

OTHER ARCHITECTURAL ADJUNCTS

PRANĀLA

Pranāla, also called *sōmasūtra*¹, *nāla*, is a stone-drain/chute carved out of one single block of stone. *Pranāla* is provided to the sanctum of the temple to let the oblation water of the sanctum to drain out². *Pranālas* are also provided to the floor and terrace of other parts of the temple for draining out the water.

Texts also prescribe that *pranāla* should always be made in stone³. The *vāstu* Texts deal elaborately with the *pranālas*, their function, their placement, their measurement and their design. Besides the prescriptions given in the Texts, the creativity, the imagination and the artistic genius have also played considerable role in the making of the *pranālas* of the temples. Hence, varieties of *pranālas* in the temples and their hybridized forms are discernible.

Pranālas are carved out of a long beam of stone. A deep groove is cut, to make the water flow easily. This groove is called by the name *ambumārga* (Pl.-1) or *jalamārga*. Sometimes, the *pranāla* may consist of two parts, viz., the upper beam and the lower beam. The groove is cut deeply on the upper surface of the lower beam and the lower surface of the upper beam. They are placed one above the other to form a *pranāla*. The *pranāla* begins from the floor of the sanctum and projects forward outside the plinth to a distance of about 3-5 ft. The hidden part of the *pranāla* inside the wall is just a stone channel deeply grooved at the top to allow the water to flow easily. The tip of the *pranāla* is artistically decorated according to the taste of the artists. The chute at the exterior may be in the form of a conduit, to give the appearance of the mouth of the animal carved at this point. *Pranālas* carved like a long cannon, with a central duct are also noticed.⁴

The architectural Texts (Mayamata, Mānasāra, Kāśyapaśilpa, Ajitāgama and Išāna Śiva Guru Dēva Paddati) deal elaborately with the *pranālas* of the temples. The *pranālas* always project forward from the building. *Pranālas* should always be

provided on the plinth of the temples⁵. *Pranālas* should be provided on the side-walls of the sanctum. It should be on the north wall⁶ of the sanctum and at the same time, it should be towards the left side⁷ of the image installed in the sanctum. If the temple faces east or west or south then also it should be towards the left side of the image irrespective of the direction of the image. If the temple faces north then it should be towards the eastern side, that is, in the eastern wall⁸. From these prescriptions, it becomes clear that the *pranāla* should not be placed towards west. In almost all the *trikūtālayas* of the Hoysalas, one *garbhagrāha* or the other in the *trikūtā* complex will be facing north. In that case, the *pranāla* cannot be kept to the left side, because it is the western side. In such cases, it is kept to the right side, i.e., to the east.

Though no textual explanation for this is found, tradition is that the guardian deity of west is *Varuna*, ‘the water god’. He is always pure and also purifies others. The oblation water that contains the dirt of the body of the deity (*tīrtha*) and that of the sanctum is fit for the consumption of only the earthly beings. But it should not be used again for ceremonial bath. If the ceremonial water that comes out of the *pranāla* is allowed to flow to the west, the belief is that it is sent back to *Varuna* and it will pollute the sanctity of *Varuna*. Therefore, orientation of *pranālas* towards the west is avoided. Via media policy adopted in the placement of the *pranāla* is also observed. The Texts prescribe that the *pranālas* should be placed to the left side of the deity. In the shrines facing north, the left invariably is the west. In such cases the *pranāla* is kept towards the west, but with its orientation slightly turned towards the north-west.⁹ However, *pranālas* fixed facing west are also not absent.¹⁰

It is interesting to note here, that a few temples of the region of our study do not possess the drain at all. The reason for this may be due to the fact that in these temples, the installed deities are made of mud and plaster¹¹ which are not given ceremonial bath or washed in water (*abhyanjana*). Likewise, some of the subsidiary shrines of the temple complex (*parivāra dēvālayas*) also are not provided with stone drains¹².

The stone drain is to be fixed in such a way that the ablution water should easily flow out of the sanctum. Hence, it is always provided at a convenient level cutting through the plinth of the sanctum. The stone drain which project from the plinth and are carved in stone is called as *sanchita*, i.e., masculine variety. However, the Texts also give specific locations for the placing of the *pranālas*. Stone drains are to be provided at the centre of the wall of the sanctum¹³. The *pranāla* is to be fixed above the sub-base, below the level of the upper *galā*, at any convenient level⁷. *Ajitagama* says that the *nāla* is to be placed above the *kumuda*, *galā*, *upāna* or *patāka*¹⁴. This position seems to have been followed in most of the temples of the region of our study. But exceptions to this are also noticed¹⁵.

The *pranāla* may be constructed to any building or to different types of *manāpas* of the temple complexes. Texts are liberal in their specification. The Texts prescribe that the *manāpas* can be provided with the *pranāla* in any of the four directions. But these *pranālas* should always be of the *asanchita* or *upasanchita* variety and never of the *sanchita* variety.

The Texts, as said earlier, prescribe different media for the making of the *pranāla*. Depending upon the medium used for the *pranāla*, they are classified into three categories. They are

1. *Sanchita*
2. *Asanchita*
3. *Upasanchita*

Sanchita means a *pranāla* made out of hard material, i.e., stone and it is considered as masculine. The stone *pranāla* should project forward from the vertical norm of the plinth.

Asanchita means a *pranāla* made of softer media like wood and brick. There is no projection to this *pranāla* from the vertical norm of the plinth. Only the orifice should be visible from outside. This is considered as feminine in class.

Upasanchita is a *pranāla*, again made of softer medium, i.e., brick and wood. But it may have only the orifice or it may even project forward and this is considered as neuter in class.

Pranāla is an important artistic part of the temple. Therefore, the projecting head of the *pranāla* is carved variedly depending upon the skill of the artist. However, a common pattern seems to have been followed in the depiction of the decorative reliefs on the *pranāla*. The Texts on architecture also prescribe different types of decorations for the temples built by different classes of people. If it is constructed by a *śūdra*, it should have the face of a *makara*; if it is constructed by a *vaiśya*, it should have the face of a *gaja*, if by a *ksatriya*, of a *simha*, and if by a *brāhmana*, that of a cow¹⁶. But the artists did not follow this rule strictly. However, it is not possible to correlate all these types of decorations with the class or caste of the patrons who got those temples constructed.

Texts on architecture mention many types of *pranālas*. Mayamata mentions *simhavaktra*¹⁷, Śilparatna makes a mention of *gajōs-tā*¹⁸, Ishanashivaguru deva paddati mentions *gajōs-tā* and *kritrimamukha*¹⁹, Kāshyapashilpa mentions²⁰ *simhāsya*, *gajōs-tā* and *bhūta* type of *pranālas*, *vāstushastra* prescribes *makaramukha pranāla*, Amara kosha and Jaina agama (*Prajnapāna Sūtra*) mention *mātan-ga makara* or *sonda makara*, Tanthra Samuccaya mentions *vyālamukha* and elephant trunk variety and *gōmukha* variety. Texts prescribe that the mouth of the *pranāla* can be decorated in the form of the mouth of, a lion, (*simhavaktra*), cow (*gōvaktra*), elephant (*gajavaktra*) and crocodile (*makaravaktra*). Besides these decorations for the *pranālas*, *kalpavalli*, *muktāgrāsa*, circular bands and fillets may also be carved on the surface if required. Besides these, the wealth of imagination of the artist, the local stylistic traits are also used to enhance the beauty through luxurious decorations. Artists have made some more additions to the *simha* and *makara mukhas* such as tiny images of soldiers coming out of the wide-open mouths of the *simha* and *makara*, the relief of *mithunas* seated on the *makaras*, etc.

Depending upon the types of decorations found on the *pranālas*, they may be classified into different types. They are –

1. *Simhavaktra* / Gorgonoid
2. *Makaravaktra* / Dolphinoid
3. *Mrinalika* / lotus head
4. *Gajavaktra* / Eliphinoid
5. *Bhuta* – Goblinoid

The above-mentioned types of decorations are made either at the beginning of the *pranāla* or at the tip of the *pranāla*. If the decoration of the head of that particular animal is carved adjacent to the plinth, for carving this decoration, the area of the masonry course immediately above the *pranāla* is also used. The rest of the shaft (*ambumārga* or *jalamārga*) of the *pranāla* is taken forward and in most of the cases it is made to bend downward, terminating in the form of a blossomed lotus flower – *mrinalika*.

Not all the types mentioned in the Texts are available in the temples of the area of our study. Moreover, many of the *pranālas* available here do not exactly fit into the category of the *pranālas* mentioned in the Texts. Some exhibit mixed characteristic features of different types of *pranālas*. This is evidently due to the artistic imagination or the freedom of expression enjoyed by the artisans. Therefore, instead of going by the types mentioned in the Texts, study and classification of the *pranālas* based on decoration is made here.

SIMHA VAKTRA - *Pranāla* having the decoration of the face of a lion occurs in a few temples in the region of our study. The earliest occurrence is at Akka-Tangi temple at Manne dated to early 9th century A.D. (Fig.-1). In this, there are certain features mentioned already in the carving of the face of the *pranāla*. Most of the *pranālas* found in the region of our study, as said earlier, are monolithic, but the present example is made by joining two pieces of stone in two successive courses of the building. The lower course is a part of the *prati* moulding of the plinth. This stone is extended forward with a semi-circular groove of which, the lower portion is

unfortunately broken. The upper portion is carved in the stone which is a part of the lowest course of the wall. In this stone, pilasters and also the face of the lion is carved. This portion also contains the corresponding semi-circular groove of the top portion of the chute. The chute forms the mouth of the lion surrounding which, the face of the lion is carved in the upper piece of stone. Globular eyes, pronounced nostrils, the upper jaw and the manes of the lion are also carved distinctly here. The top of the head of the lion contains the carving of two curved horns to give a mythical touch to the animal (Pl.-1a).

Another example of the *pranāla* comes from the Chennakeshava temple, at Kurudumale (Fig.-2, Pl.-2). From the mouth of the lion comes out a multifaceted shaft with a deep groove on the top for flow of water. It is interesting to note that the groove is taken through the head of the *simha* up to the wall²¹.

A very interesting *simhamukha pranāla* of a later date is reported from Someshwara temple at Doddagubbi (Fig.-3, Pl.-3). Here the *pranāla* is carved elaborately on a large piece of stone. The stone extends from the top of the *jagathi* of the *upapīṭha*, cuts through the *galā* and *kapōta* mouldings of the *upapīṭha* and its top ends below the *kumuda* of the *adhishṭhāna*. There are also two faces of lion carved on the upper and the lower pieces of *pranāla*. The upper piece that covers the top of the drain through the wall, projects slightly forward from the line of the plinth. This has a thinly relieved *simhamukha*. The main shaft of the plinth is elaborately designed and decorated. It is carved like a jumping lion. It stands on its hind legs and the two forelegs are projected upward and it is connected to the tip of the bend of the *pranāla*. The head of the lion is carved at the top. From the open mouth of the lion comes out the *pranāla* shaft, bends downward and terminates like a blossomed lotus. This is a unique type of design, the form of which reminds us of the similar rampant lions on the shafts of the Vijayanagara pillars²².

GŌVAKTRA - Only one example of this type is found in the region²³. The head of the cow is carved and the eyes are not very clearly carved. From the wide-open mouth of the cow emerges a shaft which bends forward.

MAKARA PRANĀLA - *Makara pranāla* is available in the region of our study right from 10th century A.D. Two types of *makara* heads are noticed here. In the first type the *makara* head is carved at the tip of the *pranāla* and in the second type, *makara* head is carved at the beginning of the *pranāla*. The first type is found at Someshwara temple at Kolar, a temple of Vijayanagara period (Pl.-4). The *makara* head is carved looking differently from different directions. From one side it has the natural proboscis of a crocodile while on the opposite side it has the wide open mouth of a crocodile with a long spiraled trunk of an elephant. This is a hybridized form of the animal resulting from the artistic skill of the sculptor but the shaft of the *pranāla* is not very long. More ornate *makara pranālas* are found at Avani and Kurudumale. The Avani example (Rameshwara temple complex) has a wide open mouth from which emerges a long, heavy, faceted shaft. It terminates like a lotus, facing downwards. The carvings of the *makara* are not so crisp and clear.

The Kurudumale example²⁴ is perhaps the best executed *makara pranāla* of the region. It has a long monolithic shaft emerging from the wide-open ornate and stylized mouth of the *makara*. The canines, bulbous eyes, the floral manes are delicately and crisply chiseled. The multifaceted shaft is also carved with *muktāgrāsas*, floral designs, etc. The bent tip of the *pranāla* has the scalloping of lotus petals and a hanging bud.

Another *pranāla*²⁵ is also very attractive in its surface treatment (Pl.-5). The two sides of the *pranāla* have the relief of *kalpavalli* with gentle curves. This reminds us of the textual prescription given in the Mayamata. These two *pranālas* are datable to 1234 A.D. and 1260A.D. respectively.

GAJAVAKTRA - The *pranāla* having the representation of the face of an elephant at its beginning is called a *gajavaktra* (Fig.-4). The elongated trunk-like shaft projects from the mouth of the elephant with a gentle downward bend. Only a few specimens of this type are found. Even these examples are not so well carved. However the trunk portion is quite neatly carved and executed. The example from Tekal happens to be the earliest example of this type (Pl.-6). The elephant mouth is

not so clearly discernible. The bent shaft of the *pranāla* in front is multifaceted, grooved and it terminates in the form of a blossomed lotus.

The second example is from Mukthinatheswhara temple, Binnamangalā, Nelamangalā Taluk, Bangalore rural district, dated to 1110 A.D. is a *pranāla* of this type (Pl.-7). The head of the elephant, the gentle bend, tapering body of the trunk are all discernible. The tip again terminates like a blossomed lotus.

MRANĀLIKĀ - A new trend seems to have impressed the artists to carve a stylized *mrānāla* or *mrālikā* (lotus stalk) by adding or providing a floral appendage to the tip of the *pranāla*. Carving *mrālikā pranāla* was known to the sculptors from the beginning, as this type of *pranāla* can be noticed at Galaganatha temple at Pattadakal. Many Texts make a mention of this variety. Umpteen examples of this variety are to be seen in the temples of the region of our study. During Vijayanagara and late Vijayanagara periods, the *mrālikā* variety became so popular that it was used in almost all the temples. *Pranālas* having a long multifaceted, bent shaft with its terminal having the form of a blossomed lotus flower are noticed. But only a few examples that possess good workmanship are discussed here.

The best specimen of this type can be seen in the Rameshwara temple complex at Magadi (Fig.-5, Pl.-8). This *pranāla* is wrought out of pinkish granite. The top of the *pranāla* corresponds to the upper level of the plinth. The multifaceted, double flexure bend of the *pranāla* is very gentle and elegant. Lotus petals in multi-layers are sharply scalloped at the end; neatly carved pointed bud of the lotus is also depicted. An additional feature of this *pranāla*, not found anywhere else is the flat pedestal like surface carved on the top of the *pranāla*. This flat surface is made perhaps to place an image above which is missing now.

Another notable feature of this *pranāla* is that the two sides at the beginning of the *pranāla* are also decorated with lotus motif. This portion contains a flexed lotus facing upwards as noticed in the Vijayanagara corbels. The surface is multifaceted and the double layers of lotus petals are also very neatly scalloped. The upper

surface of the arm is flat and it corresponds to the pedestal-like surface of the *pranāla*.

Another neatly executed *pranāla* is reported from Thimmaraya swamy temple (Fig.-6, Pl.-9). It has a long, heavy, multifaceted, multi-flexed shaft terminating with a lotus motif. The ridges of the facets are shaped like cable mouldings.

GOBLINOID VARIETY - *Pranāla* having the carvings of a goblin represented as *bhūta*, *jhambaka*, *rākshasa*, etc, are found only at two places. One example²⁶ is ornate and very attractive (Fig.-7, Pl.-10). The terminal of the *pranāla* contains a seated goblin in the form of Narasimha. The lion face has long manes on its face and head spreading over the two shoulders and the *chakrakundalas*, bracelet, *uttarīya* worn like a dhoti are all neatly depicted. The *pranāla* has a deeply grooved channel which comes up to the end of the stone and from there it is drilled like a conduit through the stone and opens up in the mouth of the goblin. Behind this figure of Narasimha, a human figure is carved on both the sides. The human figure is mounted on a lion. This human figure holds a bow in the reverse fashion, the significance of which is difficult to explain. The figure of the goblin in the form of Narasimha is of significance here. Early sculptures of Narasimha, carved in this form are available. But carving of a Narasimha sculpture at the mouth of the *pranāla* is against the sentiments of the Narasimha cult.

HYBRID VARIETY - *Pranāla* of this type has various mythical subjects combined and formed as a unique design. Two such examples are noticed in the region of our study. The first is from Arunachaleshwara temple at Nandi (Fig.-8, Pl-11). In this example a well carved forepart of the *makara* forms the shaft of the *pranāla*. The two forelegs, floriated body, broad ears, wide open mouth, protruding eyes, and sharp teeth of both the jaws are very neatly carved. The upper jaw of the *makara* has two prominently protruding canines from the upper end. Besides this there is also a spiraled trunk for the *makara*. From the mouth of the *makara* emerges a tongue in the form of a male human figure (*vidhyādhara*?). He is two-armed, wields

a sword in his right hand and holds a shield in his left hand. He wears a conical, tiered *kirītā*, necklaces, sacred thread, *udarabandha*, etc.

The second example is from Lakshmaneshwara temple (mid-10th century) at Avani (Fig.-9, Pl.-12). This *pranāla* has a heavy octagonal shaft which terminates like the head of a *makara*. The *makara* has floral manes, ears, protruding eyes, wide open mouth and a spiraled trunk which rests like a crown above the head. Sharp teeth on both the jaws and protruding canines of the upper jaw are neatly delineated. The two ears of the *makara* carved in two different ways are noteworthy.

Here also, a human figure (*vidyādhara*) holding lotuses in both his hands, comes out like a tongue of the *makara*. He is two armed, wields a sword in his right hand, and holds a shield in his left hand. He wears a conical tiered *kirītā*, necklaces, sacred thread, *udara bandha* etc.

SŌPĀNAMĀLA / STAIRCASE

Sōpānamāla literally means a staircase or a flight of steps. Staircases are provided to the temples, *manṭapās*, platforms, corridors, *kalyāṇīs*, for the *talas* of the towers, etc. Wherever the structure is built on an elevated plinth, suitable staircases are provided to climb the plinth. Therefore, *sōpānas* are noticed abundantly in the temples.

According to the Texts, the staircases can be provided to the building wherever required. No strict rules seem to have been imposed for providing staircases to the structures, though, some directions and positions are forbidden in the Texts. According to *Mānasāra*, “Staircases can be constructed at either of the sides of the front portico, at the two sides, at the back part (of the temple) and at the sides of the (two) wings in front of it²⁷ (the temple)”. The Texts continue to say, “Architect should not construct the front staircases straight in front of the building²⁸”. Though the Texts prescribe that the staircases should not be constructed straight in front of the building, this rule does not seem to have been strictly adhered to in the construction of temples. Number of temples having staircases right in front of the

main entrance, i.e., in the axis of the *garbhagrāha* are noticed²⁹. Temples having stair- cases built according to the norms prescribed in the Texts are also available in good numbers.

The staircase of the temple is generally called by the name *sōpānamāla*. Each step in the stair case is called a *sōpāna* or *patātikā*. The first step in the ascending order is called to by the name *ashwapāda*³⁰ or *chandraśila*, because, this step is generally carved semicircular or horse shoe shaped on plan. The last or the topmost step is called *phalaka*, because it is broad, flat and quadrangular. *sōpānas* are generally provided with *paksāśila* / *hastihasta* on their two open sides.

Four types of staircases are mentioned in the Texts³¹. They are:

- 1) *Śaṅkhamāndāla sōpāna*
- 2) *Vallimāndāla sōpāna*
- 3) *Ardhagōmūtra sōpāna*
- 4) *Trikhāndāka sōpāna*

*Śaṅkhamāndāla sōpāna*³² is the one where the staircase becomes narrower as it goes up, like the section of a conch shell and this will have no newel. Example to this is found at a *sōpāna* of Ishwara temple at Hunkundapattana³³.

*Vallimāndāla sōpāna*³⁴ is one where the staircase rises up spirally on a central post, like an encircling creeper around the trunk of a tree. This type of a staircase is used wherever the structure consists of more than one storey. However, such a staircase has not been reported from anywhere in the region.

Ardhagōmūtra sōpāna is a dog-legged staircase.

Trikhāndāka sōpāna is the staircase where approach to the top is from all the three directions. Here, there will be no break in the construction of the steps. Each step is carved to continue uninterrupted on all the three sides. Normally such staircases are constructed wherever structures are built on a lofty platform. No example of this kind is found in the region.

In the region of our study, the staircases of the temples are simple and non-ornate.

Most of the temples of the region of our study have simple *sōpānas* built for the main shrine and for *parivārālayas*. They are of two varieties. One is *sañkhaman□d□ala sōpāna* and the rest are of the ordinary variety. *Śaṅkhaman□d□ala sōpāna* is found at only one place, i.e., at the Ishwara temple, at Hunkundapattna. It is a stone staircase built to reach the top of a small hillock.

Now, coming to the *sōpānas* of the region, only staircases of ordinary variety are noticed. Most of the temples have *sōpānas*. They are found built to the *mukhaman□t□apa/mahāman□t□apa* of the temple and also directly to the main doors. The practice of providing *dwāras* without staircase is also noticed in the region of our study. If the *dwāras* are placed on an elevated plinth then they are provided with *sōpānas*.

Another type of *sōpāna* called in this context as *dwikhan□d□a* is also noticed. They are generally provided for the *mahāman□t□apas* of the temples. They are provided on the two sides of the *mahāman□t□apa*. Two identical *sōpānas* are built in opposite directions and they meet at the top at a common platform.

The earliest of the *sōpāna* in the region is noticed for the Kapileshwara temple at Manne. A *sōpāna* is provided to the entrance with *paks□asīla*.

Valliman□d□ala sōpānas and *trikhan□d□akara sōpānas* are not noticed in the region. *Dwikhan□d□a sōpānas* are found at many places³⁵. They are mainly provided for the *mahāman□t□apas* of the Vijayanagara period. *Ardhagōmūtra* variety is not noticed in the temples of the region of our study.

KAT□ĀÑJANA / BALUSTER

Katānjana (skt) is the term used to denote a balustrade. Baluster or Banister (a corrupt form) is a short pillar used in the construction of a hand rail of a staircase. A series of balusters arranged in a row is called a balustrade. In the case of temple

architecture, a balustrade is a vertical slab generally decorated, placed on the two sides of the staircase.

In the early brick architecture of Karnataka balustrades formed of masonry balusters of brick are found. Archaeological excavations at Rajaghatta³⁶ have provided valuable clues for the use of such balustrades in brick. Masonry balusters are constructed out of specifically designed bricks. These bricks of various sizes and shapes contain a central hole throughout its section. These bricks were arranged one above the other to get the required size and shape. For keeping the bricks one above the other in an alignment, small terracotta tenons were used between the bricks. Finally the baluster was plastered with lime mortar.

The beginning of stone architecture made a change in the method of constructing balustrades. In the stone medium the entire balustrade is made out of one single stone slab, generally carved with the reliefs on its exposed sides. Nowhere in a temple, balustrades formed of stone balusters is noticed. In fact, the Texts also prescribe that the balustrade should be made of one stone. The Text clearly mentions that the decoration for the balustrades should be in the form of a *vyāla* or an elephant. The trunks of the *vyāla* or the elephant are carved usually lengthy and the trunk portion forms the undulating coping for the balustrade. The tip of the trunk is finally turned upwards spirally, to look like a volute at the bottom of the staircase. The outer portion or the exposed portion of the balustrade is generally decorated with various divine, demi-divine and mythical themes. Normally, these two slabs (balustrades) will be identical in their theme and composition. There may be carved balustrades, decorated on both the sides. Examples of sculptures of *vyālas*, and elephants are found on the two sides of the entrances, even without a regular staircase.

Now, coming to the balustrades found in the temples of the region, it is to be said that many varieties of different sizes are noticed. Decoration of the balustrades with various types of reliefs, starts right from the period of the Gangas. Many ornate balustrades are noticed in the temples of the Ganga period of Mysore and Chamarajanagar districts. But no ornate balustrade of the Ganga period is noticed in

the region. However in the already cited Rajaghatta excavation, at the entrance of the brick Buddhist *chaithya* hall, a simple undecorated but “shaped” slab of this type was found lying. This is dated to the 6th century A.D.

Carved balustrades are reported from 10th century onwards. The earliest to be noticed is the one found in front of the Lakshmaneshwara temple at Avani (Fig.-10, Pl.-13.). Here, the outer faces of the balustrades contain *vyālas* looking backwards. The long and heavy tongue of the *vyāla* comes out in the form of an undulating, multifaceted shaft, and curls backwards like a volute. This tongue forms the coping for the balustrade.

A similar but more ornate and appealing balustrade is found at Someshwara temple at Kurudumale dated to 1234 A.D. The balustrade is carved out of black granite, a stone which can take intricate carvings. The workmanship here is exquisite and delicate and reminds us of Hoysala workmanship. The beaded festoons of the tongue of the *vyāla*, its sharp canines, delicate manes, twisted and curled tail, its sharp nails and the delicate multifaceted long tongue of the beast are all superb in their carving. A unique feature of this balustrade is that interspace between the body and the long tongue is neatly perforated. A seated relief of a man in *Rajaleelasana* is also carved in the interspace (Fig.-11, Pl.-14). Variants of the balustrades with *vyāla* motif are found at Anekal (Fig.-12 and Pl.-15), Mulubagilu, Gadidam and Teruhalli temples.

Another important theme used for the decoration of the balustrades is the form of a majestic elephant. Reliefs of elephants, sometimes with their upper back carved in full, are noticed at a few places. These pachyderms are carved facing the same direction as that of the temple. The *vyālas* are represented on the balustrades moving towards the temple, with their head turned backwards. But the elephants are never depicted like the *vyālas*. The elephants are carved facing the same direction as that of the temple. Therefore, it may be even interpreted as though they are drawing forward the chariot of the god, i.e., the temple itself. The reason for carving the *vyālas* moving in the opposite direction and the elephants in the front direction is

also probably due to the fact that physically the elephants are not able to turn their head backwards as the *vyālas* do.

The elephants of the balustrades of this region are very well decorated with all the decorations of a royal elephant carved with various types of ornaments, chains, hanging bells and other habiliments (Fig.-13, Pl.-16 and 17). They majestically stand, move and sometimes follow the *mahout*³⁷ (Pl.-18). The long extended trunk of the elephant, projects forwards to quite a distance, to form the balustrade for the lower steps. The elephants are carved in full length and height³⁸. Sometimes only the fore part of the animal is carved with its extended long trunk³⁹ (Fig.-14, Pl.-19).

The purpose and meaning behind carving the elephants on the balustrades may be also explained thus; Elephant is a major part of the four- fold army of the state (*caturan* □ □ *gabala*). Muttuswamy Dikshitar, a famous musicologist and composer who lived in 18th century states in one of his compositions about *chaitrōtsava* to god in the temple of Shiva, in the presence of the *caturan* □ □ *gabala*. (*ratha, gaja, turaga, padāti samyuta chaitrōtsava*). Therefore it may be presumed that the elephant represented on the balustrade symbolically represented the four-fold army, which is to be present at the time of worship of the god.

Over fifty balustrades in the temples of the region are noticed. Majority of them are plain and simple and others are the variants of the types mentioned above in their design and decoration. These balustrades belong to the period of Vijayanagara dynasty and its succeeding centuries.

DWĀRA / DOORWAYS

Dwāra in Sanskrit means a doorway. *Dwāra* is generally built on the main axis of the temple, as prescribed by the Texts⁴⁰. No limit for the provision of doorways is found. Texts on architecture mention the location of the doorways⁴¹, their directions of placement⁴² and their measurements⁴³. However, they are silent about the nature and type of decorations to be made for the doorways.

The doorways are classified into large, medium and small categories. No names for such doorways are given. Different measurements or heights are given and the

width of the doorway always should be half the height of the doorway. Doorways may also be provided with latticed stone screens on the sides or at the top depending upon the requirement.

In the area of our study, the doorways of the temples are of various designs and decorations. Hence, on the basis of their decorative designs, the study is pursued here. However, all the doorways are made in a specific fashion throughout the centuries. Hence, it appears that there was one traditional method of construction of the doorways followed throughout the centuries.

More elaborately carved doorways are normally found at the entrance to the *navaran* \square \square *ga*. The doorways of the *antarāla* and the *garbhagr* \square *ha* may or may not be ornate in their carvings.

To make the doorways an attractive part of the temple, the artist, as already said, filled the surface of the doorframe with varieties of decorations and sculptural motifs. To suit such delicate carvings, the artists sometimes used a different type of stone, other than the one used for the construction of the building. This trend is noticed particularly, in the temples built by the Nolamba artists. Nolamba artists used greenish-blue basalt for carving the door frames. This stone is hard and also fine-grained. This not only attracts the attention by its pleasing colour but also facilitates the sculptor for carving the decorations minute and crisp.

Like the Nolamba artists, the artists of the later period, of the region under study, also used a different type of a medium for the making of the doorways. As granite available in the region, though of very good quality, was not ideal for crisp and delicate carvings, the artists chose to use black granite (dolerite) for the making of the doorways. Dolerite is no doubt very hard. But it is fine-grained. Hence, it is ideal for carving minute designs, at the same time; it also takes a good polish. Therefore, the use of dolerite for carving of doorways in some of the temples of Chola and Hoysala periods and for carving of pillars and other attractive decorative motifs of the temples during the Vijayanagara period is noticed.

The door frame consists of four parts. They are -

1. The threshold
2. The right jamb
3. The left jamb
4. The lintel

All these four parts are cut separately in single stones and are assembled suitably. Normally, the threshold is placed horizontally on a suitable bed. Above this, at the required distance, the vertical jambs are placed into the grooves made for them. Above the jambs, the lintel is horizontally placed, thus leaving a rectangular opening in the centre. Nowhere, lintel cut in an arched manner is noticed. For making the doorways more and more elaborate, multiple jambs and multiple lintels are also placed side by side or one above the other. In such cases, the jambs and lintels are placed in projecting order from the centre of the inner most jamb or lintel. The threshold for such doorways may or may not be broad enough to support all the jambs.

THRESHOLD - The threshold is the lower horizontal member of the door- frame. It is carved out of one stone. Thresholds are generally carved plain. Occasionally they may also contain a moulded surface or *bhadra* projection or projections. The *navaran*□□*ga* of the Kapileshwara temple at Manne, has simple dadoed surface with the carving of an auspicious relief of a *poorn*□□*kumbha* in the centre (Pl.-20). A similar dadoed thresholds with the carving of auspicious symbols like *padmanidhi*, *śaṅkhanidhi* and lamps are also found ⁴⁴. At the two extreme ends of the threshold, the *poorn*□□*kumbha* motifs are noticed⁴⁵ (Pl-21 and 22).

During 10th Century A.D., the Nolamba artists of the region of our study filled the front surface of the threshold with attractive carvings. The usual type of carving, found here are, the reliefs of the seated *śaṅkha* and *padma nidhis* and the auspicious symbols such as *poorn*□□*akalaśas*, lamps and others arranged in a row⁴⁶ (Pl.-22). Other than the auspicious symbols animal reliefs are also found carved on the

threshold⁴⁷ (Pl.-23). Paneled reliefs of animals such as lions, bulls and elephants are also found carved in a row⁴⁸. In another example, what appears like a row of geese, very much effaced, is also found. Below the reliefs of geese, a band of lotus petals is very neatly carved⁴⁹. The upper face of the threshold is normally made plain and smooth. Occasionally reliefs of a blossomed lotus is seen⁵⁰. Simple graduated projections like the *bhadras* are also found carved in a temple of 16th century⁵¹ (Pl.-25). On the surface of the foremost projection is a relief of an image very much effaced. On the sides are the reliefs, which appear like the *śaṅkha* and *padma nidhis* (Pl.-26)⁵².

Majority of the temples in the area of our study have plain doorways. As threshold is a part of the door frame not often decorated, very few decorated thresholds are noticed in the region.

DOORJAMBS - The study and description of doorjambs made here is divided into two main groups, based on the type of decoration carved on them. They are -

1. Doorjambs having vertical bands / divisions (*śākhās*) of decorative designs.
2. Doorjambs having the decoration of architectural frame work .

1. Doorjambs with decorative bands / divisions - A good number of examples of this type are found in the area of our study. In this group three sub varieties are noticed. They are;

Doorjambs having a prominent strip throughout containing the relief of undulating creeper scroll from bottom to the top⁵³ are noticed. Similar decoration carved on an elaborate scale is also found⁵⁴. In this, there are multiple decorated strips separated by deep cut grooves. The main broad strip has undulating creeper scrolls. Inside the circles are tiny reliefs of various types of animals like lion, deer, bull, elephant, swan, etc⁵⁵. It is flanked by multiple strips of *dal* and *apadmas*. All the details are chiseled delicately and crisply in dolerite reminding us of Hoysala workmanship .

Doorjambs having only vertical panels with relieved sculptures are noticed in a temple of 11th century of the Chola period⁵⁶ (Pl.-29). Here, the lower part of the doorjamb inside the panel has the reliefs of seated *śāṅkha* and *padma nidhis*. Above the panel of the *nidhis* is a vertical sequence of sculptures each carved inside a panel. The themes of these sculptures are dance, music and people with the musical instruments⁵⁷.

The vertical jambs divided into three zones containing, relief sculptures is also noticed⁵⁸. Here, the outer surface of the jamb contains a number of relief sculptures carved one above the other. The sculptures are of decorative, mythical, religious and secular themes (Pl.-30).⁵⁹

Doorjambs having vertical strips of decorative designs and the reliefs of the *dwārapālakas* at the bottom (*pēḍya*) are reported from many places. The *dwārapālaka* reliefs are small to medium in size. Some are carved inside the panels. Some are without any frame. As majority of the temples in the region of our study belong to the Shai va faith, they hold the attributes of Shiva. They hold *damaru* and *trisūla* in their two upper hands and the lower right or left hand holds the *gada*, the mace and the other right or left hand is usually disposed in *tarjani* or *vismaya* or *abhayamudra* or *katihasta* posture (Pls-30 and 31)⁶⁰. The *dwārapālakas* are always represented with four hands.

Examples of doorjambs having the reliefs of Vaishnava *dwārapālakas* with decorative strips are also found, but they are less in number. The only difference between the Shai va and the Vaishnava doorways being, the *dwārapālakas* hold the respective attributes of Shiva or Vishnu. The Vaishnava *dwārapālakas* hold *śāṅkha*, *chakra* and *gada*, the fourth hand will be *katihasta*. The *dwārapālaka* sculptures normally stand in easy posture and are not shown in straight posture-*samabhan*□□ga (Pl.-32)⁶¹.

Another variant of this variety, carved on a grand and luxurious scale, is the type of doorjamb that appears in the Vijayanagara period⁶². In one of the examples the

front side of the doorjamb has life size sculptures of standing young ladies. Both the sculptures stand on *makaras* (Pl.-33). They have a floral decorative design on the sides, the stem of which forms a semi circular canopy for the sculptures. No other floral strips are found in the background. The inner faces of the heavy jambs have the reliefs of *dwārapalākas* standing under the canopy of floral designs⁶³.

A variant of this is also found, where, in the place of the standing lady sculpture, two huge Vaishnava *dwārapālaka* reliefs are carved from top to bottom⁶⁴. Another variant of this is the doorjamb having the reliefs of *śāṅkha* and *padmanidhis* below the floral strips⁶⁵ (Pl.-34). Seated reliefs of *śāṅkha* and *padma nidhis* inside the bands are carved. The floral scrolls above have seated *ganāas* inside. In the place of the *nidhis*, the carving of *poornākalaśa* is also noticed on a door jamb⁶⁶.

Another interesting variant of this type is noticed at Kurudumale⁶⁷. In this example the tall doorjambs contain the floral scroll motif prominently flanked by the lotus petal stripes. The lower part of the doorjamb contains the tiny figures of *lathā sundaris*. Above the doorframe is an oblong *kapōta* surmounting a *śāla* canopy. The carving of the doorways is interesting for the fact that, the jambs do not contain the reliefs of two pilasters meant to support the canopy above (Pl.-35).

2. Door-ways with architectural framework - Prominently carved pilasters at the middle of the doorjambs, supporting an architectural canopy is also an important scheme of decoration for the doorways. The pilasters are neatly carved with all the decorative designs and members of their counterparts found on the outer wall surface. They possess pedestals, slender shaft, capital, abacus and corbels. Above the corbel, the lintel is placed. The lintel supports the *kapōta* above. The shaft, the capital, the corbels, the architrave and the *kapōta* contain the regular designs found from time to time, on the temple pillar proper. This provides a neat architectural setting for the doorway⁶⁸.

The pilasters are normally flanked by vertical bands, having varied decorative patterns as described earlier. This type of doorway may also possess the reliefs of

*dwārapālakas*⁶⁹ river goddesses⁷⁰, *poornakalaśa*⁷¹, *nidhis*⁷² and also flying *gandharvas*⁷³ in the upper end. A vertical strip of swiftly moving horse riders⁷⁴ very beautifully carved (Pl.-36) is also noticed.

Elaborately carved doorways are normally found at the entrance of the *navaran* *ga*. The doorways of the vestibule and the sanctum may or may not be ornate in their depiction.

LINTEL - Lintel is the beam, kept above the two doorjamb. It is a very heavy stone beam carved elaborately. Lintel is also called as *mangala phalaka*. The central part of the lintel is called by the name *lalāta* (fore head). *Lalāta* may also have a carved sculptural relief generally inside a panel. In such cases, the relief is called by a specific term *lalāta bimba*.

Based on the type of decoration found on the lintel, the study of the same is made. Generally, the lintel consists of several horizontal bands. The bands that decorate the jambs (Pl.-37) continue on the lintel horizontally⁷⁵.

There are also other types of decorations specifically made for the lintels. There are lintels with simple decoration of bands, which are a continuation of those carved on the door Jamb⁷⁶. Simpler temples with not much of architectural merit contain such doorframes.

In the ornate variety of lintels three types are discernible. They are –

1. Lintels having floral decoration.
2. Lintels having architectural patterns.
3. Lintels having only sculptural reliefs.

1. Lintels having only floral decorations are found in quite a good number, as this happens to be easy to execute. Small temples of lesser architectural merit, or doorways of the interior chambers of the temple, contain such carved lintels. Two doorways having the lintel of this type are found at the entrances of the two halls of the Amara Narayana temple at Kaivara. Delicately carved vertical bands of the

doorjambs are continued horizontally on the lintels also. The workmanship is very delicate, crisp and varied. The medium used for making the doorways is black granite (dolerite).

A doorway with similar workmanship is found at the *navaran*□□*ga* of the Someshwara temple at Kurudumale. Bands of floral and other decorative designs carved in regular grey granite are also found in good numbers. In these doorways, the quality of decoration is obviously less.

Lintels with architectural decorative designs are also found in good numbers. Doorjambs having two pilasters, supporting an architectural canopy has already been mentioned. Such pilasters support an architrave, and sometimes even a super-structure. The architectural decoration on the lintel includes a thick horizontal *kapōta* with *kudus* at regular intervals (Pl.-38). The *kapōtas* may⁷⁷ (or may not⁷⁸) have *bhadra* projections (Pl.-39).

In some instances above the *kapōta*, generally a row of turrets or a replica of the *hāra* design is found. The pavilions of the *hāra* are of *kūt*□*a*, *sāla* and *pañjaras* all carved in a row are also found⁷⁹ (Pl.-39).

In a rare instance of the Vijayanagara period, one long oblong *sāla* is placed throughout⁸⁰. Above the *kapōta* instead of architectural motifs like *sāla*, *kūt*□*a* and *pañjaras*, sometimes a row of sculptural reliefs are also found. At Bharateshwara temple at Avani, instead of architectural motifs, a row of sculptural reliefs are noticed (Pl.-40). The theme of these sculptures include Gajalakshmi in the centre, flanked by the eight auspicious symbols, and elephant and bull at the extreme ends⁸¹.

The central part of the lintel, with a few exceptions, is adorned by a sculptural motif called *lalatabimba*. Usually the *lalatabimba* should be a form of the main deity enshrined in the sanctum⁸². But majority of the doorways contain the theme of *gajalakshmi* seated (Pl.-41). Other themes depicted include the *kīrtimukha* motif⁸³, *Ganēsha*⁸⁴, *Shiva* and *Parvathi* seated on a couch⁸⁵ (Pl.-42), *Śivalinga* worshipped by

two elephants⁸⁶ (Pl.-43) with *kīrthimukhas* above, etc. Carving of only the sculptural reliefs is another variety of decoration. In these lintels, the theme of the sculptures is varied. The ‘*Gajalakshmi*’ theme is the most popular one. Auspicious symbols, bull and lion at the extreme ends⁸⁷ (Pl.-44); Gajalakshmi flanked by Ganēsha seated Śiva (Pl.-45) inside panels⁸⁸, successive rows of *ganāas* and *bharavāhakas*, etc., are found.⁸⁹

It is a known fact that, the doorways of the temples of Karnataka are much more superior in their quality of carving and more elaborate in their designs than their counterparts in Tamilnadu. The reason for this is probably the medium they used for the construction of temples. The Pallavas used hard granite as medium; hence, they carved their temple doorways with minimum conventional designs. The Badami Chalukyas used sandstone as medium of construction, for their temples. Sand stone being less harder than granite, was easier for carving. Hence, the doorways were designed more elaborately and ornate. The tradition established by the Badami Chalukyas and the Pallavas continued during the successive periods in similar fashions in their respective areas of rule. In the area of our study, because of the stronger influence of the Tamil idiom simpler doorways are more in number.

The area of our study being a buffer region, inherited certain elements from the Karnataka idiom and also from that of Tamilnadu. In addition to this, the temples built in the area of our study are smaller in size and also did not receive the direct patronage of the imperial rulers. Hence, in the quality of decoration and also in their magnitude they are quite insignificant compared to the temples built by the imperial builders. This is also one of the reasons for temple doorways of the region being simpler and less ornate in their execution. Doorways of the temples under study are many in number. As already said, there are over three hundred temples in the region. On an average, at least two doorways can be noticed in a temple. These doorways excepting a few are generally non ornate or little ornate in their appearance. From the time of Gangas of Talakad, i.e., from 8th century onwards, stone temples came into existence in the region. Because of the influence of the Badami Chalukyan art, the Ganga and the Nolamba artists carved doorways in quite

an elaborate manner. The doorway at the Kapileshwara temple at Manne, succeeded in period, by those of the doorways of Bharateshwara and Shatrughneshwara, reflect Chalukyan idiom of door carving. The latter two temples mentioned above are of the Nolamba period. The Nolamba craftsmen were adept in carving exquisite quality doorways as evidenced by the doorways of the temples of Hemavathi. Because of the regional influence of the buffer land, a few elements of the Tamil idiom gets introduced into these doorways. The difference between the two is, in Hemavathi examples two prominently relieved *nidhis* seated on elephants are carved. In the Avani example, two standing *dwārapālakas* of the Chola idiom replace them. The Nolamba element of representing *nidhis* is shifted to the threshold part.

During the Vijayanagara period, doorways of some of the temples become more ornate because there was a trend to mix both the idioms. Temples built under royal viceroys who ruled Kolar district are carved more elaborately than their Chola counterparts.

BALIPĪT□HA

The *balipīt□has* are the offering pedestals found inside the premises of the temple. They are meant to keep the *bali* (the offering) made to the god, so that different creatures like birds and animals, who are also believed to be the part of Gods creation, eat them. The offerings made on these pedestals are never consumed by the human beings. Human beings consume the same offering made to god in the sanctum as *prāsādām* (considered as the left over of the food offered to the God) a part of it is also offered to the animal world. The other name for the food offered on *balipīt□ha* is “*balivis□ht□ara*”. According to Texts⁹⁰, the *balipīt□ha* should be constructed in accordance with the plinth of the shrine.

For making such food offerings in the temple premises, certain places are prescribed in the Texts⁹¹. The first and foremost is the place between the main porch of the temple and the *dwajastambha* of the temple also the eight directions, and in front of the subsidiary shrines (*parivārālayas*), if any, within the temple premises.

The concept of offering food to gods is an age old practice, which can be traced to the vedic times. The food offered into the fire alter was believed to have been delivered by the fire god *Agni*, the celestial carrier, to the respective gods, and the offering made in such a way, was called by the name, *havis* the sacrificial offering. As time passed on, worship of gods in the form of images, installed in the sanctum gained prominence and the worship of gods through sacrifices, was gradually dispensed with. No fire was used for offerings. Instead, all the offerings that were made to god were placed before the god and applied to the image directly for ex: clothes covered the body of the image, ornaments embellished the image, auspicious perfumes were anointed to the body of the image, offering in the form of food was directly placed before the deity and all these were offered to the god through chanting of suitable hymns. When the temple forms came into being, for the offering of food, platforms were constructed outside the shrines. The *balipīt*□*has* are placed at fixed places called *sthāna*. One or two in front of the main shrine, two to the right, two to the left, one behind and others in front of the *parivārālayas*. The *balipīt*□*ha* which is in front of the main shrine is called *pradhanabalipīt*□*ha* and other *balipīt*□*has* are called *upabalipīt*□*has* (Fig.-15, Pl.-46) The *baliharan*□*a*, the quantum of *bali*, depends upon the size of the image of the main deity.

The *bali* offered on the *balipūt*□*ha*, in the Shaiva tradition, is for the *pañcaśāmbhavas*, and for *navabhāgavatas* and the *brahmamānasaputras* etc. in the Vaishnava tradition.

The *balipūt*□*has* may be monolithic or masonry in nature. All the *balipūt*□*has* noticed in the region of our study are made of stone. No *balipūt*□*ha* of soft medium like brick and mortar is noticed.

The practice of constructing *balipūt*□*has*, it appears, begins from the Vijayanagara period. Early temples of the Badami Chalukyas do not have *balipūt*□*has* in the temple premises. Even the temples of the Hoysalas do not have the *balipūt*□*has*. Only the Vijayanagara temples possess *balipūt*□*has* in front of the main shrine. What is found now in early temples may be a later addition.

In the area of our study, good number of offering pedestals have been noticed. These pedestals range from small to big, simple to ornate and monolithic to masonry in their construction.

All the *balipīt*□*has* noticed in the region of our study are of stone only. Though metal ones (*tripads* / stands) are reported from temples, these are used inside the temples for keeping food vessels, in front of the deity. It is very difficult to arrive at the date for these pedestals unless they are ornate and treated elaborately.

All the temples noticed in the region may or may not have *balipīt*□*has*, even though it is a fact that, the practice of offering food in the temples is as old as the practice of building temple itself.

Some of the *balipīt*□*has* are simple, small, decorated or undecorated blocks of stone. Some are designed like an inverted lotus with scalloped lotus petals. Small *balipīt*□*has* are normally monolithic in nature. They may be square or round or many sided on plan. However, all of them will have a small circular, flat surface on the top to place the offering (*bali*).

Ornate and masonry *balipīt*□*has* come into being from the 14th century onwards. These *balipīt*□*has* are quite high masonry structures. Their height varies from three to six feet. They are square, circular, rectangular and octagonal on plan. The elevation of the *balipīt*□*ha* is also made elegant and attractive through designing their surface like that of an ornate plinth of the temple. Varieties of plinths of the region are described already (see chapter on *Adhis*□*t*□*hāna*). Similar *adhis*□*t*□*hānas* are also found repeated in the *balipīt*□*ha* of respective temples (Fig.-16, Pls.-46-52). Normally they contain the mouldings like *upāna*, *jagati*, *kumuda*, *gal*□*a*, *kantha*, *kapōta* as basic members (Fig.-17, Pl.-47). Sometimes super imposed by other conventional mouldings, carved to the taste of the sculptor (Fig.-18, Pl.-48). They are built normally tapering in the contour. However the *balipīt*□*has* built to the taste of the artist, without any resemblance to the specified types of plinths mentioned in the Texts are also found⁹². It is also possible that they are constructed by ignorant masons using the capital portions of the ruined temple pillars.

Balipīt□*has* built in pairs are also noticed⁹³. From the study of surface treatment and decoration, the ornate *balipīt*□*has* of the region belong to the Vijayangara and post Vijayanagara times. Notable among them are mentioned here. The *balipīt*□*ha* of the Someshwara temple at Ulsur, Bangalore dist, is square on plan (Pl.-49, Fig.-17). It has a *upāna*, *jagati*, *kumuda*, *gal*□*a*, *pat*□*t*□*ikā* , *kapōta* and *padma* mouldings. It is of *śrībandha adhis*□*t*□*hāna* type. All the mouldings of the plinth are exquisitely carved with varieties of decorative designs. The *upāna* on its face has a row of parading elephants. The *jagati* has prominently relieved lotus petals. The *kumuda* is of *katakāvr*□*uta* type with prominently carved ribbings, pendants and fillets. The *pat*□*t*□*ikā* has the relief of undulating creeper scrolls. The central *gal*□*a* above has reliefs of *gal*□*apādas* and animals. The *kapōta* above has prominently carved *kudus* and *kīrtimukha*. The *prathi* has scalloped lotus petals below. Above this, like a coping to the whole structure is an inverted and prominently carved lotus. Above is the circular flat surface for the offering of bali.

The *balipīt*□*ha* of Ranganatha Swamy temple at Rangasthala is unique in its design and construction. A pair of identical *balipīt*□*has* is built side by side. Both are octagonal on plan. But the two upper most mouldings are circular. It is interesting to note that on plan, they go on par with the *vis*□*n*□*ukānta* type that is having octagonal faces (Pl.-50). As the temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu, they are intentionally designed in an octagonal manner. The decoration of the moulding of these *balipīt*□*has* resembles the *śrībōga* type of *adhis*□*t*□*hāna*, having fabulously designed surface. The *upāna* though simple has multiple horizontal indentations and chamfered top surface. *Jagati* has prominently relieved lotus petals with up curled edges. The *kumuda* is of the *katakāvr*□*uta* type. *Kapōta* has prominently depicted *kūd*□*us* with *kīrtimukhas*. The *pat*□*t*□*ikā* above has the *ratnapat*□*t*□*a* decoration. The three mouldings above are circular on plan. The upper most moulding is the inverted lotus with prominent uncurled edges.

Another interesting *balipīt*□*ha* having an *upapīt*□*ha* is noticed at the Ranganatha Swamy temple of – Balepete, Bangalore. The *balipīt*□*ha* here has on its outer surface the reliefs of the fore parts of the elephants arranged in a row all-round (Pl.-51).

The other *balipīt*□*has*, noticed in the region of our study are simple and plain (Pl.-52). Some are of the *subhadra upapīt*□*ha* type and some are of the *padabandha adhis*□*t*□*hāna* type. The Rangantatha Swamy temple at Balepete (Pl.-51), Chokkanatha perumal temple at Domlur, have many *balipīt*□*has*.

PUS□**KARAN**□**I**

Pus□*karan*□*i*, also called by the name *kalyān*□*ī*, is a tank built in the premises of the temple (Pl.-53). Generally it is a stepped well or a stepped pond. The Texts are silent about the direction of the *pus*□*karan*□*i* to be built in the temple. The reason is obvious, because one has to search the source of water and then only dig the pond there. Therefore, prescription of any direction to the natural water source is absurd and ridiculous. Temples therefore have their water sources in different directions. If the temples are built close to the rivers such temples may or may not have *pus*□*karan*□*is* of their own. *Pus*□*karan*□*is* are built to provide perennial water supply to the temple for its various uses.

Construction of *pus*□*karan*□*i* is a very ancient practice. Right from the times of Buddhist rock cut halls in western India, one can see the construction of the rock-cut cisterns. The same practice continues even during the later period also. As the region of our study, geographically, is a place with less rainfall, less number of rivers flow in this region and even these rivers go dry during the summer season, provision for an artificial source of water was essential for the temples. As a result, every temple possesses a well (*kūpa*) or a pond (*pus*□*karan*□*i*) of its own. No stepped wells (*vāpi*) is noticed in the region.

Besides the small *pus*□*karan*□*is* belonging to the temple, larger *pus*□*karan*□*is* were also constructed in the places near the temples for the use of the larger section of the people of the town and also for the visiting pilgrims. Such large *pus*□*karan*□*is* are noticed at Nandi, Virupakshi and Kurudumale and such other places. Some of the *pus*□*karan*□*is*, particularly those built in the temple premises, were also christened with traditional (myhtological/folk) names.

In the region of our study, nine *pus*□*karan*□*is* are noticed. Unfortunately, most of them are in disrepair. They are generally stepped tanks. Wells dug in the

premises of the temple are found in each and every temple, as the wells are dug to touch the water source, water is available throughout the year. No *vāpis* are noticed as said already. Instead, either the *puskaranis* or the regular *kūpas* are noticed. The *kūpas* are generally found near the shrine in the first *prākāra*. *Puskaranis* are all built outside the temple *prākāra*. The *puskaranis* are all square or rectangular on plan (Pl.-54). These *puskaranis* are provided with a flight of steps on all its four sides. Occasionally, they are provided with pavilion all-round or on the required side. Instances of construction of a pavilion in the middle of the *puskaranis* are also found.

DHWAJASTAMBHA / FLAG POST:

Dhwajastambha literally means a flag post (Pls.-55-61). It is erected to hoist the religious flag and also to announce the supremacy of the religion over the other religions. Texts mention about the installation of a *dhwajastambha*⁹⁴.

Dhwajastambhas are normally erected in front of the temple. Sometimes, when the temple is extended, the extension is done so as to include the *dhwajastambha* within the new addition. Often, it is found free standing in front of the temple (Pl.-56) and in the main axis of the shrine, with a few exceptions. Generally, it is found inside the *prākāra*, occasionally it is also found to have been erected outside the *prākāra* in front of the main gate⁹⁵. Such instances are probably due to the erection of *dhwajastambha* by the devotees after the construction of the main temple. When such huge *dhwajastambhas* could not be taken into the temple premises, they are erected outside the temple. Instances of double *dhwajastambhas* inside the temple complex is also noticed(Pl.-61a)⁹⁶.

Dhwajastambhas may be carved out of wood or stone. *Dhwajastambhas*, carved out of wood, of the ancient period, are scantily available because of the perishable nature of the medium. If the *dhwajastambhas* are made of wood it is also often covered with metal covering⁹⁷ (*kavaca*) (Pl.-57).

Dhwajastambhas made of stone are available in good numbers. The height of the *dhwajastambhas* varies from temple to temple. However, very tall *dhwajastambhas*

are found at few places and their height from the ground level is about fifty feet (Pl.-58).

Dhwajastambhas are colloquially called by the name *nandikamba* if it is in front of a Shiva temple, *garudakamba* if it is in front of a Vaishnava temple and *mānasthambha* if it is in front of a Jaina *basadi*.

The shaft of the *dhwajastambha* is always monolithic in nature. At the top it may possess a masonry capital carved out of pieces of stone. Generally the shafts of the *dhwajastambhas* contain three decorative parts treated differently.

The base of the shaft is always cuboid, the lower end of which is unfinished because it goes under the ground of the platform on which it is erected. The upper part of the cuboid may consist of reliev sculptures on all its four sides. If it is of Shaiva creed the reliefs of seated or standing bull, Ganesha, Veerabhadra, or Shaiva symbols like trident, kettle drum etc. are carved. Generally the relief of Nandi faces the sanctum of the temple for which it is erected. Likewise in the *dhwajastambhas* of the Vaishnava creed, the reliefs of Garuda, Hanuman, *śaṅkha*, *cakra*, *padma* etc. are carved. Again the Garuda will always face the sanctum of the temple for which it is erected. The upper end of the cuboid is generally treated with horizontal bands and moulding and at the four top corners decoration of the inverted *padmadalas* are found.

Above the cuboid, the shaft is octagonal. The shafts of the *dhwajastambhas* are neatly tapered and finished. The top end of the *dhwajastambha* normally possesses the vase moulding with many other horizontal mouldings and grooves. At this part the monolithic shaft ends (Pl.-59).

The head of the monolithic shaft is made flat. Above this, the capital begins. The capital generally consists of a *kumbha* moulding superimposed by *manḍi* and *phalaka* i.e. the *palagai* abacus. Here the *kumbha* and *manḍi* are carved out of separate stones and kept one above the other with suitable tenons. The *kumbha* is a thick cushion like moulding, which may be circular or octagonal. The surface is made smooth and plain devoid of any decorative carvings. The *manḍi* is a fully

blossomed broad lotus flower with prominent petals. The tips of the petals are up-curved and carved like sharply pointed drops. The *phalaka* is a broad square plank. The *kumbha* moulding is also carved sometimes as a part of the shaft.

Above the shaft, a tiny monolithic stone pavilion is placed. The pavilion has a square plank like base with four pillars at the four corners of the plank. The canopy is super imposed by a *kūtā* turret. In the centre of the miniature pavilion, an image of Garuda, carved out of a different stone, is placed. The treatment of this *dhwajastambha* reminds us of the similar Jaina *mānastambhas*. Installing the image of the vahana of the god, above the level of the main deity inside the temple, is against the Hindu tradition. The mount of the god should be at the same level or slightly below the level of the main deity. But in this case the temple itself is built on a high plinth. Therefore to bring the level of the Garuda pavilion on par with the main shrine a small pillar shaft is provided for the Garuda pavilion here⁹⁸.

Generally, *dhwajastambhas* are erected with a solid support at the base. This base is masonry in nature (Pl.-60). It may be in the form of an *adhisātāhāna*, or it may even be in the form of a stone pavilion. Instances of *subhadra* and *pratibhadra upapūhas* are noticed. Ordinary stone platforms, just functional in nature, are also noticed. The pavilions are erected over plinths generally of *mañcabandha* type. In the centre of the plinth the shaft is raised. The four corners of the *adhisātāna* support four pillars, which in turn support the ceiling above. The shaft of the pillar cuts through the *vitāna* (ceiling) of the *manātapa*. Thus the *manātapa* provides stability for the tall pillar erected on its platform (Pl.-61). No sign of hoisting any type of flag at the top of these *dhwajastambhas* is noticed. Instead some modern steel fabrications are fixed there with the intension to burn lamps during the festival seasons.

Three unique monolithic *stambhas* are noticed in the region of our study, but they are not *dhwajastambhas*. They are monolithic. Their capital is either a *thrisula* (Pl.-62), or a *damaru* (Pl.-63), or a circular mirror like cresting called *Surya pana* and *chandrapana*, (Pl.-64) or a monolithic umbrella (Pl.-65). They are found in the Gavi gangadhareshwara temple at Gavipuram - Guttahalli, Bangalore.

One example of a monolithic *stambha* carved like the Nolamba order of pillar is noticed at Avani(Pl.-66) It has a monolithic shaft. Above this, the capital is placed. The capital consists of a *kumbha* superimposed by *man□d□i* and *phalaka* i.e. the *palagai* abacus. Here the *kumbha* and *man□di□* are carved out of separate stones and kept one above the other with suitable tenons. The pillar contains an inscription in praise of Chaladanda kara Nanni Nolamba, hence, is datable to C-970 A.D.

¹ *Dhāmnah□ prati grīvaga sōmasūtrāt prāg danta bhāgam pravidhāya tēs□u ||*

“*Rūpa-Pratirūpa*” – Alice Boner commemoration volume - P-148.

² The *pranāla* is inserted in the sanctum wall. It is both functional and ceremonial in nature, as it drains out the sacred water. *Nālas* are also provided in the parapets of *talas* as well as the *man□d□apas*. This is more functional in nature as it drains out the rain water.

³ *Vrajēdbāhyē vinis□krāntām nālīm śailamayīm tatha ||*

Kāran□āgama- 1.5. 54b.

⁴ Iswara temple, Doddahulluru, Hoskote taluk, Bangalore dist.

⁵ Mayamata Ch-IXX, Ślōka 23,24, Kaśyapaśilpa – 8.2, Mānasāra Ch-IXX, Ślōka -83.

⁶ *Jalanirgamanacchidram prāsādasyōttare bhavēt||*

Ajitāgama Ch- XIII - Ślōka 15.

Prāsādayōttare madhyē nālam ēvam prakalpayēt ||

Īśāna śiva guru dēva paddati- kriyapāda-II, Ślōka 32-95.

⁷ *Ēvam nālam prakartavyam vāmē prāsāda madhyamē||*

Mayamata Ch-IXX, Ślōka 29.

⁸ *Pūradikcōttarēvāpi yuktyā nālam prayojayēt||*

Mānasāra- Ch-IX- Ślōka-83.

⁹ Bhagandeshwra temple at Bhagamandala, Coorg.

¹⁰ Gunjanarashima Swamy temple at T. Narasipura, Mysore dist.

¹¹ Kolaramma temple, Kolar has two shrines in that the earlier shrine has images made out of mud and mortar.

¹² *Parivārālayas* of Markandeshwara temple at Vokkaleri, Malur taluk, Kolar dist.

¹³ *Ēvam nālam prakartavyam vāmē prāsāda madhyamē||*

Mayamata Ch-IXX, Ślōka 29.

¹⁴ Ajitāgama Ch-XIII- Ślōka -14.

¹⁵ In the Akkatangi temple at Manne, Nelamangal□a taluk, Bangalore dist, the *pranāla* is inserted at the bottom of the *bhittū* and in Someshwara temple at Ulsur, Bangalore dist the *pranāla* is inserted at the *upāna* of the *adhis□t□hāna*.

¹⁶ Purushottama samhita Ch-IV .

¹⁷ Mayamata Ch-IXX , Ślōka – 23-29.

¹⁸ Śilparatna Ch- XX - Ślōka – 1-16.

¹⁹ Ishānshivaguru deva paddati, Kriyapāda, Uttarārdha, 32, Ślōka – 86-96.

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- 20 Kāshyapashilpa *patala* – VII, *Ślōka* – 8,9,10.
- 21 Chennakeshave temple at Kurudumale, Mulbagal taluk, Kolar dist belonging to 12th century.
- 22 Someshwara temple at Doddagubbi, Hosakote taluk, Bangalore dist belonging to 15th century.
- 23 Ishwara temple at Doddahulluru, Hosakote taluk Bangalore dist.
- 24 Channakeshava temple Kurudumale, Mulubagal taluk, Kolar dist.
- 25 Someshwara temple at Kurudumale, Mulubagal taluk, Kolar dist.
- 26 From Bhoganadishwara Temple complex at Nandi, Chikkaballapura taluk, Kolar dist.
- 27 Mānasāra, Ch –XXX, *Ślōka* – 93-121.
- 28 Ibid.,
- 29 Champakadhama swamy temple, Bannerughatta.
- 30 Mayamatha Ch-XXI, *Ślōka* -89.
- 31 Ibid, *Ślōka* -87b-88a.
- 32 Ibid, *Ślōka* -88b.
- 33 Ishwara temple, Hundkundpattna, Bangarupet taluk, Kolar dist.
- 34 Ibid., *Ślōka* -89.
- 35 Rameshwara temple at Avani, Mulubagal taluk, Kolar dist.
- 36 Itihasa darshana, vol-19,20 and 21, P-6- excavations conducted at Rajaghatta, Doddaballapura taluk, Bangalore district., by Dept. of Ancient History and Archaeology in the year 2005-06.
- 37 Champakadhama swami temple, Bannerughatta.
- 38 Markandeshwara temple, Vokkaleri, Malur taluk, Kolar dist.
- 39 Ammanshrine, Rameshwara temple, Magadi, Bangalore dist.
- 40 Mānasāra Ch- XXXVIII and XXXIX
- 41 Ibid.,
- 42 Ibid.,
- 43 Ibid.,
- 44 Bharateshwara temple, Avani, Mulubagal taluk, Kolar dist.
- 45 Ishwara temple, Hunkundapattana, Kolar dist.
- 46 Bharateshwara temple-Avani, Mulubagal taluk. Kolar dist.
- 47 Mukthinatheshwara temple, Binnamangala, Nelamangala taluk, Bangalore dist.
- 48 Ibid.,
- 49 Someshwara temple, Kurudumale, Mulubagal taluk, Kolar dist.
- 50 Bhavanishankara temple, Anekal, Bangalore dist..
- 51 Chandranatha Basadi at Gudibande, Kolar dist.
- 52 Mukthinatheshwara temple at Binnamangala, Nelamangala taluk, Bangalore dist.
- 53 Choleshwara temple, Begur, Bangalore dist.
- 54 Amaranarayana Temple, Kaiwara, Chintamani taluk, Kolar dist.
- 55 Someshwara temple, Kurudumale, Mulubagilu taluk, Kolar dist.
- 56 Mukthinatheshwara temple, Binnamangala, Nelamangala taluk, Bangalore dist.
- 57 Ibid.,
- 58 Nagareshwara temple, Begur, Bangalore dist.
- 59 Gangadhareshwara temple, Shivagange.
- 60 Kapileshwara temple at Manne, and Subramanyeshwara temple, Avani.
- 61 Channakeshava temple at Devanahalli, Domlur.
- 62 Arunachaleshwara temple, Nandi, Chikkaballapura taluk, Kolar dist.
- 63 Someshwara temple, Hasigala, Hosakote taluk, Bangalore dist.
- 64 Ranganathaswamy temple, Balepete, Bangalore dist.
- 65 Nageshwara swamy temple, Begur, Bangalore dist.

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- ⁶⁶ Iswara temple, Hunakundpatna Kolar dist..
- ⁶⁷ Someshwara temple, Kurudu male, Mulabagal taluk, Kolar dist.
- ⁶⁸ Kapileshwara temple, Manne Bangalore dist.
- ⁶⁹ Gangadareshwara temple, Shivagange. Bangalore dist.
- ⁷⁰ Nagareshwara temple, Begur Bangalore dist. Bangalore dist.
- ⁷¹ Angadheshwara temple Complex, Avani, Mulabagal taluk, Kolar dist..
- ⁷² Mukthinateshwara temple, Binna mangala.
- ⁷³ Angadheshwara temple complex, Avani. Mulabagal taluk, Kolar dist.
- ⁷⁴ Ibid.,
- ⁷⁵ Gangadareshwara temple, Shivagange Bangalore dist.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid.,
- ⁷⁷ Someshwara temple, Mulabagal taluk, Kolar dist..
- ⁷⁸ Mahaganapati temple, Kurudumale, Mulubagal taluk, Kolar district.
- ⁷⁹ Someshwara temple, Ulsur, Bangalore
- ⁸⁰ Mahaganapati temple, Kurudumale, Mulubagal taluk, Kolar dist.
- ⁸¹ Bharateshwara temple, Avani, Mulubagilu taluk, Kolar dist.
- ⁸² Chandranatha Basadi at Gudubande, Kolar dist.
- ⁸³ Bharateshwara temple, Avani, Mulubagal taluk, Kolar dist.
- ⁸⁴ Someshwara temple, Hasigala, Hosakote taluk, Bangalore dist.
- ⁸⁵ Bhimeshwara temple, Kaivara, Chintamani taluk, Kolar dist.
- ⁸⁶ Subramanya temple, Avani, Mulubagal taluk, Kolar dist.
- ⁸⁷ Choleshwara temple, Begur, Bangalore.
- ⁸⁸ Arunachaleshwara temple, Nandi, Chikkaballapura taluk, Kolar dist.
- ⁸⁹ Someshwara temple, Kolar, Mulubagal taluk, Kolar dist.
- ⁹⁰ Mānasāra Ch-XXXII, *Ślōka* – 100 – 133.
- ⁹¹ Mānasāra Ch-XXXII, *Ślōka* – 99 – 100.
- ⁹² At Begur temple Complex, Bangalore.
- ⁹³ Ranganathaswamy temple at Rangasthala, Chikkaballapura taluk, Kolar dist and Prasannavirupaksha temple, at Virupakshi, Mulabagal taluk. Kolar dist.
- ⁹⁴ Mānasāra Ch LXX, *Ślōka* -24. Mayamata Ch XXIII, *Ślōka* 82-83a.
- ⁹⁵ Bull temple, Bull temple Road, Basavanagudi, Bangalore.
- ⁹⁶ At the Bhoganandishwara temple complex at Nandi and Bull temple, Bull temple Road, Basavanagudi.
- ⁹⁷ Karanjianjaneya swamy temple, Basavanagudi, Bangalore.
- ⁹⁸ Now both the *manṭapa* and the shaft of the pillar are displaced, due to renovation work.