CHAPTER - 3

THE HINDU TEMPLES - A GLANCE

3.1 General

The temples are buildings built for installing the presiding deity for worshipping. They are built according to the tradition (ajṣṭra) by the application of various proportionate measurements and standards. By the term temple, it is generally understood the main shrine in which is contained the garbhagṛha, the womb and the house of the embryo, the small innermost sanctuary generally square in plan shape. The name prīṣida, another most important name for temple in common use denotes a palatial structure. āilparatna in the chapter, prīṣidalakāna defines prīṣida, "prīṣidas please (prāsidanti) by their beauty the minds of gods and men". The asprīṣid have exquisite and holy interiors,

---

244 āilparatna, Ch. XVI, Sl. 1.
beautiful and unique exteriors and forms, which please the mind, eyes and soul of both gods and men. The temples have their own rhythm and grammar.\textsuperscript{245}

The temple culture in India is unique. It is intimately interwoven with the life of the people, both as individuals and society. It comprehends several aspects of community life, religion, social, cultural, economic, educational and unifying aspects. As per V\textsuperscript{1}st\textsuperscript{u}lpako\textsuperscript{a},\textsuperscript{246} “it utilises gainfully the energy, talent, skill and leisure of the members of the community”. A temple complex is comprehensive in the performance of various functions, utilities, forms and artifacts which declare their magnanimity and splendour. The study being directed towards the \textit{\v{r}ikovils}, the main part of the temple complex, the detailed descriptions are restricted to the temple \textit{\v{r}ikovils}.

\textsuperscript{245} Samary\textsuperscript{2}nana\textsuperscript{2}tra\textsuperscript{2}h\textsuperscript{2}ra, Ch. IX, Sl.20.
\textsuperscript{246} V\textsuperscript{1}st\textsuperscript{u}lpako\textsuperscript{a}, Part-I, Introduction, p.3.
There are several names given to the temple in various texts. Some of them are common names and some different. Mayamata\textsuperscript{247} gives 29 names as synonyms of temple as:

(i) Vim\textsubscript{j}na, (2) Bhavana, (3) Harmya, (4) Soudha, (5) Dh\textsubscript{j}na,

(6) Niketan, (7) Pr\textsubscript{\j}j\textsubscript{\i}da, (8) Sadana, (9) Sadma, (10) G\textsuperscript{\h}ha,

(11) \textsuperscript{\Eu}s\textsubscript{\s}aka, (12) G\h\h, (13) \textsuperscript{\E}\textsubscript{\l}\textsubscript{\a}, (14) N\textsubscript{l}aya, (15) V\textsubscript{s}a,

(16) \textsuperscript{\E}\textsubscript{\sp\d}ada, (17) V\textsubscript{j}tu, (18) V\textsubscript{j}\textsubscript{\s}\textsubscript{\i}ka, (19) K\textsubscript{\A}\textsubscript{\e}tra, (20) \textsuperscript{\E}\textsubscript{\y}\textsubscript{\a}t\textsubscript{\a}na,

(21) Ve\textsubscript{\A}ma, (22) Mandira, (23) Dhi\textsubscript{\A}\textsubscript{\n}y\textsubscript{\a}ka, (24) Pada, (25) L\textsubscript{\a}ya,

(26) K\textsubscript{\A}\textsubscript{\a}ya, (27) \textsuperscript{\E}\textsubscript{\g}ara, (28) Ud\textsubscript{\a}vs\textsubscript{\i}ta and (29) S\textsubscript{\h}\textsubscript{j}na.

Many of the names are synonyms used for buildings or houses. S. S. enumerates serial numbers 2, 6, 8, 9 to 12, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28 (vasati) and

\textit{Samst\textsubscript{j}na}.\textsuperscript{248} Twenty four synonyms are enumerated in M.S,\textsuperscript{249} those occur in

\textsuperscript{247} Mayamata, Ch. XIX, S.l. 10-12.

\textsuperscript{248} Samary\textsubscript{\j}\textsubscript{\a}\textsubscript{n}an\textsubscript{\u}\textsubscript{t}radh\textsubscript{\y}ra, Ch. XVIII, Sl.8-9.

\textsuperscript{249} M\textsubscript{\n}\textsubscript{\a}\textsubscript{\y}\textsubscript{\a}ra, Ch. XIX, Sl. 108-112.
MM. The synonyms like Śimsraya, Śridhīna, Nidām, āaranas, Okha and Pratiśraya are found in S.S. Kīyapiya\textsuperscript{250} includes such synonyms. Some terms exclusively used in Malayalam for temples are: Kovil, Ambalam, Molom, Devālaya and Devasthana\textsuperscript{251}

3.2 **Classification of Temples.**

The temples are classified based on several aspects such as plan shapes, storeys, decorations, space utilisation, construction materials, location, types of idols, regions and so on. The broad classifications are given in brief in subsequent paragraphs.

3.2.1 **Classifications based on plan shapes, spaces, forms and decorations.** Some classifications are given below:

\textsuperscript{250} Kīyapiya, Ch. 23, Sl. 1-8.

(a) As per Bāhatsamhitā\textsuperscript{252} temples classified into 20 varieties as under:

1. *Meru.* The *prāśadas* with the width of 32 *Hasta*, 12 storeys hexagonal in shape, doors in all four directions are known as *Meru prāśadas*.

2. *Mandara.* The *prāśada* with the width of 30 *Hastas*, 10 storeys and with *śikhara* is known as *Mandara prāśada*.

3. *Kailāsa.* The temple with the width of 28 *Hastas*, 8 storeys and *śikhara* is termed as *Kailāsa*.

4. *Vimśāccanda.* The temple with the width of 21 *Hastas*, hexagonal in plan and having several rows of windows is named as *Vimśāccanda*.

5. *Nandana.* The *prāśada* with hexagonal shape, 6 storeys, with width of 32 *Hastas*, elliptical *śikharas* is termed as *Nandana*.

6. *Samudra.* The *prāśada* with 8 *Hastas* as its width, circular in shape, single storeyed and one *śikhara* is known as *Samudra*.

\textsuperscript{252} Bāhatsamhitā, Ch. 56, Sl. 17-28.
7. *Padma*. It is lotus shaped. Other parameters are the same as *Samudra*.

8. *Garuda*. It is shaped as *garuda* but the wings and tail are excluded. It is built in seven storeys and the width of it is 24 *Hastas* and has 20 *aikharas*.

9. *Nandivardhana*. It is shaped like *nandiavatta* flower. All other parameters are same as *Garudaprisda*.

10. *Kunjara* or *Hastipata*. Shaped as that of the back of an elephant, 16 *Hastas* in width and having 3 storeys are *Hastipata prisdas*.

11. *Guharja*. The *prisdas* with 16 *Hastas* in width, 3 storeyed, shaped like *Subrahmanya* are known as *Guharja*.

12. *Vrtra*. Built in single storey, 12 *Hastas* in width, one *aikhara* and circular in shape.
13. *Hamsa*. Built in single storey, 12 *Hastas* in width, one *¿ikhara* and shape like swan (wings, tail, head and beak to be included).

14. *GÅata*. Built with 8 *Hastas* as its width, single storeyed and shaped like a pot.

15. *Sarvatobhadra*. Temples having a width of 26 *Hastas*, doors in all four cardinal directions, 5 storeys with many *¿ikharas* and balconies are known as *Sarvatobhadra*.

16. *Simha*. Temples having the width 8 *Hastas*, 12 corners and shape like lion are known as Simha.

17. *Vjetta*, (18) *Catu¿akona*, (19) *A¿etakona* and (20) *¿o≠akona* are shaped as per the indications given by the name itself.
The temples as classified above have regular shapes, spaces and forms.

*Simha, Guharja, Hamsa and Garuda* may be included in the oval shapes.

(b) *Minasra*\(^{253}\) classifies temples from single storey to twelve storeys. Only the number of types of temples pertaining to each storey is given below:

(1) Single storey - 8 types, (2) two storeys- 8 types, (3) three storeys- 8 types,

(4) four storeys - 8 types, (5) five storeys - 8 types, (6) six storeys - 13 types, (7) seven storeys-8 types,

(8) eight storeys-8 types, (9) nine storeys-7 types, (10) ten storeys-6 types,

(11) eleven storeys-6 types, (12) and twelve storeys-10 types.

(c) *Agnipurana*\(^{254}\) classifies temples into five main divisions depending on the basic shapes namely, quadrangular, rectangular, circular, oval and

\(^{253}\) _Mnasra_, Ch. XVIII to XXX.

\(^{254}\) *Agnipurana*, Ch. 104, Sl. 1-13. *Vrichalha, Gaja, Hamsa and Garuda* are included in the category of oval shapes.
octagonal. Further sub classification of nine each are given making the total number of classifications to $5 \times 9 = 45$ types.

(d) Garudapurṇa\textsuperscript{255} gives the same number of classifications based on five basic shapes and gives nine sub divisions making total of 45 kinds of temples.

(e) Matsyapurṇa\textsuperscript{256} gives 20 divisions of the temples as:

(1) Meru (16 storeys, 50 cubits width, many spires (śikharas).

(2) Mandara (12 storeys, 43 Hasta width, many spires)

(3) Kailāsa (9 storeys, 40 Hastas width, many spires).

(4) Vimānaccanda (8 storeys, 34 cubits width, many spires)

(5) Nandivardhana (7 storeys, 32 cubits wide).

(6) Nandana (7 storeys, 30 cubits broad)

\textsuperscript{255} Garudapurṇa, Ch. 47, Sl. 22-32.

\textsuperscript{256} Matsyapurṇa, Ch.269, Sl. 28-54.
(7) *Sarvatobādra* (5 storeys, 16 corners, 30 cubits broad)

(8) *Vallabhiccandaka* (5 storeys, 16 cubits broad, many spires)

(9) *Vṛiṇa* (round, two storeys, 4 cubits at central hall).

(10) *Simha* (16 cubits broad, at least 6 storeys, resembles *simha*).

(11) *Gaja* (16 cubits broad, resembles elephant)

(12) *Kumbāa* (9 storeys, 5 cupolas, 16 cubits broad, like kumbha)

(13) *Samudraka* (16 sides, two storeys)

(14) *Padma* (3 storeys, 16 corners, 20 cubits broad)

(15) *Garuda* (7 storeys, 8 cubits broad, can go up to 12 storeys)

(16) *Hamsa* (10 cubits broad)

(17) *Vartula* (20 cubits broad)

(18) *Caturaṭra* (19) *Aṭṭisra* and (20) *Sodaṭṭra*.
Most of the classifications given in Bhaṭṭasamhitā, Garuda and Agni and Matsya puriṣṭas have commonalties.

(f) Kṣiṃkṣikīgama²⁵⁷ gives broad classifications of jati, ccanda, vikalpa and ābhisa. Tantrasamuccaya²⁵⁸ (āīlpabhīga) gives the classifications of alpa, jati, ccanda, vikalpa and abhisa prīṣidas depending on the width of prīṣidas and the number of storeys. Kiṣyapīya²⁵⁹ also contributes to the same school of thought and extends the number of storeys upto 16.

(g) Samarāṇasutradhāra²⁶⁰ classifies temples into the following:

(i) Lalitaprīṣidas (25 types), sīndhara prīṣidas (25 types), Nigudha prīṣidas (5 types) and mixed varieties (9 types)

(ii) Based on the presiding deities 8 varieties such as āīva (8 types), Viśṇu (8 types), Brahma (8 types), āurya (8 types), Candika (8 types), āurya (8 types), Candika (8 types), āurya (8 types), Candika (8 types).
types), Vinijaka (8 types), Lakmi (8 types) and common to all deities (8 types). All varieties have superior medium and inferior categories.\textsuperscript{261}

(h) Vi\text{\`{u}}dhr\text{\`{u}}mottarapur\text{\`{a}} classified temples into 100 types.\textsuperscript{262}

(i) Padmasamhita classifies temples into 49 varieties.\textsuperscript{263}

Vi\text{\`{v}}eksenasamhita\textsuperscript{264} classifies temples into five types: \textit{Mand\text{\`{y}}ra}, \textit{Ni\text{\`{j}}\text{\`{h}}a}, \textit{N\text{\`{g}}\text{\`{a}}ra}, \textit{Ve\text{\`{j}}\text{\`{a}}ra} and \textit{Dr\text{\`{i}}\text{\`{v}}\text{\`{d}}\text{\`{a}}}. Markandeya-\textit{samhita}\textsuperscript{265} more or less agrees with the above but adds \textit{Indubhadra}, \textit{Bhdraka}, \textit{Trik\text{\`{e}}ta} and \textit{Vimala}. The classifications given above are based on the plan shapes, spaces, forms, decorations and styles. Though the varieties are large, there is unity in the basic concepts of shapes, spaces, forms, utility and decorations.

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{260} Samar\text{\`{a}}nganasutr\text{\`{a}}tradh\text{\`{a}}ra, Ch.52-56.
\item\textsuperscript{261} Ibid., Ch.60.
\item\textsuperscript{262} Vi\text{\`{u}}dhr\text{\`{u}}mottarapur\text{\`{a}}, Part. I.
\item\textsuperscript{263} Padmasamhita, Part. I, Ch.8
\item\textsuperscript{264} Vi\text{\`{v}}eksenasamhita, Ch. 34.
\end{itemize}
3.2.2 **Classifications based on regions and styles.** The most basic divisions based on regions and styles are *Nagara, Vesara* and *Drīvāda*. Many texts give these classifications. Some of such texts are *Kīmikīgama*, *Mīnasā*, *Vīstuṣṭra* Vol. I, *Kīyapiya*, *Mayamata*, *Tantrasamuccaya*, *āilparatna*, *Viśvaksenasamhitā*, *Mārkandeyasamhitā* and so on.

The basic features of each type are given below:

(a) *Nagara, Sītvika*, practised from Himalaya to Vindhya and square in plan shape from base to the finial.
(b) *Vesara*. *Rjasa*, practised from Vindhya to Krishna river and circular in plan shape from base to the top.

(c) *Dravida*. *Thimasa*, practiced from Krishna to Kanyakumari, octagonal or hexagonal in plan shape at the base and polygonal or circular *ikhara*. Áilparatna elaborates it further including the decorations. Mayamata simplifies the shapes into these three styles as under:

(i) *Nigara*. Square or rectangle shapes.

(ii) *Vesara*. Circular, elliptical or apsidal shapes.

(iii) *Drvida*. Hexagonal, octagonal, regular or elongated. It is evident that all regular or elongated basic shapes can be grouped under these three categories of *Nigara*, *Vesara* and *Drvida*. *Nigara*, *Drvida* and *Vesara* temples correspond respectively to Brahmans, Kings and *Vaisya* and to áiva, ViÅ,u and Brahma.
3.2.3 **Classifications based on building materials.** There are three classes as under:

(a) *āūdā.* It is constructed using one material (stone, brick, timber and iron).

(b) *Miṣra.* It is constructed using two types of materials.

(c) *Samkirna.* It is constructed using three or more materials like stone, brick, timber, etc.

3.2.4 **Based on postures of the deity.** Three classifications are:

(a) *Samcita.* Standing posture of the deity.

(b) *Asamcita.* Sitting posture of the deity.

(c) *Apasancita.* Lying posture of the deity.

---

\(^{275}\) *Mnasya,* Ch.7, Sl. 21-22.

\(^{276}\) *Ibid,* Ch.V, Sl.6.
3.2.5 Other classifications. Few more classifications are in vogue as per vistu texts as under:

(a) Based on public or private temples known as Parjńtha and Sijńtha.\(^{277}\)

(b) Based on the installation of deities like\(^{278}\)

(i) Svayam Vyka (self manifest)

(ii) Daivika (Installed by gods)

(iii) Erśa (Shrines built by sages of yore)

(iv) Puurja (Shrines built during the age of purja)

(v) Mṛnuśa (shrine built by kings, chieftains, devotees and consecrated by priests)

(c) Based on Location\(^{279}\) like

\(^{277}\) Vistu, p.38.

\(^{278}\) Ibid., pp.58-59.

\(^{279}\) Padmasamhita, Kriyāpada, 1, Sl.12-14.
(i) **Sidāyyātana.** Temples built on mountain top, confluence of holy rivers, banks of rivers, sea shore, holy spots by sages (sidhas)

(ii) **Asidāyyātana.** Temple built by men in towns and villages.

(d) Based on gender\textsuperscript{280} like

(i) **Masculine** (*pumṇ*). Built in one material like stones or bricks from the base to the pinnacle.

(ii) **Feminine** (*angany*). If both stone and bricks or timber is used in the temple it is regarded as feminine.

(iii) **Neuter** (*Āanda*). If the temple is built by combination of timber and bricks it is known as neuter.

Some texts consider the temple built entirely of wood as feminine. The structure built of burnt bricks and stones is masculine, and made out of

\textsuperscript{280} *Kīyapiya*, Ch.28, Sl. 50-51.
The temples built of stone is in the *uthama* category, bricks *madhyama* and timber *adhama*. If the temple is built in single material, it is called *sancita*, two materials is *asancita* and more than two materials is *vy$\text{misa}^{282}$*.

(e) Based on the relative height of *pr$\text{s}i\text{da}$* to the width of *pr$\text{s}i\text{da}$. The temples are divided into:

(i) *Santika*. If the height of *pr$\text{s}i\text{da}$* is equal to the width *(Ht=W)* it is known as santika *pr$\text{s}i\text{da}$*.

(ii) *Pou$\text{Atika}$. The *pr$\text{s}i\text{da}$* whose Ht=$1\frac{1}{4}$ W.

(iii) *Jayada or Sarvak$\text{mi}k$aka*. The *pr$\text{s}i\text{da}$* whose Ht=$1\frac{3}{4}$W.

(iv) *Abhuta*. The *pr$\text{s}i\text{da}$* whose Ht=$2^{283}$W

---

$^{281}$ *V$\text{y}t$uv$\text{a}$$\text{ipa}$$\text{ka}$, pp.62-63.

$^{282}$ *Padmas$\text{am}$$\text{hit}$a, Ch. 4, Sl.26-28.

$^{283}$ *M$\text{h}$$\text{a}$$\text{y}$$\text{a}$, XXXV, Sl. 11-13.
The other classifications based on the proportionate height to width are:

(i) **Santika.** The height of \( p\hat{r} \hat{s} \hat{i} \hat{d} a \) = width of \( p\hat{r} \hat{s} \hat{i} \hat{d} a \).

(ii) **Pou\( \tilde{A} \tilde{t} i \)ka.** The height of \( p\hat{r} \hat{s} \hat{i} \hat{d} a \) = \( 1 \frac{3}{7} \) \( W \)

(iii) **Sarvak\( \tilde{m} i \) \( \tilde{k} i \).** The height of \( p\hat{r} \hat{s} \hat{i} \hat{d} a \) = \( 1 \frac{3}{4} \) \( W \)

(iv) **Abhuta.** The height of \( p\hat{r} \hat{s} \hat{i} \hat{d} a \) = \( 2 \) \( W \).

\( (Ht = \text{Height}, \ W = \text{Width}) \)

The heights are given in *Tantrasamuccaya*,\(^{284}\) and *K\( \tilde{i} \)\( \tilde{\nu} \)yapi\( \tilde{y} \)a*.

\(^{286}\) Mayamata\(^{286}\) also accepts such classifications.

### 33 \( p\hat{r} \hat{s} \hat{i} \hat{d} a \) and \( \hat{v} \hat{i} \hat{n} \)\( \hat{a} \)

The \( p\hat{r} \hat{s} \hat{i} \hat{d} a \) and \( \hat{v} \hat{i} \hat{n} \)\( \hat{a} \) both are complete structures representing two streams of the temple architecture. \( p\hat{r} \hat{s} \hat{i} \hat{d} a \) is a temple inclusive of all its main parts from the base to the finial. By the term temple one may conceive the picture

\(^{284}\) *Tantrasamuccaya*, (\( \hat{a} \)ilpabh\( \hat{\imath} \)ga), Ch.2, Sl.6.

\(^{285}\) *K\( \tilde{i} \)\( \tilde{\nu} \)yapi\( \tilde{y} \)a, Ch.8, Sl. 3,4.

\(^{286}\) *Mayamata*, Ch.9, Sl. +3.
of the main shrine and ancillary structures. *Vimṇa*, on the other hand, is conceived as palatial storeyed structure including main shrines,\textsuperscript{287} *prīkaras* and *gopuras*. *Prīsīdas* are found in Ēryan origin where as *vimṇīs* are found in non-Ēryan origin.\textsuperscript{288} Hence *vimṇīs* are found more in Southern part of India. The temple architecture in Kerala had Ēryan and Drāvidian influences. History of Kerala shows evidences of the influence of Aryan culture in the region. The South Indian rulers like Cheras, Cholas and Pandias influenced temple architecture in the South and partially in Kerala. As per Dr. D. N. Sukla,\textsuperscript{289} “*Vimṇa* architecture is the prototype of South Indian *prīsīdas* having super structure with storeys and *prīsīdas* developing into the piled up superstructure having *cilharas*, as we have them in North India, viz. temples at Bhuvanesvar, Khajraho, etc”.


\textsuperscript{288} Ibid., p.472.

\textsuperscript{289} Ibid., p.476.
As per Dr. Stella Karmarisch,290 "the temple, \textit{prṣṣida}, is the symbolic substance, which as a substratum, corresponds to the principal substance and imminent cause (\textit{upṣṣ/nakṣrana}), \textit{ṇīda}, the principle vibration. From \textit{ṇīda}, the principle vibration, the world is made. This is shown by the rhythmical plan and structure of \textit{prṣṣida}. Such is the meaning of \textit{prṣṣida}, the most generally employed name for the Hindu temple. It denotes the structural pile below, around and above the sanctuary (\textit{garbhagāya})."

"\textit{Prṣṣida}, in the sense of sacred monument is referred in ancient texts and inscriptions. It denotes settling down (\textit{prṣ-sad}) and seat made of that which has settled down and acquired concrete form, the form of a dwelling, a residence, the seat of god. The rhythmic formula which effects the settling or setting or

\footnote{The Hindu Temples, Dr. Stella Karmarisch, p.237.}
steadying of brides of the fire alter is śidanā mantra. From the foregoing paragraphs six distinctive points emerge as under:

(a) Prīṣidhas and Vīṁnas are synonyms of temples but belong to two schools of architectural origins. Prīṣidhas are of Ṛryan origin and Vīṁnas are of non-Ṛryan origin.

(b) Prīṣidhas indicate the shrine around the garbhaṅga where the main deity is consecrated. Prīṣidhas indicate the piles up of under, above and around the shrine. Vīṁnas are indicative of palatial, storeyed and magnificent structures including main shrine, prākṛtas and gopuras.

(c) Prīṣidhas may have many āikharas, but vīṁnas may have at least one.

(d) Prīṣida is the seat of god. It pleases the eyes and souls of men and god. Vīṁna is built rhythmically as per the prāmīnas. Probably, Vīṁna is given more impetus on grandeur than prīṣidhas.

Baudhāyana āulbasutra, VI, 1, 28 and VII, 1, 30.
(e) Structural shapes, spaces and forms have noticeable differences such as the jikharas, sripis and decorations.

(f) Kerala temple architecture had adopted the Eryan and non- Eryan styles and modified to suit the climatic, social, religious and cultural needs of the region.

3.4 Purposes of building Prisidas/Vimñas.

Viñudharmottarapurja\textsuperscript{292} assigns the construction of temples, "during krita age there were no temples, for gods appeared to the human beings. In tretayuga there were no temples but pious folks installed iconic forms in their homes and worshipped. In dviparayuga sages installed iconic forms in jungles. In the kaliyuga when vices predominated virtues there were needs for temples for people to worship for the divine presence appeared only in iconic forms". The

\textsuperscript{292} Viñudharmottarapurja, Part -III, 94. Agnipurja, Ch-38.
primary and most important purpose, hence, is worship. Agnipurṣaṇa\textsuperscript{293} states the merits of building temples, "those who attempt to erect temples for god are freed from sins of 1000 births. Those who think of constructing temple are freed from sins of 100 births. By building a temple one attains the fruits of bathing at all sacred shrines and goes to heaven, building three goes to Brahma, five goes to āmbhu, eight goes to Hari and sixteen attains all objects of enjoyment and emancipation. A poor man making a small temple reaps the benefits as rich making a palatial one. The Hindu belief in births, rebirths and holy acts to go to heaven and ultimate bliss had been very strongly imbibed in the Hindu society".

The purposes of building temples stated here were to obtain the freedom from sins and heavenly bliss.

The temple culture based on (i) ṭṛṭṭṭa tradition (for worshipping deities),

(ii) the architectural tradition concerning the planning, designing, building and

\textsuperscript{293}Agnipurṣaṇa, Ch.38
maintaining the temples and (iii) the sculptural tradition in representing the deities suitable for worship, creation of icons, artifacts, decorations and effectively incorporate aesthetics. The purposes from the forgoing may be summarised as worship, developing the knowledge, skill and set of concepts and canons for planning, designing, constructing and maintaining temples. It created extensive skills and job opportunities and involvement of various sections of society. The art and skill of iconography, graphics, paintings and decorations created the need for skilled people. The people who visited the temple enjoyed the art, artifacts, decorations and aesthetics.

Bhatsamhita[^3] puts it in simple terms, "let him who wishes to enter the world that are reached by sacrificial offerings and the performances of religious obligations, build a temple to the gods, by doing which he attains both the results

[^3]: Vāstuśāstra, p.3.
[^4]: Bhatsamhita, Ch. 55, Sl. 2.
of sacrifices and the performances of religious obligation." Bhaṭṭasamhitā referred to the works of Garga, Manu, Viśvakarma and 18 chief preceptors (jīryas). The reconciliation of the diversities of the schools of temple architecture with in the fundamental purposes/concepts of temples is evident.

To a pilgrim, the temple is as holy as tīrtha. The darṣāna, at the temple, the seat, the abode and body of the divinity and worship, are the main purpose of visiting the temple. One can visit the temple as a pilgrim or as a devotee. One can visit the temple as student of architecture, building science, art and graphics. The set up of temple, the forms, the arrangement and the sequences of exquisite exposure of the interiors and exteriors fascinate people as students, spectators or tourists.

The prāṣāda accommodates the garbhāṅga consisting of thick walls and roof forming a dark square chamber with only one entrance door. (sometimes,

---

296 The Hindu Temple, p.141.
the garbhagṛha may be rectangle, circle or the shape of the main shrine, but generally it is square in plan shape. The chamber is small and after the installation of the pitha and the idol, hardly any circulation space is available in most of the cases. In most of the temples only the authorised pujakas and tantris only are allowed to enter the garbhagṛha. Yet, there are temples elsewhere, where devotees can have close darājan and offer pujas or offerings directly. Examples of such temples are Kṛṣṇa Visvanatha temple, Birla Mandir, Kali Temple at Patiala, etc. In such cases the garbhagṛha has to be larger in size than normal. Sometimes the entry of selected devotees are allowed up to the mukhamandapa like in Badrinath Temple, Pāḻani Muruga temple, Madurai Meenakṣī Temple, etc.

Apart from worship there could be group prayers, group offerings, bhojan, etc. The arrangements of the temple complex into garbhagṛha, sabha,
gudhamandapa and bhogmandir, could be seen in Lingaraj temple (Orissa) and Jagantha temple (Orissa).

The purposes and functions necessitated the systemising of the planning, design and construction with appropriate structuring of the structural shapes, spaces and forms including artifacts, decorations and aesthetics of the prasidas/vimanas. The traditional architecture, by intention, had afforded flexibility in the adoption of regional or provincial styles with in the main concepts of vstuvidyā.

3.5 Origin and Development of Prasidas.

The temple as a sacred institution is of hoary antiquity and is intimately associated with idol worship. This is one view. Another view is that the temple is a scheme of architecture, iconography and decorations. Infact, both views

---

296 Vstuvadstra, Vol I, p.3.
are to be synchronised in the perspective of the functions, spaces and forms. The styles of construction of temples represented the culture of those days as could be evident from the Nāgara, Vesara and Drāvida styles of constructions. According to Sir Banister Fletchers (History of Architecture), \(^\text{299}\) "architecture in India has maintained a distinctive cultural identity. Largely, unaffected by industrialisation, the stylistic nuances and symbols peculiar to ... still persists. Contemporary use of traditional religious symbols, however, goes, hand in hand with the mix of styles and traditional and modern materials and methods of construction".

\textit{World Atlas of Architecture}\(^\text{300}\) in its forward states, "In the very earliest time, the purpose recognised for building: to provide shelter and protection from wild beasts. Gradually, however, as the millennia succeeded one another and


man became more ambitious and as his ambitions developed, so did his skills. He began to turn his mind to new architectural forms: to tomb in which to be buried, monuments to be remembers, palaces from which to be governed and most important of all shrines in which he could worship his god”.

The origins of the temple may be summed up as:

(a) cīti, the altar (b) the dolmen (c) the shed of initiations
(d) tabernacle (e) image of the mountain and
(f) the philosophical background.

The most important structural limbs of the praśāda are (i) the base, the adhiśṭāna, (ii) the garbhagṛha and (iii) the super-structure. The adhiśṭāna, or the base of vedic altar, the cīti, got itself incorporated in the structural genesis of the praśāda as its petha and upapetha. In the lowest part, the scole and vedika have embodied the memory of sacred vedi with its pile up altar (cīti). Dr. Stella
Karmarisch remarked, "the vedic altar survives in the structure of the body of the temple, in its lowest and highest parts. In the technique and name, the _pr¡s¡da_, the Hindu temple shares in the name of _vedi_ and _citti_. The dolmen, the prototype of _pr¡s¡da_ had three sides covered by stone slabs and roof with only one side open to serve as entrance. Many of these types of _pr¡s¡das_ had been discovered by the archeological survey. Samar¡nga, asutradh¡ra describes the dolmen as the nucleus of the temple. It is viewed as a shed of initiation.

The tabernacle (the dictionary meaning is a temporary structure, any house of worship) as per Dr. Stella Karmarisch is equivalent to the _devagatha_. Dr. D. N. Sukla states, "tabernacle accounts for movable and immovable idols stationed in the temples... movables are taken out in procession in chariots,

---

301 The Hindu Temples, pp.152-154.

302 Samar¡ngana, asutradh¡ra, Ch.68. Sl. 4.

where as immovables are installed in temples”. He agrees with Dr. Stella Karmarisch that tabernacle is devagæha.

The temple, as mountain, has found an eloquent, praise from the time of epics and purj,as. The classifications of temples as mentioned in Matsyapurj,a and Bahatsamhita enforce the views. The classifications of temples like Meru, Mandara and Kailja bring in the cosmological-macro and micro-reality. Other motifs as the model of evolution of the temple has been the caves, cave temples and rock cut temples.

From the orthodox Hindu point of view the origin and evolution of prjjadas, the temples are representations of philosophical ideas as spiritual institutions.
Another school of thought on the evolution of temple lists out the following stages:

(a) Vedic architecture (b) Hinayâna and Mahâyâna

(c) Êryan and non Êryan styles (d) Southern style (Pallava, Cola, Pîndya, Cîlukya, Vijayanagara, etc. "Savants like Havell, Fergusson, Brown, Coomaraswami and Stella Kramarisch investigated...into the branch of architectural studies in relation into the monuments...and development of the temple... the ruling dynasties, Pallavas, Colas, Pîndyas, rulers of Vijayanagaram and Hosîlas... contributed to the development of the Hindu temples". In North India the counter parts being those belonging to Orissa, Khajurâhu, Rîjputana, central India, Gwalior and host of others contributed to the North Indian styles of temple architecture. The developments were spectacularly on the pyramidal

304 A text Book of Vâstuvidya, p.28.
305 Ibid., p.415
superstructure, curvilinear superstructure, barrel roof, vaulted roof, dome shaped roof, keel vaulted roof, development of gala, griva, īkhara and extensive decorations. Basically, a temple has the solid base or scole, the sanctuary with vertical walls and the crowning part. The shaping, spacing, forming and decoration vary but the basic concepts remained with certain unity in diversity.

3.6 Certain comparisons of Indian and South Indian Temples

Prīṣṭadāmandaṇa\textsuperscript{306} having analysed the various forms of Northern and Southern temples gave out comparative statements in tabular form. From the table, those found relevant to prīṣṭadas are given in tabular form as given below:

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
No & Diagnostic element & Southern temple style & Northern temple style \\
\hline
1 & īkhara & The top part above griva and below stēpi & The super structure above the cornice level \\
\hline
2 & Roofs of axial addition & Flat & Successive series of towers of \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Comparisons of Southern and Northern Indian styles.}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{306} Prīṣṭadāmandaṇa, pp.17-21.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>to the shrine proper</th>
<th></th>
<th>the pitha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Elevation of the axial addition</td>
<td>Mostly closed walls with only gav; kàa windows.</td>
<td>Open <em>mandapa</em> type with porched balconies or entrances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>Pranīla</em></td>
<td>It is a must. Has its position related to the <em>pitha</em> of the deity.</td>
<td>Not very typical. May be open channel on floor level or underground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Vertical plumb line of the cornice (<em>m ynāsutra</em>)</td>
<td>Falls just in line with in the plinth line.</td>
<td>Well outside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ceiling</td>
<td>Plain.</td>
<td>Wide range of ornamentations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>Dhvaja</em></td>
<td>Outside the shrine.</td>
<td>Optional. May be on top on the shrine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><em>Mahanjñika</em></td>
<td>Rarely present.</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Superstructure above ground floor</td>
<td>Storeyed.</td>
<td>Single mass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Broad plinth</td>
<td>Optional <em>upapetha</em></td>
<td>Mostly present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><em>Prīkras</em></td>
<td>Essential.</td>
<td>Optional.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.7 Kerala Temples

Kerala temples have numerous differences from the Northern and Southern temple styles. The major ones are stated below:

(a) The number storeys are restricted to three.

(b) The šikhara is mostly of sloping roof type as it falls in the high rainfall region.

(c) Êgamic and tantric culture and canons dictate the architecture.

(d) The ornate and decoration are simple, few and typical.
(e) *Upapetha* is optional, seldom present.

(f) Shapes are restricted to the regular shapes like square, rectangle, circle, hexagon or octagon, oval and apsidal.

(g) The number *śikharas* is restricted to one. The number of *stēpis* is generally one and not more than three.

(h) The roofing is generally of tiles and copper plates. Seldom stones and concrete (recent ones) are used.

(i) Lays importance to *petha, bimba, garbhagṛha*, the door, *antarāla, pranīla, sopīna, ghanadvara, bhitti alankāra* and *stēpi*. The ceiling for *garbhagṛha* may be flat or *thuravu* type.

(j) The materials used are generally granite for *adhisṛṇa*, brick or stone for walls, timber for roofing members, tiles or copper sheets for roofing.

Sloping roofs are provided in most of the *ṇāriṅgavilas*. 
(k) The pratiÀta of main idol is on petha. The petha may be at the same level of þrikovil or either elevated or seldom below the floor level.

(l) The garbhagãha is comparatively very small. Only those authorised p¿jakas or tantris are allowed to enter the garbhagãha.

(m) Mukhamandapa is optional in alpapr¡s¡das. Mukhamandapa is found mostly in mah¡pr¡s¡das.

3.8 Measurements and Proportions.

The measurements and proportions at macro level had been indicated in the classification of temples in this chapter. Detailed measurements and proportions as a whole are kept out of the scope. Certain measurements and proportions of Kerala temples are given in the forthcoming chapters.

3.9 Postulates.
(a) The Hindu temples are buildings built for installing the presiding deity for worshipping according to the ṛstras by application of various proportionate measurements and standards. By ṛikovil of a temple it is generally understood the main shrine, the garbhagṛha inside in which the main deity is installed. The ṛikovil also known as prṣīda has unique interiors and exteriors, which please the eyes and souls of both gods and men. It utilises gainfully the energy, talent, skill and leisure of the members of the community.

(b) There are several names given to the temple ṛikovils. There are several classifications based on the shapes, forms, structural spaces, decorations, materials, locations, posture of deity and measurements and so on.

(c) Prṣīda and Vimīna are synonyms; the prṣīda is of Ēryan origin and vimīna is of the Drīvidian origin. Prṣīda indicates the shrine around
garbhagûha, vimûna indicates palatial building, may be the main shrine, prâkîras and gopuras.

(d) The temples not only served as places of worships but also helped in developing the knowledge, skill and sets of concepts and canons for planning, design, construction and maintenance of temples and the artifacts connected to the temples.

(e) The temples are associated with worship, scheme of architecture synchronised in the perspective of functions, spaces and forms. They represented the culture as evident from the style of constructions like Nigara, Vejara and Drâvida.

(f) Kerala temples differ from the temples of other parts of India in few ways such as:

(i) Number of storeys seldom exceeds three
(ii) Egamic and tantric canons and culture dictate the temple designs.

(iii) The plan shapes are restricted to few regular shapes, decorations are simple and few, only one ¿ikhara with slopping roof; interiors are scantily decorated, use locally available but durable materials and stupis are provided.

(iv) The garbhagñha is small, mukhamandapa is optional and ¿ripita must, upapeta is optional, adhis¿na is a must, pran¿la and sop¿na are invariably provided.

(v) Entry into garbhagñha is restricted to the pe¿jakas and tantris.