

Kṛṣṇāpura and Kṛṣṇa Temple

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South India witnessed an important historical event between the mid 14th century and the second half of the 16th century. That was the beginnings, the glory and the downfall of the new empire called Karnataka, wrongly known as Vijayanagara Empire, with its capital Hampi-Vijayanagara. Lying on the southern bank of the river Tuṅgabhadrā modern village Hampi, Hospet *tāluk*, Bellary district, is in the modern Karnataka state. But during the above stated period, Hampi enjoyed the status of a royal capital under the name of Vijayanagara, of the vast empire known as Karnataka. Paes, a Portuguese horse trader was in Hampi-Vijayanagara in or about CE 1522. He writes¹: “outside the city walls on the north there are three beautiful pagodas ...”. Further the same chronicler adds : “And on the north-west side (of Bisnaga) is another city called Crisnapor connected with Bisnaga, in which are all their pagodas, those in which they mostly worship, and all the revenue of this city is granted to them; and they say that they have a revenue of hundred thousand *pardaos* of gold.” (*Ibid.*, p.119)

Of the three dynasties which ruled over Karnataka (Vijayanagara) Empire from its capital Hampi-Vijayanagarara, Saṅgama is the first (CE 1336-1346-1485), second is Sāḷuva from CE 1485-1505 and the Tuḷuva from CE 1505-1565 and plus. Kṛṣṇadevarāya is the most renowned king of this third dynasty during whose time the glory of the empire was at its zenith. The utmost important historical event of his rule is that of his victory over the Gajapati king of Oḍiśā (Orissa). On his way to Oḍiśā, first the King conquered Udayagiri, brought an image of *Bālakṛṣṇa* to his capital Vijayanagara, had it installed in a *Maṇimaṇḍapa* and named the locality Kṛṣṇāpura.

Kṛṣṇāpura is one of the suburbs in Hampi-Vijayanagara, which lies outside the main circuit fort walls. The locality derives its name from the main temple dedicated to God Kṛṣṇa which is the central pivot of the area. Lakkaṇṇadaṁḍeśa was the minister of King Devarāya II (CE 1424-1446 or so). The *Śivatattovacimtāmaṇi* is the *magnum opus* of Lakkaṇṇadaṁḍeśa. It is mentioned in this work, that the name of the area was Vijayakalyāṇapura (Verse 249, *Sandhi* 38). With the building of the temple to God Kṛṣṇa the name of the locality changed to Kṛṣṇāpura after CE 1513.

The four limits of Kṛṣṇāpura are: to the East - fort wall running almost up to the foot of the Mātaṅga hill (now it is razed to the ground level but traces of it can be seen here and there); to the South - the gate with the Hoysala royal emblem and the Deveri road; to the West - probably the temples of Lakṣmīnaraśimha and Rāmacandra on the bank of *hiriyakālūve*, the main canal; to the North - probably, the outer enclosure wall of the temple with the image of Narasiṁha hewn on a rock and the Mālāñjaneya shrine in the same complex (Fig.1, Fig.1A).

Kṛṣṇa temple study is not an easy subject. When was the temple built? Did the king ordered the temple to be built before setting up on his Oḍiśā conquest? Was he sure of his victory? Had he determined to bring the image of Bālakṛṣṇa from Udayagiri and to install it

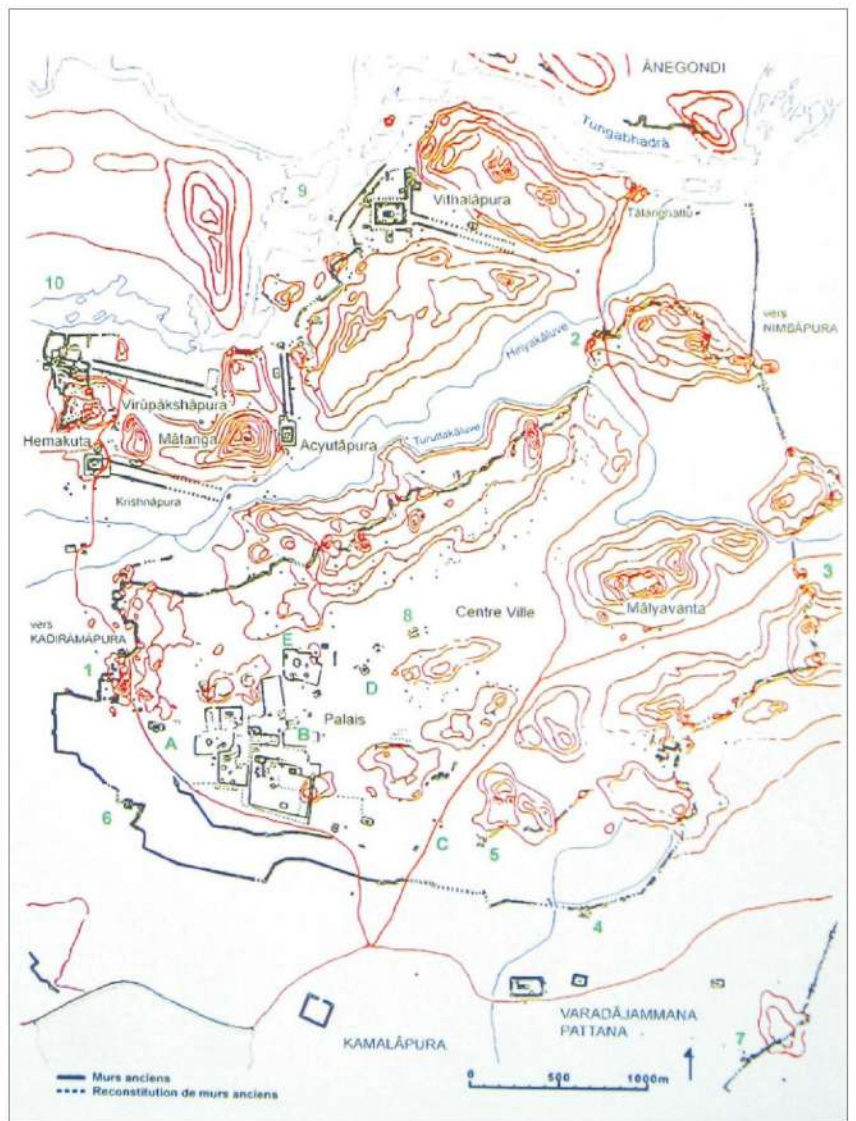


Fig.1 : Town plan of Hampi, Kṛṣṇāpura



Fig.1A : Kṛṣṇāpura before renovation (Archaeological Survey of India, Southern circle report)

in the *maṇimaṇḍapa* before conquering the fort? The researcher has to find solutions to these questions before determining the emplacement of the *Maṇimaṇḍapa* in the temple complex.

A close study of temples on the site of Hampi reveals the fact that the temples of Pre-Kṛṣṇarāya time underwent changes whereas the temples built during and after Kṛṣṇarāya are simple, endowed with only main architectural elements such as *garbhagrha*, *śukanāsi*, *antarāla* and *raṅgamaṇḍapa*.

We know from the epigraphic data that the Virūpākṣa temple was one of the most ancient shrine in Hampi. An inscription from Tīrthahalli dated CE 1406 records a donation made in the presence of Viṭṭhala on the bank of Tuṅgabhadrā (E.C.VIII, Ed. by L. Rice, Tīrthahalli nos.222). We have proved elsewhere that the epigraph refers to the temple of Viṭṭhala at Hampi.

Hampeya nālku bāgila Tirumaleśa, 'Four gated (towered) Tirumaleśa at Hampi'. *Nālkubāgila Tirumaleśa* is a noteworthy point in the Kṛṣṇa temple inscriptions of Kṛṣṇāpura at Hampi. In our opinion, it refers to the temple of Tiruveṅḡalanātha more known as Acyutarāya temple at Hampi. This is the only

temple on the site of Hampi which has four towers or entrance gates. Paṭṭābhirāma temple in the Varadājammana paṭṭaṇa near Kamalapura and Mālyavanta Raghunātha, are a few temples which were probably built before Kṛṣṇarāya's rule. To this list of temples it may not be wrong to add the temple of Kṛṣṇa in the Kṛṣṇāpura.

All these above mentioned temples, according to the availability of the space, are situated in a *prākāra*, compound wall surrounded by a number of sub-shrines. Other striking features of these structures are the addition of *pradakṣiṇāpatha*, 'ambulatory passage', *antarāla*, second ante-chamber and a *mahā-raṅgamaṇḍapa*, 'big *raṅgamaṇḍapa*'. The last architectural element is an open pillared hall meant for different ceremonies like *dolotsava*, swing festival etc.

An inscription near Cinnahudiyamma temple² registering the temple to Raghunātha was built in CE 1540 near the *Penugonḍe bāgīlu*, Penugonḍe gate in the Varadājammana paṭṭaṇa. According to the data recorded in the inscription engraved on its eastern wall, the Tirumangai ālvār temple to the NW of Viṭṭhala temple was built in CE 1556.³ Inscription records that the temple had only *garbhagṛaha*, *śukanāsi*, *antarāla* and *raṅgamaṇḍapa*.⁴ It has no ambulatory passage but two openings are there on the western wall of the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* which serve the purpose of access to the circumambulation. The temple of Raghunātha near *Penugonḍebāgīlu*, 'Penugonḍe gate', also has the same architectural elements. But the temple of Rāmacandra, more known as Hazārā Rāma, predates King Kṛṣṇarāya. Although it was also subject to changes, owing to the lack of space two openings on the western wall serve the purpose of circumambulation.

Coming back to the temple of Kṛṣṇa at Kṛṣṇāpura, there are two long inscriptions registering not only the grants to the temple but also the installation of the image of Bālakṛṣṇa or baby Kṛṣṇa which the king brought *uppāyataḥ*, as a means of success against the ruler of Udayagiri and installed it in the *maṇīmaṇḍapa*. One of the inscriptions is engraved on a nicely prepared stone stela installed to the east of the *mahā-raṅgamaṇḍapa*, big stage hall. The other is a composite inscription engraved on three sides of the walls of a small pavilion in the north-east, between *mahā-raṅgamaṇḍapa* and the *gopura* main entrance to the east. Neither of them

mentions the building of the temple. Both register, in the Sanskrit portion of the text that the image of Bālakṛṣṇa was installed in the *maṇimaṇḍapa*.

Standing in the big *prākāra* with colonnades the main temple of Kṛṣṇa consists of *garbhagrha*, cella, *śukanāsī*, ante-chamber, *antarāla*, second ante-chamber, *raṅgamaṇḍapa*, and the *mahā-raṅgamaṇḍapa* which is a open pillared hall. The two openings in the *antarāla* lead to the ambulatory passage which is devoid of any lighting. So the temple can be termed as *sāndhāra* type. According to our theory the original sanctum predates King Kṛṣṇarāya. The king must have elevated the height of the original

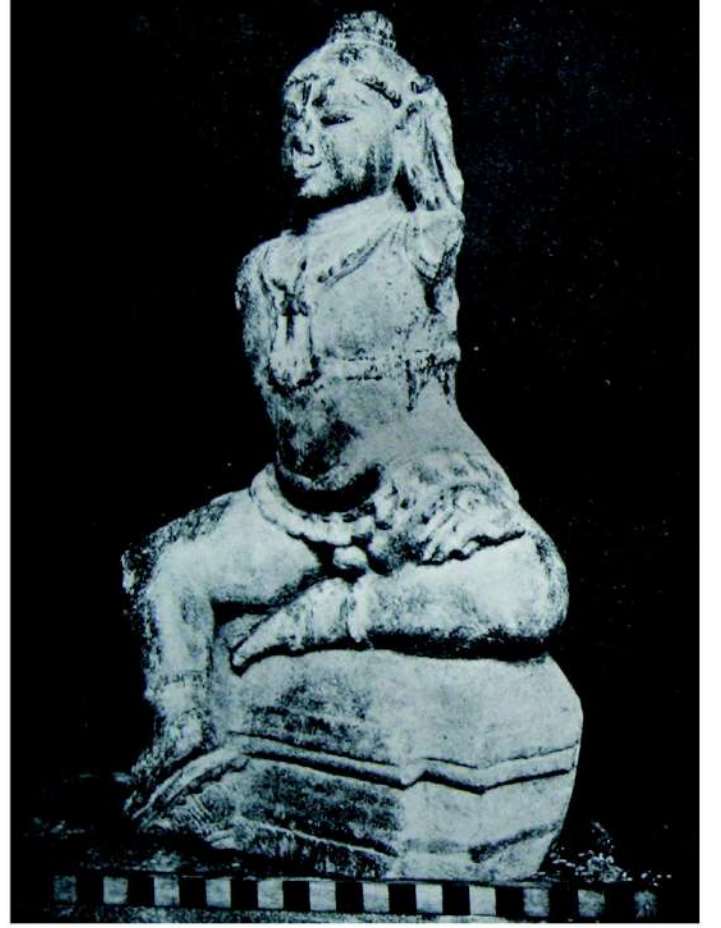


Fig.2 : Image of Bālakṛṣṇa found while debris clearing (Archaeological Survey of India, Southern circle report)

sanctum to house the image of God Bālakṛṣṇa in stone. It is written in one of the early 1920 reports of the southern circle of the Archaeological Survey that an image of Bālakṛṣṇa in stone was found lying in the sanctum. Now this image is kept in the Madras Museum (Fig.2). There are many sub-sancta in the *prākāra* but all of them are empty. An image of a personage on a peacock on the tower of one of the sub-sanctums in the SW corner intrigues the visitors. The image is in stucco and endowed with the attributes of Skanda, son of Śiva.

The presence of this sanctum in the Vaiṣṇava complex can be explained in this way. The Lakulīśa-Pāśupata religion was blooming in Karnataka predating the so called Vijayanagara Empire. Hampi was one of the important centres of Lakulīśa-Pāśupata. Otherwise why does the last section of the *Pampāmāhātmya* deal with the Lakulīśa-Pāśupata religion at length. Keeping Śiva as the main deity the adepts of Lakulīśa-Pāśupata did not disregard other gods. That is a reason why the images of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Sūrya, Gaṇeśa, Skanda, Durgā and so on are

found in their temples with Śiva in the central sanctum. A good number of the temples of Lakulīśa-Pāśupata are very small in size and the use of bricks and lime was not unknown to them. The group of temples on Hemakūṭa and Virūpākṣa temple complex pre-dates Karnataka (Vijayanagara) Empire. Probably there was a group of small shrines where now there is a Kṛṣṇa temple. In this group of small shrines King Kṛṣṇarāya might have chosen the central one to worship the image of Bālakṛṣṇa in the *garbhagr̥ha* after returning from Udayagiri. The image of Bālakṛṣṇa which was brought by the King from Udayagiri was installed in the *maṇīmaṇḍapa*. In both the inscriptions this fact is registered verbatim as follows:

*So'yaṁ śrīvarakṛṣṇarāyanṛpatir jītyodayādrim tataḥ
kṛṣṇam devamupāyataḥ svanagarīm nītvā maṇīmaṇḍape /
Śāliyābdarasāgnivedavidhuyugbhāve tapasye site
tārtīyye divase vṛṣe'pi vidhivat kru[ṣṇa]⁵ pratiṣṭhām vyadhāt //*

So this best of the kings, King Kṛṣṇarāya having conquered *Udayādri*, 'Udayagiri', and brought to his own town the image of God Kṛṣṇa as a war trophy, on the date specified (given in chronogram) : in the year Śālivāhana (śaka) *rasa* (6), *agni* (3), *veda* (4), *vidhu* (moon 1) that is in the Śaka year 1436, in the cyclic year *Bhāva*, in the (Vedic month) *tapas* (corresponding to Phālguna), in the bright half of the lunar month, in *vṛṣabha-lagna*, the *nakṣatra pauṣṇī*, 'Revatī', installation (of the image) of Bālakṛṣṇa in the *maṇīmaṇḍapa* was performed according to the rituals.

The same matter occurs in the Kannada portion of the text⁶ with succinct astronomical data: *svasti śrī jayābhyudaya śālivāhana śakavaruṣa 1435 sandu mele naḍeva bhāva samvatsarada phālguna śu 3 śukra (lū) śrīman mahārājādhirāja* (usual titles) . . . *śrī vīra kṛṣṇarāyamahārāyaru udayagiriyimda bijemāḍisikoṇḍu bandanthā śrī bālakṛṣṇa devara pratiṣṭheya māḍi . . .*

Be it well. In the auspicious Śālivāhana Śaka year lapsed in the cyclic year *Bhāva* on Friday, third day of the bright fortnight of the month of Phālguna, King Śrī Vīra Kṛṣṇarāya having made to be installed the image of Bālakṛṣṇa brought from Udayagiri . . .

According to the given astronomical data the image of Bālakṛṣṇa was installed in the Śaka year 1436 and not in 1435 as the editor of the *Hampi Inscriptions* gives. Śaka 1435 was Śrīmukha and 1436 was Bhāva. The text clearly mentions *śakavaruṣa 1435 sandu mele naḍeva bhāva saṁvatsarada*, Śaka 1435 was *sandu*, lapsed and the installation ceremonies were performed in the current Śaka year 1436, cyclic year Bhāva. The text is silent about where it was installed. *Maṇimaṇḍapa* is not mentioned in the Kannaḍa portion, is mentioned only in the Sanskrit portion of the inscription.

Some grants were made for the *Tirupaṇi*⁷ in the cyclic year Īśvara, which falls three years after Bhāva corresponding to 3rd December CE 1517. *Tirupaṇi* is not to be found in any of the Kannaḍa dictionaries or in the *Epigraphical Glossary* by D. C. Circar. It is a Tamil word and in the *Manual of the administration of the Madras Presidency Vol. III*, it is explained: *Tiru+paṇi*, Tam+Work. *Tiru* is equivalent of Sanskrit Śrī. *Paṇi* is a pure Tamil root of the verb *Paṇ*, to do, to work.

In one of the inscriptions⁸ in the Tirupati temple a construction work of Mādhavadāsari is recorded. He is credited to have built *tirumāmaṇi-maṇḍapa*, comprising of wonderful flooring, stone foundation, decorative work extending from basement to *stūpi*, and the *meyyakkāl*, sloping terrace, being his *tiruppaṇi*, construction. Instead of saying “his work” the epigraphist has preferred to say construction. The author of the *History of Tirupati* identifies *mukhamaṇḍapa* with *mahā-maṇimaṇḍapa* without strengthening his statement (p.121). It is in the axis of the cella and a part and parcel of the main temple.

It is interesting to note that in it is recorded that the previous grant made at the time of the *pratiṣṭhā*, 'installation', was re-handled on the date *Pramādhi saṁvatsarada kārtika śuda 1[1] lu pratiṣṭhākāladalū samarpiṣṭa . . .* (line no.15) 11th day of the bright fortnight of the month of Kārttika in the cyclic year Pramādhi corresponding to 11th November CE 1519. Some grants which were made to the temple of Anantaśayana were rearranged in favour of Kṛṣṇa temple in the cyclic year Pārthiva, Kārttika śu 1 corresponding to 17th October 1525 CE. Mention is done about the installation of the image of Goddess Lakṣmī and grants made to priests in charge of rituals (lines nos.45b-47a). The shrine to the north of the main

temple was probably dedicated to Goddess Lakṣmī.

Now coming to the problem of the emplacement of the *maṇimaṇḍapa*, Dr. M. S. Krishnamurthy has published an article in the 5th centenary of King Kṛṣṇarāya's accession to the throne. The title of the article is: "Unique Architectural Features of the Structures of Krishnadevaraya Period".

While writing about the Kṛṣṇa temple our professor writes: "The inscription that records the foundation of this temple by Kṛṣṇadevarāya also states that the image of Bālakṛṣṇa, brought by Kṛṣṇadevarāya as a war trophy from Udayagiri at Orissa was installed in the *maṇimaṇḍapa* of this temple. This historical information appears in the Sanskrit portion of the inscription, the translation of which can be made in two ways, because the syntax of the sentence is a little confusing. The sentence can be translated as (i) Kṛṣṇadevarāya brought the image of Bālakṛṣṇa and installed it in the *maṇimaṇḍapa*; (ii) Kṛṣṇadevarāya brought the image of Bālakṛṣṇa in *maṇimaṇḍapa* and installed it."

Although Professor's interpretation is acceptable, but grammatically speaking the verb *nītvā*, 'having brought' (invariable participle), construes better with the object Kṛṣṇamūrtim and the destination *svanagarīm*, 'the image of Kṛṣṇa to his own town'. The verb *vyadhāt*, 'installed', leads to the question where? The answer is *maṇimaṇḍape*, 'in the *maṇimaṇḍapa*'. Secondly, in the inscription there is no question of the foundation of the temple but it mentions only the installation of the image in the *maṇimaṇḍapa*.

Further Dr. Krishnamurthy adds, "Āgamas prescribe that *maṇimaṇḍapa* should be built as part and parcel of the main structure and it should be never be built separated from the main structure even if it is in the first enclosure.

Maṇimaṇḍapa, according to *vāstu* texts, should possess a *śrībandha adhiṣṭhāna* and a *sumaṅgala* (oblong) *śikhara*. The first requisite indicates that the *maṇḍapa* should have a gorgeous *adhiṣṭhāna* consisting of an *upāna*, *jagatī* with carvings of *padmadalas*, etc., a *katakavṛta kumuda* with a band of diadems, a *kapota* with *muktāgrasas*. The second requisite is the *sumaṅgala śikhara*. This *śikhara* is an oblong wagon-vaulted coping with gable ends formed of *mahanasis*. This *śikhara* is provided for the rectangular pavilions."

It would have been better if our scholar had given the references to his statements. The *Bṛhad Brahmasaṁhitā* describes the *muktimanḍapa* and calls it also *maṇimanḍapa*. It is a many pillared hall. The devotee on his way to *muktimanḍapa* sees many *stūpi*-s. But it is the abode of Viṣṇu decorated with pearls and precious stones.⁹ This reference in the *Bṛhad Brahmasaṁhitā* is not of much help to solve our problem of *maṇimanḍapa* in the Kṛṣṇa temple at Hampi. A close observation of the temple may help to find a solution to the problem.

Prof. Krishnamurthy has examined very closely the architectural elements of the *mahāmanḍapa* in the temple. He writes: "The *mahāmanḍapa* has only two side entrances, while its front, where another entry should have existed has a *manḍapa* with four pillars". Further he adds: "From the descriptions in the *agamas* and also from the present practice, it becomes clear that (i) The *maṇimanḍapa* should be built as part and parcel of the main temple structure; (ii) It should be a pavilion rectangular on plan; (iii) It should be rich in its surface treatment; (iv) It should possess a *sumaṅgala śikhara*, i.e., a wagon-vaulted roof.

In the light of these prescriptions, let us try to identify the *maṇimanḍapa* of the Kṛṣṇa temple at Hampi, in which Kṛṣṇadevarāya installed the Bālakṛṣṇa image brought by him from Udayagiri in Orissa It may be presumed that the *manḍapa* constructed on the main axis of the temple in front of the *mahāmanḍapa* is the *maṇimanḍapa* built by Kṛṣṇadevarāya as mentioned in the inscription."

Further Professor gives at length a very beautiful and exact description of architectural elements of the *manḍapa*: "There are clear indications in the structural work of the temple to establish the fact that the *maṇimanḍapa* is a portion added to *mahāmanḍapa* at a later date. This *maṇimanḍapa* is built on the main axis of the temple between the *mahāmanḍapa* and the *dhvajastambha*. The *mahāmanḍapa* is generally built adjacent to the *navaraṅga* on the main axis of the temple. It will be open on all its three sides and it is provided with an entrance at the centre of all the three sides or only at the front. The *mahāmanḍapa* of the Kṛṣṇa temple has two side approaches. It has no approach on the eastern side. In that place, the *maṇimanḍapa* is built adjoining the plinth of the *mahāmanḍapa* (Fig.3).



Fig.3 : *Maṇḍapa* built abutting the *mahāraṅgamaṇḍapa*
Inscription engraved on the stone slab and the small shrine with inscription on its walls

The general principle of construction is that whenever an offset is provided to the plinth of the building, a strong bondage is provided to the offset by projecting the stone of the plinth into the offset portion and vice-versa. But in the case of the *maṇḍimaṇḍapa* of the Kṛṣṇa temple, the plinth of the *maṇḍimaṇḍapa* is built just attached to the *mahāmaṇḍapa* of the main temple. There is no continuation of the stones of the plinth of the *mahāmaṇḍapa* into the plinth of the *maṇḍimaṇḍapa*. There is also a slight gap at the junction of these two plinths and that gap is filled with rubble and mortar.

The dripstones (*kapota*) of the two *maṇḍapas* are also differently levelled. As the *prastara* part of the *mahāmaṇḍapa* had already been constructed, they could not join the *kapota* of *maṇḍimaṇḍapa* with that of *mahāmaṇḍapa*. Therefore, the level of the *kapota* of the *maṇḍimaṇḍapa* is slightly lowered and it is made to extend below the *kapota* of the *mahāmaṇḍapa*. By doing these adjustments, the canonical

prescriptions are adhered to and at the same time the beauty of the elevation of both the *maṇḍapas* is also maintained.”

Dr. Krishnamurthy is of the opinion that the *maṇimaṇḍapa* should be built as part and parcel of the main temple structure. To strengthen this statement he gives the example of Caluvanārāyaṇasvāmī temple at Melukote. It is true that in Melukote the image of Rāmapriya is installed in the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* in a wooden structure. This *maṇḍapa* is called *maṇimaṇḍapa* according to the informants of Dr. Krishnamurthy. But, the story of *Rāmapriyamūrti* is different. According to the local legend the image of Rāmapriya was with a Muslim princess in Delhi and the Śrīvaiṣṇava saint/philosopher Rāmānujācārya brought it back to Melukote and installed it here. Secondly, in the Melukote temple Rāmapriya is not considered as the *utsavamūrti*, image for procession of Caluvanārāyaṇa. It is the image by itself. According to the legend the *Rāmapriyamūrti* has a divine origin. It was given to God Rāma by Lord Brahmā who took it out from his heart.¹⁰ That is why the image is installed in a special *maṇḍapa*. By and large, at the time of *mahāpūjā* in temples the food that is offered to the main deity is also offered to the *utsavamūrti*. But in Melukote, the practice is different. At the time of the main rituals at noon and night separate *naivedya* food offerings are made to the Caluvanārāyaṇa and to Rāmapriya.¹¹ Moreover, at the end of all rituals and ceremonies the temple is closed and the doors are locked.

What Dr. Krishnamurthy says about the *maṇḍapa* added to the *mahāmaṇḍapa* in the temple is quite convincing. None can do better description of the *mahāmaṇḍapa* than he has given. His description is so convincing that it is difficult to contradict it. But if his theory is accepted then how to answer this practical question of the safety of the deity? Because the said *maṇḍapa* abuts the open pillared *mahāmaṇḍapa* and both are open on all sides. The inscriptions records that the King made lavish donations of ornaments incrusting with precious gems and pearls to the deity, and also vessels of precious metals of gold and silver vessels at the time of the installation. If that is the case then can such a valuable image be installed in an open *maṇḍapa*? This realistic question has to be answered.

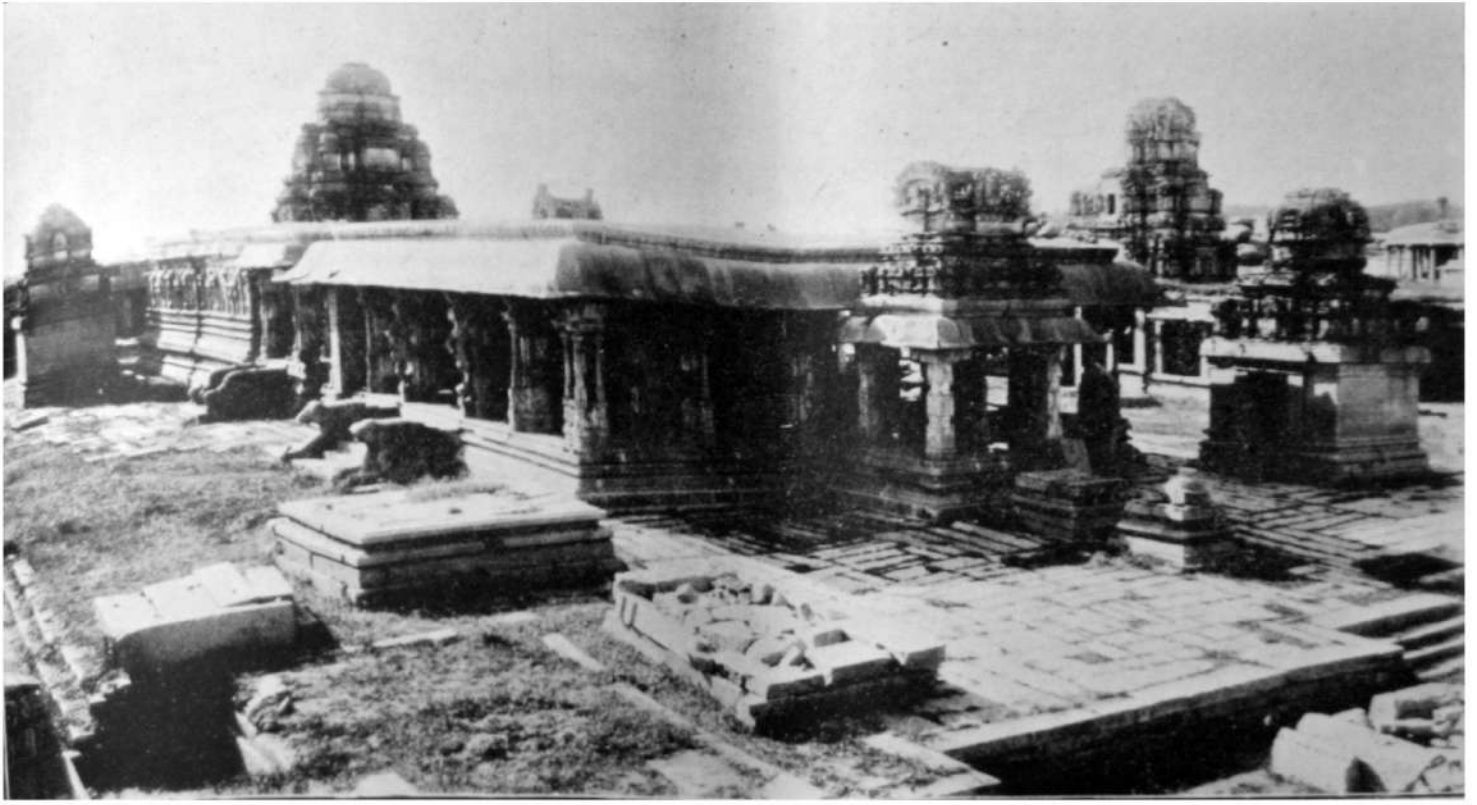


Fig.4 : Kṛṣṇa temple before renovation (From the same report mentioned above)

According to Śaivāgama texts, *maṇīmaṇḍapa* should be to the SE, in between the main *gopura*, entrance and the *mahāmaṇḍapa*. In the photo of the Southern Circle Archaeological report are seen the traces of some structures to the SE of the temple (Fig.4). Now the temple is renovated beyond the hopes of finding a trace of those edifices. It is difficult to say what their functions were. Was one of them a *maṇīmaṇḍapa*? We cannot answer with certainty. On the contrary, we propose that the small structure on the walls of which the long inscription is engraved in the NE of the main shrine must have been a *maṇīmaṇḍapa* during the historical times. But Prof. Krishnamurthy does not agree with our identification of *maṇīmaṇḍapa*¹² with this small shrine which is to the NE in the temple complex. Then why is this important inscription engraved on its walls? It registers many grants made on various dates starting from the cyclic year Bhāva up to the Pramādi, that is a period of eleven years. The inscription must have been inscribed on the walls of the shrine after CE 1525. From this information, it can be surmised that the building of the main temple, shrine to Goddess Lakṣmī and the *maṇīmaṇḍapa* was begun in or about CE 1515 after his victory over Udayagiri and completed by CE 1525.

There are three possibilities with regard to the identification of the *maṇimaṇḍapa*: Either relying upon the Śaivāgama-s it may not be wrong to identify one of the structures to the SE in ruins now as *maṇimaṇḍapa* or the one to the north with the inscription on the walls was *maṇimaṇḍapa* or even more the theory of Dr. Krishnamurthy. According to him the *maṇḍapa* was built abutting the *mahāmaṇḍapa* like in the Veṅkaṭeśvara temple at Tirupati.¹³

A few years ago the installation of Garuḍa image was performed in the temple of Varāhasvāmī in the Mysore palace when Shri Sampatakumar Achar (Sellappa) was the main *arcaka*. The rituals of installation were performed in the *mahāmaṇḍapa* where a small pavilion was raised temporarily for the purpose. After the ceremonies now the statue is kept in the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* and the temporary



Fig.5 : Eastern gopura, facade west; war scenes to the left of the window are identified with King's Oḍiśā campaign; right side of the window: King with his queens

maṇḍapa was dismantled. In the case of the Kṛṣṇa temple at Hampi King Kṛṣṇarāya was the patron. Probably, being a king, he must have had small pavilion built in stone abutting the *mahāmaṇḍapa* and he called it *maṇimaṇḍapa*. Owing to the paucity of documents it is difficult to say *idam itham*, it is like this.

Description of the temple: There are two enclosures and the main temple, facing east, is in the centre of the inner one. There is a *gopura*, big tower to the east with the depiction of some war scenes on the western facade (Fig.5). Apart from the usual architectural elements such as *garbhagr̥ha*, *śukanāsī*, *antarāla*, *raṅgamaṇḍapa* there is also a *mahāraṅgamaṇḍapa* and a *pradakṣiṇāpatha*. The access to the ambulatory passage is through two entrances, flanked on either side of *antarāla*, the second antechamber. The passage is in complete darkness, but it is worth seeing with the help of a good torch light. The carvings on the walls of the cella are particularly enchanting and some are amusing.

Now there is no image in the main sanctum. But, a mutilated statue of a baby Kṛṣṇa, now kept in the Chennai (Madras) Museum, was found while removing the debris in the cella, in the early years of the twentieth century. It is a seated image of a chubby baby. Though the hands have been broken, from the existing traces it is possible to say that it was an image of *caturbhuja* Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa with four arms. In one of his compositions Purandaradāsa makes an allusion to this image: '*come to see the glory of āratī, waving lights before our caturbhuja Kṛṣṇa when preceptor Vyāsarāya does it*' (Fig.2).



Fig.6 : A personage in royal attire, probably King Kṛṣṇarāya standing with hands in *āñjali* in front of baby Kṛṣṇa.

Architecturally speaking the main shrine is on par with other main temple complexes on the site. *Mahāraṅgamaṇḍapa*, a big dancing hall, another architectural element introduced during the days of King Kṛṣṇarāya, is an open hall with many slender pillars covered with carvings. On one of the pillars in this newly added *maṇḍapa* there is a depiction of a scene of a personage in royal attire standing in front of an image of Baby Kṛṣṇa is identified by modern art historians with King Kṛṣṇarāya with the image of Bālakṛṣṇa which he brought from Udayagiri (Fig.6). That is one of the reasons why the scholars think that this must have been a *maṇimaṇḍapa* during historical times. On one of the pillars in the probable *maṇimaṇḍapa*, the addition of a pavilion contiguous to the big dancing hall left no place for a shrine for Garuḍa. There is a small shrine of Garuḍa in all other Vaiṣṇava temples on the site. Lack of place for the shrine of Garuḍa makes us think that the shrine must have been there already before the date of Kṛṣṇarāya and he had it renovated, transformations by adding new architectural elements to give the appearance of what it has now.

There are many small sancta around the main shrine. The paucity of documentation and the emptiness of the shrines do not allow to state what images must have been housed there. There is a stucco figure of Skanda, son of Śiva, on the super-structure of a shrine. A shrine to the left of the main temple must have been dedicated to the Goddess Lakṣmī judging from a few stucco figures of female deities on the super-structure. There were kitchens too for the preparation of food offerings to gods. Many scenes of Kṛṣṇa's sports are depicted on the external facades of main temple walls and on the pillars of the *mahāraṅgamaṇḍapa*. Mainly the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* and a few compositions of Haridāsa, saints like Purandaradāsa and Kanakadāsa are the main sources for these representations. The depiction of lunar eclipse is beautifully carved on the ceiling of the eastern *gopura*. One can notice it as soon as one enters the *gopura* and raises the head to see the ceiling.

Apart from the main entrance to the east there are entrances to the north and to the south. To the south, in the second enclosure, there is a small structure built in indo-saracenic style. Probably, it was a store room of grains for the temple

kitchen. Northern gate leads to Hemakūṭa, Virūpākṣa while the southern, towards Lakṣmīnarasimha and other temples, then to the heart of the city.

To the east was a long *rathabīdi*, temple car-street, with galleries on either side with a tank for aquatic festivals of deities. *Vasantamaṇḍapa*, a small pavilion, in the centre of the tank was meant for the performance of certain ceremonies during the festivals. To the east, facing the tank, there is another *maṇḍapa* to repose the deities for some particular rituals.

Passing through the southern gate, with multiple openings for pedestrians and vehicles, one reaches the road leading to Viṣṇu and Śiva temples. This road, abutting the temple was actually a market for grains in those days and the revenue of it was destined to the Kṛṣṇa temple. Also merchants were living there in their shops cum houses. *Maḷigemane* designates the house cum shops. *Maḷigemane* is a typical house in the north Karnataka where the shutters are a series of wooden planks. They are adjusted in a railing one next to the other.¹⁴

Lakṣmīnarasimha : South of Kṛṣṇa temple walking a few yards on this road, one stands in front of a gigantesque image of Lakṣmīnarasimha. With goddess Lakṣmī seated on the left lap of Narasimha, his spouse, hoods of the snake and the seat of the deities, all this make a handsome whole carved in one single stone. In CE 1528, were celebrated the rituals of installation of the statue by a certain Kṛṣṇabhaṭṭa, son of Narasimhabhaṭṭa. Owing to the time factor, the ceiling of the temple has collapsed. Now the most exquisitely carved statue, though damaged, is in a roofless shrine.

By the side of this temple is a huge *liṅga*, housed in a small sanctum. This *liṅga* is also hewn in a single block of a rock. The source for the presence of water may be due to irrigation canals passing by the side of the shrine. There are absolutely no documents with regard to this *liṅga*.

Uddāna Vīrabhadra and Caṇḍikeśvara temples : If one walks along the road, which was a market of grains in olden days, one reaches two temples one of which bears a board *Caṇḍikeśvara* and the other *Uddāna Vīrabhadra*. Both are misnomers.

Actually Caṇḍikeśvara temple, according to the inscription *in situ*, was built and dedicated to God Tirumaleśa (Viṣṇu) by Eredimmarājīyaya, younger brother of Rāmarāya, in the Śaka year 1466, that is in CE 1545.

The temple contains all features of a Vaiṣṇava shrine such as an image of Garuḍa on the pedestal where once the statue of Tirumaleśa was installed and also the guardians of the temple have Vaiṣṇava signs. By the side of the main temple is a small shrine, probably dedicated to the goddess. The enclosure wall of the whole complex starts at a point where the *raṅgamaṇḍapa* ends and the open pillared hall starts. It is not wrong to say that it is one of the fully structured temples of King Sadāśivarāya's period.

Uddāna Vīrabhadra : Same Eredimmarāju had the whole temple built in the same year, *i.e.* CE 1545 for God Muddu Vīraṅṇa, a form of Śiva. In the course of time, that has become 'Uddāna Vīrabhadra', a tall Vīrabhadra. This standing image of Śiva is very tall, more than two metres high with the usual attributes namely a sword, shield, bow and arrow in four hands. The temple has only *garbhagr̥ha*, *śuknāsī* and a small *maṇḍapa*.

Both inscriptions mention that these temples were built near the *Chatra*, free feeding house, on the *Hiriya kāluve*, principal canal. In fact, to the east of the Vīrabhadra temple, in the fields, there is a very big open pillared hall, where thousands of people can sit for food. There are devices for the outlet of smoke. It shows that food used to be prepared there.

From there, if one walks in the fields towards south, one reaches at roads with double bends, fort gates and walls. In this enclosure there are a few small shrines and one of them has an inscription mentioning the name of the road as Deveri. Besides the royal crest of Hoysala kings - a man killing a tiger, many wrestling and fighting scenes decorate the walls of the fort.

To the east of Kṛṣṇa temple, facing the main temple there were two roads, of which one was leading to Hemakūṭa by passing through the two enclosures, whereas the way to Virūpākṣa was passing outside the two compound walls of the temple.

The king himself stood as the patron for the construction of the Kṛṣṇa

temple, the work has been done with intensive care. Stones have been very neatly cut and well formed. Kṛṣṇa temple is the best example of skilful workmanship. Another noteworthy point is that in Kṛṣṇāpura the temples to Śiva and Viṣṇu were built side by side.

References & Notes

1. Vasundhara Filliozat, *Vijayanagar as seen by Domingo Paes and Fernao Nuniz*, NBT, Delhi, 1999, p.84.
2. *SII*, Vol.IV, no.245; *Inscriptions of the Vijayanagara Rulers*, Vol.II, ed. by Shrinivas Ritti & B.R. Gopal, no.541; *Hampi Inscription*, ed. by D. Kondareddi, no.326.
3. *Hampi University Epigraphical Series : No.3, Hampi Inscriptions*, no.209.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *SII*, Vol.IV, no.254, lines 12b-14a. The same text of the epigraph (no.255) is re-engraved on the three walls of NE *maṇḍapa* where it is written *pāṣṇe*. D. Kondareddy, editor of the *Hampi Inscriptions in the Kannada University Epigraphical Series:3*, reads *pauṣṇe* (no.74, line 6) meaning *Revatī nakṣatra*.
6. *Hampi Inscriptions*, no.73, lines 14b-18a.
7. *Ibid.*, lines 12a-15a.
8. *Tirupati Devasthanana Inscriptions*, Vol.1, no.196, dated 25th August CE 1317. We are very thankful to Dr. Gerard Colas and his wife Usha Colas for drawing my attention on this Inscription and providing me the text.
9. *A descriptive Bibliography of the texts of the Pāñrātrāgala*, by Daniel Smith, Vol.I, 1975, ORI, Baroda. Our thanks are due to Drs. Gerard and Usha Colas for making this available to me on time.
10. This information was given to me by Shri Ariar Ramasharma, President awardee (2015) when I was working on Melukote site in early 1990. He does the 'Ariar seve' in the temple Caluvanārāyaṇa.
11. Our thanks are due to Shri Sampatkumara Achar, more known as Sellappa. He hails from Melukote and was a main *arcaka* in the Varāhasvāmī temple in the palace at Mysore.
12. We are informed by Shri Sampatkumar Achar (Selleppa) that in the Raṅganātha temple at Shrirangam the *maṇimaṇḍapa* is in the thousand pillared hall which is to the north of the main shrine and it was built by King Kṛṣṇarāya. *Maṇimaṇḍapa* is a closed pavilion and it is locked after the rituals.
13. *Supra*.
14. In early 1940s we were staying in a *maḷigemane* when my father was working as a primary school teacher at Haveri.