

The Rise and Fall of the Vijayanagara Empire A Historical Study

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Abstract:

The goal of this article is to investigate the Vijayanagara Empire. The Hindu empires of the Deccan, including the Yadava Empire of Devagiri, the Kakatiya dynasty of Warangal, and the Pandyan Empire of Madurai, were often invaded by Muslims from the north prior to the formation of the Vijayanagara Empire in the early 14th century. In 1336, the upper Deccan area (now Maharashtra and Telangana) was vanquished by the Delhi Sultanate's army led by Sultan Alauddin Khalji and Muhammad bin Tughluq. In 1294 CE, the Muslim armies of the Delhi Sultanate attacked and annexed the Yadava Empire, prompting Hoysala leader Singeya Nayaka-III to proclaim independence in the Deccan area. He established the Kampili kingdom around the Gulbarga and Tungabhadra rivers in northern Karnataka state. In 1327-28, the Delhi Sultanate's army defeated the kingdom, prompting the inhabitants to conduct a ceremonial mass suicide known as a jauhar. The Vijayanagara Kingdom was established in 1336 CE as a successor to the Hoysalas, Kakatiyas, and Yadavas. The breakaway Kampili Kingdom added to the resistance against Muslim invasions in South India. Harihara and Bukka, brothers serving in Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq's army, formed the Vijayanagar state in 1336. In 1336, Harihara and Bukka established an independent state in Karnataka, with the capital city of Vijayanagar on the banks of the Tungabhadra River. Vidyaranya, a contemporary scholar and saint, assisted and inspired them in their efforts. During the medieval era, regional kingdoms emerged as the Delhi Sultanate declined in power. The Sayyid and Lodi dynasties, the final rulers of the sultanate, were incapable of maintaining the realm.

The Vijayanagara Kingdom emerged in the south of India, centered on the Deccan and southern regions. By the end of the 13th century, southern countries' efforts to defend against Turkic Islamic incursions led to the establishment of the empire. During its peak, the empire expanded beyond the Tungabhadra-Krishna River doab area, conquered several South Indian families, annexed modern-day Odisha (previously Kalinga), and established itself as a formidable force. The empire had four dynasties: Sangama, Saluva, Tuluva, and Aravidu. The Sangama dynasty was Shaivite, while the remainder were Vaishnavites. The Vijayanagara kingdom represents a golden age for the southern area in many aspects.

Keywords: Historical Vijayanagara, Empire, Harihara, Bukka, Krishnadevaraya

INTRODUCTION:

The Vijayanagar state was founded in 1336 by two brothers, Harihara and Bukka, who were part of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq's army. The capital city of Karnataka, Vijayanagar, was built on the banks of

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the Tungabhadra River in 1336 when they seceded from the Delhi Sultanate and became an independent kingdom. The saint Vidyaranya and modern scholars assisted and encouraged Harihara and Bukka in establishing their empire. With the decline of the Delhi Sultanate, regional kingdoms began to emerge throughout the Middle Ages. The latter dynasties of the sultanate, Sayyid and Lodi, were unable of sustaining the country due to their extreme weakness. During this period, the Vijayanagara Kingdom, which was centered on the Deccan and the southern part of India, emerged. The empire grew toward the end of the 13th century as a consequence of the southern countries' attempts to repel Turkic Islamic incursions. At its peak, it drove the Deccan sultans outside of the Tungabhadra-Krishna River doab area, subjugated almost all of the powerful families in South India, seized modern-day Odisha (formerly known as Kalinga) from the Gajapati Kingdom, and established itself as a major force. Four distinct dynasties—the Sangama, Saluva, Tuluva, and Aravidu dynasties—ruled the empire. While the other dynasties were Vaishnavites, the Sangama dynasty was Shaivite. The Vijayanagara kingdom represents a time of great prosperity for the southern area in many respects.

The purpose of this essay is to examine the Vijayanagara Empire. All of the data included in this work came from secondary sources, including books, journals, articles, websites, and other sources.

VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE:

1. Dynasty of Sangama (1336-1485)

As the "master of the eastern and western seas," Harihara 1 reigned from 1336 to 1356, gaining authority over the majority of the region south of the Tungabhadra River (Purvapaschima Samudradhishavara).

His brother Bukka Raya I succeeded him in 1356 and reigned until 1377. The Mudkal stronghold was attacked by Bukka I in 1367. The Bahmani sultan overthrew the king and drove him into the bush after crossing the Tungabhadra and marching into Vijayanagar in retaliation. The Bahmani sultan used artillery to get the upper hand in the protracted conflict that followed. Ultimately, the kingdoms agreed to split the contested Tungabhadra doab in a treaty. Under Harihara II, the realm was extended to the eastern coast (1377 until 1404).

He overran lands from the Ganga kings of Orissa, the Reddis in the upper Krishna Godavari delta, the Warangal rulers in the lower Krishna Godavari delta, sent an expedition to northern Sri Lanka, defeated the Bahmani Sultans, and took Goa and Belgaum from the Bahmanis. After seizing Golconda and Kaulas from the Bahmani sultanate and signing a treaty, the Warangal monarch put an end to their eastward advance. An alliance that lasted for more than 50 years was established by a treaty between the Warangal and Bahmanis. Vijayanagar was prevented from acquiring control of the Tungabhadra doab by this alliance.

Deva Raya I (1406-1422):

In the battle of Tungabhadra doab, Bahmani Sultan Firuz Shah vanquished him. As compensation, he

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was required to provide 10 lakh elephants, pearls, and huns. gave the Sultan his daughter in marriage (giving Bankapur as a dowry in the Tungabhadra doab). To divide the Reddi kingdom between them, Deva Raya formed an alliance with Warangal; as a result, Warangal changed their allegiance to Vijayanagara. Because of this, Deva Raya was able to overthrow Sultan Firuz Shan Bahmani and conquer the whole Reddi realm, all the way to the Krishna River's mouth.

Additionally, Deva Raya built a dam on the Tungabhadra and used its canals to irrigate towns and cities.

Additionally, he constructed a dam on the Haridra River. In Mallapangudi, he also constructed the Mallikarjuna Temple. Nicolo Conti, an Italian adventurer, visited Vijayanagara in 1420 and wrote of the city's splendor. The Hazara Rama temple in present-day Hampi has a Kannada inscription commemorating Deva Raya I.

Deva Raya II (1425-1446):

He is regarded as the Sangam dynasty's finest king. By enlisting Muslims and providing them with jagirs, he cleverly bolstered his army. He then forced them to teach mounted archery to all Hindu commanders and troops. He traversed the Tungabhadra in 1443 to retake areas south of the Krishna (Bankapura, Mudkal). However, after three fierce conflicts, both parties decided to preserve the current borders.

During this period, the Portuguese explorer Nuniz said that Deva Raya II was honored in Quilon, Sri Lanka, Pulicat, Pegu, and Tenasserim (Burma and Malaya). Abdur Razzaq, a Persian traveler, also provided further details on the Deva Raya II army men. The kingdom was temporarily weakened after the reign of Deva Raya II due to an internal fight for the crown. The Gajapati kings of Orissa began raiding south India as early as 1450, reaching Madurai. This weakened the Vijayanagara and reduced the Rayas' power in Karnataka. The Saluva dynasty was established at this time when the minister Saluva took the throne.

2. SALUVA DYNASTY (1485-1505)

There were only three kings in the dynasty:

Saluva Narasimha Deva Raya (1485–1491 CE)

Thimma Bhupala (1491 CE)

Narasimha Raya II (1491–1505 CE)

Saluva Narasimha Deva Raya's reign was mostly dedicated to unsuccessful efforts to stop the Suryavamsa ruler of Orissa's expansion and only marginally successful wars to subjugate his vassals across the realm. Narasimha also created further ports on the west coast to resurrect the horse trade, which Bahman had taken over. After Narasimha's oldest son, Thimma Bhupa, was slain in 1492 by an army commander and one of Narasa's rivals, his youngest son, Narasimha Raya II, replaced his brother as king. He became known as Immadi Narasimha. The oldest son and heir apparent of

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Narasa, Vira Narasimha, had actual authority despite being granted the title. He ordered the murder of Immadi Narasimha in 1505. After that, he took the throne and established the third Vijayanagara dynasty, the Tuluva dynasty, which lasted from 1503 until 1509.

3. DYNASTY TULUVA (1491-1570)

Krishna Deva Raya (1509-1529):

He established the biggest kingdom in medieval South India and was the greatest monarch of the Vijayanagara empire. He had to fight against the successor powers, such as the Bijapur sultanate, that emerged after the fall of the Bahamani sultanate. In 1520, he overcame Bijapur. He resisted the Gajapati kings of Odisha's constant assaults. He overran Gulbarga and Belgaum in the west. He gave little thought to building up the fleet, which backfired since the Portuguese outperformed them in marine commerce. Babur, the Timurid king who conquered northern India, acknowledged Krishna and Rana Sanga, the king of Chittor, as India's two greatest Hindu rulers. The Portuguese explorers Domingo Paes and Duarte Barbosa visited the Vijayanagara Empire during his reign, and their trip journals show that the king was an excellent commander and administrator who led from the front in battle and even cared for the wounded. He had a strong desire to advance the kingdom's architecture, art, and culture. Another name for him was Andhra Bhoja. He authored a book on politics himself. supported eight distinguished academics known as Astadiggaja, including the well-known Tenali Raman. Another outstanding scholar among them was Andhra Kavita Pitamah, also known as Peddannah. Pedanna wrote Manucharitam and Harikatha Samaram, Krishnadevaraya wrote Amuktamalyada and Jambavti Kalyanam (Sanskrit), Nandi Thimmana wrote Parijathapaharanam, Madayyagari Mallana wrote Rajasekhara Charitramu, Dhurjati wrote Kalahasti Mahatyamu, Ayyalaraju Ramabhadru wrote Sakalakatha Sangraha and Ramaabhyudayamu, and Pingali Surana wrote Raghava Pandaviyamu, Kalapurnodayam, and Prabhavate Pradyamana. His reign is regarded as the golden age of Telugu literature.

Administration: Mandalams, or provinces, were ruled by Mandalshwaras or Nayaks. The empire was split up into gramas, sthalas, nadus, and Mandalams. One-sixth of the product was used for land tax or sist. Varaha/pagoda was the name of the gold coin; tara was the name of the silver coin; jital and duggani were minor denominations. Army leaders were referred to as Nayaks or poligars, and they received amaram, or land, in exchange for their service. (When the kingdom weakened in the 17th and 18th centuries, the Nayaks seized Madurai, Tanjore, etc.) Krishna Deva Raya was a celebration of respect for all Hindu religions. He is widely recognized for having encouraged and funded several cults and their houses of worship. He restored temples dedicated to Shiva, including the Virupaksha Temple. He granted land concessions to the temples of Tirumala, Srisailem, Amaravati, Chidambaram, Ahobila, and Tiruvannamalai. He extensively decorated the Tirumala Venkateswara Temple with a variety of pricey objects. Numerous foreign visitors, including Ibn Batuta, Nicolo de Conti, Abdul Razzak, Barossa, Domingos Paes, and Nuniz, praised the city and government in their writings. After his brother Achyuta Deva Raya (1529-1543) succeeded him, Krishnadeva Raya passed away in 1529 from sickness. The Vijayanagara kingdom's last Tuluva monarch was Sadashiva Raya (1543-1565).

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A triumvirate headed by Rama Raja oversaw his government. Rama Raja halted the supply of horses to Bijapur and signed a trade agreement with the Portuguese. The sultanates were weakened by this action, and Ahmadnagar, Golconda, and Bijapur were vanquished. The Battle of Talikota, also known as Rakhsha-Tangadi, took place in 1565 when the three kingdoms banded together to fight Vijayanagara. Vijayanagara was pillaged and devastated, and Rama Raja was put to death. Following the battle's devastation, the magnificent city was abandoned. Following the Battle of Talikota, the Vijayanagara empire was essentially destroyed, but the kingdom persisted until the 1640s.

4. DYNASTY ARAVIDU (1542-1646):

The dynasty's Aliya Rama Raja died in battle, and his brother Tirumala Deva Raya succeeded to the throne. The dynasty's kings persisted in their attempts to rebuild Vijayanagara, but their efforts were thwarted by the Muslim neighbors' persistent invasions. This continued to erode the kingdom's strength. During his rule from 1586 until 1614, Venkatapati Deva Raya gained power by defeating the Deccan sultans and reestablishing a large portion of the country. Venkatapati moved his capital from Penukonda to Chandragiri, which was located closer to the Tirupathi hills to the south, in 1592. He moved the capital from Chandragiri to Vellore Fort, which served as a significant base, after 1604. During his reign, the Dutch applied for permission to establish a factory at Pulicat in 1608. After his death in 1614, Sriranga II, his nephew, assumed power. However, when a conflict for the throne developed, different forces killed him and his family. Following the protracted conflict, his son Rama deva Raya (1617-1632), who had been smuggled away by a loyal officer amid killings, assumed power. Battles between the opposing groups plagued his reign. Sriranga III (1642-1652) was the last king of the dynasty and Vijayanagara kingdom. By the time of his death, he was a king without a kingdom because he was losing land to the Deccan sultans and the Nayaks. South India's three centuries of Vijayanagara dominion came to an end as a result. The literature, architecture, language, and culture of the period were all greatly influenced by the Vijayanagara kingdom, and several languages, including Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Sanskrit, thrived. Tall gopurams and Kalyana mandapams were a common feature of the temple architecture (Vithala, Virupaksha temple, Hampi; Varadharaja, Ekamparantha temples, Kanchipuram).

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS:

One of the wealthiest states in the world at the time was the Vijayanagara Empire. The varaha, or pagoda, was the primary gold coin. Varaha, the Boar avatar of Vishnu, was the most often used symbol.

Half a Varaha was the Perta. A tenth of a pertha was Fanam. The coins of Harihara I and Bukka I featured the Hanuman emblem, the coins of Krishna Deva Raya featured the images of Venkatesh and Balkrishna, and the coins of Tar and Jittal were made of silver and copper, respectively. Tirumala kept the original Varaha, but Achyuta Raya used Garuda. Cotton, silk, spices, rice, saltpeter, and sugar were the main export goods. Horses, pearls, copper, coral, and other items were among the imports. During this time, the craft of shipbuilding (300 sea ports) evolved, aiding in the growth of commerce. Ships were used for both domestic and international commerce. With its significant port of Cannanore,

Malabar was the most significant commercial region on the West Coast. It had trade ties with Arabia, Persia, South Africa, Abyssinia, and Portugal on the west, and the Indian Ocean islands, Burma, the Malay Archipelago, and China on the east. The state encouraged chess as a game and offered prizes to participants.

Agriculture & Industries Under Vijayanagara Empire:

The state of agriculture was thriving. Through prudent irrigation policy, rulers promote agriculture across the empire and aim to boost agricultural output. There were also canal excavations and dam building. There were several industries active at this time, including mining, metallurgy, textiles, and perfumery. Guilds governed crafts and industries.

Cultural Conditions of Vijayanagara Empire:

Tall Raya Gopurams, or gates, and the Kalyanamandapam, a temple structure with carved pillars, were the two main features of Vijayanagara architecture. The areas saw the flourishing of many languages, including Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Sanskrit. There were unique elements etched into the sculptures on the pillars. The most prevalent animal among these pillars was the horse. The most significant temples constructed under the Vijayanagara Empire are as follows:

Temples of Vittalaswamy in Hampi

Temples of Hazara Ramaswamy in Hampi

The Varadharaja at Kanchipuram and the stone chariot at Hampi

Kanchipuram's Ekamparanatha temples.

Religions Followed by Vijayanagara Empire :-

Early Vijayanagara emperors adhered to Saivism. Their family's god was Virupaksha. thereafter been influenced by Vaishnavism. But the devotion of Siva persisted. Vaishnavism was practiced in a number of ways. Ramanuja's Srivaishnavism, for instance, was very well-liked. Madhava's Dvaita system was also followed. Epics and Puranas were widely read, particularly by women who used them as a source of education.

Women's Status in the Vijayanagara Empire:

In the Vijayanagara Empire, women held prominent positions and actively participated in its literary, social, and political life. In medieval India, it was the only empire that had women working for the government. It was also popular to have dancing females affixed to temples. Due to their high social status, Devadasis received maidservants, land grants, and other benefits. Although widows faced a terrible situation, nations encouraged them to remarry by not taxing them. The Vijayanagara Empire had a high concentration of Sati or Sahagamana.

Foreign Visitors to the Kingdom of Vijayanagara:

During Muhammadbin-Tughlaq's rule, a Moroccan traveler named Ibn Bututa (1333–1347 A.D.) traveled to India. and arrived at Vijayanagar during Harihar I's rule.

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Venetian traveler Nicolo Conti (1420–1421) provided a thorough description of the Hindu state of Vijayanagara.

Abdur Razzaq was a Persian traveler who lived at the Zamorin palace in Calicut between 1443 and 1444 A.D. In addition to detailing the king's and the nobles' riches and opulent lifestyle, he has provided a detailed description of Vijayanagar city.

Portuguese traveler Duarte Barbosa (1500–1516 A.D.) provided an insightful account of the Vijayanagara empire's governance and populace.

Domingos Paes, a Portuguese traveler, visited Krishnadeva Raya's court between 1520 and 1522 A.D.

A Portuguese trader named Fernao Nuniz (1534–1537 A.D.) documented the history of the empire from its inception until the latter years of Achyutdeva Raya's rule.

CONCLUSION:

Prior to the Vijayanagara Empire's development in the early 14th century, the Hindu nations of the Deccan - the Yadava Empire of Devagiri, the Kakatiya dynasty of Warangal, and the Pandyan Empire of Madurai - were often plundered and assaulted by Muslims from the north. In 1336, the upper Deccan area (modern-day Maharashtra and Telangana) was vanquished by the troops of Sultan Alauddin Khalji and Muhammad bin Tughluq of the Delhi Sultanate. In 1294 CE, Hoysala leader Singeya Nayaka-III proclaimed independence in the Deccan area after Muslim armies from the Delhi Sultanate conquered the Yadava Empire's territory. He established the Kampili kingdom along the Gulbarga and Tungabhadra rivers in Karnataka's northeastern region. In 1327-28, the Delhi Sultanate's army defeated the kingdom, leading to a jauhar (ritual mass suicide) among the inhabitants. In 1336 CE, the Vijayanagara Kingdom was established as a successor to the Hoysalas, Kakatiyas, and Yadavas. The breakaway Kampili Kingdom added to South India's resistance against Muslim invasions.

During Krishna Deva Raya's reign, Vijayanagara soldiers constantly won battles, bringing the kingdom to its pinnacle. The empire obtained territory in the northern Deccan from the Bahamani Sultanate, eastern Deccan from conflicts with Sultan Quli Qutb Shahi of Golkonda, and the Kalinga area from the Gajapatis of Odisha. This was in addition to their existing foothold in the southern Deccan. During King Krishnadevaraya's reign, many significant monuments were built or commissioned. Achyuta Deva Raya, Krishna's younger half-brother, succeeded him in 1529. After Achyuta Deva Raya's death in 1542, Sadashiva Raya, his adolescent nephew, took over as king, with Aliya Rama Raya, Krishna Deva Raya's son-in-law, serving as caretaker. When Sadashiva Raya was old enough to claim the throne, Aliya Rama Raya imprisoned him and took over as de facto monarch. He used his diplomatic contacts with the Sultanates to employ Muslim generals for his army, referring to himself as the "Sultan of the World".

He was known for intervening in the internal affairs of Sultanates and pitting Muslim forces against one another, ultimately establishing himself as the dominant regional power. While this first succeeded, it soon made him unpopular with both his people and Muslim overlords. He formed a

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trade arrangement with the Portuguese to limit the supply of horses to Bijapur, conquered the monarch, and humiliated Golconda and Ahmednagar.

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