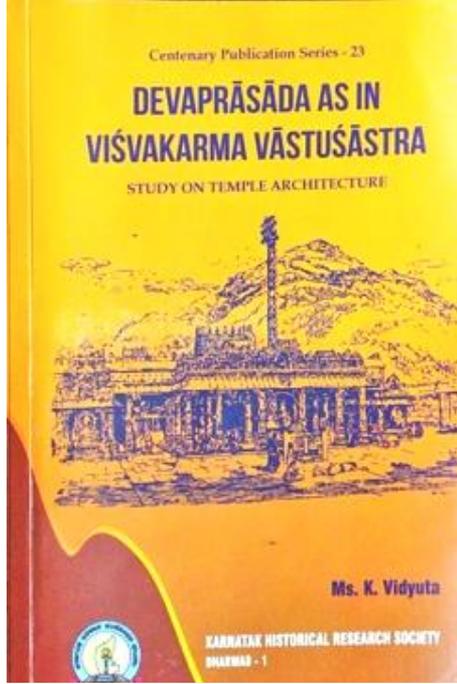


BOOK REVIEWS



**DEVAPRĀSĀDA AS IN
VIŚVAKARMĀVĀSTUŚĀSTRA
(ISBN NO: 978-81-936580-3-1)**

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Published by : Karnataka Historical Research Society,
Dharwad-580001

Page: XV+109, Price-Rs 100/-

The architecture of India is as old as its civilization and rooted in its history, culture and religion. The earliest remains of building activity in India dates back to the Indus valley cities. The temples, Chaitas, Vihāras, Stūpas and other religious structures are the most characteristic monuments of India's architectural remains. Temple architecture of high standard developed in almost all regions of ancient India. The distinctiveness in architectural style of temple construction in different parts was the result of geographical, climatic, ethnic, historical linguistic and religious diversities. Sanskrit literature is enriched with scriptures dealing with architectural guidelines for construction of temples, town planning and so on.

Devaprāsāda As In Viśvakarma Vāstuśāstra is a book on temple architecture delineated in Viśvakarma Vāstuśāstra which is attributed to the divine architect Viśvakarmā. The author Ms. K. Vidyuta is a research scholar working for her Ph.D. Degree in Temple architecture, at Kuppaswami Sastri Research Institute, Chennai. The book containing eight chapters focuses on the *devaprasāda*, i.e. construction of temples based on seven chapters (72-78) of Viśvakarma Vāstuśāstra which is classified as belonging to the Northern School of Architecture, enumerate the salient features of the *devaprasāda*, *garbhagrha*, *śatastambha maṇḍapa*, *vimāna*, *prākāra*, *upapītha* and *devapītha* alongwith the views of the commentator Anantakṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭāraka. The study has been based on Viśvakarma Vāstuśāstra, a recently published work with the commentary entitled *Pramāṇabodhini* by Anantakṛṣṇa Bhaṭṭāraka which has been jointly edited with an introduction by Shri K. Vasudeva Sastri and Major N.B. Gadre. In the first Introductory Chapter the author gives a brief history of Hindu Architecture right from the Vedic age. She also makes a brief survey of information on Vastu available in the texts such as Epics, Purāṇas, Sūtras, Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra, Āgamas, Bṛhatsamhitā, Viśvakarma Vāstuśāstra and other original Vāstu texts from the two schools of

architecture namely Southern & Northern Schools from which the readers may get ample information regarding Vāstu literature written in Sanskrit. Chapter II deals on 'Viśvakarmā' who as per Vedic tradition represents the working aspect of the Supreme Principle. It also provides a brief introductory note on the Viśvakarma Vāstuśāstra and a list of the names of the works ascribed to Viśvakarmā. In chapter three the author reviews the general classification (*vibhāga*) of a temple as given in the text. The author makes an analytical study of the temple architectural procedures as described in the text (72-78), focusing on the structures of *garbhagrha* & *vimāna*, various types of *maṇḍapas*, different measures of *prākāras*, *upapīthas* & *devapīthas* for installation of the idols of main deities, their consorts in the three chapters that follow. The author ends with an Evaluative note (Chapter VII) with a brief overview. She summarizes the findings in her concluding remarks at the end of each chapter. The book is an informative source of the relevance of architectural structures of ancient India and could be useful in present day temple architectural construction or renovation of places of archeological importance. I congratulate the author for taking up the study on the text and appreciate Karnataka Historical Research Society for bringing out the book and thus encouraging the young researchers to involve more serious study in such areas and the like. The research in such work will definitely contribute a lot in preserving our heritage. I recommend interested scholars in the concerned arena to read this book which may serve to document further such information in various regional parts of India.

-- Manashi Sharma