CHAPTER VII

ARCHITECTURE

Classical architectural and cultural enterprises are concentrated in the capital cities of the imperial kingdoms and to a lesser extent in the capitals of the subordinate principalities in the country. For instance, Badami, Aihole and Pattadkal throve as centers of Art and Architecture under the Chalukyas of Badami. Likewise, Halebid, the ancient Dvarasamudra, came to be filled with monuments of the Hoysalas. In the same way the capital of the Vijayanagara empire, Hampi saw unprecedented constructional activities both secular and religious. The art-ethos of Indian culture has been in its diversity, acceptance of other forms, and a spiritual and joyous response to life. This is evident in all the major ancient schools of Indian Art: the Mauryan, the Gandhara, the Matura, the Amaravati and the Gupta, which provided the same gallery to the works of the Buddhists, Jainas, Hindus, and others. This open approach to art and life is the prime force behind culture and art living here with a marked continuity and flourish.

The region of Sirsi was only once the seat of an independent early kingdom i.e. the Kadambas of Banavasi. Both before and after the Banavasi Kadambas the region was ruled by minor dynasties, on or other, until the advent of the British. As such, patronage and encouragement to art activity from royal sources was rather of extensive in this region. Consequently, architectural monuments and sculptural pieces here were produced mostly...
by the patronage of interested individuals. It is only from the time of Vijayanagara that centres like Nagire, Biligi and Sonda began to witness architectural and sculptural activity mainly because of the establishment of small but wealthy principalities in those places. Though the architectural and sculptural material of the region is found scattered the works make an interesting study.

Banavasi which is situated in the Sirsi region, had the great advantage of being under a direct influence of the Mauryas, the Satavahanas, the Kadambas, the Badami Chalukyas, the Rastrakutas and the later Chalukyas stretching over a period of more than one and a half centuries. It is natural that their contacts generated local artistic responses similar to the overall Indian attitude towards art. Though the works of art available from Banavasi are meagre, their variety, style and approach to it, very well reflect the artistic ethos of the whole country of India. Here we have the Buddhist, the Jaina and the Hindu sculptures, figures of trees, birds and animals, erotic figures and warriors, all infused with a spiritual humane world view.

As we have already seen, the Sirsi region had an important political socio-cultural center in the form if its provincial capital, Banavasi, right from the time of Asoka Maurya. It was noted, for instance, that Asoka sent a Buddhist monk, Rakkhita, to Banavasi to propagate the teaching of the master. The way the Buddhist chronicles speak of the numerous conversions at Banavasi, would imply, even allowing for some exaggeration, impact of
considerable magnitude on the religion of local society. It is but natural that this new impact was transformed into the corresponding art and architectural forms in abundance. At least from the time of the Satavahanas, this should have been the case. But unfortunately the scant relics so far discovered do not for whatever reasons, quantitatively compare with those found in other contemporary Buddhist centres like Amaravati or Sannati. Want of the basic raw material, limestone, with which the Satavahana artists of the Lower Deccan were familiarly acquainted, first strikes as a possible reason for this lacuna. Because this region was thickly forested and full of many natural barriers, the transportation of this material on a large-scale from elsewhere might have been rendered difficult. Hence this stone was not possibly used on a large scale. There are a few specimens of this limestone material such as the inscribed lab carrying the record of Vasishtiputra Sivasiri Pulumavi, the Naga sculpture slab carrying the inscription of Vinhukada Cutukulananda Satakarni, that have come to light in Banavasi. The modern Banavasi stands on an ancient site and the architectural and art specimens buried within are yet to be brought to light by large scale archaeological operations.

An attempt is made here to give a phase-wise account of the architectural remains in the Sirsi region.
Pre-Kadamba period:

Though recent explorations have brought to light cultural remains in the Sirsi region, it is only from the Maurya period onwards that brisk architectural activity in more permanent material like brick and stone comes to be evident. The heavy rains of the region and the quick and thick growth of forest cover seen to have resulted in the rapid deterioration of the monuments, particularly of the early phases. Sites of the Satavahana and some slightly later, periods have been identified in Banavasi. The limited excavation at the locality called Donigudda near Banavasi has revealed a large apsidal brick structure of an indefinite religious affinity. The constructions of the early period, which can be assigned to the Satavahana period, comprises of brick structures of a familiar type. The burnt bricks used for the structures usually measure 43 x 22 x 7 cm., and are similar to those used in many other contemporary sites. The ravages of time have hardly left any complete structures. Fragmentary structures have been found both inside and outside the fort, which seem to follow a rectangular plan. But as they are not fully exposed, the details are yet to be known.

The brick structure found at the excavation, shows an apsidal plan with a triple line of walls with a narrow passage between each pair. At the centre of the structure is a platform, 1.75 m high, possibly meant to serve as an altar, for offering worship on. The plan indicates that the front part of this structure possibly had a rectangular porch. The innermost part of the
structure is axially divided into three chambers. Of these, the rear chamber is apsidal while the central and front chambers are rectangular. The continuity of the central outer wall could not be traced completely. The two narrow passages running along the apse of the structure were possibly intended to serve as circumambulatory paths i.e. Pradakshinapatha.

The plan of this structure recalls that of the famous Durga temple at Aihole (Bagalkot District), where, too, two circumambulatory paths are provided. The latter temple, however, is built of stone and is dated to c.7th-8th century A.D. The religious affinity of the apsidal structure at Banavasi could not, however, be ascertained. It would be too much of a guess to describe it as Buddhist, because early Hindu temples also followed the apsidal plan as revealed in the excavations at Nagarjunakonda (Andhra Pradesh).

Within the fort at Banavasi, to the right of the car street of the Madhukesvara temple some structures were excavated behind the present residential area. Built of large sized burnt bricks (42 x 27 x 7 cm.), there was a double walled structure. The outer wall was thicker (about 1.5 M.) than the inner one. The double-walls in between provided for a Pradakshinapatha. In the front part of this structure were rectangular chambers and in the apsidal hind part, a platform. A fragmentary stone head, supposed to represent Skanda, is reported from here. Stylistically, the sculpture seems to belong to an early period and is very similar to the figure of Skanda excavated at
Nagarjunakonda datable to the Ikṣvaku times (3rd century A.D.)⁷. It is therefore possible that the apsidal structure in question may have enshrined this Hindu divinity originally. It may be incidentally noted that the cult of Skanda-Kartikeya enjoyed considerable popularity in the early centuries of the Christian era.

*The Period of the Cutus or the Anandas.*

After the fall of the Satavahanas, Banavasi came under the independent rule of the *Chutus* or *Anandas*. Their reign synchronized with that of the Ikṣvaku of Nagarjunakonda with whom they had matrimonial ties. The relation between these two far off kingdoms was obviously cordial; kings and queens of Banavasi participated in the consecration of temples and *Viharas* at the Ikṣvaku capital. It is indeed unfortunate that no structure has come to light in Banavasi that could definitely be ascribed to these rulers. The Naga image inscription in the Madhukesvara temple enclosure, belonging to the 12th regnal year of Vinhukada Chutukulananda Satakarni states that a *Vihara* and a tank were caused to be built⁸, but it has not been possible to locate these structures.

*The Period of the Kadambas:*

With the establishment of the Kadamba hegemony there was an increase in the number of inscriptions, some of which refer to constructions of temples, Buddhist and *Chaityalayas* etc. Thus, the Sirsi plates⁹ refer to the Siva temple under the care of Nilakantha-desamatya, a royal physician. The
most important inscription is of Mrigesavarma\textsuperscript{10}. It is inscribed on a stone pillar which apparently once stood in front of a temple. It begins with an invocation to Vishnu, which indicates that the temple was perhaps dedicated to that deity. An image of Narsimha installed in a shrine in the Madhukesavara temple complex seems to be an imitation of an earlier image. It belongs to the Vijayanagar times. It is a two-armed image showing archaic iconographic features. On this ground, it has been suggested by some scholars that the original image of Narsimha, which served as a model to the Vijayanagara image, was enshrined in the Vishnu temple belonging to the period of Mrigesavarma\textsuperscript{11}. In view of the fact that the early two-armed images of Narasimha (c.4\textsuperscript{th}-6\textsuperscript{th} century A.D.) are known from some other places like Kuppagadde, Halasi, etc. this suggestion possibly holds good. However, the features of this temple cannot be known till the area is subjected to a large-scale archaeological investigation.

About 5 Kms away from Banavasi there is a village called Gudnapur. Here a huge mound indicating traces of its human occupation for a considerable length of time is found. There is at this place an inscribed pillar referring to a Manmatha temple built by king Ravivarma. His palace, its dancing hall and the apartments of the Royal Ladies are also found here. The relevant portion of the inscription reads. "By ... King, Ravi, this abode of the god Manmatha was built". To the right of this was the living place, i.e., palace of the king to the left of which were the dancing halls in front of the
ladies apartments\textsuperscript{12}. It is clear that the structures there were built of brick. This evidence prompts one to regard that the earlier tradition of using brick for construction was continued in the Kadamba period. A similar evidence is forthcoming at Pattadkal where excavations revealed the plan of a brick Jain temple of a pre-Chalukya period beside the Jain Narayana temple there\textsuperscript{13}. Brick structures are also noticed in Halasi in a locality called Bodketembe\textsuperscript{14} and if excavations are taken up here, it might throw welcome light on the town planning, fortifications as well as domestic and religious building of the Kadamba period. It is obvious that not much can be said about the Kadamba architectural tradition until the sites like Banavasi, Halasi etc. are subjected to large-scale excavations. However, it may be pointed out that the setting up of a stone pillar, usually with an inscription, in front of a temple, particularly when the royal house was supporting the enterprises became a patent feature of the period. These pillars are square at base, octagonal at the centre and multifaceted in the upper part. The inscribed pillars at Talagunda and Gudnapur are good examples of this. These were probably set up in front of temples not as Dhvajastambhas but Dharmastambhas as those at Mahakuta with inscriptions of Mangalesa’s time\textsuperscript{15} and Aihole in front of the Ravalphadi cave.
Some scholars have suggested that the original portions of the Madhukeshvara temple at Banavasi belong to the early Kadamba period. But for reasons cited elsewhere in this chapter, this temple should be ascribed to the Badami Chalukya period.

The Period of the Chalukyas:

With the advent of the Chalukyas of Badami the centre of activity shifted to the region around Badami. When the Kadambas were dislodged from power by Pulikesin II the region went into the hands of the Alupas of Dakshina Kannada where it remained for quite sometime. The Madhukesvara temple at Banavasi came to be built of stone probably during the latter half of the Chalukya supremacy. It is possible that this was originally a brick Siva temple which itself was converted into one of stone as in Aihole. Pattadakal etc. This temple has undergone numerous alterations from time to time. This Madhukesvara temple has been surrounded by many smaller temples within its enclosure. Therefore, it is described as a “temple complex”.

The main temple dedicated to God Siva under the name of Madhukeshvara, consists of an open pillared hall a Gudhamandapa (closed hall) and a garbhagriha (sanctum sanctorum) with a Pradakshinapatha (circumambulatory path) around it, all arranged on an east-west axis. The temple faces east. The garbhagriha enshrines a huge linga on a pitha with multiple mouldings, stylistically assignable to
11th-12th century A.D. There are four heavy monolithic pillars in the *garbhagriha*, all square in section and without any mouldings. They carry simple rounded corbel capitals which support the beams. Between the *garbhagriha* and its doorway an antechamber (*antarala*) is located. This feature is also found in the Sangamesvara (Vijayaesvara) (c.615 A.D.), the Virupaksha (Lokesvara) and Mallikarjuna (Trailokesvara) temples (c633-444 A.D.) at Pattadakal. The doorway of the *garbhagriha* has plain *sakhas* while the *uttaranga* (architrave) carries in relief Sala and Kutas shrine motifs. They are decorated with simple *chaitya kudus*. There are two subshrines flanking the *garbhagriha* doorway which are later additions. The one on the left side shows features of about the 12th century A.D.

The *garbhagriha* of the temple actually stands equidistant, on the south, west and north sides, from the *gudhamandapa* so that a *pradakshinapatha* is formed around the sanctum. Here one can distinguish the features of the exterior of the *garbhagriha*. The plinth of the *garbhagriha* has prominent mouldings consisting of *jagati, kantha, tripatta, kumuda, griva, padma* and *kapota* elements from the base upwards. On the three sides, viz. the south, west and north a prominent projection (offset, *bhadra*) is provided at the central part so that the *garbhagriha* has a three ratha plan. The *bhitti* or the wall of the *garbhagriha* is plain except for the pair of half pillars standing over the *ratha* offset of the plinth. This features of the wall has resulted in the formation of a *devakoshtha* (god’s niche) on the south,
west and north side of the garbhagriha wall. Each of the devakosthas is surmounted by a pediment of the sala shrine type with a chaitya kudu. The horizontal median band between the sala sikhara and the beam of the devakoshtha has plain sakhas except on the north side. Running along the top line of the bhitti is a frieze hamsas (swans). The devakoshtha in the northern wall of the garbhagriha is somewhat different from the remaining two. The frame of this kostha has naga sakha and at the lower portion of either side of the frame, there is a small seated pot-bellied figure similar to the ones in the Badami Chalukya temples. These figures probably present the personified nidhis, viz. padmanidhi and sankhanidhi. The pediment of this devakostha has the sikhara motif with a horizontal median band. At the top centre is a prominent chairya kudu while below is a sala sikhara which has depictions of lions instead of kudus. None of the kosthas now has any figure of divinity.

The walls of the gudhamandapa run into a rectangular plan and enclose the garbhagriha. Corresponding to each of the devakosthas of the garbhagriha, ventilation is provided through a grilled window in the gudhamandapa wall. Two more grilled windows (jalavatayanas) are also provided in the gudhamandapa for letting light into the hall. There are 12 free standing pillars in the gudhamandapa arranged in four rows. The central bay has raised ceiling. The beams supporting the raised ceilings, almost like a clerestory, at the central bay have chaityakudus, miniature
shrine motifs, *kudus* with peeping heads, fabulous animals like *makaras*, *yalis*, *hamsas* etc. The roof is flat over the central bay, the slopes gently over the side aisles and the *prakakshinapatha*.

The pillars of the *gudhamandapa* are simple monoliths with a square section (*ruchaka*). There are semicircular medallions on the pillars. Sometimes these are decorated with lotuses, festoon bands, *kirtimukhas*, etc. at the upper and lower parts of the pillars. The capital resting over the pillar has mouldings and a median band. The mouldings look as if they are imitations of the wood work. It may be remarked here that the pillars, their decorations and capitals are comparable with those of the Jambulinga temple (c.699 A.D.) at Badami and ladkhan temple of Aihole.

In the *gudamandapa* at the north-east and south-east are recently constructed niche shrines enshrining the images of Vishnu and Kartikeya respectively. Both seem to date an early period, possible the later part of the Badami Chalukya period.

The doorway of the *gudamandapa* is apparently a later addition and probably belongs to c. 12 century A.D. This is indicated by the type of the architrave as well as the *Gajalakshmi* figure in the *lalata bimba*. The original *dvarapalas* (of c. 12th century A.D.) are presently hidden behind the later *Saiva dvarapalas* of the Vijayanagar times. To the left and right of the doorway are niches, one on each side. Their pediments show that they have undergone alterations at a later period. The one on the left depicts a *Nagara*
Sikhara in the centre flanked by a Dravida Sikhara on either side. Stylistically this may be assigned to c. 12th century A.D.

Except the alterations already mentioned and the resulting of the external wall of the gudhamandapa first during c. 12th century and later during 17th-18th centuries the garbhagriha and gudhamandapa of the Madhukesvara temple represent the two surviving members of the original temple. The drawing parallels from the early Chalukyan temple specimens, with which comparisons were made above, the original temple would have had an open porch with four free standing pillars of the ruchaka (square) order.

The open pillared hall (mandapa) is the most richly ornate part of the Madhukesvara temple. Its central pillars are lathe-turned and polished, with the typical mouldings of c. 11th-12th century Kalyana Chalukya temple pillars. There are types of pillars, such as faceted, fluted etc. their total number being 48. The central part of the floor is slightly raised and the corresponding ceiling of the central bay is embellished with a lotus motif. The hall is entered from the each, south and north but there are two more subsidiary entrances closer to the gudhamandapa wall, one from the south and the other facing it from the north. Entering from the main doorway, one first encounters a huge beautifully carved Nandi, also of c. 12th century A.D. An inscription in Kannada characters of circa 12th century, inscribed on a pillar base, mentions
the embellishments carried out in the mandapa\textsuperscript{17}. Along the borders of the pillared mandapa, kakshasanas (back-rest seats) are provided.

The features of the exterior wall of the gudamandapa shows that they were first reset during c. 12\textsuperscript{th} century and later probably during the post-Vijayanagara period. Some of the bhadras (offsets) of the wall carry pediments typical of 12\textsuperscript{th} century while practically all over the wall are carved votive Nandi and Linga groups with label inscriptions mentioning their donors. The plinth of the gudhamandapa has the same features as that of the garbhagriha. The walls are relieved into bhadras formed by pairs of pilasters and recesses (salilantaras) resulting in devakoshthas at the offsets.

The sikhara (superstructure) of the Madhukesvara temple is of a tiered pyramidal type, nicknamed by some scholars as Kadambanagara\textsuperscript{18}. It consists of horizontal tiers each pairs separated by a griva (neck) arranged in such a way that the superstructure assumes a tapering pyramidal shape as it goes up. Twelve such tiers are discerned, the last one carrying a seated bull, the vahana of siva, at its four corners. A cupola square in plan and a smaller circular element surmount this in that order, ultimately topped by a kalasa. The eastern face of the superstructure is partially covered by a sukanasa with an ornate kirtimukha and a figure of Ganesa in the front. On the sukanasa is a seated Nandi. Above the sukanasa a small shrine motif carries a figure of Garuda. Below the sukanasa is a 7-hooded sesha (serpent) whose body
encircles the lower part of the superstructure, its tail ending up near the hood. The remaining parts of the superstructure have *nasikas*.

Practically the whole of the superstructure carved with stucco and white-washed is of the Vijayanagar and later periods, which makes it difficult to distinguish the original features. In any case the present form of the superstructure seems to have imitated the original one if not enclosed in it. Already during the Badami Chalukya period, the temples with such superstructures are noticed, as for instance the Mallikarjuna temple at Aihole (c. 8th century A.D.)\(^9\). It becomes one of the most favoured superstructure types in the western part of Karnataka, the home region of the Kadambas right up to the Vijayanagar period. In fact it is for this reason that this superstructure type was nick-named *Kadamabanagara*. The medieval inscriptions of Karnataka refer to this type of *Kalinga*, probably because of its application to the Orissan temples. Perhaps it should be appropriate to describe this temple type as *phamsana*, mentioned in the canonical texts on Indian architecture.

The impact of this *sikhara* type on the temple architecture of Banavasi was indeed great, to such an extent that all the surviving temples of the place including those of the Vijayanagara period carry the same type of superstructure.
The exterior of the Kakshasana is decorated with miniature figures arranged between pillar motifs. They are listed below, commencing from the area closer to the gudhamandapa wall on the northern side in the clockwise fashion.

**North Side:**

Naginis, Saiva dvarapalas: Bhairava: a female deity (holding aksamala, chakra, sankha, gada), Surya; a female deity (holding gada, sankha, chakra, kalasa), Parvati (holding khadga, trisula, damaru, patra), Laskhmi (holding abhayahasta with aksamala, chakra, sankha, kalasa) Ganesa standing, saptamatrikas Chamunda, Indrani, Varahi, Vaishnavi, Kaumari, Mahesvari, Brahmi, Vinadhari, Virabhadra, Saiva dvarapala, kama, rati, vishnu's forms-janardana (holding padma, chakra, sankha, gada), Kesava (holding padma, sankha, chakra, gada) Aditya; Siva (holding aksamala, trisula, dmaru and phala) Ardhanarisvara; Parvati, Siva, Vishnu as Janardana (holding padma, chakra, sankha and gada) Kirata, Ekadasa Rudras.

**East side:**

Rati, Kama and Priti interspersed with Kalasa motifs, dvarapala, dancing lady and two drummers.

**South side:**

Vishnu’s forms – Madhawa (holding gada, chakra, sankha and padma) Trivikrama (padma, gada, chakra and sankha), Madhava (gada, chakra, sankha and padma), Adhokshaja (padma, gada, sankha and chakra), Kesava
(padma, sankha, chakra and gada) Hrishikesa (gada, chakra, padma and sankha), Varaha, Narasimha, Kiratas, Vishnu as Kesava (padma, sankha, chakra and gada). From this point an original Kakshasana slab has been replaced by one of a post-Vijayanagara period. It carries the Nandi and Linga scheme running all along the slab. Thereafter the original slabs continue with the following depictions, Dvarapala, lady (holding lotuses), Dikpalas – Indra, Agni, Yama, Nirruti, Varuna, Vayu, Kubera, Isana, Daksha and Dvadasa Adityas.

Almost about the same time during which extensive additions and renovations were made to the Madhukesvara temple, two gateways, one facing the east and the other on the north, were introduced in c. 12th century A.D. This is proved by two pieces of evidence. Firstly the gateways and the open pillared hall match in style. Secondly the axis of the eastern gateway (mahadvara) corresponds exactly with the axial line of the main temple running east-west, while the axis of the north gateway corresponds exactly to the axis running through the northern and southern entrances to the pillared mandapa.

The main gateway on the east is a stone structure, square in plan. A flight of steps from the east leads upto this gateway. On either side, beautifully sculptured elephants flank the stair-case. Eight pillars in the front (four on either side) and eight in the rear (four on either side) support the beams and ceilings. All parts are beautifully and intricately carved.
The gateway on the north is now closed. Its plan is essentially the same as that of the eastern gateway. The outer half consists of a platform running on either side of the passage and there are indications that originally these served as Kakshasanas. There are sockets for fixing the back rest seat slabs which are now missing. The front row of pillars are fluted while the pillars of the second row are square in the base with lathe-turned shafts. Beams are decorated with rosettes. The doorway is flanked by lattice windows with rosette decorations. The architrave of the doorway has miniature shrine motifs, with sikharas of the kalinga type crowned by kalasas. The central shrine motif is somewhat larger in dimensions and flanked by lions, the lanchana of the Kadambas.

Chronology of the Madhukesvara Temple:

The date of the original parts of the Madhukesvara temple is still being debated. Taking into account the tradition behind the temple, it seems to have a considerable antiquity. As in the case of most of the temples of Aihole and Pattadakal and elsewhere, there possibly was a preceding brick temple. Our discussion here, however, is confined to the existing stone structure.

The evidence, for dating the temple are of two types: Stylistic and epigraphical. For the earlier parts of the structure, mainly style has to be taken into consideration since direct evidence of other types are lacking. For the later parts – additions and renovations, both stylistic and epigraphical evidence are helpful.
While describing the various parts of the temple earlier it was pointed out that there are some similarities with the early Chalukya temples of Badami and other nearby regions. They may be listed as follows:

1. Use of red sandstone for the construction of the temple (only for original parts)
2. The presence of *nagasakha* on the frame of the northern *devakoshta* of the *garbhagriha*.
3. Monolithic, square sectioned pillars in the *garbhagriha* and *gudhamandapa*.
4. Half-medallion as a decorative device for the pillars.
5. The moulded capitals over the pillars in the *gudhamandapa*.
6. The mouldings of the plinths.

The use of red sandstone for the temple distinctly stands out in the contrast to the later additions for which slate stone has been used. The red sandstone is not found in the region around Banavasi, while it is abundantly available around Badami. This provides the first clue for dating the temple. The presence of *nagasakha* is the second clue. It has been convincingly suggested that the tradition of depicting the *nagasakha* motif on the doorframes and the frames of *devakoshthas* of the early Chalukya temples did not commence before c. 620 A.D. (the accession date of Pulakesi II). Its first occurrence is noted in the Malagitti Sivalaya of Badami (c. 635 A.D.). Accordingly, the lower limit of the date of the Madhukesvara temple may be
fixed as c. 620 A.D. if not later. The monolithic square sectioned pillars provide the third clue. They are a common feature of the early Chalukya temples.

Similarly the half – medallion decorations and the capitals resting over the pillars also provide scope for a comparison. The capitals of pillars in the *garbhagriha* are of a rounded type finding comparison, for instance, with those in the Malagitti Siovalaya at Badami. But the capitals of the pillars in the *gudhamandapa* have typical mouldings comparable to those of the Jambulinga temple at Badami (c 699 A.D.) built during the time of Chalukya Vijayaditya and with those of the Lad Khan temple at Aihole. Whose date is controversial. But recently scholars seems to have agreed that the Lad Khan temple as it exists today, may not be earlier than early 8th century\textsuperscript{21}. Hence it is mostly likely that the temple of Madhukesvara may belong to the period around 700 A.D. In this connection it is interesting to note that one of the records of Chalukya Vijayadithya refers to his visit to Banavasi, a provincial capital under the Alupa king that was the son-in-law of Vijayadithya\textsuperscript{22}. From this and other corroborating stylistic evidences perhaps we may say that Vijayadithya's visit to Banavasi was possibly on the occasion of the inauguration of the Madhukesvaran temple. Therefore a date in the reign of Vijayadithya (697-733 A.D.) seems appropriate for the Madhukesvara temple.
On the basis of both stylistical and epigraphical evidences, it is clearly observable that additions to the temple were made at a later period i.e. during c. 12th century A.D. It is very difficult to ascertain the original presiding deity of the temple. In any case the Linga enshrined in the garbhagriha is not the original. An image of Vishnu, now placed in a subshrine in the gudamandapa, seems to belong to the early Chalukya or Rashtrakuta period. Some scholars have suggested that this may be the original presiding deity of the temple. In the collections of the museum there is a sculpture depicting the head of a male divinity, probably of Vishnu, which seems to belong to an early Chalukya period. However, we cannot tell with total certainty the original dedication of the temple. The recent name of the deity Madhukesvara and the local tradition connecting him with Vishnu, the slayer of demons Madhu and Kaitabha, perhaps faintly suggests a Vaishnavite dedication.

The Rashtrakuta Period:

Not much is know about architectural activity in the Sirsi region during the Rashtrakuta period. Only one temple at Banavasi can be ascribed to this period with some amount of certainty though only on stylistic grounds. The Allamaprabhu temple at Banavasi belongs to the Rashtrakuta period. This simple temple has an adhithana with prominent kumuda moulding and a superstructure of the Kadamba-nagara type. It betrays traces characteristic of
later 9th or early 10th century A.D. temples in the fact that the superstructure is of the *Kadamba-nagara*. This form is significant because in Banavasi this particular temple form was preferred right from the time of the Chalukyas of Badami down to the end of the Nayakas of Sonda.

*The Vijayanagara Period and After:*

The Vijayanagar period marks a new era of architectural activity. Naturally available rock materials like chloritic schist and laterite were exploited on a large scale for constructions. Granite was also used here and there. The temple which are constructed in the Sirsi region are mainly of the Vijayanagara style. The Venkataramana temple at Manjaguni, Venkataramana Temple at Muttinakere and Hunisehonda, Trivikrama temple at Sonda Somesvara Temple at Somasagar, Prabhuligesvara Temple at Karur, were built during the Sonda Nayakas period who were feudatories of the Vijayanagar rulers.

In the *Vastu Sastra* architecture is taken in its broadest sense and implies what is built and constructed. In the first place it denotes all sorts of buildings – religious, residential and military and their auxiliary members and component members. Secondly it implies town planning, laying out gardens, constructing market places, making roads and bridges, gates, digging wells, tanks, trenches, drains, sewers and moats and erecting enclosure walls, embankments, dams, railing, flights of steps for hills, ladders
etc. Thirdly it denotes household articles like bed-steads, couches, tables, chairs, thrones, fans, ward robes, clocks, baskets, conveyances, cages, nests etc.

Architecture also includes sculpture and deals with the making of the idols of deities, statues of sages and images of animals and birds and also garments and ornaments. Against this background, if we study the art and architecture of a period, we can get an idea of the cultural life of the people. The art and architecture of 15th, 16th and 17th centuries show some distinction in building patterns, building designs, elevation, materials used, techniques adopted and stylistic traits.

**Religious Architecture:**

During this period and *Vesara* style of architecture (a mixed style) was prominent. It is characterized by its *Vesara Sikhara*, star shaped elevated platforms, intricate carvings on the outer walls of the temple, lathe-turned rounded pillars, highly ornate soft stone sculpture, multiple sanctums in the same temple, and diminished size of the *Vimanas* or even of the temples themselves.

In the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, particularly under the Vijayanagara rulers and their feudatories, there arose a new style of architecture, which was a mixture of the regional with the *Vesara* and *Dravida* styles. In this new style of architecture, the soft greenish gray soap stone gave way to the hard granite which was available in the area. Thus change in the material gradually gave way to a number of changes in the stylistic patterns of
architecture under the feudatories of the Vijayanagar rulers. “The Vijayanagara school of architecture was without doubt influenced by the various types of architecture which preceded it. The Vijayanagara school of architecture is a pleasant medley of all the currents which preceded it”25....

“With the patronage of the rulers of the Vijayanagara empire, the principles of monumentalism as expressed in an expansion and repetition of architectural elements came greatly to influence the conception of the temples”26. The outlying elements of the complex were given more attention. Temple building was characterized by a desire to enlarge the simple earlier sacred structure by the addition of successive enclosure walls, entered by a number of gateways.

_Elevation:_

The first innovation was in the elevation of the temple. In the early Vijayanagara shrines, the *Upana* was plain and smaller, as in the *Kadalekalu* Ganesha temple. In the Vittalaswamy temple it was decorated with scrolls of Vines and similar linear ornamentation. The south Indian sculptor utilized the symbolism of the lotus by making its petals one of the bases of the temple above the *Upana* and it has been called *padma*. This feature of the Vijayanagara style was probably derived from the Pandya art. Above the *Upana* another moulding was carved - the *Kumuda*. In the temples of Vijayanagara it was carved with ridges from above and below with a band space left in front and this too was filled up with different designs27.
Next was the Kantha. The Vijayanagara sculptors probably made the finest use of this space occupied by the mouldings. They filled it up with episodes selected from the social life in and around the kingdom. The long frieze was partitioned into compartments where the carvings of dancing girls, the king's darbar and such other features were filled up.

The Vedike was the moulding above the Kantha. It was an inverted Padma. According to R.N. Saletore, "the Vijayanagara craftsmen utilised this moulding and by considerably enlarging it, made it descend like the upper human lip in a continuous line but marked with partitions in the moulding itself."29

Pradakshinapatha and Garbhagriha:

The Pradakshinapatha was around the Garbhagriha as in the Vittalaswami temple. Hence it was called Sandhara temple. But sometimes, it was in the second Prakara of the temple, as in Achutaraya's temple. The Garbhagriha was made square. Sukhanasa, navaranga, prakara and pradakshina patha came to be added in course of time. Within the pradakshina patha itself were shrines dedicated to the other deities. The Sonda style of architecture, which was almost a continuation of the Vijayanagara style, with some minor variations consists of garbhagriha, antarala, with or without the pradakshina patha, mukhamantapa or pillared hall and an open corridor for the pradakshina patha, surrounded by the prakara with or without pillared corridors.
Walls of the Temples:

On the walls of the temples, decorative plasters and niches can be seen as in the Hazara Rama temple. The Kamabapanjara assumed its beautiful form in the Vijayanagara art. The niches had no separate images, but had double pillars, and were employed to adorn the adhisthana, as in the Vittalaswami temple. In the Hazara Rama Temple, the walls are filled with relief sculptures of elephants, horses, foot soldiers and dancing girls in a variety of postures.

The Roof:

The sloping roof slab with the lip-like projection is a peculiarity of the Vijayanagara style of architecture. The roof becomes elegant and ornate. Above this, was a quaint decoration composed as it were of two interrogation marks joined together. "At either end of the roof rose three feather-like projects, one larger than the other, and the last was the longest and below them was a suspended stone ring for hanging lamps. In the center of the roof ran a belt of ornamentations adorned with swans and other figures and in the middle was carved the star shaped design seen from the days of the Pandyas." 30

Over this roof ran a small panel of ornamentation either of animals or deities or kudus. These kudus evidently enshrined certain images, which have now unfortunately fallen away, as in the Vittalaswami temple. The
kudus or small pavilions were placed all round the mandapas of the shrine while the garbhagriha was crowned by the Vimana.

The sloppy Chajja was characteristic of temples in the Sirsi region, as is found in the Venkataramana temple, Majaguni, Someswara temple at Somasagara, Venkataramana Temple at Hunasehonda. The roof is flat with joints covered with slabs at regular intervals, to avoid the sewage of water. This roof style has been one of the regional characteristic features of the period in the malnad and coastal area, where there is torrential rainfall in the monsoon season.

The pillars “order”:

During the Vijayanagara period pillars became square, replacing the lathe-turned round pillars of the Vesara style. The square pillars were cut into square partitions in the middle and the distance between each square was made octagonal. The pillar capital too appears to be different in style. Over the square pillar, was placed the closed lotus munai, and above it the broad slab or the Palagai with the lotus petals, three on each facade slowly protruding from each side.

The saduram of the square pillar (which was rather suddenly broken) came to possess a leaf-like ornament, know as nagabhandha. In the Hazara Rama temple, the square pillar became ornamented.
The double bracket, in some temples, had a Pushpa-boddhigai or flowery corbel. This flowery corbel was purely a Vijayanagara decorative motif.

Round pillars were rarely used in the Vijayanagara art. As decorative plasters, the round pillars came to exist in the Hazara Rama temple at Vijayanagara.

In the Kalyana Mandapa of Vittalaswami temple, to the main pillar, extra pillars were attached. To this extra pillar were further attached equestrian riders, either Hindu or Muslim, or horses not often well executed. In some cases extra pillars were supported by couchant lions.

The Sonda rulers adopted the Vijayanagara style and the temples bear the square pillars with octagonal intervals and Pushpabodige. The pillars of Lakshminarayana temple form a fine example of this period. Sometimes the extra pillars bearing rearing lions on elephants are attached to the main pillars in the mukhamandapa or prakara. The Venkataramana temple at Hunasehonda has this type of pillars in the inner side of the Mukhamantapa.

The gate ways:

The gate ways of the Prakara of the temple had over it, and the entrance door was carved on its jambs and lintel with seated or standing figures of deities. A find specimen of it is seen in the northern gate way of the inner court yard of Achyuta Raya’s temple.
Secular Architecture:

“In this category may be included the type of architecture which developed as a result of the contact with Islam and came into existence especially during the Aravidu dynasty”32. This new style of Architecture came to be characterized by the “Indo-Sarasenic”. In the Vijayanagara city several buildings stand as the best examples of this style of architecture. The elephant stables, queens bath, the ‘Lotus Mahal’ and the guards quarters show features of this “Indo-Sarasenic” style of architecture. In the parapatta of Navarangamandapa of the Somasagara temple no one found these features.

The Dome:

The elephant stable consists of eleven large rooms with lofty “domed” roofs. Each compartment has two large niches. On either side of the door and above each niche, which are smaller are present. All these niches and the door have the typical arched façade. The original stucco and plaster adornment seems to have disappeared. Some traces of it can be seen in the interior.

There are domes on each room, which are not similar to one another. Some have domes with two steps and a crowning lotus motif each and every dome is squinched with pointed arches at the corners. The domes are various in shape, vaulted, round and octagonal. The domes on the top of the stalls are also circular, vaulted and octagonal. Likely there were some structures in
these, but whether they were finials or Sikharas cannot be made out for these are missing in the ruins.”

Arches:

The ‘Lotus Mahal’ is a pavilion with two squares in design, with recesses at the sides. The ground floor has an ornamented adhisthana of stone, with 24 square pillars having foliated and recessed arches, with vestiges of medallions in their spandrels, scroll designs and Kirtimukha emblems at the top.

The interior of this structure is plain, the square pillars are linked with foliated arches. The ceilings comprise of many vaults. The typical domes are designed symmetrically and the central ceiling alone has a lotus bud design which is impressive. In the center are immense niches, with relics of seated images, which, being disfigured, cannot be identified, with domed and fluted towers one over another, making the entire structure imposing and striking.

According to George Michel, “studying in detail the stucco decoration of the “Lotus Mahal” reveals a considerable fusion of the Islamic and Hindu elements. Here are found foliate arabesques, meandering stalks and geometric designs, familiar in the stucco decoration of monuments at Gulbarga and Bidar, in combination with geese and parrots, lion masks and other well-known motifs. The Vijayanagara artists evidently adopted ornamental features from both traditions, blending them into their known unique style”.
**General Features of Architectural Style:**

The Vijayanagara empire developed its own style of architecture different from that of their predecessors. During the period, the temple became more closely involved with the life of the town. The temples involved an increasing proportion of the community as ritual programmes became more and more complicated. The temple served as a center of civic meeting, education, dance and theatre. A number of columned halls and artificial tanks of water became prominent in the temple courtyard. Additional pavilions were constructed for the deities and their vehicles.

"The overall stylistic principles of repetition and continuous expansion led to a general tendency to multiply the elements of the vertical profile of the walls, the plinth splits up into an ever greater number of elements and the wall too, is divided into further horizontal subdivisions by the application of intermediate mouldings"\(^{35}\). Surface decoration of the columns in the halls and processional corridors of the temple complex were given more attention. The columns were decorated with considerable skill and artistry. The pillar design transforms the shaft into a central core of carved statuary, often of a monumental size and carved entirely in the round. One of the most characteristic themes, especially employed for the outer row of columns of the halls, displays a rearing horse or often beast with a rider supported by attendants or mythical animals. The virtuosity of such carvings represents a high point in the evolution of the craft traditions in South India. The brackets
of these columns exhibit considerable complexity in their design, due to the outward projection of extended figures, beasts or inverted lotus designs.

"The temples of Vijayanagara are not the unified compositions of the Cholas or of the Hoysalas. They are in fact, a number of small units, each with its own prescribed function, set rather haphazardly as dictated by the terrain within a large rectangular enclosure. The basic unit of such a temple conglomerate was a flat roofed hall supported on a series of elaborately crafted columns"36.

Instead of the round pillars of the Hoysalas, square pillars became prominent. They were embellished. Each pillar was divided into squares on which figures of mythical, religious or social subjects were carved.

The mukhamandapa was decorated with elephants elaborately designed or with dvarapalakas armed with maces.

The Vimana was sometimes erected over the ardhamandapa. The gopurams were made of brick work finished with stucco work. This brick work was raised on a stone basement which was adorned with pillars, and between these, either the memorable kirthimukha often made its appearance. Or there were carved Kostha panjaram pavilions.

The Vijayanagara sculptural art represents a rate collection of a variety of sculptures. "Probably in the whole range of South Indian sculpture it would be difficult to find a match to view with the variety of the Vijayanagara Sculpture37. Themes in sculpture are drawn with a
caricaturistic touch, pregnant with realism, vitality and power. “The Vijayanagara craftsman developed a school of imagery in which he included icons of deities, Saiva, Vaishnava and Jaina, common people, kings and queens and nobles and animals connected with their religious beliefs”38. The dvarapalaka icons, various representations of Siva, Ganesha, Virabhadra, Ugrnarasimha, Hanuman, Garuda, Ashtadikpalakas and Jain Tirthankaras are all there among the fine specimens of the Vijayanagara art.

At Srisailam is found a bronze image of Nataraj, which may be considered as one of the finest specimens of the Vijayanagara art.

The monolithic sculpture Sasivekalu Ganesa, on the slope of the Hemakuta hill is seated in a spacious open mandapa which has plain and rough pillars. The upper right hand holds the ankusa, upper left Pasa, lower right which the lower left hand is broken. This is a interesting piece of art.

The Kadalekalu Ganesa is enshrined in a large temple with a charming open pillared mandapa. The pillars are high, slim and graceful in the typical cubical ornate Vijayanagar style, with the Puspabodigai corbels of an early period.

At Lepakshi, there is a huge statue of Virabhadra with sweeping curves of form. With a bend at the waist, he has four arms and holds Khadga, dhanus, bana and Khetaka (shield). He wears a garland of skulls, with a human head (Kapala) at his feet. His jatamukuta is profusely ornamented.
The monolithic sculpture of Ugra Narasimha carved out of a single granite boulder lies near the south-western angle of the Krisnasvami temple. This image was adorned with a huge necklace of several strands, the nature of whose precious stones cannot be determined. Behind this immense statue is outspread hood of a huge serpent with six heads which canopy the deity, emerging as though from behind its neck upwards. It is superimposed by a Kirtimukha and a fine Prabhavali. "This colossal image nevertheless has been finely conceived to depict in sheer power an outstanding symbol of titanic energy, exquisitely spiritualised and magnificently wrought"39.

Some of the sculptures of this period also depict the social aspect of the life of the people, their pastimes, costumes, varieties of ornaments, weapons, infantry, cavalry, elephants wrestling, festivals and other features.

Thus the sculptural art of the Vijayanagara period is innovative and composite in nature. The sculptures are varied, skillfully executed and versatile, on a difficult medium or base of rough granite. "The sculpture of this period has a thrilling vitality, a freshness of expression and a freedom from the bonds of conventions"40.

The tradition of the Vijayanagara style of architecture was continued by their feudatories like the Sonda rulers. At Manjuguni, Somasagara, Karur, Sonda and Banavasi, the same tradition and style of architecture were continued with regional minor variations.
A field study of the subject in the region can be made under two categories.

1. Religious Architecture and
2. Secular Architecture.

1. Religious Architecture: This can be studied under different groups as follows:

**Group 1:**

1. Venkataramana Temple, Manjuguni. (17th C. A.D.)
2. Lakshmi-Narsimha Temple, Svarnavalli, (1585 A.D.)
3. Narsimha Temple, Banavasi, (1571 A.D.)
4. Trivikrama Temple Temple, Sonda (1583 A.D.)
5. Somesvara Temple, Somasagara, (17th C.A.D.)
6. Prabhulingesvara Temple, Karur. (17th C.A.D.)
7. Sankaramath a Sirsi (17th C.A.D)
8. Sankaranarayan Temple, Haleyuru. (17th C.A.D)

The 1st, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th temples are stylistically may be assigned to the later period part of 16th century A.D (Vajayanagara Style).

**General Features:**

1. Axially consists of three component parts: i) Garbhagrha ii) Antarala iii) Sabhamandapa
2. Sabhamandapa is partly or completely closed, leaving a front door in case of the Laksmi-Narsimha temple at Svarnavalli and Narsimha temple at Banavasi, it is covered on two sides leaving front side. In case of Trikrama temple it is completely closed with a front dvarabandha. But the Sabhamandapa of the Sankaranarayana temple at Haleuru is open on the three sides.

3. Devakostha on the exterior of the walls which separates Antarala from Sabhamandapa have relief sculptures of Gods and Goddesses.

4. Plain ceilings of Sabhamantapa. But the central bay of the ceiling of Sankara shrine of Sankaranarayana twin temple at Haleyuru and Somesvara temple at Somasagara has a beautiful relief parel of Astadikpalakas.

5. Rectangular Antarala with Jalandhras on either sides of the walls and on the sides of the Dvarabandha with Dvarapalas Gajalaksmi, Ganesa, Annapurna and lotus in the Lalatabimba and the plain ceiling.

6. Squarish Garbhagriha without pradaksinapatha and with simple Dvarabandha lotus motif at the center of the ceiling.

7. In elevation, the temple consists of four parts: i) Adhisthana ii) Bhitti, iii) Chajja and iv) Sikhara.

9. The lower Kantha portion has the depiction of the reliefs, animals both mythic and natural, kubjas and latas.

10. The Pattika portion in some temples contains the reliefs of Puranic episodes such as Balakrishna stealing the butter and Gopika Vastrapaharana and the reliefs of the sages of religious importance such as Matsyendranatha as in Isvara temple at Svarnavalli.

11. Plain Bhitti however in the lower part of the pilasters supporting the Chajja are relief sculptures such as Balakrishna.

12. Generally plain Chajja but in some cases containing the carvings of Puranic episodes as in Narasimha temple in Svarnavalli and Trivikrama temple at Sonda.


15. Generally the temple confirms to the Kadamba Nagara form.

16. Almost invariably, they have a dvajastambha infront.

17. In some cases as in the Trivikrama temple a Prakara wall completely encloses the main temple.

18. A noteworthy feature of the Trivikrama temple is that is modeled like a chariot with wheels. This is the imitation of the Late Vijayanagara Architectural Style.

19. Some of the temples have parapets with "Kanguras".
20. The shape of the Kalasa crowning the superstructure resembles a minaret. Both these may be regarded as the influence of Indo-Islamic architectural tradition.

21. Indo-Islamic impact is noticed in the last phase architectural products and the chiefs of Sonda.

22. Dundiraja Ganese shrine, the Chintamani narasimha shrine etc. have herulaterite walls plasters with limemorter, arched entrance facades and corner minarettes which are all a reflection of Indo-Islamic tradition.

*Group-II:*

It consists of I) The Nishidi of Sri Akalankadeva and ii) The Nishidi of Bhattakalankadeva.

Two monasteries I) Nirasi Matha and ii) Gadduge matha and two Venkataramana temples at Muttinakere and Hunasehonda.

Stylistically the temples may be assigned to the 17th century A.D. The two Nishidhi mandapas mentioned above are dated 1608 A.D. and 1655 A.D.44 respectively. The monuments now identified as Nirashi matha by the local people resembles with these Nishidhi mandapas but has a Nandi image instead of Nishidhi stone. Monuments of this group can be examined under three categories.
Category I:

Venkataramana temple at Manjuguni, Venkataramana temple at Hunasehonda, Venkataramana temple at Muttinakere.

General Features of the temples:


2. A rectangular Chandrasala with a Mahadevara in the middle decorated with Dvarapalas, Sutas and Bhuvanesvari and plain ceiling.

3. Squarish Sabhamantapa with corner pillars having depiction of gods and goddesses, Kaksasanas on the three sides. The central bay of the ceiling contains the depiction of Asthadikpalas.

4. Devakosta on the sides of the Dvarabandha of the Antarala with relief sculpture of gods and goddesses.

5. The Dvarabandha with Dvarapalas, Sakhas and Lalatabimbha and Jalandhras on the sides. The ceiling without any decoration.

6. Squarish Garbhagriha with a simple Dvarabandha, Icon at the center of the ceiling with a lotus motif.


8. Adhisthana consists jagati, Upana, Kantha, Kumuda and Pattikas.
9. Lower Kantha portion with the relief motifs of mythical and natural animals Kubjas and some trees and creepers.

10. Pattika of the Chandrasala decorated with relief or Puranic episodes and irotic sculptures.

11. Plain Bhitti. In the lower part of the wall pilasters are reliefs such as Balakrishna, Yati and his disciple.

12. Plain Chajja.

13. Kadambanagara Sikhara over the Garbhagriha.

Gadduge matha:

It is located near the Gadduges of Basavalingaraya II (1714-1749) and Sadasivaraya II (1684-1714). Hence the matha with its interesting architectural plan and elevated structure has come to be known as one of the Gadduge matha i.e. matha near the mausoleums.

The matha a large and considerably imposing monument, consists of a big veranda with an unshaped platform at the bottom. The platform has higher steps at the bends. The ceiling is decorated with various geometrical patterns and floral designs.

From the veranda is an entrance to a pillared hall with an open narrow veranda on three sides each with a door, one in the middle leading the Sabhamandapa and two at the sides of the verandas.
There are pillars at regular intervals in the verandas, in the Sabhamandapa there are four centre pillars. The central bay of the ceiling supports a hollow Shikhara square in the base, octagonal in the middle and circular at the top. The Shikhara is crowned with a Kalasa. The Sabhamandapa leads to an oblong hall as wide as the Sabhamandapa, thus the plan and the elevation of the Gadduge matha may be said to be very unusual and has hardly any other similar monument that can stand comparison with last rites to the members of the royal family were carried out in this matha.

Group III:

This group contains the following monuments, temples and Basadis and monastery.

1. Basalingesvara temple at Banavasi.
2. Nandikesvara temple at Muttinakere.
3. Isvara temple at Sonda fort.
4. Adinatha Basadi at Muttinakere.
5. Parsvanatha Basadi at Sirsi.
6. Mayantri matha at Muttinakere.

General Features of this Category:

1. Axially the temples consists of two parts. i) Garbhagriha and ii) Mukhamandapa. But from the ruins in front of Parsvanatha Basadi, it may be surmised that it had a Sabhamandapa also.
2. Squarish Mukhamandapa with four simple corner pillars.
3. Ceiling of the Mukhamandapa usually plain but in some cases with recessed lotus in the centre.
4. Dvarabandha of the squarish Garbhagriha sometimes decorated with Sakhas and Dvarapalas.
5. The garbhagriha of Nandikesvara temple unusually Octagonal in plan and elevation.
6. The ceiling of the garbhagriha either plain or decorated with lotus motifs.
7. In elevation the temple has three parts i) Adisthana ii) Bhitti, and iii) Chajja.
8. The adhisthana with Jagati, Upana, Kantha, Kumuda and Pattika. In some cases the Kantha portion has the reliefs of animals and Kubjas.
9. Plain Bhitti.
10. Plain Chajja.
11. Material used for Bhitti and roof is basalt stone slabs, for pillars Chlovite Schist.

SOMESVARA TEMPLE, SOMASAGARA:

The temple situated to the west of the village and facing towards east is built of the Deccan trap stone. In the plan the temple has a garbhagriha, antrala and open navarangamandapa. It belongs to the Ekakuta category.
There is a linga on a square panipitha, and there is no decoration at the garbhagriha dvara. But the door of the antarala has decorative motifs of standing saiva dvarapalas, Kirtimukha torana, floral designs, pillars and latas. There are six padmasakhas on the door jambs. There is a Ganesa sculpture as the Lalatabimba. The projected Chajja five Dravida Sikhara-kosthas having beautifully carved designs and the half-pillars at either side of the door jambs have miniature carvings of kumbha. The panjara stambha and the Vesara style “Sikhara stambha panjara, have been carved”. Either side of the half-pillars there are two kothas in the Vesara style.

The Navarangamandapa is an open 12 pillared hall. The central pillars are bell shaped in the Kalyana Chalukya style. These pillars have reliefs of lions at the bottom, ruchaka, ring-shaped shaft, bell, ring, ruchaka and tarangadodhige at the top. Ceilings above the pillars are beautifully carved. Horizontal beams on the pillars have carvings of geometrical designs, latas, wreaths of flowers, lions, etc. The centre ceiling is decorated with Asthadikpalakas and a dome shaped lotus bud in inverted at the centre. Though this kind of Bhuvaneshvari is not found in the Vijayanagara temple architecture, it is a speciality of the Sonda rulers that we can see the dome shaped Bhuvaneshvari, in their temple architecture. The pillars of the Kaksasana at the Navarangamandapa have square pattikas. The depiction on a pillar of Yadeyuru Siddhalingesvara seated with cow squirting milk on him is marvelous.
The outer wall of the Kaksasana has the reliefs of swans, pillars, rows of floral designs, kirtimukhas in between sikhara type sculptures, latas, warriors, dancers, musicians, erotic figures and other miniature figures illustrating the skill of the sculptors.

The adhisthana of the garbhagriha and he Navarangamandapa are of same height. The Adisthana has a upana, jagiti, gala, flower pattikas and kapota wings. The Bhitti of the temple is plain with no decoration on it. The Chajja is projective. The Shikhara is in the Dravida style. The Parapatta on the Navaranagamandapa has been constructed in the Islamic style. On the Chajja there are carvings of elephants. There is only one entrance to the temple. On the east and the staircase has, balustrades with yali sculptures.

The main features of the temple are the four bell-shaped pillars, dome like ceiling, decorative door-jambs, two kosthas with shikharas in the rear of the antarala and the adhisthana with flower pattikas. There is a linga on the pitha at the centre of the garbhagriha. The beautifully carved seated Nandi in the navarangamandapa facing the garbhagriha is attractive.

VENKATARAMANA TEMPLE, MANJUGUNI:

The temple is a huge complex built in the Vijayanagara style. The temple could have been of the pre-Vijayanagara times. The Sonda rulers have renovated this temple. The exact date of the construction of this temple has not been found so far. The Tirthaprabanda of Sri Vadirajswamy says that
Lord Katramana had come down to Manjuguni on a hunting expedition and that the God came to be called as Bete Venkataramana.

Basically the temple belongs to the Eka Kuta Sandara type. In the plan, the temple has a Garbhagriha, Antarala, Pradaksinapatha, Navaranga and Mukhamandapa. The Garbhagriha is square having a Pitha at the centre. The pitha is original and the sculpture of Vishnu which is installed on the pitha is of a later period. The idol in a standing position, holding a bow and an arrow, in the lower hands and shanka and chakra in the upper hands is beautiful creation in black stone. The image is believed to have been installed by one Tirumalayogi according to Vadirajaswamy. The front portion of the pitha has a Garuda relief. The original doorways of the garbhagriha had fallen away and at a later time new doorways were installed without any decoration. The door-jambs of the Antarala are also plain. The relief sculptures of Dvarapalas in the Pradaksinapatha round the Garbhagriha and Antarala also belong to a later period.

The Navarangamandapa has three entrances and four pillars at the centre. Each pillar has a peetha, Ruchaka, octagonal shaft, pattike, gola and pushpbodhige. In the lower and upper portion of these pillars there are beautiful relief sculptures of a lion in a sitting position and sculptures of Vishnava Alvars, Kalingamardana Krishna, Swans, Maruthi etc. the lion in the sitting position is the lanchana of the Vijayanagara rulers.
On either sides of the Bhitti of the pradakshanapatha there are beautifully carved Maruthi sculptures. Two pillared mandapas are there to the Navarangamandapa facing North-South. The Chajja on these pillars are slopy.

Mukhamandapa is an open pillared hall having 26 pillars, four pillars at the centre of the mukhamandapa have carvings of a Kalyana Chalukya feature along with the Vijayanagara style. This is a special feature of the temple. These pilasters have a pitha, devakostha, octagonal shaft, sculptural pattikas, gola, ring, ruchaka and taranganaga bodhige. On these pilasters are sculptures of dancers, musicians, Vishnu, Surya, Hayagriva, Venugopal, Vatavriksha Krishna, Sarasvati, Brahma (standing with four hands, three heads and holding Ankusa, Pasa, Aksamala and Bijaphala in his hands). The pilasters on the Kaksasana are in the Vijayanagara style. The outer face of the Kaksasana have reliefs of Ramayana, pillars, rows of sikharas, foliage, swans, silpa pattikas and river goddesses. The chajja on the pilasters of the Kaksanana have projections. Some of the pillars of the garbhagriha walls of the antarala, pradksinapatha and of navaranga have been installed in later periods. The bhitti of the temple is plain and the chajja slopy. The sikhara of the temple is in a stepped pyramidal shape with a Dravida stupi but in front of this is a sukhanasi of the Nagra style.
There is a bali pitha and a Garuda pillar of about 40ft. height in front of the temple. The staircase of the gateways have yali balustrades.

Adisthana: The temple has an adisthana of one metre in height. The adisthana of the garbhagriha and navarangamandapa has an upana, jagati, gala and kapota. The mukhamandapa has an upana, jagati and pattika with sculptures of mythological scenes, and lion, elephant, monkey and Gandhabherunda figures.

VENKATARAMANA TEMPLE, MUTTINAKERE:

This is an Ekakuta temple facing towards the east. The plan of the temple includes a garbhagriha, pradaksinapatha and navarangamandapa. In the garbhagriha though the original main idol is not found, the original pitha can be seen with a picture of Garuda on it. The door jambs are non-decorative. The doors of the pradaksinapatha are decorative. Here are Vishnava dvarapalas, flowers, latas, pillars, padmas and decorated sakhas in kostha. In the lalatabimbha there is a sculpture of Laksmi under a projected chajja. On either side of the door there are sculptures of Garuda and Hanumantha in the Dravida style kosthas. In the rear of these are sculptures of the half-pillars with decorated carvings of Sesasayi, Vishnu and Venugopal.

The Navarangamandapa has 12 pillars. 4 at the centre pitha have each a silpattika, rounded shaft, pattika, gola, silaphalakha and bodige. The lower portions of these pillars have sculptures of Narasimha killing Hiranyakashipu
and figures of Laksmi-narasimha. The ceiling above the pillars have figures of Asthadikpalas and the Bhuvaresvari has been decorated with lotus petals. The pillars of the kaksasanas are square and the chajja on these pillars is slopy. The outer wall of the Kaksasana has reliefs of swans, flowers, vesarasikhara, kirtimukha torana, musicians, dancers, horse riders with bows, husband and wife worshipping a linga and mithuna sculptures carved beautifully. The staircase of the entrance of the mandapa has yali figures at the balustrades. The outer bhitti of the garbhagriha is plain and walls of the pradaksinpatha are also plain and has two jalandhras. The temple has a prakhara but at present it is in total dilapidation. In front of the temple is erected a 40ft high Garuda pillar on a platform with a silpa-pattika around.

TRIVIKRAMA TEMPLE, SONDA:

The temple is facing towards the east, has a pravesamandapa. This is an Ekakuta temple. In the plan it has a garbhagriha, antarala and mukhamandapa. In the garbhagriha there is a main idol of Vishnu, with four hands, holding sanka, chakra, gada. The doors of the garbhagriha are non-decorated but those of the antarala have Vaisnava dvarapalas, latas, vines, stambha sakhas, and at the lalatabimba a sculpture of Gajalaksmi. Two yali sculptured pillars are at the mukhamandapa. The chajja on the pillars has slopy-projections. There is a sculpture of goddess Laksmi in the mukhamandapa. The outer bhitti of the Dravida stupa with a sukhanasi. At the adhisthana of the mukhamandapa there are four stone wheels two each
on either side. This is a clear evidence of the Vijayanagar architectural style. There is a pillared prakara round the main temple and it has a pravesha mandapa. At the entrance there are chaure bearers and the lalatabimbha is a sculpture of Gajalaksmi. The bhitti of the outer prakara is plain. The adhisthana of pravesa mandapa has sculptures of animals like elephant, horse, camel, lion, swan, deer, pig and monkey and has a gala pattika also. The pillars of the veranda of the inner prakara have warriors, Kalinga mardhana Krishna, Garuda, Indra, Chauri, Maruti and Gopalakrishna. The sculptures are carved very beautifully. Agni (Tagaru, a Vehicular animal), Yama (buffalo, a Vehicular animal), Varuna (crocodile, a Vehicular animal), Saraswati, Mahisasuramardini, Sesakrishna, Gadapurusha, Vaisnava Alvars, Vayu (deer, a Vehicular animal), Sanmukha, Vishnu, Vatavriksha Krishna, Garuda, Hanumantha, Kubera (Ram, a Vehicular animal), Butter Krishna, Balakrishna, geometrically designed swans, cow and calf, dancing girl, a girl churning curds are all elegantly carved.

On the inside wall of this veranda are sculptures of Devi, Vishnu, monkey, Madanika, Yoganarasimha, Narsimha killing Hiranyakasipu, and several seated sculptures have been carved. On the walls of the prakara Sanmukha, Hanumantha, Garuda, a monkey seated on a tree, a jumping monkey, a man sitting on a tiger, Lajja gouri and lajja purusa are marvelously sculptures. In front of the pravesa mandapa there is a monolithic Garuda pillar of 40 ft height on a flower like Vedike. The lower portion of the pillar
has depicted of the Asthadhikpalakas on the four sides. At the staircase of the entrance there are two beautifully carved standing elephants.

**SHANKARANARAYANA TEMPLE, HALEYURU:**

This temple is situated on the south of the village facing east. This is on a *Dvikut* plan. In the plan there are two garbhagriha. There is a single rectangular *antarala* and an open navarangamandapa. The right side garbhagriha has a linga and left an idol of god Vishnu in a standing posture. The entrance of the garbhagriha is plain. There are two doors to the antarala. On one of them there are Saiva dvarapalas and on the other Vaisnava ones. Along with these sculptures there are sculptures of chauri bearers, lataś, pillars and stambhas sakhas. There is a Ganesa and Lakshmi sculpture at the lalatabimbha. The projections of the chajja have been beautifully carved.

The navarangamandapa has 18 pilasters in an open hall. The four in front of the Siva garbhagriha are bell-shaped, with a pitha, kostha pattika, ringed shaft, ring, silphalaka and tarangabodhige. At the lower kostha, sculptures of swans, Bhairava, ganesa, shanmukha, Siva-Parvati, Mahishamardhini, Saraswati, Devi, Siva, Vishnu, Garuda and kirtimukha torana have been carved gracefully. The other four pillars and those above the kaksasana are square in shape. The ceiling above the bell-shaped ones is like the ceiling of the Somasagara temple. On either side of the doors of the antarala the sculptures od Sarasvati, Saiva saints (probably panchacharyas(?)), Nandikesvara, Maruti, Rati-Manmatha, and Venugopala
have been beautifully carved. The half-pillars at the rear of doors of the antarala of the Vishnu garbhagriha, river goddesses along with Balakrishna, Narasimha and male and female figures are very attractively sculptured. On the outer wall of the kaksasana, there are reliefs of elephants, horses, flowers, sikharas, kirtimukhas, Saiva saints, ten headed Ravana and dancers and musicians have been carved. The Adhisthana of the temple has an upana, jagati, gala and kapota parts. The staircase of the prakara has a yali sculpture which is now damaged. The outer bhitti of the garbhagriha is plain and the sikhara a six stepped pyramidal with a Dravida stūpi infront. It has a sukhanasi. The chajja above the mandapa pillars is projective and the Kumbi above the chajja has no decorative motifs.

VENKATARAMANA TEMPLE, HUNASEHONDA:

The temple was constructed by the Sonda rulers in the Vijayanagara style. The temple faces east. This is an Ekakuta Sandara and in the plan has a garbhagirha, pradaksinapatha an open navarngamandapa. It has a prakara also. The eastern prakara alone exists now. In the garbhagriha there is an idol of chaturbhuja Vishnu on a raised pitha in a standing posture. He is seen holding a Khadga, sanka and charaka in three hands while the fourth hand is in the abhyya mudra. This is decorated with a kirtimukha torana. The doors of the garbhagriha have no special decorations. The doors of the pradakhsinapaha are decorated with Vaisnava dvarapalas standing in the
kosthas. Ornate door jambs, a Gajalaksmi depiction as the lalatabimbha and a projecting chajja are some features of the pradaksina patha.

The pilasters on the rear side of the pradaksinapatha have carvings of river goddesses along with other figures. At the side of these half pillars there are reliefs of Maruthi in the Dravida sikhara and kostha sculptures. There are sculptures of chauri bearers on the sides of these kosthas. And on the wall there are reliefs of Ganesha and Mahisamardini. Above these sculptures are the dasavataras of Vishnu within circling vines one above the other. Among them Vrishabhavahana Siva and Gommata sculptures are prominent.

The open navarangamandapa has in all 12 pillars. The four pillars at the centre constituting a special feature and have each a pitha, pattika, 32 angled shaft, pattika, gola, ring, silaphalaka and tarangabodhige. The kostha pattike at the lower portion of these pilasters show reliefs of Nagamithunas, swans, Vishnu, Narimha, Venugopal (four hands-holding sanka, chakra and flute). The ceiling is decorated with Asthadikpalaka sculptures. The pilasters on the kaksasana are square and the outer wall of the kaksasana has in relief a pillar, Vesara sikhara, kirtimukha torana, dancers, musicians, swans and mithuna sculptures. The pilasters of the kaksasana are very peculiar with squares in side and a yali sculpture and puspabodhige out. The chajja above the pilasters is inclined.
The sikhara above the garbhagriha is in a stepped pyramidal shape having a Dravida stupa on the top. Infront it has a sukhanasi and a sculpture of Kalingamarhana. The outer wall (bhitti) of the garbhagriha is plain but the half-pillars on the bhitti have the sculptures of Balakrishna, Venugopala, Kalingamardhana Krishna and others. The kumbi above the chajja has sculptures of animals, serpents, Garuda and Lajja Gouri.

The prakara is dilapidated and only the eastern entrance has survived. The Adisthana of the prakara has the upana, jagti, gala and kapota parts. The centre gala pattika has reliefs of swans, lions, mithunas, elephants, camels, riders and lajja idols.

There are sculptures of chauri bearers at the entrance of the prakara. The lalatabimba holds a Vishnu sculptures.

There is a Garuda pillar of about 40ft in height infront of the temple.

LAKSMINARAYANA TEMPLE, HULEKAL:

The temple situated to the left of the village and facing east, is of the Deccan trap stone. The temple belongs to the Ekakuta Sandhora plan. In the plan the temple has a garbhagriha, pradaksinapatha and an open-navarangamandapa. There is a chaturbhuja Vishnu idol in a seated posture in the garbhagriha. The four hands have abhyahasta, Bijaphala, anka and charka. The main deity is decorated with a Kirtimukha Torana. The Dvara of the Garbhagriha is plain. There are two Vaishnava dvarapalas standing in the torana of the pradaksinapatha dvara. The pillars, five decorated brackets,
the Gajalaksmi at latatabimbha and foliage sculptures are beautifully carved. The half-pillars by the rear of the wall, have chauri bearers, while their sides show sculptures of Maruthi and Garuda.

The navarangamandapa is a open pillared hall having 12 pillars. The four pillars at the centre have each a pitha, silpa-pattika, octagonal shaft, gola, ring, square sila-phalaka and nagataranga bodhige. The lower portions of the pillars depict women, men, dancers and musicians.

The pillars of the Kaksasana are square with out any decorations.

The adisthana of the temple has an upana, a jagati, gala and kapota. The outer bhitti is plain and there is no decoration. It has two jalandhras. The chajja above the bhitti is projective.

The sikhara above the garbhagriha is of a six stepped pyramidal shape and has a Dravida stupi.

There is a small Garuda shrine infront of the of the main structure. There is a 30ft height Garuda pillar near this shrine.

Around the main temple, there is a prakara. At present only the eastern entrance exists. Four yali pillars in the mukhamandapa from a special feature.

SVARNAVALLI MATHA:

Svarnavalli in the matha-devala revenue village which is 16kms from Sirsi is a place of religious importance. Formally it was a part of Sonda, the old royal capital. The place name has undergone several changes. Two
inscriptions, one dated 1480 A.D. and another pf 1595 A.D. mention the place as Honnahalli. Gangadharendra Saraswati, described as the 38th guru of the Svarnavalli Matha presents a history of the Matha in his *Jnana Deepika* (Sanskrit work) and he also mentions the place as 'Honnahalli'. Buchanan who stayed in the place has mentioned it as 'Honawully Matham' and said of it 'The Golden Convent held in high reverence is of the Haiga Swami'. The Svarnavalli Matha, which is a branch of the Sringeri Matha, is said to have been founded by one Bhaskarendra Saraswati at the instance of Adi Shankara. Bhaskarendra intum initiated Vishwavandya Saraswati as the first pontiff of this Peetha. In the beginning Gokarna was the headquarters of the matha but, later, on an invitation of the Sonda Chief, the 29th Swamiji in the order came and settled at Sahasrahalli on the bank of the river Shamala. As the place was later found insecure, Arasppa Nayaka is stated to have granted it the present land and also built temples and quarters for the Svarnavalli Matha.

The Matha complex has small shrines of Raja Rajeshwari, Chandramauleshwara and Laksminarasimha built in the later Vijayanagara style. The Raja Rajeshwari shrine has a *garbhagraha, antarala* and *mukhamandapa*. The Chandramauleshwara temple has a *garbhagraha, antarala* and *Mukhamandatapa*

The *adhithana* of the temples have flower designs and silpa pattikas in the *gala* portion. The outer wall of the temple are plain. The Raja Rajeshwari
temple has a stepped pyramidal sikhara. The Kumbi above the bhitti has silpa pattikas.

There are also images of Adi Shankara, Vedavyasa, and Ganapati in the precincts of the shrine.

Secular Monuments:

Secular structures such as forts and walls were also constructed in the region at different places. The forts of Banavasi, Sonda, Sirsi and Karur still survive even though partially damaged.

Banavasi Fort: Banavasi must have been protected by fortification from very early times, since it was one of the most ancient cities and administrative headquarters in the northern Karnataka. We cannot assume that the present remains of the fort at Banavasi are original. It may have come down to us in a renovated form because right through its history it has served as a capital, as an administrative headquarters.

An attempt has been made to describe the Banavasi fort recently. The study of the materials used in the construction of the fortification wall, has shown that for want of rocks the fort was built of mud-bricks, mud and laterite. The fort is situated on the left bank of the river Varada, in an area where the river takes a sharp bend from the north-west to the east. The river flows in a zigzag manner providing the place considerable protection on the southern side. The interior of the fort measures 850x600mts. And the total length of the surrounding fort is 2,140mts. The western wing of the wall is
greater in width and height than the remaining three wings. Along with the exterior slopes of the fort a moat is still extent at many points. The fort wall is about 12mts wide at the base and about 22mts at the ground level. Presently it is mud filled. In the third stage, probably during the later Kadamba period, the fort was further extended on the northern side and the extension built exclusively of laterite.

Wells and tanks such as the Gudnapur tank, the Naksatra bhavi at the Sonda fort, the Ratalabavi near by, Musukinabhavi at Sirsi, Manchikere tank at Manchikeri, Muttinakere at Sonda, Chakratirtha at Manjuguni and Kotekere at Sirsi are the most notable examples of civil constructions.

NOTES AND REFERENCES:


9. CKI. No.21.


12. CKI. No.23.


17. *SII*. Vol.XX.

18. This term has been used by scholars like Soundara Rajan (e.g. The Personality of Indian Temples), but recently Dhaky, M.A. has demonstrated that the term *Phamsana* canonical texts on architecture suits this temple form. See Indian Temple forms in Karnataka Inscriptions.

28. Ibid. p.60.
29. Ibid.loc.cit.
30. Ibid. p.67.
31. Ibid.loc.cit.
33. Ibid. p.88.
35. Ibid.p.155.


42. *SIL. Vol.XX. No.241.*

43. *ARSIE. 1939-40. Bk. No. 74.*

44. *El. Vol. XXVIII, No.46.*