CHAPTER II

Śrīṅgērī and Vijayanagara

Introduction

From the period of the establishment of the Vijayanagara kingdom (A.D. 1336) down to the modern times the various secular heads like the Vijayanagara Emperors, the Keḻadi Rulers, the Maratha Chiefs, the Muslim Rulers like Hyder, Tipu and the Nizam, the Mysore Woḍeyars and the British Commissioners maintained close contact with the Śrīṅgērī Matha. These rulers patronised the Śrīṅgērī Matha, and showed their reverence to the Jagadgurus.

Sources

Besides the literary works like Vidyārāṇyakāḷaṇāṇa, Guruvāṁśakāvya and Śivāṭatvaratnākara, inscriptions¹ are the main sources of information to know about the relationship between Śrīṅgērī and Vijayanagara. There are also a few kadatas² (most of them are copies of inscriptions) which shed light on the relationship.
With the establishment of the Vijayanagara kingdom, the Śrīngērī Matha came to be patronised for the first time by a temporal head and the jagadgurus in return, extended their spiritual protection over the Vijayanagara Empire.

The pontificate of Śrī Vidyā Tīrtha, Śrī Bhārati Tīrtha and Śrī Vidyāranya witnessed a glorious period in the history of Śrīngērī. Though there are different views regarding the origin and foundation of the Vijayanagara kingdom, it is accepted by most of the scholars that Vidyāranya played an important role in this.

(A) Śrī Vidyā Tīrtha

Vidyā Tīrtha or Vidyāśāṅkara was an eminent Guru and learned in all the śāstras. He was the tenth pontiff of the Śrīngērī Matha.

As mentioned earlier, the earliest epigraphical evidence that establishes the relationship between Śrīngērī and Vijayanagara is the Śrīngapura grant, dated Saka 1268 (A.D. 1346). This is about a gift of land by Harihara I and his brothers to Śrī Bhārati Tīrtha of the
Sṛṅgērī Matha. This inscription on stone begins with an invocation "Vidyāṭīrthāya gurave paraśmal tējase namah" which means "obeisance to Vidyāṭīrtha who is the divine lustre". It clearly shows the great regard that Harīhara had for Vidyā Tīrtha.

From an inscription, dated A.D. 1356, it is understood that Bukka I visited Sṛṅgērī in that year and appears to have met Vidyā Tīrtha and paid his homage to him. This inscription begins with the praise of Vidyā Tīrtha as "Lord of the Ascetics, surpassing the Sun by his ability to remove both the internal and external darkness of men both day and night."

Vidyā Tīrtha was a learned Vedic scholar and was called a "Mahēśvara whose breath was the Veda" by his disciple Sāyanāchārya in the Vedic commentaries. A number of scholars flocked to him and they became his disciples. Besides Saṅkarānanda and Vidyāraṇya, Satcidānanda, Advaita Brahmānanda (Bhāratī Tīrtha), Sāndrānanda, Advaitānanda Shēvadhi, Mahādēva Śiva, Advaita Sukhānanda, Śivayōgi and Pratyagjyōti were eight other eminent disciples of Vidyā Tīrtha. And Vidyā Tīrtha is said to have installed these eight disciples as the heads of the eight mathas established by him. Among his disciples,
Bharati Tirtha, Vidyaranya and Sayanacharya were the foremost. Bharati Krishna Tirtha (Bharati Tirtha) was the virtual head of the Sringeri Matha under Vidyā Tirtha. 

"All these have invoked Vidyā Tirtha in one work or other composed by them."

"In addition to their religious and literary activities Vidyā Tirtha and his school actively assisted the early Vijayanagara kings with their counsels in the government of the people." 

Vidyā Tirtha being the greatest spiritual Guru in the lineage of the Śringerī Jagadgurus, his disciple Bharati Tirtha instituted regular worship both in the Vidyāsaṅkara temple and for the statue, Chaturmūrtī Vidyēśvara, in Simhagiri. The splendid Vidyāsaṅkara temple built in memory of Śrī Vidyā Tirtha was consecrated soon after A.D. 1356 under the supervision of Bharati Tirtha, who granted 120 vrittis to various Brahmins on the occasion. Owing to the liberal munificence and devotion of the Vijayanagara Emperor Harihara I, this temple, well-known for its sculpture could be erected.

With regard to the date of Vidyā Tirtha there are different opinions. According to Śringerī Matha's list,
Vidyā Tīrtha was ordained into Sanyāsa in Saka 1150 (A.D. 1228) and died in Saka 1255 (A.D. 1333). But from a stone inscription dated A.D. 1356 it is understood that Bukka I went to Śrīṅgēri in that year, had the darusana of Vidyā Tīrtha and made a gift of lands to him for providing for the servants of the Matha and for the food of the ascetics. This shows that the statement in the Śrīṅgēri Matha list that he died in A.D. 1333 is incorrect. D.V. Gundappa opines that the reign of Vidyā Tīrtha commenced sometimes before the foundation of Vijayanagara (A.D. 1336) and ended sometimes in A.D. 1356 when he entered into 'Yoga-sāmādhi'.

Vidyā Tīrtha was responsible for the renovation of Śrīṅgēri and he secured a high status for the Śrīṅgēri Matha. It is likely that Harihara and Bukka were helped by him and Vidyāranya in the foundation of Vijayanagara. His greatness is understood from various other sources.

(B) Bhāratī Kṛṣṇa Tīrtha (Bhāratī Tīrtha)

Bhāratī Tīrtha was the disciple and immediate successor of Vidyā Tīrtha. According to Śrīṅgēri Matha's list he reigned from A.D. 1328 - A.D. 1380. However, D.V. Gundappa opines that Bhāratī Tīrtha was a junior
pontiff prior to the death of Vidyā Tīrtha (C.A.D.1356), and after that date he appears to have ascended the Pitā.22

Epigraphical records prove that there were cordial relations between Śriṅgērī and Vijayanagara during the pontificate of Bhārati Tīrtha. For instance, as noticed earlier, in A.D. 1346, Harihara I (A.D. 1336 – A.D. 1356) with his younger brothers Kampanna, Bukkanna, Mārappa and Muddappa and two others, son-in-law Ballappa Dandanāyika (Ballāla III's sister's son) and Prince Sovannodeyaru (Kampanna's son), visited Śriṅgērī and made a land grant to Śrī Bhārati Tīrtha the then pontiff of the Śrīṅgērī Matā.23 This grant professes to have been issued in celebration of the festival of Harihara's victory over all the countries from the eastern to the western ocean.

\[(pūrvāparasamudramtām jītva hariharō bhuvam \\
  jayōtsavam khyāpayitu mākaroḍdharmamuttamam \)24

This free gift of land was meant for the penance of His Holiness and the support of his 40 Brahmin attendants and other disciples. The number of villages granted are 9 belonging to Kelanāḍu in Santaligenāḍu.
Another important point to notice in this grant is, below the grant of Harihara I is inscribed Śrī Vīra-
Kikkāyi-Tāyi endowing the village of Hossāvar in Santalīg-
nādu for the maintenance of Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha’s attendants
and servants. This Kikkāyi-Tāyi belonged to the dynasty
of the Pāṇḍya Emperors and was the queen of Hoysala
Ballāla III. Her kingdom included various places like
Honnāvara, Bhatkala, and Bārakuru. Her son, Basava Sankara
Rāya, the Pāṇḍya Emperor, ruled over Bārakuru, flourishing
the grand title Gaṇankuśa Vīra Kulasākhara Dēva.\(^2\)

This Śrīṇgāpura grant is evidently the most important
one not only from the point of view of the history of
Vijayanagara but even from that of Śrīṅgērī. This inscription
also sheds light on the relationship between the
Hoysalas and the Vijayanagara kings. The very fact that
Harihara, his brothers and his relatives, in those days
when the means of transport and communications were totally
unsatisfactory, visited Śrīṅgērī, a place in the midst of
almost impenetrable forests and mountain ranges, clearly
indicates the significance of the role played by the
Jagadgurus of the Sringeri Matha in the founding of
Vijayanagara. However, there is no reference to this
Śrīṅgāpura grant of Harihara I in the existing kādatas.
The next ruler of the Vijayanagara Empire was Vira-Bukkannodeyar or Bukka I (A.D. 1356-77) who gave rich endowments to the Śrīṅgerī Matha and thus continued the noble tradition. On his accession to the throne, Bukka I visited Śrīṅgerī, received the blessings of Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha and made a gift of land (the villages in Keluvalli grāma of the Santalīgenādu) to him of the revenue of three hundred gadyānas, in Saka 1277 (A.D. 1356).26

Copies of an almost identical stone inscription are found in kadatas27 but with a variation in date. In the kadatas, the date of the grant of land by Bukka I to Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha is recorded Saka 1128 (A.D. 1206). As it is, we know that Vijayanagara came into existence in Saka 1258 (A.D. 1356). However, only on the basis of the wrong date mentioned in the kadatas, it is inappropriate to consider this land grant of Bukka as spurious. It is quite likely that while copying the inscription, the writer might have written the wrong date. (C) Vidyāranya

Since Vidyāranya was not in Śrīṅgerī at this time (A.D. 1356), the above mentioned two inscriptions do not mention his name. But the name of Vidyāranya is recorded in the copper-plate inscription28 dated Saka 1303.
(A.D. 1380-81). The same inscription says that after the death of Harihara I, Vidyāraṇya proceeded to Vāraṇāsī and decided to stay there. Actuated by a keen desire to bring back Vidyāraṇya, Bukka I got a Śrīmukha (a letter from a guru) from Śrī Vidyā Tīrtha and despatched it with a request of his own. Accordingly, Vidyāraṇya came back to Vijayanagara and after a short stay went to Śrīnāgēri.

Vidyāraṇya succeeded Bhāratī Tīrtha on the pontifical throne of Śrīnāgēri. "Vidyāraṇya may have been ordained as a Sanyāsin in A.D. 1331 and continued to live till A.D. 1386."²⁹ Like Bhāratī Tīrtha he was also one of the foremost disciples of Vidyā Tīrtha. It is proved now beyond any doubt that Harihara and his brothers established the Vijayanagara Empire with the help of Śrī Vidyāraṇya.³⁰ "In A.D. 1368, Vidyāraṇya was mahāpradhāna to Bukka I and by 1380 he had become Jagad-guru."³¹

The next ruler of the Vijayanagara dynasty was Harihara II (A.D. 1377 - A.D. 1404), who too followed in the footsteps of his predecessors. Both in secular and spiritual affairs of the state, Harihara II (the son of Bukka I) sought the guidance of Śrī Vidyāraṇya. Harihara II consolidated the land grants³² made by his predecessors with an addition of his own to Vidyāraṇya in Śaka 1303 (A.D. 1380³³) Vidyāraṇya passed away in A.D. 1386. In
A.D. 1386, Harihara II again made a grant of land to the Śrīṅgērī Matha and divided the land into 100 vṛttis of 5 pagodas each and distributed them; 4 to the temples and the rest among 106 learned Brahmins in Śrīṅgērī.

It is necessary to mention here that out of the gift of land made by Harihara II in A.D. 1386, to the Śrīṅgērī Matha, Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha endowed vṛttis (small land holdings) to 120 scholars and among these, three scholars named Nārāyaṇa Vājapeya Yāji, Paṇḍari (Paṇḍuranga) Dīkṣita and Narahari Sōmayāji who helped Sāvana in the composition of the commentaries on the Vedas. These were the progenitors of the three families who receive special honours even now at the Śrīṅgērī Matha. The total value of all these lands given by the first three Emperors of Vijayanagara amounted to 3003 pagodas, and that is why Śrīṅgērī came to be known as Mūru Sāvira Simha country.

The Vijayanagara Emperors gave the Śrīṅgērī Jagadgurus the title of Karnātasimhasana Sthāpakāchārya. A long list of the insignia of the Śrīṅgērī Jagadgurus bestowed on them by the Vijayanagara emperor Harihara II is given in Guruvamsa kāvya. Harihara II was initiated into ādhyātmikā vidyā (spiritual education) by Śrī Vidyāranya.
Harihara II's relation with Chandrasekhara Bhārati I and Narasimha Bhārati I

Śrī Chandrasekhara Bhārati I (A.D. 1386-89) who succeeded Vidyārānya received Harihara II at Sringeri. The Emperor got a temple erected over the Samādhi (tomb) of Śrī Vidyārānya and founded the agrahāra of Vidyāranyapuram. The Emperor further granted Dandura village, situated in the Śivani hōbli of Yaranāda Sīme in Basavapattana kingdom, to Śrī Chandrasekhara Bhārati I, for the maintenance of Śrī Sāradāmbā temple.  

Śrī Narasimha Bhārati I (A.D. 1389 - A.D. 1408) the successor of Śrī Chandrasekhara Bhārati I, was invited by Harihara II to his capital. Narasimha Bhārati gave spiritual initiation to Virūpākṣa and Dēvarāya I, the sons of Harihara II.

Dēvarāya II and Purusottama Bhārati I

The successors of Harihara II also paid homage to the Jagadgurus. The grants of Dēvarāya II (A.D. 1424 - A.D. 1446), stand testimony to this view. A kādāta in the Sringeri Matha contains a copy of the Andavallī grant of Dēvarāya II. The inscription is dated Saka 1352 Saumya Sam.Māgha ba. 14, corresponding to 21st February.
The inscription records the gift of the village Andavalli by Devaraya II to Sri Puruṣottama Bhārati I (A.D. 1408 - A.D. 1448). It was granted for the Naivedya (food offerings) and the Nandādīpa (perpetual lamp) of God Vidyāśaṅkara.

Sriṅgēri and the Tuluvas

The pontificate of Sri Puruṣottama Bhārati II (A.D. 1479 - A.D. 1517), witnessed the Sāluva and the Tuluva usurpations in the history of the Vijayanagara Empire. The sources reveal that the relation between Sriṅgēri and Vijayanagara was more cordial during the Sangama period than in any other period of the Empire's history. After Sāluva usurpation Śrī Vaiṣṇavas got the upper hand in the Vijayanagara court. However, Kṛṣṇadevarāya (A.D. 1509 - A.D. 1529) the greatest ruler of the Vijayanagara Empire had a sincere regard for the Sriṅgēri Jagadguru.

Inscription dated Saka 1437 (A.D. 1515), says that Kṛṣṇadevarāya was blessed by Śrī Puruṣottama Bhārati II, before the Emperor's campaign (A.D. 1515-16) against Vīra Rudra Gajapati of Kalinga. The Jagadguru conveyed his blessings through Vidyāranya, one of the disciples. The
latter was welcomed and honoured by the Emperor at Hampi. In memory of this incident, the Rāya granted Huyyuru in Barkur rājya and the attached hamlets to the Śrīnāgērī Matha. He also ordered the immediate restoration of certain places like Gavaṭhuru, Gājanūru, Maṇḍali, Harakerē, Sīvamoga and Solleballu, to the Śrīnāgērī Matha. And history records, subsequently Kiṃnādēvarāya conquered Kalinga, recaptured Raichur and routed the forces of Bijapur, Tahmānagar and Golkonda. It was Viḍyārānya, one of the disciples of Śrī Puruṣottama Bhāratī II who organised a matha at Hampi. An inscription dated Yuva Sam. Mārgasira ba. 30 (corresponding to Wednesday 5th December, 1515) tells us that Kiṃnādēvarāya issued orders to the village officers to obey the Śrīnāgērī Gurus as their masters.

After Kiṃnādēvarāya, evidence to establish the relationship between Śrīnāgērī and Viṭṭanagāra is meagre. However, Honnappa Nāyaka, a dalavai of the Emperor Sadāśiva Rāya (A.D. 1543 – A.D. 1570), granted Bastīhalli in Ārā Sime (territorial division of Ārāga) to Śrī Rāmachandra Bhāratī (A.D. 1517 – A.D. 1560) the Jagadguru of the Śrīnāgērī Matha. The grant is dated Saka 1467 (A.D. 1545).
**Sriñgērī and the Āravidū dynasty**

Even after the battle of Rākṣasa Tangaḍi (A.D. 1565), the relationship between Sriñgērī and Vijayanagara continued to be cordial though much less so than before. This is evident from a grant by Śrī Ranga Rāya I (A.D. 1572 - A.D. 1585) of the Āravidū dynasty to the Sriñgērī Matha. Then, the Empire had its capital at Penukonda. This grant dated A.D. 1573, "expressly states that it was made when Śrī Narasimha Bhārati occupied the throne of Dharma in Sringeri fostering the Saddārānas".

Thus the Vijayanagara Emperors, particularly the Sangamas and Kṛiṣṇadevaraya made a number of land grants to the Sriñgērī Matha and on many occasions invited the Gurus to their capital, paid homage to them and received their blessings. Such acquired property was never considered personal by the Gurus but was held in trust and the income was exclusively utilised for religious and welfare activities. The relationship between Sriñgērī and Vijayanagara fostered mutual regard between the two and helped them both. The Keḻadi rulers followed in the foot-steps of the Vijayanagara Emperors.
Notes and References


2. *Kadases* (Kds.) 34, 45, 50, 66, 70, 72, 79, 86, 92, 101, 129, 134, 141, 147, 175 and 190.

There are about 25 inscriptions pertaining to this period and all these inscriptions cannot be considered authentic because some of the dates are not correct.

3. However, S. Srikantaya, in his article "Vijayanagara and Vidyāranya", writes, "The relations of the Hoysala Ballālās and of Harihara and Bukka after them with the Gurus of Sringeri were most cordial". *Vijayanagara Sexcentenary Commemoration Volume* (VSCV), Dharwar, 1936, p. 164.

4. a) *Punyatālokamāñjari, Gururatnamālā, Suṣama, Guruvamsakāvya, Rājakālanirṇaya* and *Vidyāranyakālajñāna*, confirm the tradition that Vidyāranya is the founder of the Vijayanagara kingdom.

b) Buchanan-Hamilton, in his *Journey from Madras through Mysore, Canara and Malbar* (III 110-115), on the basis of the work *Vidyāranya Sikka*, says that the city was founded by Vidyāraṇya for the two brothers Harihara and Bukka, in the Saka year 1258.

c) Nuniz, the Portuguese merchant who resided at Vijayanagara for sometime in about A.D. 1537, upholds the same view.

d) Literary works of the later periods like *Pārisāparāpaharaṇamu* of Nandi Timmanṇa, *Ach�जयवाभयुदयायम* of
Rājanātha, Varadāmbikāparināyam of Tirumalāmbā, Śivatatrataṅkāra of Basavarāja and Chikkadevarāya-
vamsāvalī of Tirumalārāya, support the view of Śrī Vidyārāṇya's role in the foundation of the
Vijayanagara kingdom.

e) However, H.Heras disapproves of the view.

5. Śringapura grant (stone), EC., VI, Śrīngēri (Sg.) 1; Sg.R., 1.
6. Sg.R., 2.
11. Ibid.
13. "In Śimhapīram there is still preserved a strange
sculpture, and on its four faces are figures
representing respectively Śrī Vidyā Tīrtha flanked
by his two chief disciples - Śrī Bhārati Tīrtha and
Śrī Vidyārāṇya, Brahma, Viṣṇu and Mahēsvara. Above
them is a figure of Lākṣmi Narasimha and on top is
a Śiva linga."
From TTW., p.21.
14. ARMAD., 1916, Sg., p. 15.


17. ARMAD., 1916, para 93.

18. Gundappa, VSK., pp. 17 and 54.


20. a) Longhurst, Hampi Ruins, p.11.
    b) FG., IV. Yd. 46, 1377.
    d) Ibid., 1908 and 1915.
    e) Jaiminiya Nyāyamālavistara, Saṅkara Vijaya
       Mādhaviya, Kālamādhāvīya and Vivaraṇa Pramāṇya
       Sangraha, all composed by Mādhava (Vidyārāṇya)
       and also Vaśyāsika Nāyamāla by Bhāratī Tīrtha
       and Vedabhāṣya by Śaṅkara.


22. Gundappa, VSK, p.54.

23. Sg.R., 1.

24. Ibid., third—Mangala Śloka. Invocation song

25. a) Kapatarala Krisnārāyaṇa, Karnātaka Sanskrātiya
   Samsādhanā (Kannada), Mysore, 1970, pp.240-256.
   b) K.V.Ramesh, A History of South Kanara, Karnataka

26. ARMAD., 1916, p.56; ARMAD., 1933, Sg.No.2; Sg.R., 2.

27. Ed. 65, No.15; Ed. 129, No.12.

28. Sg.R., 3.

29. S.Srikantaya, "Vijayanagara and Vidyārāṇya"
    VSCY., p.164.
30. a) VSCV., pp.161-168.
b) Srikantaya S., FV., pp. 135-141.

31. Srikantaya, FV., p.118.

32. Sg.R., 3; ARMAD., 1916, p.56; ARMAD., 1933, Nos. 24 and 33.

33. Sg.R., 3; ARMAD., 1933, No.33; GVK., Canto VIII, V.22, p.79.

34. Vidyārṇyapura grant, Sg.R., 4; ARMAD., 1916, Para 97.

35. Śrī Vidyāśāhakara, Śrī Bhāratī Rāmanātha, Śrī Vidyāviśvēśvara and Śrī Janārdana temples.

36. ARMAD., 1908, paras 54 and 55.

37. Harihara I 502 ¾ Varaha
   Bukka I
      i. 900 "
      ii. 425 ¾ "
      iii. 222 ½ "

   Chikkārṣaya (afterwards
   Harihara II) 202 ½ "
   Harihara II
      i. 525 "
      ii. 225 "

   Total 3003 Varahas

Also see Sg.R., Introduction, p. lxvii.

38. GVK., pub. 1966, Canto VI, V.42, p.59.

39. Ibid., Canto VIII, VV. 4-18, pp. 77-78.

40. Ibid., V. 34, p.80.
41. Kd. 101, No.45.

42. Kd. 79, No.4. Kd. 50, No.4; ARMAD., 1916, p.62.

43. The village Andavalli is situated in the Chandra-
gutti hobbli, Sorab Taluk, Shimoga District.

44. According to TTW., 1967, p.40, Sri Purusottama
Bharati is the 16th and according to the Sringeri
Souvenir (SS) pub. The Akhila Bharrata Saikara Seva
Samiti, Madras, 1963, p.157, he is the 15th pontiff
in the Jagadguru parampara.

Note: Sringeri Souvenir was published by the Sringeri
Souvenir Committee for the Akhila Bharrata Saikara
Seva Samiti at Madras, in 1963. The Chairman of the
Committee was S.Anantharamakrishnan. The Souvenir
contains several articles pertaining to the Sringeri
Jagadgurus and their Matha. Scholars like K.R.
Venkataraman, K.M.Munshi, R.Krishnaswamy Aiyar, have
enriched the value of the Souvenir by contributing
articles. However, I have made use of only such
articles which are important from the point of view
of history and written by recognised scholars.

45. SK.R., 8 and 9.

46. ARMAD., 1934, No.32.

Note: Here it is mentioned as "Copy of a Sasan of
the king Krishna Raya of Vijayanagar in a kadita in
the Sringeri Matha." But this copy could not be
traced out in the existing kaditas of the Sringeri
Matha.

47. SK.R., 10.
