



THE HEGEMONY OF HERITAGE

RITUAL AND THE RECORD IN STONE

DEBORAH L. STEIN

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The Hegemony of Heritage

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Ritual and the Record in Stone

Deborah L. Stein



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Introduction

The “Hindu” Temple in Diachronic Context

What do we see when we look at a monument, and how do we come to see what we do? Far from the innocent ravages of time, the calculated aesthetics of the Indian temple today result from the confluence of religious performance, the politics of identity formation, the tension between neoliberal and socialist preservation models, and the display, erasure, and fragmentation of the visual and material record. Architecture gives an illusion of eternal permanence only to reveal a state of perpetual flux both in meaning and in form. Through a thorough examination of two sites in southern Rājāsthān, we gain insight into a process of curating from the field whereby the erstwhile colonial institutions and socialist state compete with a variety of private initiatives for the right to construct the past and future alike. Across India, ancient sites are put back into worship, left untouched, or visited by throngs of tourists and pilgrims. A diachronic history of temples can lead us to examine how various actors claimed power and authority and shaped notions of sacred space and ritual praxis over time.

A TEMPLE COMPARISON: NEW MATERIALISM IN A RĀJĀSTHANI CASE STUDY

Chosen among the Mēdapāṭa regional cohort of temples as the two in most active worship today, the Ambikā temple in Jagat and the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple in Kailāśpurī serve as a case study of the larger pan-Indian phenomenon of putting temples “back” into use and reflect modern people’s praxis in great depth. In light of their particular histories, this book proposes that we look at Indian temples in a new way, as “catalyst” agents—generative architecture that sparks a wide variety



FIGURE 0.1. Thakur of Jagat and his wife pour ghee onto a sacrificial fire with priests from Īdar, Gujarat, on the occasion of the installation (*pratiṣṭhā*) ceremonies for the installation of a new twenty-first-century goddess into the tenth-century inner sanctum of the Ambikā temple, May 2002. © Deborah Stein.

of ritual and other activity, often far from the temple itself. As an active catalyst of a wide variety of human interaction, the temple burns brightly and is never used up (fig. 0.1). Beyond a single region or sectarian origin, the idea of South Asian religious monuments as catalysts elicits new modes of art historical inquiry far beyond the buildings or sculptural iconography alone. Whether we consider the aesthetics of the Taj Mahal today, a Chola bronze of Śivanataraja in a medieval procession, or the famous Jataka scenes on the gateways of Sanci, the idea that these architectural locations are catalysts for whole bodies of diachronic and ephemeral material practices and performative praxis expands our field of inquiry as art historians. Whereas one could misconstrue the core comparison of this book as a reinforcement of a false binary between a tantric/female/rural/populist periphery and an elite/male/dynastic center, the Ambikā temple in Jagat and the Śrī Eklingjī temple in Kailāspurī offer much more than a simplistic dialectic. Both sites offer a radical array of materials beyond style and stone to propose an alternative to high modernist notions of Hindu temple architecture through new materialist approaches to butter, flour, vermilion, and the primary importance of the materiality of the stone itself over its mere figuration. Rather than create a dichotomy between center and periphery in a single time frame, these sites offer multiple perspectives that vary greatly from one era to the next—at times serving as key

centers of religious and political activities and other moments fading from the historical record entirely. Without the modern performance of the puja-paddhati at Śrī Ekliṅgī, the use of mantra in the installation rites at Jagat would not have had the same clarity, nor would the relationship between the books of ritual liturgy and the ritual performance unfolding.

A postcolonial approach to the method of material culture reveals some difficult and at times incongruous ideas. For example, if objects, buildings, and materials have agency, some may argue that this power, inherent in the material world, takes away from the agency of the human agents who engage with those materials.¹ When Alfred Gell argues that agency lies in the work of art, does that mean that those who made and use it are erased? Alternately, what are the risks as an art historian of a suspension of disbelief when discussing a religious icon believed by devotees to be alive? This is where the idea of the temple as a catalyst becomes even more important. As an active agent that is never used up, material remains can spark human agents to a wide variety of actions at different points in time. Within each time period, diverse agents interact with those materials quite differently.² Can objects or buildings speak for themselves? No, of course, these materials cannot. People—consciously or unconsciously, both individually and collectively—leave in these materials traces of their ideas, behavior, and uses of these sites over time. Their ritual residue is the stuff of this study.

Material residue, ritual residue, stone residue, aesthetic residue, physical residue, temporal residue, and architectural residue each reflect the material traces that are left behind at religious sites intentionally and unintentionally through ritual practice. The Ambikā temple in Jagat and the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple in Kailāśpurī, as two of the most active sites of worship in southern Rājāsthān today, serve as prime examples of how religious monuments serve as catalysts for a wide variety of praxis in South Asia, often in a radius as large as two kilometers or more from the building itself, and at times in giant networks, such as the goddess network between Jāwar, Jagat, and Īdar. This triangle of sisterly geomantic relationships is documented folklore, such as the sung *Jagat Mata ki Katha* and the *Jāwar Mata ki Katha* narratives recorded on cassette tapes and sold at the village bus stand. The material remains of ritual, also referred to as ritual residue, provide physical traces of agents' actions in relation to these temples as catalysts for praxis.

Many temples and sites across India correspond to this phenomenon today, but few articulate as clear a set of diachronic histories as those found in the kingdom of Mewār. This book compares two key tenth-century sites in southern Rājāsthān to reveal very different sectarian foci and histories of religious use. The first is a temple called the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple (fig. 0.2), dedicated to the god Śiva. Today it is said that a god named Śrī Ekliṅgī has ruled the kingdom of Mewār for more than one thousand years (fig. 0.3). An inscription dated to 971 CE corroborates this idea with an early link between the ruling dynasty and the patron saint of Śrī Ekliṅgī's Śaiva sect named Lakulīṣa. Dedicated to this saint, the monastic Lakulīṣa temple



FIGURE 0.2. Śrī Eklingjī temple. © Deborah Stein.

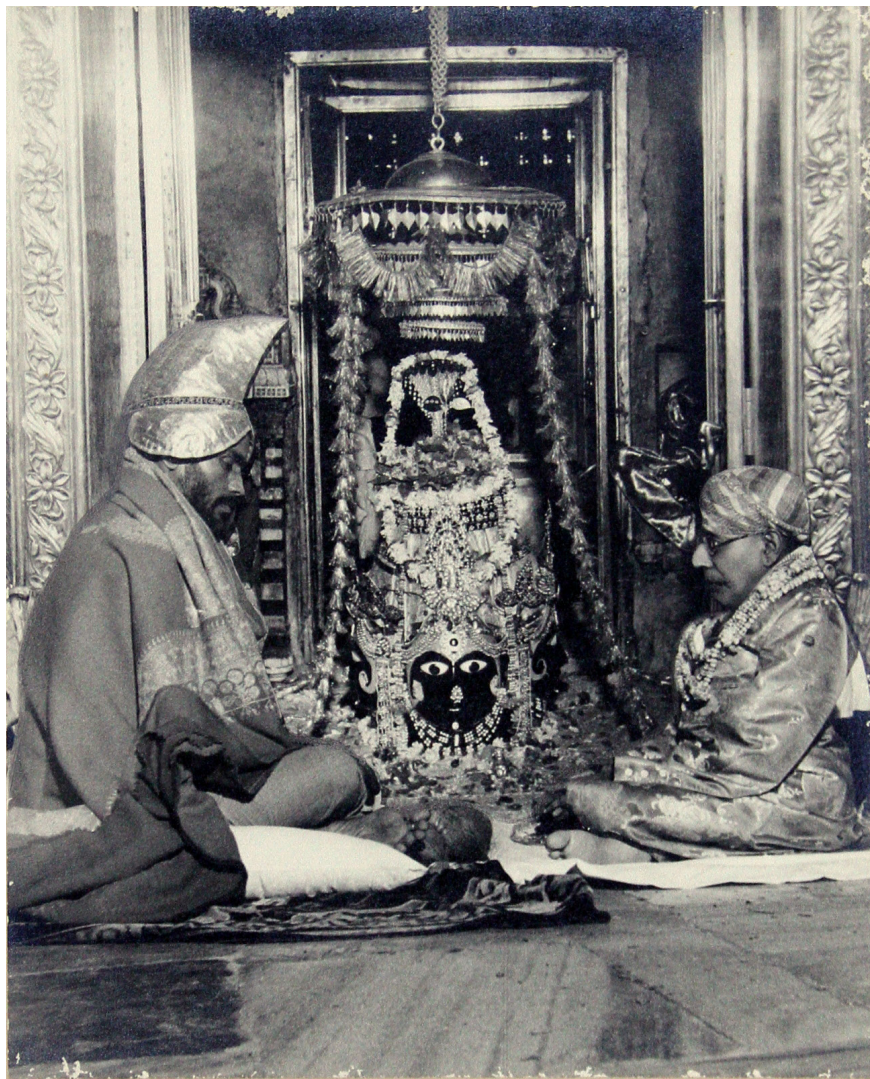


FIGURE 0.3. Maharana Bhupal Singh at Manorath, Eklingji Temple. Maharana Bhupal Singh at worship with the head priest in front of the deity at the Shree Eklingnath ji Temple, Kailashpuri. Devare & Co., Gelatine silver print. Printed from glass plate negative, 1935–1945 CE. Image courtesy of Museum Archives of the Maharanas of Mewar, © MMCF, Udaipur.

displays fine masonry and smooth walls to suggest the focused practice of Śaivaite gurus and ascetics and the architectural location of their intellectual exchange with Jains and Buddhists. In contrast with this imperial center of political and religious authority, the Ambikā temple in the town of Jagat is dedicated to a goddess who quells the buffalo demon to restore cosmic order. The complex figural program on the exterior walls of this goddess's temple suggests that syncretic modes of practice attempted to incorporate local religion into increasingly systematized modes of brāhmanical Hinduism for a popular audience.

Today, the mahārāṇā and the state of Rājāsthān legally contest the Ekliṅgī temple, whereas the Ambikā temple's ownership is contested through the display of modern icons in the ancient sanctum after the icon's theft for the international art market. The Śrī Ekliṅgī temple is currently under a *longue-durée* trial between the Devasthan Department of Living Temples of the government of Rājāsthān and the Śrī Ekliṅgī Charitable Trust, set up in the 1970s after changes in tax law by the family of erstwhile mahārāṇās of Mewār to protect their Sisodia dynastic royal temple. The Ambikā temple in Jagat recently was the site of a public deity installation ceremony, which could also be used legally to establish the site as a commodified public trust. Both deities question the politics of aesthetic taste in an increasingly global era of world heritage. The aesthetics of temple administration suggest the legal arbitration of taste as a commodity and the role of praxis and agency in the field. Renovation serves as a form of religious merit—a phenomenon witnessed during ethnographic and performance-based fieldwork but also found as early as the mid-tenth century in temple inscriptions from the Mēdapāṭa regional cohort of temples.

Each of these individual legal situations leaves these two temples as the only two out of the Mēdapāṭa regional temple cohort with specific historic time periods that seem to alternately illuminate or negate the historical and legal claims being made in the twenty-first century. On the one hand, the Ekliṅgī temple debates seem to lead the historian to the fifteenth century as a snapshot of the Sisodia clan at the apogee of its power. The royal house, on the other hand, recently claimed an unbroken bloodline back to the eighth century, and in 2012 it began to date its lineage prior to the sixth century. The Ambikā temple inscriptional record leaves a three-hundred-year silence. This sultanate period in the Chhapa and Vagada regions where the Ambikā temple is located reveals a great efflorescence of non-dynastic activity from mining, to multisectarian temple patronage, to icon theft and warfare, to fleeting attempts to maintain (or even to establish) some form of dynastic or political hegemony. On the other historical side of the sultanate period is a time before these vast ruptures with the present.

Origins have long been privileged as the most "authentic" moments in history, so origins become pregnant with meaning. In this study the temples' origins are not a unique moment of truth but rather one of four major eras considered in relation to the histories we choose to construct in the present. The second half

of the tenth century was a time in what is now southern Rājāsthān as well as all across northern India where the fragmentation of the Paramāra and Pratihāra Empires gave rise to an efflorescence of small kingdoms and new dynasties yearning to legitimize their newfound status through signature architectural styles and lunar or solar divine lineages. This same millennial moment witnessed a great rise in multisectarian, populist movements toward the practice of tantric religion—esoteric to initiated practitioners and unconsciously shaping society for the uninitiated. This tantric shift had a tremendous impact on temple architecture, iconography, and the kinesthetic and philosophical implications of temple sculptural programs that have only recently begun to be studied in detail. Recent breakthroughs in the textual scholarship open new avenues of research for the study of the architectural remains.

It is at the confluence of these two major millennial shifts—dynastic-political and tantric-populist—that the Mēdapāṭa regional cohort of temples was built primarily in the AD 960s and 970s. In response to new research and to the intersection of these two millennial changes, I move away from long-established dynastic categories of architecture and style to begin to experimentally map the sectarian landscape, to map east–west fluvial geographies of style (as opposed to the current northwest dynastic axis that is more commonly used), and to map traces of millennial ritual and ephemera.

GEOGRAPHY AND DEMOGRAPHICS IN THE FIELD

In the twenty-first century the fierce competition between religious use and historical preservation creates a parallel dialectic between these two sites. Increased commodification of culture makes temples, ritual, and even ideas about temples available to be bought and sold.³ The Ambikā temple—halfway between Udaipur and Dūṅgarpur—is situated in a fairly isolated area. Politicians and erstwhile nobles banded together to draw on the numinous and martial powers of the goddess during an installation ceremony in 2002, held far from any political capital in the small village of Jagat during a ceremony that was nonetheless attended by members of the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party), government officials from the State of Rājāsthān, and members of erstwhile royalty who now live in Udaipur. True to the regal origins of the royal Ekliṅgī temple complex, current legal debates surrounding the site suggest the continued power of archaeology for the legitimization of kingship—even after the end of monarchy as a result of Indian independence in 1947. At both sites the archaeological remains themselves become hegemonic, at the very same time in the 1990s when Guha coined the phrase “dominance without hegemony” to refer to how power was exercised by the colonial state.⁴ In fact, it is no longer the bourgeois colonial elite who pretend to a hegemony that would never be theirs; the buildings themselves, as commodified objects and catalysts for praxis, allow new segments of society to stage powerful counterhegemonic

performances in and around archaeological sites. The hegemony of heritage in its unique capacity to serve as catalysts of counterhegemonic praxis simultaneously with hegemonic reification of existing power structures is not unique to these two Rājāsthani Hindu temples, nor to India or to Hinduism, nor to South Asia at large from the secular Sikh scholar's personal experience of art in the National Museum or the multisectarian ecumenical enjoyment of ritual at religious sites.⁵ Indeed, the dueling hegemony of heritage to produce both hegemonic and counterhegemonic visual discourse seems to be the number one defining scopic reality of the twenty-first century—as evidenced in the politicized administration of UNESCO and the role of monuments and icons old and new in the visual rhetoric of war.

The similarities between the modern commodified lives of these two temples call into question “post”-capitalist accumulation in an era when the old clichéd dichotomy of iconoclasm and iconophilia no longer serve to define what is important about these Hindu temples. Imported largely from a colonial Protestant perspective, and employed above all at the hands of Empire, the idea of destruction or figuration as the central defining feature of an icon has all but evaporated in the South Asian context across more than one religion.⁶ In fact, recent scholarship suggests that an almost Catholic interest in ritual may have provided an interesting counterpoint to that perspective historiographically when we reexamine the archives of the ASI (Archaeological Survey of India).⁷ Furthermore, Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci's ideas of hegemony have served as a source of inspiration for numerous postcolonial scholars, including Edward Said and, more recently, Hamid Dabashi, among others. The idea of praxis across class and caste lines as a powerful counterpoint to colonial hegemony is borne out quite fruitfully in the tremendous scope of ritual and traditional practices (*parampara* in Hindi) that take place at these sites today.

More and more frequently in the age of “late” capitalism, ancient sites are being put back into ritual use after lying dormant for centuries.⁸ The two temples that form the subject of this study have each experienced several deaths and rebirths over the past one thousand years.⁹ Even so, a teleological and chronological approach to their biographies would not suffice to reveal the nuanced complexities of how their histories compete in the twenty-first century and in specific points in time (the fifteenth century, the thirteenth century, and the tenth century of their origin). One history did not blindly and developmentally lead to the next; rather, in each period various actors and agents chose to ignore and to highlight the past in different ways to make political arguments about the present. Both temples have been renovated and used for ritual during periods of time and then left dormant for various reasons before being given new “lives” again. These two sites form prime examples of how the nature of the archaeological enterprise is rapidly changing both in Rājāsthān and in the greater global context today.

Current uses of these two archaeological sites produce accumulations of ritual residue that visually record the interests of their respective patrons, makers, and

ritual participants.¹⁰ Different groups currently lay claim to each site. A postcolonial mahārāṇā (CEO) uses his family’s Śrī Ekliṅgī temple complex to solidify the continuity of the House of Mewār in the age of the nation-state in India.¹¹ Simultaneously, householder priests continue to lead services in the complex, while gardener caste Mali women continue to sell flower garlands at the entrance today, as is pictured in eighteenth-century frescos inside the monastery. Meanwhile, in Jagat, multiple castes actively react to the Ambikā temple today. Lower caste, habitually disenfranchised Ādivāsi groups, such as Meenas and Bhils, have slowly expanded the powerful sphere of their local goddess, Mallar Mātā, as they exercise their counterhegemonic praxis in and around the Ambikā temple today, while in daily life the temple remains largely ignored by the economic and urban elite. In the village of Jagat, it is the Ādivāsis who have reconsecrated her sister Cāmuṇḍā within the archaeological compound of the ancient Ambikā temple. This goddess—so popular in the twenty-first century that she often eclipses her sister Ambā Mātā, who is the main icon in the temple sanctum—was also incredibly popular in this region in the tenth century, when the Ambikā temple was built. At the end of this book I will focus more closely on Cāmuṇḍā and her textual and iconographic position in medieval millennial North India as an evidential response to our twenty-first-century frame. The overarching comparison between the Ambikā temple in Jagat and the Ekliṅgī temple in Kailāśpurī illustrates how kings and nobles are not the only ones involved in praxis. Tailors and gardeners, Ādivāsi and Rajput women and men, city dwellers and countryside locals all use praxis to vie for hegemony and counterhegemonies at these ancient architectural sites. Local groups at both sites enter into dialogue with tourists, the state, and their own imagined pasts and futures through their indexical relationships to these ancient monuments.

Ekliṅgī and Jagat share an important modern tension between history and ritual. Both sites lie at the heart of competitive contests for authenticity. When R. C. Agrawala “discovered” Jagat in the mid-twentieth century, he was interested in iconography, historical analysis of inscriptions, and the preservation of fragments for a museum.¹² In a footnote, Agrawala mentions that the entry pavilion (*śubhamaṇḍapa*) at another tenth-century Mēdapāṭa temple, the Pippalāda Mātā temple in the village of Unwās, “is completely mutilated,” which suggests that people in the village had already undertaken drastic renovations before his article was written in 1964 (fig. 0.4).¹³ From an architectural historian’s perspective, one cannot glean much more information than the basics of the temple program.¹⁴ Ongoing construction, whitewashing, and painting at the site attest, instead, to the continuing power of this goddess (figs. 0.5 and 0.6). One could imagine this “post”-capitalist accumulation practice as a form of theft from history, from the Archaeological Survey, from the state, and, hence, from the people. Or one could argue that these “drastic renovations” result from the use of modern materials to implement ancient forms of renovation as a form of religious duty to instill merit in the patron.¹⁵



FIGURE 0.4. Pippalāda Mātā temple in Unwās, c. 960, Mēdapāṭa region. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 0.5. Kṣēmaṅkarī, Pippalāda Mātā temple, back wall, Unwās. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 0.6. Main icon, “Pippalāda Mātā (a folk version of Kṣēmaṅkarī?), Unwās. © Deborah Stein.

Can this praxis serve as a counterhegemonic answer to colonialism through use rather than preservation, or does this praxis indicate hegemonic Hindu nationalism with power inherited blindly from the colonial past? Furthermore, is this nationalist discourse hegemonic or counterhegemonic in relation to an increasingly privatized state resulting in increasingly privatized archaeological sites? The “complete mutilation” of the temple in Unwās lamented by R. C. Agrawala, the foremost indigenous scholar of southern Rājāsthani archaeological sites in 1964, begs new questions in the twenty-first century—an era imagined by some, in exile or in limbo, as a time when some global scholars may define their identity as “amphibious,” neither Western nor non-Western but entirely more complicated than that outdated binary. “A post-nativist amphibian intellectual,” according to Dabashi, “has his or her roots in the material reality that embraces both ‘home’ and ‘exile,’ a division that has in effect caused the initial intellectual labor migration.”¹⁶ From these new global perspectives, how does the hegemony of heritage reveal the specifics of “post”-capitalist accumulation of icons, buildings, and practices that radiate out from these catalysts?

Miles Glendinning, in his chapter “Heritage in the Age of Globalization: Post-1989,” addresses the “instability” of the concept of “authenticity” in terms of the



FIGURE 0.7. Old and new architecture and repairs comingle at the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple complex, Kailāśpurī, Rajasthan. Photo by author, 2002. © Deborah Stein.

apogee of a conflict between the global and the local resulting in the 1994 Nara Convention in Japan. According to Glendinning, “Definitions of authenticity, after all, had underpinned all doctrinal definitions from the 1964 Charter of Venice through to the outstanding universal values and operational guidelines of the World Heritage Convention.”¹⁷ The clash of local heritage management in Japan and increasingly global attempts to standardize heritage conservation in the early 1990s highlighted the problems with policing authenticity and taste resulting in “the radically new field of intangible heritage.” In a backlash against what came before, “the value attributed to any heritage object began to depend entirely on the present-day host culture.” Agrawala’s bemoaning of a loss of authentic architecture in 1964 may have been celebrated by others in the living buildings of the 1990s, whereas in the twenty-first century it would be interesting to find a way these two visions are not mutually exclusive so that buildings’ histories are not erased and the buildings are able to serve multiple uses, including both local archaeological and religious ritual uses in the field.

Recent studies have suggested the antiquity of tracts of land largely beyond state control in the region of Chhapa, where the Ambikā temple in Jagat is found.¹⁸ Historically, the Śrī Ekliṅgī complex (fig. 0.7) lay in the heart of ancient Mēdapāṭa, now known as Mewār (fig. 0.8). The Ambikā temple, however, has alternately been ruled from Mewār or Vagada, when it was not in a vacuum of power. Located in the village of Jagat, the Ambikā temple (fig. 0.9) is two hours’ drive south of

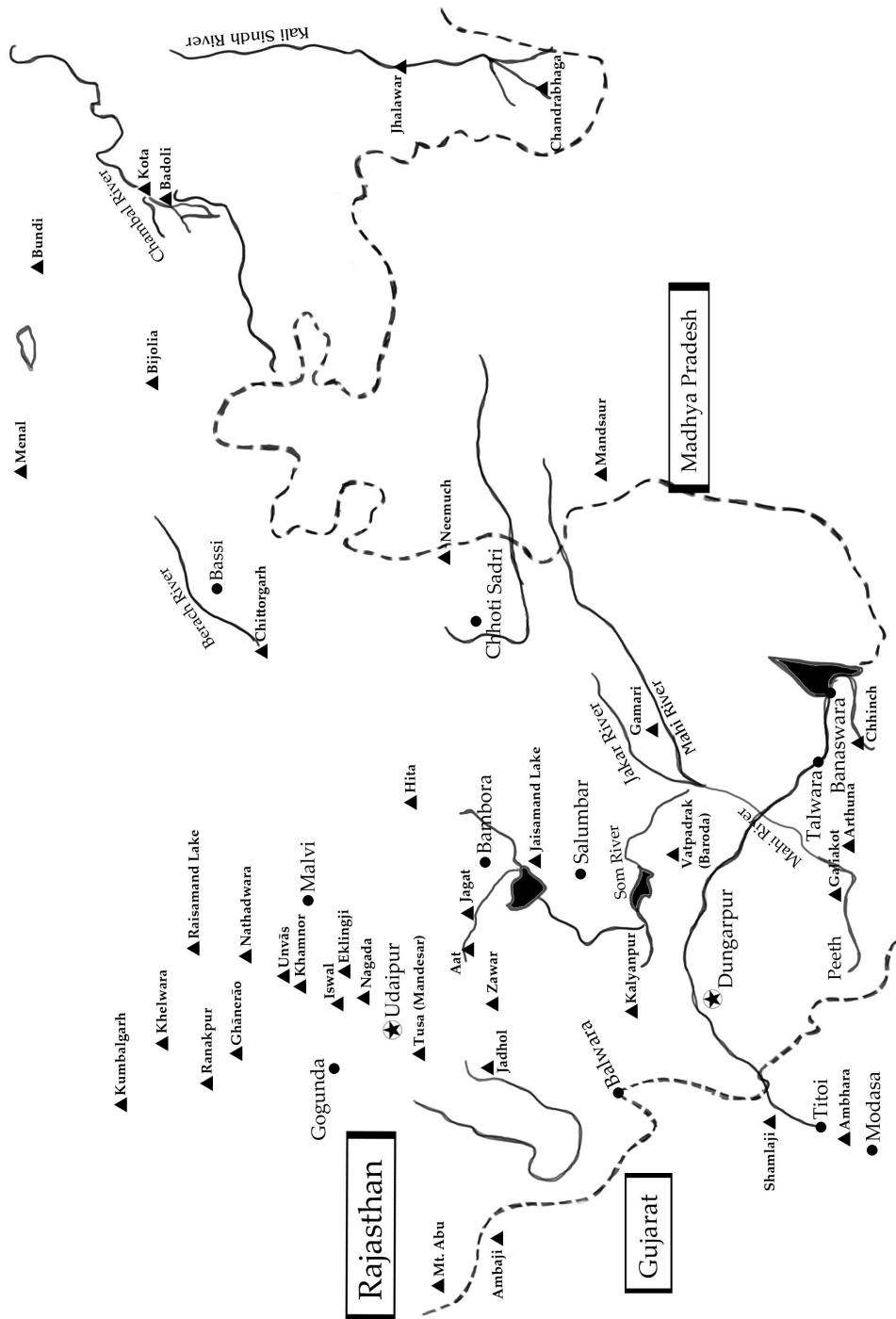


FIGURE 0.8. Map of sites in modern Mewar and Dūngarpur—ancient territories of Mēdapāṭa (north, near modern capital of Udaipur), Chhapa (middle Zawar [Jāwar]/Aat/Jagat), Vagada (south, near modern capital of Dūngarpur), and Upamālā (northeast, from Chittorgarh to Menal and Bijolia).



FIGURE 0.9. Ambikā temple, c. 960, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

the modern capital of Mewār, Udaipur. Jagat lies in a hilly region once known as Chhapa. In the thirteenth century the Guhila ruler Sāmanta Singh made Chhapa a part of the Vagada Empire when he left the Mewār throne to his brother to become the mahārawal of Vagada.¹⁹ These two Guhila royal houses still exist today—as do intact communities and villages of Bhils, Meenas, and Rājput descendants near each of the temples in this study.

The continuity and rupture found in the material, iconographic, stylistic, inscriptional, and kinesthetic architectural remains at these sites today help to clarify the hegemony of heritage in the twenty-first century. In discussing the nineteenth century in Britain, Hobsbawm reminds us that “‘traditions’ which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented.”²⁰ Much of what we see in the field in Rājāsthān today harks back to the Victorian era as well, when the Royal Titles Act (passed on April 27, 1876) made Victoria the empress inheritor of Mughal power.²¹ Rather than attempt to specifically date each tradition we encounter at archaeological sites in southern Rājāsthān in the twenty-first century, it seems more fruitful to keep in mind a broader definition of the “invention of tradition,” defined by Hobsbawm as “a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.”²²

Understanding the role of visual material sheds light on some of the violence surrounding monuments in the postcolonial era. The existing art historical literature on the temples of Mēdapāṭa falls largely on the side of architectural preservation, whereas religious studies scholars privilege ritual practice at ancient sites. Historically, an interest in visual material has led art historians to consider modern renovations as a form of destruction of the archaeological record rather than as an addition to a series of changes. Some are tempted to view practice at archaeological sites as a direct, unchanged continuation of past practices. One of the most cogent reasons to resist the rhetoric of continuity is that religious nationalism often gives rise to communal violence. Religious buildings and icons incite crowds to riot, to burn people alive.²³

Moving beyond artistic intention does not negate the importance of the moment of making. A temple is not built by a single mind for a sole purpose; it is a collage of patron's interests, guilds' aesthetic habits and choices, and the diverse body of people who consecrate and use the site. Antiquity makes a site better adapted to modern religious activity. Continuity may exist in the same cult using a site over a thousand years, yet site use changes—a reflection of the concerns of the moment. Whether we legitimize the collection of a cult's expression as a continual chain or as a discontinuous record of rupture is largely political.

The physicality of permanent stone and ephemeral offerings tells a story that would be lost in inscriptions and texts alone. Jules Prown has defined material culture as “the study through artifacts of the beliefs—values, ideas, attitudes, and assumptions—of a particular community or society at a given time.”²⁴ One of the most powerful possibilities of material culture lies in the attention to what is not intentional. Prown suggests we must extend our inquiry to include objects beyond art and icon. If we use the term “artifact”—not in the nineteenth-century sense of depreciation of the art of the “other” but rather as permission to include “butter” and “vermilion” alongside “stone” itself—conventional art historical cornerstones such as style can illuminate more when combined with a deeper understanding of context.

Man-made, and in this study I would argue woman-modified, objects “reflect, consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, the beliefs of individuals who made, commissioned, purchased, or used them, and by extension the beliefs of the larger society to which they belonged.”²⁵ Material culture offers art historians a chance to expand the realm of objects within reach. Ethnographic practice no longer serves as a colonial key to oppressing the other but rather as a potentially liberating experiment in highlighting counterhegemonic praxis on the part of people whose agency was almost always ignored intersectionally owing to gender and class as well as the counterhegemonic praxis of others who experience themselves as economically empowered local stewards of culture.²⁶ This study examines the sacred tree alongside temple architecture, the photograph at the village bus stand alongside the original black schist goddess up the hill, and the nine kilos of flour

snowing over the four faces of Śiva on the black schist *lingam* at Ekliṅgī during the annual festival of Mahāśivrātri. These objects offer a wider field of inquiry both past and present to include things made and used by people who do not belong to the elite. A second goal of this study is to find ways to cull history and the present for the unintentional remnants of subjective positions, beliefs, ideas, and experiences rather than the imposition of a singular overarching historiographic frame. Whereas an inscription, a tantric text, and to some extent even a great piece of architecture attempt to control future reception for specific aims, kinetic approaches to architecture and traces of missing ephemeral elements of ritual are just a few new ways to investigate the material culture of early medieval northwestern India.

DIACHRONICITIES IN THE FIELD

A small geographical area of inquiry allows us to toy with time. The choice of a diachronic model for this study was not premeditated but rather stemmed from the material and performative data in the field. Temples that I intended to study from a uniquely historical perspective—as if a viewpoint that is hermeneutically sealed really exists—were in active use between 1998 and 2009 on all visits. The pinnacle of this contemporary use was the goddess installation, or *pratiṣṭhā*, in Jagat in May of 2002 and the theft of the goddess Ambā Mātā, which preceded this ritual.

Theoretically, diachronic models abound. Rooted in a post-1968 shift across academic disciplines, time can now be nonlinear. Historical time can look like a sine wave in trigonometric terms.²⁷ Time can be bardic, oral, or aural.²⁸ Time can be ephemeral or permanent. Time changes in different eras and regions and contexts, and these differences are political choices the historian can choose to engage with or ignore.²⁹ Time can move backward or forward, so for this project it felt somehow more honest as a historian of art to move backward from the present into the past. Here I seek to make the frame visible as a postcolonial act in which readers are given the information they need to reveal to themselves the histories they personally believe and why.

We have recently cemented the end of the relentless relativism of postmodernism, which seemed to suppress the existence of facts at all. Today, the relativism in this text does not negate facts. This study attempts to make the facts sing, dance, and argue with each other as they compete across four distinct time periods. There is no singular fact, but there are facts. The future lies in our ability to navigate these complex webs of facts across history from multiple perspectives to understand the politics of what we consciously and unconsciously believe and why. The conclusion of this malleable dance through time will allow the reader to navigate several sets of facts with a newfound temporal agility. Contrast this agility with colonial “dead time,” whereby the “objectification of the past as a thing to seize and possess

comes as easily to the capitalist in the sphere of culture as in that of commodity production,” and with living time, the opposite of an appropriation of the past, which makes “time, dead time, into a thing before grasping it by one’s will.”³⁰

Although this study focuses on a comparison of two important sites within a key medieval area of northwestern India, the diachronic approach reveals a phenomenon on the rise in twenty-first-century India. With urbanization of rural areas, influxes of money from within and from the diaspora abroad, deregulation, and privatization, archaeological sites are increasingly being put back into religious use after centuries of dormancy. This book tracks the fantasies held in the twenty-first century and how these varied imaginings of the past lead different groups to different points in time. Whereas a modern mahārāṇā may look to the eighth and fifteenth centuries for dynastic origin myths and bardic inscriptions, Western scholars may focus on the tenth-century material remains of tantra, and nationalists may look away from this region to focus on “Islamic” iconoclasm (missing entirely in the very early records of early modern industry on a global scale).

The Guhila dynasty’s patronage of stone monument building in the second half of the tenth century CE was only the beginning of an interest in using aesthetics and religion to solidify political power. An inscription at Ekliṅgī indicates how “the site had largely fallen out of use for a few centuries before the installation of a new *lingam* in 1545 CE.”³¹ Local legend corroborates this theory in oral history.³² From the sixteenth century to the present, the Ambikā temple complex and the Ekliṅgī temple complex have lent their authority to kings, to architectural guilds, to *jātis* (subcastes or guilds) such as tailors, to shamans, to Ādivāsis, to the ASI, and to tourists. This historical evidence supports the foundation of this project, a year of fieldwork in southern Rājāsthān in 2002.

Neighboring Gujarat cast a violent shadow over Rājāsthān in 2002 when a train returning from Ayodhyā to Godhra was set on fire and weeks of unmitigated communal riots ensued.³³ Meanwhile, the erstwhile nobility of Mewār strove to maintain a precarious balance of power at archaeological sites. Regal hegemony had disintegrated with the end of the princely states of the colonial era, the birth of the nation in the mid-twentieth century, and the rapidly changing economics of a global market economy in the twenty-first century.

My informants resisted interviews, for the most part, and instead encouraged me to participate fully in every way. Mali women graciously allowed me to join them in selling flower garlands at the entrance to Ekliṅgī, to learn about the economy of divinity and devotion. The Rājput women of Jagat dressed me in their Rājāsthāni saris, woke me at four in the morning, and taught me to prepare *chapati* dough ornaments for Daśamātāpūjā, or the Festival of Mother Ten (fig. 0.10). Their counterhegemonic praxis serves as a powerful counterpart to reading theory—agency is not only found in words but also in actions, or performance.

Participation by no means erased my outsider identity, however. Aside from the comic relief engendered by the creator of this serious research project, my

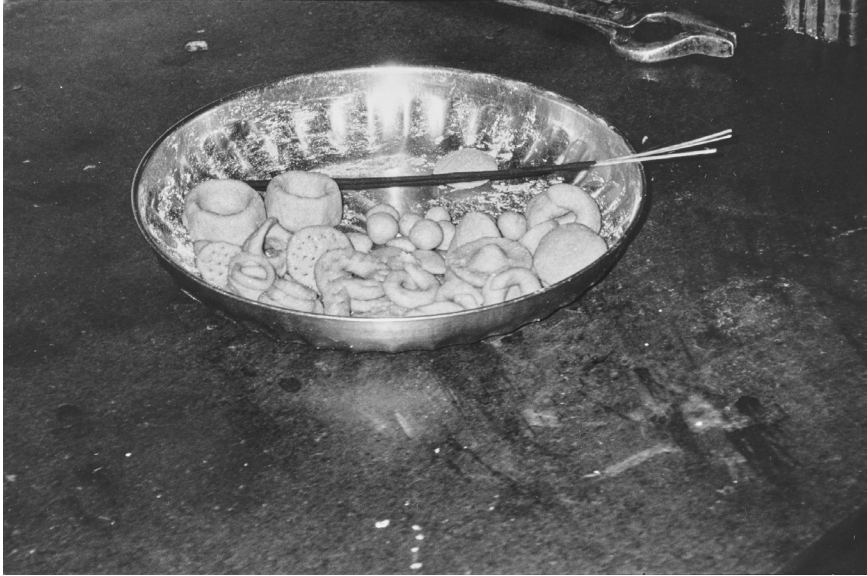


FIGURE 0.10. *Chapati* dough ornaments, 2002, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

participation allowed me to experience the ritual through the senses in a way that discussion after the fact would preclude. This embodied approach to fieldwork created a unique source for dialogue with those who habitually performed the rites. Unlike male textual scholars, whose participation often becomes enmeshed with altering the liturgy (or even sponsoring the ritual in the case of Frits Staal),³⁴ my dual status as a young female and as a scholar allowed access to the worlds of children's rooftops and women's kitchens, as well as men's more public, political, and religious spheres.

Art history has conventionally dealt with the past. But many have begun to engage the study of ancient Indian art with the present in innovative ways, although few have questioned the impact of history and the present on the future of Indian patrimony. Art historians' interest in visual material makes them particularly concerned with the future of monuments and artifacts outside the protection of archives, museums, and libraries. UNESCO increasingly interfaces with local heritage groups in an effort to coordinate relevant branches of governments.³⁵ The urgency of these projects stems from unregulated development, theft, looting, and exponential increases in tourism. Even though the discipline of art history and international organizations such as UNESCO understand their mission as preservation, living temples complicate matters.

To preserve history is, in many ways, to kill it. This book examines the many ways in which different Indian people continue to use ancient temples to construct



FIGURE 0.11. Painting the sanctum gold, Ambikā temple, May 2002, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

their own histories. The result is not always the preservation of a building. In fact, at times, buildings are defaced when locals decide to refresh a deity's home. The book explores this tension between preservation and use. The theoretical premises that inform any choice regarding preservation, conservation, renovation, or use directly affect the visual qualities of an ancient site in the present and in the future. If use is privileged to respect living icons in living monuments, then a tenth-century sanctum and sculpted doorframe may be painted metallic gold as part of an installation ceremony (fig. 0.11).

This trace of ritual practice permanently marks the ancient temple in the present. Just as Mahārāṇā Kumbhā's choices created the history received five hundred years later, the gold paint on the doorframe of the Ambikā temple might well color historians' understanding of the site five hundred years from now. Many groups vie for the power to control these sites. The hegemony of heritage lies in its political power to harness visual culture and performance, to define identities, and to control visual rhetoric. In the postcolonial context especially, the control of heritage is the construction of the future. The tension between a desire to preserve historic monuments in situ and the hope of reconsecrating historically sacred places is quite fierce.³⁶

Through an examination of the history of renovation via ancient inscriptions and architecture, we learn that reconstruction was often considered not just legitimate but meritorious. This indigenous aesthetic clashes considerably with the ideal of romantic ruins, an idea that grew from the rise of tourism and new forms of leisure during the industrial revolution in the West. The nostalgia for the past created by the mechanization of the present has led to a great interest in archiving archaeological monuments. During the colonial era in India, the ability to take a vast subcontinent full of historic buildings and record this patrimony in two-dimensional forms such as drawings, plans, and photographs enabled a form of possession and hegemony that could be realized visually.³⁷ The duty to reconstruct and the need to preserve ancient monuments continue to lead to conflict. This tension manifests itself in the composite visual culture of ancient sites such as the Ambikā temple complex in Jagat and the Eklingji temple complex in Kailāśpurī. Although these buildings seem immovable, they become cultural commodities both as fragments and as a whole.³⁸ The hegemony of heritage in southern Rājasthān in the twenty-first century lies in the control of these valuable commodities.

THE TEMPLE AS CATALYST

Heritage is always a construction of the present. The choice to read temples via geography rather than dynasty yields different answers to different questions. How to marry the mythic and the material through time? Current rituals look to the past for authenticity, yet, like Baudelaire's insistence on anachronistic modernity in the depiction of antiquity, we, too, are forced to recognize the palimpsest of pasts that concoct present-day heritage. Whether we are dating the royal glory of Mewār to the fifteenth century, or revealing Marxist histories of industrial development through nineteenth-century preservationist nostalgia, or investigating the potentially feminist histories of tantric immediacy and a tenth-century rise in populist belief systems, heritage engages several historic moments simultaneously.

Purportedly about the past, heritage actually engages the future. How will a building or an archaeological site look twenty, fifty, one hundred, or even one

thousand years from now? Julia Bryan-Wilson has put forth this idea of the impossibility of a universal sign on the scale of a nuclear marker, yet, in less radioactive terms, we can read the traces intentionally left for us in inscriptions of half a millennium ago.³⁹ These inscriptional traces tell a story of a dynasty and its regal origins in the myth of Bappa Rāwal—a myth itself only half the age of the dynasty it seeks to describe. In contrast, the material traces of the Śaiva saint Lakulīśa and early medieval tantric goddesses such as Kṣēmaṅkarī and Cāmuṇḍā reveal striking parallels with twenty-first-century ritual at archaeological sites in southern Rājāsthān. Whether a postcolonial mahārāṇā seeks to control research access to his family temple or whether a group of people in a rapidly developing tribal area of Chhapa engage in installation rituals for a stolen goddess, the material traces of history seem to supersede inscriptional evidence in the visual tales they tell of past religious and artistic practices and future aesthetic and political choices. The hegemony of heritage lies not in the past at all but in the power of people in situ to control the aesthetics of a monument—to curate the future from the field itself.

Temple as Geographic Marker

Mapping the Tenth-Century Sectarian Landscape

South Asian art histories have generally relied on style as an indicator of dynastic groupings. Formalist data was taken as geopolitical evidence to name regions and periods. The Ambikā temple and the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple complex are part of the larger regional cohort known as the Mēdapāṭa School of architecture.¹ This geographic group—named from Sanskrit inscriptional evidence—became a chapter of the *Encyclopedia of Indian Temple Architecture* focused on the patronage of the Guhila dynasty. Though stylistic affinities clearly exist, many of the sites provide no inscriptional evidence or any outside textual evidence to suggest that Guhila leaders, or even subsidiaries to the Guhilas, sponsored them.²

The force of an intense fifty-year building campaign in a small region reflects more of a political transition than was common across northwestern India in the millennial era. Architectural efflorescence in this transitional time suggests the rise of many fledgling dynasties in the wake of Pratihāra collapse. The move from a large empire to a vacuum of power, to a multitude of tiny Rājput kingdoms resulted in a scramble to construct a solar or lunar dynastic lineage, as well as a proclivity to sponsor buildings in distinct regional styles—as if the architectonic mark on the land itself was the best way to prove newfound territorial and political dominion.

Meanwhile, many temples fell outside the narrowly controlled areas of dynastic prowess and remained in regions of undetermined polity, where individuals and groups freely sponsored religious and artistic projects with no reference to a ruler at all. This is the case of the Ambikā temple in Jagat, as well as the Pippalāda Mātā temple in Unwās—both dedicated, not accidentally, to the goddess and, more significantly, to new mantric and tantric forms of worship and iconography symptomatic of populist trends in millennial religious practice, beliefs, and writings.

In contrast, the tenth-century Lakuliśa temple at the site of the fifteenth-century Śrī Eklingī temple clearly links the practice of Pāśupata Śaivism to the Guhila dynasty. Whether these sites had tenth-century inscriptions linking them dynastically to the Guhilas or not, many reflect emerging stylistic changes that may reflect temporal changes in praxis in relation to the temples in their role as catalysts of ritual behavior and social interaction.

The limitation of one figural representation of a deity per wall recalls many North Indian Gupta sites, such as Deogarh, which represent the initial shift from abstract representations of deities in the form of sacrificial fire toward the figural emanation of deities on the temple wall.³ By the tenth century, this modest temple program of one deity per wall, as found at Unwās in Mēdapāṭa, coexisted with a more complex formula of increased figuration that was more and more widespread. This figuration seems to parallel the rise of tantra, a form of worship that requires systematic sequences of gestures (*mudras*), sounds (*mantras*), and actions to awaken the deity in one's own body or in a stone icon (*mūrti*). Specific iconographic sets leave vestigial traces of ritual in stone. These tantalizing parallels have yet to be studied fully since textual scholars do not do the same kind of temple fieldwork that art historians do, whereas art historians who know Sanskrit may still not be aware of the full body of texts that Sanskrit scholars know. Recent translations of multiple tantric texts over the past two decades make it possible for the first time to begin to have a better geographic grid in stone temple waypoints of tantric practice, as well as to have a better sense at any one given site of what those rituals might entail.⁴

The most elaborate exterior sculptural program of this set of Mahā-Gurjara-style architecture is the Mīrāṇ temple at Ahar. The fabric of the temple wall exhibits an extremely complex sculptural program. This density of figural decoration parallels the temple's place in the stylistic development of Mēdapāṭa. The temple wall of the Mīrāṇ temple at Ahar, according to Dhaky,

stands at the turning point of the stylistic era and hence historically it is an important document of what happened at that time, especially because the two other schools—Anarta and Arbuda—of the Mahā-Gurjara style have lost their countable buildings of those very crucial last two decades of the century. The building possesses several typical late Mahā-Gurjara formal and emotive features, but also foreshadows what was to come with the dawning of the Māru-Gurjara style in the first quarter of the eleventh century.⁵

With the evolution of architectural style throughout the medieval period came increasingly complex temple programs on the exterior walls. The content of these early medieval programs at Ahar, Jagat, Unwās, Hita, and Bāḍoli suggest a specific attention to tantric and mantric worship, with a prevalence of Sadāśiva/Pāśupata five-faced *liṅga*, the central placement of the tutelary goddess Kṣēmaṅkarī (whose name stems from the mantric seed syllable “Kṣa”), the pairing of Nateśa and

Cāmuṇḍā independent of other *mātrkāś* (which finds its corollary today in current folk worship of Bērujī [Bhairava] and Cāmuṇḍā throughout southern Rājāsthān), and vestigial traces of dance in the form of architectural pavilions, inscriptions, or iconographic representation of dancing deities.

A nondynastic approach allows us to imagine these temples in two distinct clusters running east to west rather than one large cohort along a north–south axis. New evidence from fieldwork in 2009 suggests a southern group with non-dynastic stylistic affinities running east to west along the Tiri and Mahi Rivers that flow into the Narmada and toward the historically fruitful plains of Malwa. A second northern group suggests a Pāśupata sectarian confluence of temples running east to west along the Banas River; this reading suggests that sites previously categorized as part of the Upamāla area actually have a sociohistorical link with some of the Mēdapāṭa area temples in the northern part of that cluster.⁶ To frame the discussion, this map uses fluvial mapping to link the sites rather than a general dynastic grouping (see fig. 0.8).

I begin this chapter by mapping the Pāśupata-Śiva sectarian landscape across Upamāla and northern Mēdapāṭa along the Banas River, followed by a discussion of the tantric, mantric, and goddess sites located in the southern part of Mēdapāṭa. Two previously unpublished temple sites, the Lakulīśa temple at Āṭṭ and the Nateśa temple at Hita, extend the reaches of this nondynastic, populist, and seemingly highly tantric southern region along the Mahi and Tiri Rivers. From Upamāla into Mēdapāṭa along the northern stretches flows the Banas River. From Chandrabhaga, Bijoliā, Bāḍoli, and Menāl, past Chittorgarh, toward Khamnor, Īswāl, Nāgadā/Ekliṅgi, and Udaipur, the general migration of this river parallels the geographic waypoints that the Guhilas and Sisodias used to construct their power. Similarly, and perhaps more importantly, Pāśupata-Śiva monastic retreats and temple clusters also seem to unfold along the same general route between c. 950 and c. 1200. Here I focus on the second half of the tenth century, primarily in northern Mēdapāṭa.

THE GUHILAS AND THEIR PĀŚUPATA PATRON SAINT, LAKULĪŚA

The Guhila dynasty used three different programmatic styles—auxiliary figures, the lone deity, and completely blank temple walls—to articulate power to different audiences, whereas temples without an inscriptional reference to dynastic affiliation in tenth-century Mēdapāṭa and Upamāla tend to follow a rich iconographic style with auxiliary figures complementing deities on exterior walls. A massive schist icon of Lakulīśa found inside the temple attests to the historical importance of this Pāśupata leader as the actual ruler of Mēdapāṭa. The Guhilas styled themselves regents of God. The Pāśupata sect considers Lakulīśa—the one who carries a *lakula* (club)—to be the last incarnation of Śiva. This founder of the Pāśupata



FIGURE 1.1. Lakuliṣa temple, c. 971, Ekliṅgi. © Deborah Stein.

sect is also found in the lintel of the doorway of the Lakuliṣa temple at Ekliṅgi.⁷ He came from Karvana and lived sometime in the second century CE. Lakuliṣa had four pupils—Kusika, Gargya, Krusha, and Maitreya—who gave rise to four branches of Pāśupata-Śaivism. The Lakuliṣa temple inscription, located to the left of the temple entrance, suggests that the ascetics of Ekliṅgi were part of the Kusika lineage.⁸ The powerful Paramāra dynasty, which built the temples at Arthuna in the early eleventh century, was also Pāśupata-Śiva. To the east Lakuliṣa was worshipped at tenth-century sites such as Bijoliā in Uparamāla territories; and to the south, in the Lata country and in Anarta, Lakuliṣa was worshipped in his celebrated birthplace. By espousing this Pāśupata leader, the Guhilas could establish their independent territories as Pratihāra power dwindled in the region.

From an iconographical point of view, the Lakuliṣa temple is the most austere temple of the Mēdapāṭa group (fig. 1.1). The overall program of the Lakuliṣa temple is quite unusual. Its original plan lacks almost any figural depiction of deities. This temple does not even have an emanation of the main icon on the exterior wall of the inner sanctum. Since the main icon represents the founder of a sect—a saint of sorts, rather than a deity per se—he might not have necessitated a corresponding emanation on the back wall. Despite his lack of representation on the temple exterior, Lakuliṣa was indeed commonly represented as an emanation of Śiva on the exterior niches of temples. In fact, only one large sculpture of a deity is found near the entrance, leaving the walls fairly devoid of ornamentation.



FIGURE 1.2. Saraswatī, Lakuliśa temple, Ekliṅgī. © Deborah Stein.

An image of Saraswatī, the goddess of learning and the arts, flanks the entrance of the Lakuliśa temple to indicate a center of learning and may well provide the only extant example of a sculptural version of Saraswatī in situ on a tenth-century building known to have been associated with the acquisition of knowledge (fig. 1.2). Saraswatī rarely graced sculptural programs of tenth-century temples. Even unusual evidence, such as the inscription at the base of a female figure, does not provide a similar visual example of Saraswatī. Previously known as King Bhoja's Saraswatī from Dhar, a sculpture now housed in the British Museum bears an inscription linking it to a royally sponsored university.⁹ Saraswatī's association with learning and the arts is well known, but the inscribed sculpture provides evidence only for her association with sites of learning and not for her visual representation within an architectural context.¹⁰ She holds in her hand an elephant goad, a typical attribute of this goddess, who prods her disciples toward ever-greater acquisition of knowledge, an item that is even mentioned in guru-disciple initiation rites in Abhinavagupta's writings on tantra.¹¹

The paucity of sculptural form aside from this single goddess may reflect the audiences who used the Lakuliśa temple. A monastic audience would not have needed visual support to guide the body through space during circumambulation. Alternatively, this temple may have been used for *guru darśan*, which did not necessitate circumambulation or any form of practice that would require the animation of the central icon performed with a prayer manual.¹² The building



FIGURE 1.3. Śivēśvara temple, c. 950s–70s, Eklingī.
© Deborah Stein.

may have served as a monastic meeting space or lecture hall. Given the uncertain date of the main icon, it is even possible a living guru presided over some type of assembly. The inscription offers further evidence of the philosophical debates that may have taken place inside.¹³ The visual pairing of the inscription with a statue of Sarasvatī may indicate a learned ascetic audience for this shrine. Those who used this building may not have needed elaborate emanations of deities to guide their already sophisticated practice. This temple may have served a set of Pāśupata ascetics in residence at Eklingī.¹⁴

In contrast to the reserved simplicity of the Lakulīśa temple, the Śivēśvara temple in the Eklingī temple complex and the Takṣakēśvara temple found in the gorge nearby are much more typical of Mēdapāṭa temples in the second half of the tenth century CE (fig. 1.3). Guardians protect the corners of both buildings and *surasundarī* figures twist to either side of wall niches. Whereas the Viṣṇu temple has *vyālas*, the Śiva temple does not. The Śivēśvara temple and the Takṣakēśvara temple are undated but roughly contemporaneous with the Lakulīśa temple. The ornament and the texture of the temple wall are neither sectarian nor chronological. Temples in a spare style and in a more complex style coexist in tenth-century Mēdapāṭa. Although the carving of *surasundarīs* on the Takṣakēśvara temple is better executed, both temples evidence certain stylistic features common to the Mēdapāṭa School, such as the triangular forms above the window (*simhakarna*). Although the Lakulīśa temple is relatively unornamented, some decorative features such as the window screen (*candravalokana*) are typical of the Mēdapāṭa School. The quality of masonry of the Lakulīśa temple, together with the complex, multifigured formula of the Takṣakēśvara temple program, were preceded by an exquisite example of Mēdapāṭa architecture.

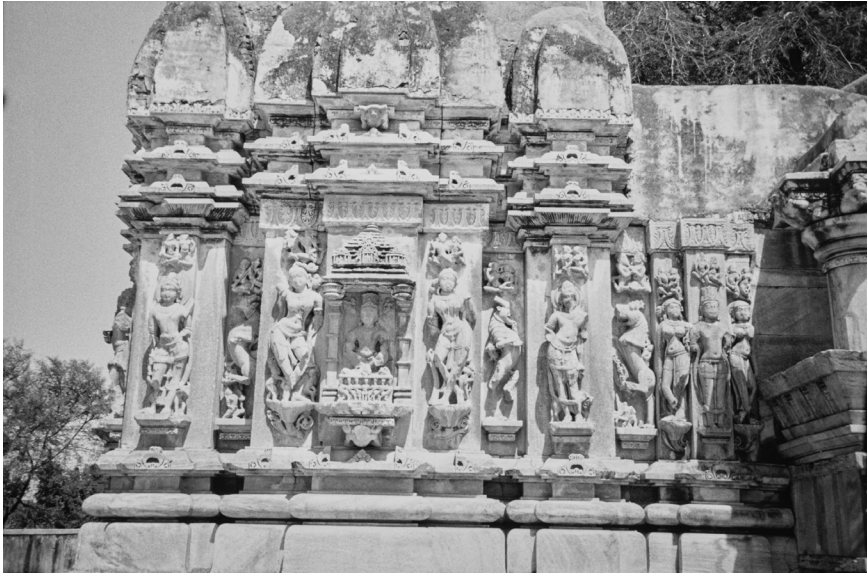


FIGURE 1.4. Sūrya on his seven-horse chariot, c. 950–75, Ṭūṣa. © Deborah Stein.

One of the earliest works of tenth-century Mahā-Gurjara architecture in Mēdapāṭa is the Śaivaite Sūrya shrine at Ṭūṣa built, in all likelihood, under the reign of Bhartṛpaṭṭa in the second quarter of the tenth century.¹⁵ Like the Ambikā temple at Jagat, the Sūrya temple at Ṭūṣa repeats three manifestations of the same deity adorning the exterior walls of the *garbhagrha* in each of the niches found on the three *bhadra* wall protrusions (fig. 1.4). In similar fashion Sūrya is flanked by two *surasundarīs* who are flanked by *vyālas*. The *dikpālas* guard the four corners of the shrine. In contrast with the Takṣakēśvara shrine, which shares this basic iconographic structure, the sculpture complements the protrusions and recesses in the temple wall. The presence of couples above the heads of the figures is a shared feature with the Ambikā temple, although here they sit rather awkwardly above the full figures without any architectural articulation, whereas at Jagat the couples sit on shelves within their own defined space.

The sculpture of Mēdapāṭa is known for a balance between rounded flesh and crisp, finely linear carving, as is exemplified by the *surasundarī* in figure 1.5. The *tribhanga* (three-bend) pose makes it seem as if her girdle is swaying with her movement, and the articulation of her stomach is unsurpassed in this region. The sculptors have captured the way her flesh gently protrudes over the top of her waistline by indicating the beginning of fabric, with only a delicately carved line, and the flattening of flesh above her belt. This way of representing a standard set of female forms atop lotuses exemplifies the regional style of Mēdapāṭa



FIGURE 1.5 Surasundarī, Tūṣa. © Deborah Stein.

sculptors. The poses repeated on temples dedicated to Viṣṇu, Sūrya, Śiva, and Durgā-Mahiṣāsura-mardini in the region indicate that they were a multisectarian architectural element dependent much more on the political and aesthetic choice of a *sūtradhāra*'s, mason's, or patron's style than on any particular religious text or convention. Their presence has been understood as formal (expression of artist's style), as decorative (*alaṅkāra*), and as a sign of celestial inhabitants of a regal heavenly palace (temple as *prasāda* [palace]), and could well have been used in tantric practices to harness the viewer's concentration in pairs on each exterior wall of the temple (as a set of four pairs of celestial maidens).¹⁶

Perhaps it is not by chance that the earliest religious monument in the Mēdapāṭa region is dedicated to the sun god, Sūrya.¹⁷ Sūrya worship has been associated with the Hunas and the Gurjara-Pratihāras, whose decline made way for Guhila autonomy. The Guhilas, however, were not of Huna stock. They may have descended from Nagara Brahmans in Gujarat and wanted to cover up their nonaristocratic origins.¹⁸ The Guhilas also may have come from Bhils, who were trying to Aryanize themselves to take power.¹⁹ This is the first temple of this type in this region, so it may indicate a regional form that was adapted to include local deities and beliefs. Mahā-Gurjara architecture first became a local signature of the Guhila dynasty while still using deities (such as Sūrya) that may have had powerful associations with foreign forms of worship.

RETHINKING ART REGIONS IN EARLY MEDIEVAL MĒDAPĀṬA AND UPARAMĀLA

Geography illuminates networks that were previously ignored because they were not dynastic. Previously understood as a puzzling add-on to the stylistic group of Mēdapāṭa regional temples, the Ambikā goddess temple in Jagat had no connection to any dynasty for the first two centuries after it was built. Architecturally, the Ambikā temple in Jagat was grouped in a field that ran along a roughly north-south axis from the Jain temple of Ghāṇērāo; to the cluster of primarily Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava temples around modern-day Udaipur, including Ahar, Nāgadā, Īswāl, and Unwās; extending farther south to Ṭūṣa; and ending with the Ambikā temple in Jagat. The architectural and sculptural evidence for stylistic commonalities among these groups suggests a coherent network of masons and patrons, but a closer look at these temples as “markers of time and space” may make it possible to trace the spread of ideas—more specifically, populist tantric ideas—along two separate rivers following an east-west axis instead.²⁰

Temple towns, known previously from an archaeological and inscriptional record, often have no dynastic connection whatsoever and appear at first glance to exist in isolation from any nearby temples. Historically, sites such as the Ambikā temple in Jagat were then assigned a stylistic category—in this case, Mahā-Gurjara.²¹ Mason then built on the Mahā-Gurjara architectural category with a

cogent analysis of sculpture in which she argues that the distribution of weight shifts from low to the ground in the west, and the center of gravity for the sculpted body moves higher as the sculpture is found farther east. Stylistic variants on plumb line and weight in sculptural production moved on a west–east axis as well.

New discoveries in the archaeological record further suggest an east–west orientation along two rivers: the Banas to the north and the Som to the south. Based on two new temples in the vicinity of Jagat, the tenth-century record of the region seems to shift to orient along the Som River and other tributaries of the Som draining into the Narmada, which runs from central India in Madhya Pradesh into the Bay of Khambhat in Gujarat, just under the Mēdapāṭa region where the cluster of Māru-Gurjara-style temples cluster geographically.

As a result of new archaeological evidence and fluvial mapping, the entire Mēdapāṭa and Upamāla regions need to be redrawn in new nondynastic ways. The unpublished and largely unknown site of Hita, made evident only in the new construction of a superhighway in Rājāsthān, has a sculpture of Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardīnī so similar to the sculpture of Jagat's Ambikā temple that, based on visual evidence alone, one could argue it was the same artist's hand or at least the same workshop. Hita lies east of Jagat and very close to the same latitudinal location. In fact, Jālōr, Jāwar, Āṭṭ, Jagat, and Hita all lie along a similar latitudinal line at the fringes of the Som River, which flows into the Mahi River—an east–west thoroughfare at the base of northwestern India leading into modern-day Madhya Pradesh and out into the Bay of Khambhat.

Geography and newly discovered tenth-century temples may begin to answer some age-old questions. What was a goddess's temple on the southern stretches of Mēdapāṭa doing there alone, with no trace of dynastic affiliation and no other temples nearby? Were there other sites with stylistic or sectarian similarities closer to Jagat? In fact, there were. The preeminent historian Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha collected rubbings of inscriptions in the field from a wide region covering Dūṅgarpur, Vagada, Chhapa, and Mewār. From these records, now housed in the archives of the royal family of Dūṅgarpur, Ojha translated these regions into historical narratives of early medieval Rājāsthān. Working from his book *Dungarpur Rajya ka Itihas* and following in his footsteps, I traveled in 2002, looking for these original inscriptions. As an art historian, I was most interested in the pedestals, sculptures, and architectural monuments where the rubbings had been made. The Juna Mahal collections in Dūṅgarpur had rubbings of well-known and published inscriptions, such as the four earliest inscriptions found on the columns of the Ambikā temple in Jagat, but also included inscriptions from sites I assumed to be primarily textual and not found on temples at all.²³ Luck proved me wrong, and I stumbled on the site of Āṭṭ, where the foundations of no fewer than thirteen subshrines, a gateway similar to the *torāṇa* at Nāgadā, and a standing structure awaited. There—literally in a field adjacent—significant sculptural remains added to the evidence of a fairly large tantric temple center complete with a maṭha or

possibly a *dharmśālā* (guesthouse for pilgrims) right next door, half buried in the dirt. Āaṭ forever changed how I saw Jagat.

These new sites suggest a new vision of early medieval Mēdapāṭa, one focused on geographic routes rather than dynastic categories. Jagat was less than ten kilometers away from a major Pāśupata-Śiva center, connected by a river now dried up; the second site had become completely inaccessible. Neither site shared any dynastic affiliation, and both sites seemed to have much more in common with each other than with other elements of the Mēdapāṭa cohort, such as the Jain temple from the same fifty-year building spree two hundred kilometers to the north. Clearly, Āaṭ was a tantric center and a travel stop on a known route at the turn of the millennium in early medieval India. Ideological affiliations, even more explicit sexual imagery at Āaṭ, and the mantric associations of the Kṣēmaṅkarī goddess on the front lintel of the Ambikā temple lead in two directions: (1) toward the goddess temple at Unwās, for a better understanding of goddess tantra gleaned from the material record at the same time that tantric texts were being recorded in manuscript form; and (2) toward a better understanding of stylistic affinities not available in the heavily rebuilt remains of the Pippalāda Mātā temple in Unwās, which might explain how the artist networks and ideological patronage networks overlapped. The discovery of the new temple at Hita suggested a sculptural affiliation so tight, so close, that the sculptures may have even shared the same artistic hand. This allows us to remap the southern group of Mēdapāṭa temples along an east–west axis to contextualize the Ambikā temple in Jagat within a world that included both the tantric center at Āaṭ and the temple at Hita, to the other side of Bambora on the way to Chittorgarh. There, at Hita, I found a small temple, possibly dedicated to the dancing form of Śiva, called Nateśa.

If we begin with the first premise, that the famous Ambikā temple in Jagat was indeed a tantric temple dedicated to the goddess from the Devī Māhātmya story but was also available for ritual interpretation along the meditational lines of mantric worship and tantric worship as enunciated in famous contemporary texts such as the *Kālikā Purāṇa*, we find that the bidirectional architecture of the Ambikā temple encourages kinesthetic arguments about the building and disintegrating of the female form as a tool for the manipulation of desire and attachment.

Dedicated to the goddess Ambikā, the temple was built around the year that Abhinavagupta was born, roughly 959 or 961, depending on how one interprets the modest inscription that describes the donor's project, which includes a well and a garden in addition to the temple. Although not generally published as part of the temple complex, as of 2002 a well to the south of the temple (now behind a locked gate in a private field) still had a shiny black sculpture of Kālī in situ, under an authentic tenth-century stone architectural frame. The southern wall dates to the time of the temple, and the foundation of a few subshrines seem to ring the temple in a square formation—the most prominent of which include the *praṇālā* (now attached to the temple by the later addition of a drain spout), a brick

structure behind the temple slightly to the northeast, and a remodeled shrine with an original *phāmsanā* roof that houses the tenth-century schist sculpture of the fearsome goddess Cāmuṇḍā. The southern wall, which attaches to the foundations of surrounding walls and an original staircase down into the complex, and which stretches the entire length of the complex, has received relatively little scholarly attention, but new research on maṭhas in Madhya Pradesh, together with evidence for a maṭha in Āṭ and two different period maṭhas near Ekliṅgī, leave little doubt in my mind that the village school and *chaukidar*'s (watchman) home are sitting on top of the only known early medieval monastery dedicated to goddess worship in India.

"Tantra" is a term with seductively orientalist overtones that has been loosely bantered about for the past two centuries or so. In contrast with common misconceptions, not all goddess worship is tantric, and "tantra" should refer more to specific modes of practice or to specific textual sources. "Tantra," for our purposes, will refer simply to embodied forms of worship, where a practitioner becomes a god or merges with a form of a god through the recitation of incantations called mantras, the physical practice of gestures called mudras, and the meditational practice of progressively identifying with a deity in sculpture or mental image corporeally.²³ This less sensational and more pedestrian view of tantra in general suggests the increasing accessibility of these modes of worship, despite the secrecy of guru-śiṣa transmission in a variety of different sects.²⁴

The early medieval temple in Jagat was known to be the earliest Indian example of a goddess temple in regional style—in western India and not in Bengal. Built of quartzite, the program was built to last, and it has for more than one thousand years. Many think of all goddess worship as inherently "tantric" and of all goddess temples as tantric (an overgeneralization to which I do not subscribe), but the Ambikā temple in Jagat does have some very specific architectural and material evidence of tantra in the more specific sense of these esoteric practices that have been increasingly studied and documented in recent scholarship.²⁵ The temple program does reference some of the "five Ms," such as drinking wine (*madya*), consuming meat (*māṃsa*), eating fish (*matsya*), ingesting grain (*mudra*), and sexual union (*maithuna*), in the sculptural iconography, but a closer look reveals tantric associations directly related to roughly contemporary texts, albeit not from the exact same region but rather from a spread of ideas in this period and just after traceable from as far north as Kashmir and as far south as Tamil Nadu.²⁶

The Ambikā temple in Jagat does not leave a trace of an exact affiliation to a specific cult as some millennial temples do in referencing Śiva's cosmic dance as Nāṭeśa in relation to Śaiva-Siddhanta or the ash-clad asceticism of Pāśupata Śaivism found at the Lakuliśa temple in Ekliṅgī.²⁷ The closest known tantric texts may come from just south of Mēdapāṭa and Vagada, in Malwa, but unfortunately post-date the Ambikā temple by two hundred years. The geographically closest text to Jagat and Āṭ known today is Hṛdayaśiva's twelfth-century *Prāyaścittasamuccaya*,

which may codify much of what was being innovated through praxis, art, and architecture along the Som River, north of the Narmada River in millennial India.²⁸

At Jagat we do not have a direct linkage of text and image, in either specific time or place, but rather kinesthetic architectural traces of ritual, use, and praxis that suggest a general “tantric” mode of worship using the female form as an alternate model for arousal and disgust in the search for detachment from desire. Writings by Phyllis Granoff and others have emphasized the plurality of subjective positions, even quoting early medieval writings that elucidate and imagine how no fewer than six different demographics would have understood the sexuality of a temple wall at a site like the infamous Kaṇḍāriyā Mahādeva temple in Khajurāho.²⁹ At Jagat the bidirectional circumambulation of the temple program suggests two narratives that would have been available in similar form to men and women alike and of all ages and social stations in varied stages of enjoyment, standard worship, and more esoteric and philosophical though equally populist tantric worship (fig. 1.6). Art historically, the Ambikā temple at Jagat has long captivated the imagination because of the beautiful, largely intact carvings dedicated to the goddess Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardinī, who vanquished the buffalo demon, Mahiṣā, in cosmic battle when the male gods could no longer restore order.³⁰ The Purāṇic account of the goddess lends itself most aptly to narrative iconography such as the famous frieze at Mamallapuram in Tamil Nadu. The goddess Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardinī is named for her sacrificial act, when Durgā kills the buffalo demon named Mahiṣā. Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardinī wielded the borrowed weapons of the male gods to confront demons on the battlefield, issuing new warriors from a light in her forehead. The most famous of the goddesses to emanate from Durgā’s forehead is none other than Kālī, whose long tongue is known to stretch the length of a miniature painting lapping up the blood of demons quelled in battle before the drops could sprout into new warriors. This story, the *Devī Māhātmya*, the stuff of the oral legends told across Rājāsthān—that is, until the very recent replacement of pan-Indian Gujarati “garbha” dancing—was told in seven hundred verses every day during the autumnal festival of Navratri, the nine nights of the goddess, culminating in the tenth night of Dusserah celebrated across India. But the oral legend, the Purāṇic texts, and the narrative festival traditions seem to have little to do with the highly iconic, monoscenic, or even nonnarrative way in which the artists, masons, and patrons chose to represent the goddess Ambikā at Jagat.

The tenth-century temple in Mēdapāṭa is often characterized by the way the icon in the inner sanctum emanates powerfully outward on architectural axes in the four directions. These axial relationships usually take the form of three sculptural icons on the three outer walls of the sanctum, with the fourth direction being the direct gaze of the deity on the worshipper inside the temple. A *bhadra* is an Indian architectural term for the protrusion of the temple wall that aligns axially with the icon in the inner sanctum of the temple. There are always three *bhadrās* that face three of the four directions and allow the essence of the icon to emanate



FIGURE 1.6. Door to sanctum on each side allows the bidirectional circumambulation, Ambika temple, c. 960, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 1.7. Durgā zoomorphic, side 1 (south), Ambikā temple, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 1.8. Durgā zoomorphic/anthropomorphic, side 2 (east/back), Ambikā temple, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

outward in every direction—the fourth direction, of course, is the interior opening to the *garbhagrha* sanctum, where the icon gazes out directly onto the viewer during worship. Each *bhadra*, then, has a niche on the exterior of the three outer walls of the temple sanctum. Exactly on axis with the inner icon, three of the same or three different sculptural deities represent the three directions in which the inner god of the sanctum is exuding power. Each manifestation geomantically reflects the directionality. For example, particularly fierce deities associated with death often face north. These axial protrusions and emanations form a sequence as the viewer circumambulates in the normal clockwise direction, or counterclockwise in an esoteric twist on the sequence that serves to relativize the passage of time or the inherent order of things.

The Ambikā temple in Jagat, in particular, has two doorways on either side of the inner sanctum that serve as thresholds between the exterior *bhadra* niches with their emanations of the inner sanctum. The viewer can then take darśan from the main deity before choosing to circumambulate either direction around the temple sanctum exterior before returning up a few steps back inside on axis with



FIGURE 1.9. Durgā anthropomorphic, side 3 (north), Ambikā temple, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

the main icon. On the three walls of the temple sanctum the goddess plunges her trident into the flank of the buffalo demon, and three different times he seems to die in pain on each wall as the devotee circumambulates the structure.³¹ If one faces the temple in normal circumambulatory order, with one's right side to the wall in clockwise fashion, three forms unfold on the southern, western, and northern walls. In the first *bhadra* niche, the zoomorphic form is quelled (fig. 1.7). In the second *bhadra* niche, the spirit in human forms begins to rise from the buffalo's sacrificed neck (fig. 1.8). And in the last *bhadra* niche, the goddess holds the fully human form of the spirit tightly by the hair (fig. 1.9). One could move from animal sacrifice to the vanquished spirit or, alternatively, in a left-handed tantric manner, from the vanquished spirit toward the sacrificed animal form. Either way, the double doorways suggest that the main icon was the fourth and main culminating component in either circumambulatory order.

Left-handed and right-handed coexisting circumambulatory paths do suggest tantra, but who exactly was in the main sanctum? Recent worship and thefts have clouded this picture, as have competing archaeological photographs, but it seems that only two viable options remain.³² Dhaky argues the main icon was Kṣēmaṅkarī, which would make sense, given the location of this mantric goddess above the entrance to the temple, where she stands atop two lions in classical iconography.³³ A second possibility lies in the emaciated version of the goddess Durgā slaying the buffalo demon that (as of 2009) lay cast aside to the right of the main icon in the



FIGURE 1.10. An icon cast aside inside the sanctum displays an emaciated form of Durgā in the act of killing the buffalo demon. Ambikā temple, quartzite, c. 960, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

inner sanctum (fig. 1.10). Either possibility suggests a tantric interpretation of the fourth and most important element in circumambulation. Kṣēmaṅkarī is a beatific version of the goddess, who would encourage a devotee to focus on the seed syllable, or *bīja* mantra, “Kṣa,” associated with the entire “garland of letters,” as Arthur Avalon would have put it.³⁴ The goddess ferociously and independently sacrifices the evil demon and then is revealed as this pleasant version of Śiva’s wife, Pārvatī, a calm evocation of the power of mantra, or speech incarnate, as Śiva’s *śakti*, or his cosmic energy. The second icon, still in situ but cast aside, suggests instead that the voluptuous, sensual body of the sacrificing independent goddess, repeated three times on the exterior, becomes emaciated in the inner sanctum. The mounting arousal of the sacrificial moment by the libidinal actor then culminates in the skeletal confrontation of time itself—either in the withering of one’s own female body, the withering of the object of one’s desire for a female body, or the withering of the object of desire—or of desire itself. Whether delightfully mantric, through the personification of speech as Kṣēmaṅkarī, or whether gruesomely corporeal through a reiteration of destiny and death incarnate, either goddess would have cemented the bidirectional tantric circumambulation found at Jagat. Either way, the cycle of samsara is reiterated forward or backward in the kinesthetic architecture of the temple sanctum flanked by two doorways.

Could a temple as unusual as the Ambikā temple in Jagat really exist in isolation as so incredibly unique—a long-lost material key to illustrate the textual scholars' interpretations of tantric texts? The tenth-century temples in Hita, Āat, and Bāḍolī suggest otherwise. The artists of the Ambikā temple in Jagat worked in their lifetimes on a temple dedicated to Nateśa directly east of Jagat at the previously unpublished site of Hita. Not only do we have a physical trace of a time and place on the map, but we also have an intact iconographic program at Hita that integrates female goddess sculptures into a Śaivaitic program—sculptures identical to those found at Jagat, less than sixty kilometers west of Hita. Sculptural fragments at Hita include a Gaṇeśa (very similar in style to the Gaṇeśa at Jagat) and exterior wall sculptures of the female form where the jewelry, flesh, position, finish, carving, and stone seem identical to what is found at Jagat—more than any other two tenth-century sculptures I have found across modern-day southern Rājāsthān.

Dancing with his skull staff, Śiva dominates the back wall of the sanctum, which suggests that the tenth-century temple in Hita was devoted to a tantric form of the god in mid-dissolution as Nateśa. Like the Śaiva-Siddhanta lord of dance, Nataraja, found so commonly among Chola bronzes, his northern counterpart, Nateśa, was quite common in Madhya Pradesh along the Narmada River and its tributaries at the turn of the millennium.³⁵ Nateśa also had a long history of association with *mātrkās* (mother goddesses) in Rājāsthān.³⁶ This Nateśa temple thus links to the Ambikā temple in Jagat with *mātrkā* worship and links to more eastern sites with established centers of tantric worship during the second half of the tenth century. Remains from the Gupta period, such as the *mātrkā* sculpture of Aindrī in the Udaipur archaeological museum and a tiny five-faced Pāśupata liṅga found by the *thakur's* (local government official) family and kept in their compound of Rawala in Jagat, suggest that Śiva/Śakti *mātrkā* worship and visual icons of Sadāśiva liṅga at the site of the Ambikā temple existed at least four hundred or more years before the tantric temple was built (before similar icons were made in the eighth century at Kalyanpur, and before the infamous one in Ahar—which Lyons argues may have served as a model for Śrī Ekliṅgi himself).

The walls of the smaller and more sparsely decorated temple at Hita do not include as many auxiliary semidivine figures as are found at Jagat, but the basic program includes a series of figures on the sanctum walls. The maṇḍapa is connected to the sanctum, and all is severely whitewashed and restored, so no evidence of a bidirectional circumambulatory path remains, except perhaps in the proportions that would leave enough room for a small doorway on either side of the main sanctum. At Hita, as at the better-known goddess temple of Unwās, we are left to work primarily from sculpture left in situ rather than from original intact architectural space. The circumambulatory order at Hita begins with a ferocious form of Śiva (fig. 1.11). Could it be Andhakāntaka, found with Nateśa and Cāmuṇḍā at Menāl and known more famously from Ellora and Elephanta?



FIGURE 1.11. Ferocious Śiva (Andhakāntaka?), c. 955–75, stone, Hita. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 1.12. Natesa, c. 955–75, stone, Hita. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 1.13. Cāmuṇḍā, Natesa temple, stone, c. 955–75, Hita. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 1.14. Exquisite śekhārī architecture, Natesa temple, stone, c. 955–75, Hita. © Deborah Stein.

Andhakāntaka steps on a demon and stabs another with a trident. Perhaps because of his fangs, he is often misunderstood as Bhairava. This figure on the south side of the temple in Hita seems to swing a drum above his head. The main position on the back wall of the temple faces east. There, in a move similar again to Menāl, Bijoliā, and Bāḍoli in Upamāla, Nateśa dances his cosmic dance, bending in an almost impossibly limber way (fig. 1.12). His dance is met on the north wall by none other than Cāmuṇḍā (fig. 1.13). Before laying eyes on the ferocious emaciated female form, the circumambulator is confronted with one of the sharpest, most geometrically clean, small *śekhārī* temples in India (fig. 1.14). Located southeast of Chittorgarh on the way to Jagat via Bambora, the tripartite iconography of this temple recalls temples of Menāl, Bijoliā, and Bāḍoli in Upamāla.

The last image in circumambulation so resembles the sculptural carving style of Jagat that one could imagine only three scenarios. The first is that one artist carved the same sculptures for both temples. A second scenario is that one guild was responsible for each—though they seem even too similar for that. The least likely is that somehow a piece of sculpture got carried from one site to another and reinstalled. Given that there is no record of this temple in the Archaeological Survey of India records, this is unlikely. The concluding sculpture at Hita (fig. 1.15) is the one that bears such a remarkable affinity to sculpture at Jagat, such as the Kṣēmaṅkarī in Dhaky's photograph.³⁷ Delicate rows of beaded necklaces and girdles decorate the finely chiseled features of voluptuous, fleshy bodies, filled with life-breath yet not overinflated on *prana* nor overly "medieval" in their columnar elongation. The sensual texture of these bodies makes stone seem like a warm, living place where one could rest one's head, the jewelry delicately jingling as the carving synesthetically invades one's ears. The foundations of other temples suggest that Hita may well have been a larger center than imagined today.

The location of Hita pushes the spread of the Mēdapāṭa cohort south and east, away from Ghāṇerāo and the Guhila strongholds around Nāgaḍā/Eklingjī. Jagat's closest stylistic companion now lies closer to Upamāla territory and yet significantly south of Bijoliā, Bāḍoli, and other tenth-century sites found on the east–west axis along the Banas River. Pilgrims and travelers may well have stopped in Hita before overnighing in Bambora, where a palace was built a few hundred years later north of what became known as Jaisamand Lake. Bambora, a subregal noble retreat, is currently in the female *jagīr* (dowry) of the nobles/family of Jodhpur, who married into the family from Dūṅgarpur. Regardless of modern marital property rights and erstwhile kingships, this bustling little town is the closest city east of Jagat and Āaṭ. Just west of Jagat and Āaṭ is the historical zinc mining center of Jāwar. Together, these places form a route from Hita, to Bambora, to Jagat, to Āaṭ, to Jāwar—a route through a region that saw fluctuating and alternating pockets of time with no polity, forming by the sultanate period the "gray areas" of the map in northwestern India.



FIGURE 1.15. Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardinī in the identical artistic style of Jagat, c. 960, Hita.
© Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 1.16. Guru and disciple on the temple wall, stone, c. twelfth to thirteen century, Gamari. © Deborah Stein.

In the tenth century, when Hita and Jagat and Āṭ were small temple towns, they lay on a route along the Som, north of the Narmada, where multiple estuaries connected them back to the great maṭhas of central India and down the river, through the birthplace of Lakuliśa, founder of Pāśupata ascetic Śaivism. Could Pāśupatas, goddess worshippers, and others have traveled from monastery to monastery through this back region of the Narmada between central India and the port of Khambhat—stopping along the way for tantric mediation and worship at three or more interconnected temples in Hita, Jagat, and Āṭ? Ojha recorded an inscription from Āṭ in his *Dungarpur Rajya ka Itihas*, and the remains found there suggest a thriving Pāśupata center with possible Jain remains and radically explicit sexual imagery, better-sculpted and yet linked stylistically through similar representation of pectoral muscles in stone to the bestiality and other motifs found farther south at sites such as Gamari.

With uncertain dating, many of the architectural remains of Vagada have remained outside of art historians' purview. Sites such as Gamari are fairly remote to modern visitors and are not nearly as impressive stylistically as the core of the Mēdapāṭa cohort or even the Paramāra remains at Arthuna. Hastily and simply carved sculptures on the exterior of the temple in Gamari, for example, suggest artistic trends in a more tenuous period of political upheaval in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (fig. 1.16). Despite a later date, the content and meaning of the carvings suggest an interesting waypoint between sultanate-era Āṭ, as a functioning tantric center off the beaten path, and a site much closer to the Mahi River as it gushes along the borders of the Malwa plateau and into the Narmada River



FIGURE 1.17. Bestiality on the temple wall, stone, c. twelfth to thirteenth century, Gamari. © Deborah Stein.

toward Gujarat.³⁸ Whereas the quality of the art element of Gamari would not normally catch the attention of art and architectural historians, the scenes of bestiality (fig. 1.17) and other explicit forms of sexual embrace could be used to trace the religious record in stone—a tenth-century tantric inheritance from Āaṭ and Jagat still important enough in twelfth- or thirteenth-century Vagada to merit the expense and trouble of carving the stone and publicly erecting the stone architecture even though it was unlikely to be sponsored by any dynastic power.

Mēdapāṭa used to include Jagat, Ṭūṣa, Nāgadā, Ekliṅgī, Īswāl, Unwās, and Ghāṇerāo. Upamāla used to include Bijoliā, Bāḍoli, Menāl, and Chandrabhaga. These regional appellations are found in contemporaneous inscriptions, which suggests that they served as place names for people in those regions at the time. But if we use fluvial patterns to imagine networks of exchange rather than autonomous dynastic regions with fixed borders, we can begin to remap the sectarian landscape over a large region during an increase in production of tantric architecture in the tenth century.

Along the Banas River from c. 950 to 1200, an east–west axis reveals active sites of Pāśupata Śaivism where temples are not the only stone markers of ritual. Chandrabhaga, Bāḍoli, Bijoliā, Menāl, Chittorgarh, Īswāl, Unwās, Ekliṅgī/Nāgadā, and Ṭūṣa lie along this route. These sites leave traces of Śaiva-Śakti worship specifically of Nateśa and Cāmuṇḍā. Cāmuṇḍā was once a part of sets of sixty-four or eighty-one yoginīs or was found as one of the seven mother goddesses. Michael Meister’s work in this very region suggests that the mother goddesses often included Nateśa, a male form of dancing Śiva, as the eighth figure.³⁹ We see

this in the mother goddess shrine at Bāḍolī, for example. From these mother goddess sets, so popular in the Gupta period throughout northern India, Cāmuṇḍā and Nateśa seem to arise as a pair or on their own around 950 CE in Upamāla, Mēdapāṭa, Chhapa, and Vagada—a large contiguous region north of the Malwa plateau, situated more broadly between the Gangetic Plains and Gujarat's ports, which open onto the Persian Gulf.

Along the Banas and its smaller branch rivers at sites often protected in natural enclaves formed by mountain ranges such as the Vindhya, or by natural plateaus at Chittorgarh and seasonal waterfalls at Menāl, ithyphallic club-bearing statues of Lakuliśa held forth (Ekliṅgī, Menāl, Bāḍolī, and Bijoliā), Nateśa danced his cosmic metaphors of dissolution (Menāl, Bāḍolī, Bijoliā, and Hita), and Cāmuṇḍā held forth in ubiquitous groups of seven (or eight, including Nateśa) mothers and on her own (Chandrabhaga, Bāḍolī, Bijoliā, Menāl, Chittorgarh [Kālikā temple], Unwās, and Nāgadā). The power and immediacy of tantric worship through tantra, mantra, and yantra was spreading in millennial India, and the sculpture, architecture, and geography leave interesting traces of specific cults along a geographical grid largely independent of dynastic affiliation.

At Bāḍolī several fragments reinstalled on-site and not in their original locations, preclude the type of programmatic analysis available for Unwās and Jagat; however, tantalizing iconographic parallels emerge at this tenth-century site in Upamāla. For example, the Sadāśiva liṅgaṃ found at Jagat in the *thakur's* house dated to the Gupta period, the Sadāśiva liṅgaṃ found at Kalyanpur, the Sadāśiva liṅgaṃ installed at Ahar, the Sadāśiva head reinstalled at Ekliṅgī, and the Sadāśiva head found in the *kuṇḍa* (tank) at Bāḍolī all manifest four faces, with the fifth, *Īśvara*, pointing upward. In Upamāla, too, whether under the Pratihāras, or in Mēdapāṭa under the Guhilas, or in Chhapa with no reference to a dynasty at all, this form was prevalent from the Gupta period into the fifteenth century and beyond in this region.⁴⁰

Continuing east to west along the Banas River, near Ekliṅgī at Nāgadā, we find a stone mandala similar to the ones we find made of legumes and grain laid out at Ekliṅgī and Jagat to this day (fig. 1.18). Beneath this image, on either side of a sacrificial fire, devotees in stone ladle ghee onto the fire and utter “*swaha*.” Ritual does leave a record in stone, but this does not make Indian history, art history, or religion timeless. To the contrary, specific continuities and ruptures can be historicized visually in particularly accurate ways owing to the stone record of temples. For example, the mandala made of legumes in 2002 for the goddess installation celebration in Jagat (fig. 1.19) is not an exact replica of the mandala of multiplying figural emanations found at Nāgadā, even though both may speak to a similar mental process of visualization. Temples are geographic and temporal markers of what was or was not happening ritually, historically, religiously, and inscriptionally in a specific time and place. To moderns, the temple serves as a buffer against ahistorical orientalisms. Each period reveals specific ideas different from the next,

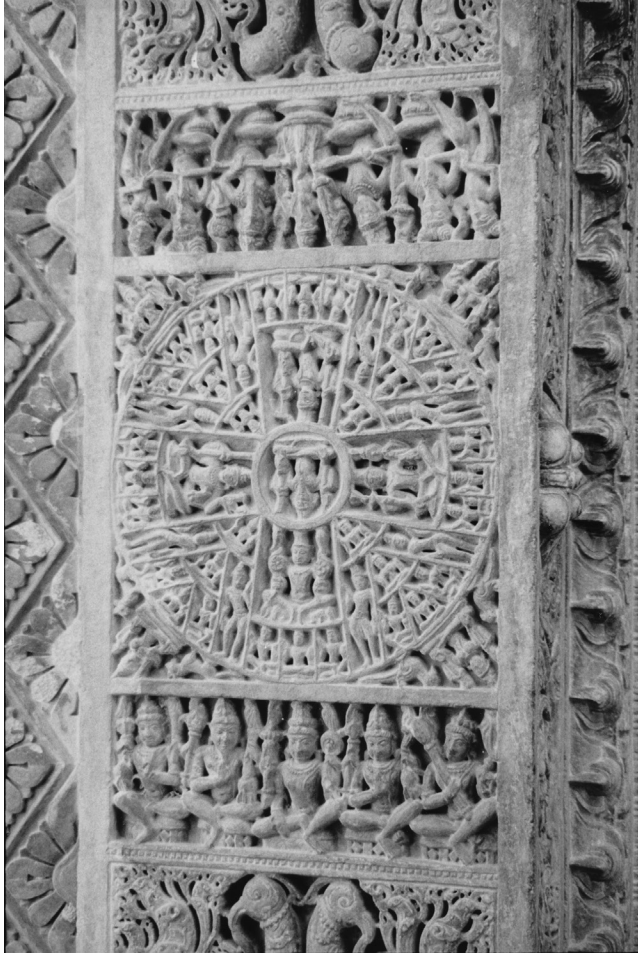


FIGURE 1.18. Mandala in stone, with devotees ladling ghee over a fire, c. tenth or eleventh century, Nāgadā. © Deborah Stein.

yet visually, ritual links, such as the stone and grain mandalas, sometimes remain organic echoes of each other over time.

Built around a century later than the Pippalāda Mātā temple, fewer than one hundred kilometers away, the fifteen shrines surrounding the two larger Sās-Bahu temples at Nāgadā are marked by similarly sparse walls but on a more prolific scale. The Sās temple has relatively few sculptures in its program. Two sculptural couples frame the entrance, Śiva/Pārvatī and a broken couple. On the exterior sides of the pavilion Viṣṇu holds the never-ending knot; another representation of Viṣṇu, Śiva, and Brahma appears on either side of the exterior of the inner sanctum; and Viṣṇu



FIGURE 1.19. Mandala made of legumes in Jagat, May 2002, temporary maṇḍapa during goddess installation. © Deborah Stein.

predictably graces the back niche. This temple has no auxiliary figures whatsoever. Although it was built after the Takṣakēśvara shrine in the gorge at Ekliṅgī, after the Datoresvara Mahadev temple at Śobhagpura, and after the Sūrya shrine at Tūṣa, this temple has a program similar to the Pippalāda Mātā temple in Unwās. Rather than displaying a rhythmic entourage of deities and attendants, the shrine invokes only the most basic deities. The exterior figures serve to show a correspondence with the interior deities and with the main deity's emanation on the back wall of the inner sanctum.

In keeping with the sparse program of the Pippalāda Mātā temple at Unwās, the Sās-Bahu temple at Nāgadā displays an even more reduced program, with only three exterior figures on the walls of the *garbhagrha*: Śiva with a fruit, Viṣṇu, and Brahma. Most of the shrines surrounding these temples share this abbreviated form of iconography. Of note is a small Devī shrine at the back of the complex at Nāgadā. Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardinī is sculpted on the back wall of the shrine. Mahesvari, with her skull staff, and Cāmuṇḍā accompany her on the two side walls. This Śaiva-Śakti shrine has no main icon, but the Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardinī is represented with the demon's human leg protruding out of the neck of his decapitated buffalo form (fig. 1.20). A second goddess shrine close to the entrance gate by the lake is dedicated to Sarasvatī. This shrine still has a statue of Pārvatī inside. A Jain complex also suggests that Nāgadā—located adjacent to Ekliṅgī where the



FIGURE 1.20. Durgā-Mahiṣāsuramardini, c. tenth or eleventh century, stone, Nāgadā. © Deborah Stein.

famous 971 CE debate among Jains, Buddhists, and Pāśupata Śaivaites was held—was already a multisectarian center for trade in the eleventh century.⁴¹

Several features of the temple complex plan at Nāgadā resonate with other tenth-century sites farther south. At Jagat, shrines also tightly overlap to the point of precluding circumambulation. There the *praṇālā* shrine would have originally been freestanding, as is evident from the later addition of the stone spout awkwardly joined to the shrine through the middle of a piece of sculpture (fig. 1.21). The plan of the site on a raised platform with several closely spaced shrines is similar to the Śaiva complex at Aaṭ, which also has an elaborate entrance gate similar in



FIGURE 1.21. Jagat *pranālā*, demon's leg protruding out of the neck of the decapitated form. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 1.22. Toraṇa gate, Nāgadā. © Deborah Stein.

style if not in iconographic content to the gate at Nāgadā (fig. 1.22). Two inscriptions from the eleventh century attest to the growing power of the Guhilas near Nāgadā and Ahar in the Mēdapāṭa region.⁴² An inscription from Nāgadā dated to 1026 CE describes the town as “a renowned seat of scholars well versed in the Vedas.”⁴³ Unfortunately, the fragmentary inscription leaves the name of the ruler a subject of speculation.⁴⁴ Viṣṇu is invoked by the name of Puruṣottama in this inscription. The inscription at this grand site of Viṣṇu temples terminates with the symbol of the diamond lotus. Whether this motif is considered tantric or merely decorative, it was certainly multisectarian in early eleventh-century Mewār.

These traces of ritual and the record in stone suggest that a diachronic approach cannot reveal timeless religious beliefs but rather that elements of current worship have landed vestigially in the twenty-first century and that—together with the inscriptional, architectural, iconographic, and stylistic evidence—we can begin to map specific responses to periodic shifts in religious practice along a grid of specific forms of worship and belief. To this end, if we follow the less-traveled waters of the Som and Mahi Rivers, we find a new set of sites, including two previously unknown to scholars.

Along the Som River we find a southern group of temple sites in a region that was historically and to this day largely outside of dynastic reaches. Bhils, Meenas, Lohars, and other Ādivāsi people still form the majority populations there. Careful inscriptional work can even trace exact points when Mērwara tribes joined the

Sisodia elite from Uparamāla in tenuous political relationships reaching as far west as Jhadol. But for the most part, Chhapa, throughout the one-thousand-year history we have explored, remained beyond the reaches of kings. In this fertile region Śakta tantra and Śaiva tantra abound to this day—with the worship of Bērujī and Mātājī predominating at hilltop shrines where *bhopas* preside with peacock brooms and corn-grain divination around the corner from many of the ancient art historical sites covered in this study.

Along the Som tributary to the Mahi River, it is no surprise that from southern Uparamāla into southern Mēdapāṭa, on the northern fringes of the Malwa plateau, we find that Nateśa (the classical version of Bērujī) and Cāmuṇḍā (the classical version of Mātājī) held sway alone more than one thousand years ago at Hita, Jagat, and Āaṭ. During the brief flash of dynastic power held by the Guhilas of Kiṣkindā prior to the tenth century, we find one of the earliest and most impressive four-faced and four-bodied Pāśupata-Śiva icons at Kalyanpur, which dates approximately to the eighth century and provides a precedent for Ahar, Eklingī, Bāḍoli, and other Pāśupata-Śaiva centers. Contemporaneous sculptures in Āmjhara suggest excellently carved mother goddess sculptures from the eighth to ninth centuries hidden and dispersed over a wide area, perhaps in the wake of destruction of their stone home.

Postmillennial sites in the region suggest expansive states attempting often quite precariously to take hold of these largely tribal lands with the construction of fortresses, mines, and public works from Jaisamand Lake to Jāwar mines and multisectarian temples, to the long sculptural and architectural history of Jhadol. This southern stretch was a place where Bērujī and Mātājī were canonized in stone; where Jains bankrolled Sisodia imperial power; and where Rājputs, Afghans, Turks, and many others traveled, looted, negotiated, fought, laid siege, marched, pillaged, but never lingered. It was in this vacuum of statehood that art, architecture, and local religion flourished in creative and unique ways, leaving a record in stone and a rich heritage of practices found today that will leave no ephemeral traces for tomorrow.

Temple as Catalyst

Renovation and Religious Merit in the Field

The history of temple renovation sheds light on tensions between preservation and use at archaeological sites in southern Rājāsthān. The word “renovate” in Hindi, *navā karanā*, has Sanskrit origins (*navī karoti*) and contains the root “*navā*” (new), just as the English word “renovate” means to make new again. Ancient inscriptions rarely distinguish between renovation and new construction since once an icon or site is *jīrṇa* (“old” or “tainted”), it should automatically be replaced with something new according to local belief. Renovations have historically ranged from slight modifications to significant additions, to completely rebuilding. This range of renovation activity continues today. Generous ancient definitions of renovation clash with ideas about archaeological preservation inherited from the British. Temple trusts, archaeological departments, and local patrons alike undertake creation in the name of preservation.

The aesthetic interpretation of archaeological sites hinges on the subjective notion of taste. In the discipline of art history, beauty has long been a subject of debate.¹ When we travel, both temporally and geographically, the issue of taste, of aesthetic judgment, is fraught with difficulty. Taste, according to John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, “is merely another item in the cabinet of social display.”² They describe the “truly tasteful collector” as someone who creates taste rather than ascribing to it. This creation of taste is grounded in a unique approach valued for its difference. So when we turn to a temple, most often understood by the discipline of art history as a specimen from an archaeological collection, we exercise taste that originated in the colonial British project of collecting patrimony.³ Disdain for current modes of renovation, such as metallic gold paint, reaches far beyond the Ambikā temple. Any Indian urbanite, especially among the rising middle classes,

may well find metallic paint on the tenth-century stone sanctum of the Ambikā temple in Jagat just as distasteful as most art historians do.

Ancient definitions of renovation gleaned from the historical record suggest that inexpensive, modern materials may actually perform a rather traditional function. In Alois Riegl's terms, modern materials conflict with monuments' transcendental "age value," a value that he argues actually interferes with the preservation of monuments.⁴ The Ekliṅgī temple complex and the Ambikā temple complex also lose "historical value" and their "original status as an artifact" to white plaster roofs, metallic gold paint, and a twenty-first-century white marble icon.⁵ Given that "disfiguration and decay detract from [historical value]," one could argue, as well, that the local people see their efforts as the preservation of "historical value" through the erasure of decay.⁶ With the birth of archaeology in India, the romantic ideal of the ruin implicit in "age value" was replaced by a quintessentially modern concern for "historical value."

Historicity had the power to "single out one moment and place it in the developmental continuum of the past and place it before our eyes as if it belonged to the present."⁷ Current uses of archaeological sites in southern Rājāsthān attempt to steal buildings from history to create "intentional commemorative value." According to Riegl's definition, "intentional commemorative value aims to preserve a moment in the consciousness of later generations, and therefore to remain alive and present in perpetuity."⁸ Sowing the seeds of memory keeps monuments alive and greatly empowers the specific commemorative vision and aspirational zeitgeist of the individual person constructing memory. Those who farm memory attempt to trump death through control of future generations' harvests.

Controversial enough to spark legal battles, the renovation of temple sites is an institution as old as temple building itself. Temples derive much of their meaning from the numinous power of the sites on which they stand. The ability to create links with the past often secures the value of a temple's future.⁹ At both the Ambikā temple and the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple the future is woven into the past. This intersection of past and present is often a site of legal contention, moral quandary, and empowering affirmation, where preservation gives way to creation and consecration borders desecration.

EKLIṆGJĪ'S GATES

Historical definitions of repair found in inscriptions reveal the amount of physical change and new building considered to be a renovation and not something entirely new. In 1489 CE, Mahārāṇā Raimal repaired the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple and made land grants.¹⁰ Buildings in the Nāgadā-Kailāśpurī region had been largely destroyed when the Guhila dynasty was taking refuge at Kumbhalgarh in the preceding century (fig. 2.1). Mahārāṇā Raimal's inscription suggests that "repairs" often meant completely rebuilding on a sacred site. The Śrī Ekliṅgī temple dates

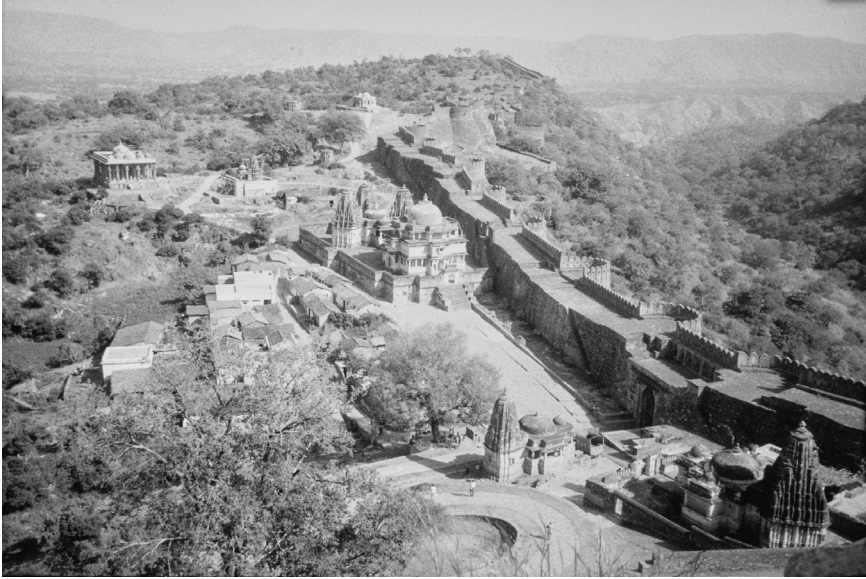


FIGURE 2.1. Kumbhalgarh fortress. © Deborah Stein.

to his era (see fig. 0.2). The icon of the god Śrī Ekliṅgī might even date to his time, even though the four-faced black stone is considered to be a self-revelatory “*svayambu*” icon that had been taken to Ekliṅgī by Bappa Rāwal. Verse 90 of Mahārāṇā Raimal’s inscription reads:

That which is eternal can never be an object of creation, that which is boundless can never have limit, and that which is *Ātmanipada* [confined to one’s self] can never be *Parasmaipada* [transferred to another]; but king Śrī Rajamalla does make extensive gifts of gold, does encompass all religion, and allows all to stand free and happy.¹¹

This verse is rather vague: it does not make explicit the exact object and architecture being donated. It could be a subtle way of referring to the installation of a new icon without negating the eternal existence of Śrī Ekliṅgī and his abode. At the Ambikā temple in Jagat there are no inscriptions referring to the donation of the goddess Ambikā, even though more than one icon has graced the main niche over the past forty years. The lack of precise written records when a new icon was installed comes as no surprise, since to mark a beginning for an icon is to take away its eternity and, hence, its divinity.

Although ancient renovations enjoy a certain romantic authenticity, modern renovations are often dismissed as garish intrusions. The Ekliṅgī temple complex has witnessed a long history of preservation under various mahārāṇās, whether under Kumbhā and Raimal in the fifteenth century or under Śrī Arvind Singh



FIGURE 2.2. Rampart, fifteenth century, Ekliṅgī. © Deborah Stein.

and his father in the twentieth century. But the preservation efforts of these kings differ from those of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). For the mahārāṇās, preservation has often not been far from creation. Mokal added a rampart to the complex, whereas Raimal may have replaced the icon itself (fig. 2.2). These innovations are now ancient history. There is little difference between the authenticity of the tenth-century Lakuliśa shrine as a historical site (see fig. 1.1) and the authenticity of the fifteenth-century Śrī Ekliṅgī temple (see fig. 0.2). But if we turn to some of the renovations in plaster and concrete on temple roofs throughout the complex (see fig. 0.7), or to the row of shrines to the left of the main entrance, some may argue these newer repairs detract from the authenticity of the archaeological site. The newer renovations lack the period integrity of the tenth-century Lakuliśa shrine and the fifteenth-century Śrī Ekliṅgī temple.

Regal renovations at a site like Ekliṅgī may produce intense aesthetic shifts; however, the spirit of housing a living being—understood to be the ruler of Mewār—suggests an alternative form of continuity. Like the mahārāṇās of Mewār, the ASI also repairs and occasionally restores archaeological sites. In some ways the ASI is more or less forthright about its projects. It often attempts to perfectly maintain the color and texture of the ancient stone, making it quite difficult to distinguish from the original structure. This creates a visual harmony that is historically discordant. In contrast, mahārāṇās visually delineate and make repair records of the changes they make to the site. Although the regal renovations may

be less aesthetically harmonious, to a large degree they better preserve the meaning of the site as the valued home of a divine ruler. The combination of innovation and creation thus serves as a type of preservation since it maintains the home of a living deity. Whether maintained by the mahārāṇās in the name of family prestige, or by the state in terms of historical patrimony, it is a fantasy to imagine that this form of renovation preserves the past exactly as it was.

Alternately interpreted as either revivalism or ritual continuity, descriptions of worship in inscriptions seem strikingly similar to rituals in the twenty-first century. The *Cintra Praṣāsti* inscription commemorates the consecration of a five-headed Śiva liṅgam on Monday, January 20, 1287, in the Late country (Gujarat).¹² This inscription is a very important document for the Pāsupata sect since it mentions Bhattaraka-Śrī-Lakulīśa, who dwelt in Karohana (Karvana, central Gujarat), and lists his disciples.¹³ Moreover, verses 47–72 describe the money allotted for various aspects of temple ritual: The gods were cleansed daily. They were fed and dressed with sandalwood. They were offered two hundred white roses and two thousand oleander blossoms. They were provided betel nuts and incense. The Pāsupata fetched offerings and performed worship. The God received rice and ghee cooked by the pupil. Verse 67 mentions Śivratri when betel nuts and leaves are procured along with garlands, coconuts. The temples and deities are worshipped, and all is repaired.¹⁴

Several aspects of Pāsupata ritual in the thirteenth century resonate with the daily pūjā performed for Śrī Ekliṅgī. Five centuries before a mural of the Mali gardener-caste women selling flowers was painted in the eighteenth-century monastery at Ekliṅgī, we find a reference to thousands of blossoms used in worship. No reference is made to the labor behind procuring those blossoms, but the history of the god is a history of his ritual—and a history of his ritual is a history of those who perform it and of those who supply the performers. The *Cintra Praṣāsti* inscription also mentions the festival of Mahāśivrātri, which is still observed at the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple in the twenty-first century. Performed throughout the night, this special set of pūjās was already the main Pāsupata ritual of the year in the thirteenth century. Besides the worship of temples and deities, the prominent feature was repair. Part of thirteenth-century pious practice was to maintain and repair holy sites and their icons.

While the value of repair has remained constant over time, the definition of repair has changed. In the fifteenth century at Ekliṅgī, repair meant reconstruction at a site that had been destroyed and neglected while the dynasty was in exile for years. During the centuries when the Ekliṅgī temple complex could not be actively maintained, there is no record of a functioning monastery or of any ritual such as Mahāśivrātri. But the mention of Mahāśivrātri in the *Cintra Praṣāsti* inscription suggests the observance itself is quite old. A pilgrimage made by a Pāsupata disciple described in the inscription took him to the Himalayas, to Allahabad, to Rewa, and to the Narmada. No mention is made of Ekliṅgī, which would certainly

have been on the way.¹⁵ So while Pāśupata observation of Mahāśivṛātri rituals dates to the thirteenth century, and the importance of repair dates at least to that era as well, we do not have any exact records of ritual and renovation in the thirteenth century at Ekliṅgī. Raimal's inscription suggests heavy rebuilding in the fifteenth century, after a period of dormancy at Ekliṅgī. Dormancy and rupture do not negate any claim of ritual continuity. The site was repaired according to *dharma* (kingly duty), and then put back into worship. The vestiges of the Pāśupata ritual conducted at the site in the twenty-first century seem to reflect forms of Pāśupata ritual already practiced just south of Ekliṅgī in the Lata region (modern-day Gujarat) as of the thirteenth century. Although the rhetoric of perfect, unbroken continuity is often subject to debate regarding ownership by the state of Rājāsthān, or by the Śrī Ekliṅgī Religious Trust, a looser interpretation suggests continuity in the political and religious motivation of the mahārāṇās.

Ironically, the fifteenth-century temple and deity that are the focus of most worship at Ekliṅgī today are located in the lower part of the complex open to the public, whereas the tenth-century Lakuliśa temple mentioned in previous chapters has been jealously guarded in recent decades. It is via this upper archaeological level of the Ekliṅgī complex that the mahārāṇā exercises his exclusive right to worship Lakuliśa, the founder of Pāśupata-Śaivism. One might imagine that the lower level in active ritual use would be the focus of the religious trust's attention, whereas the upper level—with ruined ancient temples, tenth-century architecture, and a tenth-century historical inscription—would be left to the administration of the ASI, as it was thirty years ago. And yet it is archaeology at the heart of twenty-first-century kingship. This upper level is where the mahārāṇā takes private darśan from Lakuliśa, a large black schist icon of the patron saint of Pāśupata-Śaivism. No one may photograph this deity or any other deity in the complex. The public is denied access to the upper area, which previously was administered by the ASI.

A photo in the archive of the ASI in New Delhi shows the entire site under ASI control as of 1965 (see fig. 0.3). This image of Śrī Ekliṅgī himself reveals two things: the site was used for worship then, as it continues to be in the twenty-first century, and the ASI was able to take a photo of the main deity, as is no longer possible today. Only on the mahārāṇā's death in the early 1980s did the site fall into a religious trust and become the subject of fierce debate over who held the rights to ownership. The future of Śrī Ekliṅgī and his temple then became a dispute about historicity, authenticity, continuity, and rupture.

By constructing the site as an unbroken Guhila link with the past, the mahārāṇās of Mewār claim to own the right to administer the site. In contrast, if the site is being reinvented—with building projects and forms of worship that did not take place under recent ancestors—then perhaps, according to the state, the historical evidence of a greater India is being erased by the present. This tension between preservation and creation often lacks even the clarity of the Ekliṅgī debate. At many sites in southern Rājāsthān, such as the Ambikā temple complex in Jagat,

state-owned temples are neglected because of scarce resources. Locals then fill the vacuum to renovate the temples as they see fit—as living sites of veneration.

PRATIṢṬHĀ: GODDESS INSTALLATION IN JAGAT

Whereas silver and marble make palatable the negotiation of authentic renovations at Ekliṅgī, renovation at the Ambikā temple in Jagat raises a question: consecration or desecration? Early inscriptions suggest that the same claim to historic authenticity found in renovations at Ekliṅgī can be made even more compellingly at Jagat. The shadow of poverty heightens the contrast when new metallic paint—distasteful to the scholarly elite—replaces expensive silver, only a few hundred years old itself. Would the goddess Ambikā judge the piety of her devotees based on whether they use real silver or metallic paint? On a column inside the Ambikā temple, the earliest inscription refers not to a dynasty but to a “renovator”:

In 955 CE at the Ambikā Devī temple, Valluk, the son of Sambapura, constructed a bridge. He came here every day to worship the goddess Ambikā. The renovator of the Baori, the well, the pond, the garden and the Roop Mandapa will get the blessings of the goddess on a par with the founder (responsible for the original construction of the temple).¹⁶

According to this inscription, easily read from the clear Kuṭila script that remains in situ, the one who renovated the site of the Ambikā temple in the mid-tenth century deserved equal religious merit to the one originally responsible for the temple’s creation. This merit equation suggests those who renovate this same tenth-century temple in the twenty-first century deserve equal religious merit to those who originally constructed these archaeological sites. To earn merit on a par with the original builders, one might imagine that renovation may have included complete replacement with a “new” temple.

Why, then, did it come as such a shock to visitors in May of 2002 to find a sign painter from Jagat painting the inner sanctum of this ancient stone temple with metallic gold (see fig. 0.11), as part of an elaborate eight-day ceremony to install a new goddess icon replacing an ancient statue stolen in 2000? No, it is not legal, but why are we really so uncomfortable? On the one hand, this archaeological site is “protected” under the auspices of the Rājāsthān Archaeological Survey and Rājāsthān state law.¹⁷ On the other hand, the sign painter and the village *thakur*, who sponsored his metallic painting, were renovating the temple as a way to honor the new icon of the goddess they were about to install. “Renovation” derives from “renew,” to make new. Twenty-first-century renovations at Jagat left ritual residue for future generations.

The word “patrimony” raises interesting questions about who should have responsibility for a site like Jagat. In *Archive Fever* Jacques Derrida explains how

the process of creating an archive is somewhat akin to death.¹⁸ In India the ASI created a taxonomy of two-dimensional photographs to permanently preserve India's patrimony. The photographs objectified and substituted for the actual buildings. The archive drew the life out of the buildings, transforming them into monuments. According to Derrida's Freudian argument, the death of the father allows for his immortality in memory. Thus, heritage as patrimony is appropriately named. Should the Ambikā temple be preserved as a memory for the future, or would its preservation condemn it to death? And, in turn, if renovation crosses the boundary into desecration, what kind of new life is the temple given?

By the nineteenth century, both in India and in the United States, many educated viewers of ancient Indian temples had inherited from John Ruskin a European notion of heritage based on the emergence of bourgeois leisure activities, such as tourism and museum-going.¹⁹ The British created the ASI under this optic, and the preservation of archaeological sites all over the world continues under these assumptions. The transformation of ritual space into historical evidence usurps the agency of a site and its users.

The ASI included many Indian nationals in addition to the British, under whom its direction began. Unlike the World Heritage Site at Angkor, Cambodia, which was maintained by the French, after independence Indian nationals were able to take over the direction of the ASI in order to control the management and to publish research on their own heritage.²⁰ Indians already formed an integral part of the organization under British rule. After 1947 the ASI continued on the trajectory established by British ideas of preservation stemming from nineteenth-century notions of patrimony and empire.

In this vein R. C. Agrawala declared in his article entitled "Khajuraho of Rājāsthān: The Temple of Ambikā at Jagat": "This tenth-century edifice, dedicated to goddess Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardīnī, was first discovered by me on 22nd May 1956."²¹ The title of the article referred to the most well-known tourist destination after the Taj Mahal. Khajurāho, an eleventh-century temple complex with many buildings covered in erotic sculpture, has sparked the imagination of many visitors and authors. Responses have ranged from an interest in ritual to ideas about architecture, to orientalist fantasies. Agrawala's article, published in *Arts Asiatiques* during a sabbatical year at the Musée Guimet in France, was clearly an attempt to put Jagat on the tourist map. Moreover, his introduction suggests the rhetoric of discovery typical of someone who has dedicated his life to research and the preservation of archaeology. As the Udaipur Archaeological Museum superintendent, Agrawala removed several important works of sculpture from Jagat to safeguard them in the museum. Taken out of their original context, the remains were saved from the rampant looting that has continued to take place at temples in southern Rājāsthān since his retirement.

A tribute to the benefits of the preservation model, Agrawala's research and dedication to the archaeology of southern Rājāsthān left behind some of the only



FIGURE 2.3. Marble icon stolen in 1998, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

documentation on the subject, especially after theft and damage. Writing in 1964, he reported some very important information about the Ambikā temple's inner sanctum: "The interior, measuring 7 feet \times 7 feet, contained a medieval schist image of goddess Mahiṣāsūramardīnī, under regular worship on an altar. Here we notice the demon coming out of the chopped off head of the buffalo (Mahiṣā) under the mighty influence of contemporary art traditions."²² This description corresponds to the image found on the back exterior wall of the shrine (see fig. 1.8), temporarily in-between the zoomorphic form of Mahiṣā found on the south wall and the anthropomorphic form of the demon found on the north wall during the course of circumambulation. Hence, as of 1957, when Agrawala saw it, an ancient statue of Mahiṣāsūramardīnī was under worship in the sanctum. This sculpture's iconography correlated to the iconographical program found on the exterior temple walls.



FIGURE 2.4. New marble image from Jaipur, May 2002.
© Deborah Stein.

Unfortunately, Agrawala did not include an image of this sculpture. Surprisingly, a photograph from 1963 reveals neither any deity nor any sign of worship whatsoever.²³ Was the white marble Mahiṣāsuramardini sculpture under worship in the sanctum in 1998 (fig. 2.3) actually installed in 1957? Stolen in 2000, the statue had left the sanctum empty when I returned in January of 2002.²⁴ The image believed by scholars to be the original icon of Kṣēmaṅkari remained cast aside, leaned up against a side wall.²⁵ By May of 2002 the villagers of Jagat and the surrounding area had raised enough money to commission a new marble image made in Jaipur (fig. 2.4). The ensuing installation raised critical questions concerning the value of the site as patrimony, as well as problems with rejecting archaeological death in favor of modern religious and political use.



FIGURE 2.5. *Śubhamaṇḍapa*, archival photo (1950s), building foundation, c. eleventh century; brick layer, c. 1800s–1900s, Jagat. © Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). My sincere thanks to all of the ASI officers who worked together to efficiently provide me with copies of relevant photographs.

Preservation often left good records but rarely succeeded in maintaining archaeological material in situ. At Jagat, preservation involved the removal of material considered historically irrelevant. A photograph of the *śubhamaṇḍapa* (approximately fifty feet in front of the entrance to the Ambikā temple) taken in the 1950s by the ASI (fig. 2.5) reveals that the building originally had a second story of brick.²⁶ A stone staircase from the lower level of this structure leading up to what is now a roof indicates a second story was always an integral part of this structure; holes remaining in the stone suggest masonry to support it (fig. 2.6). The fate of this brick structure is unknown. Traces of white to the right of the portal in the photograph may indicate this structure was originally plastered or stuccoed by the ASI. The *śubhamaṇḍapa* suggests how preservation colors our understanding of a site's history. Although preservation implies permanence, sites do change during restoration. While archaeological sites may die as living monuments, they do not remain unchanged.

Periods of dormancy and renovation at Jagat are not limited to recent history. A three-hundred-year hiatus was followed by a flurry of inscriptions in the eighteenth century. These inscriptions refer to *yatras* (pilgrimages) made to Jagat and



FIGURE 2.6. *Subhamaṇḍapa*, Jagat. Holes in the masonry suggest the second story may have originally been built of wood. © Deborah Stein.

reveal a diverse temple audience. Tours of 1744 indicate that royalty chose the site for pilgrimage and that Sunday was already an auspicious day for the goddess by the eighteenth century. Inscriptions of 1744 and 1745 commemorate the pilgrimage of architects belonging to the Sompurā and Nāgadā guilds. These guilds link this temple to an important set of Mewāri temples to the north. Pilgrimages were jointly recorded by several different castes, including Bhils and Meenas, and not just royalty. An inscription of 1792 lists the names of nine commoners, one of whom may have been a woman, Roopajaa. Renunciants, nobles, Bhils, women, and masons all wanted to leave their trace on the stone temple.

Like inscriptions, legal documents attest to the uses of temples. The Ambikā temple at Jagat falls under the jurisdiction of the Udaipur Archaeological Department. When the sanctum was painted gold, my field of inquiry turned to the archaeological department, where the only legal document in the museum dates to the colonial period. The Jaipur Ancient Monuments Act of 1941 makes two claims: (1) a place of worship must not be used for “any purpose inconsistent with its character”; and (2)

when a protected monument is used for religious worship, it should be protected from pollution or desecration.²⁷

The tension between use and preservation remains unresolved. The legal definition of desecration, which loosely implies harming an icon, hateful graffiti, or the destruction of a mosque to build a temple, lacks clarity. In contrast, the code makes no mention of changing the visual culture of an ancient site as a part of consecration. Section 5 provides for maintenance, including “fencing, covering in, repairing, restoring and cleansing of a protected monument.”²⁸ The act seems to refer to restoration associated with preservation in the archaeological sense of the term. The Jaipur Preservation Act attempts simultaneously to protect the sacral quality of monuments and to maintain them as archaeological treasures, seemingly unaware of the tensions between these two models.

In the absence of a clear legal mandate, the issue of preservation and use becomes a matter of taste—albeit with significant political ramifications. Although the metallic paint and modern marble sculpture may even be considered kitsch or vulgar according to Western art-historical notions of taste, from a Marxist standpoint these modern renovations may well be the opposite of vulgar. Theodor Adorno writes:

Only in mutilated fashion does the vulgar represent the plebeian that is held at a distance by the so-called high arts. When art has allowed itself, without condescension, to be inspired by a plebeian element, art has gained in an authentic weightiness that is the opposite of vulgar. Art becomes vulgar through condescension: when, especially by means of humor, it appeals to deformed consciousness and confirms it. It suits domination if what it has made out of the masses and what it drills into them can be chalked up to their own guilty desires.²⁹

If we take Adorno’s definition of vulgarity as a form of condescension, the use of metallic gold paint on the tenth-century sanctum at Jagat could just as well be understood as possessing “an authentic weightiness that is the opposite of vulgar.” The act of painting the shrine metallic gold is also a commemoration of the installation of a new icon, a white marble goddess statue chiseled in Jaipur (fig. 2.7). This piece of sculpture has no place in a museum. The white stone fits neither the rhetoric of modern transnational artists such as Anish Kapoor nor the premodern Hindu art in museum collections. The new icon has no place on the art market, no reason to be stolen. This primarily religious object is not valuable aesthetically yet extremely valuable from a ritual standpoint. The installation of the goddess is a political act of reclaiming ritual space.

The authors of *Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags* describe how the 1990s’ Hindu right corresponds to a rise in popular goddess worship.³⁰ By painting the ancient Ambikā temple, the participants removed its historical and aesthetic value and replaced it with political and ritual value, thus putting the sanctum in the same category as the new icon it housed. Theft in the eyes of the preservationist, this act was a reclaiming of space in the eyes of the Rājputs who sponsored the goddess



FIGURE 2.7. New icon, under worship in the Ambikā temple, 2009. © Deborah Stein.

installation. For the average village local, however, people who would have little impact on their lives or practice were simply making a claim to power.

In the case of the *śubhamaṇḍapa* at Jagat, the performers of ritual usurped the historical site. The grassy jagged lip of the upper wall meets no roof in the 1950s photograph (fig. 2.5). As of 2002 the same structure looked well maintained and



FIGURE 2.8. Perishable *maṇḍapa* built for the goddess installation in May 2002, Jagat.
© Deborah Stein.

paralleled the form of a perishable *maṇḍapa* constructed for the new goddess installation at the Ambikā temple (fig. 2.8). Locals asserted their independence from any local, state, or national archaeological administration by staging this ceremony to direct the future of their patrimony.

The Hindu goddess Ambikā was installed just after violence broke out in Gujarat. Months of riots followed an attack at the Godhra railway station on February 27, 2002, that burned Hindu activists who were returning from a pilgrimage to Ayodhyā.³¹ As the sacrificial fire burned in Jagat, the anguish had not been extinguished in neighboring Gujarat. Hundreds of Muslims were living in refugee camps, and the state government was doing little, even participating in the wave of unmitigated killing. In Rājasthān the threat of violence forced Udaipur, the capital city of Mewār, to close for a seventy-two-hour curfew. Rājput boys in Jagat called on their warrior ancestry, hoping when they grew up either to run for political office or to fight the terrorists.³² This anxious atmosphere may have contributed to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) victory in Rājasthān, while the left-leaning Congress Party won the national election.

This branch of the Hindu right exercises a democratic rhetoric that shallowly masks complacency toward the violent pull of communalism in northern India. After the destruction of the Babri Masjid mosque on December 6, 1992, the BJP's alliance with extreme groups such as the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the

Vishwa Hindu Parishad became more explicit.³³ Ten years later, in 2002, the same communal violence that began with the Hindu right's destruction of a mosque in Ayodhyā, the legendary birthplace of the Hindu hero Rama, continued with an attack of a train full of pilgrims returning from Ayodhyā to Gujarat. Approximately eight hundred Muslim deaths, out of one thousand total deaths, suggest that the rhetoric of revenge and parity was political rather than factual.

Ironically, the Ambikā temple did not see more use with a new icon. The first Navratri nine-day goddess holiday after the installation did not even include the usual buffalo sacrifice. The eight-day installation ceremony of May 2002 culminated in a final fire sacrifice on the last day and the actual placing of the image in the sanctum. Important Rājāsthani luminaries and people from villages around Jagat attended this ceremony. The prince of Jagat, who now runs a heritage hotel in Udaipur, and the Rājāsthan home minister were among the speakers at what appeared to be a right-wing BJP rally delivered to the locals attending the fire ceremony.

The focus of the goddess installation was anything but ritual for the majority of participants. A diagram of the social space of the ceremony reveals (1) ritual taking place between the Ambikā temple and the *śubhamaṇḍapa*, (2) a political rally for village men to the side of the *śubhamaṇḍapa*, (3) distribution of *prasād* to women and girls to the side of the temple, (4) a cluster of boys behind the women and men, and (5) the researcher on a (polluting) pile of shoes just outside the temporary *maṇḍapa*, where she had been given permission to film (fig. 2.9). Although men saw the ritual under the contemporary *maṇḍapa*, they clearly were listening to political speeches being broadcast in their midst. The women were chatting while nibbling *prasād* far from the ritual. Only those conducting the ritual paid attention.

The installation of a new icon restored the honor of a stolen goddess. Men and women who paid little attention to the installation ritual now use the temple, while Rājputs, priests, and politicians who were staging their power rarely or never return to the site. The quotidian and seasonal celebrations at the site remained completely unchanged by the presence of the new icon. In fact, if anything, the Ambikā temple seemed even less a focus of attention once the new icon was in place. The anticlimax satisfied the hope of reestablishing honor to a site marred by theft. Complacency replaced desire. The collection of money and power along with the ensuing enactment of the goddess installation answered a call to restore the honor of a stolen goddess. Once her honor was restored, her maintenance was turned back to the cluster of Bhil and Meena women who pray to her and to her hilltop sister, Mallar Mātā.

As an alternative to preservation, temple use protects the temple from death even though it cannot offer unbroken continuity. A romantic interpretation assumes that if local people control the thousand-year-old Ambikā temple, continuity is maintained—somehow they form an unbroken chain with the past. This

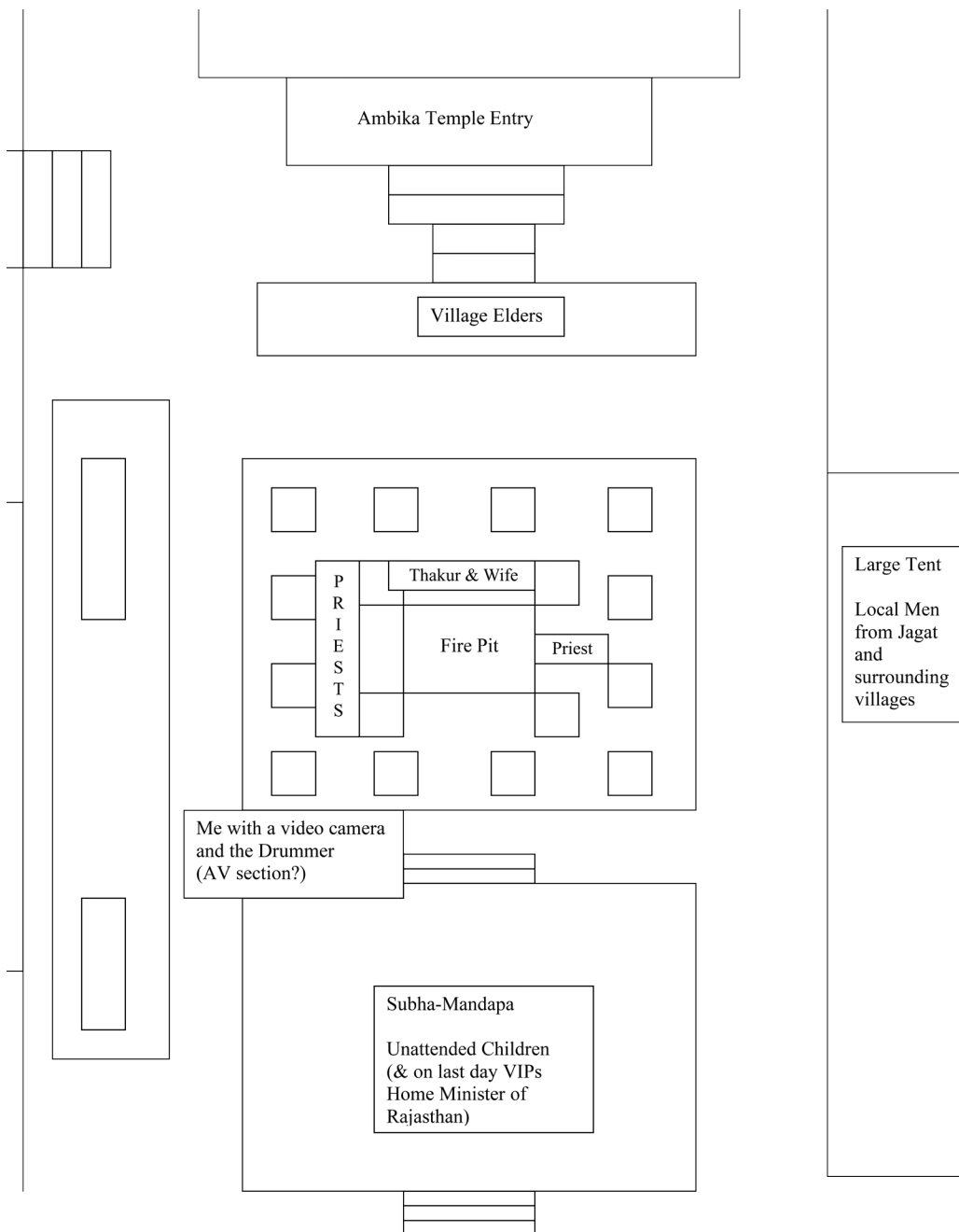


FIGURE 2.9. Diagram of the social space of the ceremony. © Deborah Stein.

myth bespeaks orientalist models that associate modernity with the West and timeless ahistorical eternity with the East. The Ambikā temple has not been in continuous use since its conception. Each new use is a construction of identity and history, an invention of the present and a creation of the future. Although use does not suggest continuity, this alternative to preservation refuses the Derridean death of relegating the temple to a historical monument. The current use of the Ambikā temple as a form of praxis is predicated on a model of the building as being alive.

CONCLUSION

As a catalyst for social interaction and praxis in the speech of human actions, the Ambikā temple establishes power. Nationalists inherit an orientalist model of timeless continuity, a story of Hindu history, Muslim invasion, and reestablishment of a Hindu nation. The *thakur*'s family struggles to stage control of numinous power as a substitute for political power, lost when India moved from a quasi-feudal system to nationhood. Both are involved in a form of theft. They wrest the temple discourse from the Rājāsthān State Archaeological Department, from tourists, and from historians to put it in the hands of politicians in the name of the local villagers. The Ambikā temple has become a commodity: it changes hands to be reused, recycled, and reinvented.

Because of the expense of guardianship and the remoteness of sites, the ASI's dominion is hard to administer. In a country where many do not have enough to eat and where drought makes water a commodity sold for two rupees a bucket, the task of maintaining a site such as Jagat is daunting. Past curators "stole" sculptures from the sites to house them in local museums.³⁴ This tactic saved many pieces from theft and the international art market but also removed the sculptures from their programmatic context. Were the objects left in situ, those that were not stolen would be in use, such as the icons in figure 2.10, housed in a mud-brick shrine at Āmjhara. The process of modern use involves the application of foil, vermilion, and ghee, thus rendering the object of veneration ritually animate while covering over its historicity. Keeping sculpture in situ often leaves the pieces open to theft or destruction, but it is the only way to maintain their historical value.

Archaeological sites in southern Rājāsthān face problems similar to those found at a UNESCO World Heritage Site, such as Angkor Wat in Cambodia. Extreme poverty of local populations, lack of necessities for survival, no opportunities for improving their social status, an abrupt shift from a collectivist state to a capitalist market economy, a highly centralized budget leaving few resources and little power to local governments, and government departments that are overstaffed and have outdated equipment are just a few of the difficulties to be overcome.³⁵ Beyond these challenges to creating a system of sustainable archaeology, it



FIGURE 2.10. Mudbrick shrine, Āmjhara (near Dūngarpur). © Deborah Stein.

is highly unlikely that such a small regional site as the Ambikā temple would ever qualify as a World Heritage Site. Even if it did qualify, a complex negotiation of preservation and use would surely ensue. New forms of rather unregulated free-market patronage promise a radical shift in the aesthetics and ethics of archaeological sites, but for now temple trusts determine for whose praxis the ancient sites of southern Rājāsthān are used.³⁶

Ekliṅgī is an example of a complex negotiation of ownership of an archaeological temple site. The history of renovation suggests that the construction of history through rebuilding is a timeless art. But the historical contexts of each period of renovation yield specific information about the political concerns of a particular time and place. In the twenty-first century, clergy, nobility, and devotees at Ekliṅgī hold fast to a *svayambu* story for the main icon, despite convincing evidence to the contrary. The politics of Raimal's renovations echo hundreds of years later through the stone residue of this mahārāṇā's praxis. This historical echo reflects present choices about how Mewār's history should be depicted. The increasingly restricted access to the most ancient upper levels of the site mirror control exercised via privatization.

Private organizations increasingly fill the vacuum of resources available to state organizations, such as the archaeological departments. This privatization of archaeology is a symptom of a larger shift, away from social, collectivist forms

of government and toward capitalist participation in a global market economy. In the same way Raimal's renovation colors present politics at Ekliņģi, future generations' uses of archaeological sites will be informed by the aesthetic residue of present actions, such as the icon left behind by the goddess installation at Jagat in 2002.

Temple as Royal Abode

The Regal, the Real, and the Ideal in Fifteenth-Century Mewār

Many have written about fifteenth-century Mewār over the past century.¹ The material residue of imaginaries contrasts with the material and architectural residue still found in situ today. This chapter on Guhila dynastic history marks a moment when the Sisodia dynasty, which claimed descent from the Guhilas, could look back on a past that included more than oral history and the seeds of dynastic legitimization that their Guhila forebears had used back in the tenth century. Tenth-century inscriptions and architecture sought to legitimize the rise of the Guhilas in the vacuum of power that characterized a two-hundred-year period prior. In the fifteenth century the physical record of tenth-century production and monumentalization served to recall Guhila greatness on behalf of its successors—the Sisodias of Mewār.

This early modern period in the kingdom of Mewār was characterized by revivalism. At the fortress of Chittorgarh, carefully labeled iconography in the Kirtistambha tower indicates an early instance of self-definition and the fear of losing heritage that gives birth to nostalgia. Long bardic inscriptions and early historical texts use the tenth-century past to deal with fifteenth-century insecurities in much the same way that twentieth- and twenty-first-century people make claims of authenticity based on fifteenth-century history to cope with rapidly changing governance and the many insecurities of the modern period.

Further art historical and sociocultural comparison with Malwa, Gujarat, Gwalior, Delhi, and Persia would illuminate more about the visual, erudite, and archival impulses that characterized polity over a large multisectarian region in the fifteenth century. Such a geographic scale of comparison, however, lies beyond the scope of this chapter. In an era of encroaching Mughal power from Delhi and sultanate power from Gujarat and Malwa, the kingdom of Mewār used culture to

produce, not just mark, its borders. In fact, there were no clear borders—just texts, buildings, images, arguments, dreams, anthologies, and the like. Recently, textual historians have mapped inscriptional data to illuminate the extent and limits of Guhila hegemony in the early stages of state formation in Mewār, Chhapa, and Vagada. Unlike the tenth century, when Guhila dynastic identity was under negotiation, the late medieval period was characterized by a tenuous Rājput political hold in the form of intense “cultural” production.²

This fifteenth-century propensity to use archival impulses and quotation in illuminated books, architectural projects, music, food, and other forms of encyclopedia was a multisectarian form of polity that stretched across northwestern India as far as Persia in this period. For example, the illustrated *Nimāt Nāmā* cookbook, produced at court in neighboring Malwa during the same era, references specifically Persian modes of kingship and painting styles alongside Indian and Persian foodstuffs. The recording of recipes, like the musical encyclopedia said to have been authored by Mahārāṇā Kumbhā Mewār during the same era, suggests an archival impulse—and an artistic production or expression of that archival desire—as a cornerstone of polity in this time and place.

Here I focus on the ebb and flow of architectural and inscriptional production in two different geographic locations. In Mewār the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were tumultuous times that left architectural traces of Guhila claims to power—buildings that do not directly correlate to written accounts of Rājput and Mughal histories. The mahārāṇās of Mewār sponsored temples and towers at Ekliṅgji and at Chittorgarh during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Meanwhile, between Mewār and Vagada to the south, the region of Chhapa witnessed similar vacillations between extensive patronage and cultural silence in the stone record. Are we to understand architectural absence as a corroboration of written records of threat, danger, or even defeat? Local rumor would have us believe that the Ambikā temple in Jagat was buried in sand at one point in history to protect it from destruction, but no proof or even suggestion of dates for this theory remain. The military history of Ekliṅgji, in contrast, remains quite legible from the inscriptional and artistic record already analyzed in detail by Tryna Lyons.³

This chapter fills the architectural and inscriptional silences in Jagat with the exuberant, active patronage of a multisectarian sacred center in neighboring Jāwar. In an interesting parallel to tenth-century Mēdapāṭa, where the Lakuliśa temple defined a Guhila center at Ekliṅgji and the Ambikā temple articulated regional style on the border of Guhila territories, the fifteenth-century Mewāri architect Maṇḍana left his traces on the border as well. The successors to the Guhila lineage self-consciously defined their kingdom from the geographic location of an oscillating center between Ekliṅgji/Nāgadā and Chittorgarh and left residue of Mewāri history on a border defined by the development of industry rather than the self-conscious construction of history.

The art and architectural history of fifteenth-century Mewār, Chhapa, and Vagada reveals relative silence at the twenty-first-century centers of Ekliṅgī (Nāgadā/Ahar), and Jagat (near Jālōr, Ranthambhor, Jāwar, and Bambora). Instead, initially Jain centers in the fortress of Chittorgarh, the mines of Jāwar, and the monastery of Delwara defined the polity of the sultanate period in this region. The Śrī Ekliṅgī temple complex and the Ambikā temple in Jagat thus form a diachronic relationship between the tenth and the twenty-first centuries that nevertheless reveals intense periods of rupture during the very moment of tenuous state formation in the region.

The pendulum of architectural production between Ekliṅgī and Chittorgarh, on the one hand, and Jagat and Jāwar, on the other, offer a material record of very early instances of self-conscious history making, long after the tenth-century manufacture of political power and foreshadowing the modern period in which the display of art in museums and in situ continues to mark territories of both geography and imagination.

BAPPA RĀWAL: MYTHICAL FOUNDER OF THE GUHILAS OF EKLINGJĪ

One of the most powerful icons of the Guhila/Sisodia rupture between the tenth and the fifteenth centuries is the figure of Bappa Rāwal—identified as the founder of Mewār lineage in the present but not listed as the originator of the Guhila line in tenth-century inscriptions. The aesthetic power of this somewhat obscure lineage debate is evident in a twentieth-century French sculptor's rendition of Bappa (fig. 3.1), housed within a structure generally attributed to the patronage of fifteenth-century Mahārāṇā Kumbhā. This modern statue of Bappa articulates the claims of the Mahārāṇā Mewār website, where the eighth-century Bappa is linked to the eighth descendant of the Guhila line, Prince Kalbhoj. The most recent Mewār encyclopedia produced by the House of Mewār identifies Bappa with Kalbhoj and more accurately navigates the uncertainties through a description of the relationships between legend and history. There, in the same vein as Col. James Tod's versions, Bappa is described as the founder of Mewār who received spiritual instruction from the Śaiva ascetic Harit Rashi.⁴ Bappa became a devotee of Śrī Ekliṅgī and was named by his spiritual teacher as the first regent of Mewār in the service of the divine ruler of Mewār, Śiva in the manifestation of Śrī Ekliṅgī.

A painting displayed inside the mahārāṇā's private residence reveals Bappa Rāwal, hands folded in respect. His greeting is aimed at Harit Rashi, who floats above in a very literal iconographic rendition of the *haṁsa* (incorrectly translated as "swan") air vessels that are so famous in Sanskrit literature. These protoairplanes date back to the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, and it is in a similar vessel that Harit Rashi, in a white plaster sculpture, hovers over the entrance to the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple today (fig. 3.2). One wonders, in fact, if the sculpture was



FIGURE 3.1. Bappa Rāwal, by a French sculptor, c. second half of the twentieth century, Eklingji. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 3.2. Modern sculpture of Harit Rashi in a Sanskritic *hamsa* vehicle (swan boat), Śri Eklingji temple. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 3.3. Harit Rashi on an exterior wall in Udaipur during Rath Yātrā. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 3.4. Painting of Harit Rashi's apparition, c. 1850–1950. Private Palace Collection (Maharana Mewar Research Institute). Photo by author. Reproduced with special permission from Śrīji Arvind Singh Mewār.

copied from the painting or vice versa. During the Rath Yātrā parade in Udaipur in 2002, Harit Rashi, in his signature swan boat, greeted people in the streets from a second-floor mural (fig. 3.3) that depicts the sage's boat hovering above the temple of Ekliṅgī (in blue) and the large brown mountain of Vindhyaśinī. There even appears to be the Rastrasena temple peeking out from behind the mountain atop a green peak in the distance. This street mural contrasts in style, but not in basic iconography, with one of the mahārāṇās's favorite paintings on view in his home (fig. 3.4). In this less cluttered composition, Bappa Rāwal (in yellow) clasps his hands as he looks up at the sage in the red swan boat.

Dating back to 971, the Lakuliśa temple and inscription record a debate that took place among Buddhists, Jains, and the Pāsupata-Śivas. This inscription also links for the first time the Guhila dynasty to the Pāsupata-Śivas. Line 5 of the Lakuliśa temple inscription mentions Bappa, and line 15 references Ekliṅgī.⁵ Bhandarkar assumes the 971 inscription as proof of why Bappa remains so important to the mahārāṇās of Mewār. The Atpur inscription of 977 clearly lists the early lineage of the Guhila line as (1) Guhadatta, (2) Bhoja, (3) Mahendra, (4) Naga, (5) Syeela, (6) Aparajīta, (7) Mahindra, (8) Kalbhoj (associated by some with Bappa), (9) Khoman, (10) Bhartṛpaṭṭa, (11) Singse, (12) Śrī Ullut, (13) Nirvāhana, (14) Salvāhana, and (15) Śaktikumār.⁶ Inscriptions within less than a decade and fewer than one hundred or two hundred kilometers of each other reveal slightly different lineages.

The myth of Bappa Rāwal found on the Mahārāṇā Mewār website does not correlate historically with tenth-century inscriptions. A lineage is set forth—one that does not list Bappa Rāwal as the progenitor of the royal line, in contrast with post-fourteenth-century records. D. C. Sircar situates the elevation of Bappa from “petty Rāwal” to “one of the greatest heroes India ever produced” in folklore as a response to status Bappa earned from “the struggle with the Mughals in the sixteenth century AD.”⁷ Nandini Kapur cites the seventeenth-century Hindi poetry of Girdhar Asia and the seventeenth-century history of court official Muhanot Nainsi to conclude, “What Bappa did for the thirteenth century Guhilas, Hammira did for the fifteenth century Guhilas.”⁸ Whereas Bappa was the progenitor of the Sisodia line by the fifteenth century, as of the tenth century, Guhadatta was listed as the first Guhila of Mēdapāṭa (later known as Mewār).

Tryna Lyons also mentions the Bappa debate, citing the inscriptional lineages as problematic with the Bappa myth.⁹ In contrast, Kapur seems to take the Kalbhoj-Bappa equivalency argument at face value—perhaps owing to her quotations of origin myths from famous seventeenth-century history and poetry. Although she seems to rely largely on Tod and Sharma and their post-1300 dynastic viewpoints as her sources for nineteenth-century Bappa adoration, her careful reliance on inscriptional data leads her to even more specific dates of rupture between the Guhila and the Sisodia lines.¹⁰ Corroborated by Topsfield's visual history of manuscripts in this region and the work of Lyons with local bards, Kapur's argument

of a break between 1303, when Alāuddīn Khiljī sacked Ekliṅgī, and 1337, when the generically named Sisodia progenitor Hammīra takes “back” Chittorgarh, seems quite plausible and agreeably specific in relation to many older accounts.¹¹ This break is likely the very reason why the fifteenth-century art history of Mewār reflects an archival impulse to quote the past and an encyclopedic impulse to create the actual monuments listed in Sanskrit and vernacular architectural manuals called śilpaśāstras; whereas, before the break, the fledgling Guhilas built in new ways to legitimize their rule with stone architecture for the first time from the 950s to the 970s CE but did not seek to quote the past or build an archive—there was no strong recent past on which to build.

WHO WAS HAMMĪRA? SISODIA-GUHILA CLAIMS TO CHITTORGARH

If the Sisodia clan seems to appear suddenly when Mahārāṇā Kumbhā's grandfather ruled the kingdom of Mewār from Chittorgarh (and not the Guhila stronghold of Ekliṅgī/Nāgadā), then where did they come from? A largely silent inscriptional record from the time after the Vindhyāvāsini goddess temple in Ekliṅgī to Kumbhā's grandfather in Chittorgarh suggests that perhaps a new ruling dynasty filled a political vacuum in this region from before the time of Alāuddīn Khiljī's Afghan raid in 1305 to the time of Kumbhā's grandfather. In his book *Objects of Translation* Finbarr Flood alludes to these precarious origins when he points out that the name “Hammīra” simply means “a ruler.” Nandini Kapur argues from what inscriptional record remains that the expansion under Rāṇā Hammīra and Rāṇā Lakha “seems to have begun the process of the annexation of Merwara.”¹² There was a critical shift in state formation in the fifteenth century, where tribal areas are increasingly incorporated into the Rājput state.

Kingship officially ended with Indian independence. Today, Mewār is technically ruled by the state of Rājāsthān under the nation of India. For many in Mewār, their ruler remains Śrī Ekliṅgī, a god—and a god in need of a dīwān at that. It is in this capacity that Śrī Arvind Singh Mewār serves as mahārāṇā in the twenty-first century and the age of the modern nation-state. He and many in modern Mewār find the hegemony of their heritage in the exploits of Rāṇā Hammīra's grandson.

The grandson of this Sisodia “Hammīra” was the famous king Mahārāṇā Kumbhā, who ruled from Chittorgarh and then constructed Kumbhalgarh at the northern edges of what was Guhila dominion, or at least the area known as Mēdapāṭa, where the old tenth-century Jain temple lies at Ghāṇērāo. He moved his capital from the southeastern edges of the Chhapa/Vagada border with Mewār to the furthest point north—never once selecting the Nāgadā/Ekliṅgī region for his capital. His daughter Ramabai in turn held the mining town of Jāwar as part of her *jaḡīr* (dowry) in the heart of Chhapa to the south of Mewār, halfway to the Guhila offshoot kingdom of Dūṅarpur.



FIGURE 3.5. Pratap, Rath Yātrā parade, Udaipur, 2002. © Deborah Stein.

In contrast with his lesser-known grandfather, Kumbhā was a very active ruler, patron of the arts, author, and architectural patron. His distinction was heralded by colonial historian James Tod and by contemporary nationalist parties in India to this day. The Sisodia line eventually was known for Kumbhā's descendant Mahārāṇā Pratap, who is said to have defeated the Mughals at the Battle of Haldighāṭī in the second half of the sixteenth century—a hundred years after Kumbhā was actively sponsoring architectural projects at Chittorgarh. Pratap's legacy has resulted in multiple visual renditions ranging from a large-scale bronze statue of him on horseback that greets the visitors at the airport, to the image carried during a Rath Yātrā parade in Udaipur in 2002 (fig. 3.5). He is recognizable by his red-trimmed blue coat, his portly and confident stance, and his profile—all of which have made his portrait infamous in several renditions from calendar art to palace paintings.

This colonial and nationalist lens of Rājput greatness has influenced our understandings and misunderstandings of some of Kumbhā's most famous monuments to this day.¹³ More recent studies, such as Upendra Nath's book about Mahārāṇā Kumbhā and, in 2002, Nandini Kapur's excellent work on state formation, have begun to correct that picture.¹⁴ Recent studies of artistic agency by Tryna Lyons provide an impressive depth of detailed data carefully culled in the field directly

from bards, as well as translated directly from inscriptions and mason marks on monuments and manuscripts alike.¹⁵ A closer look at the architectural landscape of sultanate-era Mewār, Chhapa, and Vagada exposes just how precarious the hegemony of Guhila-Sisodia heritage was prior to the fifteenth century. The Kirtistambha of Chittorgarh, for example, illustrates the quintessentially fifteenth-century phenomenon of reification of kingship through specifically revivalist and archival architectural projects.

One of the most impressive monuments built under Kumbhā's reign is the Kirtistambha at Chittorgarh (fig. 3.6). Previously understood as a Jayastambha, or "Tower of Victory," the tall stone spire of Rāṇā Kumbhā's fortress remains to this day the symbol of Chittorgarh, Rājāsthān, and, consequently, a symbol of Rājput glory in India. The extensive plateau has been alternately ruled and captured for hundreds of years owing to its location in the center of a geographic triangle formed by Gujarat, Malwa, and Agra. In a long line of rulers who used architecture—and, more specifically, pillars, *stambhas*, towers, and minarets of all types—to define their dominion and to augment their power in South Asia, Kumbhā's cultural patronage far outweighs his military claims to victory. Moreover, it is exactly this tactic—the privileging of cultural hegemony over political territorial boundaries—that made it possible for this fifteenth-century ruler's legacy to acquire such an enduring form.

In contrast to the typical victory narrative, both the rich sculptural contents and the inscriptions of the nine-story interior tell a different story—a tale that could be romantically coined the making of one of India's first museums, because it is the story of a collection—and a very permanent collection at that. The combination of two features distinguishes this tower from any previous Indian monument: first, the incised labeling of each image in stone underneath; and, second, an interior turn-square staircase that permits the viewer to travel across nine different interior landings within a span of ten minutes or so.¹⁶ The labels fix each sculpture's meaning in stone—as if it were possible to curate for posterity. The internal square helical staircase collapses the proximity of nine different gallery spaces into a single monument. Rather than travel a distance of a day or more via horse or on foot to see a variety of temple exteriors, the fifteenth-century viewer could experience these levels in intimate proximity to one another. Each level of the tower quotes prior modes of architecture and iconography to create a permanent expression of the artistic canon of the day. Even though we are inside the tower, this collection of iconographic programs quotes temple exteriors and never seems to reveal an inner icon—a crucial distinction from medieval temple iconography and architecture. All prior towers, *stambhas*, and even *kīrtistambhas* in South Asia and even western Asia relied on surface decoration of the exterior; only the Kirtistambha had such rich interior sculptural decoration.

Affixed to the inside ceiling of the uppermost gallery, an inscription corroborates the visual evidence of collecting and the creation of a permanent canon



FIGURE 3.6. Kirtistambha tower, c. 1440–60, Chittorgarh. © Deborah Stein.

in stone.¹⁷ This inscription reveals a reliance on a specific scientific manual, or *śilpaśāstra*, called the *Aparājitaṭṭpṛcchā*, an early medieval architectural treatise that lays out a prescription for the construction and iconographic program of kirtistambha towers. With the inclusion of a portion of this text on the building itself, we learn that the goal of a kirtistambha is to mark a royal capital with a

tower meant to include all worldly and celestial things. Although the *śilpaśāstra* text—revised and reauthored by the king himself and affixed to the monument interior—does not give a specific plan for a square helical internal staircase, nor does it give an iconographic prescription for specific programmatic placement of sculpture in protrusions and recesses of a drawn elevation, it does suggest the purpose of a *kirtistambha* and the role of this specific choice of monument in King Kumbhā's worldview. The story told by Kumbhā's *Kirtistambha* suggests a desire to encompass the entire cosmos within a single structure—an enticing window onto the king's own individual subjective fifteenth-century “period eye” as an architectural patron in the kingdom of Mewār at a crossroads with an increasingly complex political, ethnic, sectarian, and cultural landscape.

Constructed between 1440 and 1460, the *Kirtistambha* designed and built by architect Jaita and his sons Napa and Puna visually articulates a claim to *kirtti* (glory) rather than *jaya* (victory). The glorious claim of Kumbhā's regal tower—to encompass the heavens and earth—yields some surprising results. We are left with neither a clear-cut tale of Hindu/Muslim conflict—as many historians in colonial and nationalist modes have previously assumed—nor a tale of multicultural pre-modern global harmony, as other postmodern historians may hope to find. Of course, no one can make a claim to a truly “authentic” history in any scholarly way, but the visual record does leave behind some important clues about the hopes and dreams of Rāṇā Kumbhā, his architects, and their revivalist claim for the cultural and dynastic place of the Sisodia branch of Rājputs in relation to their Guhila dynasty predecessors in Mewār.

How, then, can we begin to understand a royally sponsored monument that gives sculptural form and a wall label to ordinary people, such as servants (fig. 3.7), but does not depict the king? How can we think about a collection that includes the calligraphic presence of the Muslim God, Allah, and multisectarian iconographic sculpture of Hindu deities Śiva, Śakti, and Viṣṇu all under the same roof but leaves out any clear references to Jainism? Could this suggest that the multisectarian iconography reflects a specifically *kshetrias*, or ruler's caste, point of view? Does the Jain tower precedent preclude any need for Jain iconography, or does their lack of a godhead similar to Allah, Śiva, or Viṣṇu suggest that a saint is not part of Kumbhā's cosmos whereas his human servants, dancers, and the like remain an integral part of his world?

The iconographic collection of the tower interior delineates complex webs of relationships among a variety of belief systems, and it does so in an almost encyclopedic manner. Far from a random assemblage of imagery, the organization of these images architecturally in relation to one another suggests an archival impulse on the part of the makers. The creation of an archive suggests a desire to classify information and objects—to forge and fix relationships for future generations. As an active patron of the arts, Rāṇā Kumbhā regularly sponsored architectural projects and scholarly works. Kumbhā is credited even with important musical treatises



FIGURE 3.7. Labeled sculpture of servants in a domestic interior. Interior of Kirtistambha tower, c. 1440–60, Chittorgarh. © Deborah Stein.

called the *Sangita-ratnakara* and *Sangita-krama-dipaka*, which also engages in an encyclopedic enterprise with a revivalist tone and an eye to fixing a contemporary view of the past in a permanent way for future generations. The fifteenth-century Kirtistambha of Chittorgarh can be read as a permanent record of one king's curatorial eye toward the past and his political claims for the future.

INSIDE THE KĪRTISTAMBHA: “THE PERMANENT COLLECTION”

The Kirtistambha was built by a Vaiṣṇavaite king in a Śaivaite kingdom. Mewāris consider Śrī Eklīṅgī, a Pāśupata manifestation of the god Śiva, as their divine ruler—whereas the human mahārāṇā serves only as “dīwān,” or his divine guardian. Technically speaking, one could argue that Śiva is the ruler of Mewār. As for the antiquity of this claim, an inscription on the Lakuliśa temple dated to 971 records a great debate that took place among the Buddhists, the Jains, and the Pāśupata Śaivas. This inscription establishes a link between the Guhila dynasty and the Pāśupata Śaivas, said to have been the winners of the debate. Although the inscription does not clearly delineate whether Eklīṅgī was understood as the divine ruler of Mewār in the tenth century, it does establish Mewār as a Pāśupata kingdom. Rāṇā Kumbhā, however, clearly was a devotee of Viṣṇu. He sponsored the famous Mīrabai temple at Eklīṅgī and even gave his own daughter the Vaiṣṇavaite name “Ramabai.”¹⁸ The Kirtistambha tower he sponsored was also dedicated to Viṣṇu, and it is an image of Viṣṇu that first greets viewers as they enter the tower.

The program does not focus uniquely on Viṣṇu by any means. In fact, the complex iconographic program establishes complex relationships among Viṣṇu, Śiva,

and the people of Mewār. In addition, the ensemble of the sculptural program suggests more of an encyclopedic, curatorial eye toward a canon of iconographic traditions rather than a pointed sectarian journey toward any singular religious experience. The interior program includes the following general categories of sculpture:

1. Male Deities
2. Nondual Deities
3. “Muslim” and “Hindu” Deities
4. Male and Female Deities
5. Humans, Mostly Ordinary People (Nonmythic, Nonnoble, Nonclergy)
6. Goddesses
7. Open Empty Gallery
8. Sealed Empty Gallery
9. Observation Deck

In tandem with medieval North Indian architectural practices, the Kīrtistambha program engages in architectural punning and other metaphors that grow from placement and the visual interaction between sculpture, wall, and building.¹⁹ For example, the fifth floor, halfway up the tower, is filled with carefully labeled images of ordinary people like servants, ascetics, drummers, dancers, architects, and scribes. On this level, where the people of Mewār are meticulously represented, the exterior program explicitly alludes to Śrī Ekliṅgī, the four-faced Pāśupata god of Śiva understood today to rule Mewār. Can we speculate that the planners were suggesting that this rich diversity of the human world was literally encased within a particular Śaivaite paradigm? In a second example, the nondual deities on floor 2 precede the viewer’s ascension to floor 3. The first two floors of the tower are larger architecturally and serve as a base for the upper stories. Both inside and outside there is more room, so the architects were able to include thick temple facades with protrusions and recesses on the building’s interior. The figures of Harihara (half Viṣṇu, half Śiva) and Ardhanārīśwara (half Śiva, half Pārvatī) directly precede the juncture between the two larger temple-within-a-temple galleries and the more narrow programmatic displays on floors above. Could the joined figures reflect an intentional pun with the joining of two parts of the building? These two examples of iconographic and architectural metaphor reflect the types of choices architects and patrons must make. The tower interior remains as a remnant of those intentions.

On entering the tower, one views a sculpture of Viṣṇu (fig. 3.8). He is easily recognized by his crater crown and holds a discus in one hand and a club in the other. Two of his arms are missing, along with a portion of his legs, yet the pedestal on which he sits seems to have all of its original form intact. A closer look reveals pitted accretions in Viṣṇu’s eyes, nose, and mouth—to an extent where the flattened traces of features become barely legible. In contrast the incised crisscross



FIGURE 3.8. Sculpture of Viṣṇu, interior of Kirtistambha tower, c. 1440–60, Chittorgarh. © Deborah Stein.

pattern of the crown remains incredibly intact, as if it had been completed yesterday. Tourists may assume “Muslim invaders”²⁰ attacked the sculpture. In an a priori narrative of iconoclasm a German tourist asked me during my fieldwork inside the tower, “But didn’t you notice that *all* [emphasis mine] the faces have been destroyed?” During a public lecture, similar questions arose about this very first image in the tower. Could he be proof of Tod’s misreading of the *Ain-I-Akbari* and his conviction that the tower engages in an intentional victory narrative? If so, one could project a narrative of victory and revenge onto the material cultural remains—but how much of this story derives visually from the remains at hand?

The weight of arms that extend from a bas-relief outward far from the picture plane could easily cause a large chunk of stone to fall over time. The stone had no metal reinforcements to sustain its weight over a long period. As for the face, one would imagine a marauder scenario would involve a club, a sword, or some other tool that would be used to bludgeon a “heathen” god’s delicate stone face. I find it highly unlikely that someone with iconoclastic aims would delicately chip into a face leaving faded features rather than slash an image in half or chip off a chunk of nose. So the visual evidence that looks more like erosion does not support this assumed narrative. Furthermore, recent studies of looting, power, and display of sacred spoils suggests that display in the capitals of the victors or ritualized travel of icons across specific routes followed standardized practices, meant to establish overlordship and hegemony more than to express a universal iconoclastic disgust for the figural image.²¹

According to the construction date of 1440 to 1460, the sculpture would have to have been destroyed subsequently—but the next capture of Chittorgarh unfolds in the late sixteenth century, when Akbar wins the fortress in 1567. This Mughal emperor was known for a multisectarian thirst for knowledge. He built the famous *kitab-khanna* for his capital of Fatepur Sikri. A dyslexic who never learned to read, the powerful Indian-born emperor was an intellectual who sponsored a number of famous illustrated manuscripts. From the “Hindu” Bhagavata Purāṇa to the Persian-style homage to his own reign, the Akbarnama, the sponsored works of the Mughal emperor included rich figural imagery and some of the most impressive Indian painting ever produced.²² Again, I find it hard to imagine his conquest of Chittorgarh as a blind attempt at *in situ* iconoclasm. The sculpture could not have become *spolia* if it still remains *in situ*. Moreover, Akbar’s sponsorship of so many figural works as an intellectual, an art lover, and a powerful patron makes him an unlikely candidate for iconoclastic-style conquest.

Rather than confuse the tests of time with an *a priori* and ahistorical narrative, we can begin instead with Kumbhā and his architects as they began their impressive architectural project. Not only did their architectural manual specify the *kirtistambha* tower type as dedicated to Viṣṇu, but we can imagine as a Vaiṣṇavaite, this choice would have appealed to Rāṇā Kumbhā as a patron. But was this personal deity (fig. 3.8) the icon of the royal tower? If we return to the question of placement, it does not make sense. A main icon normally resides in a sanctum. A main icon unfolds only at the end of a complex iconographic circumambulation. A main icon is housed in a sanctum and approached through a series of pavilions. This Viṣṇu, with fleshy pectorals and a sensual medieval stomach, greets the viewer but does not occupy a position where ritual respects could be paid properly. The sculpture reads more like exterior deities than like a central icon. From the famous eighth-century Śiva *līṅgam* of Kalyanpur to the tenth-century icon of Śrī Ekliṅgī, most important icons are made from shiny black stone and not the same material as exterior walls. The lack of a sanctum, direct approach, scale, lack of elaborate



FIGURE 3.9. Deogarh, Madhya Pradesh. © Deborah Stein.

framing, and materials suggest that this Viṣṇu sculpture served to welcome the viewer rather than as the central icon of a singular cohesive religious narrative.

The turn-square staircase leads to a narrow circumambulatory path on the first floor, where a predictable iconographic triad of Viṣṇu, Śiva, and Brahma unfolds on three exterior walls. To fully view the large figures, one must climb back into the stone window seats and enjoy the “*āchi hawai*” (pleasant breeze). From this position the walls look like a typical Gupta temple such as Deogarh,²³ where one narrative scene graces each wall without any auxiliary figures or other adornment (fig. 3.9). In monoscenic narrative this Vaiṣṇavaite story is told (fig. 3.10).²⁴ The walls of this first-floor temple-within-a temple gallery remain unadorned and free of typical medieval auxiliary figures. At the time when the Kirtistambha was built,



FIGURE 3.10. Narrative scene, Nara Narayana, Gupta Era, Deogarh.
© Deborah Stein.

one would expect to find leonine *vyāla* figures, beautiful maidens, and guardians of the corners—possibly even duplicated in two registers. The singular sculptures seem to quote a past idiom, though not verbatim. In contrast with the narrative mode of display for Viṣṇu's mythology found at Deogarh, the first floor of the Kīrtistambha displays three carefully labeled deities who remain in nonnarrative, iconic poses and have typical attributes. Not only does the sculpture-to-wall relationship suggest a quotation of the Gupta period architectural style with a single deity per wall, but the deities are labeled.

Why, in fifteenth century Mewār, would anyone—architect, patron, priest, sage, servant, visitor, or drummer—need a one-word label to explain that Śiva holds a



FIGURE 3.11. Harihara (Half-Śiva/Half-Viṣṇu), interior Kirtistambha tower, c. 1440–60, Chittorgarh. © Deborah Stein.

skull and trident? Even hundreds of years later, one need only take a course in basic iconography or read an introductory text on Indian art to know, without a label, that Śiva holds a trident and a skull, whereas Viṣṇu holds a discus and a club. Of course, for more complex iconographic representations the modern viewer might turn to Rao's *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, but the labels do not indicate an obscure manifestation of three familiar gods but rather "Viṣṇu Narayana, Mahā-Śiva, and Brahma" *tout court*.

The turn-square staircase leads to the second of two temple-within-a-temple galleries and carries the viewer five hundred years into the future. From the Gupta architectural quotation on floor 1, floor 2 reflects typical Guhila dynasty architectural style. Thickly textured with deep recesses and protrusions, and punctuated with auxiliary lion, maiden, and guardian figures, the temple wall on display could almost be dated to the second half of the tenth century, if it were not for the fifteenth-century sculptural style (fig. 3.11). The extra framing sculptures associated with the early medieval period served as *alankāra* (ornamentation) but also correlated to specific placements in relation to the central icon. These were not emanations from a *vastuśāstra* grid, as Stella Kramrisch may have imagined. To the contrary, the auxiliary sculptures served to encode architectural technology in aesthetic terms. The figures were not part of a narrative program or a mythological relationship to the central icon. They may have served as a celestial court,²⁵ or



FIGURE 3.12. Interior stairwell between floors 2 and 3, Kirtistambha tower, c. 1440–60, Chittorgarh. © Deborah Stein.

palace entourage of sorts, yet they remain a part of a strict system of architectural placement. The guardians stand at each corner of the building, apotropaically protecting the precarious seams of the building. Darielle Mason has demonstrated that the maidens and the lionine figures also correspond to specific sections of the wall.²⁶ The subsidiary sculptures thus correspond to subsidiary projections—the very projections and recesses that make possible the height of soaring North Indian temple spires of the medieval period.

Although the second-story temple wall does not support a spire, it does provide a thick base for upper stories. The turn-square staircase continues inside these thick walls where an inner main icon would normally be found in a temple sanctum (fig. 3.12). From this inner staircase one emerges through a doorway onto a set of three smaller galleries stacked one upon the other.

Nondual deities celebrate the juncture of the larger initial floors—where entire temple walls seem to be reproduced—with the upper galleries. The *sūtradhāra* (scribe) has carefully etched Harihara in stone at the base of a figure that sports a crown on one half of his head and an ascetic's dreadlocks on the other. Half Viṣṇu and half Śiva, Harihara carries attributes typical of Viṣṇu—such as the discus—on one side and attributes typical of Śiva—such as the trident—on the other. Harihara is not that unusual a deity, but he was rarely if ever represented on temple exteriors in the position of a main wall projection, or *bhadra*. On liminal floor 2 the reference to nonduality cannot be mistaken with the presence of Ardhanaṛiśwara on the



FIGURE 3.13. Ardenareśvara (Half-Śiva/Half-Pārvatī), interior Kirtistambha tower, c. 1440–60, Chittorgarh. © Deborah Stein.

main projection of another wall (fig. 3.13). A bilateral representation half Śiva and half Pārvatī, the universally recognizable female breast of Pārvatī occupies half of the body and the male pectoral of Śiva the other. Elegantly coiffed hair meets an ascetic's locks, and heavy jewelry gives way to a lightweight renunciant's brahmin cord. Nondual deities visually depict the liminal state of betwixt and between, neither fully one thing nor the other or, alternatively, both.²⁷ Just as any bilingual person might read newspapers in two languages to understand the real news lies between the lines—often in the truthful story left partially or wholly untold in both languages—the nondual deities reflect a philosophy about what is beyond binary categories.



FIGURE 3.14. Allah, Interior Kirtistambha tower, c. 1440–60, Chittorgarh. © Deborah Stein.

As one emerges from the doorway of the inner staircase onto the third floor, one clasps the columns of the doorframe, ducks one's head, and stands facing westward. Right above the place on the column where one's hand would naturally clasp, the calligraphic form of Allah is carefully sculpted in relief (fig. 3.14). Above these calligraphic sculptures of the Muslim god's name, small symbols of the architectural plan of a mosque with mihrab are carved deeply into the stone. In contrast with the incised labeling of the other iconography, these verbal and symbolic elements are treated as iconographic sculpture. Looking west, toward Mecca, forced to bow one's head because of the height of the doorframe, and hands naturally clasping the sculptural calligraphy of the Muslim God's name, any person who kinesthetically navigates the stairwell inherently includes Allah in Kumbhā's world.

The fourth floor departs from the deities of the earlier levels to include a portrait of the architect and his sons, servants, and other human actors on the interior, whereas the exterior of this level is covered in Pupate Śaiva iconography encasing this representation of all of fifteenth-century human Mewār. The sixth and seventh floors build on the deities and humans of Mewār with a free departure into metaphysics. The sixth floor is populated by goddesses, sa-guna (with form), whereas the seventh floor is left empty with jati lattice windows into a gallery of nothing, nir-guna (without form). The ascent culminates, remarkably, with this abstract philosophical reference to the nonduality of form and formlessness, before transporting the viewer up the steps to the light-laden gallery of the observation deck, surrounded on all sides by elaborate lattice windows.

There are many architectural precedents for famous towers and minarets in South Asia: Ashokan columns, the Iron Pillar in Delhi, the Minaret of Jam in Afghanistan, the Qutab Minar in Delhi, and even the Jain kirtistambha built in the same fortress as

the “Jayastambha” only a century or so prior to the one filled with sculpture built by Kumbhā. In the Maurya era these columns were inscribed with multilingual edicts that praised nonviolence from a Buddhist perspective and sought to unite the empire through a common religious perspective and state code of ethics across a very broad territory uniting most of North India. The Iron Pillar, in the same compound as the Qutab Minar built subsequently, also served a political purpose as a marker of Gupta power in tandem with a dedication to the Hindu god Viṣṇu. Both the Minaret of Jam and the Qutab Minar were Ghurid monuments in summer and winter capitals, serving as loudspeakers for the Muslim call to prayer, as well as marking these capitals with tall, regal monuments to be seen far and wide. Up close, both revel in geometric and calligraphic relief, as well as—in the case of the Afghan tower, so close to the lapis lazuli mines—incredible ceramic tile work with blue glaze.

The Jain tower in Chittorgarh, Rājāsthān, that precedes Kumbhā’s Kirtistambha follows a multisectarian patronage pattern found in other nearby cities such as Jāwar, where Jain patronage follows a mercantile success, often rooted in the exploitation of natural resources by tribal people, harnessed, financed, and traded across Jain networks, and then finally recognized, claimed, and established as royal centers by Hindu Rājput rulers and their direct noble relatives. So if we look back on this very brief history of the tower in South Asia prior to Kumbhā’s Kirtistambha, we find a multisectarian history of towers in state capitals, often inscribed with religious and/or political texts, increasingly large and impressive over time, quoted often from one dynasty to the next—even across sectarian lines. Given these commonalities, what is so special about a royal tower in the fortress of a Mewāri capital from 1440 to 1460, given that stately towers had been around North India since the Maurya Empire centuries prior and had been used across capitals on a grand scale by the Ghurids long before the Sisodias took back the fortress of Chittorgarh to turn it into a royal capital of Mewār?

Although the Qutab Minar has an internal staircase that winds circularly from a wide base to a narrow top, the Kirtistambha is the first of its kind to have a turn-square plan without narrowing at the top. None of these precedents had an internal turn-square staircase, with the exception of the Jain Kirtistambha in Chittorgarh (fig. 3.15). Furthermore, dark, narrow, and tiny, this internal staircase is more of a precarious stepladder that climbs steeply and blindly to the expansive 360 degree views from the top gallery across all the plains that surround the plateau on which the fortress of Chittorgarh sits relatively protected from invasion through its natural geographic features. Kumbhā’s Kirtistambha takes this technology so much further, where the turn-square staircase becomes a relatively roomy gallery winding around a central column, at times tucking itself under a story to rise to the next level. It is the first of all these famous towers to provide an inner passage lined with thematic collections of sculptural iconography in a set program. This is a radical pictorial, technical, ideological, and political invention that brought the entire cosmos into visual dialogue in an entirely new way.



FIGURE 3.15. Interior stairwell precedent, Jain Kirtistambha tower, Chittorgarh. © Deborah Stein.

Kumbhā's Kirtistambha collection functions as an archive, a database, and a matrix, although it may not exactly have been planned as one. The Kirtistambha engages in a particular form of display thanks to the turn-square internal staircase. This creates a stacking of iconographic programs that can lead upward or downward. Each level can be circumambulated in two directions. This creates an architectural matrix of sorts that displays iconographic programs in relation to each other in a fixed set of nonlinear relationships, like a database or an archive. A database is a collection of information arranged for ease and speed of search and retrieval—in this case sculptural, representational, iconographic, and

philosophical information—that is normally structured and indexed for user access and review. Databases may exist in the form of physical files (folders, documents, etc.) or as digital files (which combine to form data-processing systems). In this architectural database we have both “physical files” in the sculptural forms and a “processing system” in their architectural programmatic relationships.

Meanwhile, a matrix has an even more mathematical definition as a rectangular array of numeric or algebraic quantities subject to mathematical operations, or a rectangular array of elements set out in rows and columns, used to facilitate the solution of problems, such as the transformation of coordinates. One could stretch to imagine circumambulation forward and backward in horizontal space on each floor as the rows, whereas the technical feat of the turn-square staircase exists as the columns—where viewers can travel up or down. In computer science a matrix involves computing rectangular arrays of circuit elements usually used to generate one set of signals from another. How do the signals cross in a stack of inter-related temple walls, deities, and human agents—from architect to servant? Last, a correlation matrix—a matrix giving the correlations between all pairs of data sets—suggests the tower may serve as a matrix in that it creates and encourages relationships through the juxtaposition of different sculptural data sets, sets that almost never inhabit the same structure but that usually lie a significant distance from one another.

An archive is a place or collection containing records, documents, or other materials of historical interest. It is a repository for stored memories or information. For example, the Photographic Archive of the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) is available online. Much has been written on both the archive and the photograph in relation to colonial projects in India, but Vidya Dehejia gets at the essence of the photograph itself. She argues that, “The photograph, like the footprint, is treated as an actual ‘trace’—an artifact of the scene it reveals.”²⁸ Building on Roland Barthes’s idea, she explains how “we look straight through the photograph, ignoring its status as a signifier, and seeing only the signified—the image itself.”²⁹

What if we try to imagine a sculptural iconographic archive instead of a photographic one? Would a sculpture of a servant, a named architect, or the goddess Saraswati act more like the signifier or the signified? To what extent does the label cast the image as a representation, as opposed to an actual deity? Can curatorial display and puja coexist today, and did these two different ways of seeing and being seen coexist in the fifteenth century, when this labeled sculpture was planned? Are the sculptural bas-reliefs that we find on the first floor of the Kirtistambha depictions of Viṣṇu or icons of Viṣṇu? Is it a portrait of a deity we are seeing or the god himself who stares back at us? Perhaps that intersubjective question of reception lies in each individual viewer regardless of time or place. Could the multiplicity that unfolds from this unique display of iconography suggest that the text that prescribed this particular regal form of a tower to encompass the entire universe foreshadowed the

production of archives in the early medieval period when they were written, shortly after early medieval architecture had been codified in its many stone variations as it was finally committed to text and reified in its complex diversity?

Archives usually fix a set of documents in relation to one another and “kill” them by making them permanently static temporally from the moment they are archived, but in three-dimensional architectural space those relationships change. With an inner staircase directionality functions simultaneously in two registers—circumambulation on each floor forward or backward, and the juxtaposition of programs among different floors. Where else in India can you visit a tenth-century-style Mahā-Gurjara temple wall in the same building as a fifteenth-century temple wall, and then descend two flights and see a Gupta-style temple wall at the entrance? Where else do you duck your head to come up an inner staircase after seeing three five-hundred-year intervals of architectural history and iconographic programs in only two quick flights of steps—only to place your hand over the tactile, sculpturally raised, calligraphic name of Allah as you gaze out a window toward Mecca. The whole cosmos is in this fifteenth-century tower—just as is prescribed in the text for this regal architectural type, except that cosmos is not the cosmos of the eleventh-century *Aparājitapṛcchā* but rather the cosmos of multi-sectarian, fifteenth-century Mewār—Śaivaite, Vaiṣṇavaite, Shakta, Jain, Muslim, saguna-nirguna (that is, form and formless), both religiously and aesthetically.

Aside from the tower’s immediate statement as a monumental tribute to Kumbhā’s power, the inside of this building reveals a self-conscious effort to create history for the future by fixing memory. Each of the nine floors is carved with a set of sculptures, which are painstakingly labeled. One could argue anachronistically that the Kirtistambha is India’s first museum. The Kirtistambha is India’s first image archive, predating the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and the American Institute of Indian Studies’ photo archives by several centuries. No matter what English label we put on the Kirtistambha, those who created it in the fifteenth century decided the iconography could not stand alone, so text was added. Hundreds of years before photography was invented, the labeled images of the Kirtistambha suggest archival tendencies on the part of Kumbhā, Jaita, and the other artists involved in the project.

Two particularities of Rānā Kumbhā’s Kirtistambha are taxonomy and the museum label. Taxonomy creates a historical progression of temple style and iconography, similar to “World Architecture” or “Global Architecture” introductory surveys. The “museum” label creates a permanent collection. Labeling of every single piece of sculptural iconography on each floor of the building, akin to, say, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, fixes its meaning, removing some of the organic nature of identification found in normal puja with living icons.

The desire to archive involves an inherent need to fix form and to make it permanent.³⁰ The Kirtistambha combines the goals of an inscription and a tower, such as the infamous Ghurid combination of the Iron Pillar and the Qutab Minar in Delhi,

to produce a monument that fixes meaning in Kumbhā's era.³¹ The creation of a set of prescribed definitions of form intentionally reifies their fifteenth-century meaning while simultaneously drawing on the authority lent by the history of manifest forms of divinity that grew to be so important in tenth-century Mēdapāṭa. With the move of labeling the icons in the Kīrtistambha, Kumbhā both obliterates alternative past meanings of these images, as defined by his forefathers, and erases his own existence as independent of his forefathers.

The Kīrtistambha is a death of a living past in that it fixes history rather than allowing it to change and, hence, remain alive as a ritual building. And yet the labeled deities and architectural quotations of tenth-century iconographic arrangements in the Kīrtistambha also signify a rebirth of Guhila power and ensure that the record of this period will remain for posterity. By now the colonial idea that places such as Mewār had no indigenous history, only bardic exuberance, is quite moot. A monument such as the Kīrtistambha expresses a wish to secure the definition of the previous five hundred years of history in the hopes it would be preserved in Kumbhā's terms for the next five hundred years. To some extent the project was successful: many of the ways the Sisodias define themselves and their history in the twenty-first century dates to this era.

In light of the embodied practices that characterized tenth-century ritual and iconographic programs, Kumbhā's move resonated with a historicity rooted in the demystifying quality of written language described by Benedict Anderson.³² Although many still are not able to read the labels because of language barriers, illiteracy, or the wearing away over time of the labels themselves, the introduction of text fixes meaning by seducing the viewer to ask for the key to the meaning offered by a label. Anderson's book suggests that historicity replaces sanctity. The introduction of text allowed Kumbhā to construct the "nation" of Mewār. The difference between a literal, national model and this monarchy lies in the control of the stone text rather than in the proliferation of words in printed media. Although the Kīrtistambha does not offer an anachronistic record of a democratic nation-state, this stone tower does speak to Fredrick von Schlegel's definition of history as "the self-consciousness of a nation."³³

On the same floor as the architect Jaita and his sons, we find a labeled portrayal of "*sevika*" (servants). It is a fascinating exception in South Asian art history to find multisectarian deities and humans of all walks of life painstakingly labeled (fig. 3.7). Filled with sculpture, this nine-story stone monument uniquely collapses the categories of archive and archaeology. Despite his prescient Freudian analysis of the archive, Derrida holds a somewhat romantic notion regarding the transparency of archaeology. He even goes so far as to describe Freud's interest in excavations as a "*jouissance*": "It is the nearly ecstatic instant Freud dreams of, when the very success of the dig must sign the effacement of the archivist: the origin then *speaks by itself*. The *arkhè* appears in the nude, without archive. It presents itself and comments on itself by itself. 'Stones talk!'"³⁴

Problems arise when the agency of ancient stone is understood as the voice of the present. Stones do “talk”; however, their speech offers a dialogue with the present rather than the reification of nationalist discourse, as seen at Somanatha after independence, at Ayodhyā in 1992, and, more recently, in the legal disputes over the Taj Mahal.³⁵ Hundreds of years earlier, the stone residue of the temple wall was already in dialogue with its historical moment of making.

MAṆḌANA AND THE SOMPURĀS: THE SIGNATURE ARCHITECTURE OF THE SISODIA EMPIRE

Just as the Guhila dynasty did in the same region in the wake of Paramāra-Pratihāra overlordship, the Sisodias used architecture and signature style to tectonically “argue” for the eternity and, hence, the implied longevity of their clan’s rule. To this extent, famous architect and author Maṇḍana and the Sompurā family architectural guild held aesthetic sway in the region for hundreds of years.

Like the mahārāṇās of Mewār, the architectural guilds of Mewār seek the hegemony of heritage in the unbroken lineages of their ancestors. Indeed, Tryna Lyons’s work suggests that the Sompurā guild so famously linked to modern political histories of temples at Somanatha, for example, was not the only architectural guild in town. The star architect of the day, Maṇḍana, may have enjoyed a reputation akin to that of Robert Venturi’s or Frank Lloyd Wright’s today; but, in fact, Maṇḍana was not responsible for the majority of famous monuments in Mewār, even though he was considered a state architect. His son, Isara, was responsible for building Kumbhā’s daughter Ramabai’s Viṣṇu temple in Jāwar, but it was the architect Jaita and sons that had been responsible for the construction of the regal Kīrtistambha tower in Chittorgarh.

Kumbhā’s Kīrtistambha reveals fifteenth-century Sisodia aspirations, whereas Mokāl’s installation of a new icon at Ekliṅgī sought to erase the rupture between the Aghaṭa/Nāgadā Guhila dynasty and the fledgling Hammīra, who captured and ruled from Chittorgarh in the second half of the fourteenth century. The fifteenth century begins with a record of repairs that signal a desire to reassert Guhila control over important religious monuments in Mēdapāṭa.³⁶ Mahārāṇā Mokāl also sponsored the rampart on the hill above the Ekliṅgī compound. The Shringirishi inscription of 1428 records that Mahārāṇā Mokāl fought with Firoj Khan of Nagaur and Ahmad of Gujarat in two different battles and that he built the rampart at Ekliṅgī. Recent scholarship suggests that the fifteenth-century repair of Ekliṅgī included the installation of a new icon, another piece of evidence for fifteenth-century Sisodia political legitimization.³⁷

In 1428 CE Mahārāṇā Mokāl commemorated the erection of a temple to Śiva at Chittorgarh called the Samiddhēśvara temple.³⁸ Although the Samiddhēśvara temple exhibits a *śekhārī* spire, in contrast to the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple’s *latina* spire, the maṇḍapa roof of the Samiddhēśvara temple resembles the maṇḍapa roof of the



FIGURE 3.16. Ekliṅgī temple roof, fifteenth century. © Deborah Stein.

Śrī Ekliṅgī temple, built little more than a half a century later (cf. figs. 3.16 and 3.17). According to M. A. Dhaky, the current Samiddhēśvara temple was “originally the temple of a *jina* founded by Vastupala, Prime Minister of the Vaghela [Vagada?] regent Varadhavasa of Dhavalakakka (Dhoaka) in Gujarat, sometime ca. AD 1230–1235.”³⁹ Dhaky explains that “the temple had been restored in AD 1428 by Rāṇā Mokala,” and given the architectural similarities, one imagines that restoration definitely focused on the roof in addition to a shift from Jain to Hindu sectarian affiliation.⁴⁰

True to the formula of religious charity, lineage, and conquest, Mokal’s slab of black marble invokes the blessings of Gaṇēśa, Ekliṅgī, “the daughter of the mountain who swells on the Vindhya (Vindhyāvāsini), and Achyuta (Viṣṇu).”⁴¹ The lineage moves from Arisimha of the twelfth-century inscription, described above, to his descendants Hammīra, Kṣetra, Lakśasimha, and finally Mokal. Mahārāṇā Mokal’s victories are extensive in the convention of true bardic exuberance. He is said to have defeated the Āngas, Kāmarūpas, Vaṅgas, Nishadas, Chinas, and Taruṣkas. The inscription also makes reference to Maṇḍana, the famous Sompurā architect, and to the Dashora clan of Brahmins still presiding over Ekliṅgī in the twenty-first century. The mention of the architect Maṇḍana is significant as he was the author charged with articulating Guhila dynastic prowess in visual form.

By the time Mokal’s successor, Kumbhā, took the throne, the Guhilas used architecture as well as inscriptions to create their own history intentionally, beyond the



FIGURE 3.17. Roof of the Samiddhēśvara temple, fifteenth century, Chittorgarh. © Deborah Stein.

simple lineages put forth in the tenth century.⁴² Kumbhā brought Vagada under Mewāri control in V.S. 1498 (1441 CE) and forced the mahārawal of Dūngarpur to surrender Jāwar to Mewār and to submit Dūngarpur to the overlordship of Mewār.⁴³ This mahārāṇā was powerful enough to repair damages done to Ekliṅgji while the Guhila clan had taken refuge from Nāgadā at Kumbhalgarh.⁴⁴

Kumbhā is best known for two records composed during his reign: the inscription of the Kīrtistambha and the inscription at Kumbhalgarh. Akshaya Keerty Vyas attributes the contents of the two inscriptions to the Ekliṅgamāhātmyam.⁴⁵ After praising Gaṇēśa, Saraswatī, and Ekliṅgji, the inscription continues to invoke many deities “such as [Lamboda]ra, Gajamukha, Vindhyāvāsini, Ekliṅgji, Pinakin, Ina, and others.”⁴⁶ The text also describes many important geographical sites in Mewār, including “the range of hills naturally formed into a triangle within which is situated the temple and town of Ekliṅgji,” as well as “the goddess Vindhyāvāsini, whose shrine is situated on the slope of the hill to the north outside the rampart around Ekliṅgji’s temple.”⁴⁷ Verses 23 and 24 give a description of the history of the religious compound of Ekliṅgji, attributing its founding to Bappa Rāwal. It was destroyed by “Taruṣkas” and later repaired by Mahārāṇā Mokāl, who furnished the



FIGURE 3.18. Mahārāṇā Mokal sponsors the Bhāghelā Tālāv image of the lake, Ekliṅgī.
© Deborah Stein.

rampart. Kumbhakarna “repaired” the ancient shrine, and Raimal is credited for the modern structure, laying the foundation and erecting a new structure. Lines 25–28 credit Bhojabhupa with the formation of Indira Sagar, the pond behind the temple.⁴⁸ Mokal is credited with the creation of Vāghelava Lake (Bhāghelā Tālāv) in memory of his brother, Bhaghasimha (fig. 3.18).⁴⁹

Built under Kumbhā’s successor, Mahārāṇā Raimal, the construction of the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple dates to this era as well. The roof of the structure (fig. 3.16) shares much with the roof of the Samiddhēśvara temple at Chittorgarh (fig. 3.17), yet the structure of the maṇḍapa (see fig. 0.2) visually recalls the twelfth-century Deo Somnāth temple in Vagada. Whereas the Kirtistambha makes meaning explicit by carving semantic labels under every sculpture from the servants to the architects to the gods, the architectural quotations such as those cited above are no less intentional. Sompurā masons constructed these three buildings; their desire to archive, to make permanent, and to create history in the fifteenth century is corroborated by a collection of fifteenth-century manuscripts held by an architect who claims he is the twenty-second Sompurā descendant from Maṇḍana himself.

During the 2002 Navratri celebrations at Jagat, Manish Bharadwaj considered the possibility that the Ambikā temple may well have been the *kūldevī* shrine of his line of Sompurā masons. Whether or not the Ambikā temple had originally been conceived with this in mind, the fact that a Sompurā descendant was considering



FIGURE 3.19. Jāwar Mātā temple. © Deborah Stein.

this possibility five hundred years after his ancestor Maṇḍana first cemented the archival tendencies of the Sisodia dynasty suggests a rebirth of the Ambikā temple in that capacity for Manish Bharadwaj. Whereas the site could not remain secret, its fifteenth-century meaning for someone like Maṇḍana could well have been kept covert. During this period all eyes were turned to the mining center of Jāwar. No dated inscriptions were recorded at Jagat during this time. A *sūtradhāra* inscription at Jagat may lend credence to Mr. Bharadwaj's *kūldevī* theory.³⁰ Manish Bharadwaj's search for his family's *kūldevī* suggests that the Sisodias attempted to harness a regional aesthetic rhetoric that dates at least to the fifteenth century.

The Sompurā masons and royal patrons used architecture to signal Sisodia rule as the Pāsupata dīwāns of Lakulīśa, the ruler of Mēdapāṭa since the time of Naravāhana's inscription on the Lakulīśa temple in the tenth century. Drawing on architectural history, the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple establishes an aesthetic link between Chittorgarh and Ekliṅgī. The Śrī Ekliṅgī temple claims continuity via its location and elaborate architecture. The temple's maṇḍapa roof makes the stylistic claims that the Guhila Empire stretched as far as Chittorgarh and that Ekliṅgī is a site of similar power and fame. The location of Ekliṅgī, just twenty-six kilometers from Udaipur, heralded the return of the Nāgadā/Ahar branch of Guhilas back to the region where they had established their hegemony initially.

The Sisodias moved back to their Nāgadā/Ahar Guhila origins with the creation of Udaipur. The city of Udaipur, the modern capital of Mewār, was named after

Rāṇā Udayasimha (1537–72 CE). They were no longer ruling from Kumbhalgarh to the north, from Chittorgarh to the southeast, or hiding out in the hilly tracts of Chhapa by Jāwar's zinc mines. The sixteenth century was nevertheless a time of precarious power and defeat at the hands of increasing expansion of the Mughal Empire. Mahārāṇā Pratap fought the Battle of Haldīghātī against Akbar in 1576 CE. Both sides claimed victory. One of the most important sites during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries fell in the Chhapa region that bridged the Mewār/Vagada borders.

The Jāwar Mātā temple (fig. 3.19) resembles the Ekliṅgī temple (see fig. 0.2) and Deo Somnāth, which suggests the Guhila signature style of Sompurā architects. The single register of the main program at Jagat is doubled at the Jāwar Mātā temple. This sixteenth-century building takes on a much more complex approach to architecture. The tripartite efficacy of the sculptural program at Unwās and the rhythmic syncopation of the sculptural program at Jagat yield to the undulation of later programs. Icons stood alone. Then, beginning in the eighth century in Mahā-Māru architecture and in the tenth century in Mahā-Gurjara architecture, icons were visually framed and performatively punctuated to produce the fabric of the temple wall. Mahā-Gurjara unframed semidivinities graced the recesses and protrusions of the temple wall.⁵¹

By the fifteenth century CE, the fabric of the temple wall had become a dense fiber of almost continuous sculpture.⁵² But the varying sizes and waxing and waning of the temple's recesses prevented the serial consumption of images one after the other.⁵³ Later buildings with more complex, multiregister programs force the viewer if not to repeat the viewing of the main niches then at least to vary the distance from the surface of the temple wall, thus altering both visual perception and the body's movement.⁵⁴ The outer fabric of the complex, two-storied walls may, in fact, merely reflect changes in use akin to those found across early modern India. Similar architectural changes in the maṇḍapa pavilions of seventeenth-century Bengal, for example, signaled new forms of music, dance, and performance.⁵⁵ During the fifteenth century in northern India, it is possible that the plastic skins of the temple edifices were enrobing new, more congregational forms of worship in relation to a rise of *bhakti* devotion across multiple cults beyond Krishna worshippers.

The architects and royals of fifteenth-century Mewār were only newly hegemonic, with shifting capitals, competing guilds, and sporadic campaigns. Many of the temples and centers of that time and earlier in the sultanate period were built at nondynastic industrial centers or Jain monastic centers. The mining center of Jāwar and the Jain site of Delwara both lay on routes between Īdar and Chittorgarh, though both lay in an alternate Guhila dynastic territory of Vagada. The span of the Vagada Empire in the twelfth through fourteenth centuries marked a shift to the south in territorial allegiance for the border region of Chhapa, where the villages of Jagat and Jāwar lie. At this same time the royal center of Nāgadā/Ahar—originally

a Pāśupata center—fell in and out of use altogether, while a new Sisodia dynasty from the fortress Chittorgarh, east of Ekliṅgī, began to draw on Guhila lineage myths and architectural styles to establish (and potentially backdate) its heritage.

FIFTEENTH-CENTURY VAGADA: HISTORICAL SILENCE AT JAGAT VS. ECONOMIC BOOM IN JĀWAR

Beyond dynastic boundaries (territories often limited to the size of a fortress itself in this period), multisectarian architecture also flourished at sites of industry, such as the zinc-mining town of Jāwar. In Vagada the fifteenth-century was a time when the *mahārāwals* of Dūṅgarpur repelled invasions by the shahs from Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. Mahārāwal Udai Singh I helped restore Raimal to the throne of Mewār at the start of the sixteenth century and fought against Babur. At this time the Mewāri rulers were able to return southward from Kumbhalgarh and regain power over Ekliṅgī and Nāgadā. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Chhapa, Jagat was overshadowed by Jāwar's natural resources. Guhila attempts to maintain power must have been relatively futile since no new inscriptions were recorded in Jagat during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁵⁶ During the two-hundred-year absence in the inscriptional record at Jagat, the nearby mining town of Jāwar grew in importance. Given that the rulers of Dūṅgarpur were able to help their Guhila cousins regain territory in Mewār during the sixteenth century, they must have been fairly powerful. They could maintain power from the hilly capital but may have lost control in the thirteenth century over the abandoned capital of Vaṭpaḍṛak and much of the hilly desert regions of Banaswara and Vagada, which were and still are inhabited primarily by Bhils. While Mughals and Rājputs battled in the region between Gujarati strongholds and the Guhila capitals of Dūṅgarpur and Udaipur, Chhapa may have fallen under a vacuum of power.

A relative vacuum of power in Chhapa to the south left room for the growth of a multisectarian sacred center owing to innovative industry, a wealth of natural resources, and a relatively safe tract of desert land. Jain sites prospered. The monastic complex at Delwara (also known as Keśeriyājī) and the *mānasthambha* (column of honor) at Chittorgarh are a case in point (fig. 3.20). Skelton refers to more than one surviving manuscript that can be traced specifically to this monastery in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, whereas the grandeur of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is visible in the multisectarian architecture of Jāwar.⁵⁷ According to local legend, the smelting of zinc was invented at Jāwar in the fourteenth century. This site in southern Rājāsthān today lies next to small trickles of water, but this area used to be at the confluence of great waterways. Natural resources led to a multisectarian center filled with magnificent temples and tanks. These religious monuments staged the power of those who sought to control vital industry in desert tracts of land, largely inhabited by Bhils and Meenas, both historically and in the present. The site ultimately fell under the control of the kingdom of Mewār.



FIGURE 3.20. Keśeriyajī/Rishabdeo temple, Delwara. © Deborah Stein.

In Mahārāṇā Mokal's time the Jains already had considerable influence at the site, listing their *ācāryas* (teachers) on a beam of the Parsvanath temple. While on a military expedition against some Bhils, this Mewāri leader was murdered by his uncles in the sloping tracts of the Chhapa region where Jāwar is located. At this time Kumbhā had his capital far to the north of modern-day Udaipur. His reign is celebrated for several military exploits that secured vast territories for the kingdom of Mewār. Given the extent of battles during the period, the use of zinc for weapons and the control of these mines must have been a strategy essential in the minds of both the Gujarati sultans and the *rajas* of Mewār and Vagada alike. Raimal's sister, Ramabai, had Jāwar as part of her *jagīr*; she sponsored temples and a stepwell at Jāwar.⁵⁸ Upstream from the *pañcaratha* (five chariots) temple and the Rama kund tank are two temples: a large temple dedicated to Jāwar Mātā in 1598 CE and a smaller Śiva temple across the river. At this time Mewār was holding out from the encroaching power of Emperor Akbar, refusing daughters in marriage and retreating from capitals to tribal areas when necessary for protection. An ancient zinc smelter is also present at the site.

Jāwar is an important record of the interaction between industry, religion, and political power in the history of southern Rājāsthān. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries northern India was being solidified into an empire with its seat at Delhi. All the other Rājput states came into alliances with Akbar and his successors. Most of these states gave daughters in marriage to the Mughal Empire. The active resistance of many of Mewār's mahārāṇās led to a need for refuge and resources. Jāwar's location in the middle of the tribal belt of the Chhapa region made it a strategic place during these difficult and violent years. These mines provided metal in the heart of hilly desert areas perfect for hiding out. It is not surprising then that this center became so essential for the many faiths that made up the eclectic religious demographics of the kingdom of Mewār. Jains, Śaivaites, Śakti worshippers, and Vaiṣṇavaitees all turned toward religion as an answer to their violent times and placed their faith in the God-given resource that could preserve their kingdom's independence: zinc.

Zinc is a by-product of silver mining. Coinage and household items are just some of the uses for this noncorrosive metal. The material may have been used to make weapons and armor rust-resistant. We know from the theft of more than one thousand metal icons that the theft of deities in war would have necessitated metal replacements.⁵⁹ Jāwar could offer much to the war-torn border region of Chhapa during the unrest that characterized this period. The metals mined there could have been used to finance wars through minting coins or used to arm soldiers with weapons and armor, to produce commodities on a large scale for trade and the local economy, and to make sacred objects for replacement of stolen images.

According to carbon-14 dating, mining took place at Jāwar as early as two thousand years ago.⁶⁰ India's first isolated zinc smelter and mine was put into production under the reign of Mahārāṇā Laksh Singh Mewār (1392–97 CE).⁶¹ Only after

1450 CE were the Chinese able to isolate zinc during the Ming dynasty.⁶² At that time the Indian market for zinc was so strong that it was not exported. In fact, zinc was imported from China to keep up with the demand for brass in India.⁶³ This demand for silver and zinc suggests that Jāwar, with its extensive archaeological remains in Sompurā style, was of strategic importance for the control of southern Rājāsthān in the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries.

Grand architecture was often not related to any dynastic patron or even acknowledgment of an overlordship in the inscription. Gamari, Āmjhara, Chinch, the Somnāth temple near Dūngarpur, Āṭ, Jagat, and Hita provide evidence of stone architectural projects dating roughly from the tenth century through the thirteenth without specific reference to a dynasty. According to what is left of the architectural record, it seems that it was the lack of a state, per se, from the tenth century to the fourteenth that gave rise to “state formation” in the fifteenth century. Even then, the “state” seems to have been little more than fortress cities such as Chittorgarh, Kumbhalgarh, or Mandu—where polity was expressed more convincingly in cultural rather than military might.

WOMEN’S DREAMS: RAMABAI AS PATRON, MĪRABAI AS SAINT, PADMINI AS QUEEN

In court, as well as beyond, women’s history stands out in fifteenth-century southern Rājāsthān. This section attempts to situate many of the twenty-first century regal desires for unbroken stewardship within a fifteenth-century point of origin. To speak of women’s actions is feminist history; to speak of women’s words is, as well, but to speak of women as allegorical personifications strips them of their will and puts them at the service of collective fantasies, often male. Recent works by historians Meena Gaur and Ramya Sreenivasan seek to salvage the historical voices of Rājāsthāni women.⁶⁴ When that is not historically possible, owing to lack of records, some have turned to a deconstruction of allegory as a powerful tool to learn more about the perception of women in early modern Rājāsthān.⁶⁵ For the purpose of this study we must limit ourselves to women as architectural patrons, women as the sources of architectural inspiration, and women as the mythical markers of places where heritage is reified.

Three famous women held relationships with the early modern built environment in Mewār, Chhapa, and Vagada—two of whom held direct relationships with Rāṇā Kumbhā. The famous poet Mīrabai inspired Rāṇā Kumbhā to construct a temple in her name at Ekliṅgī. Rāṇā Kumbhā’s daughter, Ramabai, was the patron of the beautiful stepwell and Vaiṣṇavaite temple in her name in the mining town of Jāwar. Last but not least, Padmini, who self-immolated with all of her ladies at Chittorgarh centuries before, may well be the most famous woman in Indian history. Although traces of her story remain in the multiple overlapping mythical accounts so carefully studied by Ramya Sreenivasan, the



FIGURE 3.21. The Mirabai temple, Eklingji. © Deborah Stein.

architectural remains of her act have made Chittorgarh a site of nationalist pilgrimage in her name.

Padmini, Mirabai, and Ramabai each reveal the hegemony of heritage in Rājasthan. Here I explore the record in stone to find that whereas women held agency as patrons and poets in the fifteenth century, prior to that time it is the tale of a climax of rupture—the end of a lineage and its precarious escape—that holds the most hegemonic grip on the modern imaginings of medieval Rājasthan.

With a rooftop similar to the Śrī Eklingji temple, the Mirabai temple within the same complex postdates the Śrī Eklingji temple by less than a century (fig. 3.21).



FIGURE 3.22. Mirabai temple, rear view, Eklingji. © Deborah Stein.

The architectural plan consists of a slightly taller version of what one might expect of a tenth-century Guhila temple from Mēdapāṭa, such as the Śivēśvara temple found just a few steps away. A one-story maṇḍapa is joined to a single-register iconographical plan around the three outer walls of the sanctum. The quintessentially fifteenth-century Sompurā roof above the maṇḍapa contrasts with the oversimplified *śikhara* (spire) when viewed from the front.

When viewed from behind, the single register appears anything but tenth-century as it bursts forth in the exuberant aedication known to experts as *śekhari* style—a form that consists of multiple projections that can more easily be discerned in the roof than on the walls (fig. 3.22). The style of this temple and its proximity to the Śrī Eklingji temple suggest something about the desires of its



FIGURE 3.23. Viṣṇu icon, Mīrabai temple, Eklingjī. © Deborah Stein.

patron. This temple, named after the saint and poet who refused to marry out of her monogamous love for Krishna, is dedicated to Viṣṇu. Unlike the Guhila temple dedicated to Viṣṇu at Īswāl, the Ramabai temple dedicated to Viṣṇu at Jāwar, and even the most famous Gupta-era Viṣṇu temple of all—the Daśavatāra temple at Deogarh—this temple does not follow a *pañcaratha* plan. The extreme marriage of form and function between this specifically Vaiṣṇavaite architectural program of a central shrine with four corner detached subshrines suggests that a break from that convention may indicate a different form of ritual or philosophy. Why, then, was the Mīrabai temple placed so carefully next to the Śrī Eklingjī temple, in this style, at this time? Mīrabai was not just a Vaiṣṇavaite—she was known locally as a Mewāri Vaiṣṇavaite. Could it be that she was considered a patron saint of Mewār? If so, perhaps her temple was more about the cementing of Mewāri dynastic power than about providing an active space of Vaiṣṇavaite worship (either *pañcaratha*, as was common in the fifteenth century and earlier, or in a two-story congregational building with the potential space inside and out to sponsor dance rooted in increasing expression of *bhakti* from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries).

Many textual and religious studies scholars have translated Mīrabai's poetry and examined her life's story in great detail. Building on their work, how does one fit this specific temple into a specifically Mewāri construction of post-Kumbhā pride? In this building we find more of the origins of contemporary Sisodia dynastic aspirations than the desire to create an active theological building. Those two



FIGURE 3.24. Viṣṇu icon placement, deeply recessed, in fifteenth-century temple wall, Mīrabai temple, Eklingjī. © Deborah Stein.

functions are not mutually exclusive, of course. If we look at the exterior niches, which correspond axially to the inner icon, we find three forms of Viṣṇu. In *pradakṣinā* circumambulatory order (clockwise), the second back wall iconographic representation displays twelve hands with typical Vaiṣṇavaite iconography including the discus and the conch shell (fig. 3.23). Viṣṇu's three heads are crowned by his traditional crater-shaped crown and are backed by an elaborately carved halo. He is seated in a posture of royal ease atop, one would assume, his vehicle, a *garuda*, despite the physique of a runner rather than the typical winged depiction of this magical bird.

If we step back from the temple, we see the Viṣṇu icon of the third side within a niche (fig. 3.24). If you look at the temple frontally, without moving your body, you see the icon flanked by two *surasundarī* figures (celestial maidens), who are in turn flanked by *dikpālas* (guardians of the corners)—just as one might expect in a tenth-century Mēdapāṭa region temple. In the fifteenth century the projections of the *bhadrās* come much, much farther from the wall, and the sides of the niche also have sculpture at a perpendicular angle. Each surface of each protrusion has a sculptural outcropping. This changes circumambulation. Deeply enshrined icons remain in the shadows of their niches as a richly ornamental temple wall unwinds



FIGURE 3.25. Ramabai temple tank, Jāwar. © Deborah Stein.

around them. Kinesthetically, this high medieval temple seems to push the viewer in a serial circular movement with three points of punctuation. As we will see in following chapters, the tenth-century temples use the guardian figures as much more than framing devices. They use those figures to manipulate the viewer's gaze to preview, view, and review the main icon. The original syncopated circumambulation, which I argue is akin to the sonic resonance of a *pūjā-paddhati*, gives way to serial circumambulation. This is another sign that these later temples may in some ways intentionally copy earlier architecture even while they function in a kinetic manner similar to contemporary temples and different from the tenth-century antecedents they mirror.

The temple copies aspects of tenth-century *Mēdapāṭa* temple programs but does not retain the kinesthetic functionalities typical of that era. As I have mentioned, the temple sits right next to the *Śrī Ekliṅgī* temple, as if these high medieval stone tributes to the ruler of Mewār and Mewār's female patron saint could sit side by side as revivalist tributes to Sisodia glory, envisioned as historical continuity with Guhila dynastic glory at the location where their sect, the *Pāśupata-Śivas*, won a theological debate in their territory five hundred years earlier.

A second temple, together with a more vernacular piece of architecture—a communal water tank—was also dedicated to *Viṣṇu*. This time in the form of *Rameśvara*, the temple's main icon pays tribute to King *Kumbhā's* daughter, Princess *Ramabai*. It was she who inherited Jāwar as part of her dowry and she who was the patron of this temple and tank (fig. 3.25). This Hindu *Viṣṇu* temple plan suggests links with other *Viṣṇu* temples to the north. The *Ramanatha* temple follows a *pañcaratha* plan similar to the tenth-century *Viṣṇu* temple at *Īswāl* and



FIGURE 3.26. Ramabai icon, Jāwar.
© Deborah Stein.

the seventeenth-century Jagannātha temple in Udaipur. Literally translated as a five-chariot temple, a pañcaratha plan consists of a main temple in the center of four smaller subshrines. This architectural pattern is generally associated with Viṣṇu, as seen in the famous Gupta-period Daśāvatāra shrine in Deogarh, Madhya Pradesh (fig. 3.9). In contrast to the majority of architectural stylistic features—where regional style trumps any sectarian orientation—the pañcaratha plan seems to span a long period and wide geographic area, possibly owing to a specific mode of Vaishnavism.

Unlike the sectarian necessities of the basic Vaiṣṇavaite pañcaratha plan, the central icon of Viṣṇu in the form of Ramanatha definitely reflects regional style and choice of materials. Black schist was a common material for medieval icons in this region (fig. 3.26). From the eighth-century four-faced Śiva linga of Kalyanpur to the south to the fifteenth-century gigantic Lakuliśa icon at Ekliṅgī to the north, the highly polished, shiny black stone signals a material reserved for special icons placed within inner sanctums. In neighboring Jagat the tenth-century black icons of the goddesses Cāmuṇḍā and Mallar Mātā provide the most geographically close examples of this medieval phenomenon—a trend found in Śaiva, Śakti, and Vaishnava icons alike. The style of carving is also quite similar among these icons and differs from the fastidiously chiseled precision displayed in the ornamentation

of exterior walls. The meticulously carved sandstone, quartzite, or marble sculptures of the exterior display more elongated features than their Gupta counterparts and are characterized by a move away from volume toward a celebration of line. In contrast, the black icons of the inner sanctums in medieval Mēdapāṭa—including the Ramanatha icon of Jāwar—suggest a rudimentary folk style with an interest in basic forms rather than ornate ornamentation. And yet this “folk” style, for lack of a better term, was shared by rural and urban alike and was patronized both by those whose history remains unwritten and by nobility.

The Ramanatha icon falls in the category of icons sponsored by nobility. A female patron illuminates the political position of the Ramanatha temple within medieval Mewār since she was the daughter of the infamous Rāṇā Kumbhā. Ramabai’s father was a great builder, as well, and a patron of the arts. Though the geographic area of his rule was often tiny, shifting stretches of his cultural prowess were expansive and impressive. He was obsessed with a revivalist desire to canonize the artistic feats of his lineage and to become a steward for future generations. Kumbhā wrote an erudite treatise on Indian music and the aesthetic theory of *rasa*, and he sponsored the Kumbhalgarh fort as well as the Vaishnava Kirtistambha (mistakenly known as the Jayastambha, or Tower of Victory) at Chittorgarh.⁶⁶ The Ramanatha temple provides an important and noble female patron, a precise date, a clear geographic location, and a sectarian temple with a meaningful pañcaratha plan and an icon in situ in a single architectural example.

Perhaps the most official and important of architectural projects found at Jāwar, the Ramanatha temple, can be precisely dated thanks to a 1489 CE inscription. According to this inscription, Kumbhā’s daughter sponsored the Ramanatha temple and tank since Jāwar was part of her *jagīr*.⁶⁷ Can we then envision the architectural relationship between the Ramanatha temple and Kumbhā’s projects as a mirror of political relationships between kings and daughters, fathers and sons-in-law, rulers and the noble elite, women and their power as property owners—or alternatively, women as property tied to lands, holdings, and wealth? Certainly we can glean that a marital alliance established a noble Rājput presence at the site of Jāwar at the close of the fifteenth century. Whether that fact is understood as a signal of Jāwar’s prominence and wealth or relative unimportance merits further investigation as we learn more about the history of gender and property in fifteenth-century Mewār.⁶⁸

Ramabai’s inscription appears at the entrance to a large tank, which adjoins the Ramanatha temple and its four subshrines. This large pool of water would have provided a state-sponsored civic space for the cool purification of water under the powerful gaze of the Ramanatha (Viṣṇu) icon.⁶⁹ Mahārāṇā Kumbhā’s daughter’s inscription—located at the entrance to a space designed for the congregation of the public—suggests the desire to control, celebrate, and take credit for the economic success of the zinc mining and the rich social fabric that had grown around this natural resource.⁷⁰ From the initial construction of industrial projects to the



FIGURE 3.27. Palace where the historical Rani Padmini resided within the fortress of Chittorgarh, picturesque view from within the domestic interior of the medieval palace onto a structure rebuilt in the 20th century in the middle of the lake. © Deborah Stein.

architectural phase of thanks for the rewards of that industrial endeavor, the construction of the nobly sponsored Viṣṇu temple signals the creation of communal centers of social exchange. A tank forms the heart of a village and indicates the growth and importance of the sacred center with the expansion of the zinc industry.

The third and last piece of architecture dedicated to a woman is a site of pilgrimage in person to this day (fig. 3.27).⁷¹ The palace of the infamous Rani Padmini at Chittorgarh may be the domestic architectural remnant of one of the most potent historical events in India. Chronicled in multiple accounts over the fifteenth through the nineteenth centuries, Rani Padmini is known as the Rājput queen who committed *jauhar* (ritual suicide) along with all the palace ladies rather than fall into the hands of Alāuddīn Khiljī, the Sultan of Delhi. Ramya Sreenivasan has traced the trajectory of Padmini's story as it was told in 1540 and rewritten over time in different parts of India.⁷² In contrast to these centuries of old bardic tales, the physical location of Alāuddīn Khiljī's actual 1303 siege was the fortress of Chittorgarh. Could this "palace" next to the tank be the physical site of a *jauhar* led by Ratan Singh's wives? The palace was the residence of Rani Padmini, and not the location of the *jauhar*, which took place at the *jauhar kund*. Rani Padmini



FIGURE 3.28. J. W. Caplain, “The Water Palace of HH Rani Padmawati, Chittorgarh,” Albumen print, 1865–1885 CE, Museum Archives of the Maharanas of Mewar, © MMCF, Udaipur.

is mentioned in *Veer Vinod Part-1*, which is the official historical chronicle of Mewar.⁷³ This structure, which looks significantly more modern (it was renovated in 20th century) than c. 1303, serves nevertheless as a site of pilgrimage.

The historicity of the Mewāri Queen’s life in contrasts greatly with the artistic depictions subsequent to her time and produced outside of Mewār, each of which reflect above all the time and place where they were made. The bardic tale and “memory” dates historically to 1540 when Malik Mohammad Jayasi wrote the famous poem “Padmawat”. In circulation during Akbar’s reign, one can assume this avid patron of illuminated books and those in his *karkhana* workshops would have been aware of this story. Moreover, *Jauhar* is depicted in the Victoria and Albert Museum’s *Akbar Nama* of c.1590–5 as one of the illustrations of Abu-Fazl’s account of a Mughal siege of Chittorgarh in 1568, but this Mughal illuminated manuscript does not reference a time when Rani Padmini was in residence at her palace at all and, in fact, postdates the historical dates of Alāuddin Khilji, the Sultan of Delhi by well over two centuries.⁷⁴ By the nineteenth century, when Ravi Varma was producing his famous oleographs, and writers such as Tagore and others were writing about Padmini in literature, the focus in this colonial era had

pivoted from jauhar to nationalism as evidenced in an image entitled “Padmini or Lotus Nymph”—where a female figure is transformed into an allegory of the Indian nation incarnate—her pink sari depicting a map of India in a representation that seems to resemble France’s personification in Delacroix’s 1830 painting of “Liberty Leading the People” more than any direct reference to the historical Rani Padmini of Mewār, her life in early medieval Chittorgarh, or her palace as pictured here in an archival albumen print from Mewār taken in c. 1865–1885 (Figure 3.28).

SELF-FASHIONING MONUMENTALITY IN THE WAKE OF DYNASTIC RUPTURE

The mid and high medieval periods in Mewār witnessed an efflorescence of self-fashioning through the construction of new monuments at old sites of numinous and political power. Heralded earlier in the thirteenth century by a shift in the Guhila origin myth, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries locate the first instances of self-fashioning through the self-conscious use of tenth-century historical monuments and inscriptions. Whereas the tenth century was a time of solidification of power and the construction of dynastic hegemony through monuments and inscriptions, the fifteenth century could build on more than the seeds of dynastic power or bits of lineage in a void of architectural evidence in stone. True monumentality came when monuments could be constructed next to buildings dating to centuries earlier. Fifteenth-century Sisodia monuments referenced tenth-century Guhila projects through an intentional spread of a new Sompurā-based dynastic style, the labeling of iconography established centuries earlier, and their location on the site of earlier buildings and inscriptions. Like thinking about thinking, these were monuments about monuments.

The impact of statehood on Eklingī and Jagat echoes this process of reification through architectural campaigns yet with references dependent more on the fifteenth-century monumentality than tenth-century remains. The ritual and politics of Eklingī today continue the tradition of inventing Mewāri identity by defining the center with monuments. It is still the royal family of Mewār who ensures that the archaeology of their family is not read merely as dead history. In the present, Eklingī serves to define postcolonial kinship most of all. Regardless of Udaipur’s relationship to Delhi, either in the seventeenth or in the twenty-first century, Eklingī’s role remains constant as the divine ruler of Mewār. Like many Rājput families, the descendants of Mewāri royals have turned their attentions to the hotel business, turning their royal residences into commodities for tourist consumption. As we have seen in this chapter, however, the manufacture of heritage may no longer pass for such a modern pursuit. In the fifteenth century already, with the labeling of the Kirtistambha iconography Kumbhā and Jaita took



FIGURE 3.29. Queen Elizabeth given the tower of “Victory,” twentieth century, Udaipur Palace. © Maharana of Mewar Charitable Foundation (MMCF). Reproduced by permission.

an encyclopedic approach to capturing history and freezing meaning in stone for future generations. It worked, as we can see in figure 3.29, a photograph of the presentation of a silver miniature of the tower presented to Queen Elizabeth on a royal visit to Udaipur.

The ritual and politics of Jagat today reflect an age-old struggle for power by politically disenfranchised populations on the periphery of dynasty, empire, and state. The increase of *sūtradhāra* interest in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries suggests Jagat had already taken on an art historical quality as an exemplary piece of architecture. The last inscriptions in Jagat date to the early eighteenth century. James Tod makes no mention of Jagat, nor are there any inscriptions dating from the nineteenth century onward. The next reference to Jagat is in the form of R. C. Agrawal’s “discovery” in 1957 and a few 1950s photographs in the Archaeological Survey of India photography archive. In the twentieth century most of Jagat’s nobles moved to Udaipur to live an urban existence, gradually transforming their court lifestyles into the hotel businesses after independence, as many powerful Rājput families have done in postcolonial India. This vacuum of power back in the village may echo the period between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the local tribal peoples lived fairly independently and free of any clear dynastic power—Rājput, Mughal, British, or national. The difference between

these two periods is that the first left no additional residue of folk worship at the classical sites, whereas at the turn of the second millennium local Rājput, Meenas, and Bhils all seek to leave their lasting mark on the Ambikā temple at Jagat. They reclaim archaeology from its British heritage as well as from the tourist-and-art-market-driven capitalist economy.

Temple as Palimpsest

Icons and Temples in the “Sultanate” Era

Little is known about the history of the roughly triangular region between Ajmer, Delhi, and Ahmedābād during the sultanate period prior to the fifteenth century. What was happening before fifteenth-century constructions of Mewāri glory but after the flurry of temples and inscriptions in Mēdapāṭa between c. 950 and 1000 CE by Guhilas and in Upamāla after the Pratihāras; or in sultanate-era Chhapa, where the Ambikā temple in Jagat lies; or in Vagada in the wake of the Paramāras, where a subsidiary branch of Guhilas sprouted? Where is the “record in stone” architecturally, inscriptionally, visually, and historically?

We could cull the iconography and style of columns incorporated into the Adhai din ka Jhopra mosque in Ajmer to look for fragments that had been made in sultanate-era Mēdapāṭa, Upamāla, Chhapa, and Vagada. Using a more ethnohistorical approach, we could trek to the town of Galiakot (known to Dawoodi Bohra Muslims as Taherabad), where a large Muslim fair is held every year at the medieval tomb of Babji Moula Syedi Fakhruddin Shaheed, who was sent to western Rājāsthān from Gujarat as a representative of the Dai’I in Yemen to convert the Bhils to Islam at the behest of his father, Moulai Tarmal, and met his untimely end in the process. Historically, we could search for inscriptional and architectural records at fortresses of Chittorgarh and Ranthambhor in an attempt to read through all of the colonial and nationalist rhetoric surrounding Rājput glory based on the earliest records that are, nevertheless, post-1500. Architectural palimpsests and inscriptional evidence in this region highlight what left permanent records in stone and what ephemeral traces were lost to history.

I do not wish to reiterate two centuries of architectural historians’ careful study of Ghurid works (often categorized as “Pathan” beginning with James Fergusson,

Ernest Havell, and Percy Brown)¹ or sultanate historians and art historians' decades of work on the Delhi sultanate.² Nor do I intend to recapitulate the *a priori* legends surrounding Alāuddīn Khiljī's 1303 sack of Chittorgarh, critiqued most recently in Ramya Sreenivasan's work on Rani Padmini and my visual critique of popular oral and internet histories.³ Instead, this chapter simply puts forth the largely unpublished fragmentary traces that the period between 1150 and 1400 left on the landscapes of Mewār, Chhapa, and Vagada.

This chapter questions the geographic space in between, which was not part of any solidified dynastic stronghold in this period and remains, for the most part, architecturally unknown. In better-known Uparamāla we have traces of active Pāsupata centers, where temples and maṭhas attest to the continued worship of Śiva along the Banas River. In Mēdapāṭa we imagine that the capital was moved from Ahar to Nāgadā sometime in the eleventh century owing to its strategic protection in a natural gorge of the Aravalli Mountains.⁴ At Eklingī in the thirteenth century, the Vindhyaśasini temple was quietly built, and we can assume that the conveniently underground Pāsupata maṭha was still in use. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in Jāwar and at Chittorgarh, the Jains, Bhils, and Mers actively ran zinc mines on an industrial scale and began to build temples and temple fortresses. The Jains built wealth and left behind the majority of architectural and inscriptional evidence in sultanate Uparamāla, Mēdapāṭa, Chhapa, and Vagada.

Relative silence in the material record from sultanate Mēdapāṭa was met with further production in Chhapa and Vagada to the south and nondynastic production in Uparamāla. The fortress temple of Rishabdeo in Delwara near Dūngarpur was used as a place of prayer, a sheltered hideaway, a bank, a community center, and a waypoint in the heart of Bhil country (see fig. 3.20). Twelfth- and thirteenth-century temples dot the landscape of southern Mēdapāṭa, Chhapa, and Vagada. The town of Vatpaḍrak, according to an inscription of c. 1295, was a functioning capital in Vagada before the capital was moved to Dūngarpur. There, in Dūngarpur, the Juna Mahal palace of the thirteenth century still stands as a tribute to the Guhila branch that passed through Jagat, leaving behind the first royal inscription at the site.

If asked to draw a map of twelfth- to fourteenth-century southern Rājāsthān, a cartographer would, I imagine, represent Uparamāla by a Pāsupata Śaiva wash; northern Mēdapāṭa would remain relatively gray and unknown; Chhapa and southern Uparamāla, including Jāwar and Chittorgarh, would reflect Jain centers of economic influence across a primarily tribal landscape; and Vagada would reflect a buffer zone between the Malwa plateau and the northern branches of the Som and Mahi Rivers, where a lesser Guhila branch flourished. In Vagada, hemmed in from Gujarat, Malwa, and Delhi by sultanates, the Guhilas no longer needed to bicker as often with Solankis, Rāṣṭrakūṭas, Paramāras, Chāhamānas, and other large northern Indian rivals.

During the sultanate period, art, architecture, and inscriptions suggest a primarily tribal zone with the occasional Jain mercantile or tantric monastic communities at waypoints along routes of travel. In contrast to the dramatic tales of generic “Muslim invaders” and the romantic recapitulation of Solomon and Sheba in the Alāuddīn Khiljī and Padmini myths, one can imagine these two decades as a time of relative peace and prosperity for the common people over a wide and sparsely populated area protected in many places by the natural terrain. Political, royal, and imperial powers crossed through these territories, at times with dire consequences, but did not really stop to rule them. English-language histories focus primarily on the infamous raid of the Somnāth temple (in modern Gujarat) and the siege of Ranthambhor/Jālōr (in modern Rājāsthān) between 1290 and 1330. Whereas Alāuddīn Khiljī and Ulugh Khan did pass through Jālōr, Vāṭpaḍrak, and Chittorgarh, they were in transit and did not lay utter waste to large regions since they themselves needed supplies to restock on their way between Delhi and Gujarat.

Many of the temples, palaces, mines, and small fortresses that remain today lie in a smaller region between Jagat and Dūṅgarpur, and between Jālōr and Chittorgarh, with further evidence of building north of Chittorgarh in Uparamāla and south of Chittorgarh right at the confluence of the Mahi and Som Rivers—a sacred *tīrthas* (crossing point) for tribals to this day. At the twentieth-century Mahi dam, with all the modern conflict that arises about tribal rights to natural resources usurped by the state across India, one can imagine the corner of a tribal region where the blood of a Bhil king would literally be required to anoint the southern Guhila to rule from the newly established city of Dūṅgarpur.

Sultanate-era inscriptions on earlier architecture, as well as sultanate-era architecture with later paintings, help to tell the story of what we may loosely call the Mewār Triangle—a geographic gray region in the middle of the red wash of sultanate powers that covered the rest of northern India from ocean to ocean in this period. Between 1200 and 1400 the temples in this region served as catalysts for ritual but also as palimpsests for collective memory and the construction of history. The last of the Guhilas and first of the Sisodias—their dynastic breaks and subsequent legitimacy—can be traced to this murky time and region.

GUHILA AND NON-GUHILA INSCRIPTIONAL EVIDENCE IN THE SULTANATE ERA

Some evidence of Guhila dynastic overlordship does remain in the Nāgadā/Eklingjī region during the eleventh through thirteenth centuries.⁵ Near Udaipur, in 1116, the Paldi inscription makes no reference to the Guhilas (where have they gone? Nāgadā? Jagat?) and names a Solanki (Gujarati) officer as a sponsor of ceremonies. Could the Solanki link indicate a Sompurā-style architecture spreading north into Mewār? Jaitra Singh's Abhilek of 1026 CE at Eklingjī attests to Guhila

dominion at the site of the infamous Pāśupata debates of c. 971, in the heart of the Nāgadā/Eklingī/Ahar seat of their royal tenth-century power. The Kadmal Plate of Guhila Vijaysimha suggests that Guhilas were still powerful enough to be giving land grants as of 1083 CE. East of Chittorgarh, almost directly north of Udaipur in Jaswantgarh, close to Guhila territory in Mēdapāṭa, an inscription of 1167 links the place to the Guhila king Sanwant Singh. Then, in 1222, an inscription on the pillar of the Sūrya temple in Nāgadā lists Jaitra Singh as a Guhila ruler, with an officer Dūṅgar Singh in his service.

A brief overview of post-tenth-century inscriptions confirms a wide variety of dynastic interests in a relatively small geographic region. In Bhīlwāra, directly north of Chittorgarh, we have the Dhanop Abhilek of 1006 CE, which lists a second branch of Rāṣṭrakūṭas. An inscription from c. 1150 mentions the Chālukya Kumarapala at Chitrakoot (Chittorgarh) and is affixed to Sisodia Mokāl's temple in Chittorgarh. Prithviraj II ruled over Menāl, according to an inscription of 1169. Nearby in Bijoliā, a Jain inscription of 1170 lists the genealogy of Śākambharī Cāuhāns. At the close of the eleventh century, to the south in Arthuna (Banaswara District), the Paramāras of Vagada held both Vagada and Chhapa in their sway; they were probably feudatories of the Paramāras of Malwa. A Jain temple *praśāsti* from Arthuna foreshadows the mercantile power of Jains in the region and mentions three Paramāra rulers of Vagada, one of whom was named "Chamundrai"—a possible reference to the regionally popular goddess Cāmuṇḍā in 1109 CE. Meanwhile, to the west, on the border of modern-day Gujarat, the Achaleshvar inscription references Paramāras. The Ābū inscriptions of 1208 CE and 1230 CE still list the Paramāras as the rulers in that location.

By the thirteenth century, references to Guhilas seem to record some strife. The Neminath temple *praśāsti* from Ābū gives a genealogy of Paramāra rulers but also explains that in a fight between Guhila Sāmanta Singh and the Solanki ruler Ajayapal, the Paramāra ruler Dharavarsha sided with the Solankis (Gujarat). Further evidence of Guhila strife comes from Chittorgarh, where an inscription of 1265 CE records fighting with the Taruṣkas of Gujarat (to the west) and the Cāuhāns of Śākambharī (near Menāl in upper Upamāla). Nāgadā/Ahar had become a small space squeezed between Ābū to the west and Menāl to the north-east by the multisectarian rivals of the mid-thirteenth century. The exploits of Jaitra Singh are listed along with the mention of a *pratiṣṭhā* in the Kumbhesvara temple in Chittorgarh, where the Guhila king installed a *trimūrti* liṅgaṃ (fig. 4.1). Another Guhila inscription of 1274 CE links the dynasty to the Nagar Brahmins and boasts of Guhila achievements.

In the mid-thirteenth century the Rasia Chhatri Abhilekh lists Bappa as having received a golden staff from Harit Rashi and Guhadatta as the son of Bappa. If we are generous for the time period and assume twenty-year generations, and with approximately ten rulers before the 971 CE Lakuliśa inscription at Eklingī, we are left with a maximum of two hundred years unaccounted for prior to the



FIGURE 4.1. *Trimūrti* lingaṃ, Kumbhēśvara temple, Chittorgarh slide 329. © Deborah Stein.

construction of the Lakuliśa temple. This would place Bappa one generation before Guhadatta, whose earliest reign date could have been 771 if generations were as long as twenty years in political reign dates (most likely they were significantly less). On the inner column of the Ambikā temple in Jagat in 1259 CE, a Guhila lineage of Sāmanta Singh, Jayat Singh, Sihad, and Vijaysing shifts this century of Guhila dominion south from the Nāgadā/Ahar enclave and implies the thirteenth-century importance of the Dūṅgarpur branch of Guhilas.

In this same period an inscription of 1250 CE on a stone pillar of a tenth-century temple in Khamnor, north of Eklingjī in the Mēdapāṭa heartland, suggests that it was one Maharaj Kumar Prithviraj who was sponsoring the worship of Someśwar from a camp at Santavali (fig. 4.2). This crown prince uses neither the title mahārāṇā (Mewār Sisodias) nor mahārawal (Dūṅgarpur, Vagada Guhilas), which suggests

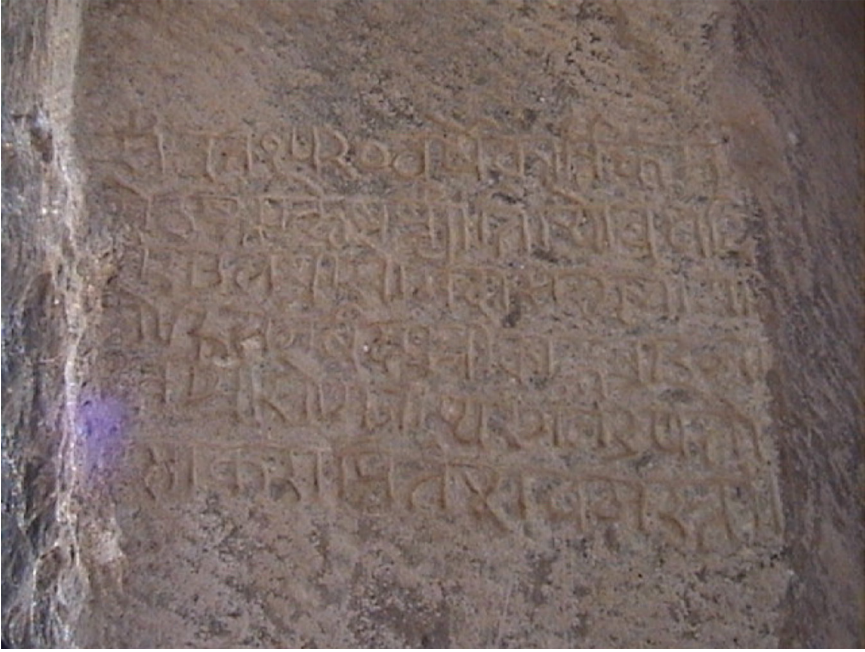


FIGURE 4.2. Inscription on the Chaturbhuj temple, Khamnor. © Deborah Stein.

that he may have been a Cāuhān (a dynasty dominant in Chhapa), although there is no way to confirm this from the brief inscription on the temple. A tenth-century temple with a stylistic affinity to the Mēdapāṭa architectural cohort of temples serves as a palimpsest for dynastic legitimation in the thirteenth century and reiterates iconography found at Āhaṛ and at Ekliṅgī (fig. 4.3). This tenth-century temple is relatively simple in its ornamentation but nonetheless employs auxiliary figures such as guardians of the corners, celestial maidens, and leonine figures to punctuate its recesses and protrusions. The basic architectural style is in keeping with other Māru-Gurjara temples as far south as the Ambikā temple in Jagat and as far north as Ghāṇērāo; however, the style and execution is not on a par with those covered in the chapter on the Guhilas of Mēdapāṭa in the *Encyclopedia of Indian Temple Architecture*. Neither the Ambikā temple to the south in Jagat nor the Cārbhujā temple in Khamnor nor the Jain temple at Ghāṇērāo to the north of the small Guhila area around Ekliṅgī/Nāgadā/Ahaṛ had dynastic inscriptions at the time they were built. The first marks of dynastic rule (Guhila or otherwise) postdate their construction by two centuries.

One can easily imagine part of the appeal of Khamnor to the Guhilas in the sultanate period, beyond its location and antiquity. A four-faced Śiva liṅgaṃ there closely resembles the black schist icon that was installed in the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple



FIGURE 4.3. Four-Faced Śiva icon, c. 975, Khamnor. © Deborah Stein.

in the fifteenth century (see fig. 0.3). Could the Khamnor stone icon—similar but less elaborate than the Ahar icon of the same era—have served as a model for the Śrī Ekliṅgī icon, just a few kilometers south in Kailāśpurī? Dashora Brahmin priests working at the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple today can trace their lineage to Mandasor in Malwa. My close friends and Indian surrogate family once brought this priest's wife's family idol out of storage to show to me in their home in Kailāśpurī.⁶ Her icon, no more than a foot high, was an eight-faced black stone liṅgaṃ—two stories of faces, looking in four directions. My friends told me that in the twenty-first century this style of liṅgaṃ—the same as that preferred by the Newari royals descended from Mewār—is linked to Dashora Brahmins from Mandasor and that this form dates to the eighth century (simultaneous to the Kalyanpur liṅgaṃ made from the same materials). This family claims that Dashora Brahmins have always been the clergy at Ekliṅgī, even before the recent break in lineage at the Ekliṅgī maṭha. Could the Guhila use of tenth-century Khamnor as a sultanate-era palimpsest evoke the same desire to tie dynasty to Pāśupata practices through specific iconographic conventions? Many scholars argue that these four-faced liṅga are too common regionally and temporally to be tied down to a specific branch of Pāśupata Śaivism. Indeed, precedents abound. But it is interesting, in the context of ritual and the record in stone, to imagine the ways in which specific visual forms of icons served as heritage to different constituencies in different eras, whether in the sultanate period or the twenty-first century.



FIGURE 4.4. Chaturbhuj icon in mirrored hall, twentieth-century mirrorwork, Khamnor. © Deborah Stein.

The mirrored interior of the inner sanctum at Khamnor (fig. 4.4), with a modern solar clan motif found in the palace calendar in Udaipur, reflects the popularity of this tenth-century site for yet another reason. It is next to Nathdwara and the pilgrimage site of the Battle of Haldighāṭī. Pregnant with meaning and fertile for the construction of Sisodia heritage, there empty grassy fields with tourist signs and small stone markers evoke the story of the infamous horse Chetak, which brought Mahārāṇā Pratap to safety in the sixteenth century. A tenth-century palimpsest of Rājput glory, the temple in Khamnor is just one example of how each sultanate inscription may sit in a site diachronically layered in meaning.

Talawara and Chinch are two early sultanate-era temples in Vagada (modern Banaswara) that attest to the use of temples as palimpsests in fifteenth-century Mewār as well. Although the inscriptional record does not reveal any Sisodia existence, let alone any northern branch of Guhila survival, Sisodia Rājputs did not hesitate to mark the architectural heritage of the region with inscriptions. On a pillar of this *śekhārī*-style temple in Talawara we find a record of how Hammīr Singh died nearby (fig. 4.5). Touted today as the “only Brahma temple in India” by local tourism departments, the brightly painted temple in Chinch references royals in an inscription of 1536 (fig. 4.6). A second inscription, photographed in the field, pushes the date of this temple’s incorporation into Mewār history back to 1463—the height of when Mahārāṇā Kumbhā sat on the throne in Chittorgarh, three years after the completion of the Kīrtistambha.

Inscriptions at the turn of the fifteenth century draw a picture of an enlarged political dominion that was to become Mewār as we know it. An inscription dated



FIGURE 4.5. Śekhārī-style temple, c. eleventh to thirteenth century, Talwara. © Deborah Stein.

to 1418 CE in the town of Desuri, north of Udaipur and southwest of Rajsamand Lake (fig. 4.7), connects Rāṇā Lakha with this town, which spreads the territorial reach of his rule from Jāwar in Chhapa (near Jagat) in the south to farther north in Mēdapāṭa than had previously been recorded under Guhila rule. A Jain inscription of 1421, together with a vigorous temple-building campaign subsequently in Jāwar, suggests that the seeds of Jain financing of the Mewāri state had been sown when this Chhapa region passed from the Mers to the Mewāri rulers. Continued fighting stretched into the early fifteenth century in Mewār.

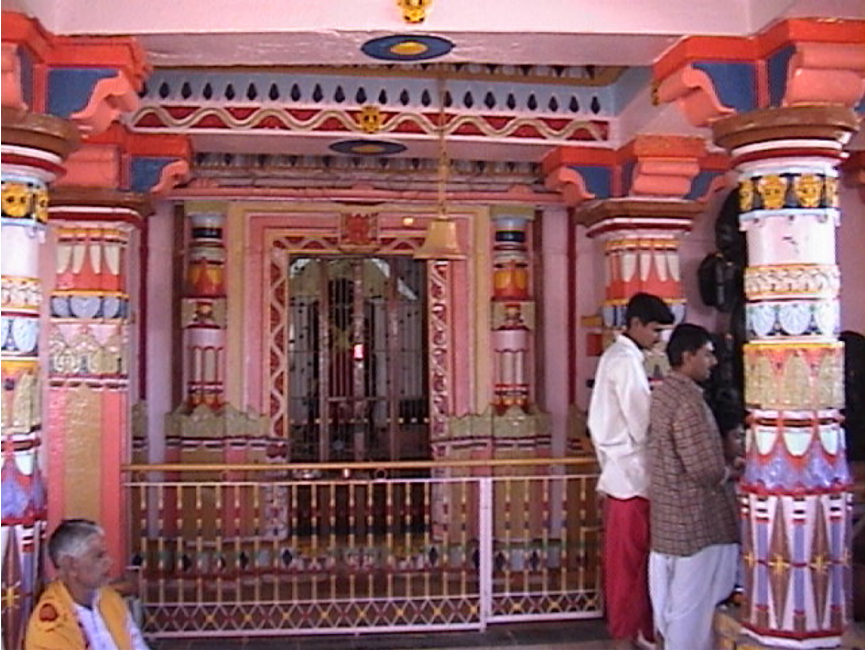


FIGURE 4.6. Brahma temple, c. twelfth century, Chinch. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 4.7. Raisamand Lake, c. fifteenth/sixteenth century, south of the Desuri inscription. © Deborah Stein.

ARCHITECTURE, SECT, AND DYNASTY ALONG THE
BANAS: UPARAMĀLA AND MĒDAPĀṬA REGIONS

In northern Mēdapāṭa and northern Upamāla, north of the perpetually contested fortress of Chittorgarh, several iconographic and architectural features found at Menāl, Bāḍolī, and Bijoliā echo some of the improvements found at Ekliṅgī and Jagat in the eleventh through thirteenth centuries. These concrete examples suggest a much larger sweep of dynastic affinities, religious praxis, and continuity than previously imagined. Although new building projects waned as the eleventh century unfolded, the Guhilas continued to produce inscriptional records. The Pāśupata sect continued to play an important role in the legitimization of multiple dynasties' rule in this period. In Upamāla a Pāśupata monastery had been thriving for hundreds of years, and a second one had been built at Menāl. Śiva temples were erected at Bāḍolī, Bijoliā, and Menāl. The tantric gods Nateśa (Śiva Lord of Dance) and Cāmuṇḍā (the emaciated stone version of the goddess Kālī) grace multiple walls of these sites along with Lakuliśa, the patron saint of the Pāśupatas, who had manifested in a black stone icon in the Lakuliśa temple, where he had already resided in Ekliṅgī for two hundred years. Beyond the sectarian affinities for the classic tantric couple, found in the widespread Bērujī/Cāmuṇḍā folk worship to this day throughout all regions discussed in this book, architectural features suggest that even though different styles, guilds, or carvers may have been operating in different regions, some basic changes may, in fact, reflect changes in use.

Three case studies from Upamāla suggest that the religious, artistic, performative, visual, kinesthetic, and architectural experiences of viewers from the eleventh to the thirteenth century may have several uncanny affinities to contemporary experience at tantric sites built in the tenth century farther south, at Hita, Jagat, and Āaṭ in Chhapa. The twelfth-century revival in Upamāla at Menāl suggests an important Pāśupata Śaivaite center that had garnered enough political clout to attract royal patronage in much the same way the Lakuliśa temple in Ekliṅgī had done for the Guhilas in c. 971. Monasteries mark this Pāśupata center in Upamāla with images of the Pāśupata saint Lakuliśa—believed to be an incarnation of Śiva—on the lintels of important rooms in the monastery. Holding his signature club, Lakuliśa sits in ithyphallic mediation in a representation no more than a few inches tall (fig. 4.8).

Along the northern east–west axis of Upamāla and Mēdapāṭa, a strong Pāśupata current has already begun to be documented by Tamara Sears and textual scholars.⁷ Some of the iconography found at the temples in Menāl begins to set the visual stage for religious experience in the twelfth century, beyond the boundaries of dynastic powers, who seemed to follow rather than create these centers and movements.

Within a century of when this temple was built, the powerful twelfth-century Cāuhāns were using Menāl as their retreat. The eleventh-century iconographic



FIGURE 4.8. Ithyphallic Lakuliṣa, Menāl. © Deborah Stein.

program of the Mahanaleśvara temple in Menāl displays a fascinating pairing of three deities in relation to Nateśa, the dancing form of Śiva referenced in the infamous tantric Pāśupata inscription from Menāl (fig. 4.9). The maṭha inscription, published elsewhere, focuses on the tantric dissolution of the body to become one with God. One can imagine that the circumambulatory programs established at the site in the same era suggest how that process of syncopated circular movement was supposed to transpire for the average person, who may or may not have been a tantric initiate with a guru.⁸ What impact was the sequence of a tripartite *bhadra* (niche) program supposed to have on the circumambulator? To imagine, let us put ourselves in the position of a *pradakṣinā*, right-handed, clockwise circumambulation.

First in this series we would encounter Cāmuṇḍā (fig. 4.10). Her skeletal form, sagging breasts, trident, and skull staff are easily recognized. The chopper knife in her lower right hand recalls the chopper and blood bowl found in the black schist icon from tenth-century Jagat. This iconographical form was readily found throughout northern India from the ninth century through the twelfth at many famous yoginī shrines, but in the large region of what was to become Mewār, she began to strike out on her own—independent of any particular set of yoginīs or even mother goddesses.⁹ This Cāmuṇḍā raises her pinky to her lips, a tantric



FIGURE 4.9. Mahanaleśvara temple, c. eleventh century, Menāl.
© Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 4.10. Cămuṇḍā, Menāl,
slide 390. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 4.11. Nateśa, Menāl, slide 391. © Deborah Stein.

gesture made to evoke the drinking of blood. All of these elements suggest that Cāmuṇḍā haunts the tantric spaces of cremation grounds, where she has easy access to blood and decaying flesh. Ongoing research is revealing new textual and artistic information about these practices, specifically in millennial India.¹⁰ What is significant at Menāl is how Cāmuṇḍā fits into a tripartite iconographic program. Cāmuṇḍā, Nateśa, and a third figure, possibly Kubera or Andhakāntaka, grace the three main niches on axis with the temple sanctum.

The back *bhadra* niche features the dancing Nateśa, holding his trident and skull staff, akin to the icon from the inner sanctum that was stolen in 1998 and is known from an American Institute of Indian Studies archival photograph (fig. 4.11). Nateśa graces the back wall, the prime space on axis with the main icon, while an unusual form of Śiva digs his trident into a small personification of misknowledge, who in turn seems to plead for mercy. Meanwhile, Andhakāntaka takes a powerful stance, lifting his left leg to stomp on yet another figure of misknowledge (fig. 4.12). The empty sack swings above the head of this fanged, ferocious manifestation of Śiva. Nateśa mediates between these two forms on the temple walls—paired with Cāmuṇḍā (as seen at Arthuna in Paramāra territories in Vagada, far to the south, and in Hita, between Jagat and Chittorgarh on the Uparamāla/Mēdapāṭa east–west border). The divorce of these two key deities from the mothers and the yoginīs is significant. To this day Cāmuṇḍā and Bērujī are widely worshipped by Ādivāsis throughout the Chhapa region. Could the twelfth-century regal Menāl record a trickle down of brāhmanical iconography and tantric practices stemming originally from tribal practices in the region?

Those who had access to the temple may not have had access to even the most public spaces of the adjacent maṭha pictured in figure 4.13. If they did, they may have



FIGURE 4.12. Andhakāntaka, stone,
Menāl. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 4.13. Maṭha, c. tenth century,
Menāl. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 4.14. Column detail, c. eighth century, in monastery in Menāl. © Deborah Stein.

spent time appreciating the intricate eighth-century carving of columns reused in the ground-floor courtyard (fig. 4.14). There, visitors may have mingled with clergy and each other, stopping to gaze and appreciate art for art's sake. Here, tucked under a pot overflowing with abundant foliage, an elephant's tusk is sharply carved. The head of the elephant, with his delicate ear, hides in a recess of the deep carving just above the never-ending knots. Iconographic meaning alone was not the didactic singular experience of this or any site; humor, tenderness, and love of ornamentation also leave a record in stone.

At Bijoliā, even though we have a later date of circa the twelfth century, we are luckier in that much of the iconography remains in situ on the Śiva temple (fig. 4.15). Encased in the sparsely spaced, highly aediculated recesses of this intensely detailed architecture, Cāmuṇḍā and Nateśa are paired yet again (figs. 4.16 and 4.17). Similar to the pairing found at Menāl nearby and Paramāra Arthuna far to the south, the style of the Cāmuṇḍā icon resembles the skinny, sinuous depictions of this goddess found across northern India farther east. The dancing Nateśa, however, replicates almost exactly the style, form, and figure of icons found at Menāl, Hita, and Bāḍoli. This suggests a very strong north–south axis for this Nateśa imagery, whereas the sculptural style under the Cāhūhāns shows an affiliation with the east in the goddess sculpture. In contrast, at Hita the affiliation seems



FIGURE 4.15. Temple, c. twelfth century, Bijoliā, Uparamāla. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 4.16. Cāmuṇḍā on south side, like at Jagat, Bijoliā. © Deborah Stein.

to go west, to Jagat, in the handling of the female form. Bijoliā remains firmly along the Banas corridor. Artistically, we could argue for a second east–west axis to the south along the Mahi and Som Rivers instead. Together these two routes would cut across Uparamāla and Mēdapāṭa to the north and Chittorgarh to the south.



FIGURE 4.17. Natesa (as found at Menāl, in Madhya Pradesh, and at Hita, and in māṭṛkā series), Bijoliā. © Deborah Stein.

Moreover, we have an inscriptional record from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that suggests that Jain pilgrims, merchants traveling from Ujjain, and rulers with links to the Cāuhāns of Ajmer all may have laid eyes on this stone building and its iconography. A *liṅgaṃ* contemporaneous with those at Ekliṅgī and Ahar demonstrates that the *sahasraliṅga* may have been the standard multitude of a thousand faces looking every direction across a wide region in the sultanate era (fig. 4.18). Furthermore, evidence of sacrificial ghee labels in stone provide a tenuous link to fire worship there (fig. 4.19).

In the eleventh century, as the Guhilas continued building at Nāgadā, the Paramāras took Ahar away from them.¹¹ Chittorgarh also came under the dominion of Paramāra king Bhoja. In the twelfth century CE the self-conscious Sisodia construction of history had not yet taken hold, since Guhadatta, not Bappa, was still considered the founder of Mewār and the Guhilas were still in a direct lineage. The Paldi inscription of Guhila Arisimha dates to 1116 CE and was found in front of the Vamesvara Śiva temple in Mewār.¹² This inscription describes poetically the ruler of Mēdapāṭa, named Arisimha; his father, Vijaysimha; and his grandfather Vairisimha in martial terms. The consecration of a Śiva *mūrti* is recorded and the early lineage of Lakuliśa ācāryas is given. Most inscriptions link dynastic lineage, martial exploits, and consecration of religious sites in this way. Another inscription, dated to 1150 CE, describes a ruler's charity to a religious institution as part of his military campaign. According to this inscription, Chittorgarh was an object of

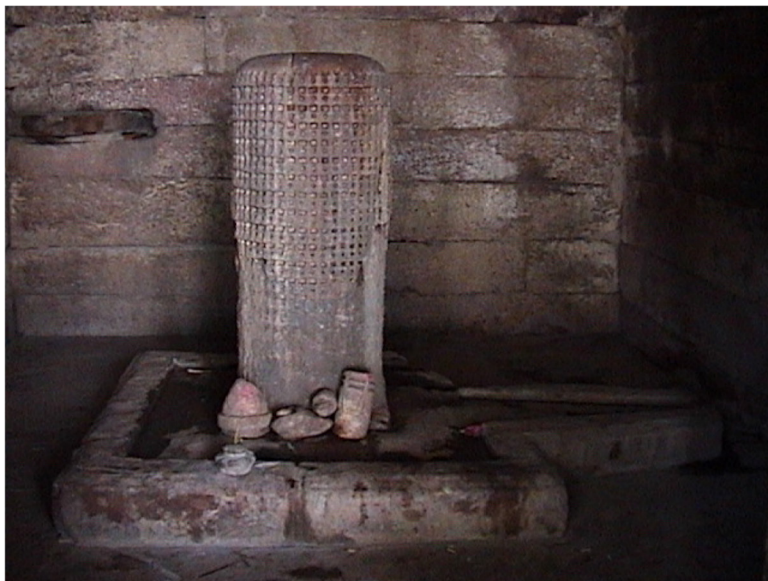


FIGURE 4.18. *Sahasralinga*, c. twelfth to thirteenth century, Bijoliā. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 4.19. Traces of ritual made permanent in stone, Bijoliā. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 4.20. Vindhyāvāsini temple, c. twelfth century, Kailāśpurī (across from Ekliṅgi).
© Deborah Stein.

victory for the Chālukya king Kumarapala over the ruler of Śākambharī (Sambhar) and the Sapadalakṣa country in the twelfth century.¹³ This Chālukya ruler—much in the same vein as the Guhila leaders—invokes Śiva, names his lineage, and then commemorates his victory in battle. As a celebration of his military success, King Kumarapala donated a village to the Samiddhēśvara temple (later known as the Mokali temple) at Chittorgarh.¹⁴

One of the only architectural records left by the Guhilas in the twelfth century is the Vindhyāvāsini temple at Ekliṅgi (fig. 4.20). This goddess temple was repaired in 1234 CE.¹⁵ Repair may indicate a Guhila desire to solidify power in the Nāgadā/Ekliṅgi area while threatened by the Paramāra dynasty, which reigned as close as Ahar. The sculptural style suggests the repair involved a significant amount of new carving. A squared and flattened facial type—as if split and opened along the bridge of the nose—breaks with early medieval modes of representation to display one of the earliest examples of what was to become high medieval style in Mewār. Like the Ambikā temple, the Vindhyāvāsini temple is a goddess temple in local style dedicated to a single deity rather than a group of mothers. Her name means “she who dwells in the Vindhya Mountains”; thus, she is named for her geographical location.¹⁶ Ancient texts suggest goddess worship involved animal sacrifice at least as early as the twelfth century and probably centuries earlier.¹⁷ The patronage of this goddess suggests a martial interest in the immediate outcome of events at the dawn of the thirteenth century.¹⁸ Not only was Vindhyāvāsini apotropaic; like

the Purāṇic Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardini and the Gupta-era mātṛkās, she could have served as a metaphor for military victory.

During the thirteenth century, the Guhilas had taken control of Chittorgarh, and the nature of memory had changed. If the precarious power of fortresses, gods, and rulers left its record in stone at Chittorgarh in earlier centuries, the thirteenth century marked a continued struggle for Guhila power and a shift in their memory-making from recording somewhat immediate events to a flourishing of bardic revivalism at Chittorgarh and Kumbhalgarh in the fifteenth century. The same impulses that inspired the archival labeling of every image in the fifteenth-century Kīrtistambha are foreshadowed by the myth of Bappa as the founder of Mewār, replacing the record of Guhadatta as the progenitor of the Guhila line. This moment, marking the transition from the creation of lineage to the reification of lineage, set the stage for history when Bappa was eulogized as the founder of Mewār. He had become the guru who received a sacred right to rule continuously from the eighth century into the present.¹⁹ It is during the late thirteenth century that the earliest record of Guhila dominance over Chittorgarh, dating to 1274 CE, is found.

The thirteenth century was a tumultuous period of many battles with the Solankis of Gujarat, with the Paramāras of Malwa, and with the most powerful ruler of the period, the great Sultan Alāuddīn Khiljī. Mahārāṇā Jaitrasingh Mewār shifted his capital to Chittorgarh and conquered Vagada. The Paramāras of Malwa invaded Vagada and were defeated near Arthuna.²⁰ Jaitrasingh's son, Teja Singh, succeeded before 1252 CE.²¹ One of the only sultanate-era Islamic architectural projects to survive in this region was a bridge built by Khizr Khān (son of Alāuddīn Khiljī) over the Gambhīrī River near Chittorgarh in 1267. The inscription yields some of the only concrete information about Afghan incursions around Chittorgarh.²² In addition to Tejsingh's Jain queen Jayatalladevī, who constructed a Śyam Pārśvanātha temple at Chittorgarh in 1278 CE, many of his Jain ministers also patronized Jain sites at Chittorgarh in the thirteenth century. Tejsingh's son, Samar Singh, came to the aide of the Paramāras of Mount Ābū, where he repaired the maṭha and installed a golden staff in the Achaleshvar temple.²³

The Guhilas were inscribing their hegemony west of Mēdapāṭa at the site of the *agnikūla* origin myth and simultaneously to the east, in the Upamāla region at Chittorgarh. Alāuddīn Khiljī invaded Mewār more than once at the turn of the century. In 1303 CE he set his sights on Chittorgarh, having already devastated Delwara, Ekliṅgī, Ahar, and other parts of Mewār.²⁴ He held a long siege, captured the queen, and tried to blackmail the king. These breaches of honor allegedly led to a veritable bloodbath of mass suicide and murder until Chittorgarh fell under Khiljī and subsequently Tughluq rule until Mahārāṇā Hammīr Mewār was able to return Chittorgarh to Guhila rule by the second quarter of the fourteenth century CE.²⁵ Hammīr's son Kheta seems to have extended the sphere of Mewāri influence at least as far east as the Śaiva center of Menāl by the end of the fourteenth century.²⁶

ARCHITECTURE, SECT, AND DYNASTY ALONG
THE MAHI AND SOM RIVERS: CHHAPA AND
VAGADA REGIONS

From the eleventh century to the fourteenth, Vagada grew in importance and power, leaving an initial trace of contestation on the inner column of the Ambikā temple's maṇḍapa in Jagat. The Vagada region slowly came under Guhila dominion with the eventual outcome of a Guhila branch ruling from Dūṅgarpur.²⁷ With time Mēdapāṭa had become known as Mewār. The southern region of Chhapa changed hands more than once. The region south of Mewār came to be known as Vagada and is distinguished by its own dialect, called Vagari. Vagada comprised conquered Paramāra territories, as well as Chhapa (annexed from Mewār by Sāmanta Singh of the Guhilas of Mewār). According to Mahesh Purohit, the royal historian of the Dūṅgarpur royal family, the Vagada Empire included the present districts of Dūṅgarpur, Banaswara, the southern part of Mewār now known as Chhapa, and a small portion of the Rewa Kantha and Mahi Kantha agencies of Gujarat.²⁸

Leaving traces of new dynastic sources of interest in Sompurā architecture, the Sompurā guild may well have begun to think of the Ambikā *devī* temple in Jagat as the temple of their *kūldevī* in the sultanate period. Several Pāsupata and a few *devī* temple sites dating from the eighth century to the fifteenth fell under the rule of the Vagada Empire, including the Ambikā temple at Jagat. The capital of Vagada was originally at Vaṭpaḍṛak, modern-day Baroda in Dūṅgarpur district.²⁹ Sculpture dating to the eleventh century suggests the Paramāras originally built Vaṭpaḍṛak.³⁰ The Guhilots of the Bhartṛpaṭṭa branch ruled over this territory as feudatories of the Solankis—a dynastic link that may partially account for the rise of the Sompurā architectural guild in Mewār. Mahārawal Sāmanta Singh, of the Guhilots of the Ahar clan, ruled Mewār from 1172 to 1179 CE. He gave his kingdom (Mewār) to his younger brother, Kumar Singh, and went south to rule Vagada. According to Purohit, he killed Surpaldeva of the Guhilots of the Bhartṛpaṭṭa branch and took control of Vaṭpaḍṛak. This new dynasty was founded in 1168–69 CE. On the periphery of two empires, Jagat served as a perfect political marker for Sāmanta Singh to stage his power in 1171 CE.³¹ But the region was hotly contested, and Sāmanta Singh was ousted by Solanki Bhimdev II of Gujarat in 1183–84 CE.³²

The first mention of a ruler in an inscription from Jagat is that of Sāmanta Singh in 1171 CE, a mere two to three years after the founding of his southern empire, having left Mewār to his younger brother. Sūtradhāra Rake tells us that Maharaja Singh fought so bravely in Chhapa that “enemies were shivering and suffering with fever at his mere sight.”³³ In honor of his heroic exploits in battle, this ruler placed a golden finial atop the Ambikā temple. This inscription suggests that Durgā-Mahiśāsūramardini was associated with victory in battle already in the twelfth century.³⁴ The account in the *Devī Māhātmya* of this goddess's cosmic battle served as a metaphor for the battles the Guhilas waged with Afghan, Solanki, Rāṣṭrakūṭa, Paramāra, Cāuhān,

and Mer forces and with each other. Dating to the tenth century CE, the earliest inscription is the first of many to make reference to Ambikā, another name for Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardinī in the *Devī Māhātmya*. By the tenth century, this warrior goddess had gained enough popularity to merit her own stone temple.

The worship of a single martial goddess contrasts with the earlier shrines to the *mātrkā* (mother goddess) Kṛttikās or to the yoginīs that were seen as near as Chandrabhaga and Āmjhara in Rājāsthān and as far as Bhērāghaṭ and Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh.³⁵ Dating to the sixth century, the sculpture of the goddess Aindrī in the Udaipur Archaeological Museum is evidence of early *mātrkā* worship at Jagat. It is possible that sometime between the sixth century and the tenth century a shift took place at Jagat from *mātrkā* worship to a focus on devotion to the more martial Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardinī. This trend continues throughout Rājāsthān over the centuries with many warrior goddess temples being constructed or reconsecrated within actual fortresses.³⁶

The Ambikā temple became a site of highly differentiated feudal rule by the mid-thirteenth century. In 1220 CE Mahasamanta Velhankara of Runija village, the vassal of Ari Sinhadadeva's state, donated a club in the maṭha of Ambikā. The reference to Ari Sinhadadeva is important since it shows that Jagat was considered part of Vagada in the thirteenth century.³⁷ The temple was already being used to stage political power—more specifically, to tie a monastic Śakta community to the Dūṅgarpur branch of the Guhila dynasty. The reference to a maṭha suggests a monastery existed as part of the Ambikā temple compound. No remains of a monastery have been unearthed at present in Jagat, but the southern wall is a prime candidate. Āaṭ (ten kilometers from Jagat) and many other tenth-century sites do have some remains of maṭhas in proximity to the temples. It would be interesting to know how Jagat's Śakta monastery may have compared to Pāśupata monasteries at Āaṭ, Achalgarh, Menāl, or Ekliṅgī; unfortunately, the archaeological record does not yet permit such analysis.

Sinhadadeva's son, Jayat Singh, established a Gaṇeśa in the Ambikā temple in the name of the Guhila dynasty in 1249 CE (fig. 4.21). He also is said to have founded a *vatak* (garden) at the site. The inscriptions from Vatpaḍṛak referencing the rule first of Sinhadadeva and then his son Jayat Singh reveal that the Solankis of Gujarat took control of this capital in 1183–84. Perhaps Mahasamanta Udayakdeva of 1220 CE was a vassal of the Solankis, or else the reference to Sinhadadeva would suggest he was ruling over Vatpaḍṛak at the time. The 1249 CE inscription by Jayat Singh falls fifty-nine years before the capital was moved from Vatpaḍṛak to Dūṅgarpur for safety from powerful Muslim forces in Gujarat, Malwa, and Delhi.

The establishment of a Gaṇeśa statue in the name of the Guhila dynasty suggests a desire to solidify their dynastic right to rule the Chhapa region in the form of a new beginning or fresh start offered by Gaṇeśa, the god of beginnings (fig. 4.21). After alternating periods of plundering and prosperity on the route between Mewār and Malwa or Gujarat, the capital of Vatpaḍṛak was transferred to Dūṅgarpur in 1308 CE. This new capital took the name of the Bhil chieftain,



FIGURE 4.21. *Gaṇeśa*, Ambikā temple, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

Dungaria, who handed the town over to Mahārawal Bhuchand. Among the archaeological remains in the village of Vaṭpaḍrak is a lion pedestal very similar to those found at Jagat and at Āaṭ. This piece of sculpture is also missing an icon. An inscription dates the image to 1295 CE, a little more than a decade before the capital was moved. This date corresponds to the time Ulugh Khan's troops were moving through the region on the way to and from Somnāth. Vagada was neither a conquest destination nor a site chosen for iconoclasm nor a rich capital waiting to be looted. It was a largely tribal area with increasing Jain mercantile presence en route between Gujarat, Malwa, and Delhi.

It is difficult to know when the icon from Vaṭpaḍṛak may have been stolen, destroyed, or removed (quite possibly within the past half century—when theft of ancient sculpture has become increasingly problematic as appetite and value have risen on the international art market). None of these pedestals have remained in worship. The frame that once held the main icon in the Ambikā temple continued to be worshipped even after the main icon was stolen, whereas the ancient lion pedestal was split in half by thieves in 2000 and then left behind. Badly damaged, the pedestal was then left outside the temple “for the archaeological department.” At Āaṭ, too, the pedestal was found far outside the compound under a tree, next to one of the many stone *liṅga* and *yoni* that had been put into worship; however, the sculpture was pristine and lacked any vermilion, ghee, or other ritual residue. Hopefully, these sculptures will remain outside the temple precincts, safe (for now) from twenty-first-century looting. The 1295 CE pedestal from Vaṭpaḍṛak is currently cemented in place in a makeshift gallery to the left of a temple entrance. These remains consigned to the archaeological record either are reborn as art in museums or simply cast aside in archaeological sheds.

The physical residue of sultanate-era turmoil on the shifting border regions of Vagada, Chhapa, and southern Mewār gave way to a full-blown fifteenth-century desire to define Sisodia hegemony through quotation of Guhila architecture—whether or not that record matched the histories from the battlefields. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Mewār conducted intense self-fashioning both at Chittorgarh and in Ekliṅgī, marking important loci of military and spiritual powers. Meanwhile, a relative vacuum of power in Chhapa to the south left room for the growth of a multisectarian sacred center owing to innovative industry, a wealth of natural resources, and a relatively safe tract of desert land.

VISUAL NONINSCRIPTIONAL PALIMPSESTS IN THE SULTANATE ERA

Both architecture and painting leave behind traces of links between the visual culture of modern Mewār and this era during the Guhila-Sisodia dynastic rupture and after. A brief look at one painted example and one architectural example demonstrates fascinating links toward the Ekliṅgī temple in Mewār and the Sompurā guild temples of Gujarat and Malwa. Both the Junah Mahal palace and the Deo Somnāth temple are located in Dūṅgarpur, capital of Vagada—led since the twelfth century by an offshoot of the Guhilas of Mewār. I conclude this chapter with these two examples, one painted and one architectural, to see how visual examples can create ties in similar ways to inscriptional evidence found on buildings across a landscape. The importance of Dūṅgarpur and Vagada during the sultanate era is paramount, as is evident in both the inscriptional and the visual evidence found there. The presence of a major Jain temple at Delwara points to a multisectarian situation similar to Chittorgarh to the northeast, one that predates the major Jain



FIGURE 4.22. Śrī Ekliṅgī painting, c. 1700, smaller than four inches square, Juna Mahal, Dūṅarpur. © Deborah Stein.

building campaign at Jāwar in the fifteenth century, and Rāṇakpur subsequently. Secular palaces, such as the sultanate-era Junah Mahal, also served subsequently as palimpsests, and further research could yield an entire study exclusively on this region between Mewār and Malwa in this era.

The thirteenth-century Juna Mahal palace is one of the earliest instances of secular vernacular architecture in this region. Pāśupata maṭhas, tantric Śaivaite maṭhas, and possibly a Śakta maṭha already dotted the landscape from the tenth century on in Āaṭ, Jagat, Ekliṅgī, and Menāl. In the sultanate period Jain fortress temples and community centers were added to the landscape from Delwara (also known in the Bhil community as Keśeriyajī) in Vagada to the south, to the mining town of Jāwar in Chhapa, and to the grand scale of Rāṇakpur to the north in Mewār. Two striking small-scale paintings in this thirteenth-century palace probably date to the seventeenth century and mark this piece of secular vernacular sultanate architecture as a palimpsest for post-fifteenth-century ideas about Guhila identity in Dūṅarpur.

The first painting clearly depicts the four-faced black stone god Śrī Ekliṅgī just as he appears today at Ekliṅgī (fig. 4.22). A haloed mahārawal of Dūṅarpur holds a three-flamed lamp as he performs *arṭhi* (lamp ceremony) while a priest wafts



FIGURE 4.23. Harit Rashi painting, c. 1700, smaller than four inches square, Juna Mahal, Dūṅgarpur.
© Deborah Stein.

this *achi hawai* (lucky air) over the devotees with a flywhisk. Of course, in the painting the viewer is cast as the recipient of the god's open-eyed gaze. How do we know this is Eklingji and not, for example, the four-faced, eighth-century statue of the same color from Kalyanpur, located much closer to Dūṅgarpur than it is to Eklingji to the north? The Kiṣkindā branch of the Guhilas sponsored that statue with four entire bodies. In addition, the text above the painting seems to say "Śrī Eklingji." Based on style alone, the date of the painting seems to be very roughly c. 1700. It is clearly post-1600, because painting prior to that time in this region had significantly less volume and three-dimensional architectural space. For example, the Mewāri-illustrated *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and the illuminated *Nīmāt Nāmā* from neighboring Malwa both share this flattened style. The flattened profiles, fish-shaped eyes, and sallow color palette, however, seem to evoke a period before Mughal, early modern European, and colonial painting had been introduced, with their proclivity for volumetric and naturalistic portraiture. Could this painting have served as a tool for Dūṅgarpur Guhila *darśan* with the ruler of Mewār? Can a painting be a "portrait" of a deity, or does a reproduction clone the ontological being of the icon? Either way, this small image clearly references Śrī Eklingji in the sultanate-era home of the Dūṅgarpur branch of the Guhila dynasty.

Even more captivating in the reconstruction of the Mewār-Dūṅgarpur relationship at the sultanate-era Juna Mahal palace is a second painting that seems to date to the same period as the first and may quite possibly even be by the same hand (fig. 4.23). This time a specific shrine with icons of the folk deity Kagil in the form of



FIGURE 4.24. Deo Somnāth temple, c. twelfth century, near Dūṅgarpur. © Deborah Stein.

a snake outside the gates of Ekliṅgī is referenced. There, to this day, stands a small spot where the indexical trace of the Bappa Rāwal–Harit Rashi story is said to have transpired. How fascinating to find an illustration of this specific site from Ekliṅgī, together with a traditional depiction of the sage Harit Rashi in his Sanskritic boat and Mahārāṇā Bappa, his hands clasped in prayer to the patron sage of the dynasty—a Pāśupata ācārya (teacher), and probably a Nagar Brahmin, a Dashora, at that. A label in a yellow lozenge makes one wonder if these two paintings were sent as a gift from Mewār to Dūṅgarpur and then were affixed to the sultanate-era marker of the founding of the town of Dūṅgarpur for posterity. Perhaps, then, c. 1700 is too early a date. This kind of visual narrative may well date to the same era as local historians Nainsi or Śyāmaladās Sr. and their famous early modern histories of Mewār.

A second piece of architecture on a grand scale near Dūṅgarpur may predate the Juna Mahal palace by as much as a century. The monumental two-story architecture of the Deo Somnāth temple may date to the twelfth century and has served as a Sompurā architectural guild model over the years (fig. 4.24). This is one of the largest, if not the largest, Śiva temples in this region—larger than any other temple discussed in this book, with the exception perhaps of the Jāwar Mātā temple, which it resembles. Both the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple and the Jāwar Mātā temple seem inspired by the maṇḍapa gallery, nine bays wide and three stories high. The rear of the temple is crowned by a *nagara* spire, which, from inside the temple, leaves a visible trace of its construction. A cavernous *garbhagrha* (womb chamber) where the original icon would have once stood lies beneath an open vault, towering above as overlapping lintels increasingly diminish in diameter, soaring upward. The deeply carved underground level of the inner sanctum further emphasizes this ascendance. Although the scale and design of the temple seem to indicate the

larger-scale congregational temples of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, perhaps the open three-story design could have served an added benefit of defense. With the height of a watchtower and enough open galleries for an entire army to hide within and to shoot from, perhaps this design reflects a post-Vaṭpaḍṛak construction date—a time when one capital had just fallen and Dūṅgarpur was just being founded. But with no other records of military incursion, this design more likely reveals a certain stylistic indebtedness to local Gujarati idioms, such as the already exuberant and impressive architecture of the Solankis found in nearby Modhera, where the temple was built in 1024 CE.

Because none of the inscriptions in the Deo Somnāth temple seem to predate 1424 CE, a time when Jāwar was bustling nearby, this Śaivaite shrine may have a date later than the twelfth-century one proposed on the website of the Archaeological Survey of Jaipur Circle.³⁸ The interior seems so intricate, so delicately carved, so large, that the early date is initially hard to believe architecturally. Even large tenth-century monasteries never seem to have exceeded two stories. This site seems to evoke the scale of the coastal five-story, sixteenth-century Viṣṇu temple in Dwarka (Gujarat), whereas the twelfth-century Jain architecture at the sultanate-era Mount Ābū does not begin to accomplish the same structural feat as the Śaivaite Deo Somnāth temple. But carving at Mount Ābū seems to surpass that found at Deo Somnāth in both depth and intricacy. Although the exact dating of the Deo Somnāth temple remains beyond reach without ample time to translate and sort through a vast amount of largely unpublished epigraphy that covers the temple interior, the temple does suggest a Gujarati link to Sompurā masons at a time when Vagada was under the control of a lesser Guhila branch in the very beginnings of the sultanate era. The later Guhila-Sisodia appropriation of Sompurās as state architects could suggest inspiration from sultanate-era time spent along the southern stretches of the Mahi and the Som in areas linked to geographically nearby Solanki architectural heritage.

Temple as Ritual Center

Tenth-Century Traces of Ritual and the Record in Stone

A diffusion of artistic style in stone leaves a trace of the production of Guhila dynastic identity in tenth-century northwestern India. Both in the twenty-first century and in the premodern period, boundaries are spaces of negotiation—fruitful places of contestation in the multivalent production of culture. Homi Bhabha has described this interruption of binary division as “a liminal form of social representation, a space that is internally marked by cultural difference and heterogeneous histories of contending peoples, antagonistic authorities and tense cultural locations.”¹ Out of fewer than a dozen temple sites that share a cultural affinity in the Mēdapāṭa region, Jagat and Ekliṅgī offer a complex web of competing interests in the nascent phases of Guhila cultural production. Art historians of South Asia used to rely on dynasty to define entire periods of cultural production. This study seeks to probe the birth of a regional style to move beyond dynastic style into some of the complex political, religious, and social negotiations in the initial making of Guhila hegemony and contemporaneous competing identities in the medieval period.

In the wake of imperial Pratihāra overlordship, the Guhila dynasty used architecture to define the center of its kingdom, but not all temples in the Mēdapāṭa region or stylistic cluster made reference to any dynasty at all. Described as impenetrable in later Mughal chronicles, the Aravalli mountain range sheltered a small temple site where ash-covered ascetics met Jains and Buddhists to debate. The inscription on the Śaivaite temple—not surprisingly—claims victory for the Śiva-worshipping Pāśupata sect, while inside, a larger-than-life schist sculpture of their patron saint, Lakulīśa, stares back at those who cross the threshold into the dark, empty hall of the stone building today. This inscription and temple cluster



FIGURE 5.1. Woman pours wine into a cup held by a man Ambikā temple, Jagat (detail). © Deborah Stein.

at Ekliṅgī is exceptional in its dynastic reference to the Guhila lineage in tandem with the sectarian prowess of the Pāśupatas.

At least two hundred kilometers southeast of this ancient Pāśupata center lies a tenth-century goddess temple. Tantric iconography reveals one of the most important goddess temples in regional style—that is not a yoginī shrine but a temple dedicated to the goddess in the form of other Śaivaite and Vaiṣṇavaite shrines. The tenth-century inscription does not refer to a dynasty; it was through regional style and iconography that the architects articulated power in the hilly tracts of the southern Chhapa territory. Circles of ferocious yoginīs—found throughout middle and southern India in the eighth to twelfth centuries—yielded to the square order of North Indian *nagara* temple style in Mēdapāṭa and Upamāla regions along the east–west flow of the Banas and Mahi Rivers. There, on the three outer walls of temple sanctums, powerful tantric goddesses such as Cāmuṇḍā and Kṣēmaṅkarī were often paired with each other or with Śiva in the form of the dancing Nateśa. Tantric references to sacrifice abound, especially at the Ambikā temple in Jagat, where libations flow freely in stone reliefs (fig. 5.1),² and the importance of sacrifice is underscored in the multiscenic way the Devī Māhātmya story has been told in a repetitive sequence on the three exterior walls of the sanctum.

Tenth-century data reveals striking parallels in political uses of sites that nevertheless spent centuries at a time abandoned. The history of ritual and renovation both foreshadows future constructs of the temples and yet distinguishes the unique historicity of the period in which they were made. The Guhilas sought to reify their power at Ekliṅgī, just as unknown patrons canonized regional practices in stone iconography and architecture in the heart of Chhapa at Jagat, a religious nexus of Śaiva-Śakti tantra. Comparative examples from the Mēdapāṭa region

(where the Ekliṅgī temple lies) and from Chhapa (where the Ambikā temple is situated in the village of Jagat) suggest a budding regional style used both for the Guhila dynasty's medieval projects and for sectarian legitimacy for newly emerging forms of populist worship of Śiva in the Pāśupata forms of Nateśa/Bērujī, four-faced liṅga, and Lakuliśa; in the mantric and tantric forms of Kṣēmaṅkari and Cāmuṇḍā; and in the Purāṇic form of Durgā-Mahiṣāsura-mardini represented particularly in her role as sacrificer.

The Lakuliśa and Takṣakēśvara temples at Ekliṅgī and the Ambikā temple at Jagat are just a few of the many temples built in Mēdapāṭa in the second half of the tenth century CE. Despite the rich architectural record, the inscriptional record leaves many questions. A lintel incorporated into the Saranesvara temple next to the *chhatra* (dome-shaped pavilion) of Ahar records the building of a Viṣṇu temple between 951 CE and 953 CE, during Allaṭa's reign.³ This record cements a difference of approximately 290 years between Aparajīta's rule, recorded at Nāgadā, and Allaṭa's reign in the same region. Over the course of almost three centuries, only ten rulers are recorded in Allaṭa's inscription, none of whom seem to have left their own mark for the historical record. Some of these rulers are recorded in later inscriptions, such as the reference to Simha found in an inscription dating to 1258 CE at Chittorgarh. Guhila ties with the Rāṣṭrakūṭa dynasty to the south of Mēdapāṭa through a marriage alliance of Allaṭa's predecessor reflect Guhila freedom from Pratihāra overlordship.

Ritual practice in Mēdapāṭa in the late tenth century precedes almost all of the surviving tantric manuscripts, and no texts dating to the tenth century can be traced to any temples in Mēdapāṭa. The earliest known tantric text in South Asia dates to the ninth century—a powerful parallel to architectural changes begun in the eighth century.⁴ The extensive artistic production that marks this era parallels the expansion of tantric forms of worship subsequently recorded by famous theoreticians such as Abhinavagupta, who was born in 960, within a year of when the Ambikā temple in Jagat was completed in 959 or 961, depending on how one reads the inscription.⁵ The pattern of ritual, then temple, then text must have been repeated multiple times across millennial India as the continent shifted toward the intimate method of using sequences of gesture (*mudras*) and voice (*mantras*) to awaken deities in various parts of the body or in a stone icon. Visualizing corporeality became a quintessential element of worship across any sectarian or regional divide, and these methods traveled east along syncretic pathways that leave traces geographically as far as Japan and temporally as far as the present day.

A fifty-year period of intense building recorded political information on Guhila identity and self-definition through style and iconography, and artistic production left traces of how worship took place. The stone provides a record of animal sacrifice, mantric worship, *pūjā* (especially for Śiva liṅga), and the inclusion of local tantric cults into the brāhmanical mainstream. The shift toward more complex temple programs also suggests a move toward a wider more popular audience and away from the Vedic sacrificial tradition of the Brahman elite.

The decline in Pratihāra power led to a flurry of Guhila-sponsored building activity during the second half of the tenth century CE.⁶ The Surya temple at Tūṣa, the Pippalāda Mātā temple at Unwās (959 CE), the Ambikā temple at Jagat (961 CE), the Lakuliśa temple at Ekliṅgī (971 CE), the Datoresvara Mahadev temple at Śobhagpura (c. 950–75 CE), the Chaturbhuj temple at Īswāl (c. 975 CE), the Sās-Bahu temples at Nāgadā (c. 975 CE), and the Mirāñ temple at Ahar (c. 975 CE) provide a strong link between political dominion and the desire to build monuments to power in the form of religious charity.⁷ But evidence of Pratihāra projects suggests a tantric regional shift across Mēdapāṭa and Upamāla in the tenth century. It is possible that the Guhilas drew on a regional iconographic paradigm rooted in ritual shifts across northwestern millennial India to boost their legitimacy. Many parallels between the Pratihāra site of Bādoli and the Ambikā temple in Jagat are most striking in a tenth-century context. Beyond any direct Guhila record, no fewer than ten kilometers from the Ambikā temple in Jagat, the previously unknown Śaivaite site of Āaṭ not only remaps past understandings of these regions along fluvial nondynastic lines, as seen in chapter 1, but this incredible temple cluster also yields fascinating data about tantric Śaivism in millennial northwestern India.

We have long thought of the Mēdapāṭa cohort as Guhila temples, but not all of the temples built in the span of c. 950 to c. 975 bear dynastic inscriptions—despite a relatively small geographic area for these stylistically similar stone monuments. The Pāśupata-Śiva saint Lakuliśa was not the only source of power for the Guhilas. This dynasty sought to underscore its growing autonomy through multisectarian architecture. So how did the temples in Mēdapāṭa leave traces of ritual and renovation as a permanent record in stone?

Whether or not the Guhilas served as the god Ekliṅgī's diwāns in the tenth century is uncertain. The Śri Ekliṅgī temple and the four-faced icon it housed had not yet been made. Four old thousand-faced liṅga called *sahasraliṅga* may well date to the tenth century and are currently housed behind the Śri Ekliṅgī temple in an inconspicuous spot (fig. 5.2). They are similar to this image of a *sahasraliṅgaṃ* found at Āhar (fig. 5.3), which suggests this was a common iconographical depiction in this time and place. These liṅga also resemble *sahasraliṅga* found at Achalgarh, a prime site for the construction of Sisodia/Guhila dynastic legitimacy. The architecture and inscription of the Lakuliśa temple at Ekliṅgī suggests that the dynasty had already defined its power via Pāśupata-Śaivism from the location of Ekliṅgī/Nāgadā in the second half of the tenth century.⁸ In contrast to the Guhila relationship between dynastic and Pāśupata lineage established in an inscription near the seat of their power, a tenth-century inscription at Jagat makes no direct reference to the elite power of dynasty, clergy, or deity.⁹

Ornamentation in the tenth century was often a direct reflection of kinesthetic uses of the early medieval temple. This idea that the cadence, rhythm, speed, distance, and experience of iconography can be so tightly controlled by the temple



FIGURE 5.2. Old thousand-faced *līṅga* called *sahasralīṅgas* may well date to the tenth century and are currently housed behind the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple in an unnoticeable spot (yoni modern era), stone, Śrī Ekliṅgī temple compound lower level. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 5.3. *Sahasralīṅga*, c. tenth century, Āhar.

wall requires a discussion of ornament specifically in relation to the temple wall. Many theories abound for why and how temple walls look the way they do. Here I would like to return to ritual to focus above all on the relationship between the wall and its physical impact on the kinesthetic experience of circumambulation. What was the relationship of tantra, mantra, and *yantra* in the tenth century? Does it have any relation to the complex twenty-first-century *pratiṣṭhā* (installation) ceremonies



FIGURE 5.4. *Sadāśiva* head, stone, c. 500–600 CE, *thakur*'s compound, Rawala, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

witnessed at the Ambikā temple or the Śrāvan rituals at the Śrī Eklingjī temple? Rather than rely on the point of origin as a mythic space of temporal authenticity, the history of ritual and the record in stone in tenth-century Mēdapāṭa reveals multiple resonances with the present—echoes, rather than unbroken chains of continuity, that can be used and enjoyed or misused and abused by any person in the present who visits, experiences, or reimagines these archaeological sites.

VISUALIZING LOCAL LĪṄGA IN EARLY MEDIEVAL MĒDAPĀṬA

A Sadāśiva head dating approximately to the sixth century found in the *thakur*'s compound at Jagat (fig. 5.4) suggests that the four-faced līṅgaṃ was popular in Chhapa even before the Guhilas of Kiṣkindā created the famous four-faced (and four-bodied) līṅgaṃ from Kalyanpur (fig. 5.5) in the eighth century.¹⁰ In addition



FIGURE 5.5. Four-faced (and four-bodied) lingaṃ from Kalyanpur, black schist, c. eighth century. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 5.6. Stone *lingaṃ* at Ahar, c. tenth century. © Deborah Stein.

to sculptural programs on the exterior architecture of temples, some interior icons point to a desire to make certain aspects of worship permanent. Several smaller forms of *linga* surround a four-faced, tenth-century stone *lingaṃ* at Ahar (fig. 5.6). Four stone *yoni* platforms provide bases for different groupings of miniature *linga* placed below each face of the main *lingaṃ*. Seen as the viewer is facing the sanctum, four spheres with a fifth sphere on top share a common iconography with other tenth-century sites such as Khajurāho. The idea of four visible faces of Śiva complemented by the invisible fifth face on top is already articulated in the large stone *lingaṃ*. Years of worship have worn an indentation where the flower petals sit atop the *lingaṃ* in the photograph (fig. 5.7). On the opposite side of the *lingaṃ* the five-sphere form is repeated seven times on a platform. The remaining two platforms display further miniaturized multiples of the same theme. The placement of multiple *linga* on alternating scales suggests meditational practice, more specifically the worship of Sadāśiva with four distinct manifestations and the fifth omnipresent emanation on top issuing forth infinitely upward.

Representation of these philosophical ideas and ritual practices in stone implies a desire for permanence and the exteriorization of meditational practice. During the month of Śrāvan the priests at Ekliṅgī make tiny clay *linga* very similar to these forms. The tenth-century sculpture could be understood as a record of ritual since it makes permanent in stone what is ephemeral in clay. This tenth-century example does not yet exhibit the desire to defy death through the production of



FIGURE 5.7. Detail flowers atop Stone lingaṃ at Ahar. © Deborah Stein.

historical posterity. This desire, produced through the self-conscious production of memory, begins in the thirteenth century. The lack of any written labels implies that practitioners already know the sculptures' identities, and the sculptures are not an intentional record for future generations. Nevertheless, this stone residue of ritual does leave a record—a stone link between past ritual and present practice.

Although we have neither a *sahasralingaṃ* nor five-faced linga in situ in the village of Āaṭ, the fragments of Śaiva tantra found there are fascinating to say the least. A five-faced clay Śiva lingaṃ is housed in the *thakur's* compound in Jagat, but there are no original linga in Āaṭ. South of Eklingjī, just a few kilometers away from Jagat, the famous five-faced and five-bodied black schist Śiva lingaṃ icon in Kalyanpur remains perhaps the most impressive and earliest of this genre, dated to the eighth century and linked to an off-branch of a fledgling branch of the Guhilas of Kiṣkindā, a dynasty that subsequently petered out long before the Guhilas of Eklingjī.

At a distance of no more than ten kilometers from each other, and more than two hundred kilometers north of Arthuna, a cluster of Śaiva-Śakti sites suggest that there was something different about goddess worship around AD 960 in Chhapa and Mēdapāṭa from that in the yoginī shrines found all over North India from the same period. The archaeological remains of a (Pāsupata? Śaiva?) maṭha and no fewer than thirteen temples at Āaṭ and the unexcavated southern wall of what I presume to be the only remaining example of an early medieval Śakta maṭha in Jagat reveal a place where tantric worship was supported by large, two-story

monasteries architecturally similar to those founded by the Mattamayūras in Madhya Pradesh. Rather than Śaiva-Siddhanta as the main sectarian orientation, it appears that the Āaṭ/Jagat tantric center was interested in both the practice of the five Ms, as depicted on the column in figure 5.8 that depicts a woman drinking blood or wine in the upper register and two people engaged in rear-entry intercourse while leaning on a bed in the lower register (fig. 5.8), and a Śakta focus on the personification of mantric worship in the form of Kṣēmaṅkarī.

We can read architecture for ritual, as we have with temple programs, but can we read iconography as narrative of practice, myth, or metaphor? What can we glean from the archaeological record when the walls no longer stand? In the absence of a temple program we are often left with style and, if we are lucky, a ground plan. At Jagat we find references to tantra in the ritual bowl of blood or wine (fig. 5.1); how then should we interpret what we find at Āaṭ? Limited resources, such as a figure identifiable as either Jain or Lakuliśa, can be strung together with copious tantric imagery and the remains of a multicelled building to suggest the site may have been a retreat for Pāśupata-Śaiva tantric practitioners. Differences between Jagat and the site of Āaṭ hint at a cultural border for the Guhilas of Mēdapāṭa. The subsequent inclusion of Jagat within the southern territory of Mewār centuries later implies the importance of this site for Guhila dominion at the time of a dynastic split. The storage of Āaṭ's inscriptional evidence by the House of Dūṅgarpur suggests the site's ties to the south in Vagada and its importance for this offshoot of the Guhila dynasty.

The highly inaccessible archaeological site in the nearby village of Āaṭ has never been published in English.¹¹ The well-preserved *torāṇa* (gate) contrasts with the temples, which are reduced to their foundations, with the exception of one that has been very heavily reconstructed with modern materials. To the side of the main complex are the ruins of a monastery (fig. 5.9). In addition to these architectural remains, a few exquisitely preserved examples of ancient sculpture remain along with some fragments of stone inscriptions.

At Āaṭ the plump Gaṇēśa in *tribhanga* (three-bend) pose (fig. 5.10) dates roughly to the late tenth century but differs stylistically from a mid-thirteenth-century sculpture from Jagat, not even ten kilometers away (see fig. 4.21). Historically linked by a river, these two sites from the same era nevertheless differ in some interesting ways. Whereas the Ambikā temple at Jagat seems to fit stylistically rather squarely into the Mēdapāṭa School of architecture, Āaṭ's remains share much with the site's southwestern counterparts in Anarta. Gaṇēśa's torso is even shorter and stockier than expected at a site such as Jagat or even Tūṣa. Jagat was probably built by a guild different from the Tūṣa-Nāgadā-Ekliṅgī guild. Āaṭ may have been built by the same guild responsible for Jagat, despite the fact that Āaṭ shares even less than Jagat with tenth-century buildings of Mēdapāṭa to the northwest. There is not enough evidence to argue that Jagat was considered part of Guhila territories or that Āaṭ was not. What we do discover at Āaṭ is in the tenth-century region of



FIGURE 5.8. Upper register of *torana* column detail: eating or drinking something. Wine? Blood? Lower register couple turn to kiss during intercourse from the rear, c. tenth century, Aat. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 5.9. Monastery, c. tenth century, Āṭa. © Deborah Stein.

Chhapa, more than one style coexisted within a distance easily traveled on foot in less than a day.

The differences with Jagat are not limited to style. Many have suggested that the Ambikā temple is tantric, yet the references to tantra at Āṭa are not limited to rumor of “bloody ritual” or small-scale figures holding a fish or a bowl of wine.¹² The gateway at Āṭa makes sex explicit, as seen in figure 5.11, a frieze of a woman with two men, located exactly in the middle of the base of the doorframe, where one would lift one’s leg to cross over into the temple compound. Whether or not one is to understand the open gate of the woman welcoming two men as an architectural pun or as a literal depiction of temple activity will remain buried in history.¹³ This explicitly sexual scene is not the only one depicted on the *toraṇa*. The small frames of sculpture include couples kissing or engaging in intercourse standing up, a man on top of a woman lying in a bed, and a woman simultaneously having oral and vaginal intercourse. The form of the *toraṇa* is more similar to one found at Tērahī in Madhya Pradesh than to the *toraṇa* at Nāgadā. The content is also similar to the tantric series of ferocious *dākinī* (tree spirit) depicted at Tērahī. As evidenced by *sūtradhāra* inscriptions and descriptions of *yatras* (pilgrimages) in texts, we can safely assume that religious pilgrims, ascetics, teachers, masons, scribes, and others responsible for the creation of temple carving could travel, as well as have access to several prototypes available in manuscripts.¹⁴



FIGURE 5.10. Gaṇeśa, c. 950–960, quartzite, Āaṭ. © Deborah Stein.

The remains of a vernacular piece of architecture suggest there was a maṭha at Āaṭ (see fig. 5.9). The largely unexcavated structure could also have been a *dharmśālā* (guesthouse). Either way, a residence such as this one suggests guests could have rested on their journeys whether traveling by waterway or by land. Similar structures remain standing as far as Madhya Pradesh and as close as Menāl in the Upamāla territories.¹⁵ Many of these monasteries were Śaiva-Siddhanta centers, whereas the closest well-preserved monastery found at Menāl shared the Guhila dynasty's sectarian orientation of Pāśupata-Śaivism.¹⁶

Fragmented inscriptions, ruined architecture, and few remaining sculptures do not leave enough behind to determine whether Āaṭ was Śaiva-Siddhanta or



FIGURE 5.11. Sexual intercourse. Woman astride two men on a bed, faces outward on the doorstep over the threshold *torāṇa* gate into the site of Āṭṭ. © Deborah Stein.

Pāsupata. Sculptures of Śiva and Pārvatī as well as Cāmuṇḍā to the left of the main sanctum of the main shrine suggest a Śaiva/Śakti site (figs. 5.12 and 5.13). A large Durgā-Mahiṣāsura-mardīnī covered in foil provides a theological link to the Ambikā temple, if not a stylistic one (fig. 5.14). Sculptures such as a Narasimha in the *torāṇa* and the foundations of no fewer than eight or nine temples suggest the site was very likely multisectarian. Āṭṭ's site plan resembles the extensive plan of Nāgadā on a much smaller scale. Sculptural fragments corroborate the idea that the site may have been multisectarian. Inside the sanctum, sculptures of Viṣṇu, Saraswatī, and Pārvatī sitting on Śiva's lap are propped up next to black stone images of Kagil, the folk snake deity.

Outside the compound remain two important pieces of sculpture and an inscription. The inscription is quite worn, but Vikrama-Saṁvat 1235 or 1285 dates the inscription to the late twelfth to early thirteenth century CE. A large lion base and serpent-hood awning (fig. 5.15) may have framed the main icon. The lion base is similar to the one that once supported the main icon at Jagat. If we accept Dhaky's argument, then we would have yet another example of Kṣēmaṅkarī as seen at Lodravā, Bāḍoli, Unwās, Jagat, and on a smaller scale at Tūṣa.¹⁷ The lion pedestal may be a stylistic feature of deity pedestals in this period rather than the marker of a particular god. Saraswatī and a male figure holding a lasso and an elephant goad also grace the bottom of the pedestal. This form of lion pedestal



FIGURE 5.12. Śiva and Pārvatī, c. tenth century, quartzite, Āraṇyaka. © Deborah Stein.

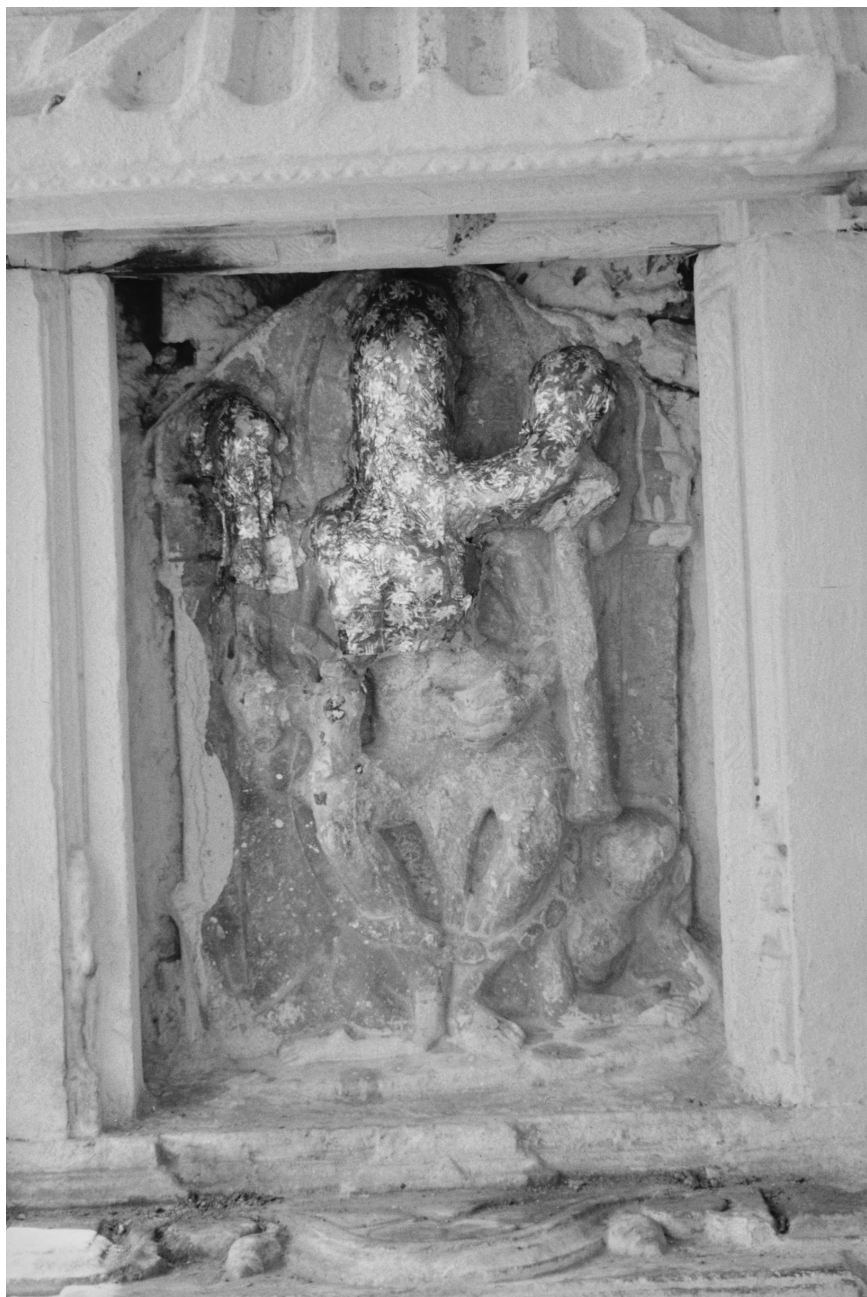


FIGURE 5.13. Cămuṇḍā in situ, c. tenth century, quartzite, Āṭa. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 5.14. A large Durgā-Mahiṣāsuramardīnī covered in foil provides a theological link to the Ambikā temple, if not a stylistic one, c. tenth century, Āṭ. © Deborah Stein.

with a wheel at the center is typical both in Mēdapāṭa and Chhapa, as well as to the south in Vagada. The regional choice of the two-lion pedestal is fairly common.¹⁸ The lion pedestal is found at both Jagat and Āṭ. These sites share this motif in the form of pedestal fragments separated from their stolen icons, so there is no way of knowing whether Kṣēmaṅkarī originally topped these pedestals or whether it was a standard form used for various deities.¹⁹ A sculpture of Kṣēmaṅkarī from Lodravā proves she was a popular manifestation of the goddess in the tenth century outside Mēdapāṭa as well (fig. 5.16).



FIGURE 5.15. A large lion base and serpent-hood awning, [Jaina frame for Pārśvanāth? Gaja-Lakṣmī? Or Kṣēmaṅkarī], pedestal with two lions and a suggestive diamond lotus framed in the center. © Deborah Stein.

Given their squared shoulders and triangular torsos, these two figures appear to be Jain. In the second sculptural fragment, the empty hood of a multiheaded serpent may indeed suggest the piece once housed a sculpture of the Jain *tīrthaṅkara* (saint) Pārśvanāth. Unfortunately, the figures display none of Lakuliśa's attributes, such as a staff or an ithyphallic representation, to confirm Pāśupata identification. This same figure is found twice on the lintel and again on an inscribed fragment of a doorframe nearby. Fragments leave traces of style, bits of broken iconography, only to frustrate the gaze on the programmatic whole.

Sculptural fragments and a grid of temple bases in Āaṭ sit as a reminder of a tantric cult that once flourished south of the well-traveled border of Mēdapāṭa and the stylistic limits of the Guhila legacy. One can imagine both Āaṭ and Jagat as waypoints for travelers and monastic residential centers with a regional religious focus distinct from the maṭhas of Madhya Pradesh and Menāl yet potentially in a pilgrimage network with other monastic sites.

ALAMKĀRA: RITUAL, ORNAMENTATION, AND THE TEMPLE WALL

The liminal region of Mēdapāṭa demonstrates a hybridity that does not reflect a model of evolution or progress. In Mēdapāṭa two forms coexist, with the logically



FIGURE 5.16. Kṣēmaṅkarī, c. tenth century, Lodravā. © Deborah Stein.

earlier type—characterized by sparse sculpture limited to *bhadrās* and the lack of auxiliary sets of generic semidivine forms—postdating the more “advanced” formula, which included *dikpālas*, *surasundarīs*, and *vyālas*.²⁰ This earlier type subsequently eclipses the later one (Takṣakēśvara and Śivēśvara at Eklingī, Śobhagpura, Tūṣa, and Jagat) when the female attendants are left out at Unwās, Nāgadā, and Ahar. The increase in semidivine occupants of the exterior protrusions that correspond axially to the corners of the inner sanctum and to the vulnerable corners of the temple exterior in need of protection articulates a type of practice also found in prayer manuals.²¹ These texts describe mantras and mudras used to invoke deities. Some of these mantras are semantic, and others are *bīja* mantras (seed syllables), with numinous power but no literal semantic meaning.

While the secret prayer manual used by the Pāśupata priests at Ekliṅgī in 2002 may be different from Śaiva-Siddhanta eleventh-century texts from South India, such as the *Somaśambhupaddhati*, the structure and goals of this type of worship remain quite similar, as does the sequence of action.²² Food rites play an important role in defining the narrow relationship between the physical body and the subtle body. In fact, most tantric texts also prescribe satiation with food and drink before any further physical action or philosophical meditation takes place.²³ The order of ritual at Ekliṅgī and in ancient texts consists of ablutions, food, study, and sleep. Like the official prayer manual at Ekliṅgī, the ancient *Somaśambhupaddhati* prescribes the following:

1. Preparation, consisting of mantras to prepare the instruments of worship
2. *Upācāryas*, or homage rendered
 - a. Make a throne for the god
 - b. Invoke Śiva on throne, construct a body for Śiva's spirit
 - c. Give him organs and instruments of power: this is Sadaśiva
 - d. Offer him water and flowers
 - e. Offer oil massage, sandalwood, dress him with flowers, clothes, jewelry, ending with incense and lights
 - f. Then construct a *darbar*, or court, with three circles
 - g. Once the court is established, offer incense and light, then food
 - h. *Japa*, mantras, bow down, then circumambulate²⁴

This embodied approach to worship allows the practitioner to use the icon as a focus for the mental invocation of the deity in a concrete material location. Medieval temples in India reflect this shift toward the growing importance of contextualizing deities and their environments corporeally within the worshipper, the icon, and by using architecture as a focal point for these inner experiences during circumambulation. Of course, not all practitioners would have known these texts, would have circumambulated with such detailed practice, or would even have been initiated into some of the tantric rites prescribed in texts we can easily read in translation today; but one can easily imagine that the team of architects, masons, and patrons would have had access to religious texts—especially at monastic sites like Ekliṅgī and Jagat, where clergy may have resided just steps away from the temple under construction.

Medieval written works, such as the *Somaśambhupaddhati* quoted above, as well as many others, seem to follow a formal transition in the northern Indian temple program beginning in the eighth century. The increased figuration of the temple wall suggests a syncopated gait in circumambulation parallel to the ritual rhythm of becoming one with a god. The auxiliary figures do not belong to an iconographic program of divinity alone. Medieval texts and current worship both emphasize the treatment of Śiva as a king through a ritual coronation and the mental invocation of his court. Already on the eighth-century Mahā-Māru temple wall

we begin to see figures that complement the main deity. The *dikpālas* who guard the corners of the building are the courtliest figures. These guardians are also featured in *vāstupurusha mandalas*. The other two main types are *surasundarīs* (celestial maidens) and *vyālas* (composite lion-like figures), neither of which appear in *vāstupurusha mandalas*.

These celestial beings do become standardized into specific sets; however, they do not correspond to the types of deities one might evoke to produce a mental court for a god. Attendant figures suggest those who would serve a king and not the political hierarchy of nobles one might expect of a *darbar* assembly. Beautiful *surasundarīs*, such as those found at Jagat (fig. 5.17), may represent *nayikas* (independent women). An increase in royal and ritual representation of servants of lords (*devadasis*) characterizes the medieval period. Daud Ali has argued that these heroine figures originally represented a courtly alternative of independence to servitude and labor; “however, in the discourses of the Śaiva Agamas, this category of *nayika*, unattached independent woman, comes to be linked to the service of Śiva, as a courtesan in his service, *rudragnayika*.”²⁵ In turn, this transformation from courtly to religious definitions of the independent woman makes servitude a condition for pleasure, especially in relation to the god. The alluring, curvaceous twisting of erotic women punctuating the temple wall may in fact cast the medieval viewer, male or female, in the role of a servant of the god, more literally, as the divinity’s courtesan—ready to derive great pleasure from subjugation to a higher power.²⁶ These seductive figures, which often eclipse all other forms in the minds of modern viewers, may have originally served as the personification of desire, as tools to derive pleasure from subjugation to the divine.²⁷

On the one hand, the increase in figural form in the tenth century, and then again in the sixteenth century, may indicate the need for more bodies onto which practitioners could project increasing numbers of deities and attendants. On the other hand, since many bodies lack fixed identities, could they then serve as meditational aids rather than as didactic iconography, as is seen in European medieval church programs? Some may protest that such a reading is speculative because it assumes too much about the inner experience of a tenth-century practitioner. A multifigured system of constructing a temple program simultaneously functioned on two levels. Whereas *ṛṣis* (sages) at a temple like Eklingji may have had specific deities of a particular mandala in mind when circumambulating a temple, the general public may not have had such a sophisticated practice. Aside from initiated tantric practitioners, the lay public may have experienced the rhythm of worship created by a secret prayer manual without having to be initiated.

By using architecture to manipulate the viewer’s body in space and sculpture to manipulate the viewer’s body in time, artisans, masons, and *sūtradhāras* may have organized the temple to evoke a structured response from the viewer. The nonsemantic structure of the clergy’s worship, as set out in medieval texts and current practice, would have been paralleled by the nonnarrative experiential knowledge



FIGURE 5.17. *Vyāla* leonine figure next to a *surasundarī* (celestial maiden), quartzite, c. 960, temple, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

gained from the lay public's circumambulation. At Ekliṅgī we find increased architectural protrusions and recesses and a paralleled increase in semidivine figural sculpture, except at the Lakulīśa temple. At Jagat the Ambikā temple exemplifies a trend begun two centuries earlier at Osiāñ, where increased architectural texture and subsequent figuration changed the relationship of the viewer's body to the temple wall. The coexistence of more than one programmatic style in tenth-century Mēdapāṭa questions previous stylistic models based on notions of progress. The epitome of the tenth-century Mēdapāṭa temple replete with auxiliary figures, such as *vyālas*, *surasundarīs*, and *dikpālas*, is the Ambikā temple at Jagat.

In addition to three framed niches on the back wall of the Ambikā temple, each recess and protrusion is accented by unframed sculptural form. These statues unfold symmetrically to either side of the central protrusion. In the two recesses directly to either side of the central protrusion, composite lions (*vyālas*) raise their paws away from the main niche in a protective stance.²⁸ Small warriors bend precariously from their powerful haunches while two more fighters seem to creep up from behind each of the mythical lions' arched backs. In their identical composition, they mirror each other to create a sinuous frame for Durgā in the main niche. This mirroring of the *vyāla* figures continues in the composition of the protruding square pilasters and the other two recessions. Containing the action of the two mythic lions, two female figures ride elephants. They are dressed in elaborately girdled skirts with bare chests and heavy breastplate ornaments that sway seductively with the line of their bodies. They pose serenely behind the elephant drivers and remain oblivious to the small figures, who pull at their legs. Beneath each elephant a small figure is caught under the trunk and between the legs, giving the impression the elephants are advancing out of the picture frame toward the viewer. These thin pilasters pull the eye directly out from the surface, creating a form of punctuation for the outward movement of the *vyāla* figures.

More than a simple framing device, the increased number of figures of the medieval temple wall direct the viewer's gaze according to his or her circumambulatory movement.²⁹ In contrast to the perfectly mirrored movement of the *vyāla* figures, a slight difference in the female figures' position indicates the direction from which they were meant to be seen. If circumambulation is clockwise with a person's right side to the temple, then the figure on the right faces forward but twists back slightly toward the advancing viewer. On the left, her counterpart twists in toward the advancing viewer and toward the main niche. So while the composition remains parallel to either side of the main niche, the female figures on the elephants' backs and the beautiful maidens in the niches to either side of them direct the viewer's gaze to the main niche.

The viewer is made to preview, view, and review the main niche by these framing figures. First the women who greet with their heads and urge the viewer on with their bodies draw the viewer's attention to the main niche. Then, once viewers encounter the main niche, their eyes are drawn back as their own body advances. The heads and bodies of the female figures confront the viewer by pointing back to the main niche.

The importance of repetition in ritual is well known. The introduction of visual repetition into the viewer's movement multiplies the opportunity for the temple wall to impact the viewer's mind. Some temples of the Mēdapāṭa group (Takṣakēśvara and Śivēśvara at Ekliṅgī and Śobhagpura, Tūṣa, and Jagat) suggest an inherent shift away from the more sedentary devotion before a single icon or scene (Unwās, Nāgadā) and toward a rhythmic experience of unfolding deities and texture. This emphasis on repetition is particularly notable at Jagat, where the three sides of the

Ambikā temple depict the same deity—a repetitive sequence found only in Jagat and at Tūṣa, where Surya is found on all three walls. Only at Jagat, however, does the repetition of the same iconography seem to reveal the progression of a ritual sacrifice—potentially with covert tantric underpinnings.

The repetition of the same deity is an unusual feature of the Ambikā temple, found also at Tūṣa but not produced in the same way. The repetition of an emanation three times on the exterior of a temple wall is found at temples that also display a hierarchy of secondary, semidivine figures who punctuate the temple wall. At Jagat the small base shrines depict three different goddesses, but the eye-level representations show the same goddess killing three different depictions of the buffalo demon. The climactic moment of the same story is repeated six times in monoscenic fashion.³⁰ The repetition of two sets of three versions of the buffalo sacrifice suggest a reference to the animal sacrifices associated with the festival of Navratri and with goddess worship in general.

The temples and shrines at Unwās and Nāgadā, sites that limit figural representation to deities in the niches found on the bhadra wall protrusions, all have different deities on exterior walls, with the tutelary deity located at the back. In contrast, the evolving Durgā-Mahiṣāsura-mardini triptych at Jagat is repeated once again in the small shrine connected to the third wall of the temple. Unlike the repetition of Surya at Tūṣa, the three representations of Durgā-Mahiṣāsura-mardini move from purely zoomorphic to hybrid to purely anthropomorphic representations of Durgā-Mahiṣāsura-mardini on the exterior walls of the main temple, whereas on the small side shrine the evolution of forms is reversed.

The syncopated rhythm of the recesses and protrusions, as well as the accompanying figural iconography of the temple wall, changes ritual practice, which suggests something about the audience who used the building and how they practiced ritual in this period, as opposed to five hundred years earlier. The process of circumambulating a building brings into view a repetitive series of deity emanations that invoke hierarchy on a grid and create a meditative state. In the past, eminent scholars such as Stella Kramrisch have argued for an emanation theory based on the *vāstuśāstra* (architectural manuals).³¹ The *vāstu* grid reflects both the geomantic spirit and fractal geometry of Indian temple architecture, but the fact remains that the deities named in each of sixty-four squares of any particular grid do not directly correlate to the figural sculpture of the temple wall, which includes humans engaged in everyday activities and formulaic female figures.

Well-known medieval texts such as the *Agnipurāṇa* call for circumambulation, an observance found at all Hindu temples today (fig. 5.18). Pūjā-paddhatis (ritual manuals) are useless without the praxis of the performer. They are like recipe books without ingredients, delineating the syntax of ritual for an initiated expert familiar with the mantric ingredients. The basic structure of embodied worship contained in these secret ritual manuals helps us to imagine the process of visualization that would take place when circumambulating this new, more elaborate



FIGURE 5.18. Circumambulation with priests and women carrying waterpots filled with the ontological person of the goddess Ambā Mātā during installation rites. © Deborah Stein.

form of temple program. A temple priest can animate an icon for temple worship or even awaken a deity within his own mind through meditation and the repetition of mantras. The sequence of animation creates a divine *darbar* in which the deity resides. This *darbar* includes both the architectural space signified by the animation of the threshold by worshipping the doorpost and the calling to mind of deities who may be present in the architectural space of the court. The final aspect of this form of worship involves the equivalent of a coronation ritual for the deity himself. This *abhiṣeka* (coronation ritual) includes bathing, dressing, adorning, anointing, and feeding the deity.³²

Darbar courts do not regularly grace the complex figural formulas of the temple wall, such as the one from Śobhagpura shown in figure 5.19. We do find the guardian figures that safeguard the four directions and that might be found at court, but we are left with the question of what purpose the *vyālas* and *surasundarīs* serve. They are not found in the *mandala* grids of deities prescribed in *vāstu mandalas*.³³ The search for a fixed semantic meaning may be missing the mark if the goal is to become the deity one worships through a structured path of mediation.

The mental process of going through a *pūjā-paddhati* involves a sequential repetition meant to animate an icon and become the deity in question. For a priest reading this type of elite Sanskrit text, the process could be quite complex. In contrast, even the increasingly complex temple walls of the tenth century usually include only three extra types of figures beyond the main deities in the *bhadra*



FIGURE 5.19. Śiva temple, c. tenth century, Śobhagpura. © Deborah Stein.

niches. Two of these forms, the *vyālas* and *surasundarīs*, are not even necessarily divine but seem more ornamental. These figures do change the pace, orientation, and relationship of the viewer's body in space. The ornament of the temple wall dictates the speed and experience of the circumambulator. Whether or not she is consciously digesting each aspect of a visual sequence, the viewer is forced to confront visually an unfolding series of figures. The repetition reinforces a hierarchy leading up to and then away from the main niches. Repetition creates a meditative state. The circumambulation of a temple with a complex, formulaic, iconographic program does for the layperson what the reading of a *pūjā-paddhati* does for a

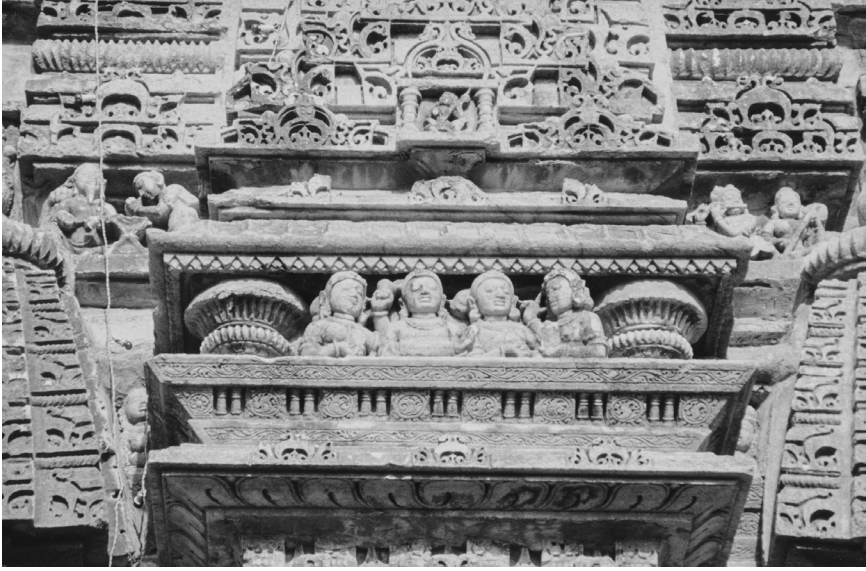


FIGURE 5.20. Devotees staring out of veranda, c. tenth century, Ambikā temple, Jagat.
© Deborah Stein.

priest. If one watches priests repeating passages from a *pūjā-paddhati*, one does not seem to witness an empirical examination of a series of deities and their meaning. The priest seems to be in a meditative state as he transforms himself mentally into a deity.

In general, the public is not and most likely never was involved in such a conscious endeavor to become a deity, but circumambulation may be a way of consciously or unconsciously invoking the deities through action rather than word.³⁴ This is a physical, performative tradition, not a textual one. For this reason, architecture surpasses text in its ability to suggest the evolution of worship by people other than the clergy and ruling elite, who had the means to leave their record in written inscriptions. The temple wall in some ways is a more democratic document that captures the ritual process of pilgrims, villagers, women, and *Ādivāsis*, who may have used the building on a regular basis. The local style of an art region can indeed yield information about social organization available through no other means.³⁵

At Jagat, miniature pavilion depictions above each niche create harmony between the protrusions (fig. 5.20). From these verandas, tiny devotees play music and engage in other forms of leisure. Small architectural quotations translate architecture into sculpture for the consumption of the viewer. This architectural convention is found contemporaneously at the tenth-century *Pratīhāra* site of *Bāḍoli* in the *Upamāla* region as well. A real devotee may later spend many an afternoon sitting on the actual veranda of the temple. The temple wall can be

neither an exclusively cosmic representation nor an outer figural projection of the metaphysical grids of the *vāstuśāstra*.³⁶ The interjection of temple activity into the temple program serves to break the distinction between deities, mythical beings, beautiful women, tantric practitioners, and the real-life human devotees who casually socialize in the temple space both in the medieval period and today. This continuum of temple characters in the program is quite similar to the variety of people who might be found making their way around the temple.³⁷ This miniaturization serves as a method to personify and to make meaningful to the lay viewer the cascading aedification of the temple so beautifully and technically carried out by architects at Jagat.³⁸

Whereas the Lakuliśa temple may have been meant for the initiated few, buildings like the Ambikā temple and the Takṣakēśvara temple had more complex programs that made physical much of what was previously metaphysical. These programs made the circumambulator meditate both consciously and subconsciously in specific ways. At Jagat, in the southern peripheral region of Chhapa, the emphasis of the exterior program was a rhythmic reenactment of ritual sacrifice. Both the complex formulaic temple program and the subject of sacrifice suggest that whoever built this temple was trying to appeal to a population with indigenous customs not found in any ritual manual.

MANTRA AND TANTRA: KṢĒMAṆKARĪ AND CĀMUṆḌĀ IN MILLENNIAL NORTHWESTERN INDIA

The program of bidirectional circumambulation at the Ambikā temple in Jagat suggests fascinating links between myth and ritual in the form of sacrifice. This type of program promotes embodied viewing particularly suited to the tantric aspects of Devī worship and of Pāśupata-Śiva worship in this region from the tenth century onward. Tantric worship entails an embodied approach, a form of worship where the devotee attempts to progressively become one with the deity he or she worships. This collapse of the subject-object relationship creates a very powerful form of knowledge that completely surpasses the false duality of mind and body. Thus, an embodied approach allows the devotee to know with his or her senses.

The sculptural program at Jagat suggests a desire to use emerging medieval forms of architecture to advance a specific new type of viewing experience not specific to any particular deity or religious sect. Not only do we find the only example of a Devī temple where three forms of the same deity are repeated twice (as found with the male Sun God, Surya, at the temple in Tūṣa), but we also encounter the earliest example of a goddess temple exhibiting the new medieval style as opposed to the many circular and rectangular *yoginī* shrines found across northern India in this same time period. In contrast to this sectarian architectural form, the Ambikā temple built in regional architectural style does not represent Devī as part of a set of goddesses. Instead, the creators have chosen to emphasize the temporal aspect

of the *Devī Māhātmya* myth in a monoscenic way. We see three versions of the sacrificial moment when the goddess beheads the demon.

The Ambikā temple program presents neither an icon nor a story but, rather, a rhythm through which the climax of Durgā's cosmic battles is repeated again and again in the form of the buffalo sacrifice. At contemporary circular and square yogini shrines such as those at Bhērāghāṭ and Khajurāho, this rhythmic punctuation of the temple wall is not present. The icons are presented one after the next in a line at the same eye level, and the viewer's progress is steady and linear, similar to what is experienced in many modern-day museum displays.

The depiction of Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardinī on the walls of the Ambikā temple suggests an interesting parallel with current ritual in Chhapa. The martial depiction of the goddess often takes the form of Kālī, who is born in the heat of battle from the Ambikā's tongue, as seen in the fortresses of Chittorgarh and Jodhpur. Otherwise, Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardinī is also represented as the sum of the male deities whose weapons she yields, as seen at Mamallapuram in southern India. This ultimate representation of *śakti* (female power) often takes the form of a frieze depicting the heat of battle. Instead, the iconic form of Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardinī almost always focuses on the climactic moment of the slaying of the demon Mahiṣā—a direct quotation of the sacrificial act.

The exterior forms of Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardinī cast the goddess in a decidedly independent role as a supreme sacrificer. The sequential representation of the slaying of a buffalo and the ensuing spirit rising from the neck follows the form of the actual buffalo sacrifice where the animal is decapitated. Blood squirts from the neck of the shaking corpse and steam rises where the blood soaks into the hot earth. The vapor rising from the neck of the shaking animal on the threshold between life and death suggests a life leaving the body in quite graphic visual form. This form is made explicit on the back of the Ambikā temple, where the human demon emerges from the neck of the decapitated buffalo. Sculptural form parallels ritual. Just as the *Devī Māhātmya* text may have been a way of integrating local deities into a brāhmanical pantheon, the architectural program canonizes ritual practice in a local architectural style.³⁹

In Chhapa, as in many parts of India, the concluding rite of the most important goddess festival, called Navratri or "nine nights," is the sacrifice of a buffalo. Similar to texts, architecture integrates buffalo sacrifice into the brāhmanical story of the *Devī Māhātmya*.⁴⁰ Whether royally in the eighteenth century in Udaipur or locally in Jagat, animal sacrifice and, more specifically, buffalo sacrifice clearly sets the stage for the visual depiction of the goddess's weapon sinking into the buffalo demon Mahiṣā.⁴¹ Three moments of decapitation are depicted together with an increasingly figural representation of the "spirit" escaping the neck in the stone of the temple wall. The creation of a canon became an important way of preserving the power of Brahmins in an era after Vedic fire sacrifice. The same move toward sculptural representation on temple walls led to a popularization of ritual. Two key

goddesses help us to understand the history of tantra and mantra in this region's architectural and sculptural records. In the tenth century, texts such as the *Kālikā Purāṇa* both parallel and diverge from Cāmuṇḍā and Kṣēmaṅkari goddess iconography in Upamāla, Mēdapāṭa, Chhapa, and Vagada to the north of Malwa.⁴² In the villages of Jagat and Unwās, Cāmuṇḍā becomes an independent force—a goddess partnered with no god, apart from any set of yoginīs—more than one of a set of mother goddesses. Texts such as the *Devī Māhātmya*—where *Durgā's killing the Buffalo Demon myth occurs*—give us the basic background of Cāmuṇḍā's story.⁴³ Her name appears in lists of yoginīs.⁴⁴ Her skeletal frame never fails to punctuate sets of *sapta-mātrikās*.⁴⁵ Cāmuṇḍā's emaciated form can illuminate ritual practice beyond the reading of medieval tantras and *purāṇas* at two specific temples. Over a short, fifty-year period in the small area of Mēdapāṭa—located in present-day southern Rājāsthān within a two-hundred-kilometer radius of Udaipur—two significant temples were built that leave a trace of medieval goddess tantra previously overlooked. For hundreds of years prior to this time and well into the medieval period, sets of *mātrikās* (the seven mothers) included the skeletal Cāmuṇḍā as one of the mothers. At times she remains rather voluptuous—which suggests she is not starving—but her skeletal nature is evoked through a tracing of bones over the roundness of her flesh. Her pinky held to the corner of her mouth in a typical gesture to evoke the tantric drinking of blood draws attention to her face, where her skin seems to reveal age in the etched lines indicating wrinkles. She can seem like the end of youth that concludes a fertile set of mothers—perhaps a representation of the life-cycle truth of the onset of menopause contrasted with previous more rotund states of pregnancy, lactation, and postpartum motherhood.

A later and more famous example from millennial North India suggests that the mothers, and specifically their sequential unfolding, may have held tantric meaning when understood in terms of architectural placement. As Devangana Desai has famously argued, the placement of Cāmuṇḍā at the beginning and Gaṇēśa at the end of the traditional *pradakṣiṇā* order at Khajurāho implies an architectural bid to travel with one's left side to the temple walls—an esoteric reversal of proper circumambulatory rights.⁴⁶ Even while still contextualized with the other mothers, Cāmuṇḍā sets the stage for tantric practice beyond her textual role in the *Devī Māhātmya*.

As we move closer to Mēdapāṭa, from modern Madhya Pradesh into southern Rājāsthān, we find that millennial goddess temples begin to bend to regional architectural style. The rectangular temple begins to eclipse both circular and rectangular yoginī shrines in this area. While there remains the foundation of a massive rectangular yoginī shrine at the Paramāra stronghold of Arthuna, near the modern-day capital of Dūngarpur, it is a smaller temple located near a tank within the main architectural cluster that draws our attention to a different millennial representation of Cāmuṇḍā—a programmatic twist that would pave the way for the hybrid iconography of the Mēdapāṭa temples of Jagat at Unwās.

On the exterior of the temple sanctum, each of three *bhadras* houses a key sculpture on axis with the main icon. Cāmuṇḍā is paired with Nateśa as a mate, the emaciated goddess and the dancing emaciated Śiva forming a foundation for the Bhairava/Bēruji-Cāmuṇḍā combination worshipped so prevalently throughout the tribal tracts between Dūngarpur and Udaipur today. And here, in millennial Arthuna, Cāmuṇḍā is paired with Nateśa—a dancing form of Śiva found throughout Madhya Pradesh and Rājāsthān during this millennial efflorescence of tantra. In his work on *mātrkāś* Michael Meister has revealed the spread of this iconography, whereas Tamara Sears has alluded to the potency of Nateśa's ecstatic dance in the inscriptions found on Pāsupata maṭhas at Menāl just to the east of Mēdapāṭa in this same millennial era.⁴⁷

Her iconographic and programmatic depiction differs at Unwās and at Jagat; however, both sites use similar architectural foils to display her in an iconographic relationship with other female divinities. Even at smaller, less important temples such as a small subshrine at Nāgadā, Cāmuṇḍā is represented with Durgā and other goddesses with no reference to Nateśa, yoginīs, or *mātrkāś*. At larger, more important temples dedicated uniquely to the goddess, both sites of Jagat and Unwās reference the *Devī Māhātmya* story of Durgā's cosmic battles, from which Cāmuṇḍā draws her name as well as the phonic elements of mantric worship. In a synesthetic reversal, sound is represented visually through Kṣēmaṅkarī relationship to Cāmuṇḍā at both Jagat and at Unwās.

Kṣēmaṅkarī, recognizable from her stance atop two lions and—more importantly—from her rosary beads, stands above the temple entrance to greet the visitor and to imply a dedication to her mantric form at Jagat in Mēdapāṭa but also at the Ghaṭeśvara Mahādeva temple in Bāḍoli in Uparamāla (figs. 5.21 and 5.22)—a site that shares the unusual detached śubhamaṇḍapa architectural element with Jagat. The goddess Kṣēmaṅkarī is the emanation of the syllable “kṣē” and references the power of nonsemantic syllabic speech in tantric worship. Each bead of the rosary she holds could be used to voice the sound of a different syllable, and her placement above the entrance of the temple suggests a visual reminder of the potential of architecture and sculpture to serve as a mantric tool in support of personal, intimate, multisensory forms of worship at the turn of the first millennium in Mēdapāṭa. Surprisingly, then, the three exterior walls of the sanctum display the goddess Durgā killing the buffalo demon Mahiṣā. Usually these *bhadra* locations correspond axially, as well as symbolically, to the central icon, often as a direct emanation of the central icon. What does a program of a tripartite repetition of the sacrificial moment have to do with an invitation for mantric worship from a beatific and abstract goddess like Kṣēmaṅkarī?

M. A. Dhaky has used the frontal position of the Kṣēmaṅkarī image and an armless sculpture cast aside in the inner sanctum to suggest that the Ambikā temple in Jagat was originally dedicated to Kṣēmaṅkarī.⁴⁸ Based on the double lion pedestal, now no longer in situ, Dhaky's theory suggests a tantric relationship between the



FIGURE 5.21. Kṣēmaṅkarī, lintel above front entrance, c. 960, Ambikā temple, Jagat.
© Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 5.22. Ghaṭeśvara Mahādeva Temple, Bāḍoli in Uparamāla. © Deborah Stein.

three images of Durgā killing the buffalo demon and Kṣēmaṅkarī that somehow sacrificial action and syllabic speech are equated in the original iconography. A second sculpture cast aside in the main sanctum reveals a different, but equally tantric, interpretation.

If one imagines the serial unfolding of Durgā killing the buffalo demon in proper circumambulatory order, the demon is first a buffalo, then half animal and half human, then finally the human form. A second sculpture cast aside in the inner sanctum depicts Durgā killing the buffalo demon yet again; this time she is emaciated. It is now Cāmuṇḍā who is killing the buffalo demon. If this sculpture were indeed the original icon, we can imagine that the illusory voluptuous Durgās who kill the buffalo demon on all three exterior walls are emanations of the emaciated truth of Durgā that lies within. Bonds drawn from corporeal attachment must evaporate as the auspicious, fertile goddess is reduced to skin and bones, maintaining nevertheless all of her divine powers.

Because of doors on either side of the sanctum, the innermost icon can be included in a circumambulation of the sanctum's exterior. Either Dhaky's theory or mine produces compelling visual examples of tantric practice in millennial Mēdapāṭa. If we choose to follow Dhaky's Kṣēmaṅkarī theory, ritual action and ritual speech collapse in the iconographic program. And if we choose to follow my Cāmuṇḍā reading, the viewer's devotion becomes clouded with *maya*—the illusory attachment to form, to youth, to beauty—and the one who walks the *pradakṣiṇā* path must succumb to the truth of the ephemeral nature of sexual pleasure, beauty, and youth and submit to the lasting power of divinity. The order could unfold in standard right-handed circumambulatory order, from the voluptuous Durgā sequentially sacrificing the buffalo in time toward the nonfigural power of the goddess Kṣēmaṅkarī as speech incarnate or toward the truth of the illusory nature of attachment, youth, and sexual desire in the boney corporeal reality of the goddess Cāmuṇḍā. Alternatively, the order could unfold in an opposite tantric order, where mediation on the power of speech or the ephemeral nature of human existence could precede the display of sacrificial action and youth on the temple exterior.

At Unwās, built within one decade of the Ambikā temple at Jagat and fewer than two hundred kilometers away, Kṣēmaṅkarī graces the back wall of the Pippalāda Mātā temple, joined by Cāmuṇḍā on the first side and Durgā-Mahiṣāsura-mardini on the third side in proper circumambulatory order. There, one moves from skeletal truth to speech to sacrificial action or, esoterically, backward from sacrifice to mantric speech to skeletal truth. These two temple programs suggest that the rise of tantra exceeds what we can understand from text or practice in millennial Mēdapāṭa. The visual examples of iconography and architectural placement suggest that the ordering of images served to correlate multisensory forms of practice into a somatic revelation of philosophical beliefs.

Emaciated precedents in South Asian iconography suggest that, independent of gender or sectarian orientation, bony depictions of the body often symbolized

time.⁴⁹ Examples as diverse as the emaciated Buddha from Pakistan or the depiction of Bhairava as Kāla at Ellora suggest that images of the body—male and female alike, Buddhist and Hindu alike—caught the interest of premodern artists in South Asia. We are left, then, with the question of why the female form was considered most effective for the iconographic linking of sacrificial action, speech, and the illusory bonds of *maya*. Was there a greater tantric immediacy offered by the female form? At the turn of the first millennium in northwestern India, was the subversion of the female form as an object of sexual desire more effective than similar maneuvers for a male body? Can this tell us anything about the role of real women in early medieval society?

A few different methodological approaches may be taken to explore the answers to this fascinating yet ultimately unanswerable question with intellectual agility, albeit inconclusively. If we take an ethnohistorical approach, one could imagine Cāmuṇḍā as a female Bērujī (Bhairava/Nateśa), either as his consort or his female manifestation. In a Western feminist approach, one could fantasize that the personification of this sagging, wrinkled goddess is a subliminal celebration of postmenopausal female power—with potential parallel readings for live women in millennial India that would differ greatly from the projection of nineteenth- and twentieth-century colonial ideas about women's disempowerment historically. Narrative studies, whether visual or textual, may choose to focus on Cāmuṇḍā as starving, perpetually bloodthirsty, and chronically insatiate both literally and philosophically. A more anthropological model found in excellent contemporary fieldwork on widows by Sarah Lamb might help us to imagine medieval Cāmuṇḍā as the archetype of a widow, an inauspicious woman, or simply the opposite of prosperity (in Sanskrit “a” prefix to signal a direct opposition).⁵⁰ Was this goddess malnourished, uncared for, unfed, and famished in the absence of a living mate to take care of her? Many of our contemporary questions remain unanswerable, but further inquiry into the material culture coupled with forthcoming textual stories may begin to paint a clearer picture.⁵¹

Whereas the exterior program of the Ambikā temple is devoted to Durgā-Mahiṣāsuramardini, some have argued that the lion pedestal of the original icon suggests that the Kṣēmaṅkarī form of the goddess graced the temple interior. Dhaky reinforces this pedestal theory by noting the prominent position of the goddess above the temple entrance (fig. 5.21).⁵² Kṣēmaṅkarī is also found on contemporaneous buildings at Tūṣa and Unwās (see fig. 0.5). Early remains from Jagat suggest that the site was originally devoted to the worship of the *sapta-mātṛkās*. Gupta-period figures in schist, such as a sculpture of Aindrī in the Udaipur museum, indicate the site was already a center for goddess worship a few hundred years before the temple was built. If the temple was indeed dedicated to Kṣēmaṅkarī, the exterior program suggests an emphasis on the independent ferocious form of the goddess, whereas the main icon would have reiterated her role as the beatific

domestic partner of Śiva. At Unwās, Kṣēmaṅkarī occupies the central protrusion on the exterior back wall of the sanctum.⁵³ In light of this contemporaneous example, it is surprising that the main icon and the emanation depicted in the same position on the Ambikā temple would be different.

An icon cast aside inside the sanctum displays an emaciated form of Durgā in the act of killing the buffalo demon (see fig. 1.10). On the one hand, this iconography is quite unusual since the emaciated form is usually reserved for Cāmuṇḍā, a *mātrkā* associated with Yama, the god of death. On the other hand, Durgā would correspond to the back wall of the temple and makes sense as a depiction of Ambikā, the “little mother” of the Devī Māhātmya story and an epithet for the buffalo slayer, Durgā-Mahiṣāsūramardini. Why, then, would Kṣēmaṅkarī—and not Durgā—grace the tutelary position above the entrance?

In addition to an enticing beatific form of Śiva’s mate, Pārvatī, Kṣēmaṅkarī offers an advertisement for a specific type of tantric worship rooted in mantras. According to M. C. Joshi, “the rosary [held by the goddess Kṣēmaṅkarī] represents the Sanskrit alphabet from *A* to *kṣa* and is the same as the *varṇamālā* (the universal creative energy in the form of sound); the book symbolizes all kinds of codified knowledge including *dharma* (righteous law) and *adharma* (unrighteous law), *vairāgya* (detachment) and *avairāgya* (non-detachment), *jñāna* (knowledge) and *ajñāna* (ignorance).”⁵⁴ Kṣēmaṅkarī is thus associated with a tantric reference to sound. Kṣēmaṅkarī suggests that mantric worship was a powerful tool at this site in the last half of the tenth century. The syncopated circumambulation guided by the punctuated architecture and targeted sculptural ornamentation of the temple wall found at Jagat follows the phonic rhythm of mantras referenced by the iconography of Kṣēmaṅkarī—the first deity one sees on approaching the temple, and the personification of the seed syllable *Kṣa* as the goddess herself. The kinetics of this architecture thus reflect the performance of a fashionable and powerful form of worship in tenth-century Mēdapāṭa—a possible synesthetic link to Guhila tastes and aspirations farther north at Nāgadā and Ekliṅgī.

The Pippalāda Mātā temple at Unwās was built in 959 CE during Allaṭa’s reign. This temple does not share the sophisticated temple wall of the Surya temple at Ṭuṣa or the Takṣakēśvara temple at Ekliṅgī. The Pippalāda Mātā temple seems closest in form to the rather austere Lakuliśa temple; however, three cardinal wall protrusions do have niches with deities. Unlike Ṭuṣa and Jagat, the deities differ. At Unwās, this circumambulation is rather straightforward, with one main niche on each side of the sanctum of the Pippalāda Mātā temple (see fig. 0.4). The Durgā temple at Unwās shares this simple design of one niche on each wall. The program of the Pippalāda Mātā temple unfolds with an image of Durgā slaying the buffalo demon followed by a rare image of Kṣēmaṅkarī on the back wall (see fig. 0.5) and finishes with a ferocious, emaciated Cāmuṇḍā. This tripartite program is not interrupted by any guardians of the corners or by any *surasundarī*s punctuating the circumambulatory design.

The Pippalāda Mātā temple is rare in that the back niche indicates the temple's dedication to Kṣēmaṅkarī.⁵⁵ This form with the two lions at her feet depicts a rather passive goddess standing still and holding a bell, a pot of water, and a trident to associate her with her mate, Śiva. Although the two sculptures of Durgā-Mahiṣāsuramardini and Cāmuṇḍā on the sides of the temple occur in the text of the *Devī Māhātmya*, Kṣēmaṅkarī is better known among sets of yoginīs.⁵⁶ The goddess Kṣēmaṅkarī seems to be popular early in the history of Mēdapāṭa, whereas this tenth-century sculpture is the latest surviving example.⁵⁷ This Kṣēmaṅkarī may be the only example of a shrine devoted uniquely to this goddess.

If we look more closely at the order of the program (Durgā, Kṣēmaṅkarī, and Cāmuṇḍā in clockwise circumambulatory order, or backward as Cāmuṇḍā, Kṣēmaṅkarī, and Durgā in reverse esoteric circumambulatory order), we find even greater affinities with the Ambikā temple in Jagat constructed fewer than three years later and fewer than two hundred kilometers to the south: young, cosmic, victorious goddess who quells demons with the weapons of the male gods meets serene, erect, powerful goddess atop regal lions, followed by emaciated old or starving insatiable goddess. Alternately, the sagging skin of Cāmuṇḍā is revealed to possess the power of the erect Kṣēmaṅkarī, followed by the martial perfection of Durgā. Either way, to pass from Durgā to Cāmuṇḍā and back again, one must focus on the mantric goddess in the prime position on the back wall of the temple.

One can imagine some of the early medieval aural syllables—"Hṛīm"—that may have resonated on the lips of a circumambulator or even silently as part of a secret meditation in a disciple's head. Was this utterance learned clandestinely in the closed corner cell of a maṭha from a guru? Or, perhaps, it was repeated as a group while looking at a guru on a platform in the main hall?⁵⁸ The idea of dissolution or transmutation from one bodily state to another metaphysically through mediation seems to bear weight in the iconographic record in stone. One passes from one kind of goddess (Cāmuṇḍā or Durgā) to another via mantra (personified as Kṣēmaṅkarī at Unwās). At Jagat, one either tantrically realizes the dissolution of the body through the goddess Durgā's sacrificial acts (culminating in the emaciated Cāmuṇḍā in the sanctum) or melts away the Purāṇic narrative of the Devī Māhātmya into the truth of mantric worship if the goddess Kṣēmaṅkarī graced the inner sanctum instead. Iconographic programs illuminate much about the visual relationships of different deities philosophically, especially when considered in terms of the characteristically early medieval syncopated punctuation of the temple wall, and the kinesthetic traces of ritual left behind in the record in stone.

Two stone clues to the tantric and mantric communities at Jagat about the Ambikā temple. To the south we find that the wall of the compound is quite high, with steps leading up to modern-day street level. There we find the village school, most likely built unknowingly atop the earliest Śakta monastery in India just

waiting to be excavated. To the north, several *chhatris* postdate the Ambikā temple by a few hundred years but point to that location as an ancient burial ground. In Jagat, future excavations could reveal one of the earliest and most important centers of goddess worship in India, complete with a period maṭha dating to the era of Abhinavagupta, as well as a burial ground adjacent to one of the earliest examples of a medieval goddess temple in regional style.

Temple as Praxis

Agency in the Field in Southern Rājāsthān

“Tradition is always about the present,” Marzia Balzani writes in *Modern Indian Kingship*.¹ Much in the same vein, Romila Thapar argues that South Asian history can no longer be written without a dialogue with the present.² An examination of current ritual reveals tantalizing parallels with the iconological record. The idea of a catalyst suggests that temples spark social interaction that is ever evolving.³ Like contemporary kingship in Jodhpur, archaeological sites in southern Rājāsthān rely on the reification of tradition. In both cases, “tradition then not only takes on the conservative role of preservation but also becomes a statement of defiance in the face of a system in which the royal families of the past are no longer valued for their nobility alone.”⁴ Kingship remains a large part of the iconological performance at Ekliṅgī, whereas many disenfranchised populations use the Ambikā temple at Jagat to assert their power through praxis.

In 2002 people used archaeological places in modern ways that nonetheless reflected their histories. At Ekliṅgī and at Jagat ritual enforces hierarchy, often challenging state or national law to practice legitimately in the eyes of the community. Historically, the rituals performed in and around the temples occasionally left permanent signs. Mahārāṇā Raimal left the written trace of his ritual in the southern doorway of the sanctum, a privileged place where the inscription receives darśan from Śrī Ekliṅgī’s southern face in perpetuity. Some features of the stone temple programs, such as the yogis at Ekliṅgī or the depiction of liṅga worship on the Ambikā temple, mirror ritual. At Ekliṅgī these stone yogis are at eye level when gazing at the roof of the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple from the upper platform (fig. 6.1), where the tenth-century Lakulīśa temple houses a gigantic black sculpture of this Pāśupata ascetic.⁵ On the Ambikā temple at Jagat, small figures present



FIGURE 6.1. Yogis (upper right, three seated vertically) on the Śrī Eklingji temple. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 6.2. Worship of a lingam from Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

offerings to a *liṅgam* (fig. 6.2) while miniature viewers peer out of small-scale bas-relief verandas at the circumambulator as if filling the temple for a festival in perpetuity (see fig. 5.20). Other aspects of ritual disappear without a trace. Ritual patronage often determines whether a permanent indexical imprint will be made on a particular site.⁶ This indexical trace is a symptom of past ritual. The modern marble icon from Jaipur in the ancient sanctum of the Ambikā temple at Jagat is an indexical marker of the installation ceremony that took place in May of 2002.

The collective performances of clergy and their audiences create continuity at Ekliṅgī and at Jagat, whereas the inscriptional and archaeological record suggests long periods of disuse and rupture. At Ekliṅgī an embodied multisensory form of worship is experienced *en masse*, whereas at Jagat it is more individualized. An organized multimember clergy at Ekliṅgī contrasts with a single folk shaman and one non-Brahman priest found at Jagat. The two temple complexes serve as loci of social activity both inside and outside the boundaries of the religious sites. Temporary spaces of social interaction such as a marketplace during a fair or ritual under a nearby tree draw on the power of these ancient temples to attract crowds and create spaces of exchange. This disintegration of the borders between numinous temple sanctums and social fields of activity suggests that these sites serve as catalysts, as permanent agents that set chains of events into action.

POSTCOLONIAL KINGSHIP: PHOTOGRAPHING THE DIVINE AND THE MAHĀRĀṆĀ/CEO

Given the complex identity of an icon, can a photograph capture the deity? Does a picture of an icon clone an icon, or does it serve as a portrait of the original? The careful protection of reproduction rights for divinities suggests that, for living temples, photographs produce clones, whereas under the archaeological heritage model a photograph could hardly hold even the ontological status of a portrait. When asked why the deity Śrī Ekliṅgī could not be photographed, Śrī Arvind Singh Mewār replied that it was his exclusive inherited right to worship the god.⁷ His response squarely situates the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple out of the public domain as a private temple. Similarly, the Lakulīṣa rights are exclusively his. What does it mean for a postcolonial king to “own” the right for darśan, or the exchange of gaze between an icon and a devotee? The god, in the form of a living icon, is believed to return the viewer’s gaze as a form of blessing.⁸ Perhaps with this relationship in mind, Śrī Arvind Singh Mewār compared photographing the black, four-faced *liṅgam* icon of Ekliṅgī to paparazzi. Drawings, however, did not hold the same potency and were therefore better reproductions (figs. 6.3 and 6.4). Śrī Arvind Singh Mewār felt these reproductions of Ekliṅgī were more respectful, not interfering with his exclusive right to worship him, not interfering with the Śrī Ekliṅgī Trust’s exclusive copyrights, and not leading to theft. Śrī Arvind Singh Mewār emphasized his exclusive religious and commercial rights over Śrī Ekliṅgī.⁹

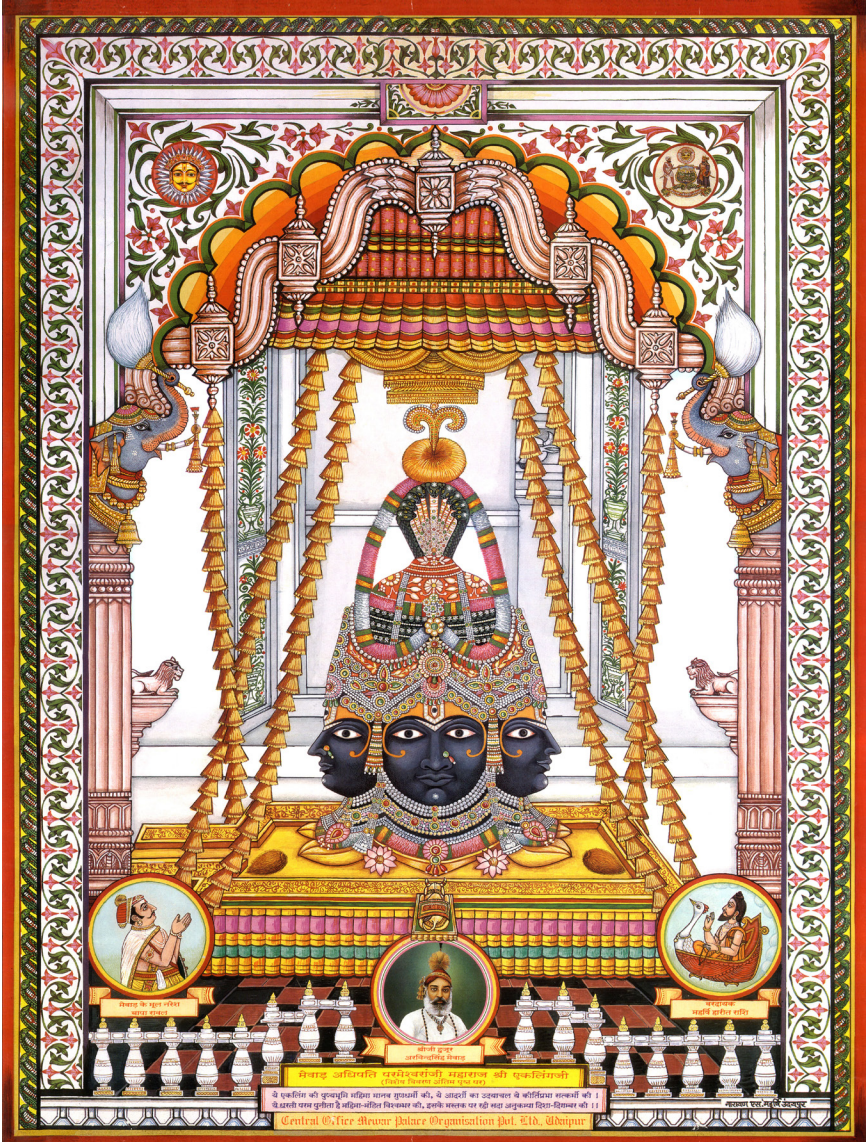


FIGURE 6.3. Śrī Eklingjī as featured in the palace calendar, 2002. Gift of Śrījī Arvind Singh Mewār. Photo by the author.

In her essay “In Plato’s Cave” Susan Sontag argues that photography is a form of violence that turns people into objects: “To photograph people is to violate them, by seeing them as they never see themselves, by having knowledge of them they can never have; it turns people into objects that can be symbolically possessed. Just



FIGURE 6.4. Śrī Eklingjī popular prints for sale during Mahāśivrātri, 2002, Eklingjī.
© Deborah Stein.

as the camera is a sublimation of the gun, to photograph someone is a sublimated murder—a soft murder, appropriate to a sad frightened time.”¹⁰ This sense of violence is acute in the mahārāṇā’s mind, even if it is not articulated as such. His gut reaction is that, as Eklingjī’s dīwān, it is his duty not to allow Eklingjī to become the subject of a photograph only to be turned into an object of the gaze. This issue is complicated since Eklingjī could also be said to gaze back. In “Descartes’s Cow and Other Domestications of the Visual,” Robert Nelson argues that past definitions of vision assumed “intromission” and were based on the culture of twentieth-century science, whereas the majority of the world’s population both past and present actually believe in “extramission.”¹¹ Although visibility is cultural rather than scientific, these differences in visibility can be equated casually neither with East and West nor with past and present. For example, many educated Americans in the twentieth century believe in extramission.¹² Śrī Eklingjī’s visibility is one of extramission based on an interchange between two subjects, the viewer and the animate icon. If we consider that Śrī Eklingjī in his environment is considered a subject rather than an object, then to photograph him, according to Sontag, would be a “sublimated murder,” hardly acceptable for a holy monarch or his guardian.

Śriji Arvind Singh Mewār accords Śrī Eklingjī the same respect as he does Mewāri citizens: architecture is not off limits to photography, but ritual inside the Śrī Eklingjī temple is taboo. This dichotomy seems to be as much a question about ownership



FIGURE 6.5. Family portrait of Śrī Ekliṅgī. © Maharana Mewar Research Institute (MMRI Archives).

as it is about respect.¹³ To take a photograph of Śrī Ekliṅgī would be to make a reproduction of the god worthy of worship. The photographic taboo prevents the accidental birthing of an icon and protects the mahārāṇā's copyright as a numinous birthright. In addition to the mahārāṇā maintaining his exclusive right to worship as a way of affecting kingship in a modern nation-state, his trust holds copyright to the reproduction of the image and is responsible if it is stolen or defaced. By controlling the reproduction, the god's function is controlled by his guardian.

The personal photo archives of the mahārāṇā were generously made available to me for study.¹⁴ There I found more than one photograph of Śrī Ekliṅgī gazing out into the eyes of members of the mahārāṇā's family, whose bent backs face the camera. This form of photography is very different from what my own would have been (fig. 6.5). In images such as this one, Śrī Ekliṅgī poses in the act of darśan, and the viewer is cast as a recipient of the gaze. These photographs are not a record of what an Indian deity looks like to the scholars, students, and readers who peruse my English text; the photographs commemorate important family occasions, functioning much as a wedding album might.

But just as in human families, the relationships are intradependent. Śrī Ekliṅgī contributes to the financial well-being of his family and of his kingdom. The multimillion-dollar empire of heritage hotels under the control of Śrī Arvind Singh functions in large part based on the orientalist fantasies of middle-class foreign tourists wanting literally to be king for a day.¹⁵ It would be hard to argue that enjoying a meal overlooking the rolling hills and palaces on the shores of Lake Pichola is not a wonderful experience or that waking up to a world framed by peacock arches is not pleasant. But tourism to the region does not depend on these comfortable, beautiful converted palaces alone. To attract tourism, there must be something to see—cultural property to be visited, rented, or sold, even if only as an idea rather than as a material entity.

The majority of visitors to ancient monuments are operating under the nineteenth-century aesthetic shared by Ruskin and by the Archaeological Survey

of India (ASI). The best tourist monuments are ruins devoid of people and available for tourists to photograph, project onto, and make their own, at least in their experience and in their minds. The success of an ancient monument for tourism is not based primarily on whether it is in use but above all on whether its current use is perceived as authentic. Herein lies the difference between a site in an official private trust, such as the Śrī Ekliṅgī Religious Trust, and a site under the control of a local population, such as Jagat. Both are contested as state property—the archaeological site of Ekliṅgī via the legal system and Jagat via the law of proximity, which yields more power to the local population than to centralized administration. The highly organized, well-funded trust at Ekliṅgī is able to construct continuity in ways that the folk practices at Jagat cannot. To the average tourist, the Ambikā temple at Jagat appears defaced by metallic gold paint, whereas the Ekliṅgī temple seems carefully maintained by the descendants of those who built it. The aesthetics of rupture are much more pronounced at Jagat than at Ekliṅgī because praxis at Ekliṅgī renders the temple complex an ideological commodity, whereas praxis at Jagat turns the monument into both an ideological commodity and a material commodity for the international art market.

SNOW FALLING ON MOUNT KAILASH: RITUAL AS ICONOLOGICAL PERFORMANCE AT EKLIṅGĪ

Revivalism, tradition, and invention characterize current uses of the archaeological site of Ekliṅgī. Many aspects of temple activity in 2002 reflect Ekliṅgī's past and present as a religious center linked with Mewāri polity. Ekliṅgī exhibits an official hierarchy, as emphasized by the staff of the mahārāṇā/CEO. Even though the temples have long benefited from royal Guhila patronage, current uses indicate a special need to establish kingship in a period with no kings. Historically, when the capital moved and the dīwān changed location, Śrī Ekliṅgī, Mewār's rightful ruler, continued to hold sway from his home in Kailāśpurī. In the twenty-first century, royal sponsorship of Ekliṅgī produces highly structured ritual conducted by a multitude of Brahman priests. The two-hour prayer service, or pūjā, unfolds at Ekliṅgī three times a day. On Mondays pilgrims travel to join locals and the mahārāṇā at Ekliṅgī. The pūjā at Ekliṅgī is performed almost identically every time by royal priests, who hold the sole access to a jealously guarded, sacred book Ekliṅgī's pūjā-paddhati, or prayer manual. For Ekliṅgī's visitors and devotees the postcolonial power shifts and concerns with royal lineage have altered site access, while pūjā in the sanctum of the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple remained for the most part the same. The mahārāṇā and his clergy derive the authenticity of their ritual from the mythical antiquity of the text. Copied from older versions, the twenty-first-century pūjā-paddhati suggests a desire to fix ritual protocol in a bold revivalist maneuver similar to Mahārāṇā Kumbhā's own architectural projects.

The god Ekliṅgī's daily pūjā serves as a mirror of the modern kingship of his human chancellor. For hundreds of years Śrī Ekliṅgī has resided in the town of Kailāśpurī, located approximately sixteen miles from Udaipur. Mahārāṇā Arvind Singh Mewār today sees himself as carrying on the tradition of the diwān of Śrī Ekliṅgī in the postindependence era. His father held this responsibility before him and transferred trusteeship of the site on his death in 1984. His grandfather used to travel to the temple on horseback and would change horses four times on his way owing to his impetuous riding.¹⁶ Although Mahārāṇā Arvind Singh Mewār is the second son, his father chose him as his heir. It is in this capacity that the postcolonial king administers the Śrī Ekliṅgī Charitable Trust. He has replaced the horseback traditions of his ancestors with a white Mercedes but nevertheless makes his way to the temple every Monday to exercise his unique right to worship Śrī Ekliṅgī from within the inner gates of the sanctum. He alone visits the tenth-century Lakulīśa temple to pay homage to this patron sage of the Pāśupatas.

The priests on the trust payroll offer their prayers to Śrī Ekliṅgī on behalf of the diwān. At the sixteenth-century Śrī Ekliṅgī temple located on the level below the tenth-century Lakulīśa temple, devotees, pilgrims, visitors, and residents of Kailāśpurī may receive darśan and witness the entire pūjā; however, they cannot offer the same prayers as the diwān. Certain relatives of the mahārāṇā and other distinguished guests can witness the pūjā from within the silver gates just outside the inner sanctum (fig. 6.5). Meanwhile, from the main hall of the temple the crowds circumambulate, sing *bhajans* (religious songs), recite mantras, exchange gazes with the deity, and share smoke and light with Ekliṅgī. The pūjā process constructs separate spaces for the god, the priests, the king, the distinguished guests, and the public.

The order of ritual events in the daily pūjā is fixed and crucial to the success of the worship. The ritual sequence focuses on a multisensory experience for the deity and the viewer. The general syntax of the god's daily routine mirrors that of the local people: bathe, dress, pray, eat, and sleep:

1. Wipe off old leaves.
2. Bath with water, milk, curd, and ghee.
3. Anoint with sandalwood powder.
4. Adorn with jewelry and dress with cloth.
5. Place leaves atop liṅgaṃ.
6. Bedeck the deity with flowers.
7. Hang golden parasol over deity's head.
8. Place flowers on the parasol.
9. Light and bring incense lantern to the four faces of the deity and in turn to the viewers' gaze.
10. Take fire lantern (*arthi*) to all four faces and in turn share the light with the viewers.

11. Keep water running constantly.
12. Dress and feed the deity; show the deity a mirror, fly whisk the deity, put it to sleep.

This sequence of sensory interactions with the *līṅgaṃ* is repeated during a two-hour service held three times a day. During *pūjā* the viewer participates in the simple daily rituals of the divine. The ritual sequence touches all of the senses of the viewer and of the deity, creating a concentrated transitory state, yet sensory treatment alone is not enough to awaken the deity. The priest attending the deity accompanies these actions by special verses uttered during every single act. The high secrecy of these Sanskrit mantras adds to their power.

According to Pundit Narendra Dashora, there are three types of mantras: semantic only, phonic only, and both semantic and phonic. The *pūjā-paddhati* mantras are both semantic and phonic; only those who know the meaning and the correct intonation can invoke their full power. Many of the mantras recited by temple-goers may have specific meaning but may not rely on phonic resonance to be effective forms of prayer. *Bhopas* (shamans) often rely on phonic mantras, which may not necessarily carry semantic meaning. The mantras of the *pūjā-paddhati* create a sacred space in which the deity can be awakened.

These chanted verses awaken different aspects of the deity's environment. For example, while placing his right hand on the doorframe, a priest will recite a mantra to consecrate the space of the threshold to the sanctum.¹⁷ Once the environment has been activated, the icon itself is addressed according to the four directions of its four faces, each with a distinct facial expression. The eastern face is *Tatpuruṣa*, the omnipresent deity. The southern face is *Aghora*, a nonhorrific form of *Rudra* representing *Yama*, the god of death. The northern face is *Vāmadeva*, an auspicious wish-granting form of *Śiva*, and the western face is *Sadyojāta*, a form of the deity as a newborn child. The top of the *līṅgaṃ* is considered a fifth face, called the *Isana* form of *Śiva*, a shapeless representation and a center of *śakti* (powerful female energy).¹⁸ Each of these faces and directions aligns with the five elements.

On the one hand, the multifaced *līṅgaṃ*, according to modern practitioners, is a cornerstone of *Pāśupata-Śaivism*.¹⁹ On the other hand, ancient texts and archaeological sites do not confirm that the multifaced *līṅga* is exclusive to *Pāśupata* worship. But whether or not multifaced *līṅga* are considered indicative of *Pāśupata-Śaivism* per se, the ritual requirements of this ideology do demand this particular form. Although the mantras may not be exactly the same, the process of ritual animation is likely quite ancient.

As the supreme icon of Mewāri kingship, the *caturmukha* *līṅgaṃ* enjoys elaborate *pūjā* year-round, but *Mahāśivṛātri* is by far the most extravagant celebration. The holiday of *Mahāśivṛātri* is the most important day of the year for Mewāri Śaivaites. *Mahāśivṛātri* celebrates three events: *Śiva's* birthday, *Śiva* and *Pārvatī's* marriage, and *Śiva's* taking blue poison in his throat in an elaborate mythical

performance. Throngs of pilgrims flock to Kailāśpurī on foot from Udaipur and the surrounding areas. The pilgrims walk past temples; people; Ferris wheels; vendors of plastic toys, silver, ornaments, implements, pottery, posters, cassettes, and sugar cane; and through the ancient gates and into the valley. On this day the inhabitants of Kailāśpurī make *sābudāna*, a special pilaf free of wheat or rice. The night of Śiva begins with the ten o'clock pūjā, when the liṅgaṃ is dressed in yellow garments and leaf ornaments with a special necklace. The priests bathe him and put three ash stripes on him and then put him to bed. There are twenty *arthis* (lamp ceremonies) in the whole program, five in each service.

The most dramatic part of the thirteen-hour program is when the priests periodically undress the liṅgaṃ and pour white flour over this black stone icon. This visual effect creates the appearance of snow falling on Mount Kailash, Śiva's home in the Himalayas. This completes the pilgrimage for all those who have traveled twenty-six steep kilometers through the dry, thirsty landscape of southern Rājāsthān to come to the cool valley of Kailāśpurī.²⁰ A winter landscape is staged in this ritual performance for those who may never make it so far as the actual sites of Śiva's rites of passage. The flour snowing onto the black stone liṅgaṃ and clustering over each of the four faces of Śiva may be the only snow most of the viewers ever encounter. After this scene water is poured over the deity to wash him, which makes him look as if he is crying cloudy tears.

The priests massage the body of the god. More than one priest told me he thought of himself as Pārvatī when serving Śiva. The massaging of the stone phallus with *āmla*, a special perfumed ointment, then takes on a certain gendered slant if the priests see themselves as emanations of his wife. Once finished with his ablutions and dressed, Śrī Ekliṅgī checks his appearance in the mirror held up for him. The holding up of a mirror to meet an icon's gaze creates a very powerful circle of vision. Receiving the gaze of the icon is a form of worship in itself—in front of a mirror, the deity gazes on himself.

Śrī Ekliṅgī's embodied worship entails meals of rice, yogurt, water, flour, and gram for the god. Although the activities of the deity mirror those of humans, the quantities on Mahāśivrātri are always greater for the god while the humans fast. Everything is served in nine-kilo portions. The servings of nine suggest the tantric element of Śrī Ekliṅgī's pūjā. Exceptionally, *pradakṣinā* (circumambulation) was counterclockwise in the sanctum and yet remained clockwise outside the temple. The embodied nature of Śrī Ekliṅgī pūjā is inherently tantric. On the one hand, according to priests, king, and temple-goers, this tantra is exclusively right-handed. On the other hand, local tantric practitioners recount that left-handed tantra may be practiced at the temple, as well, in the form of secret mantras uttered by tantric practitioners during the night on Mahāśivrātri.

Not only are the quantities of food consumed by the deity greater on Mahāśivrātri, but the hierarchy of temple-goers is even more pronounced. In the seventeenth century, silver gates were added inside the *maṇḍapa* to differentiate



FIGURE 6.6. My downstairs neighbor from Eklingji, the wife of one of Śrī Eklingji's priests, pouring water into an aqueduct leading into the inner sanctum, July 2002, Eklingji. © Deborah Stein.

even further the space inside the temple. The holiest layer of space is the inner sanctum where the deity lives. This inner shrine is open on four sides to access the deity in order to perform pūjā. The *garbhagrha* (womb chamber) allows the priests to circumambulate the deity. Only the priests enter the *garbhagrha*, with the exception of the mahārāṇā, who claims the unique right to worship the deity as Mewār's diwān. The silver gate creates a third layer of sacredness to distinguished guests, who crawl through a small door to enter the space. This area is open to the public just once a year in the summer time, when the god offers milk as *prasād* (divine leftovers). The fourth layer of ritual space is the maṇḍapa behind the silver gate on the raised platform where women sit in the middle and men stand on the sides. The fifth layer of sacred space is the path around the platform where people circumambulate and pass in front of the deity to offer flowers and receive the divine gaze. Layers of architectural elements leave temporal residue of ritual change.²¹ Although the architecture leaves some trace of different stages of ritual, most ritual residue is ephemeral, finding merely an echo in stone.

Outside the book, vernacular pleasures suggest that seasonal rites may have been performed historically even though they were not recorded. Although pūjā is performed throughout the year according to the pūjā-paddhati, the devotees and priests bestow special unwritten seasonal pleasures on Eklingji. These collective actions create spectacular visual effects to reify the human character of the divine. Corresponding approximately to early July, Aśadh is an incredibly hot month even in Kailāśpurī, a wind tunnel bordered by hills on either side. During every midday pūjā, temple-goers gather behind the temple at a special stone spout adapted from architectural fragments. Each person in turn pours a pot of water into the aqueduct leading to the inner sanctum (fig. 6.6). There, inside the temple, a constant stream of water pours over Eklingji as if the River Gaṅgā were falling through his hair. At a time when the pond behind the temple complex is entirely dried up and the heat has permeated every living creature, a cool stream of water pleases Eklingji.



FIGURE 6.7. Clay *liṅga*, Ekliṅgī.
© Deborah Stein.

During these hotter months, the deity is fanned during the three *pūjās*. Devotees operate the fan via a long cord, rhythmically pulled to the tune of the *bhajans* they sing. Vernacular practices, such as these acts of kindness performed by devotees for the comfort of their god, are not prescribed by written records. Sometimes even the priests perform seasonal rites not included in the *pūjā-paddhati* even though they may recite some of the official mantras as part of the ritual.

The month of Śrāvan is a time when the *pūjāris* sit to the side of the *maṇḍapa* hall before the services and build perishable *liṅga* of clay (fig. 6.7). The clay *liṅga* exhibit a full repertoire of *liṅga* iconography and are modeled based on the *pūjāri*'s own choice within a standard repertoire of shapes. These ephemeral *liṅga* undergo a separate *pūjā*. While reciting mantras, the priests place uncooked rice on the clay *liṅga* followed by flowers and water. They chant in Sanskrit together. The *liṅga* are then offered *rabari*, a cooling yogurt concoction. When devotees arrive, they can offer a few rupees so the *pūjāri* will anoint their foreheads with vermillion and tie special *pūjā* cords on their wrists. At last the prayers are over and the red cloths are gathered off the stands encompassing the clay *liṅga* and all the flowers and offerings. The ritual residue is placed in a large basket and anointed with vermillion. Later the basket's contents are emptied into the pond. This form of worship parallels the year-round rites that take place within the sanctum with the permanent *liṅgaṃ*.

Whereas some argue the *pūjā-paddhati* is a sign of the permanence and antiquity of current ritual at Ekliṅgī, the importance of vernacular rites alongside textual recitation suggests a much more organic model of interaction with the divine. The *pūjā-paddhati* corresponds to the current black schist *liṅgaṃ*. Since this *liṅgaṃ* replaced a more ancient *liṅgaṃ* in the sixteenth-century, whose form may or may not have been the same as that of the present *liṅgaṃ*, the antiquity of the *pūjā-paddhati* cannot predate the icon. This rupture does not delegitimize the ritual power of current forms of practice at Ekliṅgī. To the contrary, the presence of so many forms of worship complementary to recited mantras implies continuity in *pūjā* structure and audience response. The lay public knows inherently



FIGURE 6.8. Worshipping cloth, Eklingji tailor's fair. © Deborah Stein.

when to participate in seasonal forms of worship based on empathy for the god's condition. The clergy also know when to conduct extra variations on traditional worship even though those changes are not at all dictated by the *pūjā-paddhati*. The visual resonance of rites with Purāṇic mythology and stone form suggests a continuity different from the fixed form of the *pūjā-paddhati*. In contrast with the record of revivalism created by text, the specificity of twenty-first-century ritual draws sacristy from ancient myth in a mixture of old and new.

TIES THAT BIND: GUILD RELATIONS AND THE POSTCOLONIAL KING OF MEWĀR

Whether for a regal CEO or for a guild of tailors, Śrī Eklingji lends legitimacy and power to established hierarchies. The living archaeological site becomes a *darbar* (court assembly), a village parliament, a theater of visual mythmaking, and the center of material exchange. During the tailors' fair the elders of various clans bind their followers to their deity with cloth in a form of *līla* (divine sport). The life-cycle events are played out in the altered daily routine of the deity. The tailor's *mela* (festival/fair) focuses exclusively on one guild with three equal clans. On the last day of the year when the moon has waned completely, three guilds of tailors hold a competition at Eklingji. Each *jati* (subcaste or guild) arrives at the temple the night before with five hundred meters of cloth. They sleep in the temple compound with their families and worship the cloth (fig. 6.8).

In 2002 the tailors' cloth contest produced long strands of fabric reaching from Bappa Rāwal, out of the temple complex, up the neighboring mountaintop, and to



FIGURE 6.9. Ties that bind;
fabric strung up the hill at Ekliṅgī.
© Deborah Stein.

a final cascade landing on the pinnacle of the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple *śikhara*, directly on axis with the Śiva liṅgaṃ inside (fig. 6.9). This rite literally bound the ritualists to each other, bound the characters of the Mewāri origin myth together, and bound the ritual participants to their divine ruler. Moreover, the visual impact of this performance recreated the myth of the river goddess Gaṅgā's fall into Śiva's ascetic locks of hair. The flowing tresses of fabric tied the local manifestation of Śiva, in the form of the Mewāri ruler Śrī Ekliṅgī, with cosmic myths from his mountainous Himalayan home. Visual metaphor invested the ecology of the local landscape with the sanctity of cosmic geography.

At the start of the festival three *pañcāyats* (village associations) met to settle the disputes among members of their communities. The *pañcāyats* consisted exclusively of men over the age of forty-five. While they governed, the women and children slept. Pūjā began at four-thirty in the morning. Priests bathed Ekliṅgī as women sang *bhajans*. When the pūjā service concluded, around eight in the morning, each of the three clans threaded their cloth past Bappa Rāwal (see fig. 3.1), up to the roof of his maṇḍapa, over to the roof of the main temple's golden staff, and then all the way up the hilltop across from the temple complex.²²

The *jati* that completed the task first won. To ensure victory, the *panchayat* of each clan played *Holi*, which involves throwing colored powders at the cloth and garlanding it before the games begin. The spring festival of *Holi*, according to McKim Marriott, is a time of reversals, when hierarchy is undone.²³ During *Holi* a devotee might throw colored powders at a god, or a young female researcher might throw colored powder at an older male Brahman informant. The cloth's supremacy was established through its subversion in the game of *Holi*, when the tailor devotees permitted themselves to shower the revered bundle in colored powder. The contest concluded unceremoniously, when the three cloths were removed to the temple office and everyone went home.

Records of vernacular worship date to the eighteenth century and point to continuity in the public's relationship to the divine ruler of their region, through the changing of seasons and the passing of time. For example, the women of the Mali caste still sell garlands at the entrance to the temple complex. Their female ancestors can be found sitting in the same place on an eighteenth-century mural found inside the *maṭha* at *Ekliṅgi*. More organic forms of worship may well be more ancient than the static forms recorded in the text of the *pūjā-paddhati*. In contrast with *Ekliṅgi*, at *Jagat* vernacular forms of worship seem to be the only surviving practice. But even these historical rites were imported into the archaeological site of the *Ambikā* temple from the *Mallar Mātā* shrine atop the adjacent hill and from the local *pipal* tree.

THE ARBOREAL BODY OF THE GODDESS: DAŚAMĀTĀPŪJĀ AND THE IRRELEVANCE OF FORM

Stone flesh, absence, and the arboreal body suggest the fluidity of form and anti-form in women's worship of the goddess. These various manifestations of the goddess in the form of a stone icon, the stone place of contact with an absent image, or a tree provide equally numinous foci for women's worship. Women as an audience may not have historically had access to the ancient temple for their rituals, which may have taken place primarily at a tree or in their homes. Like the *Meena* and *Bhil* forms of folk religion that have slipped into the archaeological site, women's forms of worship, as exemplified by the modern holidays of *Śitalā-saptamī* and *Daśamātāpūjā*, indicate that *Jagat* served as a catalyst for women's activity that rarely took place within the temple compound. The *Ambikā* temple has always served as a catalyst, but the most recent ritual use of the archaeological site dates only to the last decade of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first.

Śitalā-saptamī (the day of the smallpox goddess) falls seven days after the spring festival of *Holi* and a week before the Hindu New Year, just as the hottest season begins in April. This long, hot, dry time puts many people at risk for smallpox. Just as *Ekliṅgi* is treated as a king by a king, *Śitalā* is treated as a female

relative by village women. Long before dawn, women wake up and make *chapati* dough. They form the bread dough into ornaments for the goddess. Śītalā wears all of the accoutrements of a married woman: earrings, nose rings, bangles, toe rings, and a *mangal* sutra necklace. The small-scale bread-dough ornaments are carefully laid out on a plate (see fig. 0.10). Next to the jewelry, the lady of the house places vermilion powder and green henna powder. Some brightly colored cloth is added to the plate as the goddess's clothes along with yogurt and uncooked grains. The married woman then covers the plate with a cloth and takes it to the family shrine to circle it in front of the sanctum.

The women make their way with their pūjā platters from their homes to the Ambikā temple. Inside, all the activity takes place on the left side of the temple. Dressed in their finest clothes, the women feed, ornament, and dress the goddess Śītalā. When I visited in 2002, the actual figure was missing since it had been stolen along with the main icon in 2000. Still, the women continued to anoint the stone throne that once framed the goddess. They lent the same attentions as when an icon was present, even though form had become formless as a result of violence. During the installation of a new icon in May of 2002, a second new icon representing Śītalā was installed into the frame of a stolen tenth-century goddess sculpture once placed in the southern niche inside the *maṇḍapa* and worshipped as Śītalā. Once the women had worshipped the niche, they placed a few grains on the threshold where the goddess had been. Then after a quick stop at the Gaṇeśa on the opposite side of the shrine, the women headed toward the small Cāmuṇḍā shrine outside the temple. They drew auspicious *svastika* symbols in vermilion dripping like blood on the shrine's threshold. At a spot on the earth between the Ambikā temple and the Cāmuṇḍā shrine the women put their dough ornaments on the earth along with yogurt and then went home to rest.

Later, under the pīpal tree, the women gathered, and the elderly among them told stories. They explained why only cold things are eaten on the day of the small-pox goddess: in order to cool off fever. One story was about how the goddess has a different name in every house but is actually the same goddess. Other stories had to do with water and bread, kings and Brahmans, caste and vows. At the end of each story the listeners would throw grains of corn onto the base of the tree with an emphatic "Hey Ram, Hey Bhagawan." The pīpal tree had a series of ten-dot red vermilion clusters on the trunk and a sacred lamp burning inside near its roots. This aspect of the pan-Indian smallpox holiday very closely mirrors Daśamātāpūjā.

Daśamātāpūjā is a localized vernacular holiday popular in Mewār.²⁴ On the Sunday after Śītalā-saptamī, Daśamātāpūjā is honored with stories and pūjā platters. The worship is much like the Śītalā-saptamī worship except the ritual and storytelling all take place under the pīpal tree.²⁵ The women pour water on the tree, lay ornaments on the roots, and dress the trunk in red cloth and string as clothing and the necklace of a married woman (fig. 6.10). Then the women go to a stone surface and make oil lamps from the bread-dough ornaments.²⁶ They worship little stones



FIGURE 6.10. Women pour water on the tree, lay ornaments on the roots, and dress the trunk in red cloth and string as clothing and the necklace of a married woman. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 6.11. Śitalā worship in side niche of Ambikā temple, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

as goddess incarnations. The women burn large amounts of incense, turning the air into “Havai Śakti,” a powerful goddess atmosphere. Friends and neighbors tell stories and gossip as they encircle the pīpal tree with long white string. The ten stories of Daśa (from the root “ten”) Mātā are told. At the conclusion the women throw the rest of their grains into the base of the tree and pour vermilion onto the trunk. The result is a bloody-looking cluster of ungerminated seeds lying at the base of the tree where the roots meet the trunk. This is clearly a visual metaphor of gestation and fertility. The number ten in Daśamātā and her ten stories may well refer to the lunar gestation cycle of forty weeks divided by ten menstrual months.

Ironically, in a society where women’s inherent reproductive power remains in worship, real women do almost all the work and are devalued. Men are pūjāris and *bhopas*. Women become possessed, make pūjā trays of food and offerings, and tell stories. Men receive offerings in the name of the goddess and distribute food as prasād to men and women. On Śītalā-saptamī, the women worship Śītalā in the *maṇḍapa*, to the left of the entrance in her side niche (fig. 6.11), whereas only one male is present. The priest worships at the temple sanctum alone. Both Śītalā-saptamī and Daśamātāpūjā are women’s holidays, where women perform worship for female deities. The temple space, controlled by men (be that the ASI, the local shaman, or a king), would not be consecrated for this type of worship. Past worship that evokes fertility and blood so explicitly was perhaps not seen as pure enough for temple precincts. And while animal sacrifice involves the ritual letting of blood, the blood is not brought inside the temple.

GOAT SACRIFICE FOR THE GODDESS: RITUAL AND MYTH BETWEEN MALLAR MĀTĀ AND HER SISTER AMBĀ MĀTĀ

More than the articulation of hierarchies, gender divisions characterize ritual performance in Chhapa. Men have historically controlled temple celebrations, whereas ancient women’s folk festivals for the goddess often take place under trees. In the temple, in the home, and under the tree, ritual is often directly imported from one location to another. Many of the folk traditions of tree worship produced and enjoyed by women have begun to move into the temple compound. During the last quarter of the twentieth century the temple served as a site of affirmation, not only for a variety of castes but also for women who took their ancient rituals into the archaeological compound. Both Śītalā-saptamī and Navratri (the nine nights of the goddess) are celebrated in parallel by Rājputs and by Meenas and Bhils, among others. Meena and Bhil concern for basic survival with few resources informs their practice, whereas Rājputs concentrate on reifying their power in a period when they no longer govern. Whether performed by Meenas and Bhils or by Rājputs, all of the rituals make use of visual metaphors to create cycles of action.



FIGURE 6.12. New goddess icon, installed May 2002, Ambikā temple, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

The Ambikā temple is not only the source of much of the ritual activity; it also mirrors much of the ritual in its stone iconography.

At Jagat, activity in the archaeological compound in the 1950s faded from the record in the 1960s. When R. C. Agrawala “discovered” the temple, in the archaeological sense of the term, an unpublished image graced the main sanctum.²⁷ Since then, more than one icon has been consecrated and then stolen from the sanctum; the most recent was installed in May of 2002 and remained as of the spring of 2009 (fig. 6.12). Several other ancient sites in the region have also undergone significant shifts in use, changing from archaeologically “protected” ruins to local centers of ritual for the people living near the sites.²⁸

Two temples and one shrine house Hindu goddesses in worship at Jagat. A modern folk temple on the hilltop shelters Mallar Mātā (fig. 6.13). Within an archaeological compound administered by the Rājāsthān State Archaeological Survey, the tenth-century Ambikā temple enshrines a sculpture from 2002, and a renovated side shrine houses an ancient schist Cāmuṇḍā sculpture (fig. 6.14). Several ancient stone fragments have been carried up the hill and installed along the left wall of the Mallar Mātā temple (fig. 6.15). Meanwhile, over the course of the 1990s, several folk practices such as possession and healing by shamans have been carried down the hill and through the gates of the archaeological compound. Within the



FIGURE 6.13. Bus-stand portrait of Mallar Mātā, Mallar Mātā hilltop shrine, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 6.14. Cāmūṇḍā, c. 960, Ambikā temple compound, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 6.15. Fragments from Ambikā temple complex, c. 960, Jagat (now housed in the Mallar Mātā hilltop shrine). © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 6.16. Tenth-century stone Cāmuṇḍā on the exterior wall of the Ambikā temple. © Deborah Stein.

compound at Jagat the renovation of Cāmuṇḍā's side shrine involved the addition of a neo-*phāṃsanā* roof.²⁹ This *phāṃsanā-kūṭa* structure, which houses Mallar Mātā's sister, Cāmuṇḍā, suggests the importance of this goddess's healing power.³⁰ This tenth-century schist sculpture physically resembles Mallar Mātā because of the buildup of ritual residue such as ghee, vermillion, and foil.

A tenth-century stone Cāmuṇḍā found on the southern exterior wall of maṇḍapa of the Ambikā temple physically resembles the schist icon of Cāmuṇḍā, in form if not in medium (fig. 6.16). The difference in materials suggests that the schist Cāmuṇḍā may have been intended for inside use as an icon (see fig. 6.14). Mallar Mātā, in turn, seems to date at least to the tenth century and is also made of black schist (see fig. 6.13). Size and medium suggest that Mallar Mātā and Cāmuṇḍā may have originally belonged to a set of *yoginīs* or *mātrkāś* (divine mothers). In contrast, Mallar Mātā's sister, Ambā Mātā, may never have been included in this set. The size of the *parikara* (icon frame) alone precludes the possibility (see fig. 6.12).

Where practice and aesthetics may flow freely between the Mallar Mātā temple and the Ambikā temple compound, folk religion and sacrifice are privileged

at the hilltop temple, and iconography and archaeology are given more weight within the ancient archaeological compound. There is an interesting exchange of both sculpture and practice between the old and the new. The result is a historical museum-quality collection of sculpture in the hilltop folk shrine and a flourishing folk religion within the archaeological compound. Ambā Mātā, the sister who inhabits the archaeological compound, is called by her pan-Indian name, referencing the sixth-century *Devī Māhātmya*, whereas her hilltop sibling, Mallar Mātā, goes by her local Mewāri name. Cāmuṇḍā, who presides over folk practices such as possession and divination within the archaeological compound, retains her pan-Indian Sanskrit name.

Ritual has traveled from the folk shrine down the hill into the archaeological compound. Ritual in turn creates a desire for the numinous objects that the archaeological site offers. Caste plays a vital role in who attends and performs rituals at each site. The royal caste of Rājputs controls the ritual at the archaeological site through patronage, whereas low-caste Meenas perform the ritual at the hilltop shrine. Although Rājputs sponsored the installation of a new deity in the ancient temple, Meenas and many other groups of people control the ritual at the archaeological site through praxis. As ritual seeps down the mountain, the field of devotees widens to include pilgrims from other villages in the region. The recording *Jagat Mātā Kaṭhā: The Story of Mother Jagat*, available at the bus stand on cassette tape, combines local oral history and inscriptional evidence from the ancient Ambikā temple to situate the goddess geographically and to establish her relationships with such neighboring deities as Jāwar Mātā. When Jāwar Mātā's devotees listen to the cassette, they are motivated to visit Jāwar Mātā's sister in Jagat.³¹

Blood sacrifice offers male Rājputs an opportunity to temporarily seize feminine powers during the festival of the nine nights of the goddess, called Navratri. Sacrifice has often been understood in terms of a theory of exchange. At Jagat, sacrifice does include elements of exchange; however, sacrifice at Jagat serves primarily as a visual metaphor. Both daily and holiday ritual are occasions for animal sacrifice, a visual explanation of the relationship between a living being and its essence, soul, or lifeblood. Sacrifice has been understood previously as a piece of a god to be consumed, as a gift, or as the act of consecration.³² Sacrifice is a manner of exchanging blood between god and man.³³ Most theory describing sacrifice is only liturgy-based and does not pay enough attention to practice. The form of animal sacrifice conducted at Jagat has little to do with purity or mantras. These blood sacrifices are nonlinguistic and are performed by low-caste men who are not clergy. The decapitation of the sacrificed animal creates visual effects captured in the stone iconography of the Ambikā temple.

Sacrifice can be understood as the performance of iconography. Iconography, in turn, can be understood as a record of ritual. Goat sacrifice in 2002 visually manifested life leaving the animal body. Each pūjā service at the Mallar Mātā temple inevitably included at least one goat sacrifice in which the animal was butchered



FIGURE 6.17. Sacrificed goat, winter 2002, Mallar Mātā shrine.
© Deborah Stein.

and distributed as *prasād* among the clan who killed it (fig. 6.17). The somewhat precarious location of this mountaintop shrine makes it an ideal site for a practice illegal since the 1970s. Since the temple is very secluded, sacrifice need not be a hasty, clandestine affair, as it is at the ancient Ambikā temple or the neighboring Jāwar Mātā temple near the Jāwar mines.

Only in death can males control lifeblood. Through sacrifice men create a visual demonstration of the separation of life from the body by draining blood from an animal. In ritual men perform this function, but in myth the goddess drains the blood. The goddess is a liminal figure between the generative powers of menstrual blood and the destructive powers of sacrifice. In the myth of the goddess Devī Māhātmya, perhaps the liminal position of goddesses makes Devī Māhātmya the only candidate to kill the demons. The male deities lend her their weapons for the occasion, transforming the goddess into the supreme sacrificer. As warriors and hunters, Rājput males have long relied on goddesses' powers for victory. These gender differences are highlighted by ritual.

After a typical *arthi* ceremony, consisting of darśan, possession, and fortune-telling, many women leave by going down a path behind the sanctum different from the path on which they arrived. Male devotees gather at the back of the *maṇḍapa* with their backs to the *garbhagrha*. Some stand in front of the temple, close to the small patch of earth at the edge of the mountain. The male family members who have brought their goat hold down the increasingly hysterical animal while a young man unsheathes a sword from its pink velvet case. A young family member raises the sword high above his head and lops off the goat's head in one fell swoop. The ears of the goat's head flop, and its tongue wiggles back and forth. Its body shakes as blood squirts out of its severed neck and is swallowed



FIGURE 6.18. *Paddhi* channel planted around the temporary *pratiṣṭhā* pavilion, sprouting midfestival, and vermillion footprints leading into the pavilion after one-week festival, May 2002, Jagat.
© Deborah Stein.

thirstily by the hot dry earth. During these liminal moments between life and death, hot vapors travel visibly up toward the sky. When the body stops moving, devotees begin to descend the mountain while the relatives butcher the meat. The animal is now *prasād*, or the remains of whatever the heavens have consumed as seen in the rising vapors. In this leftover capacity the goat not only provides rare sustenance to the extended family who purchased it, but it also affords those who may not have even been present to partake of the same food as the divine.

Just after the goat is slaughtered, the body lies in a position similar to the stone iconography of the slain buffalo demon. Perhaps the ancient artists' technique was taken more from life than previously imagined. The iconography suggests the integration and sublimation of folk practices, such as animal sacrifice rather than fire sacrifice, into the mainstream classical religion over time. Paintings of Navratri in the collection of the Palace Museum of Mewār show royal celebrations of the killing of the buffalo demon by the goddess. This festival always involved the sacrifice of a live buffalo by the mahārāṇā. In addition to being an interesting documentation of ritual as early as the eighteenth century, these painted depictions of sacrifice display the form of the dead sacrificial victim—the same as the classical iconography.

Navratri is an example of a pan-Indian holiday celebrated in a modern way at an archaeological site. The Gujarati *garbha*, a circle dance with sticks, was never danced within the archaeological compound even though Navratri has probably existed from the tenth century, when the Ambikā temple was built. Many modern forms of worship represent a visual rupture from traditional uses of this



FIGURE 6.19. *Pūrṇaghata* motif next to woman with overflowing pot on her head, May 2002, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

temple, with the exception of the pots of sprouting *paddhi* grown over the nine nights of Navratri and thrown into water on the tenth day (fig. 6.18). These pots are probably an ancient form of worship, as is reflected in the *purna ghaṭa* (overflowing pot) motif commonly seen on ancient stone temples and on the Ambikā temple (fig. 6.19).

Hindus in Jagat celebrate the nine nights of the goddess in different ways. Public celebrations vary from brightly lit nocturnal electric *pūjās* in the temple courtyards to virgin girls carrying germinating sprouts on their heads, to sacrificing animals. Private observances include fasting, vows, and rituals conducted at family *kūldevī* shrines. The consumption of alcohol, meditation, or trance may also form a part of private practice. Navratri draws various overlapping audiences to a wide variety of rituals that unfold over a ten-day period, ending with Dusserah, the celebration of the defeat of the demon Ravana.

The public dancing of *garbha* has only taken hold in Rājāsthān over the past decade. *Garbha* is an example of technology's role in globalization. The introduction of cassette music has metamorphosed the celebration of Navratri by taking a Gujarati folk dance and making it a pan-Indian passion.³⁴ Every village and city neighborhood sponsors its own *garbha* celebration. Electric lights are strung,



FIGURE 6.20. Children enjoying *garbha* dancing, Jagat, 2002. © Deborah Stein.

perishable icons of the Durgā are ensconced in niches, powdered colors are used to draw images of Durgā, and auspicious pots of plenty are filled with a coconut and placed on the altar. Then, whether in the tiny village of Unwās or the neighborhoods of Udaipur, the blaring music of the same cassette rings forth and everyone joins in the circle dancing until the wee hours of the morning. At Unwās I was told as recently as the early 1990s the *garbha* was performed. This new pan-Indian fashion had replaced *kaṭhā* (storytelling). The villagers of Unwās used to gather and listen to a storyteller recount the *Devī Māhātmya*, the story of Durgā's cosmic battle.³⁵ *Garbha* has taken over and is much touted by young people, as seen in figure 6.20, an image of children dancing in Jagat. This is an example of how technology has changed local alliances into nationwide affiliations. Even though the children of Unwās or Jagat may never have been to Udaipur, they are connected to children everywhere by dancing *garbha* like everyone else. While some ethnologists and folklorists may lament the dying of local rituals, *garbha* represents the spreading and sharing of a Gujarati folk dance, not an international import.

Two *garbha* dances take place in Jagat: one Rājput celebration takes place within the archaeological compound of the Ambikā temple while the other Meena festivities unfold at the temporary shrine near the bus stand. On this first night of Navratri the Rājput dance was somewhat deserted, whereas the Meena event was quite popular. Both dance their Rājāsthani *garbha* the same way, a fun-loving, if not fully perfected, tribute to the Gujarati original. Both *garbhas* play the same



FIGURE 6.21. “Portrait” of the goddess Ambā Mātā (Girl possessed by Ambā Mātā), Ambikā temple, spring 2002.
© Deborah Stein.

cassette as heard at Eklingjī, at Unwās, at Jāwar, and in Udaipur. Both play the cassette at the same intensely loud volumes resounding in the night throughout Mewār. At Jāwar Mātā’s temple elderly women sing high-pitched *bhajans* while *garbha* music blares in the courtyard. Old and young, oblivious to each other just yards away, sing to the goddess in the name of two social orders, which are really just two manifestations of the same desire to gather among friends, family, and neighborhoods during the night, as weather cools and the workload is reduced because of the season.

Toward the end of Navratri the pots of *paddhi* begin to sprout. At Eklingjī, at Jāwar, and at the Ambikā temple the pot of germinating sprouts grows hidden at the side of the *garbhagrha*. In private shrines sprouts are also made to grow. When they are fully grown on Dusserah, the tenth day of the celebration, the *paddhi* is taken on a procession through the village. Unmarried girls carry pots of water on their head. The water splashes and spills due to their possessed undulations (fig. 6.21). Meanwhile the Meenas, on what they counted as the ninth day, held a pūjā at their temporary shrine.³⁶ Surprisingly, it was Pundit Purohit, also used by the ruling thakur of Jagat, and not the set of Gujarati priests who conducted the



FIGURE 6.22. Plastic Meena goddess, later drowned in the well, May 2002, Jagat.
© Deborah Stein.

majority of the rites, who was reading for them. He told me the *mandalas* were exactly the same and that he never understood the content of the Sanskrit he read. The next day, on the last day of the festival called Dusserah, the plastic goddess is drowned in the local well (fig. 6.22). Whereas the germinating powers of the goddess, expressed in the sprouting *paddhi*, remain an integral part of the celebrations, the reenactment of her sacrifices in battle are waning.

The autumnal celebration of Navratri in October of 2002 did not yield the buffalo sacrifice I had been told to expect within the archaeological compound of the Ambikā temple. Instead, a goat was hastily brought covertly one morning during the nine-day festival when no one was around. Two men quickly severed the head of the unsuspecting goat, which was in the shadow of the Ambikā temple, on the grass between the temple and the Cāmuṇḍā shrine, out of view of passersby. The men quickly grabbed the head and went to offer it to Cāmuṇḍā in front of her shrine, and they drank some of the blood poured in a little bowl for her. Then they hurriedly brought the dead goat around to the back of the temple, even further from casual view, and proceeded to butcher it in the corner of the complex, just under the archaeological attendant's house. The parts were whisked away just as quickly as the goat had appeared, and soon it was almost as if nothing had ever happened.³⁷

Even more elusive was the buffalo that never appeared. Every year a diverse committee of people pool their funds to purchase a buffalo for sacrifice at Jagat. In 2002 the official calendar condensed two days of Navratri into one. As I have mentioned, while the Rājputs were following the calendar, the Meenas and Bhils were



FIGURE 6.23. Human form crawls up from the severed neck of the buffalo demon's body, just as the goddess confidently and easily sinks her trident into the sacrificial animal's back, her foot triumphantly poised on his lower back, while her lion vehicle chomps eagerly into the flank. Tenth-century iconography, Durgā Mahiṣāsura-mardini, c. 961 CE, quartzite Ambikā temple, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

counting their days according to the sun. Owing to the calendar confusion that year, the buffalo was not sacrificed on the tenth day since it was also the inauspicious eleventh day, according to the Meenas and Bhils. A tailor who was collecting the funds in the neighboring village had told me the sacrifice would take place the following Sunday, but it never materialized until finally it would have to wait for the next year. In this seventh year of drought, no one could afford to sacrifice a buffalo, but they refused to admit that the yearly tradition could not take place. Earlier that year the new goddess had been installed, so perhaps all the funds had gone to the costly consecration ceremonies.

The buffalo sacrifice would have transpired somewhat similarly to the clandestine goat sacrifice and would have resulted in a scene mirroring that on the walls of the Ambikā temple at Jagat, that of the Mahiṣāsuramardinī sculpture of the goddess vanquishing the buffalo demon. When the ritual event is commemorated in two-dimensional paintings such as those depicting the mahārāṇā sacrificing the buffalo during Navratri, the line between ritual and iconography is blurred. There, the historically recorded ritual performance looks much like the stone iconography of the Devī Māhātmya myths.

The relationship between myth and ritual can be used to describe the similarities and differences between the stone image and the sacrificial act. The stone image captures a mythical moment when the demon is slain. This moment is reenacted through animal sacrifice. The makers of the stone image may have relied on their contemporaneous visual exposure to ritual. Thus, the stone image ends up looking like the ritual reenacting the myth, in contrast to the conventional consensus that myth precedes ritual. The demon is located in human form, spurting from the neck of the sculpture and in the blood spilled from the real animal's neck (fig. 6.23). This "animal liquor" is sometimes consumed after the sacrifice.³⁸

In the iconography of the goddess killing the buffalo demon, the demon springs forth from the severed neck. Blood drains and vapors rise from the neck. The physical movement of liquid and vapor provide physical visual depictions of an inner life, spirit, or soul—ideas that may otherwise sound quite metaphysical. This literal depiction of what is inside the body relies heavily on the senses and does not require any metaphoric leaps of faith or complicated canonical explanations. This nontextual form of revelation points to an ancient practice firmly rooted in oral tradition.

CONCLUSION

The masses of people who attend the fairs and festivals in southern Rājāsthān may barely cast a glance at the deities housed in temples. The marketplace often takes over as a space of display and exchange. The fairs and festivals reflect the changing seasons, and their success is often linked to the success or impending desperation of a particular season's economy or weather. Temples have served as catalysts for



FIGURE 6.24. Original Śitalā icon, broken from her frame, covered in dots of *sindūr*. Note that the figural icon (to the right) and the “empty” space she once inhabited are filled with these indexical traces of people’s prayers. Photo taken prior to *pratiṣṭhā* ceremonies in May 2002. © Deborah Stein.

commercial activities for thousands of years; however, the historicity of their present use reflects the recent explosion of a global market economy and the inequities that ensue.

In Jagat, Meenas and Bhils, who worship primarily at the Mallar Mātā temple, have carefully dragged most of the important sculpture from the Ambikā temple up the mountain to their shrine. These pieces form a sort of *dharmic* museum, or religious collection, which lends a numinous aura of historic authority to the folk faith followed there. At the same time, this protects their deities from thieves, who could never get the pieces of stone and themselves down the mountain without enraging everyone or simply plunging to their deaths. Even so, this collection does not inherit the slightest colonial notion of preserving patrimony. Most of the faces of deities, even the tiny heads of framing deities, eventually succumb to enormous amounts of lovingly applied *sindūr* powder and colorful foil (fig. 6.24). While this technique of honoring a deity is well suited to stones under trees, it is somewhat ill adapted for finely carved medieval sculpture. Special treatment actually protects the images much more than if they were left at the site to be broken and carried away, or even if they were put in museums, where their “preservation” would be accomplished only at the expense of their original context.

Jagat’s inhabitants redefine the distinction between temple and museum to claim the buildings and sculpture of their ancestors as their own and not something to be delocalized in the hands of the nation-state. At Ekliṅgji, the continuity of practice in the sixteenth-century Śrī Ekliṅgji temple has been stretched to

include reinstating the one-thousand-year-old Lakulīśa temple. This administrative, legal, and literal co-opting of archaeological space from the nation follows a long feudal tradition in Mewār of maintaining regional independence in spite of empire or state. Although the uses of these archaeological sites are often new inventions not based on ancient history, the sites have always served as places to stage political power and to define identity.

Temple as Legal Body

Aesthetics and the Legislation of Antiquity

Legal texts reveal the philosophical underpinnings of temple administration. How do we define a temple as living or dead? Contemporary use at Jagat and Eklingji changes the materiality of the sites themselves. Is authentic history limited to a history that includes change—the object agent as an organic form? Or do we privilege heritage as the only way to preserve history through a selective process to curate the present at ancient monuments? In India the religious and legal status of deities raises the question of how to endow a god. And, as one can imagine in a setting where the life and death of monuments and the estate of a deity are in question, India becomes a place where the speech of architectural preservation models moves beyond the outdated simplistic rhetorical fantasies of iconoclasm to include the deaths of people, or “humanoclasm,” and, I would argue, humanity at large, rather than deities and their monuments alone.

I coin the term “humanoclasm” here to describe acts of political murder as a result of art historical dispute. In South Asia, two of the most recent and famous examples of humanoclasm have been sparked by the archaeological sites of Ayodhyā in India and the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan. When the Bamiyan Buddhas fell to the Taliban in 2001, many in the art history department at the University of California, Berkeley, asked me what I thought of the Taliban’s destruction of these precious, ancient, enormous examples of Buddhist art. Like many, I could not unhinge these statues from the deaths of people for the same reasons. The Taliban action spoke loudly and revealed an outcry over objects in the wake of relative silence over the plight of real people. The advent of humanoclasm at the turn of the twenty-first century suggests the stakes for temple administration are very high. For this reason, I have included as evidence large portions

of legal mandates and rather substantial quotations in my analysis of an administrative dialectic between a temple fighting for the right to be defined as private and a temple laying the foundation to become public.

Different forms of violence—ranging from communal strife to the theft and kidnapping of a deity—ensue from the stone agency of temples. Unlike modern artworks, the two ancient Indian temples at Jagat and Ekliṅgī were not conceived as “artworks.” These buildings are ideological and material commodities. Arjun Appadurai proposes that “the commodity situation in the social life of any ‘thing’ be defined as the situation in which its exchangeability (past, present, or future) for some other thing is its socially relevant feature.”¹ Some may object since an archaeological compound is fixed in situ and, hence, cannot be exchanged. But few would disagree that monuments change hands. Each group of people who use a site owns it in their own way. The past of the two temples in question displays different modes of ownership, only some of which were privileged enough to be included in the historical record. The present of the two temples reveals tensions among various groups who seek to define the temples by claiming them through praxis.

LEGISLATING EKLIṅGĪ

At Ekliṅgī we find a temple still in the court—claimed as private by the mahārāṇā of Mewār and as public by both the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and the Devasthan Department in Rājāsthān. Recent evidence of postcolonial royal claims to the family temple and the numinous ruler of Mewār comes from the published materials of multiple charitable trusts, whereas court records of legal battles with the state remain inaccessible to the public because they are ongoing. Concerned by the fate of the king’s role as dutiful guardian in 1970, Mahārāṇā Bhagwat Singhji wrote to Indira Gandhi: “The Institution of Mahārāṇā has a history of fourteen centuries behind it. . . . I am merely its trustee and servant. . . . It is not my private possession. It belongs to the people. . . . If traditions . . . are not preserved, what will there be left to inspire the nation?”²

The issue of how tradition is preserved within the context of nationhood defines much of the modern debate about how and by whom temple sites are to be administered. Most temples fall into religious trusts, which are either public and tax exempt or private and taxable. A third type of trust, the charitable trust, is always public and always tax exempt. At Ekliṅgī a private religious trust and public charitable trust coexist.

At Jagat, in contrast, no official trust existed as of 2002; however, installation ceremonies held for a new icon may pave the way for the future formation of a public religious trust. Local people—whether male or female; old or young; Rājput, Bhil, or Meena—all seek to control their own patrimony while the state seeks to preserve sites as historical monuments. Either the ASI or the Rājāsthān

State Archaeological Survey officially administers sites such as Unwās, Īswāl, and Jagat, whereas local communities claim the sites as their own. These groups paint the temples, renovate them with marble, install new icons when old sculptures are stolen, practice folk forms of religion such as divination, use the temples for seasonal festivals, and ensure basic daily *pūjā* (worship) at the shrines. Locals, the state, and private trusts all steal these sites from each other by limiting and awarding access to various groups of people.

Since India's independence in 1947, those who inherited the cultural title of mahārāṇā have sought to maintain control of the Ekliṅgī temple complex via Indian national law. They also make claims to the site based on their family histories. The current mahārāṇā, Śriji Arvind Singh Mewār, considers his control of the site to be his *dharma* (duty). By turning the administration of the Ekliṅgī temple complex over to the state, he would be the first of many generations to renounce the role of *dīwān* (regent) of Śri Ekliṅgī, the divine ruler of Mewār. Also with independence came the end of feudalism and colonialism, as well as the birth of democracy and the nation. Mewāris were no longer subjects but voters. But national law has not entirely replaced tradition in southern Rājāsthān—far from it. And while the title of mahārāṇā is no longer a political office per se, it is still taken quite seriously. The naming of Śri Arvind Singh, the younger brother, as the trust administrator is still seen by many as an illegitimate attempt to name the second-born heir to the throne. This debate has sparked many legal battles, with most records not available to the public.

The deity Śri Ekliṅgī has been and will always be the king of Mewār. So the question turns to who his *dīwān* should be and, more important, how the legal status of nationhood sits on the shoulders of a god. What is the status of a divine ruler after independence? The current mahārāṇā of Mewār administers several trusts and a multimillion-dollar corporation of heritage hotels. He styles himself mahārāṇā/CEO. As for Śri Ekliṅgī, his *dīwān* is working hard to define a role for him after the abolition of the monarchy in India. In his will Śri Arvind Singhji's father ensured that the Śri Ekliṅgī temple would continue to be administered as part of a trust after his demise, which took place on November 3, 1984. The mission of the Śri Ekliṅgī Trust is "for the preservation and perpetuation of *pūjā* (worship) to the Ruler of Mewār, Paramēśvara Maharaj Śri Ekliṅgī, in the traditional form of worship, Paddhatis."³

The commodification of monuments in the postcolonial era results from this shift from royal to national and state patronage and from the pressures of a global economy. Under colonial law the government holds permission to commodify an object with the exception of "any image or symbol used for the purpose of any religious observance" or "anything which the owner desires to retain on any reasonable ground personal to himself or to any of his ancestors or to any member of his family."⁴ Herein lies the difference with theft, which involves the commodification of a religious symbol. Strapped with the burden of development and the care of a population more than one billion strong, the government of India does not

have the resources needed to fully look after the vast wealth of historical monuments under its auspices. As the result of this strain, private organizations, either corporate or village collectives, step in to ensure renovation, pūjā, and protection according to their own varied values.

Like ancient inscriptions, the mission statements of the trust served mahārāṇās as records of their acts for posterity. The goals of the private Śrī Ekliṅgī Religious Trust are to handle “the upkeep and expenses of religious establishments and the encouragement of spiritual practice in practical terms” and to support “the restoration and conservation of temples and religious sites, the preservation and perpetuation of customary and traditional religious ceremonies.”⁵ This sounds similar to the goals set out by the *Cintra Praśāsti* inscription in the thirteenth century for ritual and maintenance of religious sites.

On the one hand, the priorities of state organizations seem to be just the opposite: maintenance first and ritual second. On the other hand, the Jaipur Ancient Monuments Act of 1941 states that “compulsory purchase” is illegal in the case of a monument that “is used for religious observances.”⁶ The government was allowed to contract with the owner for preservation. Article 10, section 1 of the same act states, “A place of worship or a shrine maintained by the Government under this Act shall not be used for any purpose inconsistent with its character.” Section 2 adds, “When a protected monument of which the Government has taken charge is used for religious worship or observance by any community, the Nazim shall make due provision for the protection of such monument or such part thereof from pollution or desecration.”⁷

The mahārāṇās maintain that the Ekliṅgī temple complex is the home of the ruler of Mewār. Henri Stern has argued that the Ekliṅgī temple serves to reify the mahārāṇās’ power in three ways: to reinforce the Bhil alliance, to legitimize the right to rule in the Brahman upbringing of Bappa Rāwal, and to emphasize Bappa Rāwal’s unique role as the exclusive guardian of the liṅgaṃ as earned by the *tapas* (aesthetic trials) of forest dwelling.⁸ The challenge to this view lies in Mewār’s rule by the state of Rājāsthān and the government of India. Under this rubric, according to the Preservation Act of 1941, the ASI should administer the site. Photographs of the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple complex and the deity himself in the ASI archives in New Delhi suggest the ASI held control in the 1950s. The Devasthan Department of the government of Rājāsthān also claims title to the Ekliṅgī temple complex, but none of the current court records are available to the public.

The Devasthan Department administers many living sites such as the Jagannātha temple in the heart of Udaipur. These buildings serve religious and tourist functions simultaneously. Despite being a department in the Rājāsthān government, the Devasthan Department’s mission is quite different from the general goals of the Rājāsthān Archaeological Department. The Rājāsthān Archaeological Department is responsible for the protection of ancient monuments with respect for those in worship, whereas the Devasthan institute administers the finances of

worship.⁹ According to departmental documents, Devasthan has three relationships to the sites it administers: ownership, partnership, and contract with a trust that administers it. The mahārāṇā claims that the Ekliṅgī temple is a family temple in a private trust. According to his *Declaration about Trusts*, “His late Highness Mahārāṇā Śrī Bhupal Singji Bahadur by virtue of the constitution granted by him as Sovereign to the then people of Mewār on the 23rd day of May, 1947, had also given a formal shape of a Trust to such properties, and since that date the various properties were separated from the Devasthan Department and were since then held as a separate Trust for the maintenance and upkeep of various religious institutions.”¹⁰

Although the current mahārāṇā's father explicitly stated on the eve of Indian independence that the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple was not part of the Devasthan Department, the director of Devasthan sees it differently. Poonam Sagar, the Devasthan Department director in the Udaipur office, sees the Ekliṅgī temple complex as the public property of the state, contracted to a trust for administration.

Bhupal Singh argues in the *Declaration about Trusts* that the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple has always been a family temple and not a public temple. A photo of the main icon from 1950 shows Śrī Ekliṅgī, the ruler of Mewār, in the form of a black, four-faced stone liṅgaṃ, under worship in the main shrine (see fig. 0.3). Why would the ASI, a national governmental organization, have taken pictures of the god of the inner sanctum of a family temple in 1950 if it was already deemed not to be public patrimony in the late 1940s? Family temples are not public. According to the Bombay Trusts Act (1950):

It is not unusual for rich families to install their deities in the temple for the worship of the family members. Such temples are located within the premises of the bungalow or residential quarters. It is settled law that such family deities may be endowed with property without any question of a public trust or such rich families may make a sort of permanent provision for the *Pūjā*, *Archan*, etc., and for the upkeep of the temple. Family deity may even be a permanently installed idol. Merely because the members of the public are allowed to visit the temple freely, that does not go to show that they visited the temple *as of right*. Our High Court as well as Privy Council held that Hindu sentiment does not permit anybody to prevent the devotees from visiting the private temple. Such temples are called *Ghar Derasars* and are not public trusts as defined under the Act.¹¹

On the one hand, the Ekliṅgī temple fits many of these criteria with one paramount exception: the temple does not exist within the family residence. On the other hand, the Bombay Trusts Act explicitly states that mere visiting of the temple on the part of the public does not constitute a public temple.

Palace archival records from the late nineteenth century list expenses for the upkeep of the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple along with a monastery and resident clergy. Local folklore locates the Samadhi spot of the last resident monk within an upturned cupola architectural element on-site (fig. 7.1). Here in this elegant ceiling, fallen and



FIGURE 7.1. Samadhi Spot of the last nonhouseholding monk of Ekliṅgī. © Deborah Stein.

upturned toward the heavens, the last monk is said to have meditated to his death within the upper area of the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple complex, behind the tenth-century temple built to honor the Pāśupata-Śaiva saint Lakuliśa. In a direct axial relationship to the monastic monument where a 971 inscription records the Pāśupata victory over local Buddhists and Jains in a debate sponsored by the Guhila dynasty, the last resident monk attained moksha.

The administration of the monastery (*maṭha*) during the second half of the twentieth century suggests interesting parallels between ritual practice and the navigation of the law. The palace still holds several priests on the payroll, but today they are householders who live nearby with their own families. They no longer live celibate monastic lives in a religious community residence. The monastery lies within the complex, but according to the law, the building no longer seems to qualify as a monastery at all. The Bombay Public Trusts Act (1950) [section 2(9), 3] states, “Position of Independent Maṭha:—Where in a Maṭha, no religious instructions are imparted, no spiritual service is rendered to any body of disciples and no member of the public is allowed to enter the place of worship without permission although worship is carried out by the Pūjāris according to Vedic usage, the Maṭha cannot be held to be a real Maṭha or temple within the definition of the Act.”¹²

The maṭha at Ekliṅgī, according to this law, does not qualify as a real maṭha. This distinction is important since, if it did qualify as a real maṭha, there would be a renunciant spiritual head who could potentially pose a legal challenge to the mahārāṇā as Ekliṅgī’s main trustee. “The Mahant has large powers of disposal over the surplus income of a maṭha of which he is the *maṭhadhipati* and the only restriction is that he cannot spend anything out of it for his personal use, unconnected with the dignity of his office.”¹³ Clearly, these powers could infringe



FIGURE 7.2. Maṭha (Pāśupata monastery), painting of Puja at the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple, c. eighteenth century, Ekliṅgī. © Deborah Stein.

on the mahārāṇā's right to decide the religious and aesthetic fate of the Ekliṅgī temple complex.

A fading mural (fig. 7.2), barely discernible within the maṭha today, seems to date to approximately 1750–1920, a date range that could be narrowed through close comparison of the rectangular red-painted panel at the bottom, which is very similar to the red panels of the same shape and style found at the Ambā Mātā temple in Udaipur. In the maṭha mural we see a different history of the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple and its maṭha—a story not of Brahmin celibate priests or mahārāṇās worshipping icons but rather of the row of shrines that lead into the temple and the Mali caste of gardeners who sell garlands to the pilgrims coming to the temple, just as they still do every Monday evening on the most special day of worship. Here we find a visual record of both a non-elite caste and the full range of devotees who stopped to buy a garland for the ruler of Mewār from the mid-eighteenth century to the early twentieth—a colonial period, a time just after the most famous histories of Mewār were being written by Nainsi and Śyāmaladās.

As of 2009, although the *pūjāris* still used the maṭha at Ekliṅgī to prepare for pūjā, it is no longer a residence with a celibate lineage of disciples, and no one

sleeps there. The timing of this transition from a live-in maṭha with a celibate guru to a place that householder pūjārī use to prepare for pūjā suggests an interesting legal change. According to the Bombay Public Trusts Act [section 2(13), 29], concerning inheritance by lineage or by blood, “the fact that the succeeding Mahant was always celibate does not lead to a presumption that the property was dedicated for religious uses. The Bombay High Court in the case of Amardas V. Harmanbhai [found] that ‘a Sanyasi’s heir is always his *chela*’ [disciple]. This protects lineage heirs from biological heirs. The aforementioned property is not considered part of the public trust.”¹⁴

The position of residential head guru at the maṭha at Ekliṅgī was dismantled after the last guru died in the 1960s or 1970s. This corresponds roughly to the period between 1955, when the Deed of Trust was made, and 1973, when temple assets were recorded. By 1984, when Arvind Singh was made heir following his father’s demise, there could be no sanyasi contenders for Śrī Ekliṅgī property since the last sanyasi leader of the maṭha had no *chela*.

The problem of biological versus teacher/disciple lineage would only arise if the temple were considered a public trust. The *Declaration about Trusts* from the House of Mewār suggests the temple complex had always been a private temple maintained by the family. Article 9 declares: “THAT the properties belonging to Śrī Pameshwarji Maharaj, the deity of the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple, are entirely and exclusively from the various accumulations and accretions made from time to time by contributions made by the Rulers of Mewār and the members of their Family. No Bhets from the public are accepted in the Temple.”¹⁵

The trust declaration insists that “provision for other visitors is made by providing a separate box (‘Golak’) with an inscription specifically mentioning that the Bhets are only for charitable purposes, placed outside the main temple but within the temple premises, in which the outside ‘Darshanarthis’ place their offerings.” These charitable donations fund the Śrī Shiv Shakti Peeth Trust Fund. The location of the box outside the main temple further distinguishes between the private religious trust and the public charitable trust, which is tax exempt. The Religious Trust Declaration relies on generous contribution by the family only to ensure a private trust.

According to the Bombay Public Trusts Act (1950) [section 2(10)], “A person who has made large donations for the maintenance of the temple has clearly a substantial interest.”¹⁶ Proof of a family’s “substantial interest” may come from inscriptions. Written records engraved into the temple at Ekliṅgī suggest that the temple historically was privately owned, even though it may have been publicly used. A closer analysis of all inscriptions, including unpublished *sūtradhāra* inscriptions, may shed more light on this issue. An elephant drawing still visible on the wall to the side of the entrance to the Lakulīśa temple, for example, is part of a cluster of mason’s marks, including some that link the temple to the Sompurā guild, via the famous architect Mandana, and other marks that tell interesting

political guild histories researched in the field with local lineage keepers and published by Tryna Lyons.¹⁷ Even though we have mason's marks that leave traces of artistic agency, it seems safe to argue that the most substantial financial donations were royally funded.

Does the 971 CE inscription linking Guhila dynastic patronage of the Pāśupata cult at the Lakuliśa temple and the underground maṭha on the hill adjacent to the site suggest that the temple was a private trust owned by the diwāns of the ruler of Mewār? Or does it suggest that the temple existed in some ways as an arm of the fledgling state reveling in newfound hegemony? In contrast, a site like Jagat has no reference to royalty until three centuries after it was erected. Does this lacuna in turn suggest a public as opposed to a private temple in the tenth century? It is unlikely that this distinction even existed in the early medieval period, so when, in our late capitalist moment, we gaze back according to the law in India as an independent state, which moment do we choose to diachronically define the legal mandates of temple aesthetics for the present and future?

The Lakuliśa inscription at Ekliṅgī links the Guhila dynasty with the Pāśupata ascetics in residence as early as 971 and probably earlier. Extensive repairs were recorded by a series of Mewāri mahārāṇās, the most famous of which is Mahārāṇā Raimal's inscription of 1545, which records the construction of the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple and implies the dedication of a new icon. The Bombay Trusts Act [section 2(13), 19] sets forth the

distinction between public and private trust:—Recently the Supreme Court held that the origin of the temple, the manner in which its affairs are managed, the nature and extent of the gifts received by it, rights exercised by devotees in regard to worship therein, the consciousness of the manager and the consciousness of the devotees themselves as to the public character of a temple are the factors that go to establish whether the temple is public or private.¹⁸

The history of extensive donations on the part of the royal family of Mewār together with the legends of Harit Rashi and Bappa Rāwal are used to suggest that Ekliṅgī was a private family temple for hundreds of years. The tenth-century Lakuliśa inscription links the Guhila dynasty with the Pāśupata ascetics but does not clearly illuminate the nature of their tenth-century power dynamics.

The question of Ekliṅgī's historical status as a private or public temple does not hinge on inscriptions alone. The Bombay Trusts Act clarifies that

there are many private temples which are places of public religious worship in the sense that the members of the public are allowed to visit these temples. On that account they do not become public trust. Recently the Supreme Court held that—Feeding of *sadhus* and giving hospitality to wayfarers, celebration of festivals, public freely admitted for *darśan*, installation of an idol permanently on a pedestal, a temple constructed on separate ground from residential quarter . . . etc., are not conclusive proof or dedication to the public.¹⁹

Even the temple's location outside the palace residence or the celebration of festivals, such as the Tailor's Mela or Mahāśivrātri by the Mewāri public, do not seem to menace Ekliṅgī's status as a private family temple. If we return to section 2(13), 19, of the same act, however, we find that gifts are not the only determining factor in whether the temple is considered private or public. The trust manager and the devotees are set on a par with each other, each providing an important factor in the establishment of a temple as a public or private trust.

Religious trusts can be either private or public, but charitable trusts can only be public. Since only a public trust is tax exempt, the mahārāṇā has separated his charitable activities from the Śrī Ekliṅgī Religious Trust.²⁰ Section 118 of the Indian Succession Act gives illustrations of bequests for religious or charitable uses:

—for the relief of poor people; for maintenance of sick soldiers; for the erection or support of a hospital; for the education and preferment of orphans; for the support of scholars; for the erection or support of a school; for the building repairs of a bridge; for the making of roads; for the erection or support of a church; for the repairs of a church; for the benefit of religion; for the formation or support of a public garden.²¹

Whereas the Maharana Mewār Charitable Foundation runs schools, takes care of orphans and widows, sponsors research, and makes donations for medical care, the Śrī Ekliṅgī Religious Trust is responsible for renovation. Renovation is considered both charitable and religious under the law.²²

To establish the Śrī Ekliṅgī Religious Trust as a private trust is to ensure aesthetic freedom for the mahārāṇā's family without intervention from the state. This aesthetic freedom writes the history of Mewār as visual choices are permanently inscribed into the archaeological site. The national ASI, the Rājāsthān state Devasthan Department, and the Śrī Ekliṅgī Religious Trust, with the mahārāṇā/CEO as chairman, all vie to preserve this historical religious site as they see fit. Each organization profits from its aesthetic decisions in the form of legitimization and revenue from religious donations and tourism. Intended for the public, a portion of the revenue usually reaches the people in one way or another. Radical renovation is encouraged in Indian law:

The stupendous activity in the direction of repair, expansion and renovation work connected with these temples, some of which are of great architectural beauty, undertaken in an organized manner by organizations like [the] Anandji Kalyanji Trust, Ahmedābād, and other smaller trusts is such that it is worthy of healthy emulation by Hindu temples and organizations. In particular, we would very strongly recommend that Hindu temples may with advantage pool their resources and undertake the work of repair and renovation on the lines on which this work is being done by the Jain Community.²³

The Bombay Trusts Act encourages all repair, expansion, and renovation. The Jain communities upheld as the model have generally tended toward renovation closer to archaeological aesthetic choices; however, even Jain improvements can

be quite extreme, as I observed in the renovation work under way at Ghānerāo in 2002. The aesthetics of renovation with the archaeological departments lean toward the preservation of historical ruin, whereas the Devasthan Department leans toward active use of historical sites or, with private religious trusts, toward modern improvements to befit a deity's home.

The Śrī Ekliṅgī Religious Trust and the Devasthan Department both seek to preserve the monuments as history, to protect the site from theft, and to market heritage in the form of material and ideological property. Both organizations seek to protect people from being exploited as cultural property to enhance the value of a site (via food, dance, handicraft, etc.) for tourism purposes. Much of the literature on heritage and cultural tourism devotes itself to marketing sites responsibly by controlling and limiting access and by ensuring that conservation goes hand in hand with preservation. When "living communities" are involved, site managers are encouraged to limit access to avoid "deformation of traditional behavior, crafts and culture" and to buffer the substantial economic differences between locals and tourists.²⁴

What, then, if the activities of the local population at the site are not "traditional" but modern? And what if modernity is not based on technology or the West but rather on folk culture or the reconstruction of identity in new political and economic circumstances? These distinctions may explain why many ancient sites such as Jagat, Īswāl, and Unwās fall under the auspices of the archaeological department and not the Devasthan Department: the temples are in use, not "still" in use. Local populations at the end of the twentieth century have put these temples back into use without setting up trusts that have to be registered with the Devasthan Department.

According to Melanie Smith,

there has been some concern that the protection of heritage has somehow been responsible for the destruction of the present. [John] Urry . . . states that:

The protection of the past conceals the destruction of the present. There is an absolute distinction between authentic history (continuing and therefore dangerous) and heritage (past, dead and safe). The latter, in short, conceals social and spatial inequalities, masks a shallow commercialism and consumerism, and may in part at least destroy elements of the building or artifacts supposedly being consumed.²⁵

Whereas the Devasthan Department concerns itself with regulating the administration of temple sites in the present, the Śrī Ekliṅgī Trust engages in a more complex negotiation of history and the present. Śrī Arvind Singh Mewār sums up this awkward dance between the past and the present with regard to his own identity: "I'm proud to be a citizen of India, but in our constitutional democracy it is not easy for me to evaluate, quantify or explain to others the magnitude of my inheritance. . . . I am confident that with the blessings of Śrī Ekliṅgī and the trust reposed in me by my father, I will be able to continue to serve Manav Dharma befittingly as the present custodian of the House of Mewār."²⁶

If Śriji Arvind Singh Mewār, his father, and his descendants strive to define an identity for the office of mahārāṇā after the abolition of monarchy, then the ruler of Mewār, Śri Ekliṅgī, has a much more difficult task since the legal code of the Indian nation makes provisions for humans, not for deities. The modern dīwān is a trustee who uses the legal system to control access to the site in order to define the deity's identity as the ruler of Mewār. The *dharma* of the dīwān is to ensure that *darśan*, or the exchange of gaze that characterizes mutual definition and recognition between Śri Ekliṅgī and Mewār, continues to transpire. The fusion of future and past by an organization such as the Śri Ekliṅgī Religious Trust confuses the categories of "authentic history" and "heritage," so what keeps the temple alive is in some ways its own death. Continuity keeps architecture alive, but the temple breaks with a past, self-consciously orchestrated in the shadow of the nation-state.

The state of Rājāsthān distinguishes between the past and the present by creating the Archaeological Department and the Devasthan Department—one based on state production of history and the other based on state regulation of religious sites. The natural interface of history and ritual at many ancient temple sites in Rājāsthān makes this form of administration somewhat difficult since both types of temple site seem to fall into the category of "authentic history (continuing and therefore dangerous)."²⁷ The Archaeological Department is responsible for heritage: for buildings, not for people. The question then arises: for whom are the buildings preserved—for foreign tourists in space or for local tourists in time?

The ASI project at the end of the nineteenth century was "to dig and discover, to classify, to reproduce and describe, to copy and decipher and to cherish and conserve."²⁸ These goals fit Peter Larkham's definition of preservation: "the retention, in largely unchanged form, of sites and objects of major cultural significance."²⁹ Larkham contrasts preservation with conservation, where sites are restored for modern use—in other words, turned into heritage.³⁰ After Sir William Jones founded the Asiatic Society in 1784, the beginnings of the ASI were under way. The Asiatic Society's research was being published in a journal by 1788, and a museum was established in Bengal in 1814 to house archaeological objects.³¹ These early British efforts created historical dates for Indian history by deciphering Gupta and Kuṭila scripts, translating the reign dates of Indian rulers into dates on the Christian calendar, and correlating dates with Greek history. Only in the latter half of the nineteenth century did Alexander Cunningham follow the paths of Chinese pilgrims such as Faxian and Xuanzang to complete the first ASI in November of 1861. The survey was abruptly abolished for four years only to be revived in 1870, when Cunningham was made director general for a central office responsible for the entire country.

The definition of "heritage" is more complex than the tourism model suggests.³² Most would agree that turning an old maharaja's train into a "Palace on Wheels" is a form of heritage used for marketing Rājāsthāni kingship to middle-class foreign tourists.³³ It is difficult to define as "heritage" Bhil and Meena practices of



FIGURE 7.3. Jantar Mantar, sixteenth century, Jaipur. © Deborah Stein.

divination and other forms of folk religion at sites such as Jagat and Unwās, however, because to do so would in many ways objectify people engaged in their normal religious practice.³⁴ In large part, the difference is commercial. According to Larkham's definition, these sites do qualify as conservation: they are restored and given a modern use. This conservation remains in keeping with the ancient inscriptional definitions of restoration, which involved major renovation and rebuilding. The temples are given a quintessentially modern use since they showed no signs of use or folk religion as of the 1950s. However, the folk religion practiced at these temples is probably as old as the buildings themselves, even though the rites were most likely practiced in parallel with temple ritual rather than within the temple compound. The return of folk religion to the Ambikā temple of Jagat suggests an ironic circle by which indigenous forms of goddess worship were canonized in the eighth through tenth centuries, and some classical stone temples were made folk at the end of the twentieth century.

Sir John Marshall, the head of the Archaeological Survey at the beginning of the twentieth century, was against hypothetical restorations. According to him, "restoration of carved stone, carved wood or plaster-moulding should be undertaken only if artisans were able to attain the excellence of the old; and in no case should mythological or other scenes be re-carved."³⁵ In contrast to the Eklingji temple complex, this type of restoration ensures that the past and present are erased by perfectly matching the old so the new is indistinguishable. This process not only eliminates the present from a site; it also jeopardizes the past by making restoration difficult to distinguish from original architecture. The current renovations



FIGURE 7.4. Stepwell, c. ninth century, Ābhānerī. © Deborah Stein.

unfolding at temples in southern Rājāsthān hardly have “attaining the excellence of old” as their goal. Locals want to make the site their own, to steal the buildings from history, and to animate them in the present. In many ways, as we learn from an ever-increasing volume of postcolonial scholarship, to steal the buildings from history seems like a valiant act against an outdated colonial mode of viewing.³⁶ The question then becomes one of stewardship: is it a theft of patrimony from the public by the private sector, or is it the theft of history from institutions inherited from the colonial state, or is it both?

Unlike the Devasthan Department, the Rājāsthān State Archaeological Department’s goals are to protect and finance conservation of archaeological sites. These sites vary from vernacular architecture, such as the observatory Jantar Mantar in Jaipur (fig. 7.3), to religious sites in terrible disrepair and ruin with clusters of loose exquisite sculpture such as Ābhānerī, northwest of Jaipur, to magnificent tanks such as the huge stepwell preserved under lock and key (fig. 7.4).³⁷ Many of these sites have fallen completely out of use and have become historical locations, tourist destinations, and the pleasant backdrop for family picnics by Indian nationals. But far from the state capital, southern Rājāsthān’s archaeological remains do not see quite the traffic that sites on the triangular Jaipur-Agra-Delhi route see. The state seeks to promote some sites, such as the ancient Paramāra dynasty stronghold of Arthuna in the Dūṅgarpur region (fig. 7.5). This large cluster of impressive buildings is too spread out to be made into a neat park, and it receives far too few visitors to merit the expense. Iconography and architecture at Arthuna reflect trends seen across a large region in the ninth to eleventh centuries. Lakuliśa, Nateśa, and Cāmuṇḍā are paired iconographically in a Śaiva-Śakti tantric



FIGURE 7.5. Paramāra temples, c. tenth century, Arthuna.
© Deborah Stein.

program akin to sculptural pairings found at the newly discovered Nateśa temple in Hita (figs. 7.6 and 7.7). Architectural style parallels this Nateśa temple as well as other *śekhārī* temples in Uparamāla at Bijoliā, Bāḍoli, and Menāl (fig. 7.8). Other important sites for Dūṅgarpur's dynastic and religious history go unvisited at all by foreign tourists and have been painted and put into modern worship by villagers, or they remain largely ignored.

To some extent, thieves must gauge the value of archaeological sites by the interest of tourists since the sculpture often is destined for foreigners or wealthy individuals in New Delhi or Mumbai. Neither marketed nor too remote and yet off the beaten track, the Mēdapāṭa cohort is a focus of ritual practice and the manufacture of identity for rural people in southern Rājāsthān. Most temples in southern Rājāsthān have a gatekeeper, usually a local person from the village, who lives on-site and is given a small salary. But many locations do not even have a guard. Some sites are so remote that even locals living within ten kilometers or closer do not know they exist. These remote temples lie in largely tribal tracts of land. They are either left alone or whitewashed and used for worship. These sites are often less susceptible to theft than temples that are out of the way but known to tourists and in active use by locals.

An unfortunate continuity between the history of these archaeological sites and their present status as monuments is that people have been and are still willing to kill for the ideals the monuments are seen to embody.³⁸ Administration affects the visual future of a temple site. One scholar kindly suggested that temple administration might not be the most fascinating subject for the nonspecialist, but when we see the consequences of administration on site function in the present and for the future, the technical and legal aspects of trusts become interesting from



FIGURE 7.6. Lakulīṣa, c. tenth century, Arthuna. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 7.7. Cāmuṇḍā, c. tenth century, Arthuna. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 7.8. A *śekhārī*-style temple, Arthuna. © Deborah Stein.

anthropological and political perspectives. Something as seemingly insignificant as a temple trust could be a life-and-death issue, both in India and globally.

Court rulings on how to preserve, conserve, and exploit temples have led to thousands of deaths at the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first owing to communal rioting that ensued. Since the most famous case of the Babri Masjid at Ayodhyā remains far from settled, the court records are not available to the public. In lieu of court documents, the Hindu right simply substitutes an architectural plan for the temple that it wishes to build. In fact, the very same Sompurā masons responsible for Guhila signature style also give their lineage to modern Ayodhyā. These architects claim to be the same architectural guild that produced Mandana, who may have built the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple (see fig. 0.2), the Samiddhēśvara temple (see fig. 3.17), and the Kīrtistambha tower (see fig. 3.6) at Chittorgarh in the sixteenth century. Mandana's seventeenth-century Sompurā descendants left their traces at Jagat, whereas twenty-first-century Sompurās believe the Ambikā temple (see fig. 0.9) to be the shrine of their *kūldevī* (family deity). Many capitalize on ancient archaeology to legitimize political purposes.

The right-wing nationalist political parties are a case in point. A description of a modern poster suggests that the rhetorical value of architecture is not limited to the premodern period:

The most familiar iconic rendering of the Ayodhyā temple on a poster is one where the warrior Ram is displayed on the left corner at the top. The center is filled with a pseudo-photographic depiction of the non-existent temple, designed by a descendant of the architect who had rebuilt the Somnath temple on North Indian *nagari* [architectural model characterized by a spire called a *śikhara*] rather than on South Indian architectural lines (we were told this by the VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad] sanyasi Giriraj Kishore). The future construction is projected as an already realized, existing present, typifying once again the basic VHP strategy of effacing the distance between aspiration and fulfillment. On the right-hand corner at the bottom, the present tense is embodied in the shape of a blue Maruti car, which substitutes for human devotees. The spectacle is indeed worthy of the Hindutva of twenty-first century consumerism—a living expression of the fetishization and commodification of human devotion.³⁹

The commodification of temples, in fact, predates twenty-first-century consumerism. The colonial period was a time of commodification owing to the imposition of the British legal system and the colonial goal of collecting revenue. While I disagree with Gyanendra Pandey's claim that revenue collection and British census data for this purpose created communal strife where there was none before, he is certainly correct when he asserts that the British played the major role in fanning the flames of communal conflict far beyond anything seen before.⁴⁰ Some of this may have come from a gravely "protestant" view of a "catholic" form of practice in the dominant visuality of colonial India's ruling elite.⁴¹

The British interest in fiscal matters over religious observance is evident in James Tod's anecdote of March 1818, when he avoided entry into the temple to pay homage to the "quadriform divinity" by claiming he could not remove his boots.⁴² In his account of the "Temple of Ekliṅga," Tod moves from a discussion of the wealth of "mercantile Gosains" to "the privileges of the Jains."⁴³ Despite the colonial interest in revenue, the expenses and administration seem to have been left largely under the control of the mahārāṇās of Mewār until the time of independence. Records of temple administration remain on the palace grounds in Udaipur. These records of payment to *gosvāmis* (priests) were recorded in the mahārāṇā's archives, as is evident in a letter from Mahārāṇā Bheem Singh (1778–1828 CE) detailing the *sindūr* (vermilion powder), saffron, and flags allotted for worship.⁴⁴ Records of temple maintenance date to the reign of Mahārāṇā Swarupsinghji (1842–61 CE), who held four *tutadans* (weighing-scale ceremonies), during which he was weighed against gold. The *gosvāmis* of temples at Ekliṅgī and Chittorgarh were allotted funds to cover expenses such as 180 rupees for flowers, 42 rupees for opium, and 669 rupees for construction.⁴⁵ Mewār's princes may have retained considerable control over temple administration during the colonial era. However, with independence, and later with the death of Mahārāṇā Bhagwat Singhji in 1984, the right to control temple administration has been subject to fierce debate and legal contention.

EVIDENCE OF A PUBLIC TRUST AT JAGAT

Held in May of 2002, Jagat's *pratiṣṭhā*, or deity installation ceremony, could also be used as legal evidence for the endowment of a public trust (fig. 7.9).⁴⁶ A *pratiṣṭhā* is not necessary to establish a public trust, but it can be used as evidence toward that goal. In the village of Jagat, the nonchalant disregard for the Rājasthan Archaeological Department, together with the casual complacency of the Udaipur Archaeological Museum officers, gave rise to painting the tenth-century sanctum metallic gold. Evidence of the installation of "a certain idol in a temple . . . establishes that the dedication was to the public."⁴⁷ For old temples without a deed of dedication, a history of public use is required to claim current public use. To this end, "proof of long use by the public without interference would be the cogent and convincing evidence to establish that the temple was dedicated to the public."⁴⁸ But this reuse of the Ambikā temple hardly dates further back than the early 1990s.

For a religious trust to be considered public, there must be no "original grants in the name of the head of the institution" and "evidence that the Hindu public went to the temple for worship as a matter of right."⁴⁹ *Sūtradhāra* inscriptions on the temple in Jagat attest to a widely varied public audience, whereas regal inscriptions on the temple are limited to Sāmanta Singh's thirteenth-century claim to power in the disputed territories of Chhapa. No sect specifically left an inscription on the temple, as seen with the Pāśupatas at the Lakuliśa temple at Ekliṅgī. In



FIGURE 7.9. New Ambā Mātā sculpture and Śitalā Mātā sculpture, blindfolded, before their eye-opening ceremonies. © Deborah Stein.

fact, the earliest inscription at Jagat refers to the donation of a layperson with no dynastic or sectarian references.

The *pratiṣṭhā* ceremonies that took place in May of 2002 in Jagat may well have been a first step in the creation of a public temple trust. At that time no one claimed there was a public trust, nor did anyone publicly lead a legal campaign for the foundation of a trust. The presence of local politicians and the home minister of Rājasthān at the ceremony suggest that a public trust may well have been in the making. If Jagat became a public religious trust, the authority of the Rājasthān State Archaeological Survey would be reduced via this newly living monument. In that case the renovation of the temple would fall to the trustees of the public trust.

Legally, the renovation of a temple in a public religious trust requires no permission of the charity commissioner. According to the Bombay Trusts Act [section 2(17), 20], “the essence of the building is its structural coherence and the building must be said to have attained the condition of ‘*jīrṇa*’ when time has seriously impaired such coherence and consistency. Where it is found that a temple is in a state of disrepair and decrepitude in many respects, it is a fit one for complete renovation.”⁵⁰

The complete renovation required by *jīrṇa* conflicts with the preservation of historical evidence required by an archaeological model. The law permits the replacement of an old temple with a new one if the old one is ruined and the site becomes unsuitable for worship. But although the law mentions the removal of

a temple and its image for the continuation of worship after a state of *jīrṇa* has occurred, no provision is made for deity installation into an old temple after the theft of a sculptural icon.⁵¹ The painting of ancient sculpture metallic gold as a part of the *pratiṣṭhā* falls outside the realm of civil law (see fig. 0.11). The law seems to espouse a religious view of renovation, which privileges new consecration over preservation of old, damaged elements. Damage in this sense refers not just to physical aesthetic damage but also to damage such as that incurred by the affront to a deity's honor during theft.

Legal language and temple trusts characterize current temple discourse. In many ways trust acts continue where inscriptions left off. The creation of records for perpetuity has given way to the legal right to construct history for present and future generations. The Hindu Religious Endowments Commission Report (1960–62) defines temples as “occult laboratories.”⁵² This legal definition of the temple appropriates scientific discourse to legitimize the metaphysical aspects of religious buildings in the eyes of the state. Administrators and practitioners at the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple and the Ambikā temple navigate the lives and deaths of monuments, of deities, and of identities as the government, population, demographics, and economy change at an incredible pace.

The residual material of past or present ritual becomes a commodity for praxis. Ritual is stolen from the gods by the camera lens, from the state by the application of vermilion (figs. 7.10 and 2.3), from villagers by bribes and heavy machinery, from the nation by nostalgia for pre-independence India, from archaeological context by the museum, and from history by the present. The past becomes an object of exchange. Private trusts, past royalty, past ruling village clans, tribal shamans, low-caste beneficiaries of post-independence state meritocracies, and thieves all fight to harness the power of these archaeological sites. They market ancient buildings and their gods to devotees, to tourists, and to the international art market. At Ekliṅgī, proximity to Udaipur makes the mediation among foreign tourists, pilgrims (local tourists), villagers, and a mahārāṇā/CEO a delicate balance of dead history, living history, and the present. At Jagat, violence loomed as a possibility to the point of necessitating a shutdown of all commercial activities when the icon was stolen on March 8, 2000.

When thieves managed to steal the Ambā Mātā icon from the sanctum of the Ambikā temple in Jagat (see fig. 2.3), the ensuing rage in the community led to a *bandh* (general strike), in which all businesses were shut down to preempt any violence.⁵³ Pūjā and prayers were performed for the missing icon. Narendra Singh Cāuhān (the local Bharatiya Janata Party president), Gajendra Singh (of the Congress Party), Mahendra Singh Sakhtawat (of the Śīvasenā Party), and village council leader Mana Ram Meena collectively called for the *bandh*.⁵⁴ The theft of the religious icon immediately took on a political dimension. The installation of the new icon in May of 2002 stood out as an inherently political act, with the home minister of Rājāsthān among the list of speakers at the event.



FIGURE 7.10. Painted fragments from the Mallar Mātā shrine. © Deborah Stein.



FIGURE 7.11. Worship of Absence, 2000–2002, Ambikā temple, Jagat.
© Deborah Stein.

During the two years when the Ambikā temple's sanctum was filled with an empty niche, villagers diligently worshipped absence.⁵⁵ The tenth-century arch of sculpture and double-lion podium was draped in cloth (fig. 7.11). The icon was not an ancient sculpture of the goddess: the icon was located in the sacred stone that housed the goddess. A smaller tenth-century sculpture that had been propped up under the lattice window to the left of the sanctum and worshipped as the smallpox goddess, Śitalā Mātā, had also been stolen. The remaining tenth-century

frame remained a focus of worship in place of the missing icons. The goddess continued to reside in the empty niche and then resided in the new icon. She never left the site with the ancient sculpture. The icons, in fact, were shells in which the goddesses resided, but they were never the actual goddesses.

What happened when the statues were stolen raises a theological issue. As soon as the physical object was no longer in situ, did it die as an object of veneration, or did the goddess continue to reside in the sculpture and in situ simultaneously? Whereas ancient texts such as the *Somaśambhupaddhati* and the *Īśānaśivagurudevapaddhati* required the disposal of damaged icons, in practice objects often remained in worship.⁵⁶ These texts considered a tainted icon as a potential site for demons to reside. When mistreated, the god becomes an object again, according to Catherine Cémentin-Ojha.⁵⁷ The statue must be reconsecrated, reanimated according to a special ritual, and replaced when broken. Although damaged images should be replaced, often they are repaired, since they are considered alive. Cémentin-Ojha gives the example of the human incarnation of the divine named Anandamayī Ma, speaking in 1947 of an incident twenty years before. Kālī's hand was cut by some thieves who were stealing her bracelets. The living saint Anandamayī explained: "on a pris un peu de sang ici et on l'a mélangé a la terre glaise pour refaire une main a Kālī" [We took some blood from here, and we mixed it with clay to restore Kālī's hand].⁵⁸

The missing figures did not impede the devotion of the women who worshipped at the temple. They may have been enraged when the sculptures were stolen, but the absence of the sculptures neither changed the women's practice nor reduced the power of the site. In spite of this, many of the powerful men and village leaders began to collect money to replace the icons of Ambikā in the form of Durgā-Mahiṣāsuramardīnī and the smallpox goddess, Śītalā Mātā. Rather than wondering where the sculpture had gone, they decided the best solution was to replace the ancient sculptures with modern ones. Many of these men may have even known the fate of the two stolen icons, electing to install the new ones to placate the local population and to reify their own power.

The only answer to theft is to make keeping the image in situ more financially viable to the local individuals than selling it on the international art market. Since the average buying power in Jagat is approximately one-tenth the buying power in Europe or the United States, it is difficult to imagine how to create "sustainable archaeology" that produces enough income in situ to ensure its own safety. Two years later, rumors circulated. According to various informants, the statue was in a warehouse, Interpol had it, and a jewelry storeowner in Udaipur running an art trafficking ring was responsible. Some said everyone knows who is responsible, but no one would reveal names to a foreigner for fear of reprisals, and a foreigner would have been in great danger had she found out. Even then, circles of corruption were much more powerful than police authorities, so nothing could have been done, even if the culprit were known and was reported to the police.

Conclusion

Heritage and Conflict

Medieval Indian Temple as Commodified Imaginary

The hegemony of heritage lies not in continuities and ruptures over time but rather in the will and means to control archaeological sites on the ground. The power to imagine these sites as linked to specific historical periods, while ignoring others, gives a variety of people the agency to curate their material in the present through praxis and for the future—either intentionally or not—via the residue left in stone. The premise of this book—that temples serve as catalysts for human interactions and that architecture can be culled for a wide variety of human experience beyond mere dynastic history—relies on our ability to move with agility forward and backward through diachronic time and ecologically and fluvially through multisectarian space. Sectarian, tribal, regal, and capitalist landscapes interwoven in this book demonstrate the intersectional arena that the once classical topic of “The Hindu Temple” or “The Indian Temple” has become.

Rupture abounds in the art historical records of the Ambikā temple in Jagat and the Śrī Ekliṅgji temple in Kailāśpurī over the millennium of the *longue durée* history presented in these pages. Most striking is the hiatus between the Sisodia dynasty that rules Mewār today and the Guhila dynasty that arose in the wake of Pratihāra and Paramāra collapse in the second half of the tenth century. The ways in which the architecture of Upamāla and Mēdapāṭa served future generations of pilgrims, monastics, travelers, rulers, and many others, at times, built on Guhila history as a way of erasing rupture. On other occasions, nondynastic sites (such as the Ambikā temple in Jagat) were made dynastic only subsequently, at times centuries after their moment of origin, when inscriptional records that postdated temples’ construction incorporated these magnificent stone structures into new histories over time. The fifteenth century is the period when a golden era of Mewāri

glory began to be constructed in encyclopedic performances of aesthetics typical of the period across the false Hindu/Muslim divide, which was constructed primarily in the colonial era hundreds of years later. Whether we imagine the *Nimāt Nāmā* cookbook in Malwa, the musical treatises in Mewār, or the Kirtistambha tower that encapsulates an entire regal worldview labeled in stone, self-fashioning and self-conscious reification of royal aspiration through direct architectural quotation flourished in this century, whereas by the sixteenth century more of the Rājput glory as we know it from nationalist discourses in the present was circulating in the form of texts about Rani Padmini and illustrated Mughal royal sagas such as the *Akbar Nāmā*.

Despite significant evidence of major historical fissures, such as the Guhila-Sisodia gaps in historical continuity, or the lack of tenth-century Guhila dynastic inscriptions at many of the Mēdapāṭa temples in question, striking similarities between current practices and ancient depictions of ritual on temple walls, as well as in period texts, suggest that ethnohistories of South Asia have often remained unexplored compared to their popularity in Mesoamerican art histories. Far from a nationalist proof of unbroken lineages, though continuous kingship via named individuals certainly does survive in multiple inscriptional and textual records, ritual and the record in stone reveal that temples built right around the birthday of the most famous tantric scholar known to this day can yield new kinesthetic and philosophical information about tantra beyond what is increasingly available from known medieval texts in the original Sanskrit, as well as in English translation. For example, the relationship among myth, ritual, and iconography is quite striking at the Ambikā temple in Jagat, as well as at the Pippalāda Mātā temple in Unwās. These two goddess temples from the Mēdapāṭa cohort—one closer to the Banas River tract, the other closer to the southern Mahi River tract—demonstrate an incredible link between the goddesses Kṣēmaṅkarī and Cāmuṇḍā in temple programs during the third quarter of the tenth century in this small area of northwestern India. A continued emphasis on semantic and nonsemantic mantric worship across this region today suggests that even though Kṣēmaṅkarī is never mentioned in modern folk worship or canonical liturgies, her role as the personification of mantra itself remains fulfilled. Meanwhile, from an ethnohistorical perspective, the power of Bērujī and Cāmuṇḍā-ma all over the tribal Bhil territories creates a fascinating diachronic link between current tribal worship and affiliations, on the one hand, and the stone brāhmanical temples and tenth-century tantric texts, ritual, and iconography, on the other hand. Whereas stone may have once incorporated ritual into the brāhmanical fold, today it is tribal culture, such as the powerful worship of Mallar Mātā on the hill adjacent to the Ambikā temple that really unpacks these medieval tantric indexical traces of historical praxis.

Continuities are not limited to the particulars of mantra and tantra, myth and ritual, or stone iconography and the practice of ritual sacrifice. Liṅga worship—the

cornerstone of royal practice at the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple to this day—has left a very explicit record in stone all over South Asia, but in this region from the northern site of Khamnor, to the central site of Ahar, and the southern sites of Jagat, Āat, and Kalyanpur, specific forms of Pāsupata-Śaiva worship abound from the Gupta period onward. The prevalence of the four-faced liṅgaṃ with the fifth formless face upward, as well as the thousand-faced liṅga and the repetition of the 4 + 1 philosophical paradigm in every material from twenty-first-century clay at Ekliṅgī (see fig. 6.7) to tenth-century stone at Khamnor (see fig. 4.3), Bijoliā (see fig. 4.18), and Ahar (see fig. 5.6), serves as a reminder that the form of the liṅga may well reflect specific localized modes of worship. Whereas the pan-Indian worship of liṅga on yoni platforms found from Khajuraho to Tamil Nadu can also be found in the upper registers of the Ambikā temple in Jagat, as tenth-century worshippers lovingly pour offerings over a liṅgaṃ in a stone sculptural frieze (see fig. 6.2), nothing compares to the elaborate nine kilos of flour and other modern offerings I witnessed at the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple during Mahāśivrātri in 2002.

Nonetheless, textual records such as the *Cintra Praśāsti* from North India and the *Somaśambhupaddhati* from South India indicate similar sequences of pūjā in medieval times. Moreover, the specifically mid-tenth-century punctuation of the temple wall with auxiliary figures along the Banas and Mahi Rivers reveals a syncopated form of circumambulation that seems to mimic the sequential patterns of using mantras to awaken a deity in an icon or even one's own body. An eight-day pratiṣṭhā ceremony to install a new goddess icon in Jagat in May of 2002 revealed the continuities in mantric practice, despite a surprisingly weak reliance on pūjā paddhati prayer manuals. Similarly at Ekliṅgī, Pūjāriji Narendra Dashora spent weeks translating the Pūjā Paddhati with me so that I could understand how it functioned. This was a scholarly exercise, in a private home, in the afternoons, not a ritual initiation in a temple during pūjā. This generous gift of the study of mantra and paddhati together made possible the idea of the tripartite parallel between (1) the gait, cadence, and prosody of the temple wall; (2) the syncopated rhythm of circumambulation; and (3) the mantric sequence of animating a deity in stone or flesh. How fitting that the goddess Kṣēmaṅkarī, as the personification of mantra, still graces the lintel of some of these mid-tenth-century temples in Bāḍoli and Jagat to this day (see figs. 5.21 and 5.22).

Never before have temples and their deities been expected to fulfill so many functions for such diverse groups of people. The stone monuments of southern Rājāsthān have remained largely untouched for the large part of a millennium. Only toward the end of the twentieth century did a new trend begin to emerge. These archaeological sites in rural places are being destroyed by theft and disfigured by use, but to safeguard them against use is to take them back from the local populations who have recently claimed them. To preserve them as dead history would be to privilege these remains as art for the sake of the centralized

government, local and foreign scholars, the international art market, and tourists. To allow the sites to be used is to permit change, breaks with history, and the construction of past and future by local people in the present. These decisions to preserve or to permit change also play into the increasing political struggles between secular and religious groups both within India and on a global scale.

Many of the changes discussed in this book began in the late 1960s and escalated in the 1980s. These changes in conservation at sites in southern Rājāsthān date to the era of jet travel.¹ The rise in alterations of ancient temples in villages parallels a rise in tourism in the 1980s and 1990s. Michael Meister has suggested that tax law is also responsible for this rise in reuse of archaeological sites for religious purposes.² The Finance Act of 1972 made tax deductible the “voluntary contributions received by a trust created wholly for charitable or religious purposes” on the condition that audits were provided to register trusts before July 1, 1973, or within one year of their creation.³ The Śrī Ekliṅgī Trust Declaration of 1973 makes explicit the distinction between private patronage of the temple by the royal family and public donations for charity made by devotees. Changes in tax law may account for some of the aesthetic symptoms of reuse found in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

By sheltering charitable trusts and public temples, temple renovation was encouraged. The Bombay Public Trusts Act of 1950 already privileged new construction over the preservation of antiquity. Less decisive is the Rājāsthān Monuments, Archaeological Sites and Antiquities Rules, enacted on April 24, 1969, which prohibits interference with both preservation and practice. On the one hand, “any act which causes or is like[ly] to cause damage or injury to any part of the monument” is prohibited.⁴ On the other hand, actions that “violate any practice, usage or custom applicable to or observed in the monument” are also not allowed.⁵

The site manager’s handbook for World Heritage Sites reflects the same unresolved tension between archaeological authenticity and living communities found in the Jaipur Monuments Act of 1941 and the Rājāsthān Monuments, Archaeological Sites and Antiquities Rules of 1968. Site managers are advised that “authenticity is of paramount importance to the guardians of world heritage. The only reconstruction found acceptable is in full keeping with the original with absolutely no conjecture.”⁶ Whereas this stipulation may avoid reconstructions, such as the somewhat fanciful walls (re)constructed on Incan foundations at Machu Picchu, it does not provide for a changing, evolving “original.”⁷ The Ambikā temple at Jagat and the Ekliṅgī temple complex are not uncontested “original” archaeological sites, available for display in the Museum of Modern Art.⁸ They exhibit their modernity through praxis as living monuments.

Whether or not their current incarnations are “original” is a moot point since Marxist definitions of taste suggest that authenticity may stem from use rather



FIGURE 8.1. Vermilion footprint, twenty-first-century *sindūr* on tenth-century quartzite stone, Ambikā temple, Jagat. © Deborah Stein.

than from stagnant constructions of archaeological history made to please tourists at the expense of the present. What the Jaipur Monument Preservation Act of 1941; the Bombay Public Trusts Act of 1950; the Rājāsthān Monuments, Archaeological Sites and Antiquities Rules of 1968; the UNESCO handbook of 1993; and even the 2003 UNESCO Intangible Heritage Act (published the year after this fieldwork was begun) fail to explain is the procedure for monuments that fall into more than one category. At places where archaeological sites are interwoven with the daily lives of the residents, the very definition of archaeology threatens practice. The future of Indian patrimony involves learning to strike a balance among archaeological, nationalist, and local histories. Present temple praxis creates an aesthetic rhetoric to be preserved for future generations (fig. 8.1).

Social media has changed the role of the expert, at times seeming to erase that position entirely, yet the curator, the art historian, the anthropologist, and the scholar no longer seek only to explain or to expose a body of knowledge. The task of the humanities is to enhance the agency of every person to produce her or his own knowledge. Sections of this book focusing on women's history, the tenth-century goddesses Kṣēmaṅkarī and Cāmuṇḍā, or praxis and the law permit the lay reader and the scholar alike to put together unlikely arenas of information to juxtapose with their own assumptions and new ideas. In this project I have sought to recuperate the Rājasthani sites from the often-petrifying view of preservationists, government archaeologists, and even modern art historians. In sum, the majority of this data-driven evidence unveils previously ignored sites, goddesses, non-dynastic humans, and populist trends in each era to provide a new postcolonial approach to both the history of the Indian temple and the future of world heritage.

The hegemony of heritage remains a fraught construction, not easily solved through the examination of the material record alone because of the changing landscape of hegemonies in different times and places. "Hegemony" could be defined in the generic and wide use of the term as a mere synonym of "political domination," or it could refer to the southern Italian Marxist theory found in the prison notebooks of Antonio Gramsci. This book about Hindu temple architecture in South Asia conveys a sense of hegemony as a process in concrete historical conjunctures, as an evolving sphere of superstructural conflict in which power relations are continually reasserted, challenged, and modified. This interpretation of "hegemony," beyond standard usage as a synonym of political domination, is important because it reflects the shifting power structures in a competitive grid over time and place. Hegemony is no longer in a simple binary with, say, monumental architecture, as a dominating force used by dynasties to subdue local peoples. Local people use these buildings to establish their own hegemony in a variety of ways in different times and places.

Gramsci delved into the theory of hegemony on multiple occasions in several contexts. He thought about hegemony in relation to praxis and to dialect, as a tool for intellectuals as masters of global hegemony in utter neglect of the local, and as a force used by Jesuits in Italy. He contrasted the hegemony of the Italian bourgeois taste for French novels and the national popular with the way that populist authors with middle-class readerships chose antipopular style and politics.⁹ Furthermore, Gramsci links hegemony to a conflict between Italian nationalism and foreign domination. For example, he writes about the academic Marinetti's protest against spaghetti in November of 1930 as "an obsolete food . . . heavy, brutalizing and gross [accusing this staple of inducing] skepticism, sloth, and pessimism."¹⁰ Throughout his letters and prison notes Gramsci seems to view hegemony as a form of class dominance via behavior, speech, religious convictions, taste in fiction, and the vilified plate of southern Italian gluten.

Can we imagine hegemony in early twentieth-century Gramscian terms as a form of class dominance in relation to Indian heritage in the twenty-first century? To do so would be to accept a dynastic narrative about the hegemony of style. As we have seen in this book, not all Mēdapāṭa temples have dynastic inscriptions, and not all time periods privilege nobles over the clergy. Some times and places were dominated by powerful monastic networks over the sectarian landscape.¹¹ Other times and places served as pregnant imaginaries for nationalisms still to be born. The grid of time and space that intersectionally pushes these catalysts into dialogue creates a hegemony of each different temple as heritage to be harnessed simultaneously by a variety of agents for their own political agendas. The hegemony of heritage in modern Rājāsthān, in fifteenth-century Mewār, in “sultanate”-era Vagada, or in tenth-century Mēdapāṭa lies in the impressive ability of local people, such as tailor’s guilds or women celebrating Daśamātā, to claim these sites through their varied praxis in situ at religious monuments, and in the impressive radius of practices sparked and disseminated from these catalysts. New materialism offers anyone who studies Hindu temples, or any religious monument in South Asia, a chance to incorporate the full extent of ritual residue left behind in perpetuity or ephemerally lost in praxis.

The relationship between heresy and the state arises in Gramsci’s scathing brief history of Jesuits, a word that in Italian we are told suggests “underhand” or “two faced”: “The Jesuits began as the shock-troops of the counter reformation and it was then, according to Gramsci, that the Church reversed its earlier process of absorbing mass heretical movements into its ranks and started propping itself up with state coercion to re-establish its undermined ideological leadership.”¹²

In tenth-century India, temples such as the Ambikā temple in Jagat definitely seem to reflect a process of “absorbing mass heretical movements” if one can imagine populist tantra (very loosely translated) in those terms, as absorbed into the brāhmanical fold of stone temple architecture. I am not sure, however, if at any point in the thousand years of history covered in this book, we find a singular turning point where “state coercion” is used to “re-establish its undermined ideological leadership.” We are left with the question, in light of the record in stone, of where we stand now and how these temples will speak aesthetically to future audiences based on their material uses in the present.

Counterhegemonies, rather than hegemony, seem to characterize the importance of the role of heritage today, as ancient temples serve as catalysts for the actions of many different people, most of whom were often ignored historically and academically. New perspectives turn us away from the largely male scholarship on hegemony from the twentieth century and open the doors to begin to question the spaces where twenty-first-century art history is performed in the museum, in the writings of the discipline itself, in new curatorial spaces across India, and with this book, which I would include in the field where the archaeological sites are found.

A question too large to answer in any one book, and one I have attempted to answer elsewhere, I leave my readers here with just one example of the counterhegemonic praxis I was asked to record by some people who use the Ambikā temple in Jagat.¹³ Finding the scholar waiting during Navratri to see if any animal sacrifice would take place at the stone temple, local Bhils insisted that I was asking the wrong questions in the wrong place and should follow them instead to make a video of their dances to celebrate Ambā Mātā during Navratri. The buffalo sacrifices found in Udaipur palace paintings never took place in Jagat when I was there; they were probably too expensive and too complicated to carry out. Modern praxis is not the exclusive prerogative of centralized urban institutions such as the birth of reform Judaism in nineteenth-century Germany or Vatican Council II, where the priests turned their backs to the altar to face their congregations in vernacular languages instead of Latin. Modern praxis is organic and diverse, and the hegemony of heritage lies in the perennity of change. Here is what some Bhil residents of Jagat want me and you to see, instead of the buffalo that never was sacrificed—the spark of their praxis ignited by the catalyst of the Ambikā temple in Jagat is danced two kilometers away from the temple in a tiny neighborhood nearby. Future scholarship will surely illuminate this fieldwork further in terms of the friction between praxis and history, capital and reification.¹⁴

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. Whitney Davis offers art historians the unique possibilities afforded by a Gellian model of object agency:

In some cases, a simplistic model of patronage as the social context of art has led to obvious historical and interpretive distortions—to neglect of the role of the *artist's agency* in destabilizing or undermining the legitimist agendas of patrons, of the role of the *viewer's* abduction of alternate or proliferated agencies of the work of art in constituting a concept of who or what patrons and artists might be, of the abducted agency of *artistic raw materials* or of art's artifactual materiality in constituting viewers' inferences about the properties that require or solicit such causal understandings—and so on. So far as I know, Gell's model offers the most comprehensive account of the “*open range* and *indefinite recursion* of the agencies of art that have been, and equally important should be, considered by anthropologists or historians as anthropology or the history of art. (Whitney Davis, “Abducting the Agency of Art,” in *Art's Agency and Art History*, ed. Robin Osborne and Jeremy Tanner [Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Online Library, 2008], 199–219, 214, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470776629.ch9>)

2. See Deborah Stein, “The Theft of the Goddess Amba Mata: Ontological Location and Georges Bataille's *Bas-Matérialisme*, *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 57/58 (2010): 264–82.

3. This asymptote of “value” is reflected in a burst of anthologies on heritage and Getty Institute themes in the years between my initial fieldwork and completion of this book.

4. Eschewing grand singular narratives of historiography is the cornerstone of offering new postcolonial insights into Indian history. The risks of historiography as a colonial enterprise are all too clear in the concluding paragraph of Guha's introduction, where he writes: “All of Indian Historiography in its dominant, that is, liberal-nationalist mode, has

been caught up since its inception in the contradictory pulls of such affinity and opposition. It is therefore not possible either to understand its character or to subject it to a proper criticism without situating it first in the relationship that bonds it to colonialism—a dominance without hegemony—and its historiography. A critique of colonialist historiography is, therefore, an essential condition and a necessary point of departure for any critique of Indian historiography itself.” Guha further elaborates that historiography in a nationalist mode involves rewriting that is “elitist and abstract. It is elitist insofar as it feeds on that messianic tendency of nationalist discourse according to which mobilization was the handiwork of prophets, patriarchs, and other inspirational leaders alone and the mobilized were no more than an inert mass shaped by a superior will. It is abstract, too, because it empties mobilization of that very real tension between foresee and consent from which Indian nationalism acquired its form and substance” (Ranajit Guha, *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997], 99, 103).

5. Saloni Mathur and Kavita Singh, “Reincarnations of the Museum: The Museum in an Age of Religious Revivalism,” *Asian Art History in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Vishakha N. Desai (Williamstown, MA: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2007), 149–68.

6. Christiane Gruber has demonstrated this nuance in her seminal article on representations of the prophet Mohammed in painting. See Christiane Gruber, “Between Logos (Kalima) and Light (Nur): Representations of the Prophet Muhammad in Islamic Painting,” *Muqarnas: An Annual on the Visual Culture of the Islamic World* 26 (2009): 229–62.

7. See Deborah Sutton, “Devotion, Antiquity and Colonial Custody of the Hindu Temple in British India,” *Modern Asian Studies* 47, no. 1 (2013): 135–66.

8. Following Fredric Jameson, Michael Rowlands argues that “the potency of heritage revivalism continues to have effect as a means to ‘cure’ postmodern identity crises and to counteract late modernist experiences of rootlessness, rupture and displacement.” See Michael Rowlands, “Heritage and Cultural Property: The Power of Origins; Questions of Cultural Rights,” in *The Material Culture Reader*, ed. Victor Buchli (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 105–34, 106; see also Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991).

9. Both Richard Davis and George Kubler made field-changing advances in the ways they stretched and changed our ideas about the point of origin of objects in relation to the rest of their “lives” or “histories” in the plural. More recent diachronic studies differ in that they abandon the modernist teleological model of chronological development. Georges Didi-Hauberman, Alexander Nagel, and others confront the classic modernist art historical problem of anachronism first raised by Charles Baudelaire in the nineteenth century. In these studies the falsity of any singular moment as authentic becomes apparent. See Richard H. Davis, *Lives of Indian Images* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); and George Kubler, *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1962). On anachronisms see also Mark Cheetham, Michael Holly, and Keith Moxey, “Visual Studies, Historiography and Aesthetics,” *Journal of Visual Culture* 4, no. 1 (2005): 75–90; Georges Didi-Hauberman, “Critical Reflections,” *Artforum International* 33 (1995): 64–65; and Nagel’s book, published five years after my dissertation was published, Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone, 2010).

10. Gianni Vattimo describes the increased production of residue that characterizes our era. He urges that aesthetic value may well be defined as the “trace” itself:

It may well be that in the end what is termed as beautiful is simply what is “historical” in a pregnant sense: monument, that is. (Natural beauty would fit perfectly in this perspective as the monument of a still remoter past.) But is it the proliferation of traces, in which we are confronted by the acceleration of productive processes insofar as they leave behind more and more “documents” and residues, also a proliferation of monuments? Or at least, does it specifically qualify our culture as a culture of memory? For instance, may we consider essential and decisive the discovery, if it is such, that we believed to be aesthetic value is nothing but, or not more than, *trace*? (Gianni Vattimo, “Postmodernity and the New Monumentality,” *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 28 [Autumn 1995]: 40–41)

11. “Mewār therefore continues to be administered in Trust in the ancient time honoured tradition on behalf of the Ruler Prameshwaraji Maharaj Śrī Ékalingji.” April 7, 2005, www.Mewarindia.com (site no longer available).

12. Agrawala proclaims, “This tenth century edifice, dedicated to goddess Durgā Mahiśāsūramardini, was first discovered by me on 22nd May 1956.” R. C. Agrawala, “Kharaho of Rājasthan,” *Arts Asiaticques* 10, no. 1 (1964): 47.

13. *Ibid.*, 51.

14. Darielle Mason rightly laments that her analysis is impeded by the condition of the Pippalāda Mātā temple.

15. Alexander von Rospatt, unpublished paper in German on the *jīrṇodhara* ceremony in Nepal.

16. Hamid Dabashi, *Post-Orientalism: Knowledge and Power in a Time of Terror* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2009), 230.

17. Miles Glendinning, “Heritage in the Age of Globalization: Post-1989,” in *The Conservation Movement: A History of Architectural Preservation Antiquity to Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2013), 417–48, 429, 424, 424.

18. Nandini Sinha Kapur, *State Formation in Rājasthan: Mewār during the Seventh–Fifteenth Centuries* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2002), 132.

19. See R. V. Somani, *History of Rājasthan* (Jaipur: Jain Pustuk Mandir, 1997), 86.

20. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1.

21. Bernard Cohn, “Representing Authority in Victorian India,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 185.

22. Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

23. The most famous example of this phenomenon in India is the destruction of the Babri Masjid mosque in Ayodhyā, on December 6, 1992. According to Basu and Subrahmanyam, history has often been misused to create violence. See Kaushik Basu and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, eds., *Unraveling the Nation: Sectarian Conflict and India’s Secular Identity* (New Delhi: Penguin, 1996), 5. Their edited volume situates the communal violence of Ayodhyā within a specific historical moment. See also Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “The Mughal State—Structure or Process? Reflections on Recent Western Historiography,” *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 29, no. 3 (1992): 291–321, <https://doi.org/10.1177/001946469202900302>.

24. Jules David Prown, “Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 17, no. 1 (1982): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1086/496065>.

25. Ibid., 2.

26. For a functionalist description of the colonial era dialectic between ethnography and history, see Guha, who carefully outlines the role of fear of the unknown in ethnography and history as the colonial answer to a population unwilling to divulge information to the colonial ethnographer. Historically, the role of colonial ethnography was “to aid a foreign power forcibly to exploit the resources of our land” (Guha, *Dominance without Hegemony*, 162–64). Modern ethnography in relation to art history provides an important human counterbalance to the taxonomical and positivist collection of architectural objects historically rendered through formalism as an end in itself. Though some may view ethnography as inherently colonial or racist, ethnography also allows places of worship to come alive as lived spaces through the documentation of a wide range of praxis in situ. A diachronic approach attempts this political engagement with history and the present to celebrate the visual and performative field surrounding Hindu temples in the broadest context possible, by writing people back into the monuments they use in their lives.

27. Jean-François Lyotard, *La condition postmoderne: Rapport sur le savoir* (Paris: Minuit, 1979).

28. Romila Thapar, “Society and Historical Consciousness: The Itihāsa-Purāṇa Tradition,” in *Interpreting Early India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 137–73.

29. Kubler, *The Shape of Time*; Georges Didi-Huberman, *Histoire de l'art et anachronisme des images* (Paris: Minuit, 2000); Nagel and Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance*; and Romila Thapar, “Time as a Metaphor of History,” in *History and Beyond* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1–49.

30. Guha further elaborates: “that, of course, is no problem for the bourgeoisie, who constitute themselves into a class precisely by turning time into that ultimate and most generalized form of the thing, money—the thing which, under the rule of that class, becomes the measure and symbol of all other things”—an interesting take on “appropriation” in the era of temple as market, or commodity. Guha, *Dominance without Hegemony*, 194.

31. Tryna Lyons, “The Changing Faces of Ekliṅgī: A Dynastic Shrine and Its Artists,” *Artibus Asiae* 58, no. 3/4 (1999): 270. Lyons brings together an impressive variety of evidence—inscriptional, visual, ethnographic, and more—to convincingly argue the main icon was made after the Malwa sultan Ghiyath al-Din Tughluq Shah I (r. 1320–25) destroyed the previous icon. She argues that the current icon dates to Raimal's era and may have been based on a four-faced liṅgam from Hammīr's reign in the fourteenth century. Hammīr's icon, she argues in turn, may have been modeled on the four-faced liṅgam at Ahar (see fig. 5.4, in chapter 5).

32. I heard the story of the *mūrti* from Pundit Narendra Dashora (personal communication, Oct. 4, 2002), with whom I was staying. The story is the same as when Sohan Lal (a regular Monday worshipper from Udaipur) told it, except with greater detail. In the thirteenth century the Muslims attacked, so the mahārāṇā put the *mūrti* in the lake for protection. An army of honeybees attacked the Muslim army and fought them off. The *mūrti* in the lake had gone to heaven. So the king fasted, and after three days the vision came that there was a new *mūrti* buried under the hill near Arthuna in the district of Dūṅgarpur (ancient Vagada). They went and, sure enough, it was there, but the Dūṅgarpur king did not want

it to leave the state. So they decided to use Dūṅgarpur bulls and a Mewāri cart to take the image to its rightful place. The bulls took it to Ekliṅgī. Before this mūrti (black schist, five-faced), the old one was from a thousand-headed *liṅgam* like the one at Chandrāvati. Behind the Kālikā temple in the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple compound is a thousand-headed Lakuliśa liṅga. Śrī Dashora will worship it tomorrow morning at 4am. There are four priests who take turns performing this secret ritual.

33. For a political scientist's analysis of this attack see Christophe Jaffrelot, "The 2002 Pogrom in Gujarat: The Post-9/11 Face of Hindu Nationalist Anti-Muslim Violence," in *Religion and Violence in South Asia*, ed. J. Hinnels and R. King (New York: Routledge, 2006), 173–92; and Jaffrelot's follow-up on the current political relationship to visibility of Narendra Modi: Christophe Jaffrelot, "Le Gujarat de Narendra Modi: Les leçons d'une victoire électorale," *Critique Internationale* 40, no. 3 (2008): 9–25; and, in English, Christophe Jaffrelot, "Gujarat Elections: The Sub-Text of Modi's 'Hattrick'—High Tech Populism and the 'Neo-middle Class,'" *Studies in Indian Politics* 1 (June 2013): 79–95.

34. When describing the fieldwork logistics of a ritual that was supposed to take place in 1974 and finally came to fruition in 1975, Staal outlines the expenses he incurred. Through Staal the Smithsonian was made a patron of the Vedic fire sacrifice, spending \$12,740 for the construction of the enclosure and for ritual performance, as well as \$3,381 for the feeding of guests. See Frits Staal, *Agni Hotra: The Vedic Ritual of Fire*, vol. 2 (Berkeley, CA: Asian Humanities Press, 1983), 459, 463.

35. See, e.g., Ang Choulean, Eric Prenowitz, and Ashley Thompson, *Angkor: Past, Present, and Future* (Cambodia: APSARA, 1996).

36. Peter van der Veer, "Ayodhya and Somnath: Eternal Shrines, Contested Histories," *Social Research* 59, no. 1 (1992): 85–109; Romila Thapar, *Somanatha: Many Voices of a History* (New Delhi: Viking, 2004); and Romila Thapar, "Somanatha: Narratives of a History," *Seminar* 475 (March 1999): 16–23.

37. Jacques Derrida suggests the archive is a form of amnesia: "There is no archive without a place of consignment, without a technique of repetition, and without a certain exteriority. No archive without outside." Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 11. The exteriorization of memory allows it to be stored somewhere other than in someone's mind, thus allowing her or him to forget, and distancing the specificity and resolution of the memory from its maker. The photographic reproduction required for the archive erodes the agency of a temple's creators and erases all but one of the temple's lives, the incarnation of a singular time and place.

38. Arjun Appadurai reexamines Marx's definition of commodities to remind us that "the commodity does not emerge whole-cloth from the product under bourgeois production." Appadurai advocates for "breaking significantly with the production-dominated Marxian view of commodity and focusing on its total trajectory from production, through exchange/distribution, to consumption." Arjun Appadurai, "Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 3–63, 8, 13.

39. Julia Bryan-Wilson, "Building a Marker of Nuclear Warning," in *Monuments and Memory, Made and Unmade*, ed. Robert S. Nelson and Margaret R. Olin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 183–204.

CHAPTER 1. TEMPLE AS GEOGRAPHIC MARKER

1. For the earliest archaeological histories of this region see Michael Meister, "Mauryas of Upamāla and Mēdapāta," and "Gurjara-Partihāras and Their Maurya Feudatories in Mālava," *North India Period of Early Maturity*, vol. 2, pt. 2 in *Encyclopedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, ed. Michael Meister and M. A. Dhaky (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 271–317; and M. A. Dhaky, "Mahā-Gurjara Style, Last Phase, c. AD 900–1000, Guhilas of Mēdapāta: Lower Variation, Phase II," in *North India: Beginnings of Medieval Idiom*, ed. M. A. Dhaky and M. Meister, vol. 2, pt. 3 of *Encyclopedia of Indian Temple Architecture* (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies, 1998). "Mēdapāta" is also the ancient name for the region that became the kingdom of Mewār. For a colonial account of the history of Mewār see A. F. Pinhey, *History of Mewār* (Jodhpur: Books Treasure, 1906); and on the recent art history of Mewār see Joanna Williams, Cynthia Talbot, and Kazuhiro Tsuruta, *Kingdom of the Sun: Indian Court and Village Art from the Princely State of Mewār* (San Francisco: Asian Art Museum, Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture, 2007).

2. M. A. Dhaky, "The Genesis and Development of Māru-Gurjara Temple Architecture," in *Studies in Indian Temple Architecture*, ed. Pramod Chandra (Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies, 1975), 114–65.

3. Danielle Mason, "A Sense of Time and Place: Style and Architectural Disposition of Images on the North Indian Temple," in *Gods, Guardians, and Lovers: Temple Sculptures from North India, AD 700–1200*, ed. Vishakha Desai and Danielle Mason (New York: Asia Society Galleries, 1993), 116–38, 121.

4. Shaman Hatley has recently published a very valuable review of tantric Sanskrit literature in English and French translation; see his "Tantric Śaivism in Early Medieval India: Recent Research and Future Directions," *Religion Compass* 4, no. 10 (2010): 615–28.

5. M. A. Dhaky, "Mahā-Gurjara Style," 192.

6. Michael Meister, "Style and Idiom in the Art of Upamāla," *Muqarnas* 10 (1993): 344–54.

7. Vishwambhar Sharan Pathak has proposed that the Pāśupata cult was founded by Śri Kantha, since there are many early references to this form of Śaivism that do not mention Lakulīśa. He suggests that Lakulīśa was the founder of a later sect of Pāśupatas. See Vishwambhar Sharan Pathak, *History of Śaiva Cults in Northern India, from Inscriptions 700 AD to 1200 AD* (Allahabad: Abinash Prakashan, 1980), 8.

8. M. C. Choubey, *Lakulīśa in Indian Art and Culture* (Delhi: Sharada, 1997), 86.

9. Susan Huntington refers to this image as Saraswatī in line with traditional interpretations of this image and its inscription such as Srinivasa Ayyangar's translation, where the inscription refers to the goddess as the "mother goddess of speech." Susan L. Huntington, *The Art of Ancient India: Buddhist, Hindu, Jain* (New York: Weatherhill, 1985), 483; and Srinivasa Ayyangar, *Bhoja Rājā* (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1993), 93.

10. Danielle Mason has identified this figure as Ambikā Yakṣī and not as Saraswatī, in concurrence with Kirit Mankodi. Vishakha Desai and Danielle Mason, eds., *Gods, Guardians, and Lovers* (New York: Asia Society Galleries, 1993), 258–59, fig. 68; and Kirit Mankodi, "A Paramāra Sculpture in the British Museum: Vāgdevī or Yakṣī Ambikā?" *Sambodhi* 9, no. 105 (1980–81): 96–103. Mason draws our attention to the lion vehicle as opposed to the haṁsa usually associated with Saraswatī. If one glances through the images of Saraswatī in Rao's classic iconographical work, the elephant goad recurs as an attribute of Saraswatī and

not, to my knowledge, as a part of Ambikā's standard repertoire. See Gopinatha Rao, *Hindu Iconography* (Delhi: Indological Book House, 1971).

11. John Dupuche, *Abhinavagupta: The Kula Ritual (As Elaborated in Chapter 29 of the Tantrāloka)* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2003).

12. Dr. Tamara Sears introduced me to the architectural history of *guru darśan* in monastic spaces during our travels in the field together, which she later published; see Tamara Sears, "Constructing the Guru: Ritual Authority and Architectural Space in Medieval India," *Art Bulletin* 90, no. 1 (2008): 7–31.

13. R. V. Somani, *History of Rājāsthān* (Jaipur: Jain Pustuk Mandir, 1997), 84.

14. Although there is no concrete way to corroborate this, the adjacent hill is the site of an underground dug-out monastery. The site is quite inaccessible today and has no major inscriptions or architecture that could be used to date it.

15. Michael Meister, "The Śaivaite Surya Shrine near Tūṣa," *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, Dr. Moti Chandra Commemoration Volume (1978): 63.

16. Desai and Mason, *Gods, Guardians, and Lovers*; Adam Hardy, *The Temple Architecture of India* (Chichester, UK: Wiley, 2007); and Phyllis Granoff, "Heaven on Earth: Temples and Temple Cities of Medieval India," in *India and Beyond: Aspects of Literature, Meaning, Ritual and Thought*, ed. Dick van der Meij (Leiden: International Institute for Asian Studies, 1997), 170–94.

17. One of the oldest buildings in nearby Upamāla is the Kālikā Mātā temple (Chittorgarh), originally dedicated to Sūrya when it "may have been built under Guhila Bappa Rawal's predecessor Manabhanga (725 CE)." Dhaky, "Genesis and Development," 143.

18. Akshaya Keerty Vyas, "First and Third Slabs of Kumbhalgarh Inscription V.S. 1517," *Epigraphia Indica* 24 (1937–38): 308.

19. During the coronation ceremonies of a Mewāri mahārāṇā, a Bhil is supposed to anoint the Guhila leader's forehead with his blood, indicating allegiance. The vestiges of a Bhil-Guhila relationship were very important for the construction of kingship by mahārāṇās as late as the twentieth century. A second reference to Bhil origins for kingship in the region is found in Dūngarpur, where the first *mahārawal* is said to have been granted the kingdom by a Bhil chieftain named Dungaria.

20. Michael Meister, "Art Regions and Modern Rājāsthān," in *The Idea of Rajasthan: Explorations in Regional Identity*, ed. Karine Schomer, Joan L. Erdman, Deryck O. Lodrick, and Lloyd I. Rudolph (New Delhi: Manohar/American Institute of Indian Studies, 1994), 143–76.

21. Dhaky, "Mahā-Gurjara Style"; Alka Patel, *Building Communities in Gujarat: Architecture and Society during the Twelfth through Fourteenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

22. Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha, *Dungarpur Rajya ka Itihas* [History of the kingdom of Dūngarpur] (Jodhpur: Rājāsthāni Granthaghar, 2000). First published by the author in 1936.

23. Extensive fieldwork in Rājāsthān in 2002 allowed me to see the priests at Ekliṅgji engaging in the practice of awakening Śiva simultaneously in their bodies and that of the icon, as well as to read their prayer manual, called a *pūjā-paddhati*. For select secondary sources on these methods in India see Michael Meister, "Giving Up and Taking On: The Body in Ritual" *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 41 (2002): 92–103; Joanne Punzo Waghorne and Norman Cutler, in association with Vasudha Narayanan, *Gods of Flesh, Gods of*

Stone: *The Embodiment of Divinity in India* (Chambersburg, PA: Anima, 1985); and Frederick Smith, *The Self-Possessed Deity and Spirit Possession in South Asian Literature and Civilization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006). For Buddhist comparisons see Luis Gomez, "Two Tantric Meditations: Visualizing the Deity," in *Buddhism in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez Jr. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 318–27; and Donald Swearer, *Becoming the Buddha: The Ritual of Image Consecration in Thailand* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

24. For Hindu goddess tantra the work of Sanjukta Gupta is among the most useful. See Sanjukta Gupta, *Lakṣmī Tantra: A Pāñcarātra Text* (Leiden: Brill, 1972); and Sanjukta Gupta, Durk Jan Hoens, and Teun Goudriaan, *Hindu Tantras* (Leiden: Brill, 1979). For a Buddhist comparison see Jinah Kim, *Receptacle of the Sacred: Illustrated Manuscripts and the Buddhist Book Cult in South Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013).

25. Much new work on tantra has been published since the turn of the century in addition to old classics such as Karel R. van Kooij's *Worship of the Goddess According to the Kālikā Purāṇa* (Leiden: Brill, 1972); see, e.g., Katherine A. Harper and Robert L. Brown, *The Roots of Tantra* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002); Alexis Sanderson, *Meaning in Tantric Ritual* (New Delhi: Tantra Foundation, 2006); Jae-Eun Shin, "Yoni, Yogi's and Mahavidhyas," *Studies in History* 26, no. 1 (2010): 1–29. Shaman Hatley's critical review of the literature is also very useful; see Hatley, "Tantric Śaivism."

26. See Dupuche, *Abhinavagupta*.

27. Tamara Sears, "Śaiva Monastic Complexes in Twelfth-Century Rājasthān: The Paśupatas and Cāhamānas at Menāl," *South Asian Studies* 23 (2007): 107–26.

28. Shaman Hatley describes the *Prāyaścittasamuccaya* by Hṛdayaśiva of Malwa in "Tantric Śaivism." This text has been translated into English recently by R. Sathyanarayanan, *Śaiva Rites of Expiation: A First Edition and Translation of Trilocanaśiva's Twelfth-Century "Prāyaścittasamuccaya" (with a transcription of Hṛdayaśiva's "Prāyaścittasamuccaya")* (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2015).

29. Phyllis Granoff, "Halayudha's Prism: The Experience of Religion in Medieval Hymns and Stories," in *Gods, Guardians, and Lovers: Temple Sculptures from North India, AD 700–1200*, ed. Vishakha N. Desai and Darielle Mason (New York: Asia Society Galleries, 1993), 66–93.

30. For an English translation of the Devī Māhātmya story about the goddess Durgā-Mahiṣāsura-mardini, see Thomas Coburn, *Encountering the Goddess: A Translation of the Devī-Māhātmya and a Study of Its Interpretation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991). On the myth of Durgā-Mahiṣāsura-mardini see Indira S. Aiyar, *Durgā as Mahiṣāsura-mardini: A Dynamic Myth of Goddess* (New Delhi: Gyan, 1997); David Kinsley, *Hindu Goddesses* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); and John Stratton Hawley and Donna Marie Wulff, eds., *Devī: Goddesses of India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996). For regional variations of this myth and goddess worship see Kathleen Erndl, *Victory to the Mother* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Rachel Fell McDermott, *Revelry, Rivalry, and Longing for the Goddesses of Bengal: The Fortunes of Hindu Festivals* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011); and William S. Sax, *Mountain Goddess: Gender and Politics in a Himalayan Pilgrimage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991). For a psychoanalytic interpretation of Durgā-Mahiṣāsura-mardini see Stanley Kurtz, *All the Mothers Are One* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992). For Western appropriations

of this myth see Rachel Fell McDermott and Jeffrey J. Kripal, *Encountering Kali: In the Margins, at the Center, in the West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

31. On the number three see Alan Dundes, *Interpreting Folklore* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980). The Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (BU) also has a 3 + 1 narrative structure, which may explain the three walls plus inner sanctum articulation of the Devī Māhātmya story in circumambulating the Ambikā temple in Jagat. For example, the BU alludes to ātman in metaphors of 3 [1.5.3–1.5.8]:

The three worlds are also these—this world is speech; the middle world is the mind; and the world above is breath. The three Vedas are also these—the Rīgveda is speech; the Yajurveda is the mind; and the Sāmaveda is breath. The gods, ancestors, and humans are also these—the gods are speech (vāc, also personified as a goddess); the ancestors are the mind; and the humans are the breath. What one knows, what one seeks to know, and what one does not know . . .

Further along in the BU [1.6.3], this undulating series of threes is subsumed into one (*ātman*): “While this is a triple reality, yet it is one—it is this self [*ātman*]. While the self is one, yet this triple reality. Now the immortal here is veiled by the real. Clearly, the immortal is breath, while the real is name and visible appearance; the breath here is veiled by these two.” Finally, when this three-to-one *ātman* ideal merges with brāhman, we find the conclusion of the 3 + 1 narrative and philosophical structure that parallels the architectural core of circumambulating the three exterior walls of the classic medieval temple sanctum, punctuated by the darśanic climax of the icon’s gaze out from the sanctum interior. In BU [2.5.19] *ātman* merges with brāhman: “This brahman is without a before and an after, without an inner and an outer. Brahman is this self (*ātman*) here which perceives everything. That is the teaching.” Patrick Olivelle, trans., *The Upaniṣads* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 19, 23, 33.

32. Deborah L. Stein, “The Theft of the Goddess Amba Mata: Ontological Location and Georges Bataille’s *Bas-Matérialisme*,” *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 57/58 (2010): 264–82.

33. Michael W. Meister, “Guhilas of Mēdapāṭa (Plates),” in *Encyclopedia of Indian Temple Architecture*, vol. 2, pt. 2, *North India Period of Early Maturity*, ed. Michael Meister and M. A. Dhaky (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991); and Stein, “Theft of the Goddess Amba Mata.”

34. See John G. Woodroffe, *The Garland of Letters: Essays on Tantra/Mantra Śāstra* (New Delhi: New Age Books, 2013).

35. See M. A. Dhaky, “Mahā-Gurjara Style, Last Phase, c. AD 900–1000, Guhilas of Mēdapāṭa: Lower Variation, Phase II.” In *Encyclopedia of Indian Temple Architecture*. Vol. 2, Pt. 3, *North India: Beginnings of Medieval Idiom*, edited by M. A. Dhaky and Michael Meister (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies, 1998), fig. 404.

36. Vidya Dehejia, *Art of the Imperial Cholas* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990); Sears, “Śaiva Monastic Complexes”; and Tamara Sears, *Worldly Gurus and Spiritual Kings: Architecture and Asceticism in Medieval India* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014).

37. See Michael W. Meister, “Regional Variations in Mātrikā Conventions,” *Artibus Asiae* 47, no. 3/4 (1986): 233–62.

38. Gamari lies near a place selected for a large dam project in the twentieth century.

39. Meister, "Regional Variations in Mātrikā Conventions."

40. References to this form of worship abound in early medieval texts as well. The *Agnipurāṇa* and the *Tantrāloka* both mention this form of worship directly. Current worship of Śrī Ekliṅgī, understood as the divine ruler of Mewār still in the twenty-first century, assumes this iconographic form and parallels medieval ritual in the *pūjā-paddhati* read to me by Narendra Dashora in Ekliṅgī in 2002.

41. M. A. Dhaky, "Nagada's Ancient Jaina Temple," *Sambodhi* 4, no. 3–4 (1975–76): 83–85.

42. The earliest metal reference to the ruling dynasty of Udaipur are the Kadmal Plates, which date to 1083 CE under the reign of Vijaysimha. Opening with praise for Śrī Ekliṅgī, the plates list Guhadatta, and not Bappa, as the progenitor of the Guhilas of Mewār. Only beginning in the thirteenth century was the myth of Bappa as dynastic founder propagated. The Kadmal Plates give a dynastic list of the Mewāri Guhilas from Guhadatta through Mahipala, covering eighteen generations over the course of four centuries. See Akshaya Keerty Vyas, "Kadmal Plates of Guhila Vijayasimha, V.S. 1140," *Epigraphia Indica* 31 (1955–56): 239.

43. R. C. Agrawala, "Inscription of V.S. 1083 from Nagada, Rājāsthān," *Journal of the U.P. Historical Society* 10, nos. 1–11 (1962): 23–25, 23.

44. Agrawala (ibid.) suggests that Sridhara may be the ruler's name or title and that the Vaiṣṇava Śās-Bahu temples may date to his eleventh-century reign, whereas Vyas argues that the ruler was Vairata, the son of Mahipala, based on the dates, even though there is no physical evidence for this opinion. See Vyas, "Kadmal Plates of Guhila Vijayasimha, V.S. 1140," 242.

CHAPTER 2. TEMPLE AS CATALYST

1. Kant defines "taste" as the "faculty of estimating the beautiful." According to him, taste is subjective. Beauty itself, however, is defined as something that "pleases universally." It is exactly this universalizing claim that becomes problematic when several different forms of praxis unfold in the same time and space. See Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgement*, trans. James Creed Meredith (1790; repr., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), 41–42, 60. Martin Powers has illuminated how conflicts of taste articulated power struggles and class wars in second-century China. See Martin Powers, "Conflicts of Taste," in *Art and Political Expression in Early China* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 335–70. In a lecture titled "Thinking Outside the Boxes: Nesting Reliquary Caskets from a 9th-Century Chinese Monastic Crypt," Eugene Wang argued that aesthetic choices in funerary arts may even provide evidence of a coup instigated by court eunuchs (University of California, Berkeley, Dec. 1, 2005). Aesthetic choices privilege one taste over another. In the postcolonial context in India, conflicts of taste often date to different eras, privilege insiders or outsiders, and give rise to political conflict resulting in rioting and death.

2. John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, eds., *The Cultures of Collecting* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 3.

3. Bernard Cohn argues that the British saw India as a living museum. See Bernard Cohn, "The Transformation of Objects into Artifacts, Antiquities, and Art in Nineteenth-Century India," in *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 76–105, 78.

4. According to Riegl, "When compared with other values [i.e., historical value] and intentional commemorative value, age-value has one advantage over all the other ideal values of the work of art in that it claims to address one and all and to possess universal validity. It rises above differences in religious persuasion and transcends differences in education and in understanding of art." Alois Riegl, "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin," *Oppositions* 25 (Fall 1982): 31.

5. *Ibid.*, 34.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*, 38.

8. *Ibid.*

9. This relationship could be fruitfully studied by comparing the lives of new temples such as the Birla temples with the contentious lives and deaths of sites such as Ayodhyā. The Birla family has recently sponsored large stone temples across India. For an anthropological perspective on this modern patronage see Anne Hardgrove, "Philanthropy and Mapping the Kul: Industrialists and Temple Building," in *Community and Public Culture: The Marwaris in Calcutta, c. 1897–1997* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 65–100.

10. "A Stone Inscription of Ekalingaji Near Udeypore in Meywar. Dated Samvat 1545," in *Prakrit and Sanskrit Inscriptions of Kattywar* (Bhavnagar Archaeological Department), 118–33 (verse 86 of inscription).

11. *Ibid.*

12. G. Buhler, "The Cintra Praśāsti of the Reign of Sarangadeva," in *Epigraphia Indica* 1 (1892): 279.

13. *Ibid.*, 273.

14. *Ibid.*, 277–79.

15. *Ibid.*, 275.

16. My gratitude goes to my research assistant, R. K. Purohit, who helped me to make estampages of the inscriptions at the temple and to translate the inscriptions into Hindi and English.

17. Metallic gold paint cannot be removed without damaging the exquisite carving it covers. This was a permanent defacement overlooked by the Archaeological Survey.

18. Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

19. See John Ruskin, *England and Its Aesthetics: Biography and Taste* (Amsterdam: G + B Arts International, 1997).

20. The French never trained Khmer nationals in "archaeological research, conservation and restoration techniques or cultural heritage management." Even upon independence there were no trained archaeological personnel, so they depended on the French while providing 50 percent of the conservation budget with no important managerial or research role in conservation work. See Ang Choulean, Eric Prenowitz, and Ashley Thompson, *Angkor: Past, Present, and Future*, 2nd rev. ed. (Phnom Penh: APSARA, Royal Government of Cambodia, 1998), 103.

21. R. C. Agrawala, "Khajuraho of Rājāsthān," *Arts Asiatiques* 10, no. 1 (1964): 43.

22. *Ibid.*, 46.

23. K. V. Soundara Rajan, "A Devi Cult Nucleus at Jagat, Rājāsthān," *Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal* 1 (March 1963): 130–40.

24. "Jagat me mahish ki mardini ki prachin pratima chori, Ganv Bandh Raha," *Rājāsthān Patrika* (Udaipur), March 9, 2000, 4.
25. M. A. Dhaky, "Kṣēmaṅkarī: The Cult Image of the Ambikā Temple, Jagat," *Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal* 6 (1968): 117–20.
26. My sincere thanks to the ASI officers who efficiently provided me with copies of relevant photographs.
27. See Jaipur Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, *Indian Legal Code* (1941), 4. Archaeological Survey of India, Government of Rajasthan, Government Museum, Udaipur.
28. *Ibid.*, 1.
29. Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor, ed. Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 239.
30. Tapan Basu, Pradip Datta, Sumit Sarkar, Tanika Sarkar, and Sambuddha Sen, *Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags: A Critique of the Hindu Right* (New Delhi: Orient Longman Limited, 1993), 111.
31. M. L. Sondhi and Apratim Mukarji, eds., *The Black Book of Gujarat* (New Delhi: Manak, 2002).
32. Personal communication with the thakur's children at the Ambikā temple, May 2002.
33. Basu et al., *Khaki Shorts*, vii.
34. R. C. Agrawala, personal communication, 2002, Jaipur.
35. Choulean, Prenowitz, and Thompson, *Angkor*, 2nd rev. ed., 119–21.
36. Jagat's Ambikā temple is currently number 273 on Rājāsthān's "Adopt-a-Monument" list.

CHAPTER 3. TEMPLE AS ROYAL ABODE

1. Three approaches predominate: (1) translations of inscriptions, (2) histories based on bardic accounts, and (3) art historical analyses rooted in visual evidence. The most famous historians of Mewār, Col. James Tod and Kavirāj Śyāmaladās, belong to the colonial period. The former worked closely with local informants while living in Rājāsthān. Paintings record Tod's presence at court, and his archives in Britain have been written about quite extensively by scholars of colonial India, among others. Śyāmaladās wrote in Hindi and his *Vir Vinod* has been a key textual source for Indian and Western scholars alike. Just as I was conducting fieldwork in 2002, Nandini Sinha Kapur wrote a critical book on state formation in medieval Rājāsthān rooted largely in inscriptional evidence. This book, and many of the works cited here, also rely on the classic corpus of Rājāsthāni history for this specific period and region, including but not limited to Śyāmaladās, Tod, Dasharatha Sharma, and Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha. See Dasharatha Sharma, ed., *Rājāsthān through the Ages*, vol. 1 (Bikaner: Rājāsthān State Archives, 1966); and Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha, *Rajputane ka Itihas* [History of Rājputāna] (Ajmer: Vaidika Yantralaya, 1927). Key art historical articles by Tryna Lyons (from explicitly nondynastic perspectives) and by Andrew Topsfield help to establish overlapping time lines for bardic and inscriptional data, as well as for painted manuscripts and artists' records in this chapter.
2. By "cultural" I mean specifically the architectural, artistic, musical, linguistic, material, and performative aspects of expression and production, as opposed to, say, military

battles or the conquest of large territories of lands or natural resources. I do not mean to include or exclude anything visual within or outside of a border.

3. See Tryna Lyons, "The Changing Faces of Eklingji: A Dynastic Shrine and Its Artists," *Artibus Asiae* 58, no. 3/4 (1999): 253–71.

4. Mewār Encyclopedia, www.eternalmewar.in/research/wikipedia/index.aspx?q=bappa; see also James Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rājāsthān*, 3 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1920).

5. Pankaj Mishra, *City within a City*, 2nd ed. (Udaipur: Maharana of Mewar Charitable Foundation, 2000); and D. R. Bhandarkar, "An Eklingji Stone Inscription and Origin and History of the Lakuliśa Sect," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay* 22, no. 61 (1906): 151–67.

6. Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rājāsthān*, 2:924; and Ratan Lal Mishra, *The Mewār Inscriptions* (Udaipur: Mahamaya Mandir, 2000).

7. D. C. Sircar, *The Guhilas of Kīṣkindhā* (Calcutta: Sanskrit College, 1965), 30.

8. Nandini Sinha Kapur, *State Formation in Rājāsthān: Mewār during the Seventh–Fifteenth Centuries* (Delhi: Manohar, 2002), 267.

9. Lyons, "The Changing Faces of Eklingji."

10. Kapur, *State Formation in Rājāsthān*, 173.

11. Andrew Topsfield, *Court Painting in Rājāsthān* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1984); and Tryna Lyons, *The Artists of Nathadwara: The Practice of Painting in Rājāsthān* (Bloomington: University of Indiana; and Ahmedabad: Mapin, 2004).

12. Kapur, *State Formation in Rājāsthān*, 173.

13. I have written about the historiography of this Rājput glory elsewhere but for this book have chosen to focus primarily on the Kirtistambha, or "Tower of Glory." See Deborah L. Stein, "To Curate in the Field: Archaeological Privatization and the Aesthetic 'Legislation' of Antiquity in India," *Contemporary South Asia* 19, no. 1 (2011): 25–47.

14. Upendra Nath Day, *Mewār under Maharana Kumbha, 1433 A.D.–1468 A.D.* (Udaipur: Rajesh, 1978); Kapur, *State Formation in Rājāsthān*; R. Nath, *Kirtti-Stambha* (New Delhi: Abhinav, 1999); and Lyons, *The Artists of Nathadwara*.

15. Lyons, *The Artists of Nathadwara*.

16. Earlier architectural examples of helical (commonly known as "spiral" staircases), such as the Minaret of Sammara in Iraq (c. 900s) and the Minaret of the Ibn Tulun Mosque in Egypt (c. 1200s), use a helical design similar to the Italian Tower of Pisa (c. 1500). Whereas the later Tower of Pisa has an internal staircase, these early West Asian examples remain exterior. What is unique about the Jain kirtistambha at Chittorgarh (c. 1300) and the technical innovation of that staircase plan in Mahārāṇā Kumbhā's Kirtistambha (c. 1450) is the adoption of a square form of helical staircase in addition to an internal rather than external stairwell. A circular helical plan ascends or descends without ever stopping at a landing. If it does stop, as it does at, say, the stupa at Sanchi, it must interrupt the circular ascent on the exterior, break the ascent with an exterior spiral landing, and then continue the ascent. In the case of the early medieval West Asian examples the ziggurat or minaret is surrounded by an exterior stair that permits a person to ascend from bottom to top or to descend from top to bottom. The square helical staircase permits the person to stop at intermediate stations; thus, exterior examples such as early Mesopotamian ziggurats or Southeast Asian stupas allow for circumambulation, similar to the circular plan at the Sanchi Stupa but with more

architectural cohesion and fluidity. When the square helical staircase is combined with the internal staircase, it becomes possible to have square landings and to stack pavilions or “maṇḍapas” one upon another. This is the case at the Kirti Stambha of Mahārāṇā Kumbhā, where nine “maṇḍapas” are stacked and the internal helical square staircase makes the circumambulation of each level possible as a distinct experience. The stacked architecture creates the unique opportunity to experience nine maṇḍapa spaces in relation to each other within a span of ten to thirty minutes—an experience that would otherwise take days of traveling to different buildings.

17. Lal M. Dubey, *Aparājitaṭṭpccā—A Critical Study: Encyclopedic Manual on Art and Architecture* (Allahabad: Lakshmi, 1987); and R. Nath, *Chittorgadh Kirtti-stambha of Maharana Kumbha: The Idea and the Form, 1440–60 A.D.* (New Delhi: Abhinav, 1999).

18. Kumbhā's daughter left her trace in the inscription of the Ramanathata temple of Jāwar, which she sponsored. R. C. Agrawala, “An Inscription from Jāwar, Rājāsthān.” *Indian Historical Quarterly* 34 (Dec. 1958): 215–25; Stein, “Smelting Zinc and Housing the Divine at Jāwar,” *Artibus Asiae* 72, no. 1 (2012): 141–58.

19. Michael Meister, “Juncture and Conjunction: Punning and Temple Architecture,” *Artibus Asiae* 41, no. 2/3 (1979): 233–62; Danielle Mason, “A Sense of Time and Place: Style and Architectural Disposition of Images on the North Indian Temple,” in *Gods, Guardians, and Lovers: Temple Sculptures from North India, AD 700–1200*, ed. Vishakha N. Desai and Danielle Mason (New York: Asia Society Galleries, 1993), 116–38.

20. Afghans, Arabs, Persianate Mughals, and Gujarati sultanates form a rather diaphanous mix of varied interests from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries.

21. See Finnbar B. Flood, *Objects of Translation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

22. See Michael Brand and Glenn D. Lowry. *Akbar's India: Art from the Mughal City of Victory* (New York: Asia Society Galleries, 1985).

23. Joanna Williams, *The Art of Gupta India: Empire and Province* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), 132.

24. On Deogarh see *ibid.*; and on mythology see Heinrich Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*, edited by Joseph Campbell (New York: Pantheon, 1946). On narrative see, especially, Catherine Becker, *Shifting Stones, Shaping the Past: Sculpture from the Buddhist Stūpas of Andhra Pradesh* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); and Werner Wolf, “Narrative and Narrativity: A Narratological Reconceptualization and Its Applicability to the Visual Arts,” *Word and Image* 19, no. 3 (2003): 180–97; Robert L. Brown, “Narrative as Icon: The Jataka Stories in Ancient Indian and Southeast Asian Architecture,” in *Sacred Biography in the Buddhist Traditions of South and Southeast Asia*, ed. Juliane Schober (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), 64–109; Joanna Williams, “On Viewing Sancti,” *Archives of Asian Art* 50 (1997–98): 93–98; Padma Kaimal, “Kaimal on Becker, ‘Shifting Stones, Shaping the Past: Sculpture from the Buddhist Stūpas of Andhra Pradesh,’” review of Catherine Becker, *Shifting Stones, Shaping the Past: Sculpture from the Buddhist Stūpas of Andhra Pradesh*, H-Asia, H-Net Reviews, August 2015. The treatment of narrative at Deogarh epitomizes the Gupta era for me, in contrast to the auxiliary figures that create synopated circumambulation in the early medieval period that followed. Becker's discussions of narrative in the Buddhist context at Berkeley as part of the Asian Art Working Group, as

well as in the field on a three-person trip to Gupta sites with Joanna and me in 2000, greatly influenced how I think about Gupta temples, iconography, and the temple wall in general.

25. Phyllis Granoff, "Heaven on Earth: Temples and Temple Cities of Medieval India," in *India and Beyond: Aspects of Literature, Meaning, Ritual and Thought*, ed. Dick van der Meij (Leiden: International Institute for Asian Studies, 1997), 170–94.

26. See Vishakha N. Desai and Darielle Mason, eds. *Gods, Guardians, and Lovers: Temple Sculptures from North India, AD 700–1200*. New York: Asia Society Galleries, 1993.

27. Arnold van Gennep, *Rites of Passage*, trans. Monika Vizedom and Gabrielle Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960); Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-structure* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969).

28. Vidya Dehejia, "Fixing a Shadow," in *India through the Lens* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, in association with Mapin [Ahmedabad] and Prestel [Munich], 2000), 31.

29. *Ibid.*, 31n39.

30. According to Derrida, the archonic principle is that the archive is repressed and suppressed patricide. The father is filed and killed, remembered externally, removed from the mind, remade, "de-made," and unmade. The patriarchal logic reifies the father as omnipresent as well. He is obliterated, yet he is present enough to erase the existence of descendant as independent of the patriarch. Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 95.

31. On the Ghurid combination see Finbarr B. Flood, "Pillars, Palimpsests, and Princely Practices: Translating the Past in Sultanate Delhi," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 43 (Spring 2003): 95–116.

32. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

33. Quoted in Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990), 1.

34. Derrida, *Archive Fever*, 93.

35. David Ludden, "Ayodhyā: A Window on the World," in *Contesting the Nation: Religion, Community, and the Politics of Democracy in India*, ed. David Ludden (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996). This nationalist discourse continues today with the dispute over the Taj Mahal. According to Agence France-Presse, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad now claims the Taj Mahal is built on the ruins of an *āiva* temple, and "pillars and temple" can be found in the unexcavated basement of the building. Historian Akhilesh Mithal has evidence that there was only a garden when the land was purchased from the Maharaja of Jaipur. The Taj Mahal is currently legally disputed by the Waqf board, which has summoned the Archaeological Survey of India for the case. See "Hindus and Muslims in Monumental Dispute over Taj Mahal," Agence France-Presse, May 18, 2005, <https://wwwn.org/articles/16882/>.

36. Romila Thapar notes that temple renovation (in relation to Somnāth) "takes on the symbolism of political legitimization for the king." Romila Thapar, "Somanatha: Narratives of a History," *Seminar* 475 (March 1999): 19.

37. Lyons, "The Changing Faces of Eklingī."

38. The historiography of this site alone suggests the continuing power of monuments to denominate territory in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. M. A. Dhaky, "The

Creed-Affiliation of Samiddhēśvara Temple in Chittodgadth,” *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art* 14 (1984–85): 27.

39. Dhaky, “Mahā-Gurjara Style, Last Phase, c. AD 900–1000, Guhilas of Mēdapāṭa: Lower Variation, Phase II,” in *North India: Beginnings of Medieval Idiom*, ed. M. A. Dhaky, vol. 2, pt. 3 of *Encyclopedia of Indian Temple Architecture* (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies, 1998), 199. This original appellation of the temple means, “Lord of the sacrificial wood” and was later modified to “Lord of trance” or “Lord of the sepulchral mound” (*ibid.*, 25–26).

40. *Ibid.*, 26.

41. F. Kielhorn, “Chitorgadh Stone Inscription of Mokala of Mewad,” *Epigraphia Indica* 2 (1894): 409.

42. Michael Meister has argued that Mahārāṇā Kumbhā is consciously employing what we might call a postmodern pastiche. See Meister, “Art Regions and Modern Rājasthan,” in *The Idea of Rajasthan: Explorations in Regional Identity*, vol. 1, *Constructions*, ed. Karine Schomer, Joan L. Erdman, Deryck O. Lodrick, and Lloyd I. Rudolph (New Delhi: Manohar/American Institute of Indian Studies, 1994), 143–76.

43. R. V. Somani, *History of Rājasthan* (Jaipur: Jain Pustuk Mandir, 1997), 105.

44. “A Stone Inscription of Ekaliṅgaji near Udeypore in Meywar. Dated Samvat 1545,” in *Prakrit and Sanskrit Inscriptions of Kattywar* (Bhavnagar: Bhavnagar Archaeological Department, 1894), 118–33.

45. Akshaya Keerty Vyas, “First and Third Slabs of Kumbhalgarh Inscription: V.S. 1517,” *Epigraphia Indica* 24 (1937–38): 305.

46. *Ibid.*

47. *Ibid.*

48. Vyas suggests that this Bhoja is an early predecessor of the Guhila family. *Ibid.*, 306.

49. *Ibid.*

50. In 1649 CE Sūtradhāra Pitambar, son of Kachara of the Sompura caste, made a pilgrimage to Jagat, and in 1702 CE Sūtradhāra Reda of the Sompura caste also inscribed his visit on the Ambikā temple.

51. Mason, “A Sense of Time and Place,” 134.

52. The increased complexity of temple programs was foreshadowed in the early eleventh century in the Mirān temple at Ahar.

53. Darielle Mason argues that the unframed semidivinities occurred with increasing frequency in Mahā-Gurjara architecture with the result of “linking the indentations and projections into a playful narrative.” Mason, “A Sense of Time and Place,” 134.

54. The preference for regional style over sectarian orientation is evident at Rāṇakpur, where a Surya temple figures prominently at a predominantly Jain site. Ritual practice and architectural style may be regional rather than sectarian. This is one reason the emanation theory may not be the best way to interpret the walls unless Jains also believed in *vāstuśāstra*, and so on. Also *vāstu* may very well postdate the architecture.

55. Pika Ghosh, *Temple to Love: Architecture and Devotion in Seventeenth-Century Bengal* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

56. Despite three hundred years without an inscription, the exterior of the Ambikā temple remained pristinely preserved until theft attempts in 2000 left some degree of damage. When the temple was photographed in the 1950s and 1960s, however, there was no image

in the sanctum. Susan Huntington suggests that “Muslim destruction of Hindu temples was not always for iconoclastic purposes.” Possibly, and very probably, raiders were seeking treasure so often housed in the temple. Not only would the treasure be desirable for its own value, but its loss could help to undermine the economic basis (and I might argue numinous basis) of a ruling dynasty. Susan L. Huntington, *The Art of Ancient India: Buddhist, Hindu, Jain* (New York: Weatherhill, 1985), 489.

57. Robert Skelton, “The Ni’matnama: A Landmark in Malwa Painting,” *Marg* 12 (June 1959): 44–50; and Deborah Stein, “Smelting Zinc and Housing the Divine at Jāwar,” *Artibus Asiae* 72, no. 1 (2012): 141–58.

58. Agrawala, “An Inscription from Jāwar, Rājāsthān.”

59. R. V. Somani, *Jain Inscriptions of Rājāsthān* (Jaipur: Rājāsthān Prakrit Bharati Sansathan, 1982), 147.

60. Lynn Willies, with P. T. Craddock, L. J. Gurjar, and K. T. M. Hedge, “Ancient Lead and Zinc Mining in Rājāsthān, India,” *World Archaeology* 16, no. 2 (1984): 231.

61. H. W. A. Sommerlatte, “Messing und Zinck: Alte Berichte aus China und neuere Ausgrabungen in Indien,” *Kultur und Technik* 1 (Jan. 1988): 46–52.

62. George B. Souza, “Ballast Goods: Chinese Maritime Trade in Zinc and Sugar in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,” in *Emporia, Commodities and Entrepreneurs in Asian Maritime Trade, c. 1400–1750*, ed. Roderich Ptak and Dietmar Rothermund (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1991), 294.

63. Ibid.

64. Dr. Meena Gaur, Professor of History at Mohanlal Sukhadia University, personal conversations about records and women’s history as a research adviser on Hindi-language and Rājāsthāni-language archives and primary sources in Udaipur, 2002 and 2009. Ramya Sreenivasan has begun the historical investigation of women during this period with her book *The Many Lives of a Rajput Queen: Heroic Pasts in India, c. 1500–1900* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007).

65. See, e.g., Sumathi Ramaswamy, *The Goddess and the Nation: Mapping Mother India* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).

66. Nath emphasizes this interesting colonial mistake in prescient postcolonial arguments in his book about this tower, *Kirtti-Stambha*.

67. Agrawala, “An Inscription from Jāwar, Rājāsthān.”

68. There is no shortage of material since a Mewāri renaissance of sorts seems to have been under way in the fifteenth century, and the patron of Jāwar’s Ramanatha temple shared the close of the fifteenth century with the two other most famous Mewāri women, Rani Padmini, who led the group immolation during the siege of Chittorgarh, and the Vaiṣṇavaite saint Mīrabai.

69. The Ramanatha icon and his tank echo medieval hymns and stories, such as the tale of lovers who would meet in the night for temple trysts and then wash away their sins in the adjacent tank under the purifying gaze of the deity. See Phyllis Granoff, “Halayudha’s Prism: The Experience of Religion in Medieval Hymns and Stories,” in *Gods, Guardians, and Lovers: Temple Sculptures from North India, AD 700–1200*, ed. Vishakha N. Desai and Darielle Mason (New York: Asia Society Galleries, 1993), 71.

70. In 2002 the inscription was in the framed niche to the right of the stairs descending toward the tank. As of February 2009 this inscription was no longer at the tank.

71. See Deborah Stein, "Translating the Year 1299: On Reading Hindi, Sanskrit, Persian, and Arabic in English," *Art in Translation* 4, no. 1 (2012): 41–59.
72. Sreenivasan, *The Many Lives of a Rajput Queen*.
73. See Kaviraj Shyamaldas, Vir Vinod [History of Rājāsthān, with special reference to Udaipur]. 1886. Vols. 1–3: 286–288.
74. As of this writing, a digital copy of this painting can be viewed at the Victoria and Albert Museum website: <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O9614/painting-unknown/>.

CHAPTER 4. TEMPLE AS PALIMPSEST

1. For classic and colonial-era art historical accounts of "sultanate"-period art, also known then as art of "Pathan," see Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture*, vols. 1 and 2 (Bombay: Taraporevala Sons, 1959); James Fergusson, *The History of Indian and Near Eastern Architecture*, 2 vols. (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1899); and Ernest Binfield Havell, *Encyclopedia of Architecture in the Indian Subcontinent* (New Delhi: Aryan Books International, 2000).
2. For a selection of recent writings on the art and history of the Delhi Sultanate see Peter Jackson, *The Delhi Sultanate: A Political and Military History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Sunil Kumar, *The Emergence of the Delhi Sultanate* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2007); André Wink, *Al-hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*, vol. 3 (Leiden: Brill, 2004); Alka Patel and Abha Narian Lambhah, eds., *The Architecture of the Indian Sultanates* (Mumbai: Marg, 2006); Finbarr Barry Flood, "Pillars, Palimpsests, and Princely Practices: Translating the Past in Sultanate Delhi," *RES: Journal of Anthropology and Aesthetics* 43 (Spring 2003): 95–116; and Catherine Asher, *Architecture of Mughal India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
3. Ziyā' al-Dīn Baranī, *The Reign of 'Alāuddīn Khiljī* (Calcutta: Pilgrim, 1967); Ramya Sreenivasan, *The Many Lives of a Rajput Queen: Heroic Pasts in India, c. 1500–1900* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2007); and Deborah Stein, "Translating the Year 1299: On Reading Hindi, Sanskrit, Persian, and Arabic in English," *Art in Translation* 4, no. 1 (2012): 41–59. For more on Rani Padmini from a postcolonial perspective see Mayaram Shail, *The Magic of Prithviraj, Padmini, and Pratap in the Vernacular Imaginaire: Revisiting the Interface of Colonialism, Orientalism, and Nationalism* (New Delhi: India International Centre, 2009).
4. See Michael Meister, "Style and Idiom in the Art of Uparāmāla," *Muqarnas: An Annual on the Visual Culture of the Islamic World* 10 (1993): 344–54.
5. Almost all of these stone inscriptions can be found, read, used for rubbings, and photographed in situ. I have photographed many of these inscriptions in the field but have spared publishers the expense of reproducing this extensive visual documentation in print. My photography and rubbings are available on request, although many have been published already in more than one place. Most of the inscriptional evidence for this section has been collated in a small volume published in Udaipur, Rājāsthān, *The Mewar Inscriptions*, written by Ratan Lal Mishra (Udaipur: Mahamaya Mandir, 2000). Many of these inscriptions have also been published and translated in more reliable and complete formats in the Epigraphical Reports of the Archaeological Survey of India. Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha has also reproduced many of these inscriptions in his Hindi-language *Dungarpur Rajya ka Itihas* [History of the kingdom of Dūngarpur]. The actual rubbings that Ojha took of these inscriptions are preserved in the archives of the royal family in Dūngarpur. They kindly

permitted me to photograph these rubbings there, and these photographs are also available on request. Many of these inscriptions were included in Kaviraj Shyamaldas's Hindi-language, *Vir Vinod*, in four volumes. See Kaviraj Shyamaldas, *Vir Vinod* [History of Rājasthan, with special reference to Udaipur], 4 vols. (1886; Udayapura, Rājasthāna: Mahārāṇā Mevāra Hīstōrikālā Pablikaśansa Trastā; Jodhapura: Saha prakāśaka evaṃ vitaraka, Rājasthānī Granthāgāra, 2007). Some stone slabs were moved by James Tod and others to the museum at Udaipur, and a few others were lost in transit to England. More recently, Jennifer Joffe has examined the later inscriptional records of Mewār closely in her dissertation research based on archival work on postsultanate, Hindi-language history and fieldwork at Rajasamand Lake and other locations throughout Mewār. Tryna Lyons has also studied many of the nondynastic and aural records in depth in collaboration locally with the Vyas family and local bards. See Jennifer Beth Joffe, "Art, Architecture, and Politics in Mewār (Rājasthan, India), 1628–1710" (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2005); and Tryna Lyons, *Artists of Nathadwara: The Practice of Painting in Rājasthan* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press; Ahmedabad: Mapin, 2004).

6. Pūjāri Narendra Dashora and his whole family adopted me during the majority of my fieldwork in Ekliṅgī. He and I studied texts together orally. Mrs. Dashora, her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Hema Dashora, and my aunties Bhuaji and Taiji welcomed me wholeheartedly into their home and every aspect of their lives in and out of the temple. With Śrī Ekliṅgī and the local temples as a catalyst, we shared rituals secular and Śaiva alike over the course of 2002. My two Dashora brothers explored multiple sites beyond the walls of the temple compound with me, including the site where Harit Rashi is said to have appeared to Bappa Rāwal as envisioned in the painting found in Dūngarpur at the Juna Mahal. None of this folklore work, or family pleasure and companionship, would have been possible without the anthropological training provided by the late Alan Dundes, in the company of fellow students Kirtana Thangavelu, Alka Hingorani, and Adheesh Sathaye. An example of Dundes's approach to folklore in South Asia can be found in his *Two Tales of Crow and Sparrow* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997).

7. See Tamara Sears, "Śaiva Monastic Complexes in Twelfth-Century Rājasthan: The Pāśupatas and Cāhamānas at Menāl," *South Asian Studies* 23 (2007): 107–26.

8. Tamara Sears, "Constructing the Guru: Ritual Authority and Architectural Space in Medieval India," *Art Bulletin* 90, no. 1 (2008): 7–31.

9. Michael Meister, "Regional Variations in Mātrikā Conventions," *Artibus Asiae* 47, no. 3/4 (1986): 233–62.

10. See, e.g., Shaman Hatley, "The Brahmayāmalatantra and Early Śaiva Cult of Yoginīs" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2007); Vidya Dehejia, *Yoginī, Cult and Temples: A Tantric Tradition* (New Delhi: National Museum, 1986); and Padma Kaimal, *Scattered Goddesses: Travels with the Yoginīs* (Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Asian Studies, 2012).

11. See Akshaya Keerty Vyas, "First and Third Slabs of Kumbhalgarh Inscription: V.S. 1517," *Epigraphia Indica* 24 (1937–38): 304–28, 312.

12. Akshaya Keerty Vyas, "Paldi Inscription of Guhila Arisimha; V.S. 1173," *Epigraphia Indica* 30 (1953–54): 8.

13. F. Kielhorn, "Chitorgadh Stone Inscription of the Chālukya Kumarapala: The [Vikrama] Year 1207," *Epigraphia Indica* 2 (1894): 421–24.

14. Ibid.

15. Dasharatha Sharma, ed., *Rājāsthān through the Ages*, 3 vols. (Bikaner: Rājāsthān State Archives, 1966), 1:378.

16. The location of this temple, in a gorge by Ekliṅgī, just down the hill from an underground Pāśupata Śiva monastery, links this time and place to a liminal political environment. In Yuko Yokochi's impressive dissertation we are reminded about her associations in Sanskrit texts:

According to the *Harivamśa* and Jinasena's *Harivamśapurāṇa*, she was considered to be worshipped by the people who are on the fringe of Hindu society, such as mountaineers and bandits, in the Vindhya mountains. It can also be gleaned from both texts that she was regarded as being terrifying and inauspicious and, when propitiated properly, as conferring on her devotees protection and worldly benefits. These suggest that Vindhyāvasinī originated from goddesses who were worshipped locally in the Vindhya mountains in cultural environments outside the Hindu dharmic society and who could have been included in the class of the Mothers as such. (Yuko Yokochi, "The Rise of the Warrior Goddess in Ancient India: A Study of the Myth Cycle of Kauśikī-Vindhyāvasinī in the *Skandapurāṇa*" [PhD diss., University of Groningen, The Netherlands, 2005], 121, www.rug.nl/research/portal/files/2903012/thesis.pdf)

17. According to Sharma, the *Kuvalayamala* describes sailors who promise animal sacrifices if they are saved from drowning. Similarly, the *Smararāichchaka* recounts that tails and heads of buffaloes and rams hung from a tree adjoining a Caṇḍika temple. The *Brhatkathakosa* describes bloody worship specifically of Vindhyāvasinī. See Sharma, *Rājāsthān through the Ages*, 1:378–79.

18. It is no accident that the Vindhyāvasinī temple is located directly parallel to the Ekliṅgī temple complex, especially given the early record of the theological debates between Śaivaites, Buddhists, and Jains recorded on the Lakuliśa temple dedicated to the Pāśupata Śiva saint. Yuko Yokochi's dissertation names two distinct streams of goddess integration as a political maneuver—the first, as a tribal chieftain who is himself a goddess-worshipper integrates himself into a brāhmanical tradition as a fledgling kshetria king; and the second, as a local king desires to win over a local tribal population who worships the goddess by incorporating local goddesses into a brāhmanical theological system. Yokochi argues further:

The motivation behind the second stream can also be said to have been political in a wider sense. For the lay Śaiva Brahmins who promoted the second stream, how to exert stronger cultural influence on society against their opponents, such as the Bhāgavata/Vaiṣṇavas, Buddhists and Jains, must have been one of their main concerns. Hence, the incorporation of the worship of goddesses who were popular among the majority of society into their mythological and theological system would have been felt to be essential. (15–16)

Either one of these scenarios is likely at the Vindhyāvasinī temple, which theologically seems to fit alongside the earliest tenth-century temples within the temple complex and the nearby gorge, but stylistically and art historically displays sculptural faces that seem to date much more firmly in a later idiom of flattened faces as found in Jāwar in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, rather than the chiseled, even somewhat beaked, faces one would

usually associate with tenth- and eleventh-century North India. Built before the fifteenth-century wall around the complex, could the Vindhyaśāsinī temple represent an attempt to win locals back into the Pāśupata Śiva fold in the wake of sultanate-period military strife and invitations?

19. See D. C. Sircar, *The Guhilas of Kīṣkindhā* (Calcutta: Sanskrit College, 1965), 30.
20. R. V. Somani, *History of Rājāsthān* (Jaipur: Jain Pustuk Mandir, 1997), 86.
21. Ibid.
22. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 55 (1887): pt. 1, 17–18 (English description) and 46–47 (transcription of the inscription in Devanagari letters). For recent images of the bridge and a brief history see Willy [Logan], “Chittaurgarh’s 700-Year-Old Bridge,” *Willy-Logan.com* (blog), August 28, 2016, www.willylogan.com/?p=1168.
23. F. Kielhorn, “Mount Ābū Stone Inscription of Samarasiṃha; V.S. 1342,” *Indian Antiquary* 16 (1887): 346.
24. Somani, *History of Rājāsthān*, 87.
25. Ibid., 96.
26. Ibid., 97.
27. This history is best described in Ojha, *Dungarpur Rajya ka Itihas* [History of the kingdom of Dūṅarpur], first published by the author in 1936 (Jodhpur: Rājāsthāni Granthaghar, 2000); the history also gets brief mention in Rima Hooja, *A History of Rājāsthān* (New Delhi: Rupa, 2006), 349.
28. Mahesh Purohit, “A Short History of Dūṅarpur State.” This is an unpublished paper given to me by Mahesh Purohit, Dūṅarpur historian, in 2002, in the Dūṅarpur Palace Archives, along with a copy of Ojha’s *Dungarpur Rajya ka Itihas*, as a gift, when I was photographing Ojha’s inscriptional rubbings there.
29. Purohit, “A Short History of Dūṅarpur State.”
30. P. K. Trivedi, *Art Traditions of the Paramāras of Vagada* (Jaipur: Publication Scheme, 1995), 26. According to one of King Bhoja’s grants, he is said to have celebrated a victory in Vatpadṛak.
31. Inscription from Ambikā temple pillar dated V.S. 1228.
32. Purohit, “A Short History of Dūṅarpur State.”
33. My sincere thanks go to Shri R. K. Purohit for his assistance with the rubbings, transcriptions, and translations of Jagat’s inscriptions from Sanskrit and Vagadi/Mewāri into Hindi and English.
34. Katherine Anne Harper, “The Warring Śaktis: A Paradigm for Gupta Conquests,” in *The Roots of Tantra*, ed. Katherine A. Harper and Robert L. Brown (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 115–31.
35. Known as the constellation Pleiades in Western astronomy, the star cluster Kṛttikās corresponds to the wives of the ṛṣis (sages) and were represented standing without children and personified as adult female givers. Sara Schastok contrasts these Kṛttikās, or personified stars of the Pleiades cluster, with “proto-Saptamātrkas,” who were represented as seated with children. See Sara L. Schastok, *The Śāmalāji Sculptures and 6th-Century Art in Western India* (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 57, 64.
36. The two most prominent examples that come to mind are the Kālī temple in the Mehengardh fort in Jodhpur and the Sun temple at Chittorgarh, both of which were reconsecrated after victory in battle.

37. Sinhadadeva's capital was at Vatpaḍrak in Vagada before the capital moved to Dūṅgarpur.

38. Chandramani Singh, ed., *Protected Monuments of Rajasthan* (Jaipur: Jawahar Kala Kendra, 2002), 186–87; K. V. Soundara Rajan, *Indian Temple Styles* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1972); K. K. Sehgal, ed., *Rajasthan District Gazetteers, Dungarpur* (Jaipur: Government Central Press, 1974), 19–40, 365–66; see also http://asi.nic.in/asi_aboutus_organization_circle_jaipur.asp.

CHAPTER 5. TEMPLE AS RITUAL CENTER

1. Homi Bhabha, *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 1990), 299.

2. In *Abhinavagupta: The Kula Ritual (As Elaborated in Chapter 29 of the Tantrāloka)* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2003), John Dupuche cites three quotations (Qt.) from the Tantrāloka as recorded by the thirteenth-century commentator Jayaratha (Jr.) pertaining to the importance of alcohol:

Jr.13d.1 “The essence of Śiva”: it is said in this regard:

Qt. 13d.1 “Alcohol is the supreme śakti; wine is said to be Bhairava. The self is turned into liquid form since Bhairava is great-hearted.”

Jr.13d.2 “Without [alcohol] there is no external enjoy-ment and liberation.” Therefore it is said:

Qt. 13d.2: “Without it there is no liberation; without it [consciousness] does not have objective form; without it there is no supernatural power, especially in the Bhairava tradition.”

Qt. 13d.3: “Since, O Maheśvarī [a goddess featured just to the right of the inner sanctum at Jagat, as well as on the exterior of the temple in a small subshrine niche corresponding to Vaiṣṇavi and Brahmini as well], [alcohol's] gift of enjoy-ment and liberation is smelt, heard, seen, drunk, and touched . . .” (186)

3. Akshaya Keerty Vyas, “Kadmal Plates of Guhila Vijayasimha, V.S. 1140,” *Epigraphia Indica* 31 (1955–56): 240.

4. Teun Goudriaan and Sanjukta Gupta, *Hindu Tantric and Śākta Literature*, ed. Jan Gonda (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1981).

5. Y. S. Walimbe, *Abhinavagupta on Indian Aesthetics* (Delhi: Ajanta, 1980).

6. Michael Meister, “The Śaivaite Surya Shrine Near Tūṣa,” *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, Dr. Moti Chandra Commemoration Volume (1978): 63. In this article Meister suggests building activity had already begun at the second quarter of the tenth century under the reign of Bhartṛpaṭṭa. M. A. Dhaky's attribution of the building activity to Allāṭa, Naravāhana, and their successors is based on dated inscriptional evidence. See M. A. Dhaky, “The Genesis and Development of Māru-Gurjara Temple Architecture,” in *Studies in Indian Temple Architecture*, ed. Pramod Chandra (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies, 1975), 114–65; M. A. Dhaky, “Mahā-Gurjara Style, Last Phase, c. AD 900–1000, Guhilas of Mēdapāṭa: Lower Variation, Phase II,” in *North India: Beginnings of Medieval Idiom*, ed. M. A. Dhaky, vol. 2, part 3 of *Encyclopedia of Indian Temple Architecture* (New Delhi: American Institute of Indian Studies, 1998), 132–200. However, Meister's suggestion

holds weight based on stylistic evidence and the decline of Pratihāra power. Moreover, the dated inscriptions suggest consecration, repair, or the commemoration of an event rather than initial construction.

7. For archaeological and inscriptional sources on the Mēdapāṭa cohort see the bibliography following the EITA chapter on the Guhilas of Mēdapāṭa. Additionally, for Śobhagpura and Hindi-language descriptions of these sites see Vishnu Prakash Mali, “*Mewār ki Murtikala*” (PhD diss., Mohan Lal Sukhadia University, Udaipur, 1989). I would not have found Śobhagpura were it not for his dissertation and the research access provided by my visa sponsor in the History Department of Mohan Lal Sukhadia University (Udaipur, Rājāsthān), Professor Meena Gaur.

8. D. R. Bhandarkar, “An Ekliṅgī Stone Inscription and Origin and History of the Lakuliśa Sect,” *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay* 32, no. 61 (1906): 151–67.

9. R. C. Agrawala, “Inscriptions from Jagat, Rājāsthān,” *Journal of the Oriental Institute* 14 (1964): 75–78.

10. The name of the thakur’s compound is Rawala. Rawala is a form of “raval,” or “rasi,” the suffix used by Pāsupata initiates. The title of the ruler of Vagada is “*mahāraval*,” perhaps another political link to the Pāsupata sect. The most famous person to bear this suffix is Bappa Rāwal, considered the founder of the Guhila line from the thirteenth century through the present.

11. The only known reference to the site is through the one-line inscription cited by Ojha in *Rajputane ka Itihas* [History of Rājputāna] (Ajmer: Vaidika Yantralaya, 1927), which notes that the site does not seem to be under the dominion of the Rājāsthān Archaeological Department or any temple trust. The site does not even seem to be on the radar of the band of thieves so active in the region in the past decade or so. For more on historian Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha see Hukum Chand Jain, *Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha: Historiography and Historical Exploration of Rājāsthān* (Jodhpur: Treasure Books, 2011). For more on the gaps between what the Hindi-language histories that I found in India and the colonial-era English-language histories choose to highlight or ignore, see Deborah Stein, “Translating the Year 1299: On Reading Hindi, Sanskrit, Persian, and Arabic in English,” *Art in Translation* 4, no. 1 (2012): 41–59. There I address how translating inscriptions such as those found at Āṭ and the capital of Vagada, Vatpaḍrak, leads to new prime archaeological sites in the field that may or may not have been on the map as visual monuments or sources of colonial histories alone.

12. Dhaky, “Mahā-Gurjara Style, Last Phase.”

13. For a comparative example of sexual and architectural punning, see Michael Meister, “Juncture and Conjunction: Punning and Temple Architecture,” *Artibus Asiae* 41, no. 2/3 (1979): 226–34.

14. Joanna Gottfried Williams makes the case that “craftsmen, their pattern books, portable models, and patrons (hence taste) must all have traveled freely.” Joanna Gottfried Williams, *The Art of Gupta India: Empire and Province* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), 99.

15. Tamara Sears, “Śaiva Monastic Complexes in Twelfth-Century Southern Rājāsthān: The Pāsupatas and Cāhamānas at Menāl,” *South Asian Studies* 23 (2007): 107–26.

16. Tamara Sears, “Housing Asceticism: Tracing the Development of Mattamayura Śaiva Architecture in Early Medieval Central India (c. 8th–12th AD)” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2004).

17. According to Dhaky, Kṣēmaṅkarī is found in the “khattakas (niches) of the pīṭha of the west bhadrā (central offsets) of the mūlaprāsāda [she holds the *mālā*, *triśula*, *ghaṇṭika* and *kamandalu*]; second, her image in the central *rathikā* of the *phāṃsanā* of *mukhacatuṣkī* [she holds *akṣamala*, *kamala*, and *kamandalu*], a situation which has a tutelary significance; and last, the image in the central *rāthikā* of the *uṭṭarang* of the door-frame itself, yet another and very significant tutelary situation having a most direct bearing on the cult image.” See M. A. Dhaky, “Kṣēmaṅkarī: The Cult Image of the Ambikā Temple, Jagat,” *Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal* 6 (1968): 117–20, 119–20.

18. The form continues to be important as is evident in a fourteenth-century pedestal from the ancient Vagada capital of Vatpadṛak (modern-day Baroda) in the Dūṅgarpur region.

19. Dhaky suggests the lion pedestal is evidence that the Ambikā temple was also dedicated to Kṣēmaṅkarī; however, the exterior program does not support this hypothesis. See Dhaky, “Kṣēmaṅkarī,” 119. K. V. Soundara Rajan’s argument, that the tripartite program may reflect the partition of the Navratrī festival into three parts for Durgā, Lakṣmī, and Saraswatī, leaves no room for *yoginīs* in the Ambikā temple program. Soundara Rajan considers the program devoid of “ugra and ghora” forms and thus argues the Ambikā temple precedes the *yoginī* cult, which, according to him, comes to life in the eleventh century. See K. V. Soundara Rajan, “The Devi Cult Nucleus at Jagat, Rājāsthān,” *Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal* 1 (March 1963): 129–40. Kṣēmaṅkarī, the cult figure according to Dhaky, is found primarily in *yoginī* lists yet is hardly mentioned in the *Devī Māhātmya*. Dating approximately to the sixth century, the *Devī Māhātmya* most closely parallels the iconography. The Ambikā temple seems to reflect the *Devī Māhātmya* story, whereas earlier remains such as the Aindri in the Udaipur museum suggest a preexisting *mātrkā*s cult in Jagat.

20. Darielle Mason, “Frame, Form, and Variation in the Mahā-Gurjara Temple” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1995), 91.

21. Mason locates the origin of these semidivine female figures in the river goddesses, who flanked the door to the *garbhagrha* at Gupta sites, such as Deogarh. She emphasizes the semidivine (i.e., less than divine) nature of the *apsaras/surasundarīs* that made her appropriate to the hierarchical order of the *pratiratha*. She both minimizes the significance of this offset and, simultaneously, attends and celebrates the deity in the *bhadra* and sanctum. See Mason, “Frame, Form, and Variation,” 98–99, 101.

22. Helene Brunner-Lachaux, *Somaśambhupaddhati* (Pondichery: Institut français d’Indologie, 1963), vii.

23. The *pancamakāra*, the five Ms, are wine, *madya*; meat, *māṃsa*; fish, *matsya*; parched grain, *mudrā*; and intercourse, *maithuna*. Abhinavagupta addresses this in his definition of the word “brahmacarya.” According to John R. Dupuche,

he defines the word *brahmacarya* by describing *brahman* as the bliss that belongs to Śiva and Śakti in their union. He goes on to interpret bliss as wine, meat and especially the sexual fluid emitted during intercourse, since these lead to bliss and result from bliss. The words “bliss” and “*brahman*” have, therefore, a double connotation and can refer to the inner experience as well as to the fluid which results from it. The word *brahman* is interchangeable with the word *parabrahman*. Therefore, the true brahmacarya is not celibate, which is the usual meaning of the word, nor is he involved with the 5 M’s, but rather makes use of the three M’s: Wine, Meat,

and Intercourse. (John Dupuche, *Abhinavagupta: The Kula Ritual [As Elaborated in Chapter 29 of the Tantrāloka]* [Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2003], 125–26n195)

24. Brunner-Lachaux, *Somaśambhupaddhati*, vii.

25. Daud Ali, “From Nayika to Bhakta: A Genealogy of Female Subjectivity in Early Medieval India,” in *Invented Identities: The Interplay of Gender, Religion and Politics in India*, ed. Julia Leslie and Mary McGee (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 157–80.

26. Art historians of European art often make a similar aesthetic maneuver in Bernini’s famous sculpture *The Ecstasy of St. Teresa*. The problem of the male viewer identifying with the female form in relation to a male god finds a precedent in the many ritual practices that cast men as Radha longing for Krishna or Ekliṅgī’s pūjāris as Pārvatī.

27. These figures may also have captured the imagination of many a modern viewer as a precedent of “art for art’s sake” since they are not specific divinities per se. These beautiful female forms flirt seductively with modern art historical notions of the nude. See Tapati Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories: Institutions of Art in Colonial and Postcolonial India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), chap. 8, “Art History and the Nude: On Art, Obscenity, and Sexuality in Contemporary India.”

28. M. A. Dhaky identifies their location in this period: “throughout Northern India from the early 10th century onward are the deep *salilantarās* (recesses) of the shrine-wall and the wall of the Closed Hall. With their full stature and entourage they hide in and haunt these semi obscure corners.” They are found on the Ambikā temple at Jagat, the Sun temple at Tūṣa, and the Mahāvīra temple at Ghāṇērāo. Dhaky suggests the *vyālas* may have had Achaemenian or Scythian prototypes. By the medieval period (and the rhetorical moment of national pride in Indian art history), these “flowing forms of incomparable beauty, surpassing the originals on all counts, the primordial models of the *vyālas* of classical Iran were excelled by the Mediaeval masters of India.” M. A. Dhaky, *The Vyāla Figures on the Mediaeval Temples of India* (Varanasi: Prithivi Prakashan, 1965), 12, 14–15.

29. This technique, increasing the figural representation of the temple wall as a way of manipulating the viewer’s body in space, is typical of several Mēdapāta temples, including the Surya temple at Tūṣa, the Takṣakēśvara and the Śivēśvara temples at Ekliṅgī, the Datoreśvara temple at Sōbhagpura, and the Cārbhujā temple at Īswāl.

30. Darielle Mason argues for a narrative reading of these three images as three crucial moments in the killing of the demon. Furthermore, she notes, “the most iconically standard image for the region, that of the demon emerging from the severed neck, is placed in the back *bhadra*, producing also an axial emphasis.” Mason, “Frame, Form, and Variation,” 106. Why, then, was this form of the icon most popular in the region? It is this liminal image between life and death that most closely corresponds to the moment of sacrifice.

31. She describes the two main types of Vāstumaṇḍala diagrams (sixty-four squares and eighty-one squares), which clearly encode technology by associating mathematical facts with philosophical ideas about their relationship to metaphysical ideas. These ideas are accompanied by ample footnotes to demonstrate the overlap of several different medieval Sanskrit architectural texts on this subject. See Stella Kramrisch, “The Plan” and “Plan and Supernal Man,” parts 2 and 3, in *The Hindu Temple* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1946), 1:19–98.

32. Brunner-Lachaux argues that the narrow relationship between the physical body and the subtle body is played out in rites using food. The treatment of the deity parallels human

comforts of ablutions, food, study, and sleep. See Brunner-Lachaux, *Somaśambhupaddhati*, xxvi.

33. Michael Meister, "On the Development of a Morphology," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 12 (Autumn 1986): 36, fig. 6.

34. Stella Kramrisch emphasizes the importance of ritual process at the expense of iconography and aesthetics: "The rite of circumambulation (*pradakṣinā*) is more a communion by movement with the images stationed on the walls than a visual recognition of their identity and the perfection of their workmanship." Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, 299. Although the idea of a universal response by "the worshipper" may seem rather essentialized, she does point to the nonsemantic ways in which the temple wall functions. Viewer response is often beyond the scope of studies that give agency to builders (Lyons), that illuminate the temple program as a whole (Desai), or that use style as a grid for political influence (Mason). See Tryna Lyons, "The Changing Faces of Ekliṅgī: A Dynastic Shrine and Its Artists," *Artibus Asiae* 58, no. 3/4 (1999): 253–71; Devangana Desai, *The Religious Imagery of Khajuraho* (Mumbai: Project for Indian Cultural Studies Publication IV, 1996); and Danielle Mason, "A Sense of Time and Place: Style and Architectural Disposition of Images on the North Indian Temple," in *Gods, Guardians, and Lovers: Temple Sculptures from North India, A.D. 700–1200*, ed. Vishakha Desai and Danielle Mason (New York: Asia Society Galleries, 1993), 116–38. These important new ways of understanding Hindu temples shed light on artists, clergy, and patrons without necessarily leaving room for the reception of the lay public. The difficulty of scientifically examining viewer response is examined in the first chapter of David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

35. Michael Meister, "Art Regions and Modern Rājasthan," in *The Idea of Rajasthan: Explorations in Regional Identity*, ed. Karine Schomer, Joan L. Erdman, Deryck O. Lodrick, and Lloyd I. Rudolph (New Delhi: Manohar/American Institute of Indian Studies, 1994), 1:143–76.

36. Michael Meister, "On the Development of a Morphology," 36–37, figs. 6 and 7. In a poetic twist on Kramrisch's understanding of *vastu* (building) as the residue of sacrifice, Meister argues that decoration is the only residue of worship. And the ultimate ornament, according to him, is none other than ritual itself. See Michael Meister, "Light on the Lotus: Temple Decoration or Essential Form," in *Multiple Histories: Culture and Society in the Study of Rājasthan*, ed. Varsha Joshi, Lawrence A. Babb, and Michael W. Meister (Jaipur: Rawat, 2002), 232–53, 247. Whereas Phyllis Granoff has argued that temple ornamentation represents a reproduction of a literary heavenly realm, Kramrisch suggested the figural ornamentation serves as an emanation from a geomantic grid. See Phyllis Granoff, "Halayudha's Prism: The Experience of Religion in Medieval Hymns and Stories," in *Gods, Guardians, and Lovers: Temple Sculptures from North India, A.D. 700–1200*, ed. Vishakha Desai and Danielle Mason (New York: Asia Society Galleries, 1993), 66–93; and Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976), 1:32.

37. Even a contemporary art historian could project herself into one of those veranda scenes as she gathered information from the local villagers from the exact same perch.

38. Adam Hardy, "Gods Are in the Details: The Ambika Temple at Jagat" *Architectural Design* 77, no. 6 (2007): 158–59, <https://doi.org/10.1002/ad.594>; and Adam Hardy, *The Temple Architecture of India* (Chichester: Wiley, 2007).

39. The only other tenth-century archaeological site in the Chhapa region is the Śiva temple at Āaṭ. This site demonstrates the most explicitly tantric imagery, suggesting that tantric worship was not completely integrated into the brāhmanical canon in tenth-century Chhapa.
40. Thomas B. Coburn, *Encountering the Goddess: A Translation of the Devī Māhātmya and a Study of Its Interpretation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991).
41. William Crooke, "The Dasahra: An Autumn Festival of the Hindus," *Folklore* 26, no. 1 (1915): 28–59.
42. Jan E. M. Houben and Karel R. Van Kooij, *Violence Denied: Violence, Non-violence and the Rationalization of Violence in South Asian Cultural History* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 269.
43. Coburn, *Encountering the Goddess*.
44. Vidya Dehejia, *Yoginī, Cult and Temples: A Tantric Tradition* (New Delhi: National Museum, 1986); Shaman Hatley, "From Mātṛ to Yoginī: Continuity and Transformation in the South Asian Cults of the Mother Goddesses," in *Transformations and Transfer of Tantra in Asia and Beyond*, ed. Istevan Keul (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2012), 99–129. According to Hatley, "The Mahābhārata accounts of the mythology of the mātṛs place them in association with Skanda and his retinue of *grahas* or 'seizers,' and recent research suggests that there may even be architectural evidence to confirm that they were worshipped in their own temples in the time when that great epic was composed." Ibid, 3.
45. Katherine Anne Harper, *Seven Hindu Goddesses of Spiritual Transformation: The Iconography of the Saptamaktṛikas* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellon Press, 1989); and Śivaji K. Panikkar, *Saptamātṛka Worship and Sculptures: An Iconological Interpretation of Conflicts and Resolutions in the Storied Brahmanical Icons* (New Delhi: Printworld, 1997).
46. Desai, *The Religious Imagery of Khajuraho*.
47. Michael Meister accurately charts the iconographical pairing of Nateśa with Cāmunda to offer a temporal and geographic grid of this development in millennial North India. See Michael Meister, "Regional Variations in Mātṛikā Conventions," *Artibus Asiae* 47, no. 3/4 (1986): 233–62. See also Tamara Sears, "Śaiva Monastic Complexes in Twelfth-Century Rājāsthān: The Pāśupatas and Cāhamānas at Menāl," *South Asian Studies* 23, no. 1 (2007): 107–26.
48. M. A. Dhaky argues that an armless statue believed to be Kṣēmaṅkarī is the original icon. Dhaky, "Kṣēmaṅkarī," 117–20.
49. Liz Wilson, *Horrific Figurations of the Feminine in Indian Buddhist Hagiographic Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).
50. Sara Lamb, *White Saris and Sweet Mangoes: Aging, Gender, and Body in North India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).
51. Shaman Hatley has begun to unravel the textual history of goddess tantra in published work such as "From Mātṛ to Yoginī Continuity"; and Shaman Hatley, "Tantric Śaivism in Early Medieval India: Recent Research and Future Directions," *Religion Compass* 4, no. 10 (2010): 615–28.
52. Dhaky, "Kṣēmaṅkarī," 117–20.
53. The small Kṣēmaṅkarī temple in the *kund* at Chittorgarh dates to c. 825 CE. This temple has an image of Kṣēmaṅkarī in the back *bhadra* niche.
54. M. C. Joshi, "Historical and Iconographic Aspects of Śākta Tantrism," in *The Roots of Tantra*, ed. Katherine Anne Harper and Robert L. Brown (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002).

55. The Kṣēmaṅkarī temple at Chittorgarh and the Dhadimati temple are the only other examples.

56. Dehejia, *Yoginī, Cult and Temples*, 194–99.

57. In addition to the seventh-century CE example of Kṣēmaṅkarī mentioned earlier, another example of Kṣēmaṅkarī is found as a fragment embedded into the outer wall of the compound at Lodravā. This sculpture is located left of the entrance of this tenth-century Bhatti site located near Jaisalmer.

58. “Māyā is māyā-bīja [‘Hrīm’],” according to the verse [Jr.271 d.1] (Dupuche 335). Dupuche’s translation of Abhinavagupta’s tantric methods for penetration via phonemes emphasizes the importance of *vāc* (speech) and, more specifically, the mantric speech “Kṣa” personified in the goddess Kṣēmaṅkarī. Not only was Kṣemarāja (611–114) the name of one of Abhinavagupta’s important disciples but also the personification of mantric speech as a goddess indicates a direct association between the speech-penetration process; the tantric goddess syllable, “Hrīm”; and the association with *maya* (illusion). One can imagine foreshadowing one’s circumambulation with a visual representation of the goddess Kṣēmaṅkarī on the lintel at Jagat, followed by an iconographic sequence that emphasizes the revelation of *maya*, through the temporal reminder of corporeal reality that is the goddess Cāmuṇḍā cast aside in the sanctum at Jagat. Meanwhile, texts, such as the *Tantrāloka*, that were contemporaneous with the Ambikā temple in Jagat, albeit from a different region, suggest the importance of “Hrīm” as a goddess seed-syllable for mantric penetration rituals associated with *maya* in spoken word in the same era. See John Dupuche, *Abhinavagupta: The Kula Ritual (As Elaborated in Chapter 29 of the Tantrāloka)*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2003).

CHAPTER 6. TEMPLE AS PRAXIS

1. Marzia Balzani, *Modern Indian Kingship: Tradition, Legitimacy, and Power in Rājāsthān* (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 2003), 3.

2. Romila Thapar, “Imagined Religious Communities? Ancient History and the Modern Search for a Hindu Identity,” *Modern Asian Studies* 23 (1989): 209–32.

3. Originally, this chapter was written from an anthropological perspective with my dissertation adviser, Professor Alan Dundes, in mind, before he died. The methodology draws largely from a two-part seminar he taught at UC Berkeley over two semesters in the fall of 1999 and the spring of 2000 called “Folklore Methods and Theories.” A very small selection of the many works on myth and ritual theory from that course includes Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969); Ronald L. Grimes, *Beginnings in Ritual Studies* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1982); Vladimir Propp, *Theory and History of Folklore*, trans. Ariadna Y. Martin and Richard P. Martin (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984); Clifford Geertz, “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight,” in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, ed. Clifford Geertz (New York: Fontana, 1973), 412–53; and from one of many South Asian anthropological perspectives (especially regarding Durkheim), S. Nagendra, *The Concept of Ritual in Modern Sociological Theory* (New Delhi: Academic Journals of India, 1971); and published after the seminar, David Hicks, *Ritual and Belief: Readings in the Anthropology of Religion* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002). This chapter is dedicated to Alan Dundes and to my fellow South Asianists in that class, including Adheesh Sathaye, who is now a preeminent folklorist in his own right and who created an

Asian American folklore archive at the University of British Columbia modeled after the Alan Dundes folklore archive at Berkeley. Grimes's work on spatial and architectural ways of thinking about ritual was seminal during my fieldwork, as I mapped out layers of ritual space. Geertz's idea of "deep description" also permeates this chapter—not as an end in itself but as a key anthropological component of postcolonial art histories in South Asia that pushes monuments beyond their stone materiality to incorporate more of the multiple layers of people who use them in the present and to imagine more about those who used them in the past.

4. Balzani, *Modern Indian Kingship*, 3.

5. Ascetics in yoga poses replace *vyālas* (leonine framing figures) beginning in the eleventh century and almost completely replace them in the next phase. By the sixteenth century, we find these ornamental figures wedged into the design of the *śikhara* (spire), rather than in the *salilāntaras* (indentations) on the walls where the *vyālas* made their first appearances. M. A. Dhaky, *The Vyāla Figures on the Mediaeval Temples of India* (Varanasi: Prithivi Prakashan, 1965), 12–13.

6. In his discussion of Peircean sign theory, Whitney Davis draws the distinction between "iconicity," as the sign resembles an object" and "indexicality," as the sign is literally a symptom of the processes that caused it." Whitney Davis, *Masking the Blow: The Scene of Representation in Late Prehistoric Egyptian Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 246–48. He gives the example of a line depicting a horizon as opposed to a line that "traces the artist's gesture in making it." Many Indian temples accumulate layers of indexical residue from centuries of ritual use.

7. Śrīji Arvind Singh Mewār, personal communication, June 15, 2002.

8. Diana Eck, *Darśan: Seeing the Divine Image in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981).

9. Śrīji Arvind Singh Mewār, personal communication, June 15, 2002.

10. Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Doubleday, 1977), 14.

11. Extramission is "the result of something leaving the eye and traveling to the thing seen and back to the eye," as opposed to intromission, "by which the visual rays pass from the object seen to the eyes." Robert S. Nelson, "Descartes's Cow and Other Domestications of the Visual," in *Visuality before and beyond the Renaissance: Seeing as Others Saw*, ed. Robert S. Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1, 4.

12. *Ibid.*, 9.

13. For a comparative study on ownership in the context of Indian deities see Günther-Dietz Sontheimer, "Religious Endowments in India: The Juristic Personality of Hindu Deities," in *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft: Einschließlich der ethnologischen Rechtsforschung*, ed. Otto Spies (Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke, 1965), 45–100.

14. My sincere gratitude goes to Śrī Aravind Singh Mārwar for supporting my research by making these intimate photographs available for this study. I also would like to thank all of the palace staff who assisted in my archival research.

15. Barbara N. Ramusack, "The Indian Princes as Fantasy: Palace Hotels, Palace Museums, and Palace on Wheels," in *Consuming Modernity: Public Culture in a South Asian World*, ed. Carol Breckenridge (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 66–89.

16. Jagat Mehta Singh, personal communication, 2002. Mr. Singh's long-established Mewārī family has had a contentious relationship with the mahārānās, as is evident in a

hero stone at the entrance to the City Palace in Udaipur that refers to a feud in recent centuries. His family home is just adjacent to the erstwhile elephant-fighting ring in Udaipur.

17. For the anthropological implications of thresholds see Arnold van Gennep, *Rites of Passage*, trans. Monika Vizedom and Gabrielle Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960); for an anthropological interpretation of threshold architecture in South Asia see Deborah Stein, "Layering of Liminality in Threshold Architecture at Tala" (master's thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 2001).

18. The antiquity of these actions is made evident not only in the stone traces of this ritual found in four-faced *līṅga* from Ahar and from Khamnor in the tenth century, in Kalyanpur in the eighth century, and at Ekliṅgī in the fifteenth century, but we also have premodern textual references to this in Sanskrit philosophical texts such as the *Īśvara* doctrine of *Prāśastapāda*, which underscores omniscience as the primary attribute of *Īśvara*—borne out visually in the four faces of *Śiva*, and the fifth featureless face of *Īśvara* crowning the four sides of the *līṅga*. See George Chemparathy, "Īśvara Doctrine of *Prāśastapāda*," *Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal* 6 (1968): 77–86.

19. One of Śrī Ekliṅgī's pundits, Narendra Dashora, and his wife from Mandasor link her natal eight-faced *Śiva mūrti* with the four-faced *līṅgaṃ* found in the sanctum of the Śrī Ekliṅgī temple. The four- or eight-faced forms of *Śiva* correspond to their mode of worship, sequentially anointing the faces of the icon. The husband and wife identify her practice in the home with his practice in the temple. Both worship multifaced *līṅga* in the same way, albeit on a significantly different scale. They identify the form of the icon as a sign of their practice as Dashora Brahmins and as specifically *Pāśupata-Śiva* practitioners. Pundit and Mrs. Narendra Dashora, personal communication, 2002, Kailāśpurī.

20. The town's very name, "Kailāśpurī," derives from the home of *Śiva* on Mount Kailāśa.

21. For a discussion of the ways in which ritual layers the architectural space, see Grimes, *Beginnings in Ritual Studies*.

22. The statue of Bappa Rāwal standing at the entrance to the main temple at Ekliṅgī venerates Bappa as the founder of the royal line of Mewār. According to Śrī Aravind Singh Mārwar, the modern sculpture of Bappa Rāwal was created by a French sculptor named P. Lukas in the 1970s and was recently repainted (email, April 5, 2005). Lukas is also responsible for busts of Udai Singh and Rāṇā Pratap, as well as a full-sized statue of Rāṇā Sanga, all made in 1968 (Sabina Baily, email, May 10, 2005). Special thanks both to Sabina and to Śrī Aravind Singh Mārwar for going to great lengths to provide me with this information.

23. "Under the tutelage of Kṛṣṇa, each person plays and for the moment may experience the role of his opposite: the servile wife acts the domineering husband, and vice versa; the ravisher acts the ravished; the menial acts the master; the enemy acts the friend, the stricken youths act the rulers of the republic." McKim Marriott, "The Feast of Love," in *Krishna: Myths, Rites, and Attitudes*, ed. Milton Singer (Honolulu: East-West Center Press), 212.

24. See Ann Grodzins Gold's folklore analysis, "Mother's Ten Stories," in *Religions of India in Practice*, ed. Donald Lopez (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 434–48. For comparative examples of women's folklore in Rājāsthān see Ann Grodzins Gold, "From Demon Aunt to Gorgeous Bride: Women Portray Female Power in a North Indian Festival Cycle," in *Invented Identities: The Interplay of Gender, Religion and Politics in India*, ed. Julia Leslie and Mary McGee (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 203–30; Lindsey Harlan, *Religion and Rajput Women: The Ethic of Protection in Contemporary Narratives*

(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Doranne Jacobson and Susan S. Wadley, *Women in India: Two Perspectives* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1995); and Susan S. Wadley, *Raja Nal and the Goddess: The North Indian Epic Dhola in Performance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).

25. The antiquity of worship under pipal trees dates at least to the Kaliyuga dynasty, as seen in sandstone carving from Mathura dating to the first or second century CE. See Stella Kramrisch, *Manifestations of Śiva* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1981), 12, fig. 11.

26. Several different tantric texts call for making lamps from dough, some even suggest mixing menstrual blood into the dough used to make the lamps with ghee that will then be consumed in nighttime ceremonies. These early medieval tantric texts differ from today's rituals, which are limited to regular bread-dough lamps that are lit but not consumed.

27. See R. C. Agrawala, "Khajuraho of Rājāsthān," *Arts Asiatiques* 10, no. 1 (1964): 43.

28. Glendinning specifically describes this postmodern shift toward a broader definition of the monument on a global scale, citing the Burra Charter as what "opened the door" to this increase in "relativism" and "reception" in the late 1970s and 1980s. See Miles Glendinning, "Heritage in the Age of Globalization: Post-1989," in *The Conservation Movement: A History of Architectural Preservation, Antiquity to Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2013), 424.

29. Michael Meister defines *phāmsanā* as a "'wedge'-shaped roof unit having [a] low pyramidal roof." Michael Meister, "Phāmsanā in Western India," *Artibus Asiae* 38, no. 2/3 (1976): 188.

30. *Phāmsanā-kūṭa* is defined as a "miniature shrine roof unit having [a] low pyramidal roof." Ibid.

31. The cassette is made by the hilltop shrine's *bhopa*, not by the priest who attends the Ambikā temple or by the Rājputs who patronize the most impressive rites at the temple.

32. Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss, *Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function* (London: Cohen and West, 1964), 2–4, 9.

33. I use "man" since women are not allowed to sacrifice animals.

34. For more on the effects of recorded music on Indian religion see Lawrence Babb and Susan S. Wadley, eds., *Media and the Transformation of Religion in South Asia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995).

35. On the third night of Navratri at Eklingji in 2002, I was told that *garbha* had replaced storytelling in Kailāśpurī only nine years before. Pundit Narendra Dashora recounted that only Nagar Bhatiwala Brahmans danced *garbha* two or three hundred years ago, but now everyone dances it. At Eklingji a gaudy plastic *devī* is set up in front of the main temple while the ancient Vindhyāvāsini temple is the site of little activity. The *Durgāsaptasati* (seven hundred verses), as the *Devī Māhātmya* is locally known, are read in the Vindhyāvāsini temple. The *Durgāsaptasati* are also read in the main temple at Eklingji over the course of nine days. A special four-hundred-year-old painting of *Devī* is erected at the side of the inner shrine behind the silver gate where the priests read the text.

36. In 2002 the seventh and eighth days of Navratri were cosmologically combined, so those worshipping at the Ambikā temple were celebrating the tenth-day Dusserah celebrations at the same time that the Meenas, who had counted the days, were observing the rites of the ninth day. The Rājputs followed the ritual calendar while the Meenas followed the sun

and the passing of days. They ended up pouring the *paddhi* into the well one day after the festivities had drawn to a close at the Ambikā temple.

37. This is similar to the way in which a goat was sacrificed at Jāwar Mātā temple during the same festival. There the live goat came in the main entrance, was sacrificed in a special lowered part of the modern marble floor below the temple steps, and was sneaked out a special side hole in the wall. The indentations in the marble floor outlined this perpendicular axis and seemed to have been made to serve this purpose, despite marble improvements that had been made in the early 1990s, a good two decades after animal sacrifice was made illegal.

38. Bassi Fort Rājput, personal communication, Feb. 2002. It is interesting that alcohol is a common offering for goddesses. Both the Chittorgarh Fort Kālī and the Jaipur Fort Kālī receive bottles of whiskey. The priests pour off one drink for the goddess and return the bottle as *prasād* (offerings).

CHAPTER 7. TEMPLE AS LEGAL BODY

1. Arun Appadurai, "Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 3–63, 33.

2. Devaki Singh, *Charities of the House of Mewar* (Udaipur: Mahārāṇā Mewār Historical Publications Trust, 2000), 20.

3. *Ibid.*, 39.

4. Jaipur Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, *Indian Legal Code* (1941), 5.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*, chap. 2.

7. *Ibid.*, chap. 4.

8. Henri Stern, "Le temple d'Ékaliṅgī et le royaume du Mewār (Rājāsthān): (Rapport au divin, royauté et territoire; sources d'une maîtrise)," *Purusartha* 10 (1986): 15–30.

9. Personal communication with Poonam Prasad Sagar, director of the Devasthan Institute, Udaipur Office, 2002.

10. *Declaration about Trusts* (Udaipur: Śrī Ekliṅgī Trust, June 26, 1973), 1–28.

11. Kesarichand Nemchand Shah, *The Bombay Public Trusts Act, 1950*, 5th ed. (Bombay: N. M. Tripathi, 1974), 75.

12. *Ibid.*, 36.

13. *Ibid.*, 37.

14. *Ibid.*, 73.

15. *Declaration about Trusts*, 5.

16. Shah, *The Bombay Public Trusts Act, 1950*, 39.

17. See Tryna Lyons, "The Changing Faces of Ekliṅgī: A Dynastic Shrine and Its Artists," *Artibus Asiae* 58, no. 3/4 (1999): 253–71.

18. Shah, *The Bombay Public Trusts Act*, 69.

19. *Ibid.*, 85.

20. *Ibid.*, 64.

21. *Ibid.*, 66.

22. *Ibid.*, 68.

23. Ibid., 77.
24. See Donald Garfield, ed., *Tourism at World Heritage Cultural Sites: The Site Manager's Handbook* (Madrid: World Tourism Organization, 1993), 11.
25. Melanie Smith, *Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 100.
26. Quoted in Sabina Baily and Trilok Sharma, *Mahārāṇā Mewār Foundation: Scheme of Annual Awards* (Udaipur: Mahārāṇā Mewār Historical Publication Trust, 2002), 23.
27. Smith, *Issues in Cultural Tourism*, 100.
28. Lord Curzon's scientific project is described on the ASI website.
29. Peter Larkham, quoted in Smith, *Issues in Cultural Tourism*, 100; see also P. J. Larkham, "Heritage as Planned and Conserved," in *Heritage, Tourism and Society*, ed. D. T. Herbert (London: Mansell, 1995), 85–116.
30. Robert Hewison is known for his definition of "heritage" as "bogus history" and coined the term "heritage industry" in his book *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline* (London: Methuen, 1987).
31. Archaeological Survey of India, www.asi.nic.in.
32. Recent studies have sought to understand historical monuments better in terms of nineteenth- and twentieth-century histories of viewing and spectatorship. Emerging work by Aditi Chandra and a recent book by Santhi Kavuri-Bauer examine landscaping and Islamic temple trusts (*waqt*) to learn more about the experiences of nineteenth- and twentieth-century visitors to temple sites. Here, I am interested less in the politics of landscaping and framing and more in how the current administration of the material past interacts with the historical record, and how it affects the aesthetic and physical future of these sites. See Aditi Chandra, "Potential of the 'Un-exchangeable Monument': Delhi's Purāṇa Qila, in the Time of Partition, c. 1947–63," *International Journal of Islamic Architecture* 2, no. 1 (2013): 101–23; and Santhi Kavuri-Bauer, *Monumental Matters: The Power, Subjectivity, and Space of India's Mughal Architecture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011).
33. Barbara N. Ramusack, "The Indian Princes as Fantasy: Palace Hotels, Palace Museums, and Palace on Wheels," in *Consuming Modernity: Public Culture in a South Asian World*, ed. Carol Breckenridge (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 66–89.
34. Following my return from fieldwork, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was ratified in Paris on October 17, 2003. This UNESCO Convention builds on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore recommendation of 1989. The growing impact of globalization on intangible cultural heritage gave rise to this new category, which privileges praxis over a monument. The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage protects oral tradition; performing arts; social practices, rituals, and festive events; knowledge and practice concerning nature and the universe; and traditional craftsmanship such as the hand-working of wood, clay, or other materials. No mention is made of when social practices, rituals, and festive events permanently change the aesthetics and historical evidence at archaeological sites. Does intangible heritage come before tangible heritage?
35. Quoted in Catherine Becker, *Shifting Stones, Shaping the Past: Sculpture from the Buddhist Stūpas of Andhra Pradesh* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 259.
36. Chandra, "Potential of the 'Un-exchangeable Monument'"; Deborah Sutton, "Devotion, Antiquity and Colonial Custody of the Hindu Temple in British India," *Modern Asian Studies* 47, no. 1 (2013): 135–66; Tapati Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories*:

Institutions of Art in Colonial and Post-Colonial India (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004); Kavuri-Bauer, *Monumental Matters*; Sugata Ray and Atreyee Gupta, "Is Art History Global? Responding from the Margins," in *Is Art History Global?*, ed. James Elkins (New York: Routledge, 2006), 348–57.

37. Cynthia Atherton, *Sculpture of Early Medieval Rājāsthān* (New York: Brill, 1997).

38. The two most famous instances of communal violence and death related to archaeological sites in India took place in western India, at the Somnāth temple, and in northern India, at Ayodhyā. Many have written on both of these sites from archaeological, historical, and political perspectives. See, e.g., M. A. Dhaky and H. P. Shastri, *The Riddle of the Temple of Somanātha* (Varanasi: Bharata Manisha, 1974); Richard Eaton, *Temple Desecration and Muslim States in Medieval India* (New Delhi: Hope India, 2004); David Ludden, ed., *Making India Hindu: Religion, Community, and the Politics of Democracy in India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005); and Romila Thapar, *Somanatha: Many Voices of a History* (New Delhi: Viking, 2004).

39. Tapan Basu, Pradip Datta, Sumit Sarkar, Tanika Sarkar, and Sambuddha Sen. *Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags: A Critique of the Hindu Right* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1993), 61.

40. Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990).

41. Sutton, "Devotion, Antiquity and Colonial Custody."

42. James Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rājāsthān*, 3 vols., (London: Oxford University Press, 1920), 2:600. This commodification was already being legislated by the British in South India. See Arjun Appadurai, *Worship and Conflict under Colonial Rule: A South Indian Case* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 229–46. For recent scholarship on James Tod in Rājāsthān see Jason Freitag's edited volume, *Serving Empire, Serving Nation: James Tod and the Rajputs of Rajasthan* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

43. Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rājāsthān*, 601–2.

44. My sincere thanks to Śrīji Arvind Singh Mewār and his staff at the Maharana Mewār Research Institute for providing access to these records.

45. "List of Goswamy's Personal Expenses" (Udaipur: Maharana Mewar Research Institute, 1905).

46. The antiquity of installation ceremonies (*pratiṣṭhā*) to replace damaged (*jirṇa*) icons is recorded in medieval texts such as the *Agnipurāṇa* and the *Mayamata*. The stigma of the damaged icon and necessity of replacement with a new icon found in ancient texts seems to have trickled into the modern Indian legal code. See Bruno Dagens, trans., *Mayamata: An Indian Treatise on Housing, Architecture and Iconography* (New Delhi: Sitram Bhartia Institute of Scientific Research, 1985); Joshi K. L. Shastri, ed., *Agnimahapurāṇam*, trans. M. N. Dutt (Delhi: Parimal, 2001); and Marie-Thérèse de Mallmann, *Les enseignements iconographiques de L'Agni-Purāṇa* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1963). In 2002, at the Udaipur State Museum Archives office, I consulted a paper copy of the then-unpublished Indian Legal Code document "The Rājāsthān Monuments, Archaeological Sites and Antiquities Rules" (1968). This document is now published online by the Archaeological Survey of India, at http://asi.nic.in/nmma/nmma_Rajasthan02.pdf.

47. Shah, *The Bombay Public Trusts Act*, 1950, 99.

48. Bombay Public Trusts Act (1950), section 2(17), 12. Proof of user: Old and New Temples; quoted in *ibid.*, 100.

49. Bombay Public Trusts Act (1950), section 19, 58; quoted in *ibid.*, 246.
50. *Ibid.*, 107.
51. Bombay Public Trusts Act (1950), section 2(17), 20: "Removal of idol how far allowed? Whether suit of civil nature?:—Where all the worshippers of a temple, who are in the management of it decide to build a new temple, the old one being in ruins and the site on which it stood becoming unsanitary and inconvenient for worshippers, then, unless there is a clear prohibition against their demolishing the old temple and building a new temple, the court is not entitled to prevent the whole body from removing the temple with its image to a new site in the circumstances." Quoted in *ibid.*, 108. The theft of the deity clearly made the site "*jirṇa*."
52. "Temples may be described as occult laboratories where certain physical acts of adoration coupled with certain systemized prayers, psalms, mantras and musical invocations, can yield certain physical and psychological results as a matter of course, and if these physical processes are properly conducted, the results will accrue provided the persons who perform them are adequately equipped." Hindu Religious Endowments Commission Report (1960–62), 42 (quoted in Shah, *The Bombay Public Trusts Act*, 83).
53. Ganv Bandh Raha, "Jagat me mahish ki mardini ki prachin pratima chori" [Theft of Ancient Durgā Mahiṣāsūramardini Statue in Jagat] *Rājāsthān Patrika* (Udaipur), March 9, 2000, 4.
54. *Ibid.*
55. I have discussed the role of figuration and formlessness elsewhere. See Deborah Stein, "The Theft of the Goddess Amba Mata: Ontological Location and Georges Bataille's Bas-Matérialisme" *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 57/58 (Spring/Autumn 2010): 264–82.
56. Richard Davis, *Lives of Indian Images* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 252–54.
57. Cementin-Ojha cites the Brahma Purāṇa of Pandurang Vaman Kane's, *History of Dharmasāstra* (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1958), 904: "lorsque l'image a été brisée en deux ou en morceaux, brûlée, enlevée de son piédestal, insultée, n'a plus été adorée, a été tachée par des bêtes—des ânes, par exemple—, ou est tombée sur un sol impur, a été adorée avec des mantras destinés à d'autres divinités, a été souillée par le contact de personnes de basse naissance, dans ces cas, Dieu cesse de l'habiter." Catherine Cementin-Ojha, "Image animée, image vivante: L'image du culte hindou," in *L'image divine: Culte et méditation dans l'hindouisme*, ed. André Padoux (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1990), 118.
58. *Ibid.*, 127.

CONCLUSION

1. Donald Garfield, ed., *Tourism at World Heritage Cultural Sites: The Site Manager's Handbook* (Madrid: World Tourism Organization, 1993), 3.
2. Michael Meister, personal conversation, April 1, 2005.
3. Kesarichand Nemchand Shah, *The Bombay Public Trusts Act, 1950*, 5th ed. (Bombay: N. M. Tripathi, 1974), 19.
4. "The Rājāsthān Monuments, Archaeological Sites and Antiquities Rules," in Indian Legal Code (1968).

5. Ibid.

6. Garfield, *Tourism at World Heritage Cultural Sites*, 5.

7. Machu Picchu is one example of a World Heritage Site that looks surprisingly intact; however, only the foundations were discovered and much of the walls were (re)built as an archaeological project, not as part of any local use. See Michael E. Moseley, *The Incas and Their Ancestors: The Archaeology of Peru* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992). Moseley's account uses ethnographic data to illuminate Incan history, a widespread technique in pre-Columbian art history. For a more romanticized version see Hiram Bingham, *Inca Land: Explorations in the Highlands of Peru* (Cambridge, MA: Riverside Press, 1922).

8. The "Histories of Tribal and Modern" section of *The Predicament of Culture* examines the MOMA Picasso and Africa show that argued that modernism is beyond history. The question then remains: why were Western works historicized, when the "tribal" works were aestheticized? Here we find the familiar equations: Occident = time, and Orient = space. In other words, history is for the West and geography is for the East, according to orientalist and modernist visions of the world. See James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 9.

9. Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from Cultural Writings*, ed. David Forgacs and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, trans. William Boelhower (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 342.

10. Ibid., 349n5.

11. I first discussed these ideas about monastic networks at Menāl, Bādoli, and Bijoliā while traveling with Tamara Sears in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan in 2001 and 2002. Her work on monasticism is now well known. See Tamara Sears, *Worldly Gurus and Spiritual Kings: Architecture and Asceticism in Medieval India* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014). On Menāl see Tamara Sears, "Śaiva Monastic Complexes in Twelfth-Century Rājāsthān: The Pāsupatas and Cāhamānas at Menāl," *South Asian Studies* 23, no. 1 (2007): 107–26.

12. Sears, *Worldly Gurus*, 299.

13. See Deborah Stein, "To Curate in the Field: Archaeological Privatization and the Aesthetic 'Legislation' of Antiquity in India," *Contemporary South Asia* 19, no. 1 (2011): 25–47.

14. A sampling of recent Marxist scholarship reveals new deconstructions of the Frankfurt School, Hegel, Kant, Adorno, and others specifically in terms of praxis and reification. See, e.g., Samir Gandesha and Johan F. Hartle, eds., *The Spell of Capital: Reification and Spectacle* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017); Samir Gandesha and Johan F. Hartle, "The Timeliness of Western Marxism: Reification and Spectacle," in Gandesha and Hartle, *The Spell of Capital: Reification and Spectacle* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017), 9–20; Anita S. Chari, *A Political Economy of the Senses: Neoliberalism, Reification, Critique* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015); Stefano G. Ludovisi, *Critical Theory and the Challenge of Praxis: Beyond Reification* (London: Routledge, 2015); Andrew Feenberg, *The Philosophy of Praxis: Marx, Lukács, and the Frankfurt School* (London: Verso, 2014); and Axel Honneth, Judith Butler, Raymond Geuss, Jonathan Lear, and Martin Jay, *Reification: A New Look at an Old Idea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

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