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Dr. S Muthu

Ph.D, D.Litt., Associate
Professor & Head, Department
of Sanskrit, Ramakrishna
Mission Vivekananda College
Autonomous, Mylapore,
Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

Temple architecture in the light of the Vaikhānasa Āgama

S Muthu

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Abstract

The Vaikhānasa Āgama offers an intricate synthesis of spiritual philosophy and architectural precision in temple construction. This paper explores the multifaceted dimensions of the Vaikhānasa tradition, highlighting temples as sanctuaries of divine connection and vehicles of cosmic representation. Key architectural components, including the Garbha-grha, Antarala, Maṅṭapas, and Vimānas, are meticulously analyzed with their prescribed measurements, proportions, and symbolic significance. The Maṅṭapas, serving as multifunctional spaces for rituals, cultural activities, and spiritual engagement, reflect both artistic excellence and devotional purpose. The paper further delves into construction guidelines, material selection, and the evolution of regional styles, showcasing the enduring legacy of the Vaikhānasa Āgama in Indian temple architecture.

Keyword: Vaikhānasa Āgama, Vikhanasa, temple architecture, Garbha-grha, Maṅṭapa, Gopura-Vimanas, Indian tradition, Nagara, vesara style, doors, spiritual philosophy, ritual space

Introduction

The Vaikhānasa Āgama stands as a cornerstone of temple architecture, offering a profound synthesis of aesthetic precision, spiritual depth, and functional utility. Rooted in the Vaikhānasa tradition, this Āgama provides elaborate guidelines for constructing temples, emphasizing their role as sanctuaries of devotion and cosmic symbolism.

The Purpose of a Temple

In the Vaikhānasa tradition, temples are not merely physical edifices but are considered representations of the cosmos and a medium for connecting the divine with devotees. The scriptures extol the spiritual benefits of temple construction:

अहन्यहनि यज्ञेन यजतो यन्महाफलम्।

प्राप्नोति तत्फलं विष्णोः यः कारयति मन्दिरम्।। (Khilādhikāra, 1.30-31)

ahanyahani yajñena yajato yanmahāphalam.

prāpnoti tatphalam viṣṇoḥ yaḥ kārayati mandiram.

"The merit gained by performing sacrifices daily is equivalent to that obtained by constructing a temple for Viṣṇu."

Furthermore, the act of conceiving and initiating a temple's construction is believed to cleanse sins accumulated over seven births, as the scripture says:

कारयेद् भगवद्देहमिति बुद्धिं करोति यः।

सप्तजन्मकृतं पापमल्पं वा यदि वा बहु।

विष्णोरालयविन्यासप्रारम्भादेव नश्यति।।

kārayed bhagavaddehamiti buddhiṃ karoti yaḥ.

saptajanmakṛtaṃ pāpamalpaṃ vā yadi vā bahu.

viṣṇorālayavinyāsaprārambhādeva naśyati.

Corresponding Author:

Dr. S Muthu

Ph.D, D.Litt., Associate
Professor & Head, Department
of Sanskrit, Ramakrishna
Mission Vivekananda College
Autonomous, Mylapore,
Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

Whoever thinks to build a temple for the Lord, all the sins accumulated over seven births, whether small or great, are destroyed right from the moment they begin plan to construct Viṣṇu's temple.

प्रतिमां लक्षणवतीं यं कारयति मानवः।

केशवस्य स तल्लोकमक्षयं प्रतिपद्यते ।।

pratimāṃ lakṣaṇavatīm yaṃ kārayati mānavaḥ.
keśavasya sa tallokamakṣayaṃ pratipadyate.

The one who makes an image of the Lord Viṣṇu with the appropriate attributes,
Attains the eternal abode of Keśava.

बेरपूजा त्वियं प्रोक्ता पूजानामुत्तमोत्तमा।

अतीते यजमानेऽपि चिरमस्या अवस्थितेः ।।

berapūjā tviyaṃ proktā pūjānāmuttamottamā.
atīte yajamāne'pi ciramasyā avasthiteḥ.

This iconic worship is described as the best of all forms of worship and even when the worshiper has passed away, its merit persists for a long time.

Architectural Elements of a Temple

The structural layout of temples in the Vaikhānasa Āgama is meticulously detailed, covering the design and proportion of key components, such as the Garbha-griha, Antarala, Maṅṭapas, and Gopura.

Garbha-gṛha (sanctum sanctorum)

The sanctum, housing the main deity, is central to temple architecture. Its dimensions are calculated as specific fractions of the vimāna's total width:

विमानविस्तारं त्रिचतुष्पञ्चसप्तनवैकादशभागं कृत्वा यथाक्रमेण

एकद्वित्रिचतुः पञ्च षडंशं गर्भगृहविस्तारं स्यात् । विमानविस्तारसमं

त्रिपादमर्थं वा मुखमष्टपम्, तद्यन्तरं त्रयोदशभागं कृत्वा,

अथैकैकांशाधिकेन-आयामं सप्तविंशतिभेदं स्यात्।

vimānavistāraṃ tricatuṣpañcasaptanavaikādaśabhāgaṃ
kṛtvā yathākrameṇa ekadvitricatuḥ pañca ṣaḍaṃśaṃ
garbhagṛhaviṣṭāraṃ syāt. vimānavistārasamaṃ
tripādamartha vā mukhamaṣṭapam, tadvyantaram
trayodaśabhāgaṃ kṛtvā, athaikāikāṃśādhikena-āyāmaṃ
saptaviṃśatibhedam syāt.

The width of the sanctum is calculated as a specific fraction of the total width of the vimāna. Depending on the design, the sanctum sanctorum 's width can be one-eleventh, one-twelfth, one-fifteenth, or so on. The depth of the sanctum sanctorum is similarly derived and can be adjusted to match these proportions

Antarala (Vestibule)

The antarala serves as a transitional space between the sanctum sanctorum and the ardha-maṅṭapa. Its dimensions are carefully determined based on the sanctum's proportions. Decorative elements such as doorframes and lattice windows enhance its grandeur.

सान्तरालं तस्य वेशनं द्विदण्डं दण्डार्धं पादं वा तदायामं हस्तेन पादमर्थं
त्रिपादमेकहस्तादिसपाद-पञ्चहस्तान्तं सभित्तिकं द्वारं जालकं वा
कुर्यात्.....

sāntarālaṃ tasya veśanaṃ dvidāṇḍaṃ daṇḍārdham pādamaṃ
vā tadāyāmaṃ hastena pādamaṃ
tripādamekahastādisapāda-pañchahastāntaṃ sabhittikaṃ
dvāraṃ jālakam vā kuryāt.....

The measurement of the entrance from the garbhagrha to antarala are determined relative to the garbhagrha's width. Its height and depth are carefully calculated, often in specific proportions like half a unit (danda), one unit, or more. The entrance, including its doorframe and decorative elements, should match these proportions.

Maṅṭapas: The Multifunctional Halls of the Temple

Maṅṭapas, or pillared halls, are integral components of temple architecture, serving both practical and spiritual functions. They act as transitional spaces which accommodate rituals, gatherings, and cultural activities. The Vaikhānasa Āgama provides detailed guidelines on the construction and classification of maṅṭapas, emphasizing their architectural precision, aesthetic beauty, and functional significance.

Classification of Maṅṭapas

The Vaikhānasa Āgama mentions a wide variety of maṅṭapas, each designed for specific purposes:

अयं दिव्यालयः गभगेह अन्तराल अर्धमण्टप माहामण्टप...

सहस्रस्तम्भमण्टपाद्यलङ्कृतो भवतु।

ayaṃ divyālayaḥ gabhageha antarāla ardhamaṅṭapa
māhāmaṅṭapa... sahasrastambhamaṅṭapādyalankṛto
bhavatu.

Ardhamaṅṭapa

- A smaller, more intimate hall attached to the sanctum or antarala.
- Often used for private rituals or recitations.

Mukhamaṅṭapa

- Positioned immediately before the sanctum, serving as an entrance hall.
- Facilitates the congregation of devotees during worship.

Mahāmaṅṭapa

- The primary space for large gatherings, festivals, and rituals.
- Distinguished by its grandeur, with intricate carvings and elaborate pillars.

Nṛtta Maṅṭapa

- Dedicated to dance performances, particularly during temple festivals.
- Symbolizes devotion through art and is adorned with carvings of celestial dancers (apsaras).

Yajña Maṅṭapa

- Designed for conducting yajñas (fire sacrifices) and Vedic rituals everyday.
- Located in a quiet area to ensure focus and sanctity.

Snāna Maṅṭapa

- Used for the ceremonial bathing (abhisheka) of the deity during rituals.

Pradakṣiṇa Maṅṭapa

- Encircles the sanctum, allowing devotees to perform pradakṣiṇa (circumambulation).

Sahastrastambha Maṅṭapa

- Found in large temple complexes, showcasing intricate craftsmanship.
- Symbolizes the infinite support of the cosmos.

Specialized Maṅṭapas

- **Bhojya Maṅṭapa:** For taking prasāda.
- **Vīṇa Maṅṭapa:** For music performances.
- **Vāhana Maṅṭapa:** For processions involving the deity's vehicle.
- **Śayana Maṅṭapa:** For placing the deity in a reclining posture.
- **Āsthāna Maṅṭapa:** For royal or administrative functions in temple governance.
- **Vyavahāra Maṅṭapa:** For sastric discourses and discussions.

Proportions and Layout

The construction of maṅṭapas follows precise measurements to ensure harmony with the temple's overall design:

मुखमण्डपं कृत्वा तत्प्रमुखे तदायामेन पादाधिकं अर्धाधिकं त्रिपादाधिकं
द्विगुणं वा विस्तारं.... त्रिवर्गाढ्यं कुर्यात्।
mukhamanṭapam kṛtvā tatpramukhe tadāyāmena
pādādhikam ardhādhikam tripādādhikam dviguṇam vā
vistāraṃ.... trivargāḍhyam kuryāt.

Dimensions

- The width of the maṅṭapa often matches or slightly exceeds that of the sanctum.
- The height is proportional to the width, maintaining a sense of balance and openness.

Pillars and Beams

- Pillars are symmetrically placed, often in multiples of four, creating a grid-like layout.
- Each pillar is intricately carved with motifs of deities, mythical creatures, and floral designs.

Roof and Ceiling

- The roof is supported by beams resting on the pillars.
- Ceilings are often adorned with padma designs (lotus patterns) or cosmic diagrams, symbolizing divine energy.

Toranas and Arches

- Decorative arches connect the pillars, enhancing the visual appeal.
- Toranas (arched gateways) are richly carved with auspicious symbols and mythological scenes.

Ornamentation and Artistic Features

Maṅṭapas are a canvas for artistic expression, showcasing the skill of artisans:

Carvings

- Pillars are adorned with depictions of deities, celestial beings, and epic scenes.
- Intricate latticework allows natural light to filter through, creating a serene ambiance.

Ceiling Sculptures

- Central panels often feature ornate lotus medallions or representations of cosmic elements.
- Themes include astronomical motifs, mythological narratives, and symbolic patterns.

Wall Panels

- Walls of maṅṭapas are often embellished with narrative friezes, depicting stories from the Ramayana, Mahabharata, or Purāṇas.

Functional Significance

Maṅṭapas play a pivotal role in temple rituals and community activities:

Ritual Space

- Host ceremonies like abhisheka, homa, and special pujas.
- Serve as venues for installing festival icons and preparing offerings.

Cultural Hub

- Act as spaces for dance, music, and dramatic performances, blending devotion with art.
- Support community gatherings and discourses on scriptures.

Spiritual Significance

- Symbolize the intermediary space between the everyday activities and sacred.
- Facilitate contemplation and spiritual engagement for devotees.

Maṅṭapas as Cosmic Representations

The design of maṅṭapas reflects the cosmic order, with the central axis representing Mount Meru, the mythical mountain at the universe's center. The pillars symbolize the cardinal directions, while the open space allows for the divine presence to manifest.

Evolution of Maṅṭapas

Over time, the design of maṅṭapas has evolved to incorporate regional variations and cultural influences. For instance:

Dravidian Style

- Features expansive maṅṭapas with richly carved pillars and towering roofs.

Nagara Style

- Emphasizes compact, elevated maṅṭapas with intricate ornamentation.

Vesara Style

- Blends features of Dravidian and Nagara styles, creating versatile layouts.

Dvāra-lakṣaṇam

अथ द्वारलक्षणं वक्ष्ये । पादायामद्धारोत्सेधं भुवङ्गमेकांशं पतङ्गं स्यात् ।
अन्यत् सर्वं पूर्ववत्कारयेत् ।
atha dvāralakṣaṇam vakṣye. pādāyāmadvārotsedham
bhuvanāgamekāśam pataṅga syāt. anyat sarvaṁ
pūrvavatkārayet.

The characteristics of the doors**Proportions of the Door**

- The door's height is determined based on the length of the pāda, and its width is based on its breadth (Mukhamaṅṭapas).
- Alternatively, the door's height can be measured using *daṇḍas*. It may vary between 1½ to 2 *daṇḍas* in height, proportionate to the structure.

Width and Depth of the Door Frame

1. The width is proportional to the *pāda*, with slight variations.
2. For specific purposes, the door may be divided into parts like six, seven, or eight divisions to determine the correct proportions of its components:
 - **Bhuvanāga (Lower Section):** One-third of the width.
 - **Pataṅga (Upper Section):** The remaining two-thirds, further divided. Etc.

Measurements for Decorative Doors

- If the door is large (mahādvāra), proportions are adjusted, keeping ⅛ to 1/16 as the guiding ratios.
- The remaining sections are divided into lower and upper portions for symmetrical balance.

Construction Guidelines

- Decorative elements like floral creepers (puṣpa-vallikā) are added for aesthetic appeal.
- The door panels (kavāṭa) should align with the door frame dimensions, maintaining balance in height and width.
- Door joints should be strong, using iron or wood, and decorated with motifs like flowers, crescents, and ornamental designs.

Establishment of Six Parts of the Door**1. Install the bhūvāṅga (lower beam) first, followed by**

- The Dakṣiṇa-stambha (southern pillar).
- The Uttara-stambha (northern pillar).
- The *patāṅga* (upper beam).
- The Dakṣiṇa-kavāṭa (southern panel).
- The Uttara-kavāṭa (northern panel).

2. The process should be guided by rituals and appropriate mantras for each component.

धातारञ्च विधातारं भुवङ्गञ्च पङ्ककम् । पतिरं वरुणञ्चैव कवाटे दक्षिणोत्तरे ।
धातारं दक्षिणेस्मिन् उत्तराभिमुखं तथा । उत्तरे च विधातारं दक्षिणाभिमुखं
तथा ।
उर्ध्वाननं भुवङ्गं च पतङ्गञ्चाप्यधोमुखम् पतिरं वरुणञ्चैव कवाटे दक्षिणोत्तरे ।
यत्र यत्र कवाटोऽस्ति तत्र तत्र समर्चयेत् ॥

dhātāraṅca vidhātāraṁ bhuvanākaṅca paṅkakam. patiraṁ
varuṇaṁcaiva kavāṭe dakṣiṇottare. dhātāraṁ
dakṣiṇesmbhe uttarābhimukhaṁ tathā. uttare ca
vidhātāraṁ dakṣiṇābhimukhaṁ tathā. urdhvānaṁ
bhuvanākaṁ ca patāṅkaṅcāpyadhomukhaṁ patiraṁ
varuṇācaiva kavāṭe dakṣiṇottare. yatra yatra kavāṭo'sti
tatra tatra samarcayet.

Materials for Door Construction

- Preferred woods include Śirīṣa, Puṇṇāga, Nimba, Bakula, Arjuna, Madhūka, and Panasa.
- If wood is unavailable, stone of the same type and texture may be used.
- The upper and lower beams (ūrdhva-paṭṭikā and ādhāra-paṭṭikā) should be made from the same material as the door panels.

Locking Systems

- The inner locking mechanism should be wooden, while the outer locks should be made of iron for durability.
- Additional protective reinforcements (rākṣā-bandhana) may include metallic rings and studs for security and ornamentation.

The text emphasizes that every aspect of the door's construction must align with prescribed proportions, aesthetic principles, and ritualistic procedures to ensure structural integrity and auspiciousness.

Vimanas

The vimāna, or superstructure above the sanctum, varies in design, ranging from two-story to twelve-story structures. Each level adheres to specific proportions:

अयं दिव्यालयः अन्तर्गतोपपीठोपान जगति कुमुद कर्णपट्टिका पादप्रस्तर
ग्रीवा शिखर नासिका क्षुद्रनासिका वल्लीवेदि परिष्कृत प्रलीनकविमान....
अनेकविमानपरिकर्मितो भवतु ॥
ayaṁ divyālayaḥ antargatopapīṭhopāna jagati kumuda
karṇapaṭṭikā pādaprastara grīvā śikhara nāsikā
kṣudranāsikā vallivedi pariṣkṛta pralīnakavimāna....
anekavimānaparikarmito bhavatu.

Two-Story Structure (Dvitala)

- The dimensions of the structure (length and breadth) are divided into nine parts.
- The inner chamber (garbhagriha), surrounding spaces (like verandahs and corridors), and decorative features (like turrets and ornamental structures) are carefully proportioned.
- The external walls are divided, with specific allocations for smaller chambers, pillars, and connecting spaces.
- Design alternates can divide the structure into eight parts, assigning specific sections to turrets, halls, and ornamental panels.
- The foundation and elevations are described in specific proportions:
 - Base: 1/19th of the total height.
 - Plinth: 1/20th.
- Additional levels like moldings, walls, and decorative spires are proportioned similarly.

Three-Story Structure (Tritala)

- The layout involves dividing the dimensions into 13 parts, with specific allocations for the central sanctum, outer corridors, and decorative elements.
- The middle level includes arrangements similar to the two-story structure but with additional considerations for aesthetic alignment.
- Proportions for base, plinth, walls, and other architectural elements are adjusted, adding more refinement compared to the two-story structure.
- Decorative and functional features like staircases and porches are planned for seamless access and symmetry.

Four-Story Structure (Chaturtala)

- The dimensions are divided into 17 parts, ensuring proper allocation for central sanctums and surrounding spaces.
- Each level includes specific sanctums for different deities, positioned according to cardinal directions.
- Detailed planning for corridors, porches, and decorative turrets is outlined, ensuring alignment across all levels.
- Elevation proportions are expanded further, with an emphasis on symmetry and grandeur.

Five-Story Structure (Panchatala)

- Similar to the four-story design, but with additional levels and sanctums dedicated to more deities.
- Proportions for height and decorative elements are slightly increased, giving the structure a more towering appearance.
- Each floor follows the same principles but with slight variations to suit its height and purpose.

Six to Twelve Stories

- The designs for six to twelve-story structures follow similar principles, with minor variations in proportions and deity placement.
- Each level may be dedicated to specific deities, with sanctums and halls arranged symmetrically.
- Architectural features like turrets, spires, and ornamental panels are proportionally scaled as the height increases.

General Principles

- For all structures, the base is solid and proportioned appropriately to support the height.
- Each level contains sanctums for deities, arranged according to cardinal directions and traditional iconographic rules.
- Decorative features like porches, staircases, and ornamental panels are incorporated to enhance visual appeal and functionality.

Upper levels are carefully designed with reduced sizes, ensuring structural stability and aesthetic balance.

Gopuras (Entrance)

The Gopura, or gateway tower, is one of the most defining features of traditional Indian temple architecture. These monumental structures serve not only as physical entrances to the temple complex but also as symbolic thresholds between the mundane and the divine realms. The Vaikhānasa Āgama offers detailed prescriptions for constructing gopuras, emphasizing their spiritual, functional, and aesthetic significance.

Symbolism of Gopuras

Gopuras represent the axis mundi, or the cosmic axis, linking the earthly plane to the divine. They are seen as guardians of the sacred space within, adorned with intricate carvings of deities, celestial beings, and auspicious symbols. The towering height of gopuras signifies the aspirational journey of the soul toward liberation, while their grandeur invites devotees to enter a divine realm.

Placement and Orientation

The placement of the gopura is a critical aspect of temple design. According to the Vaikhānasa Āgama:

तेषां प्रमुखे द्वारं गोपुरं वा कृत्वाघस्ताद्वारिमार्गं प्राच्यामुदीच्यां वा दक्षिणोत्तर- पश्चिमेषु क्षुद्रद्वारं च युक्तितः कारयेत्। एतेषां बहिरावरणपृष्ठेऽप्येवं द्वारं गोपुरं वा कुर्यात्। प्रथमा- वरण विनान्येषां कारयेदित्येके ।

teṣāṃ pramukhe dvāraṃ gopuraṃ vā kṛtvāghastādvarimārgaṃ prācyāmuḍīcyāṃ vā dakṣiṇottara- paścimeṣu kṣudradvāraṃ ca yuktitāḥ kārayet. eteṣāṃ bahirāvaraṇapṛṣṭhe'pyevaṃ dvāraṃ gopuraṃ vā kuryāt. prathamā- varaṇa vinānyeṣāṃ kārayedityeke.

(A primary gateway or Gopura should be constructed at the entrance of the temple premises, positioned based on the suitability of the cardinal directions.)

- Primary Gopuras: These are located at the temple's main entrance i.e., rājagopura, often aligned with the sanctum's central axis, ensuring a clear path for devotees.
- Secondary Entrances: Smaller gopuras may be added strategically to outer enclosures, facilitating access while maintaining the sanctity of the inner sanctum.
- Cardinal Alignments: Gopuras are ideally aligned with the cardinal directions—east, north, south, or west—depending on the temple's layout and cosmic symbolism.

Dimensions and Proportions

The dimensions of a gopura are meticulously calculated to maintain harmony with the rest of the temple complex. The base structure, or adhiṣṭhāna, serves as the foundation, while the superstructure rises proportionately above it. The height of the pillars is prescribed as seven times their width, and the doorways are categorized based on their proportions and ornamentation:

- Small Gopuras: Used for minor entrances, typically less adorned but harmoniously proportioned.
- Grand Gopuras (rājagopura): Monumental in scale, these are richly decorated and often feature multiple tiers.

The doorways and gateways are classified into five types based on width and ornamentation:

- Dvaradhima
- Dvaranala
- Dvaraprasada
- Dvarahasya
- Dvaragopuram

Each type adheres to specific ratios, often derived from traditional units such as hastas and angulas, to ensure proportionality and balance.

Construction Materials

The materials used for gopuras reflect their dual role as protective structures and aesthetic marvels. The Vaikhānasa Āgama recommends the use of stone for structural stability, with wooden components only employed in rare circumstances. The choice of stone is guided by its durability and texture, ensuring that the intricate carvings remain intact over centuries.

Ornamentation and Symbolic Carvings

The ornamentation of gopuras is a testament to the artistic and spiritual vision of temple architecture. Common motifs include:

- Deities and Celestial Beings: Depictions of gods, goddesses, apsaras, and gandharvas, representing divine energy and protection.
- Mythical Creatures: Yalis (mythical lion-like creatures), elephants, and crocodiles symbolizing strength, wisdom, and guardianship.
- Sacred Symbols: Lotus flowers, conch shells, and other auspicious designs enhancing the spiritual atmosphere.
- Narrative Panels: Episodes from epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata, bringing sacred stories to life.

The toranas (arched gateways) are particularly elaborate, often featuring floral garlands, celestial dancers, and makara (crocodile-like creatures) motifs, which add to the visual and spiritual appeal.

Evolution and Multi-Tiered Designs

Gopuras evolved over time to become multi-tiered structures, with each tier representing a different realm or plane of existence. The lower tiers often depict human and terrestrial motifs, while the upper levels are dedicated to celestial and divine themes. This ascending arrangement reflects the philosophical concept of moving from the earthly to the spiritual.

- Two-Tiered Gopuras: Simple yet elegant, often marking entrances to smaller temple complexes.
- Multi-Tiered Gopuras: Found in larger temples, these can have up to eleven or twelve tiers, each slightly smaller than the one below, creating a tapering effect.

Lighting and Ventilation

The gopuras are not merely decorative but also functional. They are designed to allow natural light and air to flow into the temple complex, enhancing the atmosphere within. Small perforations in the stonework, such as lattice windows, provide ventilation while maintaining the sanctity of the space.

Ritual Significance

Gopuras play an essential role in temple rituals, often serving as the site for processions, music, and dance performances during festivals. They are considered sacred thresholds where devotees pause to cleanse their thoughts before entering the inner sanctum.

Parivaralayas (Family Shrines)

Parivaralayas are smaller shrines within the temple complex, dedicated to family deities. Their dimensions are proportionate to the main sanctum and often incorporate similar architectural elements.

Ritual Areas

Homa Kunda

The fire altar is placed in the southeast corner of the second or third enclosure, designed with precise dimensions to accommodate ritualistic needs.

Water Channels and Pushkarini

Water conservation is integral to temple design. Rainwater is directed to a pushkarini (sacred tank) located in the temple's northeast corner, ensuring sustainability.

Ornamentation and Symmetry

The Vaikhānasa Āgama emphasizes aesthetic balance and detailed ornamentation. Toranas (arched gateways), walls, and ceilings are adorned with intricate carvings of lotus motifs, mythical creatures, and divine imagery, reflecting the cosmos's beauty and harmony.

Conclusion

The Vaikhānasa Āgama provides profound insights into temple architecture, emphasizing the interplay between aesthetic precision, spiritual significance, and functional utility. Temples are considered as not merely a physical structure but as sacred spaces representing the cosmos and connecting the divine with devotees.

The guidelines offered in agama ensure that every aspect, from the Garbha-grha, vimāna, Mandapas to the Rājagopuras is meticulously planned. By adhering to these principles, the Āgamas ensure that temples stand symbols of devotion, cultural heritage, and architectural brilliance. These guidelines continue to inspire temple construction, preserving the profound legacy of Indian temple architecture.

Maṅgalānibhavantu

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