The halls of the temples of southern Karnataka are mostly hypostyle in character. They contain many pillars whose numbers normally are four or more. The pillars have decorated shafts. These decorations vary from period to period, style to style and dynasty to dynasty. On the basis of the shape and decoration of the shaft, they are designated as belonging to different styles or to different periods.

A type of stambha mentioned in the Texts on Indian architecture is called by the name ruchakastambha (Fig.-1, Pl.-1). It is the simplest form of a pillar. “Rucaka” in Sanskrit, literally means agreeable or acceptable. That means this pillar is purely functional in nature and decorations are optional. A functional pillar should possess a pedestal, a shaft and a corbel. Therefore, rucaka, according to the Text should have a pedestal, a shaft and a corbel above. All other additions in the form of capital, abacus and other decorations of the shaft are optional in nature. The decorations made on the shaft and the additional parts of the shaft in the form of capital and abacus have lead to the emergence of various types and forms of pillars.

Texts on Indian architecture have given a detailed description of pillars, like their variety, execution and measurements. Sthānu, sthūnam, pādam, janagha, charanam, anaghrīkā, talipa, stambha, kampa, arani, bhārakam, dhāranam, kumbha and shāli are all the synonyms of pillars mentioned in different Texts. The description given in the canons concerns the pilaster (bhittipāda), foundation pillar (nikhātastambha) independent pillar and engaged pillars (bhadrakastambha).

Texts prescribe a number of varieties of pillars. The popular varieties of pillars mentioned in all the Texts and found abundantly in the temples of our region are listed in the table given below. The Textual names and their references are also provided.
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<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of the pillar</th>
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| 16 | Bhutakaṅṭa/ Bhutapāda | Śilparatna - 21- 62-63  
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| 17 | Śivachchanda | Kāśyapaśilpa- 8 – 15-16 | Shaft with 4.8 and cylindrical in section |   |
| 18 | Rudrachchhanda | Mayamata- 15- 17a | Same as above |   |
| 19 | Saumyakānta | Mayamata- 15- 13-16 | Sixteen sided shaft | (Fig.-9,PL-9) |
| 20 | Skandakānta/ Indrakānta/ Kaumāram | Mānasāra – 15- 11b  
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| 21 | Pūrvāśra | Mayamata- 15- 13-16 | See Figs. 6,7,8. | (Fig.-6,7,8 PL- 6,7,8) |
| 22 | Śivakānta | Mānasāra – 15- 11b | Five sided shaft |   |
| 23 | Chitrakhanḍa | Mayamata- 15- 22b-26a  
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| 24 | Chitrakaraṭha | Mānasāra – 15- 13-15 | | (Fig.-23) |
| 26 | Kumbhasthambha | Mānasāra – 15-37- 42 | |   |
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A study of the table given above reveals, that the same name is given for different types of shafts by different Texts, and the same types of shafts are called
by different names by different Texts, This sometimes make the identification
difficult. However, an attempt has been made to identify them with the existing
examples of pillars as convincingly as possible. Yet the identification made in this
study is not beyond correction. The Texts on Indian architecture mention
brahmakānta (Fig.-2, Pl.-2) visnukānta (Fig.-3 Pl.-3), rudrakānta (Fig.-4, Pl.-
and chitrakhan (Fig.-5, Pls.-5 and 5a). Except the chitrakhan variety, all other varieties mentioned above are categorised based on the number of sides of their shaft. Pillars are generally provided with a pedestal, a capital, an
abacus and corbels.

Mayamata mentions a variety named purvāśra (Fig.-6,7,8, Pl.-6,7,8) which has
a square base and a shaft which is octagonal, or sixteen sided or circular above.

Mayamata mentions that saumyakānta (Fig.-9, Pl.-9 and 9a) pillar should
possess a sixteen sided shaft, whereas, all other Texts call this variety as
chandrakānta.

Ishakanta is mentioned both in Šilparatna, Īśānaśivagurudēvapaddati and
Kāmikāgama. This variety of pillar should possess a cylindrical shaft. This is
similar to the rudrakānta variety described in Mayamata.

The pillar with twelve sided shaft is called bhānukanta in Šilparatna, Īśānaśivagurudēvapaddati and Kāmikāgama. The same variety is referred as
suryakānta in Kāsyapasilpa. Skandakānta possesses a six sided shaft. All the
Texts mention this variety. Kāmikāgama calls this variety as kumārakānta. Mayamata mentions this variety as indrakānta and Kāsyapasilpa mentions that a
pillar with six sided shaft is of indrakānta variety and the same is called
skandakānta.

Śivakānta variety is mentioned only in Mānasāra. This variety possesses a five
sided shaft. Though skandakānta, śivakānta and bhānukānta are mentioned in all
the Texts, they are not found in the temples of the region of our study.
If the *brahmakānta* pillar has a projection or *bhadra* in the centre throughout, i.e., from the base till the *kumbha* or *manḍapī* then, this is called as *bhadракānta*. Śilparatna\(^\text{23}\), Śānaśivagurdhavapaddati\(^\text{24}\) and Mayamata\(^\text{25}\) mention this variety and the description is the same in all these Texts.

Some pillars are categorised based on the decoration of their base\(^\text{26}\), namely:

1. *Simhapāda* has a leoglyph in squatting or sitting position (Fig.-10, Pl.-10).
2. *Vyāḷapāda* is a pillar which possesses a *vyāḷa* at its base (Fig.-11, Pl.-11).
3. *Gajapāda* or *ibhapāda* possesses an elephant (Fig.-12, Pl.-12).
4. *Bhūtapāda* variety has a figure of a goblin depicted as a *bhāravāhaka* (Fig.-13, Pl.-13).

Most of the Texts mention two unique varieties of pillars based on their form and decoration. They are *sunḍupāda* and *pinḍipāda*. If the pillar possesses a cylindrical shaft, a cushion capital and an abacus and it looks like the trunk of an elephant then it is called as *sunḍupāda*\(^\text{27}\). If the same variety of pillar is decorated with *muktāgrāsas* or chain of beads then it is *pinḍipāda*\(^\text{28}\).

The *chitrakhanda*d\(\text{3}\) variety of pillar is mentioned in many Texts\(^\text{29}\). The Texts vary in describing this variety of pillar. As the name suggests, *chitrakhanda* is the one which is wrought variedly. Mānasāra prescribes that; this variety of pillar should possess three cuboids interspersed with octagonal shafts. According to Mayamata, this variety of pillar should possess three cuboids. In between the upper and middle cuboids, the shaft should be octagonal and between the middle and lower cuboids, the shaft should be sixteen sided. These shafts should be bordered with *dalapadmas*. According to Śilparatna, *chitrakhanda* should possess a base decorated with *dalapadmas*. Above the base, the shaft should be sixteen sided. Above, it should possess a cuboid. Kāśyapaśilpa prescribes that this variety of pillar should possess three cuboids interspersed with octagonal shafts. The shafts should have the bordering of *asṭadalapadmas*. This Text prescribes that the base of the *chitrakhanda* pillar can be either a cuboid or octagonal.
Pillars are named differently on the basis of their decoration. Mayamata mentions śrikhanḍa and śrīvajra. If the median band (patibandha) of the chitraghanḍa pillar is octagonal, then the pillar is called śrikhanḍa (Fig.-14, Pl.-14), if the median band is sixteen sided, then it is called śrīvajra (Fig.-15, Pl.-15). Temples in the region of our study possess this type of pillars belonging to late Chola and Vijayanagara periods. Mānasāra mentions kumbhastambha, kosṭasambha, padmakānta, chitrastambha and pālikāstambha. Kumbhastambha is a pillar which possesses a kumbha in between the base and shaft. The shaft can be of any variety. Kōśṭaka means a niche. A pillar with a series of miniature kōśṭas (shrine motifs) carved from the base till the capital is called a kōśṭastambha (Pl.-16).

The Text prescribes that; the decoration of these kōśṭas should be in accordance with the shaft of the pillar. Such pillars are noticed in the region of our study datable to late Chola and Vijayanagara periods. Pāli in Sanskrit means the edge of a sword. Therefore, pālikāstambha (Pl.-17) is a pillar which possesses a shaft with sharply ridged vertical flutings. Such pillars are found in the temples of Kalyana Chalukyas and the Hoysalas. Kāmikāgama mentions a variety called śrikānta. Silparatna mentions padmāsana, vajrākānta, ratnastambha, śrībandha, śrīvatsa, śrīkāra, priyadarśana and saumukhyā. Kāsyapaśilpa mentions śrīkānta and śrīvajra varieties.

Īśānaśivagurudēvapaddati mentions padmāsana, vajrakānta, śrikhanḍa and śrīvajra varieties. Suprabhēdāgama mentions four types of pillars. If the shaft of the pillar is cylindrical or square then, this is called śrīkara or priyadarśana. If the shaft is octagonal it is called saumukhyā and if the shaft is sixteen sided then, it is chandrakānta. If the lower part is square and the upper part of the shaft is octagonal this variety is called shubhanḍa. Kāsyapaśilpa gives a different type of pillar and calls it śubhankari. This type has a square base and an octagonal shaft, interspaced by a decorated cubical moulding (Fig.-28a, Pl.-42).
The identification of the śubhankari type is very general in nature. It is based on the shape of the shafts. It is aptly applicable to a type of pillar carved under the patronage of the Hoysalas in southern Bangalore district. In this type the shafts are designed as having cylindrical and multifaceted forms.

Now coming to the study and description of the pillars of the temples of southern Karnataka, they normally have the following parts as mentioned in the Texts. They are (from bottom to top):

1. Adhisīṭhāna or pūṭha - Pedestal
2. Danda - Monolithic shaft
3. Kumbha - Capital
4. Maṇḍi - Lotus decoration
5. Phalaka - Abacus
6. Pōtika - Corbels

PEDESTAL - It is the lowest member of the pillar. It has three major functions.

1. It gives a solid support to the shaft of the pillar.
2. It adds height to the pillar.
3. It enriches the beauty of the pillar.

The pedestals of the pillars of this region are basically square on plan. Nowhere, a circular pedestal is noticed. The pedestals of the Ganga and Nolamba periods are dadoed. Sometimes, they are decorated like kapōtabandha adhisīṭhāna punctuated with nāsis (Pl.-18a) or with scalloped lotus petals (Pl.-19a). Ornate pedestals also contain multiple horizontal and vertical indentations. During the Hoysala period a small architectural ‘niche’ (Fig.-17, Pl.-20 and 20a) with or without a miniature figure inside also comes into being.
Pedestals get elaborate architectural decoration in the temples of the later period. By the end of 13th century an increased degree of decoration for the carving of the pedestals can be noticed. These pedestals carved like the miniature representation of adhisśūrāhāna continue with elaborate decorations. Normally, kapōtabandha46 (Fig.-16, Pl.-21) and mañchabandha47 adhisśūrāhāna (Fig.-18, Pl.-22 and 22a) are noticed. In the kapōtabandha type, upāna, jagati with scalloped lotus petals, kampa, galā, kampa, kapōta with nāsis topped by prati are seen. An observation can be made here, based on the type of decoration of the pedestals. The pedestals having the kapōta moulding do not have the leogriffs at the corners48. The pedestals having paitiikā instead of the kapōta, have the leogriffs49 at the corners. These leogriffs are carved in squatting, sitting, relaxing and rampant positions. From this it is possible to guess that the pedestals with paitiikā and leogriffs represent the Tamil tradition, while the pedestals with kapōta and nāsi represent the Karnataka tradition of carving plinths. The pedestals having kapōta and paitiikā used alternatively are found during the Vijayanagara period50. The adhisśūrāhānas, thus represented on the pedestals, become more elaborate in their decoration during the Vijayanagara period.

Another feature of the Vijayanagara pillar is, whenever the pillars are massive or pier-like, no separate pedestal is provided51. Instead, all the decorative designs of the pedestal are carved at the bottom of the pillar/pier itself. This was done obviously for structural necessities. Likewise, pedestals resembling śrībandha52 adhisśūrāhāna (Pl.-23 and 24) are also found. These are noticed only in the kalyāna manītapas and mahāmanītapas of the temples and they are carved here to enhance the beauty and grandeur of these manītapas.

During the Vijayanagara period, decorative designs, as said earlier, get highly elaborated. Besides continuing the old tradition of simple dadoed pedestals, elaborately carved architectural patterns come into use. The representation of adhisśūrāhāna, the representation of shrines with all the important architectural members53, representation of bhāravāhakas54, representation of divinities55,
representation of ladies in different aspects of vanity, faunal, floral and decorative designs, etc., are carved.

The pedestals carved at the bottom of the shaft of the pillar/pier may also increase or decrease in its height depending upon the nature of carving.

The early architecture of southern Karnataka, particularly the religious structures, were mainly built out of brick and mortar. In these structures, pillars were built in brick masonry. For such pillars, a stone plank was provided as pedestal or masonry pedestal of brick was constructed. Examples for such masonry pedestals of brick are hardly found in southern Karnataka. But in northern Karnataka, numbers of such masonry pedestals have been noticed in the excavations conducted in the premises of early Chalukyan temples at Aihole and Pattadakal. These pedestals are dated to the pre Chalukyan period. However, it is necessary to mention here that, such a tradition continued even during the medieval period. In the excavations conducted at the royal enclosure of the Vijayanagara, a number of such masonry brick pedestals have been noticed in the plinths of the civic structures of that area.

SHAFT - The shafts of the pillars of the temples of the region under study are invariably monolithic in nature. Nowhere, in the temples under study, a masonry shaft is noticed. The shaft is the portion of the pillar between the pedestal and the capital. The shaft is described, based on the several parts it has, and depending upon the nature of its shape. Normally the shaft contains two decorative parts. They are;

1. The base
2. The Shaft

BASE - Generally the base of the pillars of the temples of the region under study is cuboid. The base of the pillar may or may not have relief work on its surface. Generally the height of the base will be equal to its breadth. However, the ratio gets
changed during the Vijayanagara period. The height will be more than its width. Sometimes, the corners of the base are also indented.

In a few instances, the shaft of the pillar is carved and decorated in such a way that the carvings are uniform from top to bottom of the shaft. In a few examples, the bases of the Vijayanagara pillars possess reliefs of the faunal, floral and figural themes. In the early forms of pillars, the height and the breadth of the base are equal and generally, they are cubical in shape. In the later forms of the pillar, the height increases sometimes and occasionally the corners of the base are also indented.

Another exception, which is solitary, is a pillar found in the Tabaleshwara temple, Gangavara, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore dist., wherein, the base of the pillar is designed like a seated lion as represented in the pillars of the Pallavas. Crude variations of this type are also found (Fig.-10, Pl.-10). Remnants of this tradition are continued on a low profile in a few pillars datable to 13th century also.

SHAFT - The shaft is the part of the pillar above the base and it extends up to the capital. This part is variedly decorated depending upon the skill and the taste of the artist. The decoration of the shaft is also helpful to identify and also to determine the period and its dynastic affiliation. The general pattern of the decoration of shaft, to a large extent reflects the artistic traits of a particular period, region and the taste of the artists. These traits vary from time to time, region to region, and artistic tradition to tradition. Based on the regional and chronological criteria, artistic traits are identified and named as Pallava style, Nolamba style, Chola style, Hoysala style, Vijayanagara Style, etc. Rarely these individual traits are found mixed. For such intermixing, many a times, reasonable explanations can also be offered. The girth of the shaft and also its height varies from temple to temple depending upon structural necessity. As early temples were small in nature, the pillars found in them have shorter shafts. The Ganga order of pillars and the Nolamba orders of pillars are the earliest pillars found in the region. The Ganga order of pillars are noticed at Begur and Manne, the Nolamba order of pillars are from Nandi and Avani. These
pillars are slightly different from their counter-parts found in the Nolamba heart land. The pillars of Avani temple complex are dateable to 10th century, and they have ornately carved shafts. Three types in the carving of the pillar shafts are noticed, the shafts also possess capital and abacus.

Pillars of the regular Chola order are not available in the region of our study, though the temples built under the Chola patronage are found in plenty in the region of our study. The reason being, most of the temples of the Cholas in the region are small and humble structures and they do not possess any pillars inside. There are, no doubt a few temples with pillars. But they are of different varieties. Different in the sense, that they are either crude or variants of the earlier types of pillars of the region or prototypes of certain other new forms of pillars. Three distinct types of pillars are identified as belonging to the Chola period, the features of which are discussed later.

Later temples which are larger in dimension have taller and bigger shafts. The carving of the shafts in the beginning was very simple, which later became more elaborate and complicated. In a few instances, the shaft of the pillar is carved and decorated in such a way that the carvings are uniform from top to bottom of the shaft. The pillars of the later period, particularly those of the Hoysala period are found to have been carved and polished on a ‘lathe-like’ machine, the nature of which is not known yet. However, based on a close study of the minute, crisp and sharp mouldings and deep cut grooves of the shaft, it has been generally accepted that the pillars of the Hoysala period were prepared on ‘lathes’66. As the area under study was under the occupation of the Hoysalas, the influence of the Hoysala workmanship is discernible in the carving of some of the pillars of this region, be they of soap stone67 or of a harder medium68.

The extension of the Hoysala rule over the region of our study, to a certain extent, resulted in the change of the order of the pillars of the temples. Though the medium used was granite, not a suitable medium for carving delicate designs, these pillars are comparatively prodigal in their treatment. Four types of pillar designs are discernible in the temples built under the patronage of the Hoysalas rulers. The
temples built by the Hoysalas or the additions made by the Hoysalas to the existing temples are moderately sized, therefore, the pillars are not tall. However, they consist of all the components of a regular pillar like base, shaft, kumbha, manḍı, phalaka and pōtika.

The pillars of the later period, i.e. after 13th century, become more and more hefty and bulky in their execution. Huge monolithic shafts, mostly square, are taken and converted into a beautiful and artistic piece of carving. In the decoration of the pillars, the most attractive carvings are the sculptural reliefs found on them and certain other architectural motifs. The sculptural carvings may have a considerably big sculptural subject either faunal or figural.

Faunal figures normally are rampant yāḷīs, lions or horses with or without mounts. Pillars of this kind are generally termed as yāḷī Pillars, by many art historians. The yāḷī decorations may be one tiered or multi-tiered. The figural decorations may be religious or secular or both in nature. These figural decorations are sculptures of divinities and standing human figures which mostly are of ladies.

SHAFTS WITH PILLARETS - The motif prominently found on this type of pillar is mostly of pillarets. Texts on architecture call these pillarets as upastambha. Vishwakarmavāstu shāstra deals elaborately with this kind of pillars. Texts also mention that the pillarets should possess all the architectural members, as that of a main pillar. These pillars are categorised based on the number of pillarets they possess.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Number of pillarets</th>
<th>Name of the variety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The pillar having one pillaret</td>
<td>Supratikānta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The pillar having two pillarets on either sides</td>
<td>Śuryakānta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The pillar having four pillarets at the four corners</td>
<td>Brahmānakānta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>The pillar having two pillarets on either sides</td>
<td>Kailasakānta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The pillar having two pillarets on all four sides</td>
<td>Merukānta</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. The pillar possessing two or four pillarets and is devoid of the main shaft  

Mānasāra mentions four types of pillars with upastambhas. They are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Number of Upastambha</th>
<th>Name of the type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The pillar with four pillarets</td>
<td>Brahmakānta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The pillars with five pillars</td>
<td>Śivakānta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Pillar with six pillarets</td>
<td>Skandakānta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Pillar with eight pillarets</td>
<td>Visṇukānta</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pillarets are attached to the core of the shaft at the top and the bottom, but completely relieved in between are found in good numbers. These pillarets vary in number, depending upon the girth of the main shaft of the pillar. It varies from one (Fig.-19) to twelve in number, but in the area of our study the maximum number of pillarets found is only three (Pl.-25 and 26). These pillars have also been named as “musical pillars” because, some of the best executed pillars, which, when beaten softly by wood or metal, produces sounds similar to the seven notes of Indian music.

CAPITAL - Capital is the part of the pillar found above the shaft. Capitals are of different kinds. The capital consists of three parts. The lowest is a wheel /cushion type of moulding. It is also called as cushion capital. It is called as kumbha in Sanskrit. It is always monolithic. It is flat at the bottom and at the top. The sides are normally rounded, smoothened and some times, even polished. During the later period, sometimes the sides may also have carved relief decoration of faunal and floral motifs (Fig.-20). Cushion capitals may also have many sides based on shape of the shaft. If the shaft is four-sided the cushion capital may also be four-sided, if it is octagonal the capital may also be octagonal and if it has indentations on the shaft then, the cushion capital may also be wrought in the same fashion. There are a few exceptions to this general trend also. Above the cushion capital rests the palagai abacus. It is a unique architectural motif that was used in the Tamil country which gradually entered into southern Karnataka. In the Badami
Chalukyan pillars this architectural member is not found, but the late contemporaries of the Badami Chalukyas in southern Karnataka used this member as they were close to the Tamil country. However, this motif spreads all over south India after about 9th century. The artists of the Rastrakutas, Kalyana Chalukyas and Hoysala period used this motif extensively in their pillars.

The _palagai_ abacus consists of two parts. The upper part is carved like a thin square plank. Texts refer to this as _phalaka_. The maximum width of this goes up to 4 feet during the Chola period. The lower part of the plank is carved in the shape of fully blossomed lotus with or without scalloped petals. This concept has been derived from the concept of placing a square plank over a lotus flower. Hence, its Tamil name is ‘_palagai_’ (plank) over ‘_idal_’ (lotus). (Pls.-52, 57)

Depending upon the carving and decoration of the shaft, as has been already said, the chronological, regional and stylistic traits are determined. It has already been said, in the introduction, that the period-wise classification of the architectural development that took place in the region under study is related with the names of the dynasties that ruled during that period. The temples that were constructed during this period have been identified as belonging to that particular dynastic style. Similarly, the pillars that are taken for study have also been classified as belonging to different styles based on their morphological features. These types are arranged in a chronological order, so that a development in the form, carvings and technological changes, if any, could be easily noticed.

As has been discussed already, the shafts of the pillars of the temples suggest a chronological development and also the stylistic features of a particular style, time and region. Temple pillars are helpful to date and also ascertain their dynastic affiliation even though inscriptional evidence to know these facts are not available. In the study and description of the pillars, for the sake of convenience, broad chronological divisions are made here. They are –

1. Early period (From about 600 to 1000 A.D.)
2. Middle period (From C. 1000 to C. 1250 A.D.)
3 Later period (Circa – 1250 to 1750 A.D.)

EARLY PERIOD - This period, dynastically speaking, pertains to the rule of the western Gangas, Nolambas and Banas. The area under study was a part of Gangavadi 96,000 and Nolambavadi – 32,000 provinces. Bangalore and Kolar districts during the last two centuries of the first millennium A.D., was called by the name Ganga 6000 province. This was a part of Gangavadi as well as of Nolambavadi provinces. The Gangas, the Nolambas and the Banas, all during a certain period of time claimed suzerainty over this province. During this period, all the three dynasties are known to have patronized temple building activities. The pillars of the early period of this area comprises of varied types of shafts, which the art historians have named as Ganga pillars and Nolamba pillars. For easy understanding of the subject and to avoid confusion the same nomenclature is here also.

GANGA PILLARS - The pillars of the Gangavadi region, particularly the southern Gangavadi, i.e., Mysore, Mandya and Chamarajanagar districts, have shafts which are mostly cylindrical in form. Over a cubical base, the shaft is carved cylindrical with cable, concave and convex mouldings and with a prominent vase like moulding generally called by the name ‘laśuna’. Including the laśuna the shaft is generally cylindrical, but they are also made octagonal, multifaceted and sometimes even fluted shallow. The lower part of the laśuna is often carved with decorative bands, such as lotus petals, leaflets, beaded string festoons, beaded tassels and delicate floral designs. In the area of our study, there is hybridization of the decorative motifs of the pillar shafts. As said before, the area under study is a region, where the cultures of two distinct traditions met. Hence, in this area a mixture of traits of Karnataka and Tamil idioms in the carving of the pillar shafts is clearly noticed. The pillars of the Ganga temples are generally short as the temples to which they were provided for, were low-roofed structures.
GANGA ORDER OF PILLARS

The pillars described here are found in the temples known to have been built either by the Ganga rulers or during the rule of the Gangas. They are more akin to the pillars found in southern Gangavadi.

The artists of this period preferred to use granite for carving pillars. Some of the pillars of the Gangas have delicate and intricate decorative carvings on them. It is not possible to ascertain the medium of some of the well carved pillars of the Gangas because they are all painted in recent years. It appears that they have used dolerite for these delicately carved pillars.

Most of the pillars of this type are cylindrical in nature. Based on the shape of pillars and the kinds of shafts, the pillars are classified into different types.

TYPE-I - This type of pillar consists of a square pedestal. The base of the shaft is cubical; rest of the shaft is cylindrical, with horizontal concave, convex mouldings, cable mouldings and flat bands. The upper portion of the shaft contains two prominent mouldings, of them; the lower one is in the shape of a bell without strong contours. The upper mouldings look slightly bulbous in contour. This part is commonly referred to by the name laśuna. Over this, the capital carved out of a separate block of stone, is placed. This is a wheel moulding, the side portion of which is rounded, smoothened and sometimes even polished. Above the capital, palagai abacus is placed. This is an optional member. This type of pillar is non-ornate and is found in large numbers in the temples of Gangas of this period, in southern Gangavadi region. The total average height of this type of pillar from bottom to top is about six feet. Pillars of this type are found at Sule Basadi at Manne, at Venugopala swamy temple at Honganur, Mahalingeshwara temple at Varuna (Mysore district), Agasthyeshwara temple at T. Narasipura (Mysore district) (Fig.-21).

An ornate variety of this type is also found. In this type, the upper portion of the shaft and also the cushion capital are carved with delicate floral and figural decorations. The laśuna part of the pillar contains crisply carved floral motifs. The
lower part of the laśuna has horizontal decorative bands, beaded string festoons, tassels and other minute decorative carvings of vyāḷāmukhas, etc. Inside the festoons are tiny dancing figures, and some of them are playing on musical instruments. The inter spaces and the upper part of the column of the shaft are relieved with lotus petals. Floral decorations are also found on the body of the cushion capital 81(Fig.-20, Pl.-29).

Another interesting feature of this type of pillar is the presence of taranāgapōtika or the wavy corbel brackets with a central flat band. It is very clearly known from the Chalukyan temples that during the middle of the 8th century A.D. the carving of taranāgapōtika was in vogue. It is possible that such a trait had spread over the south eastern parts of Karnataka during the same period. The earliest specimen of taranāgapōtika is found at the Nagareshwara temple at Begur. But the earliest inscriptional date for the Nageshwara temple at Begur is 10th century A.D. But, it is possible that it is earlier by about a century. This temple, along with the Kolaramma temple at Kolar possesses taranāgapōtikas suggesting the beginning of stone temple architecture in south eastern Karnataka, as early as the beginning of 9th century A.D. Another note worthy point in this context is that just by the side of the Nageshwara temple, another temple called the Choleshwara is built. Even in this temple, this type of pillar with taranāgapōtika is noticed.

TYPE-II - This type of pillar is found in good numbers in the north eastern Gangavadi region, which corresponds to the area of our study. In this type the shaft becomes multifaceted and sometimes taller. Pillars of the temples of Kapileshwara at Manne, Vijayendraswami temple at Bethamangalā and Kolaramma temple at Kolar are of this type (Fig.-7 and 22, Pl.-7).

In this type, the contour of the lower bell moulding on the shaft becomes almost straight. The multifaceted shaft is mostly converted into a mālasthana, i.e., the area covered by festoons of beaded strings and tassels with or without figural sculptures. [The Choleshwara temple at Begur (Fig.-3), Kapileshwara temple at Manne (Fig.-7 and Pl.-6) and Kolaramma temple (Fig.- 22) at Kolar have this type of Pillar.
This type of pillars also have \textit{taranagapūtikas} (Fig.-3) suggesting that, by the beginning of 9\textsuperscript{th} century A.D., practice of carving this type of pillars was already in existence in the region. An observation regarding this is not out of place here. Pillars with shafts similar to the one mentioned, above can be noticed in some of the monolithic \textit{rathas}. (\textit{Dharmarāja ratha} at Mahabalipuram). This fact may be taken as the influence of the artistic trend of the Tamil country over this buffer zone. This type of pillar possesses a shaft consisting of cubical base, octagonal or multifaceted shaft and vase motif. The multifaceted portion is sometimes very thinly fluted to make the ridges prominent. Horizontal mouldings, grooves, bands are also carved at the required places. Instances of floral petal bands, festoons of beaded strings are also noticed\textsuperscript{82}.

In two instances the upper part of the pillar is carved with both the ‘bell’ and ‘vase’ motif suggesting the tradition of lower Gangavadi region and also as early date for these pillars\textsuperscript{83}.

\textbf{TYPE-III} - Hitherto, the description of the pillars of the temples found in lower Gangavadi region and their variants in the upper Gangavadi region has been given under the class Type-I and Type-II. Now a different type of pillar appears in the temples built under the patronage of the Gangas in the region of our study. This type is classified and studied as pillars of Type-III. This type of pillar actually resembles the Nolamba order of pillars but they are found in the temples built by the Gangas, in the upper Gangavadi region and also in the temples of eastern Gangavadi which comes under the area of our study. These pillars possess \textit{taranagapūtika} which suggests that they were formed earlier to the Nolamba order of pillars in this region. The descriptions of these pillars are not given here. However, they are refered to as Type-III pillars of the Ganga region\textsuperscript{84}. For the detailed description of this see Type-I of the Nolamba order of pillars (Fig.-2).

\textbf{NOLAMBA ORDER OF PILLARS:}

The Rastrakuta tradition of pillar carving mentioned already influenced is to a great extent, the artists of this region, who have built temples under the patronage of
the Nolambas and the Banas. Such pillars are found in majority throughout the areas ruled by the Nolambas. Therefore they are called by the name “Nolamba order of pillars”. The Nolamba style or the Nolamba order of pillar carving comprises of a shaft which is more impressive and elaborate in carvings than their Rastrakuta counterparts. Over the cubical base, the shaft becomes indented at the corners; the upper cubical portion is treated with bands of creeper scrolls and kirtimukhas, beaded string festoons, tassels, etc. Inside the festoons are carved mythological incidents of importance and also sometimes certain social themes. The upper part of the shaft is made cylindrical with a neck above having simple mouldings.

The four corners of the upper cube support tiny seated lions as found on the base of the Pallava pillars. The palagai abacus, a motif of the Tamil tradition, is placed on the cushion capital. Hence, one can see in the Nolamba pillars, a mixed form of Karnataka and Tamil traditions very clearly.

The Nolamba pillars, are an improved version of the type of pillars of the Badami Chalukyas and also those of the Rastrakutas, the latter of whom were the political contemporaries of the Nolambas. The prototypes of the Nolamba order of pillars occur as early as 9th century A.D., in the region of our study, and they are mentioned as Type-III of the pillars of the Ganga period above. The Nolamba artists with their creative genius made their pillars more attractive, delicate in their carvings and more exuberant in appearance. Rajendra Chola who conquered Nolambavadi 32,000 province, attracted by the beauty of these pillars, took away a good number of pillars as war trophies, destroying many Nolamba temples. Sixty of those pillars are found used in the construction of a pillared corridor of the temple at Tiruvayyar.

The best specimens of the Nolamba pillars are found in their capital, Hemavathi, in Madakashira Taluk of Anathapur district of Andhra Pradesh, which is outside the region of our study. This type of a pillar is the true Nolamba order of pillar. It is an improved version of a type of Rastrakuta pillar. The Nolamba pillar consists of an ornate, dadoed pedestal. The base of the pillar is cuboid, generally with plain surface. Above this, a shaft equal to the height of the base is made indented at the
corners, leaving a central broad, flat band. This band generally consists of the relief of creeper scrolls. The shaft again is made cuboid. This upper cubical portion is the most important and attractive part of the shaft. Here at the upper end a band of undulating creeper scroll runs around. Below this kīrtimukhas are carved, one on each of the central parts of the four faces. The corners also have kīrtimukhas but their relief is carved in such a way that half of its face is carved on one side and the other half is carved on its adjacent side. Two beaded strings emerge from the mouth of the central kīrtimukha turn towards opposite directions and join the mouth of the kīrtimukha. Turn towards opposite directions and join the mouth of the kīrtimukha. They carved on the two edges forming two testoons. These festoons are carved very prominent. Inside the loops of these festoons, tiny figural subjects of religious or secular them are carved. Religious themes include images of gods, goddesses, avatāras, leelamurtis, or even incidents or narrative episodes of hindu mythology. All the four faces of the upper cuboid are treated identically, except the figural themes.

Above the upper cuboid, the shaft is made cylindrical, with a central neck. The four top corners of the upper cuboid may have the carving of tiny seated lions. The inter-spaces of these lions may again have a figural relief inside a kūḍū-like semicircular frame.

The carvings on the upper part of the shaft, described above, is the most attractive and artistic part of the pillar. The carvings here are delicate, crisp and intricate. Mythologically interesting and educative. The plain surfaces of the shaft are generally smooth and polished, making the pillar more attractive.

The shaft supports a wheel moulding (kumbha), an abacus formed of maniḍi and phalaka. These parts are also smooth and often polished. The corbels are generally chamfered at the bottom, though Chola type of bevel and tenon corbels are also noticed.

The Nolamba pillars found in the region of our study are not so elegant and beautiful in their carving as their Hemavathi counterparts. However, these pillars are classified and studied separately under different types.
The Nolamba artists made use of an innovative method in the carving of the pillars. They used basalt, a fine-grained stone, bluish /greenish/ blackish in colour, for carving of the pillars from pedestal to the abacus. This stone, because of its fine grained texture takes good polish and at the same time, delicate and crisp carvings could be made in this stone. This medium was used by the Nolamba artists for the carving of door frames, perforated windows, sculptures, balustrades, ceiling panels and also for a course of building which contain the details of carvings of the capitals of the pilasters of the wall. This tradition is found followed in almost all the temples of the Nolambas built in their capital as well as in other regions ruled by them. Kolar district and the eastern part of Bangalore district from about 850 A.D. to 980 A.D. were under the rule of the Nolambas. The Kingdom of the Nolambas was called by the name Nolambavadi 32,000 province. In this big province, Ganga 6000, which was also a part of Gangavadi 96,000, was included. This area roughly coincides with the Kolar region and its adjacent parts. Nolambas inherited the Ganga 6000 province from the Gangas, because of the family ties with the former. Ganga 6000 province was a bone of contention between the Nolambas, the Banas and also, sometimes the Gangas. Therefore, in this region temples built under the patronage of the Gangas, the Banas and the Nolambas, during the period extending from about 800 A.D, to the end of 1000 A.D. are noticed, Inspite of the political fluctuations that existed in this region, the prevailing style of the artistic tradition of the region, continued to influence the temple building activity in the region. This artistic tradition imbibed the characteristic features of the Karnataka and Tamil idioms, as practiced by the Rastrakutas on the one side and the Pallavas and the Cholas on the other. The region of our study was a buffer region, both politically and culturally. Moreover, Kolar region was the connecting link for all cultural, commercial and political activities between the Tamil and Kannada countries. Therefore, the artistic style that prevailed in this region was continuously influenced by the traditions of these two distinctly different cultures. Therefore, the culture that prevailed in this region reflects sometimes the Tamil tradition and sometimes the Kannada tradition and sometimes a blend of both the traditions.
Now, coming to the order of pillars of the Nolamba period, the pillars carved in this period are of different types. They are classified as follows.

**TYPE-I** - The shaft of the pillar of this type resembles almost the order of the Nolamba pillars found in their capital Hemavathi, with little variations. These pillars do not possess the fine quality of carvings as those found on the pillars of Hemavathi. The variations found in these pillars are the absence of the sedant lions on the four corners of the upper cubical portion. The \( \textit{kūdū} \) type of decoration in the interspaces is also absent. These pillars are found at Bhoganandishwara temple at Nandi (Pl. – 28, Fig-2).

**TYPE-II** - This type is a variant of Type-I. It also, to a certain extent, resembles Type-II pillars of the Ganga period. Here, the shaft gets multifaceted up to the upper middle part of the shaft. The lower portion of the multifaceted shaft is sometimes thinly fluted or decorated with lotus petals or a mixture of both. Above this, the shaft is made octagonal instead of square. Here, each face of the octagonal shaft is treated identically with beaded string festoons, tassels, etc. Inside the loop of the festoons are found crisply carved dancing figures, musicians, and sometimes even religious reliefs. The usual horizontal bands of petals and varieties of mouldings are found above. These type of pillars are found at Lakshmaneshwara satrughneswara and Bharateshwara temples at Avani (Pl. – 28, 29 pillar in the foreground).

**TYPE-III A** - In this type, the shaft above the cubical base is made completely octagonal. In the upper part of this octagonal shaft decorative carving of the type described above are done. These types of pillars are found at Shatrughneshwara temple at Avani. A difference between the Nolamba order of pillars as described in Type-I is the upper portion of the shaft takes the shape of a slightly bulbous pot or \( \textit{laśuna} \). This feature is the continuation of the Ganga order of pillars (Pl.-29 pillar in the background).

**TYPE-III B** - This type of pillar contains very little portion of octagonal shaft above the square base. Above this, the shaft becomes fully cylindrical. The central portion of the cylindrical shaft contains a few prominent horizontal, concave and convex
mouldings. The shaft is made plain and smooth. The top portion of the shaft is designed like a slightly bulbous pot. Examples of this type of pillars are found at Kamakshiamman temple at Avani (Fig.-8, Pl.-30).

MIDDLE PERIOD

This period extends from about 1000A.D.to 1250A.D. During this period, the area of our study came under the political sway of the imperial Cholas and also, that of the Hoysals, depending upon the political vicissitudes. Therefore, both the Chola order of pillars and the Hoysala order of pillars are noticed in the temples built during this period.

A few temples built during this middle period have artistic affinity to Chola as well as to Hoysala schools of art. The date of construction of some of these temples also can be decided on the basis of inscriptions. Sometimes they refer to the rule of Chola monarchs and sometimes to that of the Hoysala monarchs, sometimes to both and sometimes to none. In such cases only the artistic traits of the pillars are taken into consideration to decide their dynastic affiliation. It is a known fact that the temples were built according to the taste, the knowledge and the proficiency of the architect/artist in a particular art tradition. Temples were built under the royal patronage but it was the mason/artist who decided the design and decoration of the building. Therefore, dynastic affiliation ascribed to the art forms limits itself to the period and region only and not to the style nurtured by the artist which was again subject to the time and the region.

CHOLA ORDER OF PILLARS:

It is a known fact that the Cholas occupied the south-eastern parts of Karnataka which were parts of Gangavadi and Nolambavadi provinces. This region comprises the districts of Chamarajanagar, Mysore, Mandya, Bangalore and Kolar districts of Karnataka. All over this region, under the patronage of Cholas over hundred temples were built in a span of about 130 years. Inscriptional evidence is found to identify these temples as the temples of Chola period. These temples are small in
nature many of them are simple structures having a sanctum and a vestibule. Rarely these temples have an assembly hall.

The Chola orders of pillars found in the region of our study are not the same as those found in the temples built by the imperial Cholas in their homeland. Chola rule over Karnataka was only a temporary extension of their political sway over an area which was already, to a certain extent, influenced by the Tamil culture. Therefore, Tamil art forms were not totally new to the region of our study. The temples built by the Cholas here are also very small in their form. These temples consist only of a small square sanctum fronted by a small \( ardhanārīśvara \) (same as the vestibule). Pillars are hardly found in these temples. However, there are a few temples possessing pillars assignable to this period. The pillars of these temples are not so attractive and distinctly different from the pillars of the preceding period in the area of our study. A few are a variant of the Ganga order of pillars, few belong to the Nolamba order of pillars, a few belong to a new order, the parallels of which are found in their native land.

TYPE I - The pillars that resemble the Ganga type are found in a few temples. They resemble the Type-I of the Ganga pillars described already. This type of pillar are found at Ishwara temple at Hunkundapattana, and Ishwara temple at Kadugudi (Fig.-8, Pl. -31)

TYPE II - The pillars that resemble the Nolamba order are also found in few numbers and they closely resemble the Type-II of the Nolamba order of Pillars. This type of pillars are noticed at Challamma temple at Kudlur (Pl.-27a) and \( mukhamanārīśvara \) of Kolaramma temple, Kolar.

The temples found in Chamarajanagar and Mysore districts possess Chola order of pillars which have carved shafts which are quite different from their counterparts found in Bangalore and Kolar districts. This is due to the fact that the prevailing architectural idiom played a great role in the design and decoration of the pillar shafts. Wherever, there was no strong influence of the local idiom, Chola artists
maintained a pattern of their own for the carving of pillars. This can be clearly noticed when the pillars of these two regions are compared.

The pillars of the temples of Mysore and Chamarajanagar districts present shafts which have a square cubical base, surmounted by a tall cylindrical or many sided shaft. The shaft is surmounted by a cushion capital, *palagai* abacus and beveled and tenoned corbels. The capital and the abacus are sometimes optional to the architect. Such pillars are noticed at Tonnur (Mandya Dist.) and many other places.

The Chola order of pillars described above is not to be seen in the area of our study. Instead pillars designed with the influence of the local idiom are noticed in good number.

**TYPE-III** - These are distinctly different Chola type of pillars, which may be called as the prototypes the *chitrakhan* variety (Fig.-23). This type of pillar is often devoid of a pedestal. The shaft is basically square. It is divided into three cubical portions interspersed by two octagonal or many-sided parts. No capital is provided for the shaft. Directly above the shaft rests the corbel bracket. The bracket is beveled and tenoned. The carvings and the finish of the pillars are generally crude.

The luxuriously carved variants are found in the homeland of the Cholas (Iravateshwara temple at Darasuram). In these pillars, all the four sides of the cuboids are relieved with delicately and intricately carved floral scrolls and medallions inside which are dancing figurual and faunal reliefs are found carved. Unfortunately the pillars found in the region of our study are not so luxuriously decorated as those of their counterparts described above, inspite of the fact that talented artists were available in this region. However, luxurious carved pillars of this type, do come into picture in the region of our study, a century later at Bhairava temple at Sitibetta and Amaranarayana temple at Kaivara.

As an exception to the observation made above one can see a luxuriously built temple with ornate pillars, a solitary example of this type, at Binnamangalā, Nelamangalā taluk Bangalore district. In this context, special mention should be made of the pillars of the temple of Mukthinatheshwara at Binnamangalā (Pl.-33,
This is a very ornate temple in all respects. It contains two noteworthy inscriptions. They mention the liberal donations given to the temple by Kulottunga Chola (1110 A.D.) and Raja Raja III (1132 A.D.), indicating that the temple was in existence at that time. This temple consists of four pillars in the navaranaga, very elaborately designed and carved and the sanctum also has four pillars at the four corners. They are of Type-III of chitrakhandada variety of Chola order of pillars mentioned above. The pillars of the navaranaga have ornate pedestals. Each pillar consists of a square shaft very richly carved. This pillar has both the Chola and the Nolamba elements in its decorative designs. The upper part of the shaft is designed like a vase. It is much indented vertically at its corners. Horizontal bands of lotus petals are found at the neck and at its base. This vase is a prominent motif of the upper part of Chola pillars. Below this is the cubical portion which has a row of kirtimukhas on the upper part and beaded string festoons emerging out of the mouth of the kirtimukhas. The lower part of this is slightly reduced in size and tapering upwards. Its corners are minutely indented. The four central faces of this part have reliefs of religious themes. Below this is a row of squatting lions. All these features remind us of the Nolamba idiom of carving pillars. The square base is slightly dadoed. The shaft supports a cushion capital having multiple indentations. The cushion is lined on both the sides with lotus moulding. The palagai abacus with its lotus motif below has multiple indentations. Between the abacus and the brackets, another piece of stone is placed (veerakanthaha) which has, on its four faces, the bharavahakas or the kubjas. Above this is the corbel bracket of the tarangapoti type with a central band and beveled bottom. The entire scheme of decoration is so unique, so profound in its carving that it is unrivalled in the entire range of Chola pillars of this region.

It is mentioned earlier, that the ornate variety of chitrakhandada type of pillars, Type-III of the Cholas occur a century later, i.e., by the end of 12th century A.D. in the region of our study. During this period, the Cholas continued to rule this region and patronise the construction of several temples. By this time the Chola order of pillars got a luxurious look as evidenced by the pillars of temples built during this period. The shafts of the pillars found here are of two varieties. They are described
as Type-IV and Type-V. Though, these types of pillars are found in very few numbers, they are classified separately and studied because of the stylistic features they possess.

TYPE-IV - This type of pillars are supported by an ornate pedestal. Such pillars are found in only two temples. They are presently covered by modern flooring. The shaft is square, indented at the corners and purely architectural decorations are found on the shaft. The architectural pattern contains a miniature shrine consisting of all the parts of elevation distinctly moulded and carved. This type of miniature shrine is repeated in several tiers till the required height is achieved. Above this is the square, indented vase motif super-imposed by the square, indented cushion capital and palagai abacus. Above the abacus, the corbel is placed with pūsāpāṭīka, a small hanging bud. This type is called as kōśāastambha in the Texts (Pl.-34).

TYPE-V - The shaft of this type of pillar also stands on an ornate pedestal. The shaft is square. It is a variant of the chitrakhanḍa variety of pillar. The shaft is divided into cubical and octagonal zones of decoration, super-imposed by a vase motif.

The cubical and octagonal portions on all their faces have delicately carved decorative designs of faunal, floral, religious and secular themes. Architectural patterns are also minutely carved. This type is called a variant of the chitrakhanḍa variety because the shaft is divided into alternating zones of cubical and octagonal portions, but this shaft supports a vase motif which is not found in the chitrakhanḍa type. Therefore it is a hybridized form of the true Chola order of pillar and the chitrakhanḍa type. The decorations are very delicate and crisp. The material used here is dolarite which is suitable for intricate carvings. Above the shaft are the square cushion capital and a square palagai abacus. The cushion capital on the sides has patches of floral motif. The abacus is very neatly finished. The capital and the abacus are not members of the chitrakhanḍa type of pillars generally noticed in the region of our study. Therefore, in general appearance, the pillar looks Chola in order with
chitrakhanḍā elements. This type also possesses the ornate variety of pusṣṭapūṭika\(^8\) (Pl.-35).

An observation be made in this context deserves mention here. The shaft of the pillars of Types-IV and V described above begun to appear from the 13\(^{th}\) century onwards. The shaft of the Type-IV pillar contains miniature architectural zones repeated one above the other in several tiers. This decorative design becomes a characteristic feature of the design of one of the types of pillars of the Vijayanagara architectural style. The beginnings of this are very clearly seen in the temples of the Chola period, built in Kolar. These temples are inscriptionally dated to 13\(^{th}\) century.

The chitrakhanḍā variety of shafts, much adored as a type of pillar of the Vijayanagara architectural style, also makes a beginning during the Chola period itself. Ornate variety of chitrakhanḍā pillars are found in the Iravateshwara temple at Darasuram built in the late Chola period, but their early, non ornate variants and non ornate prototypes are available in this region (Pl.-36).

**HOYSALA ORDER OF PILLARS:**

The Hoysalas came to political supremacy in southern Karnataka during the last quarter of the 11\(^{th}\) century A.D. The first important ruler of this dynasty who ruled independently was Vishnuvardhana son of Ereyanga. At the time of accession of Vishnuvardhana to the throne, south eastern parts of Karnataka were under the rule of Cholas. Vishnuvardhana, soon after the accession, expelled the Cholas from Karnataka and occupied Gangavadi and Nolambavadi provinces. From then onwards till the end of the rule of the Hoysalas, south eastern parts of Karnataka continued to be under the rule of the Hoysalas.

The Chola rule over south eastern parts of Karnataka lasted only for about 130 years after which, these areas were ceded to the Hoysalas. Though the rule was short, the impact of the Chola rule over this region lasted for several centuries even after. This is a strange yet true sociological factor. The reason for this is that this area was a buffer region between Karnataka and Tamil cultures. The impact of both the cultures on this region has already been discussed before. It is also a fact that the
impact of Tamil tradition was stronger than that of the Kannada tradition in this region. It is very clearly reflected in the temples of this region. Dravidian temple art, as practiced during the Ganga – Nolamba and Chola dynastic powers, continued to wield its influence on temple art during the Hoysala period also. Not a single soap stone temple is noticed in the region. Very few soapstone pillars are found and they too are from a place closer to the Hoysala heartland. In the eastern part of Gangavadi i.e., the eastern Bangalore and Kolar districts, not a single soap stone art form of the Hoysalas, is noticed. So, based only on the scanty architectural forms available the Hoysala style of architecture, particularly, those of pillars is analysed here.

In the study and classification of Hoysala order of pillars all those types of pillars that belong to the period of the Hoysala rule are taken into consideration. However, such pillars which have close affinity in their forms to those of their heartland are discussed first and taken as belonging to the Hoysala order. The rest of the types that are considered here are nothing but the continuation of the existing types of pillars of the region. A point to be noted here is that, the Hoysala order of pillars, though found scantily in the region of our study, inspite of the influence of the art style of this region, they have retained their original form in their execution. This is very clearly noticeable in the carving of the shaft and the design of the corbels.

TYPE-I - This type of pillar is a replica of the typical Hoysala lathe-turned pillars. They are made of soapstone. Each pillar contains a separate carved indented, dadoed pedestal. The base of the pillar is cubical and slightly taller. Above this is a cylindrical shaft. This portion consists of closely spaced concave, convex, cable and flat mouldings that are parallel throughout. Some of the mouldings have knife like sharp edges. The central part of the cylindrical shaft is moulded in the form of a bell. The upper part of the bell portion contains horizontal bands of creeper scrolls, band of beaded string festoons, tassels, etc. The finish of the shaft is smooth and polished. The cushion capital is a wheel-like moulding, round and polished. The palagai abacus is also neatly worked on all the four sides with delicate designs of
beaded string festoons. The pillar, from pedestal to the abacus, is made of soap stone. The shaft of the pillar is definitely turned and polished on a lathe-like machine. The corbels above are of the type seen on the pillars of the Hoysala heart land. They are horizontally and vertically moulded at the top and at the corners. (Fig.-25, Pl.-37).

The lower part of the projecting arm of the corbel is a compromise between a wavy corbel and a beveled corbel. The lower part of the corbel is beveled with a central band. The lower end of the corbel has a voluted design, to look like a roller. This type of a corbel is called by the name musṭṭhi ṛhībandhopṭīka. This type of a corbel was used by the Hoysala artists and not by the Chola artists. Only four pillars of this type are noticed at Gangadhareshwara temple, Shivagange.

TYPE-II - (Fig.-26, Pl.-38) This type of pillar is a replica of the non ornate order of pillars found in plenty is minor temples of the Kalyana Chalukyas. These pillars are also of soap stone. Each pillar has an ornate pedestal as described for Type-I pillars. The shaft of the pillar contains a cubical base and a cubical middle part. The two cubes are interspersed by multi sided shaft.

Upper part of the upper cube is cylindrical and moulded. The base of the shaft is plain, smooth and polished except for its upper end, where it is grooved with ridge in the middle. The multi faceted central part has three sixteen sided bands interspersed by a thick, concave, chain decoration. All the faces of the multi faced shaft in the centre have lotus diapers while, the upper and lower bands have beaded string festoons. The upper cube of the shaft is similar to the lower cube in its carving. The cylindrical shaft above is moulded and tapered. Mouldings are simple and are separated by deep grooves. The four sides of the shaft have plain, flat surface left uncarved. The cushion capital above is pointed with a flat tip. Its upper and lower surfaces are concave. The lower part of the palagai abacus at its four corners and on the edge of the lower moulding has pointed knobs as decorative designs. Only four pillars of this type are found at Shivagange.
TYPE-III - (Fig.-27, Pl.-39) This type of pillar is an imitation of the multifaceted pillars of the Hoysala style. These pillars are carved in granite. They are not lathe-turned. Each pillar has a square pedestal. The base of the pillar is square and indented at the corners leaving a central flat band carved with reliefs of undulating creeper scrolls. Above this, the shaft is sixteen sided. The middle portion of the shaft is horizontally grooved, leaving thick, concave mouldings. Because of incessant white wash, the delicacy of the designs is not discernible. Lotus petals, rosettes and minute horizontal grooves and mouldings are to be seen here. The upper part of the shaft is designed to look like an elongated bell-moulding again with lotus petals, festoons of beaded strings and other decorative designs. The upper part of the bell is almost a plain sixteen-sided shaft. Above the shaft, the musūr hibandha corbel is placed. Pillars of this type are found at Ramanatha temple at Bellur (Fig.-27, Pl.-39).

TYPE-IV - This type of pillar has a cubical base. Above that is a sixteen sided shaft with concave and convex mouldings. Above the shaft is a laśuna and a cushion capital. The cushion capital is topped by a palagai abacus with the regular Hoysala musūr hibandha corbels. Only four pillars of this variety are noticed at Gangadhareshwara temple, Shivagange (Pl.-40).

TYPE-V - This type of pillar is carved out of dolorite. Hence, the decorations are rough. The pillar has a pedestal, cubical base and octagonal or sixteen-sided shaft. The upper portion of the shaft is designed like a pot. The cushion capital is rounded on the sides. The palagai abacus is square. The corbel is of bevel and tenon type. Only four pillars of this type are found at Rameshwara temple at Avani (Pl.–41). This in every respect resembles the Nolamba pillar of type II, found at Lakshmaneshwara temple (Pl.-28). But the date of erection of this part of the temple is of the Hoysala period.

TYPE-VI - Another type of pillar is found in the temples built during the Hoysala period but they are quite different from the Hoysala order. This pillar in its design of the shaft is more akin to the Tamil tradition of pillar carving. It is of chitrakhaṇḍa type, contains decorative lotus pedestal with lion motifs at the
four corners. The shaft above contains three cuboids interspersed by multifaceted shaft. Each face of the cuboid is relieved with faunal, floral, figural reliefs and also bordered. Another interesting feature of this type is the corners of the inter-space of the lower cuboids have tiny rampant lions facing the four directions. As this is a *chitrakhanḍa* variety of pillar, cushion capital and abacus are not found. The corbel above is of the *pusapūṭika* type with decorations of multiple rows of petals. This variety of pillar is found at Someshwara temple at Kurudumale (1260 AD) (Fig.-23, Pl.-36).

**TYPE-VII** - Another type of pillar found in the temples built during the Hoysala period, but quite different from the Hoysala order is also found. This pillar, in its design of the shaft is more akin to the Nolamba tradition of pillar carving. This kind of pillars or found in large numbers in the temples of Channapattana taluk, and they are all generally found in the *navarana* of the temple. These pillars possess a square base and a multifaceted shaft and a cuboid above. On the cuboid faunal and floral reliefs are carved. Above the cuboid, the shaft is short, multi-faceted and fluted. A bevel and tenon *pūṭika* is placed above the shaft. Such pillars are short and slender in their form (Fig.-28, Pl.-42).

**TYPE-VIII** - Only a few pillars of this kind are found in the region of our study. They are generally seen in the Chola temples, where Hoysala additions are noticed. These pillars possess a tall square base, a multi faceted shaft and a ‘bell’ moulding. Above the bell, the shaft is again cubical, supporting a bevel and tenon *pūṭika* (Pl.-43, Fig-28a).

**LATER PERIOD** : This period begins from about the last quarter of the 13\(^{th}\) century and continued during the vijayanagara and post-vijayanagara periods. Good amount of innovations were made during this period, as the pillars were carved to support large, high roofed halls and corridors of the temples. Depending upon the necessity, the pillar shafts were designed, decorated and sculpted. Therefore one can see much variety in the design and decorations on the pillars of this period.

**VIJAYANAGARA ORDER OF PILLARS**
The period of Vijayanagara rule from 1336 to 1565 AD heralds a splendid era in the history of temple architecture of Karnataka in particular and that of South India in general. Temples of huge dimensions with attractive, imposing, architectural and sculptural decorations were constructed during this period in the area of our study. During the Vijayanagara rule Kolar district and its adjacent parts of Bangalore formed an important territorial division of the empire, hence, was governed by the prince royal who was also the king designate to the Vijayanagara throne. Therefore, the region of our study gains more importance for the study of temple architecture of the Vijayanagara period.

The typology of the pillars of the Vijayanagara period, as already been introduced briefly in the beginning of this chapter. Now an attempt is being made here to study the pillars on typological grounds. The Vijayanagara pillars can be classified broadly into four main types, of course, with their variants. They are all monolithic pillars mostly carved out of the locally available granite. However, at a few places, dolerite is also used, to take them more charming and attractive.

Type-I-This type of pillar belongs to the *chitrakhanḍa* variety. Almost all the temples of the Vijayanagara period possess this type of pillars. These pillars represent a continuation of the older tradition seen during the late Chola period. In this variety of pillars, the carvings made on them vary from simplest, reliefless shaft to very ornate and luxurious ones. *Chitrakhanḍa* variety of pillars may or may not possess a pedestal, so also the ornamentation. If the shaft is tall and massive, on the base of the pillar itself the details of the pedestal are also carved. Wherever the pillars become a structural necessity, in such places, mostly *chitrakhanḍa* pillars are used. This type of pillar is most utilitarian in character, because of the simplicity of its execution. *Chitrakhanḍa* variety of pillars contains a shaft having three cubical parts interspersed by octagonal or many sided shaft. The four faces of all the three cubes contain reliefs of varieties of subject matter and decorative designs; the wealth of details is so rich that one has to see to believe it (Fig.-29).

The information that one gets from these carvings is highly useful for the understanding of the contemporary socio-religious milieu of this period. No capital
or abacus is to be seen on the shaft. Above the shaft, directly, rests the *pusṣapāṭikā* corbel of the Vijayanagara order (Pl.-15).

**TYPE-II** - In this type, the shaft of the pillar stands above an ornate pedestal designed like a miniature shrine. The design of the shaft contains repetitive shrines placed one above the other in multiple tiers. This is a type of pillars called as *kōśāstambha* in the Text. The shaft is deeply indented on all the four corners and is slightly tapering. This type of a design is found in plenty in the Vijayanagara at Hampi. Exact replicas of this type of Vijayanagara temples pillars are not found in the region of our study, but the pillar under description is a variant of their Hampi counter-parts. In this pillar the design of the upper shaft is different. In the Hampi examples, above the shaft the corbel bracket is directly placed. In the area of our study, the pillars have a capital and an abacus at the upper part of the shaft. The capital and the abacus are also indented like the main shaft and they are decorated with delicate decorative designs and lotus petals. Therefore, the pillars of the region may be considered as a variant of the pillars of the *kōśāskānta* type found at Hampi (Pl.-44).

**TYPE-III** - This type of pillar is popularly known as *vyālākānta* pillars, also commonly called by the name ‘*vyālā*’ or ‘*yālī*’ pillar. In this type, the pedestal, the shaft and its adjoining *vyālā* figures are all designed and carved in one block of stone. The pedestal is common here to both the pillar’s shaft and its adjoining sculptural motif. The pillar shaft belongs to the *chitrakhanḍā* variety. To this shaft on one or two sides the sculpture of *yālī* is attached. Pillars of this type are normally found carved in the open *manḍapās* of the temple, there too, on the outer row of the group of columns. These *vyālā* representations are all in the rampant posture. *Vyālā* figure is the major statuary of this type of pillars. Normally, they have human mounts, sometimes holding the weapons of offence and defense. The *vyālās* rise up on their hind legs which are generally placed on a seated elephant. These *vyālā* figures with their soldier mounts represent effectively the martial spirit and the military prowess of the Vijayanagara army. The
vyālā occupies the height of the shaft, up to the lower end of the upper cuboid. Above this, the gap between the vyālā and the pusāpōtika is covered by vibrant floral motifs or other suitable architectural or decorative motifs. This variety of pillar is a composition of the Vijayanagara artists. They begin to appear in the heartland (Hampi) from the beginning of the 14th century. The rich imagination and the successful execution of this variety of pillar involved stupendous labour and skill. The medium used for these pillars is invariably the hard variety of granite. The average height of these pillars is about eight feet.

Texts mention three varieties of the vyālākānta pillars. They are

1. Simhakānta. - Pillar with rampant lion motif
2. Vyālākānta - Pillar with rampant vyālā motif
3. Aśvakānta - Pillar with rampant horse motif

Simhakānta pillars possess leogriff motifs attached to the chitrakhanḍa shaft. This type of pillar is found in large numbers throughout the Vijayanagara kingdom. This is a unique type of pillar of Vijayanagara style of architecture. This variety of pillars is found in the region of our study90 also. (Pl. - 45).

Vyālākānta pillars possess rampant vyālā motifs. These vyālās are mythical in nature with a lion face, trunk of an elephant and feet of a lion. These vyālās hold their elongated trunk in their fore legs which is a unique design of this variety. Sometimes it is shown as standing over a squatting elephant or vyālā and both their trunks are knotted together. This variety of pillars may or may not have human mounts on them. These pillars are also noticed in the region of our study91 (Pl. -46).

Aśvakānta pillars have a chitrakhanḍa shaft with a rampant horse motif. These horses always have mounts and are quite tall. This variety of pillars are generally less in the Vijayanagara heartland. These are found in umpteen numbers in the region ruled by the Nayakas, the feudatories of the Vijayanagara rulers. Thus the creation of this variety of pillars is the contribution of the Nayakas. In the region
of our study the use of *simhakānta*, *vyālakānta* and *aśvakānta* are all noticed (Pl.-47).

Ornate and elaborately carved variety of the *simhakānta* pillars are found in the region of our study. Only two pillars of this type are noticed in the entire region. These two pillars are placed at the two extreme ends of the front colonnade of the porch of the Someshwara temple at Kolar. (Pl.-47-a). The height of the shaft of these pillars is about fifteen feet. The *simha* sculptures carved here are of the type described above, but they are carved identically in two horizontal zones. This was due to the fact the shaft of the pillar is inordinately tall. As these pillars are of the *pātalankan*ā. Therefore, a taller shaft is used here for structural requirement. Single lion decoration for this tall shaft was not enough to cover the whole height of the shaft. Therefore the architect has intelligently divided the area into two horizontal zones, designed the pillar with two rows of lions. This not only shows the manipulative skill of the artist but also enhances the beauty and grandeur of the pillar and the facade.

A variant of Type-III variety is found at Ranganatha Swamy temple in Rangasthala. These pillars are like the Type-III variety pillars, with rampant horses instead of *simhas*. The height of the shaft of these pillars is more than fifteen feet. The horses carved here are majestic and exhibit enormous strength. They are carved in two horizontal zones. In the upper zone, horses in the rampant posture are carved. In the lower zone, lions are carved. Only two examples of this type are noticed in the *pātalankan*ā of this temple (pl-47b).

**TYPE-IV** - This type of pillar looks like a pier. It is monolithic in nature. It may have a separate pedestal also. In most of the instances, the pedestal is carved in the same block of stone as the pillar. The main pillar shaft is of the *chitrakhan*ā variety, decorated and relieved with sculptures on three of its open sides. The fourth side, mostly the front side, is extended forward almost equal to dimensions of the main shaft. In the centre of this portion an ornate pillaret is relieved. The shaft of the pillar only is separated from its core while its bottom and top portions are attached to the extensions of the shaft. The pillaret is carved with all the decorative
details of an ornate pillar. It may have a carved pedestal in the shape of a big pot or kalaśa or it may have a sedant lion also. If the pillarets are more than one each pillaret will have a separate lion support. Above the pillaret, the space left is filled by architectural and some other suitable decorative design. In the area of our study pillars with single pillaret and triple pillarets are noticed. If the pillarets are three they are carved on the three corners of the main shaft of the pillar. They are all shown as supporting a common canopy above. A type of pillars has already been referred to as musical pillars in the introduction to this chapter. The pillars of this order found in the region of our study are a variant of their original counterparts found at Hampi, but these pillars never produce any musical notes when beaten (Pl. - 25-26).

TYPE-V -This type of pillar is a variant of the Type-IV pillar described above, but they are described here as belonging to a different type because of their exuberant quality of carvings and wealth of decoration found on them. In this type, the main shaft of the pillar is of the chitrokhanḍa variety, so luxuriously decorated and so richly carved, that the architectural nature of the shaft is completely eclipsed behind these carvings. The fourth side of the pillar where the pillaret is carved, also contains an additional member in the form of a life size sculpture, almost in the round. These sculptures are carved adjoining the pillaret behind. Every part of the pillar from bottom to the top is so profusely carved and so richly decorated that they remind us of the mural decorations of the Hoysala artist. Wherever the decorations were intended to be very rich and prodigal, the sculptors have chosen dolerite as medium for carving such pillars. Only two temples of our region contain this type of pillars. They are found in the central platform of the kalyānāmanātipa indicating the special significance of those manātipas in the temple complex. The sculptures found here are of Hindu divinities and they are very attractively posed and decorated (Pl.-48-49).

Besides these types of pillars described above, there are also a few stray cases of pillar carving which are reminiscent of the pre-Vijayanagara order of pillar carving.
They are found in isolation and very few in numbers. One such pillar is a copy of the Kalyāna Chalukya order of pillars described already. They have two cuboids with a central octogonal portion a kumbha, manḍī and phalaka. These pillars support the *pusapōti*ka above. This type of pillars are found in the navaranāga of a temple\(^9\). These types of pillars are found in the group of temples on the Hemakuta hill at Hampi, suggesting that, some of the traditional artists continued the old tradition of pillar carving (Fig.-30, Pl.-50).

Another type of pillars noteworthy in this context is of the Chola order. They belong to the sowmyakānta variety as practiced by the Chola artists. The pillar of this order consists of a square, octagonal or multifaceted shaft supporting a wheel moulding and a *palagai* abacus. The corbels are also of the Chola beveled and tenoned variety. An interesting feature of the shaft of this pillar is that due to the exigency of height, another small piece of stone is added at the top of the shaft. The date of carving of these pillars is 1650 A.D. This indicates that in spite of the development in the carving of pillars, some sculptors preferred to adhere to old methods of pillar carving (Pl.-51).

It is stated already that, certain of the architectural designs, like the chittrakhanḍa pillars, liberally used by the Vijayanagara artists, were already in existence, in the region of our study, during the late Chola times. One more architectural motif, ascribed by art historians to Vijayanagar school of art is the *pusapōti*ka. Even this *pusapōti*ka motif appears in the late Hoysala period, in the temples of the region of study\(^9\). Examples of the *pusapōti*kas are noticed in the temples built by Ilavanjirayas, the feudatories under the Hoysalas. Therefore it may be clearly said that certain of the architectural forms such as the chittrakhanḍa pillars and *pusapōti*kas were already in use in the region, a century prior to the foundation of the Vijayanagara dynasty and they were continued in the architecture of the Vijayanagara period. It is also a known fact that many of the monuments of Hampi were built by architects who hailed from Tamilnadu. Therefore it is natural that the architectural traits that existed in the Tamil country during the pre-Vijayanagara period were introduced into the art of


Hampi and they got recognized by the art historians as the special traits of Vijayanagara art.

**CAPITAL:**

Capital is the upper most member of the pillar. It is a decorative part of the pillar which is ornamental in nature and is not functional, except for the fact that it increases the height of the pillar. In the composition of the pillar the, capital is optional. It is left to the convenience of the architect to have the capital or any part of it above the shaft in the pillar order. The capital of the pillar comprises of 2 members.

They are, from the bottom,

1. A compressed cushion like member *kumbha*, circular or square on plan. It is of one stone. It is generally called by the name cushion capital. The side of this cushion is either smoothened or polished or ribbed or carved with floral reliefs. This member also sometimes is many-sided or square on plan. If it is a square capital its sides are indented depending upon the facets of the shaft of the pillar. Many a time, square capitals are horizontally indented also (Pl. -52,53,54,55,56,57).

2. Above this cushion like member sits the abacus. Abacus is also an optional member of the capital. Generally in South Indian temples it is formed by combining two different types of motifs. The upper one is called *phalaka* in Sanskrit and *palagai* in Tamil. The lower one is called *manḍalī* in Sanskrit and *idal* in Tamil, which means a lotus. The *palagai* is represented as placed over a fully blossomed lotus flower. Thus having a form which is flat at the top, square and brimmed on all the four sides, and having a lotus like moulding at the bottom. The combination of these two motifs forms the ‘*palagai*’ abacus.

The *palagai* may be sometimes indented at the corners or horizontally grooved or decorated with minute carvings. The lotus motif or moulding below may be
smooth and polished or multifaceted to go on par with the capital and the shaft below. Sometimes it is scalloped with lotus petals also. The palagai abacus is a design formed by the Tamil architects. It is seen from the time of the Pallavas and continues up to the period of the Pandyas and occasionally during the Vijayanagara period also.

Palagai abacus is not seen in the Badami Chalukyan pillars. The Rastrakuta artists used this motif in their temples. In southern part of Karnataka, Palagai abacus is a regular feature to be seen in pillars of the Gangas and the Nolambas. This continued during the later period also.

**PÔTIKA /BRACKET / CORBEL:**

Bracket or Corbel also often referred to as corbel bracket is an architectural member which is functional in nature. It is placed above the shaft of the pillar to give additional support to the architrave which rest on them. Corbels also help in the manipulation of the length of the architraves. In the Vijayanagara temples brackets become often multilayered and more projecting to decrease the width of the span between two colonnades.

The Corbel is called by the name pōtika in Sanskrit. The Dravidian nomenclature for this is bōdige. Depending upon the shape and carving on the surface of the corbel, they are called by the names – (1) rounded bracket (vrūttapōtika (Pl.-58), (2) wavy (bottom) bracket (taranāgapōtika), (Pl.-58-a) (3) flowery bracket (pusāpāpōtika) (Pl.-61), bevel and tenon type of bracket (ādhārapōtika) (Pl.-59) and voluted bracket (musāribandhapōtika) (Pl.-60) and chithrapōtika (figural) (Pl.-61-a). The shape of the bracket many a times, help us to date the approximate period of its carving.

Texts mention five types of pōtikas. They are

1. Vṛūttapōtika
2. Taranāgapōtika
3. Ādhārapōtika
4. *Musṭibandhapōṭika*

5. *Pusṭapōṭikā*

In the region of our study, the temples of the Ganga period possess – the *vrśaṭha*\(^95\) and the *taranāgapōṭikas*\(^96\). These types of *pōṭikas* are occasionally found in the temples of the Cholas also\(^97\). The temples of the Nolamba period\(^98\) possess corbels which are beveled or chamfered at the lower ends, sometimes with a central band. In the temples built by the Cholas the central band becomes a tenon or a brimmed knob\(^99\).

In the temples of the Hoysala period, the shape of the *pōṭika* is of a different kind. The bottom of the projecting end gets the shape of *cyma-recta* moulding with a central prominent petal in the place of a band. The lower end of the corbel gets the shape of a volute, (*musṭ ti*) transversely moulded\(^100\).

During the late Chola period the tenon of the corbel gets the shape of an inverted lotus flower. During the Vijayanagara period the same gets increased in size. The projecting arm of the corbel is extended, double flexured and it terminates in a well blossomed lotus. The body of the arm is also decorated with lotus petals, indentations and other suitable decorative patterns.

In the carving of the corbels, sometimes, all the extended arms of the corbel are carved in one block of stone. Even the tip of the lotus bud is carved, most often, in the same block. Usually the two sided *pusṭapōṭika* is commonly found. In rare instances four-sided *pusṭapōṭika* is also carved\(^101\). If, during the time of carving or during the erection of the corbel, the tip of the flower is broken, they are joined by another piece of stone through tenon and socket. In a rare instance (Kolar, Someshwara temple) a screw-like mechanism also seems to have been adopted for fixing the bud of the lotus. (This is subject to further confirmation whether the repair is ancient or recent one).

*Chitrapōṭika* is a cross bar placed between the pillar shaft and the architrave, at an angle of 45° from the shaft. The lower end of the cross-bar is supported by the
shaft, and the upper end supports the bottom of the architrave. The junction of the cross bar at the architrave is slightly away from the top portion of the architrave and is slightly away from the top portion of the pillar shaft.

A study of the morphology of the brackets of the temples of Karnataka would, however, reveal that there is a gradual evolution or development of the design of this architectural member. If the temples of this region are placed in a chronological order and the shafts of the brackets found in them are arranged, the order of the shapes, will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Dynastic affiliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Vṛttapōṭika</td>
<td>C. 500-800 Chalukya (Badami)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Taranagapōṭika</td>
<td>C. 800-900 Ganga – Nolamba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ādhārapōṭika</td>
<td>C. 900-1200 Chola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Musṭibandhapōṭika</td>
<td>C. 1100-1300 Hoysala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Pusṭapōṭikā and its</td>
<td>C. 1250-1700 Late Chola and Vijayanagara developed forms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See line drawings for details : 30a,b,c,d,e)

The result of this table can conveniently be applied to sum of those temples of south India, to which no other means to date them is available. This analogy is useful to determine the approximate chronology of different structures within a huge temple complex.

**UTTARA/ ARCHITRAVE / BEAM:**

The Architrave is the beam placed above the pillar. This covers the span between two pillars. Architrave is used to take the load of the ceiling. Most of the architraves of the region of our study are plain. Sometimes they are horizontally moulded or indented. In the temples of the Vijayanagara period they are often
carved with scalloped lotus petals\textsuperscript{102}. Occasionally they are also carved with a frieze of vyāl\textsuperscript{103} or hamsas\textsuperscript{104} or creeper scrolls etc.

**VITĀNA/ CEILING** - Vitāna (skt.) is the term used to denote the ceiling or candy of the temple. It is also called by the name *prachhādana*. The ceilings found in the region of our study are often treated in a very simple way. They are no doubt divided into different sections by a network of architraves. Except for the central part of the ceiling of the hall, rests of the parts are plain and simple. No doubt the ceilings of the temples are covered by the slabs dressed on the lower portion and undressed on the outer part. The observation made above is regarding the construction of the ceiling of the halls, *manḍapa*, cloisters and other simple constructions.

In the treatment of the central part of the *navaranag"a* ceiling, special attention is normally given for its surface treatment. In most of the early temples of the region of our study, this part is filled by nine panels of equal size, containing the reliefs of the *as"hātādikpālakas* surrounding Shiva as *Natarāja* or as *Umāsahitha*. In the early temples (Ganga and Nolamba), in the place of *as"hātādikpālaka* panels, sometimes a highly relieved lotus flower is also carved. The carving of *as"hātādikpālaka* panel in the *navaranag"a* ceiling is a distinct feature of the temples built by Nolamba artists.

The temples built during the Chola rule in the area of our study, as already stated, contain only the sanctum and the *ardhamanḍapa* in front. Hardly a *navaranag"a* built contemporarily is seen in this region. The Mukthinatheshwara temple at Binnamangalā is the only exception to this rule. In this temple, the local tradition of carving *as"hātādikpālaka* ceiling is followed. In the later period, the additions made to Chola temples during later time generally *nābhichchandha* ceiling is noticed.

*Nābhichchandha* roof is similar to the lantern roof of the Western architecture. It is a very simple and effective method of covering a span. The construction consists of placing stone slabs at the four corners of the square diagonally to the preceding
square. This method is repeated till the area is covered to the required size. Finally one cap stone is placed at the top. In this method in the lower portion of the roof, a big void is formed, while its outer portion becomes bulbous. The surface of the void is trimmed or decorated according to the need to get a fine ornamental domical ceiling. The Hoysala artist excelled every other artist in this field. Such decorative ceilings are also called by the name ‘bhuvanēśwari’.

No ornate bhuvanēśwari is found in the region of our study, even though the Hoysalas ruled over this region. During the Vijayanagara period, the tradition of carving ornate domical ceilings was revived in the region of our study. Beautiful bhuvanēśwaris come into being above the ornate centre stage of the kalyāna manṭapaś. The ceilings of the ardhamanṭapaś and the garbagrhaś were normally constructed in the nābhichchanda method.

**BHADRAKA STAMBHA / ENGAGED COLUMN / REAR PILLAR**

Engaged Columns are pillars meant to bear the load of the structure. They are built into the wall of the structure. They support the frame work of the architraves. The interspaces of the engaged pillars are filled by screen walls. The practice of using engaged pillars is very ancient one. It is continued in modern times also. Engaged pillars are used in structures having mud walls, brick walls and also stone walls. Engaged pillars possess all the essential parts of a pillar like the pedestal, shaft and the corbel bracket. Because it is fully or partly concealed in the wall, it may or may not have decorative carvings.

The temples of the region under study do possess engaged pillars. They are to be seen on the inner surface of the wall of the temples. These pillars project out slightly from the surface of the wall. All the engaged pillars found so far in this region are variants of the free standing pillars of the frame work. Exceptions are found wherein the free-standing pillars of the framework are cylindrical in nature. In such cases, the engaged pillars will have basically square shaft of the type of pillars that was in vogue in that style, because the pillars with round shaft do not suit into the plain walls of the structure. Even these engaged pillars bear the design
of their central counter parts in squarish form and their decorations too are carved only on their exposed portions. Rest of the shaft is left plain and straight throughout so that the joinery is perfect and cavity proof (Pls.-63 - 69).

1 Mayamata Ch-XV, Mānasāra Ch-XV, Iṣāṇāśivagurudevapaddati-Kriya - 31-19-74, Kāśyapaśilpa pataла VIII deals with the pillars.
2 Mayamata Ch -XV- Śloka 2, Mānasāra Ch -XV, - Śloka 2b-3, Kāśyapaśilpa pataла VIII, - Śloka 2 Iṣāṇāśivagurudevapaddati Kriya 31 Śloka 19b and 20a.
3 Mayamata Ch -XV - Śloka 13, Mānasāra Ch -XV - Śloka 10, Kāśyapaśilpa pataла VIII-Śloka 10, Śilparatna Ch –XXI - Śloka-58, Iṣāṇāśivagurudevapaddati Kriya 31 Śloka 10b-11a, Kāṃikāgama pataла 53 Śloka 16.
4 Mayamata Ch -XV - Śloka 15, Mānasāra Ch -XV - Śloka 10, Kāśyapaśilpa pataла VIII-Śloka 10, Śilparatna Ch-XXI Śloka-58, Iṣāṇāśivagurudevapaddati Kriya pādā, pataла 31 Śloka 11b, Kāṃikāgama pataла 53 Śloka 17a.
5 Mayamata Ch -XV - Śloka 15, Mānasāra Ch -XV - Śloka 11a, Kāśyapaśilpa pataла VII-Śloka 13-14, Śilparatna Ch-XXI Śloka-60b-61a, Iṣāṇāśivagurudevapaddati Kriya pādā, pataла 31 Śloka 23, Kāṃikāgama pataла 53 Śloka 20a 21b.
6 Mayamata Ch -XV - Śloka 22b – 26a.
7 Kāśyapaśilpa - pataла VIII - Śloka 23-25.
8 Mayamata Ch -XV - Śloka 13-16.
9 Mayamata Ch -XV - Śloka 13b-16.
10 Kāśyapaśilpa pataла VIII - Śloka 11b, Śilparatna Ch –XXI- Śloka-59, Iṣāṇāśivagurudevapaddati Kriya pādā, pataла 31 Śloka 22b-, Kāṃikāgama pataла 53 Śloka 18b.
11 Śilparatna Ch-XXI- Śloka-60a.
12 Iṣāṇāśivagurudevapaddati Kriya pādā, pataла 31 Śloka 22b.
13 Kāṃikāgama pataла LIII - Śloka 20a.
14 Śilparatna Ch - XXI - Śloka- 59b.
15 Iṣāṇāśivagurudevapaddati Kriya pādā, pataла 31 Śloka 24b.
16 Kāṃikāgama pataла LI I- Śloka 18b.
17 Kāśyapaśilpa pataла VIII - Śloka 11.
18 Mānasāra Ch -XV - Śloka 11b, Kāśyapaśilpa pataла - VII - Śloka 10b, Śilparatna Ch –XXI - Śloka-59a, Iṣāṇāśivagurudevapaddati Kriya pādā, patala XXXI -Śloka 21, Kāṃikāgama pataла LI I-Śloka 18a.
19 Kāṃikāgama pataла LI I- Śloka 18a.
20 Mayamata Ch -XV- Śloka 14a.
21 Kāśyapaśilpa pataла VIII - Śloka 10b.
22 Mānasāra Ch -XV- Śloka 11b.
23 Śilparatna Ch XXI - Śloka-62a.
24 Iṣāṇāśivagurudevapaddati Kriya pādā, pataла XXXI - Śloka-24.
25 Mayamata Ch - XV- Śloka-17-19 .
26 Śilparatna Ch - XXI - Śloka-62b-63a.
27 Kāśyapaśilpa pataла VIII - Śloka 21.
28 Kāśyapaśilpa pataла VIII - Śloka 21a.
30 Mayamata Ch - XV- Śloka- 25b.
31 Mayamata Ch - XV- Śloka- 26a.
32 Someshwara Temple, Bidirahalli, Hoskote taluk, Bangalore district and Prassanna Virupaksha temple, Virupakshi, Mulabagal taluk, Kolar dist.
33 Mānasāra Ch - XV - Śloka 37.42.
34 Mānasāra Ch - XV - Śloka 42-49.

STAMBHA / PILLARS
Mānasāra Ch - XV - Śīloka 16-19.
Mānasāra Ch - XV - Śīloka 29.
Mānasāra Ch - XV - Śīloka 22-36.
Amaranarayana Swamy Temple, Kavalara, Chintamani taluk, Kolar dist.
Sanskrit English dictionary by Monier Williams –Pg 623.
Śīlaparata Ch - XXI - Śīloka-65a.
Śīlaparata Ch - XXI - Śīloka-65b-66.
Śīlaparata Ch - XXI - Śīloka-66.
Nagareshwara temple at Begur, Bangalore dist. has lotus petals carved on them. Bhoganandishwara temple at Nandi, Chikkaballapura taluk, Kolar dist has Kapota carved on it.
Pillars at Gāngadhareshwara temple at Shivagange, Bangalore dist. possess niche on the pedestal.
Kapōṭabandha adhiṣṭhāna is noticed at Markandeswara temple at Vokkaleri, Malur taluk, Kolar dist. and Venugopalaswamy temple at Devanahalli, Bangalore rural dist.
Maṅcabandha adhiṣṭhāna is noticed at Someshwara temple at Kurudumale, Mulabagal taluk, Kolar dist.
Pillars of the pillars of the kalyāṇaṁ tāpa of Bhoganandishwara temple at Nandi, Chikkaballapura taluk, Kolar dist.
Pedestals of the pillars of the kalyāṇaṁ tāpa of Someshwara temple at Kolar, Kolar dist.
Pedestals of the pillars of the kalyāṇaṁ tāpa of Someshwara temple at Kolar, Kolar dist. and Pedestals of the pillars of the kalyāṇaṁ tāpa of Bhoganandishwara temple at Nandi, Chikkaballapura taluk, Kolar dist.
Pillars of the kalyāṇaṁ tāpa of Venkataramana swamy temple, Aalambagiri, Chintamani taluk, Kolar dist.
Pedestals of the pillars of the kalyāṇaṁ tāpa of Bhoganandishwara temple at Chikkaballapura taluk, Kolar dist.
Pedestals of the pillars of the kalyāṇaṁ tāpa of Someshwara temple at Kolar, Kolar dist.
Pillars of the pātalāṅkāra at Ranganatha temple Rangathala, Bodigenahalli, Chikkaballapura taluk, Kolar dist 60 of the pillars of the kalyāṇaṁ tāpa and pedestals of the pillars of the kalyāṇaṁ tāpa of Bhoganandishwara temple at Nandi, Chikkaballapura taluk, Kolar dist.
Kalyāṇaṁ tāpa of Someshwara temple, Kolar dist.
Ibid.,
Ibid.,
Pillars of the outer prākāra at Swayambuveshwara temple at Madivala, Bangarpet taluk, Kolar dist has a plain base and pillars at Virupaksha temple at Virupakshi, Mulbagal taluk, Kolar dist. has relief sculptures on the shafts.
Pillars of Bhairava temple at Sitibetta, Kolar taluk, Kolar dist. and Amaranarayana temple at Kaivara, Chintamani taluk, Kolar dist.
Pillars of the kalyāṇaṁ tāpa of Someshwara temple, Kolar dist.
Pillars of Bhairava temple at Sitibetta, Kolar taluk, Kolar dist. and Amaranarayana temple at Kaivara, Chintamani taluk, Kolar dist.
Pillars of the kalyāṇaṁ tāpa of Someshwara temple, Kolar dist.
Pillars of the kalyāṇaṁ tāpa of Someshwara temple, Kolar dist.
Pillars of Bhairava temple at Bellur, Kolar taluk, Kolar dist.
Pillars of Bhairava temple at Sitibetta, Kolar taluk, Kolar dist. and Amaranarayana temple at Kaivara, Chintamani taluk, Kolar dist.
Pillars of the kalyāṇaṁ tāpa of Someshwara temple, Kolar dist.
Pillars of Bhairava temple at Bellur, Kolar taluk, Kolar dist.
Srirama temple at Kudalur, Channapattana taluk, Bangalore rural dist.
Engaged columns of Bhairava temple at Sitibetta, Kolar taluk, Kolar dist. and Amaranarayana temple at Kaivara, Chintamani taluk, Kolar dist.
Though many art historians accept this theory professor S. Settar opines that it is handmade and not lathe turned. The Hoysala Temples,Dharwad.
Pillars at Gāngadhāreshwara temple at Shivagange, Bangalore dist. are of soap stone i.e. made of softer medium.
Pillars at Ramanathadevar temple at Bellur, Kolar taluk, Kolar dist. have granite pillars, which is of harder medium.

Pillars of the pāṭālāṅkana of Ranganatha temple Rangasthala, Bodigenahalli, Chikkaballapura taluk, Kolar dist and Someshwara temple at Kolar, Kolar dist.

The pillars of the kalyāṅgaṇa īṭāpa of Someshwara temple at Kolar, Kolar dist. and Bhoganandishwara temple at Nandi, Chikkaballapura taluk, Kolar dist.

Pillars of the rangamāṇa īṭāpa at Ranganatha temple Rangathala, Bodigenahalli, Chikkaballapura taluk, Kolar dist.

Vishwakarma Vāsthuḥśāstra – Śloka – 46.

These varieties of pillars are noticed at Vijayanavittala temple at Hampi.

Ishwara temple at Hunkundpattana, Bangarupete taluk, Kolar dist and the Vijayendraswami temple at Bethamangala, Bangarupete taluk, Kolar dist.

Capitals of the pillars of Markandeshwara temple at Vokkaleri, Malur taluk, Kolar dist. and Nagareshwara temple at Begur, Bangalore dist.

Choleswara temple at Begur, Bangalore dist.

Bharateshwara temple at Avani, Mulbagal taluk, Kolar dist.

Amaranarayana temple at Kaivara, Chintamani taluk, Kolar dist. and Mukthiṇaṭhswami temple at Binnamangala, Nelamanagala taluk, Bangalore dist.

Bharateshwara temple at Avani, Mulbagal taluk, Kolar dist and Nagareshwara temple at Begur, Bangalore dist.

Sulebasadi at Manne, Nelamangala taluk, Bangalore dist Choleswara temple at Begur, Bangalore dist.

Nagareshwara temple at Begur, Bangalore dist.

Kolaramma temple at Kolar.

Sulebasadi at Manne, Nelamangala taluk, Bangalore dist Choleswara temple at Begur, Bangalore dist.

Nagareshwara temple at Begur, Bangalore dist. Choleswara temple at Begur, Bangalore dist.


Bhairava temple at Sītībetta, Kolar taluk, Kolar dist. and Amararayana temple at Kaivara, Chintamani taluk, Kolar dist.

Someshwara temple at Kolar dist.

Pillars of the Gangadareshwara temple at Shivagange has got muṣṭīṭaḥibandha potika.

Mānasāra Ch – XV - Śloka – 53.

Rangamāṇa īṭāpa of Someshwara temple, Ulsoor, Bangalore.

Pillars of the navaraṇa īṭa of Venkataramana swamy temple, Alambagiri, Chintamani taluk, Kolar dist. and the mahādwarā of Prasanna Rameshwara temple at Magadi, Bangalore rural dist.

Mukhamāṇa īṭāpa of Ranganatha swami temple, Balepete, Bangalore and pāṭālāṅkana of Rangasthala temple at Rangasthala, Bodigenahalli, Chikkaballapura taluk Kolar dist.

Prasanna Venkataraman swamy temple, Alambagiri, Chintamani taluk, Kolar dist.

Examples of the puspāpāṭikas are noticed in the temples built by Ilavanjirayas, the feudatories under Hoysalas.

Navaraṇa īṭa of Kolaramma temple at Kolar.

Pillars of the navaraṇa īṭa of Choleswara temple and Nagareshwara temple at Begur, Bangalore dist.

Pillars of the guḍhāhanam īṭāpa of Mukthiṇaṭhswami temple at Binnamangala, Nelamanagala taluk, Bangalore dist.

Pillars of the navaraṇa īṭa of Lakhmaneshwara temple at Avani, Mulbagal taluk, Kolar dist.

Kailaseshwara temple at Doddamalur, Channappattana taluk, Bangalore rural dist.

Pillars at Ramanathadevar temple at Bellur, Kolar taluk, Kolar dist and Pillars at Gangadhareshwara temple at Shivagange, Bangalore dist.

Pillars of the navaraṇa īṭa of Venkataramana temple at Devaragudipalli, Bagepalli taluk, Kolar dist. and Rangasthala, Bodigenahalli, Chikkaballapura taluk Kolar dist.

Someshwara Temple, Kolar dist.
Markandeshwara temple at Vokkaleri, Malur taluk, Kolar dist.

Nagareshwara temple, Begur, Bangalore.

Anuradha temple at Anuradhapura has got ornately carved bhuvaneshwari.

Someshwara temple, Mulbagal taluk, Kolar dist., Bhogandhishwara temple at Nandi, Chikkaballapura taluk, Kolar dist.