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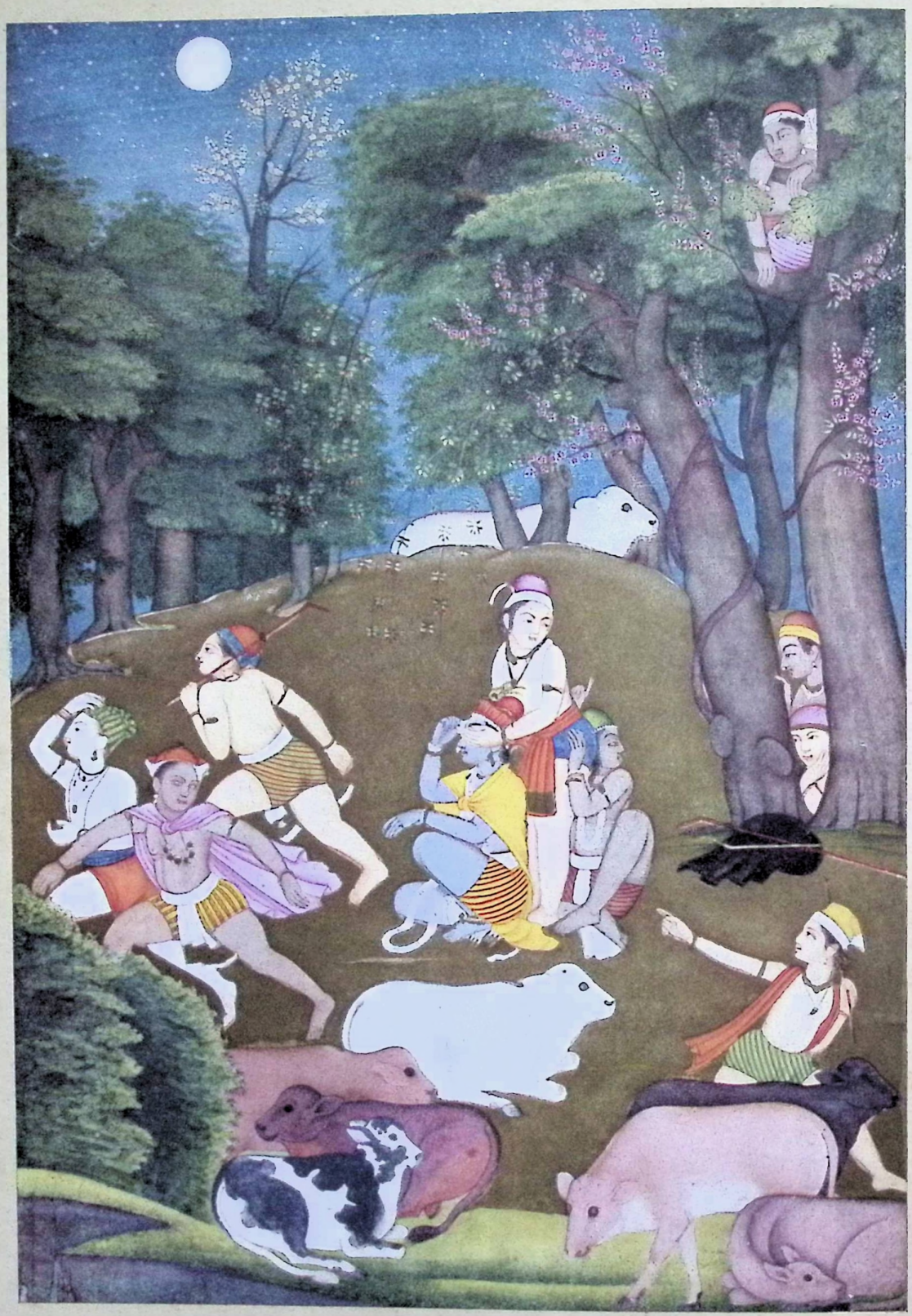

THE ARTS AND CRAFTS OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN

A PICTORIAL SURVEY OF
DANCING, MUSIC, PAINTING, SCULPTURE,
ARCHITECTURE, ART-CRAFTS, AND RITUAL DECORATIONS
FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE PRESENT DAY

By

SHANTI SWARUP

"BRINDMAN'S BUFF"

Belonging to the Tehri-Garhwal school of painting, it is signed on the reverse "painted by Manak" (Manak ki likhi). It is one of the finest and most characteristic of Manaku's creations and depicts Krishna and his cow-herd companions playing a game of hide-and-seek on a full-moon night along the verdant banks of the Jamuna.

(Reproduced from *Studies in Indian Painting* by N. C. MEHTA.)

With 6 Coloured Plates, 212 Line Drawings, and
515 Half-tone Illustrations

1957

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PRINTED IN INDIA

Published by J. H. Taraporevala for Messrs. D. B. Taraporevala Sons & Co. Private Ltd., 210, Dr. D. Naoroji Road, Bombay 1 and Printed by Z. T. Bandukwala, at the British India Press, (Props. Leaders' Press Private Ltd.) 108, Love Lane, Mazagon, Bombay 10.

FOREWORD

The story of Indian art as told by Shri Shanti Swarup is a welcome addition to the literature of the subject. The author has evidently taken great pains in the accumulation of facts and presenting a running informative commentary on the many-sided artistic achievements of our country. It is a presentation inspired with devotion and backed by knowledge. With this helpful guide in his hands the visitor both of our country and abroad may surely go on a pilgrimage to the far-flung monuments of art and architectures in India and also walk through the rich galleries of its museums with renewed interest and understanding. I am glad that here at one place much instructive information has been made available relating to Indian dancing, music, and in particular to painting, sculpture and architecture.

The author has taken within his purview the whole evolution of Indian art through the ages from the ancient to the modern. In the chapter on architecture, which is rather more detailed than the others, besides some beautiful descriptions and connected accounts of ancient Indian architectural monuments, the story of muslim architecture is given its rightful place, in all its three phases of Indo-Afghan, provincial and Mughal style. The chapter relating to minor arts brings together much useful information and is sure to create interest in this aspect of Indian art heritage, which fortunately occupies a good share of the material preserved in our museums, but is often little understood for want of reliable information.

The last chapter on ritual decorations focuses attention on a very important aspect of Indian life where even today we witness important links with our art traditions. What we call folk-art of floor-decorations is spread from Bengal to Rajputana, Maharashtra and the South in the form of *Alpanā, Māndanā, Rangolī* and *Kolam*, and has not only preserved in actual life an important and considerable stock of art-motifs which form the backbone of our decorative arts, but also provides a fruitful ground where the seeds of future art renaissance can usefully be sown. The tradition, as long ago pointed out by Dr. Coomaraswamy in his *Medieval Simhalese Art* and by Dr. Abanindra Nath Tagore in his beautiful handbook *Bānglār Brata* dealing with *Alpanā* decorations, is of countrywide usage and like other traditional art disciplines is replete with great possibilities for the future revival of Indian culture.

This presentation by drawing adequate attention to these many aspects of our art and traditions, therefore, deserves a happy welcome and is sure to give genuine pleasure with its numerous beautiful illustrations.

V. S. Agrawala

Banaras Hindu University.

PREFACE

Ever since Abanindra Nath Tagore started the Revival movement, Art in our country has aroused a great deal of public interest. Many scholars and artists have explored the field of artistic research which India offers, and discussed the possibilities of new media of expression. New themes have been adopted and forms of execution have also undergone a change. But the unpalatable truth has to be admitted that art, its forms and traditions are still comparatively unknown to the people to whom they belong, and the spirit of India's art remains as illusive and unintelligible to them as it is to outsiders. For the vast majority of our countrymen Indian art has yet to be discovered and its aspect and ideology presented before them in a proper perspective.

Art is the vital force of a nation, the fountain from which the national life is inspired and sustained. In India, as nowhere else, her splendid art has been the essential basis of culture, the over-powering tendency of her soul, always illumining the mind of Man, exalting his heart and enriching his life. Our supreme need today, therefore, is not so much of a Renaissance of a national culture, as it is one of understanding and appreciation of the creative endeavours which in their beauty and variety belong to the eternally fascinating India. It is doubtful if any other country in the world can display such wealth of artistic activity, remarkable for a great depth of feeling and imaginative creativeness, or offer anything equal to the highest attainment of Indians in this sphere.

In the following pages an attempt has been made to give a short and simple exposition of the various aspects of Indian art, such as might be helpful for its comprehension and interpretation by those who do not know or more unfortunately do not care to know. I have also endeavoured to relate each topic with the thought and life of the period through which it has passed in the course of its development. It is hoped that this work will lead its readers to better appreciation of Indian art and stimulate them to seek further enlightenment through other more advanced works on the subject.

SHANTI SWARUP

Chandra Bhawan
Azamgarh
Uttar Pradesh, India.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author expresses his indebtedness to the following for their valuable help in the preparation and production of the book :—

The Department of Archaeology, Government of India ; Bharat Kala Bhawan, Banaras ; Government Museum, Madras ; Shri Rai Krishnadasa ; Dr. V. S. Agrawala ; Shri O. B. Lal ; Shri N. C. Mehta ; Shri Gautam Sarabhai ; Shri A. S. Varma ; Shrimati Sushil Kumari Varma ; Shri P. L. Gupta ; Shri B. B. Lal ; Shri R. C. Sathi ; Shri S. B. Lal ; Dr. K. B. Lal ; Mr. Walter P. Dias ; Dr. V. Swarup ; Shrimati Usha Swarup ; Shri B. Prasad Gupta ; Mr. Ehsan Haleem ; Shrimati Ratan Kala Swarup.

The Publishers also express their appreciation and thanks for all the help received by them from Shri D. N. Marshall and Shri Bernard Anderson, the Librarian and Assistant Librarian respectively of the University of Bombay, for the loan of books and illustrative material ; to Dr. Moti Chandra, Director of the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, for his guidance in the selection of suitable illustrations ; to Shri Ram Subedar for preparing the line illustrations for the book ; to Dr. Rustam J. Mehta for seeing the publication of the book through its various stages ; and lastly, to Shri Syed A. Husain of Express Block & Engraving Studios for his personal interest and supervision in the making of the many blocks for the book.

CONTENTS

Page

FOREWORD v

PREFACE vii

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ix

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS xiii

1. DANCING 1

Shiva as Nataraja ; Dance in later Hindu and Buddhist period ; Natya, Nritta and Nrittya ; Kathakali dance-drama of the West Coast ; the art of Bharata Natyam ; Alarippu, Jatiswaram, Shabdam, Varnam, Tillana ; Manipuri dances of Assam ; Ras Lila dance ; Kathak of North India ; Folk Dances ; Mask dance of Bengal ; Garba of Gujarat and Rajputana ; Tribal dances.

2. MUSIC 9

Indian music as revelation of the Divine Grace ; Narada ; Bhajans and Kirtans ; Dhrupad ; Raga; Swars; Marg and Deshi music; Khyal; Thumari, Ghazal and Dadra ; Musical instruments.

3. PAINTING 15

Origin of Indian painting ; Patas or scroll paintings ; Ancient theory of painting ; Frescoes ; The Ajanta wall-paintings ; Bagh and Sigiriya frescoes ; Pala miniatures ; Gujarat school of painting ; Indian painting under the Mughals ; Rajasthani and Pahari schools of painting ; Deccani school of painting ; Western influences ; Modern revival ; Modern artists.

4. SCULPTURE 29

Distinguishing features ; Sculptural art of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa ; The Mauryan period ; Asokan pillars ; The graceful period of Buddhist art ; Bharhut, Sanchi, Bodh Gaya and Bhaja ; Art of the Kushan and Gupta periods ; Mathura, Taxila and Amaravati ; Gandhara school of sculpture ; The sculpture of Ajanata and Mahabalipuram; Ellora; The 9th and 10th centuries ; Orissan sculpture ; Konarak, Khajuraho and Bhubhaneshwar ; The Jain temples of Rajasthan and Gujarat ; Temples of Belur and Halebid ; The Hoysala school ; Somnathpur in Mysore.

INDIAN METAL SCULPTURE 42

5. ARCHITECTURE 44

Indian builder's attitude towards architecture ; Indus Valley Civilisation ; Architecture mentioned in the Vedas, Epics and Pali literature ; Early Mauryan architecture ; The coming of Asoka ; The stupa ; Buddhist structural monuments ; Rock-temples of Bhaja, Nasik, Karli, Kanheri and Ajanta ; The chaitya hall; The vihara; Temples of the Gupta Age; Temple architecture ; Monolithic temples or Rathas; Pallava rock architecture; Architecture at Ellora ; Architecture of the Chola Age ; The gopuram ; Dravidian temples; The Post Pandyan phase ; Mandapams and the Vijayanagar epoch ; Architecture under the Nayaks ; Northern style of Architecture ; Orissan temples at Konarak, Bhubhaneshwar, Puri ; Sun temple of Konarak ; Temples at Khajuraho ; Architecture under the Solanki dynasty ; Modhera

Page

and Mt. Abu; Jain temples; Deccan architecture under the later Chalukya and Hoysala kings; Somnathpur, Belur and Halebid; Architecture of Bengal.

MOHAMMEDAN ARCHITECTURE 60

Indo-Islamic Architecture; The mosque and the tomb; Turkish and Afghan periods; The Qutb Minar; Architecture under the Tughlaqs; Architecture under the Sayyads and the Lodis; Architecture in the provincial capitals; Bengal, Pandua, Gaur and Jaunpur; Indo-Islamic architecture in Gujarat; The provincial style of Malwa; Architectural styles in the South; Architecture at Bijapur; The period of the Surs; Sher Shah; The Mughals; Akbar and Fatehpur Sikri; The lyric age of Shahjahan; The Taj Mahal at Agra; Architecture under the Rajput princes; Western influences of the 17th-18th centuries.

6. ART-CRAFTS 74

POTTERY 75

Indus Valley civilisation; The potters of the North; Burhanpur pottery.

IDOLS AND DOLLS 75

The traditional art of modelling; Image makers of Maharashtra; Toys of ivory, metal and sandalwood; Painted wooden and shining brass toys of Bengal.

WOOD DECORATIONS APPLIED TO ARCHITECTURE 77

STONE DECORATIONS APPLIED TO ARCHITECTURE 78

HOME ART WARES AND FURNITURE 78

Ivory workers; wood carving; sandal-wood carving; furniture

INLAYING 79

LEATHER WORK 79

PAPIER MACHÉ 80

FABRICS 80

Ancient art of weaving; Woven and embroidered fabrics; The dyed fabrics of India; The Patola of Gujarat; Chunari or Bandhani; The muslins of India; Kimkhab, the "fabric of dreams"; Kashmir Embroidery; Palampores of Masulipattam.

CARPETS 83

JEWELLERY 83

METAL WORK 84

Moradabad craftsmanship; Damascened work; Bidri ware; Kashmir metal crafts; The art of enamelling.

7. RITUAL DECORATIONS 86

Ritual ceremonies and decorations; Ritual decoration as a domestic art; Classes of designs; Decorations among the Malayalis; Rangolis and Kolams of Maharashtra and the South; Mandana of Rajasthan.

LIST OF PLATES

PLATES IN COLOUR

"Blindman's Bluff" .. .. *Frontispiece*
A Fresco from Ajanta .. .. *Facing page* 8
A Bullock Chariot, by Abul Hasan .. .. „ „ 14
Red Blossoms, by Mansur .. .. „ „ 28
A Darbar Scene, Mughal Miniature .. .. „ „ 46
Study of an Elephant, Decanni Miniature .. „ „ 72

PLATES IN MONOCHROME

I-III Dance Sculptures from Chidambaram Illustrating Some of the Poses Described in the Natya Shastra of Bharat .. .. *between pages* 4—5
IV Twenty-four Main Mudras of Kathakali .. .. „ „ 4—5
V 28 Different Gestures of the Single Hand Used in Dancing .. .. „ „ 4—5
VI Gestures of the Combined Hands Used in Indian Dancing .. .. „ „ 4—5
VII Bharata Natyam Poses .. .. „ „ 4—5
VIII Musical Accompaniment to Kathakali .. .. „ „ 4—5
Kathakali Dance Pose
Kathakali Mask and Head-dress
IX Dancer, Western India .. .. .. „ „ 8—9
Bharata Natyam Pose
X Folk Dance .. .. „ „ 8—9
Folk Dancers from an Old Gujarati Painting
Folk Dance .. ..
XI Kathak Dance Pose .. .. „ „ 8—9
Manipuri Dance Pose
XII Dancing Women (After Ivory Plaque) .. .. „ „ 8—9
Dancers and Musicians. From Khajuraho
XIII Musicians from Ajanta (Cave XVII) .. .. „ „ 8—9
Dancers and Musicians (From Vikrampur)
XIV Dancing Party from Ajanta .. .. „ „ 8—9
XV Celestial Bharata Natyam Dancers. From Brihadeshvara Temple, Tanjore .. .. .. „ „ 8—9
Dancing Pairs from Karle, Near Bombay
XVI Dancing Nataraja .. .. „ „ 8—9
Shiva Kalarimurti
Shiva as Nataraja

XVII	The Dance of Shiva (Bhairava). From Ellora ..	*between pages*		8—9
	Shiva Dancing the Tandava. From ellora			
XVIII	Nataraja. From Badami	,,	,,	8—9
	Shiva Dancing the Tandava. From Ellora			
XIX	Female Dancers. From Ramappa Temple, Palampet, Hyderabad	,,	,,	8—9
XX	Shiva Nataraja. Bronze. Madras State	,,	,,	8—9
XXI	Shiva Nataraja. Bronze. From Velankanni, Madras .. —	,,	,,	8—9
XXII	Dancing Krishna. Bronze. South India	,,	,,	8—9
	Balakrishna. Copper. South India			
XXIII	Chathunni Panicker as Nala and Mrinalini Sarabhai as Damyanti in the Marriage of Nala and Damyanti in Nala Charitam, Traditional Kathakali	,,	,,	8—9
	Panicker as King Nala and Shivashankar as the "Hamsa" in Nala Charitam, Traditional Kathakali			
	Panicker as Sri Krishna brings reconciliation between Anirudha and Bana. An adaptation of Kathakali technique			
XXIV	The Holi Dance	,,	,,	8—9
	Kathakali Dancers			
XXV	Manipuri Dance	,,	,,	8—9
	Bharata Natyam Dance			
XXVI	Kumbha Dance	,,	,,	8—9
	Dance of Madan and Rati			
XXVII	Indian Dances by Uday Shankar's Ballet Troupe	,,	,,	8—9
XXVIII	Folk Dancers of Assam	,,	,,	8—9
XXIX	The Nagas of Assam in Dance Attire	,,	,,	8—9
	Folk Dancers of Assam			
XXX	Radha Krishna Dance	,,	,,	8—9
	Nag Dance			
XXXI	Folk Dancing	,,	,,	8—9
XXXII	Indian Folk Dances by Mrinalini's Ballet Troupe	,,	,,	8—9
XXXIII	Dancing Girl from Vadnagar	,,	,,	8—9
	Shiva Dancing the Tandava. Ellora.			
	Dancing Girl from Vadnagar			
XXXIV	Celestial Beauties in Dancing Poses from Belur	,,	,,	8—9
XXXV	Dancing Parvati from Halebid	,,	,,	8—9
	Dancing Shiva from Halebid			
XXXVI	Music Party from Amaravati	,,	,,	8—9

XXXVII	Musicians from Borobudur	..*between pages*	12—13
	Musicians from Recent Excavations at Bejnore			
XXXVIII	Musicians from a Painting, Kangra School ..	„	„	12—13
	Musicians from Ajanta			
	Samudragupta Playing on the Veena			
XXXIX	Musicians, Kangra School, 18th Cent.	„	„	12—13
	A Music Party. After a Bagh Fresco			
XL	Temple Drummer. After Bengal Terracotta. 16th Cent.	„	„	12—13
	Drum Dance. After Sculpture from Temple at Belur			
XLI	Hindu-Javanese Bas-relief	„	„	12—13
	Dancing Ganesh			
XLII	Saraswati. After a Jain Sketch on Palm Leaf ..	„	„	12—13
	Dancer After a Jain Painting			
	Musicians from Jain Painting on Palm Leaf			
XLIII	Indian Musical Instruments	„	„	12—13
XLIV	Indian Musical Instruments	„	„	12—13
XLV	Indian Musical Instruments	„	„	16—17
XLVI	Indian Musical Instruments	„	„	16—17
XLVII	Indian Musical Instruments	„	„	16—17
XLVIII	Indian Musical Instruments	„	„	16—17
XLIX	17th Century Images from the Ruins of Old Temple at Amber Fort, Jaipur	„	„	16—17
L	Musicians from Brahmesvara Temple, Bhubaneshwar	„	„	16—17
LI	Dancers and Drummers from Dilwara Temple, Mt. Abu	„	„	16—17
LII	Lakshmi Dancing. Sculpture from the Great Temple at Halebid	„	„	16—17
	Sculpture from the Great Temple at Halebid with Vishnu on Right and Drummer on Left			
	Krishna Playing the Flute. Sculpture from the Great Temple, Halebid			
LIII	Deepak Raga. Rajasthani, Early 17th Cent. ..	„	„	16—17
	Megh Raga			
LIV	Reproduction of Fresco from Sigiriya	„	„	16—17
	Yashodhara and Rasul. Reproduction of Fresco from Ajanta			
LV	Motifs from Western Indian Paintings	„	„	16—17
	An Illustration from *Vasant Vilas*. Gujarat ..			
LVI	Fresco Painting from Ajanta	„	„	16—17
LVII	Avalokistesvara-Padmapani. Fresco from Ajanta	„	„	20—21
LVIII	Fresco from Ajanta	„	„	20—21

LIX	"The Conquest of Ceylon by Wijeyo." Ajanta Fresco as Reproduced at Jaipur Museum ..	*between pages*		20—21
LX	A Hunting Scene and Penance of a Thirthanker. Illustrations from Uttaradhyayana Suttra ..	,,	,,	20—21
	Illustrated Wooden Book Cover of Palm Leaf Manuscript. Pala Period. 11th-12th Century			
	Illuminated Palm Leaf Manuscript. Pala Period. Depicts the Monkey Miracle of Buddha			
LXI	King Solomon Consults the Birds and Beasts, by Dhannu	,,	,,	20—21
	The Jackal Summoned Before the Lion, by Dhannu			
LXII	Portrait of Raja Man Singh, by Pak (?)	,,	,,	20—21
LXIII	A Drinking Party. Artist Unidentified ..	,,	,,	20—21
LXIV	Portrait of a Nobleman. From "Album of Jahangir"			
LXV	A Prince Hunting, by Ali Quli	,,	,,	24—25
LXVI	The Himalayan Cheer Peasant. By Ustad Mansur. Mughal School, Early 17th Century.	,,	,,	24—25
LXVII	Nurjahan Entertaining Jahangir and Prince Khurram. Mughal School, Early 17th Cent. ..	,,	,,	24—25
	Shah Jahan. By Balchand. Mughal School, First Half of 17th Cent.			
LXVIII	Envoys Bringing Gifts to Humayun at Agra. By Alam. Mughal School, Early 17th Cent. ..	,,	,,	24—25
	Akbar with Prince Salim Holding a Private Audience in a Royal Garden. By Manohar. Mughal School, Early 17th Cent.			
LXIX	Panel of Calligraphy in Nastaliq Character. By Mir 'Ali of Herat, Late 15th or Early 16th Cent.	,,	,,	24—25
LXX	Yudhishthira, Krishna, and the Pandavas Hold a Great Feast at Hastinapur Before the Horse is Set at Liberty. From the *Razm Namah* of Khwaja Inayatullah			
LXXI	Indian Deer and Tibetan Antelope. By Unidentified Artist of early 17th Cent. Mughal School	,,	,,	24—25
	Jahangir's Turkey-Cock. By Ustad Mansur. Mughal School, 1612 A.D.			
LXXII	The Nativity of Christ. Miniature of the Mughal School	,,	,,	24—25
LXXIII	Women Bathing. Rajasthani with Mughal Influence, 17th Cent.	,,	,,	28—29
LXXIV	Sri Krishna Rises to Welcome Sudama. Pahari (Jammu), 17th Cent.	,,	,,	28—29

LXXV	Wives of the Mathura Brahmans Taking Food to Sri Krishna. Pahari (Kangra), 18th Cent.	..*between pages*		28—29
LXXVI	Radha and Krishna Sheltering from the Rain. Pahari (Kangra), Late 18th Cent.	„	„	28—29
LXXVII	The Evening Dance of Shiva. Pahari (Kangra), Late 18th Cent.	„	„	28—29
LXXVIII	Mahadeva (Shiva) and Parvati. Pahari (Garhwal, Attributed to Mola Rama), Late 18th—Early 19th Cent.	„	„	28—29
LXXIX	Kalki-Avatar. By Nicholas Roerich	„	„	28—29
	A Painting by Jamini Roy			
	The Might of the Law. By G. N. Tagore			
LXXX	Mohenjo-daro Discoveries	„	„	28—29
LXXXI	Back and Front Views of Famous Dancing Doll from Mohenjo-daro	„	„	28—29
	Female Terracotta from Mohenjo-daro			
	Seals from Mohenjo-daro			
LXXXII	Male Torso from Harappa. Limestone	„	„	28—29
	Monkey from Harappa. Terracotta			
	Front and Back Views of Male Torso from Harappa. Limestone			
LXXXIII	Zebu and Elephant from the Plinth of the Capital of the Asoka Column, Sarnath ..	„	„	28—29
LXXXIV	The Inner Side of the Eastern Gate of Stupa of Bharhut	„	„	28—29
	The Bo-Tree of Buddha with Railing, the Diamond Tree and Asokan Pillar, Bharhut			
LXXXV	Two Relief Panels From the Stupa of Bharhut ..	„	„	28—29
LXXXVI	Stone Hedge from the Stupa of Bharhut ..	„	„	28—29
LXXXVII	Stone Hedges from the Stupa of Bharhut ..	„	„	28—29
LXXXVIII	Chulakoka Devata	„	„	28—29
	Kuvera Yaksa			
	Sirima Devata			
	Gangita Yaksa			
LXXXIX	Four Tondi of the Stone Hedge. Stupa of Bharhut	„	„	32—33
XC	Four Tondi from the Rafters and Stone Hedge of Stupa of Bharhut..	„	„	32—33
XCI	Sculptures from Bodh Gaya	„	„	32—33
XCII	Sculptures from Bodh Gaya	„	„	32—33

XCIII	Architraves of North Gate (Front View). Stupa of Sanchi	*between pages*		32—33
	Architraves of North gate (Rear View). Stupa of Sanchi			
XCIV	Sculptures from the Stupa of Sanchi	,,	,,	32—33
XCV	Sculptures from the Stupa of Sanchi	,,	,,	32—33
XCVI	Sculptures from the Stupa of Sanchi	,,	,,	32—33
XCVII	Details of Carving of Amaravati Sculpture ..	,,	,,	32—33
	Relief on Plinth. Amaravati			
XCVIII	Fragments from Railing Beams, Amaravati ..	,,	,,	32—33
XCIX	Sculptures from Amaravati	,,	,,	32—33
C	Two Plinths from the Stupa Panelling at Amaravati	,,	,,	32—33
CI	Fragments of Door Panels from Mathura ..	,,	,,	32—33
CII	Front and Back Views of Fragment of a Door Panel from Mathura	,,	,,	32—33
CIII	Parkham Yaksa, Mathura	,,	,,	32—33
	Part of a Frieze from Mathura			
	Fragment of a Frieze with the Seven Buddhas, Mathura			
CIV	Jamb Fragment from Kankali Tila, Mathura ..	,,	,,	32—33
	Girl Carrying Bird Cage from Railing Pillar, Mathura			
	Support of a Torana Architrave (Front and Back Views) from Kankali Tila, Mathura			
CV	Front and Back Views, Torana Architraves, Mathura	,,	,,	36—37
	Front and Back Views, Torana Architraves, Mathura			
CVI	Buddha Image, Mathura	,,	,	36—37
	Bacchanalian Scene, Mathura			
CVII	Reliquary of Kanishka, Shah-ji-ki-dheri	,,	,,	36—37
	Statue of Kanishka, Mathura			
CVIII	Relief from Verandah of the Rock Vihara of Bhaja representing the Sun-god Surya with his Two Wives	,,	,,	36—37
	Two Figures of Watchmen from the Rock Vihara of Bhaja			
CIX	Yakshi of Besnagar	,,	,,	36—37
	Kalpataru Capital, Besnagar, Bengal			
CX	Yakshi from Didarganj, Bihar	,,	,,	36—37
	Two Door Jambs from Bhutesar			
	Post from Batanmara			

CXI	Sandstone Torso of Prince Siddharta (Buddha) from Sanchi	*between pages*	36—37
CXII	Bodhisattva Head. Sahri-Bahlol	„ „	36—37
	Buddha Head. Sahri-Bahlol		
	Bodhisattva Head. Sahri-Bahlol		
	Bodhisattva Head. Takht-i-Bahi		
CXIII	Buddha and Bodhisattva from Shahri-Bahlol..	„ „	36—37
CXIV	Buddha from Set Mahet	„ „	36—37
	Lion-crowned Capital of the Asoka Column, Sarnath		
CXV	Two Stucco Heads from Taxilla	„ „	36—37
CXVI	Bodhisattva and Buddha in Standing Pose, from Takht-i-Bahi	„ „	36—37
	Bodhisattva of Mathura		
CXVII	Tondo of Hose from the Outer Railing, Amaravati	„ „	36—37
	Adoration after the Enlightenment. Relief from Dharmarajika Stupa, Taxilla		
	Head, Gupta Period		
	Kartikeya, God of War, seated on Peacock, Gupta Period		
CXVIII	Terracotta Buddha from Cloister, Mohra Moradu, Taxilla	„ „	36—37
	Buddha from Sahri-Bahlol		
	Buddhas on the East Side, Stupa A 15, Jauhan, Taxilla		
	Buddha Head, From Mohra Moradu, Taxilla		
CXIX	Gandhara Statue of Fasting Buddha from Sikri..	„ „	36—37
	Bodhisattva Statue from Katra		
	Gandhara Statue		
CXX	Marriage of Shiva and Parvati, Ellora	„ „	36—37
	Ravana Shaking the Kailas, Ellora		
CXXI	Goddess Kali, Ellora	„ „	40—41
	Shiva and Parvati, Ellora		
CXXII	Sculpture on North Wall of Ravana-ka-Khai, Ellora	„ „	40—41
	Bhairava (God of Destruction), Ellora		
CXXIII	Buddha from Kanheri Caves	„ „	40—41
	Gangavtar from Elephant Caves		
CXXIV	Andhakasura Vadha Murti, Elephanta	„ „	40—41
	Nataraja-Shiva, Elephanta		

CXXV	Mahadeva from Elephanta Cave No. 1	*between pages*	40—41
	Ardhnari Sculpture from Elephanta Caves		
CXXVI	Couples on the Outer Walls of Verandah of Chaitya, Karle	,, ,,	40—41
CXXVII	Couples on Southern Half of East Wall of Verandah, Chaitya Cave No. 3, Kanheri ..	,, ,,	40—41
	Couples on Northern Half of East Wall of Verandah, Chaitya Cave No. 3, Kanheri		
CXXVIII	Brackets Showing Male and Female Figures, from Cave No. 4, Badami	,, ,,	40—41
CXXIX	Marble Sculptures at Dilwara, Mt. Abu	,, ,,	40—41
CXXX	Beautifully Carved Ceilings of Dilwara Temple, Mt. Abu	,, ,,	40—41
CXXXI	Beautifully Carved Ceilings in Dilwara Temple, Mt. Abu..	,, ,,	40—41
CXXXII	Details of Sculptures on West Facade of the South-West Corner of Kandariya Mahadeo Temple, Khajuraho	,, ,,	40—41
CXXXIII	Details of Sculptures on South Face of S. W. Corner of Kandariya Mahadeo Temple, Khajuraho	,, ,,	40—41
CXXXIV	Woman Playing with Child, Bhubaneshwar ..	,, ,,	40—41
	"Woman Writing with a Stylus, Bhubaneshwar		
CXXXV	Shiva-Parvati. Halebid	,, ,,	40—41
	Kalingamardana. Halebid		
CXXXVI	Arjuna Winning his Bride. Halebid	,, ,,	40—41
CXXXVII	Sculptures from Belur	,, ,,	44—45
CXXXVIII	Huntress, Hoysala Art, Mysore	,, ,,	44—55
	Mahesavuramardini, Belur		
	Dancer, Belur		
CXXXIX	Bhima Fighting Bhagadatta, Belur..	,, ,,	44—45
	Musicians and Dancers, Belur		
CXL	Sculptures from Vellore Temple	,, ,,	44—45
CXLI	Krishna and Gopis, Ramachandraswami Temple, Vijayanagar	,, ,,	44—45
	The Chammundi Bull, Mysore		
CXLII	Musicians from Temple of Ananteshwar at Hemadpanti Ruins in Ahmednagar Dist. ..	,, ,,	44—45
	Wooden Bracket from a Temple-car, with Armed Rider on Rearing horse and Three Attendants Madura		

CXLIII	Elephant Lifting an Asura (Demon). Konarak	*between pages*	44—45	
	War Horse Led by a Warrior and Trampling an Asura (Demon). Konarak			
CXLIV	Marble Image of Goddess Sarasvati	„	„	44—45
CXLV	Shiva Nataraja. Bronze. Tiruvelangadu, Chitur Dist. Madras	„	„	44—45
CXLVI	Shiva as Nataraja. Bronze. From Velankanni, Tanjore Dist. Madras	„	„	44—45
	Shiva as Nataraja, Supported by an Apsara Purusa and Lotus Pedestal. Copper, South India			
CXLVII	Kaliya Krishna. Bronze	„	„	44—45
	Bala-Krishna. Copper			
CXLVIII	Parvati. Medieval, South Indian School	„	„	44—45
	Uma. South India			
	Parvati. Bronze. From Tanjore Dist., Madras			
CXLIX	Chola Queen. Bronze. From Chingleput Dist., Madras	„	„	44—45
	Krishnaraya and Two Queens. Brass.			
CL	Shiva. Ceylon	„	„	44—45
	Shiva as Nataraja. Bronze. From Tiruvelangadu, Chittur Dist., Madras			
CLI	Types of Stupas	„	„	44—45
	Types of Sikharas (in the Northern Style)			
CLII	Types of Domes	„	„	44—45
	Types of Minarets			
CLIII	Bodh Gaya	„	„	48—49
	Lomas Rishi Cave, Barabar, Near Bodh Gaya			
CLIV	North Gate (Front View). Stupa of Sanchi	„	„	48—49
	Stupa of Sanchi, Bhopal. General View from the East			
CLV	Cave III, Nasik	„	„	48—49
	Chaitya Cave, Kondane			
CLVI	Stupa Flanked by Bodhisattavas in Cave II at Bagh, Gwalior	„	„	48—49
	Group of Rock-hewn Stupas at Bhaja			
CLVII	Facade of Cave XIX, Ajanta	„	„	48—49
	Interior of Cave XXVI, Ajanta			
CLVIII	Ellora Caves	„	„	48—49
	Interior of Cave XIX, Ajanta, Showing Dagoba and Pillars			

CLIX	KAILAS, ELLORA	*between pages*	48—49
	VISVAKARMA CHAITYA CAVE, ELLORA		
CLX	THE GREAT TEMPLE AT BHUBANESHWAR	,, ,,	48—49
	ENTRANCE TO GREAT CHAITYA, KARLE		
CLXI	KANDANYA MAHADEO TEMPLE, KHAJURAHO ..	,, ,,	52—53
CLXII	TEMPLE OF THE SUN, KONARAK	,, ,,	52—53
	SOUTH-EAST VIEW OF KAILASHANATH TEMPLE, KANCHI		
CLXIII	ORNAMENTAL CEILING IN TEJPALA TEMPLE, DILWARA GROUP, MT. ABU	,, ,,	52—53
	RICHLY CARVED PILLAR HALL IN VIMALA TEMPLE, MT. ABU		
CLXIV	JAIN TEMPLE, LIMBDI	,, ,,	52—53
	JAGANNATH TEMPLE, PURI		
CLXV	SOUTH GOPURAM AND GOLDEN LILY TANK, MADURA..	,, ,,	52—53
	GENERAL VIEW OF SOUTH GOPURAM, MADURA		
CLXVI	SOUTH SCULPTURE CORRIDOR, MEENAKSHI TEMPLE, MADURA	,, ,,	52—53
	WEST CORRIDOR, RAMESHWARAM TEMPLE, MADURA		
CLXVII	EASTERN PAGODA, TRICHINOPOLY	,, ,,	52—53
	THE GREAT TEMPLE, TANJORE		
CLXVIII	SUBRAMANYA TEMPLE AT TANJORE	,, ,,	52—53
	VISHNU TEMPLE, SRIRANGAM		
CLXIX	THE FIVE PADAVA RATHS, MAHABALIPURAM	,, ,,	56—57
	KESHAVA TEMPLE, SOMANATHPUR		
CLXX	SCULPTURE ON RANGNATHJI TEMPLE, PUSHKAR ..	,, ,,	56—57
	OLD TEMPLE OF RANGNATHJI AT PUSHKAR		
CLXXI	ASOKA IRON PILLAR, DELHI	,, ,,	56—57
	KUTB MINAR, DELHI		
CLXXII	THE TAJ MAHAL, AGRA	,, ,,	56—57
	ENTRANCE TO TAJ MAHAL, AGRA		
CLXXIII	SHAH JAHAN'S MOSQUE, AGRA FORT, ...	,, ,,	56—57
	GATEWAY TO AKBAR'S TOMB, SIKANDRA, AGRA ..		
CLXXIV	DIWAN-I-AM, AGRA	,, ,,	56—57
	INTERIOR OF MOTI MASJID, AGRA		
CLXXV	MAUSOLEUM OF ITMAD-UD-DAULAH, TOP STOREY, AGRA	,, ,,	56—57
	MAUSOLEUM OF ITMAD-UD-DAULAH, AGRA		
CLXXVI	PANCH MAHAL, FATEHPUR SIKRI	,, ,,	56—57
	MAUSOLEUM OF SALIM CHISTI, FATEHPUR SIKRI		
CLXXVII	BULAND DARWAZA, FATEHPUR SIKRI	,,	60—61
	PILLAR IN DIWAN-I-KHAS, FATEHPUR SIKRI		

CLXXVIII JAMI MASJID, FATEHPUR SIKRI .. ..*between pages* 60—61
THE PALACE OF BIRBAL, FATEHPUR SIKRI

CLXXIX THE AGRA FORT .. .. „ „ 60—61
SHER SHAH'S TOMB, SASARRAM

CLXXX INTERIOR OF DIWAN-I-KHAS, DELHI .. .. .. „ „ 60—61
PILLARS OF DIWAN-I-KHAS, DELHI

CLXXXI JAMI MASJID, DELHI .. .. „ „ 60—61
LAHORE GATE, THE FORT, DELHI

CLXXXII ZENANA IN DELHI FORT .. .. „ „ 60—61
MOTI MASJID, DELHI

CLXXXIII THE TOMB OF HUMAYUN, DELHI .. .. .. „ „ 60—61
MAUSOLEUM OF RABI DURRANI, WIFE OF AURANGZEB, AURANGABAD

CLXXXIV GOL GUMBAZ, BIJAPUR .. .. „ „ 60—61
IBRAHIM-KA RAUZA, BIJAPUR

CLXXXV INTERIOR OF ARHAI-DIN-KA JHOMPRA, AJMER .. „ „ 64—65
ATALA MASJID, JAUNPUR

CLXXXVI THE PALACE GATEWAY, AMBER .. .. .. „ „ 64—65
MOSQUE AT LUCKNOW

CLXXXVII MAN MANDIR OR RAJA MANSINGH'S PALACE (SOUTH FACE), GWALIOR FORT .. .. „ „ 64—65
MAN MANDIR PALACE, EAST FACE, GWALIOR

CLXXXVIII JAMI MASJID, AHMADABAD .. .. „ „ 64—65
RANI SIPRI'S MOSQUE, AHMADABAD

CLXXXIX PAINTED POTTERY FROM HARAPPA AND MOHENJO-DARO .. .. „ „ 72—73
PAINTINGS ON EARTHERN POTS FROM HARAPPA AND MOHENJO-DARO .. .. „ „ 72—73

CXC EXAMPLE OF POTTERY .. .. „ „ 72—73

CXCI EXAMPLES OF POTTERY FROM LUCKNOW .. .. „ „ 72—73

CXCII MULTAN POTTERY VASE .. .. „ „ 72—73
EXAMPLE OF POTTERY

CXCIII COLLECTION OF BRASSES FROM MADHYA PRADESH .. „ „ 72—73

CXCIV COLLECTION OF BRASSES FROM MADHYA PRADESH .. „ „ 72—73

CXCV CARVED ROOF PANELS FROM A HINDU TEMPLE .. „ „ 72—73

CXCVI WOODEN BALCONY, PALANPUR .. .. „ „ 72—73
CARVING ON TOMB AT PALANPUR

CXCVII CORNER OF RANI SIPRI'S TOMB, AHMADABAD .. .. „ „ 72—73

CXCVIII SIDE OF A JAIN HOUSE, 200 YEARS OLD, IN KAIRA, GUJARAT .. .. „ „ 72—73
DOORWAY OF A HOUSE IN AHMADABAD

CXCIX	Interior Screen in the Taj Mahal, Agra	*between pages*	72	—73
	Detail of Itmad-ud-Daulah's Tomb, Agra				
CC	Fresco Decoration of the Interior of the Mosque of Wazir Khan, Lahore	,,	,,	72	—73
CCI	Interiors of Anoop Mahal, Bikaner	,,	,,	72	—73
CCII	Hathising Temple, Ahmadabad	,,	,,	72	—73
	Balcony of Hathising Temple, Ahmadabad				
CCIII	Mohammedan Architecture at Ahmadabad ..	,,	,,	72	—73
	Close-up of Jami Masjid, Ahmadabad				
CCIV	Details of Inner Courtyard, Lallgarh Palace, Bikaner	,,	,,	72	—73
	Tomb of Shams-ud-Din Iltutmish, Delhi				
CCV	Interior of Diwan-i-Khas, Delhi	,,	,,	76	—77
	Marble Carving of Diwan-i-Khas, Delhi				
CCVI	Perforated Window, Siddi Sayyad Mosque, Ahmadabad	,,	,,	76	—77
	Zenana Palace at Amber, Jaipur				
CCVII	Carvings on Qutb Minar, Delhi	,,	,,	76	—77
	Close-up of Qutb Minar, Delhi				
CCVIII	Lattice Work of Ramnivas, Jaipur	,,	,,	76	—77
	Carvings of Qutb Minar, Delhi				
CCIX	Wall Decorations of Palace at Sikar, Rajasthan	,,	,,	76	—77
	Carved Wooden Balcony, Pushkar				
CCX	Palace Facade, Lalgarh, Bikaner	,,	,,	76	—77
	Carvings on Palace at Lallgarh, Bikaner				
CCXI	Carvings on Hira Gate, Dabhoi	,,	,,	76	—77
	Balcony of Hira Gate, Dabhoi				
CCXII	Carved Mihrab in a Tomb at Chanderi, Gwalior..	,,	,,	76	—77
	Fretwork Window of the Tomb of Muhammad Ghaus, Gwalior				
CCXIII	Wooden Door Carved in Deodar Wood in the Punjab	,,	,,	76	—77
CCXIV	Carved Door in Sisum Wood, Punjab	,,	,,	76	—77
	Carved Window in Deodar Wood				
CCXV	Carved Wooden Door, Amritsar	,,	,,	76	—77
CCXVI	Back of a Carved Sandalwood Cabinet	,,	,,	76	—77
	Carved Screen from Ahmadabad				
CCXVII	Ivory Carvings	,,	,,	76	—77
CCXVIII	Carved Ivory and Horn Writing Case from Vizagapatam	,,	,,	76	—77

CCXIX	Side Panel of Ivory and Tortoiseshell Casket from Vizagapatam	..*between pages*	76—77
	Carved Ivory and Tortoiseshell Casket from Vizagapatam		
CCXX	Lid of an Ivory and Tortoiseshell Box from Vizagapatam	„ „	76—77
CCXXI	Wood and Ivory Mosaics from the Golden Temple of Amritsar	„ „	80—81
CCXXII	Inlaid Table Top, Hosiarpur	„ „	80—81
	Sandalwood Carving from Travancore		
CCXXIII	Two Sides of a Powder Horn Made of Buffalo Horn Inlaid with Ivory and Mother-of-Pearl..	„ „	80—81
CCXXIV	Book Cover of Stamped and Embossed Leather Gold on Red and Black Ground	„ „	80—81
CCXXV	Knot-dyed Shawl, from Amritsar	„ „	80—81
CCXXVI	Printed Cotton from South India	„ „	80—81
CCXXVII	Woven Silk Shawl from Bangalore	„ „	80—81
CCXXVIII	Bandana Work. Knot Dyeing or the Tie-and-Dye Work	„ „	80—81
CCXXIX	Shawl, White Floss Silk on Net, from Delhi ..	„ „	80—81
CCXXX	Patola Work	„ „	80—81
CCXXXI	Silk Embroidery, the Design Being after a Fresco from Ajanta	„ „	80—81
CCXXXII	Reshmi-Bhurat-Kam (Silk Embroidery)	„ „	80—81
CCXXXIII	Embroidered Cap, Kutch	„ „	80—81
	Baluchar "Butedar" Sari		
CCXXXIV	Gold Embroidered Kashmir Shawl	„ „	80—81
CCXXXV	Gold Embroidered Velvet Carpet from South India	„ „	80—81
CCXXXVI	Woollen Carpet, 17th Century	„ „	80—81
CCXXXVII	Woollen Carpet from the Punjab	„ „	84—85
CCXXXVIII	Woollen Pile Carpet from Vellore	„ „	84—85
CCXXXIX	Corner of a Kashmir Carpet	„ „	84—85
	Corner of a Warangal Silk Carpet		
CCXL	Corner of a Malabar Carpet	„ „	84—85
	Corner of a Coromandel Carpet		
CCXLI	Woven Mats	„ „	84—85
CCXLII	Old Indian Jewellery	„ „	84—85
CCXLIII	Old Indian Jewellery	„ „	84—85
CCXLIV	Centrepiece of Silver Supported on Elephants ..	„ „	84—85
CCXLV	Surahi of Bidri-ware	„ „	84—85
	Plate of Bidri-ware		
	Spice Box of Moradabad Work		

CCXLVI	A Plate of Tar-Kashi or Wire-Inlay work, from Manipur	*between pages*	84—85
CCXLVII	Hammered Copper Panel, after a Design from Ajanta Perforated Brass Window, after a Design from Ahmadabad	,, ,,	84—85
CCXLVIII	Bidri Ware from the Deccan	,, ,,	84—85
CCXLIX	Damascened Tray from Sialkot	,, ,,	84—85
	Brass Salver from U. P.		
CCL	Copper-gilt Sacrificial Vase from Madura	,, ,,	84—85
	Vessel of Chased Gold, from Kashmir		
	Silver Casket which Contained the Address Presented to Lord Harris		
CCLI	Bidri Ware from Lucknow	,, ,,	84—85
	Silverware from Kutch		
CCLII	Brass Vessels	,, ,,	84—85
	Engraved Brass Hookas		
CCLIII	Tinned Copper Niello Ware with Black Background	,, ,,	84—85
	Brass and Copper Teapots from Kashmir		
CCLIV	Silver Casket Presented to the Late King George and Queen Mary on the Occasion of Their Marriage in 1893, by the People of Calcutta	,, ,,	84—85
CCLV	Copper Panel from Bombay	,, ,,	84—85
	Chased Silver Vase of Jug		
CCLVI	Superb Examples of Indian Enamelled Ware	,, ,,	84—85
CCLVII	Sacrificial Vessels and Spoons	,, ,,	88—89
CCLVIII	Auspicious Symbol from Kankali Tila, Mathura	,, ,,	88—89
CCLIX	Auspicious Marks on the Soles of the Feet of Radha	,, ,,	88—89
	Auspicious Marks on the Soles of the Feet of Lord Krishna		
CCLX	Decoration from Panel of Salim Chisti's Tomb, Fatehpur Sikri	,, ,,	88—89
	Decoration from Chini-ka-Rauza, Agra		
CCLXI	Auspicious Symbol from Mathura	,, ,,	88—89
	Auspicious Floral Design from Agra		
	Auspicious Designs from Kankali Tila, Mathura		
CCLXII	Ritual Decorations	,, ,,	88—89
CCLXIII	Ritual Decorations	,, ,,	88—89
CCLXIV	Wood and Ivory Mosaic from the Golden Temple at Amritsar	,, ,,	88—89

1 DANCING

THE Hindu conception of Shiva dancing as Nataraja within the cosmos and Krishna in his Rasmandala stresses the idea of a divine urge of Spirit to move rhythmically and perpetually—an idealism which finds its display in the Dance of India. As a highly perfected expression of a great religious consciousness, the art of dancing in our country, therefore, is not merely the supreme manifestation of physical life but also the supreme unfoldment of the spiritual state. Every step, every movement, every gesture is an expression of the spiritual. So powerful, indeed, is the religious motivation that our dance has for long been regarded as a divine art meant to portray only the highest and the purest sentiments of the human heart.

Consequently, our dances are ritualistic, symbolical and interpretive, unlike Western dancing, which, barring the ballet, is expressionistic and consists of pleasing movements and poses evoking mere sensuous enjoyment. In Indian dancing on the other hand, the action is not simply the expression of Man's subjective emotions, but also an "objective realisation" of the persons and scenes around, through the use of a highly developed technique of symbolic and suggestive gestures, known as the language of the gods in Sanskrit treatises. Every object and emotion has a gesture to represent it and every gesture is pregnant with deep symbolic purpose.

This is a singularly significant aspect of Indian dancing. Its gesture language, as codified in the *Natya Shastra* and the *Abhinaya Darpana*, is based on a thorough knowledge of life and nature, and is almost a perfect medium for the interpretation and portrayal of emotional experiences. The dancer, in depicting the objects with his limbs, manages at the same time to evince the natural and appropriate feelings on his face and connects them through his eyes and emotions with the objects represented, so that where the hand is, the glance goes, where the glance is, the mind goes.

Thus, the art of a great dancer in our country depends foremost on the success with which she or he can express life. According to *Natya Shastra*, amongst the greatest virtues that a dancer must possess, the first is the "grace of repose," implying a merging of the " self" of the dancer into his art, into what he is creating for the moment. In order that the form of an image or an emotion may be interpreted fully and vividly before the mind, the dancer must not only see the image and feel the emotion but should also meditate through a spiritual vision.

Dancing in India is as old as her civilisation and has a vitality as perennial as the culture that brought it into being. The fact that our artists and philosophers of long ago could give such highly aesthetical and beautiful plastic form to the imagination of a dancing Nataraja expressing the highest reaches of human thought and feeling, conclusively proves that dancing as an art had fully developed in ancient India and the spiritual significance of dancing had been well realised. In the *Rig Veda*, composed sometime before 1500 B.C., we find frequent references to dances and musical instruments accompanying dance performances. Our mythologies and books of literature in Sanskrit abound in many interesting accounts of dancing gods and goddesses, Gandharvas and Apsaras. Tradition has it that in the beginning Brahma gave the *Natya Veda* to Bharat, who performed *Natya*, *Nrittya*, and *Nritta* before Shiva, which pleased him so much that he instructed *Bharat* in the art of Tandava and Parvati taught *Lasya* to Usha. Another legend mentioned in *Bharat Natya Shastra* describes how Brahma created Apsaras for the execution of certain types of dances which could only be performed by women.

According to Hindu philosophical thought, Shiva is the first dancer. His name Nataraja means the Lord of Dancers and Actors, and his dance in the Hall of Chidambaram is the symbolisation of all movement within the cosmos in order to release humanity from the snares of illusion. The dance is, in reality, a manifestation of his five activities, viz., *Shristi* (creation and evolution); *Sthiti* (preservation); *Samhara* (destruction); *Tirobhava* (embodiment of soul and rest); and *Anugraha* (release and salvation), representing respectively the activities of Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Mahesh and Sadashiva. "Creation arises from the drum, protection proceeds from the hand of hope; from fire proceeds destruction; the foot held aloft gives release" (Coomaraswamy).

We are also familiar with Krishna and Radha, the Eternal Lovers, as dancing god and goddess. While Shiva is Nataraja, Krishna is known as Natwar who is the embodiment of spiritual love leading the soul on the path of liberation. "The *Rasa Krida* of Radha and Gopies represent the eternal longing of the Individual Soul (*Jivatma*) to join the Divine Soul (*Parmatma*), represented by Krishna."

There are several references to ritualistic dances in the *Vedas* and *Puranas*. At the end of *Ashwamedha Yagnya*, women are mentioned as dancing round the sacred fire with water pots on their heads, beating the ground with their feet and singing: "This is honey." By their dances they were supposed to endow the sacrificers with might.

In the later Hindu and the Buddhist periods dancing was a favourite form of entertainment in the palaces and formed an integral part of the splendours of royalty. Not only were dancers patronised by the kings, but dancing as an art was practised by the ladies of the royal and aristocratic families. The cave frescoes of Ajanta and Bagh and the numerous sculptures of Ellora and Elephanta speak of the important place dancing held in the cultural life of the nation. Coomaraswamy gives a list of ancient royalties who practised dancing as an accomplishment. "In the Divyavadana, King Rudrayana plays the lute (Veena) while his wife Chandravati dances. Kalidasa represents King Agnivarman as competing with actors in their art of dancing. In Devendra's *Uttaradhayana Tika*, King Udaya plays on the lute while his wife dances, but drops the plectrum of the lute, at which the Queen is angered and asks, 'Why have you spoilt the dance?' In the *Mahavamsa*, Parakrama Bhau I (of Ceylon) is said to have built a theatre besides his palace that he might listen to the singers and witness the delightful dances, while his queen Rupavati, 'who was young and beautiful and an embodiment of all the traditional virtues of a Hindu wife was skilled in dancing'."

Among the masses, dancing as a mere rhythmic bodily movement in out-bursts of the emotions was enjoyed as a social pastime and occasions like childbirth, weddings, festivals, fairs and harvests were celebrated by dancing in which both men and women took part.

All efforts in India have, for ages, been directed towards one dominant idea, that is, the desire to approach God. As we have seen, dancing is no exception to this, and almost every Hindu place of worship has its ritual of dancing. The Devadasis, who from generation to generation danced in the religious dramas, lent colour and glamour to the temples of South India till very recent times. Kolutunga III, a Chola King of Tanjore, is known to have appointed professional artists to give lessons in gestures to the dancers of the temples. The pillars of the temple of Sittanavasal are profusely adorned with statues of dancing Devadasis. Dancers and the exhibitions of their art also formed an important part of the religious processions of ancient India.

Dancing that had at first originated as a means of pleasing the gods and goddesses was soon adopted by the masses for propitiating the forces of nature, like rain, the storm, the sun, and fire, represented by the gods Indra, Varuna, and Agni. During scarcity of the rains, dancing to please the rain god developed in several parts of the country and this continues to be believed in and practised even today almost everywhere in India.

As an art, dancing reached its zenith about the first or second century of the Christian era and remained so for nearly one thousand years. With our civilisation, however, coming

in contact with "the cross-bow, the catapult and the fire arms of foreign science, " our arts and artistic activities were shelved in the background. The Mohammedans gave it the status of a low sensual entertainment, perceiving only the bodily movements displaying the physical charm of the dancer. Emphasis shifted from the spiritual to the physical and the prostitutes took to dancing as an easy means to gain the favour of the Afghan and the Mughal lords. The Dance of India lost its emotional and spiritual values and expressed only the lower sentiments of passion. The result was that soon dancing came to be tainted as something low in society, and became a tabooed art for respectable women.

The South, however, retained its old dances for some time longer, having received protection on account of its geographical position. The folk dances too continued to flourish in the countryside, undisturbed by the political upheavals going on in the cities and towns.

In recent years, with a growing keenness to understand and learn the ancient fine arts of the country, attempts have been made to discover and revitalise the traditional dances of the country. Also a new art in the shape of a synthesis of all the forms handed down by tradition is in the process of evolution. Great pioneers like Uday Shanker, Gopinath and Ram Gopal, Shanta, Rukmini Devi and Menaka, have not only revived our old dance forms but have also adapted them to the conditions of the modern age, interpreting the ancient art to new eyes. Uday Shanker's famous ballet "Labour and Machinery" and "Rhythm of Life" have a strong sociological content, depicting modern ideas by traditional gestures and movements.

Today, we have four representative kinds of classical Indian dancing: Kathakali, Bharata Natyam, Manipuri, and Kathak styles.

Before entering into a discussion of the various dance forms, it is important to bring out clearly the meaning of the three words—*Natya*, *Nritta* and *Nrittya*. The word *Natya* is a synonym for *Abhinaya* and means the presentation of the *Natak* or the drama which is based on some past story or *Katha*. In ancient India, the interpretation of a plot was done only by means of dancing and mimicry, in which speech and even song were absent. *Nritta* is pure dance based on *Laya* and *Tala* alone. A full-fledged *Natya* includes *Nritta* also, although it is possible to have *Nritta* devoid of all *Natya*. *Nrittya* is that part of dancing in which acting is based on the display of *Rasa* and *Bhava*, that is, expression of sentiment and emotion. This is done by explicit gestures and facial expressions.

Of the above-mentioned dance styles, probably the most ancient and certainly the most developed is the Kathakali dance of the West Coast. Although popular in almost every part of the south, it is by the palm-fringed beaches and the backwaters of Kerala that this style of dancing has preserved some of the purest traditions of Hindu *Nrittya*. Venkatachalam traces its origin to a period of civilisation much earlier than of the Aryans, "considering it has certain primitive elements in its rhythm, music, make-up, dress and ornaments, and considering also that it gave birth, at a distant date, to the Javanese and Kandyan dances." But recorded history attributes to Kottarakara Raja, reigning about 600 years back, the present form of Kathakali. Whatever be the date of its origin, today the dance of Kathakali is rightly regarded as the most perfect pantomime show in the world.

Kathakali, literally meaning "story-play", is a composite art made up of the elements of dance, drama and music. Representing both dramatic and dance arts, it is the narration of the story of gods and goddesses, of heroes and demons from mythologies, particularly the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, in the form of a graphic dance-drama to the accompaniment of weird music—both vocal and instrumental. Since Kathakali belongs to the category of religious dances, most of its stories are moral in texture, the motif being the depiction of triumph of Virtue over Evil, of the Holy over the Unholy. The singers standing behind the dancers chant verses briefly narrating the story and the actors enact their contents through the language of gestures and set facial expressions.

Kathakali weds *Natya* to *Nrittya*, and therefore gestures and facial expressions, in singular fulness and purity, play a significant role in the dance. As keen observers of life and nature, the Kathakali artists paint a scene realistically and as keen psychologists interpret every phase of mood and emotion eloquently through their gestures. Entire epics are depicted appropriately and the various shades in moods and emotions of even birds and animals are portrayed so faithfully that the achievement appears almost unbelievable. This is a very interesting feature of the Kathakali. Its language of gestures is as expressive as any picture could be and the entire dance can be visualised clearly and vividly. The head, glances of the eye, eye-brows, neck, heels, toes, ankles, thighs, waist, sides, hips, arms, feet, elbows, shoulders, wrists, palms, lips, nose, chin, cheeks and eye-lids are all trained in a variety of movements that lend subtle shades of expression to all the emotional qualities of the mind that the dancer wants to display. At his best, the dancer loses himself completely in his art and there is a singular spontaneity in the dynamic force of his movements.

Characterised by dignity, vigour and dramatic movements, the rhythmic excellence of the Kathakali dance has not perhaps been excelled anywhere in the world. In fact, in his best form, the Kathakali dancer, as a well-known critic writes, "is more a dance than anything else : the poses, gestures and indications and movements are all blended together into one supreme rhythmic picture that tells a story and shows a cosmic glimpse at the same time."

The Kathakali dance-drama is a spectacular open-air show performed from dusk to dawn. One of its distinguishing characteristics is that the dancers are only of the male sex, who also take the part of females. Without the usual painted curtains or ornate settings and spectacular effects, the Kathakali stage is just a raised platform lighted by a big bell-metal oil lamp flinging fantastic shadows all around. The party usually includes twelve actors dressed picturesquely in tight-fitting jackets, white skirts and with magnificent crowns on the heads, and two singers and four instrumentalists who chant and play behind the actors on chenda, muddalam, gongs and cymbals—the gongs indicate the principal periods and the cymbals 'spirit up' the rapid movements.

Make-up and fantastic masks are an integral part of the Kathakali dance. The mask consists of a white outline made of rice paste and cleverly done in relief on the sides of the face from ear to ear, with the face within the outline painted green, light green or red or even black, on which the display of emotions can be observed clearly. The idea underlying is to portray the characters as fully as possible in accordance with their nature, so that the face is literally the loud and eloquent index of the heart and mind.

Taking birth in the rituals of the temples, the art of Bharata Natyam is traditionally a hereditary occupation confined to certain communities. The Nattuvans are its traditional teachers, and the Devadasis—the one-time temple dancers of Andhra and Tamil—the exponents of the art. A *lasya* or feminine dance in character, it is usually performed either as a minuet or by a pair of girls.

The art of Bharata Natyam is an unique cultural heritage. Bearing in mind the mythological references to this dance, Bharata Natyam is obviously of very ancient origin. A story narrated among the people of Mangalore traces its history back to the days of the *Mahabharata* when Arjun in the disguise of Vrihannala gave lessons in this type of dancing to Uttara, the princess of Virata. Ancient palm leaf manuscripts relating to this art are scattered all over the south, and now held as sacred objects of worship by people who would not surrender them at any cost. The spirit of Bharata Natyam also finds expression in the ancient South Indian temple sculptures, the dance motifs of which bear a close resemblance to those exhibited in this art of dancing. The temple par excellence in this respect is the one at Chindabaram where dances the divine Nataraja.

In the course of the many centuries that it has survived, Bharata Natyam, on account of its essentially erotic character, fell from its original religious glory to become a plaything



Passion



Anger



High Passion



Hateur of the Nouveau Riche

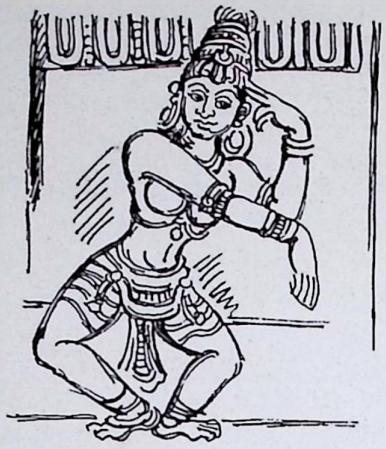


Passionate Temper



Vira : Hateur of the Nouveau Riche

DANCE SCULPTURES FROM CHIDAMBARAM ILLUSTRATING SOME OF THE POSES DESCRIBED IN THE NATYA SHASTRA OF BHARAT



Nritya-Karana : Lalita



Sympathy



Nritya-Karana : Alata



Sympathy and Pity



Nritya-Karana : Lalata Tilaka



Reeling in Terror

DANCE SCULPTURES FROM CHIDAMBARAM ILLUSTRATING SOME OF THE POSES DESCRIBED IN THE NATYA SHASTRA OF BHARAT



Elation



The Whirling Scorpion



Snake Fear



Hasya

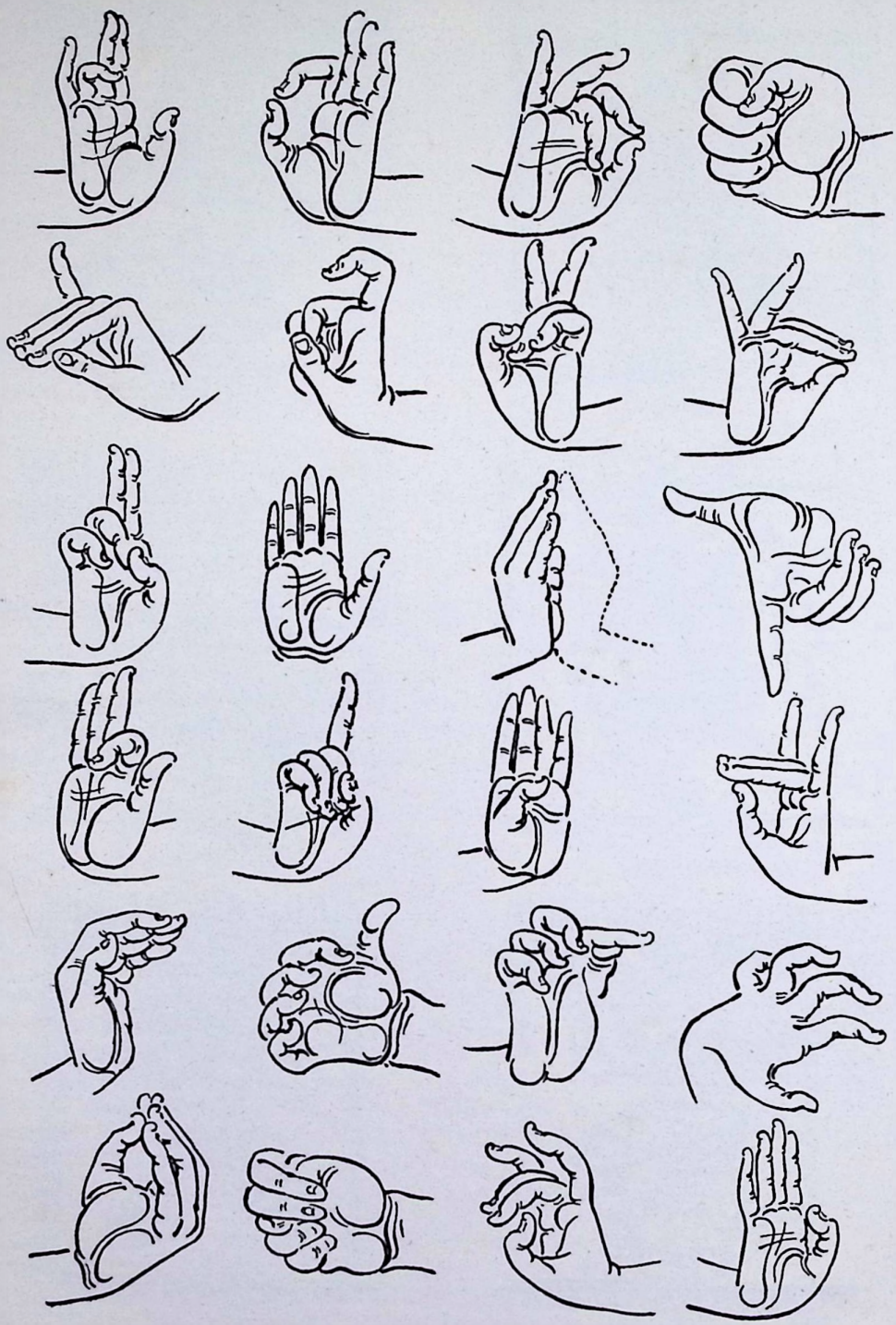


The Ram

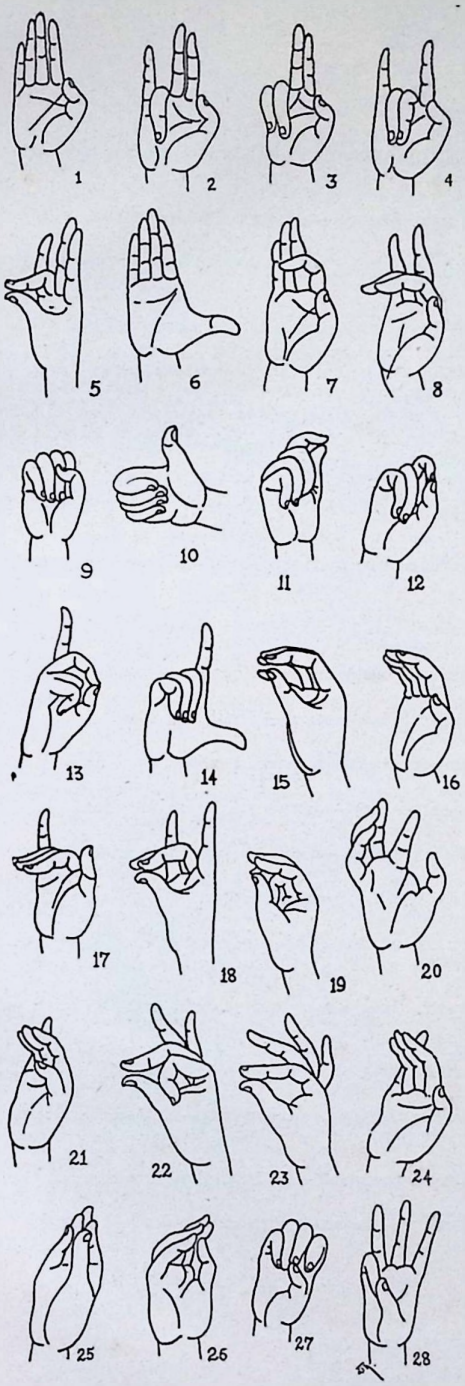


The Lion

DANCE SCULPTURES FROM CHIDAMBARAM ILLUSTRATING SOME OF THE POSES DESCRIBED IN THE NATYA SHASTRA OF BHARAT



TWENTY-FOUR MAIN MUDRAS OF KATHAKALI



1. Pataka (flag)—it is mainly used to represent—the beginning of a dramatic representation, benediction, cloud, night, etc.

2. Tripataka (three flags)—usage; to represent—thunderbolt, flames of fire, etc. It is also used when a character speaks *aside* to another on the stage.

3. Ardhapataka (half flag)—usage; leaves of trees, arrow, knife, etc.

4. Kartarimukha (scissors)—represents—separation, death, etc.

5. Mayura (peacock)—bird in general creepers, etc.

6. Ardhachandra (half moon)—a phase of the moon, prayer, meditation, etc.

7. Arala (cooked)—drinking, cyclone, etc.

8. Shukatunda (parrot's beak)—throwing of arrows and spears, etc.

9. Mushti (closed fist)—fixed intention, grasping, fight, etc.

10. Shikhara (peak)—refusal, drawing of something, etc.

11. Kapittha (wood-apple)—milking a cow, holding a flower, etc.

12. Katakamukha (joint of a bracelet)—plucking flowers, offering betels, etc.

13. Suchi (needle)—represents—unity, God, rod, circular movement, scolding, etc.

14. Chandrakala (a phase of the moon)—moon, river, cudgel, etc.

15. Padmakosha (lotus bud)—fruits, buds, balls, etc.

16. Sarpashirsha (snake's hood)—snake, offering libations of water, etc.

17. Mrigashirsha (deer-head)—animal's head, beckoning, etc.

18. Simhamukha (lion's head)—elephant, lion, etc.

19. Kangula—represents—larks, areca-nut, cocoanut, etc.

20. Alapadma (full-blown lotus)—full-blown flowers, fruits, full moon, etc.

21. Chatura (sly)—something small, gold, musk, eye, oil, etc.

22. Bhramara (black bee)—black bee, parrot, cuckoo, crane, etc.

23. Hamsasya (swan's head)—auspiciousness, painting a portrait, etc.

24. Hamsapaksha (swan's wings)—to denote the number six, covering, etc.

25. Sandamsha (pincers)—offering presents, number five, etc.

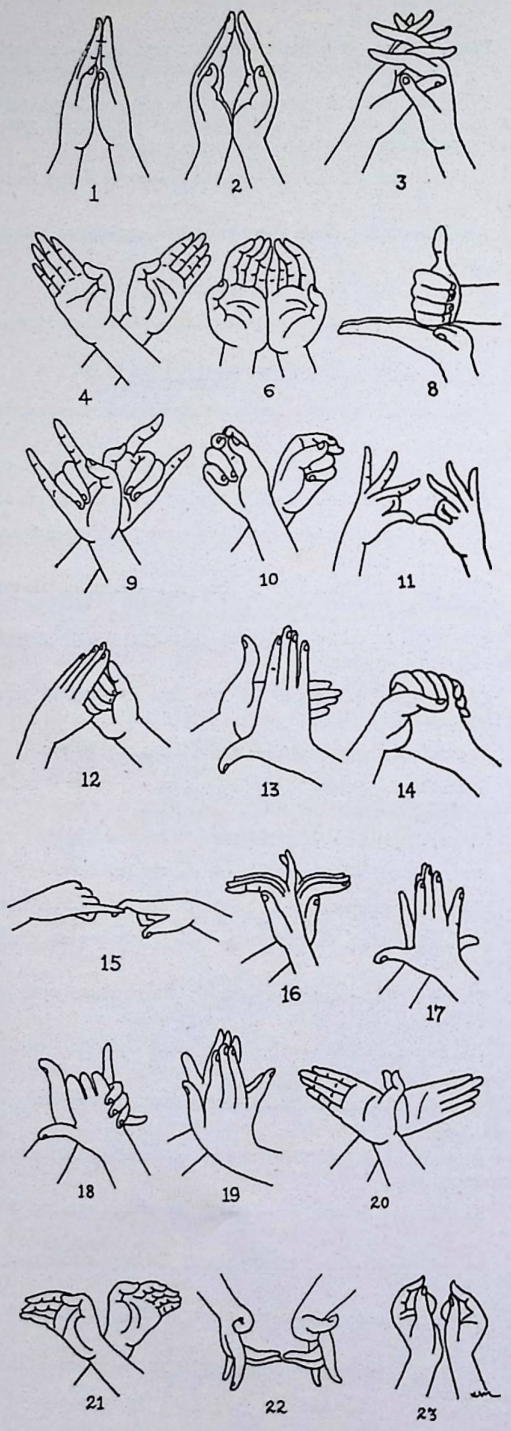
26. Mukula (bud)—lily, taking meal, holding small things, etc.

27. Tamrachuda (cock)—cock, crow, writing a manuscript, etc.

28. Trishula (trident)—represents the number three, trident, etc.

28 DIFFERENT GESTURES OF THE SINGLE HAND USED IN DANCING

(*As Mentioned in the Abhinayadarpana*)



1. Anjali (joined palms)—salutation, offering presents to gods, etc.

2. Kapota (pigeon)—salutation, modesty, etc.

3. Karkata (crab)—blowing conch-shells, pressing down, etc.

4. Svastika (cross)—crocodile, big creatures, etc.

6. Pushpaputa (palmful of flowers)—offering flowers to gods, accepting fruits, etc.

8. Shivalinga (image of God Shiva)—indicates the idol of Shiva.

9. Katakavardhana (pair of bracelets)—carnation, marriage, worship, etc.

10. Kartarisvastika (pair of scissors)—hill-top, tree, branches, etc.

11. Shakata (cart)—represents a demon, carriage, etc.

12. Shankha (conch shell)—represents a conch-shell.

13. Chakra (discus, wheel)—denotes a wheel.

14. Samputa (box)—covering, box, etc.

15. Pasha (noose)—quarrel, noose, chain, etc.

16. Kilaka (wedge)—affection, love-affair, light talk, etc.

17. Matsya (fish)—denotes fish, etc.

18. Kurma (tortoise)—indicates a tortoise ; used in meditation of deities.

19. Varaha (boar)—represents a wild boar or other wild animals.

20. Garuda (king of birds)—denotes birds.

21. Nagabandha (pair of serpents)—indicates a serpentine noose.

22. Khatva (bedstead)—beadstead, palanquin, etc.

23. Bherunda—indicates a pair of birds.

GESTURES OF THE COMBINED HANDS USED IN INDIAN DANCING

(*As Mentioned in the Abhinayadarpana*)







BHARATA NATYAM POSES

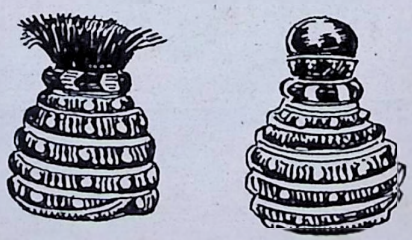


MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT TO KATHAKALI



KATHAKALI DANCE POSE





KATHAKALI MASK AND HEAD-DRESS

of passion. From heights of spiritual experiences it came down to pervading mere sensuous thrills.

It has only recently been revived on a cultural basis by such great artists as Guru Minakshi Sundaram Pillai, Rukmini Devi, Shanta, Bala Saraswati and Ram Gopal.

The old Tamil word for Bharata Natyam is *Koothu* or *Attam*, meaning play. Being principally an art of *bhava*, *rasa*, and *tala*, the dance has two definite elements harmonised into one : first, *Nritta* which is just rhythmic movement expressive of the joy of dancing. A series of formalised poses where every sequence is refreshingly beautiful are strung together such as words are in poetry. Second, when a theme is added to it,the *Nritta* of Bharata Natyam becomes *Nrittya*, interpreting and expounding the words of a song by explicit gestures, voice and such external manifestations of the emotions as smiles and tears.

The dance of Bharata Natyam begins with *Alarippu* which means flowering of the body. It is in the nature of an invocation to God. In a fantasia of beautiful and expressive poses, the neck, eyes and hands are slowly and rhythmically moved, giving a display of pure *Nritta* with the feet keeping time in consonance with the soft background music. In *Jatiswaram*, which follows soon after, beautiful rhythmic foot movements and appropriate gestures of the eyes and neck are executed while the drummer playing pleasing notes on the *mridingum* (drums) keeps time.

One of the chief features of Bharata Natyam is the interpretation of the ideas of a song in many different ways. *Shabdam* and *Varnam*, which are the next steps, interpret dance to a song of devotional and erotic emotions. Although *Bhakti Rasa* is the keynote of the dance, the background music is usually set to songs rich in *Shringar Rasa*. The songs known as *Padam* express sentiments of love—the divine love of Krishna and Radha or Shiva and Parvati. This is, indeed, the most difficult and interesting part of the dance wherein the dancer reveals her skill and talent through an elaborate expression of the dramatisation of the emotions. One single line of a song is sung and the dancer in quick fascinating gestures and fast changing foot movements interprets the same in different new ways, lending charm and novelty through every change.

Tillana is the last step which is pure dance with graceful foot rhythm, whilst the body executes beautiful and sculpturesque movements and attitudes.

Manipur in Assam is the home of some of the most picturesque and artistic dances of India, which have a style of their own and have popularly come to be known as the Manipuri School of Dancing. Rabindranath Tagore was the first to discover the subtle charm innate in this form of dancing and by using Manipuri technique in the various dances of Shantineketan introduced it to the world outside.

Every village in Manipur has a Thakurghar whose presiding deities are Krishna-Radha, or Krishna-Balram or Krishna-Chaitanya, and attached to the temple is a Nautch-ghar (dancing hall). Inside these halls or outside against the rich and colourful background of hills and forests, the Manipuris dance episodes from the story of Krishna and Radha to the accompaniment of songs from the *Padavalis* of Jaydeva or other Vaishnavite poets. The theme of each dance has its source of inspiration in the loves of the Divine Lovers and the songs and sentiments have the flavour of adoration.

Putting on extremely gorgeous costumes of scintillating skirts in green or dark red with small pieces of mirror, gold and silver tinsel stitched on, embroidered tassels dangling at the sides, close fitting jackets of velvet to match, and conical caps with bands of pearl trimming hidden under a thin white veil, the dancers perform graceful flowing movements and take quick rhythmic steps while the drummers beat some difficult *talas* on the *Khol*. The most famous is the *Ras Lila* dance which has a restraint and dignity befitting the spiritual significance of the theme, and there is a complete absence of sensuous implications or baser sentiments. Next in popularity are the dances known as *Dol-Jatra* in Spring,

Jhulan during the rains, and *Lai Haroba*, meaning making merry with the gods. Every religious festival or social function gives the young people of Manipur occasion for this type of dancing wherein their emotions find a spontaneous outlet. The dances express great strength and offer a fascinating display of rhythm, making the Manipuri one of the most appealing dance forms of India.

Kathak is the classical dance of North India and is very common in the Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Bharat, and even in some parts of Madhya Pradesh and Bombay. Dancing, which was a religious institution in ancient India, assumed, as has been remarked earlier, a purely secular character under the Mohammedans and with the fusion of Hindu culture with the Persian and Arabic cultures, a new style of dancing came into being, known as the Kathak. Adopting a technique more foreign than Indian, the Kathak style for some time retained Hindu sentiments and feelings. But during the subsequent period of general social decay and the consequent relegation of dancing to the "socially ostracised" it degenerated from real art into a poor exhibition of lifeless technique for its own sake. However, in the general æsthetic renaissance taking place in our cultural life today, Kathak dancing has been revived and popularised as a classical art by Menaka, Sadhona Bose, Achhan Maharaj and Shambhoo Maharaj.

In Kathak dancing, more attention is generally paid to its *Nritta* part—rhythm of feet, strictly adhering to the rhythmic accompaniment of the *tabla* and less to the *Abhinaya* part of dancing. It concentrates more on graceful movements, swift and forceful foot-work, speed and tempo. Gestures and emotional expressions play a lesser role in the Kathak style than in the Kathakali or the Bharat Natyam. But it would certainly be very unjust to the Kathak dance to say that it is mere foot-work, which by itself is superb. The Kathak admittedly is a classical Indian dance, intimately associated with the traditions of Hindustani music, giving elegant and magnificent renderings of usually amorous themes from the legend of Krishna and Radha. It is pure *Nritta* in its highest developed form.

Like other art forms, the art of dancing truly lives in the countryside of India. Apart from the classical dance styles fashioned and presented by the more sophisticated of our artists, the villagers known as the masses of our country have developed and maintained in a fluid tradition a most natural and virile art of folk dancing. Although folk dancing in India still remains hidden here and there with apologetic diffidence, a more intimate acquaintance with it reveals a high standard of vivid artistic expression, depth of philosophical conception and intensity of feeling in no way inferior to those that have acquired the appellation of "classic art." Perhaps in some ways folk dances are of even greater significance being a "direct and unsophisticated expression of the innermost spirit of India."

Joy of life and rhythm are the soul of folk dancing. Presenting no set theme or stylised completeness and technique, the folk dances of our country are characterised by the simple joys and sorrows of life, a sense of light-hearted freshness, under-currents of gratitude or fear for the supernatural powers, and plenty of simple vigorous rhythmic movements proceeding out of the free and natural inner urge of creative self-expression. On every occasion, whether religious or social, our simpler folks let their bodies dance impersonally and yet with the greatest of expression.

Folk dances danced as a duet are rare, though not infrequently there is a dance leader who has a special part to play. As a rule the dances are performed by a group or groups of people, all of whom move in the same way. Usually the sexes are segregated except in the case of very few communities such as the Santhals, the Ahirs and certain other aboriginal tribes.

Although in their endless variety of themes, the folk dances of India have captured almost the whole gamut of human emotions, they may in general be divided into three main classes : (1) religious and ritual ; (2) social, including dances associated with harvest, changing of the seasons, and important family events ; and, lastly, (3) martial. It is, however,

usually very difficult to place a particular dance exclusively in any one of these three main classes, as most dances though predominantly religious or social bear many traces of other themes.

We may mention here a few representative examples of the surviving folk dances that have delighted and appealed to the simple country folk through the ages.

The mask dances of rural Bengal, presenting a beautiful blending of classic and religious motives with unsophisticated forms of folk expression, have cultural and artistic significance as well as social and recreational values. Themes from the *Puranas* with Mahadeva and Kali as central figures, the excellent wooden masks expressively painted by the village potters, vigorous and yet graceful movements of human limbs, the thrilling time-beats on the drum, present a wonderful harmony of varied elements casting an irresistible spell over the audience. Although danced in a spirit of devotion, the entire performance is a deliberate symbolic representation of a joyous battle of victory against the hindrances of life.

Another representative social dance enjoyed in a religious background is the Garba dance of Gujarat and Rajputana. Inspired by the divine melodies of Krishna's flute, the Garba forms an important part of the religious and social life of the people there. On moon-lit nights, giving that dreamland sense of fantasy so necessary to plunge the spectators into the spirit of the dance, the gaily dressed young girls dance round and round in gracefully adjusted steps, presenting a most fascinating and spectacular performance of artistic and cultural excellence.

However, the religious motives in our folk dances are not every time an occasion for gaiety. The religion of the peasantry of the countryside includes for the most part the propitiation of the spirit of Nature. Most of the major epidemic diseases have their presiding deities and whenever there is impending danger of an area being affected, the women gather together to offer prayers and perform ritual dances to please the gods. Behind all this frenzied rhythmic movements, in accompaniment to constant roll of the drums, there is an underlying spiritual purpose so that the dance actually succeeds in giving courage to the weaker spirits.

The rain dances, performed almost all over India, emphasise the ritual character of folk dancing. The Indian peasant living close to Nature is inevitably much affected by the changing of the seasons and the coming of the rains. In the south, rain dances to induce the exacting gods, considered to be a sacred ceremony, are danced with increasing speed and vigour as the dancers are carried away more and more by the fervour of religious enthusiasm and the frenzy of the throbbing drums.

The rich and varied pastoral folk dances of India signify through the medium of gracefully charming movements of the limbs the reaping and harvesting of plenteous crops, stressing the "symbol of life fighting joyously its eternal battle of struggle for existence." Any bright moonlit night draws the young people out to dance who never tire until they have expressed themselves in all shades of emotional experiences.

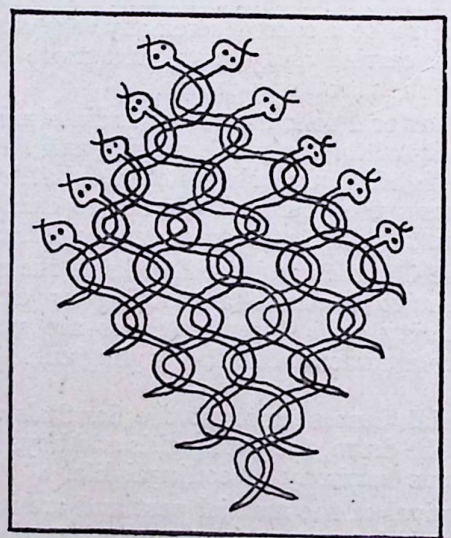
The Ahirs, Kahars, the Chamars and the Dhobis in the north have their own store of dances which they perform to celebrate a wedding or childbirth. Characterised by elemental directness, spontaneity and sincerity, theirs are purely social dances, danced rhythmically in a spirit of gay abandon while the jingling anklets round their waists and the *dhol* provide the music.

The most popular social dances amongst the Santhals are their courtship dances. Guided by the time-beats on the drum, the young girls and boys sway to and fro in rhythmic unison, symbolising the joyous harmony of conjugal life.

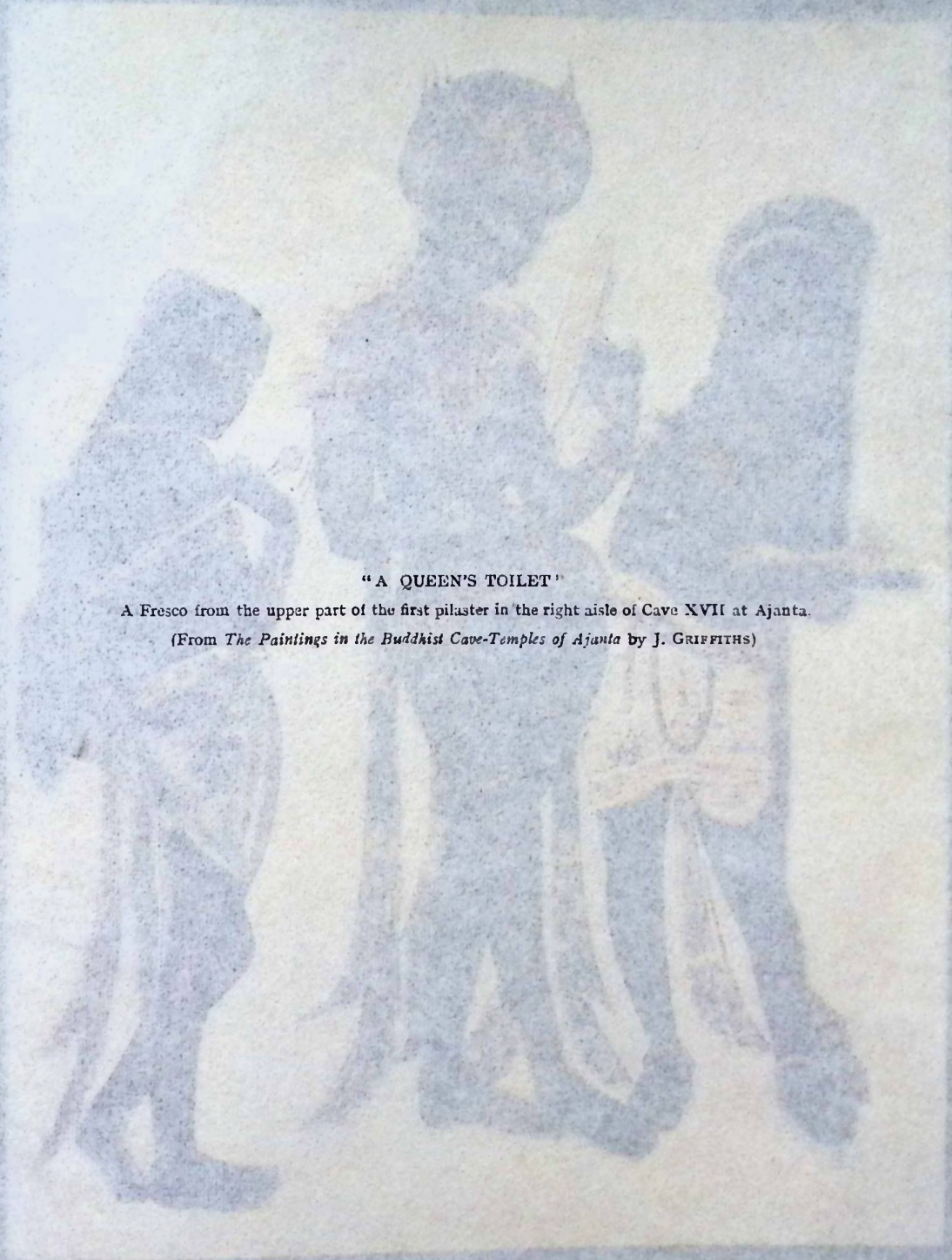
War dances are a survival of the martial past and are usually practised today by a few aboriginal tribes as symbolical events which they desire to be successfully accomplished. But the war dances of Velakali in the south have an epic grandeur and powerful rhythmic

vitality. In quaint and impressive costumes, with gleaming swords and ornamental shields, the Velakali actors stage the great battle of Kurukshetra as an act of adoration to God, while the vigorous martial music in the background lends classic dignity to the beautifully rhythmic performance.

"Art", said Carlyle, "is the disimprisoned soul of fact." The Dance of India, as one of the true art forms, reveals the inner significance of the obvious and uncovers that soul in a varied and colourful manner. Sublime in beauty and philosophical in content, giving that vision of the Eternal which is only another name for God, our Dance has constantly striven towards an understanding of the meaning and ultimate purpose of Life, imparting an emotional and temperamental bias worthy of a great nation and a high culture.



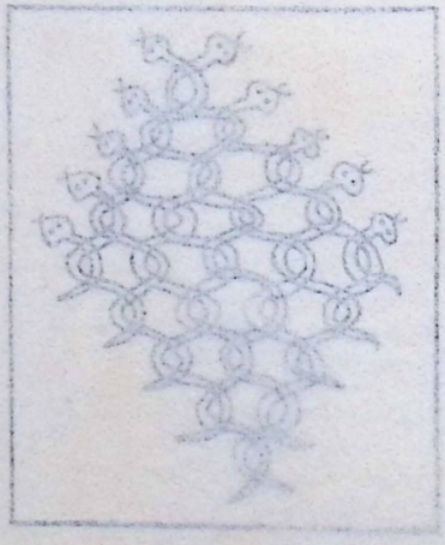
Nagpanchmi Rangoli



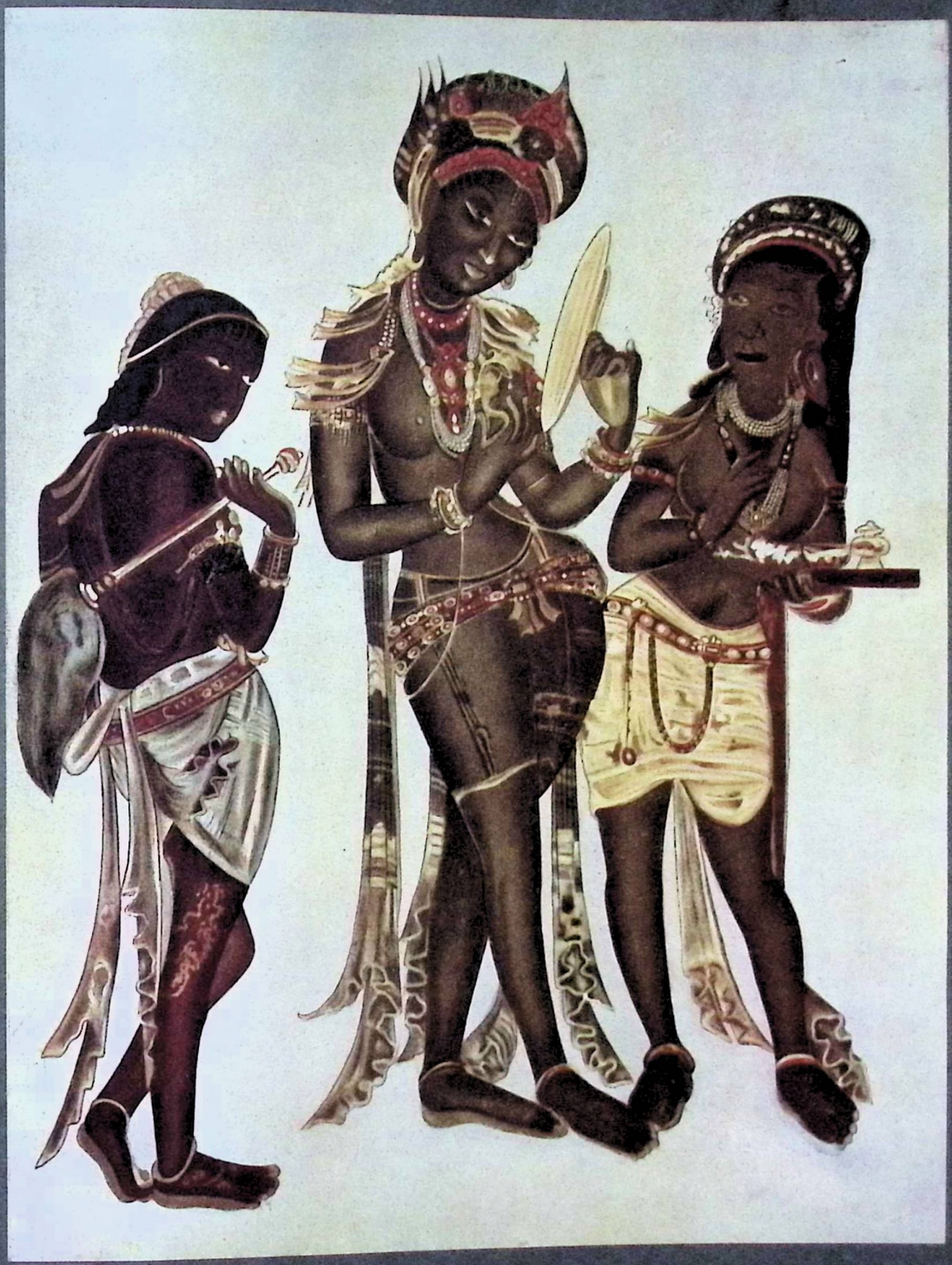
"A QUEEN'S TOILET"

A Fresco from the upper part of the first pilaster in the right aisle of Cave XVII at Ajanta.

(From *The Paintings in the Buddhist Cave-Temples of Ajanta* by J. GRIFFITHS)



Nagpanchmi Rangoli





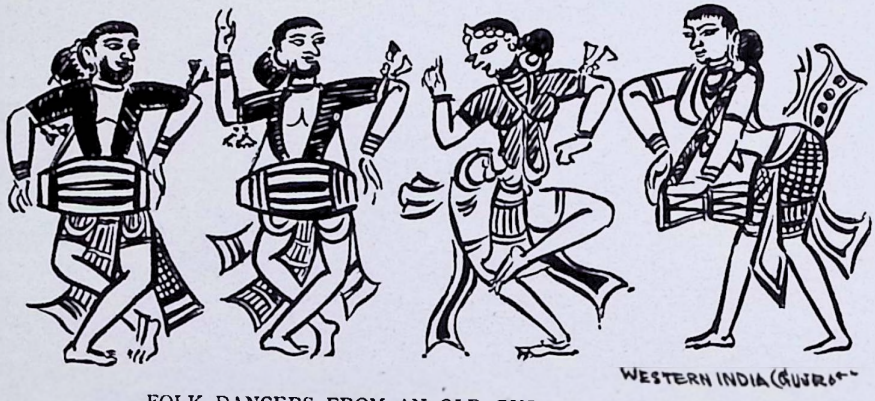
DANCER, WESTERN INDIA (GUJARAT)



BHARATA NATYAM POSE



FOLK DANCE



FOLK DANCERS FROM AN OLD GUJARATI PAINTING



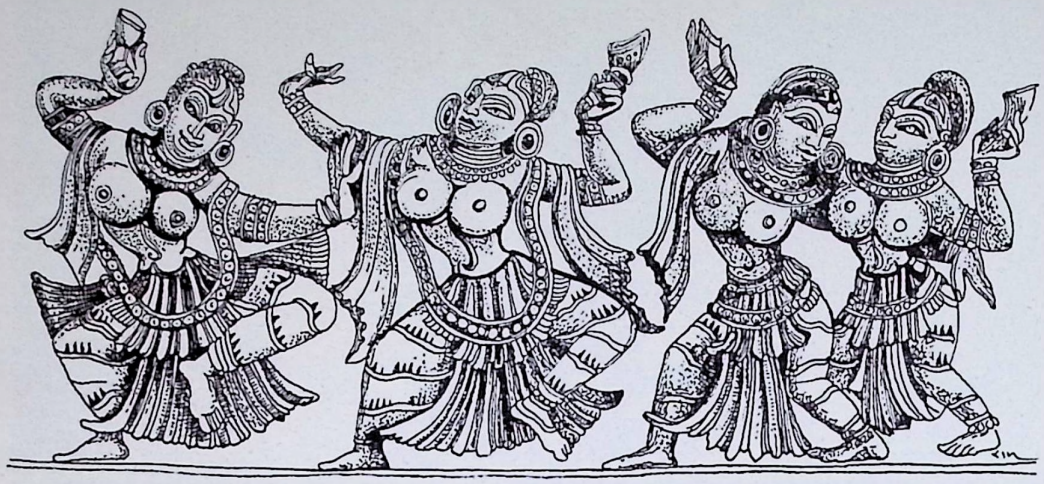
FOLK DANCE



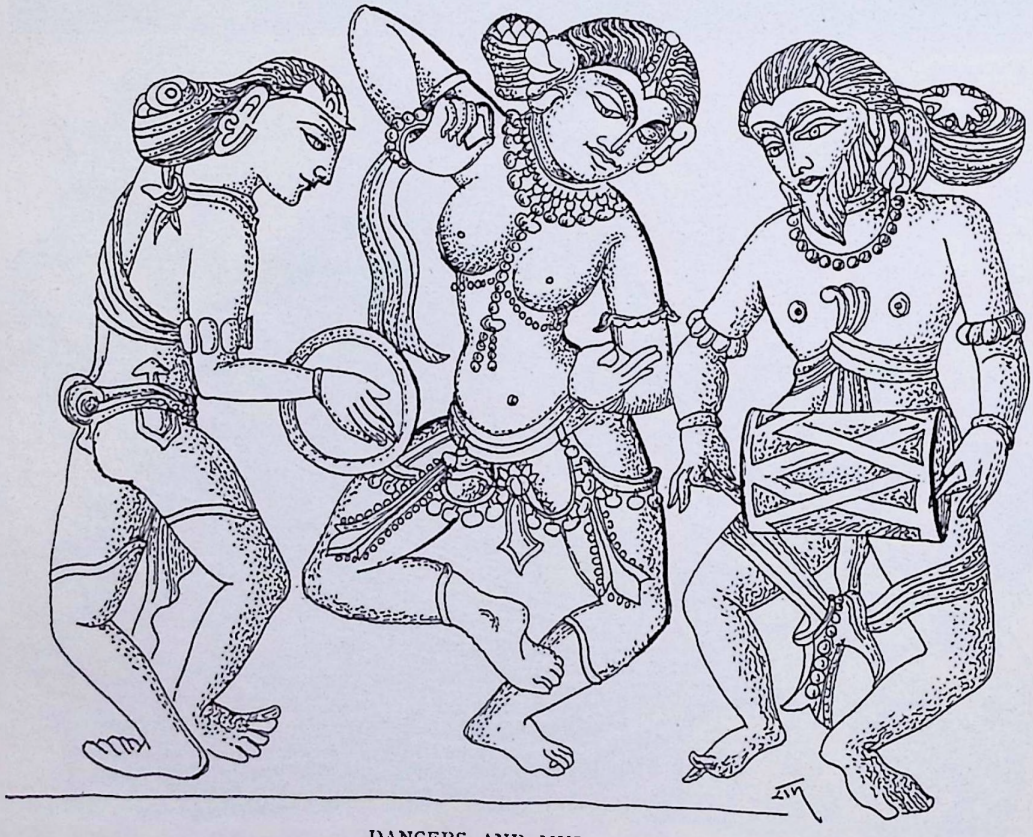
KATHAK DANCE POSE



MANIPURI DANCE POSE



DANCING WOMEN (After Ivory Plaque)



DANCERS AND MUSICIANS.
From Khajuraho c. 10th-11th Century



MUSICIANS FROM AJANTA FRESCO (Cave XVII)



DANCERS AND MUSICIANS
From Vikrampur, Bengal, 14th Century

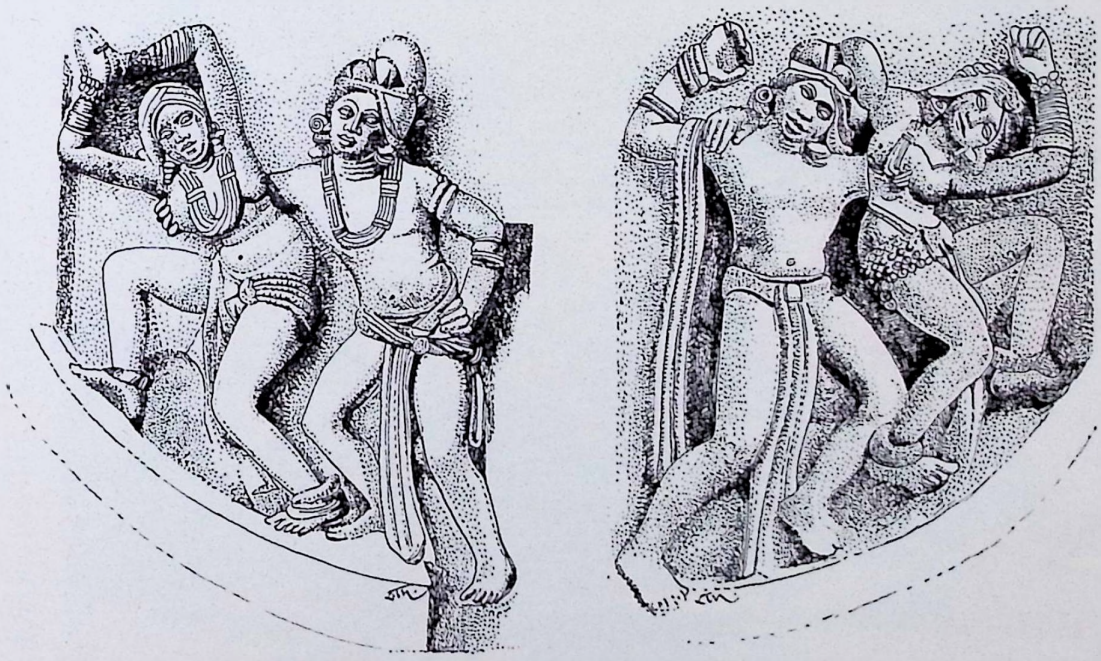


DANCING PARTY FROM AJANTA FRESCO



CELESTIAL BHARATA NATYAM DANCERS

From Brihadeshvara Temple, Tanjore, Chola Period.



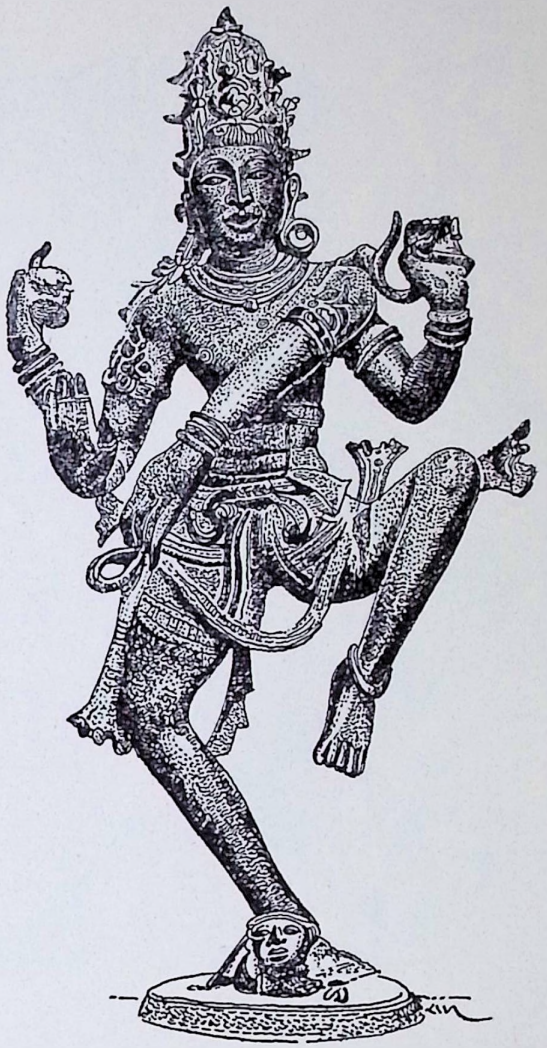
DANCING PAIRS FROM KARLE, NEAR BOMBAY



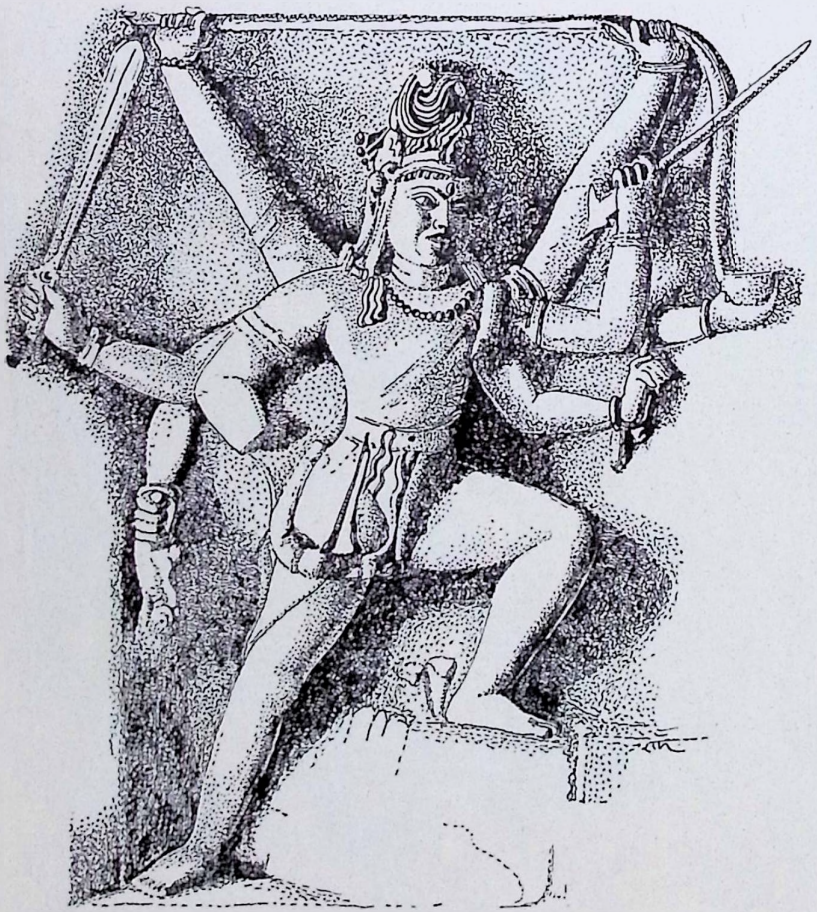
DANCING NATARAJA



SHIVA KALARIMURTI
From Temple of Muvarkoil, Pudukkottai, early 10th Century



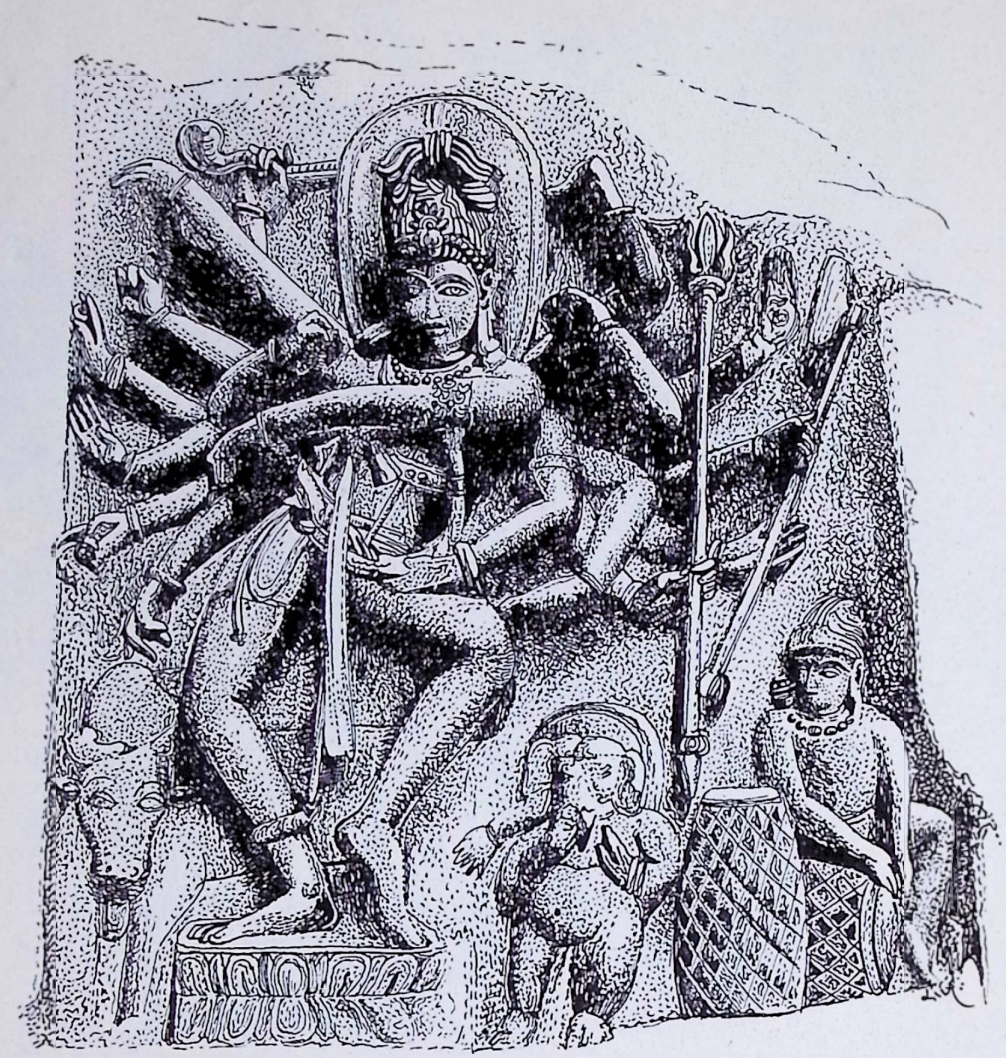
SHIVA AS NATARAJA
Chingleput District, Madras, c. 900 A. D.



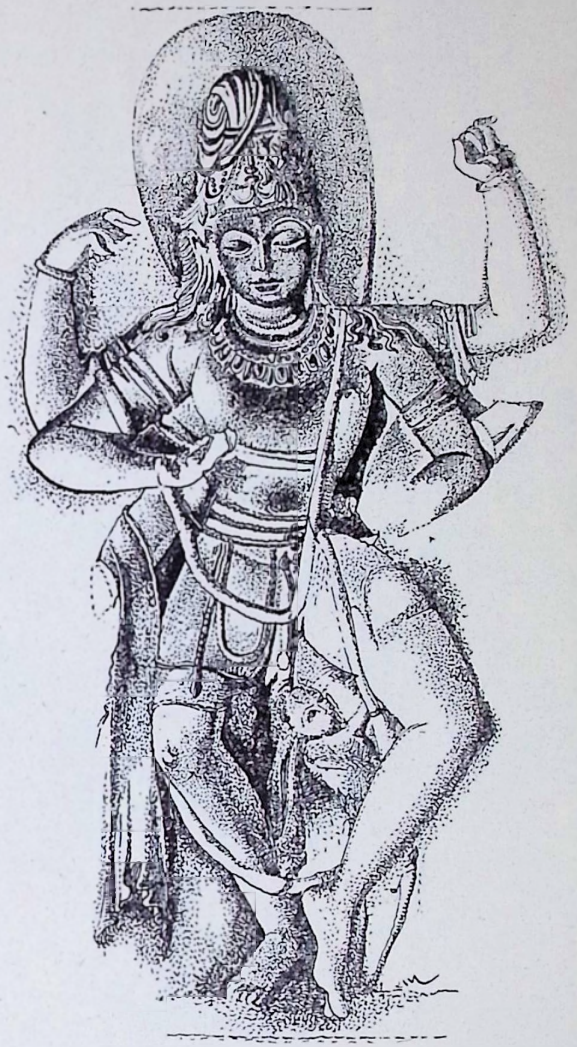
THE DANCE OF SHIVA (BHAIRAVA). From Ellora



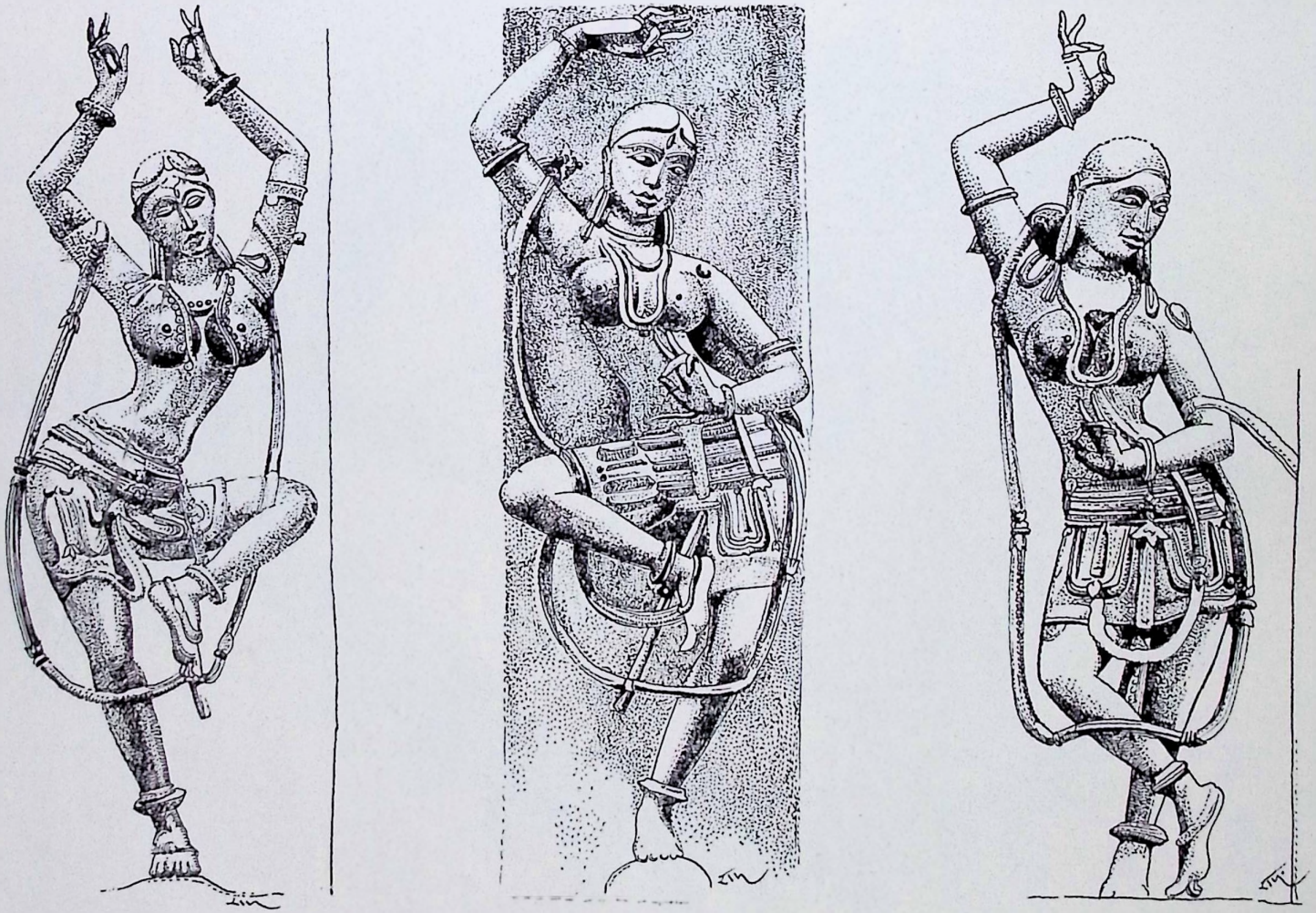
SHIVA DANCING THE TANDAVA. From Ellora



NATARAJA. From Badami

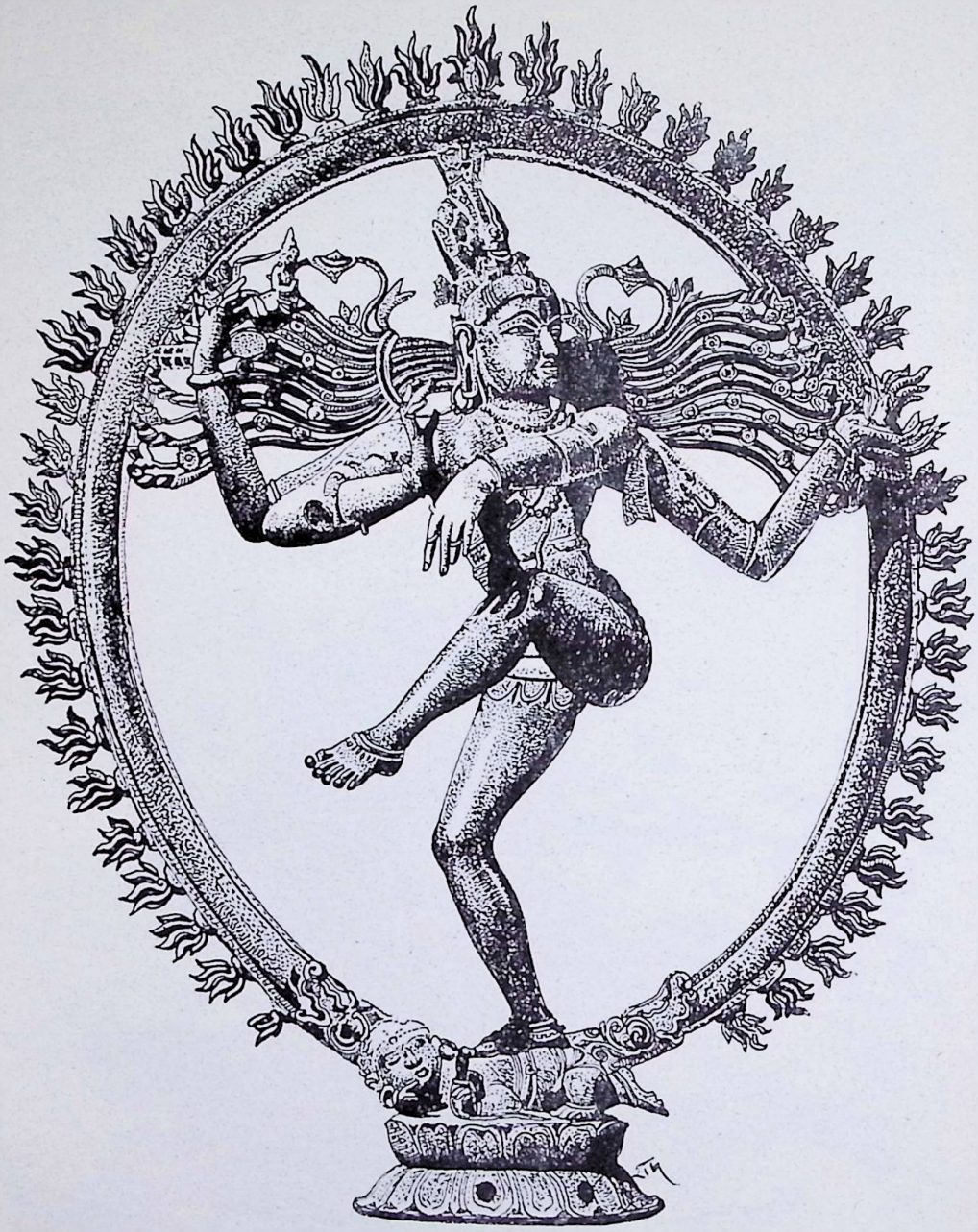


SHIVA DANCING THE TANDAVA. From Ellora



FEMALE DANCERS

From Ramappa Temple, Palampet, Hyderabad



SHIVA NATARAJA

Bronze. Madras State. 13th-14th Century A. D.



SHIVA NATARAJA

Bronze. From Velankanni, Tanjore District. 11th-12th Century A. D.

6675



DANCING KRISHNA
Bronze. South India



BALAKRISHNA
Copper. South India





Chathunni Panicker as Nala and Mrinalini Sarabhai as Damyanti in the Marriage of Nala and Damyanti in Nala Charitam, traditional Kathakali.



Panicker as King Nala and Shivashankar as the "Hamsa" in Nala Charitam, traditional Kathakali.



Panicker as Sri Krishna brings reconciliation between Aniruddha and Bana. An adaptation of Kathakali technique.

(Reproduced by Courtesy of Mrinalini Sarabhai)



THE HOLI DANCE
Celebrating the Advent of Spring
(*Photo : M. Desai*)



KATHAKALI DANCERS
(*Photo: A. L. Syed*)



MANIPURI DANCE
(*Photo : A. L. Syed*)



BHARATA NATYAM DANCE
(*Photo : M. Desai*)



KUMBHA DANCE



DANCE OF MADAN AND RATI

(*Photos: M. Desai*)



INDIAN DANCES BY UDAY SHANKAR'S BALLET TROUPE

(Photos : A. L. Syed)





FOLK DANCER OF ASSAM

(*Photos : Darshan Lall*)



THE NAGAS OF ASSAM IN DANCE ATTIRE



FOLK DANCERS OF ASSAM

(Photos : Darshan Lall)



RADHA KRISHNA DANCE



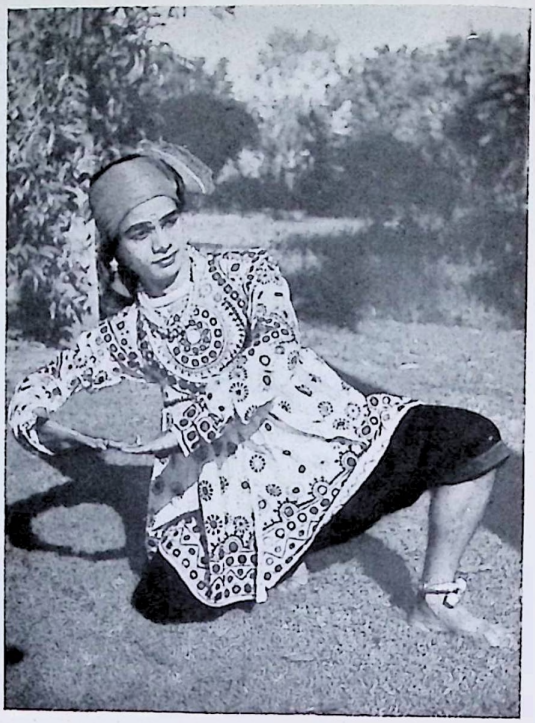
NAG OR SERPENT DANCE

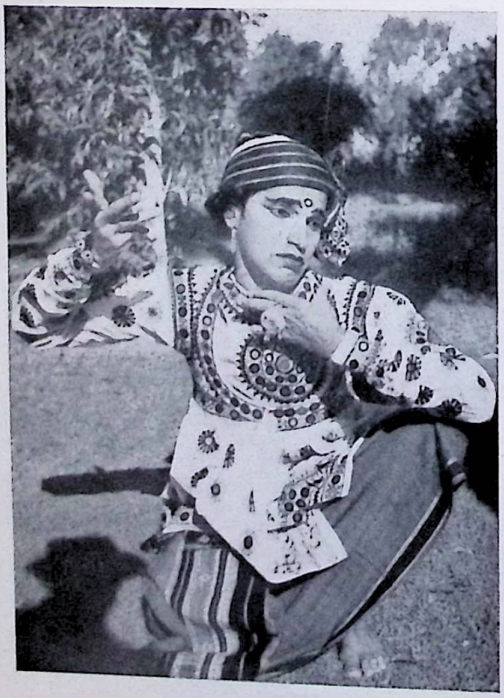


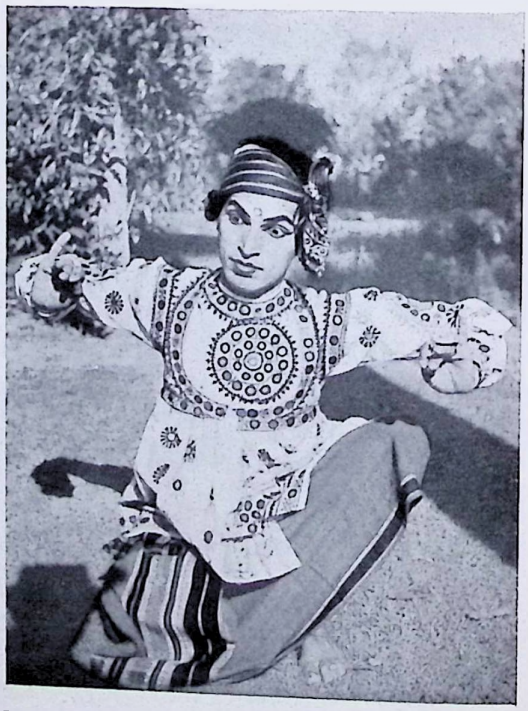


FOLK DANCES









INDIAN FOLK DANCES BY MRINALINI'S BALLET TROUPE
(Photos : A. L. Syed)



DANCING GIRL
From Vadnagar, N. Gujarat
(*Photo : C. J. Bhatt*)



SHIVA DANCING THE TANDAVA. ELLORA



DANCING GIRL
From Vadnagar, N. Gujarat
(*Photo : C. J. Bhatt*)





CELESTIAL BEAUTIES IN DANCING POSES, FROM BELUR

(*Photos : A. K. Banerji*)



DANCING PARVATI, FROM HALEBID



DANCING SHIVA, FROM HALEBID

(From *Architecture in Dharwar and Mysore*)



MUSIC PARTY FROM AMARAVATI SCULPTURES

MUSIC

PERHAPS nowhere else is Beethoven's dictum that "music is a revelation higher than all science and philosophy" truer than in India, where music pulsates in every fibre of our being and interprets life in every phase of it. So vitally important a place it occupies in our cultural life that it can with equal emphasis be asserted that no other nation seeks more than ours to enshrine in her music her ideals and dreams, her hopes and heart-breaks, her tears and smiles. For ages past, Indian music, as one of the truest and most spontaneous expressions of our artistic mood, has reached deep down into the lives of our people and has ever been an intimate part of our emotional and spiritual life. Not only has it functioned vitally in the building up of our cultural self but also plays a prominent role in our eager quest for the Ultimate. It is this dual predominance that gives to the music of India its peculiar appeal.

Of all the facets of our cultural heritage, music is perhaps the most ancient. It is a product of ages, moulded and coloured by succeeding generations with an astonishing continuity.

The beginnings of our music are, however, lost in the mists of antiquity, and we have nowhere a recorded history of it. Philosophically, Indian music is supposed to be a revelation of the Divine grace. It is said that before the creation of the world an all-pervading sound emanating from Brahma's *Nad* rang through the universal space. And that was the origin of music. Our mythologies are steeped in fascinating legends of gods and goddesses who are traditionally believed to be its authors and patrons. Shiva is supposed to be the creator of music and Saraswati is regarded as its patron goddess, who is depicted as sitting on a white lotus with a veena and a lute in her hands. In the court of Indra, the Lord of Heaven, Gandharvas are the celestial singers, Apsaras the dancers, and the Kinnaras are the performers on musical instruments. Our books of literature teem with many little stories centred round music which give an idea of the high place music has held from very ancient days in the life of our people who regarded it as an inseparable part of devotion to the Supreme. Popley has narrated a very interesting story about Narada from the *Adbhuta Ramayana*. "Once upon a time the great *rishi* Narada thought within himself that he had mastered the whole art and science of music. To curb his pride the all-knowing Vishnu took him to visit the abode of the gods. They entered a spacious building, in which were numerous men and women weeping over their broken limbs. Vishnu stopped and enquired of them the reason for their lamentation. They answered that they were the ragas and the raginis, created by Mahadeva; but that as a *rishi* of the name of Narada, ignorant of the true knowledge of music and unskilled in performance, had sung them recklessly, their features were distorted and their limbs broken; and that, unless Mahadeva or some other skilful person would sing them properly, there was no hope of their ever being restored to their former state of body. Narada, ashamed, kneeled down before Vishnu and asked to be forgiven."

Coming to the sober facts of relatively recent history we find that mention is frequently made in the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, the scriptures of Buddhism, and the early Tamil literature, of musical instruments and music—both classical and popular. The hymns of *Samaveda*, associated with ritual, had to be chanted with the most precise intonation, and had their own metrical system—the *Sama Sutras* laying down their peculiar canons of recital. The folk songs naturally enjoyed greater vocal liberties, being guided by ordinary human feelings. All this goes to show that music, even in centuries preceding

the Christian era, was not only a 'cultivated art' but also equally expressive of human emotions.

Music which was all along developing and growing by incorporating folk songs and tunes into the classical patterns and by the classical style in its turn influencing folk music, reached its peak under the Imperial Guptas when Samudragupta played on the veena, Kalidasa composed his immortal masterpieces and Bharata his *Natya Shastra*. The rise and development of the drama after Kalidasa meant also the development of music as all Indian dramas are essentially operatic.

With the revival of the Bhakti form of worship, the seventh and eighth centuries of our era in the south and later the fifteenth century in the north witnessed a great musical responsiveness in the masses. The Bhakti movement emphasised worship by prayer and absolute faith, in which songs were the outpourings of a real devotion. This urge of the heart for the Divine ultimately resulted in the coming into being of such popular musical styles as *Bhajans* and *Kirtans*.

The one art which the zeal of the early Muslim invaders could not destroy was music. On the contrary they enriched it. Probably one of the richest single contributions in the development of Indian music, was made by the Afghan and Mughal rulers of India. Many of them were great lovers of music and extended enthusiastic patronage to it. In the court of Akbar music was specially cultivated and Abul Fazl in his *Ain-i-Akbari* has recorded the names of thirty-eight masters of music, both vocal and instrumental. Every royal court in that age had musicians attached to it where the ancient music of India was considerably modified and enriched with the constant blending of airs and tunes of the folk styles. *Dhrupad* in its present form made its appearance under Akbar and later *Thumari* was sung in the courts of the rulers of Oudh. Instruments too occupied a place of honour in the courtly music of the Mughals. The sitar and veena, rabab and sarangi were some of the most highly developed and popular stringed instruments of those days.

During the last few decades the scientific study of music has developed considerably in our country and music schools and associations have sprung up all over India. Today, names like Vishnu Digambar, Bhatkhande and Rabindranath Tagore are associated with the movement for the preservation and development of a living musical culture of India.

At present a distinction is drawn between the Northern or Hindustani music and the Southern or Carnatic music—a system of music confined to a small part of South India. But this is a superficial distinction based on differences of nomenclature and certain melodic patterns. Basically there is only one Indian music—the two in the ultimate analysis having a common source, common fundamental notes and many common and parallel ragas.

Indian music has been founded on sound musical principles. The word for 'melody-type' in our music is Raga and every song is set in some raga or ragini—the latter being a more feminine and elegant presentation of the main theme. The possible number of ragas in our music is very large, but thirty-six are generally recognised from which are derived hundreds of ragas and raginis and their mixed varieties.

Raga is the basis of our music which has grown and prospered principally along the lines of melody. The seven notes or *Swars*—*Shadja*, *Rishabha*, *Gandhara*, *Madhyama*, *Panchama*, *Dhaivada* and *Nishad*, distributed along the musical scale in order of ascent form the melody mould or the ground plan of a song. Of the seven notes, except *Shadja* and *Panchama* which are constant and fixed, the remaining five *Swars*, besides having neatly marked characteristics of their own in relation to one another, have shades of delicate and subtle variations in themselves occurring in regulated durations and successions. Each raga is thus a cluster of *Swars* or notes in various formations, artistically embellished with microtonal effects while retaining an individuality of its own.

Bharat says that a "song without an *alankara* (embellishments) is like a night without moon, a river without water, a creeper without flowers and a woman without ornaments." So the Indian musician, besides employing musical intervals for the enrichment of the raga, makes use of elaborate graces or *gamaks*, by a clever manipulation of sounds with indefinite variations and repetitions of notes. These new variations are not separate notes and have no fixed character, depending only on the mood and the imagination of the performing artist. Starting from a fundamental note, the musician although keeping himself strictly within the limits of the traditional scale always creates music by varying the melody in countless different ways, blending it at the same time with his own personality, so that every time we hear a raga there is an appeal and freshness which never fades. Our music is thus fascinatingly melodious without being monotonous. This emphasis on melody in Indian music sets it apart from the European music which is characterised by harmony. In Indian music the melody is produced by a succession of concordant notes, whereas in Western music discordant notes are massed together to produce harmony.

Raga, meaning passion, suggests the idea of mood. And that brings us to the second characteristic of Indian music. As the power of melody in our music is not confined merely to the giving of a pleasurable sensation, but embraces the whole range of human emotions, ragas have been associated with moods and feelings which interpret and invoke particular human passions and sentiments. Bharat mentions eight different types of "emotive flavours" (*Rasas*)—*Sringar* (Love), *Hasya* (Laughter), *Rudra* (Anger), *Vira* (Heroic), *Karuna* (Compassion), *Vibhatsa* (Aversion), *Bhayankara* (Terror) and *Shanta* (Serene). These *rasas* provide the motifs for our ragas which in order to be appealing must also correspond to the moods of nature. Accordingly, we have ragas and raginis which are played and sung at particular seasons and at specific hours creating thereby a harmony between the soul of man and of nature. *Vasant raga*, for example, inspiring emotions of joy, is sung in the spring season ; *Megh*, representing exuberance of joy with the coming of the rains, is a raga for the rainy season ; *Bhairava*, arousing feelings of asceticism and reverence, is sung early in the morning ; and *Raga Shri*, allied with the feelings of love, is a song for the first part of the evening in the dewy season.

Tradition goes so far as to claim that our ragas are able to reproduce and create the conditions and moods suggested by them. And there are many interesting stories of untimely rainfall or spontaneous lighting of lamps under the influence of music. Whatever may be the truth in these stories there is no doubt that the raga singer in India has successfully adapted music to the seasons of the year, the different hours of the day, and the moods and emotions of man and nature. As Percy Brown says, "the raga is a work of art, in which the time, the song, the picture, the colours, the season, the hour and the virtues are so blended together as to produce a composite production to which the West can furnish no parallel."

In the evolution of our music, ragas have undergone many changes, and some have, from time to time, even dropped out from current usage. Many of the surviving ragas and raginis have lost their original structural forms and today their note compositions are very much different from what is given in the ancient texts.

From very early times music in India has divided itself into two classes—*Marg* and *Deshi*. The former follows the rules fixed by the music makers and is the conventional or classical music of the country. The latter are those that have been sung by the masses in different parts of the country according to their tastes in their own dialects and tongues. There is an amazing variety of both *Marg* and *Deshi* music, the styles and themes of which have been heard, acquired and orally communicated from the master to the disciple from ancient days.

Among the classical varieties, *Dhrupad* was the most popular form of music for three or four centuries, reaching its zenith in the fifteenth century when Tansen sang it at the

court of Akbar. Although it is usually a solemn religious song, the chief emotions which are generally depicted in it are *Vira*, *Shringar* and *Shanta*. Characterised by a restraint and a slow movement of verbal and emotional dignity, *Dhrupad* is the music of the classical Indian, and *Dhrupad* singing is even to-day regarded as a high accomplishment.

Closely allied to *Dhrupad* in spirit are *Hori* and *Dhamar* styles of music, descriptive of the Holi festival and Krishna's amorous adventures with Radha.

With the advent of the Muslim culture and its consequent fusion with Hindu thought and ways of living, our music could not escape adjustments and ultimately the classical *Dhrupad* yielded place to the romantic *Khyal*. *Khyal* conveys the idea of imagination which also symbolises its spirit. Introduced probably by Amir Khusrau and developed by Sultan Alauddin in the thirteenth century and by the Mughals later, *Khyal* is recognised today as the standard of classical music, though the orthodox *Dhrupad* singers prefer to give it an inferior place. The *Khyal* style is less restrained and less bound by rules and makes up for the graces and *alankars* which the *Dhrupad* lacks.

Thereafter, the music of India enters into one of its most interesting phases. Shedding the discipline and decorum of the purely classical varieties, an entirely new style of music came into vogue in the form of *Thumari*, *Ghazal* and *Dadra*, characterised by soft and elegant notes and sentimental poetry, symbolising the age of ease and luxury of which the Nawabs of Oudh were the representatives. *Thumari*, intimately associated with the melody and grace of classical music, mixes up different ragas. The resulting composition is a pretty song artistically designed and gracefully sung with greater freedom in the rendering of the various shades of emotions suggested by the poem. S. K. Chaube writes : "While the *Khyal* is like classical painting done on a wide canvas, the *Thumari* is like miniature painting with all its rich artistic details."

Ghazal, born as a literary product of the ninteenth century Urdu, was soon adopted as a style of music by the Kawwals and dancing girls and has come to stay as a favourite form of music. *Ghazal* has an intense emotional appeal and depends for its successful rendering on correct accent and good voice.

Dadra, another variety of light music, has a style bearing close similarity to *Thumari*. Differing only in their *talas*, they have a sameness of structure, theme, language, sentiment and treatment.

The temple provides the greatest inspiration for music. "Those who sing here," says Sankaracharya "sing God." The historical background of our music is religious and for ages past religious impulses and spiritual passions have pervaded every aspect of our life. *Bhajans* and *Kirtans* as forms of religious music are found all over the country. The music of *Kirtan*, though simple and highly emotional, has no classical bias. Sung collectively, it has moved the masses to great emotional heights under the spiritual impetus supplied by Ramanuja, Chaitanya and Vallabhacharya. The style of music known as *Kirtan* in the south is not however the same thing as the *Kirtan* of the north. The Carnatic *Kirtan* is more akin to the *Dhrupad*.

The *Bhajan*, sometimes rendered into the *Khyal*, is garbed in simple and moving language and has for centuries inspired the masses to mystical ecstasy. Surdas, Mira Bai and Tulsi Das have given us hundreds of immortal verses which go to make excellent *Bhajans*. *Kawwali*, *Marcia*, *Soz* and *Naat* are the counterparts of the *Kirtans* and *Bhajans* for the Muslims.

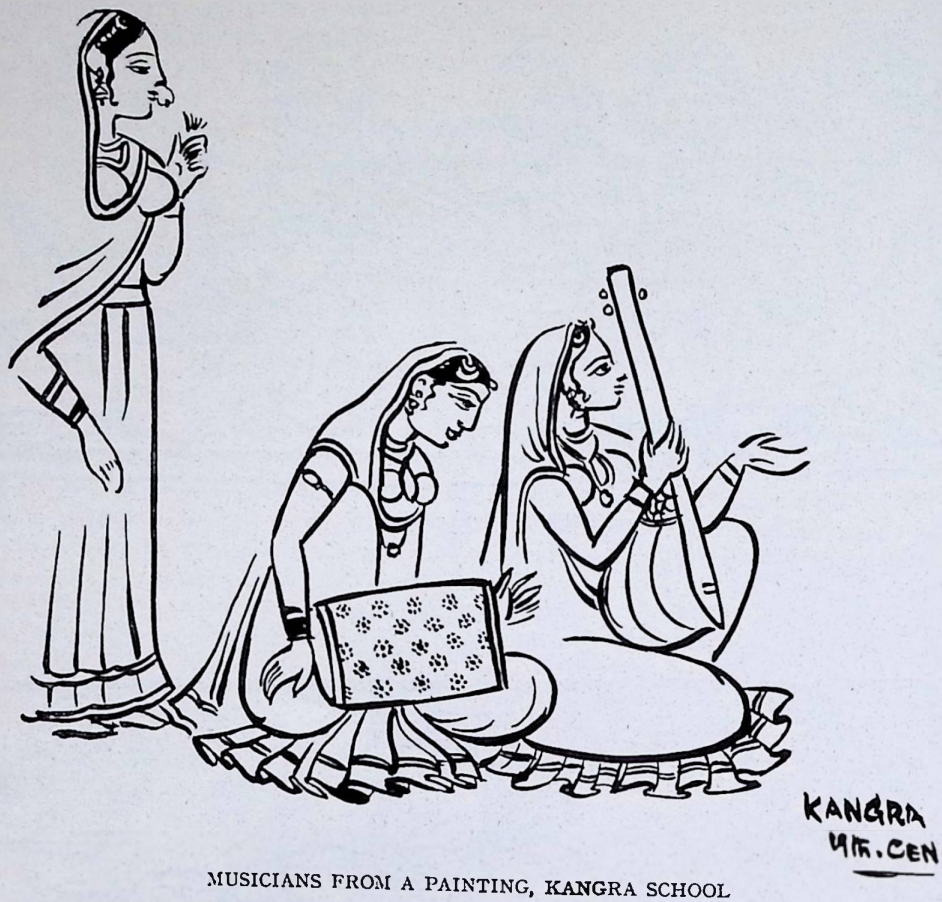
The sobriety and solemnity of classical music has been side by side followed by a popular emotional outburst in the masses of our country. Possessing neither the restraint and dignity of the classical varieties, nor the grace and ornamentation of the popular styles, our folk songs and ballads are yet rich in sentiments and powerfully expressive in language that is always simple and precise, adorned with homely similes and metaphors and metres



MUSICIANS FROM BOROBUDUR



MUSICIANS FROM RECENT EXCAVATIONS AT BIJNOR, U. P.



MUSICIANS FROM A PAINTING, KANGRA SCHOOL



MUSICIANS FROM AJANTA



SAMUDRAGUPTA PLAYING ON THE VEENA



MUSICIANS
Kangra School, 18th Century



A MUSIC PARTY
After a Bagh Fresco



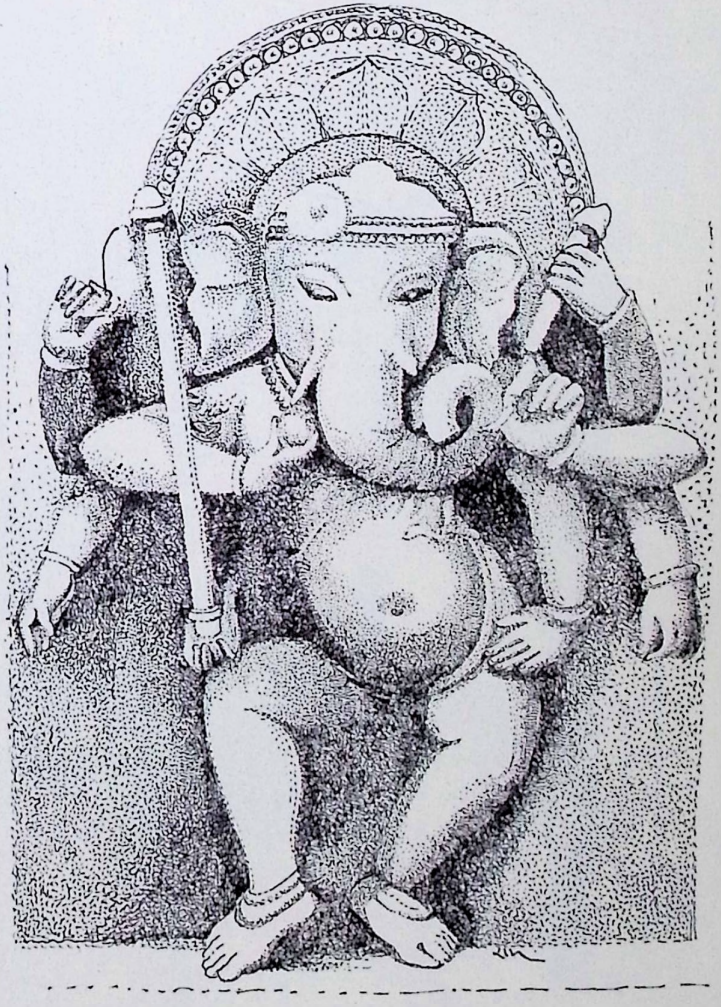
TEMPLE DRUMMER
After Bengal Terracotta, 16th Century



DRUM DANCE
After Sculpture from Temple at Belur



HINDU-JAVANESE BAS-RELIEF
(After *Other Minds* by Zœte)



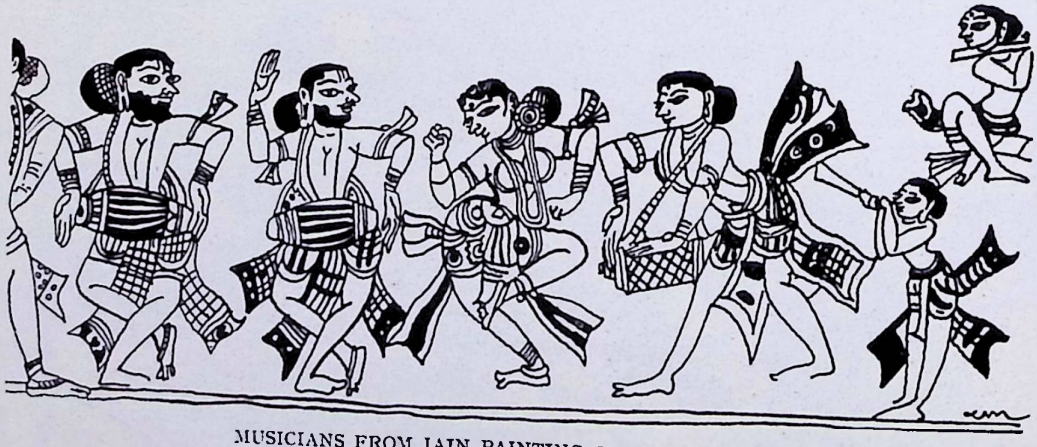
DANCING GANESH



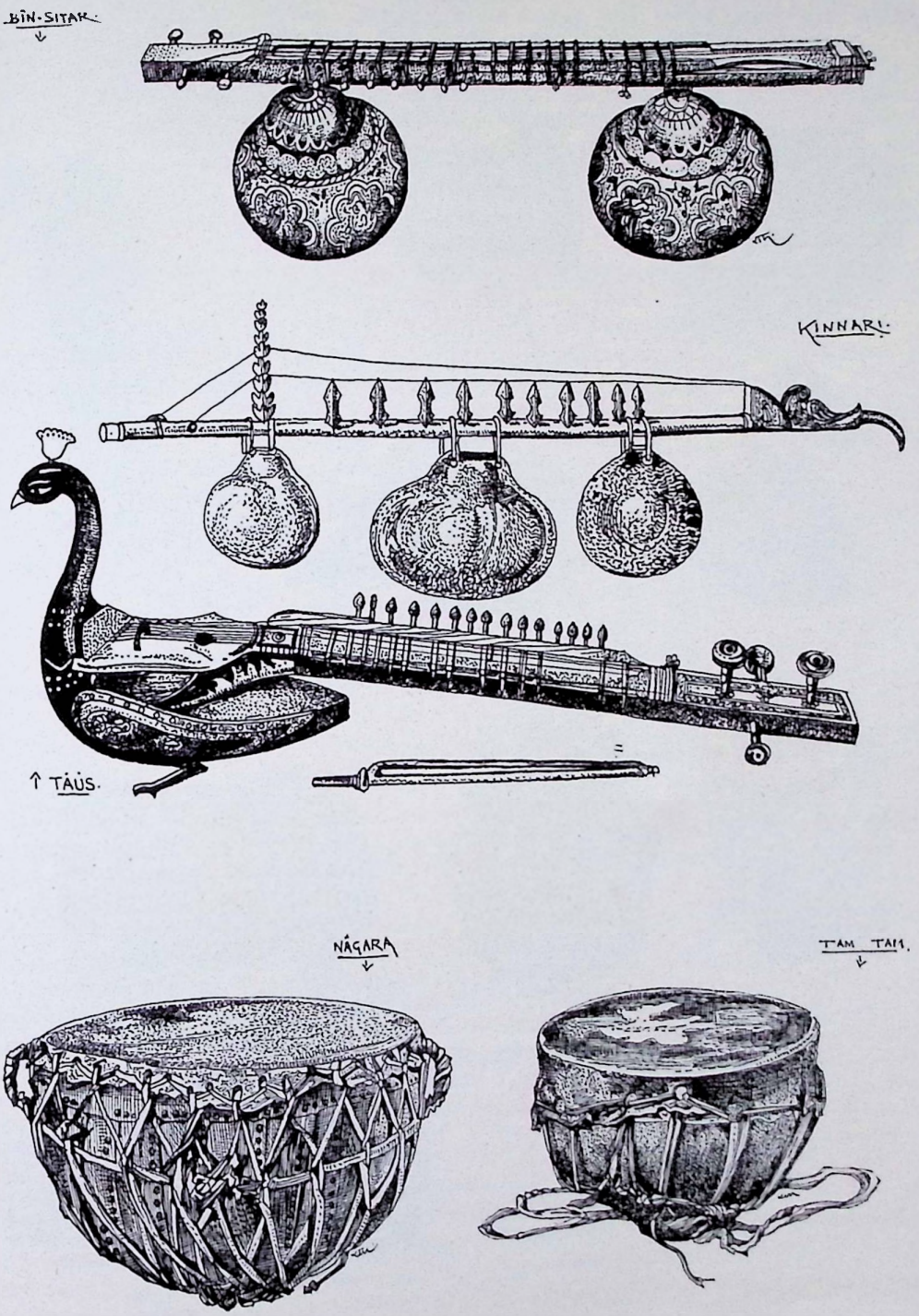
SARASVATI
After a Jain Sketch on Palm Leaf.



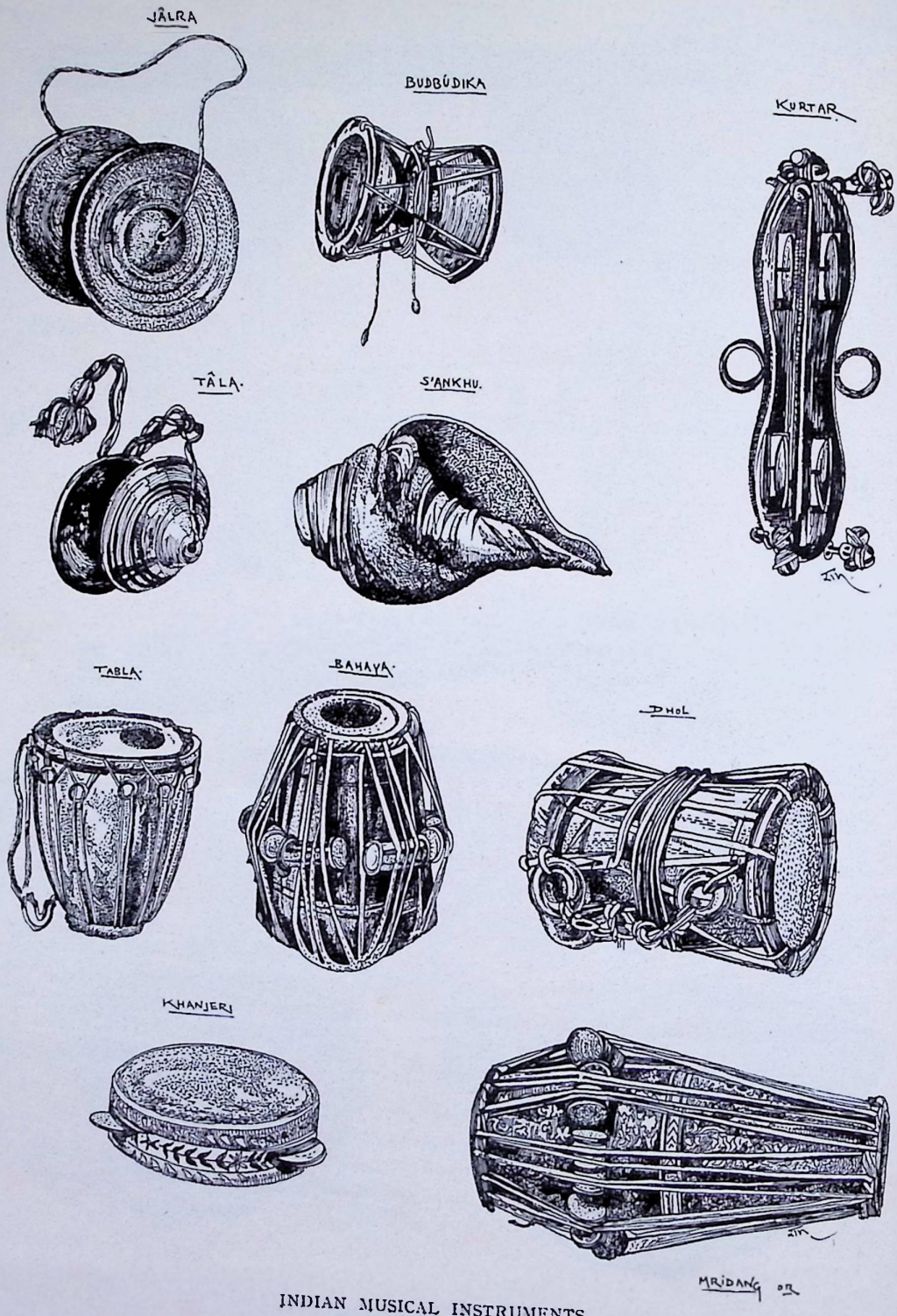
DANCER
After a Jain Painting.



MUSICIANS FROM JAIN PAINTING ON A PALM LEAF
(National Museum)



INDIAN MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS



INDIAN MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

natural and rhyming. This perfectly artless music set against the background of the village and the peasantry is closely linked to the very springs of life and expresses the culture and thought of rural India. Devendra Satyarthi says : "The villager in India, in his inspired moments succeeds to celebrate a true marriage between words and music as he takes to the time-honoured songs and ballads ; connected together his song may make a full epic of village life, with a story simple and enduring like the earth and the characters which grow like the wheat and paddy in his fields. Work and leisure recall the old memories; his imagination takes a flight bringing every time a new fire to his immemorial similes and metaphors, bringing every time a warm grace to the outline of his everyday life." Every season and every festival, every occupation and social occasion has its heritage of folk songs. *Chaiti, Sawnee* and *Kajri* catch the seasonal moods of summer and the rains. The airs of *Baul* and *Bhatiali* speak of the boatman's occupation and his longings. *Mahiya* and *Powada, Bilhari* and *Nondi Sindhu* move the rustic heart of the farmer and the cartman to intense pathos and sweetness, while *Sohar* and *Holar* awaken warmth and joy in the hearts of the countrywomen every time a new child is born. *Birha* and *Bideshia, Jhoori* and *Mohna* are the songs of love, tragic and unhappy but faithful unto death. In every language and dialect, in every village and hut these songs, impregnated with emotion and philosophy, are sung by the old and young alike with an ever-new urge.

Although classical music in its purest form does not belong to the masses, their own music is not entirely divorced from the *marg* varieties. Ragas like *Pilu, Sarang, Durga* and *Sorath* can easily be discovered in these songs.

Divine adoration or human love in all its aspects is the dominant theme of our songs, the words of which are always sincere and passionate. Words for the musician in our country are merely a way out for the expression of the inner feelings. "All songs," according to *Vishnu Purana,* "are a part of Him, who wears a form of sound." In classical music, however, words are not accorded any special value and they are always brief and scarcely audible. The reason, as a well known art critic points out, is that "the singer believes in putting all poetry into SOUNDS irrespective of what they connote." The folk varieties on the other hand are invariably richly worded and the poetry of these songs pervades the compositions.

Thus from *Dhrupad* to *Dadra* and the folk varieties, it is a long "procession from the abstract and the divine to the concrete and the human, with an increasing prominence of the verbal."

Instrumental music has from the very beginning occupied an honoured place in our cultural life and most of the early musical instruments are still in use and have not altered their ancient form even in the smallest particular. The *Veena* and the *Tambura,* in every detail, still remain as they are described in the ancient texts.

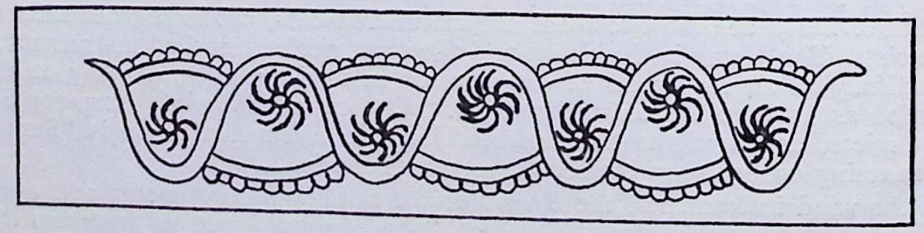
Music in our country is always played or sung to a drone which is a subordinate instrumental accompaniment, providing a background to the principal melody. The classical vocalists use the *Tambura* for this purpose and this is indispensable both for the *Dhrupad* and the *Khyal* singer. It serves as a base for the human voice and keeps the singer in time. The *Sarangi* is another effective drone instrument for the musician. But the *Sitar* and the *Dilruba* are the two most elegant instruments, producing beautiful melodies for the soloist. The *Veena* is the oldest and the most perfect musical instrument, lending itself beautifully to all the graces of our music. In ancient days, playing on the *veena* was regarded as an essential accomplishment. On one of his coins, Emperor Samudragupta is depicted as playing on the *veena* and his title engraved thereon is "Sangitarnava Parag"—meaning one who has crossed the ocean of music.

Of the wind instruments, the *Bansri* or the flute is widely known and appreciated and has legendary associations with Krishna. The *Shahnai* is an old instrument and for sweetness and appeal is unequalled among the musical instruments of the world.

Because of its deep resonance, the *Mridanga* is found a very suitable background for the *Dhrupad* style of music. It is the most ancient *tala* or percussion instrument. It is said to have been created by Brahma to serve as an accompaniment to the dance of Shiva. Images and terracottas found in the excavations at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro and the frescoes of Ajanta represent gods and goddesses playing the *veena*, flute and the *mridanga*. But the *Tabla* occupies an unique place in our music. It is the instrument that guides the musician and enables him to keep proper time and also gives rhythm to his music. It is believed to have been invented by Amir Khusrau during the reign of Alauddin Khilji.

During recent years our instrumental music has absorbed many features of Western music and experiments are still being made on a very large scale to adopt and introduce some of the features of the latter into Indian Music. There is almost a craze to develop our music on the lines of the Western orchestra. But orchestras of Indian instruments cannot be justified unless it be accepted that polyphonic music, that is, music which makes use of several instruments playing distinct melodies, represents a progress on monodic forms, that is, music made essentially of one melodic development whether this be played by one or several instruments. Music, to be true to itself, must be national in character, and in keeping with the classical traditions of a country. At this stage, we are bound to ask ourselves whether a music which has been built up and perfected through ages of refined civilisation and creative genius can really enrich itself by harmonizing along lines of the music of the West. It is, however, obvious that our traditional music with its emphasis on psychic moods and spiritual states offers greater possibilities of successfully expressing the subtle and delicate emotions than the music of the classical Westerner.

Our music has a distinctive charm and beauty of surpassing worth, so much so that for any one who has the ear and susceptibility for musical beauty it is impossible to remain unaffected by the haunting charm and spiritual appeal of the music of India. By his music, the Indian musician touches the profoundest emotional chords of the mind of the listener and appeals to an emotional experience which is wider and deeper than the emotional experience of the conscious mind. He is not only the singer who takes the listener away from the joys and sorrows of life, but also the spiritual guide who leads us "to that lonely region of renunciation which lies at the root of the Universe." Yeats has, therefore, good reason to say that the Music of India is not an art but life itself.



Creeper Motive



"BULLOCK CHARIOT"

This picture is by Abul Hasan Nadir-Uz-Zaman, the greatest painter of Jahangir's time, and son of the celebrated Persian artist, Aqa, Raza of Herat. While the heads of the bullocks with their rather wild expression are drawn more after the Persian or rather the Chinese style, the treatment of their bodies is absolutely Indian. In the corner of the front panel of the chariot is inscribed "Raqim Abul Hasan", indicating the authorship of the picture. The technique of the picture is purely Persian though the subject-matter is entirely Indian.

(Reproduced from *Studies in Indian Painting* by N. C. MEHTA.)

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PAINTING

CULTURALLY contemporaneous history of every country offers clear and abundant evidence that man has always aspired to the attainment of concrete vividness of visual presentation of the real and the ideal, depending on the peculiar evolutional stage of his civilisation at a particular period of time. With the earliest dawn of consciousness, his endeavour in this direction appears to have led him to invent various forms of expression. By and by he came to prefer the two chief visual languages—the language of image-making, and of drawing and painting, which he evolved to such a high degree that the principles of their vital being were discovered, which operating through stone and colour have endowed the creations of sculpture and painting with a formal beauty as near perfection as we can conceive.

In India, too, has occurred an identical phenomenon. These two were the media to which the Indians became preferentially susceptible, with the result that Indian painting and sculpture have perhaps been more naturally expressive of the thoughts and ideals of the nation than any other representational art. Over the centuries, these two have given the most forceful directions to the course of the national cultural life of the country, and as vehicles for the communication of the conception of Beauty have achieved the utmost limits of expression.

Unfortunately, the roll of centuries and the iconoclastic ravages have removed from our midst, though not entirely effaced, some of the best works of genius in the field of painting. The salvage, however, is sufficient to establish beyond doubt the existence of a very rich and colourful creative art of painting in India, characteristics running throughout and in every art style, be it, frescoes, paintings on banners and dossals, palm leaves or *patas*, miniatures, or book illustrations. Every type and technical detail exhibits a mastery of line and proportion, striking postures and expressions, remarkable adornment of figures and finish, and above all a note of interpretation apart from imitation. Art for the Indian has primarily been not a mere production of a resemblance to the 'obvious' but a creation, a creation of the impressions produced by the object, real or imaginary. The Buddhist and the Hindu artists have particularly striven after the Reality behind the common appearance of things. Indian painting at its best has, therefore, been an expression of the Ideal—an appeal to the inner mind and not merely to the sensuous eye.

Although it is easy enough to think of Indian painting as progressing from 'primitive' to 'mature', from a descriptive and decorative art to an abstract and idealistic one, the pendulum has constantly swung between decadence and debility on the one hand, and vigour and vitality on the other. At different times in history and in different regions, people evolved specific styles of drawing and painting by developing certain ideas and objects, certain arrangements of lines and spaces, so that Indian painting has blossomed and decayed, reviving every time in new splendour.

The desire of the Indian to sustain his arts and crafts on the basis of a philosophical idealism has given a very picturesque origin to the art of painting. "Narayan, the Supreme Being was engaged in meditation when the celestial dancing girls (*apsaras*) tried to disturb him with a display of coquetry and blandishments. The God conceived of a plan to cure the maidens of their vanity. He extracted the juice of a mango tree, and using that as his paint, he drew an imaginary picture portrait of a nymph, large eyed and delicate, with a form so filled with grace that no goddess nor woman, could vie with her in the three worlds. The apsaras were put to shame when they saw Urvashi, the painted maiden, and crept silently

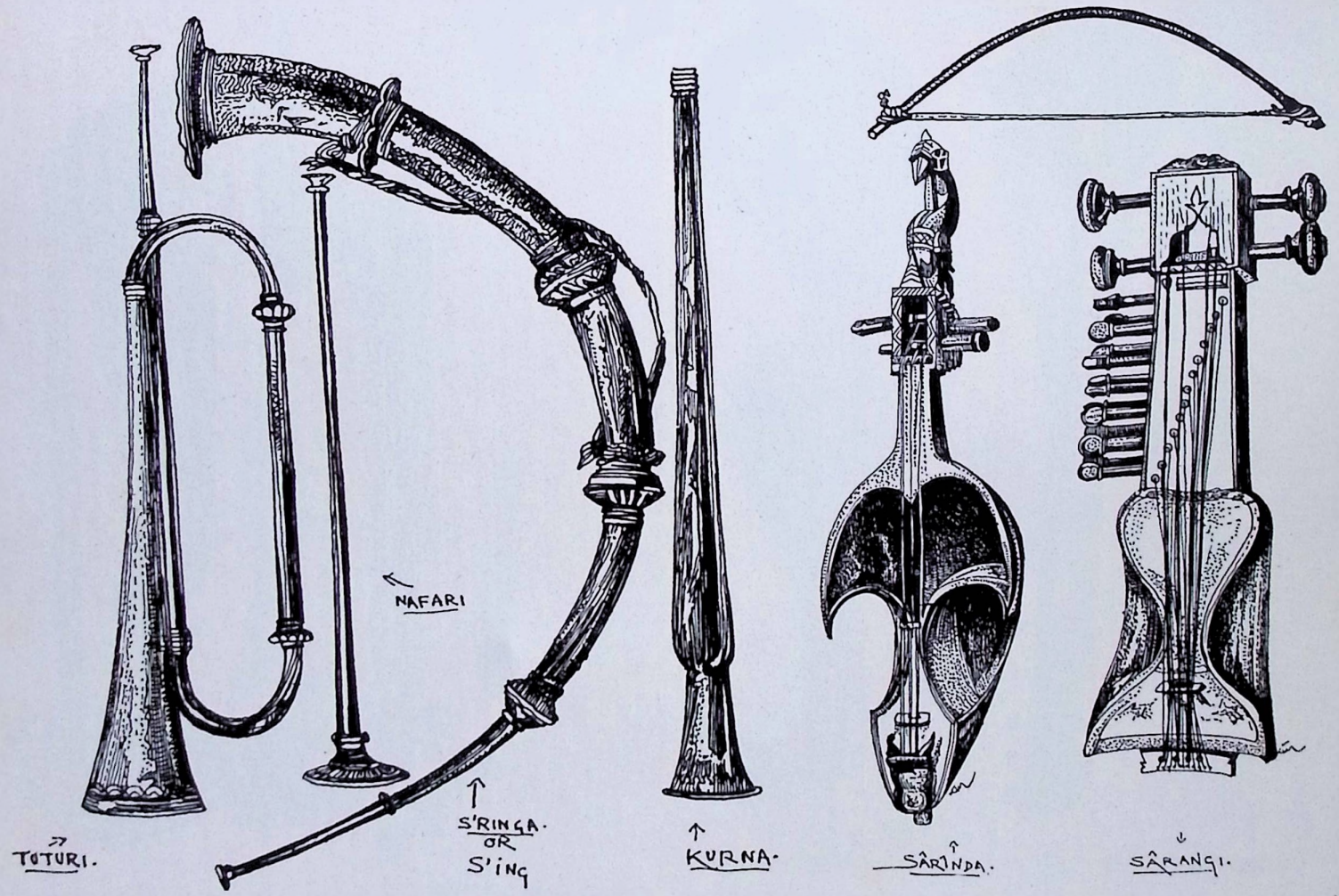
away from God's presence, and the picture into which Divine skill had infused the golden breath of life, became the ideal type of feminine beauty. Vishwakarma, the architect of heaven, was then instructed in the art and science of painting, so that he might transmit his knowledge to the peoples of the earth."

In the *Chitralaksana*, supposed to be the earliest treatise on the theory of painting and based on pre-Buddhist traditions, there is a story of how Brahma ordered a king to paint the portrait of a Brahman's dead son, so that he might breathe life again into the body ; and that was known to be the first painting ever done.

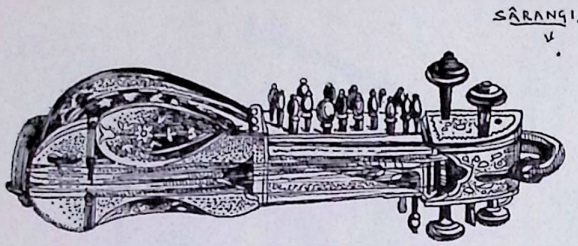
Shorn of this mythological basis, it is likely that the painter's art in India took its origin in the symbolic representation of various supernatural powers, such as sun, fire, rain and storm, and later of Vedic gods and goddesses. The desire in the loving devotee's mind to please these powers may have also suggested the need for colouring and embellishment of the symbols and the images, giving rise to a symbolical and decorative art of painting in the beginning of things. That symbolic painting did occupy a significant place in the scheme of our cultural life is proved by the surviving tradition, developed into superstition, about the paintings on walls and doors in the homes of rural India. The crudely drawn figures of elephants, birds and scorpions are even today supposed to possess magical powers to drive away evil or to invite good fortune.

Painting as a way of life, as an integral part of our everyday existence, has in fact persisted right through the centuries in our country. Painted earthen vessels, decorative paintings with ritualistic and ceremonial significance on the floor and mud walls of the huts, done by the women or the potter on occasions of various fasts, festivals and ceremonies have an ageless tradition behind them. The village folk, nourished on myths and legends of magical, animistic, fetishistic and other primitive significance, have always found elevating topics in the rendering of the religious themes, floral, geometrical and animal subjects—whose unsophisticated candour and colourful appeal have never failed to stir even the most critical. An interesting example and by far the most significant of this class of paintings is the one known as *patas*, i.e., scroll paintings on long vertical sheets of cloth or paper rolled round a pair of wooden sticks. "That such paintings had in their origin a deep magical significance is evident from the fact that in Birbhum and the adjoining regions, mainly inhabited by Santhals, there is a class of Patuas or Scroll-painters who are still known as Jadu Patuas who paint pictures for the Santhals. But scroll painting as a form of traditional painting in India is neither confined to the Jadu Patuas nor only to Bengal or Eastern India. Indeed it is an age old traditional practice presumably known and practised throughout India from very early times and played an important role in the social life of our people through the ages. The Patuas were painters and at the same time a sort of wandering minstrels also with their collection of scrolls. They used to unroll the scrolls one by one and each scene contained in one panel, each scroll consisting of a series of such panels, showing the progress of the entire narrative stage by stage, and at the same time singing verses in explanation of the narrative. It was through such songs and pictures that the cultural tradition of the people as a whole was transmitted down the ages to our own times." (Dr. Nihar Ranjan Ray.) This tradition has not yet died out but still survives.

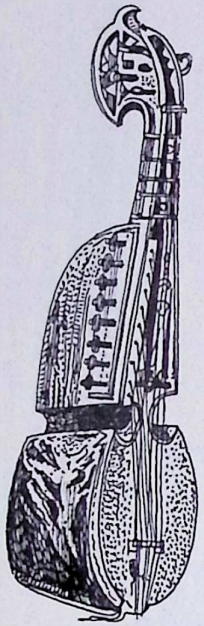
Apart from these folk performances, however, painting in our country has always been considered and practised as a polite secular accomplishment. Although no substantial visible evidence of the painter's art of the pre-Ajanta days has come to light, painting from long before recorded history, as the records and relics of the days about and after the Mauryan Empire show, has occupied a place of honour in our cultural life. Ancient India was keenly alive to this aspect of cultural education and painting appeared prominently in every list of the 64 *kalas*. "The study of a good picture helps one to fulfil one's duty by becoming a better citizen ; and to attain liberation from the expensive and enslaving demands of the lower nature, through the cultivation of the higher nature," says the *Vish-*



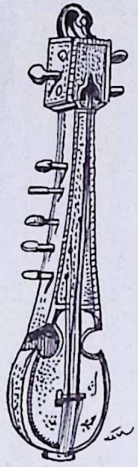
INDIAN MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS



SÂRANGI, SMALL



RABÔB.



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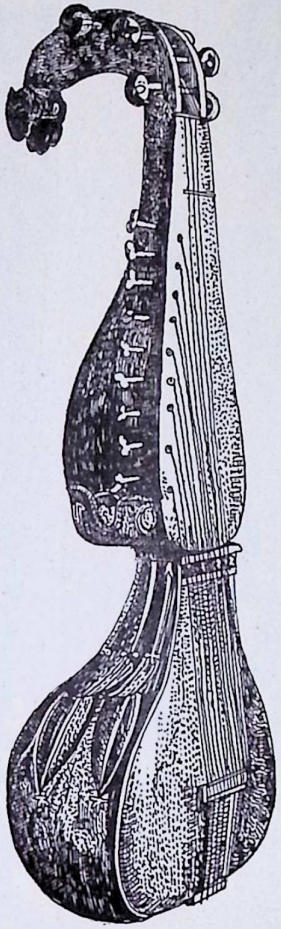
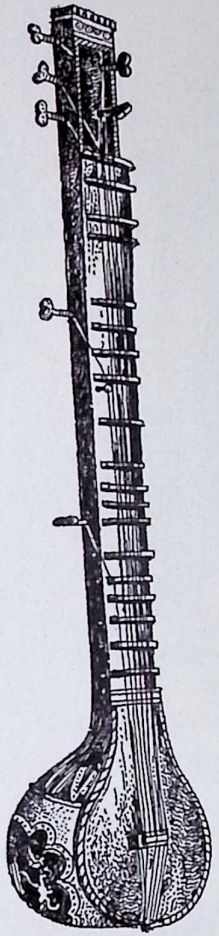
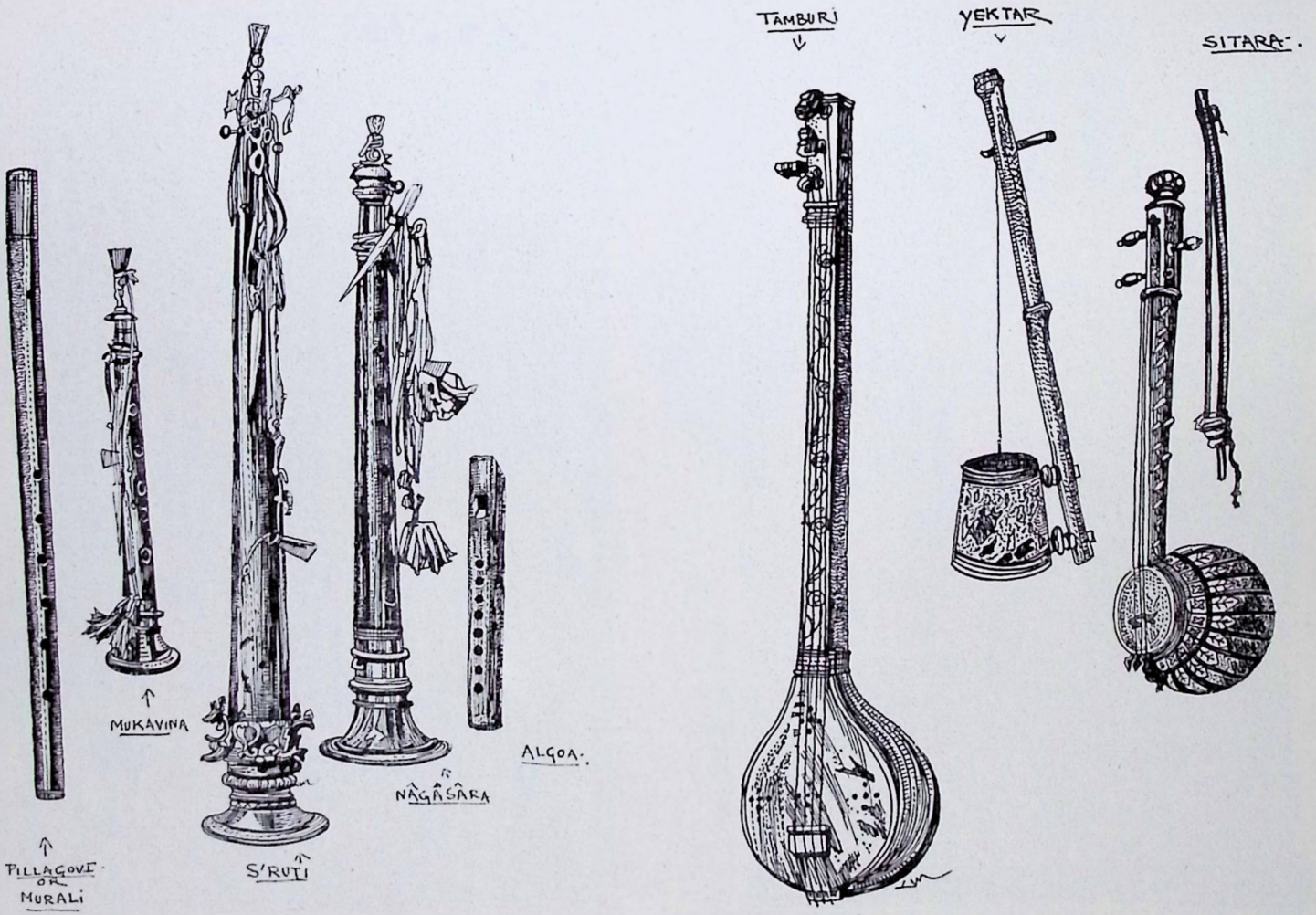


SUR-S'RINGÂRA.

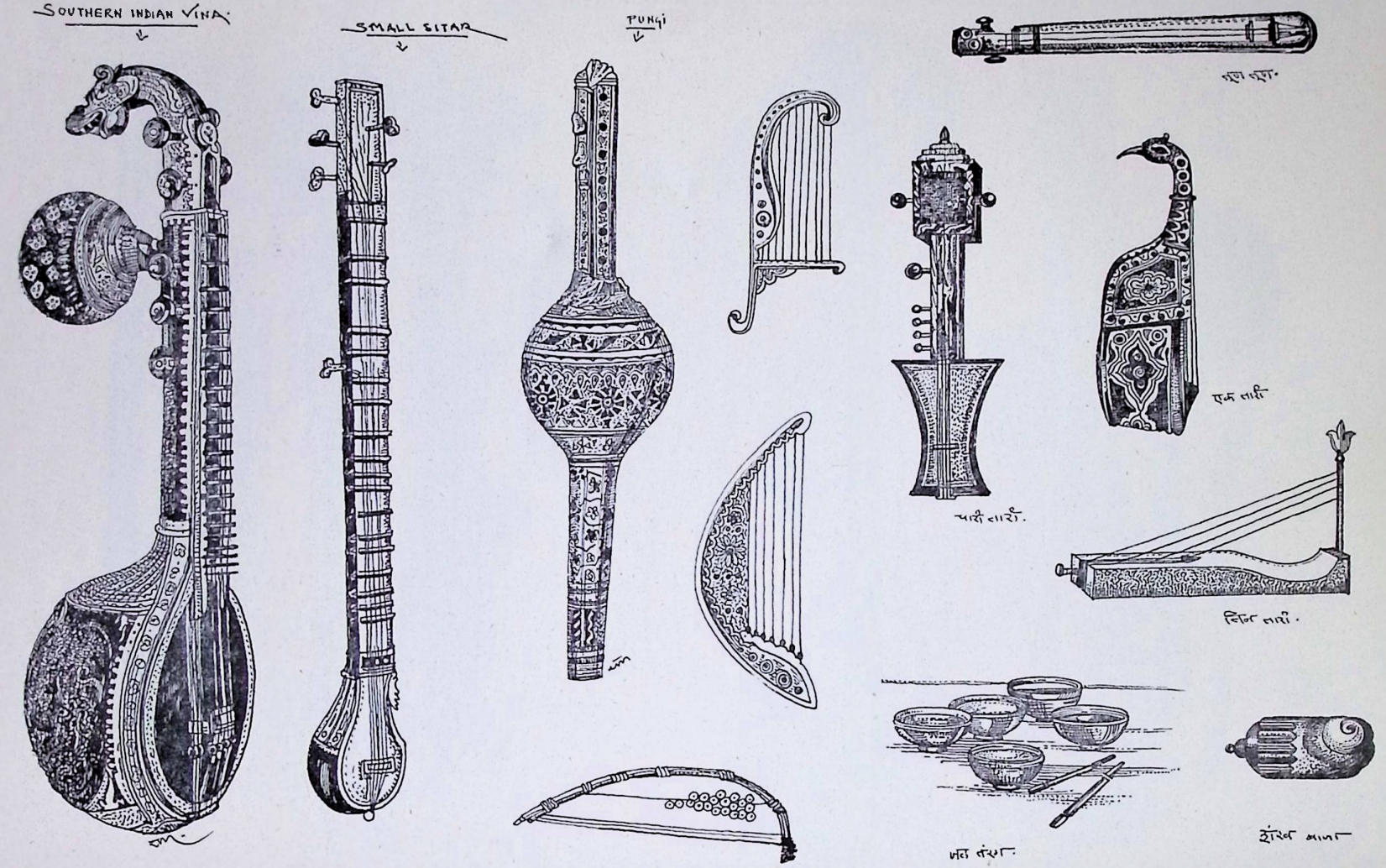


LARGE SITAR, OR SUNDARI

INDIAN MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS



INDIAN MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS



INDIAN MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

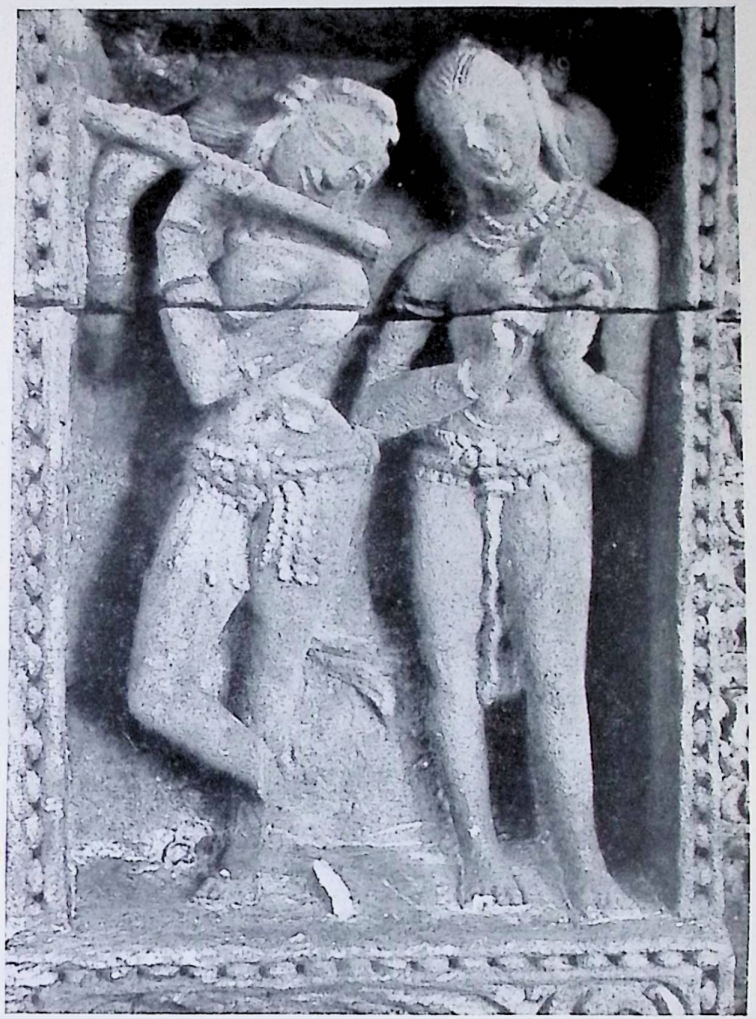




17th CENTURY IMAGES FROM THE RUINS OF OLD TEMPLE AT AMBER FORT, JAIPUR

(Photos : A. L. Syed)





MUSICIANS FROM BRAHMESVARA TEMPLE, BHUBANESHWAR

(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)





DANCERS AND DRUMMERS FROM DILWARA TEMPLE, MT. ABU

(*Photos : A. K. Banerji*)



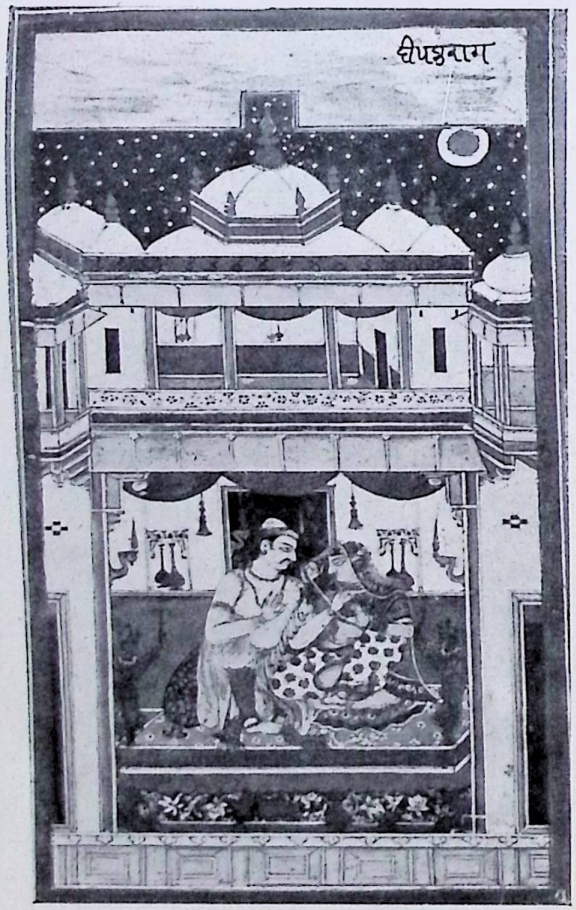
LAKSHMI DANCING. SCULPTURE FROM THE GREAT TEMPLE AT HALEBID



SCULPTURE FROM THE GREAT TEMPLE AT HALEBID WITH VISHNU ON RIGHT AND DRUMMER ON LEFT
(From *Architecture of Dharwar and Mysore*)



KRISHNA PLAYING THE FLUTE. SCULPTURE FROM THE GREAT TEMPLE AT HALEBID



DEEPAK RAGA
Rajasthani, Early 17th Century



MEGH RAGA

(By Courtesy of Bharat Kala Bhavan)



REPRODUCTION OF FRESCO FROM SIGIRIYA

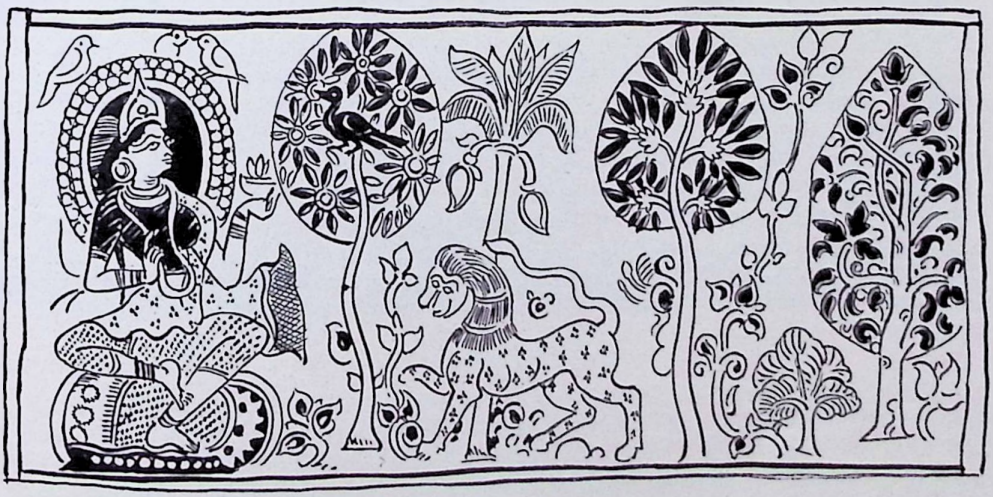


YASHODHARA AND RASUL
REPRODUCTION OF FRESCO FROM AJANTA

'FROM WESTERN INDIA PAINTINGS.



MOTIFS FROM WESTERN INDIAN PAINTINGS



AN ILLUSTRATION FROM *VASANT VILAS*, GUJARAT



FRESCO PAINTING FROM AJANTA

(Photo : A. L. Syed)

nidharmottaram. According to *Silpa-Sastras*, it is a canonical injunction to decorate temple walls with paintings. The frequent references in early Pali and Sanskrit literature to *Chitra-shalas* (picture halls) in palaces, to the skill of the king and of the aristocracy and their ladies in drawing and painting, testify to the high excellence the art of painting had reached in Ancient India. In the *Ramayana*, mural paintings are often described. A whole scene in the first act in Bhavbhuti's masterpiece, *Uttar Ram Charita*, is devoted to an animated description of the picture gallery in Ram's palace at Ayodhya. In the Jatakas and many Jain classics, there are descriptions of exhibitions of paintings and of painters' guilds. Portraits play an important part in the romances described in the ancient Sanskrit dramas and stories. Patronage of the painters and of their art by the State by providing them with jobs in Government departments had also begun early. As early as the 3rd century A. D. an exhaustive account of the theory of painting was elaborately summarised by Vatsyayana under six categories—canons based perhaps on writings of a much earlier age :

1. *Rupa-bheda*—the distinction of forms and appearance.
2. *Pramanam*—measurement, scale and proportion.
3. *Vhava*—sentiment and expression.
4. *Lavanya Yojanam*—imparting of grace and beauty.
5. *Sadrisyam*—imitation of likeness.
6. *Varnikabhanga*—use of materials and implements.

Art for art's sake was, however, unknown in ancient India. The religious attitude of the artist dominated his work so much that the purpose of his art was only religious and could not be conceived as aesthetic.

The earliest paintings of the pre-historic times, placed by some archeologists in the Upper Palaeolithic period, have been discovered on the walls of a group of caves of the Kaimur Range and on the sandstone rock at the mouth of a series of caves in Raigarh State of Madhya Pradesh. The latter drawings, in burgundy red, mauve and pale yellow, represent various figures, including men, birds and animals together with geometric designs of uncertain significance. Similar examples of the later Stone Age, representing a rhinoceros attacked by six men, most faithfully rendered, have been found in excavations in the Vindhya Hills. These are the only remains of the pre-historic Man's artistic activities in India, which although mostly unintelligible, are sufficient to establish the claims of primitive Man of being an artist.

Frescoes, executed probably in the 2nd century B.C. in the Yogimara caves in Sirguja in Madhya Pradesh are, however, the earliest datable specimens of Indian painting. A close investigation reveals a series of panels depicting hunting and dancing scenes, chariot scenes, chariots and elephants—scenes not very different from the earlier archaic remains.

By the time we come to the beginnings of the Ajanta group of paintings, Buddhism was largely the religion of the country. In the past, religion has gone a long way in moulding the aesthetic tastes of the people, but perhaps nothing else has supplied the artistic impulse in so marked a manner as the creed of Buddhism. Referring to the Buddhist paintings in India, Sir John Marshall says : "The school which these paintings represent was the source and fountain head from which half the art of Asia drew its inspiration, and no one can study their rhythmic composition, their instinctive beauty of line, the majestic grace of their figures, and the boundless wealth of their decorative imagery without realising what a far-reaching influence they exerted on the art, not of India alone and her colonies, but of every other country to which the religion of the Buddha penetrated."

The Ajanta paintings, considered to be the best testimony to the qualities of the ancient art, bear the profound marks of a background of wealth, splendour and cultural magnificence. They date back to the 2nd century B.C. to about the 6th century A.D., corresponding to the outstanding creative age of the Gupta Emperors.

In the early history of Buddhism, the priests found the brush more effective than the pen in their mission of teaching the tenets of their creed to mankind ; and so, the theme of these paintings is almost exclusively Buddhist religious lore, dealing with incidents in the previous incarnations and legends associated with Buddha, intended purposely to inspire the devotee by the visualised ideals of the events of Buddha's many existences. The artists themselves were, in all probability, the members of a priesthood, who carefully chose their subject matter for its engrossing and dramatic appeal. Hidden away in their mountainous seclusion, the priest-artists could still show a keen interest in the larger and fuller life outside which gave an intensely humanistic character to their paintings. Although the scenes depicted on the Ajanta walls are fundamentally religious, there are intimate glimpses of the buoyant, throbbing and colourful everyday life of the period, which have been painted invariably with unflinching fidelity to truth. Kings and queens, surrounded by wealth and splendour, ordinary men and women in dignified poses engaged in the quest for beautiful and spiritual values of life attract our attention. Woman, with her airs and graces, particularly enthralled the artists who caught every curve of her body, every glance of her eye and every gesture of her hands with consummate artistry. The inspired artists used the Woman as their principal decorative asset, imparting to the figures a dignity of the human soul without denying them their sensual appeal. Even in their nakedness, their portrayal is superbly chaste and lovely. But as Gladstone Solomon points out : "Woman is treated not as an individual, but as a Principle. She is there not female merely, but the incarnation of all the beauty of the world."

It is unfortunate that a considerable number of the masterpieces have been destroyed by the insensate vandalism of the ignorant and the insensible, but whatever is still left today on the walls of Ajanta, show the remarkable perfection of workmanship, expression and harmony, accomplished by the anonymous artists trained by centuries of religious and artistic discipline. The best work is in the narrative style, and the compositions have been spaced out on a grand scale. But for the simplicity of treatment, masterly modelling of the surfaces, variety in design, exquisite refinement of decorative details, delicate colouring, subtle characterisation, dramatic expressions, breadth and range of the conception, and a spontaneous flow of line, the Ajanta paintings are yet unsurpassed as works of art. There is no attempt to depict light and shade, but the figures are portrayed with such beauty and freedom of the brush outlines that they give them amazingly life-like attitudes. "The painter knew how to qualify and gradate his outline so as to give it every degree of expression. Not only do these frescoes represent his visualisation of a rounded object translated into line, but actual treatment of this line is so subtle and experienced that by its varying quality and sympathetic utterance it embodies modelling, values, relief, foreshortening and all the essential elements of the art. It is doubtful whether any artist has equalled the Buddhist painter in his capacity for analysing the complexities of the human form and then rendering in his picture what is essential by means of a simple line. Strong, confident and emphatic in its meaning, this method of artistic interpretation was utilised with consummate skill by the painters of this classic age."

The handling of the brush is seen at its best in the portrayal of Bodhisattava Avalokitesvara, divine and majestic in its simple and austere lines, yet suggestive of a feeling of profound pathos and renunciation. The same forceful expressiveness of characterisation can also be observed in the figures of Yasodhara and Rahul (mother and child), replete with tenderness and love.

'Revelation of the Divine,' the most important of the artistic principles enumerated by Vatsayana, sums up into these words the secret of these paintings, and incidentally the message of their creators. The Ajanta paintings are, as K. T. Shah observes, "the earliest surviving illustrations of the rooted ideal of the Indian artist, *viz.*, that beauty is spiritual and not of the matter. When the artists began to reconcile themselves to the ideas in re-

presenting in visible form the spiritual conception of the gods, they instinctively avoided the Hellenic ideal, which sought to fashion god-like beauty from a faithful copy of human loveliness. They were familiar, of course, with the outlines of the anatomical details of the human form, on which they obviously modelled their gods and heroes. . . . But in that which makes a painting really a creation of the artist's own—in the pose and expression of the figure they introduced an element of studied elaborate idealism, which makes the works of the Indian artist as being totally apart from his contemporary in Greece."

Beneath the idealism, however, of the Ajanta frescoes there can easily be discovered a subdued note of realism. The artist appears to have been aware of the sense of harmony between his subjects and his surroundings and therefore sincerely strove to realise a sort of mystic unity between the spiritual and the real. With a few firm strokes of the brush and a subtle harmony of colouring, he painted life as he saw it, and even the minutest details testify to a thorough knowledge of the human body and of nature, bestowing on his paintings an unbroken power to charm the beholder.

The technical process of the frescoes appears to have been the same everywhere. The surface of the hard rock was first covered with a rough layer of a mixture of clay, cowdung, powdered rock, and sometimes also rice husks, to the thickness of one-eighth to three-quarters of an inch. Over this was spread a ground of fine white lime-plaster. On this polished surface, while it was still moist, the paintings were executed in water colour.

The Bagh frescoes in Gwalior and the Sigiriya frescoes in Ceylon, probably executed in the closing years of the Ajanta glory, show the same remarkable command of brush work as at Ajanta.

Apart from these, fresco remains of much aesthetic merit still survive in the shrine of Sittanavasal in the midst of the Pallava country on the southern banks of the Krishna—the cultural product of an age which is noted in history for the great Shaivite revival of the 6th and 7th centuries in Southern India.

But after the last of the Ajanta artists had finally laid aside his brush, the age of the great frescoes practically fell into oblivion and for about 900 years a period of almost virtual eclipse in Indian painting set in. It is likely that some paintings may have been executed on the wood, clay, or brick walls of the picture halls in palaces and in temples, but even under the best of conditions they could not possibly have lasted for more than a few generations. The banners painted with mythological subjects and hung up in temples and monasteries, and the manuscripts were still more liable to be obliterated by climate, insects, moulds and wars. That a period of decay, a general weakening of inspiration in classical Indian art, had crept in after the last of the Ajanta viharas had received the final touches of the artist's brush is clear from the few fragments discovered in the cave paintings of Ellora, in the shrines of Cochin and Travancore, and from the banners and other artistic relics with strong traces of Indian art found in the neighbouring countries of Tibet and Eastern Turkistan.

After the frescoes had become less popular, there was a preference for miniature paintings as seen in the pages of the illuminated manuscripts done by the Pala school in the east (9th to 12th centuries) and the Gujarati school (11th to 15th centuries) of Western India. The story of Buddha's life was the main theme of the Pala miniatures, whose art is characterised by sinuous lines, subdued tones and simple composition. Several palm manuscripts of the famous Buddhist work *Prajnaparamita* (Perfect Wisdom) of the 11th and 12th centuries are still extant.

The Gujarati school of miniature paintings, indigenous to and characteristic of Gujarat, and evolved perhaps under the patronage of the Jain religion, belongs not exactly to folk art as is sometimes suggested but to what N. C. Mehta calls a "bourgeois art, akin to the art which expresses itself even at the present day in mural decorations and in exquisite albeit ephemeral displays of geometrical patterns in a variety of colours in front of

the middle class homes in Gujarat on festive occasions." It has two phases—an earlier phase of illustrated manuscripts on palm leaves using brick red background, and a later phase on paper using blue and gold pigments on a lavish scale. The miniatures are generally $2\frac{1}{4}'' \times 2\frac{1}{4}''$, portraying either the Jain sacred texts or Vaishnava subjects such as *Gita-govinda* and *Bhagavata*, or secular love. The most prominent features of these paintings are the depiction of angular faces in three-fourth profile, pointed noses, protruding eyes, broad chests and thin waists, an elaboration of decorative details rather than the beauty of form and emphasis on narration more than accomplished expression. Differing only in scale, the Jain miniatures are artistically of the same class as the ancient frescoes. But they have nothing of the inherent charm and gracious beauty of the old masterpieces.

Referring to the illustrations of the *Vasant Vilas*, supposed to be the earliest record of medieval secular paintings, N. C. Mehta says that the pictures "may be regarded as a sort of pictorial interpretation of the perennial themes of Love and Spring. They are painted in oblong panels with all the directness, vigour and concentrated intensity of primitive art. The figures are bound by bold and definite lines, and represent fundamental types and forms with no attempt whatsoever either at verisimilitude or even outward elegance. The artist is more concerned with his narrative than with the exhibition of his accomplishment, and consequently the utmost possible use is made of symbols and suggestion, regardless of the harmonies of throbbing colour and balanced composition. The composition is invariably simple and one feels in looking at these naive but forceful drawings, as if they were only abridged versions of large fresco paintings, which the old masters used so effectively for narration and ideal representation. Mere technical skill is always held in reserve, in complete subordination to the narrative flow of the pictures. The proportions of various objects in a composition appear to be based more on the requirements of wall paintings rather than of miniature drawings. Shading, foreshortening, perspective, complexities of colour are conspicuous only by their absence."

If a reason is to be sought for this decline, we must find it in the changed artistic expression of Brahmanism, to which India was fast becoming transformed with the decline of Buddhism. The revived Hindu religion gave birth to a new order of things—both in faith and in practice. The artist devotee who followed the *Bhakti-marga*, in his religious frenzy, sought to give a more lasting and abiding form to his labours, believing that salvation could only be achieved by acts and not by intentions—the more permanent his acts, the greater the merit he acquired in the sight of Vishwakarma, his patron God. The art consciousness of the age, therefore, gave the art of the sculptor and the architect the foremost place in all religious works and painting tended to move into the background. "Painted pictures, which largely sufficed for the simpler ritual of the Buddhists, did not satisfy the craving of the Hindus for an actual graven image—a realistic embodiment of their chosen deity (personal god)."

The result was that for about eight centuries, the period of India's sculptural triumphs, the painter was neglected, and lay in obscurity. It was not until a fresh cultural tradition from the North-West had penetrated the civilisation of Hindu India, and the subsequent rise of the Imperial Mughals, that the artist again came out of the limbo of oblivion to plant his feet, this time on surer grounds.

Indian painting under the Mughals began with different ideologies and an entirely new outlook and technique. Islam condemned painting as sacrilege and as against the precepts of the Quran, which expressly forbids the picturisation of animate nature. An orthodox Mohammedan displayed his artistic consciousness only in calligraphy, transcribing the texts of the Holy Book and verses of his favourite poets. They made a religious duty of calligraphy and gave it a higher place than image painting.

But the rulers, gifted with keen artistic temperament, defied the ban and rising above the puritan scruples gave protection to the art of painting as a court accomplishment.



AVALOKISTESVARA-PADMAPANI. FRESCO FROM AJANTA

(Photo : A. L. Syed)



FRESCO FROM AJANTA

(*Photo : A. L. Syed*)



"THE CONQUEST OF CEYLON BY WIJEYO." AJANTA FRESCO AS REPRODUCED AT JAIPUR MUSEUM
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



Top : A HUNTING SCENE

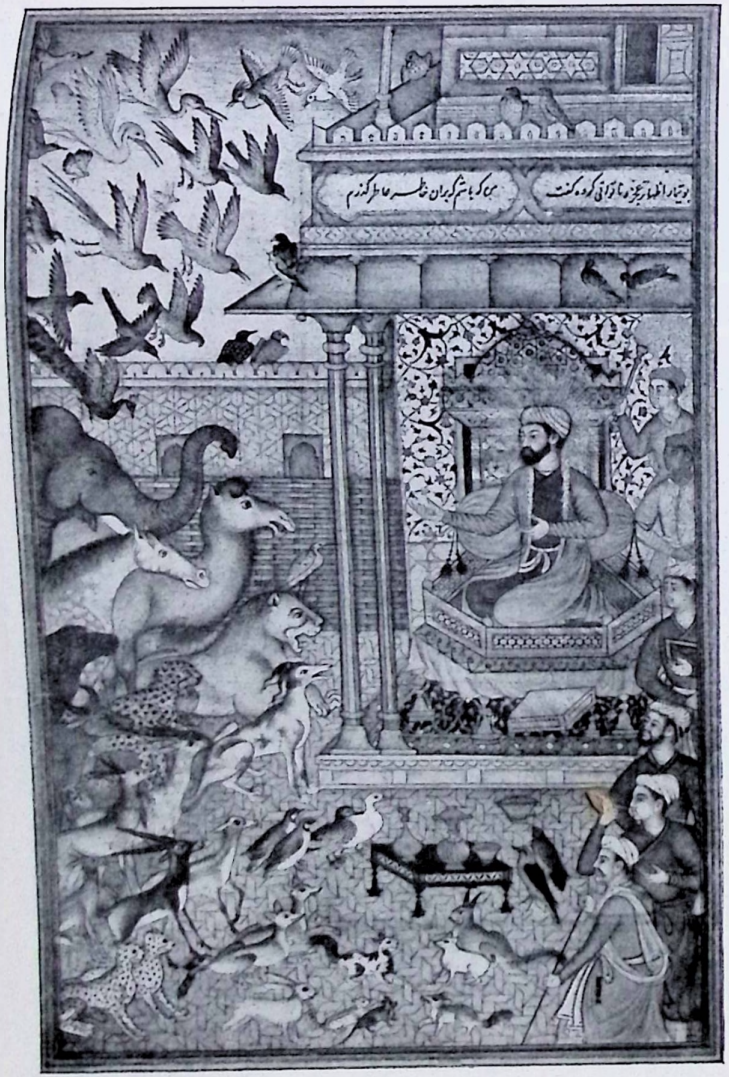
Bottom : PENANCE OF A THIRTHANKAR
Illustrations from Uttaradhyayana Suttra, Western Indian School, 14th Century



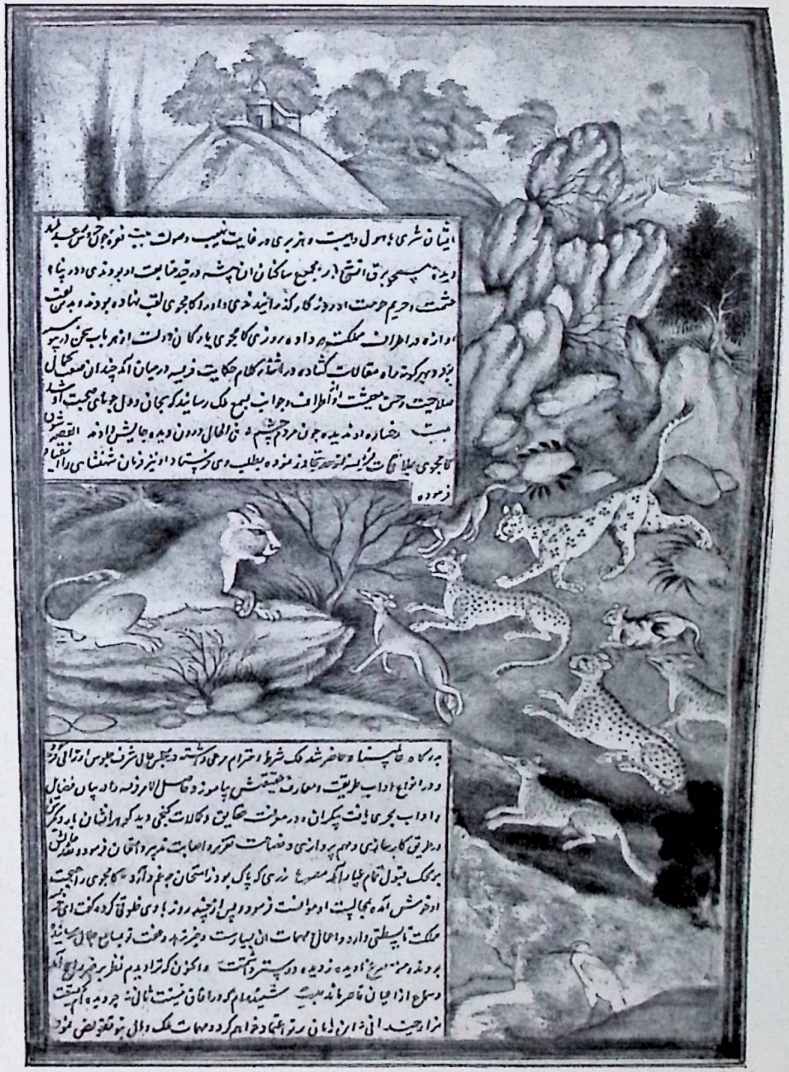
ILLUSTRATED WOODEN BOOK COVER OF PALM LEAF MANUSCRIPT. PALA PERIOD 11th—12th CENTURY



ILLUMINATED PALM LEAF MANUSCRIPT. PALA PERIOD, 11th—12th CENTURY. DEPICTS THE MONKEY MIRACLE OF BUDDHA
(*Courtesy : Bharat Kala Bhavan*)



KING SOLOMON CONSULTS THE BIRDS AND BEASTS



THE JACKAL SUMMONED BEFORE THE LION

FROM IYAR-I-DANISH, BY DHANNU

(From *The Library of A. Chester Beatty*)



PORTRAIT OF RAJA MAN SINGH BY PAK (?)

(From *The Library of A. Chester Beatty*)



A DRINKING PARTY. ARTIST UNIDENTIFIED

(From *The Library of A. Chester Beatty*)



PORTRAIT OF A NOBLEMAN. FROM "ALBUM OF JAHANGIR"

(From *The Library of A. Chester Beatty*)

We have no surviving relics or records of the art of painting of the time of the earlier Mohammedan rulers, but there are indications that painting in some form or the other had existed in those days, although we can safely assume that it could not have been systematically encouraged. Painting in its revived glory was introduced by Humayun after his return from Persia, where he had taken refuge at the court of Shah Tahmasp. This was a very significant circumstance in shaping the beginnings of the Mughal art in India.

In spite of the devastating effects of the Mongol invasions on the civilisation of Western Asia, Persia had managed to maintain her culture with extraordinary vitality for several centuries, and in the 15th century was the centre of Islamic culture and all aesthetic activities. The Shah himself was a painter of some repute. But the greatest name was that of Behzad, the famous master, under whose guidance flourished a great school of miniaturists at Herat and Samarkand. Two of his very famous disciples, Abdal Samad and Mir Sayyid Ali, were brought over to India by Humayun, who awarded them titles and high social status. These two masters played a leading role in the development of Mughal painting at the Court at Agra and Delhi. The first Mughal painters were not only greatly influenced by them but actually derived their inspiration and traditions from Persia.

Painting, which had thus again started to live in India, grew up and was nurtured by Akbar and prospered, reaching to glorious heights under Jahangir and Shahjahan. Under these circumstances, it was only natural that Indian painting should have emerged principally as an aristocratic art, with all that it signifies—less freedom in the choice of subjects, the use of fine and costly materials, and emphasis on the niceties of delicate craftsmanship.

The interest of the Mughal monarchs in things artistic eventually led to a number of artists from all parts of India and from other countries making their way to the Court at Delhi and Agra to carry on their art under royal patronage. Consequently, the early Mughal school was an attempted synthesis of several elements—the Central Asian, the Iranian, and the Indian. Long before the end of the 16th century, Western influences had also begun to make their mark on the Mughal style, which is unmistakable in the landscape backgrounds, in the sunset and cloud effects, the appearance of the halo, and the gradual approach to the idea of subordination of parts to the central theme. The narratives of the Jesuit Mission which reached Fatehpur Sikri in 1580 contain numerous instances of the interest shown by the ruler and the Court artists in the Christian pictures which they had brought with them.

The varied influences, however, never completely coalesced. The Mohammedan painters of the Persian school followed the lines of the art of calligraphy, the brush outline and colouring in the miniatures often being the responsibilities of two different artists. The indigenous painters of the country, on the other hand, although fully taken in by the Persian influence, could not wholly throw off the Indian conventions, as is apparent by their management of lines, the interpretation of perspective, and the note of idealism which mark all their pictures.

Fortunately, the "phase of tutelage to Iranian traditions" was short-lived. By and by, as a result of the influence of the style and spirit of the one over the other, made possible by the congenial atmosphere of art brought about by the sympathetic attitude and keen aesthetic temperament of Akbar and Jahangir, an amalgamation of the two modes was the result and the art began to assume a nature characteristically Indian. It had now begun to display an individuality which showed beyond doubt that the Mughal miniatures were the offspring of the art of India.

Thus was born the Indian Mughal school of painting.

Besides the difference in technique that was particularly a feature of the early phase, the Mughal school differed materially from the typical local style in intentions and subject matter. While to the Buddhist and the Hindu artists, who handled their subjects in a

spirit of intense religious devotion, endowing their productions at the same time with that note of idealism which manifests the deeply introspective quality of the Indian mind, painting was a sacred undertaking, the Mohammedan painting strove after no such spiritual conceptions. It was frankly a secular art, aristocratic in outlook and matter of fact in approach. It had no associational contact with the common man or his domestic life, and was almost wholly devoid of spiritual sentiments that had once inspired the Ajanta painters to deep idealism. Interest in humanity as a revelation of life was not their subject matter. The Mughal miniatures are, therefore, frankly material and in technique a general statement of facts.

Since the Mughal artist was one of the retinue of the Court, keen to please his patron, who was either the Emperor or a nobleman, he was more familiar with the important dignitaries of the court, the picturesqueness and pomp of camp life, with armies on the march, hunting, battle and Durbar scenes. A keen appreciation of nature led him to draw curious birds, animals and unusual trees and flowers. Jahangir commissioned artists to depict for him any rare bird or beast, and in this way an interesting album was made. Some of the sketches are extant even now which show to what heights of achievement the Indian miniaturist had reached under the Mughals. Tiny peacocks by Jagannath, a wild buffalo by Sarwan, a cock and a turkey-cock by Mansur and a duck in the unhappy Dara Shukoh's book are for accuracy of detail and superb craftsmanship among some of the most perfect specimens of animal and bird studies. The Mughals loved blossoms and plants in bloom, and the artist's brush was requisitioned to portray the likeness of anything beautiful and novel. Besides floral paintings, each miniature is enclosed within a frame-work of sprays of blossoms, arranged in a conventional manner. All the flowers of the Kashmir valley and many of those of the gardens in the plains, lilies, tulips, irises, daisies, poppies are there, whilst often small and delicate figures of birds and butterflies have been introduced to make the border decoration more effective. The early painters of this school were particularly skilled in the manipulation of the ground on borders and in the use of brilliant colours and vigorous drawing. Brocaded canopies, silken curtains and awnings, glittering jewels and golden thrones gave opportunities for brilliant displays of colour harmonies that were frequently embellished with discreet touches of gold. Every effort, however, of the miniaturist was concentrated on obtaining a faithful likeness of what he saw, missing in the process the "inner poetry." The artist was concerned with the expression of a visual experience and not with the implications of an emotional experience. Mohammedan painting was, therefore, realistic only in reference to the artist's visual experience as against the attitude of the old Indian artist who took pains to portray realistically his mental concepts. Perhaps it could not be helped. The puritan sentiment of the Mohammedan was so strong that it persistently denied the glory of creation even to his best works.

But the Mughal artists were not mere "soulless imitators," without a message of their own to impart. They truly excelled in portraiture which reached its zenith under Jahangir and Shahjahan. By this time the calligraphist's outline had gone out of fashion, and the Persian and the Indian convention had to a very great extent fused into one, giving distinct individuality to the work of the portrait painter, who went beyond the mere representation of superficial facts of the face and the head, which by itself is a marvel of sheer delicacy, extraordinary fineness of brush work and fine quality of draughtmanship. He rivalled the best masters in the wonderful power of character delineation, and was specially successful in bringing out the inner man and not simply his outward appearance.

Numerous portraits were produced. The Mughal history makers from Timur down to Aurangzeb, together with others of the aristocracy, have all been drawn with great sincerity and feeling by artists whose fine shading of the figures and the delicate and subtle line drawing of the face and hands have revealed them as they have really been—strong or weak, kind or cruel, magnanimous or petty. The Mughal artists had other models as

well, holy men, faqirs, dancing girls, soldiers and lovers—each one drawn with remarkable sensitiveness and charm. The portraits are usually in complete profile—natural and unaffected, while the hands and fingers, expressing character are either laid on the sword hilt or may hold a flower or jewel. This conventional profile pose underwent a change in the time of Jahangir, when three-quarter faces became the fashion, and attitudes less ceremonial became more human. During the reign of this ruler, Mughal painting achieved maturity, and is exceptional for the minuteness of the modelling, extreme delicacy of finish, artistic choice, and combination of colours.

Speaking of the technique of the Mughal painters, Wilkinson writes: "Paper was made in India, generally of cotton, jute, or bamboo; other paper was imported from Persia. It was carefully prepared and burnished smooth, often with an agate. In the actual execution of the miniature, the method usually employed, both by the court painters and in the provinces, seems to have been fairly uniform at all periods and was the same, *mutatis mutandis*, as that of the mural painting of antiquity. The drawing was first sketched in outline, usually in red, and corrected with lamp-black; it was then covered with a thin preparatory coat or priming of white. The outline was then retraced and the colours applied. The pigments were extracted mainly from various minerals, lapis lazuli, cinnabar, orpiment and others; but some were of vegetable origin, such as indigo or mung; a few, like lake or kirmiz, from insects; the gold was from pounded gold-leaf. The pigments were tempered with gum-arabic or glue. Brushes were of various qualities—the finest being from the hairs of young squirrels' tails (as, in Persia, from kittens). The whole miniature, when completed, was again burnished from the reverse side. It is unnecessary to describe the variations from the usual methods, or to detail the other processes connected with the preparation of miniatures and manuscripts, but mention should be made of the practice of copying by means of pouncings. Tracings were drawn on very thin portions of skin, the contours being pierced with small holes; these were dusted with powder, reproducing the outlines, which had to be at once drawn over. Copying by this method was an important part of the painter's training."

With the comparative apathy of the rulers who followed Shahjahan, the art of painting in India once again declined. It had never aspired to popular approval, nor did its roots ever enter the religion and beliefs of the common man. From its very birth it had depended for its existence largely on Imperial patronage, and when this was withdrawn the Mughal art of painting fell from its giddy heights and started disintegrating like the great Mughal Empire.

Although the brush continued to be handled by artists remarkably well for some time more, lingering as late as the end of the 18th century under the Nawabs of Oudh, the art was marked with growing lifelessness, and was weak in grasp and execution.

While painting under the Mughals was flourishing at the Imperial Court at Agra and Delhi, Hindu art did not lie dormant, but was having rather a more active existence than for some centuries preceding. From that stage of decadence that had finally set in in the art of painting about the 15th century, blossomed the exquisite Hindu art, called the Rajput Art by Coomaraswamy, the main centres of whose early phases were Rajputana and the Punjab Hills, where the art flourished in separate groups known as "Rajasthani" and "Pahari".

This was the time when a revival of a popular culture in the garb of Vaishnavism was dominating the art and literature of the country. Vaishnavism stirred the innermost depths of the common consciousness and brought about psychological changes in the moods of the people. Therefore, the principal motif, visualized in his painting by the Hindu artist, who was essentially one of the people, was religion, for which he drew his inspiration from the old religious stories, myths and folklore. Since he also desired these religious truths to appeal to the populace, he drew his imagery from the everyday life of the masses. In this respect, the Hindu artist covered a larger field than the Buddhist, and adopted a line

of approach entirely different from the Mughals. The Hindu artist not only interpreted in line and colour the dramatic incidents of the epics, but also portrayed all that is best in the emotional life of the Indian people. The artists brought their gods down to the level of their daily lives, humanising them in their paintings, so that Rajput painting is really the picturisation of the simple life of the common man, his work and play, joys and sorrows, his beliefs and customs and his home and field life, in the picturesque background of his religious faith and ritual. Love, both human and divine, is its central theme, and Love is conceived as the means and symbol of all union. "The schools of Rajput Art," writes O. C. Gangoly, "embody a whole cycle of Hindu culture, chiefly covered by mediaeval Vaishnavism, with its doctrine of Love and Faith. Though rooted in the old classic Sanskrit culture, it takes the form of a vernacular folk art, the pictorial analogue to the great body of Hindu literature, inspired by the renaissance of the Puranic Hindu religion. The most absorbing themes for the painting are furnished by the cult of Krishna, idealised in a series of religious mysteries, the gopis being the symbols of the soul's yearning for the Divine." Shiva and Parbati are also popular, and Rama and Sita appear occasionally. But love and adoration of Krishna and Radha, symbolic of the eternal motif of Man and Woman, are the main themes.

The representation of love scenes, erotic sentiments of heroes and heroines, ballads and romantic poems, such as the *Hammira-hatha* and *Nala-Damayanti*, nature's moods, and last but not the least, the visualization of the dramatic atmosphere suggested by the ragas and raginis are other subjects of these paintings. The picturisation of such an intangible thing as the emotional situation aroused by a raga provided the artists with unlimited opportunities for artistic treatment which they usually executed with singular tenderness and lyric imagination. For example, *Todi ragini* is generally represented by a charming woman standing in an open landscape under the brilliant noonday sun, clothed in a snow white sari. In her hands she holds the veena, and the deer in the neighbouring pastures stand entranced as she plays. The imagery is expressive of a woman whose youth has inspired love in the hearts of young lovers who cluster around her. Similarly, *Megh raga* is represented by a group of musicians playing outside a fine house during the rainy season. The clouds hang overhead and there is joyous expectancy of rain everywhere. It is a raga suggesting hope and a new life. *Bilawal* typifies the heroine who gets conscious of the pangs of love by a vision of her own beauty in the mirror. These and similar other pictures of "visualised music" pulsate with life as only a great piece of art could.

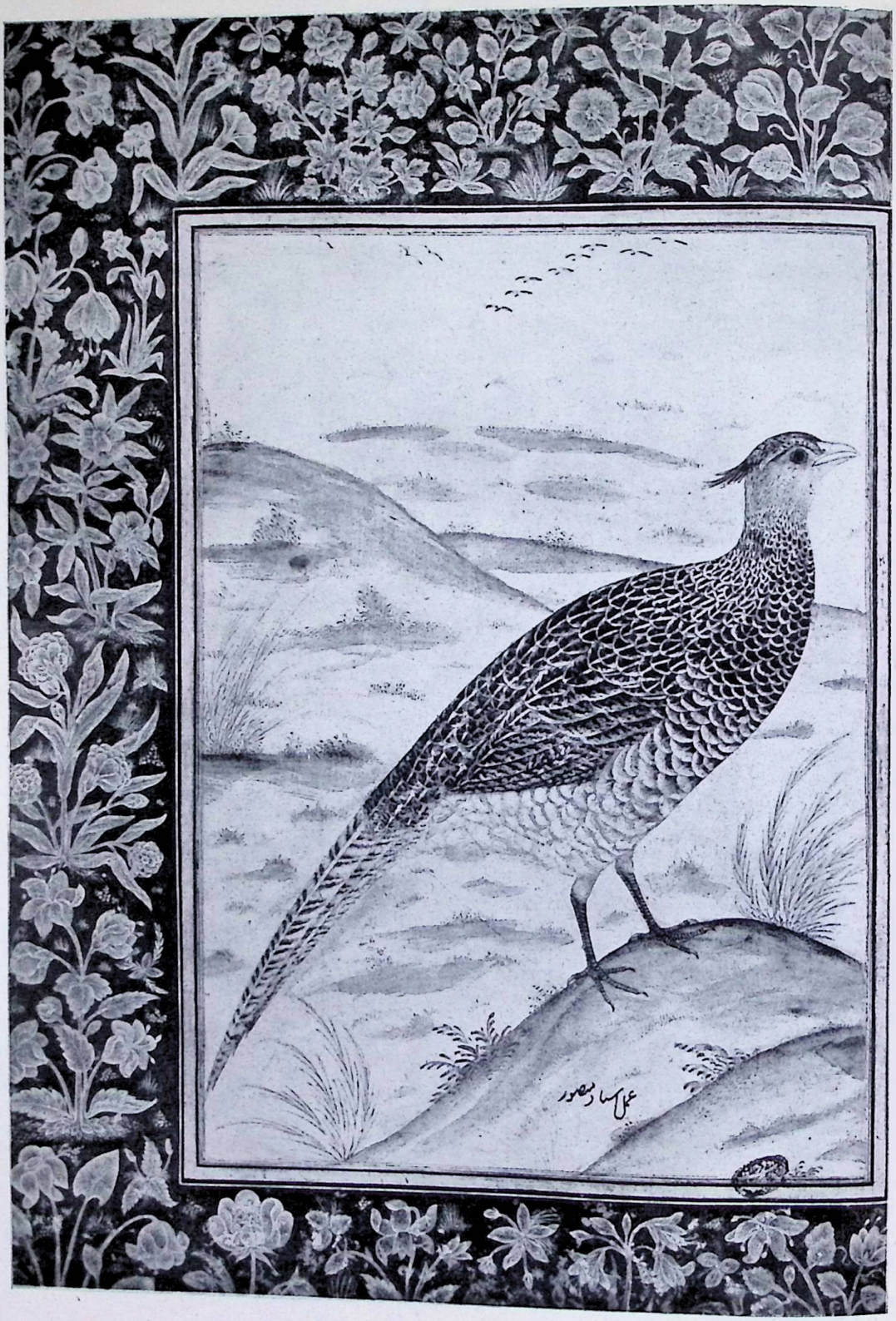
Musical melodies have thus been appropriated to nature's moods and human passions. According to the exposition of Sir William Jones, "the artists were able to recall the memory of autumnal merriment at the close of the harvest; of reviving hilarity on the revival of blossoms and complete vernal delight in the month of Vasant; of langour during the dry heat and refreshment by the first rains which bring a second spring to the Indian season. The inventive talents of the Greeks never suggested a more charming allegory than the lovely families of the six ragas, named in the order of seasons—*Bhairava, Malva, Sri-rag, Hindola* or *Vasant, Dipaka and Megha;* each of whom is wedded to five raginis or nymphs of harmony—presenting wonderfully diversified images for the play of the artists' genius."

Women have been one of the principal motifs of Hindu art, but they inspired the Rajasthani painter in a way different from the painters of the women of Ajanta. The Ajanta women are apparently of an erotic type, charming and sentimental models prescribed to the painter by a society which was a highly sensuous and sophisticated aristocracy. But the Hindu artist depicted her as a heroine, emotional and delicate, innocent and proud—a mirror of the thoughts and feelings of the people who knew chivalry and heroism, Padmani and Mira. Physically she is the true ideal of female beauty. She has large lotus eyes, firm and round breasts, thighs graceful and smooth, slender waist, rosy hands, and stresses falling in heavy plaits.



A PRINCE HUNTING, BY ALI QULI

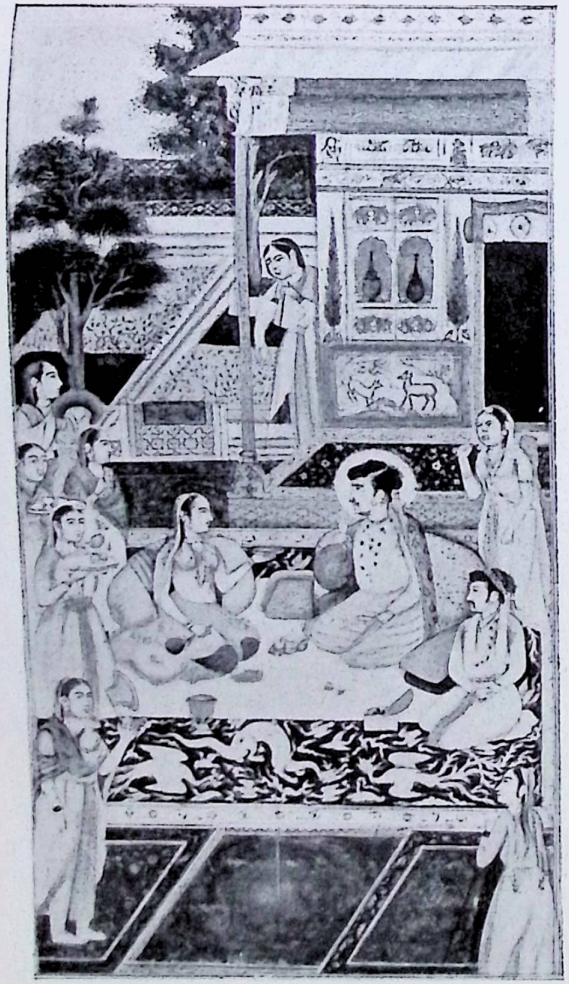
(From *The Library of A. Chester Beatty*)



THE HIMALAYAN CHEER PHEASANT

By Ustad Mansur: Mughal School, Early 17th Century.

(*From the Wantage Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum*)



NURJAHAN ENTERTAINING JAHANGIR AND PRINCE KHURRAM

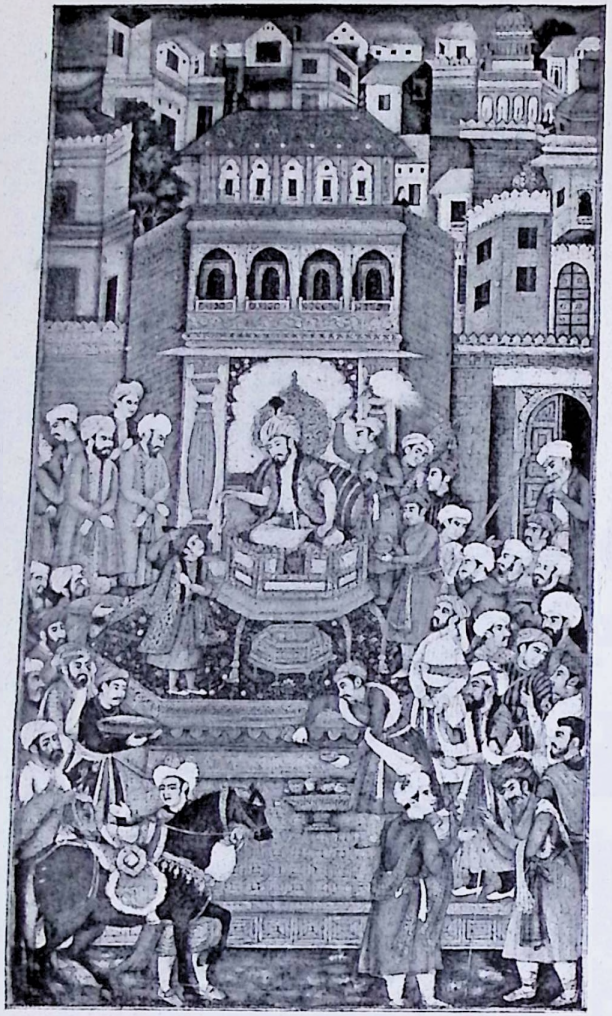
Artist unknown : Mughal School, Early 17th Century.



SHAH JAHAN

By Balchand : Mughal School, First Half of 17th Century.

(*From the Wantage Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum*)



ENVOYS BRINGING GIFTS TO HUMAYUN AT AGRA

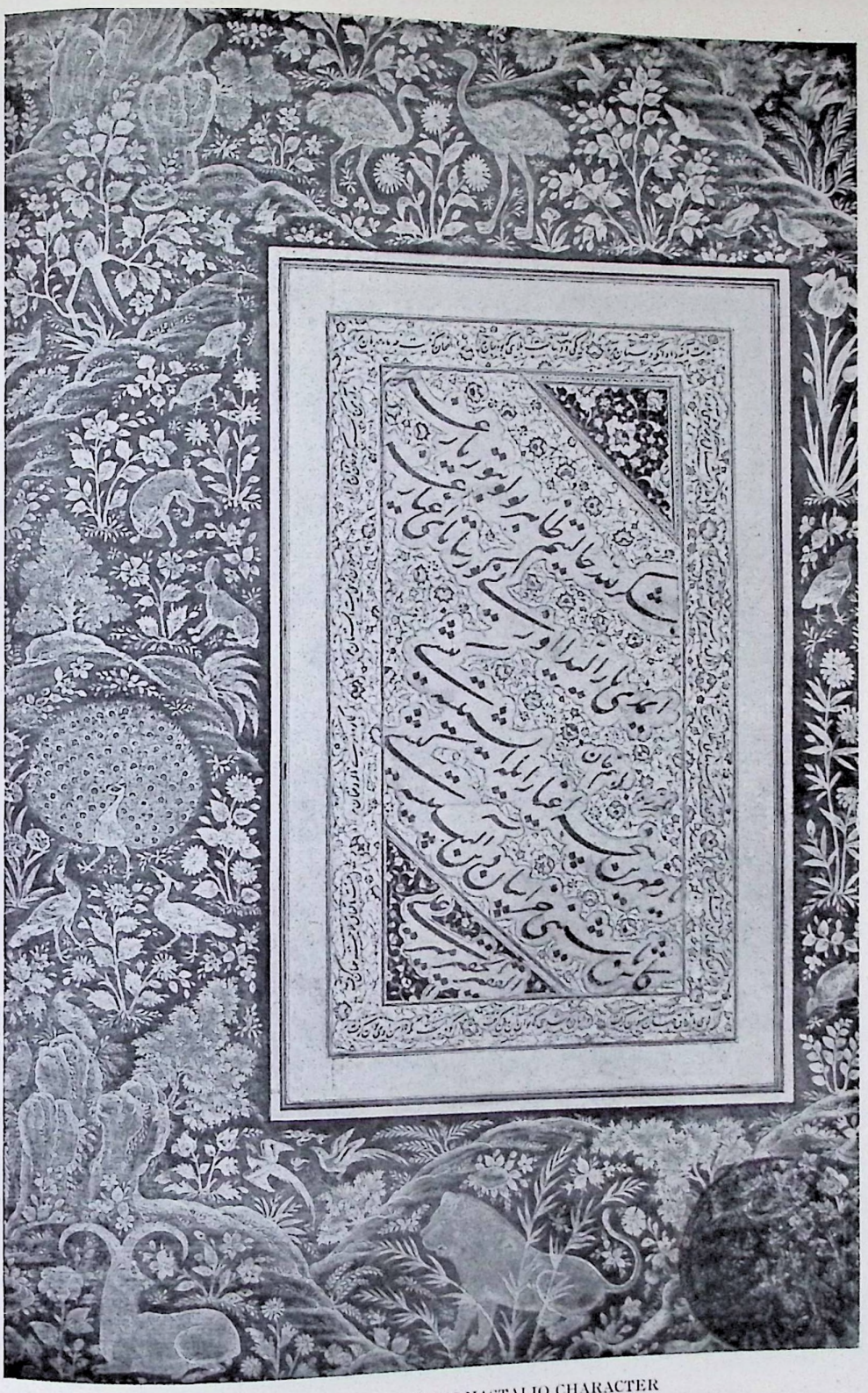
By Alam : Mughal School, Early 17th Century



AKBAR WITH PRINCE SALIM HOLDING A PRIVATE AUDIENCE IN A ROYAL GARDEN

By Manohar : Mughal School, Early 17th Century.

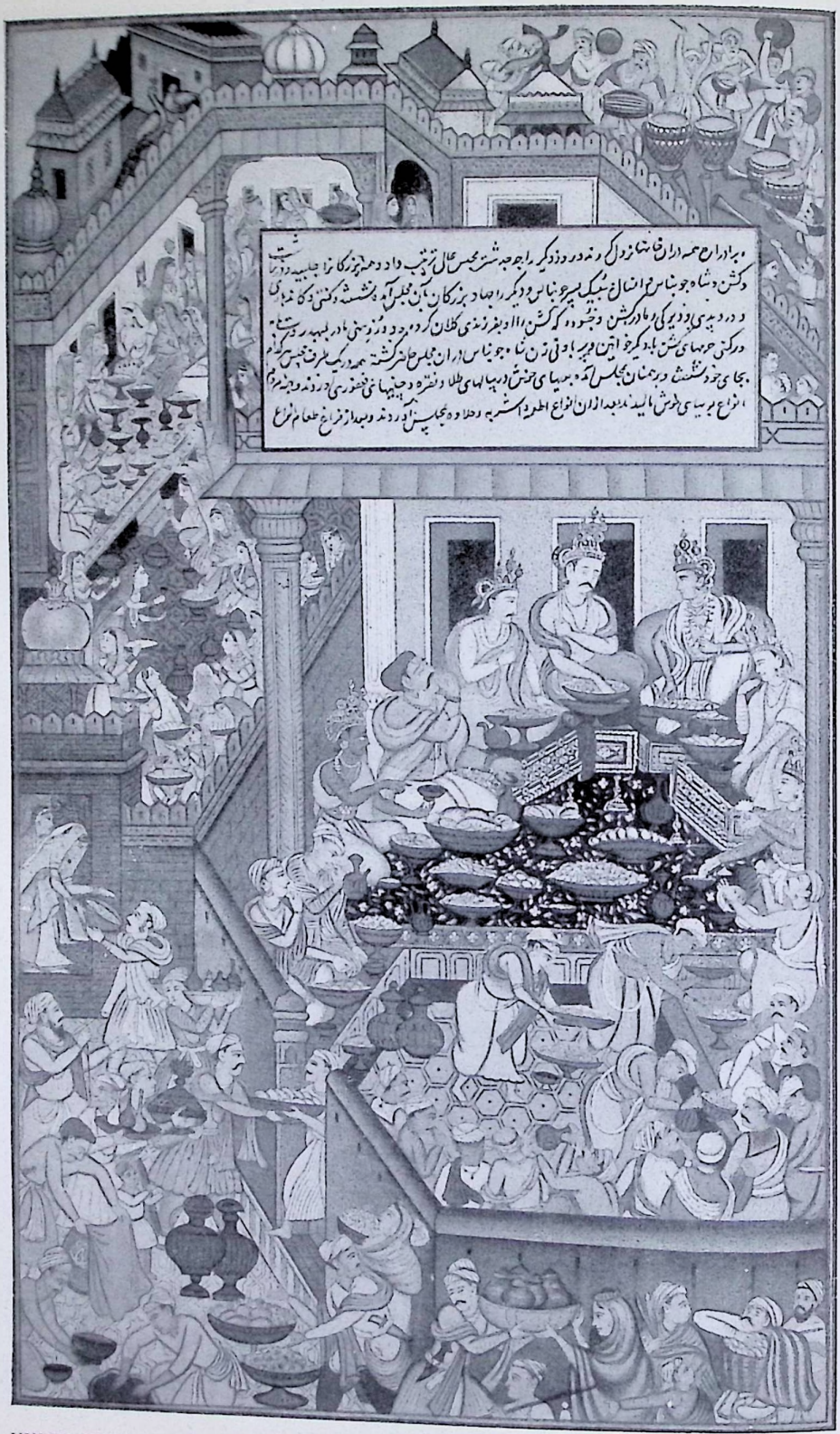
(*From the Wantage Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum*)



PANEL OF CALLIGRAPHY IN NASTALIQ CHARACTER

by Mir 'Ali of Herat, Late 15th or Early 16th Century.

(From the Wantage Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum)



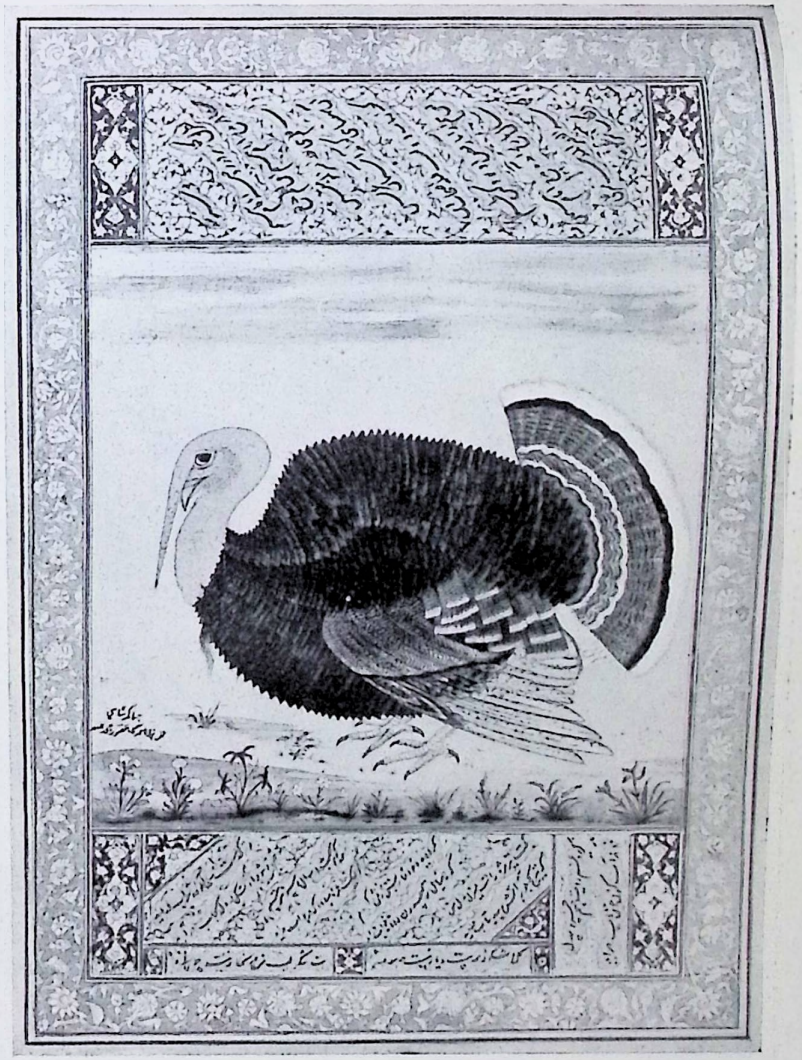
YUDHISHTHIRA, KRISHNA, AND THE PANDAVAS HOLD A GREAT FEAST AT HASTINAPUR BEFORE THE HORSE IS SET AT LIBERTY. FROM THE *RAZM NAMAH* OF KHWAJA INAYATULLAH

(*From The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



INDIAN DEER AND TIBETAN ANTELOPE

By Unidentified Artist of Early 17th Century. Mughal School.



JAHANGIR'S TURKEY-COCK

By Ustad Mansur: Mughal School, 1612 A.D.

(From the Wantage Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum)



THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

Miniature of the Mughal School from *The Library of A. Chester Beatty*

The colours of these pictures are bright and pleasing. Coomaraswamy sums up some of the main aesthetic features as follows: "The borders are pink with yellow bands above and below; the horizons are high with room for a band of dark sky, passing into a strip of clouds. Sometimes they also represented snaky red-gold lightnings and falling rain. A common motif is the representation of water and lotus in the foreground. A characteristic feature is the representation of floating draperies and of coloured garments seen through coats and skirts, yellow and white. Night scenes also appear in these series."

The typical Rajasthani style of painting could never shake off its primitive folk character, being closely associated with the decadent phase of the classical art, but it is certainly more developed, cultured and refined, particularly the Jaipur school "in which are blended the qualities of imagination and restraint verging on austerity, with such transparent sincerity of feeling that if we are to seek for other comparable work of equal merit, we must go back to the creative epoch of Harshvardhan, Pulkeshin and Mahendravarman." (N. C. Mehta.)

On the other hand, the Pahari art or Kangra art, as it used to be called from the name of the State where it flourished most in its heyday, is essentially a princely art, developed on the groundwork of the fine workmanship of the Mughal art by refugee artists from Delhi, who flocked to the hill states where they continued to find patronage under the rulers and the aristocracy. It was, therefore, from the very beginning a fully alive and susceptible art, creative in nature, delicate and graceful in workmanship, combined with unusual brilliancy of colour, animated expressions and minuteness of decorative detail. It is full of intimate scenes of village life and of the hills and the forests, treated as natural settings for human emotions and activities, and excels in the portrayal of female figures and animal life.

Divine Love is the inspiration and purpose of this school. It is sometimes the picture of Krishna and his cowherd companions playing a game of hide-and-seek on a full moon night along the banks of the Jamuna, or a picture of Krishna claiming his toll from the milk maids of Gokul, occasionally a depiction of Krishna and his amours with Radha, or Radha preparing a leafy bed of love on the banks of the Kalindi; and on them, the artists, lavished all the wealth of their palettes. The Pahari artist was particularly successful in treating landscape, which he has done with remarkable beauty and charm. Living amidst the snowcapped mountains, bubbling rivulets or tempestuous torrents, winding through scenes of verdant glory, he painted Nature as he saw and felt it. It has however to be admitted that these paintings of scenic grandeur, though pretty, lack that stirring appeal which belongs to some of the better Mughal miniatures.

Being in direct line with the Buddhist school of painting this phase of Hindu art could not but be like the Ajanta frescoes, an art of the line. "This vigorous archaic outline is the basis of its language. Wiry, distinct and sharp as that golden rule of art and life desired by Blake: sensitive, reticent and tender, it perfectly reflects the severe self-control and sweet serenity of Indian life." (Coomaraswamy.)

These old traditions of Hindu painting still linger on though in a decadent form among the temple craftsmen of the country, in the ritual of Hindu women-folk and in the traces of an art of fresco painting in the homes of the well-to-do, particularly in Jaipur, Bikaner, Jodhpur and Udaipur, where it is, even to this day, a living craft.

As an off-shoot of the proper Mughal school, a local school patronised by the rulers of Golkunda and Bijapur developed in the Deccan in the 17th century. The paintings of this school have popularly come to be known as Deccani. Scenes of acrobatics, court and harem life, portraits of dancing girls and notables, Ragmalas and book illustrations, with distinct decorative features, show an effective synthesis of the Persian and the indigenous art traditions.

Under the patronage of the European merchants, about the close of the 18th century, what remained of the Mughal style took a new form, being impregnated thoroughly with Western influences. A number of the hereditary portrait painters, yielding to material considerations, quickly adapted their style to be in line with the increasing European vogue. Miniature and portrait painting continued to be practised but the artists were mere copyists who could not well assimilate the lesson and their products were often crude and lifeless.

By the time the present century had opened, the best in the Mughal and the Rajput traditions in painting had exhausted itself. The English-educated Indian, in a mood of unintelligent appreciation of everything Western, developed a sacred respect for Victorian ideas on art, and refused to find any basis of national culture in the soil and traditions of the country. It was generally considered that Indian art was not based on reality, and was extremely poor in technical skill. The artist, therefore, turned for inspiration to the Greek ideals of art as explained to him by the English, and produced pictures, both in oil and water colours, imitating the works of cheap European art. Schools of art were opened in important cities in the country where, in course of time, a curiously bastard style was evolved. Raja Ravi Varma, the talented representative of the new taste got a tremendous popularity in the country for his cheap picturisation of mythological subjects. But his works were photographic and devoid of all aesthetic merit. Even at best, they could not get beyond mediocrity. As Havell says: "His pictures invariably manifest a most painful lack of the poetic faculty in illustrating the most imaginative Indian poetry and allegory; and this cardinal sin is not to be atoned for by any kind of technical skill in the execution."

A continuance of this state of affairs was bound to have fatal consequences for the life and growth of the national art. But by a queer accident of history, it was an Englishman who gave a turn to the tide. E. B. Havell, Principal of the Calcutta School of Art, recognised the grievous wrong done to the cause of Indian art by the imposition of foreign ideas and a superficial admiration of Western art. Through his writings he sought to help the educated Indians to a better understanding of the achievements and ideals of their own art heritage. Soon his efforts and encouragement brought in the renaissance of classical Indian painting. A revivalist movement, better known as the Bengal School of Indian Painting, got started under the leadership of Abanindranath Tagore who gave form and character to it. Determined to regenerate once again the art life of the country by capturing the ancient artistic ideals, and producing something truly Indian in style and spirit, Abanindranath and a small group of his immediate associates went back for inspiration to the Ajanta frescoes and the Mughal, Rajput and Pahari miniatures. Like their great predecessors they found an inexhaustible range of subjects for their imagination to take shape in the religious, social and political life of the people, taking care to give expression to mental concepts rather than reproducing the objects of the external world. Western representationalism and technique were completely abandoned. With the emphasis always on Oriental traditions, Chinese and Japanese paintings too, a short time later, began to be studied, and the artists adopted certain mannerisms of these arts as well. Abanindranath Tagore himself was deeply influenced by the calligraphic quality of Chinese paintings and the colour technique of Japanese works. Among the other great artists who guided the course of the new movement, mention may be made of Nandlal Bose, Asit Kumar Haldar, Venkatappa, Sarada Ukil, Samarendranath Gupta, Mukul Dey, Abdur Rahman Chughtai, Devi Prasad Roy Chowdhury, Pulin Behari Dutt, Pramode Chatterjee, and Kshitendranath Majumdar.

This movement, which was intended to be aesthetic, could not escape being influenced by a feeling of nationalism, which ultimately weakened the ideals with which it had started. The patriotic zeal of the people fighting the war of Independence offered but artificial stimulus to the further progress of the Art, and from the thirties of the present century, the idea of assimilating tradition began to lose in vitality. The latter followers

of the Revivalist School lacked the intellect and power of visualisation of the pioneers. They adopted not only the technique and language of the Ajanta, the Rajput and the Mughal artists, but also began to copy the ideological and social contents of their productions. And they got so much engrossed in imitation that they became incapable of giving anything new or original. Lifeless picturisation of historical and mythological subjects, instead of interpretation and subjectivism, became the key-note of the followers' works.

Fortunately, however, about the same time a new movement, a search for a new Spirit of Truth, was being launched in the country by a set of talented artists who really belonged to the Revivalist School at its best, but had consciously set themselves to the task of re-interpreting the old forms and translating their thoughts and visions in various new techniques and possibilities. Modernism in Indian painting, in the sense of opening up of new paths and discovering new principles of artistic expression was thus ushered in not by 'rebels', but by the exponents themselves of traditionalism. It was really the appearance of a new out-look rather than a victory of the one form over the other.

Gaganendranath Tagore, Rabindranath Tagore, Nand Lal Bose and Jamini Roy were its great pioneers in the Calcutta group. Gaganendranath daringly experimented with pleasant cubistic manipulations and in subtle brush work portrayed the various pictorial possibilities of light and shade. Rabindranath struck out a new note in expressionism. His head studies particularly, are reflections of a poet's sub-conscious mind. With Nand Lal, the old Indian conception of form remains the ideal but his inspirations have led him to experiment with remarkable success with diverse techniques and mediums of expression. Jamini Roy, drawing his inspiration from the age-less folk art of the villages, is after expressive forms on the simplest compositional schemes. Using the colour and brush of the village artists, his aim is to represent the inherent idea of the object to the exclusion, where necessary, of its concreteness, almost by the use of a single colour.

In quite another way, Amrita Sher-Gill suggested and evolved a new style in the treatment of her subjects and ideas. Deeply imbued with the Spirit of Ajanta and equally influenced by Cezanne and Gauguin, on account of her years in Paris, she boldly employed the Western technique, form and colour in recreating the Indian themes, particularly the miserable and pathetic aspects, which she achieved with remarkable vigour and acute realism. It may be said that probably few have succeeded more than Amrita Sher-Gill in giving original form to our traditions.

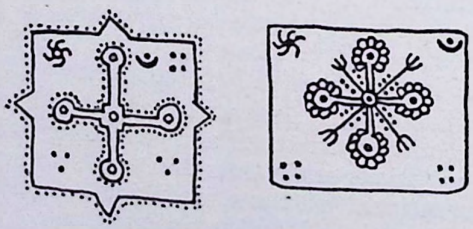
A good number of our present day artists are also discovering new themes, new norms of beauty, and new ways of giving expression to them. Freedom has become the key-note of the modern trend. The demands of society have to a great extent ceased to worry the artist and he finds himself free to translate the spectacle of life around him as he feels it and as he finds it convenient. His attention these days is concentrated on Man, his joys and sorrows, his hard, grim, day to day struggle for existence, which he attempts to express in various bold and revolutionary techniques. Old historical and legendary subjects, too, continue to arouse a sense of wonder among some of our artists, who seek to re-enliven them by their modern outlook. There are also signs of the development of a purely landscape art. Fascination for the simple, sincere and powerfully expressive forms of the folk-art of our villages has brought into being, with some force, a new movement in art, so much so, that the two-dimensional treatment of the folk form appears to have found a very secure place for itself in the art life of the country.

Art, under such circumstances, has naturally tended to become a matter of research. The artist's viewpoint has become experimental and he is eager to learn from wherever he can. He has become aware of new visions and values and wants to organise form and colour in different novel and unconventional patterns, reducing subjects sometimes to extreme simplicity. Naturalism has been given its proper connotation. It is not the formal representation of the recognizable reality that the artist aims at, but actually the visualisation

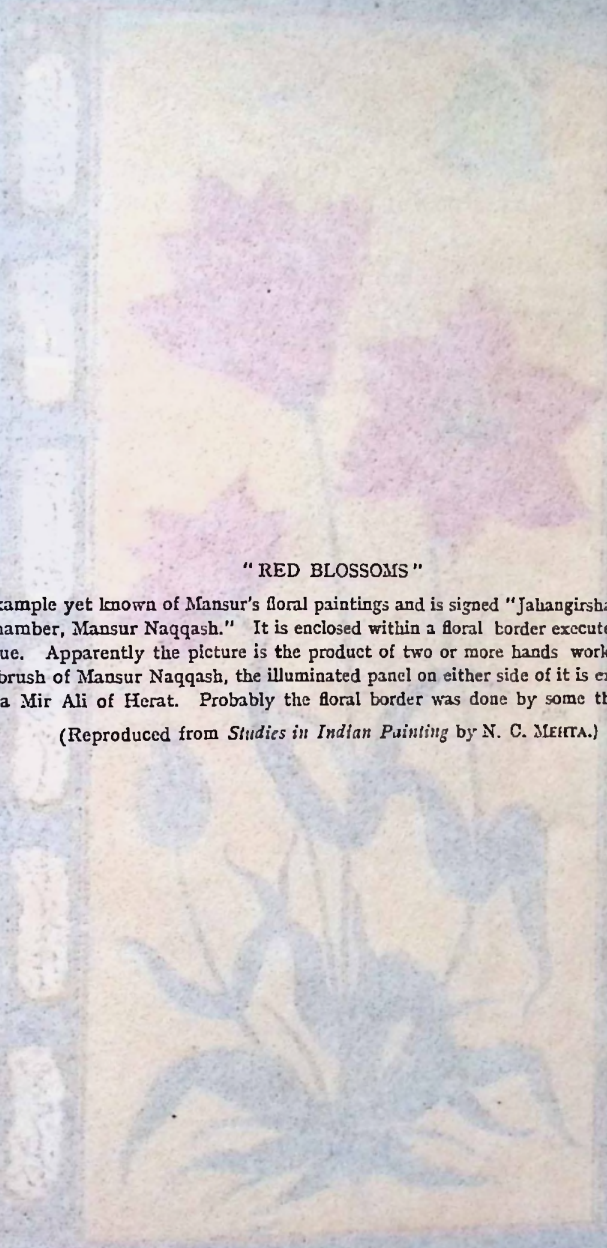
of his emotional reactions, resulting sometimes in very unorthodox compositional balancing of the subject matter, that has become the artist's principal concern.

Some of the prominent moderns who have influenced our artists are Van Gogh, Gauguin, Cezanne, Mattisse, Picasso and Diego Rivera. Their influence, unfortunately, has not always been for the best. A strange waywardness is sometimes noticeable in the contemporary scene. A school of experimentalists has come into being whose main work seems to be to dabble in all sorts of -isms. All sorts of new ways of visualising conception have been exaggerated into arid and academic abstractions, and labelled with such high-sounding terms as Cubism, Futurism and Surrealism which have only resulted in depriving the pictures of even the truth of formal appearances, and making them sometimes even look grotesque.

Among the artists who have successfully synthesized the age old traditions of art in India with the Western manner of handling paint on canvas, mention must be made of George Keyt, Sailoz Mukherjea, Chavda, Ara, Bendre, Satwalekar, Satish Sinha, Manishi Dey, Paul Raj, Paniker, Kanwal Krishna, Madhava Menon, Gopal Ghose, R. C. Sathi, Frank Wesley, Bhuwan Varma, Premoja Chowdhari, Sheela Subarwal, Ramkinkar, Satyen Ghosal, Badri, Binode Mukherjee, Paritosh Sen, Y. K. Shukla, Sheila Auden, Subho Tagore, Raza, Hebbar, Raval, Shreenivasulu, Rathin Maitra and Husain. While the technique of form and colour in some of these artists' work may well remind us of modern movements in Europe, we are bound to note a spirit of striving after the fundamental principles of Indian art. There is a sincere appreciation for the experience of the West, but at the same time a deep consciousness of the spiritual quality which forms the basis of the national art is also noticeable. The artists believe that modernisation of art does not necessarily demand casting off its traditional character or even a departure from aesthetic intentions. With delicate sensibility they have shown themselves capable of playing with form and colour in a manner which never seems to lose coherence, sense and beauty as understood by us for hundreds of years.



Rural Wall Decorations



"RED BLOSSOMS"

This is the only example yet known of Mansur's floral paintings and is signed "Jahangirshahi, the work of the slave of the Presence-Chamber, Mansur Naqqash." It is enclosed within a floral border executed in gold against a background of deep blue. Apparently the picture is the product of two or more hands working in collaboration: the plant is from the brush of Mansur Naqqash, the illuminated panel on either side of it is executed by the illustrious calligraphist, Mulla Mir Ali of Herat. Probably the floral border was done by some third artist.

(Reproduced from *Studies in Indian Painting* by N. C. MEHTA.)

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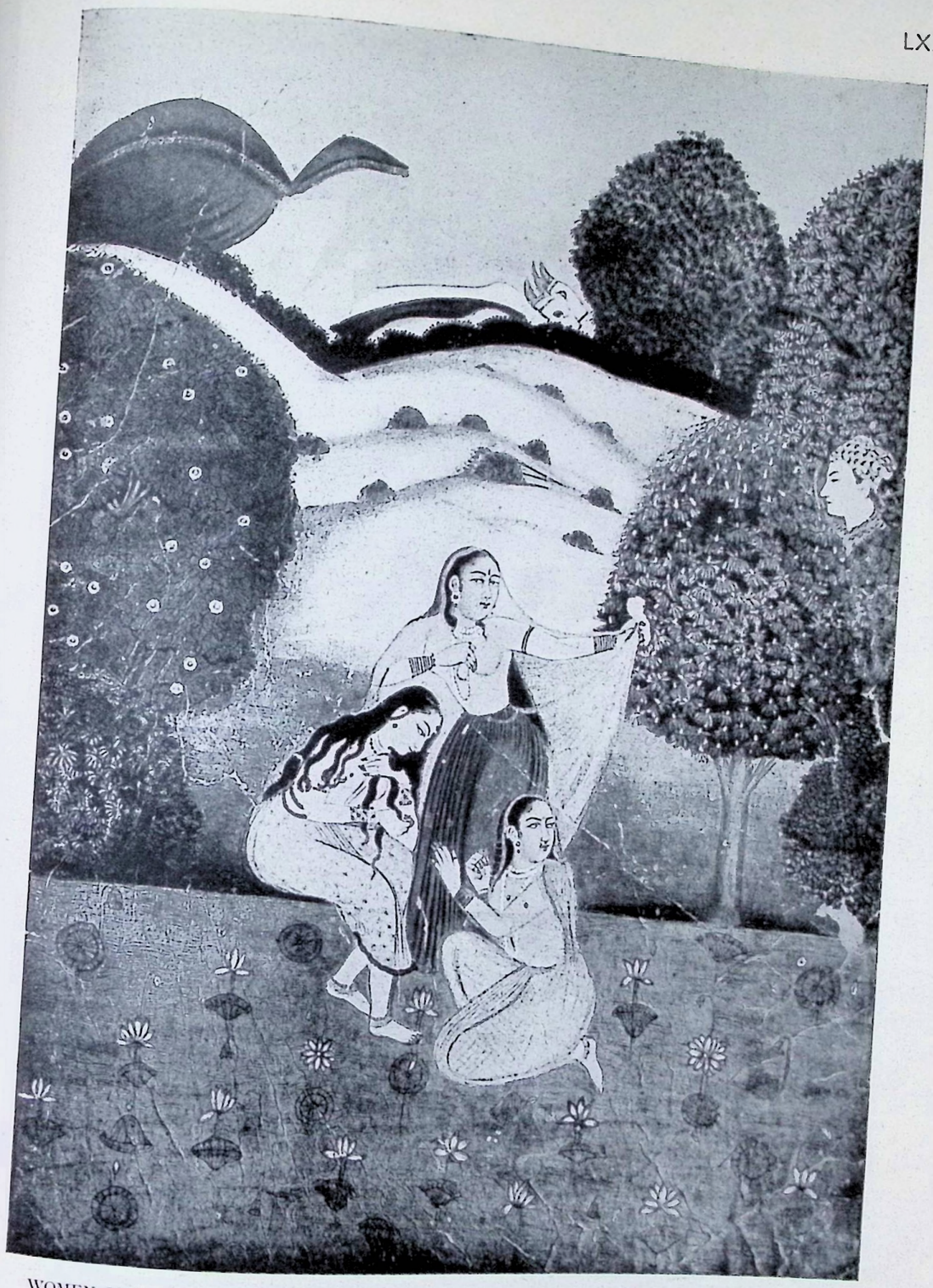
Floral Wall Decorations





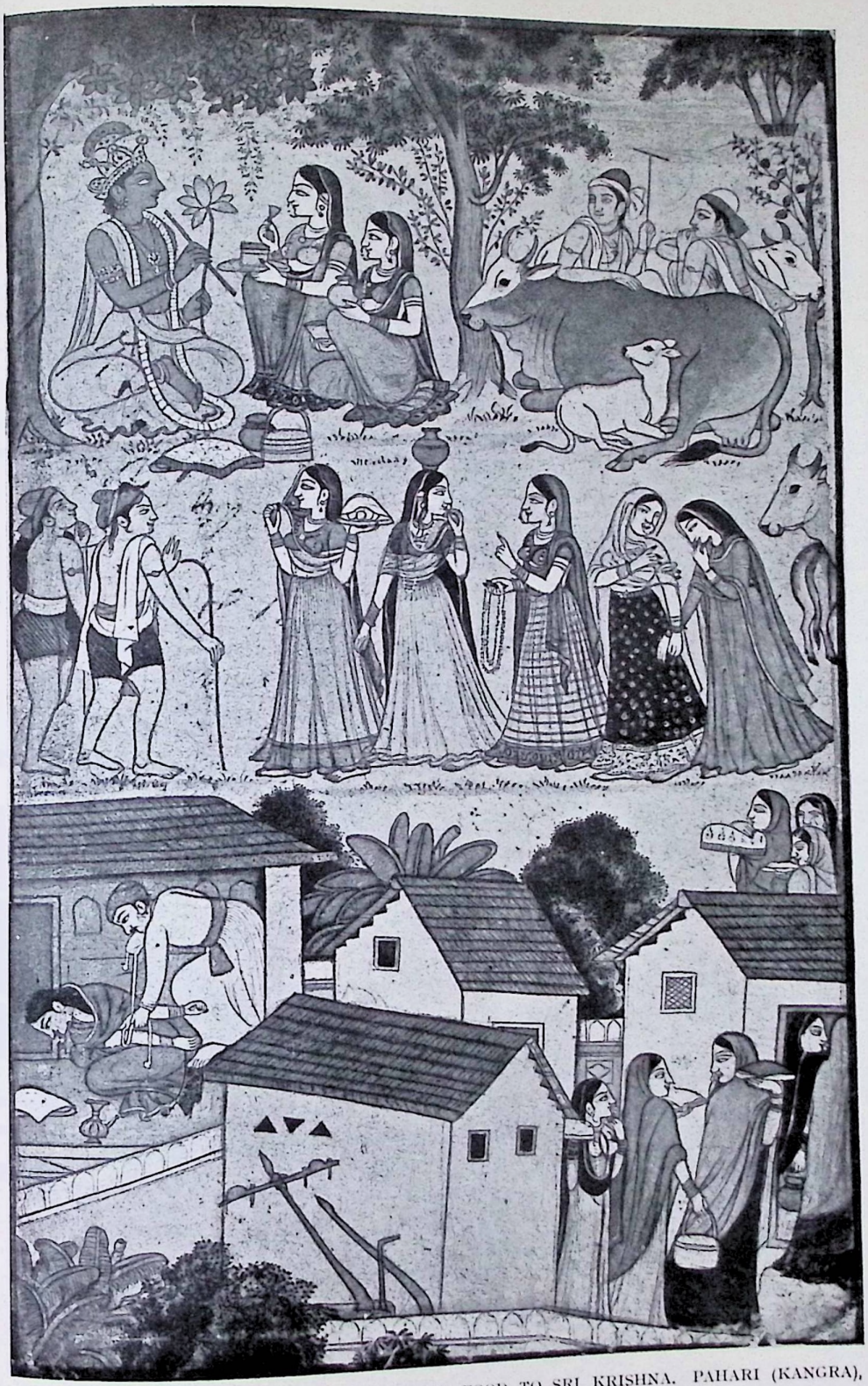
WOMEN BATHING. RAJASTHANI WITH MUGHAL INFLUENCE, PROBABLY JAIPUR OR DELHI, 17th CENTURY. BODELIAN MS.

(From *Rajput Painting* by Ananda Coomaraswamy)



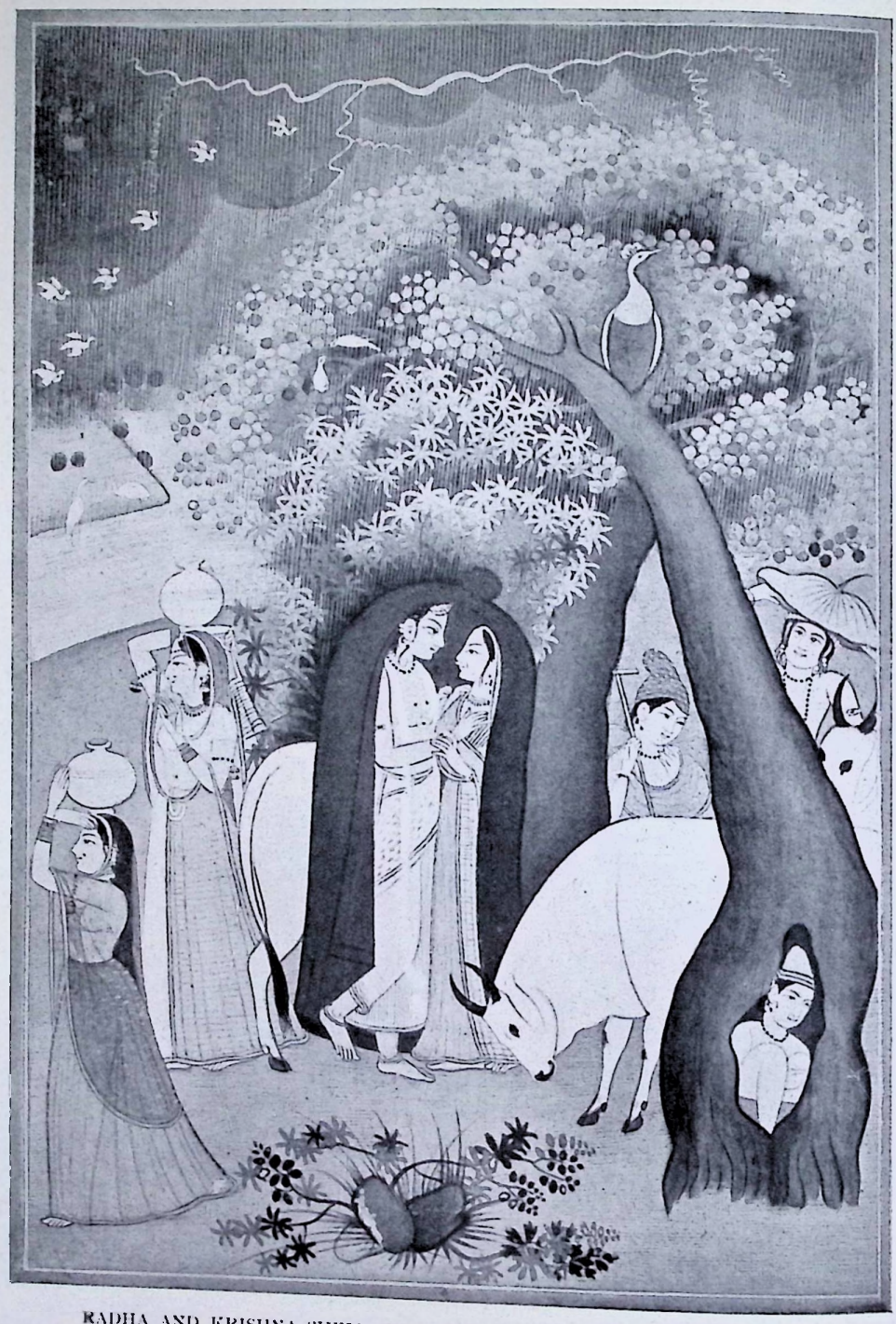
SRI KRISHNA RISES TO WELCOME SUDAMA. PAHARI (JAMMU), 17th CENTURY

(From *Rajput Painting* by Ananda Coomaraswamy)



WIVES OF THE MATHURA BRAHMANS TAKING FOOD TO SRI KRISHNA. PAHARI (KANGRA), 18th CENTURY

(From *Rajput Painting* by Ananda Coomaraswamy)



RADHA AND KRISHNA SHELTERING FROM THE RAIN. PAHARI (KANGRA), LATE 18th CENTURY

(From *Rajput Painting* by Ananda Coomaraswamy)



THE EVENING DANCE OF SHIVA. PAHARI (KANGRA), LATE 18th CENTURY

(From *Rajput Painting* by Ananda Coomaraswamy)



MAHADEVA (SHIVA) AND PARVATI. PAHARI (GARHWAL, ATTRIBUTED TO MOLA RAMA). LATE 18th—EARLY 19th CENTURY

(From *Rajput Painting* by Ananda Coomaraswamy)



KALKI-AVATAR. By NICHOLAS ROERICH

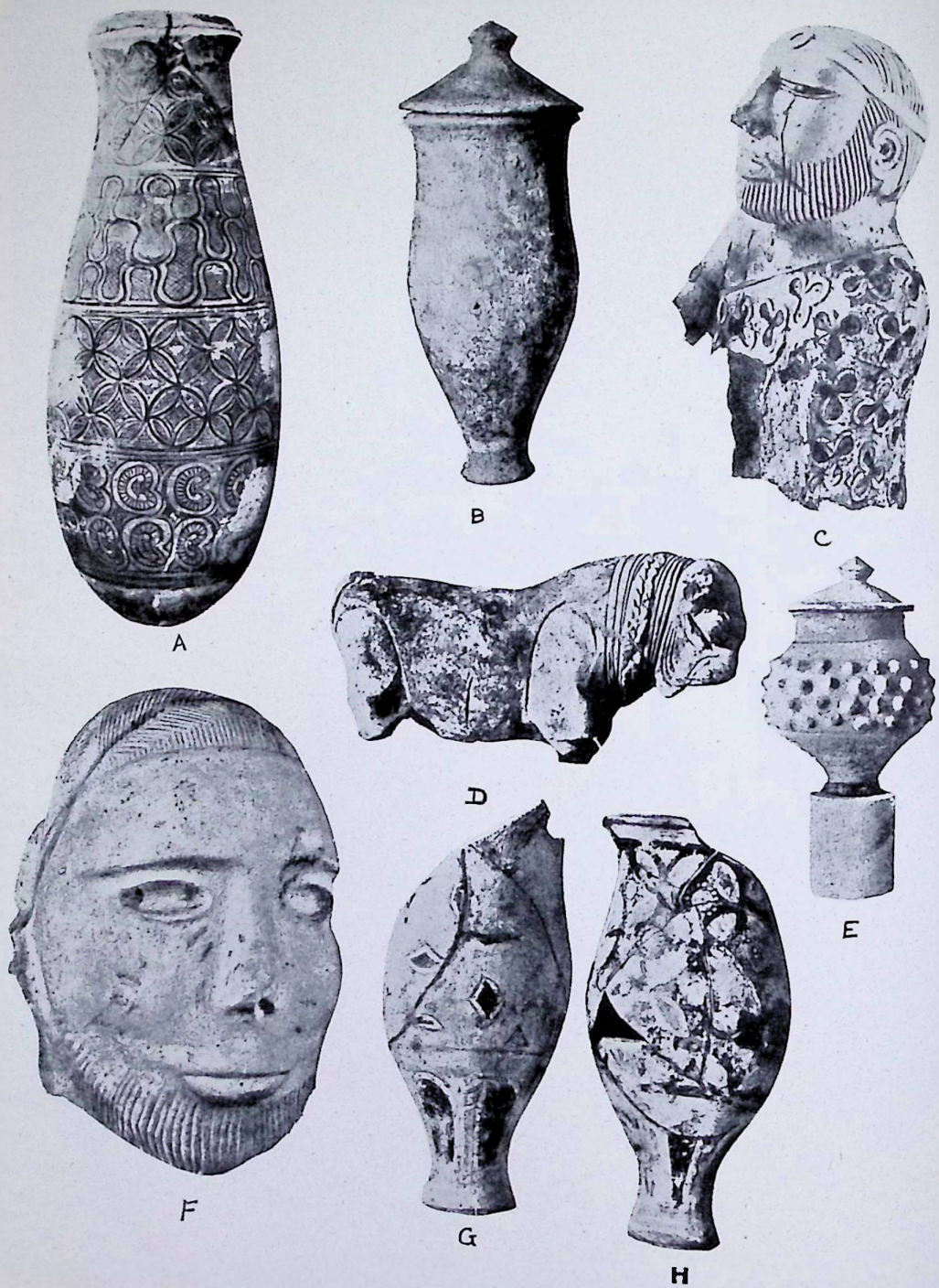


A PAINTING BY JAMINI ROY



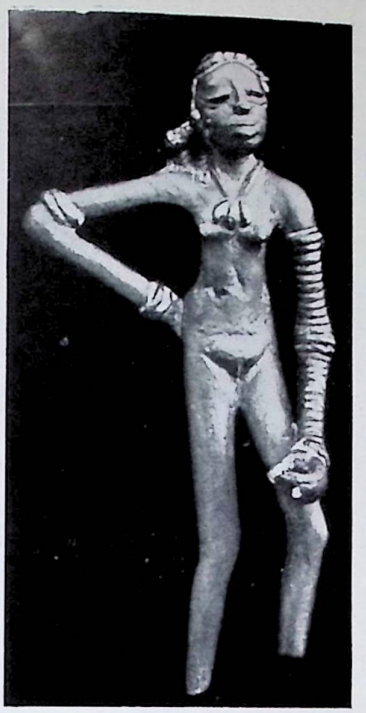
THE MIGHT OF THE LAW. By G. N. TAGORE

(By Courtesy of Bharat Kala Bhavan)



MOHENJO-DARO DISCOVERIES

A, Painted vase. B, Silver vase containing jewellery. C, Painted stucco statue. D, Terra-cotta bull. E, G, H, Polychromatic vases and urn. F, Stone head.





BACK AND FRONT VIEWS OF FAMOUS DANCING DOLL FROM MOHENJO-DARO

(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



FEMALE TERRACOTTA FIGURINE

Mohenjo-daro.

(Courtesy : Bharat Kala Bhavan)





SEALS FROM MOHENJO-DARO



MALE TORSO FROM HARAPPA. LIMESTONE

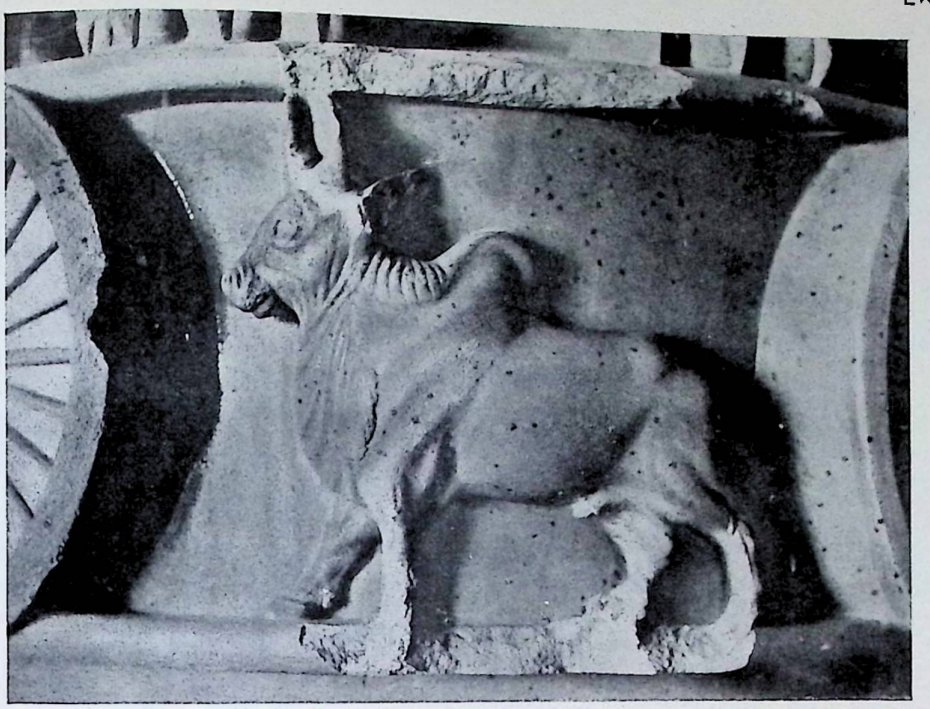


MONKEY FROM HARAPPA
TERRACOTTA





FRONT AND BACK VIEWS OF MALE TORSO FROM HARAPPA. LIMESTONE.
ATTRIBUTED TO THE THIRD MILLENIUM, B.C.





ZEBU AND ELEPHANT FROM THE PLINTH OF THE CAPITAL OF THE ASOKA COLUMN, SARNATH (242-236 B.C.)

(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



THE INNER SIDE OF THE EASTERN GATE OF STUPA OF BHARHUT
MIDDLE OF THE 2nd CENTURY B.C.
Indian Museum, Calcutta. (*Photo : India Office*)



THE BO-TREE OF BUDDHA WITH RAILING, THE DIAMOND TREE AND ASOKAN PILLAR, BHARHUT
(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)



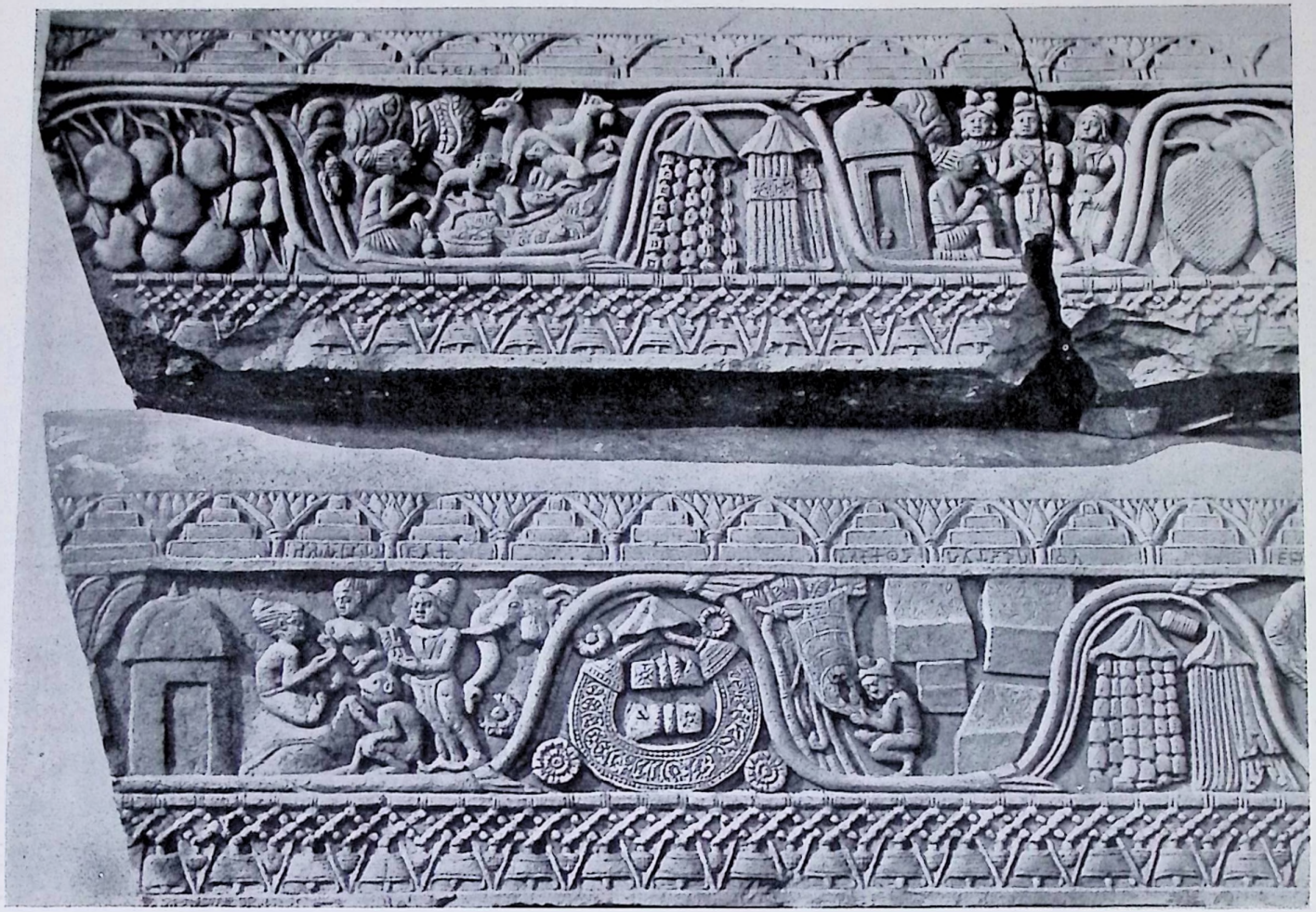


TWO RELIEF PANELS FROM THE STUPA OF BHARHUT
MIDDLE OF THE 2nd CENTURY B.C.

The Adoration of the Buddha, Symbolised by the Wheel of the Law and a Stupa

Indian Museum, Calcutta.

(Photos : India office)

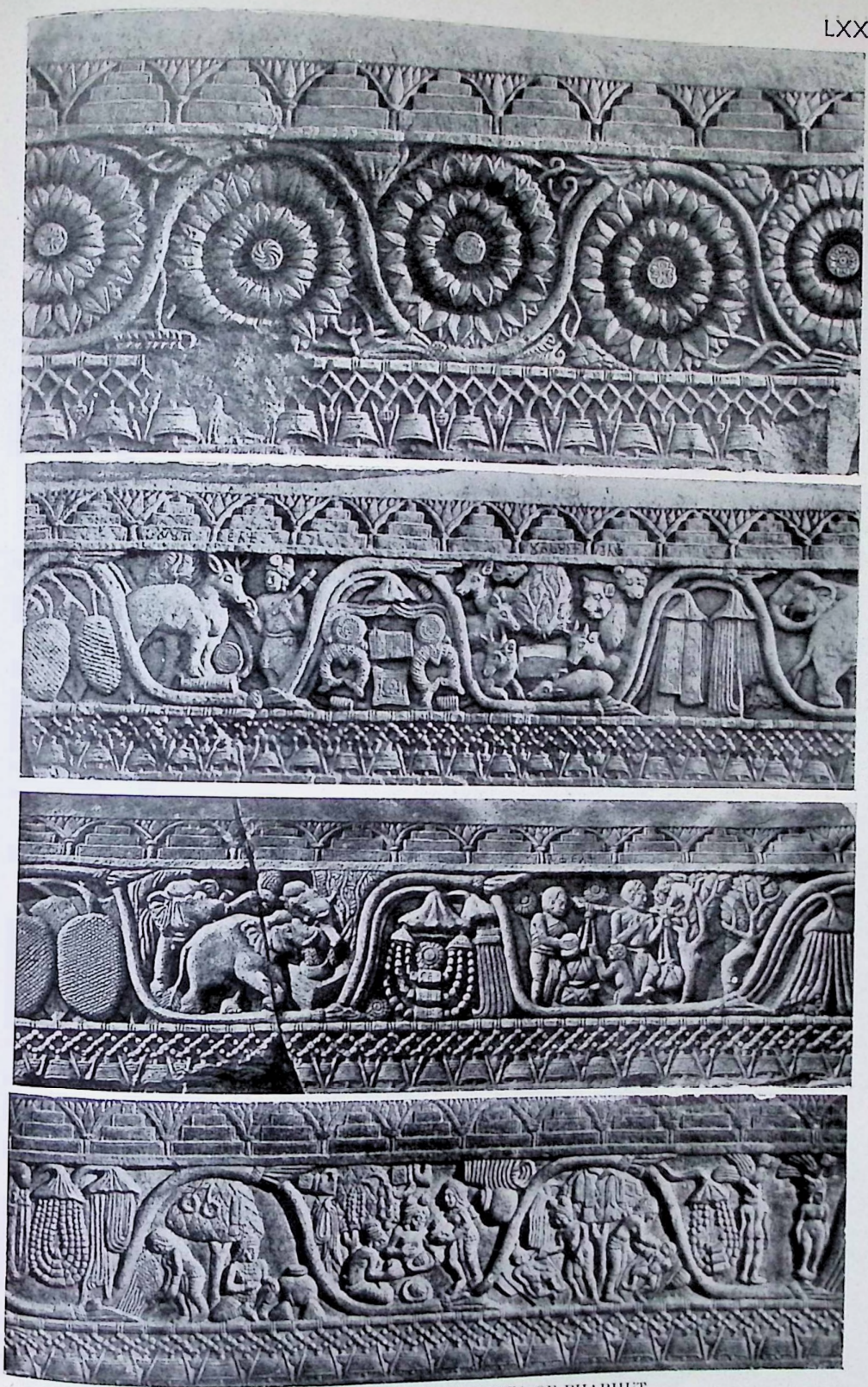


STONE HEDGE FROM THE STUPA OF BHARHUT. MIDDLE OF THE 2nd CENTURY B.C.

(Indian Museum, Calcutta. *Photo: India Office*)

Top. Dabbhapuppha Jataka (No. 400). In one of his existences, the Bodhisattva was the spirit of a tree standing on the banks of the Ganges. The female of a pair of jackals living near by one day showed a desire for fish, so the male set out in search for it. During the search he was asked by a couple of otters to act as arbitrator because they could not agree as to the distribution of a fish they had caught. The jackal gave the head of the fish to one of the otters and the tail to the other, keeping the best middle portion for himself, as fee for his work.

Bottom. Bhisa Jataka (No. 348). The left panel depicts the Bodhisattva's existence when he had retired to the Himalayas in company of his six brothers and one sister. Each of the brothers had to provide food for all in turn. The gathered fruits and lotus stalks were divided equally and placed in a certain place from where each could take the portion he liked. Sakka, wanting to test the Bodhisattva, took away his portion for three consecutive days. The Bodhisattva summoned his brothers and sister for an explanation. An elephant and an ape living near by also came to the meeting. All protested their innocence whereupon Sakka appeared and returned the food he had stolen.



STONE HEDGES FROM THE STUPA OF BHARHUT

Top and Upper Middle : Outer and inner sides of stone hedge. Middle of the 2nd century B.C.
Lower Middle : Frieze from stone hedge. The scene to the right, Dubhiya Makhala Jataka (No. 174), shows a street with a well from which passers-by used to draw water for their animals. One day when the Bodhisattva was passing the well he gave a drink to an ape sitting near the well, tortured by thirst. But the ape proved ungrateful and tried to frighten the Bodhisattva by making ugly grimaces and finally soiled him.
Bottom : Fragment from stone hedge. The scene depicted here apparently represents episodes of the Dubhiya Makhala Jataka

Indian Museum, Calcutta. (*Photos : India Office.*)



CHULAKOKA DEVATA



KUVERA YAKSA



SIRIMA DEVATA



GANGITA YAKSA

Sculptures from the Stupa of Bharhut, 2nd Century B.C. Indian Museum, Calcutta.
(*Photos : India Office*)

SCULPTURE

SCULPTURE is one of our immortal glories and perhaps our strongest claim to pre-eminence in the domain of art. In its long history Indian art, and particularly sculpture, was submitted to various vicissitudes, and quite a considerable amount of sculptural art has been lost for ever. But, the still surviving remnants display, both in quantity and quality, an amazing range of human achievement—unique in its pristine vitality and imagination, beauty and creative excellence, reaching a perfection hardly ever reached elsewhere.

The most distinguishing feature of our sculpture is its predominantly religious character, being one of the several manifestations which represent the spiritual life of the Indians. Buddhism, Jainism, and Hinduism, distinguishable from all other religions by the importance they have attached to visual representation of their ideals, have each contributed their share to the building up of that superb edifice known as the Indian Pantheon. Every city and every village in India possesses its *devagrah*—its place of worship which must contain a representation of God, a receptacle of the divine spirit, in whose presence the religious sentiments of the people find their natural outlet. Image worship, in fact, forms the very pivot of Indian religions, since it offers a very convenient solution of the difficulty of conceiving a limitless Absolute.

Alongside with this attitude, there can be observed another tendency, which has been of the greatest importance in the history of art—the effort to please and propitiate the Divinity and also to adorn His House with exquisite sculptural decorative devices. The desire for decoration is universal and irresistible. But the zeal with which Indians have responded to this instinct is really amazing. They have overlaid the cold, bare surfaces of their temples with carvings of intricate variety and delicate fancy, leaving behind a marvellous cultural legacy for admiring posterity to wonder at. In order not to divert the mind of the devotee from the divine image, the artists usually left the interior of the temple as bare as possible and only the exterior walls were embellished with almost a limitless exuberance of sculpturesque decorations. Gradually, however, the interior surfaces, too, began to be richly and profusely decorated, so much so that ornament became a most vital accessory to our architecture.

There is no doubt, of course, that a considerable part of the output of the Indian sculptors exhibits an intensely sensuous awareness of life. The message, however, which even they invariably convey is that there is no aspect whatever of existence, animate or inanimate, in which we should not perceive Divinity. In the vigorous groupings of dancers caught in the gay abandon of movement in the reliefs at Sanchi, in the lovely and passionate conjugal embraces of men and women at Khajuraho and Konarak, in the intricate carving of jewellery with which almost every sculptured figure is decorated, and in the flowers which embellish every design, there is a teaching of religion which forces us to see the Divine in those very forms in which we are most likely to forget it.

In classic Sanskrit treatises, the sculptor has been given various names. He is known as the *Sadhak* (Achiever), the *Mantrin* (Wizard) and the *Yogi* (Visionary). All these words collectively convey the significance of thought underlying image making in India. It is not the representation of Nature that the mere physical eye sees, but actually the bringing out of the universal and eternal forces of life that is sought after by the Indian artist. In other words, his aim is not to visualise the physical reality, but to achieve something of the movement of an inner consciousness that is behind it. Indian art is as real as any other

art. Only the 'reality' has a different meaning for us. The reality which has ever been the standpoint of Indian art, consists in the relation of the forms of the visible world with the energies and emotions which belong to the forms. The genius of our artist, therefore, lies not in merely copying external Nature, but in unfolding it in the way it functions.

The aim being primarily spiritual and only secondarily secular and aesthetic, portrayal of the mere perfection of physical structure, as with the Greeks, was not the highest artistic ideal in our country, nor was it ever glorified by the Indian sculptor. He on the other hand believed that even the perfect human figure could not fully manifest the higher spiritual values of Life, nor contain within itself the attributes and qualities of the Divinity, a Divinity who is philosophically "Supersensuous, Infinite, Unconditioned and Absolute."

In his endeavour, therefore, to give to such abstract conceptions local habitation in sculptured forms, the artist adhered to a tradition of a supremely creative imagination. He consciously placed before himself an ideal, which was not based upon the contemplation of the natural form, but upon meditation of the Divine Form. It is a 'Yoga' for the successful realisation of which by the artist, says Sukracharya "the spiritual vision is the best and the truest standard for him. He should depend upon it and not at all upon the visible objects perceived by the external senses." In this way, suggestion and symbolism became the language of Indian art, and the artist gave an idealistic and symbolic character to his sculpture.

Consequently, the figures in the best periods of our sculpture are considered not in their fine exterior or anatomically perfect form, but in the degree of their efficacy as plastic figuration for imitating Divinity or any spiritual conception that may pervade and animate them. Its supreme function lies in the distinctive power of its suggestiveness. Energy is concentrated in the superhuman figures so transforming their aspect that considered on the basis of actual appearance they suggest attributes and possibilities beyond the range of mortals. Taking the well known example of the image of Mahadeva or Trimurti in the Elephanta cave, one will be struck by the grand and stupefying majesty of God, whose three heads although anatomically inconceivable, are a simple symbolic device to represent the unification of the three different aspects of the Supreme Being. On the other hand, in the ample hips and full breasts of the sculptured women, we perceive not the physical charm of the female form, but the majesty and mystery of the Divine Mother. The portrayal of the same Reality makes flowers and plants surge in curves unforeseen by physical Nature, yet significant of a life which belongs to a 'psychological Nature.'

The Indian artist was also enjoined to follow an established symbology for the treatment of the lineaments of the images of the gods in worship, which were laid down in the *Shilpshastras*. For each image or different classes of images, elaborate and definite canons of proportion and appearance of the figure as well as definite attributes were prescribed. The *Shastras* have also laid down a highly formalised gesture language called *mudras* for conveying by values of movements, spiritual moods and ecstatic raptures. For images not meant for worship, the artist's fancy was the only guide.

It is frequently maintained that the ancient Indian sculptors were so much fettered by the restrictions on what and how the artists may present their conceptions that they enjoyed little freedom in the expression of their artistic self, resulting, as the critics point out, in a degeneration of their productions into empty conventionality. Nothing, however, could be farther from the truth. It may be questioned, legitimately to the triumph of the Indian artist, whether a greater number of expressive postures, not only of the face but of the whole body throughout, has yet been possible for any other artist to exhibit in any part of the world. No canon could ever alter the individual genius or skill, personal style and imaginative fervour of the artist, who, whenever he has handled a material with his chisel has tried his fullest to infuse his productions with the vitality of his individual creative power. In the sway of the arms and figures, apart from the symbolic significance, the

artists have succeeded in interpreting the feelings and motives of the mind in so wonderfully articulate a manner that no canon or prescription could have made that possible. The canons and prescriptions were intended simply to guide the image-maker in his work of translating the ideal into plastic form, so as to prevent degeneration of the plastic conception in the hands of inferior artists.

As to the first examples of sculptural achievement, so far the earliest have been discovered in the Indus valley, dating back to the 3rd millennium B.C. They, however, do not give us any clue to the earlier stages of its development, being much too mature and subtle to suggest a beginning of the plastic art. At Harappa and Mohenjo-daro we are confronted with evidence of a sculptural art already founded on the accumulated artistic experience of ages. In fact, in many forms and symbols, Mohenjo-daro has a strong palaeolithic flavour.

It is evident, therefore, that sculpture in our country extends to a past remoter than that of the Indus valley. Unfortunately, we have no surviving relics of the pre-Indus age. But it is certain that for the beginning of iconography and the development of a plastic art on Indian soil, we owe a debt to the non-Aryan population of the country —the Dravidians being the most predominant. They had already attained a high degree of culture and had built up devotional cults of the phallus and of mother goddesses, Nagas, Yakshas and other nature spirits, thus possessing themselves of an elaborate pantheon.

The character of these images, however, must have been primitive, earthly and natural, moulded in the simplest and crudest shapes. Sculpture also had probably not yet become a medium of expression of the artistic sentiments. For that we have to wait until the austere intellectualism of the *Upanishads* and Buddhism had given way to the warm theology of the Hindu devotional cults in Epic times and later.

Among the most striking fragments excavated in the Indus valley are the two mutilated torsos found at Harappa. In modelling and characterisation they bear a significant resemblance to the examples known from the Hellenistic age 2000 years later. The first, carved in red sandstone is the naked torso of a man—astonishingly accurate in anatomical details—interpreting the vigour and power of the human body, through a subtle modelling of the form. These qualities generally characterise the Indus sculptures. The second, too, is a torso in grey slate in which the sculptor has successfully represented the figure of a male dancer in action.

The subject of reliefs on the so-called seals or amulets, another very interesting relic, found in large numbers at the Indus sites, is usually animal—the types most commonly engraved being the so-called unicorn, the short-horned bull and the Brahmani bull, although elephants, tigers, rhinoceroses, buffaloes, crocodiles and antelopes also find place. The animals, appearing so effortlessly naturalistic to the last detail, breathe forth an air of sustained animality and majesty, suggesting a tradition of a highly skilled craftsmanship. No doubt, the merit of the Indus valley artists lay in their ability to portray amazingly realistic and sympathetic impressions of life.

There follows now a long gap in the continuity of India's material culture—a period of 2000 years which saw the arrival of the Aryans in India and the coming into being of the three great Indian religions, Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism. But hardly any traces of the artistic activities of this period survive, although from a description of houses and palaces in the great epics, we know that image making in some form or other did exist during this period. It is, however, only from the days of the Mauryans that a continuous history and development of Indian sculpture as a tradition begins.

When Asoka, the most illustrious of the Mauryans, adopted Buddhism as the State religion, he found in his precept of "Dharma Vijai" not merely a means for the spread of a religious movement, but also a convenient Imperial policy. The columns named after

Asoka, erected all over his empire, either to mark a sacred site or to commemorate a great event, have been inscribed with edicts propagating the *Dharma* and indirectly preaching the Imperial sermons to his people. Rising to an average height of about 40 feet the pillars are large circular shafts of plain sandstone, the capital of each of which incorporates a series of fluted elongated petals and which, falling together, take the form of a bell, surmounted by a circular abacus, ornamented with animal and flower motifs in relief, and a crowning sculpture in the round. The bell shaped capitals of the pillars have led many art critics to trace in them a borrowed motif, supposedly Persian. But they are as a matter of fact the inverted lotus flowers, so common a feature of India's spiritual life.

For bold execution, technical skill and expressive symbolism, Asokan pillars hold a high place in the history of Indian Art. The workmanship of the columns is in every case marked by marvellous chiselling, fine proportions and a lustrous finish. It is, however, in the massive Buddhist conception poised above the abacus that the artist has shown the greatest imagination and skill. The animals which are the main features in the scheme are superb creations, simply and realistically modelled, infused with vigour and natural expression. The Lion Capital at Sarnath is the finest of the group and an outstanding example of the power and brilliance of the Mauryan Art. To quote Sir John Marshall : "In the masterful strength of the crowning lions, with their swelling veins and tense muscular development, and in the spirited realism of the reliefs below, there is no trace whatever of the limitations of primitive art. So far as naturalism was his aim, the sculptor has modelled his figures direct from nature and has delineated their forms with bold, faithful touch ; but he has done more than this : he has consciously and of set purpose infused a tectonic conventional spirit into the four lions, so as to bring them into harmony with the architectural character of the monument.

It is sometimes suggested that the Persian and Hellenistic influences went a long way to mould the shape of Mauryan art. There is no doubt that the Mauryan kings had many contacts, both political and cultural, with the Greeks and the Persians, but neither changed the trend of Indian sculpture. On the other hand, a very strong possibility of the Mauryan sculpture being of the same stock as that of the Indus valley is not excluded.

The other contemporary figure carvings of this period—the Didargunj Yakshi of Bihar, the colossal standing image of a Yaksha at Parkham—a statue which seems to step directly out of the rock, the Yakshi of Besnagar, and the two headless figures from Patna, may, unlike the columns which are examples of the Imperial art using Buddhism for political ends, just be taken to be the splendid specimens of the popular and wholly indigenous art of the period. With the exception of the Didargunj Yakshi, which stands out in artistic achievement, the other figure carvings, whose physical bulk is one of their main qualities, retain in their archaic stiffness, vestiges of the earlier and less mature sculptural traditions. These specimens of the Mauryan art represent trimphant humanity and are suggestive of dominant energy, spirit of freedom, hope and beauty.

The age following the Mauryan was the graceful period of Buddhist art. The robust and severely simple sculpture of the earlier stages gradually gave place to the 'flowing linear rhythm' of the classical art, and the characteristic voluptuous expressions of Indian art, pervaded by a vitality that passes through the form made their first appearances at Bharhut, Sanchi and Bodh Gaya. "An inner pliability bends and models the form. The paradox of the solid material (stone, etc.) and the fluid aspect of its artistic transformation make the high tension and complexity of Indian sculpture." (St. Kramrisch.)

It may be remembered here that the early Buddhism, inspired by austere religious ideals, had almost put a ban on all art which was considered as motivated by a sense of mere worldly pleasure. And the monks of the early Buddhist brotherhood were expressly forbidden from indulging in any decorative art form, particularly depicting the human figure. Later, however, in welcoming the non-Aryans within its fold "the Buddhist movement pre-



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4

FOUR TONDI OF THE STONE HEDGE. STUPA OF BHARHUT, MIDDLE OF THE 2nd CENTURY B.C.

1. Represents the Dream or Conception of Maya, the future mother of Gautama. She dreams of the Buddha ascending in the shape of a white Elephant. During the pregnancy the guardians of the world guard her couch. The lamp denotes night-time.

2. Represents Ruru Jataka (No. 482). A suicide having thrown himself into the Ganges was saved by the Bodhisattva, who was present there in the form of a gold gazelle. However, the miscreant betrayed the presence of the superb creature to King Brahmadatta. But instead of trying to escape from his captors, the Bodhisattva approached the hunting king and enlightened him about the ingratitude of the man he had saved from death.

3. Represents an episode from the Mahamagga Jataka (No. 546). Amara, wife of the Bodhisattva, during the absence of her husband, summoned the latter's enemies to her house. In expectation of gallant adventures, they stole into her house where they were bundled up in mats one by one. She had them then brought into the presence of the king, thus proving the innocence of her husband and her own chastity.

4. Represents the legend of the Jetavana Garden. The merchant Anathapindika once invited the Buddha to Sravasti and in searching for a dwelling place worthy of his guest he found the garden of Prince Jeta. But the wily owner asked for a high price, namely, as many pieces of gold as would cover the whole garden. The merchant agreed to this and erected in the garden the famous Jetavana cloister. Anathapindika is shown here twice, once as superintending the laying out of the gold pieces, and again as consecrating the ground by pouring water which is supposed to flow over the hands of the Buddha symbolised here by the hedged-in tree.

Indian Museum, Calcutta. (*Photos : India Office*)



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4

TONDI FROM THE RAFTERS AND STONE HEDGE OF STUPA OF BHARHUT
MIDDLE OF THE 2nd CENTURY B.C.

1. Represents the Kurugamiga Jataka (No. 200). A tortoise, woodpecker and antelope were living harmoniously together. One day the antelope was caught in a hunter's trap which the tortoise started to gnaw through. The hunter then returned, but the woodpecker (considered to be a bird of ill-omen) blocked his path until the net had been gnawed through and the antelope released.
2. Represents some episode from the Saddanta Jataka.
3. A female bust.
4. A male bust.

Indian Museum, Calcutta. (*Photos : India Office*)






SCULPTURES FROM BODH GAYA



Love Scene



Mithuna ?



The First Meditation



Bodhi Tree



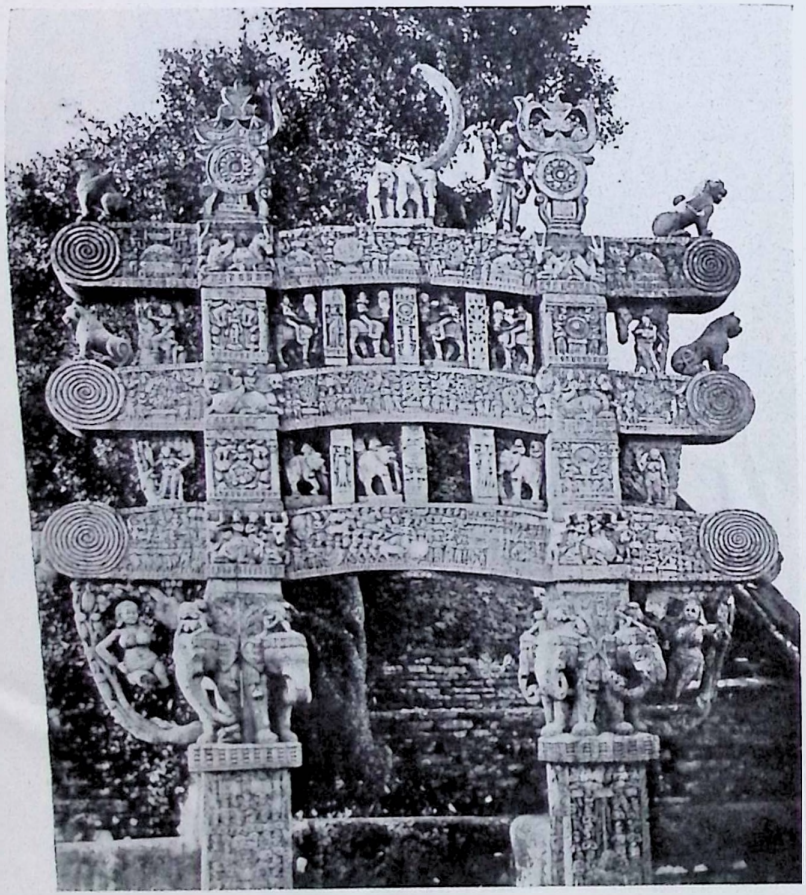
Donation of Jetavana by Anathapindika



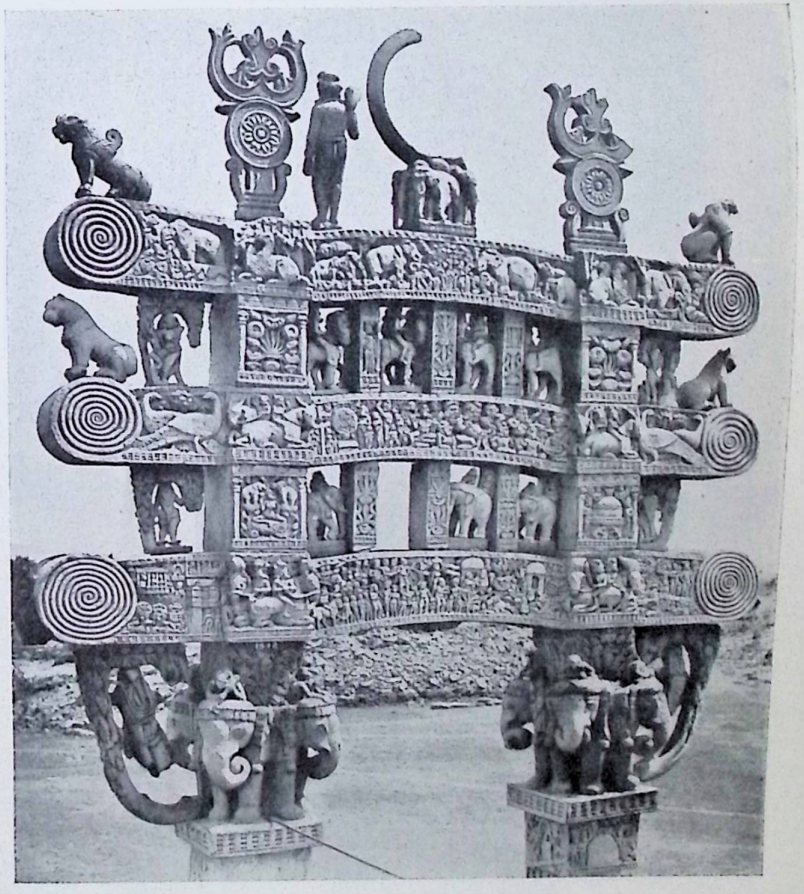
Adoration of the Sacred Tree

SCULPTURES FROM BODH GAYA

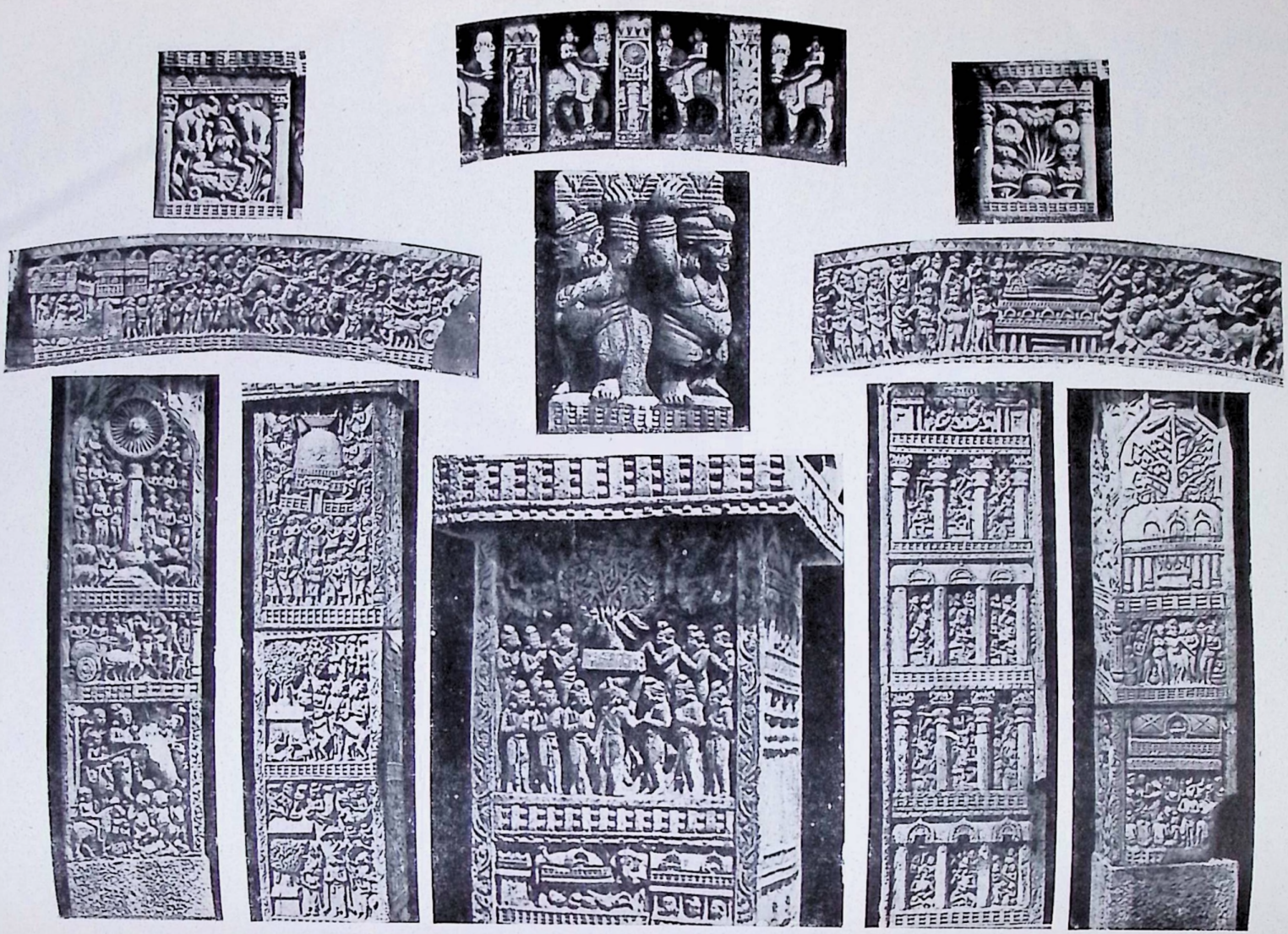
(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)



ARCHITRAVES OF NORTH GATE (Front View). STUPA OF SANCHI



ARCHITRAVES OF NORTH GATE (Rear View). STUPA OF SANCHI



SCULPTURES FROM THE STUPA OF SANCHI











SCULPTURES FROM THE STUPA OF SANCHI

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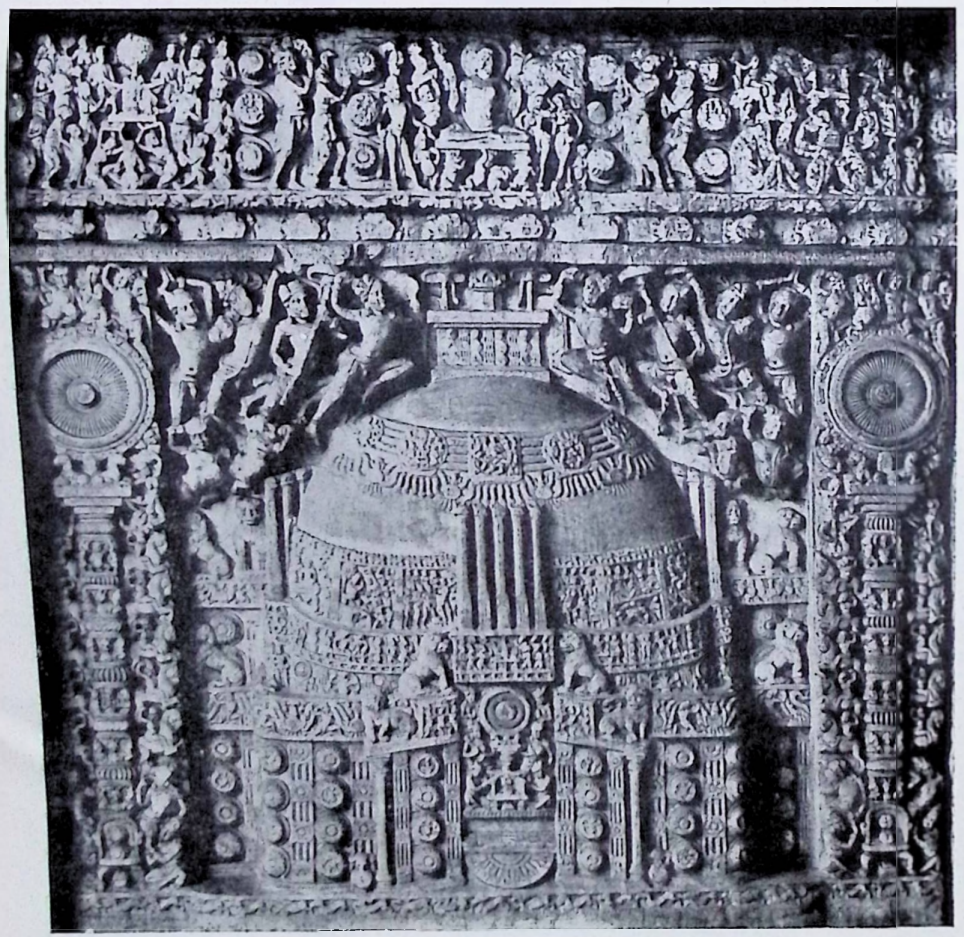
SCULPTURES FROM THE STUPA OF SANCHI



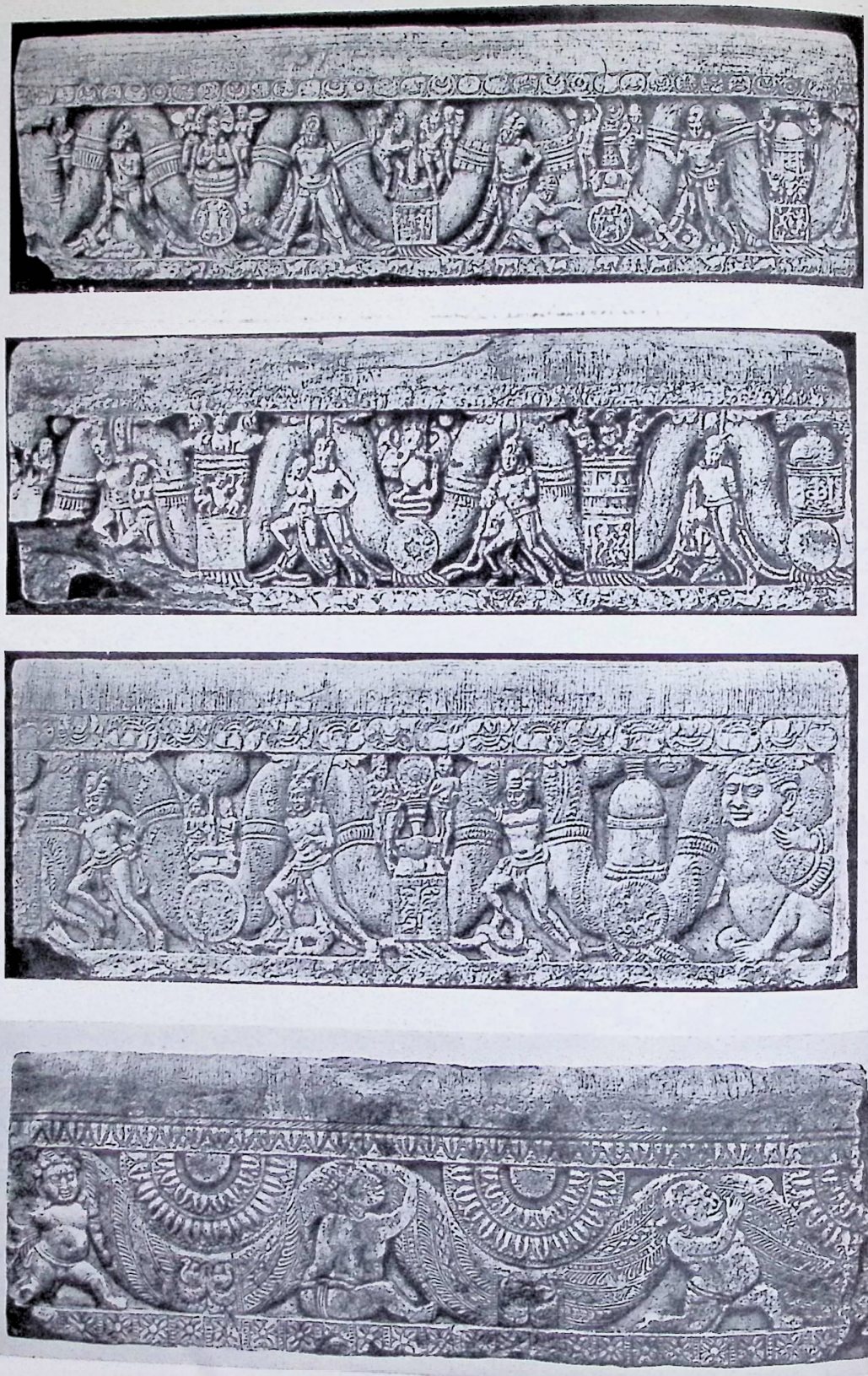


RELIEF ON PLINTH. AMARAVATI.

(Photo : India Office)

DETAILS OF CARVING OF AMARAVATI SCULPTURE

(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



FRAGMENTS FROM RAILING BEAMS, AMARAVATI
2nd Century A.D. Museum, Madras.
(*Photos : India Office*)

3



4





1



2

SCULPTURES FROM AMARAVATI

1. Outside of post from the outer railing, Amaravati. Middle of the 2nd Century A.D. Fig. 2. Inner side of jamb from the outer railing, Amaravati. 150-200 A.D. 3, 4. Two tondi of posts from the outer railing, Amaravati. Fig. 3 represents a musical entertainment and Fig. 4 Nagas worshipping the Relics of Buddha at the Stupa of Ramagrama.



Adoration of the Stupa by Nagas and Naginis



Adoration of the Buddha and the Wheel of Law

TWO PLINTHS FROM THE STUPA PANELLING AT AMARAVATI

Later half of the 2nd Century A.D.



Top. Adoration of the Alms-box of Buddha
Middle. Adoration of the Buddha
Bottom. Adoration of the Bodhisattva

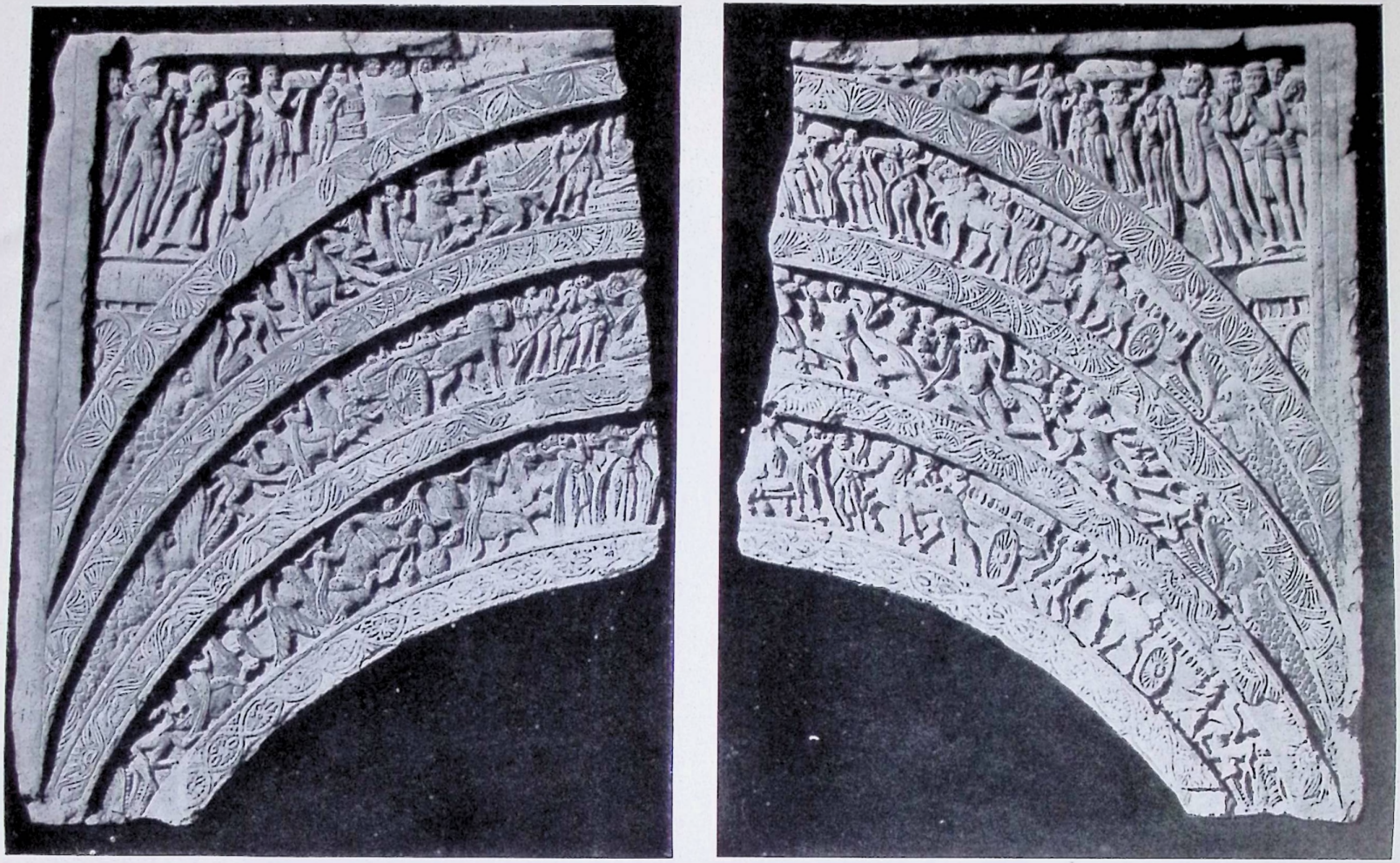


Top. Adoration of the hair-lock in the Heaven of the Thirty-three
Middle. Adoration of the Bodhisattva Maitreya

FRAGMENTS OF DOOR PANELS FROM MATHURA

Museum, Mathura

(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)



FRONT AND BACK VIEWS OF FRAGMENT OF A DOOR PANEL FROM MATHURA

1st quarter of the 2nd Century A.D.

Provincial Museum, Lucknow

(Photo : Prov. Mus., Lucknow)



PARKHAM YAKSA, MATHURA. END OF THE 3rd CENTURY B.C.

Museum, Mathura



PART OF A FRIEZE FROM MATHURA. 1st HALF OF THE 2nd CENTURY, A.D.

Museum, Mathura

(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



FRAGMENT OF A FRIEZE WITH THE SEVEN BUDDHAS, MATHURA, JUST BEFORE 129 A.D.

Provincial Museum, Lucknow

(Photo : Prov. Mus., Lucknow)



JAMB FRAGMENT FROM KANKALI TILA
Mathura, 1st half of the 2nd Century A.D.
Museum, Mathura
(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



GIRL CARRYING BIRD CAGE
From Railing Pillar, Mathura
2nd Century A.D.
(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)





SUPPORT OF A TORANA ARCHITRAVE
(Front and back views) from Kankali Tila,
Mathura.
Provincial Museum, Lucknow
(Photos : Prov. Mus., Lucknow)

pared the way for a release of popular forces which were eventually to transform its original character as a monastic order to that of a popular religion with a cult, incorporating the beliefs, practices and modes of worship characteristic of the traditional cults of the soil. In this way, the worship of trees, snakes and stupas (originally primitive tumuli or burial-mounds) and numerous other non-Aryan cults, became characteristic features of a popular Buddhist worship, and at the same time a Buddhist pantheon arose peopled by Yakshas, Yakshanis, Nagas and other devatas, the godlings and fertility spirits of village India.

"Equally significant were the philosophic implications. While Buddhism, in proclaiming the equality of man, expressed a new humanism and a strong faith in the brotherhood of man, at the same time its gospel of reincarnation stressed the unity of all life and the identification of man with nature. From this arose the intense feeling for nature and animal life which are found displayed in the Bharhut and Sanchi reliefs, where animals as well as human beings bring flowers and other offerings in homage to the symbol of the Buddha ; in the processions headed by gaily caparisoned elephants and horses ; in the ponds teeming with lotuses, water-fowl and fish, with here and there a buffalo cooling itself in the water. The treatment everywhere is full of sympathy, kinship and affection, and the theme unique, for its period, in the history of art." (John Irvin.)

The art of this period is almost exclusively Buddhist, with its chief centres at Bharhut, Sanchi, Bodh Gaya, Bhaja and elsewhere in Western India. The majority of the sculptures are reliefs, and belong either to the railings and gateways of the stupas or to the monasteries and chapels attached to them. Free alike from artificiality and idealism, the purpose of the art was to illustrate the teachings of the Lord, and give expression to spiritual beliefs in the simplest and most expressive language which the chisel of the sculptor could command. The method of presentation is that of continuous narration, that is, in one and the same relief composition, various connected incidents of one story taking place in one particular locality may be depicted.

An inscription on the gateway of the Buddhist stupa at Bharhut records its erection " during the supremacy of the Sungas," ascribing to it a date about the middle of the 2nd century B.C. The stupa, it may be explained here, was originally the primitive idea of a funeral mound. Later, however, it was adopted by the Buddhists as one of their sacred objects symbolising Buddha's achievement of Nirvana. And in no long time, the hemisphere-shaped stupa, enshrining relics either of Buddha or of Buddhist saints, became objects of cult-worship, around which the monks and lay-worshippers performed their *pradakshina*, keeping the stupa always on their right hand as they moved.

Both, the massive stone railed-in-terrace, going round the base of the Bharhut stupa, and the huge gateway leading to the main shrine have been lavishly decorated with sculptured narrative scenes from the historical and legendary lives of the Buddha. The sculptured stones also display incidents of contemporary social life and the current religious concepts and tendencies. One can find here men, women, ascetics, and traders, attired and bejewelled according to their station in life and engaged in their particular callings. The figures, alive and eager, seem to move in ceaseless rhythmic movements, or recline in static grace. Single images add to the richness and variety of the Bharhut decorations. Among the large individual figures, whose names are inscribed in Karoshthi script, are Kuvera, guardian of the north ; Sirima, goddess of fortune, and Sudarsana, guardian of still waters. A large number of real and fabulous animals displayed on the stones of Bharhut, show the artists' intimate knowledge of the types and habits of various jungle animals. Such a fine critic as Fergusson remarks : "Some animals such as elephants, deer and monkeys are better represented here than in any other sculpture known in any part of the world, so too are some trees... The human figures, too, though very different from our standard of beauty and grace, are truthful to nature, and where grouped together, combine to express the action intended with singular felicity." There is also an abundance of flowers and creeper motifs carved without exception with remarkable delicacy and workmanship.

In these sculptures, we do not come across the figural representation of the Master, but his presence is shown by symbols such as the sacred foot-prints, the Bodhi tree, the throne on which he sat or the platform on which he used to walk. It had been religiously ordained that "on the dissolution of the body neither gods nor men shall see him." These restrictions were faithfully followed till the 1st century A.D. when artistic urge triumphed over the scruples of the mind, and Buddha began to be portrayed in human form simultaneously at Mathura and Gandhara.

At Bharhut, we find the Indian artist's first attempt to replace wood by stone. The art, therefore, shows the characteristics of a transitional period, with all its drawbacks. The artist experienced a certain lack of facility in the use of the new medium and he has also almost entirely ignored the principles of perspective and distance. But all the same, the work of Bharhut is characterised by a penetrating flowing rhythm, "an apparent spontaneity which never sacrifices precision and is always combined with meticulous attention to detail."

The carvings on the stone balustrade from Bodh Gaya, with a wealth of floral and animal decorations, lotus medallions or upstanding figures in high relief, are historically later, but stylistically more elegant, than the Bharhut sculptures. The subject-matter of the reliefs is almost entirely taken from the lives of Buddha, but the exhaustive manner of telling stories that was the fashion at Bharhut, has now dwindled into abbreviations, although the images have this time been handled to suggest freer movements and a prouder gait.

Sanchi, a small village a few miles from Bhilsa, near where once stood the famous and populous city of Vidisha, the capital of Eastern Malwa, is the site of the noblest and the most interesting of all the monuments which early Buddhism has bequeathed to our country.

Encircling the stupa on the ground level is a procession path, enclosed by massive stone railings, entered by four gateways or toranas, as they were called, each of which is lavishly encircled with reliefs on both the inner and outer sides. There is evidence that the work was not all executed at the same time. Considering the styles of their carving, the Southern gate was probably the earliest votive offering and then followed the Northern, the Eastern and the Western gateways, in that order.

The Northern one, however, is now the most complete and the finest as a work of art. It appears likely that the Northern gateway was designed and supervised by one master builder, while the others were, as the inscriptions record, the joint gift of several pious individuals or guilds, and evidently carried out in sections by different groups of craftsmen working independently.

Although of the same class as Bharhut, Sanchi carvings mark a decisive sculptural advance. The scenes and figures have all been carved with the greatest boldness and a sureness of touch, while at the same time the play of light and shade on the different panels has been contrived so skilfully that even the extreme richness of ornamentation has in no way spoiled the aesthetic effect. Figures have been endowed with a sense of perspective and their portrayal is both naturalistic and sincere.

Although the sculptures of Sanchi illustrate the *Jatakas*, the emphasis is on the ceremonial pageantry and their treatment is wholly secular. The panels are thronged with tumultuous groups in a spirit of frolicsome freedom. But, be the figures at rest, or borne along in surging crowds, or dancing with exuberant joy, the effect they produce is invariably of calm and dignified composure. Their representation is naturalistic and sensuous and they have no affinity with the later creations of the Mahayana Buddhists.

The illustrations of the jungle stories by the Budhist workmen are expressive of a clear insight into animal character as well as a marvellous skill in technique, for the Sanchi sculpture is original, capable of expressing its ideas and of telling its story with a distinct-

ness that has never been surpassed in India. Sir John Marshall speaking of the animal figures says : "The material from which they are cut, might be clay instead of stone, so soft are their contours, so unrestrained their movements, so plastic their limbs."

Richly designed floral and plant ornamentations are amongst the greatest beauties of Sanchi. We may quote Sir John Marshall again : "Motifs taken from the plant world have at all times been handled with exquisite taste by the Indian artist, but never more exquisitely than by the sculptors of Sanchi."

The transition from the Sanchi and Bharhut art creations to the art of the Kushan and Gupta periods was a slow and gradual process, characterised mostly by the shifting of emphasis from the predominantly naturalistic and sensuous to the spiritual and idealistic art traditions. The rise and growth of the Kushans as a political power in India, in the first and second centuries A.D., coincided with some great religious and cultural ferments. Though Buddhism was still the predominant religion, the passage of time had dulled the enthusiasm of the Buddhists for the monasticism implied in the earlier ideal of passionless search for truths. It no longer remained a code of ethics, but became a popular religious system. The Hindu psychological truth prevailed at last that the human impulse craves for something concrete through which to adore rather than to explore the void of metaphysical subtleties. The belief in a God, who could be visualised in the likeness of living things, created the first great schism within the Buddhist movement and was responsible for the establishment of the rival Mahayana and Hinayana schools.

In sculpture, these trends were reflected firstly, in the creation of an iconography, peopled by the various Bodhisattavas and Buddhas. The Mahayanists, breaking away from the earlier traditions of Buddhism, not only raised Buddha to the dignity of the Divine, but also sanctioned the worship of the Great Teacher as the manifestation of the Infinite Light. So, while previously the Lord's presence was indicated by such symbols as his footsteps, now the seated or standing Buddha with the varying Yogic *mudras* began to capture the imagination of the artists.

But the artists never followed a definite model. Every school of sculptors impressed its own racial type upon the Buddhas it created. The Master represented in this period is only the idealised vision of the various artists and not a standardised individual. Standardisation came afterwards. However, the conventions with regard to dress and pose and appearance had definitely manifested themselves in the making. "The head is shaven, never covered with curls ; the 'unisa', wherever preserved, is spiral ; there is no moustaches ; the right hand is raised in 'Abhaya Mudra', the left is often clenched and rests on the thigh in seated figures, or in standing figures supports the folds of the robe the elbow being always at some distance from the body ; the breasts are curiously prominent, though the type is absolutely masculine, and the shoulders very broad ; the robe leaves the right shoulder bare ; the drapery moulds the flesh very closely, and is arranged in schematic folds ; the seat is never a lotus, but always a lion throne, without miniature figures. there is often a seated lion between the feet ; the gestures and features are expressive of enormous energy, rather than of repose or sweetness, nor is there any suggestion of intended grace. The nimbus is plain or scalloped at the edge in low relief." (Coomaraswamy.)

The second innovation was a departure in the method of relief narrative from Bharhut and Sanchi—instead of depicting the separate episodes of the story within the framework of a single panel, they now began to illustrate them in a sequence of panels. But the reliefs are of minor importance in this period. The artistic urge of the time expressed itself in increased plastic penetration of large-sized sculptures, boldly carved in round or high relief, and with greater vitality.

Specimens of this period have been discovered in and around Mathura, Taxila and Amaravati. Mathura was a great centre of Indian culture and religion during the first three centuries of the Christian era. From the remains not only of Buddhist art but also

of Jain stupas as well as many Brahmanical shrines and images, it is clear that the artistic activities at this place were prolific. Situate at the junction of great trade routes, sculptures designed and made at Mathura were commercialised and taken over a very wide area in Northern India, including Taxila, Gaya and Patna.

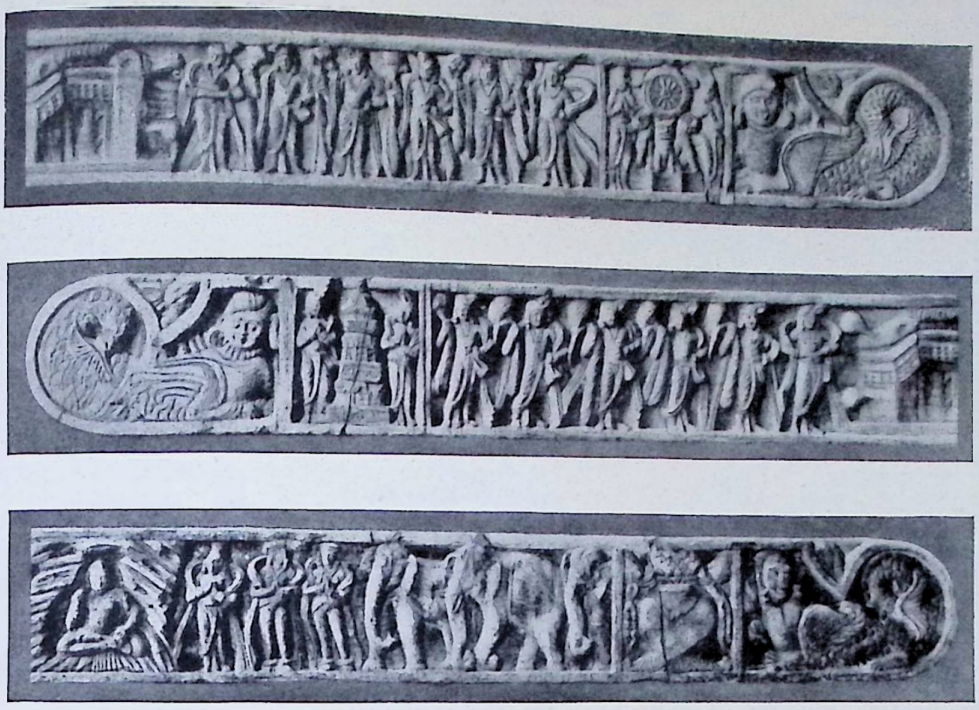
In most of the carvings associated with Mathura, the technique and conception are generally related to the earlier stupa traditions. Massive Buddha images are usually in direct continuation of the Mauryan traditions, but well impressed with the new plastic tendencies. In contrast to the Buddhist images is the standing royal figure of Kanishka, radiating an impression of tremendous physical force. Unfortunately the head has not been preserved, but the 'harsh angular rigidity' of an upright posture indicates Scythian craftsmanship. Incidentally, this is also the earliest surviving example of portrait sculpture in India.

Side by side, the images of the Buddhas and the Bodhisattavas, the sculptural portrayals of the joyous groups of dancers and courtesans, of the gay abandon of the sensuous Bacchanalian groups, of the graceful round-breasted, narrow-waisted and full-hipped Yakshanis and women standing under Asoka trees or bathing under waterfalls or adorning themselves with flowers and leaves, indicate the coming into fashion of a new plastic attitude towards his work on the part of the Indian sculptor. The Kushan artist, playing his part at a time which was marked by a reaction against the monasticism of the earlier Buddhism, was inspired by an ideal which was a compromise between the life of the world and the life of restraint preached by Buddha. Both of these were, therefore, chosen to adorn the House of God under a common roof. Here is an art which was not spiritual. But never has the "unity of form" found better expression in sculpture than in these strangely fascinating sensual figures. Here, indeed, one gets a sense of volume, but volume not unaccompanied by grace.

With its capital at Taxila, the province of Gandhara, included in its territory the North-West India and a large part of Afghanistan. From its geographical position, situate on the great trade routes between Europe and Asia, Taxila also witnessed the confluence of several streams of cultures from both European and Asiatic scurces. And as a result, in the early centuries of the first millennium, there emerged a form of Indo-Buddhist art which was a fusion of Greek elements with Indian ideals. With very few exceptions the sculptors of this school devoted themselves to illustrating the Buddha legend. But in the production of plastic representations of divine forms on the Buddhist monuments, the Hellenistic methods and forms were freely applied. So powerful indeed was the Hellenistic influence that it occasionally contributed characters from its own Olympian system to the Buddhist pantheon.

Briefly, the imported elements are the halo, the wavy hair, the straight profile, the classic cut of the eye, the curve of the lip, and above all, the supple and deep folds of the drapery. Later on, however, Indian standards of proportion, linear treatment, poise and demeanour began to inspire the chisel of the artist. The Gandhara school is famous for the quantity of its output, but its art is somewhat of a mediocre kind, and can only be described as of a commercial variety.

About the time of the golden age of the Mathura school of sculpture, the first of the great classical monuments of South India, namely the Amaravati stupa, with its wealth of magnificent sculpture was being built and carved under the patronage of the Andhra rulers. The carvings follow the bas-relief traditions of Bharhut and Bodh Gaya, but incorporate some of the new features which characterise the sculptures of Mathura and Gandhara. Thus, symbols as well as actual representations of the Buddha in stately figures of round and heavy form, appear side by side. But the Amaravati Buddha, like the Buddhas at other places, "is not the Indian ideal of divinity : it is a transitional type. In all the art of Amaravati we see Indian sculpture passing from the naturalistic school of the Asokan epoch into the



FRONT AND BACK VIEWS. TORANA ARCHITRAVES, MATHURA

Mathura Museum, Mathura

(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)



FRONT AND BACK VIEWS, TORANA ARCHITRAVES, MATHURA

Top : Adoration of a Stupa by Centaurs. *Bottom :* Riders on Horses and in Chariots.

(*Photos : Provincial Museum, Lucknow*)



BUDDHA IMAGE, MATHURA
5th Century A.D.

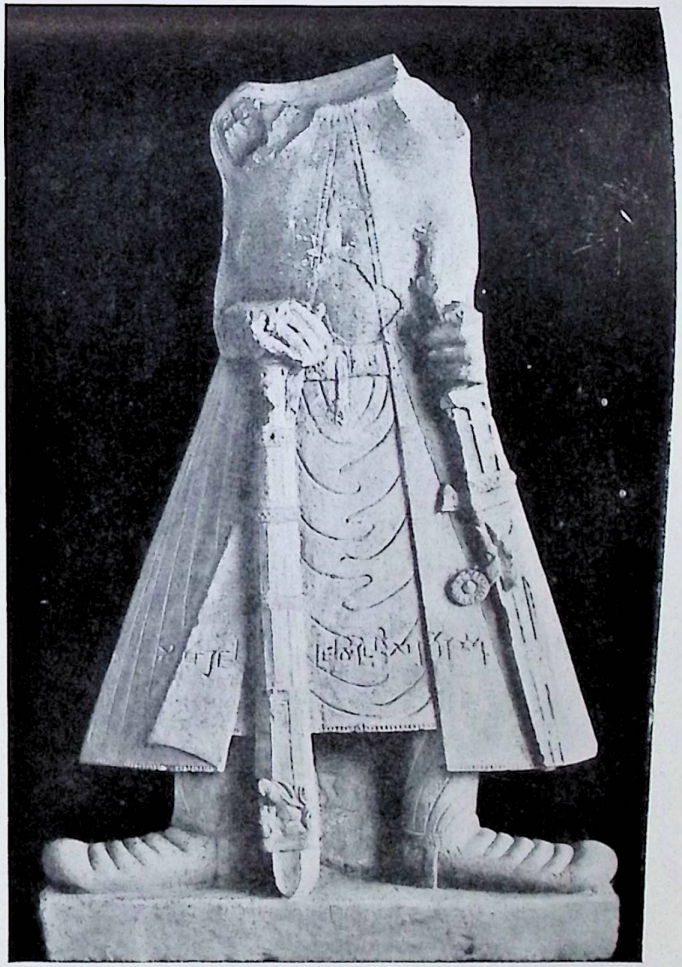


BACCHANALIAN SCENE. Mathura, 2nd Century A.D.
(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



RELIQUARY OF KANISHKA

Shah-ji-ki-dheri. A.D. 78-100
Indian Museum, Calcutta



STATUE OF KANISHKA

Mathura. C. 80 A.D.
Museum, Mathura

(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)





RELIEF FROM VERANDAH OF THE ROCK VIHARA OF BHAJA REPRESENTING THE SUN-GOD SURYA WITH HIS TWO WIVES. 1st HALF OF THE 1st CENTURY B.C.

(Photo : India Office)

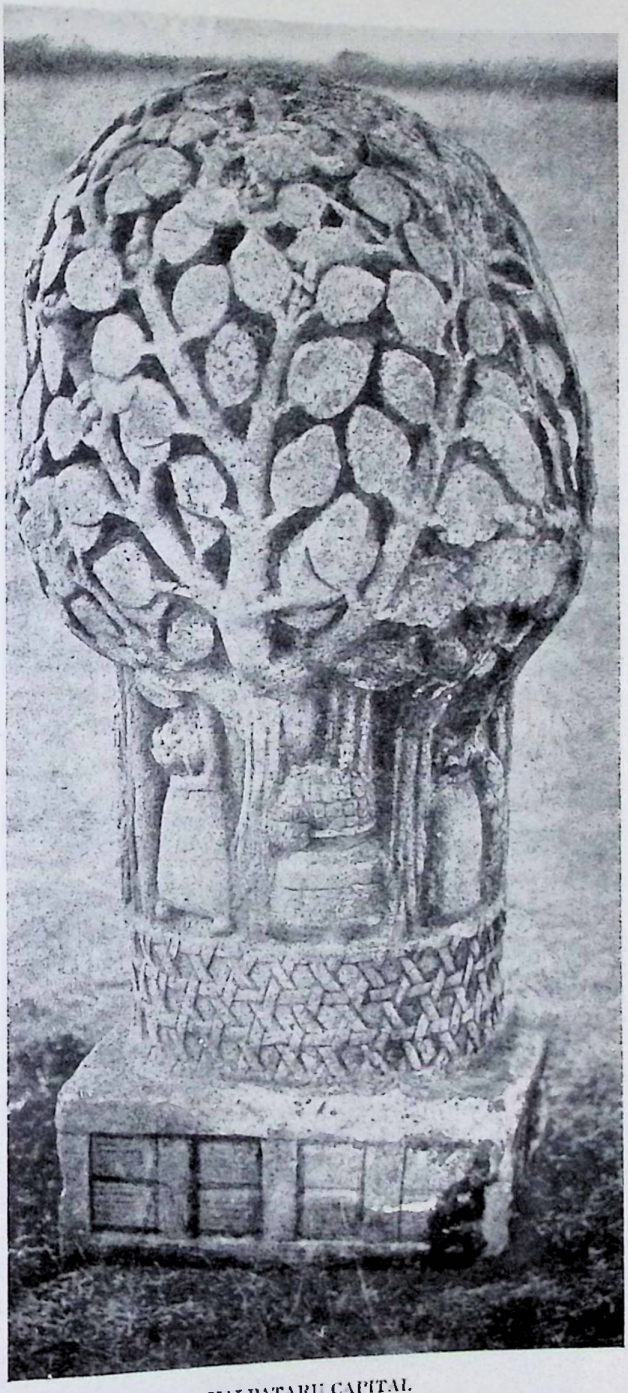


TWO FIGURES OF WATCHMEN FROM THE ROCK VIHARA OF BHAJA 1st CENTURY B.C.

(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



YAKSHI OF BESNAGAR
Latter half of the 1st Century B.C.
Indian Museum, Calcutta
(Copyright : *Archaeological Department of India*)



KALPATARU CAPITAL.
Besnagar, Bhopal



YAKSHI FROM DIDARGANJ, BIHAR
1st Century B.C.-1st Century A.D.



TWO DOOR JAMBS FROM BHUTESAR, C. 130 A.D.
(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)





POST FROM BATANMARA
Middle of the 2nd Century B.C.



SANDSTONE TORSO OF PRINCE SIDDHARTA (BUDDHA)

From Sanchi. Gupta, 5th Century A.D.

(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



BODHISATTVA HEAD. SAHRI-BAHLOL
Latter Half of the 1st Century A.D.
(*Museum, Peshawar*)



BUDDHA HEAD. SAHRI-BAHLOL
2nd Century A.D.



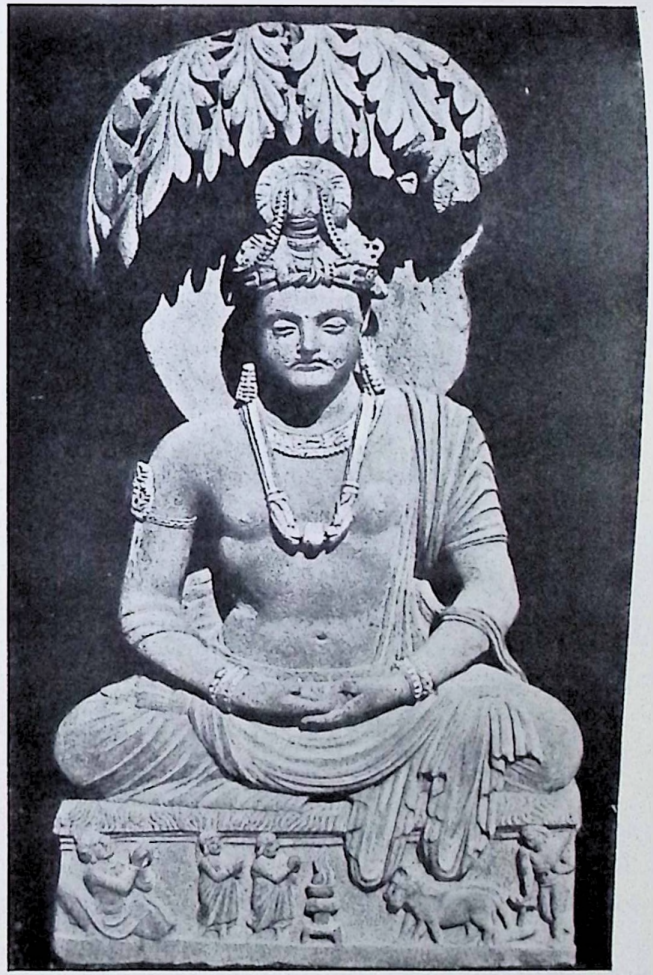
BODHISATTVA HEAD. SAHRI-BAHLOL
First Half of the 1st Century A.D.



BODHISATTVA HEAD. TAKHT-I-BAHI
Latter Half of the 1st Century A.D.

(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)





BUDDHA AND BODHISATTVA FROM SAHRI-BAHLOL
Latter Half of the 1st Century A.D.
(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



BUDDHA FROM SET MAHET. C 130 A.D.
(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



LION-CROWNED CAPITAL OF THE ASOKA COLUMN, SARNATH
(Museum, Sarnath)



TWO STUCCO HEADS FROM TAXILLA
Middle of the 1st Century A.D. at the latest.
(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)





BODHISATTVA AND BUDDHA IN STANDING POSE, FROM TAKHT-I-BAHI
Latter Half of the 1st Century, A.D.
(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



BODHISATTVA OF MATHURA. c. 81 A.D.
(Museum, Sarnath)



TONDO OF POST FROM THE OUTER RAILING
AMARAVATI
Middle of the 2nd Century, A.D. Represents Adoration of the Alms-box of the Buddha in the Heaven of the Thirty-three.
Museum, Madras (*Photo : India Office*)



ADORATION AFTER THE ENLIGHTENMENT
Relief from Dharmarajika Stupa, Taxilla.
2nd century, A.D.
(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)



HEAD
Gupta Period



KARTIKEYA, GOD OF WAR, SEATED ON PEACOCK
Gupta Period, 6th Century A.D.



TERRACOTTA BUDDHA FROM CLOISTER
Mohra Moradu. Taxilla, 4th Century A.D.



BUDDHA FROM SAHRI-BAHLOL
2nd Century A.D.

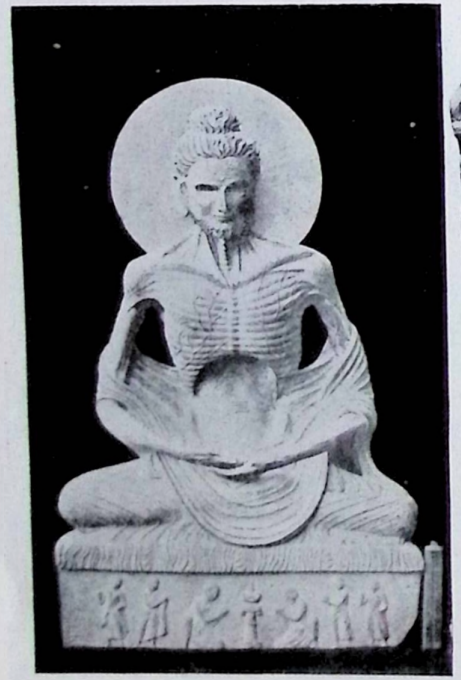


BUDDHAS ON THE EAST SIDE. Stupa A 15.
Jauhan, Taxilla. Beginning of the 5th Century A.D.

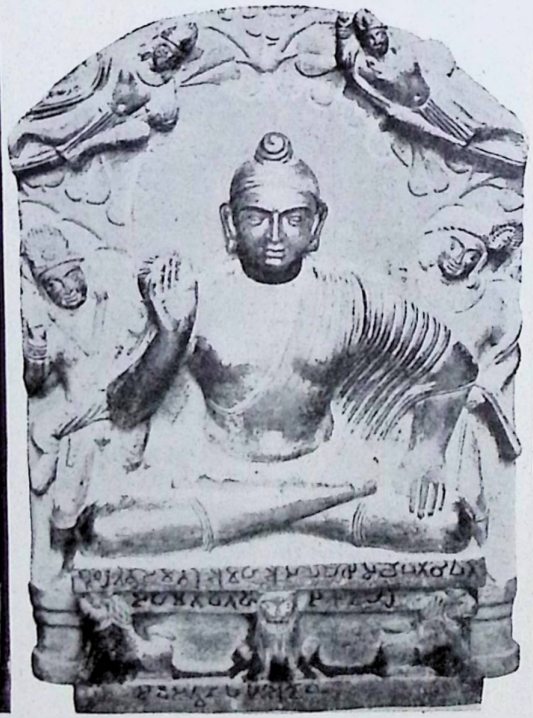


BUDDHA HEAD, FROM MOHRA MORADU
Taxilla, 4th Century A.D.

(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)



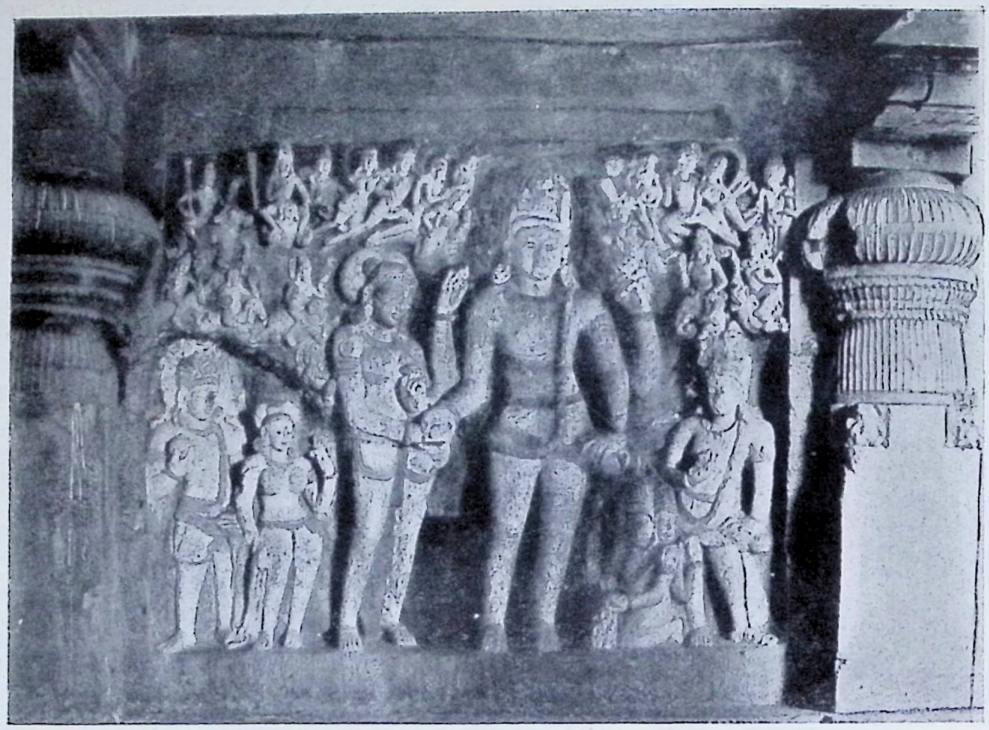
GANDHARA STATUE OF FASTING BUDDHA, FROM SIKRI



BODHISATTVA STATUE, FROM KATRA
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



GANDHARA STATUE



MARRIAGE OF SHIVA AND PARVATI. CAVE XXIX, ELLORA



RAVANA SHAKING THE KAILAS. CAVE XXIX, ELLORA

idealistic school in which Indian art reached its highest expression. The simple, unsophisticated naturalism of the Bharhut and Sanchi sculptures is here beginning to change into a very pronounced style of an academic character, but wholly different from the style of Gandhara, though in detail Gandhara or Graeco-Roman type frequently occur."

Most of the reliefs at Amaravati illustrate Buddha stories and legends, although assembly, festival and *maithuna* scenes have also provided inspiring themes for the skill of the sculptor. Each scene depicts some emotional experience of life, and so much endowed are they with aesthetic excellence and dramatic quality that for mere plastic achievement Amaravati easily finds a place amongst the greatest monuments of the world. Equally significant are the long wavy floral scrolls on the coping stones, reminiscent of the rambling lotus landscapes of Bharhut, which have been most beautifully rendered.

With Amaravati we come to the end of the older era in art traditions. The art of the age now beginning is in essence Brahamanical and spiritual, and the art creations adopt new shapes and techniques.

In 320 A.D., when Chandragupta founded the Gupta dynasty, he laid the foundations of a power in India which was to dominate the country in all its aspects for about 300 years. During this period was witnessed the orientation of the religious and cultural life of the country. Puranic Hinduism came to the forefront and popular worship was rationalised. Buddhism, which was already showing signs of passing through a stage of transformation, itself became so much affected by the birth of new ideals that it eventually appeared to have lost its identity as an independent movement and Buddha was assimilated into the medieval Puranic pantheon as an incarnation of Vishnu.

The same epoch also beheld a re-shaping of the plastic ideologies. The sensuous freedom and a profound sense of form that we see in the figures of Mathura are now replaced by restraint, elegance of form and spiritual feeling. Emphasis has shifted from the latent naturalism of the earlier periods to the spiritual representation of the superhuman, elementary, or cosmical powers. The human figure is henceforth only the 'vehicle of transcendental forces' and sculpture is accepted, as Coomaraswamy says, "as a medium of conscious and explicit statement of spiritual conceptions." The Buddha images are amongst the most notable creations of the period. The face shines with spiritual ecstasy, and the smiling countenance breathes a spirit of serene contemplation and compassionate love of the Buddha towards all beings.

Floral devices such as the lotus-scroll have either disappeared altogether from the compositions or are relegated to the borders. The swaying linear rhythm seen in vegetation is now made to permeate the bodies and attitudes of the human figures in the manner in which they are modelled, imparting to the sculptural representations an attribute suggestive of the vital currents that belong to the substance of the inner life.

An art depending so much for its expression on the innermost sources of life could not possibly have much use for jewellery and garments. But what little is tolerated of such superfluities is only to further heighten the spiritual qualities of the images.

Although much of the Gupta sculpture is now no more with us, the few examples that have survived the fanaticism of the foreign invaders rank with the world's supreme religious images. The Sarnath Buddha, highly academic in treatment, is considered to be one of the greatest masterpieces of its age. It represents the Master enthroned and expounding his doctrine, while a band of disciples at his feet are shown as worshipping the Wheel of Law. "The expression of an inner serenity and an outer compassion, the restraint and repose of the vibrant body and the divinely-lit smile on the face are executed with such mastery and skill that it stands most unquestionably as one of the noblest and the finest works of art."

The Buddha in this age has been mostly represented in the standing position with close fitting transparent drapery. In the classic simplification and perfection of modelling, in

its serene spirituality and dignity that has been so effortlessly imparted to the Mathura Buddha, it is easily one of the greatest achievements of the early Gupta period.

The splendid statue of the standing Buddha in a gesture conveying fearlessness, excavated from a ruined monastery at Sultangunj in Bengal, is a remarkable piece of sculpture. About 7½ feet in height and cast in copper, it is an exquisitely finished work. It is probably of the same age as the famous Iron Pillar of Delhi, erected by Kumar Gupta I to celebrate the victories of his father Vikramaditya. Its total height, including the capital, is 23 feet 8 inches and it is composed of pure malleable iron. The high technical skill required to forge such an object, is a remarkable tribute to the genius and manipulative dexterity of the Indian iron-worker.

In the 6th to 8th centuries, the centre of political power had drifted southwards, with the result that the south saw more of the major glories of sculpture, henceforth intertwined with architecture, than any other place in India. During this period, the past in sculpture comes up to the high mark of achievement ; and the surging force of Brahamanism which had made its beginnings under the Guptas fills Indian sculpture with its own forms, endowed with a new dynamism.

This era of sculptural development in the south witnessed the carver working, among many places, at Ajanta, Ellora, Badami, Mahabalipuram (also known as Mamallapuram), and Elephanta. The range and audacity of this phase in sculpture is indeed astonishing. Not from single blocks of stone, but from solid hill sides, complete temples with their sculptural adornments were hewn.

The sculpture at Ajanta, like its fresco paintings, is virile and unfettered, essentially artistic and full of life. Although the caves cover a period of nearly 700 years, it is only in the later ones that we find examples of sculpture. For reliefs high and low, for sculpture in the round, for impressive individual figures, for arabesques, as well as for architectural renderings in sculpture, Ajanta offers some of the best examples of advanced craftsmanship. The pose of Buddha's images, the figures of disciples and monks, kings and queens, birds and animals, have all been carved with rare artistic skill.

Mahabalipuram, further south, offers some of the most robust sculptures executed in India. Carved in the middle of the 7th century, under the Pallavas, they include seven monolithic shrines and a magnificent open-air bas-relief, known as "Arjun's Penance."

The latter is the most conspicuous amongst the Mahabalipuram reliefs and perhaps the finest piece of bas-relief to be seen anywhere. It is a marvellous piece of work, and Fergusson bears us out when he calls it "the most remarkable thing of its class in world." Wrongly called "Arjun's Penance," it is actually a visualisation in stone of the austere penance of Bhagiratha and the descent of the Ganga. The front face of two big rocky boulders, with a cleft in the middle, is covered with scenes of intense life activity, comprising *rishis* in meditation, elephants with their young ones on the march, monkeys at play, tigers and lions crouching and crawling about ; ascetics and warriors in groups, gods, human beings, nymphs and dwarfs, in full and profile—each one of them infused with vigour and animation and pulsating with a passionate spirit which only the stroke of a very experienced craftsman could have infused. Taken together the sculptured dreams portray an epic narrating the eternal struggle between the *Devas* and *Asuras*, in which the great deities Shiva and Vishnu are shown emerging triumphant over the forces of darkness and evil.

Stylistically, it has one very prominent feature. It is a relief composition truly inspired by the quality and character of the material itself. Thus the story told by the inanimate stone has taken a concrete colouring through visual handling of the theme by the artist. But most of the other rock-cut reliefs here are architectonic in their structure. Whether they depict Vishnuitic myths and Shivaitic divinities, or the royalty, the rectangular frame is the controlling thought of the compositions.

The Kailash temple at Ellora is a marvel of the art of the sculptor and the architect combined. Built and carved from the top downwards, through a hundred feet of rock, the enormous Kailash monolith stands aloof in solitary grandeur from the surrounding rocks. Of its architecture we shall write elsewhere. But its plastic decoration is its outstanding glory. The main body of the temple is supported by a grand frieze of boldly carved elephants, lions and tigers, whose eyes, ears and trunks and even the creases in the animals' hide beneath the throats have been realistically and vividly rendered. Standing high on this platform are the pavilions and balconies, encrusted with a profusion of sculptured figures and ornaments, surrounding a great ornate tower over the main hall, which have been lavishly adorned with a wealth of symbolism, mystical imagery and the gods of the Hindu pantheon.

The Kailash sculptors tried to produce the effect of movement and very well achieved this end by cutting the figures in deep relief. But for astonishing perfection of representation of natural forms and motifs, where each single image has been invested by the artist with a depth, shadow and light, according to their individual requirements, we have few equals in the sculptural art of the world. But it is more than a record of civilisation, art and glory in stone. The Kailash temple is a great spiritual achievement, every part of it being a rich statement tingling with deep meaning.

A superb fragment among the sculptures of Ellora relates to the epic struggle between Ram and Ravan. Ravan finding himself defeated in the fight with Rama, flies to Kailash. There placing himself beneath the mountain, he is shown making a tremendous effort to lift it up. The mountain quakes and Shiva's wife Parvati is startled by the shock, and so are her maids who are running about in panic. But Shiva raising only one foot, presses Kailash upon Ravan's head and holds him fast. The entire scene has been dramatised with intense force and imagination, and the execution shows an extraordinary command of plastic technique, not only in the grouping and composition, but in the powerful and subtle treatment of the varied gradation of the relief.

From the 9th and 10th centuries onwards, Hindu art conquered and dominated almost every corner of the country. Although with wider distribution, local schools developed in course of time and medieval sculpture, irrespective of stylistic variations, followed the same direction everywhere.

Prolific sculptural creation is the peculiar quality of medieval India. The craftsmen were called upon to decorate the innumerable temples that were being built every day with figure sculptures, floral and geometrical devices, in a seemingly unending succession. While the innermost sanctuary was invariably left severely plain, with nothing to disturb the devotee in his meditation, the exterior of the temple was overwhelmed with exuberance of figure and floral friezes into which the walls of the temples seem to melt away. "In each of these figures, playing in and out of the light and shadow of the mouldings, there is unfailing plastic beauty, a strange, somewhat disquieting sensuous energy and subtlety of movement; while the sense of design and rhythm concentrated in each of the hundreds of figures used to enrich mouldings, plinths, capitals and door-jambs in a single temple is unfailing." (Sir William Rothenstein.)

The abundance of animal motifs in Orissa is indeed surprising. The friezes contain animal forms, not only of the lion, the elephant, the horse, and the stag, but also of the goose, fish, monkey, sheep, dog, frog, tortoise, parrot, boar and bull and even the crab and the lizard—each one carved with singular power and refreshing realism.

A marked feature of the medieval sculpture, particularly of the Orissan work, is the use made of the *maithuna* (erotic) motif. The sculptors, who adorned their splendid monuments with such figures, were inspired by profound knowledge of psychology and symbolism that led them to choose portrayal of the act of love as a means of expression for the most refined emotions and profound philosophical conceptions.

None of such figures nor the representation of warriors and animals is carved according to set prescriptions or ideas of iconographical correctness, unlike the treatment of religious matter which was strictly regulated by the demand of Shastric injunctions made on the artists by the priests. The many types and varieties of the religious images and reliefs are all restricted by canons which the artists were required to bear in mind when giving form to their creations. They were enjoined to be distinguished by the attributes they carry and bodily peculiarities and other material aids like jewellery and weapons, as laid down in the sacred books.

This probably explains why *mudras* have not been given so much importance in Brahmanic sculpture as they have been in the Buddhist iconic art. The one reason why *mudras* are of less consequence in orthodox Hindu art is due to their substitution by a great deal of jewellery worn and the weapons and attributes held by the Brahamanic deities. The Buddha figures, on the other hand, are generally devoid of such material symbols.

The Konarak temple is perhaps the finest example of the school of Kalinga which was in the ascendancy in the 9th century. Dedicated to the Sun, the temple, whose exterior is covered with panels of sculpture symbolising the phenomenal Nature which is the product of the Sun, faces the east and greets the god *Surya* every day as he moves across the sky, communicating to it an atmosphere of spiritual grace. Few structures can claim such an unrestrained exuberance of plastic ornamentation as this vast temple, where every inch of the exterior has been moulded and chiselled either in the form of intricate geometrical patterns, conventional foliage, mythical animals, fantastic beings, or divine figures. Here at Konarak, "architecture, on the grandest scale, has its surface covered and differentiated by ornamentation, and jointly they step forth with figure sculpture, not only in relief but fully carved in the round, severed almost (in the upper storeys) from the architectural body, and actually the colossal horses, elephants, etc., are away from it right in the plane, yet dynamically, and in a wider sense, one with it ; for the atmosphere itself, that is comprised within the lines that can be drawn pyramidally from the top of the building to these outlying figures, has been integrated into the volume and become part of the body of this architecture ; this ultimately, is but a supreme fulfilment of the classically Indian conception of volume. Architecture thus in Orissa is but sculpture on a gigantic scale, and the modelled figure, as well as space itself partake in its discipline." (Stella Kramrisch.)

In spite of the general heaviness of sculpture which could not perhaps be helped, there is grace and elegance in the richly and elaborately carved animal and human figures, which are full of animation and amazingly life-like.

The great Brahamanical temples constructed at Khajuraho in Central India at the beginning of the eleventh century have many features in common with the Orissan style, but have been more sumptuously and elegantly treated.

The halls, unlike the Orissan temple interiors as well as the exteriors, are richly decorated with sculptured groups moulded in high relief and in dimensions less than life size, presenting a moving pageant of superbly conditioned forms, dramatically tense and alive. They depict divine personages posed in elegant attitudes or women endowed with the loveliest forms, either in the act of dancing or posed in a flexuous attitude, each a finished statuette in itself, carved out of separate slabs of stone. The artists endowed the cold unyielding stone with the appeal of vibrant living tissue and shaped it into figures of indescribable beauty and nobility.

The capitals of the pillars are richly overlaid with ornament and figure subjects, strange and unearthly beings, or scenes of imagery and allegory with profound meaning. But it was in the ceiling treatment of the Khajuraho temples that the sculptor found his supreme expression. The design selected was usually a geometrical one—an arrangement of intersecting circles, which in plan form a combination of cusps or quatrefoils, but in section are a series of semi-spherical recesses, or shell-shapes, with a long richly carved pendant



GODDESS KALI
Cave XVI, Ellora



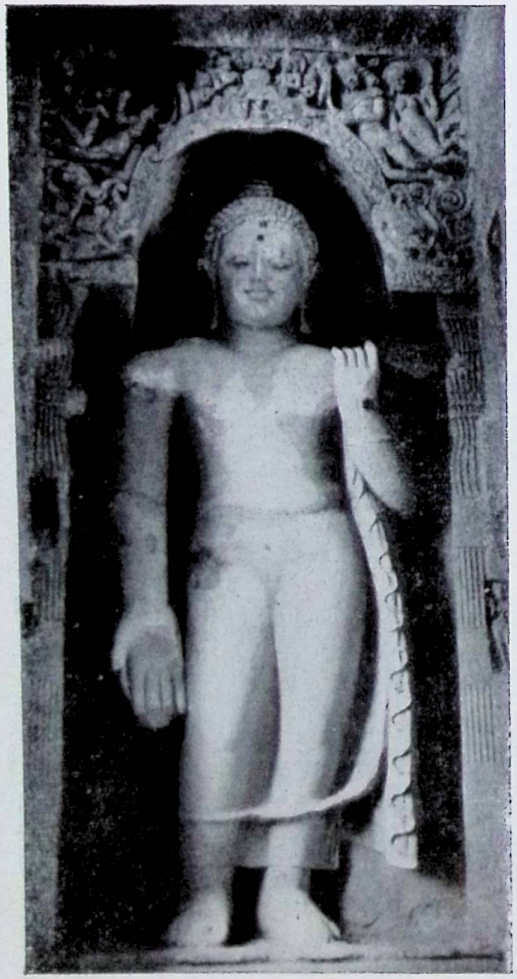
SHIVA AND PARVATI
Cave XXIX, Ellora



SCULPTURE ON NORTH WALL OF RAVANA-KA-KHAI, ELLORA



BHAIRAVA (GOD OF DESTRUCTION), CAVE XXIX, ELLORA



BUDDHA FROM KANHERI CAVES



GANGAVTAR FROM ELEPHANTA CAVES

(Photos : E. S. Mahalingam)



ANDHAKASURA VADHA MURTHI. ELEPHANTA



NATARAJA-SHIVA. ELEPHANTA

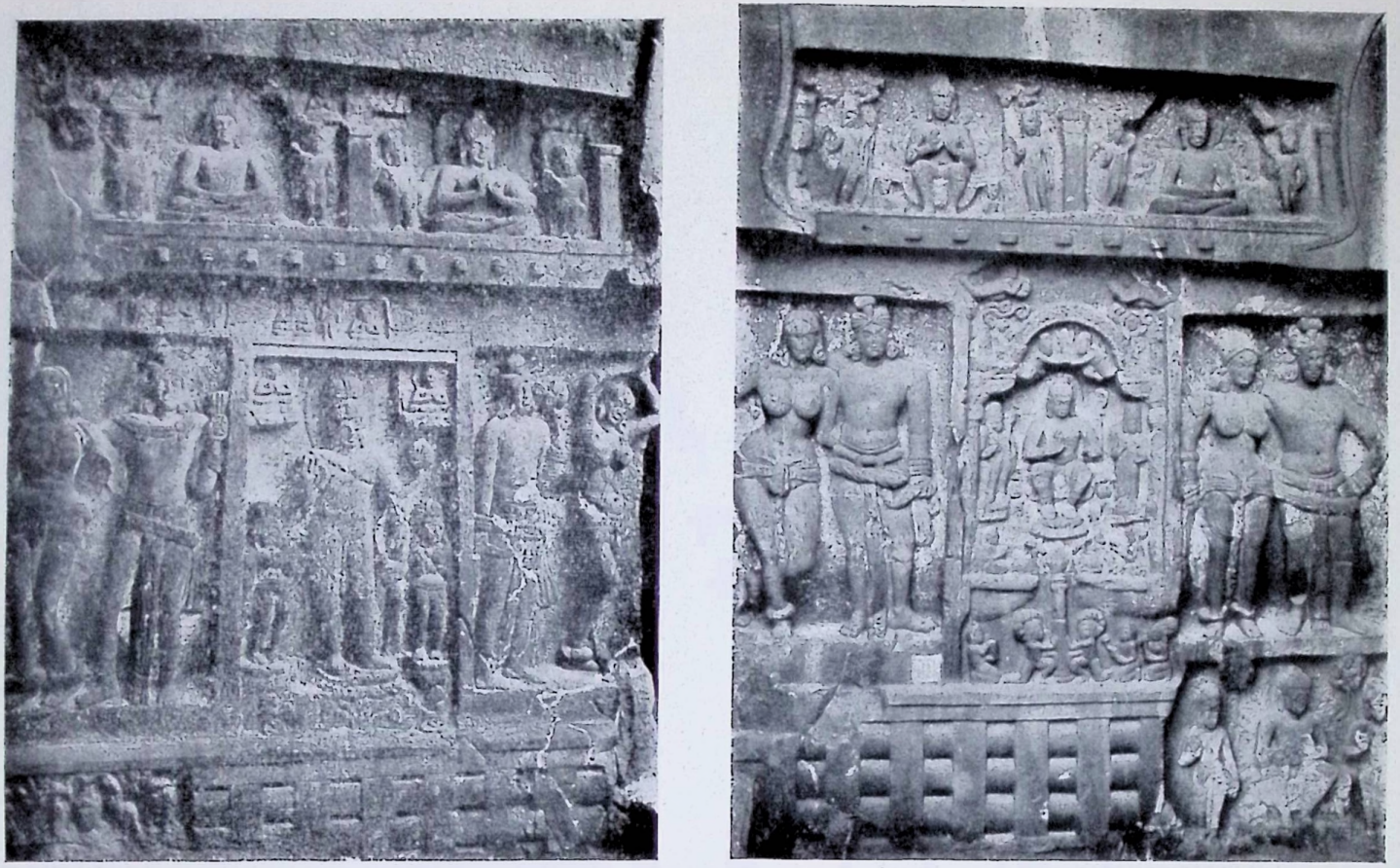
(*Photos : E. S. Mahalingam*)



MAHADEVA FROM ELEPHANTA CAVE No. 1
7th-8th Century



ARDHANARI SCULPTURE FROM ELEPHANTA CAVES
7th-8th Century



COUPLES ON THE OUTER WALLS OF VERANDAH OF CHAITYA, KARLE. 1st Century B.C.

(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



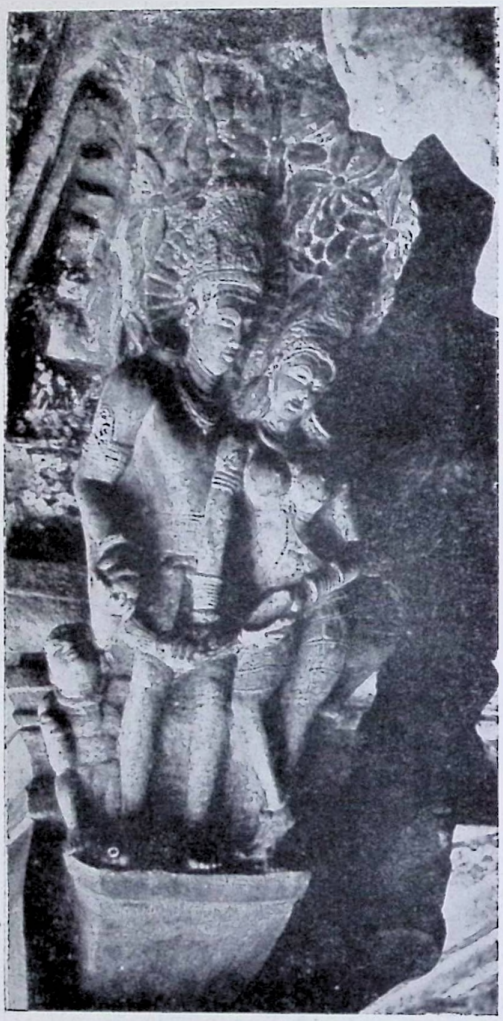
Couples on Southern Half of East Wall of Verandah, Chaitya Cave No. 3



Couples on Northern Half of East Wall of Verandah, Chaitya Cave No. 3

KANHERI CAVES. 2nd Century A.D.

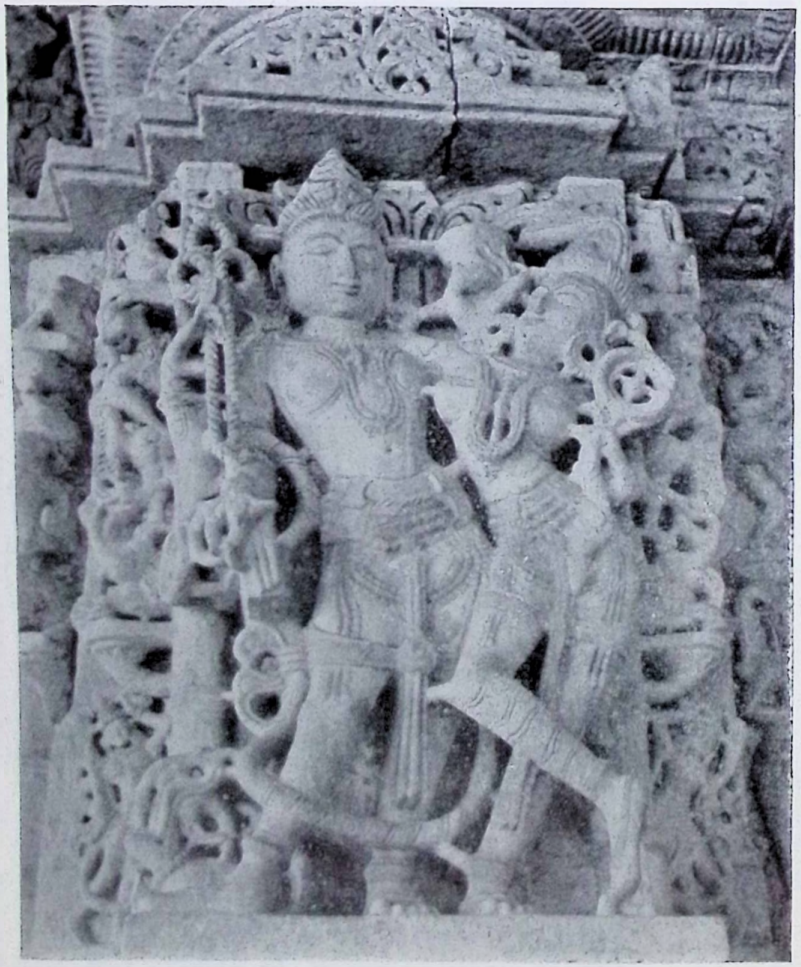
(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)





BRACKETS SHOWING MALE AND FEMALE FIGURES
FROM CAVE No. 4, BADAMI (BIJAPUR). 7th CENTURY A.D.

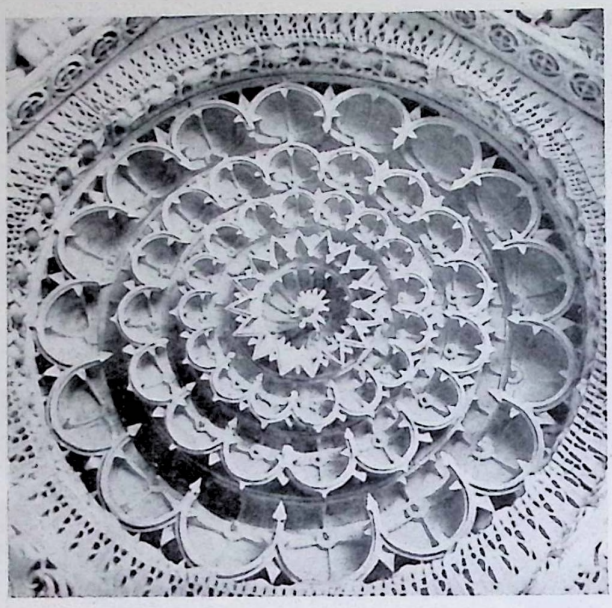
(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)

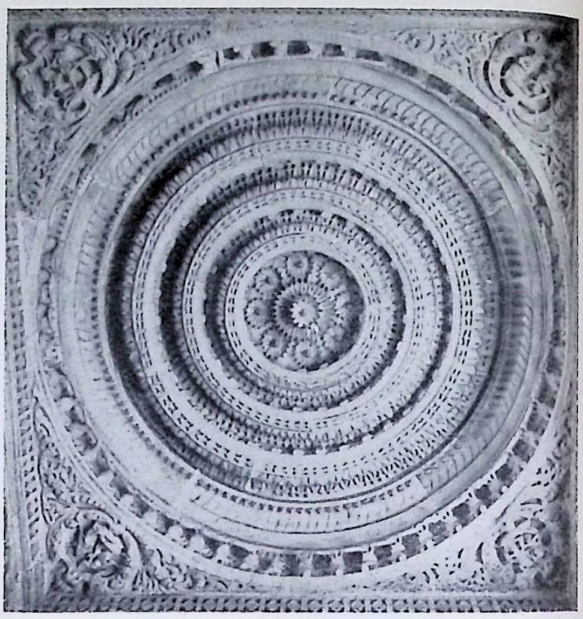


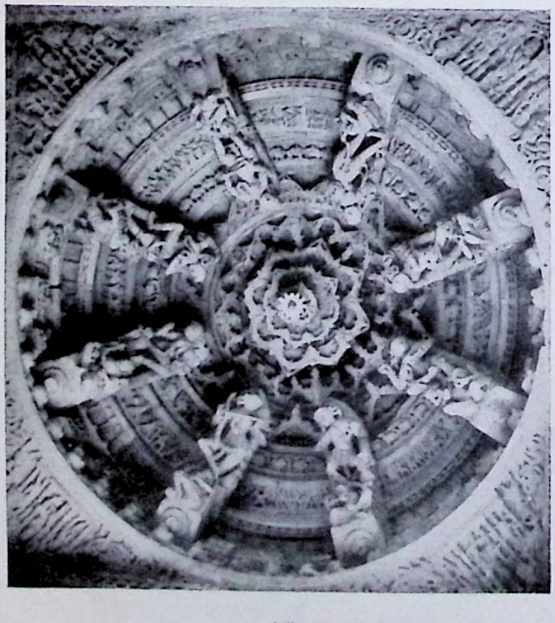


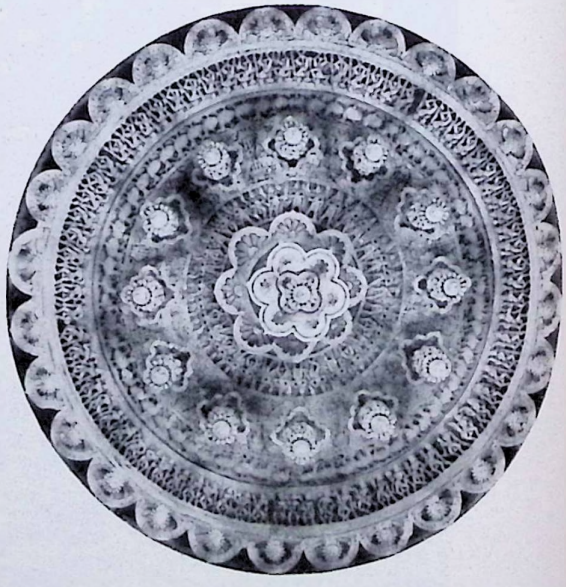
MARBLE SCULPTURES AT DILWARA, MT. ABU

(Photos : A. K. Banerji)





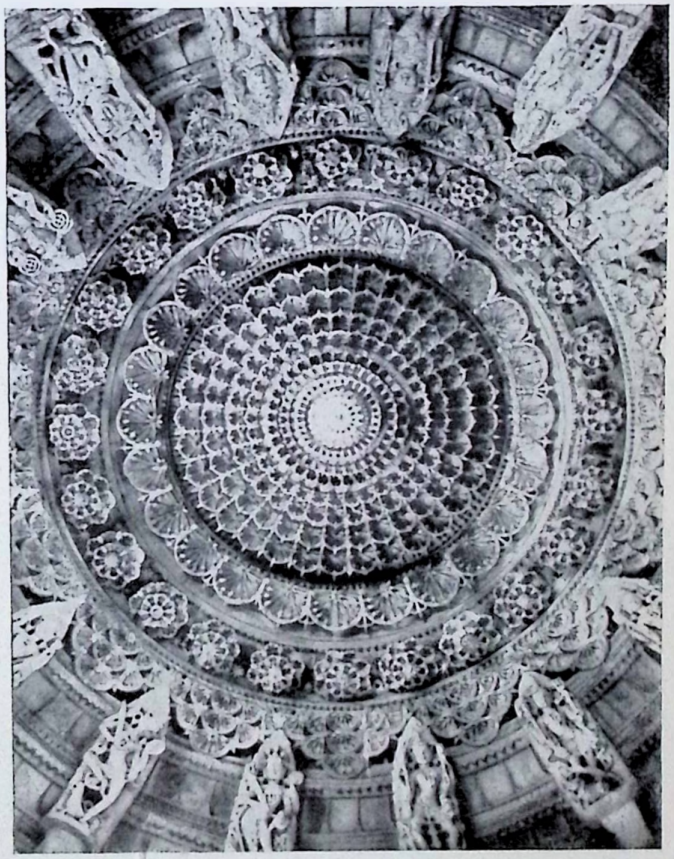




BEAUTIFULLY CARVED CEILINGS OF DILWARA TEMPLE, MT. ABU

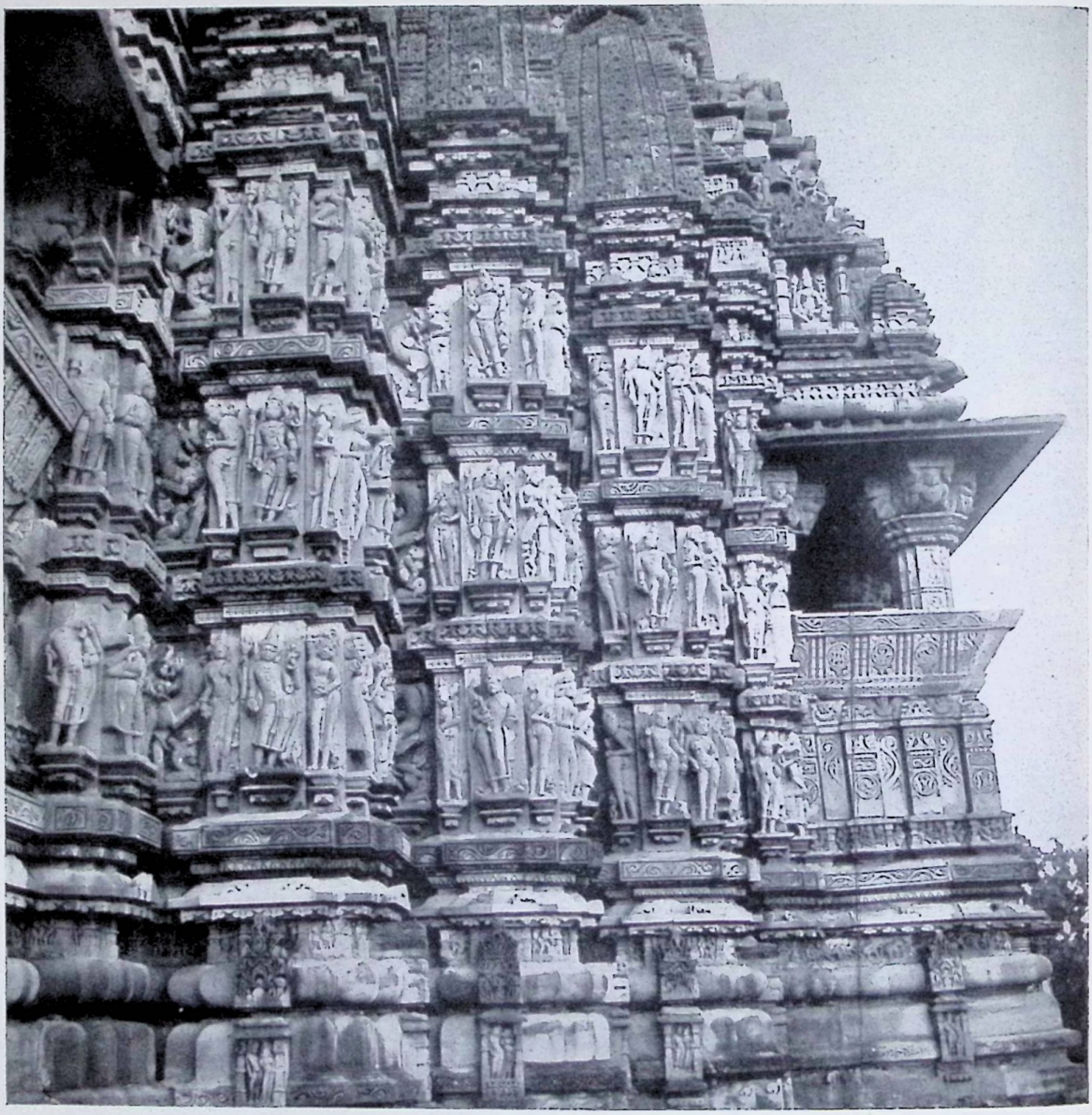
(Photos : A. L. Syed)





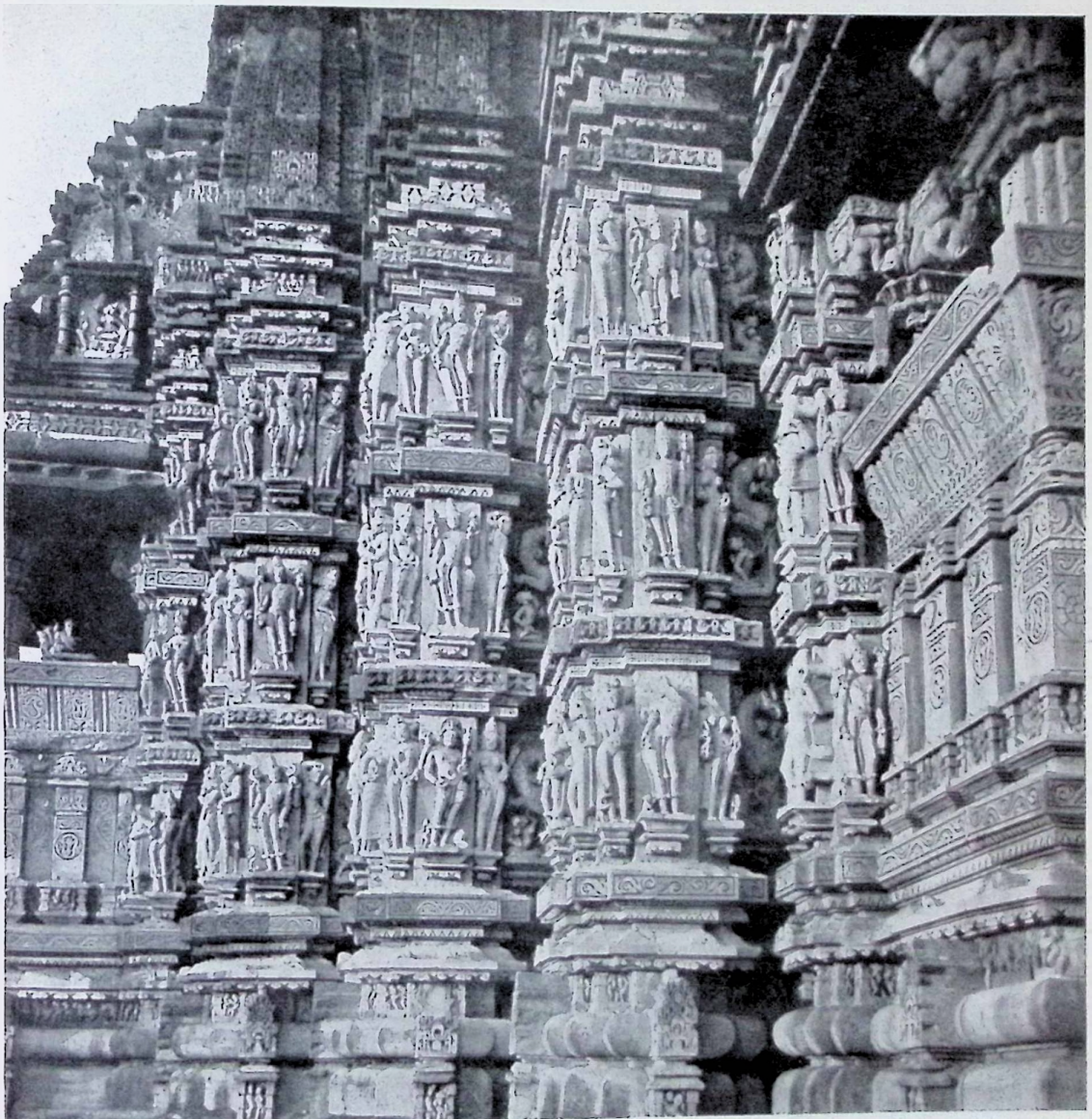
BEAUTIFULLY CARVED CEILINGS OF DILWARA TEMPLE, MT. ABU

(Photos : A. L. Syed)



DETAILS OF SCULPTURES ON WEST FACADE OF THE SOUTH-WEST CORNER OF KANDARIYA MAHADEO TEMPLE, KHAJURAHO

(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)



DETAILS OF SCULPTURE ON SOUTH FACADE OF THE SOUTH-WEST CORNER OF KANDARIYA MAHADEO TEMPLE, KHAJURAHO

(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



WOMAN PLAYING WITH CHILD
BHUBANESHWAR



WOMAN WRITING WITH A STYLUS
BHUBANESHWAR

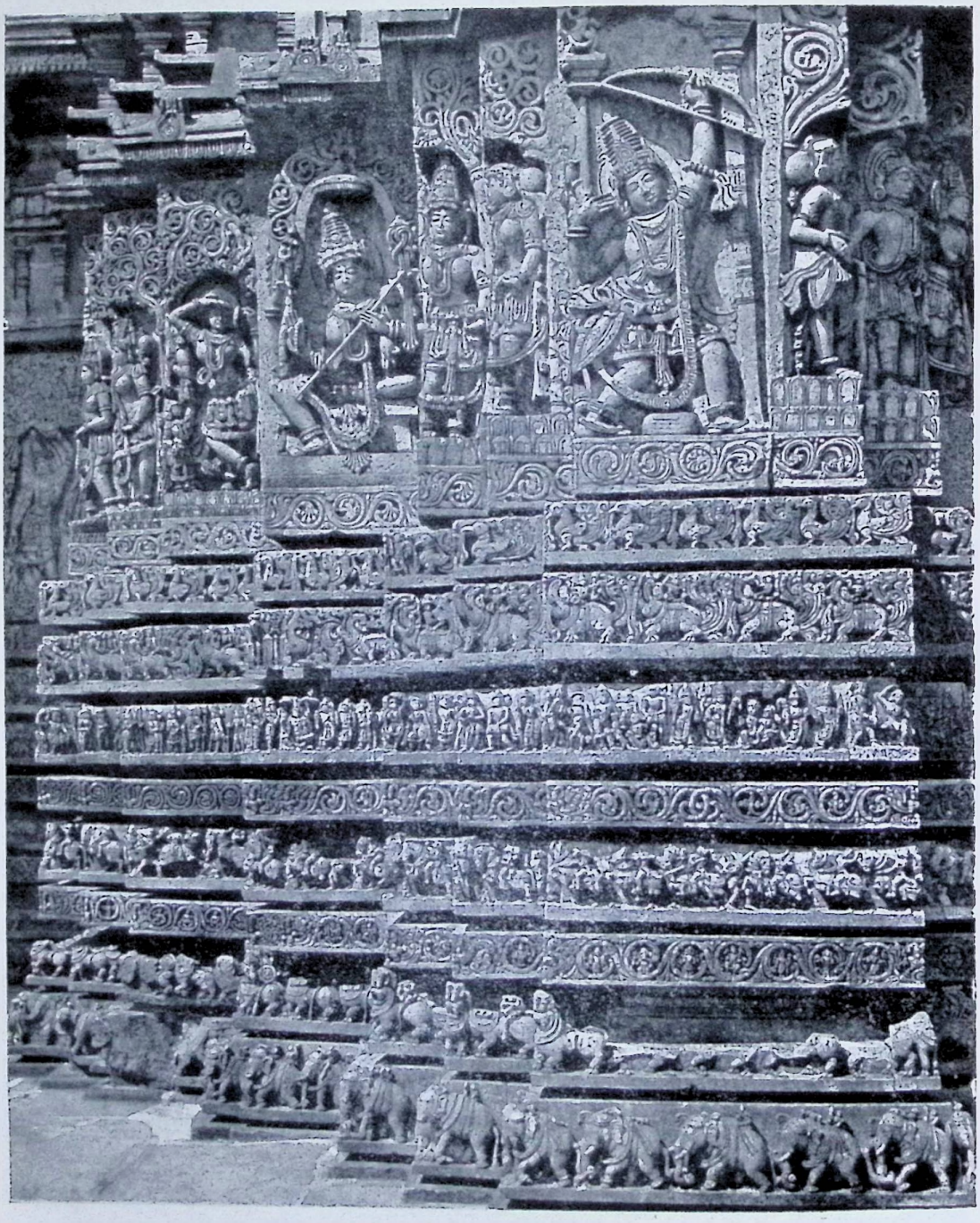
(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)



SHIVA-PARVATI, INDIAN MYTHOLOGICAL EPITOME OF CONJUGAL LOVE. HALEBID
(Photo : A. K. Banerji)



KALINGAMARDANA, HALEBID
(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



ARJUNA WINNING HIS BRIDE, HALEBID

(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)

dropping from the centre of each. In a typical example of one of these ceilings, the entire surface is a swirling pattern of circles and semi-circles recalling stones thrown into a pool. Each stone of these ceilings was carved separately according to a stencilled pattern, and the whole composition fitted together temporarily on the ground. Then when all the parts were complete, and the joining perfected, the complete compositions were hoisted up on to the roof and dropped into position one by one, so that they interlocked, each course supporting that above it.

Yet another exuberance of plastic decoration of a singularly rich and lovely nature can be seen in the Jain temples of Rajasthan and Gujarat—the finest examples being found in the Vimala and Tejpala temples at Mount Abu (11th and 13th centuries). They are splendid tokens of the material prosperity of a people who in a spirit of passionate devotion gave their fullest support and patronage to the architect and the sculptor. The surface of these two temples, built entirely of white marble, has been moulded into religious forms mingled with rich creations of fancy by craftsmen who had inherited from the past an artistic capacity, rich and deep.

It has been, as we have discussed earlier, a very special feature of our temples that the interior has been left as bare and featureless as possible and only the outer walls have been covered with relief decorations. The original intention was probably to help the devotee in his concentration on the image of the deity. In the course of time, however, the irresistible chisel of the carver could not be restrained and entered all but the innermost recesses of the sanctuary. So while some of the Orissan temples have entirely plain interiors, those at Khajuraho have received a considerable amount of plastic embellishments. Still further to the west, in the Jain temples, except for the most sacred chambers, every part of the interior has been profusely decorated with sculptured ornaments.

The interior of each of these two temples at Mount Abu resolves into an orderly group of elegantly carved pillars decorated with the vase and foliage motifs—a distinctive decorative feature of the North Indian pillars. But over and above this, when the sculptor piles on other ornamental devices, the latter sometimes obscure the wealth of imagery. It was, however, in the treatment of the vaulted ceiling of the Vimala temple that the marble-worker showed the greatest skill and ingenuity. "This dome is built up of eleven concentric rings, five of which, interposed at regular intervals, depict patterns of figures and animals, a plastic record of some ancient half-obliterated memory. The lowest contains the fore-fronts of elephants, their trunks intertwined, as many as one hundred and fifty of these in close rank. A few mouldings above is another border representing images in niches, also repeated many times, and again over that a similar course of dancing figures. This is followed higher up in the concavity by a series of horsemen, finishing in the topmost story with more figures engaged in an endless dance. Between these various figured courses are ornamental repeats, gradually becoming more pronounced until towards the apex they culminate in a grouping of pendants not unlike festoons of foliage suspended from the high trees of a forest. But this is not all. Boldly superimposed athwart the lower of these circular rings is a series of sixteen brackets consisting of female figures representing Vidya devis or goddesses of knowledge, each contained with an aureole, their high semi-detached projection giving them the appearance of supplementary braces supporting the vault." (Percy Brown.)

Throughout the entire scheme of plastic treatment, there is a ceaseless repetition of motifs and deities, but the profusion of detail does not in the least diminish the dignity of the whole nor have the sculptural qualities suffered in the delicacy of execution.

An unique development of South Indian sculpture of great beauty is found in the temples of Belur and Halebid (12th and 13th centuries) in Mysore. The temple of Hoysalesvara at Halebid is the highest achievement of the Hoysala school. The walls of the sanctuary are extraordinarily ornate and present a bewildering display of plastic art. As we proceed along the outer walls, a most comprehensive sculpture gallery is unfolded before

us, occupied by friezes portraying a graphic and most complete record of the Hindu pantheon, splendidly apparelled and modelled in exceedingly high relief, friezes of animals, of dramatic narrative scenes, of scenes illustrating myths, legends, every one with rich ornamental borders. The minutest details have been elaborately carved with superb technical skill, ingenuity and imagination. It is not that the quality of the art represented here is of a particularly high order—much of the figure modelling is taut and stylized, lacking in breadth and suggestion, but it is for the incredible intricacy with which each detail of this plastic manifestation has been treated and as a grand repository of the great religious consciousness of the people that the temple of Halebid has no equal in the domain of Indian art.

A temple with an art nearly as alluring as that exhibited at Belur and Halebid is the Keshava temple at Somanathpur in Mysore. Built about 1268, it is also a splendid example of the Hoyasala art. Every stone that has been used for raising this temple has been sculptured into a work of art before being introduced into its place. Running completely around the walls of the temple are four rows of horizontal strips which depict caprisoned elephants that seem to carry the temple on their back, horsemen, scroll work, scenes from the epics and mythologies and figures of Vishnu in his various incarnations, Ganpathy, Brahma, Indra on his divine elephant, and Lakshmi and Saraswati in dancing poses. Each one of these images is a work of art, carved with persistent accuracy and a fineness that is just exquisite.

INDIAN METAL SCULPTURE

The artist's creative urge about this time in South India took a different line of development, under the influence of the technique of figure casting in bronze and copper. But it was not, in any way, the beginning of an entirely new tradition in plastic creation. The first Indian bronzes which we know of are those which have been discovered in the excavations at Mohenjo-daro. In South India, too, the earliest bronzes extant are Buddhist, which in all probability belong to the Gupta period. Also during the Pala period (9th to 11th centuries), metal images, embodying the elegance and abstraction of the stone sculptures, became popular as a medium of artistic expression.

Although it was in the 8th and 9th centuries, when the Pallavas were the dominant power in South India, that bronze-casting became popular, it was left to the kings of the Chola dynasty (11th to 13th centuries) to inspire and develop the great school of bronze sculpture in the country.

The fashioning of metal images arose from the desire of the devotee to take out the representations of his deities in procession. The stone-carved deities being heavy and unwieldy could only be worshipped in the shrine. But the metal images, the replicas of the original in the sanctuary—*Utsava murtis*—could easily be carried in processions on festive days, and so allay the religious hunger of even those who longed to see their God, but on account of the rigours of religion could not approach the shrine.

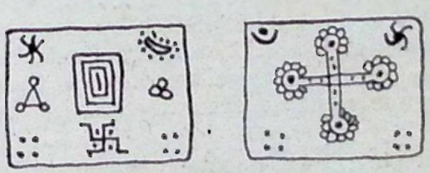
By the 9th century, the wave of Shaivism had swept over the whole of South India, and gave a new direction to plastic creations. Already under the Pallavas, Shaivism had developed a richly crowded pantheon. It was perfected and elaborated under the Cholas.

The chief bronzes, therefore, of this time are those of Shiva. The most characteristic conception of Shiva sculpture and the one which has evoked the world's admiration is that of Nataraja, the Lord of the Dance. Innumerable representations of the Nataraja are scattered all over South India. Illustrating the process of world creation and dissolution in terms of dance rhythm, each one has been rendered by the artists with consummate artistic power, and in conformity with certain essentials laid down by ritualistic conventions. The image of Nataraja still worshipped in the temple of Tanjore is perhaps the most powerful of the Southern bronzes and displays a masterly plastic technique. Encircled

with a halo of flames, the deity is shown vanquishing the demon of Illusion, represented by a snake, which he kills by a touch of his fingers, while the left leg swings in the air, expressive of rhythm. With one hand he sounds the drum, symbolising the Force of Sound, in the second he carries the Fire—symbol of Light, the third hand is raised in the *Abhya mudra*, while the fourth is extended towards the feet, pointing to the destruction of Illusion and Ignorance. As observed by Coomaraswamy, "the Nataraja is one of the great creations of Indian art, a perfect visual image of Becoming, an adequate complement and contrast to the Buddha type of pure Being. The movement of the dancing figure is so admirably balanced that while it fills all space, it seems nevertheless to be at rest, in the sense that a spinning top or a gyrostat is at rest."

Other famous bronzes include images of Brahamanical gods and goddesses, saints, and figures of Jain and Buddhist teachers.

Writing of the quality of the bronzes, O. C. Gangoly remarks: "In the absorbing serenity of expression, in the rhythmic sways and dynamic symmetry of the poses, above all in the moving and generalised forms of an original yet artistic anatomy, the bronzes of this school translate the abstruse conceptions of Brahamanic philosophy, into which the artists have skilfully mingled their own meditations, their prayers and all the hope of their lives. To know them and to appreciate them is to receive an invitation into a new world of plastic dreams."



Rural Wall Decorations

5 ARCHITECTURE

IN THE long history of man's efforts at building, it is difficult to find anything rivalling the architectural achievements of the Indians, which in their richness and extent provide a rare kaleidoscopic luxuriance of accumulations, built up by a people whose desire for enrichment has been insatiable and whose taste always exquisite. Taken together they embody an architecture which expresses the soul, not only of those who aroused to a life of fulness and supreme emotional vitality produced it, but also of those for whom it was wrought. Indian architecture has been in all ages a revelation in stone, brick or marble, of the spirit of her age-long culture, the aspirations of her people and even their ways of life. Today the monuments that have withstood the ravages of time stand as silent tributes to the marvellous creative genius of a people who for centuries have planned and chiselled superb structures of the highest aesthetic standard, and of profound spiritual import, easily giving them a place amongst the most important cultural contributions of any civilisation in any period of the world's history.

The one outstanding quality of our architecture is the principle underlying its conception. The mind of the people occupied mainly by contemplation of the Divine has given the spiritual precedence over the artistic and materialistic character of the productions. Each type of our architecture is, therefore, an articulate symbol of a great thought—a material interpretation of the spiritual life of the period through which it has passed. The basic purpose of the building art throughout the ages in our country has not been to provide a mere utilitarian covering, but to symbolise in concrete form the prevailing religious consciousness of the people. "It is," as Percy Brown writes, "mind materialised in terms of rock, brick or stone."

This feature is particularly emphasised by the sculpturesque treatment of the structural form. The Buddhist Stupa is not merely an elaborate casket for a holy relic, but easily symbolises the image of a seated Buddha, with his head crowned by a series of *Chhatras*. Similarly the form of the *Sikhara* lent itself well to symbolising the Godward endeavour of human life. The treatment of the lotus and the Kalash motifs in the temple architecture has also its own mystic symbolic significance. The pointed arch or *Mihrab*, which is a characteristic structural feature in Saracenic buildings, appealed to the Mohammedan because it demonstrates the idea of Divine Unity. It architecturally interprets the fundamental concept that "all things converge towards and meet in the One."

The builder's mental attitude towards architecture is further exemplified by the treatment of the wall surfaces. It was nothing short of a profoundly spiritual impulse that moved the Indian artists to cover the whole of the exterior of the House of God with a scheme of sculpture, remarkable not only for the richness of its decorative effect, but also for the deep significance of the subject matter. The unrestrained abundance of plastic imagery on the outer walls, visualising the mythological traditions of the country and the moods and aspirations of the people, is not merely a decorative device, but an attempt to represent "transcendent life" itself.

The dawn of the country's history, popularly known as the Indus Valley civilisation, records our earliest known achievement in architecture. The Indus Valley, where extensive cities have been found buried under the mud and the sand of the river, takes back the builders' art in India to some three thousand years before Christ. The buildings, which are now in ruins, have been identified as houses, market halls, store-rooms, baths and shops. The normal plan of a well-to-do house appears to have been based on a courtyard to which access



Garuda



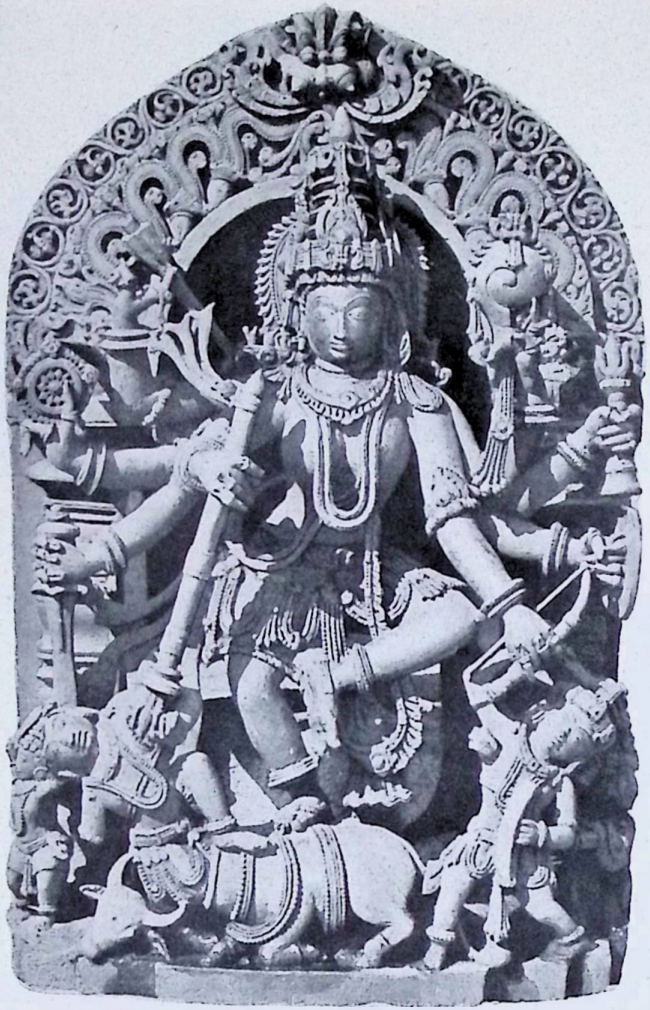
Dwarpala

SCULPTURES FROM BELUR

(Photos : S. C. Mehta)



HUNTRESS, HOYASALA ART
Mysore, 12th Century A.D.



MAHESAVURAMARDINI, BELUR
(Copyright : Archaeological Dept. of India)



DANCER, BELUR
(Photo : S. C. Mehta)



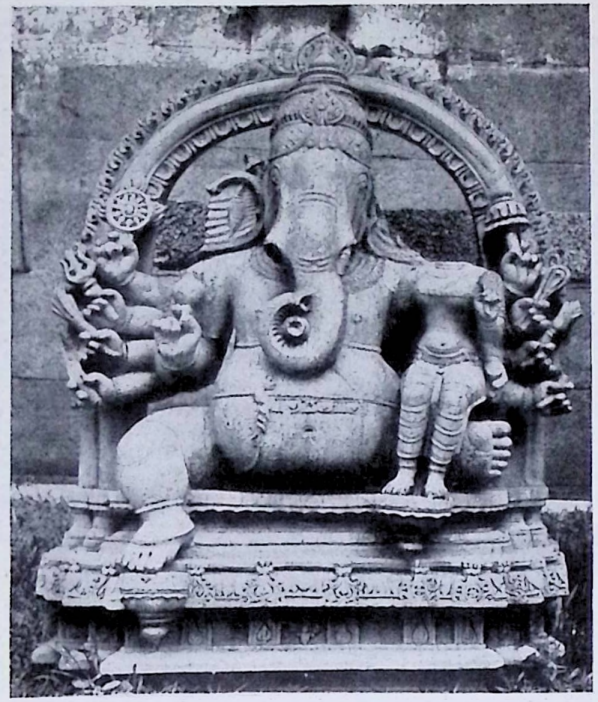
BHIMA FIGHTING BHAGADATTA, BELUR
(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



MUSICIANS AND DANCERS, BELUR
(Photo : S. C. Mehta)



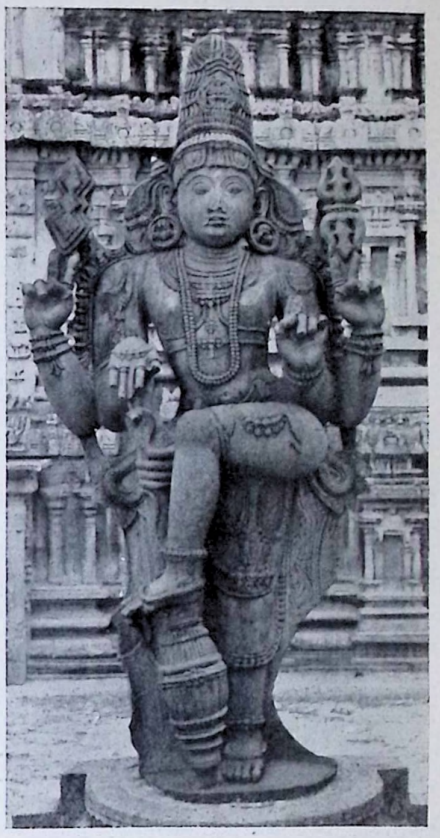
Dwarapala



Ganapathi

SCULPTURES FROM VELLORE TEMPLE

(*Photos : E. S. Mahalingam*)



Dwarapala



KRISHNA AND GOPIS, RAMACHANDRASWAMI TEMPLE, VIJAYANAGAR
(Photo : A. K. Banerji)



THE CHAMMUNDI BULL, MYSORE
(Photo : S. C. Mehta)



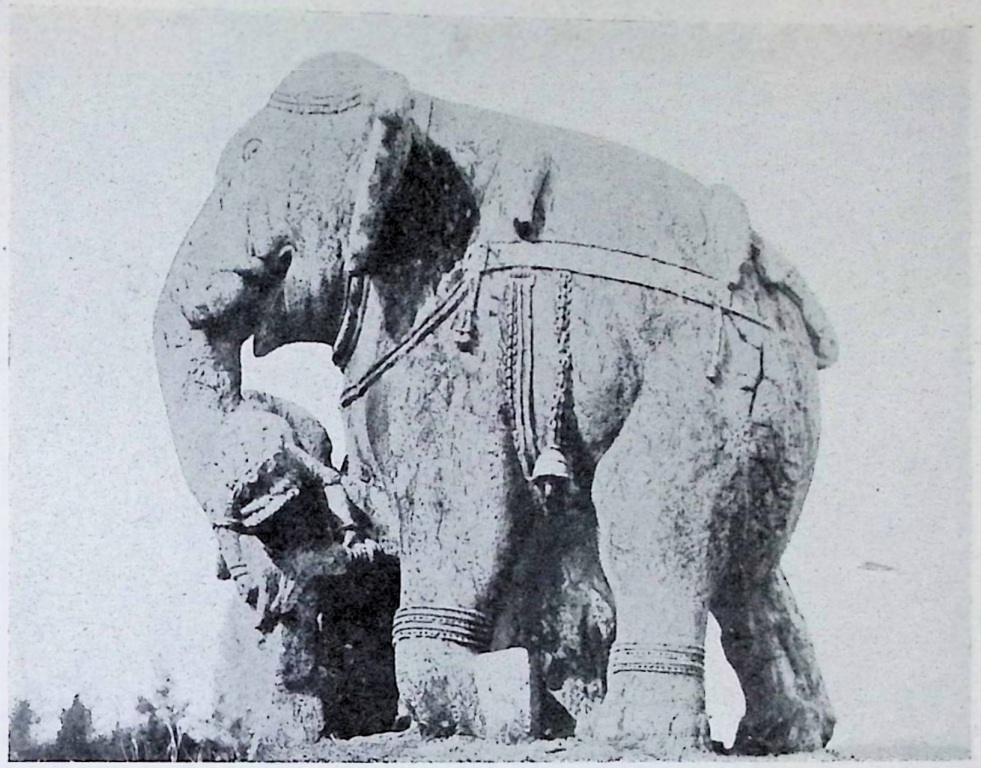
MUSICIAN FROM TEMPLE OF ANANTESHWAR AT HEMADPANTI RUINS IN AHMEDNAGAR DIST.

12th Century

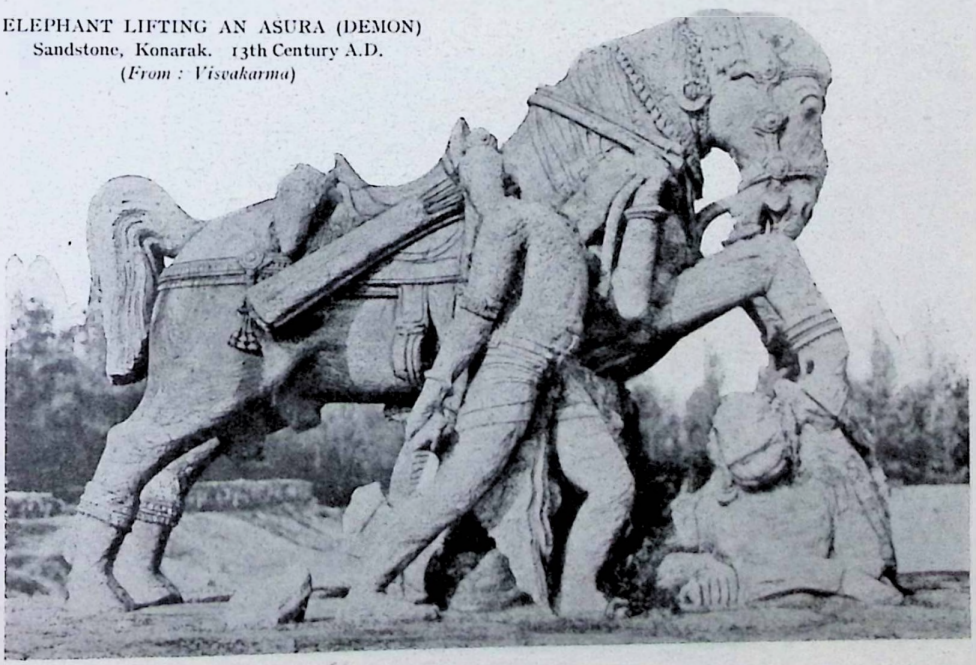
(Photo : A. L. Syed)



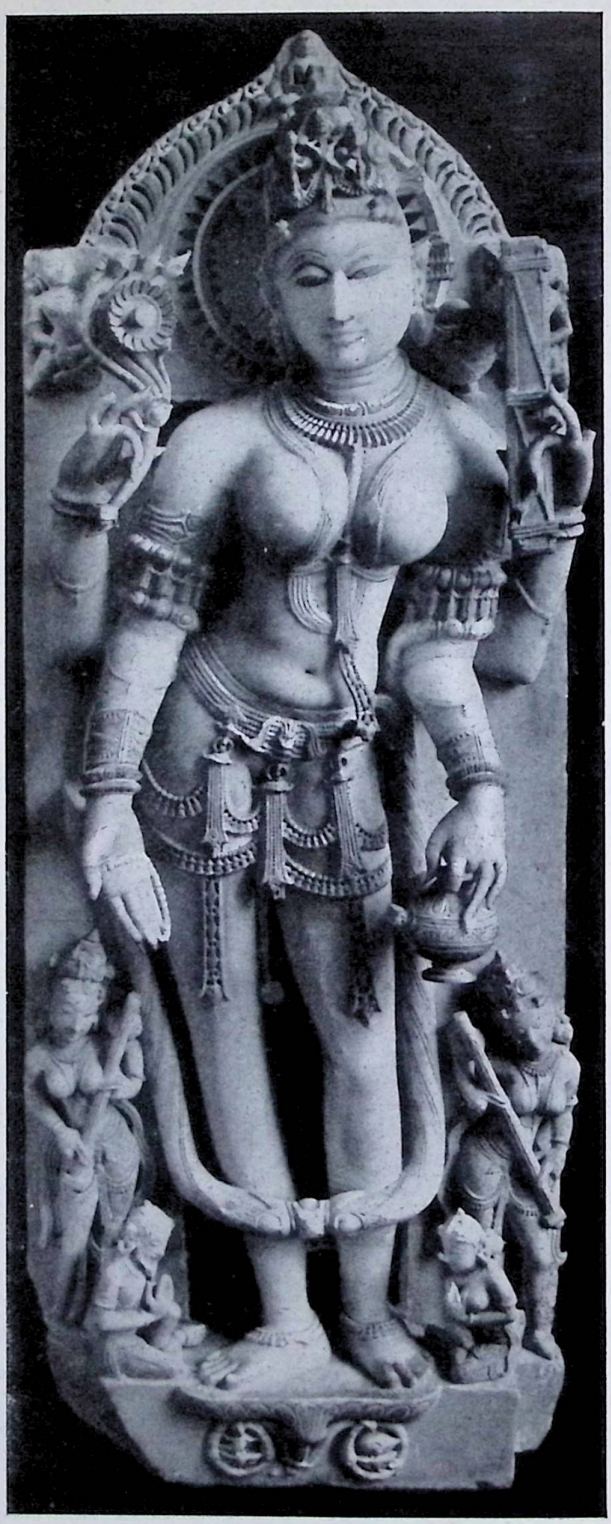
WOODEN BRACKET FROM A TEMPLE CAR, WITH ARMED RIDER ON REARING HORSE AND THREE ATTENDANTS. MADURA, 17th-18th Century.



ELEPHANT LIFTING AN ASURA (DEMON)
Sandstone, Konarak. 13th Century A.D.
(*From : Visvakarma*)



WAR-HORSE LED BY A WARRIOR AND TRAMPLING AN ASURA (DEMON)
Sandstone, Konarak. 13th Century. A.D.
(From Havell, *Indian Sculpture and Painting*)



MARBLE IMAGE OF GODDESS SARASVATI

(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)



SHIVA NATARAJA. BRONZE

Tiruvelangadu, Chitur District, Madras. c. 1100 A.D.

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SHIVA AS NATARAJA. BRONZE
From Velankanni, Tanjore District, Madras. 11th-12th Century A.D.



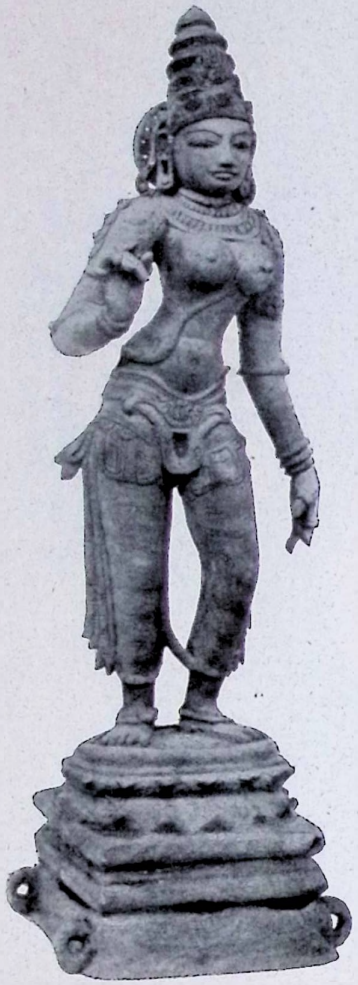
SHIVA AS NATARAJA, SUPPORTED BY AN APSARA PURUSA AND LOTUS PEDESTAL. COPPER. South India. 15th Century.



KALIYA KRISHNA. BRONZE



BALA-KRISHNA. COPPER. DRAVIDIAN. C. 16th Century. A.D.
(From *Vishvakarma*)



PARVATI
Medieval, South Indian School.



UMA
South India.



PARVATI. BRONZE
From Tanjore District, Madras.
C. 15th-16th Century A.D.



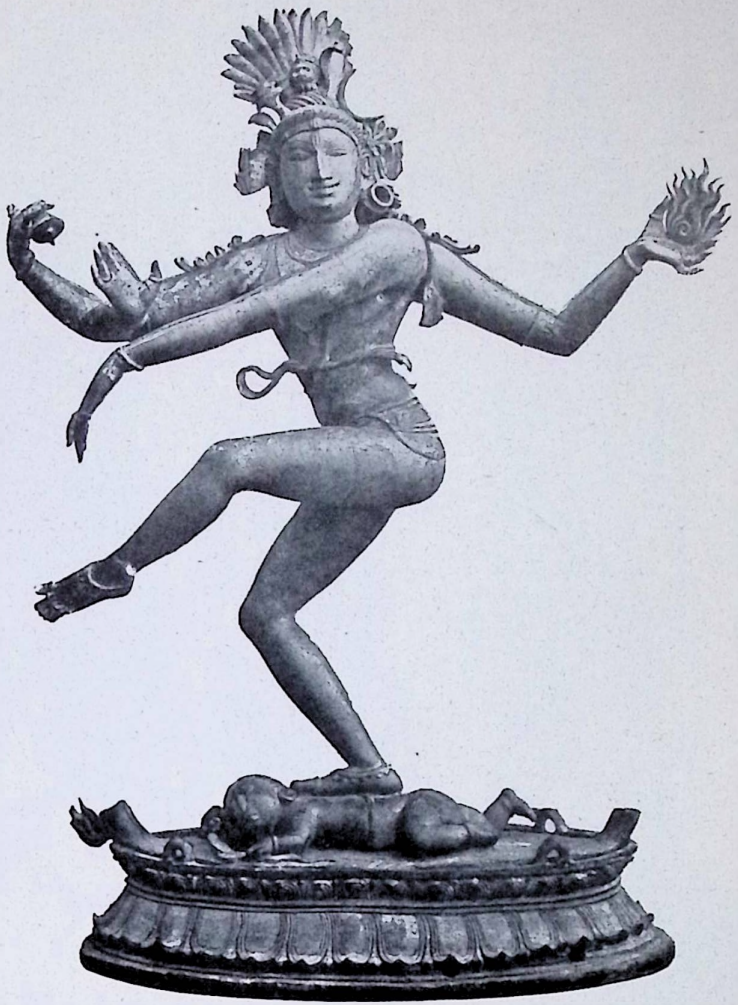
CHOLA QUEEN. BRONZE
From Chingleput District, Madras.
C. 13th Century A.D.



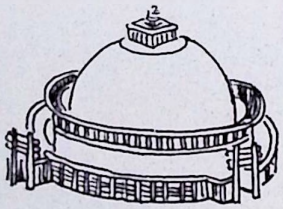
KRISHNARAYA AND HIS TWO QUEENS. BRASS
The date of Krishnaraya of Vijayanagar was 1510-1520 A.D. The figures are contemporary.
(From *Viswakarma*)



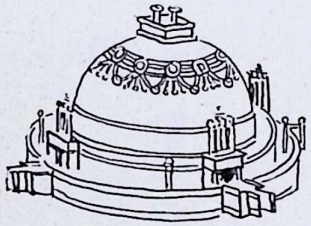
SHIVA. CEYLON



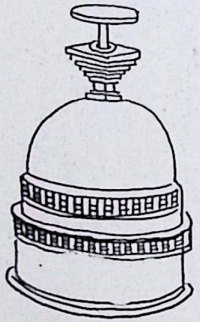
SHIVA AS NATARAJA. BRONZE
From Tiruvelangadu, Chittur District, Madras. C. 11th-13th Century A.D.



SANCHI



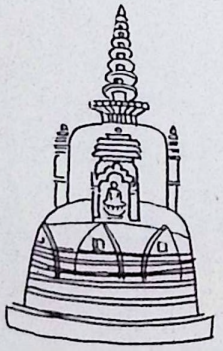
AMRAVATI



KARLI

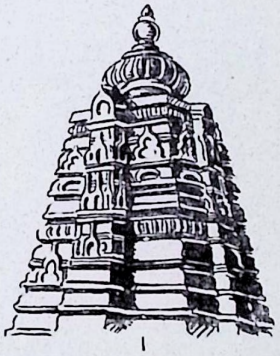


AJANTA



SARNATH

TYPES OF STUPAS



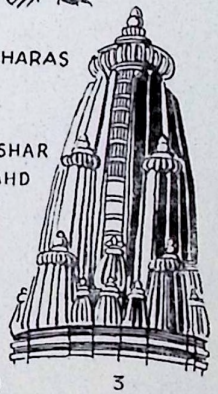
1

TYPES OF SIKHARAS

1 AIHOLE
2 BHUBANSHAR
3 KHAJURAHD
4 GUJARAT



2



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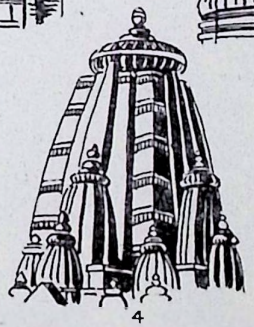
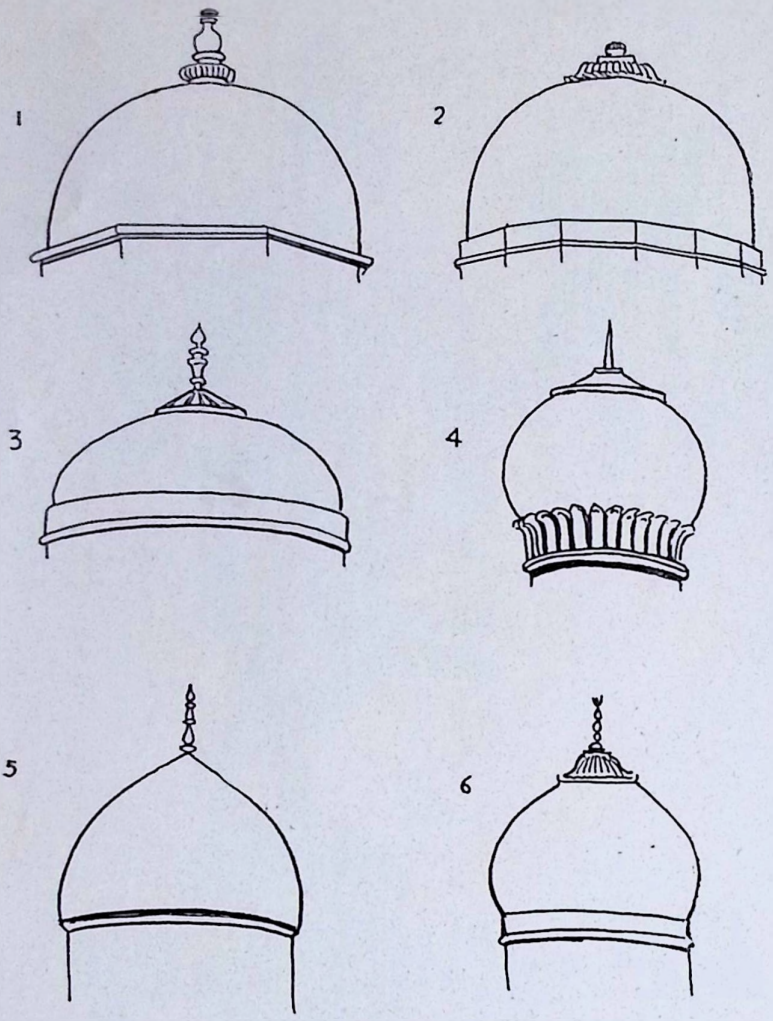


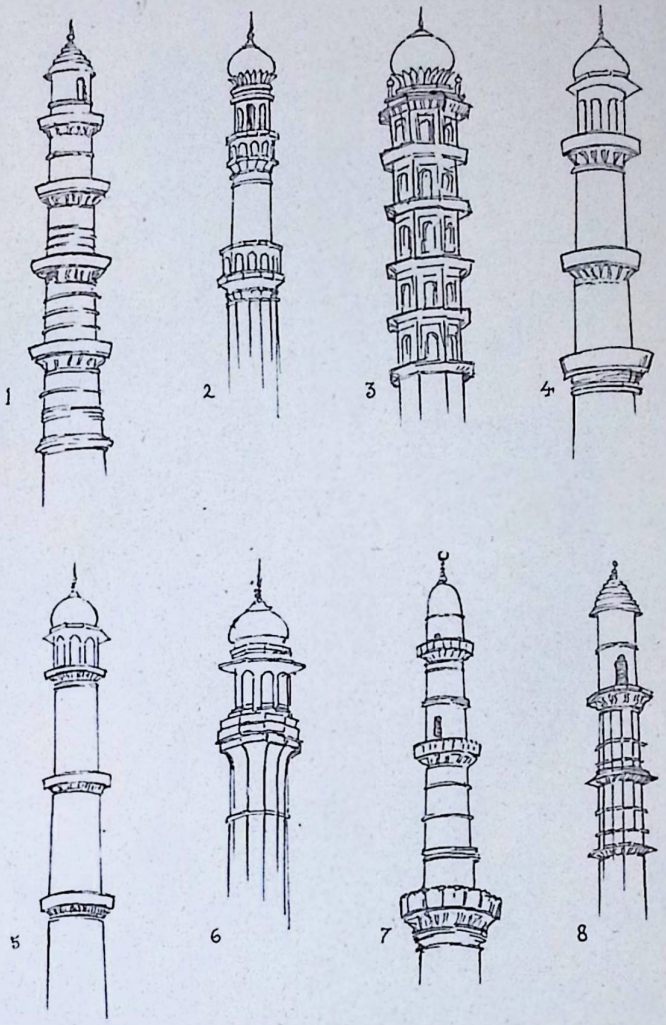
4

TYPES OF SIKHARAS
(in the Northern Style)



TYPES OF DOMES

1. Ghyasuddin Tughlaq's Tomb, Delhi, 1325 A.D.; 2. Lodi Tomb, Delhi, 1500 A.D.; 3. Jami Masjid, Jaunpur, 1470 A.D.; 4. Bijapur, 16th Century; 5. Humayun's Tomb, Delhi, 1564 A.D.; 6. Taj Mahal, Agra, 1634 A.D.



TYPES OF MINARETS

1. Shah Alam Mosque, Ahmadabad; 2. Char Minar, Hyderabad; 3. Gol Gumbaz, Bijapur; 4. Akbar's Tomb, Sikandra; 5. Taj Mahal, Agra; 6. Wazir Khan's Mosque, Lahore; 7. Chand Minar, Daulatabad; 8. Jami Masjid, Champaner.

was gained by a door, usually from a side alley. Round the courtyard, or on two or three sides only, were grouped rooms of varying sizes, including bathrooms with very well made brick floors and elaborate drains running out into the street. Stairways, implying upper storeys or at least flat roofs, were common and in some instances beam-holes for definite upper floors have been found. The buildings, however, were plain and functional and lacked any artistic merit. But the finished quality of the materials employed and the high standard of their manipulation is indeed astonishing.

Although ancient Sanskrit literature refers constantly to the existence of an Aryan architecture, which from the descriptions should have been in a high state of excellence, no visible traces of these monuments have so far been unearthed. Yet, it can scarcely be denied that architecture was one of the arts to which the ancient Indians gave considerable attention. No doubt, wood, bamboo and reeds must have been the only building materials before stone began to be used as a more permanent medium for architecture. The Vedic 'fire-altars' and sacrificial halls, which were essential ritual edifices, necessitated the coming into being of architects who made them of bamboo, reeds and mats. In the *Vedas*, there are also frequent references to wooden houses which were often movable. "Like a woman, O Dwelling, we carry thee where we will." Such houses were presented to the Brahamins. A special guild of skilled craftsmen called *ratha-karikas* (builders of chariots) has also been mentioned in the *Rigveda*.

In the Epics there are picturesque descriptions of a variety of stone architectural constructions, such as, 'abode of gods,' in the sense of a shrine, 'the white washed portals of god's temples', *sabhas* or assembly halls, balconies, porticos, arched gateways, two-storeyed buildings and amphitheatres. Ayodhya has been vividly described in the *Ramayana*: "The temples of the city were as resplendent as sky. Its assembly halls, gardens and alms-houses were most elegant. The houses were as mines of gems....."

A perusal of old Pali literature shows that a science of architecture, *viz.*, *Vattu-Vijja*, was in practice, and it guided the architects to build *sabhas* and *prasads* (palaces). Of special significance are the references to *Kutagara* (peaked-huts), a primitive temple with a curvilinear roof, which may be seen pictured on the reliefs from Bharhut.

Another visible evidence of our early architectural activities can be gathered from the fragments of the wooden ramparts excavated at Bulandi Bagh, near Patna. For an idea of its original excellence we may refer to the account of Pataliputra given by Megasthenes. It was in the shape of a parallelogram girded with a wooden wall pierced with loop-holes for the archers. Within the walls was the royal palace, which consisted of a series of halls, containing pillars of wood. The Imperial residence was still standing when Fa Hian saw it in the 5th century A. D. He says: "The carvings and sculptures which ornament the windows are such as this age could not make."

These accounts of the early Mauryan architecture are exemplified by a perusal of the pictures of various historical towns carved in bas-relief on the Sanchi gateways, which although produced a little later are substantially representative of the building art of the period. They all testify to the high skill of the Mauryan craftsmen in wood.

With the coming of Asoka in the 3rd century B. C., a distinctly visible tradition of the building art in India can be traced. He inaugurated Buddhism as the state religion of the country, and thenceforth in the fulfilment of his mission of *Dharma Vijaya*, erected pillars and built stupas to encase the sacred relics of Gautama Buddha. The remarkable stupas are not in any sense Buddhistic, nor a new departure in Indian architectural traditions. On the other hand, as we have discussed in a previous chapter, in their form and purpose, they were adopted by the Buddhists who imparted to them a peculiar symbolic significance. It was originally a funeral monument built of bamboo or reed which used to be erected to enshrine the fragments of bones and ashes of an Aryan king or a holy personage, collected from the funeral pyre and deposited in an urn. The names given to the various

parts of the Stupa are too clearly reminiscent of the Vedic ritual terminology to leave any doubt as to their origin. The lofty terrace surrounding the monument at the base was called *Medhi*, which served in the ancient days as the processional path. Encircling the Stupa on the ground level was a second procession path, enclosed by a massive balustrade known as *Vedika*—the Sanskrit word for sacrificial ground in Vedic ritual; the cross-bar of the rail was called *Suichi*, suggesting *Sucha*—roots of sacred grass which used to be scattered on the sacrificial ground as part of the Vedic rites. The symbolism of the *pradakshina*, circumbulatory rite performed by the pilgrim around the Stupa, was likewise drawn from ancient Vedic traditions.

Nevertheless, the Stupa had not prior to the time of Asoka acquired any sacred character among the Buddhists. From the time that Asoka divided the body relics of the Buddha and erected monuments to enshrine them all, Stupas became objects of cult worship. They became the symbol of the passing away of Buddha into Nirvana, and gradually in Buddhist art came to mean a mound, containing a relic, *e.g.*, ashes, bones, hair, tooth of the Buddha, or of his spiritual successors.

The typical form of the earliest Buddhist Stupas are to be seen at Sanchi. In shape, it is almost an hemispherical dome, truncated near the top, and rises from a terrace, access to which is provided by a double flight of steps. A massive railing running round the monument consists of octagonal pillars, pierced with cross-bars and divided into four quadrants by entrances, each of which is adorned with an imposing gateway, lavishly ornamented with reliefs. On the top of the dome is an umbrella-like structure, which is a religious symbolism signifying the reign of *Dharma*.

The original dome was probably a structure of brick, about half the diameter of the present Stupa, and it was about a century later that this essential symbol of the creed was encased in stone, giving it a more dignified architectural appearance. Later, the wooden palisade too, which enclosed the processional path, was replaced by the present stone railing—each part a copy of the wooden original. The reason why wood was used instead of stone is not, as Havell points out, "because they were unpractised in the use of stone, but because they wished to avoid a break in the railing, and to maintain the sacred associations of the old wooden work." But perhaps no feature of Buddhist architecture is more characteristic than these railings. For largeness of its proportions and austerity of its treatment, the railing at Sanchi is one of the most impressive productions of the architecture designated as Buddhist.

The entrance archways, though forming an important part of the structural scheme, were really decorative additions, constructed mainly for the accommodation of the sculptures. In view of the prodigality of embellishment, the constructional part is not easily distinguishable from the ornamental, but detached from the sculptural overlay the actual frame-work of the *toranas* resolves itself into a comparatively simple framework. Like the railings, the original *toranas* were probably of wood, the present gates having been put up about the 1st century A. D. But the marvel is that structures of this kind, standing alone without struts or supports, obviously constructed on the principles of timber-work and not that of stone, should have continued to stand in such remarkable preservation for some two thousand years.

Bharhut, Bodh Gaya and Sarnath are some of the other important places considered sacred in the Buddhist holy land. They have their own Stupas, although in general dimensions they are less massive and less impressive than the one at Sanchi. In marked contrast to the naked simplicity of the Sanchi railings, the stone work of the railings at Bharhut is richly carved in bas-relief, portraying incidents of the Jatakas or in the life of Buddha. The Bodh Gaya railings are almost in the same style as the Bharhut railings.

Amaravati, in the south of India offered, at the beginning of the Christian era, a few Buddhist structural monuments, which were not only technically remarkable, but

"A DARBAR SCENE"

The incident represented here is according to Coomaraswamy the fall of Kandhar in 1602 and the subsequent appointed of Ganj 'Ali Khan as Governor. He was succeeded by his son 'Ali Mardan Khan who is shown here bowing in the typical Mughal fashion. No doubt this gorgeous picture was one of the series painted for illustrating the royal memoirs or the chronicles as was customary with the Moghul emperors and was probably commissioned either by Shah Jahan or 'Ali Mardan Khan himself.

(Reproduced from *Studies in Indian Painting* by N. C. MEHTA.)



evinced an artistic perfection of a particularly high order. Unfortunately, the Stupa, the noblest of all the monuments, has now completely disappeared from its site. But from a study of the still preserved carved decorations of the Stupa, showing small duplicate copies of the Stupa itself in bas-relief, we can once again re-create the appearance and re-capture some of its former glory. Thus whatever little comes before us is enough to prove that the Amaravati Stupa was a superb achievement. When it is understood that almost the whole of the grand towering dome was encased in marble, sumptuously carved in relief, we can get an idea of the inspiring picture of art that it once must have presented.

With the establishment of Buddhist monastic orders and the idea of pilgrimages to holy places coming into vogue, the organisation of the Sangha gradually began to feel the need of sheltered places for the accommodation of the Buddhist priests, monks and lay-worshippers, where they could meet, worship or meditate on the words of the Blessed One and settle the spiritual affairs of the monastery. The wandering *Bhikkhus* were strictly enjoined to meet together in the rainy season for the purpose of comparing notes and instructing laymen. The natural cave retreat in the mountain had in the early days of Buddhism fully served the requirements of the church, as is evident from the character of the excavated Lomas Rishi cave on the Barabar Hills in Bihar. Later, however, when royalty and nobility took holy orders, the austerity of the earlier days had to give place to showmanship, and the craftsmen vied with one another in carving out the most lavishly decorated monastic establishments, consisting of *Chaityas*, *e.g.*, large assembly halls and chambers attached to the Stupa.

The distinguishing feature of these Buddhist cave cathedrals is that they are not constructed, but excavated from solid rock. There is no external view except the frontage which is often ornamented. But the interior has afforded the rock-cutter so wide a range in architectural fashioning that some of them could be classed amongst the most remarkable examples of architecture noted for their creative quality.

It was originally under the fostering care of Asoka that the great series of rock-temples, progressive development of which may be studied in the examples at Bhaja, Nasik, Karli, Kanheri and Ajanta, began to be carved out. The typical *Chaitya* is a long apsidal building with a semi-circular roof, lighted and ventilated by a large horseshoe shaped window over the main entrance. This window will be seen to be the most frequently used decorative device in Buddhist architecture. As an artistic and effective method of introducing light, this form of the window is a remarkable architectural conception.

The interior of the *Chaitya* is divided longitudinally by means of a double row of pillars into a broad nave for the congregational service and aisles on either side for the purpose of processions and circumbulation by lay worshippers. At the apsidal end is a Stupa, also carved out of the natural rock.

As in the Stupa rails, so in the *Chaityas*, we find architecture in stone slowly evolving out of wooden forms. The pillars may be taken as an example. They will usually be found to slope inwards at a considerable angle, as wooden posts would slope to give strength to a structure. In the earliest *Chaitya* halls, the pillars are without capitals or base but gradually stone architectural features were incorporated and for the first time, in the verandah of the Nasik cave, we find complete pillars. In the later caves at Ajanta it became the custom to elaborate each different member of the pillar and its entablature.

The largest and the most complete of these *Chaityas* is that which is carved in the scarp of the Western Ghats at Karli. Supremely artistic and at the same time the most impressive yet discovered, the *Chaitya* appears to have been completed structurally about the first century B. C. by the Hinayana Buddhists. A rock-cut screen, having a triple entrance and a pillared clerestory above, together with two large columns with lion capitals, one on each side of the facade, once formed a very ornamental front to the *Chaitya*. They

are, however, today in a dilapidated state—only the interior is in a slightly better preserved condition. The Chaitya hall owes much of its majesty and effect to the manner in which its three principal elements—the colonnade, vaulting and the great sun-window—have each in themselves been treated and then combined to produce a co-ordinated whole. Each of the thirty-seven closely-set pillars forming the colonnade, with its vase-shaped base, octagonal shaft, a campaniform capital with spreading abacus and each finished off with exceptionally vivid and fine examples of rock sculpture, imparts a solemn grandeur to the entire hall. Above the rich zone of the sculptured mass rises the high arched vault of the roof imparting an air of mystery to the whole interior. But it is in the manipulation and treatment of the sun-window that the architect showed his creative excellence. The endeavour of the designer was to so subdue and modify the glare of sunshine in the interior as to make the entire inner atmosphere appear diffused in a soft luminous light. In this the architect succeeded admirably by skilfully dividing the sun-window.

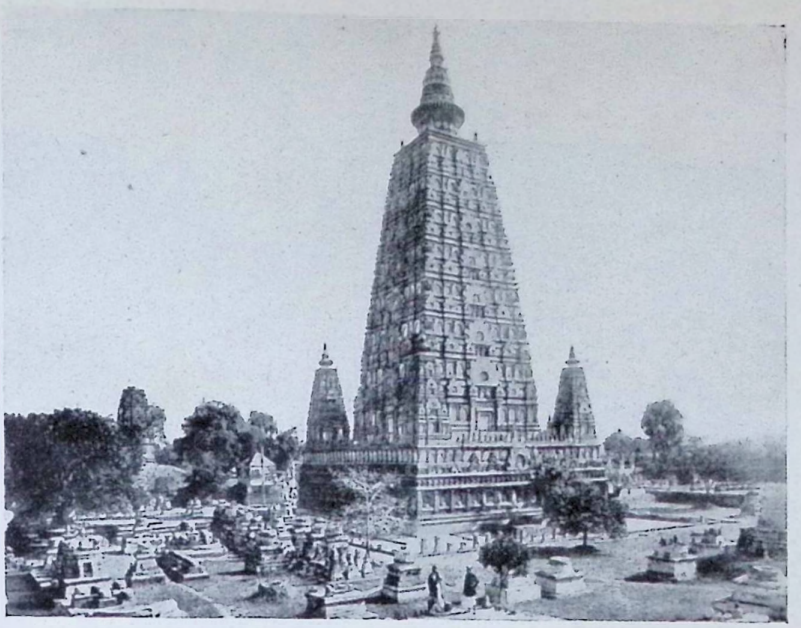
These retreats were the focus of Buddhist spiritual life. "The imagination," writes Havell, "must fill in what is now wanting in this noble deserted assembly hall of the Sangha —the painted banners hung across the nave; the flickering light from the lamps reflected upon the glittering surface of the Stupa, and losing itself in the vaulted roof above; the bowed figures of the yellow robed monks, solemnly pacing round the relic shrine and chanting the sacred texts or seated on the floor in meditation; the pious laymen looking on from between the close set pillars of the nave, and following the sacramental path along the outer ambulatory."

Close by these Buddhist shrines was constructed another architectural formation in the rock-cut retreats. It was the monastery or *Vihara* where the monks resided and led pious lives undisturbed by the distractions of human activity.

Viharas as we see them today are more or less facsimiles in rock of structural monastic houses which had originally stood in the open in more impermanent materials and have now been effaced. A typical *Vihara* is a square central hall, corresponding to the open courtyard of the style prior to the rock-cut architecture, flanked by cubicles for the monks on three sides. Cave No. 12 in the Ajanta group may be cited as an example of the early progressive attempts in *Vihara* architecture. It is decorated with the usual *Chaitya*-arch and railings.

Although the Brahmanical form of worship had already taken root about the beginning of the Christian era, the temple in the strictly Brahmanical sense is not noticeable until the fourth century which heralds the dawn of the country's greatest intellectual awakening. The patronage and encouragement given by the Gupta rulers, who were themselves followers of the Brahamanical religion, gave impetus to the emergence and birth of a new style in the art of building wherein we can discern two progressive movements of much importance. The first, which relates to its aesthetic character, marks the coming into being of a new artistic approach—" a change from the mere imitative to the infinitely creative, from the mere servile copying of meaningless forms to a reasoned application of the first principles of architectural compositions." The other relates to structural procedure, making possible the beginnings of an architecture composed of stone masonry.

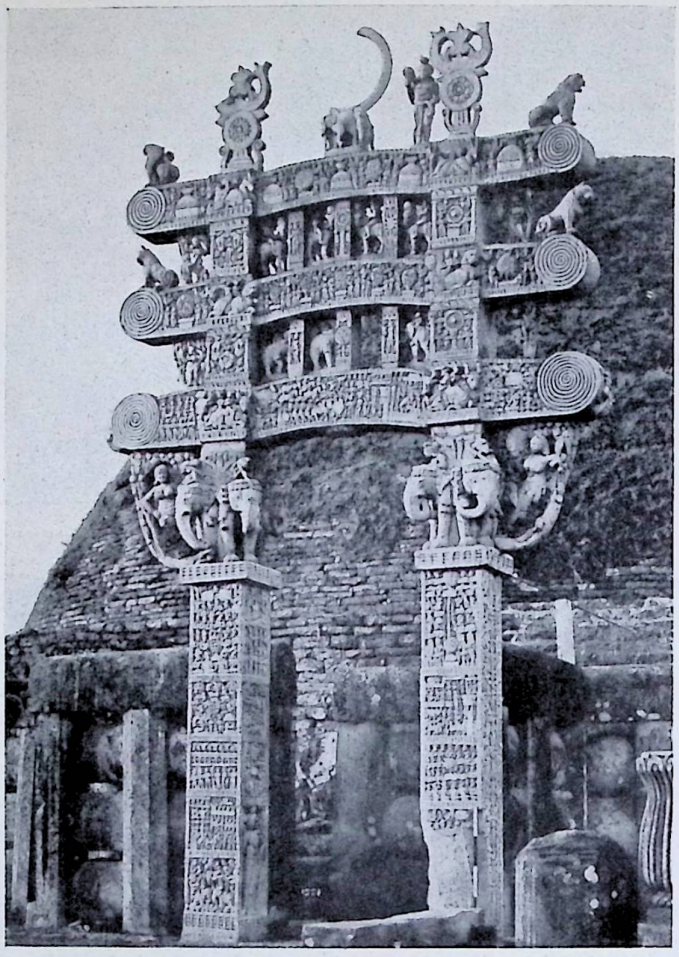
The creative quality of the epoch is well illustrated in the little shrine at Sanchi, dating from about 400 A. D. Very primitive in shape, it consists of aimple flat-roofed chamber with a porch in front faced with four thick pillars, elaborately carved with animal capitals in the Buddhist tradition. Here in this structure we have the nucleus of the temple proper taking form, *viz.*, a cubicle cell, square in plan, with interior walls completely bare of any ornamentation, and without any other opening except the doorway connecting the porch. Contrasting with the plain walls of the interior, the outer walls of the entrances to the *garbha-griha* (Shrine) are often exquisitely carved with bands of relief figures and scroll ornaments.



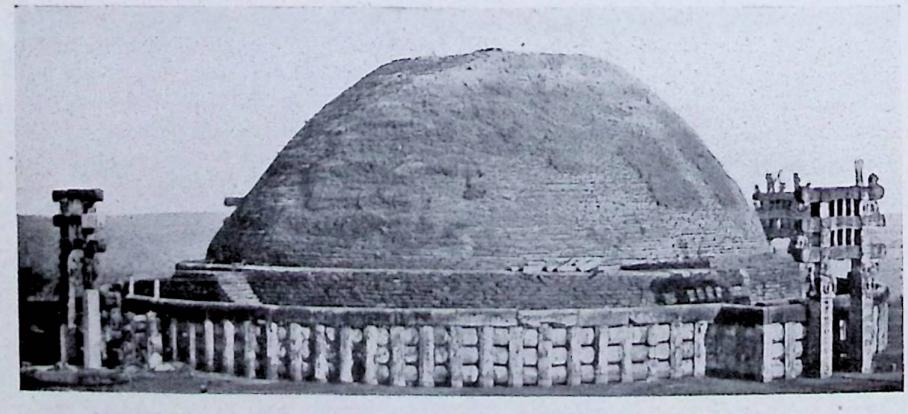
BODH GAYA



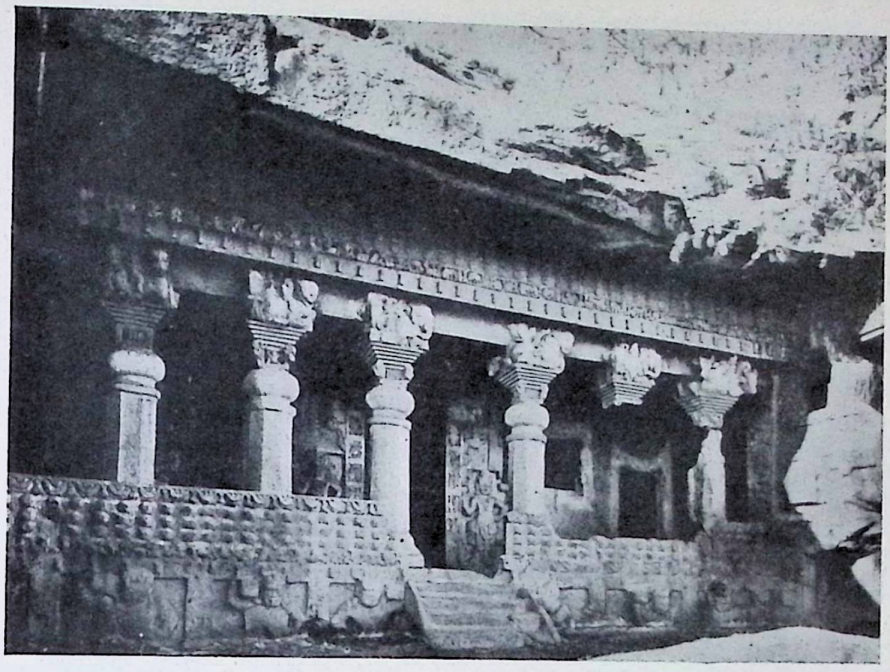
LOMAS RISHI CAVE, BARABAR, NEAR BODH GAYA
Latter half of the 3rd Century, B.C. One of the most ancient rock caves.
(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)



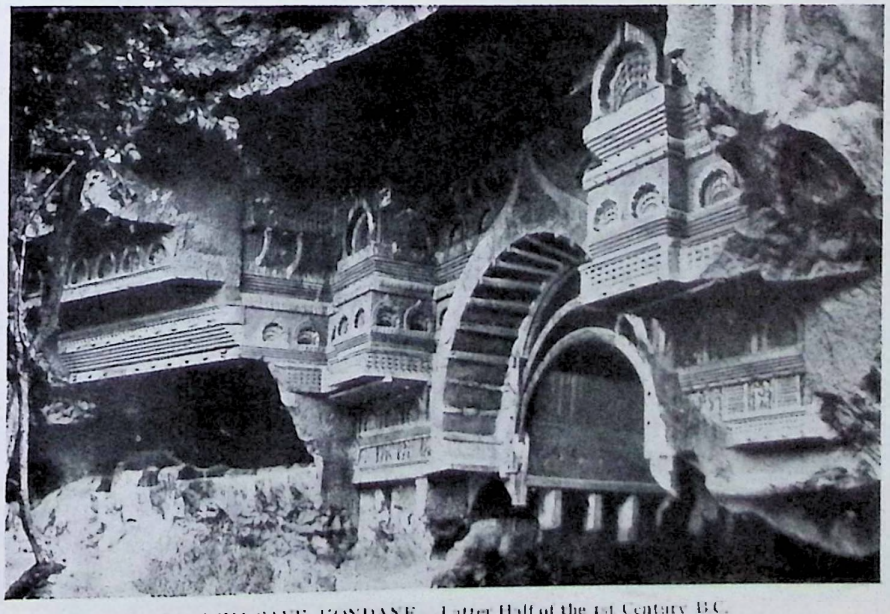
NORTH GATE (FRONT VIEW). STUPA OF SANCHI



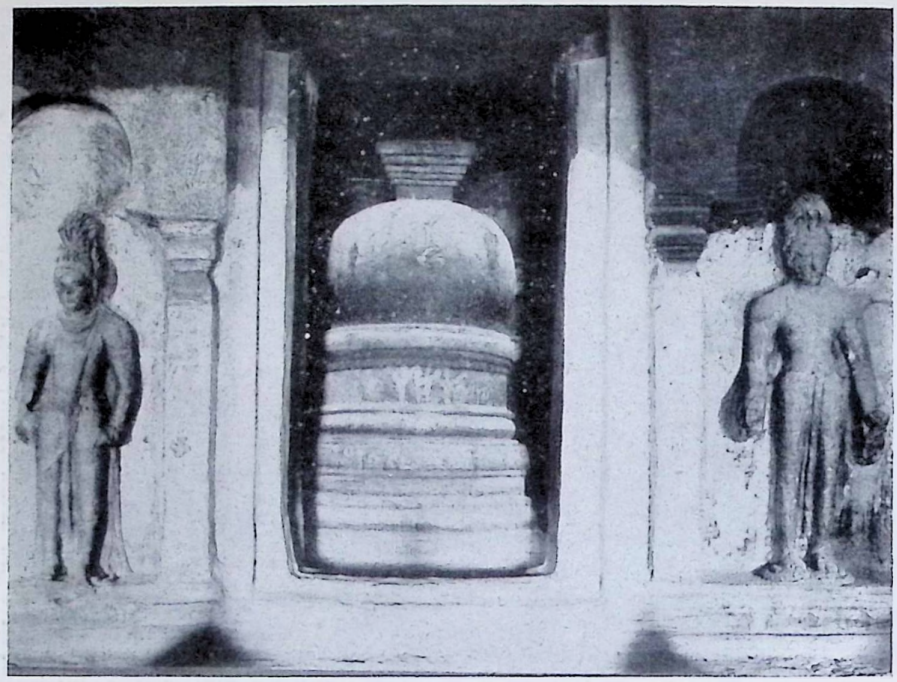
STUPA OF SANCHI, BHOPAL. GENERAL VIEW FROM THE EAST



CAVE III, NASIK. First quarter of the 2nd Century A.D.
(*Photo : India Office*)



CHAITYA CAVE, KONDANE. Latter Half of the 1st Century B.C.
(*Photo : India Office*)



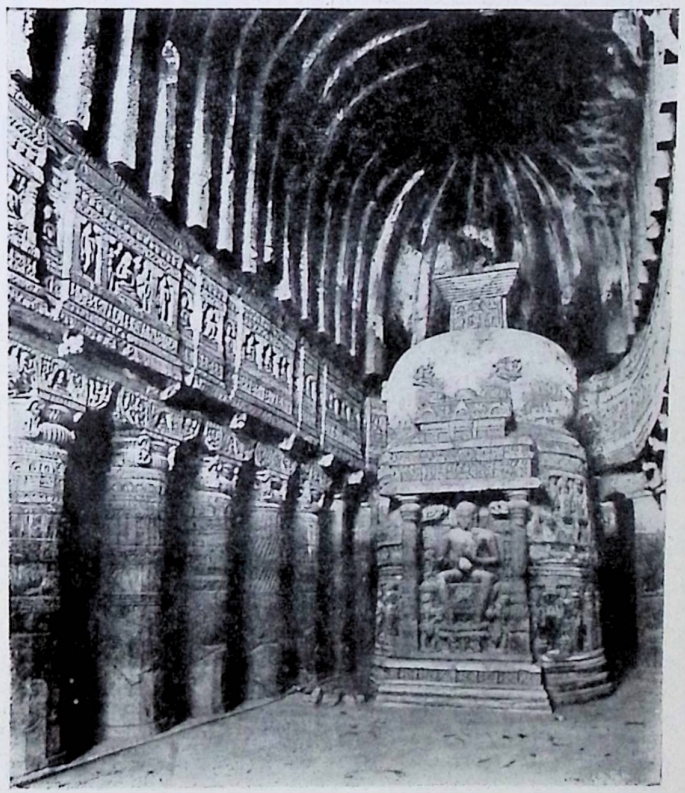
STUPA FLANKED BY BODHISATTAVAS IN CAVE II AT BAGH, GWALIOR



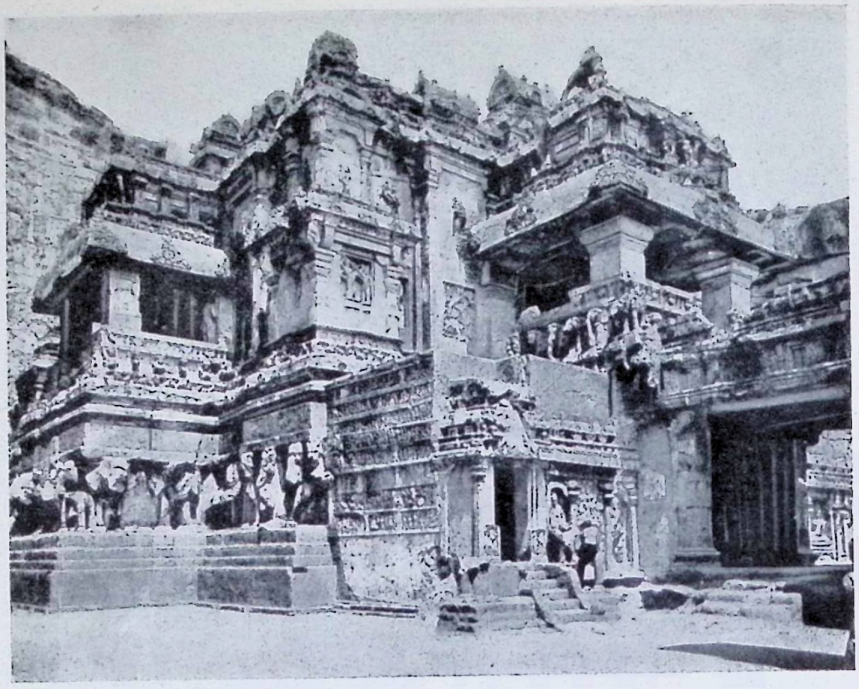
GROUP OF ROCK-HEWN STUPAS AT BHAJA



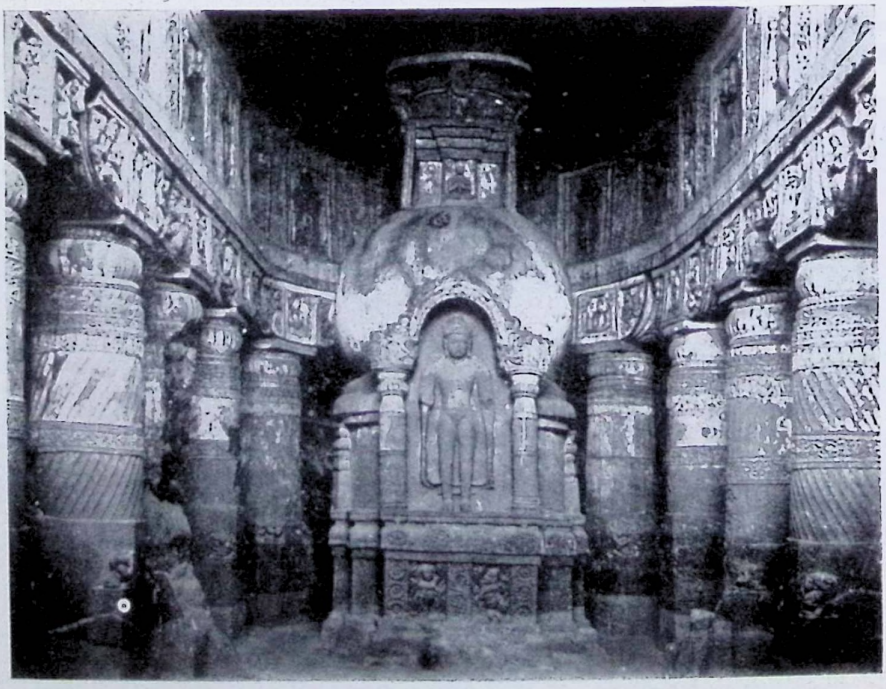
FACADE OF CAVE XIX, AJANTA



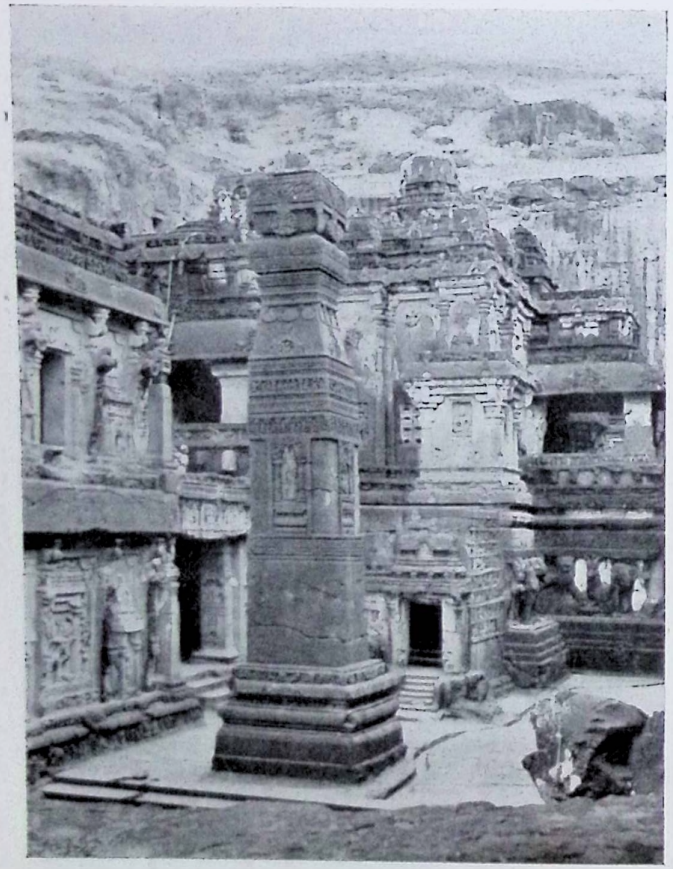
INTERIOR OF CAVE XXVI, AJANTA



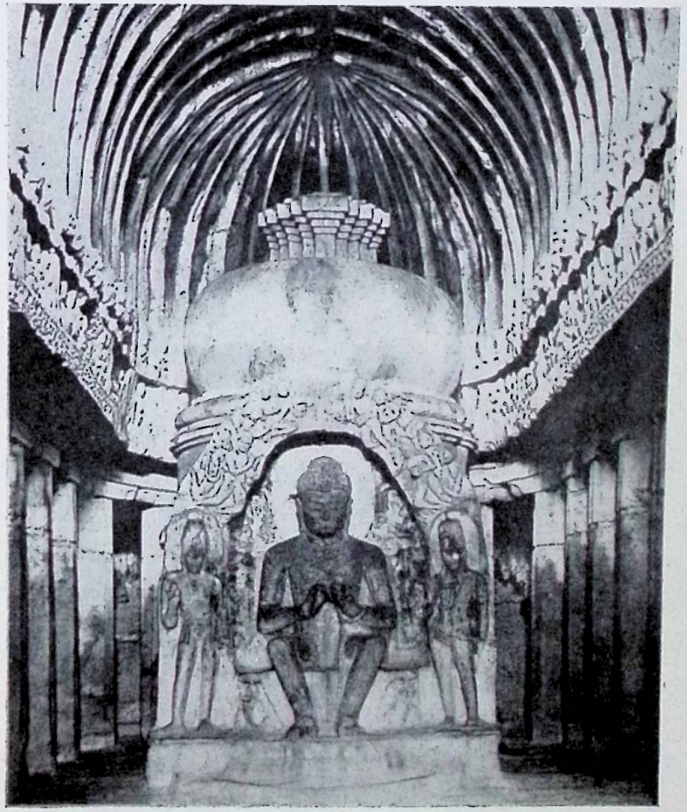
ELLORA CAVES



INTERIOR OF CAVE XIX, AJANTA, SHOWING DAGOBA AND PILLARS



KAILAS, ELLORA



VISVAKARMA CHAITYA CAVE, ELLORA



THE GREAT TEMPLE AT BHUBANESHWAR
(Fergusson, *Illustrations of Ancient Architecture in Hindostan*)



ENTRANCE TO GREAT CHAITYA CAVE, KARLE
(Fergusson, *Illustrations of Rock-cut Temples of India*)

A number of similar flat-roofed sanctuaries, dedicated to the worship of Shiva or Vishnu, has been found in various places in Central India. The principal examples besides the one at Sanchi, are at Tigowa in the Jubbulpore district, Eran near Bhilsa, Bhumara in Nagodh State, Udaigiri in Bhopal and the temple known as Lad Khan in the Deccan.

These flat-roofed temples of the Gupta Age should, however, be considered merely as a prelude to the monumental religious edifices that arose later. It was only in the later half of the 7th century that the temple architecture in its medieval aspect began to take shape. Its principal architectural features, as they gradually evolved, reflect the devotee's mental attitude towards religious edifices.

The dwelling place of the gods in our country has from the very start been regarded as the *Vimana* or the *Ratha* (Chariot). Inside the *Vimana*, the most sacred spot is a small and generally dark chamber which houses the divine image. This is known as the *Garbha-griha*, and was entered by a doorway on its inner and usually eastern side. In front of the doorway was a porch which later developed into a pillared hall or *Mandapa*—to serve as a pavilion for the assembly of the devotees. The Hindu ritual being individualistic, and not congregational, a porch, in its early stages, fully served the purpose of the priest in-charge. Gradually, however, with the elaboration of rituals, the growing importance of the temple as the meeting place of the village community, where philosophical and religious discussions took place, *kathas* and epics recited, it became necessary to provide a suitable shelter which could accommodate a large congregation. So the *Mandapas* became more and more spacious and often more than one were constructed.

Originally the *Mandapa* was not connected with the main shrine, as in the Shore temple at Mamallapuram. But later they were joined together by an intervening chamber called *Antarala*. Leading into the main hall is a porch or *Ardha-mandapa*. The whole temple may, as in the south, be raised on a platform and be surrounded by an enclosure through which leads a gateway—*Gopuram*. A number of recesses, alcoves and altars were also provided as part of the architectural scheme within which would be enshrined holy idols so that the whole structure was in effect a place of "assemblage of the gods."

The upper and pyramidal or tapering portion of the temple rising over the *Garbha-griha* is called the *Sikhara*, which has been the main distinguishing mark of the temple styles. Several theories as to its origin have been advanced. According to some, *Sikhara* is the natural evolution of the Buddhist Stupa gradually becoming elongated from the semi-globular mound. On the other hand, a few critics maintain that the idea of the *Sikhara* may have been borrowed from the tall covering of the *Ratha*, which with the image of the deity inside, was carried about on ceremonial occasions. There may also be some truth in the suggestion that the conception of the *Sikhara* took its birth in the primitive expedient of giving protection to the Vedic altars for keeping off the rain water or in giving to the Aryan temple of Agni (fire spirit) a structure through which smoke from the sacred Fire could escape. But there can be little doubt that the structural effect of the *Sikhara* has been derived from the bamboo and thatch constructions of the Vedic Aryans to which symbolical decorative forms were added afterwards. A three-pronged trident motif on the finial of the *Sikhara* signifies a Shiva temple, whereas a disc or wheel mounting the spire fulfils the symbolic requirements of a Vaishnava temple.

A close examination of the *Sikhara* will show that the surface is often treated with a repetition of the same architectural motif, that is, the *Sikhara* will be found to be composed of miniature replicas of itself. An analysis of the temple structure generally will reveal that this principle applies to the other parts of the structure as well. By means of this artistic ingenuity, the designers succeeded in imparting a very effective and dignified architectonic character to the whole shrine.

It is at Aihole (Bijapur district) that for the first time, the beginnings of the *Sikhara* are observable in its various temples, dating about the 6th century. The manifest

primitive simplicity of their design points but too clearly to a very early stage in the process of *Sikhara* evolution. Gradually, however, two main forms of *Sikhara* emerge—one may even say, two main orders of temple architecture : one being developed in the Tamil regions known as the Dravidian style ; and the other assuming a separate form in the north, known as the Indo-Aryan style. The *Sikhara* in the former would usually be found divided into storeys and crowned with a circular or octagonal dome, technically called the *Stupika ;* whereas the northern type is a curvilinear *Sikhara* with ribbed *amalaka*—fruit of Vishnu's blue lotus, which caps the tower and carries the *kalash*, symbolising the jar of Nectar.

The history of the Dravidian school of architecture begins with the contributions of the Pallava rulers, who appear to have been the first builders in stone in Southern India. The productions of the Pallava dynasty can be grouped into two classes, belonging to two phases. In the earlier phase, the examples are wholly rock-cut and in the later are wholly structural.

The Dravidian rock architecture takes two forms, identified as *Mandapas* and *Rathas*. *Mandapa* is an open pavilion, excavated in rock, and takes the shape of a simple pillared hall with one or more cubicle cells containing the image or representation of the deity, recessed in the back wall.

The *Ratha*, literally meaning a chariot, used for the conveyance of the image of the deity during processions, refers to shrines which are exact replicas in granite of certain religious structures common at that time.

Examples of the *Mandapa* of the early Pallava princes, in various stages of development, are 14 in number and are spread all over the North Arcot and Trichinopoly districts. Each consists of one or more cubicles, containing the *linga*, the representation of Shiva, faced by a hall, supported on a row of thick square pillars. Afterwards, at Mogalrajapuram, a new structural feature, known as *Kudu*, was introduced, which can easily be identified as the Buddhist *Chaitya* window, although much reduced in size and converted into a mere ornamental motif. That the southern style did have some contacts with the Buddhist forms of the north as practised by the Andhras in the Vengi is clearly suggested by the architectural rendering of the temples of Anantasayana at Undavalli and of the series of shrines at Bhairavakonda, where the earlier singularly plain and one-storeyed treatment of the *Mandapa* has been given up for multi-storeyed pillared halls one above the other, evidently taking the idea from the conventional form of a Buddhist *Vihara*.

The second stage in the development of the earlier phase of the Pallava architecture is exhibited during the reign of Narsinghavarman (A. D. 640-68). While the rock-cut method had not been entirely given up, a number of *Rathas* and monoliths also received the attention of the artist's chisel. Almost all the examples of this group are found at one place, namely, Mahabalipuram, the sea-side city of Mamallapuram. The *Mandapas* though displaying the same general characteristics as in the earliest phase are now more skilfully decorated with *Chaitya*-arch motifs. Figure formation seems to be the main ornamental device. The pillar which had been undergoing changes achieves its maturity here. The heavy pillars of the previous reign are now replaced by elegant pillars with bulbous capitals, supported by squatting lions, the heraldic symbol of the Pallavas, forming the lower half of the shaft.

The series of monolithic temples called *Rathas*, popularly known as the "Seven Pagodas", form one of the interesting landmarks of Indian art. Although architecturally in the same style as the *Mandapas*, they represent a "most enigmatical architectural phenomenon in all India." Each is obviously an exact copy of a separate type of temple structure, built usually of wood and popular at the time. The interior is left unfinished ; and we do not yet know why the temple builders undertook to copy with such infinite patience the existing architectural types. They are eight in number, exemplifying either the Buddhist *Viharas*, so well illustrated in the Dharmaraj *Ratha* or the Buddhist Chaitya Halls, so faithfully interpreted in rock in Ganesh and Sahdev *Rathas* with their peculiar apsidal backs.

As Fergusson has observed, "these *Rathas* represent the petrifications of later forms of Buddhist architecture, and of the first forms of the Dravidians." The monuments, particularly the *Chaitya* type, marked a decisive step in the architectural movement of South India. They were, to quote another authority, "the pattern out of which was evolved an important later development, for it was on their oblong plan, diminishing storeys, and specifically the keel roof with its pinnacles and gable ends, that the *Gopuram* was based. It is possible to see here the beginnings of those great towering pylons forming the entrance gateways to the temples of the South and which give their chief character to the Dravidian style."

A notable feature of the Pallava rock architecture, both *Mandapas* and *Rathas*, is its strikingly fine quality of figure adornments. The sculptures in the niches of the *Rathas* are some of the noblest and most perfect specimens of the sculptor's art. The outline of the reliefs almost everywhere at Mahabalipuram have a pronounced sense of dignified restraint. They are true to life and nature, very mobile and very graceful.

With Raj Singh of the Pallava dynasty coming into power, the architectural movement in the south took a new turn. Shaivism became the popular religion and the builders in order to give a grander and more elaborate appearance to the temples dedicated to the worship of Shiva, adopted the art of structural building. The Shore temple, standing near the sea at Mahabalipuram, built of dressed stones, is a development of the monolithic *Rathas* of the previous phase and the first structural example of the Pallava period. Its notable feature is the soaring pinnacle over the *Stupika*, showing the obvious desire of the builders to improve upon the *Vihara* structure. The Kailashnath temple at Conjeevaram presents the *Sikhara* in the full fledged Pallava architectural form, "well proportioned, substantial, yet at the same time rhythmic in its mass and elegant in its outlines."

In the temple of Vaikunthnath Perumal, another building at Conjeevaram, the Pallava architecture reaches its most highly developed form. This temple is more spacious and larger in its proportions than the Kailashnath temple, but the main elements have been very well balanced so as to present a remarkable unity of conception. The cloisters, portico and sanctuary are all skilfully amalgamated into one architectural whole, instead of being treated separately as in the previous example. The sculptor and the architect joined hands in encircling the surfaces of the exterior walls with various semi-structural and decorative motifs, so that they harmonise beautifully with the architectural scheme of the *Sikhara* towering above the whole composition.

A remarkable example of the rock-cut form of expression, incidentally in its final manifestation moving further up, was witnessed at Ellora where the Brahamans and the Jains had between the 7th and the 9th centuries embarked on the mission of excavating religious edifices. The Kailasa temple of Ellora, although clearly an illustration of the normal development of the Dravidian temple-type, stands in a class by itself.

Unquestionably it is the most astonishing single work of art executed by the Indians in any period of history, and as an example of rock architecture it stands unparalleled. Instead of excavating *Chaityas* and halls, the creators of Ellora boldly undertook the most stupendous task of chiselling out of the solid rock a large scale structural temple complete in every detail. Unlike the structural methods employed for *Chaityas* and *Viharas*, the process of cutting the irregular mass into shape was undertaken from the top downwards into the sloping hill-side, by artists who with amazing technical skill and fertility of imagination conceived and treated Kailasa as an object of sculpture on a grand scale rather than a piece of architecture. When it is realised that the ground plan of the Kailasa covers an area nearly 154 feet wide and 276 feet long, with a scarp 107 feet high at the back and about 30,00,000 cubic feet of rock had to be quarried or chiselled in the building of it, some idea of the magnitude of the undertaking may be had.

The Kailasa composition as a whole is divided into four parts, namely, the body of the temple itself, the entrance gateway, an intermediate *Nandi* shrine, and the pillared

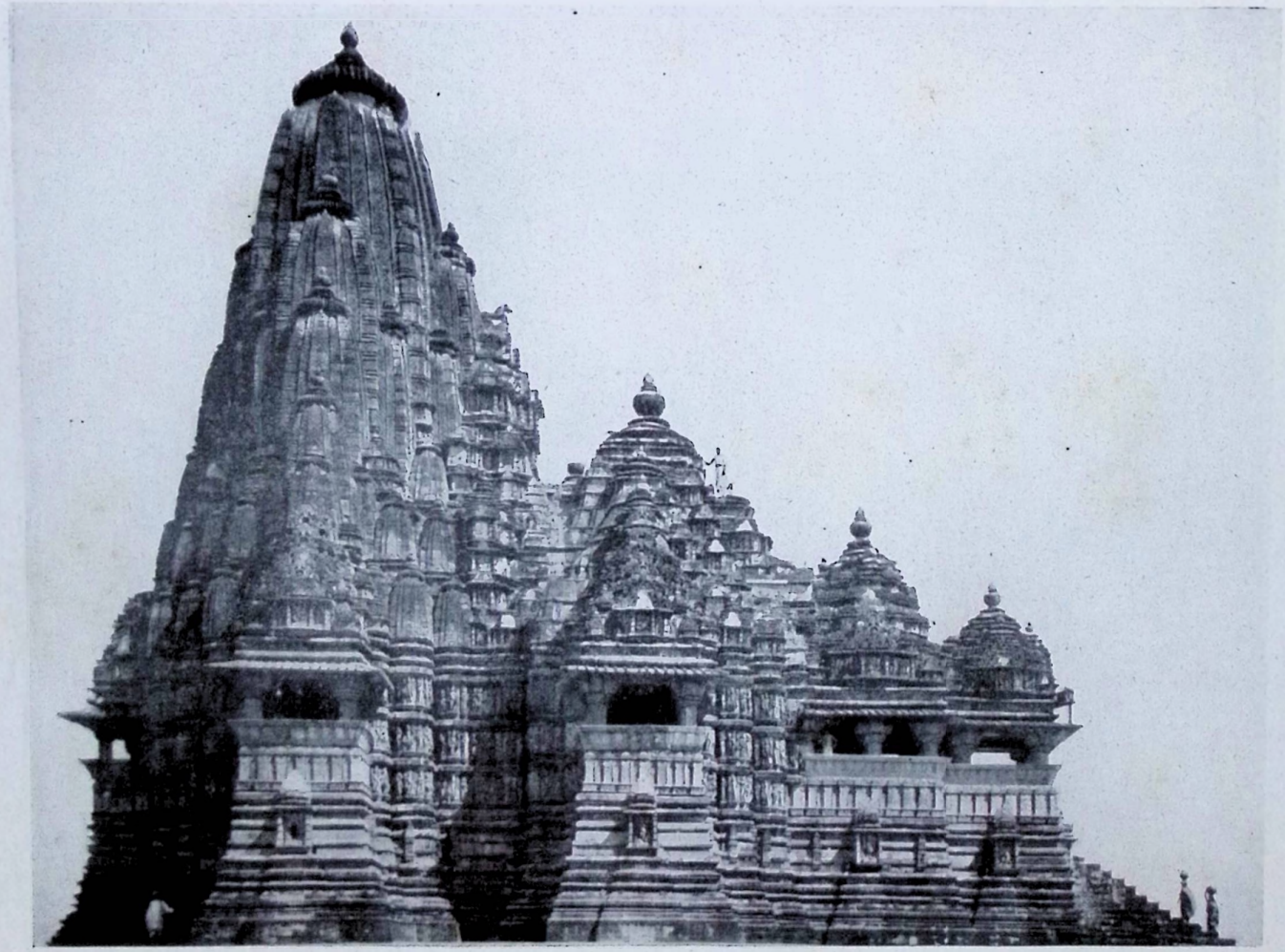
cloisters surrounding the courtyard. The main temple however is the most distinguishable part. It "occupies a parallelogram approximately 150 feet by 100 feet, with sections of its sides projecting at intervals, like transepts, to support corresponding projecting features above. Much of the imposing character of this portion of the composition is obtained by the lofty and substantial plinth, twenty-five feet high, and at first sight has the appearance of a ground storey. Above and below, the substructure is heavily moulded, while the central space of the sides is occupied by a grand frieze of boldly carved elephants and lions. Standing high on this plinth is the temple proper, approached by flights of steps leading to a pillared porch on its western side, and it is here that its designers rose to the greatest heights. There is no pronounced departure from the conventional combination of the *Mandapa* and the *Vimana*, but the manner in which various architectural elements, all definite and sharply outlined, such as cornices, pilasters, niches, and porticos have been assembled in an orderly and artistic manner to form a unified whole, is masterly. Then over all rises the stately tower in three tiers, with its prominently projecting gable-front, and surmounted by a shapely cupola, reaching upto a total height of ninety-five feet. But this is not all. Around the wide space of the platform at the base of the *Vimana* five subsidiary shrines have been fashioned out of the rock, each an elegant reproduction to a reduced scale of the main theme, to which they serve as a refrain. The interior consists of a pillared hall, from which a vestibule leads to the cella. This hall is a well proportioned compartment measuring seventy feet by sixty-two feet, having sixteen square piers in groups of four in each quarter, an arrangement which produces a cruciform central aisle with an effect of great dignity."

A detached porch, standing on a high base in front of the main temple to which it is connected by a bridge, accommodates the Nandi—Shiva's Bull. The other side of this shrine is joined similarly to the gateway. A cloister runs round three sides of this vast structure, over which are assembly halls and cells. On each side of the Nandi shrine stand two gigantic monoliths, bearing Trishul, the ensign of Shiva, guarded by beautifully carved life-size elephants.

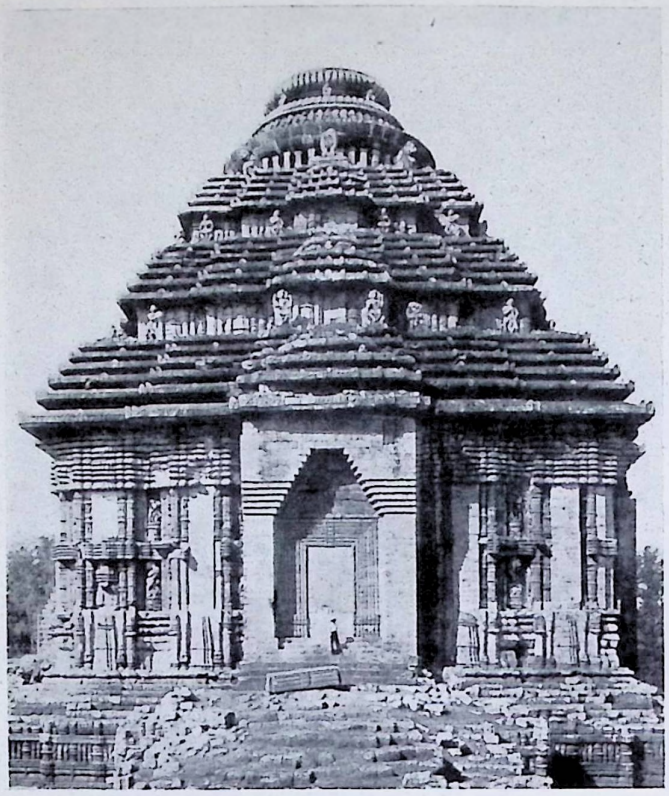
Percy Brown truly rises to romantic ecstasy when he comes to describe the unearthly beauty and harmony of the Kailasa temple. "Standing within its precincts and surrounded by its grey and hoary pavilions, one seems to be looking through into another world, not a world of time and space, but one of intense spiritual devotion expressed by such an amazing artistic creation hewn out of the earth itself. Gradually one becomes conscious of the remarkable imagination which conceived it, the unstinted labour which enabled it to be materialised (a work of a hundred years), and finally, the sculpture with which it is adorned; this plastic decoration is its crowning glory, something more than a record of artistic form, it is a great spiritual achievement, every portion being a rich statement glowing with meaning. The Kailasa is an illustration of one of those rare occasions when men's minds, hearts and hands work in unison towards the consummation of a supreme ideal. It was under such conditions of religious and cultural stability that this grand monolithic representation of Siva's Paradise was produced."

With the decline of the Pallavas, the Cholas came into power and they made some valuable contributions to the growth of the Dravidian style. The magnificent Shiva temple at Tanjore and the temple at Gangaikonda-Cholapuram are land-marks in the building art of South India. The principal feature of both the temples is the lofty *Vimana*—the main tower, planned simply, in accordance with the typical architectural characteristics of the Chola-Dravidian *Sikhara*—the square vertical base, the tall tapering body and the graceful domical finial over all.

The Tanjore temple, regarded as "the largest, highest and most ambitious production of its kind hitherto undertaken by Indian builders," is built on a colossal scale; it is 82 feet square and crowned by a massive pyramidal tower of thirteen diminishing zones,



KANDARIYA MAHADEO TEMPLE, KHAJURAHO



TEMPLE OF THE SUN, KONARAK
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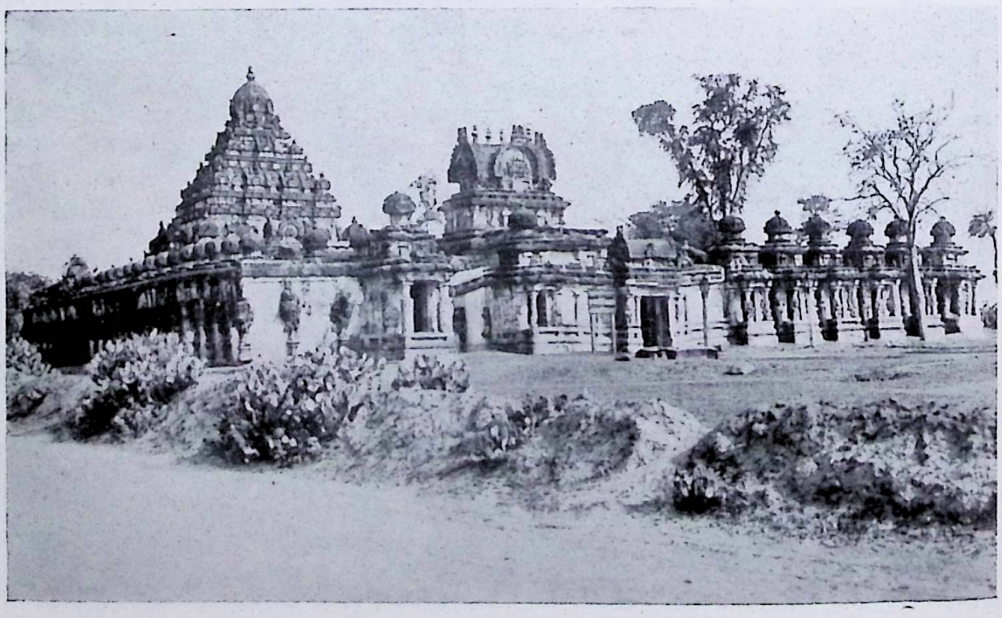
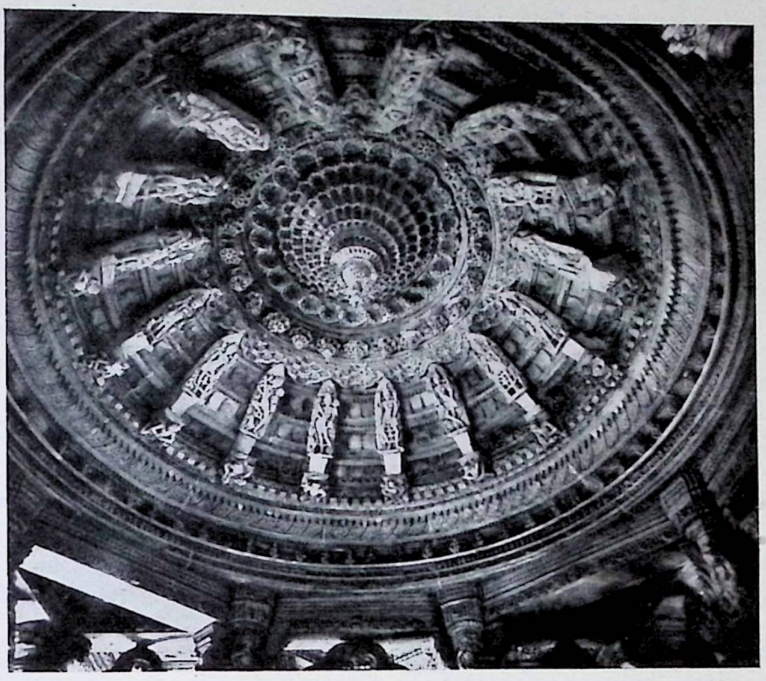
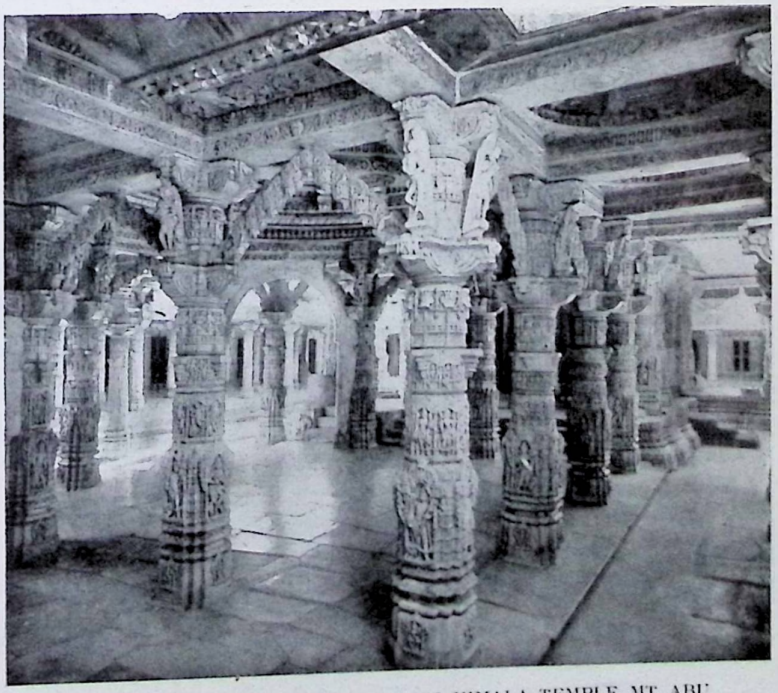


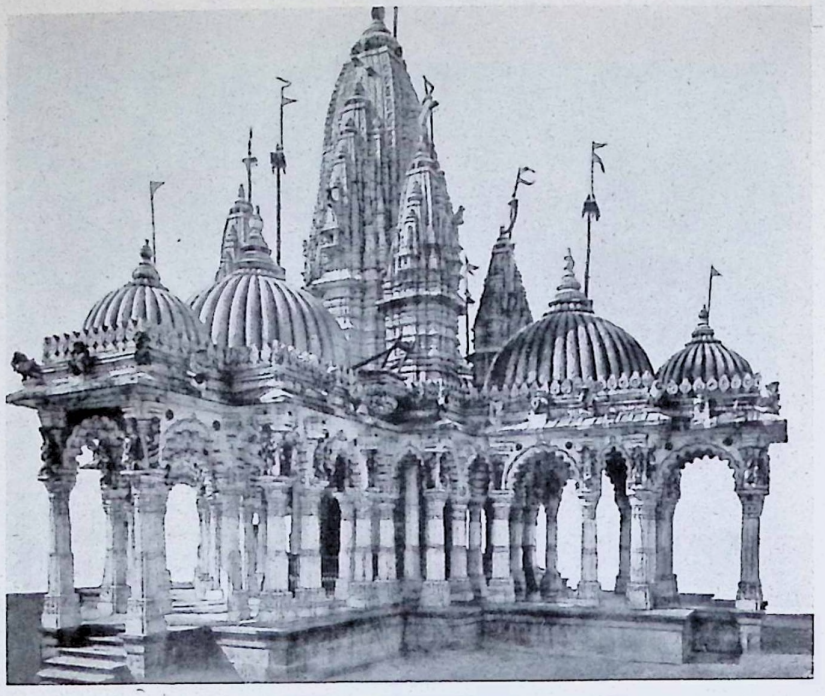
SOUTH-EAST VIEW OF KAILASHANATH TEMPLE, KANCHI
(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



ORNAMENTAL CEILING IN TEJPALA TEMPLE, DILWARA GROUP, MT. ABU



RICHLY CARVED PILLARED HALL IN VIMALA TEMPLE, MT. ABU



JAIN TEMPLE, LIMBDI



JAGANNATH TEMPLE, PURI

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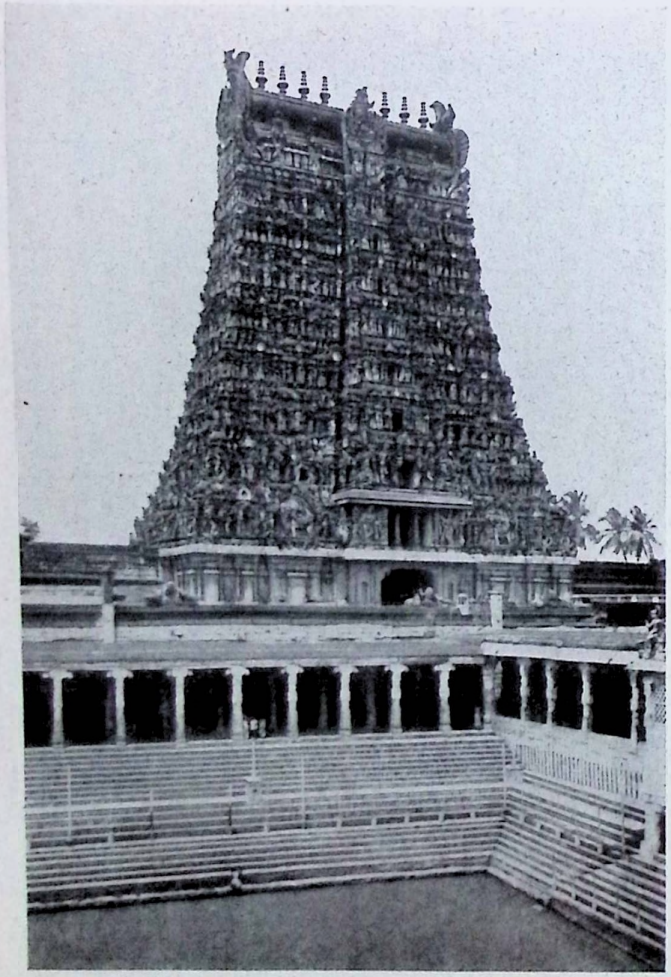
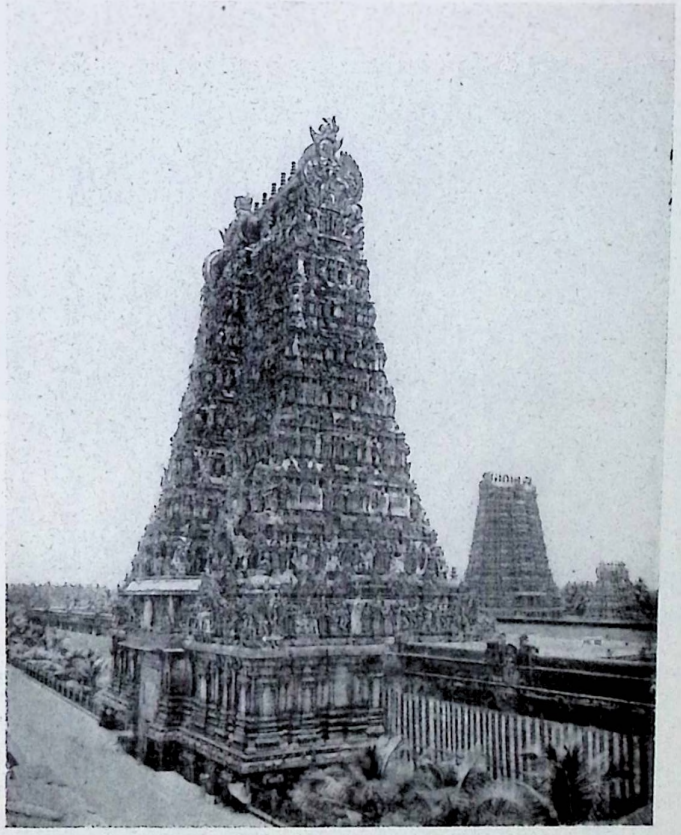
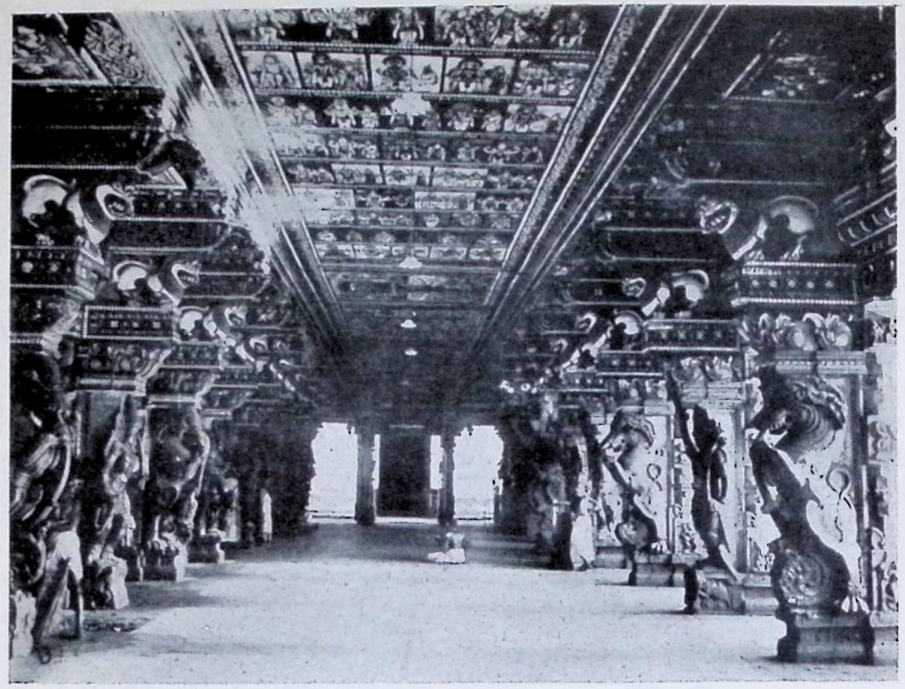


SOUTH GOPURAM AND GOLDEN LILY TANK, MADURA

(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)



GENERAL VIEW OF
SOUTH GOPURAM, MADURA



SOUTH CORRIDOR, MEENAKSHI TEMPLE, MADURAI
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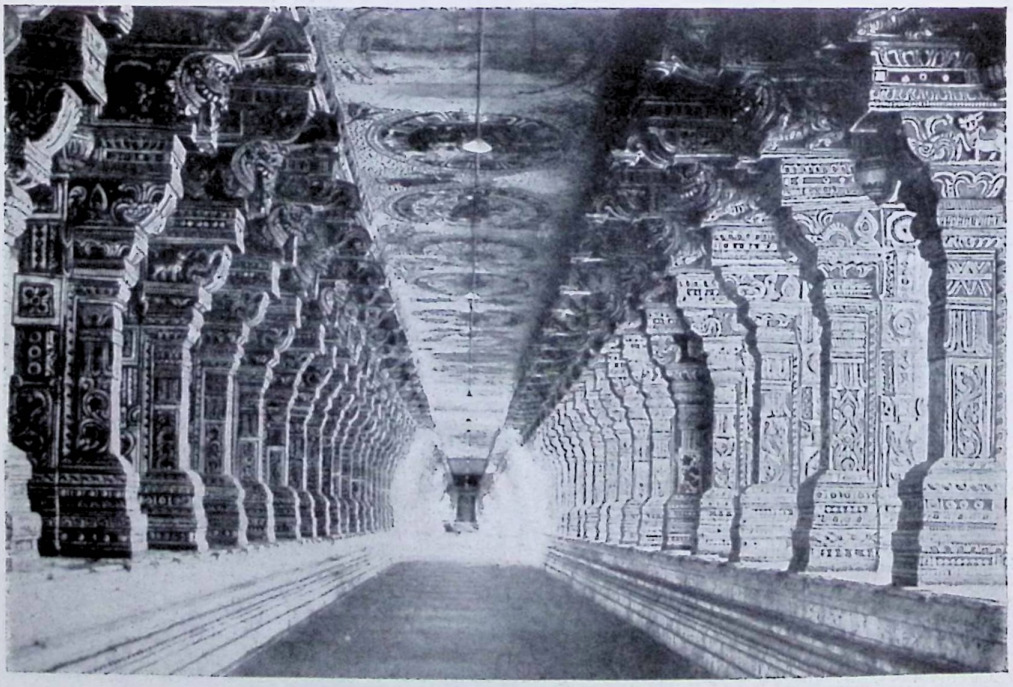

WEST CORRIDOR, RAMESHWARAM TEMPLE, MADURAI
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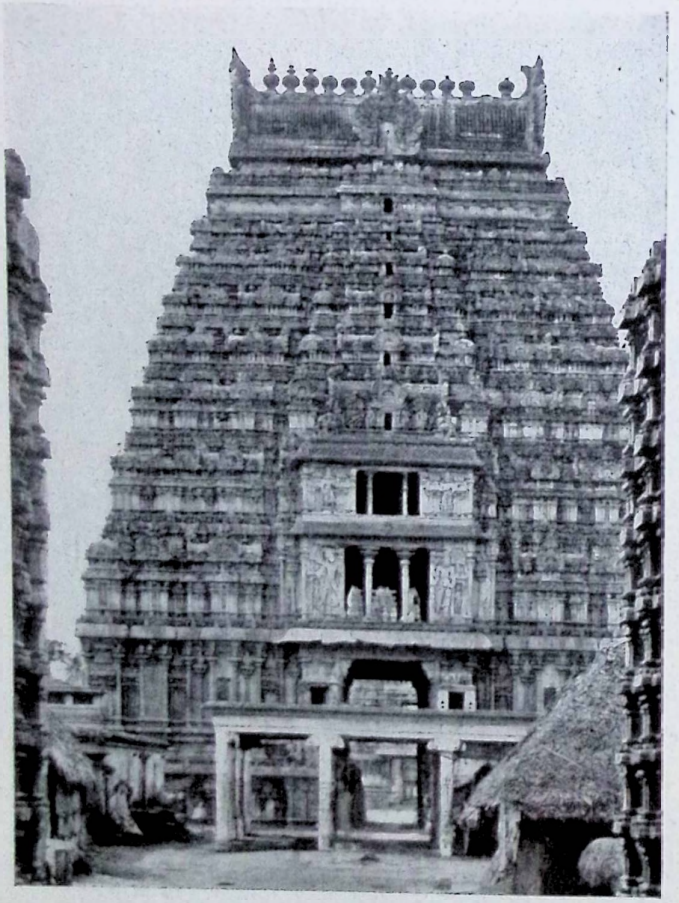
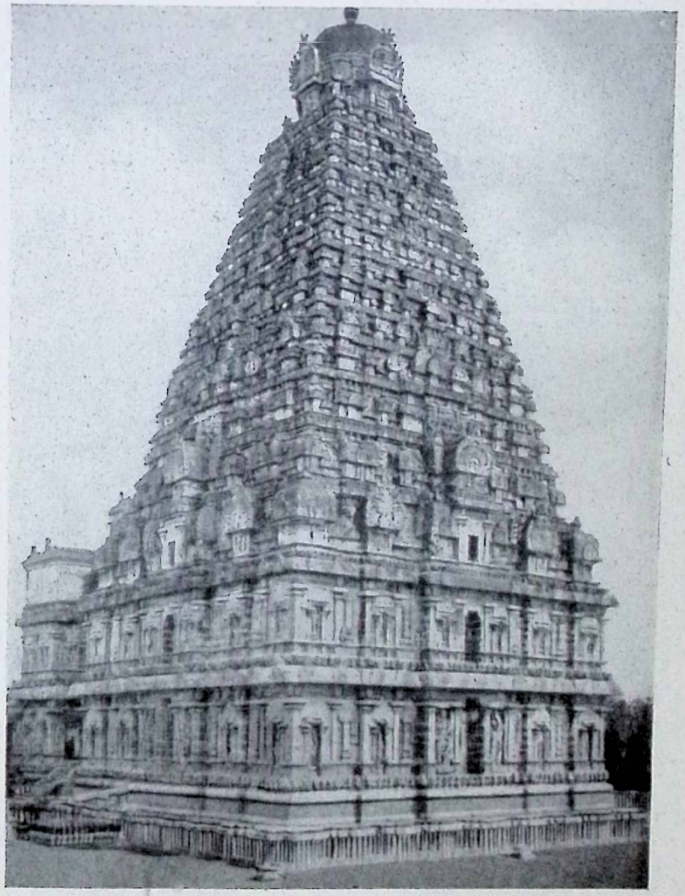
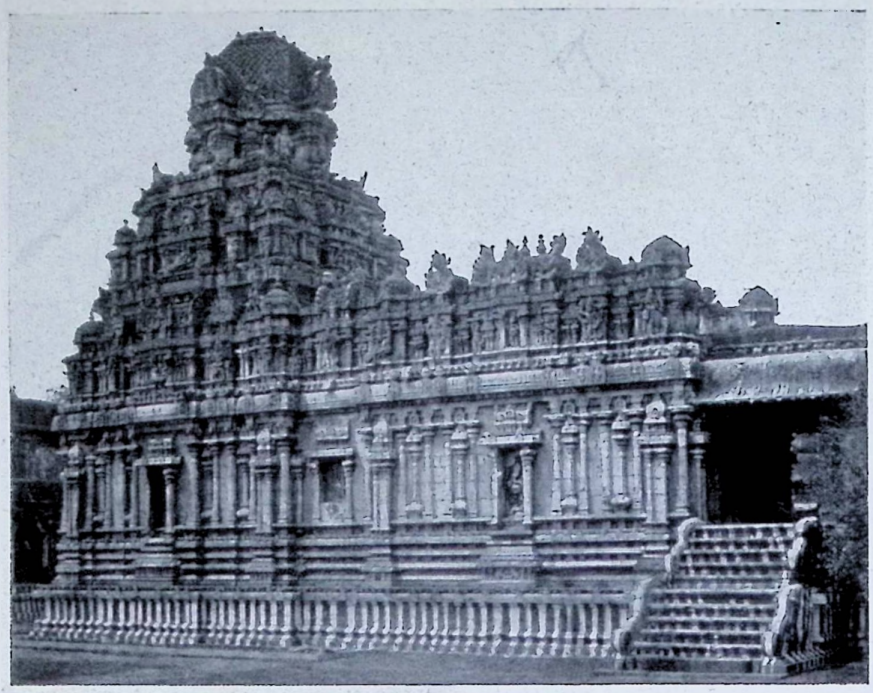


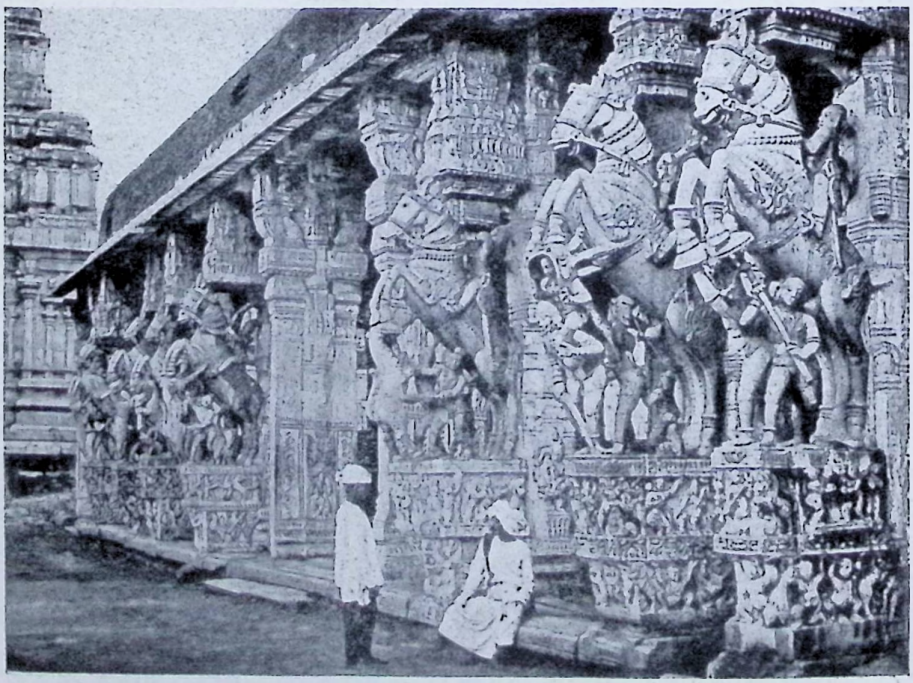
EASTERN PAGODA TRICHINOPOLY



THE GREAT TEMPLE, TANJORE. C. 1,000 A.D.



SUBRAMANYA TEMPLE, TANJORE



VISHNU TEMPLE, SRIRANGAM, NEAR TRICHINOPOLY

190 feet high. In spite of the dimensions, however, the entire scheme presents a remarkable architectural unity and the proportions of its components are in every case adequate.

But much of the dignity and effect of the Tanjore temple lies in the supremely imaginative quality of the decorative motifs with which the walls of its square foundational portion are richly embellished, and the grand tower of the *Vimana* in which "with its qualities of powerfully adjusted volume there is at the same time a sense of graceful balance so that when seen either close to or from afar its upward sweep is such that it appears to hang in the air."

Upto this point, the builders had displayed their finest craftsmanship on the most sacred part of the temple, the *Vimana*. But with the Pandyas coming into power, this practice ceased. The new builders, moved by a desire to preserve the sanctity of an ancient shrine, whose structure however aesthetically insignificant, could not, if once a god had deigned to dwell in it, be pulled down or re-built, diverted their skill and attention to giving an exalted appearance to the outlying portions and surroundings of the main temple. As part of the changed emphasis in the architectural practice, therefore, enclosures and gateways of imposing size and rich appearance began to be built around the temple. Of the two, however, the gateways received considerable architectural attention, so much so that in the course of time, they became the dominant features of the temple architecture of the south. In this way the *Gopuram* made its appearance.

A typical example of a *Gopuram* depicts a building oblong in plan, rising up in a pyramidal shape, in a series of zones, diminishing as they ascend and crowned by a barrel-vaulted roof on the top. The whole often reaches a height of over 150 feet and is entered by a rectangular gateway in the centre of its long sides.

Most of the Pandya *Gopurams*, being the earliest of their kind, are of the simpler type in which the sloping sides are relatively straight, firm and rigid in their contours and their decoration is usually architectural in character, consisting of pillars and pilasters. But in the later *Gopurams*, the sloping sides are not straight, but curved and concave, and in surface treatment richly embellished with plastic imagery. The eastern gateway at Chindambaram is perhaps the most characteristic of the style.

But the *Gopuram* reached its maturity in the final phase of the Dravidian style at Madura, and some of these great portals can be classed amongst the most inspiring examples of building art. The great temple of Madura, built in the 17th century, has two separate sanctuaries, situate within a single shrine—one dedicated to Shiva and the other to goddess Minakshi. Large and small, there are eleven *Gopurams* to the temple—the four outer ones being each over 150 feet in height. In keeping with the Madura phase, the height of the *Gopurams* has been emphasised by lines leading vertically, upward tendencies being obtained by the sides not being flat, but having perpendicular sections projected. Then across this verticality is carried the lines of the diminishing storeys in horizontal tiers, so that the entire structure becomes a rich pattern of the vertical and the horizontal. The surfaces of the *Gopurams* have been plastered over with exquisitely modelled floral and figure subjects taken from the old religious books. The majority of the statuary is considerably over life-size.

Architecture, which was from the Pandyan epoch definitely progressing towards imparting a richer and more elegant effect to the productions, received a fresh impetus and direction with the revival of the Hindu empire at Vijayanagar in the middle of the fourteenth century. Stimulated by the princely patronage, the country gradually became rich in buildings representing "the supremely passionate flowering of the Dravidian style." There is an attempt everywhere to restore, renovate and extend the existing shrines into structural complexities of magnificent appearance. Sentiment, as we have earlier seen, was not the only reason for expanding the existing traditions. An elaboration of the temple ritual and ceremonial observances supplied the urgent need for the enlargement of the buildings. In addition to the central shrine, a number of other minor shrines, pillared halls, pavilions

and other annexes, each having its special purpose and place in the architectural scheme, began now to appear. In the course of expansion, however, a systematic planning was rarely put into practice. In some cases, the scheme has been unproportionately enlarged, as a result of which the later Dravidian temples, as a whole, fail to produce an elegance of design or any unified architectural effect. There is a growing tendency to inspire by sheer magnitude. But taken individually, certain features of the later architecture are of considerable artistic merit.

The post-Pandyan phase is also distinguished for the exuberant richness of its architecture and the profuse application of plastic embellishments to almost all the shrines of Southern India. Decorative motifs in Indian architecture, remarkable at all times for their beauty and abundance, inspired craftsmen as they had never done before ; and at this stage of development the extreme perfection of florid grandeur was achieved as the super-imaginative artists were now seen to penetrate into the domains of phantasy. The sculptural habit of the artists finds its expression in the intimate use and adoption of sculptural forms to architectural purposes which is a very special feature of this phase. Stories from the old mythology, with the figures and images of deities and fantastic animals—the rampant horse motif being the most favourite—are skilfully woven into or attached to the pillars in remarkable unity with architectural designs.

Mandapams supported by groups of monolithic pillars, delicately sculptured into the most intricate and *phantastic* compositions of rare beauty, form the principal part of the architectural efforts of the Vijayanagar epoch. " A very striking type of pillar design and also the most frequent is that in which the shaft becomes merely a central core for the attachment of an involved group of statuary, often of heroic size and chiselled entirely in the round, having as its most conspicuous element a furiously rearing horse, rampant hippogryph or upraised animal of a supernatural kind. Another type, sometimes combined and also alternating with the foregoing, shows encircling the central column a cluster of miniature pillars, slender, mystical and dreamy. Of the less complicated form of column there is one which is often found in conjuction with others, where the shaft is composed of a series of small-scale shrines copied from original full-size structures and arranged in zones one above the other on the same principle of repeating 'cells' on the *Sikhara* and *Gopuram*. Lastly there is a fairly common type which appears throughout the later phases of the Dravidian style consisting of a cubical motif alternating with wide bands and chamfered, so that portions of the shaft are eight or sixteen sided."

The temple of Vithala Raja, the most elegant building in the city of Vijayanagar, is a typical example of the Vijayanagar phase. Its range of pillars is its chief feature. Each one of them has been sharply cut and beautifully chiselled with the most elaborate patterns of exceptional artistic merit. The temple in the fort at Vellore is another masterpiece of this epoch. But the *Kalyan* (marriage) *Mandapa* of this shrine, with astonishingly beautiful carved pillars, is the richest and the most beautiful structure of its kind. For sheer beauty of the vigorous carving of its imaginative statuary or the finesse and prodigality of ornamentation this piece of architecture is unrivalled.

After the fall of Vijayanagar, the Nayaks made themselves masters of Madura and of the neighbouring tracts, and under their patronage the Dravidian style assumed its final form. In the field of religious architecture, the Madura builders tried to keep up the architectural traditions of their predecessors, and their efforts consisted mostly in improving and extending the existing shrines. Besides the *Gopuram*, which we have discussed earlier, pillars form another characteristic element of the Nayak architecture. In no style as in Madura, are they found in such profusion—the Madura temple alone having at least two thousand pillars. The temple of Rameshwaram is another classic example. Its pillared corridors are its chief glory. Richly carved pillars of good and elegant proportions not only surround the temple but form avenues leading up to it, so

that combined they are calculated to aggregate three thousand feet in length. In almost every direction there is a seemingly unending perspective of columned halls.

Almost simultaneously another style of our architecture was taking shape and growing in the northern part of the country. Unlike the Dravidian style, which had confined itself to a relatively small area, i.e., the southern extremity of the peninsula, the northern style or the Indo-Aryan as it is sometimes called, had a larger field for its development and in consequence was more widely distributed. Unlike the southern style again which flourished dynastically, the northern style of architecture developed regionally—each region manifesting its own particular qualities, although influenced everywhere by the same ideals, principles and forms of art, presenting generally a remarkable architectural affinity.

The temples of Orissa, dating from the 8th century A.D. to about the middle of the 13th century, provide a study in one of the earliest movements in the Indo-Aryan or northern style of architecture. The main group is concentrated in the town of Bhubaneshwar. The most important buildings, however, of this stage of evolution in the style are the temple of Jagannath at Puri and the temple of the Sun at Konarak.

The principal body of the temple in the Orissan group is known as *Deul*, joined in front by a square assembly hall, known as *Jagmohan*. These two edifices combined form the most important part of the Orissan temple structure. Gradually, however, as the temple ritual developed, other buildings notably the *Nritya Mandapa* (Dancing Hall) and *Bhog Mandapa* (Hall of Offerings) were added one after the other, to the front of the *Jagmohan*, thus presenting in the larger examples a succession of ancillary halls. The halls were invariably of one storey and the elevation of each consisted of two parts, a cubical portion (*bada*) below, and a pyramidal roof (*pida*) above.

One of the most remarkable features of the Orissan temple is the difference in the treatment of the exterior and the interior. The walls inside are plain and devoid completely of any ornamentation, and the ceilings too have been treated in an equally simple manner. But there is not even an unconscious echo of these austere interiors when the same workmen came to indulge their artistic tastes in the fantastic enrichment of the exterior walls. Outside, the inventive imagination of the carvers revelled in the covering of every inch of the surface of the walls with exquisite plastic decorations of infinite variety, which only fall short of the miraculous.

The Lingaraja temple at Bhubaneshwar, datable about 1000 A.D., is not only the finest surviving example of the Orissan group, but ranks as one of the noblest architectural achievements of Indian craftsmanship. It is a fully developed Orissan temple type, comprising the *Deul*, the *Jagmohan*, the *Nritya Mandapa* and the *Bhog Mandapa*, all the sanctuaries extending on the same axis from east to west.

Undoubtedly, the most imposing feature of this temple is the graceful tapering tower of the *Deul*, which for purity of outline, superb technique and stateliness of its rich decorations, is easily a masterpiece of perfect masonry. Its soaring effect is greatly enhanced by the vertical lines of the strongly emphasised ribs and similarly treated lines of miniature *Deuls*, small scale replicas of the tower itself, filling in the recessed chases.

One other notable example of the Orissan group is the famous temple of Jagannath at Puri, a considerably larger building than the Lingaraja, but built on the same principles. Except, however, for its imposing proportions, the architectural treatment is heavy and lifeless and lacks in the dignity and poise of the great temple at Bhubaneshwar.

One of the finest endeavours of the Indian builders and the grandest achievement of the Eastern school of architecture is the temple of the Sun at Konarak. Dating about the thirteenth century A.D., it stands in a class by itself.

Firstly, it illustrates the finality and maturity of the Eastern style of temple architecture. Not only is every part of the temple, large and small, perfect in itself, but the

entire building scheme has been so well worked out and so systematically co-ordinated, that the temple of the Sun presents an architectural unity hitherto unknown and not found even in the Lingaraja or Jagannath temples.

Secondly, in its conception, the building is unique for its supremely imaginative character. The god Surya has been traditionally visualised in Hindu mythology as blazing across the heavens in his fiery golden chariot of seven horses—an allegory which the architects have so splendidly tried to express in the temple form.

The building, therefore, has been designed like a chariot. The base of the structure is a massive platform with twelve giant wheels, fixed on either side of it ; and in front is a wide flight of steps supported on sides by seven richly carved horses. On this high terrace was raised the temple building in two conjoined parts, consisting of a *Jagmohan* and a *Deul* about 225 feet high from the ground. At the base of this *Deul*, three subsidiary shrines were attached with outer staircases. Confronting the main entrance, the *Nat Mandir* was erected, a detached structure, square in plan and with a pyramidal roof.

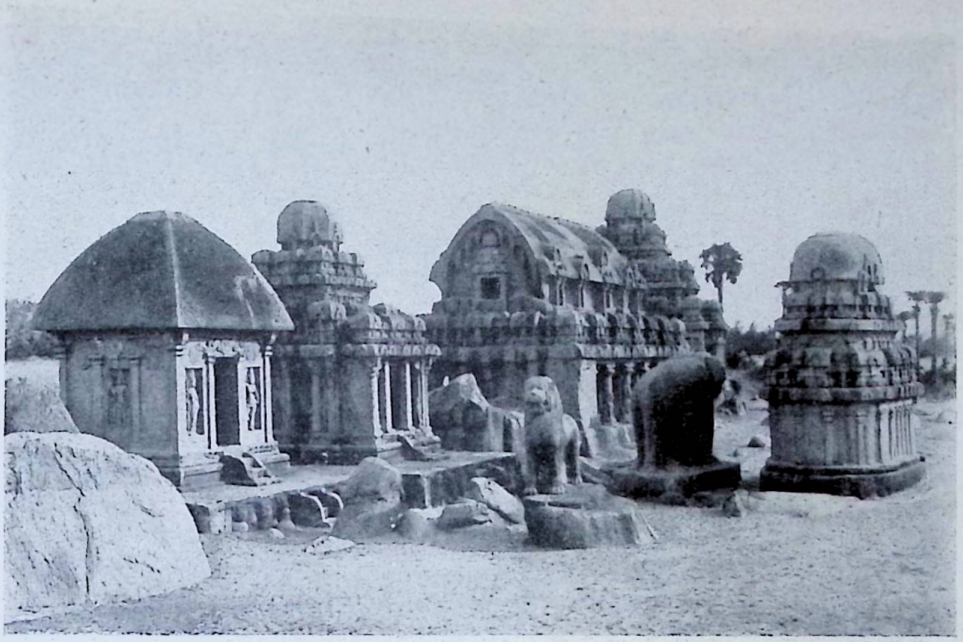
The temple now lies in ruins. All that remains of this stupendous undertaking is the *Jagmohan* revealing a glimpse of the splendour that once belonged to Konarak. Although considerably damaged, it is still identifiable as a noble work of art, whose impressive appearance is largely due to the treatment of the pyramidal roof. It rises in three tiers, diminishing as they ascend, and is crowned by a massive circular finial, fluted, curved and moulded like a lotus. The wide spaces between the tiers are elaborately enriched with amazing life-like statues, all performing on musical instruments. To add to the richness of the appearance, the builders have moulded or chiselled every portion of the exterior with almost every conceivable motif known, so that the temple at Konarak becomes a fine example of the skill of the Indian craftsmen who could combine the most extraordinary richness of decoration with an astonishing largeness of architectural conception.

But as Percy Brown says, it was a " magnificent failure." It was so daringly conceived that it could never actually achieve completion. "Some of the large sculptured blocks intended for the summit lie at the foot, not only unbroken, but unbruised, whereas had they fallen from such a height they could not fail to show signs of serious damage or fracture. The conception of this temple was that of a genius, but its colossal grandeur outstripped the means of execution, for its materialisation was beyond the capacity of its builders, its scale was too great for their powers, and in the constructional part they failed."

Rather later in origin is the group of temples at Khajuraho in Central India, all of which were built in a hundred years from A.D. 950 to A.D. 1050. They, therefore, do not testify to the development over a long period of time, but as one of the most refined and elegant manifestations of our building art, they represent a brilliant phase in the history of Indian temple architecture. They are the products of an age when people in a spirit of intense religious devotion were stirred to a singularly rich creative effort in giving material expression to their artistic genius.

The temples are a tribute to several beliefs, some of them being Shivaite, a few Vaishnavite and the others Jain. None of them is of any great size. The finest of the group is the Kandariya Mahadeva temple, 116 feet in height. This temple, as also the others in the group, do not rely on height for appearance, but on their fine proportions, elegance of contours, rich surface treatment, and a perfectly harmonious blend of the structural and decorative elements.

The trend of the Khajuraho temple type, however, is towards an upward direction which gives it its peculiar appeal. Raised up on a high masonry terrace, it has a lofty basement storey, over which are the walls and openings of the interior compartments, that is, the *Garbha-griha*, *Mandapa*, the *Ardha-mandapa* and *Antarala*, covered by a grouping of the replicas of the 'tower-forms' around the hall and graceful central *Sikhara*, crowned with a finial in the shape of the *amrita* jar and a colossal cap, representing the lotus fruit.



THE FIVE RATHS, MAHABALIPURAM
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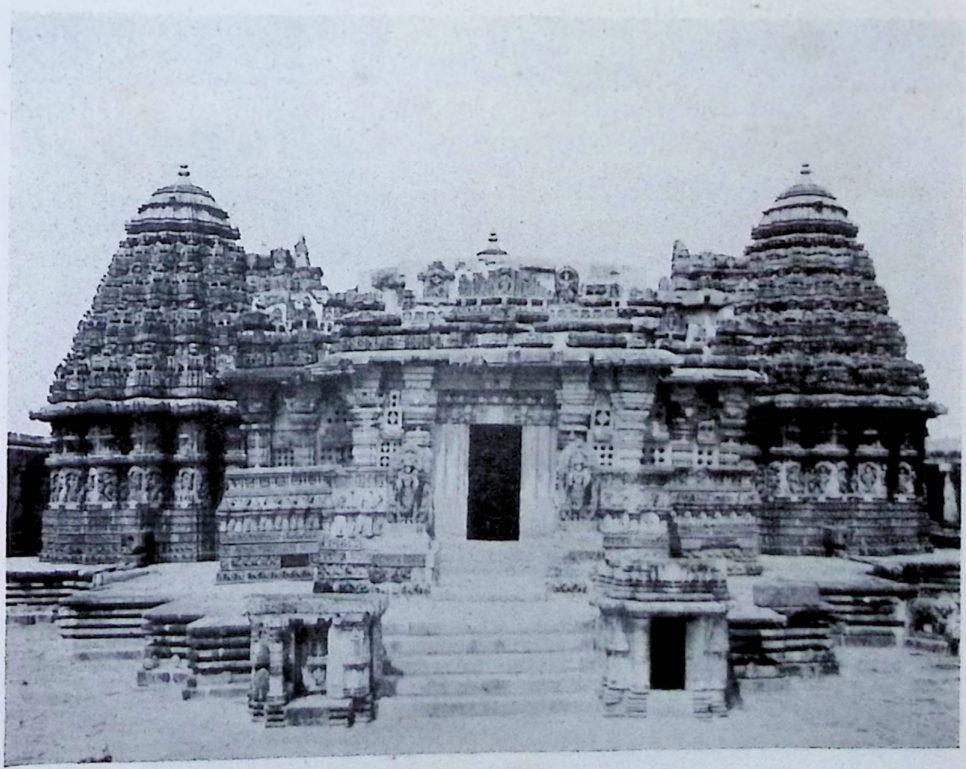

KESHAVA TEMPLE, SOMANATHPUR
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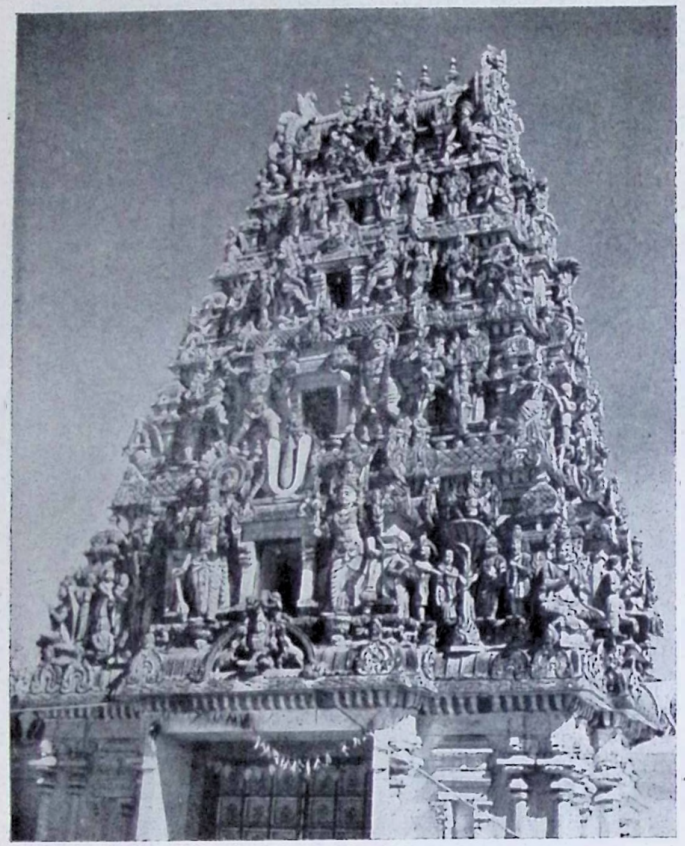
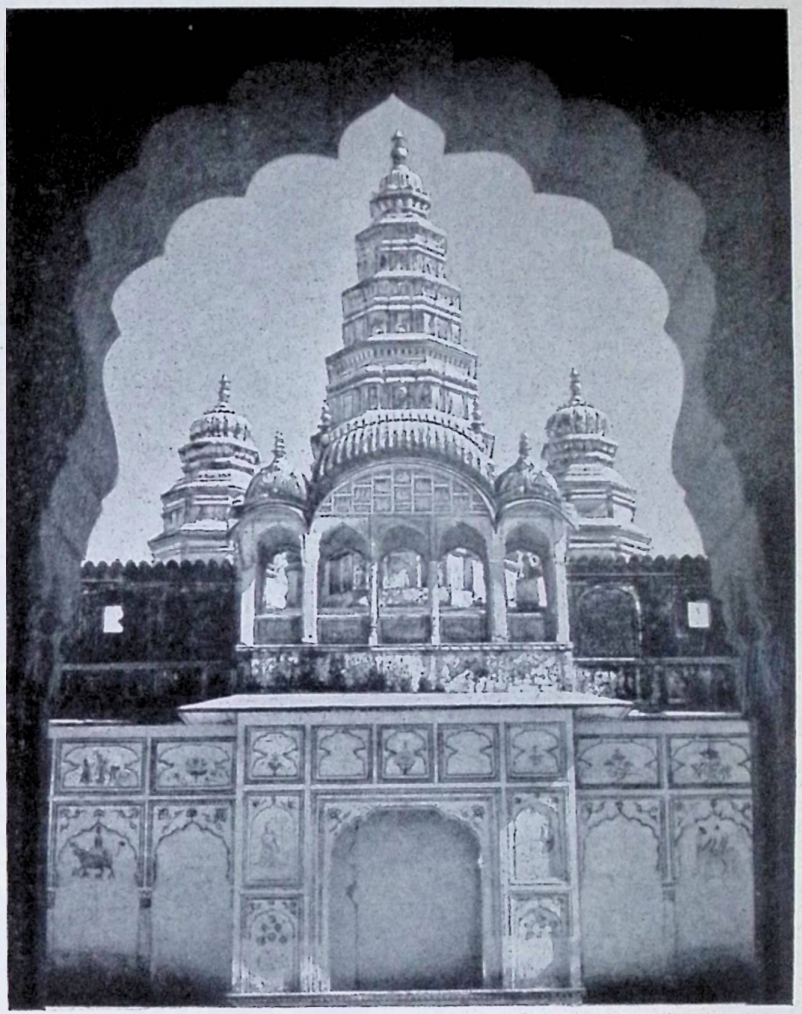
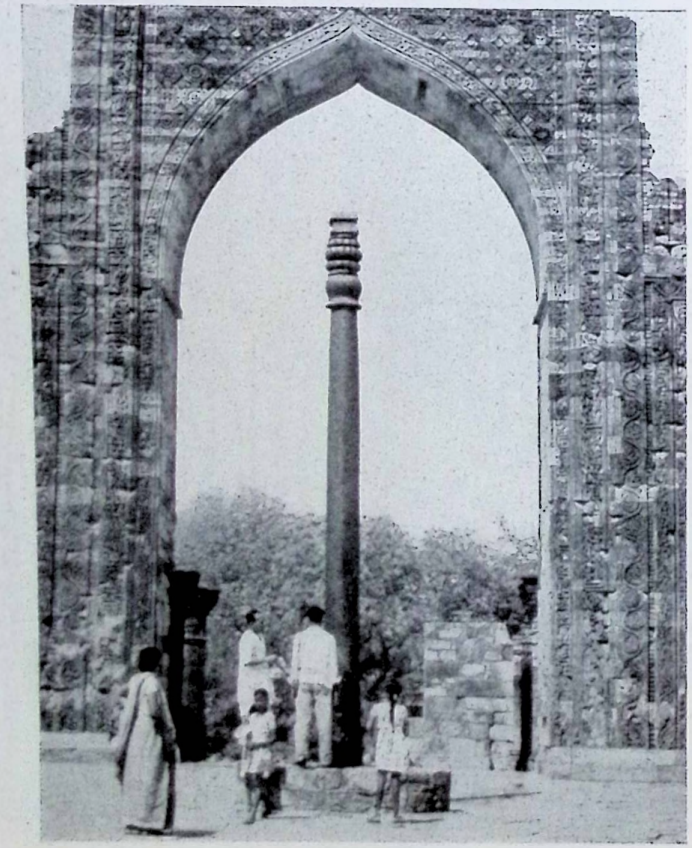


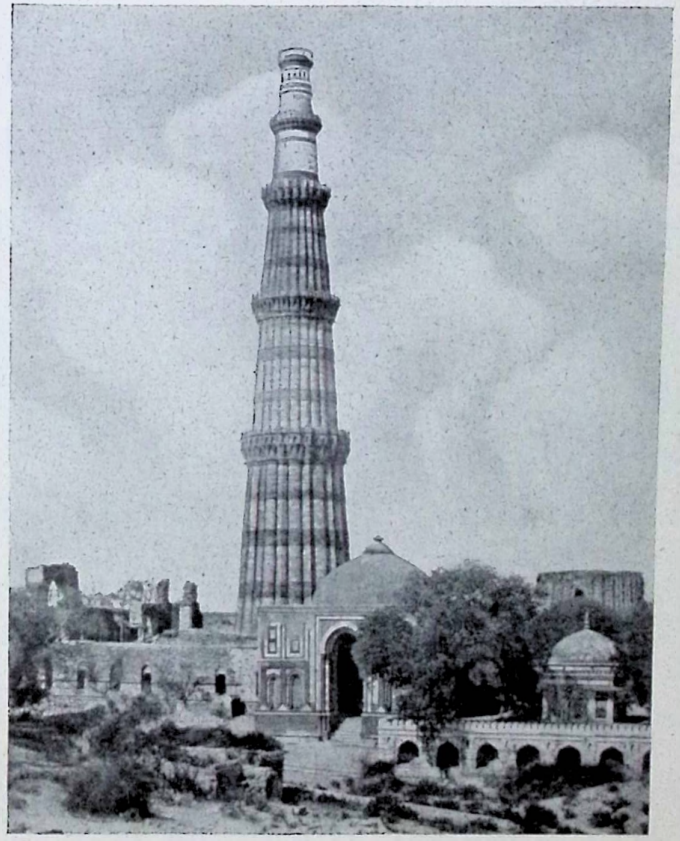
SCULPTURE ON RANGNATHJI TEMPLE, PUSHKAR



OLD TEMPLE OF RANGNATHJI
AT PUSHKAR
(Photos : A. L. Syed)



ASOKA IRON PILLAR, DELHI



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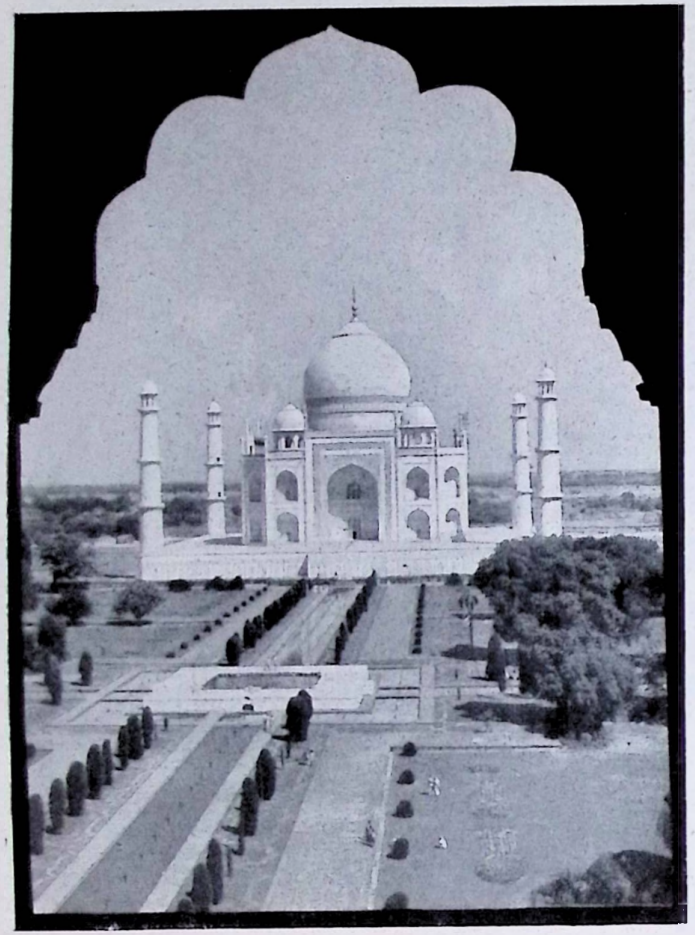
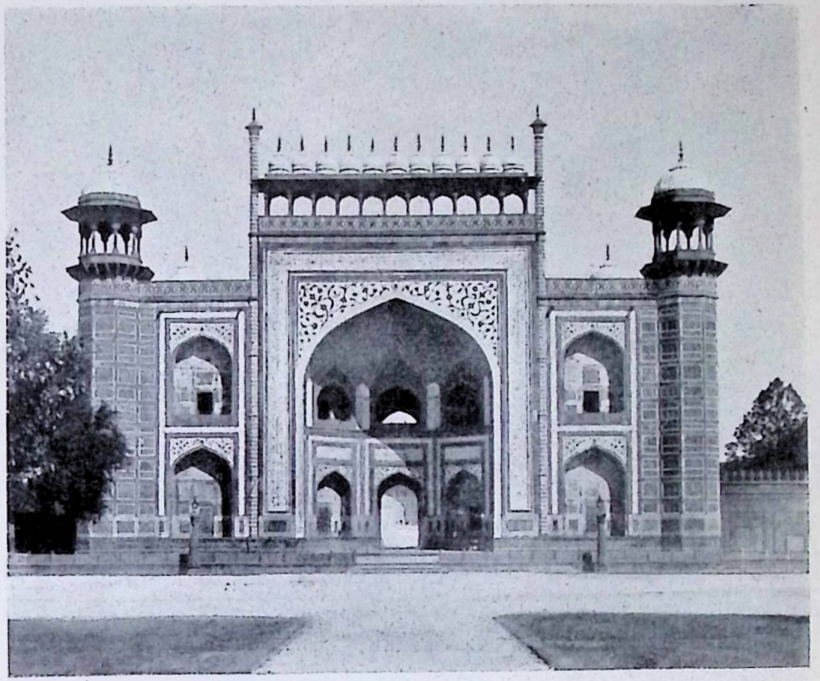


THE TAJ MAHAL, AGRA
(*Photo : R. J. Chinwalla*)



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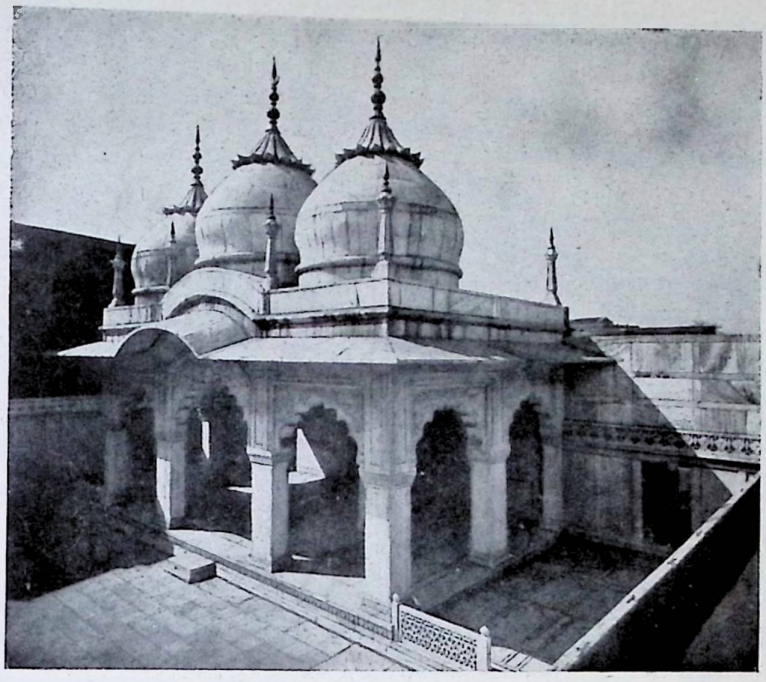
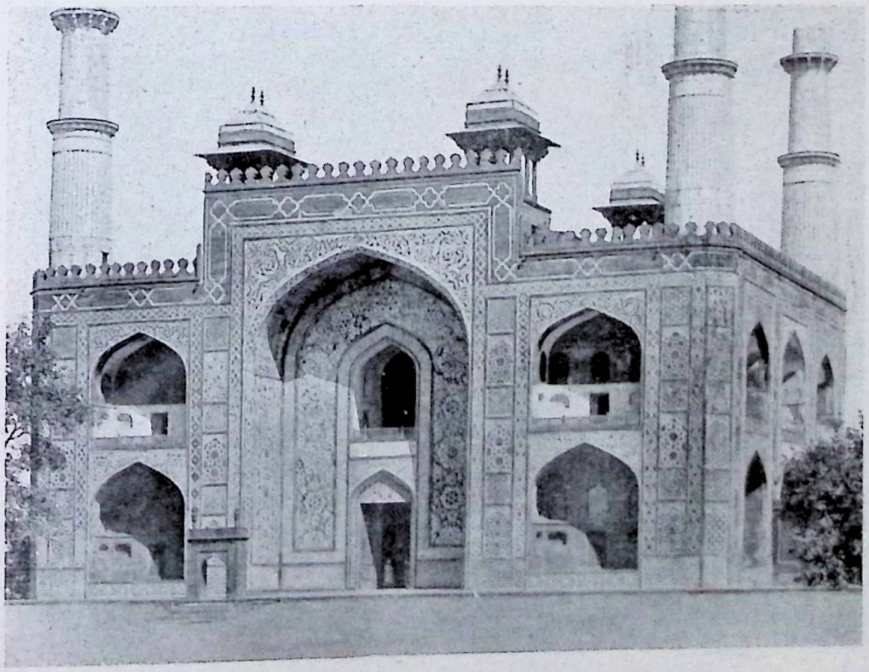
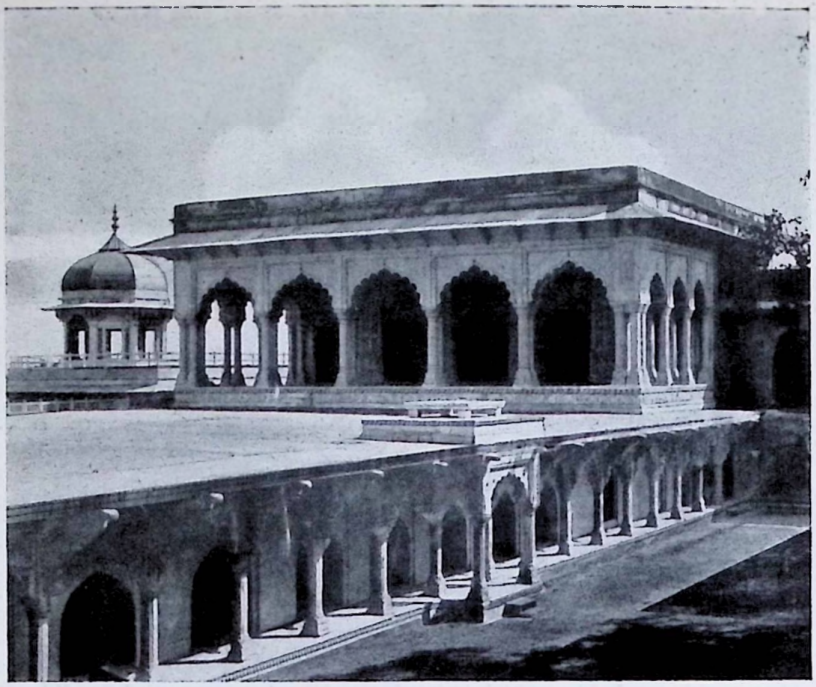


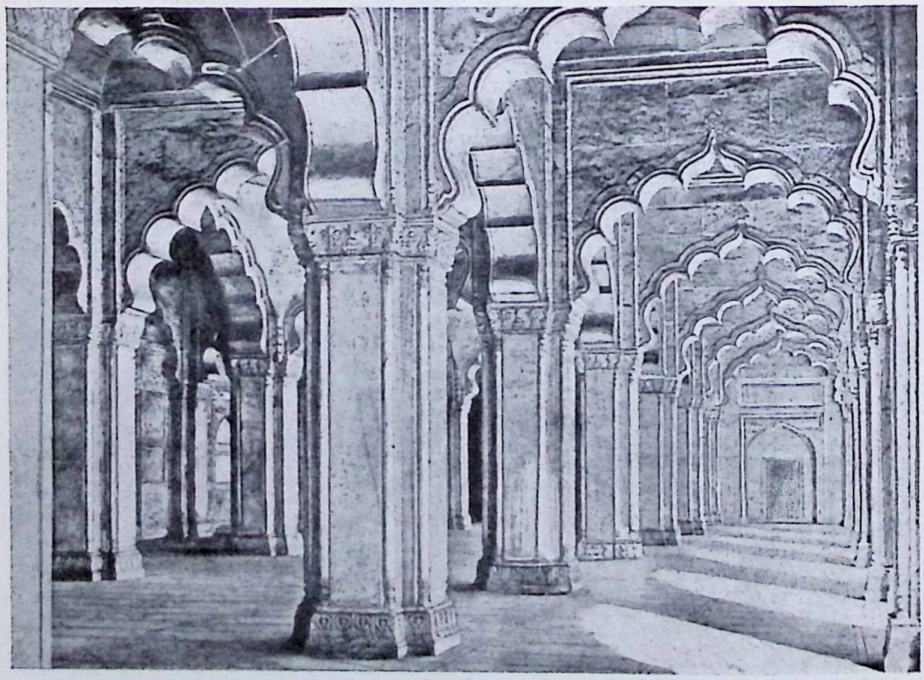
SHAHJAHAN'S MOSQUE, AGRA FORT



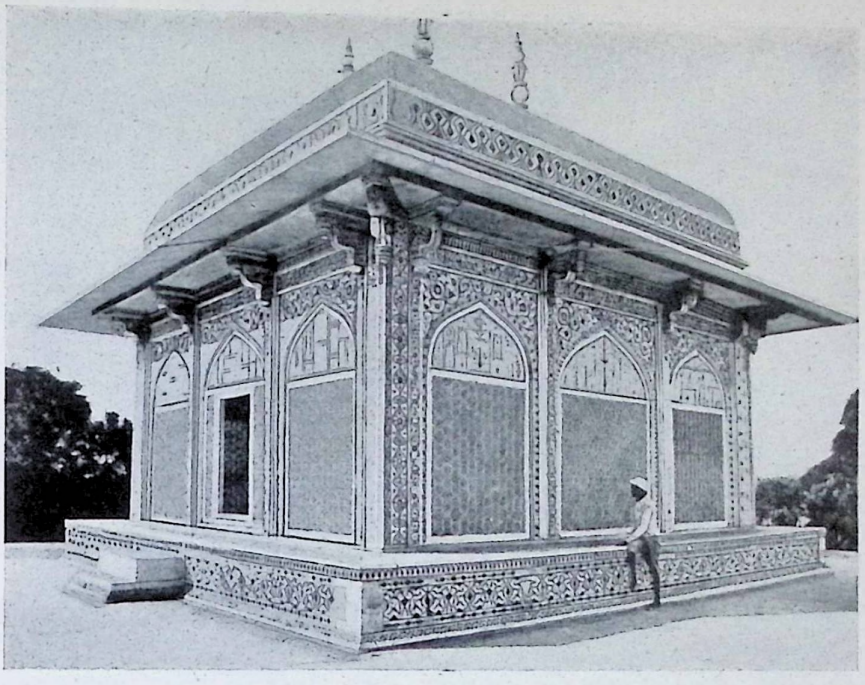
GATEWAY TO AKBAR'S TOMB, SIKANDRA, AGRA



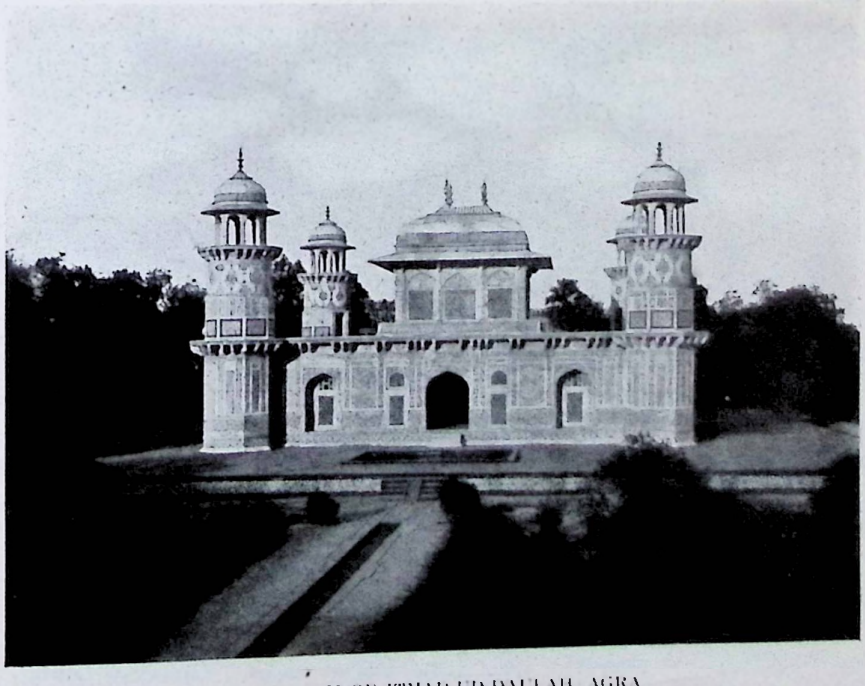
DIWAN-I-AM, AGRA



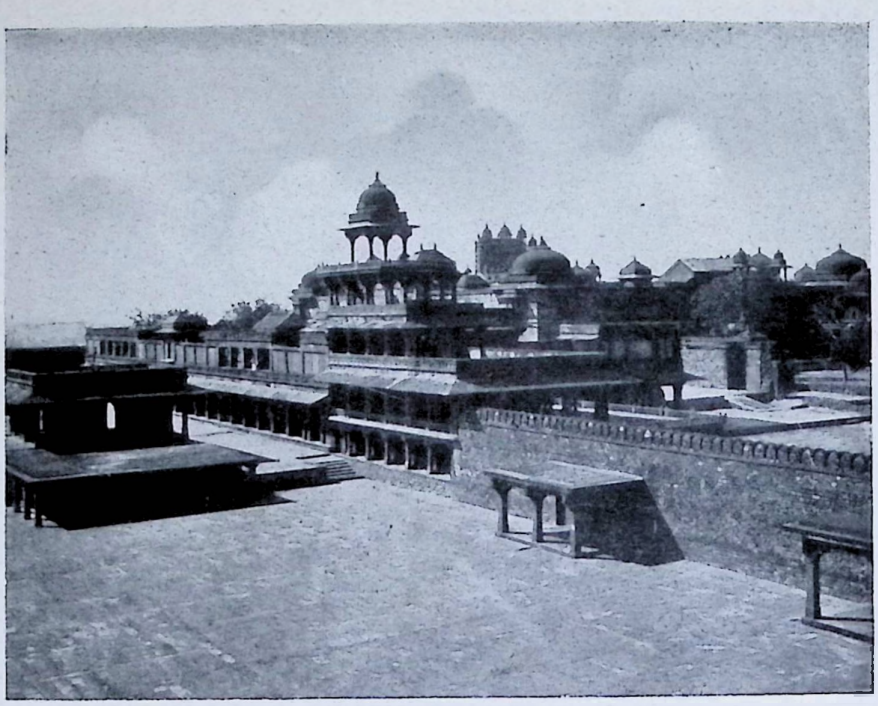
INTERIOR OF MOTI MASJID, AGRA



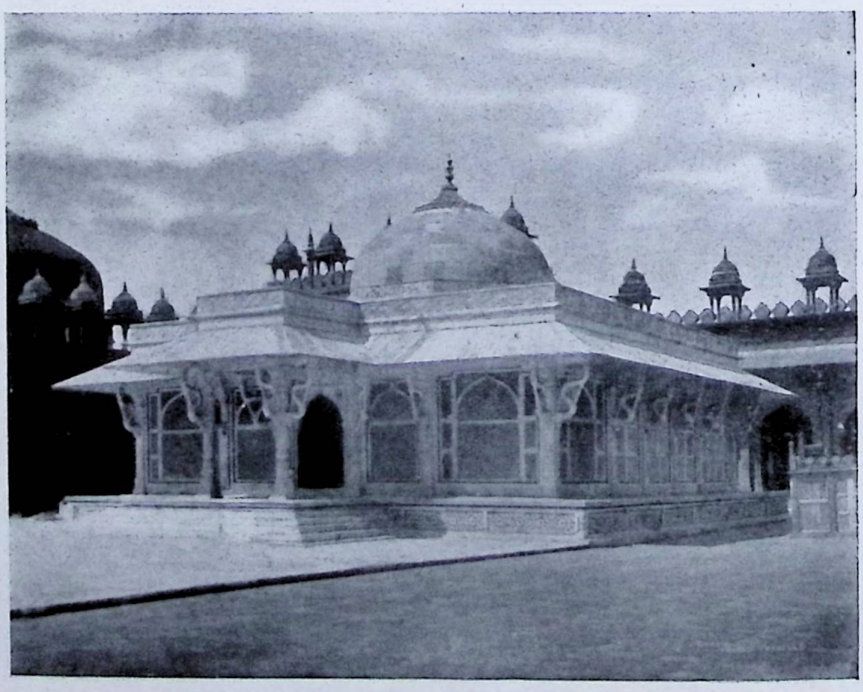
MAUSOLEUM OF ITMAD-UD-DAULAH, TOP STOREY, AGRA



MAUSOLEUM OF ITMAD-UD-DAULAH, AGRA



PANCH MAHAL, FATEHPUR SIKRI



MAUSOLEUM OF SALIM CHISTI, FATEHPUR SIKRI

The effect is of a clustered arrangement of *Sikhara* upon *Sikhara* in each case, but so magnificently and rhythmically disposed that the tempo of the vertical lines appear beautifully accelerated as they mount up in a more decided incline. To stress the elevational aspect of the structure, there are also a number of projections, which provide a variety of vertically inclined shaded balcony windows.

As against the extremely plain treatment of the Orissan interiors, the halls of the Khajuraho temples are elaborately decorated with floral and figure sculptures, exquisite in workmanship and of inexhaustible interest. The ceilings, particularly those of the *Mandapa*, have been most artistically treated.

A number of temples in Rajputana built in the receding phase of the Gupta era have been profusely decorated with *Sikharas* of the type we find in a more developed form in the Khajuraho group of temples. They exhibit the existence of a singularly rich building art tradition. Unfortunately, a large number of them have, owing to the ravages of time and invaders, suffered irreparably. The temples of Osia, near Jodhpur, of late ninth century may be studied as exemplifying the Hindu workmanship of the period. They all show a variety in their design, each exhibiting an individuality of conception and originality of composition which are replete with freshness.

The Surya temple is the most elegant of the entire group. It has for its finial a ribbed *amalaka* which caps the tower and carries the *Kalasa*. There is an open *Mandapa* in front, supported by a row of pillars which distinguish it from the Orissan temples. The " vase and foliage " motif forming the capital and the base of the pillars together with recessed angles, which are carried through the entire length of the pillars, impart a rare richness and refinement to the whole composition.

Rajputana and Gujarat, under the stable rule of the Solanki dynasty (in the early centuries of the second millennium) witnessed one of the richest and most artistic developments of the *Sikhara* temples in the Indo-Aryan style. Unfortunately, many of the finest temples are in ruins today, entirely devoid of their one-time splendour. But from the remains it is clear that the Gujarati mason had excellent aesthetic taste and a passion for architectural efficiency which he has admirably revealed in the production of masterpieces notable for many important and new structural features.

Although many of these building undertakings were mainly due to the patronage of the Solanki rulers themselves, some of the finest efforts were financed and inspired by the aristocrats of the realm, who were more often than not passionately devoted to the Jain faith. Moreover, every single member of the community took a personal interest in these constructions and sought to subscribe according to his maximum capacity, so that each of these magnificent monuments stands as a record in stone and marble of the spontaneous expression of the spiritual consciousness of the time.

The general structural scheme of these temples is in conformity with the established building plan of the Hindu temples, namely, a central shrine with its cella, crowned with a tower and flanked by a pillared hall, which here has a domed portico. But it is in the combination of these formations that the architect showed individuality and considerable artistic ability.

The outstanding architectural peculiarities of these temples are their large circular *Mandapas* supported by beautifully sculptured pillars joined by strut brackets and covered by still more beautifully ornamented vaulted ceilings. Another feature which distinguishes these temples is that the entire shrine would be found surrounded by a cloister of colonnaded cells, which are minor shrines in themselves.

The treatment of the pillars lends an unique style to these temples. Groups of elegantly carved pillars arranged geometrically so as to leave an octagonal area or nave in the centre of the *Mandapa*, with the outside so shaped as to constitute the aisles, impart

a definite peristyler character to these monuments. Each pillar is divided horizontally into decorative zones, thinning by stages to finish in a richly sculptured bracket-capital; and in order to add to the height they are surmounted by upper dwarf columns, also bearing the bracket capitals. From the lower capitals spring angular struts or trusses of white marble, each carrying an image, usually a female figure, carved in high relief.

In contrast to the early traditions of keeping the interior of the 'house of god' as plain and featureless as possible, every surface of the inner side of these western temples is an open protest to this 'plastic prohibition.' The artist's chisel has found its way into all but the most sacred chambers, and every inch of the available space has been profusely decorated with rich and intricate patterns of human and animal figures.

Many large and beautiful temples were erected, some in Kathiawar, others in Rajputana and several in Gujarat. But the most important of these are the temple of Surya at Modhera, and the Vimala and the Tejpala temples at Mount Abu.

The Surya temple is in a very damaged condition today. It has lost its tower, the roofs of its *Mandapas* have mostly crumbled down and its surrounding structures generally are in ruins. Yet even in this state of decay the temple impresses us as a monument of excellent workmanship. Facing the rising sun which endows it with an air of supreme spirituality, the temple is remarkable not so much for its fine structure, design or the elegance of its proportions, as for the very skilful arrangement of the architectural scheme which produces an effect of unity.

The Vimala temple, constructed entirely of marble, is famous for the stability of its horizontal arch, the treatment of its remarkable dome built up of eleven concentric rings and for the richness of its sculptured decorations. Externally there is not much hint of splendour but once we enter the courtyard, we are irresistibly struck by the wealth and beauty of the carvings. Every available space of the interior is elaborately embellished with ceaseless repetition of deities, dancing figures, animals and a host of other motifs, carved vigorously and beautifully by Jain artists who were imbued with an intense religious fervour.

Architecturally, the temple of Tejpala is very much alike to the Vimala temple. Its dome is a particularly true example of its kind. The central pendant has the lightness and elegance of a glass chandelier. But it lacks the creative energy and freshness of its predecessor and represents the beginning of the decline of the Solanki style.

An interesting development of the later Jain temples is the building of a class of sanctuaries known as *Chaumukh* or four-faced, used for enshrining four-faced Jain images, placed back to back so that each image could be seen and worshipped from each of the four cardinal points. Since such a requirement could only be fulfilled in a shrine chamber with four doorways, the architects effected a structural alteration by designing the temple on a cruciform pattern with an opening on each side. The temples on the heights of Sitrunjaya, near Palitana in Gujarat, and Girnar in Kathiawar, are among some of the most famous examples of the *Chaumukh* style.

Almost contemporary with the Chola and the Pandaya (1050 A.D. — 1300 A.D.) styles, a markedly different type of temple architecture developed and matured in a large area of the Deccan under the later Chalukya and Hoysala kings. Although this style appears to be a compromise between the two main styles, namely the Northern and the Southern, it acquired certain peculiar characteristics sufficient to label it as a distinctive movement in Indian architecture.

One of the principal features of the style relates to the arrangement and shape of the plan. The main structure, of course, resolves itself into the customary cella and the pillared pavilions. But it is in the actual conformation that it develops a character of its own. Instead of consisting of a single cella with its pavilions, a Chalukyan-

Hoysala temple structure consists of a group of multiples. In a large number of instances, they are double temples, having most of their essential parts in duplicate, and quite frequently they are triple, quadruple, and in some instances even quintuple in their plan and general arrangement. The plan itself is laid out in the shape of a star, instead of the usual straight lines and right-angles.

The pillars take on a special form, owing to the practice of the masons to fashion and decorate the monolithic shafts by turning them on large lathes.

The tower also develops a distinctive character. In its pyramidal shape, almost circular in form, the *Sikhara* resolves itself into a succession of zones, diminishing as they move up, to terminate at the summit in a low parasol-shaped finial.

The builders of these temples revel in a bewildering display of plastic ornamentation. Every surface of the structure has been richly sculptured. There is an exuberance of carved borders depicting a succession of scenes from the epics, images of gods and men, adorned with a wealth of simulated jewellery and fantastic head-dresses, processions of elephants, horsemen, legendary birds, and repeating patterns of floral and geometrical motifs, each chiselled with marked dramatic effect, by hands that are not those of the stone worker but of the ivory and sandal-wood carver.

Percy Brown rightly criticises these temples "as 'artists' architecture' or, even more specifically 'sculptors' architecture'. For these temples owe their character more to the sculptor than to the mason. Gone is the structural basis, the functional framework evolved through the experience of previous workers in the field, with its bold organic mouldings, and supporting pilasters providing stability and strength, and in its place is an arrangement of manifold planes, projections, and courses of masonry, each intricately carved and beautiful in itself, even beautiful in its aggregation, but not as a whole, amounting to a work of significant architecture in the full sense of the word."

Most representative of the style is the Keshava temple at Somnathpur. The whole structure stands on a high platform and occupies the middle of a cloistered courtyard. Its plan, which is in the shape of a cross, consists of the main pillared hall in the centre, at the western end of which are the three shrines, one in axial alignment with the hall, the others projecting laterally—thus producing its cross-like form. The individual parts are so well-balanced and finely proportioned that the whole presents a remarkably unified structural plan, arrayed in impressive grandeur.

A larger example is the group of temples at Belur, with almost the same treatment as in the Keshava temple. The Hoysalesvara temple, another principal example of the style, exhibits all the virile imagination and decorative skill of the Indian artists. It is a temple remarkable not for any architectural greatness but for the prodigality of its plastic manifestation enriching the surface from the base to the summit, unrivalled in technical skill, ingenuity and dramatic narration of scenes.

Bengal with its traditions of wooden houses and thatched huts offers some new and interesting architectural modes in the *Chandimandapas* and temples. The country being deltaic, there are everywhere deposits of clay suitable for the manufacture of bricks. The Bengali mason, therefore, used moulded bricks to beautify temples and multiplied the number of pavilions and spires to make them more imposing. In addition, a luxurious growth of the jungle was responsible for a gradual evolution of the Bengal architecture into a form suggested by the wooden and bamboo cabins of the forest dwellers. This is particularly shown in the sloping roof, carved eave and a pointed arch style. A very characteristic form has a square plan and vertical walls, but the lines and planes instead of being horizontal are here carried across its front, in a series of parallel curves, bent in the form of a bow. Such an application of the curves has specially affected the form of the roof which gets a parabolic contour. Over this curvilinear roof is sometimes erected another miniature tower, the upper

portion of which forms into a kind of *Sikhara*. The temple of Vishnupur in the district of Bankura may be cited as an example of this class of architecture.

Another movement in the Bengal building art is illustrated in the temple at Kantanagar near Dinajpur and repeated in the Dakhshineshwar temple in recent times, designed in the form of wooden *Rathas*, arranged in tiers of bent cornices mounted at corners with miniature curvilinear *Sikharas*.

A distinguishing feature of the style of architecture that flourished at Lakhnauti, under the patronage of the Pala and Sena rulers, was the invariable use in the temples of the trefoil arch supported by pillars that for their stability and grace are considered to be remarkable productions of the stone-cutter's art.

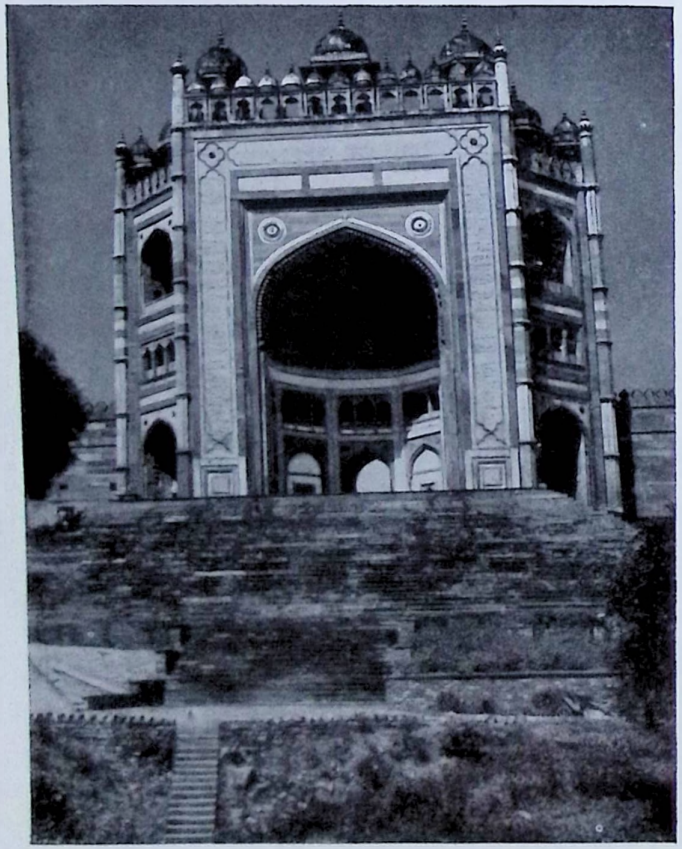
MOHAMMEDAN ARCHITECTURE

The establishment of the Mohammedan power by the end of the 12th century in Northern India saw the commencement of a style of building art which has come to be known as Indo-Islamic. There was, however, no decisive break in the continuity of the architectural traditions of the country. On the other hand, whatever changes were brought about were obviously the results of the impact of two contrasting spiritual and aesthetic ideologies, rather than the importation of fresh structural ideas. It would, therefore, be wrong to assume, as some foreign art-critics have done, that at this stage a beginning was also made in a wholly new style of architecture in India. For one thing, the first Mohammedan buildings were constructed of the materials of Hindu and Jain temples, and sometimes the conquerors adapted to their own use the structures of the conquered with comparatively slight alterations to suit the canonical laws of Islam. All that was required was the removal of the *Garbha-griha* from the centre, and the smashing up of the images and as much as possible of the other sculptured ornamentations which offended against the injunctions of the Holy Law.

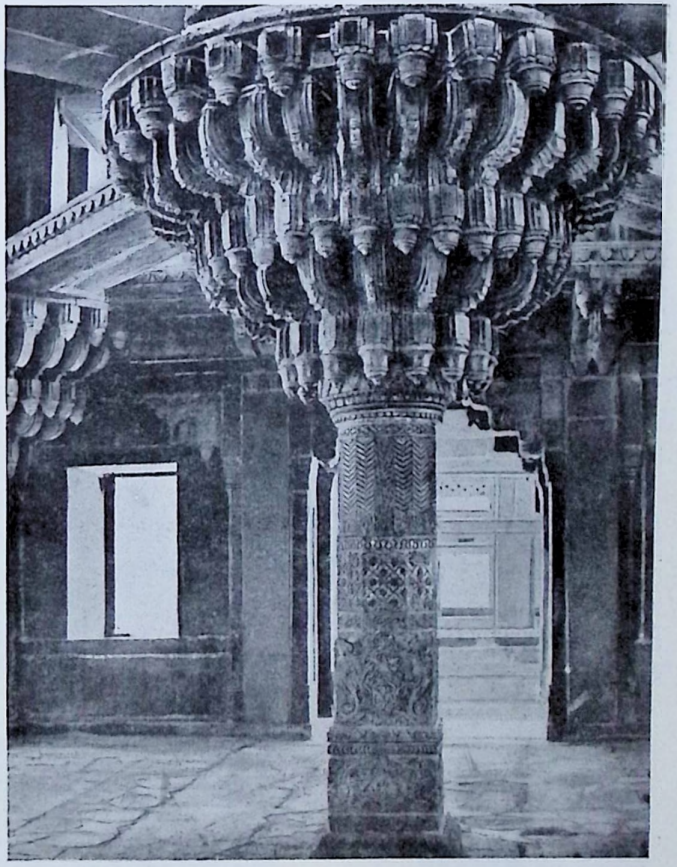
Moreover, the Muslims who first came to India were soldiers and not artists. They were of necessity compelled to employ the indigenous labour and the local artists, before whom there were no original masterpieces of the Saracenic architecture to hold up as examples. Hence the Indian builders, although guided by the Mullahs and Ulema, looked on their own achievements to serve them as models when planning a mausoleum or a mosque. In the beginning, the so-called new style was thus only a brilliant development of the older artistic conventions of the country and a mosque was architecturally designed on the same principles as the temple it replaced.

Our earlier architectural traditions themselves were not alien to the minds of the invaders. They had known them and been accustomed to them for ages before. The Mahayana Buddhists had long before the rise of the Prophet spread all over Western Asia. The missionaries had been followed by artists who went there to illustrate in material form the teachings, precepts and practices of the Buddha. And these were the artistic manifestations which had once pleased the Western Asians. Gradually Saracenic art came into closer contact with the Buddhist-Hindu art, and became more and more impregnated with Indian concepts. The Arabs, before they came to India as conquerors, were great admirers of the works of the Indian architects. Al Beruni who visited India in the beginning of the 11th century says : "Our people when they see them, wonder at them and are unable to describe them, much less to construct anything like them." Mahmud of Ghazna himself, who had plundered and ravaged India, marvelled at the magnificence of the temples he looted, and carried off thousands of masons along with him to build for him palaces and mosques in his own country.

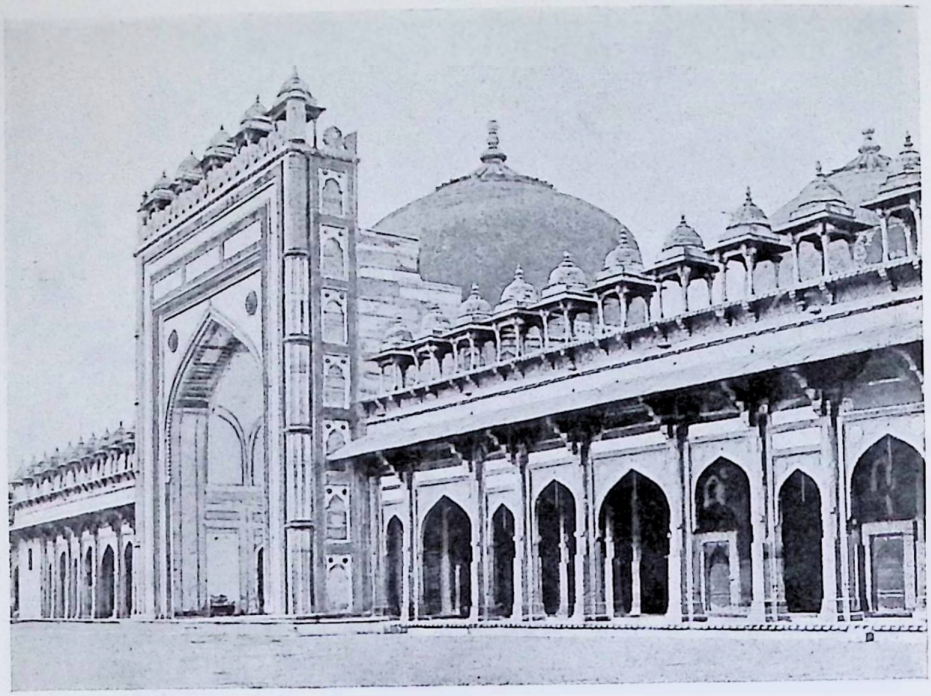
With this background, it was not difficult for the conquerors who came to India to perceive the remarkable excellence of the indigenous methods and principles of construction,



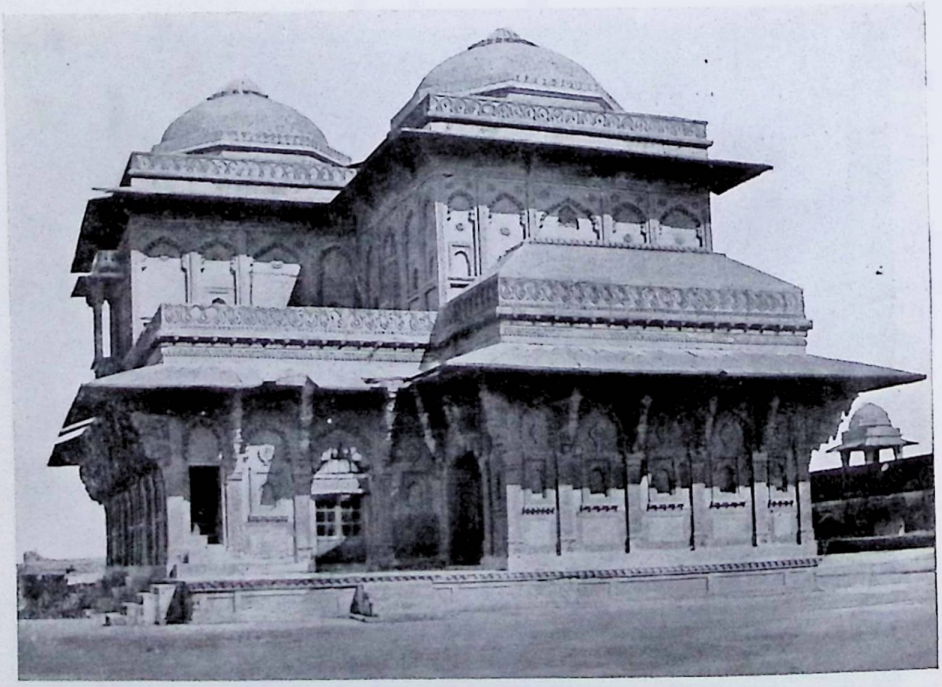
BULAND DARWAZA, FATEHPUR SIKRI
(Photo : A. Aziz)



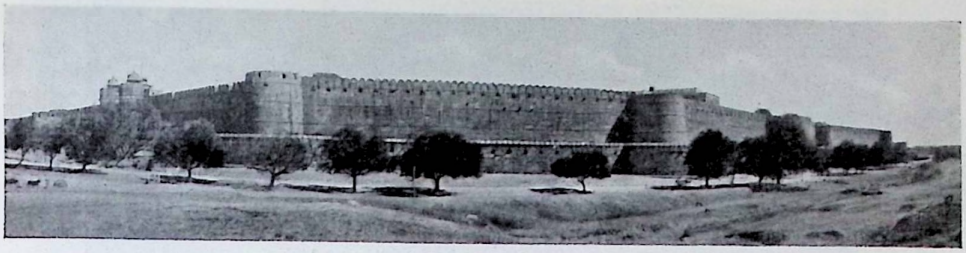
PILLAR IN DIWAN-I-KHAS, FATEHPUR SIKRI



JAMI MASJID, FATEHPUR SIKRI



THE PALACE OF BIRBAL, FATEHPUR SIKRI



THE AGRA FORT



SHER SHAH'S TOMB, SASARRAM

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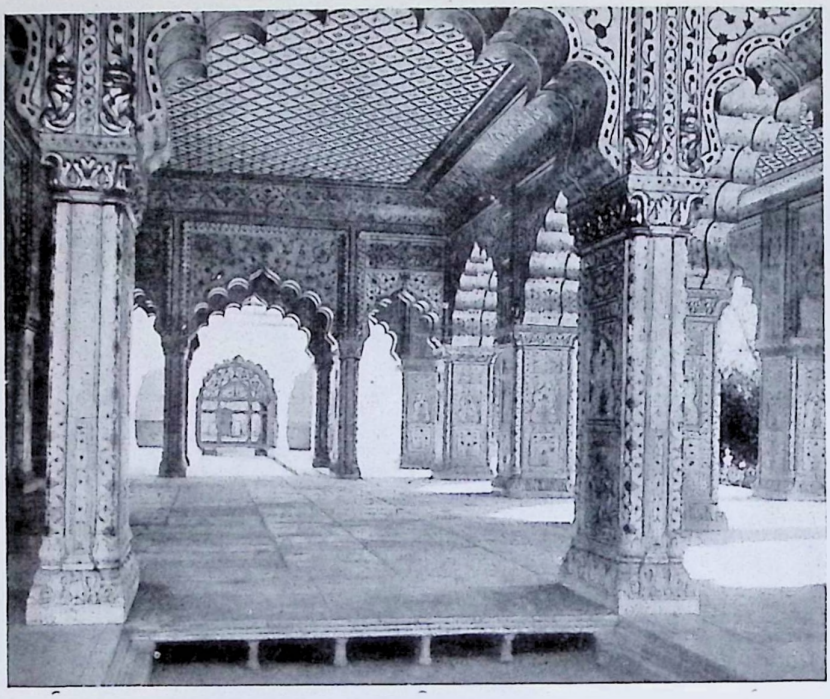
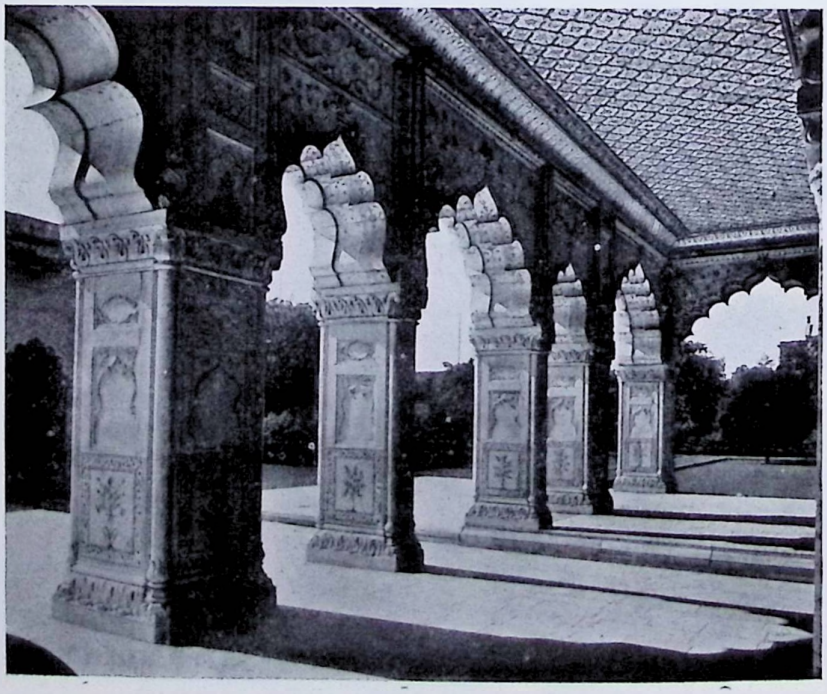
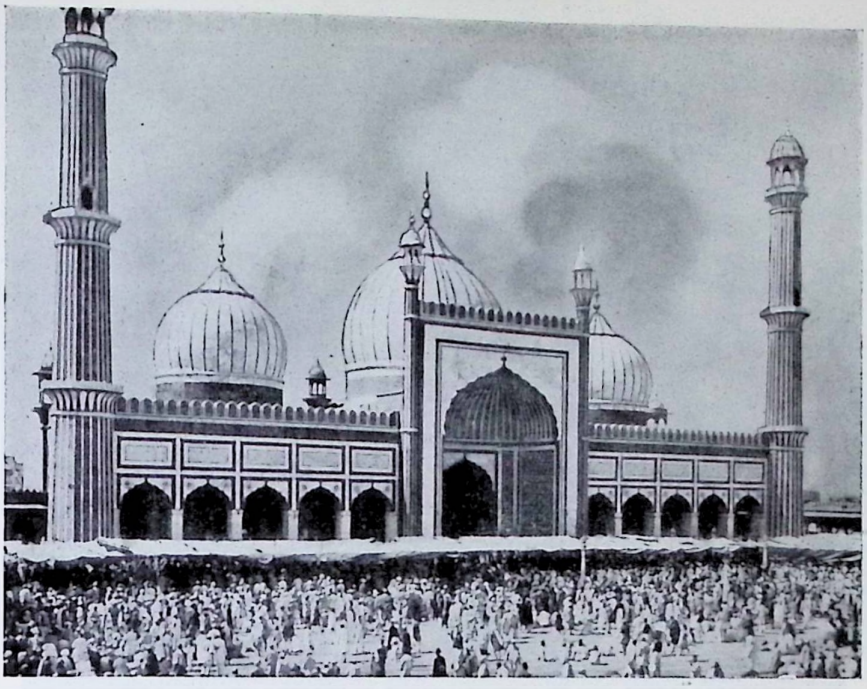


INTERIOR OF DIWAN-I-KHAS, DELHI



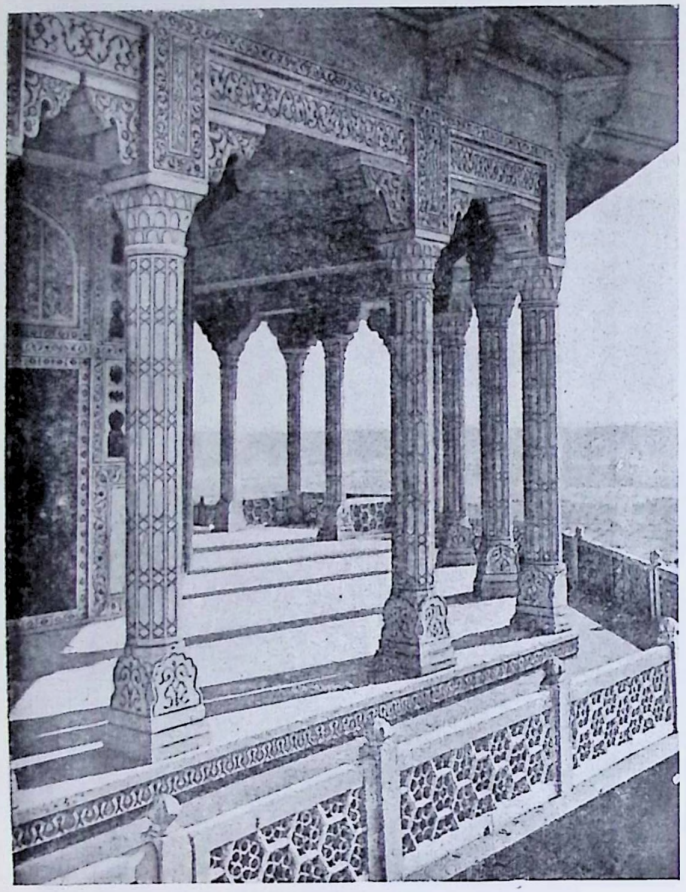
PILLARS OF DIWAN-I-KHAS, DELHI



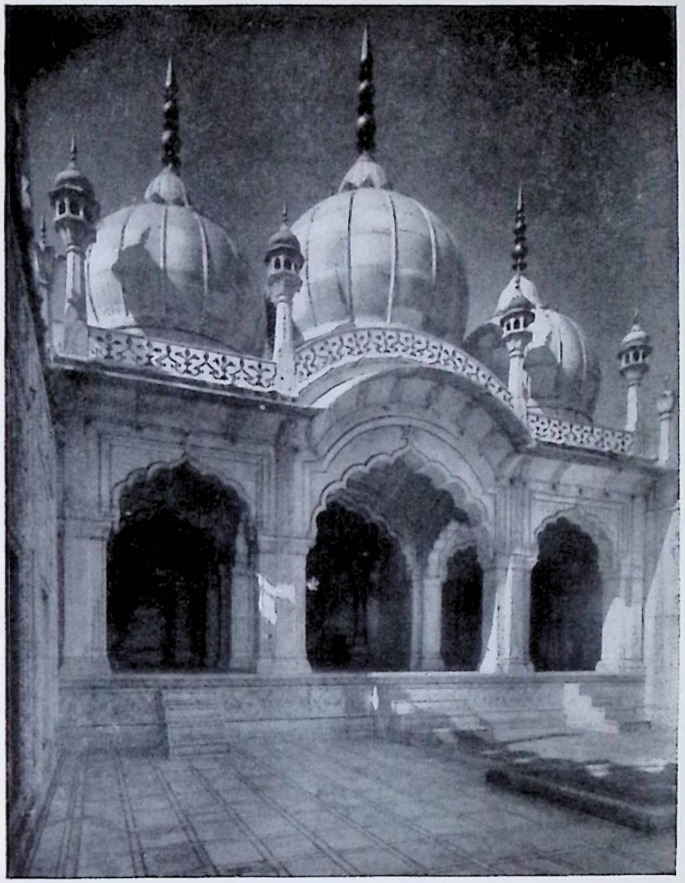
JAMI MASJID, DELHI



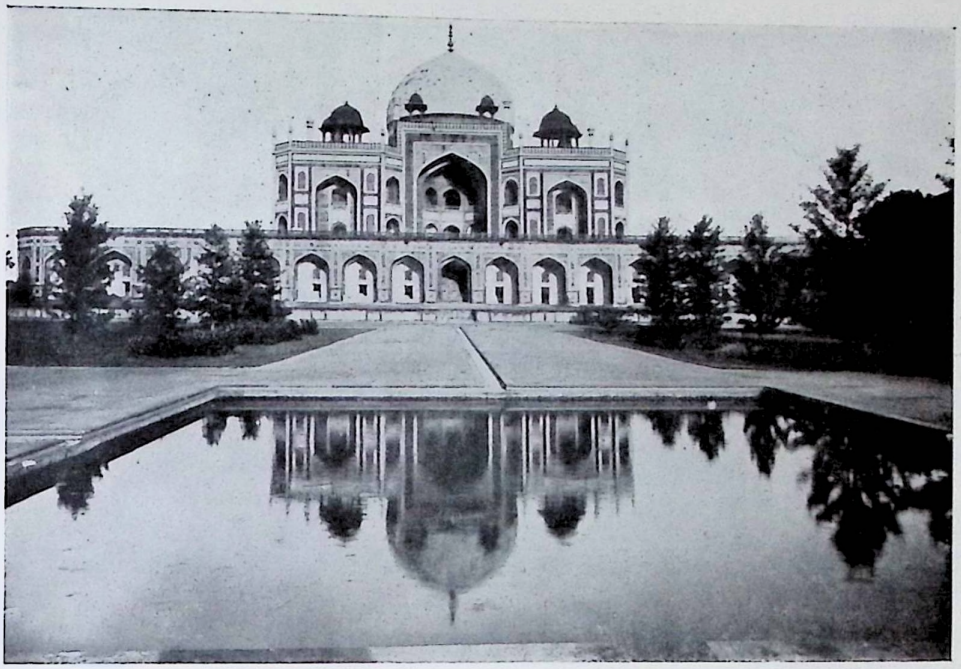
LAHORE GATE, THE FORT, DELHI



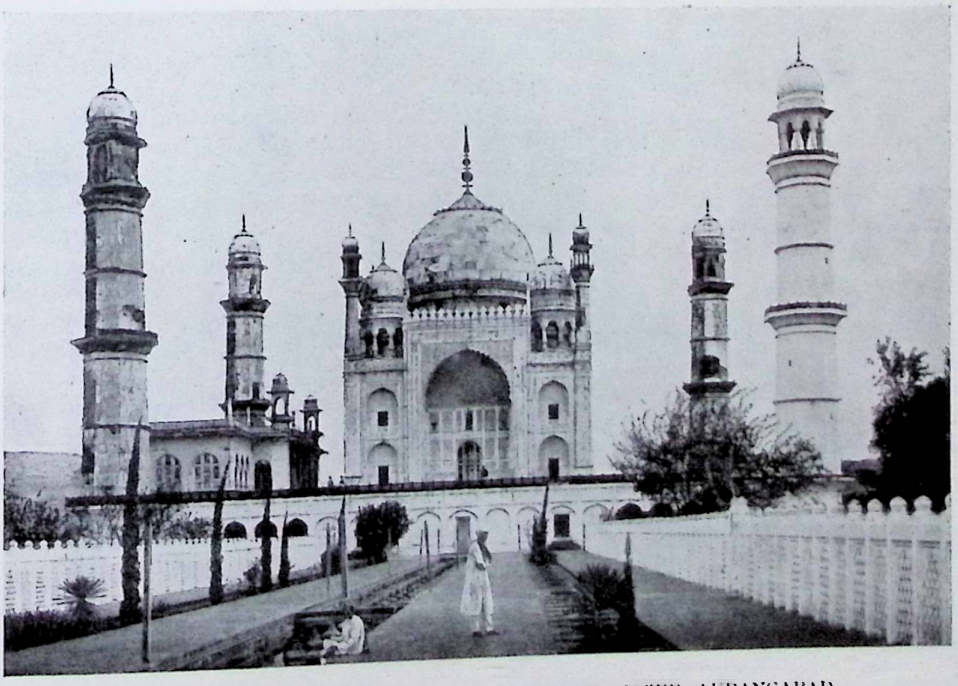
JESSAMINE TOWER, AGRA FORT



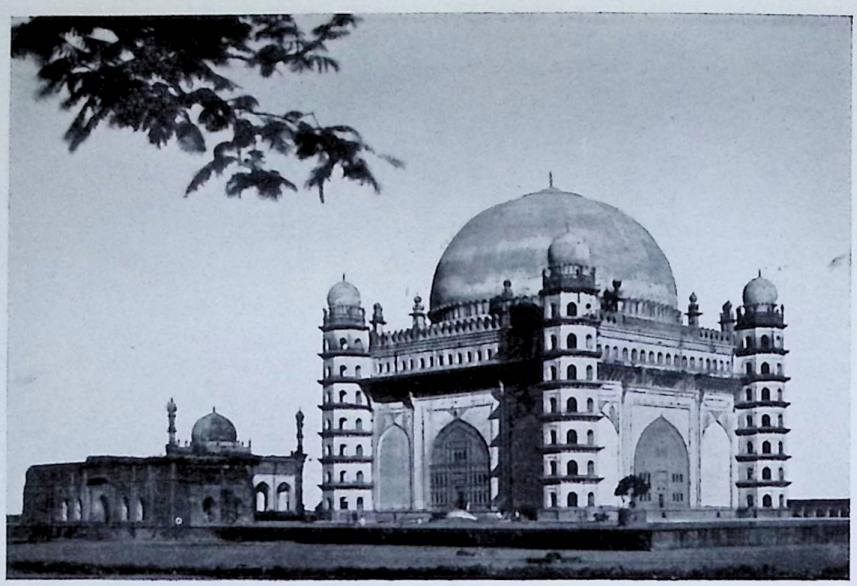
MOTI MASJID, DELHI



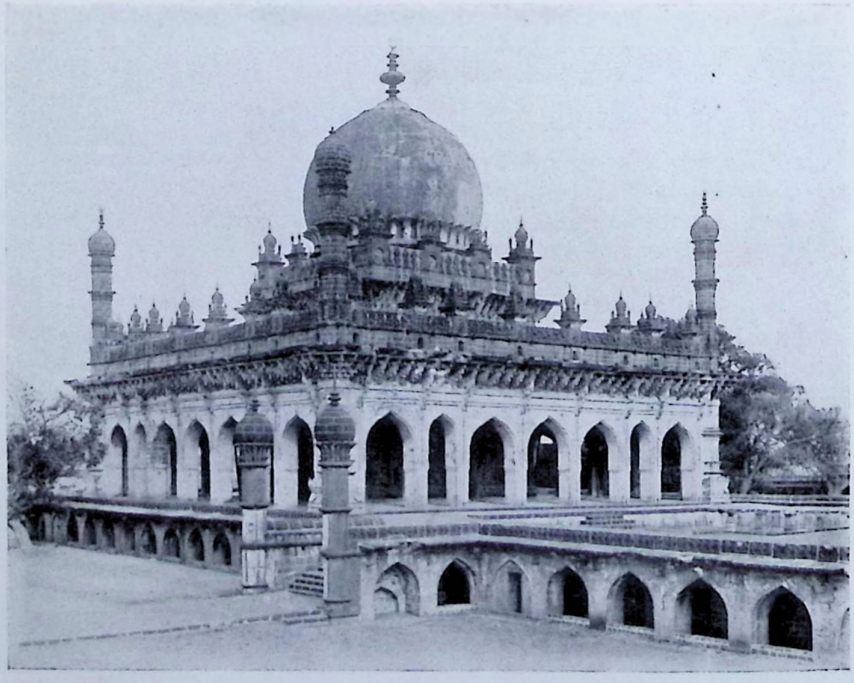
THE TOMB OF HUMAYUN, DELHI



MAUSOLEUM OF RABI DURRANI, WIFE OF AURANGZEB, AURANGABAD



GOL GUMBAZ, BIJAPUR
(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



IBRAHIM-KA RAUZA, BIJAPUR

and they were soon found unconsciously adopting and assimilating the Indian rules and conventions of building and frequently also the symbolism in their most solemn and stately structures. In course of time was evolved a ground common for both—the Mohammedan architect who brought with him principles and practices from Syria, Egypt, Northern Africa and Sassanian Persia, and the indigenous Hindu mason, who possessed an extraordinary synthetic power. Consequently, Indo-Muslim architecture, as Havell writes, was only "a continuous development of Indian building traditions proceeding from altered social and political life, changes in religious ritual and symbolism and in the structural requirements evolved therefrom."

The arched niche or *Mihrab*, which is a distinctive feature in Muslim architecture, is according to Havell, essentially 'an Indian motif.' It was originally the temple niche of the Buddhist and the Hindu from which the sculptured representations of the deities were torn away and removed and the bare niches, lancetted or trefoiled, were retained to serve as *Mihrabs* in the converted or newly built mosques.

The "bulbous" dome, according to the same authority, is another Indian contribution to Muslim architecture. The Arabs who had recruited their earliest masons from Rome, Byzantium and Persia, discarded the more cumbersome domes after the fashion of the West, and adopted the Buddhist form and system of domical construction when the builders of the Gandhara districts began to be employed in Persia and the neighbouring countries. So the Mohammedan dome of India was only a simplified form of the Hindu dome, constructed according to the Hindu-Buddhist methods, but stripped of its external decorations. The fashioning of the finial was also in accordance with the Hindu and Buddhist symbolism of *Kalash* and the lotus flower, instead of a mere spike as was the case in the pure Arab dome in Egypt.

But while we may agree that a great deal of the constructive elements of Muslim architecture in India suggests an essentially Indian origin, the purity of outline, the perfection and proportion of the interior spaces and their plain simplicity, almost amounting to severity, were peculiarly Islamic characteristics. The Law of the Quran forbade any sculptural decorations, so the only architectural embellishments in which the Muslims of India indulged were the carving and painting of texts from the Holy Book and the use of Persian and Arabian geometric and floral motifs for surface decoration, which they did with a remarkably aesthetic sense.

Also in the taste of co-ordinating the main elements so as to form an unified and pleasing architectural composition, the Muslim builders showed great structural ingenuity.

The architecture of the post-Hindu phase may be placed as religious and secular. Those of a religious nature consist of either the mosque or the tomb. On the other hand, the secular buildings are of a miscellaneous order, such as palace-forts, pavilions, baths, wells and town gates.

The mosque is basically an open rectangular space surrounded by a pillared verandah. This was its original structure. Later, the cloisters on the western side were expanded and elaborated into a pillared hall, with a wall at the back, containing a *Mihrab* to indicate the direction of the holy city of Mecca. On the right side of the *Mihrab* stands the *Mimbar* or the pulpit. The sanctuary, containing the *Mihrab*, being the most sacred part of the mosque was also architecturally the most important. First, a dome was raised over the central space or the nave, and second, a screen of arches of brick, sometimes plastered, sometimes with stone facing, was built in front to form a facade.

The monument erected over the resting place of the dead is another class of building of a religious order, and some of the finest expressions of Indo-Islamic architecture have been through these structures. Situated almost always in the centre of beautiful gardens, often with magnificent gateways, these tombs consist of an imposing structure of vaulted halls and towering domes. In accordance with the practice of the race, they were usually

built during the life-time of the persons whose bodies were finally intended to rest there, and served as pleasure-resorts for themselves and their friends during their life-time. But, when once used as a place of burial, sounds of revelry would for ever cease to be heard there.

Historically, Indo-Muslim architecture has three main divisions. The first, known as the Pathan, refers to the structures raised by the Turkish and Afghan rulers of Delhi whose reign lasted for about three centuries and a half (1200 - 1550 A.D.). After the death of Alauddin Khilji, the centre power was at times weak and the outlying provinces frequently refused to owe allegiance to Delhi, and then proceeded to develop a form of architecture expressive of their local peculiarities under the pressure of foreign domination. These provincial manifestations of the building art have been classed separately. The third of these divisions may be classed as the Mughal style which flourished from about the middle of the 16th century till about the 18th century, when the foundations of the Mughal Empire itself began to crumble.

In the development of the Islamic architecture in the Turkish and Afghan periods, Delhi occupied an important place, as it was here that the mosques made their earliest appearance. Qutb-ud-din Aibek was the first of the Slave rulers. According to Hasan Nizami, his chronicler, "the conqueror entered the city, and its vicinity was freed from idols and idol worship, and in the sanctuaries of the images of the gods, mosques were raised by the worshippers of One God." It is recorded by another contemporary authority that materials of as many as twenty-seven temples within the neighbourhood of Qal'a-i-Rai Pithaura were utilised to build the great mosque, called Quwwat-Islam or Might of Islam. The mosque as it originally stood was nearly 135 feet in length and 32 feet deep with a courtyard surrounded by pillared cloisters. All the pillars, which are obviously torn from Jain temples, are profusely carved in the most elegant Hindu style. In some instances, the figures which had adorned the shafts in their original setting have been cut off as offensive to Muslim sentiments. But idolatrous ornamentation on the less visible parts still stands intact.

The main glory of the mosque is in the screen of magnificent arches, projecting along the entire front on the western side. It was pierced by five openings, consisting of a large central archway and two lesser archways on both sides of it. This screen is really the only Mohammedan contribution to the sanctuary, although the Indian masons could not help imparting to it an Indo-Buddhist character while trying to give material shape to the directions of their masters. They built the pointed openings on the same principles upon which they had built their domes. They carried them up in horizontal courses as far as they could and then enclosed them by long slabs meeting at the top. The entire surface is covered with a lace-work of graceful carvings. They are either floral devices copied from those on the pillars or decorative inscriptions from the Quran in the beautiful Kufic or Tughra scripts.

In 1230 A.D., Iltutmish doubled the mosque by enveloping it within a much more spacious quadrangle and lengthening the screen of arches on either side. Alauddin Khilji added a third court to it, reduplicating the prayer chamber on the north and also built a fine gateway on the south.

Even more significant than the Quwwat-Islam mosque was the lofty tower of red sandstone and marble, known as the Qutb Minar, situated near the mosque. Its foundations were laid by Qutb-ud-din Aibek and the structure when completed became a remarkable architectural monument. Intended first as a place from which the muezzin could summon the Faithful to prayer, it later came to be regarded as a Tower of Victory, erected to cast "the shadow of God over the East and over the West."

Nearly 48 feet in diameter at the base and over 240 feet in height, tapering to a width of nearly 10 feet at the top, the tower once consisted of four storeys, with a boldly projected balcony at each stage. In the lower storey the projecting ribs, which form

the flutes, were alternately angular and circular ; in the second, only circular ; and in the third, only angular. The fourth storey which is a badly conceived reconstructional work and an addition of Sultan Feroz Shah (1351-1388 A.D.) is plain and round, without any artistic merit. Between the storeys are richly sculptured raised belts on which inscriptions from the Quran and titles of the Emperor have been boldly and beautifully carved. " Seen from any point of view the Qutb Minar as a whole is a most impressive conception, the vivid colour of its red sandstone, the changing texture of its fluted storeys with their overlay of inscriptional bands, the contrast between the alternating spaces of plain masonry and rich carving, the shimmer of the shadows under the balconies, all combine to produce an effect of marked vitality. Then the tapering cylindrical appearance was purposely designed in order to give the whole an upward impulse and the illusion of increased height. But perhaps its most pronounced quality is that of stability, absolute and immutable, its very shape decreasing as it rises on much the same principle as the pyramid, illustrating, as was intended, man's highest endeavour to make his handiwork timeless." (Percy Brown.)

In Ajmer there is another ancient mosque, popularly known as Arhai-din-ka-Jhompra. It is attributed to Qutb-ud-din, although it was completed at a much later date by Iltutmish. In the same manner and style as the one at Delhi, but on a much larger scale, its pillars, architraves, roofing stones and the domes remind one of the Jain temples of Mt. Abu and Girnar. Iltutmish adorned it with a screen of seven arches, which make the front elevation of the mosque grander and more imposing. The curves of the arches are firmer and more decided than in the earlier example. The changing course of the art is also marked by the addition of fluted minarets, one on each side over the main archway.

Iltutmish, by introducing the tomb in the architecture of India, added one more type of building, in form and intentions hitherto unknown. The tomb of Iltutmish, built about 1236 A.D., is a square compact structure of 42 feet side with an entrance doorway on each of its three sides, the western side being closed to accommodate a series of *Mihrabs*. The interior of the hall has been very beautifully and elaborately engraved with inscriptional motifs, so much so that it is supposed to be one of the richest examples of Hindu art applied to Mohammedan purposes.

The tomb of Balban erected about 1280 AD., is a remarkable construction for in this building, for the first time in India, we come across the arch produced by means of radiating voussoirs — indicating a definite progress in the field of Indo-Islamic architecture.

The structure constructed as an entrance to the Delhi mosque by Alauddin Khilji, who ascended the throne of Delhi after the Slaves, is known as the Alai Darwaja. It is a cubical structure of 55 feet side in plan, with a total height to the top of its domical finial of over 60 feet. In the middle of each side is a doorway flanked by a perforated stone window, each doorway opening into a single inner room with a domed ceiling. This gateway makes a decisive advance in the structural practices of India. Not only in the expert and artistic manner in which the various parts have been architecturally co-ordinated, but also in the shape and refined quality of the curves of the arches, in the system of support for the dome, constructed on the same principle as all the arches, and in its decorative treatment, it is clear that a fresh influence had begun to make itself felt. This evidently came from Asia Minor. With the break up of the empire of the Seljuks and the consequent insecurity of life and property from the invading mongol hordes, some of those skilled in learning and arts moved to Delhi, which was by this time regaining its repute for wealth and influence, taste and culture. Among the refugees were many architects of note who joined hands with the Hindu mason in designing and executing the famous gateway.

The Tughlaqs came next into power and they ruled Delhi for nearly a century. They appear to have been keen builders and their architectural undertakings include both

religious and secular structures. They built mosques, tombs, buildings of public utility, and also those 'great complexes' combining a city, fort and palace. But a marked change seems to have come over the spirit of the Pathan architects and in this phase lavish display of ornamentation gave place to sobriety and an austere simplicity of design. This is probably on account of the puritanical sentiments of the rulers and also their soldier-like character.

Ghyas-ud-din, the first of the Tughlaqs, who was more of a warrior than a statesman, built the city of Tughlaqabad, which is noted architecturally for the massive stone masonry of its walls of over four miles, colossal bastions which have been constructed at frequent intervals throughout the entire length of the wall and heavily embattlemented parapets. The project comprises two parts, a combined structure of fortress and palace on the one hand and city on the other, with the outer walls of both adjoining. Today, however, it is a huge ruin of broken masonry.

The tomb of Ghyas-ud-din is in the form of an island fortress with battering walls and a bastion at each angle of its pentagonal plan. But the most striking part of the structure is the pronounced slope of the outer walls of the tomb, with a tall pointed archway, recessed in the centre of each side. The tomb is important in the architectural evolution of the country as it signifies the beginning of a phase in which the sloping effect appears and persists for a considerable time.

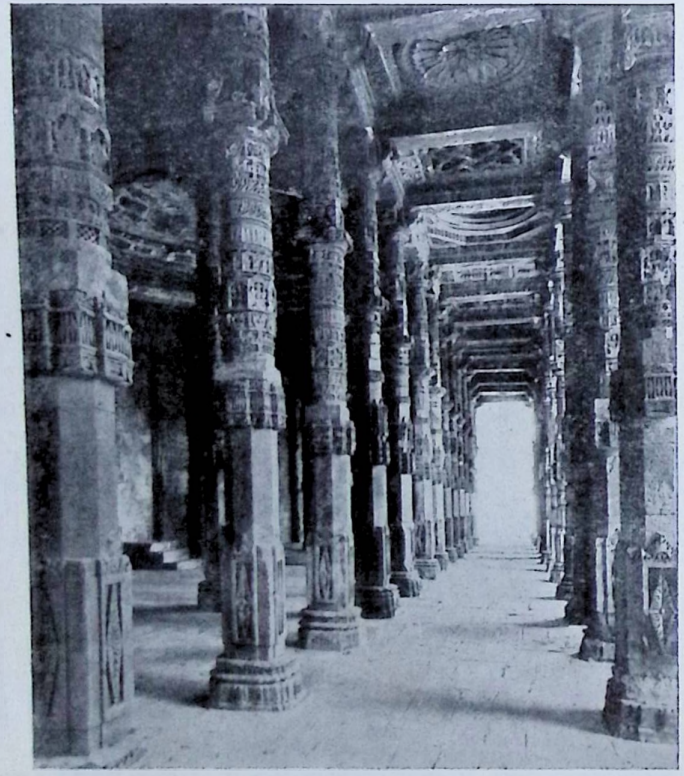
Feroz Shah, the most prolific of the Tughlaq builders, writes about himself: "Among the gifts which God bestowed on me, His humble servant, was a desire to erect public buildings." He built a number of cities, forts, palaces, mosques and tombs, besides a number of other public buildings.

But the architecture of this period suffers from being dull and spiritless — a direct consequence of the failure of the experiment in the change of capital during the previous regime. On account of the reduced finances of the state and a scarcity of skilled builders who had dispersed in the confusion that followed the transfer of the government to Daulatabad, only a plain but serviceable style could be afforded and the material had also of necessity to be cheap. Accordingly, instead of the well-finished sandstone ashlar, the ruler had now to please himself with a rough masonry hiding the untrimmed surfaces with a thick layer of cement.

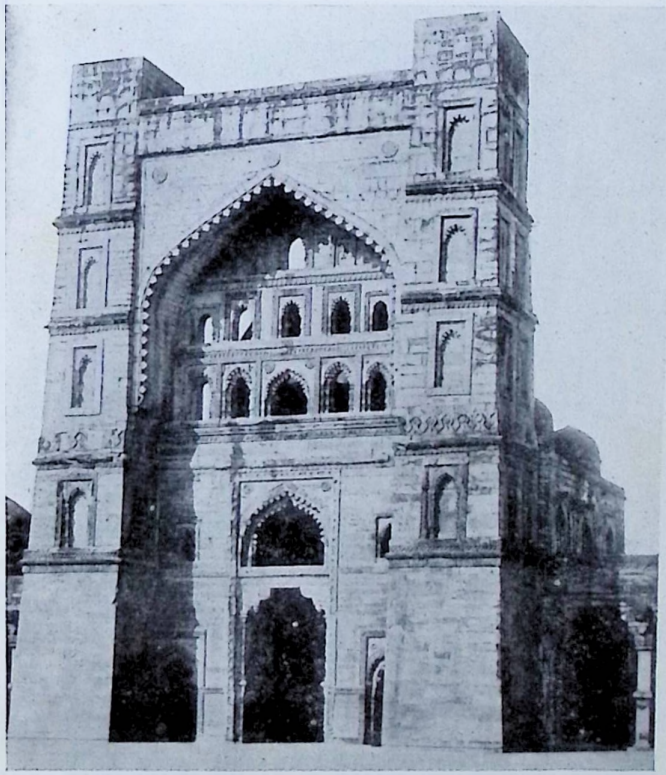
Besides the fortified cities of Jaunpur, Hissar and Fatehabad, Feroz Shah built at Delhi the palace-fort of Ferozabad. The site of the Kotila Feroz Shah, as it is called, is an extensive plain by the river side and is surrounded by high battlemented walls with immense bastions at regular intervals. The monuments within the citadel are of a varied nature and include palaces, rest houses, a Hall of Public Audience, pavilions, baths, tank, barracks, armoury and servants' quarters, places of prayer and a Jama Masjid which was a large and imposing building of two storeys. Thus to Feroz Shah goes the credit of laying the foundations in India of a palace-fort, in all its essential principles, which were later developed with such magnificent effect by Akbar and Shahjahan.

The mausoleum of Khan-i-Jahan Tilangani, the Prime Minister of Feroz, is another building of considerable significance. Although the outer walls are in conformity with the fortress idea, incidentally the last of such walls, it is the building itself which exemplifies a new type in tomb structure — a type which influenced fundamentally the architecture of the tomb in centuries to come. In place of the square plan which had hitherto been the case, the tomb of Tilangani takes the form of an octagon, enclosed within a verandah and covered by the usual dome.

After the sack of Delhi by Timur, the Imperial throne, during the 15th century and the first quarter of the 16th century, was seized first by the Sayyads and then by the Lodis. A number of buildings, particularly tombs, ranging from simple open pillared



INTERIOR OF ARHAI-DIN-KA JHOMPRA, AJMER



ATALA MASJID, JAUNPUR, 1408 A.D.
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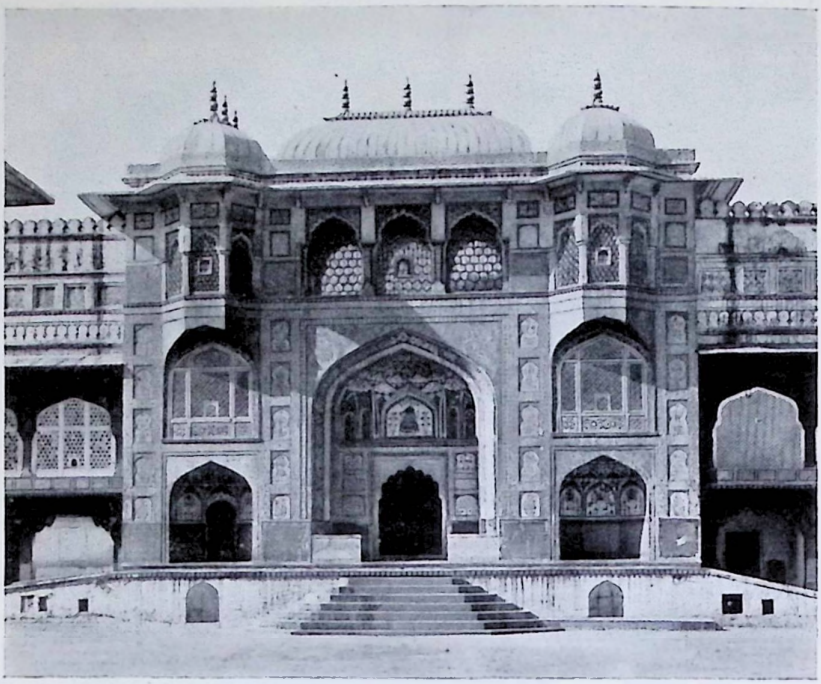
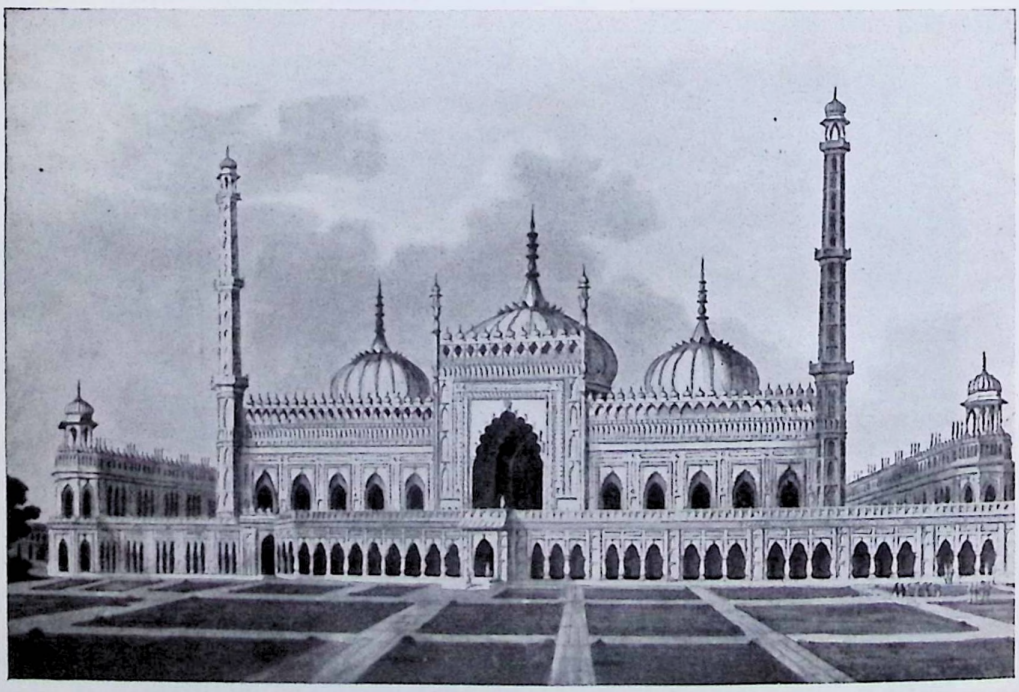
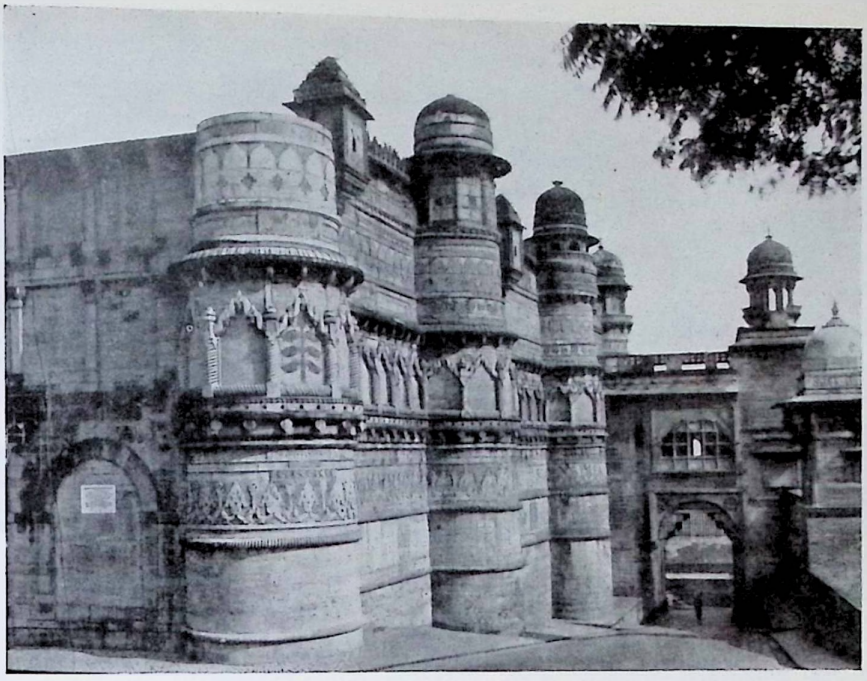


THE PALACE GATEWAY, AMBER

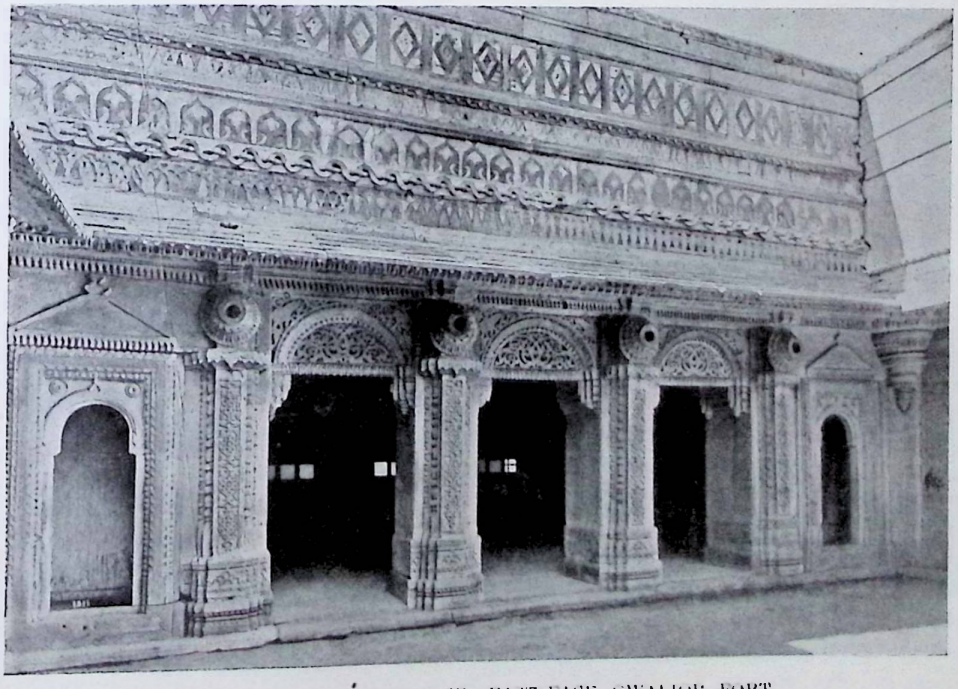


MOSQUE AT LUCKNOW
(From Salt's *Views of India*)

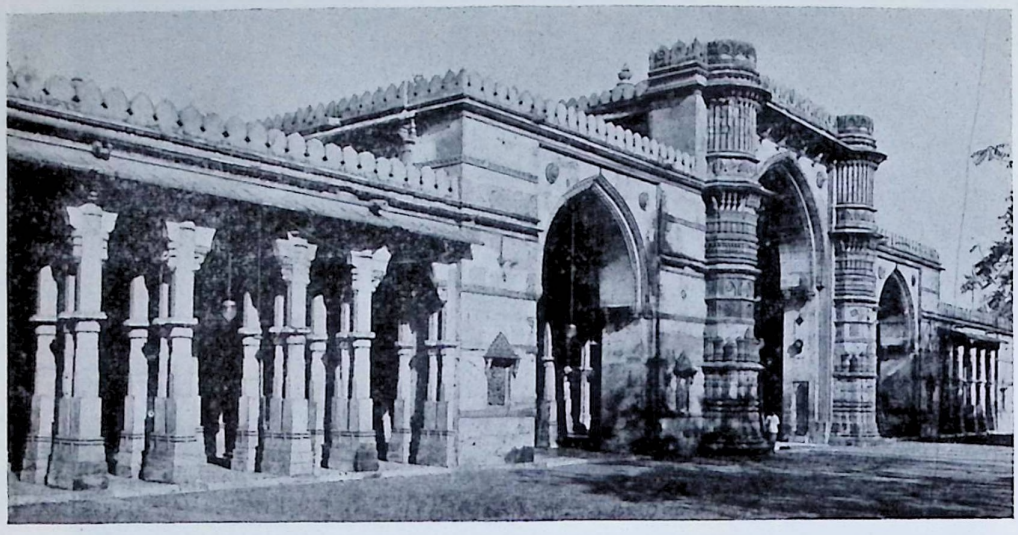


MAN MANDIR OR RAJA MANSINGH'S PALACE (SOUTH FACE), GWALIOR FORT

(*Copyright : Archaeological Department of India*)



MAN MANDIR PALACE, EAST FACE, GWALIOR FORT



JAMI MASJID, AHMADABAD
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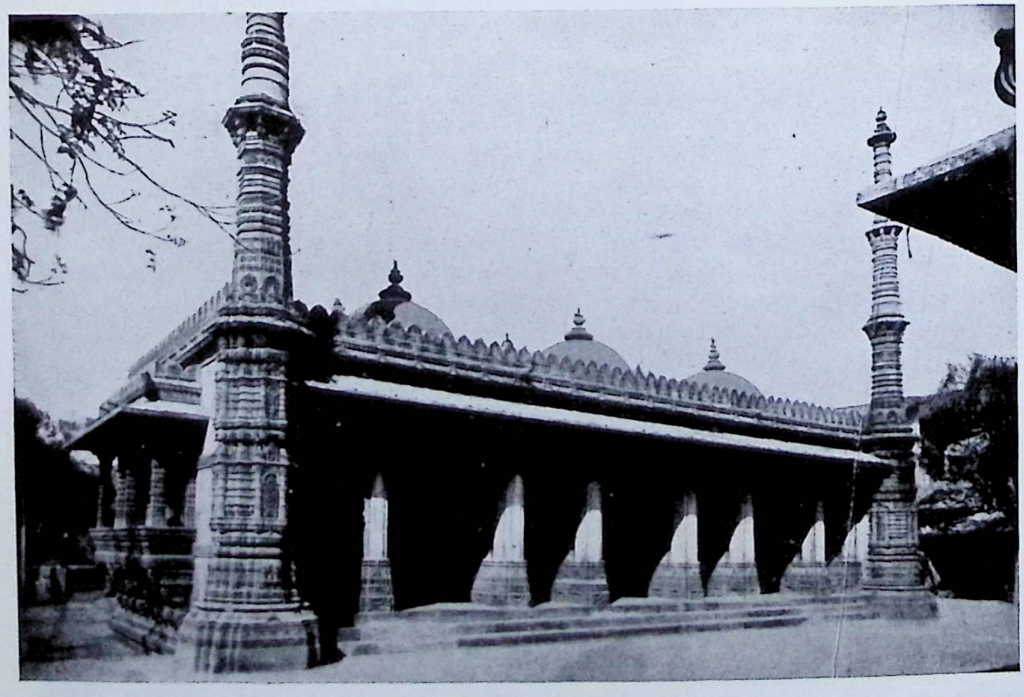

RANI SIPRI'S MOSQUE, AHMADABAD
(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)

pavilions to imposing structures surrounded by walls, were erected by them. But none of these undertakings was of much architectural significance except for the introduction of such new features as the use of blue enamelled tiling, the elaborate treatment of the surface, and the use of lotus finials over the domes.

While Islamic architecture was taking shape at Delhi, the provincial capitals were erecting some of the most remarkable monuments under the patronage of their Mohammedan rulers. Although basically subsidiary to the Imperial style, the provinces manifested in their buildings their individual architectural characteristics. Among some of the important factors which decided the character of the provincial styles were the length of association of the province concerned with Delhi, the prevalence of an already developed indigenous art tradition within a particular area, contact with experienced foreign craftsmen, unusual climatic conditions necessitating special treatment and the availability of building material.

Bengal came under the Muslim occupation in 1202 A.D., but it was more than a century later before Bengal could exhibit a distinct architectural trend under the Islamic influence. Brick, timber and bamboo being the only principal building materials available, the Mohammedan orchitects readily adopted the characteristic features of the architecture of Bengal, such as the use of square brick pillars of stunted proportions, the curvilinear form of roof, and carved, moulded surface decorations, besides elaborating a pointed-arch style of their own.

The mosque of Pandua, built in 1358 A.D., is the largest and most important Mohammedan building in the whole of Bengal. Planned in the conventional style, it has an immense quadrangular courtyard bounded on all sides by seemingly endless arched screens and arched ways, surmounted by a parapet, above which may be seen the domes on the roof, one over each bay, and amounting to 306 in all. The most impressive portion of the mosque was the central nave of the sanctuary, covered at one time by a superb arched vault. The exquisitely designed and executed central *Mihrab* inside, which is in the form of a trefoil arched alcove contained within a rectangular frame-work, above which are delicately carved arabesques and calligraphic texts, is apparently a copy of the niche found in the Buddhist and Hindu places of worship in Bihar and Bengal.

In another interesting monument at Pandua, known as the Eklakhi tomb, the Islamic style, woven completely into the indigenous local style, comes into being. And for the next hundred years, the building activity of the Muslim rulers proceeded along the lines laid down by this tomb.

There are several gateways at Gaur, which are of considerable magnificence. The Dakhil Darwaza, built in 1459 A.D., which though of brick and adorned only with terra-cotta ornaments, consisting of such motifs as flaming sun, rosettes, hanging lamps, fretted borders, decorative niches, is as grand an object in its class as is to be found anywhere.

The mosques at Jaunpur represent another local development of the Imperial school. After the capture of Delhi by Timur, the state of Jaunpur under the enlightened Sharqi rulers, became famous as a seat of Islamic learning and arts, specially noted for its sympathetic understanding of Hindu culture. In the field of architecture, too, the monuments show an interesting synthesis of Hindu and Muslim structural ideas.

The best monument in the Jaunpur style is the Atala Mosque, erected in 1408 A.D. on the foundations prepared by Feroz Shah Tughlaq. As its name suggests, the mosque was built on the site of the Hindu temple of Attala Devi. Planned in the orthodox style, it consists of a square courtyard, surrounded on three sides by spacious five-fold colonnades interrupted in the middle of each side by handsome gateways, and the sanctuary on the western side. The facade to the sanctuary is unquestionably the most striking part of the whole building. In the centre rises an imposing construction, shaped like a pylon, with sloping sides, its height being 75 feet and its width at the base 55 feet. Within the pylon is a great arched recess, containing the entrances to the nave and also the arcaded window

openings, beautified with traceried patterns. According to Havel, the remarkable artistic ingenuity which the Jaunpur architects showed in designing the facade was inspired by the Hindu temple *Gopurams*. Two more similar pylons, but on smaller scale, have been constructed on either side of the main pylon, while the same frontal effect has been given to the three gateways in the cloisters, lending balance and rhythm to the whole composition. The interior of the mosque is equally well planned.

The Jami Masjid, completed about 1470 A.D., is the final culmination of the style, but very like the Atala mosque in its essential features.

No other form of Indo-Islamic architecture is so essentially Hindu as the one that flourished in Gujarat, to which the patrons and the labourers jointly contributed. First, the rulers of the Ahmad Shahi dynasty, whose founder had renounced Hinduism to save his life, were too much imbued with Hindu cultural traditions to repress its influence. Second, the indigenous skilled labour of Gujarat on which the Muslim over-lord had almost entirely to depend, consisted of accomplished artisans who had for generations built some of the most remarkable Brahamanical and Jain temples. And their profound artistic consciousness refused to be dominated by the religion and culture of the foreigner. Consequently, although in intention the Mohammedan buildings had to be Islamic, they were in every detail of design, decoration and finish, characteristically Hindu, so much so, that only here and there an arch would be found inserted not because it was structurally expedient, but because it was symbolic of the faith of the builder.

The Jami Masjid of Ahmadabad, finished in 1423 A.D., is a clever combination of Jain details with the Muslim idea of magnitude. Its greater size is not obtained by increasing the dimensions of its parts but by re-duplication of forms according to the Jain fashion. The facade is its most significant part. Here, by placing the screen of arches in the centre with the pillared portico in the wings, the architect has skilfully combined two different facade conventions, and given a balanced and soaring character to the front. The interior of the mosque exhibits an equally noble structural design. It is filled with some three hundred closely set, symmetrically arranged tall pillars, each modelled according to the usual Hindu design, supporting fifteen large domes, of which the three in the middle are larger and considerably higher than the others. The building inside is illuminated with a diffused light through a very clever arrangement of clerestory windows, so that no direct light of any kind can penetrate.

The mausoleum of Shaikh Ahmad Khattri at Sarkhej is the largest of its kind in Gujarat. Planned in the form of pillared cloisters, surrounding the central domed hall, it is distinguished for its chaste simplicity and jewel-like carvings.

About the end of the 15th century, the architecture of Gujarat entered its final and most magnificent phase. Mohammad Bigarah, who ruled from 1459 to 1511 A.D., built not only the new cities of Junagarh, Kheda and Champaner, but adorned them together with Ahmadabad with splendid mausoleums, mosques, palaces and several other structures of a secular and utilitarian order. The most outstanding among the monuments is the Jami Masjid at Champaner, one of the most symmetrically disposed and elegant buildings. Except for a few additional refinements, it was modelled on the plan of the Jami Masjid of Ahmadabad.

The beauty of the Jami Masjid and of the other Gujarat buildings of this phase lies, however, mostly in their structure and ornamentation. This phase is particularly notable for its carved stone work. The outer walls of the Jami Masjid have been pierced by traceried openings of a singularly attractive design. For extremely delicate carvings, the Rauza of Rani Sipri at Ahmadabad has been regarded by some art-critics as one of the most elegant structures of the world. But the perforated stone screens seen on the walls of the sanctuary of the Sidi Syyad mosque have given this otherwise insignificant building a world-wide reputation. Screens of similar kind had been for a long time a favourite

decoration in the hands of the Gujarati craftsmen, but never before were they treated with so much 'aesthetic sensitiveness and technical skill' as in this mosque. "It would be difficult to excel the skill with which the vegetable forms are conventionalised just to the extent required for the purpose. The equal spacing also of the subject by the three ordinary trees and four palms takes it out of the category of direct imitation of nature, and renders it sufficiently structural for its situations; but perhaps the greatest skill is shown in the even manner in which the pattern is spread over the whole surface. There are some exquisite specimens of tracery in precious marbles at Agra and Delhi, but none quite equal to this." (Fergusson.)

These buildings are also distinguished by the varied designs of their minarets, with perforated stone windows carved in their bases, the beautifully sculptured *Mihrabs* and domed and panelled roofs, executed in every case with unerring skill and exquisite taste.

But even such minor architectural undertakings as the step-wells, *baolis*—deep, long, and staired reservoirs of water—could not escape the general aesthetic sensibility that was pervading the atmosphere. The pillars, capitals, railings, wall surfaces, and cornices of these *baolis* are as profusely ornamented as the mosque and the temple.

The provincial style of Malwa as manifested at Dhar and Mandu was inspired by the architecture of the Imperial capital, and it was also from this place that trained workers were brought, who were only too glad to accept the new assignments on account of the declining authority of the Tughlaqs. Accordingly, we see reproduced in the Malwa buildings, the architectural elements of the Delhi monuments, such as the battering walls, pointed arch and the pyramidal roof. But in the numerous palaces, mosques, tombs, pavilions, balconied turrets, colonnade terraces and rest houses which the Sultans built, several new elements were also added to give the Malwa style a distinctive feature. One of them was the appearance of long and imposing flights of steps leading to the entrances of the buildings. The other was the introduction of colour effects obtained either by the use of coloured stones and marbles, in which the country around was rich, or by the use of gorgeously painted tiles. The Jami Masjid at Mandu, a building simple and stately in outline and details, is one of the finest examples of the Sultanate architecture.

Across the Vindhyas in the south flourished several schools of marked character. In contrast to the earlier method of borrowing from the existing art traditions of the place they occupied, the Muslim dynasties of the south patronised a style of architecture which was in practice a fusion of the Imperial style of Delhi and the architectural system prevailing in Persia. The founder of the Bahamani dynasty at Gulbarga in 1347 A.D. was himself a Persian adventurer from the Court at Delhi, and to his State had flocked, for some time past, Persian immigrants, some of them highly skilled engineers, and workmen. They together with the artisans from Delhi who had come south during the transfer of the capital in 1340 A.D., laid the foundations of the Deccan style.

Two features of this style emerge into prominence. One is most strikingly expressed in the shape and proportion of the dome which gradually assumed the bulbous or 'Tatar' form. The other feature is displayed in the process of decoration which was done in a purely Persian fashion of surface treatment. Delicately glazed tiles in which green, yellow and white predominate, combine in various brilliant schemes of floral ornamentation or conventional arabesques to give a most colourful effect to palaces and tombs. Mosques, however, continue to be plain and sombre.

The Jami Masjid at Gulbarga is one of the most interesting monuments of its class in India. Its great peculiarity is the absence of an open courtyard as the whole area is roofed over by small domes carried on arched bays. Inside it is a vast range of broad squat cloisteral arches. Lacking in any outstanding aesthetic qualities, the entire composition is powerfully original.

Another notable monument is the *Madrassa* or College, erected at Bidar in 1472 A.D. by Mahmud Gawan, who tried to reproduce a building exactly similar to the one he had known in Persia. It was a three-storeyed construction containing lecture halls, library, mosque, professors' quarters and accommodation for students. For its effect, the building relies entirely on surface treatment, the walls having been richly ornamented with superb coloured tile-work.

But the most distinguished of the Southern schools was that of Bijapur, where during the last hundred years of the kingdom before its merger with the Mughal Empire, some of the most noble and constructionally perfect monuments were created. The building art of the Adil Shahi rulers of Bijapur developed fundamentally out of the earlier productions of the Bahamani rule. But the fact that the Adil Shahi dynasty was Turkish may account for some of the Ottoman characteristics that may be found introduced in their buildings.

The dome at Bijapur received special attention—of which the most perfect and as Fergusson stated, "artistically the most beautiful form of roof yet invented," can be seen in the Gol Gumbaz, the name given to the mausoleum of Muhammad Adil Shah (1627—1657 A.D.). The mausoleum itself is a vast composition, but so well proportioned are its main elements that only for its immense scale and constructive boldness, it is most certainly one of the proudest achievements of the Indian builders. But it was in the construction of the dome, supposed to be the largest domical roof in existence, that the artist revealed his astonishing structural abilities. In Fergusson's usually inimitable expressions: " The most ingenious and novel part of this dome is the mode in which the lateral or outward thrust is counteracted. This was accomplished by forming the pendentives so that they not only cut off the angles, but that their arches intersect each other, and form a very considerable mass of masonry perfectly stable in itself; and by its weight acting inwards, counteracting any thrust that can possibly be brought to bear upon it by the pressure of the dome. If the whole edifice, thus balanced, has any tendency to move, it is to fall inwards, which from its circular form is impossible; while the action of the weight of the pendentives being in the opposite direction to that of the dome, it acts like a tie, and keeps the whole in equilibrium, without interfering at all with the outline of the dome."

Two other Adil Shahi monuments deserve to be mentioned. The royal mosque of Ali Adil Shah (1558-1580 A.D.) is considered to be one of the finest mosques in India, notable for the refined shaping of its spherical domes. In contrast to the simple grandeur of the Gol Gumbaz, the Ibrahim Rauza, built by Ibrahim Adil Shah is a mausoleum exciting admiration for the most exquisite and elaborate carvings of original and intricate patterns. The walls have been so much enriched with ornamental inscriptions that it is said that the whole Quran is carved on them.

In the days of storm and stress that preceded the firm establishment of the Mughal Empire in India, an Afghan dynasty by the name of Sur, usurped and retained power for about fifteen years, and Sher Shah, the most illustrious of the Surs, launched a building activity which had far reaching influence in the development of the Islamic style.

The tomb of Sher Shah at Sasaram stands undoubtedly as one of the grandest tributes to the skill of its architects and the genius of its patron. Based obviously on the later Sultanate type of buildings, now getting out of fashion, it has been amplified with so much imagination and skill that there is hardly any direct imitation in it of an earlier model. Situated on a 300 feet square platform in the centre of a great artificial lake, the tomb rises on an octagonal base in five distinct storeys, forming an immense pyramidal pile of diminishing tiers, crowned by a broad low dome—the second largest in India. The tomb chamber, which is a big vaulted hall and is surrounded by arcaded corridors, is moderately plain, the only ornamentation being the inscriptions carved on the western wall.

One of the noblest monuments of the country, this mausoleum is a creation of massive and solemn grandeur. In the words of a learned art-critic: "The proportions of its dimin-

ishing stages, the harmonius transition from square to octagon, and from octagon to sphere, the variety and distribution of its tonal values, the simplicity, breadth, and scale of each major element, and finally, the carefully adjusted mass of the total conception, show the aesthetic capacity of the Indian architect at its greatest, and his genius at its highest."

Another architectural gem of Sher Shah's period is the Qil'a-i-Kuhna Masjid, within the walls of the Purana Qil'a at Delhi. Its chief beauty lies in the treatment of the facade, which has been divided into five arched bays, each within a larger recessed archway, contained within a rectangular framework. And to add to its elegance, the mouldings have been decorated with beautiful inscriptional inlays.

With the Mughals getting a strong foothold at Delhi, Indo-Islamic architecture entered its most fascinating phase and a large number of works of unusual brilliance and splendour was produced. Among several factors which contributed towards this remarkable development were the wealth and power of the Empire, the prevalence of relatively settled conditions in the country and the pronounced aesthetic temperament of the rulers who were all men of culture keenly interested in architecture. They, however, did not combine to develop a 'Mughal pattern,' nor is there any evidence to show that much foreign cultural influence had anything to do with the architecture which flourished under the patronage of the Mughals. On the contrary, it was a purely Indian architectural movement, wherein both the Hindu and Mohammedan craftsmen joined together their inventive and artistic faculties to create dreams in marble and stone. But, while local influences affected quite substantially, the fancies and tastes of the individual patrons were in no way less significant in shaping the general architectural character of these buildings.

Although Babar in his "Memoirs" relates that a number of building projects were undertaken by him in India, and from Farishta we learn that Humayun, his son, adorned his capital with many splendid edifices, no building known to be Babar's or Humayun's has yet been identified.

The Mughals were particularly fond of building tombs, of which some of the most superb examples have been produced. The tomb of Humayun at Delhi, designed and commenced by himself, but completed in 1564 A.D. by his great son, is one of the earliest architectural achievements of the new ruling dynasty. Occupying the centre of a lofty square terrace, with arching piers, inlaid with marble, stands the tomb itself, crowned by a graceful 'double dome,' an architectural expedient in which it is composed of two separate but well spaced shells one within the other. The four principal sides of the mausoleum are entered by arched recesses, each flanked by smaller octagonal compartments containing similar arched alcoves. Its most marked characteristics are the purity and simplicity of the design, the perfection of its proportions and the judicious blending of red sandstone with marble.

Akbar was a prolific builder. But it was at Fatehpur Sikri, his new capital, that he congregated the grandest of his monumental works. Here on the sandstone outcrop of the city of Fatehpur Sikri, he built a great complex of spectacular structures, including palaces, courts, pavilions and mosques, all of which bear the impress of a great ruler's versatility. On account of a large number of artificers being employed from the outlying provinces of the Empire, it may be possible to detect traces of influences of the architectural styles prevailing in those places, but the architecture of Fatehpur Sikri is characteristically individual and typical of the man who ordered it.

Among the palaces, the richest and most beautiful are those of Jodh Bai, Mariam, Sultana and Birbal. Of these, the palace of Jodh Bai is the most representative of the residential structures of the period, with its double storeyed rooms facing inwards on a square quadrangle to which an entrance is available through a handsome gateway. Some of its structural features, particularly the design of the niches and brackets, have been

brought in obviously from the architecture of Western India. But it is in the application of the decorative elements, and in the richness and quality of its carved ornamentation that the impress of Gujarat is unmistakable. The other three palaces, although comparatively small, have been treated with the same exquisite delicacy of workmanship and adornment.

The principal architectural feature of the single chambered Diwan-i-khas is its throne, which is as artistic as it is novel in conception. It consists of a large circular platform, shaped like a flower, supported on an immense cluster of brackets forming the capital of a richly carved column which occupies the central portion. The platform reaches to the level of the upper windows from which causeways radiate to the four corners of the hall to connect with narrow hanging galleries which go round the hall. On every Friday, the Emperor sat on this elevated capital and listened to discussions in which learned men of different religions participated.

Another interesting building at Sikri is the Jami Masjid. Designed on the orthodox plan, it is a perfectly symmetrical structure with a courtyard of very large dimensions. The sanctuary has been provided with a beautiful facade, a portico in the centre and pillared arcaded wings on both sides of it. Above the facade rise three domes. The walls inside have been most artistically carved, painted or inlaid with fantastically floral or geometrical patterns.

But the most spectacular feature of the mosque is its southern gateway, known as Buland Darwaza, which Akbar erected in 1601 A.D. to commemorate his victories in the south. It is distinguished by its imposing height, dominating even the main mosque, and bold projecting facade with its arched and domed recess in the centre, gradually narrowing in its parts until finally reduced to a man-height doorway at the rear. The entire scheme has been most successfully treated producing an effect of grandeur without being weighty or unproportionate.

Akbar's mausoleum at Sikandra, near Agra, though situated and planned as Akbar had wished, was completed by Jahangir in 1613 A.D. The building is of a pyramidal form, built up of five diminishing terraces, and consists of, first, a large foundational terrace with arches recessed within its sides; then above this, red sandstone pavilions in three diminishing stages, richly ornamented with kiosks, forming the middle portions; and crowning the whole a white marble enclosure with delicate trellis work of the most beautiful patterns completes the final storey. There is originality in composition combined with artistry which has made it a remarkable effort by a monarch whose reign is otherwise deficient in architectural achievements.

Jahangir's own tomb at Sahadara near Lahore is an unimpressive affair, except for the brilliant splash of colour over its surfaces through the use of fresco painting, inlay and mosaic tiling in the Persian style.

The tomb of Itmad-ud-Daulah at Agra, built by Jahangir's wife, is an outstanding monument, heralding the sumptuous building epoch of Shahjahan. For its chaste decoration and almost feminine elegance, the tomb "stands in a class by itself as it illustrates a fresh interpretation of the building art, an expression of the style in its most delicate and refined aspect, disregarding size, but aiming at exquisite finish." Raised to two storeys with an octagonal minaret at each angle and crowned by an open pavilion, it is constructed entirely of white marble and covered throughout with a mosaic in pietra dura for the first time in India.

With Shahjahan began the "lyric age" of Indo-Muslim architecture, and the force and constructive craftsmanship of the style under Akbar gave way under the new monarch to a delicate elegance and over-refinement in structural design and an extravagant prettiness in decoration. The change in the architectural sensibility was side by side followed

by a change in the building material, and stone yielded place to marble which Shahjahan easily got in unlimited quantity from the quarries of Makrana in Rajputana. He also introduced certain new architectural elements, particularly noticeable in the shape of the cusped arch, bulbous domes, pillars with tapering shafts, voluted bracket capitals and foliated bases. In the decorative sphere, the art of pietra dura, applied to graceful foliations, and other ornamental devices achieved almost sensuous loveliness in the exceptionally splendid creations of the great builder.

Shahjahan started his building activity by demolishing some of the stone structures in the Agra fort and their place was taken by such elegant edifices in marble as the Diwan-i-Am, Diwan-i-khas and the Moti Masjid, the prettiest of all. But the magnificent palaces in the city of Shahjahanabad that the Emperor built for himself on the banks of the Jamuna at Delhi, provide a study in palace building art in its maturity. The "imperial city" is in the shape of a parallelogram, and is surrounded on all sides by a high and fortified wall of red sandstone, with a most noble gateway on the western side. The inside consists of a market place, barracks, servants' houses, accommodation for those attached to the Court, Naubat Khana, royal residences, pavilions, etc.—all planned out in the most systematic and uniform manner.

Shahjahan lavished his finest art on palaces, baths and halls, arranged in rectangles or squares, with wide open spaces and ornamental gardens coming between two structures. Two of these, the Diwan-i-khas and the Rang Mahal, are of exceptional richness in their architectural and decorative treatment.

"In the broad features of their architecture these two buildings have much in common, and these features again are common to the style as a whole. Each structure takes the form of an open pavilion in one storey, their facades of engrailed arches shaded by a wide eave, or *chajja*, above which rises a parapet and from each corner a graceful kiosk. The interiors also consist of engrailed arches in intersecting arcades which divide the whole space into square or oblong bays, each bay having a cavetto or cyma recta cornice and a flat highly decorated ceiling. There are no pillars, their place being taken by massive square or twelve-sided piers, a formation which also gives a spacious soffit to the arches, a factor having no little influence on the effect. For, viewed from any angle, owing to the double and sometimes four-fold outlining of the underside of the arches, these interiors present a perspective of flowing curves and accurate shapes, of volutes and crescentic forms, expressive of the soft luxurious use to which these structures were applied. In addition there is the ornamentation distributed on every portion, of gilt, coloured and inlaid patterns in sinuous scrolls and serpentine lines accentuating that atmosphere of voluptuousness with which these buildings were obviously associated. Within the traceried foliations on the walls, piers and arches, conventional flowers were freely introduced, roses, poppies, lilies, and the like." (Percy Brown.)

Another eminent structure at Delhi, erected by Shahjahan, is the Jami Masjid. Ranking as the largest mosque in India, it is architecturally remarkable for its size and proportionate manipulation of its various parts. Its lofty plinth, approached by seemingly endless flights of steps, its immense quadrangle and the manner in which its principal elements, including the three bulbous domes of white marble and tall minarets, have been disposed, give the whole composition a strikingly picturesque and impressive appearance.

A monument erected in memory of an undying love, the Taj Mahal at Agra is the "vision beautiful" materialised in marble. But unique in its loveliness as it is, the Taj would lose half its charm if taken out of its beautiful setting. Its ornamental gardens, with their long row of cypresses, water courses with fountains and an elevated lotus pool have so perfectly been harmonised with the general architectural scheme, that they have given the mausoleum a jewel-like enrichment, so that the picture of the Taj becomes a picture of a memorial of matchless beauty.

There has been a controversy as to the possible architects of the building. Some have suggested that the principal hand was that of an Italian. But the character of the building itself, and also the contemporary records, in which names of the chief craftsmen have been given, go to prove that the Taj was "the logical evolution of the building art as practised by the Mughals, true to tradition and entirely free from any external influence." It will, however, be admitted that calligraphists, decorators and builders from Baghdad, Bokhara, Shiraj and Samarkand were invited. But they all had to submit to the patterns and models prepared beforehand.

The mausoleum rises on a terrace whose corners are adorned with minarets of the most exquisite proportions. The tomb building itself is a simple composition, both in proportion and shape. But it is "the facile grouping, rhythmic disposal and skilful interrelation of each part in the total unity" that makes it as great a work of art as a work of faith. Its crowning glory is the great bulbous dome which seems to rise with exquisite grace and subtlety from the base. Under it a beautiful screen of lovely trellis work of white marble, makes the enclosure for the tomb chamber. This dome has been constructed on the same principles as the dome in Ibrahim's tomb at Bijapur, but displays a more refined and finished craftsmanship.

Much of the beauty of the Taj lies in the choice of the materials and process of decoration. The quality of marble used here is of such a nature that it is extremely susceptible to the slightest changes in the light, thus all the time "picturing the passing colour of the moment." But the principal enrichment is obtained by the exquisite plastic treatment of the screens, arabesques in pietra dura scroll work, diapers, and sprays of floral forms, beautiful in design and satisfying in colour.

The next great ruler, Aurangzeb, also added a few pretentious buildings, but it is clear that the style of architecture had reached a point from which it must decline. The unsettled political conditions of the country and the sectarian prejudices of the Emperor in combination led to the weakening of the Indian architectural movement as a whole. It now lacked that touch of vitality and spirit with which the monuments of the earlier period had been distinguished. A building which so graphically depicts the declining conditions is the mausoleum of the wife of Aurangzeb at Aurangabad, which is merely a very inferior copy of the Taj.

Lucknow was the next centre of political power after Delhi, and there are several examples of the architectural efforts of the Nawabs of Oudh. But, evidently, the sources of inspiration had dried up and the great Imambara can in no way be classed amongst the outstanding monuments of the country.

About the time the Mughals were busy giving shape to their architectural fancies, Indian architecture found patronage under the Rajput princes as well. Some of the palaces which they have built are not only structurally significant, but for great imaginative beauty, rival those produced at Delhi and Agra. The Man Mandir at Gwalior, erected by Raja Man Singh (1486-1516 A.D.) is a very picturesque palace-building for its joyous colourings and the bold patterns of its decorative forms. Amongst some of the most beautiful structures are the palaces of Bikaner, Jodhpur, Jaisalmir, Orchha, Datia, Udaipur and the city of Amber, built mainly during the 16th and the 17th centuries. The city of Amber, with its grand grouping of buildings, is as pleasing for its architectural richness as Akbar's Fatehpur Sikri. The Jahangir Mandir, produced at Orchha under the directions of Bir Singh Deo (1605-26 A.D.) is a dainty and dignified palace, and a superb example of the builder's art. But, within the Udaipur Palace, overlooking the Picholi Lake, windows and doorways have been so exquisitely carved and the peacock mosaics are so gaily colourful that they almost defy description.

Western principles entered our architecture when India came in contact with Europeans in the 17th and 18th centuries. A fairly large number of residences, convents and

"A STUDY OF AN ELEPHANT"

This picture here is unsurpassed as a piece of elephant portraiture. The inscription "Amal Dakkan-niyan" means that it was possibly painted by a Deccani painter. It is finished in every detail and the vigour of its draftsmanship is only matched by the exceptional quality of its glowing tints. The head of the animal is drawn with real power and one almost gets the impression of the great majesty and the slow and measured dignity of this mighty beast.

(Reproduced from *Studies in Indian Painting* by N. C. MEHTA.)

[illegible] ARTS AND CRAFTS OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN

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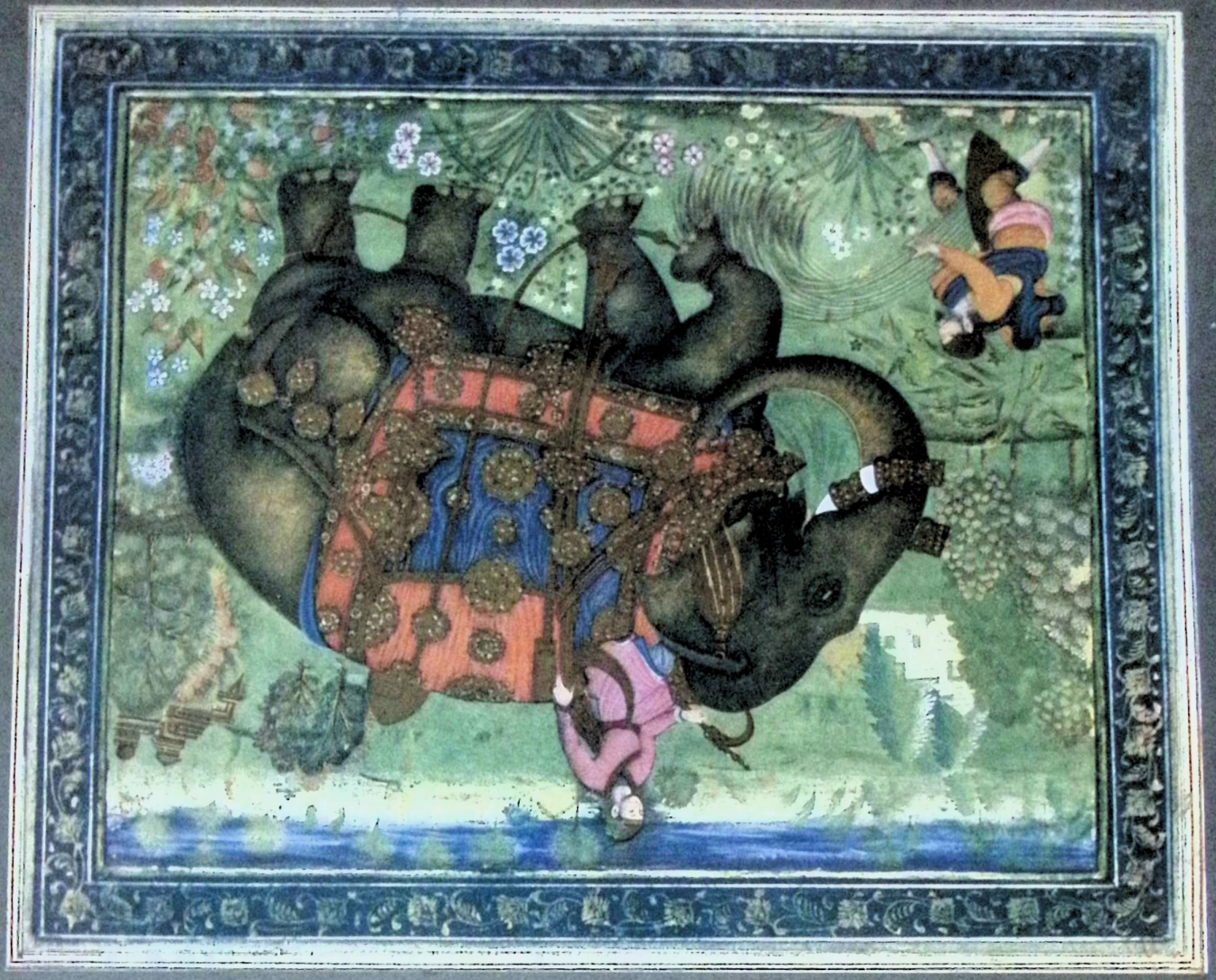
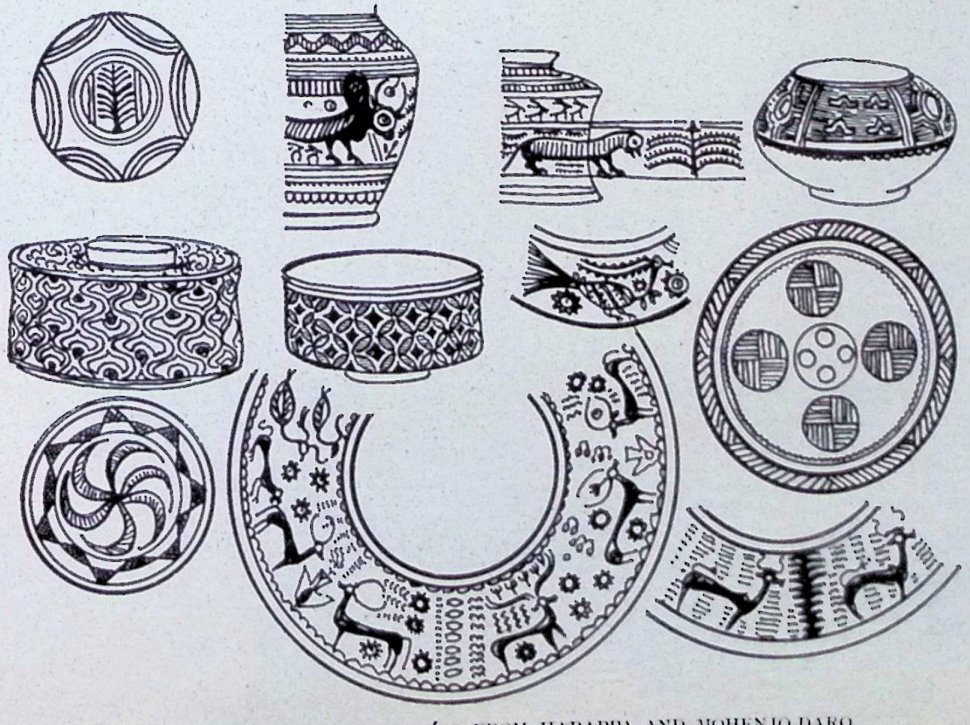




PAINTED POTTERY FROM HARAPPA AND MOHENJO-DARO



PAINTINGS ON EARTHERN PÓTS FROM HARAPPA AND MOHENJO-DARO

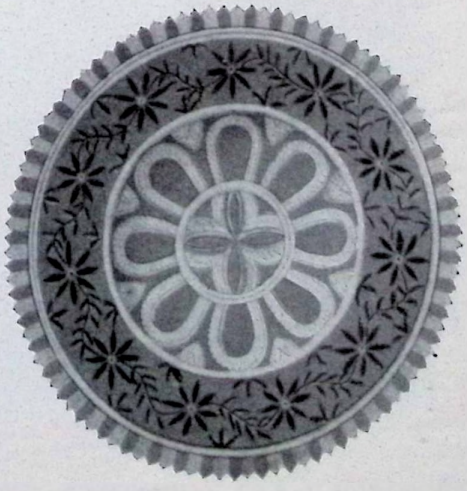


EXAMPLE OF POTTERY WITH A MOTIF FROM AJANTA FRESCO
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)









EXAMPLES OF POTTERY FROM LUCKNOW
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



MULTAN POTTERY VASE



EXAMPLE OF POTTERY

(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



COLLECTION OF BRASSES FROM MADHYA PRADESH

(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



COLLECTION OF BRASSES FROM MADHYA PRADESH

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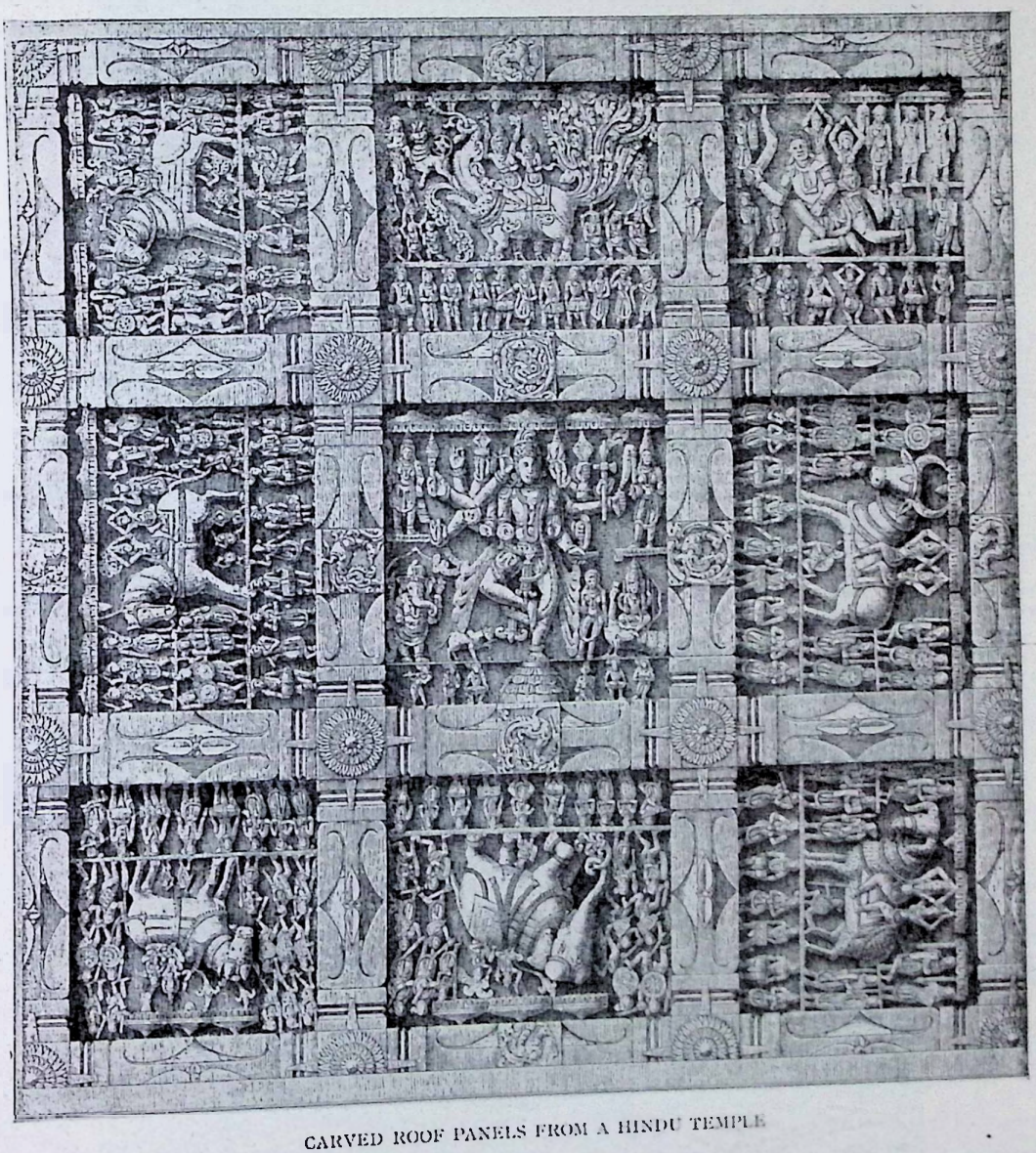
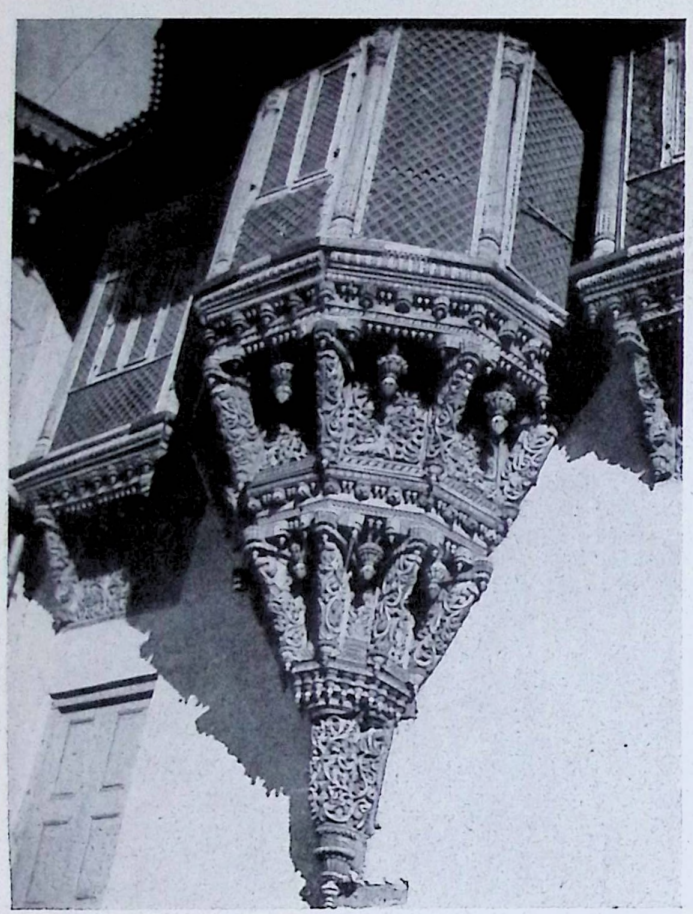
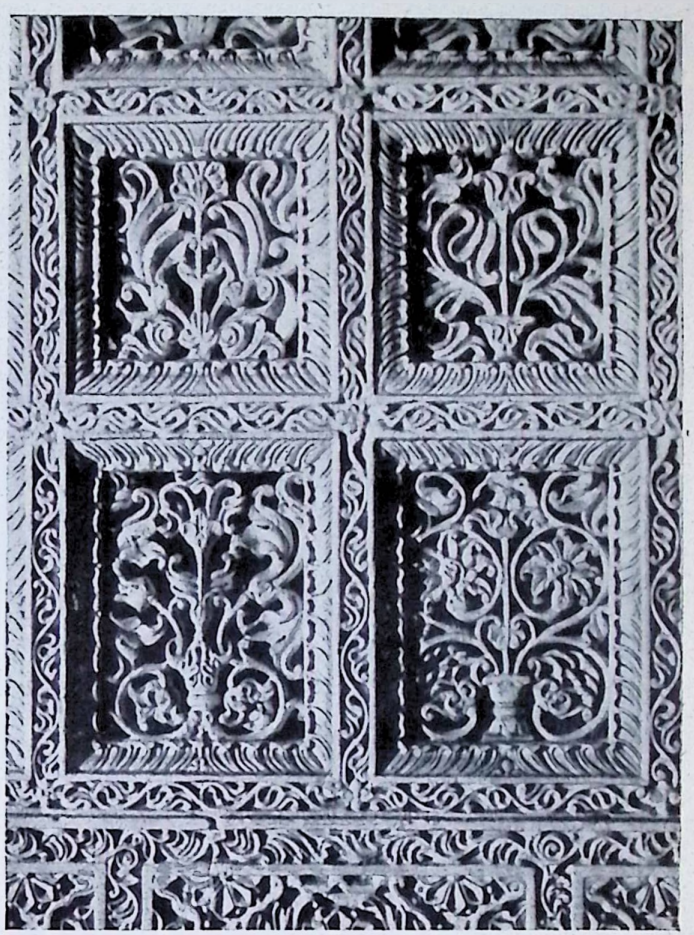


CARVED ROOF PANELS FROM A HINDU TEMPLE

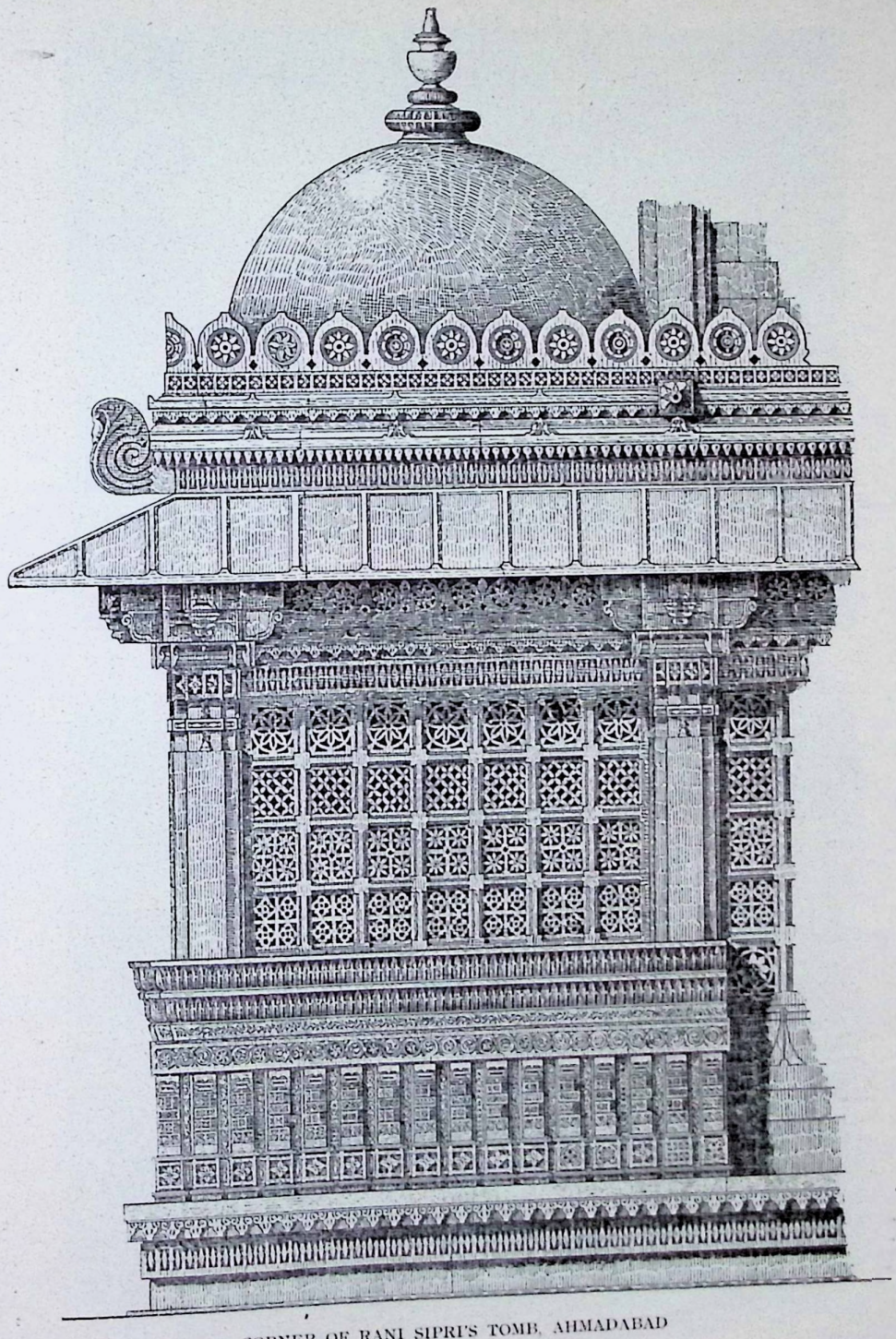


WOODEN BALCONY, PALANPUR

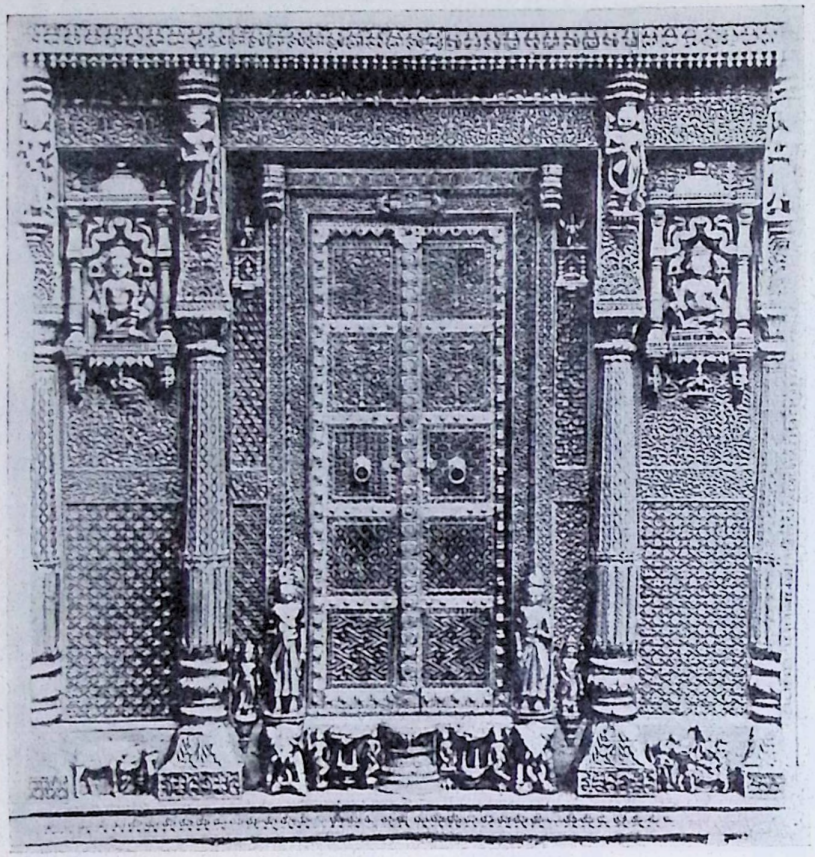


CARVING ON A TOMB AT PALANPUR

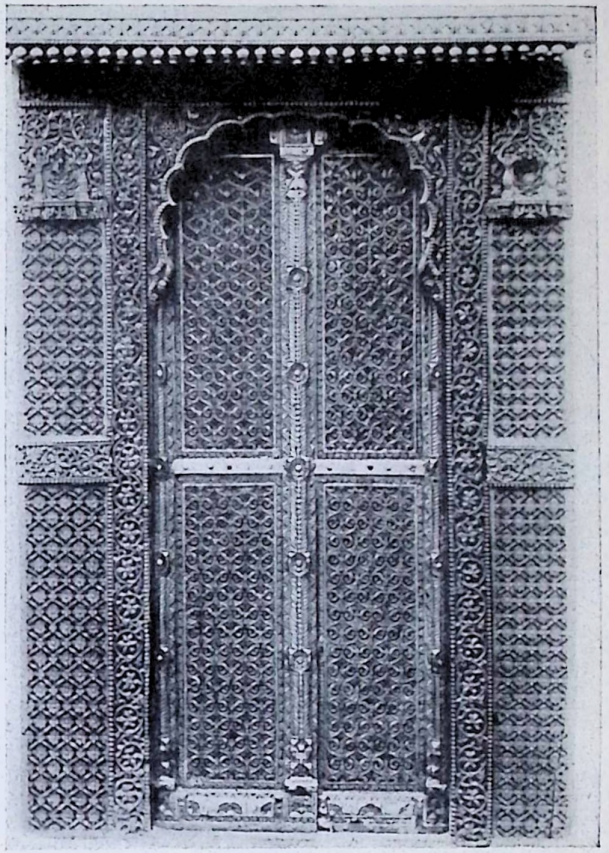
(Photos : A. L. Syed)



CORNER OF RANI SIPRI'S TOMB, AHMADABAD
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)

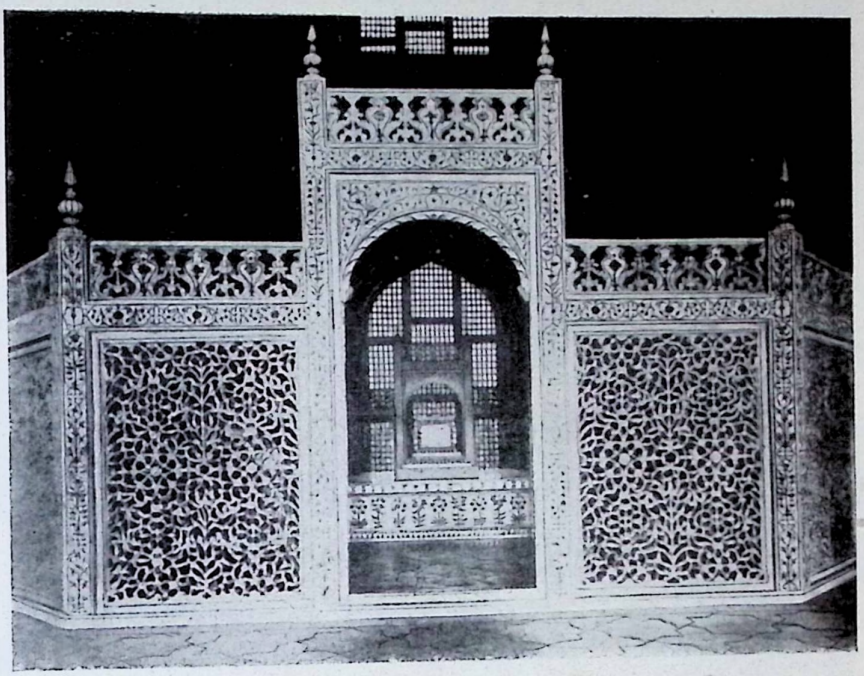


SIDE OF A JAIN HOUSE, 200 YEARS OLD, IN KAIRA, GUJARAT

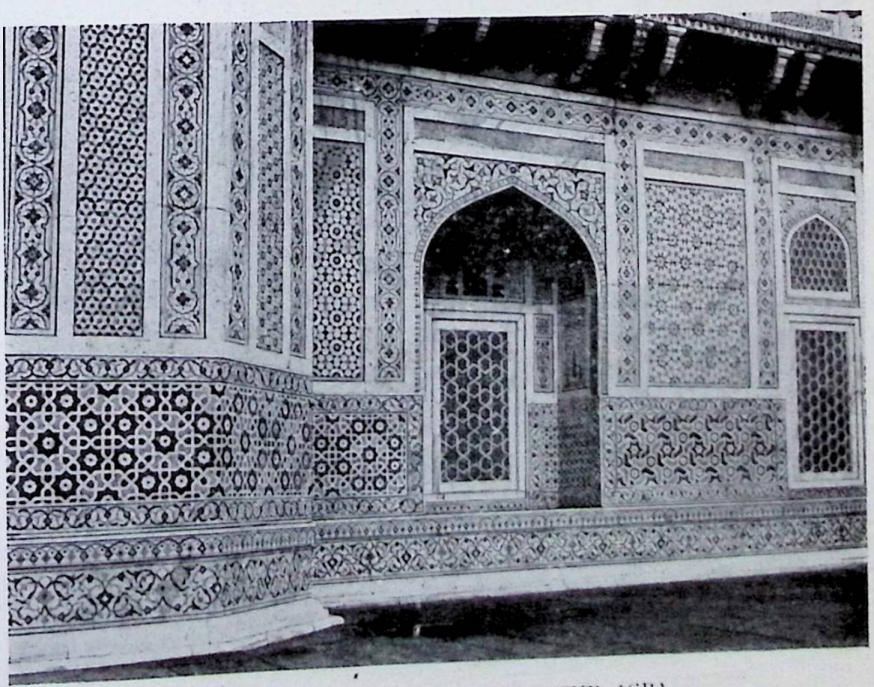


DOORWAY OF A HOUSE IN AHMADABAD

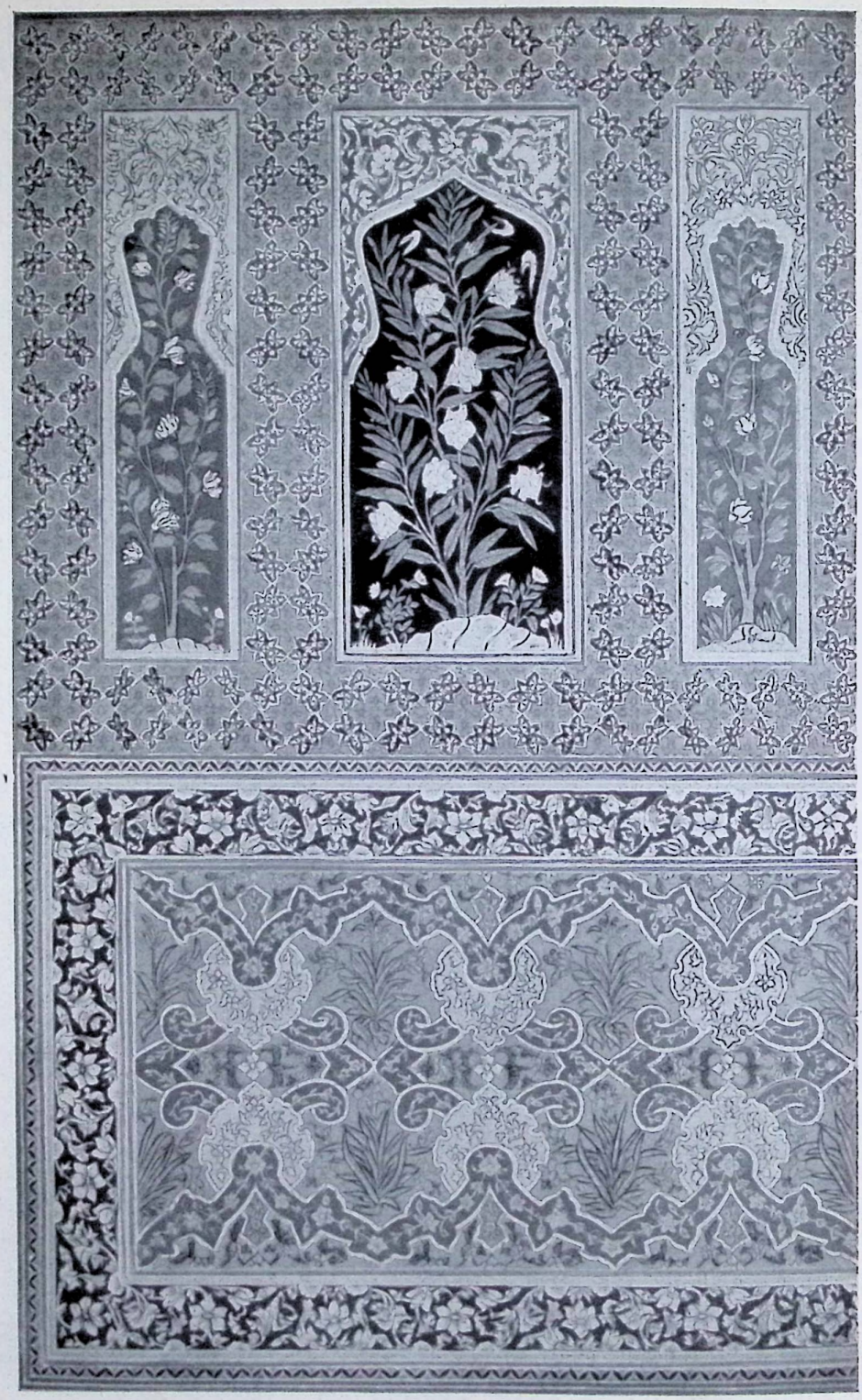
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



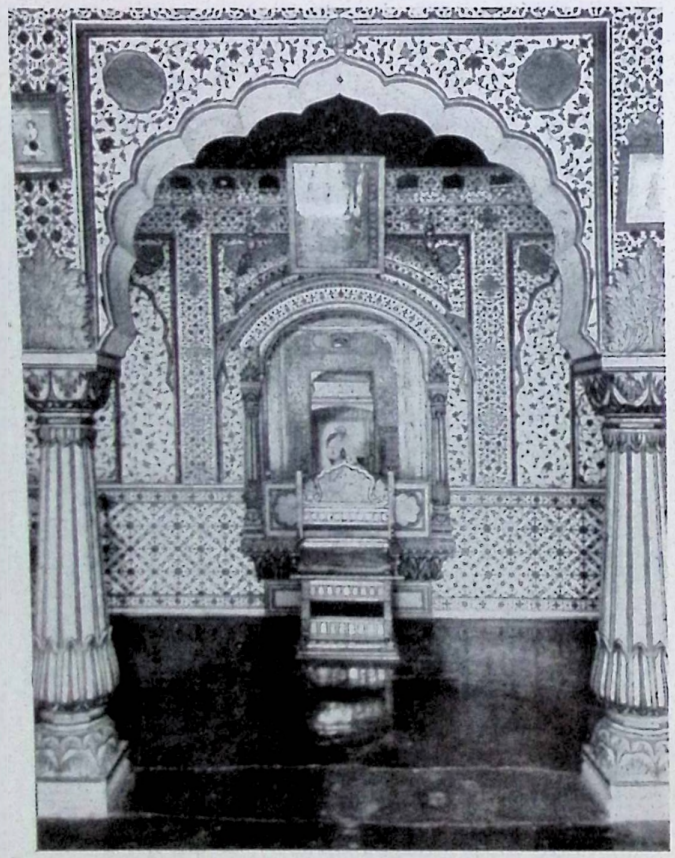
INTERIOR SCREEN IN THE TAJ MAHAL, AGRA

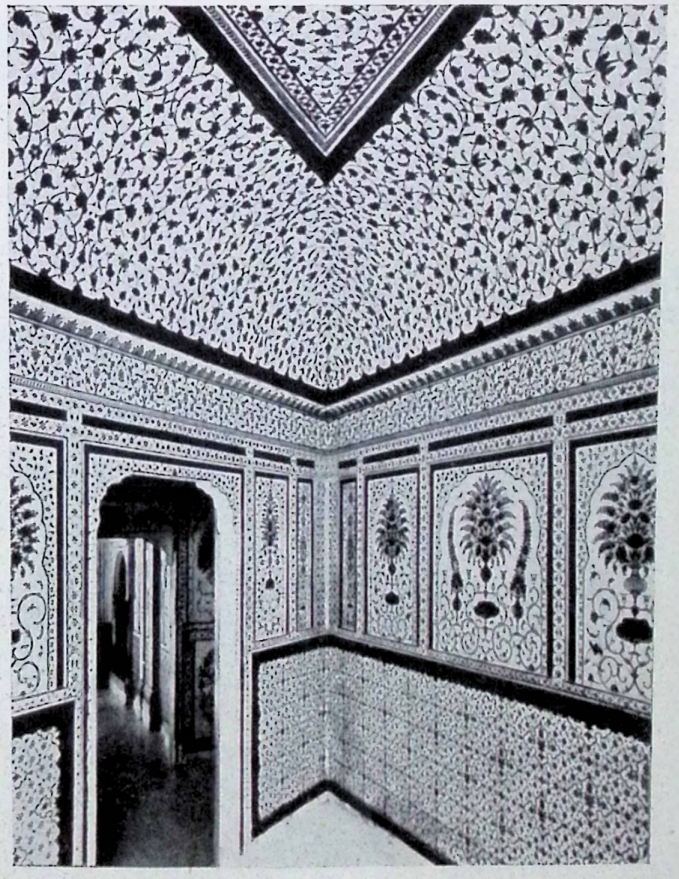


DETAIL OF ITMAD-UD-DAULAH'S TOMB, AGRA
(*Photo : A. L. Syed*)

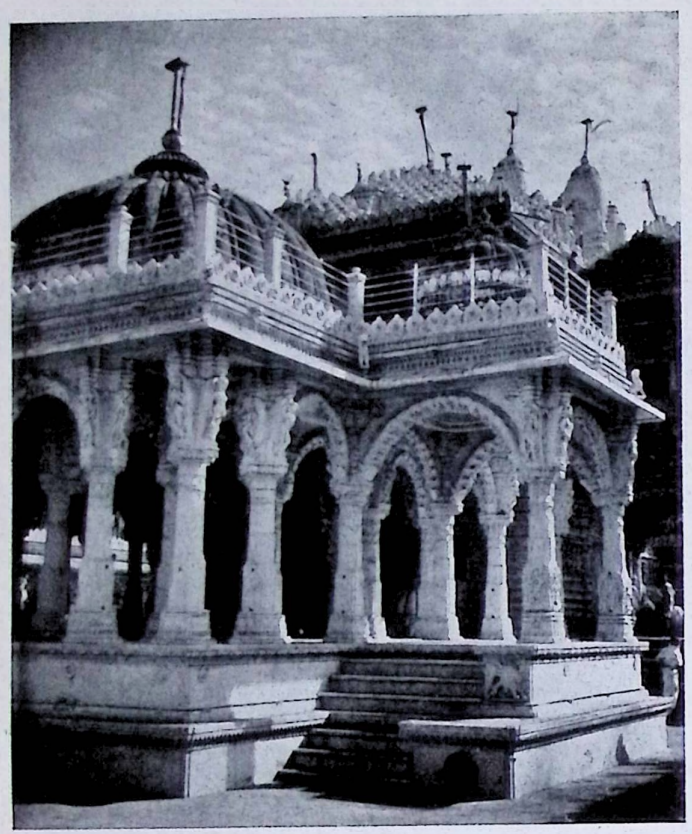


FRESCO DECORATION OF THE INTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE OF WAZIR KHAN, LAHORE
17th Century Work
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)

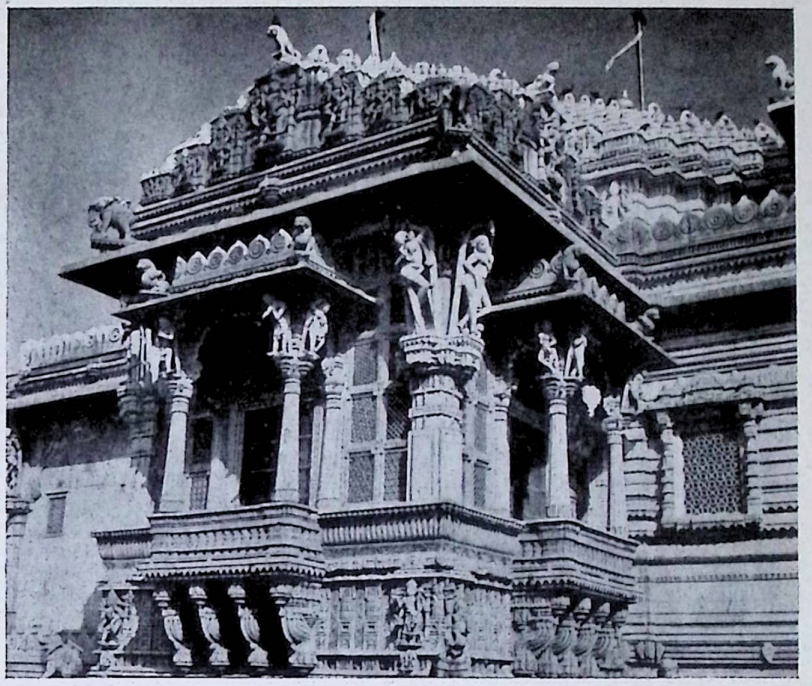




INTERIORS OF ANOOP MAHAL, FORT, BIKANER
(*Photos : A. L. Syed*)

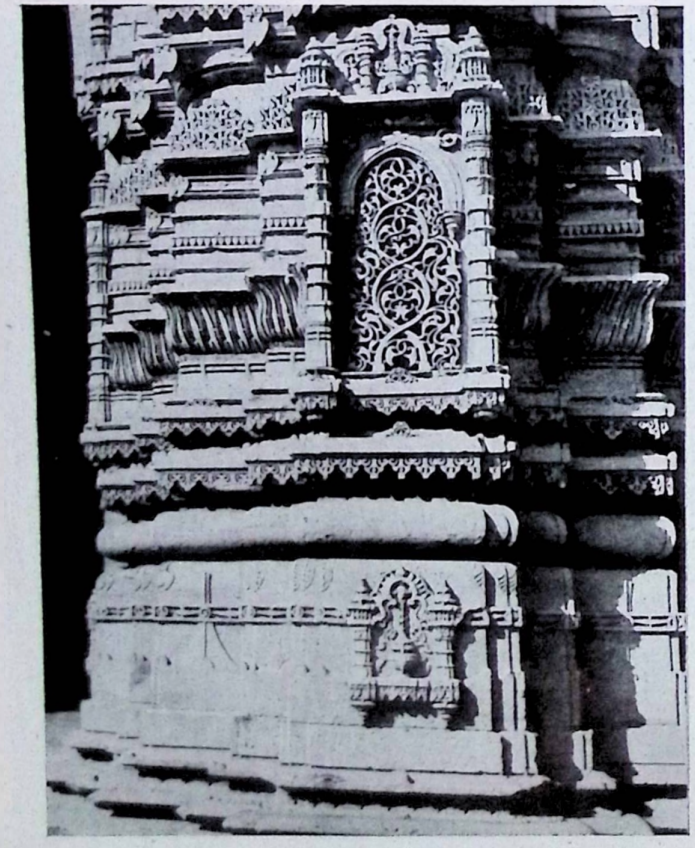


HATHISING TEMPLE, AHMADABAD

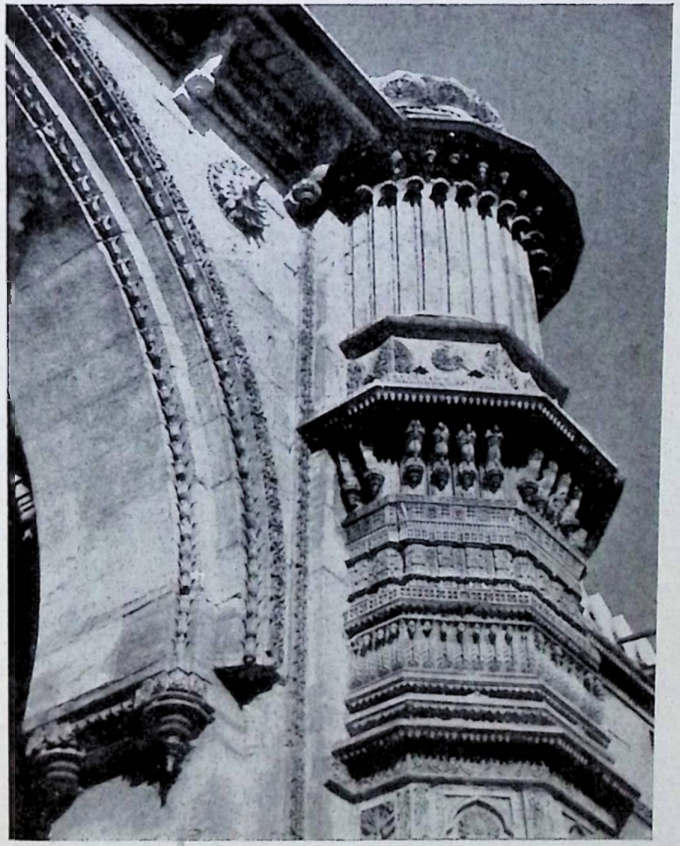


BALCONY OF HATHISING TEMPLE,
AHMADABAD

(Photos : A. L. Syed)

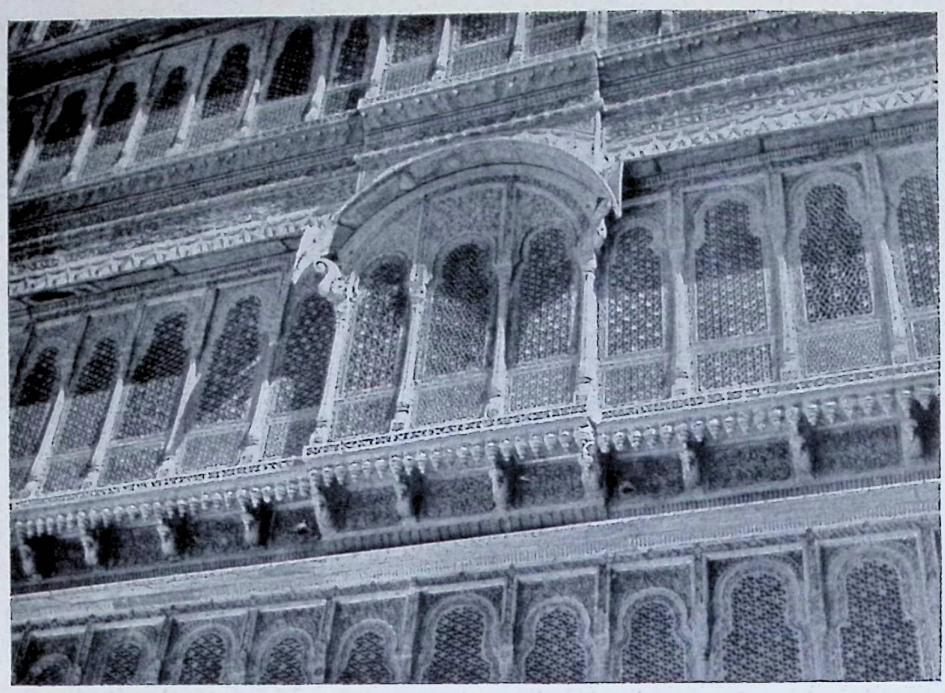


MOHAMMEDAN ARCHITECTURE AT AHMADABAD

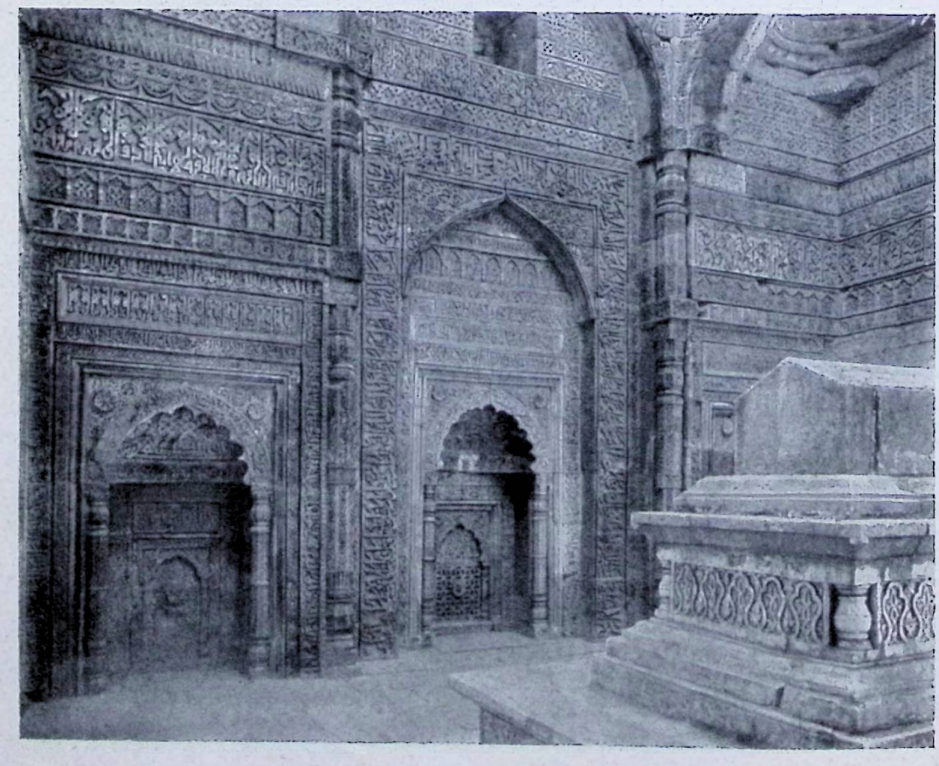


CLOSE-UP OF JAMI MASJID, AHMADABAD

(*Photos : A. L. Syed*)



DETAILS OF INNER COURTYARD, LALLGARH PALACE, BIKANER
(Photo : A. L. Syed)



TOMB OF SHAMS-UD-DIN ILTUTMISH, DELHI

churches were built according to the plans of the Portuguese, Dutch, and French settlers. Later, British engineers designed a number of important buildings based on the style of architecture that was popular in England. Two of the outstanding architectural achievements of the British rule in India are the Victoria Memorial Hall in Calcutta, and the new capital at Delhi. Though both incorporate certain structural features which are indigenous to the country, the merit of the style of the architecture of New Delhi has failed to win appreciation from lovers of Indian art.

Architecture in India is, however, still a living art. But it is being gradually Westernised, and a hybrid style composed of the structural elements of both the Indian and the Western schools, under the name of 'Modern School' is finding favour with the people. There has been, in recent times, a controversy between those who propagate a survival of the indigenous building art of the country and the others who argue for the development of an architecture on Western lines. But except in Rajputana, the Occidental approach has generally been accepted.



Ivory Carving on Door in Amba Vilas Palace, Mysore

THAT an age fascinated by the coldly inanimate glamour of the machine-god has not quite succeeded in suppressing the brilliancy of our traditions of individual skill and creative craftsmanship goes only to show that the ideals and inspiration of Indian Art have a deeper and more fundamental place in the richness and extent of our culture than is commonly imagined. If history teaches us anything, it teaches the immense vitality of the Art of India, which has remained unaffected in spite of the successive waves of foreign invasions—both military and cultural. Today, although greatly diminished in scope and possibly doomed to fade away, the ancient heritage of beauty and artistry inherent in our handicrafts lives with the same picturesqueness as in the past, and our craftsmen can still find in the supreme ideal of Beauty their greatest creative force.

The reason for this may be sought in the Hindu view of art which is simply a way of illustrating the central truth of religion and philosophy. It is this that he contemplates, this upon which his entire consciousness is concentrated, and all his art consists in revealing it. For the Indian, creation as well as contemplation of a work of art is pre-eminently a spiritual experience. His art does not take shape through any external sensuousness, but through an inner consciousness, and the artist ultimately records experiences of the soul in various significant forms and symbols.

This approach determined the status of the artist. It is likely, as Mulk Raj Anand suggests, "that in the early history of Indian art the priest himself was artist and brought the inspiration and the fecundation of the soul to the making of sacred objects." But later on he appears to have surrendered his function as artist to a class of people who took to art as a distinct profession. Their place, however, in society was as servants of the temple, and their attitude towards their work was guided by the higher principles of religion and philosophy.

The ancient Indian craftsman, in order to emphasise the religious character of his vocation, traced descent of his caste from "Vishwakarma, Lord of the Arts, master of a thousand handicrafts, carpenter of the gods, and builder of their palaces divine, fashioner of every jewel, first of craftsmen, by whose art men live, and whom a great and deathless god, they continually worship" (*Mahabharata*). This picturesque origin supplied the craftsmen not only a religious background but also a model to live up to and a high aesthetic ideal which has given them their most valuable spiritual incentive throughout the ages. The result is that the fury of men through the darkest periods of our country's history has not been able to exterminate our arts and crafts, nor has the advent of machines succeeded in entirely supplanting the artist and the craftsman.

Another very redeeming feature of our art-crafts has been a ready responsiveness to receiving influences and impulses from the art traditions and movements of other countries and nations and the assimilation of these without losing our own spirit and spiritual expressiveness. On the other hand, the new elements have sublimated, often enriching the old in various new and striking ways. Beginning as a joint creation of the Aryan and the Dravidian genius, Indian arts and crafts were first impregnated by the Greek and Central Asian influences. Afterwards, during the Muslim rule of India, they happily blended with the Islamic traditions of art, absorbing even the European features later on. Thus our artists and craftsmen have ever adapted new designs and modes for creations stamped with their own appealing individuality, fineness and delicacy, the subtle flavour of beauty and

the heritage of an age-long culture, creating not only for the needs of the body, but also for the needs of the mind and soul.

We have a precious heritage of beauty and art in our pottery, our idols and dolls, architecture, household wares and furniture, carvings, engravings, textiles, fabrics, and jewellery. In all these the craftsmanship of our artisans reached tremendous heights and even in its decline is the marvel of the world.

POTTERY

The master-potters of the world are the Indians who have worked in clay to produce a remarkably beautiful style of pottery. Birdwood writing of pottery in his *Industrial Arts of India* says: "Truest to nature, in the directness and simplicity of its forms and their adaptation to use, and purest in art, of all its homely and sumptuary handicrafts is the pottery of India." It is also of the highest antiquity, since perhaps no feature of Indian Art has such a long tradition of artistic achievement as our pottery. Way back to the Indus Valley civilisation, glazed pottery of pleasing and varied shapes with rich decorative designs in black or red filled, enriched and illuminated every nook and corner of our domestic life. One is ever struck by the variety of shapes, beautiful workmanship and the advanced technique of the pottery of Mohenjo-daro, the specimens of which are, almost without exception, obviously the work of people trained in a long and well established craft. In the sculptures of Bhubaneshwar, the form of the *Kalash*, treated with great taste as an architectural decoration, emphasises again the excellence of the potter's art in Ancient India.

Although a higher development of the art of pottery has been confined mainly to the making of jars, flower vases, bowls, and similar other objects, on account of the orthodox Hindu prejudices that pottery is easily defiled and must be destroyed when once used, a very high degree of exquisite craftsmanship can be discovered in other works as well of the artist potters. Today, in every village the hereditary potter may be seen sitting by his wheel "moulding the swift revolving clay by the natural curves of his hands," turning out products in the same antique forms as represented in the paintings of Ajanta.

Painted pottery, both glazed and unglazed, is known throughout the whole of India, but that of the North exhibits a superior craftsmanship, fascinating in its exuberant pictorial and decorative schemes with hundreds of scintillating motifs. The painted flower vases of Khurja with the free and bold brush work in all colours are specimens of fine porcelain goods in extremely graceful shapes. Delhi, Rampur and Gwalior too are places noted for beautifully painted glazed pottery. Potters of Nizamabad and Chunar in Eastern U.P. work with red burning clays to produce tea-sets, flower-vases, plates and bowls painted with silvery floral decorations. The charm of this pottery is the simplicity and symmetry of its form which is, "When unadorned, adorn'd the most."

Burhanpur pottery has an old reputation. It is an ornamental glazed earthenware of a brown ground colour diversified with decorations in light yellow lines. In the farther south, Vellore, North Arcot and Kumbhakonam are famous places for glazed pottery. The glaze is either a clear emerald green or deep dull brown. Black pottery, painted with a special preparation of yellow earth mixed with other substances has been made in Madura for ages past.

In all these modes of pottery, the Indian potter invariably maintains inviolate the beauty of form, harmony of colouring and surface decoration, together with a perfect unity of purpose, without a seeming premeditation as if the work were the creation of nature rather than of art.

IDOLS AND DOLLS

Idols and images for worship or for decoration, and dolls as playthings for children, have a continuous history which can be followed from the earliest times.

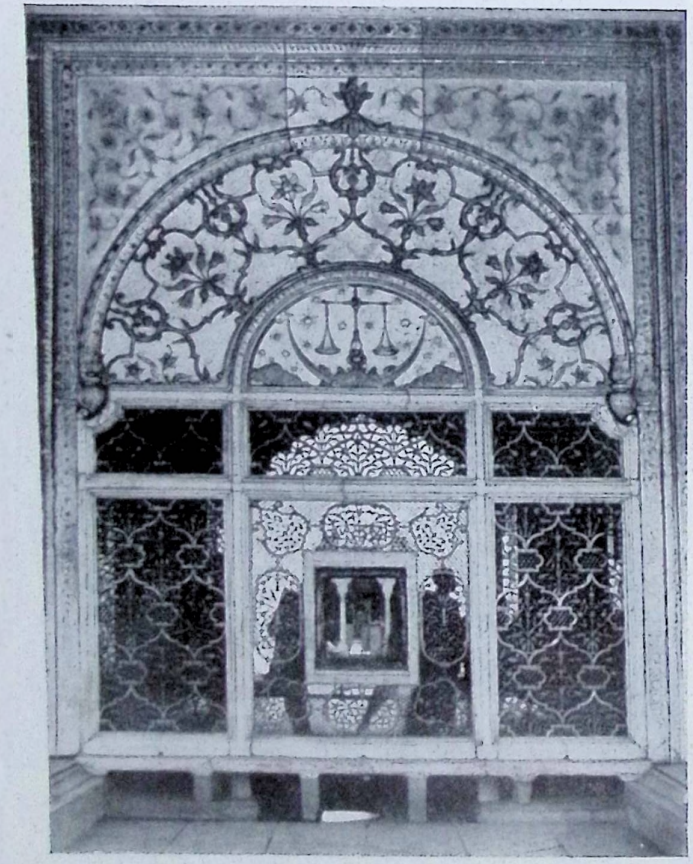
For centuries India has been hailed as the land of great temples and statues unequalled for artistic craftsmanship. The large Yaksha statues of the Mauryans, the carved railings and gates of the Bharhut and Sanchi Stupas with incredibly lively images of gods, goddesses, men and animals, the erotic figures in the temples of Central India and Orissa, the Trimurti in the Elephanta Caves, the bronze image of Nataraja, the elaborately sculptured pillared hall of Madura and the great temple of Tanjore are striking examples of India's sculptural excellence.

This traditional versatility in the art of modelling has been inherited by the craftsmen in several parts of India who have continued to keep alive the great artistic heritage. Some of the most beautiful images both in bronze and in stone of gods and goddesses, are today made in the villages of Mysore by the rural craftsmen exhibiting the artistic sense and skill of their forefathers in the art. The stone images are made from a special kind of material called "Krishnashila" and everything is done strictly in accordance with the standards and methods set out in the *Shilpshastras*. No drawings are prepared, the sculptors just imagining the essentials of the features of the gods in their minds ; and then with infinite patience, the minutest details are carved out carefully with perfect chiselling, presenting finally an exquisitely sculptured idol. The hammer and the chisel of the craftsmen of Jaipur have turned out some of the finest specimens of Hindu art embodying both grace and beauty. Like Mysore's, the images represent gods and goddesses which are everywhere in great demand for the temples.

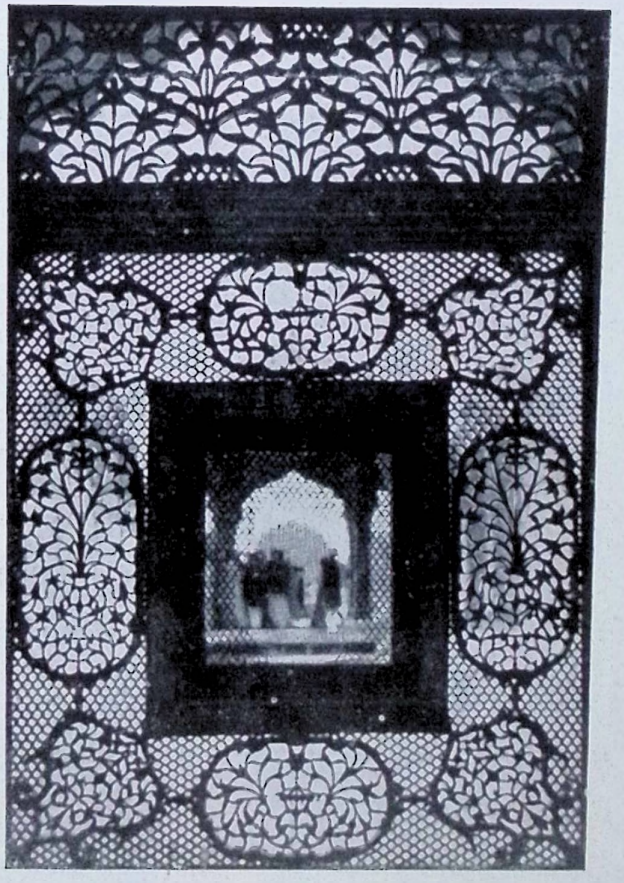
Clay is a cheap and easily manipulated material for modelling, with which we have for ages made dolls and images of great beauty of design and execution. Before the Vedic deities filled the temples, the primitive non-Vedic gods, the Yakshas and the Yakshanis in the forms of pretty clay toys, satisfied the craving of the human soul for the Divine, and then later on shared in the temples the devotion offered to the Puranic gods and goddesses. The Mohenjo-daro and Harappa excavations show a highly developed clay doll-making art at a period of history about 2500 years before Christ. Among the earliest surviving dolls dug up at Mohenjo-daro are a pottery toy of an animal with a movable head, a monkey nursing a baby and a little toy bird with its beak open, evidently singing. The figures are imbued with life and expression and their poses and actions are excellent. There is also a reference to a painted clay doll of a peacock in Kalidasa's *Shakuntala*, and in the "Clay Cart" of Shudraka we are referred several times to a clay cart toy.

Today, the clay images manufactured in many parts of Bengal, Maharashtra and U. P. afford a striking example of the hereditary skill of our craftsmen in the art of modelling. Lucknow, from Mughal times, has been the centre for producing popular clay figures of quaint types and great beauty, painted and dressed up in muslins, silks and spangles ; and the models of fruits are so true to nature as to defy detection. The craftsmen of Bengal, however, exhibit plastic talent of a high quality, "which demonstrate that among the poor illiterate village potters of Bengal there still survives a precious art tradition inherited from the master artists of medieval Bengal by virtue of which they can produce, out of the humble native clay of Bengal images which throb with life and movement and exhibit as high a degree of plastic genius as has ever been found in any sculpture wrought out of the more aristocratic medium of stone or marble." (G. S. Dutt.) The most life-like representations of Lakshmi on her owl, Saraswati with her Veena, Ganesh with his elephant's trunk, the peasant, the fisherman, the milkman, the hermit and the farmer in their typical costumes and with their various appurtenances are admirably modelled, perfect in every detail, by the potters of Krishnanagar. The figures are made from plaster moulds, but the details are carefully worked in by the artists individually. The costumes are tailored or woven to fit the size of the toys and the other accessories like the fish-net, and hoe are skilfully made from bits of bamboo, wood and string.

Image makers in Maharashtra get busy weeks before Ganesh Chaturthi turning out beautiful and artistic clay figures of Ganpati by thousands for the festival.

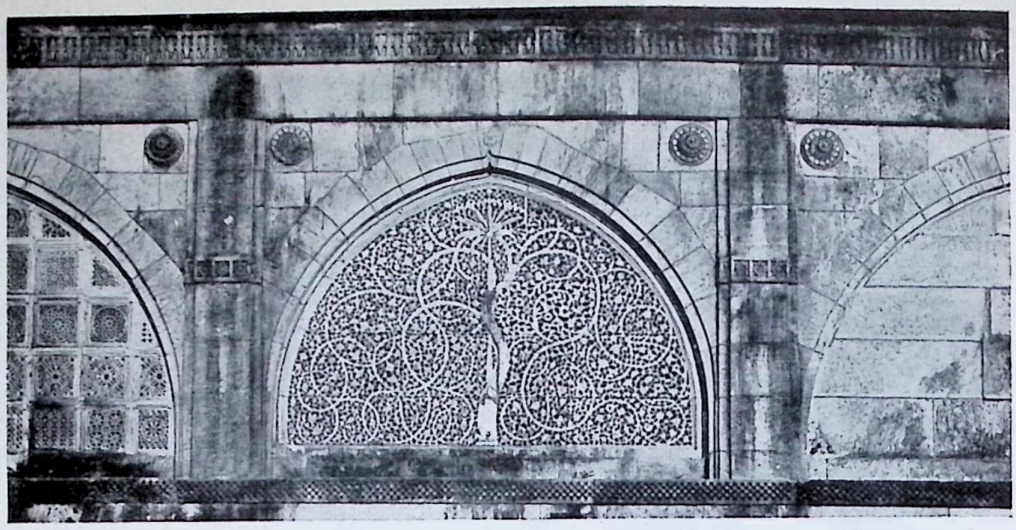


INTERIOR OF DIWAN-I-KHAS, DELHI

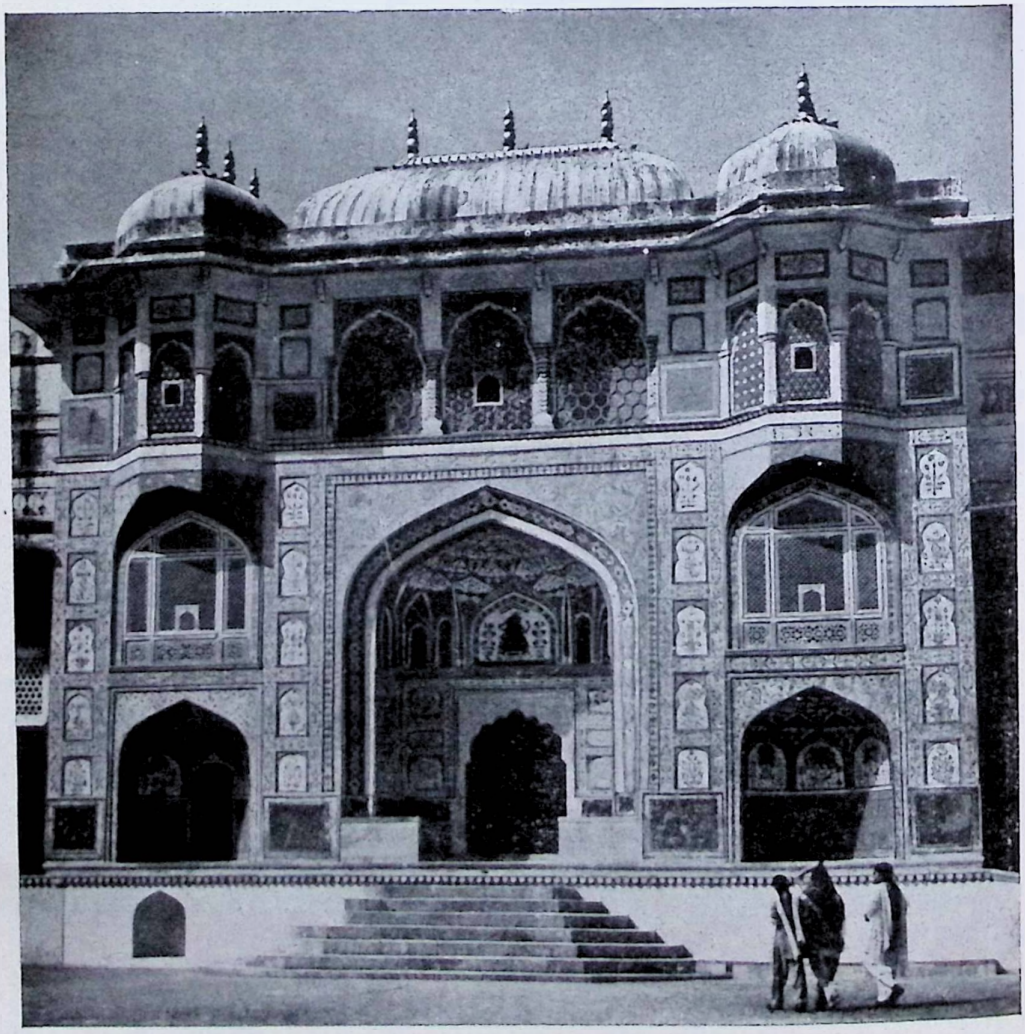


MARBLE CARVING OF DIWAN-I-KHAS, DELHI

(Photos : A. L. Syed)



PERFORATED WINDOW, SIDDI SAYYAD MOSQUE, AHMADABAD
(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



ZENANA PALACE AT AMBER, JAIPUR
(Photo : A. L. Syed)

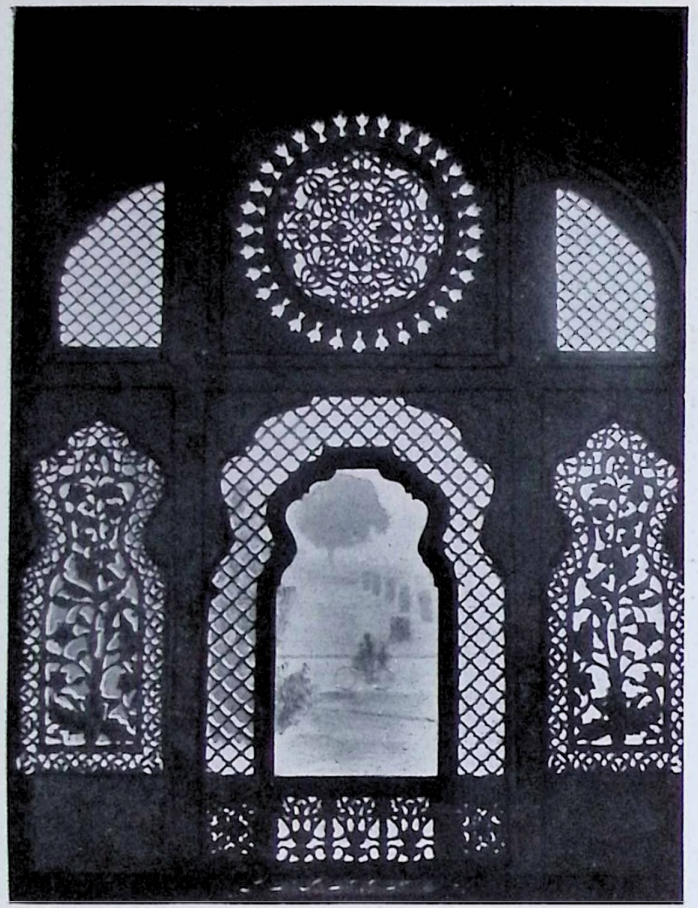


CARVINGS ON QUTB MINAR, DELHI

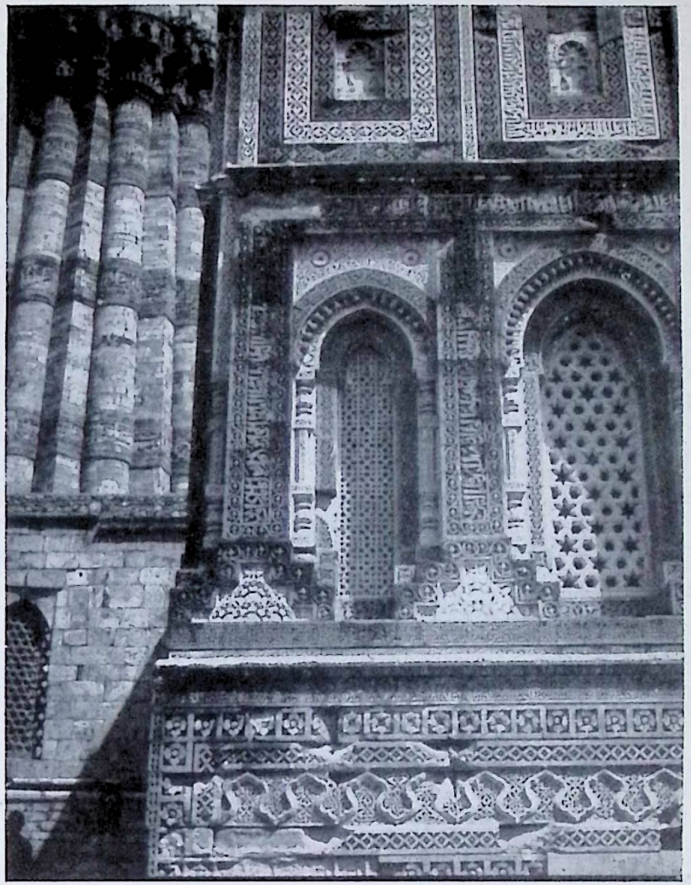


CLOSE-UP OF QUTB MINAR, DELHI

(Photos : A. L. Syed)

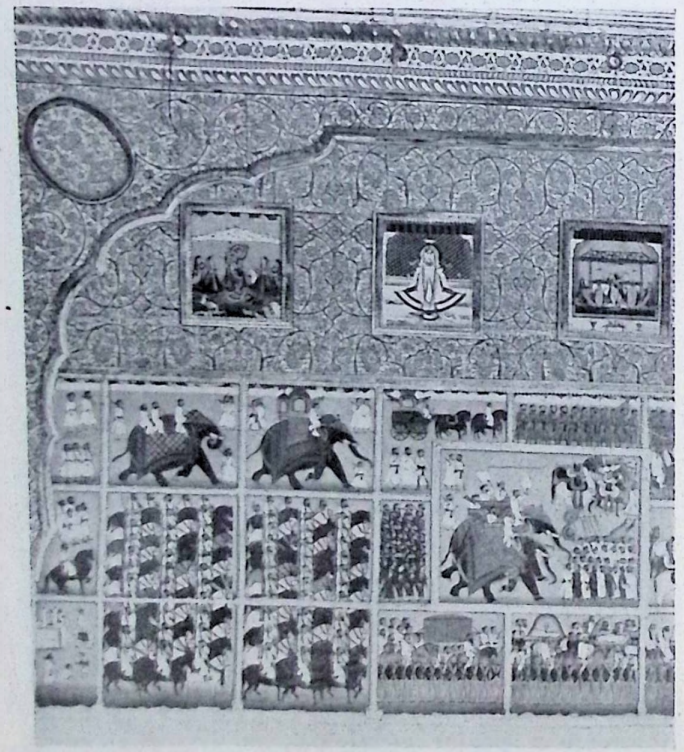


LATTICE WORK OF RAM NIVAS, JAIPUR

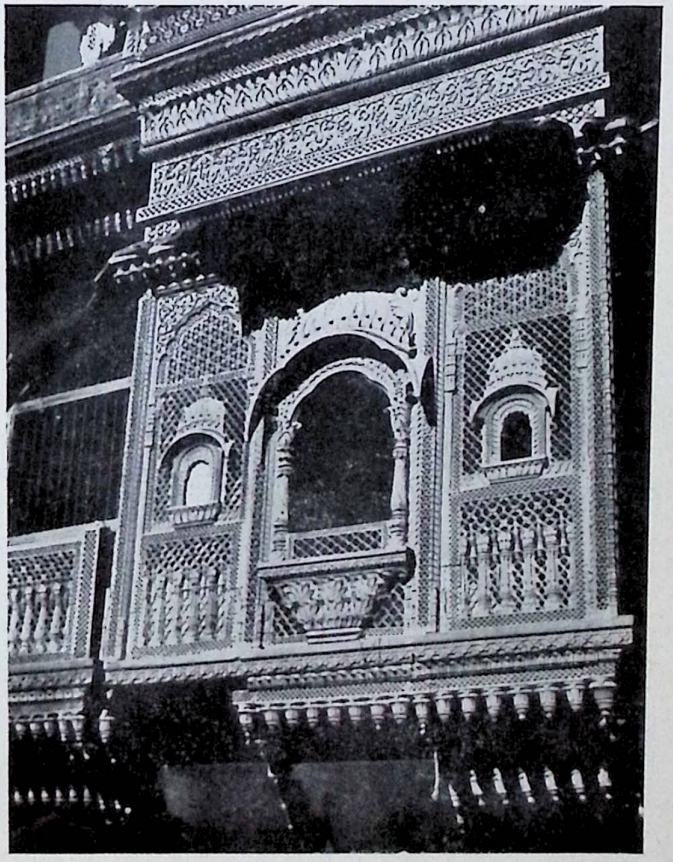


CARVINGS ON QUTB MINAR, DELHI

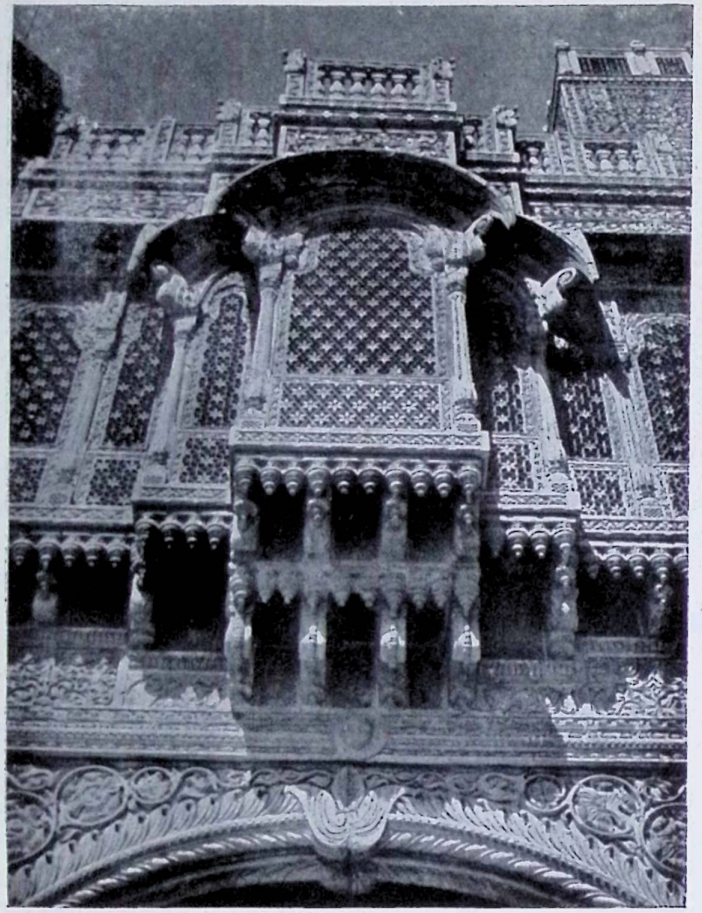
(*Photos : A. L. Syed*)



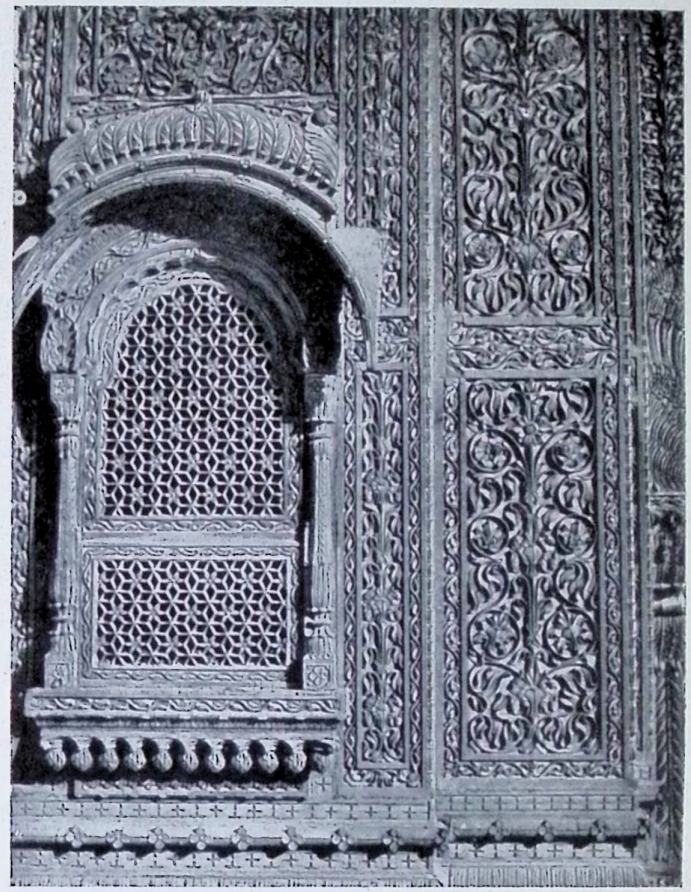
WALL DECORATIONS OF PALACE AT SIKAR, RAJASTHAN



CARVED WOODEN BALCONY, PUSHKAR
(*Photos : A. L. Syed*)



PALACE FACADE, LALLGARH, BIKANER



CARVINGS ON PALACE AT LALLGARH, BIKANER

(Photos : A. L. Syed)

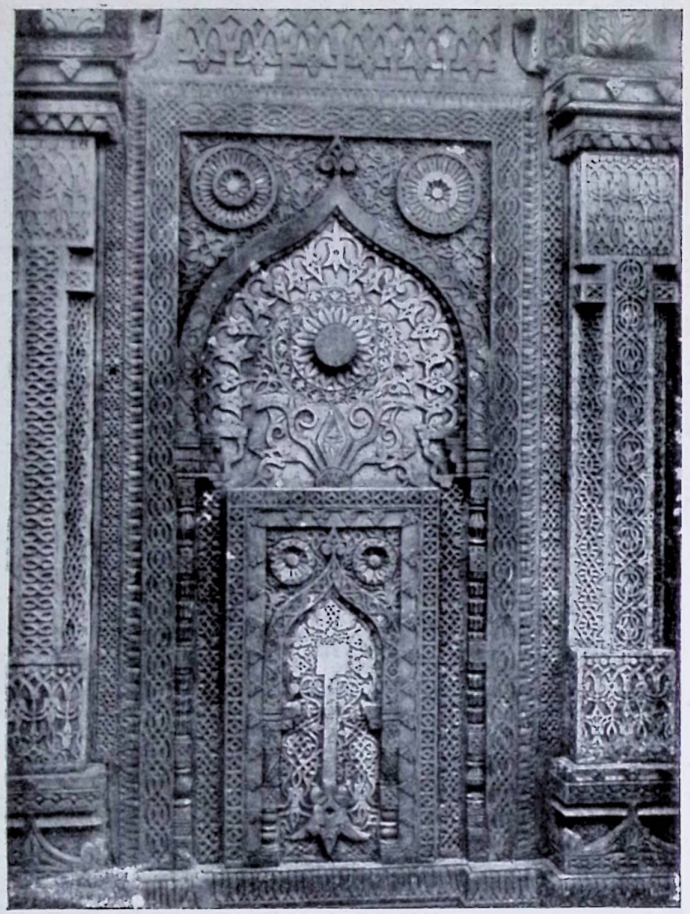


CARVINGS ON HIRA GATE, DABHOI

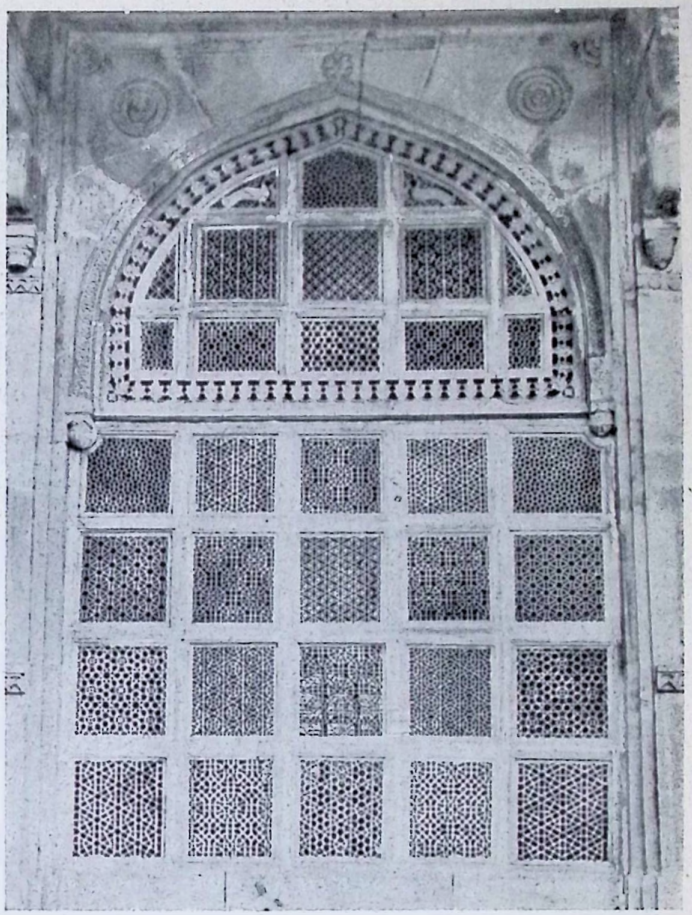


BALCONY OF HIRA GATE, DABHOI

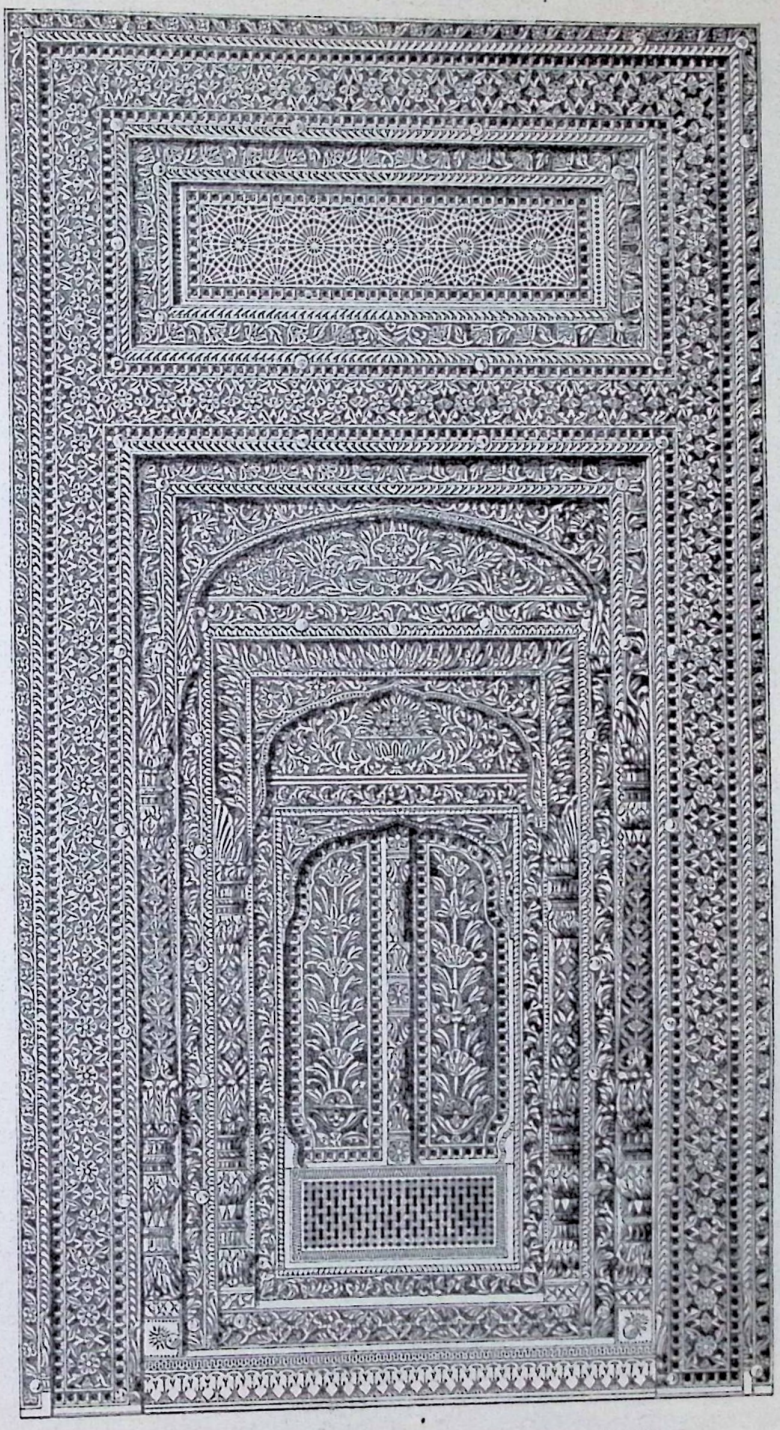
(Photos : A. L. Syed)



CARVED MIHRAB IN A TOMB AT CHANDERI, GWALIOR
(Copyright : Archaeological Department of India)



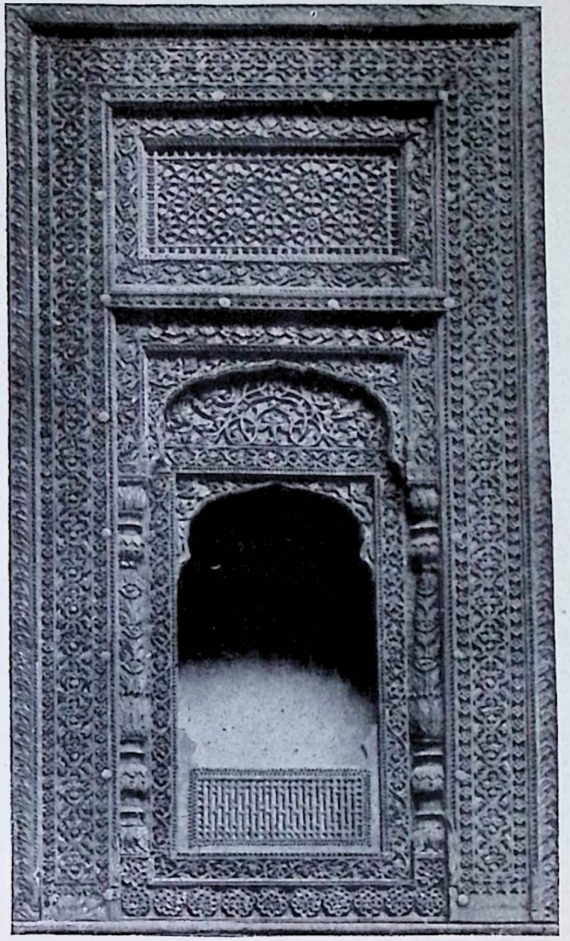
FRETWORK WINDOW OF THE TOMB OF MUHAMMAD GHAUS, GWALIOR



WOODEN DOOR CARVED IN DEODAR WOOD, PUNJAB
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)

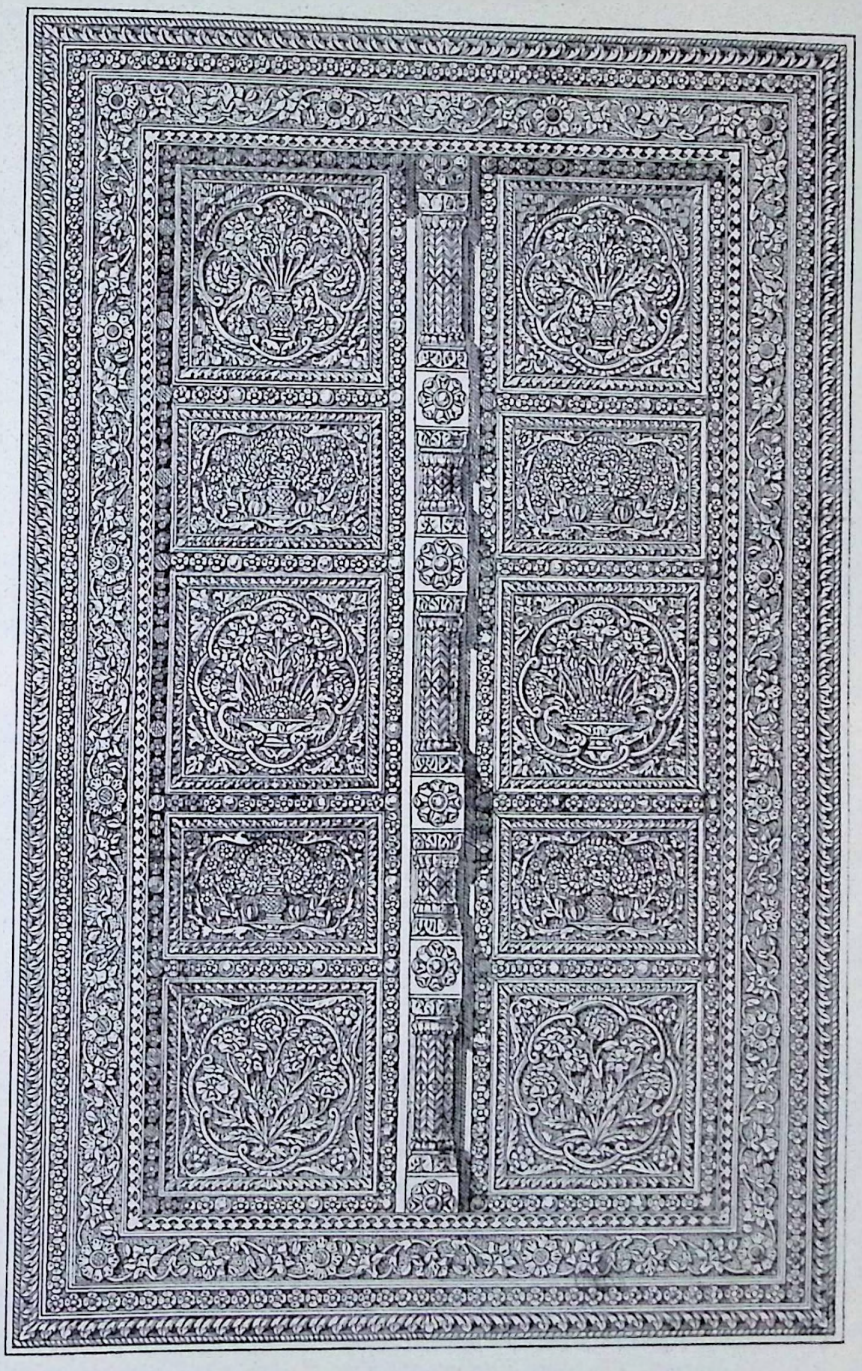


CARVED DOOR IN SISUM WOOD, PUNJAB

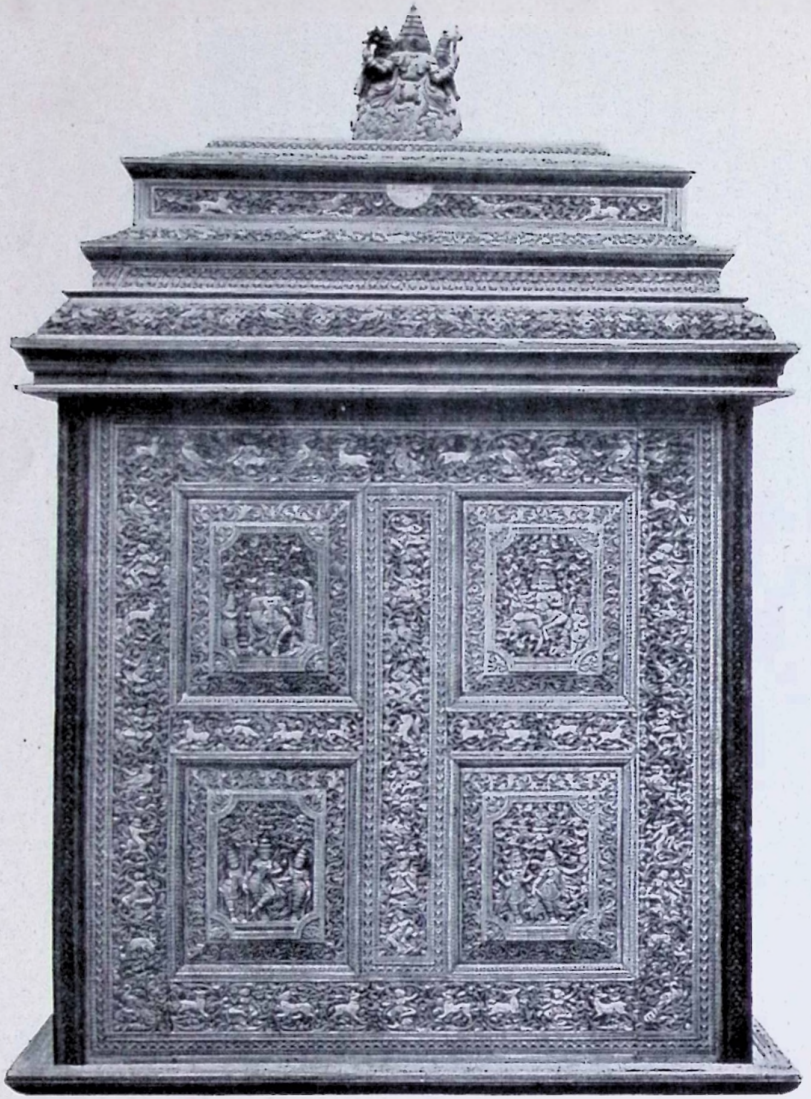


CARVED WINDOW IN DEODAR WOOD

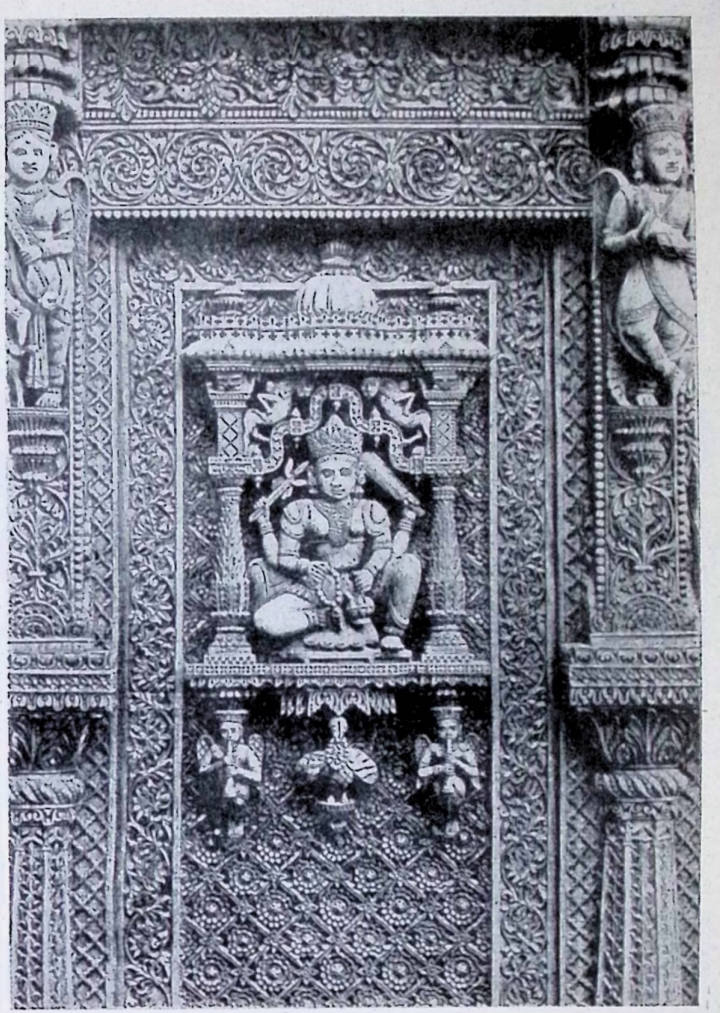
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



CARVED WOODEN DOOR, AMRITSAR
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



BACK OF A CARVED SANDALWOOD CABINET



CARVED SCREEN FROM AHMADABAD

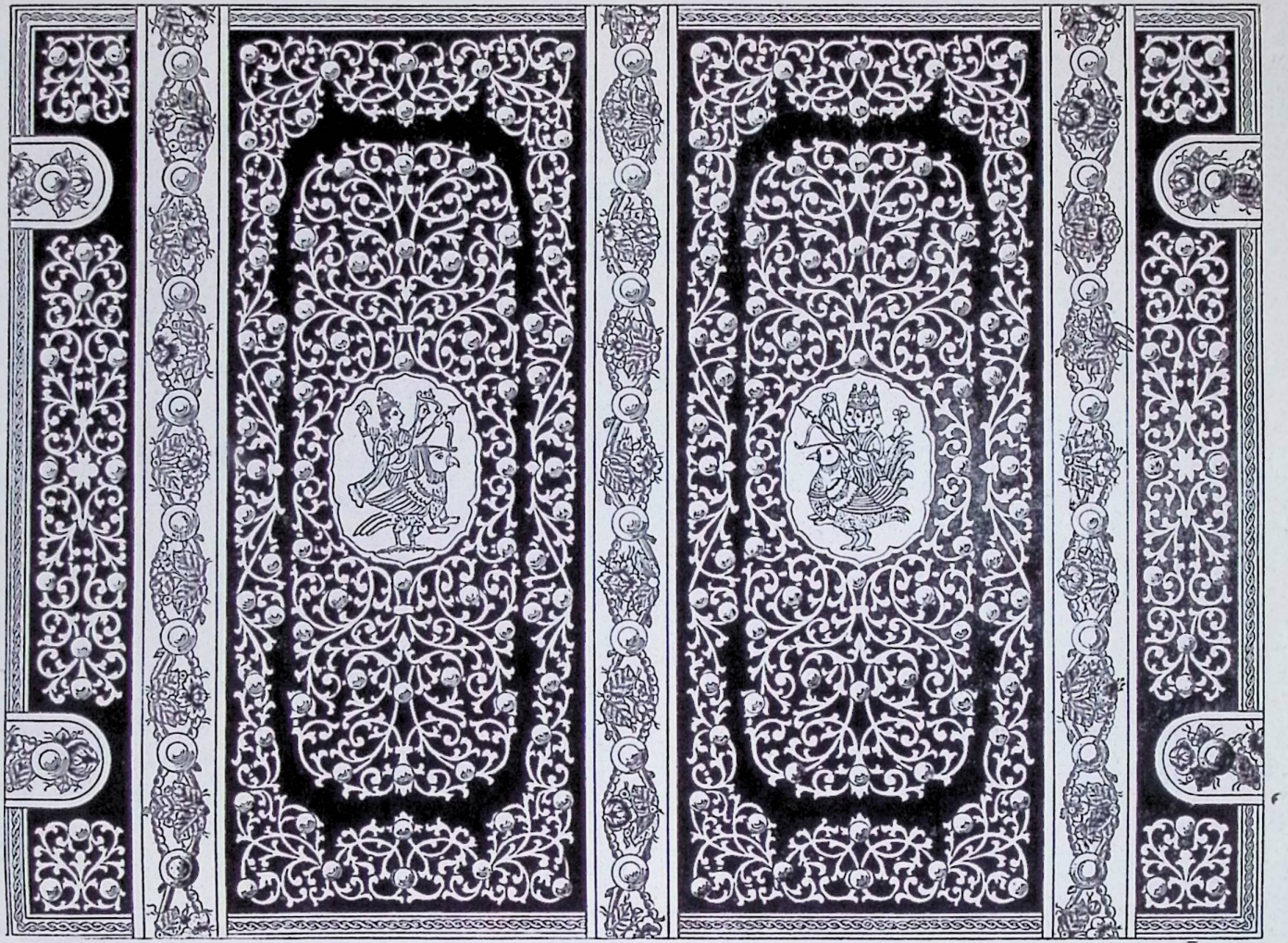
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



IVORY CARVINGS

4, 4a, Bombay. 4b, 4c, 4d, Travancore. 9b, 9c, Punjab. 9d, Madras.

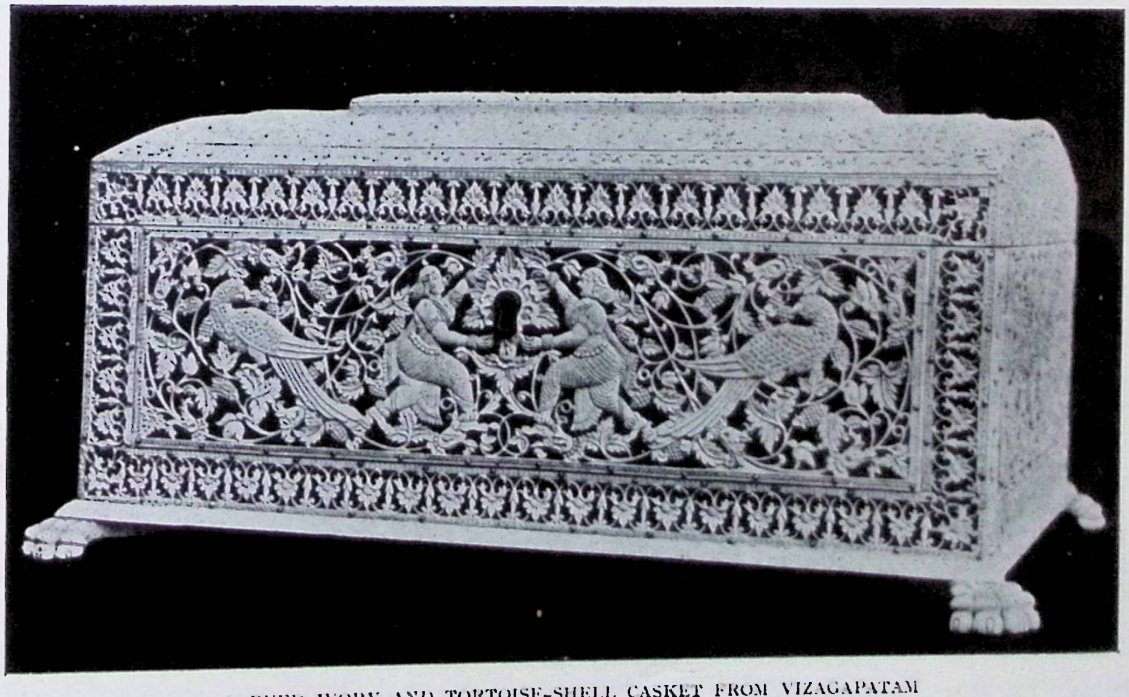
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



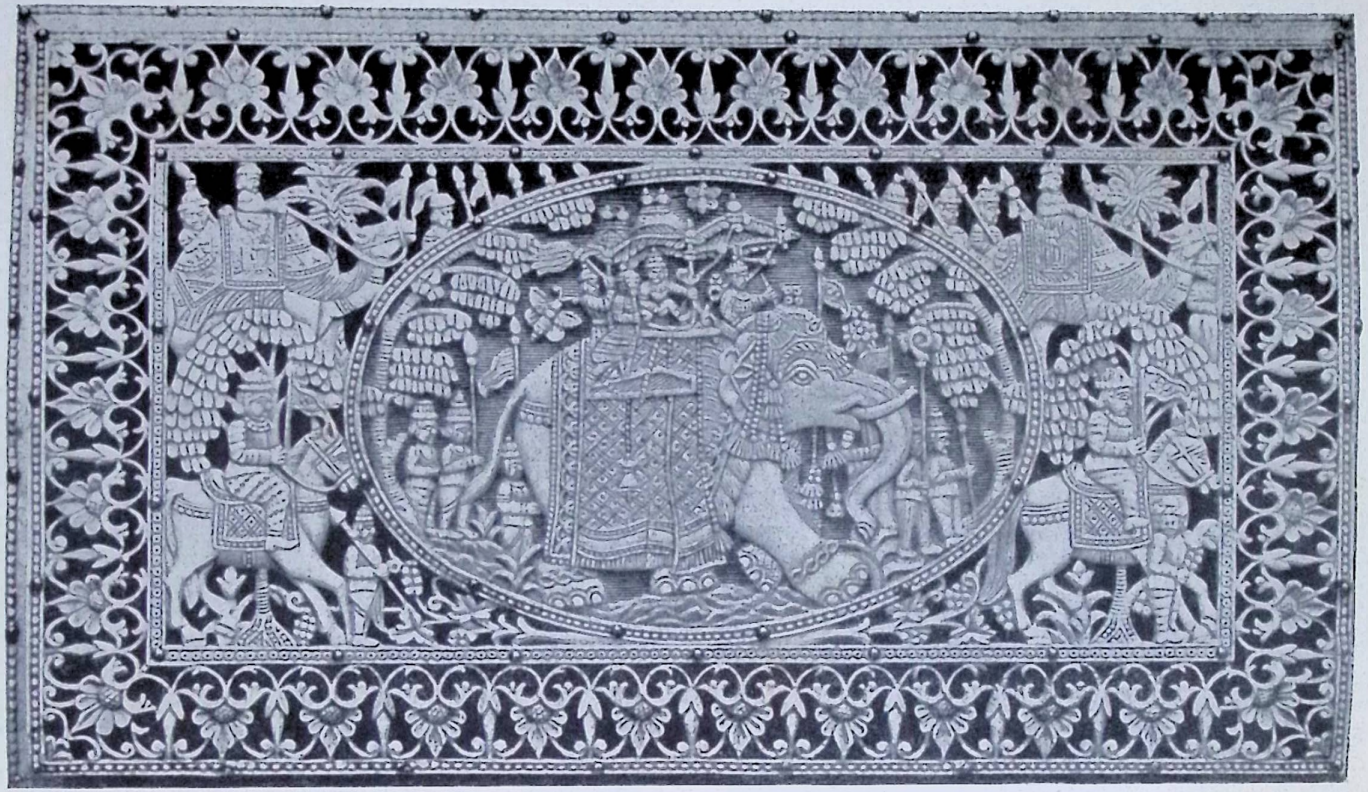
CARVED IVORY AND HORN WRITING CASE FROM VIZAGAPATAM
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



SIDE PANEL OF IVORY AND TORTOISE-SHELL CASKET FROM VIZAGAPATAM



CARVED IVORY AND TORTOISE-SHELL CASKET FROM VIZAGAPATAM
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



LID OF AN IVORY AND TORTOISE-SHELL BOX FROM VIZAGAPATAM
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)

Besides stone and clay, toys of ivory, metal and sandalwood as well have been popular in the country from very ancient times. In our early literature, there are frequent references to *danta-puttalika* (ivory doll) and *loha-puttalika* (metal doll). One of the earliest ivory statuettes, a beautiful doll, datable to the first century A.D. has been discovered from the ancient Italian city of Pompeii, where it had been taken by the Roman traders from India. Today, Mysore is a place well known for ivory and sandal-wood image-making of considerable delicacy and finesse. The objects are generally richly caparisoned elephants, state gondolas in gala trim, tigers, cows, peacocks, all carved as statuettes; and hunting, festive, and ceremonial scenes and mythological subjects carved in relief.

Banaras has for long been famous for its painted wooden and shining brass toys, while the craftsmen of Bellary and Madura still make beautiful toys of teak and red-wood. The painted wooden toys of Kondapalli in the south are unique for artistic merit, colour and attractiveness. Specimens of these toys are exhibited in many important museums of the world. The Howdah or the Ambari elephant toy is one of the most popular. The caparisoned elephant and the men riding on it, sets of different figures representing village life, and also models of animals, Kolattam dance, temples, huts and incarnations of Vishnu, have each been magnificently painted in typical old Indian range of colours, brick-red, ochre, olive-green, indigo and black, displaying excellent plastic quality.

WOOD DECORATIONS APPLIED TO ARCHITECTURE

In Ancient India, the carpenter held an important place in the social life of the village and was called the *Sutradhar* or the holder of the line. He made chariots for the warriors, and was also by profession a driver of chariots both in peace and in war. Carpenters are mentioned in the *Rig Veda*, and in the time of Manu they were sufficiently numerous to be recognised into a separate caste. That wood-carving was not an insignificant art is proved by the fact that the *Brihat Sanhita* and the *Silpa Shastra* give full directions as to the season and manner of felling a tree, seasoning of the wood and the making of the different articles required.

On account of the perishable nature of wood, we have however no surviving remnants of the past glories in wood-carving, but from the accounts coming down to us in various historical and literary works, we can safely assume that wood decoration as applied to architecture has for a long time been a very popular and highly developed art in the country. It is now universally accepted by eminent art-critics that the richly carved panels and window screens found in the earliest architecture now extant in India in the rock-cut temples of Karli, Ajanta, Nasik and Mahabalipuram manifest a wooden origin.

Today Gujarat, Kathiawar, Punjab, Kashmere, U. P., Rajputana, Madhya Pradesh and Mysore abound in woodwork of a high quality and excellent workmanship. In the temples and palaces of Mysore, Bellary, and Madura elaborate wood-carvings in the South Indian style create the effect of fine sculptures or even painting. The wood-carving inside the Darbar Hall of the Amba Vilas and the beautifully carved door leading to the big Dasehra Hall of the Mysore Palace are some of the best examples of the art. At Nasik, famous for its old carved timber houses, there is not a beam, door, window, bracket or cornice which does not show a highly artistic treatment based on the form of the sacred lotus. In Madhya Pradesh it is not uncommon to find even in small villages, houses with carved teak fronts of considerable beauty, taste and skill, on which floral designs are delicately chiselled. In Gujarat and Rajputana, the craftsmen work out beautiful perforated tracery and flower carvings on window shutters, window-balustrades and door-screens. The doors and windows of houses in the Punjab exhibit some of the best efforts of the carvers in wood. But the *Khatam-bandi* style of ceiling is the sole monopoly of Kashmere and has so far remained unimitated in any other part of the world. It consists of small pieces of carved wood fitted with frames in geometrical designs to form decorative ceilings for rooms. Almost all the houses in Kashmere possess these ceilings.

Wooden sculpture of a very high order is an integral part of the cottage architecture of rural Bengal. This sculpture is to be found mainly in the cornice brackets where the head and the trunk of the elephant or two women joined arm in arm are the common motifs.

STONE DECORATIONS APPLIED TO ARCHITECTURE

The whole of our country is full of magnificent buildings, both ancient and modern, built and adorned with carved stones of exquisite craftsmanship. The temples of Ellora, the Taj Mahal, the palaces, baths and mosques at Agra and Delhi, show the very high excellence to which stone carving had in the past reached in India. Today, Upper India, part of the south, Rajputana and Gujarat are the chief centres of stone-carving for architectural purposes, specially the last two where timber is scarce and stone abundant. Stone carvers of Rajputana excel in delicate tracery work, tracing its descent from the Augustan Age of the Mughal Empire, for windows in palaces, private buildings and mosques. The craftsmen of Jaipur and Bikaner are particularly skilled in ornamental carving and tracery—the floral or arabesque patterns of which are beautifully sharp and clear. Perforated screen work and tracery are the specialities of the stone carvers of Dholpur State who work on the red and the white sandstone. Carved panels and plaques have for a long time been made at Gwalior that are characterised by remarkable artistic taste, skill and finesse.

HOME ART WARES AND FURNITURE

In Ancient India and to a very great extent even in Medieval times, since everything was hand-made, everything was a work of art, possessing individuality, variety and artistic finish. Craftsmanship entered into the most ordinary household goods and our artisans manufactured art wares and furniture of high excellence and great beauty, establishing a tradition of artistic activity in every sphere of workmanship.

The ancient tradition, in spite of the highly mechanised nature of modern life, lives even today and has not yet been broken.

Ivory as a medium for the artist-workman is peculiar to India and our markets for centuries carried on a brisk trade in skilfully carved ivory goods. An inscription at Sanchi recording the dedication of a bas-relief by the "Guild Of Ivory Workers" of the nearby city of Videsha, goes to show that the ivory craftsmen had attained a high status in the social pattern of ancient India, which could only have been possible on account of their superb workmanship. Today the chief centres for the manufacture of ivory goods are Amritsar, Patiala, Delhi, Banaras, Surat, Ahmadabad, Travancore and Mysore. Besides dolls and images, caskets, doorways, panels, chairs, howdahs and thrones of ivory have for a long time been the speciality of Mysore and Travancore, whose artists work so minutely and delicately that they almost seem to paint beautiful jungle scenery. Vizagapattam is the place known for veneered ivory work of India. Combs from Rajkot, knife-handles from Kathiawar, spoons from Baroda, powder-boxes, buttons and umbrella-handles from Ahmadabad and Surat, bangles from Cuttack, and ivory mats from Sylhet are some of the delightful examples of the work of the ivory craftsmen of India, displaying finish, minuteness and ingenuity characteristic of true Indian art.

Wood lends itself readily to artistic treatment, and so the art of wood carving, from very early times, has been fully employed in making various articles of household use. The carpenter in Ancient India was required not only to make chariots, but also bedsteads, thrones and wooden seats of various forms and patterns. He often carved the bedstead legs, the lowest part of which was usually made into the shape of a lion's paw. They were also mounted or inlaid with gold, jewels and ivory. Sofas, chairs, benches, and teapoys of various designs were also made in Ancient India.

The simplicity of the Aryan life, however, gave little scope for a higher development of the art of carving and furniture making. It was only during the Mohammedan rule that this art received the requisite impetus from the aristocracy.

Today, cabinets, writing boxes, pen-trays of ebony as well as palm and areca-nut, are made at Monghyr ; tables, chairs and other furniture at Bareilly ; while wooden bowls, cups, oval boxes, painted in colours, are manufactured at Banaras with the deliberateness of an art which leaves nothing to be desired. The artisans of Nagina in the district of Bijnore specialise in floral designs delicately chiselled in ebony boxes, pen cases, ink stands, and book covers. Wooden cradles, carved, coloured and gold gilded and used for swinging gods are made at Jodhpur.

Walnut trees grow in abundance in Kashmere and articles made of the walnut wood are the speciality of that place. Floral designs in chaised or raised work, accurate to the smallest detail, are delicately seen wrought on cigar boxes, jewellery boxes, trays, table tops, screens, table-lamps and collar boxes. Beautiful furniture for the drawing room and dining room are also manufactured there.

But sandal-wood is the best suited for minutely detailed work. The chief centres of sandal-wood carving are Surat, Mysore, Travancore, Trichinopoly, Tirupatti, Madura and Coimbatore. While Surat specialises in elaborate and minute high relief carving on boxes, Mysore and other places are known for artistic wall calendars, paper cutters, toys, photo frames and ornaments with beautiful floral designs and scenes from mythology, encircled with intricate foliage worked out with the finest chisels.

Beauty combined with utility in baskets, fans, mats, and rural toilet boxes, made of bamboo, rattan canes, reeds, grasses, palm leaves, and date leaves are some of the few more objects of daily use in the humbler homes of real India, manufactured all over the country from very olden times. Beautiful chairs, teapoys, stools, shoe-racks are also produced in various designs by the deft fingers of the artisans who have inherited the skill of generations. Mat weaving is one of the principal art-crafts of Mysore, but those at Tinnevelly have greater artistic value. Dr. Bedie writes: "Tinnevelly mats of the first quality are generally uncoloured or with one or two simple bands of red and black at each end, and they may be made so fine that a mat sufficient for a man to lie on can be rolled up and packed into the interior of a moderate sized walking stick."

INLAYING

Inlaying, an art bewitching in appeal, is a complementary craft to carving, and there is evidence that inlaying as an art was known to our people in the past. The use of shell as inlay was a craft commonly practised at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa. The use of marble inlay and mosaic work was very popular under the Mughals and led to excellence in the costly art of pietra dura, in which precious stones were inlaid in marble in the most astonishingly delicate flower patterns.

Inlaying in various woods, in ivory, in bone, in metal is also a very high class decorative craft that had achieved astonishing results in Medieval India. It consists of inlays of large pieces of these materials or of fine wire. In Mysore, ivory inlaying in rose-wood or ebony is a fashionable form of this art. Travancore today offers some of the best specimens of inlay work in metal. But one of the most noted kind of inlaid work is the Tarkashi work of Mainpuri. Minute bits of wire are hammered into wood, generally ebony wood, presenting to the eye an intricacy of delightful geometric and floral patterns running in all directions in endless profusion, with unbroken regularity and symmetry.

LEATHER WORK

Leather was one of the earliest materials which was used by primitive man to furnish his household including the kitchen where the utensils used were of the skin of animals. It was only when the Aryans had fairly settled down in the plains of India with its profuse abundance of grains, vegetables and fruits that the idea of impurity began to be associated with leather, the feeling later culminating in the sacred injunction—"Thou shalt not kill."

Leather shoes and boots were, however, in common use in ancient India and they have been frequently referred to in our ancient texts and the statues in the old temples are also shown wearing them.

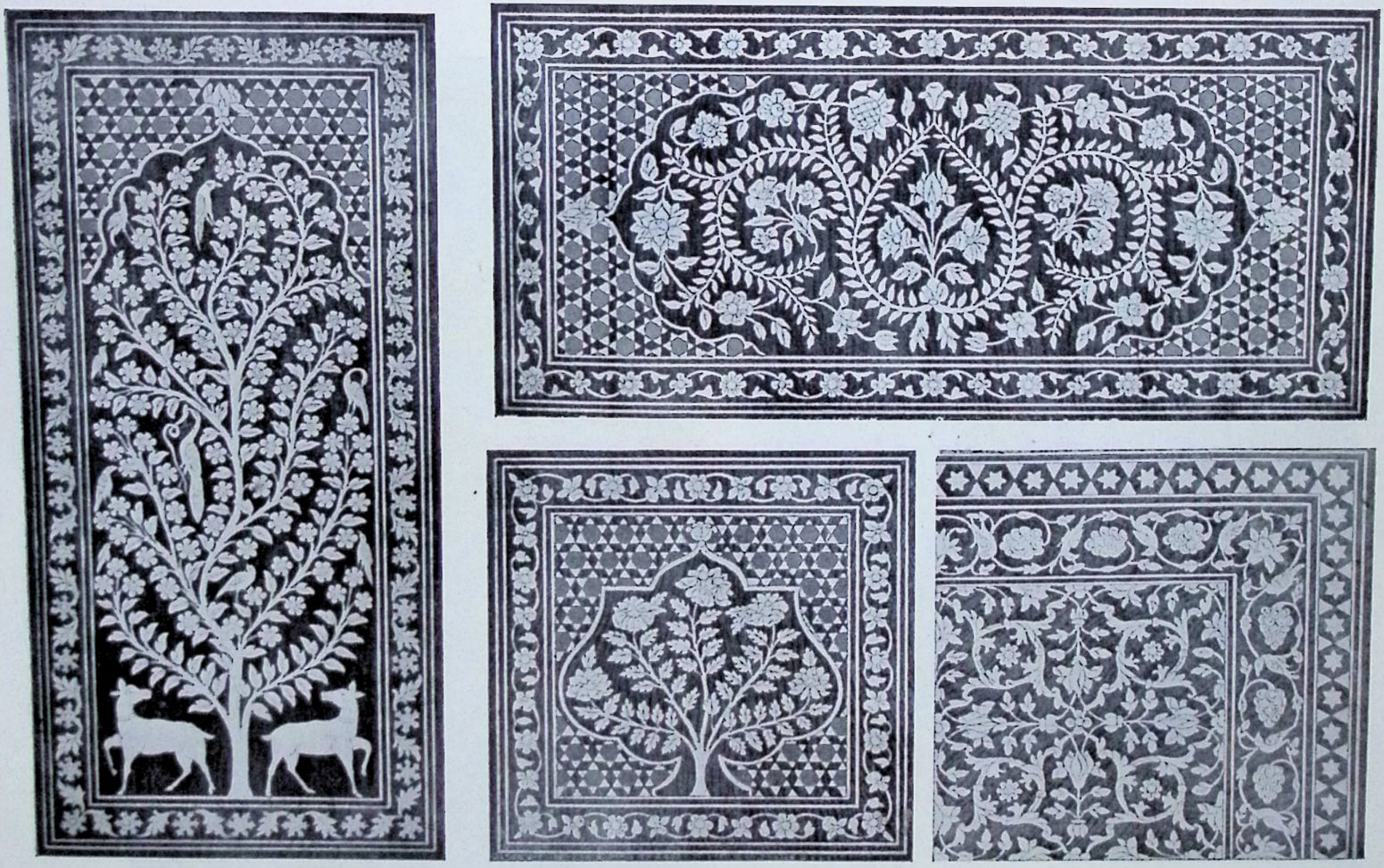
The art of making shoes developed under the Mohammedans, and in the days of the Nawabs, a great industry in gold-embroidered shoes flourished at Lucknow. The kings of Oudh would not allow the shoe makers to use any but pure gold wire. Today, the growing demand among the fashionable for embroidered shoes is responsible for its survival, though more or less in a decayed form. The shoes or slippers made for feminine feet, of a reddish leather with a curled front and low sides lined with red or green velvet and ornamented with tinsel gold or silver embroidery at Banaras, Rampur, Lucknow, Agra, Delhi and Jaipur are among the finest and most artistic examples of the art of leather craft in India. Nothing could be prettier, or more dainty than the shoes and slippers made at Hyderabad embroidered with gilt copper. Camel saddles, water-bottles, pipes, embroidered bridles, and belt, powder flask and pouch are very artistically prepared of leather at Bikaner.

PAPIER MACHÉ

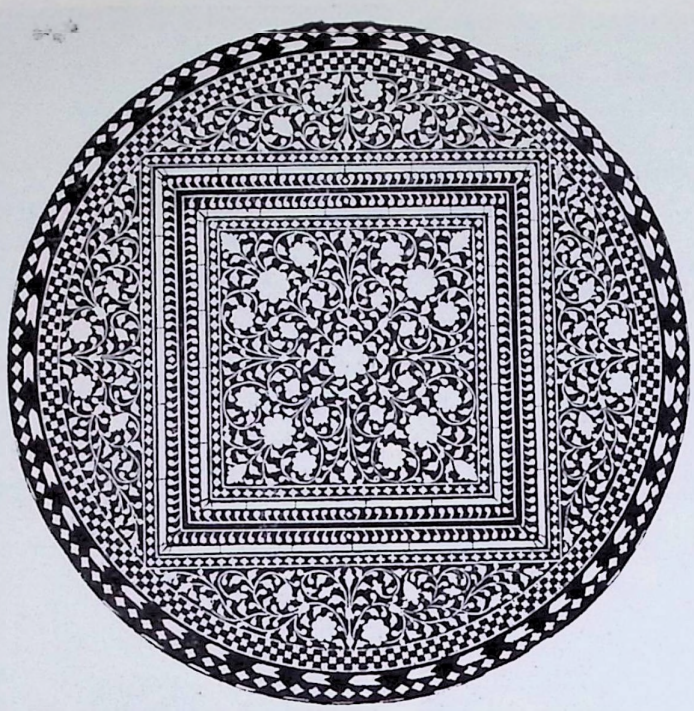
Perhaps the best known examples of the art of papier-maché are the products of the Kashmere craftsmen. This industry was very prosperous in Mughal times and Kashmere supplied the best quality of paper to the rest of India. In Mughal times, due to its silky texture and glossy appearance, Kashmere paper was found very good material for painting and for writing of state documents. Today, with the growing vogue for artistic goods, the craft of papier-maché is making great strides in Kashmere. Besides such fancy goods as powder bowls, toilet sets, and candle-sticks, a great demand has also arisen for flower vases, trays, finger bowls, book-ends, lamp shades and screens, painted artistically with decorative and floral designs, which are exported on a large scale to foreign markets.

FABRICS

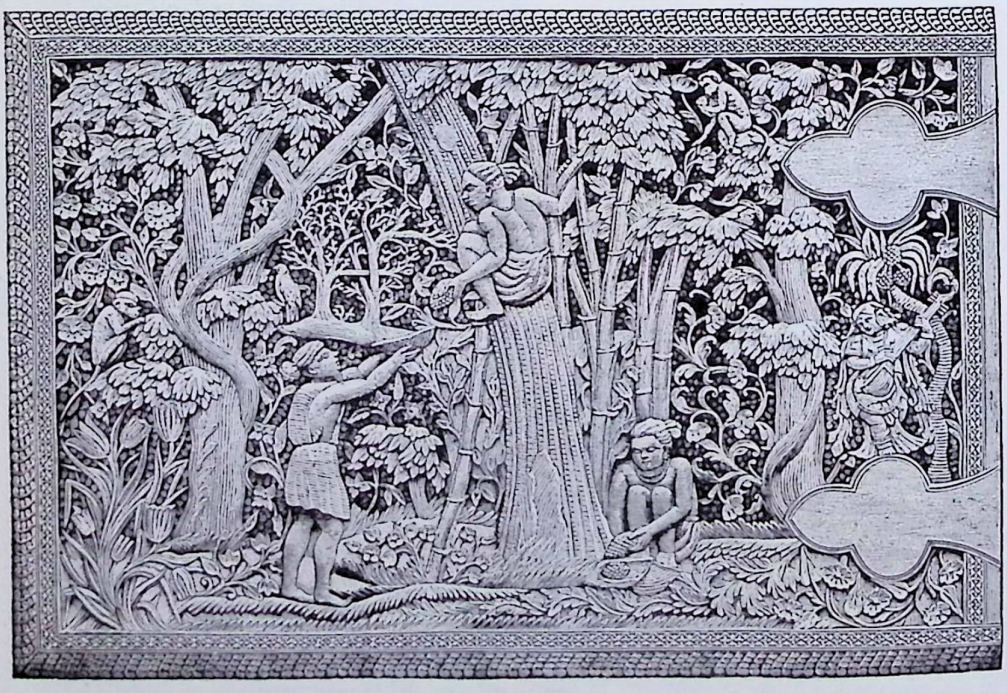
Exquisite poetry in colourful fabrics—both cotton and silk—has for centuries been woven by the weavers of India; and there is hardly a technique or art in fabric making that was not known to the craftsmen of the past. India was probably the first to perfect weaving and her marvellously woven tissues and sumptuously in-wrought apparel are probably older than the code of Manu. There are passages in the *Rig Veda* from which we can conclude that the art was carried to a high state of excellence. One hymn refers to Agni for light regarding the mysteries of sacrifice, but the language used is that of weaving—"I know not either warp or woof, I know not the web thy weave." There is also a reference to the shining gold-woven cloak (*hiranya-drapi*) and in the *Mahabharata* to the *manichira*—probably a fabric with pearl woven fringe manufactured in South India. Cotton, silk and woollen stuffs were in common use when our great Epics were written. Banaras silk is also mentioned in the Buddhist Jatakas, and Egyptian mummies are known to have been wrapt in Indian muslin. In 437-438 A.D., a temple dedicated to the Sun-God was built in Malwa by a company of silk weavers. It was repaired in 473-74 A.D. and the memorial inscription throws much light on the silk craft conditions at that date. "Just as a woman, though endowed with youth and beauty and adorned with golden necklaces and betel leaves and flowers, does not go to meet her lover in a secret place, until she has put on a pair of silken cloths, so the whole of the region of the earth is adorned by the silk weavers as if with a garment of silk, agreeable to the touch, variegated in colours, pleasing to the eye....." Megasthenes testifies to the Hindu's love of dress in ancient India when he says: "In contrast to the simplicity they observe in other matters, they love finery and ornament. They wear dresses worked in gold, adorned with precious stones, and also flowered robes made of fine muslin." In the old Hindu sculptures the women are represented both in richly embroidered brocaded robes and in muslins so fine as to fully expose their form, the lines of its folds or gold edging traced across their bodies, being the



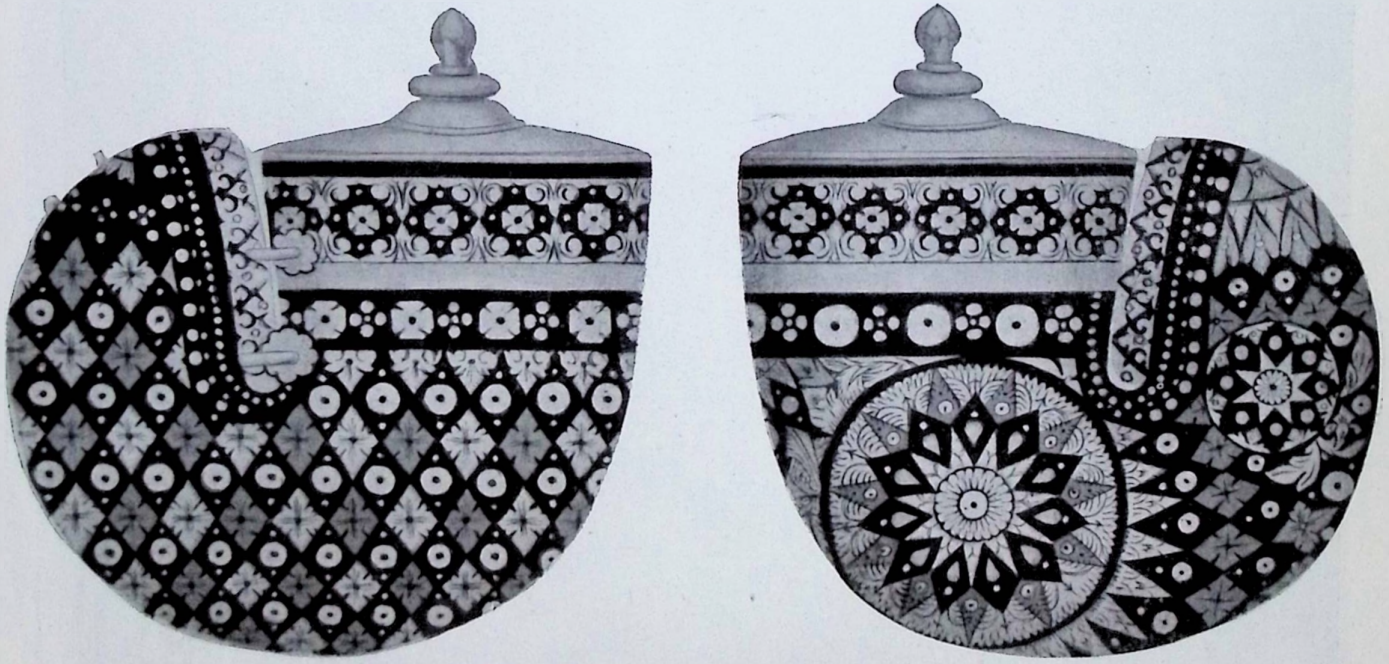
WOOD AND IVORY MOSAICS FROM THE GOLDEN TEMPLE AT AMRITSAR
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



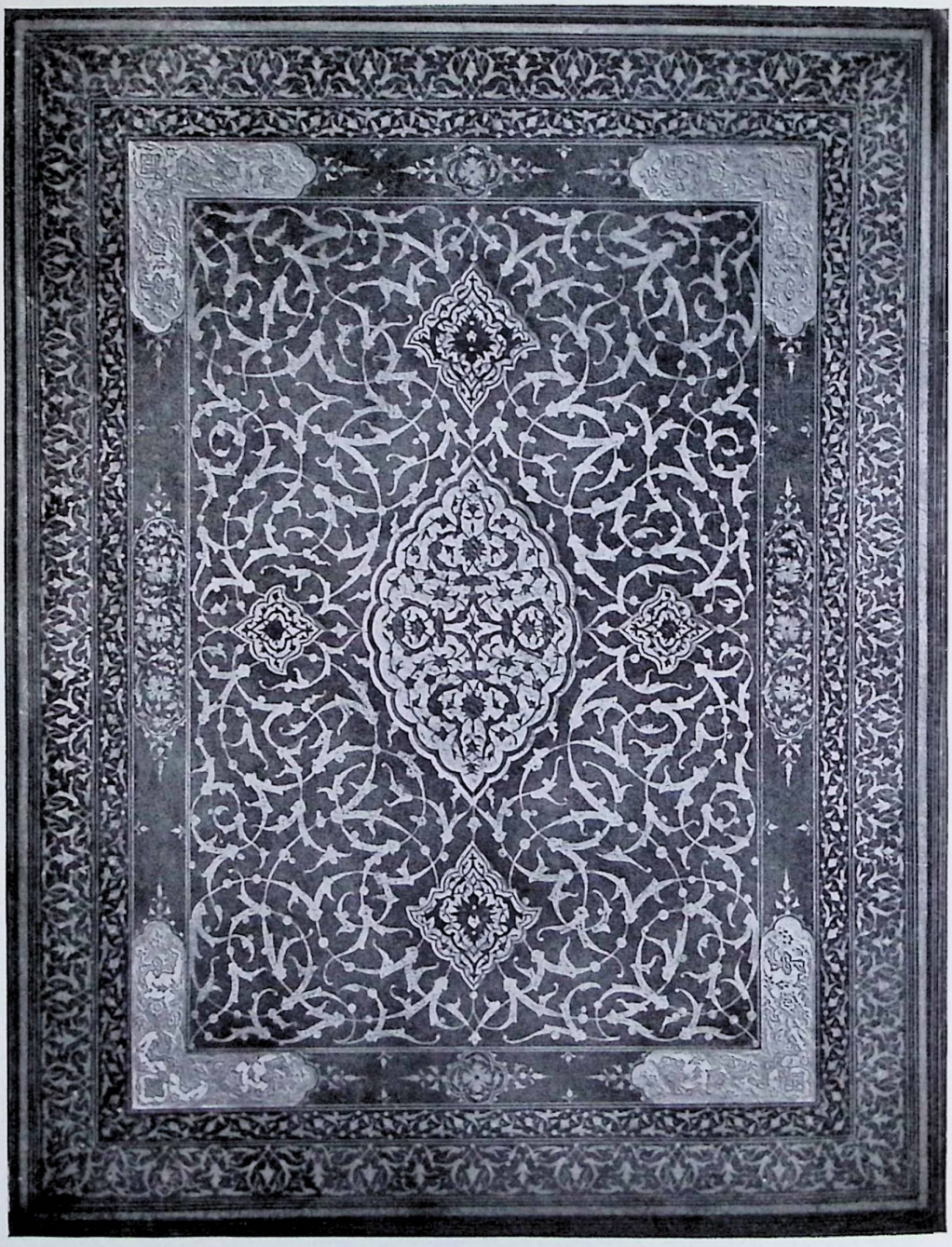
INLAID TABLE TOP, HOSIARPUR



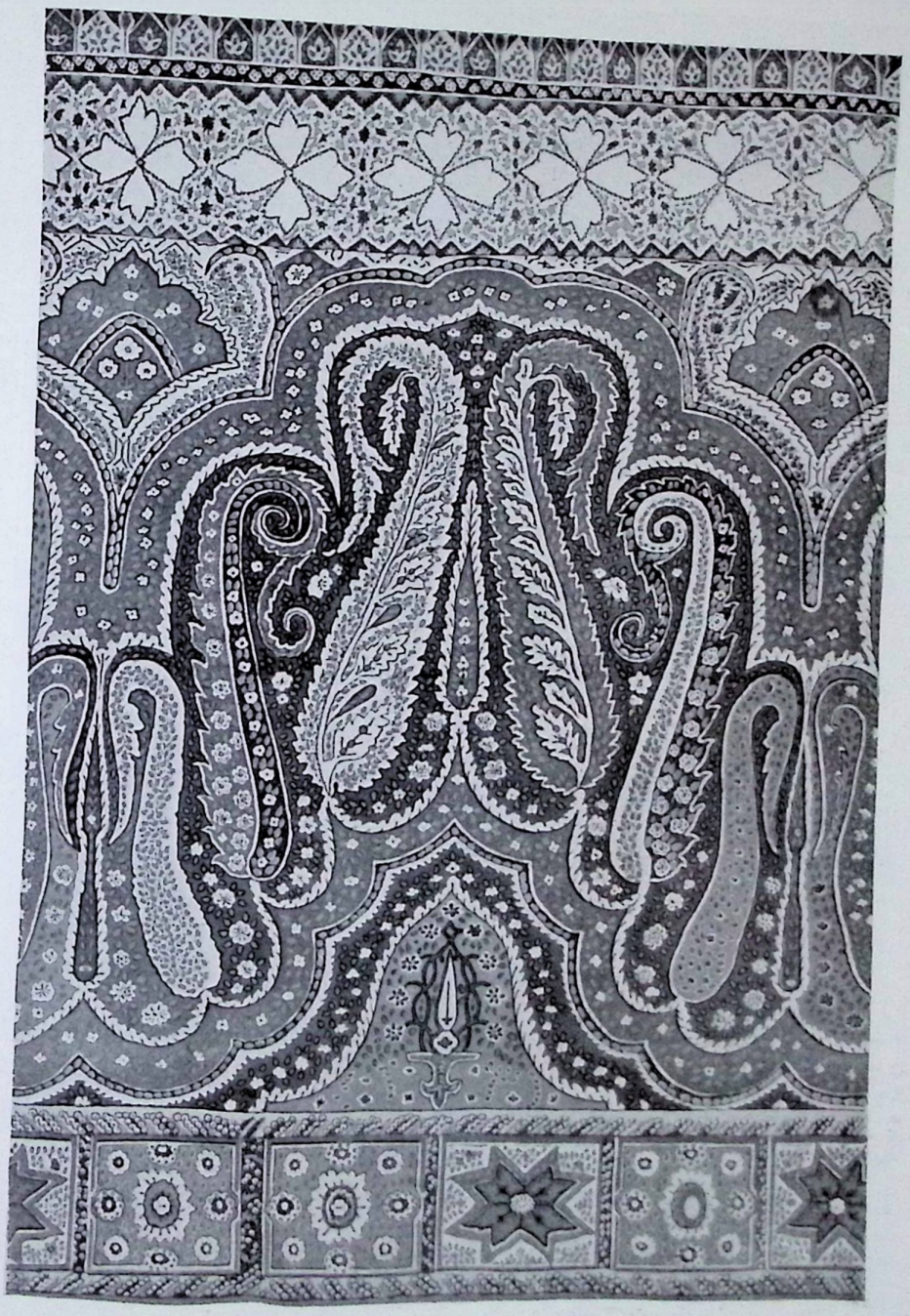
SANDALWOOD CARVING FROM TRAVANCORE
(From *The Industrial Arts of India* by G. Birdwood)



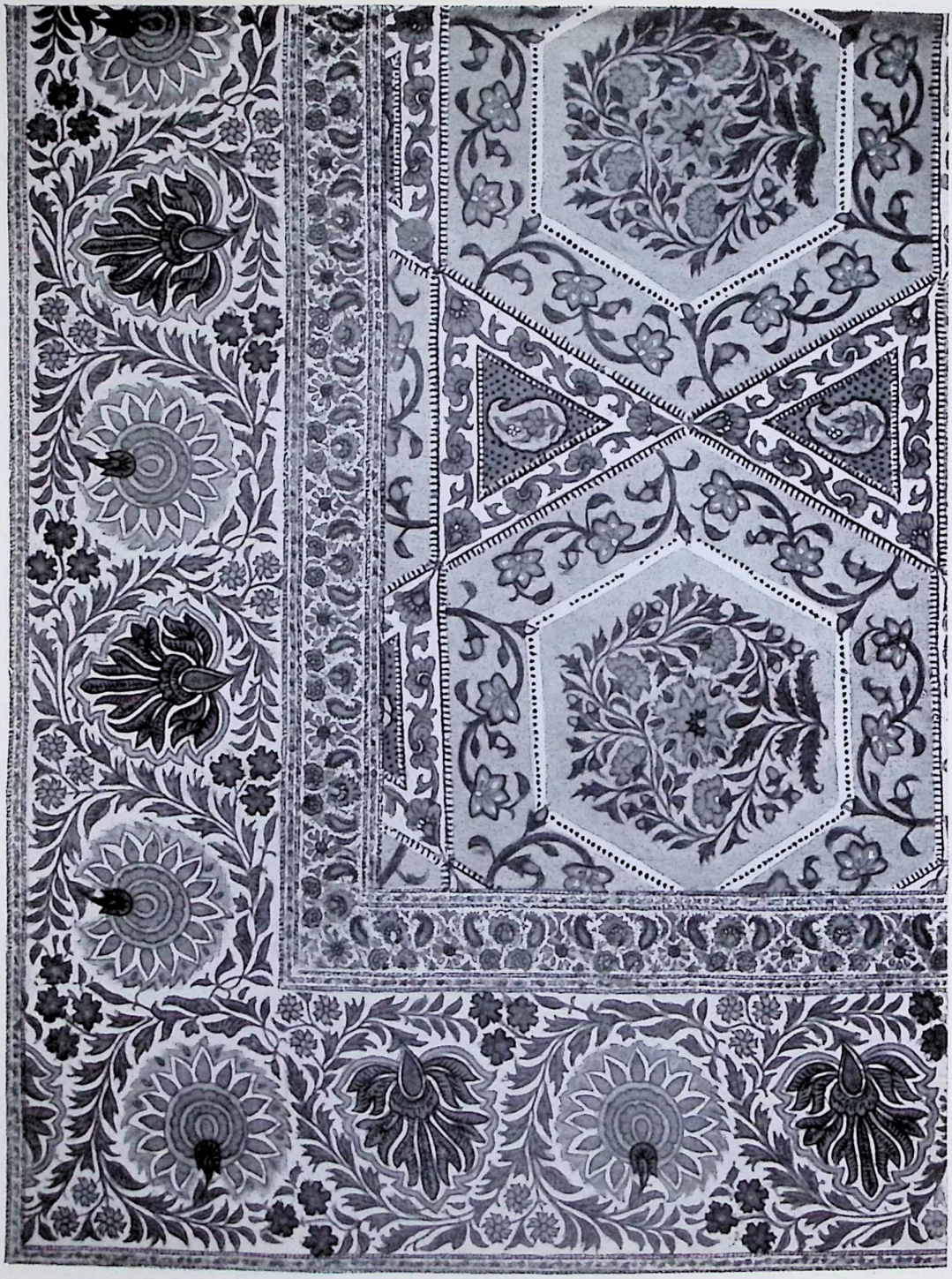
TWO SIDES OF A POWDER HORN MADE OF BUFFALO HORN INLAID WITH IVORY AND MOTHER-OF-PEARL
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



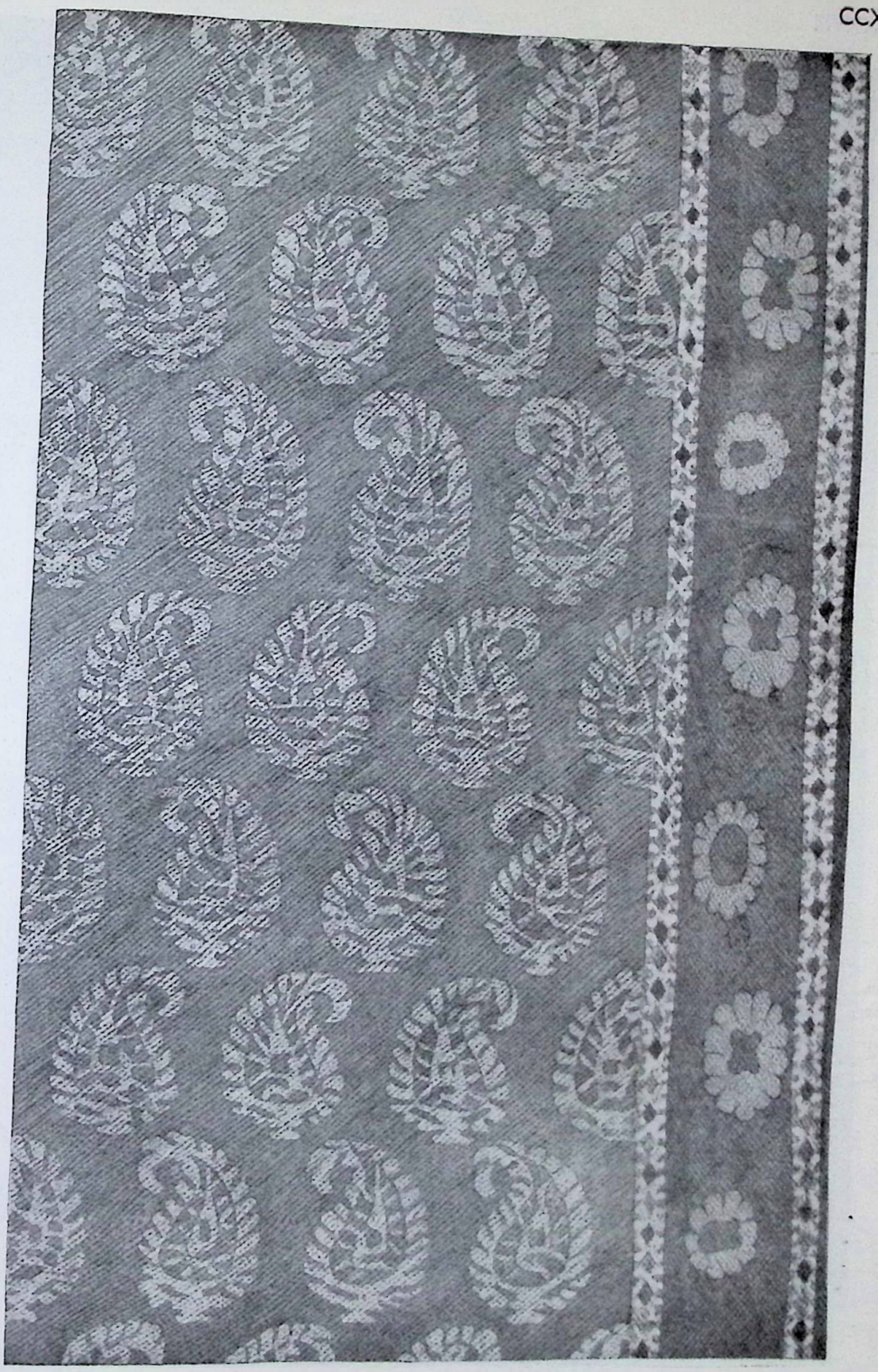
BOOK COVER OF STAMPED AND EMBOSSED LEATHER. GOLD ON RED AND BLACK GROUND



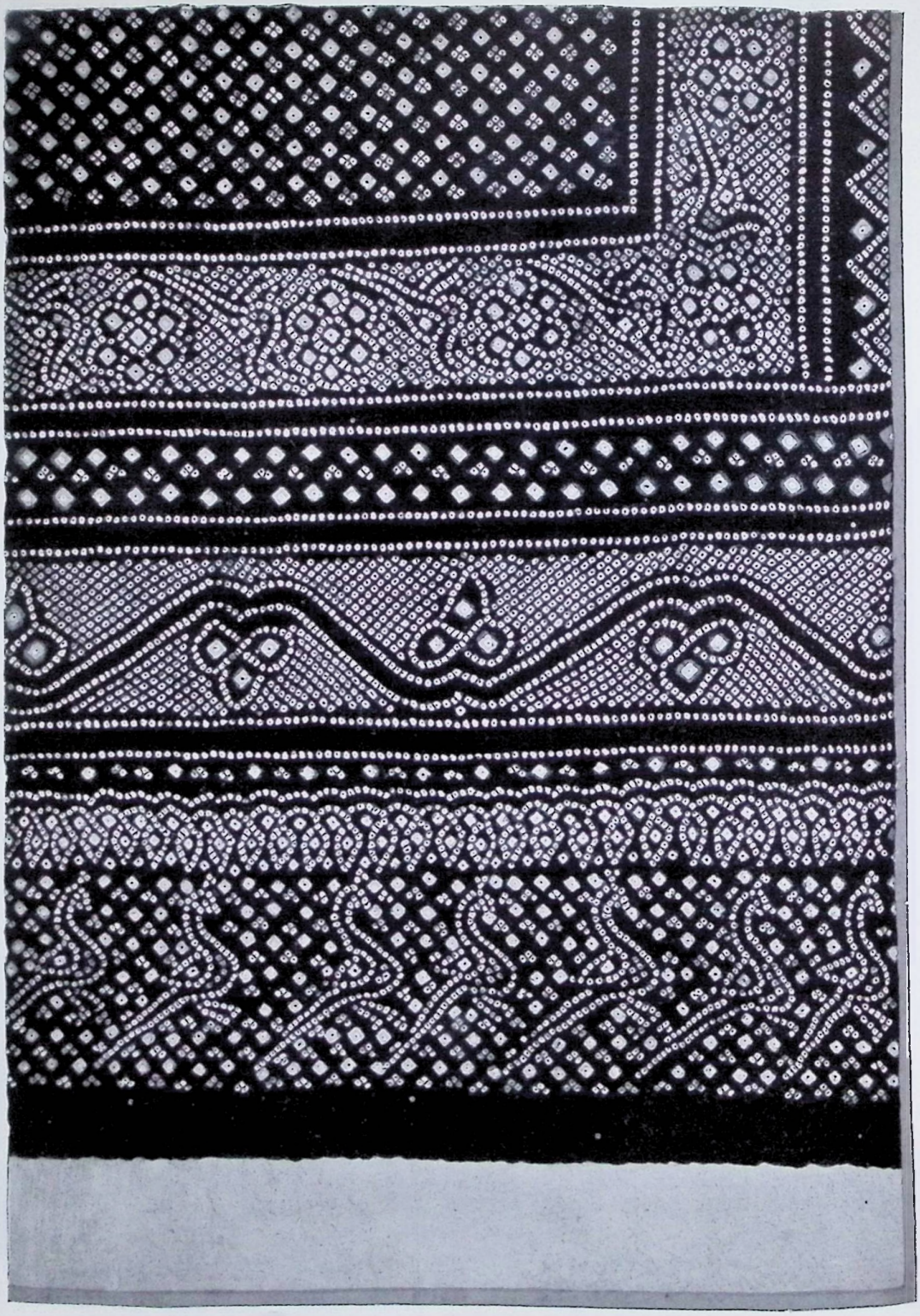
KNOT-DYED SHAWL, FROM AMRITSAR
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



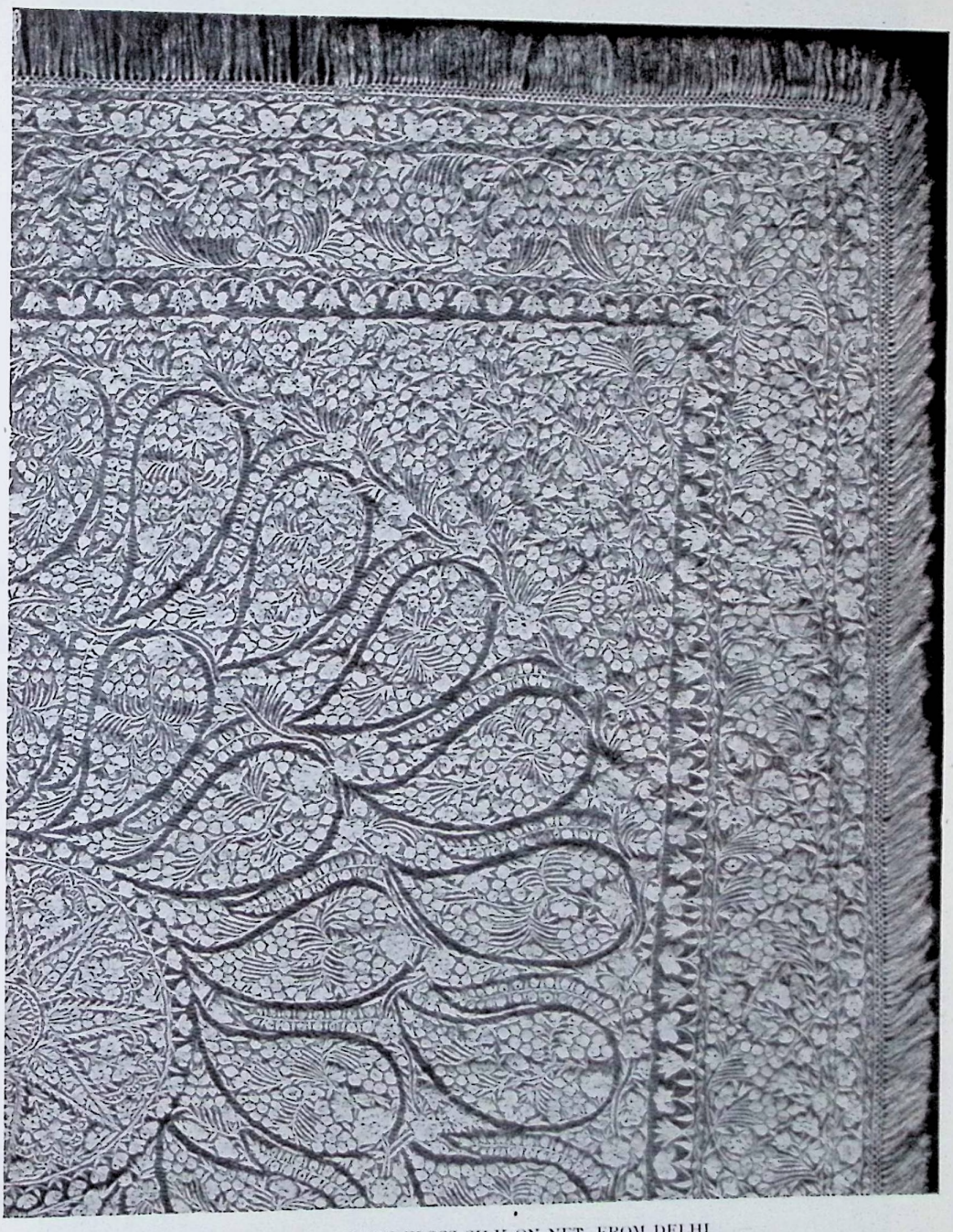
PRINTED COTTON FROM SOUTH INDIA
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



WOVEN SILK SHAWL FROM BANGALORE
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



BANDANA WORK. KNOT DYEING OR TIE-AND-DYE WORK
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



SHAWL, WHITE FLOSS SILK ON NET, FROM DELHI
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



PATOLA WORK

(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



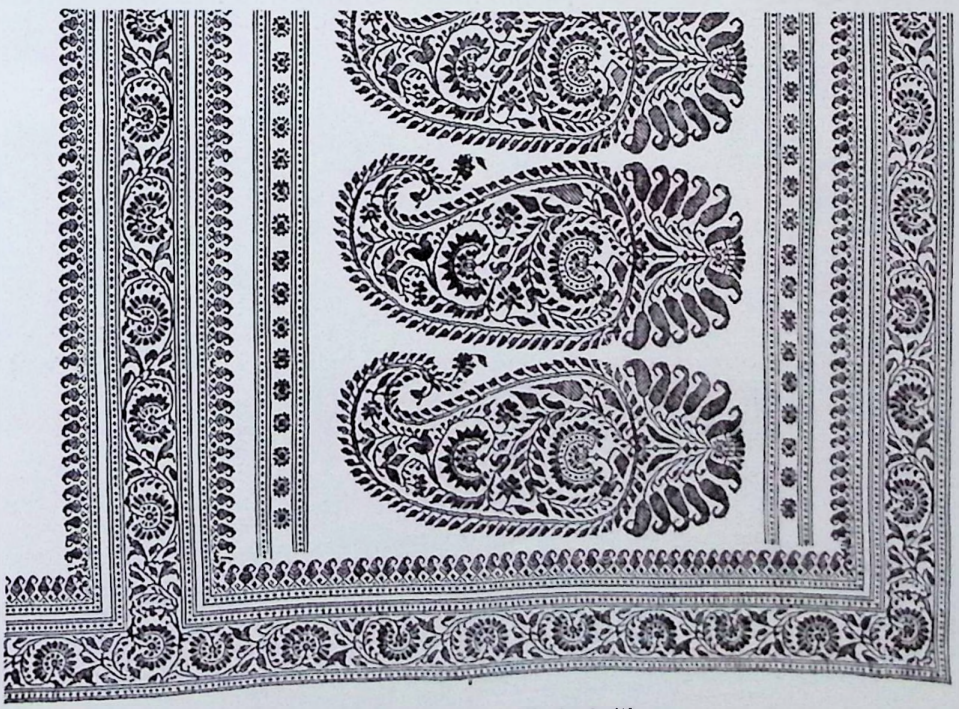
SILK EMBROIDERY, THE DESIGN BEING AFTER A FRESCO FROM AJANTA
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



RESHMI-BHARAT-KAM (SILK EMBROIDERY)
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)

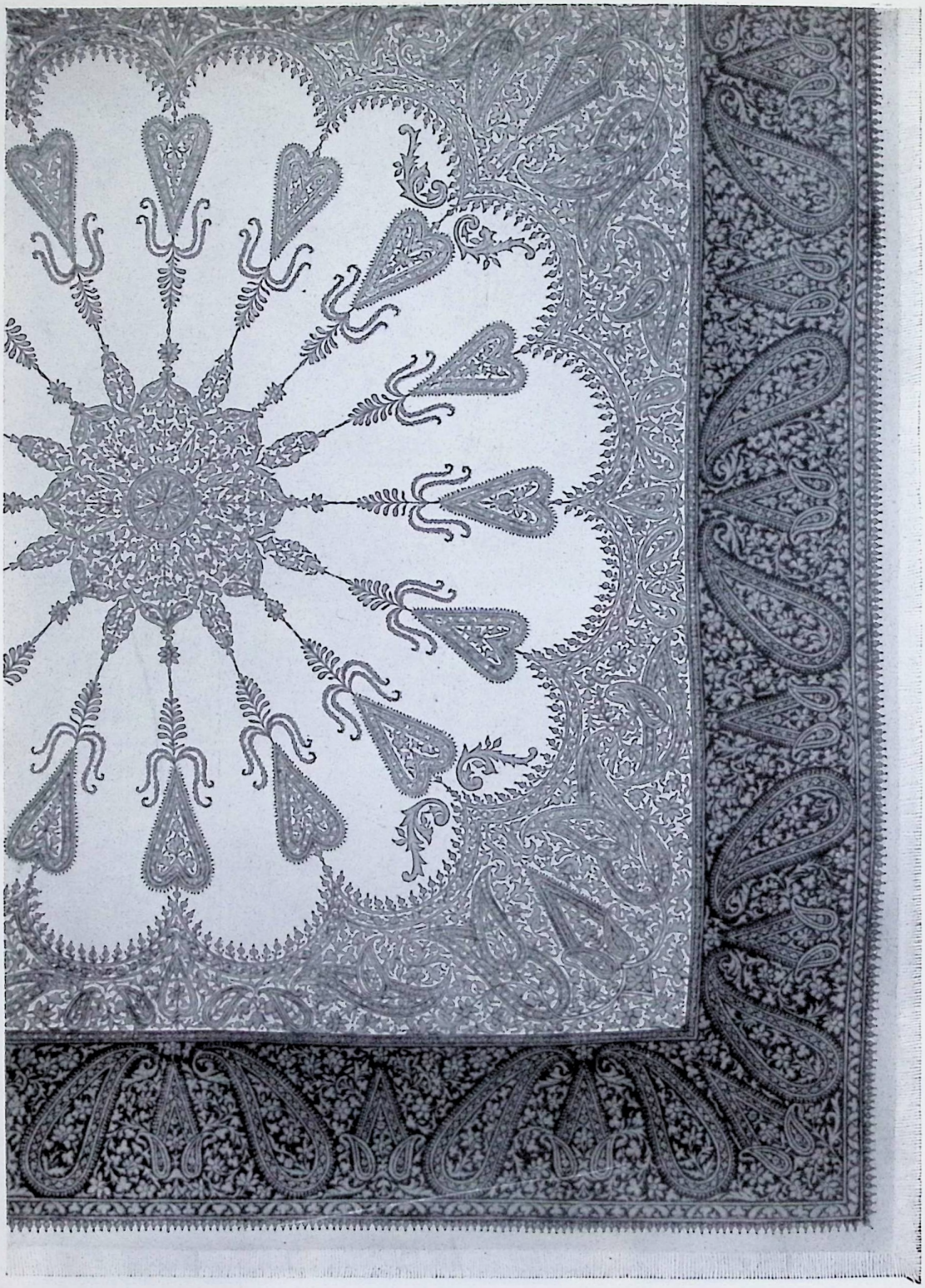


EMBROIDERED CAP, KUTCH



BALUCHAR "BUTEDAR" SARI

(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



GOLD EMBROIDERED KASHMIR SHAWL.
(From *Masterpieces of Industrial Art and Sculpture*)



GOLD EMBROIDERED VELVET CARPET FROM SOUTH INDIA
(From *Masterpieces of Industrial Art and Sculpture*)



WOOLLEN CARPET, 17th century
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)

only evidence that they are clothed. An examination of the cloths worn both by men and women painted on the walls of Ajanta indicates an extraordinary variety of decorative design, and a highly developed sense of weaving technique. In the Gupta period, fine cloth with beautiful goose pattern is referred to by Kalidasa as forming the dress of Parvati. In the 7th century, Bana refers to costly textiles manufactured by the tie-and-dye process in a variety of designs.

Mohammed Tughlaq in the fourteenth century kept in Delhi 500 weavers to make silk and gold brocades worn by the ladies of the palace and distributed as royal presents. In the Mughal times, there were at every court arrangements for the manufacture of magnificent silks and brocades in many varieties and designs, for the use of the Sultans and the royal princesses and the nobles and their wives. The skill of the weavers and embroiderers of Delhi was such that the finest products of Persia, China and Europe tended to recede into the background and found no sale. The painted muslins and cotton cloths were also everywhere highly prized for the purity and brilliance of their dyes, and the fineness and softness of their material.

Today, there is hardly a village which does not have its colony of caste weavers, where the master-weaver sitting at his simple loom under the spreading shade of a tree works up dreams in fabrics by hands schooled by generations of skilled work.

Certain factors have contributed to the preservation and development of the various forms of art fabrics in India. Prescriptions of rigid social codes have ordained individual styles of decoration, colours and designs for different occasions and different communities. Auspicious occasions like marriages, festive seasons and sacred ceremonials have called forth from Hindus the use of particular clothes in brilliant shades of every colour. The Mohammedan being prohibited from the wearing of pure silk had to wear other types of fabrics known as Mashru and Himru, which are a mixture of cotton and silk, and in appearance as pleasing as silk, but still within the "permitted" category. Temple rituals have always claimed the finest products of the loom. Cloth with brocade and printed and painted curtains have been used as temple hangings from earliest times. Court patronage, too, helped a great deal in the creation of exquisite fabrics. However, when the local artists came in contact with foreigners, fashions and designs underwent a change. A desire to capture markets outside India led to an adaptation of patterns and colours suited to different tastes which resulted in an assimilation of the local designs with new symbols and motifs. And hence we can even today trace influences of Persian embroideries in the Farrukhabad prints, Masulipattam curtains and the Shikargah brocade saris of Banaras.

Among a most spectacular variety of dyed fabrics in India, Patolas from Gujarat are considered to be one of the most amazingly beautiful fabrics that have been produced anywhere in the world. It is this cloth which was carried by Indian merchants to Java and Bali in the Middle Ages where it was honoured as a special bridal garment on account of its exquisite floral designs and beauty. The Patola is seen at its best in the silk wedding saris of the women of Kathiawar. The fabric is woven with warp and weft that have been separately dyed by a special colouring process known as *Bandhana* or knot-dyeing. After the silk warp has been dyed in the lightest colour, the dyer, keeping in mind the design to be produced, draws across it some lines in pencil at measured distances. The marked spaces are tied tightly with cotton thread through which the dye will not penetrate. The yarn is then dyed in the next darker colour. The process is repeated and continued till the darkest colour is reached. The weft is also treated in the same manner. Then the threads are stretched and arranged in the loom by the weaver and woven into artistic patterns of elephants, flowering shrubs, human figures and birds in red, white or yellow, on a background of dark blue-green. The Patola colour designs are rich and yet soft, and are so finely mingled that they seem to flow into one another. The triumph of the Patola craftsman lies in the harmony of colours and in the simplicity and treatment of the decorative details.

Chunari or Bandhani is another fascinating dyed fabric of the country. It is the garment symbolising youth and romance, love and married happiness. It figures most in our folk songs and love lyrics. Chunari is worn as a wedding scarf by the women of Gujarat ; the Rajput belle throws it over her embroidered skirt ; the Sindhi woman decorates her "ghagra" with it and the Khoja uses it to drape her head. But to the Hindu woman everywhere in the country it is an auspicious bridal garment. The fabric may be silk, cotton or satin, but is coloured by the Bandhani tie-dyeing process. Elephants, birds, flowers and dancing females performing *garba* are some of the motifs with which the picturesque Chunari outlined by small dots of different colours are designed.

Kinkhab, the fabric of dreams, is the inter-weaving of silk thread and gold wires in a rich variety of colours and floral patterns. This is the most gorgeous and highly ornamental fabric of India. History says that it was taken from India to Babylon where the princes and the noblemen vied with one another in the gorgeousness of their dresses. At present Banaras, Murshidabad, Tanjore and Ahmadabad produce this lovely material, woven so skilfully that it is soft and light as pure silk. The design of the hunting scene (*Shikargah*), once produced in Banarsi Kinkhab, was considered to be unique.

The delicate muslins of India, called *ab-i-rawan*, flowing water, and *baft-hawa*, woven air, by the poets, have for ages been the classic achievements of our craftsmen. Flowered muslins having a succession of small flower sprays, worked with unequalled grace and lightness of touch, arranged in a variety of ways, producing a most delightful effect, are almost miraculously achieved. A very popular artistic arrangement is called *Panna Hazara*—the thousand emeralds, because the sprays of flowers are arranged in such a way as to produce the effect of jewels in their settings. A rare muslin was formerly produced in Dacca, which when laid wet on the grass was rendered invisible and because it thus became indistinguishable from the evening dew it was named *Shabnam*. At present the chief centres of these fabrics are Dacca, Mysore, Hyderabad, Jaipur and Banaras.

Embroidery is an ancient art of our country. It is found at Ajanta, where are depicted men weaving embroidered coats with diagonal strips of geese or geometric bands alternating with floral ones. Today all over India distinctive kinds of embroidery are done by the women of different castes and classes, but it has attained its highest development in Northern and North-western India. Beautifully embroidered Khamis and other white cotton goods have been produced for centuries in the U.P. and Bengal. Badlan embroidery, in which minute gold and silver dots are disposed at intervals over the entire surface in various floral designs, also comes from Lucknow. But from Dacca comes the best and finest embroideries in gold, silver and silk. "Phulkari chadars", in which floss silk is employed on woollen or cotton material to produce bold sprigged floral designs, are a speciality of both Dacca and the Punjab.

The Kashmere embroidery on wool is of historical and universal fame and the delicacy and deftness of the Kashmere craftsmen in this line are yet unrivalled anywhere in the world. The manufacture of the shawl in Kashmere in the days when Bernier travelled in India was carried on a " prodigious scale and brought her extensive wealth." Birdwood says : "The few Cashmere shawls shewn in the Prince of Wales' collection are superlatively fine, some of the usual cone or shawl pattern, others snuff-coloured, of softest texture in-wrought with gold. One is worked with a map of the city of Srinagar, the capital of Cashmere ; the streets and houses, gardens and temples, with the people walking about among them, and the boats on the deep blue river being seen as clearly in the quaint drawing of a medieval picture, as in a photograph. Another shawl, more soberly coloured, is one mass of the most delicate embroidery representing the conventional Persian and Cashmere wilderness of flowers, with birds of the loveliest plumage singing in the bloom, and wonderful animals stalking round, and wandering men."

The Palampores of Masulipattam used generally as curtains have wide fame, and form another variety of fabrics. They were regularly imported into Europe from the end

of the 17th to the beginning of the 19th century, and received the patronage of royalty. In Kalahasti, in the south, Hindu mythological subjects, particularly scenes from the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, are wax-dyed and hand-painted on cotton to produce a most charming effect.

CARPETS

It was once believed that India learnt carpet-weaving from Persia. But the methods and designs of the carpet weavers in our country are so peculiarly indigenous and so distinctly recognisable from those of other countries that this theory has now been abandoned.

Carpet weaving was a great industry under the Mughals. Terry, in describing his voyage to the East Indies in 1655 A.D. says: "They (Indians) make likewise excellent carpets of their cotton wool, in mingled colours, some of them three yards broad and of a great length. Some other rich carpets they make all of silk, so artificially mixed as that they lively represent those flowers and figures made in them. The ground of some others of their very rich carpets is silver or gold, about which are such silken flowers and figures most excellently and orderly disposed throughout the whole work." Today, Mirzapur, Amritsar, and Bikaner in the north and Ellora and Masulipattam in the south are some of the places where the finest carpets in India are made. The large cotton durries of Rajputana, striped in red, green, yellow, blue and black, are marvellous examples of the skill of Indian weavers in harmonising the prismatic colours. Warrangal is famous for its silk carpets which are so woven that they change colour according to the position from which they are seen. A Warrangal carpet of the sixteenth century exhibited in one of the London Exhibitions was highly admired as a supreme example of the greatness of the Indian weaver. There were 400 knots to every square inch of it, giving a total of 35,00,000 knots for the entire surface, and so complicated was the pattern that a change of the needles had been required for every knot.

JEWELLERY

In nothing do the people of India display their sense of the gorgeous and the artistic so much as in their jewellery, which is "not only fabricated of the richest and rarest materials, but wrought likewise with all the elaborateness, delicacy and splendour of design within the reach of art." Their numerous variety, with an almost endless series of motifs involving the most intricate adjustments, have throughout the ages dazzled the eyes of the beholder. Popular tradition takes the story of Indian jewellery right back to the dawn of human history, and there are passages in our ancient books which support the tradition. Jewellery of much beauty and variety is constantly mentioned in the *Rig Veda*. In the *Ramayana*, Sita is represented as arrayed in jewelled butterflies and other bright ornaments in her black hair. Her ears are resplendent with gems, she has bracelets and armlets on her wrists and arms, a golden zone binds her slender waist and golden anklets her well-shaped ankles. The simplicity and accuracy of construction and the polish and beautiful finish of the jewelled ornaments found at Mohenjo-daro make them admirable pieces of art. The old vocabulary of *Amara Sinha*, one of the "nine gems" of the court of Vikramaditya, gives a long list of names for crowns, crests and tiaras for the head, rings, flowers and bosses for the ears, necklaces of all shapes and patterns, girdles, anklets, rings for the fingers; and all the names given there are still current in India. The sculptures of Sanchi, Bharut, Amaravati and Bhubaneshwar, and the paintings in the caves of Ajanta show the exuberant splendour of the art of jewellery making in Ancient India.

Today, Jaipur, Lucknow, Mysore and Sawantwadi offer some of the choicest pieces of Indian jewellery. But perhaps the best examples in the purest Hindu style are those from Mysore and Sawantwadi, which possess the highest artistic value, "never even in their excessive elaboration of detail violating the fundamental principles of ornamental design, nor failing to please."

METAL WORK

The skill and subtlety of the craftsmanship of our artisans who display great delicacy and ingenuity in chasing, ornamenting and engraving of patterns on various metals have been richly admired in the highest terms everywhere in the world. Metal craft is, indeed, not only one of the most ancient but also one of the most developed crafts in India. Moreland gives 1,000 B.C. as the probable date of the introduction of iron into our country. But whether or not iron and its manufacture was understood by the Vedic Indians, their descendants in the Mauryan age had undeniably achieved great excellence ; while a little later under the Guptas, their skill was equal to turning out such masterpieces as the Iron Pillar at Delhi. The earliest surviving examples, traceable to nearly fifty years before Christ, of the ancient gold and silver work found on Indian soil are a gold casket and a silver paten discovered in one of the Buddhist excavations near Jalalabad. They are executed in the finest style of beaten goldsmith's work, with figures of gods and birds engraved on them. Gold cups are also frequently alluded to in the *Rig Veda* and during the period of the Great Epics, we find richly ornamented metallic vessels in universal use. The craft, of course, received the highest encouragement from the Mohammedan rulers, under whose patronage several new modes of ornamentation in gold and silver and iron were adopted. Today, metal craft is an extensive industry practised almost all over the country ; and so diverse are the products of metal, that next to weaving, perhaps the largest number of craftsmen are employed in this industry.

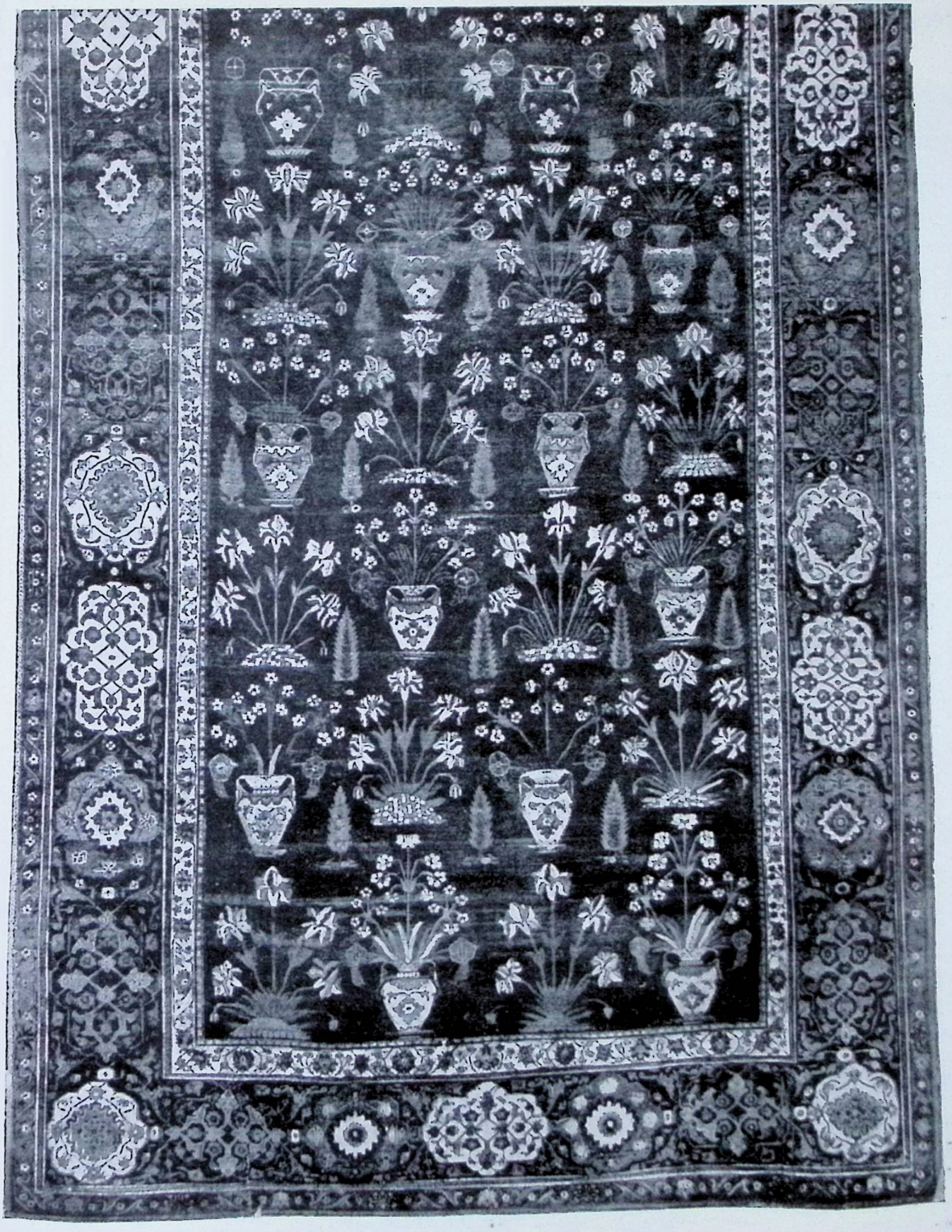
In the variety of the designs, in the excellence of the cast and the rich colouring which gives to the articles a gold-like lustre, Banaras brassware has not been surpassed by any other town in India. Plates, water goblets, trays, cups, *lotas*, salvers, shields, betel holders, and various other articles from Banaras are famed for the excellence of their cast and the chased mythological images.

The brassware of the incomparable Moradabad craftsmanship, both plain and ornamental, is universally admired ; and the elegant shapes of the vessels with their rich floriated patterns exemplify the artistic taste and ingenuity of the makers. But the graceful and delicately cut brass screens, *pandans* and small boxes covered with the most intricate tracery from Ahmadabad, the stately architectural shapes of the temple bells from Madras, the bold forms and elaborately in-wrought ornamentation of mythological designs or leaf patterns from Madura, are some of the living examples of the superb artistry of the Indian artisan.

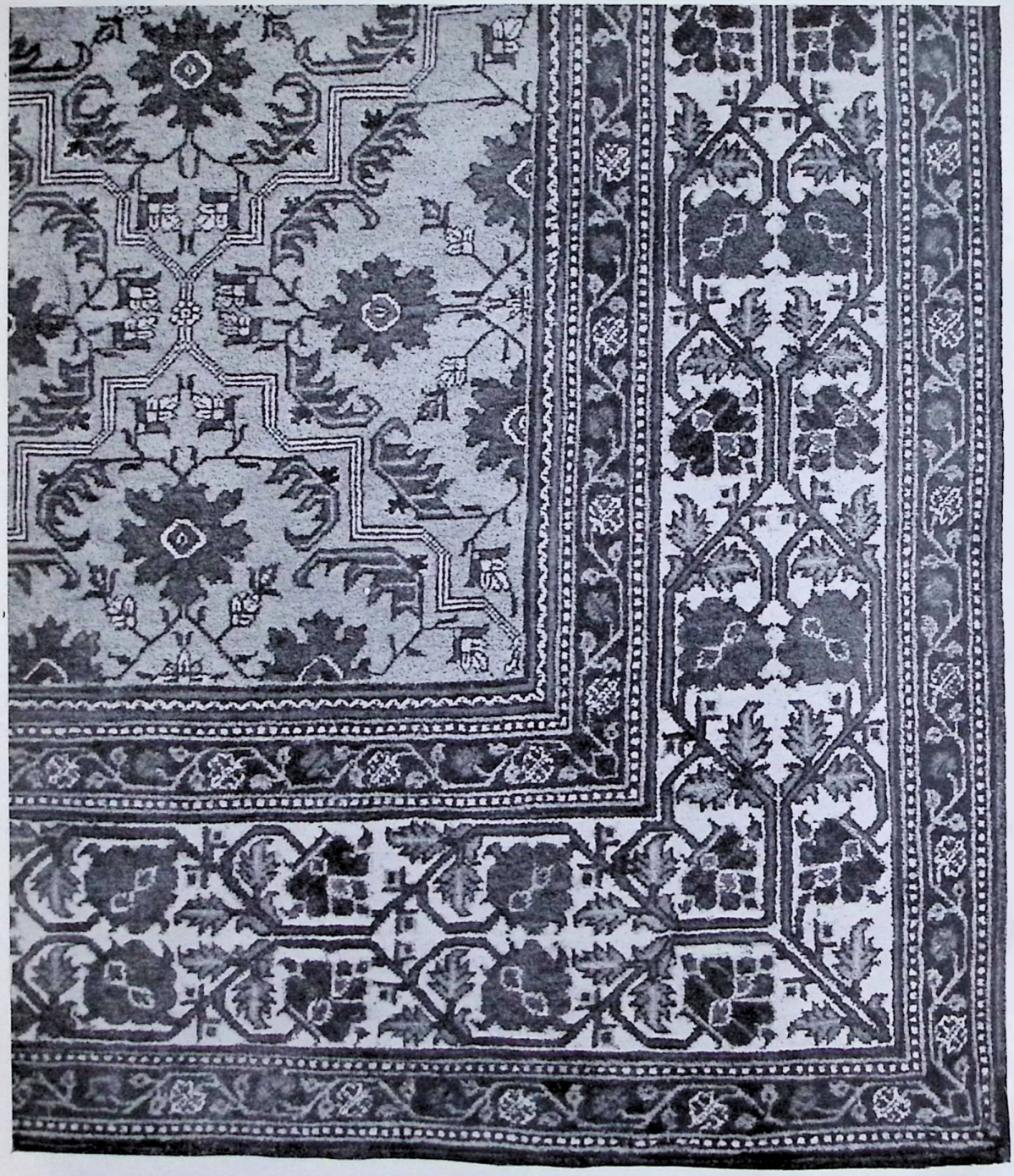
Even soldiers have succumbed to the charm of ornamentation ; and the art of damascened or 'koftgari' work seems to have originated in the desire to decorate weapons of war. Damascening as its name suggests had its home in Damascus, from where it was later brought to India directly through Kabul and Persia. Damascening is the art of encrusting one metal on another in the form of wire, which by under-cutting and harmonising is thoroughly and beautifully incorporated with the metal which it is intended to ornament.

In pre-modern days when the weapons of war were few and simple, the craftsmen spent a busy time ornamenting swords, shields, daggers and other similar objects. Akbar was keenly interested in the art and gave his personal attention to the royal armoury and to the forging and decorating of the weapons made therein. With a change, however, in the methods and materials of destruction the demand for damascened weapons has naturally waned and the skill of the craftsmen has been diverted mostly towards the ornamentation of articles of domestic use such as spittoons, ornament boxes, betel boxes, *surahi* and *huqqa* bases.

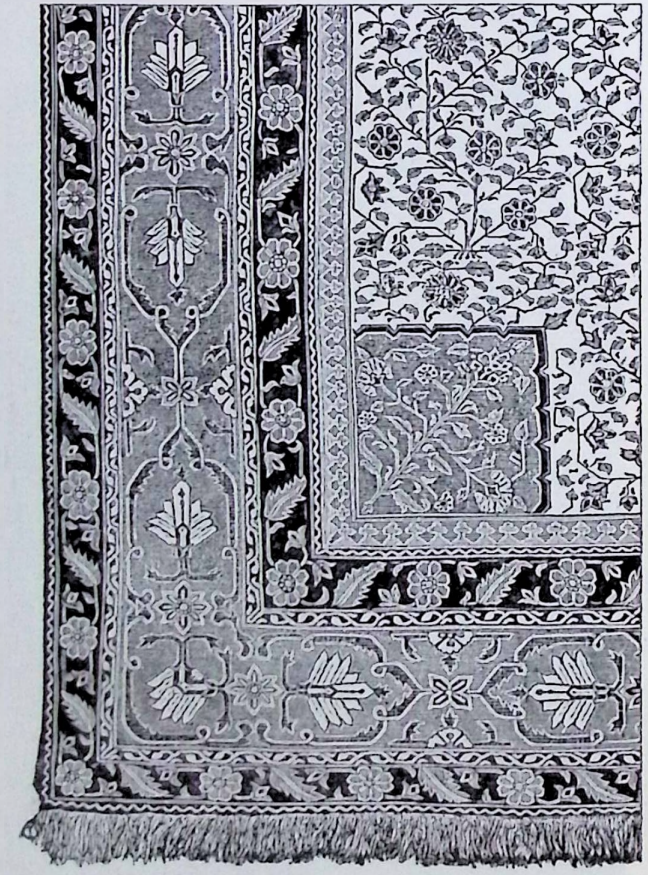
Today, Gujarat, Sialkot, Jaipur, Alwar, Sirhoi, Travancore and Bidar are renowned centres of damascened work. Damascened elephant goads, daggers, swords, shields and helmets, made of carved steel from Jaipur and Alwar, exhibit superior artistic talent. "The manufacturers often take a great pride to form by a skilful inlay of the wire, verses from



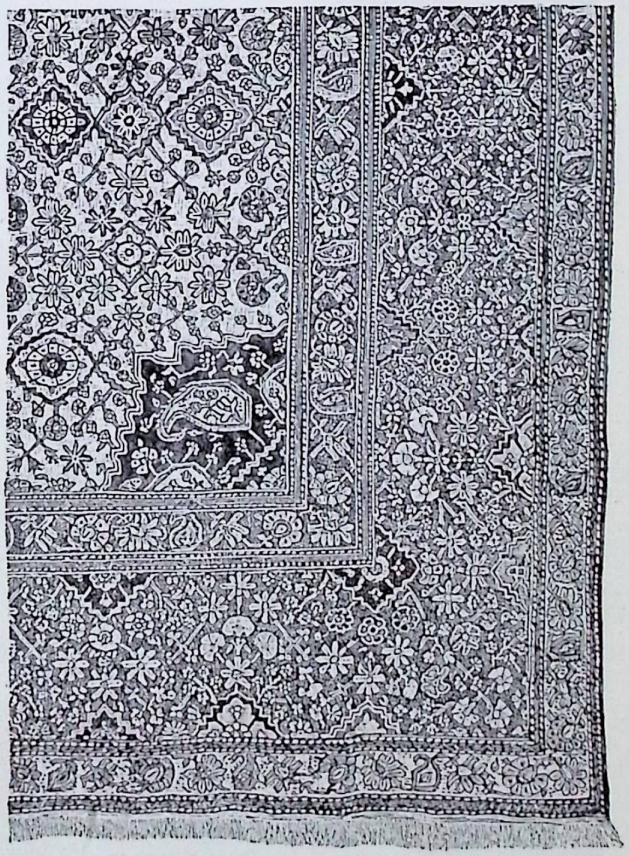
WOOLLEN CARPET FROM THE PUNJAB
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



WOOLLEN PILE CARPET FROM VELLORE
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)

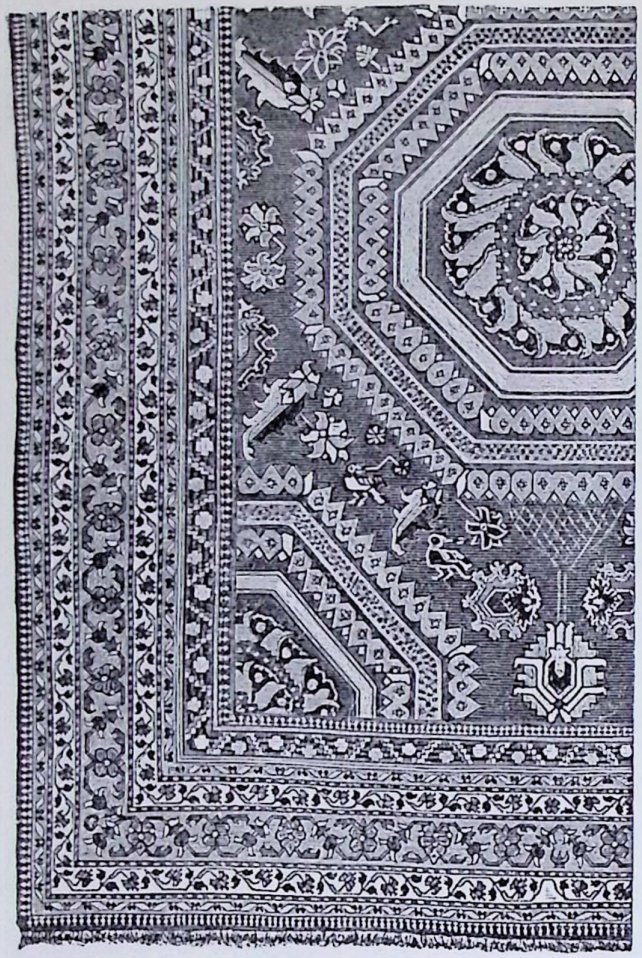


CORNER OF A WARANGAL SILK CARPET

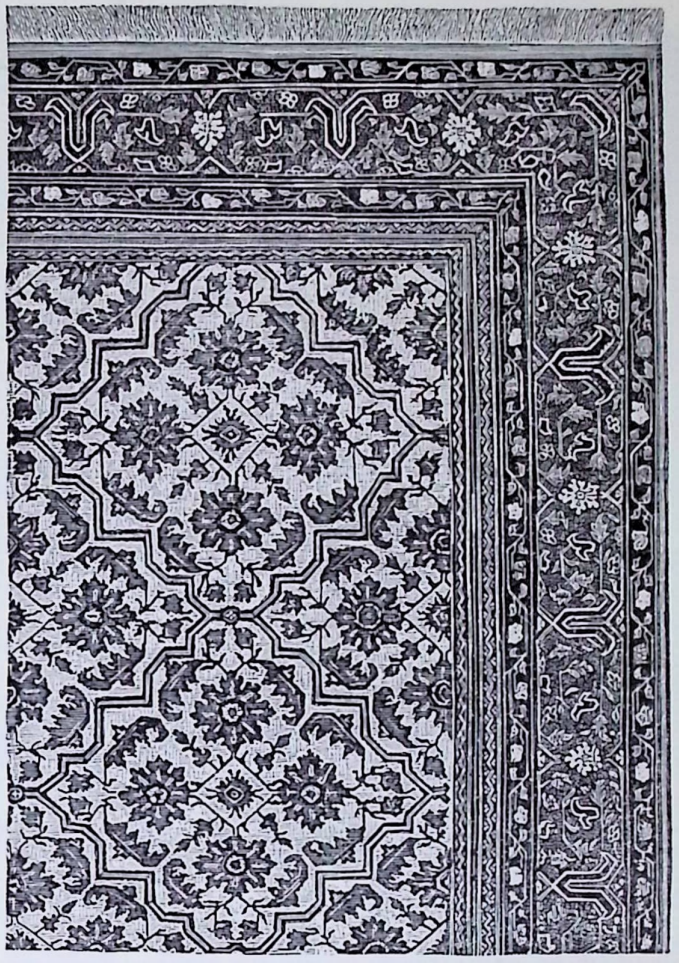


CORNER OF A KASHMIR CARPET

(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)

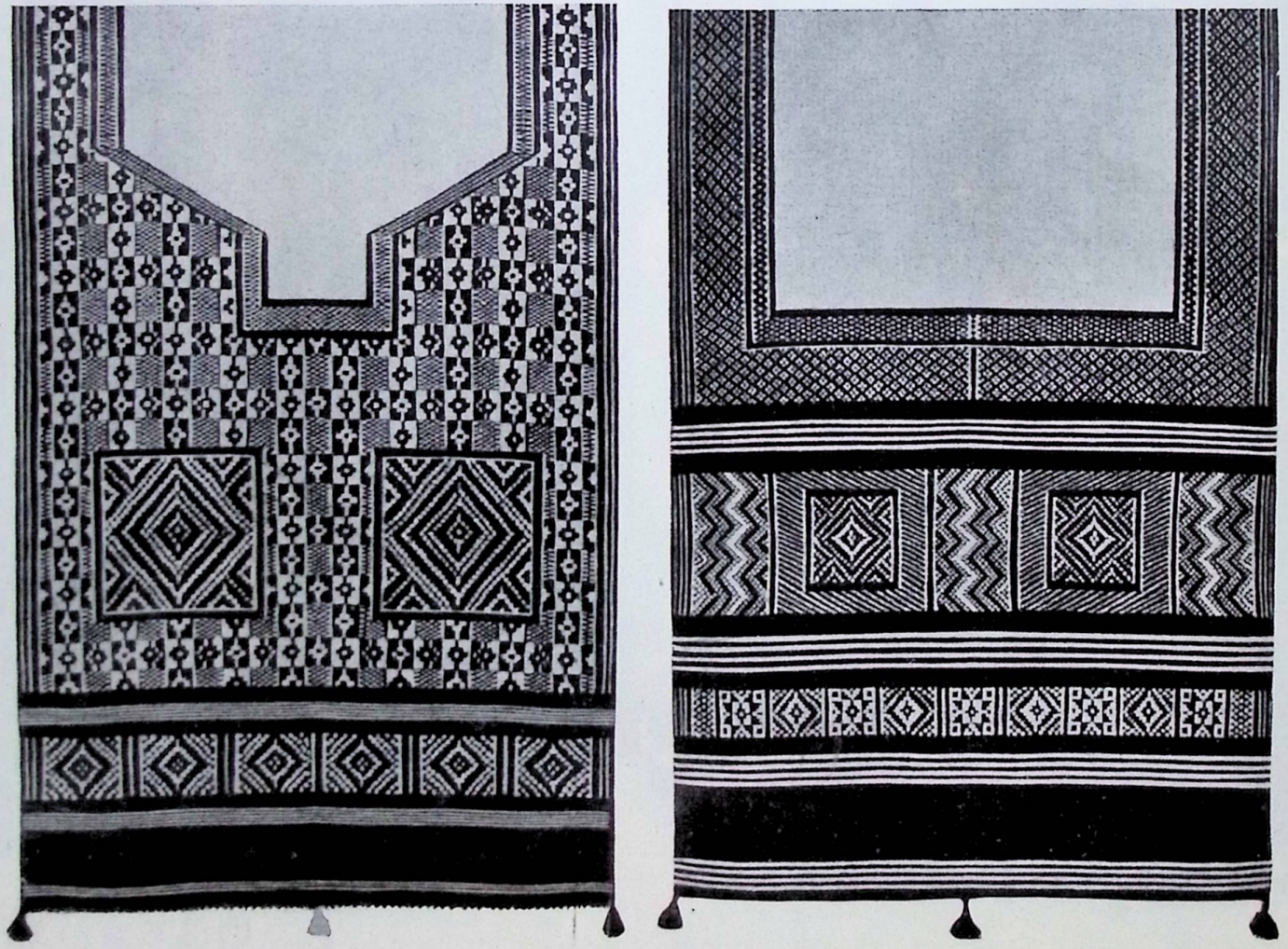


CORNER OF A MALABAR CARPET



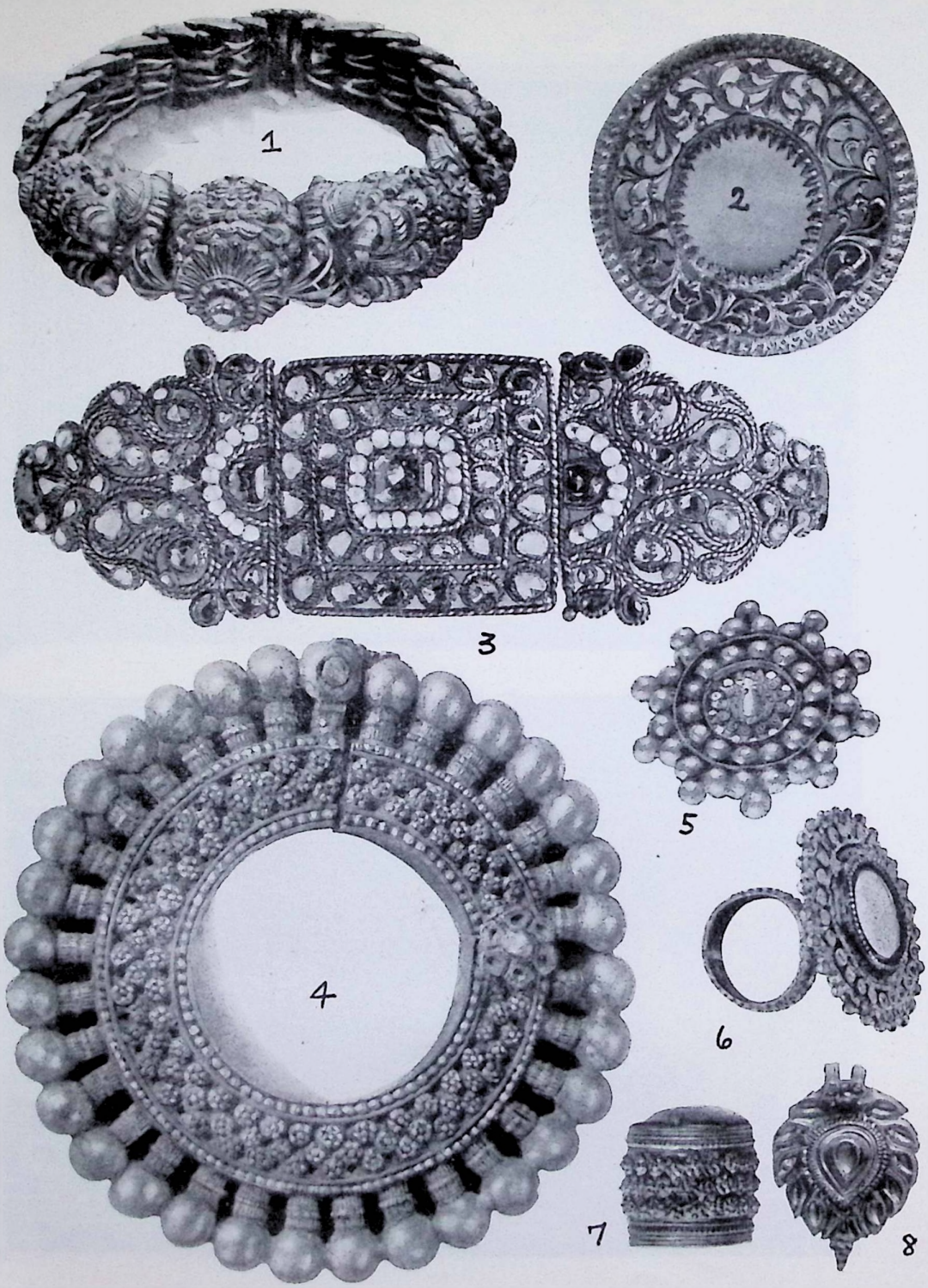
CORNER OF A COROMANDEL CARPET

(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



WOVEN MATS

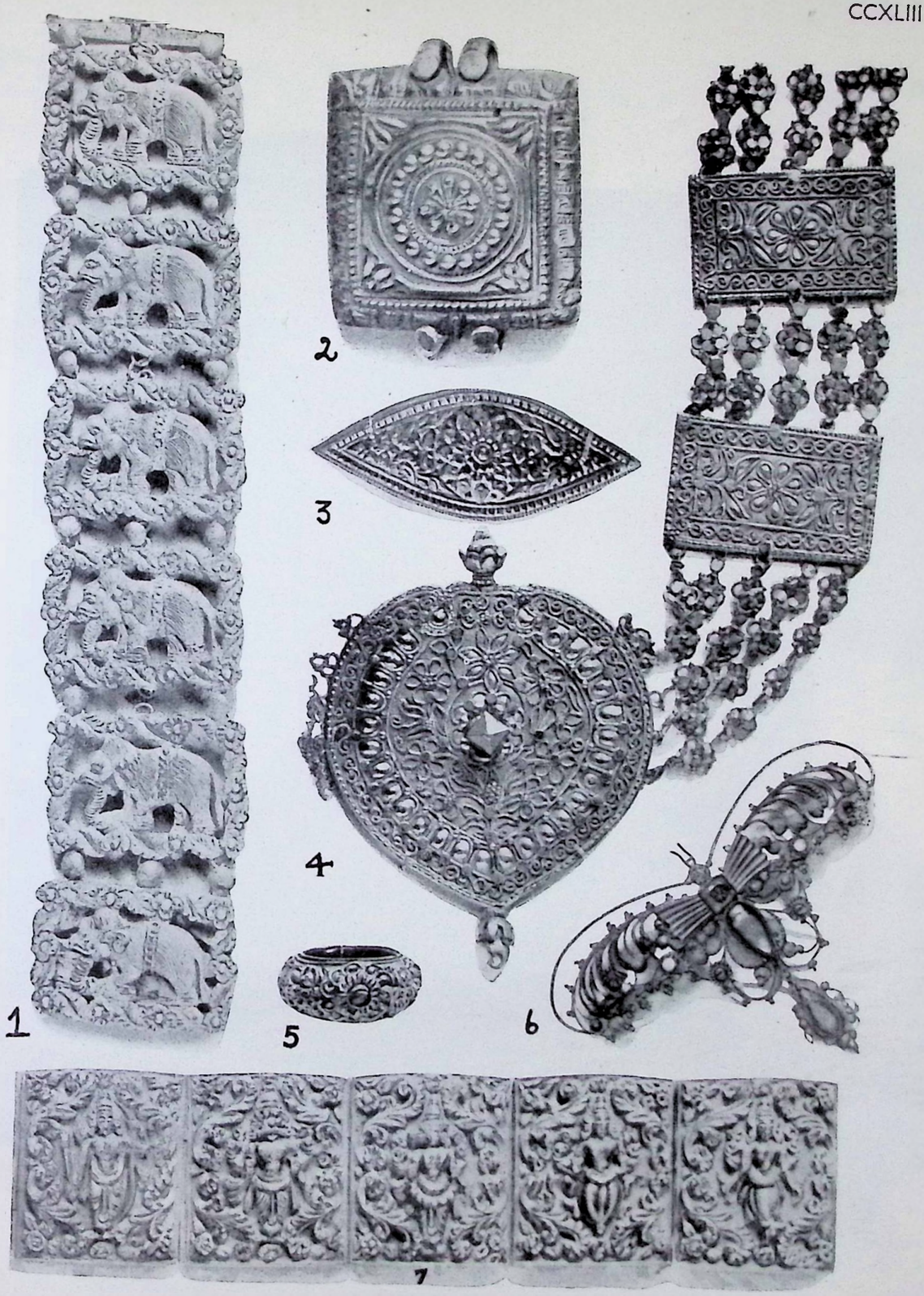
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



OLD INDIAN JEWELLERY

1. Embossed and chased gold bracelet with rubies, from Madras. 2. Head ornament, from Bangalore. 3. Clasp or Sarpesh. 4. Anklet or bracelet from Ajmere. 5. Top of ring. 6. Toe-ring. 7. Gold ring, from Ajmere. 8. Pendant.

(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



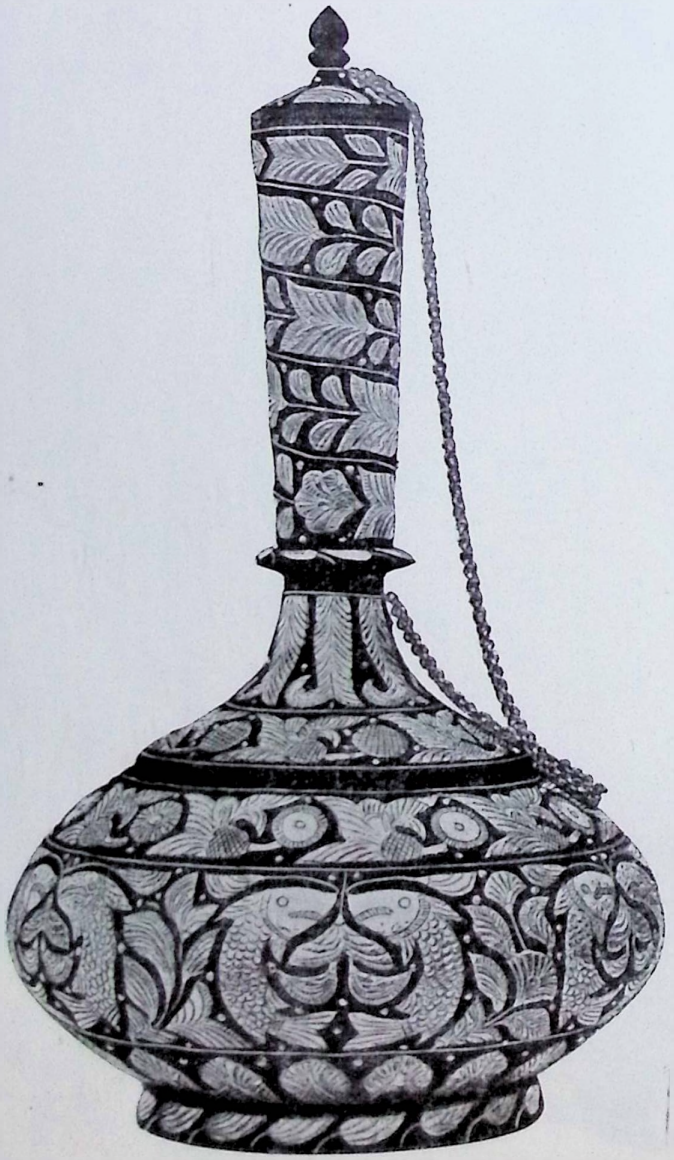
OLD INDIAN JEWELLERY

1. Bracelet of embossed elephants, Madras. 2. Square pendant or amulet case. 3. Shuttle-shaped head ornament. 4. Part of a necklace. 5. Ring from Vellore. 6. Butterfly brooch of gold filigree set with turquoises and rubies, from Madras. 7. Bracelet of plaques embossed with mythological figures.

(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



CENTREPIECE OF SILVER SUPPORTED ON ELEPHANTS
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



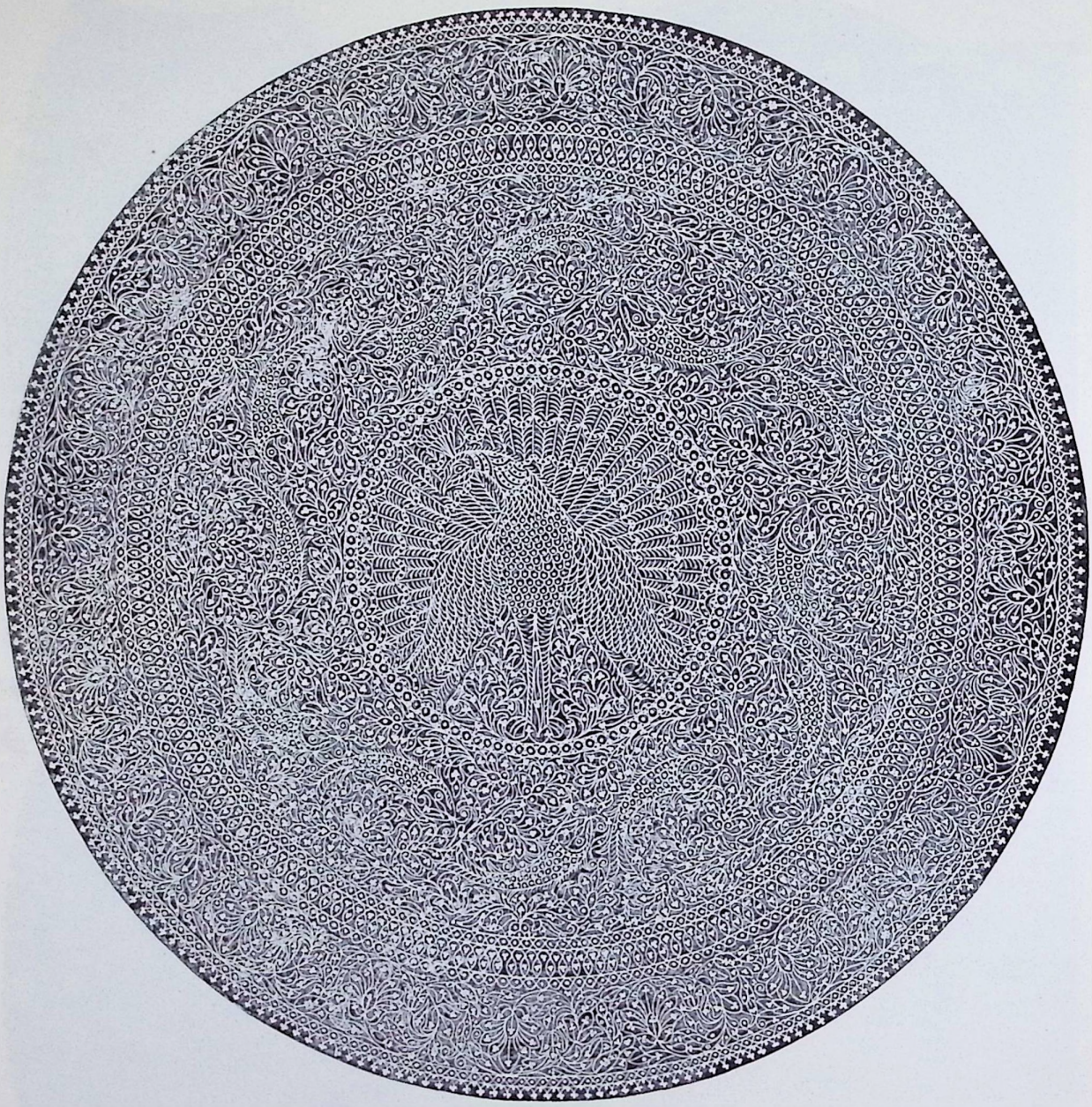
SURAHI OF BIDRI-WARE
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



PLATE OF BIDRI-WARE



SPICE BOX OF MORADABAD WORK
(From *The Industrial Arts of India* by G. Birdwood)



A PLATE OF TAR-KASHI OR WIRE-INLAY WORK, FROM MANIPUR
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



HAMMERED COPPER PANEL, AFTER A DESIGN FROM AJANTA

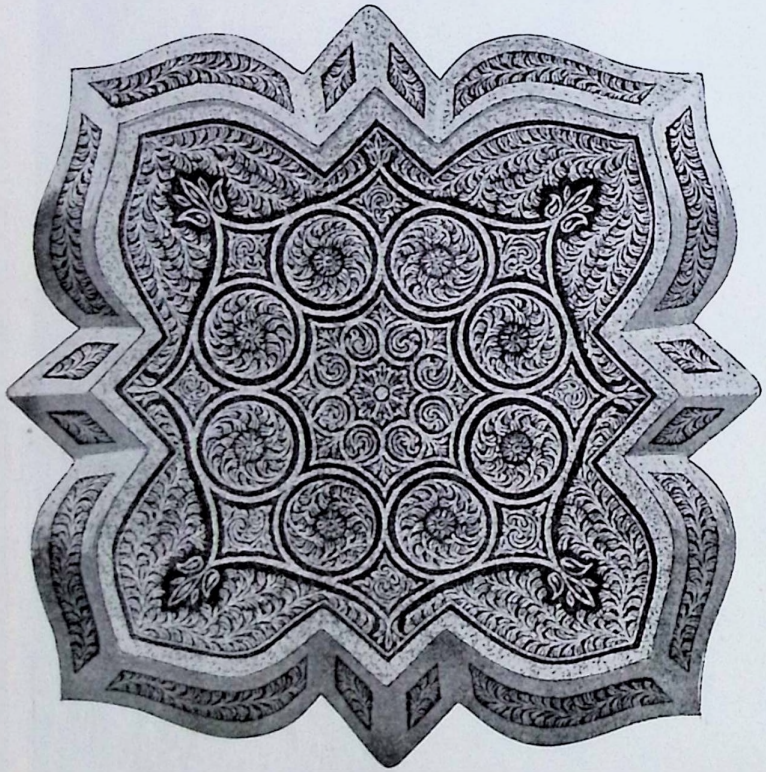


PERFORATED BRASS WINDOW, AFTER A DESIGN FROM AHMADABAD

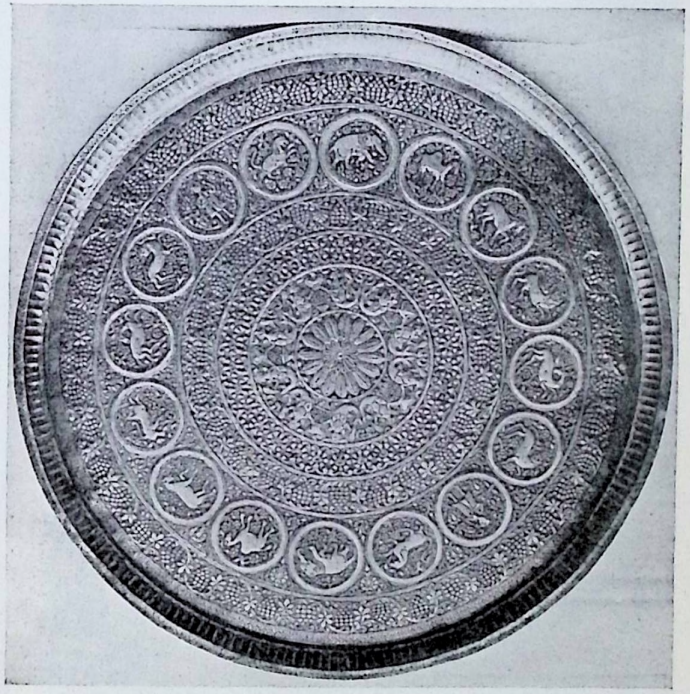
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



BIDRI WARE FROM THE DECCAN
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



DAMASCENED TRAY FROM SIALKOT

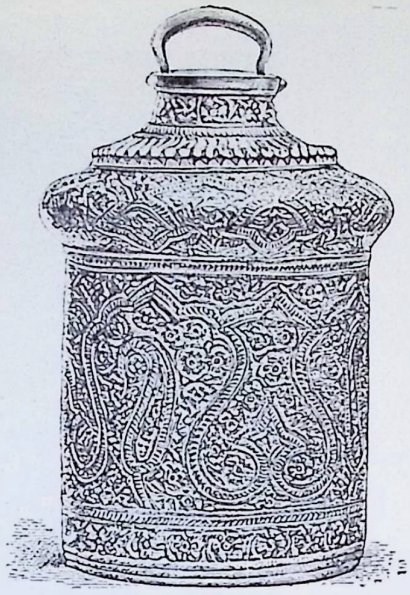


BRASS SALVER FROM U. P.

(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)

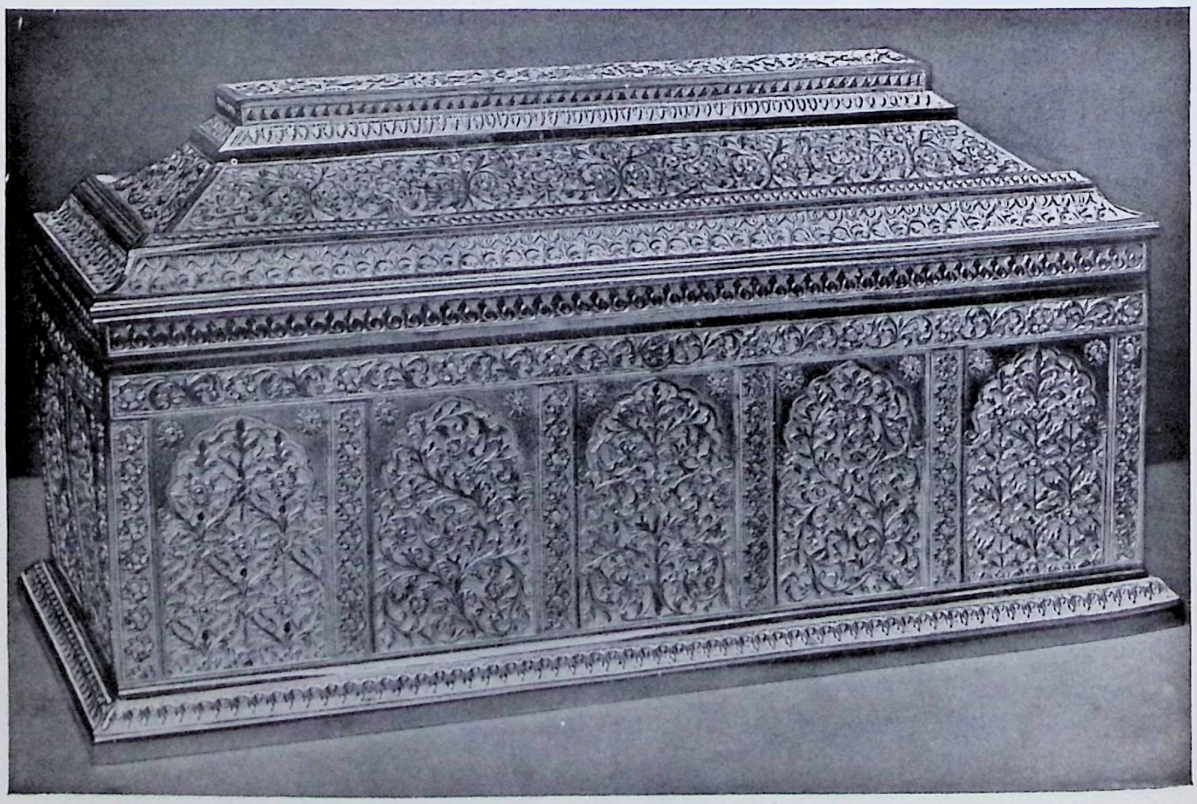


COPPER-GILT SACRIFICIAL VASE FROM MADURA



VESSEL OF CHASED GOLD, FROM KASHMIR

(From *The Industrial Arts of India* by G. Birdwood)



SILVER CASKET WHICH CONTAINED THE ADDRESS PRESENTED TO LORD HARRIS

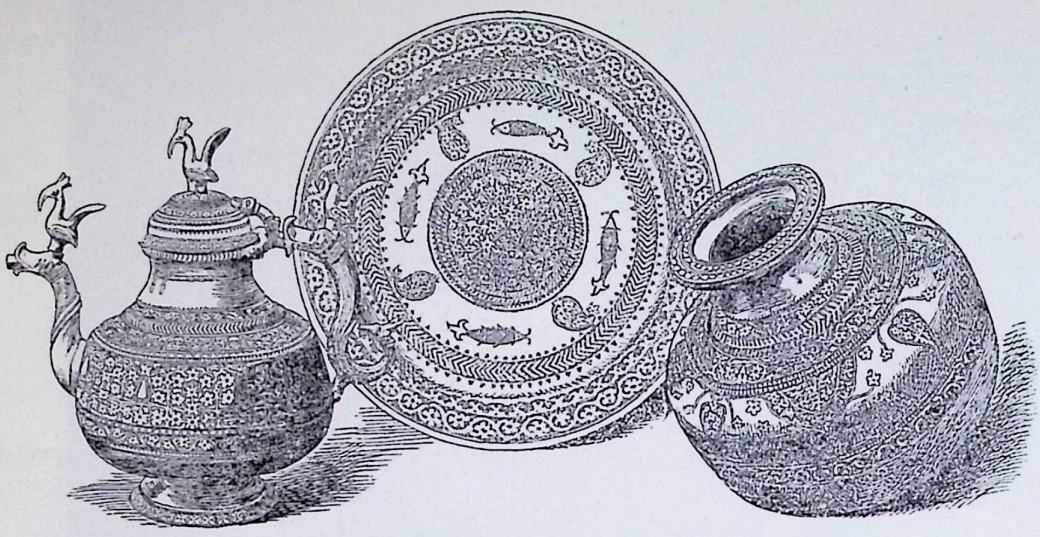
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



BIDRI WARE FROM LUCKNOW



SILVERWARE FROM KUTCH
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



BRASS VESSELS



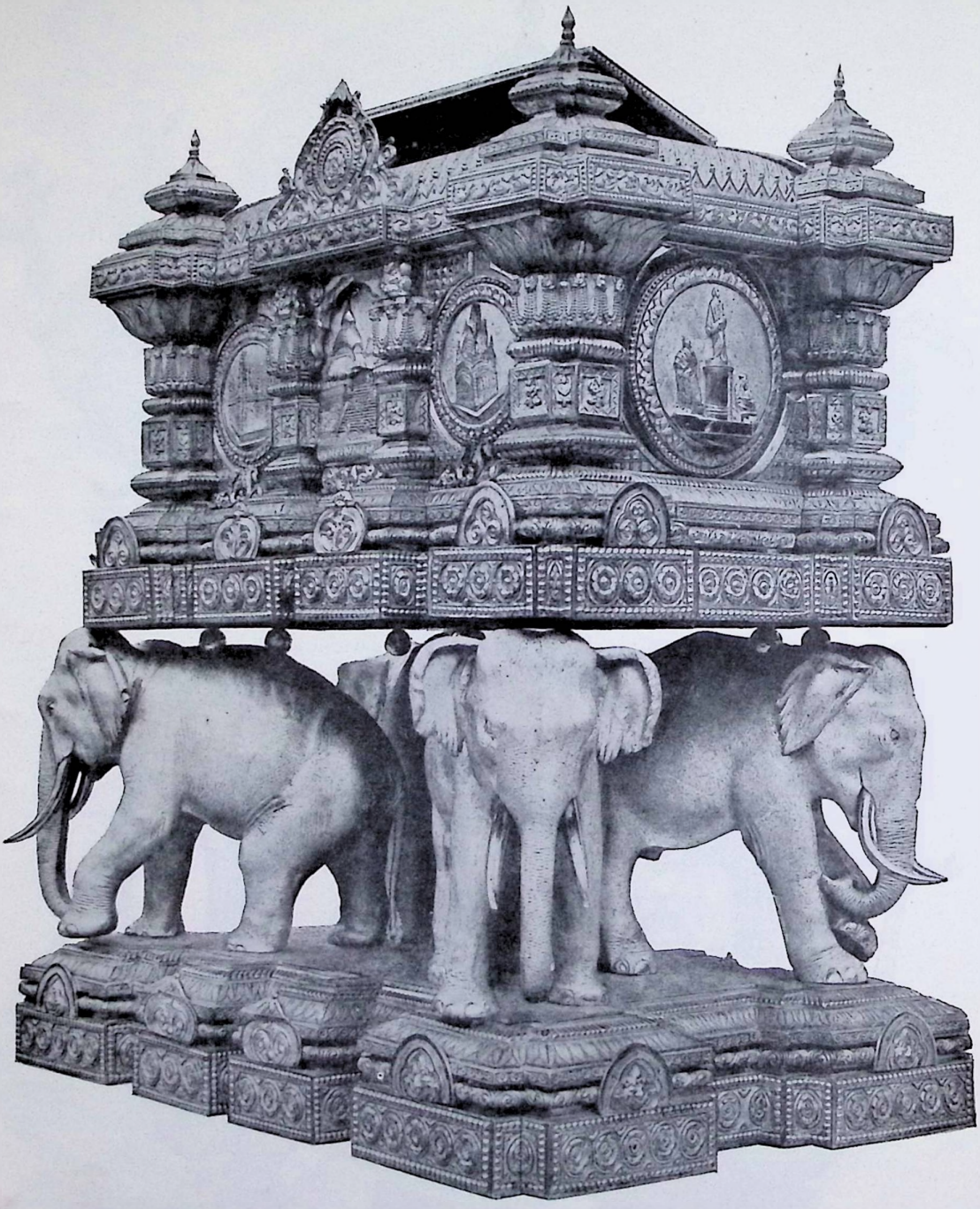
ENGRAVED BRASS HOOKAS
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



TINNED COPPER NIELLO WARE WITH BLACK BACKGROUND

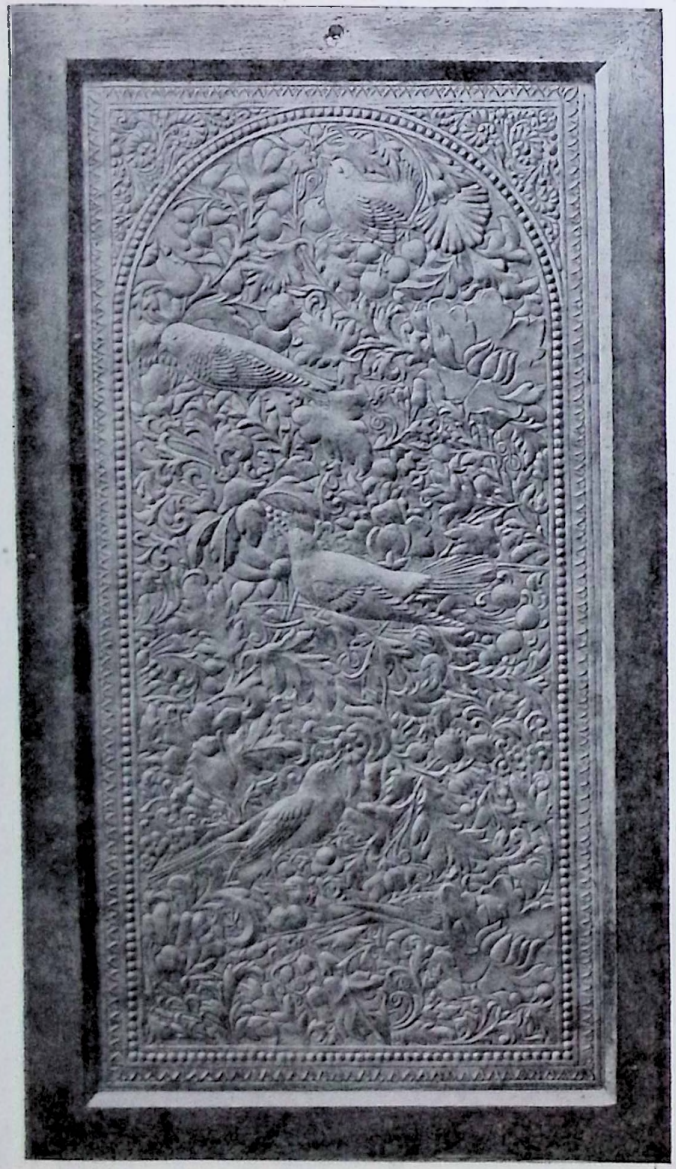


BRASS AND COPPER TEAPOTS FROM KASHMIR
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



SILVER CASKET PRESENTED TO THE LATE KING GEORGE V AND QUEEN MARY ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR MARRIAGE IN 1893, BY THE PEOPLE OF CALCUTTA

(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



COPPER PANEL FROM BOMBAY
(Copyright : Archæological Department of India)



CHASED SILVER VASE OR JUG
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



SUPERB EXAMPLES OF INDIAN ENAMELLED WARE
(From *Masterpieces of Indian Art and Sculpture*)

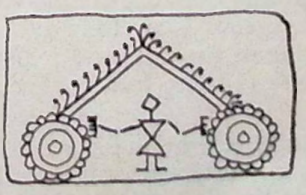
the Koran, spells, poetical passages, and prayers for good fortune and prizes at an exhibition. Thus a shield may contain an Arabic spell worn as a talisman by Musalmans for protection from all evils and cure for diseases which flesh is subject to." The art of Travancore craftsmen in damascening consists in the making of floral designs of a strongly Dravidian style, with gold wire beaten into a background of roughened steel.

Damascening in silver is called Bidri ware—the name having been derived from Bidar in Hyderabad, whose Mohammedan craftsmen decorate *huqqa* stands and plates in their own most inimitable style of work. The patterns employed are in imitation of the poppy plant—a design of great artistic merit. The prevailing custom amongst the Mohammedans in Hyderabad of presenting a complete set of Bidri ware to the bridegroom at the time of marriage is responsible for its flourishing trade condition even today. "No dowry is considered complete among the better class of Mohammedans unless a complete set of the Bidri wares from bed-legs to a spittoon is included. The high prices often render it necessary for the father of a family to begin his collection years before his daughter is marriageable." Other seats of Bidri manufacture are Lucknow, Purniah and Murshidabad.

Kashmere is well known for its parcel gilt silver ware and its artisans are famous for making *Surahi*—a water goblet of very ancient and extremely graceful form. Birdwood is full of praise for this work. "Their elegant shapes and delicate tracery, graven through the gilding to the dead white silver below, which softens the lustre of the gold to a pearly radiance, gives a most charming effect to this refined and graceful work." Besides Surahi, gold and silver tea sets, house-boat models, bowls, and vases with diffused floral designs, traced beautifully all over, elicit our spontaneous admiration for the skill of the craftsmen. Working in gold and silver is still carried on in Lucknow, Jaipur, Tanjore, Tirupatti, Bangalore and Gujarat, the beautiful gold repoussê work of which is much sought after. Rose water sprinklers, bowls and trays with small sprigs of leaves and flowers hammered out in relief receive artistic finish from the hands of artists whose efficiency is born of life-long devotion to the craft in Trichinopoly and Coconada.

The art of enamelling is an art which was very well known in ancient India, and universally practised in medieval times. For a long time past this art called Minakari has been highly admired by art connoisseurs throughout the world. Although it is practised in several parts of the country, the enamels of Jaipur in Rajputana rank above all others for matchless perfection. The work done on gold is considered to be the best in the world. "The colours employed rival the tints of the rainbow in purity and brilliance, and they are laid on the gold with such exquisite taste that there is never a want of harmony."





Rural Wall Decorations

7 RITUAL DECORATIONS

RELIGIOUS sentiment has everywhere been not only one of the principal sources of aesthetic impulse, but has also provided the creative force for artistic productivity. This, as we have seen, is particularly true of India, where religion and art are vitally linked together. Here religion has supplied not only the motive and material for Indian art, but has also been the sustaining force. To this very source we owe the existence and development of the very interesting folk art of ritual decorations.

Before we had our gods and goddesses, we had faith in certain supernatural powers who, we believed, could wholly or partly determine our fate. It was our belief that these supernatural powers manifest in the sun, moon, fire, storm, rain, flowers and animals, could be evoked or controlled through worship. The result was that we first attempted to portray them in images and drawings and then developed ritual ceremonies and artistic embellishments with the purpose of honouring them, or begging from them or even of humouring those powers. In the course of time, however, the original magical and symbolic character attached to these images, decorations and rituals was nearly forgotten, but the practice has been continued in a vague reminiscence of their originally supposed effects.

Ritual ceremonies and decorations are, however, not confined to religious worship alone. They have now become an important part of our fasts and festivals, for example, those associated with the changing of seasons, the return of peace and plenty after the dark days of the monsoon, the birth of young shoots at the close of winter, the ripening of paddy in Bengal, and the return of the great "King Mahabali" indicating the coming in of the month of harvest in Kerala. The rituals and decorations play a significant role in such semi-religious ceremonies and on social occasions as well. Almost all the auspicious family events, such as weddings, *grah-pravesh* (entering a new house), the naming ceremony of the child, or the coming of an honoured guest to a meal, or even the dawning of a new day, are adorned and embellished with an artistic skill which is both traditional and spontaneous.

Ritual decorations in India have, therefore, not grown up as an isolated phenomenon. They are essentially a part of our culture and very closely linked up with our religious and cultural development.

The words "ritual decorations" have a wide meaning and convey to our mind a variety of objects and activities. They include the hanging of festoons and *Torans* of mango leaves across the doors, the *Kalash*, filled with water and *Amra-pallavs* (mango twig with five leaves) placed on the top of the *Kalash*, lighted clay lamps, banana trees, flowers, incense and the decorating of the floors of the house with figures and floral and geometrical motifs in white and coloured rice powder, limestone or chalk. It is, however, the last of these which is the most interesting and artistic part of the decorations. On each occasion of worship, fast, festival or social event of a sacred nature, the womenfolk of the household set themselves joyfully to beautify and decorate the floors of the house, and the courtyard with designs and patterns, executed slowly, carefully and religiously, "capturing something of the magic of tradition, something of the primeval freshness of simple beauty, something of the *e'lan* of aspiration and leaving it there to bless her home and to gladden the eyes of all who come and go."

This particular kind of ritual decoration as a domestic art is practised throughout the whole of India, but in its most developed form, it is found in Bengal, Orissa, Madras, Maharashtra and Gujarat—practically along the entire coast line. It is not seen so well

executed and in such variety in the more interior parts of the country. It is indeed remarkable that this art should have found a most fertile field only along the sea-coast.

Known as *Alpona* in Bengal, *Jhunti* in Orissa, *Kolam* in the South, *Rangoli* in Maharashtra and Gujarat and *Chowkpujana* and *Sona-rakhna* in Uttar Pradesh, *Alpan* in Bihar and *Mandana* in Rajasthan, this art is entirely in the hands of the womenfolk of the country. Religion being the motive force for much that women in India do and also because of the artistic instinct innate in them, this art of decoration has been monopolised by our women and has come to be regarded as a feminine art essentially. The girls receive their first schooling in the art from the elder womenfolk of the family when hardly six or seven years of age. They soon become quite adept at it, and in their turn, teach them to their daughters and grand-daughters. Thus the art has survived through the ages. Very recently, the Kala Bhawan at Shanti Niketan has introduced this form of art as a subject of study in its arts curriculum. But that is an exception. It is a pity that nowhere else does it form a part of the regular studies.

We should not however imagine that since the art is passed on from generation to generation, it is a stereotyped affair. It is no doubt a traditional art and some of its patterns are very much conventionalised, yet the spirit behind it is capable of manifesting itself in an infinite number of ways. We can easily discover in most of its products artistic creations of great skill, executed with taste, variety and originality. Each individual pattern is, as a modern art critic says, "a true picture of the women's heart—her desires, fancies and imaginations—a great worship of life unlike the dead ceremonial worship, alleged to be based on scriptures."

These decorations are generally executed on the plane surface of the courtyard or the floor of the house, which is usually of earth or on the streets by the main doorway in Gujarat, Maharashtra and the south. They are also executed on low wooden seats—the *Patas*—and over the rounded body of the *Mangal Kalash*, although on the latter, the natural flourish of the designs is sometimes very much disturbed, often degenerating into mere geometrical patterns.

The materials of our folk artists are few and simple. Powdered rice, or white limestone or chalk or even flour, sometimes mixed with water, producing an effect like that of white paint, is usually the only material. There is no need for even a brush. The nimble finger tips of the artists serve the same purpose. A quantity of the powder or a little piece of cloth dipped in the paint is held with the tips of the thumb and fingers of the right hand and slowly, by a harmonious movement of the fingers, a design is executed, in clear, fresh, white lines.

Although white is the generally accepted colour for these decorations, other colours are also used on important occasions by the more ambitious of our folk artists, to beautify the patterns further. Broken bits of leaves supply them with green colour, marigold petals and powdered turmeric with yellow, powdered red brick gives them the red colour needed, and charcoal the black. In the south and in Maharashtra, minute particles of cocoanut husk and sand are also pressed into service.

Each decoration consists of two classes of designs, that is, the ceremonial and the decorative. The ceremonial designs are traditional and always in keeping with the occasion that is being celebrated. In such designs figures of birds, fish, and animals, both real and legendary, sometimes with riders and sometimes without, sun, moon, stars and chariots, combined into many pleasing arrangements, have their places of honour. For example, on the occasion of the worship of Manasa, the goddess who presides over the snakes in Bengal, or on the Nagpanchami Day in other parts of the country, the Alpona and Rangoli designs and patterns must include figures of snakes. The most important festival in honour of Lakshmi, in Bengal, takes place in the month of Aswin (September-October) on the full moon night. Paddy is regarded as the chief wealth and the symbol of prosperity and since

Aswin is connected with the ripening of the early winter paddy, Lakshmi is regarded as the presiding deity of the crop and an elaborate form of decorations is executed to worship her. *Charan* or the footmarks of Lakshmi, the goddess of Fortune, who is fondly believed to enter the house on this day and a creeper to represent the paddy are important motifs of the Alpona associated with this worship.

In the south, the women make a "Shiv Peeth" Kolam on Mondays, a "Kali-Peeth" on Tuesdays, a "Swastik" on Wednesdays and "Lakshmi Kolam" on Fridays. Conch shells, gada, gopads (cow's footmarks) are important motifs of the ceremonial side of the Rangolis. The scorpion, supposed to symbolise human suffering, figures in the Chowks of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar to ward off evil influences. The figure of a fish, regarded as an auspicious object by the Hindus, is a very favourite motif and appears in almost all cases where water is shown or where the different kinds of animals are depicted. In Bengal the figures of the vermilion pot, *baju* (an ornament of the upper arm), *nath* (a nasal ornament), bangles, ear-tops are objects of Alpona decorations connected with the worship of married women. Some Alponas involve as many as forty different objects, before each of which a flower is offered, and a song and a rhyme recited on important occasions. These designs though sometimes markedly crude and stiff are however interesting and surprisingly refreshing.

The decorative part of these designs is the most fascinating and a very real means of expression of the heart's uplift towards Beauty. On the occasion of the reception of a distinguished guest, the place where the guest sits and dines at weddings, the place used for standing by the bride and the bridegroom, at religious worships, the place where the idol is to be worshipped or on the coming of a new dawn, the courtyards are decorated with beautiful patterns and designs, which are not just traditional but fresh creations of the artist's mind unfettered by any convention or rules of ritual decoration. The designs are mostly geometrical or floral but of superb execution. The girls vie with one another in excelling the other's works and produce many beautiful creations of art.

There is an endless variety of geometrical patterns which most probably originated in the simple enjoyment of lines and forms. Some of the designs are very simple, just a network of lines, but very cleverly and artistically done. Sometimes, colour effects are introduced to enhance their beauty. On auspicious occasions, clay lamps glow in the centre of them and in the south they are filled in with brightly coloured flowers and leaves.

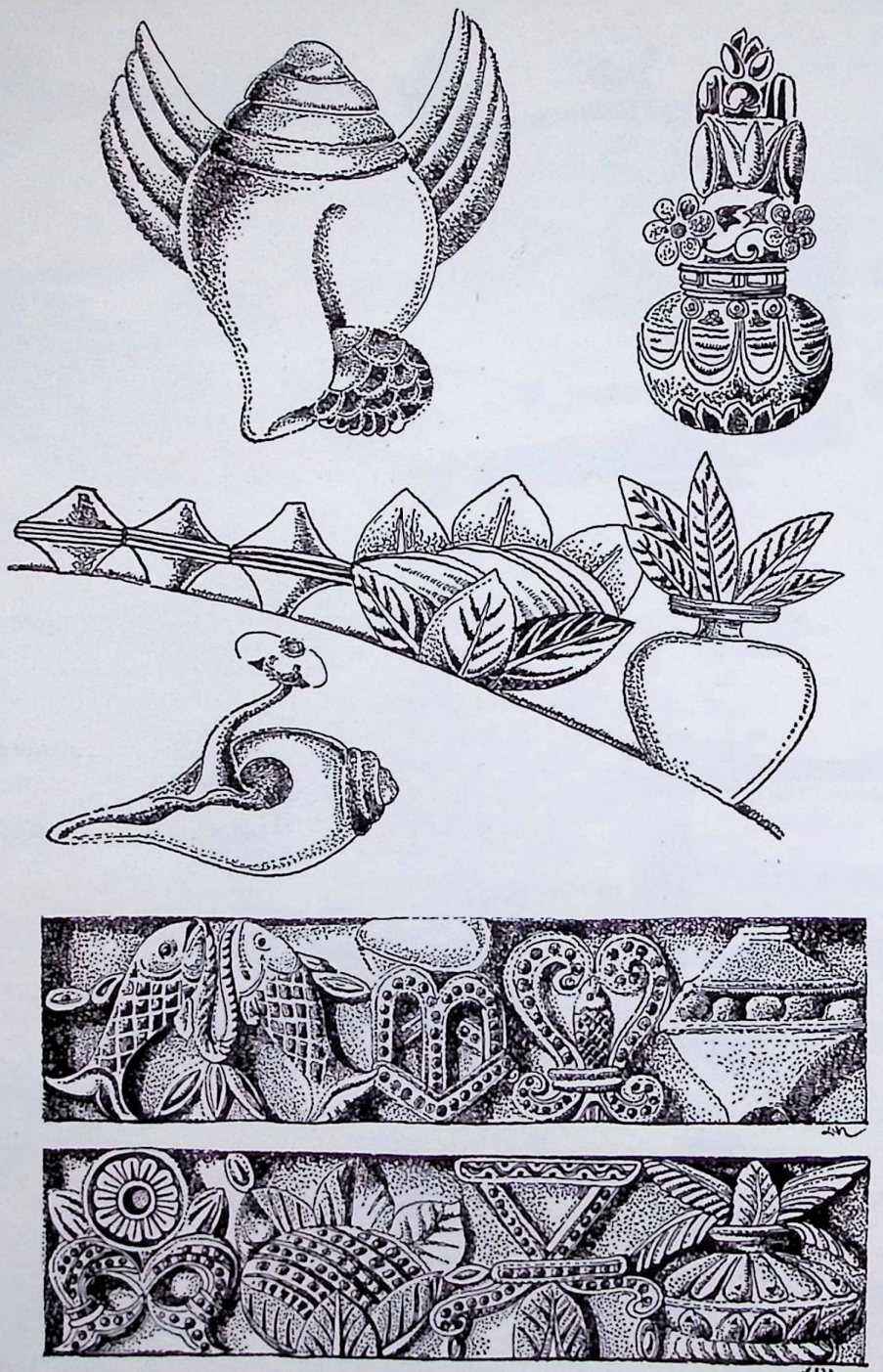
It is in the execution of floral designs, however, that the richness and glory of this art is to be seen at its height. Motifs taken from the plant world are handled with exquisite taste and great skill. Proportions and details are carefully portrayed, and in almost every instance the artists show an admirable observation of Nature, at the same time adapting the design with perfect freedom to the shape of the decorative area. The lotus, India's national flower, is in every part of the country a very popular motif. Besides being the symbol of the Divine Seat, the lotus is also the Tree of Life and of Good Fortune. Many beautiful and intricate designs of the lotus are drawn and variously interpreted, so much so that they do not always appear to be the strict representation of the real lotuses we see every day. But they are fine works of art in themselves. The lotus is particularly designed to adorn the standing place for the newly wedded couple and to provide a place of dignity for the idol to be worshipped.

Besides the lotus, flower motifs with an infinite variety of designs and colour schemes can be seen. Creepers with graceful curves are a very favourite source of inspiration and there is always room for the artist to show her artistic ability in ornamentation.

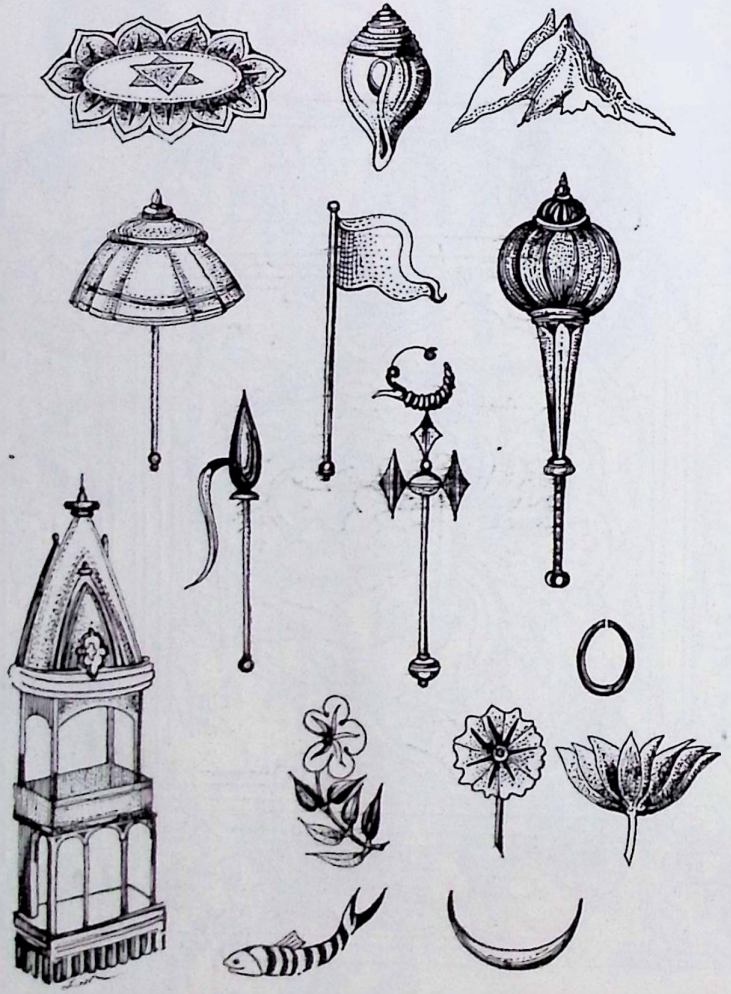
Among the Malayalis, there is an interesting form of decoration on festive occasions, a model of a gay flower bed with white powder and cocoanut husks, on the ground of the outer courtyard by the main doorway. It is called "Phook Kolam." The Malayali damsels fill the design with beautiful flowers of as many different kinds and colours as possible and



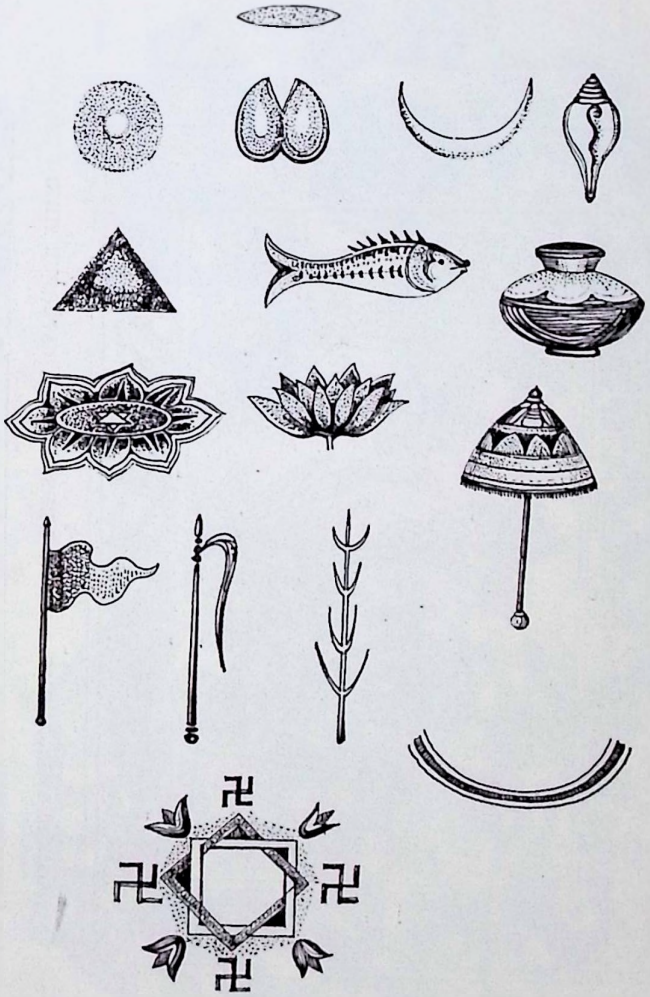
SACRIFICIAL VESSELS AND SPOONS
(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)



AUSPICIOUS SYMBOLS FROM KANKALI TILA, MATHURA



AUSPICIOUS MARKS ON THE SOLES OF
THE FEET OF RADHA



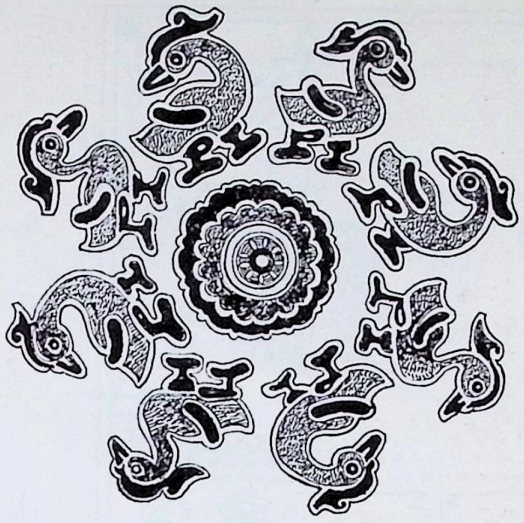
AUSPICIOUS MARKS ON THE SOLES OF
THE FEET OF LORD KRISHNA



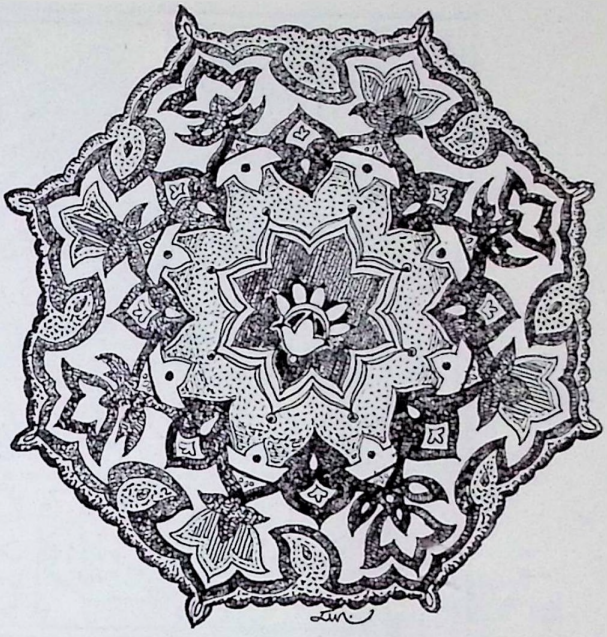
DECORATION FROM PANEL OF SALIM CHISTI'S TOMB, FATEHPUR SIKRI



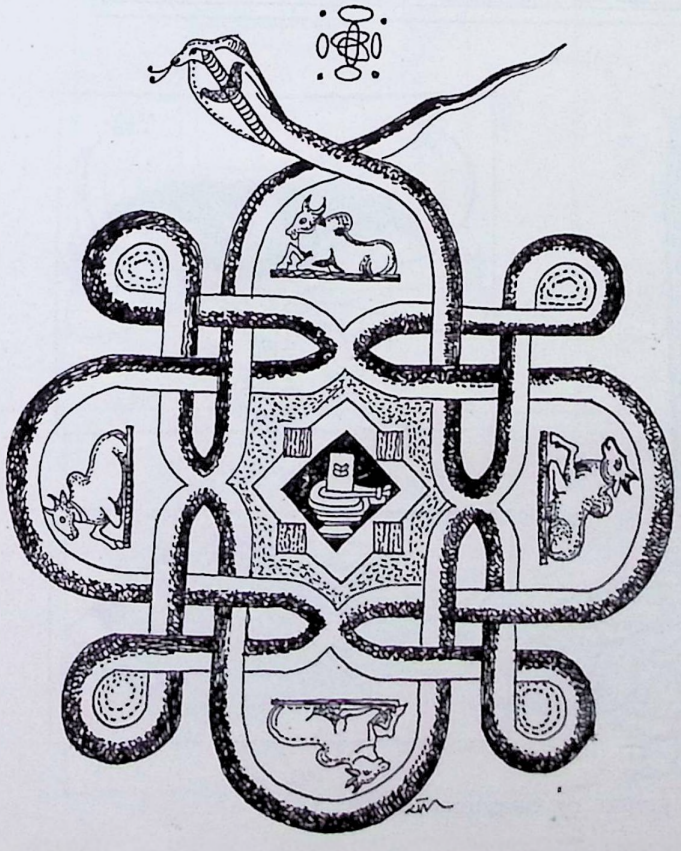
DECORATION FROM CHINI-KA-RAUZA, AGRA

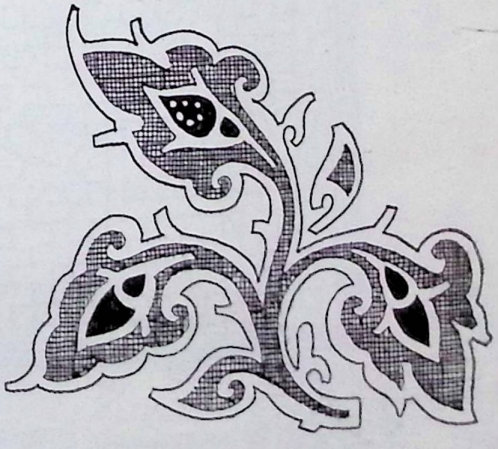


AUSPICIOUS SYMBOL FROM MATHURA



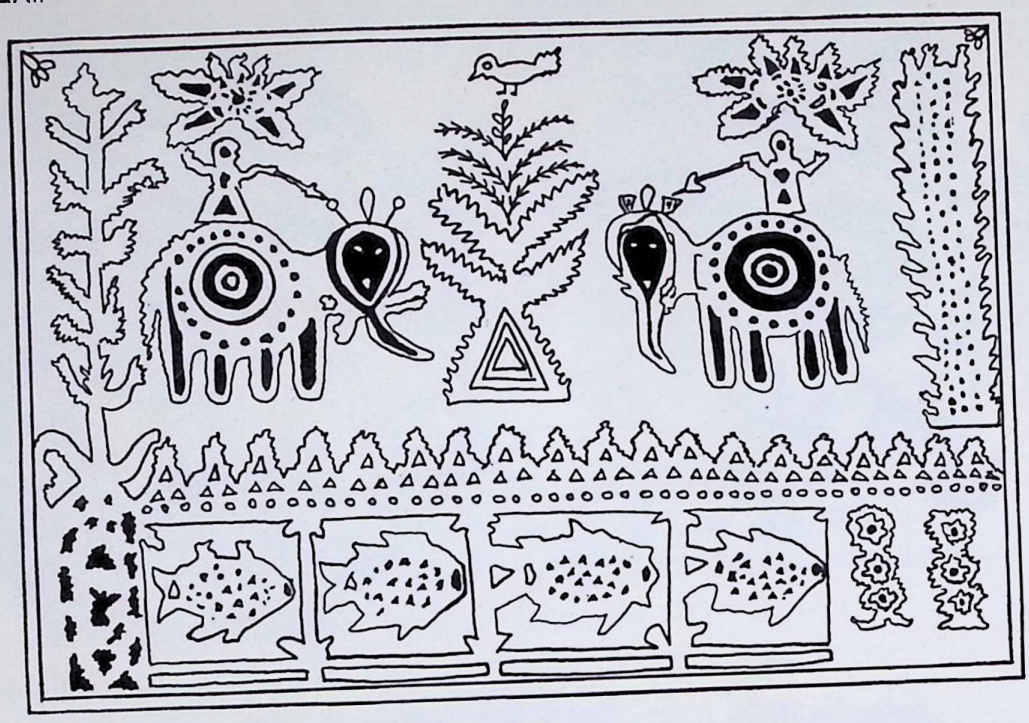
AUSPICIOUS FLORAL DESIGN FROM AGRA





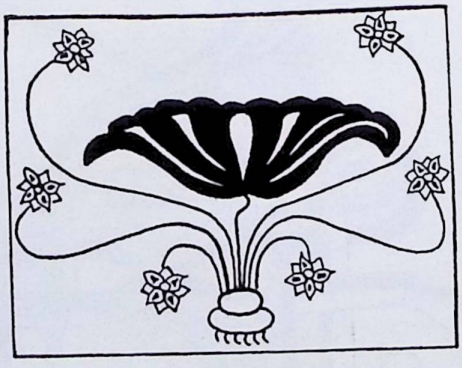


AUSPICIOUS DESIGNS FROM KANKALI TILA, MATHURA



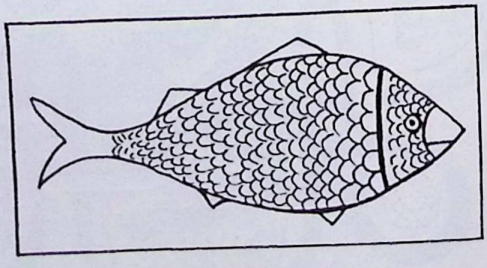
Alpona





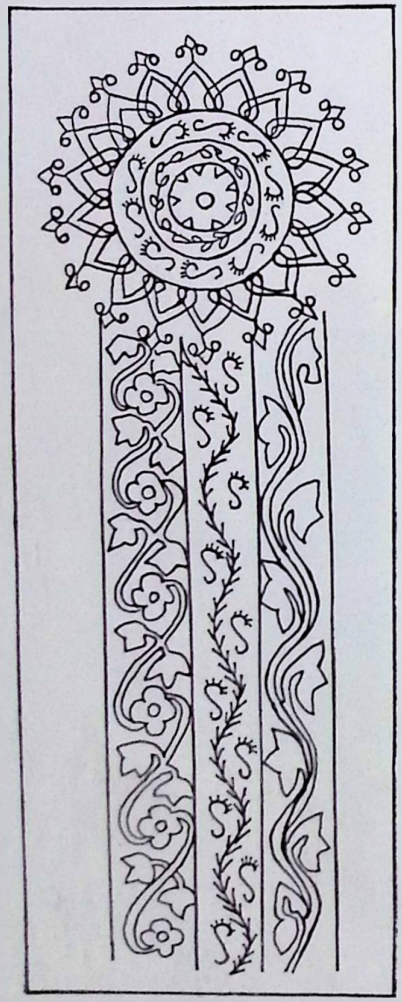
Lotus Motif



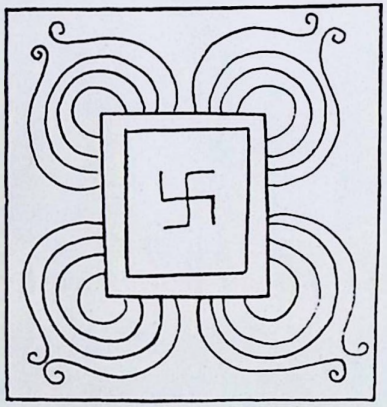


Fish Motif

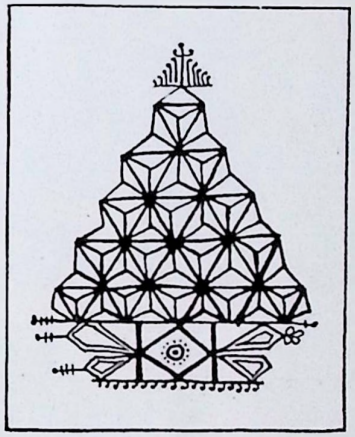
RITUAL DECORATIONS



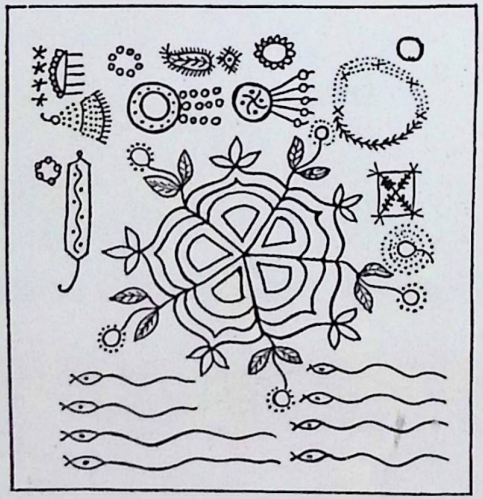
Lakshmi Puja Alpona



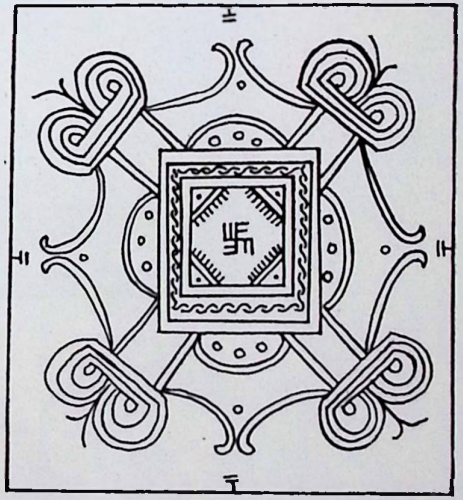
Rangoli



Mandana

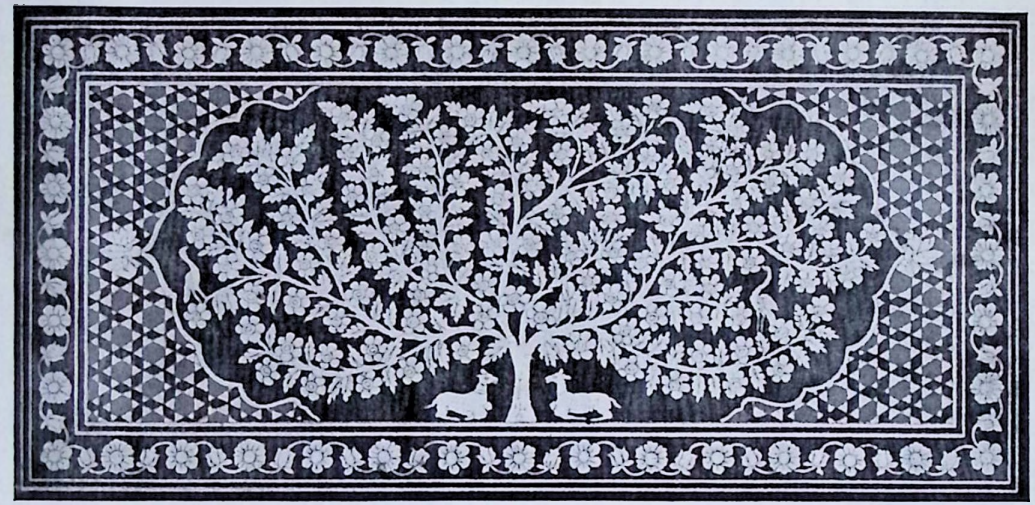


Nagpanchmi Alpona



Kolam

RITUAL DECORATIONS



WOOD AND IVORY MOSAIC FROM THE GOLDEN TEMPLE, AMRITSAR

(From *The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*)

thus produce designs of rare charm. The golden age of Kerala history is coincident with the reign of "the great and good King Mahabali." He symbolises prosperity and every year in the month of the harvest, Kerala celebrates one of the loveliest festivals known as Onam. It is said that even the gods were jealous of the popularity of this King and cast him into nether regions. But so deep was his people's sorrow that Mahabali was allowed to visit them once a year to gladden their hearts with his presence. So every house in Kerala wears a gay and festive appearance when Onam comes again, and beautiful Kolam designs, filled with richly coloured flowers, are everywhere in abundance. During the Deepavali week, the Gujarati girls make a thousand and one Rangolis in a variety of designs and colour schemes, both inside the house and on the streets, during the night for the townfolk to see and rejoice in the mornings.

Apart from festivals, in Maharashtra and the South it is a daily ritual for the ladies of the house to make Rangolis and Kolams in the courtyard and on the ground outside the house by the threshold. They sprinkle fresh cowdung on the recently swept ground and execute designs of Kolam and Rangolis with white powder of rice, or limestone or chalk. No particular design is prescribed. The girls draw pleasing floral and geometrical patterns from their imagination and display a real artistic sense.

In Rajasthan, Mandana imparts a picturesque beauty to the *kuchcha* ground finished with cowdung in crimson red, which is obtained by mixing *rati* (red earth found locally there). The background of the Mandana motifs is prepared in black, chocolate, blue or green. White being the only colour favoured, chalk dissolved in water or rice paste mixed with water is used for drawing the patterns. *Chokas* or squares, single and interwoven, have greater importance on ceremonial occasions, while polygons and circles abound at festivals.

The most obvious quality of this folk art is its simplicity and spontaneity. Inspired partly by religious ideas and spiritual experiences, and partly by a decorative instinct born of the creative impulse of Man, it is the purest and the most sincere form of art, and is characterised by the unsophisticated candour of its creators. For this reason, although there is a complete absence of perspective values and set conventions of pattern and design, there is yet in these 'compositions of two dimensional flatness' an ample power of realistic delineation, which is of the true expressionistic type. They have a naturalistic appeal not in the sense of photographic realism, but in an altogether different sense of the term, wherein we may speak of naturalism or realism as representing all the details actually in existence—not only those the artist can see at the moment, but those he knows are there, although not in view from a given angle and at a given time.

Unfortunately, there has been a certain one-sidedness in the appreciation of Indian art. In our enthusiasm to relish the more sophisticated arts of the country, we have we dare say, through our ignorance, neglect and apathy refused to give the rightful place in the domain of art which most surely belongs to these unique art creations. But as the spontaneous self-expression of the people who in a spirit of religious devotion, love for nature and rapturous joy have responded with more than the usual vigour to the artistic instinct innate in human nature, this art is as sublime, aesthetic and human as the more elaborate arts of the country. Whether one chooses to label them as childish or grotesque, the element of Beauty is ever there to cheer us and provide the nearest thing to pure pleasure. They not only truly represent the living art traditions of the country, but through them art continues to be linked with our daily life.

This art of ritual decorations is no doubt a highly developed domestic decorative art—an art which is as vital in nature as it is sincere in expression.

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