

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Historical, Religious and Archaeological Background

1. Historical Context

Four dynasties, which arose from the ruins of the Chōla and later Chālukyan empires, that is, the Yādavas of Dēvagiri, the Kākaṭiyas of Warangal, the Hoysaḷas of Dvārasamudra and the Pāṇḍyas of Madurai dominated the political scene south of the Vindhyas in the thirteenth century. These kingdoms were swept away by the irresistible might of the invading Islamic forces in the early fourteenth century. By A.D. 1328 the whole of south India was brought under the control of Delhi.

Soon however revolts broke out against the rule of Delhi. In the far south the independent sultanate of Ma'bar was set up in Madurai; it lasted from A.D. 1335 to 1378.¹ Shortly after this the empire of Vijayanagara was born and in A.D. 1347 the Bahmanī sultanate came into existence. Thus, the political vacuum in south India, caused by the destruction of the earlier Hindu kingdoms, resulted in the emergence of the Vijayanagara empire.

There is some difference of opinion among historians regarding the date of the founding of this empire. Although A.D. 1336 has been traditionally described as the foundational year, the year A.D. 1346 has also been suggested. It is likely that the emergence of Vijayanagara's statehood was a gradual process. The Saṅgama brothers, who may have risen to prominence sometime around or after A.D. 1336, slowly consolidated their authority and were firmly in power by A.D. 1346, when they celebrated the famous "festival of victory" at Śṛiṅgēri.²

The Vijayanagara empire, up to A.D. 1565, was ruled by three dynasties—the Saṅgama (A.D. 1336-1485), the Sāḷuva (A.D. 1485-1505) and the Tuḷuva (A.D. 1505-1570) dynasties. The first king, Harihara I (A.D. 1336-1356), the eldest of the five sons of Saṅgama, ably assisted by his brother Bukka, built up within a few years a kingdom stretching from coast to coast. During the latter part of his reign the Bahmanī king-

dom was established beyond the Kṛishṇā river and with this commenced an era of constant warfare, the *doāb* between the Tuṅgabhadrā and the Kṛishṇā being a bone of contention between the Vijayanagara and Bahmanī states.

A great achievement of the reign of Bukka I (A.D. 1356-1377) was the destruction of the Ma'bar sultanate by Kumāra Kampana, Bukka's son. This is described in the Sanskrit poem *Madhurāvijayam* by princess Gaṅgādēvi.

Harihara II (A.D. 1377-1404) was the first ruler of the dynasty to assume the imperial title of *Mahārājādhirāja*. His reign saw the expansion of the Vijayanagara empire over the whole of south India to the south of the river Kṛishṇā. The *Vēdabhāsyā*, begun under Bukka I, was completed now and earned for Harihara II the epithet of *Vaidikamārga-sthāpanāchārya*.

On the death of Harihara II there was a dispute over the succession among his three sons, Virūpāksha I, Bukka II and Dēvarāya I. Ultimately Dēvarāya I secured the throne and ruled from A.D. 1406 to 1422. He was followed by his sons Rāmachandra and Vira Vijaya both of whom ruled for brief periods. Vira Vijaya was succeeded by his son Dēvarāya II (A.D. 1424-1446), the greatest of the Saṅgama rulers. Following his reverses in wars against the Bahmanīs, Dēvarāya II introduced reforms in his army and employed Muslims, especially in the archery and cavalry. He was a scholar and author, and a liberal patron of the arts and literature.

The glorious rule of Dēvarāya II was followed by a period of decline and disruption during the reigns of Mallikārjuna (A.D. 1446-1465) and Virūpāksha II (A.D. 1466-1485). The weak rule of these two kings facilitated the rise to power of Sāḷuva Narasiṃha, governor of Chandragiri, who usurped the throne in A.D. 1485.

Sāḷuva Narasiṃha (A.D. 1485-1491) was an able ruler who set himself to restore the might and the prestige of the empire. He was succeeded by his minor sons Timma (1491) and Immaḍi Narasiṃha (A.D. 1491-1505), who had,

as their regent, the Tuḷuva minister Narasa Nāyaka and later his son Vīra Narasiṃha. The latter assassinated the Sāḷuva emperor and assumed power. With this second usurpation the Tuḷuvas attained the imperial throne. Vīra Narasiṃha (A.D. 1505-1509), after a short reign, was succeeded by his half brother Kṛṣṇadēvarāya.

Kṛṣṇadēvarāya (A.D. 1509-1529) was not only the greatest king in Vijayanagara history, but also one of the most brilliant monarchs in medieval India. His armies were successful everywhere—against the Bahmanī sultān, 'Ādil Shāh of Bijāpur and the Gajapati ruler of Orissa. Kṛṣṇadēvarāya maintained friendly diplomatic relations with the Portuguese on the west coast. An accomplished scholar and poet in Sanskrit and Telugu, Kṛṣṇadēvarāya wrote the Telugu work *Āmuktamālyada*. The noted Telugu poet Allasāni Peddaṇṇa was his poet laureate and at his court were the eight poets known as the *aṣṭa-diggajas*. Kṛṣṇadēvarāya renovated dilapidated temples throughout his empire, built new ones and gave munificent gifts and grants to temples.

Achyutarāya succeeded his half brother Kṛṣṇadēvarāya on the throne. Achyutarāya (A.D. 1529-1542) was a capable ruler and a liberal patron of arts and letters.

In the power struggle following Achyutarāya's death, the faction led by Kṛṣṇadēvarāya's son-in-law, Rāmarāya, triumphed and Sadāśiva, nephew of the previous ruler, was placed on the throne, although Rāmarāya remained the de facto ruler as the regent.

Rāmarāya became entangled in the interstate rivalries of the Deccan Sultanates that had been formed after the disintegration of the Bahmanī kingdom. As a result of alliances and wars, Vijayanagara regained the territory lost after Kṛṣṇadēvarāya and even extended its limits beyond the Kṛṣṇā. But, in the long run, Rāmarāya's policy proved disastrous. The Deccan Sultanates, alarmed at the growing power of Vijayanagara, buried their differences and in a joint action defeated Rāmarāya in the decisive battle of Rakkasa-Taṅgaḍi—also known as the battle of Tālikōṭa—in January A.D. 1565. The capital city Vijayanagara was temporarily occupied and sacked by the allied Muslim armies. The Vijayanagara state never fully recovered

from the catastrophe of Rakkasa-Taṅgaḍi; the northern parts of Karṇāṭaka came under Muslim rule and Vijayanagara ceased being the imperial capital. The truncated empire lingered on in the south, under the Āraṇḍi dynasty (A.D. 1570-1646), while its feudatories became independent one after the other. Rāmarāya had died in the battle, his brother Tirumala, the founder of the Āraṇḍi dynasty, moved to Penugoṇḍa in the Anantapur district taking with him the puppet ruler Sadāśiva. Later, in A.D. 1592, the capital was shifted further south to Chandragiri in North Arcot district³ and in A.D. 1606 to Vellore.⁴

Most historians writing about the nature of the Vijayanagara polity emphasize that it was a Hindu empire, acting as a bulwark against the southward expansion of Islam. It is assumed that the empire "came into existence for (1) the purpose of saving South India from being completely conquered by Muhammadans, (2) to save Hindu religion and give it a chance for its natural development, at least in this corner of India without molestation from outside agencies, and (3) to save for India as much of its culture and learning as it was possible."⁵ "The empire was founded for the protection of *Dharma*.... In the whole range of South Indian history an instance of an empire founded with the purpose of giving protection to a religion irrespective of different sects, has yet to be discovered.... Religion did not mean ... Śaivism alone or Vaiṣṇavism alone, but it embraced all the systems of religious thought."⁶ "In matters spiritual the policy was the protection of *Dharma* understood in its widest sense; in matters social, it was the protection of the various *varṇāśrama dharmas*...i.e., the peaceful observation of the rules of conduct as enjoined by the castes to which one belonged."⁷ The Vijayanagara rulers claimed to be followers of *Pūrvada maryāda* (ancient constitutional usage).⁸

This traditional notion regarding the essence of the Vijayanagara state has been challenged by others. According to Stein, "this kind of interpretation stems from a modern nationalist sentiment and an only slightly older indologism."⁹ Earlier writers have interpreted titles such as "supporters of dharma" or "upholders of the ancient constitutional usage" too literally. Such titles constitute an important part of the tradi-

tional pedigree of the kings of ancient India and “protection of dharma” formed part of the coronation oath of the Hindu kings.¹⁰ It is true that wars against the Bahmanī sultāns were frequent. But their cause was more political and economic rather than religious. It was but a revival of the ancient feud that had existed between the Deccan and south India under the earlier Hindu sovereigns, e.g., between the Chālukyas of Bādāmi and the Pallavas, the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇi and the Chōlas, the Yādavas and the Hoysālas.¹¹ Besides, the major victims of the Vijayanagara arms were not always the Muslims. The expansion and maintenance of the Vijayanagara empire also necessitated military expeditions against less powerful Hindu rulers, such as the Śāmbuvarāyas, the Reḍḍis of Koṇḍaviḍu, the Vēlamas and the Gajapatis. Also, Muslim soldiers played an important part in the successes of the Vijayanagara army.

Therefore, the Hindu nature of the Vijayanagara state should not be overstressed. However, it must be accepted that the empire did create conditions for the defense of Hindu culture and institutions and it succeeded in limiting the expansion of Muslim power in the Deccan for over two centuries. During this period the outlook of the Hindus of the south developed into an orthodoxy in social and religious matters.¹² The encouragement of religion by the Vijayanagara monarchs, as revealed by the numerous inscriptions, included promotion of Vedic and other studies, support of brāhmaṇas, generous patronage extended to *mathas* and temples, pilgrimages to religious places and celebration of public rituals.

Under the patronage of the early Vijayanagara sovereigns, notably Bukka I, a syndicate of scholars, headed by Sāyaṇa, undertook the prodigious task of commenting upon the *Saṁhitās* of all the four *Vēdas* and many of the *Brāhmaṇas* and *Āraṇyakas*.¹³ A codification of the philosophical systems was effected in the *Sarvadarśana-saṅgraha*. Lands in villages and sometimes entire villages were granted to individual scholars¹⁴ or to groups of brāhmaṇas.¹⁵ Achyutarāya's *dāna* (gift) of *Ānandanidhi* by which he made “Kubēras of the brāhmaṇas” is recorded in different temples within the capital¹⁶ and elsewhere in the empire.¹⁷ Among the *dānas*, the gift of the weight of a man in gold or pearls, the

tulāpurusha-dāna, was considered especially meritorious. Dēvarāya I performed the *tulāpurusha* in gold in the capital city¹⁸ and Achyutarāya that of pearls in Kāñchi at the Varadarāja-svāmi temple.¹⁹ Kṛishṇadēvarāya in the course of the Orissan campaign performed this ceremony at the Amarēśvara temple at Amarāvati.²⁰

Gifts to ascetics and sectarian leaders by the monarchs was common. Thus, Kṛishṇadēvarāya granted a number of villages to the Mādhva sage Vyāsārāya.²¹ Endowments to *mathas* encouraged religious learning and activities. The Advaita *matha* at Śrīngēri was the recipient of many royal grants; an inscription of Harihara II lists the benefactions to the *matha* made by him and his predecessors.²²

The Vijayanagara rulers encouraged pilgrimages within their own empire, possibly to integrate the different language zones within the realm. Besides, visits to the northern sacred sites had become increasingly difficult due to the occupation of north India by the Muslims. The important pilgrimage centres were: Chidambaram, Virūpāksham, Kālahasti, Tirupati, Kāñchi, Śrīśailam, Tiruvaṅṅamalai, Harihara, Ahōbalam, Sangamēśvara, Śrīraṅgam, Jāmbukēśvaram, Kuṁbhakōṇam, Mahānadi, Gokarṇam, Ramēśvaram and Anantaśayanam. Several of these were considered to be substitutes for the northern pilgrim sites, for instance, a visit to Ēkāmranātha in Kāñchi was equivalent to a visit to Vārānaśi. The Vijayanagara rulers themselves often undertook pilgrimages.²³

Inscriptions are scattered throughout south India which record the benefactions to temples by the Vijayanagara rulers. The emperors and their subordinates built hundreds of new temples, repaired or made extensive additions to several old ones, settled disputes among temple servants and endowed the temples richly with lands (known as *dēvadāna* lands), money, taxes due to the state and jewels for the daily worship or for new festivals that were instituted. Such favours extended to Śaivite, Vaishṇavite and Jaina institutions. Besides state support, temples also enjoyed wide patronage from private donors such as rich individuals, sectarian leaders, professional guilds and communal groups.

The celebration of public rituals was an im-

portant royal function. For it was believed that flourishing festivals would strengthen *dharma*, establish the presence of divine powers in the kingdom and stimulate the cosmic flow of gifts and fertility.²⁴ During this period the most important of these rituals preserving cosmic order was, undoubtedly, the annual nine-day *Mahānavamī* festival. Paes has left a vivid account of this festival,²⁵ a careful perusal of which makes clear that the festival, although basically religious in character, had political, economic, social and military significance. The focus of the ceremonies was upon the reigning king and the revitalization of his kingdom and his realm.²⁶ The various rites of this festival reveal that the king and the deity (being worshipped) were at least homologous, if not equal.²⁷

The patronage of religion, especially the royal celebration of public rituals such as the *Mahānavamī*, highlights the fact that in the Vijayanagara system the relationship between kings and gods was one of partnership. "Sovereignty is conceived as shared between powerful humans (*Rājas*) and powerful divinities (*Devas*); the sovereignty of neither is complete; the sovereignty of both, together, is perfect."²⁸ Although the king himself was not seen as divine, kingship frequently was and the great royal rituals were attempts to bring into being this divine analogy.²⁹ The transactions between kings, temple deities, priests and sectarian leaders point to a relationship of mutual interdependence. There was a triangular relationship linking them.³⁰ The priests made offerings to and performed services for the gods, the gods preserved the king, his kingdom and his subjects and the king protected and awarded material rewards to the temples, the priests or sectarian leaders. Thus, while the temples and sectarian leaders bestowed honours and blessings on the king, the ruler in turn conferred on them protection and riches. Even though the kings were not conceived to be gods, kings manifested divinity and maintained divine order in the world. Prosperity, fertility, success in war, the right relationships between the castes and other groups—all resulted, ultimately, from royal activity.³¹

2. Religious Situation in South India

The centuries just prior to the foundation of

the Vijayanagara empire and the period of this study were marked by intense religious activity in south India. In order to understand the history of the religious traditions in the city of Vijayanagara, a survey of the important sects and revivalist movements during this age and the religious affiliations and attitudes of the Vijayanagara kings is essential.

A. Religious Developments

A towering figure in the Hindu renaissance of the early medieval era was the great Śaṅkarāchāryā (A.D. 781-820). Relying on the *Upanishads*, the *Vedānta Sūtras* and the *Gītā*, Śaṅkara gave a definite shape to the monistic or non-dualistic school of Vedānta philosophy known as the Advaita system. The entire philosophy of this school was summed up by Śaṅkara in half a verse, "Brahman is real : the world is an illusory appearance; the individual soul (*jīva*) is Brahman alone, not other." The non-duality of Brahman, the non-reality of the world, and the non-difference of the soul from Brahman—these constitute the essence of the teaching of Advaita.³² The Smārtas are the followers of the Advaita philosophy of Śrī Śaṅkarāchārya. They worship five gods, Śiva, Viṣṇu, Dēvī, Sūrya and Gaṇeśa, together known as *Pañchāyatana*, but they give preference mostly to Śiva.³³ The two important Advaita *mathas* at Śrīṅgeri and Kāñchipuram, besides a number of others, propagated the Smārta religious system and the Advaita philosophy. Inscriptions from A.D. 1346 onwards reveal the close links between the Vijayanagara rulers and the former *matha*. Two copper plate grants record the gift of villages to the latter by Kṛishṇadēvarāya.³⁴

The Pāśupata sect of Śaivism and its offshoots, the Kāpālīka and the Kālāmukha, were important Śaivite sects. The Pāśupata sect is anterior to the Christian era, but in the second century A.D. it was reorganized by Lakulīśa.³⁵ One great difference between the Advaitins and the Pāśupatas appears to have consisted in the fact that while the former laid great stress on the *Vedas*, the latter did so to the Śaiva *Āgamas*. The Kāpālīkas worshipped mainly the Kāpālīn form of Śiva and also Chāmuṇḍa.³⁶ This sect was present in south India from the seventh century onwards but by the fourteenth century it seems to have virtually

died out.³⁷ The sect was perhaps absorbed by the Śaivite tāntric orders such as the Kānpḥaṭas and the Aghorīs.³⁸ By the time of the origin of the Vijayanagara empire the Pāsupatas and the Kāpālīkas appear to have lost their influence.³⁹

The Kālāmukhas were very popular all over south India between the ninth and fourteenth centuries. They were so called because of a black streak worn across the forehead.⁴⁰ They worshipped Śiva as Mahākāla (the great destroyer) or as Bhairava⁴¹ and also the goddess Kālī.⁴² The Kālāmukhas have been misrepresented by many. The great philosopher, Rāmānuja, wrongly identified them with the Kāpālīkas and this was accepted by R.G. Bhandarkar.⁴³ The Kālāmukhas have made a great contribution, especially in the field of education. Baḷligāve and Kuppattūr, both in the Shimoga district of Karṇāṭaka, and Śrīśailam in the Kurnool district in Āndhra were the most influential centres of the Kālāmukhas. The Koḍiya-maṭha of the Kedāreśvara temple in Baḷligāve was a very important and famous educational institution during the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D. Some of the Kālāmukha priests also acted as *rāja-gurus*. Among them were Sarvēśvaraśakti and Rudraśakti, both of Kuppattūr, and Vāmaśakti of Baḷligāve.⁴⁴ The names of the Kālāmukha ascetics mostly end in śakti, rāśi, ābhāraṇa or Śiva. While the last three endings may be found in the names of persons of other Śaivite sects as well, that of śakti is particular to the Kālāmukha sect.⁴⁵

After the early fifteenth century we do not hear anymore of the Kālāmukhas. "It is possible that the democratic Liṅgāyat sect (and the enlightened Advaita religion?) absorbed the Kālāmukhas and they practically disappear from history."⁴⁶ That the Kālāmukha sect was absorbed by the reformist Viraśaiva religion is indicated by the fact that many of the former Kālāmukha temples and *maṭhas*, including the Kedāreśvara temple at Gadag and the *maṭha* at Śrīśailam, are now controlled by the Viraśaivas. Even more significant, perhaps, is the fact that few Viraśaivas are found in areas not formerly dominated by the Kālāmukhas.⁴⁷

Another school of medieval Hindu mysticism which flourished in the Deccan was the Nātha *saṃpradāya*, founded by Matsyēndranātha and Gorakhnātha. The followers of this school are

known as the *nāthas*, *yogīs* or *kānpḥaṭas*.⁴⁸ They are votaries of Śiva and Śakti with a strong bias towards the Śākta tradition. They also worship the nine saints known as the *navanāthas* and the eighty-four *siddhas*. The fifteenth century Telugu work, *Navanāthacharitam* by Gauranna, mentions members of this sect in Āndhra. Śrīśailam was an important centre of this cult and it was also popular in coastal Karṇāṭaka during this period. Pietro della Valle, who passed through Mangalore in A.D. 1623, gives a detailed account of the Nātha monastery at Kadire.⁴⁹

Another important Śaivite school was that of the Tamil Śaiva-Siddhānta. It is based on the *Vēdas*, the twenty-eight *Śaivāgamas* and their *Upāgamas* and the mystical poems of the Śaiva saints of south India, the sixty-three *nayanārs*. Tamil Śaivism is neither pure Advaita, nor is it Dvaita or Viśiṣṭādvaita. It is a doctrine by itself.⁵⁰

The Śivādvaita school was spearheaded by Śrīkanta in twelfth century A.D. His work, the *Śrīkanta Bhāshya*, was commented upon by that versatile sixteenth century scholar Apayya Dikshita. Except in minor details the Śivādvaita is not very different from the Śaiva-Siddhānta.

The Viraśaiva reform of the twelfth century A.D. spread rapidly from Karṇāṭaka to Āndhra and Tamil Nāḍu. The Viraśaivas are also called the Liṅgāyats on account of the *liṅga* that the followers of this sect wear on their person. Besides the *Vēdas*, the *Āgamas* and the *Purāṇas*, the Viraśaivas accept the authority of the sixty-three Tamil Śaiva saints whom they refer to as the *purātanas* (ancients) and the 770 later Viraśaiva saints. Tradition avers that this sect is very old that it was founded by five *āchāryas*, Ēkōrāma, Paṇḍitāradhya, Rēṇuka, Daruka and Viśvārādhya. But the real founder was Basava, the minister of Bijjala (A.D. 1162-1167), the Kalachūri king. The Viraśaivas consider Basava to be the incarnation of Nandi.

This new faith is a departure from the ritualism of the Vēdic traditions. The goal of human life is the union of the individual soul with the Supreme. This can be achieved by following the rules of the *aṣṭāvaraṇa*, the eight-fold spiritual aids, the *pañchāchāra* or the five-fold conduct and the *ṣaṭsthaḷa*, the six-fold stages which lead one on the path of spiritual progress and perfection. Among the *aṣṭāvaraṇa*, the triad, the *guru*

(the spiritual guide), the *liṅga* (the mystic emblem of the Supreme) and the *jaṅgama* (the itinerant teacher) are the most important.

The Viraśaiva reform differed in many essentials from the Vaidika social practices. Thus, the Viraśaivas allow widow remarriage and the burial of the dead; they do not follow sex and caste distinctions and neither do they wear the sacred thread. Basava emphasised the importance of labour, vegetarianism and the abstention from all intoxicants.

Vaiṣṇavism received a great impetus in south India because of the work of the two great *āchāryas*, Rāmānuja and Madhva.⁵¹

Rāmānuja (A.D. 1017-1137), the great philosopher of Viśiṣṭādvaita, or qualified monism, followed a long line of Vaiṣṇava thinkers in Tamil Nāḍu. Twelve poetsaints, the *āḷvārs* (third to ninth centuries A.D.) had poured out their devotion in the form of songs. These were collected into what is called the *Nāḷayira-Prabandham*. These songs constitute the basis of Viśiṣṭādvaita, together with the *Upanishads* and the *Bhāgavata*. The *āḷvārs* were followed by a succession of *āchāryas* (teachers), the greatest of whom was Rāmānuja. According to his system, Viṣṇu is the Supreme deity, accompanied by Śrī or Lakṣmī who represents divine grace. That is why the religion is called Śrī-Vaiṣṇavism. In the place of the abstract, impersonal God or *Nirguṇa Brahman* of the Advaita school, Rāmānuja justified the need for a personal God, possessed of all good qualities (*Saguṇa Brahman*). He repudiated the doctrine of illusoriness of the material world and the finite self and postulated that Ultimate Reality is one, in which the material world and the finite self find a necessary place. He stressed the importance of *bhakti* (devotion) and *prapatti* (self-surrender) as means to receive the Lord's favour. Śrī-Vaiṣṇavism won many followers in Tamil Nāḍu. It also spread to parts of Karṇāṭaka following the conversion of the Hoysaḷa king Viṣṇuwardhana by Rāmānuja.

In the early fourteenth century the Śrī-Vaiṣṇava sect split into two groups—the Vaḍagalai, the northern or Sanskrit (Bhāshyic) school and the Teṅgalai, the southern or Tamil school. Vedānta Dēśika was the *āchārya* of the former, while the latter was headed by Piḷḷai Lōkāchārya and Maṇavāla Mahāmuni.

The Vaḍagalais favour the Sanskrit philosophical literature while the Teṅgalais give more importance to the Tamil *Prabandham*. For the attainment of salvation individual effort is the first step according to the Vaḍagalais (*Markaṭanyāya* or the monkey analogy), while for the Teṅgalais only surrender to the Lord is necessary (*Mārjāranāyāya* or the cat analogy). The Teṅgalais believe that, since God's grace was spontaneous, sins could be committed without any reference to punishment; the Vaḍagalai reject this view. For the Vaḍagalais, Śrī is infinite and is a part and parcel of the Lord, but, the Teṅgalais relegate her to a lower position. The Vaḍagalais adhere strictly to the caste system, while the Teṅgalais contend that *prapatti* transcends all caste and creed barriers. Vaḍagalais consider that prostration should be made only to deserving persons like a *guru*, a *brāhmaṇa*, or the wife of the *guru*, etc., while the Teṅgalais perform the *namaskāra* to every Vaiṣṇava of their school. There are some other minor differences: the Vaḍagalais enjoin the tonsure of widows while the Teṅgalais do not, the Teṅgalais are opposed to animal sacrifices, they do not ring the bell during *pūjā* while the Vaḍagalais do.⁵² With regard to the *nāmam*, or the sacred mark worn by Śrī-Vaiṣṇavas on their foreheads, the Vaḍagalai wear a U-like mark with a prominent curvature and the Teṅgalais have a different type with a distinct *pāda* projection at the bottom.⁵³ Śrīraṅgam became the stronghold of the Teṅgalais and Kāñchipuram the centre of the Vaḍagalais.⁵⁴

Madhvāchārya (A.D. 1238-1317) preached the philosophy of Dvaita or dualism in Karṇāṭaka. The Dvaita system, while admitting two ultimate principles constituting Reality as a whole, regards only one of them (God) as *Svatantra* or Independent, the other, that is the world and souls, is *Paratantra* or Dependent. He stressed five types of differences or *pañchabhedas*: those between God and the soul, between God and matter, between matter and soul, between one soul and another soul, and between matter and matter. Madhva is supposed to have set up eight *mathas* in Uḍipi. It is, however, the three other *mathas* represented by a group of four disciples of Madhva—Padmanābha, Narahari, Mādhava and Akshobhya Tīrtha and continued by their successors—which have made the most solid

contribution to the propagation of Mādhvism. Vyāsarāya was a great Mādhva saint of the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries. Following the Dvaita philosophy of Madhvāchārya a movement was started in Karṇāṭaka in the fifteenth century, known as the Haridāsa movement, which greatly spread the cult of Viṣṇu.

Besides the Śaivite and Vaishṇavite sects, there was also the Śākta cult. The Śāktas worship the Supreme Deity exclusively as a female principle. Its followers are of two schools, the Dakṣiṇāchārī (Walkers of the Right Way) and Vāmāchārī (Walkers in the Left Way).

Side by side with the “greater” or Sanskr̥itic sects of Śaivism, Vaishṇavism and Śāktism, there existed the “lesser” or non-Sanskr̥itic cults of the popular or folk deities. Most of the *grāma-dēvatas* are conceived of not as supreme cosmic powers, but only as local deities with jurisdiction limited to the village.⁵⁵ Most of these deities are female.⁵⁶ The fertility cult and the predominant role of women in an agrarian economy perhaps were the reasons for this. Yellammā, Irukulammā, Poḷaladēvī, Mūkāmbikadēvī were some of the village deities worshipped during the period under review.⁵⁷ The worship of snakes, represented by *nāga-kals*, of sacred trees and of men and women who had died under heroic circumstances were also a part of popular religiosity.

For about fifteen centuries Jainism had been the dominant religion in this region. Its advent into Karṇāṭaka is traditionally attributed to the migration of Bhadrabāhu and Chandragupta Maurya in the third century B.C.⁵⁸ Jainism appears to have spread from the north, via Kaliṅga, to the Āndhra region in the sixth century B.C.⁵⁹ Throughout south India, for centuries, Jainism played a very significant role. But, the Hindu renaissance in Tamil Nāḍu led by the *āḷvārs* and the *nayanārs* and the Śaiva revival in Āndhra struck a death blow to Jainism and it had virtually disappeared from these regions before the fourteenth century A.D. Its last stronghold in the south was in Karṇāṭaka, where it had enjoyed much royal patronage under the Kadāmbas, the early western Chālukyas, the Rāshtrakūṭas and the Hoysāḷas. Even though the Viraśaiva movement resulted in the decline of Jainism, it continued to be fairly influential in Karṇāṭaka during the period under review and it received patronage from the Vijayanagara

rulers. However, by the sixteenth century the decline was irreversible and Jainism came to be mainly restricted to certain areas, such as the Tuḷuva country. Jainism in south India was dominated by the Digambara order. The Yāpaniya sect was exclusive to Karṇāṭaka.

Islam reached south India via the Arab traders who visited and settled along the west coast. With the Muslim invasions, the presence of Islam was felt for the first time throughout south India. During the Vijayanagara period, the employment of Muslim soldiers in the army resulted in the wider spread of Islam.

Although there were Christians in Malabār long before the period under survey, it was only with the coming of the Portuguese that Christianity spread to other areas. However, Christianity was restricted to a few pockets and its impact, therefore, was minimal.

B. Religious Affiliations of the Vijayanagara Rulers

Historians differ about the affiliations of the Vijayanagara sovereigns. Were the early Saṅgamas the disciples of Vidyāraṇya and the Śrīṅgerī *maṭha* or of Kāḷāmukha *gurus*? To what sect did the later Saṅgamas belong? When did the shift from Śaivism to Vaishṇavism take place? Were the Sāḷuvas and early Tuḷuvas Mādhvas or Śrī-Vaishṇavas? When did Śrī-Vaishṇavism gain predominance?

A careful study of the epigraphical and literary sources reveal that the *rāja-gurus* of the early Saṅgamas were Kāḷāmukhas. In this they were following the traditions of the Karṇāṭaka monarchs, who from the middle of the eleventh century A.D had set the precedent of selecting their *rāja-gurus* from one or other of the famous Kāḷāmukha centres—Baḷḷigāve, Kuppattūr or Śrīśailam.⁶⁰ At the same time the kings showed great devotion to the Śrīṅgerī Advaita *maṭha* and to its pontiffs Vidyātīrtha, Bhāratīrtha and Vidyāraṇya, the last of whom came into contact with Vijayanagara only twenty years after its founding.⁶¹

There are epigraphical and literary references to the Kāḷāmukha Kriyāśakti *gurus* from A.D. 1347 to 1442. At least three different Kriyāśaktis are mentioned—Kāśivilāsa, Vāṇivilāsa and Chandrabhūshana. It is evident that the

first name in the full title is the personal designation of the *guru* and the second that of his office. Two inscriptions of A.D. 1347 refer to Kriyāśakti as the *guru* of the famous minister Mādhavamantrin.⁶² A stone inscription of Bukka I's reign dated A.D. 1368 speaks of Kāśīvilāsa Kriyāśakti as the preceptor of this minister.⁶³ During this same reign, in *Madhurāvijayam* Gaṅgādēvī pays obeisance to guru Kriyāśakti.⁶⁴ A copper-plate grant of Harihara II dated A.D. 1378 mentions Kriyāśakti as the *kula-guru* (family preceptor of the king).⁶⁵ Another record of A.D. 1379 refers to the *rāja-guru* Vāṅṅilāsa Kriyāśakti.⁶⁶ Two other copper-plate grants of 1398 and A.D. 1399 praise Harihara II as the worshipper of the feet of *rāja-rāja-guru-pitāmaha* Kriyāśaktidēva.⁶⁷ An inscription of A.D. 1410 refers to Dēvarāya I as having received supreme knowledge by the favour of *rāja-guru* Kriyāśakti.⁶⁸ In the same year in a grant of his son Vijaya-Bhūpati, Kriyāśakti is referred to as the *guru*.⁶⁹ A grant was made by Dēvarāya II in A.D. 1429 to certain brāhmaṇas with Kriyāśakti at their head.⁷⁰ Another record of the same reign, dated A.D. 1431, mentions Kriyāśaktidēva.⁷¹ The record of A.D. 1442⁷² referring to *rāja-guru* Kriyāśakti-Oḍeya is the last epigraphical reference to these preceptors. Śrīnātha, the Telugu poet, relates the presence of Chandrabhūshana Kriyāśakti in the court of Dēvarāya II.⁷³ After his reign no more is heard of the Kālāmukhas.

The close relationship between the Śrīṅgēri monks and Vijayanagara is evident from A.D. 1346 onwards. Harihara I and his relatives in A.D. 1346⁷⁴ and Bukka I in A.D. 1356⁷⁵ paid homage to Vidyātūrtha and made land grants to Bhāratīūrtha. Harihara II was zealous in his devotion towards this *maṭha* and to Vidyāraṇya. In 1380 he confirmed all the previous grants.⁷⁶ In A.D. 1384 he made a donation to two disciples of sage Vidyāraṇya.⁷⁷ In 1386-87, after Vidyāraṇya's death, the same ruler made a generous land grant near Śrīṅgēri in honour of the *guru*.⁷⁸ Bukka II in A.D. 1406 gave an endowment for the renovation and proper maintenance of a library belonging to the *maṭha*.⁷⁹ The gifts of land made by Dēvarāya II in A.D. 1431⁸⁰ and by Mallikārjuna in A.D. 1451⁸¹ show that the later Saṅgama rulers continued to patronise the Śrīṅgēri *maṭha*. Such a relationship of the Vijayanagara rulers with the Śrīṅgēri *gurus* is

not at variance with their having Kālāmukhas as their family preceptors, for no exclusiveness existed at the time in the matter of paying respects to more than one venerable teacher.⁸²

Vīraśaivism was influential in the later Saṅgama period. According to one school of thought Dēvarāya II and his immediate successors were Vīraśaivas,⁸³ but there is no conclusive evidence to support this contention. Yet it is undoubtedly true that this sect enjoyed favour. The *Chennabasava Purāṇa* by Virūpāksha Paṇḍita (A.D. 1584) informs us that Dēvarāya II revered and patronised the Liṅgāyat *gurus* Kerasthaḷada Vīraṇṇa and Basavēśa and he even gave his daughter in marriage to the former.⁸⁴ It is believed that 101 *viraktas* ("the passionless ones") propagated the religion in the empire. Among them were General Lakkaṇṇa, the author of *Śivatattva Chintāmaṇi* and Chamarasa, who wrote *Prabhuliṅgalīlē*.⁸⁵

According to some historians the last Saṅgama monarch, Virūpāksha II, was converted to Śrī-Vaiṣṇavism. This is based on the account in *Prapannāmṛitam* by Anantāchārya.⁸⁶ It is not supported by epigraphical, archaeological or other literary evidences. Besides, the *Prapannāmṛitam* is a Śrī-Vaiṣṇava hagiographical work of the seventeenth century. The historical accuracy of such a source is questionable. Hence, it is most likely that Virūpāksha was a Śaiva like his predecessors.

The shift to Vaiṣṇavism occurred with the change in dynasty. Sāḷuva Narasiṃha was a devotee of Venkaṭēśvara of Tirupati and Narasiṃha of Ahōbālam. His *guru* was Kaṇḍāḍai Rāmānujaiyāṅgār, a prominent spiritual leader at Tirumalai and Tirupati.⁸⁷

According to *Śrī Vyāsayōgicharitam* by Sōmanātha, the Mādhva sage Vyāsarāya was the *rāja-guru* of Sāḷuva Narasiṃha, Tuḷuva Vīra Narasiṃha, Kṛishṇarāya and Achyutarāya. Going by this account, it is claimed that these rulers favoured the Mādhva sect.⁸⁸ But, without other corroborating evidences the assertion of *Śrī Vyāsayōgicharitam* cannot be accepted. For, although Somanātha was a contemporary of the sage, he was also his devout disciple. Besides, his work, a *chamṭpū-kāvya*, is replete with embellishments typical of this literary genre. No inscriptions refer to Vyāsarāya's influence over Sāḷuva Narasiṃha,⁸⁹ or over Vīra Narasiṃha. Many

epigraphs point to the great reverence of Kṛishṇadēvarāya for this *guru*.⁹⁰ Still from this it cannot be definitely stated that the king was a Mādhva. His relationship with the sage might have been more personal than sectarian. Inscriptions also refer to Śrī-Vaiṣṇava ascetics whom he venerated, such as Goviṇḍarāja, who is called his *guru*,⁹¹ and Veṅkaṭa Tātāchārya.⁹² The king's favourite deity was Veṅkaṭēśvara of Tirupati and his strong leaning towards Śrī-Vaiṣṇavism is revealed in the *Āmuktamālyada*.⁹³ Under the last Tuluva emperor, Sadāśiva and his regent Rāmarāya, Śrī-Vaiṣṇavism won an undisputed ascendancy; Pañchamatabhañjanam Tātāchārya was the *guru* of Rāmarāya.⁹⁴

Harihara I and his successors had placed the realm under the protection of Śrī Virūpāksha and had adopted this name as their "sign-manual". Despite the change in the sectarian affiliation there was no alteration in this till the Āraṇḍi king, Veṅkaṭa II, replaced "Śrī Virūpāksha" by "Śrī Veṅkaṭēśa" as the official signature.

The conscious effort at religious conciliation seen in the Jaina-Vaiṣṇava accord of Bukka I in A.D. 1368⁹⁵ was continued by the later rulers. For, despite their sectarian preferences, the Vijayanagara rulers, on the whole, adopted the deliberate policy of tolerance towards all sects, so as to incorporate them all within the polity. Thus, Dēvarāya II endowed the Śrī-Vaiṣṇava temples at Śrīraṅgam⁹⁶ and Tirumalai,⁹⁷ favoured Jaina institutions in the capital⁹⁸ and elsewhere,⁹⁹ employed Muslims in his army¹⁰⁰ and allowed them to practise their religion freely.¹⁰¹ The Vaiṣṇava Kṛishṇadēvarāya bestowed lavish grants and gifts on Śaiva temples¹⁰² and Achyutarāya, on the occasion of his coronation, gave an equal number of villages to the temples of Ēkāmbaranātha and Varadarāja at Kāñchi.¹⁰³ Under Sadāśiva and Rāmarāya, however, although there was no persecution of Śaiva institutions, the official patronage was primarily extended towards Śrī-Vaiṣṇava ones. This departure from the traditional policy had unhappy consequences.

3. The City of Vijayanagara

"The City of Bidjanagar is such that the pupil of the eye has never seen a place like it, and the

ear of intelligence has never been informed that there existed anything to equal it in the world",¹⁰⁴ remarked 'Abdur Razzāk, the Persian ambassador to the court of Dēvarāya II. The city is situated in magnificent surroundings, the most striking element of which is the river Tuṅgabhadrā that flows here in a north-easterly direction through rugged, rocky terrain, particularly inhospitable on the northern bank. The pinkish-grey granite boulders form fantastic shapes as though piled up by some mysterious spirit. To the south of the river are two ridges, separated by a valley, and low hills such as Hēmakūṭa and Mataṅga. Immediately south of these the landscape changes, there are open valleys with isolated rocky outcrops, including Mālyavanta. Gradually the hills disappear and the land becomes increasingly flat and open. The larger valleys are irrigated; the contrast between the stark rocks and the green, fertile valleys adds to the picturesqueness of the site.

The remains of the imperial city of Vijayanagara, popularly known as "the Haṁpi ruins", are spread over an extensive area of about twenty-five square kilometres, from the village of Haṁpi in the north to Kāmalāpuram in the south (see Fig. 1). The outer lines of its fortifications and the suburban areas, however, include a much larger area,¹⁰⁵ from Ānegoṇḍi in the north to the modern town of Hospēṭi in the south.

The city was called Hosapaṭṭaṇa, the "New City", for some time. Later it came to be known as Vijayanagara the "City of Victory" and in the sixteenth century, it also came to be called Vidyānagara. Haṁpe, Paṁpā-kshētra, Bhāskarakshētra, Paṁpā-pura, Virūpāksha-kshētra, these are some of the other names by which the site is identified in inscriptions,¹⁰⁶ though, perhaps, these refer more particularly to the sacred area on the south bank of the river and not to the entire metropolis. Besides 'Abdur Razzāk, other visitors have left glowing accounts of the splendour of Vijayanagara. These include the Italian Nicolo Conti in the early fifteenth century, his compatriot Varthema in the beginning of the sixteenth and the Portuguese Duarte Barbosa, Domingo Paes and Fernāo Nuniz.

The Saṅgamas did not build the capital in an uninhabited desert land. The discovery of neoliths and handmade pottery at the site proves

that the history of the Haṃpi region dates back to the neolithic/ chalcolithic times.¹⁰⁷ Buddhist occupation here approximately between the first and the third/fourth centuries A.D. is indicated by an inscription in Brāhmī characters found during excavations near the “King’s Audience Hall”¹⁰⁸ and the more recent find in A.D. 1985 of five limestone slabs with elaborate reliefs. Epigraphical evidences show that this area was under the control of the various dynasties that ruled Kaṛṇāṭaka successively, including the early western Chālukyas,¹⁰⁹ the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇi,¹¹⁰ the Hoysālas¹¹¹ and the Kāmpili chiefs.¹¹² Liṅgāyat poets, such as Hariśvara and Rāghavāṅka, were active here in the twelfth century A.D.¹¹³ This site, from pre-Vijayanagara times, has an unbroken tradition of sanctity. It is a place of pilgrimage hallowed by goddess Paṃpā and her consort Virūpāksha. Kishkindhā of the Rāmāyaṇa is also believed to be close to Haṃpi.

Although the popular tradition of the “hare and the hounds”¹¹⁴ and some spurious inscriptions ascribe the foundation of the city to Harihara I and Vidyāraṇya, Vijayanagara became the imperial capital only during the reign of Bukka I.¹¹⁵ Harihara I ruled from Ānegoṇḍi on the north bank of the Tuṅgabhadra.¹¹⁶ An inscription dated A.D. 1349 of Harihara found in Ānegoṇḍi¹¹⁷ and the absence of all epigraphical or archaeological remains of his reign in Vijayanagara gives weight to this supposition. Paes refers to Ānegoṇḍi as the “old capital”.¹¹⁸

A record of A.D. 1368 states that Bukkarāya was “on the throne of the new Vijayanagara”¹¹⁹ and another of A.D. 1378 asserts that Bukka “built a splendid city, called the city of victory.”¹²⁰ The “royal centre” was built during this reign; inscriptions from the site refer to two gates, the Siṅghārada Hebbāgilu (NS g) and the Sōmavārada Bāgilu (NS s), in the fortification wall around this centre, as being “east of the city of Vijayanagara of Śrī Vira Bukkarāya”.¹²¹

Under Harihara II the capital was already a well-developed city extending from the present Haṃpi to Kāmalāpuram. Near the former was built in A.D. 1386 a Śiva temple,¹²² while close to the latter, in A.D. 1385, General Irugappa constructed the *chaityālaya* of Kunthu Jinanātha (“Gāṇigitti” temple).¹²³ In the sixteenth century Kṛṣṇadēvarāya shifted the royal residence

to the newly built suburban area to the south of the main city.¹²⁴ He returned, however, to the city proper, for the celebration of public rituals.¹²⁵

To facilitate documentation at the site, the entire area has been divided into four functional zones—the “sacred centre”, the “intermediate irrigated valley”, the “urban core” and the “sub-urban centres”.¹²⁶ The “sacred centre” is to the south of the Tuṅgabhadra. Here, in the confined areas of flat land or at the summits of rocky outcrops, are located the largest temple complexes of the city, numerous smaller temples and shrines, sculptures and inscriptions. To the south of this is an “irrigated valley”; the paucity of buildings and potsherds here indicate that this was an agricultural zone. The “urban core” occupies a series of hills, ridges and valleys to the south of the agricultural zone. The greatest concentration of population was located here, as is revealed by the traces of residences, tanks, wells, roads, stairways, pottery and also of the remains of many small shrines and larger temples. This zone is surrounded by a complete circuit of fortification walls, broken only by well-defended gateways. In the south-west end of the “urban core” is the “royal centre” (also referred to as the “palace zone” or “citadel”), which had its own enclosure wall, only parts of which have survived. To the north, the “urban core” is bounded by the north ridge. In the east end of the north ridge and the north-east valley was the Muslim quarter. Beyond this zone, further south and west, as far as modern Hospēt, were laid out the great residential suburbs. A few isolated temples in these are all that remain of the once populous “sub-urban centres”.

The validity of such a division of the site into four parts have been questioned and it has been suggested that the site should be viewed as a whole.¹²⁷ However, it must be noted that the authors themselves do not consider this designation as definitive.¹²⁸ For the sake of convenience, and for want of a better terminology to differentiate between areas in this vast city, these terms have been used in this monograph.

What were the city’s limits? In the time of Bukka I, as already seen, the “royal centre” within its own fortifications appears to constitute the city of Vijayanagara. In a later period

the “urban core” was viewed as the furthest extent of the city. Thus, Paes differentiates between ‘Crisnapor’, the area around the Kṛishṇa temple, from ‘Bisnaga’ (Vijayanagara).¹²⁹ From another point of view the city may be considered to embrace the whole site—“sacred centre”, “urban core”, and “sub-urban centres”.¹³⁰ In this monograph, the city proper is assumed to comprise only the “sacred centre”, the “irrigated valley” and the “urban core”, where extensive field work has been carried out. In the “sub-urban centres” to the south and Ānegoṇḍi to the north, which are included in the metropolitan area of the city, the field research has been restricted to the important monuments and remains.

Inscriptions and literary sources supply information about some of the quarters, suburbs, canals, markets, gates, etc., many of which date from the sixteenth century. The area around the Virūpāksha temple (NF w/1) was variously known as Virūpākshapura or Haṁpe, Paṁpakshētra,¹³¹ Paṁpā-pura¹³² or Bhāskarakshētra.¹³³ The Viṭhala temple (NH a/1) was located in Viṭhalāpura.¹³⁴ On his return from the victorious Udayagiri campaign Kṛishṇadēvarāya installed the *mūrti* of Bālakṛishṇa in the Kṛishṇa temple (NL m/4) in Kṛishṇāpura,¹³⁵ an *agrahāra*.¹³⁶ The area in which at present the A.S.I. office and the Traveller’s Bungalow are situated in Kāmalāpuram was called Koṇḍamarasayana-Pālya.¹³⁷ Kāmalāpuram was known by that name at least from A.D. 1531 onwards.¹³⁸ An inscription of A.D. 1541 mentions Kāmalāpuram and the big tank there.¹³⁹ Gōri-keḷagana-grāma (village downwards of the the tombs)¹⁴⁰ was, probably, the “Moorish quarter” of Paes;¹⁴¹ Hiriya Tirumalarāja, the brother-in-law of Achyutarāya built the Tiruveṅḷalanātha temple (NM h/1) in Achyutarāyapura.¹⁴²

Achyutarāya-pēṭe was in Achyutarāyapura.¹⁴³ Other markets included the Kṛishṇāpura-pēṭe,¹⁴⁴ the Peḍḍa-aṅgaḍi-vīdhi (big bāzaar street) near the Mādhava temple (NR t/2)¹⁴⁵ and the Kramuka-parṇāpaṇa-vīdhi (pān-supāri bāzaar) in which the *chaityālaya* of Pārśvanātha (NS q/1) is situated.¹⁴⁶

The so-called Turutta canal was originally known as the Hiriya Kāluve (big canal).¹⁴⁷ The small canal, on either side of which there are

stone plates (NW m), was called the Ūṭada kāluve (canal for eating).¹⁴⁸ Along the river, besides Paṁpā-tīrtha, other sacred spots were Chakra-tīrtha (NG r)¹⁴⁹ and Kōṭi-tīrtha (NG m).¹⁵⁰

During the reign of Kṛishṇadēvarāya the *agrahāra* township of Nāgaladēvīpura was called after the king’s mother (modern Nāgēnahalli).¹⁵¹ Sāle-Tirumale-Mahārāyapura¹⁵² (modern Anantaśāyanaguḍi) was built in A.D. 1524 in honour of the heir apparent. Tirumaladēvī-ammana-paṭṭana, named after the principal queen, forms the nucleus around which the town of Hospēṭ has grown.¹⁵³ During Achyutarāya’s reign the new suburbs of Varadadēvī-ammana-paṭṭana extended from the Paṭṭābhīrāma (or Raghunātha) temple towards the Penugoṇḍa gate.¹⁵⁴

The monuments within the city consist mainly of religious, civil and military buildings. The religious structures, such as the small shrines, large temple complexes and sculptures, provide the main source of information for this monograph.

While the bulk of the temples belong to the Vijayanagara period, a small proportion may be assigned to the pre-Vijayanagara times. These are mostly located in the original pilgrimage centre at the site, i.e., on the Hēmakūṭa hill and in and around the Virūpāksha temple complex. These early temples are built in the styles typical of the Deccan architecture—the Rāshṭrakūṭa, Kadāmba and the late Chālukya/Hoysāla styles.¹⁵⁵ The earliest temples, dating from the ninth to tenth centuries A.D., are in the Rāshṭrakūṭa idiom. There are at least two of these, the best example being the Durgā-dēvī temple near the Manmatha tank (NF w/25). There are many “Kadāmba-style” temples on the Hēmakūṭa. These are characterised by the stepped, pyramidal stone super-structures, the open porches with overhanging eaves and the plain outer walls with a horizontal band of geometric designs in the middle.¹⁵⁶ Some of these have triple shrines. The Bhuvanēśvari shrine within the Virūpāksha complex, with its fine lathe-turned chlorite columns and elaborate door-frame and ceilings, is in the later-Chālukya-Hoysāla idiom.

There are hundreds of small shrines and some large temple complexes within the city

dating from the Vijayanagara period. The former, comprising only a *cella* or a *cella* and porch or a *cella*, small *maṇḍapa* and porch are found all over the site, while the latter are mainly restricted to the “sacred centre”.

Two distinct strains are to be seen in the Vijayanagara style of temple art and architecture—the Karṇāṭaka tradition (of the Rāshtrakūṭas-later Chālukyas-Hoysalas) and the Tamil traditions (of the Pallavas-Chōḷas-Pāṇḍyas). The temple style of the Tamil region satisfied the increasingly elaborate ritualistic needs better than the Karṇāṭaka type of temple with fewer components and smaller dimensions. Thus, in the developed style of Vijayanagara temple architecture the material used (granite, with brick and mortar for the super-structures), the general plan and the various auxiliary structures are mainly from the Tamil tradition, but the sculptural themes and the decorative motifs come from the Karṇāṭaka traditions.¹⁵⁷

A medium-sized temple in the city has a *garbha-griha*, a *śukanāsi* (antechamber), an *antarāla* (second antechamber) and a *raṅga-maṇḍapa*, all arranged axially.¹⁵⁸ Larger ones have in addition a closed *pradakṣhiṇā* (circumambulatory) passage around the sanctum and an open *mahā-maṇḍapa* or *mukha-maṇḍapa* in front. Such temples stand within one or more *prākāras* (courtyards). The auxiliary structures within the temple courtyard include the separate shrine for the goddess, the *kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa* with the raised platform in the centre for the reception of the deity and his consort at the annual celebration of their marriage, the temple kitchen and store-rooms, the hundred-pillared hall for music and dance, shrines of the subsidiary deities or saints, the *pushkarāṇi* or temple tank, the towering *gōpuras* and the *ratha-vīdhi* or chariot street. The temple pillars are decorative. In the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries the Kalyāṇi-Chālukyan pillar-type remained popular.¹⁵⁹ The most characteristic type of pillar is one in which the shaft is cut into three square blocks, usually with reliefs on each side, separated by sixteen and octagonal sections. The composite pillars are a sixteenth century feature. In these the central shaft has either a rearing *yāli*/horse with the rider in front or a cluster of columnettes attached to it. In the *chitra-khaṇḍa* variety of

pillars the shaft is composed of a series of miniature shrines, one over the other. The typical Vijayanagara corbel is of the *pushpa-pōdigai* variety. The wide roll cornice with a double flexure is an important decorative element in these temples.

The fourteenth century temples, such as the Prasanna Virūpāksha (“Underground”) temple (NQ y/1) and the Jaina temple of Kunthu Jinanātha are in the Deccan style. The early fifteenth century Rāmachandra temple (NR w/1) is the first major construction in the city in the imported southern style. During the fifteenth century there was gradually a total absorption of the southern influence into the characteristic Vijayanagara style as can be seen from the Mādhava (NR t/2), Tiruveṅḷalanātha (NX l/1) and Chandraśekhara (NX l/1) temples within the “royal centre”. In the sixteenth century many additions were made to existing temples and new temples complexes were constructed. The most important of these are the Virūpāksha (NF w/1), Kṛishṇa (NL m/4), Tiruveṅḷalanātha (NM h/1), Viṭhala (NH a/1), Mālyavanta Raghunātha (NT d/1) and Paṭṭābhirāma.¹⁶⁰

A large number of non-religious themes—soldiers on horseback, clowns, acrobats, wrestlers, folk dancers, animals, and birds—are incorporated into the temple sculptures. The variety of deities depicted, often not according to the canonic texts, and the large number of non-religious themes represented indicate innovations in and new interpretations of the iconographical rules that guided artists in the early periods.¹⁶¹ Besides the sculptures in the temples, there are also a vast number of reliefs carved on free-standing boulders and also a few monolithic statues.

Besides the Hindu and Jaina temples and sculptures there are also remains of a number of Muslim tombs, gravestones and at least two mosques.

Contemporary with the religious monuments are secular structures of different types. Among these are some that employ easily recognisable Islamic elements such as arches, domes, stucco decoration and parapets. The most important of these are the so-called “Lotus Mahal” (NR t/3) and the three watch towers in the “Zenāna Enclosure”, the “Queen’s Bath” (NW p/1), the Octagonal Fountain (NW g/3), the “Guards’

Quarters" NR o/3) and the "Elephant Stables" (NR p/3). A careful study shows that these buildings demonstrate an effective synthesis of different architectural styles. Despite using Islamic elements they are neither Islamic nor Hindu, but are typically Vijayanagara. This was an imperial style reserved for buildings connected with the king, court and army.¹⁶²

Although no palace structure has survived intact, the recent excavations conducted at the site by the Archaeological Survey of India and the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Karnataka, have exposed the basements of a number of courtly residences. These follow an almost uniform pattern.¹⁶³ Associated with the court life were other platforms such as the "King's Audience Hall" (NW c/1) and the "Māhanavami Dibba" (NW d/1), also called the "House of Victory" or the "Throne Platform".

The city was fortified by circuits of defensive walls. According to 'Abdur Razzāk¹⁶⁴ there were seven circles of fortifications, while Nikitin¹⁶⁵ and Varthema¹⁶⁶ describe only three. The only more or less intact circuit wall is the one around the "urban core". The names of some of the strongly defended gateways that controlled movement in and out of the city are provided by epigraphs, such as the Areśāṅkara Bāgilu (NJ s), Udayagiri Bāgilu, (NU d) and Penugoṇḍa Bāgilu,¹⁶⁷ the Koṭīśāṅkaradēvara Bāgilu (NQ s & x)¹⁶⁸ and the Bēṭekārara Hebbāgilu (NYe).¹⁶⁹

The destruction of this rich and splendid city was sudden and dramatic. Following the climactic of Rakkasa-Taṅgaḍi, Vijayanagara was first looted by bands of robbers and then systematically plundered by the victorious Deccan armies. The large quantities of charcoal found during the archaeological excavations prove that parts of the city were burnt, while the mutilated sculptures render mute testimony to the iconoclastic zeal of the invaders. However, as Caesar Frederick relates, the city was not fully destroyed in A.D. 1565 and Tirumalarāya even attempted, though unsuccessfully, to restore it as the capital.¹⁷⁰ No longer the setting of an imperial dynasty, the city soon fell into decay. Later treasure seekers¹⁷¹ and vandals added to the despoliation of the city and the forces of nature completed the destruction begun by man.

Notes

¹S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, *South India and her Muhammadan Invaders*, p. 170.

²ECVI, Sg. 1.

³Manjula Sinnur, "The Capitals of the Vijayanagara Empire," in *The Vijayanagara Urbanity*, ed. K.R. Basavaraja, p. 48.

⁴Ibid.

⁵S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, "The Character and Significance of the Empire of Vijayanagara in Indian History," in *Vijayanagara Sixcentenary Commemoration Volume* (henceforth cited as VSCV), p. 16.

⁶H. Heras and V.K. Bhandarker, "Vijayanagara Empire—A Synthesis of South Indian Culture," in VSCV, p. 33.

⁷Ibid., p. 35.

⁸A.V. Venkata Ratnam, *Local Government in the Vijayanagara Empire*, p. 3.

⁹Burton Stein, "Vijayanagara and the Transition to Patrimonial System," in *Vijayanagara—City & Empire: New Currents of Research*, ed. A.L. Dallapiccola (henceforth cited as *Vij. City & Emp.*), vol.1, p. 73.

¹⁰B.S.L. Hanumantha Rao, "Inspiration for the Foundations of Vijayanagara and other Hindu Kingdoms," in *Dr. N. Venkataramanaya Commemoration Volume*, p. 162.

¹¹Gurty Venket Rao, "The Bahamani-Vijayanagara Relations," *PIHC*, 2, 1938, p. 264.

¹²K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *A History of South India: From Prehistoric Times to the Fall of Vijayanagara*, p.10.

¹³Ibid., p. 331.

¹⁴MAR of 1925, no. 20; ECH, Nj. 179; ECIX, Dv. 81; EC XII, Tm. 11; ECIV, Gu. 67; JAHRS 10, pp. 121-142; ARIE of 1963-64, A. 22.

¹⁵ECV, Cn. 265; ECV, B1. 148; ARIE of 1965-66, A. 1; EIII, pp. 35-41; ECX, Gd. 77; EIXVIII, pp. 165-166; ECXI, Hk. 132.

¹⁶ARSIE of 1889, nos. 27, 28, 39 and 40; ARSIE of 1904, nos. 1, 17 and 20; ARSIE of 1922, nos. 684 and 685.

¹⁷ARSIE of 1926-27, B.K. 7 and 14; ARSIE of 1928-29, B.K. 186; EC XI, Dg. 24.

¹⁸MAR of 1925, no. 34.

¹⁹ARSIE of 1919, nos. 541 and 549; SIII, pt. II, nos. 547 and 548.

²⁰EIV, pp. 17-22.

²¹MAR of 1941, no. 28; ECXIV, Tn. 161 and 162; ARSIE of 1919, no. 370.

²²MAR of 1933, no. 33.

²³Job Thomas, "Cultural Developments in Tamil Nadu During the Vijayanagara Period," in *Vij. City & Emp.*, vol. 1, pp. 24-25.

²⁴D.D. Hudson, "Two Citrā Festivals in Madurai," in *Religious Festivals in India and Sri Lanka*, ed. G.R. Welbon and G.E. Yocum, p. 138.

²⁵R. Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire* (henceforth cited as *FE*), pp. 269-274.

²⁶Burton Stein, "Mahānavami: Medieval and Modern Kingly Ritual in South India," in *All the Kings Mana: Papers on Medieval South Indian History*, p. 312.

Religious Traditions at Vijayanagara

- ²⁷Ibid., p. 319.
- ²⁸Ibid., p. 320.
- ²⁹A. Good, "Divine Coronation in a South Indian Temple," in *Religion and Society in South India*, ed. V. Sudarsan et al., p. 40.
- ³⁰Ibid.; see also A. Appadurai, "Kings, Sects and Temples in South India," in *South Indian Temples*, ed. Burton Stein, pp. 47-55.
- ³¹J. M. Fritz, "Chaco Canyon and Vijayanagara", in *Mirror and Metaphor*, ed. D. Ingersoll and G. Bronitsky, p. 331.
- ³²T. M. P. Mahadevan, *Outlines of Hinduism*, p. 141.
- ³³D. A. Pai, *Monograph on the Religious Sects in India among the Hindus*, p. 70.
- ³⁴*EI* XIII, pp. 122-132; *EI* XIV, pp. 168-175.
- ³⁵D. A. Pai, op. cit., pp. 61-62.
- ³⁶P. Jash, "The Kapalikas: An Obscure Saiva Sub-Sect," *PIHC*, 34, pp. 152-153.
- ³⁷D. N. Lorenzen, *The Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas: Two Lost Śaivite Sects*, p. 53.
- ³⁸Ibid.
- ³⁹B. S. L. Hanumantha Rao, op. cit., p. 151.
- ⁴⁰G. W. Briggs, *Gorakhnāth and the Kānpṭha Yogis*, p. 223.
- ⁴¹Ibid., p. 224.
- ⁴²Ibid., p. 166.
- ⁴³R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, pp. 127-128.
- ⁴⁴Sadyojata Swamiji, "Śaiva and Virāṣaiva Māthas in Kārnāṭaka", (Ph.D. diss.), p. 64.
- ⁴⁵A. Venkata Subbiah, "A 12th Century University in Mysore", *QJMS*, VII, p. 178.
- ⁴⁶R. Rama Rao, "Hinduism under Vijayanagara Kings", in *VSCV*, p. 44.
- ⁴⁷D. N. Lorenzen, op. cit., p. 170.
- ⁴⁸G. W. Briggs, op. cit., p. 1.
- ⁴⁹Pietro della Valle, *Travels in India*, vol. II, pp. 345-352.
- ⁵⁰A. P. Karmarkar, *The Religions of India, Vol. I: The Vṛātya on the Dravidian System*, p. 285.
- ⁵¹To distinguish the Mādḥvas from the Śrī-Vaiṣṇavas, in Kārnāṭaka (and possibly elsewhere in south India), the former are often referred to as Vaiṣṇavas. In this monograph, however, the word Vaiṣṇava is used in its more common connotation as that pertaining to Viṣṇu and his followers in general. To avoid any confusion, the followers of Rāmānuja are always referred to as Śrī-Vaiṣṇavas and their system as Śrī-Vaiṣṇavism, while the followers of Mādḥvāchārya are called Mādḥvas and their system as Mādḥvaism.
- ⁵²T. V. Mahalingam, *Administration and Social Life Under Vijayanagara* pt. II, pp. 196-198.
- ⁵³K. V. Raman, *Srī Varadarājaswāmī Temple-Kāñchi*, pp. 86-87.
- ⁵⁴A. Govindacharya, "Tengalai & Vadagalai," *JRAS*, 1912, p. 714.
- ⁵⁵H. Whitehead, *The Village Gods of South India*, p. 17.
- ⁵⁶Ibid.
- ⁵⁷K. Sarojini Devi, "Religion in Vijayanagara", (Ph.D. diss.), p. 368.
- ⁵⁸M. S. Ramaswami Ayyangar & B. Seshagiri Rao, *Studies in South Indian Jainism*, pt. I, pp. 23-24.
- ⁵⁹P. B. Desai, *Jainism in South India and Some Jain Epigraphs*, Preface, p. ix.
- ⁶⁰B. A. Saletore, "The Raja-Guru of the founders of Vijayanagara and the pontiffs of the Śrīngēri Matha," *JAHRS*, 9, p. 42.
- ⁶¹P. B. Desai, op. cit., p. 191.
- ⁶²*EC* VIII, Sb. 375; *MAR* of 1929, no. 90.
- ⁶³*EC* VII, Sk. 281.
- ⁶⁴Gāṅgādēvi, *Madhurāvijayam*, Canto I, verse 4.
- ⁶⁵*EC* V, Cn. 256.
- ⁶⁶*ARSIE* of 1924-25, A. 15.
- ⁶⁷*MAR* of 1912, p. 47.
- ⁶⁸*EC* XI, Dg. 23.
- ⁶⁹*EI* XIV, pp. 68-83.
- ⁷⁰*MAR* of 1941, no. 20.
- ⁷¹*ARSIE* of 1930-31, no. 344.
- ⁷²*ARSIE* of 1928-29, no. 467.
- ⁷³S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, *Sources of Vijayanagara History* (hereafter cited as *Sources*), p. 61.
- ⁷⁴*EC* VI, Sg. 1.
- ⁷⁵*MAR* of 1933, p. 117ff.; *ARIE* 1961-62, no. 500.
- ⁷⁶*MAR* of 1933, no. 33.
- ⁷⁷Ibid., no. 23.
- ⁷⁸Ibid., no. 24.
- ⁷⁹*ARSIE* of 1936-37, no. 283.
- ⁸⁰Ibid., no. 284.
- ⁸¹*MAR* of 1934, no. 31.
- ⁸²P. B. Desai, op. cit., p. 192.
- ⁸³B. V. Sreenivasa Rao, "The Religious Policy of Saṅgama Rulers," *JAHRS*, 29, pp. 35-36.
- ⁸⁴R. Rama Rao, op. cit., p. 45.
- ⁸⁵S. Rajasekhara, "Saṅgamas and Virāṣaivism", in *Early Vijayanagara: Studies in its History and Culture*, ed. G. S. Dikshit, pp. 85-93.
- ⁸⁶*Sources*, pp. 71-73.
- ⁸⁷*TTDES* VI, pt. II, p. 224.
- ⁸⁸R. Rama Rao, op. cit., p. 50.
- ⁸⁹S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, *A History of Tirupatī*, vol. II, p. 81.
- ⁹⁰*ARSIE* of 1919, no. 370; *MAR* of 1941, no. 28; *EC* XIV, Tn. 161 & 162; *EC* IX, Cp. 153; *EI* XXXI, pp. 139-162; *TTDES*, vol. III, nos. 157, 158 and 159; *EC* VII, Sh. 85; *SII*, vol. IV, no. 277.
- ⁹¹*EC* XIV, Md. 115.
- ⁹²*MAR* of 1918, p. 52.
- ⁹³K. Sarojini Devi, op. cit., p. 149.
- ⁹⁴*EI* XII, p. 347.
- ⁹⁵*EC* II, SB. 344; for details see M. Chidananda Murthy, "Fresh Light on Bukka's Inscription at Shravanabelgola," in *Early Vijayanagara: Studies in its History and Culture*, ed. G. S. Dikshit, pp. 95-100.
- ⁹⁶*EI* XVIII, pp. 110-111.
- ⁹⁷*TTDES* I, no. 192.
- ⁹⁸*SII* I, no. 153.
- ⁹⁹*ARSIE* of 1901, no. 33; *ARSIE* of 1928-29, A. 12.
- ¹⁰⁰*EC* III, Sr. 15.
- ¹⁰¹*FE*, p. 72.
- ¹⁰²e.g. *EI* I, pp. 361-171; *EI* VII, pp. 17-22; *SII* VIII, no. 165; *ARSIE* of 1913, no. 371.
- ¹⁰³*SITI* I, no. 406.
- ¹⁰⁴Abdur Razzāk, in *India in the Fifteenth Century*, ed.

R.H. Major, p. 23.

¹⁰⁵D. Devakunjari, *Hampi*, pp. 1-2.

¹⁰⁶C.T.M. Kotraiah, "The Metropolis of the Vijayanagara Empire," in *The Vijayanagara Urbanity*, ed. K.R. Basava Raja, p. 15.

¹⁰⁷D. Devakunjari, op. cit., p. 4.

¹⁰⁸*Indian Archaeology: A Review*, 1975-76, p. 20; also *ARIE* of 1975-76, B. 94.

¹⁰⁹IA VI, pp. 85-88; also *JBBRAS*, XII, p. 337 (late 7th century A.D.).

¹¹⁰*QJMS* VII, 4, p. 286 (late 10th century A.D.); *SII* IX, pt. I, no. 80 (A.D. 1018); *ARIE* of 1975-'76, B. 95. (A.D. 1077); H. Krishna Sastri, *Munirabad Stone Inscription of 13th year of Tribhuvanamalla* (A.D. 1088).

¹¹¹*Annual Report of the ASI of 1925-'26*, p. 140 (A.D. 1237).

¹¹²*ARSIE* of 1935-36, no. 353 (early 14th century A.D.)

¹¹³R. Narasimhacharya, *Karnataka Kavi Charite*, pt. I, pp. 257-277.

¹¹⁴*FE*, p. 299.

¹¹⁵B.A. Saletore, *Social and Political Life in the Vijayanagara Empire (A.D. 1346-A.D. 1646)* (henceforth cited as *Soc. & Pol. Life*), vol. I, pp. 102-106.

¹¹⁶Sugandha, "History and Archeology of Anegondi" (Ph.D. diss.), p. 49.

¹¹⁷M.S. Nagaraja Rao, (ed.), *Vijayanagara : Progress of Research 1983-'84* (hereafter cited as *VPR '83-84*), no. 74, p. 50.

¹¹⁸*FE*, p. 259.

¹¹⁹*EC* VII, Sk. 281.

¹²⁰*EC* V, Cn. 256.

¹²¹*VPR '83-84*, no. 2, p. 21 & *Ibid.*, no. 3, p. 23.

¹²²*Ibid.*, no. 11, p. 29.

¹²³*SII* I, no. 152.

¹²⁴*FE*, p. 246 and p. 252.

¹²⁵*Ibid.*, p. 262.

¹²⁶J.M. Fritz, G. Michell and M.S. Nagaraja Rao, *The Royal Centre at Vijayanagara: Preliminary Report*, pp. 9-13.

¹²⁷Burton Stein, "The Problematical 'Kingdom of Vijayanagara'," in *Vij. City & Emp.*, vol. 1, p. 2.

¹²⁸Fritz, Michell and Nagaraja Rao, op. cit., p. 8.

¹²⁹*FE*, p. 290.

¹³⁰J.M. Fritz and G. Michell, "Interpreting the Plan of a Medieval Hindu Capital," *World Archaeology*, 19, no. 1, p. 122.

¹³¹*VPR '83-84*, no. 11, p. 29.

¹³²*SII* IV, no. 267.

¹³³*VPR '83-84*, no. 12, p. 29.

¹³⁴*SII* IV, no. 272.

¹³⁵*SII* IV, no. 254.

¹³⁶*ARSIE* of 1935-36, no. 337.

¹³⁷*SII* IX, pt. II, no. 533.

¹³⁸*Ibid.*

¹³⁹*SII* IV, no. 245.

¹⁴⁰*Ibid.*, nos. 272, 273, 278.

¹⁴¹*FE*, p. 256.

¹⁴²*SII* IX, pt. II, no. 564.

¹⁴³*Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴*SII* IV, nos. 265 & 266.

¹⁴⁵*Ibid.*, no. 248.

¹⁴⁶*SII* I, no. 153.

¹⁴⁷*SII* IV, nos. 265 and 266.

¹⁴⁸*Ibid.*, no. 245.

¹⁴⁹*SII* XVI, no. 217.

¹⁵⁰*Pampamahatmya*, an English translation by G.S. Kalburgi (not yet published) of *Sri Pampa Mahatme or the Holy Eminence of the Pampa* (Kannada) by Guru Omsiddhalingeshvara Swami, 1983; the latter is based on the Sanskrit text, in Telugu characters, entitled *Sri Pampa Mahatme*, ed. Koratamaddi Venkataramasastry, 1933 (henceforth cited as *Pampamahatmya*. It is the English translation that is referred to throughout this monograph and since it is not yet published chapters, instead of pages, are cited) pt. I, chapter 75.

¹⁵¹*SII* IX, pt. II, no. 504.

¹⁵²*ARSIE* of 1922, no. 683.

¹⁵³*SII* IX, pt. II, nos. 539 and 573.

¹⁵⁴*Ibid.*, nos. 573 and 595.

¹⁵⁵G. Michell, "Architectural Traditions at Vijayanagara : Temple Styles," in *Vij. City & Emp.*, vol. 1, p. 274.

¹⁵⁶G.M. Moraes, *The Kadamba Kula*, pp. 310-312.

¹⁵⁷K.V. Raman, "Hoysala Influence on the Vijayanagara Art," in *Śrīkaṇṭhikā: Dr. Śrīkantha Sastri Felicitation Volume*, pp. 55-58.

¹⁵⁸*SII* IV, no. 280.

¹⁵⁹See *Vijayanagara : Progress of Research 1979-'83*, (*VPR '79-83*), p. 63.

¹⁶⁰G. Michell, op.cit., pp. 275-276.

¹⁶¹Dr. A.L. Dallapiccola, personal communication.

¹⁶²G. Michell, "Architectural Traditions at Vijayanagara : Islamic Styles," in *Vij. City & Emp.*, vol. 1, pp. 282-286.

¹⁶³C.S. Patil, "Palace Architecture at Vijayanagara : New Excavations," in *Vij. City & Emp.*, vol. 1, pp. 229-239.

¹⁶⁴Abdur Razzak, *loc. cit.*

¹⁶⁵A. Nikitin, in *India in the 15th Century*, ed. R.H. Major, p. 29.

¹⁶⁶Varthema, *The Itinerary of Ludovico di Varthema*, trans. J.W. Jones, p. 51.

¹⁶⁷M.S. Nagaraja Rao and C.S. Patil, "Epigraphical References to City Gates and Watch Towers of Vijayanagara," in *VPR '83-84*, pp. 96-100.

¹⁶⁸*VPR '84-87*, nos. 83 and 84.

¹⁶⁹*Ibid.*, no. 105.

¹⁷⁰Caesar Frederick, in *Purchas His Pilgrims*, by Samuel Purchas, pp. 93-98.

¹⁷¹*Annual Reports of the ASI of 1903-04*, p. 63 and of 1916-17, pp. 28-29.

A number of examples can also be given of the damage wrought by treasure seekers or vandals at the site even during the past few years. One very recent example will prove that the destruction at Vijayanagara was not exclusively the work of the looters of A.D. 1565. In temple (NG m/2) by the river there are three magnificent groups of portrait sculptures, with labels mentioning the names of the figures (see *VPR '83-84*, pp. 140-141 and plates XCI a and b and XCII a). These are the finest portrait sculptures at the site. Early in 1988, one of these groups (*Ibid.*, Plates XCI b) was severely mutilated by some unknown persons. This was, indeed, a senseless and vicious act of vandalism.