

Architectural Terms in the Epigraphs of the Panchalingeshwar Temple at Huli

Dr. K.S. Patil

Assistant Professor of History, Govt. First Grade College, Dharwad

Abstract

The Panchalingeshvara temple at Huli (Saundatti Taluk, Belgaum District, Karnataka) is a temple of *Dravida* form with an unusual plan¹. It has a long rectangular *garbhagriha*, with its longer axis running north-south, which opens into a similar common *gudhamandapa* through three doorways. This *garbhagriha* is long enough to carry three superstructures in a line (Pl. 1). There are two additional *garbhagrihas* connected to and flanking the *gudhamandapa* on the north and the south sides. These also carry a superstructure each. The *gudhamandapa* opens into a large open pillared *agramandapa* on the east. The temple now enshrines five *lingas*, three in a row in the principal *garbhagriha* and one each in the remaining two. Hence its current name Panchalingeshvara. But in the inscription on one of its *garbhagriha* doorframes the temple is called *Manikyatirtha* (i.e., *Manikyatirtha Basadi*) and there are clear enough other indications (such as the seated *jina* figures under *trichhatra* on the *lalatabimbas*) to the effect that it was a Jaina temple originally. Going by the dated inscription on one of the doorframes (1220 A.D., see Inscription No. 4 below) and other features, the temple should be ascribed to the beginning of the thirteenth century A.D.

One of the problems faced in the study of the medieval temples of Karnataka is that of appropriate terminology for different temple forms and components. It is now clear that architects of Karnataka, during the period of the Chalukyas of Kalyana, the Hoysalas and the Yadavas of Devagiri, had deviated considerably from the norms prescribed in the manuals of the "Southern" architectural tradition. They had acquaintance with the northern "*Nagara*" temple forms like *Latina*, *Bhumija*, *Sekhari* etc.² This is confirmed not only by inscriptions, which refer to northern forms, and temple models found on contemporary temples (e.g., Kasivisvesvara temple, Lakkundi, Gadag Dist.) but also by actual temple specimens available in such places as Umapur (Bidar Dist.), Sirur (Bagalkot Dist., Siddhesvara Temple), Hataragi (Belgaum Dist., Sikharesvara Temple), Amaragol (Dharwad Dist., Banashankari Temple), Hanagal (Haveri Dist. Ganesha Temple), Belur (Hassan Dist., Channakesava temple), Nuggehalli (Hassan Dist., Sadasiva temple) and Turuvekere (Mulesankara temple) etc. Hence for understanding the Karnataka temples of the medieval period, possible utility of surviving northern architectural manuals, like the *marangana - sutradhara* cannot be overlooked.

Keywords: Panchalingeshwar -Panchalinga, Garbhagraha, Dravid, Lalatbimba

Paramara Bhoja (11th century A.D.) dedicates two separate chapters in his *Samarangana-sutradhara*, one for a description of five principal types of *pithas* (*adhithana*) employed for *Dravida* temples and the other for a description of the *Dravida prasadas* from a single *bhumi* to twelve *bhumis* '(storeys)³. This work and the *Aparajitaprichchha* appear to preserve to some extent aspects of the Deccan architectural

tradition of the medieval times. These works probably derived information from an earlier anonymous text now lost to us. Therefore, the terminology employed in the *Samarangama-sutradhara* may reflect the one that was in vogue in the Deccan about that time. It is in this context that significance accrues to some inscriptions on the Panchalingesvara temple at Huli.

The five principal *Dravida pithas* (i.e., *adhithanas*) are named by *Samarangana-sutradhara* as *Padabandha*, *Vedibandha*, *Sribandha*, *Pratikrama*, and *Kshurakabandha*. It distinguishes between them essentially in terms of the total number of vertical divisions, the corresponding proportion of member-mouldings and the number of mouldings. The principal mouldings enlisted include *khuraka*, *padmapatrika*, *kanika*, *kumuda*, *kanika* (or *karnika*), *makara*, *makarapattika*, *kapota* with *nasikas*, *padmapatrika* and *vedi*.

Lately, while examining the epigraphs of Huli *in situ*, curious references to the terms *kapota*, *makaravattige* and *sakhe* came to this author's notice. From the *vastu* manuals these are known to be architectural terms with specific connotations. The texts, translations, and significance of these inscriptions are considered below.

No. 1

This inscription (Pl. 3) is engraved on the *kapota* moulding of the east side *adhithana* of the north *garbhagriha*,⁴ in 13th century Kannada characters.

Text

1. @Kapota-taramattavisuddhi8[I I*]

Translation

"The *kapota* moulding level finished, 8."

Significance

The significance of the record lies in the fact that it helps by its location the correct identification of the *kapota* moulding of the *adhithana*.

No. 2

This inscription (Pl. 2) is on the *adhithana* moulding consisting of a series of projections above the *kapota* moulding on the south side of the Panchalingesvara temple at Huli. The epigraph is in Kannada characters and language of c. 13th century AD⁵.

Text

1. @Makaravattige vi-
2. suddhi 9[I *] Pittiga Ga-
3. ru[da*] [i] pat[t*]i [ke*]yda [II*]

Translation

"The *makaravattige* (=Sanskrit *makarapattika*) finished, 9, Pittiga Garu[da*] made this *patti* (string - course)."

Significance

The short inscription is significant in view of the fact that it helps identify the exact member of the *adhithana* represented by the term *makarapattika* of the texts. Literally *makarapattika* means a band of *makaras*. But the moulding in question consists only of a series of projections and cross-pattern projections without carved details. This feature is common in most temples of *Dravida* form in Karnataka during the period from the Rashtrakutas to the Hoysalas. It repeats also over the *kapota*

component of every *bhumi* of the *Dravida* temple form. It will be of interest to note that in some temples of that form in Karnataka this particular band of series of projections over the *kapota* component of the *adhithana* as well as over the *kapota* in each *bhumi* is finished in the form of *makara* faces (Pl. 4). This explains why this particular band, whether finished or un-finished, is called *makarapattika* in the *Samarangana-sutradhara*. This work however incorrectly places the *makarapattika* between *kapota* and *kumuda* mouldings. In Karnataka *Dravida* temples the *makarapattika* is invariably placed over the *kapota* moulding.

No. 3

This inscription is engraved on the lintel of the first doorframe of the principal *garbhagriha*. It is in Kannada language and characters of 13th century AD⁶.

1. @ Sriman-Nemichandra-siddhanta-chakravailigala guddugal-appa
2. Navilura govariya KaHgavumdanu tavare Mahadevisashti
3. kolagada Ketisashti Baliyara Ketisashti: gudara Pattasashti
4. milara Malisashti komdasa Bammissashti mukhyavagi sama-
5. sta Nakaragalum eradu dvara-sakhegalam sthirava-
6. gi madisidaru [II*] Mamgala-maha §ri Sri Sri [I I *]

Translation

All the *Nakas* led by *Govariya* Kaligavumda, *Tavare* Mahadevisetti, *Kolagada* Ketisetti, *Beliyara* Ketisetti, *Gudara* Pattasetti, *Milara* Malisetti, *Komdasa* Bammissetti etc., belonging to *Navilur* (modern Navalur near Dharwad in Dharwad District), who were the disciples of (the Jaina ascetic) *Nemichandra-siddhanta-chakravarti*, caused to be firmly made the two *dvara-sakhas*.

No. 4

This inscription is on the lintel of the third doorframe of the principal *garbhagriha*. It is in Kannada characters and language of 13th century AD.⁷

Text

1. @ Srimatu Prabhachandra-siddhantadevara guddugal-appa hadapada Bosyanana magan- appa Somayyanu sa[masta]di-verggade Bammayanum Daravadada hattiya Malisashtiyum Balayya Someyanum Dodavadada besa[lu?]ka Basavisashtiyu kambhada Nemsashti Balisashti mukhyavagi sa-
2. mastabhabya-janamgalumSaka-varsham 1142neya Vikrama-samvatsarad-Ashadha-Suddha-Budhavara Amavaseyamdu Huliya Manjkyatirthada dvara-sakheyam supratishtheyagi madisidaru [II*] Mamgala-maha Sri Sri Sri [I I *] Kuruvanura Rajoja madidanu [II*]

Translation

Somayya, the son of Bosyana, and Bammaya and Malisetti (a dealer in cotton) of Daravada (=Dharwad, Dharwad Dist.), Balayya, Basavisetti, Nemisetti, Ballisetti etc. of Dodavada (=Dodawad in Bailhongal Taluk, Belgaum Dist.), and other *bhavya-janas*, who were the disciples of Sri Prabhachandra-siddhantadeva, caused to be made this *dvara-sakha* of *Manikyatirtha* (*Basadi*) at Huli on Budhavara Amavase in the month of Ashadha in Vikrama-samvatsara, Saka 1142. (=Wednesday, 9th June, 1220 A.D.). The work was done by (sculptor) Rajoja of Kuruvanur (probably = Kuruvinakoppa in Saundatti Taluk of Belgaum Dist.).

Significance

The inscription No. 3 is on a doorframe which consists of five plain bands (*sakhas*) one of which is *stambha-sakha*. But the epigraph in question refers to two *dvara-sakhas* only. This suggests that the whole doorframe is being implied by the term *dvara-sakha* as used in the inscription. Clearly, the inscription is referring to two separate doorframes. Similarly, the inscription No. 4 refers to a *dvara-sakha* in singular, though the doorframe consists of five bands (*sakhas*), confirming that the whole doorframe is implied by the term *dvara-sakha*. It may be recalled that the principal *garbhagriha* of the Panchalingesvara temple is rectangular on plan, with three doorways in a line provided from the east side. And the inscriptions under reference are found on the lintels of the first and third of these doorways. The central doorway is not inscribed. Apparently the second *dvara-sakha* of the inscription (No. 3) on the first doorway refers to the central doorframe itself. In both the inscriptions under consideration, therefore, the doorframe as a whole is implied by the term *dvara-sakha*. The doorframes in question are plain but well-executed. However, they are made of softer schist in contrast to other portions of the temple which are of sandstone.

Inscriptions on the Panchalingesvara temple at Huli thus help us in the identification of medieval terminology for certain components of *Dravida* temple architecture as practiced in Karnataka. These terms can now be applied appropriately without hesitation that has long lingered in the art historical studies pertaining to Karnataka.⁸

REFERENCES

1. For details of the plan of the Panchalingesvara temple at Huli, see Hardy, A., 1995: *Indian Temple Architecture: Form and Transformation*, Fig. 66. (Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts and Culture and Abhinav, Delhi).
2. For a detailed study and illustrations of this aspect see Dhaky M.A., 1975: *Indian Temple Forms in Karnataka Inscriptions* (Abhinav, Delhi).
3. Agrawala, V.S. (ed.); 1966: *Samarangana-sutradhara*, Chapters 61 and 62 (Oriental Institute, Baroda).
4. This inscription is noticed in *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy (ARSIE) 1940-41*, Appendix E. No. 28. However the reading given there is incorrect.
5. The inscription is noticed in *ARSIE 1940-41*, Appendix E. No. 29. But the reading given there is revised here
6. This inscription is noticed in *ARSIE*, Appendix 'E.' No. 24. But complete text is being published here for the first time on the basis of an ink-impression and *in situ* verification.
7. This inscription is noticed in *ARSIE*, Appendix E. No. 25. But the complete text is being published here for the first time on the basis of an ink impression and *in situ* verification.