

A STUDY OF SELECTED VIJAYANAGARA HISTORICAL TEMPLES AT HAMPI

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ABSTRACT

Hampi or Hampe, also referred to as the Group of Monuments at Hampi, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site located in Hampi (City), Vijayanagara district, east-central Karnataka, India. Hampi predates the Vijayanagara Empire; it is mentioned in the Ramayana and the Purana's of Hinduism as Pampa Devi Tirtha Kshetra. Hampi continues to be an important religious centre, housing the Virupaksha Temple, an active Adi Shankara-linked monastery and various monuments belonging to the old city.

KEYWORDS: Vijayanagara, Balakrishna temple, Achyutaraya temple and Pattabhirama temple.

INTRODUCTION

The decline of the Hoysala rule resulted in the establishment of the Vijayanagara kingdom in (1336) A.D. The Sangamas under Harihara I ruled over the whole of the erstwhile Hoysala territories and parts of Andhra including the Vidayagiri territory. It was under Bukka I that the rule of the Muslims in Madura was ended. Gangadevi, wife of Kumara Kampana and daughter-in-law of Bukka I, gives a graphic description of the plight of the Hindus in the Sultanate of Madurai. She further informs that Bukka I advised his son Kampana to undertake an expedition against Madura to get rid of Muslim rule. It was as a consequence of this advice that Kampala, governor of Mulabagilu Rajya, invaded the Sambauvaraya territories and annoyed it by 1363 A.D. The capture of Rajangbhivarajya meant the annexation of the North Arcot, South Arcot and Chingleput districts. With it the strategic city of Kanchi was also captured. It was destined to serve as a military base for further campaigns in Tamil Nadu. Within a space of five years, the Kangu region was also captured. The next stage in the campaign was against the Sultanate of Madura. The kingdom of Madurai established in 1334 A.D. by Jalaluddin Shah had

resulted in continuous warfare with the Hoysalas. HoysalaBallala III had lost his life while fighting with the Sultan of Madura. Hence, it was left to the Sangamas to recapture Madura. Kampana after consolidating his conquests in the KonguDesa turned his attention towards Madura. In 1371 A.D. accompanied by generals like salvagingSomayyaDanayaka, Vittappa and Gopana, he invaded the Madura kingdom. In a bloody battle fought outside Madura, Kampala defeated the Muslim armies headed by Sultan Fakruddin Mubarak Shah. Salve Mangu is said to have killed the 3 Sultan of Madura.¹

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Vijayanagara architecture of 1336–1565 CE was a notable building idiom that developed during the rule of the imperial Hindu Vijayanagara Empire. The empire ruled South India, from their regal capital at Vijayanagara, on the banks of the Tungabhadra River in modern Karnataka, India. The empire built temples, monuments, palaces and other structures across South India, with a largest concentration in its capital.

METHODOLOGY

A study of past construction events of Vijayanagaradynasty in a given geographical area which is based on a wide variety of documentary evidence and primary data placed in a comparative context that is regional Hampi.

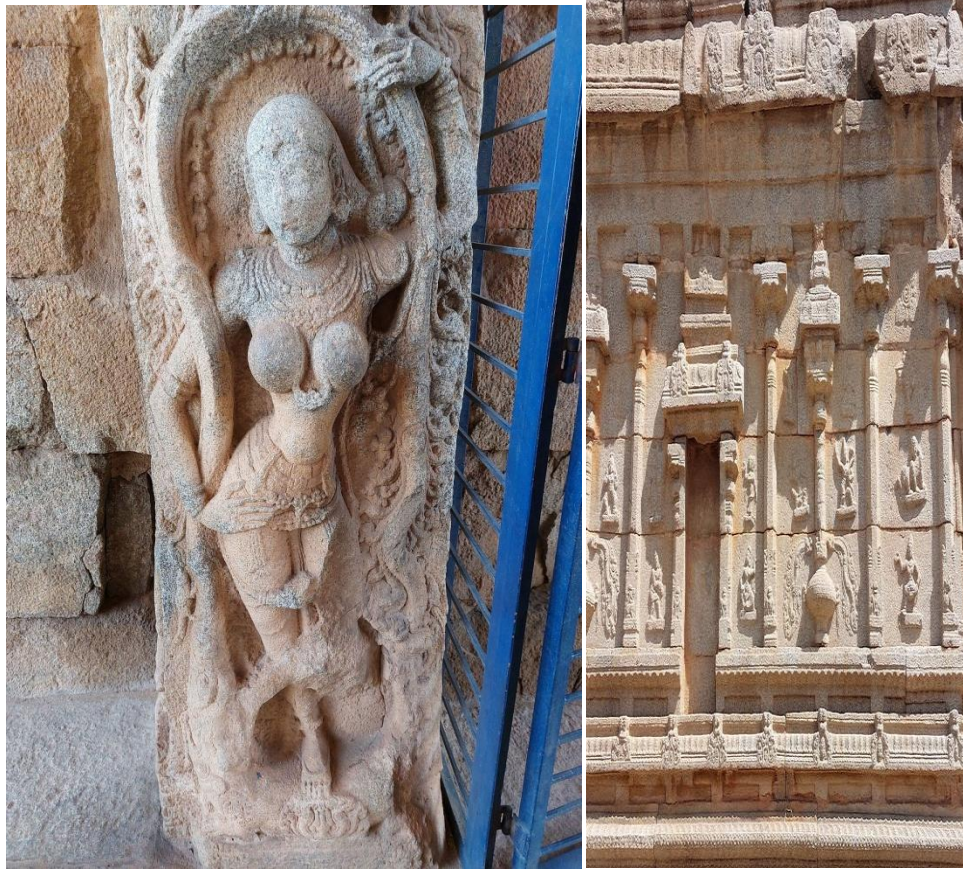
BALAKRISHNA TEMPLE

The temple of Balakrishna is located in the Krishnapura suburb of the Capital city. This suburb, established by Krishnadeva Raya, developed around this temple. In course of time, a big bazaar grew in front of this temple. During the rule of Sadasiva Raya, the Virabhadra temple 1 was also built this area.²

The temple includes also the parivara shrines built at its four corners. The whole complex, situated within a courtyard is enclosed by a wall. Along the pillar wall runs a pillared cloister, now in ruins at certain places. The parka which is considerably large is entered through gateways, the main gateway being set on the east. The main entrance is lofty, but the gopura above it is very much in ruins. Though the plan of the Balakrishna is compact and developed, it lacks a few necessary components like the kalyana-mantapa and the utsava-mantapa. In the well-

developed mid-sixteenth century Vijayanagara temple complex these mantapas are an integral part, particularly under Achyuta Raya and Sadasiva Raya. However, it should be noted that such mantapas were built during Krishnadevaraya's time, as additions to the existing structures, as can be seen in the Hazara Rama, Vittala, and the Virupaksha temples at the capital. In the Hazara Rama, the utasavamantapawas built in 1521 A.D. as an adjunct to the main temple by Timmaraja, an officer of Krishnadeva Raya.³





ACHYUTARAYA TEMPLE

To the right of the Matanga hills lies the temple of Achyutaraya. This temple was constructed by a minister, who was a brother of the king's wife Varadambika', and was dedicated to god Tiruvengalanatha. In course of time this temple became the centre of the Achyutapete or Achyuta's Bazaar. The temple facing north consists of a garbhagriha, sukhanasi, ardhamantapapradakshinapatha, navaranga and a mukhamantapa. Opposite to the mukha-mantapa is a shrine for Garuda. To the left of the temple, is the small, pomp act Amman shrine. The temple is enclosed by a prakara wall with the main entrance gateway on the north. There are also two more small entrances on the east and west. This entire prakara along with the entrance is further enclosed by an outer prakara where there are a few mantapa, including the kalyana-mantapa. This enclosure is marked by the main outer entrance on the north. The temple stands on a considerably high adhishtana. The main components of this adhishtana decorated with padmapetals, tripatta-kumuda. The gala is divided into compartments by vertical bands as in

Balakrishna temple. The kapota is designed with charity'sand petal moldings. The basement has broad projections in the garbhagriha section. In this projected part the adhishtana has a Patta with chitins and petal decoration m pi ace of the tri pattakumuda. The height of the adhishtana is 4 feet. ⁴





PATTABHIRAMA TEMPLE

One of the largest temples to be built during the Vijayanagara times was the Pattabhirama temple. This temple, facing east, was built during the time of achyutaya. It was the centre around which the suburb of VaradajiAmmanavara Pattana developed. The temple on plan has a garbhagriha, sukhanasi, ardha-mantapapradakshinapatha, navaranga and a large pillared mukha-mantapa. The temple possesses a large courtyard enclosed by a puskara wall. As in many temples of the period there is also a Amman shrine. The garbhagriha still contains the original pitha. The consecrated images are missing. The garbhagriha and the sukhanasi are always dark. The sukhanasi door frame resembles the door frame of the Achyutarsyasukhanasi. Door frame with two prominent jambs. These are carved with petal and flower designs. The lintel has a

seated figure of Vishnu with four hands. He holds chakra and sankha in the upper hands while the lower hands are indistinct. On either side of the sukhanasi door i.e., in the back of the ardha-mantapa the wall is decorated with Adhishthana moldings in the lower half and very shallow Devakoshthas above these mouldings. The adhishthana includes pattakumuda, gala with compartments, a projecting band, a narrow gala and another projecting band. The jeeva koshathatflanked by pilasters are crowned with silla-sikharait should be noted here that most of the sukhariadevara and the kapota above it are badly damaged. In the ardha-mantapathere are two side doors leading to the Pradakshriapatha. The archmantapaitself is squarish.⁵



CONCLUSION

The temples of Balakrishna, Achyutaraya and Pattabhirama are architecturally and sculpturally as important as the other wellknown temples. Hence, an attempt is made here to highlight the architectural, sculptural and iconographical significance of these temples. Any understanding of the Vijayanagara art is incomplete without a study of these three temples. The Sangama temples, mostly of the Kadamba Nagara style, are also studied, since very little mention of the architectural significance of these monuments has been made so far.



REFERENCES

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