

*Fig 13.04 Plan of the temple of Surya at Osian 1 Garbhagriha and 2 Mandapa*

### **Hindu Temples in the Valley of Kashmir**

Development of the Hindu temple along parallel lines was meanwhile continuing in other urban centres of the plains. Let us, however, also have a look at the contemporary styles developing in the more isolated hill states such as Nepal, Kashmir and Garhwal. The distinctive architecture of these regions was more suited to their geographic and climatic conditions, and even absorbed traits from the styles of neighbouring nations. The most flourishing of the hill states that falls into this purview is that of the fabled valley of Kashmir. In the sixth century AD, the Buddhists who had fled from the wrath of the Huns, had built a number of monasteries in Kashmir. The climate being none too kind to brick masonry, not one of these has survived in a recognizable architectural form. In the eighth century, Kashmir was under the rule of King Lalitaditya who had developed it into a prosperous and virtually self-sufficient state. The ambitions of the Hindu King Lalitaditya, however, were not entirely restricted to the valley. He made several successful forays south into the plains, and was also partly responsible for warding off the threat posed by Arab expansionism in the Sind. By opening up channels with the plains, Lalitaditya exposed the valley to the influence of Hinduism, which ultimately prevailed over Buddhism. The craftsmen of Kashmir, though, were not a part of the stream of architectural development in the plains. With their background of Buddhist artistic traditions, they evolved a style of Hindu temple architecture, with a distinct flavour of its own.

*Fig 13.09 Ruins of the great eighth century Sun temple at Martand, Kashmir*



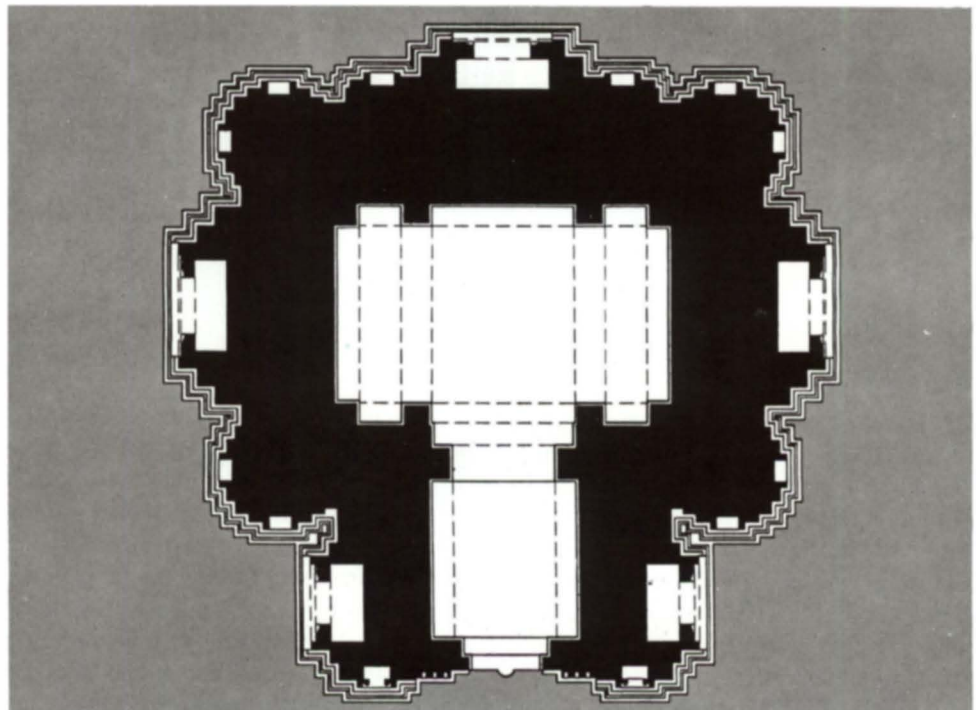
## Rajput “Vanshas” and the Kalinga Kings

Leaving Kashmir, which rose again to architectural prominence only under the Great Moghuls more than 500 years later, we come down once again to the plains. The Hindu mason, in spite of his rather rudimentary structural techniques, was busy erecting temples for his proliferating overlords. The fluxionary state of eighth century feudal India, gave rise to many centres of feverish building activity. The most prominent of these were located in the central region of the hills surrounding Gwalior, the western plains of Gujarat and Kathiawar, the eastern coast of Orissa and in the desert strongholds of Rajasthan in the north-west.

### Teli-ka-Mandir at Gwalior

While Gujarat, as we shall see later, took its cue from the neighbouring style of the temples of Osian, the so-called Teli-ka-Mandir (literally ‘oil man’s temple’) within the hilltop fort of Gwalior is in a class by itself. Local legend attributes its peculiar name to the fact that it was built from the donations given by an oil merchant. Judging from its style, it is more probable that the name is a distortion of Telengana (modern Andhra) suggesting that it was designed by an architect from that region. In fact, it was the last grand attempt at adopting the Buddhist *chaitya*

Fig 14.01 Plan of the Teli-ka-Mandir at Gwalior







*Fig 14.06 (a) The typical Orissa shikhara, the Linga Raja temple, Bhubaneswar*