



एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर



प्रत्नकीर्तिमपावृणु

SUN TEMPLE

Modhera, Dist - Mehsana



Archaeological Survey of India
Vadodara Circle, Vadodara

The Sun Temple, Modhera, is located on the left bank of the river Pushpavati, a tributary of river Rupan in Becharaji Taluka of Mehsana District.

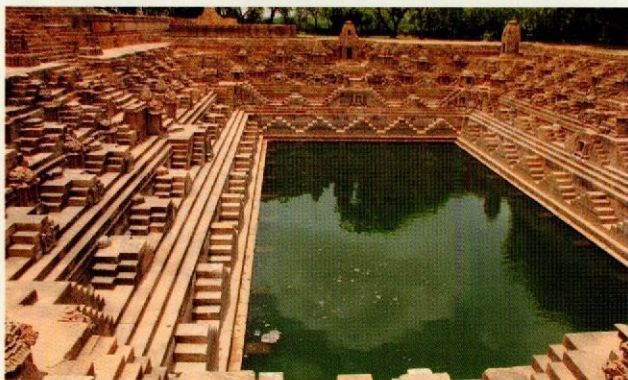
The literal meaning of Modhera is "Mound of the dead". Modhera is sometimes called Mundera, the original settlement of the Modha Brahmans. The Jain Acharya Hemchandra was of the Modha Parentage.

During the Reign of Solanki King Bhimdev I (1022-1063 AD), the famous Sun Temple was constructed. H. Cousens found stone inscribed with "Vikrama Samvat 1083", which corresponds



to 1026-1027 AD, the date of erection of temple. The place where this temple was built is mentioned in the Skanda Purana as Bhaskara kshetra.

The temple consists of three separate elements: (a) The

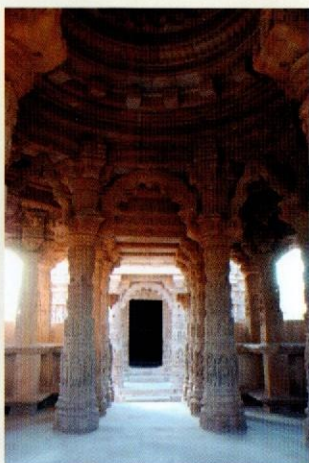


main temple-complex, including sanctum, with ambulatory, lateral transepts and porch (b) A detached assembly hall with a torana in front (Dancing Hall / Sabhamandapa) and (c) A large rectangular tank decorated with numerous miniature shrines.



The closed sanctum of the temple has an octagonal arrangement of elegantly decorated tall columns with ornamental torana-arches. The plain walls of the sanctum are relieved by niches containing images of the twelve Adityas.

The assembly hall is described as a “magnificent pile of pillared splendor”, carrying torana arches and can be entered from each cardinal directions. In front of assembly hall towards east stood a large torana,





overlooking a huge rectangular masonry tank known as Surya kunda measuring 175 ft. north-south and 120 ft. east-west which was approached through a grand flight of steps.

This temple is remarkable not only for its fine proportions and aesthetic appeal but also for harmonious integration of its plastic embellishment with architectural scheme.



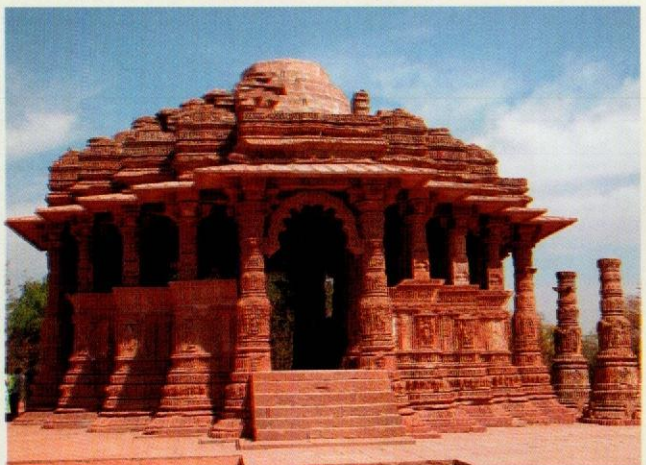


The basement of the Temple is illustrative and represents all the possible mouldings. The wall portion of the temple contains several panels of Surya, ashtadikpalas, different forms of Gauri and dancing apsaras, musicians and amorous sculptures. Lord Surya stands in samabhanga pose, in a

chariot draw by seven horses, with two full-blown lotuses held in his hands.

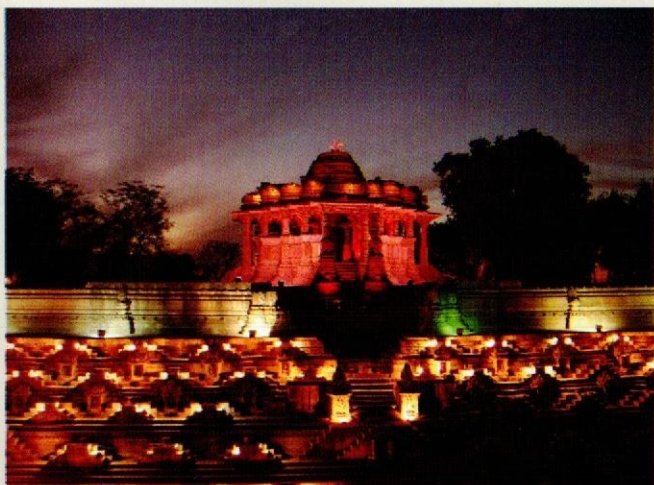
Figures of Surya also occur on the architraves of the doorjambs of the garbhagriha and sabhamandapa.

The main shrine at Modhera has Samatala type of ceiling with floral and figural motifs carved. In the Sabhamandapa, four ceilings represents the scenes from Ramayana and Mahabharata.



Unfortunately, the sikhar as well as main image of this temple is broken and lost.

The earliest sculptures from Modhera belong to the Post-Gupta period and they represent both Saiva and Vaisnava sects. The sculptures include Brahma, Vishnu, Varaha, Trivikram, Narsimha, Krishna-Sudama, Sheshasayi Vishnu, etc. Different types of Saivaite images like Mahasadasiva, Uma Mahesvara, Sakti-Ganesha, Nritya-Ganesa, Sapatamatrikas, Durga, Parvati, Sitala and several other mother goddesses and apsaras like Lilavati, Shubhangini, Hansavali, Padmini, Mrigaksi, Bhavacandra are also represented by artisans. All these sculptures are now displayed in the sculpture shed.



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