Chapter I

Introduction
Hampi is a small village in Hospet taluk (15 latitude, 76 longitude) Bellary district (Karnataka) and is about 12 k.m. from Hospet. It is located on the southern bank of Tungabhadra river. Hampi is surrounded by the rocky outcrops of granite boulders providing protection. Tungabhadra river flows in northeasterly direction. To the North, rocky outcrops partly contain the river in a narrow gorge; elsewhere, these hills open up to define a wide valley through which the river and its branches flow. Overlooking the south bank of the river is a high ridge with several elevated outcrops such as Hemakuta and Matanga hills. This ridge together with another that runs parallel to it further south, defines a richly irrigated valley. To the south are valleys bounded by lower ridges and isolated outcrops like Malyavanta hill. Gradually, these hills disappear altogether and the landscape becomes increasingly flat and open. This plain extends for several kilometers to the East, South, and west, limited by hills and the river. Hampi region is blessed with natural resources. Hospet region is known for the rich deposit of manganese and iron ore of very high quality. This kingdom was one of the vast empire in South India in medieval times. Hampi was Kishkinda of Ramayana fame. The antiquity of this place goes back to the times of the Ramayana according to the traditions and local
legends. Further, Vali and Sugriva of the *Ramayana* rules from Kishkinda, their kingdom. Hampi as a capital city under the rulers of Vijayanagara emerged into a great centre of art and a seat of political power and became one of the leading cities in India. Even today, there are hundreds of monuments of varieties, forms and styles in various states of dilapidation scattered over a very vast area, a feature generally not found in many of the ancient capitals of India. Consequently, the site began to attract people from the other countries who became very curious about the architectural remains. Some of them even wrote about the glory and grandeur of the city that could be known from the extant remains.

From the beginning of the 20th century works Vijayanagara *kingdom* are available. Many works on various aspects of the kingdom are published. Few early works such as *Social and Political Life in Vijayanagara Empire* by Saletore, B.A. 1934, 2. *Vijayanagara Sex Centenary Commemoration Volume*, 1936, 3. *Further Sources of Vijayanagara Empire* by Nilakanta Sastry, K.A., Venkata Ramanayya, M.A., 1946, *The Tamil country under Vijayanagara* by Krishnaswamy A., 1964, *Administration and Social life under Vijayanagara* by Mahalingam, T.V., 1975 and etc, deals with various aspects of Vijayanagara dynasty. But only a few works on Hampi are published mostly on monu-
ments in the site such as Longhurst's Hampi Ruins, Devakunjari's Hampi and etc. The book by Longhurst is a good account of the monuments as appeared at the beginning of the present century against the political and cultural history in brief. This indeed readily gave a clear idea especially to the people abroad about what Hampi was. Later publications such as Hampi by Devakunjari and etc, are only guide books and one or two books including recent findings in brief. The Master pieces of Vijayanagara Art is just in the appreciation of sculptural art of the Vijayanagara school by taking the most impressive and colossal such as Lakshmi-Narasimha, Kadalekalu and Sasivekalu Ganeshas and etc. Similarly, the Courtly Style of Vijayanagara discusses the imperial architectural style. The Royal centre of Vijayanagara A preliminary Report is the reports of findings about the work through explorations and excavations in the site and the findings there from. Hampi-Vijayanagara Vitthala Temple, The Ramachandra temple in Vijayanagara are evidently scholarly studies of individual magnificent monuments of great merit.

After Longhurst's publication occasionally, here and there, there were studies (I.A.R.,1975-76, p,20,62, A.R.E.,1975-76, no.B-94;B-95,pp.20,62,S.I.I.Vol.IV.
No. 260, Narasimhacharya, 1972) as a part of the Vijayanagara history on the pre-Vijayanagara history in relation to the prevalent traditions about the site. Besides, much earlier, in the last decades of the 19th century Bruce Foote has notices some important archaeological remains in Hampi-Anegondi area and reported them (Bruce Foote, 1916). All these gradually drew the attention of the public and the government to take the site seriously particularly in relation to the great description of Hampi by alien itinerants (Robert Sewell, 1900). Eventually, the governments of India and Karnataka decided to carry out large scale archaeological operations in Hampi. The archaeological departments began from 1975, exploration, excavations, conservation of the monuments and publication of the results annually. Besides, foreign scholars such as George Michell, John Fritz, Anna Dallapiccola and as well as Indian scholars such as Raja Shekhara, Vasundara Filliozat, Ms. Vargheese, M.T. Kamble and other have studies and have been studying especially in monuments in great detail. Some of these have been published as mentioned above. Consequently, vast materials pertaining to Hampi alone ranging from the Neolithic to the fall of Vijayanagara are available and have been studies partly. It is, therefore, necessary to review comprehensively the rich archaeological materials available,
prehistoric and historic and coordinate as far as possible the literary accounts indigenous and foreign in order to get a clear picture of Hampi in all its cultural aspects through the ages. An attempt has been made in the present study to coordinate the archaeological evidences with the literary sources.

For the present study, essentially all archaeological evidence such as epigraphs so far published and monuments in Hampi area are made use of. The literary sources are taken into consideration in a limited way for better understanding of the city layout etc., interpretation and to fill up the blanks wherever possible. A detailed field survey has been carried for a period of three months in all and the site has been studied on the spot. Local traditions about the mathas are collected and recorded. Photographs of select monuments, pillars on the basis of style, forms, period, characteristic etc. Detailed notes were made of the monuments. The field data has been analyzed and studies and the coordinated with the archaeological data also with literary references wherever necessary. As a result it has been possible to put the findings in the following chapters. They are:

1. Introduction.

2. Hampi region in pre-Vijayanagara period.

and Vijayanagara period
3. City (Vijayanagara).
4. Society.
5. Economy.
6. Religion.
7. Language and Literature.
8. Architecture, Sculpture and Painting.
9. Conclusion.

In the first chapter, the necessity to take up the present study, work done so far on the subject, source material, methodology have been discussed.

In the second chapter, the antiquity of Hampi has been traced from the Early Palaeolithic period to the historical period on the basis of the excavated sites, epigraphs, antiquities found are dealt with.

Hampi city in indigenous literature and as seen by the itinerants is the subject of the third chapter. All the excavates structures in the royal complex, other buildings related to the complex, gateways and roads are discussed in detail. An attempt has been made in the present study to give a picture of the city and the royal complex.

In the fourth chapter, the different classes of people such as royal members, officials and common people, their
life, style, food habits, dress and ornaments are discussed in brief. The general administration of the city, the court life of the officials are also dealt with.

The economic conditions prevailed in Hampi city are discussed in the fifth chapter. The types of lands, revenues, food grains grown, irrigational works, trade and commerce, currency of the state, fairs and bazaars and etc., are discussed on the basis of epigraphs and itinerants accounts.

The religious conditions of Hampi from the known period are discussed in the sixth chapter. Jainism, Buddhism, Saivism, Smarta Sampradaya, Madhva sampradaya, Srivaishnavism are discussed.

The literary activities in Hampi area, the works, poets in the court and the language are dealt in the seventh chapter.

The gradual development in layout of temple architecture are discussed from the simple to the elaborate temple complex are discussed. Sculptures found on different parts of the temple such as adhistana, bhitti, gopura, pillar, prakara wall, maha dwaras etc., the unique sculptures of Hampi area and etc., are discussed here. The prehistoric
paintings found in the Hampi area and the paintings of the Vijayanagara period are dealt with in this chapter.

In the last chapter, the over all cultural picture of Hampi on the basis of the present study is given.