CHAPTER - IV
ADHISTHĀNA- PLINTH

Adhisthāna is the bottom most member of any building. Its English equivalent is the plinth. Adhisthāna is derived from the Sanskrit root ‘adhiṣṭha’, which means ‘to stand upon’. Hence adhisthāna is a base or a platform on which a structure is built. The synonymous terms mentioned in the Texts are maṣūraka, vāstvādhāra, kuttīma, tala and ādyangam. Terms such as dharātala, ādhāra, dharani, bhuvana, prthvi, bhūmi, ādhāra are also used to describe an adhiṣṭhāna.

Adhisthāna, in the sadvarga system (the six parts) (Fig: 8) of the temple, comes first, hence it is called ādyangam. Adhisthāna may sometimes also have another base (sub-base), which is called by the name “upapīṭha”. According to some texts it is mandatory and according to some it is optional. But construction of two upapīṭhas, one above the other is also noticed.

In the following pages the different types of upapīṭha and the adhiṣṭhānas are discussed quite elaborately. Texts mention different types of upapīṭhas with some differences within themselves.

UPAPĪṬHA

The purpose of constructing an upapīṭha is mainly three. They are:

i) rakṣārtham – to enhance the stability of the structure.

ii) unnathārtham- to increase the height of the structure.

iii) sōbhārtham- to increase the beauty of the structure.

In the region of our study the upapīṭhas begin to appear from Nolamba period onwards.
Upapithas as mentioned in Mayamata and Manasāra

Fig 9. Mayamata

a) Pratibhadra upapītha

b) Vēdibhadra upapītha

c) Subhadra upapītha

Fig 10. Manasāra

a) Pratibhadra upapītha

b) Vēdibhadra upapītha

c) Mañcabadra upapītha

Fig 11 Mañcabadra upapītha- according to EITA

Not to Scale
upapīṭha also symbolically conveys the form of a trivarga structure. In the trivarga structure, adhiṣṭhāna, bhitti and prastara form the structure. In the upapīṭha, the lowest moulding i.e. upāna represents the plinth. The gala represents the wall and the kapōta or patṭika represent the prastara. The presence of these three parts in the upapīṭha makes it look like a miniature structure (shrine).

The mouldings of the upapīṭha are also found repeated in the adhiṣṭhāna (plinth). However, the upapīṭha is not as elaborately moulded as the adhiṣṭhāna. Therefore, to differentiate between the two, the sub-base is called by the name upapīṭha and the regular base is called by the name adhiṣṭhāna. As the mouldings of the upapīṭha and adhiṣṭhāna are identical in shape and form the description of the mouldings of the upapīṭha is elaborately given while dealing with adhiṣṭhāna.

The mouldings generally found in the upapīṭha are,

i) upāna- the bed slab
ii) jagati- a rectilinear, square or sloped moulding
iii) gala/kantha- dado (a deep and tall recessed portion)
iv) kapōta- cornice/dripstone
v) patṭikā- thick string course

Upapīṭha is also referred to by the name 'socle'. As mentioned already, it is constructed above the ground level and below the adhiṣṭhāna.

Mayamata mentions three types of upapīṭhas\(^\text{10}\). (Fig: 9) They are:

i) vēdibhadra.
ii) pratibhadhra.
iii) subhadra.
Mānasāra also mentions three types of upapīthas\(^1\). (Fig: 10) They are:

i) vēdibhadra.

ii) pratibhadhra

iii) Mañcabhadra

This is to say that subhadra of Mayamata does not find a place in Mānasāra. In its place, mañcabhadra is mentioned. A study of the drawings of both the groups clearly shows that the vēdibhadra and pratibhadra of both the Texts are identical except for the small subsidiary mouldings. Hence we can clearly say that mañcabhadra is a variant of the pratibhadra of both the Texts. Thus in the place of subhadra of Mayamata mañcabhadra is mentioned.

**Vēdibhadra Upapītha:** This upapītha (Fig 9a.) contains the following important mouldings\(^2\).

i) upāna- The bed slab

ii) gala- (with or without galapādas)

iii) paṭṭikā- Thick brimmed moulding/string course

Mayamata gives two types of vēdibhadra upapīthas. The first type should possess eight parts and the second should possess six parts. In the first variety, urdhvapadma, adhahpadma, and vajana are to be carved\(^3\). The second variety doesn’t possess any padma decoration\(^4\). This upapītha, according to Mayamata\(^5\) and Mānasāra,\(^6\) is suitable for all types of buildings. Vēdibhadra is simple in its form and easy to construct. It is non-ornate, hence economical in construction. Therefore it is prescribed for all types of buildings. Mānasāra states four types of vēdibhadra upapīthas depending upon the measurements and the number to sub mouldings. Earliest reference to vēdibhadra upapītha in the area of our study is reported from a Chola temple datable to 12\(^{th}\) century A.D.
**PRATIBHADRA UPAPĪTHA** (Figs 9b, 10b, pl-1): The following important mouldings are seen in the Pratibhadhra upapīṭha. They are:

i) upāṇa

ii) gala

iii) kapōta (with nāsis at regular intervals)

Use of a few upāṅgas varies the height of this upapīṭha. Both Mayamata and Mānasāra mention this kind of an upapīṭha. Mānasāra mentions four types while Mayamata mentions two types of pratibhadhra upapīṭha. Few upapīṭhas of this kind are found in the area of our study, of which, some are extensively decorated. The upapīṭha of this type is also found used throughout the temple, beginning from the central shrine to the mahāmaṇṭapa.

This type of upapīṭha is built for the temples constructed during the Vijayanagara period and onwards. Ornamentation of the mouldings of this plinth is more gorgeous. The nāsis of the kapōta are decorated with floral motifs and kṛthimukhas. The upper part of the upāṇa which normally contains a doucine form is enlarged to look like a jagati with lotus petal scalloping on it. Thus it resembles a kapōtabandha adhiṣṭhāna. It is usual to see small reliefs of secular themes like dancers, musicians (pl-1a) and figures of kubjas on the kanṭha (pl-28).

A variant and a more elaborate version of the pratibhadhra upapīṭha is also noticed. No reference to this type of upapīṭha is found in the Texts. Besides the regular mouldings, an additional padmajagati and dhāravṛttakumuda is carved here. The surface of the gala is also relieved with a row of tōrana (pl-174).

**SUBHADRA UPAPĪṬHA** (fig 9c): Mayamata mentions two types of subhadra upapīṭha while Mānasāra does not make a mention of this type. This upapīṭha,
according to Mayamata, consists of the following mouldings24. They are:

i) upāna
ii) mahāpadma
iii) gala
iv) adhahpadma
v) paṭṭikā
vi) urdhvapadma
vii) gala

According to Mayamata, subhadra upapīṭha is identical with pratibhadhra upapīṭha. The second variety of this upapīṭha is simpler than the first type in its surface treatment. This type of upapīṭha is built for the temples constructed during Vijayanagara period and onwards.

MĀṆCABHĀDRA UPAPĪṬA (Fig 10c): Maṅcabhadra upapīṭha is mentioned only in Mānasāra25. The surface treatment of this variety is quite ornate. A few structures in the region of our study have this type of upapīṭha26. The major mouldings of this variety are:

i) upāna
ii) jagati
iii) gala
iv) kapōta

Apart from the upapīṭhas mentioned above, EITA illustrates a different type of maṅcabhadra upapīṭha (Fig 11,PL-2). This type is very simple in its elevation. A thick brimmed jagati, super-imposed by a prominent gala and another thick-brimmed slab are the mouldings found in this upapīṭha. The gala is relieved with galapādas and reliefs occasionally. Temples of both ornate and non
ornate variety have this *upapīṭha* in their premises. Hence this was a popular type of *upapīṭha* used in the area of our study. No reference to *upapīṭha* of this type is found in the Texts. Hence this may be considered as a variant of the simplest *upapīṭha* i.e. *subhadra upapīṭha* of Mayamata.

The practice of constructing *upapīṭhas* to the temples and its adjuncts is found since early days. In the area of our study the earliest use of *upapīṭha* comes from the 10th century found at the Kamakshiamman temple at Dharmapuri, a structure of Nolamba workmanship (Fig 17, pl-3). This may be identical to the *maṇcabhadra upapīṭha*. The *upapīṭha* is partly hidden under the ground. The *gala* and the upper part only are visible. The *upapīṭha*, at regular intervals, has sculptures of squatting elephants placed cardinally to the axis of the temple. The elephants are depicted as if they are carrying the *upāṇa* of the plinth on their backs. The interspaces of these elephants are relievos of the narrative panels depicting important incidents from Ramayana. This is the earliest specimen of an *upapīṭha* in the region of our study. In spite of its early nature this *upapīṭha* is carved in a very exquisite manner. Unfortunately, the lower mouldings (below the *gala*) are hidden under the ground due to later renovation work.

During the 12th century A.D., increase in the construction of *upapīṭhas* is noticed in the area of our study. They are extensively used in the construction of the plinths of the *mahādwāras* than in the main shrines.

**ADHIṢṬHĀNA**

*Adhiṣṭhāna* is the base of the structure. It corresponds to the plinth or the foundation proper of the structure. *Adhiṣṭhāna* of the temples are generally ornate in nature. Ornamentation is done mostly in the shaping of different mouldings of the plinth. The mouldings project from the vertical norm of the plinth and these projections are moulded into different pleasing shapes, sometimes with the addition of decorative carvings also. Though the *adhiṣṭhānas* are named with different names the major mouldings of the *adhiṣṭhāna* are almost the same.
Therefore, before going to the typology of the adhisthāna let us know what these mouldings are. They are:

i) upāna
ii) jagati
iii) kumuda
iv) gala
v) kapōta
vi) paṭṭikā
vii) prati

Each moulding forms a horizontal course of the plinth. In the carving of these mouldings, irrespective of their thickness or height, one single slab is used. Nowhere two horizontal slabs are joined to carve a single moulding.

Kasyapaśilpa mentions five major mouldings of the Adhisthāna. They are upāna, jagati, kumuda, kampa and paṭṭikā and these are called “pañcavarga”.

A cursory glance at the moulded adhisthāna of the temples clearly shows that the mouldings get reduced in size as they go up. This is a common feature of all the adhisthānas of the South Indian temples. If the adhisthānas are tall enough, the contour presents a gentle battered sloped look.

**UPĀNA:** Upāna is the lowest member of the plinth. It is the bed slab. It is always rectilinear in form. Upāna is generally plain and devoid of ornamentation. Sometimes, it contains horizontal indentations. Occasionally, bhāravāhakas and elephants may also be noticed. The provision of the upāna is optional in case an upapīṭha is built below the adhisthāna.

**JAGATI:** Jagati is the moulding above the upāna. It may be rectilinear in form or it may be moulded in the shape of an inverted lotus (mahāpadma) or both. Jagati is a dominant and impressive moulding of the plinth. The jagati of the
plinths of the early temples are very plain, while decorations on the jagati begin to appear from 10th century onwards. Decorations commonly found on the early jagati are scalloping of the lotus petals with prominent up-curled edges. If the jagati is rectilinear, its face is relieved with the figures of animals, birds etc. Commonly found faunal themes are elephants, lions, swans and vyālas in various postures. If the jagati is in the shape of a mahāpadma (big inverted lotus), the petals are scalloped very neatly with double flexure and up curled tips and edges. The entire surface of the mahāpadma is smoothly polished. The mahāpadma will invariably be placed on a thick flat-brimmed moulding. Even this moulding is sometimes relieved with various types of decorations like ratnapattika (band of jewelled pendants) and creeper scrolls. The surface of these prominent lotus petals is also sometimes decorated with minute carvings. Instances of carving mahāpadma and rectilinear jagati alternatively in the same plinth are also not unknown.

**KUMUDA**: Kumuda is a very important moulding of the plinth. It is to be noted here that upāna, jagati and kumuda are the three major mouldings of the plinth invariably noticed in all the well-moulded plinths. Three different shapes of the kumuda are noticed in the plinths of the temples. They are, round (vrtta), three-faceted (tripatta) and multi-faceted (dhārāvṛtta). The round kumuda corresponds to the Greek Torus of the plinths. All the above mentioned types are found in the same plinth used alternatively. The surface of the kumuda also contains decorations of ribbings, creeper scrolls and other intricate designs (kaṭākāvrtakumuda). This design is very unique and also attractive for its minute carvings. The ribbings carved are closely spaced, prominent and thick. Often they are joined together by a ratnapattika flowing in the central portion of the kumuda.

**GALA**: Gala is not a moulding. Its surface corresponds to the vertical norm of the plinth. It is a dado of considerable height running all-round the plinth. The gala is a part of the plinth which is used to vary the height of the plinth.
Repetition of the gala is also noticed above and below kapōta or paṭṭikā mouldings in the same plinth. In a solitary instance, the gala is found on both sides of the kumuda. However, nowhere a gala is found repeated in an upapīṭha. The gala of the upapīṭhas is always very prominent and high in elevation. But the galas of the adhiṣṭāṇa, though somewhat prominent, are never made as tall as the galas of the upapīṭha. Galas may be carved with galapādas which divide the horizontal surface into distinct panels. The surface of the gala may have relievo sculptures of varieties of subject matter. Subjects of religious, social, faunal, floral and decorative themes are commonly noticed. Occasionally, erotic themes are also found. Repetition of gala in the plinth is not to be seen in the plinths of the early temples while it is noticed in the plinths in the temples built after 10th century A.D.

KAPŌTA: Kapōta is a very prominent moulding of the adhiṣṭāṇa. It has got its name kapōta because of its sloped contour which resembles the contour of a pigeon's head. It is not dissimilar to the kapōta (drip stone) above the wall. The section of the kapōta is like a quadrant. Some times it may be solid and sometimes it is hollow. The common decoration on the surface of the kapōta are the nāsis carved at regular intervals. However, variedly carved decorations on the upper surface of the kapōta are also often noticed. Floral patterns, elongated stylized lotus petals, beaded string festoons (muktāgrāsas), tassels, etc., are also found. kapōta is a moulding which is found in the plinth and in the upapīṭha as well. Occasionally kapōta is drawn forward from the vertical norm of the mouldings of the plinth. Kapōta is always placed above the gala, i.e., the Dado, a recessed and prominent part of the plinth. Kapōta is a moulding found invariably in the plinths built in Kannada tradition.

Kapōta, as mentioned earlier, is provided for the upapīṭhas also. The kapōtas of the upapīṭha are also invariably decorated with varieties of designs similar to those found on the plinth.
**PATTIKĀ:** *Pattika* is a rectilinear moulding flat and brimmed in form. If the *pattika* is thick, broad and prominent it is called ‘mahāpattī’ or ‘agra paṭṭiyal’ (Tamil). If the same is small, it is called *ksudrapattika*. *Paṭṭikā* is a moulding of the *adhiṭṭhānas* of Tamil tradition. It is used in the place of *kapōta* of the Kannada tradition. *Paṭṭikā* serves the function of a drip stone and it is always above the *gala*. The area of study being a buffer zone, both Tamil and Kannada idioms are found used in the temples of this region. Good examples where, in the same course of the *adhiṭṭhāna*, *paṭṭikā* and *kapōta* are carved alternatively are noticed in good numbers. *Paṭṭikā* normally contains bold reliefs of animals in a row, like *vyālas*, elephants, lions playing, frisking and fighting and in different attitudes. The projecting terminals of the *paṭṭikā* normally contain the heads of *makaras* with wide open mouths.

**PRATI:** The top-most moulding of the plinth is the *prati*. It is said to correspond to the level of the floor inside. It is the smallest of the mouldings of the plinth. It is always carved thin. The shape of this moulding is uniform throughout. It is flat at the top and flat at the side, while its bottom is moulded in the shape of a lotus, and it is often scalloped with lotus petals.

Instances where the side of the *prati* is decorated with *ratnapaṭṭikā* (plate-) are noticed. The upper portion of the *prati* is sometimes horizontally indented (plate-). In the plinth where the *gala* is repeated, the *prati* is not carved continuously, and its line is interrupted because the bottom line of the *kōṣṭha* is extended down up to the top of the *paṭṭikā* or *kapōta*.

Besides these major mouldings, minor mouldings are also used for the sake of decoration and for increasing and adjusting the height of the plinth. These minor mouldings are carved at suitable places and intervals.

**UPĀNGAS (SUB-MOULDINGS):** *Upāṅgas* are the sub-mouldings of the plinth. Besides the major mouldings, the plinth contains good number of minor mouldings adjoining the major mouldings, on both the upper and lower parts.
These minor mouldings are called by the name the upāṅgas. Upāṅgas help to increase the beauty and elegance of the adhiṣṭhāna. They also help in the harmonious blending of the two variedly shaped major mouldings and upāṅgas help to increase the height of the plinth. The upāṅgas are sometimes responsible for the creation of the sub types. For example, the two types of subhadra upapītha are differentiated on the basis of the upāṅgas they possess. Likewise, in the adhiṣṭhāna, there is a variety called kampabandha adhiṣṭhāna (not found in the region of our study). It is called so because of the good numbers of kampas (fillets or strips) provided on the two sides of the major mouldings. Upāṅgas are always carved in the same stone as that of its upper or lower major moulding. They are never carved separately and used in the construction. Names of various types of upāṅgas are found in Texts. They are:

i) kampa: fillet or strip.

ii) vājana: A small band between two mouldings

iii) ārdhvapadma: cyma moulding with lotus scalloped upward.

iv) adhopadma: cyma moulding with lotus scalloped downward.

v) ratnapaṭṭikā: band of tassels and diadems.

vi) puspapaṭṭikā: band of floral motifs.

vii) antarita: Narrow recessed surface

viii) ālinga: A small rectilinear band attached to a major moulding.

Of these upaṅgas, kampa is an upaṅga found invariably at the top most point of each and every stone-slab containing the moulding of the plinth. It is always carved according to the contour line of the ground plan. As the major mouldings of the plinth are relieved with various types of decorations on their fore parts, it is not possible to maintain the plumb line of the plinth. Therefore, the line of the kampa is taken to determine the plumb line always. Kampa is found carved even in the mouldings of the prastara of the temple.
ARCHITECTURAL TEXTS MENTION DIFFERENT TYPES OF ADHIŚṬĀNAS.

These types of adhiśṭānas are not uniform in their number, size and form. Many of these types of adhiśṭānas have sub-varieties. Several of the types of adhiśṭānas mentioned in the Texts are similar in shape and form but are named differently by different Texts. Sometimes the names of the adhiśṭānas are different but their literal meanings are the same. Mayamata mentions fourteen main types of adhiśṭānas, while Manasāra mentions sixty four types, including all the sub-varieties. Mayamata does not mention any sub-varieties of adhiśṭānas. While Manasāra mentions sixty four sub-types, the names of all these sub-types are not available at present, probably due to the loss of pages of the manuscripts where those were mentioned. However, the printed version of the Manasāra mentions nineteen major varieties of adhiśṭānas and sub-varieties totalling fifty five. Therefore, other varieties and sub-varieties of adhiśṭānas might have been lost in the manuscript stage itself of the Text.

The Kaśyapaśilpa and Pādmasamhiita classify the adhiśṭānas broadly into two categories. They are (i) pādabandha and (ii) pratibandha adhiśṭānas. All the different types of adhiśṭānas found in the Texts can be grouped under these two categories. The Kaśyapaśilpa classifies about ten types of adhiśṭānas under the pratibandha class, and about eight types under the pādabandha class. This classification seems quite logical, which is explained at the end of this chapter. The classification according to Kaśyapaśilpa is given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pādabandha</th>
<th>pratibandha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i) ambujakēsara</td>
<td>i) pratimukham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) puspapuskala</td>
<td>ii) śrībandha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii) śrikāntabandha</td>
<td>iii) mañcabandha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv) śrēṇibandha</td>
<td>iv) abjabandha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fig 12. *Pādabandha adhiśṭhāna* (single gala) - Tiruvirattaneshwara temple - Pillur.

Fig 13. *Pādabandha adhiśṭhāna* (with katākāvṛta-kumuda) - Kailasanatha temple - Kargudi.

*Not to Scale*
The following is a detailed account of the different types of adhiśṭānas and their descriptive and analytical study.

**PADABANDHA ADHIŚṬĀNA** (fig 12, pl-4)

Pādabandha adhiśṭāna contains five distinctly cut mouldings, according to Mayamata⁴⁷ and Mānasāra⁴⁸. They are,

i) upāna

ii) jagati

iii) tripaṭṭa kumuda

iv) gala

v) paṭṭikā

The upāna and jagati of the pādabandha adhiśṭānas found in the region of our study are very simple, plain and brimmed mouldings. In the carving of the tripaṭṭakumuda for pādabandha adhiśṭāna there is some discrepancy amongst the Texts. Vimanarcanakalpa⁴⁹ states that pādabandha adhiśṭāna should possess tripaṭṭakumuda, whereas Kāśyapaśilpa ⁵⁰ states that pādabandha adhiśṭāna should possess dhāravruttakumuda. However, in the region of our study, all but one instance have tripaṭṭakumuda. In this solitary instance, the kumuda is made kaṭakavruttakumuda (ribbed)⁵¹(Fig 13,pl-5).The Gala portion is treated plain and
Fig 14. Pādabandha adhisthāna (double gala)- Swarnambika shrine-
Shikavaneshwara temple- Salem.

Fig 15: Pādabandha adhisthāna (Ornate variety)
Kailasanatha temple, Taramangalam

Not to Scale
also with galapādas. If the height of the gala is more, galapādas are provided, otherwise, gala is treated plain. The paṭṭikā is also treated very plain and non ornate.

In the area of our study, good number of pādabandha adhiśṭhānas are found for the shrines and for the subsidiary structures as well. Based on the morphological study of the pādabandha adhiśṭhānas in the area of our study certain observations can be made here. In pādabandha adhiśṭhāna, upāṅgas begin to appear from 11\textsuperscript{th} century onwards\textsuperscript{52} and the same are not seen in the plinths of the period\textsuperscript{53}. It is also a fact that no upāṅga is provided between jagati and the kumuda till the late medieval period. More than seventy five temples possess this type of adhiśṭhāna in the region under study. By about 11\textsuperscript{th} century pādabandha adhiśṭhāna gets a morphological change and variants of pādabandha adhiśṭhāna also come into use. The gala gets doubled and in between two galas a mahāpaṭṭikā is provided (Fig 14, pl-6). Side by side, the old type also continued to be in use. In the later forms of pādabandha adhiśṭhāna, a few adhiśṭhānas are made ornate by carving creeper scrolls, ratnapaṭṭikā, etc (Fig 15, pl-7). It is noteworthy that even a circular temple in the region of study is provided with a pādabandha adhiśṭhāna\textsuperscript{54} (pl-8). Mānasāra states that the pādabandha adhiśṭhāna is suitable for the structures of gods and of all classes of people\textsuperscript{55}. This type of adhiśṭhāna is easy to build and also quite appealing in its look. Therefore, it is widely used in the temples built by all the royal dynasties that ruled over this region.

The name pādabandha given to this type of adhiśṭhāna is probably due to the reason that the Pāda (literally feet), i.e., the lowest moulding dominates the elevation of the Plinth. Their prominence is enhanced further by making the lowest mouldings project forward like the human feet, from the vertical norm of the upper part of the plinth.
Fig 16. *Uragabandha adhiśṭhāna* - Kayanirmaleshwara temple - Attur

Fig 17. *Pratikrama adhiśṭhāna* - Kamakshiamman temple - Dharmapuri

*Not to Scale*
It is noticed in the region of our study that *pādabandha adhiṣṭhāna* is alternatively used with *pratibandha adhiṣṭhāna* in the same plinth since early days. Likewise, *pādabandha* is also used alternatively with *kapōtabandha adhiṣṭhāna*, in a solitary instance in an *adhiṣṭhāna* of the medieval period.

**URAGABANDHA ADHIṢṬHĀNA** (Fig 16, pl-9): Mayamata mentions one type of *uragabandha adhiṣṭhāna* while Mānasāra mentions four types of four different heights. *Uragabandha adhiṣṭhāna*, according to Mayamata, should possess two main string courses resembling a serpent’s mouth and a torus moulding. It also says that it is suitable for palaces of gods, brahmins and kings. Mānasāra states that this type of base is shaped like the face of a snake and furnished with two *pratis* at the top and the *kumbha* (pitcher torus) is circular. This type of plinth provides a robust, strong and appealing elevation to the structure. The cost of construction is also less as it involves less amount of carving. Solitary example of this type of plinth is found in a temple of 10th century. A close observation and study of the plinth reveals that this plinth may be categorised as *uragabandha adhiṣṭhāna*. As mentioned above *vṛttakumuda* should be ponderous and robust and the projecting corners of the *gala* should have prominent *makaramukhas* projecting forward. In the example cited, the *kumuda* moulding is very heavy and robust like the body of the python and correspondingly the *makaramukhas* project with open mouth. They give the appearance of a big snake surrounding the plinth, therefore it is possible to consider this plinth as the *uragabandha* variety of *adhiṣṭhāna*.

**PRATIKRAMA ADHIṢṬHĀNA** (Fig 17, pls-10-11): One type of *pratikrama adhiṣṭhāna* is mentioned in Mayamata, while Mānasāra mentions four types of *pratikrama adhiṣṭhāna*. This division is again based on the height and number of *upāṅgas* the plinth possesses. Kāśyapaśilpa also makes a mention of this type of *adhiṣṭhāna*. The major mouldings of this plinth are *upāna, jagati, dhārarvrttakumuda, gala and prati*. According to Mayamata, this plinth should be decorated with the carvings of elephants, *makaras, vyālas* etc and this plinth
Fig 18. Padmakēśara adhiṣṭhāna (with Vṛttakumuda)- Vishnu temple-
Thyaganur

Fig 19. Padmakēśara adhiṣṭhāna (with Tripāṭṭakumuda and Pratibhadra
upapīṭha)- Varadaraja temple- Sendamangalam

Not to Scale
is ideal for the house of gods. It also states that when the plinth is employed for
the houses of brahmins and kings it should be decorated with foliage and
creeper\textsuperscript{66} and such a plinth brings happiness and victory. Only one example of
this type of plinth is noticed in the area of study. It is reported from a Nolamba
temple of 10\textsuperscript{th} century A.D, from Dharmapuri\textsuperscript{67}. The plinth here is decorated with
the mythical animal motifs and also the floral motifs. This shows that the
prescription regarding the decoration of the plinth as mentioned in the Mayamata
is not strictly adhered to, by the sculptor. Instead, the sculptor has used his
discretion and used both floral and faunal motifs together in the same \textit{pratikrama
adhiśṭhāna}.

\textbf{PADMA KĒSARA:} Mayamata\textsuperscript{68} and Kasyapasilpa\textsuperscript{69} both mention this type of
plinth. Mānasāra also mentions this with four sub-varieties all having the same
height\textsuperscript{70}. The major mouldings of this plinth are \textit{upāna, jagati, kumuda, gala} and
\textit{prati}. There is no specific rule followed regarding the shape of the \textit{kumuda} of
this plinth. Therefore, both the varieties namely \textit{vṛtta} (Fig 18, pl-12) and
\textit{tripāṭṭakumuda} (Fig 19, pl-13) are found carved. Sometimes the \textit{vṛtta} is also
made into a \textit{kāṭakāvṛtakumuda} (Fig 20.), to make it more ornate. From the
description given in the Text, it becomes clear that this plinth is full of delicately
carved doucine and fillets decorated with delicate lotus petals. Lacing of
minutely carved lotus for all the mouldings of the plinth is obviously the reason
for naming it \textit{padmakēsara}. Lacing of lotus petals for all the mouldings is a
feature noticed commonly in many decorated plinths. These lotus petals are very
crisp, thin and delicate and also minute in the \textit{padmakēsara} plinth. The \textit{padmas}
carved here are thin and delicate like the curly hair (\textit{kēsara}) which in fact
brought the name \textit{padmakēsara} for this plinth. It is said that this type of plinth is
ideal for the temple of Shiva (Śambhu)\textsuperscript{71} in Mayamata, but Mānasāra states that
this type of plinth is suitable for all buildings\textsuperscript{72}.

Good number of plinths of this type are found in the area of our study and
these plinths begin to appear from 11\textsuperscript{th} century onwards. In the area of our study,
Fig 20. *Padmakēsara adhiṣṭhāna* (ornate variety) – Achaladeepeshwara temple- Mohanur.

this plinth has been used for both Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava temples in equal numbers.

**PUŚPAPUŚKALA** (Fig 21, pl-14): Mānasāra, Mayamata and Kaśyapaśilpa mention this *adhiśṭhāna*. They prescribe different heights for this plinth. According to Mayamata, the major mouldings of this plinth are *upāna*, *mahāpadma*, *jagati*, *kumuda*, *gala* and *prati*. According to Mānasāra, *paṭṭikā* and *kapōta* can be carved together. Mayamata states that in this plinth, importance is to be given for *mahāpadma* i.e. an inverted lotus moulding in the place of *jagati*. This surface is to be made prominent and attractive by carving lotus petals deep and well-scalloped. *Puspapuskala*, the literal meaning of which is to be taken as *puspa* i.e. *padma*, *puśkala* i.e., prominent. The prominent *puspa* motif is the main attraction of this plinth. Solitary example of this variety of plinth is found in the area of our study datable to 15th century A.D. While all the other mouldings of the plinth are simple in their execution, the *padma* is the main attractive part of the plinth. Prominently grooved petals with upcurled pointed edges and multiple layers of the lotus petals are all neatly executed in this plinth. An additional feature of this plinth is that the *kumuda* is dhārāvṛtta.

During the Vijayanagara period, much attention was given for the decoration of the plinths of different types of maṇṭapas and those of the shrine as well. In course of decoration of the plinth, every moulding of the plinth was decorated in an elaborate manner through floral, faunal and other decorative motifs. In the area of our study, one can notice such ornate plinths carved for the structures of this period are noticed. The *kumuda* is decorated with deep ribbing and a band of fillets, consisting of a chain of pendants, interspersed by medallions. Even the ribbings on the *kumuda* have delicate beaded surface. The *kapōta* moulding also has band of fillets and deeply scalloped lotus petals on the body. All the major mouldings as mentioned in Mayamata are provided, with sub mouldings carved in the form of band of scalloped lotus petals. Thus, it is very
Fig 22. *Śrībandha adhiśṭhāna* (ordinary variety)-Varadaraja temple-Pavithram.

Fig 23. *Śrībandha adhiśṭhāna* (ornate variety)-*nandimāṇṭapa*-Cholisthvara temple-Mallasamudram. Not to Scale
difficult to categorise them as belonging either to *puspapuṣkala* or *śribandha adhiṣṭhāṇa* which is also full of decorative patterns.

**ŚRĪBANDHA ADHIṢṬHĀṆA** (Fig 22, pl-15): Mānasāra⁷⁹, Mayamata⁸⁰ and Kāśyapaśilpa⁸¹ mention *śribandha adhiṣṭhāṇa*. Mānasāra mentions four sub-varieties of this plinth of equal size. *Śrībandha adhiṣṭhāṇa*, in its arrangement of mouldings, is basically a *kapōtabandha adhiṣṭhāṇa*. *Śrībandha adhiṣṭhāṇa* consists of all the essential major mouldings like *upāna, jagati, kumuda, kaṇṭha, kapōta* and *prati*. All these mouldings should be flanked or bordered by richly carved lotus petals (*dalapadmas*) throughout. Indentations (sub-mouldings) also must be rich. The mouldings should be carved with appropriate floral and faunal motifs and decorative designs. Faunal motifs like *kīrtimukhas*, leo griffs, *vyālas*, *hamsas* (Fig 23), elephants, etc., occasionally, deers (Fig 24) are also found⁸². Floral motifs such as *kalpavalli* (creeper scrolls), patches of floral motifs, *dalapadmas*, etc., are found profusely carved. The decorative designs include *ratnapattika*, medallions, diadems, diapers, beaded string festoons, tassels and series of hanging knobs are carved elaborately. The scheme of decoration found on the various members of the plinth is as follows. The *upāna* consists, on its face, rows of animal motifs and *kalpavalli*. *Jagati* is often relieved with prominent *dalapadmas* with ponderous petals having upcurled rounded edges. *Kumuda* is *vṛttā* but often made *katakāvṛttakumuda*. The ribbings of the *kumuda* are very prominent and the grooves are deep and sometimes carved with beaded strings. The front portion of the *kumuda* invariably contains a *ratnapattika* or a chain of diadems. *Gala* is generally single, and the *kapōta* above consists of closely spaced *nāsis* with varieties of decorations. Some of the *nāsis* are just conventional and some are real in their form. They have, in their centre, *gandharvamukhas* and other decorative designs. The interspaces of the *nāsis* are filled with elongated stylized lotus petals interspersed with beaded strings. The *kapōta* and *pattika* are sometimes interspersed. In such cases even the *pattika* also is carved equally ornate with bands of diapers and diadems and other
Fig 24. Sribandha adhisthāna (with Kumuda having galas on its top and bottom)- mahādwāra of Kandasami temple- Kalipatti

Fig 25. Sribandha adhisthāna (earliest examples of the region)- Shukavaneshwara temple- Salem.

Not to Scale
temples of gods and palaces of kings only. This kind of plinth, it is said, brings wealth, prosperity, health and all kinds of pleasures. It is also said that it must be built by an able vardhaki (Carpenter/Architect).

Solitary example of śrībandha adhīśṭhāna (Fig 25, pl-16) of the early period is reported from Shukavaneshwara Temple at Salem datable to the reign of Rajaraja I. This shows that from a very early period, the use of śrībandha adhīśṭhāna was in practice. A noteworthy feature of this plinth is that it is mixed with kapōtabandha adhīśṭhāna in the same plinth. But in this śrībandha adhīśṭhāna, in the place of kumuda a mahapatti is carved. This is a rare instance of the presence of mahapatti in the śrībandha adhīśṭhāna. Probably in the early period, because of the uncertainty in the design of śrībandha adhīśṭhāna, a mahapatti replaces kumuda in the adhīśṭhāna. However, a few parallels to this type of alignment have also been noticed in the Kalyana Chalukya and Hoysala temples. There, this brimmed pattika moulding has been identified as a type of Kumuda by the author. By about the 16th century, under the patronage of the Vijayanagara, this variety of plinth is seen in innumerable temples. It is used there for the rangamanṭapa, kalyāṇamanṭapa, sayyagrha (sleeping chamber for the god) (Fig 26, pl-17), vasantamanṭapa etc.

MAṉCABANDHA ADHĪŚṬHĀNA: Maṅcabandha is a form of adhīśṭhāna mentioned by Mānasāra, Mayamata and Kāśyapaśilpa. Mānasāra gives five varieties of maṅcabandha adhīśṭhāna of equal height. The details of this plinth, given by these Texts, are almost the same. Mānasāra and Mayamata both state that this kind of plinth should be used for the palaces of Gods and Kings. The description of this class of adhīśṭhāna given by the Texts suits the pādabandha variety described already. But the EITA gives a different illustration for the maṅcabandha variety. According to this work, the plinth is very ordinary, simple and non-ornate. It consists of two major string courses at the bottom and at the top, with a tall dado in between. This is similar to the maṅcabhadra upapiṭha described already. This type of adhīśṭhāna is totally different from the
Fig 26. Śrībandha adhiśthāna (repeated one above the other)- Śayyamāntapa of Kashi Vishweshwara temple- Velur.

Fig 27. mañcabandha adhiśthāna- Someshwara temple- Ethapur.
top, with a tall dado in between. This is similar to the mañcabhadra upapīṭha described already. This type of adhiṣṭhāna is totally different from the description given by the texts for mañcabandha adhiṣṭhāna. Therefore the description given by the EITA is considered to discuss the features of the mañcabandha adhiṣṭhāna (Fig 27, pl-18). A solitary example of this type of adhiṣṭhāna, which suits the description given by EITA is found in the area of our study. It is very simple. It has two major string courses with a tall gala in between. The string courses are devoid of any ornamentation and the gala is also plain. Not even galapādaṇas are carved here.

ŚRĪBHŌGA ADHIṢṬHĀNA (Fig 28, pl-19): Śrībhōga Adhiṣṭhāna is mentioned only in Mānasāra. It also mentions two varieties of this adhiṣṭhāna of same height. The major mouldings of this plinth are upāṇa, jagati, kṣudrābhja (small cyma), kumuda, kapōta and prati. As the name indicates, this is a luxuriously carved adhiṣṭhāna, hence a variant of the śrībandha adhiṣṭhāna described already. It is probably due to this fact that Mayamata does not mention this as a separate entity. In the arrangement of mouldings, śrībandha and śrībhōga are identical. In the śrībandha variety all the mouldings are provided with the lacing of lotus petals but in the śrībhōga, these decorations are enhanced and made more luxurious and gorgeous by the intricacy and prodigality of carvings. Certain additional features like the provision of miniature shrines, carved separately for many of the mouldings and also carved commonly adjoining the plinth are found. Therefore, the suffix bhōga, that is, a pleasure to the eye, as it provides an enjoyable sight. śrī is the prefix to bhōga. śrī means auspicious. śrī also represents wealth, plenty and prosperity. The richness of the decoration, the quality of carving, the prodigality of the design found in this reflects the wealth of imagination of the creator of this adhiṣṭhāna. Therefore the adhiṣṭhāna deserves in every respect the name ‘śrībhōga’ given to it.

Many examples of this variety of adhiṣṭhāna are found in the area of our study. They all present a gorgeous look with their intricate design and decoration.
Fig 28. Śābhōga adhiśṭhāna (ornate variety) - mahāḍwāra of Kailasanatha temple- Tiruchengodu

Not to Scale
region (Fig 28a, pls-20-21). Tiny shrines having all the architectural members of a $sa\text{d}varga$ temple are found carved independently on the $up\text{\=a}na$ and $jagati$ (pls-22-23). These shrines have tiny images in them. Shrines of $\text{s\=a}la$, $ki\text{\=u}ta$ and $pa\text{n\=j}ara$ varieties are found. The interspaces of these shrines carved on the $up\text{\=a}na$ have $kalpavalli$ motif with tiny figures of parrots and swans inside. The $jagati$ has a large $padma$ relief. The scalloping of the lotus petals is very prominent and deeply relieved with upcurled edges. The $kumuda$ and $kap\=o\text{\=ta}$ are also profusely carved with varieties of designs.

**KAP\=OTABANDHA ADHI\=STH\=ANA**: Kap\=otabandha adhi\=sth\=ana is mentioned in Mayamata$^{92}$. However, M\=anas\=a does not mention this type of adhi\=sth\=ana. According to Mayamata, kap\=otabandha adhi\=sth\=ana should possess a well-rounded $kumuda$ and above that, a $kap\=o\text{\=ta}$. The major mouldings of this type of adhi\=sth\=ana therefore are, $up\text{\=a}na$, $jagati$, $kumuda$, $kan\=tha$, $kap\=o\text{\=ta}$ and $prati$. The $kumuda$ can be a $trip\=attakumuda$ or a $vrttakumuda$.

Only two examples of kap\=otabandha adhi\=sth\=ana are found in the area of our study. They are from Shukavaneshwara temple at Salem datable to 10$^{th}$ century A.D. (fig 29.) and Ekamranatha temple at Tadavur datable to 11$^{th}$ century A.D. In the former (Fig 30, pl-24) example, all the mouldings of the kap\=otabandha adhi\=sth\=ana have lacing of $padmadalas$. A noteworthy feature of this adhi\=sth\=ana is that the kap\=otabandha adhi\=sth\=ana is made very ornate in some parts, thus causing confusion as to whether it is a $\text{\=s\=r\=i}bandha$ type of adhi\=sth\=ana. $\text{\=S\=r\=i}bandha$ adhi\=sth\=ana is nothing but a kap\=otabandha adhi\=sth\=ana with all its major mouldings laced with varieties of floral, faunal and decorative motifs. Therefore, this plinth happens to be the earliest adhi\=sth\=ana of both the varieties in the region. For kap\=otabandha adhi\=sth\=ana in the region of our study, this is the only example available. But for the $\text{\=s\=r\=i}bandha$ adhi\=sth\=ana, this becomes the earliest specimen of the region. In the latter example gala is repeated above the $kap\=o\text{\=ta}$ as was the practice of the day. The scarcity of kap\=otabandha adhi\=sth\=ana in the region of our study is obviously due to the fact that this area was more
Fig 28a. Śrībhōga adhiśthāna (ornate variety)- Rama temple- Ayodhyapattinam.
kapōta as was the practice of the day. The scarcity of \textit{kapōtabandha adhiṣṭhāna} in the region of our study is obviously due to the fact that this area was more influenced by the Tamil tradition. However, because of the influence of the Ganga/Nolamba rule over this region, two examples of this \textit{adhiṣṭhāna} are found here.

During the Vijayanagara days, \textit{kapōtabandha adhiṣṭhāna} was not in use. Instead, a variant of this, classified under the \textit{sīrabandha adhiṣṭhāna} is found in good numbers. \textit{Sīrabandha adhiṣṭhāna} consists of all the major mouldings of a \textit{kapōtabandha adhiṣṭhāna}, but each moulding is decorated with varieties of floral, faunal and decorative motifs. Hence they are described under the category of \textit{sīrabandha} and \textit{sīrbhōga} types.

\textbf{PRATIBANDHA ADHIṢṬHĀNA:} Mayamata\textsuperscript{93} and Kāśyapaśilpa\textsuperscript{94} mention \textit{pratibandha adhiṣṭhāna}. But there is no mention of \textit{pratibandha adhiṣṭhāna} in Mānasāra. Mayamata states “when the \textit{prativājana} takes four parts and \textit{prati} takes three parts then the base is called \textit{pratibandha}”, all the other members being same as in the \textit{kapōtabandha adhiṣṭhāna}. That means to say the \textit{prati} moulding which used to be the thinnest moulding in all the plinths becomes prominent and thick in this plinth. However, Īśānaśīvagurudēva Paddati gives a different picture of the nature of \textit{pratibandha adhiṣṭhāna}. According to this, “the upper part of the \textit{prati} should be broad (\textit{pratimukha}). On this, \textit{makara}, \textit{mrga}, \textit{vyāla} and \textit{gaja} should be carved”. No mention of \textit{kapōta} is seen in Īśānaśīvagurudēva for the \textit{pratibandha adhiṣṭhāna}. Kāśyapaśilpa states that \textit{pratibandha} should possess \textit{vṛttakumuda}\textsuperscript{95}.

The EITA gives an illustration of \textit{pratibandha adhiṣṭhāna} which is a mixture of both Mayamata and Īśānaśīvagurudēva. Therefore the \textit{pratibandha adhiṣṭhāna} should possess \textit{upāna}, \textit{jagati}, \textit{vṛttakumuda}, \textit{gala}, \textit{kapōta} and a prominent \textit{prati} with bold reliefs of the said animals. Such plinths are available in the region of our study.
Fig 29. *Kapōtabandha adhiṣṭāna* (earliest example of the region)- Shuvaneshwara temple – Salem.

Fig 30. *Kapōtabandha adhiṣṭāna* - Ekamānatha temple - Tadavur

Not to Scale
Two plinths of this variety are found in the region of our study. They belong to 9th century A.D. (pl-25), and 12th century A.D. (Fig 31, pl-26). Both of them have an upāna, jagati, vṛttakumuda, gala, kapūta and a broad prati with vyālamāla below. This type of plinth was more popular in the adjacent region of Kolar and Bangalore districts, hence appears to have been a popular plinth of Karnataka temples. As our area is a buffer region, the influence of this tradition may be said to have percolated into the Salem region. Hence, only two examples are extant.

PADMAKA ADHIŚŤĀNA: Padmaka adhiśṭāna is a variant of pādabandha adhiśṭāna. It is not mentioned in any of the major Texts. EITA mentions this adhiśṭāna as a separate entity and gives the name padmaka adhiśṭāna, the source of which is not mentioned. The alignment of the mouldings as seen in the illustration is upāna, jagati, tripāṭṭakumuda, gala, paṭṭika and prati. If we go by the literal meaning of the word, padmaka means the plinth with traces of decoration of padma. That means minimum carving of padmadalas should be present. If a pādabandha adhiśṭāna contains little decoration of padmadalas on it, it becomes a padmaka adhiśṭāna. This decoration of padmadalas is found in-between the rectilinear upāna and jagati. This type of adhiśṭāna is found in good numbers in the area of our study. They possess a rectilinear upāna, a cyma moulding with lotus petals, a rectilinear jagati, kumuda, gala, paṭṭika, gala and prati (Fig 32, pl-27).

A luxurious mode of padmaka adhiśṭāna can be seen at the sub-shrine in the Ardhanarishwara temple complex at Tiruchengodu (Fig 33, pl-28). This plinth is of 16th century. In the plinth, the upāna has a ratnapaṭṭika, the jagati is carved like a mahāpadma with bold and prodigal lotus petals like that of the puspapuṣkala plinth. The kumuda is kaṭakavṛttakumuda having crisp and minute carvings. The paṭṭika has a puspapaṭṭika and the prati has scalloped lotus petals below. The entire plinth is raised above an upapīṭha of ornate pratibhadra type.
Fig 31. Pratibandha adhiśṭhāna with Mañcabhadra upapītha- mahādwāra of Kamanatheswara – Aragalur

Fig 32. Padmaka adhiśṭhāna (with Tripāṭṭakumuda)- Kailasanatha temple- Tiruchengodu Not to Scale
A solitary example of the *padmaka adhiṣṭhāna*, built out of brick and mortar, is found at Kariamangalam. There is no definite date for this temple. But the ancient look of the *adhiṣṭhāna* and material in which it is built suggest that the plinth may probably belong to 12th century A.D., as the earliest of the *padmaka adhiṣṭhāna* built out of stone in this region is dated to this period.

*Padmaka adhiṣṭhānas* possessing *dharavṛttakumuda* and *tripaṭṭakumuda* are also noticed in the region of our study.

**VAPRABANDHA ADHISTHANA**: Mayamata, Mānasāra and Kāśyapaśilpa mention this type of *adhiṣṭhāna*. From the description in the Mayamata, it becomes clear that in this plinth the *jagati* and the *kumuda* mouldings are to be big in their size and they should dominate the elevation of the plinth. ‘*vapra*’ literally means a rampart or a buttress which is heavy, strong and high. These qualities can be clearly seen in the *adhiṣṭhānas*, in the rock-cut sanctuary of Sheshashayi in Namakkal (Fig 34). The *upāna*, *jagati* and *kumuda* are unusually tall and look like buttresses. This is dated to 7th century A.D.

**MISCELLANEOUS ADHIṢṬHĀNAS**: Introduction to some rare types of plinths is given below with description. These varieties are not found in the area of our study. Mayamata mentions a few of these *adhiṣṭhānas* and Mānasāra also gives a detailed list. Likewise, other Texts also do so. A few *adhiṣṭhānas* are selected and an attempt has been made to describe the probable nature of such plinths and explain the reasons for naming them so.

**KUKṢIBANDHA ADHIṢṬHĀNA**: Mānasāra mentions four types of *adhiṣṭhāna* of this class. The *kumuda* should be heavy and ponderous. ‘*Kuksi*’ (Sanskrit), means belly and thus the literal meaning of *kukṣibandha adhiṣṭhāna* is that it should possess a *kumuda* moulding projecting forward distinctly from other mouldings and resemble a huge belly. Though *kumuda* is noticed to dominate the elevation even in *uragabandha* and *vaprabandha adhiṣṭhānas*, the *jagati* below
Fig 33. *Padmaka adhiśṭhāna* and *Pratibhadra upāṭha* (ornate variety)- Sub shrine- Ardhanarishwara temple- Tiruchengodu

Fig 34. *Vaprabantha adhiśṭhāna* - Śesāśayi cave- Namakkal.

Not to Scale
the kumuda also dominates in these plinths, whereas, in the kuskibandha, only
the kumuda should project forward and dominates the elevation. Considering this
aspect, kuskibandha adhisṭhāna can be called a variant of the vaprabhandha or
uragabandha adhisṭhānas. Further, this was perhaps a regional style and hence
mentioned only in Mānasāra.

KUMBHABANDHA ADHĪṢṬHĀNA: Kumbhabandha adhisṭhāna and its five
variants are mentioned in Mānasāra. The text describes this adhisṭhāna as
possessing two major mouldings namely karnas (semi concave moulding) and
kumbha (convex moulding) interspersed by a number of doucines, fillets and
grooves. The presence of a prominent moulding resembling a kumbha probably
gives this name to this type of plinth.

PATTABANDHA ADHĪṢṬHĀNA: Pattabandha adhisṭhāna is mentioned only
in the Mānasāra. The plinth, as the name itself suggests, should possess a
dominating paṭṭa i.e paṭṭikā. Major mouldings like upāna, jagati, paṭṭikā and
kapōta are found in this plinth amongst which, importance is given to paṭṭikā
with a number of fillets on its sides.

RATNABANDHA ADHĪṢṬHĀNA: Ratnabandha adhisṭhāna is also mentioned
only in Mānasāra. The ornamentation of bands and fillets with medallions,
diadems, diapers, and other decorative motifs probably gives this plinth the name
ratnabandha. The Text prescribes that the ratnabandha adhisṭhāna is suitable for
the temples of Shiva and Vishnu.

VAJRABANDHA ADHĪṢṬHĀNA: Mānasāra makes a mention of the
vajrabandha adhisṭhāna. upāna, jagati, kumbha, vajrakumbha, dalapadmas,
kapōta, kanṭha and vajra paṭṭa are the important mouldings of this plinth. This
type of an adhisṭhāna basically is not dissimilar to the already described
adhisṭhānas. The variation noticed in this plinth is the carving of kumbha, instead
of kumuda, which is decorated with vajra fillets. The paṭṭikā of this plinth is also
decorated with vajrapaṭṭi.
**KAMPABANDHA ADHIŚṬHĀNA:** This adhiśṭhāna is mentioned only in Mānasāra. The name kampabandha for this type is given because the major moldings of this plinth i.e. upāna, mahāpadma jagati, kumbha, string course/patṭikā, kapota are alternated by prominent kampas (fillets). As a result, this becomes comparatively a taller variety of adhiśṭhāna.

**ŚRIKĀNTA:** This type of adhiśṭhāna is mentioned in Mānasāra, Mayamata and Kāśyapaśilpa. Mānasāra states that the major moldings of the plinth are upāna, jagati, patṭikā, padma, kumuda and gala. These are interspersed by a good number of minor moldings. According to Mayamata, this adhiśṭhāna is suitable only for the “denizens of the sky”.

**ŚRĒṆĪ BANDHA**

Śrēṇibandha adhiśṭhāna is also mentioned in Mayamata, Mānasāra and Kāśyapaśilpa. This type adhiśṭhāna is an uncommon type like that of śrikānta. One type of śrēṇibandha adhiśṭhāna is mentioned in Mayamata, which states that this should possess twenty six equal parts. However Mānasāra mentions 4 variants of śrēṇibandha adhiśṭhāna possessing eighteen parts, twenty two parts, twenty three parts and twenty four parts. Mānasāra prescribes this type of plinth for temples as well as other structures, while Mayamata disagrees and states that the śrēṇibandha adhiśṭhāna is suitable only for gods. This plinth possesses minor moldings like fillets and doucines interspersing the major moldings like upāna, jagati, kumuda, and prati. This plinth should be decorated with lions etc.

**PADMABANDHA ADHIŚṬHĀNA:** Texts like Mānasāra and Mayamata mention the padmabandha adhiśṭhāna. Kāśyapaśilpa addresses this type as abjabandha, which is synonymous to padmabandha. Padmabandha, in the place of Jagati, should possess a mahāpadma and the lacing of padmadalas should be provided for the kumuda.
So far, quite an elaborate discussion has been made about the various types of plinths and their possible forms mentioned in various Texts. A detailed examination of the mouldings of these plinths indicates that most of the plinths mentioned are one and the same as far as the alignment of the major mouldings are concerned. The major mouldings of the plinths of the temples of south India in general and the area of our study, in particular, are *upāna, jagati, kumuda, gala, kapōta/ paṭṭikā* and *prati*. In almost all the plinths, the three lowest members namely *upāna, jagati* and *kumuda* remain the same in the same order. Only the upper mouldings namely the *kapōta* and *paṭṭikā* are alternated or even interspersed with each other. The *gala* may be one or two. *prati* remains the same throughout as the top most moulding of the plinth. Sometimes, its thickness may increase as in the case of *pratibandha adhiśṭhāna*. Increase and decrease in the number of minor mouldings also contribute to the change in the elevation of the plinth. Increase and decrease in the decoration, prodigality of decoration, importance given for a particular moulding, the shape of the *kumuda*, shape of the *jagati* and the decoration of the *gala* contribute to the creation of varieties and sub-varieties in the plinth.

In the general vertical alignment of the mouldings in the elevation, attempts are made to make the plinth to present a battered contour. Different types of plinths, differences in the construction of the plinths and the carvings made on them were obviously for making the temple appear more ornate and luxurious, than increasing or decreasing the strength of the plinths. The shape and the size of the temple, available material and monetary resources, the calibre of the architect, the skill and imagination of the sculptor and the taste of the society of that region were the deciding factors for the selection of *adhiśṭhāna*. The Texts also prescribe the same conditions for the architect to design and construct the temple. Sometimes, the material and regional influence also account for the change in the design, combination of the designs and mouldings etc. As the Texts on architecture were composed in different regions, they also
vary in their prescriptions. It is a known fact that the canons on architecture are
the codified versions of the existing tradition, practices and techniques. Some of
the later Texts have also taken ideas from the earlier Texts and existing models
of temple. As these Texts were written on palm leaf manuscripts and they were
copied several times by several scribes, possibilities of addition, alteration,
 omission, misinterpretation, misquotation, etc., creeping into the new versions
are also there. Therefore, the explanations given by Texts are sometimes not
clear and are vague. Taking such lapses into consideration, one has to interpret
and explain the type of *adhiśṭhāna* based on common sense, practicality, utility
and also on the basis of etymology.

In the present study, a similar attempt is made and certain generalisations
are made regarding the identification of the plinths mentioned in the Texts. It is a
known fact that the different Texts mention different numbers and different types
of *adhiśṭhānas* ranging from fourteen to sixty four. A close study of this would
however reveal that the major mouldings of the plinth are mainly similar. The
method of arrangement of the mouldings is almost one and the same, with minor
variations. Therefore, the variation in the number of types of plinths is due to the
importance for any particular moulding or mouldings or the decorations made on
them. For example, in the *pādabandha adhiśṭhāna*, the lowest mouldings namely
*upāna, jagati* and *kumuda* are often projected forward prominently from the
vertical norm of the upper mouldings, reminding us of the *pāda* i.e., the foot. In
the case of *vaprabandha adhiśṭhāna*, two lowest mouldings, namely *jagati* and
*kumuda* are made very heavy reminding us of *vapra* (rampart or buttress).
Similarly *uragabandha* contains heavy *kumuda* moulding reminding us of a big
python encircling the plinth. In the *kapōtabandha adhiśṭhāna* importance is
given for the *kapōta*. In the *pratibandha adhiśṭhāna* the *prati* is made bold and
thick and its lower part is filled with a row of animal figures.

After classifying the plinths into different types on the basis of their
shape, size and prominence of the mouldings, based on the delicate decorative
designs carved on the mouldings or on the upper and lower parts of the mouldings, a further increase in the typology appears to have been made by the authors of the canons. Examples of these types of plinths are *padmaka*, *puspapūśkāla* and *padmakēśara* plinths. In the *padmaka adhīśṭāna* just a strip of lotus petals is carved between the *upōṇa* and the rectilinear *jagati*. In the *puspapūśkāla*, heavy, broad and prodigal lotus petals are carved on the surface of the cyma-shaped *jagati* making the *jagati* a *mahāpadma*. In the *padmakēśara*, delicate, thin and crisp lotus petals are carved profusely flanking all the mouldings.

Further increase in the typology of the plinths is made through the elaboration of decorative designs of various types. All the mouldings of the plinth are decorated profusely and intricately in these plinths. Examples to rich ornate variety of plinths are *śrībandha*, *śrībhōga*, *vajrabandha*, *ratnabandha*, etc. *śrībandha* is a plinth having richly decorated mouldings. ‘Śrī’ in Sanskrit means auspicious, plenty, bounty etc. Therefore *śrībandha* is that which is auspicious and bounteous in every respect. Hence it is decorated profusely and both the *kapōta* and *paṭṭikā* mouldings are employed in this type of plinth. *Śrībhōga* is a more gorgeous variant of *śrībandha adhīśṭāna*. The very look at this plinth is rejoicing because it is gorgeous and fabulous in every respect. *Vajrabandha* and *ratnabandha* look synonymous in their meaning. No examples of these plinths are found but it is obvious by their names that they should be decorated richly with *ratnapatti* and *vajrapatti*, diadems and diaplers, fillets etc.

A chronological study of the typology of *adhīśṭānas* has revealed certain interesting factors regarding the popularity of *adhīśṭānas* of different types in the region of our study. The earliest type of *adhīśṭānas* found in this region is *pādabandha adhīśṭāna*. Right from 7th century A.D., this type of *adhīśṭāna* occurs in the region of our study. The rock-cut sanctuaries of Namakkal has, in its façade, this type of *adhīśṭāna*. Same type is found used in the 9th and 10th century temples. It continues till the end of Vijayanagara period. More than
eighty pādabandha adhiṣṭhānas are noticed in the area of our study. pādabandha adhiṣṭhāna is simple to construct and non ornate in character, hence it is economical in construction. Its use is wide spread in the region. Temples constructed with pādabandha adhiṣṭhānas are also generally simple and non-ornate in character, therefore a harmonious blend of all the trivargas of the temple is produced by using this type of plinth. Ornate pādabandha adhiṣṭhāna in a single temple complex is noticed. This is probably due to the availability of skilled sculptors and also rich patronage. It is noteworthy that on the wall of the main shrine of the temple two inscriptions of Hoysala Ramanatha Deva are found as a patron of the temple. It is possible that the handiwork of the Hoysala artisans possibly resulted in the carving of this type of adhiṣṭhāna in a luxurious manner. A parallel instance to this is noticed at Barur where a padmakēsara adhiṣṭhāna is made more ornate with the carving of various decorative themes. There also an inscription of Hoysala Ramanatha Deva is found.

Two examples of pratibandha adhiṣṭhāna; pratikrama adhiṣṭhāna and kapōtabandha adhiṣṭhāna and one example of uragabandha adhiṣṭhāna are found in the region of our study. These adhiṣṭhānas are simple yet attractive because of the limited ornamentation on them. They all belong to 9th and 10th centuries A.D. and after that no continuation of these types of adhiṣṭhānas is found. The reason for this is difficult to explain. Instead, padmaka and padmakēsara adhiṣṭhānas were the popular types in the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries A.D. That means to say that there was a tendency to make the adhiṣṭhānas elaborate as well as ornate. Therefore pādabandha adhiṣṭhāna, which contains all the mouldings, was made more ornate to convert them into padmaka and padmakēsara types. About twenty examples of padmaka and padmakēsara types are noticed in the region of our study. Provision of paṭṭikā is a feature of Tamil plinths, so also kapōta is a feature of Kannada plinths. In the temple built in the 10th century possesses the influence of Kannada tradition because of the rule of Gangas and Nolambas. This is reflected in the construction
of pratibandha adhisthāna, in which a kapōta is found carved. After the Chola occupation of the region, the use of kapōta totally disappears and only the use of paṭṭikā becomes wide spread. Therefore pādabandha adhisthāna occurs profusely in the region.

During the Vijayanagara period the patronage for construction of temples is prodigally seen, and the region of our study being close to the Vijayanagara head quarters, the temples of this region also reflect the glory and splendour of the Vijayanagara Empire to a great extent. Ornate adhiṣṭhānas like the śrībandha and śrībhōga are found in good numbers in the temples of the region. During this period, besides the construction of shrines, temple complexes get elaborated with the construction of different types of maṇtapa, gateways, corridors, etc. These architectural components are provided with ornate adhiṣṭhānas of the śrībandha and śrībhōga types. About forty adhiṣṭhānas of śrībandha type and about twenty adhiṣṭhānas of śrībhōga type are noticed in the region. These plinths are often provided with ornate upapīthas thus making them high, ornate and luxurious in their elevation. Not only are they elaborate in their ornamentation but also the carvings are very crisp and delicate making them comparable with any of the best adhiṣṭhānas of their class.

The area of our study being politically a buffer zone, no major powers either of Tamilnadu or Karnatakā exercised power directly over this region up to the second half of the 10th century A.D. Therefore this region was ruled by feudatories like the Gangas, Nolambas, Banas, Vaidumbas, Kongus etc. The temples built and maintained under the patronage of these rulers were also small in their construction. Accordingly the structures were small and unimposing and their plinths were also were suitably designed. Therefore, pādabandha, kapōtabandha and pratibandha adhiṣṭhānas of non ornate kind are noticed. After 11th century A.D., Cholas exercised direct power over this region. The Cholas were not only master builders of temples but patronised temple building activity even in the remote parts of their Empire. The result of this was the building of
temples during 11th century A.D., in large numbers, in the region of our study. Ornate adhīṣṭhānas also come in to being because of the use of padmaka and padmakēśara varieties.

A close observation of the plinths of the structure of the region built in the same temple complex would reveal that the structures were provided with different types of plinths for different parts of the structure or for the different parts of the same building. In some instances, the same type of plinth is also continued while additions were made during later period to maintain uniformity. This shows that there was no hard and fast rule in the design and decoration of the plinths for the different parts of the structure. There are also deviations noticed in the alignments of the plinths, and also deviations in the decoration of the plinths. The plinths in some parts are simple and in some parts are profusely decorated. Hybridisation of plinths is not noticed, but glorification of the simple plinths into ornate ones are noticed. The example of padmaka adhīṣṭhāna is already mentioned. It is a point to be noted here that the freedom to express their creativity was given to the artist in the canons themselves. The Mayamata states at the end that in spite of the prescriptions given by the Text, the sculptor should execute work according to the taste of the builder and it should be pleasing to the eye of the viewer. Therefore, variation is noticed within the typology of the plinths blended with rich ornamentation.

The table provided illustrates clearly the different types of adhīṣṭhānas mentioned in some important texts.

### TABLE OF THE ADHĪṢṬHĀNAS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL NO</th>
<th>Name of the Adhīṣṭhāna</th>
<th>Manasāra</th>
<th>Mayamata</th>
<th>Katāyapaśilpa</th>
<th>Śilparatna</th>
<th>Vimānārcana Kalpa</th>
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4. Kāśyapaśilpa- Ch-6, Śloka-1b-2a
5. Kāṇḍikāgama LV- 20
6. Śaḍvarga system states adhiśṭhāna, bhītī, prastara, grīva, śikhara and stūpi are the six aṅgas of the Temple.
8. Mahādvāra of the main entrance of the Virupaksha temple at Hampi
9. Mayamata page 156 Ch-13 śloka 1
10. Mayamata Ch-13 śloka 5
11. Manasara Chapter 13 deals with upapithas
12. Mayamata-Ch-13, Śloka-6-8a
13. Mahādvāra of Chandrachudeshwara temple, Hosur- Krishnagiri dist. and Mahādvāra of Kailasanatha temple at Taramangalam, Omalur taluk, Salem dist
15. Mayamata-Ch-13, Śloka- 8b

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16 Mānasāra- Ch- 13, Śloka-16
17 Mayamata-Ch-13, Śloka-9-11
18 Mayamata-Ch-13, Śloka- 14
19 Achaladeepashwara temple of Mohanur, Namakkal dist. Devi shrine of Karivaradaraja temple at Aragalur, Attur taluk Salem dist, etc.
20 Varadaraja temple at Sendamangalam, Attur taluk Salem dist.
21 Subramnya shrine at Ardhanarishwara temple Tiruchengodu, Namakkal dist.
22 Mahādvari of Kailasanatha temple at Tiruchengodu, Namakkal dist.
23 Mayamata-Ch-13, Śloka- 19a
24 Mayamata-Ch-13, Śloka- 15-17a
25 Manasara Chapter 13, Verses 45b-62
26 Varadaraja temple at Sendamangalam, Attur taluk, Salem dist
27 Amman Shrine of Varadaraja temple at Sendamangalam, Attur taluk, Salem dist
28 The earliest upapīṭha in the tamil tradition is noticed in the Pallava temples and the earliest upapīṭha in Karanataka tradition is noticed from the Rashtrakuta period in the temple of Kailasanatha at Ellora.
29 Varadaraja temple at Sendamangalam, Kamala mangai shrine in Karivaradaraja temple, Aragalur, Attur taluk, Salem dist etc.
30 Kāśyapaśilpa- Pātala 6- Śloka 22
31 Achaladeepashwara temple of Mohanur, Namakkal dist and śayyagrīha Kashivishwewara temple, Kailasanatha temple, Taramangalam, Omalur taluk, Salem dist.
32 Rangamanjapa of Rama temple at Ayodhyapatinam, Kailasanatha temple at Tiruchengodu, etc
33 Shiva temple at Barur, Krishnagiri dist, Kailasanatha temple at Taramangalam, Omalur taluk, Salem dist etc.
34 Rangamanjapa of Rama temple at Tenkaraikottai, Harur taluk, Dharmapuri dist.
35 Kamakshiyanman temple, Dharmapuri dist
36 Mahadwara of Kailasanatha temple at Taramangalam, Omalur taluk, Salem dist and Kashivishwewara temple at Velur, Namakkal dist.
37 The earliest kumuda of this type is found in Kailasanatha temple at Kargudi, Namakkal taluk, Namakkal dist.
38 Mahadwara of Kandasami temple, Kalipatti, Salem.
39 Achaladeepashwara temple of Mohanur, Namakkal dist, Kailasanatha temple at Tiruchengodu, etc.
40 Kamakshiyanman temple, Dharmapuri dist
41 Kamakshiyanman temple, Dharmapuri dist and mahādvari of Kamantheshwara temple at Aragalur, Attur taluk, Salem dist.
42 Kailasanatha temple at Taramangalam, Omalur taluk, Salem dist, Achaladeepashwara temple of Mohanur, Namakkal dist, etc
43 Kailasanatha temple at Taramangalam, Omalur taluk, Salem dist
44 Kashivishwewara temple at Velur, Namakkal dist.
45 “Mānasāra- on Architecture and Sculpture”
Prasanna Kumar Acharya
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46 Kāśyapaśilpa, Pātala 8
47 Mayamata- Ch-14 Śloka- 19-20
48 Mānasāra – Ch- 14, Ślokas- 5- 11
49 Vimanarcanakalpa- Śloka 35
50 Kāśyapaśilpa- pātala-6 śloka-26
51 Kailasanatha temple at Kargudi, Namakkal taluk, Namakkal dist.
52 Karaburunatheshwara temple at Uttamacholapuram, Salem, Choliśvar temple at Mallasamudram, Namakkal dist, etc
53 Narasimha and Sheshashayi rock cut structures at Namakkal, Virattaneshwara temple at pillur, Paramatti taluk, namakkal dist, etc.
54 Vaishnava Shrine at Peddur, Harur Taluk, Dharmapuri dist.
55 “Pādabandham adhiṣṭhānam sarva-jatyarhakam bhavet”
Manasara Ch 44, Sloka- 22

56 Kamakshiamman temple at Dharmapuri and the Mahādeva of Kamantheshwara temple at Aragalur,
Attur taluk, Salem dist.

57 Mahādeva of Kailasanatha temple at Taramangalam, Omalur taluk, Salem dist

58 Mayamata-Ch-13, Śloka- 21-22

59 Mānasāra- Ch- 14, Īḷ Uragabandha adhiṣṭhāna, Śloka-23-43, mentions four types of Uragabandhaadhiṣṭhāna of four different heights. (a) 18 parts, (b) 20 parts, (c) 22 parts and (d) 24 parts.

60 Kavanirmaleshwara temple at Attur, Salem dist.

61 Mayamata Ch-14, Śloka- 23-24

62 Mānasāra Ch-14, Śloka-22b- 32

63 Kasyapasilpa- patala 6 , Śloka-39b-41a

64 Mayamata states that Pratikrama adhiṣṭhāna should posses Dharavṛttā kumada
–Mayamata Ch 14- Śloka- 23

65 Mayamata-Ch-14, Śloka- 23

66 Mayamata-Ch-14, Śloka-24

67 Kamakshiamman temple at Dharmapuri.

68 Mayamata-Ch-14, Śloka-25b-26a

69 Kasyapasilpa- patala 6 , Śloka 41-46a

70 Mānasara ch 14, Śloka -33-40a

71 Mayamata-Ch-14, Śloka-26b

72 Mānasāra Ch 14, , Śloka -40a

73 Achaladeepaeshwara (Saiva) temple of Mohanur, Namakkal dist, Cholishwara temple and Karivaradaraajatemple, Aragalur, Attur taluk, Salem dist, Perumal (Vaiṣṇava) temple at Thyaganur, Attur taluk, Salem dist. etc.

74 Mānasāra Ch-14, Śloka-40- 46

75 Mayamata Ch-14, Śloka- 27-28.

76 Kaśyapaśilpa- Paṭaḷa 6, Śloka- 46-51

77 Mānasāra Ch-14, Śloka- 36b and 37 a

78 Achaladeepaeshwara temple of Mohanur, Namakkal dist,

79 Mānasāra Ch-14, Śloka- 47-54

80 Mayamata Ch-14, Śloka- 29-30a

81 Kaśyapaśilpa- Paṭaḷa 6, Śloka- 51b-56a

82 Kalipatti gopuram, Kalipatti near Mallasamudram, Tiruchengodu taluk, Namakkal dist.

83 Dēvēśānām mandirēśvēvamuktaṁ śrīsoubhāgāyāryaḥbūgyam dadātīṁ
Mayamata Ch-14, Śloka- 30b

84 ARE 1888, no 50

85 Adam Hardy.

86 Rangamanṭāja of Rama temple, Ayodhyapattinam, Salem, Rangamanṭāja of Rama temple, Tenkaraikottai, Harur taluk, Dharmapuri dist.

87 Mānasāra Ch-14, Śloka-55-61

88 Mayamata Ch-14, Śloka- 31

89 Kaśyapaśilpa- Paṭaḷa 6, Śloka-56b-59a

90 Someshwara temple, Ethapur, Attur taluk, Salem

91 Mānasāra Ch-14, Śloka-125-129a

92 Mayamata-Ch-14, Śloka-36 a

93 Mayamata-Ch-14, Śloka-36b

94 Kaśyapaśilpa- Paṭaḷa 6, Śloka-30-32

95 Kaśyapaśilpa- Paṭaḷa 6, Śloka- 26b

96 Kamakshiamman temple, Dharmapuri dist

97 Mahādeva of Kamantheshwara temple at Aragalur, Attur taluk, Salem dist.

98 Ṭiṣṇā Śiva Guru Dēva Paddati, Kāmitha, Mayamata, Mānasāra, Śilparatna and Kaśyapaśilpa.
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