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EVOLUTION OF HINDU ARCHITECTURE IN INDIA

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While Muslim architecture continued to flourish during the medieval period, Hindu art continued to receive patronage from Hindu princes. Hindu princes built temples, powerful forts in traditional Hindu style. However, he did not pay much attention to the construction of palaces. As a result several Hindu schools of architecture developed in different parts of the country. The distinctive features of Hindu architecture were narrow pillars of circular section with base and capital, pilasters, corbels or chajjas, graceful tapering arches, lavish ornamental designs and attractive well shapes. Hindu architecture remained free from Islamic architectural ideas during the early period of Muslim rule in India. However, Islamic architectural ideas found their way into Hindu architecture during the time of the Mughals. For a complete understanding of Hindu architecture in medieval times, it is desirable to make a detailed study of the various monuments of the period.

The most outstanding examples of medieval Hindu architecture are provided by the temples in Orissa. Percy Brown has divided these temples into three groups. The first group consists of temples built between 750 and 900 A.D. The second group of temples was built between 900 to 1100 AD and the third group of temples was built between 1100 to 1250 AD. Prominent temples in Orissa include Parshurameshwara, Mukteswara, Linga Raja Temple at Bhubaneswar, Sun Temple at Konark, Jagannath Temple Puri etc.

The Parshurameshwara temple has a tower, a Jagamohana and a beehive forty feet high. The Mukteswara temple has a separate entrance which is known for its wonderful execution and elegant design. The height of Linga Raja Temple is 180 feet. Its structure is conical and beehive shaped. According to William Curtis, "Bhubaneswar is a perfect example of sculpture conceived as an integral part of architecture; No stone has been left here - but many other temples are almost as ornamented. The Sun Temple at Konark represents the culmination of Orissan architecture.

The Sun Temple at Konark, also known as the Black Shivalaya, represents the mythological chariot of the Sun. Around the base of the building are twelve pairs of carved and decorated stone wheels at intervals, the wheels being 9 feet 8 inches in diameter. Seven colossal monolithic rocking horses on either side of its entrance

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towered in the flaming white sky. According to Venkatachalam, "The Black Pagoda is a pyramidal structure rising in three terraces, crowned with a lotus, and is regularly carved in procession with elephants, horses, warriors, chariots, and wonderful life-like figures." The pagoda is supported by eight richly carved wheels which are, in themselves, gems of art. Jagannath Temple is another world famous Orissa piece of architecture. It was dated 1174 AD. It was built by King Anang Bhimdev of the Ganga dynasty. The temple is a massive structure, standing within an enclosure measuring 440 feet by 350 feet. Though this temple is built on the model of Linga Raja, it does not possess the grandeur and plasticity of the same.

Another notable piece of Hindu architecture during medieval India is the temple group at Khajuraho. It is said that in all 85 temples were built, but only 20 of them survive. The Khajuraho sculptures feature female figures in flexible attitudes that are masterpieces of plastic modelling. The carvings from the lives of men and women are a tribute to the sculptor's attention to minute details. Pro. A. Ale. According to Basham, "The style of Khajuraho sculpture lacks the cohesion and solidity of the best of Orissa, but the wonderful friezes of the statues have a graceful vitality, warm and the figures more attractive than those of the Orissan temple."

In Gujarat, an ornate and floral architecture developed under the patronage of the Solanki kings of Anilwad. He 1150 AD. Built a Sun Temple at Mundera in Baroda. Though the temple is now in ruins, its remains testify to the quality of its sculpture. We also find excellent pieces of medieval Hindu architecture at Mount Abu in southern Rajputana and at Girnar and Satrunjya in Kathiawar. Vimla Shah and Taj Pal built temples in Dilwara. These temples are made of pure white marble and have been highly appreciated by art critics. The outer grounds are plain, but the assembly halls are ornate. The shikhara of the temple is decorated with a large number of miniature minarets.

A. Ale. According to Basham, "The temples of Mount Abu, built of sober white stones, are covered with the most delicate and ornate carvings, especially in the interiors: it is, however, rather sober and repetitive. Those of Bhubaneswar, Konark and Khajuraho Mount Abu's rich decoration tastes of cold lifelessness in comparison. Like Hindu civilization itself, this temple was at once volcanic and sinister, down to earth but aspiring to heaven. Another masterpiece of Hindu architecture during the medieval period. The specimen is the palace of Raja Man Singh at Gwalior. This palace though quite small (its floor space is only 150 by 120 feet) is a perfect piece of architecture. Detachment marked by bastions, bands round the gilt flat domes of copper, and is raised by an inclined balcony by round bastions.

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Many of the walls are decorated with an assemblage of colored tiles with representations of ducks, elephants and peacocks in blue, green and gold, while the towers are connected at the top by graceful jaalis. Other prominent piece of architecture in Gwalior are the Temple of Sas-Bahu and Teli-Ka Mandir which were constructed in the 11th century. These temples impress not only with their grandeur, but also with their patiently worked out details. In Mewar, Rana Kumbha in 1439 A.D. D. built a temple which is square in plan and built on a raised plinth. It represents the newly acquired love for plain surfaces, as 'there is no decoration except for a few horizontally continuous string courses. The pillars of the temple are similar to those of Ahmad Shah's Jami Masjid.

Another masterpiece of Hindu architecture in Chittorgarh is the Kirti Stambha or Jai Stambha. It is partly built of gray sand-stone and partly of white marble. It is beautified with beautiful collering and jaali work. Apart from these two monuments, Chittorgarh has several other palaces which represent a model of medieval Hindu architecture. During the time of Akbar, a fusion of Hindu-Muslim culture took place, which greatly influenced the system of architecture. Hindu architecture absorbed some of the features of Muslim architecture. 1590 AD In. Raja Man Singh built a temple at Govinda Dev. It was a vaulted vault with radiating arches, a truly Muslim characteristic. Similarly, the temple of Harideva built by Raja Bhagwan Das as Govardhan had many features of Muslim architecture. 1627 AD. The Jugalkishore temple built in Brindaban was also heavily inspired by Muslim ideas of architecture.

The influence of Muslim architecture is also not able to be seen in the buildings constructed at Amber, Udaipur, Bundi etc. The palace at Amber which was started by Raja Man Singh and completed by Jai Singh is a great Rajput monument of architecture. This monument is known for its sculpture and use of colors and mirrors. Pro. According to Sherwani, "The Diwan-i-Aam in Amber is a masterpiece of Rajput-Mughal art consisting of a double row of pillars with a colossal row of pillars. Remarkably, there is a series of beautiful latticed galleries for the ladies of the ruling house. In Udaipur, Amar Singh in 1597 AD. Built Bari Mahal in It is a five-storied building, built of marble and trellis screen windows, on the edge of Lake Pichola. Another building Jag Mandir was built by Rana Karan Singh as the residence of Shah Jahan when he rebelled against his father. It combined the features of Hindu and Muslim architecture.

Other specimens of architecture that combine Hindu and Muslim features are the temple of Ahalya Bai, the palace of Raja Jai Singh in Jaipur, the palace of Raja Suraj Mal at Deeg, the temple of Kantanagar in Bengal and various temples built by Prithvi

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Raj. Rai Puboura which has since been destroyed. The influence of Mughal architecture is also found in the temples of South India. For example, the palace of Trumala Nayaka at Madura built in 1645 A.D. betrays the Hindu, Mughal and even the English varna-system. Pro. Sherwani said, "Like fully developed Mughal architecture, where it is difficult to separate the Mughal from the Hindu, here the Hindu and Indo-Persian styles blend so well that it is difficult to say where one ends. And another begins."

In the south the rulers of Vijayanagara built many palaces, public offices, temples which were specimens of medieval Hindu architecture and earned the admiration of foreign travellers. Although most of these monuments have since been destroyed by Muhammadan invaders, whatever remains are illustrative of the most splendid phase of South Indian architecture. Some of the temples built by the Vijayanagara rulers include the temples of Pampapati-Vitthal Swamy, Hazara Rama etc. These temples were exquisitely ornamented and are more spacious than those in northern India.

From the above survey of architecture in medieval India it is clear that medieval architecture like other forms of art passed through three phases – confrontation, inclination, and assimilation "The conflict naturally entailed a certain amount of destruction, but this phase it soon passed, especially when both sides found that it was impossible to dissuade the other and that they would have to fight side by side. In the art of the builder, the conquerors required the services of Indian masons with ancient Hindu traditions, and although many architects carried on their work, they did not fail to introduce their own motifs and ideas into the construction in which he was commissioned. In course of time the mutual inclinations gave place to assimilation and a composite system was formed, which spread its wings across the length and breadth of India.

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