

## A Sastric Study on The Principles of Vighraha Formation in The Vaikhanasa Agama

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**Abstract :** This paper presents a śāstric study on the principles of Vighraha

Nirmāṇa (icon construction) as outlined in the Vaikhānasa Āgama. The study explores the role of standard measurements (mānadaṇḍa), the structural and proportional norms for vimāna and garbhagrha, and the application of āyādi principles to ensure auspiciousness in temple construction. It also delves into the significance of materials used for vighrahas, their spiritual effects, and the classification of the principal deity forms like Yoga, Bhoga, Vīra, and Viraha. Through scriptural references, the paper emphasizes the holistic, sacred vision embedded in the tradition of Vaikhānasa temple architecture and vighraha worship.

**Keywords :** Vaikhānasa Āgama, Vighraha Nirmāṇa, Mānadaṇḍa, Āyādi, Vimāna, Garbhagrha, Dhruva-Bera, Yoga-Bhoga-Vīra-Viraha, Śilpāsāstra, Temple Architecture.

**Introduction :** The foundational bedrock of *Sanātana Bhāratīya Saṃskṛti* is rooted in the eternal wisdom of the Vedas. A life governed by the Vedic path alone is considered capable of bestowing desired benefits, removing obstacles, and elevating the soul toward liberation. Among the vast corpus of Vedic literature, the *Āgama Śāstras* hold a unique and profound place. Even amidst globalization and the rapid wave of modern technological advancement, the survival and protection of the Vedic tradition have been made possible, in large part, due to the sustaining power of the Āgamas.

The Āgamas instruct the worship of the Supreme Being—who is knowable through the Vedas—in a manifest, iconic form, thereby offering a practical means for spiritual progression. Among the various Agamic traditions, the **Vaikhānasa Āgama Śāstra**, as expounded by Sage Vikhanas, is widely revered. This śāstra provides elaborate details regarding the construction of Viṣṇu temples, the making of various *vighrahas* (consecrated images) of Viṣṇu, and the layout of temple structures such as *prākāras* (enclosures), *gopuras* (towers), *maṇḍapas* (pavilions), sacred tanks, villages, *agrahāras* (settlements for priests), towns, cities, and fortresses.

In this paper, I aim to present an analytical overview of *vighraha* construction as discussed in the Vaikhānasa Saṃhitās, with attention to aspects such as the form of the sanctum (*garbhagrha*), the materials

used for making the *vigraha*, the iconometric proportions, and the various types of *vigraha-s* such as *yoga*, *bhoga*, *vīra*, *viraha*, and *abhicārika*.

### 1) Proportions and Measurements (Pramāṇa)

Any structure—be it a temple or a *vigraha*—must be constructed strictly in accordance with defined proportions (*pramāṇas*). Without the correct standard of measurement, such sacred constructions are believed to bring harm and misfortune. Every aspect of the construction must therefore be based on properly established and scripturally sanctioned *mānadaṇḍa-s* (standard measuring rods).

In the *Vimānārcanākālpa*, Sage Marīci provides a clear warning about the consequences of improper measurements:

षण्मानसहितंमुख्यमानहीनं धनधान्यनाशनम्मानाधिकंरोगवर्धनं प्रमाणाधिकंहीनं वा दृष्टा दृष्टफलविनाशनम्उन्मानहीनमधिकं वा पुत्रविनाशनं परिमाणहीनमधिकं वा भार्याविनाशनं म्लम्बमानहीनमधिकं वा ग्रामविनाशनम्उपमानहीनमधिकं वा नृपनाशनं स्यात्।<sup>1</sup>

This verse outlines that deviations in measurement—whether excess or deficiency—lead to loss of wealth, health, progeny, spouse, even the destruction of the village or king. Hence, sacred constructions must be guided by *śilpāśāstra*-based measurements.

### 2) Establishing the Standard Measure (Mānadaṇḍaḥ)

“दिवादादौ आदित्यरश्मौ जलकान्तः प्रविष्टः तद्गोचराः अत्यन्तक्षुण्णाः लवाः अणवः प्रोक्ताः। तत्परमाणुरष्टाभिः रथरेणुः, रथरेण्वष्टगुणितं रोमाग्रं, रोमाग्राष्टगुणितं लेख्या, लेख्याष्टगुणितं यूकं, यूकाष्टगुणितं यवं, यवाष्टगुणितं मानाङ्गुलमुत्तमं, तदष्टांशो नमध्यं, तत्तुरीयांशमधममिति।”<sup>2</sup>

The origin of measurement begins with nature’s smallest visible particle. At sunrise, when a beam of sunlight enters through a window (*gavākṣa*), the tiniest particle seen in the light is termed a *paramāṇu*. From that subtle unit, the traditional hierarchy of measurements ascends as follows:

8 परमाणवः	=	1 रथरेणुः	8 यवाः	=	1 उत्तमाङ्गुलः
8 रथरेणवः	=	1 वलाग्रा	7 यवाः	=	1 मध्यमाङ्गुलः
8 वलाग्राः	=	1 लिक्षा	6 यवाः	=	1 अधमाङ्गुलः
8 लिक्षाः	=	1 यूकः	12 अङ्गुलाः	=	1 वितस्तिः
8 यूकाः	=	1 यवः	2 वितस्ती	=	1 किष्कुः

Upon deriving the basic unit *aṅgula*, standard measuring rods (*mānadaṇḍa-s*) are prepared with specific lengths:

25 अङ्गुलाः = प्राजापत्यमानदण्डः, 26 अङ्गुलाः = धनुर्मुष्टिमानदण्डः, 27 अङ्गुलाः = धनुर्ग्रहमानदण्डः, 4 हस्ताः = धनुर्दण्डमानदण्डः, 8 दण्डाः = रज्जुमानदण्डः

These *mānadaṇḍa-s* are employed in all sacred constructions, particularly for temples and *vigraha-s*.

### 3) Application of Mānadaṇḍa in Temple and Vigraha Construction

Once the appropriate *mānadaṇḍa-s* are crafted, they are to be used meticulously in the construction of temples and *vigraha-s*. The *vigraha* may be constructed either in accordance with the personal desire (*icchā*)

<sup>1</sup>*Vimānārcanākālpaḥ*, 22 *Paṭalaḥ*

<sup>2</sup>*Vimanarchana kalpa*, p.22

of the temple patron (*yajamāna*), or as prescribed in the śāstra in general terms applicable to all patrons (*yajamāna-sāmānya*).

**Vimāna Construction :** The term vimāna (temple superstructure) has a profound meaning in the Vaikhānasa tradition. The Kāśyapa Jñānakāṇḍa defines it as follows:

“विशेषेणमीयतेज्ञायतेभगवतोनिवासःअनेनइतिविमानम्।”<sup>3</sup>

That through which the divine presence of the Lord is specially measured and known is called a vimāna.

Since the presence of the deity is distinctly revealed therein, the sanctum and its superstructure are referred to as vimāna. The Kāśyapa Jñānakāṇḍa, in its 31<sup>st</sup> adhyāya, presents the characteristics of the vimāna.

➤ अथविमानलक्षणम्।हस्तशतंषण्णवतिःनवतिःचतुरशीतिःअशीतिःपञ्चसप्ततिःचतुष्पष्टिःषष्टिःषट्पञ्चाशदित्युच्छ्रायाःविमानानांक्रमेणनवधाभवन्ति।द्वात्रिंशत्पञ्चविंशोत्सेधंवा।द्वादशैकादशदशनवाष्टसप्तांशंवाविस्तारम्॥<sup>4</sup>

The canonical heights (*ucchrāya*) of the vimāna are specified as one of the following (in hastas):100, 96, 90, 84, 80, 75, 64, 60, and 56. Alternately, shorter heights such as 32 or 25 hastas may also be employed. As for the width (*vistāra*), it may be proportionally derived as fractions of the height:1/12, 1/11, 1/10, 1/9, 1/8, or 1/7 of the total height.

Furthermore, the vimāna is structurally divided into six integral components:

अधिष्ठानपादप्रस्तरग्रीवाशिखरस्तूप्याह्वाःषड्भागाःभवन्ति।

अत्रपादशिखरौद्वयशौ, एकांशाःशेषाः॥<sup>5</sup>

These six architectural elements, arranged from base to top, are:

Adhiṣṭhāna (plinth), Pāda (wall portion), Prastara (cornice), Grīvā (neck), Śikhara (spire), Stūpī (finial).

Among these, the pāda and śikhara each constitute two-sixths (i.e., one-third) of the total height of the vimāna, while the remaining four components together comprise the remaining two-sixths, with each occupying one-sixth. This proportional distribution ensures symmetry, balance, and scriptural correctness in vimāna construction, forming a sacred embodiment of divine geometry.

**Garbha-Gṛha (Sanctum Sanctorum) :** The Garbha-Gṛha — the sanctum sanctorum — is the innermost and most sacred space within the temple, wherein the vigraha of the Lord is installed. According to the Vimānārcanākalpa, the dimensions of the Garbha-Gṛha are not arbitrary; they are derived proportionally from the total width of the vimāna. The proportions are prescribed as follows:

विमानविस्तारंत्रिचतुष्पञ्चसप्तनवैकादशभागंकृत्वायथाक्रमेणएकद्वित्रिचतुष्पञ्चषडंशंभगवृहविस्तारंस्यात्॥<sup>6</sup>

This verse outlines that the Garbha-Gṛha width is to be calculated as:

One-third of the total vimāna width (i.e., विमानीयविस्तारस्य 1/3), Two-fourths (i.e., 1/2), Three-sevenths (2/5), Four-ninths (4/9), Six-elevenths (6/11).

<sup>3</sup> Kāśyapa Jñānakāṇḍa, 14 adhayaya

<sup>4</sup> Vimanarchana kalpa, 11 patalaha

<sup>5</sup> Vimanarchana kalpa, 11 patalaha

<sup>6</sup> Vimānārcanākalpaḥ, 9 Paṭalaḥ

Depending on the architectural context and śāstric tradition being followed. This ensures that the Garbha-Gṛha is proportionally harmonized with the rest of the vimāna structure, achieving both visual balance and scriptural correctness.

**Doorway of the Garbha-Gṛha :** The doorway (dvāra) leading into the Garbha-Gṛha is to be designed in accordance with the pāda, one of the six parts of the vimāna. As per the śāstra:

- The height of the door may either be equal to the height of the pāda,
- Or 1.5 times its height, Or even half its height (ardhāṃśa).

The inner opening of the doorway is divided vertically into three equal parts (tribhāga), and the vigraha must be visible through the upper two-thirds from the outside. This ensures that devotees standing in front of the sanctum can have a clear and uninterrupted darśana (vision) of the deity. Such precise measurements symbolize not only architectural elegance but also metaphysical harmony, whereby the outer and inner worlds connect through the sanctified proportions laid down by the scriptures.

**Vigraha Construction :** The Dhruva-Bera, the principal immovable icon (vigraha) of the temple, must be constructed with precise adherence to proportions based on the dimensions of the Garbha-Gṛha.

As stated in the Kāśyapa Jñānakāṇḍa:

गर्भागारसमंपादमर्धहीनंद्वारसमंपादाधिकमर्धाधिकंपादमानंयजमानसमंवाध्रुवायामं।ध्रुवायामषड्भागंपीठमुत्तमम्।<sup>7</sup>

From this śloka, it is evident that the height (āyāma) of the Dhruva-Bera can be determined in multiple ways:

- Equal to the height of the Garbha-Gṛha,
- Half or one-fourth less than the Garbha-Gṛha,
- Equal to half or one-fourth the height of the door (dvāra),
- Equal to the height of the yajamāna (patron of the temple).

Further, the base (pīṭha) of the vigraha must constitute one-sixth (1/6) of the total height of the Dhruva-Bera, which is considered ideal (uttamam). Regarding the pīṭha, the Vimānārcanākalpa (22<sup>nd</sup> Paṭala) provides further elaboration:

ध्रुववेरस्यपीठोत्सेधंद्वारोत्सेधस्याष्टांशैकांशंषड्भागैकांशंवाभुवंगोत्सेधसममध्यार्थद्विगुणंवसमवृत्तपद्माकारंचतुरश्रंत्रिमेखलंवा  
कारयेदथवाकौतुकपीठात्पश्चिमभागंतत्पीठोत्सेधमानेनसमस्थलंकृत्वादेवीभ्यांसहदेवंसंस्थापयेत्<sup>8</sup>

This indicates that the height of the pīṭha may be:

- One-eighth (1/8) or one-sixth (1/6) of the height of the dvāra (doorway),
- Equal to or 1.5 to 2 times the height of the flooring (bhuvaṅga),
- Made circular (samavṛtta),
- lotus-shaped (padmākāra),
- square (catuśra), or
- with three moldings (trimēkhala).

<sup>7</sup>Kāśyapa Jñānakāṇḍaḥ – Adhyāya 36.

<sup>8</sup>Vimānārcanākalpa, 22 Paṭala.

Additionally, the western side of the kautuka-pīṭha is to be leveled to match the height of the main pīṭha, where the vigraha is to be enshrined along with the consort deities (devībhyāṃ saha devam).

**Āyādi Calculations and Śāstra-Based Assessment :** To finalize the proportions and ensure auspiciousness, the construction of the Dhruva-Bera must be validated through the Āyādi examination — a sacred and ancient method for determining architectural suitability. The six factors to be considered in the Āyādi are:

- Āya (आय): overall dimension (length),
- Vyaya (व्यय): loss or negative influence,
- Yoni (योनि): directional aspect,
- Nakṣatra (नक्षत्र): the star,
- Vāra (वार): the weekday,
- Aṃśa (अंश): the degree or influence.

Only when all these parameters are deemed auspicious, may the Dhruva-Bera be crafted and consecrated. Through such meticulous and sacred design, the temple becomes a divine abode that aligns physical space with cosmic principles.

**Āyādi Calculation Method for Vighraha Construction :** Before performing the Āyādi examination, the height of the vighraha must be converted into mānāṅgula units. Once this is done, the following method is followed:

बिम्बोत्सेधं त्रिगुणीकृत्य वसुभिर्हृते शेषम् – आयम्। उत्सेधं चतुरगुणीकृत्य वह्निभिः हृते शेषम् – व्ययम्। उत्सेधं वसुभिर्गुणिते सप्तविंशतिभाजिते शिष्टम् – नक्षत्रम्। उत्सेधं त्रिगुणीकृत्य वसुभिः हृते शेषम् – योनिः। उत्सेधं नवभिर्गुणिते मुनिभिः हृते शिष्टम् – वारः। उत्सेधं चतुर्भिर्गुणिते नवभिः हृते शिष्टम् – अंशः।<sup>9</sup>

**Example:** Āyādi Calculation for a Vighraha of Sixty-Four Aṅgulas. Let the height of the vighraha be sixty-four aṅgulas.

1. **Āya:** Multiply sixty-four by three, then divide the result by eight. The remainder is the āya. → Result: āya is twentyfour.
2. **Vyaya:** Multiply sixty-four by four, then divide the result by five. The remainder is the vyaya. → Result: vyaya is fifty one.
3. **Nakṣatra:** Multiply sixty-four by eight, then divide the result by twenty-seven. The remainder gives the nakṣatra. → Result: nakṣatra is twenty-six.
4. **Yoni:** Multiply sixty-four by three, then divide the result by eight. The remainder is the yoni. → Result: yoni is three.
5. **Vāra (Weekday):** Multiply sixty-four by nine, then divide the result by seven. The remainder gives the vāra. → Result: vāra is two.
6. **Aṃśa:** Multiply sixty-four by four, then divide the result by nine. The remainder is the aṃśa. → Result: aṃśa is four.

**Interpretation of Āyādi Results :** Once the āyādi calculations are completed using the vighraha's height in mānāṅgula-s, the results must be examined to determine the auspiciousness of each of the six factors. The following criteria guide their interpretation:

1. **Āya vs. Vyaya** The value of Vyaya must be less than that of Āya.

<sup>9</sup>Vimānārcanākalpa, 12 Paṭala.

This ensures that the constructive and sustaining forces (āya) outweigh the dissipating or obstructing influences (vyaya).

**2. Nakṣatra (नक्षत्र) :** The nakṣatra derived from the calculation must correspond to an auspicious constellation —ideally one that is beneficial for the temple patron (yajamāna).

The following constellations (nakṣatra-s) are considered most auspicious due to their association with Tārā Bala (star strength):

Āśvinī, Rohiṇī, Mṛgaśīrṣa, Punarvasu, Puṣya, Uttara-traya (Uttarā Phālgunī, Uttarāṣāḍhā, Uttarābhādrapadā), Citra, Svātī, Anurādhā, Śravaṇa, Dhaniṣṭhā, Śatabhiṣak, Revatī

These constellations are said to confer stability, success, and long-lasting divine presence.

**3. Yoni (योनि) :** Yoni represents the symbolic generative force or directional form. There are eight yoni-types in Āyādi tradition:

1. Dhvaja (Flag), 2. Dhūma (Smoke), 3. Siṃha (Lion), 4. Āśva (Horse), 5. Vṛṣabha (Bull), 6. Gārḍabha (Donkey), 7. Gaja (Elephant), 8. Vāyasa (Crow)

Among these, 1. Dhvaja, 3. Siṃha, 5. Vṛṣabha, and 7. Gaja are regarded as auspicious.

**4. Vāra (वार) – Day of the Week :** Among the seven weekdays, the following are considered auspicious.

Monday (Soma) Wednesday (Budha) Thursday (Guru) Friday (Śukra)

These days are associated with prosperity, peace, growth, and devotion.

**5. Aṃśa (अंश) – Effect or Fruit :** Aṃśa indicates the karmic or energetic effect of the established dimension.

The nine types and their auspiciousness are:

1. Taskara (Thief), 2. Bhukti (Enjoyment), 3. Śakti (Power), 4. Vitta (Wealth), 5. Avanapāla (Protector of Earth), 6. Klība (Impotent), 7. Nirbhīti (Fearless), 8. Daridra (Poverty), 9. Peśya (Servant)

Among these, the most auspicious results are:

3. Śakti, 4. Vitta, 6. Avanapāla, 7. Nirbhīti

These denote power, wealth, royal patronage, and fearlessness — all desirable traits for a temple and its principal vigraha.

Through this comprehensive āyādi analysis, the selection of an appropriate dimension for the Dhruva-Bera becomes a matter of śāstra-based precision rather than mere artistic or arbitrary choice. Such alignment with divine principles ensures the prosperity of the temple, the wellbeing of the yajamāna, and the vibrancy of worship for generations to come.

**4) Material Composition of the Vigraha :** The substance (*dravya*) used in the construction of the *Dhruva-Bera* — the principal and immovable icon — plays a pivotal role in determining both its ritual efficacy and the divine qualities it embodies.

The *Vimānārcanākalpa* (15<sup>th</sup> Paṭala) prescribes the types of materials allowed and their relative superiority:

अथध्रुवबेरंताम्रजंशैलंमृण्मयंदारवंचविधीयते।दारवन्मृण्मयंश्रेष्ठंमृण्मयात्शैलमुत्तमम्।शैलात्ताम्रजंमुख्यंभवति।ध्रुवार्चचेत्ताम्रजंशैलंवाकुर्यात्॥<sup>10</sup>

According to this śloka, the *vigraha* may be constructed from:

<sup>10</sup>*Vimānārcanākalpaḥ, 15 Paṭalaḥ*

**Tāmbra (Copper), Śilā (Stone), Mr̥ṇmaya (Clay), Dārava (Wood)**

These are ranked in decreasing order of excellence:

**Copper is the most superior**, Followed by **stone**, Then **clay**, And lastly, **wood**.

When it comes to *Dhruvārcā* (permanent consecration), copper or stone is highly preferred, owing to their durability and spiritual potency.

5) Stone Classification and Their Effects : The *Prakīrṇādhyaḥ* of Bṛgu in the Āgamic texts classifies various types of stones based on their color and texture, each of which is believed to bestow specific spiritual and material benefits:

श्वेतं रक्तं तथा पीतं कृष्णं चैव चतुष्टयम्। शैलजं भेदमाख्यातं तस्य लक्षणमुच्यते॥

**1. Śveta-śilā (White Stone)**

गोक्षीरसन्निभा चैव शङ्खकुन्देन्दुसन्निभा शिला श्वेता समाख्याता सा तु वश्यप्रदायिका।

Resembling cow's milk, conch, jasmine, or the moon — it bestows **mukti** (liberation), especially auspicious for **brāhmaṇas**.

**2. Rakta-śilā (Red Stone)**

जपाकुसुमसङ्काशा शिला शोणितसन्निभा... शिलारक्ता समाख्याता जयदालक्षणा न्विता।

Comparable to hibiscus, blood, or bandhūka flowers — it bestows **victory and valor**, suitable for **kṣatriyas and warriors**.

**3. Pīta-śilā (Yellow Stone)**

पीतासुवर्णसदृशा... शिलालक्षणसंयुक्ता धनधान्यसुखप्रदा।

Similar to turmeric or gold — it brings **wealth and prosperity**, suited to **vaiśyas**.

**4. Kṛṣṇa-śilā (Black Stone)**

भृङ्गमुत्पलसङ्काशा प्रजावृद्धिकरा स्मृता... कृष्णा तु सर्वेषां सर्वसिद्धिप्रदायिका।

Dark like bee or blue lotus — grants **universal success and growth of progeny**, ideal for **all varṇas**, including **śūdras**.

श्वेतारक्ता तथा पीता कृष्णा चैव यथाक्रमम्। द्विजानां च त्रिवर्णानां शिलारक्ता जयप्रदा।

श्वेतामोक्षप्रदा प्रोक्ता ब्राह्मणानां विशेषतः॥<sup>11</sup>

Hence:

**Śveta** (White) – *Mokṣa* for **brāhmaṇas**, **Rakta** (Red) – *Jaya* for **kṣatriyas**, **Pīta** (Yellow) – *Dhana-dhānya* for **vaiśyas**, **Kṛṣṇa** (Black) – *Sarva-siddhi* for all.

**6) Effects of Metal and Gem Materials**

In addition to stones, certain **metals and gems** may be used for specific kinds of *vighraha-s*, and each imparts a unique result. As per Āgamic tradition:

Material	Effect
Manikya (Ruby)	Brings wealth and fortune
Pravala (Coral)	Enhances influence
Sphatika (Crystal)	Promotes progeny
Marakata (Emerald)	Draws attraction

<sup>11</sup> Bṛgu, *Prakīrṇādhikāra 11 Adhyaya*



Nila (Sapphire)	Grants riches and success
Ayasa (Iron)	Causes misfortune
Hayma (Gold)	Brings prosperity
Raupya (Silver)	Grants royalty and power
Sisa (Lead)	Ensures freedom from disease
Tamra (Copper)	Promotes offspring
Trapu (Tin)	Results in loss of longevity
Kamsya (Bell metal)	Leads to conflict or hatred

Thus, the *selection of material* is not merely an artistic or aesthetic decision, but a sacred, śāstra-guided choice that deeply influences the spiritual efficacy of the *vigraha*.

### Types of Vighraha Forms and Their Results

The Dhruva-Bera, the principal immovable vighraha in the temple, is classified into three fundamental postural modes:

- Sthānaka – Standing postures
- Āsana – Seated posture
- Śayana – Reclining posture

Each of these postures can further be divided into four types based on the intent (artha) behind the consecration:

- Yoga – For spiritual seekers
- Bhoga – For enjoyers of worldly pleasures
- Vīra – For those desiring valor and protection
- Abhicārika (or Viraha) – For removal of obstacles, destruction of enemies

### As mentioned in Vimānārcanākalpaḥ, 19<sup>th</sup> Paṭalaḥ

ध्रुवबेरंतत्रिविधंस्थानकमासनंशयनञ्च।पुनस्तत्रैकैकंचतुर्विधंयोगभोगंवीरमाभिचारिकंच।  
योगार्थीयोगमार्गं, भोगार्थीभोगमार्गं, वीर्यार्थीवीरमार्गं, शत्रुजयार्थीचाभिचारिकंकारयेत्॥<sup>12</sup>

### The Kāśyapa Jñānakāṇḍa (Adhyāya 53) supports this classification, stating

योगार्थीयोगमार्गं, सुखार्थीचिसुखमार्गं, धनैश्वर्यभोगार्थीभोगमार्गं, वीर्यार्थीविजयमार्गं,  
विरहार्थीविरहमार्गम्। एतेषांअभीष्टमार्गेणध्रुवबेरंकारयेत्॥<sup>13</sup>

### Iconographic Indicators for Each Type

Each category has distinct indicators in terms of the presence or absence of consorts (devīs), priests (archaka-s), and sacred symbols such as the śaṅkha (conch), cakra (discus), and gadā (mace). These distinctions are outlined below:

1. **Yoga-Mūrti:** Accompanied by Bhū and Śrī devīs, and markaṇḍeya and archaka-s. The Lord may hold śaṅkha and cakra, seated or standing in meditative poise.
2. **Bhoga-Mūrti:** Accompanied by devīs and archaka-s; includes luxurious symbolism. The deity may be seated on a throne, sometimes with divine attendants holding cāmaras, signifying royal pleasure.

<sup>12</sup>Vimānārcanākalpaḥ, 19<sup>th</sup> Paṭalaḥ

<sup>13</sup>Kāśyapa Jñānakāṇḍa, Adhyāya 53



3. **Vīra-Mūrti:** May or may not include devīs, but always with śaṅkha, cakra, gadā. Posture is active, hands extended, knees slightly bent, with ūrubaddha-vastra (cloth across thighs), showing readiness and power.
4. **Viraha or Abhicārika-Mūrti:** Devoid of consorts, simple and solitary. May appear unarmed (nirāyudha), with gesture of renunciation or detachment. Typically associated with destruction of obstacles and inner enemies.

These distinctions help determine the appropriate iconography for specific devotional and ritual intentions.

**Conclusion :** The construction of a vigraha as prescribed in the Vaikhānasa Āgama Śāstra is not merely a sculptural or artistic endeavor, but a deeply sacred act rooted in cosmic order, spiritual symbolism, and scriptural precision.

From the dimensions of the temple, the measuring rods (mānadaṇḍa-s), the garbha-gṛha layout, to the Āyādi calculations for auspiciousness, and finally the material and form of the vigraha — each step is meticulously outlined by ṛṣis like Mārīci, Kāśyapa, and others.

The selection of the vigraha's material influences the spiritual qualities it radiates; its form (yoga, bhoga, vīra, or viraha) aligns with the devotee's intent and the temple's purpose. The inclusion or exclusion of śaṅkha, cakra, devīs, and symbols further communicates the philosophical and ritual message embedded within the image.

Temples like Śrī Veṅkaṭeśvara Swāmī at Tirumala are believed by scholars to embody the Viraha-mūrti, due to the absence of consorts in the mūla-vigraha, thus showing how these āgamic standards are reflected in practice.

Ultimately, vigraha nirmāṇa is both a science (śilpaśāstra) and a pathway to divinity (mokṣa-mārga), where form becomes a vehicle for the formless.

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