
CHAPTER-V: ARYO-DRAVIDA CULTURE AS REFLECTED IN
SOUTH INDIAN ART AND ARCHITECTURE

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ART AND ARCHITECTURE

Art, which is an expression of people's sentiments, aesthetic feelings and an urge to give permanency to one's own ideas of religion and culture found an excellent medium in architecture, particularly after the emergence of Buddhism and Jainism in the 6th century B.C. The spread of Buddhism in the pre-Christian and early Christian centuries over most parts of India had a lasting impact on the artistic achievements of the people in South India and the Deccan. The emergence of Buddhist and Jaina centres in the Deccan and the South like Ajanta, Ellora, Bhaja, Karle, Bedsa etc; in the Western Deccan and Amaravati, Jaggayyapeta, Nagarjunakonda, Guntupalli, Gudivada etc; in Eastern Andhra resulted in the excavation of innumerable Viharas where the monks lived in isolation, Chaityas where people worshipped the Buddha and the erection of Stupas containing relics of the great Buddhist monks, which were adored and developed into places of pilgrimage.

As the Buddhist monks desired to live away from the busy towns to pursue their aims of realising the truth, naturally they chose hills, often not easily accessible, to live. The practice of living in an excavated cave or a Vihara was not a new thing at the beginning of the Christian era. Asoka Maurya had three caves prepared for the use of Ajivika monks.¹ The Buddhists also adopted the same practice and got Viharas and

Chaityas prepared for their use in addition to the building of stupas.

The earliest of the Buddhist monuments in South India are to be found into the hills of the Western Deccan. For the purpose of Buddhist monks hundreds of Viharas and Chaityas were excavated in these hills, notably at Ajanta, Karle, Bedsa and Bhaja. The caves belong to two clear-cut phases of the Buddhists namely the Hinayana or the Lesser vehicle and the Mahayana or the Great vehicle schools. As such, the caves of the Hinayana phase are simple without any figures of the Buddha or the Buddhist pantheon since the Buddha was not as yet deified. He was symbolically represented in the form of a stupa. Such Hinayana caves exist at Ajanta.

With the emergence of the Mahayana school of thought a remarkable change took place in the decorative schema in the caves. Though the stupa was retained in the Chaityas, it now contained a figure of the Buddha on it along with the triple umbrella, a feature absent under the Hinayana school of art. In addition, a whole range of Buddhist deities, semi-deities, legendary and mythical creatures were also introduced. Thus, in the Ajanta caves we come across some of the excellently carved sculptures in high relief of the Buddha, the Bodhisatva, the Padmapani and the Avalokiteswara.

Though in the Hinayana phase of art we do not come across

the Buddha images, it is not devoid of sculptures. For example we come across incidents from the Jatakas and the sculptures of Yakshas and Yakshis, though it should be noted that these are more popularly used in the Stupas than the caves.

Architecturally most of the Buddhist caves are apsidal on plan,² a feature often reflected in the Satavahana and the Ikshvaku brick structures in the Deccan and the coastal Andhra respectively. This apsidal plan did find an echo in some of the Chalukyan and Pallava monuments. For example, the Durga temple at Aihole is considered to be inspired by cave-XVI at Ajanta.³ The Sahadeva Ratha at Mahabalipuram is apsidal on plan.

Another form through which the Buddhist art found a good expression is the Stupa architecture. Building Stupas even during the period of the Buddha was well established fact. They were built to house the relics of religious leaders and great rulers.⁴ When the Buddha died his remains were shared by eight claimants who enshrined his relics under the Stupas. Asoka is supposed to have built hundreds of Stupas in a bid to popularise Buddhism and the message of the Buddha.

The two well known and earliest Stupas of India are the ones built at Sanchi and Barhut.⁵ The Stupa at Sanchi, a pre-Mauryan edifice was renovated with additions during the Maurya, Sunga and post-Sunga periods. The Stupa relics at Barhut which are now housed in the National Museum, Calcutta contain some

superb railing sculptures, so also the ones at Sanchi.

That under the Stavavahanas, these Stupas, particularly the one at Sanchi, inspired the construction of Stupas in Eastern Andhra cannot be denied. The best and the most well known Stupa in Andhra of the Satvahana period is the great Stupa at Amaravati. Most of this Stupa is now preserved in the Government Museum at Madras,⁶ and the British Museum in London. The basic plan of the Stupa was modelled after the Sanchi Stupa. The railings and the encasement slabs are relieved with incidents from the life of the Buddha and the Jataka stories.

Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda and Jaggayyapeta are known not only for the Stupa architecture but also for the refined and varied sculptures. These sculptures are greatly influenced by the Greeco-Roman elements of the Gandhara school.

Speaking of the Greeco-Roman influence C. Sivaramamurti observes, "At Amaravati itself the Satavahana sculpture shown scenes now and again with some figure or other in a peculiar dress which cannot be associated with any indigenous mode but at once suggests foreign Greeco-Roman element. Sometimes it is a woman in Great dress offering a cup of wine to a soldier almost Roman in appearance. It may be sometimes a woman wearing a Great robe and holding in her hands a Cornu-copia which is somewhat modified into a Sringa, a horn of plenty, one of the emblems in the royal court."⁷

It is also to be noted that the sculptures in the Stupas in Andhra were influenced by the dropery of the Mathura school, particularly that of the Buddha figures. As there was no bar on an interchange of ideas and art forms from one region to another it was but natural that the Sātavahana artists were moved and inspired by the Gandhara as well as the Mathura school of sculpture and adopted a few of the elements that appealed to them, in their own creations.

The coming of Bhadrabahu, a Jaina sage, to the South in the 4th century B.C. along with hundreds of monks and lay devotees opened up the Southern territory for the Jains. Bhadrabahu stayed at Sravanabelgola⁸ while the rest of the monks proceeded Southwards and entered the Tamil country. His stay at Sravanabelgola sanctified the smaller hill, Chandragiri, and soon it became one of the three important Jaina centres of the South. The other two were Ganga Perur in Andhra and Koppal in Karnataka.

The Jaina way of life soon began to attract people and it gained a considerable number of followers. Most of the ruling families in the South, especially in Karnataka, were good supporters of Jainism. As such Jaina Basadis and Jaina caves came into existence. At Sravanabelgola, the Bhadrabahu cave; the Chandragupta Basadi, the Majjigame Basadi and in the 10th century the Chamundaraya Basadi as well as the world famous monolith of Gommata were consecrated.⁹

The earliest Jaina vestiges in the Deccan are to be found at Badami and Aihole in the form of caves, excavated under the early Chalukyas. To these should be added the caves at Ellora predominantly of the Rashtrakuta period. It is interesting to note that the Jaina sculptures in the caves at Badami and Aihole were based on the Mahapurana of Jinasenacharya. The panels representing Parsvanatha and Gommata are the earliest extent figures which become models for others to follow.

The iconographical features of Parsvanatha like the serpent hoods, the attendance of Dharanendra and Padmavati and those of Gommata like the Kayotsarga posture, the creepers entwining his legs and arms and the out hills with smokes were more or less standardised during the early Chalukya period.¹⁰

Under the Rashtrakutas a large number of caves were excavated at Ellora. The most notable among them is the Indra Sabha.

In the Tamil country, though Jainism received royal support in the beginning it soon lost it when Pallava Mahendra Verma-I became a Saiva. The rulers of the Pallava, Chola and Pandya families were staunch Hindus and as such Jainism did not receive much support from the royal family as it could get in Karnataka. However, grants to Jaina institutions and Pallis were forthcoming from the individual patrons.

The area to the South of the Vindhya though generally dubbed

as South India from the view point of art history, it is really the area to South of the Godavari that is taken as comprising the South Indian territories. The excavations carried out in Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra have revealed the Satavahana sites together with a lot of material connected with every day life. However, the remains of the structures are such that it is difficult to identify them as places of worship. But then the caves that were excavated in Western India in places like Ajanta, Karle, Bedsa, Bhaja and Kuda, and in Eastern India mostly confined to coastal Andhra are Buddhist in nature. Though the Satavahanas call themselves as supporters of Brahmanism no trace of any Satavahana structure representing a temple that can be definitely assigned to the Hindu order is found. All the existing monuments whether caves or Stupas belong to the Buddhist order. But then this does not mean that places of worship belonging to Hindus did not exist. The Satavahanas ruled at a time when the concept of a public place of worship among the Hindus was gaining support. It is possible that the Hindus who by this time were already following the Aryan way of worship were conducting worship mostly at home and the concept of public temple was not popular. Another reason for a lack of temples during the Satavahana period is to be found in the fact that the majority of the people were still influenced by the folk traditions wherein erection of a temple for a folk deity was not a necessity. Such folk deities were erected or installed under trees or near a stream or a well or on a hill.

With the decline of Buddhism and the slow but sure re-emergence of Brahmanism under the Bharasiva Nagas and the Guptas in North India and the Chalukyas and the Pallavas in South India, the construction of temples which has greater implications than what meets the eye gained greater momentum. The period from the 5th to the 8th centuries, particularly in South India, was a period of great significance because of all round development in the fields of religion, architecture, sculpture and painting. It was during this period that principles of constructions and main features of different styles of art were standardised and the examples of this period served as models for the subsequent temple constructions.

The rapid strides achieved in the development of art and of architecture/both Northern or Aryan and Southern or Dravidian forms was a natural corollary to the Brahmanical movement that had taken place. This was largely due to three factors: (1) The Chalukyas and the Pallavas had established a power which was a stable and had unified large portions of South India into two large divisions, one comprising Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra while the other included the whole of Tamilnadu. The political stability helped the rulers and the rich people including the merchants to concentrate on building activities without being unduly concerned about political disorders. (2) The rulers were staunch supporters of either Vaishnavism or Saivism. Being great supporters of Brahmanism they were eager to make it more formidable

by erecting temples which attracted large number of devotees; and these devotees began to identify themselves with these temples which in other words, should mean Vedic religion, and (3) The rulers were enlightened. They had a high sense of aesthetics. The well known temples like the Rathas at Mahabalipuram and the caves at Mandagapattu and Tiruchinappally owe their origin to Mahendravarma-I and Narasimhavarma-I. The well known Kailasnath temple at Kanchi was a creation of Narasimhavarma-II. In the Chalukya kingdom Mangalesa was responsible for the creation of that magnificent Vishnu cave at Badami in 578 A.D. while Vijayditya built the present Sangameshwar temple at Pattadakal, not to speak of Vekramaditya-II in whose period the present Virupaksha and Mallikarjuna temples were built by his two queens - Loka Mahadevi and Trilokya Mahadevi. In short, the political stability, the economic viability and the support of the rulers who were refined and cultured patrons of Brahmanism together resulted in the rapid development of temple architecture in South India.

While the Western Deccan was the cradle of cave architecture of both the Hinayana and Mahayana phases, the Deccan and the South as well as the far South turned out to be the regions wherein experiments of far-reaching consequences in structural architecture were carried out. These experiments in architecture were also due to the impact of aryanisation in the South, for we come across attempts to fusion both the northern and southern forms of

architecture to produce a pleasing form of architecture. While the far South was predominantly Dravidian as far as its architectural pursuits were concerned, it was in the region between the Tungabhadra and the Krishna that both the Dravidian and the Northern, also called Indo-Aryan, style prevailed. It should also be noted here that among the South Indian territories the Deccan and the South up to the Kaveri that had felt the full impact of aryanisation following the coming of sage Agasthya who crossed the lofty Vindhya never to return to the North.

The earliest art centres of the Deccan, namely, Aihole, often considered the cradle of structural architecture,¹¹ and Vatapi (mod. Badami) are related to the story of Agasthya and the Aryanisation of the Deccan.¹² The legends say that Agasthya destroyed the two demons, Ilvala and Vatapi at these two places viz., Aihole and Vatapi. In course of time these two places were destined to become great political as well as art centres under the early Chalukyas.

The history of the 6th century was a history of three dynasties, namely, the Pushyabhutis at Kanauj, the early Chalukyas at Vatapi and Pallavas at Kanchi. It is these three dynasties that more or less determined the socio-political-cum-cultural trends of North as well as South India. As noted earlier, it was in the Deccan and the far-South that structural experiments were carried out and these were done in the early Chalukya and the

Pallava kingdoms that dominated the two regions of South India.

The early Chalukyas who had served as feudatories of the Kadambas of Banavasi decided to throw off the Kadamba yoke under Pulikesi-I in 535 A.D. To strengthen his position, Pulikesi-I built an impregnable fort at Badami in 547 A.D.¹³ The early Chalukya rule lasted till 757 A.D. when in that year the Deccan passed into the hands of the Rashtrakutas under Krishna-I. The rise and growth of the early Chalukya power also determined the architectural achievements of the period. The period from Pulikesi-I to Pulikesi-II (535-64* A.D.) was a period of establishment and sturdy growth of the Chalukya power but at the same time resulting in a temporary eclipse of the power due to Pallava attacks on Badami in 642 A.D. while the second phase of their rule under Vikramaditya-I to Kirtivarma-II witnessed the re-establishment of the Chalukya rule and its steady rise till its downfall in 757 A.D.

In the first phase of their rule we find them continuing the cave traditions of the Buddhist period resulting in the excavation of the caves - Brahmanical and Jaina - at Badami and Aihole. But then a few structural temples were also built at Aihole and Mahakuta. In the second phase of their rule a remarkable development took place in the temple construction activities resulting in the emergence of new art centres at Pattedakal, Naganatha, Alampur, Satyavolu, Panyam, Kudavelisangama, Papanasanam, Sulebhavi, Hunagund and a score of places around

Badami.¹⁴ This period is noted for the efflorescence of Chalukya art which is supple, refined, dignified, restrained and aesthetically superb.

It is appropriate at this juncture to examine as to what was the position under the Kadambas of Banavasi as far as architecture was concerned. The Kadambas who ruled from ^aVijayantipura (mod. Banavasi) are spoken of as rulers who were well read and as patrons of religious institutions in the inscriptions. The Talagunda inscription refers to the Siva temple wherein the Satavahanas had worshipped,¹⁵ the Halsi Plates refer to the construction of a Jaina Basadi by Mrigesavarma¹⁶ and the Gudnapur Pillar inscription of Ravivarma refers to Jaina Basadis.¹⁷ A number of Kadamba copper plate records refer to grants given to Jaina institutions and temples.¹⁸

Though there are references to many Jaina institutions and temples, it is unfortunate that many of these structures are not in existence at present. The known Kadamba remains are the Pranaveswara temple at Talagunda, the Jaina Basadi at Halsi¹⁹ (ancient Palasika) and the Madhukeswara temple at Banavasi.²⁰ The Pranaveswara at Talagunda has undergone subsequent renovations and as such with the exception of the Linga and the door-frame containing the record of Mrigesvarma's Queen Prabhavati,²¹ the rest of the temple is of the post-Kadamba period. Originally it may have been of bricks under the Satavahanas since brick structures were common under them.²²

The Jaina Basadi built by Mrigesavarma at Halsi (C. 455-480 A.D.) is a small structure containing only a sanctum and an ante-chamber. The only noticeable feature is the use of large blocks of stone for the walls, a feature continued by the early Chalukyas. The lack of decorative details is probably in keeping with the simple and unpretentious feature of the Jaina Basadis. However, it is to be noted that this Basadi is significant because it provides the basic plan of a temple comprising the sanctum and an ante-chamber and it is quite likely that the plan of this Basadi may have been inspired by the Siva temple at Talagunda.²³

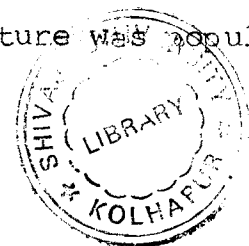
The Madhukesvara temple at Banavasi is by far the most well known temple of the Kadambas. But unfortunately the temple has undergone extensive renovations. Excepting the Linga, the rest seems to be of post-Kadamba in date. The present sanctum and the pillared hall are of early Chalukya times of the 8th century A.D. Since there is a lot of resemblance between the pillars and other decorative details of this structure with those temples of Vikramaditya-II period at Pattadakal, namely, the Virupaksha and the Mallikarjuna temples, the Sikhara, which is a stepped Pyramidal unit, is generally classified as Kadamba Nagar Sikhara. It is a variant of the North or Aryan Sikhara of the Rekha order. The present Sikhara though of the early Chalukya period, was in all probability built on the earlier Kadamba model and was later introduced in the Chalukya temples

at Aihole, Mahakuta, Papanasanam and Panyam.²⁴

It will not be out of place here to note the extensive use of the Kadamba Nagara Sikhara in Karnataka temples. As the name indicates it was borrowed from the Aryan architecture of the North but underwent a few changes to suit the local needs and taste. Temple with stepped pyramidal Sikhara was a prominent type under the early Chalukya. It was one of the prominent forms of Sikharas, the other two being the Dravida Sikhara and the Rekha Nagara Sikhara. Temples with Kadamba Nagara Sikharas of the Chalukya period include the Mallikarjuna at Aihole, the Lakulisa and a few smaller structures at Mahakuta, the smaller shrines on the Tungabhadra at Papanasanam and the temple at Panyam.²⁵ This form of Sikhara was very popular with the Jains and a series of temples with Kadamba Nagara Sikhara were built under the Rashtrakutas, Chalukyas of Kalyani and the Hoysalas at places like Aihole, Hariharapura, Kurugodu, Degavi, Belgaum and Hampi.²⁶ It can also be noted here that it was popular under the later Kadamba families at Hangal and Goa.²⁷

THE CAVE ARCHITECTURE

As noted earlier the South Indian architecture is represented by two distinct forms of expression, namely, cave architecture and structural architecture. Both the forms were adopted by the Chalukyas and the Pallavas. It cannot be ignored that it was in the early phases of their rule that cave architecture was popular



and was completely given up from about the middle of the 7th century A.D.

The earliest caves of the Brahmanical order in the Deccan are those that were excavated at Badami and Aihole. While in the Western Deccan the caves were of the Buddhist order, the Chalukyas decided to go in for Brahmanical caves since they considered themselves as divinely ordained to spread and develop Vedic religion and rituals. They decided to introduce cave architecture of the model of the Buddhist caves.

During the 6th century under Pulikeshi-I who performed such Aryan sacrifices and ceremonies like Hiranyagarbha and Paundarika,²⁸ the first two caves which are of moderate size at Badami were excavated. Mangalesa who calls himself a "Paramabhogavata"²⁹ was instrumental in excavating the Vishnu cave at Badami in 578 A.D.³⁰ The excavation of this cave was indeed a great service rendered to the cause of Vaishnavism. Though the early rulers of the Chalukya dynasty were great supporters of Vaishnavism they were not the bigots. In spite of their personal religion being Vaishnavism they continued to worship Mahakuteswara at Mahakuta who was probably considered as the family deity.³¹ The excavation of caves at Badami in Karnataka inspired the Pallavas to undertake similar projects. It was under Mahendravarma-I (C. 600-630 A.D.) that sustained efforts to excavate Hindu caves started. He supported the

excavations of a large number of caves like the one at Siyamanagalam, the Lalitankura cave at Tiruchirapally, the Vasantesvara at Vallam and a cave at Kuranganiluttam etc.³² The example of Mahendravarma-I was soon followed by his son Narasimhavarma-I (C. 630-655 A.D.) who not only continued the excavation of caves but also started the preparation or rather the cutting of monolithic shrines at Mahabalipuram better known as Rathas.³³

The caves at Badami contain sculptures in very high relief. They are known for massive frame, restraint of ornamentation and iconographical features. In these sculptures the iconographical features of the various deities like Varaha, Narasimha, Vishnu seated on Ananta, Harihara, Ardhanarisvara, Nataraj, Ganesa and Mahisasura Mardini were standardised.³⁴ All the sculptures that were prepared in Karnataka from about the 7th century A.D. more or less looked to these early examples far from style and iconographical features. In the Pallava territories the same gods were represented quite often in a different style and posture thereby contributing to the diverse iconographical features. This can be best brought out through an example of the Mahisasura Mardini sculpture. The one at Ravanapadi cave at Aihole shows the goddess holding the mouth of buffalo while her left leg is planted on the back of the buffalo. The hands hold weapons like Trisula, Chakra, sword etc. The figure is somewhat static and devoid of dynamic movements.³⁵ As against this we have the well known Mahisasura-mardini Panel in the Mahisasuramardini cave at Mahabalipuram.

Here the whole composition vibrates with dynamic movements. The Devi represents the divine force and as against her we have the demon in human form with a buffalo head holding a heavy club representing the brute force of the devil world. The Devi riding on a lion which is charging against the demon, is about to discharge a lethal arrow which would rid the universe of the evil force. Both the contestants are supported by their armies. The panel is full of movement, but one cannot but notice the defiant stance of the demon and the triumphant attitude of the Devi.³⁶

The Rathas at Mahabalipuram³⁷ named after the Pandavas, the Aryan princes of the Mahabharata, are a new innovation introduced by the Pallavas. Narasimhavarma-I, in addition to excavating caves, was responsible for introducing monolithic shrines. They are cut in live rock in situ. In one complex, we have Rathas named Dharmaraja, Bhima, Arjuna, Sahadeva and Draupadi. What is interesting is that the Rathas are of different types. The Dharmaraja Ratha is purely Dravidian in nature complete with a Dravida Sikhara. The Bhima Ratha is rectangular on plan and has a Sala Sikhara. The Sahadeva Ratha is apsidal on plan while the Draupadi Ratha has a roof which is slopy on all four sides resembling the roof of a hut.

The Dharmaraja Ratha is one of the earliest temples to be excavated in Dravidian style. The Sikhara with Salas, Karnakutas and Kutas became a model for later structural temples like the

shore temple at Mahabalipuram³⁸ and a score of Pallava and Chalukya temples of the period.

In the Chalukyan territory the architects under the encouragement of the rulers and the rich patrons experimented with different architectural traditions. It was in the Chalukyan cities like Aihole, Pattadakal, Mahakuta, Alampur, Satyavolu, Naganatha and Panyam that temples belonging to different styles - Northern, Southern and regional - were constructed. Not only did they built temples in different styles but also built them side by side at the same site.³⁹ For example, Aihole, Alampur, Mahakuta and Pattadakal possess temples of different traditions side by side.

The three predominant styles prevalent in the Chalukyan territories were (1) Nagara, (2) Dravida, and (3) a regional style wherein the temples are devoid of a Sikhara but noted for their flat roof and slopy aisles. As noted earlier, we do not have any pre-Chalukya structure for studying the impact of the Northern form of temples on Karnataka temples. The earliest known examples belong to the Chalukyan period. However, with regard to the Dravida style of architecture many early examples are available in the Pallava territories, right from the first half of the 7th century A.D.

THE NAGARA STYLE: Temples built in the Nagara or the Northern style are found at Aihole, Alampur, Mahakuta and Pattadakal, all

in the Chalukya kingdom. Of these places, Alampur is on the bank of the river Tungabhadra in the Mahaboobnagar district of Andhrapradesh. Chronologically, the temples at Aihole are the earliest while those at Pattadakal are of the middle of the 8th century.

The Huchchamalligudi at Aihole is the earliest belonging to the beginning of the 7th century.⁴⁰ The temple with a square sanctum, a circumambulatory passage, a pillared hall and a half open pillared porch is dominated by a rekha-nagarasikhara or curvilinear Sikhara. This Sikhara is a true Nagara-Sikhara with bhumi-amalakas, a central projecting vertical band called rahapage and a large amaleka on top.⁴¹ The latter is dismantled due to ravages of time. It is in this temple that the first attempt to build a temple on the Nagara model was attempted. As such, the attempt though laudable, indicates the unfamiliarity of the architect with this new style of architecture, as can be clearly seen from the Sikhara. The Sikhara has sides which do not bulge a lot and the curve is not predominant. The sides of the Sikhara are almost straight thereby revealing the none too sure approach of the architect and the limited knowledge he possessed. He had no example of such a temple with a rekha-nagara Sikhara in Karnataka. His model was based entirely on his own perception of a Nagara structure.

The nearest and one of the earliest models of a Nagara-Sikhara is situated in Saurashtra viz., at Gop. The Gupta temple

at Gop in a ruinous condition has a sikhara built in Nagara style.⁴² The other area where Nagara temples are situated is Kalinga. The Parasuramesvara temple at Bhubaveshwara is later in date and as such it does not help us to locate the source from which the idea was borrowed.⁴³ It is in the territory between the Tungabhadra and the Malaprabha that the Nagara style developed in the South. This style of temple architecture continued even after the end of the early Chalukya period with a few changes. The building of the Huchchalingudi at Aihole soon inspired other patrons to adopt the Nagara style for new constructions, particularly, from the second half of the 7th century A.D. Thus, at Aihole itself Huchchappayyanagudi, Tarappa, Suryanarayana, Chakragudi and the famous Durga temples were built with a rekha-nagara sikhara.⁴⁴ The sikhara of the Tarappa and the Chakragudi clearly indicate the mastery the architect-sculptors had achieved in building a curvilinear Sikhara.

At Pattadakal, the temples of Galaganatha, Kadasiddesvara and Papanatha were built in Nagara style.⁴⁵ The Galaganatha is an excellent example of a finely proportioned rekha-sikhara. All these were the creation of the 8th century.

At Alampur a large number of rekha-nagara prasadas were built. These include Svarga-Brahma, Garuda-Brahma, Kumara Brahma, Padma-Brahma and Veer-Brahma. These temples are noted not only for their rekha-sikharas,⁴⁶ but also for the excellantly executed

pillars with urnaghatas - symbols of prosperity. This last feature is almost totally absent in the pillars of the early Chalukyan temples in Karnataka, though they do appear on the railings of the temples. These Nagara examples at Alampur are further noted for the large sculptures found in the niches of the outer walls. The sculptures of Indra and Lingodhbhava Siva on the other walls of the Svarga Brahma temple are indeed masterpieces of the period. It is interesting to note that the rekha-nagara temples outnumber the Dravida temples at Alampur, thereby indicating the strong influence of northern school in this part of the Deccan.

Mahakuta where the earliest temple is of the Dravida order viz., the Mahakutesvara temple built in the 6th century A.D. was nevertheless the scene of activities involving the construction of a number of temples with rekha-nagara sikharas. These temples are by no means large. These are small temples, but very compact containing mostly a sanctum and a small porch. These temples are built around an artificial pond named Vishnu-Puskarini.⁴⁷ These were built during the closing years of the Chalukya rule, mostly under Kirtivarma-II.

Other examples of rekha-nagara-orasadas of the early Chalukya period are found at Siddanakolla, near Aihole, Satyavolu⁴⁸ and Kudaveli-sangama.

The early Chalukya architects not only built rekha-nagara

temples but also a variant Nagara temple. These temples contain Sikharas of the Nagara-type but of a different order. These Sikharas are as noted earlier called Kadamba-Nagara-Sikhara. It is a stepped-Pyramidal Sikhara. The name Kadamba-nagara-Sikhara probably owes its origin to the stepped-pyramidal sikhara of the Madhukesvara temple at Banavasi, the capital of the early Kadambas. Temples with this type of Sikhara were continued to be built even during the Vijayanagara period as indicated by the small triple temples on the Hemakuta hill at Hampi. This type of sikhara was popular, throughout Karnataka from the Kadamba period onwards. It was specially preferred by the Jains in Karnataka.

Even in the Kadamba-nagara-sikhara, the projection on the front called sukanasa is very prominent, as in a true rekha-nagara sikhara. The projection was fitted with a huge nasika, displaying a large sized chaitya motif. In the centre of the Chaitya a sculpture related to the deity installed in the sanctum was generally placed.

As noted earlier, temples with the Kadamba-nagara-sikharas were continued to be built even after the early Chalukya rule. This sikhara was adopted for temples irrespective of the fact whether they are twin temples, or triple temples or temples with a single sanctum. A few examples should suffice to show its popularity in Karnataka. During the later Chalukya times temples of this type were built at Halsi, Aihole, Hampi and Kurgodu.

Under the Hoysalas such temples can be seen at Hariharapura, Hampi, Siddapur and Halebid.⁴⁹ One of the well known temples is the Lakshmi temple at Doddgaddavalli built during the period of Vishnuvardhana.⁵⁰ It is four celled temple dominated by Kadamba-nagara sikharas.

While experiments in the construction of nagara temples and its variants were taking place in the Chalukya territory, the Pallavas concentrated on developing a distinct type of architecture called the Dravida architecture. The Pallava rulers like Narasimhavarma-I, Paramesvaravarma-I, Narasimhavarma-II patronised the construction of temples of the Dravida style. In fact, it is quite probable that the Tamil country being the home of the Dravida style exported these Dravida traditions to the neighbouring Karnataka and Andhra. One of the earliest examples of a perfect Dravida temple is the Dharmaraja Ratha at Mahabalipuram. This monolithic shrine cut in charconite has all the relevant Dravidian features. The proportionate carving of the Salas and Kudas which are a constituent element of a Dravida Vimana are pleasingly balanced.

The temples of Kailasanath at Kanchi and the shore temple at Mahabalipuram⁵¹ of Narasimhavarma-II's period are highly developed and complex structures. The introduction of a gateway through which the temple complex is entered is a feature which revolutionised the South Indian temple complex. This gateway was fitted with a super structure commonly called the Gopura. The

Gopura of the Chola period and also of the Pandyan rule more or less diminished the significance of the sikhara. The architects and builders now gave great attention to the creation of massive but tall tapering and storied gopuras, built of brick and mortar. Not only there was significant development in the building of the gopuras but the concept of Parivara shrines received greater attention under the Pallavas and the subsequent ruling families. As a result of the development of vedic rituals the concept of a temple underwent a great change. What was in the beginning a simple structure soon became a complex building with the addition of many parts to the temple including separate shrines for the subsidiary deities or the Parivara deities.

The Dravida style and the related conceptions that developed in the Tamil country soon had its impact on the neighbouring territories. The Chalukyas of Vatapi seem to have borrowed the Dravidian traditions while building the temples of the upper sivalaya and the Malegitti Sivalaya at Badami, the Mahakutesvara at Mahakuta and the Sangamesvara, the Virupaksha and the Mallikarjuna temples at Pattadakal. Of the temples mentioned above, some like the Sangamesvara at Pattadakal of the Mahakutesvara at Mahakuta and the Upper sivalaya of Badami are pure Dravidian temples. The other two temples at Pattadakal mentioned above contain a few elements like the projection in the sikhara which is an essential feature of the nagara-temples. However, it cannot be denied that the Virupaksha temple at Pattadakal was

basically influenced by the Kailasanatha temple at Kanchi.

Though the influence of the Dravidian style was very much felt in the Karnataka and Andhra regions, one cannot escape noticing the fact, namely, the nagara temples of the Karnataka and Andhra regions influencing the Dravidian structures in the Tamil territories. For example, one feature which can be observed in many Dravidian temples is the projection in the sikhara even in such well known temples like the Bruhaddisvara temple at Tanjavur and the Iravatesvara temple at Darasuram.⁵² These two are well known Chola temples.

As noted earlier, the Pallavas under Narasimhavarma-I started the tradition of monolithic shrines cut in live boulders. This style of temples which are basically Dravidian, was adopted by the Rashtrakutas. The well known example of a Rashtrakuta monolithic temple is the Kailasanath temple at Ellora.⁵³ However, this temple which on plan resembles both the Kailasanath temple at Kanchi and the Virupaksha temple at Pattadakal is again influenced by the nagara-sikhara as can be seen in the sukhanasa attached to sikhara though basically it is Dravida in form.

The Chola period, which was in fact the most important phase in the development of Dravidian architecture saw the erection of three great temples which represent the three important phases of the Dravidian architecture. These three phases are represented by the Bruhaddisvara temple at Tanjavur, the

Brohadisvara at Gangaikonda Cholapuram and the Iravatesvara at Darasuram.⁵⁴ The expansion of the Chola rule over several parts of Karnataka brought in its wake the Dravidian traditions which found expression in innumerable temples erected in the Gangavadi and the Kolar regions. The Kolaramma temple at Kolar, the Jaina Basadis at Kambadahalli and the temples at Talakad speak volumes about the introduction of the Dravidian form of art in these regions in the wake of Chola occupation.

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