

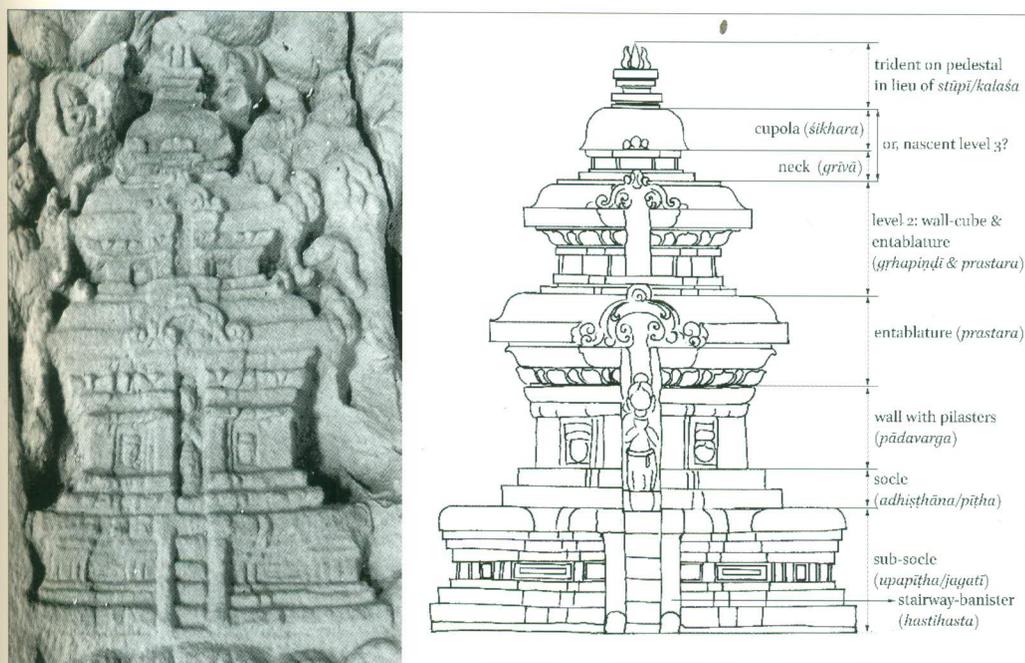
and depicts a miniature two-storeyed temple-model in relief as part of the Śaiva mythological narrative of Rāvaṇa's vain attempt to lift the Kailāsa mountain (Rāvaṇānugrahamūrti).<sup>22</sup> This miniature temple-model is of utmost importance as it is the only surviving and intact representation of a temple's elevation – from the sub-socle to the finial – that belongs to a period prior to the first quarter of the ninth century (Fig. 7). The F1 temple-model rises from a moulded platform (*upapīṭha*) that is interrupted at its centre by a stairway-with-banisters leading up to the platform terrace. The arrangement is reminiscent of the E1 platform but with a few important differences. While the E1 *mahāvedī* had supported the *līṅga-yoni* directly, the F1 platform acts as a sub-base (*upapīṭha*) from which the temple springs, complete in its own elevation from the base to the finial – the socle (*vedībāndha/pīṭha*), wall with pilasters (*pādavarga*), an entablature (*prastara*), a second level (*grhapīṇḍī*) also topped by an entablature, the neck (*grīvā*), cupola (*sikhara*), and a trident (*triśūla*) as finial resting on a tiny pedestal (*pīṭhikā*).<sup>23</sup>

The pedestals which had supported *līṅgas* in the interior of the sanctums of the M̄y S̄on temples built after the early eighth century (such as the stone pedestals in the sanctum of M̄y S̄on F1 and A1) were much more modest in dimensions and embellishment as compared to the M̄y S̄on E1 *mahāvedī*. This is because the E1 *mahāvedī* was intended to be seen from the outside and was not hidden inside a dark sanctum

chamber as was the case with the M̄y S̄on F1 main temple and M̄y S̄on A1 pedestals which were made later. The difference is both symbolic and formal, and offers useful insights into the guiding principles that shaped temple forms in Champa during the formative period (seventh to ninth centuries CE). The architectural transition from the M̄y S̄on E1 type of temple to the M̄y S̄on F1 temple-model type records a shift from open-air structures to brick-walled temples with superstructures. The M̄y S̄on E1 *mahāvedī* served a dual function – of an image-pedestal (*pīṭhikā*) and a temple-platform – from which sprang the pillars supporting a wood-and-tile superstructure (Fig. 5). In case of the M̄y S̄on F1 temple-model, the two functions have been separated and are served by distinct architectural elements: The temple itself is supported on an elevated platform or sub-base (*upapīṭha/jagati*) and the *līṅga* housed in the inner recesses of the brick-walled sanctum would have been supported by the pedestal (*pīṭhikā*).<sup>24</sup> But even when the temple's platform and deity's pedestal have been functionally and structurally differentiated, the conceptual equivalence of 'deity on pedestal' and 'temple on platform' continues to underpin its further development.

### Building, Destruction and Rebuilding

The very first temple to have been built in the M̄y S̄on valley carries a tale of destruction. Built during the reign of king Bhadravarman I in the fifth century, this temple was destroyed by fire (*dagdham*) during the reign of king



**Fig. 7** Temple carved in relief on the M̄y S̄on F1 tympanum, c. late eighth century CE. (© Parul Pandya Dhar)