compositions, Saivite and Vaish-

navite. The cella is rectangular and has provision for a platform

on its rear with a socket in it for Vishnu or Durga, but not'for

Siva or a linga. This excavation in the pre-Rashtrakuta series can

be dated near A.D. 700. Besides the above, others like Caves

17, 20, 21 and 26 are of the sandhara type and have their shrine

chambers at the rear of the pillared mandapa cut out on all sides,

resulting in a circumambulatory passage. Cave 17 should be

nearer Ramesvara in point of time, i.e. the second quarter of the

seventh century, and Cave 26 should approximate to the Rashtra-

kuta excavations.

The Dhumarlena, or Cave 29, is of the greatest interest since it

is the largest and most imposing of the caves at Ellora. Its san-

dhara and chaumukh, or chaturmvkha shrine, is not only isolated

but also contained within a group of mandapas arranged in a

cruciform plan which is simliar to that.of the Blephanta and the

Jogeshvari caves. The four doorways of the shrine are fianked by

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large dvarapalas'and other accompanying sculptures. The long

rectangular maha-mandapa or main hall that precedes the shrine

and also partly surrounds it has a wide nave and aisles formed by

а colonnade of five pillars on each side, of which the front enclo-.

ses the main entrance. Additionally flanking the main hall are

two lateral entrances through two portals or pillared transepts.

The pillars are huge in size with kumbha or cushion capitals,

and the statuary inside is also ponderous and of large proportions.

The shrine contains a linga on a monolithic pitha. The cave-temple

can be dated to the middle of the seventh century in the

Chalukyan period. ‹ :

Cave 27, or the Milkmaid’s cave (Gopilena), is, an- interesting

example with triple shrines on the rear and side walls of the man- ·

dapa. Cave 25, or the Kumbharvada has multiple shrine-cells as

in Bhokardan and has lateral galleries attached to the ante-cham-

ber. While Cave 27 may be of the transitional period between

the Chalukyas and Rashtrakutas, Cave 25 should be earlier,

datable to the second half of the seventh century.

The Dasavatara, or Cave 15, is an odd example.in as muchas. it

is the only two-storeyed cave-temple or cave-complex of a very

large size. It is.apparently a case of reconditioning of what was

all prepared and cut out for Buddhistic requirements. It would

mark the earliest example of Rashtrakuta work at Ellora. Its front

pavilion carries the inscription of Dantidurga (c. 752-756) and is

an accomplished piece of contemporary rock architecture. The

cave-temple will have to be placed in the mid-eighth century. The

detached Nandi-mandapa is four-pillared with flights of steps at the

front and the rear. The facade of the temple that rises beyond

has its two storeys with two rows of pillars, one above the other,

the pillars being square and reminiscent of the arrangement in the

Tin-tal cave of Ajanta. The ground floor is á compartment with

fourteen square pillars and the upper floor has the plan of a large

pillared mandapa with central nave and.lateral aisles and & shrine

with a Zinga at tbe rear. The linga-pitha is circular. The pillars are

arranged in six rows of pine cach with two additional ones at the

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far end of the nave forming a vestibule in front of the shrine. The

two pillars at the front of the vestibule are elaborately carved while

the rest 'of the pillars are plain, square in section. The pilasters

` along the walls enclose between them large sunk panels with fine

group sculptures. Cave 16 is another example having a circular

` linga-pitha in its shrine.

The Lankesvara cave at the: upper level, to the right of the

Kailasa monolith, is again a Rashtrakuta excavation, showing a

reversion to the type with a sandhara shrine-cell at the rear of a

pillared mandapa. It is compact and has a terminal Nandi pavilion

and contains a very rich grouping of sculptures of great iconogra-

phic value. . :

The Ganeshlena constitutes over a score of cave-temples forming

a group collectively numbered as Cave 21. Each unit consists of a

mandapa having simple pillars and pilasters of square section with

corbels of the Chalukyan type on the facade, and the shrine cham-

berat the rear. The rear wall of the shrine has a relief of Mahesa-

murti. In most cases there is a linga inserted into a monolithc

circular pitha on the floor, and in one case there is a rock-cut лга

as well. The shrine doorways have over-doors. These may be

placed'just about A.D. 750 in the early years of the Rashtrakuta

rule in Ellora. The Mahesamurti reliefs here are quite different in

treatment and finish from the celebrated One at Elephanta and,

unlike Elephanta, they are placed on the wall behind the Rashtra-

kuta linga in thé main shrine.

The Jain excavations (Caves 30 to 34) mark the last phase of

activity in Bllora commencing from about A.D. “800 and continuing

into the next century. They follow mostly' the earlier Hindu

examples in plan and design, differing only in their sculpture and

iconography. The Indra Sabha (Cave 32) and the Jagannath

Sabha (Cave 33) standing close together, are both two-storeyed

excavations, The Indra Sabha has in its open fore-court the Chau-

mukh Jain monolithic temple. The rock faces on the sides of the

open front quadrangle are profusely sculptured and have elabora-

tely carved kapofa entablatures, one separating the lower from the

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upper storey with a lion and elephant series in the frieze, and the

other, on top of the upper storey, with a series of shrines depicting

Tirthankara forms. The lower storey of the cave is an unfinished

hall mostly with simple pillars, some of them moulded. There are

attempts to cut cells into the walls. The upper storey is again a

navaranga-mandapa with twelve pillars, the central bay having a

. raised platform for a Jain Chaumukh with the ceiling showing an

elaborate lotus carving. The hall has a pillared portico, and there

are two side shrines, projecting on either side of the front.

The Jagannath Sabha, though of the same type, lacks the regu-

larity of the plan. The ground floor is a complex of three asym-

metrically disposed sanctuaries, each a complete unit, consisting of

agra-and maha - mandapas. 'The rear shrines open into the court-

yard which has crumbled away. The upper floor has the navaranga

hall with twelve outer pillars as in the Indra Sabha, but there is

also a shrine at the rear. From one corner of the mandapa and

disposed at an angle is an additional unit similar in proportions

and character to those of the ground floor, but complete and

richly carved. i

In Elephanta, a tiny island off Bombay, the cave-temple is dis-

tinguished by the exceptional quality of its sculptures of which the

great Mahesamurti is the most well known. With the main east-

west linear axis of the excavation parallel to the length of the rock,

its plan consists of a large mandapa supported by twenty pillars on

‚ its periphery, eight ranged on each of the. longer sides and two

each on the front and the rear, between the corner pillars. There

are flights of steps in front of the shorter or front and rear sides,

leading out into open courts on the respective sides, which are

formed by cuttings that more or less isolate the section of the rock

with its excavated cave-temple from the rest of the mass. In the

eastern court on its floor is a circular rock-cut pedestal, perhaps

for Nandi. The northern side of the main maha-mandapa has pro-

‘jected mukha- and agra-mandapas. “The outermost agra-manaapa has

two pillars and pilasters on its facades; the mukha-mandapa is longer

than the former by the addition of one more bay at either end.

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These two are designed as the northern lateral extensions of the

maha-mandapa with an entrance on the open side, while the corres-

ponding lateral extension of the same plan on the south, dug into

the parent rock, contains the niches of Mahesamurti and other

sculptures, Towards the rear end of the maha-mandapa is’ a

sandhara, chaturmukha shrine, square, and with doors framed by

'elaborate over-doors on the four sides. Inside there is a large

rock-cut linga pedestal, with its spout on the north, and with an

inserted Zinga. In front of the shrine there is an inner pradakshina-

mandapa between two rows of four pillars each, forming part of

the circumambulatory passage round the shrine. A cutting into

the rock on the east, beyond the northern portico, leads to the

eastern fore-court and the, main entrance to the temple. On the

southern side of this court, a smaller cave-temple for Durga is

excavated into the scarp. A similar cutting at the western end

beyond the northern portico leads into the court behind the main

temple into the western scarp. Into this a smaller Siva cave-temple

is cut, consisting of a square shrine with a mandapa in front. This

cave-temple may have to be placed in the middle of the second

"quarter of the seventh century, while Bllora Cave 29 (Dhumar-

lena), which is to a large extent its copy, should be placed in the

beginning of the last quarter of the same century.

The Jogeshvari cave-temple in Salsette, near Bombay, which is^

excavated into an almost underground low trap outcrop, is larger

in area than the Elephanta cave, but is essentially of the same

type. Trenching on three sides all round a marked-area into the

rock outcrop isolated a large rectangular mass on which the scarps

for the excavation were prepared. At the eastern/and longer end a

large gateway or mahadyara is carved with a central passage and

flanking mandapas on either side, one of them enshrining Ganesa.

The mahadvara leads into an open court and the eastern facade,

which is an agra-mandapa with.a higher floor-leyel. The main part

of the temple beyond consists of a square chaturmukha shrine

surrounded by a pillared cloister "with six pillars on each side,

counting. the corner ones too. This is surrounded again by an

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outer astylar cloister, or mandapa, with a lower floor-level enclosed

by the rock walls on all sides except for an entrance each on the

east and the west, and for. three on the south. The shrine here

occupies a central position and its doorways are framed by elabo-

rate over-doors. On the western side there is another agra-man-

dapa, similar to the one on the east, which leads out and up thro-:

ugh a narrow tunnel to the road beyond. On the southern side,

the main mandapa leads through its three openings, with a fine

over-door frame round the central one flanked by two intermedi-

ate windows, to an extension on this side, which is in the form of

an outer open mandapa with a row ef ten pillars and two pilasters

on its southern facade. Outside this is a narrow open court, The

rock wall beyond has incomplete or abandoned excavations of a

smaller size, of which the one at the'extreme end is dedicated: to

Siva. This has interesting pillars with caryatids on 'its facade. The

original dedication of the main sanctum was to Siva, though the

temple now enshrines a modern idol of a goddess.

The Patalesvara (or Panchalesvar) caye on Jangli Maharaj Road

in Poona, cut into a low trap rock, is unique in that it has a triple-

shrine with common pradakshina round it, a circular front pavilion

for Nandi, and a side shrine for Durga. The three shrine-cells were

perhaps dedicated to the Hindu Trinity, the central one to Siva

and the lateral ones to Brahma, and Vishnu. All these features

would point to the second half of the eighth century as its date in

the Rashtrakuta times.

The Hindu cave at Mahur (Nander district) in Maharashtra has

a sandhara-type of sanctum with two smaller ' transverse corridors

in front and two smaller subsidiary shrines on the flanks. This is

apparently a late plan after the model of Caves 17 and 21 of

Ellora, and datable to the first quarter of the eighth century. It was

perhaps a provincial contemporary of Dhumarlena of Ellora. There

is an unfinished excavation by the side of the Siva cave.

The cave at Bhokardan near Aurangabad bas five shrine-cells in

a line behind the pillared rectangular mandapa at the rear of an

open cutting in a low outcropping trap rock on the left ‘bank of

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the Kelna river-bed. Each cell has а door-opening. The mandapa

has two bays, at the front and therear, forming mukha- and ardha-

mandapas. The side walls of the mandapa are scooped into shallow

curves with large figure sculptures. The dvarapalas are large-sized,

:and there are sculptures of Anantasayi, Surya, Balarama, Mahisha-

mardini, etc. It is not clear if this cave is of Western or Eastern

Chalukyan authorship; it could even have been of mixed tradition.

The.nature of the sculpture and other evidence indicate an Eastern

-Chalukyan authorship in the mid-seventh century A.D.

The: group of two adjacent cave-temples at Arvalem in Goa is a

rare instance of excavation into the local laterite of the west coast

overlooking a stream. Both are of simple features. One of them,

the southern cave-temple, is a triple-celled unit containing in each

unit a Zinga mounted on a rock-cut pitha. The linga forms in their

symbolic aspect differ from one another and represent three differ-

ent deities. The central linga is the normal Chalukyan-type Siva-

linga; the one in the southern cella is a linga shaft surmounted. by

a solar disc representing Surya or the sun-god, with an inscription

‘below the disc specifically mentioning it as a Surya form. The linga

shaft in the northern cell is-surmounted by a flat spear-head, or

“sakti”, indicating that it presents Kumara or Kartikeya. It is an

interesfing instance of Vishnu of the Trinity being replaced by

Surya according to the Surya-Narayana concept, and Brahma by

Brahmanya or Kartikeya, as in the Trimurti cave-temple at Maha-

'balipuram.

The most outstanding feature of the rock-cut cave art has been,

from the Buddhist times, the dominance of: sculpture over archi-

‘tecture. This was facilitated largely by the softness of the stone

material and the urge to exploit spaces, as on the pillars, on the

walls between pilasters, and even on the ceiling. The same-tendency

resulted in large-scale paintings, as at Ajanta, Ellora and Badami.

The “different god-forms sculptured are depicted often in the

narrative or synoptic panels. They vary in size from very large-

-sized individual figures, as the dvarapalas, Mahesamurti, etc. to

-almost the size of cameos. In the earlier Western Chalukyan caves

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as.at Badami, Vishnu and Siva sculptures occur indiscriminately,

while in the later ones they are well-nigh separated. The former

type of caves show among the female deities only Durga, while

the latter have the Saptamatrikas, Sarasvati, Gajalakshmi and

Parvati. The latter category is also to be found in the Rashtrakuta

caves along with a relapse to the admixture of Vaishnavite carv-

ings, though to a lesser extent. While the Western Chalukyan

sculpture is noted for clarity in form, pose and expression, the

Rashtrakuta phase is characterised by crowded ornamentation with

less emphasis on pose and expression and, what is more, a tendency

to depict Puranic episodes, either in a synoptic or narrative form.

The profusion of such didactic depictions compensates richly for the

diminution of the aesthetic trends of the earlier phase. In the Saiva

temples at least, tendencies of cult domination and the prescrip-

tions of Agama are noticed. While the Western Chalukyan linga-

pithas are mostly square, the Rashtrakuta linga-pithas, as in Ellora

Caves 15 and 16, and the Ganeshlena caves arc circular. They are

monolithic and form part of the live rock of the excavation. These

contrast with the absence of linga-pithas іп the Pallava cave-temples

where the advent of lingas ofthe prismatie;dharalinga type inserted

into sockets in the floor, or of éven uniform circular section over

the square lower part that goes into the socket, is of a later date

than the cave-temple. The Chalukya-Rashtrakuta lingas are of a

different type. It is only in the monolithic linga-pitha and linga of

the Pandyan temples that we find square, circular, and even

octagonal linga-pithas. \_

While the Zinga symbolising Siva in his aniconic aspect with the

‘characteristic linga-pitha, called avudaiyar is absent as organically

rock-cut with the cave itself in the earlier stages of the Pallava

cave-temples, they appear as integral rock-cut forms of the Pandya-

Muttaraiyar series, coinciding chronologically with the later

Pallava structural phase. But in the north of the Tamil country, in

the Chalukya-Rashtrakuta cave-temples the presence of the rock-

cut Jinga-pitha, though not always along with the linga on it, would

suggest a continuity with the earlier prevailing trends in that area.

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For after the unique example of the urdhvalinga (phallic) form in

Gudimallam (Chittoor district), lingas, many of them of the arsha

(or naturally occurring type), inserted into sockets of linga-pithas

have been found in the course of excavations of the river-side area

in Nagarjunakonda of.the Ikshivaku times, followed by the

recent finds of lingas in linga-pithas in the salvaged area of the

river-valley projects in the Kurnool and Mahbubnagar districts of

Andhra Pradesh. These linked up with such finds of an earlier

period from Karvan (Kayarohana), associated with Lakulisa—the

founder of the pasupata creed, would indicate the gradual spread

of the linga cult southwards during tye centuries, reaching Tamil

Nadu in the beginning of the eighth century A.D..

The iconographic forms noticed in the Badami group include,

among Vaishnava forms, Varaha, Trivikrama, Narasimba, Ananta-

sayin, Vaikunthanatha, Vishnu, and Vaishnavite legends and,

Krishna-lila in friezes. The Siva forms are Tandavamurti, Harihara,

and Ardhanari. Among the others are Ganesa, Kartikeya, Durga

and Mahishamardini. At Aihole (Ravalapudi or Ravalagudi), we

have Varaha, Harihara, Ardhanari, Gangadhara, Saptamatrikas,

Mahishamardini and the two Nidhis.

In the Chalukyan phase at Ellora are to be seen Ganesa, Karti-

` keya, Sarasvati, Gajalakshmi, Saptamatrikas, Siva-Parvati legends

in synoptic forms, Parvati's penance, Kailasa-tolana, Aksha-krida-

murti, Kalyana Sundara, Andhakari, Siva-tandavas, Lakulisa,

Siva-Lakulisa, Krishna, Balarma, Subhadra, Surya, Anantasayin.

and Brahma. The Rashtrakuta phase in the same place is noted for

such sculptures as Durga, Mahishamardini, Parvati-tapas, Kalyana

Sundara, the Kailasa scene, Ardhanari Siva, Govardhanadhari,

Kaliyadamana, Varaha, Narasimha, Lakshmi, Sarasvati, Ganesa

and Kartikeya. The Ganesalena at Ellora depicts also the Shan-

mata or six-fold cult of Surya, Vishnu, Siva, Kartikeya, Ganesa

and Durga. : ó

The Elephanta sculptures are almost the same as those in

Dhumarlena (Ellora), with some additions, such as the Mahesa-

murti and Sivayogi. Jogeshvari has Kartikeya, Lakshmi, Ganesa,

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Saptamatrikas, Lakulisa and Kalyana Sundara. The Patalesvara at

Poona has Gajalakshmi, Tripurantaka, Anantasayin, Lingodbhava

and Andhakari. Mahur depicts Ardhanari, Gangadhara, Tripuran-

taka, Ganesa, Kartikeya and Surya.

THE EASTERN CHALUKYAN CAVE-TEMPLES OF

COASTAL ANDHRA

In the Andhra coastal region, excavated into the softer rocks on

either bank of the Krishna in the territory of the Eastern Chaluk-

yas of Vengi, there are over a dozen cave-temples. They are to be

found in the hills of Vijayawada and Mogalrajapuram on the north

bank, all in Krishna district, and in the hills of Undavalli, Pena-

maga, and Sitaramapuram on the south bahk in Guntur district.

"These cave-temples of Eastern Chalukyan authorship show indivi-

dualistic characters in their lay-out, iconography and the scheme

of the cella. They partake in some respects of the neighbouring

Pallava modes, apart from their parental Chalukyan and northern

inheritance. The remarkable feature of this series of cave-temples

is the occurrence of a rock-cut pedestal socket at the base of the

rear wall of the cella denoting the object of worship, whether it be

the linga form of Siva, or à sculptured stele bearing the image of

other gods inserted into the socket. In Bhairavakonda, the socket

is cut in a sunken recess on the wall over the pedestal to take in

the linga, or image. In respect of the cave-temples of the Eastern

Chalukyas, the absence of Vishnuite carvings is notable as against

what is found in the Western Chalukyan-Rashtrakuta group.

Practically all the cave-temple are Saiva, or are dedicated to other

deities of the Saiva pantheon. The only exception is the aberrant

Undavalli.cave-temple which is dedicated to Vishnu. The Nandi

in Saiva cave-temples is rock-cut as in the Pandyan examples

farther south. In point of time the Akkanna-Madanna cave at

Vijayawada in its present form comes first. It is ascribable to the

middle of the seventh century, and is closely followed by Caves I

to IV of Mogalrajapurani, the lower cave-temple at Vijayawada,

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the Undavalli -and other caves in a series, ending with the:

Bhairavakonda group datable to the middle of the eighth century.

The last if not of direct Eastern Chalukyan vintage, can at-best be:

of Telugu-Choda authorship.

These cave-temples essentially consist of a rock-cut hall, or

mandapa, with one or more, often three, shrine-cells behind. The

multiple shrines are in a row at the rear. The mandapa is in some

cases astylar and in others multi-pillared, or demarcated into front

and rear sections by two rows of pillars and pilasters—the usual

facade row and the parallel inner row. The pillars are usually

simple, thick-set, short and square in section throughout, or have

their middle height bevelled . at the corners. This results in the

middle section being octagonal, while the basal and apical sections

are square in plan. The cornice of the facade, the kapota, is decora-

ted by kudu, or nasika arches. The doorways of the shrines are

simple. like those in the southera cave-temples, and unlike the

Western Chalukyan-Rashtrakuta types with elaborate over-doors.

The doorway is often enclosed by two flanking pilasters carrying

a torana festoon above. While most of the cave-temples are dedica-

ted to Siva, two are definitely dedicated to Durga, and a few to

Vishnu. The sculptural content is very meagre compared to the

examples at Badami, Aihole, Ellora, etc. Among the few sculptures,

mention.may be made of Tandava-Siva. The Anantasayanagudi

cave-temple at Undavalli is the largest of the group and is a three-

storeyed structure akin to the Ellora Buddhist Caves 11 and 12,

the Do-tal and Tin-tal. It belongs to the seventh century if not

earlier, and was perhaps intended originally for the Buddhist creed,

but was adopted later fora Vishnu temple, the principal deity

being a recumbent Vishnu, or Anantasayin.

The Bhairavakonda cave-temples are excavated into a soft Schist

intrusion in the hills at Kottapalle in Nellore district, а rock

material different from the Krishna-Guntur group. Interposed

between them, along with two rock sculptures of dancing Siva and

Harihara, are small niches or memorial shrines with lingas cut inside

them, with dedicatory or other inscriptions of the eighth century.

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1

The eight larger cave-terhples fall into two groups. The first four,

starting from the northern end of the horse-shoe valley or ravine,

are simple shrine excavations without a front mandapa and lack

the elaborately decorated kapota cornice and its kudu ornaments.

The cave-temples of the second group are of the regular type

having an outer mandapa with a facade row of two pillars and two

pilasters and a rear shrine-cell. The mandapa facade has on top a

fully formed kapota with kudus as in the Mamalla-style cave-

temples of the Pallavas. The pillars are square in section and of the

Chalukyan pattern as found in the cave-temple on the banks of

the Krishna. In some the pillars have lion caryatids on top and

are also lion-based, with capital components above.as in the

Mamalla-style cave-temples. The shrine-entrances are plain and

without any over-door. These mixed characters and other features,

as also the presence of relief sculptures of Brahma and Vishnu in

the mandapa, provision for a linga in the shrine, and the presence

of other sculptures like Chandesa and Ganesa, and the rock-cut

Nandi, would indicate their non-Pallava origin and their date as

being the middle of the eighth century.

CHAPTER V

ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE

THE MONOLITHIC VIMANAS — RATHAS

THE MONOLITHIC vimana shrines cut out entirely from live rock are

the most outstanding contributioh to rock architecture by Pallava

Narasimhavarman Mamalla (630-668). These are in fact large

sculptures of architectural models carved out of sectioped masses

of standing rocks, or out of entire” boulders of the intractable

granite gneiss rocks of Mahabalipuram. The germ of the idea of

cutting out an entire temple form lies in tbe carved out stupas in-

side the rock-cut chaitva halls of western India. The idea was

further elaborated by the Buddhists in the large hypaethral stupa

forms at Sankaram (Visakhapatnam district, Andhra Pradesh). An

early, if imperfect, monolithic shrine form is found in the Tawa

cave at Udaigiri (Vidisha district, Madhya Pradesh). It is more

or less a circular monolithic temple cut out of an isolated mass of

sandstone tock and carved into a hemisphere mounted on a base

and capped by a flat stone in the form of a tawa (griddle) which,

according to the inscription on it, was fashioned by a minister- of

Chandragupta.

What is more interesting is the fact that the Pallavas translated

into the hard imperishable stone monoliths the various forms of

structural vimana temples of brick-and-timber that were prevalent i

at the commencement of the seventh century. These stone copies

have survived these thirteen centuries, while their brick-and-timber

originals, and their contemporary and later counterparts of the

samefabric have totally perished. Thus they stand out as the

earliest examples. of the beginnings of vimana architecture in the

south, and exhibit the varieties of vimanas that existed, or were

ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE 83

evolved at that time. The variety in form, namely, plan and rise,

exemplified by these monoliths, locally called the rathas, would

also indicate the existence of well-defined codes and manuals on

rituals, art and architecture—the Agama, Silpa and Vastu Sastras. ~

They thus form the” most important landmarks in the study of

Indian temple architecture, especially of the south.

As entirely gut-out models, these monoliths show not only the

entire external aspect-of a vimana from the base to the apex, with

the front ardha-mandapa constituting a unitary type of the temple

form, but also, to a large extent, as in the cave-temples, the interior

aspects. They were all carved down from the apex to the base 'as

opposed to structural constructions that are built up from the base,

or foundation, to the apex. As, however, according to the tradi-

tional ritual the installation of the stupi, or finial, should coincide

with the consecration of the temple, after ceremonial installation

of the archa murti, or image of worship in the sanctum, the pra-

tishtha and kumbhabhishekam rituals, the stupi was not cut out

initially and the work on these monoliths started from the member

next below, viz. the sikhara, and a separately carved sfupi was

inserted into position later on. As an alternative, sufficient rock

material was left uncarved initially at the top, to be finished into

the stupi at the end of the work.

The carving of these monolithic vimanas, all confined to Maha-

balipuram, seems to have continued for at least two generations

after Mamalla, that is, till about A.D. 700 when, perhaps, sculptures

in bas-relief of the principal deities were carved in the sanctuaries

of two of these vimanas—the Draupadi Ratha and the top storey

of the Dharmaraja Ratha. The earlier practice was to have painted

stucco forms of the principal deity inside the sanctum.

THE VIMANA TEMPLE

Since the vimana form is the most characteristic and distinctive

feature of the southern temple as opposed to the characteristic

| Prasada temple of north and central India, it would be useful in

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this context to define it briefly and understand its general features,

as also the variations of its form, plan ard rise. ‘Such a general

understanding of the fundamentals of the southern vimana temple

would be necessary, for it may not be practicable to describe in

detail the temples that follow in the-seguel, except highlighting

their most outstanding features.

The term vimana, according to all the early and most of the later

Silpa and Agama works, as also many contemporary inscriptions,

would denote the entire edifice from the upana or lowermost

moulding of the-adhishthana, or pedestal, to the stupi, or the top-

most finial. It is not the superstructure over the sanctum alone, as

is often assumed by many writers and in a few late texts. It has

often а small vestibule in front called the ardha-mandapa or anta-

rala, standing on the same basement, or adhishthana. The earliest

examples of the southern temple were of the unitary type consist-

- ing of the vimana, siagle or multi-storeyed, with its ardha-mandapa

surrounded by the enclosure wall, the prakara. The early southern

texts also deal mainly with vimana which, though attaining con-

siderable stature in elevation, was in actual lay-out remarkably

rudimentary and compact in character. Subsequently, a stage came

when a simple maha-mandapa was added in front of the ardha-

mandapa. and was well integrated with the main. parts, the whole

often surrounded by an enclosure wall, the prakara. The entrance,

another characteristic storeyed.structure of the south, was called

the dvarasobha, mahadvara, or gopura, according to its stature and

magnitude. Often the additional mandapa was an unattached auxi-

liary structure standing separately in the fore-court inside the pra-

kara. The stature of the main vimana, with its adjunctthe ardha- or

mukha-mandapas, was increased by the addition of a platform, the

upa-pitha, below the adhishthana. 'Yhe upa-pitha is, however, descri-

'bed in the texts as an optional member. We have to understand

that the functional importance of the shrine was directly, propor-

tional to its spatial extent. The gods and goddesses other than the

principal form enshrined in the main sanctum had to. be accom-

modated largely in two dimensional niches, or devakoshthas, on the

ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE 85

vimana and ardha- and maha-mandapa walls, and the falas or

storeys of the superstructure. The rest of the figure sculpture was

accommodated even on the pillars of the mandapa. With the,

increasing importance and elaboration of rituals and multiplication

of festivals, additions, both axial and peripheral, were made to

this nuclear structure. These took the form of auxiliary mandapas

on the axial line and subsidiary shrines or vímanas, mandapas

(halls), and malikas or cloisters, surrounding the central unit. The

whole was enclosed by one or more prakaras, with one or more

gopura entrances, resulting in the familiar temple complex of south

India. These additions were sometimes coeval with the main unit.

In cases, like the Brihadisvara at Thanjavur, the entire temple

complex was planned and designed at the same time and executed

almost simultaneously. More often, however, it is the result of

gradual additions duringivarious periods, thus successively enlarging

the original lay-out and resulting in such larger temple complexes,

ortemple cities, as those at Chidambaram,. Tiruvannamalai,

Madurai and Srirangam.

The temple cities, so called, such as Srirangam, which is the

largest of the lot, accommodate the residential houses of people

connected with the temple inside of the outer circuits. In Srirangam,

for example, where the primary temple nucleus of Ranganatha

(Vishnu-recumbent) is surrounded by seven concentric prakaras or

enclosure walls, the inner four walls invest the various subsidiary

shrines and festival mandapas while the outer three walls have

residential houses and mansions ranged along their inside faces,

which are also called maikai (malika). These along with other

houses and streets outside the outermost seventh prakara,

constitute a modern municipal town.

As in all three-dimensional constructions where the plan and

elevation aspects count, it is the diverse nature of the plan, and the

degree of rise, involving the elaboration of the number of talas or

storeys—the talachchhanda, as it is called—that result in the great

variety of southern vimanas leading to their differentiation: and

classification into categories. The f our-sided square or oblong plans,

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and the curvilinear—circular, elliptical and aspidal plans—became

familiar even in the earlier Buddhist and non-Buddhist temples.

But the bexagonal or octagonal plan that is found introduced in

the make-up of the southern vimana would be rather uncommon.

In the matter of rise the simple or ekatala vimana consists es-

sentially of six vertical components, which, from base to apex,

would be (1) the adhishthana, or basement, (2) the pada, or pillar,

or the bhitti, or wall, according as the structure stands on either

or both of these supports enclosing the sanctum, (3) the prastara

or architrave, with the prominent cornice, ог kapota, (4) the griva

or clerestory over. sanctum terrace and entablature, (5) the sikhara

or ultimate roof covering the top of the clerestory or griva and (6)

the sfupi or fmial crowning the top of the sikhara. Such a simple

structure, or alpa vimana, is said to be ekatala, or single-storeyed,

and is shadanga or shadvarga, ie. insix parts. The addition of

another tala to its body part, or harmya, and architrave or prastara

of smaller dimensions than the ground floor as in interpolation

between the prastara ofthe ground floor and the griva-sikhara-

stupi components above, would make the vimana a dvitala one, or

two-storeyed, with eight angas, the additions being the harmya and

prastara of the second tala. Such ashtanga vimanas were more

common in fhe earlier stages. The number of storeys could be in-

creased to three or four (tritala, chatushtala), etc. jn which case

they were called jati vimanas. The larger vimanas with panchatala

and more storeys reaching up to sixteen, are mentioned in the Silpa

texts as mukhya vimanas. A case in point is the great Brihadisvara — .

Vimana of Thanjavur, which rises to a height of over 60 metres.

The most characteristic .and general feature of the southern

vimana is the presence of a string of miniature vimana-like shrines

on top of each storey, above the prastara set on its periphery, and -

surrounding the body, or harmya, of the next fala. Such a string

is called the hara. While a Agra is not prescribed for the ekatala .

alpa vimanas of the [simple type, ‘the jati and mukhya vimanas are

provided with such haras. In the earlier examples dating up to

about A.D. 700, the hara is found on top of all the talas of the'

1. Belur—Chennakesava Temple (See page 157)

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2. Vidyashankar Temple—Sringeri (See page 172)

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3. Ramaswanu Temple —Rameshwaram (See page 184)

4. Jalakanthesvara Templc— vc

‘ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE 87

multi-storeyed vimana, including the topmost fala where it sur-

rounds the griva. In later cases the hara on the topmost tala is

absent. Its place is taken by the vahanas, or vehicles, or lanchanas,

that is, cognizant symbols appropriate to the principal deity

enshrined in the sanctum of the aditala. They are Nandis or

bhutas in Siva temples, lions in Devi, Vishnu or Jain temples,

Garuda in Vishnu temples, and so on. This became an invariable

feature of the southern temples from this period onwards. Thus

the credal or denominational character and the type of the con-

secration of a temple can be recognised even from a distance from

the nature of the vahanas, or lanchanas placed on the topmost tala.

According to the plan—four-sided, polygonal or curvilinear—

the southern vimanas are classified in the southern Silpa and

Agama texts as Nagara, Dravida and Vesara. That which is four-

sided, square or oblong, from the base to the finial, or has a four-

sided griva and sikhara, is classified as Nagara. That which is

hexagonal or octagonal from the base to the finial; or has a hexa-

gonal or octagonal griva or sikhara, is termed Dravida. The one

which is circular, ellipsoidal or apsidal from base to top, or has

such a plan in its griva and sikhara, is Vesara. While generally the

uniform square or oblong plan is met with making up a pure

form of Nagara, in many cases the griva and sikhara may assume

the octagonal, or circular, or apsidal plan over a square body

constituted by the tadifala, or the series of talas in simple or multi-

storeyed examples. This would make such vimanas Dravida or

Vesara of the mixed variety. Likewise, the oblong body may carry

an elliptical griva and sikhara, which would make the vimana

Vesara again. Thus, more than the shape of the basal parts or

body, it is the plan of the griva sikhara components that really

matters in this type of classification.

The square, circular, hexagonal or octagonal structure which

has а sikhara that is domical and ends up in a single’ finial, ог

stupi, is called kuta vimdna with kuta sikhara. The oblong and

ellipsoidal body structures with a wagon-top, vault-like or inverted

iboarlike roof, or sikhara with a row of stupis on top along the

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ridge, are known as sala vimanas, or koshtha, or sabha forms. The

chapa, ог apsidal structure which has an apsidal roof and a series

of finials along the horizontal part is generally called the hasti-

prishtha, or gaja-prishtha, since it resembles the hind view of a

standing elephant. It comes in the category of panjaras or nidas.

The Zara, or string of diminutive shrines on top of the alas of

multi-storeyed vimanas, is composed of these three classes of ,`

shrine forms—the miniature kuta, sala (or koshtha), and panjara

(or nida). These are placed at the corners and along the sidês on

the top edges of the tala, and are interconnected by lengths of

cloister-like or parapet-like parts of lesser height than the kuta,

kostha and panjara elements, called the karantara. These harantara

cloister lengths have lateral bay-window-like projections with a

lower rectangular component Or window proper, projected from

the wall of the cloister, and an arched dormer, the upper com-

ponent, projected from the coping roof of the harantara cloister.

These are called kshudra nasikas, since they 'are smaller than

similar projections from the sides of the main griva sikhara part

of the vimana which are the maha nasikas and originally function-

ed as ventilators. It will be seen that the hara in most of the

Mamalla-style cave-temples is a string of oblong salas alone, and

the kutas at the extremes of each side, coinciding with the corners

and hence called karnakutas, areto be found for the first time in

the Pancha-Pandava cave-temple. While the salas along the lengths

of each side and the karnakutas at the corners are found in most

of the monolithic vimanas, the nida or panjara as the third element

of the hara makes its appearance only in two cases, namely, Over

the first tala of the Dharmaraja Ratha and the second fala of the

Nakula-Sahadeva Ratha completed towards the close of the

seventh century. Though this is not repeated in the alpa vimanas

with one, two or three talas of the structural phase, both of the

Chalukyas and the Pallavas, the mida appears as an invariable

constituent of the larger jali and mukhya vimanas from the eighth

century onwards. P

The hara may stand apart from the central harmya of the tala

ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE $9

that it surrounds, leaving a narrow circumambulatory passage in

between as in the Dharmaraja Ratha where all the talasare intend-

ed to be functional, each with a cella. Such a hara is said to be

anarpita. This scheme of a ring of miniature shrine motifs round

the central body of each storey would be after a similar lay-out

plan at ground level, of a central shrine surrounded by subsidiary

or purivara shrines and would denote that it is schematically

carried up at every storey level. This scheme of anarpita hara was

possible in the case of vimanas where the cella was sandhara, or

enclosed by a double wall, with circumambulatory interspace

between the two walls and with the inner wall rising to a greater

height to form the second tala harmya, While the outer wall rose to

the height of tbe aditala alone carrying over its prastara and hara. \_

By further extension of this principle, the number of concentric

walls round the aditala sanctum could be three, resulting in 2

three-storeyed vimana, the outermost wall rising to the height of

the aditala, the middle one to the height of the second tala, and

the innermost one to the height of the third tala, with horizontal

separations at each tala height forming a system of three super-

posed garbha-grihas arranged one over the other, with deities

inside them.

Though a few such vimanas are to be found built from the

Pallava times onwards, a universal extension ofthe scheme in all

cases of vimanas of the mukhya class would have resulted in

ponderous, squat edifices of uncouth proportion of base and height;

the former much larger in area as compared to the height. The

solution was to design massive walls round the aditala sanctum

which could rise to heights and bear the load and make the upper

tales schematic or non-functional storeys with the haras coalescing

with the tala harmya wall, thus eliminating the inte: ning circum-

ambulatory space. Such а hara was called arpita, and the vimana

with such a single wall round the cella in its aditala was known as

nirandhara. All this was actuated by the desire to construct vima-

nas of impressive loftiness on comparatively smaller base areas.

The quadrature or the sides of the aditala in the case of

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four-sided, polygonal, circular or apsidal structures, could be

broken by offset projections or bays at intervals, starting from the

lowermost part of the adhishthana. This scheme could be carried up

to the talas above also, resulting in a scheme of bays at the corners

and along the sides, with intervening recesses. The projected bays

are denoted. as the ratha projections in the northern-style temples

and are described as tri ratha, pancha ratha, sapta ratha, etc.

according as the offset bays on each side of the square are three,

five or seven. The nomenclature is not applied to these parts in the

southern vimanas. The bays here are called bhadras. They are can-

toned by pilasters at their outer corners. On their inner angles with

the.adjacent walls, and over the prastara region, likewise offset,

they carry the members of the, hara—kuta, sala or panjara, as the

case may be. The corner ones, equal-sided and square carry the

kutas of the lara which invariably occupy the corners and are aptly

called karnakutas. The bays on each face of the vimana coming

between the corner ones are wider when they carry the salas of the

hara over their prastara. In between these two the third type of

projections would be the narrowest since they carry the panjara or

nida element of the hara over their prastara. These occur only in

the larger jati and mukhya vimanas. These bays, particularly the

wider ones with the sala on top, have niches sunk into them

between the cantoning pilasters over the level of the adhishthana

and below the kapota of the prastara. These are occupied by figure

sculptures and are called devakoshthas. The intervening recesses

between the bays. represent the wall proper of the tala and are

generally without sculpture in the earlier examples. They have only

the pilasters, but some later Ones have sculpture panels too, even

- shallow niches, or decorative type of pilaster motifs.

The. pillars and pilasters conform more or less to their wooden

originals with moulded ‘capitals’, or tops, which comprise the

“order as.it is termed in architectural parlance. The shaft has a

base or pedestal, the oma, and has on its top a band of lotus petals

with & scheme of loops of garlands hanging down. This part called

malasthana and padma bandha marks the top end of the shaft and

ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE ` 9i

the beginning of the capital which consists of moulded parts, a

pitcher, lasuna or kalasa, placed over the padma bandha, a saucer-

shaped part called tadi, a flattened. bulbous or cushion-shaped

member over if called the kumbha carrying an inverted platter-

Shaped part, and a doucine moulding, called the pali (or padma

when itis shaped to simulate an inverted lotus blossom with:

petals) which really forms the underside of a plank-like abacus—

the phalaka. The phalaka, large, thick and square'in earlier forms,

became polygonal or circular and thinner and smaller in:later

temples. It supports the corbel-bracket or block, potika, which

carries the beam, or uttira. The oma, or pillar base, is often shaped

or transformed into a figure sculpture of an animal, real or my-

thical, or of a celestial being. Thus there are the squatting or

rearing vyalas (mythicallion-like forms with transformed faces),

elephants, magas, naga-deyas, bhutas, etc. The pillar shaft, as also

the capital components, except the phalaka (which remains always

square in earlier forms), may, instead. of being four-sided or square,

have six, eight, sixteen or more sides, or be circular in section. The:

potikas assume various. shapes, like the taranga potikas of the:

Pallava cave-temples or the simple bevelled ones in others. They

later develop a central projecting tenon, or ‘double volute, or

assume the shape of a projecting curved arm terminated by a

pendentive lotus bud, the pushpa potikas of the temples of the:

fifteenth century and later. These shapes indicate regional develop-

ments and also chronological evolution.

Another important architectural feature is the torana which i is

essentially an arched festoon (occasionally straight as in the

foranas of Sanchi), mounted over two columns and marking а.

sacred or ceremonial entrance. Such free-standing forana entrances

or stambha toranas are stated to have preceded the gopura entrances

of ancient palaces. But while the entrance forana hàs been retained:

in the northern monuments, as at Sanchi and Bhubanesvar, it is.

the gopura entrance that has prevailed in the south and forms the

most characteristic and invariable part of the temple complex. The:

torana idea is, however, not lost; the motif is applied to тапу:

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niches and entrances on.the-body of the vimana or the gopura and

are known as bhitti toranas: Their supporting columns are of the;

same type as the pillars or pilasters with the capital components..

From the mouths of opposed makaras perched on top-of the:

phalaka or abacus are sprung the arched festoons of flowers and

foliage, or friezes of animals, ganas and other forms. Such toranas

are accordingly called patra toranas, chitra toranas, vidyadhara ,

toranas, etc. These are found to frame the entrances of some cave-:

temples, the fronts of the niches, or devakoshthas, on the walls of |

the vimana, and the fronts of the nasikas of various orders and

sizes—the maha nasika, the sukanasika, the kshudra nasika, and

the alpa nasika. The gable-window-like arched kudu ornaments on

the kapota. of the prastara are fronted by toranas bereft of the

supporting columns. :

The adhishthana, or pedestal, is also variable. In its simplest and

most primary form it would consist of an offset bottom course, the

upana, a taller neck-like recessed vertical course, the kantha, and a

top projecting platform, the prati or pattika. Such a one is called a

mancha: A slight elaboration would be the insertion of a torus

moulding called the kumuda which is three-faceted (tripatta), or

rounded (vitta) and placed above the kantha and below the

pattika, having another plain moulding, less offset than the upana

but taller and coming over it, called the jaguti. A third variant

would be the one with the addition of a flexed kapota or cornice

below the pattika region. A jagati or kumuda may also be placed

over a series of lotus petals shown as spread over the upana. These

in earlier periods indicate regional forms and show elaboration in

later forms. ; z

Different combinations of adhishthana forms, the number of

talas in the talachchhanda. variations of the hara components

between the karnakutas, their alternate or opposite position in the

successive, talas, their number and other features gave rise to diffe-

rent types of vimanas às classified in detail in the Silpa and Agama

texts and as found among thousands of temples in the south.

While the unitary type of the southern temple in its simplest

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ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE 93

-form consisted merely of the vimana proper enclosing the garbha-

griha, with a porch-like antarala or ardha-mandapa, with the growth

of the Agama and rituals, elaboration set in. Mandapas, such as the

maha-mandapa, mukha-mandapa, agra-mandapa, etc. were added

axially, and soon peripherally also like the utsava snapana and . the.

sabha-mandapas. 'The mandapas of the southern temples are all flat-

roofed, however long or large they may be. Occasionally опе finds

them slopy-roofed if the local climatic conditions so demand as,

for instance, on the west coast and the extreme tip of the penin-

sula. This is in; sharp contrast to what obtains in the nothern

prasada temples whether of Gujarat, Orissa or central India.

There, one invariably finds pyramidally rising or tiered superstruc-

tures terminating in a finial over the roofs of the mandapa in the

axial or transverse line of the main prasada, the superstructures

being of the ghantasamavarana type, or its simplified pitha pida type.

Though this scheme gives a distinct sky-line of successively ascend-

ing finials from the top of the foremost or outermost mandapa to

that of the main sikhara of the prasada, it does make a rather

heavy cluster of towers and necessitates also the main sikhara,

superstructure over the prasada sanctum to be relatively much

higher than that of the mandapas. The flat roof of the mandapas,

which are mere adjuncts to the main vimana of the southern temple,

allows always the vimana which is the most important and domi-

-nating entity to stand clear against the sky-line.

The mandapas, very rarely astylar inside, are mostly supported

on pillars and are closed or open on the sides. When closed they

have. a series of pilasters against the inner faces of the walls. On

their outer faces the external scheme obtaining in the main vimana

is followed. The pillars are mostly of the simple type, with the top

and bottom sections square on plan and with the intervening sec-

tion octagonal or polygonal, as in the case of the southern rock-

cut cave-temples which, on that account, are popularly: called

mandapa-temples. The names Kotikal mandapam, Orukal manda-

pam, Idaichi mandapam, etc. indicate this. Additional square sec-

tions are also interposed in the middle region in the case of tall

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pillars. Such simple mandapa pillars do not have differentiated

capital mouldings, but bear the potika or corbel block directly over

the top square section. They may occasionally have the full

capitals of the-order or, as in the case of the cave-temples of the

Deccan, they may be of the kumbha-valli type or have the so-called

‘cushion capitals mentioned earlier. In later mandapas of the

' Chalukyan series, the pillars above their square base are rendered

into a series of curved and rounded shapes by being turned on a

lathe. In later mandapas of the Pallava-Pandya series, the pillars

have attached portrait statues, animal fipures or a number of

,columnettes called ani-yotti-k-kal.

Though the rudiments of the plan of the mandapa are to be seen

in ‘the rock-cut caves and їп the remains from Nagarjunakonda,

their patterns became móre distinct in the stone-and-brick temples

of the ‘seyenth century onwards. In the Chalukya-Rashtrakuta

Series in the Deccan and in those that took after them and succeed-

ed them, the mandapa is of two patterns. In the first case it is divid-

ed into a central nave with a raised roof over taller pillars, or with

clerestory, arid two lateral. aisles with lower roofs. In the second

pattern the mandapa is essentially square, being eleborated all round

concentrically by the addition of peripheral rings of the same short

squat pillars as the central ones. With four central pillars standing

on the corners of a central square and twelve peripheral pillars or

pilasters sét up at equal distances, in axial transverse and diagonal:

alignment with the central ones, a system of eight bays surround-

ing the central bay (making in all nine bays) would result in the

mandapa becoming a mavaranga. The addition of twenty more

‘pillars as a still outer ring in alignment with the inner onés and

at the corners would correspondingly increase the number of

bays to twenty-five and make the mandapa a larger square. The

Pallava-Pandya series of temples, and what followed them

in material, technique and tradition in the succeeding periods

in the farther south, elaborated the shape from the square to

the oblong by emphasizing linear rows of taller pillars with wider

spans. All this resulted in such multi-pillared mandapas as the

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bundred-or thousand-pillared halls. i 5

Till about thë commencement of the eleventh century, the

gopuras, or storeyed gateways, piercing the protective prakara, or

enclosure wall, çharacteristic of the southern temples, were built

comparatively smaller than the vimana. They are essentially oblong

on plan; transversely linear, with the entrance running tbrough at

the middle, and; with .a single simple or storeyed superstructure,

terminated by a sala sikhara with a row of stupis. The talachch-

handa, or system of.storeys, with hara components at each level, is

much akin to that of the oblong, or ayatasra vimana. In the earlier

series of temples mostly the alpa and jati vimanas prevailed. The:

larger temples, with jati vimanas included in their lay-out scheme

the gopuradvara, or main gateway entrance, which was of consi-

derably smaller proportions and height than the main vimana that

always dominated the entire composition. These small and middle

size gopuras were single- ог two- or :three-storeyed ‘called dyara-

sobha, dvarasala, dvaragopura, etc. From the close of the tenth

century onwards when larger vimanas came to be constructed, the

gateway came to assume correspondingly larger proportions, be-

coming many-storeyed and called maltadvara, or gopura, or raja-

gopura. The gateways also tended to increase in height and size,

ultimately to become the dominating structures of the temple com-

plex. This could be seen particularly in the case of those ancient

temples where the main vimana nucleus that was ancient was kept

intact and the prakara and gopura adjuncts came to be successively

added round it in later timesas in the Chidambaram, Tiruvanna-

. malai, Madurai and Srirangam temple complexes. There was thus a

shift in emphasis from the main vimana in the. gopura, with the

result that while in the earlier temple complexes, as in the Briba-

disvara temple at Thanjavur, the sky-line.descends from the stupi

of the main vimana to-tlíé-outer-of the two front gopuras built

almost in the:same period as the main vimana, it ascends from the

centre to the outermost gopura in the four temple complexes men-

tioned above. t

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THE MONOLITHIC VIMANA FORMS

While the Chalukyas of Badami started constructing structurat

temples of the very tractable sandstone closely following their

earlier excavated rock-cut cave-temples in the same type of rock,

the Pallavas were faced with a very hard and intractable material

—the granites and charnockites. Besides carving out a few vimana:

forms as miniature reliefs or full-scale facades, they also started

carving out three-dimensional monolithic vimanas of normal

stature, and of diverse kinds. This was a sequel to the experience

they gained in the cutting in of cave-temples in hard stone. Such

pioneering work of making cut-out vimana temples was inaugurated

by Mamalla (Narasimhavarman 1—630-668), and the monoliths

were taken to different degrees of finish. New ones were created ‘by

his successors, Mahendravarman 1I (668-672) and Paramesvara-

varman 1 (672-700), and also perhaps by Rajasimha (700-728) in

his early years before he started the vogue of constructing struc-

tural temples. There are nine such monolithic vimanas, popularly

called rathas, and named after the Pandava group as usual in folk

tradition, all confined to Mahabalipuram, in various stages of

completion and representing different forms. It will be useful to

consider along with these the eight miniature: bas-relief represent-

ations of vimanas found in the same place, as also the full-scale

.example of the Trimurti cave-temple facade, since they taken to-

gether would illustrate various forms of the southern vimana,

Incidentally they constitute the earliest representations copied in

stone from the contemporary and earlier brick-and-timber vimanas.

Thus these stone replicas would afford a good starting point for

the study of the south Indian temple architecture. More so because

these faithfully reproduce in stone not only the various forms in

general but also the individual parts, even to the minutest detail,

of timbering, fastening, metal work and decorative design appro-

priate to the various forms of the brick-and-timber originals.

The bas-relief miniature found in the famous Arjuna's Penance

scene in Mahabalipuram ‘is а typical replica of an ekatala

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alpa vimana with all the six angas or parts, viz. the adhishthana

(moulded base), pada, or bhitti (pillars or walls), prastara (entabla-

ture with kapota or cornice), griva (neck or clerestory), sikhara

(roof), and stubi (finial). Being four-sided and square from base to

finial,it belongs to the Nagara class and is dedicated to Vishnu,

who is shown in relief as standing inside the cella. The reproduc-

tion of the parts of the wooden original is quite obvious. The two

bas-relief replicas in miniature on either flank of the facade of the

Ramanuja mandapam cave-temple are likewise ekatala, Nagara

forms, but with their cella empty. Their adhishthana stands over a

larger moulded platform, which would form the upa-pitha, an

optional member, often introduced in the design to elevate the

height of a vimana.

A similar bas-relief miniature of an ekatala vimana of a hexago-

mal section from base to apex is depicted inside the front sikhara

arch (torana mukhapatti) of the apsidal Nakula-Sahadeva Ratha.

This with a uniform polygonal plan from base to apex would con-

form to the pure Dravida class of southern vimanas as described in

the texts. Two more identical relief miniatures inside the two

arched ends of the wagon-top sikhara of the Bhima Ratha repre-

sent ekatala vimanas, each with a square body (aditala) over a.

similar adhishthana carrying over the prastara a circular griva and

circular sikhara with stupi, illustrating the Vesara class ofthe

mixed variety since their griva and sikhara parts are circular,

though the aditaki components below are square in section. What

would appear io be tall and column-like dvitala, or two-storeyed

forms of the pure Vesara vimanas, circular in section from base to

apex, are represeated by the identical miniature reliefs found one

at either end of the wagon-top sikhara of the Ganesa Ratha.

The Trimurti cave-temple at Mahabalipuram differs from the -

other rock-cut muandapa-type cave-temples of the Mahendra or

Mamalla style, in that it represents only the vimana- or shrine-

fronts of three contiguous units in bold relief without the frontal

mandupa component. Each unit is complete with the adhishthana

having a flight of steps in front, the aditala with an excavated

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shrine-cellsand external pilasters, walls and niches, and the pras-

tara with a prominent kapota adorned by kudu arches and the

elements of the hara over it, at which stage the top'of the rock is

reached. Further continuation upwards of ‘these three apparently

dvitala vimana-fronts is barred by the limited height of the parent

. rock. The three west-fating shrine-cells contain on their rear walls

bas-reliefs of the principal deities. They are a standing Vishnu with

devotees in the southern cell, a standing Siva with devotees in the

middle ‘cell, and a standing Brahmanya or Brahmasasta, in place

of Brahma with devotees inside.the northern cell. This is a slight

variation from the presiding deities of the Mandagapattu cave-

temple, which was the first such Pallava temple to be excavated by

Mahendra I and which, according to his inscription, was dedicated

to the Trinity—Vishnu, Siva and Brahma. These icons of Man-

dagapattu. were perhaps painted on the walls of the three niche-

like shrines of the cave-temple. The entrances of the three vimana-

fronts are guarded by appropriate dvarapala figures carved inside

the niches. On the rock face to the southi of the group is carved a

relief ‘of Durga, standing on a severed buffalo-head, the head

of the Mahishasura demon. It is inside a niche placed over

the moulded adhishthana having a flight of'steps in front, as in

the adjoining Trimurti shrine. The niche entrance is framed

by two ‘pilasters carrying an elaborate forana, while over either

extreme corner of the adhishthana platform are cut taller

- pilasters, the whole scheme appearing to be a replica of the front

elevation of the Draupadi Ratha but without the hut-like roof:

carved on top.

` The five rathas at the southern end of Mahabalipuram comprise

a group by themselves. Of these the Draupadi, Arjuna, Bhima and

Dharmaraja Rathas standing in a line are cuit out of a Single whale-

‘back rock extending north-south and severed into three convenient

sections. The northernmost section of lesser height has been utili-

sedfor cutting out the shorter Draupadi Ratha and the Storeyed

Arjuna Ratba, with a common platform, or upa-pitha, for both

below their separate adhishthanas. The central longer segment with

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a fairly horizontal top ridge has been appropriately utilised for the

oblong Bhima Ratha, and the southern taller section, with a broa-

der base too, for the three-storeyed Dharmaraja Ratha—all facing

west. The fifth ratha—the Nakula-Sahadeva Ratha which is apsi-

dal or of gaja-prishtha (elephant back) form and the adjoining

sculpture of the elephant, both facing south, have been carved out

of another smaller rock that stood independently in front on the

west of the Draupadi and Arjuna Rathas. Another rock that stood

close behind on the east of the Draupadi, and Arjuna Rathas was

cut down to ground level in order to bring the rear aspects of

these two: rathas into full view. The central mass that intervened

between the two rathas was retained and cutout as a large sculp-

ture of a recumbent Nandi facing west. A small upright free-stand-

ing rock just in front of the Draupadi Ratha that would have

hidden its front view has been shaped into a large sculpture of a

standing lion facing north.

Of the other four rathas, the Ganesa Ratha has been cut out of

a boulder amidst the main hill in Mahabalipuram, and the two

Pidari Rathas (northern and southern, so called because they are

near the modern temple of the village goddess Pidari) and the

Valaiyankuttai Ratha (standing in front of the Valaiyankuttai

pond) are shaped out of free-standing boulders at. a distance on

the western side of the main hill.

The small Draupadi Ratha illustrates the type ofa very simple

hut-like vimana, square on plan, with only four of the usual six

angas of the vimana, namely, adhishthana, pada and bhitti, sikhara,

and stupi, the angas that are lacking being the prastara and griya.

"This chaturyarga rutha represents the kuta-type with a four-sided

domical roof, or sikhara, crowned by a single stupi or finial. In

having a square plan from base to apex, it exemplifies the pure

Nagara „order. It is dedicated to Durga whose standing sculpture

in relief, with attendants, is carved omthe rear wall of the sanc-

tum. The main doorway is framed by. a fine torana as also the

three devakoshthas which also enshrine standing relief sculptures

of Durga on the three side walls. On either side of the doorway

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are flanking dvarapalikas, one on either side in the niche between

the corner pilaster and the torana pilaster framing the entrance.

This ratha lacks a mukha- or ardha-mandapa, unlike the other

rathas, as also the nasikas projected from the sikhara. ў

А dvitala and hence ashtanga, ог ashtavarga vimana of the same

Nagara order, square from base to apex is illustrated in the incom-

plete Valaiyankuttai Ratha facing east. Jt'has a small ardha-

mandapa and the aditala has a single wall, hence it is nirandhara.

The prastaras of both the talas carry arpita haras, appligue on the

harmya of the second tala and on the griya above, and made up of

four karnakutas at the corners and four salas in between them on

each side over each face. There are nasikas on the four sides of the

griva sikhara region. The hara at the aditala level is extended also

over the top of the ardha-mandapa, a feature of all early vimanas.

The kutas and salas over the mandapa are of-a smaller size than

those over the aditala as usual. This is an example of the elabora-

tion of the talachchhanda by the addition of one storey over the

ekatala form of six angas illustrated by the bas-relief vimanas

which are depicted in Arjuna's Penance sculpture and again at

either end of the facade of the Ramanuja mandapam cave-temple.

The northern ratha of the twin Pidari Rathas, facing north with

its ardha-mandapa, is of the pure Nagara order, with only this

difference that there is no hara over the second tala—an advanced

feature—making it out as the last of the series in Mahabalipuram

and anticipating in this respect the later vimanas of the eighth

century. The griya sikhara faces are provided with projected

nasikas. Both the rathas lack sculptures on their aditala walls and

are incomplete.

The incomplete southern Pidari Ratha facing east and the more

complete Arjuna Ratha are likewise double-storeyed, square in

section in both the alas and carrying applique haras of four karna-

kutas and four salas at both levels. The griva and sikhara are,

however, octagonal in section, making them both-ashtanga, niran-

dhara vimanas of the Dravida order of the.composite variety, There

are four nasikas projected from the four cardinal “sides "of the

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griya sikhara, The ardha-mandapa in both the vimanas carries haras

\_of kutas and salas of а smaller size than those over the aditala.

There are no sculptures on the walls of the northern Pidari Ratha,

while in the Arjuna Ratha the faces of the aditala from adhish-

thana to prastara are offset thrice, at the.two corners and in the

middle, and the reliefs contain plain niches carrying fine figure

sculpture. The second tala too has sculpture on its walls inside the

córner pilasters of each face that are exposed to view on either

side of the central sala of the hara in front. The two pillars and

two pilasters of the mandapa facade are vyala-based. As in all the

above cases, the hara is extended over the mandapa.

The Dharmaraja Ratha is three-storeyed, square in its talas and

: octagonal in the griva sikhara region; but all the three storeys are

intended to be functional. Thus the vimana is designed to have

three superposed garbha-grihas, as against the . non-functional but

„symbolic upper falas in the other rathas and most of the later

structural examples. This is achieved by a cellular mode of con-

struction with three concentric walled squares of increasing height

rising one inside the other to the successive heights of the respec-

tive falas, thus leaving interspaces in between. The outermost wall

rising to the height of the aditala prastara is, however, present in

:sections only round the four corners, the intervening open sides

'having each a facade of two pillars and two pilasters, all vyala-

based. The haras over the prastara of the three talas are thus

detached from the fala Walls, and hence anarpita. The small

mukha-mandapa on the west in front of the aditala carries a hara

which in its composition includes for the first timé the apsidal nida

or panjara. along with the kutas and salas. The octagonal griva

sikhara region has four projected nasikas on the four cardinal

sides. While the lower talas remain unfinished but for their ex-

terior, the topmost fala has a sanctum excavated into it that

enshrines a Somaskanda form of Siva, with Vishnu and Brahma

in attendance carved on its rear wall. In addition to dyarapalas on

either side of the entrance, this tala, like the two lower tala walls,

contains in its niches fine sculptures of various gods illustrating

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varied features of early Pallava iconography. This was perhaps

commenced by Mamalla, as indicated by the label inscribed on the

eastern side of the second tala, and was brought to its present

stage of completion with the consecration of the top tala by

Paramesvaravarman, as the labels on the top tala would denote.

In the Dharmaraja Ratha what apparently looks like the outer

wall of the aditala cantoning the corners leaving open pillared

entrances on the four cardinals, in between, is really the wall of

an outer, narrow peripheral mandapa investing the aditalo or

ground floor shrine. The pattern is really one where the wall of

the aditala garbha-griha or cella rises up as the outer wall of the

second’ tala sanctum which is rendered sandhara With an inner

wall, in addition, that rises up higher as the wall of the third tala

of lesser linear dimensions than the ones below. Thus the Dharma-

raja Ratha is only pseudo-sandhara on its ground floor or aditala.

The Bhima and Ganesa Rathas illustrate the oblong or ayatasra

vimanas of the koshtha- or sala-type, with wagon-top roofs (sala.

sikharas) carrying a row of stupis, or finials over the ridge as

opposed to the kuta or convergent type of sikhara with a single

finial in the others. The incomplete Bhima Ratha appears to be

pseudo-sandhara, like the Dharmaraja Ratha, in that its oblong

aditala is surrounded by a narrow mandapa with walls round the

corners and intervening open facades of two pillars and two

pilasters on the long and short sides, the pillars and pilasters being

vyala-based. The mandapa carries above its prastara a hara of

kutas at the four corners and sala in between, over the sides. The

oblong sanctum facing west was perhaps intended for a reclining

form of Vishnu with his head to the south and legs to the north.

The oblong griya, which rises as an upper continuation of the

garbha-griha walls, is rather tall. On each of the two long sides

of the griva sikhara are five well projected nasikas in three sizes,

the central one being the largest, the extreme ones middling, and

the intermediate one being the smallest. The three larger ones

represent full masikas with the prastara element in their com-

position. The two smallest ones lack the prastara part. The

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harantara parts between the kutas and salas of the hara circuit

have still smaller nasikas than are usual in all the other rathas.

Thus this ratha alone would illustrate the various forms of nasikas

as described in the texts. The two-storeyed Ganesa Ratha is

nirandhara, single-walled, and with a narrow mukha-mandapa in

front and of the same length as the aditala. The mandapa is walled ©

on its shorter sides and round the front corners leaving an open

facade in front, with vyala-based pillars and pilasters. The hara

over both the talas as also that over the mandapa contains the

kutas and salas alone There are three projected nasikas on the

two longer sides of the griva sikhara region, of which the central

one is larger with the prastara element in its make-up and the two

lateral ones smaller without that element. The stupis are integral

and cut out at the completion of the vimana from the mass left

over the ridge unlike in the other ,rathas where they are separate

insertions. The crest of the two end-arches of the sikhara carry, in

addition, a trisula finial each, which is the head of a three-horned

sula deya represented-by the face only. Similar sula deya finials, like

the sfupis. were inserted іп the case of the Bhima Ratha. Except

the dvarapalas there ате no other sculptures in this ratha. In the

facade of this ratha, besides the two vyala-based pillars, the

pilasters of the facade are different, in that another type of

mythical animal, a vyala-like form with beaked face, is introduced

in the pilaster base. The ratha according to its inscription was

originally dedicated to Siva; the Ganesa idol, now found planted

in the cella, is an introduction of very recerit times.

The dvitala-and wholly apsidal and nirandhara Nakula-Sahadeva

Ratha well illustrates the dyayasra (two-sided with apse end) or

chapa (bow-curve) form also called gaja- or hasti-prishtha, in that

it resembles the rear of a standing elephant, a large sculpture of

which is carved by the: side as if to emphasise the resemblance.

The chapa form of the Nakula-Sahadeva Ratha: derives its archi-

tectural nomenclature chapa from the fact that the shape of the

vimana on plan resembles the “U'-shaped curve ofa fully drawn

bow or chapa. Because of its elliptical shape, though truncated at

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the front end, this is'also classified as of the Vesara order. It has

a small open mukha-mandapa in front, of almost the same width

as the aditala. The two front pillars are vyala-based and the two

rear pilasters are clephant-based. The prastara over the aditala has

а hara with two karnakutas at the two front corners, while over

the sides and round the rear apse. there is a row of salas. The

hara ori the mandapa too has only kutas and salas. The hara of

the setond tala, however, shows two nidas or panjaras (which are

ekatala miniatures.of the main vimana) between the two karnakutas

on the front face, while the rest of the hara on the sides and round

the curve is made up of salas. The innovation, namely, the addi-

tion of the third element, the panjara or nida, in the composition

of the hara seems to.have been made for the first time here, as

over the mukha-mandapa of the Dharmaraja Ratha, the stage of

completion of which should have been at about the same time as

this apsidal ratha. This ratha has no sculpture either inside the

sanctum, or on the-walls of the talas between the pilasters.

The Pallava vogue of creating cut-out monolithic temple forms

was soon caught up, as it were, not only by the neighbours of the

Pallavas in south India, but also by others much beyond, and

quite a few monolithic temples of the southern and northern types

were created ín various parts of India, from the Tirunelveli district

at the far southern tip of the peninsula to the Kangra district in

the foot-hills of the Himalayas in the horth; from Bihar in the

east to Mandsaur in the west -and Gwalior in central India—all

within the two succeeding centuries.” :

1Beyond the confines of the peninsula, the spread of this modeof carving down

monolithig temples, though of the northern rekha-pranada type, is indicated in

the west by the example of the Vaishnavite temple complex with seyen pari-

vara shrines, entrenched iri the laterite hills of Dhamnar (Mandsaur district)

of the eighth-ninth centuries. Inthe north there is the complex with parivara

shrines of monolithic temples at Masrur (Kangra district) cut out of the over- .

ground sandstone rock" and.attributable to the ninth century. In centrá

India there is the Chaturbhujaji temple with prasada and mukha-mandapa on

the sandstone Gwalior hill assignable to the Pratiharas of the ninth century,

and also the incomplete monolithic temple of the tenth century carved out of

a granite boulder near the summit.of a rocky island in the Ganga at Colgong

(Bhagalpur district) on the east. It has a sala sikhara with 7 d gri

with architectural wali-reliefs in the fashion of Orissan Через? ны Биа.

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Following this pioneering work of the Pallavas, a few attempts

at the cutting-out of monolithic vimana forms in the sanie or

succeeding centuries “are noticeable in the Eastern Chalukyan

Tegion north -of the Pallava territory of Tondaimandalam. At

Undavalli, immediately to the west of. the well-known four-storey-

-ed cave-temple, the Anantasayanagudi, a projecting section of the

rock is cut into a-temple form with vimana and front mandapas,

the latter fully cut-out and the former presented externally in front

‘elevation. The tiered superstructure rises on the main hill face

‘over the top line of the front mandapas. Internally, the work

presents thefull aspect of an excavated. cave-temple with front

halls and a.shrine-cell behind. The mandapa facade has two pillars

and two pilasters, all of thé plain type. There is a well-defined

kapota on its architrave decorated by kudu arches. The lateral wall

of the mukha-mandapa inside has devakoshthas, now empty. Similar

| niches surmounted by foranas are to be found on the rear wall of

' the ardha-mandapa on either side of the shrine-entrance. Thé

shrine-cell is empty. In the adjoining rock faces bas-relief vimana

miniatures are cut, six in number, of varying sizes and much

resembling the model bas-reliefs seen in Arjuna's Penance com-

position and on either side of the Ramanuja mandapam at Maha-

balipuram. They are replicas of ekatala Nagara vimanas, square

in section from base to apex.

The much damaged remains of a monolithic vimana are to be

found in Vijayawada, in front of the upper cave-temple of the,

Akkanna-Madanna group. In the precincts of the apsidal brick

temple of Kapotesvara at Chejerla: (Guntur district). are to be

found a number of” miniature shrine models, monolithic in

character, evidently of a votive nature. These would also recall

similar models found in the temple precincts at Satyavolu, Maha-

nandi and Alampur in the adjoining Kurnool district. One of the

Chejerla models is interesting, in that it shows.a completely free-

standing pair of pillars for the shrine-front. — .

While the contemporary Western Chalukyas of Badami, who

were forging ahead with their structural stone temples, did not

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take.up the carved-out monolithic mode of the Pallavas, the

Rashtrakutas, who soon replaced the Chalukyas in their own

territory, took it up. with zest and, among others, created at Ellora

the greatest and largest monolithic version. of a southern temple

complex that is familiarly known as the Kailasa.

This creation of Rashtrakuta Krishna I. (756-775) is .rather

unique. By trenching vertically down into the sloping hill on all

sides of a chosen area at right angles up to the base of the rock,

an oblong central mass (about 60m х З0т) was isolated and in

front of it, beyond the wider front trench, a further trench isolated

а narrower transversely oblong mass stretching across like a wall.

The larger oblong mass, longer from front to rear than from

Side to side, afforded the material for carving out the complex of

the main vimana and its axial mandapas, as also.two tall and stout .

free-standing monolithic'pillars on either side in front surrounded

by an open courtyard formed by trenches on all the sides. The

fore-court on the front, measuring 90m х 60m, was:cut wider than

on the sides .and 'it is on the two sides of this that the two mono-

lithic free-standing pillars are found carved. The much narrower,

transversely oblong mass in front afforded the material for the

carving out of а front gopura entrance, with the two wings of

prakara walls on either side. The gopura is double-storeyed with a

sala sikhara on top and a passage cut through its lower part to

provide agcess to the fore-court in front and the circumambulatory

„Passage round the base of the main vimana complex. The upper

storey is connected with the floor of the Nandi-mandapa. This is

likewise conceived as a two-storeyed structure with the lower

storey solid and non-functional and serving only as a raised

platform, despite the external markings of all the architectural

features ef an aditala, and the upper functional, containing Nandi

inside. The main part of the temple beyond consists essentially of

a yimana containing the sanctum with an antarala, or ardha-

mandapa, and a clpsed maha-manadapa axially in front. The whole:

axial series is raised over a highly ornate plinth with its tep plat-

form supported, as it were, over a frieze of boldly carved fronts.

ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE 107

of elephants, lions and'a number of mythological animals. The

maha-mandapa is cantoned at its two rear corners by dvitala

vimanas of the kuta-type, and has three projected porcli-openings

on the middle of its south, west and north sides, which are super-

posed by larger and more raised salas to simulate gopuraii-like

entrances. The top of the mandapa is morc or less flat with 2 large

multi-petalled lotus surrounding the base of the finial cut over its

centre. Behind the maha-mandapa and the antarala stands the

principal vimana, its moulded square adhishthana of lesser sides

than those of the platform below, occupying the centre df the

upa-pitha, while five detached sub-shrines are cut at intervals over

the edge of the platform. The three lesser vimanas on the three

cardinal sides of the upa-pitha are dvitala sala yimanas, while the

two at the rear corners are tritala kuta vimanas. These five to-

gether with the two dummy dvitala kuta vimanas embracing the

hind corners of the maha-mandapa, and the Nandi shrine in front,

would complete the full complement of the ashta parivara or

shrines of the eight subsidiary deities round the principal vimana,

a concept already evolved in the structural temples of the far

south. The principal vimana is four-storeyed (chatushtala). The

lowermost tala of the superstructure over the aditala with sanctum

is projected in front over the antarala to form a gable-like projec-

tion called sukanasika, a characteristic of the southern temples of .

the Chalukyan series as well as of all their northern prasada

temples. Though the talas are square, the griva and sikkara are

octagonal, making the vimana conform to the Dravida class of the

mixed type. The stupi, now missing, was not part of the monolith.

On the four corners of the topmost fala, which is devoid of a

hara, are placed four bulls, the cognizant Janchanas. The structure

is replete with sculpture of varied iconography. Behind this on the

hill are the remains of an unfinished sala-type edifice, піоло-

lithic likewise and akin to the Bhima and Ganesa Rathas of the

Pallavas.

The monolithic Nandi-mandapa in front of Cave 15 at Ellora

with an inscription of Rashtrakuta Dantidurga is perhaps, a

108 TEMPLES OF SOUTH INDIA

slightly earlier carved-out monolith in this region.

The smaller and müch later Jain monolithic version of the

Kailasa Vimana, also of the Rashtrakuta period at Ellora, is popu-

larly called the Chota Kailasa. There is another chaumukh standing

in the fore-court of Cave 33. It isa tritala vimana with square

talas and with the aditala having projected, porch-like entrances on

the four cardinal sides. The stela is placed at the centre of the

-sanctum floor and is visible through the doors from all four sides.

"The top of the porch projections carry panjara-like nasika fronts

instead of the usual salas of the hara. There are the usual karna-

kutas at the corners. The second tala.has four cardinally projected

nasikas and no karnakutas. The top tala has no hara, but has four

lions; the cognizant Janchanas at the cofners. The griya and sikhara

are octagonal, making the vimana Dravida of the mixed variety.

The monolithic temple complex, called the “Chota Kailasa’ is not

the monolithic Chaumukh Vimana, in the Indra Sabha fore-court.

The Chota Kailasa stands farther away and higher up. It is a Jain

replica’ of the Kailasa (Siva temple complex), with a dvitala

vimana having an octagonal sikhara, the sukanasa, leaving to -an

upper shrine in the second zala over the aditala. The tala prastara

is provided with a hara of kutas and salas and the axial extensions

in front of the vimana constitute mukha- and maha-mandapas with

a triple entrance; and a dvara-mandapa with sculptures at the

entrances leading into the entrenched court,

As against these Pallava and Rashtrakuta creations, the contri-

‘bution by the contemporary Pandyas of the far south to this series

is ‘the exquisitely carved Vettuvankovil monolith at Kalugumalai

(Tirunelveli district). It can be dated about A.D. 890, if not slightly

earlier. Unlike the Pallava technique of free-cutting or carving

down of segmented parts of standing rocks or free-standing boul-

ders of hard rocks, the Pandyas, though they always followed the

Pallava tradition of rock architecture in hard stones, adopted in

the creation of this monolith the trenching technique of the

Rashtrakutas as at Ellora. Both the dyitala vimana and its ardha-

mandapa cut out of the entrenched mass on the hill slope are

ARCHITECTURAL SCULPTURE 109

incomplete, but the finished upper parts reveal a high degree of,

workmanship and art and contain some outstanding sculptures. '

The talas are square on plan and the griya and sikhara are octago-

nal. Thus this would be an example in the Dravida order of the

misra type. The four Nandis on the corners of the top fala round

the base of the griva indicate the date and the dedication of the

temple to Siva. The dating js further indicated by the sculptures

of Dakshinamurti, Vishnu, Brahma and Siva on the south, west,

north and east nasika-fronts, respectively, on the faces of the griva

sikhara, a feature that became constant from the ninth century

- onwards. :

` CHAPTER VI

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—

THE EARLY PHASE .

THE PALLAVA-PANDYA SERIES

WHILE WITH the Chalukyas of Badami, the construction of stone

temples started, almost simultaneously, if not as a sequel to their

cut-in-cave-temples, with the Pallavas of Kanchi, it may be said

that the structural vogue started after their cut-out monoliths from

the time of Narasimhavarman II Rajasimha (700-728). In the keen

competition with their Chalukyan rivals, that had all along moti-

vated the urge for unique achievements in architecture and faced

with the comparatively greater difficulty in the quarrying and

sizing of such very hard native rocks as granite, gneiss and char-

nockite—as against the soft standstone exploited with ease and

advantage by the Chalukyas—Rajasimha Pallava experimented, as

it were, with the different kinds of stones from the rocks of Ton-

daimandalam. Furthermore, \*rock architecture' implied the creation

of temples only in places where there were hills or rocks. Such

temples could not be created elsewhere, for instance, in the Pallava

capital of Kanchi. His experiments with different kinds of stones

. could be seen from the blackish hard variety of leptinite used in

the Shore temple, the hard reddish gneiss in the Mukundanayanar

temple, and the somewhat softer greyish-white' granite employed

in the Olakkannesvara temple, all in Mahabalipuram, and the

hard pinkish .gneiss of the Talagirisvara temple at Panamalai.

Finding that construction in these hard stones was difficult and

time-consuming, and in order to step up the tempo and keep pace

with, if not outstrip, his rivals, Rajasimha ultimately resorted to

the soft stone tradition and had to employ ‘the coarse, friable,

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE EARLY PHASE 111

local standstones of a not Very commendable quality for the tem-

ples in his capital city. Even in such standstone constructions the

use of hard stone, a tradition inaugurated by his forbears, was not

totally abandoned. It was used as slabs and as the bottom and top

courses of the basement or adhishthana, namely, the upana and

pattika components. The great Kailasanatha temple in Kanchi

and others in the same place are of this kind. However much the

Pallavas lagged behind the Chalukyas in this respect, their mono-

lithic or cut-out ratha interlude did confer definite advantages, for

it gave them better ideas of form, proportion and design that

helped -them in making their structural edifices more elegant and

better composed and dimensioned than. the Chalukyan structural

creations.

The Shore temple ‘at Mahabalipuram is a complex of three

Shrines with accessory mandapas, prakara enclosures and gopura

entrances. Of the three, the larger vimana facing the sea on the

east, called Kshatriyasimhesvara,. and the smaller vimana at its

rear facing the village on the west called Rajasimhesvara, are both

dedicated to Siva and have wedged in between them a rectangular

mandapa-shrine without a superstructure—called Narapatisimha-

Pallava-Vishnugriha. This is built over a previously existing re-

cumbent Vishnu carved on.a low rocky outcrop. These names

inscribed on the structure are all titles of Rajasimha, the builder of

the complex. The axial mandapas and gopuras are built in front of

the smaller vimana, and the whole is enclosed by a common prakara

wall. The Jarger eastern vimana has ап additional prakara of its

own, closely investing it on the east, south and north, and leaving

the west open. The smaller vimana is three-storeyed, all square on

plan, but with octagonal griya and sikhara and stupi on top. While

the uditala is devoid of the hara elements on top,it has, like the

top tala, four seated bhutas placed at the corners blowing conches.

The hara elements are found over the second tala on all the four

sides, and again over the ardha-mandapa in front of the aditala,

The bhuta forms take the place of Nandis or bulls to be invariably

found оп the top fala of the later Siva temples. The falas are

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proportionately tall, the top tala rising high and clear over the hara:

elements of the tala below, the stupi over the octagonal griva and

.sikhara being made of polished black basalt. The pilasters on the

walls have rearing lion bases, as is characteristic of the Rajasimha

temples. The four storeyed eastern vimana is also of square plan

up to the griva which with the sikhara and basalt stupi above is

octagonal. The hara of kutas and salas are rcstricted to the tops

of the second and third talas, as also to the top of the ardha-man-

dapa in frónt of the aditala, which carries instead figures of squat-

ting lions at the four corners. The top tala has four squatting

bhutas blowing conches, symbolizing a Siva temple, as in the case

of the smaller vimana. The very closely set prakara that is special

to this vimana is of a lesser height than the aditala, and carries

karnakutas at the corners and salas over. the:lengths of the sides.

The gap at the rear on the west is partially filled by the hara

‘elements on top of the Vishnu mandapa at the same level. The

central sala over the seaward entránce on the eastern length of this

prakara is made larger than the rest in order to simulate a dyarasala

or lesser gopura scheme. The proportionately tall storeys and the

elimination of the hara elements over the lowest and topmost falas

lend a grace and charm to this attenuated structure, while the

close-set prakara of a lesser height surrounding the aditala, with

hara elements over its coping, gives externally the appearance of

an additional tala. It apparently enlarges its basal area in apt pro-

portion to the total height. The usual’ Somaskanda relief panels

are found on the rear walls of both the vimana sanctums in addi-

tion to a sixteen-sided, fluted, polished, basalt linga, planted with-

out the usual pedestal on the centre of the floor of the garbha-griha.

Though the sculptures on the walls of this temple complex are

much eroded by the moist and saline winds from the sea, the archi-

tectural proportions and make-up, and the natüral setting on the

sea make the edifice one of the finest monuments in India. Besides

fhe usual rearing lion-based pilasters, the larger vimana shows

on its own walls and those of its prakara, other types which have-

the elephant, ram, naga, nagadeva, and bhuta forms for their bases..

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE EARLY PHASE 113:

à z i

Fhe Olakkannesvara structure on top -of the light-house hill, j

devoid of its original superstructural falas and with the outer shell

of its aditala and-ardha-mandapa alone extant (owing to its earlier

conversion and use as a light-house before the present one was

constructed in 1900) retains the sculptures, niches and pilasters of

the outer walls. Its most interesting feature is thd occurrence of the

Dakshinamurti icon in the central niche on the southern side,

heralding this usual feature of the southern vimanas which follow-

ed. Án important feature that enables one to assign the Olakkan-

nesvara temple to Rajasimha Pallava is the presence of rearing

vyala-based pilasters cantoning the outer corners of the.shrine and

ardha-mandapa.

The Talagirisvara temple on the Panamalai Rock (south Arcot

district) of the same pinkish-red hard granite has an interesting

plan. It is essentially square on its base and talas, but its east-

facing aditala has smaller oblong shrines with cells attached to the

middle of its south, west and northern sides Óver corresponding

Offset extensions of the adhishthana. The corresponding oblong

attachment on the east, with the passage through it, forms the

antarala entrance to the, main sanctum. The two: lateral shrines

facing east as also the rear shrine facing west are, like the main

sanctum, dedicated to Siva. The main sanctum has a Somaskanda

relief panel inside a special niche high upon its rear wall and vis-

ible above the top of the fluted Zinga stele, planted without a pitha

on the sanctum floor, unlike the other Rajasimha temples where the

linga more or less hides the Sómaskanda panel, set at the centre

of the rear wall. The vimana is four-storeyed, and the sala super-

structures of the two-storeyed oblong side shrines are dexterously

made to merge into the hara of karnakuta and other elements: of

the aditala, The hara is found again on the upper storeys except

the topmost. The griva and sikhara which are modern restorations

in brick-and-mortar are, as per the original plan, octagonal. The-

corners of the walls of the aditala and of the attached shrines are

cantoned by bold rearing vyala pilasters characteristic of Rajasimha

temples. The top tala carries bhuta forms at the corners. Otherwise

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the walls lack sculpture as in the Mukundanayanar temple,

evidently because of the hard material of construction. There are

only the dvarapalas and the Brahma and Vishnu sculptures on the

inner walls of the antarala that maintain the original Trimurti con-

cept, but with Brahma and Vishnu relegated to lesser positions.

The northern outer shrine contains remnants of a Pallava mural

painting depicting a dancing Siva with Parvati.

The Mukundanayanar temple in Mahabalipuram, also.built of

а reddish granite, isa more plain and severe structure, with a

dvitala vimana, square below but with octagonal griva sikhara, and

is hence Dravida. It consists of the vimana and mandapa in front.

The upper parts of the sikhara and the stupi are lost. The walls are

plain, the pilasters simple, crudely shaped and devoid of vyala

bases. It contains a Somaskanda relief as the main deity on the

back wall of the sanctum.

The Kailasanatha complex at Kanchi is a joint venture of Raja-

simha and his son Mahendra III. The main vimana, Rajasimhesvara

(now called Kailasanatha) facing east is four-storeyed, and is

essentially a square structure up to the griva, which and the sikhara,

above are octagonal. The aditala is double-walled and its moulded

base is prominently offset on all the four sides and four corners—

for they carry over them smaller shrines with cella in them, abutting

on and incorporated with the outer wall of the main aditala, This

is an elaboration of the feature found in the Panamalai temple.

While the adhishthana offsets. at the four corners are square and

carry smaller two-storeyed vimanas of square plan with four-sided

kuta sikharas, those on the four sides are oblong and carry smaller

dvitala vimanas of the oblong plan, with sala sikharas on the south,

west and north. The corresponding one on the east is also oblong

with the: sala superstructure having a passage through in place of

a cella and functioning as the antarala passage to the main sanctum.

The kuta and sala sikharas of the abutting shrines are cleverly in-

corporated into the hara scheme over the prastara of the outer wall

of the aditala as in Panamalai. The cells of these abutting vimanas

in their ground storeys enshrine forms of Siva. The abutting

STRUCTURAL STONE TÉMPLES—-THE EARLY PHASE 115.

.Yimangs оп: the south-east, south, north and north-east face east

like the main sanctum, while those. on the: South-west, west and

north-west face west..Tle main‘sanctum bas а large fluted, sixteen-

faceted, polished, basalt linga with an.immense circular linga- -pitha

occupying almost the entire floor of the sanctum. On the rear wall,

in a special-niche, is carved the usual Somaskanda panel, with Siva

and Uma seated with little Skanda on Uma's lap and Brahma and

Vishnu standing behind on either side, The inner wall of the garbha-

griha is plain and square, while the outer wall, visible in parts

between the abutting vimanas, is profusely sculptured -with reliefs

of gods and goddesses, as also are the walls of the abutting: struc-,

tures. In between the two walls internally is a narrow, covered,

circumambulatory passage. The superstructural falas are built

over a-bridge of slabs spanning the tops of the two massive walls

of the aditala. The double-walling and the additional buttressing

by smaller vimanas on the sides and corners are evidently expedients

to support the mass of the superstructure of this vimana, which is

the largest one of the period, and at the same time to provide a

pleasing base to the height ratio and a balanced proportion to the

edifice. While the panjaras are absent among the hara elements over

the aditala prastara, which, in addition to the corner kuta and the

lateral sala sikharas of the abutting shrines, carries salas over the

intervening parts of the aditala outer wall, the hara of the second

tala has the full complement of kutas, salas, and panjaras. The third

Storey has again a hara of kutas and salas above, and the fourth

carries only four Nandis on the four corners at its top. The pilasters

contoning the aditala wall and those of the abutting shrines have

rearing vyala bases, peculiar to the Rajasimha temples. There is a

‘detached ‘multi-pillared oblong mandapa in front, longer on its

north-south axis and with its cantoning pilasters yyala-based» while

the rest are of the plainer type with basal and apical square

sections and intervening octagonal belts. The whole is surrounded

by.a prakara with a gap on the middle of its east side and enclosing.

an open court all around. The large eastern opening is occupied

by a fair-sized oblong dvitala sala-type vimana, with its ardha-

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mandapa, the vimana itself appearinglike a gopura when viewed

from a distance. Both its talas are devoid of the hara. This vimana,

called Mahendravarmesvara after Rajasimha's-son, contains in its

sanctum the usual fluted linga and Somaskanda panels, besides

Brahma and Vishnu sculptures on the inner wall of the ardha-

mandapa, as also other sculptures on its outer wall and in the

devakoshthas. The cantoning pilasters are rearing vyala-based. The

prakara has another entrance on the west at the middle, which is a

real gopura-entrance with a sala superstructure; it is smaller in

magnitude. All round the inner face of the prakara is built an

array of fifty-eight small dvitala vimanas all except -wO being square

and of the kuta type. They are all dedicated to Siva except the two

which are oblong and come opposite the north and south of the

“main Rajasimhesvara sanctum and contain groups of Vishnu and

Brahma sculptures facing south and north, respectively. But among

the kuta vimanas of the malika of parivara shrines, those along the

east face west, those along the west face east, while those on the

north and south both face east. The cells of many of these contain

traces of old paintings on plain walls or painted stucco over reliefs.

The external walls of these parivara shrines of the malika contain a

variety of sculptures, both Saivite and Vaishnavite, of varied icono-

graphy, thus making this temple complex a veritable museum of

iconography and plastic art. The sculptures include the dikpalas

and Ganesa, who makes his first appearance in Pallava temples, as

also the Saptarnatrika group, Chandesa and other parivara deities.

The Mahendravarmesvara has a smaller enclosure with a small

gopura or dyarasala infront and two lateral entrances in addition

near the two front corners. Inside there are two lateral oblong

shrines in the centre on the north and south. In front of the whole

complex stands a row of eight small dvitala square kuta vimanas

with octagonal griva and sikhara, all of them memorial shrines,

and, like the Mahendravarmesvara and the parivara shrines of the:

inner malika, devoid of the hara elements over their talas. All of

them contain Somaskanda panels on their hind walls and varied

sculpture on their external walls.

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE EARLY PHASE 117

The remnants of fresco paintings found inside the various cloister

shrines around the Rajasimhesvara of the Kailasanatha complex

in Kanchipuram cannot, all of them, be coeval with the date of

the main shrine and Pallava. While some are undoubtedly Pallava,

painted over the plaster ground laid over the coarse sandstone

surface, which expedient was found necessary (as at Ajanta) to

smoothen and protect the stone surface even at the outset, there

are undeniable evidences of the renewal of the plaster.and the

‘paintings over them in subsequent periods. For example, in one of,

the cells on the north-east corner of the malika. the extant plaster

was found by the present writer to overlie an inscription on the:

stone below, of Rajasimha himself. This alone would denote that

the plastering was at best an afterthought in the times of the

founder himself or immediately thereafter. For, an inscription

would not be incised on a surface if it was to be covered over by

plaster. Likewise the present writer again found in another cell, on

the southern row, the painted plaster revealing beyond its broken

edges, parts of a later Chola inscription of Kulottunga I (Accn.

A.D. 1070) indicating that the stone face was bare at that time and

that the plaster was laid after that time. Thus the painting over it

could only be after the above date. From other evidences it is

known that the temple, which was flourishing in Pallava and early

Chola times, fell into disuse in the times of the later Cholas, (after

Kulottunga I) till the times of the rise of the Vijayanagar dynasty.

Prince Kampana is known from inscriptions to have repaired the

damages wrought by the Muslim incursions and restored worship

in the temple. This accounts for fragmentary paintings of the

Vijayanagar period too. Thetemple saw bad times again sub-

sequently till it became a protected monument and came to be

attended to. Thus the Panamalai temple painted fragment, men-

tioned earlier, would alone be the earliest Pallava painting extant

as found so far.

The Vaikunthaperumal temple in Kanchi built by Nandivarman

Pallavamalla (A.D. 731-796) and dedicated to Vishnu is another

Pallava structure of the larger variety facing west and built in

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sandstone with.an admiixture.of granite, jn :the-top and bottom

courses of its .adhishthana. It has a. square four-storeyed main

vimana with allthe. talas except the:topmost, containing the super-

posed garbha-grihas, to enshrine the-three forms of Vishnu, stand-

ing (sthanaka), sitting (asana), and reclining (sayana). It is thus a

fore-runner of many such Vishnu temples that came later even till

recent times, e.g. 'the .Sundaravaradaperumal ‘temple at Uttira-

merur, the Chitrakuta at Madurai, and the Vishnu temple at

Mannarkovil, to mention only a few. The triple storey has been

achieved by a system of three concentric walls forming three con-

centric squares, one inside the other with ambulatory passages in

between in the sandhara mode. They are set on top of a boldly

moulded adhishthana, the innermost wall rising to the height of the

three storeys, enclosing the three tiers of cells, the intermediate wall

rising to the terrace level of the second storey, and. the outermost

stopping short of the terrace level of the first storey. The aditala has

thus its sanctum: surrounded by two covered circumambulatory

passages, the outer one functioning as such while the inner one |

provides access to the second tala. There is a flight of steps on the

north and south, for ascent and descent providing access to and

exit from the second fala, terminating in an opening on the centre

of the west outer wall. The open outer ambulatory of the -second

tala is surrounded by the parapet on top of the outermost wall

formed by a hara of kutas, salas and panjaras; the inner covered

ambulatory lies at the heads of the two flight of steps from below.

This hara is extended over the top of the pillared ardha-mandapa in

front of the aditala. The intermediate wall extending up to the top

of the second fala and enclosing the closed ambulatory carries on

top a similar hara forming the parapet edging for the open circum-

ambulatory passage round the third-tier cella. The innermost wall

reaching to ‘the top of the third-tier cella has, likewise, a hara of

kutas and salas, The kutas, salas and panjaras of each tier crown

the correspondingly relieved bays and recesses of the walls. The

fourth tala, which is a smaller square, is closed on.all sides and

carries the octagonal griya and sikhara with a metal stupi on top,

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE EARLY PHASE 119

and four lions originally (now replaced by Garuda figures in

stucco) at its four corners. The central bays of the aditala outer

wall have small door-openings, while the lateral ones have deva-

koshthas with figure sculpture, the intermediate recesses having

perforated windows. The bays and recesses of the upper tala outer

walls have similar sculpture, all Vaishnavite. The lowermost storey

and the ardha-mandapa i in front are surrounded by an open narrow

circuit at the level of the base of the adhishthana. The whole is

again surrounded by a pillared cloister running all round on a

raised platform with vyala-based pillars on the edge facing the

central edifice and a wall on the outer edge that carries on its top

a string of kutas and salas,-at a level slightly lower than that of

the aditala. This arrangement when viewed from outside would

simulate a pancha tala appearance, as in the case of the Shore

temple described earlier. In addition to the numerous divine

sculptures on the vimana and ardha-mandapa acd contemporary

inscriptions, the most interesting part of this temple would

bea series of .panelled sculptures narrating the history of the

Pallavas from their legendary ancestors down to the time of

Nandivarman II Pallavamalla, the builder of the temple, a unique

feature rarely met with elsewhere.

The other temples of this period to be found in Kanchi, though.

smaller in proportions, are interesting for their architecture and:

iconography. They are the Muktesvara, Matangesvara, Airavat-

esvara, Valisvara, Iravatanesvara and Piravatanesvara temples,

built mainly of sandstone with granite slabs forming the base and

top of the adhishthana, and the upa-pitha platform below it in cases

where it is added to raise the stature of the edifice. All of them are

composite varieties of the square vimana with varying numbers of

talas, the upper storeys non-functional and closely invested by the

hara over the prastara of the storey below, and with different plans

in the griva sikhara part. The Iravatanesvara and Tripurantakes-

vara are dyitala, square throughout, including the griya and

sikhara, and hence are Nagara. The Matangesvara and Muktesvara

temples which are #ritala have likewise square falas, but carry

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Circular griva. and sikhara conforming to the Vesara. The Piravat-

anestara and Valisvara are two- and three-storeyed, respectively,

their talas square, but the griva and sikhara octagonal, making

them Dravida. The superstructure of the Airavatesvara is lost. The

Kailasanatha at Tiruppattur (Tiruchirapalli district) is a larger

vimana in sandstone and. is much like the Kailasanatha of Kanchi.

It is of the late eighth century and is an example of the provincial

variety of the Pallava vimana.

But soon after the middle of the long reign of Nandivarman II `

Pallava, in the later part of the eighth century, temples came to be

built entirely of granite blocks, cut, moulded, carved and sculp-

tured, as seen in some cf the smaller temples and in the granite

adhishthanas of the large brick temples of Vaikunthaperumal and

Sundaravaradaperumal at Uttiramerur (Chingleput district) of the

time of his successor, Dantivarman. In the former,:the niches were

meant to contain stucco figures and in the latter slab reliefs. The

extant three-storeyed brick structure of Sundaravaradaperumal over

its stone adhishtiiana is unique again in having all the three storeys

functional with the cellas dedicated to the standing, seated and

reclining forms of Vishnu, while the abutting smaller shrines on the

three sides of its two lower falas south, west and north, contain the

six other principal forms of Vishnu—Satya, Achyuta, Aniruddha,

Naranarayana, Narasimha, and Varaha—thus incorporating the

nine forms or navamurtis in accordance with the Vaikhanasa Agama.

These two temples and the large and fine renovated brick temple at

Tiruvadigai (south Arcot district) on a stone adhishthana corrobo-

rate the fact that brick-and-timber continued to remain in use in

spite of the advent of stone, and skills in their use in large con-

structions were fostered and maintained.

The Virattanesvara temple at Tiruttani (Chingleput district)

affords a very good example of a single-storeyed vimana square in

its adhishthana and aditala that carries an apsidal griva sikhara

superstructure. It was built of hard black stone in the ninth

century in the time of Pallava Aparajitavarman, one of the last

rulers of the dynasty. It contains some good bas-reliefs in its wall

2

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niches which exemplify the definite polarisation of the deities in

the vimana and ardha-mandapa devakoshthas, namely, Ganesa and

Durga, respectively, in the soüthern and northern outer wall

niches of the ardha-mandapa and Dakshinamurti, Vishnu and

Brahma, respectively, in the south, west and north outer wall

niches of the aditala wall. The introduction of a projected gar-

goyle-like water-outlet, the pranala, from the northern side of the

garbha-griha floor to drain off the abhisheka water, till now not

noticed in earlier temples, is another noteworthy feature. The

pranala becomes an invariable component of all the temples built

later.

The credit of constructing fine vimanas of hard stone, though

small, and perfecting the same would, however, go to the con-

temporary Pandyas of the south who, following their rock-cut

temples and the single carved-out monolithic vimana—the Vet-

tuvankovil at Kalugumalai (A.D. 800), built a series of small

karralis, or all-stone temples, in the southern districts. The con-

temporary Western Gangas of the Talkad in the south Mysore

area, and the Muttaraiyar, the Irukkuvel and other chiefs on

either bank of the Kaveri, is the dividing border line between the

Pallava and Pandya Empires, followed by the early Cholas (who

till then in hibernation had risen at the close of.the ninth century

to imperial power with their capital at Thanjavur, and soon spread

over the Pallava and Pandya territories) have likewise left a

number of fine temples in granite dating before A.D. 1000.

The series of small and elegant all-stcne temples at Kaliyapatti,

Tiruppur, Visalur and Panangudi (Pudukkottai district) have

square ekatala vimanas with simple moulded adhishthanas, less than

2m square at the base, carrying on top over the cella a square

griya and sikhara. In addition to the vimana koshtha devatas in

the prescribed order as mentioned above, in the context of the

Tiruttani Virattanesvara, they have eight smaller sub-shrines, the

ashta parivara, dedicated to the ancillary deities located on the

corners and sides and inside the prakara wall that surrounds the

nuclear vimana and its axial adjuncts. While all the rest of the

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eight sub-shrines are square on plan like the main vimana, the

one on the middle of the south side, dedicated to the Saptama-

trikas, is rendered oblong with an appropriate sala sikhara as.

exemplified in the typical temple complex of the Sundaresvara at

Tirukkattalai (Pudukkottai district). Such oblong or elliptical

shrines of the linear pattern are prescribed for and found employ-

ed in cases where the deity is reclining, or where more than one

deity (as the Saptamatrikas) is installed in a row, or a deity is

with consorts (like Sri and Bhu Devis for Vishnu), and attendants

are enshrined in the sanctum. The oblong form with sala sikhara

became the invariable rule, according to prescription and practice,

for all the Devi shrines. Occasionally also, one or more of the

other seven parivara shrines deviate in form, as, for example, the

apsidal or gaja-prishtha (elephant back) sub-shrine for Gajanana.

or Ganesa found in the Sundaresvara 'temple at Nangavaram

(Tiruchirapalli district). The cult of Chandesa as the mulabhritya,

or chief seneschal of a Siva temple, which had its emergence even

in the time of Rajasimha Pallava as seen in his Kailasanatha at

Kanchi, had now become crystallised and one of the ashta parivara

sub-shrines on the north was assigned to him till about A.D. 1000.

Subsequently in the temples of the imperial Chola period he, like

-Nandi of earlier times and the other equal associate of Siva,

Chandesa, came to have a more honoured place by coming into

closer proximity with the main vimana just to the north of the

pranala which had by now emerged on the northern side of the

main vimana. These form the peculiar features of the southern

temples, particularly of the temples of Tamil Nadu.

The Balasubrahmanya temple at Kannanur and the Siva

temple at Viralur (both in Pudukkottai district) are examples of

the kind where the griva and sikhara are circular in section, mount-

ed over the square body of the ekatala vimana. The former carries

on the four corners of its aditala four elephant figures as- symbols

for Subrahmanya Kartikeya, instead of the later and usual

peacock forms. ү

Тһе dvitala Talinatha temple at. Tiruppattur (Ramanathapuram

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES— THE EARLY PHASE 123

district) and the similar Siva temple in Tiruvalisvaram. (Tirunelveli

district) are slightly larger examples. The former has four karna-

kuta miniature shrines at the corners of the topmost tala in place ·

of the Nandis. The latter is noted for its fine sculptures and

cameos in relief on its walls and superstructure, amongst which is

to be found the well-known ananda-tandaya of Siva Nataraja,

perhaps the earliest depiction of this characteristically crystallised

and sublimated concept of Tamil Nadu and its unique contribution

to Indian and world art.

The celebrated icon of Nataraja in the characteristic ananda-

tandava pose, depicting, esoterically, the pancha kritya of Siva of

Tamilian Saiva Siddhanta, as ably described and interpreted by

Coomaraswamy, makes its advent late in the ninth century. The

Saiva saint, Manikkavachakar is the first among the Nayanmars

to refer to this form and aspect of Siva’s dance and the small

Tiruvalisvaram panel (c. A.D. 890) is perhaps the first to capture

the imagery in stone. The concept was perhaps first revealed in |

copper or bronze, in the casting of which the Tamilian artisan had

achieved skill and excellence, primarily to serve as a processional

deity, that came to be translated into stone subsequently. Such

early stone representations are to be met with again, in miniature

mostly, as the crest figure in a niche torana arch in the early

Chola temple in Punjai (Thanjavur district) of the time of Paran-

taka І (Accn. A.D. 907), and on a pillar in the temple in Turaiyur

(Tiruchirapalli district) of about A.D. 940. The other early mini-

atures are found in the Koranganatha temple, Srinivasanallur in

the same district, and also in a niche forana in the Tirumiyachur

temple (Thanjavur district). It occurs as a niche sculpture in stone,

perhaps for the first time, in the deyakoshtha of the south wall of

the ardha-mandapa in the temple at Konerirajapuram (Thanjavur

district) and become’ a usual feature in ‘that position in the other

early Chola temples.

^ The Vijayalaya Cholisvaram in Narttamalai (Pudukkottai dis-

trict), though so called after the founder of the Chola line of

Thanjavur, is an interesting and fine Muttaraiyar example. The

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sandhara aditala of this tritala structure is square on plan exter-

nally with an almost egual-sized closed mandapa in front, while its

inner wall enclosing the sanctum is circular, leaving an intervening

passage all round. The second zala rising over the inner circular

wall is square, while the third, as also the griva and sikhara above,

iscircular in section. The aditala hara; extended over the top of

the front mandapa, also shows a series of dance sculptures. But

for these and the dvarapalas at the mandapa entrance, the sculp-

tures on the four faces at the top and the cylindrical Zinga with

circular pitha in the sanctum, there are not many sculptures. The

west-facing complex is surrounded by the ashta parivara and a

prakara with a small gopura entrance on the east located near the

north-east corner at the top of a slopy ascent on the rock over

which the temple is built.

The Muvarkovil at Kodumbalur (Tiruchirapalli district) is of

Irukkuvel origin and has three equal-sized dvitala vimanas .square

from base to sikhara with their ardha-mandapas standing in a

north-south row facing west, with a common large and oblong

maha-mandapa in front. Two of these are complete and the third

is represented by its extant basement only. The whole was sur-

rounded by sixteen sub-shrines and a prakara, with the small

entrance gopuram on the west. This temple is another important

landmark in the line of the great south Indian temples. It is built

of fine-grained and neatly-dressed granite, and is noted for its

exquisite sculptures—particularly Vinadhara, Dakshinamurti,

Kalari Siva, and some feminine forms.

Likewise, the early Chola temples of Koranganatha at Sriniva-

sanallur (Tiruchirapalli district), Nagesvaram in Kumbakonam,

Naltunai Isvara at Punjai and Brahmapurisvara in Pullamangai

are other early all-stone temples famous for their sculpture of

quality and grace including what appear to be portrait sculp-

tures of men and women. Hundreds of such stone temples were

being built in Tamil Nadu іп the centuries.before and after A.D.

1000, in replacement, of earlier brick-and-timber structures, and

in places hallowed by the memory ofthe Saiva and Vaishnava

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE EARLY PHASE 125

saints—the Nayanmars and the Alvars.

Similar activity, though on a lesser scale, is to be found in the

southern Mysore country, where the Western Gangas of Talkad

havelefta few contemporary hard stone temples. The earliest

would be the twin ekatala vimanas of: a small size forming an

adjunct to the later Jain temple on the Chandragiri Hill in

Sravana-Belagola (Hassan district). But the more impressive Jain

temple on the same hill would be the Chamundaraya Basti (c.

982-985), with a three-storeyed east-facing yimana and closed

mandapa and open porch in front. Its two square lower talas of

the superposed sanctum type, with a double-walled square san-

dhara aditala leaving a passage in between the walls, are functional

and have Tirthankara forms enshrined in their sanctums. The

third tala, also square, is non-functional, and the griva and sikhara

are octagonal. The hara of the aditala over the top of the outer

wall, consisting of the kuta, sala and panjara elements, is continued

over the top edges of the front mandapas. The second ‘storey has

thus an open ambulatory round it. The hara contains a series of

fine sculptures.

But the most interesting monument in Sravana-Belagola is the

hypaethral temple of the Gommatesvara colossus, 17.5 metres high,

carved in the round out of a standing tor on top of the Indragiri

Hill This was the work of Chavundaraya, the minister of Ganga

Rachamalla (974-984). Being a free-standing image of fine propor-

,tions and of polished granite, it is even more interesting than the

colossus of Ramses II at Abu Simbel in Egypt. The base of the

colossus is surrounded by a malika of granite, built by Gangaraya,

the minister of Hoysala Vishnuvardhana (1110-1152), and the

mandapa abutting the lower part of the colossus from behind was

built by another minister, Baladeva, in the twelfth century.

The Ganga temple at Kambadahalli near Sravana-Belagola, also

Jain, is interesting on account of the fact that its three principal,

vimanas of moderate dimensions and built wholly of granite open

into the three sides of a common mandapa; the fourth side

of which on the north affords the common outer entrance—a

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grouping called trikuta.“The three sguare-based vimanas have square,

octagonal and circular: griva sikharas, respectively, denoting the

\_Nagara-Dravida-Vesara types as described in the Silpa texts. To

this complex have been added two more lateral vimanas in front of

the comnion mandapa of the trikuta nucleus. The whole is sur-

-rounded by a prakara with a small gopura entrance on the north.

This complex called. Panchakuta Basti (Jain temple) in Kamba-

dahalli (Hassan district), besides being an unique combination óf

‘units illustrating the ternary classification of the southern vimanas

as Nagara, Dravida and Kesara, is interesting in its other aspects

too. Particularly may be mentioned the variety of niche foranas-

framing the devakoshthas, that depict the different forms of toranas

described inthe texts and inscriptions, such as the patra torana,

chitra torana, makara torana, vidyadhara torana, etc. This temple

complex in thus exemplifying the various features: of the vimana

form as enumerated and codified in the Silpa and Agama texts of

the period, can be said to be а perfect text-book illustration or

specimen to be studied in comparison with the texts.

The granite temples of Nandi (Kolar districts), the capital of the

Banas, are of Ganga-Nolamba extraction. The small and earlier

Yoganandisvara on top of the hill is not architecturally impressive,

while the larger twin temples of Bhoganandisvara and Aruna-

chalesvara, both of the square type, at the foot of hill are. This

nuclear twin is enlarged with the addition of later axial mandapas

ard “peripheral structures into a complex with prakara and gopura.

on the east. The Bhoganandisvara, earlier of the two, is evidently

a renovation of a pre-existing structure, and is noted for the. fine-

ness of its structure and beauty of its sculptures. The Arunachales-

vara would appear to be almost a later copy of the Bhoganandis-

vara. The ruined soft stonc-built temples at Hemavati (Anantapur

district), noted for their fine sculpture, are examples of pure

'Nolamba architecture and art.

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE EARLY PHASE 127

THE CHALUKYA-RASHTRAKUTA SERIES

The structural experiments of the carly Chalukyas are found

confined to their capital Vatapi (Badami), the adjacent Mahaku-

tesvar, and the twin mercantile cities of Aihole and Patadkal (all

in Bijapur district). In all of them the native soft sandstone of fine

‘grain and quality which was most easily tractable has been used.

This alone was responsible for the larger-sized structures using

massive blocks in the construction and richness of figure sculpture.

Before considering the well-known and typical vimana and

prasada forms of temples of this series, it would'be good to consider

briefly the few mandapa-type temples that came early in the series

and were made after the early cave-temple model. They are the

small temples in the Jyotirlinga group, the Ladkhan, the Kontgudi

and the Meguti temples of Aihole. The two temples of the Jyotir-

linga group are hardly more than mere mandapas with closed walls

and flat terrace-tops, with an outer Nandi-mandapa of a similar size.

The Ladkhan is a ponderous construction, essentially a large

mandapa standing on a moulded adhishthana with four central

pillars, surrounded by two concentric rows of successively lesser

height, so that the flat roof over the centre is 2 raised clerestory,

with the slab roofs sloping down on all the four sides over the

outerrings of the shorter pillars. The inter-spaces between the

outermost row of pillars, on the edge of the plinth are closed by

slab screen waks, some of them with perforated window pattern,

the walls extending on the front on either side with a central door-

opening. The centrál bay at the rear end with a slopy roof is con-

verted into a shrine chamber with a plinth and slab walls. Over the

central clerestory has been constructed an upper cell of heavy slabs

with flat roof. To the whole is added later, open pillared mukha-

mandépa, transversely oblong, with carved pillars of the mandapa

type, their bases connected by a seat having a lean back-rest

over its rear edge—the kakshasana typical of Chalukyan temples

and their derivatives. Thus it would appear to be no more than a

‘large assembly hall converted into a temple with a shrine inside at

the rear. The large. mandapa of the Ladkhan temple with its

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improvised shrine at the rear with an unconventional slopy roof

standing on an adhishthana of its own was rightly suspected to have

been originally the hall of the village moot (Percy Brown). Such

assembly halls for the village elders to meet and transact business

relating to local, social, administrative, judicial and religious

matters were not uncommon, judging from the evidence of many

inscriptions. A case in point will be what is nowadays called the

Vaikunthaperumal temple in Uttiramerur (Chingleput district), a

later Pallava structure, which we have not noticed in our preceding

account of temples of the period. What isextant of this sabha-

mandapa or grand assembly hall of Uttirameru-Chaturvedi manga-

Jam, constructed, evidently, for the village sabha or assembly, is.

only the magnificent, stone-built plinth, the upa-pitha and the

adhishthana, the columned superstructure that stood over it having

been lost. The extant moulded basement is in hard granite stone.

The superstructure was perhaps walled оп all three sides with

lion ог vyala-based hard stone pillars carrying: moulded capitals of

soft stone (chloritic schist) on the facade over the front sopana.

An inscription of the twenty-fourth year of Pallaya Nandivarman

Ш, on the extant structure itself calls it a mandapa, not а

temple (vimana). The structure is of the time of Dantivarman (А.р.

196-846). Incidentally it carries the famous inscription of the

twelfth and fourteenth years of Parantaka I Chola (А.р. 919-921),

laying down the rules and conditions for eligibility in elections

to and the manner of the constitution of the village assembly—

perhaps the earliest inscription known as relating to elections to

the village administrative bodies. Thus it was a village moot

hall, a santhagara, even as the Ladkhan in Aihole was. It originally,

like the Ladkhan, had a small shrine at the rear, now replaced by

a much later one called Vaikunthaperumal. This contained

the deity before which oaths were taken, deliberations made

and decisions arrived at, the deity standing asthe divine wit-

ness or sakshi bhuta. Such sabha-mandapas, associated with a

Vishnu shrine are mentioned in the Silpa texts, such as Maya mata

(9:73). The presence of a shrine for Vishnu, on the mandapa of the

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES —THE EARLY PHASE 129

Vaikunthaperumal is referred to in an inscription of Pallava

Kampavarman. The other mandapas of the large mercantile city of

Aihole can be deemed to have served a similar purpose.

The Kontgudi likewise, has a shrine at the rear wall of the hall

and with the superstructural scheme added later since the roof

shrine has the features of a more evolved Chalukyan vimana roof.

The Meguti of Jain dedication with an inscription dated A.D.

634 is better evolved. It is essentially a closed mandapa on a raised

and moulded plinth with four central pillars and peripheral walis

on all sides over the edge of the plinth and enclosing nine bays,

onc central and eight peripheral. The walled central bay forms tlie

main sanctum and also carries the roof shrine over it. The rear

bays on either side, close to the hind wall coruers, provide for the

two lateral shrines of the ground floor with the two lateral buys in

front on the median axial line having flat roofs like the central cell,

thus forming their respective ardha-mandapas. The three front bays

form а transversely oblong mukha-mandapa for ali the three

shrines. The three muk&a-mandapa bays in front as also the corres-

‘ponding three at the rear have slopy roofs. The outer walls are

relieved with three recesses, by pilasters, the relieved parts carry-

ing derakoshtha niches. Some of the recesses have perforated

windows. The inscription of A.D. 634 may not relate to the stone

structure of Meguti as has come down to us, but to an earlier

structure, perhaps of brickwork, to which the inscribed stone stele

was attached, or, in front of which it stood. For, judging by the

components of the adhishthana and the wall pilasters and their

developed mouldings one can only attribute them, on comparison

with what obtains in other cases in Aihole, Pattadkal and

Badami, to a date posterior to the first half the seventh century. A

parallel case will be that of the extant Mahakubesvar temple,

Mahakuta, which, as a wholly stone-built structure, can only be

posterior to the date of the free-standing Mahakuta pillar, or one

that at best could have gone into the composition of a mandapa

and not of a vimana. The present stone temple, of a later date than

-the pillar, could have replaced an earlier brick structure that had

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the inscribed pillar in front of it.

The plan and design of these odd-looking temples do, however,

anticipate similar temples of later times on the west coast where

owing to high rainfall slopy roofs were immensely suitable. As

such, temples of this type became common there. The shrine

located in the central bay had a raised roof and slopy side roofs

all round. The central shrine was often of the Chaturmukha type as

at the Chaturmukha Jain temple at Karkala. For other temples of

such derivation, one has only to look at the many examples found

in the region between Goa and Mangalore, if not further south,

exemplified by the Ketapi Narayana temple at Bhatkal, or the

Vaital temple at Keri in Goa.

Coming to the typical vimana temples of the Chalukyas of

Badami, we find that the earliest essays were confined to the out~

skirts of the capital Badami and adjoining Mahakutesvar.

The Makutesvara temple, the main temple in the group formed

of northern-and southern-type temples enclosed by a wall in Maha-

kutesvar, was in fact existing from the time of Mangalesa—at the

close of the sixth century—according to an inscription on a loose

pillar (vijaya stambha) that stood in front of it and is now kept in

the Bijapur Museum. The temple has been apparently redone in

stone and later renovated, but it still retains much of the earlier

characters. The aditala of the vimana is double-walled with a closed

ambulatory in between. The external wall as also the adhishthana

below are relieved on the centre of each side into bays with deva-

ch side are provided with perforated

koshthas. The recesses on ea

windows set inside a frame of lateral pilasters and a top cornice or

kapota of a prastara carrying miniature shrine elements as found in

the hara of either the southern vimana typc.or they are of the

northern prasada type, a rather advanced feature as again found in

the devakoshthas of the Durga temple at Aihole. The square adirala

outer wall carries on top over its prastara four karnakutas at the

corners and four salas in between over tbe central bays of the wall.

The adhishthana below is. extended forward and widened to form

the base of the wider square mandapa in front. The central bays of

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE EARLY PHASE 131

its walls have devakoshthas for sculptures of Siva, as on the vímana

wall, and the recesses have perforated windows. The second tala

rising as an upward extension of the inner aditala wall is high and

carries a similar hara of four karnakutas and four salas, while the

octagonal griva and sikhara above have four large prominent kuta

appligues. on the diagonal faces and concealing much of them, -

while the intervening cardinal faces have nasika fronts.

Standing at the south end of the Mahakutesvar enclosure and

also facing east is the Mallikarjuna temple with a sandhara vimana,

dvitala, of the same type as the Makutesvara, except for some

minor variations of architectural detail and sculptural content.

The griva and sikhara of this otherwise Square vimana are

Octagonal. Both these temples show some advanced features such

as the elaborately carved over-door of the shrine-entrance in addi-

tion to theniche decoration already noticed, and in having a water-

chute, or channel, on the floor of the shrine with an outlet opening

on the northern side.

The Malegitti Sivalaya standing on an outer crag among the

hills of Badami is the simplest structure consisting of a ponderous-

ly built single-walled nirandhara vimana coniposed of large blocks

of sandstone, with a closed mandapa almost of the same width in

front of it, preceded by an open four-pillared porch of a lesser

width, all standing over a common moulded adhishthana. The hara

of four karnakutas and four salas of the aditala of the vimana is

extended over the mandapa in front, the two front vimana karna-

kutas being also the rear karnakutas of the mandapa. The second

tala of the vimana has a similar hara of four kutas and four salas.

Four more large karnakutas closely adhere to the griya існага and

conceal the corner faces of the octagonal griya, partially over-

topping the squat dome of the octagonal sikhara and thereby lend-

ing a peculiar appearance to this vimana. The cardinal faces of the

griva have four nasikas of equal size. The three bays on the vimana

Wall on each of its faces correspond, respectively, to the two

extreme karnakutas and central sala, with plain rectangular niches

for sculptures of deities. Likewise, the two lateral walls of the

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mandapa are relieved five times, corresponding to the kara elements,

the central one on each side being a devakoshtha which is again

found on either wing of the front eastern wall on either side of

the shrine-entrance. The extreme recesses on the north and south

of each lateral face of the mandapa wall have perforated windows.

The Lower Sivalaya (so called for want of any other name) in

Badami fort, which was perhaps originally dedicated to Vishnu, is

a smaller structure almost similar to the Malegitti Sivalaya, but

differing from it in one important respect, namely, that its aditala

is double-walled, or sandhara. The hara elements are present over

all the falas and the griya and sikhara are octagonal with applique

kutas. Р

The Upper Sivalaya, a little higher up on the hill within the fort

at Badami, has a sandhara vimana square on plan, with. the outer

wall of the vimana aditala extended forwards over the similarly

extended adhishthana to enclose a large mandapa. The mandapa is

closed and pillared inside, with a central nave under a flat roof of

the same width as the shrine behind. Two lateral aisles form the

forward continuation of the circumambulatory passage between

the double walls of the vimana aditalg, with slopy roofs, as in the

case of the ambulatory passage also. The external walls of the

aditala and front mandapa are alternately relieved and recessed and

the bays are cantoned by pilasters, to correspond with the widely

spaced hara elements on top of their prastara. The recesses have

shorter pilasters, topped by the kudu arches of the cornice of the

prastara. The second tala is tall, rising as an upward extension of

the aditala inner wall. It does not carry the hara over its top. The

third fala of a lesser height over itis also devoid of the hara ele-

ments. The griva and sikhara are square, like the rest of the vimana

below, and are not encumbered by applique kutas, as in the other

cases. 1

In contrast with this group оѓ earlier vimana forms showing diffe-

rent stages of development duringthe seventh century, we have:

the ‘full-fledged vimana forms in the temples of Sangamesvara,

Virupaksha, aad Mallikarjuna in Patadkal, reflecting to a great.

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE EARLY PHASE 133

extent the vimana features as crystallised in the contemporary

Pallava structural temples and their earlier monolithic rathas. The

Sangamesvara is the earliest of the three and was built by Chalukya

Vijayaditya (A.D. 697-733) and is nearer the Pallava form than any

other, in that it has no sukanasika or gable-like projecting appen-

dage from the front of the upper talas and griva sikhara region of

the vimana over the top of the antarala or ardha-mandapa fronting

the shrine below. The other two, namely, the Virupaksha built by

the queen of Vikramaditya II (A.D. 733-746), and the Mallikarjuna

built by another queen soon after, have the sukanasika forming

the earliest of the Chalukyan vimana series that possess this charac-

teristic architectural member, as does the later Kailasa monolith at

Ellora. The Sangamesvara and the Virupaksha are both similar to

each other in having a square plan from the base to the apex, and

are hence of the Nagara order. The Mallikarjuna has a circular

griya and sikhara over-topping the square talas, and is hence of

the Vesara order.

The Sangamesvara vimana, which is tritala, has a double-walled

sandhara aditala, with the outer wall extended forward to form

the ardha-mandapa over the similarly extended adhishthana and

widening beyond to form the closed maha-mandapa with four rows

of five pillars each inside. An open pillared porch is attached to

the middle of the northern side of the maha-mandapa. The exterior

of this wall relieved and recessed alternately has a series of deva-

-Koshthas in the bays containing sculptures of deities of varied

iconography. The prastara over this outer wall of the vimana and

its forward mandapa wall extension carries a hara of karnakutas

and salas corresponding to the relieved bays below. At the centre

of each side the hara is pierced by water-outlets of the terrace.

Over them the hara part carries incipient panjaras, perhaps the first

appearance of this third characteristic member in the vimanas of

the Chalukyas and their derivatives. The second tala too, which is

an upward projection of the inner wall of the aditala, carries a

hara of four karnakutas and four salas, while the third tala has

four salas only on the cardinal sides, coming in front of the

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nasika projections of the griva and sikhara region. The absence of

tbe karnakutas in the hara of the top tala marks the first step to-

wards the elimination of the hara itself, and the placement of the

vahanas and lanchanas of the main deity at the corners in its place.

This is a significant change that occurred almost at the same time,

if not slightly earlier, in the Pallava temples as in the Shore tem-

ple and the Kailasanatha of Kanchi. The Sangamesvara establishes

another landmark in that it has in its scheme two" side shrines in

the ardha-mandapa at its two ends, on either side of the sanctum

entrance dedicated to Durga and Ganapati.

The Virupaksha is the largest structural temple complex of the!

early Chalukyas consisting of a tall four-storeyed vimana with

axial mandapas and peripheral two-storeyed parivara sub-shrines

of the kuta and sala type round the court, the whole enclosed by

a prakara wall with gopura entrances in front and behind on the

east and west, which are again the earliest in the Chalükyan series.

The square vimana has a sandhara aditala, the outer wall of which,

as also the adhishthana below, is thrown out into five bays and

four recesses on each side. They are of varying widths correspond-

ing to their corner karnakutas, central salas, and intervening

panjaras of the hara over the prastara of that side. The mandapa

js multi-pillared with massive sculptured columns and has three

openings with projected pillared porches on its three sides—east,

north and south. The salas of the hara on top of the mandapa

prastara that come over these three entrances, as in the Kailasa of

Ellora, are rendered larger in dimensions than the rest of the hara

elements in order to simulate miniature gopuradvaras. The deva-

koshtha niches accommodated between pilasters cantoning the

relieved bays have varied sculptures set inside kuta, panjara or

forana frames. The ardha-mandapa has shrines inside for Durga and

Ganesa. The second zala carries four karnakutas and three

salas over its prastara on three sides. The third smaller storey of

lesser height likewise has four karnakutas and three salas, the

front of both talas projected over-the antarala as the tiered

sukanasika which in design is of the form of a multi-storeyed

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE EARLY PHASE 135

apsidal shrine with an appropriate front. The fourth storey, still

smaller, carries only four karnakutas in its hara from which the four

salas have been eliminated, as in the Pandya Talinatha temple іп

Tirupattur, exposing to full view the four nasikas of the griva

sikhara region. The prakara wall has overits coping a series of

kutas and salas, as over the prakara of the larger vimana of the

Pallava Shore temple.

The Mallikarjuna built close to the Virupaksha is a smaller

temple with a four-storeyed vimana square in all its talas. The

griva and sikhara above are circular. It has also a prominent suka-

nasika projected forward from its upper talas. The topmost tala

has no kara at all, marking the stage of the total elimination of

this element, and heralding the advent of the characteristic vahanas,

or symbols appropriate to the dedication of the main sanctum.

The Durga temple at Aihole is essentially of the southern

variety of the apsidal or gaja-prishtha form with an odd, clumsily-

fitted northern-type square sikhara which would be aberrant if of

original design or incongruous and inapt if a later addition. The

shrine and its axial mandapas stand raised with their adhishthana

built over a sub-base, a feature not common in the earlier temples

considered above, but usual in later temples of both Chalukyan

and Pallava-Pandya derivation. The moulded upa-pitha is apsidal in

plan and carries a peripheral row of heavy mandapa-type pillars on

its edge that surround the moulded adhishthana and the outer wall

of the apsidal sandhara aditala of the vimana proper and its for-

ward projection, as the closed antarala mandapa of equal width,

and also the frontal agra-mandapa on the forward extension of the

same adhishthana at which region it narrows. Thus, the platform on

top of the upa-pitha forms a covered outer ambulatory with а slopy

roof, spanning the gap between the outer wall of the vimana and

axial mandapas оп one side and the pillars set on the edgeon the

other. The upa-pitha terminates in front as a still narrower land-

ing platform with lateral flights of steps and a frontal banister.

These periphers' pillars of the front mandapa section and

those at the font or eastern end on either side of the inner

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edge of the landing have large statuary carved on them,

while the rest are devoid of such embellishment. They are all

interconnected by kakshasanas or seats with lean-back rests, as

is common in Chalukyan structures. The adhishthana, as also

the outer wall over it, are thrown out at intervals into eleven

bays, three on each linear side walls, three more round the rear

apse end, and two in front, where the wall turns in to embrace

the front doorway of the antarala-mandapa flanking the entrance.

These eleven bays carry devakoshthas, the niches of which are

framed by shrine-fronts of all patterns of southern-style vimanas

and northern-style prasadas—such as the kura, sala or koshtha,

panjara, udgama (coalesced kudu-like arches), and forana, and

containing bold sculptures of gods. This much developed feature

is coupled with the presence of a prominently projecting pranala

or gargoyle-like water-spout over the adhisthana level on the nor-

thern side at the apse end of the outer wall. This is in continuation

of the water-channel leading from the floor of the cella and pas-

sing through the base of the inner wall and the sandhara ambula-

tory. All this indicates a later date for this temple than is usually

assumed, not to speak of other advanced features like the diverse

corbel forms, the style of sculpture, the presence of the upa-pitha,

etc. These and the presence of an inscription of Chalukya Vikram-

aditya II (A.D. 733-746) on the ruined outer gopura at the south-

eastern part оѓ the prakara indicate a date early in the first quarter

of the eighth century. The inner wall of a typical short apse or

chapa form encloses the cella. In forward alignment with its two

linear side walls are two rows of four pillars each inside the

antarala-mandapa dividing the space into a central nave with a

raised flat clerestory roof and two lateral aisles with lower slopy

slab roofs projected over the still lower slopy roof of the outer

circuit. The chapa ends of the inner wall of the aditala are turned

in to form the narrow front eritrance of the antarala-mandapa. T. he

agra-mandapa has four pillars set on the edge of the forward end

‘of the adhishthana with a raised clerestory roof in continuation

of the one at its rear. The aisles of the antarala are continuous

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE EARLY PHASE 137

with the inner circumambulatory between the two walls round the

sanctum. The sanctum is empty for a circular pitha. Its original

dedication is uncertain. The name Durga for the temple is mis-

leading since it was evidently not dedicated to that goddess. This

may be due to the fact that till the earlier part of the last century,

the temple formed part of a fortification (durga or durgam) with a

rubble defence work on top of the temple, probably of the

Marathas. If the incongruous superstructure of the northern -

.prasada-type is not original, the sanctum might have been either

flat-roofed or might have had an apsidal roof of the pattern of

Ter and Chezerla apsidal temples.

Coming to the Rashtrakuta phase of this early period commenc-

ing with the last quarter of the eighth century, we have, as a good

example, the ruined Jain vimana temple standing on the outskirts

of Patadkal. It is essentially a three-storeyed sandhara vimana,

square on plan from its base to sikhara, the two lower storeys

being functional. The kudu motifs on the cornice or kapota tier of

the adhishthana have lost their original nasika shape and have

become flat triangular reliefs, precursors of the dentil reliefs of

the later Chalukyan and Hoysala temples. The pillar capitals too

have lost their original shape and robustness and are transformed

into mere conventional shapes found in the later Chalukyan tem-

ples. The navaranga-mandapa in front of the aditala and connected

with it by a short antarala shows on its walls seven bays with six

intervening recesses, adorned with nasika forms containing the

seated Jinas and other figures. The prastara carries a hara of kutas,

salas and panjaras. The second tala has a sanctum enclosed by the.

upward extension of the inner wall of the aditala. Its antarala front

is masked by the basal part of the sukanasika, while the prastara

-on the other three sides carries four karnakutas and three salas,

there being no scope for a sala on the front side because of the

-Sukanasika. The third storey of some lesser width is relieved on its

- sides’ except on the front or sukanasika side. The bays contain

udgama motifs as in northern-style temples. The square sikhara

“following the same scheme of offsetting simulates a twelve-ribbed

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member heralding similar modifications in the later Chalukyan tem-

ples. In front of the navaranga is the open multi-pillared mukha-

mandapa, the peripheral row having interposed kakshasanas. Ex-

cept the two innermost pillars of peripheral series abutting on the

nayaranga front, all others, as well as the four central ones, though

in sandstone, are partially lathe-turned beralding the more com-

\_ pletely lathe-turned pillars of schist or soap-stone of the later:

Chalukyas and their successors.

The Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi, a collateral branch of the

early Chalukyas of Badami, however, have left a series of structu-

ral temples in sandstone which are more akin in their style to the

"Pallava style of Tondaimandalam to their south. Among these, the

temples at Biccavolu (east Godavari district) are characteristic.

The Bictavolu series falls into two groups. The earlier one com-

prises the temples called Kansaragudi, Nakkalagudi and a third

having no local name, all built, perhaps in the time of -Gunaga

Vijayaditya (848-891) and his successors. They are all square on

plan, three-storeyed tritala Nagara vimanas with four karanakutas.

and four salas intervening on the aditala and second tala prastaras,

without panjaras and devoid of the sukanasika. These features in-

dicate affinity and proximity to the Pallava type, though their

distinct regional and parental Chalukyan traits! would be evident

from the other features and the general stature of the vimana

form. The makara toranas show great emphasis in their detail,

particularly by the addition of a pair of makara-heads at the apex

of the arch on either side of the finial. The pilasters are four-sided

as usual in all early temples, with full capitals of the “order”. The

kudus in the flexed cornice, or kapota, are horse-shoe-shaped as in

the Pallava and early Chalukyan examples. The other three tem-

ples inside the village—the Golingesvara, the Chandrasekhara, and

the Rajarajesvara—would belong to the second and later group

(c- 950-1050), and the last perhaps to the time of Rajaraja

‘Narendra (1019-1060). They are also two- or three-storeyed Nagara

vimanas, square on plan, but with tbeir superstructures entirely

or partially restored in later times and heavily plastered over,

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obscuring many original diagnostic features. These temples have

all a typically Chalukyan plinth form, with nirandhara or single-

walled aditala and with a narrower ardha-mandapa in front. The

` niche sculptures are all Saivite. The sikhara is square as also the

griya. In some cases, as in the Rajarajesvara, the talas are devoid

of the hara over the prastara, a feature that became common in the

later temples of the Andhra coast. The sikhara form of the earlier

group shows affinity to the Upper Sivalaya form at Badami.

CHAPTER VII

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES--

THE MIDDLE PHASE

BY ABOUT A.D. 1000, imperial Chola power had reached its zenith,

its authority having spread over the entire Tamil region and

Kerala, parts of south Mysore and coastal Andhra, and even over-

seas to Sri Lanka, the Andamans, the Laccadives and the Maldives.

The contemporary rival power, the Rashtrakutas in the Deccan,

soon gave way to the resurgent Chalukyas of Kalyani, the Western

Chalukyas or later Chalukyas, as they are often called. With the

experience and knowhow acquired in stone construction, technique

and design, and with the forms and norms crystallised into codified

Agama and Silpa manuals, the period that followed witnessed

great activity in the construction of temples, particularly the great

ones of south India and Sri Lanka. A great number of new temples

were built by the Chola emperor, Rajarajachola I the Great (985-

1014), his elder sister, queens and vassal chiefs, and some more

still by the dowager queen, Sembiyan Mahadevi, the queen of the

pious Gandaraditya Chola, the grand uncle of Rajaraja I.

THE CHOLA AND THE LATER PANDYA SERIES

The Brihadisvara temple at Thanjavur closely followed by the

Brihadisvara at Gangaikendacholapuram (Tiruchirapalli district)

mark the acme of the southern vimana architecture—in magnitude,

quality of design, technique and embellishment. The great temple

at Thanjavur, appropriately called the Brihadisvara, or the Raja-

тајеѕүага after its builder Rajaraja I, conceived as a whole complex

on a grand scale and completed by the founder, constitutes the

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE MIDDLE PHASE. 141

most ambitious undertaking and achievement of the: Tamilian

architect. It combines all that is best in temple-building tradition

— architecture, sculpture, painting and allied arts. It is a large

complex with an enormous monolithic Nandi recumbent on a high

pedestal in front of the vimana and its coeval axial mandapas, but

now shelteréd in a mandapa of a much later date. It has the loftiest

known or achieved vimana, 66m high, standing over a basal

square one side of which is about 28m in length and which, in

due proportion to the elevation, forms an appropriately broad,

high and amply moulded upa-pitha platform, on which the boldly

moulded adhishthana of the east-facing pyramidal vimana rests.

` The same upa-pitha and adhishthana are extended forward as basal

structures of the axially placed ardha-, maha- and mukha-mandapas,

connected to the main vimana by a north-south transept across the

ardha-mandapa, reached from either side by flights of steps over

the heights of the upa-pitha and adhishthana. The pillard maha- and

mukha-mandapas are closed on their sides, the rows of pillars in-

side forming a central nave and lateral aisles which, in the maha-

mandapa part, are raised as a continuous platform on either side

of the central passage formed by the nave. The structure of pillars

"and roof over the frontal landing, constituting an open porch, or

agra-mandapa, are later replacements over the original adhishthana

and upa-pitha with a flight of steps added in front in addition to

the two original ones on the sides. While the transversely designed

mukha-mandapa as also the connecting transept rise in four storeys,

the maha-mandapa was originally three-storeyed. The top storey

was evidently an open terrace, with а TOW of Nandis placed on

the coping of its walls.

The basal part of the vimana enclosing the garbha-griha is o£

two talas and is double-walled in the sandhara mode, each of the

walls, outer and inner, of the same thickness and very massive.

The outer wall rising-vertically to a height of about 15m is mark-

ed externally into two storeys, lower and upper, by a dividing

prastara line marked horizontally by the bold cornice and the cen-

trally-placed additional doorways, complete with jambs, lintel and

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sill on each of the visible sides, south, west and north, the vimana

being an east-facing one. These two walls enclose inner circumam-

bulatories in two tiers, since the inner wall of the sanctum too

rises vertically to the same height of two storeys, in order to

accommodate the colossal linga, and its equally immense linga-

pitha in the sanctum. The outer wall, like the adhishthana below, is

externally relieved into five bays on each face, the central ones on

the south, west and north having the large door-openings in two

tiers, one over the other, for both storeys of the inner circumam-

bulatory. These along with the two superimposed larger or main

doorways on the east make the vimana а chaumukh or chaturmukha

structure, described as sarvatobhadra in the texts. In front on the

east, the massiveness of the walls pierced behind the main doorway

provides the antarala passage across the sandhara circuit leading

to the inner doorway of the sanctum. In front of this. antarala is

laid the north-south transept with flights of steps at either end,

north and south, described above.

The outer doorway is flanked by two colossal, drarapalas as are

the outer entrances too. The central bays of the outer wails, which

are the widest with door-openings, ‘have, at the top, over the

prastara of the second tala, the targest central sala of the hara of

that side. The extreme bays forming the respective corners and of

middling width have on top the karnakutas. The intermediate bays

of least width have the panjaras at their top, thus constituting the

full hara of aedicules over the second tala prastara. The hara over

the aditala is thus eliminated. The bays on either side of the cen-

tral one with a door-opening are full-fledged devakoshthas contain-

ing fine and bold sculptures, inside, of various deities. The Puranic

legend associated with the iconograpy of each niche figure is indi-

cated by small cameos in a synoptic manner on the jambs on

either side of the main sculpture, an innovation seen for the first

time during the early Chola period. The four intervening ‘recesses,

or wall spaces, are each filled up by the ‘decorative pilaster’ motif

which,is a short pilaster, carrying a shrine motif—panjara front—

on top, a motif characterfitic of the period. The main pilasters

Ld

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE MIDDLE PHASE 143

‘cantoning the.corners of the bays and their angles with the walls

are square in section with full capitals. The abacus, or phalaka, as

in earlier Pallava capitals, is large, massive and square, but the

corbel or potika arms are bevelled with a central triangular tenon

on the bevelled face.

. The inner wall of the lower storey has on its three sides, in the.

recesses between immense pilasters and opposite to the outer wall

openings, more than life-size sculptures of Siva seated on the south,

dancing on the west, and of Devi seated on the north. This lower

ambulatory contains, over the rest of the inner wall and over the

pilasters and ceilings and also over the inner face of the outer wall,

extensive mural paintings of the Chola period, overlaid by later

palimpsests of the Nayaka period in the seventeenth century. The

Chola layer has been exposed wherever extant by peeling off the

damaged Nayaka layer to reveal its richness. The most important

themes occupying almost entire wings of the inner wall space are

the panel representing Siva as Tripyrantaka (setting out for his

fight with the Tripura demons), the panel narrating the story of

the Saiva saint Sundaramurti Nayanar, and the panel representing

the Chera king worshipping at the shrine of Nataraja of Chidamba-

ram; along with his queens and his retinue. Other paintings of

dancers, musicians, birds, animals, etc. are interesting. After the

earlier paintings of an extensive nature in the Buddhist caves at

Ajanta arid the smaller area of paintings in the Jain cave-temple at

Sittannavasal, these are the only other'extensive series of guality >

forming an important landmark in the history of Indian mural

painting. The second tala circumambulatory is equally interesting,

for on its inner wall face at its middle height are blocked out one

hundred and eight sguare panels running as a belt right round, all

except the last. twenty-seven with completed reliefs showing Siva,

four-armed, ‘demonstrating the various karanas, or dance poses, as

enumerated in Bharata’s Natyashastra.

By a system of inward corbelling or offsetting of the successive

inner courses of the two opposing faces of the two walls, ог kada-

lika karqna—a system commonly adopted i in Indian architecture to

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bridge spaces as an alternative to true arching or vaulting—the

two walls are made to meet at the top level of the third storey,

from which point rises the rest of the pyramidal superstructure of

the eleven further gradually receding talas of this soaring vimana

in all of sixteen stages from the upa-pitha, almost the traditional

maximum. Each tala carries over its prastara a hara of kutas, salas

and panjaras. The topmost tala has instead four Nandis placed at

the four corners with the octagonal griva and sikhara rising up

from the midst. The topmost stones closing the ultimate gap alone

is estimated from their size to weigh 80 tons (81.3 metric tonnes).

The stupi, as originally intended by Rajaraja, and as stated in

his inscription in the temple, is of copper, gilt with gold and is

3.82m high. The entire interior of the pyramid from its base to

apek is rendered hollow by the gradual inward offsetting of the

successive courses of masonry in the kadalika karana mode. On

the front side the storeys up to the level of the fifth tala are slight-

ly extended forward over the antarala of the two lowermost vertical

talas, in the form of what is called a mukha sala, or mukha bhadra,

in order to take in these passages also in the organic scheme of

the vimana, which is the largest mukhya vimana of the Dravida

order.

From the top of the adhishthana at about the middle of the

northern side, an immense and carved water-spout is projected

which discharges the abhisheka water flowing out of the sanctum

floor. The water goes along the chutes running through the bases

of the two walls and along the floor of the sandhara circumambu-

latory in between. The lengthy pranala, or spout, is supported on

the head of a bhuta squatting over the upa-pitha platform, blowing

a conch. Opposite to this pranala and a little to the east is built

the coeval square vimana for Chandikesvara, the seneschal of the

Siva temple. This position located by Rajaraja in his great temple |

became the norm for all Siva temples of subsequent periods.

Enclosing the wide open court around the vimana and its axial

mandapas, including the Nandi pavilion, is a two-tiered prakara

wall of the same period. The tiers are demarcated externally by a

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE MIDDLE PHASE 145

horizontal kapota running at middle height, while both the tiers

are sectioned by carved pilasters at intervals. On the middle of the

eastern side the prakara has a massive gopura built entirely of

stone. Ranged inside the prakara wall and built against it is a con-

tinuous double-storeyed cloister, or malika, with a third open

terrace on top, interrupted at the four corners and the middle of

the three sides by seven square tritala-vimanas with octagonal

griva sikhara. These are dedicated to the eight dikpalas, or guar-

dians of the guarters: Agni, Yama, Niruti, Varuna, Vayu, Soma

and Isana, from the south-east round to the north-east. The shrine

for the eighth dikpala, Indra, and also another for Surya, merge

into the inner face of the vertical base of the gopura on the cast.

For the rest, the cloister is divided by a row of pillars aligned

behind the facade columns into a frontal continuous corridor and

a rear section stringing a series of thirty-six, two- and three-stor-

eyed shrines, all except those of the dikpalas with flat roofs of the

mandapa type. On top of the prakara wall are ranged a row of

Nandis. In the front of the gopura and at some distance away

from it is a second outer and larger gopura, perhaps going with an

outer prakara wall originally, but now incorporated into the de-

fensive fort-wall of much latér times. In addition to the inner

gopura, the prakara wall is pierced by three additional smaller

entrances of the forana gate variety, placed opposite the centre of

the south, west and north sides of the main vimana.. These are

framed by simple over-doors with sakhas and crowned by. horizon-

tal lintels. Е

The Brihadisvara truly great in all respects, as its devout and

victorious royal builder conceived it to be, is thus a repository of

every branch of art—architecture, sculpture in stone and copper,

iconography, painting, dance and music, jewellery, lapidary, etc.

The numerous Sanskrit and Tamil epigraphs inscribed on itare in

fine calligraphy. Some of them relate to the dedication of metal

images of various deities with details of their forms and appear-

ances, their measurements and weights. Some of these images are

extant. Others describe the various ornaments, with details of

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weights of gold and gems, their variety and quality, the manner of

their setting, the weight of lac and the strings used. The measure-

ments of lands endowed are given to the fraction of units. All

these would only show how meticulous the emperor was in matters

relating to his great temple. |

The other structures inside the court of this temple are the

south-facing Amman temple, or the Devi-shrine unit of Brihan-

nayaki, the consort of Brihadisvara, located to the north of

Nandi, with the vimana having sala sikhara and axial mandapas,

the adjoining sabha-mandapa for Nataraja also facing south, .and

the east-facing Ganesa and Subrahmanya temple units on the

south-west and north-west of the court. All these are all later

additions to this complex, the last one pertaining to the Nayaka

period.” ~ j ; ў

This magnum opus of the Cholas started іп 1003, and still

incomplete in a few of its details, was closely followed, within

about twenty years, by another magnificent Chola structure, also

called the Brihadisvara, built almost on the same plan and design

by Rajendra I Chola (1012-1014), the great son and worthy. succes-

sor of Rajaraja. The venue of this great temple was chosen in the

newly found capital of Gangaikondacholapuram (Tiruchirapalli

district), so named after the title of the king signifying his con-

quests and successful expedition up to the Ganga. This temple

complex had only two entrances, a gopura (now shattered) on the

east and a plain double-storeyed forana gate on the north. While

a great part of the stone enclosure wall, gopura, two-storeyed

malika, and sub-shrines and mandapas were blasted and pulled

down in the last century to supply stones for constructing a river

dam in the neighbourhood, «ће main vimana and its axial man-

\_dapas, and two or three lesser vimana units in the court have for-

tunately been spared and are even now almost intact. ‘The vimana

is of a lesser height and smaller dimensions than its predecessor

and model at Thanjavur, but the sculpture on the wall ‘niches, bold

and almost cut-out in the round, is perhaps of greater excellence.

‘The square vimana with a boldly moulded adhishthana over a high

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-upa-pitha is likewise sandhara in its two vertical lower falas. The

Brihadisvara Vimana of Gangaikondacholapuram differs from its

predecessor and supposed model of the same name in Thanjavur

in one important respect. It has only a single entrance on the east,

on both the functional lower storeys and is not chaturmukha or

sarvatobhadra as the Thanjavur temple is. The tapering superstruc-

ture of further talas resting on the third fala, rendered in a similar

kadalika kana mode, assumes an embowed outline at the corners

in -contrast to the severely straight corner lines of the Thanjavur

Vimana. This is an aesthetic achievement, resulting from the clever

interposition of octagonal kutas in the hara elements of the upper

talas as karnakutas at the corners. Externally this vimana may be

said to excel its predecessor in the matter of quality, fineness and

variety of bold sculpture, as also the more aesthetic design of its

superstructure. Internally, however, it lacks the other embellish-

ments, namely, the paintings and depiction of dances. The smaller

temple units, called the Uttara Kailasa and Dakshina Kailasa on

either side of the main vimana, also belong to about the same

P wholly apsidal and multi-storeyed main vimana, built of

black-stone of the Tiruvorriyur temple near Madras, is another

fine temple, though it is a smaller structure of Rajendra I Chola.

The foundation inscription is interesting in that it defines the type

of stone used as krishna-sila (black-stone), gives an account of the

angas or parts of the vimana by which it was embellished, and also

the name of the architect-designer. Following this, a number of

wholly apsidal temples or temples with four-sided aditala and

apsidal superstructure and griva sikhara continued to be built in

this part of Tamil Nadu—Tondaimandalam in later Chola times

and succeeding periods. Such temples are rather rare in the Chola

Pandimandalams further south. А

S Rajarajesvara, now. called Airavatesvara, at Darasuram,

builtby Chola Rajaraja П (1 146-1173), and the Kampaharesvara

at Tribhuvanam, built by Chola Kulottunga Ш (1178-1223) (both

in Thanjavur district) are the last great temples of tlic later

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Cholas with all-stone vimanas that were built before the later

Pandyas supplanted them by the middle of the thirteenth century.

These two are essentially lesser versions of the two Brihadisvara

Vimanas, but incorporate in their design some variations and inno-,

vations revealing an amount of Chalukya-Rashtrakuta influence.

The Airavatesvara exhibits in its five tala vimana superstructure, a

clever variation of the corner elements in the fala haras which are.

square, octagonal and circular karnakutas conforming to the

Nagara, Dravida and Vesara types; beside, there are also panjaras

of the apsidal Vesara type turned sideways in one of the lower tala

corners. The topmost tala carries four square karnakutas, again

flanked by a pair of recumbent Nandis, one on either side. This

feature is an innovation made by Chola Rajendra I in his later

temples. It persisted for about a century in some temples and dis-

appeared, as before, leaving the place for Nandis alone. But at the

same time this temple of Rajaraja II heralds the idea of placing

paired Nandis or similar vahanas or lanchanas appropriate in other

temples —which in later times were placed back to back, or coales-

cent with single-neck and head—at the corner, with two indepen-

dent bodies along the two sides. Another feature found abandoned

in the post-Pallava temples and earlier Chola temples, but persisting

throughout in the Chalukyan'series of temples, and found again in

this temple, is the extension of the hara of kuras, salas and panja-

ras over the tops of the axial mandapas beyond the transept in

front of the aditala, The main axial tomplex of vimana and man-

dapas is similar to the plan in the Brihadisvara. Though it is lesser

in dimensions, it is more ornate with bold and round sculpture in

the niches and cameos of Puranic scenes formed by miniature

panels. The one forming a belt round the base. of the vimana walls

is noteworthy in that it narrates synoptically the stories of the

lives of the 63 Saiva Nayanmars according to the ‘work called

Periyapuranam. The larger loose sculptures set in the wall-niches

and in the malika corridors are in a new medium, namely, a black,

polished basalt-like stone, as against the'granite of the structure.

They are all sculptures of a fine quality and most of them arc now

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removed and exhibited in the Thanjavur Art Gallery. The closed

maha-mandapa of this east-facing complex has-an open porch-like

agra-mandapa on its south, with ornately carved pillars having

panel sculptures. The porch mandapa itself is designed to simulate

a chariot on wheels drawn by horses, while the flights of steps,

fore and aft, have balustrades guarded by elephants.

On the northern side of the maha-mandapa is the improvised

Amman shrine for the Devi, consort of the presiding deity. The

whole is surrounded by a prakara with a storeyed malika. corridor

running round inside and a storeyed gopura in front. Outside this

gopura is the ornate but small Nandi-mandapa. Beyond is another

Outer gopura that fronted a now non-existent outer prakara.

The Deivanayaki Amman temple in a separate enclosure with

a front gopura on the north of the Airávatesvara complex is also

coeval, and the storeyed superstructure of the vimana carries a

sala sikhara appropriate to Devi temples. The pilasters cantoning

the walls of the aditala are yyala-based, as in the Rajasimha

Pallava temples of much earlier times.

The Kampaharesvara is much similar to the Airavatesvara,

including its wheeled .porch-mandapa, an extension of the hara

elements over the axial mandapas in front of the vimana aditala:

and the Amman or Devi and Chandikesvara Vimanas being coeval

with cach other. This temple too is a.veritable museum of sculp-

tures of varied iconography that include some fine dance poses.

Of the coeval main gopuras, the inner one in front and the rear

ones are ruined on top, and the taller outer-front gopura has the

characteristic squat shape of the period.

The series of temples of this later Chola and later Pandya

periods, terminated by the disruption brought about by the brief

Muslim invasion and revival under the Vijayanagar Empire of

the south, often revert to the system of brick-building for the

superstructural falas over the stone body of the vimanas and

gopuras, the mandapas alone being wholly of stone. The temples

of this and subsequent periods incorporate in the original plan

and composition of the temple complex the new and significant

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addition brought into vogue late in the time of Rajendra I Chola,

namely, the Tirukkamakottam, or Amman shrine as itis called in

Saiva temples, or Tayarsannadhi in Vaishnava temples, that

formed the unique feature of all temples: of Tamil Nadu and of

Tamilian-built temples elsewhere. For example, there is a Visal-

akshi temple built by the Tamils for the consort of Lord Visvesvara

at Kasi-Varanasi. These also came to be built in the precincts of,

or adjoining to, earlier built temples that originally did not pos-

sess them; as, for example, the Thanjavur Brihadisvara. Assigned

a definite location in the complex, it is a separate vimana with a

sala sikhara dedicated to Devi as the divine consort of the/presid-

ing deity in the main vimana, receiving equal importance in the

rituals of worship and in the festivals. Thus, in accordance with

the local names for the main deity, the Devi consort has an appro-

priate name, e.g. Brihadisvara-Brihannayaki, Sundaresvara-Min-

akshi, etc.

The gopuras of the temple complex, in front and ip rear, as also

often on the sides of the multiple prakaras, become more pro-

minent by their greater size, often overtopping the main vimana in

height. The gopuras added to already existing temples by the later '

Cholas, the later Pandyas, and the contemporary Pallavaraya

chieftains and others are many. The Hoysalas too, when they came

to occupy a part of Tamil Nadu in the last days of the later

Cholas, left some significant gopuras, as, for example, the Ballala

Gopura at Tiruvannamalai. The Pallavara Gopuras of Ko-Perun-

jinga at Chidambaram, Vridhdhachalam and other places are

noted for their sculptures, particularly for the depiction of the

hundred and eight dance poses with appropriate verses from the

Natyashastra inscribed as labels. The decorative pilaster motif,

which is essentially a pilaster carrying a shrine motif, often a

nasika front, on top that adorned the recesses of the walls of

vimana aditalas, mandapas and gopurqs, came to have a purna ghata

or puma kumbha base, appearing as though the pilaster emerges

out of a full pot or pitcher of plenty signified by foliage flowing

out of its mouth. These kumbha panjaras became a common

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feature. The corbel shapes also change, and the central tenon of

the simple bevelled corbel of the earlier Chola temples, assumes

more or less the form of a bell-shaped pendentive, which gradu-

‘ally becomes floral and extended, anticipating the incipient

madalai, or curved stalk of the characteristic риѕйра potika of the

Vijayanagar times and after. The abacüs of the pillar and pilaster

capitals becomes thinner, smaller, and polygonal in contrast with

the large, thick and square forms of the Pallava and earlier Chola

times. The octagonal griva and sikhara of the southern style, which

were more common in earlier times become from now on the more

general norm of the southern temples, though the square and

circular shapes are occasionally, and the apsidal style still more

rarely, seen.

Mandapas like the Airavatesvara porch-mandapa in the form of

a chariot on wheels drawn by horses or elephants or both added

to the front of the mukha-mandapa, or to one of its sides forming

the main entrance, became rather common. These are found in the

Sarangapani and Nagesyara temples in Kumbakonam (Thanjavur

district) where in the case of the Nagesvara it fronts the sabha-

mandapa of Nataraja, which again is -another feature added to

the temples from the later Chola times. They are also to be found

in Tiruvarur, Kudumiyamalai, Vridhdhachalam, Chidambaram

and many other places. This provided inspiration to the Eastern

Ganga king, Narasimha, for constructing such а mandapa in his

Simhachalam temple in north coastal Andhra, and more so for

his great Sun temple at Konarak.

The addition of the Devi temple brought into more common

vogue the Kalyana utsava, or annual ceremonial marriage festival

of the god and goddess, for which special Kalyana dolotsava-(swing

festival) mandapas with attached yaga-mandapas were built. The

advent of the special Nataraja shrine as part of the sabha-man-

dapas or nritta-mandapas in Siva temples has already been men-

tioned earlier. The other types аге the utsava-mandapas for various

periodical festivals where the utsava murtis were decorated, wor-

‘shipped and taken out in procession. Snapana- ог abhisheka-

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mandapas (halls for ceremonial bathing rituals), vyakarana-man-

dapas (halls for exposition and educational purposes), ranga- and

.natyasalas for dance and music, and even atura salas (hospital

.mandapas) came to . be added to ‘the temple complex. All these

made the medieval temple of the Tamil land the hub not only of

the religious but also of the social, economic and other temporal

activities ofi the: community which always centted round the

temple.

THE LATER (WESTERN) CHALUKYA-HOYSALA SERIES

The Rashtrakutas, whose two important temples, the Kailasa

monolith at Ellora and the Jain temples on the’ outskirts of

Patadkal, have been considered earlier, were replaced in the

Deccan by the resurgent Western Chalukyas of Kalyana who

became the most important power between the eleventh and the

thirteenth centuries. They continued the Chalukya-Rashtrakuta

traditions with a gradual introduction of significant modifications

of their own. Their earlier temples such as the Navalinga group

and the Kallesvara at Kukkanur near Gadag (Dharwar district),

assignable to the latter half of the tenth century, are perhaps the

last among structures that were built of sandstone, and mark the

end of the sandstone-trap rock tradition. They adopted different

soft stones, such as the chloritic schist, for their temples during the

middle of their period.

The fine cluster of nine temples ina group called the Navalinga

temple consists of nine two- or three-storeyed square vimanas,

single-walled, and built round the sides and ends of a linear row

ofthree mandapas, all of poor quality, sandstone. In general

appearance, but for the characteristic sukanasikas, they resemble

the Biccavolu temples of the Eastern Chalukyas. The top talas are

devoid of the Aara, the top sikhara has a prominently splayed out

brim or lip, and the sides arc offset repeatedly. The kudus still

retain their arched shapes. The hara elements too retain their

STRUCTURAL STONE.TEMPLES—THE MIDDLE PHASE 153

«characteristic shapes, and the projected bays of the aditala wall .

have devakoshtha niches framed by kuta fronts mounted on shorter

pilaster pairs, or by makara toranas. The door lintels too are

elaborate makara toranas, often with a Gajalakshmi crest as the

lalata bimba. The mandapa pillars are partially lathe-turned in

respect of their capitals, while the shaft is square and angular,

marking the beginnings of the characteristic and almost wholly

lathe-turned pillars of the later periods. Standing a little away from

. the group is the Mahamayi temple with an oblong shrine appro-

priate to Devi Vimanas, and two front mandapas, also oblong. An-

other obloug shrine with narrow front mandapa stands next to the

Navalinga cluster. It has a tank at one corner. The other ruined

structures are all enclosed by a prakara with two openings on two

‘of the four sides. The mention of goddesses like Ganga, Kalika,

Sarasvati and Mahamayi in the associated inscriptions indicates -

a strong Devi cult in this centre.

The Kallesvara.has a square three-storeyed nirandhara vimana

fronted by an antarala and a closed mandapa in the axial line over

which also the hara of the aditala level is extended. The top tala

is bereft of the hara, a sukanasika projects from the upper tala

over the antarala. The storeys, however, are not boldly marked off

as in the earlier type, and the square sikhara with offset sides has

a well splayed out brim. The kudus on the cornices are beginning

to lose their horse-shoe shape and have become flat facets or ante-

fixes. The wall spaces between the relieved bays of the adifala are

adorned by reliefs of shrine frontals with superstructures of the

southern vimana patterns, or of the northern prasada patterns. The

square-based pillars of the mandapa are partially fathe-turned,

particularly the capitals below the phalaka, showing some advance

in this respect over the earlier Navalinga examples. There are two

rectangular shrines facing the four central pillars of the mandapa,

perhaps originally dedicated to Ganapati and Durga. The recesses

of the mandapa wall have perforated windows. But what is more

interesting from the constructional point of view is the fact that

the walls, though of usual thickness, are built of smaller blocks of

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stone, a tendency to approximate to brickwork, in contrast to the

large-sized blocks used in the earlier cyclopean or near cyclopean

constructions of the Chalukyas and the Rashtrakutas.

Turning to the temples of Lakkundi, also near Gadag, one comes.

across temples in the construction of which sandstone, till then

usual, is totally abandoned in favour of a fine-textured, soft,

chloritic schist stone that is quarried naturally in lesser thicknesses.

The new material, because of its less thick quarry size and the

greater ease with whick it can be cut, naturally reacted upon

workmanship, resulting in the reduced size of the masonry courses

and increased volume of fine and delicate carvings on such tempt-

ing soft and smooth material. Of the many interesting temples of

such material in this place, the Jain temple is the largest and most

prominent which might have: been built in the latter half of the

eleventh century. It has a square five-storeyed nirandhara vimana,

with a square griva and sikhara. It had originally a closed nava-

ranga-mandapa in front, though an open mandapa was added later

on. The central bay of the mavaranga included within the four

central pillars is a square larger than the eight surrounding peri-

pheral bays. The single aditala wall is made thick and massive to

carry the hara and the functional tala with a shrine over it (as in

the Jain temple at Pattadkal which, however, is sandhara) and is

also provided externally on its sides, with repeatedly offset projec-

tions. In addition, it has four supporting pillars at the four inner

corners of the garbha-griha. The aditala hara is extended as usual

over the antarala and the larger navaranga. The upper talas, of a

considerably lesser height and a gradually diminishing width, have

the hara over them, except the topmost one. The griva tóo is very

short and the prominent squattish sikhara has a well splayed out

brim. The kudus on the cornice, though flat, retain their arched

shape, and have simha mukha finials. The pilasters on the walls are

slender with capitals that have lost their robust shapes. The pro-

portionate sizes of their components are lost and the abacus, or

phalaka, is small and thin. In the spaces between the paired pilas-

ters on the walls are inset 'nasika front motifs. In the recesses

‘STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES — THE MIDDLE PHASE 155

\_ between the bays of the wall occurs the ‘decorative pilaster'—a

pilaster carrying a shrine front or pavilion on top, as is to be found

in the Chola temples of the eleventh century at Thanjavur and

Gangaikondacholapuram. The decorative pilaster is framed in--

side a torana over two shorter pilaster supports. The tall functional

second tala and the five-storeyed elevation lend stature to this fine

vimana.-

The Kasi-Visvesvara temple at Lakkundi, and the Mahadeva

temple at Ittagi, also not far from Gadag, mark among others the

zenith of architecture and art jn this area under the Western

Chalukyas. The date of the latter temple is precisely indicated by

its inscription as A.D. 1112. The main vimana, extant only up to

the griva, the sikhara and stupi having been lost, is a square five-

storeyed structure standing on an elaborately moulded adhishihana

with a sukanasika projected from the level of the fourth tala over

the antarala roof. The entire vimana on each side is thrown out

into five prominent bays, the central one being the most projected,

with four narrower recesses in between, the bays again offset

repeatedly, so that the plan is apparently a scalloped one. The hara

on each side of the-falas in correspondence with the width of the

bays are made of two karnakuras, one at either end, a central sala,

and two intervening panjaras. The most projected central bay of

each side of the aditala with sala superstructure embraces deep

and broad niches forming miniature sanctums, making the whole

appear like lesser vimanas, with their pillars, prastara and super-

structure clustering round the base of the central one, while the

corner ones, corresponding to the karnakutas, have narrower and

shallower fronts. The navaranga forms a larger square in front, its

outer walls and adhishthana similarly relieved and recessed. and

with similar external ornamentation. What is more interesting is

its highly ornate and raised central ceiling, and the fine carvings on

its tier slabs, particularly those cutting the corners of the ceiling of

square bays. This mandapa:is provided with three entrances, east,

south and north, with pillared porches, the front one connecting it

with an open multi-pillared agra-mandapa axially in front, which:

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again has three porches on its three sides. The excessive decorative

elements of this temple, ás.also the plan and other "features, '

indicate its proximity in time to the typical temples of the Hoy-

salas and Kakatiyas who came after them to power in this region

3n the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.

The temples built by or under the patronage of the Hoysalas in

south Deccan and Mysore are of the very tractable, dense and

fine-grained, soft chloritic schist or talc which permits fine and

minute carving. The temple unit in general consists of a vimana

connected by its short antarala to a closed navaranga which may

often be preceded by another mandapa. It is not also unusual for

the temple unit to have three, main vimanas on three sides of a

common navaranga each opening into it by the connecting antaralas,

the fourth side of the navaranga being provided with the main

entrance, or porch. This is termed trikutachala. The whole com-

plex is raised over a common wider terrace, or upa-pitha, providing

an open circumambulatory round the entire unit over its top

platform. By the repeated offsetting not only of the sides but

alio of the angles, the resulting plan becomes star-shaped, the

same plan as would result by rotating a square pivoted at its

centre so that its corners, or the ends of its diagonals, touch

sixteen or thirty-two or more points on a circle circumscribed \_

round it. This star-shaped external configuration is made to

extend from the upa-pitha to the apex of the vimana superstructure.

This, incidentally, provided a larger surface area for the execution

of the cloyingly prolific sculpture and carving for which the Hoy-

sala temples are noted. The adhishthana pattern is more akin to -

the northern style in having tiers of superposed friezes of ele-

phants, warriors, horses, hamsas, makaras, etc., the broad pattika-

like top tier depicting Puranic scenes in a series of narrative

vignettes. The walls are embellished by niches crowned by pyramid-

al tiered superstructures and enshrining figure sculpture of varied

iconography. The intervening parts are adorned further. by pilasters

carrying pyramidal tiered superstructural motifs on top. The pras-

tara has a prominent eaves-like cornice. The superstructure is a

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scheme of close-set hara elements, essentially of kutas, rising one

behind the other, each marking a stercy, the topmost one carrying

a short griva and octagonal sikhara terminating in a sfupi. The

middle of the front face of the upper talas is drawn forward into а: `

sukanasika over the antarala below. The pillars inside the man-

dapa have square bases. The shaft and capital region up to the

broad square abacus is smoothly rounded, turned on a lathe and

polished, forming a series of bulges and curved necks, beadings,

etc., usually later embellished by finely picked ornamentation.

Often the axial series of the temple unit is surrounded by an open

court and pillared cloister inside the prakara wall, having its maha-

dvara entrance only on. one side, the front. í $

Among the hundreds of Hoysala temples of greater or lesser

merit, the most well known and typical аге: the Hoysalesvara

among the many temples at Halebid, the Chennakesava temple

at Belur (both in Hassan district; the two towns were the earlier

and later capitals of the Hoysalas), and the Kesava temple at

Somnathpur (Mysore district). 8

The Chennakesava temple unit at Belur was built by Hoysala

Vishnuvardhana in 1117 and consecratgd to Vishnu with the name

Vijaya Narayana. It now forms the р cipal unit in a complex of

later temples, surrounded by a cloister and prakara, with a gopura

entrance in the east on the axial line of the main unit, and a plain

side entrance to its south on the same, side. The present brick-

work superstructure of the gopura is а much later renovation. As

designed and completed by Vishnuvardhana it had the vimana of a

beautiful stellate plan and an ornate ;sanctum doorway with a

superbly carved over-door, and an antarala fronted by a similar

ornamental doorway. The ornamental doorway was preceded by a

large navaranga, the three sides of which had extended passages or

closed porches, east, south and north, terminating externally into

elaborately carved entrances with over-doors. The whole is raised

on an upa-pitha, 1.5m high, the plan of its open circumambnlatory

following the stellate plan of the vimana and. its axial mandapas,

In front of the three external openings of the ‘mandapa are two

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short flights of steps down the adhishthana and upa-pitha heights,

respectively, with two miniature vimana models posed at either end

on the ground level and on top ofthe flight of steps over the upa-

pitha platform. The bases of the peripheral pillars of the navaranga

and its three porches were interconnected by kakshasana platforms

over which a few generations later (in the time of Ballala II who

built the tank at the north-east corner and the prakara), perforated

screen walls were fitted between the pillars, making the mandapa

a closed one: The adhishthana tiers of the vimana antarala and

mandapa are profusely carved with long lines of friezes of animals,

men and narrative scenes. The walls carry sculptures of icono-

graphic interest. The relieved bays on е, three sides of the vimana

aditala, which are almost buttressing miniature vimanas, have deep

cells inside for sculptures of deities. The overhanging kapota of the

mandapa is supported by numerous finely-carved female figures in

graceful poses called madanikas. The superstructure of the main

vimana is now lost. The pillars inside the mandapa are exquisitely

lathe-turned or intricately carved, and a few of them carry fine

bold figure sculptures. The raised coffer-like central ceiling of the

mandapa, rising in eight tiers by stepped-up triangular slabs cutting

the corners successively, forms a sort of octagonal hollow dome

“with all the tiers intricately carved. The apical covering stone

extends down the centre as a large, intricately-carved lantern-iike

pendentive or karnika. The lowest tier of the ceiling is also sup-

ported, as it were, by madanikas, more beautiful than those outside,

sprung from the square abacus ofthe lathe-turned pillars. The

temple thus is a veritable museum of sculptures, large and small,

and intricate vegetal, floral and animal carvings.

The Hoysalesvara, built about 1150, among the many other tem-

ples of the period in Halebid, is a composite of two similar vimana

units, both dedicated to Siva, standing side by side on a common

raised platform, a combination of two stellate upa-pithas. Each

unit consists of a vimana of a star-shaped plan with antarala and

navaranga in front, facing east. Each navaranga has three projected

entrances in a cruciform manner with the northern arm of the

-

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southern navaranga joined to the southern arm of the northern

-navaranga resulting in а common passage between the two. The

adhishthanas of both the units are made up of elaborate animal or

narrative friezes forming their respective tiers. Externally the inter-

columnal spaces of the projected porches are screened by perfora-

ted windows above the level of the kakshasana platforms that join

together the bases of the pillars. The walls of the vimana, the inter-

connecting transept, and the walls of the mandipas are covered

externally with large sculptural reliefs of remarkable fineness. The

-entrances of the porches, the antarala and the shrine ch#mber are

framed by elaborately carved over-doors, with elegant makara

torana lintels on top. The superstructures of both the vimanas are

lost. The upa-pitha platform provides a broad open circumambula-

tory round both the units. Standing in front of the temple units,

and at some distance from them are two open-pillared Nandi-man-

dapas, both asymmetrical and later additions, though of the same

period, the southern onc having a small shrine at its rear. Though

incomplete as it stands now, the Hoysalesvara marks the climax of

Hoysala art and architecture.

The Kesava temple at Somnathpur is a fine example of one of

the latest in the series of Hoysala creations. It was built in 1268

by Somanatha, a general of the Hoysala king. ft is one of the

most exquisitely carved temples of small size, resembling a jewel:

casket. It is a trikuta temple with three principal vimanas of equal `

magnitude, facing north, east and south, respectively, opening into

a larger and closed common mandapa on its north, west and south

sides. To its east is added a larger nararanga-mandapa closed by per-

forated screen walls over the kakshasana level. All the three shrines

are dedicated to Vishnu in different forms. The whole is mounted

. overan.rpa-piha platform of steller plan, as also are the three

-yimanas and Ње mandapas from base to apex. The platform provides

a broad circumampbulatory. This axial series is surrounded by an

"open court with 4 peripheral cloister of sixty-four shrines inside the

prakara wall. The shrines аге ranged on the rear half of the cloister

close to the prekara; while the anterior half forms a continuous

TO.. ` TEMPLES OF SOUTH INDIA

‘corridor with pillared facade. In front there is а pillared entrance

mandapa Which perhaps had a superstructure of the pattern’ of a

pura, The adhishthana mouldings are exquisitely carved with:

jezes of men, warriors, elephants, horses, hamsas and makaras,.

{Бе ‘topmost tier. having a series of narrative panels depicting

incidents from the Ramayana and the -Bhagavata. The wall niches.

have boldly moulded figure scutptures of gods and goddesses. The:

pillars inside the mandapa are all finely lathe-turned with gracefully

carved mouldings. More ‘interesting, however, are the coffered

ceilings óf the navaranga, as also those of the inner mandapa, and

the outer porch, looking like inverted basketry, with elaborate car-

-vings, floral, vegetal, serpentine, etc. of different patterns and

including small sculptures of dikpalas, no two ceiling bays looking

alike. The larger central bay is the most significantly wrought bay.

Of the temples of the Kakatiyas of Orangallu, or Warangal, the

temples at Hanamkonda and Palampet are the most well known,

and typical of their architecture and art. The so-called “thousand-

pillared temple’ at Hanamkonda (Warangal district), built by King

Prataparudra in 1162, shows well the transition from the late

Western Chalukyan to the Kakatiya style. The main part consists

of a trikuta or triple shrine of considerable dimensions and dedica-

ted to Siva, Vishnu and Surya, all the three opening into a common

mandapa on its west, north and east, respectively, and the whole

standing over a common platform. The mandapa has open corners

between the three shrines and on its two sides, and its pillars inside

are lathe-turned. The adhishthana, the walls with pilasters and the

prastara are repeatedly offset, with projected bays, the central one

on each side projecting the most and constituting by itself a small

side vimana with a cella. The superstructures of all the three

vimanas are lost. The most interesting part extant is the multi-

pillared mandapa with about three hundred pillars, all richly car-

ved. This is attached in front of the unit to an intervening Nandi-

mandapa. Another interesting feature of this ruined temple within

the fort is ‘the elaborate free-standing zoranas marking the

entrances.

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE MIDDLE PHASE 161

The temples at Palampet (Warangal, district) form another in-

teresting group. The main temple of'the group constructed in 1215

stands on a high platform, with a Nandi-mandapa in front. It is

enclosed by a massive wall. The main vimana, essentially square

on plan, has its three sides offset prominently into five bays each,

the central one of each side further offset forward and constitüting

a three-tiered replica of the main vimana on a lesser scale. The

other bays. have tall close-set pairs of pilasters carrying on their

tops shrine-motifs which are replicas of the superstructures of the

. southern-type vimanas and northern-type prasadas alternately. The |

haras of the talas are indistinct, with more of the kuta element con- -

spicuous. The griva too is abbreviated and less distinct and almost

of the same. width as the domical sikhara. The entire, superstruc-

ture is of brickwork. Axially, a closed square antarala or ardha-

mandapa connects the vimana with a large navaranga in front,

which is surrounded by a peripheral platform with an outer series

of thirty-two pillars and a circumambulatory. The most noteworthy

feature is the array of brackets in the form of female figures,

rising from the capitals of the pillars and strutting up the beams

and the cornice. Twelve of these are almost life-size figures of

slender build and in graceful poses. The rest are rearing vyalas,

their hind legs resting on elephant heads. The bases of the periphe-

ral pillars of the mandapa are also connected by a -vedi and a balus-

"trade forming the lean-back of the kakshasana. The interior of the

mandapa is\*also full of sculptures; and the ceilings of the bays are

. ornate. The hara of the aditala of the vimana is also extended over

- the mandapa terrace. On the platform inside are a set of eight sub-

shrines in four pairs adjacent to each of the four corners of the

navaranga. While the main structure is of reddish sandstone, the

decorations are of polished basalt or hornblende, which are stones

of the hard variety. Ye

Among the three temples in Pillalamarri (Nalgonda district), the

Erakesvara, now called Somesvara, consecrated in 1208, is like the

great temple of Palampet, a complete unit of the Kakatiya pattern.

It consists of a vimana with a mukha-mandapa in front that is

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provided with three projected porch entrances, preceded by flights

ofsteps on the north, east and south, while the garbha-griha is

attached to the west with a connecting antarala. The whole stands

on a prominent and well-moulded upa-pitha. The wall,of the garbha-

griha over the adhishthana on each face has five prominently re-

lieved pilasters, the central one wider than the lateral pairs, and

the prastara on top has a slopy flat plain cornice. The recesses bet-

ween the pilasters contain the usual short and slender pilaster

motif surmounted by a shrine superstructure over its abacus. The

superstructure of the main vimana, now ruined, appears to have

been of four talas or storeys with a prominently projected sukana-

sika on the front side over the antarala, a Nandi placed on top of

it. The sikara оп top also appears to have been square. The

mandapa with offset sides has four carved pillars at its centre

round a raised floor vith a ceiling, which is a grid of nine squares,

each containing a lotus.

The Namesvara temple in another part of the village, consecra-

ted in about 1202 by Nami Reddi, is a more elegant structure with

carving and sculpture richer than in the larger Erakesvara. It con-

sists of the vimana facing east and open mukha-mandapa connected

by an antarala. The upa-pitha is absent. The mukha-mandapa has 2

frontal porch. .The mandapa is of the navaranga pattern with four

central pillazs round the centre of the floor and twelve more pillars

on the periphery. Adjacent to the Namesvera is a triple-shrined

unit with three shrines opening on the south, west and north of a

common mukha-mandapa. The three shrines, all alike, are compara-

tively plain structures built of large slabs of stone with no decora-

tions on their exterior. The shrines named Namesvara, Kamesvara

and Kachesvara (now called Mukkanti Siva temple) were built by

' Nami Reddi at the beginning of the thirteenth century. The ruined

brickwork superstructure has lost many of its distinctive features.

The temple complex at Ghanapur (Warangal district) inside the

mud-fort at the centre of the village is another example of a Kaka-

tiya temple complex. The nuclear structure dedicated to Siva is

large with a mandapa in front and a number of lesser independent

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1

shrines of varied shapes on the four sides, some of them with man-

dapas and others without such an axial appendage. The main

structure is like the great temple of Palampet in size, plan and ele-

vation. It faces east. The vimana of 16.3m width at base is

connected to the western side of a large mukha-mandapa through

an antarala, the mukha-mandapa having openings with entrance

porches on the other three sides, east, south, and north. The whole

stands on a double plinth, as usual, the wider upa-pitha platform

below and the adhishthana, or the real base of the structures above,

leaving an open ambulatory all round. The superstructure of the

vimana is unfortunately lost. Over the adhishthana of the mandapa

there is the usual dwarf wall, or vedi parapet forming kakshasanas

and supporting the shorter peripheral pillars at the corners and on

either side of each porch entrance. These pillars, as at Palampet,

carry fine caryatid brackets springing from the top cubical part of

the shaft and reaching up to the corbel and cornice. The bracket-

figures represent madanikas in graceful poses, and vyalas surmount-

ing elephants, each with a human torso emerging out of its gape.

The walls of the antarala and sanctum are alternately relieved by

flat pilasters and recessed, as in other temples of the type, the

recesses containing a pilaster motif crowned by a shrine superstruc-

ture below а pafra-lata arch or torana, the common motif of the

Kakatiya temples. The bases of the main pilasters have relief.

sculptures of gods and dancers. Inside the mandapa there are minor

shrines arranged on the periphery, five.of them extant, as in the

Palampet temple again. The roof of the mandapa is lost. Axially

there is a ruined mandapa in front of the eastern porch. The sur-

rounding parivara shrines are of varied character, with or without.

a front mandapa. Some of them have tiered superstructures still

extant with sukanasika projections, in some of which the kuta sala

elements of the southern vimana are evident. Many of them have

square sikharas. In one case at least the crowning part is of the

amalaka type.

There are about a dozen temples, not very outstanding, inside

the Warangal Fort, many of them only small structures like the

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Virabhadra, Mandalamma, Rama, Visbnu, Venkatesa, Svayambhu,

Nelasambhu, Jangamesvara, and Devi temples. The two small

temples at Katachpur (Katakshapura) in the same district are

- trikuta with their superstructures lost. :

The Kakatiya temples, though they derive mostly from the Wes-

tern Chalukyan group, form a distinct category. They include single

vimana units and trikuta units. The superstructure over the stone-

built body in many cases, especially the larger temples, is of brick

and mortar. The trikuta units are to be found among those at

Panagal. The Rudresvara-Vasudeva-Surya complex at Hanam-

konda is the best example of this type. One of the units is at

Pillalamarri. This and the shrine to the west of the main temple at

Palampet are also trikuta. The single vimana units, of which a

typical example is the great temple at Palampet, show variations

in plan, rise, and decorative, details. Typically the vimana is con-

nected by an antarala to a frontal mandapa with three porch én-

trances on the three other sides. The mandapa, after the navaranga

pattern, has four central pillars, which are highly finished and are

decorative, lathe-turned, with basal and top cubical sections on

the shaft, with their faces sculptured, and an intervening polygon-

al belt. The jar-like kalasas or lasunas, with more straight sides

than curved, are polygonal in section often and the kumbha is

flattened in the form of a circular and lenticular disc with almost

a sharp or narrow edge. The phalaka is large, square and thin in

section. All this indicates an elaboration of the trends already

noticed in the. Western Chalukyan temples. The pillars in the

mandapa of the great temple at Palampet and in the triple shrine

of Hanamkonda are of black granite, lathe-turned and highly

polished, while in the other cases they are of sandstone. Similar

shorter peripheral pillars. over the vedi of the mandapas, as at

Ghanapur and Palampet, often carry remarkable bracket-figures,

of madanikas or of mythical animals. The sanctum and axial

. mandapa or mandapas are often raised on their own adhishthana

over a common and larger upa-pitha affording a circumambulatory

platform round the entire structure and providing the first landing

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE MIDDLE PHASE 165

over the flights of steps from the ground level to the porch en-

trances over the adhishthana above. The scheme of vimana, antarala

and mandapa with three porch entrances is found in the great

temple at Palampet as also in the one at Ghanapur, the Reddigudi

and some other shrines in the same place, the ruined temple on

the tank-bund at Palampet, and the Erakesvara of Pillalamarri.

The scheme where the mandapa preceding the sanctum and antarala

has a single porch is to be found in:the Namesvara of Pillalamarri,

in a lesser shrine at Ghanapur and in Shrine IV at Palampet.

There are others with a sanctum and an antarala alone, as found

among the lesser shrines at Ghanapur and Palampet. In a few

cases, the antarala is absent. The shrine comes directly behind -the

mandapa and hence the sanctum alone is present. The walls of the

garbha-griha:are sometimes plain in the simpler . cases as in the

one on the tank-bund at Palampet. The offsetting of the sides is

not generally much pronounced. When alternately projected and

recessed, the bays are broad, flat pilaster patterns, often with

shrine-motifs at their bases. The recesses contain a slender pilaster

carrying a shrine top at its apex over its abacus with a superposed

creeper or patra-lata torana over it. The kapota of the prastara is

not curved in section as it is in the earlier examples of the Pallavas

and the Chalukyas. It is rather a slopy, straight, “projected ledge,

often large. The prastara over the antarala and the front mandapas

carry, like the lower tala of the vimana superstructure, а hara of

miniature shrines of the kuta variety, often. in brick and mortar.

These form the fore-runners of the typical arched niche-like minia-

ture shrine series, the chunchus of the subsequent Vijayanagar

mandapa prastaras. The sukanasika, projected in front of the viniana

superstructure is an invariable characteristic, marking the "Chaluk-

yan derivation of the temples. The antarala and sanctum entrances

are framed by over-door patterns, which incorporate, in the com-

position of the sakhas, a vertical perforated jalaka window-pattern.

The lintel has a lalata bimba of Gajalakshmi or other gods, often

inthe central loop of a wavy forana issuing from такага heads

perched atop the door-jambs, The prastara over the door-frame,

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as in the earlier Chalukyan models, carries a series of miniature

shrine tops. Thé relieved pilasters on the projected bays of the

shrine walls have often shallow devakoshthas inside paired pilasters

with prastara and shrine superstructures on top, single or in: a

row. In the extreme cases of the larger vimanas, the central bay is

the most projected one with its devakoshtha niche and superstruc-

ture simulating a side vimana attached to the main structure.

These miniature shrine tops here and elsewhere are of the vimana

type with a square or circular sikhara or of the prasada type with

an amalaka on top. Another characteristic decorative motif seen is

a cruciform rosette, or a lotus with four petals spread crosswise, a j

pattern that one finds carried over to the Ikkeri area of the late

Vijayanagar Empire and the temples of the Keladi Nayakas there.

"There are nearly fifty temples of the Kakatiyas known, but they

are mostly in various stages of ruination. A few of these temples,

however, are of the Kadamba-Chalukya vimana pattern which have

been dealt with separately.

CHAPTER VIII

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—

THE LAST PHASE

THE VIJAYANAGAR TEMPLES

AFTER THE early Muslim inroads into the south which had abated

the hitherto continuous temple-building activity, there was appa-

rently a temporary lull for less than half а century. The rise of the

militant Vijayanagar Empire to halt the Muslim conquest in the

middle of the fourteenth century (which, in the process, soon en-

compassed the whole of the peninsula) almost gave a new and vigor-

ous spurt to temple architecture by way of repairs or additions

to existing structures, and erection of new ones. In their northern

domain the imperial rulers, with their capital at Vijayanagar or

Hampi, inherited the architectural traditions as carried down till

their times by the later Chalukyas, Kakatiyas and Hoysalas, and

in their southern provinces the tradition as developed up to the

times of the later Pandyas. Thus their temples in their northern

domains in the Deccan, Andhra and Karnataka regions retain much

that was of Chalukyan-Hoysala-Kakatiya inspiration, while their

more southern constructions in Tamil Nadu and southern Kerala

continued the traits of the Pallava-Chola-Pandya architecture. But

as already stated, they made one significant change in so far as the

northern regions were concerned: in all the places throughout their

vast empire they adopted and spread the hard stone tradition and

technique of building to the exclusion of the hitherto prevalent soft

stone constructions. In their vast capital of Hampi, now ruined,

there are scores of temples, all of hard stone, exhibiting the traits

from one of the two sources, the Chalukya-Rashtrakuta-Hoysala-

Kakatiya series, and the Pallava-Chola-Pandya series. Their

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subseguent capitals at Penukonda (Anantapur district), Chandragiri

(Chittoor district), and Vellore (north Arcot), and their environs,

and their provincial capitals or seats of viceregal Nayakas as at

Vellore (north Arcot), Gingee (south Arcot), Thanjavur, Madurai,

‚ and Ikkeri (Shimoga district) also have temples of their period.

In fact, the reign of the Vijayanagar rulers witnessed a greater

activity in temple-building than had been the case in the times of

the Cholas. Some of their temples are remarkable for the great

size of their componént structures, i.e. the mandapas and gopuras.

The choice of hard stone, as against the then extant soft stone

tradition, for the fabric of construction in the building activities,

including temple architecture and sculpture, in the northern part

or the home provinces of the Vijayanagar Empire was a significant

enough step. It marked a definite break and made the designers

and the architect-sculptors think in terms of the new \_ material’ and

urged them to put forth their best, both in terms of number and

quality that would reflect the aim and genius of the Vijayanagar

epoch. It is to be’ noticed that the extensive and many-walled

fortifications of cyclopean masonry, the massive gates and other

defence: works of the new capital city,- which now forms the cele-

brated ‘Hampi Ruins’ centring round the earlier existing temple

of Sri Virupaksha or Pampapati on the banks of the Tungabhadra

amidst the chain of massive granite hills, as also the numerous

temples that sprang up since, inside and outside the city were all

built of the hard stones quarried from the local hills. This new

capital was located on' the right bank across the river with the

old capital Anegundi on the left bank and came to be called

Vijayanagar,’ or the “City-of Victory” that lent the name also to

the dynasty.

1Alternatively it was also called Vidyanagara in honour of the great saint-

preceptor - Vidyaranya. He was sanyasin of the Sringeri Sankaracharya

lineage ordained by the great pontiff Vidyasankara also called: Vidyatirtha

‘and himself became the pontiff as second in succession to him. .During

Vidyaranya's sojourn in. the Hampi area, as a sanyasin (in the times of

Vidyasankara as pontiff of the Sringeri Matha) he took both the royal;

brothers, the founders of the dynasty, Harihara I and Bukka, under his’

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE LAST PHASE —— 169

The urgent need for stone constructions in and around the new

capital and the requirements of the know-how of the technique

of working on the hard, adamantine stones, in which material the

rocky terrain of Hampi and the neighbourhood abounded, was

perhaps met from the further south where the craftsmen were

for long centuries steeped in the hard stone tradition and

possibly also from the Kakatiya region in the north, where sculp-

ture in hard stone had come into vogue for some time, since."

These should have helped the Vijayanagar craftsmen guilds even

in their initial achievement which was considerable enough after

the stagnation that ensued due to the invasions and upheavals.

fostering spiritual care and as their constant preceptor friend, philosopher

and guide played a momentous role in the events of the time culminating in

the foundation of the new Hindu empire of Vijayanagar. Under the aegis

of the saint, Virupaksha I celebrated his coronation in. the new capital on

18 April 1336 in the presence of God Virupaksha undertaking to rule the

kingdom as the agent of the deity in token of which he adopted the royal

sign manual Sri Virupaksha that continued as such ever since. Placing all

the royal insignia at the feet of his guru Vidyaranya, in all gratitude and

reverence, he hailed him as the \*Karnataka-simhasana pratishthapanacharya' ,

(the establisher of the throne of Karnataka), a title which the successive

heads of е: Sringeri Matha have borne till today as also the royal honours

conferred on the saint at that time by the emperor. This historical back-

ground will help in the proper appreciation of the, zeal and fervour with

which the founders of Vijayanagar and their successors entered into the

tasks of reconstructing the shattered polity and religion of the country,

repairing the damages wrought to the temples 'and institutions that were

in existence in addition to consiricting and founding many new ones and `

providing for their proper maintenance. E і £

2Such migrations or importations of craftsmen guilds from one region to

another are not unknown. A Mahabalipuram inscription in script of the

seventh century, cocval with the date of the monolithic rathas, gives a list of a

team of such artisans—a master architect-builder (Permutachchan) from a

place (Kevada (?)) a blacksmith (needed to temper the chisels for cutting

hard stone) or Kollan Semakan by name hailing from Kalyani, ctc. (Sce

K. R. Srinivasan, The Dharmaraja Ratha and Its Sculptures, New Delhi,

1975, p. 45). Again “the vastly improved design and execution of the

Virupaksha temple (Pattadkal) built by one of Vikramaditya II's queens was

most likely due to workmen brought from Kanchipuram and to their direct

imitation of the Kailasanatha temple which had come‘into-existence in the

Pallava capital some decades earlier.” (K.A:N. Sastry, A History of South India,

Third Edition, Madras, 1966, p. 452). There is inscriptional evidence to show '

that a guild of Dravida (Tamil) artisans had come for work in the Chalukyün °

country for the inscription refers to the settlement of affairs relating to -

the comparative status of the immigrants vis-a-vis the local artisan guilds.

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The problem of a break or disruption of the continuity of the

development of the vimana temple in hard stone that had all along

been the choice and character of the farther south, to which area

Vijayanagar hegemony soon extended in the reign of Harihara's

contemporary and successor Bukka, was not so keen in that area.

In Tamil Nadu and. parts of Kerala that went into the Vijayanagar

Empire it was merely a task of continuing the then unbroken

chain of the vimaza temple forms by forging the new Vijayanagar

links with the modulations and innovations introduced by the

genius’ of the period as the Vijayanagar idiom. As such tiie evolu-

‘tionary chain of the southern vimana order could be handed over

at the end of the empire to the succeeding Nayak rulers for them

to add in turn before leaving the heritage to be continued in post-

Nayak times till today.

- But nearer home, in the northern regions of the empire, the

break is observed to be more pronounced, conditioned not only

by the political invasion by iconoclastic rulers of alien faith but

-also other local and intrinsic causes. The change-over from a

hitherto soft stones vogue to one of rather quite novel and less

tractable hard stone, apart, the models left in the hundreds,

though of great merit as great expositions and landmarks. in the

history of architecture, by the immediate predecessors, the

Hoysalas and before them the Western Chalukyas, could not

supply the want adequately. The very peculiarities of their plan

and elevation could not afford the starting point for the Vijaya-

nagar series. Either of. them have become cul-de-sacs, so to say,

that had taken far away from the main highroad of evolution!

The very bold emphasis of the vertical off-settings or corrugations from

pin upwards to thé apex below the crowning elements reminiscent of the

hadras or ratha projections of the northern Rekha-prasadas against the

suffused persistence of the horizontal divisions of the superstructure especially

expounded by the Western Chalukyan genre could not very well offer the

desired model. For, the emphasis on the horizontal division resulting in the

tiered nature of the superstructure was the sine-gua-non of the recognised

southern vimana order. In such a perspective of the subdual, almost to the

extent of obliteration in effect of the horizontal division and stratification,

neither could the Hoysala genre satisfy. The similar but stellate vertical

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE LAST PHASE 171

laid by their precursors, the Rashtrakutas and before them the

early Chalukyas and codified in the architectural canons. The `

early Vijayanagar temple-builders and sculptors had perforce to

hark back to the earlier developed forms and types obtaining in

that cradle of temple architecture, viz. the early Chalukyan region,

that linked the north of India with the south and choose two

rather basic and characteristically southern strains from among the

early forms and the welter of their mutations that had since filled

the landscape developed under the aegis of the succeeding

dynasties.

.Of the two types opted, one was the southern vimana form

with a sukanasa as a type derived from early Chalukya-Rashtra-

kuta times. The other choice of equal antiquity and ubiquity in

the area was the Kadamba Nagara, a Kadamba-Chalukya form

(described in chronological series in the next chapter—IX) with a

superstructure formed by successively receding tiers, superposed

one over the other, each tier made up of horizontal or slopy (in

regions of high rainfall) or curved eaves-like kapota members—

the smallest topmost tier carrying the griva-sikhara-stupi combina-

tion. This latter form is akin to what obtains in the pidadeu!

shrines of Orissan vintage on the north-east and the Phansanakara

sikhara found in Gujarat and western India on the north-west of

the Deccan.? The-temples in Hampi and places round about, that

constitute the maximum agglomeration of Vijayanagar fame, very

corrugations again extending from the very base to the near apex, more

boldly emphasized in the Hoysala genre, could not satisfy the need. The

tempting softness of the stone, coupled with the increased surface area to be

carved, resulting from the vertical folds or offsets, had encouraged ‘such pro-

fusions of sculpture. and embellishment, which could not very well be done

with equal facility in the hard stone material that the Vijayanagar artisans,

took up for their work. The Hoysala mode both in terms of prodigious output

and cloying exuberance had almost spent itself out in the effort.

2The Kadamba-Nagara mannerism in the superstructural tiers culminating.

in the griva-sikhara-stupi apex, the southern vimana mannerism, was the most

common combination. The sukanasa may or may not be present and tho:

jatter form is found adopted in secular constructions, too, as 1n the “Lotus.

‘Mahal’ in the zanana enclosure in Hampi and in the “Kalyana Mahal’ in tha

Tower fort of the Rajagiri in Gingee (district south Arcot).

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patently exhibit this dichotomy, by their conformity with the one

or the other of these two parent stocks and the most important

ones of either class are noticed below and in the succeeding

chapter (IX).

The Vijayanagar temple-builders could soon catch up with the

above two opted straius and fall into even strides in the develop-

ment of the characteristically Vijayanagar temples, many of them

eventually turning out to be massive and dignified structural

models of great virtuosity and elevational clarity. But in tbe initial

years of the nascent empire wherever faced with the challenge of

raising up imposing edifices, that would accord with the ambition

and pride of therising empire, the Vijayanagar architects have

responded by making some bold and daring experiments and

produced structures that would seem to be aberrant in the geo-

graphical and cultural context but yet exhibiting merit and fine

composition. One such example, that is unique in more ways than

one, will be the Vidyasankara temple in Sringeri (district Kadur-

Chikmagalur, Karnataka) located high up in the heaviest monsoon

area of Malnad on the Western Ghats. It was in the Ikkeri

(Keladi) viceroyalty cf the Vijayanagar Empire—and has been

one of the principal seats of amnaya mathas founded by Sankara.

The temple was built under the royal patronage of Harihara and

Bukka under the behest of their guru, sage Vidyaranya, in com-

memoration of the earlier and illustrious pontiff Sri Vidyasankara

also called Vidyatirtha, over the site of his disappearance. The

ifest himself, A btle li

1 today inspires and guides the affairs of Sringeri) and the veneration in which

of the pitha can be realised from the fact that the sign manual and seal of the

pitka, whatever may be the individual name of the occupant pontiff, continues

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES —THE LAST PHASE 173

temple was founded in A.D. 1338 according to traditional accounts

buta Sringeri inscription indicates the date as 1356. While the

former date may refer to an earlier nuclear shrine raised on the

spot, the latter date would indicate that the large all-stone temple

now standing over the spot was in a completed stage by that

. year. Thus it would be seen that the temple was founded within a

few years after the foundation of Vijayanagar, the city and the

empire.

The temple.built in the local reddish granite is easily the largest

among early Vijayanagar temples, consisting of the sanctum and

axial mandapa combined into one unit. On plan, from foundation

to the aditala and mandapa prastara, it is a double apse or chapa,

the two large apses meeting each other by their open ends result-

ing in an elliptical shape that is rather elongated. The outer curved

apse ends face east and west respectively. The western half of this

combination (ellipse) contains the sanctum and as such forms thé

vimana half while the eastern half contains a large pillared man-

dapa, there being a narrow north-south transept inside, separating

the two. The whole stands over an adhishthana raised up in turn

by an upa- -pitha, both of Ње same plan, elliptical, the lower upa-

pitha of slightly greater over-all length and width resulting i in the

formation of a narrow open ambulatory on its top round the base

of the adhishthana. The provision of an upa-pitha, or sub-base, an

optional member solely intended to enhance the height and stature

of the structure according to the texts, bas been an invariable

feature of the Chalukyan and its lineal cohorts. It follows in its

ties and mouldings the southern norms including a kapota with

indistinct kudu ornamentation. The tiers of the adhishthana follow

the later Chalukyan and Hoysala models in the form and ornate

nature of its-six projected tiers or mouldings and five recessed

` sculptured intervals alternating. They, as in Hoysala forms, are

friezes of horses, elephants, lotuses and on top cameos or panels

4 as the sign mianual of all the Vi

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in “Contemporary inscriptions and copper plate grants.

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in series illustrating episodes from the Puranas and a historical

narration in sculpture of some local event..

The wall above, forms the bahya bhitti or outer wall of the rear

or western part of the structure surrounding the inner antara bhitti

that contains the garbha or sanctum thus rendering the vimana a

sandhara one, while over the eastern part of the structure, it forms

the external wall enclosing the twelve-pillard ranga-mandapa inside

it. In imitation of the Western Chalukyan models, the convex

parts of the front and rear apses are each thrown at intervals into

seven major vertical off-sets or bhadras which are in turn offset

further, resembling the sapta ratha mode of the Orissan temples or

the northern prasadas. These are six doorways set into the six

major off sets or bays, one each at the forward or eastern end, and

at the hind or western end, with two more on each flank, south

and north, the six so arranged that each apsidal half comes to

have three, one terminal and two lateral. ;

Each portal or dvara, set inside one of the large bhadra projec-

tions, is provided with an ornate door-frame having a number of

sakha components as is the wont with the Chalukyan and its deri-

vatives and in the northern temples. The lintel has a Gajalakshmi

relief and the introduction of a wide-set projecting door cornice

over each one of the doorways is reminiscent of the Kakatiya

mode. There is the usual river goddess panel at base of each jamb.

The sill of each door-opening is reached by a flight of seven steps

over the height of the adhishthana while below there is a corres-

ponding sopana of six steps over the upa-pitha height, each flanked

by a pair of elephant balustrades as in -Hoysala examples. The

eastern doorway forms the principal entrance.

The bahya bhitti right round exhibits a series of pilasters with

capitals complete and the interspaces between the pairs of pilasters

accommodate niches, of the? devakoshtha or torana type. These

enshrine a galaxy of more than sixty sculptures or sculpture groups

of varied iconography, making the templesall a veritable museum

of sculpture and iconography. Titis i is an imitation in the hard stane

of what the Hoysala predecessors could do in their soft stone

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE LAST PHASE 175

fabric. The sculptures besides being Saiva, Vaishnava and Sakta,

include the "Buddha and Jina too, rendering the scheme quite

eclectic. The six doorways are each guarded by a pair of door-

keepérs, two of the six pairs being Saiva and two more pairs

Vaishnava dvarapalas, while the remaining two pairs are Sakta

dvarapalikas as could be identified by the attire and the attributes

they carry. On top of the wall runs the entablature with the usual

prastara components but with the difference that the kapota or flex-

ed cornice or eaves has a double flexure (a doucene or ogee in

section) instead of the simpler single-flexed kapota encountered in

all the earlier eras. This is a typical Vijayanagar innovation. What

is more, its underside is sculptured with a series of curved ribs and

connecting cross-bars in imitation of the original timber frame of

pristine kapotas, that was of curved metal sheeting nailed over the

ribbed frame projected from the tops of the beams to serve as the

eaves. This delicate imitation is to be seen in the kapotas of

numierous Vijayanagar structures as for example in the famous

Kalyana mandapa of the Varadaraja temple in Kanchipuram. An-

other characteristic Vijayanagar innovation, made as if to display

the great skills their craftsmen had achieved in working hard

stones, is the pendent links of stone chains cut out of the same

corner stone. of the kapota or cornice which is found round the

eastern corners of this temple. This feat had become ubiquitous

Jater.

The inner wall of the rear apse encloses the sanctum or the

garbha-griha enshrining the principal Vidyasankara linga with a

narrow aghtarala in front. On either side of the antarala and with

door-openings facing east in line with that of the antarala are two

cells, onc on each side. The one on the,south enshrines Ganapati,

while the other on the north enshrines Durga, as had become the

form from the Chalukyan times." Attached to the south, west and:

1 In the Chalukyan temples and their derivatives Durga and Ganapati often

have separate small Nana facie each other in the maha-mandapa set a little.

distance in front of the antgrala. In the temples of the Pallava-Pandyas and

their derivatives they come to be accemmodated in the northern and southern.

devakoshtha niches on the exterior walls of the ardha-mandapa.

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north of the sanctum' part and as affluent.sub-shrines, as in the

case of some Western Chalukyan tempies, are three affluent sub-

shrines. facing the respective directions. The one on the south

enshrines Brahma with his consort Sarasvati, the one at the rear

on the west, Vishnu with his consort Lakshmi and the cne on

the north has Mahesvara or Siva with his consort Uma. Thus the

grouping round the main sanctum forms а panchayatana complex

of five subsidiary shrines bugging close on to the sanctum san. torum.

The three door-openings in the outer wall of the rear apse, each

come opposite the three affluent shrines of Brahma, Vishnu and

Siva on the south, west and north. In front. of the complex the

front wall of the north-south transept has three openings, the central

one opposite the antarala and the lateral ones, each opposite the

Siva, Ganapati and Durga shrines while inside, the transept with

provision of the openings one at either extreme of its rear west be-

comes continuous with the circumambulation or pradakshinapatha

round the whole complex through the sandhara passage between

the main outer and inner walls. The antaralá front has two dvara-

palas one of which, curiously enough, is Hanuman while the other

is sage Bhringi.

Inside the eastern apse, Or the eastern half of the structure is

accommodated a large pillared mandapa with twelve peripheral

pillars each of which is a huge monolith of the composite charac-

ter that becomes the feature of Vijayanagar temples to come.

Each pillar has a thick massive central shaft, the front of which is

carved out, as a huge rearing vyala mounted over a crouching

elephant, the proboscis of both intertwined, the vyala bearing on

its head the upper components or corbelled brackets, the topmost

and most projected being 2 typical pushpa potika as had been.

evolved out from the late Pandyan types and developed in Vijaya-

nagar tímes. On the outer face of each such caryatid column is cut

out the pillai-k-kal or slender columnette attached to the main

part only by its base and top and having: all the features of a'

` typical pillar, the potika on top, again, being a pushpa potika. The:

twelve columns form the outer series of a typical navaranga with

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—IHE LAST PHASE 171

the four usual central pillars eliminated, Yet the nayaranga design

is betrayed by the raised ceiling with nine coffered bays on top,

eight of them surrounding a central larger one. Inside the open gaps

of each one of the vyalas the stone mass has been very dexterously

cut out into a round ball which can be rolled inside but not taken

out, another feat of sculpture by the craftsman as is common in

the Vijayanagar vyala pillars. The twelve columns are each marked

by one of the twelve signs of the zodiac or rasi in the regular

order and are, therefore, called the rasi pillars, the arrangement of

the pillars being such that the rays of the sun fall on each one of

them, successively in the order of the twelve solar months. On the

floor of the mandapa enclosed by the twelve pillars is inscribed a

large circle with many converging lines to indicate the direction of

the shadows cast by the pillars when the rays of the sun fall on

them through one of the three door-openings, north, east and

south. This is a rare combination of astronomy and architecture.

The passage outside the ring of the ranga-mandapa pillars and bet-

ween them and the outer wall has a roof made up of two rising

stages each with an outward slope while that over the- central

ranga-mandapa ceiling is raised up still further as a cleresiory. The

roofing in this highly rain-soaked region is adequately designed by

the laying above of the long channel stones sloping out and placed

together, the adjacent parallel edges ofevery two channels being

covered by an inverted channel stone, hood-like. This pattern is

found followed in many other temples of this area and the western

coastal strip on the other side of the Ghats. The large central bay

on the ceiling of the ranga-mandapa, inside, thus coming to have a

greater depth—forming as it were a nabhichchanda vitana, bears a

well-defined inverted lotus blossom with many seriate petals and a

large pendentive central torus which is pecked by four parrots per-

ched, topsy-turvy, on the petals immediately surrounding the central

torus: This is a novel but significant pattern, occupying the central

vitana in place of the sculptured panel with the icon of the main

deity consecrated in the sanctum often surrounded by eight dik-

palas or guardians of the quarters placed all round, as has been

' 178 TEMPLES OF SOUTH INDIA

usual in the earlier series of temples in this “Cbalukyan' area. In

conjunction with the rasi pillars arrangement, the rasis being the

‘houses’ which the sun is supposed to aspect in order ofthe

twelve months, the central lotus is to be identified as symbolic of

the sun. F i

The four parrots perched topsy-turvy around the torus of the

lotus blossom in the ceiling of the rasi-mandapa of the Vidyasan-

Kara temple, Sringeri, are incidentally the first examples of the

kind. Their pose is also true to nature, attesting to the acquain-

tance of the sculptor with things of nature. The ornithologist will

be reminded of the species of the Indian parrot (Psittacula) com-

monly called the lorikeet, which is unique among Indian birds for

its habit of roosting upside down like a bat. To the ascetic yogi, it

will be a form of sadhana or penance (tapas).

The superstructure of the vimana or garbha part is an upward

continuation of the inner wall or antara bhitti. It is a tall cylindri-

cal tower of three upper talas of gradually diminishing circumfe-

rence raised over the sanctum terminating in the griva that carries

the sikhara with the stupi on top, while the roof over the antarala

‘carries a large sukanasa projected from the front of the vimana

superstructure. Jt is thus а chatushtala vimana with a sandhara

aditala. The top of the sandhara passage between the outer and

inner walls of the aditala is made up of a system of channel-and-

. hood stones, as over the mandapa half in front, the long stones

radiating from the base of the second tala with a proper slope

giving rise to a slopy alinda. The usual hara scheme characteristic

of southern vimanas made up of miniature shrine aedicules is total-

ly eliminated over this part, the second and third talas and over

.the anterior mandapa top, nor does the pattern of the superstruc-

ture follow the local Hoysala style. The aditalachadya or roof is

marked externally by the abbreviated adhishthana mouldings of

the second tala base, the harmya of which is raised tall with the

vertically offset Dhadra projections, the corners of the offsets can-

toned by pilasters of the order as in the case of the tala harmyas

of the southern vimanas. There are three niches provided in the

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE LAST PHASE 179 .

main bhadras of the three cardinals, south, west, and north while

on the east comes the prominent sukanasa. The prastara of this

second fala harmya or the uparichchadya is composed of seven tiers

of curved cornices or kapotas. The third tala of slightly lesser

elevation repeats the same pattern ending with its uparichchadya

of five kapotas, superposed one over the other. The fourth tala of

still lesser height, again of the same pattern, carries an uparich-

chadya of the three kapotas. This scheme is an adaptation of the

system of uparichchadya coming successively over the main tala-

chchadya, with a clear but short or indistinct recessed neck inter-

vening between any two, as obtains in the temples of the Eastern

Ganga and Kalinga vintage but is a modification of the same

with the respective sets of cornices separated by taller intervals,

here forming the tala harmyas. The top of the third tala carrying

the grihapindi or base of the griva has four Nandis at the four

corners, or vidiks. The circular griva shows a ribbed pattern because

of the offsetting as in the zalas below and the domical globular

sikhara, too, exhibits the same pattern of ribbing. The griva

sikhara combination has four maha nasikas projected on the four

cardinals, including the eastern face, where.the third tala of the

vimana rises clear over the top of the frontal sukanasa. The maha

nasikas are framed in front each by an ornate mukhapatti that

carries at its apex, a kalasa or stupi that rises up round the base of

the larger main stupi placed over the crest or mastaka of the

sikhara proper. All the five stupis are of metal and they together

form a pancha kalasa scheme, that according to ancient Buddhist

texts should be the character of a divya vimana. The sukanasa in

front rises in two stages on top of the antarala, the lower forming

the rectangular harmya part with a vestibule internally leading to

the inside of the hollow superstructural falas. This rises to the

height of the second tala or the harmya over the sanctum. The sala

type ‘toof or chadya over this vestibule, rising to the height of the

next vimana tala, is again a system of superposed cornices. The

sukanasa with its longer side, east-west has a forana mukhapattt

framing its front that has a framed door-opening leading into thé

So are

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vestibule in the lower rectangular face and the sculptured relief of

dancing Siva inside the arch fronting the upper or roof part of the

sukanasa, a feature that is common to temples of the Chalukyan

and northern areas. The vimana superstructure which has a hollow

interior has its shell of externally carved stone work supported by

a stone scaffolding built inside made up of upright and cross-

pieces of roughly hewn stone props and beams, a feature not

noticed anywhere else in the south.

Thus this unique temple, which is a bold experiment, as it were,

in the blending of architectural features, borrowed from far and

near, and cleverly harmonised, with a unique plan and elevati-

‘onal lay-out, is an interesting early Vijayanagar production of great

merit. The intention was to make it a sort of universal amalgam

of different regional architectural styles with its eclectism in the

sculpture too, in view of the importance of the spiritual master,

whom both the royal house and the heads of the spiritual seat

venerated equally.

Among the temples in Hampi following by and large the traits

` of the southern group may be mentioned the Vitthala temple,

which is one of the largest there. It is, in fact, a great complex

planned and built at one time, with vimana, axial mandapas,

garuda-mandapa, other mandapas, including kalyana-mardapas,

cloister prakara, and gopuras. It was commenced by Krishnadeva

Raya in 1513 and was perhaps still not completed when the em-

pire fell in 1565 after which the capital was shifted to Penukonda.

The mandapas and gopuras are, as in all Vijayanagar temples,

remarkable for their great size. The mandapas are often of the

thousand-pillared variety. The pillars and pilasters have elegant

shafts. The. lower part of the abacus, the pali, which was a plain

doucene in the Pallava and early Chola temples and got scalloped

into petals in the later Chola period, evolves still more into a

floral form with the petals, idal. The corbel evolves into what is

called the pushpa-potika, characteristic of the Vijayanagar style,

with a double-flexed arm extending, projected from the main block

and scalloped at the free end as upturned petals with an incipient

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE LAST PHASE 181

conical bud at the centre. The downwardly flexed arm has a hori-

Zontal connective bar below it, Connecting the free tip with the

main block. The kumbha panjara motif on the wall recesses of

vimanas, gopuras and mandapas is made more ornate and elaborate. 4

The cornice, which was till now thick and curved down, becomes

large, much thin and with a double flexure, and extends far for- .

ward, often showing the imitation in stone of the wooden ribs of

the frame-work supporting it. In the case of mandapas, like the

kalyana-mandapa- of the Varadaraja temple at Kanchipuram,

one of the finest examples of such kind, the corners of the kapota '

bave large stone chains dangling down, all the links, including the

cornice stone-piece from which it hangs down being cut out of

one stone. These mandapas, the kalyana- or utsava-mandapas, are

noted for their fine and intricately-worked colonnades in hard

stone. Some of the pillars with a series of small columns are cut

out round the main central shaft, or with large animal sculptures

or, statues all in a monolithic mode. The aniyottikkals, as they are

called, are characteristic of the Vijayanagar style. The super-

structure of the stone vimanas or gopuras are of brick-and-mortar,

often with timber inside if they are not built in the corbelled or

kadalika karana fashion. Such immense gopuras were added to the

outermost prakara of pre-existing temple complexes of importance

and are called Rayagopurams, sometimes as many as eleven

storeys high, as in the Ekamranatha at Kanchi, the Arunachala

at Tiruvannamalai (north Arcot district), and the large Siva

temple at Kalahasti (Chittoor district), all built by the great

emperor, Krishnadeva Raya (1502-1529).

The Vitthala temple complex stands inside а high-walled, paved

enclosure, with three gopura entrances—east, south and north.

There are also axial and accessory mandapas and ancillary shrines.

The axial series consisting of vimanas with front mandapas stands on

an ornate platform, carved with friezes of men, horses, hamsa, and

small shrine motifs. The steps leading up to the frontal agra-mandapa

are flanked by the large stone elephants. The agra-mandapa itself

contains huge monolithic pillars with carved-out columnettes, or

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with Jarge. vyalas. having riders on their backs. The hall һаѕ crnci-

form extensipns.in front and on the sides. The beams show carvings

from the Ramayana. "The superstructure of the vimana is of brick-

work. The hara of the aditala is extended over the tops of the front

mandapas. In front of the agra-mandapa stands the garuda-mandapa

which is a lesser vimana fashioned in the form of a temple-car or

chariot on stone wheels. On the northern side of the fore-court is

the Amman shrine, while on the south is the beautiful though small

kalyana-mandapa. There are also shrines for other attendant deities

in the courtyard. The Krishna temple built by Krishnadeva Raya in

1513 is another handsome temple complex with the usual compo-

nents of attendant shrines, the mandapas and pillared. malikas and

gopura.

The Pattabhirama temple at Hampi is yet another large temple

complex of this kind. Built by Achyuta Raya (1530-1542), it is noted

for its great size and huge proportions. The Achyuta Raya temple

built in 1539 is another large structure inside a double prakara with

gopuras and an Amman shrine, mandapas and cloister, designed on

lines similar to the famous Vitthela temple, though it will not bear

comparison with that superb creation. Its pillars are, however,

handsome and it contains some fine sculptures.

The Anantasayana temple at Anantasayanagudi near Hospet on

the way to Hampi is an example of a large oblong vimana with the

brickwork superstructure having an immense sala sikhara. It is

elaborated axially by a large pillared mandapa, and surrounded by

other peripheral mandapas and an Amman shrine. The whole is en-

closed within a prakara with a large gopura. It is the largest sala

type vimana known. The temple was dedicated to Anantasayin

Vishnu, but the deity is now missing. The shrine front has three

doors to render the head, body and feet of the reclining god visible

from the antarala. у |

Besides the extension of the hara over the mandapas—a prevailing

trait of Chalukyan extraction—there are other Chalukyan characters

retained by some of the other temples in Hampi, and in the Deccan,

Andhra and north Mysore area. Among them are the presence of

18. Hampi—Vitthala Temple—Front Mandapa (See page 169)

19. Vellore—Jalakanthesvara Temple — Kalyana Mandapa Interior

(See page 184)

20. Srirangam— Ranganatha Temple—Sesharayyar Mandapam,

Facade Pillars (See page 171)

21. Srivilliputhur—Vatapatrasayi Temple Main (East Gopurm)

(See page 171)

22. Thanjavur—Subrahmanya Temple in the Brihadisvara Complex

(See page 185)

23. Ikkeri—Aghoresvara Temple (See page 733)

24. Alampur—Visva Brahma Temple in the Nava

Brahma Complex (See page 194)

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STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE LAST PHASE 183

the sukanasika in front of the vimana superstructure, the occurrence

of the sculptures of the river goddess on the door-jambs, and

ornate over-doors, often delicately carved in soft stone and fitted

over the plain granite door-frames, as in the temples at Tadpatri

(Anantapur district). Then there is the navaranga pattern of the

mandapas, as opposed to the linear multi-pillared type of the farther

south, and free-standing toranas as in the temples on the top of the

hill at Chitaldurg (Mysore state).

The Hazara Rama temple was probably begun earlier and was

completed by Krishnadeva Raya. This temple is devoid of the

characteristic gopura but its prakara walls are decorated by friezes,

externally depicting dance, music and folk festivals. The maha-

mandapa in front of the main vimana is of the Chalukyan navaranga

pattern and its four central pillars, in contrast to the greyish granite

- of the rest of the entire structure, are polished shining black, though

of square section, and embellished with panels of sculpture and

carvings. The vimana superstructure of brick has a prominent

sukanasika. There is an Amman shrine vimana to its north, also of

the same type. The walls of the open agra-mandapa and of the

vimanas as also of the prakara on the inner faces around its north-

east corner have panel sculptures which are narrative, depicting

episodes from the Ramayana and the Krishna-lilas.

The Pampapati or Virupaksha temple, the most prominent temple

in Hampi, and in worship, is a large complex, elaborated round a

later Chalukyan temple nucleus. Its agra-mandapa of the Vijaya-

nagar period is noted for its sculptured columns and contemporary

ceiling paintings. The most interesting painting is a panel depicting

the sage Vidyaranya, a lineal successor of Sankaracharya and

pontiff of the Sringeri Matha, being taken in a procession in a palan-

quin with royal honours and paraphernalia to the Virupaksha temple.

The hollow, tall, main east gopura, built of brick in the corbelled

fashion, is one of the largest Vijayanagar gopuras. The Vijayanagar

Vimanas farther south in Tamil Nadu do not have the sukanasika.

They conform more to the Pallava-Chola traditions and form a

continuing link with temples of the earlier epochs.

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THE POST-VIJAYANAGAR TEMPLES

After the fall of the central power following the-disastrous battle

of Talikotta in 1564 and the ruination of Vijayanagar city, the capi-

tal ofthe empire was shifted in successsion to Penukonda, Chandra-

giri and finally to Yellore. The central power was much weakened.

The Vijayanagar viceroys in the southern regions, the Nayakas,

gradually assumed independent powers. Some of them fostered

temple architecture and created some notable temples. They were the

Nayakas of Vellore (north Arcot district), Gingee (south Arcot

district), Thanjavur and Madurai id Tamil Nadu, and Ikkeri in

north-west Mysore. The Nayaka period in Tamil Nadu witnessed

the addition of elaborate mandapas of the hundred-pillared type, and

larger gopuras with a greater number of plastic stucco figures on

them, as at Vellore and Madurai, their tallest gopura superstructure

being at SriviWiputtur (Ramanathapuram district) in front of the

Vatapatrasayin temple. The closed ambulatory, flanked on either

side by-continuous platforms, with massive pillars set on their edges

on either side of the sunken pradakshina path, and elaborately cor-

belled brackets on top spanning the gap above and nearly meeting

each other, built during Nayaka and later times, form the celebrated

“corridors', as at Ramesvaram. The kalyana-mandapa of the Jala-

kanthesvara temple at Vellore, and a similar one in the eastern

prakara of the famous Ranganatha temple at Srirangam, like the

earlier Vijayanagar structure in the Varadaraja temple at Kanchi,

are two of the great masterpieces of the time. They are of the

multi-pillared type, having a facade row of remarkably sculptured

columns carrying almost full-size monolithic figure sculptures of

rearing horses with warrior-riders and retinue and other animal

figures of the hunt. . :

Most constituents of the large temple complex at Madurai on all

sides of the nuclear shrine are of Nayaka origin, mostly of the time

of Tirumalai Nayaka (1623-1659), including the great mandapas and

towering gopuras ón all the four sides. The huge pillars have life-

size portraits of royalty with consorts and retinue, or donor-chiefs,

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE LAST PHASE 185 .

the sculpture so cut out as to form along with the main shaft a

Common support to the capital. Other sculptures of gods, women in

graceful poses, tribal folk like the Kurava and-Kuratti—hunter and

huntress—are also to be found in the composition on the pillars.

The Pudu Mandapam in the Minakshi-Sundaresvara temple at

Madurai, and the front mandapa in the temple at Krishnapuram

are notable examples in this respect among hundreds of others.

The Subrahmanya temple unit, with vimana ardha- and mukha-

mandapas standing in the north-west court of the Brihadisvara

temple complex, is a typical example of the Nayaka temple of the

ornate variety and a real gem of its kind. Built of fine-grained

granite, it exhibits in the mouldings of its adhishthana and pilasters

of its wall some fine and intricate engraving. The characteristic

kumbha panjara in the wall-recesses between pilasters is rendered

highly ornate, as also the pushpa potika corbel of the capitals over

the pillars and polygonal pilasters, with the pendent bud at the tip

of the curved arm taking the shape of a full lotus bud. The double-

flexed kapota is thin and elegant, showing the ribbed supporting

frame-work on its under side. The griya and sikhara of the square

vimana are hexagonal, in conformity with the six-faced Shanmukha

form of Subrahmanya installed in the sanctum. The karnakutas

too of the fala haras of this multi-storeyed vimana are six-sided.

This and other temples thus formed easily the pattern for the living

art of the modern stapati or temple-builder of south India.

Another feature initiated by the Nayakas of Madurai and con-

tinued thereafter is the employment of polished granite—the ex-

ternal faces of the plain carved or moulded stones, polished shining

black, and used in the construction of small vimanas and their

ardha-mandapas. Such work can be seen in the Rock Fort temple

at Tiruchirapalli, Madurai, and other places.

The entire temple complex inside the Vellore Fort including the

kalvana-mandapa and gopura, as also much of the Virinchipuram

temple near Vellore, is the work of the Bommi Nayakas of

Vellore. What we see, however, of temples or their ruins inside the

extensive fort at Gingee and its neighbourhood is the creation of

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Gingee Nayakas. Similarly, there are many small Nayaka temples

inside the Chandragiri Fort.

What: may be reasonably considered to be the quintiscence of

later Vijayanagar architecture and sculptural art, as evolved in the

southern half of the Vijayanagar Empire, is the unique example of

a moderate-sized temple unit, in the large Ranganatha temple

complex in Srirangam. It may as well be considered to be the pre-

cursor of, òr the model for, the exquisitely designed and ornately

carved -Subrahmanya temple unit of Nayaka times, inside the

enclosure of the Thanjavur Brihadisvara temple complex. On

tbe basis of an inscription from elsewhere it is believed by some

scholars, following the epigraphist’s report (A.R.E., 1937), that

the Vaishnavite teacher of Kuruhurpura who was in charge of

the Tiru-k-kulal-udina Pillai (Venugopala-Krishna) temple at

Halebid, that was consecrated by the Hoysala queen Umadevi,

was during his visit to Srirangam, also, instrumental in consecrat-

ing a shrine for Venugopala in that temple complex.

There is a superbly built temple unit of Venugopala extant, with

exquisite sculptures on its walls and very fine architectural features,

also with a painted ceiling on its.agra-mandapa (done in Lepakshi

style). It is located inside the fifth south prakara, west of the

utsava-mandapam, called locally ranga-mandapam. It is a temple

unit by itself, facing east with a dvitala vimana that has an aditala

built of fine grained ‘white granite surmounted by a brickwork

superstructure, ardha-, maha-and agra-mandapas preceding the

yimana, in the order. The upa-pitha and adhishthana, are of finely

carved mouldings adorned by miniature shrine motifs or aedicules,

at intervals, as in the Darasuram Mandapam. The central bhadra

reliefs on the walls of the vimana and the mandapas have deva-

koshthas crowned by sala sikharas, the niches containing lithesome

sculptures of divine-looking damsels in various poses of suffused `

grace and beauty. The recessed wall spaces carry fully formed

kumbha panjara motifs, in the vimana part, while in similar situa-

tions on the mandapgs they are elaborately carved vritta sphathitas,

the so called \*decorative pilasters', that is pilasters carrying on top

STRUCTURAL STONE TEMPLES—THE LAST PHASE 187

a panjara crest, but devoid of the basal kumbha or purna ghata.

The pushpa potikas are of the characteristic Vijayanagar type. These

and the advanced architectural features as also the style of the

extant paintings on the ceiling of the agra-mandapa or porch would

only indicate a late Vijayanagar date (bordering on the Nayaka

times that succeeded). It may perhaps be a Vijayanagar renova-

tion of an earlier foundation during the Hoysala interregnum and

not a standing Hoysala example as some scholars aver in the wake

of the suggestion of the epigraphist. There are a few granite stone-

built temples of the Hoysala times, built when a collateral branch.

of the dynasty ruled over parts of Tamil Nadu with capital at

Kannanur near Srirangam and Jambukesvaram. They are all built

in the local regional style ‘in logical continuation of the late

Pandya temples of Tamil Nadu aud consequently heralding features

of the Vijayanagar temples of Tamil Nadu that followed.

Such temples of the Hoysala times are to be found in Kannanur

some 6 kms from Srirangam (Posalesvara, called locally Bhojes-

vara) and in Jambukesvaram, in the eastern part of the Srirangam

island. There are a few more, constructed by the Hoysala generals

and administrators, in the Tiruchirapalli and Pudukkottai districts,

for example the temple unit at Sembattur (Pudukkottai). These

temples built during the Hoysala interregnum reveal in their

architecture and sculpture only the local regional norms, ahd not

of the Hoysala patterns as known in their home country (Karna-

taka) built of soft soap-stone. The Srirangam Venugopala temple

shows noticeably far advanced architectural and sculptural features

of the local regional style. The sculpture of the tall, slender-built

graceful maidens, perhaps many of them depicting gopis, besides

salabhanjikas in different attitudes and poses, contrast with the

short-built and buxom madanikas, of Belur, Halebid and similar

feminine sculpture in óther centres of Hoysala art. The Venu-

gopala temple sculptures, may bear comparison, if one is at all

required, with the similar hard stone caryatid (madanika) sculp-

tures of the Kakatiyas and, nearer home, with those at Krishna-

puram and Tenkasi, (Tirunelveli district) and in the Pudumandapam

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and other parts of the Madurai-Minakshi-Sundaresvára temple.

The Ikkeri Nayakas have left temples of a Chalukyan affiliation

in their capital towns of Ikkeri, Keladi, and in other places in

their area. The Aghoresvara temple at Ikkeri (Shimoga district) is

the largest and finest of the Ikkeri style of temples. Built of -

granite, it stands on a lofty and weli-moulded upa-pitha platform.

Its five-storeyed square vimana is a Gouble-walled sandhara struc-

ture, and the fala superstructure has the characteristic sukanasika

projection. The griva and sikhara are octagonal. The square, closed-

front mandapa has three projected openings—one frontal and two

lateral with elaborate over-doors, as is also the case with the

antarala and shrine-doors inside. They are reached by flights of

steps with ornaniental balustrades. A horizontal band divides the

exterior wall face into upper and lower halves. The upper half

shows a series of pointed arches enclosing lattice-windows with

. floral spandril decorations and rhomboid rosettes, introducing an

element of Indo-Islamic motifs. The lower half shows a series of

shrine-fronts between paired pilasters. Inside, the mandapa is of the

mavaranga pattern with ornate pillars, some of which have the

animal statuary characteristic of the Vijayanagar and post-Vijaya-

nagar pillars. à

The twin temples of Ramesvara and Virabhadra in nearby

Keladi, the earlier seat of the dynasty, are built of greyish-green

granite. The two separate vimanas have their front mandapas inter-

connected. The Ramesvara was built between 1499 and 1513, and

the Virabhadra between, 1530 and 1540. Both are sandhara vimanas

with their walls made up of large slabs laid in longitudinal tiers

and sparsely carved, as is commonly found in many of the smaller

temples in Hampi, and in the northern area. The pillars inside the

mandapa are in the typical Vijayanagar pattern and the ceiling

slabs are carved with designs and motifs, some of them reminiscent

of Indo-Islamic designs.

CHAPTER IX

OTHER TEMPLE TYPES

THE KADAMBA-CHALUKYA STYLE TEMPLES

WHILE THE early Chalukyas took'in the early norms of vimana

architecture, developed them according to their own regional

idiom and evolved the early forms of such types, they also devo-

ted equal attention to the forms more prevalent in the region

which was earlier dominated by the Kadambas of Banavasi. They

took note of what was developing further north. Their geographi-

cal position astride the area of the Deccan, dividing the peninsula

from the northern half of the sub-continent, made them suscept-

ible to more influences ' than one. The result was that the cradles

of early Chalukyan architecture and art, namely, Mahakutesvar,

Aihole, Pattadkal and Badami, and lower down in Andhra-

Karnataka region round about Kurnool in Satyavolu and Maha-

nandi—bordering the castern Chalukyan branch of Vengi—pro-

duced a mixed varicty of temples—the northern, the southern, and

those locally known as Kadamba.

The Kadamba-Chalukya or Kadamba-Nagara type in its sim-

. plest form has a square vimana body with a low superstructure

that is a stepped pyramid of successively receding tiers, essentially

eaves-like or of kapota-like form, often separated from one

another by short recessed necks standing for the talas. The kapota

tiers are decorated by relieved Kudu motifs, particularly at the

centre on cach side. These in their vertical alignment simulate the

rekha of a northern style prasada sikhara. The separating necks,

or galas, may be altogether absent or much abbreviated so as not

to be visible. The tcpmost tier carries a short grira with a distinct

amalasila, or amalaka, which has a ribbcd globular or lenticular

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shape which is the characteristic top member" of: the northern

prasada superstructure or alternately the griva may carry a sikhara

with a stupi on as in the southern vimana forms. The former

resembles the so-called pidadeuls of Orissan architecture or the

phansanakura edifices of the Gujarat région. In more developed

forms with.the amalaka crest, the corners of the tiers are further

provided at intervals with similar smaller amalaka forms, the

karnamalakas, as in the northern-style temples. It will be evident

that this system of tiered arrangement of slopy, roof-slabs or

cornices curved one over the other was best suited to a region of

high rainfall, as was the original "Kadamba region on the west

coast.“It witnessed further developments in the area of coastal

- Konkan and in. the succeeding centuries spread even beyond to

the east as far as the lower reaches of the Krishna and the Tunga-

bhadra. The earliest structures in stone, as in some examples in

Aihole, though possessing the amalaka head and the karnamalakas,

lack the sukanasika, the invariable characteristic of north Indian

temple forms. It may be said that this form with either type of

top member and devoid of or with the sukanasika is more or less

across between the typical northern prasada superstructure and

the southern vimana form. This type is exemplified by the Malli-

karjuna group (с. eighth century) near the Galaganatha.temple at

Aihole,! the: Lakulisa temple on the way to the Bhutanatha group

in the Badami valley and in the Mahakutesvar group, all of the

Badami-Chalukya-Rashtrakuta origin. The group of smaller

shrines behind the Mahanandisvara temple complex at Maha-

nandi (Kurnool district), and the Papanasanam group of temples

in Alampur, are of this type in the Eastern Chalukyan territory.

Eight of the nine structures of the Lakshmi Devi temple complex

in Doddagaddavalli (Hassan district, Mysore)? built in 1113 ате

"1Cousens, Chalukyan Architecture of the Kanarese Districts, Archaeologi

Surveyor, India, Vols ХШ Neu Imperial Series, 1926, pl. XXV labelled Le

ac e temple of Galagana: and temple Nos. 37 & 38."

called Gandaragudi and Galaganatha. P hese are also

‚ 2Narasimhachar, R., The Lakshmi Devi Temple оп Doddagaddavalli,

‘Archaeological Series, Architecture and Sculpture in NN sora No. IIT, ЛЫ

n

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of this type belonging to , the Hoysala period. The Ganigitti Jain

temple built in 1385, the similar Jain temple on the hill at

Chippagiri (Bellary district), the group of trikuta shrines on the

Hemakutam Hill adjoining the Pampapati temple in Hampi, and

two more just near its gopura as also another a mile north-east

of Hampi are examples of such types built in the Vijayanagar

period. It is perhaps because the Ganigitti and Chippagiri temples

were of Jain dedication that Longhurst chose to call the temples

on the Hemakutam Hill as Jain too, though they are, from

evidence found on them, Brahminical.!

A variant of this form, looking like a cross between the tiered

talas of the southern vimana and the schematic and undifferenti-

ated bhumis of the northern prasada, often with amalakas compres-

sed at the corners, is also to be found distributed over the same

region in different periods. In this type, each of the bhumis is

differentiated by simple, short, pilastered and recessed walls that

divide the entire pyramidal superstructure into square-sectioned

strata. The top is crowned by a griya, amalasila, and Stupi—as is

usual in northern prasadas. This is exemplified by the Galaganatha

at Aihole, with a plain stepped-up superstructure with karna-

malakas (Temple No. 10 of Cousens). The Mallikarjuna temple

at Aihole is an example of this kind without the karnamalakas.

| The other structures standing inside the enclosure of the Maha-

kutesvara temple complex, except the Makutesvara and the

Mallikarjuna which are southern vimana type and the Sangames-

vara Which is cf the northern prasada type, are variants of the

Chalukya-Kadamba style. Similar temples are to be found at

Terala near Nagarjunakonda (Guntur district). In the Kadamba

territory itself, as at Hangal, Belagami, and other places, the type

assumes aform which has a tiered superstructure of receding

horizontal slab-like components, a series of upright-lotus bud-

lLonghurst, A.H., Hampi Ruins, Government of India Publications, Delhi,

Third Edition, 1933. s

2Ibid, pl. XIX, Aihole Temple No. 10 from south-west.

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shaped projections or “dentils” along their upper edges in addition

to kudu-like ornament at the centre, a square vimana-type sikhara

on top, and a sukanasika in front. This typé became more com-

mon in the northern territories of the Vijayanagar Empire, as at.

Hampi.

THE NORTHERN STYLE PRASADA TEMPLES OF THE

CHALUKYAS AND THE RASHTRAKUTAS

The prasada-type structures with square bodies and proportion-

ately immense curvilinear superstructures quite different in form

and composition from the superstructure having tiered talas with

haras of the vimanas were also built by the early Chalukyas in

Aihole and Pattadkal glong with the other types, as mentioned

earlier. These also came to be built in other parts of Karnataka

and Andhra. The sikhara in these temples connotes the entire

superstructure over the part enclosing the sanctum, forming a

single unit called the anda, differentiated into nodes defined by

small gooseberry-shaped karnamalakas at the corners, all com-

pressed in such a manner that a clear-cut storeyed division, as in

the talas of a southern vimana, is not revealed. There are only

undifferentiated bhumis. This sikhara of the rekha-prasada carries

on top a gala or griva that holds up the large amalaka-shaped

amalasara or amalasila with a stupi or kalasa finial on its top.

Thus it would be clear that what is termed as the sikhara in a

northern rekha-prasada is not to be equated with what is known

by the same name in the southern tiered vimana. The smaller

amalakas found. squeezed in at the corners of the superstructure

of the prasada, hence called karnamalakas, are the only basis for

differentiating the bhumis. These northern-type prasadas in the

Karnataka and Andhra region of the peninsula, with their charac-

teristic Chalukyan idiom, despite their individual variations, form

a group that stands quite apart ; from such prasada temples of

western, northern or eastern India. Their adhishthanas generally

follow the patterns found in the southern vimana, and the body

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is provided with a clear prastara entablature separating the super-

structural parts over it. The square plan or quadrature is relieved

by three or five bays on each face from base to top, the relieved

parts being called rathas, making the temple tri rathe or pancha

ratha, as the case may be. Tbe most characteristic and con-

spicuous sukanasika is projected from the front side of the super-

structure over the antarala roof and is almost as wide as the front

face of the sikhara at its lowest part and projecting forwards, to

an extent equal at least to half if not two-thirds the basal width

of the sikhara in the earlier examples. The axial mandapas are,

however, of the same pattern as those of the vimana temples of

the region, and their flat roofs help to make the projected sukara-

sika more evident than in the northern-style temples elsewhere,

in which the sukanasikas hardly exceed in width the central bay

or bhadra projection. Besides the mandapas, these northern-style

temples of the Chalukyan area share much in common with the

local vimana types in respect of their pillar forms, door-frames,

sculptures, particularly dvarapalas on either side of the entrances,

iconography and other features of embellishment.

The Huchchimalligudi, the Huchchappayyagudi, and the

Tarappagudi in Aihole, the Siddhanakolla near it, the Mallikar-

juna in Mahakutesvara, and the Kadasiddhesvara, the Jambulinga,

the Papanatha, the Kasivisvesvara and the Galaganatha i in Patad-

kal are the most important of such examples to be found in the

Badami Chalukyan territory. The Huchchimalligudi, the Huch-

chappayyagudi, and the Mallikarjuna are the earliest of this

group. These are generally tri rathas with front mandapas. The

outer wall is plain or decorated and often provided with a pillared

porch. The former ones are of sandhara type, while the latter one

is of the nirandhara type, though they are similar in general

outward form to the first.

The Kadasiddhesvara, and the Jambulinga at Pattadkal are the

simplest ones. They have a sanctum with a tri ratha sikhara and а

mandapa in front. The Kasivisvesvara is pancha ratha, while the

Galaganatha is sandhara with three sides of the sanctum outer wall

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conspicuously: projected as flat-roofed porches, and with a tri ratha

sikhara, The Papanatha has a low and linear plan with a stunted

sikhara over the main edifice which appears to be too small in

proportion to the whole length made up of the disproportionately

large antarala in front of the sanctum, with a mandapa and a

portico as its front. The most interesting feature is the hara of

salas with karnakutas at the front corners and a few panjaras in

between that extend continuously over the roof of the axial manda-

pas, а southern feature appropriate only to the vimana type of

temples. The Sangamesvara in the Mahakutesvara group is of the

tri ratha lay-out with a pillared mandapa in front. The presence of

achute in the form of a groove ending as an oblong opening on

top of the adhishthana on its northern side as a water outlet from

the floor of the sanctum is an interesting feature.

In the Eastern Chalukyan area comprising the district of

Kurnool, Mahboobnagar and Guntur, we have such rekha-

prasada-type temples built from the seventh-eighth centuries. In

the Navabrahma complex of nine temples in Alampur, ail except

the Tarakabrahma, which is of the southern vimana type, are of

this variety. They mostly date earlier than A.D. 713 when, as

stated in an inscription, the prakara enclosing the whole group

was built by Isanacharya. They are mostly nirandhara while a few

are sandhara. Each unit consists of а sanctum with a well-propor-

tioned tri ratha sikhara, an antarala and pillared mandapa with a

two-tiered flat roof. The whole axial series has a single entrance

in front and a continuous wall surrounding it, forming also the

outer wall of the cell in the sandhara type. The exterior wallfaces '

are richly carved with niches, surmounted by udgama motifs con-

taining fine sculptures and lattice windows. The carvings are fine,

and reminiscent of the central Indian and Rajasthani styles. The

Balabrahma is the most advanced and elaborate specimen of the

group.

The Mahanandi group of temple units, also enclosed by a

common prakara, consists, among other structures, of six miniature

shrines of varying types in one group and four smaller shrines in

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another behind the principal Mahanandisvara, which is a sandhara-

rekha-prasada with a tri ratha type sikhara, datable to A.D. 750. The

Bhimalingesvara and Ramalingesvara of the complex at Satyavolu

(Kurnool district) that form the principal units of the group are

both nirandhara with a tri ratha sikhara, over а square body. They,

in addition to having the adhishthana akin to that of the southern

vimana type, show also a vyala vari or vyala mala, a frieze of vyalas

in the entablature, an invariable component of the prastara of the

southern vimana temples, and absent in all the other rekha-

prasadas. The larger Ramalingesvara has a sanctum, antarala and

axial mandapas in front. The shrine wall is plain but for a deva-

koshtha niche on each side. Among the diminutive shrines are to

be found specimens with square, rectangular and apsidal plans.

The square one is similar in form to the Huchchimalligudi with a

stepped-up series of six horizontal kapota-like tiers crowned by ' an

amalasara, an example of the Kadamba-Chalukya model.

The Panchalingesvara, also near Kurnool, though much reno-

vated, also belongs to this class. It is sandhara in plan and its

present superstructure is a modern renovation in the Kadamba-

Chalukya style. It has a pillared mandapa in front with a central

raised clerestory roof and lateral wings with slopy roofs. It con-

tains an inscription of Vijayaditya's time, about A.D. 750. Another

well-preserved temple of this type is to be found in Bandi Tandra-

padu nearby with a nirandhara body, having carvings of Ganesa,

Durga and Kartikeya on the relieved bhadra niches on its sides.

The sukanasika in front of the sikhara is prominent.

The Somesvara at Chebrolu, and the Panchalingesvara at

Panchalingula also belong to this category. The miniature shrines

found in the Yelesvaram excavations are akin to the diminutive

experiments found in the Satyavolu and Mahanandi complexes.

This type of rekha-prasadas soon fell out of vogue in these areas;

it could not extend any further south into the Tamil territory..

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THE KERALA TEMPLE TYPES

The Kerala temples form a class by themselves because of the

material used in their construction that includes timber to a large

extent, as was the case everywhere in south India before the

advent of the stone vimanas. Though in a few places the vimana

temples of the medieval and late medieval periods and styles (as

in Tamil Nadu) are to be found, the vast majority have their bascs

and walls built of granite and laterite, respectively, with the roof

of wooden planks, or tiles, or sheet metal over timber frames, and

their forms are adapted to suit the high rainfall of the region.

While the adhishthana of the vimana or Srikoyil is of moulded

stone with all parts resembling those of the adhishthana of the

southern temples, the walls are usually of laterite blocks which are

abundant in the area, and can be cut and shaped easily when

freshly quarried. Because of their rough and pitted surface, the

walls are heavily plastered and the few decorations are picked out

in stucco. The walls form a good ground for mural paintings

which take the place of relief sculptures. The Kerala temples are

thus noted for their rich colour paintings executed on the lime-

plastered walls in fresco technique. The roof timbers rest directly

on the wall plate on top of the walls, and converge in gable form

to meet at the top. The roofing material covering the timber frame-

work is clinker-built. It is made up of laminated wooden planks

overlapping one another and covered over by clinkertiles or tiles

highly heated in kilns with a vitreous or glassy smooth surface

that makes them waterproof. It is this fish-scale-like overlapping

pattern of tiles that is found reproduced in the covering plaster of

the brick-and-mortar sikharas of the southern vimanas. The roof

may alternatively be of metal sheet—copper or brass, which is

again found imitated even in the earliest monolithic models at

Mababalipuram, the Draupadi Ratha, for instance. Like the

Draupadi Ratha, the Kerala temples in their simplest form have

only the four essential parts instead of six of the simple vimana,

namely, the adhishthana or base, the bhitti or wall, the sikhara or

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roof, and the stupi or finial. The prastara and griya below the ulti-

mate roof are eliminated. The entablature and hara may be seen

in storeyed forms only. The usual plan for the Srikoyil or vimana

is the square or the circle and the apsidal. The rectangle is more

common for the mandapas and gopuras which are called padi-p-

pura. The rafters of the roof project beyond the wall, forming

well-formed eaves-like kapotas. These are often additionally

supported by a carved wooden frame-work with carved wooden

brackets sprung from the walls, caryatid-like. In larger vimanas the

body is sandhara or double-walled with a circumambulatory, or

idai nali, round the shrine-chamber, the inner wall rising up to

form a second tala as it were, and carrying the conical or pyra-

midal gable roof. The circumambulatory has a roof at a lesser

level which slopes down from the middle height of tne inner wall

and projects eaves-like over the top of the outer wall. The conical

or slopy main roof has dormer, or nasika, projections, which are

called kilivasal locally, with finely-carved wooden forana-frames

fronting them. Their entire forms, or at least their fronts—mukha-

patti, retain the arched or horse-shoe shape in most cases, while ja

some they are simply triangular. The local name kilivasal (parrot

entrance) is suggestive of the name sukanasika. It is not also un-

usual for the outer wall to be circular, with the inner one round

the sanctum square, or vice-versa. Normally, there is only one

entrance on the east or west of the Srikoyil. On the remaining three

sides there are niches or false doors. In some cases, the entrances

are found on both east and west, the space inside the shrine-

chamber being divided into an eastern and a western half by a

transverse wall, each half containing a different deity. In front of

the entrance is a flight of stone steps flanked by stone side-slabs or

balustrades, which contain rich relief sculptures, the banister Or

coping being shaped in the form of an elephant trunk issuing from

a vyala mouth, or similar interesting patterns. The pranala, or

water-outlet, projected from the northern side, is of a characteristic

shape—thick, long, cylindrical and tube-like, with a narrow bore

made through it, simulating a straight elephant's trunk emerging

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out of a vyala mouth. Externally, it is often ribbed and divided

into ringed nodes at intervals and supported below by a bhuta or

gana. The Srikoyil has a detached small front mandapa, often

square with а slopy roof, called the namaskara-mandapa. External-

ly, the quadrangular open court is surrounded by a prakara with

a cloister, or malika, locally called nalambalam or chuttambalam.

There may be more quadrangular enclosures, the outermost with

the main gopura entrance or padi-p-pura, in front, occasionally

with additional ones on the rear and on the sides. Besides the inner

prakara which is simpler, larger temple complexes like the Vadak-

kunnatha temple in Trichur have an outer prakara with storeyed

gopura entrances on all the four sides, and detached halls or man-

dapas in the court, like the rangasala or kuttambalam, for operas,

dances and similar performances, for which Kerala is noted,

especially dance-dramas and pantomime shows, like Kathakah,

Ottantullal, etc. In the Vadakkunnatha temple, the subsidiary

shrine for Sasta, at the north-east corner of the outer court is

apsidal with a timber-and-metal sheet roof.

Most of the Kerala temples now existing are not very old, the

oldest dating from medieval or post-mediaval times. The oldest

ones, because of the perishable fabric of construction, have been

lost, but for their stone adhishthanas and sculptures of gods, dvara-

palas, etc. These give us an idea of the continuity from at least the

tenth century A.D.,-if not earlier.

Such temples with prominent slopy or pent roofs, or ridged-roofs

on gables, are to be found extensively distributed over the entire

monsoon-swept littoral, from Kanyakumari in the south to south

Kanara and Goa on the north. Their Srikoyil or vimana plans

include the circular, which is more frequent, the elliptical, the

square, the oblong and the apsidal, and they rise often in more

than one storey. When storeyed, the lower storeys have their slopy

or pent roofs resting on rafters with their overhanging eaves on

the outer walls further supported by brackets sprung from the

outer wall and sloping down from 'beams on hooks fixed at a

higher lever on the inner wall. The top storey over the innermost

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wall is covered over by a conical or four-sided kula roof with a

single finial in the case of circular, octagonal, and sguare structures,

or by a ridged sala or sabha type on gable walls, with a row of

stupis in the case of the oblong and apsidal structures. The adhish-

thana is invariably of granitic stone, while the walls and superstruc-

ture may be of granite, laterite or brick and timber. The roof is

made of planks, metal shect or tiles, or even thatch in extremely

humble cases. Most of these temples, some with original found-

ations dating from the tenth-eleventh centuries, have been consider-

ably renovated and reconstructed in their upper parts in recent

centuries and as a result do not reveal much that can be attributed

to or interpreted as evolutionary trends.

Usually what goes unnoticed is the internal make-up and struc-

tural contents of the Srikoyil, since, by ritual, tradition and con-

vention, the interior of the Kerala temple is totally inaccessible to

any except the ordinated priesthood. What one perceives of the

Srikoyil is in fact an external shell, as it were, of a core vimana or

garbhakudi inside. The internal core containing the garbha or

sanctum is in essentials a vimana form as found elsewhere in the

south, often with a full complement of its anges in the tiered

superstructure over the cella, including the crest or sikara, or

more commonly ending up with its griva; in either case the super-

\_ structure is raised up over the cella by the system of internal cor-

belling or kadalika karana. The pedestal of the principal deity on

the sanctum floor is called the pithika, and the space all round it

inside the cella, the vithika, the wall of the cella itself being called

the antara mandala. The circuit outside the antara mandala, in which

are erected the rings of pillars going to support the external roof-

ing, is the antara hara, which is circumscribed by the antara bhitti

or inner wall of the Srikoyil between which and the bahya bhitti or

outermost wall, in a sandhara structure, runs the ambulatory

passage called the idai nali. The plan of this nuclear unit often

dces not correspond with the ground plan of the Srikoyil and its

plinth and it is usual to find that the cella is square, inside what is

externally a circular or apsidal structure or vice versa. The

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ultimate esternal conical (domical) or ridged roof either covers the

inner sikhara over the nuclear inner structure like an umbrella

with its sfupi or it is made to rest on the top of the griva itself

forming sikhara with stupi as common to both.

The eaves (avalambana) of this sikhara is extended and rendered

slopy on all sides, (with dormer projections or nasikas projected

out of the faces) in order to overhang and shelter the tala face

below of the external superstructure even as the chadyas or pro-

jected, slopy eaves from the various levels below do їп respect of

the parts below them, the lowest among tbem, in the case of a

multi-storeyed structure or the avalambana of the single main roof

or sikhara in the case of the ekatala or single-storeyed structure

coming to overshadow the main outer wall that rises over the

adhishthaza of the structure.

While, essentially, the nuclear fane or the sanctum sanctorum

is of the usual vimana type as found developed in the mainland

part east of the Western Ghats, the outer Srikoyil structure is au

adaptation to form a protective armour, so to say, shielding the

inner core from the excessive and continuous monsoon precipit-

ation of the western littoral, much like an umbrella—single- or,

multiple-tiered—or a shell. The pian of the Srikoyil, as mentioned

earlier, is generally square, or may be oblong or elliptical when

intended to house reclining - deities, or circular, or apsidal, the

apse arms having often a proportionately greater width to appro-

ximate in shape a semi-circle, as suggested by the descriptive name

' chapa (bow). The roofing or sikhara is kutagara or domical, the

sides converging to an apex with a single stupi or salakara with

gable ends, extended, - with а longitudinal ridge on top carrying a

row of stupis, in either case, as appropriate to the plan and shape

of the structure “below. In addition to the simple, single-storeyed

Srikoyil, two- and three-storeyed types are also common. But

judging from the local texts and from the extant models of Sri-

Koyils a talachchanda of more than three storeys does not ѕест to

be contemplated or attempted. The nirandhara (sin gle-walled)

ekatala structure is devoid of a sukanasa, while the sandhara

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(double-walled with an annular passage in between) ekatala struc-

ture of any plan has of necessity a sukanasa, as dictated by its

very sandhara nature, as also the double or triple-storeyed ones.

The multi-storeyed types exhibit a kara scheme of aedicules at top

of each tier or fala, (equated with the term griva in Kerala texts)

of successively diminishing height in their arrangement one over

the other. The true sandhara nature may be inferred, even from

outside, by the fact that superposed eaves of the multi-storeyed

structure (that are, of course, separated from one another,

in the vertical plane, by the intervening fala or griva) comes

over the hara elements of the tala-prastara below, as ап overhang-

ing chadya. This, because the respective chadyas, emerge from what

would otherwise be the kapota tier of the tala-prastara in a

soüthern vimana prototype. In the nirandhara pattern with a thick

wall, the hara aedicules would appear to be placed over the line of

emergence of the chadyas or eaves, since it is a case of the chadyas

being sprung at convenient levels and strutted up in position by

the carved brackets sprung from the wall itself. Internally the

support for the sikhara roof and the successive chadya caves below

is afforded by the top of the garbhakudya in combination with the

' system of walls and concentric rings of pillars of graded heights

on which the skeletal framework of beams, sloping rafters, cross-

pieces that are further secured by the planking over is constructed.

The actual water-proof covering is laid over the planking in the

form of clinkertiles, or metal sheeting (copper or brass). This

accords with the regional climatic requirements, and the steep slant

of the sikhara sides and the chadya eaves not only drain quickly

the heavy rain-water and throw it away, but also protect painted

stucco or wooden sculpture work wrought over the faces of the

fala walls and the main wall below. Thus a diligent comparative

study would indicate more a taxonomic homology with the parts of

the southern vimana type with such modifications as called for by

the local climatic environment, especially in respect of the sikhara

and chadya forms, than a seeming analogy with the Orissan pida-

deuls or the phansanakara styles of western India, or even the \_

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canopied temples of the sub-Himalayan tract.

The intervening parts of the idai nali, immediately in front of

the door-opening of the garbhakudya and lying between it and the

outer principal door-opening of the Srikoyil fronton constitutes,

functionally, the ardha-mandapa part in the scheme and thus comes

to have a sukanasa superstructure over it as a frontal projection

of the main: Srikoyil superstructure. This, as in the Chalukyan

temples and its cohorts, will be in addition to the maha nasikas on

top of the Srikoyil. \_

In front of the outer door-opening isthe flight of steps. It may

be a single flight of steps or sopana marga, laid in front of the

door providing direct ascent. Or, often, there isa landing laid in

front of the doorway with lateral flights of steps, one on either

side. While the frontal sopana marga is flanked on either side with

surulyal( balustrades, with sculptured outer faces, the làteral flights

have each of them, a similar balustrade flanking the front edges of

the steps with carvings. The front of the central block with the

landing on top of it likewise contains sculptures. These balustrade

sculptures along with the dyarapala figures form the only signi-

ficant stone sculptures in the Srikoyil make-up.

Perhaps one of the largest complexes in this series of temples is

the Vadakkunnatha, or Ten-Kailasam, or Sri Mulanatha temple,

perched picturesquely on a low hilly promontory in the centre of

Trichur town, which itself is almost at the centre of Kerala terri-

tory. From its inscriptions the temple is known to have been in

existence from the twelfth century, though its foundations could

have been “much older. The nuclear structures inside the nal-

ambalam or inner malika prakara are the three independent

shrines standing almost in a line north-south, all of them facing

west. The circular Srikoyil of Vadakkunnatha,.the most northerly

of the row, has its sanctum cella divided by a transverse. diagonal

wall. The western half enshrining Siva has its own door-opening

and flight of steps in front with a detached namaskara-mandapa in

front. The eastern half is dedicated to Devi-Parvati with a door

opening on the east. The northern and southern faces have false

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doors, or ghanadyaras. Over the moulded stone adhishthana, the

outer wall of the sandhara structure and its prastara show the

characteristic reliefs of pilasters and miniature shrines of the kuta,

sala, and panjara models, as in the Tamil Nadu temples, The

slopy conical roof of metal sheet covers these by its overhanging

eaves supported by brackets sprung from the wall at intervals. The

inner wall rising up further actually carries this immense conical

roof, or sikhara, with a single metal stupi on top. The most

southerly of the group is the two-storeyed shrine of Rama, square

on plan, with its adhishthana, walls, and prastara relieved five

times on each of its four faces. The central reliefs on the side and

rear faces, corresponding to the door-opening on the west, have

false doors inset between the pilasters carrying the sala motif on

top. The corner bays have the karnakutas at the corners and the

intervening ones the panjaras. The narrow recesses have lesser

shrine motifs on paired pilasters. These kuta, sala, panjara reliefs

are overshadowed by the overhanging eaves of the pent roof

sloping down from hooks and beams, set higher up on the face of

the inner wall, and resting on the wall-plate of the outer wall, the

overhanging eaves further supported by intricately carved carya-

tid-like wooden brackets sprung from the top\_region of the outer

wall again. The inner wall rises up to a further level, carrying the

four-sided domical ultimate roof, or sikhara, also of metal sheet,

with a stupi on top. The sikhara roof has four nasikas, or dormers

at the middle of its four sides. In between the Rama and Siva

shrines, there is a third shrine dedicated to Sankaranarayana, or

Harihara, circular in plan and two-storeyed in its rise. Its adhish-

thana and wall are likewise relieved, the larger bays in the middle

of the north, east and south sides being sala patterns, with a false

door inside a stambha torana front with a makara arch on top. The

other bays correspond to the kuta or panjara patterns—all two-

storeyed models—while the recesses have again such two-storeyed

models of lesser size with sala sikhara motifs on tops of shorter

and more closely set pairs of pilasters. On the southern side of the

Vadakkunnatha shrine, on the floor of the open court, is the

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Saptamatrika group, the component deities being represented by a

row of padma pithas alone, a characteristic of Kerala temples. All

the three central shrines have mukha-mandapams on the west.

There is also a smaller shrine for Ganapati, interposed between

the Siva and Harihara temples. The walls of the shrines are richly

painted and the timberwork and brackets ornately carved. The

nalambalam or pillared corridor, surrounding the nuclear group,

has on its outside a larger wider open court, with a paved circum-

ambulatory passage immediately to its outside. The lesser shrines

for subsidiary deities like Krishna, Nandi, Parasurama, and Sasta

are also located in the outer court. The shrine of Sasta on the

south-west is an elegant, smail, east-facing ekatala, apsidal struc-

ture, gaja-prishthakara, appropriate to Sasta, whose vehicle is the

elephant. It is perhaps the smallest apsidal structure in the Kerala

mode of construction. In the north-west corner of the outer court

is the large kuttambalam or opera-hall, rectangular in shape, and

built in typical Kerala style. Inside is a central pavilion with ex-

quisitely lathe-turned pillars which, in addition to the caryed

pillars of the hall and the woodwork of the ceiling, add to the

splendour of the structure. The whole complex is surrounded by 2

massive stone prakara, with four-storeyed gateways on the four

cardinal sides with slopy gable roofs, standing as good examples of

gopura construction in the Kerala style. е

Another large and important temple complex іп the south of

Kerala is the Padmanabhasvami, or Anantasayanam temple in

Trivandrum, which was wholly reconstructed in the last two cen-

turies. The stone-buill central shrine is appropriately oblong on

plan to enshrine the reclining form of Anantasayin Vishnu. It is

two-storeyed with pent and gable roof patterns for its storeys. The

walls are painted and tliere are subsidiary shrines for deities like

Krishna, Kshetrapala, Narasimha, Sasta, Garuda, etc. The open-

pillared mandapa round the complex, with .stone pillars, and the

eastern gopura of stone body and brickwork superstructure are in

the style of Tamil Nadu temples, while a subsidiary entrance to the

north of the gopura is in the traditional Kerala pattern with a gable

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СА

roof and kilivasal nasikas,

The Srikoyil of the celebrated Guruvayur temple, dedicated to

Krishna, is square and two-storeyed with metal sheet gable roofs,

as in the above two cases. It has the chuttambalam and prakara

encircling it. The other noteworthy temples, single-or more-storeyed

and built of laterite, brick and wood, and roofed by metal sheet or

tiles, are the Siva temples at Tiruvanchikalam, Tali (near Kozhi-

kode), Taliparamba, Tiruprangode, Perumanam, Trikkandiyur,

Trittala and Sukapuram, the Rama temples at Trichchambaram

and Tirunavay, and the Bhagavati temple at Kodungallur. The

Tiruvanchikalam shrine is square on plan and ashlar-built, double-

walled and two-storeyed, the lower slopy roof resting over the

outer wall, and the upper one over the raised inner wall, both of

metal sheeting. The upper roof in its overhanging eaves, further

supported by wooden brackets profusely carved, has four kiliyasal

nasikas projected from the sloping sides. The walls contain some

good sculpture and carving. The top stupi is of gold-plated copper.

The Taliparamba temple is almost similar, quadrangular on

plan and double-walled, with the roof in two storeys. The lower

pent roof slopes down on the top of the shorter outer wall and the

upper pyramidal or kuta roof caps the top of the inner walls. In

front there is the namaskara-mandapa with a sloped roof and two ,

projecting gables at either end. The remnants of a large gopuram

demolished during Tipu Sultan's invasions are still extant.

The Tali temple near Kozhikode is again another structure of

the same kind, square, double-walled, and two-storeyed, the roofs

made cf modern tiles. The adhishthana and the walls show the usual

five reliefs on bcth the side and rear faces, the central widest with

a sala over the prastara, and a false door inset into a torana, placed

between the wall pilasters below; the extreme bays relate to the

karnakutas, while the intermediate ones, the smallest, to the panja-

ras of the prastara. The recesses show narrow windows between

close-set pairs ‘of pilasters carrying panjara tops reaching to the

level of the kapota of the prastara. Its stone sculptures are of a

fine quality as also the wood-carving on the ceiling of the

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namaskara-mandapa.

The Rama temple of Tiruvangad in north Kerala is unigue in

having a rectangular Srikoyil with a linear orientation, that is, with

the entrance on one of the shorter sides of the oblong structure. It

is two-storeyed. The front elevation on the face with the main door-

way is almost vertical, while the two longer sides and the shorter

rear side have the slopy pent roof at the lower level, and the ridged

gable roof at the higher level with three stupis in a linear row on the

ridge along the longitudinal axis. The roofs are of copper sheeting.

In front there is a mukha-mandapa, also oblong, but with its long

axis transverse to that of the Srikoyil and provided with stupis over

its transversely-oriented ridge. All round there is а nalambalam of

lesser height. : T

The.Krishna temple at Trichchambaram, noted for its excellent

wood-carvings illustrating scenes from the Bhagavata, has a Srikoyil

square on plan and sandhara in its make-up, with the roof of both

the storeys covered with copper plate. The lower pent roof is ex-

tended forward, as the sukanasa, with a front triangular gable face

over the idai nali or linear antarala-mandapa, in front of which is an

independent namaskara-mandapa. The upper four-sided pyramidal

roof has projected kilivasal nasikas on its. four sides, with arched

or horse-shoe-shaped front; there is a single stupi on top. The

Tirunavay, Vishnu temple also belongs to the' same category.

The Perumanam Siva temple dedicated to Erattayappan is a

three-storeyed version of the kind with a frontal antarala projec-

tion of two storeys in front, and the top pyramidal roof unique

in being octagonal. It is raised over an eight-sided neck with

kilivasal nastkas projected from each of. the eight octant faces;

The lower roofs are made of tiles and the octagonal sikhara of

, metal sheet.

The twin temples of Rama and Lakshmana standing side by side,

in Tiruvilvamalai, the former (facing east and the latter, west, are

interesting. Both are of ћезате plan and rise, square, sandhara,

and with a projected gable roof from the lower tier over a linear

front antarala-mandapa. The roofs ate made of metal sheeting and

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the four-sided pyramidal sikharas have four kilivasal nasikas and

single metal gold-gilt stupis on top. The walls are decorated with

sculptures, the Dasavatara sculptures on the Lakshmana temple

being particularly noteworthy. The Rama temple has undergone

renovation recently.

The Rama temple at Tiruprayar has a circular ekatala Srikoyil

and is noted for its ancient wood-carvings. The namaskara-mandapa

has profuse wood-carvings, while the wall ofthe shrine has in-

teresting mural paintings. The Srikoyil at Vaikom is similar, circular

and ekatala, with an immense conical copper-sheet roofing, and a

single stupi. The Srikoyil of Thrikotithanám, another ancient struc-

ture, is likewise of circular plan but two-storyed, as also is the Sri-

koyil of Payyanur, which has a boldly moulded stone adhishthana

and finely carved caryatid brackets supporting the eaves of the lower

pent roof. The Siva temple at Ettumanur, noted for its paintings,

especially of Nataraja, has a simple ekatala Srikoyil, which is also

circular on plan.

While-the small Sasta shrine in the outer precincts of the Vadak-

kunnathan temple at Trichur stands for a simple ekatala apsidal,

or gaja-prishtha vimana, the Siva temple at Tiruvannur exemplifies

a two-storeyed and larger version of the type. The pent roof cover-

ing the storey below and the apsidal ridged roof above, with a gable

front, has a row of. three stupis on top. The Subrahmanya temple

at Payyanur is another example of a two-storeyed structure of the

gaja-pishtha class with a square namaskara-mandapa and a trans-

versely oblong mukha-mandapam in ftont, all metal sheet-roofed,

and having a tiled nalambalam of a lesser height running all round.

The decayed temple at Tripparangode, and-the one at Tiruvannur

near Kozhikode, аге:уеї other examples of the same class. The com-

paratively modern Ananthavinayakar temple at Madhur in north

Malabar, also 'gaja-prishtha,-has its roof in three tiers, the two lowest

ones with pent roof and tiled; the upper lean-to-roof and the ulti-

.mate apsidal roof are of copper sheeting.

. "The Bhagavati or Durga temple at Kodungallur of ancient fame

is now a total modern renovation, of course in the indigenous style.

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The main Srikoyil is two-storeyed with a subsidiary Siva shrine td

its left.

Among the temples with southern style vimanas, akin to those

of the adjoining districts of Tamil Nadu, and more or less con-

centrated in the south Travancore and Kanyakumari regions, may

be mentioned the Guhanathasvami temple of stone of Kanya-

kumari of the middle Chola period, with the superstructure lost; the

Parthivasekharapuram temple, four-storeyed with the superstruc-

ture in brick-and-mortar over the stone body of the late Chola or

Pandya period; and the Banatirtha temple with tritala vimana of

the late Vijayanagar period, with the vimanas all square on plan.

The Parasurama shrine in the Tiruvallam temple complex and the

Valiya Udaiyadichapuram shrine with a stone body and brickwork

superstructure are examples of dvitala and tritala vimanas of vritta

or circular plan of the sixteenth century and later. The largest

temple complex of this kind is the one at Suchindram, with struc-

tures inside dating from the ninth-tenth centuries A.D., a chitra-

sabha built in 1410, a mandapa, called the Chempakaraman

Mandapam, built in 1471, and the gopura built in about 1545.

` The Kanara temples, as Cousens calls them, form an interesting

group, though small in number, characterised by their plain sloping

roofs of stone slabs with a peculiar arrangement for closing in the

sides. This -is adapted to the excessive rainfall of the place that

makes for the deep gradient of the roof, and its extension much

downwards to cut off the beating rain. The sides of the halls inside

are closed by screens and often they are storeyed. Inside they often

contain lathe-turned pillars, but in general the columns are short,

squat and clumsy, rather degenerate Chalukyan forms. Their affili-

ations have been mentioned earlier and besides the Ketapi Narayana

temple, we have examples of such temples in Bhatkal itself, also in

Mudabidri and its neighbourhood.

GLOSSARY OF INDIAN

ARCHITECTURAL TERMS

adhishthana: Basement ofa vimana, mandapa, or similar structure, forming

a distinct architectural feature supporting walls and pilasters or pillars,

and consisting of distinct moulded tiers.

alpa nasika: Projected front-end of an apsidal shrine resembling a kudu arch

over pilasters, originally functioning as a small opening or fenestrated

window, usually in kutas, koshthas and panjaras.

alpa vimana: Small, one-storeyed vimana. The parts are adhishthana, bhitti .

or pada, prastara, griva, sikhara and stupi. ЇЇ is usually without a hara.

amalaka, amalasara, amalasila: Ribbed, lenticular or globoid part resemb-

ling the amalaka (Indian gooseberry fruit) crowning the top of the

northern-style sikhara as its characteristic; also adopted as the top of

the Kadamba-Chalukya forms, sometimes as an alternative to the

griya sikhara component of the southern vimana form.

anarpita hara: String of miniature shrines (hara) on the edge of each vimana

tala, distinct from the body of the upper fala or storey, with interven-

“ing space (opposite of arpita).

antara bhitti: Inner wall cf multiple-walled garbha-griha, or sanctum, 01

storey.

arpita kara: Hara or string of miniature shrines on the edge of each vimana

fala that is applique to the body (harmya) of the upper zala or storey

without any intervening space (opposite of anarpita).

ardha-mandapa; Pillared hail immediately in front of the principalshrine or

distal half of a mandapa with two seriate pillars, as in rock-cut cave-

temples.

ashta parivara: Lay-out of central shrine with eight surrounding sub-shrines

(including the Nandi sbrine) in the cardinal and corner directions.

aytana: Shrine, vimara.

ayatasra vimana: Vimana oblong on plan and covered by a wagon-top

roof.

bahya bhitti: Outermost wall of a multiple-walled sanctum or storey

(opposite of antara bhitti).

bhadra: Central relieved or projected part from each side of the body of the

` yimana or prasada as distinct from the corner projection (Karna).

bhadra sala: Oblong wagon-topped miniature shrine of ayatasra type in the

centre of each side of the hara over the storeys of the vimana.

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bhitti: Wall.

bhitti torana: Ornamental festoon on the wall, usually a makara torana

supported by two pilasters. See torana, makara torana.

bhumi: Stage in the curvilinear superstructure (sikhara) or anda of a

northern-style temple, often marked off at the corners by compressed

amalakas—the karnamalakas or bhumiamalakas.

bhuta: Goblin,

chaturmukha: Shrine or vimana opening on all four sides. -

chitra potika: Corbels with embossed carving or painting of creepers,

flowers, etc.

devakoshtha: Niche on wall of shrines and mandapas containing sculpture of

deity; often crowned by orana or shrine motif, kuta sala, panjara, or

Kudu, or udgama. Е

gala, griva: Neck; usually the clerestory raising up the roof (sikhara) with

light and air-openings (nasikas) on its sides in the vimana types. The

neck is below the amalaka in prasada types, but without nasikas.

garbha-griha: Shrine-cell, or sanctum sanctorum, or cella.

gopura: Main gateway; the storeyed structure over the entrance or entrances

through the enclosing walls to the premises of a temple, palace, or

city.

hara: String of miniature shrines over each terrace (tala) of the storeyed

vimana consisting of Kutas, koshthas, or salas and panjaras, inter-con-

nected by cloister-lengths or balustrades simulating cloisters (harantara.)

harantara: See hara.

kadalika karana: Successive inward offsetting or corbelling-in of the roofing

slabs or brick courses over walls to reduce the space to be roofed over

to an ultimate small opening on top that can be covered by a slab over-

lapping like a banana bunch.

Kadamba-Chalukya: Variant primarily of the rekha-Nagara-style prasada, or

temple, in which the superstructural tiers comprise kapota (cornice) and

kantha (neck) and are capped by a circular griva or gala (neck), and

an amalasara, often without the sukanasika.

kalasa (lasuna): Wide-mouthed vase; lowermost member of the pillar capital,

so-called after its shape. Also the vase-shaped finial over the amalaka

of northern temples.

kalyana-mandapa: Mandapa or hall in which the ceremonial wedding of god

and goddess in the form of utsava murtis or processional bronze icons

is celebrated annually in south Indian temples,

kapota: Dove, pigeon; overhanging cornice, usually flexed, projecting

beyond the principal beam to throw off water from tbe terrace beyond

the beam and joist-end or the recesses of the adhishthana like the

kumuda and padma.

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skamnakuta: Miniature sama-chaturasra (square) shrine at the corner of each

storey of the vimana over the prastara, with a single stupi. It is rarely

vritta (circular) or ashtasra (octagonal) on plan.

karna sala: Miniature ayatasra (oblong) shrine with barrel-vault roof placed

at the corner of each tala of a structure, usual in gopuras.

kattu: Intervening octagonal or polygonal portion between the bottom and

top squares of a pillar.

-kilivasal: Kerala term used for the nasika. See nasika, and sukanasika.

.koshtha: Same as a sala.

kshudra nasika: Short nasika; projected front end of a miniature apsidal

(one or two-storeyed) shrine with arch'over pilasters functioning as a

small opening, usually found in the harantara.

kudu: ‘Nest’; an arched or horse-shaped opening projected out of a flexed

cornice (kapota), orizinally perhaps intended for entry of roosting birdg

(kapota) but in later examples filled with human figures (rnirhura, etc.) ,

surmounted by а finial. The arch is usually a makara torana.

kudya-stambha: Pilaster shown as relief on wall surface.

kumbha: Member of the pillar capital coming above the kalasa, and fadi,

and bulbous in form. Originally a flattened carinate vase with a short,

narrow mouth.

kuta: Shrine of square plan (sama-chaturasra) with four-sided converging

roof and single finial, or cse or octagonal with domical roof and

single finial, or stupi.

lalata bimba: “Crest figure": chief decorative motif or figure on the frontal of

any entrance or door-lintel, sometimes'extending to the over-door.

maha-mandapa: Pillared hall immediately in front of the ardha-mandapa, or

antarala, or the proximal half ofa mandapa with two-seriate pillars,

closed or open, in cave-temples. Я

maha nasika: Projected nose-like part from the sides of the griva and

sikhara showing the frontal aspects of apsidal vimanas and having

pillars with surmounting arched foranas.

makara torana: Entrarice-decoration with a festoon—straight or arched,

spanning the tops of two columns, the festoon or forana being a deco-

rative garland or scroll issuing from mouths of makaras (crocodiles),

placed over the capitals: of the supporting .stambhas. Such makara

roranas are found over the devakoshtas or mandapa entrances, or walls

(bhitti torana).

malasthana: Apex of pillar or pilaster shaft below capital with „looped gar-

land (mala) hanging from the padma bandha.

mandapa, mandapam: Open or closed pillared or astylar hall.

mukha-mandapa: First or frontal mandapa of a series at the entrance of a

temple; often synonymous with maha-mandapa in earlier temples.

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nasika: Nose’; projected arched opening (window). See-alpa nasika, kshudra

nasika, maha nasika and sukanasika. In Kerala temples it is called kili-

yasal, or parrat-beak entrances.

natya mandapa: Dance-hall. See nritta-maridapa.

navaranga: Mandapa with four pillars surrounding a central bay, twelve

more on the periphery in alignment with the central pillars enclosing

cight more bays surrounding the central one and making nine bays in

all; characteristicof Chalukyan temples and their derivatives.

nida: Miniature apsidal shrine. Same as panjara.

nirandhara: Devoid of a closed circuit or ambulatory round the cella, the

wall of the cella being single and tbick (as opposed to sandhara).

nritta-mandapa: Sce natya-mandapa.

oma: Basal pirha of pillar or pilaster,

peda: Pillar (stambha).

padma: Lotus; capital-member (doucene) below the phalaka (abacus), shaped

like a lotus with petals.

padma bandha: Broad fillet, ringing the top of the shaft of a pillar; marked

by decorative bands between rows of lotus petals, separating the shaft

from the capital.

pali: Capital member, same as padma, but without scalloped petals.

panjara: Miniature apsidal shrine. Same as nida.

parlvara devatas: Also called avarana devatas, or subsidiary deities in

shrines called parivaralayas or parivara.

patta: Plain or decorated band occupying the median face of the corbel as if

binding the rolls of taranga mouldings of the corbel.

pattika: Projected top slab of the platform or adhishthana in line with the

vertical norm or manasutra—a major moulding of considerable thick-

ness.

` phalaka: Abacus; wide plank on top of the terminal saduram or moulded

capital of pillar supporting the corbel, or potika.

pidadeul: Structure with stepped or tiered superstructure over the sanctum

asin Kadamba-Chalukya temples. The term is used in Orissa (Kalinga)

architecture for the mandapa in front of the main prasada called jag-

mohan, or smaller individual shrines with such superstructure (as

distinct from rekhadeul).

pitha: Pedestal, base.

potika: Corbel-bracket over pillar. Sec raranga potika, makara potika,

chitra potika.

pranala: Spout projected like a gargoyle to discharge water.

Maece NASA temple, as distinct from the vimana form of the

sout

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prastara: Entablature, consisting of mouldings over walls and pillars, viz.

` the шїїга (beam) vajana, valabhi, kapota, alinga, and antari.

ranga-mandapa: Equivalent of nayaranga, corresponding to the maha-

mandapa of southern vimana temples. Ў

ratha: \*Chariot': monolithic vimgna.

rekha-prasada: Typical northern-style sanctuary form witb curvilinear

superstructure, or anda, emphasised by the bhadra projections on the

sides, and by rekhas (curvilinear lines) crowned by a neck and amalaka

With kalasa on top.

' sabha-mandapa: Mandapa with shrine of Nataraja in the southern temples,

generally facing south.

saduram: Square basal, intermediate or terminal section of a pillar separated

by octagonal, polygonal or circular intermediary parts.

wala shrine: Vimana of ayatasra type (oblong on plan) with barrel-vault roof.

and a series of stupis on its ridge.

gala sikhara: Sikhara peculiar to za/a shrine, barrel-va

inverted, keel-shaped.

sandhara: Structure with a closed or cove

round the cella or the

of nirandhara).

snapana-mandapa: Mandapa

monial bathing of

festivals.

sikhara: Roof of the vimana over the griva, domical or four-sided with .a

single finial, vaulted with many finials on the ridge, or apsidal with

many finials over the horizontal part, The entiro superstructure (anda)

Of northern prasadas.

stambha: Pillar (pada).

stambha torana: Entrance decoration or free-standing decorated entrance

without doors and with a festoon spanning the tops of two columns,

the festoon primarily being a garland of leaves and flowers, later on

taking the form of one or more curved and docorated cross-bars, or a

floral and foliar festoon arch issuing out of makara-heads, placed'on top

of the supporting columns. Í 4

stupi, stupika: Finial, morphologically the ushnisha, taking in later times the

form of a purnaghata or purna kumbha, forming the topmost or

` ultimate member of the vimana, gopura, or any other structure.

sukandsika (Also sukanasa): Integral forward projection of the tiers of the

‘int superstructure, below the griva and amalaka level in northern prasadas

coming over the antarala and forming its roof; has a nasika front,

` enclosing bas-relief sculptures inside the arch. In adaptations in the

southern yimanatypes, as in the Chalukyan and its derivatives, ho

ult, wagoh-top or

red circuit passage or ambulatory

sanctum as in double-walled structures (opposite

in which the abhisheka (or snapana) or cere-

processional idols of bronze is performed during

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forward projection primarily of the front nasika or maha nasika or the

dormer of the griva sikhara region alone in smaller simple vimana types

and along with the forward projection of the falas in storeyed types,

the whole coming over the terrace of the lower- antarala or ardha-

mandapa.

fadi: Saucer-shaped capital-member above the kalasa ind below the

kumbha.

tala: Storey of the vimana or gopura.

taranga: ‘Wave’; wavy roll-ornament of the corbel resembling the ‘reed’

moulding or ‘reeding’ of European classical architecture.

taranga potika: Corbel-bracket with roll- or taranga- moulding.

torana: Free-standing ornamenta] foliar and floral festoon forming entrance

supported by two upright columns and often interlaced vertically (jala

forana): copies in wood and stone with greater elaboration and carving,

or taking the form of makara torana, mounted on two pillars. It pre-

cedes the main gateways (gopuras) of cities, palaces and temples. It is

often erected temporarily (as is common in south India) on festive

occasions on roads Jeading to cities, palaces and temples, When adorn-

ing the doorway as a dyarasobha, it is called a griha-dvara-torana, or the

face-of-a-wall (bhitti) torana, where it often frames a niche or deva-

koshtha or suggests an opening ghanadyara. When free-standing, it is

designated stambha torana.

foranastambha: Pillar or pilaster supporting rorana.

#rikuta, trikutachala: Three vimanas connected by a common adhishthana in

aline or placed round a common mandapa, as in Chalukyan types.

udgama: Fenestrated pattern of coalescent kudu-like arches and half-arches,

typical of northern-style temples and found in the facade arches of

Buddhist cave-temples; used in northern temples as crest over deyako-

shthas also in place of the miniature shrine tops of such figure niches

\_ on walls of shrines and mandapas.

upana: Lowermost part or footing of the basement or adhishthana, project-

ing beyond the vertical norm and surmounted by the jagati. It forms

the lowermost visible part of the vimana, the uppermost limit of the

same being the stupi. $

upa-pitha: Additional moulded platform or sub-base below the basement or

adhishthana with mouldings repeating those of the adhishthana, or often

reduced in number, or simpler- ;

utsava-mandapa: Mandapa in which the processional deities of bronge are

kept during celebrations.

vedika: Railing.

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vimana: Shrine from upana to stupi (base to finial), the whole shrine consist-

ing of adhishthana (basement), pada (pillars) or bhitt! (walls), prastara

(entablature), griva (neck or clerestory), sikhara (head or roof), and

stupi (finial) in the case of simple vimanas (ekatala); with talas (storeys)

intervening between the lowermost prastara below and the griva,

sikhara, and stupi above in storeyed vimanas.

vyala: Leonine figure.

vyala mala, vyala vari: Decorative frieze with vyalas usually as part of the

adhishthana and on top of the entablature of each sala, marking the

ends of the cross-joists in original timberwork.

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