It is said that history consists of a series of successive challenges and responses. The empire of Vijayanagara indeed emerged in response to the devastating challenge of the Turkish Sultans of Delhi, who conquered and subdued the Deccan and South India during the first quarter of the fourteenth century A.D. In their greed for gold and desire for easy conquest, their soldiers resorted to all kinds of terrorism, and assailed all that was dear and near to the Hindus. The Vilasa grant \(^1\) of Prółaya Nayaka gives a graphic description of the atrocities committed by the Muslim soldiers in the Telugu country.

"In a hundred sinful ways, the rich were tortured for the sake of money. Merely on beholding the Parasikas (Mussalmans) some abandoned their lives. Brahmins were disallowed to perform their religious rites and rituals. Temples were destroyed and idols were desecrated and broken.

\(^1\) Vilasa grant of Prółaya Nayaka: Edited by Dr. N. Venkataramanayya and Sri M. Somasekhara Sarma, R.I., Vol. XXXII, pp.239-268.
All the agrahārās which had long been in enjoyment of the most learned were taken away. Forcibly deprived of the fruits of their cultivation, the husbandmen, both the rich and the poor, got ruined. In that great calamity people could not regard their money, wives and other earthly belongings as their own. The wretched yavanās (Mussalmans) revelled always in drinking wine, eating cow's flesh, sporting in armour and killing the Brahmins. When such is the case how could the world of living beings exist? Situated as the country was without the possibility of a Saviour being conceived even in imagination, the land of Tilinga tormented in this way by those yavana warriors who were exactly like Rākasas was in flames like a forest surrounded by wild fire.2

However, the triumph of the Mussalmans was short lived. The arbitrary administration of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq provoked universal revolt, and many parts of his empire broke loose from his tyrannical rule. The lands, south of the river Narmada threw of the

imperial control and soon settled down into well-defined independent principalities. It was in this process that the Vijayanagara Empire came to be founded.

The Vijayanagara Empire came into existence in response to the challenge thrown out by the Mussalmans against Hindu religion and Hindu way of life. Founded in 1336 A.D., the city of Vijayanagara formed the nucleus of a vast empire covering almost all the territories south of the river Krishna. But its rapid progress was not left unchallenged. Its northern expansion was impeded by the Bahmani kingdom and in the south it had to face the hostility of the Sultans of Madura. It, however, eliminated the southern menace by destroying the Sultânate of Madura in 1365 A.D.; it kept the northern foe at bay for over two centuries; and it fostered Hindu religion, arts and letters. In short, it stood as the guardian of Hindu way of Life. Even after the catastrophic defeat at Hâksasi-Tangadî in 1565 A.D. by the combined forces of the Sultâns of Deccan (who had parcelled out the Bahmani kingdom among themselves), it maintained
its original mission of safeguarding the Hindu religion and culture till its final disintegration and its ruler became a fugitive in 1660 at the court of the Nāyak of Ikkeri.

FOUNDERS:

There are two theories regarding who the founders of the Vijayanagara Empire were. Dr. N. Venkataramanayya one of the well known scholars in Vijayanagara history maintains that they were Telugu people; they were feudatories of the Kakatiya ruler of Warangal. This theory is refuted by Dr. P.B. Desai and others who maintain the Kannada Origin of the Empire in the work "A History of Karnāṭaka". Prof. T.V. Mahalingam, an eminent authority on Vijayanagara history while reviewing this book in the Journal of Indian History, writes ..... 'The authors of this volume have collected all available evidence in support of the Karnāṭaka origin of what developed later as the glorious empire of Vijayanagara and cogently argue out the case. This view is acceptable

but one would like to have more positive evidence to clinch the issue. 5 It is sufficient to know for the present study that there are two theories regarding the founders of the Vijayanagara Empire — (1) They were Telugu people and (2) They hailed from the Karnātaka region. The supporters of both the theories are strongly divided in their opinions on this issue and we would like to have more positive evidence to establish conclusively one way or other.

THE TELUGU COUNTRY:

The founders started their rule from the small principality of Kampili which became the nucleus of the future empire of Vijayanagara. Later on, they founded the city of Vijayanagara on the Southern bank of the Tungabhadra and expanded their territories. A large part of the Telugu country extending from Ballary district in the west up to the Bay of Bengal in the East came under the rule of Harihara I, the founder emperor.

The Rāyas of Vijayanagara in their desire to expand the empire started encroaching upon the Reddi territory. The authority of Prōlaya Vēma, the Reddi ruler, extended during the early days of his rule over Abōbalāma in the Kurnool district but Harihara I soon acquired this territory. Consequently, Prōlaya Vēma tried to assert his independence at Vīlaṇṭuda but this district appears to have formed part of Vijayanagara kingdom during the reign of Bukka I.6

The hostility of the Reddis of Kopānāvīṇa and the Rāyas of Vijayanagara did not take a serious turn until the accession of Harihara II.7

It was during his reign largely owing to the efforts of his son Devaraya, the governor of Udayagiri rāja, the territory extending from Śṛīśaila to Tīyurān-takam passed from the hands of the Reddis to those of the Rāya between 1382 and 1385 A.D. The district

6. V.R. Kurnool, Nos. 55, 58. The date of the inscription has been wrongly given. The correct date of the inscription is Saka 1294 (1372-73 A.D).

of Addanki, the original capital of the Reddis, together with the coastal strip upto Motupalli appears to have fallen into the hands of the Rāya about the same time.

Later on peace was concluded between the Rāyas and Reddis during the reign of Kumāragiri Reddi when Harihara II's daughter Hariharūmbha was given in marriage to Kāṭaya Vēma, the brother-in-law of Kumāragiri Reddi and the real ruler of the kingdom. Friendly relations continued between them for sometime after this marriage.

Again, during the last days of Kumāragiri Reddi's reign troubles started at Kondavīḍu. Kumāragiri Reddi's son Vīra Annapōta predeceased his father. Therefore, Kumāragiri Reddi divided his kingdom into two halves and assigned the northern half with Rajahmundry as its capital to his brother-in-law and minister Kāṭaya Vēma, and the southern half with Kondavīḍu as its capital to his cousin Peda Kōmāṭi Vēma. On the

8. Ibid. p.128.
death of Kumaragiri Reddi in 1403 A.D. Peda Kōmati Vēma occupied the throne of Kondavīdu and Kāṭaya Vēma took possession of the Krishna-Godāvari region with Rajahmundry as his headquarters.

Peda Kōmati Vēma tried to recover the territories lost to the Rāya of Vijayanagara during his predecessor's time but he did not succeed in this effort. After the death of Peda Kōmati Vēma, his son Rācha Vēma, an incompetent person, became the ruler of Kondavīdu. After a brief rule of three years, he was murdered by one of his subjects. The Kondavīdu branch of the Reddi kingdom was dissolved. The Reddi principality became a prey to the rival ambitions of some independent chiefs. Among them Panta Mallāra Reddi and Sāluva Telungaraya stand out prominently. Both of them tried to carve out independent principalities in the southern parts of the Kondavīdu-Reddi kingdom. Panta Mallāra was exercising sway over the Ongole Taluk of the present Prakasam (Ongole) district and Narasaraopeta Taluk of the Guntur district. Sāluva Telungaraya

ruled over a part of Podili in the Nellore district and portions of the Ongole taluk in Prakasam district and Bapatla taluk of the Guntur district in 1428 A.D. Dēvarāya II did not allow them to rule over these areas independently; he subdued them and forced them to acknowledge his supremacy. After subjugating these chiefs, Dēvarāya II marched against Konḍavīḍu and occupied it in or about 1432 A.D. Therefore, by this date, the Vijayanagara conquest of the Konḍavīḍu-Beṭṭī Principality was over and the boundary of the Vijayanagara empire on the north-eastern side extended up to the Krishna.

**THE BEṬṭĪ OF RAJAHMUNDRY**

After the death of Kāṭaya Vēma, his son Kumāragiri became the ruler of the Rajahmundry Beṭṭī kingdom. But after a short rule he died. His general Allaya Vēma upheld the claims of Anitalli, sister of Kumāragiri. He got her married to his second son, Vīrabhadra and then started ruling the kingdom on behalf of his daughter-in-law.

An inscription from the Bhūmīśwara temple at Drākshārāma, East Godavari district, states that Mallappa Vōḍeya, one of the maha-pradhanas of Devāraṇa II, was governing the city of Rajahmundry and presumably the territory dependent on it in 1404 A.D. A copy of an old inscription preserved in the introductory portion of Adhyātmārāmāyanam also confirms the rule of Devāraṇa II over the Krishna-Godavari region about this time. If the rule of Devāraṇa II and of his maha-pradhana Mallappa Vōḍeya is attested by epigraphic evidence, what were the circumstances in which they came to rule over an area which was in the hands of the Reddis of Rajahmundry with whom they maintained cordial relations?

Allaya Vēma, son of Allāda extended the Reddi dominions into Kaliṅga by following a policy of aggression. He succeeded in extending the frontiers of the Reddi kingdom upto Chilaka lake in Ganjam district. After completing the conquest of Kaliṅga, Allaya Vēma induced his brother Veerabhādra

(husband of Avitalli) to assume the title Kalinda Raja Parameswara. 14

But the Gajapati ruler Kapileswara took steps to recover the lost territories and invaded the Reddi capital. The Reddis naturally implored the assistance of Devaraya II. Two important considerations weighed heavily with Devaraya in going to the rescue of the Reddis. Firstly, Allaya Vema, the de facto ruler of Rajahmundry was related to him by marriage. Secondly, with the annexation of the Reddi kingdom of Kondavidu the river Krishna became the north-eastern boundary of his empire and the kingdom of Rajahmundry would serve well as a buffer state between his dominions and the Gajapati kingdom. Therefore, he despatched Mallappa Vodeya at the command of a huge force to help the Reddis of Rajahmundry. Mallappa Vodeya defeated Kapileswara 15 and forced him to flee from the battlefield. It was after this battle that Mallappa Vodeya issued the Draksharamam inscription probably with the consent


But the Reḍḍi kingdom of Rajahmundry did not survive for long. After the death of Devarāya II his successor Mallikārjuna could not extend the same kind of support to the Reḍḍis. Therefore, Kapilēśvara marched against Rajahmundry and annexed the Reḍḍi kingdom to his dominions sometime before 1458 A.D. because in an inscription dated in that year Baghulēva Narendra Mahāpātra was governing the kingdom of Kājāmāhandravara. Kapilēśvara must have conquered Rajahmundry before marching against Kondavīḍu. The Chāvali grant states that Ganadēva, a cousin of Kapilēśvara was governing Kondavīḍu in 1455 A.D. Another epigraph from Chintalapalle dated 1454 A.D. records that he was ruling at Addanki, Vinukonda and Kondavīḍu. Therefore, it is quite obvious that Kapilēśvara completed the conquest of Rajahmundry and Kondavīḍu before 1454 A.D. Thus Kondavīḍu which was acquired by Devarāya II, after

the death of Rācha Vēma was lost to the Oriyas during Mallikārjunas reign. Kapilēśwara's conquests appear to have extended upto Śrīśailam and a large part of the Kumool district,\(^{20}\) including the Velama principality of Velugōdu.\(^{21}\)

Emboldened by the success attained in capturing Kondāvīdu, Kapilēśwara undertook an expedition into the Vijayanagara dominions, south of Kondāvīdu and captured the important fortress of Udayagiri. He proceeded upto Tirushirāpalli in the Tamil country during the course of this expedition and captured a number of places.\(^{22}\)

In the Anantavaram copper-plates, it is proudly asserted that Kumāra Harvīra at the command of his father Kapilēśwara subdued the kings of the southern region and washed his sword clotted with their blood in the waters of the southern ocean.\(^{23}\) Kāndī also fell into the hands of the invader.\(^{24}\)

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22. Epigraphical Coll. No.92, of 1919.
Kapileswara entrusted the administration of the newly conquered territories to his grandson Kumara Kapileswara Mahaputra, son of Kumara Hawwira Mahaputra. As a result of this expedition Kapileswara became master of a vast empire extending from the Ganges to the Kaveri. But, in the words of Sewell, the expedition so far to the south of the Orissa force from Kondavīdu was merely a sudden raid followed by speedy withdrawal. 25

The Gajapati invasion did not offset Vijayanagara rule in the Tamil districts. But the two provinces in the Telugu area - Udayagiri and Kondavīdu were lost to the Oriyas. Kapileswara appointed Oriya governors to rule over them.

The fort of Udayagiri did not remain in the hands of Kapileswara for a long time. Saluva Narasimha, the ruler of Chandragiri captured it

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25. Sewell: Historical Inscriptions of South India, p.228.

Note: Dr. R. Subrahmaniyam endorsing and further amplifying the opinion of H. Krishna Sastri, argues that this expedition was not a sudden raid but almost an occupation of the Tamil country, Op. cit., p.48.
from the Oriya governor sometime after 1470 A.D. Kapilāśwara died on the banks of the river Krishṇa in the same year and his death made the conquest of the east coast up to the Krishṇa by Sāluva Narasimba much easier. He brought under his sway the east coast up to the Krishṇa sometime before 1475 A.D. According to the Muslim historian, Sāluva Narasimba's authority extended as far as the southern bank of the Gōdāvari and that Kondavidū and Machilipatnam were included in his dominions.

But in the civil war that followed after the death of Kapilāśwara between Purushottama and Hamvīra, the kingdom of Rajahmundry was occupied by Sultan Muhammad Shāh II. He also captured the fort of Kondavidū. The Muslim occupation of Rajahmundry and Kondavidū lasted for a short period. After the death of Muhammad Shāh II in 1482 A.D. Purushottama recaptured them and the whole east coast up to the Gondalakammā came under his sway before 1489 A.D.

Purushottama followed his victories by laying siege to the fort of Udayagiri. Sāluva Narasimha who came to defend the fort, was defeated by Purushottama. He concluded a treaty of Peace by agreeing to cede the fort of Udayagiri with its dependent territory to the Oriya ruler. Munis tells us that Udayagiri was one of the three forts which rebelled against Sāluva Narasimha which he could not retake owing to want of time. The Oriyas continued to rule over Udayagiri rājya until 1514 A.D. when they were driven away from all the area South of the Krishna by Krishnadevarāya.

The Telugu Country from Nellore to the river Krishna continued to be in possession of the Oriya rulers. Prataparudra Gajapati the successor of Purushottama was a powerful ruler and the immediate successors of Sāluva Narasimha did not succeed in taking back the forts of Udayagiri and Kondavidu from him.

27. The siege of Udayagiri by Purushottama and the submission of Sāluva Narasimha are discussed in detail in Chapter II. vide supra, pp. 29-32.

KRISHNADEVARAYA

Krishnadevaraya who ascended the throne of Vijayanagara in 1509 A.D. was the greatest of all the Vijayanagara Emperors. He inaugurated an astonishing career of conquest and expansion. He appears to have taken some initial steps to recover the forts of Udayagiri and Kondavidu from the Gajapathi soon after his accession to the throne. The Hampi inscription dated 28th January, 1610 A.D. refers to victories which he obtained over the Sultan and the Gajapathi. An inscription dated in October 1510 A.D. records that Krishnaraya granted Kacharalakota in the Anamabroli gana in the Kondavidu raja to Saluva Timna. Krishnaraya might have come into conflict with the Gajapathi sometime in 1510 A.D. and occupied some of the territories. But the defeat of the Gajapathi at the hands of Krishnaraya and occupation of his territory upto the Krishna occurred only in 1513 A.D.

* The most recent scholarship on this great ruler is Mrs. Bhargavi Sivaihi: Sri Krishnadevaraya and His Times—Ph.D. thesis submitted to the Karnatak University, Dharwar, 1972.


Krishnārāya declared war against Pratāparudra Gañapati, the ruler of Orissa in 1513 A.D. The Āmuktānīlyudha states that the war against the Kalinga ruler was carried out in five district stages. This is corroborated by epigraphic evidence. During the first stage, Krishnārāya laid siege to the fort of Udayagiri and captured it. The second stage ended with the fall of Kondavidu. The third stage was devoted to the successful attack on Kondapalli. During the fourth stage, the emperor marched to Simhachalam and set up a pillar of victory at Poṭnūr. The fifth stage ended with the attack on the Gañapati capital Cuttack.

**Udayagiri:**

Krishnārāya laid siege to the fort of Udayagiri in 1513 A.D. Huniz tells us that he captured the fort after a siege of 'a year and a half.' Krishnārāya defeated Pratāparudra who came with his forces to

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raise the siege and had driven him up to Kondavidu. After a protracted siege, Tirumala Rāhuttarāya, who was commanding the fort, surrendered it, placing his usnīsa at Krishparāya's feet. In his Āmuktamālīvada, Krishparāya proudly asserts that the paternal uncle of the Gajapāṭhī placed the rare gift of his usnīsa at his (Rāja's) feet. Krishparāya immediately occupied the fort and appointed Rayasam Kondamarasayya as its governor.

Krishparāya's victory over the Gajapāṭhī was one of the greatest achievements of his glorious career. After terminating the Udayagiri campaign successfully he paid a visit to Tirupāṭhī accompanied by his two principal queens Tirumala Devi and Chinnadevi to pay obeisance to Lord Venkaṭēśwara. The victory was celebrated with great pomp after his return to the capital city. The Rāya constructed a temple installing the image of Balakrishna which he brought from one of the shrines at Udayagiri, to commemorate the victory.

34. Sources, p.137.
KONDAVIDU

The Vijayanagara army led by Sāluva Timma proceeded against Kondavīdu which was the principal fort of the Gajapatīs in the south of the Krishna. The minor forts which were dependent on Kondavīdu, namely, Kundukūr, Addanki, Vinukonda, Bellamkonda, Nāgarjuna-konda, Tangeda and Kētavaram were subjugated by the Rāya's forces. Krishnāraṇa came from Vijayanagara to conduct the operations during the final stages of the siege. The fort ultimately surrendered because Sāluva Timma starved the occupants by cutting off all supplies to it. The Amuktaṃśyadā states that all the Oriya noblemen, who gathered in the fort of Kondavīdu to defend it, went to heaven without any wounds on their bodies. 38 This is corroborated by epigraphic evidence. The Mangalagiri pillar inscription records that Sāluva Timma, who conducted the siege of Kondavīdu, 'starved the Oriya noblemen to surrender'. 39 Many of the surviving Oriya nobles, including Veerabhadra, son of Pratāpa Parīnāṁara

38. Sources, p.136.
Gajapatnī were taken prisoners. Munis mentions that a wife of the Gajapatnī was also taken prisoner. Krishnarāya entrusted the administration of Kondavīdu and its adjoining territory to Saluva Timma. After successfully conducting the siege of Kondavīdu, Krishnarāya paid a visit to Amaravathī along with his two queens Tirumalādevī and Chinnādevi and worshipped God Amarāswara. From there, he proceeded to Śrīśailam to pay obeisance to God Mallikārjuna and Ehdramarambā. On this occasion, he made many valuable gifts to the temple.

**KONDAPALLI:**

Krishnarāya started for a third time with the object of further subjugating the Gajapatnī dominions. Making Vijayawada (Bezwada) on the banks of the Krishna, the base of his operations, Krishnarāya marched against Kondapalli and laid siege to it.

42. E.I. Vol.VII, p.20; Mac. Mss. 15-3-6, p.17.
The fort was commanded by Praharëswara Pätra, one of the officers of the Gajapati, who had a very strong garrison under his command. Prataparudra Gajapati came with a large army consisting of 'One thousand three hundred elephants, twenty thousand horsemen and five hundred thousand foot soldiers' to oppose the Bïya. But he was utterly routed in a great battle on the banks of the Krishna and fled. Then Krishnaraya conducted the siege of Kondapalli vigorously for two months more. The fort surrendered and Praharëswara Pätra and his followers were taken prisoners.

SIMHACHALAM:

From Kondaviliu, Krishnaraya marched towards Simhachalum in the heart of the Gajapati dominions. On his way, he captured Rajahmundry which was an important fort of the Gajapati on the banks of the Godavari. Krishnaraya marched upto Pōtnūri-Simhādri devastating the territory of the Gajapati all along the way. At Pōtnūri-Simhādri, he set up a pillar

45. Sources, p.124.
of victory. Three inscriptions in the Varāha Lakshmi Narasimhaswāmi temple at Simbāchalam refer to Krishnārāya's victories and the valuable gifts he made to the temple while staying at Simbādri.\textsuperscript{46}

**Cuttack**

From Simbādri, Krishnārāya proceeded against the Gajapātī capital Cuttack and set fire to it.\textsuperscript{47} According to epigraphic evidence (an inscription dated 12th March 1617 from Kosmūru in the Guntur district) Krishnārāya's conquests extended as far as Kātakam.\textsuperscript{48} Lakshminārāyana, the Vijayanagara court musician also confirms that after erecting the pillar of victory at Simbādri, Krishnārāya won a victory over the Gajapātī and married his daughter.\textsuperscript{49}

Thus it can be seen that the Gajapātī was defeated in several battles beginning from the siege of Udayagiri (or even much earlier) and lost most of

\textsuperscript{46} Epi. Coll. Nos. 246, 247, 248 of 1898.

\textsuperscript{47} Sources: P.153, Dr. R. Subrahmanyan is inclined to believe that Krishnārāya led a second expedition and reduced the Gajapātī capital by setting fire to it, Op.cit. p.118.

\textsuperscript{48} Epi. Coll. No. 324 of 1922.

\textsuperscript{49} Further Sources: Vol.III, Extract No.116-a, p.
his dominions in the Telugu country. Therefore, he sought the friendship of Krishnaraya by giving his daughter in marriage to him and concluded a treaty of peace. Krishnaraya restored to the Gajapatmi all the country north of the river Krishna which he had taken from him during the recent campaign. Referring to this, Hanis states: "Crisnarao restored the lands on the other side of the river and kept those on the nither side for himself".50

The territory south of the river Krishna containing the most important and strategic forts of Vrayagiri and Nandavidu were restored to the Vijayanagara Empire by the military prowess of Krishnadevaraya who fulfilled the pious wish of Soluva Barasimha on his death bed.

From the foregoing account, it is clear that the Telugu country under Vijayanagara rule during the time of Haribara I and Bukka I, the founder-emperors extended from the Bellary district in the west to the Bay of Bengal in the East and

50. P.I., p.320.
from the Chittor district in the south to the southern portions of the present Ongole and Kurnool districts. The northern portions of the Ongole and Kurnool districts and the whole Guntur district upto the river Krishna were captured by Devaraya II and the river Krishna became the north-eastern boundary of the Vijayanagara Empire. But the area upto the river Gundlakama was captured and occupied by Purushottama Gajapatili during the last days of Saliwa Narasimha’s reign. It was left to Krishnaraya to regain the lost territories. The Telugu Country upto the river Krishna came under the direct rule of Krishnaraya. Therefore, it can be said that, Krishnaraya’s rule extended over the whole of the Telugu-speaking country from the Bay of Bengal in the east to the Ballary District in the west and from the Chittor district in the south to the river Krishna in the north. The area north of the river Krishna never came under the direct administration of the Vijayanagara rulers.
ADMINISTRATION OF THE COUNTRY

The Vijayanagara emperors from the time of Devaraya II ruled over extensive dominions in South India. In the words of Abdur Razaq, Devaraya II's empire extended "from the borders of Samadip (Ceylon) to those of Kulburga, and from Bengal (Orissa) to Malabar. Such a vast empire could not be administered directly by the officers of the Raya. So, the Vijayanagara emperors divided the country into various fiefs and entrusted each fief to a feudal lord. It was the duty of the feudal lord to look after the administration of the country on behalf of the Raya. The feudal fief is known as "Amaram" or "Mayankara" and the feudal lord as "Mayak" or "Amaranayaka". In the Telugu Country, these Amaranayakas belonging to various families came into prominence in the days of Vijayanagara and played a prominent part in the annals of South India. Some of these feudal families were: Naṭla, Pammäsāni, Velugōṭi, Nandyāla,

Gobbouri, Jupalli, Jillella and Damerla. The Amaranāyakas of these various feudal families can be described as the pillars on which the administrative system rested.

Before describing the Nāyankara system, it is necessary to give an idea of the Vijayanagara administrative system under which the Amaranāyakas were working. The stability of any empire depends upon the administrative machinery and its efficient working. The Vijayanagara emperors took special care in organising the administrative system of the empire and in ensuring its proper and efficient working. The Vijayanagara administrative system went through a process of evolution and reached its perfection under Krishnādēva-raja. Krishnāya had both the ability and the wisdom to see the needs of the empire and hence he organised the administration of the country in such a way as to ensure the stability and safety of the empire.

The chief features of the provincial and local administration can be gleaned from inscriptions.
issued by Vijayanagara rulers or their subordinate chiefs. From the territorial divisions given in the inscriptions, some generalisations can be made. For administrative convenience the empire was divided into a number of Rājyas at the first instance. The division of the empire into various Rājyas or provinces was strongly influenced by military considerations. The Rājyas comprised the area round some important fort or other after which they were named. There was also some difference even among the Rājyas; some being Mahārājyas and the others merely Rājyas. There was no fixed limit to the number of these Rājyas in any particular region. Depending upon the necessities of time, new Rājyas were created and sometimes the old ones were abolished and incorporated into an adjoining Rājya. For example, Gutti figures as Rājya upto Śaka 1451 (1639 A.D.). In fact the fort of Gutti has been described as "the nave of the wheel of Sovereignty over the whole earth" under the control of Bukka I. But in the reign of Krishnadevarāya after

52. Penugonda is mentioned as Mahārājya in Epi. Coll. No.312 of 1922; V.R. 371 Guiddapah.
Saka 1451 (1529 A.D.) Gutti is mentioned only as a Sima and not as a Rajya. It may be reasonably concluded that Krishnadavaraya, having realised that Gutti Rajya was not a viable unit as a province, incorporated it into Penugonda Rajya.

The Telugu Country under Vijayanagara rule during the reign of Krishnadavaraya was divided into five Rajyas - Udayagiri, Penugonda, Gutti, Chandragiri and Kondavidu. After 1529 A.D. Gutti Rajya was abolished and all the area which formed that province was incorporated into Penugonda Rajya. The chiefs of the Telugu feudal families like Matla and Pemmasani ruled the fiefs granted to them by the Rajya in these Rajyas.

Extent of Udayagiri Rajya:

The kingdom of Udayagiri comprised all the area which to-day forms part of the Guddapah district, a major portion of the Nellore district and the southern portions of Cumbum taluk of the Ongole district and Nandyal taluk of the Kurnool district.
This conclusion is drawn from inscriptions in which names of certain villages forming part of Udayagiri rājya are given. These villages have been identified with some modern villages. From these identifications it is inferred that the Taluks of (1) Proddatūr, (2) Jammalamadugu, (3) Kamalāpuram, (4) Badvel, (5) Cuddapah, (6) Koilkunta, (7) Pulivendula, (8) Siddhavaṭam, (9) Rajampēta, (10) Rāyachōti of the Cuddapah district, (11) Kondukūrū, (12) Kāvali, (13) Podili, (14) Rāpuru, (15) Ātmakūrū and (16) Nellore of the present Nellore district and the southern portions of the Cumbum taluk of the Ongole district and Nandyāl taluk of the Kurnool district comprised the area designated as Udayagiri rājya in Saka 1450 (1528 A.D.) in the reign of Krishnadēvarāya.

The Rāiva was divided into a number of Śimāgs at the first instance. The Udayagiri rāiva consisted of 13 Śimāgs. They were (1) Āndikōṭa, (2) Kondukūrū, (3) Chennūrū, (4) Poṭladūrī, (5) Kongiri, (6) Āruva, (7) Penugonda, (8) Sarvepalli, (9) Udayagiri, (10) Pākanādu, (11) Sakali, (12) Siddhavaṭam and (13) Mulikinādu. Of all the
Simas, Mulikinadu enjoyed a special status in administrative matters. It appears singly as Mulikinadu up to Saka 1428 (1504 A.D.) when Inmadri Narasingaraja Maharaaya was ruling. But in Saka 1431 (1509 A.D.) in the time of Krishnadeva-rajya most certainly it enjoyed the status of a Sima and hence it was referred to as Mulikinati Sima in Udayagiri Rajya. Because of its enormous extent, part of it was again divided into two other Simas, namely (1) Potladurti and (2) Chennuru. Because they were very small in extent and were organised as Simas for the sake of administrative convenience they were referred to as "Chennuru-Sima-Potladurti-Sima districts (Sthalas)". In the first place where Mulikinadu was elevated as a higher administrative division, Sima constitutes the next unit after the Rajya. But in the second case where Chennuru and Potladurti are referred to, Sima has no specific meaning.

and stands only for a group of villages. In extent Candikóta was the largest Śīna in the Vayagiri rājya. Candikóta Śīna consisted of the taluks of Proddatür, Jammalamaçugu, Cuddapah, Kamalāpuram and Badvel in the Cuddapah district and the southern portions of the two taluks of Koilkuntla and Sirivēl in the Kurnool district.

EXTENT OF PENUONGDA RĀJYA:

Penugonda was one of the biggest of the Rājyas under Krishnadevarāya and hence it is referred to as Mahāraja. The extent of Penugonda rājya was considerably increased by the addition of the areas which formed part of Guttī rājya, consequent on its abolition. The following were the administrative divisions which formed part of the enlarged Penugonda Mahārāja under Krishnadevarāya in Saka 1451 (1629 A.D).

(1) Mārjavāda Śīna (2) Tumbekallu Sthala (3) Yēnugu-mallī Sthala (4) Reddandu (5) Sādali Sthala (6) Kōsuwāripalli Sthala (7) Mallāla Sthala

CHANDRAGIRI RĀJYA:

Chandragiri rāja extended over the whole
of the present Chittor district. It is not possible to give a complete list of the smaller administrative divisions which formed parts of Chandragiri rājya as the information supplied by inscriptions in this regard is not sufficient.

KONDAVIDU RĀJYA:

The Kondaividu rājya extended over the northern portions of the present Ongole district and the whole of the Guntur district. Roughly it covered the area extending from the river Gundlakamma up to the Krishna. All this area was for a long time under the Reddis of Kondaividu, for sometime under the Gajapathis of Orissa and then passed under the Rāyas of Vijayanagara. Sufficient epigraphic evidence regarding the smaller administrative divisions which formed parts of Kondaividu rājya, is not available. Therefore, the broad extent of Kondaividu rājya is indicated here.

* Some Tamil speaking areas also seem to have formed parts of the Chandragiri rājya. It is not necessary to enumerate them here as these 'Studis' are confined to the Telugu country under Vijayanagara rule.
The Bajya was divided into various subdivisions. Six administrative divisions are known from inscriptions of the Vijayanagara period. They are (1) Sima (2) Nādu (3) Sthala (4) Kampana (5) Pranṭya and (6) Thāna. The Bajya was divided into a number of Simas in the first instance. Nādu was a smaller administrative division than the Sima and formed part of the latter. Pottapi nādu and Muliki nādu are referred to as parts of Gandikota Sima. Sthala was a smaller sub-division than the Nādu and Sthala formed part of a Nādu. The other sub-divisions Pranṭya and Thāna are also mentioned as smaller sub-divisions than the Sima; they formed part of a Sima. Another division styled Kampana is mentioned in three inscriptions of the Nellore district.

But they are dated from Saka 1252 to 1255 (1330 to 1333 A.D) and hence they are practically of no use.

58. a) M.D.I. Mayagiri No. 48 Saka 1252-53, Chilakalapadi Kampana.
   b) M.D.I. Darsi No. 25 Saka 1254-55, Amavakalamari Kampana.
   c) M.D.I. Darsi No. 28 Saka 1254-55, Amavakalamari Kampana.
for the present purpose. Some scholars are of the opinion that Kampana was used in the place of a Sthala. But as long as there is no substantial evidence to connect this administrative division with the Sthala, no satisfactory conclusion can be drawn. A Sthala consisted of 20 or 30 villages. Four or five hamlets were grouped into a village. The village formed the nucleus of administration.

THE NĀYANKARA SYSTEM:

The Nāyankara system was not completely an innovation of the Vijayanagara emperors. It was borrowed from the Kākatiyana of Warangal. This system depended upon the theory that the king was the owner of all the land in the country and it was only held by his subordinate chieftains at his will and pleasure. The term Nayak was first applied to those chiefs who obtained grants of fiefs from the Bāya on two conditions. (1) They had to pay a fixed annual contribution to the Bāya. This annual contribution, according to Mumtaz, was generally half of

59. Vijayanagara: Origin of the City and the Empire by Dr. N. Venkataramanayya, p.105.
They had to maintain for the king a fixed number of troops and assist him in his wars. Referring to the reign of Achyutadēvarāya Nūnīz says:

"The kings of this country are able to assemble as many soldiers as they want as they have them there in their kingdom and have much wealth with which to pay them. This king Chitānao has foot soldiers paid by his nobles and they are obliged to maintain six lakhs of soldiers, that is six hundred thousand men, and twenty four thousand horses which the same nobles are obliged to have. These nobles are like renters who hold all the land from the king, and besides keeping all these people they have to pay their cost: they also pay to him every year sixty lakhs of rent as royal dues. The lands, they say, yield a hundred and twenty lakhs of which they must pay sixty to the king and the rest they retain for the pay of the soldiers and the expenses of the elephants which they are obliged to maintain. For this reason the common people suffer much hardship, those who hold the lands being so tyrannical."

60. P.E., p.373.
also corroborated by Paes. According to him the 
Baya fixed, the number of soldiers that a Hayak 
should maintain * ..... these captains whom he 
has over these troops of his are the nobles of 
his kingdom, they are lords and they hold the 
city, and the towns and the villages of the king-
dom, there are captains amongst them who have a 
revenue of a million and a million and ha half 
of Pardaos, others two hundred, three hundred 
or five hundred thousand Pardaos, and as each one 
has revenue so the king fixes for him the number 
of troops he must maintain in foot, horse and 
elephants. These troops are always ready for 
duty whenever they may be called out and wherever 
they may have to go and in this way he has ten 
million of fighting men always ready. Each of 
these captains labours to turn out the best 
troops he can get because he pays them their 
salaries ..... Besides maintaining these troops 
each captain has to make his annual payments to 
the king.....

61. Ibid. pp. 280 and 281.
Besides maintaining the fixed number of soldiers and paying the rents, the Nayaks had some other obligations to the emperor. It was the custom that whenever the king was blessed with a son or a daughter, all the nobles of the kingdom used to offer him great presents of money and jewels of great value. Similarly many presents were given to the Raya by the captains and nobles every year on his birth day. The Nayaks also gave their daughters in marriage to the king. But they were never treated as the principal queens of the king. The nobles also used to send to the king everybody to his house, rice and wheat and meat and fowls with other necessary things. So, the king had no expense in connection with his food.

The greatest mark of honour the Raya could confer on the nobles consisted of two fans ornamented with gold and precious stones, made of the white tails of certain cows. He gave them bracelets also sometimes. The king conferred very great honour if he permitted any noble to kiss his
feet for he never gave his hands to be kissed by any one. Whenever he wished to please his captains or persons from whom he had received or wished to receive good 'service' he gave them searves of honour for their personal use which was a great honour.62

The Nayaks were made responsible for the maintenance of law and order in their fiefs. If a subject complained that he was robbed in such and such a province, the king immediately used to send for the captain of that province and if he failed to catch the thief, his property was taken away.63

Nobles who turned traitors were sent to be impaled alive on a wooden stake thrust through the belly.64

The king settled for the Nayaks the forces they had to maintain and how much revenue they have to pay to the state according to the lands and

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62. Ibid. p.376.
63. Ibid. p.380.
64. Ibid. p.383.
revenues they were enjoying. According to Nunis, the nobles had to pay to the king their revenues as fixed by him annually during the first days of the month of September. This only means that though remittances were made every month, assessment was made in September. The financial year under Vijayanagara commenced in September-October when the Mahānavami festival was celebrated by the emperor for nine days. The Amaranāyakas were expected to be present in the capital during the festival and they cleared all the accounts then. All the rents that were due from his kingdom were paid to the king during those nine days. Nunis says: "According to the lands and revenues that they have so the king settles for them, .... how much revenue they have to pay him every month during the first nine days of the month of September". 65 According to him the dues to the imperial government seem to have been payable every month in accordance with an assessment made annually in the month of September. Nunis also

65. Ibid. p.389.
states that the king gave no receipts for the money he received from his captains. "He (the king) never gives any receipts to them, only, if they do not pay, they are well punished, they are ruined and their property taken away." However, it is very difficult to believe this statement of Nunis. The Vijayanagara emperors with such elaborate administrative machinery could not have managed the treasury accounts without receipts for the money granted or the income derived.

The Nayaks maintained an officer, called "Secretary" by Nunis, at the capital. According to Nunis, the Secretary was always at the court and he kept his master informed of what was taking place at the palace for nothing took place there which they did not soon know. The Rāyaṅaḥakamu tells us that Viswanāthanāyaka of Madura has an agent, "Stānāpathi" at Vijayanagara and it was he that wrote the Rāyaṅaḥakamu giving an account of the reign of Krishnadevaraya.

66. Ibid. p.389.
67. Ibid. p.374.
68. a) Sources, pp.110-11.
 b) Rāyaṅaḥakamu.
If the Nāyaka failed to discharge their duties properly and fulfill their obligations, they were punished by the emperor. According to Muniz, the estates of the Nāyaks would be confiscated and themselves severely punished if they did not maintain the full number of soldiers or pay tribute according to their obligations. Duarte Barbosa gives more details about the mode of punishment. When the king found any great lord guilty of any crime, he sent for him immediately and if he failed to give a just excuse for his fault, he chastised him in words as thoroughly as he deserved and took from him half of his revenues. Then he was immediately ordered to be stripped and stretched on the ground and given a severe beating and if he happened to be a near relative of the king, the king beat him with his own hand and after he had been punished he was ordered to be taken in his palanquin very honourably with the music and rejoicing to his own house. Barbosa is the only writer to speak of

corporal punishment. This information is not corroborated by any other writer of the Vijayanagara times. Hence it is very difficult to believe this story. Dames remarks that this might be an improbable story.71

**PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS**

The administration of each province was entrusted to a governor appointed by the emperor in consultation with his ministers. Each province, as stated already, centred round a fort and the governor appointed by the emperor acted as the administrator of the Rāja and the commandant of the fort. The governors of the various provinces were entrusted not only with the civil administration of the country but also with the military organisation of the kingdom. They were dignified civil officials of the state with responsible military duties.

71. Ibid. Foot note.
DUTIES OF PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS

Though they were controlled by the central government, the provincial governors enjoyed autonomous powers within the province (Rājya). Administration of justice, appointment and removal of officers, maintenance of the military organisation were some of the most important branches of administration which were managed by the governors without central interference. The central government usually never interfered with the administration of the provincial governors except when they failed to discharge their duties properly.

The provincial governors were transferred from one Rājya to another depending upon the necessities. There was definitely no time limit placed upon the tenure of a governor in a particular Rājya. Depending upon the capacity of the governor and needs of the place, the governors sometimes were kept for longer durations in a particular place.
The governors organised councils to assist them in carrying on their administration. The council consisted of the Pradhāni,72 the Dalavāy73 or the Dandānyaka, the treasurer,74 the Sāmāntādhiṅkāri75 and some others. The members of the council were appointed by the provincial governors themselves.

Though the imperial government issued its coinage, the provincial governors were permitted to mint their own coins and circulate them within their Bāiyas. This peculiar system, under which the coinage of the imperial government and the provincial chief was in circulation caused annoyance to foreign travellers like Caesar Frederick. Remarks Frederick, "when we came into a new governor's territory as every day we did, although they were all tributaries to the king of Bijanagar, yet every one of them stamped a small coyne of copper, so that the money we took this day, would not serve the next day".76 The provincial

73. Ibid.
74. Ṣti. Coll. No. 309 of 1912.
75. R.C. X. Mb. 58.
governors not only had the privilege to issue their own coinage but they also had the power to grant to private individuals the right of issuing coins and owning private mints. The right of imposing new taxes and remitting old ones was enjoyed by the provincial governors. The governors had to pay a fixed contribution to the imperial exchequer and so the central government did not interfere with the details of the incidence of taxation and the manner of the collection of taxes. The central government interfered on behalf of the people only when the people were oppressed by tyrannical rule of the provincial governors.

Giving an account of the Vijayanagara empire, Barbosa says: "All these villages and hamlets are inhabited by Heathen among whom dwell a few Moors. Many places here belong to the Lords who hold them from the king of Narasyungu who in his own town keeps his governors and collectors of his rents and duties". 78 These

77. A.R.B., 1929 para 90.
observations of Barbosa make it clear that there were two types of provinces: One of which was held by the "Lords" (amaranāyakas) from the king (on a马拉n tenure) and the other was directly governed by the king through his governors.

The aamaranāyakas and the provincial governors had some similar duties and powers under the Vijayanagara administrative system. But the constitutional position of the Nāyak was different from that of a governor of a province.79 (1) The governor was the king's representative in a province and ruled it on behalf of the king whereas the Nāyak was only a military vassal. The provincial governors were transferred from one province to another depending on administrative necessities. (2) The aamaranāyakas generally were not transferred from one place to the other. Only on rare occasions, a Nāyak was removed from a particular district assigned to him whenever he failed to discharge his duties or fulfill his obligations or when the king desired to provide for another of his favourites.

79. See Dr. T.V. Mahalingam, Administration and Social Life under Vijayanagara (Madras, 1940) p. 291.
(3) The provincial governor, though left with autonomous powers was supervised by the central government. But the Nayak enjoyed greater freedom in his territory. The central government never appears to have interfered with the internal administration of the Nayak's fief except in cases of maladministration and failure to conform to obligations. (4) The Nayaks, unlike the provincial governors, had a personal interest in the administration of the fief. The Nayaks usually undertook many works of public utility like clearance of forests, introduction of agriculture, digging of canals and tanks etc. They were responsible for the spread of civilisation under the Vijayanagara rulers. (5) The Nayaks belonged to various communities in South India whereas the governors for a long time under Vijayanagara rulers (i.e., upto Rama raya's time were Brahmans. (6) The governors of the provinces were appointed from time to time by the emperor. The Nayakship on the other hand, which was in the initial stages personal became hereditary in course of time, when the Vijayanagara emperors after the battle of Bukkasi-Tangadi failed to control them properly.
COBOL CSIONJ
Even though the Telugu speaking country from
the Chilaka lake in the Ganjam district to the river
Krishna was never directly administered by the Rāyas of
Vijayanagara, the Rāyalasīma area and the Guntur district
came under the impact of the Vijayanagara rule. The temples
constructed by the Rāyas or by their subordinate chiefs are
living monuments to the grandeur that was Vijayanagara.
The Vijayanagara rulers evolved a distinct style of
architecture in the temples built by them in the capital
city and this style was adopted by the governors and the
Amaranāyakas working under them in the Rāyalasīma area.
The Rāyas and their subordinate chiefs undertook many
irrigation works besides bringing extensive areas under
cultivation by clearing the forests and they strove hard to
improve the prosperity of the people. The tanks of Vijaya-
nagara times are very useful even to-day as major sources of
irrigation in the Rāyalasīma area. The Rāyas followed a
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CONCLUSION:

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irrigation in the Rāyalasīma area. The Rāyas followed a
tolerant religious policy towards their subjects and there
was no persecution of the followers of any religion or reli-
gious sect. The rulers of Vijayanagara were great patrons of
letters and the reign of Krishnadēvarāya may be described as the golden age of Telugu literature. The period of the rule of the Vijayanagara emperors over the Telugu country was one of the most glorious periods in the history of the Andhras.