In India’s southern state of Karnataka lies the town of Badami, an ancient capital of the Chalukya Dynasty. Pulakeshin I was the leader of the Chalukya Dynasty when Badami was constructed; evidence of this was found in an inscription dated 535 A.D (Reddy 58). Badami is famous for its five cave temples carved into the rock, dating as far back as the 6th century. The five temples and their ornate carvings stand frozen in time, making them an excellent example of early Dravidian (southern) temple architecture. Chalukya rule spanned from the 6th to the 12th century. Over this period it is likely that different religious views came into play and this can be seen in the changing temple architecture. The earliest temple motifs are Hindu and later Jain and Buddhist carvings can be seen. These changing religious themes show a degree of tolerance for new ideas and this allowed the region to display a syncretic nature. To the west of Badami is the Malprabha River that brings life to the city. In the center of the cave complex is Agastya Lake and surrounding the complex is a ravine. The red sandstone structure of the temples contrasts beautifully with the lake and surrounding greenery, creating a truly spectacular scene that rivals any of the great archaeological discoveries. Badami has been recognised as a UNESCO world heritage site (Cohn 3).

As you walk through the town you can see a long set of steps carved into the rock that leads to Temple I, close in proximity to the village. Dwarves of Siva (gana) are placed on each side of the steps and serve as guards of the temple and are commonly found in most of the Badami temples. Temple I has a focus on Siva, the God of the Yogis, and the destroyer of the universe. Henotheism is displayed in the temples, where there are multiple gods and goddesses worshipped but one is raised above the rest. A carving of Siva with multiple arms is found in Temple I, which is the most notable of the motifs in the temple. Siva is depicted as dancing and in Hinduism dances are very spiritual and are often dedicated to gods. Some sources indicate that Siva can be worshipped as the God of Dance and use the Dancing Siva at Badami as evidence (Koostria 6). Siva is dancing the tandava, a fierce dance he performs before he is to destroy the world (Russell 9). To the right of the Siva, there is a smaller carving of Ganesa, who is regarded as his son. Dance and the connection to the divine has always been an important theme in Hindu culture, elevating the significance of the carving in understanding early religious practice of the region. Also, within the temple stands a chapel which is supported by two pillars and on the back wall is a depiction of Mahishasura in a battle with a buffalo demon. Decorating the base of the chapel are more dwarves. To the left of Siva is a carving of a bull, which is named Nandi and is regarded as sacred (Mandala 125). On another wall in Temple I, there is a Kartikeya riding a peacock.
Kartikeya is the Hindu God of war (Tyomkin 84).

Temple II is dedicated to Visnu, one of the gods responsible for maintaining the order of the universe. Temple II is rectangular in shape and at its entrance are four pillars and below are multiple carvings of the guardian dwarves as seen on the entrance to temple one. Temples I and II are very similar in styles and carving technique, leading scholars to believe they were constructed around the same time (6th century). An interesting carving within the temple is Varaha, the boar, who is an incarnation of Visnu and in his hand is the Goddess Bhudevi. Bhudevi metaphorically represents the earth in this depiction and Visnu is saving her. Traces of frescos that are no longer intact have been found on the side walls of the temple (Reddy 60). On the roof of the temple is a panel made up of a wheel of fish and svastikas. Multiple stories of Krsna and Visnu are also found carved throughout the temple on the roof. The rafters are adorned with elephants and lions.

Temple III is the grandest temple at Badami and one of the most unique and intriguing Brahmanical temples in India. An inscription was left behind in this temple by the Chalukya King Mangalisa, the son of Pulakeshin I. This inscription allowed for the temple to be accurately dated. As you enter there are beautifully carved symmetrical pillars that line a long aisle. At the end of the aisle there is a large carving of Visnu and similar to Temple II, this temple is primarily devoted to Visnu. Visnu is depicted as having four arms sitting on the cosmic serpent Ananta, which means without end. Visnu is seated cross-legged with his eyes closed and in his two raised hands, Visnu holds a discus (cakra) and a conch shell (sankha). These objects are commonly found in depictions of Visnu (Burgess 408). Visnu is wearing three necklaces and a belt made out of gems. Temple III features a veranda, which is a common feature among a few of the temples. Walking through the veranda and into the temple you encounter a carving of a man and women covered in foliage, most likely depicting a scene from the Kama Sastras. On the roof of the temple there are carvings of Agni, Brahma, Varuna and Deva seated on a ram. On a back wall of the temple there is a large carving of Narasinha, son of Siva (Burgess 411).

Temple number IV is dedicated to Jainism. While the first three temples are Brahmanical, Temple IV was the last to be constructed and displays the religious tolerance of the Chalukya dynasty. Temple IV is the highest of the four and is located east of Temple III. Similar to other temples, you enter the temple from a set of steps leading to a veranda propped up by pillars. Temple IV features a carving of Mahavira sitting in a meditative position on a throne. Mahavira is a spiritual teacher who teaches students about Dharma. Accompanying Mahavira are two smaller figures holding fans (chauri) (Burgess 491). Adjacent to the row of pillars is a tall carving of The Tirthankara Parshvanatha, the first Jain spiritual leader featuring cobras surrounding his head. Another carving shows Guatama Swami surrounded by four snakes. Temple IV is believed to be constructed in the late 7th century or early 8th CE (Burgess 492).

References


**Related Topics**

Chalukya Dynasty

Pulakesin I

Pattadakal Temple

Virupaksa Temple

Mahadeva Temple

Karnataka

Jainism

Siva

Ganesa

Kama Sastras

*Ramayana*

Aihole Temple

**Related Websites**


http://www.cultureholidays.com/Temples/badami.htm

http://www.bagalkot.nic.in/badami.htm
The Kailasanatha Temple is a Saivite Temple located near Maharashtra in western India. It is grouped in a family of structures referred to as the Ellora Cave Temples and is one of dozens of Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain temples among the structures. The Kailasanatha is generally regarded to have been excavated in the mid-8th century during the Rashtrakuta Dynasty, inscriptions claim during the rule of Krsnaraja I, who ruled from 757-772 C.E. It is constructed out of a single rock.

The claim that it was constructed under a single ruler, or in the short period of fifteen years, seems rather absurd considering the sheer size of the structure. The architecture and sculpture art are not completed with a uniform style, in fact at least ten different styles can be found each belonging to a particular section on the temple (see Goetz 85-87). The caves in the court walls also appear to have been constructed at a later date. Because it is a cave temple though its historical sequence follows from the top, where the surface was when excavation began, to the bottom. For this reason it is believed that Krsnaraja I was the ruler whom it was completed under. [Goetz (1952) delves slightly further into a few other Ellora cave temples that are believed to be constructed around the same time]. Most of the court as well as the lower story of the temple appear have been created under Krsnaraja, the higher levels under the rule of his predecessor Dantidurga (735-756 C.E.). The courts and lower levels also don't appear to integrate with the older designs; leaving chambers in the upper levels unreachable except by means of ladders (see Goetz 93-94). Though the Court was likely completed early in Krsnaraja's reign as many sculptures appear to be more similar in style to those constructed during the time of Dantidurga, simply of smaller size.

Though the architecture and excavation of the Kailasanatha are staggering in and of themselves they are outshone by far by the incredible artwork, sculptures, and statues all about temple. Much of the artwork supports similar themes to several of the Puranas, this is due to the fact that these texts would have been written close to the same era as the temple was constructed. [for more on the
Though Kailasanatha contains undeniable evidence toward the conclusion that it is a temple of Siva, at least a few of its designers did not see issue with frequently interspersing sculptures and art of many other deities, especially Visnu. There are both Vaisnavite and Saivite subjects scattered liberally about the temple structure (see Hawley 80-82). There are also many depictions of the Dikpalas, naga, and River Goddesses, though they never appear quite as important as the sculptures of Siva, Visnu, and Brahma, usually appearing smaller and or made to look as if standing further back (see Heston 220-221).

The gopura (entry gate) of the temple is an area clearly depicting and paying homage to several other Hindu deities. The entry gate depicts many stories with diametrically opposed themes on opposing walls. The north wall clearly portrays Siva as the supreme deity, while enforcing unity among all deities and forces; it supports the pursuit of knowledge in order to achieve moksa. The sculptures contain images such as Siva in several modes of dance, a story of Visnu and Brahma seeking the beginning and end of a flaming linga, with turns out to be Siva in his ultimate form. The sculptures continue, showing Harihara a composite form of Siva and Visnu, showing unity though with Siva dominant in the representation. The next sculpture is one of Siva with his divine consort again with Siva appearing in a superior fashion (see Heston 222-223).

The south wall portrays a radically adverse side of Hindu tales. The sculptures all reveal tales of a deity’s heroic victory over a demon in battle. One is of Visnu in incarnated as a boar, the story of which is told in the Puranas of this incarnation saving the earth goddess from the primordial ocean. Another depicts the dwarf Vamana (another form of Visnu) defeating the demon Bali and claiming the universe for the gods. Some of the carvings are damaged and others still depict demons being killed or defeated. One of these however reveals the connection between the northern and southern walls. The specific carving is one of Siva thrusting his trident into a demon, upon his impalement the demon sees past the illusion and lies of the material world and achieves true knowledge. The demon in the tale is a metaphor for that illusion, the story clearly stating that only through Siva, among other deities, and proper ritual will one achieve that knowledge (see Heston 223-225). This is another section of the temple where the sculptures place emphasis not only of Siva but also depict stories of Visnu and Brahma in tales of seeking knowledge, on the north wall, and in triumph of asura, on the south.

Among the images carved closer to the actual entrance of the gopura only depictions of the Dikpalas, or Gods of the Eight Directions, appear. It is commonplace to see these deities given a protector status, especially among temple entrances and other important religious locales. Four images lie on either side of the portal; unfortunately three are damaged, and of those two are completely unrecognizable. However, because in this era and in this setting it was popular to depict all eight deities together in this role it is assumed that the two damaged sculptures are the remaining Dikpala.
On the north side of the entry presides sculptures of Agni (fire god), Vayu (wind god), and Varuna (water god), the fourth is one of the destroyed sculptures. Varuna in this representation is attributed with a lotus, as opposed to his usual noose. The south side of the doorway consists of sculptures of Indra (sky god), carrying his typical lightning bolt, a damaged panel depicts a bull mount which is the usual vehicle of the deity Yama (death god). Another damaged, unrecognizable panel on this side as well as an image Kartikkeya, who is the son of Siva but is not a deity among the Dikpalas. Though throughout the Puranas Kartikkeya is seen as both as a seeker of knowledge and a sage, as well as a leader of an army of gods, in this he shows himself both as a protector, garnering a place among the Dikpalas, at least thematically. These two roles also aptly blend with the theme already beginning to shine through among the other sculptures (see Heston 226-234). It is impossible to ever tell which of the Dikpala Kartikkeya replaces, due to the two damaged carvings.

The deities flanking the door directly are Indra with his lightning bolt and Varuna carrying the lotus, again this is unusual in representations of Varuna. The lotus often represents knowledge, however, fitting seemingly with that wall’s theme. The lightning bolt clearly held as a weapon in this case fitting with the theme of its respective wall. [It is interesting to note that Buddhist excavations in the Ellora Caves also similar symbols representing religious knowledge, Heston 1981-1982]

The temple also contains much smaller vastly intricate and detailed carvings of Hindu epics, The Ramayana, The Mahabharata, and The Krsnacaritra. The walls of the porch of the temple depict these stories in their episodic nature. Many believe these depictions are later additions to the temple for several reasons (see Hawley 77-78); this is believed in part due to the intense amounts of detail that has gone into these carvings as well as the fact that they do not seem to be very well integrated into the general architecture of the temple. Despite this studies have dated the story panels at least around the same time as the rest of the monument. It is interesting to note that regardless of the intricacy with which the many episodes of each story are depicted many arguably important episodes of each tale are either incomplete or just missing (see Markel 59).

The Kailasanatha is clearly a marvel of architecture, artistry, and an unfathomable amount of labour. It rests as the center piece and most impressive of the Ellora Caves, an already marvellous network. Its art characterizes a deep understanding of, and willingness to teach Hindu beliefs. It exemplifies the amount of devotion and care one has for something they truly believe in, while at the same time exposing the intelligence and creativity of its designers through their use of symbolism. It is no wonder this place attracts so many visitors, including scholars, pilgrims, and tourists, or why it is considered the unrivalled spectacle among the other cave temples.

REFERENCES AND OTHER RECOMMENDED READING

Heston, Mary Beth (1982-82) “Iconographic Themes of the Gopura


Related Topics for Further Investigation

The Vishvakarma

The Dashavatara

The Indra Sabha

Krsnaraja I

Dantidurga

Rastrakutra Dynasty

Siva

Visnu

Brahma

Agni

Indra

Vayu

Varuna

Kartikkeya

Yama

Krsna

The Ramayana
The historically and archaeologically significant Ellora Caves are located near the city of Aurangabad, in the Maharashtra state. The Ellora Caves site is comprised of thirty-four temples and monasteries cut directly from the vast cliffs that surround the caves. The site exemplifies the Dravidian tradition of rock-cut architecture and art. The Ellora Caves were given UNESCO World Heritage site accreditation in 1983 (UNESCO). There is also evidence that the various caves have been used throughout history for Buddhist, Jain, and Hindu worship (Heston 219). The site culminates at the centre, where the vast Kailasanatha Temple sits in the middle of the courtyard area. Although the other thirty three caves are similarly intricate and interesting, the most is known about the Kailasanatha, or Kailasa Temple.

The caves are an excellent example of the Dravidian architectural tradition. The gopura, or gateway, at the Kailasa Temple [as well as at several of the other caves] is monumental to the study of Hindu religious architecture (Heston 219). In particular, the Kailasa gopura features numerous figural images that are extremely important to the Hindu tradition. The gopura is often seen as an indication to the worshipper as to what kinds of themes they may wish to consider upon entering the temple. Gopura sculptures typically depict guardian gods and goddesses, whereas depictions of other more
The important deities are reserved for the inside of the temple (Heston 220). This is an example of a hierarchy within the Hindu tradition, where images such as one of a river guardian may be present at the gopura, but important imagery such as the linga, representing Siva, are present inside the temple. At Ellora, several lingas adorn the inner niches of the Kailasa Temple, along with other depictions of Siva, Visnu, and Brahma.

The use of several Hindu [as well as Buddhist and Jain] deities throughout Ellora, and particularly Kailasa, represents a certain unity present in many elements within the Hindu tradition. For example, one image in the niches of Kailasa depicts Harihara, a composite of Siva and Visnu together (Heston 223). Another example is a male and female fusion of Siva and his divine consort. This image is called the Ardhanarisvara, and represents the union of powers, or sakti, and could be based on the purusa-prakrti doctrine (Heston 225).

The Ellora Caves offer great insight into the development of Indian architectural traditions throughout the county, but particularly on the Indian subcontinent. There are other rock-cut cave sites that exist in India. Sites such as Elephanta and Kanheri offer additional insight into the realm of ancient architecture, but Ellora remains one of the more important sites (Chakrabati 327). Despite its designation as a UNESCO World Heritage site, the knowledge surrounding Ellora is still somewhat patchy. It is an immense challenge to try to piece together the historical context within which the Ellora Caves were constructed. From 1830 to 1861, excavating megaliths in southern India became very popular (Chakrabati 328). Many images and relics at Ellora [and other sites] were supposedly damaged during this time due to over-enthusiastic excavation (Chakrabati 328). After 1939, Indian universities became more interested in archaeology, the preservation of historical information, as well as pre-historic research endeavours. This contributed to existing theories about the history and context of the Ellora Caves.

The Ellora Caves are renowned for their exemplary rock-cut architecture. The caves and the images within were carved directly from the rock face of the staggering cliffs that surround the site. The time it must have taken the ancient architects to design and execute such a massive feat can only be imagined, especially when the dimensions of the site are taken into consideration. The Kailasa Temple alone, stands at the centre of the Ellora site, and measures 200 feet long, and 100 feet wide and high (Goetz 85). The entire site stretches even further towards the faces of the cliffs, making the feat of creating such a masterpiece very impressive. The Kailasa Temple, although it is not technically a cave, is one of the most important examples of ancient Indian art. Also carved directly from the rock face, Kailasa is a freestanding structure that sits in the middle of the enormous court surrounded by the wall of cliffs (Goetz 89). The Kailasa has been generally accepted to date back to the middle of the eight century of the Common Era (Goetz 89). This assertion is based on inscriptions present in Kailasa that indicate the temple was erected in honour of Krishnaraja (757-772 CE) of the Rashtrakuta Dynasty (Goetz 90). The courtyard walls surrounding the Kailasa Temple are generally accepted as being carved out later. These ties to the Rashtrakuta Dynasty are what help make Kailasa so important to Indian art history.
Although Kailasa is mainly credited to the Rashtrakuta Dynasty, scholars have accepted that it would have been impossible for the entire temple to have been finished under one ruler (Goetz 92). Not only would the construction of such a marvel be extremely time-consuming, but there is also the issue of the non-uniform nature of much of the imagery throughout Ellora. Due to India’s rich history of rock-cut architecture and other art, it is also near impossible to cross-reference the Ellora Caves with other sites such as Elephanta. The fact that few monuments survive from the time of the Rashtrakuta Dynasty suggests that it was a violent period in which temples were constantly changing hands, and therefore were re-appropriated over time. [By the tenth century of the Common Era, the Ellora site seems to have been occupied by the Jains (Goetz 92)]. It is currently accepted that Kailasa could not have been completed during the reign of Krishnaraja, even though he is the ruler who is thought to have commissioned the temple, and maybe even the entire site (Goetz 92).

Another important factor in determining the historical context within which the Ellora Caves were constructed is that rock-cut structures were built backwards. Normal temple construction began with the gateway, or gopura, and progressed into the rest of the temple afterwards. Rock-cut temples began with the construction of the inner rooms and builders would have worked towards the mouth of the cave, finishing with the gopura (Goetz 94). This concept is very useful in analyzing another of the major structures at Ellora, the Dasavatara cave. This cave houses fifteen inscriptions about Dantidurga (735-757 CE), who is thought to have been the founder of the Rashtrakuta Dynasty (Goetz 97). This would mean that Krishnaraja, although he had previously been credited with Ellora, could not be the mastermind. The chronology of the Dasavatara cave, along with the inscriptions and general styles of the images contained within, may prove that Dantidurga, not Krishnaraja, was the planner behind the Ellora Caves. Despite this evidence, Krishnaraja is still credited with completing the Kailasa Temple, although his contribution to Ellora as a whole is still somewhat questionable. There are implications that Krishnaraja killed Dantidurga’s two sons, who would have been the rightful heirs to the Rashtrakuta Dynasty, and took power by force. This may be why Dantidurga’s contribution to the Ellora Caves seems somewhat covered-up, and Krishnaraja’s contributions glorified (Goetz 99).

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND FURTHER RECOMMENDED READING


Known to natives as Gharapuri, the Elephanta Cave Island is located in the Bombay harbour (on the northerly west coast of the Indian subcontinent). The island was named by the Portuguese, who, upon
arrival to the island in 1534 found a large stone elephant sculpture on entry into the bay. Evidence suggests that even before the Portuguese arrival, there had been foreign visitors to the island since the 5th century (see Collins 16-17). Measuring approximately three kilometers long (Knapp 352), the island houses massive temples excavated from the island’s great rock composition. The most extraordinary (in size and seeming importance) of these caves is solely dedicated to the Hindu deity Siva. This cave houses large stone relief sculptures depicting many forms of the deity. Suggested chronological placement for the construction of the caves is sometime during the 6th CE, during the great Gupta Dynasty rule in India. The Gupta Dynasty is widely recognized for striving to unite Indian states, and encourage all cultural pursuits including Indian art (Knapp 352).

Because of Siva’s significance as one of the major Hindu deities, the great cave at Elephanta has become a large pilgrimage site for Hindus today. Known as the cosmic creator, preserver, and destroyer Siva is regarded in the Shaiva Puranas as the supreme or absolute (Shattuck 47). Architecturally, the temple considers the cosmic associations of Siva, as the construction allows for space, light, and movement. Interestingly, the journey to the shrine is an integral part of the pilgrimage experience. Reaching the temple is a symbolic removal of self from the physical world (across water, up a mountain, then entering the cave), transcending from the human realm into the divine realm (Berkson 17).

The cave temple has three entrances, from the north, west, and east – all leading into the main interior hall. Both the east and west wing entrances have their own sculptures associated with Siva. Sixteen sculptures in total are present in and around the temple cave, nine of which are housed within main hall of the temple. Either in relief or as standalone sculptures, they are carved directly from the hill’s rock composition. Each of these nine works depicts a form of Siva or a figure associated with the deity (see Berkson 17-18). The two most significant of these sculptures are the linga sculpture contained within a chamber (completely separate from the rock walls) near the west entrance, and a massive bust sculpture of the five-headed (with only three being visible) Sadashiva (the Eternal Siva form) protruding from the southern wall in the temple. Travelling along the directional axes and through the center of the temple would lead one to encounter either the linga chamber (east to west) or the Eternal Siva bust (north to south). This suggests even more attention to the specific construction of the temple, and a
possible geometric link between the two sculptures for ritual movement purposes (see Berkson 19-21).

The square chamber enclosing the linga form has an opening on each side, with each also being guarded by large dvarapalas (Berkson 20-24). The symbolic association of doorkeepers to Siva is debated in interpreting Hindu mythology, but their purpose can be generalized, as either to prevent or preserve sexual contact (see Berkson 29). The presence of doorkeepers around the housed linga serves to promote the exclusiveness to Siva and symbolically, to serve the shrine as guardians. The linga form of Siva represents the phallic nature, and exudes the energy associated with its nature of creation (Knapp 363). The energy radiated from the linga is considered, as it is allowed to travel outward through the four open doorways surrounding its enclosure and outward in all directions, auspiciously affecting any devotees in or near the temple (see Berkson 25).

The large bust sculpture depicting Sadashiva reveals three of its implied four headed figure. The implied fourth face at the back and fifth face on the top, noted as being Sadyojata (the first manifestation of Siva) and Ishana (the highest manifestation of Siva) respectively (Berkson xv). Each of the visible faces describes a part of Siva's nature and embodies specific features to allude to those qualities. Siva's right face portrays the masculine/destructive nature of the deity (aghora – fierce) (Berkson 13). The face is rugged and aggressive looking, and carries a moustache along with a snake being held near the face to further emphasize the physical, and philosophical masculine nature. The sculpture's left face offers the duality of this and embodies a feminine (vamadeva – graceful) form of Siva (Berkson 13). The face looks tranquil and pure, with a lotus held near the face to help to convey the creator nature of the deity. The center face of Siva is an embodiment of both male and female forms (tatpurusha – transcendent) (Berkson 13). Aligned together, and transcending both forms, this face is serene and tranquil. Siva’s eyes are closed suggesting deep meditation and inward thought while still remaining ever present; allowing for the presentation of the dichotomies he represents (active yet passive, finite and infinite, energetic yet ascetic, etc.) (Knapp 363).

The remaining seven sculptures are relief panels carved into the walls surrounding the interior of the temple and embody depictions of Siva. The placement and relation between each set of relief sculptures also represents the dual natures of the deity. Below is a
diagram depicting the location of each of the sculptures within the main temple, as well as accompanying descriptions derived from Berkson (18, 23-24):

North Entrance

West Wing Entrance East Wing Entrance

3. Ardhanarishvara 7. Siva Dancing
4. Ganga 8. Lord of Yogis

Located on either side of the eastern entrance to the shrine and facing each other on opposing walls:

1. Ravana – depicting Siva and Parvati at their celestial residence on Mt. Kailasa. Siva is casually fending off Ravana as he has come to disturb them.
2. Gambling Scene – also situated on Mt. Kailasa, Parvati and Siva are depicted as at leisure playing gambling games.

Mt. Kailasa is mythically believed to be situated precisely where the Siva cave at Elephanta is carved. Simply, the contrast between the two images here is Siva at home and at rest in the gambling scene, and on guard or defence at his home.

Located on panels on either side of the Eternal Siva Shrine, both facing north:

1. Ardhanarishvara – shows Siva and Parvati joined in a unified form (androgyne). This androgynous fused form is beside Nandi the bull. Nandi represents fertility and the agricultural nature of Siva in animal form.
2. Ganga – portrays Siva breaking the fall of the river Ganga’s descent to earth (here Ganga is being depicted as a goddess with three bodies).

As the Ganga is sometimes regarded as the wife to Siva, these two panels play off each other; they present the symbolisms of husband-wife and male-female, while connecting these to the Eternal Siva figure who separates the two. The rising three heads
of the Eternal Siva sculpture contrasts with the falling three-bodied Ganges relief depiction and further suggests a calculated placement of the sculptures.

Located on either side of the western entrance to the shrine and facing each other on opposing walls:

1. Marriage – depicts Siva being wed to Parvati.
2. Andhaka – shows Siva killing the demon Andhaka by impaling him with a sword.

This dichotomy is more evident and represents two moods being experienced. Siva is angered, aggressive, and dangerous fighting Andhaka; but is calm, at peace, and joyous marrying Parvati.

Located on either side of the northern entrance, both facing the Eternal Shrine to the south:

1. Siva Dancing – shows several forms of Siva dancing with other deities surrounding him.
2. Lord of Yogis – presents a large image of Siva as the Lord of Yogis – Yogiashvara, meditating.

Contrasting energies between these two images are evident. Siva, while dancing, presents outflowing, active, dynamic energy; where, as the yogi the energy is inward flowing, passive, and static. Although seemingly different, it is suggested that the energies of the images are identical just executed in different manners.

As the Elephanta caves are not one of India's major tourist destinations, the majority of visitors to the caves are Siva devotees. This heavy traffic (being upward of tens of thousands each year) requires the caves to be protected and maintained. UNESCO appoints the Indian government to maintain the cave temple at Elephanta, which was declared a World Heritage Site in 1987 (see UNESCO).

References


Knapp, B. L. (1978) “The Dance of Siva: Malraux, Motion and


**Related Topics for Further Investigation**

- Aghora
- Ishana
- Tatpurusha
- Sadyojata
- Vamadeva
- Dvarapalas
- Gupta Dynasty
- Shaiva Puranas
- Ajanta Caves
- Ellora Caves
- Pitalkhora Caves
- Mt. Kailasa

**Noteworthy Websites Related to the Topic**

  (This link provides a 360-panorama view from inside the main hall)
- [http://www.devi.org/elephanta.html](http://www.devi.org/elephanta.html)
- [http://whc.unesco.org/pg.cfm?cid=31&id_site=244](http://whc.unesco.org/pg.cfm?cid=31&id_site=244)
- [http://www.templenet.com/Maharashtra/elephanta.html](http://www.templenet.com/Maharashtra/elephanta.html)
- [http://theory.tifr.res.in/bombay/architecture/building/elephanta.html](http://theory.tifr.res.in/bombay/architecture/building/elephanta.html)
Written by Brett Ferster (March 2006) who is solely responsible for its content.
C. Karma, Time, and Cosmology (11)
   a. Hindu Conceptions of Time and Creation (2)
   b. The Hindu Universe (2)
   c. Karma, Samsara, and Reincarnation (3)
   d. Moksa (Spiritual Liberation) (4)

D. Hindu Social Organization and Values (17)
   a. Dharma and the Dharma Sastras (5)
   b. The Four Classes (Varna) Of Hindu Society (4)
   c. The Caste (Jati) System (4)
   d. The Untouchables (2)
   e. Purity and Pollution (2)
   f. Auspiciousness and Inauspiciousness (1)

E. Dharma and the Individual (52)
   a. Hindu Rites of Passage (Samskara) (10)
      1. Investiture with the Sacred Thread (Upanayana) (1)
      2. Marriage (Vivaha) (4)
      3. Householder’s Samskara (3)
      4. Antyesti (Final Sacrifice) (2)
   b. The Four Goals/ Aims of Life (16)
      1. Dharma (1)
      2. Artha (2)
      3. Kama (9)
      4. Moksa (2)
   c. The Four Stages of Life (6)
      1. The Student (Sisya) (1)
      2. The Householder (1)
      3. The Forest Dweller (1)
      4. The Renouncer (3)
   d. Women in Hinduism (18)
      Gender Issues (11)
      Notable Women in Hinduism (5)
   e. Vowed Ascetic Observances (Vrata) and Auspiciousness (Saubhagya) (4)
   f. Marriage and Pativrata (1)
   g. Sati and the Status of Widows (5)

F. Indian Philosophical Schools (58)
   a. Asceticism and Renunciation (7)
b. The Heterodox Philosophies (4)

1. Jainism (2)
2. Buddhism (1)
3. Carvaka (1)

c. The Six Orthodox Systems (46)

1. Sankhya (6)
2. Yoga (26)
   - Hatha Yoga (5)
   - Patanjali’s Yoga Sutra (2)
   - Related Topics in Yoga (5)
   - The Eight Limbs (Astanga) of Yoga (9)
     - Asana (1)
     - Dhyana (1)
     - Pranayama (2)
     - Samadhi (3)
     - Yama and Niyama (2)
   - The Yogas of the Bhagavad Gita (4)
3. Nyaya (1)
4. Vaisesika (1)
5. Mimamsa (1)
6. Vedanta (12)
   - General Information (1)
     i. Sankara’s Radical Non-Dualism (Advaita) (3)
     ii. Madhva’s Dualism (Dvaita) (2)
     iii. Ramanuja’s Qualified Non-Dualism (2)

G. The Epics, Bhagavad Gita and the Rise of Bhakti (56)

a. The Ramayana (21)
   - Major Characters in the Ramayana (8)
   - Summary Retelling of Books 1-7 (9)

b. The Mahabharata (22)
   - Major Characters of the Mahabharata (15)
   - The Harivamsa (1)

c. The Bhagavad Gita (3)
   - General Studies (2)

d. The Bhagavad Gita’s Three Yogas (9)
   1. Jnana Yoga (2)
   2. Karma Yoga (4)
3. Bhakti Yoga (2)

e. The Alvars and the Nayanars (1)

H. Major Hindu Sects, Deities and Puranic Myths (135)

a. The Puranas (6)

b. Saivism (25)

Saiva Deities (22)
- Ganesa (3)
- Sati/Parvati (3)
- Siva (15)
- Skanda/Kartikeya (2)

c. Vaisnavism (35)

1. Vaisnava Deities (32)
   - Hanuman (2)
   - Radha (2)
   - Sita (1)
   - Visnu (5)
   - Visnu's Avatars (20)
     - Krsna (13)
     - Rama (3)

2. Vaisnava Schools (3)

d. Saktism (52)

Sakta Deities (Hindu Goddesses) (51)
- Ganga (4)
- Mahadevi Durga (6)
- Other Goddesses (17)
- Parvati (3)
- Sarasvati (1)
- Sri/Laksmi (2)

The Ten Mahavidyas (21)
  a) Kali (7)
  b) Tara (3)
  c) Tripura Sundari (2)
  d) Bhuvanesvari (2)
  e) Bhairavi (1)
  f) Chinnamasta (2)
  g) Dhumavati (3)
  h) Bagalamukhi (3)
  i) Matangi (2)
J. Tantra (18)

a. History and Fundamentals of Tantra (1)

b. The Tantras (3)

c. Tantric Saivism in Kashmir (6)

Saiva Siddhanta (1)

d. Kundalini Yoga (2)

e. Goddess and Women in Tantra (3)

f. Tantric Mantras and Yantras (3)

g. General Information (1)

K. South Indian Hinduism (11)

General Studies (1)

Literature, Cinema, Etc. (2)
South Indian Deities (3)
South Indian Festivals (2)
The Alvars (2)
The Nayanars (1)

L. Hindu Arts, Architecture and Culture (41)

Culture (6)
Assorted Aspects of Hindu Culture (4)
Hindu Symbols (1)
Martial Arts (2)
Poets and Playwrights (6)

Ritual Arts (16)
Sacred Dance (10)
Sacred Music (2)
Sacred Cities (5)
Tales and Fables (4)

M. Colonization and Reform (16)

a. Religious Syncretism in North India (3)
   1. Kabir (1)
   2. The Bauls (1)
   3. Guru Nanak (1)
b. Hindu Responses to Christianity (1)
c. Hinduism and Politics (12)
   1. Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1)
   2. Mahatma Gandhi (5)
   3. Hindutva and the Bhartiya Janata Party (1)
   4. Bharat Mata (1)
   5. Significant Figures (3)
Political Parties (3)

N. Transnational Hinduism in Asia (13)

a. Hinduism in Nepal (6)
b. Hinduism in Southeast Asia (4)
c. Hinduism in Indonesia (3)

O. Revitalization and Modernity (25)

a. Hinduism and Humanism (1)
   Rabindranath Tagore (1)
b. Hinduism in Universalistic Religion (11)
   1. The Theosophical Society (4)
   2. Sri Aurobindo and Integral Yoga (1)

Noteworthy Figures in Contemporary Hinduism

1. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and the Ramakrishna Order
2. Sathya Sai Baba
3. The Sankaracaryas
   - Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan
   - The Dasanamis

c. Hinduism and Modernity

1. Hinduism and Ecology
2. Hinduism and Ethics
3. Gender Equality

P. Hinduism Beyond India

1. Hinduism and Ecology
2. Hinduism and Ethics
3. Gender Equality

Q. Hinduism and Other Religions

1. Hinduism and Buddhism
2. Hinduism and Christianity
3. Hinduism and Islam
4. Hinduism and Sikhism
5. Hinduism's Interaction with Other Religions

The Parsis

R. Hinduism and the West

1. Hinduism for the West
   - Swami Vivekananda
   - Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and Transcendental Meditation
   - Osho
   - Jiddu Krishnamurti
   - Swami Bhaktivedanta and ISKCON
   - Krishnamacharya and the Hatha Yoga Movement
   - Yogananda Paramahansa

2. Some Contemporary Teachers
   - Swami Sivananda Saraswati

S. Significant Figures and Organizations in Hinduism

1. Significant Figures in Hinduism
   - Scholars of the Hindu Tradition
2. Significant Hindu Organizations
The glorious Mogao cave temples and the earliest printed book. Legend holds that in 366 A.D., a Buddhist monk named Yuezun saw a vision of a thousand Buddhas on the face of a cliff near the town of Dunhuang in the Gobi Desert of northwest China. He began digging caves into the cliff face to make his vision a reality. Who knows if there was a Yuezun who had a vision, but it’s undeniable that in the 4th century, Buddhist monks began to dig grottoes into the cliffs and they didn’t stop for a thousand years. From the 4th to the 14th century, the monks, sponsored by politicians and wealthy donors w Cave temples at Dunhuang were begun in 366; at Bingling and Maijishan in the early fifth century; at Yungang in 460; at Longmen and Gongxian in the early sixth century. During the Tang period additions were made to many of these cave temple complexes, especially Dunhuang and Longmen. DUNHUANG. Positioned in the furthest reaches of northwestern China, Dunhuang served as a gateway into China from Central Asia. Beginning in the fifth century, and continuing through the tenth, approximately five hundred rooms were carved into the area's soft rock. These rooms were decorated with sculptures an Hidden cave temples of Matara.

Copyright Notice: Please obtain permission from the author before duplicating, re-publishing or adapting content of a trip report. Be a responsible traveler! Watch this video before you hit the road! Do you like to contribute a Trip Report? learn how to or download template and start straight away! Tags & Author Archive. Akuressa, Amangala Owagiri Rajamaha Viharaya, Budugala Rotuba Rajamaha Viharaya, Elamaldeniya, Elamaldeniya Rajamaha Viharaya, Eldeniya, Getabaru Devalaya, Hakmana, Kireelipana, Kotapola, Matara, Meemanagalkanda Gal Len Viharaya, Mulatiyana, Pasgoda, Rotumba, Thunbewila, Thunbewila Rajamaha Viharaya, Umangala Viharaya, May, July, Wet Zone, History, 2013, Trekking. Author: Niroshan (192 Trips).