

# INDIAN ART

## FROM INDUS VALLEY TO INDIA TODAY

Talk 12

Indian influence in Indian Asia



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*India's typical monuments-rock-hewn temples  
and cliff carvings  
spread throughout most of Asia  
following the expansion of Indic religions,  
Buddhism especially, but also Hinduism.*

*The shapes India created gave rise to others  
the tower-pagodas of China  
the mountain stupa at Borobudur in Java  
sacred cities such as Angkor Vat  
the bell shaped stupas of Laos and Thailand  
the towers with the large, enigmatic, smiling  
faces of late Khmer art  
the entrance vestibules in the shape of  
small temples, Javanese in style.*

*The diffusion of Indian figurative art was  
even more extensive than  
India's cultural and religious influence*

*Features reminiscent of Indian art are found in northern Asia, in Madagascar and along the coasts and in the inland of eastern Africa.*

*But these are basically ornamental, rather than stylistic and iconographical.*

*Let us have a glimpse*



*Bayon of Cambodia: A hundred faces invite you*



The Bayon temple complex  
is best known for the mysterious large faces on most vimanas



There are many, as much as 200 on its 50 towers,  
some of them being as 8 feet high.  
These faces may be of Bodhisattva Lokeshvara,  
and may even be made to resemble  
the builder-king Jayavarman VII (12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> century CE).





In contrast to the classical style of the Bayon complex is the most striking expression of the baroque style of Khmer architecture.



Owing to later alteration the complex gives feeling of a muddle of stones, a sort of moving chaos assaulting the sky, cluttered design with the many towers and other structures cramping the monument.



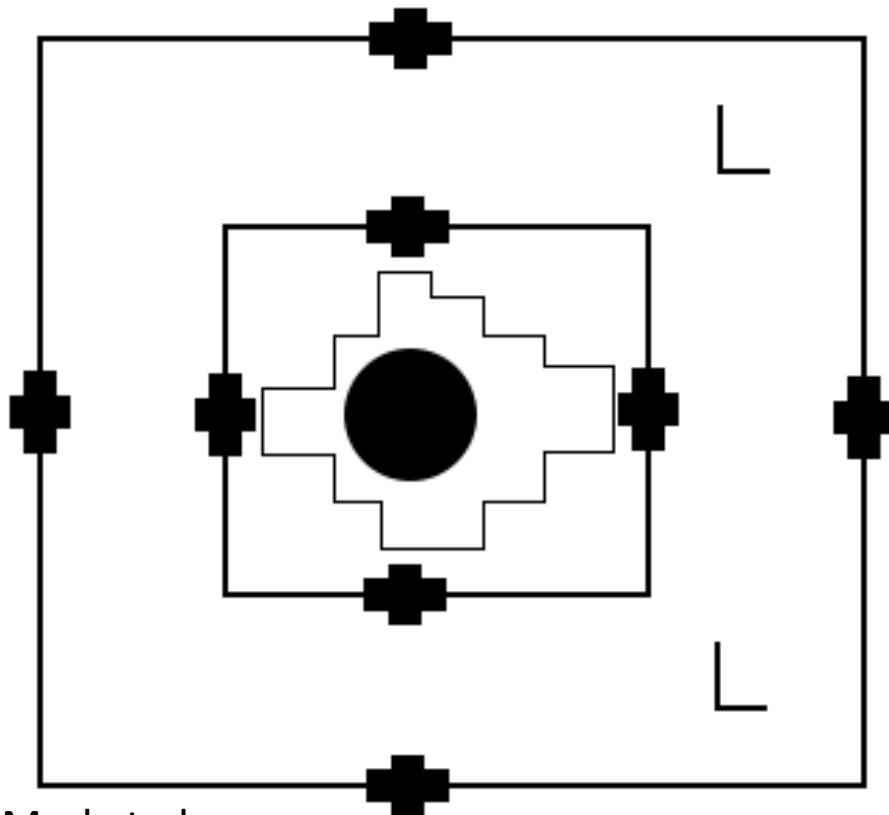
The complex might have represented Mount Meru, the centre of the universe in Hindu and Buddhist cosmology, was built as a Buddhist shrine, later converted to a Hindu shrine by Jayavarman VIII.



The Bayon has 3 enclosures.

**The first enclosure**

This contains the sanctum, where the original Buddhist images have been turned into Hindu images.



Market place



**The second enclosure,**  
250 x 240 feet,  
is decorated with bas  
reliefs Hindu religious and  
mythological scenes  
in inner galleries and  
the outer galleries  
mainly show  
historical events,  
battles and scenes from  
daily life.





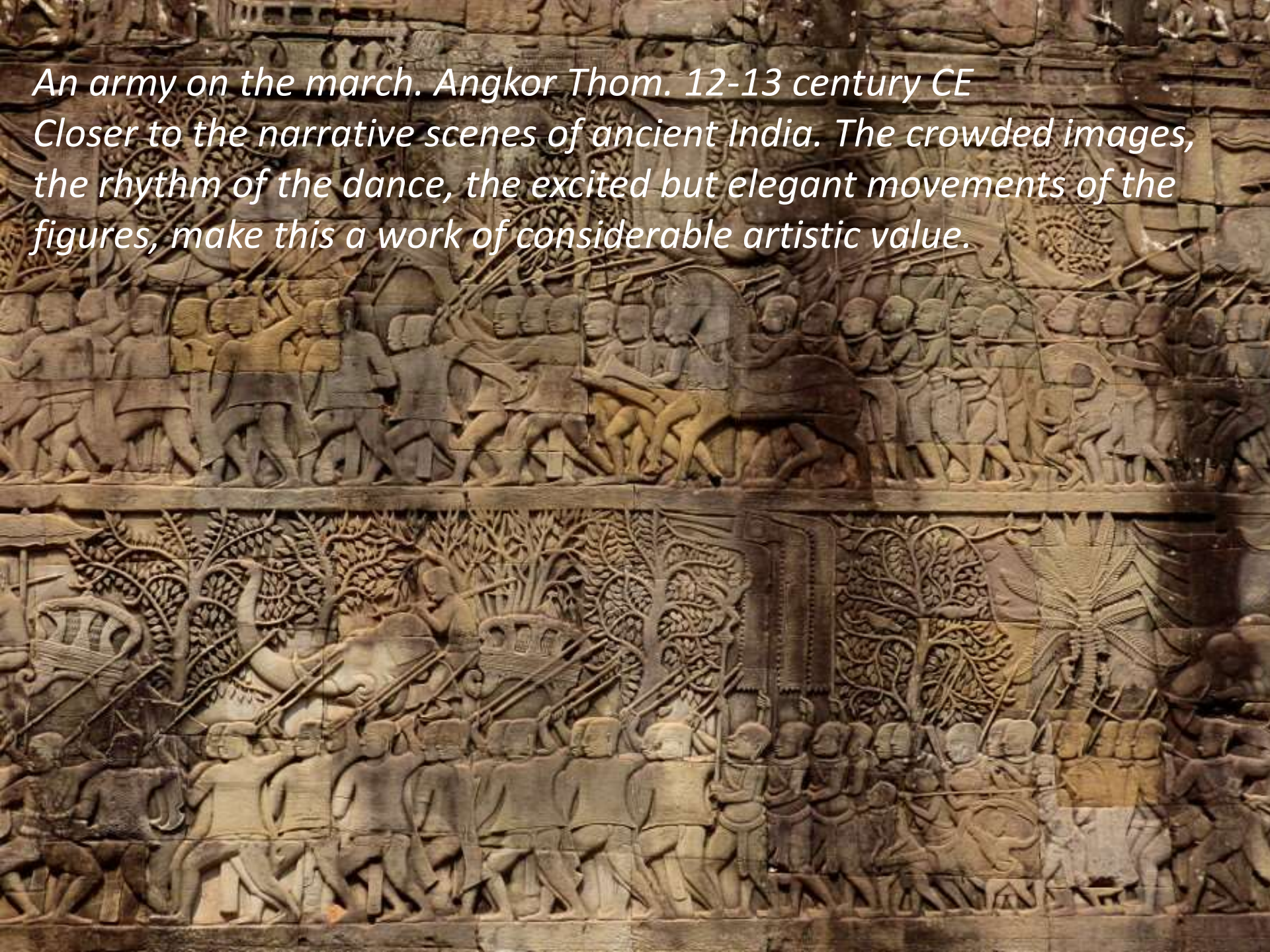
Jayavarman's naval fleet moving to defeat Cham





Khmer army marching from eastern gallery

*An army on the march. Angkor Thom. 12-13 century CE  
Closer to the narrative scenes of ancient India. The crowded images,  
the rhythm of the dance, the excited but elegant movements of the  
figures, make this a work of considerable artistic value.*



A rural scene





Market place



Dancers on the pillar

The South-east has not merely copied India, but made an imprint of its own.





*Apsaras. Bronze. Khmer,  
12<sup>th</sup> century CE*

*Except for gestures and  
dance movements the  
Indian elements are  
reduced to a minimum*



*Struggle between two asuras; Banteay Srey (Cambodia);  
10<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century CE*

*Unconquerable asuras tricked into killing each other  
for Tilottama, created for the purpose. The representation,  
both in style and in costume, is typically Khmer.*





The magnificent Angkor Wat





Suryavarman II, the builder; 12<sup>th</sup> century





Angkor Wat is the world's largest temple complex.  
Suryavarman II built it this Hindu complex with Vishnu  
as the presiding deity in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.  
Gradually this became a Buddhist temple,  
but by the 17<sup>th</sup> century it was abandoned.





Everything about this temple is gigantic.

It covers more than 400 acres and  
the height from the ground  
to the tip of the central tower is almost 700 feet.

The complex is a high point of  
restrained monumentality of architecture  
of balanced elements and  
precise arrangement of its proportions,  
unity and style.

Towers shaped like lotus buds, half-galleries,  
broad passageways and cruciform terraces  
form the elements.



It is built as a temple-mountain and also as a galleried temple, with three galleries.

The temple represented Mount Meru, five mountains, the moat walls mountain ranges and the ocean.

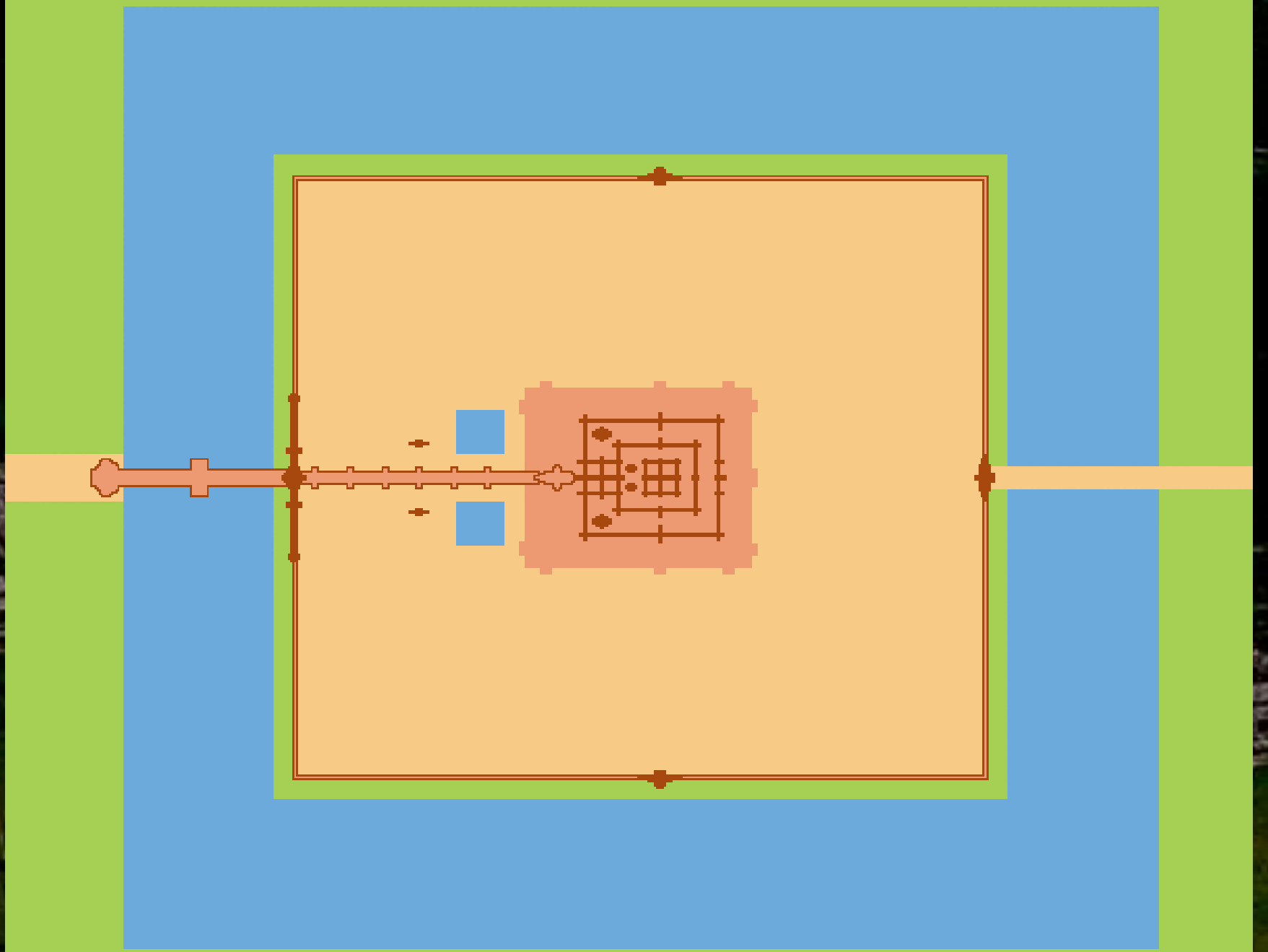
It can be seen that reaching the final towers becoming progressively tougher.

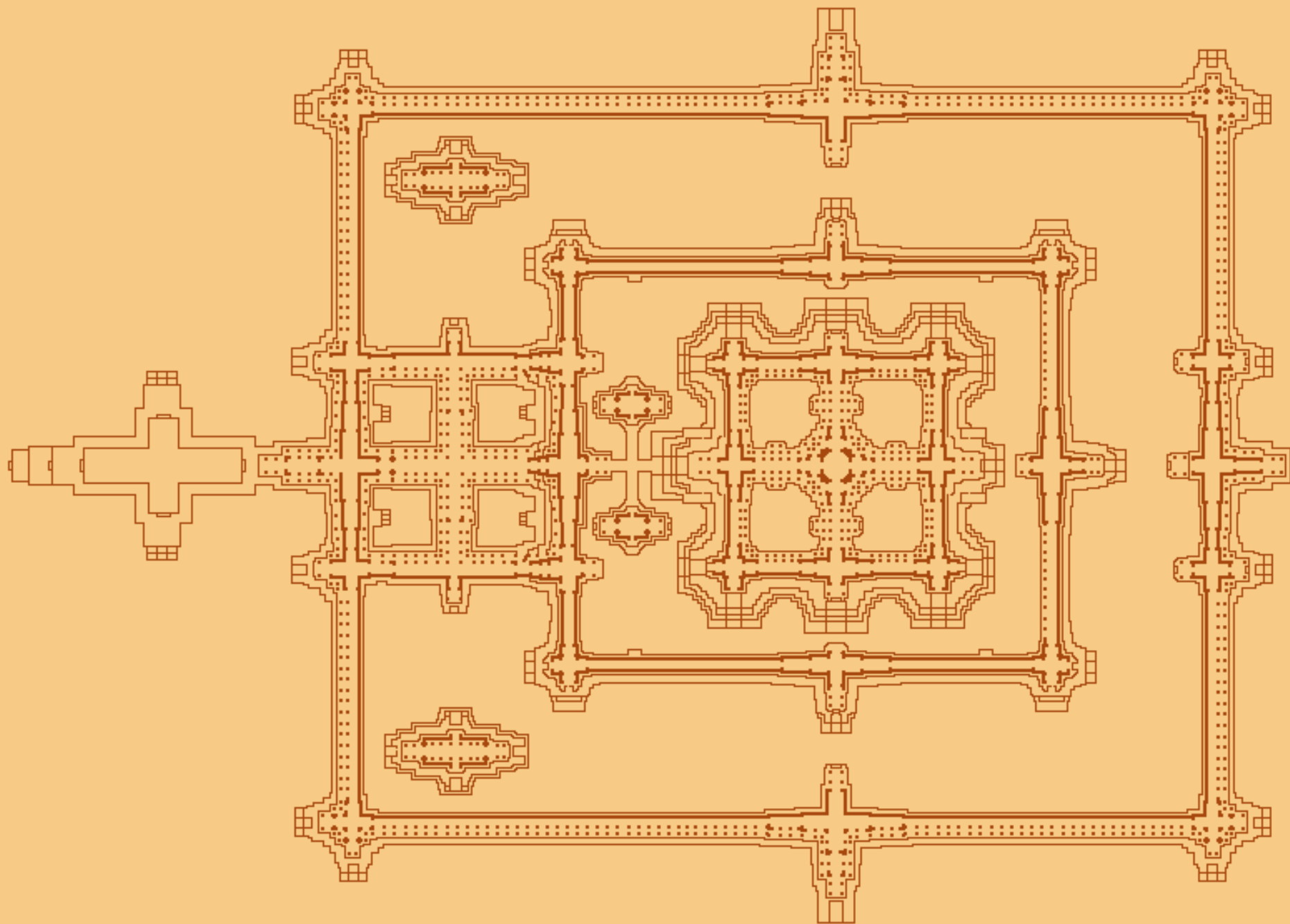
At the centre of the temple stands a quincunx of towers.



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# The five towers







Corridor



Decoration on the corner

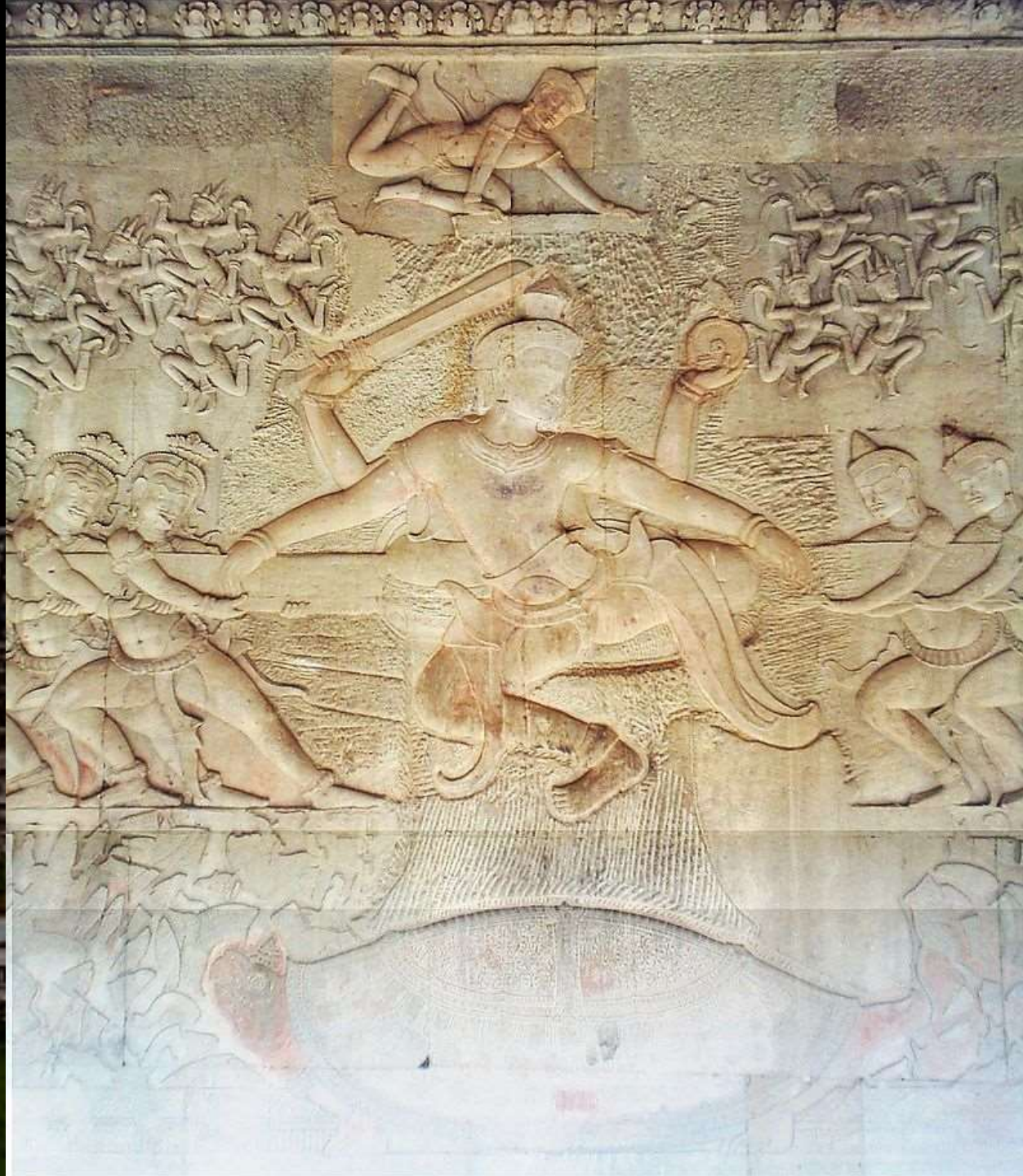








Ocean of milk is  
being churned by  
88 devas and  
92 asuras  
under the direction  
of Vishnu









Waterbirds



Yama









Truly magnificent, indeed!



Following the Middle Path  
of our neighbour, Srilanka



*Gal Vihara, Parinirvana, Srilanka, 12<sup>th</sup> century*

*On the left is an open-air bas relief of Meditating Buddha, beyond which a cave shrine that contains another seated Buddha. Next is a standing figure, most call it Ananda, followed by a colossal reclining Buddha.*



*Another view*



The large 15-foot high meditating Buddha, on lotus-seat, its base being decorated with carvings of flowers and lions.

There are four identical, but small images of the Buddha carved inside small chambers.



A similar, but smaller statue about 4 feet 7 inches is carved on the back wall of the cave. The base of the lotus shaped seat of the Buddha image here is also decorated with designs of lions. A halo, a throne and a parasol are carved behind it, more elaborate in design than the larger image, attended by Vishnu on his right.



The 23-foot standing image standing on a lotus pedestal is of Ananda, who carries a sorrowful expression, while leaning back, its arms folded across its chest.





This 46-foot colossal is typically Srilankan in the treatment of the face and the muscle masses of the body. The highly stylized drapery reminds us of the Gupta school.

# Maha-pari-nirvana



*Pollonaruva, 12th century CE*



*Ajanta, 5<sup>th</sup> century CE*



LAWTON

•1870-1871

*The Bodhisattva Avalokitenara.  
Jetavana Monastery,  
Polonnaruva (Srilanka).  
12th century A.D.*

*Indian influence on the delicacy  
of the modelling and the  
suppleness of the pose*





*Apsaras with her maidservant. Sigiriya (Srilanka), 5<sup>th</sup> century CE.  
Effects of the Ajanta can be felt, but in the Srilankan manner.  
The features of the faces are different from Ajanta.*



**PRAMBANAN OF INDONESIA**  
**WORLD'S LARGEST HINDU TEMPLE COMPLEX**

The Praabanan temple complex  
was built in 850 CE and abandoned in 930 CE!

It is the largest temple site in Indonesia.

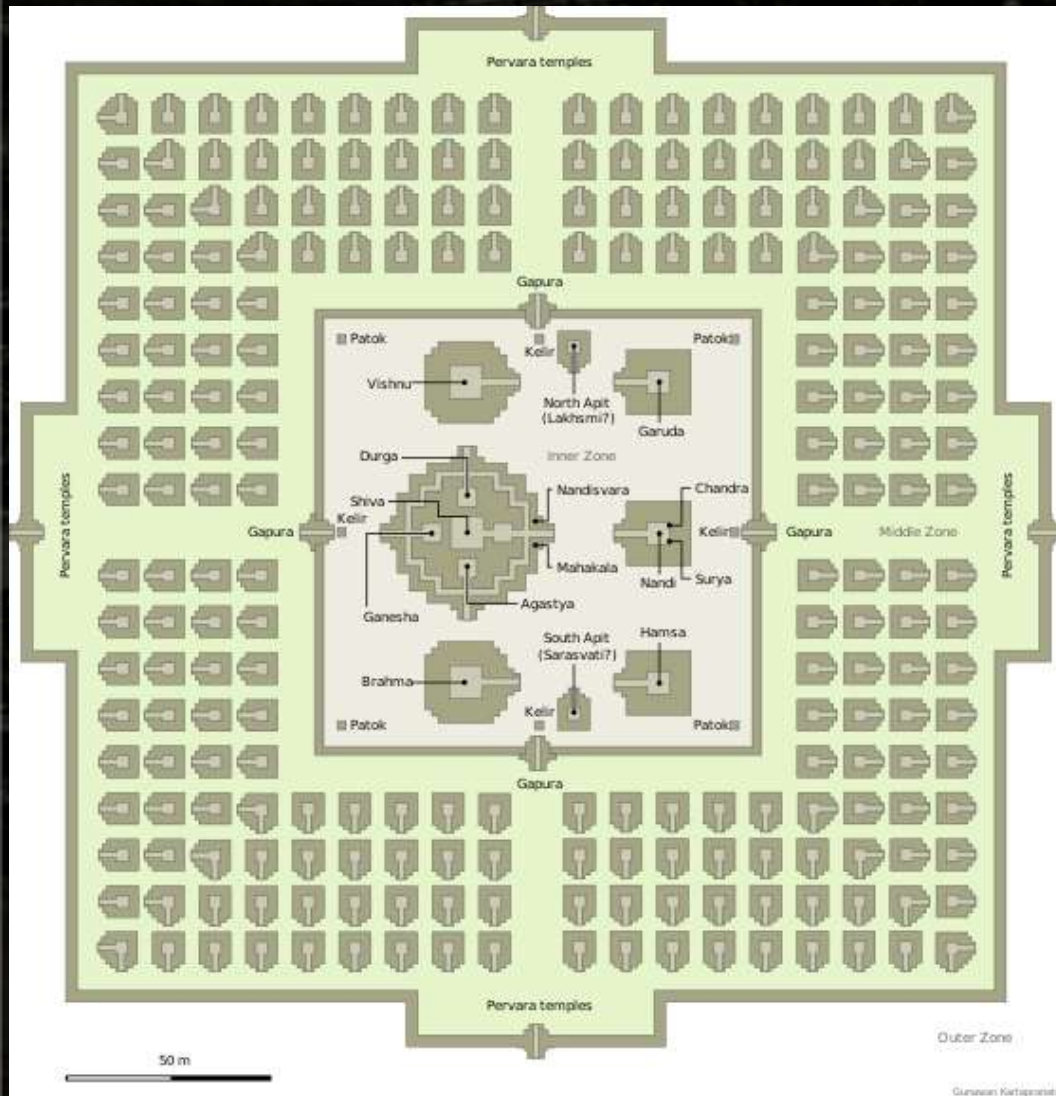
It is very extensive containing main shrines  
for the Hindu Trinity, their vahana-s, and  
more than 200 subsidiary shrines.

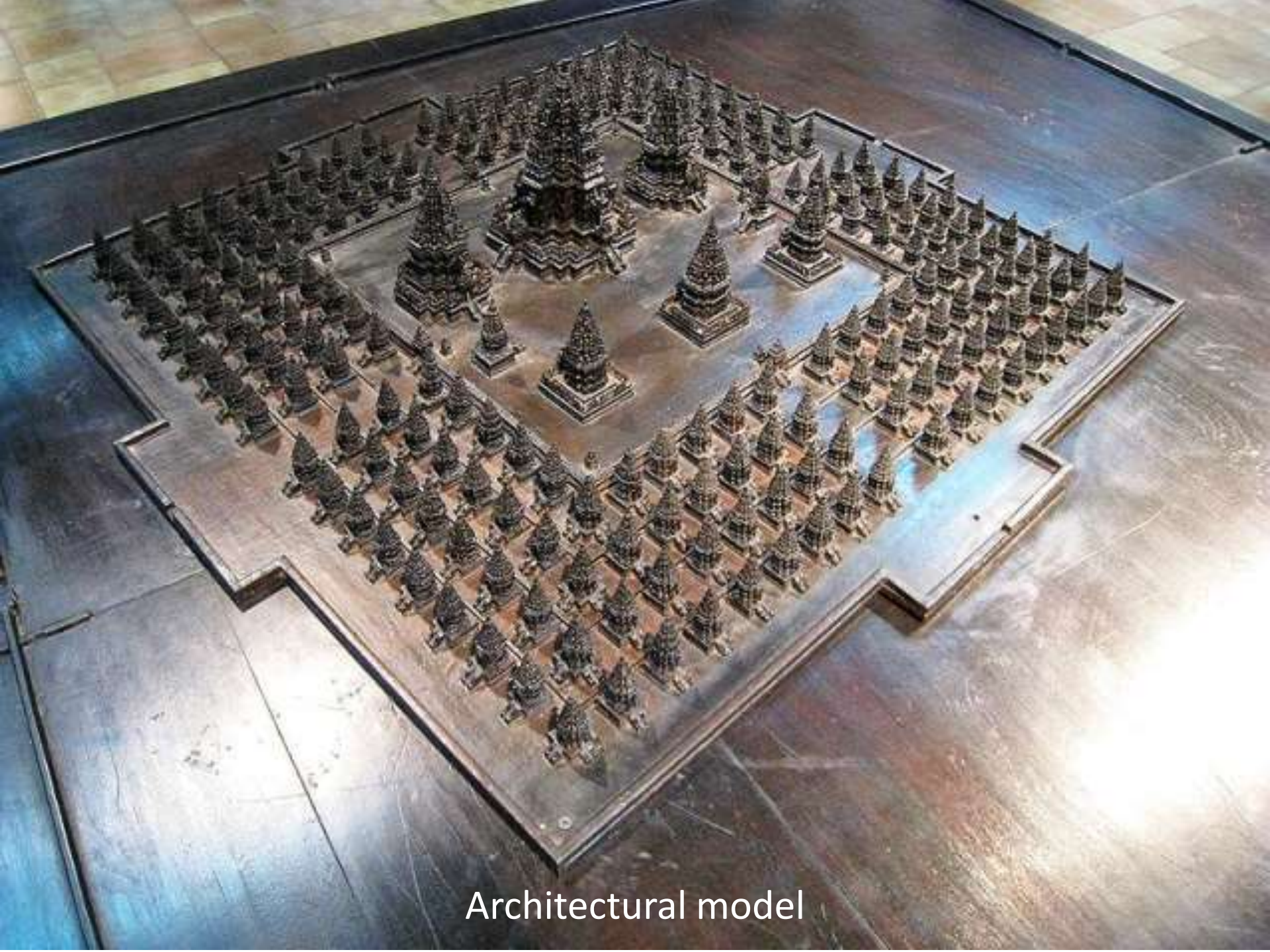






The complex is laid out as mandala  
With 240 major and minor shrines in it.



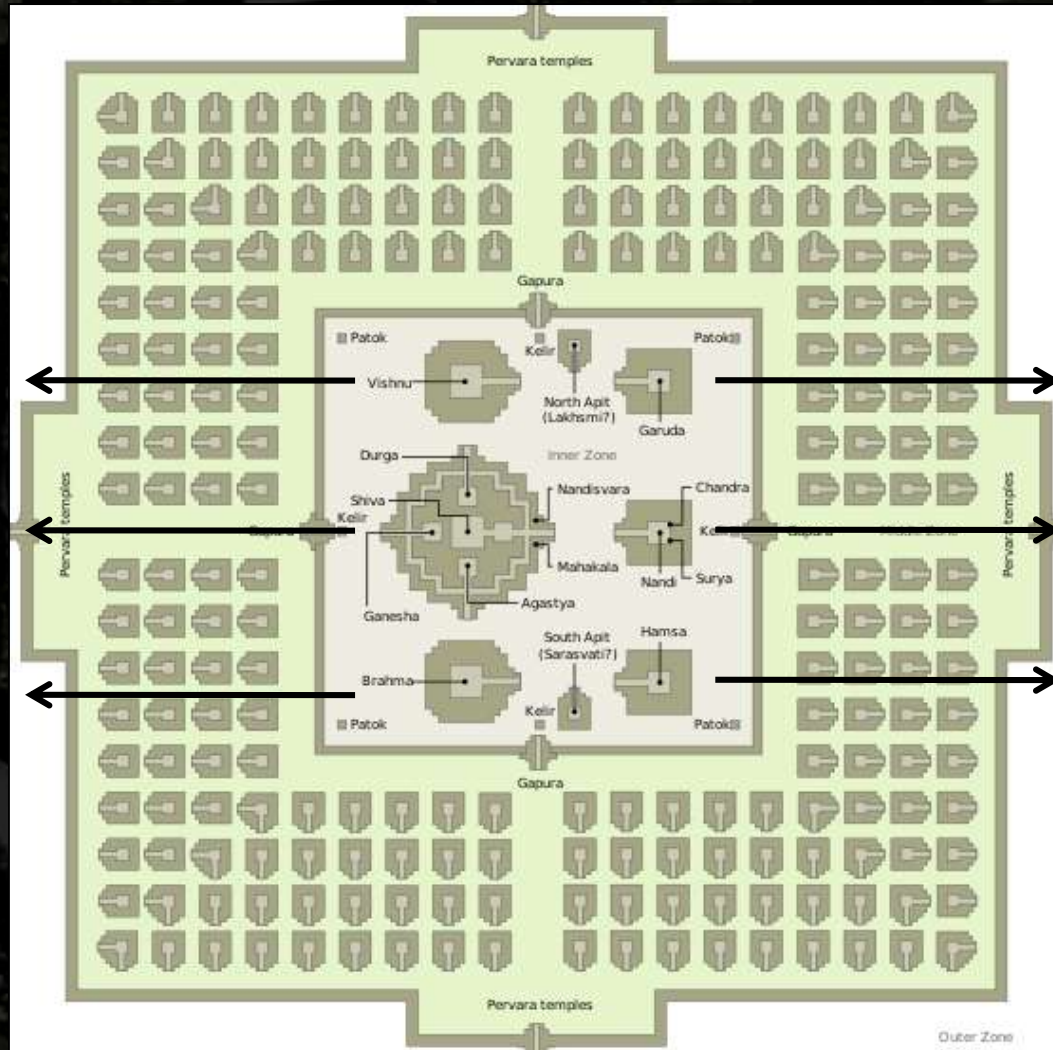


Architectural model

Vishnu

Siva

Brahma



Garuda

Nandi

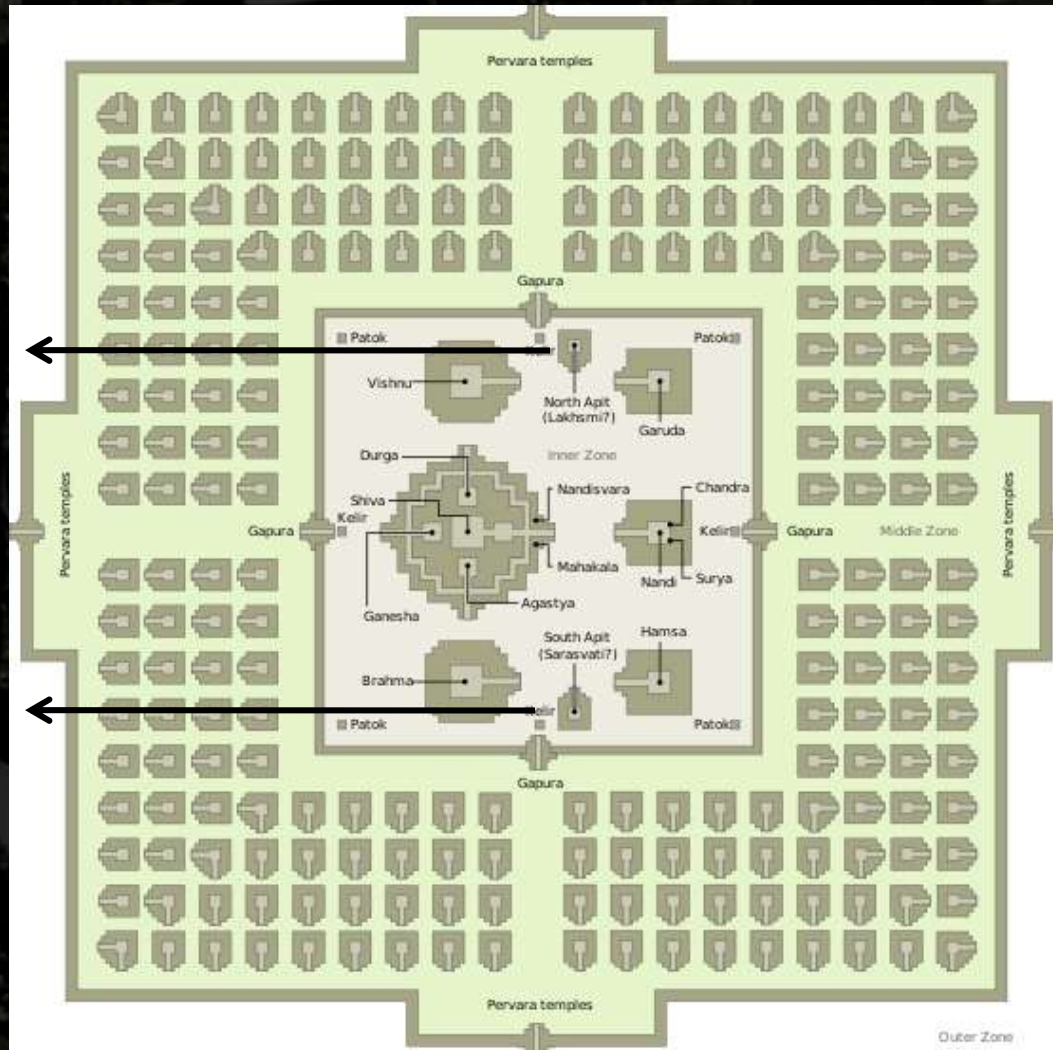
Hamsa

Main shrines and shrines for the vahana-s

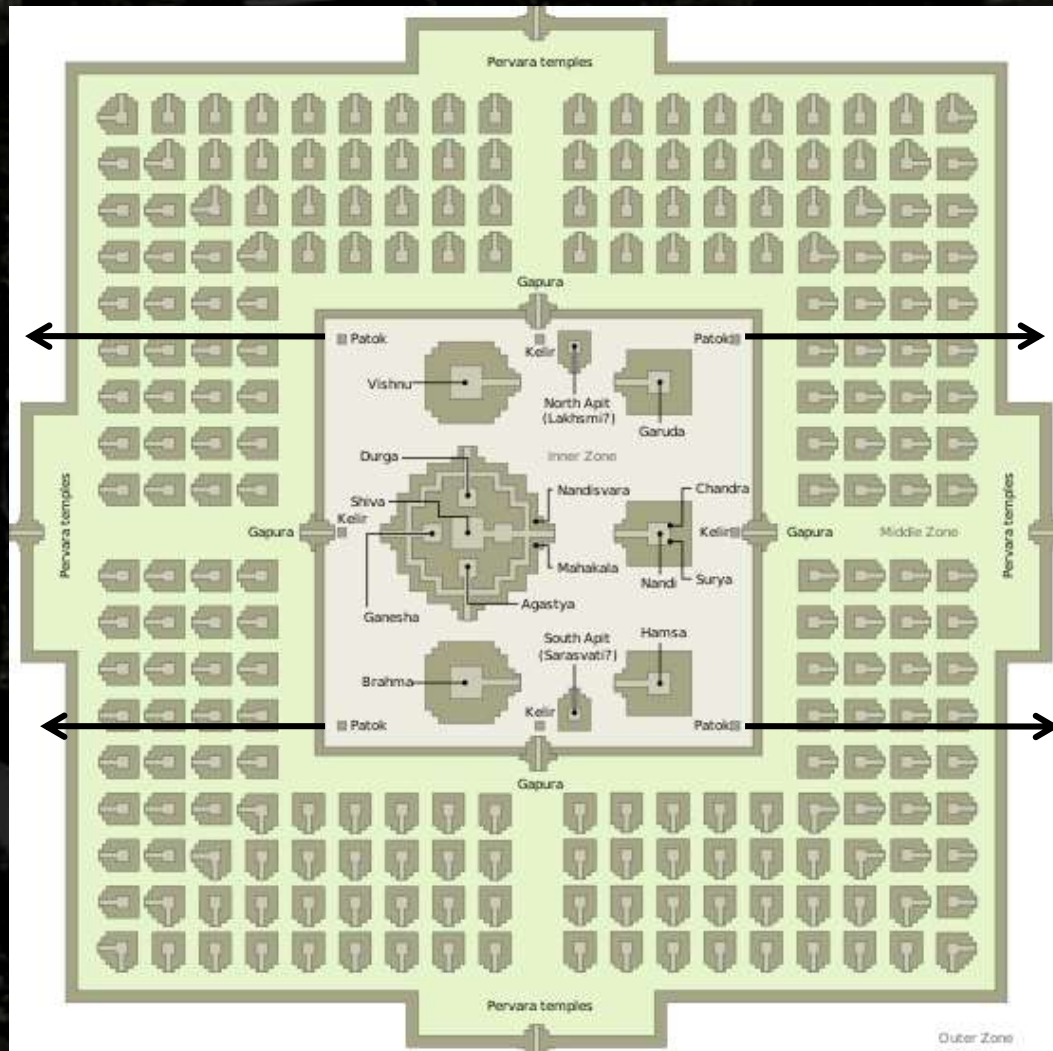
Lakshmi



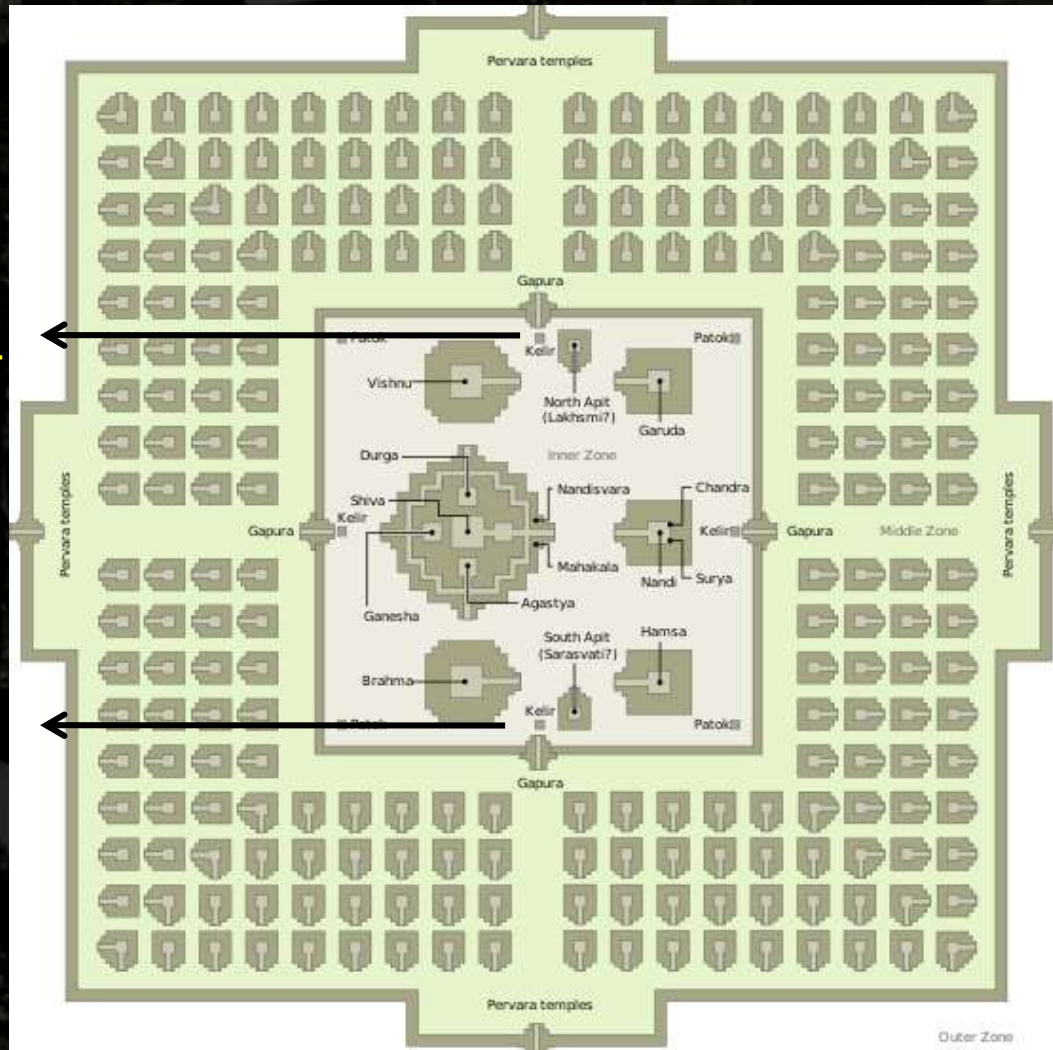
Saraswati



Flank (Apita) shrines



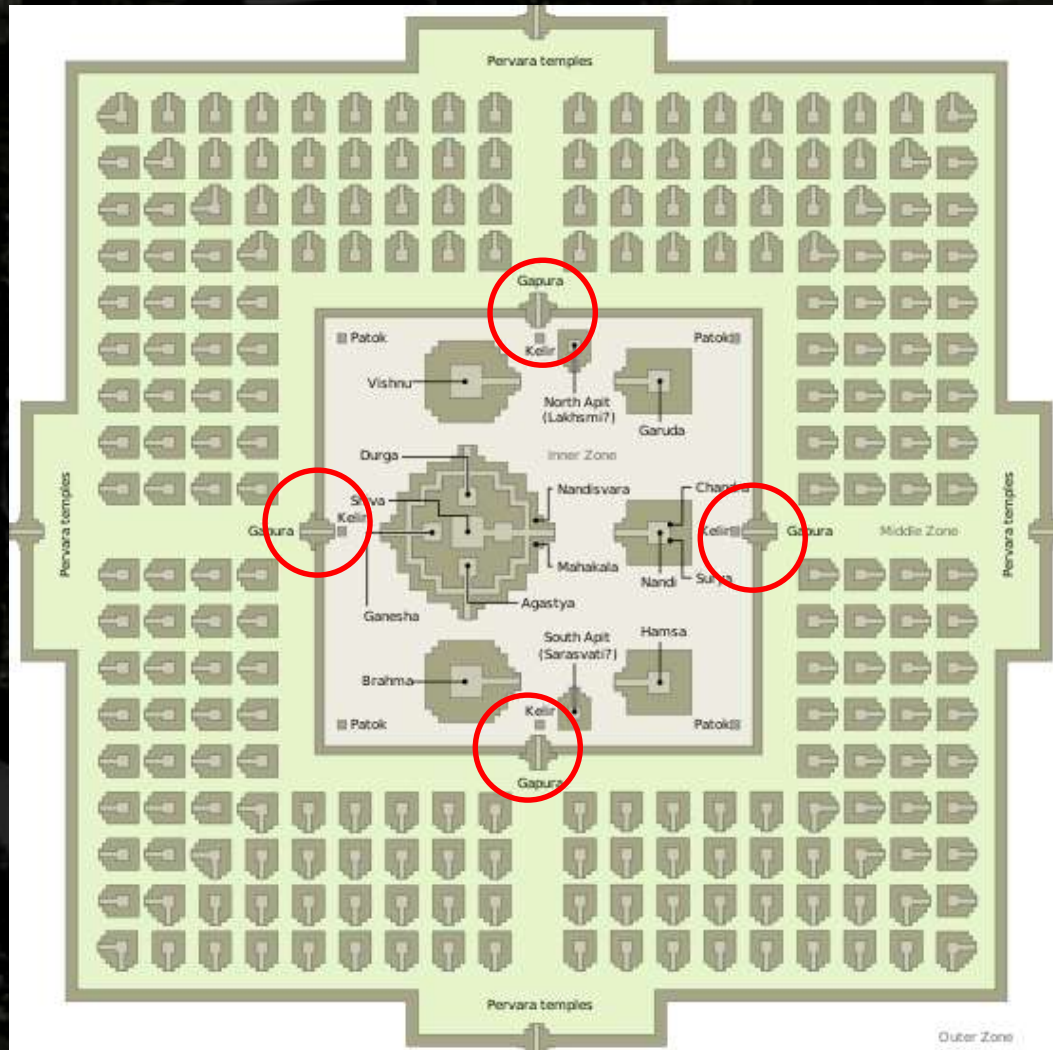
4 Patok (peg) shrines on the cardinal corners



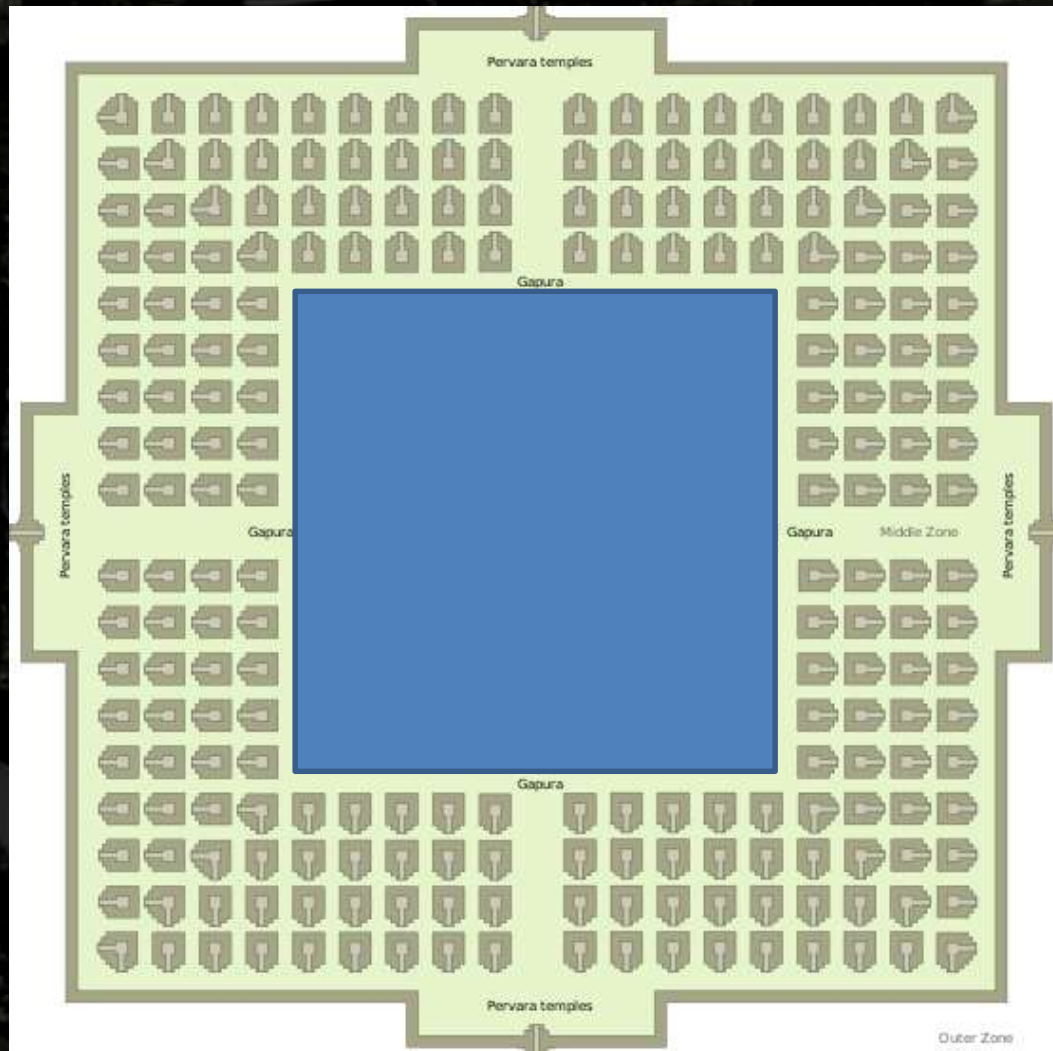
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2 Kelir (screen) shrines



4 Gopuras (Entrances)

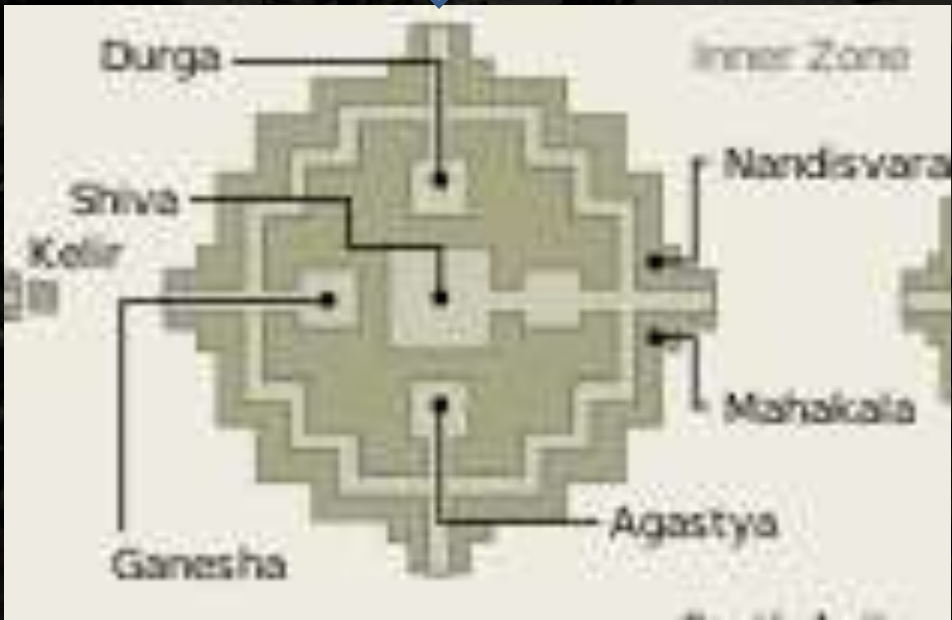
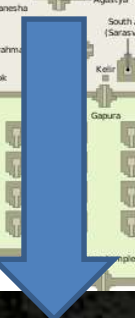
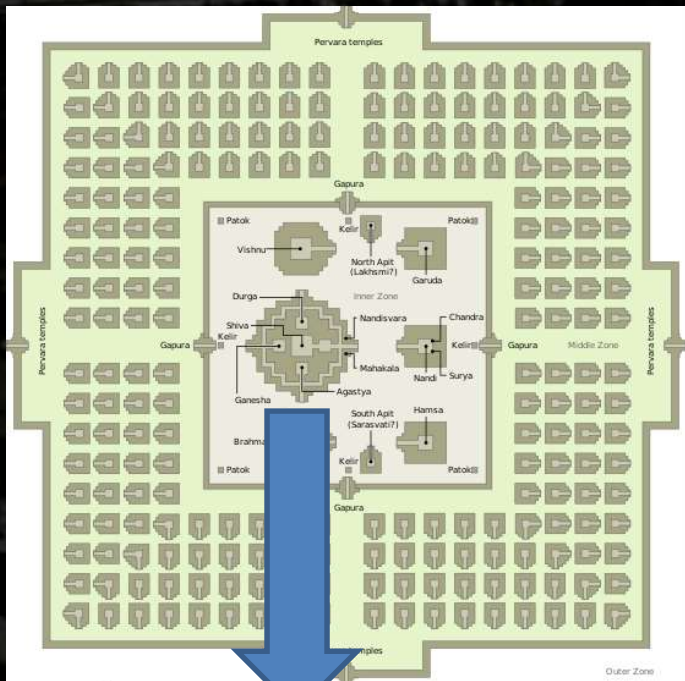


224 Parivara (Pervara) shrines





Temple complex



Siva shrine, 150 feet high



Siva in sanctum holds akshamala, chamara, trisula, with head dress of skull and lunar crescent and with thread of snake



Detail of a relief in Siva shrine





Siva shrine



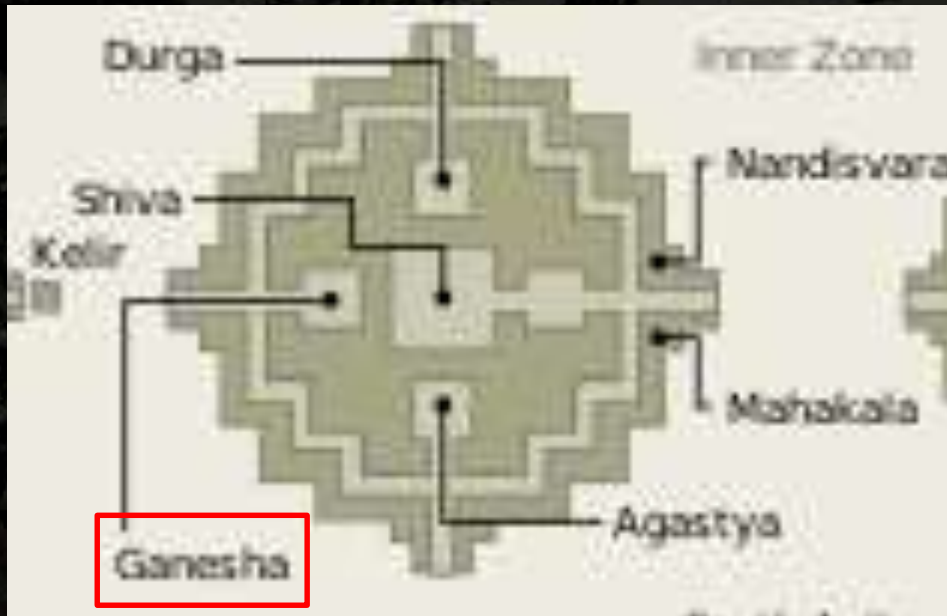
Durga as Mahishasuramardini



Siva shrine



Agastya



Siva shrine



Ganesa



Vishnu shrine



Vishnu idol in sanctum





Parivara temples in ruin



An interesting feature of this complex is the depiction of Hindu epics.

On the inner walls of the Siva temples is narration of Ramayana chronologically in 42 panels which continues in the shrine for Brahma for another 30.

Episodes from the Krishna are also depicted in the Vishnu shrine.



Ravana abducting Sita, who hands over her ring to Jatayu



Hanuman finds Sita





Maricha vadham

Kaliya mardana in Vishnu temple



Dancer and her troupe

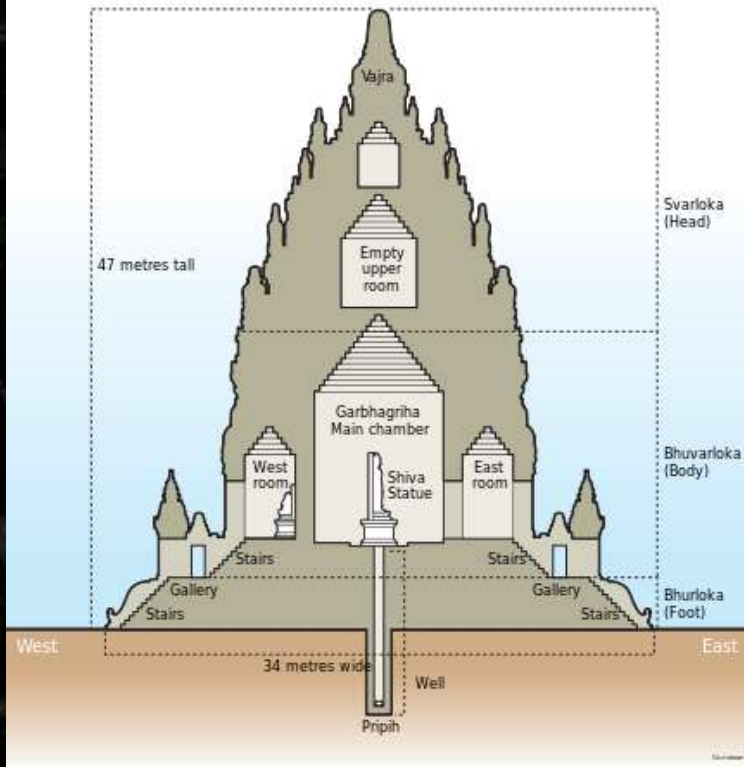




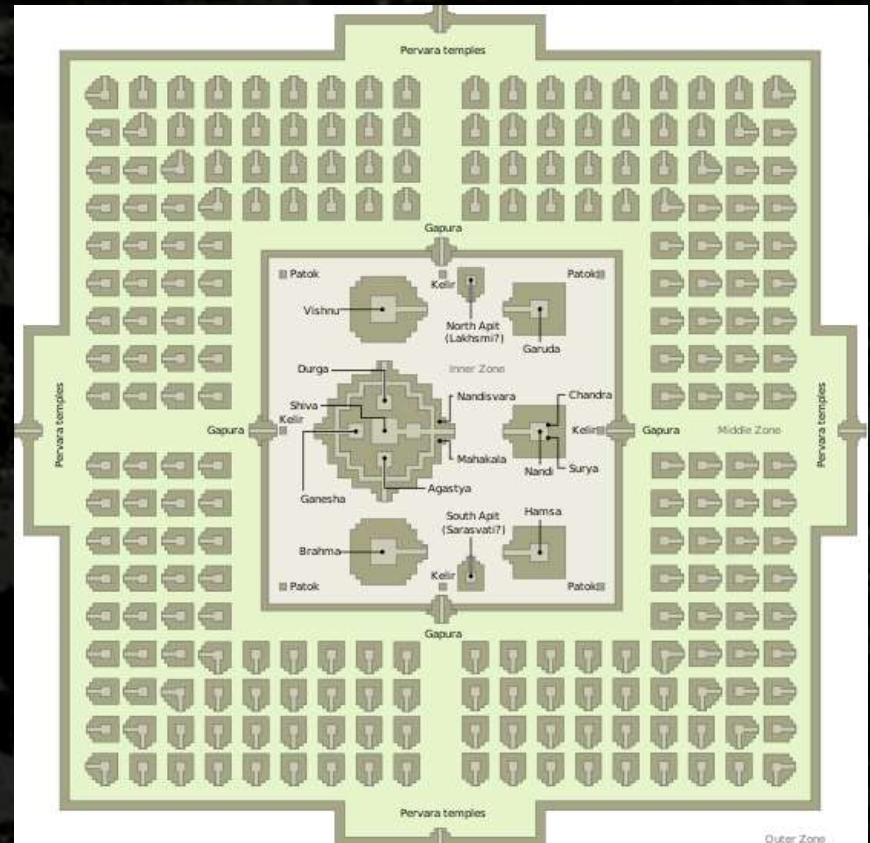


Dancer

Shiva Temple Cross Section  
Prambanan Temple Complex, Indonesia



There is something more to this complex, that is, its symbolism.



Hindu cosmos divided into Bhurloka, Bhuvarloka and svarloka, both and vertically and in plan.

Can we recapitulate?

The temple complex and the shrines within it are unique.

There is a definite plan, based on a mandala layout which has philosophic and symbolic dimensions.

The temples are engineering marvel, the main Siva shrine being 150 high.

The idols in the sanctums, the minor deities, narrative reliefs, and decorations are superb.

All these have been accomplished by 850 CE.

Can we identify temples in Tamilnadu, in the South and in India of the same period and compare them with this?

நன்றி