



**Ministry of Culture
Government of Bharat**



The Splendour of Abhaneri



Published by:
**Superintending Archaeologist
Jaipur Circle
Archaeological Survey of India**

Introduction

The village of Abhaneri, located in the Dausa District of eastern Rajasthan, lies about five kilometres from Bandikui and today appears as a quiet town with rural settlement. However, its modest present contrasts sharply with its past. The surviving monumental and sculptural remains at the site reveal that Abhaneri was once an important centre of religious, political, and artistic activity in early medieval India. It is best known for two remarkable monuments, the Harshat Mata Temple and the Chand Baori, which together demonstrate the long-forgotten history of architectural grandeur and religious significance (*District Gazetteer: Dausa*).

While the town was never “lost” as an abandoned settlement but one of the earliest notices as a place of exquisite interest comes from the writings of B.L. Dhama, who described the remains of a large temple and an elaborate stepped water structure, both notable for their scale and craftsmanship. His observations highlight the architectural ambition of the builders and draw attention to the integration of sacred and functional spaces within a single complex. The presence of both a monumental temple and a vast stepwell suggests that Abhaneri was not only a place of worship but also an important centre organized around the relationship between water and communal life (Dhama 1926).

The historical background of Abhaneri remains somewhat uncertain, though it is generally associated with the political developments of early medieval Rajasthan. Following the decline of the Gupta Empire, the region came under the influence of emerging powers, particularly the Gurjara-Pratiharas, who played a significant role in shaping the cultural and architectural landscape of northern India. At the same time, local dynasties such as the Nikumbhas and later the Chahamanas are believed to have exercised control over the area. While precise details of patronage are not fully known, it is likely that these ruling groups contributed to the construction and development of the site during the eighth and ninth centuries CE. Sir Alexander Cunningham in his report mentioned ‘Abaneri’ to be the capital of the ‘Nikumbas’ (Jain 1972, Cunningham 1885).

Both the temple and the *baori* exist as the sole evidence of the prosperity of the town. Due to missing epigraphical evidences to reconstruct the town, the ruins of the temples and remnants of the architecture are emphasised as a lens to look into the history. The surviving remains indicate that Abhaneri supported a complex and layered religious environment. Sculptural fragments and architectural elements point to the presence of multiple traditions, including Saiva, Vaishnava, Sakta and Jain practices. Rather than existing in isolation, these traditions appear to have coexisted within a shared sacred space, reflecting a broader pattern in early medieval India where religious identities often shared spaces and were interconnected (Jain 1972).

The presence of -associated figures such as Vasudeva, Pradyumna, and Samkarshana at Abhaneri is particularly noteworthy due to the relative rarity of worship in temple iconographic programs of this region. While Vaishnava imagery is more commonly encountered in broader forms, the appearance of the Vrishnis reflects a more specific theological strand. This may be understood as a continuation of traditions that gained prominence during the Gupta period, when Vasudeva worship and Vrishni affiliations were more widely represented. Its presence at Abhaneri therefore stands out as both unusual and significant within the regional context.

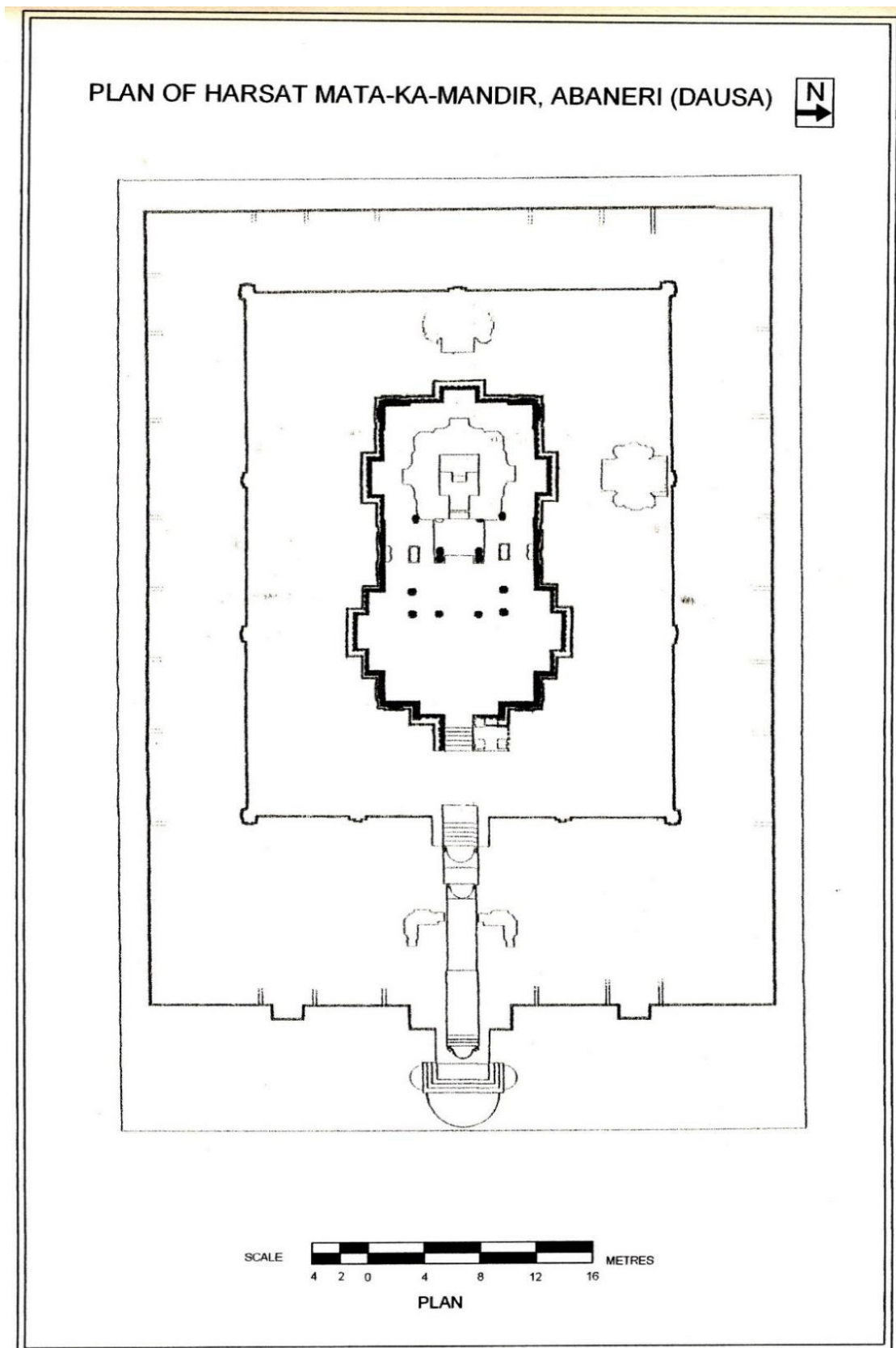


Figure 1 Plan of Harshat Mata Temple

Harshat Mata Temple

The Harshat Mata Temple constitutes the principal architectural monument at Abhaneri and represents a highly developed example of early medieval temple construction in Rajasthan. Although much of the superstructure has not survived, the remaining architectural elements particularly the platforms, base mouldings, and scattered structural fragments allow for a reasonably clear understanding of its original plan and scale. The temple is generally dated to the eighth or early ninth century CE and is associated with the broader artistic developments under the Gurjara-Pratiharas and their contemporaries (Meister and Dhaky 1991).

The temple is oriented eastward and is built upon a series of elevated platforms or *jagati*, which create a stepped and monumental base for the structure. This multi-tiered arrangement not only enhances the visual prominence of the temple but also structures the approach to the sanctum, requiring a gradual ascent that emphasises the ritual movement toward the sacred core. The upper platform appears to have supported the main shrine along with additional structural elements, suggesting that the temple was conceived as part of a more extensive architectural composition rather than as an isolated building (Atherton 1997).

At its core, the temple follows a *sandhara* plan, in which the *garbhagriha* or sanctum is enclosed within a circumambulatory passage. This passage would have allowed devotees to perform *pradakshina* around the central deity, an important aspect of temple worship. Access to the sanctum was likely provided through a sequence of spaces including an *antarala* or vestibule and a *gudhamandapa* or enclosed hall, although these elements are now largely lost or survive only in fragmentary form. The surviving layout indicates a complex and carefully organized spatial structure typical of developed temple architecture of this period.

One of the most striking features of the temple is its elaborate system of base mouldings, known as the *vedibandha*, which forms the architectural foundation of the structure. These mouldings consist of multiple horizontal courses, each with distinct forms such as the *khura*, *kumbha*, *kalasa*, and *kapotapali*. Together, these elements create a layered and rhythmic base that supports the vertical rise of the temple. The surfaces of these mouldings are richly carved with motifs including floral scrolls, animals, and mythical figures, reflecting a high level of craftsmanship and attention to detail. The decorative treatment of the base is not merely ornamental but contributes to the overall articulation of the structure.

Above the base, the walls of the sanctum were organised into projections and recesses, creating a dynamic exterior surface. This articulation, often described as a *tri-anga* plan, divides the wall into central and lateral projections that would have housed sculptural niches. Although many of these sculptures are now displaced, surviving fragments indicate that the temple once possessed a rich sculptural program integrated into its architectural framework. Additional projecting elements, such as *rathikas*, further enhanced the complexity of the exterior design.

The superstructure or *sikhara* of the temple has not survived, but fragments suggest that it may have belonged to the Latina type, characterised by a curvilinear profile rising above the sanctum. The presence of architectural fragments such as miniature shrine motifs and decorative elements indicates that the

upper portion of the temple was as elaborately treated as its base. Despite its loss, the remaining evidence points to a highly developed and visually complex superstructure (Meister and Dhaky 1991).



Figure 2 Harshat Mata Temple

An important aspect of the temple's architectural conception is its probable identification as a *panchayatana* complex. This form involves a central shrine surrounded by four subsidiary shrines placed at the corners of the platform. Although these subsidiary shrines do not survive in complete form, their existence is suggested by architectural remains, including fragmentary shrine bases and a set of *sukanasa* elements of similar size and design. These fragments, now dispersed across the site and in museum collections, display consistent features that indicate their association with smaller shrines accompanying the main structure. Comparison with contemporary temple complexes, particularly those at Osian temples, supports this interpretation, where similar arrangements are clearly preserved. The layered *jagati* concept is thus justified by some scholars as the presence of a five shrine layout at Abhaneri (Reitz 1993).

In its present condition, the temple survives only in a fragmented state. Much of the superstructure has collapsed, and numerous sculptural and architectural elements have been removed or relocated. Some fragments are preserved within the site itself, while others are housed in museums. The sanctum now contains a later installed idol, and parts of the structure have been reconstructed in ways that do not fully reflect the original design. Despite these changes, the surviving remains continue to convey the scale and sophistication of the original monument, making the Harshat Mata Temple one of the most significant examples of early medieval temple architecture in Rajasthan (*District Gazetteer: Dausa*).

While the architectural remains and later associations connect the temple with the worship of the goddess, the sculptural evidence particularly the presence of Vrishni figures has led to alternative

interpretations regarding its original dedication, a question that will be explored further in the discussion of its iconographic program

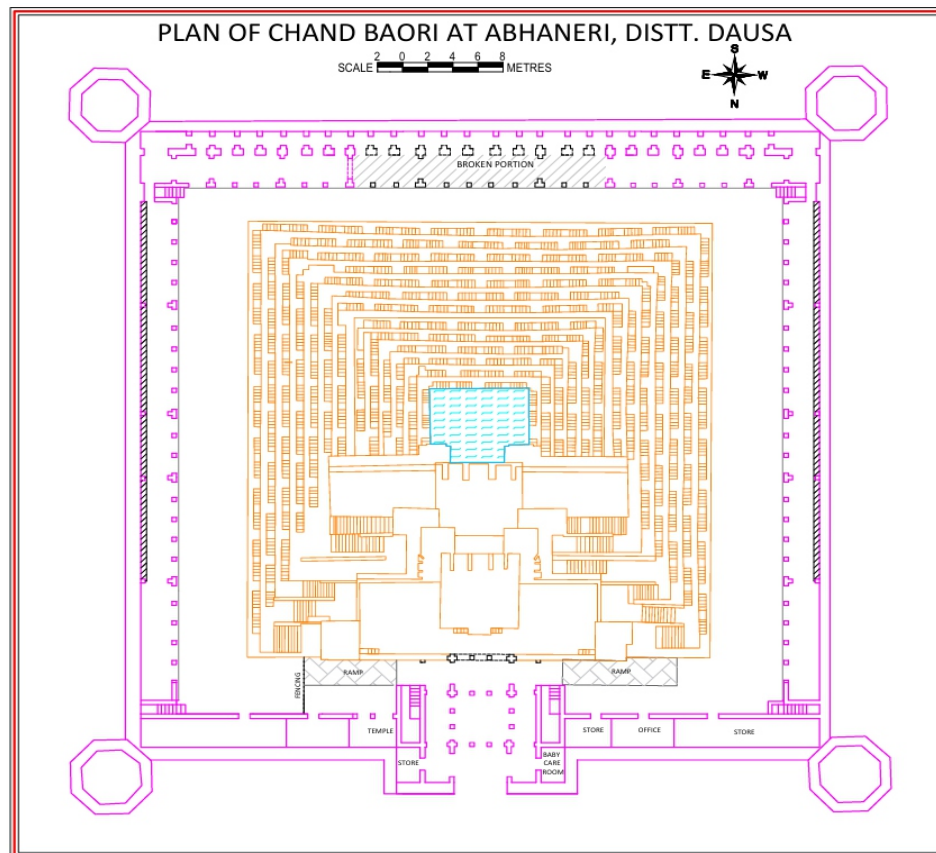


Figure 3 Plan of Chand Baori



Figure 4 Chand Baori

Chand Baori

Chand Baori forms the second major architectural component of the site and stands as one of the most imposing and well-preserved stepwells in India. Located directly adjacent to the Harshat Mata Temple, it is closely integrated into the sacred and functional layout of Abhaneri, suggesting that water management and ritual practice were conceived together within a single architectural framework. The structure is generally dated to the early medieval period, most likely the eighth or ninth century CE, and is associated with the same phase of activity that produced the temple complex (Meister and Dhaky 1991; Dhama 1926).

Architecturally, the *baori* is designed as a large, square excavation descending to a depth of approximately sixty-five feet. Three of its sides are formed by a dense and highly ordered arrangement of steps, laid out in a precise geometric pattern. These steps create a series of receding terraces that draw the eye downward toward the water, producing a strong visual effect based on repetition and symmetry. The strict alignment and uniformity of the steps distinguish Chand Baori from many other stepwells, where the layout may be more varied. Here, the geometry itself becomes the dominant visual and structural principle, organising the entire space into a coherent and controlled form.

The fourth side of the structure is architecturally distinct, consisting of a multi-storeyed pavilion with pillared corridors and projecting balconies. This vertical arrangement contrasts with the horizontal spread of the stepped sides and introduces a built façade that overlooks the well. The pavilion contains a series of chambers and galleries, which would have provided shaded areas for rest and possibly for ritual or social activities. The presence of such architectural spaces indicates that the stepwell functioned not only as a source of water but also as a place of gathering within the settlement (Livingston 2002).

Sculptural elements within this pavilion further reinforce the religious dimension of the structure. Niches at the lower levels contain images of deities such as Ganesa and Durga in her Mahishasuramardini form, indicating that the act of approaching and drawing water was associated with ritual practices. These images also suggest a strong Saiva and Sakta presence at the site, consistent with the broader religious character of Abhaneri. Stylistic features of these sculptures support an early medieval date and align them with the sculptural program of the nearby temple (Meister and Dhaky 1991; Livingston 2002).



Figure 5 Vedibandha present at Chand Baori, probably the remnants of the earlier temple.



Figure 6 Gajalakshmi inside a niche at Chand Baori, possibly a medieval addition.

Over time, the structure appears to have undergone modifications, particularly in the upper levels of the pavilion, where later additions and alterations can be observed. Some of the originally open architectural features have been enclosed, and certain elements reflect stylistic changes from subsequent periods. These interventions indicate that the *baori* remained in use over a long duration and was adapted to changing needs and conditions (Livingston 2002). A closer examination of the architectural articulation of Chand Baori reveals that it incorporates several formal elements typically associated with temple architecture. Features such as *vedibandha* mouldings, niches and sculptural programs. They include representations of dancing figures as well as *devakoshtha* imagery, suggesting an iconographic scheme embedded within the structure's architectural framework. Particularly notable are depictions of Siva, accompanied by Gauri, along with images of Durga, indicating a strong Saiva-Sakta devotional presence at the site.



Figure 7 Tapasvini Parvati affixed in Chand Baori, a medieval addition

This combination of architectural articulation and sculptural programming suggests that the stepwell may have initially incorporated a pronounced ritual dimension, in which water access was closely interwoven with sacred visuality. The three-sided stepped arrangement, together with the articulated fourth side, may be read as creating a spatial hierarchy in which movement through the structure was framed by religious imagery and temple-like architectural ordering. However, this ritual dimension does not appear to have remained dominant over time. In its later phases, the clearly ritual function of the structure was diminished and gradually lost, while the architectural focus shifted toward practical use and social utility. The fourth side, which may earlier have carried a more sacred emphasis, was subsequently transformed into an expanded pavilion with pillared halls and modified upper levels, reflecting later architectural interventions.

The Temple Complex and Associated Structure

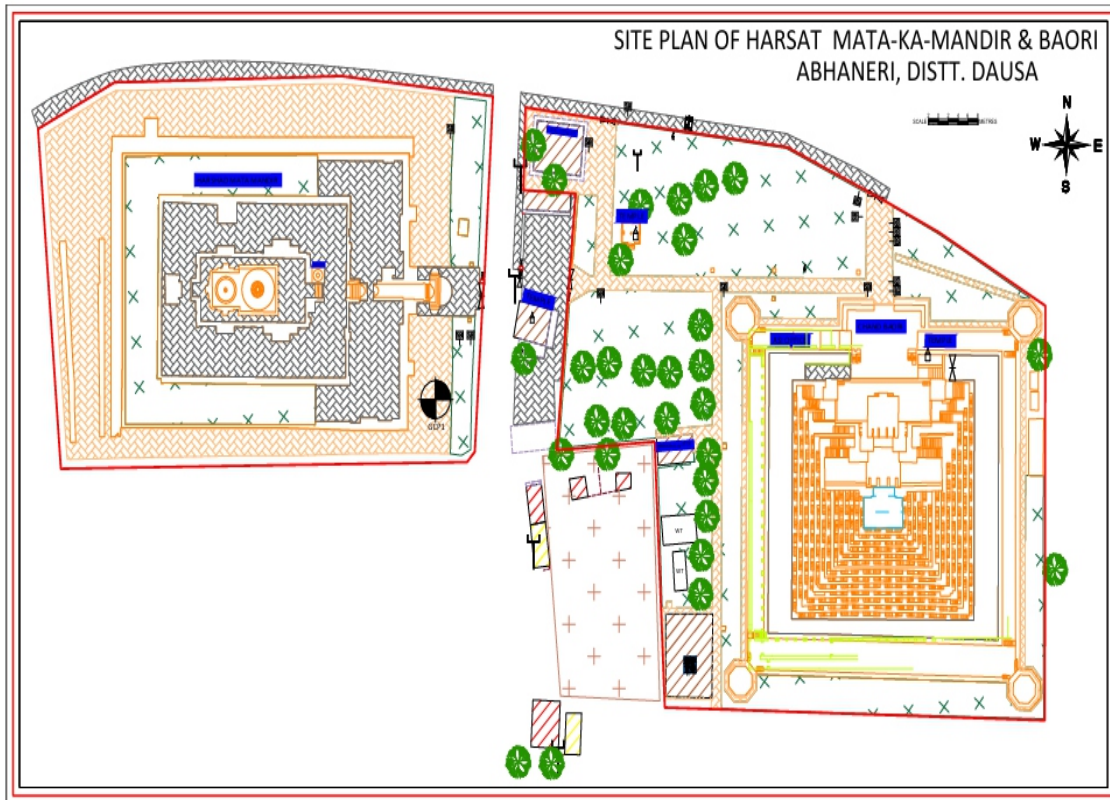


Figure 8 Site plan of the Abhaneri complex

The remains at Abhaneri indicate that the Harshat Mata Temple and the Chand Baori were not isolated monuments but formed part of a larger and more complex sacred landscape. Although much of this extended complex has not survived in a complete architectural form, the presence of scattered structural fragments, subsidiary shrines, and reused religious spaces suggests that the site once functioned as a densely organized centre of worship. The spatial proximity of the temple and the stepwell points to a deliberate integration of religious and functional architecture, where ritual practices and daily activities were closely linked (*District Gazetteer: Dausa*; Meister and Dhaky 1991).

One of the most significant features of this broader complex is the presence of remains associated with Jain worship, now largely incorporated into later Hindu structures. A small shrine near the main temple, presently used as a Hanuman temple, houses a Jina image which is being worshipped as Hanuman, the chief idol of the temple. Evidence for this earlier phase survives in the form of sculptural fragments identified with Tirthankaras, including a figure of Mahavira that has been modified through later devotional practices. The application of *sindura* and the reinterpretation of the image within a Hindu context reflect a process of religious transformation, where earlier sacred spaces were adapted to new forms of worship while retaining elements of their original identity

In addition to this, references to temples dedicated to Adinatha and Mahavira suggest that Abhaneri once supported an active Jain community, likely composed of patrons engaged in trade and local administration (Jain 1972).



Figure 9 The modern Hanuman Temple which houses a Jain idol.

The site is also characterised by a large number of loose architectural and sculptural fragments, many of which have been collected and placed within the vicinity of the stepwell. These include carved pillars, doorframes, lintels, and sculptural panels that once formed part of the temple and its associated structures. Their current dislocated condition makes precise reconstruction difficult, but their stylistic consistency indicates that they belonged to a unified and highly elaborate architectural scheme. Some fragments have also been removed to museums, further dispersing the material remains of the complex (*District Gazetteer: Dausa*).

In comparison to other early medieval temple centres in Rajasthan, particularly the Osian temples, Abhaneri presents both similarities and distinctions. Like Osian, it appears to have supported multiple shrines and a diverse religious environment. However, Abhaneri is distinguished by the presence of a large stepwell as an integral part of the complex, as well as by the fragmentary survival of its structures. While the temples at Osian remain relatively intact and clearly organised, the remains at Abhaneri require reconstruction through scattered evidence, offering a more complex and layered understanding of the site.

In its present condition, the complex reflects both continuity and change. Like the Vaishnava temple turned into the Harshat Mata Temple and the Siva or Siva-Sakti temple attached to the *baori* is now lost, same goes for the Jain complexes. While many of its original structures have been lost or altered, the continued use of certain spaces for worship and the preservation of sculptural fragments maintain its cultural significance.

Art and Iconography

The sculptural and artistic repository at Abhaneri constitutes one of the most significant bodies of early medieval stone carving in Rajasthan, offering insight into the aesthetic, religious, and socio-cultural dimensions of the region. However, most sculptures are now found detached from their original architectural contexts, having been displaced from temples and associated structures over time. As a result, interpretation depends not only on architectural placement but also on iconographic reading and stylistic analysis. The surviving fragments, whether in situ or preserved in museum collections, indicate a well-developed sculptural tradition in which architecture and imagery functioned as an integrated system rather than independent elements (Meister and Dhaky 1991).

The Chand Baori preserves an important group of sculptural remains associated with Sakta and Saiva traditions. These include representations of Gaja-Lakshmi, *tapasvini* forms of Parvati, and several depictions of Durga, including Mahishasuramardini. The figures are placed within niches and structural recesses, indicating planned placement within the architectural scheme rather than random insertion. Images of Siva in Bhairava form are also present. The association of Bhairava Siva with Durga imagery indicates a Saiva–Sakta religious presence at the site. The arrangement of sculptures within the stepwell suggests that movement through the structure involved visual engagement with religious imagery. The Chand Baori thus reflects a close relationship between architectural space and religious representation in the early medieval period (Meister and Dhaky 1991; Jain 1972).

The Harshat Mata Temple complex shows a different set of religious associations. While the temple is generally identified with Harshat Mata as a form of Durga, the sculptural remains include Vaishnava elements. These include representations of Vasudeva, Samkarshana, and Pradyumna in prominent niches, along with *avatara*-related imagery. These figures suggest the presence of a Pancharatra Sattvata or Vrishni-linked Vaishnava tradition. The sculptures occur within mouldings and architectural members, indicating that they formed part of the original decorative programme. This suggests that the temple incorporated both Vaishnava and Sakta elements within a shared religious environment (Jain 1972).

The Chand Baori and Harshat Mata Temple together represent two related but distinct religious expressions at Abhaneri. The stepwell reflects Saiva–Sakta imagery, while the temple complex shows a stronger Vaishnava association. This indicates the presence of multiple religious traditions within the same site and suggests coexistence rather than strict separation of sectarian identities during the early medieval period.

The sculptural remains at Abhaneri also reflect a transitional phase between late Gupta and early medieval styles. The figures show continuity of Gupta idioms in terms of proportion, modelling, and clarity of form. At the same time, there is increased emphasis on ornamentation and decorative detail. Hair is often shown in stylised curls or arranged forms, and jewellery is rendered in greater detail. These features indicate a shift toward more decorative and regional styles associated with the early medieval period.

A notable feature of the sculpture at Abhaneri is the use of simplified pedestal forms. Instead of the *padma* base seen in earlier sculpture, many figures are placed on short and plain pedestals. This change

suggests a shift in sculptural presentation, with greater emphasis on clarity and stability of form. The simplified bases are consistent with broader early medieval developments in regional sculpture.

The sculptural programme also includes a range of courtly and secular figures. Female figures are shown in standing or graceful postures, engaged in music, dance, or relaxed movement. These figures are characterised by detailed ornamentation and refined execution (Atherton 1995). *Mithuna* figures depicting couples in close association are also present. These have often been identified as royal or courtly couples; however, as noted by Cynthia Packert, such figures allow for multiple interpretations due to their idealised and non-specific nature. Their placement within temple architecture suggests that they were representing the divine imagery rather than *mithuna* or royal couples; an attempt to identify the deities as well as to ascertain their divine nature is being made in this work and a forthcoming book.

The sculptural evidence from Abhaneri shows overlapping categories of imagery, where religious figures, courtly representations, and decorative motifs appear within the same architectural framework. The presence of Saiva, Sakta, and Vaishnava elements together indicates a shared religious environment. The remains suggest that architecture and sculpture functioned as a unified visual system in both the stepwell and temple contexts, reflecting the complexity of early medieval religious and artistic expression.

Sculptures from the Harshat Mata Temple



Figure 10

The hair of the figure is matted, coiled and left open. There is a *paduka* pair depicted beneath the pedestal of the figure. The figure is evidently a divinity with strong Vaishnava affiliation, possibly Vasudeva, however due to the lack of *ayudhas* and damage, the identification is difficult. On both sides of the deity rise curling vegetal forms resembling a tree branch, the purpose of this motif can be to frame the central figure as well as act as a halo. The central figure is flanked by human figures which are severely damaged, but in all probabilities were attending figures.

1. A deity, possibly Vasudeva

The niche affixed in the *mandapa* of the temple in the *bhitti* is formed by *rukha* pilasters imitating the temple columns. The niche houses a central male figure seated over a pedestal in a yogic pose resembling *padmasana*. While the arms and face of the figure is damaged, he seems to have been holding a bowl or a slab in his left hand. The reminiscence of *mukuta* perhaps a *kiritamukuta* is visible; additionally, he is adorned with a *muktavali*, *ratnayajnopavita*, and a *ratnamala*.

2. Siva



Figure 11

The figure dons a loin cloth with triangular leaf like belt. He is ornamented with *hara*, *ratnayajnopavita*, *keyura*, *hastavalaya*, *ratnamala* and *nupura*. The figure on the basis of the attributes can be identified as Bhagavana Siva. The divine nature of the deity is emphasised by the presence of *maladhari gandharvas* flanking the figure. Below the *gandharvas*, the Saivite imagery continues as skeletal figures are depicted, the figures don a *kaupina* and *yajnopavita*. The attributes held in their hands are broken and the facial features are also damaged, however the presence of *jatamukuta* is evident. The figures are likely *gana* or *preta* attendants.

3. A possibly Vrishni couple



Figure 12

The niche affixed on the temple wall is formed by *rukha* pilasters devised imitating the temple columns, the niche is capped by a *chaitya gavaksha* motif with similar pilasters in the centre. The niche consists of a couple depiction, the male stands in *tribhanga mudra* with his left hand in *alingana* and the right hand holding an object near his chest which is rendered broken. The female figure stands in *padavastika mudra*, her left hand holds the arm of the male figure and her right hand is resting on the thigh of the male figure. Both figures have suffered damage with broken visage and partial body, though they seem to be ornamented well and draped with *antariya*. The vegetal image surrounds the couple as well but not as symmetric or composite as the other. The figures are *mithuna* figures and in all probability would have formed a Vrishni couple.

4. Vishnu (Vasudeva)



Figure 13

The niche affixed on the temple *jangha* is formed by pilasters devised imitating the temple columns; the niche is capped by a *chaitya gavaksha* motif with similar pilasters in the centre. The niche houses a central male figure in a mutilated state, with broken natural hands and visage. The figure is seated in *sukhasana* over a subsidiary anthropomorphic mount. The figure holds a *gada* in his upper right hand, and a *chakra* in his upper left hand.

While the facial features are eroded with much damage to the crown, the hairdo of the figure seems to be in a matted coiled long lock held together by a *mukuta*, perhaps a *kiritamukuta*. The figure is donning a *yajnopvita* and a *ratnamala*, beautified *keyuras*, *katisutra* and *muktavali*. The divine figure although can be subsumed under Vishnu, the figure may specifically represent Vasudeva aspect, due to the temple's affiliation to the Vrishnis. The deity is accompanied by his *vahana*, Garuda. The divine nature of the deity is emphasised by the presence of the *maladhari gandharvas* flanking him on the top section of the niche, the left figure has suffered more damage.

The deity is moreover flanked by standing figures of females holding *padmas* which is now rendered broken. They are elaborately ornamented and represent attending figures. Two male figures are seated in *lalitasana* over a pedestal. The figures are mutilated, the figure on right holds a circular object as understood by the silhouette, from that it can be inferred that the figures are the *ayudhapurushas* of the deity, Chakrapurusha and Sankhapurusha.



Figure 14

5. A Devi, possibly Sarasvati

The niche affixed on the temple *bhitti* is formed by *rukha* pilasters devised imitating the temple columns, the niche is capped by a *chaitya gavalaksha* motif with similar pilasters in the centre. It presents a central female figure seated in *lalitasana* over a pedestal; the figure is vastly damaged with broken arms and mutilated face. The figure is adorned with an elaborate coiffure, *kundalas*, *hara*, *keyura*, *nupura* and *antariya*. Additionally, a drapery is going around her body.

In her broken right hand is a round object with scales like pattern on it, the object is broken and from the silhouette and the position of her left hand, it appears to be a *vina*. The figure is probably representing a divine imagery of Sarasvati. The deity is flanked by subsidiary figures; on the left a male figure stands in *padavastika mudra* bent at his waist towards the deity, and playing on a flute. On the right side a female figure is depicted in a pose resembling a singing stance but with her face being mutilated it cannot be confirmed. Above the figures vegetal/floral motifs are present as if projecting an emphasis on the subsidiary figures as well as framing the central divinity.



Figure 15

6. A Deva

The niche affixed on the temple *bhitti* is formed by *rukha* pilasters devised imitating the temple columns. It is capped by a *chaitya gavalaksha* motif with similar pilasters in the centre. The composition inside is severely mutilated with none of the figures depicted surviving without weathering and damage. The central position is held by a male figure seated in a partial *virasana* over a pedestal, while it does appear to be a warrior stance but rather a relaxed one with the right leg of the figure bent resembling a fighting stance while the left leg is placed on the pedestal folded.

The left arm of the figure seems to be resting on the left leg while the right arm is broken off. The figure dons a *muktavali*, *ratnayajnopavita*, *keyura*, *mekhala*, and a loin cloth. The figure doesn't hold any *ayudha* or if he did, they are broken off, but the presence of a decorated *yajnopavita* indicates towards a divine affiliation.

Flanking the figure at the bottom are seated female figures, the one on left holds the leg of the central figure, and the one on right holds a *mala*. While both the figures are damaged, they are subsidiary to the male figure and are seated over a pedestal, and the attributes held by them further confirm the divine nature of the male figure. Apart from them there are female figure standing flanking the deity, again the figures are damaged and their features are lost. All the females appear to be attending figures to the deity. The vegetal motif was present in this niche as well, as suggested by the leftover silhouette.



Figure 16

7. Pradyumna

The niche affixed on the temple *jangha* is formed by pilasters devised imitating the temple columns; the niche is capped by a *chaitya gavaksha* motif with floral decorations. The composition of the niche is mutilated with prominent damage to the faces of the figures and weathered attributes. The central space is occupied by a male figure seated in *lalitasana* over a *makara* pedestal, while the arms of the figure are broken, he seems to be holding a curved stick like object in his left hand, which suggests it's probably an *ayudha*, a *dhanusha*.

The attribute held in the right hand is broken as well, though it was holding a long stick/staff like object which went diagonally across the chest of the figure towards the *dhanusha*; which suggests that it might be a *bana*. The face of the figure is damaged but tight curled locks are visible and reminisce of a *mukuta* is present. The figure is ornamented and draped, a *yajnopavita* is missing, and otherwise all attributes are of divine nature. The identification of the *ayudhas* if correct is associated with Kamadeva, whose reincarnation or manifestation was the Vrishni vira, Pradyumna; the *makara* further confirms this identification. The overall Vrishni and Vaishnava theme of the temple suggests that the figure is of Pradyumna rather than Kamadeva.

The figure is flanked by standing female figures holding an object in her left hand and the one on the right seems to have been holding a *mala*, as suggested by the floral band next to her. These attributes also signify the divine nature of the central figure. Lastly, the seated figures flanking the deity are atop a pedestal, both are similarly crafted females, while the attributes held by the figure on right are broken, the figure on the left seems to be holding a long stick in her right hand, it might be a *bana* or another *ayudha*. The figures can be the consort of the deity, namely Rukmavati and Mayavati, as they are seated atop a pedestal and given more importance in the compositions as opposed to the attending figure standing at the back.



Figure 17

8. A possible Divine Couple

The niche affixed on the temple *bhitti* is formed by *rukha* pilasters devised imitating the temple columns. The niche is capped by a *chaitya gavaksha* motif with similar pilasters in the centre. The composition inside the niche while elaborate is now damaged with all the figures having broken visage and attributes. A couple makes the central element of the narrative while the male figure is seated in *lalitasana* over a pedestal, his one arm is going around the female figure in an *alingana* like gesture though it doesn't hold the female but rather was holding an object which is now broken; while his other arm is broken. The female is seated in a relaxed pose on the male's lap, with her left leg bent and the right leg dropped freely.

She was holding her own wrist with her left hand while her right hand was placed near her face. They are both ornamented in the typical style of the temple. They are flanked by standing female figures which are now equally if not more damaged, and therefore can't be identified.

The flanking figures which usually appear as attending figures suggests that the couple seated are divine beings and possibly a Vrishni couple.



Figure 18

9. A Deva

The niche affixed on the temple *bhitti* is formed by *rukha* pilasters devised imitating the temple columns, and it is capped by a *chaitya gavaksha* motif with similar pilasters in the centre. The niche consists of damaged figures, a central prominent figure flanked by subsidiary figures. The central figure is in a stance likely resembling *atibhanga mudra*, or in a dancing pose, although it is difficult to confirm it due to broken arms and legs of the figure. The figure seems to be of a male but has a long *veni* which complicates the identification. There are branches stemming out of the figure or it seems as if it is, with either fruit bunch or flower at the end of them.

The flanking figures are also in a dynamic stance, the one on the left holds a *damaru* which suggests it is a musician and one on the right has his hands in a singing pose. Both of these figures then supports the central dancing figure. Adding another element to the niche is a *yajnakunda* carved to the left of the figure, which is not common in dancing and musical themes and also rarely depicted with a vegetal imagery.

While the identification remains unknown the figure seems to be a dancing divinity, owing to the flanking attendants and the vegetal sprouting from its back.



Figure 19

10. Samkarshana

The niche affixed on the upper frieze of the *jangha* of the temple is formed by *chaitya gavaksha* elaborately designed with floral motifs. The niche comprises of an elaborate narrative, though it is damaged with broken faces of the figures. It showcases a central male figure seated in *lalitasana* over a pedestal. The figure is four armed, with his upper left hand holding a *hala*, upper right hand holding a *musala*, his natural left hand was embracing a figure; probably a female, and/or his consort although uncertain. The natural right hand of the figure is damaged.

The figure has his hair tied in a decorative coiffure, and he is ornamented with *hara*, *ratnayajnopavita*, *ratanamala*, *mekhala*, *hastavalaya*, *angada*, *nupura*. There are snake heads flanking the figure which are the representations of Sesha and a common motif in the Vaishnava imagery associated with Vishnu and Balarama. On the basis of his attributes the figure can be identified as Samkarshana/ Balarama and not Vishnu, and in that case the attribute held by him in the natural right hand can be identified as a *mayapatra*/ wine vessel.

The deity is flanked by female figures, the figure on the right holds a *vyajana* (fan), and the left figure holds a globular pot as evident by the silhouette, which further confirms that the deity held a vessel in his missing hand.

While the female embraced by the figure is broken, she can be identified as Revati, although her presentation is not any different from the other attending figures and therefore is left as uncertain.



Figure 20

11. Deva, possibly a Vrishni

The niche affixed on the temple *jangha* is formed by *rukha* pilasters devised imitating the temple columns. It is capped by a *chaitya gavaksha* motif with similar pilasters in the centre. The niche consists of damaged figures, a central prominent figure flanked by subsidiary figures. The prominent figure is of a male seated in *lalitasana* over a pedestal. The figure is ornamented in the typical fashion of the temple imagery, while his hands are broken, still it seems as if he was holding an instrument with both his hands.

The figure is flanked by attending figures, the figure on the right is damaged and had her right hand raised, while her left hand was kept near her chest. The figure standing on the left is damaged as well, she seems to be holding a vessel or a *manjira* like object in her hand.

If the object held by the attendant is a *manjira*, the other attendant can be in a singing pose and confirms the central figure holding a *vina* like musical instrument; engaged in a musical act. Although the identification remains inferential, the central figure seems to be a divine entity based on the nature of his stance and being flocked by attending figures. He can be a Vrishni vira. The niche also has foliage or vegetal imagery.



Figure 21

12. Divine Couple, possibly Vrishni

The niche affixed on the *adhishtana* of the temple, is carved out of *rukha* pilasters and is capped by a *chaitya-gavaksha* motif. The composition of the niche consists of a primary male figure who is depicted seated on a pedestal in *lalitasana*. The figure's left hand is caressing the face of the female figure standing to his left and his right hand is holding a *padma*. The hairdo of the figure is in coiffure made of coiled matted hair, he is donning large *valaya-kundalas* and his facial expressions seem to present a serene look. He is additionally wearing *muktavali*, *moti-keyura*, *hasta-valaya*, and a loin cloth. A subsidiary female figure is seated in his lap with her broken left hand raised but the attribute in it is missing.

The female standing to his left is in *padavastika mudra*, she is oriented towards left but her face is turned towards the male figure. Her left hand holds an unidentified object and her right hand is resting on the male's thigh. The figure has coiffure with *ratana* or *pushpa* embedded, she wears similar *kundalas*, *lambika*, *muktavali*, *mekhala*, *pada-valaya* and *antariya*. There are foliage framing these figures.

Flanking the scene are more subsidiary female figure, the one standing on the left side holds a *vyajana* and one on the right holds the drapery from one hand and her other hand is not visible. These two figures and the one seated on the male figure's lap seems to be subsidiary to the other female figure, due to the proportion difference as well as the emphasis by the male figure which is solely on this female. On the basis of this framing by foliage, the pedestal and the proportions it seems as if they are a divine couple surrounded by attending figures.



Figure 22

13. Divine Couple, probably Vrishni

The niche affixed on the *adhishtana* of the temple, is carved out of *rukha* pilasters and is capped by a *chaitya-gavaksha* motif. The niche showcases an elaborate sensual imagery wherein the prominent figures are engaged in an amorous act. The male figure is seated in *lalitasana* over a pedestal with his leg resting on a *padma*, the female is seated on the lap of the male figure with her one leg kept on a *padma*, both are in *alingana*, the free hand of the male is cupping the breast of the female while her free hand holds her drapery.

Both of the figures are elaborately ornamented; the male has a coiffure with tied coiled matted hair, *valaya-kundalas*, *muktavali*, *keyura*, *hasta-valaya*, *mekhala*, and a loin cloth. The female also dons an elaborate hairdo with *ratna* and *pushpa* embellishments, *valaya-kundalas*, *muktavali*, *lambika*, *mekhala*, *antariya*, and *nupura*.

The drapery of the female figure which she holds, at the base the same is being snatched by a dwarf female figure, identified as female owing to her *veni* and clothing which includes an upper garment as well

which is not present in any other female. By her other hand the dwarf holds a basket, the purpose of which remains unknown.

Flanking the figures are female attending figures, the one on left holds a *chauri* in her right hand and a *padma* in her left hand. The female figure depicted on right side, has her right hand in a *mudra* akin to *jnana mudra* and her left hand is holding a branch or a *padma*. There are foliage around the figure inside the niche.

The figure seems to be representing a divinity with his divine consort as evident by the presence of *padmasna* as leg pedestals, as well as the proportions of the central figure. The couple might be a Vrishni couple.



Figure 23

14. Divine Couple, possibly Vrishni

The niche affixed on the *adhishtana* of the temple, is carved out of *rukha* pilasters and is capped by a *chaitya-gavaksha* motif. The niche comprises of a narrative in which the prominent figures seems to be the couple positioned in the centre. The male figure sits in a *lalitasana* over a pedestal and the female figure sits on his lap, with her one hand holding a *padma* bud and the other hand resting on the male figure's foot.

The male figure is holding her face up by supporting her chin with his one hand and his other hand holds the top of her head. While the expressions of both the figures being cheerful suggest that he is either looking at her with adoration or it can be the act of applying vermillion on her head. The ornamentation of the figures is similar to the other such figures, although the hair coiffure differs, the female lacks the *ratana/pushpa* embellishments and has a simple low tied bun and the male has a hairdo akin to *pingalorddhakesa*.

There are attending figures flanking the couple, on left is a male *chauri* bearer and on right a female *chauri* bearer is present. Moreover, at the base a potbellied female dwarf is present who holds a branch like object with her left hand and her right hand is extending towards the couple holding a *padma* bud or a *ratna*. The foliage covers the upper profile of the niche arranged as a band, giving it an imagery of figures seated under a tree or in a forest. The prominent couple here seems to be a divine couple, possibly Vrishni, engaged in an affectionate act.



Figure 24

15. Divine Couple, possibly Vrishni

The niche affixed on the *adhishtana* of the temple, is carved out of *rukha* pilasters and is capped by a *chaitya-gavaksha* motif. The niche contains yet another complex imagery, the similar pattern follows with a couple occupying the central space with prominent proportions. The male figure is seated in *lalitasana* over a pedestal with his leg resting on a *padma* pedestal whereas the female figure is seated akin on his lap.

While the attributes in the hands of the male figure are missing now the female figure rests her right hand on the male's thigh and other hand holds her drapery. She is looking towards the male figure in an adoring way, while the male figure's eyes are fixated on the arm of the female, seems like he could be holding her arm with his left hand. The figures are ornamented in the similar manner as other figures of such type.

The figures are flanked by male figures on the upper side, the figure on the right holds a sword and a shield, and the one on the left is damaged with no surviving attributes. On the lower register the couple is flanked by a female attendant on the right holding a rope or a *mala*. On the left side a bearded male figure with long coiled locks stands holding a *musala* or a *danda*. There is floral imagery on top framing the couple.

The couple is a divine nature character emphasised by the presence of the lotus pedestals, but the figure on the lower left section, in case it is an *ayudhapurusha*, can be suggesting that the couple is Balarama with his consort Revati.



Figure 25

16. Samba or Aniruddha

The niche affixed on the *adhishtana* of the temple, is carved out of *rukha* pilasters and is capped by a *chaitya-gavaksha* motif. The niche is relatively less saturated than the other such niches and the imagery here looks more linear. There is a male figure in *pratyaldha mudra*, holding a sword in his right hand and his left hand is making some peculiar *mudra*. The figure is crossing over a subsidiary figure who is kneeling at his feet. While the gender of the kneeling figure is not certain, it seems to be a female owing to her lower garment. The male figure is looking down at the figure.

The male figure is ornamented with an elaborate coiffure, *valaya-kundalas*, *muktavali*, *hasta-valaya*, a *mekhala* to which a *katari* is tied, loin cloth and he dons boots. The footwear is what complicates the imagery, as it is a symbol associated with Surya, although no other element of Surya imagery is present in which case this can be associated with heroic or warrior traits. The martial hero is the identity which can be given to the figure but his loin cloth does not fit in it. The nature of the figure is therefore complex. Fitting in the Vrishni vira or Vaishnava pantheon, the figure can be identified as Samba, who was a devout Surya worshipper and was alienated from the Vrishni clan.

The figure is flanked by female figures, on the left a female as prominent in proportion as him stands in a *padavastika mudra* holding his arm; as if engaged in an act of holding him back or stopping him. The figure on the other side is more damaged with broken face and arms, so her role in this narrative remains unknown. Although the way her hands are placed either she is revering him or pleading him; the later will suit better with the other female holding him. The exact identification of this narrative remains unknown but the figure may be of Samba with his wives. Though, sword is generally associated with Aniruddha in Vrishni imagery but not the boots.



Figure 26

17. Divine Couple, possibly Vrishni

The niche affixed on the *adhishtana* of the temple, is carved out of *rukha* pilasters and is capped by a *chaitya-gavaksha* motif. The niche consists of two prominent figures seated in *lalitasana* over a pedestal. The male figure seated on the left pedestal has kept his left hand on his thigh while his right hand holds a *padma*. The female figure seated on the right pedestal holds a *padma* in her left hand and her right hand is grabbing the arm of the male figure emphasising their nature of courtship.

Both figures have downward looking eyes and are sitting stern. The ornamentation and stylisation of the figures resemble the ongoing trope of the temple artistic scheme. Both the figures are flanked by floral vegetative sprouts, which frame them as well as present a forest scenic location, it can also be suggestive of divine presence.

On the left a subsidiary figure is present holding a *khetaka* in his left hand and his right hand is broken. The figure depicted on the right side, is damaged and is holding an object which goes on his shoulder and drop down in a diamond shape. The object is not drapery because it's not proportioned that way, and is perhaps a garland, but unsure why it would be held like that.

Overall, the imagery seems to be of a divine couple, probably seated in a court surrounded by protecting attendants and the couple might be Vrishni.



Figure 27

18. Divine Couple probably Kamadeva/ Pradyumna

The niche affixed on the *adhishtana* of the temple, is carved out of *rukha* pilasters and is capped by a *chaitya-gavaksha* motif. The composition of the niche presents a vivid and dynamic scene, although the niche is partially damaged and weathered, the elements present are probably the finest stylization of the temple. The central space is occupied by a male figure who sits in *lalitasana* over a pedestal, he is holding a *padma* in his right hand and his left hand is in *alingana*.

The said female in *alingana* is also seated on a pedestal in a much more relaxed stance with her one leg folded over like in *lalitasana* while her other leg is placed up on the pedestal bent which supports her left arm. The female is leaning towards the male figure while playing a *vina*. The pedestal on which she sits has an oblong object placed underneath it, which is probably a lotus bud although not confirmed but there must be a reason to depict it. The figures are ornamented and stylised in the typical manner of the temple's art repository, evidently this depiction showcases the male wearing a *yajnopavita* unlike the other figures of such nature. This suggests the figure divine and by association the female figure is also the same. The figures have vegetal sprouting framing them which have visible mango bunch, a symbol associated with Kamadeva, especially the mango blossom which is specifically revered as a symbol of fertility and passion.

Kamadeva is often depicted holding a bow made of sugarcane and five arrows, tipped with a mango flower, representing the power to induce passionate desire. On the basis of this the figures can be identified as Kamadeva and Rati or in a Vaishnava or more specifically Vrishni context of Pradyumna and Mayavati.

There are many subsidiary figures surrounding the divine couple, a seated flute player depicted at the base between the pedestals of the two figures. On the left a male figure stands holding a *khetaka* and *khatvanga*, probably a martial attendant stationed for protection. Above him a figure holding a *damaru* is depicted and on the right a mutilated figure is present. The musical imagery is constant with the depiction of Kama and the martial figure indicates the royal nature of the divine figures.



Figure 28

19. A Deva, probably Vrishni

The niche affixed on the *adhishtana* of the temple, is carved out of *rukha* pilasters and is capped by a *chaitya-gavaksha* motif. The niche depicts yet another musical composition, with a central authority figure. The figure sits in a *lalitasana* over a pedestal, the stance of the figure showcases pious and grandeur, he holds unidentified object in both his hands, one seems like a *padma* bud but is unclear. The figure is ornamented in the typical fashion of the temple sculptures. There is vegetal sprouting from his back, framing the figure as a halo.

Flanking the figure are female figures in dancing posed atop a *padma*, beneath them are musicians placed; one on right plays a *dholak* and one on left plays a flute. Musicians are depicted in the upper section of the niche as well, one playing *manjira* survives in the right corner followed by a singer perhaps. On the left section a broken *manjira* player is there followed by a *damaru* player.

The niche depicts a divine figure seated to enjoy the performance of the musical and dancing figures around him, the niche as well merges the divine and royal element.



Figure 29

20. Divine Couple, possibly Vrishni

The niche affixed on the *adhishtana* of the temple, is carved out of *rukha* pilasters and is capped by a *chaitya-gavaksha* motif. The niche consists of an elaborate and intrinsic composition, wherein the central space is occupied by a couple seated over a pedestal. The male figure is seated in *lalitasana*, with his leg resting on a *padma*. He is holding a *padma* in his right hand and his left hand is placed below the chin of the female figure in an act of adoration, his eyes are fixated on her.

The female in turn is seated in a relaxed cross-legged posture holding with her one hand resting over the head of a subsidiary figure and her other hand is in *alingana*. Both the figures are ornamented and stylised in the typical fashion of the temple repository with only exception that the male figure dons a *yajnopavita*. The couple is probably divine.

The figures are surrounded by attending figures including a dancing female *gana* over which the hand of the female deity rests, on the bottom left corner a seated flute player is carved, above which a male figure holding a sword is present and behind it a female attending figure holding a *vyajana* is stationed who also holds a *padma*. Above her a *maladhari gandharva* is present highlighting the divine nature of the central figures. On the right section a female *vina* player is present, above her a female *chauri* bearer is stationed who also holds a *mala* like object with a round and diamond-shaped end tassels.

The niche presents a musically heavy narrative amidst which the divine couple sits in an amorous gesture, while the missing attributes hinders the identification, the couple are probably a part of the Vrishni/ Vaishnava pantheon.



Figure 30

21. Divine Couple

The niche affixed on the *adhishtana* of the temple, is carved out of *rukha* pilasters and is capped by a *chaitya-gavaksha* motif. The niche comprises of a unique nature, with all the figures present including the central prominent figures and the flanking subsidiary figures looking towards the left.

The central couple, with the male seated on a pedestal in a pose of ease in which the leg let down usually is placed on a lotus pedestal. He holds a *padma* in his right hand and his left hand is resting on his thigh. The figure is styled in a similar manner as the other figure in such niches with an addition of a *yajnopavita*, which suggests a divine attribute. The female figure is seated on a pedestal as well in a relaxed pose with bent knees. She has her left hand let loose in a *mudra* and her right hand is placed below her chin with her index finger placed on her chin, showcasing an expression of amusement or suspicion more curious than her counterpart who has a pleasant expression on his face.

The figures are flanked by a male figure holding a *vina* like musical instrument on the left side and a female holding a *padma* or a drapery in her left hand and her right hand is raised up as if looking at something. The foliage imagery is present over the figures.

The divine couple with attendants are all looking over as if looking at the last niche, which is one of a kind of representation at the temple wall. Either they are playing music for the later niche or stooped their act to glance in the other niche is as unclear as the identification of the divinities present.

22. Divine Couple, possibly Vrishni



Figure 31

The niche affixed on the *adhishtana* of the temple, is carved out of *rukha* pilasters and is capped by a *chaitya-gavaksha* motif. The niche represents a similar musical element with royal divine essence. The composition includes a prominent male figure seated in *lalitasana* over a pedestal and the imagery plays around him. He is looking towards a female figure who like him is seated in *lalitasana* on his lap partially. The female is engaged in an act of playing the *vina*. These two figures are prominent as depicted by their proportions and space. Behind them a foliage scroll moves as if it is framing them. The male holds a *padma* in one hand and with his other hand he is grabbing a female figure who appears to be a subsidiary figure; probably an attendant as she is holding a *vyajana* in her right hand.

Behind the attendant figure a mutilated male figure stands holding a sword. Additionally, a subsidiary male figure is depicted at the bottom right section who is stepping on the pedestal but is in a dynamic stance of either climbing or dancing.

While the prominent figures can be seen as a couple it is not certain, they are both dressed and styled similar to the couples so far which suggests they belong to the same group, the male dons a *yajnopavita* and his drapery stands out from the other figures; which is made in a fancy ruffled manner as oppose to the typical loincloth worn by other male figures.

23. Kamadeva or Pradyumna



Figure 32

Description- The niche affixed on the *adhishtana* of the temple, is carved out of *rukha* pilasters and is capped by a *chaitya-gavaksha* motif. The niche comprises of a rich yet damaged imagery. The male figure occupying the prominent space is seated over a pedestal in *lalitasana*, he is holding a *danusha* and a *bana*, more specifically he is nocking the arrow in the bow. The figure has a top knot coiled hairdo, and is ornamented in the typical fashion of the temple. Flanking him are female figures, the one on left is broken with missing arms but it is evident that her left hand was raised till her ear. The figure on the right holds her drapery with her left hand and her right hand is raised in a *mudra*. On the extreme right a female figure stands holding a *mala* towards the male figure. On the basis of which, the male figure is suggested to be a divine entity.

There are mango bunches depicted on the top section of the niche; the association of mangoes with Kamadeva as mentioned earlier, adding the *ayudha* held by the figure confirms his identification as either Kamadeva or Pradyumna. The female holding the *mala* is an attendant but the other two are either consorts of the male figure or attendants. In case the figure is Pradyumna which is more plausible owing to the Virshni affiliation of the temple, the figures might be of Rukmavati and Mayavati.

Sculptures fixed inside the Chand Baori



Figure 33

24. Durga

A sculptural panel affixed to the wall of the *baori* is set within a niche articulated by pilasters, dividing it into three vertical sections. The central and more prominently projected division contains a mutilated image of a female deity seated in *lalitasana* upon a lion. The figure is four-armed; however, both upper arms are now lost. Of the surviving limbs, the lower right hand holds an *akshamala*, while the attributes of the remaining hands are indistinct. The face is severely damaged, rendering the features unrecognisable.

The deity is adorned with ornaments including a *lambika*, *keyura*, and a draped lower garment. On iconographic grounds, particularly the presence of the lion as *vahana*, the figure may be identified as Durga. The flanking sections of the niche contain subsidiary figures. In the left division is depicted a *chauri* bearer, while the right division accommodates another attendant figure, both shown in attendance upon the central deity.



Figure 34

24. Surasundari

The affixed member comprises a niche divided into five vertical sections by pilasters and surmounted by a *chaitya gavaksha* motif, the centre of which contains a medallion carved with a human face. The central division depicts a female figure in a dancing posture, accompanied by an attendant shown playing a *mridanga*-like musical instrument. The flanking sections on either side contain sculptural representations of couples, possibly identifiable as musicians. The terminal sections at the corners are occupied by *vyalas* mounted by warrior figures.



Figure 35

25. Bhagavana Ganesa

The niche depicts a male figure seated in *lalitasana* upon a pedestal. The deity bears an elephant head and is four-armed, though only one surviving hand clearly holds a small female figure. The remaining attributes are now lost or indistinct. The figure is sparingly ornamented and is accompanied by a female attendant. On iconographic grounds, the figure may be identified as Bhagavan Ganesa, attended by a female figure, possibly holding *modaka-patra* for him.



Figure 36

26. Mahishasuramardini

The niche presents a central figure of a female deity shown in a dynamic and fierce *pratyaldha* posture. The figure is eight-armed. In her upper hands she holds a *khadga*, *ghanta*, and *khetaka*, while the lower right hand wields a *trisula* which is shown piercing the body of a buffalo. The lower left hand grasps a subsidiary figure emerging from the severed neck of the buffalo. The buffalo's head is depicted as beheaded and fallen, from whose neck a human form is shown issuing forth and being seized by the goddess. A lion is represented attacking and devouring the buffalo. On iconographic grounds, the figure is identifiable as Mahishasuramardini.



Figure 37

27. Dancing Male

The affixed member depicts a niche divided into five vertical sections, divided by pilasters and capped with a *chaitya gavaksha* motif with a central medallion depicting a human face. The central section depicts a female figure in a dancing pose accompanied by an attending figure playing a *mridanga* like musical instrument. The flanking niches consists of couples, probably muscians and the corner sections depicts *vyalas* mounted by warriors.



Figure 38

28. Uma Mahesvara

The niche is divided into three vertical sections by pilasters, the central and more prominently projected division containing a damaged sculptural group. The principal figures, now considerably mutilated with broken faces and arms, are shown seated upon a bovine mount. A small dancing figure is depicted near the hooves of the animal. The male figure is four-armed, though the left arms are broken. Of the surviving attributes, the upper right hand holds a *trisula*, while the lower right hand holds a *padma*. The female consort is shown in *alingana* with the male figure. On the basis of these features, the group may be identified as Uma-Mahesvara seated upon their *vahana*, Nandi, and accompanied by the attendant Bhiringi. The flanking niches contain attendant figures identifiable as *ayudhapurushas*. The figure in the left niche holds a *trisula*, while the figure in the right niche carries a *kapaladanda*.

Sculptures with Various Affiliations

Saiva



Figure 39

29. Ardhanarisvara

The architectural fragment was probably part of an *adhishtana* or *jagati* moulding of the temple. The upper portion is decorated with a horizontal floral scroll. At the centre is a niche framed by decorated pilasters fashioned in the form of miniature pillars. The left pilaster is damaged and the pediment above the niche is broken.

Within the niche is a sculptural composition depicting a composite figure whose left half is male and right half female. Although the hands are mostly broken, the figure was originally four-armed. The upper hand of the male side probably held a trident, now broken, while the natural hand of the female side holds a *patra*. The figure stands upon a lotus pedestal. The male half is adorned with a *jatamukuta*, *valaya-kundala*, *graiveyaka*, *keyura*, *angada*, *yajnopavita*, and *padavalaya*, and is clad in a short loin cloth. The female half is ornamented with a *muktavali* with *lambika*, *keyura*, *kangana*, and *nupura*, and is draped in a flowing lower garment. Both halves are further adorned with an *urudama*.

Behind the figure is represented a bull, while to the right side appears a subsidiary female attendant holding a *pushpakalika*. Although the facial features are mutilated, the composite form of the figure

clearly identifies it as Ardhanarisvara, the combined aspect of Siva and Sakti, accompanied by the *vahana* Nandi and a female attendant.



Figure 40

30. Uma-Mahesvara

The architectural fragment depicts a niche framed by a *makara-torana* and pilasters whose capitals are adorned with *maladhari gandharvas*. The composition is divided into three sections.

The central section contains a seated couple placed upon a bull. The male figure, positioned to the left, is four-armed: the upper right hand holds a *trisula*, while the upper left is shown in *alingana*; the lower hands are broken, as is the face. He is seated in *lalitasana*, with the right foot resting on a lotus pedestal. The figure is ornamented with a *hara*, *yajnopavita*, and *valaya*. The female figure is also heavily mutilated, with no clear attributes surviving apart from minimal ornamentation. Despite the damaged condition, the presence of the bull and trident allows for a plausible identification of the group as Uma-Mahesvara.

The lateral sections depict attendant figures. On the left, a male figure stands, probably in *atibhanga mudra*, holding a *danda* in the right hand and a *padma* in the left. He wears a *jatamukuta*. Beneath him is a smaller, ghoulish figure shown with similar attributes. On the right, a comparable standing figure is depicted, though here the subordinate figure is replaced by a *gana* holding a *padma* and a *sriphala*. These figures may be understood as attendant or subsidiary beings associated with the central Saiva imagery.



Figure 41

31. Bhagavana Ganesa

The panel follows a decorated scheme wherein from the left three niches are carved out of *rukha* pilasters and are arranged in a manner where the central niche is wider and protruding; they are followed by a series of *rukha* pilasters separated by diamond-shaped flower motif.

The central and prominent niche depicts a composition, severely damaged and weathered. The principal figure of the composition is of an elephant-headed male figure who is depicted with four arms. The figure is pot-bellied and is seated in a stance resembling *lalitasana* over a short pedestal. The figure evidently holds a *parasu* in his upper left hand while the attributes held by him in other hands remains unidentified due to breakage; additionally, his natural left hand is twisted inwards. The figure is adorning a *karnadamukuta*, *yajnopavita*, *hastavalaya*, *padavalaya* and a loin cloth. There is additionally a *mala* depicted on the pedestal. The figure is identified as Bhagavana Ganesa.

Flanking the deity two female figures are depicted; the figure on the right is facing the deity seated in a relaxed pose with one leg resting on the other. The figure is damaged and her left arm is visible. The female seated on the left is also similarly carved, in this case the other arm is visible and she is holding a *chauri*. While the latter figure seems to be floating, there was probably a pedestal similar to the other one. The figures owing to the pedestal seems like consorts of the deity rather than female attendants and they can be identified as Riddhi and Siddhi.

Apart from these, subsidiary figures are also present. The one near the right leg of the deity seems to be a *gana* holding sweet offering and one near the consort, seems like a *maladhari* female attendant although the *mala* is not visible. The composition also includes foliage and vegetal imagery which is now partially damaged.

The flanking niches depict female figures standing in *padavastika mudra*, holding their drapery with one hand. The one in the left niche holds a *padma* and one in right niche holds a *chauri*. The figures are female attendants.



Figure 42

32. Ganesa and Brahmani, part of panel (Fig. 59).

The architectural fragment forms part of a larger panel. It depicts a three faceted *rukha* pilaster followed by an arched niche and then a panel commences. The panel was inside a niche as suggested by the round pilaster with a *vyala* depiction. It consists of two figures, the one on left is a four-armed male figure with an elephant head. He holds an *akshamala* in his upper right hand and a *modakapatra* in his upper left hand, his natural left hand holds a *danta* and his natural right hand holds a *parasu*.

The figure is adorned with a *mukuta bandha*, *hara*, *keyura*, *kangana*, and is wearing a loin cloth. The figure is identified as Bhagavana Ganesa. The figure on the right, is of a female with three visible heads, she stands in an *atibhanga mudra* holding an *akshamala* in her right hand and a *kamandalu* in her left hand. The figure is adorned with a *jatamukuta*, *kundala*, *muktavali* with a *lambika*, *keyura*, *hastavalaya*, *nupura*, *mala* and an *adhovastra*. The figure can be identified as Brahmani and in that case the fragment is a part of a Matrika panel.



Figure 43

33. Karttikeya

The architectural fragment is part of a temple *jagati*, in the centre of the fragment a niche is formed by *rukha* pilasters. A four-armed male figure takes the primary place in the niche; he stands in a *samabhanga mudra* over a lotus pedestal. Although the figure is weathered, his three heads are visible with the central face being damaged.

The attributes in all four hands are broken but perhaps he is holding a *sakti* in his upper right hand, a *khadga* in his natural right hand, a *patra* in his natural left hand and his upper left hand is completely damaged. The figure is wearing a *mukuta*, *kundalas*, *hara*, *yajnopavita*, and *mala*. A halo is placed behind the figure; based on these attributes the figure can be identified as Karttikeya.

The figure is flanked on left by a subsidiary attendant figure and on right by an animal whose head is broken, the animal is probably a *mayura*, associated with Karttikeya.



Figure 44

34. Karttikeya

The fragmentary architectural member probably formed part of the *jagati* of the temple wall. The surface is bordered by a scrolling floral band, while the central field is articulated by a *rukha* pilaster forming a niche, the pediment of which is now lost. Within the niche stands a male divinity in a highly dilapidated condition. The figure appears to have originally possessed three heads, although the faces, arms and lower limbs are now broken. The surviving posture suggests a *tribhanga* stance.

The deity is adorned with long flowing locks of hair, a *graiveyaka*, a broken *yajnopavita*, *keyura*, a garland, and a short drapery. A lotus halo is carved behind the head. At the base of the niche appears a bird with a long neck and a now damaged face. On the basis of this avian attribute, the figure may be identified as Karttikeya, accompanied by his *vahana*, the peacock. The presence of multiple heads and the peacock mount further supports this identification.

Sakta

35. Devi Durga



Figure 45

The architectural fragment probably formed part of the *adhisthana* or the *jagati* of the temple. It depicts a niche articulated by *rukha* pilaster, of which the left pilaster is now broken.

Within the niche is a female figure seated in *lalitasana* upon a *padma* pedestal. The figure is eight-armed. The surviving attributes in the left hands include a *khetaka*, *pasa*, *dhanusha*, and a *kamandalu*, while in the right hands only two attributes are clearly visible, namely an *akshamala* and a *khadga*; the remaining attributes are now lost. The deity is richly ornamented with a *jatamukuta* set with a central *ratna*, *valaya-kundala*, *graiveyaka*, a *muktavali* with a central *lambika*, a pendant resembling a spoked-wheel motif, *keyura*, *hasta-valaya*, *pada-valaya*, and a *ratnamala*.

A lion is depicted to the side of the lotus pedestal, serving as the *vahana* of the goddess. To one side of the niche stands a subsidiary female attendant in *namaskara mudra*, minimally adorned and wearing a simple drapery and a *muktavali*.

On the basis of the lion mount and the martial attributes, the image may be identified as Durga, attended by a female devotee or attendant figure.



Figure 46

36. Chamunda

The architectural fragment is probably part of the *jagati* of the temple, it has a floral scroll on its top section and a niche carved out from *rukha* pilasters with a missing pediment in the centre.

The niche houses a female figure with eight arms, while most of them are mutilated, one of the left hands hold a *munda*, and one of the upper left hands is placed next to the mount in an act of devouring something. The figure stands over a *sava* (corpse) and a *padma*. Her body is all skeletal with sagging breasts, and she is donning a *munda mukuta*, *lambika*, *mekhala*, loin cloth, *mundamala*, and *nupura*. There is a scorpion depicted on her torso and a halo is presented at the back. The figure is identified as Chamunda.

At the bottom left there is a zoomorphic female figure depicted probably associated with yoginis, a *preta* is depicted feasting on the *sava*'s leg. Additionally, there is a jackal depicted at the bottom right in an act of eating the *munda* held by the goddess. The niches overall imagery seems very grotesque and unique.



Figure 47

37. Devi Durga

The architectural fragment formed part of the temple *jagati*, showcases a niche carved out of *rukha* pilasters. The niche houses a mutilated figure of a female. The figure is ten-armed with all of them broken barring one holding a *khetaka*. She stands in a *samabhanga mudra* atop a lotus pedestal. The figure seems to be adorned with a *mukuta* which is now broken, *kundala*, *hara*, *keyura*, *mekhala*, *nupura* and *antariya*. Flanking the pedestal lions are present. On the basis of these features and a halo the figure seems to be Goddess Durga.

Additionally, attending figures were depicted right above the lions which are now broken.

38. Mahishasuramardini panel

The panel is divided into three sections formed by round pilasters which are decorated with *vyala* figures; the central section is the principal one. On the lateral sides of the panel *rukha* pilasters are depicted.

The central section houses an elaborate and intense narrative, wherein the central figure is of a female. The figure is ten-armed, standing in a fierce *pratyaldha* form, holding in her upper hands a *khadga*, a *damaru*, a *vajra*, a *parasu*, a *ghanta*, a *khetaka*, a *bana*, and one hand in *tarjani mudra*. The natural left hand of the figure grabs a subsidiary figure and the right hand wields a *trisula* which is piercing a buffalo's body. The said buffalo's head is beheaded and fallen off and from his neck a human body is sprouting out which is grabbed by the female deity. A lion is shown devouring the buffalo.

The main narrative is surrounded by subsidiary figures. On top, the figure is flanked by *maladhari gandharvas* and at the base two male figures holding weapons are depicted moving away from the principal figure and on the lateral left a female is shown holding a *manjira* and on the right a female holds a *chauri*. This composition is identified as Mahishasuramardini surrounded by demons and attendant figures.

On the subsidiary niches four figures are depicted on each side, out of which two are seated. All the figures hold weapons and are facing the principal section continuing the war like narrative.



Figure 48

Vaishnava



Figure 49

39. Yoga-Narayana

The architectural fragment formed part of the *adhishthana* of the temple. It has a niche carved from *rukha* pilasters at the centre. The pediment of the niche is missing, and the base is relatively minimal.

The figure housed inside sits in *padmasana* over a lotus pedestal, beneath which attending *bharavahakas* or *naga* figures are seated looking above with their hands in *namaskara mudra*; they are flanked by lions.

The figure is four-armed with his natural hands in *dhyanamudra* and upper hands holding the garland that he dons. The figure is ornamented with a *kiritamukuta*, *kundalas*, *kanthi*, *muktavali*, *yajnopavita*, *keyura*, *hasta valaya*, and a *mala*. There is an additional *mala* depicted on the pedestal and a halo behind him. The figure is flanked near his legs by attending figures and on top by *maladhari gandharvas*. The figure is identified as the Yoga-Narayana aspect of Bhagavana Vishnu.

The face of the figure is mutilated and same goes for the subsidiary figures, although the rest of the figure is weathered but not damaged, this suggests a form of iconoclasm.



Figure 50

The niche houses a male figure standing in a partial *samabhanga mudra*, the figure is four-armed, holding a *hala* in his upper right hand, a *patra* in natural right hand, natural left hand is in *katyavalambita mudra* and the upper left hand possibly holds a *musala* but now broken. The figure is adorned in the typical manner of the temple iconography and his divine nature is reinforced by presence of a halo and a *vanamala*. The figure on the basis of these attributes can be identified as Balarama. Flanking the deity subordinate female figure stands holding a globular flask with wine.



Figure 51

40. Balarama

The architectural fragment showcases a niche formed by *rukha* pilasters, below the niche a scroll of diamond-shaped blocks appears which is followed by partially visible full blown *padma* which is usually depicted on the *mandapa* ceilings. The niche is broken from the top in a way that the housed figure's visage and other attributes are eroded.

41. Balarama

The architectural member was probably affixed to the *jagati* of the temple. It depicts an *urusringa* on the left and a niche formed by *rukha* pilasters, surmounted by a rising pediment. Within the niche stands a central male figure in *tribhanga mudra*, holding a *hala* in the left hand and a *madya-patra* in the right. The figure is richly adorned with a *mukuta*, *kundalas*, *hara*, *yajnopavita*, *hasta-valaya*, *urudama*, *mekhala*, and a *mala*. The facial features are damaged, limiting a definitive identification.

At the lower right, a subsidiary female figure is depicted holding a *kalasa* and gazing upward toward the principal figure. On the basis of the *hala* and the drinking vessel, the figure may be identified as Balarama, accompanied by a female attendant.

Surya



Figure 52

42. Revanta

The architectural fragment represents a carved niche framed by pilasters on either side. The niche is broken and consists of a dense narrative. It is crowned by the presence of subsidiary figures, within the upper register *maladhari gandharvas* are depicted.

At the centre of the niche is a male figure mounted on a quadruped animal likely a horse, depicted in a composed riding posture. The horse is shown in profile, with careful attention to its form, and appears controlled rather than in rapid motion. The rider is adorned with a *mukuta kundalas* and a cape, indicating a figure of elevated, possibly royal or divine status. Although the hands are now damaged, the positioning suggests that they may originally have held attributes associated with drinking or holding a *patra*.

The figure is accompanied by attendants positioned behind him, one of whom appears to bear an umbrella over the rider, reinforcing the divine and aristocratic character of the scene. The composition further includes a dog-like animal beneath the horse, now rendered broken. The presence of attendants holding a spear, a *padma* and a vessel enhances the imagery.

The absence of a chariot and the presence of a single horse distinguish the figure from Surya, while the lack of apocalyptic features rules out identification with Kalki. Instead, it aligns closely with the established iconography of Revanta.



Figure 53

43. Surya

The sculptural fragment represents an elaborately conceived architectural panel, framed by pilasters adorned with *vyala* motifs and crowned by lotus-bud capitals surmounted by *maladhari gandharvas*. The composition is further enriched by a multi-tiered *makara-torana*, composed of dense floral and scrolling bands, forming an ornate superstructure over the central niche.

The principal image within the central field depicts a male divinity seated in *utkutikasana*. Although the figure is considerably mutilated, the surviving iconographic markers namely the presence of *padmas* in both hands, along with the *mukuta*, *kavacha*, and *upanaha*, strongly indicate an identification with Surya. At the base of the composition is a subsidiary figure grasping the reins of a chariot drawn by a team of seven horses, identifying the charioteer as Aruna. The representation of the *saptasva*, serves as a definitive iconographic attribute of the solar deity and reinforces the identification.

The flanking niches contain elegantly rendered female figures, richly ornamented and holding *chauris*, functioning as attendant figures. Beneath them are subsidiary male figures, now partially damaged, holding a *danda* and a stylus respectively. These figures may be identified as Danda and Pingala, the *ayudhapurushas* conventionally associated with Surya in early medieval iconographic programmes.

Syncretic Forms



Figure 54

44. Rudra-Bhaskara

The architectural fragment showcases a dilapidated niche consisting of a male figure standing in *samabhanga mudra*. The figure is four-armed, while the left arms are broken, the right ones hold a *trisula* and a *padma* each. The face of the figure is mutilated, and the figure dons a *jatamukuta*, *kundala*, *kavacha*, *hara*, *hasta-valaya*, *mekhala*, boots and a garland. On the basis of these the figure can be identified as Rudra-Bhaskara, the composite form of Siva and Surya. On the bottom left side a subsidiary male figure is standing perhaps an *ayudhapurusha* but his attributes are weathered.

45. Trideva Panel

The panel is divided into three sections formed by round pilasters which are decorated with *vyala* figures; the central section is the principal. On the lateral sides of the panel *rukha* pilasters are depicted.

The central section houses an ensemble, three prominent figures standing in *samabhanga mudra* over a lotus pedestal; each flanked by subsidiary figures in dynamic poses and engaged in activity contrasting the static nature of the former figures. The leftmost figure is four-armed and three-faced male, with his front face mutilated. The figure holds a *padma* in his upper left hand, a *kamandalu* in his natural left hand, a *pustaka* (only partially remaining) in his upper right hand, and his natural right hand perhaps held a *sruva* now rendered broken. The figure is adorned with a *jatamukuta*, *kundalas*, *hara*, *yajnopavita*, *keyura*, *mekhala*, *hastavalaya*, *antariya* and a *mala*. The figure can be identified as Bhagavana Brahma. He is flanked by *gana* figures, one on left is completely broken and the one in right stands in *tribhanga mudra* holding an unidentified object. Additionally on the left a female attendant stands.

The following figure is also four-armed, holding a *trisula* in his upper right hand, an *akshamala* in his natural right hand, a *sarpa* now broken in his upper left hand and a *kamandalu* in his natural left hand. The figure is ornamented similar to later figure. He is flanked by *gana* figures holding offerings, the one on left has the offering turned towards a cattle who is eating it. The figure can be identified as Bhagavana Siva with his *vahana*, Nandi.

The next figure holds a *chakra* in his upper left hand, a *sankha* in his natural left hand, a *gada* in his upper right hand and an *akshamala* in his natural right hand. The figure is ornamented the same way barring his *mukuta* which in this case is a *kiritamukuta*. The figure is flanked by his *ayudhapurushas*

Chakrapurusha and Sankhapurusha. Apart from his *ayudhapurushas* female attendants holding a *padma* flanked the the deity who is identifiable as Vishnu.

In the right section of the niche. Two male figures stand in a *tribhanga mudra*, both hold similar object, a *dhvaja* in the left hand and a *padma* in the right hand. The figures have coiled hair, and don *kundalas* and a loin cloth. They are flanked by a *gana* in reverence on the right and another figure in a dynamic walking pose facing the central niche, he holds an unidentified object. On the left section identical twin male figures are present, they are more damaged but hold a *kamandalu* in the left hand, and right hand is in *jnanamudra*. The figures wear a *yajnopavita* and a loin cloth. They are also flanked by a revering figure and a figure holding unidentified objects.



Figure 55

Jain



Figure 56

46. Tirthankara

The sculptural fragment depicts a pedestal with a *dharmachakra* in the middle flanked by lion and deer. Over the pedestal the lower body of a figure seated in *padmasana* atop snake coils is present. The figure on these basis can be identified as Jain Tirthankara, either Parsvanatha or Suparsvanatha.

Sculptures At Albert Hall Museum

The sculptural assemblage from Abhaneri, now in the Albert Hall Museum, reflects a coherent iconographic programme. The Ravananugraha theme (Fig. 57) shows Ravana attempting to lift Mount Kailasa and being subdued by Siva, who ultimately grants him grace, expressing the transformation of arrogance into devotion. The figure of Karttikeya in a *makara torana* (Fig. 58) niche with his *vahana*, the peacock is also interesting. The Matrika panel (Fig 59), centred on Bhairava, follows a notional iconographic order in which the seven goddesses are arranged in a fixed sequence with identifiable attributes and *vahanas*; the missing Brahmani, suggested through adjoining fragments with Ganesa (Fig. 42), points to the disruption of an originally complete frieze. The Mahishasuramardini form of Durga (Fig. 60) is a fine example of early medieval art.



Figure 57



Figure 58



Figure 59



Figure 60

Conclusion

The monuments at Abhaneri, though now preserved only in part, together present a complex and layered picture of early medieval religious and artistic life. The scale and ambition of the Harshat Mata Temple and the Chand Baori indicate that the site was not a minor settlement but an important regional centre, likely supported by the patronage of ruling powers such as the Gurjara-Pratiharas and their local associates, including the Chahamanas. The construction of such a monumental complex suggests coordinated political and religious investment, reflecting both regional authority and structured devotional activity.

When the architectural and sculptural evidence is considered together, the site reveals a carefully structured yet non-uniform religious landscape. The Harshat Mata Temple, while later associated with the worship of the goddess, presents a more complex iconographic profile. The presence of a deliberate engagement with Vaishnava theological concepts, particularly those associated with the Pancharatra sect or the Vrishnis and Caturvyuha framework, suggests that the temple may originally have functioned within a Vaishnava context. Such evidence opens the possibility that Vaishnava elements were not peripheral but central to its initial conception. At the same time, the reinterpretation of sculptural figures

on the outer walls of the temple, earlier understood as courtly or *mithuna* figures, may also be reconsidered within this Vaishnava and broader divine framework, indicating that the original religious identity of the monument was more complex than the later association of the temple with the goddess suggests. Rather than being incidental, these elements appear as part of an integrated sculptural programme reflecting a structured theological environment.

At the same time, the broader complex, particularly the Chand Baori, reflects a strong Saiva–Sakta presence. The prominence of Durga in her Mahishasuramardini form, along with the presence of figures such as Uma-Mahesvara and Ganesa, indicates that the stepwell functioned as more than a water structure. It appears to have been closely linked to a Saiva–Sakta ritual environment, where architectural space and devotional imagery were integrated. The sculptural programme suggests that the Chand Baori may represent an early Saiva–Sakta *baori*-temple complex, where water access, ritual movement, and sacred imagery were interconnected. In this sense, the later identification of Harshat Mata as the presiding goddess may reflect a continuity or reconfiguration of an earlier sacred association rather than an entirely new foundation.

The evidence from Abhaneri also suggests that the site preserves an important strand of Vaishnava worship associated with the Pancharatra tradition and the Vrishni concept. The presence of Vasudeva, Pradyumna, and Samkarshana points to a continuation of theological and artistic developments that can be traced back to the Gupta period, where such affiliations were more prominently expressed. Although the complex has often been interpreted as a unified temple-centred site dedicated to the goddess, the structured inclusion of Vrishni imagery suggests that parts of the complex, particularly the temple, may originally have functioned within a Vaishnava framework. At the same time, the strong presence of Saiva and Sakta elements in the Chand Baori, along with evidence of Jain remains in the surrounding region, indicates that this Vaishnava expression existed within a broader multi-religious environment, rather than in isolation.

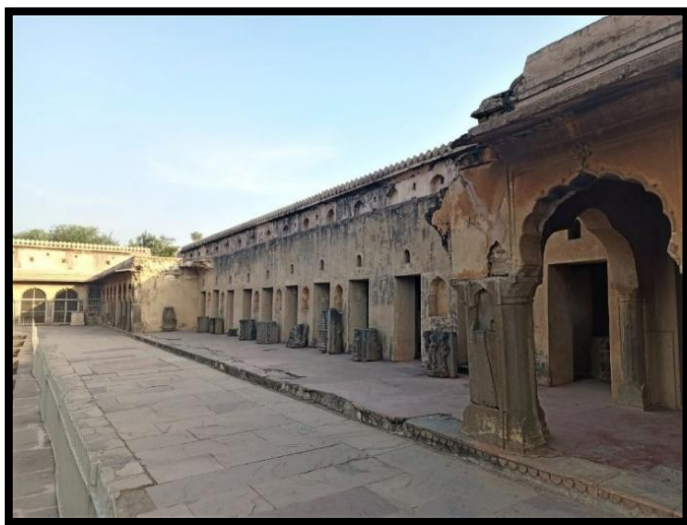
In light of this, the interpretation of the sculptural narratives on the outer walls of the temple should be reconsidered. Figures earlier identified as *mithuna* or royal couples may instead be understood within a broader iconographic framework that includes divine or Vrishni-related associations, suggesting that the visual programme was more closely tied to theological meanings than previously assumed. The combined evidence therefore points to Abhaneri as a site where an early Saiva–Sakta *baori*-temple complex and a Vrishni-oriented Vaishnava temple tradition coexisted and were later reinterpreted through shifting religious affiliations. This remains a preliminary reading, and the site requires further detailed architectural and contextual study to refine the understanding of its original religious organisation and development over time.

One important fact is that Harshat Mata Temple is the only one of its kind in the entire north Indian landscape which was devoted to Pancharatra sect, possibly originating from Mathura. Before and after no such conclusive evidence has been found throughout the country for the existence of such a temple but recently, we have come to conclusion that a similar temple following the tradition of Harshat Mata Temple came into existence at Atru in the form of Gadhgach Temple (now in ruins). This temple somehow follows the elevation model of Harshat Mata with three-tiered socle housing a number of

exquisite carvings. At Gadhgach Temple, two sets of *dikpalas* were observed, one standing alone and the other with their consorts and there is a possibility that at Harshat Mata Temple too, there were two sets of *dikpalas* as the surviving images of Indra and Agni at the temple are carved in quite different proportions indicating such a possibility.

Conservation Work

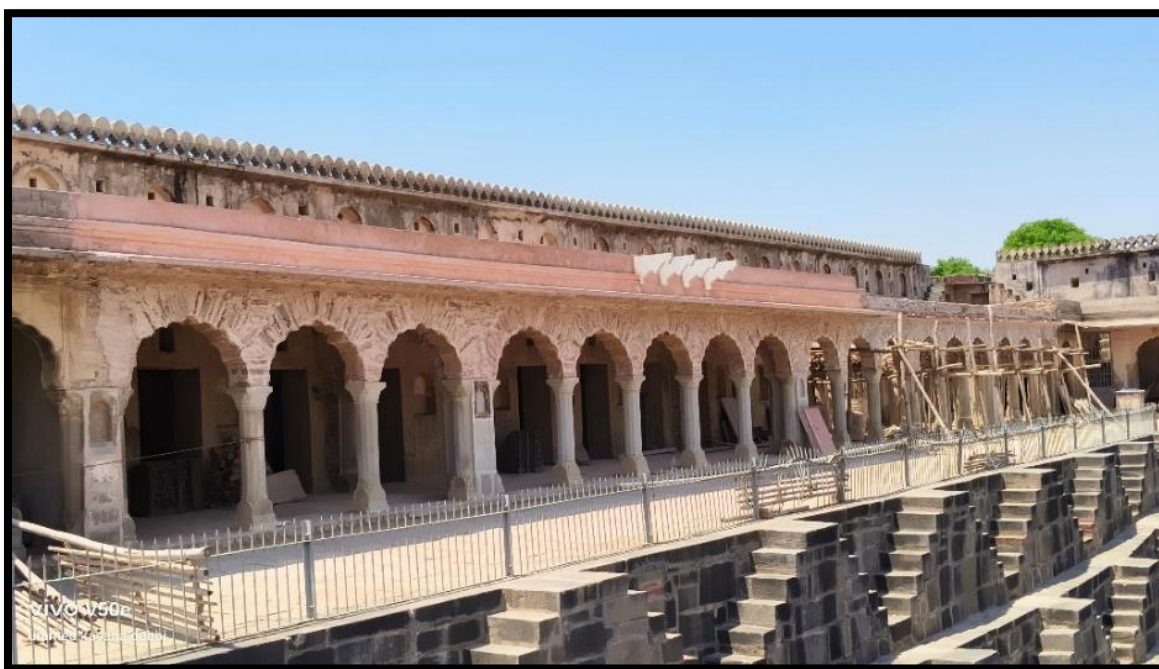
Conservation and Restoration of the southern side *verandah* at Chand Baori, Abhaneri, Distt. Dausa.



Before



During

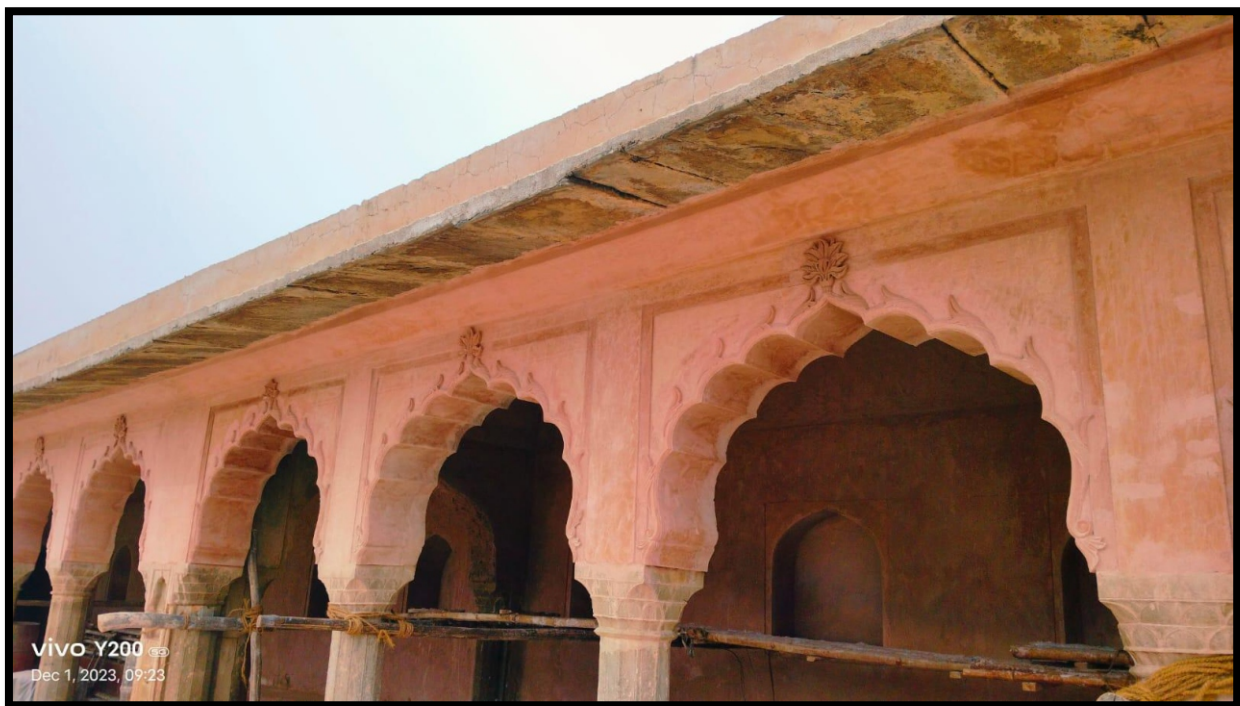


After

Conservation & Restoration: Lime Plaster, Resetting Stone Flooring, etc. of Chand Baori Abhaneri Distt. Dausa.



Before



After
[39]

Conservation & Restoration: Pointing work at the steps of Chand Baori Abhaneri Distt. Dausa.



Before



After

Old room (Interpretation Centre) of Chand Baori Abhaneri Distt. Dausa.



Before



After

Conservation & Restoration: Replastering work at Chand Baori Abhaneri Distt. Dausa.



Before

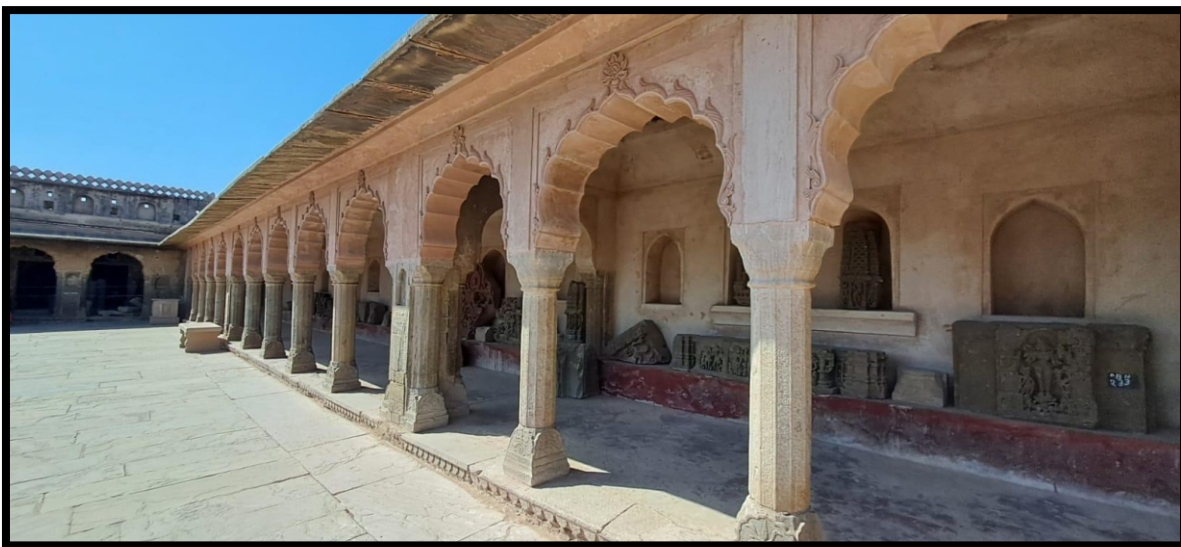


After

Conservation & Restoration: Replastering work at Chand Baori Abhaneri Distt. Dausa.



Before



After

**Conservation & Restoration: Replastering of the ceiling inside the pavilion at Chand Baori
Abhaneri Distt. Dausa.**



Before

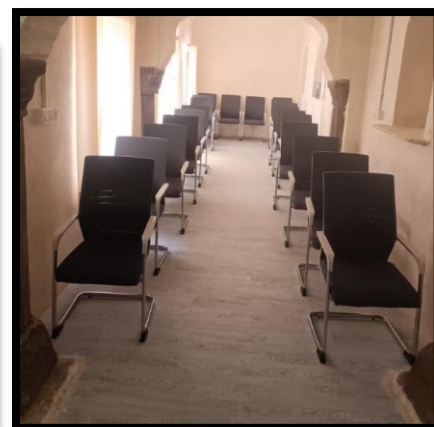


After

Development of Interpretation Centre and providing touch screen kiosks, television, and other tourist facilities at Chand Baori, Abhaneri, Dist. Dausa.



Before



After

Providing and laying flagstone and display of loose architectural fragments /sculpture, western side (back side) Harshat Mata Temple at Abhaneri, Distt. Dausa.



Before



After
[46]

Providing stone flooring, shifting, and placing different sizes of sculptures /architectural members present in the campus of Harshat Mata Temple for display.



Before



After



Before



After

Providing and laying flag stone and display of loose architectural fragments/sculpture western side (Back Side) Harshat Mata Temple at Abhaneri.



Before



Before



After



After

References

1. Atherton, Cynthia Packert. "The Harṣat-Mātā Temple at Ābānerī: Levels of Meaning." *Artibus Asiae*, vol. 55, no. 3/4, 1995, pp. 201–236. JSTOR, doi:10.2307/3249750.
2. Atherton, Cynthia Packert. *The Sculpture of Early Medieval Rajasthan*. Brill, 1997.
3. Dhama, B. L. *Annual Report of the Archaeological Department for the Year 1925–1926*. Government Press, 1926.
4. *District Gazetteer: Dausa*. Government of Rajasthan, Directorate of District Gazetteers.
5. Gupta, Vinay Kumar with assistance of Rashmi Asopa. *Atru: Tale of a Forgotten Temple Town*. ASI Jaipur Circle, 2026.
6. Jain, Kailash Chand. *Ancient Cities and Towns of Rajasthan*. Motilal Banarsidass, 1972.
7. Livingston, Morna. *Steps to Water: The Ancient Stepwells of India*. Princeton Architectural Press, 2002, pp. 38–39.
8. Meister, Michael W., and Madhusudan A. Dhaky. *Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture. Vol. 1: North India, Period of Early Maturity*. American Institute of Indian Studies, 1991.
9. Reitz, Falk. "The Harṣatmātā Temple at Abaneri: Originally a Devī-Pañcāyatana Complex." In *South Asian Archaeology 1993*, edited by Asko Parpola and Petteri Koskikallio, vol. 2, Suomalainen Tiedekatemia, 1993, pp. 645–656.



Conceptualised, Designed and Authored by
Dr Vinay Kumar Gupta
(Superintending Archaeologist)
and **Rashmi Asopa**
With assistance of Jaipur Circle team

Published by:
Superintending Archaeologist
Jaipur Circle
Archaeological Survey of India