KHAJURAO GROUP OF TEMPLES

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

• The Khajuraho group of Temples were built by Chandellas of Jejakbhukti (modern Bundelkhand) during 10th -11th century CE, it is significant that all temples of Khajuraho were constructed almost within 100 years (950-1050 CE). King Jeja was one of the earlier ruler of this dynasty

• The Chandellas were famous for their structural productions in form of temples, ponds, reservoirs, well etc.

• Chandellas ruled over central India from 10th to 13th centuries.

• Khajuraho a small village is situated along a lake (Khajuraho sagar) in Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh, about 125 km s.e. from Jhansi town

• In ancient period known as ‘Kharjuravahika’ (one who carries date palm) or ‘Khajurpura’ or ‘Kajura’ etc. It seems that in ancient time this place was full of Khajura tree.

• It is believed (according to Parmal Raso) that 85 temples were built but now only 22-25 temples have survived in varying degree of preservation. These temples are spread in an area of about 21 sq. km.

• Of the available temples, 10 were dedicated to Vishnu and his various forms, 8 to Shiva, 1 to Surya, 1 to Chaunsath Yogini and 5 to Jain faith

• Classified as Western group(largest, compact and central location), Eastern group and Southern group

• It posses one of the most compact and refined group of Northern Temple
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dedication</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>General Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chaunsath Yogini</td>
<td>Shakti</td>
<td>850 CE</td>
<td>Earliest but now in dilapidated with 64 small cells, built of granite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lalguan Mahadev</td>
<td>Shaiva</td>
<td>900 CE</td>
<td>Pyramidal shape, body-granite, roof-sandstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahma</td>
<td>Shaiva/Vishnu</td>
<td>925 CE</td>
<td>Vishnu shown on <em>lalatbimba</em>, Granite body, sandstone <em>shikhar</em>, four faced shivlingam in sanctum, seems earlier dedication to Vishnu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parshvanath</td>
<td>Jaina</td>
<td>954 CE</td>
<td>Largest, best preserved among Jaina, originally of Adinath, Parshvanath installed in 1860, design like hindu temple, sculptures contain many Vaishnavas images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakshmana</td>
<td>Vaishnava</td>
<td>954 CE</td>
<td>Only surviving <em>Panchayatan</em> temple, built of fine grained buff sandstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devi Jagdambi</td>
<td>Shaiva</td>
<td>975 CE</td>
<td>On same plinth of Kandariya, Image of Parvati in sanctum but Vishnu on <em>lalatbimba</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vamana</td>
<td>Vaishnava</td>
<td>1050-75 CE</td>
<td>Sanctum without ambulatory, Monospired Shikhar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chitragupta</td>
<td>Surya</td>
<td>1000-25 CE</td>
<td>Porch has been renovated,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parvati</td>
<td>Shaiva</td>
<td>950-1002 CE</td>
<td>Perhaps subsidiary to some other temple, Porch missing, Vishnu on <em>lalatbimba</em></td>
</tr>
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## Temples at a Glance

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Varaha</td>
<td>Vaishnava</td>
<td>900 CE</td>
<td>Built of granite and sandstone, No Platform, Huge image of Varaha on which 674 tiny images of gods &amp; goddesses carved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matangeshwar</td>
<td>Shaiva</td>
<td>900-25 CE</td>
<td>Only living temple, having India’s largest Sivalingam,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vishwanath</td>
<td>Shaiva</td>
<td>1002 CE</td>
<td>Originally <em>Panchayatan</em> but now only two shrines survive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kandariya-Mahadev</td>
<td>Shaiva</td>
<td>1000 CE</td>
<td>The largest and tallest in Khajuraho group, <em>Panchayatan</em> but all shrines destroyed, main <em>Shikhar</em> consists 84 <em>Urushringas</em>, largest no. of sculptures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghantai</td>
<td>Jaina</td>
<td>10th cen. CE</td>
<td>Similar to Parshvanath, almost in ruined state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Javari</td>
<td>Vaishnava</td>
<td>1075-1100 CE</td>
<td>Without ambulatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shantinath</td>
<td>Jaina</td>
<td>1028 CE</td>
<td>Contains Adinath image, largely modernized structures around</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adinath</td>
<td>Jaina</td>
<td>11th cen. CE</td>
<td>Plan like Vamana temple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nandi</td>
<td>Shaiva</td>
<td>1002 CE</td>
<td>Pyramidal roof, square plan, No ornamentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaturbhuja</td>
<td>Vaishnava</td>
<td>1100 CE</td>
<td>Without ambulatory, Plan similar to Duladev temple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duladev</td>
<td>Shaiva</td>
<td>1100-25 CE</td>
<td>Main <em>Shikhar</em> having three rows of <em>Urushringas</em>,</td>
</tr>
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</table>
ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

• The temples of Western group have been listed as UNESCO World Heritage sites in 1986, consisting Laxman, Matangeshwar, Varah, Vishwanath, Parvati, Nandi, Chitragupta, Devi Jagdambi, Kandaria-Mahadev, Chaunsath yogini and Lalguan Mahadev. Last two are little bit away from other temples (largest, located in centre and having representative examples)

• Eastern Group (near present town) - Brahma, Vamana, Javari, Adinath, Parshvanath, Shantinath, Kakramath and Ghantai

• Southern Group (at most distant location) – Duladev, Chaturbhuj and one new discovered temple Bijamandal

• The appeal of Khajuraho temples lies in the beauty of their proportions and contours

• The temples have individual architectural character, different from any other part of country which testifies the mastery of craftsmen and extraordinary vision

• Raw material- Granite and Sandstone (shades of buff, pink and pale yellow)

• Built on high platform, few metres above the ground

• Provision of Urushringa looks like mountain peak

• Exterior wall adorned with sculptures including the themes of Animals, Geometric and floral designs, Apsaras & Surasundaris, the king at court, marching armies, Royal hunt, Erotic sculptures

• Temples represent perfect combination of art and architecture
• Absence of enclosure wall, hence courtyard not found
• Not big size, compact shape
• Most of the temple on *Panchayatan* plan
• Originally three part planning – *garbhgriha*, *mandap* and *ardhmandap*. In later period *antarala* was added infront of *garbhgriha* and *mahamandapa*. All part are provided with oriel windows
• Each part having separate circular roof
• Roofline contains upward momentum, *mandapas* create gradual smooth rise from entrance
• The refinement of architecture found in *Urusringas* which rise gradually at successive levels
• The *Urusringas* create vertical momentum and creating a more dynamic three dimensional surface
• The height of temples of western group varies from 17.71 m (Chausath Yogini) to 101.04 m (Laxmana Temple)
- Architecture of the Khajuraho temples -
  (example of Kandariya Mahadeva temple)

- Amalaka
- Kalasha
- Urushringa (Subsidiary sikhara)
- Antarala (Vestibule)
- Maha mandapa (Great hall)
- Mandapa (Hall)
- Ardh mandapa (Entrance porch)
- Garba griha (Shrine, inside the sikhara)
- Pradakshina (circumambulation)
- Jagati (platform)
- Adhisthana (base platform)
- Transepts

East