



# FACULTY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES

**COURSE: B.A.LL.B. 1st Semester**

**SUBJECT: HISTORY - I**

**SUBJECT CODE: BAL 102**

**NAME OF FACULTY: Dr. Sadhna Trivedi**

# Lecture-34



## MEDIEVAL INDIA

### Kings and their Courts

#### Vijayanagara State

The **Vijayanagara 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 the brothers Harihara I and Bukka Raya I of Sangama Dynasty, members of a pastoralist cowherd community that claimed Yadava lineage. 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. At its peak it had subjugated almost all of South India's ruling families and the Sultans of the Deccan region thus becoming a notable power. It lasted until 1646, although its power declined after a major military defeat in the Battle of Talikota in 1565 by the combined armies of 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. Different temple building traditions in South and Central India came together in the Vijayanagara Architecture style. This synthesis inspired architectural innovation in Hindu temples' construction. 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.

## **Development of the state**

The kingdom of Vijayanagar was founded by Harihara and Bukka, two of five brothers (surnamed Sangama) who had served in the administrations of both Kakatiya and Kampili before those kingdoms were conquered by the armies of the Delhi sultanate in the 1320s. When Kampili fell in 1327, the two brothers are believed to have been captured and taken to Delhi, where they converted to Islam. They were returned to the Deccan as governors of Kampili for the sultanate with the hope that they would be able to deal with the many local revolts and invasions by neighbouring Hindu kings. They followed a conciliatory policy toward the landholders of the area, many of whom had not accepted Muslim rule, and began a process of consolidation and expansion. Their first campaign was against the neighbouring Hoysala king, Ballala III of Dorasamudra, but it stagnated; after the brothers reconverted to Hinduism under the influence of the sage Madhavacarya (Vidyaranya) and proclaimed their independence from the Delhi sultanate, however, they were able to defeat Ballala and thereby secure their home base. Harihara I (reigned 1336–56) then established his new capital, Vijayanagar, in an easily defensible position south of the Tungabhadra River, where it came to symbolize the emerging medieval political culture of south India. The kingdom's expansion in the first century of its existence made it the first south Indian state to exercise enduring control over different linguistic and cultural regions, albeit with subregional and local chiefly powers exercising authority as its agents and subordinates.

## **Conquests**

In 1336 Harihara, with the help of his brothers, held uneasy suzerainty over lands extending from Nellore, on the southeast coast, to Badami, south of Bijapur on the western side of the Deccan. All around him new Hindu kingdoms were rising, the most important of which were the Hoysala kingdom of Ballala and the Andhra confederacy, led by Kapaya Nayaka. However, Ballala's kingdom was disadvantageously situated between the Ma'bar sultanate and Vijayanagar, and within two years after Ballala was killed by the sultan in 1343–44, his kingdom had been conquered by Bukka, Harihara's brother, and annexed to Vijayanagar. This was the most important victory of Harihara's reign; the new state now could claim sovereignty from sea to sea, and in 1346 the five brothers attended a great celebration at which Bukka was made joint ruler and heir.

Harihara's brothers made other, less significant conquests of small Hindu kingdoms during the next decade. However, the foundation of the Bahmanī sultanate in 1347 created a new and greater danger, and Harihara was forced to lessen his own expansionist activities to meet the threat posed by this powerful and aggressive new state on his northern borders.

During Harihara's reign the administrative foundation of the Vijayanagar state was laid. Borrowing from the Kakatiya kings he had served, he created administrative units called stholas, nadus, and simas and appointed officials to collect revenue and to carry on local administration, preferring Brahmans to men of other castes. The income of the

state apparently was increased by the reorganization, although centralization probably did not proceed to the stage where salaried officials collected directly for the government in most areas. Rather, most land remained under the direct control of subordinate chiefs or of a hierarchy of local landholders, who paid some revenue and provided some troops for the king. Harihara also encouraged increased cultivation in some areas by allowing lower revenue payments for lands recently reclaimed from the forests.

## MCQ

**1. Who among the following was the founder of the Vijaynagar Kingdom and the city according to the Kapaluru and Begepalli grants?**

- A. Saluva Narsimha
- B. Vir Narsimha
- C. Tirimala
- D. Hari and Bukka

**2. Who became the King of Tuluva Dynasty after the assassination of Immadi Narasimha?**

- A. Saluva Narsimha
- B. Vir Narsimha
- C. Tirimala
- D. Krishna Deva Raya

**3. Who was the following Bahmani King married to the daughter of Dev Raya I?**

- A. Sultan Quli Hamadani or Qutbul Mulk
- B. Yusuf Adil Khan
- C. Ahmad Shah I
- D. Firoz Shah Bahmani

**4. How many kingdoms ruled over Vijaynagar?**

- A. Four
- B. Five
- C. Six
- D. Seven

**5. Who among the Vijaynagar ruler adopted the 'Gajabetekara (the elephant hunter)'?**

- A. Deva Raya I
- B. Deva Raya II
- C. Harihar
- D. Bukka



