Ancient Indian Palace Architecture

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It is necessary to have a clear idea of the palace architecture in ancient India together with its terminology so that the relevant portions of the Harṣa-carita and the Kādambarī may be properly understood. The material is quite elaborate and consistent with the traditional terms relating to a royal palace. This material occurs at four places in the Harṣa-carita, namely (i) description of the elephant Darpaśāta in which Bāna has strongly grafted the terminology of a royal palace; (ii) description of the palace of Harṣa when Bāna himself was introduced to the king; (iii) description of Rājyaśri’s marriage inside the palace; and (iv) the illness of Prabhākaravardhana giving details of his apartments. The material in the Kādambarī is spread throughout the book. We shall first deal with the evidence of Harṣa-carita and then take up that of the Kādambarī. The most expansive unit was known as the Skandhāvāra that contained the Rājakula and the Rājakula included the royal palace known as Dhavalagṛha, the white house. Skandhāvāra was a term of the entire military encampment which included the area for the horse and elephant wings, camel corps, encampments of guest kings and miscellaneous establishments relating to the army. These various portions were assigned special places for them in the vast, extensive area outside the Rājakula. The Rājakula proper was entered through a principal entrance known as Rājadvāra. Inside the Rājakula was the palace containing the living
apartments of the kings and queens, that was known as Dhavalagṛha. An attempt is made here to interpret the relative position of the various component parts with the help of the evidence from Bāṇabhāṭṭa and from other literary texts.

Skandhāvāra:

In chapter II of Harṣa-carita (58–60) and chapter V (152–156) we find a description of Skandhāvāra, Rājakula and Dhavalagṛha. Bāṇa had his first meeting with Harṣa in the temporary palace built for the king on the bank of the Ajirvatī (modern Rāptī) in the village named Maṇitārā. The area necessary for the army encampment, Skandhāvāra, was very extensive. The whole army was settled there. From the point of view of planning the Skandhāvāra was divided into two portions, firstly the army encampment outside and secondly the royal palace. The outer area of encampment had in the beginning extensive grounds for horses on the one side, and elephants on the other. The area for horses (mandurā) also provided for the stables of camels. After this there were camps of kings and other royal guests who came on State business. This area was known as Sivira. Thus this portion of the army encampment looked like a city with its own market and shops to which admission was free and unrestricted for the public. In the fifth chapter it is stated that Harṣa, returning from his march, first passed through this Bazar (153). This was called Vipāṇi-vartma and later on in Muslim times known as Urdu Bazar, i.e., the market place of the army hordes. The very extensive area in front of the red fort in old Delhi was once known as Urdu Bazar, which was but a translation of Vipāṇi-vartma. This wide plot of ground accommodated the camps for kings and rulers and feudatories who came to meet the emperor. In this Skandhāvāra area of Harṣa there were ten kinds of encampments. These included kings from many countries, enemy kings and feudatory kings defeated in battles, embassies from many foreign lands, Mleccha races, principal representatives from amongst the people and also religious heads and teachers who specially came to see the king. There was additional open area all of which was known as Ajira (p. 25).

Rājakula:

At the end of the Skandhāvāra the Rājakula was situated in a well defended portion. It was also named Rājabhavana, Rājaprāsāda or

Rājamandira; its entrance was known as Rājadvāra, and the place was well guarded. There was no restriction against entry in the Skandhāvāra which was open to all the public but entry into the Rājakula was restricted and strictly controlled. The entrance of the Rājakula was guarded by the Vāhya Pratihāras, i.e., chamberlains posted outside or in the palace. The first portion of the Rājadvāra on both sides of the entrance consisted of several rooms in one or more storeys known as Dvāra Prakoṣṭha or Alinda. It is stated that at the time of Rājyaśri’s marriage goldsmiths were seated in the Alinda portion and working to make golden ornaments (142). The etymology of Alinda (Ālimi dadāti) may be traced to an earthen cup called Ali² in which some drink or eatable was offered to the guests. The Alinda was named Bahirdvāra Prakoṣṭha in Gupta Sanskrit (Hindi Barautha). In Pāṇinian Sanskrit the Alinda portion of the house was known as Praghāṇa or Praghāna (see Rājakula, Plate 2³, in Harṣa-carita: A Cultural Commentary).

The system of Kakṣā:

Inside the Rājakula there was a regular scheme of courts (kakṣā). The palace of Harṣa was planned in three courts. In the Kādambarī the palace of Tārāpīḍa, father of Candrāpīḍa, was divided into seven courts which the prince had had to pass through in order to meet his father. In the Rāmāyana the palace of Daśaratha is stated to have five courts. The palace of Rāma as crown prince (Yuvarājabhāvana) had only three courts (Ayodhyā, 5.5). In the first court of Harṣa’s palace on the left side of the Rājadvāra was an extensive pavilion (Asthānamanḍapa) for the royal elephants (ibha-dhiṣṇyāgāra) in which the king’s own elephant Darpaśāta was kept. On the right side opposite to

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2 The word Ali for an earthen cup is still current in the dialect of western Uttar Pradesh. The word is also preserved in Sanskrit Aliṅjara meaning a very large storage jar. (Aliṁjaṛayati Aliṁjaraḥ = Mahākumbha. Amarakośa, 2.9.31.) These have been found in the excavations at Nālandā, Rājagṛha, Kāśipura. The reason of such a big jar being named as Aliṅjara was that when these were made all the available clay was diverted for them and the smaller cups went by default.

3 There is a sūtra in Pāṇini, that the Praghāṇa denoted a portion of the house (agāraikdeśe) (Ref. 3.3.79) which the Kāśikā equates with Bāhyadvāra Prakoṣṭha. Bāna also has used Bahirdvāraḍeva, i.e., a portion of the outer gate.
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it was the stable (mandura) for the king’s own horses who were known as Bhūpālavallabhaturaṅga. Later on such horses for the king’s own use began to be called merely as Vallabha. It should be noted that the arrangement for the horse and elephant wings and the army outside in the Skandhāvāra was a general one but inside the Rājakula in the first floor it was intended to accommodate the horses and the elephants for the king’s own use. It is therefore that Bāṇa often refers to the king riding on the royal elephants or horses entering the entrance and crossing the four courts mounting near the big staircase (Mahā-sopāna) leading to the hall of public audience.

In the second court at the centre was located the Vāhyāṣṭhāna Manḍapa, i.e., the hall of public audience also called Sabhā from ancient time or Sadas, also known as Āsthāyikā or Sarvosara. In Moghul palace architecture this was known as Darbare-am. In front of it was the extensive first court also called Ajira. Upto this point the king had the privilege to mount his horse or elephant. In order to gain access into the audience hall the king had to dismount at the foot of the staircase. After mounting the steps the entry into the audience hall was obtained. We may understand in the light of the above why Harṣa rode on the back of his she-elephant upto the foot of the stairway and dismounting there entered the Āsthānanaṇḍapa and put his seat on the throne placed there. (Ityevam āsāsāda āvāsam, mandirādvāri ca visarjitaraṇjaṇalokāḥ, praviśya ca avatatāra, bāhyāṣṭhānanaṇḍapasthāpītam āsanam ācakrāma.) Candrāpiḍa took the decision of his military conquest in the Āsthānanaṇḍapa. In the Kādambarī it is described as Sabhāmanḍapa (Kādambarī, 111). In the Delhi fort there is an open court in front of the Darbare-am which may be identified as Ajira. At the time of Prabhākaravardhana’s illness, his friendly kings and feudatories assembled in the Ajira to express their sympathies (154). When the king used to convene a Darbar or hold assembly or courts of justice it was always in the Darbare-am or Bāhyāṣṭhānanaṇḍapa.4 After the death of Rājyavardhana, Harṣa took counsel with his Senapati Simhanāda and Marshal of the Elephants Skandagupta in the Bāhyāṣṭhānanaṇḍapa. At that time there were many kings present in that hall. When Harṣa had taken the decision to go on a military expedition for the conquest of the whole earth and had dictated the same to his minister for peace and war (mahāsandhivigrāhaka) named

4 The Darbare-am has been called Sarvosara = Sanskrit Sarvopasara in the language of its time in the Prthivīcandra-carita (1421).
Avanti, he having dismissed the assembly of kings left the Bāhyāsthānāmaṇḍapa to go for his mid-day toilet. (Iti kṛtaniścayaḥ ca muktāsthāno visarjitarājalokāḥ snānārambhākāṅkṣi saṃhām atyākṣēt. 194.)

In the Rājakula there were two Āsthānāmaṇḍapas of audience chamber. One was the Bāhyāsthānāmaṇḍapa or Darbare-am described above which was placed in the second court of the Rājakula. The other was inside the Rājakula in the Dhavalagṛha portion usually at the end of the series of courts which was known as Bhuktāsthāna-maṇḍapa corresponding to the Darbare-khas of Moghul times. The distinction between the outer and the inner Āsthānāmaṇḍapas is very clear both in the Harṣa-carita and the Kādambari. In the Bhuktāsthāna-maṇḍapa the king used to take rest and enter into discourse or consultation with his selected friends, ministers and inmates of the harem.

This he did after taking his meals when he wished to retire and hence the name Bhuktāsthānāmaṇḍapa was justified. This was also known as Pradoṣāsthānāmaṇḍapa, i.e., the place when the king gave audience in the evening. It is stated that Harṣa on the day of his taking the decision about his military conquest did not stop for any length of time in the Pradoṣāsthānāmaṇḍapa but left it quite soon to go to his retiring room. (Pradoṣāsthāne nāticiram tāsthou. 195.) There used to be a court (Ajira) in front of the Bhuktāsthānāmaṇḍapa with a pavilion in it. We can, therefore, understand the statement that Bāna at the time of his first meeting with Harṣa after crossing the three courts saw him in the Bhuktāsthānāmaṇḍapa when the king was seated under a pavilion in the court of the hall of private audience. (Dauvārīkena upadīṣyamānavartmā samatikramya trīṇi kaksāntarāṇi caturthbhuktāsthānāmaṇḍapasya purastād ajire sthitam. 69.) In the Kādambari the Cāṇḍāla girl carrying the parrot in the cage saw the king in the Bāhyāsthānāmaṇḍapa. The elaborate description given by Bāna relates to the hall of public audience. After the king had accepted the parrot Vaiśāmpāyana from the Cāṇḍāla girl he dismissed the assembly of kings and returned to the inner portion of the palace to fulfil his mid-day routine and for bath and food, etc. (Visarjitarājalokāḥ kṣitipatiḥ āsthānāmaṇḍapād uttasthou. Kādambari, 13.) After the king had finished his toilet and usual routine he retired to the Bhuktāsthānāmaṇḍapa, hall of private audience, where in company of his friends, ministers and queens he listened to the story as recited by the parrot Vaiśāmpāyana.

The portions included in the first and the second courts of the Rājakula was known as Bāhya or the outer one, and hence the chamber-
lains and attendants moving in this portion were known as Bāhyapratihāra. Beyond this was the palace proper and the chamberlains and attendants specially appointed to that portion were known as Antarapratihāra or Abhyantaraparijana.

Bāna had given an elaborate description of the Dhavalagṛha or the palace situated in the third court. Round the Dhavalagṛha there used to be a contingent or other as follows:

1. Gṛhodyāna (The palace garden): It was also known as Bhavanodyāna. It contains a number of flowers and flowery plants and trees and green houses or groves covered with creepers. Sited in it were the lotus ponds and the Kṛiḍāparvata, named in the Kādambarī as Dāru-Parvata, which was an artificially improvised hill intended to serve for the pastime of the king and queens.

2. Gṛha-Dirghikā: In the palace garden and other portions of the palace there was a flowing canal of water known as Gṛha-Dirghikā which derives its name from its length. In its intermediate stages small fountains and water ponds (Kṛiḍāvāpi) were improvised for lotuses and Haṁsas, who were the inmates of the palace, enjoyed themselves. It was also a feature of the palace architecture in Iran in the time of Khusaru Parvez. In his palace such a long canal had been brought from Kohe Bihistuna to supply water to the Kasare Siri which was the name of his palace.5

Vyāyāma-bhūmi: the place for the king’s gymnasium. It is stated that king Śudraka after dismissing his court went to his Vyāyāma-bhūmi or gymnasium, where he took a course of routine

5 I am indebted for this information to my friend Maulavi Mohd. Asraf, Supdt. of Archaeology in Delhi. This was known as Nahare Bihista, heavenly canal. That such a canal of water existed also in Moghul palaces inside the red fort in Delhi is well known. This feature of palace architecture continued during mediaeval times also. Vidyāpati in his Kirtilata has mentioned Kṛiḍā-śaila, Dhārāgrha, Pramadavana, Puṣpavāṭikā and also Kṛtrima-nadī, i.e., an architectural canal of flowing water, which was another name of Bhavana-Dirghikā. The reference in Vidyāpati’s Kirtilata preceded the Moghul palaces by a couple of centuries. This feature of the architecture in royal palaces existed not only in India but also outside. In the palace named Hampton Court of Tudor Henry VIII this was known as Long Water which seems to be so close to the Indian Dirghikā.
exercises. That the king observed such a routine is also mentioned in the Arthaśāstra of Kautilya. We learn from Pāṇini’s Astādhyāyī that the senior wrestlers who gave wrestling training to the king were known as Rājayudhvā (3.295).

Snāna-ṛṛha or Dhūrā-ṛṛha: The yantradhūrāṛṛha and snānabhūmi, i.e., the fountain and the swimming pool, formed a contingent part of the Vyāyāma-bhūmi. Kṣemendra has named it Nimajjanamanḍapa in his Lokaprakāśa and the Pṛthivicandra-carita calls it Mājanahāram (Sanskrit Majjanagrha), 14th century.

Deva-ṛṛha: Inside the Dhavalagrha there used to be a religious shrine with an image of the deity worshipped by the king and other inmates of the palace. It was known as Devagrha, which Kṣemendra names as Devārcanamanḍapa in Lokaprakāśa.

Toyakarmānta: The place for storage of drinking water, which was placed in charge of an officer named Toyakarmāntika, or the Superintendent of water-works.

Mahānasa: the royal kitchen.

Aḥāramanḍapa: The dining hall or the pavilion where the king took his meals.

In addition to the above we also find in the Kādambarī a reference to Saṅgītabhavana or the Music Hall (91), Ayudhasālā or the armoury (87), Bānayogyāvāsa or the ground for the practice of archery (90), and Adhikaraṇamanḍapa or the court of justice (88) which were located in the different portions of the palace. Hemacandra (12th century) speaks of a Śrama-ṛṛha inside the palace in which the king gave himself exercise in wrestling and archery, which corresponds to the Vyāyāma-bhūmi and Bānayogyāvāśa of the Kādambari.

Besides the component parts of the palace the main portion was the Dhavala-ṛṛha also named Suddhānta in which the king and his female inmates resided.

Dhavala-ṛṛha: The Dhavalagrha was the palace proper forming the residential quarter. In Hindi it is called Dhaurāhara, literally, the White House. The entrance to the Dhavala-ṛṛha, according to Bānā, was known as Gṛhāvagrahanī, in which Gṛha signified Dhavala-ṛṛha and Avagrahanī the Dehali or threshold, i.e., the point where strict checking was made by the chamberlains posted for the purpose. The doorkeepers appointed here were much more experienced and trustworthy. In the Rāmāyaṇa this portion of the palace is named
Pravivikta-kakṣa (Ayodhya, 16.47), i.e., the secluded court, where Rāma along with Sitā was given accommodation as prince-regent and where only trustworthy persons were allowed to enter. The chamberlain in charge of this portion has been mentioned in the Rāmāyaṇa to be an aged person holding a staff in his hand (Vetra-pāṇi) and placed as superintendent over the inmates of the harem (Strīadhyaṅka) of Rāma. This is confirmed by the description of Bāṇa. The Dhavalagṛha or the palace proper was architecturally formed, planned in two or more storeys. The king and the queen usually lived in the upper stories. Just after entering the Dhavalagṛha one found two staircases on right and left leading to the upper floor. Bāṇa has stated that king Prabhākaravardhana at the time of his illness was occupying the upper floor of the palace. It is also said that the chamberlains angrily forbade the noise or the sound produced by treading on the staircase. Harṣa went to see his father several times in the upper storey (Kṣanamātram ca sthitvā pitrā punarāhārātham ādiśyamāṇah dhavalagṛhād avatatāra. 159) and then came down. There used to be an extensive court in the middle of the Dhavalagṛha and round it were series of rooms or the Śālās because of which that portion was named Catuḥśāla. The Catuḥśāla was known in Gupta Sanskrit as Saṁjavana. Bāṇa has used the word Saṁjavana which formed part of the palace of Prabhākaravardhana (155). Prabhākaravardhana himself was in the upper storey of the palace but servants were assembled on the ground floor in the Catuḥśāla and sorrowing for the king’s illness. It appears that the rooms of the Catuḥśāla portion were used for the king’s guest and for storage of clothes (Vastrāgāra) and other objects.

In the middle portion of the Catuḥśāla there used to be a pavilion supported on pillars known as Subīthi which was enclosed by triple screens (Trigūña Tiraskāraṇī. 155). This was separated from the rooms of the Catuḥśāla by a pathway around open to the sky. The Subīthi portion was entered into by side entrances (Pakṣadvāra). In the Ajanta painting we may see the kings and queens seated in the Subīthi portion enclosed by the triple screens and furnished with side-entrances which helps us to understand this portion of Dhavalagṛha (Chief of Aundha, Ajanta, Plate 67.77). The middle portion of the Subīthi was like a platform known as Vitardikā which was a covered pavilion (178) (see Dhavalagṛha, Plate 27, in Harṣacarita : A Cultural Commentary).

Upper Storey of the Dhavalagṛha: In the upper storey of the Dhavalagṛha on the front side the central portion was called Pragrīvaka
and the two side portions were called Saudha and Vásabhavana or Vásagṛha. In the Vásagṛha was located the Sāyanagṛha or the sleeping chamber. There were wall paintings in the Vásabhavana (127). Hence this particular room as known was Citraśālikā (Hindi : Citrasārī). Queen Yaśovatī used to sleep in Vásabhavana. Harṣa also occupied for his nightly rest the Vásabhavana. The Saudha portion was exclusively occupied by the queens. It had an open roof on which queen Yaśovatī used to enjoy moonlight by putting off her upper garment (127). The central portion was called Pragrīvaka because it occupied the grīvā or neck portion of the palace. In the Arthasastra also in the mention of Pragrīvaka in the palace of the princess (Kumari-śāla) (Arthasastra, 2.31), it is stated that the female guests that had come during the illness of Prabhākaravardhana were accommodated in the Pragrīvaka portion which was enclosed by screens on all sides (155).

The Pragrīvaka was also known as Mukhaśāla; corresponding to it the back portion on the upper storey was known as Candraśālikā which was a roofed pavilion supported on pillars in which the king and queens enjoyed the moonlight. Queen Yaśovatī in her stage of pregnancy used to sit in the Candraśālikā and enjoyed herself looking at the Sālabhañjikā figures.

The two long verandahs on right and left connecting the Candraśālikā and the Pragrīvaka were known as Prāsādakukśi furnished with ventilators or latticed windows (Vatāyana). In them the king enjoyed music and dance (Antahṣāna-saṁgīta) together with his select friends and guests, and inmates of the palace (Kādambarī, 58, Plate 28).

Comparative literary differences:

The above picture of a royal palace given by Bāna may be understood with the help of literary references preceding or following the works of Bāna. The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki describes the palace of Daśaratha and of Rāma as prince. The palace of Daśaratha has five courts. Rāma entered three of them riding in his chariot and then entered the last two on foot (Ayodhyā, 17.20). King Daśaratha also occupied the upper storey of his palace like king Prabhākaravardhana. When Rāma went to see his father he went up to the upper floor (Prāsādam ārūdhaka. Ayodhyā., 3.32.32). Similarly Vasiṣṭha coming to king Daśaratha ascended to the upper floor (Prāsādam adhiruhya. Ayodhyā., 5.22).

Rāma was prince-regent. His palace was separate from that of king Daśaratha but from the point of architecture the two resembled
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each other very much. Rama's palace consisted of three courts. In Rama's palace Vasiṣṭha rode on his chariot up to the third court (Ayodhya, 5.5).

In this connection the evidence of Bāna is valuable. When prince Candrāpiḍa returned from the college where he received his education, a separate palace was provided for him called Yuvarāja-bhavana or Kumāra-bhavana. Similarly for a princess a separate palace named Kumārī-antaḥpura was provided. In the palace of Candrāpiḍa there were two portions: Śrī-mandapa and Sayanīya-grha. Śrī-mandapa was the outer portion and Sayanīya-grha the inner portion of the palace (Kādambari, 96). In the Kumārī-antaḥpura of Kādambari also there was a Śrī-mandapa portion (Kādambari, 186).

We find that in the Tudor palace named Hampton Court there was a palace for the prince-regent in the same portion but separate from the main royal palace. This had three portions named Presence Chamber, Drawing Room and Bed Room. Of these the Presence Chamber corresponded to Śrī-mandapa of the Indian palaces where the prince received his guests. There was a well furnished seat which was occupied by prince Candrāpiḍa (Kādambari, 96). The Sayanīya-grha was the Bed-room in these palaces. In the palace of Rāma in the first court there was accommodation for the royal horses and elephants. There were rooms for Rāma and Sitā in the third court, which was a secluded portion (pravivikta kakṣa). In between the first and the third court there was most probably the drawing room of the audience chamber which was usually situated in the second court. It is stated that in the third court old chamberlains holding staff in their hands were appointed. They were known as Stryadhyakṣa and devoted young men were appointed as guards holding weapons in their hands (Ayodhya, 16.1). There is a marked resemblance between the palace of Rāma and Harṣa. The palace of Harṣa (Kumāra-bhavana) was separate from that of Prabhākaravardhana as was the palace of Rāma from that of Daśaratha. When Harṣa returned from his hunting expedition he first came to the entrance of Rājakuṇa where the chamberlain bowed to him; and from that point he entered the Dhavalagṛha and going upstairs he saw his ailing father, king Prabhākaravardhana. Then he came down from the upper floor of the Dhavalagṛha and went to his own palace with an attendant. In the evening time he came again to see his father and mounted up the staircase. He remained there the whole night and again came down the next morning, and although the groom was ready with the horse he preferred to walk on foot to his palace.
(160). This indicates that the palace of Harṣa was located outside the entrance of the Rājabhavana or royal palace proper. In the Rāmāyaṇa there is a detailed description of the palace of Rāvana (Sundararakāṇḍa, ch. 6–7). The whole area which is described as Alaya, contained the palace (bhavana) of Rāvana architecturally planned in several portions (Prāsāda). These three words correspond to Rājakula, Dhavalagṛha and Vāsabhavana which were placed one inside the other. Rāvana's Mahāśāla had a staircase. In the extensive palace (Mahāniveśana) or Rājakula of Rāvana there were several component parts, e.g., Latāgrha, Citraśālāgrha, Krīḍāgrha, Dāruparvataka, Kāmaṛgṛha, Cāpaśāla (armoury), Candraśāla (moonlight house), Niśāgrha (night chamber), Puṣpatagṛha, etc. Several of these features correspond to those in the palace described by Bāna. The Candraśāla is common to both. The Citraśāla of the Rāmāyaṇa was the same as the Vāsabhavana of Harṣa, where there was the Bed-Chamber with paintings on the walls and which was therefore justifiably known as Citraśālikā.

Aśvaghoṣa (1st century A.D.) describes the house of Nanda as Vimāna comparing it to Devavimāna. That house was divided into spacious courts. Once Buddha arrived at the entrance of Nanda’s house, on his begging round. At that time Nanda was seated with his wife Sundari on the upper floor of his house. As soon as Nanda learnt about it he got down and passing through the wide courts ran to meet the Buddha. But the courts were so spacious that it took him a long time to pass through them and therefore he felt agitated as to why they were so expansive. Aśvaghoṣa has also mentioned that in the upper storey of his palace there were Gavākṣa ventilators (4.28). This seems to be evidently a reference to the Prāsādakukṣi or the two galleries connecting the Pragriyaka in front and the Candraśālikā at the back. These galleries were provided with carved latticed works as clearly mentioned by Bāna. They were closed with shutters which could be opened to give a clear view of the outside (Vighaṭitakapāṭaprakatavātāyaneṣu mahāprāsādakukṣiṣu. Kādambari, 58). These galleries were utilised for dance and musical performances.

In the Pādatāditakam the large houses of the courtesans are stated to be divided into spacious courts well separated from each other (Asambaddhakakṣāvibhāgāni. 1.12). They were well sprinkled with water (Sikta) and cleansed off their dust with air blown through hollow

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6 अतस्वराजनाधमस्यपेतो ग्रह्यं क्रियामहतं ज्योत्स्यवव ॥ (५.८)
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tubes (Suṣiraphû Recorder). There are many other technical details mentioned about their construction, e.g., Vapra (raised foundations), Nemi (deep foundation), Sāla (ramparts), Harmya (upper storey), Sikha (spires), Kapotapālikā (a special moulding with a row of pigeons like a motif), Sīhakarna (two corners of the Gavākṣa raised aloft like the two ears of a lion), Gopānasī (the projecting top above the Gavākṣa resembling a long nose of a bull), Valabhī (a small pavilion on the top storey), Attālikā (towers of the gateway), Avalokana (a room on the upper storey for looking outside), Pratoli (rooms for connecting the towers of the gateway) (Hindi: pola), Viṭaṅka (a platform on the ground floor), Prāsāda (a palace), etc. Bāna also refers in his description of Sthānviśvara to Prāsāda, Pratoli and Sikha (142). As in the palace of Prabhākaravardhana there is mention of Vitardi (platform in the Cauḍśāla of the ground floor), Samjavana (Cauḍśāla), Vithi in the Paddatādītakam.

In the description of Vasantasenā's house as given in the Mrchakatikā we find reference to eight courts (Prakoṣṭha) which has same meaning as Kakṣa).

These traditions of house-building continued with minor changes even during the mediaeval period. We read of these features in the Dvūṣraysa Kāvya of Hemacandra (12th century) and Kīrtilata of Vidyāpati (14th century) and in the Varṇaratnākara of Jyotēśvara Thakkura and Prthivibandra-carita (1421) and also find them continued in the Moghul palace of Delhi and Agra. In the Kumārapāla-carita, Āsthānamanḍapa is called Sabhā or Maṇḍapikā. There is mention also of the Gṛhodyāna adjacent to the Dhavalaṅgrha, as shown in the illustration of the Rājakula. The Gṛhodyāna is referred to as Bhavandeyāna or Mandirodyāna in the Bṛhatkathā-Śloka-Saṁgraha of Budhaśvāmin and was known as Najara-bag, in Muslim times. Hemacandra has given a detailed account of Bhavandeyāna located inside the royal palace (Dvūṣraysa Kāvya, 3/1—5/87). The Bhavandeyāna occupied an extensive area between the Āsthānamanḍapa of the second court and the Dhavalaṅgrha proper of the third court. In this palace garden there were many kinds of trees, creepers, flowers of which a full list is given by Hemacandra. There was also a lotus pond and a Krīḍā-parvata, an artificial hillock for royal pastime, with many other contingent buildings and bowers and also an elaborate water fountain. The summer house (Hima-grha) described by Bāna in great detail in the Kādambari also forms part of the palace garden, and continued as Sāvana Bhādo in Mughal times. There are many points of similarity
between the descriptions of Bāṇa and Hemacandra. In these a study of the horticultural material in ancient Indian literary texts is a vastly interesting subject. It is stated that queen Yaśovatī held in high affection the jasmine creeper (Jāti-guccha), the pomegranate, the young Bakula, and the mango sappling at the door of the house (Bāla-sahakāra) (164–165).

In the Kirtilatā of Vidyāpati the description of the palace includes several motifs of ancient tradition, namely Kāṅcana-kalaśa (golden vase on the top of the spire), Pramadavāna (female garden), Puṣpa-vātikā (flower-garden), Krtrimanadi (long canal), Dīrghikā, Kriḍa-saila (artificial hillock), Dhārāgrha (water fountain), Yantra-vyajana (mechanical fan), Śrīnaṅgārasaṅketa, Kāmagra (dalliance house), Madhavi-manḍapa (grove of Hiptage creeper), Khaṭvāhinḍola (swing with a bed stretch), Kusuma-śayyā (flower bed), Catuḥṣamapallava (a small pond of the Catuḥṣama perfume), Citraśālā (a room with paintings). Side by side with this Indian tradition several new terms of Muslim palace architecture had been current which have also been mentioned by Vidyāpati, e. g., Khas-darbar (Bhuktāsthānamanḍapa), Dar sadar (Rājadwāra), Nimaj-gah (Deva-grha), Khvabgah (Āhāramanḍapa), Shoramagah (Sukha-mandira: a term still applied to a portion of the Amīra palace, same as Raṅga Mahala of a Moghul palace).

In the Prthīvīcandra-carita also (18th century) several component parts of the palace have been mentioned, e. g., ventilators (Aneka-gavākṣa), platforms (Vedikā), thrones (Caukis), painted hall (Citraśāli), latticed works (Jāli), three stūpikas on the top (Trikalaśam), palace with a Torana (Toranadhavalagrha), under-ground cellar (Bhumi-grha), store-house (Bhāndāgāra), granary (Koṣṭhāgāra), arms-house (Sastrāgāra), fortress (Gaḍha), hostel (Maṭha), temple (Mandira) basement (Paḍavaṇi), throne room (Paṭaśālā) basement, the staff above the spire (Daṇḍaṅkalaśa), the fluted stone on the top (Āmalasāra), flag (Āṅcali), bunting (Bandanaṅvāra), five-coloured banner (Paśicavarna-patākā), hall of public audience (Sarvopasara), hall of special audience (Mantrosara), Bathroom (Manjanahara = Maṇjana-grha), seven courts (Sāpta dvārāntara), city gate (Pratoli), forecourt (Rājāṅgaṇa), horse-market (Ghadahādi), court (Rāṅgamanḍapa), main pavilion (Sabhāmanḍapa)—Prthīvīcandra-carita, pp. 131–32. In this list there are several terms mentioned by Bāṇa. Gavākṣa, Vedikā, Citraśāli, Torana-dhavalagrha, Sabhāmanḍapa and Pratoli were the older terms. Maṇjanaṅgrha, Sarvosara, Mantrosara and Rāyaṅgaṇa were new terms but with older meaning which had become current in Bāṇa’s time.
ANCIENT INDIAN PALACE ARCHITECTURE : 255

It is necessary to have a clear picture of the mediaeval literary description and surviving monuments in order to understand the description of palace architecture given by Bāṇa in the Harṣacarita and the Kādambari. The need for different component parts of palaces remain more or less the same leading to an identical planning to the component parts of the royal palaces, and this is the reason why there was so much similarity between the ancient Hindu palaces and the mediaeval Mughal palaces.

If we look carefully to the palaces of Akbar, Jehangir and Shahjahan, the Mughal forts of Delhi and Agra, we may discover the meaning of Bāṇa’s description in several respects. The apparent reason is that the Mughals had inherited the older building traditions which they adopted in their palaces and at the same time introduced several features of their own. We may tabulate these common features between the palaces of Bāṇa’s time, the Mughal palaces and also the Tudor palace, named Hampton Court. It is not at all our intention to suggest that any one of them knew or copied the other, but the striking resemblance proves that the basis of their architectural planning was to cater to common needs. This comparative chart does render one service essential to our purpose, namely that it brings us to understand the evidence of Bāṇa in a more clear and consistent manner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bāṇa’s palace (7th cent.)</th>
<th>Mughal palaces in old Delhi</th>
<th>Hampton Court palace (16-17)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 The Skandhāvāra encampment in front of the Rājakula or palace, and the market place in its Vipani-mārga.</td>
<td>The extensive open ground in front of the Red fort known as Urdu bazar.²</td>
<td>……</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Entrance to the palace (Rājadvāra).</td>
<td>Sadar-darvaja, the main entrance to the palace.</td>
<td>The Great Gate House.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Urdu was the word of a Turkish language meaning army. Later on denoting an army encampment. Hindi Vardī (literary uniform) and English Horde are derived from it.
<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Contingent of rooms and towers of the gateway (Ālinda, or Bāhyadvāra prakośṭha).</td>
<td>Rows of rooms inside the Sadar-darvaja where now shops are accommodated.</td>
<td>Barracks and Porter's Lodge, in the Entrance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 First court (Prat hama Ka kṣa) where the royal elephant and royal stables were kept.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Open Court.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 The Hall of public audience (Bāhyāsthānamandapa) with the grand staircase (Mahāsopāna) and the forecourt (Ajira).</td>
<td>Dewane-am and the open space in front of it.</td>
<td>Base Court.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 The staircase leading from the Forecourt into the (Ajira) Audience Hall (Āsthāna-Maṇḍapa).</td>
<td>The staircase in front of the Dewane-am.</td>
<td>Great Hall and Hall-Court.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 King's throne in the Āsthāna-Maṇḍapa.</td>
<td>The royal throne in the Dewane-am.</td>
<td>Grand staircase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Inner court (Abhyantarakakṣā).</td>
<td></td>
<td>King's staircase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Dhavala-grha (inner palace).</td>
<td>Inner palace.</td>
<td>Clock Court.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Gṛhodyāna (Palace Garden), Pond (Kriḍā-vāpi) and Lotus pond (Kamalavana).</td>
<td>Nazar bagh and its pond.</td>
<td>Principal Floor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Royal canal (Gṛhadirghikā).</td>
<td>Nahar-e-bahiste.</td>
<td>Privy Garden, Pond Garden, (Vinery, Orangery etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Long canal, “Long water”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bāṇa’s palace
(7th cent.)

13 Bath (Snāna-grha), Fountain (Yantra-dhārā), Bath tub (Snāna-droni), Kitchen (Mahānasa), Dining Hall (Aḥāramaṇḍapa).

14 Temple (Devagrha).

15 Catuḥśāla.

16 Corridors (Bīthī).

17 Hall of private audience (Bhuktaśthā-namaṇḍapa).

18 Pragrivaṇa, Gavākṣa front room with latticed work.

19 Mirror House (Darpaṇa-Bhavana).

20 Sayana-grha, Vāsagṛha (Citra-śālikā), Saudha, Ḥāthi-dāta and Muktaśaila (white stone). The Particular Room made of ivory and marble or agate (Muktaśaila); sometimes it was made of carved ivory and inset with diamonds and therefore called Vajramandira.

Mughal palaces
in old Delhi

Hammam, Houze and Phavvar.

Masjid or Namaj-gah.

Royal Chapel.

Khurramgah.

Cellars on the ground floor.

Darbare-khas.

Galleries.

Hampton Court
palace (16–17)

Bathing Closet, King’s Kitchen, Banqueting Hall, Private Dining Room.

.......

Queen’s Gallery. Great watching Chamber.

Sisamahala. The Adarśa bhavana is also mentioned in Tilaka-mañjarī (11th century).

Personal Chambers for kings and queens. Khvabghah with paintings on wall and roof.

King’s Drawing Room, Queen’s Drawing Room, King’s Bed Room, Queen’s Bed Room

21 Music-hall (Saṅgaṇīgrha).

G.J.V. 17
Bāna’s palace  
(7th cent.)

Mughal palaces  
in old Delhi

Hampton Court  
palace (16–17)

22 Moon-light pavilion  
(Candra-śāla).

23 Palace galleries  
(Prāsādakukśis).

24 Chamberlain’s Khwajasar.  
court (Pratīhāra-grha).

This list indicates that the architecture of the palace described by Bāna had come from earlier times and continued even after him. Actually many other items of palace life and routine in the Indian palaces of the 7th century were borrowed from earlier time, e.g., attendants, chamberlains, amusements, performances etc. This was the outcome of the natural historical process. The picture painted by Bāna has to be given greater relief. It is expected that a study of the palaces built in the time of Uttaravarti Gurjara and Pratīhāra kings, Pāla, Paramāra, Cālukya, Yādava, Kākati, Gaṅga, Vijayanagaravamśī kings and also of the later Mughal emperors will fill the picture of Bāna which will throw light on the details and evolution of Indian palace architecture.

The Hampton Court Palace was built by Cardinal Woolsey in 1514 and made over to the Emperor Henry VIII in 1529 and the latter completed it in 1540. It represents the architecture of the early 16th century. It was restored after a century and a half in 1680 in the time of William the Third and Queen Anne. In the 17th century also in the time of Shahjahan the old palaces were retouched with marble structures. We find several points of similarity between the palaces in Delhi and Hampton Court. There did not exist any historical connection between these three classes of palaces but the common needs of royal life brought about an internal identity in their planning.

The Rashtrapati Bhavana at New Delhi has the following planning:—

Central Vista upto India Gate (Skandhāvāra), Secretariat  
(Adhikaraṇamaṇḍapa), Main Gate (Rājadvāra), Fore Court (Bāhya-  
kakṣa), Grand stair-case (Prāsādasopāna), Darbar Hall (Bāhyāsthāna-
mandapa), Military Secretary’s Wing (Pratihārabhavana), Audience Room (Bhuktāsthānamandapa), Banqueting Room (Āhāramandapa), Ball Room (Prasādacūsi for Antahpura-saṅgīta), Mughal Garden (Grhodyāna), Flowers area (Kamalavana), Pond (Krīḍāvāpi), Fountain and Long Canal (Dīrghikā).