

Subject: History of Architecture-II

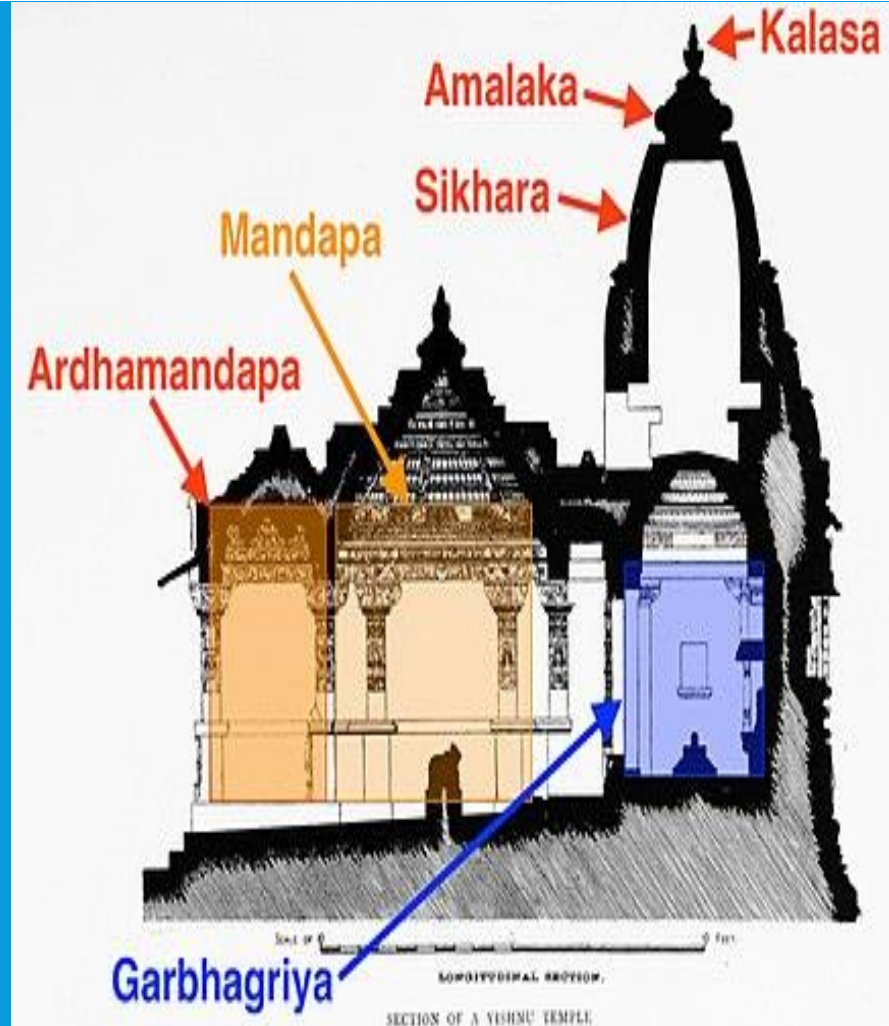
Topic: Central Hindu Temple and Dravian Architecture

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# CENTRAL HINDU TEMPLE AND DRAVIAN ARCHITECTURE

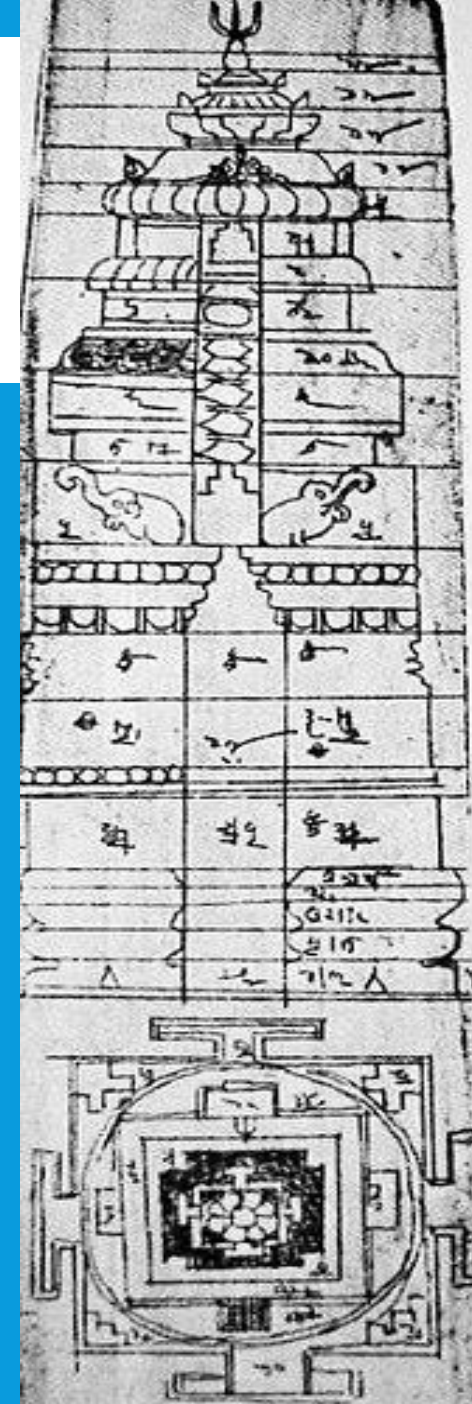
# HINDU TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE

- **Hindu temple architecture** as the main form of Hindu architecture has many varieties of style, though the basic nature of the Hindu temple remains the same, with the essential feature an inner sanctum, the *garbha griha* or womb-chamber, where the primary *Murti* or the image of a deity is housed in a simple bare cell. Around this chamber there are often other structures and buildings, in the largest cases covering several acres. On the exterior, the garbhagriha is crowned by a tower-like *shikhara*, also called the *vimana* in the south. The shrine building often includes an ambulatory for *parikrama* (circumambulation), a mandapa congregation hall, and sometimes an antarala antechamber and porch between garbhagriha and mandapa. There may further mandapas or other buildings, connected or detached, in large temples, together with other small temples in the compound.



# DESIGN

- A Hindu temple is a symmetry-driven structure, with many variations, on a square grid of *padas*, depicting perfect geometric shapes such as circles and squares. Susan Lewandowski states that the underlying principle in a Hindu temple is built around the belief that all things are one, everything is connected. A temple, states Lewandowski, "replicates again and again the Hindu beliefs in the parts mirroring, and at the same time *being*, the universal whole" like an "organism of repeating cells"<sup>71</sup> The pilgrim is welcomed through mathematically structured spaces, a network of art, pillars with carvings and statues that display and celebrate the four important and necessary principles of human life—the pursuit of artha (prosperity, wealth), the pursuit of kama (desire), the pursuit of dharma (virtues, ethical life) and the pursuit of moksha (release, self-knowledge).



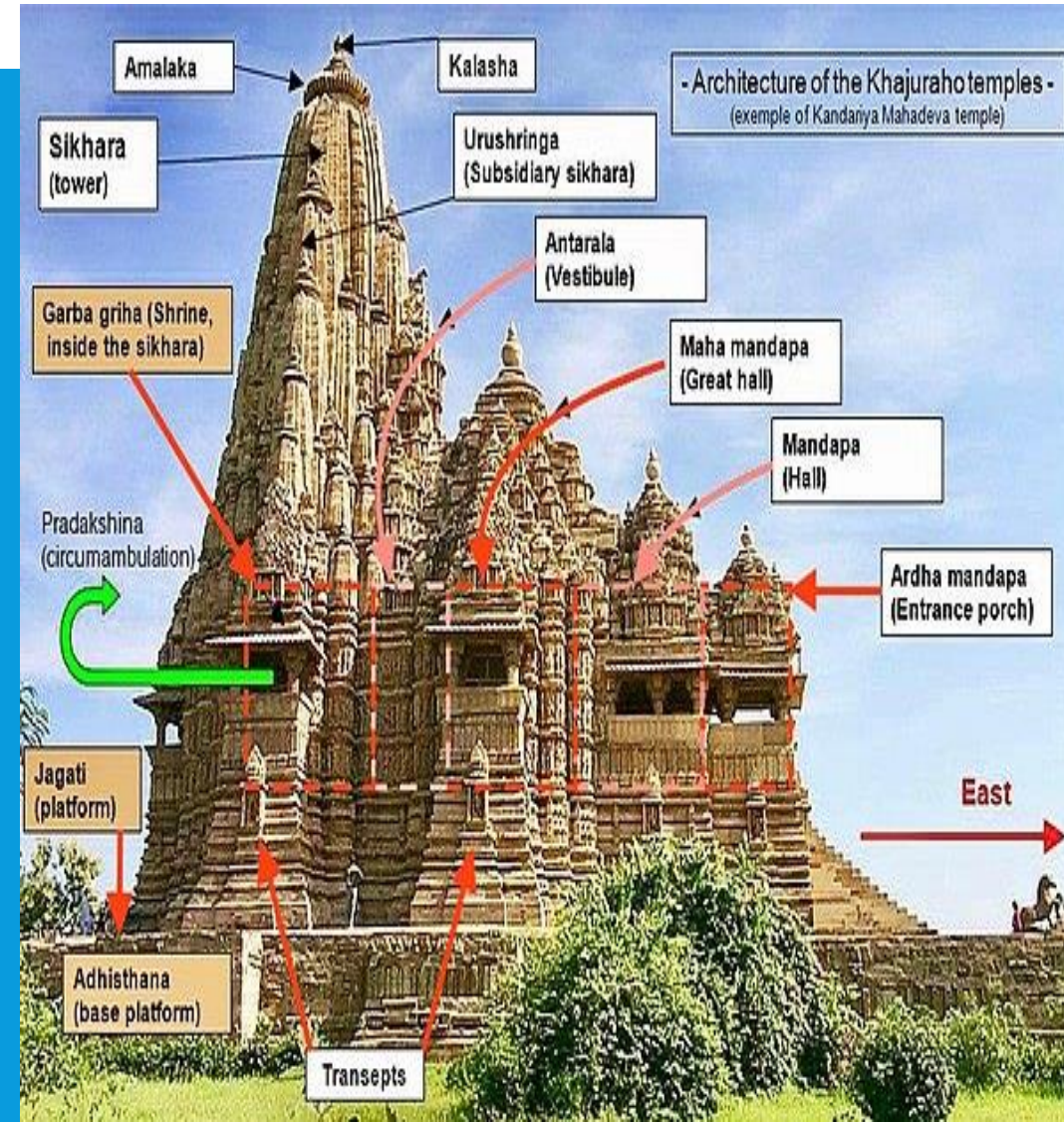
# SITE

- While major Hindu mandirs are recommended at sangams (confluence of rivers), river banks, lakes and seashore, the *Brhat Samhita* and *Puranas* suggest temples may also be built where a natural source of water is not present. Here too, they recommend that a pond be built preferably in front or to the left of the temple with water gardens. If water is neither present naturally nor by design, water is symbolically present at the consecration of temple or the deity. Temples may also be built, suggests *Visnudharmottara* in Part III of Chapter 93,<sup>[29]</sup> inside caves and carved stones, on hill tops affording peaceful views, mountain slopes overlooking beautiful valleys, inside forests and hermitages, next to gardens, or at the head of a town street.



# VARIOUS STYLES OF ARCHITECTURE

- The ancient Hindu texts on architecture such as *Brihatsamhita* and others, states Michell, classify temples into five orders based on their typological features: Nagara, Dravida, Vesara, ellipse and rectangle. The plan described for each include square, octagonal and apsidal. Their horizontal plan regulates the vertical form. Each temple architecture in turn has developed its own vocabulary, with terms that overlap but do not necessarily mean exactly the same thing in another style and may apply to a different part of the temple. Chronologically, the early Hindu temples are often called classical (up to 7th or 8th century), while those after the classical period through 12th or 13th century are sometimes referred to as medieval. However, states Michell, this is inappropriate for Hindu architecture given India's artistic tradition to conserve its heritage and architectural framework, while evolving ideas.





# DRAVIAN ARCHITECTURE

- **Dravidian architecture** or the **South Indian temple style** is an architectural idiom in Hindu temple architecture that emerged in the southern part of the Indian subcontinent or South India and in Sri Lanka, reaching its final form by the sixteenth century. It consists primarily of Hindu temples where the dominating feature is the high gopura or gatehouse; large temples have several. Mentioned as one of three styles of temple building in the ancient book Vastu shastra, the majority of the existing structures are located in the Southern Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana. Various kingdoms and empires such as the Cholas, the Chera, the Kakatiyas, the Pandyas, the Pallavas, the Gangas, the Kadambas, the Rashtrakutas, the Chalukyas, the Hoysalas, and Vijayanagara Empire among others have made substantial contribution to the evolution of Dravidian architecture.



# PALLAVA

- The earliest examples of Pallava constructions are rock-cut temples dating from 610 – 690 CE and structural temples between 690 – 900 CE. The greatest accomplishments of the Pallava architecture are the rock-cut Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram at Mahabalipuram, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, including the Shore Temple. This group includes both excavated pillared halls, with no external roof except the natural rock, and monolithic shrines where the natural rock is entirely cut away and carved to give an external roof. Early temples were mostly dedicated to Shiva. The Kailasanatha temple also called Rajasimha Pallaveswaram in Kanchipuram built by Narasimhavarman II also known as Rajasimha is a fine example of the Pallava style temple.

# BADAMI

- The Badami Chalukyas also called the Early Chalukyas, ruled from Badami, Karnataka in the period 543 – 753 CE and spawned the Vesara style called Badami Chalukya Architecture. The finest examples of their art are seen in Pattadakal, Aihole and Badami in northern Karnataka. Over 150 temples remain in the Malaprabha basin.
- The most enduring legacy of the Chalukya dynasty is the architecture and art that they left behind. More than one hundred and fifty monuments attributed to the Badami Chalukya, and built between 450 and 700, remain in the Malaprabha basin in Karnatak.



# RASHTRAKUTAS

- The Rashtrakutas who ruled the Deccan from Manyakheta, Karnataka in the period 753 – 973 CE built some of the finest Dravidian monuments at Ellora (the Kailasanatha temple), in the rock-cut architecture idiom, with a style showing influences from both north and south India. Some other fine monuments are the Jaina Narayana temple at Pattadakal and the Navalinga temples at Kuknur in Karnataka.

# CHALUKYAS

- The Western Chalukyas also called the Kalyani Chalukyas or Later Chalukyas ruled the deccan from 973 – 1180 CE from their capital Kalyani in modern Karnataka and further refined the Chalukyan style, called the Western Chalukya architecture. Over 50 temples exist in the Krishna River-Tungabhadra doab in central Karnataka. The Kasi Vishveshvara at Lakkundi, Malikarjuna at Kuruvatii, Kalleshwara temple at Bagali and Mahadeva at Itagi are the finest examples produced by the Later Chalukya architects.

# HOYSALA

- The **Hoysala Empire** was a Kannadiga power originating from the Indian subcontinent, that ruled most of what is now Karnataka, India, between the 10th and the 14th centuries. The capital of the Hoysalas was initially located at Belur but was later moved to Halebidu.
- The Hoysala rulers were originally from Malenadu, an elevated region in the Western Ghats. In the 12th century, taking advantage of the internecine warfare between the Western Chalukya Empire and Kalachuris of Kalyani, they annexed areas of present-day Karnataka and the fertile areas north of the Kaveri delta in present-day Tamil Nadu. By the 13th century, they governed most of Karnataka, minor parts of Tamil Nadu and parts of western Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in the Deccan Plateau.
- The Hoysala era was an important period in the development of art, architecture, and religion in South India. The empire is remembered today primarily for Hoysala architecture. Over a hundred surviving temples are scattered across Karnataka.

# COMPOSITION OF STRUCTURE

- Chola style temples consist almost invariably of the three following parts, arranged in differing manners, but differing in themselves only according to the age in which they were executed:<sup>[17]</sup>
- The porches or *Mandapas*, which always cover and precede the door leading to the cell.
- Gate-pyramids, *Gopuras*, which are the principal features in the quadrangular enclosures that surround the more notable temples. Gopuras are very common in dravidian temples.
- Pillared halls (*Chaultris* or *Chawadis*) are used for many purposes and are the invariable accompaniments of these temples.