

= Vijayanagara Empire =

The Vijayanagara Empire (also called Karnata Empire , and the Kingdom of Bisnagar by the Portuguese) was based in the Deccan Plateau region in South India . It was established in 1336 by Harihara I and his brother Bukka Raya I of Sangama Dynasty . The empire rose to prominence as a culmination of attempts by the southern powers to ward off Islamic invasions by the end of the 13th century . It lasted until 1646 , although its power declined after a major military defeat in 1565 by the Deccan sultanates . The empire is named after its capital city of Vijayanagara , whose ruins surround present day Hampi , now a World Heritage Site in Karnataka , India . The writings of medieval European travelers such as Domingo Paes , Fernão Nunes , and Niccolò Da Conti , and the literature in local languages provide crucial information about its history . Archaeological excavations at Vijayanagara have revealed the empire 's power and wealth .

The empire 's legacy includes many monuments spread over South India , the best known of which is the group at Hampi . The previous temple building traditions in South India came together in the Vijayanagara Architecture style . The mingling of all faiths and vernaculars inspired architectural innovation of Hindu temple construction , first in the Deccan and later in the Dravidian idioms using the local granite . Efficient administration and vigorous overseas trade brought new technologies such as water management systems for irrigation . The empire 's patronage enabled fine arts and literature to reach new heights in Kannada , Telugu , Tamil , and Sanskrit , while Carnatic music evolved into its current form . The Vijayanagara Empire created an epoch in South Indian history that transcended regionalism by promoting Hinduism as a unifying factor .

= = Alternative name = =

Karnata Empire (Karnata Rajya) was another name for the Vijayanagara Empire , used in some inscriptions and literary works of the Vijayanagara times including the Sanskrit work Jambavati Kalyanam by King Krishnadevaraya and Telugu work Vasu Charitamu .

= = History = =

Differing theories have been proposed regarding the origins of the Vijayanagara empire . Many historians propose that Harihara I and Bukka , the founders of the empire , were Kannadigas and commanders in the army of the Hoysala Empire stationed in the Tungabhadra region to ward off Muslim invasions from the Northern India . Others claim that they were Telugu people , first associated with the Kakatiya Kingdom , who took control of the northern parts of the Hoysala Empire during its decline . Irrespective of their origin , historians agree the founders were supported and inspired by Vidyaranya , a saint at the Sringeri monastery to fight the Muslim invasion of South India . Writings by foreign travelers during the late medieval era combined with recent excavations in the Vijayanagara principality have uncovered much @-@ needed information about the empire 's history , fortifications , scientific developments and architectural innovations .

Before the early 14th @-@ century rise of the Vijayanagara Empire , the Hindu states of the Deccan ? the Yadava Empire of Devagiri , the Kakatiya dynasty of Warangal , the Pandyan Empire of Madurai , and the tiny kingdom of Kampili ? had been repeatedly invaded by Muslims from the north , and by 1336 they had all been defeated by Alla @-@ ud @-@ din Khilji and Muhammad bin Tughluq , the Sultans of Delhi . The Hoysala Empire was the sole remaining Hindu state in the path of the Muslim invasion . After the death of Hoysala king Veera Ballala III during a battle against the Sultan of Madurai in 1343 , the Hoysala Empire merged with the growing Vijayanagara empire .

In the first two decades after the founding of the empire , Harihara I gained control over most of the area south of the Tungabhadra river and earned the title of Purvapaschima Samudradhishavara (" master of the eastern and western seas ") . By 1374 Bukka Raya I , successor to Harihara I , had defeated the chieftdom of Arcot , the Reddys of Kondavidu , and the Sultan of Madurai and had gained control over Goa in the west and the Tungabhadra @-@ Krishna River doab in the north . The original capital was in the principality of Anegondi on the northern banks of the Tungabhadra

River in today 's Karnataka . It was later moved to nearby Vijayanagara on the river 's southern banks during the reign of Bukka Raya I.

With the Vijayanagara Kingdom now imperial in stature , Harihara II , the second son of Bukka Raya I , further consolidated the kingdom beyond the Krishna River and brought the whole of South India under the Vijayanagara umbrella . The next ruler , Deva Raya I , emerged successful against the Gajapatis of Odisha and undertook important works of fortification and irrigation . Italian traveler Niccolo de Conti wrote of him as the most powerful ruler of India . Deva Raya II (called Gajabetekara) succeeded to the throne in 1424 and was possibly the most capable of the Sangama dynasty rulers . He quelled rebelling feudal lords as well as the Zamorin of Calicut and Quilon in the south . He invaded the island of Lanka and became overlord of the kings of Burma at Pegu and Tanasserim . The empire declined in the late 15th century until the serious attempts by commander Saluva Narasimha Deva Raya in 1485 and by general Tuluva Narasa Nayaka in 1491 to reconsolidate the empire .

In 1509 , after nearly two decades of conflict with rebellious chieftains , the empire came under the rule of Krishna Deva Raya , the son of Tuluva Narasa Nayaka . In the following decades the Vijayanagara empire dominated all of Southern India and fought off invasions from the five established Deccan Sultanates . The empire reached its peak during the rule of Krishna Deva Raya when Vijayanagara armies were consistently victorious . The empire annexed areas formerly under the Sultanates in the northern Deccan and the territories in the eastern Deccan , including Kalinga , while simultaneously maintaining control over all its subordinates in the south . Many important monuments were either completed or commissioned during the time of Krishna Deva Raya .

Krishna Deva Raya was followed by his younger half @-@ brother Achyuta Deva Raya in 1529 . When Achyuta Deva Raya died in 1542 , Sadashiva Raya , the teenage nephew of Achyuta Raya was appointed king though real power was wielded by Rama Raya , Krishna Deva Raya 's son @-@ in @-@ law . When Sadashiva was old enough to claim absolute power , Aliya Rama Raya had him imprisoned and became the de facto ruler . Eager to take advantage of the disunity among the Sultanates of Bijapur , Ahamednagar , Berar , Golkonda , and Bidar , Rama Raya involved himself in the political affairs of the powers across the Krishna river to the north . His ploy of supporting militarily one Sultanate against another , often changing alliances , brought rich rewards for a while . However , by 1563 , exhausted with his intrigues , the bitter rivals from the north formed an alliance . They marched against Rama Raya and clashed with the Vijayanagara 's forces in January 1565 .

The capture and killing of Aliya Rama Raya in the famous Battle of Talikota , after a seemingly easy victory for the Vijayanagara armies , created havoc and confusion in the Vijayanagara ranks , which were then completely routed . The Sultanates ' army later plundered Hampi and reduced it to the ruinous state in which it remains ; it was never re @-@ occupied . Tirumala Deva Raya , Rama Raya 's younger brother who was the sole surviving commander , left Vijayanagara for Penukonda with vast amounts of treasure on the back of 1500 elephants .

The empire went into a slow decline regionally , although trade with the Portuguese continued , and the British were given a land grant for the establishment of Madras . Tirumala Deva Raya was succeeded by his son Sriranga I later followed by Venkata II who was the last king of Vijayanagara empire , made his capital Chandragiri and Vellore , repulsed the invasion of the Deccan Sultanates and saved Penukonda from being captured .

His successor Rama Deva Raya took power and ruled until 1632 , after whose death Venkata III became king and ruled for about ten years . The empire was finally conquered by the Sultanates of Bijapur and Golkonda . The largest feudatories of the Vijayanagar empire ? the Mysore Kingdom , Keladi Nayaka , Nayaks of Madurai , Nayaks of Tanjore , Nayakas of Chitradurga and Nayak Kingdom of Gingee declared independence and went on to have a significant impact on the history of South India in the coming centuries . These Nayaka kingdoms lasted into the 18th century while the Mysore Kingdom remained a princely state until Indian Independence in 1947 although they came under the British Raj in 1799 after the death of Tipu Sultan .

= = Governance = =

The rulers of the Vijayanagara empire maintained the well @-@ functioning administrative methods developed by their predecessors , the Hoysala , Kakatiya and Pandya kingdoms , to govern their territories and made changes only where necessary . The King was the ultimate authority , assisted by a cabinet of ministers (Pradhana) headed by the prime minister (Mahapradhana) . Other important titles recorded were the chief secretary (Karyakartha or Rayaswami) and the imperial officers (Adhikari) . All high @-@ ranking ministers and officers were required to have military training . A secretariat near the king 's palace employed scribes and officers to maintain records made official by using a wax seal imprinted with the ring of the king . At the lower administrative levels , wealthy feudal landlords (Goudas) supervised accountants (Karanikas or Karnam) and guards (Kavalu) . The palace administration was divided into 72 departments (Niyogas) , each having several female attendants chosen for their youth and beauty (some imported or captured in victorious battles) who were trained to handle minor administrative matters and to serve men of nobility as courtesans or concubines .

The empire was divided into five main provinces (Rajya) , each under a commander (Dandanayaka or Dandanatha) and headed by a governor , often from the royal family , who used the native language for administrative purposes . A Rajya was divided into regions (Vishaya Vente or Kottam) and further divided into counties (Sime or Nadu) , themselves subdivided into municipalities (Kampana or Sthala) . Hereditary families ruled their respective territories and paid tribute to the empire , while some areas , such as Keladi and Madurai , came under the direct supervision of a commander .

On the battlefield , the king 's commanders led the troops . The empire 's war strategy rarely involved massive invasions ; more often it employed small scale methods such as attacking and destroying individual forts . The empire was among the first in India to use long range artillery commonly manned by foreign gunners (those from present day Turkmenistan were considered the best) . Army troops were of two types : The king 's personal army directly recruited by the empire and the feudal army under each feudatory . King Krishnadevaraya 's personal army consisted of 100 @,@ 000 infantry , 20 @,@ 000 cavalymen and over 900 elephants . This number was only a part of the army numbering over 1 @.@ 1 million soldiers , a figure that varied as an army of two million has also been recorded along with the existence of a navy as evidenced by the use of the term Navigadaprabhu (commander of the navy) . The army recruited from all classes of society (supported by the collection of additional feudal tributes from feudatory rulers) , and consisted of archers and musketeers wearing quilted tunics , shieldmen with swords and poignards in their girdles , and soldiers carrying shields so large that no armour was necessary . The horses and elephants were fully armoured and the elephants had knives fastened to their tusks to do maximum damage in battle .

The capital city was completely dependent on the water supply systems constructed to channel and store water , ensuring a consistent supply throughout the year . The remains of these hydraulic systems have given historians a picture of the prevailing surface water distribution methods in use at that time in the semiarid regions of South India . Contemporary records and notes of foreign travelers describe how huge tanks were constructed by labourers . Excavations have uncovered the remains of a well @-@ connected water distribution system existing solely within the royal enclosure and the large temple complexes (suggesting it was for the exclusive use of royalty , and for special ceremonies) with sophisticated channels using gravity and siphons to transport water through pipelines . The only structures resembling public waterworks are the remains of large water tanks that collected the seasonal monsoon water and then dried up in summer except for the few fed by springs . In the fertile agricultural areas near the Tungabhadra River , canals were dug to guide the river water into irrigation tanks . These canals had sluices that were opened and closed to control the water flow . In other areas the administration encouraged the digging of wells monitored by administrative authorities . Large tanks in the capital city were constructed with royal patronage while smaller tanks were funded by wealthy individuals to gain social and religious merit .

= = Economy = =

The economy of the empire was largely dependent on agriculture . Sorghum (jowar) , cotton , and pulse legumes grew in semi arid regions , while sugarcane , rice , and wheat thrived in rainy areas . Betel leaves , areca (for chewing) , and coconut were the principal cash crops , and large scale cotton production supplied the weaving centers of the empire 's vibrant textile industry . Spices such as turmeric , pepper , cardamom , and ginger grew in the remote Malnad hill region and were transported to the city for trade . The empire 's capital city was a thriving business centre that included a burgeoning market in large quantities of precious gems and gold . Prolific temple building provided employment to thousands of masons , sculptors , and other skilled artisans .

Land ownership was important . Most of the growers were tenant farmers and were given the right of part ownership of the land over time . Tax policies encouraging needed produce made distinctions between land use to determine tax levies . For example , the daily market availability of rose petals was important for perfumers , so cultivation of roses received a lower tax assessment . Salt production and the manufacture of salt pans were controlled by similar means . The making of ghee (clarified butter) , which was sold as an oil for human consumption and as a fuel for lighting lamps , was profitable . Exports to China intensified and included cotton , spices , jewels , semi precious stones , ivory , rhino horn , ebony , amber , coral , and aromatic products such as perfumes . Large vessels from China made frequent visits , some captained by the Chinese Admiral Zheng He , and brought Chinese products to the empire 's 300 ports , large and small , on the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal . The ports of Mangalore , Honavar , Bhatkal , Barkur , Cochin , Cannanore , Machilipatnam , and Dharmadam were the most important .

When merchant ships docked , the merchandise was taken into official custody and taxes levied on all items sold . The security of the merchandise was guaranteed by the administration officials . Traders of many nationalities (Arabs , Persians , Guzerates , Khorassanians) settled in Calicut , drawn by the thriving trade business . Ship building prospered and keeled ships of 1000 ? 1200 bahares (burden) were built without decks by sewing the entire hull with ropes rather than fastening them with nails . Ships sailed to the Red Sea ports of Aden and Mecca with Vijayanagara goods sold as far away as Venice . The empire 's principal exports were pepper , ginger , cinnamon , cardamom , myrobalan , tamarind timber , anafistula , precious and semi precious stones , pearls , musk , ambergris , rhubarb , aloe , cotton cloth and porcelain . Cotton yarn was shipped to Burma and indigo to Persia . Chief imports from Palestine were copper , quicksilver (mercury) , vermilion , coral , saffron , coloured velvets , rose water , knives , coloured camlets , gold and silver . Persian horses were imported to Cannanore before a two week land trip to the capital . Silk arrived from China and sugar from Bengal .

East coast trade hummed , with goods arriving from Golkonda where rice , millet , pulses and tobacco were grown on a large scale . Dye crops of indigo and chay root were produced for the weaving industry . A mineral rich region , Machilipatnam was the gateway for high quality iron and steel exports . Diamond mining was active in the Kollur region . The cotton weaving industry produced two types of cottons , plain calico and muslin (brown , bleached or dyed) . Cloth printed with coloured patterns crafted by native techniques were exported to Java and the Far East . Golkonda specialised in plain cotton and Pulicat in printed . The main imports on the east coast were non ferrous metals , camphor , porcelain , silk and luxury goods .

= = Culture = =

= = = Social life = = =

Most information on the social life in Vijayanagara empire comes from the writings of foreign visitors and evidence that research teams in the Vijayanagara area have uncovered . The Hindu caste system was prevalent and rigidly followed , with each caste represented by a local body of elders who represented the community . These elders set the rules and regulations that were implemented with the help of royal decrees . Untouchability was part of the caste system and these communities were represented by leaders (Kaivadadavaru) . The Muslim communities were represented by their

own group in coastal Karnataka . The caste system did not , however , prevent distinguished persons from all castes from being promoted to high @-@ ranking cadre in the army and administration . In civil life , by virtue of the caste system , Brahmins enjoyed a high level of respect . With the exception of a few who took to military careers , most Brahmins concentrated on religious and literary matters . Their separation from material wealth and power made them ideal arbiters in local judicial matters , and their presence in every town and village was a calculated investment made by the nobility and aristocracy to maintain order . However , the popularity of low @-@ caste scholars (such as Molla and Kanakadasa) and their works (including those of Vemana and Sarvajna) is an indication of the degree of social fluidity in the society .

The practice of Sati was common , though voluntary , and mostly practiced among the upper classes . Over fifty inscriptions attesting to this have been discovered in the Vijayanagara principality alone . These inscriptions are called Satikal (Sati stone) or Sati @-@ virakal (Sati hero stone) . Satikals commemorated the death of a woman by entering into fire after the death of her husband while Sati @-@ virakals were made for a woman who performed Sati after her husband 's heroic death . Either way , the woman was raised to the level of a demi @-@ goddess and proclaimed by the sculpture of a Sun and crescent moon on the stone .

The socio @-@ religious movements of the previous centuries , such as Lingayatism , provided momentum for flexible social norms to which women were expected to abide . By this time South Indian women had crossed most barriers and were actively involved in matters hitherto considered the monopoly of men , such as administration , business and trade , and involvement in the fine arts . Tirumalamba Devi who wrote Varadambika Parinayam and Gangadevi who wrote Madhuravijayam were among the notable women poets of the era . Early Telugu women poets like Tallapaka Timmakka and Atukuri Molla became popular during this period . The court of the Nayaks of Tanjore is known to have patronised several women poets . The Devadasi system existed , as well as legalised prostitution relegated to a few streets in each city . The popularity of harems amongst men of the royalty is well known from records .

Well @-@ to @-@ do men wore the Pethaor Kulavi , a tall turban made of silk and decorated with gold . As in most Indian societies , jewellery was used by men and women and records describe the use of anklets , bracelets , finger @-@ rings , necklaces and ear rings of various types . During celebrations , men and women adorned themselves with flower garlands and used perfumes made of rose water , civet musk , musk or sandalwood . In stark contrast to the commoners whose lives were modest , the lives of the empire 's kings and queens were full of ceremonial pomp in the court . Queens and princesses had numerous attendants who were lavishly dressed and adorned with fine jewellery , their daily duties being light .

Physical exercises were popular with men and wrestling was an important male preoccupation for sport and entertainment . Even women wrestlers are mentioned in records . Gymnasiums have been discovered inside royal quarters and records speak of regular physical training for commanders and their armies during peace time . Royal palaces and market places had special arenas where royalty and common people alike amused themselves by watching matches such as cock fights , ram fights and wrestling between women . Excavations within the Vijayanagara city limits have revealed the existence of various types of community @-@ based activities in the form of engravings on boulders , rock platforms and temple floors , implying these were places of casual social interaction . Some of these games are in use today and others are yet to be identified .

== Religion ==

The Vijayanagara kings were tolerant of all religions and sects , as writings by foreign visitors show . The kings used titles such as Gobrahamana Pratipalanacharya (literally , " protector of cows and Brahmins ") and Hindurayasuratrana (lit , " upholder of Hindu faith ") that testified to their intention of protecting Hinduism and yet were at the same time staunchly Islamicate in their court ceremonials and dress , as Philip Wagoner points out in his 1996 article " Sultan Among Hindu Kings " published in the Journal of Asian Studies . The empire 's founders , Harihara I and Bukka Raya I , were devout Shaivas (worshippers of Shiva) , but made grants to the Vaishnava order of Sringeri with

Vidyaranya as their patron saint , and designated Varaha (the boar , an Avatar of Vishnu) as their emblem . Over one @-@ fourth of the archaeological dig found an " Islamic Quarter " not far from the " Royal Quarter " . Nobles from Central Asia 's Timurid kingdoms also came to Vijayanagara . The later Saluva and Tuluva kings were Vaishnava by faith , but worshipped at the feet of Lord Virupaksha (Shiva) at Hampi as well as Lord Venkateshwara (Vishnu) at Tirupati . A Sanskrit work , Jambavati Kalyanam by King Krishnadevaraya , called Lord Virupaksha Karnata Rajya Raksha Mani (" protective jewel of Karnata Empire ") . The kings patronised the saints of the dvaita order (philosophy of dualism) of Madhvacharya at Udupi .

The Bhakti (devotional) movement was active during this time , and involved well known Haridasas (devotee saints) of that time . Like the Virashaiva movement of the 12th century , this movement presented another strong current of devotion , pervading the lives of millions . The haridasas represented two groups , the Vyasakuta and Dasakuta , the former being required to be proficient in the Vedas , Upanishads and other Darshanas , while the Dasakuta merely conveyed the message of Madhvacharya through the Kannada language to the people in the form of devotional songs (Devaranamas and Kirthanas) . The philosophy of Madhvacharya was spread by eminent disciples such as Naraharitirtha , Jayatirtha , Sripadaraya , Vyasatirtha , Vadirajatirtha and others . Vyasatirtha , the guru (teacher) of Vadirajatirtha , Purandaradasa (Father of Carnatic music) and Kanakadasa earned the devotion of King Krishnadevaraya . The king considered the saint his Kuladevata (family deity) and honoured him in his writings . During this time , another great composer of early carnatic music , Annamacharya composed hundreds of Kirthanas in Telugu at Tirupati in present @-@ day Andhra Pradesh .

The defeat of the Jain Western Ganga Dynasty by the Cholas in the early 11th century and the rising numbers of followers of Vaishnava Hinduism and Virashaivism in the 12th century was mirrored by a decreased interest in Jainism . Two notable locations of Jain worship in the Vijayanagara territory were Shravanabelagola and Kambadahalli .

Islamic contact with South India began as early as the 7th century , a result of trade between the Southern kingdoms and Arab lands . Jumma Masjids existed in the Rashtrakuta empire by the 10th century and many mosques flourished on the Malabar coast by the early 14th century . Muslim settlers married local women ; their children were known as Mappillas (Moplahs) and were actively involved in horse trading and manning shipping fleets . The interactions between the Vijayanagara empire and the Bahamani Sultanates to the north increased the presence of Muslims in the south . The introduction of Christianity began as early as the 8th century as shown by the finding of copper plates inscribed with land grants to Malabar Christians . Christian travelers wrote of the scarcity of Christians in South India in the Middle Ages , promoting its attractiveness to missionaries . The arrival of the Portuguese in the 15th century and their connections through trade with the empire , the propagation of the faith by Saint Xavier (1545) and later the presence of Dutch settlements fostered the growth of Christianity in the south .

= = = Language = = =

Kannada , Telugu and Tamil were used in their respective regions of the empire . Over 7000 inscriptions (Shilashasana) including 300 copper plate inscriptions (Tamarashasana) have been recovered , almost half of which are in Kannada , the remaining in Telugu , Tamil and Sanskrit . Bilingual inscriptions had lost favour by the 14th century . The empire minted coins at Hampi , Penugonda and Tirupati with Nagari , Kannada and Telugu legends usually carrying the name of the ruler . Gold , silver and copper were used to issue coins called Gadyana , Varaha , Pon , Pagoda , Pratapa , Pana , Kasu and Jital . The coins contained the images of various gods including Balakrishna (infant Krishna) , Venkateshwara (the presiding deity of the temple at Tirupati) , goddesses such as Bhudevi and Sridevi , divine couples , animals such as bulls and elephants and birds . The earliest coins feature Hanuman and Garuda (divine eagle) , the vehicle of Lord Vishnu . Kannada and Telugu inscriptions have been deciphered and recorded by historians of the Archaeological Survey of India .

During the rule of the Vijayanagara Empire , poets , scholars and philosophers wrote primarily in Kannada , Telugu and Sanskrit , and also in other regional languages such as Tamil and covered such subjects as religion , biography , Prabandha (fiction) , music , grammar , poetry , medicine and mathematics . The administrative and court languages of the Empire were Kannada and Telugu ? the latter was the court language and gained even more cultural prominence during the reign of the last Vijayanagara kings . Telugu was a popular literary medium , reaching its peak under the patronage of Krishnadevaraya .

Most Sanskrit works were commentaries either on the Vedas or on the Ramayana and Mahabharata epics , written by well known figures such as Sayana and Vidyaranya that extolled the superiority of the Advaita philosophy over other rival Hindu philosophies . Other writers were famous Dvaita saints of the Udipi order such as Jayatirtha (earning the title Tikacharya for his polemical writings) , Vyasatirtha who wrote rebuttals to the Advaita philosophy and of the conclusions of earlier logicians , and Vadirajatirtha and Sripadaraya both of whom criticised the beliefs of Adi Sankara . Apart from these saints , noted Sanskrit scholars adorned the courts of the Vijayanagara kings and their feudatory chiefdoms . Many kings of the dynasty were themselves litterateurs and authored classics such as King Krishnadevaraya 's Jambavati Kalyana , a poetic and dramatically skillful work . Princess Gangadevi , wife of Kumara Kampana the son of Bukka I , wrote the Sanskrit work Madura Vijayam (or Virakamparaya Charita) , detailing the invasion and conquest of the Madurai Sultanate by the Vijaynagar Kingdom .

The Kannada poets and scholars of the empire produced important writings supporting the Vaishnava Bhakti movement heralded by the Haridasas (devotees of Vishnu) , Brahminical and Virashaiva (Lingayatism) literature . The Haridasa poets celebrated their devotion through songs called Devaranama (lyrical poems) in the native meters of Sangatya (quatrain) , Suladi (beat based) , Ugabhoga (melody based) and Mundige (cryptic) . Their inspirations were the teachings of Madhvacharya and Vyasatirtha . Purandaradasa and Kanakadasa are considered the foremost among many Dasas (devotees) by virtue of their immense contribution . Kumara Vyasa , the most notable of Brahmin scholars wrote Gadugina Bharata , a translation of the epic Mahabharata . This work marks a transition of Kannada literature from old Kannada to modern Kannada . Chamarasa was a famous Virashaiva scholar and poet who had many debates with Vaishnava scholars in the court of Devaraya II . His Prabhulinga Lile , later translated into Telugu and Tamil , was a eulogy of Saint Allama Prabhu (the saint was considered an incarnation of Lord Ganapathi while Parvati took the form of a princess of Banavasi) .

At this peak of Telugu literature , the most famous writing in the Prabandha style was Manucharitamu . King Krishnadevaraya was an accomplished Telugu scholar and wrote the celebrated Amuktamalyada . In his court were the eight famous scholars regarded as the pillars (Ashtadiggajas) of the literary assembly . The most famous among them were Allasani Peddana honoured with the title Andhrakavitapitamaha (father of Telugu poetry) and Tenali Ramakrishna , Krishnadevaraya 's court jester who authored several acclaimed works . The other six poets were Nandi Thimmana (Mukku Timmana) , Ayyalaraju Ramabhadra , Madayyagari Mallana , Bhattu Murthi (Ramaraja Bhushana) , Pingali Surana , and Dhurjati . This was the age of Srinatha , the greatest of all Telugu poets in legend , who wrote books like Marutracharitam and Salivahana @-@ sapta @-@ sati . He was patronised by King Devaraya II and his stature was equal to the most important ministers in the court .

King Krishnadevaraya himself composed the epic poem Amuktamalyada in Telugu , which is considered as a masterpiece . Amuktamalyada translates to one who wears and gives away garlands , and describes the story of the wedding of Lord Vishnu to Andal , the Tamil Alvar saint poetess and the daughter of Periyalvar , at Srirangam .

Though much of the Tamil literature from this period came from Tamil speaking regions ruled by the feudatory Pandya who gave particular attention on the cultivation of Tamil literature , some poets were patronised by the Vijayanagara kings . Svarupananda Desikar wrote an anthology of 2824 verses , Sivaprakasap @-@ perundirattu , on the Advaita philosophy . His pupil the ascetic ,

Tattuvarayar , wrote a shorter anthology , Kurundirattu , that contained about half the number of verses . Krishnadevaraya patronised the Tamil Vaishnava poet Haridasa whose Irusamaya Vilakkam was an exposition of the two Hindu systems , Vaishnava and Shaiva , with a preference for the former .

Notable among secular writings on music and medicine were Vidyaranya 's Sangitsara , Praudha Raya 's Ratiratanapradipika , Sayana 's Ayurveda Sudhanidhi and Lakshmana Pandita 's Vaidyarajavallabham . The Kerala school of astronomy and mathematics flourished during this period under such well known scholars as Madhava (c . 1340 ? 1425) who made important contributions to Trigonometry and Calculus , and Nilakantha Somayaji (c . 1444 ? 1545) who postulated on the orbitals of planets .

= = = Architecture = = =

Vijayanagara architecture is a vibrant combination of the Chalukya , Hoysala , Pandya and Chola styles , idioms that prospered in previous centuries . Its legacy of sculpture , architecture and painting influenced the development of the arts long after the empire came to an end . Its stylistic hallmark is the ornate pillared Kalyanamantapa (marriage hall) , Vasanthamantapa (open pillared halls) and the Rayagopura (tower) . Artisans used the locally available hard granite because of its durability since the kingdom was under constant threat of invasion . While the empire 's monuments are spread over the whole of Southern India , nothing surpasses the vast open @-@ air theatre of monuments at its capital at Vijayanagara , a UNESCO World Heritage Site .

In the 14th century the kings continued to build vesara or Deccan @-@ style monuments but later incorporated Dravida @-@ style gopurams to meet their ritualistic needs . The Prasanna Virupaksha temple (underground temple) of Bukka and the Hazare Rama temple of Deva Raya are examples of Deccan architecture . The varied and intricate ornamentation of the pillars is a mark of their work . At Hampi , though the Vitthala temple is the best example of their pillared Kalyanamantapa style , the Hazara Ramaswamy temple is a modest but perfectly finished example . A visible aspect of their style is their return to the simplistic and serene art developed by the Chalukya dynasty . A grand specimen of Vijayanagara art , the Vitthala temple , took several decades to complete during the reign of the Tuluva kings .

Another element of the Vijayanagara style is the carving and consecration of large monoliths such as the Sasivekalu (mustard) Ganesha and Kadalekalu (ground nut) Ganesha at Hampi , the Gommateshvara (Bahubali) monoliths in Karkala and Venur , and the Nandi bull in Lepakshi . The Vijayanagara temples of Kolar , Kanakagiri , Shringeri and other towns of Karnataka ; the temples of Tadpatri , Lepakshi , Ahobilam , Tirumala Venkateswara Temple and Srikalahasti in Andhra Pradesh ; and the temples of Vellore , Kumbakonam , Kanchi and Srirangam in Tamil Nadu are examples of this style . Vijayanagara art includes wall @-@ paintings such as the Dashavatara and Girijakalyana (marriage of Parvati , Shiva 's consort) in the Virupaksha Temple at Hampi , the Shivapurana murals (tales of Shiva) at the Virabhadra temple at Lepakshi , and those at the Kamaakshi and Varadaraja temples at Kanchi . This mingling of the South Indian styles resulted in a richness not seen in earlier centuries , a focus on reliefs in addition to sculpture that surpasses that previously in India .

An aspect of Vijayanagara architecture that shows the cosmopolitanism of the great city is the presence of many secular structures bearing Islamic features . While political history concentrates on the ongoing conflict between the Vijayanagara empire and the Deccan Sultanates , the architectural record reflects a more creative interaction . There are many arches , domes and vaults that show these influences . The concentration of structures like pavilions , stables and towers suggests they were for use by royalty . The decorative details of these structures may have been absorbed into Vijayanagara architecture during the early 15th century , coinciding with the rule of Deva Raya I and Deva Raya II . These kings are known to have employed many Muslims in their army and court , some of whom may have been Muslim architects . This harmonious exchange of architectural ideas must have happened during rare periods of peace between the Hindu and Muslim kingdoms . The " Great Platform " (Mahanavami dibba) has relief carvings in which the

figures seem to have the facial features of central Asian Turks who were known to have been employed as royal attendants .