

**EARLY TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE
IN KARNATAKA
AND ITS RAMIFICATIONS**

K. V. SOUNDARA RAJAN



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KANNADA RESEARCH INSTITUTE
KARNATAK UNIVERSITY
DHARWAR-2

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RESEARCH LECTURES, NEW SERIES NO. 1

General Editor
Dr. P. B. DESAI

EARLY TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE IN KARNATAKA AND ITS RAMIFICATIONS

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KANNADA RESEARCH INSTITUTE
KARNATAK UNIVERSITY, DHARWAR

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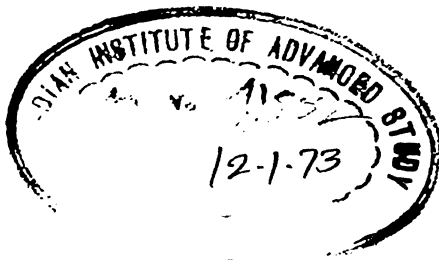
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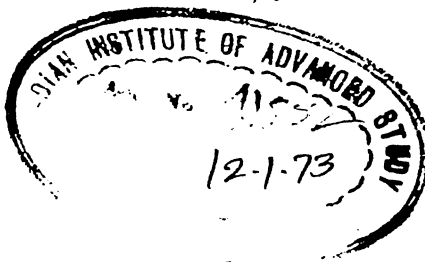
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FOREWORD

Karnataka, the traditional boundaries of which extended from the Godavari in the north, to the Kaveri in the south, has a rich heritage to boast of, in all fields of human activity — politics, religion, philosophy and literature. In the domain of architecture also it has a place of pride. The amazing cave temples at Badami, the structural monuments of Aihole and Pattadakal, rightly called the cradle of Indian Architecture, and those at Halebid, Belur, Somanathapur and Hampi, to mention only a few, are an open book as it were, unfolding the rise and growth of the glorious Karnataka architecture. With an artistic insight and scientific precision, the Kannada artist assimilated what was worthy in other styles, but developed an indigenous style of his own, which carried its influence to the neighbouring regions. The fine pieces of architecture show how the people were enjoying a prosperous period. The people and the government of the time must be taking keen interest in exhibiting their skills and working wholeheartedly with devotion to translate their designs and ideas into action. It requires a lot of patience and imagination to produce such architectural models.

The present work is a scholarly treatment of this aspect of early Karnataka architecture by an erudite Sanskrit scholar and a specialist in Archacology and Architecture. I hope that this will serve as an incentive to our young scholars to pursue the study of this fascinating subject.

The Kannada Research Institute is doing creditable work in historical and epigraphical research and it has brought out more than fifty works of research value. Arranging research lectures by experts in different fields of indological research and publishing them in book form is a part of the regular programme of work of the Institute. I congratulate Dr. P. B. Desai, Director, Kannada Research Institute and Head of the Department of Ancient Indian History & Culture, for this valuable work that he has brought to light. I hope this first volume in the new series of research lectures will be a forerunner to many such to follow in quick succession.

Yugadi,
19th March 1969
Karnatak University,
Dharwar.

DR. A. S. ADKE
Vice-Chancellor.

PREFACE

We feel happy to present this monograph on temple architecture to the world of scholars interested in the subject. This comprises the subject matter of three research lectures delivered by the author at the Kannada Research Institute on the 16th, 17th and 18th February, 1968. The field of investigation covered herein is Early Karnataka Architecture and Its Ramifications.

The Kannada Research Institute forming an academic department of the Karnatak University, came into existence as an independent unit in 1938 to serve the need of a preliminary centre of Post-Graduate studies and research in Karnatak History and Culture and cognate subjects in the northern districts of the present Mysore State, formerly in the Bombay Presidency. It was precursor of the Karnatak University which was founded twelve years later in 1950. The Kannada Research Institute is a broad based cultural institution having no parochial affiliations as evidenced by its comprehensive educational activities.

The functions of the Institute in association with the Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, now constituting a composite Post-Graduate Department of Karnatak University, range over a wide field. They are as follows: teaching the subjects of Ancient Indian History and Culture to the Post-Graduate M.A. courses in history, viz., Ancient Indian History, Epigraphy, Archaeology, Numismatics; Ancient Indian Political Thought and Institutions, Historical Method and Thought, History of the Vijayanagara Empire; training in Palaeography and Epigraphy for the Post-Graduate Diploma course in Epigraphy; maintenance of the Museum of Art and Archaeology; survey and collection of archaeological and epigraphical materials; collection of historical records and literary manuscripts; small scale archaeological explorations and excavations; publication of source materials, epigraphical volumes; documented history series, and literary works; arranging research lectures by renowned scholars and their publication. The total number of publications of the Institute to date is 52.

Pertaining to the last mentioned item, the plan generally adopted is as follows: The lectures are normally three, dealing with the various aspects of one principal theme of research on a suitable problem in historical and cultural studies. The text of the lectures is published in the form of a monograph soon after their delivery. Ten series of such lectures delivered from 1940 to 1953 have so far been published and are available to the scholars for study. Owing to some difficulties this activity was suspended for about twelve years in the past. It was again revived since 1966. During this latter period of revival, six series of lectures were delivered. The present is the first volume of the new series of research lectures to be published.

The author of these lectures, Shri K. V. Soundara Rajan, is a scholar of repute, well-versed in Sanskrit, Ancient Indian History, Archaeology and Epigraphy. He has toured extensively for intensive study all over the country. He has specialised in the early temple architecture of India with special reference to South India.

The early Karnataka Architecture is an absorbing study rich with rewards. From the earliest period the creative genius of Karnataka artists has liberally contributed to the art treasures of India and picturesquely adorned their native land with their masterly products. From the sixth century onwards, with the rise of the mighty Chalukyas of Badami rises the splendour of Karnataka architecture which, flourishing through vicissitudes, attains its glorious climax during the spirited age of the Vijayanagara monarchs in the sixteenth century. In the course of these ten centuries and over, hundreds of exquisite temples and thousands of superb sculptures were erected throughout the length and breadth of its boundaries. The mysteries of this vast wonderland yet remain to be fathomed. No systematic survey and scientific study with true insight of these works of art have adequately been made so far.

The subject has been dealt with in a cursory fashion by James Fergusson in his *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* in 1910. In *The Chalukyan Architecture of The Kanarese Districts* published sixteen years later (1926) by Henry Cousens we obtain a better,

more critical and fairly comprehensive descriptive treatment of the theme. Coming forth three decades later (1956), Percy Brown with his discerning acumen made a substantial contribution in the field. His monumental survey *Indian Architecture* (Buddhist and Hindu periods) traces the genesis, evolution and growth of the art of temple construction on scientific lines. He rightly recognizes the distinctive characteristic features of Karnataka architecture which was an independent movement, an expression of the natural instincts and aspirations of the inhabitants of the region. Aihole where a variegated array of early shrines and temples is clustered, was a cradle town of Indian architecture. The plentiful harvest of temple architecture with its various modes and styles, emerging during the later periods, was an outcome of aesthetic experiments carried out in the early stages in this and the adjoining centres of Badami, Mahakuta and Pattadakal. Among other scholars who have made a study of Karnataka architecture partially or in special aspects, mention may be made of R. Narasimhachar and M. H. Krishna.

The present enquiry is a fresh approach to the subject. Its originality lies in the fact that it takes into account for the first time the hitherto untapped literary treatises, the Agamas and Silpa texts on the temple architecture. With this clue and applying the modern techniques of research, an illuminating appraisal of the origin and evolution of the early temple architecture of Karnataka is impressively presented here in minute details. Another welcome feature of this investigation is the systematic discussion of the subtle interrelations and impacts of the art movement of Karnataka on similar movements in other regions and *vice versa*. Noteworthy is the unconventional manner of explaining the familiar nomenclature Dravida, Nagara and Vesara. The terminology introduced to describe the three characteristic temple forms in Karnataka as Rekha-Nagara, Kadamba-Nagara and the southern Vimana, is a novel feature.

It is further pointed out that: the early Chalukyas were responsible for the orientation of the Sadasiva and Mahesa concepts of the images of Siva; Karnataka offered the cult of Ganesa to the deeper south; the vigorous and impressionistic Durga is a

special feature of Karnataka art; Karnataka, in art and architecture, was a unifying and rejuvenating bridge between the northern and the southern traditions. In fine, the early Karnataka art is the best rendering, on the religious plane, of what was essentially a local ethos.

Leaving aside a few minor observations on which there is likely to be disagreement and divergence of opinion, the overall treatment of the author constitutes a positive landmark in the studies and researches on the early temple architecture of Karnataka and South India.

We are grateful to the author for having placed at our disposal the valuable results of his strenuous research and painstaking study in the subject. We are indebted to our esteemed Vice-Chancellor Dr. A. S. Adke for his interest in this Department and for having blessed this publication with his weighty Foreword. My colleagues Dr. S. H. Ritti and Dr. B. R. Gopal have shouldered the burden of seeing the work through the press. Miss Leela, Research Assistant, has prepared the Index. The attractive cover design is by the artist Shri R. S. Desai of this Department. We express our hearty thanks to them all.

15th March 1969

Department of Ancient
Indian History & Culture
and Kannada Research Institute.

P. B. DESAI
Professor & Director.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

I am indeed grateful to the Karnatak University, Dharwar and the learned Director of the Kannada Research Institute, Dr. P. B. Desai, for having invited me to deliver the lectures on South Indian architecture early last year. I chose the subject which is now presented in the following pages, in realisation of the fundamental contributions of the Karnataka area towards the study of early structural architectural motivations in ancient India. The region has a felicitous array of early stone temples, especially in the Malaprabha Valley, even whose iconography by itself has an exclusive scope for detailed treatment. I hope some scholar would surely be doing justice to it early.

I have tried to present the topics of my lectures in a concise manner, projecting, by and large, the architectural personality of the temples alone. I am hoping that the treatment and the tabulated notes that follow, would stimulate further fruitful studies in this premier art-nucleus of India.

I have also to thank the Karnatak University authorities for having brought out the book early.

Madras

K. V. SOUNDARA RAJAN

1st March 1969.

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I

ORIGINS AND FORMATIVE STAGES

In a land of many rivers that is India, Karnataka constitutes a territory which is plateau-land in physiomorphology, with the unique distinction of river systems cutting in all directions but essentially dividing the zone into three areas, *viz.*, that (to the north) fed by the Krishna and its tributaries (the Varada and the Tungabhadra); that on its mid-eastern fringe which is inundated by the northward flowing North Pennar river system; and that, further south, fertilised by the Kaveri system. The locking by the Sahyadris and the Eastern ghats, on the southern part of the Karnataka plateau, together with the dominant Trap country which occurs to the north, made it an almost homogeneous terrain, and movement of people and art-impulses had inevitably followed this tri-furcated pattern. This had given rise to its typical Chalukya architectural *milieu* in the north, the Nolamba-Bana *melange* in the mid-east, and the typical western-Ganga style of the south. The individuality of the first and the last, and the fixed character of the second are also a direct sequel to the physical pattern. Thus, the art-heritage of the region, taken as whole, is polyglot to a degree, but follows a pattern already predestined by the developments that took place in the northern tract, in the early sixth-seventh centuries A.D. Here, nature with its fine sandstone raw-material, and man with his well-nigh seven-century old familiarity with another soft medium, namely, Trap—found inadequate by now for structural temple-architecture—co-conspired to make the land the very cocoon, as it were, of the earliest temple modulations, while history almost anticipatively overtook nature and man by witnessing the rise of one of the most venturesome, colourful and deeply religious Hindu dynasties of early India—the Chalukyas of *Vatapyadhithana*, the present day Badami. By

a timing that was as meticulous as it was canny, the early chieftains to this throne, caught the opportunity by its fore-locks, and by the close of the sixth century A.D. had become the masters of all that lay between the Narmada and the Krishna, at least in Western Deccan. The erstwhile centres of Buddhist art quickly gave place to flourishing Brahmanical cave temples, whose sculptural wealth in their dim-lit interiors spoke in no uncertain terms of the religious revival already afoot. Suddenly, as it were, the Buddhist church and clergy are heard no more, and the Trinity, with their full protocol honours, were re-established by Puranic Hinduism, without tear or rancour. A silent revolution had taken place and with it Hindu architecture, of the structural order in stone medium, was born and baptised. This phenomenon was the product entirely of local circumstances and resources, and was rudimentary and functional to a degree in its initial stages. As the fledgelings of the architect's fancy put forth wings, South India was, for the first time, provided with a three-fold temple fabric, of indigenous, outlandish, and of the arche-typal forms respectively. Here, if anywhere, was the bed-rock of the Hindu temple formulation.

The opening scenes of this new drama are laid at Aiholi, Mahakut, and Badami, all on or near the Malaprabha and the first and last within 14 miles of each other, with the middle one midway but rather tucked away, at the head of a hill stream, into the lush valley. Kisuvolal—later better known as Pattada Kisuvolal or Pattadakal—had not yet been born to art. The busy town of Aiholi—Aryapura as it was perhaps called then—perhaps patronised the erection of the first sumptuous Chalukyan structural temple, in what is now somewhat jarringly going by the *sobriquet*, Ladkhan. This ponderous, rudimentary and non-descript structural model has three main features to its credit: 1) the main structure is entirely closed all around and is no better than a civilian hall, whose interior symmetry is clear from the central square architrave over four free-standing pillars, resulting externally in a clerestory. The roofing of the other parts is of the slopy variety. (2) An entrance *mandapa*, mainly of the *vedi* type and borne on transversely oblong rows of pillars is provided.

{3) There was probably no shrine-chamber, as such, originally and the present one should have come later to the main structure. But its place at the very rear of the scheme, against the backwall, most persuasively recalls the cave-temple model with its shrine at the rear extremity and a mandapa, like the one of Ladkhan, in front, with a raised central *ankana* in the axial strike, besides the *mukhamandapa* scheme, similar again to Ladkhan in its essential lay-out and dimensions. These three features, together with the massive character of the pillars, their relative unsculptured or conventionalised but only engraved and embellished character, would show that the temple construction was still in the throes of evolution, and stability, utility, and imitation of erstwhile rock-cut tradition were all too evident. The temple could not thus be placed later than the last quarter of the sixth century A.D., and should have been close on heels of the earliest cave shrines at Badami. The model is local, empirical and atypical in so far as the main current of temple styles are concerned. But even this cannot be deemed as the earliest temple enterprise because its very forbidding dimensions are against its being a clumsy beginning. If we have to be content with modest models of this stage, rather than ambitious elaborations of them, we might as well accept two miniature temple-units in the so-called Jyotirlinga group. Both of these, close to each other and facing the same direction, are hardly better than a *mandapa* with closed walls and flat top, but are axially confronted by an open pillared hall—the *nandimandapa*—of identical dimensions, but whose pillars depict on their outer faces, a compendium of the religious iconography of the place and time, involving the *dvarapala* figures, the non-polarised Saiva-Vaisnava harmonisation, the *dikpala* carvings, etc. Further, more than a bare suggestion of panel sculptures is attempted in the cameos of *Kailasapati-Siva* on the upper register of the wall of the temple under the cornice. The highly simplified character of the plinth, the presence yet of the *nala* channel or opening on its top moulding, the existence of a balustraded approach for the shrine—all these are pointers to the inchoate but deliberate experimentation at the shrine. To this stage, perhaps, is ascribable, the small *mandapa*-shrine with

mukhalinga in the tank at Mahakut. The Ladhkan is itself a perfected norm, well beyond the above stage, and should have carried its finite entity for a considerable while. If we are to search for its lineal sequel, we have only to turn to the coastal Konkana type of temple in mediaval times, persisting from Goa to Mangalore and showing the variant motifs of the converted pillar hall with slopy roof represented by Ladhkan, the railing type of relief members on the exterior of the sanctum and the open railings themselves in the circuit passage around, as the examples of Ketapi Narayana temple at Bhatkal, or the Vaital temple at Keri in Goa territory show. Ladhkan, thus, was not, after all, an aberration, but a rationalisation of the simple residential hall in the religious context, of the formative stages.

The main interest in Ladhkan, further, attaches to the two-fold fact that its present shrine is at the back wall—a fact largely simulated at Kontigudi also and it has an additional shrine chamber at present on the centre of roof. These two features bristle with possibilities regarding their relative priority. The indications such as the plain ashlar exterior wall on most of the rear side of Ladhkan as different from the pierced and grilled side walls would argue in favour of the back-wall shrine being reasonably early if not original indeed. If so, the corollary would be that the upper shrine on the roof is relatively later. If the fact that access to this roof shrine is provided by a stone-cut detached ladder placed in the *mukhamandapa* (through a corresponding square opening in the ceiling of the *mukhamandapa*, on the innermost bay), be any guidance, we might as well surmise that this roof shrine, as well as the *mukhamandapa* itself, came comparatively later. The corresponding unit on the roof at Kontigudi is not much different but is clearly a further evolution over that at Ladhkan into a *dvitala* superstructure, although the provision of a *nala* at the *hara* level of this unit, would seem to suggest that this unit was independent of the ground floor scheme and represented an upper shrine cell. In any event, the Ladhkan scheme would resolve itself roughly into the following stages:

- a) original shrine at the back wall of the *mandapa*-type;
- b) provision of the *mukhamandapa* and parapet;

c) the roof shrine and provision of access to it.

The authority for the provision of shrine in the roof in the form of a turret is perhaps based on such usages as *Valabhi-prasada*, mentioned in early texts. The Kontigudi scheme correspondingly would be coeval with (c) of above or much after, and its superstructure is more organic than that of Ladkhan and indeed represents a typical, evolved Chalukya southern *vimana* roof—one of the few of its kind at Aiholi. The fact that the stone ladder is outside the floor *mandapa* might suggest:

(1) that there was no front porch to Kontigudi originally; and (2) that the roof shrine was indeed not a live part of the scheme and thus given deliberate access to only from outside. It is feasible to place Kontigudi ground floor nearly a century separated from Ladkhan structure while its upper floor could well have been an addition of the second half of the eighth century A.D., when structural *vimanas* like the one near the dolmen in the Galaganatha group at Aiholi have come into being and were more or less transitional to the Rastrakuta efforts here, if not belonging to them squarely.

It is not necessary, therefore, to consider Ladkhan and Kontigudi as a related effort, notwithstanding the superficial similarities that one sees in them now, and this is also emphasized by their differences, such as the totally closed character of the former and the partially closed twin entry points of the latter; the difference between the superstructural features of the two; in the interior pillar and door frame details, and their art-values. The thing, however, to be admitted is that in their ground floor plan and structure they are remarkably close, and their superstructure also was a related effort, perhaps similar originally in both, but later reconstructed into its present form in Kontigudi. This last mentioned detail is clear from the typically Rastrakuta or later-to post-Chalukyan features of the *hara* of Kontigudi roof and the fact that the interior of this *anarpita-hara* provided for a *nala* at the *vedika* level for draining storm water.

It is significant here to note that in the Meguti temple at Aiholi and in the Upper Sivalaya at Badami, we have an attempt to keep a second hollow chamber over which the repetitive and

shorter upper *talas* rise. Thus, their effort is inchoate and allied. All this would have to be dated up to 634 A.D., the clearly known age of Meguti. Even at Mahakut, the Makutesvara and the Mallikarjuna as succeeded in the Malegitti and Lower Sivalaya of Badami, are rather unsuccessful attempts to give a clarity to the *talacchanda* particularly on the topmost *tala*. Obviously the impact of the Pallavas, after 640 A.D., at Badami should have given the critical momentum to *vimana* models in the Karnataka country, and this change is only too patent, as seen in the Bhutanatha temple at Badami, or in the Pattadakal temples, both of which are admittedly after the Pallava interregnum in early Chalukyan history. At Aiholi itself, the Ladkhan, Kontigudi arche-type was followed by Chikkigudi and Gaudargudi models (in which the separate sanctum was hitched on to the *mandapa* format) at the time when elsewhere at Badami and Mahakut structural temples had already been improved to form a cognate superstructural arrangement. Thus, we seem to have first, a rather heavy, cumbersome outline of the elevational rise of temples in their committedly local slopy roof-*mandapa* type of ground floor, preceding at Aiholi, coeval with early finite stage at Mahakut and Badami in the pre-642 A.D. phase; and then, a confident and coherent formulation of the temple unit in the second empire of early Chalukyas, after the sack of Badami by Narasimha Pallava. All this only shows that the architectural enterprises of the early Karnata phase going on in the various art centres, like Aiholi, Badami, Mahakut, Nagaral etc., was amorphous in texture, as a result of which many variant experimentations were afoot before the head-on-impact of two great art-forces, the Chalukyan and the Pallava, resulted in a fruitful harmonisation and consolidation of their respective *art-metier*. But here we are truly anticipating.

Soon after the early formative phase itself, we find a sudden fanning out of architectural essayings in compact structural models, and it is reasonable to presume that we are now well and truly in the very apogee of early Western Chalukyan history, in the victorious decades of Mangalesa and Pulakesi II. We have now a glimpse of the new horizons seen around Mahakut and

the capital Badami itself. It is no insignificant fact that while the Badami phase, at its earliest, also specialised in cave temples, there was co-extensive activity in the cave as well as the structural forms only at Aiholi, ostensibly because the trade guild, the Aiholi 500 had already been prominent in the patronage of art and religion in a big way. The early tripod stand on which the crucible of Chalukyan art was laid to produce unparalleled amalgams of early temple formulations, in conformity to the emergent *Agamic* codes, is to be witnessed at Mahakut, Badami, and Aiholi. The land assimilated the multiplicity of concepts and art-impulses steadily acquired by the imperial sweep of the Badami throne over extensive territories south of the Vin-dhyas. The sandstone cliffs at or near the triple cities provided an almost inexhaustible supply of the raw material and the industrious mercantile guilds of Aiholi had apparently the matching financial resources for this laudable enterprise in the realms of art. Thus at one stroke, the chisel of the architect assembled as many as five different forms of temples whose mediaeval elaborations—unquestionably profound—and whose sculptural decor—indubitably *svette*—would concern us less here than the formal enunciations of the temple of god in the earlier stages. The Makutesvara temple at Mahakut at the vanguard, followed by the Malegitti Sivalaya at Badami, Upper and Lower Sivalayas at the same place, the Hucchimalligudi and its ilk at Aiholi, the Mallikarjuna and its variants at the same town, the Durga temple again at Aiholi, the Mallikarjuna temple at Mahakut, culminating in the Bhutanatha at Badami, the Virupaksha and the Papanatha at Pattadakal, by now Pattada Kisuvolal, these form a veritable galaxy of temple styles variously of the *nagara-rekha-prasada*, the *Kadamba-nagara* or the *Pidha* deul, and the triple facets, such as the *Dravida*, *Nagara* and *Vesara*, of the southern *vimana* forms respectively. These were the finest that ever studded one and the same circumscribed region in India.

At this stage, we may be permitted to digress on the elements of evolving early architectural concepts in the Deccan—the mind behind the hand reducing formal art to abstract symbolism on the one side and clothing this subtle core with a physical garb—an

index of perfect concord between the craftsmen and the clergy. Much of the early manuals on architecture deals with a diffuse, visionary spectra of elevational perspectives—called by different imaginative labels based squarely on ground plans which were five-fold fundamentally. These basic forms or geometric patterns comprise the square, the octagonal, and the circular, to which were added the ellipse and the rectangle. These were called *Vairaja*, *Trivistapa*, *Kailasa*, *Manika* and *Puspaka*. The square was undoubtedly the most versatile of the series and the ellipse, the most *recherche* and thus seemingly archaic (drawn from the bamboo and wood prototype). After an early phase of development when the elliptical form appears to have been much in preference as seen at Nagari in Rajasthan, Bhilsa in Madhya Pradesh, Kausambi in U.P. and Rajgir and Barabar hills in Bihar (of structural timber and stucco character in the former two, vestigially preserved, and of rock-art style in the last mentioned in a prevailingly fifth-second centuries B.C. context), the Buddhistic era most insistently exploited a variant of the ellipse, namely, the apse, in its virtually countless *chaitya* edifices, of rock-cut as well as brick-and-stucco media.

In all these cases, both elliptical-socalled and apsidal, the common feature is that the sides are truly linear and not curved and thus actually they should be classified as oblate, than elliptical. Further, the fact that this linear character of the sides would dismember the figure into a rectangle and a semi-circle (attached to it on both sides or on one side only), would show how precisely these have been termed in the *silpa* texts as *Dvyasra-vritta*, whereas the term *Kukkutanda-sadrisa* also sometimes met with, should be more appropriate to the ellipse. The *dvyasra-vritta* or flat ellipse should have risen as an amalgam of circle and rectangle, and even structurally it is seen that the internal division of the plan occurs only at the correct junction between the semi-circle and the rectangle. An interesting corollary in actual ritual slant of the *garbha* within such temples is that the *pitha* or pedestal on which is placed the deity (iconic or aniconic, as the case may be) is usually also elliptical or circular. In the corresponding case of the apsidal Saiva temples of the deep southern country, it is seen that the

linga itself gets a reciprocal apsidal section vertically by a sheer straight front and topward curving rear, or is indicated appropriately by a protuberance (or *budbuda*) on the front, like a *purva-sikha*—symbolic of the apse-shape of the *garbha*. There are copious examples of such usage, not till now sufficiently appreciated or even documented and known. The *dyvasra-vritta* plan is employed in architectural style even to the superstructures of rectangular shrines, in which case, these should serve as the replica of the (now lost) original roofs over many an ancient elliptical brick and timber structure, some of which have been enumerated above as occurring in Northern India in pre-Christian times. Among the earliest such in the south would be the innermost shrine proper of the temple complex of Ranganatha at Srirangam.

It has been stated that the Buddhist craftsmen almost appropriated to themselves after this formative stage, the circular and apsidal forms. They, thus, made original contribution to the familiarisation of the apse in its structural elevation, interior as well as exterior and even lent the germ-idea to the sanctum form in an apsidal shrine as seen, for example, in the Mahayana Chaitya Cave No. 29 at Ajanta. When the resurgent Brahmanism took over the country in the fourth century A.D., almost everywhere it immediately organised a compact group of alternative shrine forms to develop from—first in the brick medium itself, and within two centuries in the stone medium also, structural as well as rock-cut and monolithic. These forms are the cubical, the circular, the octagonal and the rectangular, apart from the apsidal; and the first-mentioned among these alone admitted of a two-fold variation, *viz.*, the curvilinear northern variety (that one may designate as the *Nagara-rekha-prasada*) and the truly southern *vimana* form of the *nagara* class—meaning that which has, amidst other features, a square *sikhara*. It could be readily seen that this compendium of temple forms found acceptance over an area covering almost entire Southern India, an outstanding example of which is to be seen, for instance, in the early Pallava monoliths at Mahabalipuram near Madras, of the *Nagara*, *Dravida*, *Vesara* (*Gajapristha*-apsidal), *sala* (rectangular) and *kutagara* (incipient curvilinear *Nagara* form). In the Karnataka country, the *Dravida* (Makutes-

vara, Mahakut) *Nagara* (Upper Sivalaya, Badami), *Vesara* (Durga temple, Aiholi), the *nagara-rekha-prasada* (Hucchimalligudi, Aiholi) and the many oblong shrines at Aiholi (like Gaudargudi, or Temple No. 11¹ in the village) became the familiar and vigorous expressions of the same formulations. The *Kudamba-nagara* variety of stepped and multi-tiered superstructure, exemplified by Mallikarjuna and Galaganatha of Aiholi, and the western group at Mahakut became an affiliated abstraction of the *Nagara-rekha-prasada* as cross-fertilised with the southern storeyed form and thus retained its intrinsic merit of being an indigenous model in the coastal Konkana tract. Its inherent values are manifest in the lack of *sukanasa*, despite the use of *amalaka* for the top as well as the *karna-bhumi* in some cases as at Aiholi, and the abbreviation this model makes of the quadrental or slopy *kapotas* and roof slabs. The slopy roofed character itself is primarily the bequeathal of the monsoon-ridden west coast tract, to structural architecture of Karnataka under the Chalukyas and, in its displayed provenance, prevailed as far afield as the lower Krishna-Tungabhadra doab in the present day Andhra Pradesh, as at Alampur, Satyavolu, and Mahanandi (under Eastern Chalukya patronage), thereby clinchingly asserting the cultural dominance of the indigenous Karnata structural *milieu*. The heart of the Eastern Chalukyan kingdom along the east coast in the Godavari-Krishna delta country was, however, more germane in its architectuarl essayings with the deep southern Pallava-Pandya norms, and had no great use for the slopy roof device which had no roots in that region.

Having somewhat oversimplified but not, one would hope, underestimated the vivacity and verve of the early Chalukyan craft-potential in Karnataka homeland, we might dwell briefly upon some of the favourite structural manipulations its architects were fond of—the like of some of which is not generally met with, either in the deep south or in the northern plains.

To start with, the early Karnataka temples reveal an avowedly *sandhara* (or closed inner circuit passage) for the truly southern types of temples also—a feature which is more in line with the

¹ Cousins — *Chalukyan Architecture*, pl. XXIII.

curvilinear *Nagara-rekha-prasada* of Upper India, than with the more southerly ones. The distinction between a mere cellular organism of the ground floor, intended more to widen the base for rather heavy and multistoreyed superstructure (as in the deep south), rather than a deliberate means of distinguishing the sanctum from the outer enclosure wall of the temple proper, is to be noticed by the provision of the plinth mouldings to the inner sanctum exterior in addition to the outer surrounding wall, although the former is almost likely ever to remain ill-illuminated. This provision is not met with in this form in the southern temples, as at Kanchi etc. of the Pallavas, although the shrine lay-out here is of the pseudo-*sandhara* character with the purpose of *kadalika-karana* (or corbelling) of the successive walls for widening the base, as already mentioned above. It is in fact of an entirely different ilk, and has a direct relationship with the *bahya-bhitti*, *alindra*, *antara-bhitti* and the *grihapindi* (of the *garbhagriha*)—a basic structural concept involved in the truly southern *vimana* form. Contrastively, the Karnataka idiom revelled in providing the cella with a closed circumambulatory upto a stage, diversifying it with the open sanctum type (with open *pradaksina* premises) as well, as at Huchapayyagudi etc. In fact one may see in the process, a slow displacement of the slopy roof, which was originally all around the sanctum, and then restricted to one side of the sanctum, and ultimately to the front part of the sanctum alone (now relieved of any encumbrance and showing its full stature from plinth to *stupi* unhindered). In the ultimate analysis, in conformity to the sophisticated innovations of other regional styles, the slopy roof almost completely disappeared from any part of the front *mandapa*-complex as well, and became the specialised archetypal adjunct to the *Kadamba-nagara* alone and its coastal variations upto the mediaeval times, as already hinted earlier. Thus, the personality of the temple composition was steadily outstripped of the rather bohemian apparel it was accoutred with in the formative stages, and was spelled out into coherent and rationalised elevational and layout designs. In effect, from the functional folk-base, the “mansion of the gods,” in the north Karnataka country rises to a conventionalised but independent structural

corpus, as illustrated by the Lokesvara temple, Pattadakal (a *Nagara-vimana*), the Lower Sivalaya of Badami (a *Dravida-vimana*), the Mallikarjuna shrine at Pattadakal (a *Vesara-vimana*), and the Mallikarjuna temple at Mahakut (a *Nagara-rekha-prasada*). The stage was well set then for its further transformations in a rising magnificence of body dimensions, of sculptural opulence, and of iconographic profundity—the unmistakable hall-marks of a mediæval devolution.

A second feature, typically Karnataka, is the pierced windows and doors of the outer walls of the temple, around the santcum and in the front *mandapas*. These *jala-vatayanas* and *ghana-dvaras* of the *silpa* texts, lend themselves to graceful ornamental motifs, besides tending to lighten the fabric of the wall scheme. It is one of the characteristic features of a Chalukyan temple, and outside north Karnataka, they are under loan in the Ganga-Nolamba-Bana tracts also, as we shall see later. It should be borne in mind that these latter areas were in language, culture and affinity largely integral with the early Western Chalukyas, although their regionalism was a direct product of environmental factors and local political impacts, making them stylistically (in architectural matters) serve as buffers between the Karnataka-Andhra and the southern Pallava-Pandya traditions, and thus equally aligned with both. While the *jala-vatayana* is more ubiquitous, the grilled false door (*ghana-dvara*) on the cardinal points of the main shrine placed on the outer wall of its covered circuit, has a typical character and are spread on the eastern wing of the Chalukyas also, as insistently adopted at Alampur, Sangamesvara, Chebrolu, Draksharama etc. in slightly variant forms abbreviating in themselves basically the *sarvatobhadra* concept of shrine composition.

A third element, differentiating the *Nagara-rekha-prasadas* of the Karnataka from their counterparts in northern India, is the provision of a typical *prastara* or entablature mouldings over the brief cornice or eave in the form of a *vyalavari* course, before the node over the *venu-kosa*, of the curvilinear superstructure proper begins. Internally, it obviously represents the architrave or clerestory of the *garbha-griha*, formed by two *uttira* beams with a

bold *kantha* in between, dividing the shell of the *sikhara* from the false ceiling of the cella proper. This feature is unknown in the northern Indian temples but corresponds to the typical *prastara* with *vyalavari* and in some cases, the *upagriva* also, of the southern style.

Another and indeed inherent trait of the Karnataka zone is the *sukanasa* projection on the front side of the superstructure, forming, as it were, a gable roof for the antechamber or *ardha-mandapa* in front of the *garbha-griha*. Its diagnostic and indigenous character is more than sustained by the fact that this feature consistently occurs in the *Rekha-nagara-prasadas* as well as in the *Nagara-Vesara-vimanas* of the southern form also. These are not, however, found employed on the *Dravida-vimanas* of the early Chalukyas, but are applied even in this category by the succeeding Rastrakutas, as most convincingly displayed in the great Kailasa monolith at Ellora. Thus, these form a most outstanding element of the architectural personality of the Deccan in the centuries of Chalukya-Rastrakuta rule. They are so much in contrast with their studied absence in the *Vimana* forms of the more southerly regions, like those of the Gangas, Pallavas, Pandyas etc, and even in the eastern wing of the Chalukyas themselves in the Godavari-Krishna Delta. The surmise seems to be valid that this *sukanasa* feature is primarily on loan in the Chalukyan country from the northern Indian regions where in all the regional styles, it was more or less an universally prevalent feature, especially under the Gurjara-Pratiharas of Rajasthan, Malva, and the northern plains. But its actual shape had been somewhat modified in the Karnataka usage. Its dimensions could be of equal, half, or one third of the *garbha* width according to *silpa* texts, and examples of all these three are available.

A more sophisticated diversity of the early Karnataka temples from the more southerly ones in Andhradesa and Tamilnad, is the preference for the simple, vertically drooping *padma* course in the lower part of the plinth, in place of the rectangular *jagati* moulding, and the employment of *kapota* as the very uppermost important moulding of the plinth, as against the *pattika*, which takes this place in the south. Of course, these features are, in

some rare contexts, appropriated by the southern dynasties also, as by the Pallavas in the unique and early case of the Dharmaraja *ratha* at Mahabalipuram, and by the Western Gangas at Kambadahalli in one of the temples of the Panchakutabasti group, and by the Pandyas and the Cholas as well (more in the former), and almost becomes a norm in the Vijayanagara period. But it is only in the Karnataka area proper that these two characteristics are incessantly and widely prevailing from the very beginning, and form a common element both of the *Nagara-rekha-prasada* as well as the *vimana* forms.

In an even more subtle and symbolic manner, the Chalukyas in the Karnataka area, consistently preferred only a square *linga-pitha* in the sanctum of a Siva temple, and are followed in this practice by their eastern, Vengi wing, by the Western Gangas, the Nolambas, the Banas, the Kadambas, and in the deep south by the Pandyas. On the contrary, the Rastrakutas had very early in their career, as from the Kailasa, Ellora onwards (or even in their cave phase itself as in the Dasavatara cave), opted for the circular plan for the *linga-pitha* (apparently as a synonym of the term *Rudra* for circular and *Brahma* for square and *Visnu* as octagon as employed in the *silpa* texts—to the codification of which they gave great boost), and in the lower southern India, the Pallavas practically adopted the same practice from the stage they actually start using the aniconic *linga*, which was only from around the second quarter of the eighth century A.D. Before that, either no *linga* (or aniconic form) was in vogue, or a *dharalinga* type was more in demand, as in the times of Rajasimha, and this seemingly continued even in the reign of Nandivarman II Pallavamalla. They do, however, occasionally, under submission either to peripheral impacts or to *silpa* injunctions, employ square or octagonal *linga pithas*, as in the Pralayakalesvara temple at Pennadam (South Arcot District) or Visalesvara temple at Ramakrishna-maharajapet near Tiruttani respectively. Fundamentally, the square *linga-pitha* is a bequeathal of the early Chalukyas of Karnataka, and is followed by the entire western flank down to the Cape Comorin in this way. It was perhaps symbolic of the omni-facial

character of the divine personality, as rooted in the *sarvatobhadra* tradition, oriented along the cardinal directions.

It would be fruitful at this stage to peep into the veiled mystery of the apparent diversity of forms obtaining variously at Badami, Mahakut, Aiholi and Pattadakal. These four were, doubtless, the chief nurseries of the so-called early Chalukyan architecture which is, indeed, tantamount to the early architecture of Karnataka. Of these, again, the three first mentioned are more closely involved with the very birth and inception of this art and should be deemed as its cradles. But we do note a surprising disparity in the creations of these places. On a rough chronological sequence of their earliest creations of temple form, we should place Aiholi as the earliest, Mahakut closely following it, Badami, in the wake of the latter, and finally Pattadakal, closely in trail, as an extrovert and extravagant showplace of the royal coronation city. In this order, we should now assemble the arche-typal models designed by the architect—guilds of each of these places—as, indeed, their variety seems to warrant. Aiholi is prolific but none-the-less rudimentary, embrionic, and comprehensive, taking in its stride, the formative, atypical coastal-residential model (as in Ladkhan), the *Rekha-nagara-prasada*, its *Kadamba-nagara* variant, the *Nagara* and *Vesara-vimana* of the southern style, to the exclusion significantly of the *Dravida-vimana* form, or to be more specific, the octagonal *sikhara* type capping a southern temple type.² It is at Mahakut that we see the use of this *Dravida-sikhara* also in the mixed bag. Here, the types noted are the southern *vimana*, mainly of the *Dravida* form, the *Rekha-nagara* type, and the *Kadamba-nagara* model (largest in number relatively). And at Badami, we find an almost exclusive application of only the southern *vimana* types wherein, again, the *Dravida* and *Nagara-vimanas* are preponderant, without any model of the *Vesara* type. The very close resemblance of the *Dravida-vimana* superstructure of Badami with that of the corresponding Mahakut type, would seem to suggest that these are of two very closely

² This would exclude only the Meguti temple, devoid of its superstructure, which could have perhaps carried an octagonal or a square *sikhara*, consistent with its early age.

succeeding stages, although the *sandhara* character of the latter and the *nirandhara* character of the former (Malegitti), not unmixed with a *sandhara* (Lower Sivalaya) type as well would seem to point to the relative posteriority of the Badami enterprise. Thus dispositioned, we seem to be led to the special significance of the southern *vimana* type alone prevailing and even in it the *Dravida* and the *Nagara* forms alone at Badami, the metropolitan capital city of the realm, and this would seem to be susceptible to the following speculations:

Since even in the Vaisnava cave-excavation at Badami, dated 578 A.D., there is Lanjisvara (perhaps standing for the village Nandikesvara close to Mahakut) mentioned, the existence of considerable activity, in the form of temples specifically at Mahakut, which should have actually formed an integral revenue part of Lanjisvara, is seemingly self-evident. This is, of course, corroborated by the pillar inscription of Mangalesa originally in front of Makutesvara temple (perhaps as a *vijaya-stambha*), and now in the Bijapur Museum. It is not necessary to discuss here the question whether this pillar was an integral part of the Makutesvara temple as it stands today, but it would be legitimate to infer that the original Makutesvara temple was of stone alone and not perhaps much different in its model from its present day form. Thus at Mahakut, there were temples including, at least, Makutesvara, by about the close of the sixth century A.D. How far earlier we do not know at present. Additionally, the Makutesvara temple was obviously a *Dravida-vimana* from the start—its later indiscriminate renovation of fabric not fortunately having tampered with its basic style and form.

The Lower Sivalaya (which, after all, might not be a Sivalaya, but for Visnu) at Badami followed this plan, and led logically, within a decade or two, to the Malegitti Sivalaya. This was just the period when there were considerable bones to pick for the early Chalukyas with the Pallavas of Kanchi, and in this process between the ascension of Pulakesi II (c. 610 A.D.) and his own liquidation at the hands of the flamboyant Narasimha I Pallava (Mamalla) in c.642 A.D., resulting in the garrisoning of Vatapi by the victorious Mamalla for nearly 12 years upto the revival of the

Chalukyan throne under Vikramaditya from 655 A.D., there should have been a subdued but fruitful era of give and take, in the field of art and architecture between the Pallavas and the Chalukyas, and one might not be far wrong in supposing that the very conception of the perfected *Dravida-vimana* might have been a conspicuous borrowal from the former by the latter, notwithstanding the other disparate features of regional or local character that tend to show them apart. Two interesting facts seem to reinforce this proposition which, it would be obvious, is of a fundamental and momentous nature. At Mamallapuram, the earliest experimentations in the monolithic models portray the octagonal, apsidal and rectangular forms, to the exclusion of the square. The use of square in the Draupadi ratha, is to be viewed in a different light, as the inchoate *Nagara-rekha-prasada* type rather than a southern *vimana* form, and should not detain us here, at any rate. The first indubitable and convincing employment of the *samachaturasra* (or square) *sikhara* for a southern *vimana* is in the Valayankuttai and the northern Pidari *ratha* and these are obviously late Mamalla and after, and are well entrenched in the last quarter of the seventh century A.D. The occurrence of the *Nagara-sikhara* reliefs in the bas-relief of Arjuna's Penance and in the Ramanuja mandapa would not affect the argument very much. If we turn now to Badami itself, the Upper Sivalaya there, being the earliest *nagara* type of *vimana* in that city—the Bhutanatha, being relatively later, though the finest, finite, southern *vimana* in all respects—and this Upper Sivalaya temple is not merely a novel experimentation, but also quite obviously well prior to the sack of Badami by Mamalla, c. 642 A.D., and got ruined perhaps during the holocaust. It is a rather atypical *vimana* form which dispenses with the *hara* completely in all its *talas* in the main *vimana* although, retaining as it does the *sandhara* lay-out itself—not germane to the southern *vimana* of the evolved kind—it shows the *hara* parapet on the outer enclosure walling. It also does not use the *sukanasa*. The odds are clearly in favour of Mamalla's artisans who having had a look at this impressive temple and carrying this germ idea to their native land, but under inevitable obligations to their own local idioms, were able to show

the model in reliefs and also to create the Valayankuttai and the northern Pidari *rathas*. If this argument is considered reasonable, as it seems to be, we then have important impacts of this element on the Chalukya-Pallava architectural concordance. Simply stated, while the southern *Dravida-vimana* was rarer in Karnataka centres of art like Aiholi and starts occurring at Mahakut and in the early Badami stage, and is, perhaps, a borrowal from the Pallava domain where it was seemingly familiar already during the closing years of Mahendra and early years of Mamalla, correspondingly, the square *Nagara-sikhara* for the southern *vimana* was, to the same degree, unfamiliar to the Pallavas till the time of Mamalla's return to his homeland after his epoch-making encampment at Badami, and was conceivably drawn from the exquisite Upper Sivalaya specimen, lending itself in due course into the creation of the Valayankuttai and the north Pidari *rathas*—almost at the same time as the Bhutanatha temple itself was being executed at Badami. This would give a date between c.660-675 A.D. for Bhutanatha temple there, while correspondingly, a date such as c. 665 downwards should be predicated for the Valayankuttai and Pidari *rathas*, making these, acceptably clearly pre-Rajasimha in age and character. An important sequel to these transactions, was the rising popularity of the square *sikhara* in the southern *vimana* type, destined to prevail long over a very extensive area outside Karnataka and especially outside Pallava realm (where it had only a short span of life), almost amounting to a diagnostic faddism, as in the Ganga, Bana, Kadamba, Irukkuvel and the north Pandya zones, making all these appropriately the inheritors from Karnataka of this significant formal mutation in architectural enterprises of the South. The deep south, no doubt, continued the pristine, octagonal or *Dravida-vimana*—as a fillip to its own inherent individuality—as in the later Pallava (under Rajasimha and early stage of Nandivarman II), entire south Pandyan and Ganga creations as at Mahabalipuram, Kanchi Kalugumalai, Sivalapperi, Tirukkurungudi, Vijayamangalam, Kambadahalli etc. variously in which last mentioned place in the Panchakutabasti, there was almost an uptodate display of the entire *gamut* of elevational elements of the three southern *vimana* types.

II

STANDARDIZATION OF ARCHE-TYPES

The Western Chalukyan empire in the Karnataka region, and its complementary wing in the eastern Deccan under the collateral Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi under Kubja Visnuvardhana, the brother of Pulakesi II and after, saw the flowering of an impressive variety of temple forms, in the medium of sandstone, the abstractions of which in the matter of plans and superstructural symbolism was dealt with above. The type-specimens of complete temples conforming to one or the other varieties could not be clearly drawn out, since almost every temple was a variant in itself and spoke well for the liveliness and scope of the imagination of the architect. The Ladhkan type was itself varied into the Chikkigudi and the Gaudargudi. The Hucchimalligudi and Hucchapayyagudi into the variants like Tarappagudi, Chakkargudi, Siddanakolla temple (away from the village, upstream) Mallikarjuna into Galaganatha, Meguti temple into Melgudi at Hallur (12 miles from Bagalkot), to mention only the pre-Rastrakuta developments. Most of these, unlike Upper Sivalaya and Malegitti Sivalaya of Badami, have *pranalas* for the external discharge of *abhiseka* water. In most cases, these are on the topmost mouldings, namely, the *kapota* and *prati*, thus testifying to the fact that the plinth is a functional platform, and that the temples were primarily constructed straightaway in stone. The earliest *pranala* or *nala* arrangement, as seen at Mahakut is a type by itself wherein an oblong or square opening was cut just into the thickness of the wall, over the topmost moulding, on the central niche of the northern wall, the statuary of the niche actually rising just above this opening. This feature is not usually found outside Mahakut, and is indeed formative in its character.

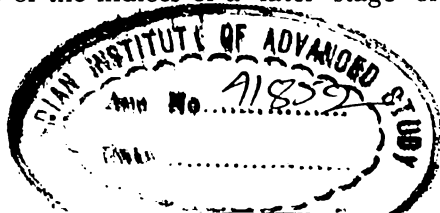
The elements of the Western Chalukyan temple would resolve

themselves into the plinth, the wall, the interior (including the sanctum) and the superstructure. The plinth has almost invariably an *upana*, *padma*, *vritta* (*tripatta* and multifluted being other varieties) *kumuda*, *kantha*, *kapota* (with the *kantha* showing a frieze of miniature sculptures in some of the earlier examples) and followed by a *vyalavari* rarely, and *prati* in all cases. There is a comparative rarity of *upapitha*, but it is not entirely unknown, as seen from the Durga temple. The actual disposition here of the *upapitha*, however, is a *via-media* between the *jagati* terrace of the *Rekha-nagara* temples of northern India and the true *upapitha* of the lower south India. The plinth serves as a solid platform and the entire internal level of the shrine is well set on it, with a slight elevation notable for the *garbha-griha* floor.

The walls of the temple are usually closed with a number of pierced windows placed externally within *makara-torana* reliefs, and set at the junctions between the *garbha*, *sabhamandapa* and *agramandapa*. Where it is *sandhara*, the exterior wall has a regular porched grill (*ghana-dvara*) on the cardinal *bhadras*, projecting rather in a subdued way. This holds good in the western and middle Chalukyan region only for the *Rekha-nagara* or *Kadamba nagara* type, but not for the southern *vimana* types, which, however, are provided with well projected porches on the *sabhamandapa*. In the eastern Chalukya region, however, this feature is seen borrowed from the southern *vimana* type as well now and then. The interior is almost invariably divided into a central nave and two side aisles and the relatively earlier temples alone have a porched *agramandapa*, while the subsequent ones end abruptly on the front and have only a door frame with carvings on them. The interior ceiling is well decorated only in the central nave which has an architrave and clerestory, while the side ceilings are of the slopy roof-type and do not take any ornamentation. Even in the *Rekha-nagara* temples, there is no desire to carve out *vitana* forms known to such a temple-order of Northern India. On the other hand, there is almost a set pattern of sculptural decor of the nave ceiling, comprising either full-dress panels of the Trinity and their *entourage*, or a grid pattern scheme whose central part shows the main deity of the shrine and the remaining

show the *dikpalas*. The use of mere large lotus medallions or *naga-nagini* motifs for ceiling slabs are also equally common. Generally, there is no tendency to introduce an *antarala* or *ardhamandapa*, the actual internal scheme being the integration of what is truly a square open *mandapa* with a peripheral circuit and central raised *ankana*, into a longitudinal or axial scheme of nave and aisles. Thus, immediately outside the *garbha-griha*, there is a single bay width which is not, truly, the *antarala*.

In fact, a very characteristic structural situation in the evolved Western Chalukyan temple is the integration of the *garbha-griha* and *ardhamandapa* into one unified scheme, so that the inter-columniation between the two is effected within the cella chamber in its front part by side plasters and a kind of corbelled and heavy beam members running transversely. In the earlier temples, however, whether of the *Rekha-nagara* or the southern *vimana* type, this feature is absent, although in the case of the latter, the conventional thickening of the wall to accommodate the *garbha-griha*, or *antara-bhitti* and *ardhamandapa* wall is followed, as is indeed the norm in deep south. In its most rudimentary form, it is seen in Makutesvara at Mahakut where just outside the sanctum, only two engaged pillars are placed to serve the purpose of the dividing line between the *garbha* and the *ardhamandapa*. The front *mandapa* with its nave and aisles follow beyond. The integrated *garbha* and *ardhamandapa* would naturally be rectangular axially in its lay-out and this is certainly not its true form, nor is it permissible to have an axially oblong *garbha-griha* for any temple. The anomaly is got over by the fact that externally the *Rekha-nagara-sikhara* is resting only on the square main part of the *garbha* while the front extension of the same carries overhead the *sukanasa* serving as the roof of the *ardhamandapa* or *antarala*. This feature itself is distinctive from the southern usage where, firstly the *sukanasa* is almost invariably absent and further the *garbha* and its superstructure form an entity, uninterfered by any other part of temple structure. The typical examples of the combined *garbha* and *antarala* forming a single cella chamber basically, are to be seen at Pattadakal in the Kasivisvesvara and Galaganatha, and this is indeed to be taken as one of the indices of a later stage of evolution of the



regional style. While, certainly, the pilasters of the side-walls corresponding to the free-standing pillars of the central nave and supporting the load of the slopy roof, are done away with in some later specimens, they do not really form any stylistic break, chronologically speaking. The idea is more to provide greater moving space around and to make the interior wall purely ashlar, while its own exterior is to be well embellished with plinth, *toranas*, *kudiyastambhas*, niches, *udgamas* etc. An almost similar outlook is noticed in respect of the cella also, where internally the variation is from free-standing pillars near the corners to engaged columns or pilasters on the corners, and these also are dispensed with in some others. The exterior of the cella, however, has its own lay-out consistent with its *Rekha-nagara* type or 'southern' *vimana* type. While in the latter, the *vinyasa* line is kept straight always, with projections and recessions of the *karna* and *bhadra* occurring within this line, in the former these are often of the *ratha* or off-setted type.

The sanctum of the Chalukyan temple as elsewhere has a most significant element, since that is where the deity is consecrated. It is here that the early Chalukyas, (along with, perhaps, the coastal Bhoja-Maurya, and Kadamba tracts) set the pace for a meaningful systematisation of the *silpa* discipline which should have already been pervasively experienced. Unlike the early Pallava device of a Somaskanda panel on the back wall being the main object of worship in the sanctum, the Western Chalukyan region established the linga already in its rock cut phase, as at Ellora, Elephanta, Jogesvari etc. following the practice already seen in Central India or Malwa as in the Udayagiri caves near Bhilsa, and in doing that displayed a range of practices related to the actual installation of the deity. It thus took the form, variously, of either a detachable shaft (*linga*) inserted in a monolithic *pitha*, or a totally monolithic *linga* and *pitha* or as in the structural stage, a detachable *pitha* as well as *linga*. There was an invisible unity in this triple variation, namely, that the *linga* shaft had actually only two parts, the lower square-sectioned (oblong) part, and the upper circular sectioned (cylindrical) part. In the jargon that came to be adopted later, they have only the

Brahma-bhaga, and the *Rudra-bhaga* without the intervening *Visnu-bhaga*. This character is not reproduced in any later *lingas*, either in Karnataka of the time of the Rastrakutas, or in the south, of the time of the Pallavas, although Pandyas are nearer to this in their early specimens. The *pittha* is invariably square in all the Chalukyan examples, and changes into the circular form only in the Rastrakuta stage, as seen in the Caves XV and XVI at Ellora. Thereafter, the Rastrakuta cave temples start utilising the circular shape only and are followed in this respect, in the south by the later Pallavas, Muttaraiyars, Irukkuvels and the Cholas. In Karnataka as well as in Andhradesa (under the Eastern Chalukyas), however, as a result of the undercurrent of the Chalukyan influence, we find the distinctive usage of the square *linga-pittha* alone.

In fact it could be averred without any possibility of contradiction that the entire Karnataka and Andhradesa, even in the succeeding stages, as in Nolambavadi and Gangavadi, and even in the peripheral Perum-Banappadi (of Brihat-Banas) took, with facility, to this square *linga-pittha*, and this preference was carried almost upto the very tip of the peninsula, thanks to the initiative of early Pandyas, in whose country, it would be very difficult to find out even stray specimens of the circular *linga-pittha*. If cultural vogue and preference could be firm and uncompromising, here is indeed a convincing example of its operation. The Pandyan country spread this vogue even in its cultural colony across the Mannar gulf, namely, Ceylon.

The polarisation of the Chalukyan architecture of Karnataka into the Western and the Eastern dynastic ramifications is itself a matter of considerable significance. It is generally accepted now that Kubja Visnuvardhana, the brother of Pulakesi II was firm on the Eastern Andhra saddle by the second quarter of the seventh century A.D., and the line that he started there got into meaningful action, in so far as architectural patronage of structural temples is concerned, from about the time of Narendra Mrigaraja, followed by his son Gunaga Vijayaditya. This means that the main period of the structural architectural flowering of this region is from the opening of the ninth century A.D. and after.

The reason for this, which would not immediately concern us here, would have to be sought for in the remarkable and extensive rock-enterprise in this region directly attributable, on many grounds, to the same Eastern Chalukyas. Indeed, the rock-cut art of this region appears to have gone on in relatively interior areas uninterrupted upto the campaigns of Rastrakuta Govinda III, although from the cult point of view they are merely the expressions of evolved temple organisation in the rock-cut medium, the emphasis being more on iconography than on the cave plan. The truly structural architectural phase of the Eastern Chalukyas that followed saw the finite continuity of this iconographic mainstream, but the temple model was distinctive and varied, as stated at the outset, from the norms that were evolving in Karnataka itself under the Western Chalukyas and the succeeding Rastrakutas. The primary character of these eastern Andhra idioms was that it was predominantly a southern *vimana* model. Northern *Rekha-nagara* models, under Eastern Chalukyan patronage are to be seen only in certain parts of Kurnool and its adjacent northerly Mahboobnagar Districts of Andhra Pradesh or further west, but not in the eastern zone. In fact, Kurnool region almost functions as a dividing line, since both southern and northern temple forms were reared here side by side, an example of the former being Sangamesvara, while of the latter may be mentioned Mahanandi and Satyavolu. The elements of the former are a prevailing *chaturasra* or square *sikhara* with the *hara* on the top *tala* and only the animal cognizance along the corners in a few. In addition to the above two stylistic orders, the third variant namely the *Kadamba-nagara* type is also seen in this zone, as at Bandi Tandrapadu and Panchalingala (both near Kurnool), but they have undergone a queer transformation, namely, that instead of the tiered and alternatively recessed *sikhara*, capped by an *amalaka* of globular form as in the standard variant, it had cross-fertilised here with the prevailing southern *vimana* type, and had become a mere stepped tower (representing successive *talas*) capped by a *griva* and square *sikhara* with a *kalasa* on. Indeed, one sees a prolific occurrence of this variety in this middle zone, as at Papanasanam, near Alampur. It is only to be surmised that in this

last-mentioned place, this had become standardised in the later-Chalukyan phase and becomes a popular regional type, in much the same way as the tiered simple variety with upraised lotus petals along the edges also with a square *sikhara* and additionally the *sukanasa* as well, becomes a very characteristic type in the Kadamba country itself as at Hangal, Belagami, and later in countless other places in the Vijayanagara stage of history. This development thus is in fact early mediaeval and would not concern us directly here. It is, however, implicit that in a place like Panchalingala (Kurnool District). which has early Chalukyan inscriptions and a *sandhara* temple layout suited to the typical, *Rekha-nagara* type similar to Alampur temples, the present stepped *sikhara* was obviously a mediaeval renovation and replacement of the original truly *Rekha-nagara* or, more plausibly, *Kadamba-nagara sikhara* whose prototype is that of Mallikarjuna at Aiholi or Madhukesvara at Banavasi.

The fact that this advanced early Chalukyan period coincides with the era of religious consolidation and *Agamic* codification is suggested by the manifestation of the *Rekha-nagara*, the southern *vimana* type of the square, rectangular and the apsidal categories and so on, in one and the same place, as seen by the miniature experimentations at a number of sites like Satyavolu, Mahanandi, Elesvaram (from excavations) etc. In the last mentioned place, we have inscriptional evidence to show that these perhaps belong to the seventh-eighth centuries A.D., and from the point of view of architectural modelling, they seem to evidence an interplay of the truly southern *vimana* types, even among themselves. This is interestingly brought out by the fact that in an apsidal model of a shrine from this place the front of the superstructure, instead of showing a *mukha-patti* of the *nasika*, has the flanged front facet of a *chaturasra-sikhara* of the southern *vimana*—a rather unique combination. These miniature specimens from Elesvaram are now in the State Archaeological Museum at Hyderabad.

The powerful art and religious patronage seen in Karnataka around the seventh-eighth centuries A.D. with its polarised eastern (Andhra-Karnata) wing under the Vengi Chalukyas went on from one innovation to another within the framework of the

regional norms, by now fast crystallising, and assisted the overall stabilisation of architectural essayings in the entire south, and facilitated also a meaningful interaction of regional styles. It must be stated here, that, at this time, the lower south was deeply engaged in its own commitments in temple building and had achieved considerable cohesion already. As narrated earlier, the *Dravida* type of southern *vimana* order would appear to have been the special and original contribution of the deep south to the Deccan, and this is proved, amidst other things, by the fact that the earliest productions in the monolithic and structural temple form are of the *Dravida* type with octagonal *sikhara*, as with the early Pallavas; and further the lower part of Tamilnad, in the Pandyan kingdom especially, is almost exuberantly made up of the *Dravida-vimana* model, characterised at Kalugumalai (c. 800 A.D. or earlier). This is also the case in the lower western flank with the Gangas, as at Kambadahalli, Sravanabelgola, Vijayamangalam etc. There appears to be no doubt that this *Dravida-vimana* was indeed the type-model of Tamilnad and its environs at the earliest level. The relative rarity of the octagonal *sikhara* in Karnataka and Andhradesa, and the comparative preponderance of either the *Nagara-vimana* type (with *chaturasra* or square *sikhara*) or the *Vesara* type (or apsidal or hemispherical *sikhara* form) or the *Rekha-nagara-prasada* type would itself indicate this differential distribution and an implied priority of the progenitor models in the respective zones. It is in this context that is to be interpreted the all-too-frequent intercourse in peace and in war of Karnataka and Andhra, under the Chalukyas (Western and Eastern) and the Rastrakutas subsequently, with the southern Pallavas, in which the Pandyas, Banas, Gangas etc., took a ready if somewhat less historically conspicuous part, resulting in a diversification of the art trends from their pristine regional virtuosity, producing a *gamut* of pleasant combinations, to the degree upto which they were exposed to the impacts and influences of these neighbouring regional sub-styles. Thus, indeed were born the substyles Western Ganga, Bana, Nolamba, Vaidumba and Eastern Ganga (Kalinga), on the one hand, and Muttaraiyar and Irukkuvel and Chera substyles in the deep south, on the other. All these, it would be

noted, come within the sphere of Pallava-Pandya-Chola nuclei or southern *vimana* influences, while the central and upper Indian art-nexus of the sixth-seventh centuries A.D., primarily stands for the northern (*Rekha-nagara*) sphere of influence. Between the two, Karnataka with its prime centres around Aiholi, Badami, and Pattadakal, and at Ellora in the Western India, and in the middle and eastern Andhra zones (as in the Kurnool and Mahabubnagar districts and Krishna-Guntur districts respectively) offered its own special contribution through an early assimilation and regeneration of the *Rekha-nagara-prasada* and the 'southern' *vimana* orders, giving rise to almost a fresh set of idioms, typical of the region, but integrating and polarising the trends already imbibed. The respective archetypes of this new movement would have to be seen at Aiholi and Pattadakal on the one hand, at Alampur and Satyavolu in middle country and at Chembrolu and Biccavolu in eastern Andhra tract. Its ramifications fanned out upto Sandur in Bellary District where on the top of the hill we have a clumsily renovated early Karnataka temple model of the southern *vimana* type, going now by the name of Parvati shrine locally. The arche types of the home zone would be delineated first in some detail, before we could pass on to a consideration of the extent of indebtedness that Ganga, Nolamba and Bana substyles had to the Karnataka formulations.

Pattadakal, notwithstanding its early mention as the village Kisuvolal in Chalukyan inscriptions (as for instance, that of Mangalesa on a pillar, now in Bijapur Museum, originally found in front of Makutesvara temple at Mahakut), did not ostensibly attain any special importance as the venue of interesting temples before the time of Chalukya Vikramaditya I when the fortunes of the Badami throne were restored after the Pallava occupation. The Sangamesvara temple at Pattadakal, called Vijayesvara, should perhaps be attributed to Vijayaditya (696-733) on inscribed evidence. The Papanatha shrine at the same place is quite obviously much earlier and was probably one of the first batch of temples coming up at Pattadakal in the reign of Vikramaditya I. Kadasiddesvara, at the northern end of the present temple group here, was also seemingly one of these earliest, coeval

with Papanatha or even slightly preceding it. The fact that these two occupy the fringes of the present village, while most of the remaining ones are in a compact and close group would seem to uphold the thesis that the centre of greatness shifted around Sangamesvara and Lokeshvara (Virupaksha) in the first half of the eighth century A.D. Kasivisvesvara was perhaps the very last among the Chalukyan creations here, while, in all probability, Chandrasekhara on the one hand and the Jain temple of the village on the road to Nandikesvar on the other, were post-Chalukya and Rastrakuta productions. The Papanatha temple is archaic to a degree in its combination of the *hara* parapet of the southern *vimana* usage of the early Chalukyas with the truly *sandhara* and *Rekha-nagara* shrine lay-out. The rather subdued *sukanasa*, the *petite sikhara* outline, the incipient pillared porch projection on the cardinal points of the sanctum on the outer wall, the rather straight and unrelieved line of *mahamandapa* and *rangamandapa* strike the disequilibrium between the carved exterior and the inadequate pierced windows of the two front halls; all support its early stage at Pattadakal. Sangamesvara is indeed equally distinctive as an early stage of the southern *vimana* characterised by the unique lack of *karnakutas*, but only the *sala* in the uppermost *tala-hara* of the superstructure—a feature which was further played upon in Virupaksha itself, by not showing the *sala* and displaying only the *karnakutas* of the top *tala-hara*. Sangamesvara in every respect is a direct evolutionary stage, though with a probable chronological gap, after upper Sivalaya of Badami. Another distinction of it in tune with Upper Sivalaya—a feature which is shared by Bhutanatha temple at Badami—is the absence of the *sukanasa*, which is such a typical concomitant of all other southern vimanas at Pattadakal and Ellora. This tends to show that there was a distinctive auxiliary pattern, influenced strongly by the southern Tamilnad tradition, working on the Karnataka matrix at this time, facilitated by the political see-saw tussle between Chalukyas and Pallavas. In tune with the deliberate variations experimented at Pattadakal should also be listed variously, the usage of the circular or *vesara sikhara* for the Mallikarjuna temple close to Virupaksha, the strong influence

of the Gurjara-Pratihara art in the Kasivisvesvara temple *sukanasa* and main shrine elevation, and the rather dominating and massive character of the *sikhara* piece of Galaganatha with its relatively plain exterior wall and large panel carvings on the cardinal points of the inner shrine circuit, making it ascribable to the close of the early Chalukyan experimentation in the second quarter of the eighth century A.D. The last was also, by and large, perhaps the largest *Rekha-nagara-prasada* known at Pattadakal, although much of its *rangamandapa* and basal terrace had disappeared.

The Aiholi situation in the second half of the seventh and the first half of the eighth century A.D. is somewhat more diffuse, since local idioms continued to have a greater sway there for a while. Huchchimalligudi, Huchchapayyagudi, Durga temple and Mallikarjuna would all have been complete already before this phase and the new ventures were probably Tarappagudi, Narayanagudi, Sakkaragudi, Siddanakolla, on the side of the *Rekha-nagara* model, Gaudargudi and Galaganatha on the *Kadamba-nagara* side and Navidanagudi alone on the southern *vimana* type; Huchchapayyamatha, rectangular shrined temples just across the *nala* on the way to Galaganatha from the village, and the small group near Chikkigudi, would all, on the other hand, pertain to the degenerate local, ashlar, cut stone idiom in a state of atavism, emphasising slopy roofs and improvised shrine arrangements of single or multiple type within. Aiholi witnessed a state of transition in the first half of the eighth century A.D. from the preponderance of *Rekha-nagara* temples to those of the southern *vimana* type and these latter have been given a special boost by the Rastrakutas from the close of the eighth and early ninth century A.D., resulting in such piles as the Jain group near the school, and the Galaganatha eastern group near the dolmen. It should perhaps be at this time that the superstructure of Kontigudi should have arisen in its present form, added to what might have looked like a *mandapa* shrine of the degenerate type, just referred to above. At a subsequent time, the *Kadamba-nagara* mode gained ascendancy, in a transmuted and stylised *sikhara* model, with the *sukanasa* becoming increasingly more prominent and massive and the multiple shrines also becoming common. These are indeed of

the late Rastrakuta or early Kalyana Chalukya stage, whose arche-types are to be seen in Maddinagudi and in some among the surrounding temples of Brahmanical and Jaina affiliations. They are more profuse in the tracts of the Kadamba feudatories ruling from Goa, Hangal, Banavasi, and subservient to the Kalyana Chalukyas.

Farther afield, in the mid-lower Deccan, the provincial Andhra-Karnata territories have the *Rekha-nagara* style, with the bias for a *sandhara* lay-out of more than one circuit sometimes with *ghana-dvaras* of grill type having weak porch projections, dominating the scene, although *nirandhara* groups are also common. The former are exemplified at Alampur ranging in age between the second half of the seventh century A.D. to the end of the eighth century A.D. in their primacy, while the latter are to be seen at Satyavolu and Mahanandi, towards the close of the same period. In these latter, the *sukanasa* becomes massive with a large *Tandava Siva tableau* on the *kudu* depression. It would seem that there was still no lack of inventive skill among the guilds of artisans, and these are notable in the southern *vimana* productions at Alampur itself, as in the Taraka Brahma, and at Sandur in the Parvati temple. The former is certainly not much earlier than the beginning of the eighth century A.D., while the latter could be placed in the middle of the eighth century A.D. These are very significant landmarks stylistically of the Chalukya-Karnata models, as impinging on the peripheral tracts, because the Eastern Chalukya idioms proper in the Andhradesa, even in the contact zone around Kurnool district where Satyavolu and Mahanandi are located, were of a typical fabric, quite distinctive from the Western Chalukya trends. The most notable absence in these would be that of *sukanasa* in any of the Eastern Chalukya or (Andhra—Karnata) temples of the southern *vimana* type, and in this respect seemingly in a collateral succession of the norms seen at Badami, Nagaral, and Pattadakal (Sangamesvara). These are, however, predominantly again sporting only a *chatusra* (square) *sikhara* but carry forth the grill windows, the *kapota-panjaras*, the plinth-modes, and the projecting porch wings etc., of their western compeers, grafting these elements to a prevailing southern

chassis. The arche-types are to be seen at Sangamesvara temple near Siddhesvaram in Kurnool District, at Pondugala and Chebrolu both in Guntur District, and at Biccavolu in East Godavari District. It is this refreshing differentiation between the architectural formulations of the areas ruled by the collateral kinsmen of the Badami line in Andhra Pradesh, that vindicates alike the supremacy of the imagination and local skill of the artisan-guilds, and the deep-rooted traditional bias in favour of the southern *vimana* order in lower eastern Andhra Pradesh bordering on the Tamil country. The entire area (of coastal Andhra) from Srikakulam District downwards to Guntur and Nellore Districts is a solid southern sphere on architectural considerations, and acted in unison with the southern zone covering the entire Tamilnad, its western peripheral tract and lower Mysore area ruled by the Gangas, Nolambas, and Banas. A look at the chart (Fig. 1) would make this amply clear. These southern dynasties are seen in temporal affiliation with all the three prevailing political *foci* of the eighth century A.D., namely, the Kannada-speaking western Chalukya, the Andhra-based Eastern Chalukya and the Tamil speaking Pallava. There was a remarkable degree of interrelationship among these larger powers as well as the smaller vassal potentates. For instance, the Kadambas and the Nolambas had their matrimonial ties with almost every one of the important kingdoms of Tamilnad and Karnataka. The Banas were virtually a peripatetic group extending their links from the western uplands of Chittoor, Nellore and Kolar districts to North Arcot of Tamilnad. The Gangas of Talkad again had close ties with the Pallavas, the Pandyas, the Banas and the Chalukyas and, later with the Cholas also. The Vaidumbas, again, were like the Banas occupying a part of the strategic hill valley approach from Karnataka to Tamilnad across Cuddapah, Chittoor and Kolar Districts, and were so acknowledged as the border vassals by Tamil kings as well as the Karnataka rulers. In such a context, the brisk manner in which the amalgamation of art-impulses took place in these tracts should not occasion any surprise. The arche-types of the Nolambas are to be seen at their old capital Hemavati or Henjeru in Anantapur District, of the Banas at Nandi and

Gudimallam, of the Vaidumbas at Kalakada and Attirala, of the Western Gangas at Sravanabelgola, Kambadahalli, Vijayamangalam etc., and the Eastern Gangas at Mukhalingam and Srikurmam. The last mentioned being again a border territory, was open to the powerful impacts of the Kalinga style of the *Rekha-nagara* as well as the *pidha-deul* (akin to *Kadamba-nagara*) categories already entrenched there. But the southern *vimana* style, all the same, got a foothold there as at Srikurmam in the best Karnataka style with the octagonal *sikhara*, lack of *sukanasa*, lack of *sala* in the top *tala*, having the *hara* parapet all around the temple unit in its front *mandapa* roof and having pierced windows and relief carvings on the exterior wall. We are not much concerned here with the local inflexions of the subsequent stages of this temple here under the Eastern Gangas and the Kakatiyas. The existence of the *pidha-deul* type, affiliated to Kalinga order (as at Vaital deul of Bhubaneshwar) at Mukhalingam, in the Madhukesvara temple as well as in the Bhimesvara temple in the village while the Somesvara temple in the same place outside the village is a typical Kalinga *Nagara-rekha-prasada* would also, in comparison with a similar situation in Western India with *Kadamba-nagara*, Chalukya *Rekha-nagara* and *vimana* orders, fully sustain the polyphylar variation of the temple-building norms in South India, by which the same zone, under adventitious circumstances reveal multiple models. This would incidentally mark out some of these zones as primary or nuclear tracts of inception of temple formulations in their formative stages.

Some of the idioms that help us in seeing a link between Karnataka norms and the features employed in some of these southern substyles (like the Gangas, Nolambas, Banas etc.) are the use of free-standing pillars, conversion of the *ardhamandapa* from the *mahamandapa*, the closed walled *mahamandapa* with rectangular pierced windows and decorated exterior walls by way of pilasters, *torana*-niches etc., the abrupt front side of the *mahamandapa* without a *mukhamandapa* porch (which was a characteristic feature of the early phase of the Western Chalukyan art in Karnataka but followed only in the Andhra-Karnataka zone of Alampur and not at all followed in the eastern Andhra area), the replacement

of the southern practice of free-standing *dvarapalas* by the more preferred use of jambs and lintel embellishment wherein divinities in a *tableau* are on the lintel, floral devices are on the jambs (upper part) and *dvarapala*, Ganga-Yamuna and attendance are on the lower jambs, the invariable use of the octagonal or square *sikhharas* alone and very rarely of the circular *sikhharas* (except as an innovation), and above all the immutable attachment of the square *linga-pitha* in the sanctum. While it would appear that the *Vaidumbas* and the *Banas* were less liable to use all these features in the temples and were architecturally ambivalent absorbing the southern as well as Karnataka *vimana* models, the *Gangas* and *Nolambas* were more steadfast in this adherence. In the later Chalukyan devolution from the tenth century A.D. onwards, notwithstanding the remarkably sophisticated regional variations into main Karnata, Kadamba (or Kuntala) and Hoysala (*Gangavadi*) moulds the matrix was unswervingly southern though the *illusion* is sometimes assiduously fostered that the temple perspective has adopted the *Rekha-nagara* pharascology. A luxury unknown to the pure southern *vimana* that was consciously adopted in these later devolutions would be variously the *sukanasa*, the *jagati* terrace, and the depiction of the *nara*, *gaja*, *vyala*, and *asvataras* etc., in some of the temples, as in the Hoysala classics at Halebid and Somanathpur, and the feverish ornamental exuberance employed to activate the otherwise placid square or simply offsetted plinth into a gyrating and dynamic haven for the divinity enshrined within. This tendency had caught on in the whole of the Deccan, as with the *Yadavas*, *Kakatiyas* etc., under the northern *Rekha-nagara* aegis, in the mediaeval times. But in the Karnataka area, this mediaeval Hoysala zone temple elevation in its constituent limbs was ending with a *sikhara* and not an *amalasara*, and thus was of the *sadvarga* southern order, though its overall slant was, more after the prevailing Kadamba model (dealt with in these earlier pages) than the true southern type. While analytically it conformed thus to the southern *vimana* order, it synthesised the inherent elements of the southern *vimana* and *Nagara-rekha-prasada*, and far from becoming casteless, emerged unscathed from this exercise, into a refreshing novel *milieu*, which

would have pleased the lapidary as much as the architect. It was the very ultimate in aesthetic sublimation, and was for its own period what the Kailasa monolith of Ellora constituted for the earlier rock-cut era.

III

CANONICAL AND AESTHETIC ELEMENTS

A

(i) **Adhithana and linga in sanctum**

Unlike the deep southern Indian experimentations in architecture, the use of a brick and stucco material for the ground *tala* and superstructure or the latter alone was apparently unheard of in Karnataka. The earliest activity, after the cave art phase, was thus confidently initiated directly in the sandstone medium, and a regular plinth of stone displaying the mouldings—by now slowly gaining usage and preference in each region—was the norm. This is a very significant factor because, if the plinth could be of moulded stone courses, the question of the wall and the superstructure alone being of brick might not arise. It certainly did not in Karnataka. Even in the further Southern India, a brick temple never normally had a stone plinth except in rare instances—to be explained further down—due either to the fact that cut stone architecture (in granite) had not made any significant headway by then, or for the more obvious and tangible reason that a brick structure has a firmer bonding in mortar, and thus would not have called for any specially heavy stone foundation. Either way, the sequel to it was that the sanctum where the image of god was enshrined, had to be at the top level of this stone plinth, whereas had the temple been of brick it would not have been much higher than the surrounding ground level or the *prakara* floor level. Only if the temple is erected on a terrace of its own, things might have been different, but early Chalukyan temples in this respect were of the southern tradition and not given to a built-up *jagati* terrace around the shrine proper, as used to obtain in Northern India from the Guptas and the Gurjara Pratiharas downwards.

An interesting rule enjoined by the *Agama* and *silpa* texts is that the image of the deity in the sanctum should correspond in its raw-material to that of the temple itself. By this procedure, a brick temple should have invariably a stucco image, or alternatively a wooden image, but not certainly a stone image, be it an icon or a *linga*. It is on this principle that ancient brick temples, when later converted into stone temples, have a reconsecrated, new stone image contemporary with this stone construction. The corollary to this injunction is that a stone temple should not have any icon or (aniconic) *linga*, other than stone. Acting on this corollary, sometimes, a temple though erected on a stone plinth, and if required to rise in many *talas* in brick and if enshrining an original sanctified wooden image which is not to be changed into any other medium, has never been rebuilt later in stone but only repaired or conserved in the brick medium itself. All this is fully borne out by countless examples in Tamil country, and go to suggest how canonical injunctions had been meticulously preserved in the South. The Karnataka area, however, cut the gordian knot, as it were, by ubiquitously utilising sandstone, from the beginning, and thus was always entitled to a stone image or *linga* in the sanctum. This image, however, was either fixed in a regular *pitha* (or pedestal) or raised over the floor with only a semblance of a *pindika* or ridged border around it on the floor. The former is the more common feature and it is seen that this *pitha* was invariably square in outline, and carries the characteristic mouldings of a Chalukya temple plinth, like the *padma*, *kumuda*, *kantha* and *kapota*. At the same time, conformity to *Agamas* had led them sometimes to adopt a variant shape, as in the case of Durga temple at Aiholi, where this *pitha* is circular, seemingly because the shrine itself is apsidal. This is a feature which is even more sedulously followed in the south, where in many post-*Agamic* temples, the *sikhara* shape almost fixes the shape of the *pitha* on which the deity or *linga* stands, an octagonal *sikhara* thus having an octagonal *pitha* in the sanctum, a circular *sikhara* endowed with a circular or elliptical *pitha*, and a square *sikhara* square *pitha*. These should give us an insight into the prevalence of the *Agamic* mandate in these regions and help us sometimes even for chrono-

logical fixation, either of the temple or of the *Āgamas*, when the age of the temple is known by other means. In early Chalukya temples of Karnataka, even the *linga* is distinctive and is broadly divisible into early and evolved stages, the earlier ones, whether rock-cut (as at Ellora, Elephanta etc.) or structural, have only the square-sectioned lower half (designated as the *Brahma-bhaga* in the later texts) and the circular sectioned and cylindrical shaped upper part (to be called the *Rudra-bhaga*), unlike the evolved *lingas* which have an intermediate octagonal part (called *Visnu-bhaga*). These early Chalukya *lingas* have an additional feature sometimes, (as in all the cases at Ellora and Elephanta) of being bulged and heavy in their upper end and rather leaner and constricted at the waist, just above the *pitha*. Such *lingas* are designated as the *arsa-lingas*, and *ipso facto* connote a proto-*Āgamic* or early usage. The *arsa* type could, alternatively, be of the tapering end part and heavy basal part also, as seen at Arvalem (Goa) and in certain cases of cave temples in South Tamilnad and Kerala. Thus, the pioneering character of the early Chalukyan cult concepts for *linga* in the sanctum and the *pitha* on which images are erected, is well upheld. This very usage of the terms *Brahma*, *Visnu* and *Rudra* for square, octagonal and circular, is of universal currency in *Āgamic* texts, even for describing parts of pillars of such cross-sections. Obviously, they derive themselves from the original names of basic shapes (already dealt with earlier) such as *Vairaja* for square, *Kailasa* for circular and *Trivistapa* for octagonal—this *Trivistapa* apparently standing for the world of *Visnu*.

(ii) **Orientation of *linga***

The position of the *linga* with reference to its *pitha* was never fixed originally by devices which obtain later, like the *Brahmanadi*, the *parsvasutras* etc. Two reasons are implicit in this, namely, the popularity of the *sarvatobhadra-Siva* shrine and image, abstracted from the *Maheśa* concept of the god involving four heads, *Aghora*, *Vamadeva*, *Tatpuruṣa*, and *Sadyojata* on four cardinal points, and *Isana* on the top. This icon with a four-door sanctum (as exemplified at Elephanta) would not require any fixed orientation. Secondly, the very origin of the *linga* has no *direct* relationship with what it turned out to be in the pre-mediaeval times—a phallic

analogue—and had essentially a pillar concept wherein the *madhyanaḍi* and *parśvasūtra* lines might not be apposite. Even in the evolved pre-mediaeval *linga*, it is possible to posit that these lines have an essential functional character of delineating the orientation of the *linga*—which is otherwise cylindrical, in any given shrine. For, an image in a sanctum, according to the *Āgamas*, should have the feature of orientation. This is why these lines rise from the very base of the *linga* and are up towards the upper centre. If phallic arche-type was intended, these lines should have been restricted to the uppermost zone of the *linga* shaft.

(iii) **Mahesa**

Talking of the *Mahesa* concept and *sarvatobhadra* shrine unit, the early Chalukyas had indeed been responsible for the *Sadasiva* as well as the *Mahesa* concepts. In this, the latter always showed the *Vamadeva* part on the proper left and *Aghora* on the proper right. This is what we see at Elephanta and in the textual source. But at Ellora in the post-Chalukyan and Rastrakuta stage (as in the Ganesh Lena group, Lankesvara etc.) we have quite a large number of *Mahesa* images wherein the *Aghora* is to the proper left and *Vamadeva* to the proper right. This, by its studied repetition, will have to be taken as having a direct relationship at Ellora to the western orientation of the entire row of cave shrines. The *Āgamic* period essentially purports to base its propositions for an east-facing temple—the most normal and suitable direction for a temple. When the temple, of necessity, does face only west, a rotation by 180° appears to have taken place in the *Mahesa* icon, resulting in the placing of *Aghora* to proper left and *Vamadeva* to proper right. In such a case, the central figure itself would not indeed be *Tatpuruṣa*, but *Sadyojata*. This special and unique transformation of the *Mahesa* orientation is also repeated elsewhere in one of the Eastern Chalukyan cave groups at Bhairavakonda in Nellore District, where, again, the *Mahesa* panel is carved on the back wall of the sanctum behind *linga*, as at Ellora. Incidentally, this feature occurs in the north also in Mewar (Rajasthan) as at Chitorgarh, where two temples—Samiddhesvara and Adbhutanatha—have *Mahesa* panels in the sanctum, and these facing west, follow the laterally transposed arrangement mentioned

above for the Rastrakuta specimens at Ellora. In the Eastern Chalukyan country itself, this Rastrakuta impulse is carried forward to the structural architectural stage of the ninth century A.D. also, as seen in the Sangamesvara temple at Siddhesvaram in Kurnool district, where a seated *Mahesa* figure is found in a niche on the back wall of the sanctum. It only shows an aspect of the diffusion, characteristic of cult usages, notwithstanding handicaps in the path of their dissemination.

(iv) **Sukanasa**

The Karnataka temple style was the first to adopt, again, the *sukanasa* feature. It would not need much argument to show, as already done earlier, that this feature was germane only to *Rekha-nagara-prasada*, and not to the *talacchanda* of a southern *vimana*. Thus, when the early Western Chalukyas utilised it, they had deliberately employed them for the *Rekha-nagara* temples primarily, but occasionally to the southern order that they initiated. Here, however, they were very particular to design it in such a way that it might harmonise with the *tala*-pattern of the *vimana* model. For this purpose, they adopted the *sala-sikhara* design of an *alpa-vimana* for the *sukanasa* pattern and erected it at the roof level, in front of the *prastara* of the ground *tala*. They showed also the southern *vimana* models without the *sukanasa*, cf., Upper Sivalaya, Malegitti Sivalaya, Bhutanatha, Makutesvar and Mallikarjuna at Mahakut, Sangamesvara of Pattadakal etc. They did not adopt the *sukanasa* in the *Kadamba-nagara* type as well, as the Mallikarjuna and Galaganatha temples at Aiholi and the western (rear) row of temples near the tank at Mahakut, would show. Thus they had the deliberate intention of integrating the northern feature of *sukanasa* in their temples, although in the truly southern *vimana* this was used only optionally. This option was followed by Rastrakutas also as at Ellora (Kailasa and Chhota Kailasa), and was continued in later Chalukyan and Hoysala sub-styles as well, as an ubiquitous feature. Needless to say, a few other northern characteristics were also integrated with the southern *vimana* by them like the *jagati* terrace, the animal-and-human-friezed *tharas* of the plinth, as narrated already in an earlier section. The reason why the *sukanasa* was made a

characteristic feature by the Western Chalukyas would seem to stem directly from the impact of the northern temple forms on the Chalukya matrix more incessantly than the southern the latter largely happening only after the overpowering of the Badami throne temporarily by the Pallavas. It would be seen that the Eastern Chalukyan wing deliberately and scrupulously avoids the *sukanasa* feature in its temples, and in this, it is only bearing testimony to its closeness to the southern *vimana* tradition, as already adumbrated in the Tamil country and disseminated to its environs. Adoption of the *sukanasa* in a truly southern *vimana* in the heart of the Tamil country had also occasionally taken place, as in the Nagesvara temple, Kumbakonam, and in a modified form, in the temples at Tanjore and Gangaikondacholapuram. It should be stated that the *sukanasa* is stylistically more germane to the slopy-roofed side aisles and the flat central clerestory roof, and should have mainly owed itself to this character, whereas the *garbha* and *ardhamandapa* unit which is invariably the lay-out in an early southern *vimana* of the deeper south India would not have the artistic scope, nor function, for the *sukanasa* on the *ardhamandapa* roof. We are, thus, in a position to detect two viable but coincident traits of *vimana* models, with as well as without the *sukanasa*, within the early Karnataka architectural complex itself—a feature, as already stated, which was optionally employed in the *Kadamba-nagara* model also, in a like manner.

(v) **Sikhara variations**

The most spectacular manifestation of the Karnataka temple order is the differentiation of its *sikhara* idiom. It utilises the *Rekha-nagara* curvilinear *sikhara*, the *Kadamba-nagara* variant with *amalaka* on top but without (or with) *sukanasa*, and the southern *vimana* forms with octagonal (*Dravida*), square (*Nagara*) and circular or apsidal (*Vesara*) *sikhara* forms. Of course, it could be established that the *Dravida-sikhara* form of the latter group is the oldest. This early *Dravida-sikhara* temple of Karnataka also shows the presence of the *hara* at the very top *tala*, as well as *kutas* in three-fourth relief against the corner facets of the *sikhara*, rising from the corners of the *griha-pindi*. This feature, though in mild variation and manifest clumsiness, is typologically closer to the

'Mamalla' stage of temples in Tondaimandalam, as at Mahabali-puram. In the early square *sikhara* type of Karnataka, however, *haras* have been entirely dispensed with, as in the Upper Sivalaya or Nagaral or only the *kutas* or *salas* are shown, as in Virupaksa and Sangamesvara respectively at Pattadakal. This square *sikhara* type became the norm in the Eastern Chalukyan complex, particularly the ones like Upper Sivalaya, as seen at a number of places like Biccavolu, Draksharama etc. But the *sikharas* in all these cases where the *haras* are shown, are entirely of the *arpita* or the applique variety, and practically not a single instance exists of the *anarpita* variety. This would mean that these superstructural towers with their *sikhara* were practically to serve as one tower unit cohesively, and made the basal width of the wall of the *garbha* rather unduly heavy and massive. They had only the stone *vimana* model but not necessarily the earlier brick and timber *vimana* models, owing to the dominance of the Buddhist brick Chaitya-Stupa form earlier in this region. These conceivably were restricted only to the lower southern part of the peninsula.

The *anarpita hara* of the southern type however, deliberately divides the plan into *bahyabhitti*, *alindra*, *antarabhitti*, and *grihapindi* and where there is only one wall, as in a *nirandhara* lay-out, manages to raise the superstructure by corbelling, and it is owing to this reason, that it had initially had only brick and stucco superstructure which it directly imitated in stone later, by the mastery achieved in granite stone-cutting, in adventitious localities. This, by itself, would show that the *vimana* order of the Karnataka country was a derived product and not of the primary character, as in the early Pallava-Pandya-Chola regions. This is of great significance.

B

The Chalukya architectural style is well supported by its own sculptural art which embellishes the temple exterior. The sculptural art, however, had an edge over structural architecture, owing to its continuous usage in the cave art phase, alike in the Brahmanical cave temples as in the earlier Buddhist caves. This explains why in the cave temples of Ellora, Elephanta, Badami etc., the sculptural art is conspicuous though not dominant.

The Brahmanical cave art of the Chalukyas, in one sense, could be said to have set the pattern for the relative arrangement of architectural and sculptural decor of the temples, since the cave temple has merely to be turned inside out, for its conversion into structural model with its carved wall panels. This would also justify why the art of the figure-carving had already its classification by the time the architect had been struggling with his earliest free-standing structural temple of a complete unit and modest proportions. Also, the freedom that the sculptor had for carving surface in cave art style was not there in a structural temple, where the architectural outline, its longitudinal strike, elevational profile and disposition of the wall-constituents like pilasters, grill windows niches etc. would have a clear priority over the iconographic ornamentation. This is patent even in a primarily sculptured enterprise like the monolith Kailasa at Ellora, where, by any standard, it would be admitted that it is the architecture that dominates the scene. The sculpture, notwithstanding its profusion as well as conceptual profundity, had to be billeted out on the extraneous locations, and not so much on the main temple interior and exterior. Thus, in the early Chalukya structural temple itself, we see a disciplining of the sculptor's role developing, as a sequel to which, carvings both decorative as well as figural, are very unobtrusively harmonised with the temple form. on the railings, pillars, grill windows, plinth friezes etc. Only *niche*-sculptures have a well-planned or pre-meditated stamp, but otherwise any sculptured surface ornamentation was fully taxing the ingenuity of the sculptor, for selecting suitable space. The Virupaksha temple at Pattadakal or the Durga shrine at Aiholi is an ideal case in point, where the exuberance of the sculptor had, notwithstanding the ponderosity of the structural body, been well manifest, and in the process is almost mantled or engraved on even the mouldings and other structural limbs of the temple. The size of these secondary carved figures had somewhat become diminutive or even reduced to mere cameos or caricatures, but the style had not suffered any deterioration.

Indeed, as a logical culmination of this enforced disciplining of carved exuberance, the mediaeval Hoysala or later Chalukyan

temples of Karnataka, burst out into a complete fusion of decorative exterior and structural fabric of the temple. This development, in this intensity, is nowhere else found in the south, since the rise of canonical injunctions and treatises had generally the effect of polarising architecture and iconography into two independent and isolated entities, resulting in the purely ritual role of the figure sculptures on the specified points of compass on the walls and bestowing an austere splendour on the architectural framework. It was a direct bequeathal perhaps of the Chalukya art which was, from its inception, never utterly divested of its *penchant* for figure carving—which was its very life breath—that the early temples thus are dexterous essays in the balance of the two.

While this situation was made more complex by the urge to carve out verily countless cancos of the *Puranic*, epic and other legendary myths and episodes, sometimes in a sequential or narrative pattern on the pillars or the plinth, the relative precedence of aesthetics and perspective over functional or didactic carvings was never completely lost sight of. This meant that, on the one hand, the exterior pillars were always made to look elegant by large sized carvings of *mithunas* or couples on its lower part and its upper brackets, while in the interior, the pilasters had a similar scheme, the free-standing pillars alone showing the diminutive carvings and embellishments. The *mithunas* were, certainly, very inconspicuous and relatively less in the cave stage, and even where present, had occupied, as mentioned above for structural temples, only the facade pillars, or brackets of interior pillars. But now in the early structural temples, they had been rehabilitated and are to be considered as quantitatively forming one of the largest categories of sculptures in a temple. It is seen that even in a relatively simple temple with ashlar walls, the door frame with its Ganga-Yamuna motif was made very elaborate, the river-goddesses made the cynosure of attraction and of disproportionately large size for this purpose. The ceilings similarly became the locations for a set pattern of the Trinity or for a grid-pattern scheme for the carvings of *lokapalas* etc. The *mithunas* were, undoubtedly, the result of a great volume of literature growing upon

the secular graces of femininity and the sophisticated approach of a *Nagaraka* towards ladies in society. They became, in effect, the back-drops, the perceptible mantle in which the ineffable but pervasive beatitude of divinity within the temple was wrapped, so that passing through one experience—the mundane, physical and fickle glamour—one attains the other—the ethereal and enduring communion with God.

There is an interesting aspect of some of these early Chalukya sculptures, namely, that they are carved *in situ* on the temple walls often. Of course, this is a direct corollary to the soft stone medium, like sandstone which they adopted, wherein even architectural mouldings are carved not functionally but as composite blocks of stone which when reassembled would delineate the architectural constituents, in relief, but not in individual detachable parts. It is on this score that we have, in many early temples like Ladkhan, the corner cantoning pilasters of outer wall, actually arranged in coursed blocks successively raised, the adjoining wall as well as the pilaster cut on the same common blocks. Again, at Sangamesvara at Pattadakal, the divinities detailed for being carved out on the wall sections of the ground floor have not, in many cases, been completed to this day and have only been blocked and roughed out. The question would arise if the temple could have been consecrated when these are so unfinished. The fact of the matter is that for the consecration of a temple, indeed the carvings of the exterior walls are not a necessary precondition, the tower should be complete upto the *kalasa* point (the *kalasa* being the most important member, added only on the day of consecration and a temple without *kalasa* being unfit for worship at any time) and the sanctum being provided with the pedestal and the image duly carved according to specifications. The temple wall decoration could actually be completed simultaneously or in due course.

But, the very incomplete character of the carvings in the temple like Sangamesvara, while most of the remaining architectural parts of the superstructure are completed in detail, would show that it was the *in situ* character of the blocks carrying the carved (or to be carved) figures that could have been the cause of this

lapse. While the temple wall had been duly erected and finished off, the carvings had not been able to keep pace with the progress and had been left incomplete and later, due perhaps to the lack of a sculptor who could really complete it in a way originally designed, they were allowed to stand as they are. However, in a temple like Virupaksha, the niches have blocks of stone which carry the carvings. These had obviously been carved separately and inserted at will and in time. In fact, quite a few of the sculptured slabs in this temple might not originally have belonged to the niche or to this temple. All the same, their very technique of being loose detachable stele, was conducive to their presenting always a finished appearance in the niche or presenting only an empty niche. This is a typically southern structural architectural feature although even here, monolithic temples had naturally *in situ* carvings. But in the Chalukyan country, early structural temples carried this practice of carving the sculpture *in situ*, due to the soft medium, and this placed the onus of completing the carvings on the sculptor, while the architect would have already assembled the very stone blocks which are to be carved, in their proper place, and thus completed his part of the assignment.

An unusual feature of the sanctum of early Chalukya cave temples is that by the side of the *linga pitha*, immediately below its water-chute projection is to be found a square or circular depression socket on the floor, apparently intended to collect the *abhiseka* water and to bale it out by normal process. This is, of course, the result of the shrine being a cave model, whereas in a structural temple, the *varimarga* would have led the *abhiseka* water in the sanctum, through a *pranala* outside the shrine wall. This feature of the cave model was so ubiquitously followed in the subsequent Rastrakuta cave temples, and also in almost all the forty odd Pandya and Muttaraiyar cave temples of Tamil country that one is left without doubt about the great impact that early Chalukya cave temple style had over these regions. Added, especially, is the fact that the very character of carving the *linga* and the *pitha* both, or at least the *pitha* alone, in live rock in the sanctum was both an innovation that the Chalukyan cave temples

initiated for the first time, and was not found in vogue in any of the Pallava cave temples.

Invariably, the Karnataka temple is a unitary temple without any *parivara* subshrine. The *parivara-devatas* are all carved in various parts of the temple. Rarely, however, provision is made for a rectangular *saptamatrika* shrine on the western side of the temple. The only case where a regular *sodasa* (sixteen) *parivara* shrine lay-out is provided as part of the temple scheme is for Virupaksha temple at Pattadakal. Here, seemingly, the analogue was the Kailasanatha at Kanchi, although in the latter place, the *parivara* shrines, started perhaps from Mahendra II and finally completed upto the time of Paramesvaravarman II, are 64 in number, including the main shrine. All the same, we might take that the separate *parivara* lay-out element was essentially a southern innovation and was assimilated by the Pandyas, the Muttaraiyars, and the Irukkuvels and later by the Cholas. The Rastrakuta king Krishna, again, followed a *parivara* lay-out in the Kailasa, only on this analogy, although in consideration of the rock-cut medium he kept the number reduced to an *astaparivara* complex. We do have in the northern temple style in Malwa *astaparivara* unit at Dhamnar. But it was obviously posterior to the Chalukya cave art phase and had thus no influence on it, but rather in the reverse direction was a borrowal from the Rastrakuta application of it at Ellora, notwithstanding the difference in temple style as well as religious affiliation, since it was Vaisnava in character. The *panchayatana*, again suffers a similar fate. This is certainly not known in the Chalukyan region as well as in the deep south. But it is also attempted for the first time perhaps at Ellora, as seen on the southern roof top of Kailasa, just directly above the triple-storyed cave, on the southern court. Its date is certainly within the Rastrakuta activity at Ellora, but very likely later to the Kailasa and perhaps of the time of Govinda III or Sarva Amoghavarsha, in the early decades of the ninth century A.D. It combines the *panchayatana* lay-out with a series of *gopura-dvaras* on the centre of the fully shown *prakara* wall feature—not germane to the northern *Panchayatana* type. It further actually shows the larger central shrine super-structural model as well as the corner ones of smaller *alpa-vimana*

size, abutting on the angles of the *prakara*, in the typically southern *vimana* form. But then, it is well known that the Rastrakutas had a built-in preference in architecture for the typical southern order, while yet imbued with a few Deccani features.

That the Karnataka art under the Chalukyas was a gulf bridging the northern and the southern orders of architecture is more than established by the present study. But the predilection for certain northern trends in iconography, in preference to the southern, appears to be not so explicit. The reason for such a preference would seem to be the impact of the central Indian and west Indian region on Karnataka more directly than the south. This characteristic is, for instance, observed in icons like Mahisamardini, Umamahesvara, Ganesa etc., in the former, and the absence generally of a regular *lalata-bimba* on the lintel of the door frame of the *garbha* in the southern *vimanas*. In fact, southern temples have a very simple and plain door frame for the cella, without any carvings, except the *dvarapalas* and the *torana* arch, in the cave stage, and without these two also in the structural stage, where these are shifted to the flanks of the *ardhamandapa* and *mahamandapa* entrance variously. The absence of Ganesa in the southern temples of the early Pallavas is particularly noteworthy. They occur for the first time in the temples of Rajasimha (c.700-728 A.D.) while they are more prolific in the Pandyan cave temples earlier than this date as well as the later ones. Obviously, the borrowal of Ganesa cult had been effected through the Pandyas, across Ganga country and transmuted northwards simultaneously or otherwise to the Tondaimandalam. In a similar way, the absence of Daksinamurti in the Deccan is equally significant, but would be amenable to a more rational explanation. The iconic prototype corresponding to Daksinamurti in the north would be Lakulisa. This latter has, broadly speaking, a *dhyana* pose, four disciples and yogic attire. In fact one might go further and state that the practice generally obtaining in the north (Gujarat, Rajasthan and Central India), places Lakulisa icon in a southern niche of the temple. Of course, there are separate temples for Lakulisa in the north (as at Eklingji, Rajasthan) and in Karnataka (as at Badami, also facing south, near Bhutanatha temple). This

analogy between Lakulisa concept of the north and the Daksinamurti icon of the south is more than superficial and is brought out in a fine synthesis, in the eastern Chalukyan zone where, as in the Nakulagudi at Biccavolu—obviously named after Nakulesa a corruption for Lakulisa—we have a figure in the southern wall niche of the *ardhamandapa*, which is a combination of the *ardhaparyanka* and *utkutika* pose of Daksinamurti and the *lakshanas* and *ayudhas* of Lakulisa. Further south, in the very outskirts of Madras in the famous shrine of Tiruvorriyur we have an image, now going by the name of Goulisa, which is very likely that of Lakulisa and which though in *dhyana-mudra* and *padmasana* (both characteristic of Lakulisa) is apparently a replacement to Daksinamurti and is in a separate shrine. Of course, this place was also a great centre of *Pasupata* Saivism. It is sustainable by other data of a similar kind in the region intervening between Karnataka and Tamilnad that a degree of fusion had been effected between Lakulisa and Daksinamurti. In any event, this should have been the context in which the latter icon never found any specific usage in Karnataka and Deccan, and is to be taken as a distinctive and individualistic icon of the Tamil country.

The difference between the Durga-Mahisamardini of Karnataka and north on the one hand, and the southern peninsula is that, in the latter she is shown almost invariably as standing only on the head of the buffalo and with *sankha* and *chakra* in her hands, while in the former, she is seen grappling with the demon in buffalo form, out of the mouth of which his human form is also shown emerging. There are other variations and only one rare instance finds a repetition in three widely separated places, as at Mahabalipuram (Mahisamardini cave panel), Pattadakal (Virupaksha pillar scene), and Ellora (Kailasa *gopura-dvara*, inner wall face looking north), wherein Durga giving a vigorous battle riding on lion with the demon in human form but buffalo head standing in *pratyaldha* pose. It is very clear that these are mutually linked replicas, and quite reasonably the earliest of these is from Mahabalipuram where it is to be dated not later than the middle of the seventh century A.D.

Qualitatively, the early sculptural art of Karnataka is infor-

med by elemental emotion, soft and sensuous modelling and a graceful combination of apparel and jewellery, which gets sophisticated and accentuated in the Rastrakuta stage. The southern (Pallava and early Pandya) art, on the other hand, is more sedate, of compressed modelling and with sparse drapery (where outlines alone are emphasised) and ornamentation. The raw materials—supple sandstone and grim granite—are perhaps responsible partly for this difference. Both are equally, however, the products of local *ethos* and are to be examined and initially appreciated only on the basis of local traditions in art and religion. Both the traditions were like a giant banyan tree with a multiplicity of shoots claiming a semi-independent status but well linked to the parent tree. Of these two, however, it was only the Karnataka region that imbibed the *Rekha-nagara* of the north, the Kadamba slopy roof and quadrantal *sikhara* of the coastal west, and the *vimana* order of the south, and reared up, as it were, a new series of structural experimentations in stone, in all the three directions, with great success, elaboration and virtuosity. This emphasises the enormous imagination of the patrons and craft skill in the stone medium available in the Karnataka country in its formative stages.

**TABLE OF
NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN TEMPLE CATEGORIES IN THE EARLY KARNATAKA AND THE VARIANT ZONAL ARCHITECTURAL STYLES**

SOUTHERN VIMANA TYPE			NORTHERN PRASADA TYPE		REGIONAL STYLE
DRAVIDA	NAGARA	VESARA	REKHA-NAGARA	KADAMBA-NAGARA	
Makutesvara (Mahakut)	Upper Sivalaya (Badami)	Durga temple (Aiholi)	Hucchimalli (Aiholi)	Mallikarjuna (Aiholi)	Western Chalukya of Badami
Mallikarjuna (Mahakut)	Bhutanatha (Badami)	Mallikarjuna (Pattadakal)	Hucchapayya (Aiholi)	Galaganatha (Aiholi)	
Malegitti (Badami)	Navidanagudi (Aiholi)	...	Tarappagudi (Aiholi)	Western group (Mahakut)	
Lower Sivalaya (Badami)	Virupaksha (Pattadakal)		Sakkarakudi (Aiholi)	Chikkigudi (Aiholi)	
Visvesvara (Hallur)	Sangamesvara (Pattadakal)		Siddanakolla (near Aiholi)	...	
Meguti (?) (Aiholi)	Naganatha (Nagaral)		Mallikarjuna (Mahakut)		
Melgudi (?) (Hallur)	Taraka Brahma (Alampur)		Kadasiddesvara (Pattadakal)		
...	Parvati temple (Sandur)		Jambulinga Papannatha Kasivivesvara } Pattadakal Galaganatha }		
	Biccavolu (all temples) Bhimesvara Draksharama	Apsidal temple (Satyavolu)	Navabrahma temples } Alampur (except Tarakabrahma) }		
	Rupala Sangamesvara at Krishnabhavanasi Sangam		Ramalingesvara } Satyavolu Bhimalingesvara }		
			Mahanandi (Mahanandi) Somesvara (Chebrolu) Panchalingesvara (Panchalingala)	Siva temple (Banditandra- padu near Kurnool)	Eastern Chalukya
Panchakutabasti (Kambadahalli)	Chandraguptabasti (Sravanabelgola)	Panchakutabasti (Kambadahalli)	
Chayundarayabasti (Sravanabelgola)	Panchakutabasti (Kambadahalli)				
Jaina temple (Vijayamangalam)	Bhoganandisvara (Nandi)				
...	...	Shrine outside the village (Hemavati)	Doddesvara (?) (Hemavati)	(Variant) Siddesvara (?) (Hemavati)	Nolamba
		Parasuramesvara (Gudimallam)	Bana
	Pallisvaramudaiya - Madeva temple (Kalakada)	Parasuramesvara (Tiruvallam)			Vaidumba
		Parasuramesvara (Attirala)			

N. B:— This classification is not exhaustive but only indicative of the variety and nexus of the more well-known regional specimens.

NOTES ON PLATES AND MAPS

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|---|--|
| <p>I A and B 1. <i>Name (with place and District)</i></p> | <p>: Middle group in the Jyotirlinga cluster, Aiholi, Bijapur District.</p> |
| <p>2. <i>Type of structure</i>
 <i>Mandapa or pavilion type</i>
 <i>Rekha-ngara-prasada</i>
 <i>Kadamba-nagara-vimana</i></p> | <p>: <i>Mandapa</i> (closed).</p> |
| <p>3. <i>Number of talas</i></p> | <p>: Nil.</p> |
| <p>4. <i>Sandhara or nirandhara</i></p> | <p>: <i>Nirandhara</i>.</p> |
| <p>5. <i>Plinth mouldings</i></p> | <p>: <i>Mancha-bandha</i> (<i>Upana</i>, <i>Kantha</i>, <i>Kapota</i> and <i>prati</i>).</p> |
| <p>6. <i>Age</i></p> | <p>: c. 575 A. D.</p> |
| <p>7. <i>Special features</i></p> | <p>: Provision of a <i>nandimandapa</i> with sculptures of <i>dikpalas</i>, Trinity and <i>Dvarapalas</i> on the pillar faces. East facing. Having a <i>pranala</i> channel cut with <i>simhavaktra</i> on the <i>kapota</i>. Frieze zone on the upper part of the <i>bhitti</i> and schematic rafter course (<i>varimana</i>) above the cornice. Probably with slopy roofs and <i>amalaka</i> on top.</p> |
| <p>8. <i>Dynastic grouping</i></p> | <p>: Early Western Chalukyas of Badami.</p> |
| <p>9. <i>Religious affiliation</i></p> | <p>: Saiva.</p> |
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- II**
1. Shrine in the tank. Mahakut, Bijapur District.
 2. *Mandapa* (open).
 3. Nil.
 4. *Nirandhara*.
 5. *Mancha-bandha*.
 6. c. 575 A. D.
 7. With *mukhalinga* in the centre of the *mandapa*; almost always immersed in water; *Sarvatobhadra* in orientation; with square massive pillars bearing *taranga* corbels, *uttira*, *kapota*, slopy roof and *amalaka sila* on top.
 8. Early Western Chalukyas of Badami.
 9. Saiva.
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III

1. Mahakutesvara, Mahakut, Bijapur District.
 2. *Vimana* (of the *Dravida* category).
 3. *Dvitala*.
 4. *Sandhara*.
 5. *Upana*, *padma*, *vritta-kumuda*, *kantha*, *kapota*, *vyalavari* and *vedi* frieze.
 6. c. 575-600 A. D.
 7. The earliest known *Dravida-vimana* type in the Karnataka country with the special incipient feature of applied *kutas* around the *griva*, in addition to the *hara* of the top *tala*. The *hara* of the ground *tala* is quite away from the superstructure leaving thus a wide corridor all around and the *hara* continues along the fringe of the *mukhamandapa* also—a characteristic Chalukya feature. The niche sculptures on the front face of *mukhamandapa* with divinities, and *dvarapalas* on the abruptly vertical wall-face would show that the *agramandapa* porch is not integral with the original lay-out, but came slightly later, as fully seen in the Mallikarjuna temple at the south end of the same Mahakut group. The character of the original *linga* is not clear and the present one has only a *pindika* enclosure at floor level around it.
 8. Early Western Chalukyas of Badami.
 9. Saiva.
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IV

1. Other temples in Mahakut
 - (a) Mallikarjuna.
 - (b) Sangamesvara.
 - (c) The western group along the north-south enclosure wall and flanking the *kunda*, all facing east.
 - (d) The south-eastern group around the *kunda*, facing north and west variously.
2. (a) *Vimana* of *Dravida* category.
 (b) *Rekha-nagara-prasada*.
 (c - d): *Kadamba-nagara* as well as *Rekha-nagara* types, the former predominating.
3. (a) *Dvitala*.
 (b - d): *Talacchanda* different from *Vimana* types and comprises multiple *bhumis*, capped by *amalaka* in all cases. All except (b) of less than medium size.
4. (a) *Sandhara*.
 (b) to (d): *Nirandhara*.
5. (a) Like Makutesvara temple except for *tripatta-kumuda* and absence of *vedi* frieze.
 (b - d): Mostly *mancha-bandha* type, but in some cases with *tripatta* or multifaceted *kumuda* and a high friezed *vedi* for the *mukhamandapa*.
6. c. 625 - 750 A. D.
7. A multiple assortment, but essentially confirming the prevalence

of all these at an early date, though in varying stages. The absence of the *sukanasa* for the *Kadamba-nagara* as for the *Vimana* types should be noted. The *Kaksasana* parapet for the *mukhamandapa* (which has not yet become a wider unit) is also to be noted. The provisions of, in most cases, a rectangular opening over the plinth on the northern side as *nala* or discharge of *abhiseka* water, is an interesting typical innovation.

8. Early Western Chalukyas of Badami.
 9. Saiva.
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V

1. Upper Sivalaya, Badami, Bijapur District.
 2. *Vimana* of the *Nagara* category.
 3. *Dvitala*.
 4. *Sandhara*.
 5. *Upana*, *padma*, bold *kantha* with sculptured frieze *kapota* and *prati* on the outer wall—No corresponding mouldings on the inner wall of the cella circuit.
 6. c. 625 - 640 A. D.
 7. The earliest *Nagara-vimana* at Badami and in fact in the Chalukyan country. It applies the elements of the *Makutesvara* temple layout for a *Nagara-vimana* also on plan and outer wall which is carrying a *hara*, apart from niche carvings, *vedi* carvings on the plinth and pierced windows of various designs, one of which is of radiating fish-like spokes, imitated from Badami caves, in design. The superstructure is the most significant and incipient, with a large and high second *tala-bhitti*, and a telescoped *prastara* without *hara* as well as the *vedi*, and *griha-pindi*, in an indistinguishable stepping, capped by an identifiable *griva* and square *sikhara*. The idea of the scheme is to give elevation to the shrine, though only *dvitala*.
 8. Early Western Chalukyas of Badami.
 9. Saiva perhaps, though *Vaisnava* use cannot be ruled out if the carvings are any guidance.
-

VI

1. Lower Sivalaya, Badami, Bijapur District.
2. *Vimana* of *Dravida* category.
3. *Dvitala*.
4. *Sandhara*.
5. Inner wall has no mouldings.
6. c. 625-640 A. D.
7. A model, half way between *Mahakutesvara* and Upper Sivalaya, and clearly coeval with Malegitti Sivalaya also, since both the latter are at Badami. The archaic superstructural features common to

all the above mentioned, varying only in the *nirandhara* character of Malegitti, and *Nagara-vimana* type of upper Sivalaya, would suggest that there was no great time lag among all these experimentations. The nature of the cella *pittha* in this temple would suggest that it was not for Siva. Its steeper height and more restricted ground area might show that it was closely preceding Upper Sivalaya.

8. Early Western Chalukyas of Badami.
 9. Probably Vaisnava in affiliation.
-

VII

1. Bhutanatha temple, Badami, Bijapur District.
 2. *Vimana* of the *Nagara* category.
 3. *Tritala*.
 4. *Nirandhara*.
 5. *Upana*, *jagati*, *tripattav-kumuda*, *kantha*, *pattika* and *prati*.
 6. c. 650 - 700 A. D.
 7. The most finite *vimana* type at Badami coming closest to the southern types in Tamil country (including the *pattika* in place of *kapota*). The square *sikhara*, lack of *hara* on the top moulding, rather steep elevation, lack of *ratha* projection of its *vinaya-sutra*, would all suggest that it had well succeeded the other temples at Badami and had occurred after the Pallava occupation of the place. Inscriptional evidence at the place would also place it in the second half of the seventh century A. D. The *sabhamandapa* in its front, fringing the Agastya-tirtha is a much later addition. The abrupt front entrance point with a small *agramandapa* on two free-standing pillars originally, is the characteristic Chalukya feature. The *linga* in the sanctum is badly disturbed.
 8. Early Western Chalukys of Badami.
 9. Saiva.
-

VIII

1. Tarappa gudi, Aiholi, Bijapur District.
2. *Rekha-nagara-prasada*.
3. Not applicable.
4. *Nirandhara*.
5. Has variant forms of two *vargas* mixed in the *karna* and *bhadra* of the *adhithana*, the latter showing multifaceted *kumuda* with heavy beam projections at intervals and the *karnas* have *padma* and *vritta kumuda*, capped by *kantha*, *kapota* and *prati*.
6. c. 675 - 700 A. D.
7. The type is a development over the Hucchimalligudi, but nearer to Hucchappayyagudi in many respects except that, it is built with more massive frame and greater confidence, but less of sculptural

ornamentation. It is likely to represent a new vogue, if its plinth features as above are any guidance, seen elsewhere, especially at Alampur. Its high plinth for a *Nagara-rekha-prasada* not usually common elsewhere also would show that it is imitating forms from a *Dravida-vimana* types. It is likely to be a plain and rather modest artistic production of a lesser pattern, but not otherwise too late in the Western Chalukya series.

8. Early Western Chalukyas of Badami.
 9. Saiva.
-

IX

1. Laddkhan, Aiholi, Bijapur District.
 2. Pavilion type.
 3. Not applicable but if its superstructural roof shrine of the same simple chamber type has any special significance, it is to be called a double shrine.
 4. *Nirandhara* in so far as the roof shrine is concerned. Has no special applicability in so far as ground chamber is concerned.
 5. *Manchabandha* with *upana*, *padma*, high *kantha*, *kapota* and *prati*.
 6. c. 550 - 600 A. D.
 7. A very finite, well executed secular hall type of shrine which provides for the deity only against the back wall, which in consonance is not so richly provided with grilled sections, pierced windows etc., as is seen on the side walls. A *mukhamandapa* with narrow oblong strike and with *vedi* parapet, carrying *purna-ghata* design on the *kantha* and with sculptures on the pillars is an addition as is also the roof shrine. But the type became a different model, as effected in a composite way in Kontigudi also without any direct integral connection with the ground floor. The hall type is notable only for its art motifs on the pillars, the ceilings etc. and the pillar and corbel types themselves. The model should have been almost coeval with the cave temple phase at Badami and was a more positive and large sized copy of its smaller attempts as in the Jyotirlinga group.
 8. Early Western Chalukyas of Badami.
 9. Seemingly for Saiva use, though its present *linga* is a later replacement of an earlier one.
-

X

1. Kontigudi, Aiholi, Bijapur District.
2. Pavilion or *mandapa* type.
3. No applicability.
4. — do —
5. *Manchabandha* type.
6. c. 675 - 800 A. D.

7. A model which was in simulation of Lakkhan in so far as it went and after quite a little interval as indicated by its variant use of doors, *mukhamandapa*, pillar details, sculptural values etc., and building even later still, a superstructure almost completely conforming to the southern *Vimana* type of the Rastrakuta period. It was perhaps a *dvitala* structure which got truncated into its present form later and gives the freakish look entirely different from the outwardly harmonised look of Lakkhan superstructure. It was perhaps a desire to mount the southern *Vimana* type at a time when it had become very popular at Aiholi, which was perhaps not before the advent of the Rastrakutas, notwithstanding the early model like Meguti temple.
 8. Early Western Chalukyas of Kalyana.
 9. Saiva, if its location of the shrine on ground floor is original.
-

XI

1. Mallikarjuna temple, Aiholi, Bijapur District.
 2. *Kadamba-nagara* type.
 3. Not relevant, but the superstructure divided into seven nodes or *bhumis*.
 4. *Nirandhara*.
 5. *Manchabandha* type.
 6. c. 650 - 700 A. D.
 7. An early formulation of the finite *Kadamba-nagara* type, empirical in its character with the combination of the typical superstructure, slopy roofs and a higher clerestory in the middle, lack of *sukanasa* and presence of an *amalaka* over a curved *griva*, and an *agramandapa* porch. The type in lay-out is similar to Hucchapayyagudi, but has no rather offsets in the plinth and no niches on the wall. A more ornate type of the same is the Galaganatha main shrine facing west.
 8. Early Western Chalukyas of Badami.
 9. Saiva.
-

XII

1. Meguti temple, Aiholi, Bijapur District.
2. *Vimana* type.
3. Not ascertainable, probably *dvitala*, on earlier or contemporary analogies.
4. *Sandhara*.
5. *Upana*, *jagati*, *tripattav-kumuda*, *kantha* with sculptured *gana* frieze, *kapota* and *prati*.
6. c. 634 A.D., as implied by the foundation record of Pulakesi II.
7. A landmark in history as well as architecture but unfortunately truncated in superstructure and dedicated to Jaina religion. There is sufficient reason why this should be an early form which takes

after the Parvati, temple at Nachana in Central India, for its composition, though the stylistic elements are local. It does not appear to be too close to Mahakutesvara or Malegitti Sivalaya but rather in its tall and raised form to either Lower Sivalaya, or Upper Sivalaya and chronology would also reinforce this. The tradition of Jaina temples having an upper shrine in the second *tala* is seen at the earliest context only here.

8. Early Western Chalukyas of Badami.
 9. Jaina.
-

XIII

1. Naganatha temple, Nagaral, Bijapur District.
 2. *Vimana* of probably *Nagara* category.
 3. *Dvitala*.
 4. *Sandhara*.
 5. *Upana*, *padma*, multiple fluted *kumuda*, *vyalavari* frieze *vedi* and *prati*.
 6. c. 675 - 725 A. D.
 7. A compact and rather evolved type of temple, nearer in concept to Sangamesvara at Pattadakal which it would precede. Has a suavity of sculptural delineation, harmonisation of wall features, lay-out, superstructure and interior. Has an *agramandapa* porch. In some of its plinth features, it has a link variously with Durga temple, Galaganatha, Tarappagudi etc.
 8. Early Western Chalukyas of Badami.
 9. Saiva.
-

XIV

1. Parvati temple, Sandur, Bellary District.
2. *Vimana* type.
3. Upper part reconstructed in *Kadamba-nagara* style. Probably a *trititala* type originally.
4. *Nirandhara*.
5. *Upana*, high *padma*, *antari*, multifaceted *kumuda*, *vyalavari* in the *kantha*, *kapota*, and *prati*.
6. c. 700 - 725 A. D.
7. A southern outlier of the Chalukyan model on the border area of the Nolamba-Ganga tract. The scheme includes a nave and side aisles for the *mukhamandapa*, absence of *agramandapa*, and the abrupt front face having *dvarapala* and other niches—showing secular figures, recalling one of Mallikarjuna at Mahakut at the same time part of the shrine—and the superstructure has a *vimana* form with *arpita haras*, in successive telescoped *talas* and with a massive *sukanasa*—practically equal to the width of the *garbha* and showing Tandava Siva relief in the *kudu*. Cardinal niches show sculptured stele. The model is, despite its size and difference in *mukhamandapa*, almost that of the Taraka-Brahma at Alampur and going with the advanced stage of Karnataka *vimanas* as seen at Pattadakal.

8. Early Western Chalukyas of Badami.
 9. Saiva. Though it is called Parvati temple, originally dedicated to Siva.
-

XV

1. Taraka Brahma temple, Alampur, Mahaboobnagar District, Andhra Pradesh.
 2. *Vimana* type.
 3. Seemingly *tritala* despite the dilapidated top part.
 4. *Nirandhara*.
 5. *Upana*, *jagati*, *tripattav-kumuda*, *kantha*, *pattika*, and *prati*.
 6. c. 700 – 750 A. D.
 7. A singular *vimana* expression at Alampur of medium size, with *triratha* pattern and niche on cardinal directions on the wall, enclosed in a *mukhasala*. Superstructure is of the *arpita-hara* type, the *prastara* mouldings boldly rendered. The *mukhamandapa* is a pillared porch. The cella has pillars on the corners of the wall, making it this internally the atrophied *sandhara* scheme. The *sukanasa* above it is as broad as the cella, but about half its thickness, and has Tandava Siva in the *kudu*.
 8. Early Eastern Chalukya group with Karnata influence.
 9. Saiva usage.
-

XVI

1. Bala-Brahma temple, Alampur, Mahaboobnagar District, Andhra Pradesh.
2. *Rekha nagara prasada* type.
3. The *sikhara* has 5 nodes in it, capped by a square *griha-pindi*, *griva* and flat globular *amalaka-sila*.
4. *Sandhara*.
5. *Upana*, *jagati*, *kumuda*, bold *kantha*, *pattika* and *prati*.
6. c. 650 – 725 A. D.
7. Is typical of all the other temples (except Taraka Brahma) at Alampur, having a covered inner circuit around the cella, porched and grilled *ghanadvaras* on the outer walls, and a pillared and pilastered *gudhamandapa* to the front having slopy side aisles and clerestoreyed central nave. The ceiling of the nave has lotus medallions and *naga* spiral motifs and door frame outside has a series of overdoors and *dvarapala*, *ganga-yamuna* etc., on the base of the jamb, and Garuda on the *lalatabimba*. It has also an *agramandapa* porch. Carvings in niches of the eight *dikpalas* adorn the exterior wall of the *gudhamandapa* and outside the sanctum circuit. The roof shows a well modulated *sikhara* in 5 nodes, with a *prastara* at the base; double *griha-pindi-phalaka* on top; and a very tastefully exc-

cuted *sukanasa* complete with *mukhapatti*, *saktidhvaja* and *simhalalata* and side cusps with foliage design. The *kudu* has Tandava Siva.

8. Early Eastern Chalukya group with Karnata influence.
 9. Saiva usage.
-

XVII

1. (a) Ramalingesvara, and Bhimalingresvara, temples Satyavolu, Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh.
 2. *Rekha-nagara*.
 3. The former is a larger unit with a loftier *sikhara* than the latter.
 4. *Nirandhara* in both cases.
 5. *Upana*, high *padma*, *vritta-kumuda*, *kantha*, *kapota* and *prati*; *Upana*, very bold and high *kantha* with friexes and *kapota* — being a *manchabandha*, and *prati*.
 6. c. 675 – 725 A. D.
 7. Two very important examples of the contact zone of typical early Western and Eastern Chalukya temple models of Karnataka. The *garbha* has pillars on the corners, and *ardha* and *mahamandapa* have central and side sections. In (1) there is a later, larger, *ranga-mandapa* also. The *ghanadvara* is in the *mahamandapa*. The superstructure shows *vyalavari* in *prastara*—a typical southern *vimana* feature—at the base of the *sikhara* and a fairly heavy *sala* type of *sukanasa*, occupying almost the entire width of *sikhara*—in (2) and of *ardhamandapa* in (1), which is narrower than *garbha* as well as *mahamandapa*. Interesting inscribed information is regarding the *utpatti pidugu* label found at a number of places like Vijayawada, Mogalrajapuram, Undavalli, Satanikota and farthest north west at Bhokardan near Ajanta—all datable to c. 700 A.D. and being a pilgrim record of a Pasupata Yogi. The precincts of the temple have miniature shrine models of all types apart from a small apsidal temple itself. In this respect, it is similar to Mahanandi also in the same district, and recalls such miniatures found in Ellesvaram excavations near Nagarjunakonda.
 8. Early Eastern Chalukya group.
 9. Saiva usage.
-

XVIII

1. Golingesvara temple, Biccavolu, East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh.
2. *Vimana* type.
3. *Tritala*.
4. *Nirandhara*.
5. *Upana*, *padma*, *tripattav-kumuda* on the *bhadra* and *vritta* on the *karnas* and elsewhere, *kantha*, *pattika* and *prati*.
6. c. 850 A. D.

7. A typical Eastern Chalukya *vimana* with a *triratha* lay-out of shrine proper and with niches in the *bhadra*, *karna* and *harantara* wall sections, with *hamsa-valabhi* below cornice, *prastara*, with *vyalavari* and *vedi*, and an *arpita-hara* in the venture superstructure capped by a square *sikhara*. The carvings are full of life and traditional stylistic features of the period.
 8. Early Eastern Chalukya type of the time of Narendramrigaraja or Gunaga Vijayaditya.
 9. Saiva usage.
-

XIX

1. Rupala Sangamesvara temple, Sangamesvaram, Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh.
 2. *Vimana* type.
 3. *Chatustala vimana*.
 4. *Nirandhara*.
 5. *Upana*, *jagati*, *vrittav-kumuda*, *kantha*, *vyalavari*, *pattika* and *prati*.
 6. c. 850 A. D.
 7. Perhaps one of the very few among the earliest Eastern Chalukyan structural temples of the finite variety completely preserved in its constituent parts, namely, cella, *ardhamandapa* and *mahamandapa*. It has a square *sikhara* and *arpita-haras* at every level. It is an all stone temple. It is provided with *jala-vatayanas* on *ardhamandapa* and *mahamandapa*, and *ghanadvaras* on the *mahamandapa* central part with pillared porch on the outside. It has a *mukhamandapa* with a lateral entrance and provided with bracketed *vedi*-like railing on the facing side, borne on free-standing carved *gana*-pillars as in the case of *ghandvaras*. The scheme is nearer that of Satyavolu though the latter is a *Rekha-nagara* type. The iconography of the place is rich and varied, an outstanding example of which is the Mahesa figure in seated form in a niche on the rear inner wall of the cella—a hangover of its usage in the early Chalukya and Rastrakuta times at Ellora. Apparently it is the only known example of this kind in a structural temple of this region.
 8. Early Eastern Chalukya type.
 9. Saiva usage.
-

XX

1. Sangamesvara temple, Pattadakal, Bijapur District, Mysore State.
2. *Vimana* type.
3. *Tritala*.
4. *Sandhara*.
5. *Upana*, *padma*, *vrittav-kumuda*, *kantha*, *kapota*, *vyalavari*, *vedi* and *prati*.
6. c. 700 A. D.
7. Perhaps one of the earliest *vimana* types at Pattadakal and called Vijayesvara in its records. In its *sandhara* type, is like Virupaksha and Mallikarjuna. In its *talacchanda*, it is nearer the southern

norm in being without *sukanasa*, having an *anarpita-hara*. The loftiest *tala* also has a *madhaya-sala* alone but not the *kutas*. Interior lay-out of *ardhamandapa* is more like Papanatha than Virupaksha. Its wall carvings, *makara-toranas* and pilaster features are less sophisticated than Virupaksha. Its elevation rises in easy stages.

8. Early Western Chalukyas of Badami.
9. Saiva usage with *linga* on square *pitha* preserved in sanctum and with a *nala* cut at the *kumuda* moulding, on the outer plinth of the temple.

XXI

1. Galaganatha temple, Pattadakal, Bijapur District, Mysore State.
2. *Rekha-nagara-prasada*.
3. There are four nodes on the *sikhara*.
4. *Sandhara*.
5. *Upana*, *padma*, *antari*, *vrittav-kumuda*, after course projection or *vari-marga*, *kapota* and *prati*.
6. c. 750 A. D.
7. A very sophisticated *Rekha-nagara* type with an elaborate outer wall with grilled *ghanadvāras* raised over *adhishtana* mouldings of their own, and a very spacious *gudhamandapa*, now extinct. The inner circuit is having massive slopy roofs and the *sikhara* has a *lata* or central *bhadra* rubbing which is of receding and superimposed *udgama* designs, giving it a curved and steep profile. The *sukanasa* is largely missing, but would have risen to the third *bhumi* when extant fully. The interior moulding, large panel carvings on the *bhadra*, and the exterior styling with art motifs, are all minimum necessary to emphasise the essentially architectural modulation of the temple. Perhaps one of the latest temples built at Pattadakal.
8. Early Western Chalukya of Badami.
9. Saiva usage (*linga* without *pitha* extant).

MAP I

The map seeks to project the background of the broad formal division of early architectural delineations in South India—the northern *Rekha-nagara* and the southern *vimana* respectively—and the important nucleating centres wherein bold and pioneering experimentations in the harmonisation as well as the differentiation of these two above orders were vigorously displayed. These nucleating zones, in the nature of things, were incidentally the result of the patronage of certain outstanding regional dynasties and, in their turn, become more or less models for inspiration for other stylistic formulations of a more local kind initiated in areas under the subordinate chiefs and vassal units. Thus, it could be stated, for instance, that the Krishna-Tungabhadra valley was the richest

zone of not only the meeting ground of the two above-mentioned major orders, but also of the hybridizations thereof. And similarly the Kadamba, Nolamba, the Eastern Ganga, and to a lesser extent, the Western Ganga were outlier manifestations of the Karnataka style developed in the Krishna-Tungabhadra valleys, while correspondingly the Bana, the Vaidumba, and others in the deeper south like the Muttaraiyar, the Irukkuvel, the Chera etc., and to a large extent, the Western Ganga, were the direct end-products of the southern *vimana* order, as crystallised in the nucleating zones of this order. The map supplies the locale of these nucleating zones and the regional sub-styles, in addition to the outstanding sites of all of them, and thus, is a compact picture of the empirical structure of early South Indian formal architecture, in terms of physiography and nomenclature.

MAP II

This map serves to present a visual picture of the regional archetypal models of the traditional temple styles in South India. It does not—deliberately seek to variegate the mosaic, but only to compress the basic unitarian character of the style. It, however, displays the mutual co-existence of basically different arche-types in the contact-zones. It is these contact zones that kept the concerned stylistic *ensemble* alive, by imaginative hybridisations within the permissible degree and carried on the innovations, from period to period. It is also needless to say that the zones of impact themselves gradually expanded and by the early-mediaeval times, the whole of Southern India largely behaved as comprised of two basically compact areas of provenance for the temple format, thus implying the free movement of the larger imperial dynasties that governed then. In the ultimate analysis, it is this stylization of the model and its lay-out, that gradually brought about the sterio-typed degeneration of the architectural personality of temples in late mediaeval times.

GLOSSARY OF INDIAN ARCHITECTURAL TERMS

<i>alindra</i> :	a deliberately left perambulatory space between the double walls of the sanctum resulting in an <i>anarpita-hāra</i> . (see under <i>hāra</i>).
<i>alpa-vimāna</i> :	small one-storeyed <i>vimāna</i> : the parts are: <i>adhiṣṭhāna</i> , <i>bhitti</i> or <i>pāda</i> , <i>prastara</i> , <i>grīva</i> , <i>śikhara</i> and <i>stūpi</i> . Usually it is without a <i>hāra</i> .
<i>anarpita-hāra</i> :	the string of a sub-shrine or chapel miniature on the parapet of each <i>tala</i> (see under <i>hāra</i>), shown fully in the round and separated from the <i>pāda</i> or wall of next <i>tala</i> .
<i>ankaṇa</i> :	bay or intercolumniation between pillars or space between pillars and pilasters.
<i>antarabhitti</i> :	inner wall.
<i>antarāla</i> :	intermediate passage or room between outer <i>maṇḍapa</i> and shrine.
<i>ardhamanḍapa</i> :	a pillared hall immediately in front of the principal shrine or distal half of a <i>maṇḍapa</i> with two seriate pillars as in rockcut cave temples.
<i>aṣṭa-parivāra</i> :	eight-fold shrine layout which includes the main shrine, the <i>nandi</i> shrine and six other sub-shrines.
<i>bāhya-bhitti</i> :	outer of the two cellular walls of the <i>garbhagriha</i> or sanctum.
<i>bhadra</i> :	the central unit of the layout plan is equivalent to the <i>śāla</i> or wagon-roof porch entrance, also sometimes called <i>bhadra śāla</i> , or <i>mukha-bhadra</i> .
<i>dvyaśra vṛtta</i> :	a plan formed by two linear sides and two curved ends, giving a flattened ellipse. This is the shape more in use than the oval or egg shape (<i>kukkuṭāṇḍa</i>).

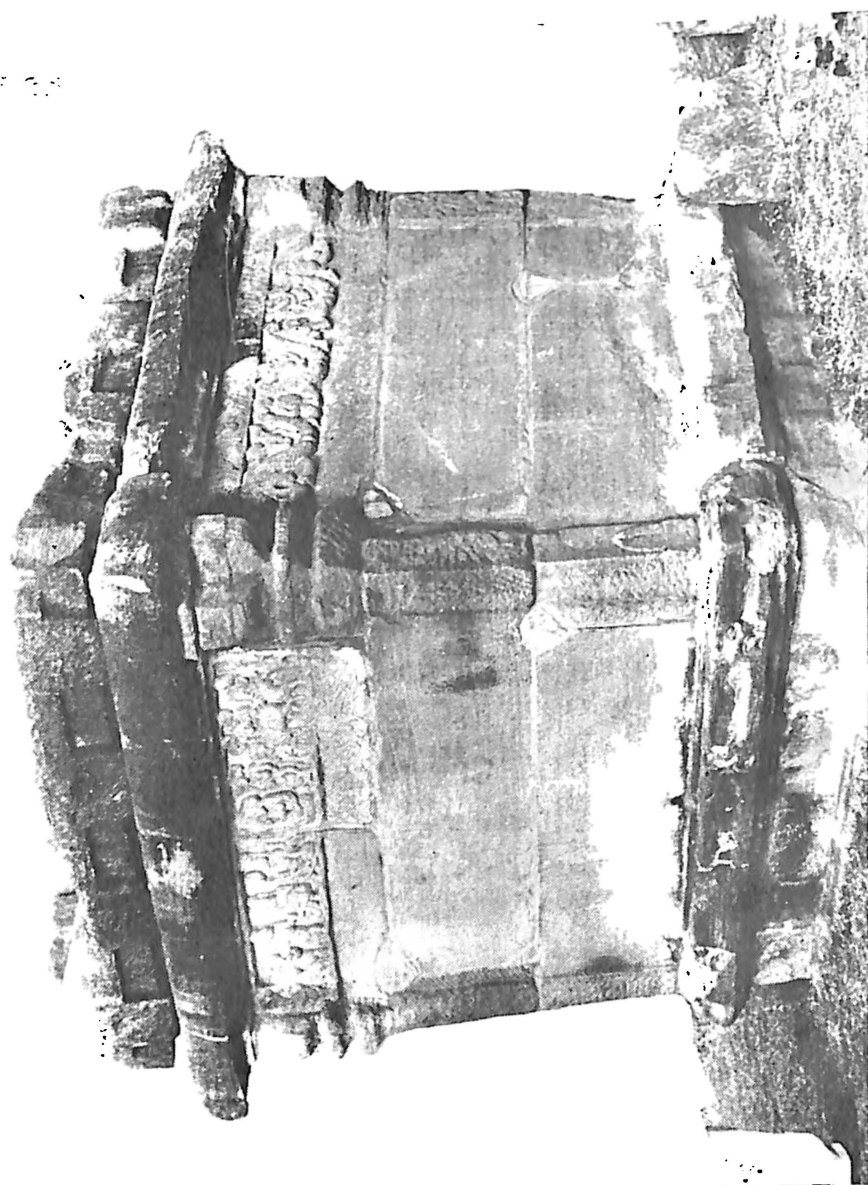
- garbha-gṛiha* : shrine-cell or sanctum sanctorum.
- ghanadvāra* : false-door; usually with grilled framework.
- griha-piṇḍi* : The coping slab, single usually, sealing the superstructure at *grīva* or neck level. It is usually equal to and standing for the wall-space around the deity in the cella itself.
- hāra* : string of miniature shrines over each terrace (*tala*) of the storeyed *vimāna* consisting of *kūṭas*, *koṣṭhas* or *śālas* and *pañjaras*, inter-connected by cloister-lengths or in its place balustrades simulating cloisters (*hārāntara*).
- jagati* : vertical moulding of the *adhiṣṭhāna* immediately above the *upāna*, oblong in shape and in a line with the vertical norm or *māna-sūtra* (main plumb).
- jāla-vātāyanas* : pierced windows.
- kadalikākaraṇa* : astylar, corbelling of the upper ends of the cellular circuit walls around the sanctum for making them serve as wide foundational bases of the superstructure.
- Kadamba-nāgara* : the variant primarily of the *rēkhā-nāgara* style, in which the superstructural nodes are comprised of *kapōta* and *kaṇṭha* each and are capped by a circular neck and *āmalasāra* often without *śukarāsa*.
- karṇa-bhūmi* : the corner features of the *śikhara* in a *rēkhā-nāgara* or northern temple comprising three parts each, capped by flattened and squarish *āmalaka śilā* in relief.
- mukhapaṭṭi* : the barge-board sheet of the *nāsikā* design, fixed in position by nail heads, and supported by the *daṇḍikā* scheme within the *kudu*.
- nāla* : chute or channel on the *pīṭha* of the deity or at the base of the sanctum wall, or on top or any level of the *adhiṣṭhāna* of the shrine, serving as

PLATE 1 (A)



JYOTIRLINGA SMALL TEMPLE, Aiholi, Bijapur District

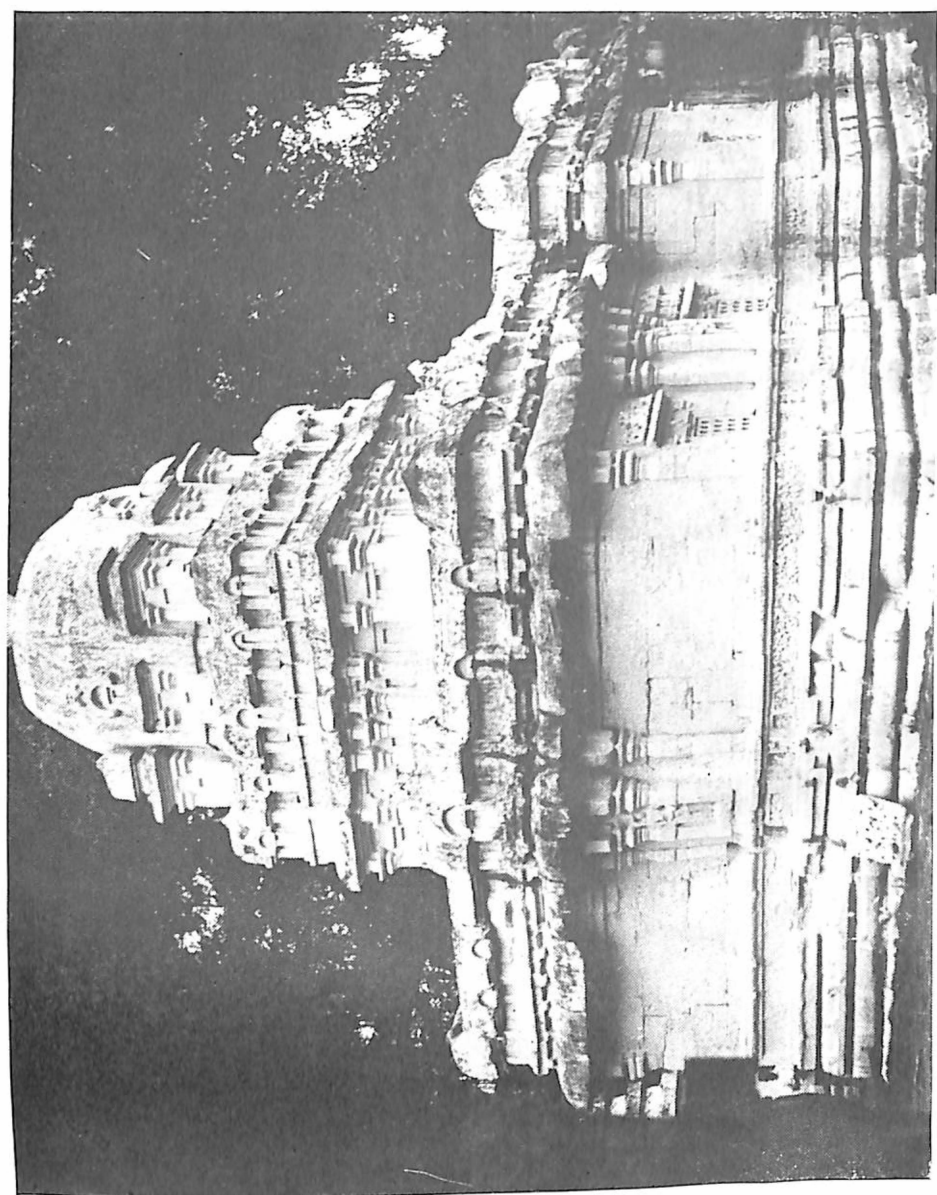
PLATE I (B)



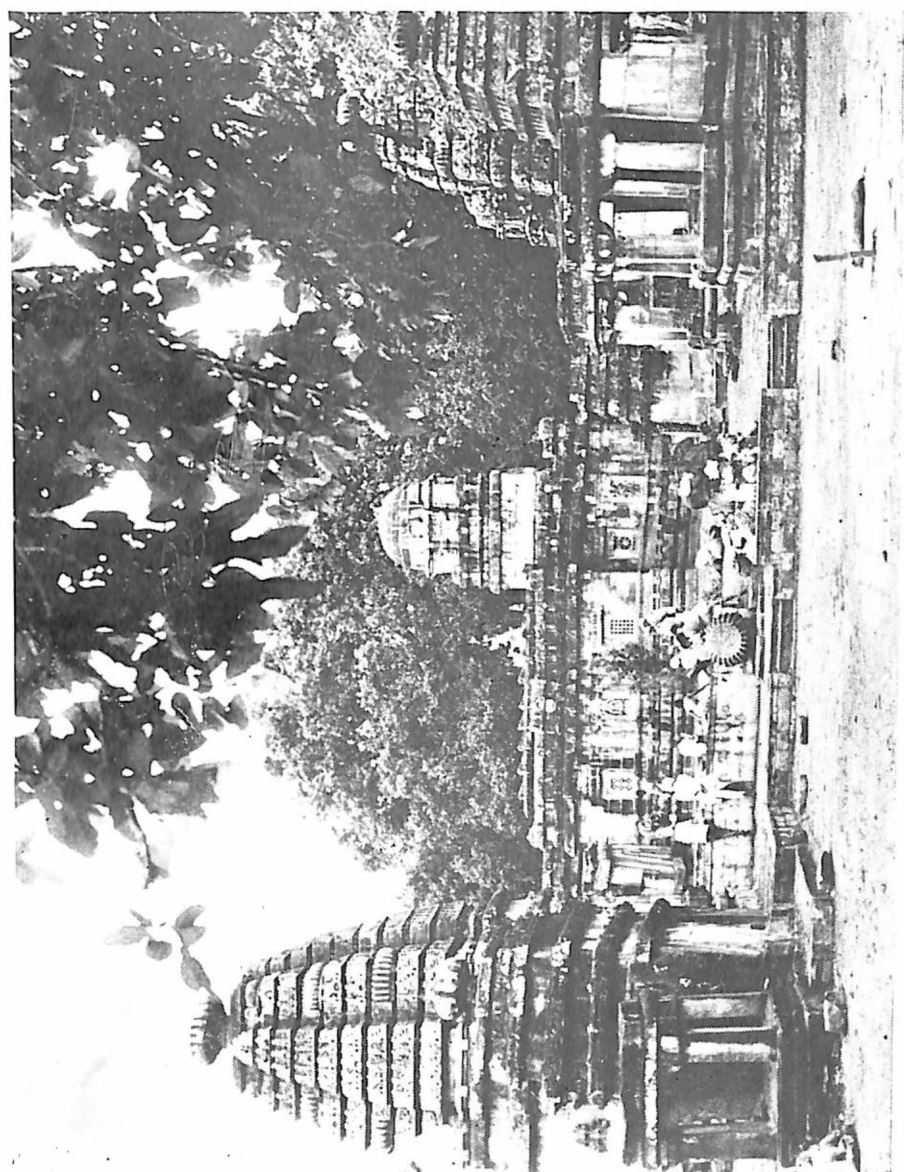
JYOTIRLINGA SMALL TEMPLE, Aholi, Bijapur District



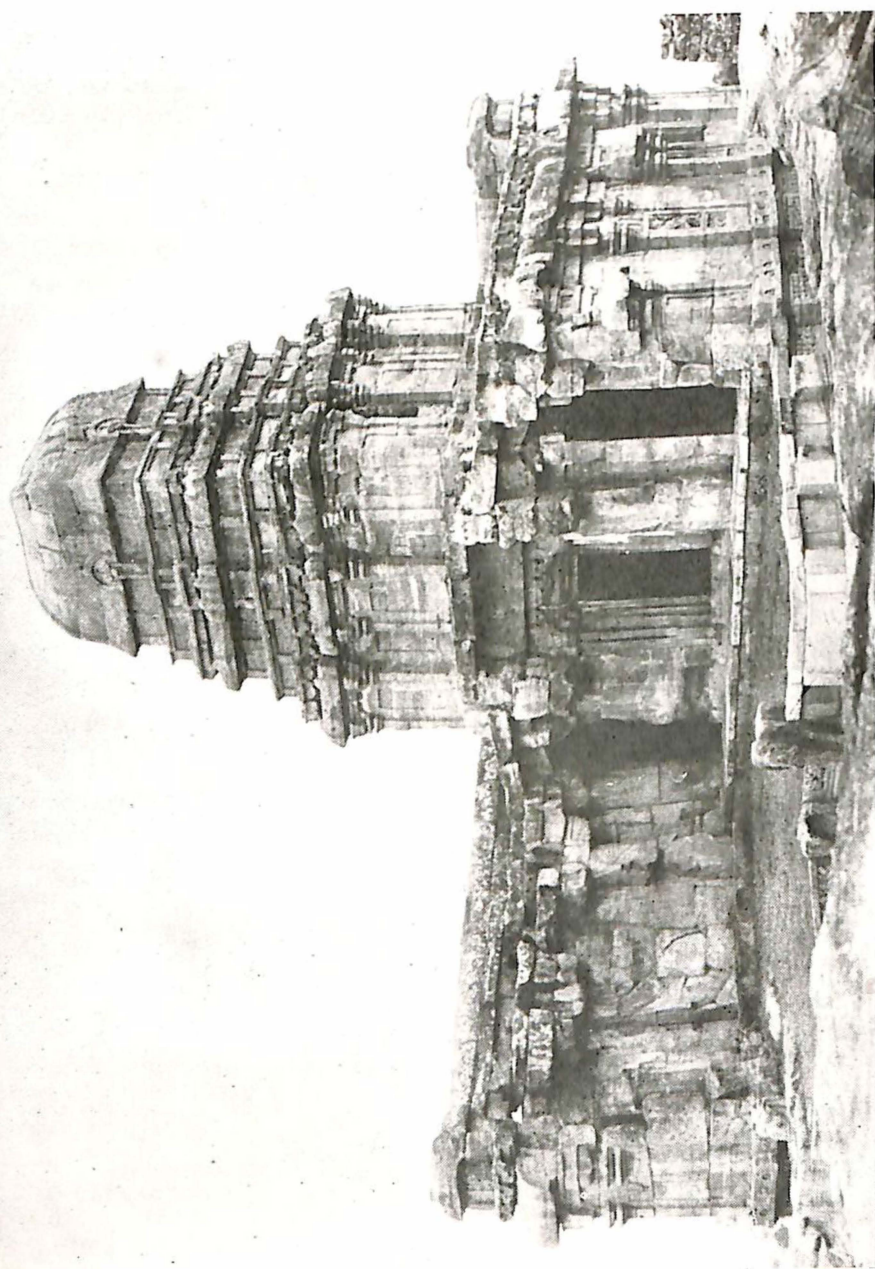
SMALL SHRINE IN THE TANK, Mahakut, Bijapur District



MAHAKUTESVARA TEMPLE, Mahakot, Bijapur District



OTHER TEMPLES, Mahakut, Bijapur District



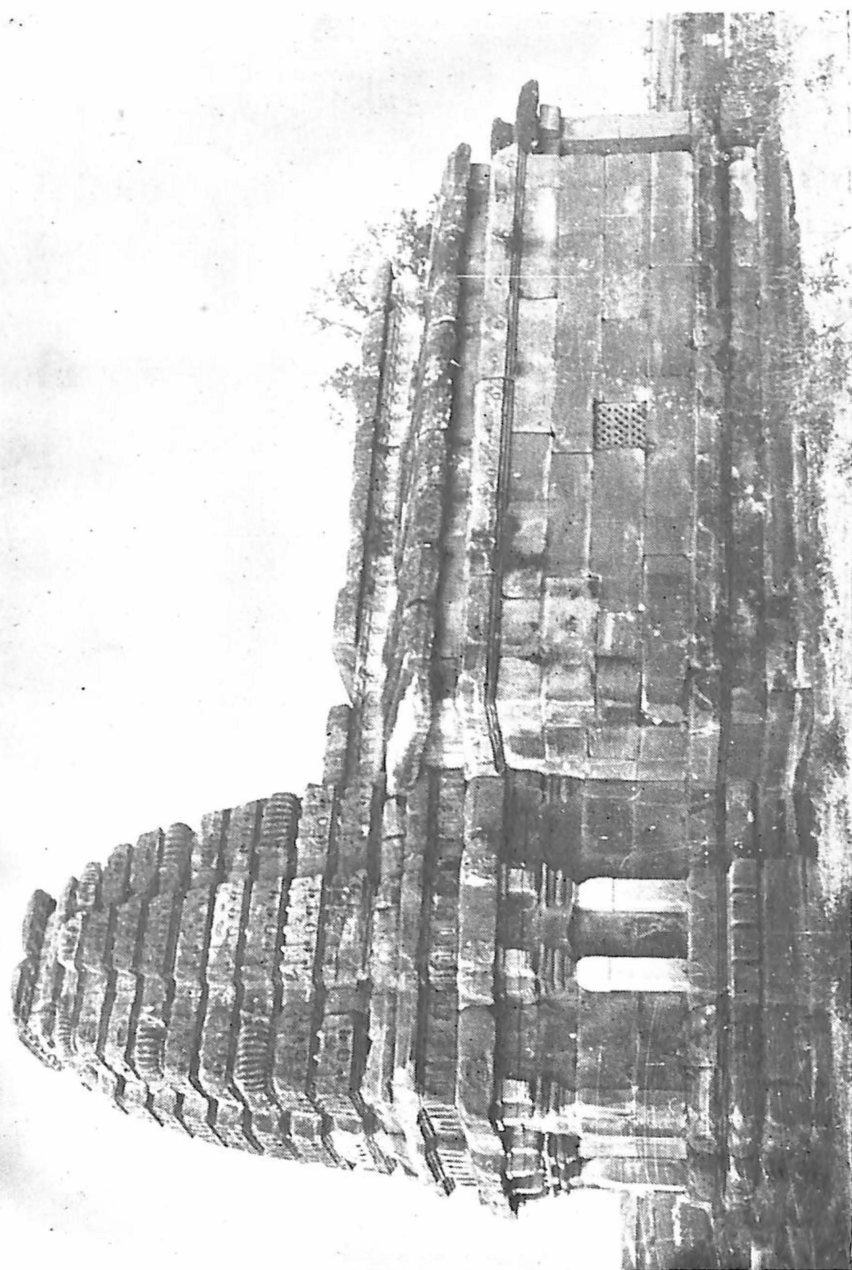
UPPER SIVALAYA, Badami, Bijapur District



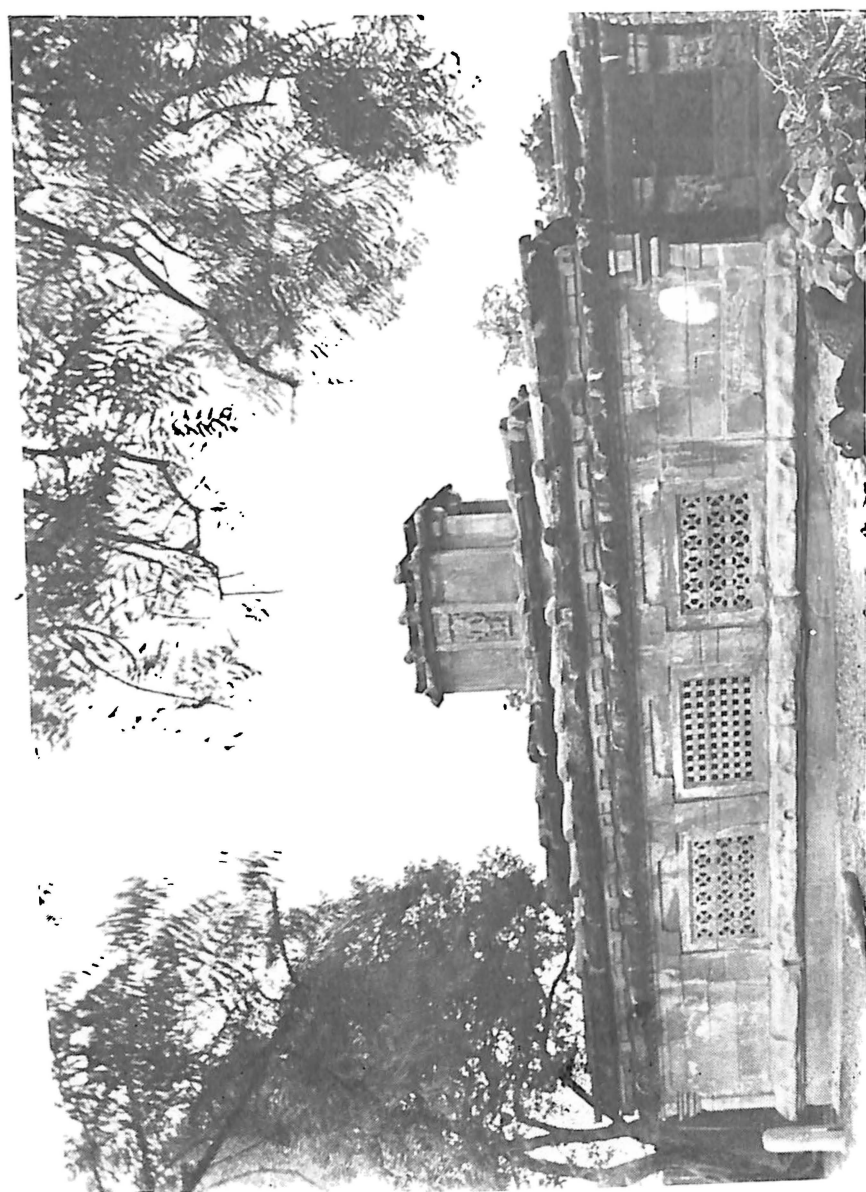
LOWER SIVALAYA, Badami, Bijapur District



BHUTANATHA TEMPLE, Badami, Bijapur District



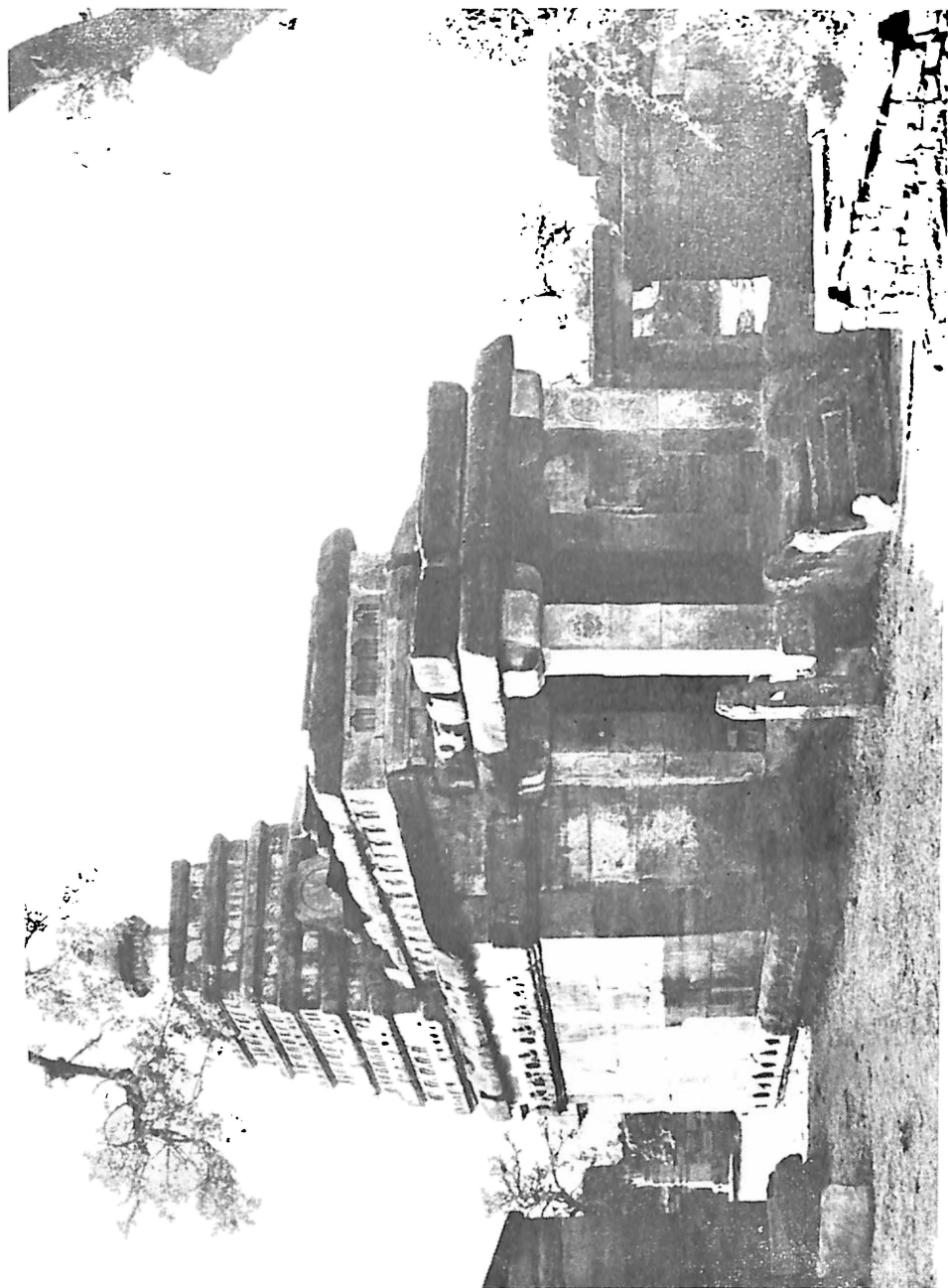
TARAPPAGUDI, Aiholi, Bijapur District



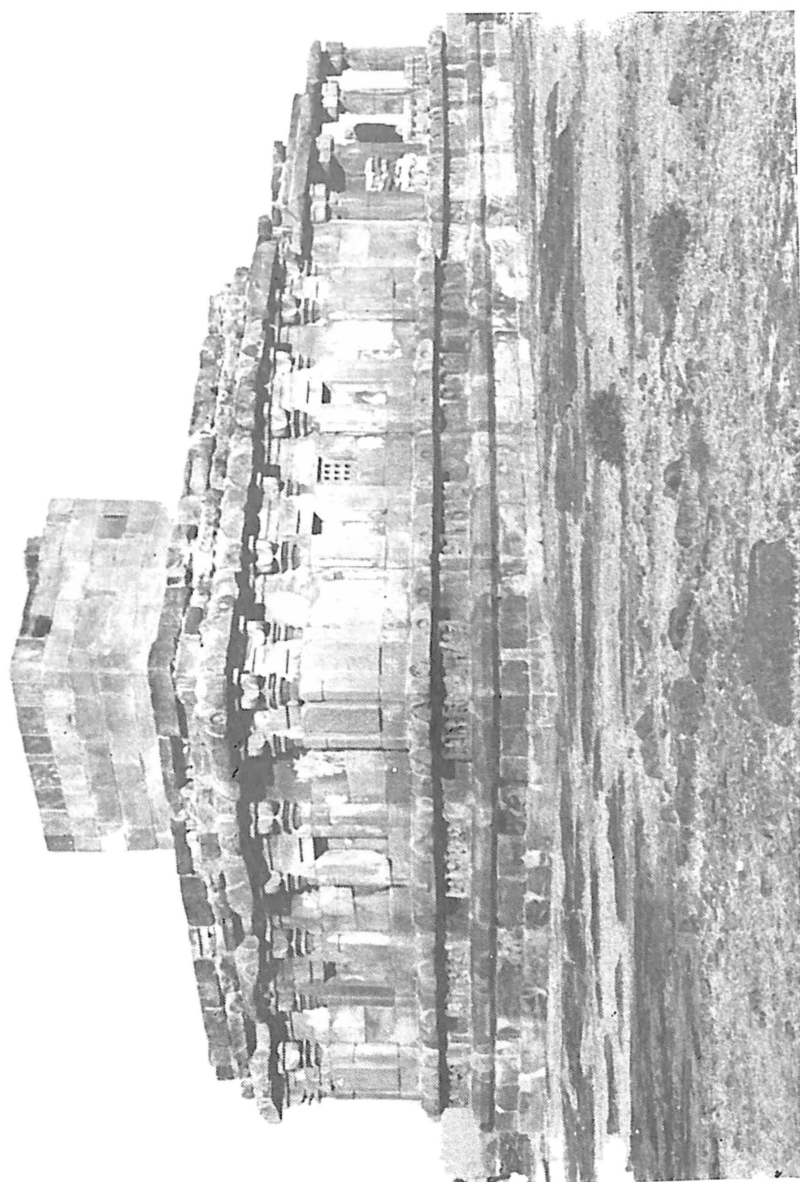
LADKHAN TEMPLE, Aiholi, Bijapur District



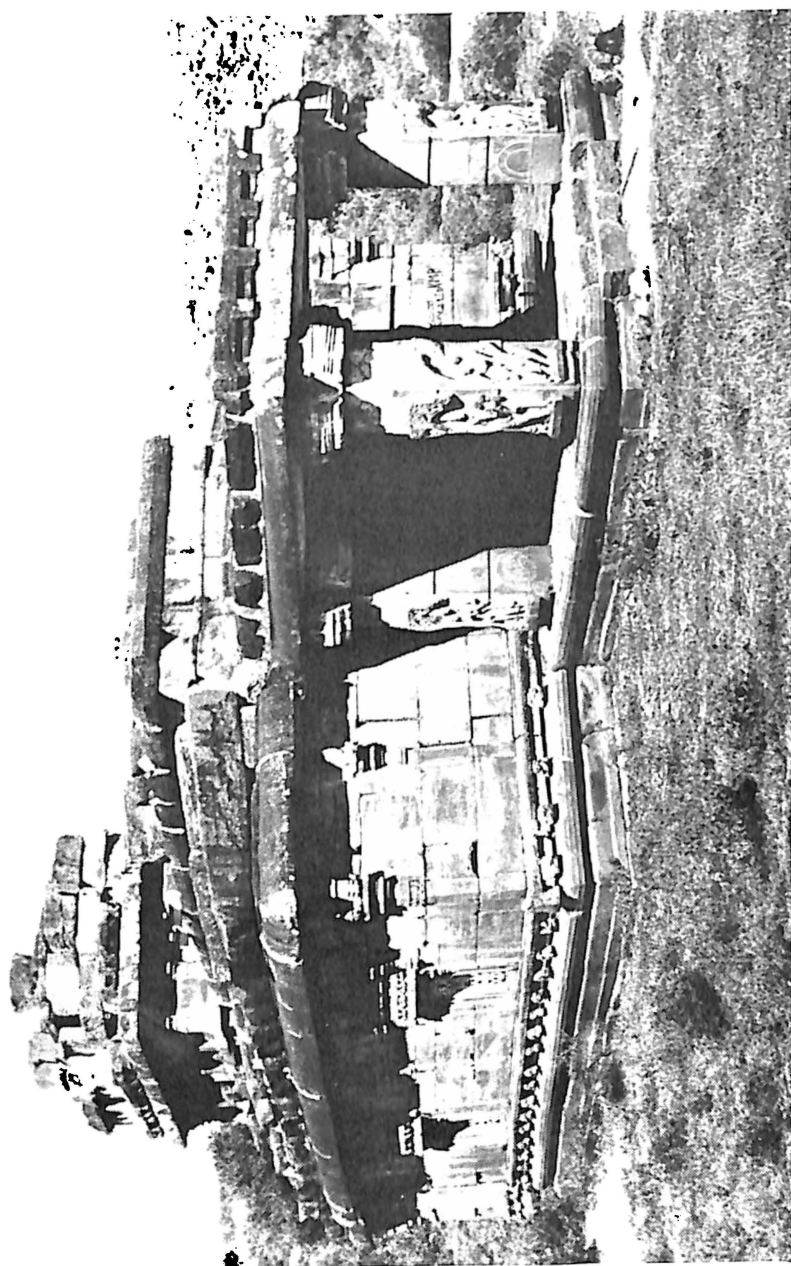
KONTIGUDI, Aiholi, Bijapur District



MALLIKARJUNA TEMPLE, Aiholi, Bijapur District



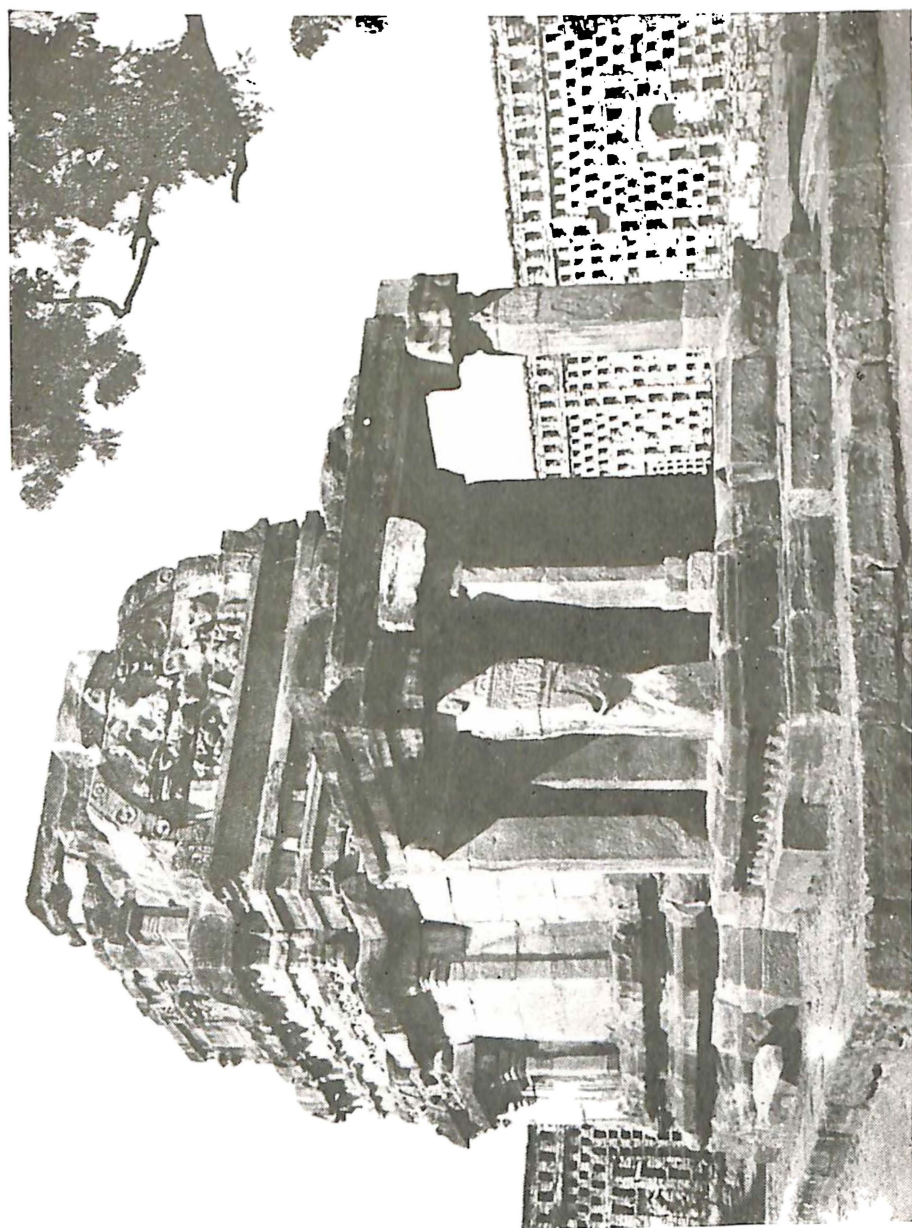
MEGUTI TEMPLE, Aiholi, Bijapur District



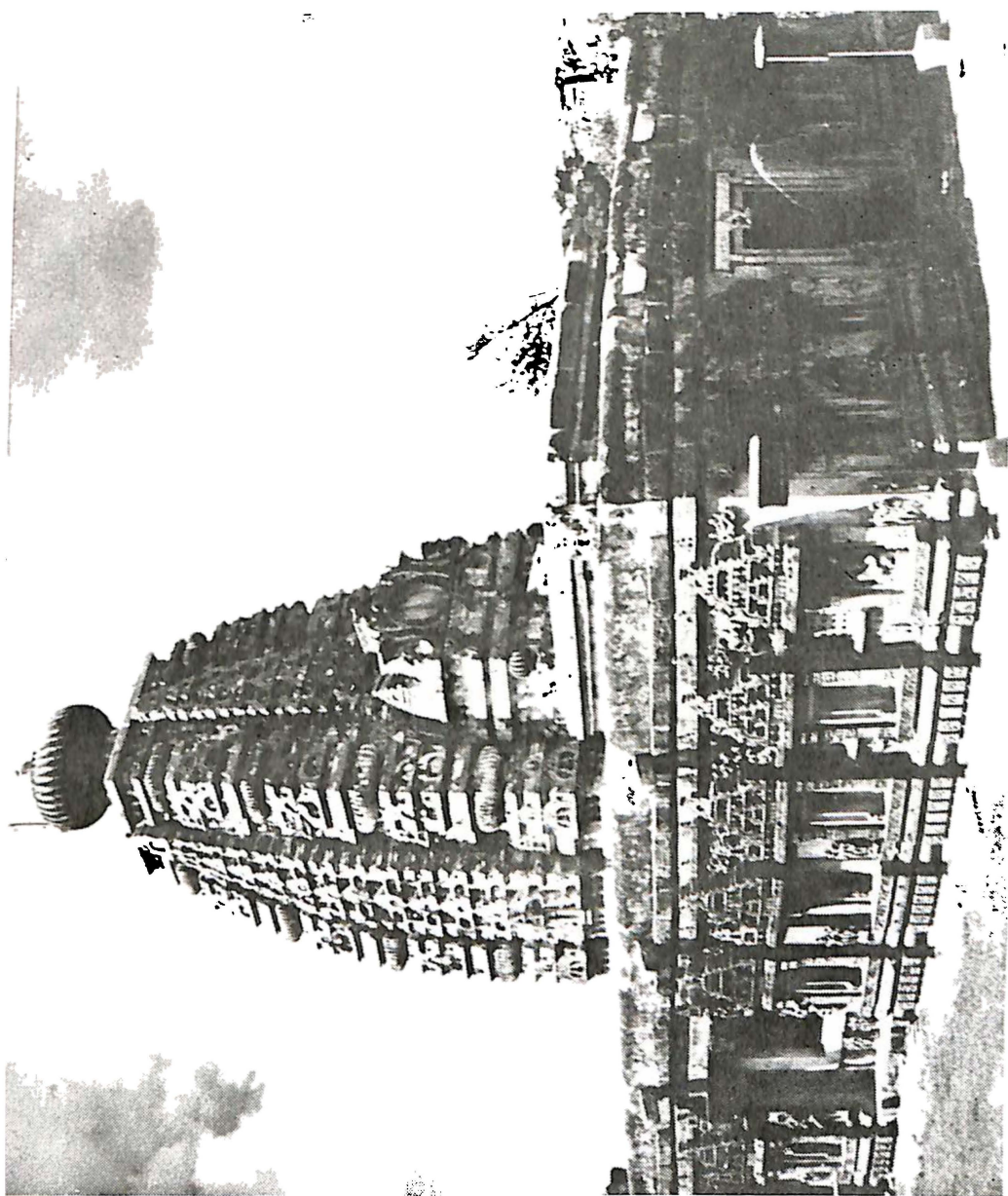
NAGANATHA TEMPLE, Nagara, Bijapur District



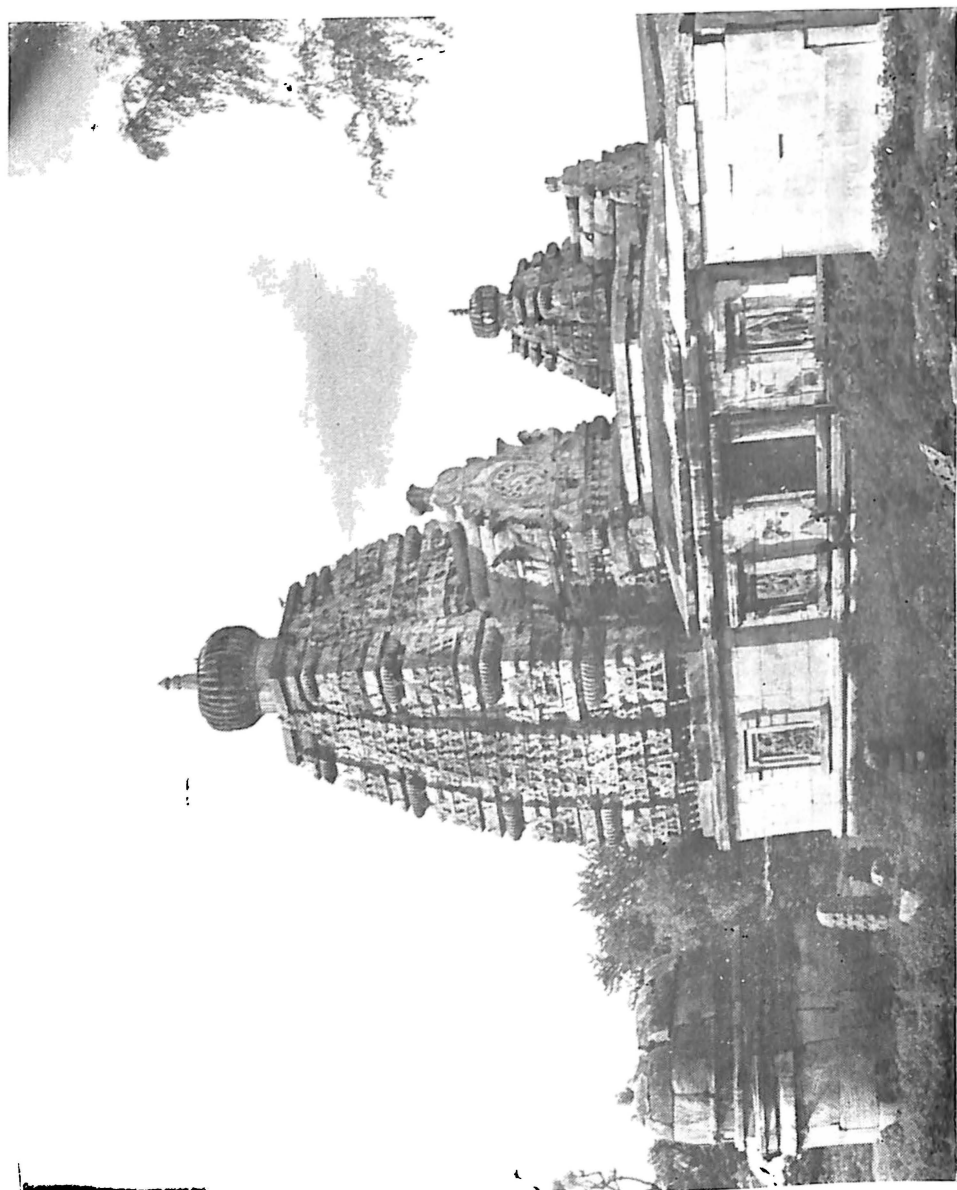
PARVATI TEMPLE, Sandur, Bellary District



TARAKA BRAHMA TEMPLE, Alampur, Madhya Pradesh, India.



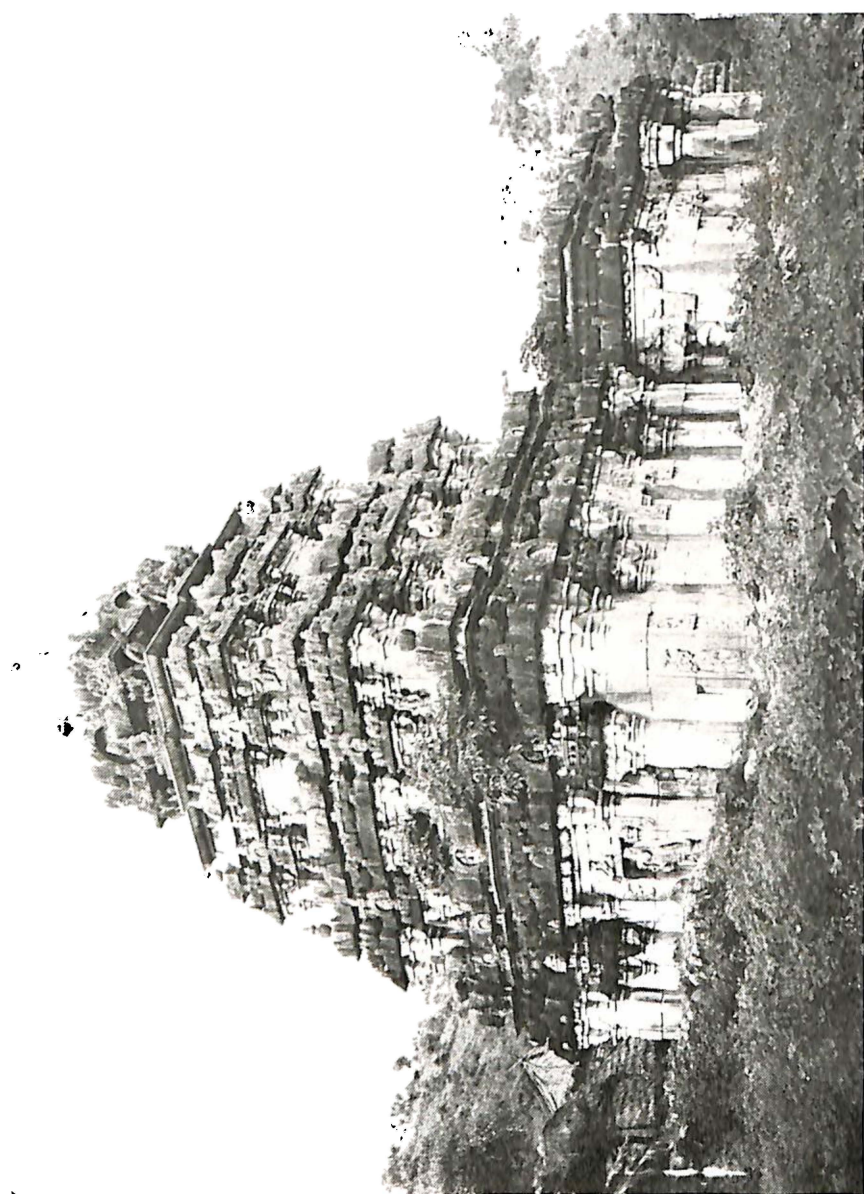
BALA BRAHMA TEMPLE. Alampur, Mahbubnagar District, Andhra Pradesh



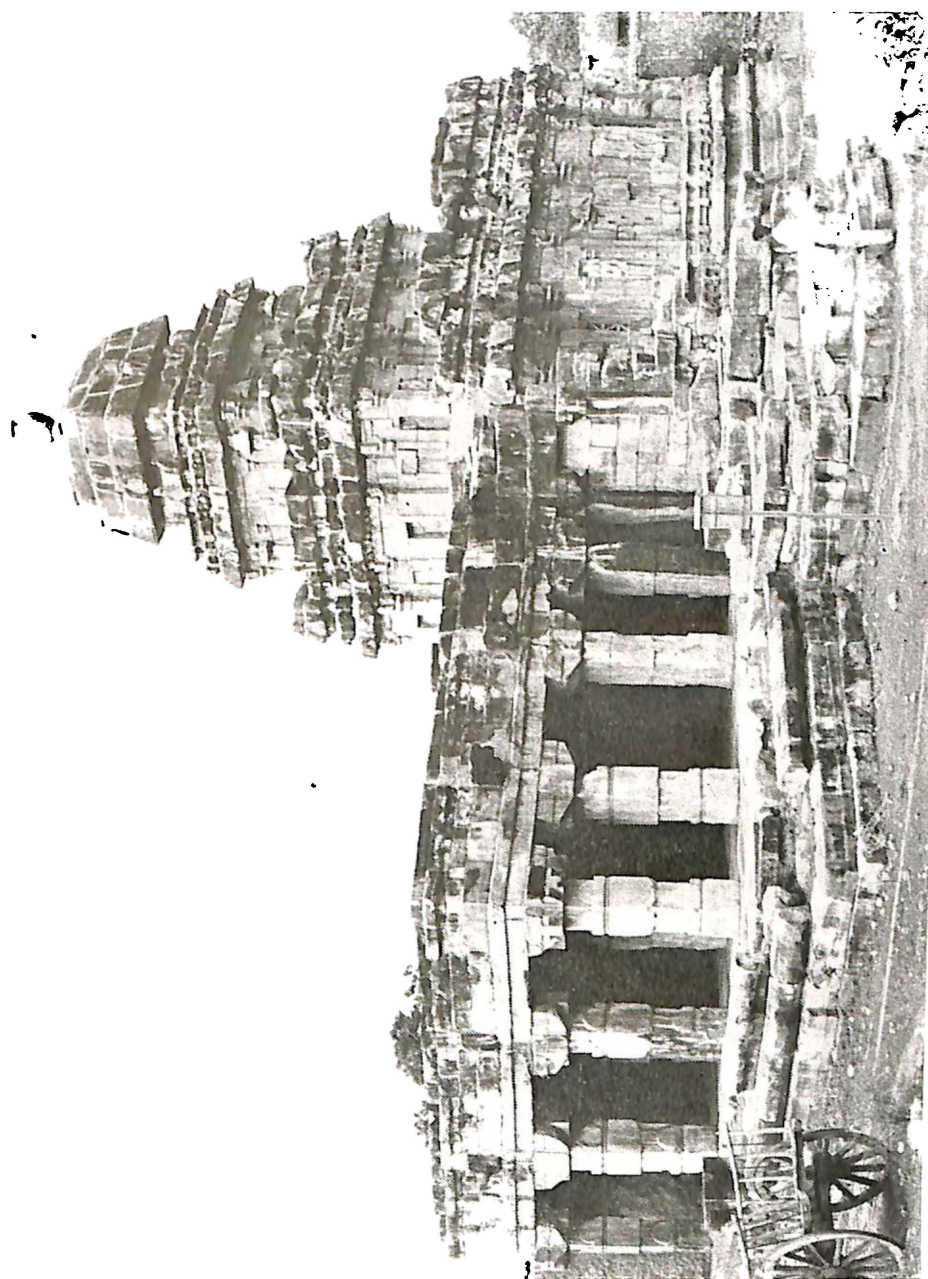
RAMALINGESVARA AND BHIMALINGESVARA TEMPLES, Sanyavolu, Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh



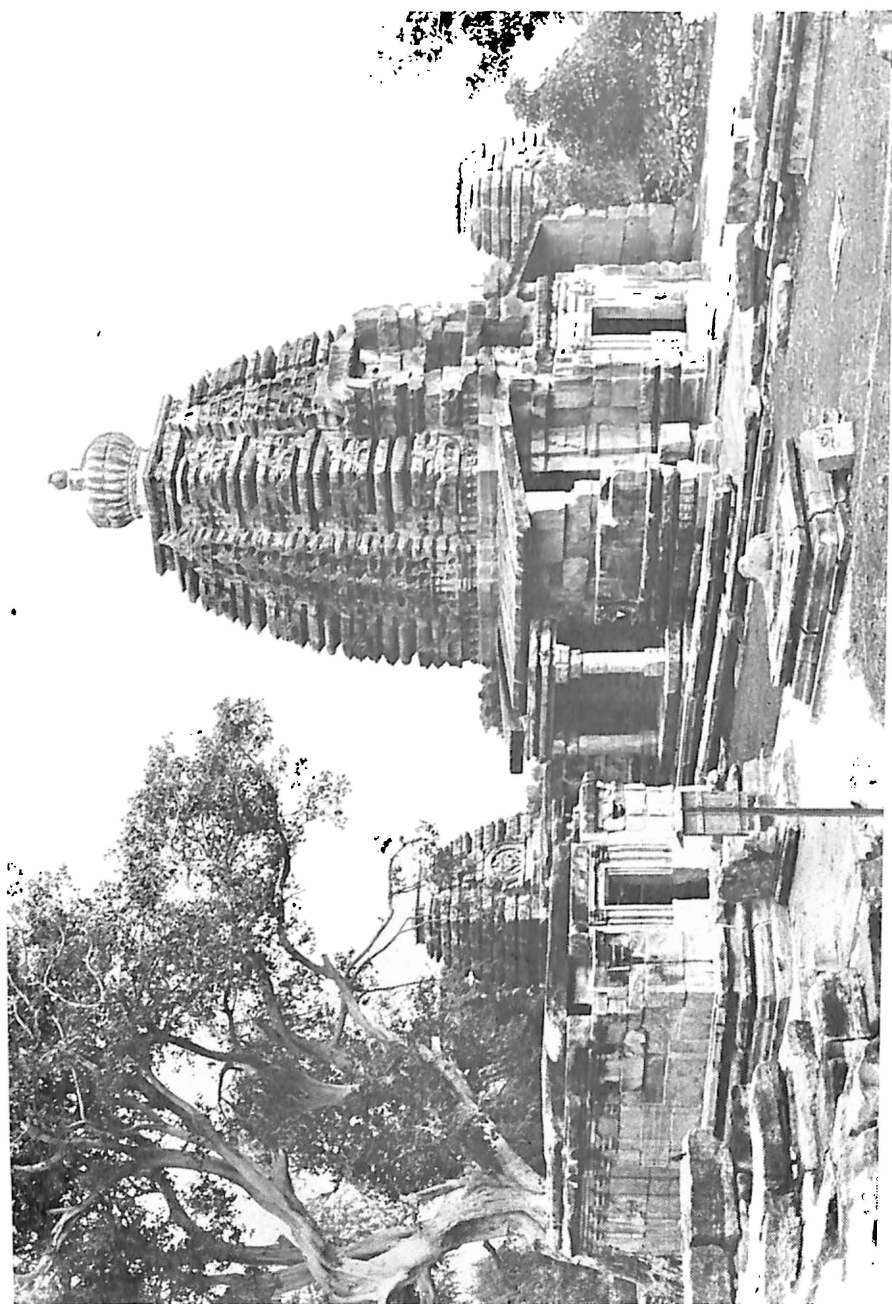
GOLINGESVARA TEMPLE, Biccavolu, East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh



SANGAMESVARA TEMPLE, Sangamesvaram, Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh



SANGAMESVARA TEMPLE, Pattadakal, Bijapur District



GALAGANATHA TEMPLE, Pattadakal, Bijapur District

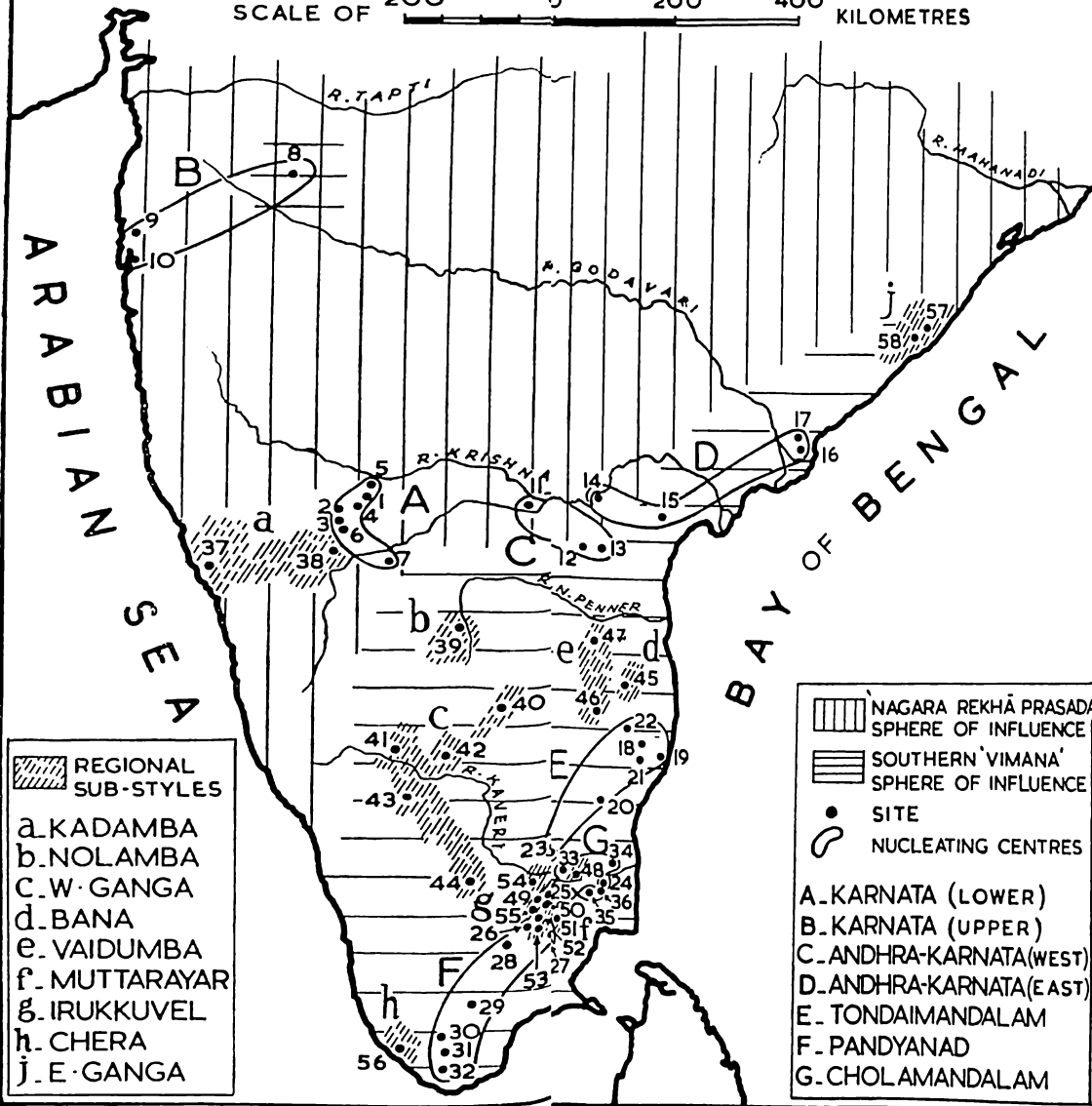
1. AIHOLI.
2. MAHAKL
3. BADAMI
4. PATTAD
5. HALLUR
6. NAGARA
7. SANDUR
8. ELLORA
9. JOGESV
10. ELEPHAI
11. ALAMPL
12. MAHANA
13. SATYAV
14. SANGAM
15. CHEBRC
16. DRAKSH
17. BICCAV
18. KANCHI
19. MAHABA
20. PANAMA
21. UTTIRAN
22. TIRUTTA
23. TIRUPPA
24. KUMBAK
25. KALIYAP
26. ENADI
27. TIRUPPA
28. MADUR
29. KALUGU
30. TIRUVAL

SOUTH INDIA EARLY ARCHITECTURAL NUCLEI & VARIANTS

SCALE OF 200 0 200 400 KILOMETRES

1. AIHOLI.
2. MAHAKUT
3. BADAMI
4. PATTADAKKAL
5. HALLUR
6. NAGARAL
7. SANDUR
8. ELLORA
9. JOGESVARI
10. ELEPHANTA
11. ALAMPUR
12. MAHANANDI
13. SATYAVOLU
14. SANGAMESVARAM
15. CHEBROLU
16. DRAKSHARAMAM
17. BICCAVOLU
18. KANCHI
19. MAHABALIPURAM
20. PANAMALAI
21. UTTIRAMERUR
22. TIRUTTANI
23. TIRUPPATTUR
24. KUMBAKONAM
25. KALIYAPATTI
26. ENADI
27. TIRUPPATTUR
28. MADURAI
29. KALUGUMALAI
30. TIRUVALISVARAM

- REGIONAL SUB-STYLES**
- a. KADAMBA
b. NOLAMBA
c. W. GANGA
d. BANA
e. VAIDUMBA
f. MUTTARAYAR
g. IRUKKUVEL
h. CHERA
j. E. GANGA



31. TIRUKKURUNGUDI
32. SUCHINDRAM
33. LALGUDI
34. GANGAIKONDA
CHOLAPURAM
35. TANJORE
36. DARASURAM
37. ARVALEM
38. BANAVASI
39. HEMAVATI
40. NANDI
41. SRAVANBELGOLA
42. KAMBADAHALLI
43. NARASAMANGALA
44. VIJAYAMANGALAM
45. GUDIMALLAM
46. KALAKADA
47. ATTIRALA
48. SENDALAI
49. VIRALUR
50. KIRANUR
51. NARTTAMALAI
52. KILATTANAYAM
53. KANNANUR
54. TIRUCHCHENDURAI
55. KODUMBALUR
56. TIRUVALLAM
57. SRIKURMAM
58. MUKHALINGAM

- an outlet for *abhiṣeka* water of the cella; when provided with a projecting gargoyle unit visible outside is called a *pranāla*.
- nāsikā* : (nose) projected arched opening (window).
- nirandhāra* : without a closed circuit around the cella.
- pañcāyatana* : a five-fold shrine layout, the minor four of which are on the edges of a large low terrace platform. More common in the northern order; are of the Śiva or Viṣṇu Pañcāyatana type with appropriate deity-scheme.
- parivāra-dēvatās* : also called *āvaraṇa dēvatās* or subsidiary shrine-units in a temple complex, auxiliary to the main deity.
- paṭṭikā* : projected top slab of the platform or *adhiṣṭhāna* in a line with the vertical norm or *māna-sūtra*, a major moulding of considerable thickness and found mostly in the southern *vimāna* order only, the Karnataka temples replacing it by a *kapōta* moulding.
- piḍha-deul* : the stepped or tiered super-structural or *śikhara* arrangement, as in *Kadamba-nāgara*. The term is used in Kalinga style for the roof unit of the front *maṇḍapa* called *jagmohan* there.
- piṇḍika* : the basal plinth of a deity in the sanctum, sometimes represented by a simple ridging on the floor of square shape.
- pranāla* : see *nāla*.
- prastara* : entablature, consisting of the mouldings over the walls and pillars, viz., the *uttira* (beam) *vajana*, *valabhi*, *kapōta*, *alinda* or *vyālavāri* and *antari* and mounted by the *vēdi* and followed by the *hāra*.
- pratyālīḍha* : complementary to *ālīḍha* — a pose of defiance to the adversary, in angular stance, body thrown back, one foot forward.

- ranga-maṇḍapa* : equivalent to *Navaranga* — a large pillared hall at the outer part of the main temple unit under the shrine limit generally in later examples. Corresponds to *mahā-maṇḍapa* or southern *vimāna* usage.
- śāla* : shrine (*vimāna*) of *āyatāsra* type (oblong on plan) with barrel-vault roof with a series of *stūpis* on its ridge.
- sāndhāra* : with closed or covered circuit passage around cella.
- sarvatōbhadra* : open on all the four cardinal points, as regular shrine doors. A concomitant of the Mahēśa icon, conceptually.
- śukanāsa* : the integral projection of the basal part of the superstructure derived from the term 'parrot's beak' and generally applicable only to northern order but used for both northern and southern styles in the Chālukya-Rāshtrakūṭa practice and thus serving a diagnostic purpose there.
- talacchanda* : the rhythm of the superstructural scheme.
- udgama* : the *jālaka* unit, in the form of a *nāsikā*, cresting niches in northern temples.
- upagrīva* : a supplementary part of the storcyed superstructural scheme in southern usage, introduced either to raise the height artificially, or as a mere device.
- vēdi* : the parapet wall either on top of a plinth of the cella or the *rangamaṇḍapa* (as in the northern usage). It is the limit in the latter of the sacred precincts of the *garbha*. Derived from the fire-altar usage. In railing form, it is called *vēdikā*.
- vimāna* : *upānādi-stūpi-paryantam vimānam*; whole shrine from base to finial; from *upāna* to *stūpi*, consist-

- ing of *adhiṣṭhāna* (basement) *pada* (pillars) or *bhitti* (walls,) *prastara* (entablature), *grī-va* (neck), *śikhara* (head of roof). Wrongly employed for the superstructure alone sometimes.
- vinyāsaśūtra* : the linear axial guide line, within which the plinth layout should be confined.
- vilāna* : ceiling of the *maṇḍapa* or room, plain in southern temples and very ornate in the Karnata & northern temples.
- vyālavāri* : the intersecting rafter course, either at plinth level, or in the entablature level, supporting at each stage, the load above it. Its ends, in stone architecture, are beautified by *vyāla* and *makara* heads for aesthetic effect and protection of the terminals.
-

(This glossary is restricted to only those terms employed in this book)

INDEX

Key to abbreviations: *ca.*, capital; *ci.*, city; *co.*, country; *de.*, deity; *di.*, division; *do.*, ditto; *f.*, family; *k.*, king; *l.*, locality; *pl.*, place; *ri.*, river; *s.a.*, same as; *te.*, temple; *vi.*, village.

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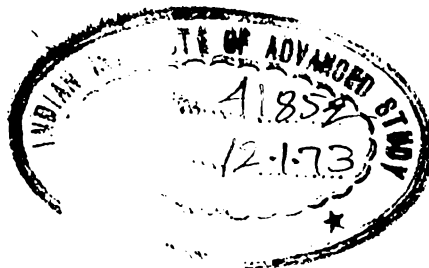
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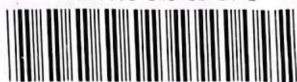




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