

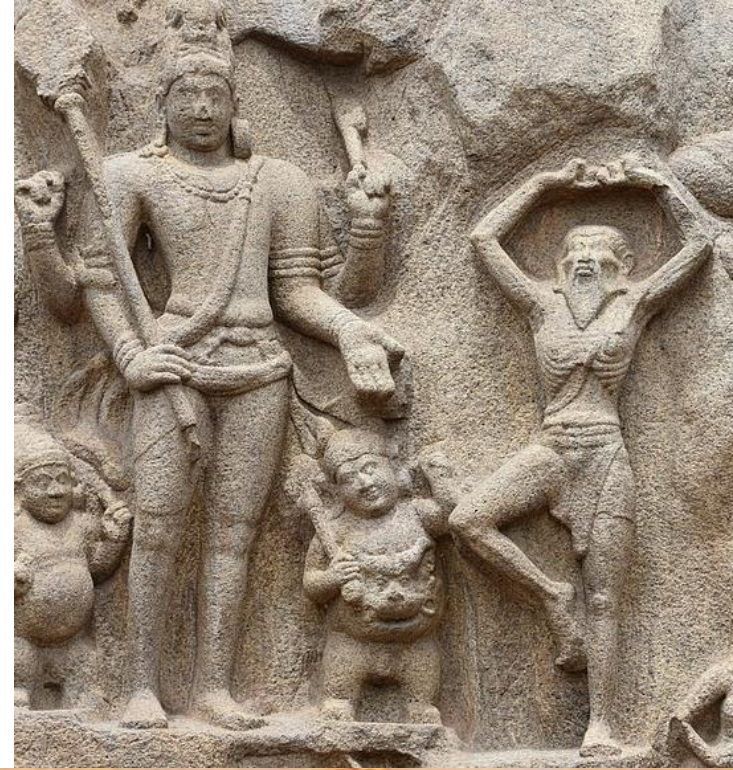
# History of the Art of India, Part I: Origins to Mughals



**OLLI**  
**Spring 2024**

# Week 6

## Extra slides



## South India: Pallavas, Cholas, post-Chola

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## General introduction

A. Pallavas

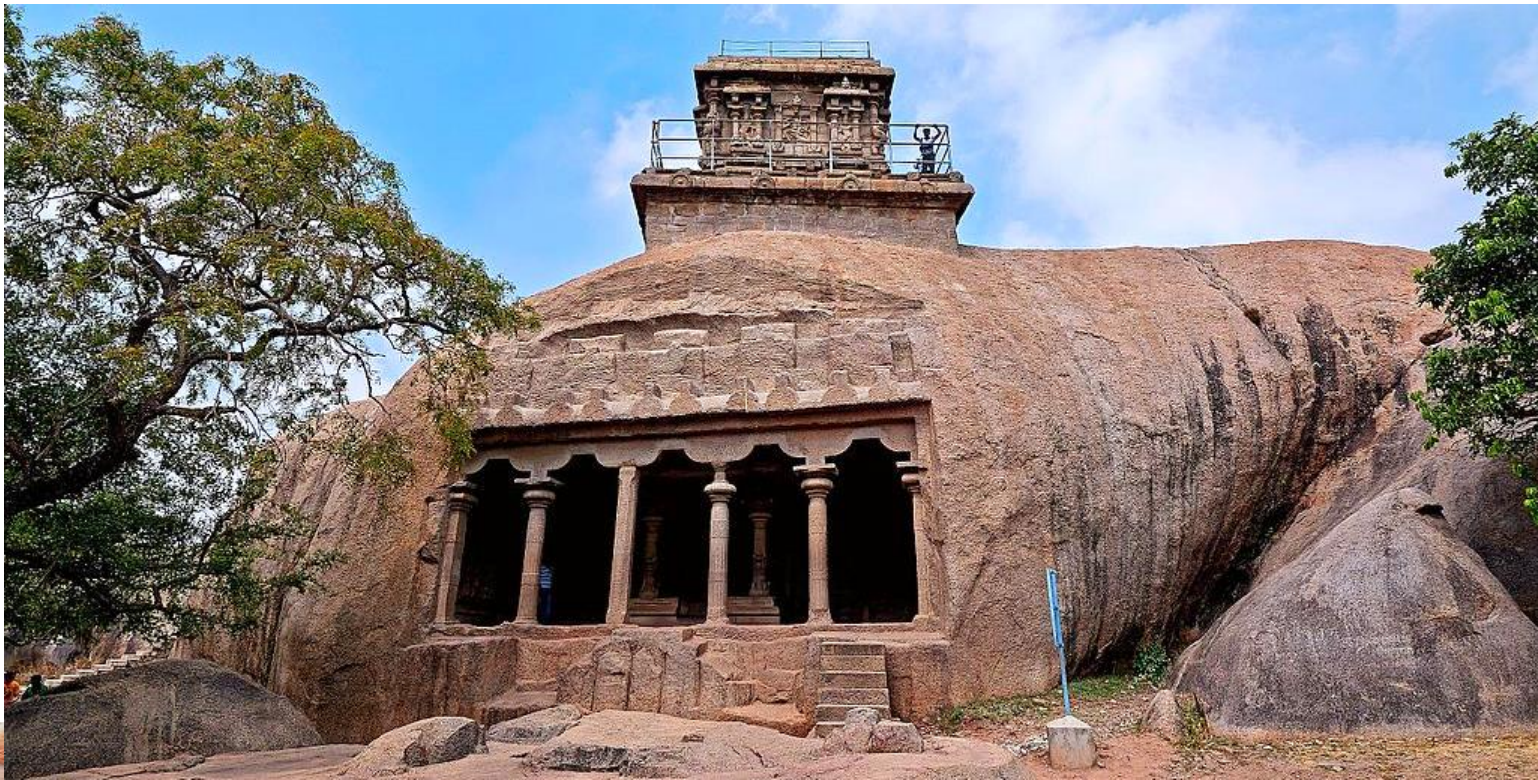
B. Cholas

C. Post-Cholas

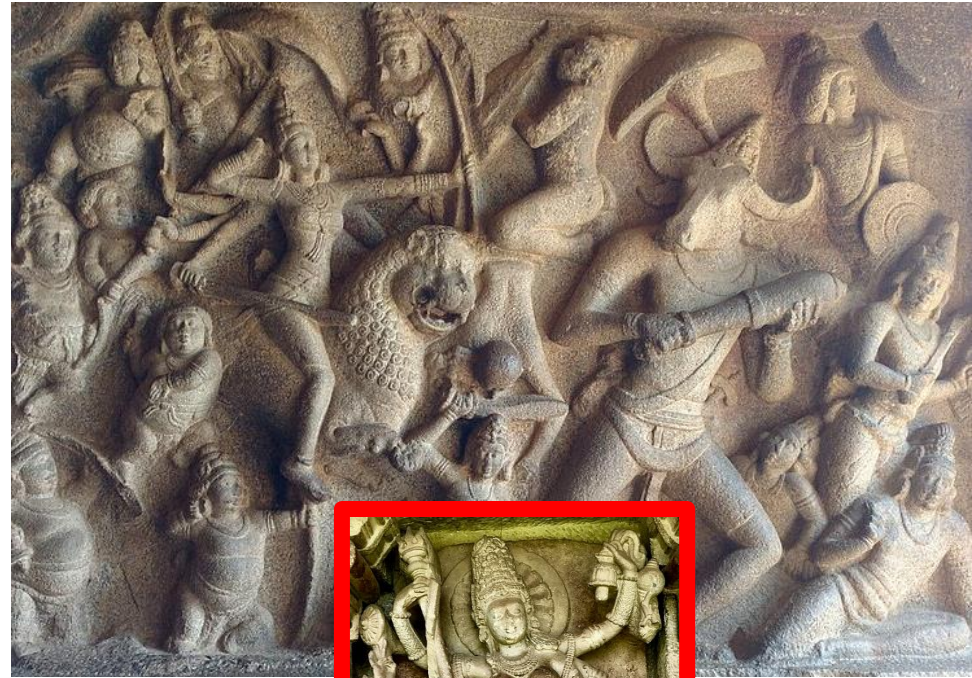
# A. Pallavas

## A-X. Rock-cut caves

- Mahishasuramardini cave, 630-668
- Interior: Reliefs of Hindu mythology... Vaishnava and Shakta (SO: eclecticism)
- 2 ex.: Vishnu Anantaśāyin & Mahishasuramardini

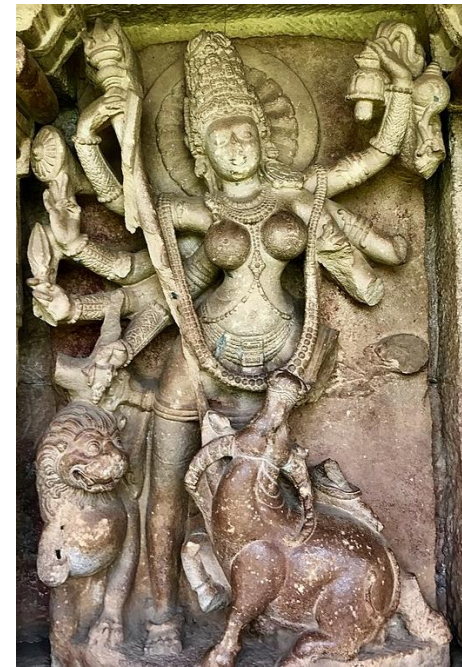
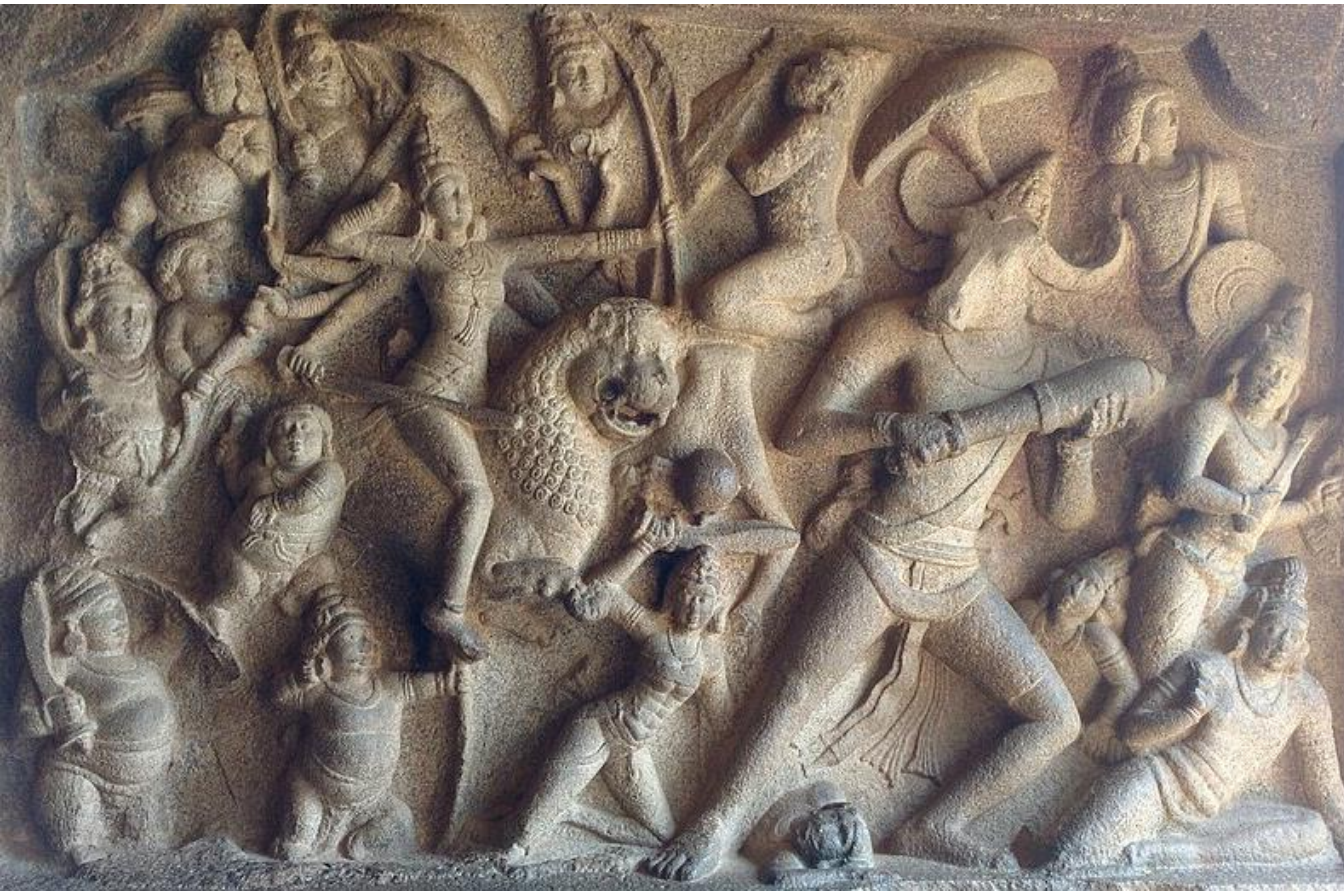


- **Vishnu: Cf. here & earlier Udayagiri caves, ca.425 (w4)**
  - less detailed iconography... only 5 heads of snake visible
- **Durga: Cf. here & earlier from Aihole (w4)**
  - More intricate; Durga on lion; army; human Mahisha; diagonal



## A-X. Rock-cut caves

- Durga Mahishasuramardini (cf. Udayagiri cave, ca.403, w4; & contemp. Durga temple, Aihole, 675-725, w5
- Here more intricate & different iconography:



Durga, relief in Mahishasuramardini mandapa, 630-668

## A-X. Rock-cut caves

- Durga riding her lion, shooting an arrow, 8 arms w/ weapons
- Her army accompanies her
- Mahisha in human form w/ boar head, fleeing w/ army
- Diagonal creates sense of flight and falling



## A3. Rock-cut ratha temples, 7C

- Shalas & kudus on temple roofs suggest city of the gods
- Pyramidal form (of roof) & hemispherical or octagonal stupi atop suggest Mount Kailash (present-day Tibet) in the Himalayas, summit of the world, where the gods dwell

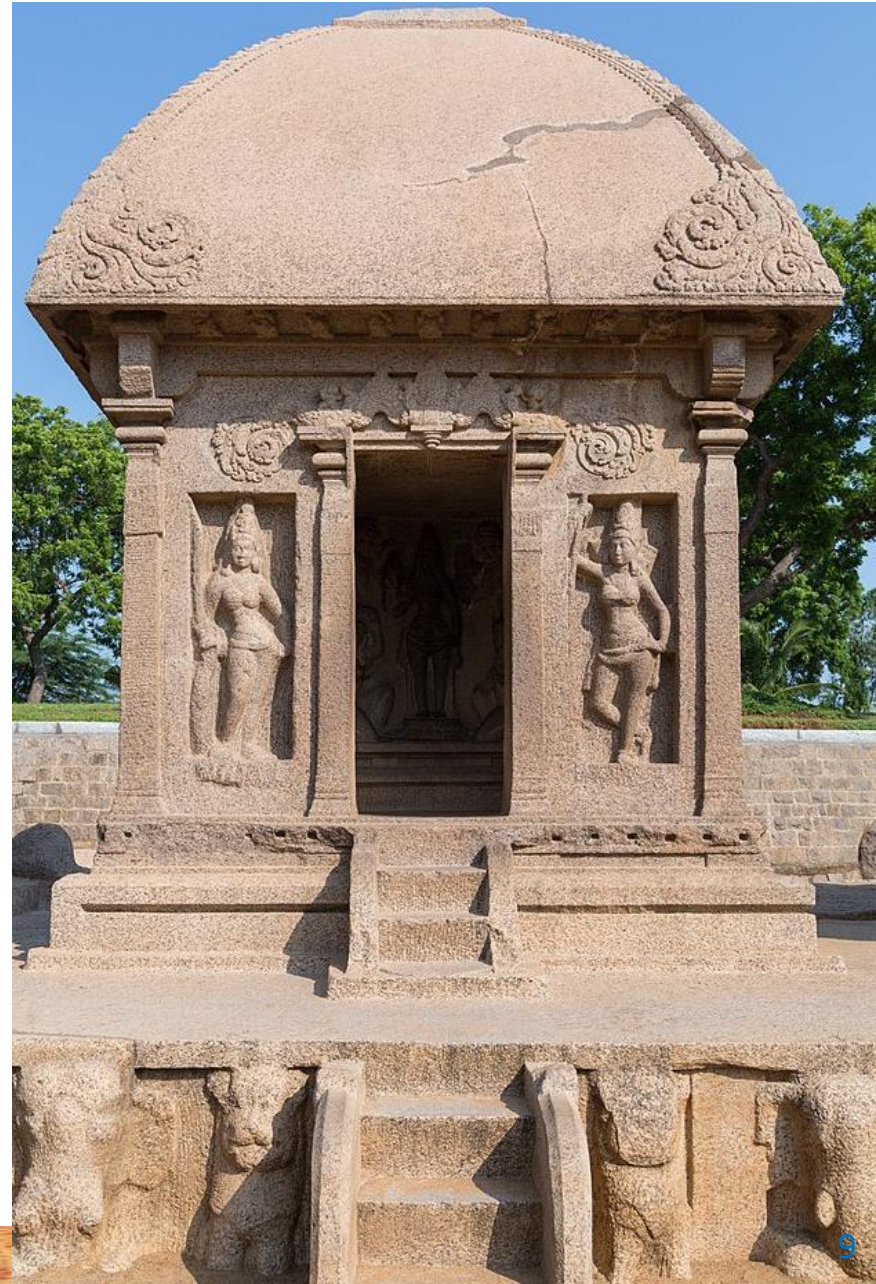




## A3. Rock-cut ratha temples, 7C

### #1, on NE, Draupadi ratha

- Smallest, replica of square, thatched roof temple
- 11 ft square on a side, height = 18 ft
- Reliefs of female door guardians on front of temple
- Dedicated to Durga; her image on rear wall; her lion stands in front of the temple
- Corner ridges of the roof decorated with delicate carvings



## A3. Rock-cut ratha temples, 7C

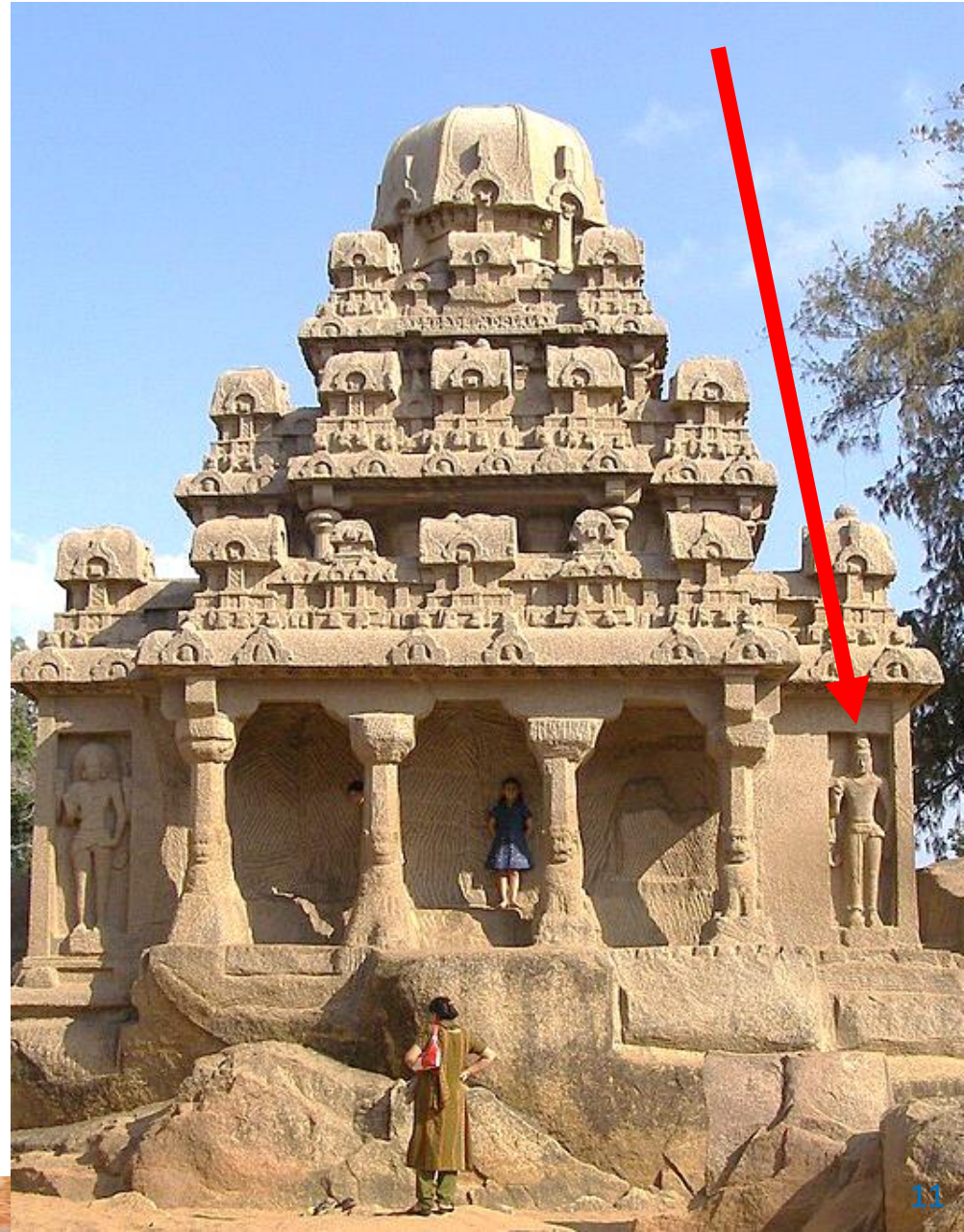
- Entrance portico with 5 bays... dormer windows
- Columns rise from seated lions
- Perhaps dedicated to Vishnu Anantasayin



## A3. Rock-cut ratha temples, 7C

#4, next to SW, Dharmaraja (Yudhisthira) ratha:

- Larger version of Arjuna ratha but with 3 stories instead of 2
- Square ca. 30 ft on a side, ca.40 ft high
- 3-story step pyramid roof
- Incomplete, monolithic (no interior space)
- Reliefs of King Narasimha on the corners of the façade
- Dedicated to Siva



## A3. Rock-cut ratha temples, 7C

- Most ratha exterior walls have relief sculptures
- E.g., front of Draupadi & Dharamaraja
- Here, Arjuna ratha with reliefs of deities
- Stierlin: In the 5 rathas, we see the entire formal repertory of architecture used by Hindu and Buddhist religions



## A3. Rock-cut ratha temples, 7C

Off line, Nakula Sahadeva ratha:

- Named for 2 of the Pandava brothers
- Smaller version of Bhima ratha
- ca. 15 ft x 10 ft
- Reproduces “basilican” plan with rounded apse... 2-story step pyramid roof w/ shalas plus small barrel-vaulted roof



## A3. Rock-cut ratha temples, 7C

### #5, Nakula Sahadeva ratha (2 Pandava brothers)

- Adjacent elephant
- **SO:** Temple perhaps dedicated to gods Indra or Aiyinar, who ride elephants
- Apse-form shrine called “elephant-backed” in Skt
- **SO:** Elephant possibly an architectural pun



## A4. Shore temple at Mamallapuram

- Currently retaining wall protects the monument
- Surfaces originally covered with carvings, but most eroded away by salt spray from the sea



## B2. Rajarajeshwara temple

### B2b. Nandi pavilion





## B2. Rajarajeshwara temple

### B2d. Garbha griha

- Majestic stairway entrance with double life-size door guardians



## B2. Rajarajeshwara temple

### B2f. Exterior walls

- Courtyard surrounded by 2-story wall and portico with double row of pillars



## B2. Rajarajeshwara temple

### B2f. Exterior walls

- Portico lined with Siva lingams (actually, lingam-yoni)
- Walls painted with frescoes of scenes from mythology of Siva and related mythologies (12C)



## B2. Rajarajeshwara temple

### B2g. Painting in Rajarajeshwara temple

- Frescoes on walls of garbha griha
- Larger figures: taut and rigid; smaller: rhythm and flexibility
- Painted legends of Siva... local colors + imported lapis lazuli

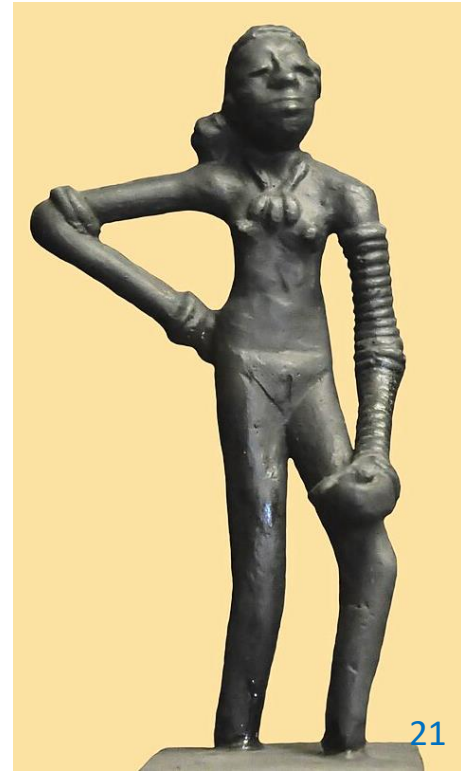


## B. Cholas

### B3. Chola bronzes

- Bronze is the chola sculptural medium par excellence
- Recall the earliest Indian bronze: dancing girl from Mohenjo daro
- Statues produced with lost wax technique... so every bronze is unique

Mohenjo-daro statue of “dancing girl,” copper / bronze, 5.5” high, National Museum, New Delhi



## B3. Chola bronzes

- Grandmother of Rajaraja I and patron of arts
- Extremely thin, almost nude, crown and lower garment seem to merge with the body
- Grace of **tribhanga** pose, heavy breasts, arm and finger positions, create unified stylization
- Craven: Raises the human to the divine
- Holes in the base for carrying in procession
- This is not a portrait!

Queen Sembiyan Mahadevi as Goddess Parvati,  
Chola lost-wax bronze statue, 37" high, ca.998,  
Washington, DC, Freer Gallery of Art



## C. Post-Chola

### C1. Characteristics of south Indian temples, 12-17C

- Mid-13C, Cholas superseded by their old enemies, the Pandyas of Madurai and the Hoysalas around Mysore
- Hoysalas built temples in Halebid, Belur, Somnathpur 12-14C
- Temples covered with fine, filigree-like carving that obscured the architectural forms
- Craven: “Rococo”
- SO: Classical > rococo (as in Euro architecture)

# C1. Characteristics of south Indian temples, 12-17C

- E.g., Chennakeshava temple at Somnathpur, 1268
- 3 star-shaped sanctuaries on a multi-panel platform
- Relatively low shikharas (cf. to Chola)
- Within walled compound (~Chola)





# C1. Characteristics of south Indian temples, 12-17C

- Walls with fine and complex reliefs carved in steatite (soapstone), not granite (Cholas) or stucco (Nayaks)
- Relief of Vishnu (?) and other deities
- Fine and detailed carving: jewels, garlands, bracelets, ankle ornaments, accessories
- Tree-like overhang, architectural overhang



## **C1. Characteristics of south Indian temples, 12-17C**

- **After Pandyas, Vijayanagar dynasty ca.1370, then Nayak dynasty 1564**
- **Nayaks transformed Madurai into temple city in 17C**
- **Minakshi temple: Last manifestation of Hindu temple architecture in the south at Madurai, 17C,**

# C1. Characteristics of south Indian temples, 12-17C

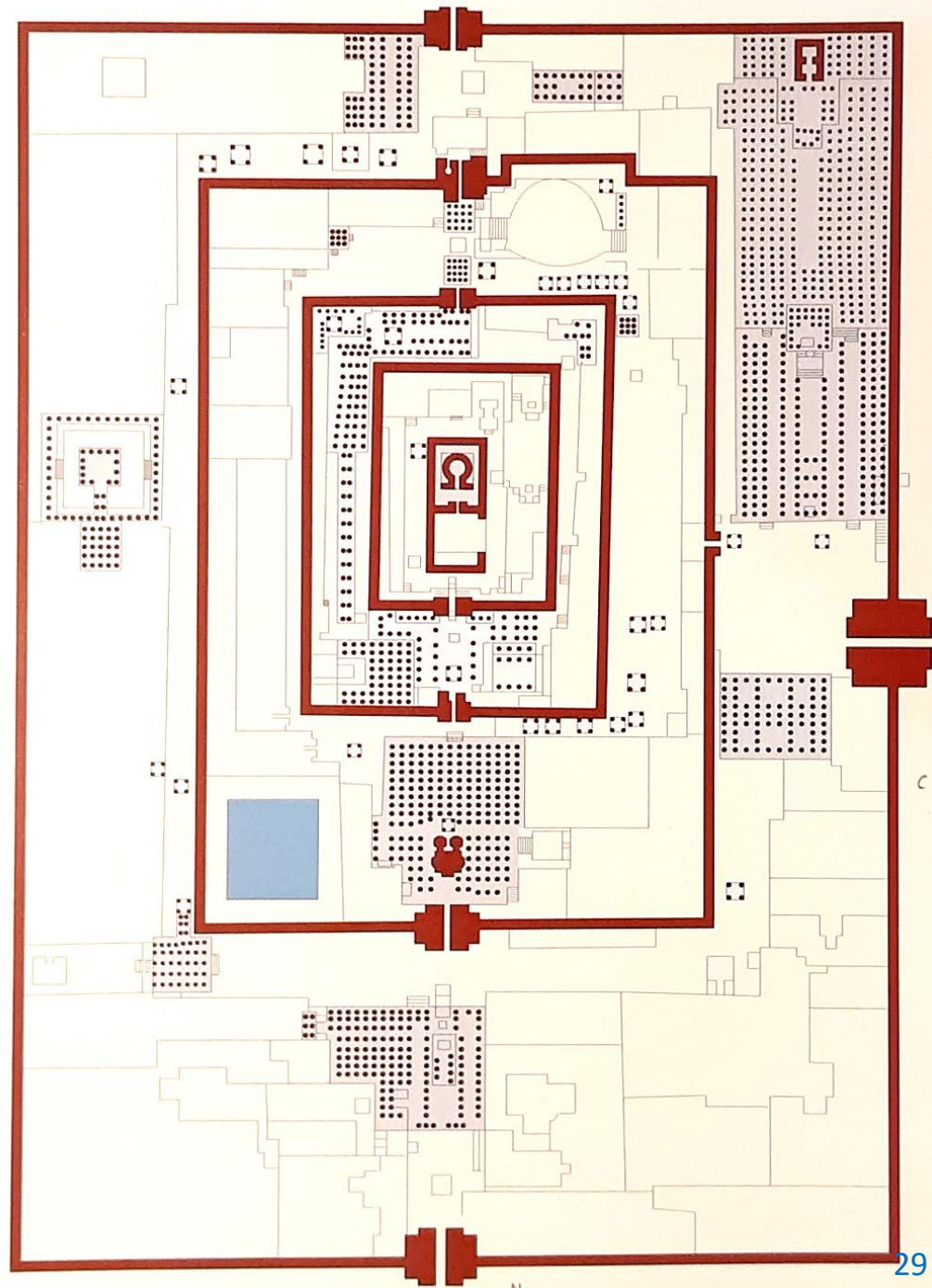
- In architectural development of S Indian temple, gopurams begin to overshadow shikharas
- Typical temple complex of 4 concentric squares
- 4 principal gopurams on the outside square which contains halls and shrines
- Next inner squares: smaller gopurams, halls, shrines, Garbha griha
- Phenomenon of temple expansion, e.g., Siva temple at Chidambaram, originally modest 11C temple, expanded 12-13C to cover 40 acres

# C1. Characteristics of south Indian temples, 12-17C

- **Reasons for this phenomenon:**
  - **Tradition: do not destroy a temple to build a more impressive one, or add a tall shikhara above the garbha griha**
  - **Expansion of the function of the deity: not just dwell in the garbha griha, but perform tasks in the temple complex and even outside ~ functions of a king**
- **SO: architectural tradition & influence from royal patronage mimicking royal functions**
- **Many such temples in S India... we'll look at one temple in Madurai...**
- **But first: 2 temples on the island of Srirangam in the Kaveri River at Tiruchirapalli**

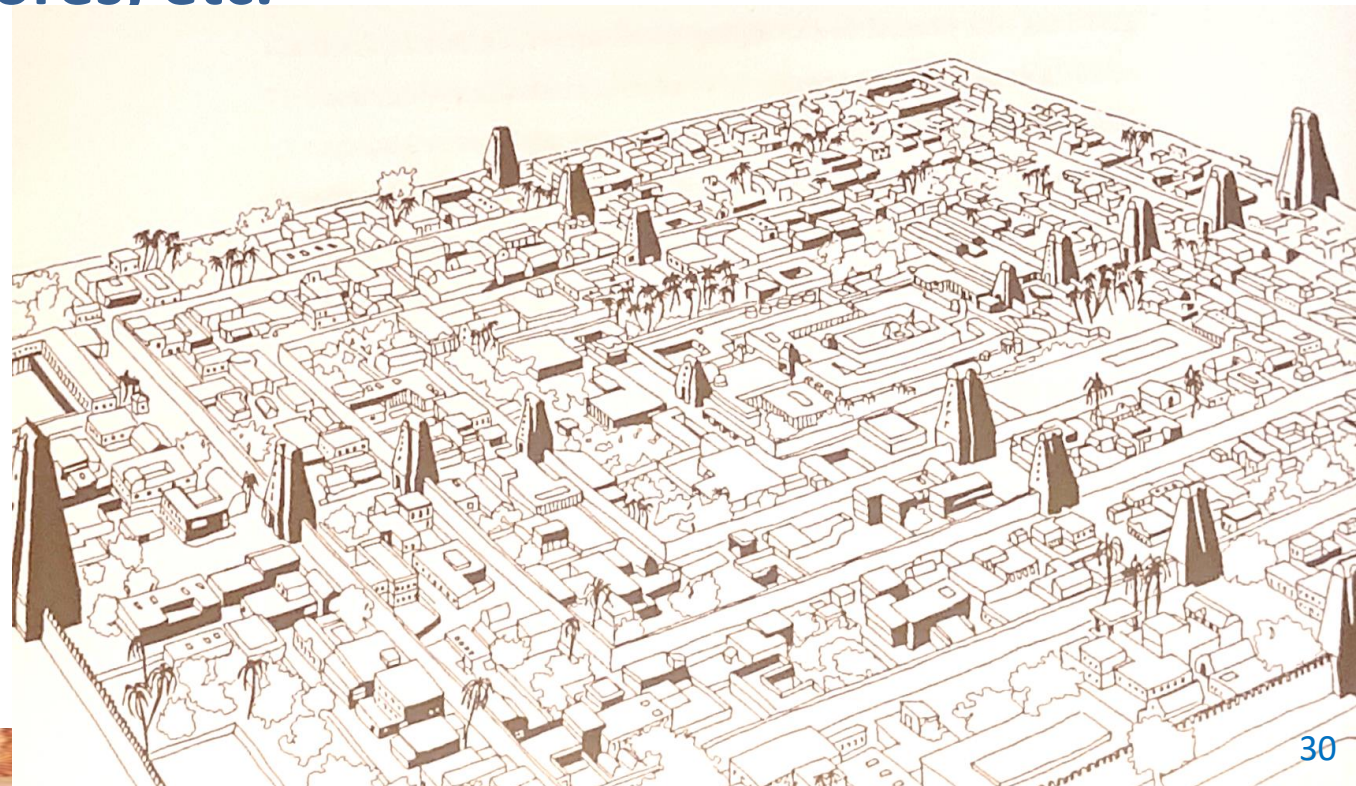
# C1. Characteristics...

- Jambukeshwara Siva temple, Srirangam, Tiruchirapalli, 16-17C (Nayak period)
- 5 precincts (not quite concentric)
- Outer precinct ca.800-900 ft (?)
- **SO:** very large compound, still on axial plan, many additional non-axial structures in the complex



# C1. Characteristics of south Indian temples, 12-17C

- Ranganathaswamy Vishnu temple, 14-17C with 7 (not usual 4) enclosures; outermost is 2880 x 2474 ft
- Largest temple compound in India, 155 acres
- Includes: employees' residences, hostels, restaurants, shops, bookstores. etc.
- **SO: Extreme size**



## C2. Minakshi temple at Madurai, 1336-1736

- 2 garbha grihas topped by modest shikharas, each in its own walled enclosure with gopuram



## C2. Minakshi temple at Madurai, 1336-1736

- **Ritual ablution tank** called Golden Lotus Lake, 150 ft long, surrounded by pillared walkway, steps leading down for pilgrims





## C2. Minakshi temple at Madurai, 1336-1736

- 17C Nayak ruler, Tirumala Nayak built a **large pillared hall** across the street from the E side of the temple complex, 1628-35
- Granite columns included carved figures of Nayak royalty, e.g., one of himself with 2 queens
- **SO: Self- and lineage-promotion**
- Still has some original paint
- Shows his pot belly
- **SO: realism rather than stylization; lack of flattery**



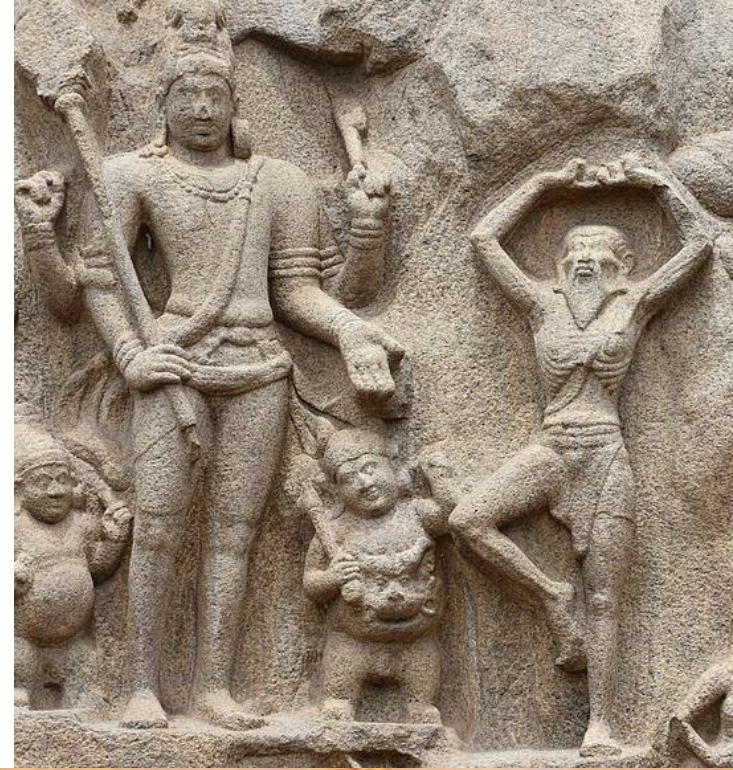
## C2. Minakshi temple at Madurai, 1336-1736

- **Adorning the goddess:** Though a Siva temple, Goddess Minakshi most popular
- Jewelry and accoutrements donated to the goddess by wealthy devotees... even British administrator of Madurai in 1812 gave her a pair of gem-studded gold stirrups
- Each day the goddess is decked in sumptuous outfits... rich devotees can make donations to have her dressed on a certain day according to their wishes
- Ordinary devotees come to the temple, especially the water tank, to socialize and relax
- **SO:** Vibrant religious center & social center

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