CHAPTER XIV

BENGALIS OUTSIDE BENGAL

No survey of the history and civilisation of the people of Bengal can be regarded as complete without some account of their activities outside the boundaries of their own province, both in and outside India. From very early times many sons of Bengal distinguished themselves in various spheres of life both in India and abroad. Apart from these individual instances, we must presume that Bengal, as an integral part of India, must have taken her due share in the various activities of the Indians, and contributed her quota to the general influence exercised by them, in the outside world. But it is not always easy to distinguish the part played in these respects by Bengal or any other region comprised within the great sub-continent of India. We propose, therefore, to touch briefly upon those incidents alone in which the Bengalis are specifically known to have taken the leading part.

I. ACTIVITIES OF BENGALIS OUTSIDE INDIA

The chief activities of the Bengalis outside India lay in religious and commercial spheres. The port of Tamralipti was the great emporium of trade between Northern India and the Eastern world across the sea. Being situated in the eastern extremity of India, Bengal also served as the connecting link, by way of land, between the great sub-continent and extensive regions in the east, from South China to Burma and thence to Malay Peninsula and Indo-China. The Chinese evidence leaves no doubt that there was an active intercourse by both the land and sea-routes, and streams of traders, merchants, pilgrims and other classes of people followed them in their journey between India and the Far East (supra pp. 344 ff). Apart from being an intermediary in trade and commerce, Bengal must, therefore, have played an important part in the cultural contact between India and the diverse civilisations of Eastern and South-Eastern Asia which forms such a distinguished feature in the history of this great continent for more than one thousand and five hundred years. Two special cases may be cited by way of illustrating the part played by the Bengalis in the ancient Indian colonisation in the Far
East. In the first place, it appears from the Kalyāṇī Inscription that the settlement in Suvarṇabhūmi (Lower Burma) was apparently colonised from Bengal by the Golas (Gauḍa Ś). Their name has become the Mon and Burmese appellation for all foreigners from the west. Secondly, two Sanskrit inscriptions found in Cambodia exhibit so completely all the peculiarities of the Gauḍa style, as defined by Damālin and other rhetoricians, that the great French scholar Georges Coedès, who edited them, has expressed the view that the records were composed by a Paṇḍit who either belonged to Bengal or was trained there.

Fortunately, this view, mainly based on general grounds, is corroborated by some specific instances.

As regards maritime and colonial activity, an inscription in Malay Peninsula, of the fourth or fifth century A.D., records the gift of a Mahānāvika (great captain) Buddhagupta, who was probably a native of Bengal. Tradition also connects Bengal with the Indian settlement in the island of Ceylon (v. supra p. 31). The truth of the story of prince Vijaya may, however, be doubted, and no final conclusion is possible until fresh evidence is available.

But we are on surer grounds when we come to missionary activities. It is now admitted on all hands that Bengal exercised great influence on the development of later Buddhism in Java and neighbouring regions during the Pāla period. An inscription in Java definitely mentions that the guru (preceptor) of the Śailendra emperors was an inhabitant of Gauḍa (Gauḍāśāśa-guru). This royal preceptor, named Kumāraghośa, set up an image of Maṇjuśrī in the year 782 A.D., and was probably also the guru for whose worship the famous temple of Tārā at Kalasan had been built four years earlier. We are told that at the command of the guru some officers of the king built a temple, an image of goddess Tārā, and a residence for monks proficient in Vinaya-Mahāyāna. Reference has already been made above (p. 116) to the grant of five villages by Devapāla, at the request of king Bālaputradeva of Suvarṇadvīpa, for maintaining the monastery that the latter had built at Nālandā. The intimate intercourse between the Pāla and the Śailendra kingdoms explains the great influence exercised by the Pāla art upon that of Java. It will be shown in Chapter XV, that such influence was by no means confined to Java, but also extended to the mainland, and the peculiar architectural style of a group of temples in Burma was probably derived from that of Bengal.
and neighbouring regions. As a further evidence of the close contact between Java and Bengal, reference may be made to the affinity between the scripts used on certain Javanese sculptures and the proto-Bengali alphabet. This contact continued till at least the 14th century A.D.

The influence of Bengal upon the development of art and religion in the Far East must thus be regarded as considerable, although sufficient data are not available to trace in details the relationship between them. We are, however, more fortunate in this respect in regard to Tibet, the other region where Bengal exercised a deep influence on the evolution of culture.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the form of Buddhist religion and monastic order in Tibet was largely shaped by a number of famous Buddhist teachers from Bengal. Fortunately, the Tibetan chronicles have preserved a detailed account of a large number of Indian Pāṇḍits from the Pāla kingdom who visited the Land of Snow, and not only preached the Buddhist religion and translated Indian texts, but transmitted to that inaccessible region the various elements of Indian culture and civilisation. Their literary and religious activities have been treated in a general way in Chs. xi and xiii. Here we would refer to only a few distinguished persons among them who may be regarded, on reasonable grounds, to be inhabitants of Bengal. The detailed accounts of their lives are culled from Tibetan sources, and though much of them may be merely traditional, unsupported by positive testimony, they are still of great value, at least in so far as they hold out before us a general picture of the honour and respect accorded to the Bengali scholars and religious teachers in Tibet.

The native religion of Tibet was Bon-po. It advocated demon-worship and other sacrifices. During the reign of Srong-tsan Gampo, as noted above (p. 83), Buddhism was introduced in Tibet. Bon, however, remained the predominant religion in Tibet till the accession of Khri-srong-lde-btsan ( supra p. 118), a descendant of Srong-tsan Gampo, in the middle of the eighth century A.D. Khri-srong-lde-btsan was a great devotee of Buddhism. He invited Sāntirakshita ( supra pp. 380-81), 11 who was at that time living in Nepal, to Tibet in order to strengthen the cause of Buddhism there, Sāntirakshita went to Tibet. He had hardly preached there the Buddhist doctrine for four months when, we are told, the demi-gods of Tibet grew indignant and caused many phenomenal disturbances. Sānti-
rakshita was sent back to Nepal. Sometime afterwards he, on the request of the Tibetan king, went for a second time to Tibet. He introduced there the observance of the ‘ten virtues’ and Dharma. But the local gods, demi-gods, genii, and female spirits, finding the people inclined to Buddhism, became very violent again. They were evidently the adherents of the Bon religion. Sāntirakshita was not strong enough to cope with them. He advised the king to invite Padmasambhava, who knew mystic charms for combating the evil spirits. Padmasambhava, at the invitation of the king, went to Tibet, and within a very short period brought all the evil genii under his control. The king was highly pleased with Padmasambhava and Sāntirakshita and built Bsam-ya, a monastery after the model of that at Odantapurī in Magadha (supra p. 110). The two Indian teachers established there the order of the Lamas. Lama, in the true sense, means the head of the monastery, though in modern times the title is given to all the monks and priests in Tibet connected with the Buddhist order. The religion of the Lama is simply called “The Religion” or “Buddha’s Religion.” Its followers are called ‘Nan-pa’ that is ‘within the fold.’ Padmasambhava and Sāntirakshita trained some Tibetans as monks, who carried on their mission assiduously, and translated many Buddhist texts into Tibetan. Padmasambhava, after a residence of a short period, left Tibet in order to preach Buddhism in other lands. Sāntirakshita was made the first abbot of the monastery at Bsam-ya. He occupied that position for thirteen years. Shortly before his death Hoshang Mahāyāna, a Chinese missionary, visited Tibet. He started preaching Buddhism of an order which differed from that advocated by Sāntirakshita. Sāntirakshita, failing to defeat his opponent in controversy, requested the king to invite his disciple, Kamalaśīla, to Tibet. The latter was then in Magadha. But Sāntirakshita, shortly before Kamalaśīla’s arrival in Tibet, died of an accident. Kamalaśīla defeated the Chinese missionary in a debate, and established the soundness of the doctrine preached by Sāntirakshita.

The Tibetan literature closely connects another Bengali teacher named Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna, also known as Atīśa, with the religious movement in Tibet. Dīpaṅkara was born in 980 A.D. in the royal family of Gauda at Vikramaṇipura in Bangala. He was known as Chandragarbha in his early age. His father was Kalyāṇaśrī and his mother was Prabhāvatī. While young, he learned five minor sciences under the guidance of the great teacher Jétārī. He studied the im-
portant literature of the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna schools. Rāhulagupta taught him the meditative science of the Buddhists in the Krishnagiri monastery. Kṛishṇagiri, modern Kanheri, in the Bombay Presidency, was an important centre of the Buddhists. Chandragarbhā received there the name of Guhyajñāna-vajra. At the age of nineteen he took the sacred vows in the Odantapurīvihāra from the Mahāsaṅghika Āchārya Śilarakshita, who gave him the name Dipaṅkara Śrījñāna. Twelve years later, at the age of thirty-one, he was ordained as a Bhikshu. He received the vow of a Bodhisattva from Dharmarakshita. He intended to study Buddhism under the guidance of Chandrakīrti, the High Priest of Suvarṇadvīpa. Suvarṇadvīpa, which was a general name for Java and other islands in Eastern Archipelago, was at that time an important centre of Buddhism in the East. A merchant vessel, after several months’ strenuous journey, brought him to that island. He studied there for twelve years, and returned to Magadha, visiting Tāmradvīpa (Ceylon) on his way. He was invited to the Vikramaśīla monastery (supra p. 110) by the king Mahīpāla. Dipaṅkara assumed the post of the High Priest of the Vikramaśīla monastery at the request of king Nāyapāla, son of Mahīpāla. Sthavira Ratnākara was at that time the chief of monastery.

About the middle of the eleventh century A.D. Lha Lama Ye-čes-hod was the king of Tibet. He was a pious Buddhist. He intended to reform Buddhism in Tibet, which was debased by Tantric and Bon mysticism. He sent Rinchen Zah-po, the great Lochava, and Legs-paḥi Śerab to India in order to invite some Indian scholars to Tibet.12 These two officers of the Tibetan king, in course of their sojourn, went to the Vikramaśīla monastery. They came to learn there that Dipaṅkara was the best of the Buddhist scholars in Magadha. But realising that there was no chance of their request being complied with, they did not dare extend him their invitation to Tibet. They went back to their country and communicated to the king everything they knew about the great Bengali teacher. The king despatched a Tibetan mission under Rgya-tson-gru Sengé, a native of Tag-tshal in Tsang, to Vikramaśīla with rich presents to invite Dipaṅkara to his country. Dipaṅkara, on receipt of invitation, replied to the Tibetan mission:

"Then it seems to me that my going to Tibet would be due to two causes: first, the desire of amassing gold, and second, the wish of gaining sainthood by
the loving of others; but I must say that I have no necessity for gold nor any anxiety for the second at present."

The Tibetans, thus having failed to achieve their end, went back to their country. About this time a great calamity befell the king of Tibet. He was taken prisoner by the king of Garlog in the frontier of Nepal. The king, shortly before his death in the enemy's prison, sent through his nephew and successor Chan Chūb the following message to Dipaṅkara:

"Lha Lama, the king of Tibet, has fallen into the hands of the Rājā of Garlog while endeavouring to collect gold for diffusing the religion of Buddha, and for the Paṇḍit himself. The Paṇḍit should therefore vouchsafe his blessings and mercy unto him in all his transformed existences. The chief aim of the king's life has been to take him to Tibet to reform Buddhism, but, alas, that did not come to pass! With a longing look to the time when he could behold the Paṇḍit's saintly face, he resigned himself absolutely to the mercy of the three Holies."

After the death of the king, Chan Chūb sent a Tibetan mission in charge of Tshul Khrim-gyalwa to Dipaṅkara at Vikramaśīla with the deceased king's letter. It was also instructed, in case Dipaṅkara refused to come, to invite a scholar, next to him, to Tibet.

Tshul Khrim-gyalwa, also known as Vinayadhara, formerly studied Buddhist literature in India for two years. He proceeded to Vikramaśīla with the mission, and met there unexpectedly his preceptor Gya-tson Sengé. The preceptor told him that the Tibetans had no influence there, and advised him not to disclose at once the object of his visit. Both of them saw Dipaṅkara from time to time. Dipaṅkara was very much moved when he heard the news of the king's death in a tragic circumstance. He consented to pay a visit to Tibet after finishing his work in hand, to which he would have to devote a period of eighteen months. He advised the Tibetan monks to keep the matter secret. Once Vinayadhara and Gya-tson made an attempt to know the opinion of Ratnākara on the matter of Dipaṅkara's visit to Tibet. Ratnākara discarded the idea with the remark,

"in the absence of Atśa, no other Paṇḍit would be able to preserve the moral discipline of the monks here. He holds the key to many a monastery of Magadha. For these reasons we can ill afford to lose his venerable presence."

The day of Dipaṅkara's departure for Tibet was drawing near. It was not, however, possible for him to leave the Vikramaśīla monastery without the permission of his chief, Ratnākara. Once he sought the permission of Ratnākara for leave to accompany Vinaya-
dhara to many places of pilgrimages including Nepal. Ratnakara could, however, discover that Dipaṅkara cherished an idea of visiting Tibet on that occasion. He eventually agreed to the proposal of Vinayadhara about Dipaṅkara's visit to Tibet on condition that the venerable teacher should return to Vikramaśīla within three years. He remarked:

"without Atśā India will be in darkness. He holds the key to many institutions. In his absence many monasteries will be empty. The looming signs prognosticate evil for India. Numerous Turushkas (Muhammadans) are invading India, and I am much concerned at heart. May you proceed to your country with your companions and with Atśā to work for the good of all living beings there."

Dipaṅkara started for Tibet, accompanied by Vinayadhara, Gya-tson, Paṇḍit Bhūmigarbha, and the Mahārāja Bhūmisāṅgha, the king of Western India, who was his disciple. Some Śaivas, Vaishnavas, and Kāpilas, who did not like that Dipaṅkara should preach Buddhism in Tibet, engaged some robbers to take his life as soon as he passed the border of India. The robbers, when they saw the saintly appearance of the teacher, could not raise their hands against him, and went away. As soon as Dipaṅkara entered Nepal a local chief took fancy to a beautiful little table made of sandalwood, which was being carried by the venerable teacher. He set some brigands to rob him of it. But Dipaṅkara, it is reported, averted the danger by some mystic charms. After this he paid his reverence to the temple of Ārya Svayambhū. Gya-tson unfortunately died there of fever. Dipaṅkara was much moved by this calamity, as Gya-tson was his close companion, and was to serve him in Tibet as an interpreter (lochava). At this time he wrote a note to king Nayapāla. He met Ananta-kirti, king of Nepal, at Palpa, then called Palpoi-than. He presented the king with an elephant, and the latter in gratitude laid the foundation of a monastery called Thānvīhāra. His son Padmaprabha was ordained as monk by Dipaṅkara. Padmaprabha accompanied the Bengal Paṇḍit to Tibet.

Dipaṅkara was received by the officers and the army of the king Chan Chūb in the frontier of Tibet. He stopped on the bank of Mānasa-sarovara for a week. Finally he reached the monastery at Tholing with his party. He was given grand ovation by the king in the capital. He moved from province to province and preached Mahāyāna doctrine. Brom-ton, the founder of the first great hierarchy of Tibet, became his disciple. Dipaṅkara succeeded in eliminating Tantric and foreign elements from the Tibetan Buddhism.
He wrote several books on Buddhism during his stay in Tibet. *Bodhipatha-pradīpa* is the most prominent among them.\textsuperscript{16} The authorship of about two hundred books is ascribed to him.\textsuperscript{16} He lived in Tibet for thirteen years and died there c. 1053 A.D. at the age of seventy-three. His memory is still cherished by the people of the country.

II. ACTIVITIES OF BENGALIS IN INDIA OUTSIDE BENGAL

We have many references to Bengalis playing an important part, both in secular and religious affairs, in different parts of India outside Bengal. A short account of some of these persons is given below to indicate the nature and scope of these activities.

We may begin with Gadādhara who founded a principality in the Far South. Gadādhara was born in the village of Taqā, in Varendra. He is described as the crest-jewel of Gauḍa, and the illuminator of Varendra. He proceeded to Southern India, and became the chief of the territory called Kārtikeya-tapovana. The seat of his government was Kolagala, the modern village of Kolagallu, in the Bellary district, Mysore. He was a subordinate of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Kṛṣṇa III. (A.D. 939-967) and Khoṭṭiga (967-972 A.D.). He installed the images of Śūrya, Brahmā, Vishṇu, Maheśvara, Pārvatī, Vināyaka, and Kārtikeya, and founded a monastery at Kolagallu.\textsuperscript{17}

The Gopeśvar inscription of Anekamalla, dated Śaka 1113 (=1191 A.D.), refers to the king as sprung from the family of Gauḍa.\textsuperscript{18} He was a king of the Garhwal district where the inscription was discovered, and is said to have conquered Kedāra-bhūmi, no doubt the holy city of Kedāra and the adjoining territory.

Another son of Gauḍa distinguished himself in the same region about the same time. He is Udayarāja, of the Gauḍa family, who was appointed commander of the Chāhamāna army by Prithvirāja III. (1177-1192 A.D.). Prithvirāja defeated Muhammad Ghūrī in 1190-91 A.D., but lost his life in a battle with the same Muslim general at Tarūrī, near Karnal, in 1192 A.D. These informations are supplied by the Muhammadan historians. The *Hamārī-mahā-kāvyā* gives a somewhat different account of the conflict. It records that Prithvirāja fought successfully with Sāḥabadina (Shihab-uddin Muhammad Ghūrī) many times. On the last occasion the Muslim general, referred to as the king of the Sakas, invaded the
kingdom of Prithviraja, and captured Dilli (Delhi). Prithviraja, commanding Udayaraja to follow him, hurried to oppose the enemy with a small army. He suffered defeat at the hand of Muhammad Ghuri, and was taken prisoner, before Udayaraja could come to his assistance. Muhammad Ghuri, after the arrival of Udayaraja in the battle-field, being dubious about his ultimate success, withdrew to the city of Delhī with the captive Prithviraja. The pride of his being a member of the Gauḍa family prevented Udayaraja from retracing his steps, leaving his master in that perilous condition. He made an onslaught on the city, and fought bravely with the enemy for a month without interval. A Muslim officer, apprehending grave danger, advised Muhammad Ghuri to ease the situation by releasing Prithviraja. But Muhammad Ghuri, in his rage, ordered the execution of the Chāhamāna king. Udayaraja, after the death of Prithviraja, in despair made a desperate attempt to capture the city, and fell fighting in the battle.¹⁹

Two ruling dynasties of Orissa, the names of whose kings ended in Tuṅga, are said to have come from Rohitāgiri which is located by some in Bengal (above, pp. 200-201). One of these was founded by Jagattuṅga, whose descendants ruled about 9th century A.D. Another was founded by Rāṇaka Vīñātatuṅga and ruled in parts of Talcher, Pal Lahara and Keonjhar States.³⁰

A Brāhmaṇa named Śakti, belonging to the Bharadvāja family of Gauḍa, obtained Darvābhīsāra, which is now represented by the tract of the lower and the middle hills between the rivers Chandrabhāga and Vitastā. His son was Mitra. Mitra’s son was Śaktisvāmī. Śaktisvāmī became the minister of king Muktāpiḍa, also known as Lalitāditya, who ruled Kashmir from c. A.D. 724 to 760 (supra p. 76).

Gadādhara, son of Lakshmīdhara, an ornament of the Gauḍa family, attained to the position of the great minister of peace and war under the Chandella king Paramardi (c. 1165-1201 A.D.). There was another personage named Lakshmīdhara, who was born in the Gauḍa family, and who was an ornament in the kingdom of the Chandella Kirtivarman (c. A.D. 1073). Lakshmīdhara’s son was Yaśaḥpāla, who was a minister under the next Chandella king Sallakṣaṇavarman. Yaśaḥpāla’s son Śrīdhara was an officer of the Chandella king Jayavarman (A.D. 1117). Śrīdhara’s son Gokula was a minister of the Chandella Prithvīvarman. Gokula’s son Bhoja (†) flourished during the reign of the Chandella Madanavarman (c.A.D. 1129-1163). Bhoja’s son Mahipāla was an officer under
the Chandella Paramārī. Mahāpāla's son Gaṅgādhara became a
favourite of the Chandella Trailokyavarman (c.A.D. 1205-41).
Gaṅgādhara's son Jagaddhara was a minister of the Chandella Vīra-
varman (A.D. 1254-1285).

An inscription of the fifth century A.D. mentions that a Kṣhatriya
family from Gaura, founded a kingdom in the Upper State,
Rājaputāna. Gaura appears to be the same as Gauḍa, though
this cannot be definitely proved.

The Bengalis in foreign land showed more zeal in religious and
missionary activities than in any other sphere of life. Both Buddhist
and Brahmanical teachers went far and near, and propagated their
respective tenets.

The earliest Bengali Buddhist teacher to achieve distinction out-
side Bengal is Śīlabhadra ( supra pp. 78, 380), a member of the
Brahmanical royal family of Samataṭa. We are fortunate in
getting a detailed account of his life from the contemporary Chinese
traveller Hiuen Tsang. Śīlabhadra, in his young age, travelled
throughout India for acquiring special knowledge in Buddhist philo-
sophy. He met Dharmapāla at Nālandā and received religious
instruction from him. Dharmapāla, finding in him the qualities of a
great man, ordained him as a monk. Śīlabhadra mastered the
principles of Buddhism, and attained high efficiency in explaining the
subtleties of the Śāstras. His fame as a great Buddhist scholar
spread to foreign lands. A Brāhmaṇa from South India, who was
proud of his learning, came to Magadha and challenged Dharmapāla
for a religious discourse. Dharmapāla engaged Śīlabhadra, who was
then only thirty years old, for initiating discussion with the Brāhmaṇa.
Śīlabhadra thoroughly outwitted his opponent, and succeeded in
proving the soundness of his faith. The king of Magadha was
highly pleased with Śīlabhadra for his achievement, and expressed
his willingness to endow him with the revenue of a city. Śīlabhadra
first refused the offer on the ground that a monk should not have
any attraction for such a thing. But he had ultimately to accept
the gift at the king's earnest request. He built a monastery and
donated the above endowment for its maintenance.

In the course of time Śīlabhadra became the chief minister of the
community of Nālandā. At this time 'the priests, belonging to the
convent, or strangers (residing therein) always reached to the
number of 10,000.' They all studied Mahāyāna, the doctrines
belonging to eighteen schools, the Vedas, Hetu-vidyā, Sabda-vidyā,
Chikitsā-vidyā, Atharva-veda and the Saṅkhya (Sāṅkhya). Śīlabhadra was the only scholar who mastered all the collections of the Sūtras and the Sāstras. Hiuen Tsang reports that the members of the convent, from their great reverence to Śīlabhadra, did not venture to call him by his name, but gave him the appellation *Ching-fa-tsong* (“Treasurer of the good Law”).

When Hiuen Tsang arrived at Nālandā in 637 A.D. Śīlabhadra was the chief of the monastery. The pilgrim submitted to the teacher that he came from the country of China in order to learn the principles of Yoga-śāstra under his guidance. Śīlabhadra received Hiuen Tsang with great respect. Hiuen Tsang attended a series of lectures, delivered by the venerable teacher, on Yoga-śāstra. About this time Harsha Śilāditya, at the request of Śīlabhadra, granted the revenues of three villages to a Brāhmaṇa, who attended the above lectures along with the Chinese pilgrim.

Hiuen Tsang prepared a work entitled *The Destruction of Heresy,* and handed it over to Śīlabhadra. Śīlabhadra received a letter from Kumāra, king of Kāmarūpa, requesting him to send the Chinese pilgrim to his kingdom. Śīlabhadra did not comply with this request, as he expected a similar invitation from Śilāditya about the same time. Kumāra ultimately sent a threatening letter to Śīlabhadra. “If necessary,” said he, “I will equip my army and elephants, and like the clouds sweep down on and trample to the very dust that monastery of Nālandā.” Śīlabhadra, probably to get out of the unpleasant situation, sent Hiuen Tsang to Kāmarūpa. This happened about the beginning of 643 A.D.

We hear nothing more of Śīlabhadra. He was the greatest Buddhist teacher of his age. He commanded respect from everybody. One of his works is known to us. It is entitled *Arya-Buddha-bhūmi-vyākhyāna,* which was translated into Tibetan.

Śīlabhadra and Śāntirakshita, referred to above, were both teachers of the Nālandā monastery. Another Bengali teacher, whose name was Chandragomin (*supra* pp. 354, 380), is known to have been connected with that institution. Chandragomin was born in a Kshatriya family in the east in Varendra. He studied Sūtra- and *Abhidharma-piṭakas* under the guidance of Āchārya Sthiramati. He mastered literature, grammar, logic, astronomy, music, fine arts, and the science of medicine. He was initiated into the Buddhist faith by Āchārya Asoka, and became a great devotee of Avalokiteśvara and Tārā.
Chandragomin proceeded to Ceylon and Southern India. While residing in Southern India he wrote a grammar entitled *Chāndrayākaraṇa*, which was an improvement on Nāgāśeṣha's (Patañjali's) *Bhāṣya* on Pāṇini’s grammar. Next he proceeded to Nālandā where he met Chandrakīrti, who was at that time the High Priest of the monastery there. The priests of Nālandā did not give him a warm reception as he was only a lay disciple. But Chandrakīrti found in Chandragomin a great scholar, and succeeded in removing the unfriendly feeling from the minds of the host of priests. He arranged a procession of priests, which was headed by three chariots. He placed Chandragomin in one of them, an image of Mañjuśrī in the second, and himself in the third. After this event the priests paid great reverence to Chandragomin. Chandragomin, who was a follower of the Yogāchāra system, carried on philosophical discussions in the monastery. The story runs that he once threw off the grammar, which he wrote in South India, into a well, considering that it was inferior in merit to one prepared by Chandrakīrti. But at the instance of goddess Tārā, who told him in dream about the superior quality of his work, he recovered the book from the well.

Chandragomin wrote a book on logic known as *Nyāya-siddhyāloka*, the Tibetan translation of which is now available. His Tibetan name is Zla-wa-dge-bsnen.

The Bengali *Paṇḍit*, most highly esteemed in Tibet, is Abhayākaragupta (*supra* p. 382). He is worshipped there as one of the Panchhen-Rinpochohes *i.e.*, Lamas possessing royal dignities. He was born at a place near the city of Gauḍa, in Eastern India. In his young age he went to Magadha, in Madhyadeśa, and learnt there five sciences. Within a very short time he earned renown as a great Buddhist scholar. He became a priest in the palace of Rāmapāla, who is described as the king of Magadha in the Tibetan literature. It is reported that he wrote Śāstras during the first two watches of the day, explained Dharma in the third watch, worshipped his gods till midnight in the Himavana cemetery, and retired to bed after that. He gave relief to many hungerstricken beggars in the city of Sukhavatī. It was due to his intervention that a Charaśāla king of the city of Charaśāla gave up the project of sacrificing one hundred men. He furthered the cause of Buddhism. In his later life he became the High Priest of the Vikramāśila monastery, which accommodated three thousand monks. He was the head of the Mahāyāna sect in the Odantapurī monastery. It is reported that
when Abhayākara was residing in the Vikramaśīla monastery under the protection of the son of king Śubhaśrī of Eastern India, a Turuskha war took place. Abhayākara performed many religious rites as the result of which, it is said, the Turuskhas were forced to leave India. He died before Rāmapāla’s abdication of the throne. He is said to have been succeeded to the position of the High Priest of Vikramaśīla monastery by Ratnākara-śānti. It is, however, known from another Tibetan source that Ratnākara-śānti preceded him to that post. Abhayākara was a great writer. He translated many books into the Tibetan language. It is not known whether he ever visited Tibet.

Other Bengali scholars, who were closely connected with the Vikramaśīla monastery, were Jetārī and Jñānaśrī-mitra. They were senior contemporaries of Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna.

Jetārī27 (supra p. 381) was a resident of Varendra. His father Garbhapāda, a Brāhmaṇa āchārya, was the religious teacher of Sanātana, who is described as the king of Varendra by Tāranātha. Sanātana was probably a vassal of king Mahāpāla I. In his young age Jetārī was expelled by his relatives. This incident turned the course of his life. He became a devotee of Buddha. He studied the Buddhist doctrine, and became thoroughly conversant with Abhidharma-pitaka. King Mahā-(T)i-pāla conferred on him the diploma of 'Pañjita' of the Vikramaśīla monastery. He served there as a professor for a long time. Ratnākara-śānti and Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna, who became High Priests of Vikramaśīla monastery, were his pupils. He wrote many books on Tantra and Sūtra. Tāranātha reports that he was the author of one hundred books. Many of his works have been translated into Tibetan. He was known in Tibet as Dgra-las-rgyal-wa.

Jñānaśrī28 (supra p. 382), who was also known as Jñānaśrī-mitra, was a native of Gauḍa. According to Dr. S. C. Vidyābhūṣāṇa, he is probably the same as Jñānaśrī-bhadra, who carried on activities in Kashmir. He was one of the gate-keepers (guardians) of the Vikramaśīla monastery. Ratnavajra and Ratnakara-śānti were his colleagues. Dīpaṅkara, in his early age, studied Buddhism under his guidance. He was a contemporary of king Chanaka (Sanātana ?). He has written many books on logic and other subjects. Most of them have been translated into Tibetan language. He is known in Tibet as Yeses-dpal-bases-gnen.

With the decline of Buddhism in the twelfth century A.D.
Śaivism became predominant in Bengal. During this period some Bengali Śaiva teachers went to North and South India, and exercised considerable influence over the kings and the people there. The earliest known among them is Umāpatideva, who bore another name Jñāna-Śivadeva. He was a native of Dakshīṇa-Rādhā, in Gauḍa-desa. He settled in the Chola country, and acquired great renown for his divine qualities. He was known there as Śvāmidevar. He was a contemporary of Rājadhirāja II (A.D. 1163-1179), successor of Rājarāja II on the Chola throne. In the third quarter of the twelfth century A.D. the Ceylonese army, under their generals Jayadratha, Laṅkāpurī and others, conquered the Pāṇḍya country, and forced the Pāṇḍya Kulaśekhara to flee away from Madura. Thereafter they attacked the feudatories of Rājadhirāja, and threatened to invade the districts of Toṇḍi and Pāsi. The people in the Chola country got panic-stricken. Edirili-Śoḷa-Śambuvarāyan, a feudatory of Rājadhirāja, prayed to Umāpatideva for offering oblation and worship to the great god for their safety. Umāpatideva worshipped Śiva for a period of twenty-eight days, as the result of which it is said, the Ceylonese army with its generals fled away from the Chola country. Edirili-Śoḷa-Śambuvarāyan, as a token of gratitude, granted the village of Arpakkam to Umāpatideva. Umāpatideva distributed the income of that village among his relations.

The Śaiva teacher Viśveśvara-śambhu exercised still greater influence on the thought and culture of the people of the Deccan. He was a resident of Pūrvagrāma, in Dakshīṇa-Rādhā, in Gauḍa. He rose to the position of the chief teacher in the famous Golaki māṭha, in the Dāhala-maṇḍala, situated between the Narmadā and Bhāgirathi. Dāhala-maṇḍala was the country round the modern town of Jubulpore in the Central Provinces. This Golaki māṭha was founded by Durvāsas. Sadbhāva-śambhu, a remote successor of Durvāsas to the position of the High Priest of that māṭha, received three lakhs of villages as a gift from the Kalachuri king Yuvārajā I (c. A.D. 925-50), and dedicated it to the māṭha for its maintenance. In the line of Sadbhāva-śambhu flourished the teachers Soma-śambhu, Vimala-śambhu, Śakti-śambhu, Kīrti-śambhu, Vimala-śiva of the Kerala country, and Dhārma-śambhu. Dhārma-śambhu's successor was Viśveśvara-śambhu of Bengal, who flourished in the middle of the thirteenth century A.D. Viśveśvara-śambhu was a great Vedic scholar. The Chola and Mālava kings were his disciples. He was the dīkṣā-guru (preceptor for initiation) of the Kākatiya king.
Gaṇapati (A.D. 1198-1261) of Warangal, and of a king of the Kala-chury dynasty of Tripuri. Gaṇapati is stated to have been his (spiritual) son. Viśveśvara-śambhu lived in the court of Gaṇapati. It offered a pleasing sight when he, with his gold-coloured matted hair, pendent ear-ornaments, and brilliant face, took his seat in the open Hall of Learning of Gaṇapati. Gaṇapati expressed his desire to grant the village of Mandara, situated in the Kaṇḍravati, in the Velināda-vishaya, on the south bank of the Krishṇaveṇī (Krishna) river, to his preceptor. His daughter and successor Rudrāmba granted, in Śaka 1183 (≈ 1261 A.D.), that village along with the village of Velangapuṇḍi, and the laṅkā lands, on the Krishṇaveṇī river, to the Śaiva teacher. Viśveśvara-śambhu amalgamated the two villages, thus granted to him, into one, and named it Viśveśvara-Golakī. He founded there a temple, a monastery, a college, a chaultry for distribution of food, a maternity home, and a hospital. He settled there sixty families of Drāviḍa Brāhmaṇas, and granted them altogether 120 puttis of lands for their maintenance. They were given full power to dispose of these lands in any way they liked. The remaining lands were divided into three parts. The income of one part was granted for the maintenance of the temple of Śiva, the income of the second was allotted for meeting the expenditure of the college and the Śaiva monastery, and that of the third was reserved for meeting the expenditure of the maternity home, the hospital, and the feeding-house. Altogether eight professors,—three for teaching Vedas, viz., Rig, Yajur, and Sāma and five for teaching logic, literature, and Āgama—were appointed for the college. One very able physician and one expert clerk were appointed, apparently for the hospitals. Ten dancing-women, eight drummers including two pipers, one Kashmirian (music teacher?), fourteen songstresses and Karaḍā drummers were employed for the temple. Two Brahman cooks, four servants, and six Brahman attendants were engaged for the monastery and the feeding-house. Ten village-guards, belonging to the Chola country, and known as Virabhudas, whose duty was to cut the scrotums, the heads and stomach, were employed. The duty of the Virabhudas, mentioned above, cannot be properly explained. There were twenty Vira-mushṭis, who were bhaṭas or police-officers. The village was provided with a goldsmith, a coppersmith, a stone-cutter, a bamboo-worker, a potter, a blacksmith, an architect, a carpenter, a barber, and an artisan. Some Brahmans of the Śrīvatsa-gotra and Śāma-
veda, who were natives of Pūrvagrāma in Dakshiṇa-Rādhā of Gauḍa, were appointed to supervise the income and expenditure of the village, and to keep an account of them in writing.

All the employees, referred to above, were granted lands for their maintenance. Their sons and grandsons etc. were given the right of ownership of these lands. Some lands were granted for meeting the expenses of the food and clothing of the Śaiva ascetics, Kālānana (Kālamukha), Pāṇupatas, and the students, and also for meeting the cost of supplying food to all, irrespective of caste, who came to the village. Viśveśvara-śambhu laid down that the Golakī line would be appointing an Achārya, who would be in charge of all the charitable establishments of the village, viz., the temple, the feeding-house, and the monastery. The Achārya must possess the required qualifications, viz., he must be a virtuous and a learned Brahman, well-conversant with Śaivism and its mysteries. He would be drawing in return for his service one hundred nishkas as his fee. The whole Śaiva community of the village was given the power of appointing a new Achārya if the existing one was found negligent in his duty or was guilty of misbehaviour.

Some other benevolent activities of Viśveśvara-śambhu are known to us besides those mentioned above. He founded a monastery known as Upala in the city of Kālāśvara, and making the village of Ponna an agrahāra, granted it for the maintenance of the monastery. He installed a liṅga, and founded a monastery after his own name in the city of Mandakīṭa, and donated Manepalli and Uṭṭupīlla for their maintenance. He installed a liṅga in the city of Chandravalli, and having extended the boundary of a pond, gave half of it to the deity. He founded a city called Viśveśvara in Anandapada, and having installed Ananda (Siva) and a monastery granted the city for the maintenance of the god. He set up a liṅga after his own name, and donated the village of Kommu for its maintenance. In Īśvarapurī on the north-east of Śrīśaila, he erected a monastery with sixteen surrounding walls, for the maintenance of the feeding-house of which his disciple king Gaṇapati donated a village. This disciple granted him Kaṇḍrakoṭa in Pallināḍa as a fee to his preceptor. The latter installed a liṅga in Nivrītta, and gave it the dry land adjacent to Vellāla, part of the forest of the village Dudyāla, and the whole village of Pūnūru. He set up a liṅga in the northern Somaśila, and donated it the village of Aitaprol. In Śaka,1172—A.D. 1250, he made some gift of gold to the temple of
Tripurāntakeśvara, in the Markrupura tāluk of the Karnul district (Andhra Pradesh). Three years later, the central shrine of this temple was erected by his son Śānta-śambhu, under orders of king Gaṇapati.31

Viśveśvara-śambhu's activities in the Andhra country reveal to us the nature of the cultural and civic conceptions of the Bengalis in the early times. And we know of a few more Bengalis who carried on similar activities in other parts of India.

Avighnākara, an inhabitant of Gauḍa, visited Western India in the middle of the ninth century A.D. Krishnagiri, modern Kanheri, in Maharashtra State, was, at that time, under Kapardin, a chief of Koṇkan, who was a subordinate of the Rāshtrakūta Amoghavarsha I. Avighnākara excavated in the hill there a great monastery for the residence of monks. In Śaka 775=A.D. 853, he made a gift of one hundred drammas, from the interest of which the monks residing there were to be provided with clothes after his death.32 A Bengali also perhaps made some contribution to the famous Kailāsa temple at Ellora.33

Vasāvaṇa, a famous Brahman of the Vatsa-bhārgava gotra from Gauḍa, settled at Simhapalī, in the Hariyāna country (modern Hāriyāna in the Hissār district, Punjab). His eldest son Īśānaśīva forsook the world, proceeded to Vodāmayūtā (modern Badaun, Uttar Pradesh), and lived in a well-known Saiva monastery there. He received initiation from Mūrtigaṇa, the chief of the monastery. In the course of time Īśānaśīva himself became the chief of that monastery. He was a contemporary of the local Rāshtrakūṭa ruler Amrītāpalā. He founded a temple of Śiva and donated for its maintenance the revenues of Bhadaṇaulīkā.34

Devendravarman III, king of Orissa, granted, early in the 9th century A.D., a village to a Brāhmaṇa of Uttara Rājhā.35 Devendravarman IV of the same family granted, towards the end of the same century, a pradeśa in a village to a number of Brāhmaṇas of Vaṅga “who are eager in performing sacrifices and studying the Vedas, are well-versed in the Vedas and Vedāṅgas, and who always practise dharma as prescribed in the Śrutis and Smṛitis.”36

King Gayaṭatuṅga, of the Tuṅga dynasty of Orissa named above, granted lands to a Brāhmaṇa who had emigrated from Varendra-

Another ruler, Devānandadeva, ruling in the modern Dhnkaenal region of Orissa, about the end of the 9th century A.D., granted lands
to a Brāhmaṇa of the Bhaṭṭa community whose family hailed from Puṇḍravardhana. 88

Mahābhavagupta I, the Somavānśī king of Orissa, gave a village to Bhaṭṭaputra Jātarūpa, who was an immigrant from Rājāh. He and his son Mahāśivagupta I, as well as the Chandella kings Dhaṅga, Devavarmadeva and Madanavarmadeva granted villages to Brāhmaṇas immigrating from Tarkarika 89 which has been located by some scholars in Bengal. 90

Bengalis are also known to have achieved high distinction outside Bengal in the domain of literary art. It has been mentioned above (p. 589) that a Bengali, named Śaktisvāmī became the minister of Lalitāditya of Kashmir. His son was Kalyāṇasvāmī, who has been compared with Yājñavalkya. Kalyāṇasvāmī’s son was Kāntāśchandra, whose son was Jayanta. Jayanta is identified with Jayantabhāṭṭa, the author of Nyāya-mañjarī. Jayanta was a poet and had also the gift of eloquence. He acquired thorough knowledge in Veda, Vedāṅga, and all other Śāstras. His son was Abhinanda, who is the author of Kādambarī-kathāsūra. The book gives in verse the brief outline of the prose composition, named Kādambarī, by Bāhabhaṭṭa. 91

Lakshmīdhara, a native of the village of Bhaṭṭa-Kośala, in Gauḍa, was a well-known poet. He went to Mālava, and lived in the court of the Paramāra king Bhoja (A.D. 1000-1055). He is the author of a Mahākavya entitled Chakrapāṇi-vijaya. 92

Hālayudha, a resident of Navagrāma, in Dakshiṇa-Rājāh(ā), seems to have settled in Mālava. He composed sixty-four verses, in v. s. 1120 = A.D. 1063, which are found engraved in the temple of Amareśvara in Māṇḍhātā (Nimar district, Madhya Pradesh). 93

Madana, who was born of a family of Gauḍa, was a poet of outstanding merit. In his early years he went to Mālava, and learnt the art of poetry from the great Jaina scholar Āśādharā. He obtained the title of Bāla-sarasvatī in recognition of his poetic genius. He rose to the position of the preceptor of the Paramāra king Arjunavarman (A.D. 1210-1218), a remote successor of Bhoja. He wrote a drama entitled Pārijāta-mañjarī (also called Vijayaśrī) commemorating the victory of Arjunāvarman over Jayasimha, king of Gujarāt. He also composed three inscriptions, belonging to Arjunavarman’s reign. 94

Gadādhara, mentioned above (p. 589), and his two sons
Devadhara and Dharadhara were poets in the court of the Chandella king Paramardi.45

Rāmachandra Kavibhāratī was a native of the village Vīravatī, in Gauḍa. In his early age he became thoroughly conversant with Tarka, Vyākaraṇa, Śruti, Śmṛti, Mahākāvya, Āgama, Alankāra, Chhanda, Jyotisha, and Nāṭaka. He went to Ceylon and embraced Buddhism. The king Parākramabāhu46 conferred on him the title of Bauddhāgamachakravartī. Rāmachandra wrote three books in Ceylon, viz., Bhakti-bataka, Vṛtta-mālā and Vṛtta-ratnakara-pañchikā.

The Gauḍa Karana-Kāyasthas (supra pp. 432-33) were proficient in Sanskrit language and were expert scribes. They lent their services to various ruling dynasties for writing praśastis. The Aphsaṅ inscription47 of Ādityasena (A.D. 672), king of Magadha, was written by Sūkshma-śīva, a native of Gauḍa. An inscription48 of the time of the Chandellas of Khajurāho (A.D. 954) was written in pleasing letters by the Kāraṇika Jaddha, the Gauḍa. Jaddha is said to have attained proficiency in Sanskrit language. The Dewal praśasti (A.D. 992),49 in the Pilibhit district (Uttar Pradesh), was written by Takshāditya, a Kāraṇika from Gauḍa, who knew the Kuṭila alphabet. The Kinsariyā inscription (A.D. 999)50 of the time of the Chāhamāna Durlabharāja of Śākambharī was written by Mahādeva, a native of Gauḍa. The Nāḍīi inscription (A.D. 1141)51 of the Chāhamāna Kāyapāla was written by the Ṭhakura Petha-la, a Kāyastra of the Gauḍa lineage. The Delhi-Siwalik Pillar inscription (A.D. 1163)52 of the Chāhamāna Viśaladeva was written by Śripati, a Kāyastra of Gauḍa descent. The Peṇḍrabandh Plates of the Kalachuri king Pratāpamalla (1214 A.D.) were engraved by Pratirāja of the Gauḍa family who is described as the ocean of learning and the light (i.e., chief) of Karaṇa (office or caste).53

This brief outline, based only on what is definitely known of the activities of some of the glorious sons of Bengal outside the land of their birth, throws interesting light on the part they played in the bigger cultural life of the Indians, both in and outside India. We have seen them holding prominent positions, political and spiritual, establishing monasteries and temples, reforming religions and writing sacred and secular texts, founding educational institutions and hospitals, and contributing in various ways to the lustre of the courts of different kings by their intellectual pursuits. Everywhere they held their position with honour and dignity, and gave practical demonstration of the ideal and vision of the cultural unity of India.
Footnotes

1 R. C. Majumdar,—Champā, pp. xiii-xxiv; Suvarṇadīpa, Part I, Bk. I. specially Ch. iv.

2 IA, 1894, p. 256; Epigraphia Birmanica, III. Part I, p. 185, f.n., 12.

3 See pp. 351-2.

4 Melanges Sylvain Levi, p. 213.

5 R. C. Majumdar, Suvarṇadīpa, i. 82-83.

6 Ibid. II. 121 ff. 7 Ibid. I. 151-52. 8 Ibid. II. 304.

9 H. B. Sarkar in IHQ. XIII. 597. Several other instances of cultural contact, noted by him in the same article, are neither definite nor conclusive.

10 A Javanese text, composed in 1365 A.D., includes Gauḍa in a list of countries whose people came to the Javanese capital “unceasingly in large numbers. They came in ships with merchandise. Monks and distinguished Brāhmaṇas also came from these lands and were entertained” (Suvarṇadīpa, I. 336).

11 For the account of Śāntirakshita and Padmasambhava that follows, cf. L.A. Waddell. Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism, 20, 24, 25; IP. 49; JASB. LI. Part I, 7-8; Pag Sam Jon Zang, Part II, 170 ff. (see table of contents, pp. x. ff.); A. H. Franck, Antiquités of Indian Tibet, II. 87-88. Śāntirakshita, also known as Śāntarakshita, whose Tibetan name was Zi-ba-htsho, became the high priest of Nālandā monastery in the first half of the eighth century A.D. S. C. Das points out from the Tibetan authority that Śāntirakshita was a native of Gauḍa. The Pag Sam Jon Zang, a work compiled in 1747 A.D., states (p. 112) that Śāntirakshita was born in the royal family of Zahor during the reign of Gopāla and died when Dharmapāla was ruling. The identification of Zahor has been discussed above (p. 402, f.n. 97). Dr. B. Bhattacharya remarks that Zahor is a regular phonetic equivalent of Sābhār, a well-to-do village in the Dacca District, Bengal. It is legitimate to infer from all available evidences that Śāntirakshita was a native of Bengal (supra p. 380). His sister was Mandaravī. The tradition runs that Indrabhūti, a king of Uḍḍiyāna, had a son named Padmasambhava (Waddell, op. cit. 380-82). Padmasambhava in his early age was tyrannical. The king, in order to please his subjects, banished the prince. Padmasambhava in course of his travel reached Zahor, and married the sister of Śāntirakshita. Waddell identifies Uḍḍiyāna with Uḍḍyāna in the Swat Valley (op. cit. p. 26). According to Pag Sam Jon Zang, the first Siddhāchārya Lui-pā belonged to the fisherman caste of Uḍḍiyāna, and was in the service of the king of Uḍḍiyāna, as a writer. He is referred to in the Bstan-hgyur as a Bengali (Cordier-Cat. II. 33). He composed some Bengali songs (BGD. 21). On this and other grounds it has been suggested that Uḍḍiyāna might have been situated in Bengal (IHQ. XI. 142-44). For other views cf. supra, p. 403. f.n. 100a.

12 Cf. supra, pp. 381-2. Dīpaṅkara is mentioned as Phul-byuṅ īn an inscription in Tibet (Francke, op. cit. 119. For the account that follows Cf. IP. 50-76; Pag Sam Jon Zang, n. 183 ff. (Cf. table of contents, xviii ff.); Francke, op. cit. 167, 169, 170.
Francke (op. cit. 169-71) points out that Ye-ses-ḥod was a king of Gu-ge (Goggadeśa, in Western Tibet) which included parts of Kunawar and Spyi-ti, and that it was not he, but one of his descendants, that invited Atiśa to his country.

It is identified with Totling math in Western Tibet (PHC. Lahore 1940, p. 179)

Cordier-Cat. II. 45 ff.; IP. 76.

P. N. Bose, Indian Teachers of Buddhist Universities, pp. 73-79; IP. 76.

Kolagallu inscription (EI. XXI. 260-64); IMP. I. 265, No. 82; 266, Bellary No. 91. The name is wrongly read here as Gajādhara and Gāṇādhara.

Atkinson, Notes on the History of the Himalaya of the North-Western Province of India, Ch. iv. 16. The name of the king may also be read as Bhaneka Mall. There is a second inscription of the king on an iron trident in front of Gopēśvara Temple (Ibid. 17-18).

Hamīrā-mahākāva of Nyāyachandra Sūri, Canto iii. vv. 65-73, (Cf. IHQ. XVI. 349).

HCIP. IV. 77.

Kādambari-kathā-sāra by Abhinanda (Kāvyamālā, No. ii), p. 2.


ASI. 1929-30, p. 187.


The account of the Buddhist teachers, given below, is based on Tibetan tradition. For Chandragomin cf. S. C. Vidyabhusana, Hist. Ind. Logic. 121-23, ; Tar. 145-158; Pag Sam Jon Zang, 95-96; JASB. N. S. III. No. 2; IA. IX. 178.

JASB LI. Part i. pp. 16-18; Sādhana-mālā, II. Introd. pp. xc-xcxi.

Tar. 230-33; Pag Sam Jon Zang, 116; S. C. Vidyabhusana, op. cit. 136.

Tar. 235-42; Pag Sam Jon Zang, 117-20; Vidyabhusana, op. cit. 137.

Tiruvaliśvara Temple inscription at the village of Arpakkam in the Conjeeveram tāluk of the Chingleput District, Tāmil Nādu (IMP. I. 353, CG. No. 248; D. C. Ganguly, Eastern Chālukyas, p. 140).

Malkapuram Stone Pillar Ins. The pillar stands in front of the ruined temple of Viśeśvara, at Malkapuram, Guntur tāluk in the Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh (JAHRS. IV. 158-62; IMP. II. 938, No. 316),

IMP. II, KL. No. 262.

IA. XIII. 133. Inscription, found on the architrave of the verandah of the Darbar of Mahārājā's Cave (No. 10) at Kanheri.

A rock-cut inscription from Kailāsa at Ellora reads:—"(The gift of Lakṣaṇa) in the water and Udadhiśaṅça (a gana of Śiva) by Bhadrākūra of the Rādha family (Rādha-kūla)" (Burgess, Ins. Cave Temples of W. India p. 97). Rādha may be taken as identical with Rādhā.

Ep. Ind., XXIII, p. 79.
IAHRS, II pp., 146 ff.
JASB, N.S. V, 350;
Ep. Ind. XXVI, p. 74
IC. XIII, 158-60.
See p. 493, fn. 46.
IC. I. 703-704.
Descriptive List of Inscriptions in the C.P. and Berar by Rai Bahadur Hiralal, First Ed. p. 72; Bhandarkar's List, No. 138. Hiralal refers the date to Vikrama Saṃvat. Mr. J.C. Ghosh thinks that it is in ċaka era and identifies Navagrāma with a village of the same name in Hooghly district (IC. I. 502).
D. C. Ganguly, Hist. of the Paramāra Dynasty, 295; JAOS, VII. 33; JASB. V. 378; EI. VIII. 101 ff.
EI. I, 207, 214.
It was believed formerly that this king was Parākramabāhu II (1236-70) and this view was accepted in HB (p. 688). But is now proved that he was Parākramabāhu VI (1412-67 A.D.) and so the career of this scholar from Bengal falls outside the scope of this work.
CII. III. 208.
EI. I. 122.
Idid. 81.
Ibid. XII. 61.
Ibid. XII. 41.
IA. XIX. 218.
EI. XXIII. 6, 8.
CHAPTER XV

ART

A. Architecture

I. INTRODUCTION

The actual remains of buildings and sculptures found in Bengal do not convey an adequate idea of the state of things in ancient Bengal. This particularly applies to buildings. Both epigraphic records and accounts of foreign travellers testify to the existence of numerous temples and monasteries all over Bengal, and some of them, even allowing for the usual exaggeration, must have been magnificent structures. The only contemporary literary text available to us, namely the Rāmācharita, fully corroborates this when it refers to the city of Rāmavatī built by Rāmapāla as a city of gods and wealthy residents (III. 31), having a series of lofty temples of gods (III. 30) and “rows of palaces with plenty of gold therein” (III. 32). It may be easily surmised that there were many other cities of this type.

(No trace of all these has survived. The nature of the soil and the climate of Bengal are no doubt partly responsible for the destruction of some of them, specially those built of easily perishable materials, but the more magnificent buildings, particularly temples, must have been deliberately destroyed by the Muslim invaders.) Apart from the record of such destruction all over India in Muslim chronicles, we have positive reference in the Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī to vandalism of this type committed by the first Muslim hordes that invaded Bengal. But we have more positive evidence of this deliberate destruction of fine stone buildings in the use of the materials of the demolished Hindu palaces and temples in the structures built by the Muslim rulers. Prof. Percy Brown, an authority on Indian art, who cannot be accused of any communal feelings against the Muslims, after referring to the natural causes of ruin and decay, observes: “At the same time the destruction brought about by the hand of man cannot be omitted from any account of the architecture of this portion of the country, as the remains of some of the finest buildings amply testify. In no part of India are the two great cultural movements,
the Hindu and the Muhammedan, and the manner in which the one superseded the other more vividly illustrated than in some of the ancient remains of Bengal, as for instance in the ruined Adina Masjid, built by Sekander Shah (1358-89) at his new capital of Pandua, as this great congregational mosque was constructed almost entirely of materials taken from the demolished city of Lukhauti, the capital of the Hindu dynasty of the Senas. Another notable instance is the tomb of Jaffar Khan Ghazi at Triveni in the Hooghly District, built of materials of many Hindu and Buddhist stone temples, including a series of plaques illustrating the story of the Rāmāyaṇa, the inside figures of which were embedded in the structure and thus concealed for a long period from public gaze, till the tomb was dilapidated and, in the course of its repair and conservation, the nature of these and other materials came to light. These instances are merely illustrative, and by no means exhaustive. No wonder that ruins of many other temples were used as materials for building mosques in Bengal when we learn from an inscription on the portals of the famous mosque near Qutb Minār still in situ, that it was built on the ruins of a score of Hindu temples; the pillars which once adorned them still stand as a mute testimony to this vandalism which has left no trace of ancient temples with the exception of only about half a dozen. There is absolutely no trace of any secular building in ancient Bengal. The images of gods and other sculptures have escaped the same tragic fate because, being portable, they could be carried away from temples which were in imminent danger from the iconoclastic zeal of the Muslims and kept concealed elsewhere—not unoften thrown into tanks from which some of them have been recovered in our days. Still there is no doubt that those which have been preserved represent only a very small proportion of the total number.

The paintings, that adorned the walls of buildings or were kept therein, were destroyed with them. Those that served as illustrations in Manuscripts were also destroyed along with these, for, apart from natural decay, whole libraries were deliberately destroyed, as was done after the sack of a monastery in Bihar.

These facts should be kept in view in making a proper assessment of the art of ancient Bengal—for the extreme paucity of materials, specially in respect of architecture and painting, makes it almost impossible to convey even a general idea, far less an outline, of the growth and development of their style. Subject to these limitations
we shall first make an attempt to describe the very scanty remains of architecture under the following three heads: Stūpa, Monastery and Temples.

II. STŪPA

The stūpa was a familiar structure to the Buddhists and Jains all over India. In its original and simplest form it consisted of a solid domical structure on a circular base. The upper part of the dome supported, a square box-like capital (harmikā), surmounted by a circular disc (chhatra). Gradually it was transformed, sometimes almost beyond recognition, by the addition of following elements, among others.

1. The low circular base becomes a high solid cylinder or drum (medhi), with corresponding increase in the height of the dome (aṇḍa) and its change from a hemispherical to an elongated shape, leaving a vacant passage round it on the base, wide enough to serve as a circumambulatory walk (paradakshiṇa-patha).

2. The number of the single crowning member (chhatra) on the top of the dome is gradually increased, each smaller than the one beneath it, so that the whole thing looks like a tapering row of small discs, the topmost one being almost a point.

3. A square plinth (basement) is added beneath the low circular base.

4. A projection is added to the middle of each side of the plinth, and sometimes a second one projecting from the first.

In its final stage the elongated stūpa appears like a tall spire, and the spherical dome (now lengthened), once the principal element, becomes an insignificant element between the drum, supported by a lofty basement below it, and the imposing series of high and conical discs (chhatra) above it.

The stūpas were originally erected by the Buddhists in order to enshrine the relics of Buddha (either parts of his body or articles used by him), (and also, perhaps later, to mark a spot sanctified by the visit of Buddha or some events associated with his life. Ultimately the stūpa itself became an object of veneration, and it was regarded as a pious object to erect a stūpa.) This led to the introduction of small votive stūpas, i.e., miniature stūpas offered as religious gifts to places of pilgrimage by persons who were not rich enough to erect a structural stūpa.
Though the accounts of the Chinese pilgrims leave no doubt that the whole of Bengal was studded with structural stūpas, big and small, in ancient days, they have all disappeared and only the remains of a few votive stūpas have survived the ravages of man and nature.

Of the large number of small votive stūpas made in brick, only the basements have been preserved. Most of them are cruciform in plan, formed by one, two, or three offset projections on each side of the square, and only a few are either square or circular. Many such basements have been found at Pāhārpur (Rajshahi Dt.) and Bahulārā (Bankura Dt.). They are very high, consisting of successive tiers of elaborate mouldings. Probably they were sometimes decorated with Buddha figures, as moulded terracotta plaques, containing friezes of Buddha figures in various attitudes, were found lying about many of them round the Satyapir-bhitā at Pāhārpur during the process of excavation. These votive stūpas are usually found standing alone, but sometimes they form a row, and occasionally a group of them stands on a big common platform. As stūpas with such basements have been found in Bihar it may be surmised that the structures on the basements were also similar. There is, however, basement of a very novel design in Pāhārpur which has been described as follows:

"It consists of a circular base over which rises a high plinth with sixteen projected angles (and sixteen corresponding recessed angles), each projection just touching the outline of the circular base. It is well-decorated with elaborate mouldings, in which the bold 'torus' is prominent. The provision of so many projecting and re-entrant angles may be regarded as a logical culmination of the desire for elaboration of the original ground-plan, which was first manifest in the addition of a number of projections on each face of a square structure. Seen from the top, the whole structure looks like a sixteen-sided star evenly arranged inside a circle. This novel plan and arrangement of the basement suggest a novel shape and appearances of the super-structure; but unfortunately the upper members are irretrievably lost."

The only specimen of a votive stūpa in stone has been found at Jogi-guphā. The basement is lost, and the portion that remains hardly looks like a stūpa structure as has been described above or is normally met with in any part of India. "A close examination however, reveals that it was probably an ultimate transformation
of a hemispherical structure due to an excessive tendency towards
elevation and elongation. Along with the multiplication of the
different elements there was also a corresponding elevation of each
component part, and here, even without the basement that is lost, we
find that the drum and the dome each represents a high cylinder,
their total height being more than three times the diameter at the
bottom. The drum, as usual, is ornamented with four figures in
niches, while the plain dome is surmounted by the harmikā, not
square but circular and ribbed on edge, just like the āmalaka-kītā
of a temple. This is a peculiarity which is noticed here for the first
time in case of a stūpa monument. Next we have the range of chhatra
discs, gradually diminishing in size as they go up. The sense of
accentuated height is strongly manifest in the whole composition,
which gives to this particular specimen almost the appearance of a
miniature obelisk, though with a round contour.”

Three bronze votive stūpas have been found in Bengal, one each
at Āshrafpur, Pāhārpur, and Jhewāri (Chittagong Dt.). The first
was found along with two copper-plates of the Khadga Dynasty,
mentioned above (p. 78), and probably belongs to the same period
(7th-8th century A.D.). “It is a fairly preserved specimen and
consists of a cylindrical drum and hemispherical dome supported
on a lotus over a high and slightly sloping basement, which is
square with one offset projection on each face. The dome bulges
a little towards the top—a peculiarity that endows the form with
a contour not unlike that of the ‘bell-shaped’ stūpas of Burma.
Above the square harmikā rises the shaft of chhatrāvalī, of which
only one disc now remains. Like the stone prototypes in Bihar the
basement and the drum are adorned with figures. What is, however,
unique in this specimen is that the square turret of the harmikā
has each of its sides adorned with a figure of the Buddha, a pecu-
liarity which, so far as our knowledge goes, is not met with
elsewhere.”

Each of the other two “consists of a bulging dome on a cruciform
basement, as in the mediaeval stone examples from Bihar. The
Pāhārpur specimen exhibits four concentric rings just below the
dome in the section usually occupied by the drum (cf. three similar
rings in the stūpas of Ceylon). Streamers in ornamental design are
also attached to the shaft of the chhatras. Relief representations
of stūpas of exactly similar design may also be found in the stelae
of Buddhist images found in Bengal.”
In addition to these actual examples some idea of the stūpa-structure in ancient Bengal may be formed from the representation of stūpa either in relief as a decoration of divine image or in the illustrations in Manuscripts.

As regards the former reference may be made to the image of Tārā from Dhondai.\(^7\)

As regards the illustrations in Manuscripts reference may be made to three of them. The earliest, the Mrigasthāpana-stūpa in Varendra is illustrated in Ms. Add. 1643, Cambridge, to which reference has been made above (p. 37). It is noticed by I-tings and must, therefore, have existed in the 7th century A.D.

This and two others were first noticed by Foucher,\(^8\) and have been thus described by S. K. Sarasvati:

The first “shows a low circular drum over a basement consisting of six terraces, each of which is in the form of a lotus. The semi-circular dome, with four niches on four sides containing Buddha figures, is decorated with garlands at the top and surmounted by a square harmikā. Above it rises a tapering row of chhatras, the topmost one of which is adorned by flying streamers.

“The second stūpa is labelled as ‘Tulākshetra Vardhamāna-stūpa’. Vardhamāna, which, as a place name, occurs rather early in Indian literature, has been identified with modern Burdwan. Tulākshetra, with its locative case-ending, appears also to be a topographical name, and is placed, in the same manuscript, in Varendra. The monument exhibits two stūpas of exactly similar design and elevation, placed side by side. The basement, square in plan with one projection on each side, consists of four elaborately carved stages separated by recessed mouldings. The drum is designed in the shape of a double-petalled lotus, and over it is placed the dome, similar to the preceding example but without the niches, along with its upper component members.

“The basement of the third stūpa consists of a double row of petals separated by two plain mouldings, and supports a square terrace with two rectangular niches on each side. The drum has the shape of a lotus with drooping petals and over it rises an almost cylindrical dome with a cinque-foil niche on each side. The harmikā has a concave outline and streamers are attached to the shaft of the conical chhatarvalī.”\(^9\)

The following review by S. K. Saraswati sums up the principal characteristics and different stages in the evolution of the stūpa architecture in ancient Bengal.
"From an examination of the extant specimens the characteristic feature of the stūpa architecture in Bengal may be summed up as follows: Votive stūpas, plainly square or circular in shape, have been known to exist at Pāhārpur and Bahulārā. But such simple structures are rather rare and the prevailing style shows a high basement, square with one, two or three projections on each face, variegated still more with numerous lines of horizontal mouldings. The number and depth of the projections as well as of the mouldings offer a rough standard in stylistic evolution. The Ashrafpur specimen shows niches with sculptured figures on the basement, and such a decorative scheme may also be found to actuate at least some of the brick examples at Satyapir-bhītā (Pāhārpur). Next comes the drum, plain or ornamented, and sometimes with four figures in the niches round its body. The dome—originally the principal element in the stūpa, now a mere finish or capping to a series of elaborate mouldings forming a lofty base—is either hemispherical or cylindrical, and though generally plain, is sometimes decorated with garlands at the top and niches containing figures at the bottom. It supports the square or cruciform harmikā, and the rows of diminishing chhatras ending in a pointed finial, sometimes with streamers flying from it. The stone example of Jogi-gopāh exhibits an extremely elongated type and may be said to represent the final transformation of a hemispherical shape into a spirelike one through successive stages of heightening, achieved by adding to, and elevating the different parts."10

III. MONASTERY

'As in the case of stūpas, so in the case of monasteries, there is no doubt that the whole of Bengal was studded with them in ancient times, but not one of them has survived the ravages of man and nature. 'Fortunately, the ruins of Somapura-vihāra,' mentioned above (pp. 110-111), 'have been discovered' by archaeological excavations at Pāhārpur (Rajshāhi District). They have been described by Percy Brown as "the remains of a monumental edifice of such stupendous proportions, that although now a mound of ruins it appears to have been the largest and most important of its kind."11

The monasteries in Bengal followed the usual plan of building four rows of cells round the four sides of a courtyard, a running verandah along the cells giving access to each cell through a door. The great vihāra at Pāhārpur had the same plan, but it was of a
large dimension with a huge lofty temple in the centre of the courtyard.) The temple will be described later. The quadrangle measured more than 900 ft. externally on each side with high enclosing walls all around it. The main entrance was on the northern side where a flight of steps gave access to a large pillared hall enclosed by massive walls on the other three sides. A single door on the southern side of the hall led to a smaller pillared hall, with an opening on the south through which, across a verandah, was a flight of steps descending to the inner courtyard facing the temple in the centre which was open to the north. From the top of this flight of steps branched off rows of cells on the inner sides of the enclosing walls on four sides, connected by a spacious corridor (about 8' to 9' wide). This corridor ran continuously on all the four sides giving access to each of a single (sometimes double) row of cells (about 13'-6" in length) through a doorway with an inward splay. There were four flights of steps one in the middle of each side of the inner courtyard. There were altogether 177 cells along the corridor, in addition to the three cells in each of the three central blocks made by a projection at the middle of the extension wall on the east, south and west behind the landing stage of the flight of steps leading down to the inner courtyard. The thickness of the walls, which now remain only up to a small height, have led to the conjecture that it was a storeyed structure. Besides the main gateway on the north, there was a small passage of entrance in the north wall near its eastern end. There was possibly also another small passage in the middle of the eastern enclosure. The roof of the corridors rested on pillars and it had railings running along its whole length except at the centre where the means of ascent from below were provided by a staircase. A row of terracotta plaques adorned the plinth of the corridor. Some think that this was a later addition.

Besides the rows of cells on the four sides and the lofty temple at the centre there were within the enclosed quadrangle of the courtyard a number of small shrines and votive stūpas and other structures probably serving as refectory kitchen, bathing platforms, etc. A Jaina monastery on the site in the sixth century A.D. as mentioned above (p. 520). This was overshadowed, if not replaced by the great vihāra described above in the eighth (or early ninth) century A.D.) A set of clay sealings found amid its ruins call it the great monastery of Dharmapāla at Somapura (Śrī-Dharmapāla-deva-mahāvihāra) (above, p. 110-11). That the designation 'Mahā-
vihāra' or Great Monastery was fully justified would be evident from
the description given above. As Dikshit has rightly pointed out, "no
single monastery of such dimensions has come to light in India". No
wonder that its reputation spread all over North India and
even outside its boundaries in the Buddhist world of Asia.

There is perhaps a tragic reference to this great monastery in an
inscription of the 12th century A.D., found in the ruins of a
monastery at Nālandā. It refers to an ascetic (yati) named
Karunāsāmitra who lived in Somapura, and we are told that "when
his house was burning, (being) set on fire by the approaching armies
of Vāngāla, (he) attached (himself) to the pair of the lotus feet of
the Buddha (and) went to heaven." It hints at a military raid on
the locality where the great vihāra was situated, in the course of
which a pious Buddhist laid down his life by suicide (a well-known
religious custom). Whether this raid and conflagration had damaged
the great monastery cannot be determined, but it is not unlikely.
As this event occurred four generations before the record was
engraved it may be dated in the 11th century A.D. But it is certain
that the Great Monastery was not finally destroyed at the time.
For the great-grand-disciple of Karunāsāmitra built a temple of
Tārā at the illustrious Somapura, and "effected the renovation of
the inner and outer parts of four cells,—(a work) in which alone the
eyes of the world found repose." It has been suggested that the
expression chaturshu layaneshu, which has been translated as four cells,
probably refers to the four groups of cells of the Great Monastery
which had been damaged (by the fire referred to above). Such an
interpretation alone can justify the expression that after the renovation
work on a magnificent scale the great edifice became a "singular
feast to the eyes of the world" (jagatān netr-aika-vikrama-bhūn).

Ruins of several monasteries have been discovered in the Maina-
mati hills near Comilla (E. Pakistan). According to preliminary reports
these are relics of monasteries and temples even bigger than those of
Pāharpur. But no details are available in this country.

That there were magnificent monasteries in ancient Bengal before
the Somapura vihāra was built is also proved by the description of
some of them by the Chinese pilgrims, quoted above (p. 523). But all
of them, as well as the less splendid ones whose number must have
been very large, have disappeared, and the ruins of some of them
probably lie buried under the big mounds, like those of the Somapura
vihāra before the excavation at Pāharpur. Such remains have been
exposed at Bhārāl (Rajshahi District) and the Rājbāḍīdāṅgā (the site of the famous old Raktamṛittikā vihāra (p.7)

IV. TEMPLES

1. Ruins of Temples

(In support of what has been said above (p. 603) about the existence of numerous temples in Ancient Bengal of which no trace exists today,) reference may be made to the ruins of a big temple at Chandraketugarh (Barachampa in the 24 Parganas Dt.) of the Gupta period, and the Pañchāyatana temple-complex at Rājbāḍīdāṅgā (Murshidabad Dt.) of the same or slightly later period, exposed by the recent excavations at these two places. But beyond the idea of their massive character, and a few details of the general plan nothing more can be said of them. "The massive temple at Chandraketugarh had a large square sanctum cella with projections on three sides and a covered ambulatory passage. The bigger square was preceded by a rectangular covered vestibule with a rectangular open porch in front, complete with a flight of steps. Around the larger square, the vestibule and the porch, was a rectangular structure with projections on three sides, corresponding to those of the inner square. Rising from the same level as that of the main temple, its facade and the two sides up to the vestibule were decorated with shallow niches, possibly plastered with stucco, and embellished with rounded offsets and string course of dentils made of moulded bricks."

Each side of the square of the cells was 63 ft. long and the vestibule attached to the middle of the northern side was 45 ft. square. There were also massive brick buttresses and open ambulatory passages. Near by are the remains of miniature replica of the temple and the basement of a votive stūpa flanking the stairway.

The Pañchāyatana temple-complex at Rājbāḍīdāṅgā "consisted of: (i) a rectangular enclosure-wall ; (ii) four square shrines at the four corners ; (iii) main temple of triratha plan ; (iv) the rectangular maṇḍapa on the north, surkhi-rammed platform, etc. The compound-wall, measuring 20.87 m. in length on its western side and having several offsets at the plinth level on its southern face, contained beautiful niches and decorated and moulded cornices on its exposed southern and northern faces.. The rectangular main temple,
measuring 7.84 × 7 m., had projections on three sides, leaving northern side open for the entrance, thereby giving a triratha shape. The inner area of the main shrine, measuring 4.41 × 3.4 m. was surkhirammed and over it were laid bricks to form the platform. The rectangular manḍapa, measuring 6.09 × 4.57 m., was built subsequently on the northern side of the main shrine. "To the south of this temple there was another oblong temple-complex consisting of walls, platforms and ardhachandra entrance platform on a rectangular basement 2.66 m. × 1.37 m."¹⁹

2. Pāhārpur Temple

But by far the greatest and the most magnificent of all the temples whose ruins have been excavated in modern times is the one at Pāhārpur, to which reference has been made above in describing the Great Monastery. The ruined state of the structure makes it impossible to give a detailed account of this mighty edifice, worthy of the Grand Monastery which surrounded it on all sides of the open courtyard whose centre it occupies. Only a general view must therefore suffice.

The temple was square in plan with projections so that it assumed the shape of a gigantic cross with angles of projection between the arms. It rose in several terraces of which two alone still remain. It covered an area about 356 ft. long from north to south and 314 ft. wide from east to west. About 250 ft. to the south of the main gateway of the monastery at the centre of the north side stood the main entrance to the great temple facing the north. Its basement wall had a plain surface of ashlar brick work (with a number of offsets in foundation), the monotony of the plain surface being broken by the insertion of 63 stone bas-reliefs at most of the angles of the projection and at intervals in specially built recesses in the middle of the wall. Above the reliefs there is a projecting cornice with three courses of mouldings, above which, in a recess, terracotta plaques, about 13"-14" in height, were fixed in rows running almost uninterrupted throughout the length of the wall. Further upwards, after a stretch of 3' 6", there is another deep cornice moulding decorated by various designs. Above this stood another recess for the insertion of terracotta plaques. The portion above this is broken. The length of the wall on each side is about 300 ft.

A grand flight of brick-built stairs, flanked by sloping parapet walls on either side, gave access to a verandah or circumambulatory
passage running continually on all sides. There were two rows of plaques decorating the inner wall of the passage, one below and the other higher up, separated from each other by cornice mouldings. In the north-western part of this verandah the circumambulatory passage was at a later period partially blocked by the construction of a shrine.

In the second terrace was the central shrine with an antechamber at each cardinal point and a verandah with projections similar to the one in the terrace below. Maṇḍapas or Pillared halls were later added to these antechambers.

There are not enough materials for the reconstruction of the temple above the second terrace. There are clear traces of a verandah 11′ broad at the height of 28′ from the level of the antechambers, and access to it was provided by a stairway in the southern antechamber. According to K. N. Dikshit the main shrine must have been at the top, but no remains of it exist except the four walls 18′10½″ in thickness enclosing a chamber of 13′ 6″×13′ 3″. At a depth of 38′ ft. in the interior of the chamber there were four square platforms from 2′ to 3′ ft. square at the four corners and at 41′ ft. depth the side walls came to an end with a regular offsets descending towards a finely laid brick floor in the centre measuring 6′6″×6′2″. No relics or foundation deposits were discovered on the floor. The platforms and floor apparently only mark a stage in the construction of the high plinth on which the main shrine stood. Even below the floor up to 30′ ft. further down was found masonry work of 18 carefully laid layers of burnt bricks of full size followed by several feet of regularly laid layers of brickbats.

These features and the discovery of ornamental bricks and terracotta plaques of the regular Pāhārpur type at depths of 56′ ft. to 70′ ft. from the top of the mound show that the foundation of the main shrine was laid simultaneously with the construction of the other parts of the main temple. But the superstructure, method of roofing and other details regarding the main shrine at Pāhārpur are matters of conjecture. The extraordinary thickness (about 19′) of the foundation walls and the small span to be covered over what would roughly be the dimensions of the shrine may point to a high tower gradually tapering to a point with corbelled arches.

The drainage of the entire area of the main temple and the immediate surroundings was carefully provided in the original construction.

The above account is based on the report of Mr. K. N. Dikshit
who carried out the excavations at Pāhārpur. It may be concluded with the following general observation made by him.

"The type of plan on which the main temple at Pāhārpur was erected is so far unknown to Indian archaeology nor is its further development on Indian soil traceable. Its cruciform shape with angles of projection between the arms, its three raised terraces, and complicated scheme of decoration of walls with carved brick cornices, friezes of terracotta plaques and stone reliefs are not found in any of the developed styles of temple architecture in India."

The description of the temple given above on the basis of the report of K. N. Dikshit has given rise to several intriguing problems. In the first place, his view that the main shrine must have been on the top of the building on the third terrace and consisted of a square cella with a circumambulatory passage has been challenged by several scholars. Both Sir John Marshall and R. D. Banerji regarded the structure as a garbhachaitiya or hollow pagoda. Mr. S. K. Saraswati says that "the evidence, now before us, is against the inference" of Dikshit and "the sanctuary could have neither been situated at the top nor inside the central square pile." "Naturally and logically, the sanctuary and what are described its ante-chambers and mandapas should have been placed at the same level."

Saraswati, however, draws attention to one suggestion casually made by Dikshit on the basis of Ins. No. A. 12, which refers to a Jaina vihāra at Pāhārpur in the fifth century A.D. (p. 520) and worship of the Jinas or Arhats. He thinks that a four-faced (chaturmukha) Jaina temple probably existed on the site or near it, and this furnished the barest outline of the present structure. Saraswati refers in this connection to "a particular type of temples at Pagan in Burma, which may be described as an adaptation of Chaumukha shrines of the Jainas. The type represents a square temple with four figures of the Buddha, set in recessed niches, on the four faces of a solid masonry pile standing in the centre of a surrounding corridor which is approached through entrance vestibules on one or more of its faces." He also emphasizes "other points of resemblance and affinity between the Pāhārpur and Pagan temples."

This would mean that the Pāhārpur temple furnished the model to the temple-builders in Burma. This possibility was emphasized, on other grounds, by Dikshit also. "There can be no doubt", said
he, "that this style of architecture has profoundly influenced that of Burma, Java, and Cambodia." He has supported this view by pointing out that the plan and superstructure of three well-known temples in Central Java afford the nearest approximation to those of Pāhārpur. Saraswati has also discussed at length the profound influence exercised by the Pāhārpur temple on the architectural efforts of Further India, specially of Burma and Java.

(Referring to the generally accepted view that the temple-type at Pāhārpur is entirely unknown to Indian archaeology) Saraswati has drawn attention to the type of temple known as Sarvatobhadra described in Indian texts on architecture. He has rightly pointed out that the following distinctive characteristics of this type laid down in literature closely approximate to the actual remains of the Pāhārpur temple: "The Sarvatobhadra type should be a square shrine with four entrances at the cardinal points, and with an ante-chamber on each side (chatuḥśālam-gṛiha). It should have uninterrupted galleries all around, should have five storeys and sixteen corners and many beautiful turrets and spires." Saraswati thinks that the disappearance of other examples of this type of temples in Bengal is alone responsible for the view "that the Pāhārpur type is a novel one in Indian architecture. In support of this view he mentions that "the ruins of a temple, exactly similar to the Pāhārpur plan, but of much smaller dimensions have accidentally been laid bare at Birāt (Rangpur Dt.)." He further observes: "From such remains and from representations of almost similar temples in the sculpture and paintings, this type may be taken to have been characteristic of Eastern India."

3. Other Temples

The number of temples in Bengal in a fair condition that may be referred to the period of Hindu rule with any reasonable probability is very few, and with the exception of the temple at the centre of the courtyard of the Great Monastery of Somapura described above and the temple No. IV at Barakar, none of them is perhaps earlier than the eleventh or twelfth century A.D. Many of these are also in ruins or changed beyond recognition by modern methods of conservation. As the upper part of the Somapura temple is lost, it is difficult to form an idea of its style. The remaining temples belong to the rekha-type whose distinguished characteristic is the high cur-
vilinear śikhara towering over the cella, resembling that of the temples found in Orissa, and probably also derived from it. Perhaps the oldest example of it is furnished by a miniature Jaina temple, found at Charra (Purulia Dt.), which shows the curvilinear form of the roof with vertical rows of decorative features, consisting of replicas of the temple with the figures of Jaina Tirthaṅkaras in between them. This is a distinctive feature, not found so far in any actual temple of this type in Bengal.

But although we have no actual example of any temple in Bengal constructed before the 8th century A.D. we may form some idea of its general style from the replicas of temples within which the divine images are seated in many sculptures. This furnishes evidence of a new type of temples, in addition to the curvilinear śikhara type, which is almost certainly earlier in date going back probably to the Gupta period. Its distinctive characteristic is a roof consisting of a series of gradually diminishing horizontal tiers, one upon another, with a recess between two successive courses. Gradually, with the tiered stages compressed, the roof looks like a stepped pyramid rising from the end of the four perpendicular walls of the garbhagṛīha or inner chamber of the shrine. On the whole it resembles like the pyramidal roof of Dravidian style such as we see, for example, in the great Tanjore temple. The last course is capped by an āmalaka-śilā on a narrow cylindrical neck, and above it the usual finials as on a curvilinear śikhara roof. This type of temple is technically known as bhadra or piṭa. The simplest and perhaps the earliest form of this type of roof is what we find in relief on each of the four sides of the bronze stūpa of Āshrafpur. It consists of two receding courses of sloping tiers with a recessed rectangular stage between them, with a finial of some peculiar shape. The usual finials of this type are of three varieties, namely, the āmalaka, a miniature stūpa, and a miniature śikhara, giving rise to three distinct varieties of bhadra or piṭa type according as the tiered stages of the roof are surmounted by one or other of these three. All these types are represented only in the sculptures of images or in pictures in illustrated manuscripts. For the first type reference may be made to the image of Kalyāṇasundara from Hili, and of Uṃa Maheśvara from Biroi (which shows trefoil arches and rampant lions below the āmalaka).

The second and third types are represented in
(1) a series of miniature paintings of temples in Bengal, noticed in Foucher, Icon, pls. III 4; V. I; VI. 5; VII.

(2) Buddha Image of Madhyapādā. Structural examples of the pīṭha-type are practically unknown, though a rough resemblance to the type may be found in the Nandi pavilion within the premises of the temple at Ektēśvar (Bankura Dt.) —a simple structure (open on all sides) of four pillars on a high base supporting a roof of three receding stages. Its date is uncertain. Similar tiered roofs are found in Burma and Indonesia and it is not unlikely that they were borrowed from India.

All the structural examples of temples in ancient Bengal so far known belong to what is generally known as Indo-Aryan or Northern, as opposed to Dravidian or Southern, style prevalent in India. It has been styled by Brown as the provincial phase of the Orissa School, for such temples of an early period are found in large number in Bhuvanesvara in Orissa. Its most distinctive characteristic is the curvilinear sikhara—a tower-like construction formed by the four walls gradually curving inwards from the very beginning and almost meeting at the top, the narrow intervening space being capped by a ribbed round piece of stone known as āmalaka-bilā.

This type of temples is known as rekha, and the stone temple No. IV at Barākar (Burdwan Dt.) furnishes the earliest example of it in Bengal. "It consists of a high garbhagriha (cella, sanctum) on a low basement and is surmounted by a short and stunted sikhara (tower), gradually curving inwards from its very beginning, and ultimately capped by a huge and archaic āmalaka-bilā. Both the garbhagriha and the sikhara are square in cross-section all through and the sharp edges of the corners and of the ratha-paga projections are rigidly maintained. In these respects and in the arrangement of the rathas and niches of the garbhagriha and pagas of the sikhara, the temple closely corresponds to the earliest group in Orissa, represented by the Paraśurāmeśvara temple at Bhuvanesvara, which has been assigned to the 8th century A.D. The Barākar temple may, therefore, be dated about the same period or only a little later." Eight other temples of this type—all more or less damaged—and one in a fair state of preservation are known.

1. The brick temple at Deuliya (Burdwan Dt.). Its peculiar feature is that the sikhara does not rise directly from the walls of the cella but is placed on something like a pro-
jected cornice formed by several inverted offsets towards the top
of the cella. The sikhara, divided into sharp ridges, is decorated
with scroll work and chaitya-window pattern.

2. The Siddheśvara temple in brick at Bahulārā (Bankura Dt.).

The plain walls of the sanctum are broken, outside, by niches,
"capped by miniature sikharaś in the central rathas and by three
horizontal bands (bandhana) passing all around just in the centre."
The elaborate ornamentations cover the exterior face from top to
bottom. It is a fine temple of graceful proportions and may
be assigned to the eleventh century A.D.

3-4. Sareśvara and Salleśvara stone temples at Dehar
(Bankura Dt.).

Only the sanctum of each of these is preserved, which closely
resembles that of the Siddheśvara temple (No. 2), and they all
probably belong to the same period.

5-6. Jaṭār Deul in the Sundarbans, and the Gaurangapur
temple.

The original shape and features of Jaṭār Deul have been obliterated by modern conservation. An earlier photograph shows its
close resemblance to the Siddheśvara temple. It is assigned to the
tenth century A.D. on the strength of an inscription of Raja
Jayantachandra dated 975 A.D. But there is no trace of the inscrip-
tion and no king of Bengal of this name is otherwise known. It
probably belongs to the eleventh or twelfth century A.D. There is
a similar temple at Gaurangapur (Burdwan Dt.).

7. The stone temple at Bāndā in the District of Purulia, is a
fairly preserved specimen.

One great peculiarity of this temple, which at first seems to be a
puzzle, is the existence of two superimposed cells above the garha-
grīha. Beglar, who first noticed it, perhaps rightly suggested that
it was due to the "constructive necessity to tie the walls together
at regular intervals to give the necessary rigidity and stability to
the tower." This temple may be dated in the twelfth century A.D.
on stylistic grounds.

8-9. There are two other temples of this type in Purulia District.
One is at Telkupi, which represents the Tailakampa of the
Rāmcharita (p. 148), and the other is at Para.

Two stone and one bronze votive miniatures of this type have
been found, respectively, at Bāngarh, Nimdighi (both in Rajshahi
Dt.), and Jhewari (Chittagong Dt.). It appears from stylistic
considerations that they were later than Barākar temple but earlier than the six temples mentioned above.

A study of the rekha type of temples in Bengal undoubtedly shows its close resemblance to the earlier group of temples at Bhuvanesvara. But there are some striking differences, too. There is no trace of the Jagamohan—a smaller chamber with tiered roofs in front of the cella and giving access to it, which is a typical feature in Orissan temples. Its place is taken in the temples of Bengal by an approach vestibule in the thickness of the front wall. As regards the excellence of workmanship, opinions are bound to differ. The following estimate of a Bengali writer may be quoted for whatever may be its worth. After mentioning the difference, noted above, he observes: “Further, the temples of Bengal do not show such extreme variation of the ground plan and section as is to be found in the later temples of Orissa. In these respects Bengali architects displayed a better sense of reserve and restraint than their Orissan contemporaries. The ornamentations in the Bengali temples are also chaste and elegant, the chief decorative motifs consisting of the “chaitiya-window”, the running scroll-work and the miniature replica of the tower arranged in rows. The rekha temples in Bengal may not have the grandeur of the stupendous stone monuments of the sister province of Orissa, but they exhibit better taste, and the brick examples in particular, though in ruins, represent a fine and mature skill in the science and art of architecture.”

The rekha type of temples continued to be built after the end of the Hindu rule and a group of three temples at Barākar (Nos. I, II, III) and the temple of Ichhai Ghosh at Gaurangapur (Burdwan Dt.) may be cited as examples. The Barākar group may be assigned to the 15th, and the last, to the same or even a later age.

Before concluding the account of temples mention may be made of fragments of ruined temples discovered in several localities, but apart from the fact of their existence we hardly know anything more, and it is not possible to form any idea about their plan and elevation. Some of these have been recently excavated and referred to above (pp. 604, 612). But many other examples are also known. Ruins of a temple, for example, have been found at Baigrama, which may represent all that now remains of the temple mentioned in an inscription found at that place (No. A 5). Similar ruins of several temples have been found near about Mahāsthān (Bogra Dt.),
which represents the site of the ancient city of Puṇḍravardhana, at Bairāgir Bhīṭā, Govinda Bhīṭā and Gokul, where a large mound, 43 ft. high, when excavated, revealed the plinth of a shrine—a polygon of twenty-four sides in plan with a circular structure in the centre. The numerous buttress quadrangles which alone remain and look like a cobweb of blind cells, really served as the plinth of a shrine which was placed more that 30 ft. above the ground level on a solid foundation.41

V. MISCELLANEOUS

The account of architecture will remain incomplete without any reference to some architectural members which lie scattered all over Bengal—the only mementos of numerous temples that once adorned it but have vanished from the face of the earth due to the ravages of man and nature. The most important among these are pillars, door-frames, brackets, etc.

1. Pillars with characteristic decorations of the Gupta period, or, more properly, fragments of them—are very rare, but there are quite a number of them belonging to the Pāla period. They have, generally speaking, an octagonal shaft on a square base and are surmounted by a square capital. The decorations are very few and consist of either geometrical patterns, or Chaitya window on each face carved in low relief. A very fine and novel specimen is furnished by a free-standing stone pillar at Dinajpur42 on which the Inscription No. B. 93 is engraved. The base and the top are square and richly decorated with lotus and kirtimukha designs, but the central part of the shaft is dodecagonal, and is plain except for the decoration of garlands at the upper part. The capital is made up of a vase with rich arabesque work on each side. The pillar shows the characteristic decorative patterns of the 10th century of which there are a few more examples.

A fine specimen of a richly decorated wooden pillar about 10 ft. high was recovered from a tank at Arial (Dacca Dt.). It is even more richly decorated than the Dinajpur stone pillar.43

Four stone pillars found at Handial (Pabna Dt.), though not as richly decorated as the two mentioned above, present some novel features and probably belong to the very end of the Hindu period. 'The square base is quite plain except for a decorated
niche on each face containing the figure of a deity. The shaft is dodecagonal up to about the three-fourths of its height, the rest being circular. The bottom is decorated with a raised band bearing in relief twelve dancing female figures. From a mass of arabesque at the top of the dodecagonal portion hangs a chain with a bell on each of its four facets. The circular portion bears three encircling hands set up one above the other. A few free-standing pillars, some of which are sadly mutilated, present more or less the decorative pattern described above. Mention may be made of the two, bearing inscriptions of great historical interest, namely the Bādāl Pillar (Ins. No. B. 20) of which the upper part is missing, and the mutilated pillar at Paikor (see above, p. 139). There are also a fragmentary monolithic pillar bearing an image of Manasā found at Paikor and the so-called Kaivartta Pillar, standing in the middle of a tank, associated by some with the Kaivartta ruler Divya (pp. 142 ff.).

2. Door-frames. A large number of door-frames in stone, consisting of a pair of upright jambs joined above by a lintel—or parts thereof—have been found in different parts of Bengal. One complete frame—rather very rare—is now in the Dinajpur Raj Palace. It was brought from the ruins at Bangarh.

The general type has been described as follows: "The Jambs exhibit several vertical bands, usually decorated with different patterns, and this scheme of decoration is continued horizontally on the lintel, which moreover contains a niche in the centre occupied by the figure of the deity, installed in the sanctum, or of Gaṇeśa, the bestower of success. The bottom of the jamb sometimes shows the figure of an attendant deity or of the river-goddesses, each in a sculptured niche, over which the usual decorations begin. The simple and common type of the door-frames exhibits a division of the surface into several vertical bands, in the form of running offsets, such bands being carried over to the lintel."

Some of these door jambs were so profusely decorated that their whole surface was practically ornamented by mouldings, and figures of men, gods or variegated vegetal or geometrical patterns carved in low relief.

3. Wooden brackets were fixed on tops of pillars in order to support the architraves or lintels even in stone or brick buildings. One recovered from Sonarang (Dacca Dt.) has been thus described: "It is divided into three sections, the central one of which consists
of a square panel depicting a figure of Vishnu, seated in *yogasana*. The two sections at either end have been cut away at an angle of 45° and the ends have been rolled up."  

4. Niches sometimes of trefoil form or sunken panels flanked by decorative stone pilasters often formed an ornamental feature of temples. Many of these are found at Paharpur. Several pilasters found at Sundarban “exhibit the decorative motifs usually seen on the stelae of contemporary images—*Gajasimha, hamsa*, etc. The bold draughtsmanship and elegant execution speak eloquently for the skill of the artist and for the richness of the buildings to which they belonged.”

B. Sculpture.

I. INTRODUCTION.

The sculpture of ancient Bengal may be studied under the following heads:

1. Image of stone or metal.
2. Terracotta.

Although the oldest specimens of the first category, so far discovered, belong to a period much later than those of the second, still they deserve our attention first as the most important examples of the art of sculpture. Though the decorative designs are mostly associated with images, sometimes they are independent of them and hence deserve a separate treatment.

II. IMAGE.

1. *Pre-Gupta*

Only a very few images of the pre-Gupta period have been discovered in Bengal. These are

1. Head and bust of Bodhisattva in mottled red sandstone discovered in the course of the excavations at Chandraketugarh (24 Parganas Dt.).

2. Red stone torso of a deity (probably Kārtikeya) found in Mahāsthān, the site of the famous ancient city of Puṇḍravardhana.

3-4. Two sandstone images of Śūrya found at Kumārpur and Niyāmatpur (Rajshahi Dt.).

5. Sandstone image of Vishnu found at Hankrail (Maldah Dt.).

6. A colossal head in basalt found at Dinajpur.

The first two have been definitely assigned to the Kusāna period,
i.e., roughly speaking, the first three centuries of the Christian era, as they have all the characteristic traits of the images of the Kushāna period at Sāranāth, Mathurā, Kausāmbī and Śrāvasti (Sahet-Mahet).

Nos. 3-5 show Kushāna affinity in their dress (a long tunic covering the body from neck to knee such as is found in the image of Kushāna Kings), low and flat relief, effort to produce linear effect without any attempt to round the contours, broad and heavy features, etc.

In No. 6 "the shaven skull, the short but wide open eyes and the raised eyebrows with descending curves at the extremities present clear affinities with the heads of the Buddha-Bodhisattva type at Mathurā, while the moustache, the beard and the sinuous bow of the mouth are closely akin to such features in the sculptures of the contemporary Gandhāra School."53

Of course, the affinities do not furnish positive evidence of the date, and the theory that Nos. 2-6 belong to the Kushāna period can only be regarded as tentative. As a matter of fact Nos. 3-5 have been assigned by some to the eighth century A.D.54

No. 5 which is the only complete figure cannot be regarded as artistically of a very high order. It has been described by Kramrisch as follows:

"The four-armed figure, of which the two lower arms, now broken, originally were stretched downward, carries the conch in the upper left, a round object (lotus bud ?) in the upper right, wears a low kiriṭa mukuta (crown), scanty jewellery, peculiar loin cloth (paridāhāna) clinging to the legs and curled towards the bottom with a folded end hanging between the legs. A squat halo, with design incised, surrounds the head."55

It is difficult to decide whether the images were imported from outside.

No. 1, the image of Bodhisattva in mottled red sandstone, the material extensively used in Mathurā and practically otherwise not known to be used in Bengal, and not available in this State or in its neighbourhood, may be reasonably regarded as an importation from Mathurā. As regards the rest, final judgment must be suspended till more positive evidence is available. Generally speaking, however, the images should be regarded as works of local artists, until the contrary is proved by satisfactory evidence. That the artistic traditions of the Kushāna period were not unknown to Eastern