CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF HOYSALA TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE
History of Hoysala Temple Architecture

Introduction:

There was a notable outburst of architectural and sculptural activity during the reign of the Hoysalas who were famed for their ornate and exuberant style. The Hoysalas built their temples in the same architectural traditions and standards set by their predecessors the Chalukyas; however, they later multiplied, elaborated and congealed the Chalukya motifs and offered them in a baroque variation. The Hoysala style also exhibited a greater reliance on sculptural decoration which could be observed in the large figural sculptures dominating the wall surfaces. Though all the temples do not possess this characteristic yet it was this exuberance that made the Hoysala style unique and distinctive.

It is interesting to study the Hoysala temples from the point of view of the temple plan, its setting within a compound space, the treatment of the wall surfaces, the formation of the tower or Śikhara and the design of the pillars.
While discussing the plan of the Hoysala temple, one has to mention the stellate plan as a decisive Hoysala feature. In its most simple form the structure consisted of three customary compartments, namely, the garbhagriha (cella), connected to a vestibule which in turn was attached to a pillared hall known as the navaraṅga. In certain temples there was an open pillared pavilion in front of the navaraṅga referred to as mukhamandapa. Sometimes, the Hoysala temple consisted of double, triple, quadruple and even quintuple garbhagriha, in place of a single one. Though the plinth plan was generally star-shaped, there were temples of a broken square type in which all the corners of the temple consisted of right angles. Occasionally the Hoysala temple did present a combination of two types, as for example, the three-shrined Lakṣmī - Narasimha temple at Haranhalli, in which only the major vimāna is stellate. The typical Hoysala temple rested on a platform or jagati which was harmonious with star-shaped nature of the constructions. This feature was of immense architectural value for it gave some sense of height to the temple.

The spatial organisation of the Hoysala temple was another aspect of the Hoysala style. Despite the multiplicity of elements in the Hoysala temples, the
architectural solidity and unity of the monument was preserved. A compound or enclosure was then used to place this solid mass which was then set off against other structures.

As regards the treatment of the wall surfaces, one finds that the Hoysala architect greatly indented the wall surface in order to attain the play of light and shade, and also to furnish more space for the decorative sculpture. At the basement of the temple on the platform there were a number of bands displaying animate sculptured designs, which ran right round the temple. The carved borders followed a typical pattern. The lowest section consisted of a gajathara procession of elephants in different attitudes and poses, signifying strength and stability; next was a border of horsemen and finally, there was a floral scroll. The windows were richly carved and highly ornamented.

The Hoysala sculptor also carved ornate niches and foliate canopies on the wide wall surfaces and placed elaborately chiselled images of the gods within them. Thus every surface had pilaster forms extending from the top of the frieze basement to significant elements such as the sikhara forms or the large eave at the top of the wall. The Hoysala temple wall did not exhibit nearly a
repetition of similar elements. In decorating these temples the Hoysala sculptor concentrated only on the exterior surface by varying specific forms. The interior walls of the temple were generally left undecorated. For example, a vestibule to the shrine was indicated by the sukanāsī a parrots' beak projection at the front of the sikhara. Simultaneously, there was a difference in the wall treatment at that spot, from the rest of the temple.

The keynote of the Hoysala style lay in the design and treatment of the tower or sikhara. A fluted effect was created on the tower by the continuation of the stellate system throughout the tower. Another significant aspect of the style was the lathe-turned pillars with their distinctive shape, design and variety. The pillar in the Hoysala temple was enriched by the attachment of a sloping bracket stone which was fixed on the turned capital with the aid of sockets.

In the light of the above details, it is clear that the Hoysala architect was not merely concerned with displaying sculpture, but was also constantly aware of the needs of architecture.

To enable a study of the unique features of the sculpture and architecture undertaken in temples during
the Hoysala period, it is necessary to make a survey of main temples which present the best specimens of these features. These include the Kesava temple at Belur, the Kesava and Siddhesvara temple at Marale, the Hoysalesvara temple at Halebid, the Dveśvara temple at Koravangala, the Amritesvara temple at Amritapura, the Tāvara temple at Arsikere, the Mallikārjunaswāmi temple at Basral, Lakshmínarasimha temple at Muggihalli, the Vīranārāyana temple at Belavadi, the Lakshmi Narayana Temple at Hosaholalu, the Kesava temple at Somanathpur and the Lakshmīdevī, temple at Doddagaddvalli.

The Lakshmīdevī temple at Doddagaddvalli:

Doddagaddvalli is a village about one and a half miles directly west from the spot of the main road of Hassan - Belur where the ninth milestone and the stone indicating the boundary between the Kaveri and Krishna basins, stand. A pathway passing over a low hill leads to the village whose surroundings can clearly be seen from the crest of the hill behind Girihalli.

Epigraphical evidence proves that the temple was constructed in the year 1113 A.D. in the reign of Vishnuvardhana Hoysala by a merchant Kṛillahana Rahuta and his wife Sahajadevi. The temple of Mahālakṣmī was constructed in a village of Abhinava - Kolāpura also known
as Goddumballi. Inscriptions show that this temple got grants during the reign of Ballāla and the subsequent kings. No extraneous structure or ingrafting was done on the temple later on. The Bhairava and the corner shrines are architecturally the same as the main building, though there is a possibility that they were executed later.

The most attractive feature of this temple is that it has many towers. The other feature which makes it attractive is that it is dedicated to goddess Lakshmi who is the chief deity.

The wide stone compound is entered through a porch which is on the south. Earlier, it also had a porch on the north.

The temple has four towers out of which three are stepped pyramid type. Four small turrets crown the four corner shrines. The tower over the Lakshmi shrine is nearly of the multi-turreted kind. The plan of the temple resembles the Latin cross with its head to the south and with the two entrances on each side of its long tail. On the north-east of the temple is a small shrine dedicated to Virabhadra which is of the Hoysala days. This also has a tower. So the temple in total has nine shrines with nine towers. It was the plainness of the walls and the
towers and the presence of the stepped-pyramids, that made some scholars feel that it belonged to the later Chalukya or very early Hoysala period.

II. The Kesava temple at Belur:

The temple of Vijayanārāyana, also known as the Kesava or Chennakesava temple was constructed by Vishnuvardhana Ballāla. He had been converted to the Vaishnava faith by the great teacher Rāmānujaśāchārya, and thus after his victory over the Chola viceroy of Talkad, he built a temple for Vijayanārāyana the victorious Vishnu, at Belur, in the year 1117 A.D. 10.

Constructed entirely of soapstone, this temple possessed a star-shaped garbhagriha with the sculptures of the gods on the exterior and a row of small niches below. The beautiful image of Kesava was installed in the sanctum. Its pedestal mentions the fact of its being set up by Vishnuvardhana who gave it the name of Vijayanārāyana. There was a large sukānasī in front of the garbhagriha doorway. The former opened, without any partition, into the Navaraṅga hall. The sides of the sukānasī, as well as the western side of the navaraṅga both to the south and to the north of the Sukānasī were covered by a large soapstone wall with sculptures on its exterior and inscription on its interior. The most important of these
inscription is Belur 53, for it recorded the construction of the temple and the consecration of the image.

The navaranga pavilion was comparatively large and contained beautifully designed pillars and ceilings. It was open on all sides except the west, and had three entrances. In between the latter, there were raised stone benches which were supported on the outside by railings. The daylight which flooded this pavilion through the open spaces between its pillars, enabled the devotees to admire the beautiful pillars, ceilings, and carved Garbhagriha doorway as also the striking image of Vijayanārāyana.

High tower of brick mortar and wood, probably star-shaped like the lower building, surmounted the Garbhagriha. The entire temple was situated on a high platform with three stairways, to the east, south and north, each of which was supported by a ratha or tower on either side. Thus there were in total nine rattas constructed around the platform. The entire structure must indeed have appeared beautiful and commanding, being situated on the top of the raised ground, with a tower that was plated with sheets of copper and gilded with gold.

Though Narasimha, the son of Vishnuvardhana did not make any important changes in this temple, he made two important grants for maintaining the temple and for
conducting worship. In 1173 A.D., a private devotee made a grant of land for worshipping the Narasiṣṭha image sculptured on the outside wall. It was known as Yeni - Narasiṣṭha and lay to the south-west of the main temple. A stone pillar with Garudas on its four sides was also constructed for the god, with the engraving of the inscription Belur 25 on it.

The inscription Belur 2 gives the information that Viṣraballāla II constructed a fine pond, known as Vāsudeva-Tīrtha, about 200 feet to the north-east of the temple. It had an ornamental entrance and two corner towers. According to inscription Belur 20, Ballāla had a large low-roofed store-house constructed in the north-west corner of the temple in 1180 A.D. From the inscription Belur 72, it is clear that apart from the pond and the kitchen, he had a rampart wall put up around, with two entrances or Mahādvāras. One of the latter was opposite the Kappe-Chennigaraya temple which had been constructed by Santalā Devī, queen of Vishnuvardhana. A pavilion which was also constructed could be the large one known as the Māganāyakana Mantapa which was right in front of the main temple.

Ballāla II carried out the following important changes in the main temple. The Navaraṅga pavilion was covered on all its open sides with stone slabs which
were perforated in order to serve as pierced windows. The three entrances on the east, south and north were supplied with stone doorways having massive wooden doors. He had a supporting tower erected on the platform on either side of each of these doorways. Further, large two storied niches, covering the smaller original niches, were constructed outside the Garbhagriha on the south, west and north sides. There was a doorway to separate the Śukanāśī from the Navaraṅga. The work connected with the main building had elaborate carvings in soapstone. In fact the most elaborate sculptures of this temple are contained in these additions.

During the days of Vīraballāla III, an officer named Somayya Danāyaka had the central tower rebuilt with brick and wood, according to the inscription Belur 24.

Among the sculptures in this temple are the fine bracket images, popularly referred to as the 'madanakai' images. The figures of Vasanta, Durgā, Sāradā, the huntress, and the drummer are some of the other striking sculptures.

III. Keśava and Siddheśwara temples at Marale :

In the village of Marale, about nine miles to south-east of Chikmaḡlur, are situated the two temples dedicated to Keśava and Siddheśwara 11. They occupy a
commanding position on a high ground to the north-west side of an old tank.

The larger or northern Kesava temple was built by Rayanadandanatha in 1130 A.D. Vishnuvardhana Hoysala is reported to have visited this temple and endowed it with lands. Inscription No. 141 Chikmaglur taluk reveals that the southern, slightly smaller, temple was dedicated to Siddheswara. However, according to the inscription No. 140, the original name of the linga was Kalideva. It is reported that Rayanadandanatha also constructed this temple at about the same time as Kesava temple, during the reign of Narasimha I Ballala.

The material used for constructing both the temples was soapstone. Though they are equally well ornamented, the Kesava temple is the larger and better executed one.

(a) Kesava Temple:

It possess a Garbhagriha, a closed śukīnaśīl, a Navaraṅga of nine squares and a porch of one square. The basement, which is on the outside, is cut up horizontally into four cornices. The latter have no ornamental designs but one of them carries the dentil mouldings meant for the Makara faces and the cross designs. The Navaraṅga and the Garbhagriha are square-shaped with projecting centre on the outer sides. A number of ornamental
turrets are used as ornamentation for the upper portion of the walls.

Some of these turrets are of the stepped pyramid type with dentil cornices, borne on pilasters of the indented square pattern. Others are constructed in the multi-turreted style and are borne on tall double pilasters. There are exquisite designs on some of them.

(b) Siddheśwara Temple:

In its general plan and design, it is similar to the Keśava temple, for it is square in form. Though it is slightly smaller, it possesses more of figure sculptures. It has a similar basement; however, the turrets of its niches have different and perhaps slightly inferior designs. The figure sculptures that are on the walls, start near the porch and run clock-wise. This temple has similar eaves and parapet as those of the Keśava temple. However, the modern brick tower has been constructed in a very inelegant shape which is not harmonious with the surroundings. The porch is also similar to that of the Keśava temple. The Navaraṅga ceiling is not as ornamental as that of the Keśava temple and apart from the central one, each ceiling is flat.
IV. Hoysaleśvara Temple at Halebid:

The great temple of Hoysaleśvara was constructed in the small village of Halebid which is situated about 18 miles to the west-south-west of Banavar railway station and nine miles by road east-north-east of Belur. It stands intact among the ruins of the great city of Dorāsamudra, the capital of the Hoysala empire, for three centuries, which lies in and around Halebid. Being the largest monument of the place and perhaps the greatest ever constructed in Dorāsamudra, it can rightly be regarded as a veritable museum of sculpture, with its thousands of large and small carved figures which depict the condition of art and life during the reign of the Hoysalas.

There was no inscription found on the Navaraṅga walls, or on a slab set up to the south-east of the temple, giving details regarding its erection, in accordance with the usual practice of the Hoysala ruler. It could thus be concluded that the concerned inscription has been lost. However, a slab about 7-1/2 feet high was found at Ghattadahalli, about three miles east of Halebid, with an inscription recording the constructions of a temple for Vīshnuvardhana Hoysaleśvara as well as the grant of some land for its support. This inscription mentions that Dvārāsamudra was definitely the place of construction of this temple, and that it was built by Ketamalla, an officer
of the king. The date on which the temple was constructed had not been mentioned. However, it has been recorded that the grant of land was made in Saka 1043 or A.D. 1121, which definitely establishes that the Hoysalesvara temple was constructed in or just before 1121 A.D.

This large temple built entirely of greyish soapstone is situated on a high platform which, more or less, follows the main contour of the temple, and is nearly 15 feet wide. There are two large cells in the temple which contain the Hoysalesvara and Santalesvara Lingas. Their outer walls are star-shaped. There are large niches to the south, west and north of each Garbhagriha on the interior. Corresponding to these can be seen tall two-storeyed towered niches on the exterior. In each cell, there is a Sukhanasi as well as a large indented square-shaped Navaraṅga with a corridor connecting the two Navaraṅgas. The thick and heavy back wall of the Navaraṅga has two intended square shape projections at each corner. There is a tower-like projection at the back of the centre of the corridor, with a slightly larger one in front. Of the four doorways leading from the platform into the Navaraṅga, two are from the east and one each from the north and the south.

Flanking each flight of steps of the platform as well as of the basement, are towered Niches. There is a mantapa containing a large stone bull, situated outside the
building and opposite to each shrine on the east. A shrine for the sun god Sūrya faces the west, and lies behind the south bull, to the east.

This temple is the largest existing structure of the Hoysala style. However, its elaborate sculptures make one easily forget its hugeness. Sculptures of gods, animals, men and ornamental designs cover almost every square foot of space on its outer walls, and every inch in many other places. One could compare the elaborateness of their ornamentation to jewellery, while sculptures are of high standard, revealing beauty of ideas and art. Great technical skill has been displayed by the sculptor who has excelled in exhibiting his talents.

The marvellous sculpture of the Hoysalesvara temple is never obtrusive. Further, inspite of the fact that each individual figure is a work of art, the designer definitely used sculpture as a subordinate element in order to embellish the beauty of the architectural design of the structure. A view of the temple from the distance, particularly on the west, confirms this point. With its intricately broken contour and harmonised sculpture and architecture this temple must have been a majestic and beautiful monument, worthy of being the greatest ever, in the imperial capital.

It appears that there was at least a gateway on the south if not a compound wall. The gateway ran between the
Ganapati image and the Hoysala group, as is revealed by their basements.

On studying the structural details of the temple closely, it can be seen that the original structure was composed of two temples, each of which had an almost similar plan to that of the Kesava temple at Belur, with nearly the same dimension. Each Garbhagriha had a star shape, while the Navarangas had straight walls at the back, which met the side walls at right angles. The Navarangas halls with Sukhānasālīs were square-shaped. Perhaps the only doorways were the ones guarding the Garbhagrihas. There were pillars supporting the eastern half of the building above the basement and railings. However, there were no screens between them, which made it possible for the whole building to be well illuminated by daylight. Thus the structure had a simple and yet beautiful design.

Soon after, changes began to be made in the structure. Owing perhaps to the heavy stress caused by the large brick tower on the outer walls of the Garbhagriha, buttresses were given in order to counteract this side-thrust and to give a better protection to the inner niches of the Garbhagriha. The small niches which probably stood originally on the south, west and north of each Garbhagriha were now superseded by large, two-storeyed towered niches, which sometimes concealed the temple's original wall sculpture. However, the basements
were carved along with the corresponding friezes of the temple. From this one could conclude that these niches were set up after the carving of the large wall images but before the completion of the friezes. An unusual feature among Hoysala temples was the tower-like tops of the projections which made Fergusson conclude that there were smaller towers standing over these portions of the roof. It appears that the projection at the back of the corridor also existed before the carving out of the large images.

That there were considerable changes in the temple, a generation after it was constructed, is evident from the unpublished inscription on the lintel of the southern doorway stating that the sculptor Kalidasi made the lintel for Kedaroja, the master architect of Narasimha I. It is also learnt from another inscription on a basement cornice to the east of the Surya temple that Demoja made the eastern doorway, that is the south doorway on the east. Narasimha's accession to the throne in 1141 A.D., more than 20 years after the construction of the temple, makes it appear that the series of perforated screens were all put up during the reign of Narasimha I.

The striking difference between the designs of these new doorways and the Sukanaśī doorways on the one side and the Garbhagriha doorways on the other gives
rise to the surmise that the addition of the Sukanaśī doorways was also made during Narasiṃha's reign.

It appears that the central tower-like projection on the east, the Sūrya shrine and perhaps the original bull mantapas were also built at this time or later. The great change undergone by these latter in subsequent times is apparent from the fact that their ceilings have stray Hoysala viragala sculptures on them, while sculptured friezes evidently belonging to some other temple appear on the platform on the north bull mantapa.

V. Buchesvara Temple at Koravangala

The Buchesvara temple is the largest of the three temples that are constructed in the village of Koravangala, which is situated in the midst of a sandy highland, six miles to the north of Hassan.

Though there are several inscriptions in the village, E.C. V Hn. 71, which occupies a prominent position in the south-east of the temple, is the inscription most closely concerned with the temple. According to this inscription the temple owed its construction and consecration in 1173 A.D. to Buchirāja (colloquial for Bhūtanātha Rāja) a Brāhmaṇa officer from a family in the hereditary service of the Hoysala king Narasiṃha I. It was constructed to commemorate the coronation of Ballāla II. Buchirāja was the youngest of a large family whose other members were
responsible for the construction of the other temple in the place.

The Bucchēśvara temple, which is well preserved has a towered Garbhagriha, a noble Sukanaśī, a Navaraṅga, a Mukhamantapa which had a connection to the main shrine through a porch, and a Sūrya shrine which lay to the east of the Mukhamantapa. Thus, all the elements of well-developed Hoysala temple were present in the building. The shrines were constructed in a squarish plan but the mantapa was an indented square. The sculptural work of this temple which was very ornate, was almost similar to that of Mosale.

VI. Amritaśvara Temple at Amritapura :

The temple of Amritaśvara, which is situated at Amritapura, contains ten inscriptions within its precincts and its compound. The oldest one of these is on a large slab set up in the south-east of the temple. It is reported to be the composition of Janna, the famous Kannada poet, and was constructed in the year 1196 A.D. The temple was consecrated during this year. It appears that the one responsible for having the temple erected was Amritaśvara Dandanāyaka, a Hoysala officer. At the same time, the linga of Amritaśvara was consecrated during Ballala II's reign. On studying the temple closely, one is to conclude that the main temple with its Gabhagriha, Sukanaśī, Navaraṅga
and original porches was constructed in 1196 A.D. The Mukhamantapa must have been built later, by 1206 A.D. Nevertheless, the entire structure and most of the neighbouring structures all typically portray Hoysala workmanship and origin.

The unique feature of the Mukhamantapa is that the outer facing of its basement is covered by a series of beautiful turrets. The latter, which are alternatively large and small, are about a hundred in number with a variety of designs. Each of these towers is borne on an ornamental pilaster which is often star-shaped.

The smaller towers, which are proportionate to the width of their bases, are tall and taper uniformly. A few of them have curvilinear outlines. Most of the larger towers are star-shaped with a curvilinear design. On the top, they possess the same star-shape and inverted lotus sikharas with stone Kalaśas. It is peculiar to find this combination of a curvilinear outline with a star-shaped plan, with the elevation of each ray of the star being composed of seven smaller turrets tapering one above the other, even among Hoysala towers. This pattern has been made use of rarely even in the case of larger towers of the temples as in the Sadaśiva temple at Muggihalli. Figures of lions trampling on elephants or pairs of elephants
rearing up, are generally found between each pair of towers.

VII. Vīranārayana Temple at Belavadi : (Fig. 1)

Belavadi is a village on the Banavar-Chikkmagalur Road, four miles directly to the north of Halebid. There is a large temple dedicated to god Vīranārayana.

It is difficult to date exactly the temple as the soapstone slab set up to the south-east of the temple bearing inscriptions is broken and completely effaced. On top of this inscription is a sculptured panel showing Nārāyaṇa with Venugopāla on his right and Yoganarasimha on his left. It is evident that this slab which has Hoysala Kannada inscription was erected after the completion of the temple. But another fragmentary slab in the vicinity, though greatly damaged, dates it to the Saka year 1128, i.e. 1206 A.D. It states that in Saka year 1128 some lands under some tank were given for the worship of lord Vīranārayana. So we can conclude that at least the shrine of lord Vīranārayana was in existence then. It is obvious that the eastern part of the temple was an afterthought.

The temple is a trikūṭāchala or three-celled structure but it is more complex than any other trikūṭāchala of the Hoysala period.
A closer study of the temple makes one feel that
the temple can be divided into two distinct parts - the
western and the eastern parts.

The western part is a complete temple which was
constructed before the eastern part which appears to have
been added later on. The western part of the temple has
a square Garbhagriha and an open Sukanāsī, a Navarānga of
nine aṅkānas and an indented square-shaped mukha-mantapa.
These structures are in a courtyard which is paved by
soapstone slabs and surrounded by an oblong basement.
The eastern portion of the basement has a part of the
cloistered verandah which originally enclosed the whole
courtyard. To the east of this verandah is a doorway
leading to the eastern part of the temple.

The eastern part of the temple consists of a large
sabhāmāntapa of indented square plan with triple indentations
in the corners, a Sukanāsī in the south and the Garbhagriha
in the north which houses the images of Gopālakrishna and Yoga
Narasimha.

The difference between the eastern and the western
parts of the temple is that the walls of the eastern part
are fully sculpted and the plan is different.
The original entrance to the temple compound was through a fine large upparige on the east of the sabhamantapa.

VIII. Isvara Temple at Arsikere:

The Isvara temple which is constructed at Arsikere is a composition of exquisite beauty, in spite of its small dimensions.

Arsikere was perhaps named after the tank which was built in the name of Chalukya princess. It was already well-known during the reign of Chalukya Tribhuvanamalla Vikramaditya VI. It is clear that the town and its tank were well-known long before 1220 A.D. from the inscription found on a conduit of the tank and subsequent inscriptions on other conduits by various Hoysala rulers. Around 1220 A.D., Ballala II probably constructed and consecrated the temple during the reign of his son, Narasimha II. Very few subsequent references are found regarding the temple. The north view of the Isvara temple is obstructed to some extent by the much plainer double temple on the north which lies near the Navaraṅga of the Isvara temple.

The temple is constructed almost entirely out of soapstone. It depicts the typical characteristics of Hoysala architecture. It possesses a small Garbhagriha, an open Sukanaśī, an open Navaraṅga, a porch and a unique mukhamantapa. Both the Garbhagriha and the mukhamantapa
have a star shape. However, the Navaraṅga has a squarish plan. There are entrances to the north and south of the porch. The latter opens into the mukhamantapa on the east and the Navaraṅga on the west.

It appears that the structure is raised on a floating foundation of flat slabs placed on a hardened bed of sand. A basement which is about three feet high, rises on this foundation. The basement has several cornices, the lowest of which is bell-shaped. The others are separated by deep horizontal lines of shadows and are ornamented with differently shaped geometrical mouldings. However, the carving work of the latter has not been completed.

IX. Śrī Mallikārjunasvāmī Temple at Basral:

In the north-east corner of Basral, a large prosperous village, fifteen miles north of Mandya, is situated a fine Śiva temple of the Hoysala type. It possesses a large upparige with an outer porch on the south. The modern street which lies beyond it, is perhaps four feet above the original street level. There is a small Bhairava shrine in the northeast of the courtyard, while a large, main temple of Mallikārjuna is in the centre.

Marihara, an officer of the Hoysala emperor Narasiṣṭha II, claims to have constructed the Mallikārjuna
temple in 1234 A.D. The village tank was built by Harihara in his mother's name, while he set up the linga of the temple in the name of his father who probably was an inhabitant of the village of Basurivala. This temple was provided with lands etc., for its maintenance by the emperors Narasimha in 1234, Vīra Somesvāra in 1237 and Narasimha III in 1269 A.D.

The Mallikārjuna temple is smallish in structure. It belongs to the highly ornate thirteenth century Hoysala type, and in several respects, is similar to the Vuchēśvara temple at Koravangala, Hassan taluk. It is built entirely of soapstone and potstone, and has a small interior, a rather low roof and narrow doorways. It has a noteworthy plan, for it is a three-celled structure, or trikūṭāchala. Only its western cell has a tower as in the case of the Kedāreśvara temple and Hosaholalu temple. There is a Nandi shrine to the east of the Navaraṅga directly opposite the linga. The entrances are only from south and north as in the case of the Vuchēśvara temple at Koramangala in which is found a Sūrya shrine similarly situated. The temple possesses three Garbhagrihas, one sukanāśī on the west, one Navaraṅga with an eastern extension, a small porch and Nandi shrine.
X. Lakshmi Narasimha Temple at Nuggihalli:

Lakshmi Narasimha temple is situated twelve miles north-east of Channarayapatna in a village called Nuggihalli, which was once a flourishing town according to the inscription No. Ch 238. It has been recorded that during the reign of Someśvara Hoysala Bommanna Dannayaka made Nuggihalli into an Agrahāra named Somanāthapura. He had the gods Keśava, Narasimha and Gopāla installed in Śaka 1168. Kīlaka got the god Sadāśiva installed in 1249 A.D. It is thus clear that the original temple was a Hoysala structure set up about twenty years before that of Somanāthapura in the T-Narasipur taluk. The present Navaraṅga with its square granite pillars was probably built much later, perhaps during the Vijayanagar period, in front of the original porch. The latter possesses lathe-turned soapstone pillars and complete eaves. Perhaps the hajāra in front and the patalankana with eighteen-sided, high, fluted pillars were also constructed later, by about 1700 A.D. The south and north towers which are made of brick and mortar belong to the same date. Although the main god is Keśava, the temple is generally referred to as the Lakshmi Narasimha temple.

It appears that the original Hoysala temple had a Mahādvāra or upparige of soapstone, which was supported by plain round pillars. There were two fine elephants before
the Mahādvāra. They are now in front of the hajāra, and are well carved, with a horseman cantering on either side of the trunk of each. Perhaps there was prākāra wall on either side of the Mahādvāra, enclosing an oblong courtyard as at Belavadi. The temple was raised on a platform which was about four feet high and lay in the western part of the courtyard.

This Hoysala temple resembles that of Hosaholalu in size, quality and plan. However, they differ from each other in the following points:

Firstly, the main cell on the exterior has a squarish plan, and with the exception of the sukanāśī and the outer niches, it has the same size as the other two cells.

Secondly, one does not find the inner jagali and extra aṅkana near the Navaraṅga. However, there is a long porch which functions as a mukhamantapa, in front of the Navaraṅga. It appears that only the main cell had a tower originally.

Finally, the sculptures of this Keśava temple belong to a high order. They can be put in the same class as those of Hosaholalu and Somanathapura, and could probably be attributed to the talent of Mallitamma and his colleagues,
XI. Lakshmīnārāyaṇa Temple at Hosaholalu:

Any inscription regarding the Lakshmīnārāyaṇa temple of Hosaholalu has not yet been discovered. It was reported in the Annual Report of the Mysore Archaeological Department for 1915, that the temple might belong to 1118 A.D.\(^{23}\). However, in the lists of monuments published by the Department, R. Narasimhachar offers an opinion that the temple might have been constructed about 1250 A.D. There is now a belief that the temple was constructed at about the same time as the Muggighalli temple which belongs to 1240 A.D.\(^{24}\).

It appears that this temple retained its original structure for a long period. However, recently a mantapa of twelve aṅkana was built of granite stone in front of the temple. For some time, a small room to the south-east of the Navaraṅga was used as a kitchen. However, a large room has recently been built to the south of the mukhmantapa for the same reason.

It is reported that formerly a compound wall existed twenty yards away from the temple and around it, which has now disappeared. From the general features of the village one can conclude that there was originally a complete agrahāra in the fertile valley, having the Lakshmīnārāyaṇa temple in the centre, the Harihareśvara temple in the east-
north-east and a protecting wall around the village as in the case of Somanathapuram. The agrahāra, having almost disappeared, Hosaholalu is now a village of weavers.

The main temple is a trikūṭaṅgala, constructed in the Hoysala style. It is built on a platform which is four and a half feet high and roughly follows the contours of the temple. There is only a small extension from the Navaraṅga towards the east, which consists of the jagati platform and the doorway aṅkana. Thus compared to that of Kappechennigaraya of Belur and of Somanathapuram, the Navaraṅga at Hosaholalu has smaller dimensions. The north and the south, out of the three cells, have a squarish plan both on the interior and on the exterior. However, the centre of each side, has a slight projection. The main cell possesses a sixteen pointed-star plan. However, owing to its three outer niches on the south, west and north, it has attained a more important position in the plan. Only this cell has a śukanāśī and a tower among the three cells. A study of the general features of the temple leads one to conclude that some important official must have built it around the middle of the thirteenth century A.D. However, only the main temple belonging to the Hoysala period has been studied here.
XII. Kesava Temple at Somanathapur:

The Kesava temple is constructed at Somanathapur, which is a small village situated to the left of the Kaveri river.

It lies three miles to the north-west of Sosale and twenty four miles by road from Mysore over the Sosale bridge which has been newly opened. Somanathadandanayaka, a Hoysala governor, is reported to have built an agrahāra in this place, around the year 1258 A.D. since no village existed there before. The temple of Kesava was constructed by him at the centre of the agrahāra. There was also a temple built at the east-north-east end of the village, with five lingas. This was formerly referred to as Somanatha Bijjalesa. The village, whose ruins still exist today, was enclosed by a fort wall which encompassed an area of about 3 x 2 furlongs.

The history of the Kesava temple can be gleaned from eight inscriptions. A large soapstone slab near the Mahādvāra of the Kesava temple bears four of these inscriptions. The fifth can be found to the left of the Mahādvāra of the Harihara temple on the banks of the Tungabhadra, while the sixth inscription lies on a large slab to the north-east of the Pañchaliṅgeśvara temple at Somanathpura. The ceilings in the south-east and north-west verandahs of the Kesava temple bear the other two inscriptions.
A study of these inscriptions reveals that governor Somanātha was responsible for the construction of the Keśava temple at Somanathapur together with its prākāra etc. This has also been confirmed by the Harihar inscription dated in the year Vibhava or 1268 A.D. In July 1278 A.D., the Hoysala emperor Narasimha III permitted him to make a grant for maintaining the temple.

It is, therefore, clear that the construction of the temple took place earlier than 1268 A.D. However, it was completed by 1268 A.D. with the exception of a few sculptural details. It is learnt from the other inscriptions that Narasimha and his successor Ballāla III made settlements of lands etc., connected with the temple. The inscription No. 177, dated in 1497 A.D., states that Nanjarāja Vādeyar of Ummattur restored the agrahāra at the orders of Narasanāyaka, son of Īśvaranāyaka, during the rule of the king Immadi Narasiṁha Saluva. Referring to the reign of Sadāśivarāya another inscription reports that the taxes of the agrahāra were remitted by the governor Ahobalarāja, nephew of Aliya Rāmarāya. It appears that these inscriptions which stood elsewhere, were used to repair the roof of the verandah. The stones on the basement of the verandah in the northeastern corner depict Kannada letters and figures which reveal that they are the marks of masons responsible for rebuilding this portion. Granite beams and square granite
pillars are used to support a portion of the verandah to the north and west of the temple. This offers a striking contrast to the old Hoysala potstone beams and lathe-turned pillars.

This leads to the conclusion that the northern and the western verandah and the basement of the north-east verandah were probably rebuilt after 1550 A.D. perhaps in the late Vijayanagar era owing to the modern appearance of the characters of the masons' marks.

Conclusion:

The temples under study cover the period from A.D. 1113 to A.D. 1268 and these are at Doddagadavalli, Belur, Marale, Halebid, Koravangala, Amritapura, Balavadi, Arsikere, Basral, Muggihalli, Hosaholalu and Somanathapur. The construction of these temples was started by Vishnuvardhana Hoysala and was carried out by his successors. The main plan of the temple, however, remained star-shaped while the general appearance was slightly different as some of the temples had double, triple, quadruple and even quintuple Garbhagrihas. Hoysala temples have been known to be the 'veritable museum of art'.

The gradual elaboration of the style of the temple sculpture of the Hoysalas spanning over a hundred years is also reflected in the development of their iconography which will be considered in the following chapter.
CHAPTER II

1. Marg, 'In praise of Hoysala Art', p. 23.
2. Ibid., p. 24
5. Ibid., p. 33
6. Diwakar, R.R., op. cit., p. 480
7. Ibid., p. 481
8. MAR., 1933, p. 93
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., 1931, p. 26
11. Ibid., 1936, pp. 19–20
12. Ibid., 1930, p. 34
13. As quoted in MAR, 1930, p. 35.
14. MAR. 1933, p. 45
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid., 1931, p. 7
17. Ibid., 1933, p. 80
18. Ibid., 1930, p. 61
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., 1934, p. 36
22. Ibid., 1933, p. 20
23. Ibid., 1933, p. 3
24. Ibid.

25. Ibid., 1932, p. 16

26. Ep. Carn. XI Tn. 97, as quoted in MAR, 1932, p. 16

27. Ep. Carn. XI, Davangere No. 36 as quoted in MAR, 1932, p. 17

28. Ep. Carn. Tn. 101, as quoted in MAR, 1932, p. 17


30. MAR, 1932, p. 18

31. Ibid.

32. The above information has been collected from the Annual Reports of the Mysore Archaeological Department for the years 1930, 1931, 1932, 1934, 1936.