

KHANDWA

(351) GAURI SOMNATH TEMPLE, OMKARESHWAR



It is believed that one sees one's past and future life forms in the Shivlinga installed in the temple. Even emperor Aurangzeb experienced it. According to another belief, if a person with his niece embraces the Shivlinga he becomes worthy of *moksha*.

The Pancharatha type of temple is built in Bhumi style. The three-storeyed temple is peahen-shaped. The stories are built on square angles supported on each other. The *garbha-griha* enshrines a large Shivlinga of a glazy stone on a Jalhari. On the back and sides of the *garbha-griha* there are three *dev kulikas*. One

is occupied by a Chaturbhuj *sthanak* image of Gauri holding a lotus stalk in the back right hand which has a Shivlinga in the middle portion, while in the left back hand she holds a lotus occupied by Ganesha in its center. Two hands are broken. In the side portion below, there are Paricharikas and Shiva as *dwarpal*. In the Pad portion crescent moon and *kirtimukha* are carved. The *vitana* of the door has Ganesha. On both sides of *antaral* there are *dev kulikas* between decorated pillar cells. The auditorium is now ruined. A large Nandi idol is installed in front of the temple. Built by the Paramaras the temple belongs to the 11th century A.D. It was renovated in the 16th century A.D. Its *shikhar* top was also built during Maratha period. The temple is under protection of the department. The department has set up a local museum by exhibiting various stone artifacts on the bricks pedestal in the temple premises.