

Religious and Royal Patronage in North India

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The building of temples was a leading concern of the Indian people between the eighth and thirteenth centuries. This is shown not only by the surviving monuments but by numerous inscriptions recording the construction and endowment of temples. This epigraphic information is particularly critical because no archival material from before the thirteenth century has been preserved. Despite the importance of temple building to Indian society and the fact that inscriptions are, for the most part, documents of religious giving, the subject of patronage has not been systematically explored.¹

Direct evidence for patronage first appears in northern India during the third century B.C., and gifts to temples, particularly in the south, have continued to the present day. In order to facilitate detailed examination, the present exhibition focuses on north India between A.D. 700 and 1200, a period during which temples were constructed in considerable numbers and ornamented with an abundance of sculpture. In many cases these temples were also provided with inscriptions that record the names of donors and details about the temple's property. While north India is a vast area with a corresponding number of inscriptions, a narrower geographical horizon would not yield a representative sample, precluding a balanced evaluation of the data found in individual records. Similarly, our time frame spans several centuries. Because standardized formulae dominate epigraphic records, only a broad chronological cross section can illustrate changes in the anatomy of religious giving.

Inscriptions and the Nature of Religious Gifts

Inscriptions from north India between the eighth and thirteenth centuries vary considerably. However, two basic types were predominant: (a) land grants on copper plates and (b) eulogistic and commemorative inscriptions on stone tablets or pillars. Copper-plate inscriptions usually recorded a king's donation of villages or tax-free agricultural land (*agrahāra*) to members of the priestly class.² The revenue from a village supported a particular Brāhmin and was thus seen as rewarding and perpetuating sacred knowledge. Apparently the plates were held by the recipients (rather like a deed) and often have been discovered near the villages to which they refer. Stone inscriptions, in contrast, were commonly associated with the foundation of temples. Hundreds of stone inscriptions have been preserved; some remain near temple entrances as originally intended, while others have been recovered from ruins and are held in museum collections (see Fig. 14).

Both stone and copper-plate inscriptions were normally written in Sanskrit verse and open with an invocation to a deity such as Śiva or Viṣṇu. This might be followed by an account of the presiding monarch. Many verses praising the king and his ancestors were often included. If the king was not the donor, then the royal eulogy was followed by an account of the donor and his family, followed by a description of the building or grant. In the case of buildings, gifts for the temple's maintenance are often detailed. These gifts could consist of villages,

Fig. 14
Estampage of an inscription from Central Archeological Museum, Gwalior, recording the establishment of a Śiva temple in about the 12th century.

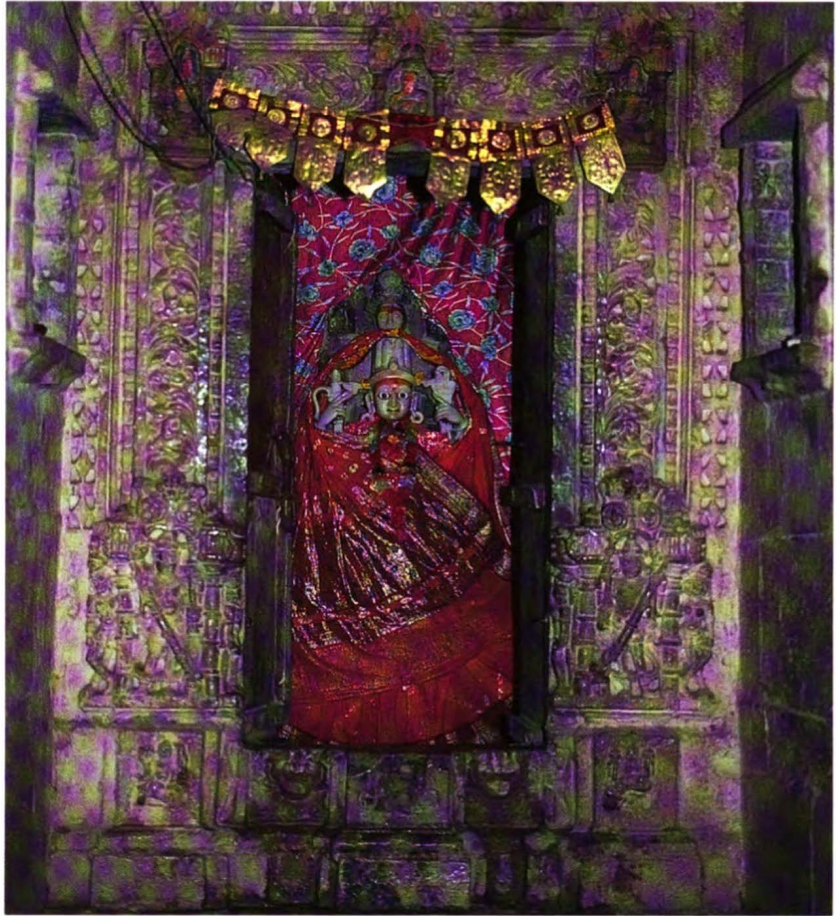


Fig. 15
Worship of the Goddess (Devī) in
the inner sanctum, Durgā temple
(with later additions), near Udaipur,
Rajasthan, 12th century.

agricultural land, or commercial property, the revenue from which served as an endowment. An inscription's closing statement often expresses the hope that the temple might long endure and that the endowment might not be disturbed. Assorted facts could then follow, such as the date, the names of the architect (*sūtradhāra*), the poet who composed the inscription, the individual who transcribed it, and the engraver. While copper plates and commemorative stone tablets are the most common sort of record, other epigraphic sources occasionally provide information about patronage. Pilgrim inscriptions recount visits to holy places and give an indication of the significance of certain shrines. Memorial inscriptions provide an account of departed relatives or warriors who died in battle and sometimes mention endowments to support the bereaved. Cultic inscriptions furnish the pious texts or ritual formulae considered appropriate for a particular place.³

Despite standard content and phraseology, each inscription is unique. Just as north Indian temples have a generic similarity but are distinct, each donor emerges from the epigraphic record as an individual with particular motivations for building a shrine or making a donation. Likewise, each sacred place had its own special history and reservoir of endowments. These endowments, because of their economic value, were given exact descriptions. An exemplary inscription from Ahar records a number of transactions in favor of the Goddess Kāīcanaśrīdevī.⁴ In one case, individuals arranged for rent revenue to be directed to the temple; in another, a community council (*maḥājana*) donated long-term leases on commercial enclosures (*āvaṛī*). These properties are described with legal precision and their revenues were placed under the control of a managing board or committee (*gaṣṭhī*).

Endowments like those documented by the Ahar inscription were made in substantial numbers before the thirteenth century and were considered the personal property of the god or goddess enshrined in the building. These deities were not abstract symbols but concrete personalities with clearly defined legal rights to donated property. A temple was thus a complex institution consisting of one or more gods and a number of social groups who managed the temple's property and controlled worship. Making a gift to a temple, or more correctly to the god in a temple, was seen as a meritorious act in which all could participate according to their means. Gifts were made by all sorts of people but most commonly by the ruling nobility. Aside from making gifts, it was incumbent upon rulers to provide a stable environment in which religion could flourish. This meant, in practical terms, the maintenance of established preferments and the protection of temple property from abuse and encroachment. As a consequence, temples came to control an increasing amount of property revenue. Temples also accumulated important fixed assets such as jewels, bullion, and miscellaneous paraphernalia, including image frames, thrones, parasols, crowns, and vestments for the deity (see Fig. 15). Temple property could also include ritual implements such as bells, lamps, censers and palanquins or temple carts for parading the divinity on festival days.

The end of temple wealth and social prominence was heralded by the violent incursions of Maḥmūd of Ghazna in the early eleventh century. Celebrated religious centers such as Mathura and Somanātha were ransacked, and temple treasuries were looted, with much booty being removed to Afghanistan.⁵ With the establishment of the Mu'izzi Sultanate at Delhi in the closing years of the twelfth century, the power and influence of the indigenous ruling elite that had built and endowed temples was increasingly circumscribed. Temple building declined precipitously, the remaining vestiges being all but swept away by the expansionist policies of the Tughluq dynasty in the fourteenth century. The old temples that survived this cataclysm now stand as hollow shells in secluded spots, their property and revenue sequestered, their rites in abeyance, and their names lost to memory (see Fig. 16). It is from the particular facts provided by inscriptions that a history of religious giving can be constructed and it is against these facts that the architectural and sculptural residue of the temple tradition must be measured.

Religious Giving and Temple Patronage

A history of patronage between circa A.D. 700 and 1200 has not been written for a variety of reasons, the most salient being that epigraphic records, like most legal documents, use standard formulae that *prima facie* offer little to the historian. The description of temples and religious gifts changed little after the seventh century and this repetitiveness was coupled with the use of stock descriptive phrases that are of little concrete value. For example, a great many temples are described as having spires "as high as Mount Kailāsa." In contrast, the factual data provided by inscriptions (such as donors' names and the conditions surrounding an endowment) are so particular that the information is seldom repeated in other records. Furthermore, many of the temples described, especially those from before the tenth century, are either ruined or unidentifiable. As a result, it is impossible to transform the myriad facts into a connected narrative. While a comprehensive history cannot be rendered, a modest survey of patronage is nonetheless feasible. With numerous individual inscriptions it is possible to present a cross section of temple building and religious giving. Although this approach has the disadvantage of representing patronage as a static phenomenon, it can be justified due to the extremely conservative nature of Indian society, the concepts of innovation and progress having virtually no place in intellectual life before the thirteenth century.⁶ A synchronic description is thus appropriate, provided it is tempered with instances of change. Our survey might be criticized as burdened with excessive detail. In fact the details given are only a fraction of what

has been preserved. These details not only illustrate the character of inscriptions but highlight the information that ancient patrons deemed worthy of record.

Noble Patronage

After the seventh century, north India was seldom ruled by a single power. Major kings and dynasties emerged only rarely from a matrix of competing clans and principalities. The history of these political entities is not well understood, but surviving inscriptions indicate that religious institutions were vigorously supported by all members of the ruling elite. The first major king to appear after the death of Harṣavardhana (A.D. 606–47) was Yaśovarman of Kannauj (ca. A.D. 720–50). Yaśovarman's ancestry is not directly known, but he may have come from a Mauryan clan that controlled Mathura in the late seventh and early eighth centuries.⁷ Although a powerful ruler, little archaeological material can be connected with Yaśovarman. Vākpati's *Gauḍavaho* states that Yaśovarman built a temple at Hariścandranagarī (Ayodhya).⁸ The only other indication of Yaśovarman's architectural activities is given in an inscription from Ghosrāwā that mentions a location called Yaśovarmapuravihāra, apparently a monastery in the Rājgir hills.⁹ Yaśovarman's successor Āma (ca. A.D. 750–75) is credited with building a temple to Mahāvīra, founder of Jainism, at Gwalior (ancient Gopādrī, Gopagiri).¹⁰

This evidence indicates that the kings who ruled the Gangetic heartland in the eighth century had an active interest in constructing temples. More information is forthcoming about contemporary princes in Rajasthan. An illuminating example of such patronage is provided by the inscription from Kanswa near Kotah that recorded the establishment of a temple by one Śivagaṇa, son of King (*nirpa*) Sarīnkuka, an ally of King Dhavala.¹¹ Dhavala belonged to one of the Mauryan clans that prevailed in many parts of north India during the eighth century. Śivagaṇa built a temple (*bhāvana*) of Parameśvara in the hermitage of Kaṇva (modern Kanswa).¹² Two villages were given as a perpetual endowment for maintenance, lights, incense, and other accoutrements of worship. The conclusion includes the customary prayer that the *kīrti* (fame of the builder and thus also the building) might long endure, the purpose of this temple (to augment merit and fame), the date, the name of the poet Devata, and the names of others, including Nāṇṇaka, the *sūtradhāra*. That this sort of patronage continued in later times and was not restricted to deities such as Viṣṇu and Śiva is evidenced by the archaeological material discovered at Ghatiyālā, a site northwest of Jodhpur. A ruined Jaina temple bears a Prākṛit inscription that states it was erected by Kakkuka, a ruler of Pratihāra lineage, in [Vikrama] year 918 (A.D. 861–62). Beginning with a genealogy of Kakkuka, the record states that in order to increase his fame the ruler founded a market (*haṭṭa*) and established two pillars, one at Maḍḍodara (modern Mandor) and the other at Rohinsakūpa (modern Ghatiyālā).¹³ Though inscribed during the reign of Mihira Bhoja (ca. A.D. 836–85), a celebrated Pratihāra monarch, the inscription does not mention his name. The genealogy indicates that Kakkuka was related in some way to the imperial Pratihāras and that occasionally the two branches of the family may have been in conflict.¹⁴

The pillar mentioned in the Ghatiyālā inscription stands near the ruined Jaina temple and is locally known as Khakhu-devalam. On the shaft are three ninth-century inscriptions. The inscription on the east side, in Sanskrit prose, gives the genealogy of Kakkuka and again records that he set up two pillars, built a *haṭṭa*, and established a community (*mahājana*). The inscription on the west side records that the area was originally inhabited by Ābhīras until Kakkuka routed them and built a market with lovely streets and houses and induced a *mahājana* of Brāhmins and other reputable people to live there.¹⁵

The degree to which epigraphic records focus on matters of local concern is further illustrated by an inscription of the Guhila prince Bālāditya from Chātsu.¹⁶ This gives a long account of the achievements of the Guhilas in the service of their Pratihāra overlords (even though the Pratihāras are barely mentioned). The



inscription's main purpose was to record that Bālāditya married Raṭṭavā and that after her death he erected a temple (*prāsāda*) of Murāri (Viṣṇu) in commemoration. An inscription from Rajor cites another commemorative temple.¹⁷ A prince named Mathanadeva granted a village to a Śiva temple to maintain rituals. The temple was named the Lacchukeśvara Mahādeva after Mathana's mother Lacchukā. The naming of temples after a donor or an esteemed person is a long-established practice. It is known from at least the fifth century and continues today.¹⁸

The predominantly local focus of inscriptions necessitates a brief consideration of Indian polity between the eighth and thirteenth centuries. Historians have traditionally emphasized major dynasties and assumed that they were responsible for organizing a powerful and centralized administrative structure. The lesser nobility functioned as feudatories, their main significance being that they either supported or opposed the dominant power. This approach has produced a number of important works, some of which are now classics of Indian historical writing.¹⁹ While such histories are useful and easily updated when new discoveries are made, they do not provide an entirely satisfactory account of events in relation to internal political arrangements and the constitution of power. This has prompted a number of scholars to probe into the structure of several Indian kingdoms. Burton Stein, using the Cōjas of Tamil Nadu as his example, has proposed that the kingdom was a decentralized "segmental state" and that the king was an almost entirely symbolic figure.²⁰ Power rested not in the hands of a centralized government, but in what Stein calls "ethnoagrarian microregions." Ronald Inden, using the Rāṣṭrakūṭa dynasty of the Deccan as his starting point, has argued that the king was important, but that his power was continually constituted, contested, and remade. The business of "imperial formation" took place, according to Inden, in an environment of shifting human agencies.²¹ Finally, Nicholas Dirks, working mainly with much later dynasties in south India, has described how "large kingdoms" and "little kingdoms" coexisted and were interdependent.²² Authority was shared and could thus fluctuate between kingdoms, transforming a small kingdom into a large one. While none of these

Fig. 16
General view of the tank and
ruined temples at Batesar, Madhya
Pradesh, 8th century, with later
additions.

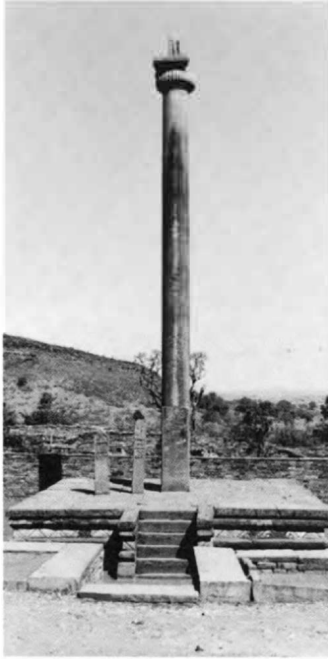


Fig. 17
Pillar known as "Bhimgaja," Badoh,
Madhya Pradesh, dated Vikrama
year 917 (A.D. 861).

models can be regarded as directly applicable to north India, they nevertheless alert us to the complexity of the political situation and help explain the predominantly local focus we have seen in individual inscriptions. Perhaps one of the most important records illustrating the weakness of the centralized model is the inscription of King Parabāla on the pillar at Badoh, which states that he built a temple of Śauri (Viṣṇu) and that he caused this Garuḍa-bannered pillar (*garuḍadhvajā*) to be set up before the temple.²³ In verse 27 we have an eloquent description of the pillar (Fig. 17).

Repeatedly deliberating whether this is Viṣṇu's foot making three
strides, or the body of Sthāṇu shaped like a post, or
Śeṣa pulled out of a hole in the ground by the enemy of the serpent
king, the gods on viewing it find that it is really a
Pillar of pure stone, proclaiming the glory of King Parabāla.²⁴

This pillar and the adjacent ruined temple are important in the history of architecture, there being few securely dated monuments of the period.²⁵ However, the position of Parabāla, and consequently the dynastic affiliation of the physical remains, constitute a challenge to the centralized model of kingship. Parabāla is usually described as an ally of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas of Malkhed (ancient Mānyakhēṭa) because the record states that he was of Rāṣṭrakūṭa lineage. Consequently his title *kṣmāpāla* ("protector of the earth," i.e., "king") has been translated as "governor." Some key facts stated by the inscription have been ignored. First, one of his forebears gained control of Lāṭa (coastal Gujarat), having defeated the Karmāṭas (a common name for the Rāṣṭrakūṭas in northern epigraphs). This makes it virtually impossible for Parabāla to have been an ally of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas in the Deccan. Second, princes claiming Rāṣṭrakūṭa lineage are occasionally encountered in north India but they have no connection with their famous namesakes.²⁶ Nor can Parabāla be claimed as a Pratihāra ally. His father, Karkarāja, put Nāgabhaṭṭa II (ca. A.D. 810–33) to flight and invaded his home. Parabāla and his line must therefore be seen as independent and ninth-century north India more politically diverse than previously supposed.

An examination of the composition of the nobility brings forward the issue of gender and India's long tradition of women's patronage of temples. According to the early ninth-century inscription from Buchkalā, for example, a temple (*devagṛha*) was founded by Queen (*rājñī*) Jayāvalī, daughter of Jajjaka, himself the son of the Pratihāra prince Bāpuka.²⁷ A slightly older epigraph from Kāmān (ancient Kāmyaka) gives the genealogy of a local Śūrasena dynasty and mentions that one Vacchikā, the wife of Durgādaman, built a temple to Viṣṇu.²⁸ The dynasty is otherwise unknown, but the record has been dated to the eighth or ninth century on the basis of its style.²⁹

Further insight into the ruling class is provided by stelae that bear reliefs depicting noble individuals. A votive slab from Sāgar showing a prince with members of his family is of historic value.³⁰ Presumably set up in a temple built by the donor, the slab is comparable to a later relief in the Gupteśvar temple at Mohangarh (Fig. 18). That these were freestanding stelae is shown by the long inscription on the reverse of the Mohangarh slab.³¹ The memorials that record the death of warriors and occasionally the self-immolation (*satī*) of their widows also sometimes provide information regarding temple patronage, especially through their placement in temple complexes.

Patronage of Officers and Subjects

Like the nobility, officers and subjects supported religious institutions. A useful example of this level of patronage is found at Gwalior. Two inscriptions on the Caturbhuj temple (Fig. 19) state that it was established by Alla, the warden (*koṭṭapāla*) of Gwalior fort in the last quarter of the ninth century.³² Alla was the son of Vāillabhaṭṭa, who had come from Lāṭa where he had served as a frontier commander (*maryādādharīya*) under the Pratihāra king Rāmabhadra (ca. A.D. 833–36). Alla succeeded to this post and was subsequently appointed to

Gwalior by Mihira Bhoja. In this position, Alla must have been a respected member of the Pratihāra nobility, for Gwalior fortress was an important location for the rulers—it guarded the territory between Kālinjar and Chittaur and was integral to their campaigns against the Rāṣtrakūṭas to the south. After assuming his post at Gwalior, Alla built the Caturbhuj temple of Viṣṇu for the increase of his and his wife's merit, "a receptacle of his fame, cut by the chisel and marked with his name." The temple is described as a single piece of rock (*ekaśīle . . . bhavane*) and a "great ship for crossing the ocean of existences." The temple was known as Vāillabhaṭṭasvāmin in honor of Alla's father. Alla also built a second temple dedicated to the goddess that has not survived. Endowments were lavished on both buildings by various sections of the community and the city council made a grant on behalf of the entire town.

The Caturbhuj temple inscriptions also provide an unusually thorough eulogy of the Pratihāra dynasty. More typical is an inscription made during Yaśovarman's reign describing how his officer Bālāditya built a temple of the Buddha at Nālanda and how it was endowed by Malada, the son of Yaśovarman's minister.³³ Virtually no information is given, however, about the ruling monarch. The same situation is found in the copper plates from Una.³⁴ These were issued by Bālavarman and his son Avanivarman Yoga of the Cālukya family; they record the gift of villages to a temple of the sun god called Taruṇādityadeva. They mention that the Pratihāra monarch Mahendrapāla I (ca. A.D. 885–910) conferred the title of the "five great sounds" (*pañcamahāśabda*) on Bālavarman and that the gifts were sanctioned by a frontier-guardian (*antapāla*) named Dhūika. This Dhūika appears to have been a representative of Mahendrapāla's court. Despite these imperial connections, a royal genealogy is not given and all the details focus on matters of immediate local importance. The same situation is found in the plates from Haddala.³⁵ Citing the example of the nobility, we can conclude that officers enjoyed considerable autonomy, giving only brief acknowledgement of their sovereign when issuing such documents regarding their temple patronage.

The wives of important officers were also active patrons. An image of Śiva and Pārvatī from Gwalior carries an inscription stating that it was commissioned by Rājīkā, the wife of Śrī Rudra, a Pratihāra feudatory.³⁶ Another inscription, of unknown provenance but now in Udaipur, records the activities of Yaśomatī, who built a temple of Viṣṇu. She was the wife of Varāhasimha, a commander in the service of the Guhila prince Aparājita.³⁷ Though separated by two centuries, both the Caturbhuj and Udaipur inscriptions describe temples as a means of crossing over this world—a reminder of how little inscriptions and their contents changed with the passage of time.

Patronage of Persons without Title

The foregoing examples are fairly simple in that they represent donors constructing individual temples or making individual grants. Religious centers of importance, however, often attracted an extended series of temples and endowments. This led to complicated inscriptions recording numerous gifts by a range of individuals over a span of time. Such collective records are known from Kāmān, Ahar, Partāgarh and Siron.³⁸ The Siron inscription lists a number of grants by persons without title—an appropriate bridge to the most common level of patronage.³⁹ Temple gifts at this level often consisted of plots of land, the rents from which were intended to benefit a particular god. However, land was not the only source of temple revenue. This is shown by an inscription at Delhi dating to Mihira Bhoja's time, which records the gift of rent money from a house for lamps, sandal paste, flowers, and worship at a particular shrine.⁴⁰ Similar, but somewhat unusual, is a monthly gift of wine for the worship of Viṣṇu (probably in the Tāntric fashion).⁴¹ A number of records show that some kind of taxing was used to support temples. An inscription from Pehowa (ancient Pṛthūdaka) recounts how a group of horse traders imposed certain taxes upon themselves and upon their customers and the way in which the proceeds were to be distributed to certain temples in fixed proportions.⁴²



Fig. 18
Memorial stele, Gupteśvar temple,
Mohangarh, Madhya Pradesh, early
10th century.

Individuals without title not only endowed temples but also constructed them. This is shown by a second inscription from Pehowa recording that three brothers built a temple (*āyatana*) of Viṣṇu.⁴³ Each brother's contribution to the work is described as follows.

In the middle it was made by Gogga, the back by Pūrṇarāja,
The front by Devarāja, for destroying the cloud of intense ignorance.⁴⁴

Common devotion did not always express itself as a complete monument. A pillar at Deogarh dated [Vikrama] year 919 (A.D. 862) is one of a pair at the site that seem to have been parts of a gate or gate house of the main temple.⁴⁵ The inscription explicitly states that "this pillar" was set up "near the temple of Śāntinātha (*śrī śāntyāyata[na] [saṁ]nidhe*)" by Śrī Deva, a disciple of Kamaladeva, suggesting that the gate may have been the collective gift of several individuals.⁴⁶ Places like Deogarh and Gwalior Fort, which had an established reputation, were naturally subject to embellishment. At Gwalior, other embellishments such as small shrines, niches, *liṅgas*, and Jaina images were provided well into the sixteenth century.

Apart from epigraphic documentation of this type, many sites possess material indicative of common patronage, although personal details are often lacking due to the absence of inscriptions. The collection of shrines located at Batesar, near the village of Pāroli (ancient Paḍhāvali), is a noteworthy example.⁴⁷ A Śiva temple was built near the tank at Batesar toward the end of the eighth century and a complex of small shrines subsequently developed in the immediate neighborhood (Fig. 16). No record states who commissioned these shrines, but more recent sites explain them. For example, an analogous temple city evolved at Soṇagir (ancient Suvarṇagiri) during the last two centuries, each addition being a product of the individual devotion and means of its patron. The miniature monolithic temples found at many places in north India are of the same character. Such shrines, including the example from Gwalior in the exhibition (see No. 1), were bona fide temples and represent what a person of humble means could add to a sacred site for his own religious merit.

That grants to religious establishments by ordinary people were growing in number after the seventh century is evidenced by the increasing mention of the administrative boards or committees (*goṣṭhis*) that were set up to manage endowments. These boards ensured that the funds were directed to the stipulated purpose. The wealth of temples from minor grants was considerable and the *goṣṭhis* supervised significant investments and expenditures. These involved repairs to temples and at times the construction, so some account of these boards is necessary for a complete picture of temple patronage. A good indication of how boards were formed is given by the Kāmān inscription, dated Harṣa year 263 (A.D. 869).⁴⁸ This begins by naming the board members (*goṣṭhika*) and recording that three brothers built a tank (*vāpī*) and a temple (*maṭha*) and further arranged for *piṇḍa* rites, the offerings to deceased parents. The brothers then formed part of the board that was set up to manage the shrine and the offerings. A second Kāmān inscription, carrying various dates between Harṣa year 180 and 279 (A.D. 786 and 885), mentions a variety of gifts to different gods, the most important of which was Śiva as Kāmyakeśvara. Several of these grants were instituted or managed by board members.⁴⁹ The Pehowa inscription recording how some horse dealers distributed income to various shrines ends with an exhortation to the board members to manage the grants in accordance with the terms set down.⁵⁰

Royal Patronage in the Age of Pratihāra Supremacy

Among the competing principalities of the eighth century were the Gurjara-Pratihāras, a clan whose power was centered in the Māru country of Rajasthan. During the reign of Nāgabhaṭṭa II, the Pratihāras were able to assert control over most of the ruling families in northern India. An important step in

the expansion of their power, celebrated in Pratihāra-period inscriptions, was the capture of Kānyakubja (modern Kannauj), the imperial capital of the Gangetic heartland. A considerable number of Pratihāra inscriptions survive, some of which have been mentioned. These provide sufficient documentation to allow a tentative reconstruction of imperial patronage during the ninth and tenth centuries. The largest corpus of imperial Pratihāra records are copper plates recording gifts of villages to Brāhmins.⁵¹ In several cases kings made grants for the religious merit of their parents—a long-standing practice.⁵² These records contain royal genealogies and references to the deities that were the object of each monarch's special devotion. An imperial gift to a temple is also recorded in the stone inscription from Partābgarh. Mahendrapāla II (ca. A.D. 943–46) granted a village to Vaṭayakṣiṇidevī, a goddess whose shrine was under the care of the monastery (*maṭha*) of Haryṣṣīvara.⁵³ Records such as these demonstrate that the imperial Pratihāras were active patrons of both Brāhmins and notable temples. However, no epigraphs state that the Pratihāras supported the actual construction of temples. The only evidence for imperial building activity is an inscription found at Sāgar Tāl, a large tank on the outskirts of Gwalior.⁵⁴ The epigraph opens with an invocation to Viṣṇu and a verse in his praise, followed by a twenty-four-verse account of the Pratihāra family and their noble achievements. The actual object of the inscription, mentioned in verse 26, is that the Pratihāra king Mihira Bhoja erected a city for his seraglio in the name of Viṣṇu.

To increase the fame and merit of his queens,
The king built a harem city in Viṣṇu's name.⁵⁵

The inscription closes with a prayer for the longevity of this noble building (*āryakīrti*) and mentions the poet Bālāditya. The crucial phrase is *antaḥpurapuram*. The word *antaḥpura* is well known from inscriptions and its interpretation in this context as “royal harem” or “seraglio” is not contentious.⁵⁶ The word *pura* means “city” or “fort,” and taking the whole as a *kamadhānīya* compound we can render it “a city for the royal harem” or “palace complex.”⁵⁷ This complex is unknown because the site of Sāgar Tāl, where the inscription was discovered in 1896, has only one battered ninth-century fragment. It served as the wall section of a small shrine that stood beside the tank. The tank itself was rebuilt in Mughal times. At or before that period, Sāgar Tāl's original function as a palace site was transformed and it became part of the necropolis of Islamic Gwalior.

Further evidence of royal patronage is provided by the Caturbhuj temple inscription at Gwalior. As mentioned before, the primary purpose of the inscription was to record the establishment of a temple by a man named Alla, warden of Gwalior fort.⁵⁸ It also states that the temple was built “on the descent of the roadway of Śrī Bhojadeva (*śrībhojadevapratoḷyavatāre*),” referring to the steep road cut into the east face of Gopādri that was made, or substantially expanded, by Mihira Bhoja. The road originally consisted of a series of wide steps, some of which are still visible beside the gravel and paving stones laid in the mid-nineteenth century to facilitate vehicular traffic.⁵⁹

The phrase “on the descent of Bhoja's road” suggests that the roadway led to a building of note. Examination of the fifteenth-century building that now crowns the fort shows that Bhoja's road led to a ninth-century palace. Some sumptuously carved pilasters belonging to the original structure were reused when the Elephant Gate was reconstructed (Fig. 20). From the description of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, who visited Gwalior in the fourteenth century before the reconstruction began, we know that a life-sized image of an elephant and mahout stood outside the entrance.⁶⁰ All that remains of the spectacular structure are the reused pilasters and, on the south side of the entrance, about forty courses of ashlar relieved by a number of cornices (*kapotas*). A unique double-lion capital, now in the National Museum of India, was found near Trikonīa Tāl on the fort and may have crowned a pilaster in the Pratihāra palace complex.⁶¹ These remains are of considerable importance, there being little known about palace architecture before the Islamic conquest. Further information on early secular architecture is provided

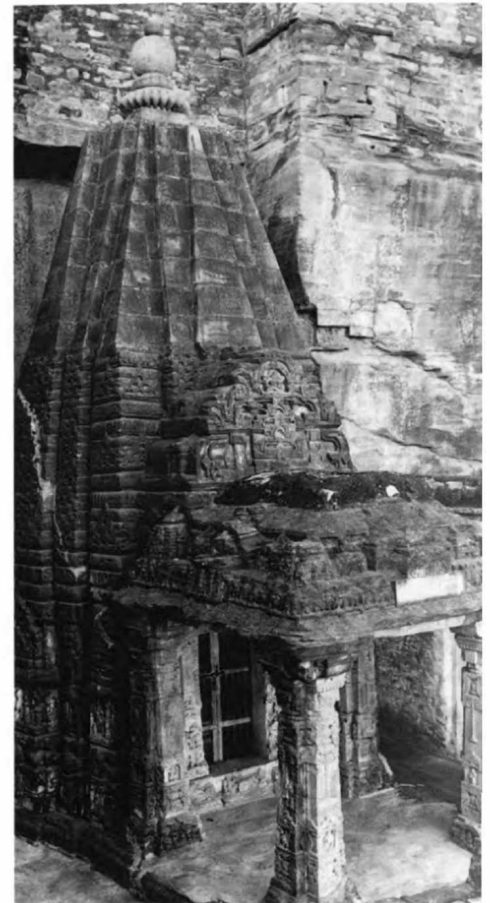


Fig. 19
Caturbhuj temple, Gwalior,
Madhya Pradesh, dated Vikrama
year 932 (A.D. 875–76).



Fig. 20
Reused pillars at the entrance of the
Mān Maṇḍir, Gwalior, Madhya
Pradesh, 9th century.

by the Sola Khambi at Badoh.⁶² Built on a knoll overlooking a lake, the structure apparently served as a pleasure pavilion. It consists of an open pillared hall conforming to the type placed before temples; no inscriptions pertain to the structure, but it may be dated architecturally to about the tenth century.

Our overview of ninth- and tenth-century inscriptions suggests that the Pratihāra monarchs, while active in providing land grants, were not involved in commissioning temples or images. This is supported by the inscription of Bāuka, a prince of Mandor (ancient Māṇḍavyapura), dated Vikrama year 894 (A.D. 837–38), which gives a long account of Bāuka's family and culminates with a ghoulish description of his victory in a battle.⁶³

Verily when Bāuka danced in the battlefield,
putting down his feet on the very entrails and corpses,
His frightened enemies, like antelope, became ever so quiet
with the strain *tiṣṭha, tiṣṭha*. This was strange indeed!⁶⁴

The celebration of this victory and the praise of Bāuka's lineage is the sole purpose of the inscription; no temple was built and no grant of villages made. Bāuka was a Pratihāra prince but did not belong to the main imperial line. During the setbacks which marked the reign of Rāmabhadra (ca. A.D. 833–36), Bāuka asserted independence and laid claim to the full range of kingly titles. Though his political ambitions were soon suppressed by Mihira Bhoja, Bāuka's inscription is imperial in aspiration and general character.⁶⁵ Records of this type were probably once common in the capital at Kannauj before that city was completely destroyed in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The fairly wide use of these purely laudatory inscriptions is evidenced by a eulogy (*praśasti*) of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa monarch Kṛṣṇa III (ca. A.D. 939–67). This inscription has no purpose but the valorization of the king.⁶⁶ Its political overtones are evident both from the use of the Kannada language and its location at Jura in the Iḍāhala country, an area traditionally under the sway of northern rulers.

The noninvolvement of the imperial Pratihāras in temple building can be understood in various ways. The elaborate Vedic rituals, such as the horse sacrifice (*aśvamedha*) and royal consecration (*rājasūya*), crucial to early Indian kingship, represent the most ancient aspect of the situation. These rites, frequently performed in India during the two centuries before and after Christ, were seen as propelling the king into a heavenly sphere and infusing him with divine power, simultaneously giving him a mandate and placing him above numerous sects and classes of society. Ritual performance was therefore the primary and most appropriate focus of royal patronage and made kings dependent on Brāhmins because only they were qualified to carry out the rites. Brāhmins consequently had to be supported through village grants and other gifts. Royal sponsorship of Vedic ritual declined after the fifth century and regal patronage of temples and images clearly emerged under Harṣavardhana and his contemporaries in Tamil Nadu and the Deccan.⁶⁷ In northern India this innovation proved to be short-lived. Inscriptions show that the Pratihāras stood aloof from temple building. While Vedic performances were not reinstated, grants to Brāhmins continued, suggesting that preservation of Vedic knowledge through recitation (*svādhyāya*) was valued apart from its application to specific rituals (*prayoga*).⁶⁸ However, the Vedas and attendant Śrauta rituals had declined in importance and had ceased to impinge on day-to-day affairs, beyond their theoretic value as the source of tradition and the basis of cosmogonic and social order.

The reluctance of the imperial Pratihāras to become involved in temple building can be attributed to other factors as well. As mentioned earlier, a deity could receive and hold gifts as a bona fide legal entity. A different relationship was created, however, when a ruler actually constructed a shrine and thus established a divine personality. The relationship between such shrines and the ruling clan could be extended to the point where the deity was seen as the true ruler and the prince merely a minister or representative of the god. One of the best known instances of this is the Lakuliṣa temple at Ekalingji, which contains the patron-deity of the

Guhilas of Meḍapāta (modern Mewar).⁶⁹ Such temples can be called clan shrines and were associated with particular warrior families over generations.

While the complete subordination of a king to a god was not elaborated in epigraphic records until well after the disintegration of Pratīhāra power, close ties between temples and their founders are indicated by the above-cited practice of naming divinities after specific individuals. Building a temple was thus a meritorious deed that tangibly linked an individual and his clan to a particular place, especially those founded by members of the ruling elite. It was precisely this localization of power and particularization of identity that the imperial Pratīhāras sought to avoid. They belonged to a recognized clan yet claimed hegemony over all their contemporaries; temple building and its inevitable ties would only impede their efforts to control the nobility of north India, a nobility that had a sufficient history of factionalism and violent competition.

This interpretation could be subverted by excavations at Kannauj and the discovery of inscriptions showing that the Pratīhāras built temples in the capital. However, information buttressing our conclusion is provided by the Cambay plates, which were issued by the Rāṣṭrakūṭa dynasty, the Pratīhāra's most bitter and long-standing foes.⁷⁰ One of the events recorded in the Cambay plates is a raid led by Indra III against north India in the early tenth century. Indra's rampage northward is celebrated in the following verse.

After the courtyard of the temple of Kālapriya was knocked
askew by the strokes of his rutting tuskers,
His steeds crossed the bottomless Yamunā, which rivals the sea,
and he completely devastated the hostile city of Mahodaya,
Which even today is renowned among men by the name Kuśasthala.⁷¹

The temple of Kālapriya was located at Kālpī near the Yamunā River.⁷² Mahodaya was, of course, the capital city of Kannauj. While the temple at Kālpī was singled out for destructive attention, there seem to have been no temples at Kannauj meriting similar treatment. If the Pratīhāras had a temple in the capital surely the Rāṣṭrakūṭas would have destroyed it and taken special delight in recording its desecration. Not only are the Cambay plates silent in this regard, but the Sanjān, Rādhānpura and Waṇi plates, in recording earlier defeats of the Pratīhāras, do not mention the destruction of temples. Instead they state that the Pratīhāra king was forced to ritually attend upon his Rāṣṭrakūṭa rival.⁷³ That no account of temple destruction is found suggests once again that the Pratīhāras were not involved in temple building.

Dynastic Temples After the Disintegration of Pratīhāra Hegemony

During the first half of the tenth century Mahendrapāla II and Devapāla (ca. A.D. 948–59) maintained the Pratīhāras as a power in the Gangetic plain, but succession problems and Rāṣṭrakūṭa incursions prompted the development of strong regional dynasties throughout northern India.⁷⁴ Most of these regional dynasties fostered temple building on an unprecedented scale and this exhibition includes some especially impressive pieces from the ruins of these monuments. This later period is also rich in epigraphic records that shed considerable light on patronage after the disintegration of Pratīhāra power.

The Candellas are perhaps the most well-known regional dynasty due to the number of temples surviving at Khajurāho (ancient Khajūravāhaka). The Candellas first appeared as a notable power when Harṣadeva supported Mahipāla (ca. A.D. 912–43) in his successful bid for the Pratīhāra throne.⁷⁵ Yaśovarman (ca. A.D. 925–54) raised the prestige of the Candellas by taking Kālinjar, an important fortress and center of military power. The same trends are augured by the inscription on the Sās Bahu temple at Gwalior. This records that the

Kacchapaghāta prince Vajradāman (ca. A.D. 975–1000) “put down the rising power of the ruler of Gadhinagara [Kannauj] and his proclamation drum . . . resounded on the fort of Gopādri.”⁷⁶ In the Malāva region, the Paramāra prince Vairisimha seems to have ruled Dhārā as a feudatory of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas.⁷⁷ Vairisimha's son Harṣa Siyaka rebelled and defeated the Rāṣṭrakūṭa Khoṭṭiga (A.D. 967–72), devastating Mānyakheṭa in the process.⁷⁸ Vākpati Muṇja, son of Harṣa Siyaka, issued a charter from Ujjayinī in A.D. 974–75 and subsequent Paramāras ruled over Malwa for more than a century.⁷⁹ In Rajasthan, the imperial Pratihāras were able to maintain some tributaries, but their relative decline is documented by inscriptions from Rajor, Bayānā, Harasnāth and Garḥ.⁸⁰

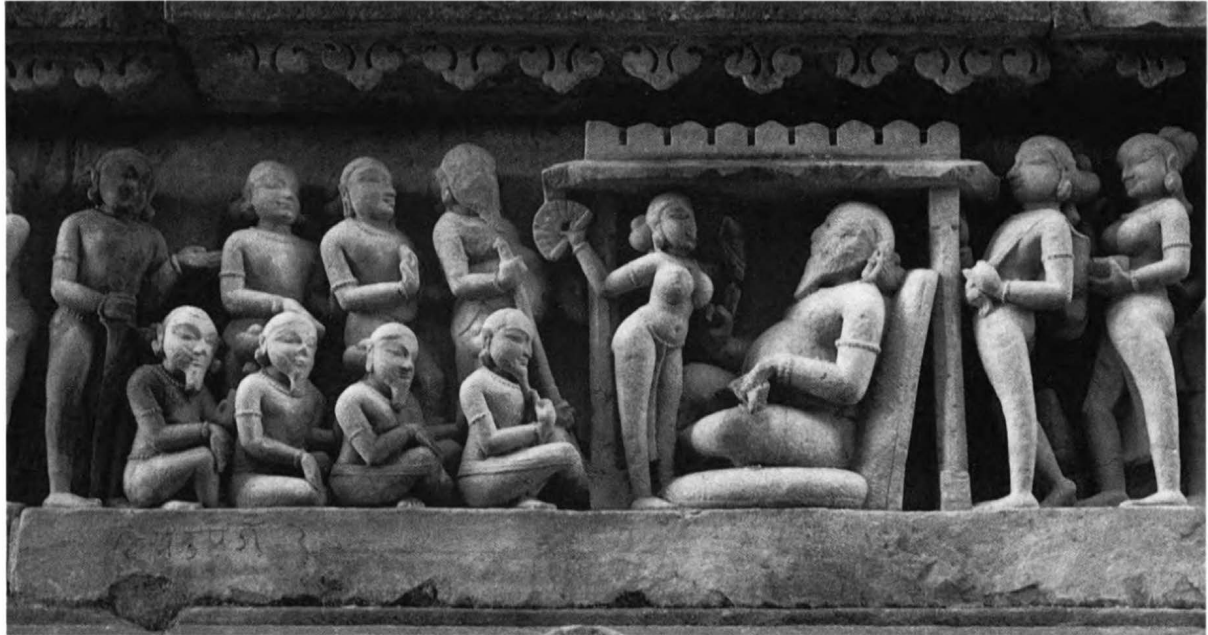
No abrupt changes are found in temple patronage with the rise of these regional dynasties. However, there were subtle shifts in emphasis and a clarification of the ties between kings and the temples they supported. The inscriptions and monuments at Khajurāho are perhaps the most dramatic illustration of this. The Lakṣmaṇa temple inscription is symptomatic of the building activities of the Candella kings.⁸¹ It enters into some unusual detail, describing how Yaśovarman forced the Pratihāra king Devapāla to surrender an ancient and celebrated metal image of Vaiṣṇava. This image was set up in the Lakṣmaṇa temple, a building expressly constructed by Yaśovarman for the purpose.⁸² At the close of the inscription, there is a brief reference to Vināyaka, the Pratihāra monarch. While this passing nod maintains the fiction that the Candellas were tributaries of the Pratihāras, they soon set aside their token homage. The Viśvanātha temple inscription of Vikrama year 1059 (A.D. 1002–03) omits any mention of an overlord.

Most of the Khajurāho inscriptions, despite their large size, have been shifted from their original position. An effort to protect the archaeological remains has resulted in some of the tablets being placed in temples to which they have no historical connection. In the Sās Bahu temple at Gwalior, however, the dedicatory inscription is still beside the main entrance as originally intended and is carefully incised with over one hundred verses giving a history of the Kacchapaghāta dynasty. The temple was founded by Padmapāla and completed by his successor Mahipāla.⁸³ As at Khajurāho, direct links are made between the temple and the dynasty, in this case reinforced by the building's dedication to Padmanātha (Viṣṇu) in honor of Padmapāla.

Among the most fascinating inscriptions of this period is one from the ruined Śiva temple on a hill called Harsha or Uchāpahar, not far from Sikar in Rajasthan. Some sculptures from this site have been included in this exhibition. The superlative quality of these sculptures is matched by the historic significance of the inscription, which states that a series of additions and endowments were made to the temple by a line of Cāhamāna princes and their supporters.⁸⁴ It also contains elaborate references to the temple complex. For example, verse 12 of the inscription describes the main shrine.

Glory to this mansion of holy Harṣadeva! It is auspicious for the expanse
of its superlative halls which are radiant like eggs of gold; it is
Pleasing like Pāṇḍu's mighty sons for the rows of shrines at its edge;
It is comparable to the pinnacle of Mount Meru, and it is
Pleasant for the skillfully carved bull at the entrance gate and for its
endowment of manifold objects of enjoyment.⁸⁵

From the perspective of patronage, the central point revealed by the inscription is that a Cāhamāna clan had this temple as its family shrine. Construction was initiated in the mid-tenth century by Sinharāja who provided the necessary funds and “on Śiva's dwelling he set a golden [man] like the full moon, his own glorious form made manifest.”⁸⁶ The custodians of this shrine were a line of Śaiva ascetics or *ācāryas* who supervised the building of the temple and its surrounding wells, courts, and gardens. The ascetic Bhāvarakta Allaṭa began the work and it was finished after his death by Bhāvadyota. These ascetics did not



do the actual work, of course, but hired craftsmen with the funds provided by their patrons. The architect's name is given as Caṇḍaśiva, son of Virabhadra; the temple was completed in Vikrama year 1013 (A.D. 956–57). The mention of ascetics introduces an important element of temple life. While the cults represented by these individuals were quite ancient, it is only in the tenth and eleventh centuries that their history and social position emerges with any degree of clarity. That ascetic orders were well established in northern India by the eighth century is shown by a number of records, a good example being the Indragarh inscription of Vikrama year 767 (A.D. 710–11).⁸⁷ Two ascetics named Vinītarāśi and Dāṇarāśi of the Pāśupata sect are the central figures. The record states that Dāṇarāśi was responsible for making a temple (*mandira*) of Svayambhorlokanātha (Śiva). The inscription does not specify what sort of relationship existed between Dāṇarāśi and Naṇṇappa, a ruler whose exploits are praised at some length. One would suspect that Naṇṇappa was a patron, but this is not actually stated, a circumstance that is not unusual. However, an inscription from Rannod shows how ascetics might establish a relationship with a prince and subsequently become sponsors of architectural projects.⁸⁸ This record explicitly states that a king named Avantivarman was desirous of being instructed in Śaiva doctrine and so resolved to bring Purandara to his country. Purandara belonged to a respected line of teachers known from several sources.⁸⁹ The saint eventually initiated Avantivarman and then founded a monastery (*maṭha*) in the king's city. About one hundred years after Purandara's passing, a master named Vyomaśiva took charge of the establishment. He restored the building and constructed a tank and temple. The tank and adjacent monastery are still extant at Rannod (ancient Araṇipadra). The inscription is not dated but likely belongs to late tenth or early eleventh century. That Śaiva cults enjoyed wide currency is indicated not only by the preponderance of dedications in favor of Śiva, but by incidental depictions of Śaiva ascetics on temples. Several examples are found at Khajurāho, one of the most detailed being on the Lakṣmaṇa temple (Fig. 21). This relief shows a master seated in a small pavilion; in front of him is a female attendant and a row of four bearded disciples. To the left is a doorkeeper with a sword who appears to be introducing three individuals.⁹⁰

Close ties could be established between ascetics as depicted in the Khajurāho relief and princes and, in turn, could lead to the construction of temples and

Fig. 21

Relief in the temple platform showing a Śaiva ācārya with disciples and attendants, Lakṣmaṇa temple, Khajurāho, Madhya Pradesh, datable to Vikrama year 1011 (A.D. 954–55).

monasteries. In some cases, the temples became closely associated with the dynasty, the ascetics becoming royal intimates and enjoying, albeit indirectly, the revenue belonging to the god. The relationship was beneficial to all concerned. The ascetics established and controlled the temple, but the dedication was made in the royal patron's name. A link between the god and king was thus forged through the application of the ascetic's sacred knowledge. From this the king received legitimacy and the *ācārya* support for his order. The tangible product was a temple that advertised the power of the dynasty and its associations with a particular manifestation of the godhead.⁹¹

These arrangements were substantially different from the old Vedic scheme of kingship. Up to the fifth century, Śrauta rituals propelled the king upward into contact with the divine, from whence he returned infused with power and a mandate to rule. After the abeyance of royal sacrifices, power was seen as flowing down from the divine through whole or partial incarnation (in the case of Viṣṇu) or manifestation (in the case of Śiva). Kings no longer reached up through sacrificial effort but sought to associate themselves with the sacred as it was known and revealed in this world. Rulers devoted to Viṣṇu saw themselves as participating in the descent of the divine through noble deeds and an august lineage that recapitulated the god's incarnation into the world for the maintenance of universal order. Rulers devoted to Śiva identified their personalities with the infinite power of the supreme lord that eternally pervades the whole creation. Given that nobles had long built temples and that inscriptions display remarkable continuity in organization and poetic style, it seems likely that these connections were always inherent, if not openly articulated. They become clear after the mid-tenth century due to the decline of the Pratihāras and the increasingly unstable condition of north India. Regional princes made free use of imperial titles and competed vigorously with each other in the arts of peace and war. Yet, however powerful some of these princes became, no ruler was able to claim paramount status. In the absence of a recognized imperial center, there was no impetus to return to the detached role once played by the Pratihāra monarchs. Regional princes, unlike the Pratihāras, maintained and amplified their programs of temple construction. In the competitive climate that prevailed, the small temples of earlier days gave way to projects of unprecedented size and elaboration. The passing of the Pratihāras in the later part of the tenth century thus inaugurated an era in which temple building, typically on a vast scale, became one of the central acts of Indian kingship. This pattern of patronage prevailed until the establishment of the Islamic Sultanate in the closing decades of the twelfth century.

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1. A general introduction will be found in Willis, "India, XI. Patronage, 1. architecture and sculpture," in *The Dictionary of Art*, J. S. Turner, ed. (London: Macmillan, forthcoming).
 2. The term is spelled *āgāra* or *agrāhāra*, the latter being an early form; see K. V. Ramesh and S. P. Tewari, *A Copper-Plate Hoard of the Gupta Period from Bagh, Madhya Pradesh* (Delhi: 1990), p. xi.
 3. One such inscription is discussed in Phyllis Granoff's essay.
 4. *Epigraphia Indica*, vol. 19 (1927–28), pp. 52–65. (*Epigraphia Indica* is hereafter cited as *EI*.) Ahar is located in District Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh; the inscription is now in the State Museum, Lucknow.
 5. Excavations at Ghazna have uncovered a variety of Indian items, among them Brāhmanic stone images that were set up in the palace as souvenirs of the conquest.
 6. Sheldon Pollock, "The Theory of Practice and the Practice of Theory in Indian Intellectual History," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 105 (1985), pp. 499–519 and Pollock, "Mīmāṃsā and the Problem of History in Traditional India," *JAOS*, vol. 109 (1989), pp. 603–10.
 7. *EI*, vol. 32 (1957–58), pp. 207–12; S. M. Mishra, *Yaśovaman of Kanauj* (Delhi: Abhinav, 1977).
 8. Vākpati, *The Gauḍavaho: A Historical Poem in Prākṛit*, Shankar Pandurang Pandit, ed. (Bombay: Government Central Book Depot, 1887), verses 507–08; the construction was said to have been completed in a single day (*surāpasāo pahuṇā ekkeṇa diṇeṇanimavio*).
 9. *Indian Antiquary*, vol. 19 (1890), p. 310; the inscription dates to the ninth or tenth

- century. (*Indian Antiquary* is hereafter cited as *IA*.)
10. Prabhācandrācārya, *Prabhāvākāṇṭha*, Jina Vijaya Muni, ed. (Ahmedabad, 1940), p. 94 (verses 139–40) and Rājasekharaśūri, *Prabandhakośa*, Jina Vijaya Muni, ed. (Santiniketan, 1935), pp. 28–29.
 11. *IA*, vol. 19 (1890), pp. 55–62. This record is dated Mālava year 795 (A.D. 738–39). The complexity of calendars and eras in India often excludes exact Gregorian equivalents even when the day and month are recorded in the inscription. For the present purpose, equivalents have been approximately calculated and thus typically span two Gregorian years. In some cases, however, there is sufficient information about the procedure used to record a date to enable provision of an exact equivalent. For an introduction to Indian calendars, see A. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India* (London: Fontana, 1971), Appendix III.
 12. Read *Kanaswa* or *Kamsuwan* as “Kanswa,” Survey of India Map 45 D.16.5. Elaborate synonyms being typical of these epigraphs, the temple is also described as a *mandira* of Dhūrjati.
 13. Munshi Deviprasād [and F. Keilhorn], “Ghaṭayālā Inscription of the Pratīhāra Kakkuka of [Vikrama] Śarīvat 918,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1895), pp. 513–21.
 14. As evidenced by Bāuka, *El*, vol. 18 (1925–26), pp. 87–99, also discussed below.
 15. *Progress Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, Western Circle* (1906–07), pp. 34–35.
 16. *El*, vol. 12 (1913–14), pp. 10–17. The inscription likely dates to the tenth century.
 17. *El*, vol. 3 (1894–95), pp. 263–67. The inscription was found in the ruins of a temple called Nīlakanṭha Mahādeva in Pāranagar, south of Rajor; it is dated Vikrama year 1016 (A.D. 960).
 18. The Karmdaṇḍ inscription of Gupta year 117 (A.D. 436–37) records the setting up of a *linga* by Pṛthivīśena and then naming it Pṛthivīśvara. Ram Swaroop Mishra, *Supplement to Fleet's Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. III 1888, Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and Their Successors* (Varanasi: Benares Hindu University, 1971), number 19.
 19. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Cōlas* (Madras: Madras University, 1955); A. S. Altekar, *The Rashtrakutas and Their Times* (Poona: Oriental Series, 1934); R. S. Tripathi, *History of Kanauj* (Benares: Indian Book Shop, 1937).
 20. Burton Stein, *Peasant State and Society in Medieval South India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).
 21. Ronald Inden, *Imagining India* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990).
 22. Nicholas B. Dirks, *The Hollow Crown: Ethnohistory of an Indian Kingdom* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988).
 23. *El*, vol. 9 (1907–08), pp. 248–56.
 24. *Viśṇoh kim caraṇastatrivikramakṛteḥ stambhākṣteruvā vapuḥ sthāṇorbhūvira[rā]ṭphaṇindra nipunā sēṣothavā proddhṛtaḥ / ittham bhūni vi[cāra]yadbhiramarairālokyā nī[ści]jyate stambhaḥ śuddhaśilamāyah Parabāla [kṣmā]pāla kīrtipradāḥ //*
 25. R. D. Trivedi, *Temples of the Pratīhāra Period in Central India* (Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1990), plates 131–32.
 26. *El*, vol. 32 (1957–58), pp. 112–17. Cālukya princes are likewise found, but they are unrelated to the Cālukyas of Vātāpi; see *El*, vol. 9 (1907–08), pp. 1–10.
 27. *El*, vol. 9 (1907–08), pp. 198–200. M. A. Dhaky, “The Genesis and Development of Māru-Gurjara Temple Architecture,” in *Studies in Indian Temple Architecture*, Pramod Chandra, ed. (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies, 1975), plates 63–64.
 28. *IA*, vol. 10 (1881), pp. 34–36. The inscription is damaged and consequently all details of this foundation are not clear.
 29. *El*, vol. 36 (1965–66), p. 32.
 30. Illustrated in Donald M. Stadtner, “The Śaṅkaragaṇa Panel in the Sāgar University Art Museum,” in *Indian Epigraphy: Its Bearing on the History of Art*, F. M. Asher and G. S. Gai, eds. (New Delhi: American Institute of Asian Studies), pp. 165–68; also in Stadtner, “Nand Chand and a Central Indian Regional Style,” *Artibus Asiae*, vol. 43 (1981–82), fig. 6.
 31. This inscription, datable to the early tenth century and probably critical for late Pratīhāra and early Candella history, has not been published.
 32. *El*, vol. 1 (1889–92), pp. 154–62. One inscription is over the lintel, the second on the wall of the cella.
 33. *El*, vol. 20 (1929–30), pp. 37–46; the temple has not survived. Buddhist foundations were not unusual in the eighth century as shown by an inscription from Shergarh (District Kotah), *IA*, vol. 14 (1885), pp. 45–48.
 34. *El*, vol. 9 (1907–08), pp. 1–10. The Una plates are dated Valabhī year 574 and [Vikrama or Śaka] year 956.
 35. *IA*, vol. 12 (1883), pp. 190–95.
 36. Richard Salomon and Michael Willis, “A Ninth-Century Umāmaheśvara Image,” *Artibus Asiae*, vol. 50 (1990), pp. 148–55.
 37. *El*, vol. 4 (1895–97), pp. 29–32.
 38. *El*, vol. 36 (1965–66), pp. 52–53; *El*, vol. 10 (1927–28), pp. 52–62; *El*, vol. 14 (1917–18), pp. 176–88; *El*, vol. 1

- (1889–92), pp. 162–79.
39. The adjective *common* is undesirably amorphous but it is forced upon us by the paucity of information about the humbler levels of Indian society during this period.
 40. *Annual Report on the Workings of the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer for the Year Ending 31st March 1924* (Simla: Government of India Press, 1924), p. 3; also see *El*, vol. 19 (1927–28), p. 54, n. 1.
 41. *El*, vol. 36 (1965–66), pp. 49–52. The inscription is dated Harṣa year 182 (A.D. 788) and comes from Tasai near Alwar.
 42. *El*, vol. 1 (1889–92), pp. 184–90 and 162–79.
 43. *El*, vol. 1 (1889–92), pp. 242–50.
 44. *Goggena kāntam madhye Pūmarājena prsthaḥ / purato Devarājena ghanāndhatamasacchide. //*
 45. *El*, vol. 4 (1895–97), pp. 309–10. The date corresponds to 10 September 862.
 46. Illustrated in Trivedi, *Temples of the Pratihāra Period*, plates 83–84.
 47. The ancient name is provided by an eighth-century hero stone in the Central Archeological Museum, Gwalior; illustrated in J. C. Harle, "An Early Indian Hero-stone and a Possible Western Source," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1970), pp. 162–64, plate II(b). I am grateful to Richard Salomon for providing a reading of this inscription from my estampage.
 48. *El*, vol. 36 (1965–66), pp. 52–53; this inscription is fragmentary.
 49. *El*, vol. 24 (1937–38), pp. 329–36; further comments in *El*, vol. 36 (1965–66), pp. 52–53.
 50. *El*, vol. 1 (1889–92), pp. 184–90.
 51. *El*, vol. 5 (1898–99), pp. 208–13; *El*, vol. 19 (1927–28), pp. 15–19; *IA*, vol. 15 (1886), pp. 105–13.
 52. *IA*, vol. 15 (1886), pp. 105–13 and 138–41; *El*, vol. 14 (1917–18), pp. 176–88.
 53. *El*, vol. 14 (1917–18), pp. 176–88. This inscription was found in the platform of a well and is now in Ajmer; it carries two dates, Vikrama year 999 (A.D. 942–43) and Vikrama year 1003 (A.D. 946–47).
 54. *El*, vol. 17 (1925–26), pp. 99–114; D. C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions Bearing on Indian History and Civilization*, 2 vols. (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1965; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983), pp. 242–46, plate XVII.
 55. *nājñā jena svadevinām yaśah puṇyābhivṛddhaye / antaḥpurapuram namnā vyadhāyī narakadvīṣaḥ //*
 56. D. C. Sircar, *Indian Epigraphical Glossary* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1966), s.v. *antaḥpura*.
 57. H. D. Sankha is mistaken in thinking the inscription records the foundation of a temple, "Gujara-Pratihāra Monuments: Study in Regional and Dynastic Distribution of North Indian Monuments," *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute*, vol. 4 (1942–43), p. 150.
 58. *El*, vol. 1 (1889–92), pp. 154–62.
 59. *Archaeological Survey of India Report 2* (1864–65), p. 337.
 60. Mahdi Husain, *The Rehla of Ibn Baṣṣāṭa (India, Maladive Islands and Ceylon) Translation and Commentary* (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1953), pp. 45 and 163. The palace remains were first published in Willis, "An Eighth-Century Mihrāb in Gwalior," *Artibus Asiae*, vol. 46 (1985), pp. 227–46.
 61. J. B. Keith, *Preservation of National Monuments; Gwalior Fortress* (Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1883), p. 75, records that the capital was found at Trkonka Tāl, Gwalior. Illustrated in Department of Archaeology, Gwalior State, *A Guide to the Archaeological Museum at Gwalior* (Gwalior, [193–?]), plate vii; Pramod Chandra, *The Sculpture of India, 3000 B.C. to 1300 A.D.* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1952), p. 209.
 62. D. R. Patil, *The Cultural Heritage of Madhya Bharat* (Gwalior: Department of Archaeology, Madhya Bharat Government, 1952), p. 110.
 63. *El*, vol. 17 (1925–26), pp. 87–99. The inscription was recovered from Jodhpur; though belonging to the ninth century it refers to events and building activities from as early as ca. A.D. 600.
 64. *nanu sama[ra]dharāyām Bāuke nṛtyamāne śavatanuśakalāntreṣveva vinyastapādē / samamiva hi gātās te tiṣṭhātīṣṭheti gītād bhayagatanṛk[ra]māṅgāścīttam etat tadāsīt. //*
The words *tiṣṭha*, *tiṣṭha* capture, in an onomatopoeic sense, the sound of dancing through corpses and entrails oozing with blood. Such descriptive passages are not uncommon in epigraphic accounts of war.
 65. The reassertion of imperial Pratihāra power in the region is evidenced by the Siwāh plate that records that Bhoja reinstated a grant of Vatsarāja, which was in abeyance: *El*, vol. 5 (1898–99), pp. 208–13. Though called the Daulatpurā plate, it was in fact recovered at the village of Sewa or Siwāh, Survey of India Map 45.1.11.7.
 66. *El*, vol. 19 (1927–28), pp. 287–90.
 67. Michael Rabe, "Royal Portraits and Personified Attributes of Kingship at Mamallapuram," *Journal of the Academy of Art and Architecture, Mysore*, vol. 1 (1991), pp. 1–4.
 68. Louis Renou, "The Vedic Schools and the Epigraphy," in *Siddha Bharati*, 2 vols., Vishva Bandhu, ed. (Hoshiarpur: Veshvarananda Vedic Research Institute, 1950), vol. 2, pp. 214–21.

69. The temple is dated to A.D. 961; R. C. Agrawala, "Inscriptions from Jagat, Rajasthan," *Journal of the Oriental Institute, Baroda*, vol. 14 (1965), pp. 75–78; Agrawala, "Unpublished Temples of Rajasthan," *Ars Asiaticus*, vol. 11 (1965), pp. 53–72.
70. *EI*, vol. 7 (1902–03), p. 43.
71. *yanmādyaddvipadantaṭṭhataṭṭhaviṣamam
kālapriyapṛāṇaṇam iṭṭhā
yatturagair agādhayamunā sindhu-
pratisparddhinī /
yenedaṇ hi mahodayārinagarāṇ
pimūlam unmulitāṇ nāmnādyāpi
janañi kuṣasthalam iti khyātīṇ parāṇ nīyate //*.
72. V.V. Mirashi, "Three Ancient and Famous Temples of the Sun," *Purāṇa*, vol. 8 (1966), pp. 38–51; D. C. Sircar, *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971), pp. 301–07.
73. *EI*, vol. 18 (1925–26), pp. 243 (verse 9); *EI*, vol. 6 (1900–01), p. 243 (verse 8); *IA*, vol. 11 (1882), p. 157.
74. See R. C. Majumdar, ed., *The History and Culture of the Indian People: The Age of Imperial Kanauj* (Bombay: Bharat Vidya Bhavan, 1955), p. 37, for the complexities of imperial succession after Mahendrapāla II.
75. *EI*, vol. 1 (1889–92), p. 122 (line 10). The inscription was found near the Vāmana temple, Khajurāho. For more general information, see R. K. Dikshit, *The Candellas of Jejakabhukti* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1977).
76. *IA*, vol. 15 (1886), pp. 33–46; the record is dated Vikrama year 1150 (A.D. 1093–94). For a recent account of the dynasty's history, see Harihar Nivās Divedi, "Gopaksetra ke kacchapaghāṭa," in *Gwalīyar darśan* (Gwalior: Gwalior Research Institute, 1980), pp. 186–216.
77. *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy* (1957–58), p. 2.
78. *EI*, vols. 19–23 (1927–36), Appendix, number 64; *EI*, vol. 1 (1889–92), p. 137 (verse 12). For literary references to the devastation of Mānyakheta, see Hem Chandra Ray, *The Dynastic History of Northern India*, 2 vols. (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1931–36), vol. 2, pp. 850–51.
79. *EI*, vols. 19–23 (1927–36), Appendix, number 84.
80. *EI*, vol. 3 (1894–95), pp. 263–67; *EI*, vol. 22 (1933), pp. 120–27; *EI*, vol. 2 (1892–94), pp. 116–30; *EI*, vol. 39 (1972), pp. 189–98, the last giving a fresh summary of the problems of late Pratihāra history.
81. *EI*, vol. 1 (1889–92), pp. 122–35. The inscription, dated Vikrama year 1011 (A.D. 954–55), was found "amongst the ruins at the base of the temple known as Lakshmanji" at Khajurāho.
82. The theme of objects looted by Indian kings was explored by Richard Davis, "Indian Art Objects as Loot," read at the Annual Meeting of the American Committee of South Asian Art (Richmond, Virginia) 29 April 1988. S. Huntington, *The Art of Ancient India* (New York: Weatherhill, 1985), p. 469, suggests the main image in the Lakṣmaṇa temple is a tenth-century replacement of the metal Vaikuṇṭha; in fact the current image dates to the eleventh century.
83. *IA*, vol. 15 (1886), pp. 33–46. The date given is Vikrama year 1150 (A.D. 1093–94).
84. *EI*, vol. 2 (1892–94), pp. 116–130.
85. *[eta]ṭṭi svarṇṇāṇḍakāṇṭipravaratama
mahāmandapābhogabhadraṇ
prāṇṭapnāsādāmālāviracitavikaṭāpāṇḍu-
putrābhīramam /
meroh spṛṅgopamāṇam
sughaṭitavṛṣasattorapadvararamyaṇ
nānāsadbhogayuktam jayati bhagavato
harṣadevasya [hammyam] //*.
86. *haimamāropitaṇ yena śivasyabhavanopari /
pūṇṇacandropamam svīyam mūrtam ya[ś]
[pim?]ḍakam*. The description is somewhat opaque, but I would take *haima* ("golden") to mean *haimapuruṣa* or *hiraṇyapuruṣa*, the "golden man" that often holds a temple's crowning flagstaff. Surviving examples are of stone, but this description suggests they could be gilt or made completely of metal. The donor is apparently being identified with this figure near the summit of the spire. Epigraphic descriptions of temple buildings (among them *EI*, vol. 39 [1972], pp. 189–98, and *EI*, vol. 41 [1975–76], pp. 49–57) merit comprehensive study. An important instance of the use of this material is M. A. Dhaky, *The Indian Temple Forms in Kārṇāṭa Inscriptions and Architecture* (Delhi: Abhinav, 1977).
87. *EI*, vol. 32 (1957–58), pp. 112–17. The inscription is in the Central Museum, Indore.
88. *EI*, vol. 1 (1889–92), pp. 351–61.
89. Mirashi, "Gwalior Museum Stone Inscription of Patanḡaśambhu," *Journal of the Madhya Pradesh Itihas Parishad*, vol. 4 (1962), pp. 3–12; also see *IA*, vol. 12 (1883), pp. 190–95 (copper-plate grant recording the gift of a village to Śrī Maheśvarācārya of the glorious Āmardaka tradition, *śrīmadāmardakasantāna*). Elsewhere I have suggested that Āmardaka is represented by the modern Amrol; see "Introduction to the Historical Geography of Gopaksetra, Daśārṇa and Jejakadeśa," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. 51 (1988), pp. 273–78.
90. The doctrines and practices of some of the Śaiva cults are summarized by Pramod Chandra, "The Kaula–Kapalika Cults at Khajurāho," *Lalit Kalā*, vols. 1–2 (1955–56), pp. 98–107.
91. These circumstances neither prevailed in all temples nor applied to all ascetic orders; see *Progress Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, Northern Circle* (1905–06), p. 14; *IA*, vol. 16 (1887), pp. 173–75.



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