



3rd to 4th Century AD: Ikshvaku Phase

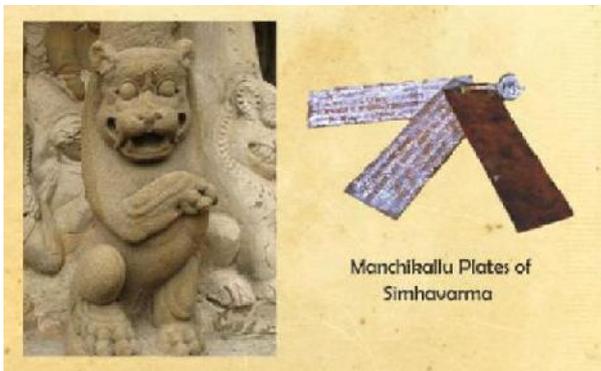
The Ikshvakus, who succeeded the *Satavahanas*, extended their patronage to the art tradition of Amaravati. Additional installations such as two Dharmachakras and additions to the Maha-Chaitya complex were made during this period.

Vishnukundin Phase

According to a local tradition, Madhava Varma, the *Vishnukundin* King, a staunch supporter of *Brahmanical* faith, caused a lot of damage to the *Mahastupa* and was responsible for persecuting the Buddhist monks by forcing them to desert, resulting in the gradual erosion of the prestige of the holy *Stupa*.

4th century AD: Pallava dynasty

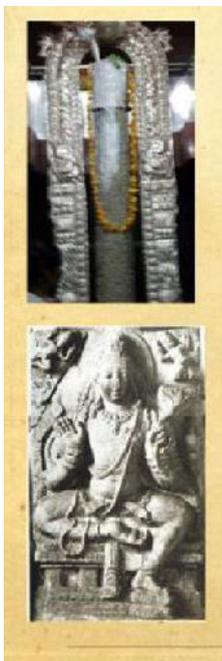
The areas around Dhanyakataka – Amaravati went into the hands of the early Pallavas who ruled from Amaravati as their capital, as attested by their inscriptions.



Manchihallu Plates of Simhavarma

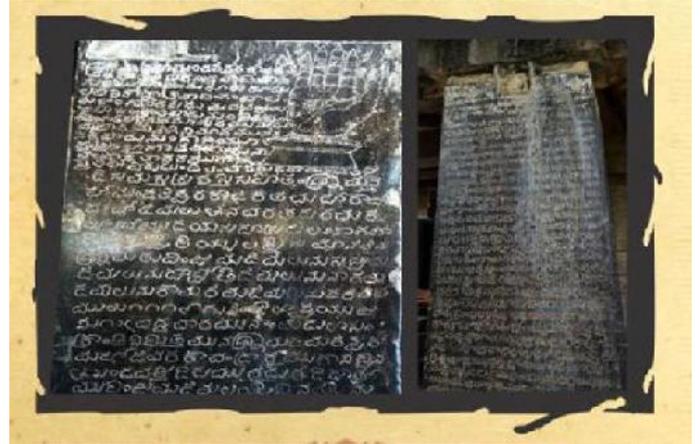
7th century AD: Eastern (Vengi) Chalukyan

The eastern Chalukyas, the *Vengi Chahlukya*, started ruling the coastal tracts of Andhra Pradesh. During the rule of the Eastern Chalkuyas, Saivism took its roots at Dharanikota. Amma Raja-II, considered as one of the Pancharama Ksthetras, constructed the Amareswara temple during this period.



12th century AD: Kota Chiefs

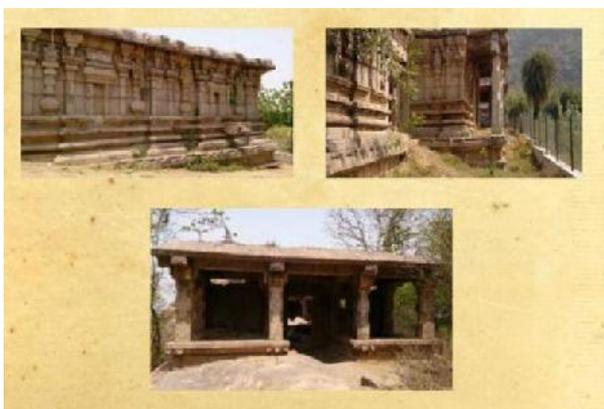
Amaravati Dharanikota became the capital of the *Kota* chiefs, for the 3rd time in history. According to an inscription found in a temple at Velpuru in Guntur, Amaravati was described as follows: "There is a city, named *Sri Dhanyakataka*, which is superior to the City of the Gods, and where the temple of *Sambhu*, named *Amaresvara*, is worshipped by the Lord of the Gods (*Indra*), where the God Buddha, worshipped by the creator, is quite close by and where there is a very lofty *chaitya*, well decorated with various sculptures.", which also reveals that the *stupa* was in good state of its existence.



13th and 14th Century AD: The Kakatiya dynasty

Dhanyakataka or Dharanikota was under the administration of the Kakatiyas during the 13th and 14th centuries who extended their patronage to the Amareswara temple.

An inscription from Malkapuram near Amaravati reveals that Rudrama Devi celebrated the birthday on 25th March 1261 AD and at the same time ascended to the throne.



13th Century AD: The Reddy dynasty

Prolaya VemaReddi, (1326 AD), the founder of the Reddy dynasty, seized Dharanikota from the Kota Chiefs and strengthened the fortress against the Muslim invasions. The temple of Amaresvara, celebrated as one of the Pancharamas was deconsecrated during this period. The area was annexed by the Gajapoets of Orissa, after the Reddy period.

13th Century AD: The Sri Lankan Connection

An inscription dated 1344 A.D at Gadaladeniya, near Kandy, in Sri Lanka, records the repair of a two-storeyed image-house at *Dhanyakataka* by Dharmakirti a Sinhalese monk. This is the last known reference to the *Stupa* at Amaravati.



1500-1600AD: The Vijayanagara Period

After the capture of the Kondavidu Fort, in Guntur district, on June 23, 1515A.D, Sri Krishnadeva Raya, the Vijayanagara Emperor, proceeded to Dharanikota and presented gifts to god Amareswara, and also to 108 learned Brahmins. It is clearly established that Dharanikota was under the rule of the Vijayanagara Empire during the 16th century A.D.

1700-1800AD: The Last Phase

Amaravati passed successively under the reigns of the Qutubshahis followed by the Moghul emperor, Aurangzeb, the Nizam and the British. Colonel Colin Mackenzie discovered the great *Stupa at Amaravati* in 1797, resulting in a series of excavations and recovery of a large number of Amaravati Sculptures.

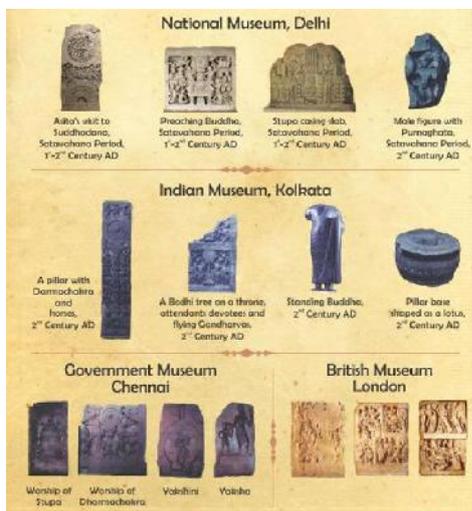
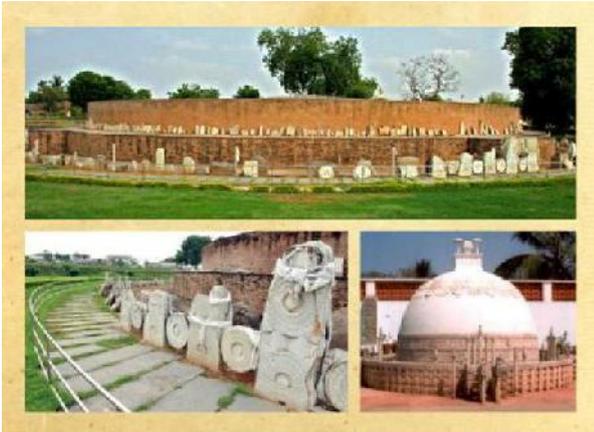
17th Century AD: Raja Vasireddy Venkatadri

Raja *Vasireddi Venkatadri* Naidu, a chieftain of *Chintapalli Zamindari* in Guntur district, fretting under the surveillance of a battalion of the East India Company, shifted to Dharanikota.



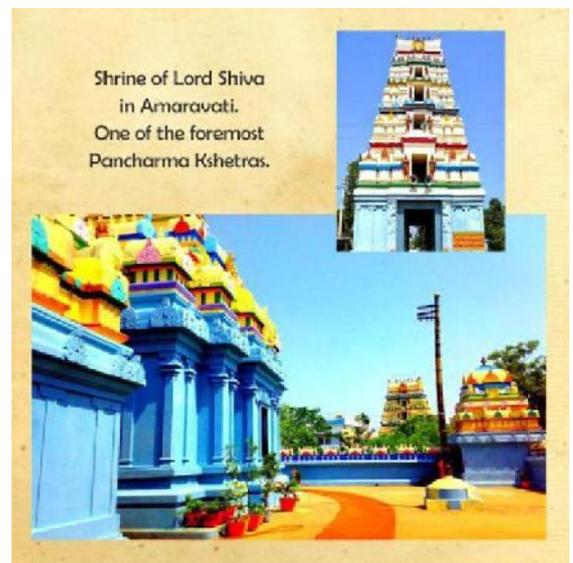
18th Century AD: Preservation and excavation of Maha Stupa

Colin Mackenzie visited Amaravati in 1797 and prepared a volume of plans and drawings. 11 marbles were delivered into the charge of Major Cotgrave, who subsequently transferred them to Indian Museum, Kolkata and Museum of East India Company, London. 33 marble slabs were brought by the then Collector of Masulipatnam who sold to various Governors, Collectors and so on. Further excavations by Sir Walter Elliot sent 90 pieces of sculpture to Chennai. 121 sculptures were transported to London, where it was featured in multiple international museums and gaining acclaim and attention before permanently being transferred to the British Museum.



18th Century AD: Complete excavation

The Governor of Madras, on February 1, 1880, visited Amaravati and ordered the complete excavation of the *Stupa*, resulting in its total destruction. Over 400 pieces that were found were dispatched to the Madras Museum. Later findings by Alexander Rea and Burgess are lodged in the sculptured at Amaravati.



19th Century AD: Clearance operation

In 1958, R. Subrahmanyam and K. Krishnamurthy undertook clearance operation at Amaravati, and they brought out numerous fragments of the railing with donative inscriptions. They also located features of the *Stupa* and the *ayakas*.

Statue of Dhyana Buddha (125 ft high) seated in meditative posture on the bank of River Krishna. A three-storey museum beneath the statue has replicas of famous sculptures of Amaravati Art.



His Holiness the Dalai Lama spearheaded the event, Kalachakra, held at Amaravati in Andhra Pradesh in January 2006

