CHAPTER - III

VASTU TEXTS

The ancient Indian *Vāstuśāstra* has its own history from the very beginning of habitation of the human being. It evolved through centuries of observation and experimentation. The great Harappa and Mohanjadaro civilization placed in the frontline of the ancient world civilizations. The Harappa civilization existed here about 3000 years before Christ. The townships existed in that era, the bricks used for the constructions, the architectural skills are used in the constructions of various patterns etc. These are the basic examples for the scientific approach existed in these ages.

The Ancient Texts of Vāstuvidya can be classified into different groups based on the period it has origin or in the different pattern it was written. Basically it has grouped as the Vedic Literature, Puranas, Ithihasas Saṁhitas. Āgamas, Sūtras and Upanishads and also the basic original Vāstu texts based on the traditional works, compilations, translations, commentaries and modern works.
Mayamata, Mānasara, Bṛhatsamhita, Samrāngaśa
Sūtradhāra, Vāstuvidya, Tantrasamuccayam- Silpabhūgam and
Manusyalayachandrika are considered as the main texts on
vastuvidya. In the following chapters these texts are discussed in
details.

3.1 BṛHAT SAMHITA

The Bṛhat samhita, is usually classified under the
astronomical and astrological treatise deals with heterogeneous
subjects like Puranas. Bṛhat samihita had been written by Acharya
Varāhamihira born in Advantidesa the son of Adidyadasa. He had
been one of the navaratnas of the king Vikramaditya and
considered to be the contemporary of Kalidasa.

The literature on vāstuvidya has been dealt in systematic
way through chapters 53 to 60. The chapters open with a
definition of the science of architecture and goes to describe
briefly the points like the suitable building sites, testing of soil, the
general plan, comparative measures of the storeys and doors and
carvings there on and other important part of the buildings.¹
Chapter 53 deals purely on vastuvidya. vastu purusha, various

¹ M.R. Bhat, Varahamihitra’s Brihat samhita
types of houses, elements of houses, various salas selection and tests of location in a comprehensive way. For example according to Brihatsamhita a catussala having continuous verandah on all sides is defined as Sarvotobhadra.\textsuperscript{2} This will have four doors on four sides and is suitable for gods and kings Fiftyfourth chapter is basically about the: construction of well and Fiftyfifth is about the \textit{Vrikshayurveda}. Chapter fifty sixth devoted to \textit{prasadalakshana}, canons of various elements of temple and various types of temples. Fifty seventh chapter is about the application of preservatives (\textit{vajralepana}) Fifty eighth chapter is about the \textit{prathimalakshana}. The detailed canons of the iconography are given in the chapter (chapter fifty nineth is about the use of \textit{trees and woods for construction work} and sixtieth chapter is devoted to the rite to be performed for the \textit{pratista}.\textsuperscript{3} Briefly \textit{Brihat Samhita} is a concise dictionary of almost all sciences, glimpses of knowledge and practices.

\textsuperscript{2} Brihat Samhita Ch 53. 31-32
\textsuperscript{3} Brihat Samhita, Vyakhyatha Puliyoor Purushothaman Namboothiri
It also discussed about the temple architecture in details. There are twenty types of temples enumerated in the Brāhatsamhitā as follows.

1. *Meru*
2. *Mandāra*
3. *Kailāsa*
4. *Vimanacchanda*
5. *Nandana*
6. *Samudga*
7. *Padna*
8. *Garuda*
9. *Nandhivardhana*
10. *Kunjara*
11. *Guharaja*
12. *Versa*
13. *Hamsa*
14. *Sarvatobhadra*
15. *Ghata*
16. *Simha*
17.  

18.  

19.  

20.  

The temple named meru\(^4\) is hexagonal and has twelve storeys and also has internal windows of various kinds. It has four doors or gates in the four directions and is 32 cubits in width. Its height is 64 cubits.

The temple named *mardara* is also in the hexagonal in shape. The width comes in 30 cubits and has ten storeys and domes.

Kailasa is also in hexagonal type and only 3 loons and 28 cubits width. The height comes to 56 cubits.

The *vimanacchanda* is in the hexagonal shape and eight floros. The width comes to 21 cubtis.

The temple named *Samudgga* is circular in shape. It’s width comes to 8 cubits, and only one storyed and has one dome.

\(^4\) Brihatsamhita Chap 54
The temple called *padma* is shaped like a lotus with eight petals. The width comes to 8 cubits, and only one storyed and has one dome.

The garuda is shaped like an eagle with wings and tail. The nandin is also like an eagle but has no wings and tail. Both are 24 cubits broad. They have seven storeys and are adorned with 20 cupolas.

The temple named *Kunjara* has the form of the back side of a standing elephant. It measures 16 cubits all round from the bottom. It has only one storey and has a sloping roof with upper rooms.

The *Guharaja* type is shaped like a cave as its name tells. It has 16 cubits wide and single - storeyed- It has sloping roof with three upper rooms.

The *Versa* is shaped like a swan with beak, wings and tail. It has 12 cubits broad and has only one storey.

The *Ghata* is shaped like a pot. It has only 8 cubits broad and single storeyed and has only one dome.
The temple called *sarvathibhadra* is square in shape and has four doors in four cardinal directions with many beautiful dormer windows. It is five-storeyed in type and the breadth comes to 26 cubits.

The simha type which is adorned with images of lion. It has 12 angles and is 8 cubits broad. The last four viz, Vrtta that is circular, *Catuskona* is quadrangular, *sodasasri* that is one with 16 angles and Astasri in octagonal have significant names and are dark inside All these are single storiyed except the *Chaturasara* which has five domes.

3.2 MAYAMATA

In the extensive and widely disseminated range of works, the *Mayamata* occupies a fairly well defined place. It is a general treatise written in Sanskrit but originated in Dravidian India, most probably from Tamil area. It is considered that the text *Mayamata* was written by the greatest sage *Mayan*. It is said that the text was originally in Tamil and it was translated to Sanskrit. Mayan is considered to be the architect of *asuras*. 

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The content of *Mayamata* is basically about the *Vastusastra* and *Prithimanirmanasastra*. Through the 45 chapters *Mayamata* explained the *vastu* concepts including all the aspects. It also described about the consruction of multistoryed buildings, Gopura constructions Bimba construction etc. It also discussed and gives specific directions to the construction of residential buildings.

Some scholars say that *Manasāra* is the reproduction of *Mayamata* since there is similarity of verse by verse. The various chapters in *Mayamata* are as follows. Chapter 1 summary, 2 Dwelling sites, 3 Examination of sites 4 taking possession of sites, 5 systems of measurement, 6 Orientation.... And the 36th chapter is iconography.

Lists of thirty six chapters of *Mayamata* with their contents are briefly shown here:

1. *Samgrahādhyāya* - Table of contents
2. *Vāstuprakāra* - Classification of architectural subjects
3. *Bhupariksa* - Testing of soil
4. *Manopakarana* - System of measurement
5. **Dikpariccheda**  -  Chapter on finding out cardinal points
6. **Padadevatavinyasa**  -  Ground plan
7. **Balikarmavidhāna**  -  Offering to gods
8. **Gramavinyasa**  -  Villages
9. **Nagaravidhāna**  -  Town planning
10. **Bhulambavidhāna**  -  Dimensions of stories
11. **Garbhanyasavidhāna**  -  Foundations
12. **Upapithavidhāna**  -  Pedestals
13. **Adhisthariavidhāna**  -  Bases
14. **Padapramana dravvasamgraaha**  -  Columns
15. **Prastara prakarana**  -  Entablatures
16. **Sandhikarmavidhajia**  -  Wood joinery
17. **Sikharakaranbhavana samaptividhana**- Finishing the buildings
18. **Ekabhumi Vidhāna**  -  One storeyed building
19. **Dvibhumi vidhāna**  -  Two storeyed buildings
20. **Tribhumi vidhāna**  -  Three storeyed buildings
21. *Bahuhumi vidhāna* - Buildings of more than three storeys

22. *Prakara parivara* - Courts and temples there in of the attendant deities.

23. *Gopura vidhāna* - Gatehouses

24. *Mandapa vidhāna* - Pavilions

25. *Sala vidhāna* - Halls

26. *Grha manadhikarana* - Measurement of house s

27. *Grha praves* - House warming ceremony

28. *Raja veśma vidhāna* - Royal palaces

29. *Dvāra vidhāna* - Doors

30. *Yānādhikaraṇa* - Conveyances

31. *Yāna Šayanādhikaraṇa* - Cars and chariots; couches and bedsteads

32. *Liṅga lakṣaṇa* - The phallus

33. *Pitha lakṣaṇa* - The pedestal of the phallus

34. *Anukarma vidKana* - Minor works on sculpture

35. *Pratimālakṣaṇa* - Images in general and the last chapter 36 chapter is *Iconography.*
Mayamata states five styles of catusala namely sarvatobhadra vardhamana, svastika, nandiyavarta and rucaka\textsuperscript{5}.

3.3 \textbf{MĀNASARAM}

The detail on the author of the text Mānasar was not mentioned in the book and we have no evidence yet to find out the author. Yet the author is said to be the Muni Mānasara. The word manam means measurement and Mānasara can be defined as the essence of measurement. Mānasar the essence of measurement, is an authentic textual work on vāstuvidyā. Through 70 chapters\textsuperscript{6} the Mansara speels out the details for the calculation of padavinyāsa, vāstuprakara, village planning, urban planning, perimeter of the residential as well as other buildings, bungalows etc. It also gives measurements to the Vigraha Nirman and other divine related constructions.

The chapter 2 of Mānasara discussed about the different types of professionals who engaged in the process of construction of a building. It is classified as sthapati, sūtragrahi, takshaka and

\textsuperscript{5} Mayamata ch 26-1
\textsuperscript{6} Indian architecture, P.K. Acharya pp 34-38
vardhaki. In the modem construction management process we can see this type of classifications.

The contents of chapters in Manasara are given.

1. Invocation of Brhma, v4iva and Vishnu and other sages
2. System of measurement
3. Examination of soil and examination
4. Saûku sthapana - principles of asserting directions
5. Padavinyâsa
6. Balikarma - vidhâna
7. Gramalakšaîa - vidhâna
8. Nagarâ- vidhâna
9. Bhumilamba- vidhâna
10. The foundation
11. Upapitha- vidhâna
12. Adhisthâna- vidhâna
13. Stainha-lakshana- vidhâna
14. Prastara- vidhâna
15. Slandhikarma- vidhâna
16. Vimâna- vidhâna
17. *Ekabhūmi-Vidhāna*

18-28. *Buildings of two to twelve storeys*

29. *Prākarā- Vidhāna*

30. *Parivāra- Vidhāna*

31. *Gopura- Vidhāna*

32. *Mandapa- Vidhāna*

33. *Śāla- Vidhāna*

34. *Location and measurement of houses*

35. *Grhapraveda- Vidhāna*

36. *Dvāra- Vidhāna*

37. *Measurements of doors*

38. *Rathalakṣaṇa- Vidhāna*

39. *Simhāsanalakṣaṇa- Vidhāna*

40. *Toraṇa- Vidhāna*

41. *Madhyaranga- Vidhāna*

42. *Kalpavṛkṣa- Vidhāna*

43. *Abhiṣekalakṣaṇa- Vidhāna*
46. Bhūsanalaiisana- Vidhāna
47. Trimlirtilakasan a- Vidhāna
48. Liṅga- Vidhāna
49. Pithalakṣaṇa- Vidhāna
50. Saktilakṣaṇa- Vidhāna
51. Jainalakṣaṇa - Vidhāna
52. Baudhalakṣaṇa- Vidhāna
53. Munilakṣaṇa- Vidhāna
54. Yaksab-Vidyadhralakṣiina- Vidhāna
55. Vahanalaksna – Vidhāna
56. Garudamāna – Vidhāna
57. Vrsabhalaksana – Vidhāna
58. Simhalakṣaṇa – Vidhāna
59. Pratima – Vidhāna
60. Daśatāla – Vidhāna
61. Pralambalakṣaṇa – Vidhāna
62. Casting of images
63. Angadusana – Vidhāna
64. Nayanonmilana – Vidhāna
Manasar discusses the site of building the methods of orientation, sacrificial inauguration, plans for the layout and building of towns, villages, roads, bridges, gardens, ponds, temples, cremation grounds etc. It describes the ceremonies of house warming and first entry; the proportions of the image in relation to the building; the setting of precious stones in different parts of the image etc.

3.4 SAMARĀṅGANASŪTRADHARA

Samrāṅgaṇasūtradhara is one of the standard texts in the field of vāstuvidya. It was written by the King Bhoja. In the first volume it deals with the main principle branches namely residential architecture, engineering palace architecture, temple architecture etc and the second volume is about silpa and chitra. The Samarāṅgaṇaśūtradhara is divided in to 84 chapters. The first seven chapters deal with the introducing subjects. In the eighth chapter is the Stapi-lakṣaṇa. The system of measurements is discussed in the chapter nine and eleven. Bhuparikṣa is the topic in tenth chapter; the five fundamental canons of Indian architecture are discussed in chapter twelve to sixteen. In the subsequent Twenty

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Nine chapters (17-45) are deal with the civil and secular architecture. In the next twenty chapters (45-65) are deals with temple architecture. In last fourteen chapters (70-84) is treated iconography, both sculptural and paintings.

A list of chapters in Samarāṅgasūtradrāhāra is given

1.  *The advent of Earth*- Mahasangamana
2.  *The dialogue between father and sons*
3.  *The query*- Prasnodya
4.  *The creation*
5.  *The geography*- Bhuvanakosa
7.  *The division of society according to Varna and Asrama*
8.  *Stapati*-laksana
9.  *Astanga*-laksana
10.  *The selection of site*- Bhuparigraha
11.  *The measurement*- Hastalaksana
12.  16.  *The five fundamental canons of Indian architecture are discussed*
17.  *Towns and their categories*- Nagaradisamjnya
18. *Purvanivesa*- Town planning
19. *Ayadinirnaya*
20. *Offerings* - Balidana
21. *Vedi*-laksana- The Altar
22. *Indradhvajanirupana*-Indra’s flag
23. *Silanyasa*-The foundation laying ceremony
24. *Kilaka*-Sutrapata
25. Pithamana-The measurements of the pedestal
26. *Rajanivesa*- The planning of royal palace
27. *Rajagraha*- The various types of palaces
28. *Sabha*- The assembly hall
29. *Gajasala*- Stables of elephants
30. *Asvasala*- The stables of the horses
31. *Ayatananivesa*- The shrines
32-36. *Ekasalas up to Dasasals*
37. *The miscellaneous verities of the houses*
38. *Dvarapithabhittimandadi*- The measurements of doors etc.
39. *Variapranvesa*- Entry into the forest
40. *Grhadravya - pramana*- The proportions and the component parts of the house

41. *Dvaragunadosa*- The door and its merits and demerits

42. *Cayavidhi*- The masonry

43. *Aprayoijaprayojya*- With what not to decorate and with what to decorate

44. *Dvaradhangaphala*- The effects of the door break

45. *Toranabhanga*- Santika to the attended to, if Toraria is broken

46. *Grhadosa*- nirupana

47. *Santika*-vidhi

48. *Yantradhyaya*- The machines

49. *Sayanasana*- The couches and the cots

50. *Prasadas*

51. *Prasada*- geneology of the prasadas

52. *Prasada*- dvaramanadi

53. *Jaghanya*- vastu - dvara

54. *Prasada*- subhasubha-lakshana

55. *Rucakadi prasadas*
56-57. Prasacla-stavana- The dedication of the temples

58. *Meru and other sixteen types of prasadas*

59. *Temples of the Uttarna type*

60. *Meru etc. twenty type prasadas*

61. *Mervadi-vimsika-nagara-prasada*

62. *Srikutadisattrimsat-prasadas*

63. *Pithaparicaka*-The five fold terraces

64. *Dravidaprasada*-The south Indian temples

65. *Dighadra-prasada*

66. *Bhumija-prasada*

67. *Mandapalaksana*- The pavilions

68. *Saptavimitamandapa*

69-70. *Jagatilakshana*- The Jagati temples

71. *Linga-pithapratimalaksana*- Iconography of 1 h e phalli

    and their pedestals

72. *The gods and goddesses and their forms and mudras*

73. *Pratima*- lakṣaṇa

74. *Doshagurianirupana*- The demerits and merits of images
75. *Pancapurusa strilaksana* - The standard models of proportions of the five fold men and women

76-78. *Mudras*

79. *Citroddesa* - The paintings

80. *Bhumibandha* - The Vartika and the backgrounds

81. *Lepyakarmadikarn* - The paints and the plasters and brushes

82. *Andaka pramana* - The measurements of Andakas

83. *Manotpati* - The standard measurements

84. *Rasadrstilaksana* - The rasas and Rasadristis

Among these the first 48 chapters treat the principal subjects such as the needs, origin, scope and subject matter of architecture and the qualifications of the architect. It deals with the house architecture in the subsequent chapters. Twenty chapters are devoted to temple architecture and the last chapters deal with iconography, both sculptural and pictorial.

It is noted that Dr. D.N. Sukla did his doctoral research thesis based on *Samarāṅgasūtradhāra*.\(^7\)

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\(^7\) Vastusastram Vol Dr. D.N Sukla
3.5. MANUṢYALAYACHANDRIKA

Sri Thirumangalam Neelakandan Moosad who wrote the classical work in vastuvidya named Manusya layachandrika. This is the only book which is specifically written for the construction of residences. The author referred to main textural works in the sastra such as Mayamata, Prayogamanjari, two Nibandhas, Bhaskariyam, Gurudevapadhadi, Markandeyam, Ratnavtli. Kasyapamata, Kumaragama, Harisamhita and Vastuvidva. It is mentioned in the book itself by the author The other books written by the author named Mathangaleelac and vedikkambavidhi are available today. Other one named Silpachandrika which is not available right now.

The book Manushyalayachandrika is a systematic arrangement of the concepts and ideologies of our ancestors in this area. Manushyalachandrika, a unique work dealing exclusively with residential building. Some poems are in the same words. Through 247 slokas in 7 chapters the author systematically explained the vastu methods for the construction of residential
buildings.\textsuperscript{8} Acharyavaranam, stapathi and other master craftsmen find their requisite qualifications and duties, bhulakshana, vrikshalakshana, soil tests, selection of sites etc are rediscussed in the first chapter, Chapter two deals with the dik-nimaya, squaring, veethi samkalaa, marma, vastupuru- shamandala etc.

The perimeters of a house, wall size and height. basement etc are specifically explained. Nine types of nalukettu, ekasala, dwisala, trisala etc. are also discussed well. This book is considered as the basic book for the construction of houses in Kerala \textit{Vastusastra}.

\textit{Manushyalayachandrika}, the specific book on residential building gives detailed and scientific descriptions to the construction of the residential building (\textit{manushyalayam})

According to \textit{Manushyalayachandrika}\textsuperscript{9}, the ideal land should be slope downwards to east. This is probably to ensure that the rising sun is visible from the house.

\footnote{An engineering commentary on Manusyalacandrika, Dr. A. Achyudhan, Dr. Balagopal, T.S. Prabhu pp xii}
\footnote{Manusyalacandrika. pp.14}
It is said that rectangular sites too are suitable for gods and for Bhramins. The shape of the site must be perfect and must rise towards the west to south.

The land with lose soil, filled up ground with void rocky surfaces and marshy or wet conditions will not produce good sound when treaded upon or tamped. Hence the prescription that the land should give sound when one walks over it ensures good ground conditions.\textsuperscript{10}

3.6. TANTRASAMUCHAYAM

The classical work of Tantrasamuchayam was written by Sri.Chennas Narayanan Namboothiri at Vennair desolate in Ponnani Taluk of Malappuram District. The text contains 12 chapters and 2896 slokas. In this book the author describes the rules and regulations of Hindu temples. It also enlightens the techniques for making icon s and mural paintings.\textsuperscript{11}

Tantrasamuchays is in line with Agamas, and has referred to various previous texts like Aparajitha Pracaram, Kasyapiyam, Manasara. Samarangana Sutradhara, Mayamatha etc.

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid pp. 16
\textsuperscript{11} Tantrasamuchaya by Karuva Neelakandan Achari
Tantrasamuchayam by K. Neelakandand Asari written in Malayalam containing 142 slokas It contains Bhuparigraha, Adhistanavidhi, Ekasala, Dvisalavidhi, Bimbalakshana, Linga Lakshana, Natyamandapa, Gopuravidhi, etc. throughout 12 chapters and 142 slokas (Tantrasamuchaya silpabhaga Vyakhyata Kanippayyoor Damodharan Namboothiripad). It is the widely accepted book in Malayalam for the tantra, practices, iconography and temple planning.

*Tantrasamuchayam*\(^{12}\) classified the temples in to various types

1. *Chandam*
2. *Vikalapam*
3. *Abasam*
4. *Circular*
5. *Rectangular*
6. *Gajapreshta*
7. *Eliptical*
8. *Hexagonal*
9. *and Octogonal*

\(^{12}\) Tantrasamuchayam
3.7. VASTUVIDYA

Even though we have no authentic information about the author of the book ‘vastuvidya’ it is considered as a basic text for the Vastusastra literature. The seven manuscripts published as a book in 1913 compiled by Ganapathi Sastri from the scattered materials from different sources helps us to get much about the text.13 (Vastuvidya compiled and edited by T.G. Ganapathi Sastri)

Chapter 1 starts with the customary propitiating slokas. Then it gives details regarding the scale and measurements. Description of silpins, their categorization, etc. are elaborated in this chapter.

Chapter 2 deals with site description and suitability of sites for construction purpose. The fixing cardinal directions are given in this chapter.

Chapter 3 gives different locations of the entry gate:, and the positioning of other rooms and structures. The different types

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13 Vastuvidya compiled and edited by T.G. Ganapathi Sastri
of padavinyaams and the details of vastupurusa and the positioning of gods etc. are detailed

Chapter 5 deals with the positioning of the building in site in more details. A detailed description of trees, which can be planted in the site, is also given in this chapter.

Chapter 6 describes the Nadis, Rajjus and Mormas, in details and how to avoid interception of marmas md Sutrums on structure.

Chapter 7 mentions about a moving Vastupurusa and moving with the sun in an anti clockwise direction. The auspicious periods for starting the construction of different salas are given in this chapter.

Chapter 8 describes the Catuśśala. Ayadisadvarga proportions used, joiner) details of columns and beams etc. are also given in this chapter.

Chapter 9 describes the details of basement and foundation.

Chapter 10 deals with the construction details of the roof structure. Joinery details are also given.
Chapter 11 further explains the graphical method of finding the measurements of different rafters in detail.

Chapter 12 gives the details of Vamada and the rituals to be conducted before fixing the Vamada. Later slokas explain the fixing of Montayam and Kutam.

Chapter 13 describes the method of leveling the site. Details regarding foundation and basement and rituals before fixing the doors are given in this chapter.

Chapter 14 gives the construction details of doors. Details of upadwaras are also explained.

Chapter 15 details with construction details and measurements of walls. Details of Uttaram are also given. The final rituals before the first entry is also given at the end of this chapter.

Chapter 16 describes the manufacturing process of tiles and bricks. The different types of tiles and their uses are also given.

The main contents of the text vāstuvidya are: bhūlakṣana. qualification of śilpins as Sadhanakathanam in chapter 1. Chapter 2 deals with the slopes of the land, suitability of the land, trees
and plants etc. Chapter 3 deals with vastupurusha and vastudevatas. Chapter 4 is devoted to vastupuruṣa samstapanam. Like this vidivinyasa, marmas and sutras, yoni samkalpa, śālāvidhana, roofing and elements, doors and gates, house warming etc are discussed in other chapters. And the final chapter (Chapter 16) deals with the technology for the construction of buildings.