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VIJAYANAGARA ; HAMPPI

A REPORT

A R C H I V E S

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3182

VIJAYANAGARA, HAMPI WAS THE HINDU MEDIEVAL TOWN THAT CAME UP AS A BULWARK AGAINST THE ONSLAUGHT OF THE DELHI SULTANATE. SITUATED ON THE BANKS OF TUNGABHADRA RIVER (A TRIBUTARY OF KRISHNA) IN PRESENT DAY KARNATAKA STATE; IT WAS THE LAST BARRICADE PUT UP BY THE HINDUS IN PENINSULAR INDIA BEFORE IT WAS CONQUERED BY THE MUSLIM INVADERS (IT HELD ON FOR TWO CENTURIES) IN 1565 A.D., AT THE BATTLE OF TALIKOTA.

THE KINGDOM OF VIJAYANAGARA AS WELL AS ITS CAPITAL WAS A COMPLETELY NEW FOUNDATION (ACCORDING TO THE TELUGU VERSION) - AS A PHOENIX WHICH ROSE FROM THE ASHES OF FORMER HINDU KINGDOMS, THAT HAD BEEN DESTROYED BY SEVERAL MUSLIM INROADS INTO SOUTH INDIA.

THE CHOLAS WHO CAME INTO POWER AFTER THE PALLAVAS (4th - 9th century AD) WERE INFLUENCED TO A GREAT EXTENT BY THEIR ART, RELIGION & ARCHITECTURE. THIS WAS DISRUPTED BY THE FALLOUT OF THE CHOLAS IN 1250 A.D. ONE HUNDRED YEARS GLAPSED BETWEEN THE COLLAPSE OF THE CHOLAS AND THE EMERGANCE OF THE VIJAYANAGARA KINGDOM. THAT WAS A PERIOD OF EXTREME DISORDER IN TAMIL NADU.

THE VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE THAT WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1336 A.D. CLAIMED TO DEFEND THE HINDU CULTURE OF THE SOUTH.

ART THAT FLOURISHED DURING THE PALLAVA AND CHOLA PERIOD WAS FOSTERED BY THE ROYAL FAMILIES. DURING THE VIJAYANAGARA PERIOD TOO, PATRONAGE CAME FROM THE RULERS' FAMILY AND THE NOBILITY.

RELIGION WAS THE MAINSTAY OF THE PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY IN SOUTH INDIA. WITH THE BRAHMINS HAVING ALMOST A STRANGLE HOLD OVER THE MECHANICS OF THE SOCIETY - CULTURE, RELIGION ECONOMY AND EVEN POLITICS BY VIRTUE OF THEIR POSITION IN THE SOCIAL FABRIC; THE RITUALS BECAME MORE AND MORE ELABORATE. THE SOCIAL ORDER AND THE RELIGIOUS BENT OF THE PEOPLE CALLED FOR A PARTICIPATION IN THESE ELABORATE RITUALS TO A GIGANTIC SCALE. THE HOUSE OF

THE GOD, THE TEMPLE, OF SUCH NEEDS, TOOK TO A NEW SCHEME IN THE ORDER OF THINGS, AND OVER THE YEARS, BECAME AN INSTITUTION VERY PERTINENT TO SOCIETY.

THE TEMPLES WERE NO MORE MERE EDIFICES TO HOUSE THE IMAGE OF GOD, BUT BECAME A CITY WITHIN A CITY; THE TEMPLE TOOK A WHOLLY NEW DIMENSION - IT BECAME A FORUM; A GATHERING PLACE FOR ALL KINDS OF OCCASIONS; A MARKET PLACE AND FINALLY A PLACE WITH STRONG DEFENCE IDEOLOGY.

PATRONAGE FOR THE BUILDING OF TEMPLES WAS MORE WIDESPREAD DURING THE VIJAYANAGARA TIMES. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY AT VIJAYANAGARA GOES BACK TO A PERIOD WELL BEFORE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CAPITAL IN THE 14TH CENTURY. HAMPPI HAS STRONG MYTHIC ASSOCIATIONS WITH PAMPA DEVI, KISHKINDA (LEGENDARY PLACE OF SUGRIVA AND VALI) AND THE RAMAYANA.

A LARGE NUMBER OF SHRINES DOT THE HEMAKUTA HILL - A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF WHICH ARE PRE/EARLY VIJAYANAGARA. HEMAKUTA HILL ITSELF HAS STRONG MYTHIC VALUES - (IT IS HERE THAT PAMPA DEVI ON DOING PENANCE GOT MARRIED TO SHIVA).

THE PRE-VIJAYANAGARA SHRINES ARE MOSTLY CONFINED TO THE HEMAKUTA HILL, A LARGE NUMBER OF OTHER STRUCTURES (SOME OF WHICH HAVE GOT INCORPORATED INTO THE VIRUPAKSHA TEMPLE COMPLEX) AND THE SHRINES AROUND THE MANAMATTIA TANK, NORTH OF THE VIRUPAKSHA TEMPLE. DATING BACK TO THE 9th - 10th CENTURIES, THESE TEMPLES ARE MOSTLY IN LATE CHALUKYA STYLE, WHILE OTHERS SHOW THE KADAMBA INFLUENCE.

MADE OUT OF LOCALLY AVAILABLE GRANITE STONE, THESE EARLY TEMPLES WERE MADE ENTIRELY OUT OF STONE, UNLIKE THE LATER ONES. THE OUTER ELEVATIONS OF THESE TEMPLE WALLS DISPLAY THE CONTRASTING FEATURES OF CHALUKYA AND KADAMBA INFLUENCE. THE FORMER HAVE THEIR OUTER WALLS ARTICULATED BY PILASTERS, CREATING SLIGHT RECESSES AND PROJECTIONS IN A RHYTHMIC FASHION. PILASTER BRACKETS SUPPORT OVERHANGING EAVES AND PARAPET ABOVE WHICH

RISES THE SUPER-STRUCTURE IMITATING THE SANCTUARIES AT A SMALLER SCALE; WHILE THE CAPPING ROOF FORMS ONE OF THE SQUARE-TO-DOME TYPE.

WHEREAS IN THE KADAMBA STYLE TEMPLES, THE OUTER WALLS ARE BARE, RELIEVED ONLY BY A MOULDED BASE AND A FLAT BAND OF DECORATION WHICH RUNS AROUND THE MIDDLE. THE SUPER-STRUCTURE CONSISTS OF A PYRAMID OF DEEPLY RECESSED EAVE-MOULDINGS AND CAPPED BY A SQUARE-TO-DOME ROOF TOWER.

THE SHRINES ON THE HEMAKUTA HILL RANGE FROM VERY PRIMITIVE KIND OF TWO UPRIGHT STONE SLABS COVERED BY A THIRD; TO SINGLE CELLED SHRINE WITH A PILLARED MANDAPA; TO A TRIKUTA TYPE.

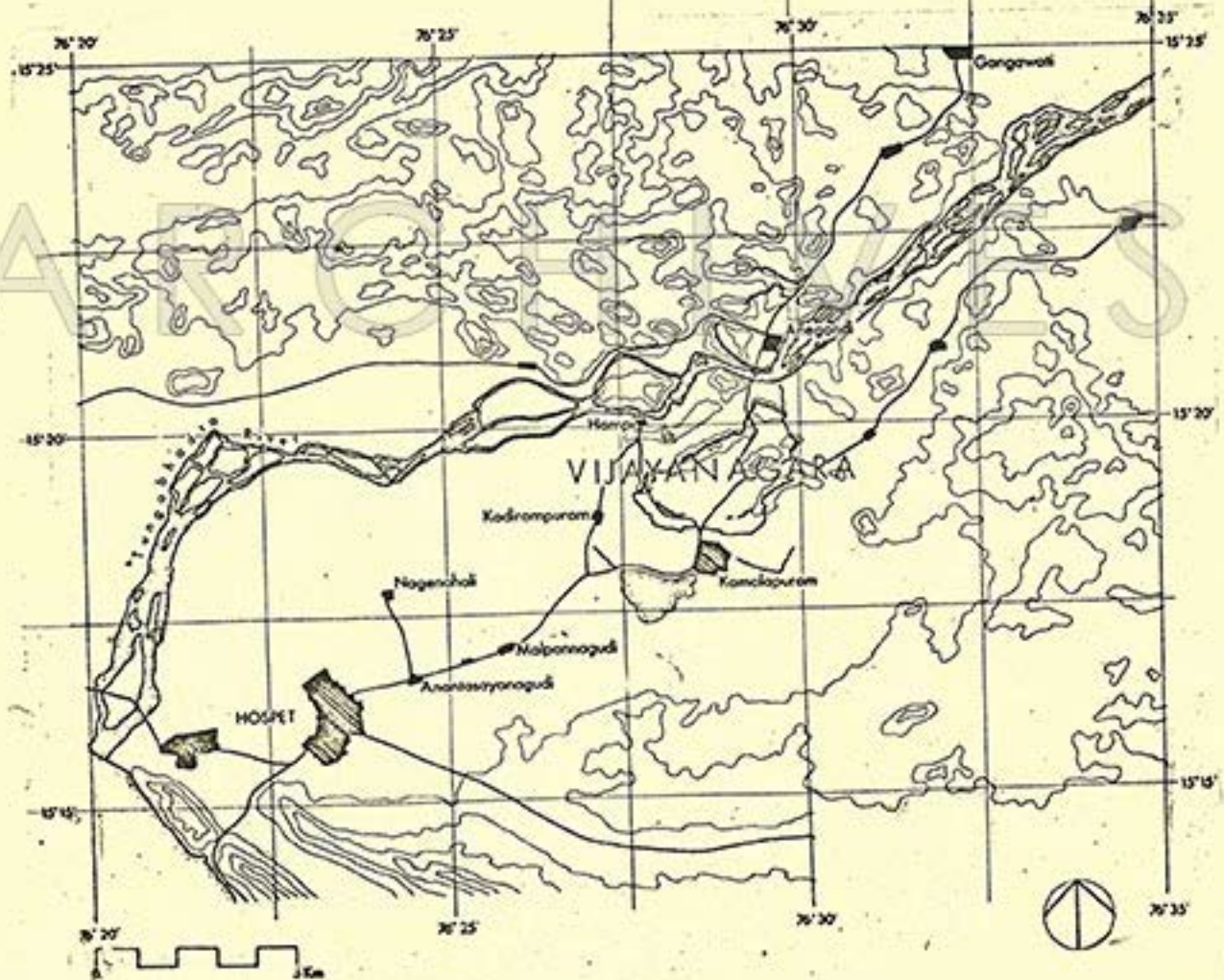
FOR AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE TEMPLE FORM OF VIJAYANAGARA (AS ALSO, AS A COROLLARY, TO DETERMINE THE VIJAYANAGARA STYLE OF ARCHITECTURE), HAMPI, THESE SHRINES ON THE HEMAKUTA HILL ARE VERY PERTINENT.

THE VIRUPAKSHA TEMPLE HOLDS A VERY ESTEEMED POSITION AMONGST OTHER TEMPLES IN AS MUCH AS IT HOUSES THE OLD SHRINE OF SRIVIRUPAKSHA. ADDITIONS TO THE TEMPLE COMPLEX WENT ON EVEN UP TO THE 16th CENTURY; THAT THIS WAS A ROYAL CHAPEL OF CONTINUOUS SIGNIFICANCE IS SIGNIFIED BY THESE ADDITIONS. IT IS ONE TEMPLE THAT IS STILL HELD IN GREAT REVERENCE AND IS IN ACTIVE USE TODAY ALSO.

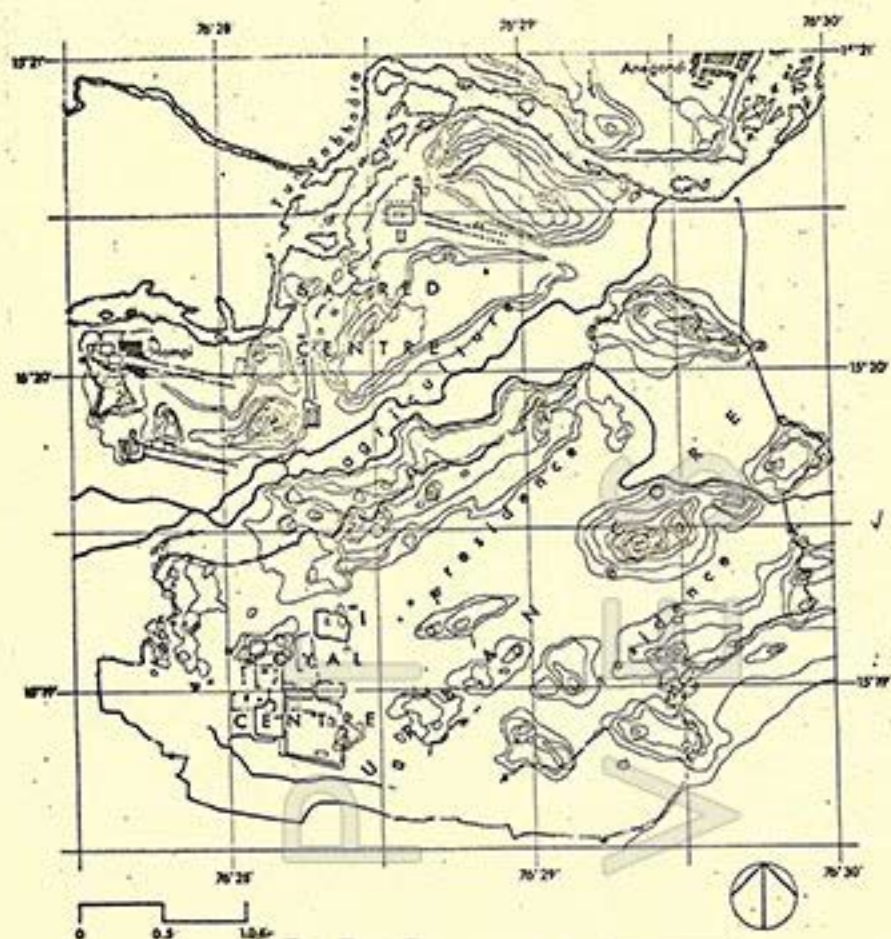
APART FROM THE MAGNIFICENT MANDAPAS (KALYANA MANDAPA, PHALA PUJA MANDAPA) - IT HAS MAGNIFICENT RAYA GOPURAMS ON ITS GATEWAYS. ONE STRIKING FEATURE IS THE TEMPLE STREET WHICH EXTENDS FROM THE OUTER (EASTERN) GATEWAY OUT INTO THE LANDSCAPE.



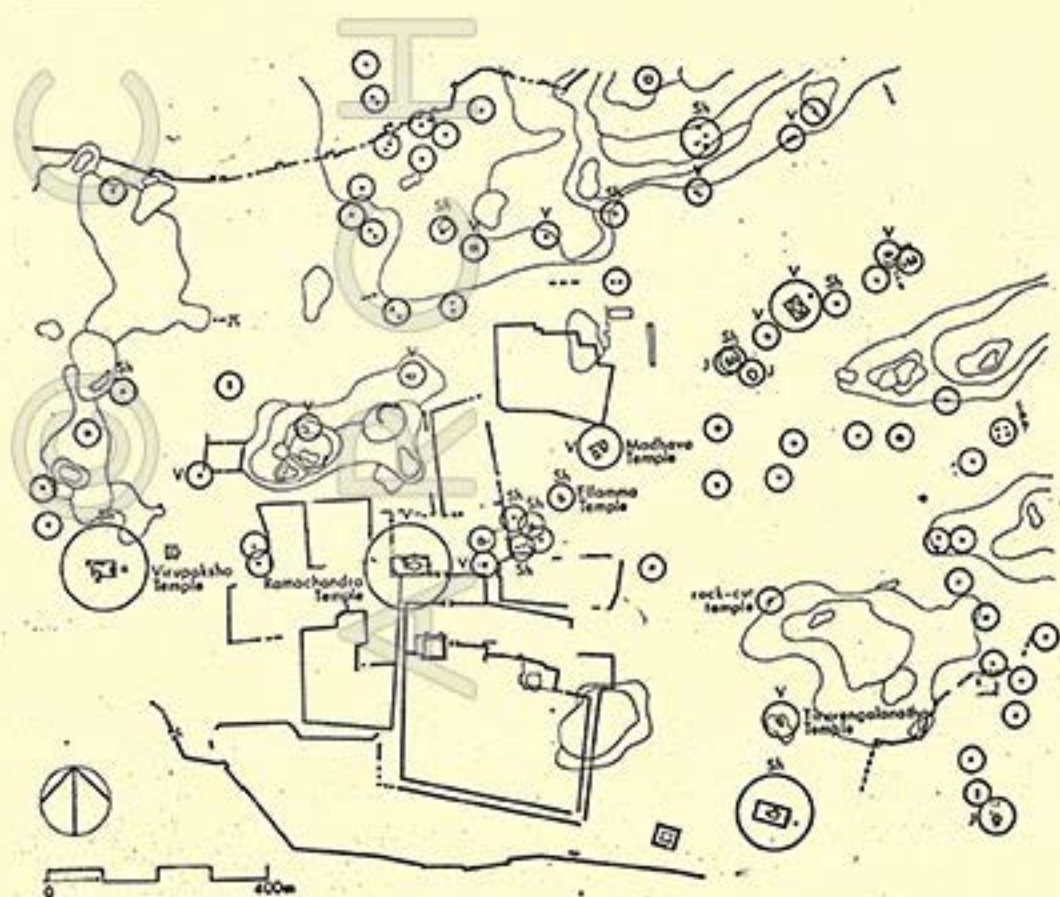
VIJAYANAGARA EMPIRE.



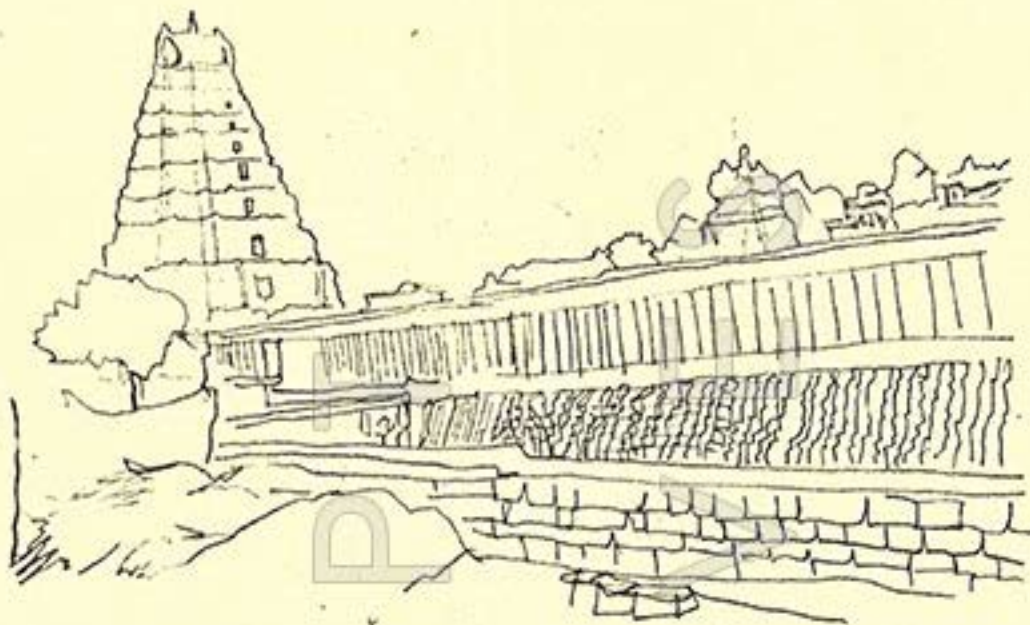
REGIONAL CONTEXT OF VIJAYANAGARA.



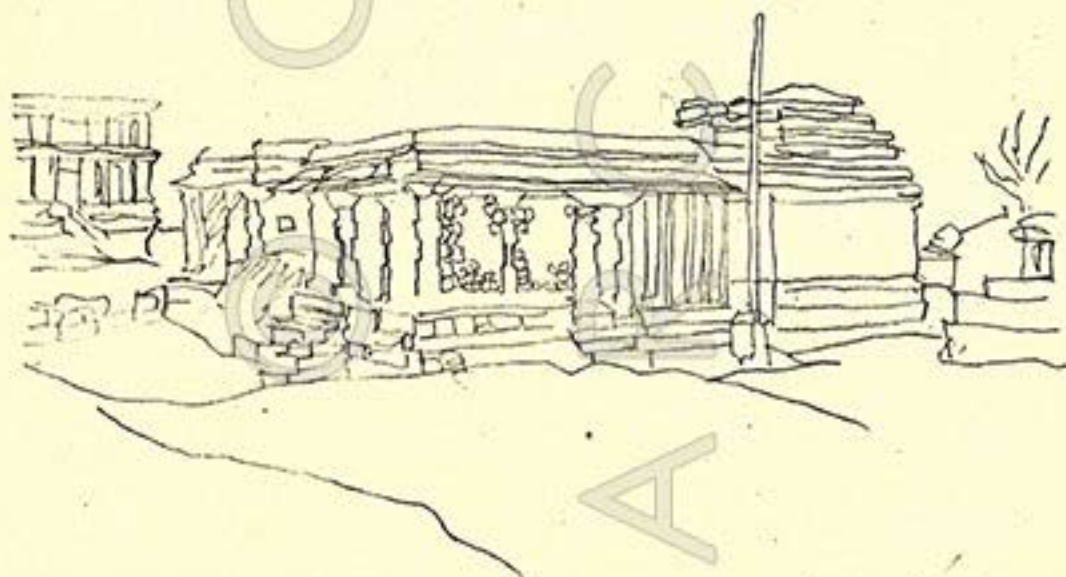
ZONAL ARRANGEMENT OF VIJAYANAGARA.



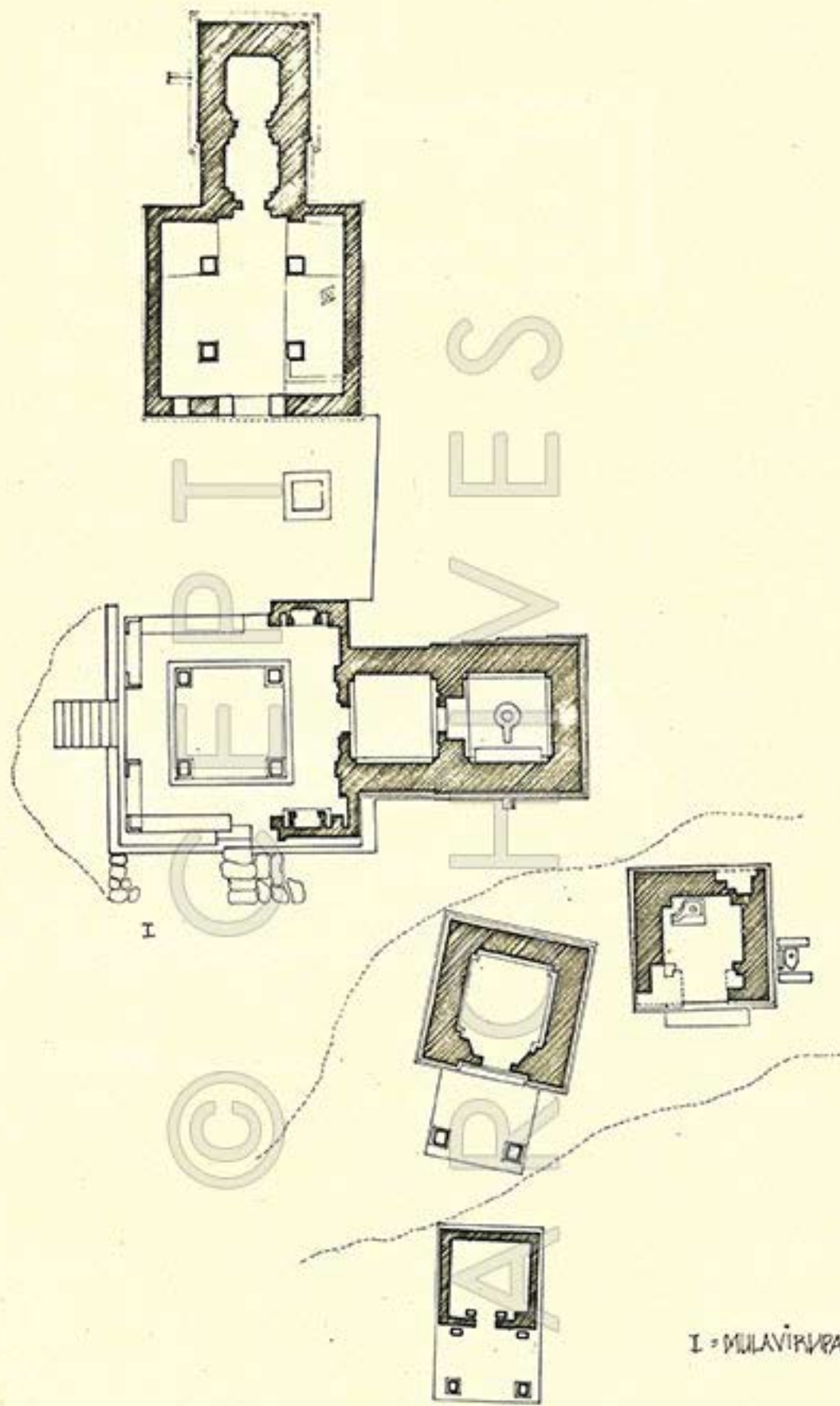
LOCATION OF TEMPLES: SHAIVA (SH), VAISHNAVA (V), JAINA (J) CULTS.



SKETCH OF SRIVIRUPAKSHA TEMPLE, IN THE FAR BACK-
GROUND IS HEMAKUTA HILL AND SHRINES.

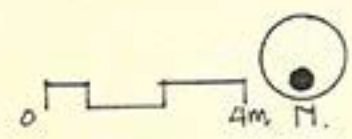


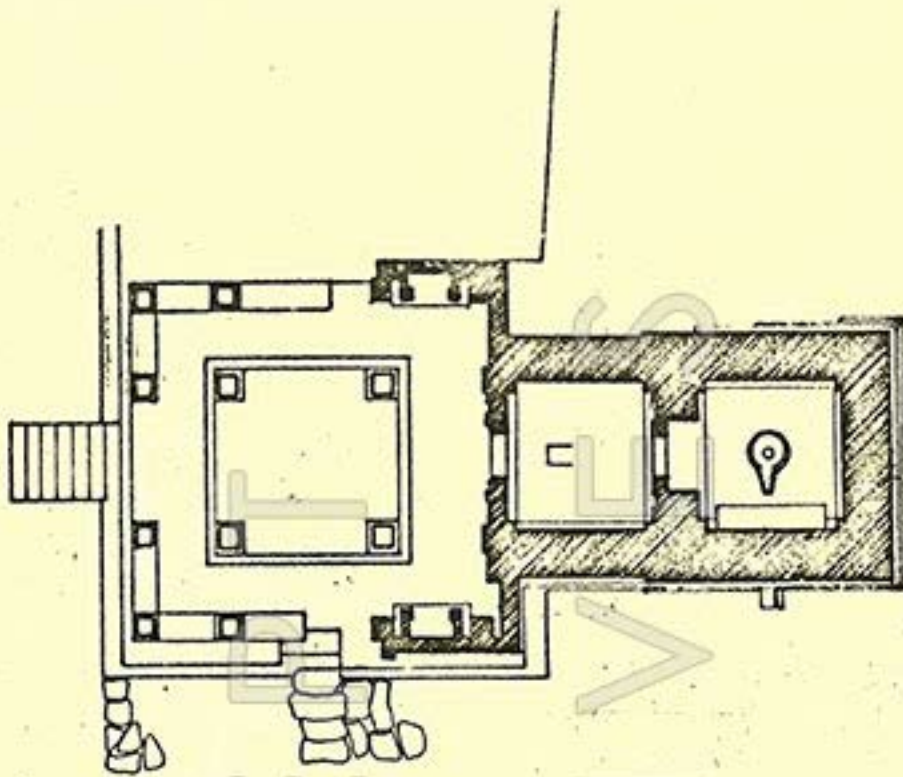
SKETCH OF MULAVIRUPAKSHA SHRINE



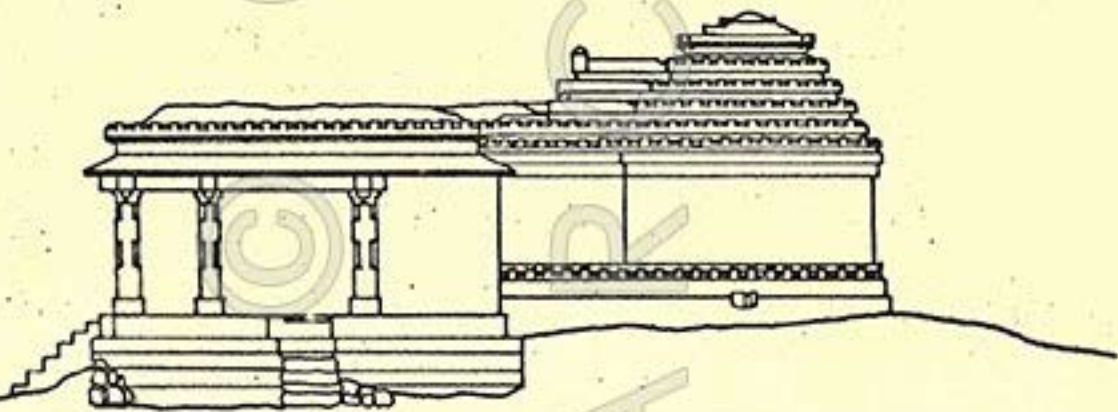
HEMAKUTA HILL SHRINES.

I = MULAVIRVAKSHA SHRINE.



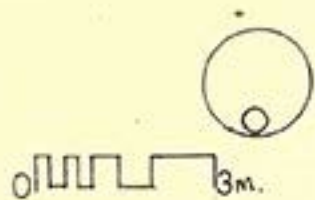


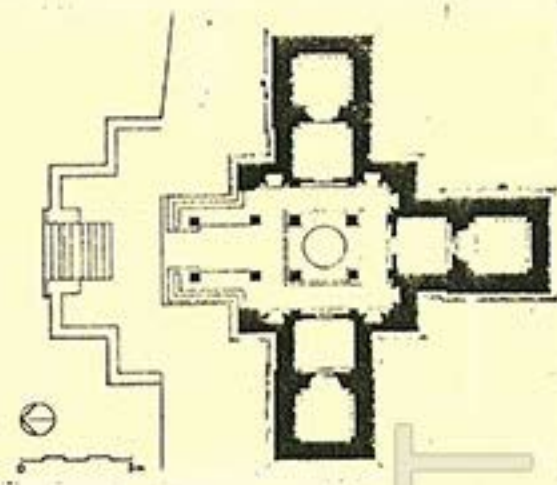
PLAN



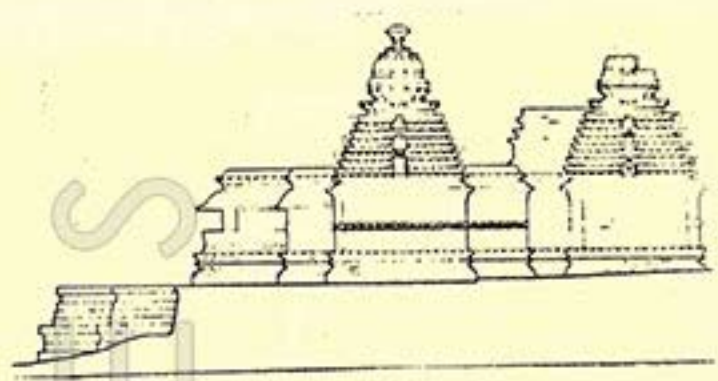
NORTH ELEVATION

HEMAKUTA SHRINES: MULAVIRUPAKSHA.





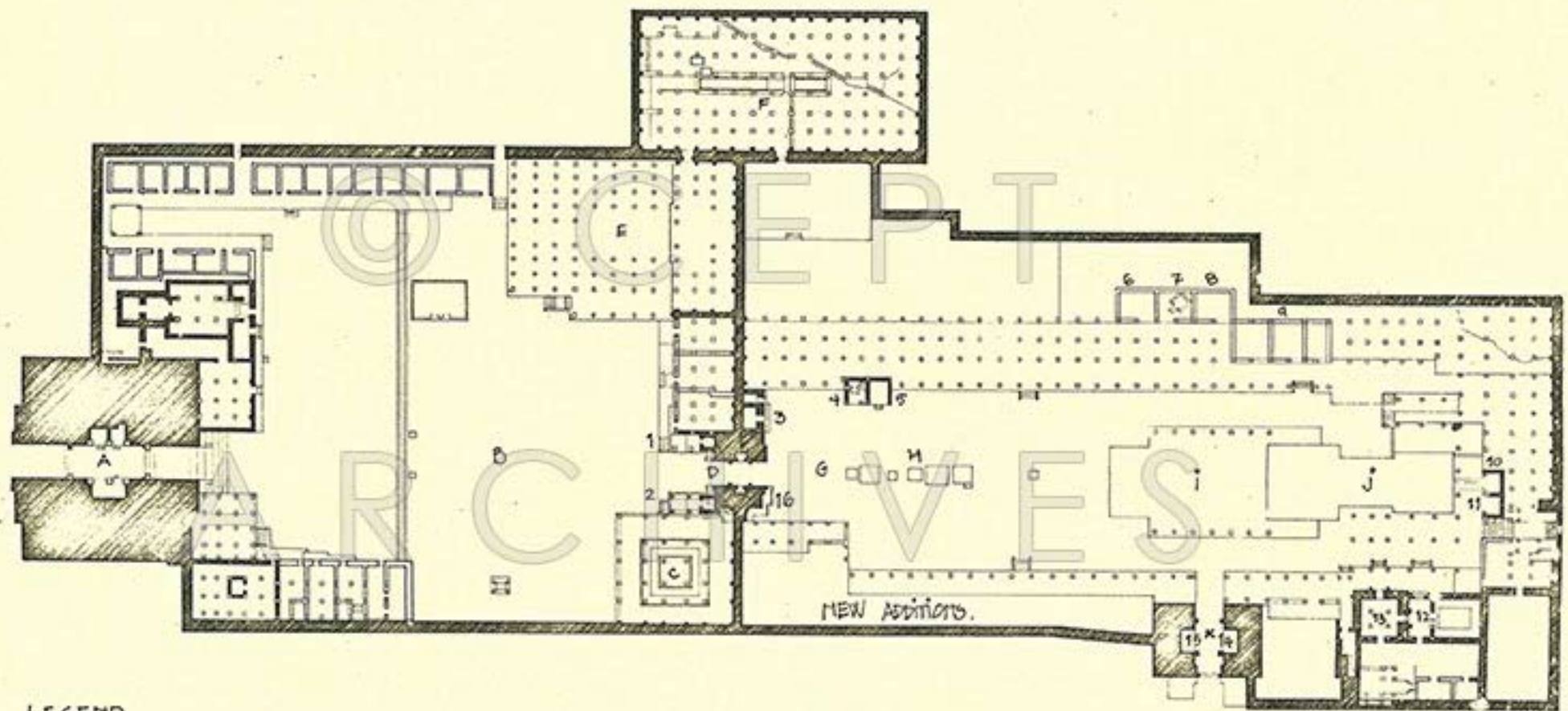
TRIAKUTA SHRINE : PLAN



ELEVATION.



HEMAKUTA HILL SHRINES.



LEGEND.

1. VARADHA GAMAPATI
2. KUMARASIVAMI
3. SURYAMARAYAMA.
4. NARASIMHA SWAMI
5. TARAKESHWARA.
6. KUMBHESHWARA
7. PATALSHWARA
8. BHASHAMESHWARA.
9. NAVADURGA.
10. GAMESHA
11. SUDHARMESHWARA.
12. BHUBANESHWARI
13. MADHVI SWAMI

14. ANMAPURNESHWARI
15. CHAMUNDESWARI
16. LAXMI VENKATESHWARA.

- A. EASTERN GOPURAM.
- B. OUTER COURT
- C. PHALAPUJA MANTAPA.
- D. RAYA GOPURAM
- E. PHALAPUJA MANTAPA.
- F. KITCHEN
- G. INNER COURT.

- i RANGA MANTAPA
- j APDHA MANTAPA,
- k ATTARALA
- k KANNIGIRI GOPURAM.

H MANDI, GARUDA DHIVAJASTHAMB, BALI PITH, DEEP STHAMB.

SRI VIRUPAKSHA TEMPLE PLAN.

VIJAYANAGARA RESEARCH PROJECT

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MONDAY 09 MARCH 1987 - KAMALAPURAM/ HAMPPI

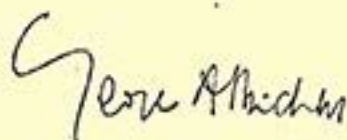
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that Sandhya Venkatarani has worked with us from the 21st of February until the 10th of March, 1987. She has been engaged in measuring ancient monuments at this medieval Hindu site, and analyzing the stylistic development of its architecture.

Throughout, her work has been excellent, and she has demonstrated an ability to tackle different problems efficiently and energetically. The finished drawings that she has produced have been of high standard. Her work here has contributed to the over all study of the sacred site of Hampi by our international team of architects, archaeologists, art historians and Sanskritists.

We wish her all the best in the completion of her studies, and the advancement of her future career.

Yours Sincerely,



Dr. George Michell
Co-Director



Dr. John H. White, Director
Associate Professor of Anthropology
University of New Mexico