

CHAPTER 4

The *Rāmāyaṇa* Tradition

Vijayanagara city and its environs have been closely associated with the *Rāmāyaṇa*; certain incidents related in the epic are said to have taken place in this locality. From the early fifteenth century A.D. onwards the cult of Rāma gained in popularity and enjoyed the patronage of both the court and the populace. The survey of this cult in the city also reveals that a homology was established between Rāma and the king. In this chapter an attempt is made to trace the antiquity of the association of this site with episodes of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and to study the evolution, extent and patronage of the Rāma cult in the city and of the parallel drawn between the universal king, Rāma, and the earthly monarch.

Many places in Karṇāṭaka are associated with the incidents and heroes of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Vāli and Sugrīva are said to have lived near Hampi; places like Sitimani in the Bijāpur district, Chaya Bhagavati near Muddebihala and Birakabbi in Bāgalkoṭe *taluka* still retain the memory of Rāma and Hanumān who are said to have camped there.¹ The Jatinga Ramēśvara hill in the Chitradurga district is believed to be the place where Jaṭāyu fought with Rāvaṇa and lost his life.² Many place names in Karṇāṭaka are based on the stories from the *Rāmāyaṇa*. In some of these places, Rāma is stated to have lived with Sītā and Lakshmaṇa, while in others, he is said to have left the mark of his feet. At many riverside places where Sītā is believed to have dwelt and bathed, the water is said to be still yellow because of the turmeric she used!³ Of all the *Rāmāyaṇa* sites in the state, none perhaps is as important as that of Hampi and its surroundings which is claimed to be locale of many of the events narrated in the Kishkindhā Kāṇḍa, one of the seven *kāṇḍas* of the epic.

It must be noted that there is considerable academic controversy over the *Rāmāyaṇa*—about when and even whether Rāma existed, about the route that Rāma took in his southern wanderings, about the location of Daṇḍakāraṇya,

Kishkindhā, Laṅkā, etc. To cite just a few examples: Daṇḍakāraṇya has been located both in Mahārāshṭra and in Orissa;⁴ while the people of Karṇāṭaka assert that Hanumān was born near Ānegoṇḍi, the tribals of Madhya Pradesh believe that he was born in Anjan village in Gumla-Paramandal in the Rānchi district and countless legends related to his life are woven around the old temples scattered all over this region; still others hold that Hanumān was a descendant of the monkey clan that inhabited central India.⁵ Regarding Kishkindhā, besides Ānegoṇḍi, Vādhyā Kishkindhā on the Vindhya and Kekind near Jodhpur in Rajasthan are some of the places that claim to be the city of Vāli and Sugrīva.⁶ Besides the most common assumption of Śrī Laṅkā being the Laṅkā of Rāvaṇa, places as far apart as the Amaraṅṭaka peak in central India,⁷ the Maldives⁸ and the northern part of the Āndhra country on the shores of the Bay of Bengal⁹ have been identified as Laṅkā. Different views are held regarding the route that Rāma took in his southern journey. While the most commonly accepted view is that Pañchavaṭī, the place of Sītā's abduction, was near Nāsik on the Godāvari, in Mahārāshṭra, and that from here Rāma followed a southerly route through Karṇāṭaka in his search for Sītā, another theory locates Pañchavaṭī in Āndhra and the route of Rāma's southward progress along the east coast.

Such controversies are outside the scope of this study. From our point of view what is important is that for centuries countless numbers of people have venerated certain spots in and around Hampi as places hallowed by Rāma's presence. The genesis of this tradition dates back to the pre-Vijayanagara times and gained in popularity during the empire period. To this day thousands of devout pilgrims visit these places with the greatest reverence.

The events of the *Rāmāyaṇa* related to this site centre around the meeting of Rāma with Hanumān and Sugrīva and the alliance entered into with them. When Sītā was abducted by

Rāvaṇa, Rāma and Lakshmaṇa began their famous search for her. In their journey through the Daṇḍaka forest they encountered the giant *rākshasa* Kabandha,¹⁰ who advised them to ally themselves with Sugrīva, the exiled prince of the *vānaras* or monkeys, and directed them to go to lake Paṃpā and Rīshyamūka hill.¹¹ Rāma and Lakshmaṇa reached the west bank of the Paṃpā¹² and near it they visited the *āśrama* of the old female ascetic Śabarī, the disciple of *rīshi* Mataṅga. Sugrīva, the exiled prince, with Hanumān and his three other faithful companions, is said to have been dwelling at Rīshyamūka;¹³ from here they saw Sītā being carried away southwards by Rāvaṇa in his aerial chariot. Seeing them, the desperate Sītā dropped her ornaments and a garment,¹⁴ hoping that these would guide her husband in his quest for her.

When Rāma approached with Lakshmaṇa, Sugrīva fled, suspecting them to be emissaries of his rival Vāli. Hanumān, who was sent by Sugrīva, at first accosted the two strangers in the guise of a mendicant but soon realised his mistake, whereupon both sides offered friendly explanations.¹⁵ This meeting occurred at Rīshyamūka hill.¹⁶ Hanumān now fetched Sugrīva to meet the illustrious brothers; Rāma and Sugrīva made a pact of friendship and the latter brought out Sītā's garment and the jewels from the cave in which he had hidden them.¹⁷ Rāma and Sugrīva went to Kishkindhā, where Rāma killed Vāli, the reigning king, and enthroned Sugrīva in his place. Then, as the rainy season had begun and no operations could be undertaken, Rāma and Lakshmaṇa took shelter for four months on Mālayavat hill,¹⁸ also called Prasavaṇa.¹⁹ When the rains passed, Lakshmaṇa asked for Sugrīva's help in finding Sītā and Sugrīva repaired to Rāma at Mālayavat hill.²⁰ Summoning his vassal *vānaras*, Sugrīva despatched them in four bands east, south, west and north, to discover within one month where Rāvaṇa kept Sītā in captivity. Hanumān and his band who went south, found Sītā in Laṅkā city and returned with the good news to Kishkindhā.²¹ Before reaching Rāma with the happy tidings, the *vānara* band celebrated their triumph by alighting at Madhuvana, the protected park of the *vānara* king, where they indulged in unrestrained revelry. Regardless of the warnings of the guards,

they drank the honey, ate the fruits, uprooted trees and ruined the beautiful park. Rāma and Lakshmaṇa along with *vānara* army then proceeded south towards Laṅkā.

The places mentioned in the above account from the *Rāmāyaṇa* are all located in and around Haṃpi. Kishkindhā is said to be in the hills that surround Ānegoṇḍi. Āñjanadri hill, to the north-west of Ānegoṇḍi, is reputed to be the birth-place of Hanumān or Āñjanēya. Paṃpā Sarōvar (also called Paṃpā Saras) is near the foot of this hill. Close to this lake is a small cavern in the rock that is identified as Śabarī's hermitage. The Rīshyamūka hill is on a large island in the Tuṅgabhadrā, to the north of Mataṅga. A small cave amidst boulders on the south bank of the river (NG o/1), known as Sugrīva's Cave, is identified as the place where Sugrīva hid Sītā's jewellery. Certain streaks on the sheet rock near the cave are pointed out as the marks made by Sītā's garment. At Chintāmaṇi, in Ānegoṇḍi, Rāma is said to have given the garland for Sugrīva to wear, in order to distinguish him from his brother Vāli in their deadly combat, which took place on a nearby rocky island in the river. A huge mound of scoriaceous ash in the village of Nimbāpuram on the south bank of the river is claimed to be the cremated remains of Vāli. Lakshmaṇa is said to have crowned Sugrīva king at the site of the Kōdaṇḍarāma temple (NG w/1), also located on the south bank. During the rainy season Rāma and Lakshmaṇa waited on Mālyavanta hill. Madhuvana, where Hanumān and his cohorts descended to celebrate their success in discovering Sītā, is said to be located on the Hospēṭ-Kāmalāpuram-Kaṃpili road, about one-and-a-half kilometres beyond the circuit wall of the "urban core". A small lake near Sugrīva's Cave is locally known as Sītā Sarōvar or Sītā-kuṇḍa.²² The *Rāmāyaṇa* makes no mention of such a spot. Perhaps, it came to be so called because Sītā's jewels are believed to have fallen nearby. The *Pampamahatmya* gives an interesting account of this lake. According to it, Sītā, after her abandonment by Rāma, was advised by Vālmiki to bathe in that lake, pray to the goddess Gaurī and do penance. Sītā did so and the goddess Paṃpā appeared to her and reassured her; thereupon Sītā returned to the hermitage of Vālmiki.²³ The *Hemakutakhanda* and the *Pampamahatmya*, the local *sthaḷa-*

purāṇas, corroborate the oral tradition by mentioning Kishkindhā, lake Paṁpā, Rishyamūka, Madhuvana, Āñjanadri hill etc., as being at the site.²⁴

A careful survey of the monuments and remains at these spots reveals no traces of any pre-Vijayanagara structures. If there is no archaeological proof that the *Rāmāyaṇa* association with this site pre-dates the empire, there are a few epigraphical and literary sources that indicate this link at least from the eleventh century A.D. onwards. A Kannaḍa inscription dated A.D. 1069 from Dēvighaṭ about 10 kilometres away from Ānegoṇḍi refers to Kishkindhā.²⁵ A later Chālukyan record, dated A.D. 1088, in a Śiva temple of Sōmanātha at Munirābad, a village about 6.5 kilometres north-west of Hospēṭ, mentions Kishkindhā as being to the north and Rishyamūka to the east of this temple.²⁶ The Jaina version of the Rāma story, *Rāmachandra-Charita-Purāṇa* of the eleventh or twelfth century A.D. by Nāgachandra or Abhinava Paṁpā, claims that the residents of this area were not monkeys but a tribe who had the monkey insignia on their flag.²⁷

From the Vijayanagara period, we have many proofs of the firm belief that Kishkindhā was located in this area. In Ānegoṇḍi, across the village from south to north, there are about seven or eight stone temples of Hanumān now in ruins. The pillars of these and other temples are scattered about the village. On these pillars there are numerous representations of Hanumān and his heroic exploits. What is noteworthy is the exclusive representation of Hanumān in these and not of the main events of the entire epic. Obviously this is due to the attempt to commemorate the tradition that this is the place of Kishkindhā.²⁸

In the *Virūpāksha Vasantōtsava Champū* of Ahōbala, Kishkindhā and Vāli Bhaṇḍāra (the treasury of Vāli) are mentioned as being on the northern side of the Tuṅgabhadrā,²⁹ the Rishyamūka hill is also referred to.³⁰ This is a work of the Vijayanagara period, but the exact dating of it remains a problem.³¹

By the early fifteenth century, when the Rāmachandra temple (NR w/1) was built in the heart of the "royal centre", the *Rāmāyaṇa* association with the site seems to have been widely accepted. The Rāmachandra temple is axially

and visually aligned with hills to the north and north-east that are connected with this epic. The "route of Rāma" and the sculptural panels on the temple walls circumambulate the temple.³² The north-south axis of this temple, if extended northward, passes through the Mataṅga hill, the Kōdaṇḍarāma temple, close by the Rishyamūka hill and through the Āñjanadri hill; while a north-east axis converges on the Mālyavanta hill. The "route of Rāma" at the site is a complete half circle of clockwise movement around this temple—from the Rishyamūka hill to the north, the Mālyavanta to the north-east and finally the departure for Laṅkā southward. The *Rāmāyaṇa* panels on the exterior wall of the *raṅga-maṇḍapa* of the Rāmachandra temple also encircle the temple in a clockwise direction three times.³³

In the Rāmachandra temple there are two series of *Rāmāyaṇa* panels, the first, as mentioned above, around the *raṅga-maṇḍapa* and the second on the inner face of the *prākāra* walls between the northern and eastern gateways. In both, the Kishkindhā episodes are well depicted. A third complete *Rāmāyaṇa* series is found on the walls of the sixteenth century *gōpura* of the south-facing temple (NCw/3), north-east of the Viṭhala temple, locally known as the 'Old Śiva Temple'. Here 32 panels, out of a total of 131, are related to the Kishkindhā Kāṇḍa.³⁴ Thus, it is clear that by the sixteenth century it was widely accepted that the city and its surroundings was the locale of these incidents. Even the foreign visitors to the city seemed to be well aware of this, for Nuniz reports, "they say that in the former times this land belonged all to the monkeys and that in those days they could speak".³⁵

Āñjanadri hill, the supposed birthplace of Āñjanēya, is crowned by a temple dedicated to this deity, where worship still continues. The large relief of Āñjanēya, in heroic pose, in the *garbha-griha* is most probably a Vijayanagara period carving. An inscription on a rock in a field close to the hill records a land grant to Hanumantadēva of the hill by Nāgaṇḍadēva of Ānegoṇḍi³⁶ who appears to be a minister of a Vijayanagara king.³⁷ Unfortunately this record cannot be dated since the Śaka year is not given in it, but only the cyclic year Svabhānu.

There seems to be some confusion regarding the location of Paṁpā Saras during the

Vijayanagara period. An inscription of A.D. 1400³⁸ identifies what is now called Sitā-kunḍa (NG o/2) as the Paṅpā Saras. However, in another inscription of A.D. 1534³⁹ this lake is clearly named as Sitā-kunḍa, it being mentioned as the northern boundary of Achyutarāya-pēṭe. Evidently a change in identification occurred during the 134 years between these two epigraphs. Perhaps, with the growing popularity of the Rāma cult in the city and due to the proximity of this lake to the small cavern, that is called Sugrīva's Cave, this lake came to be associated with Sitā, while the lake to the north of the river became known as Paṅpā Saras. That the latter was considered a sacred spot at least by the late Vijayanagara period is indicated by the presence of a *dēvī* temple and a Śiva shrine, of the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century A.D. on its banks.⁴⁰ Besides its association with the *Rāmāyaṇa*, this lake is more famous as the site of Paṅpā-dēvī's austerities, hence the *dēvī* and Śiva shrines near it are appropriate.

The site of Sugrīva's coronation is marked by the temple of Kōḍaṅḍarāma (NG w/1). In its sanctum is a large relief, carved on a rock, of Rāmā-Sitā-Lakshmaṇa, with a small figure of Sugrīva to one side. The temple, with its composite pillars, appears to be a sixteenth century construction. At Madhuvana is a modern temple, enshrining a very large relief of Añjanēya in the striding, heroic pose. That this place was known as Kaḷasāpura in the Vijayanagara times is revealed in an undated inscription.⁴¹ An inscription of A.D. 1434, near this temple, records the gift of Devarāya II to god Hanumantadēva.⁴² Thus, evidently, there was a temple here in the fifteenth century and this spot must have been of special significance. It is likely that the modern temple is built on the site of the Vijayanagara temple and that the *mūrti* is the original one.

Mālyavanta, where Rāma is said to have stayed for four months and from where he started on his campaign against Laṅkā, is graced by a large Raghunātha temple. However, the Mālyavanta hill appears to have also been a Śaivite sacred spot. According to the *Pampamahatmya*, sage Mālyavanta, a great devotee of Śiva, did severe penances on this hill.⁴³ Around A.D. 1410 Lakshmidhāra, a minister of Devarāya I, consecrated Gaṇeśa in a cave temple on the southern slope of this hill;⁴⁴ no mention is made of

Raghunātha in this record. On this hill there is also a group of twenty *liṅgas* and Nandis carved on the bedrock (NT d/7), flanking a crevice filled with water. Surprisingly, this crevice is locally known as Lakshmaṇa-bāṇa, for it is believed that Lakshmaṇa shot his arrow into the ground here to get water. Perhaps, this may indicate a conflation of the earlier Śaivite cult with the cult of Rāma at this spot. Much of the Raghunātha temple complex dates from the sixteenth century. It is possible that the nucleus of this temple is of an earlier date, since in the *Narasimhapurāṇam* of Haribhaṭṭa it is written that one Prōlugaṅṭi Tippa, a contemporary of Devarāya II, gifted a valuable crown to god Raghunātha of Mālyavanta hill.⁴⁵ However, since this work was composed only about the year A.D. 1580⁴⁶ its reliability as a source of information may be questioned. While there are sixteenth century epigraphical references to this temple,⁴⁷ there does not seem to be any inscriptional evidence of its existence in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries.

Thus, although the association of Hampi *tīrtha* and its immediate environs with the Kishkindhā section of the *Rāmāyaṇa* cannot be dated exactly, it definitely pre-dates the Vijayanagara empire. It is likely that, besides the association of the site with Paṅpā and Virūpāksha, the *Rāmāyaṇa* tradition at the site was a reason for its choice as the capital city. Yet the first Saṅgama rulers made no reference to Rāma or to the *Rāmāyaṇa* at this site in their inscriptions and there are no pre-fifteenth century temples dedicated to Rāma in the city. It was in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that the various pilgrimage spots linked with Rāma's exploits here were clearly identified and reliefs, shrines or temples were set up to highlight their importance.

It is not surprising that, despite the *Rāmāyaṇa* association at this site, the worship of Rāma in the city is not very ancient. For although the belief in Rāma as an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu existed from the early centuries of the Christian era, the cult of Rāma came into existence only about the eleventh century A.D.⁴⁸ So far no shrine dedicated to Rāma and no cult image of this deity has come to light before the medieval period.⁴⁹ In Kaṛṇāṭaka, although there are representations of the *Rāmāyaṇa* themes and of Rāma on temple walls from the early

Chālukya and Rāshtrakūṭa periods, there are no temples dedicated to him till the Hoysāḷa period.⁵⁰ In the state, Rāma gained importance from the latter half of the Hoysāḷa period and became a popular deity during the Vijayanagara times.⁵¹ Thus, the strong prevalence of the Rāma cult is a relatively later phenomenon, for the incarnation of Rāma definitely remained a minor one till the late medieval period.⁵² Undoubtedly, in south India the Rāma cult became widely popular only during the Vijayanagara period.⁵³

Within the empire, the royal patronage of the cult of Rāma dates from the early fifteenth century. In A.D. 1406, on the occasion of his coronation, Dēvarāya I gifted a village as an *agrahāra* to several brāhmaṇas after granting one share of it to the gods Rāmachandra and Śaṁbhū (Śiva).⁵⁴ An inscription of A.D. 1433 of Dēvarāya II, records a gift of a village to a temple of Rāmachandra.⁵⁵ Both Dēvarāya II⁵⁶ and Mallikārjuna⁵⁷ patronised the Raghūttama *maṭha* at Gokaṇa and the temple of Rāma in it. Among the later rulers, Kṛishṇadēvarāya was the most generous in the lavish endowment of temples of various deities, including the temples of Rāma,⁵⁸ in different parts of his empire.

Within the capital, probably the earliest and certainly the most important Rāma temple is the one popularly known as Hazāra-Rāma (NR w/ I), the real name of which, inscriptions reveal, was Rāmachandra temple.⁵⁹ It is located in the heart of the “royal centre”, in the middle of the royal enclosures. As already seen, a north-south axis and a north-east axis link it with prominent natural features in the city. To the west of the Rāmachandra temple and aligned with it on an east-west axis, is the temple of Prasanna Virūpāksha, the royal chapel dedicated to the tutelary deity of the empire and the earliest temple within the “royal centre”.

The Rāmachandra temple (Plate 16) was the first major construction in the capital in the imported Tamil style; it was worked on by the most skilled artisans and sculptors of the day, for the quality of its architecture and sculpture is truly outstanding. The temple complex is a fairly small one (see Fig. 15). It consists of a rectangular courtyard, with gateways in the east (A) and north (B) walls and a small doorway in the south wall (C), which was probably a private

entrance for the ruler. The principal, east-facing shrine (D) has a square sanctum, a rectangular antechamber, a transitional rectangular bay and a square hall (*raṅga-maṇḍapa*) with porches on the east, north and south sides. In the sanctuary is a rectangular *pīṭha* (pedestal) with three socket holes, probably for statues of Rāma, Sītā and Lakshmaṇa. The open pillared *maṇḍapa* (E) to the east of the *raṅga-maṇḍapa* is a later addition. The subsidiary shrine (F) has two sanctuaries, an antechamber and a pillared hall. The enclosed *utsava-maṇḍapa* (G) in the north-east corner of the courtyard is probably a sixteenth century structure. This temple complex is fairly small. The limited space suggests a restricted use—possibly only for the king and his family, his priests and high officials. In all likelihood it was a state chapel.

The high enclosure wall of this temple complex is unique, for this is the only example in the city where there are continuous reliefs along the outer face of the wall. These reliefs, arranged in five sculptured friezes, run in a clockwise direction around three sides of the temple. The friezes display a procession of elephants, horses, soldiers, dancing girls and mythological scenes; occasionally seated royal figures are also present, leaning on cushions inside pavilions, sometimes with attendants. More than eighty metres east of the Rāmachandra temple and aligned with its east gateway are the remains of a lofty stone pillar and a shrine, which was probably intended to house Garuḍa or Hanumān.

The strategic location of the temple, the remarkable quality of its architecture and sculpture and the royal imagery on its enclosure walls—all indicate that it was a royal construction. But, there is no foundational inscription to reveal clearly who the royal founder was. The earlier writers⁶⁰ on Vijayanagara have erroneously attributed the temple construction to Kṛishṇadēvarāya. This temple is definitely of the early fifteenth century. A Sanskrit inscription mentions king Dēvarāya and the goddess Paṁpā.⁶¹ According to N. Venkataramanayya, the temple was built by the last Saṅgama ruler, Virūpāksha II, who following his conversion to Śrī-Vaiṣṇavism transformed an earlier Paṁpā temple into a temple of Rāma.⁶² However, as seen in Chapter I, the story of the conversion of Virūpāksha is based only on the

Prapannāmṛitam, a late piece of Śrī-Vaiṣṇava hagiography and is not supported by any other evidence. Besides, throughout the period under survey, Paṅpā-Virūpākṣa remained the tutelary deity of the empire and it is highly unlikely that any ruler, whatever be his personal affiliation, would have replaced an extant temple dedicated to Paṅpā-dēvī by a temple to another deity.

This inscription carved on the east porch of the *raṅga-maṇḍapa* (Fig. 15: 1) has puzzled historians, for no mention is made in it of god Rāmachandra. It reads “Just as Vāṇi was gracious to Bhōja Rāja, Tripurāmba to Vatsa Rāja and Kālī to Vikramārka, just so is Paṅpā now gracious to king Dēvarāya.” Michell has proposed an interesting explanation for this invocation by the king of the blessing of the goddess. Paṅpā, as seen in Chapter 2, was the local goddess of the site selected by the early Saṅgamas for their capital, the *śaktī* of Virūpākṣa the tutelary deity of the kings. Therefore, some need must have been felt to integrate the older Śaiva cult with the rising importance of Rāma, a god who came to be worshipped in a splendidly appointed new temple in the heart of the king’s own capital. Through this Sanskrit *śloka*, Dēvarāya asserts that despite his patronage of Rāma, and his incorporation of the cult of this god into his “royal centre”, he is still concerned about benefiting from the blessing of the goddess. “Dēvarāya has no intention of relinquishing his links with Paṅpā despite the dedication of his new royal shrine to Rama. This, we believe, is the basic intention of the epigraph and it provides us with an insight into the conflicts that must have arisen as the Vijayanagara kings broadened the scope of their religious beliefs.”⁶³

The above inscription indicates that one of the Dēvarāyas built the temple. This inscription, when read together with a second one (2), also on the basement of the east porch, reveals that the king was probably Dēvarāya I. It is likely that these two epigraphs, engraved one above the other and prominently displayed just north of the main entrance of the principal shrine, date from the consecration of the temple. In the second inscription⁶⁴ it is stated that Aṅṅala-dēvī presented gold vessels to Śrī Rāmachandra, on the first day of the bright fortnight of *Chaitra* in the year Durmukhi.⁶⁵ It is very probable that

Durmukhi here represents A.D. 1416 and that Aṅṅala-dēvī may have been a queen of Dēvarāya I.⁶⁶ The type of royal figures depicted on the outer faces of the enclosure walls also indicates that this is an early temple.⁶⁷

An inscription (3) dated 12 March A.D. 1513, on the south wall of the *utsava-maṇḍapa*⁶⁸ records the gift made by Kṛishṇadēvarāya of six villages to this temple.⁶⁹

Another inscription (4) on the south basement of the *raṅga-maṇḍapa* of the principal shrine,⁷⁰ of A.D. 1521, and a damaged, unpublished one on the south basement of the sanctum (5) record the devotion of Timmarāja, son of *Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara* Chikka Timmayadeva, the ruling king of Yeruva, to this temple deity. He built an *utsava-maṇḍapa* and made an endowment for the celebration of a number of festivals and services in the temple.

On the west wall of the north gateway (6) is the record of the installation of *ālvārs* in the temple by Āravīṭi Veṅḡalarāju.⁷¹ The Āravīṭi chiefs, Rāmarāya, his brothers and cousins, rose to prominence during the reign of Sadāśiva. Hence, it is likely that this undated epigraph is of the last phase of the city’s history. We do not know of an Āravīṭi prince named Veṅḡalarāju. But, a younger brother of Aliya Rāmarāya is named Veṅkaṭādri. Since Veṅkaṭa and Veṅḡala are both names of the deity of Tirumalai-Tirupati it is possible that this prince was the author of the inscription.⁷²

These inscriptions reveal the importance of this temple. It enjoyed patronage from the early fifteenth century up to the mid-sixteenth century. The authors of the inscriptions are all distinguished persons, namely, two kings, a queen, the son of a subordinate prince and a highly connected chief. The significance of the Rāmachandra temple is also indicated by its position in the centre of the royal enclosures, at the heart of the “royal centre” and its alignment with salient landmarks and structures. This temple was the key organizing feature of the plan of the “royal centre” and the city, for all the radial roads from outside into the city converged on the plaza adjacent to the temple, while the ring roads of the city pivoted around the royal enclosures at the centre of which is the Rāmachandra temple.⁷³

The Rāmachandra temple is the only temple

in the city dedicated to this cult deity that can be definitely assigned to the fifteenth century on the basis of epigraphical evidence. However, as already seen, it is probable that the core of the Mālyavanta Raghunātha temple (Fig. 16) was also constructed during the Saṅgama period. This temple is built around a large boulder, which is completely incorporated into the *vimāna*, only protruding above the roof. In the sanctum (A) is a relief carved on this rock of the Rāma-Sītā-Lakshmaṇa-Hanumān group. Rāma and Sītā are seated, the former has his right hand in the *jñāna-mudrā*, while the left rests against the knee and the goddess holds a lotus flower in one hand; Lakshmaṇa is standing and Hanumān kneeling in adoration. All the figures wear magnificent head-dresses and ornaments. Stylistically these figures appear to have been carved during the period of the Saṅgama rulers.⁷⁴

Many additions were made to the Mālyavanta Raghunātha temple in the sixteenth century A.D., such as the *mahā-maṇḍapa* (B) which has composite pillars and the detached columned hall (C) in the south-west corner of the courtyard. The latter is a typical feature of the sixteenth century temple complexes in Vijayanagara. This temple is one of the largest temples dedicated to Rāma in the city. The frequent occurrence of the *nāmam* and of reliefs of the *ālvārs* and Rāmānuja on pillars indicate that this was a Śrī-Vaiṣṇava temple. For many years it was deserted, but in fairly recent times worship has been revived in it and an annual car festival is organized by *bairāgis* from Bihār who have occupied it.⁷⁵

On the south bank of the Tuṅgabhadra, near the sacred Chakra-tīrtha, is the small, north-facing, sixteenth century temple of Kodaṇḍarāma (NG w/1), the name indicating that Rāma holds the Kodaṇḍa or bow. As at Mālyavanta the images here are carved on a single boulder. Rāma, Sītā and Lakshmaṇa are standing, while Sugrīva bows low at Rāma's feet. These figures are not refined. Stylistically they probably belong to the reign of the last kings of Vijayanagara.⁷⁶ The temple belonged, most probably, to the Vaḍagalai Śrī-Vaiṣṇava sect, for the *nāmam* of the northern school appears on the temple pillars. It is a living temple; even today the *archakas* conducting the rituals are Vaḍagalai

Śrī-Vaiṣṇavas.

That the cult of Rāma was popular in the city in the sixteenth century A.D. is revealed by the number of temples built in honour of this deity. To the north of the Hiriya Kāluve (Turutta canal) is a dilapidated Raghunātha temple (NL q/1) built in A.D. 1524 by Gōpinātha Dikshita, who also donated some land to the temple. At the same time Kṛishṇadēvarāya laid down a system of offering daily a quantity of supplies from the Kṛishṇa temple for the food offerings to this god; while from the Paṁpā-Virūpāksha temple, too, a stipulated amount of rice and oil was to be supplied daily.⁷⁷

The largest temple in the site dedicated to this deity is the so-called Paṭṭābhīrāma temple, east of Kāmalāpuram (Plate 18). Although there is no foundational inscription in this temple, its construction can be assigned to the period of Achyutarāya since it is located in the new suburb built during his reign in honour of the queen. Besides, the inscriptions within the temple also belong to the reign of this king. An epigraph of A.D. 1539⁷⁸ reveals that this temple in Varada-dēvi-ammana-paṭṭana was of god Raghunātha and it records a gift to the deity of the toll revenue on garden produce, amounting to *varāhas* 1050, by one Achyutarāya-Mallapaṇṇa. This was also one of the temples in the capital on which king Achyutarāya inscribed his gift of *Ānandanidhi* to the brāhmanas in A.D. 1539.⁷⁹ On the east gōpura there are two Sanskrit records of this, one in the Telugu script and the other in Nāgarī.⁸⁰ This temple, too, was undoubtedly a Śrī-Vaiṣṇava one.

During the same reign, in A.D. 1540, Timmarāju, son of Hiriya-Abbarāja, installed the god Raghunātha in a temple built by him to the east of Varada-dēvi-ammana-paṭṭana near the Penugoṇḍa gate and made a grant of lands for the services in the temple.⁸¹ This inscription is engraved on a large slab in front of this temple.

A slab erected in front of a small ruined temple (NS x/1) on a hill to the south-east of the Sōmavārada Bāgilu (Monday Gate) records a donation to god Gavikēri Raghunātha during the reign of Sadāśivarāya.⁸² Since this is a donative grant, it is not possible to date this temple of Gavikēri Raghunātha. East of this temple is a deserted double-shrine temple (NT z/5). In the

lower shrine is a relief of Vīrabhadra, while the upper one is built against a boulder on which is a carving of the *paṭṭābhishēka* (coronation) scene of the seated Rāma and Sītā flanked by the standing Lakshmaṇa, Bharata and Śatrughna.⁸³ This shrine of Paṭṭābhirāma, too, cannot be dated. An inscription on a double-storeyed *maṇḍapa* (NR y/3) east of the Rāmachandra temple records the construction of the *maṇḍapa* by the mercantile guild as a service to god Raghunātha.⁸⁴

Thus, inscriptions or relief carvings indicate the presence of eight Rāma temples at the site. It is likely that there were other temples or shrines dedicated to Rāma of which we have no evidence. The epigraphs reveal that the patronage of the Rāma cult came not only from kings (Dēvarāya I and Kṛishṇadēvarāya), high dignitaries (Āravīṭi Veṅgaḷarāju) and subordinate chiefs (Timmarāju, son of the ruling king of Yeruva), but also from wealthy citizens (Gopinātha Dikshita, Achyutarāya-Mallapaṇṇa and Timmarāju, the son of Hiriyā-Abbarāju) and from mercantile groups.

Besides the temples, sculptures also highlight the wide popularity enjoyed by this cult. Throughout the site, reliefs of Rāma are common on the pillars of temples, both Vaishṇava and Śaiva. He is usually depicted, according to the iconographic rules,⁸⁵ in the standing pose with the *bāṇa* or arrow in the right hand and the *dhanus* or bow in the left. Lakshmaṇa is also to be seen occasionally on pillar reliefs. To distinguish him from Rāma, Lakshmaṇa's bow is slung over one shoulder and his hands are joined in the *añjali-mudrā*. Carvings of the Rāma theme on rocks and isolated boulders are also extant. In the Yantrōdhāraka Āñjanēya shrine (NG w/3), besides the principal Hanumān relief, there is in a side shrine a fine carving of Rāma seated in *lalitāsana* with Sītā on his knee and Lakshmaṇa standing to one side. In a rock shelter (NG n/5) near Kōṭi-tīrtha, alongside the Narasiṃha relief, there is the representation of the Rāma-Sītā-Lakshmaṇa group. In another rock shelter (NS a/1), along with other Vaishṇava themes, is the relief of the seated Rāma and Sītā and standing Lakshmaṇa, flanked by Garuḍa and Hanumān. On the Hēmakūṭa hill, near temple NL b/14, is a rock-carving of Vira-Āñjanēya and to his left that of the standing Rāma, Sītā and

Lakshmaṇa. This relief is unique since it is the only definitely non-Śaiva monument of the pre-Vijayanagara or Vijayanagara times extant on this hill. On a rock within the "royal centre" is a relief (NQ u/4) of Rāma and Sītā in a seated posture and Lakshmaṇa standing guard. Below the panel are carved Hanumān, Garuḍa and Śēsha. A large relief of Rāma and Lakshmaṇa appears on a boulder near temple NM d/3.

The *Rāmāyaṇa* association with the city and its surroundings is commemorated by *Rāmāyaṇa* panels. Besides the three complete series of the *Rāmāyaṇa* mentioned earlier (i.e., two from the Rāmachandra temple and one on the *gōpura* of temple NC w/3), which portray the complete story of Rāma from the Bāla Kāṇḍa to the Yuddha Kāṇḍa of the epic, there are also two series of the Uttara Kāṇḍa, the seventh and additional *kāṇḍa*. The first of these is on the exterior walls of the *vimāna* of the subsidiary shrine within the Rāmachandra temple complex. The main episodes of Uttara Kāṇḍa are to be found here, arranged in two tiers. The second occurs in the *uyyāle-maṇḍapa* of the principal shrine in the Viṭhala complex (NH a/1). This *maṇḍapa* is divided into three parts: in the central portion of the north aisle there are vertical slabs forming an architrave above the pillars. Along these are panels of some of the episodes of the Uttara Kāṇḍa—the *aśvamedha* sacrifice organized by Rāma, the capture of the horse by the twins, Lava and Kusha, etc. A number of *Rāmāyaṇa* reliefs are also seen on the two pillars of the north porch of the principal shrine of the Viṭhala complex and on the east *gōpura* of the Tiruveṅgaḷanātha temple (NM h/1). Stray reliefs of incidents from the epic are to be found on pillars of many temples such as in the Śiva temple NG t/3, in the *raṅga-maṇḍapa* of the principal shrine of the Viṭhala temple and in the south-east corner pavilion in the same complex.

Rāmāyaṇa themes may have also been popular in temple paintings. Unfortunately, very few paintings have survived at the site. The best preserved paintings are on the ceiling of the *mahā-raṅga-maṇḍapa* of the Virūpāksha temple (NF w/1). Here the depiction of the *Sītā-svamyamvara* and the marriage of Rāma and Sītā are prominent.

In the Indian tradition, Rāma is considered to be the ideal king. One reason for the wide

prevalence of the Rāma cult and the royal patronage it enjoyed in Vijayanagara was, perhaps, the homology drawn between Rāma, the ideal, universal monarch and the earthly king reigning from his capital. The city was compared to Ayōdhyā, Rāmā's capital. For example an inscription of A.D. 1379 states, "in the same city (Vijaya) did Harihara dwell, as in former times Rāma dwelt in the midst of the city of Ayōdhyā."⁸⁶

Fritz and Michell have highlighted the centrality of the Rāmachandra temple in the urban planning of the city. It is the key to the understanding of the partnership envisaged between the deity and the king. This temple is at the nucleus of the "royal centre", from where the king's authority emanated outwards to the city and the empire; around it are arranged all the enclosures and architectural elements of this zone. The temple is the focus of the radial road system of the city and it also acts as a pivot for the concentric circumambulatory routes. The temple helps to define the "royal centre" into two parts. The north-south axis of the temple, besides axially aligning the temple with important landmarks, also separates the "royal centre" into the zones of royal performance and royal residence. The zone to the east of this axis is connected with the public roles of the king (administrative, military and ritualistic), while in the enclosures to the west of this axis were enacted the private roles of the royal household. Thus, the god is at the centre of the king's public and private life. Such an emphasis on Rāma as the nucleus of the city plan suggests the profound significance of this deity for the Vijayanagara rulers. The king and the god were the focus of the "royal centre" and the city; the monarch was the most powerful terrestrial partner of the god.⁸⁷

It has been suggested that "Ramachandra was conceived as being 'within' the king, 'empowering' or 'generating' his activities."⁸⁸ This aspect of the relationship between the god and the king is hinted at in the arrangement of the reliefs on the enclosure walls of the Rāmachandra temple complex. On the inner faces of the walls, between the north and east getaways, are Rāmāyana reliefs distributed in panels on six horizontal courses (Plate 17). On the outer faces of the walls are the five courses of reliefs

displaying royal pageantry—the celebration of the royal rituals of the *Mahānavamī* and *Vasantōtsava* festivals. While in the interior Rāma is the focus of the friezes, on the exterior the attention is directed to the king and his power and wealth.

If the king in Vijayanagara is identified with Rāma, in turn Rāma is also portrayed as a king. This is to be found in certain reliefs in the temples, which are at variance with the traditionally accepted iconographic representations of this god.⁸⁹ In these unusual reliefs, Rāma is shown sitting on a throne-like seat, leaning against a cushion or bolster, with one leg crossed over the other, often with one hand raised in the *tarjanī-mudrā* (one finger pointing upwards) and usually with a shawl draped around one arm (Plate 19). He is depicted exactly as the kings are on the enclosure walls of the Rāmachandra temple complex (Plate 20), on the Mahānavamī Platform and elsewhere. The only difference is in the headdress: while the god wears the *kirīṭa-mukuta*, the typical crown worn by Vishṇu in his diverse manifestations, the kings are bareheaded or wear the *kullāyi*. Occasionally in such reliefs, Rāma is accompanied by Lakshmaṇa or Hanumān, either in the same panel or in the adjacent one.⁹⁰

Thus, Vijayanagara and its surroundings are considered to be intimately connected with the earthly adventures of god Rāmachandra. The cult of Rāma from the fifteenth century onwards enjoyed an extensive following in the city and it had a special significance for the kings.

Notes

¹H.V. Sreenivasa Murthy and R. Ramakrishna, *A History of Karnataka: From the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, p. 23.

²Ibid.

³Masti Venkatesa Iyengar, *Popular Culture in Karnataka*, p. 136.

⁴D.R. Bhandarkar, "Daṇḍakāranya", in *Jha Commemoration Volume*, ed. K. Chattopadhyaya et al., pp. 48-50.

⁵K.C. Aryan and S. Aryan, *Hanuman in Art and Mythology*, p. 72, (a footnote).

⁶D.R. Bhandarkar, *op.cit.*, pp. 51-52.

⁷M.V. Kibe, "Rāvana's Laṅkā located in Central India," *IHQ*, IV, pp. 694-702; G. Ramadas, "Rāvana's Lanka," *IHQ*, IV, pp. 339-346; R.B. Hiralal, "The Situation of Rāvana's Lanka" in *Jha Commemoration Volume*, ed. K. Chattopadhyaya et al., pp. 151-161.

⁸V.H. Vader, "Situation of Ravana's Lanka on the

Equator," *IHQ*, II, pp. 345-350.

⁹D.P. Mishra, "The Search for Lañkā," *Mahakōśala Historical Society*, vol. I, cited by S.B. Chaudhuri, "Lanka," *IHQ*, XXVII, p. 119.

¹⁰Aranya Kāṇḍa lxxiv. 19 (of the Vālmiki *Rāmāyaṇa*), cited by F.E. Pargiter, "The Geography of Rāma's Exile," *JRAS*, 1894, p. 250.

¹¹Aranya Kāṇḍa lxxv. 57-66, *Ibid.*, p. 251.

¹²Aranya Kāṇḍa lxxvii. 2-5, *Ibid.*, p. 252.

¹³Aranya Kāṇḍa lxxv. 63, *Ibid.*, p. 254.

¹⁴Aranya Kāṇḍa lx. 3-12, *Ibid.*, p. 255.

¹⁵Kishkindhā Kāṇḍa ii and iii, *Ibid.*

¹⁶Kishkindhā Kāṇḍa iv, 1, *Ibid.*,

¹⁷Kishkindhā Kāṇḍa iv, v and vii, *Ibid.*

¹⁸Kishkindhā Kāṇḍa xxvii, 1., *Ibid.*, p. 256.

¹⁹Kishkindhā Kāṇḍa xxvi, 1-4, *Ibid.*

²⁰Kishkindhā Kāṇḍa xxxviii, 11, 36, *Ibid.*

²¹Sundara Kāṇḍa lxvi.1, *Ibid.*

²²These spots connected with the Rāmāyaṇa that are listed above are as pointed out by the local pilgrim guides and as given in the pilgrim maps. Many of these were also mentioned by H. Daniel Smith in his talk "Rāma Padyātra," delivered on 29 March 1988, at the University Club House, Bombay, under the aegis of the Anantacharya Indological Research Institute and the Museum Society.

²³*Pampamahatmya*, first part, chapter 73.

²⁴*Hemakutakhanda*, chapters 32-34 and *Pampamahatmya*, first part, chapter 67.

²⁵A. Sundara, "New Lights on Religious Trends in Anegondi Region during Vijayanagara Period," *QJMS*, LXVIII, p. 9.

²⁶H. Krishna Sastri, *Munirabad Stone Inscription of the 13th Year of Tribhuvanamala (Vikramaditya VI)*.

²⁷P.B. Desai, ed., *A History of Karnataka*, pp. 40-41.

²⁸A. Sundara, *op.cit.*, pp. 10-11.

²⁹V. Raghavan, "The Virūpākṣa Vasantotsava Campū of Ahōbala," *JOR*, XIV, p. 23.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 32.

³¹According to V. Raghavan, this work must have been produced during the time of Harihara I (*Ibid.*, p. 17). According to R.S. Panchamukhi (Introduction to the *Virūpākṣa Vasantotsava Campū*, p. xvi), it belongs to the second half of the 14th century A.D. However, the internal evidence indicates that it is highly unlikely that this was a 14th century work. In the *Champū* the city is referred to as Vidyānagara, but this name became current only in the 16th century. Mention is made in it of the great eastern *gōpura* of the temple, but it is unlikely that this could have existed in the 14th century. The reference to the pulling of the temple chariot up to the Nandi statue at the foothill of Mataṅga indicates the existence of the *ratha-vidhi*, which appears to be part of the late 15th or 16th century expansion of the temple. The main reason for attributing it to the 14th century is that Vidyāranya is stated to be present and to play an honoured role in the festival, as did the king. The two learned authors were probably unaware that Vidyāranya became the title of the ruling pontiff of the Advaita *maṭha* at Vijayanagara (just as Sankarāchārya is the honorific title assumed by the heads of the *pīṭhas* that trace their origin to the great *advaitin* sage), which was originally a branch of

the *Śrīṅgeri maṭha*. This is indicated in an inscription of Kṛishṇadēvarāya of A.D. 1515 (B.R. Gopal, *Vijayanagara Inscriptions*, vol. II, no. 526). Even today, the present head of the Hampi *maṭha*, Narasiṃha Bharati, is called Vidyāranya *svāmi*. In modern times, too, the spiritual descendant of the original Vidyāranya *svāmi* and the descendant of the Vijayanagara rulers, the erstwhile ruler of Āneḡondi, played an important role in the annual car-festival of Virūpākṣa. Thus, it is possible that this *chāmpū* was a 16th century literary work.

³²J.M. Fritz, "Vijayanagara: Authority and Meaning of a South Indian Imperial Capital," *American Anthropologist*, 88 (1), p. 53.

³³J.M. Fritz, "Was Vijayanagara A 'Cosmic City'?" in *Vij. City & Emp.* vol. 1, pp. 266-269.

³⁴Anna L. Dallapiccola and Anila Verghese, "Ramayana Panels on the Gopura of the 'Old Shiva' Temple, Vitthalapura," in *VPR '87-88*, pp. 143-153.

³⁵*FE*, p. 390.

³⁶R. Shama Sastry, "A Few Inscriptions of the Ancient Kings of Anegondi," *QJMS*, VII, pp. 287 and 291.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 285.

³⁸*VPR '83-84*, no. 12, p. 29.

³⁹*SII IX*, pt. II, no. 564.

⁴⁰C.T.M. Kotraiah, "Pampa Sarassu, Kiskindha and Hampi," paper read at the Centenary Celebrations of the Mysore Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, p. 8.

⁴¹*VPR '84-87*, no. 161.

⁴²*SII IX*, pt. II, no. 445.

⁴³*Pampamahatmya*, first part, chapter 61.

⁴⁴*SII IV*, no. 267.

⁴⁵*Further Sources*, vol. III, pp. 46-47.

⁴⁶*QJMS*, XXXI, p. 148.

⁴⁷*EC XI*, Hr. 75 and 76; *SII IX*, pt. II, no. 670.

⁴⁸R.G. Bhandarkar, *Vaisnavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 47.

⁴⁹K. Desai, *Iconography of Viṣṇu*, p. 116.

⁵⁰S.V. Padigar, "The Cult of Viṣṇu in Karnataka" (Ph.D. diss.), p. 380.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 336.

⁵²K. Desai, *op.cit.*, p. 120.

⁵³K.V. Soundara Rajan, *The Art of South India: Tamil Nadu and Kerala*, p. 49.

⁵⁴*ECV*, Hn. 133.

⁵⁵*ARSIE* of 1929-30, B.K. no. 119.

⁵⁶*MAR* of 1933, nos. 26 and 27.

⁵⁷*ECVIII*, Nr. 68 and 69.

⁵⁸*SII IX*, pt. II, no. 496; *ECV*, Ag. 86; *ARSIE* of 1942-43, no. 183; A Butterworth and V. Venugopal Chetty, *A Collection of Inscriptions on Copper-Plates and Stones in the Nellore District* (referred to hereafter as *Nel. Ins.*), pt. III, Udaygiri, no. 37.

⁵⁹*SII IV*, nos. 250, 251, 253; *VPR '83-84*, no. 67.

⁶⁰R. Sewell, *FE*, p. 161; A.H. Longhurst, *Hampi Ruins*, p. 69.

⁶¹*SII IV*, no. 252.

⁶²N. Venkataramanayya, "The Date of the Construction of the Temples of Hazāra-Rāmasvāmi and Viṭhala at Vijayanagara," *JOR*, XVI, pp. 84-87.

⁶³G. Michell, "Kings and Cults," in *The Ramachandra*

Temple at Vijayanagara by A.L. Dallapiccola, J.M. Fritz, and G. Michell, p. 20.

⁶⁴*SII* IV, no. 251.

⁶⁵The cyclic year Durmukhi during the Vijayanagara period coincided with A.D. 1356-57, 1416-17, 1476-77 and 1536-37.

⁶⁶*MAR* of 1920, p. 36.

⁶⁷These figures are very similar to the regal figures depicted on the 14th century first phase of the Mahānavamī Platform. In both cases, the men wear only a short *dhōti*. They have long hair, tied up in a large knot at the back of the head. In the later period there is a definite change in the courtly attire—the kings and other noble personages always wear a high cap, the *kullāyi*, and besides the *dhōti* they often also wear a short jacket and often have a shawl thrown over one arm. This can be seen on the 16th century A.D. third phase of the Mahānavamī Platform, in the statue of Kṛishṇadēvaraya at Tirumalai, on the pillar reliefs in the subsidiary shrine of the Tiruveṅḷaṅānātha temple (NM h/1), etc. The earliest example of this type of costume is to be seen in the so-called Ānjanēya temple (NV o/1) of Mallikārjuna's reign where, in the portrait sculptures of the king and his attendant Śīraṅgu, both sport the *kullāyi* (see *VPR* '79-83, plate LIII; and N. Lakshminarayan Rao, "Portrait Sculpture of the Vijayanagara King Mallikārjuna," in *Studies in Indian History and Culture*, ed. S. Ritti and B.R. Gopal, pp. 181-82). Thus, in the 14th and early 15th centuries A.D., the kings were bareheaded and had hair tied in a big knot, while from the mid-15th century onwards the *kullāyi*, which covered the hair, became *de rigueur*.

⁶⁸*SII* IV, no. 253.

⁶⁹At the same time the king made similar grants to three other temples. These grants were all made on the auspicious occasion of a solar eclipse that occurred on the 7th March A.D. 1513 (*SII* IX, pt. II, no. 490). The other temples were the great Virūpāksha (*SII* IX, pt. II, no. 493), the Prasanna Virūpāksha (*SII* IX, pt. II, no. 491) and the Viṭhala (*SII* IV, nos. 273 and 278) temples. The choice of these four temples for rich endowments on the same occasion is significant. They are the temple of the tutelary deity, the royal chapel dedicated to the same deity within the "royal centre", the state chapel of Rāmachandra and the temple which in the 16th century became the most important Vaiṣṇava centre in the city.

⁷⁰*SII* IV, no. 250.

⁷¹*VPR* '83-84, no. 67, p. 49.

⁷²16th century A.D. inscriptions reveal many variations in the names of Āravīḍu chiefs. For example, Tirumala, the younger brother of Aḷiya Rāmarāya, who became the first king of fourth dynasty, is also referred to as Yera-Timmarāja (*SII* IV, no. 265 and 266). Thus, Tirumala and Timma are used interchangeably. Similarly, Rāmarāya's paternal uncle Peda Koṅḍrāja is mentioned as Koṅḍāiyadēva (*SII* IV, no. 275) and his son Kōnēṭirāja as Kōnetayadēva (*Ibid.*) and Kōnēṭi-Timmarāja (*SII* IX pt. II, no. 616). Suffixes such as

rāja or rāju, dēva and ayya are often added to the names and are also used interchangeably.

⁷³J.M. Fritz, "The Roads of Vijayanagara: A Preliminary Study," in *VPR* '79-83, pp. 55-56.

⁷⁴V. Filliozat, "Iconography," in *Splendours of the Vijayanagara Empire: Hampi*, ed. G. Michell and V. Filliozat, p. 129.

⁷⁵A.H. Longhurst, *Hampi Ruins*, p. 134.

⁷⁶V. Filliozat, loc.cit.

⁷⁷*VPR* '83-84, no. 16, pp. 31-32.

⁷⁸*SII* IX, pt. II, no. 595.

⁷⁹The other temples are the Viṭhala (NH a/1), Tiruveṅḷaṅānātha (NM h/1), Kṛishṇa (NL m/4) temples and the Chinnahudiyam temple near Kāmalāpuram.

⁸⁰*SII* XVI, no. 120 and *ARSIE* of 1904, no. 20.

⁸¹*SII* IV, no. 245.

⁸²*VPR* '83-84, no. 65, p. 48.

⁸³According to R. Champakalakshmi, *Vaiṣṇava Iconography in the Tamil Country*, p. 125, it is only in the coronation scene that Bharata and Satrugna are shown along with the seated Rāma and Sitā and the standing Lakshmaṇa.

⁸⁴*VPR* '83-84, no. 68, p. 49.

⁸⁵T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, vol. 1, pt. I, p. 189.

⁸⁶Cited by B.A. Saletore, *Soc. & Pol. Life*, vol. I, p. 121.

⁸⁷J.M. Fritz and G. Michell "Interpreting the plan of a medieval Hindu capital, Vijayanagara," *World Archaeology*, 19, 1, pp. 123-127.

⁸⁸J.M., Fritz, "Archaeological Documentation at Vijayanagara," in *South Asian Archaeology—1983*, ed. J. Schotsmans, and M. Taddei, p. 883.

⁸⁹According to R. Champakalakshmi, *op.cit.*, pp. 124-125, Rāma is usually depicted in a standing pose, holding the bow and arrow in his two hands; occasionally he is shown with four hands, in which case in the upper hands he holds the *śaṅkha* and *chakra*. At times, Rāma is shown along with Sitā, Lakshmaṇa and Hanumān, all four may be standing or Rāma and Sitā may be seated while Lakshmaṇa and Hanumān are standing. It is only in the *paṭṭābhishēka* scene that the other two brothers are also represented. In this scene the god and goddess are usually represented as seated (in *lalitāsana*). Thus, an icon of Rāma seated by himself does not occur in the iconographic canon.

⁹⁰In my first field trips to Hampi, such images of Rāma were wrongly identified by me as that of Vijayanagara kings. It was only the occasional presence of Hanumān or Lakshmaṇa near Rāma or in an adjacent panel and *kūṭamukuṭa* worn by the deity that helped in identifying this unusual type of image as that of Rāma. In a discussion about the nature of such images with Dr. A.L. Dallapiccola, it was suggested that the Vijayanagara sculptors had resorted to "intentional ambiguity" in these reliefs, in order perhaps to draw a parallel between the divine and earthly kings.

