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Silent Music and Sacred Sounds of the Hoysaḷas: Visual and Aural Sensory Experiences in Jain and Hindu Temples

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SILENT MUSIC AND SACRED SOUNDS OF THE HOYSAḶAS: VISUAL AND AURAL SENSORY EXPERIENCES IN JAIN AND HINDU TEMPLES

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Vani Vignesh

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To: Interim Dean Shlomi Dinar
Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs

This thesis, written by Vani Vignesh, and entitled Silent Music and Sacred Sounds of the Hoysaḷas: Visual and Aural Sensory Experiences in Jain and Hindu Temples, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this thesis and recommend that it be approved.

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DEDICATION

For my parents, Lalitha and Parameshwar Hegde, thank you for sowing the seeds of artistry in me. For my sister Veena and my brother Ramesh, thank you for your endless love and eternal support. For my late grandfather, Mahabal Hegde. My memories of you, filled with your intellectual curiosity, inspired the birth of this thesis. Thank you for your continued blessings.

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

SILENT MUSIC AND SACRED SOUNDS OF THE HOYSAḶAS: VISUAL AND AURAL SENSORY EXPERIENCES IN JAIN AND HINDU TEMPLES

by

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This project examines affective responses to temple spaces and investigates how visual and aural sensory stimulations can amplify people's experiences in Jain and Hindu temples through ethnographic research and qualitative interviews. It involves the study of the traditional Indian methods of designing and planning temples to understand their place in contemporary South Indian devotion. This project focuses on two twelfth century temples built by the Hoysaḷa dynasty in the South Indian state of Karnāṭaka—the Jain Pārśvanātha basadi (temple) at Haḷēbīḍu and the Hindu Vaiṣṇava Chennakēśava temple at Bēlūru—to show that their location, design, and structure were planned to cater to the people's senses. Through the concept of placemaking, this thesis argues that the architecture of these temples is critical as a placemaking device that enriches the Jain and Hindu devotees' sensorial experiences through the union of art, performance, ritual, and sound.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

INTRODUCTION..... 1
Fieldwork..... 4
Affect, Emotions, and Feelings..... 8
Chapter Outline..... 11
Sanskrit and Kannada Writing..... 12
Identity of Respondents..... 12

CHAPTER ONE
Hoysaḷas: Beginnings and Religious Background..... 14
Humans as Sentient Beings..... 18
Sensuous Experiences in Jain and Hindu Ontology and Rituals..... 19
Concluding Remarks..... 26

CHAPTER TWO
Introduction..... 28
Traditional Indian Temple Construction Process..... 30
Placemaking in Temple Space..... 38
Placemaking Devices and Visual Connections..... 39
Background on the Devotees'/Visitors' Interviews..... 41
The Pārśvanātha Basadi..... 43
The Chennakēśava Temple..... 55
Concluding Remarks..... 65

CHAPTER THREE
Introduction..... 67
Acoustical Properties of Jain and Hindu Temples..... 68
Auditory Experience in Different Temple Spaces..... 73
Concluding Remarks..... 79

CONCLUSION
Summary..... 81
Future Study..... 83

FIGURES..... 85

BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 110

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE PAGE

1. A Mahādvāra or a big gateway at the Pārśvanātha *basadi* compound wall.....85

2. The Pārśvanātha (right), the Ādinātha (relatively smaller in size in the middle), and the Śāntinātha basadis with a mānastambha in front of the latter basadi (far left).....85

3. Bali pīṭha, in front of the square mukha-maṇṭapa of the Pārśvanātha basadi.....86

4. The Pārśvanātha basadi's mukha-maṇṭapa ceiling.....87

5. Makaras at the ādhiṣṭhāna of the main structure of the Pārśvanātha basadi.....88

6. Pārśvanātha basadi's southern parapet detail.....88

7. Doorway lintel, Pārśvanātha basadi.....89

8. Stone stele, Pārśvanātha basadi.....89

9. Finely polished floor and pillars, Pārśvanātha basadi.....89

10. Smaller shrine inside the Pārśvanātha basadi.....89

11. The central square slab, raṅga-maṇṭapa ceiling, Pārśvanātha basadi.....90

12. Raṅga-maṇṭapa ceiling vertical facades, Pārśvanātha basadi.....90

13. Image of a yakṣa, southeast corner of the raṅga-maṇṭapa, Pārśvanātha basadi.....91

14. Image of a yakṣi, southwest corner of the raṅga-maṇṭapa, Pārśvanātha basadi.....91

15. Image of Pārśvanātha, Pārśvanātha basadi.....92

16. Pārśvanātha basadi from the east.....93

17. Gōpura, Chennakēśava temple.....93

18. Puṣkariṇī, Chennakēśava temple compound premises.....94

19. The Chennakēśava temple.....94

20. Two sthambhas in the Chennakēśava temple compound.....95

21. Garuḍa sculpture, Chennakēśava temple compound.....95

22. Stones cut precisely to fit into one another at the joints without mortar, Chennakēśava temple.....96

23. Stellate jagati, Chennakēśava temple…….……96

24. The bottom-most frieze with elephants, Chennakēśava temple…….…....97

25. Hindu mythological engravings on the external walls, Chennakēśava temple.....97

26. Moral and virtue-filled stories with humans, animals, other creatures on the external walls, Chennakēśava temple…….....98

27. King Viṣṇuvardhana (center) and his Queen Śāntalādēvi (right), external facade of the walls, Chennakēśava temple.....98

28. Man (on the right) appears to be in a western attire (Bermuda shorts), external facade of the walls, Chennakēśava temple.....99

29. Śālabhañjikās holding musical instruments, Chennakēśava temple..... 99

30. Darpaṇa sundari, Chennakēśava temple.....100

31. Hoysaḷa emblem depicting Saḷa fighting a tiger on either side of the door, Chennakēśava temple.....100

32. Makaras on the outer face of the Chennakēśava temple over the door lintels.....101

33. The raṅga-maṇṭapa's lathe-turned decorative pillars, Chennakēśava temple.....101

34. The raṅga-maṇṭapa śilāvēdikā, Chennakēśava temple.....102

35. Jālandhras around the maṇṭapa from inside the Chennakēśava temple.....102

36. The kakṣāsana around the raṅga-maṇṭapa, Chennakēśava temple.....103

37. Haḷegannada inscriptions on the stone pillars inside the Chennakēśava temple.....103

38. The main image of Lord Viṣṇu, Chennakēśava temple.....104

39. Nādasvara (in the musician's hand) instrumental performance, Chennakēśava temple.....105

40. Plan of Chennakēśava temple.....105

41. Plan of Pārśvanātha basadi.....106

42. Exterior sculpture in a dancing posture, Chennakēśava temple.....106

43. Bhuvanēśvari, Chennakēśava temple.....107

44. Ceiling design, raṅga-maṇṭapa, Pārśvanātha basadi.....107

45. Modern-day ceiling baffles.....108

46. Cylindrical pillars, Pārśvanātha basadi.....108

47. Elaborate external engravings, Chennakēśava temple.....109

48. Jālandhras with carvings around the maṇṭapa exteriors, Chennakēśava temple.....109

INTRODUCTION

My interest in the Hoysaḷa sites, which began in my childhood, was deeply influenced by my grandfather. In his prime, my now late grandfather, a *Yakṣagāna* (folk dance from South India) artiste, traveled around India and the world for performances and artistic inspirations. Upon return, he would narrate his travel experiences to us, his grandchildren. One such travel included his visit to the Hoysaḷa empire's medieval towns of Haḷēbīḍu[1] and Bēlūru[2] in the state of Karnāṭaka. His vivid descriptions of the art of the Hoysaḷa buildings and the famous *darpaṇa sundari*, or "damsel with the mirror," a sculpture etched in stone at the Bēlūru Chennakēśava temple, remain one of my most cherished moments with him. The memories of him as a dancer, trying to emulate the exquisite postures and capture the expressions of the sculpted dancers, are imprinted in my mind, and will continue to dwell there forever. Watching him, the curiosity that he then instilled in me has now culminated in my master's thesis project.

Coming from a family of musicians and performing artistes and having an undergraduate degree in architecture, my earliest interests in this subject as a thesis project matured from the following questions: Do art and architecture influence the way we see and feel religion? Do performing arts like music at worship places uplift our devotional experience? I was aware of the Hoysaḷas' religious fluidity and how they built numerous Jain and Hindu temples, so my first instinct was that their live monuments, synonymous with architectural magnificence, would help me find my answers. However,

[1] Also referred to as Haḷēbīḍ.

[2] Also referred to as Bēlūr.

I was still undecided as to which of their temples would be the focal point of my research.

To carry out this project, I visited India in the summer of 2022 after three long years due to the global coronavirus travel restrictions. With an eagerness to see my family and with a preliminary framework of my research proposal in mind, I landed in Karnāṭaka's Bangalore city. On our drive back home, after a joyous yet emotional reunion with my family at the airport, I started conversing with my father about my travel plans for the project and the people I wished to contact. I was trying to approach the team members working on the Hoysaḷa-style temple, soon to be constructed in Karnāṭaka, as talking to them would be a good way to kick off my fieldwork. To my surprise and delight, my father informed me that he knew the team's chief sculptor and visual artist, Ganesh Bhat. Privileged to have connections but challenged due to the lingering pandemic spread, I had to prioritize everyone's health and safety and avoid in-person meetings. I made an appointment to speak with Mr. Bhat and began communicating with him via telephone and Zoom calls. Bhat's expertise was vital to my research. His knowledge of religious history, temple construction, rituals, and his prowess in his craft opened up new research opportunities and ideas. Gathering data about potential research locations and informants, I mapped out my Haḷēbīḍu and Bēlūru travel schedule. After sketching out an elementary research proposal draft, I set out on my fieldwork.

It was only after visiting the sites and through experiential learning that I designated my primary sites to be the Jain Pārśvanātha *basadi* (Jain temples in South India, particularly in Karnāṭaka are referred to as "*basti*" or "*basadi*") at Haḷēbīḍu and the Hindu-Vaiṣṇava (a tradition where Viṣṇu is regarded as the Supreme deity)

Chennakēśava temple at Bēlūru, built by the Hoysaḷa empire in the twelfth century CE. I picked these two distinct religious sites to collect eclectic ethnographic findings. In addition, I wanted to bring to the foreground medieval South Indian religious pluralism and the cultural syncretism exhibited through their building designs. I pursued answers to the following questions: How did the religious history of the Hoysaḷas shape the Jain and Hindu temples? What do the Jain and Hindu texts say about aesthetics and performing arts in rituals? How are they linked to sensuous pleasures? What architectural foundations and principles guided the Jain and Hindu temple construction under the Hoysaḷas? What is devotion, and what makes it a sensorial experience? How does the architecture of these temples work as a "placemaking device" to enhance the devotee experience and interact with the basic human senses like visual and aural?

In this study, I examine affective responses to temple spaces and investigate how sensorial stimulations can amplify people's experiences in Jain and Hindu temples. I also study the traditional methods of designing and planning temples to understand their place in contemporary South Indian devotion. The Hoysaḷa empire rulers, known initially as Jain followers, were recognized for their religious tolerance. In the course of their reign, they commissioned several Jain and Hindu temples. This research will explore the temple devotees' and visitors' definitions of devotional experience, their connections with the temple spaces through multiple senses, and their affective responses to these spaces with the help of the concept of placemaking. Placemaking involves the creation and transformation of public areas as per the people's needs. It intends to establish a deep relationship between people and public spaces and make the time spent in those spaces meaningful. I will employ this theoretical idea to argue that the architecture of the

Hoysaḷa temples is critical as a "placemaking device" to enrich the Jain and Hindu devotees' experiences through the synthesis of art, performance, rituals, and sounds. My argument will explicitly focus on the visual and auditory senses to show that the structure, aesthetics, and form of these temples, built in Karnāṭaka's *Drāviḍa* architectural style, were planned to cater to the devotees' visual and aural senses.

Regarding visual senses, I had initially surmised that most of the respondents[3] would only associate with the visual culture of the Jain and Hindu rituals focused on and around the main object of worship and the sanctum sanctorum. Nevertheless, my fieldwork and the subsequent interviews with the visitors opened my eyes to another perspective, one in which the main image of worship is decentralized as the visitors work on connecting with the worship places. Consequently, my research objective evolved to demonstrate that the visitors at both the Jain *basadi* and the Hindu temple are visually stimulated right from the entrance to the final viewing of the image at the sanctum.

Fieldwork

When I visited the research sites at Haḷēbīḍu and Bēlūru, "participant observation," a qualitative method in ethnographic studies, which stresses the importance of learning through first-hand experience,[4] led me to silently witness the respective worship rituals at both sites. The carefully monitored pandemic regulations even allowed me to attend a

[3] I have addressed the respondents as devotees and visitors at many places in this project.

[4] Graham Harvey, "Field Research: Participant observation," in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, eds. Michael Stausberg, and Steven Engler (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 219.

nādasvara instrumental musical offering at the Chennakēśava temple. Through my embodied and sensuous experience of participating as a visitor at the Pārśvanātha *basadi* at Haḷēbīḍu and the Chennakēśava temple at Bēlūru, I discovered that they were built to commemorate people, gods, or events in the respective religions, and are presently open to all, regardless of religion, caste, and creed. Their history and aesthetics attract local, national, and international crowds.

As an Indian from Karnāṭaka and as a Hindu, I have frequented many temples and have been a part of numerous rituals. Yet, as Graham Harvey argues: "Scholars who 'belong' within the community that they research will, while performing research, attend to different actions, have different questions in mind, and experience events differently from when they are 'just' participating."[5] As a researcher, aside from my other findings, this fieldwork made me acknowledge the role of our bodies in religion. Although the religions under study were not foreign to me, I was in awe of their charming worship places. Additionally, through the interviews, I could perceive things from alternative viewpoints. As Bronislaw Malinowski remarks, through fieldwork, "we may be able to see ourselves from a distance, we may be able to gain a new sense of proportion with regard to our own institutions, beliefs, and customs."[6]

As an adherent of the Hindu-Smārta tradition (which worships five Hindu deities, all of whom are revered equally), I was familiar with the rituals and the artworks at the Vaiṣṇava temple. I could also identify the ritual offerings at the Jain *basadi*, but I

[5] Ibid., 227.

[6] Ibid., 219.

witnessed a stark difference between the simple floral worship at the *basadi* and the grander rituals at the Chennakēśava temple. Furthermore, both at the Jain and Hindu temples, I found myself in a conflicting position of being an "insider" as well as an "outsider." I entered the field with the identity of a researcher from an international university who was studying medieval Indian temples. Therefore, despite my cultural and religious background, a few respondents initially saw me as a "foreigner," as an "outsider" who is clueless about Karnāṭaka's heritage. Eventually, I was accepted as an "insider" by both the Jain and Hindu respondents, which I think was more to do with my nationality and less with my religion, and also because I was well-informed about the local customs.

With my Indian roots, I definitely had the advantage of studying Indian communities in my native geographical surroundings. Still, as Harvey aptly observes: "There are, then, no 'insiders' who are not, sometimes 'outside' to some degree in relation to those they observe. There are no 'outsiders' who are not sometimes 'inside' the event in which they participate."[7] At the Chennakēśava temple, I "belonged" to the community of Hindus and was an "insider" who was aware of the rituals. At the Jain *basadi*, albeit I was an "insider" in terms of my nationality, being a non-Jain, I was still an "outsider." Steering around the issues of "belonging," and the "insider/outsider" dichotomy, my interviews with the respondents helped me to gradually build a rapport with a group of people from varied backgrounds**.**

[7] Ibid., 227.

Around this time, as the pandemic spread persisted locally, some of the restrictions were still in place. Impromptu interviews with visitors on or around the sites were not feasible. I organized pre-arranged interviews through telephone or Zoom calls. I interviewed the temples' visitors, most of whom were devotees of the respective temples, to share their visual and auditory experiences at the sites. Since Haḷēbīḍu and Bēlūru are popular tourist attractions in Karnāṭaka, finding their visitors and potential respondents was an easy process. Some of them were introduced to me by my friends, and a few others by friends or acquaintances of my family, who, in turn, offered to introduce me to people playing pivotal roles in the temples' operations. The wide range of interviewees were adults of different age groups and genders, and from diverse geographical settings and religious beliefs. Their unique experiences provided me with the data needed to grow my research.

As an ethnographic researcher, I initially found it cumbersome to maneuver around the pandemic regulations as, ideally, in ethnographic research, these individuals would have been observed and interviewed around the monumental presence of the two temples to document their views and practices in those settings. The unprecedented times and unusual circumstances taught me how to adapt and find new ways of executing research. After the initial introductory phone calls, most respondents were happy to do video calls, where casual conversations generated candid responses. They also shared their screens to display photographs and videos of their visits to the places as they narrated their experiences. Despite the constraints of the coronavirus, the virtual meetings accommodated a meaningful dialogical interview structure. All twenty-six respondents were given semi-structured questions, and the appointments and schedules were planned

based on their convenience. The cumulative interview duration with each individual ranged from thirty minutes to over an hour.

During the interview process, I had to be cautious to set aside my personal expectations and practice "epoché," which James Cox defines as: "the bracketing out or suspending of a researcher's previous ideas, thoughts or beliefs about the truth, value or meaning of the religion [culture, event, or community] under study."[8] Even so, the obtained ethnographic data supported my rudimentary arguments and shaped my fieldwork. Albeit I had an inkling of what might await me at the sites, my visits helped me develop those ideas, and the respondents confirmed my empirical insights.

Affect, Emotions, and Feelings

In this section, I will briefly discuss the terms "affect, emotions, and feelings" since they are salient features that repeatedly appear throughout this project. As David Morgan asserts:

> "Feeling, affect, emotion, and sensation are key features of the study of the material culture of religion because they register the nonrational response to and engagement with objects, spaces, and events that are so much a part of human embodiment. We cannot understand the material characteristics of religions without attending to the emotional and sensory investment in them that gives them a powerful presence in human life."[9]

"Affect" is often used as a blanket term for "emotions and feelings" constituting both the mind and body functions. It can be a facial or a bodily expression, a feeling, or an

[8] Ibid., 232.

[9] David Morgan, *The Thing About Religion*: *An Introduction to the Material Study of Religions* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2021), 67.

emotion. Several scholars, psychologists, philosophers, and neuroscientists, among others, have voiced their opinions on the interconnectedness of "affect, emotions, and feelings." Ann Cvetkovich writes:

> "Because affect, emotions, and feelings stand at the intersection of mind and body, cognition and sensation, and conscious and unconscious or autonomic processes, it is not easy to identify the material basis for their social and historical construction, which includes parts of the body (nerves, brains, or guts) as well as environments and transpersonal relations."[10]

Identifying this interconnection, I gravitated toward investigating people's affective responses, which are situated somewhere between the bodily senses and the emotional reactions. As Erika Doss contends:

> "Works of art are the physical and visual embodiment of public affect, 'repositories of feelings and emotions' that are encoded in their material form, narrative content, and 'the practices that surround their production and reception.' Sight alone or critical analysis that focuses only on seeing fails to explain completely how Americans—or any publics—make sense of art, themselves, and the world."[11]

Many professionals have also tried differentiating between "emotions" and "feelings," which are often categorized under the same umbrella and frequently interchanged in their applications. Andrea Scarantino proposes that emotions are "motivating behaviors,"[12] and Stephen Leighton writes: "…it is what is felt, not physiology, that constitutes emotion. The same points are to be made concerning being moved by music, to anger, etc. The determination of the emotion (both epistemologically and ontologically) rests upon the

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[10]Ann Cvetkovich, "Affect," In *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*, ed. Bruce Burgett and Glenn Hendler (NYU Press, 2014), 13, http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1287j69.6.

[11] Erika Doss, "Affect," *American Art* 23, no. 1 (2009): 9, https://doi.org/10.1086/599051.

[12] Ralph Adolphs and David J. Anderson, "Theories of Emotions and Feelings," in *The Neuroscience of Emotion: A New Synthesis* (Princeton University Press, 2018), 300, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvc77b1j.15.

presence of feelings."[13] Therefore, merging Scarantino's and Leighton's theories, emotions based on certain feelings can be motivations that drive one to take action. For instance, feeling hungry may make a person emotionally sad, irritated, or angry, and those emotions may push them to find sustenance.

H. M. Stanley posits that "Pleasure and pain have been considered primitive by many psychologists, and all feeling may be considered as developed pleasure and pain."[14] From this, if we were to understand that the feeling of pain was to produce certain emotions, then the feeling of pleasure would also induce other specific emotions. Thereby, various emotions would sprout from the foundational feelings of pain and pleasure.

I agree when Paul Griffiths argues that "distinctions need to be made between the phenomena commonly lumped under affective science and that no single theory can do the job."[15] Indeed, emotions and feelings are complex neurophysiological mental and bodily states that are difficult to identify and define. In order to avoid reductionism, for the rest of my project, I have opted not to explicate expressions related to the terms "affect, emotions, or feelings," especially when presenting the respondents' views to honor their subjective experiences.

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[13] Stephen Leighton, "Modern Theories of Emotion," *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 2, no. 3 (1988): 220, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25668245.

[14] H. M. Stanley, "Feeling and Emotion," *Mind* 11, no. 41 (1886): 68, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2247158.

[15] Adolphs and Anderson, "Theories of Emotions and Feelings," 300.

Chapter Outline

Chapter One presents the inception story of the Hoysaḷas, their religious background, and how the two main sites came to be established. I shed some light on the sentient quality of humans before I delve into locating the importance of sensuous experiences in Jain and Hindu ontology and their respective rituals. Chapter Two introduces traditional Indian temple architecture, focusing on the Karnāṭaka *Drāviḍa* style. It presents the construction process, the rituals and architectural foundations involved in the genesis of Indian temples, and the essential components of these temples. It also discusses the *vāstu* and *śilpaśāstra* texts which are textual guides to traditional building techniques. It compares the ideas in the *śāstra*s of providing sensory stimulation to the visitors and establishing a meaningful relationship between them and the temple spaces to the concept of placemaking. It then turns to concentrate on the detailed descriptions of the Pārśvanātha *basadi* and the Chennakēśava temple while concurrently discussing the visual experience of the respondents in both places. It also tackles questions on devotion, the devotional experience of the temples' visitors, and how the temples' architecture work as "placemaking devices."

As performance and sounds are no longer a part of the *basadi'*s worship rituals, Chapter Three scrutinizes the distinct traits and spaces of the two primary sites using only the Chennakēśava temple. It illustrates how the acoustical functionalities were considered in the Hoysaḷa temples' designs and how they dictated the temple's materials, shape, and size of interior spaces to control echoes and sound pressure levels to enrich the visitors' experiences. The ethnographic work conducted with the devotees and visitors of the Chennakēśava temple further discusses their auditory experience at the temple. The

chapter continues its line of questioning on devotion and how religious placemaking helps the visitors have a profound experience at the temples. The Conclusion ties up all the arguments of the study to reaffirm that the art and architecture of the two primary sites function well as "placemaking tools," making it a worthwhile experience for the devotees and the other visitors. It looks into the future scope of the study to further probe the world of South Indian devotion and architecture.

Sanskrit and Kannada Writing

The transliteration of the Kannada language script into Roman was an essential part of this thesis. In India, Kannada, belonging to the family of Dravidian languages, is spoken widely in the southern parts of the country. Kannada is heavily influenced by Sanskrit and continues to use many of the Devānāgari script of Sanskrit in it. Although the pronunciations of such words are derived from Sanskrit, the word finishes may often differ. Few of the "ā" endings in Sanskrit may produce "e" endings in Kannada: for instance, *pujā* and *śilā* in Sanskrit, are *pūje and śile* respectively in Kannada. As my primary sites are located in Karnāṭaka, where Kannada is the official language, Sanskrit and Kannada words have been utilized in many places in this project.

Identity of Respondents

I have changed the respondents' names, at times genders, and other identifiers for confidentiality reasons. This project also mentions three key informants,[16] experts in their

[16] They also responded to the interview questions.

respective fields, who are directly or indirectly involved in the construction of the upcoming Hoysaḷa-style temple in Karnāṭaka, and whose expertise contributed tremendously to my project. With their permission, their identities remain unmodified, as it is only fitting that I duly give them credit for their time and generosity of spirit.

CHAPTER ONE

Hoysaḷas: Beginnings and Religious Background

The Hoysaḷa dynasty thrived between the tenth and the fourteenth centuries CE in the present South Indian state of Karnāṭaka for three centuries before crumbling under the Delhi sultanate circa the fourteenth century CE. Known for its exquisite art and architectural splendor, which included the temples in the towns of Haḷēbīḍu and Bēlūru, the Hoysaḷa kingdom was also one of the strongest proponents of Jainism in Karnāṭaka.[17]

Around the tenth century CE, Sosevūr (presently Angaḍi), a village located in the Mūdigere taluq (district subdivision) of the present-day Chikmagalūr district in Karnāṭaka, had a strong Jain presence.[18] According to legend, Sudatta, a Jain guru (teacher), and Saḷa, the chief of Angadi, were attending a worship ritual at a goddess temple in the village when they encountered a ferocious tiger from the nearby forest. Sudatta shrieked "*poy Saḷa*" ("attack Saḷa") in the native language of *Haḷegannada,* or Old Kannada, as he handed over a rod to Saḷa, asking him to beat the tiger with it. Saḷa is then said to have struck the tiger and killed it. This is the most circulated origin story of how the cry of a Jain guru Sudatta, "*poy Saḷa*," was later adopted as a royal family name, "Hoysaḷa," and how the image representing Saḷa attacking the tiger became their royal emblem, appearing in every Hoysaḷa temple even today.[19] Although considered a Kannada folklore, there are certain inscriptions dated between 1271 and 1284 CE found

[17] Bhasker Anand Saletore, *Medieval Jainism* (Karnatak Publishing House, 1938), 59.

[18] Ibid., 61.

[19] Ibid., 62-63.

at Nāgamangala town in Karnāṭaka that do mention Saḷa welcoming a Jain sage Sudatta into his town.[20] Another account, found on a stone inscription near Honnāvara town of Karnāṭaka and dated to 1123 CE, records Saḷa saving a meditating Sudatta *muni* (sage) from a tiger in one of the forests of the Western ghats. It also mentions that Sudatta made the Jain goddess Padmāvati appear as a tiger to test Saḷa's bravery.[21] These tellings of the legend show that Jainism had a firm hold on the Hoysaḷa kingdom since its inception. Originally belonging to a tribal race of Karnāṭaka, the Hoysaḷa lineage had established a robust foundation in the state by the beginning of the twelfth century CE.[22]

The successors of Saḷa offered continued support and patronage to Jainism. King Viṣṇuvardhana Bittiga Dēva, who ascended the Hoysaḷa throne in 1108 CE, provided shelter to Rāmanujāchārya, a Hindu-Vaiṣṇava guru who was fleeing to escape religious persecution under the Chola Kings in 1116 CE.[23] Deeply influenced by the guru's teachings, Viṣṇuvardhana embraced Vaiṣṇavism, a Hindu tradition where Viṣṇu is regarded as the Supreme deity. Here, I use "embraced" and refrain from using the phrase "converted to Vaiṣṇavism" because this was a period in South India where one could accept and practice multiple religions: while staying true to Jainism, the king also practiced three Hindu traditions.[24] They were Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism (Śiva is worshipped

[20] Ibid., 64.

[21] Ibid., 71.

[22] Ibid., 67-68.

[23] Ibid., 79.

[24] Srivatsa S. Vati, *Bēlūr Mēle Hosa Beḷaku* [*A New Light on Bēlūr*] (Karnataka: Hoysaḷa Publication, 2011), 10.

as the Supreme being), and Śaktism (the goddess Śakti is viewed as the Supreme being). Individually, these four traditions were called "*samaya*s" or "creeds," and together, they were called "*chatussamayagaḷu*" ("four *samaya*s" or "four creeds") and have even been recorded in several Hoysaḷa inscriptions.[25] Personally, the king could worship any God of his choice, but socially it was his duty to acknowledge all the above four traditions.

Records show that in 1125 CE, Viṣṇuvardhana became a devoted follower of the Jain teacher Srīpāla Traividyavrati. In addition, a stone inscription dated to 1129 CE at Bēlūru also honors the monarch's gift to a Jain *basadi*, named "Malli Jinālaya," "abode of the Jina Mallinātha."[26] Srivatsa Vati, a historian who has studied the Hoysaḷas for over twenty years, rightly asks: If Viṣṇuvardhana had, in fact, "converted" to Vaiṣṇavism, would he have continued to promote Jainism?[27]

The most significant attestation to King Viṣṇuvardhana's piety toward Jainism can be seen on an inscription dated to 1133 CE at the Pārśvanātha *basadi* in *Basadihaḷḷi* or *Bastihaḷḷi* ("*haḷḷi*" refers to a village- a village of *basadi*s) in their capital town of Dorasamudra, currently known as Haḷēbīḍu. This epigraph in *Haḷegannada* mentions that the temple was built under the leadership of courtier Boppadēva in memory of his father Gaṅgarāja or *Daṇḍanāyaka* Gaṅgappayya, one of the great generals of King Viṣṇuvardhana.[28] The king's donations toward the temple's running also testify to his

[25] Ibid., 10.

[26] Saletore, *Medieval Jainism*, 79.

[27] Vati, *Bēlūr*, 11.

[28] Katherine E. Kasdorf, "Forming Dōrasamudra: Temples of the Hoysaḷa Capital in Context" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2013), 140.

devotion to Jainism.[29] His wife Śāntalādēvi, recognized for her beauty, dancing skills, and the commissioning of several Hindu temples, was known as an ardent Jain devotee as well. She was raised in a household that followed "*chatussamayagaḷu*," where her father, Marasingayya, was a Śaivite, or a Śiva devotee, and her mother, Macikabbe, was a Jain follower.[30] Viṣṇuvardhana, his wife Śāntalādēvi, and his generals commissioned several Jain temples all around Karnāṭaka. Even after Viṣṇuvardhana, Jainism continued to dominate the state through his successors like Narasimha III (1263-1292 CE) and Vīra Ballāḷa III (1293- 1342 CE).[31] *Basadihaḷḷi* in Haḷēbīḍu got its name because of the increasing presence of Jain temples, or *basadi*s in the area under the Hoysaḷas.[32] Pārśvanātha, Ādinātha, and Śāntinātha *basadi*s are among the few Jain temples that continue to exist there that attract devotees to this day.

Viṣṇuvardhana's Vaiṣṇava influence was gloriously brought to life in 1117 CE in the form of the Chennakēśava temple at Bēlūru.[33] The Hoysaḷas, like many others in Karnāṭaka's royal history, exhibited religious tolerance through the monarchy's unprejudiced view of most religions.[34] Karnāṭaka's Jain and Hindu temple architecture

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[29] Ibid., 175.

[30] Saletore, *Medieval Jainism*, 165-166.

[31] Ibid., 79.

[32] Ibid., 211.

[33] M.H.Krishna, *Annual Report of the Mysore Archaeological Department For the year 1931* (Bangalore: Government Press, 1935), 26.

[34] See Saletore's *Medieval Jainism* for a discussion on several other kingdoms and their rulers, such as the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, the Gaṅgas, the Chālukyas, who patronized multiple religions in medieval Karṇāṭaka.

reached greater heights under the Hoysaḷas on account of their unbiased propagation of Jain and Hindu worship centers.

Humans as Sentient Beings

With this brief overview of the Hoysaḷa religious history, before I turn to the role of aesthetics and performing arts in Jain and Hindu rituals, I want to emphasize that art and the religious world can change and expand our sensory perceptions. In this project, I accentuate the sentient quality of humans and argue through the two primary sites that the union of the art and religious worlds can visually and aurally stimulate human senses.

Reddy, Roy, Leite, and Pereira have argued that humans' "self-identification" and "sense of existence" happen through their sensory experiences in different environmental settings. They have singled out and deconstructed the concept of "self" for a better understanding of its nature. Our human "self," which perceives things, is an embodied being comprised of emotions and feelings, among many other things. Our feelings, emotions, and affects (interpreted in the Introduction) often depend on environmental images and are highly dependent on directly experiencing everyday events as constructed by us.[35] We internalize and embody such experiences, including religious and cultural, to become aware of and receptive to the all-encompassing beauty of the respective external world fundamentally through the sense of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch.

[35] Reddy, J.S.K., Roy, De Souza Leite, E. et al., "*The 'Self' Aspects: the Sense of the Existence, Identification, and Location*," *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science* 53, no.3 (September 2019): 470–472, DOI:10.1007/s12124-019-9476-8.

As anthropologist Edward T. Hall said: “People from different cultures not only speak different languages but, what is possibly more important, inhabit different sensory worlds.”[36] Hence, in studying religious rituals, art, architecture, sounds, music, or any religious phenomenon, an investigation of affective responses and independent sensual experiences becomes indispensable and cannot be dismissed.

Sensuous Experiences in Jain and Hindu Ontology and Rituals

The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (tenth century CE), a text highly revered by the Vaiṣṇavas, speaks of controlling human desires: “Life's desires should never be aimed at gratifying the senses. One should desire to live only because human life enables one to inquire about the Absolute Truth. This should be the goal of all works.”[37] Although this suggests that the senses are not meant to gratify us, the text also speaks of devotees' deep love for their God and how they can use their sensory faculties, such as the eyes, to consume God's presence in the form of the cosmic being. For example, the text further states:

> “The devotees, with their perfect eyes, see the transcendental form of the *puruṣa* (“cosmic man”) who has thousands of legs, thighs, arms and faces-all extraordinary. In that body there are thousands of heads, ears, eyes, and noses. They are decorated with thousands of helmets and earrings and are adorned with garlands.”[38]

[36] John A. Niemi, “Some Facets of Cross-Cultural Communication and Their Implications for ABE and ESL Teachers,” *US Department of Health, Education &Welfare-National Institute of Education* (March 1976): 2, https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED121964.pdf.

[37] Veda Vyasa, *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, trans. A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda (The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 1972), 97.

[38] Ibid., 140.

I argue that devotees' sensorial connections at their places of worship enable a close bond between them, their gods, and the place itself. As per the *Viṣṇu Sāṃhitā*, a Vaiṣṇava text on rituals:

> "Without a form how can God be mediated upon? If (He is) without any form, where will the mind fix itself? When there is nothing for the mind to attach itself to, it will slip away from meditation or will glide into a state of slumber. Therefore, the wise will meditate on some form, remembering, however, that the form is a superimposition and not a reality."[39]

These words stress upon the value of "seeing" deities' images, for they can be powerful visual aids to anchor a person during religious ruminations. Anthropomorphic and aniconic images can serve as stepping stones to support a person's devotional journey.

Sri Vaiṣṇava, a theological text by Rāmanujāchārya (1017-1137 CE), expresses views on the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* (dated to circa the second century BCE), one of the most revered Hindu texts. It conveys one of God's messages from the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* thus: "I suit myself in a manner that I am to them not only a visible demonstration, but they may enjoy me by everyone of their senses faculties and in all diverse ways."[40] This suggests that not only the eyes, but all our sensory capabilities are crucial in Vaiṣṇava *pūjā*s or worship rituals.

Diana Eck has rightly stated that worship rituals can be sensuous in India, and that the culture celebrates "the realms of the senses."[41] For instance, the devotees express their love for their gods through sensory exploration in rituals: seeing the deity; hearing

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[39] Diana L. Eck, *Darśan Seeing the Divine Image in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 45.

[40] Ibid., 49.

[41] Ibid.,12.

the deity's stories, listening to the hymns, mantras, bells, and other sacred sounds and devotional songs performed at the worship space; touching the deity images; smelling the fragrance of incense sticks or floral decorations offered to the deity; tasting the consecrated food (*prasāda*) and liquid (*tīrtha*) and so on.[42] I argue that affective responses in devotees can be generated through such sensory activations at worship places.

In Hindu worship, the five senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch are known as *pancha indriya*s or *panchēndriya*s, where *"pancha"* means five and *"indriya"* means instruments to perceive the external world, i.e., the sense organs. *Indriya* can also mean "belonging to Indra," the lord of heaven, as per Sanskrit's semantics. One way to explain the derivation of *indriya* from Indra is to imply that just as Indra commands heaven, our senses lead us here on earth.[43] Interestingly in Jainism, Indra, considered the king of gods, and his queen consort, Indrāni, are among the most important deities and, above all, are considered to be the deities who most enjoy the sensual pleasures of worship.[44]

Unlike Hinduism, in Jainism, there is an emphasis on asceticism in worship. The idea behind the worship rituals becomes complex as asceticism is glorified and turned into a colorful spectacle through artistic and aesthetically pleasing decorations, dance,

[42] Ibid., 11-12.

[43] As informed by Srivatsa Vati during an interview by author, 15 June 2022.

[44] Sarah Pierce Taylor, "Jains, Kings, and Kingship in Medieval India," *Brill's Encyclopedia of Jainism* (2020): 496, https://www.academia.edu/61360047/Jains_Kings_and_Kingship_in_Medieval_India.

drama, and music. The eternal tension between the monastics' unavoidable ascetic regulations and the laypeople's celebratory ways remains an intrinsic part of Jain culture.[45] In the rest of this chapter, I will elucidate the reasons behind these convoluted workings of Jainism and how aesthetics, performing arts, and sensuous experiences are integral to this austere religion's devotional expressions.

Both Jain and Hindu religions believe in reincarnation, the cycle of death and rebirth rooted in *karma*. Jainism views the Jina as a perfect living being who has reached liberation after crossing all the barriers of *karma* and that he possesses infinite wisdom, knowledge, and power. While the Jains view *karma* as material particles that stick to the soul during each life cycle and that need to be shed to cleanse the soul, the Hindus view *karma* as positive or negative, gained through merits or wrongdoings, respectively, through several lifetimes.[46] In Jainism, every soul is associated with ignorance and, therefore, with *karma*.[47] The chief goal is the removal of the *karma*s of the soul to attain *mōkṣa* or liberation, and the karmic balance can be improved by performing or praising asceticism.[48] When people cross all the barriers of *karma* after having conquered anger, desire, greed, and hatred, they are said to have procured *kēval jñāna,* or omniscience, which leads to the final release from this world.[49]

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[45] Sarah Pierce Taylor, "The Aesthetics of Sovereignty: The Poetic and Material Worlds of Medieval Jainism" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2016), xiii-xiv.

[46] As informed by Srivatsa Vati during an interview by author, 15 June 2022.

[47] Uday Dokras and Srishti Dokras, *The Complete Compendium of Jain Temples Part I* (Sweden, Finland and India: Indo Nordic Author's Collective, 2021), 8, https://www.academia.edu/44777590/Jain_Temples_Part_I_Complete_Compendium_Book_I.

[48] Ibid., 9.

[49] Ibid., 10.

*Tīrthaṅkara*s attain *kēval jñāna* and lay the foundation for the fourfold religious order of monks, nuns, *śrāvaka*s, and *śrāvikā*s (male and female laypeople).[50] The term "*tīrthaṅkara*" means a spiritual pathfinder or ford-maker.[51] *Tīrthaṅkara*s preach Jain philosophy to the followers in a divine preaching hall called "*Samavasaraṇa"* ("assembly").[52] It is a Jain belief that no two *tīrthaṅkara*s can exist at the same time, and that so far, there have been twenty-four *tīrthaṅkara*s. Generally, *tīrthaṅkara,* also referred to as the Jina, is viewed as someone who resuscitates Jainism on earth when it is declining rapidly and is in its recession state.[53]

In Jain ontology, Indra's heaven is believed to be the abode of gods. When a Jina is born on earth, Indra, Indrāni, and other celestial beings come down from their heaven to celebrate and worship the Jina. They offer majestic dance and music celebratory performances at the Jina's birth ceremony, which is one of the five *kalyāṇaka*s, or auspicious events.[54] The Jain devotees emulate Indra by wearing crowns and enacting the chain of events that occur before, during, and after the Jina′s birth as part of their worship rituals (*snātra pūjā*).[55] During these rituals, the Jina's image and qualities of asceticism are extolled, and he is believed to be a spiritual king who has left the circle of rebirth and

[50] Ibid., 10.

[51] Eck, *Darśan*, 72.

[52] Dokras, *The Complete Compendium of Jain Temples Part I*, 84.

[53] Ibid., 9-10.

[54] Aleksandra Restifo, "Aesthetic Pleasure in the Worship of the Jina: Understanding Performance in Jain Devotional Culture," *Religions* 10, no. 4 (April 2019): 253, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10040251.

[55] Taylor, "Jains, Kings, and Kingship," 496.

is absent from this world.[56] In a sense, he has abdicated the material kingdom to welcome a kingdom of liberation.

While some Jains believe that the Jina is present in his image, others believe rituals are to please the secondary gods and goddesses. Therefore, in Jainism, like Hinduism, the Jina and the other deities' images are worshipped through food, water, flowers, incense sticks, and lamps, even when the Jina is considered absent from his image.[57] The worship involves vibrant dance and music performances, even though the Jina is believed to be beyond earthly attachments. Thus, the Jains often find themselves in the liminal space between sensual and ascetic worlds, and I argue that this space promotes sensuous devotionalism in Jain practices.

The Jain tradition was divided into two sects, the Digambaras and the Śvētāmbaras, circa the mid-fifth century CE. While the Digambaras practice nudity, Śvētāmbaras wear white attires.[58] Śvētāmbara canonical texts restrict both Jain mendicants and laypeople from sensual pleasures of dance, music, and drama and from any activity that can generate emotional bondage.[59] However, scholars such as Aleksandra Restifo have discussed the centrality of aesthetic performance in Jain devotion, deriving examples from Śvetāmbara canonical texts like *Rāyapaseṇiyasutta* in which God Sūriyābha holds a performance for the Jina Mahāvīra where devotional rituals are merged with sensual pleasures. She has also correctly noted that the Jain poet Rāmacandra's poem

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[56] Dokras, *The Complete Compendium of Jain Temples Part I*, 89.

[57] Ibid., 107-109.

[58] Taylor, “The Aesthetics of Sovereignty,” 5.

[59] Restifo, “Aesthetic Pleasure in the Worship of the Jina,” 252.

Kumāravihāraśataka (twelfth century CE) welcomes visually pleasurable devotional activities in worship places and performing arts like music and dance in devotional rituals.[60] Additionally, she has rightly pointed out that while Rāmacandra's teacher Hēmacandra lists performing arts as acts in which devotees should refrain from participating, he also encourages the affluent devotees to donate to temple constructions and participate in such performances.[61]

Jain devotional practices through sensuous pleasures of art, sound, or music are lesser-studied and often underrepresented in Jainism, especially in the study of South Indian devotion. The scholarships of John Cort, Sarah Taylor, Restifo, and Whitney Kelting, which discuss aesthetics and the centrality of dance, drama, sound, and music in Jain devotional expressions, have been invaluable in the field.

Taylor has aptly argued that Jains constantly balance the overlapping material and spiritual worlds. She has comprehensively discussed Jain poet Pampa's *Ādipurāṇaṃ* (941CE), a Jain epic literature written in *Haḷegannada*,[62] and highlighted Pampa's emotional and aesthetic explorations of Jain devotion through King Ṛṣabhanātha's life, who later transformed into the first *tīrthaṅkara, Ādinātha*. Pampa writes about human pleasures and attachment while emphasizing the austerity of Jainism.[63] His descriptions of the dancer Nīlāñjane, who performs in front of Ṛṣabhanātha's court and whose death in the middle of her performance becomes the point of renunciation for Ṛṣabhanātha, lasts

[60] Ibid., 254-255.

[61] Ibid., 268.

[62] Taylor, "The Aesthetics of Sovereignty."

[63] Ibid., xiii-xiv.

for about twenty-six verses.[64] These verses, in Kannada poetic style, with mixed verse and prose called *champū kāvya*, praise Nīlāñjane's clothes, dance, body, her power over the audience, the background music, and palatial decorations. For instance, one of the verses states:

> "Without even knowing the divine music, she didn't miss a beat or become fatigued.
> She made beautiful the musical notes and sounds /
> the colorful necklace
> as if arranging a colorful necklace /
> as if arranging the musical notes and sounds.
> Oh! What a skilled woman is she?"[65]

In a way, Pampa's *Ādipurāṇaṃ* encapsulates the essence of Jainism. Pampa recognizes that without experiencing *bhōga,* humans cannot understand *yōga*, i.e., we need to live through a life of sensual pleasures to appreciate the spiritual discipline required to attain liberation. Also, material attachments are to be renounced only after enjoying the beauty this world so generously offers.

Concluding Remarks

Through this chapter, I have provided a glimpse of the history of the Hoysaḷa dynasty and their religious background and policies. I have also demonstrated the

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[64] Ibid., 255.

[65] Ibid., 259.
Pampa's original verse in *Haḷegannada* is as follows:
pesar ariyadamaratūrya-
prasaraṅgaḷa datige toḍaradiniseḷalade ba-
ṇṇasaraṅgōdantire ba-
ṇṇasaraṃ sogayisidudēn avaḷ pariṇateyō || 9.31{kanda}
As per Taylor (Ibid., 254), "*kanda*" here refers to a Kannada literature meter structurally comparable to the "Sanskrit *ślōka* meter" that is mainly used for sermons.

complicated relationship between worldly and spiritual dimensions in Jain worship rituals. Finally, I have pointed to the significance of the sentiency of humans in the religious world. In the following chapters, I will turn to the Hoysaḷa temple art and architecture of Jains and Vaiṣṇavas to demonstrate their roles in bringing visual and aural pleasures to people.

CHAPTER TWO

Introduction

In the first two sections of this chapter, I will focus on the architectural style practiced by the Hoysaḷas and explore the traditional construction process of the Indian temples to argue that these temples' locations, designs, structures, aesthetics, and forms ensured that they catered to the temple visitors' senses. In the rest of the chapter, I will discuss the concept of placemaking and examine the Pārśvanātha *basadi* and the Chennakēśava temple in detail while drawing on the interviews of responders about their visual experiences in the temples.

The traditional Indian architectural texts mention three types of temple architecture:

- The *Nāgara* style, associated with the Northern region of India.
- The *Drāviḍa* style, associated with the Southern region of India.
- The *Vēsara* style, a hybrid of *Nāgara* and *Drāviḍa*, associated with the middle region of India.[66]

Although the style of Hoysaḷa architecture has been debated over the years, many scholars have concluded it to be *Vēsara*.[67] Adam Hardy, an architectural historian, who is currently designing the upcoming Hoysaḷa-style temple in Karnāṭaka, has written in detail about the Hoysaḷa architecture style and the evolution of its design. He, on the contrary, writes that Karnāṭaka's *Drāviḍa* temple architecture style evolved from other earlier types of *Drāviḍa*, *Nāgara,* and *Vēsara* temples, as the Karnāṭaka architects delighted in

[66] Dokras, *The Complete Compendium of Jain Temples Part I*, 21.

[67] Kasdorf, "Forming Dōrasamudra," 9.

producing hybrid forms. He has fittingly observed that depending on the then-existing necessities and design instincts, the temple designs were extemporized rather than technicalities and fixed mathematical calculations, which is manifested in the Hoysaḷa temples.[68] The "necessities" then resulted in the temples evolving into *svayambhu* or self-developing forms.[69] Hardy states that there was no sudden conceptual metamorphosis as the "*Drāviḍa* architecture was never static."[70]

Karnāṭaka *Drāviḍa* style, outlined in several ancient Sanskrit texts like the *Mānasāra*, *Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra*, and *Mayamata*, might have provided the basic skeleton for the Hoysaḷa temple designs. However, there are no available scriptures specifically on the Hoysaḷa architecture. How the temples were conceived must be inferred from the monuments themselves. Hardy also quotes James Fergusson as he emphasizes that "all that is wild in human faith or warm in human feeling is found portrayed on these (Hoysaḷa temple) walls," and that the main quality of these temples is that they are enlivened with feeling and warmth to arouse the same in the visitors.[71] Based on Hardy's interpretation, I agree with his explanation and reluctance to categorize the temples. However, throughout this project, for the purpose of discussion, I will refer to the Hoysaḷa architecture as the Karnāṭaka *Drāviḍa* style. While a few Karnāṭaka

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[68] Adam Hardy, "Tradition and Transformation: Continuity and Ingenuity in the Temples of Karnataka," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 60, no. 2 (2001): 197, https://doi.org/10.2307/991703.

[69] Hardy, "Indian Temple Design: Shree Kalyana Venkateshwara Temple Venkatapura, Karnataka," *Architecture for Divinity, Architecture + Design* (2017): 58, https://www.academia.edu/41808512/Indian_Temple_Design_Shri_Kalyana_Venkateshvara_temple.

[70] Hardy, "Tradition and Transformation," 197.

[71] Hardy "Re-Creation and Self-Creation in Temple Design," *Architectural Research Quarterly* 26, no.1 (2022): 16, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1359135522000082.

archaeologists argue that the Hoysaḷas may have followed *Mayamata* as the primary guide in construction, a few scholars, with whom I concur, opine that the Hoysaḷas may have combined the main elements of a variety of the then-available texts to come up with their own unwritten guidelines.[72]

The Karnāṭaka *Drāviḍa* architecture peaked under the Hoysaḷa dynasty, but had its foundation laid under the Kalyāṇi Chālukyan empire in the mid-seventh century CE.[73] Apart from the texts mentioned above, other sources like the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, *Viśvakarma Vāstuśāstra* and the early twelfth century socio-cultural texts like the *Mānasollāsa* by the Kalyāṇi Chālukyas were also considered important guides for construction design and planning.[74] With this overview of the Indian architectural styles, particularly the Hoysaḷa architecture, I will now explain the traditional Indian process of temple building to argue how the construction of temples is tied with individual and collective affect.

Traditional Indian Temple Construction Process

The construction process of Indian temples involves rituals based on the *śāstra*s or customary rules. It includes the collaboration of *sthāpathi* or an architect, *sthāpaka* or a priest, *śilpi* or a sculptor, and *karta* or the patron.[75] Although Hoysaḷa inscriptions record contributions made toward temples by laypeople from various backgrounds, the royals

[72] Vati, *Bēlūr*, 18.

[73] Dokras, *The Complete Compendium of Jain Temples Part I*, 25.

[74] As informed by Srivatsa Vati during an interview by author, 15 June, 2022.

[75] Ibid.

were the main patrons and the most prominent donors.[76] Texts on *vāstuśāstra* (rules for traditional architecture system) and *śilpaśāstra* (rules for classic art) became crucial resources for temples' collaborators to plan, design, and construct the temples.

Originally, the *vāstuśāstra* primarily focused on Indian geographical conditions, natural forces like solar energy, wind, water, the earth's gravity, magnetic field, and the influence of the sun and moon to scout for ideal building locations. Like traditional Chinese Feng Shui,[77] *vāstu* practitioners were sensitive to their environment and energies.[78] Not confined to a specific country, religion, or climate, they believed in the intricate energy grid lines known as *maṇḍala*s that cover the earth from north to south and east to west and affect the human body at the level of vibration where the human cells act as energy receivers.[79]

In both Jainism and Hinduism, the *maṇḍala*s are regarded as holy religious diagrams, which provide a basic square grid system for the built forms using mathematical calculations. The elementary *maṇḍala*s, with simple divisions of squares and their different combinations and permutations, became the base for developing composite temple designs.[80] The *maṇḍala* grid size calculations and temple space

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[76] Ibid.
Such inscriptions are found around the state of Karnāṭaka.

[77] Feng shui is a traditional Chinese practice that helps balance the energy levels between humans and their external environment.

[78] Sashikala Ananth, "My conversation with Sashikala Ananth," Interview by Kushal Mehra, *The Cārvāka Podcast*, YouTube video, August 10, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wLfckWyPIw&list=WL&index=19.

[79] Richa Rajoriya, "Relationship Between Vastu Shastra and Environmental Conservation" (Thesis, Environmental Planning and Coordination Organization, Bhopal), 11, https://www.scribd.com/presentation/370349787/Relationship-Between-Vastu-Shastra-and-e#.

[80] Dokras, *The Complete Compendium of Jain Temples Part I*, 96.

proportions are based on the horoscopes of the *karta* and the deity that is to be installed. These also result in the *garbha-gṛha* or the sanctum sanctorum's dimensions, which houses the Jina or the main image of worship, based on which the rest of the space proportions follow.[81]

The *vāstu-puruṣa-maṇḍala* represents an otherworldly being upon whom temples are built. It is a device that symbolizes a cosmic being called the *vāstu-puruṣa*, who has the utmost knowledge to acquire the best results in temple construction.[82] Tracing the *vāstu-puruṣa-maṇḍala* on paper and then on the construction site is considered a sacred ceremony, where the temple's *brahmasthāna* or the chief location of the presiding deity is marked. Once the *maṇḍala*s and the temple's size are determined, soil and land are examined (*bhūparīkshe*), and the temple's construction materials are selected.[83] Suppose the chosen material is stone, like in the case of this research's primary sites, as per the *śilpaśāstra*, it is differentiated into three kinds:

- *Pum-shile*, or male stone, suitable for the main image of worship.
- *Strī-shile*, or female stone, used for the image pedestals.
- *Napumsaka-shile*, or neuter stone, employed for exteriors and steps.[84]

This is followed by *vāstu* rituals conducted to please the *vāstu* gods, and unsought things like bones are removed from the land and cleaned (*śalyodhāra*). Then, the first stone (*ādyeṣṭakā*) and the foundation for the temple construction are laid (*nirmāna*).

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[81] Hardy, "Re-Creation and Self-Creation," 26.

[82] Dokras, *The Complete Compendium of Jain Temples Part I*, 125-126.

[83] Ibid., 263.

[84] As informed by sculptor Ganesh Bhat during an interview by author, 16 June 2022.

Following this, the top stone over the *gōpura* or the entrance gateway (*mūrdheṣṭakā sthāpana*) is placed. The fixing of a pot made of *panchalōha*s or five metals under the main icon (*garbhanyāsa*), and the installation of the icon (*sthāpana*), lead to the preliminary ritual of image consecration (*pratiṣṭhā*) before the opening ceremony of the temple. These rites are carried out at astrologically auspicious times, and the main icon is executed per the *śilpaśāstra* - proportionate and pleasing to the eyes.[85]

The core of *vāstu* is based on the life force or *prāṇa* in Sanskrit or *chi* in Feng Shui, which flows within each body and space, concerned with the physical and spiritual balance of the built environment.[86] Our ancestors knew the importance of having a sustainable relationship between built forms and nature, and that a building should guarantee harmony in and around humans, which could be achieved by valuing and nurturing the external environment.[87] The ancient texts or *śāstra*s on building had codes that treated human settlements as part of nature, without separation, and gave great importance to environmental care. For instance, the *Arthaśāstra*, a treatise on statecraft and political science, written by Cāṇakya in the third century BCE, speaks of ecological laws and penalties for breaking them or polluting the environment.[88] Vati, with his scholarly knowledge of historical architecture, notes that the *Mānasollāsa*, which

[85] Dokras, *The Complete Compendium of Jain Temples Part I*, 263-264.

[86] Rajoriya, "Relationship Between Vastu Shastra and Environmental Conservation," 13.

[87] Reena Patra, "A Comparative Study on Vaastu Shastra and Heidegger's 'Building, Dwelling and Thinking," *Asian Philosophy* 16, no.3 (November 2006): 209, https://doi.org/10.1080/09552360600979430.

[88] Vibhuti Sachdev, "Paradigms for Design: The Vastu Vidya Codes of India," in *Urban Coding and Planning*, ed. Stephen Marshall (Routledge, 2011), 91-92.

includes *vāstu* and *śilpaśāstra*, mentions practicing environmental ethics during the construction process, like not cutting healthy trees or trees with birds' nests in them.[89] For these reasons, even though *vāstu* frequently faces criticism over its dilution over the years, and for currently being sold as a commodity by imposters pretending to be consultants, I argue that the original *vāstu* laws were enforced to encourage users to be conscious of their surroundings and cautious of the energy they invite into their buildings. With such methods, the *śāstra*s guided building laws and people's religious encounters at the worship sites and continue to do so.

I agree with Reena Patra's analysis that *vāstu*'s underlying belief that human consciousness should adapt to the nature around us to establish a built form filled with harmony, health, wealth, and prosperity is similar to Heidegger's notion of dwelling: "Only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build."[90] As humans, we are reliant on energy, capable of self-awareness and emotions, which need constant replenishment from our surroundings. Our habitats can mold us, and we, in turn, need to nurture them. Heidegger's idea that our internal and external environments reflect one another is imbibed in the basic concept of *vāstuśāstra*, where buildings are viewed as instruments to communicate with the outer world.[91]

As per the *śāstra*s, the presence of *panchbhūtā*s, or five elements in temples, determine our perceptions of temple spaces and how we are affected in those spaces.

[89] As informed by Srivatsa Vati during an interview by author, 15 June, 2022.

[90] Patra, "A Comparative Study," 209.

[91] Ibid., 211.

The *panchbhūtā*s are viewed as the embodiments of the human senses in different ways: ether or space or *ākāsha*, which corresponds to hearing; air or *vāyu*, which corresponds to touch; fire or *agni*, which corresponds to sight; water or *jala*, which corresponds to taste; and earth or *prithvi*, which corresponds to smell.[92] The *panchbhūtā*s also denote specific sections of the *vāstu-puruṣa-maṇḍala*. The *maṇḍala*'s southwest direction is associated with *prithvi*; southeast with *agni*; northeast with *jala*; northwest with *vāyu*, and center space with *ākāsha*.[93] Consequently, I argue that the temple spaces are designed to activate the human senses while connecting to these natural elements and highlighting their presence or absence in the specific portion of the designed spaces. For instance, the temples' sanctums are usually intentionally created windowless. They are scantily lit to play with the sunlight (light from the gigantic source of the element fire) and stimulate the senses. By the time the devotees approach the dark, dimly lit sanctum from the sunny or bright exteriors, their minds are calmed and relaxed to finally surrender to the divine.

Shilpa Sharma and Shireesh Deshpande have written about the use of Hindu temple architectural elements and strategies most comprehensively to argue that they are tools to direct the visitors' concentration on worship away from worldly distractions.[94] Their arguments accord with mine, which states that the traditional Indian temples' ideology

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[92] Malini Karani, "Understanding Vernacular: Vastu Shastra and Carl Jung's theories of Psychology," *International Society for the Study of Vernacular Settlements e-journal* 3, no.1 (April 2014): 22-23, https://isvshome.com/pdf/ISVS_3-1/ISVS%203-1%202%20Malini.pdf.

[93] Sashikala Ananth, "The Vaastu Tradition" *Indian Knowledge Systems, Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar* (2016):3, http://iks.iitgn.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/The-Vaastu-Tradition-Sashikala-Ananth.pdf.

[94] Shilpa Sharma and Shireesh Deshpande, "Architectural Strategies Used in Hindu Temples to Emphasize Sacredness," *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 34, no.4 (2017): 316-317, http://www.jstor.org/stable/44987239.

focused on how humans experienced a space and connected and formed a relationship with it.[95]

The architect Yashaswini Sharma, who is assisting Adam Hardy in designing the upcoming Hoysaḷa-style temple, soon to be constructed in Karnāṭaka, says that geography is a significant point for all Indian temples. “Mountain and hilltops are preferred spots as those are the places to link all *panchbhūtā*s. Piety is naturally the driving force, and everything is done as an offering to the deity.” When the main image is ready, the deity is invited to reside in it and breathe life into it. This process, called *prāṇapratiṣṭhāpane,* is supported by chanting of the mantras and marks the moment when the image turns into a deity. She further adds that Hoysaḷa temple designs were massively influenced by performing arts, which is one of the reasons we see performance motifs as a recurrent theme in their Jain and Hindu temples. The temples are, therefore, a celebration of life where both devotion and art co-exist.[96]

The Karnāṭaka *Drāviḍa* temples typically have an entrance gateway called the *gōpura*. Jain and Hindu *Drāviḍa* temple’s main structure classically consists of the following principal segments: an entrance, with or without a roofed porch; an attached or a detached *mukha-maṇṭapa* or an entrance hall; the *maṇṭapa* with the *raṅga-maṇṭapa* or the performance hall inside; the *sukhanāsi* or the entry chamber of the *garbha-gṛha*; the *garbha-gṛha* or the “womb chamber;” and its superstructure.[97] The superstructure is a

[95] Ibid., 311

[96] As informed by Yashaswini Sharma during an interview by author, 14 June 2022.

[97] Dokras, *The Complete Compendium of Jain Temples Part I*, 77-83.

pyramidal-shaped tower called the *vimāna* that ends with the *śikhara* or the *kaḷaśa,* a crowning component at the temple's summit.[98] The idea here is that cosmic energy descends upon earth through this *kaḷaśa* or the finial.[99] In the later Chālukyan and the Hoysaḷa period, the Karnāṭaka *Drāviḍa vimāna* began to transform into a stellate or a star-shaped form.[100] Unfortunately, the *vimāna*s in this project's primary sites of Pārśvanātha *basadi* and the Chennakēśava temple no longer exist due to their dilapidation over time.[101]

The ancient and medieval builders and carvers worked for all religions, as the provincial and periodic styles were very similar.[102] The Hoysaḷa Jain and Hindu temples incorporated fractal geometry, repeating nonregular geometric shapes of different scales in their construction. This might have helped with the artisans' practice and mastery of the building elements for better executions. Aesthetically, fractal geometry also provided the rhythmic order in a complex design pattern.[103] Such distinct design compositions of the Hoysaḷas share the limelight in this research as I argue that the art and architecture of the primary sites are critical "placemaking devices" as they engage the visitors visually

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[98] Ibid., 266.

[99] Ibid., 156.

[100] Hardy, "Tradition and Transformation," 195.

[101] As informed by Srivatsa Vati during an interview by author, 15 June 2022.
Srivatsa Vati further informed me that this has been debated over the years. As per him, some historians argue that the superstructure of the Haḷēbīḍu *basadi* was destroyed due to the Muslim invasion circa the fourteenth century CE; they believe that the Chennakēśava temple's superstructure was removed under the British rule between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to prevent the weight of the *śikhara* from crushing the rest of the temple below.

[102] Dokras, *The Complete Compendium of Jain Temples Part I*, 14.

[103] Ibid., 150.

and aurally to enrich their affective experiences at the worship centers. I will now elaborate on how the focus on placemaking helps highlight the ways in which the Karnāṭaka *Drāviḍa* temples facilitate purposeful interactions between the buildings and their users.

Placemaking in Temple Space

Placemaking, as a concept and a movement, was introduced in Western scholarship in the 1970s and further developed after getting inspired by the works of urbanists Jane Jacobs and William Whyte. Placemaking is about making the time spent by people in public spaces meaningful. It is about generating and metamorphosing public areas according to people's needs and wishes. It concerns forming vibrant community areas that can shape social lives while establishing a deep connection between such areas and their users.[104] This idea of "humanizing" spaces to encourage social interactions through community gatherings was essential to traditional Indian architecture and planning. *Vāstu* and *śilpaśāstra* texts mention temples as "living" entities, as microcosmic representations of the universal elements and energies,[105] and performing arts, sound, and music formed the core of the worship rituals. The idea behind activating devotees' and visitors' senses, to set up a deep relationship between them and the spaces, is equivalent to placemaking as a concept. However, the absolute success of concepts such as these rest

[104] Dominique Hes and Cristina Hernandez-Santin, ed., *Placemaking Fundamentals for the Built Environment* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 3-4.

[105] Vibhuti Chakrabarti, *Indian Architectural Theory and Practice: Contemporary Uses of Vastu Vidya* (Curzon Press, 1998), 12-13.

on fulfilling all the individual needs of a space's users, but there is no definitive blueprint that can effectively meet the expectation of every user. Yet, I have employed this idea in my project because the "humanization" of spaces was integral to the Indian temple architecture system. Similar to the objective of placemaking, I propose that the historic temple creators sought to make the time spent by people in public spaces purposeful, which echoes in both the Pārśvanātha *basadi* and the Chennakēśava temple.

Several scholars have contended that religious placemaking is important to create a relationship between worship places and their users and explore how this relationship further participates in community formation.[106] I contribute to this conversation by examining these Hoysaḷa temples, including their outer artworks, engravings, and architectural components, to understand different perceptions of sensory experience. I argue that they were designed and planned to stimulate the devotees' and the visitors' senses, elevating their experiences.

"Placemaking Devices" and Visual Connections

In the words of art historian Stella Kramrisch,– In Indian temples, "the symbol or image occupies the center of the sanctuary and is known as the *jīva*, the "life" of the temple in which it dwells; The walls are its body."[107] My research will show that "the

[106] See Shilpa Mazumdar and Sanjoy Mazumdar, "Religious Placemaking and Community Building in Diaspora," *Environment and Behavior* 41, no.3 (2008): 307–337, https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916508320459.
Also see David Gilbert, Claire Dwyer, Nazneen Ahmed, Laura Cuch, and Natalie Hyacinth, "The Hidden Geographies of Religious Creativity: Place-making and Material Culture in West London Faith Communities," *Cultural Geographies* 26, no.1 (2018): 23–41, https://doi.org/10.1177/1474474018787278.

[107] Stella Kramrisch, "Wall and Image in Indian Art," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 102, no. 1 (1958): 7, http://www.jstor.org/stable/985301.

body" and the other features directing to this "body" and the "life" of the temple are also essential for amplifying an individual's visual and auditory experience at the places. Although considered peripheral to worship, they were tailored for the visitors to sensuously immerse themselves starting from the entrances to their final encounter with the Jina or the main deity in the respective temples and work as "placemaking devices." They help the visitors to have a solid visual connection with their surrounding spaces and intensify their hope and anticipation to have a transcendental experience. As Morgan puts it: "The agency of things in religious experience is perhaps most apparent in the way they engage human beings. Objects, spaces, and places invite, threaten, scare, comfort, and inspire people interacting with them. And for this reason, people form relationships with such things that endure over time and shape personal and social life."[108] In the subsequent sections of the chapter, while I describe the two primary sites, I also talk about the visitors' visual connections with the sites. Both places' art and architectural characteristics are devices to lead the visitors' visual attention to the "sanctity" of the locations, away from worldly diversions.

We know it is pivotal for art viewers to connect visually to art pieces. Regarding religious art in particular, the notion of "liberation through seeing" is practiced in numerous South and East Asian religions.[109] In the Jain context, Cort has written about several Jain theologies of gaze, and discussed that a worshipper's fixed eye on the chief icon provides them "with the impetus and means to focus on his or her karmic failings at

[108] Morgan, *The Thing About Religion*, 22.

[109] Holly Gayley, "Soteriology of the Senses in Tibetan Buddhism," *Numen* 54, 4 (2007): 461-463, https://doi.org/10.1163/156852707X244306.

the same time that he or she gazes upon the icon as the very embodiment of the perfections of the Jina."[110] Further, Eck has contended that even the mere sight of a worship place is meant to gain spiritual merit in Hindu theology.[111] As such, we recognize that India has worship rites concentrated around the significance of the visual senses.

Background on the Devotees'/Visitors' Interviews

To examine the affective responses to worship spaces and investigate how sensory stimulation can amplify visitors' experiences in Jain and Hindu temples, I personally observed and experienced the phenomenon of Hoysaḷa temples' history, art, architecture, sound, and acoustics in the summer of 2022. Additionally, I interviewed twenty-six adults from diverse backgrounds from June to August 2022 to understand their visual and auditory experiences in the Haḷēbīḍu Pārśvanātha *basadi* and the Bēlūru Chennakēśava temple, most of whom called themselves "*bhaktharu*"[112] or "devotees."

While the next section of this chapter will be about the visual experience at the sites, the next chapter will be concerned with the auditory experience at those same locations. However, only the Chennakēśava temple will be used to demonstrate the aural connection through common characteristics that it shares with the Pārśvanātha *basadi*, as

[110] John E. Cort, "Situating Darśan: Seeing the Digambar Jina Icon in Eighteenth-and Nineteenth- Century North India," *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 16, no. 1 (2012): 30, http://www.jstor.org/stable/41476654.

[111] Eck, *Darśan*, 75.

[112] *Bhaktharu* is the plural of *bhaktha* (devotee) in Kannada.

sounds and music performances are still an active part of the Bēlūru temple, but not so much at the Haḷēbīḍu *basadi*.[113]

The prompts provided to the respondents were semi-structured questions about their generic visual and auditory experiences at the temple. They were also asked questions about the sound quality in these worship places and whether they paid attention to it. Since I will turn to the aural aspect of the worship places and the related interviews only in the next chapter, this chapter will concentrate on the respondents' visual experience and cite only those relevant prompts. As part of the interview, I asked the respondents about the reasons for their visits that involved devotion, art and architectural experience, and the aesthetic appeal of the sites, among others. Although there is no distinct definition of *bhakti*, which is most often interpreted as "devotion," Cort notes that it is essentially what the *bhaktaru* from different religious backgrounds feel it is to them. It can be described, comprehended, and expressed in manifold ways.[114] Hence, to acknowledge its non-textual and non-rational definitions, the respondents were asked if their visits were for *bhakti*; if the answer was "yes," they were asked to define it and elaborate further on their experiences.

The respondents ranged from laypeople to scholars, temple guides, a priest, a nanny, taxi drivers, a musician, professors, a visually impaired person, a professional Bharatanātyam[115] dancer, an ex-archaeology officer, an engineer, architects, sculptors,

[113] The reason for this is discussed in Chapter Three.

[114] John E. Cort "Bhakti in the Early Jain Tradition: Understanding Devotional Religion in South Asia," *History of Religions* 42, no. 1 (2002): 62, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3176384.
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[115] A classical dance form from South India.

and also an acoustician. Twenty-four out of the twenty-six respondents claimed that the temples' ambiance, structure, and artworks triggered their visual senses in myriad ways. Of the remaining two respondents, the visually impaired person naturally leaned on his other sensory faculties to experience the temple spaces. The remaining respondent shared that she visits temples with her family only because she feels obligated to do so and that, personally, she prefers to pray at home in solitude and does not see the appeal of temples. I will next begin my visual descriptions of the primary sites and simultaneously share interview highlights, starting with the Pārśvanātha *basadi* at Haḷēbīḍu.

The Pārśvanātha *Basadi*

The Pārśvanātha *basadi,* as mentioned in Chapter One, was built under the patronage of the royal courtier Boppadēva in remembrance of his father, Gaṅgarāja, and under the rule of Hoysaḷa King Viṣṇuvardhana.[116] Although primarily supported through royal patronage, merchant clan sponsorship also played a vital role in constructing such medieval *basadi*s.[117] It is presumed that under the Hoysaḷas, most of the population lived near the Jain temples clustered in the southeastern part of the town of Haḷēbīḍu, and this part eventually came to be known as *Basadihaḷḷi*.[118] Presently, there are three surviving Jain temples in *Basadihaḷḷi*: Ādinātha (1108 CE), Pārśvanātha (1133 CE), and Śāntinātha (1196 CE) *basadi*s.

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[116] Kasdorf, "Forming Dōrasamudra," 140.

[117] Ibid., 143.

[118] Saletore, *Medieval Jainism*, 211.
Additionally, based on the inscriptions in the area, Saletore concludes that *Basadihaḷḷi* was a wealthy Jain center under the Hoysaḷas.

Among these, my focus will be on the Pārśvanātha *basadi*, which is the largest and the most sculptural of the three *basadi*s. A *mahādvāra* or a "big gateway"[119] at the compound wall by the roadside opens into the three *basadi*s (Figure 1). At the gateways, which become the first transition points, the respective religious narratives pull the visitors from the outer "profane world" to the inner "sacred world." Once inside the compound, one can find the Pārśvanātha *basadi* to the right, the Ādinātha *basadi* in the middle, the Śāntinātha *basadi* to the far left, and a *mānastambha* ("pride pillar")[120] in front of the latter *basadi* (Figure 2). Upon first glance at the *basadi*s, I could see that their external facades are plainer than the rich sculpture-filled walls of the other Hoysaḷa temples, which I presumed was intentional due to the previously discussed Jain religious milieu.

The Pārśvanātha *basadi* faces north, a standard arrangement for most Jain temples of Karnāṭaka.[121] A small *bali pīṭha*, or a stone altar for floral offerings, is placed in front of the *basadi*. This is followed by a square *mukha-maṇṭapa* behind, which is a pillared entrance hall, where two stone elephants guard its entry on either side of the steps (Figure 3). The *mukha-maṇṭapa* ceiling is supported by thirty-two circular, lathe-turned pillars,[122] considered one of the most significant architectural accomplishments of the Hoysaḷas.

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[119] Although the name suggests it as "big", the gateway here is only slightly bigger than an average doorway.

[120] Kasdorf, "Forming Dōrasamudra," 167.
The visitors are supposed to bow down to the *mānastambha,* lower their pride and then enter the *basadi*.

[121] Ibid., 141.

[122] Krishna, *Annual Report 1930*, 55.

Kishore Prabhu,[123] an ex-archaeology officer of Karnāṭaka, opines that the *mukha-maṇṭapa* was a later addition made to create space for the increasing amount of Jain worshippers at the time. This claim can also be supported by the inscriptions found on the site.[124] The *mukha-maṇṭapa,* adjoining the main *basadi* building but structurally disjointed from it, allowed people to gather around during special occasions and processions to catch a glimpse of their Jina inside. Stone benches with sculpted panels run all around this *maṇṭapa*, which during the time might have been a place used for visitors' social interactions post their worship (much like the idea of placemaking, which enables communal interactive spaces).[125]

According to Kishore, who calls himself non-religious, the nature of devotion is such that it can be shown in all spheres of life and not just in the religious realm. For instance, historically, people treated their king like a god and shared their devotion and love toward him as his citizens. This holy affection toward their ruler also led to his worship. He continues that similarly, at the *basadi*s, "the ceremonies deemed fit for a king were also conducted for the *tīrthaṅkara*s." Moreover, the pictorial details convey that the *tīrthaṅkara*s experienced sovereignty at some point in their lives;[126] hence, people's devotion toward them must have multiplied exponentially. His observations re-iterate my point from the previous chapter that the Jains' spiritual and material worlds

[123] Respondent, interview by author, 16 June 2022.

[124] Kasdorf, "Forming Dōrasamudra," 4.
The inscriptions hint that a fairly large number of Jains were living around the area at the time.

[125] I have made a point earlier in the chapter on other academics who have written on religious placemaking and its role in the genesis and maintenance of communities.

[126] Pictures are discussed in the following pages.

often run into each other, which is exhibited at this worship place through the visual stories. Kishore affirms that his awe and admiration of the Hoysaḷa venues will never cease. However, regardless of religion, he is loyal to logical conclusions whenever he enters historical places, including temples, and calls it an "occupational hazard." He adds that even with many years of service, he is still left with many unexplored nooks and corners of Hoysaḷa buildings where creativity, religion, and artistry come together.

The Pārśvanātha *basadi* is constructed with slabs of chloritic schist or "soapstone," a typical Hoysaḷa building material. Another distinctive feature of many Hoysaḷa buildings is the lack of mortar in the joineries. One of the guides at these Hoysaḷa venues, Prasad,[127] who has been working in the Karnāṭaka tourism industry for thirty years, says that these temples were "built like jigsaw puzzles, like *gūta randhra*," meaning pivot and socket joint system. Prasad, who is from the nearby Hassan district, reminisces about his childhood and states that the religious fluidity of the Hoysaḷas also reflected in his life. He informs me that he regularly visited the Haḷēbīḍu *basadi*s with his family and friends, irrespective of their religious backgrounds. While he thinks that devotion toward the deities is important, he believes that these Hoysaḷa sites, through their visual charm, unite the visitors in their devotion and admiration toward art and architecture.

The topmost part of the central indented square ceiling of the *mukha-maṇṭapa* is flat in the middle and intricately carved. This is supported below by three indented octagonal tiers, followed by a large indented square tier at the bottom. The middle slab is elaborately decorated with images of footmen, animals, and dancers. I agree with M.H.

[127] Respondent, interview by author, 12 June 2022.

Krishna's hypothesis that these images depict the earlier lives of *tīrthaṅkara*s, where one can see royal figures as well as a seated man in a meditative pose.[128] Krishna also identifies the central image on the slab to be that of "Pārśvanātha as a Prince," but I agree with Katherine Kasdorf's analysis that the "figure sheltered by hooded snake heads is consistent with the iconography of Dharaṇēndra," the serpent-*yakṣa* of Pārśvanātha.[129] With a seven-hooded cobra over his head, he has two seemingly royal people sitting on either side of his feet and heavenly beings soaring around his head (Figure 4).

With plain exteriors, the *ādhiṣṭhāna,* or the base of the main structure, is ornamented with a row of *makara*s or "half-animals" (Figure 5) and other decorative motifs such as the Hoysaḷa symbol of Saḷa fighting the tiger, and spirit deities like *yakṣa*s. *Makara* is a life form usually pictured as a merger of two or more creatures (rams, fish, crocodiles, elephants, or dolphins, among others) and the lotus plant's rhizomes, which shoot out from the normally open mouths of the *makara* heads. Both Jain and Hindu religions have displayed several unique combinations of *makara*s. A *makara* denotes exuberance and life,[130] and the *makara*s convey various religious accounts to the viewers, fostering their curiosity and wonderment. Only the southern parapet (Figure 6), along the roofline around the *garbha-gṛha,* still survives to display seated Jinas and several goddesses such as Sarasvatī, Durgā, and Padmāvatī, among many other sculpted elements.[131]

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[128] Krishna, *Annual Report 1930,* 56.

[129] Kasdorf, "Forming Dōrasamudra," 150.

[130] Betty Dashew Robins and Robert F. Bussabarger, "The Makara: A Mythical Monster from India," *Archaeology* 23, no. 1 (1970): 38, http://www.jstor.org/stable/41668057.

[131] Krishna, *Annual Report 1930,* 56.

Kumar Shastha,[132] a professor of architecture and a Hindu, who frequents Hoysaḷa temples for his personal and his students' education, says that he is filled with "construction logic" when he enters these places. He gets into the technical details of the *Drāviḍa* constructions as he comments that Hoysaḷa architecture cannot be "straight-jacketed" into *Drāviḍa* or *Vēsara* style. With no available texts on the Hoysaḷa architecture, he contends that the lack of graphics in the available *śāstra* texts also makes it difficult for students to completely understand these buildings. Kumar prefers bringing the students into the fields to connect them to the structures in person. He attests that the Hoysaḷa temples are like institutions that can help with the edification of students in terms of creativity and architectural dimensions, among others. The measurement system under the Hoysaḷas was based on *bhāgā*s or parts. They worked with subdivisions rather than absolute geometry or feet and meters. Their construction methodology and techniques are very tricky to simplify. He observes that a person obsessed with creative art can enter an intuitional mode to keep creating and recreating it. Likewise, the Hoysaḷa designers and artisans, to some extent, became intuitional as they became devoted to the art of innovating and building. He insists that every architectural student must visit these sites to gain deeper insights into such aspects of architecture to see, touch, and feel the stones that have turned into art.

Toying with utilitarian logic, financial analysis, and construction principles, Kumar says the temples were also used for secular, economic, and political purposes. They were institutions where no stone was unturned in terms of innovations, which is why they keep

[132] Respondent, interview by author, 28 July 2022.

the visitors engaged, as there is something visually intriguing for everyone in the buildings. He declares that the "present builders are not extrapolating the available ancient or medieval information but are simply scaling up and designing in a big way with imitations and shortcuts." Priorities change with changing demands and scenarios. Even with the Hoysaḷas, when the next big Karnāṭaka empire, the Vijayanagara (1336-1565 CE), started growing, they took to "defense designing" and saw a deep decline in their creativity.

The main structure of the *basadi* has a large doorway leading into the *raṅga-maṇṭapa*, or the performance hall. The doorway lintel has a Jina seated on a *simhāsana* or a throne[133] (Figure 7). Among the stone stelae that stand to the left of the entrance to the *raṅga-maṇṭapa,* the tallest one with the *Haḷegannada* inscription mentions the *basadi* construction date (Figure 8). It addresses the main Jina image as "Vijaya Pārśva" ("Victorious Pārśva"), a name bestowed on the Jina by King Viṣṇuvardhana. The text narrates the origin story of Saḷa, the Jain sage, and the tiger and glorifies all of Saḷa's successors. It also eulogizes Gaṅgarāja and his son Boppadēva and their Jain gurus.[134] Interestingly, the text also describes and applauds the artistic beauty of the temple for its "drawing, carving and sculpting" and calls it a "jeweled ornament of the earth."[135] I argue that the makers' spotlight on the *basadi*'s innovative designs, etched details, and

[133] Krishna, *Annual Report 1930*, 57.

[134] Kasdorf, "Forming Dōrasamudra," 165.

[135] Ibid., 140.

exquisite appeal demonstrates that they were concerned with the temple's visual elements and how they appeared to the visitors.

The interior of the *basadi* alternates between detailed engravings, glossy flooring, and circular pillars. Round lathe-turned pillars once again support the central ceiling of the raṅga-maṇṭapa, which are so finely polished that one can see their reflection on them (Figure 9). "*Raṅga*" here means stage, and "*maṇṭapa*" means hall. There is a slightly raised circular platform in the middle, which was perhaps meant for devotional performances offered to the *tīrthaṅkara* (more on this in the next section of the chapter). The walls of the *raṅga-maṇṭapa* accommodate eight auxiliary shrines that are spread out along the eastern, western, and northern walls. These shrines have carved niches with symbols, which suggest these were associated with all twenty-four *tīrthaṅkara*s whose images were once placed there (Figure 10). As per a related inscription, this might have been the only *basadi* in the locality that housed all *tīrthaṅkara*s under one roof.[136]

The ceiling is a repetition of the *mukha-maṇṭapa* ceiling with an indented flat top slab and indented tiers of three octagons with a large square at the bottom. With much finer details, the pantheon on the *raṅga-maṇṭapa* ceiling is almost identical to the *mukha-maṇṭapa* ceiling. The central square slab once again features Dharaṇēndra, enclosed by other godly beings (Figure 11).[137] Even the vertical facades of the octagons have images inscribed on them (Figure 12). Some of them look like seated *tīrthaṅkara*s*, yakṣa*s, and other deities.[138]

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[136] Ibid., 151.

[137] Ibid., 149.

[138] Krishna, *Annual Report 1930*, 57.

A stone image of a Jain *yakṣa* Sarvāhṇa adorns the southeast corner of the *raṅga-maṇṭapa*[139] (Figure 13). The southwest corner has the stone image of a *yakṣi*, which the archaeology department hypothesizes to be Kuṣmāṇḍinī[140] (Figure 14).

Asha Jain,[141] an architecture student and a Jain by religion, says that her reason for visiting the *basadi* lies somewhere between religion and artistry. Raised in a nearby town of Chikmagalūr, she shares that her views about the *basadi* have evolved since starting her architecture course. Earlier, she never paid attention to the design details, space, or history, and her devotion started and ended with the worship of the main image at the *garbha-gṛha*. However, now her devotion extends to historical art, as she finds "godliness" in the effort and thoughts behind the building's materialization. The fact that everything was a product of manual labor without the current technology or machinery inspires her creatively. She speaks of the central ceiling and the lathe-turned pillars of the *raṅga-maṇṭapa* and states that they are exhibitions of how "every stone has a story to tell." Apart from being visually impactful, she feels the space provides a transition from the noisy outer world to the inner world of peace. She opines that the current architectural world is losing the language of design and needs to provide more such transformative worship spaces.

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[139] Kasdorf, "Forming Dōrasamudra," 150.
Krishna posits this *yakṣa* to be Dharaṇīdhara; see *Annual Report of the Mysore Archaeological Department for the year 1930*, 57.

[140] Krishna, *Annual Report 1930*, 57.

[141] Respondent, interview by author, 14 June 2022.

The *sukhanāsi,* the entry chamber of the *garbha-gṛha,* leads to the fourteen to fifteen feet high image of Pārśvanātha,[142] the twenty-third *tīrthaṅkara* (Figure 15). The *sukhanāsi* area was for devotees who wished to have an undisturbed view of the *tīrthaṅkara* during crowded rituals. The unclad Digambara image of Pārśvanātha with a seven-hooded serpent over his head is one of a kind in the neighborhood. It is lit up by the natural daylight shining through the front central doorway and also by the artificial lights installed inside.

Shiva Shantha,[143] a Jain devotee and a taxi driver by profession, has been frequenting this *basadi* for over ten years. To him, the short and curly hair of Pārśvanātha with whorls, broad shoulders, standing meditative posture in the nude called *kāyōtsarga* ("*kāya-utsarga,"* i.e., "abandoning the body"),[144] and his kind face with a warm smile, radiate a glow that brightens up the entire *garbha-gṛha*. As Shiva visually and emotionally connects with the Jina, it instills deep humility in him, and he always leaves the place much humbler than when he entered. He adds, "I realize that I am a *śūnya* ("zero" or "nothing") in front of the Jina." Although Shiva admires the intricacy of the ceiling designs, he is devoted to Pārśvanātha, who offers him peace during every visit. He continues that irrespective of circumstances, his "devotion toward Pārśvanātha is eternal and does not waver."

[142] Kasdorf, "Forming Dōrasamudra," 152.

[143] Respondent, interview by author, 22 June 2022.

[144] Kasdorf, "Forming Dōrasamudra," 181.

On the right side of Pārśvanātha stands the *yakṣa* Dharaṇēndra, and on the left, the *yakṣi* Padmāvatī.[145] Both deities are bejeweled with stone ornaments. The simple and unornamented Pārśvanātha, the seven-hooded serpent emerging from behind and above him, and the two deities on either side are set against an embellished *prabhāvaḷi* or background arch. There is another image of Pārśvanātha, much smaller in size, outside the *prabhāvaḷi* to its right, and toward the front, which completes the visual at the *garbha-gṛha*. The base of the main image has an inscription that further underpins the *basadi*'s connection to Gaṅgarāja.[146]

Swathi Shah,[147] a Jain and a homemaker from Bangalore city, who visits the Haḷēbīḍu *basadi*s every year, says that the *yakṣa*s, the *yakṣi*s, and the animals are important markers in Jain worship as they help identify the *tīrthaṅkara*s. For example, the lion symbolizes *tīrthaṅkara* Mahāvīra, the hooded serpent signifies Pārśvanātha, the bull stands for Ṛṣabhanātha, and so on. She first looks for these identification markers at the worship places as she likes to understand the meanings behind the iconographies. She adds that the "ruling *tīrthaṅkara* of *yakṣi* Padmāvati is Pārśvanātha, so it is her at the southwest corner of the *raṅga-maṇṭapa* and not Kuṣmāṇḍinī." Per her research, the *raṅga-maṇṭapa* was used for *pravachanā*s or reciting religious scriptures. The raised platform in the middle was for the devotees to perform religious music and dance as offerings.

[145] Ibid., 179.

[146] Ibid., 182.

[147] Respondent, interview by author, 10 August 2022.

Some Jain temples have an internal *pradakshiṇa patha* or circumambulation pathway, where one can go around the *garbha-gṛha*. At this *basadi,* devotees like Swati walk around the main structure of the *basadi* in a clockwise direction as part of their worship ritual (Figure 16). The symbolism here is that when the worshippers circumambulate the Jina, they circle around the universe and honor its every divine manifestation. Swati observes that the miniature sculptures of dancers and festivities on the ceilings suggest that performances were a part of religious celebrations. Since her childhood, she too has expressed her devotion to the *tīrthaṅkara*s and Jain deities through dance and music in front of altars enveloped in visually stimulating ornamentations. She believes that such performing arts help her convey her true devotion to the Supreme being in the most heartfelt manner. She claims that this kind of devotional expression is mirrored through the Hoysaḷa art in the columns, parapets, elevated floor, and ceilings at the *basadi*.

In this manner, different visitors and religious adherents, drawn to various parts of the *basadi*, relayed their narrative accounts of the place. The *basadi,* performing as a "placemaking device," deepens the connection that the devotees and the visitors cultivate with it through their sense of vision. While some respondents looked for logical, practical, and religious interpretations in the visuals, some viewed the temple's art and craftsmanship as "godly." A few others saw the stone imagery come alive to tell a story, while others deemed it important to comprehend the images by engaging in meaning-creation. In their own distinctive ways, the respondents, pleased with what their sights captured, cherished their time spent at the *basadi.*

The Chennakēśava Temple

The Chennakēśava temple at Bēlūru was commissioned in 1117 CE by the Hoysaḷa ruler Viṣṇuvardhana (1108–1152 CE). An enormous gateway on the east called *gōpura* (Figure 17) welcomes visitors to enter this Vaiṣṇava temple's premises. It is discernible that the visual readiness for the ultimate meeting with the principal object of worship starts right at the gateway. Entering this threshold can be regarded as the launch of a visual experience that is stored for the visitors inside. With a rectangular stone base and a pyramidal stone superstructure on top, the *gōpura* showcases sculptural engravings of Hindu mythical stories. The visitors' eyes are directed through all the tiers of the superstructure to finally arrive at the peak of the *gōpura* with the five golden spires.

Upon entering the temple compound, one can locate a *puṣkariṇī,* or a stepped well (Figure 18) to the right or the northeast corner, and the main Chennakēśava temple straight ahead (Figure 19). Several other smaller temples are inside the compound premises, such as the Kappe Chennigarāya temple, the Vīranārāyaṇa temple, the Somyanāyaki temple, and the Aṇḍāl temple. The temple complex also features other peripheral buildings with a granary, storage rooms, and a community kitchen, and structures like the *uyyāle maṇṭapa* ("swing porch"), among others. There are also two main *sthambha*s or pillars in the temple complex (Figure 20). One pillar is for the mythological creature *garuḍa*, the vehicle[148] of Lord Viṣṇu, which is made of metal and called the *garuḍa sthambha*. There is a *garuḍa* sculpture with folded hands (Figure 21) in front of this pillar facing the main temple, followed by a rectangular-shaped stone *bali*

[148] In Hindu mythology, different animals or creatures are associated with different deities as their "vehicles" or accompaniers.

pīṭha for worship offerings. The other pillar is made of stone and is called the *dīpa sthambha* (lamp post), which was erected with the purpose of lighting night lamps on its top surface.[149]

The main temple faces east and is assembled from the typical Hoysaḷa building material of blue-grey chloritic schist. Like the *basadi,* the stones have been cut precisely to fit into one another and joined together without mortar (Figure 22). While the Pārśvanātha *basadi* is subdued yet elegant in its quietude and simplistic exterior design, the Chennakēśava temple exudes its majesty through elaborate designs and outer ornamentations. It has a *jagati,* a *padmākāra* (lotus-shaped), or a star-shaped platform with thirty-two corners (Figure 23), which was a construction style peculiar to the Hoysaḷas, and the temple walls run parallel to it. The space between the *jagati'*s edge and the peripheral temple walls operates as the outer *pradakshiṇa patha.*

Madhavi Joshi and Anandi Sriram,[150] college students, and childhood friends, who have been visiting the temple since their pre-teen years, share that their devotion is more to sculptures and art than the deity itself. Both are Hindu and claim that they are "spiritual," and that getting immersed in the art of the place, in itself, can be "pretty meditative." They often prefer to meditate on the *jagati* during their visits.

At this temple, the architecture is treated sculpturally. The external walls are divided into several ornate sections with sculptural friezes depicting animals, wine

[149] Vati, *Bēlūr*, 61.
Note that many of these relics on the premises were later additions commissioned or set up by successive empires and their rulers.

[150] Respondents, interview by author, 14 June 2022.

motifs, *makara*s, *yakṣa*s, mythical aquatic animals, and anthropomorphic deities, among others. The bottom-most frieze is nine inches tall, with about 644 ornamented elephants (Figure 24). Among such thousands of engravings, the external walls of the *garbha-gṛha* feature sculptures primarily related to Hindu mythological tales and are called the *daivika* (divine) or *paramātma* (related to the universal soul), or *aloukika* (other-worldly) section (Figure 25). The remaining exterior walls around the temple are called the *jīvātma* (related to the individual soul) or *loukika* (worldly) section, which essentially portrays scenes from medieval everyday lives with moral and virtue-filled stories (Figure 26). It imparts direct, at times, concealed knowledge and wisdom through humans, animals, birds, and other creatures to the viewers. One can even see the sculptures of King Viṣṇuvardhana and his Queen Śāntalādēvi (Figure 27). The laypeople also have been captured in stone, dressed in different attire, some of which look like western Bermuda shorts (Figure 28), miniskirts, and long winter coats. These images made me question if they were sculptors' imaginary creations or influenced by the exchange of ideas during medieval trade. In this fashion, the place slowly unravels its religious, mythical, and historical backgrounds to the visitors.

Malini Hegde,[151] an engineer by profession and a Hindu devotee, says that she is amazed by the depiction of confident and fashionable women in the sculptures. She is convinced that they were inspired by real women of those days. She voices her opinion that our ancestors were wiser than us. She can feel a different vibration in older temples compared to the new ones and credits it to the proper *vāstu* and consecration process of

[151] Respondent, interview by author, 2 June 2022.

earlier periods. She mentions that *vāstuśāstra* and *śilpaśāstra* have been watered down over time as people do not follow and execute the ancient Vedic steps punctiliously. She adds, "to feel devotion in your heart, you need old temples." For her, devotion is when she feels the deepest and highest reverence for something, which she feels toward the entire Hoysaḷa temple space.

*Śālabhañjikā*s, considered auspicious Hindu symbols and found as bracket figures around the outer face of the primary structure of this Viṣṇu temple, are also called *śilābālikā*s, *madanikā*s, or *apsarā*s, which mean damsels in Hindu mythology. There are forty-two such meticulously sculpted semi-naked *śālabhañjikā*s overall, in various dancing postures. Some of them carry musical instruments and appear to be playing "silent music," pointing to the then-existing sway of performing arts on devotion (Figure 29). The craftsmanship of these three-dimensional images is such that even the stone bracelets on some of them can be rotated and moved up and down. Every time I stood in front of these *śilābālikā*s, I found myself scouting for the *darpaṇa sundari* (Figure 30) to admire her posture and, even if for a few moments, I relived my childhood memories with my grandfather.

Dr. Manoj Nairy[152] is an English professor and a regular visitor to Hoysaḷa temples. As a Hindu, who calls himself a devotee, he has an insightful view of the temple's art. He mentions "psychical distance theory" by Edward Bullough[153] and

[152] Respondent, interview by author, 21 June 2022.

[153] See Edward Bullough, "Psychical Distance" as a factor in Art and an Aesthetic Principle," *British Journal of Psychology* 5 (1912): 87-118, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8295.1912.tb00057.x.

comments that there is something called “under distance” and “over distance” in visual art. If you are too close to an object of art or too far from it, it maybe be difficult to appreciate it. For instance, being too close to a fire can be destructive, but the proper distance from it will give warmth. It is the same with the *śilābālikā*s. The way men and women view an almost naked woman’s dancing sculpture may be different because of her curves, angles, and the pieces of jewelry that enhance her beauty. The way a native viewer sees the art may also be different from how a foreigner views it. The sex, gender, and cultural backgrounds of the viewers also matter. Through their talent and creativity, as he conjectures, the Hoysaḷa sculptors portrayed emotions in their images, which look like “an enormous photo album” when viewed from the appropriate angle and height. The size of the images may also seem to differ with height, and the smaller they appear, the more intricate and detailed they may look. A sculpture may look better upon closer inspection than it looks from a farther distance or vice versa. Either way, art can bring a sense of pleasure to the onlooker when viewed from the right distance.

Manoj postulates that the visitors’ state of mind when they enter and exit the temple is also based on the aesthetic visuals they see, which the Hoysaḷa artisans tactfully handled. The temple visuals invoke a sense of warmth in his entire being and intensify the devotion he feels toward Viṣṇu. Manoj concludes by remarking that there is more to visual pleasure than what meets the eye; psychology and biochemistry are also involved in it, which are for another time and another research.

Speaking along similar lines, Ganesh Bhat[154] (whom we already encountered in the Introduction) briefs me that through temple artworks, "*bhāvane araḷabēku keraḷabāradu*,"[155] meaning "emotions should bloom not provoked." He informs me that it is vital to perceive a sculptor's purpose and to see in his work what he is trying to tell society. He shares a *śloka* (verse), which he states is from the *Nāṭya Śāstra* (penned approximately between the second century BCE and the third century CE), an ancient treatise on Indian performing arts, and applies it to the sculpting process:[156]

> *"yatho hasta tatho drishṭi, yatho drishṭi tatho manaḥ*
> *yatho manaḥ tatho bhāva, yatho bhāva tatho rasa"*[157]

He translates it as, "where the (sculptor's) hand goes, there the eyes follow; where the eyes wander, the mind follows; and wherever the mind goes, the *rasa* or the inner sentiments and emotions follow." He further adds that wherever the emotions go, the mood follows. Hence, every perceptible sight that the sculptors offer through their handiwork has a deeper meaning behind it. He adds that sculptors like him craft even the image of the main deity. Therefore, as a Hindu devotee, he does not like to define devotion, as he feels that it is an intensely personal inexplicable emotional experience that can recurrently provide a cathartic release.

Unlike the Pārśvanātha *basadi*, this Vaiṣṇava temple does not have a *mukha-maṇṭapa*. There are three entrances to the main temple structure, on the east, north, and

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[154] As informed by sculptor Ganesh Bhat during an interview by author, 16 June 2022.

[155] In Kannada.

[156] This is often erroneously believed to be from the *Nāṭya Śāstra*. The verse is from *Abhinaya Darpaṇa*, a treatise on Indian classical dances, written by Nandikeshvara between 1000 and 1300 CE.

[157] Although the correctness of Sanskrit is questionable here, this is a popular, vernacularized version of the *śloka* used by Indian classical dancers.

south, all of which are adorned on both sides by the Hoysaḷa emblem of Saḷa fighting a tiger (Figure 31). The *makara*s[158] make another appearance as decorative motifs on the outer face of the temple structure, over the door lintels (Figure 32). The ideal entry for a visitor is through the east, where one enters directly into the *maṇṭapa*, which has a central *raṅga-maṇṭapa.*

The *raṅga-maṇṭapa* is supported by multiple lathe-turned cylindrical and other decorative pillars on all four sides and is beautified with ornamentations (Figure 33). The *raṅga-maṇṭapa* ceiling of this temple is the most intricately ornamented with miniature sculptures of dancers, drummers, kings, queens, animals, gods and goddesses, celestial beings and other decorative circular friezes. These ceiling embellishments are known as "*bhuvanēśvari.*" The *raṅga-maṇṭapa* has a six-inch thick circular raised *śilāvēdikā* or a rock platform inside, which is designed exclusively for "*raṅgabhogasēve,*" i.e., services done through dance and music concerts as acts of devotion to the deity (Figure 34). There is also "*aṅgabhogasēve*," which happens inside the *garbha-gṛha*. This includes services done through *abhiṣeka* or bathing the deity image with water, milk, honey, and other liquid offerings, *alankāra* or decorations with flowers, fruits, turmeric, vermilion, and *pūjā* of the deity with *ārati* or the light from a small usually camphor lit flame. The terms *aṅgabhoga* and *raṅgabhoga* have also been mentioned in the Hoysaḷa inscriptions.[159]

[158] The *makara*s can also be spotted in several other places on the interior walls of the temple.

[159] Vati, *Bēlūr*, 43.

Lakshmi Raju,[160] a localite, and a nanny, who frequents the temple every week, believes that the temple's impressive art and architecture are more to lure the devotees into the temple to witness the spectacle of the deity in all its grandeur with decorations. She shares that the visual stimulation that starts through the exterior art pulls the visitors into the temple interiors. Once inside, they experience other sensory stimuli, such as smelling the vermilion, turmeric, flowers, and camphor and listening to devotional songs and music, bells, conches, and gongs, which can be immensely refreshing. Graciously refusing to share her religion, she lets me know that activating her eyes, nose, and ears at such temples gives her the zeal to live her life to the fullest. She thinks that her "life is a gift" from her God and that she can only show her true devotion and appreciation to the creator by thoroughly relishing and cherishing life's little and big pleasures.

There are *jālandhra*s or external perforated walls, around the *maṇṭapa* (Figure 35). These help with the interplay of light and shadow in the temple interiors and are among the many qualities that captivate architect Shriya Menon's[161] attention. Shriya confides in me that she is not a Hindu, saying, "Although I am not a Hindu, my adulation for the place and the workmanship behind it make me want to go inside the temple and pray." She shares that she is an art lover who venerates learning and knowledge and is committed to learning the art of construction.

The *kakṣāsana* (Figure 36) is a comfortable seating area with backrests inside the temple that might have been made during the time for the audience to assemble around

[160] Respondent, interview by author, 14 June 2022.

[161] Respondent, interview by author, 14 June 2022.

the *raṅga-maṇṭapa* during performances.[162] They continue to serve that purpose even today on special occasions.

There are several *Haḷegannada* inscriptions etched on the base of the stone pillars inside the temple (Figure 37). Near the temple's northern entrance, adjacent to the *raṅga-maṇṭapa*, there is an epigraph that corroborates that King Viṣṇuvardhana commissioned the temple in 1117 CE. The *sukhanāsi,* the entry chamber of the *garbha-gṛha,* which is also called the *ardha- maṇṭapa* by a few historians of religion and art,[163] houses the *utsava mūrti*s or procession images.

The *garbha-gṛha* has no openings and houses the main Viṣṇu image (Figure 38) made of *Kṛṣṇa shile* or black stone. The standing icon is eight feet two inches tall. Its overall height, including the bottom pedestal and the background *prabhāvaḷi* that extends beyond the image at the top, is around thirteen feet seven inches.[164] The icon mirrors the superior artisanship of the Hoysaḷas. It is regularly decorated in a *Mōhini avatāra,* in feminine clothes and jewelry, which is often seen as symbolic of Viṣṇu's mystic powers to overthrow the world's evil in the form of a captivating damsel. As per the Hindu Vedic law, Lord Viṣṇu is the protector and preserver of the world. It is only fitting that his image has four hands that hold *chakra* (discus), *śankha* (conch), *gade* (mace), and *padma* (lotus), one in each of the hands, which represent the tools to communicate, review, punish and reward, respectively. He is flanked on either side by

[162] Vati, *Bēlūr*, 28.

[163] Ibid., 52.

[164] Ibid., 53.

the images of goddesses *Bhūdēvi* and *Śrīdēvi*, who are his lady consorts.[165] *Haḷegannada* inscriptions on the pedestal below the image's feet mark the date and year of the temple's first *pūjā* by King Viṣṇuvardhana. It also reads that Lord Viṣṇu at this temple was initially named "Vijayanārāyaṇa," but later, his name was changed to "Chennakēśava."[166]

Shivarama Acharya,[167] one of the priests at the temple, tells me that the beauty of his job is that he gets to spend most of his time inside the *garbha-gṛha*, where he feels that Lord Viṣṇu is physically present in front of him and does not consider the stone sculpture as just an image. He feels like he is in "*Vaikuṇṭha*," the abode of Lord Viṣṇu, and his eyes are perpetually blessed to witness the Lord and be in his presence every day. It fills him up with "*ullāsa,*" or "happiness" and devotion, as he forgets all his worries. He takes pride in cleaning, decorating, and worshipping the image and claims that being of service to the Lord in every possible way embodies his devotion. He asserts that only "*daivāmśa puruṣaru*,"[168] meaning "godly men," could have made such temples with their hands and without machinery.

The worshippers circumambulate after their final encounter with the deity at the *garbha-gṛha*. They go around the central temple structure, which has the *garbha-gṛha* inside, while visually communicating with the detailed sculptures of Hindu divinities on the outward facade of the walls. The *pradakshiṇa patha* holds their

[165] Krishna, *Annual Report 1931*, 46.

[166] Vati, *Bēlūr*, 54.

[167] Respondent, interview by author, 21 June 2022.

[168] In Kannada.

attention, engaging them as they move around. They touch the outer walls and bow down to them, collecting blessings via their senses of sight and touch. The bodily movement involving the senses with the steady gait of circumambulation can also be rhythmic and a profoundly introspective process for them.

From the entrance gateway to the circumambulation path, we see that the devotees and the curious visitors at the Chennakēśava temple are presented with diverse "tools" for placemaking, which make room for religious ruminations and thoughtful introspections, where the *jagati* transformed into a meditation spot and the artwork prompted speculations and theories about their origins. Many devotees valued the time they spent viewing the deity and marveled at the inspirations for the etched figures. Several visitors appreciated the intentionality behind ancient temple techniques, which produced aesthetically pleasing qualities. Thus, in numerous ways, the place initiates visual conversations with the people, who, in turn, develop an embodied relationship with it.

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, I have discussed the traditional methods of Indian architecture and put them in conversation with the recent theory of placemaking. I have shown that the ancient Indian practices of temple creation rested not only on religiosity, but also on the effective harnessing of the natural elements and those elements' participation in the stimulation of human sensations, which we see in the Jain and Vaiṣṇava Hoysaḷa temples described above. In support of my argument that the temples offer effective "placemaking devices" to boost the devotees' and visitors' visual sensory experiences, this chapter has also unfolded several interview responses concerning the two temples

and the manifold interpretation of devotion. While the Indian term "*darśana*" has been argued to mean "seeing" one's deity and "seeing of truth,"[169] in this chapter, I have demonstrated that "seeing" does not necessarily imply an intimate encounter with the *tīrthaṅkara* or the deity's image inside the *garbha-gṛha*; but it can also mean witnessing one's house of worship in its totality, where the sight can nourish their mental, emotional, and physical state of mind. In the next chapter, I will explore the role of these temples in activating the visitors' aural senses by examining the Chennakēśava temple's acoustic properties.

[169] Eck, *Darśan*, 24-25.

CHAPTER THREE

Introduction

During my visits to the Chennakēśava temple, I had the opportunity to attend a morning worship ritual, followed by a *nādasvara* instrumental performance (Figure 39). Neither the swarm of crowds nor the lack of microphones seemed to deter the music quality that reached me. Instead, the music kept me engaged in bolstering my devotion to the deity. It was then that it dawned upon me that the role of acoustics, often overlooked, cannot be underestimated, especially in a devotee's auditory experience. My inquisitiveness led me to explore the relationship between the Hoysaḷa temples' designs, and the production and reception of sound. Hence, in this chapter, I will examine both temples' distinct traits and spaces to demonstrate how their designs ensure that acoustics cater to the devotees' aural senses to amplify their experiences as both producers and receivers of sacred sounds. I argue that these Jain and Vaiṣṇava temples were acoustically designed to facilitate the performance of sacred sounds– bells, gongs, conches, mantra chants, and devotional music– to enrich the devotees' experiences.

Although worship rituals are part of the daily routine at the Pārśvanātha *basadi* and the Chennakēśava temple, only the latter still continues to have music and dance performance offerings as part of its rituals. The reason for this is unclear, but I suspect it could be to discourage large congregations at the *basadi* as its structure appears more fragile than the Chennakēśava temple. Presently, only minimal rituals with floral offerings are done at the *basadi.* As a result, even though I will theorize about the acoustic properties of both these temples, the respondents could only offer their feedback about live performances and sounds at the Chennakēśava temple.

The twenty-six adults who were interviewed to share their affective responses to the temples' visuals were also asked about their auditory experiences at the Chennakēśava temple. Of the twenty-six respondents, twenty-one shared that they noticed the sound quality and found a substantial difference in their auditory experience at the temple; the rest reported that they were visually stimulated and too occupied to observe any sound quality. In the previous chapter, I presented interviews centered around visual experience at the two temples. In this chapter, the interview highlights will show how the temples' architecture is critical as a "placemaking device" to cater to the aural senses.

Acoustical Properties of Jain and Hindu Temples

Cort has written about collective hymnal singing or reciting ("*Darśan Pāṭh*") at Jain temples in congregational rituals,[170] where devotees sing hymns composed in different *rāga*s (traditional tunes and musical note patterns) to the Jina image, believing that he is listening to them.[171] Whitney Kelting has studied the performative facet of Jain devotion in India (Pune, Maharashtra state) and discussed the creative expertise of Jain women in devotional compositions. She has observed how they sing hymns, *stavan*s, or eulogies to the Jina, which are performed with music and dance.[172]

[170] Cort, "Situating Darśan,"14.

[171] Ibid., 30.

[172] M. Whitney Kelting, *Singing to the Jinas: Jain Laywomen, Mandal Singing, and the Negotiations of Jain Devotion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Restifo has noted that in the poet Rāmacandra's poem *Kumāravihāraśataka,* which eulogizes the Kumāravihāra temple, dedicated to *tīrthaṅkara* Pārśvanātha, one can draw out resemblances between "Jain religiosity" and "Hindu *bhakti* traditions" of devotional expression.[173] The performances through songs, poetry, musical instruments, dance, mantra chants, and plays, which were integral to the temple's operations, have been portrayed as being enjoyed even by the Jinas and the temple gods.[174] The temple's aesthetic appeal is referred to as "a veritable feast for the sense organs," and Rāmacandra described the temple as a space for festivities that people visited not only for devotional purposes but to seek sensual and worldly pleasures, to live a happier, wealthier, and healthier life.[175] Restifo has aptly pointed out that "Rāmacandra's poem shows that he had no illusion about the effects of gratifying experiences: they served to please, entertain, and attract more visitors to the temple."[176]

Although Eck has mentioned that Hindu rituals are sensuous and involve the use of all our five senses,[177] she also stated that seeing divine images "is the single most common and significant element of Hindu worship."[178] However, I agree with Cort's critique of Eck's that the experience of Hindu worship is not limited to sight; it is

[173] Aleksandra Restifo, "The Theater of Renunciation: Religion and Pleasure in Medieval Gujarat," (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Yale University, 2018), 104.

[174] Ibid., 106.

[175] Ibid., 105.

[176] Ibid., 108.

[177] Eck, *Darśan*, 11-12.

[178] Ibid., 1.

subjective, highly variable, and "intersensorial,"[179] but most importantly, worship rituals in Hindu devotional experience are "rarely silent."[180] Thus, I argue that attention to sound propagation is imperative in both Jain and Hindu temples' designs.

Jordan Lacey, a sound artist and researcher, has worked on "sonic placemaking" and argued that installations of sound art in urban spaces could encourage sensorial connections between people and their surroundings.[181] Following the idea of religious placemaking, I suggest that sound in temple architecture works as a "placemaking tool" as it helps intensify the connection between devotees and their surrounding religious space.

The Kalyāṇi Chālukyan text *Mānasollāsa* greatly emphasizes performing arts and architecture, paving the way for the Hoysaḷas.[182] The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa,* revered by the Vaiṣṇavas, stresses the importance of mantras and sound. As translated by Swami Prabhupāda, "Thus he is the actual seer who worships, in the form of transcendental sound representation, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, who has no material form."[183] This implies that God is personified by sound.

The ancient treatise on Indian performing arts, the *Nāṭya Śāstra,* states that performing art is a holy ritual where the end goal is not entertainment but transporting the

[179] Cort, "Situating Darśan,"13.

[180] Ibid., 14.

[181] Jordan Lacey, "Sonic Placemaking: Three approaches and ten attributes for the creation of enduring urban sound art installations," *Organised Sound* 21, no.2 (2016): 147, doi:10.1017/S1355771816000078.

[182] As informed by Srivatsa Vati during an interview by author, 15 June, 2022.

[183] Vyasa, *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, trans. Swami Prabhupāda, 275-276.

audience into a transcendental zone of self-awareness. The chapter on *prekshāgriha* or "playhouse," as translated by Manomohan Ghosh says, "And it (playhouse) should be free from wind and should have good acoustic quality. For (in such a playhouse) made free from the interference of wind, voices of actors and singers as well as the sound of musical instruments will be distinctly heard."[184]

From these, we infer that sound was considered a central requirement for the complete experience of performing *pūjā*s in both the Jain and Hindu temples and so was sound propagation in performing art. This would necessitate that acoustics be considered in temple construction to determine the proportions of the temple interior spaces to provide superior sound quality. These spaces include the *garbha-gṛha*, the *maṇṭapa* with the *raṅga-maṇṭapa*, and the *sukhanāsi* (Figures 40 and 41).

Here, it is essential to acknowledge that designing acoustics in worship spaces is challenging. It must cater to mantra chanting, music, and other sacred sounds from conches, bells, and gongs. Specific parameters are used to measure acoustics; some are physically measurable, like the interior distances, while others depend on the source of the sound and the audience listening to the sounds, which can be subjective.[185]

[184] Bharata, *Nāṭya Śāstra*, trans. Manomohan Ghosh (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1950), 29-30.

[185] Vijay Raybagkar, Anirvan Gupta, and Laxman Chaudhari, "Analysis of Acoustical Characteristics for Understanding of Sound Quality and Acoustic Environment Inside Temples," *International Journal of Engineering Technology Science and Research* 5, no. 3 (2018): 1908-1909, http://ijetsr.com/images/short_pdf/1522914031_1908-1920-dyp340_ijetsr.pdf.

Many experiments have been done on Indian temple acoustics by scholars like Prasad and Rajavel,[186] and Gupta and Raybagkar,[187] which confirm the presence of acoustic properties in ancient temples. Umashankar Mantravadi, a sound technician, measures the acoustics in ancient archaeological spaces to recreate ancient acoustic performances at such sites. He confirms that ancient Indian temple constructions had high acoustic sensibility. How else, he questions, would the sacred sounds travel to all the devotees during temple worship with vocal and instrumental music performed simultaneously without microphones?[188]

Karnāṭaka's *Drāviḍa* architecture reached its pinnacle under the Hoysaḷas, notably under King Viṣṇuvardhana. As established in the preceding chapters, Viṣṇuvardhana played a prominent part in the construction of the Pārśvanātha *basadi* and also commissioned the Chennakēśava temple. He and his wife, Śāntalādēvi, also named *Nātyarāni*, "the queen of dance," and renowned for her flawless mastery of the traditional dance of Bharatanātyam, were famously known for their patronage of performing arts. Careful attention was given to the worship centers' sculptural designs to reflect their avid interest in dance and music (Figure 42). This also meant they had to fulfill the interior acoustical requirements to support their interests.

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[186] Marehalli Prasad and Rajavel, "Acoustics of Chants, Conch-shells, Bells and Gongs in Hindu Worship Spaces," *The Journal of Acoustical Society of America* 137, no.4 (2013): 137-152, https://asa.scitation.org/doi/10.1121/1.4920854.

[187] Raybagkar, Gupta, and Chaudhari, "Analysis of Acoustical Characteristics," 1908-1920.

[188] Harshini Vakkalanka, "Can archaeoacoustics help understand how peoples' acoustic sensibilities evolved?" *The Hindu.* November 9, 2017, https://www.thehindu.com/entertainment/music/can-archaeoacoustics-help-understand-how-peoples-acoustic-sensibilities-evolved/article20010297.ece.

Auditory Experience in Different Temple Spaces

Like the visual experience interviews, the respondents were asked semi-structured questions about their generic and auditory experiences at the Chennakēśava temple. They were questioned if they paid attention to the sound quality in the temple. If yes, was it the sound of the bells, gongs, conches, mantra chants, and other instruments used during regular rituals or music and dance performances in the hall during special occasions? Were they part of these performances and sound productions or just observers? What was their experience in these respective roles? What does devotion mean to them?

As I share a few key pieces of the interviews, I will simultaneously address sound propagation in different spaces starting with the *maṇṭapa*, which has a central *raṅga maṇṭapa* in both the Jain and Vaiṣṇava temples, surrounded by lathe-turned cylindrical pillars on all four sides. As discussed in Chapter Two, at both temples, there is a raised platform inside the *raṅga maṇṭapa*, designed exclusively for music and dance performance services as an act of devotion to the main image.[189] The *raṅga maṇṭapa*s also have the most ornate ceiling designs. Referred to as *bhuvanēśvari* at the Vaiṣṇava temple, the ceiling garnishments seems to be doing a similar job as modern-day baffles, which are either hung on ceilings or walls to trap, amplify or disperse sounds and achieve diffusion, or scattering of sound to cut reverberations (figures 43, 44 and 45).

Reverberation is an important property in the field of acoustics. It can be defined as a persisting sound in an enclosed space, even after the sound source has stopped producing it. Reverberation time depends on the room size and its reflective or absorptive

[189] Vati, *Bēlūr*, 43.

surfaces. Reverberation is needed for performing arts like music and dance.[190] A typical Hoysaḷa building material is blue-grey chloritic schist, and as per Prasad and Rajavel, stones are known to be highly reflective. The higher the reflection, the more the sound intensity reaches the audience, with a high reverberation time.[191]

During the interview process, I was fortunate to have come across Karthik Sahu,[192] an acoustician, among the respondents. Sahu, a regular visitor to the Hoysaḷa temples, shares that devotion, to him, means living in the present to appreciate everything that each moment offers. He admits to being "more spiritual than religious." He believes that living in the "now," without regretting what happened the previous day or worrying about the next day, is like communicating with a higher power. This belief also makes him adventurous as he frequently travels to study even the remotest and most ancient temples' acoustics across India and has been doing so for eight years. He calls Hoysaḷa acoustics one of the best temple acoustics in South India. He claims that "form always followed function" in these temples, and even the distances at which stone pillars are placed in these temples are crucial to sound production and reception. He opines that keeping the *garbha-gṛha* as the center, the performers back in the day would sit on either side, at an angle of 60 to 72 degrees, turning toward the main object of worship. If instruments like *nādasvara* were performed on one side of the *garbha-gṛha*, bells would be played on the other so the audience assembled behind the performers could enjoy what we now call, "stereophonic surround sound."

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[190] Raybagkar, Gupta, and Chaudhari, "Analysis of Acoustical Characteristics," 1912.

[191] Prasad and Rajavel, "Acoustics of Chants," 140.

[192] Respondent, interview by author, 19 August 2022.

Studies done in different settings, with varying distances between source and receiver around cylindrical pillars, conclude that audible reflections and temporal spreading depend strongly on vertical structural supports like pillars. Even tiny geometrical characteristics like pillar shapes can diffuse reflections just like sound diffusers, reducing the intensity of sound reflections.[193] Such studies support Sahu's theory that these temples' cylindrical pillars (Figure 46), considered an outstanding architectural achievement of the Hoysaḷas, were designed with circular but not straight or square edges to cut the sound waves and reduce echo.

Sahu claims that certain construction styles peculiar to the Hoysaḷas resulted from constant architectural innovations to provide better sound quality as well, especially in bigger enclosed areas. For example, since the Chennakēśava temple is larger in area than the *basadi*, its stellate-shaped platform with thirty-two corners produces more surface area and reflects the sounds to spread them across the space. Also, the sound wave amplitude decreases after diffracting and diverting at the many corners and edges, thereby softening any jarring sound. These features could be why Narayan Swamy,[194] who has been the *nādasvara* player at the Chennakēśava temple for thirteen years, states that the temple offers a naturally well-balanced acoustic environment for music performances to bring out devotion, which according to him, is the reason for his existence. He iterates that his life begins and ends with Lord Viṣṇu, and as soon as the

[193] Antoine Weber and Brian Katz (2022), "Sound Scattering by Gothic Piers and Columns of the Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Paris," *Acoustics* 4, no.3 (2022): 679-703, (PDF) Sound Scattering by Gothic Piers and Columns of the Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Paris (researchgate.net).

[194] Respondent, interview by author, 12 June 2022.

opportunity to be an in-house temple musician surfaced, he took it. Performing at the temple has helped him channel his devotion and express it with sincerity, and it continues to do so. While he performs at other venues, he does not get the "*ānanda*" or "joy" he gets at the Hoysaḷa temple. Such construction anomalies could also be why Suresh Soori,[195] a visually impaired Hindu devotee, describes the sound texture as unique in the Hoysaḷa temple. He says it pulls him into "a state of overpowering emotion," which he names "devotion." Blind since birth, he states that he constantly gets in touch with this emotion to be resilient, survive, and thrive in his challenging life. Soori, whose life revolves around his sense of touch and hearing, believes that the sacred sounds merge inside the temple spaces to amplify his divine religious experience through his keen sense of hearing.

Dhriti Mani,[196] a Bharatanātyam dancer and a Hindu, responds that she feels fortunate to exchange gazes with the main deity Viṣṇu while performing in such a historical place. She conveys her *bhakti* to God by surrendering her mind, body, and soul to the art of dance. She gets goosebumps every time she performs at the Hoysaḷa temple; the auditory experience is no different from modern auditoriums, with limited disturbances and echoes. Born and raised in Bēlūru, she believes that the dancing poses and *navarasa*s, or nine sentiments portrayed in the stones, have helped develop her dancing and emoting caliber in her performances since her formative years. She remarks

[195] Respondent, interview by author, 22 August 2022.

[196] Respondent, interview by author, 17 June 2022.

that all the Hoysaḷa temples, including the Jain *basadi*s, were undoubtedly planned to elevate music and dance performances during rituals.

Architect Yashaswini Sharma[197] (introduced in Chapter Two), who did not disclose her religion, asserts that one cannot constrict the meaning of *bhakti* by confining it to a definition. It is a pleasant emotion that can bring transient as well as eternal bliss. She affirms that sound was a requisite worship offering at these worship places, and so was the quality of music that reached the Supreme beings and the devotees. She says that the Pārśvanātha *basadi'*s performance motifs and the Chennakēśava temple's meticulously sculpted dancing *madanikā*s with musical instruments indicate that they were made exclusively for promoting performing arts through *raṅgabhōgasēve.*

The *sukhanāsi* is a space for uninterrupted viewing of the chief icon and for occasional collective mantra chanting by priests, where bells, gongs, and conch shells are also sounded. The conch shell is a musical wind instrument that provides tonal sound with a single frequency, and a gong is made mainly of bronze or brass that is circular and flat shaped, struck with a wooden mallet. Per Prasad and Rajavel's studies, in Indian temples made entirely of stone, the sound pressure level increases outside the *sukhanāsi* of each temple. This is due to the combined reverberation effects of *garbha-gṛha* and *sukhanāsi* with minimum openings and smaller sizes, compared to the corresponding effect in other temple spaces like the *maṇṭapa.*[198]

[197] As informed by Yashaswini Sharma during an interview by author, 14 June 2022.

[198] Prasad and Rajavel, "Acoustics of Chants," 140.

Vati[199] (introduced in Chapter One), a Viṣṇu worshipper himself, comments that humans crave to have a relationship with gods, to feel secure in the feeling that they will safeguard us during hard times. However, like how finding facts is the final objective of any research, devotion is our earnest attempt at forming an association with the Supreme beings to find the ultimate goal of life, the "Absolute Truth." He informs me that mantra chants, music, and dance were originally used to draw people's attention to devotion, so all the bells are meant to be tuned to the same frequency, to be harmonious, and play a chord. This tuning of bells is followed even today at the temple. He says that acoustics played a role in the elaborate engravings (Figure 47) of the Hoysaḷa temples and the design of the *jālandhra*s (Figure 48) at the Chennakēśava temple as they had to work through trial-and-error methods to cut down the wind force. The different layers of the chloritic schist were used for different interior spaces and purposes, depending upon their functionality and acoustic properties. He adds that material selection is vital for sound propagation and that sound vibration from source to stone differs from the vibration from stone to our skin, as stones have their own sounds.

Shashidhar Bhattar[200] is a twenty-seventh-generation priest in Bēlūru, working there since 1993. Like Shivarama Bhat (from Chapter Two), he responds that he is a *bhakta* born to serve his God. His job as a priest makes him feel like the gods have employed him to serve them directly and display his dedication and loyalty to them. As both a producer and receiver of sound at the *garbha-gṛha* (which are windowless at both

[199] As informed by Srivatsa Vati during an interview by author, 15 June 2022.

[200] Respondent, interview by author, 21 June 2022.

Jain and Vaiṣṇava temples), he says that for the phonetic articulation and enunciations of mantra chants, he must meditate, fast, and do breathing exercises to have the force needed while chanting them. The chanted hymns need to be precise in acoustical characteristics, and Bhattar finds it easier to chant at the temple than in other closed spaces as it reduces his vocal effort. His opinions, and an acoustic study of chants at Indian temples by Aishwarya and Narasimhan, show that temple architecture and acoustics matter even for vocal comfort.[201] Once inside the *garbha-gṛha*, he may use handbells while chanting, apart from the main bells outside. He says that he finds a difference in sound propagation between the *garbha-gṛha* and other temple spaces, especially when he chants "*Omkāra nāda*" or "*Om*."

Concluding Remarks

With evolving designs and identities of temples, it is crucial to understand what can augment devotees' experiences to reproduce or induce an environment they wish to experience in worship places. Even with the current scientific tests, computational techniques, and acoustical analyses, it is tough to determine the exact acoustical behaviors that existed when the Hoysaḷa temples were constructed because of later changes and renovations. Also, it would be hard to facilitate accurate environmental simulations from those times, like external noise and disturbances.

[201] S.Y. Aishwarya and S.V. Narasimhan, "The effect of a prolonged and demanding vocal activity (Divya Prabhandam recitation) on subjective and objective measures of voice among Indian Hindu priests," *Speech, Language and Hearing* (February 2021): 498-506, https://doi.org/10.1080/2050571X.2021.1888194.

Witnessing the temples and listening to the respondents made it clear to me that the reasons for devotion and how one feels it may differ. Devotion may also be possible without sounds, music, sensorial experiences, or even stepping into a temple. However, devotees do bond with their higher beings using multiple senses. The Hoysaḷa temples' features discussed here strongly suggest they were instrumental in supporting the acoustics and hence, enhanced the visitors' auditory experience. As someone who until recently believed that temples were not necessary for devotion, I realized through my experience at these temples that they work well in this placemaking process of healing and nurturing the visitors and strengthening the devotees' intimacy with their respective Jinas and deities.

CONCLUSION

Summary

In this project, I have employed the concept of placemaking and centered the research around the Hoysaḷa empire, the Jain and Hindu traditions, and Karnāṭaka's Drāviḍian architecture. I have engaged with methodologies that include textual analysis and ethnography alongside the phenomenological narratives to seek answers to the questions related to Hoysaḷas' religious history, the sensuous facets of Jain and Hindu rituals, people's devotional experiences, and compared the ideology behind traditional Indian temple constructions to the objectives of placemaking.

With the above line of inquiry, I have argued that the Hoysaḷa rulers' religious tolerance molded and motivated their Jain and Vaiṣṇava temple constructions. Indeed, while the Jain rituals continually strive to balance the material and spiritual realms, employing the senses in worship is integral to both Jain and Hindu rituals. The Pārśvanātha *basadi*'s and the Chennakēśava temple's medieval designs and forms based on traditional doctrines were planned to establish sensorial connections with people to produce affective responses in them.

Through my ethnographic research, I have assembled various interpretations of "devotion" and argued that the devotees' and visitors' visual and auditory senses are instrumental in experiencing the same. This project has also made me re-evaluate the meaning of "*darśana*" by not limiting it to the visitors' rendezvous with the main image, but extending it to their encounters with the entire temple area or the specific parts of the temple.

I have utilized the concept of placemaking to argue that the two temples' architectural elements intensify the devotees' experiences and that religious placemaking invigorates the visitors at the temples. I have shown through the prominent Hoysaḷa architectural features that the Pārśhvanātha *basadi* shares with the Chennakēśava temple that their acoustical properties cater to the visitors' auditory senses and also elevate their experiences as both producers and receivers of religious sounds and music.

Despite the challenges brought by the coronavirus mandates, especially for the ethnographic aspect of the research, the enlightening telephonic and online conversations with respondents certainly provided me with rich data to conclude that the art and architecture of the Jain and Vaiṣṇava temples operate well as "placemaking devices." Through theorization of affect, my visits to the sites, and observations from the respondents' interviews, I discovered that the visitors, including myself, construed experiences based on the beliefs, thoughts, and feelings that we carried to the temples. Our individual stories and memories engendered our wonder at the images and fascination with the places and influenced our meaning-making process. As Morgan writes:

> "Viewers do not encounter objects in isolated aesthetic purity; rather, they discover them arrayed within an ecology of other objects, places, texts, memories, lore, and people. If we wish to understand something, we need to scrutinize the dense context in which we experience it. Without that, a thing is unspecified, an object without context, an entity afloat on a nondescript sea of possibilities."[202]

The temples assist the visitors in withdrawing themselves, even if fleetingly, from the din, hustle, and commotion of everyday life. As the visitors gravitate toward the artistic

[202] Morgan, *The Thing About Religion*, 2-3.

and illuminative world of religion, the worship places bring about a sense of devotion and appreciation in them through the union of religious materials, sound, and music.

Future Study

In the future, I plan to orchestrate scientific ways to corroborate my findings as I had originally intended for this project, but which did not transpire due to time constraints, logistic concerns, and the circumstances brought in by the continued coronavirus restrictions. For instance, I wish to practically test the acoustical properties that currently exist at the temples with appropriate equipment and accurate measuring under the supervision of sound engineers. I would like to conduct on-site interviews and meet with overseas tourists to gather their accounts of being amidst Indian historical art and culture. The South Indian Jain and Hindu devotion in medieval Karnāṭaka *Drāviḍa* temples need further scrutiny and comparative analysis. Asking pertinent questions related to traditional construction techniques would better serve the needs of the users of a space and help reconstruct historical experiences.

Additionally, I am interested in exploring individuals' sensory experiences as they move through temple spaces, experiencing devotional music or participating in such performances. I would like to ask further questions such as the following: How has South Indian Jain and Hindu devotion in Karnāṭaka evolved? How did Karnāṭaka's temple spaces make room for performance-oriented worship rituals, and how do they continue to do so? What architectural elements and performative aspects of devotion enable the

devotees to savor the time spent at the temples? There are endless opportunities to continue inspecting the rich intersection of South Indian temple architecture, religious music and sound, and people's affective states.

FIGURES

Figure 1. A *Mahādvāra* or a "big gateway" at the Pārśvanātha *basadi* compound wall

Figure 2. The Pārśvanātha (right), the Ādinātha (relatively smaller in size in the middle), and the Śāntinātha *basadi*s with a *mānastambha* in front of the latter *basadi* (far left)

Figure 3. ***Bali pīṭha*****, in front of the square** ***mukha-maṇṭapa*** **of the Pārśvanātha** ***basadi***

Figure 4. The Pārśvanātha *basadi*'s *mukha-maṇṭapa* ceiling

Figure 5. *Makara*s at the *ādhiṣṭhāna* of the main structure of the Pārśvanātha *basadi,* Photo: Courtesy of Katherine E. Kasdorf

Figure 6. Pārśvanātha *basadi'*s southern parapet detail, Photo: Courtesy of Katherine E. Kasdorf

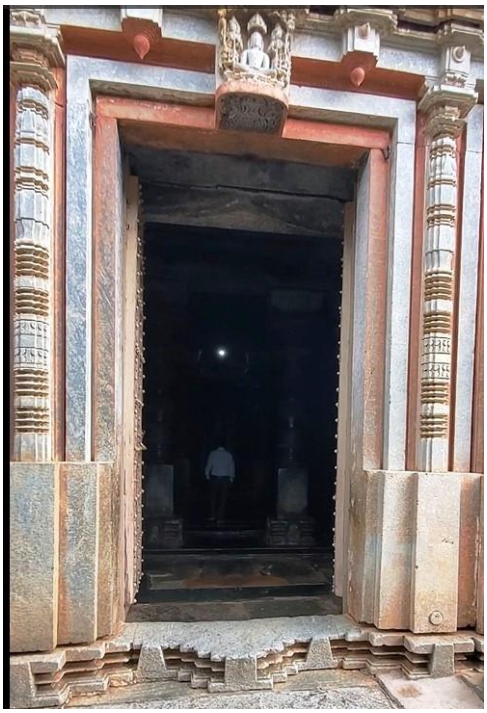

Figure 7. Doorway lintel, Pārśvanātha *basadi*

Figure 8. Stone stele, Pārśvanātha *basadi*

Figure 9. Finely polished floor and pillars, Pārśvanātha *basadi*

Figure 10. Smaller shrine inside the Pārśvanātha *basadi,* Photo: Courtesy of Katherine E. Kasdorf

Figure 11. The central square slab, *raṅga-maṇṭapa* ceiling, Pārśvanātha *basadi*, Photo: Courtesy of Katherine E. Kasdorf

Figure 12. *Raṅga-maṇṭapa* ceiling vertical facades, Pārśvanātha *basadi*, Photo: Courtesy of Katherine E. Kasdorf

Figure 13. Image of a *yakṣa*, southeast corner of the *raṅga-maṇṭapa*, Pārśvanātha *basadi*

Figure 14. Image of a *yakṣi*, southwest corner of the *raṅga-maṇṭapa*, Pārśvanātha *basadi*, Photo: Courtesy of Katherine E. Kasdorf

Figure 15. Image of Pārśvanātha, Pārśvanātha *basadi,* Photo: Courtesy of Katherine E. Kasdorf

Figure 16. Pārśvanātha *basadi* from the east

Figure 17. *Gōpura,* Chennakēśava temple

Figure 18. ***Puṣkariṇī,*** **Chennakēśava temple compound premises**

Figure 19. The Chennakēśava temple

Figure 20. Two *sthambha*s in the Chennakēśava temple compound

Figure 21. *Garuḍa* sculpture, Chennakēśava temple compound

Figure 22. Stones cut precisely to fit into one another at the joints without mortar, Chennakēśava temple

Figure 23. Stellate *jagati,* Chennakēśava temple

Figure 24. The bottom-most frieze with elephants, Chennakēśava temple

Figure 25. Hindu mythological engravings on the external walls, Chennakēśava temple

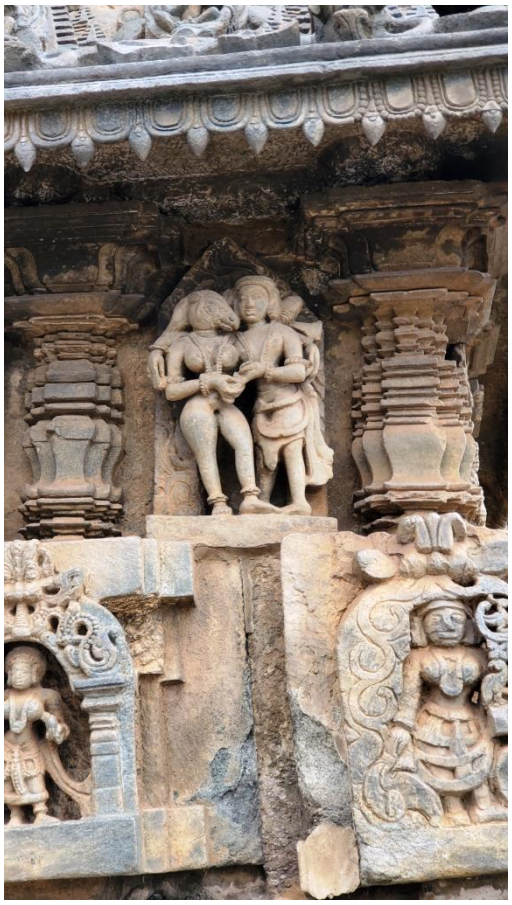

Figure 26. Moral and virtue-filled stories with humans, animals, other creatures on the external walls, Chennakēśava temple

Figure 27. King Viṣṇuvardhana (center) and his Queen Śāntalādēvi (right), external facade of the walls, Chennakēśava temple

Figure 28. Man (on the right) appears to be in a western attire (Bermuda shorts), external facade of the walls, Chennakēśava temple

Figure 29. *Śālabhañjikā*s holding musical instruments, Chennakēśava temple

Figure 30. ***Darpaṇa sundari,*** **Chennakēśava temple**

Figure 31. Hoysaḷa emblem depicting Saḷa fighting a tiger on either side of the door, Chennakēśava temple

Figure 32. *Makara*s on the outer face of the Chennakēśava temple over the door lintels

Figure 33. The *raṅga-maṇṭapa*'s lathe-turned decorative pillars, Chennakēśava temple

Figure 34. The *raṅga-maṇṭapa śilāvēdikā,* Chennakēśava temple

Figure 35. *Jālandhra*s around the *maṇṭapa* from inside the Chennakēśava temple

Figure 36. The *kakṣāsana* around the *raṅga-maṇṭapa,* Chennakēśava temple

Figure 37. *Haḷegannada* inscriptions on the stone pillars inside the Chennakēśava temple

Figure 38. The main image of Lord Viṣṇu, Chennakēśava temple

Figure 39. *Nādasvara* (in the musician's hand) instrumental performance, Chennakēśava temple

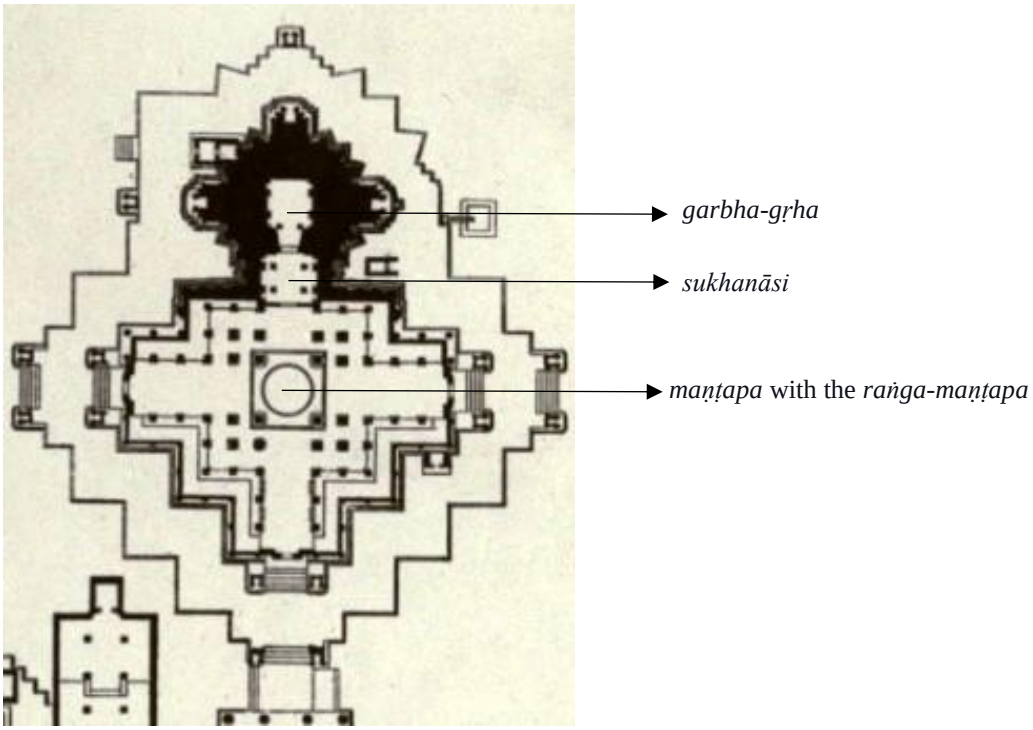

Figure 40. Plan of Chennakēśava temple, taken from *Epigraphia Carnatica* Vol 5 (1902), https://archive.org/details/epigraphiacarnat05mysouoft/page/n175/mode/1up?view=theater

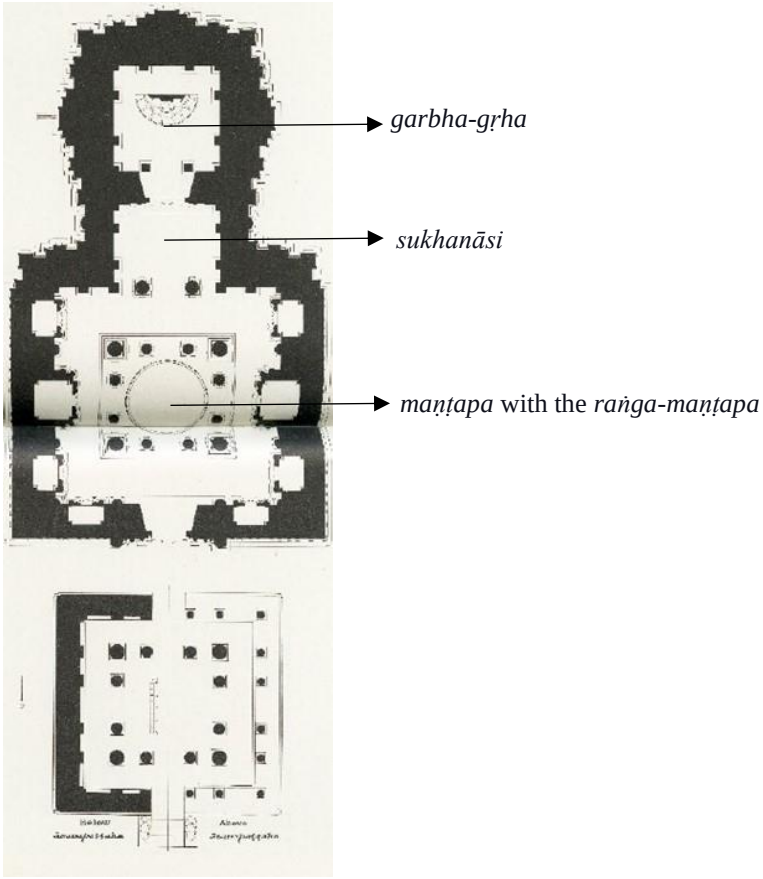

Figure 41. Plan of Pārśvanātha *basadi*, taken from *Encyclopaedia of Indian Temple Architecture* (*EITA*) (1996)

Figure 42. Exterior sculpture in a dancing posture, Chennakēśava temple

Figure 43. ***Bhuvanēśvari,*** **Chennakēśava temple**

Figure 44. Ceiling design, ***raṅga-maṇṭapa*****, Pārśvanātha** ***basadi***

Figure 45. Modern-day ceiling baffles, image taken from *CertainTeed*, https://www.certainteed.com/ceilings-and-walls/ceiling-baffles/

Figure 46. Cylindrical pillars, Pārśvanātha *basadi,* Photo: Courtesy of Katherine E. Kasdorf

Figure 47. Elaborate external engravings, Chennakēśava temple

Figure 48. *Jālandhra*s with carvings around the *maṇṭapa* exteriors, Chennakēśava temple

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