GLOSSARY

**Abhang:** A verse form used for devotional songs in Marathi from the earliest period onward. The saints of Maharashtra who belonged to the Vārkari tradition popularized this genre of devotional lyrics in praise of god Viṭhala of Pandharapur.

**Āchārya:** Teacher, Preceptor. Śrī Vaishnavas acknowledge a line of such teachers.

**Advaita:** One of the most influential schools of Indian philosophy, which argues that there is no distinction between god and human souls. This non-dualistic philosophy was propounded by Sankarāchārya in the 8th century.

**Āgama:** Sacred text related to worship

**Agrahāra:** Village donated to Brahmins or village where Brahmins resided

**Ānjaneyā:** Another name of Hanumān, the monkey god.

**Ankita:** The signature of composers used at the ending lines of the compositions. Purandaradāsa used Purandara Viṭhala as his ankita or mudra.

**Āḻvār:** “one immersed in god”; a title given to devotional singers in Tamil from the Seventh to the Eighth centuries in South India. Nammāḻvār, Āṇḍāl, Kulasēkhara Āḻvār are some of the important Āḻvār saints who composed and sang songs in praise of god Vishnu.

**Anantaśayana:** One of the reclining forms of Vishnu.

**Avatār:** “descended”; a term used to describe incarnations of Vishnu, such as Krishna, but also incarnations of other figures such as Nārada and Prahlād.

**Ayōdhya:** The Capital of King Daśaratha and of Rāma.

**Bāgilu:** Medium sized gateway.

**Basadi:** Jain Temples. Mostly found in Karnataka in South India.

**Beṭṭa** (Kannada): Hill, a term quite frequent in the Hoysāla inscriptions.

**Bhāgavata/Bhāgavata Purāṇa:** A Chronicle of Vishnu and his avatāras, especially important are the portions of the narrative dealing with the life of god Krishna and a child and his his youthful exploits.

**Bhaj:** “divide, share, bestow, enjoy”; the root of the words, bhakti, bhakta and bhajan.
Bhairava: ‘Terrible’, name of one of the fierce aspects of Śiva.

Bhajan: “a thing enjoyed or shared”; a public, collective performance usually in the form of singing one or more names of god repetitively.

Bhakta: “one who exemplifies Bhakti”; a term that generally denotes someone who is devoted to something in ways that confrom to the general idea of Bhakti.

Bhakti: From the root ‘bhaj’ meaning “to participate”. Usually glossed as devotion; implies both a devotion to one’s deity and a devotion to a community or public.

Darśan: “view”; two key meanings are indicated by this term; (1) viewing a deity, sacred person, or sacred object in Hinduism; (2) a term used in the sense of a “school of thought” or “point of view” differentiating the six classical Indian philosophical systems.

Dāsa: “devotee, servant or disciple”; feminine form is dāsī. The dāsa tradition was a devotional tradition which existed in Karnataka during the heyday of Vijayanagara Empire. They followed the Madhva philosophy of dvaita (dualism) which upheld the supremacy of Lord Hari.

Dēvadāsi: Temple dancing girl

Dhruvapad: “refrain”; the refrain line of a song; and also a classical form of Indian vocal music.

Durgā: A militant goddess, who combats demons who threaten the stability of the universe.

Dvaita: Dualism, one among the schools of Vēdānta philosophy.

Ganēśha: The elephant- headed son of Śiva and Pārvati. He is regarded as the remover of obstacles and as the god of wisdom.

Garbhagriha: The Sanctum Sanctorum of a temple.

Garuda: The mythical eagle, the vehicle of Vishnu.

Gōpura: Ornamented, pyramydical entrance gateway to a South Indian temple.

Guru: Teacher, preceptor

Hanumān: The monkey chief who helped Rāma to rescue Sīta.

Haridāsas: The poet saints of Karnataka who followed the Dvaita tradition of Vaishnavism.

Harikathā: stories (kathā) about Vishnu/Krishna(hari); a devotional art performance known throughout India in which stories about Krishna, avatārs of Vishnu, the lives of Vaishnava Sants, and other subjects are explored in public performance with a mix of song, dance and exposition.
**Ishṭadēvatha:** Favourite god, personal deity.

**Itihāsa:** “thus indeed it was”; a term for a genre of Sanskrit literature that encompasses the epics and Purāṇa and other materials that are considered accounts of real events from the past; sometimes glossed as “history” and often a translation for the word “history” in Hindi and Marathi.

**Jangama:** Vīraśaiva ascetic

**Kālamukha:** A Śaiva sect, its followers smear ash on their faces.

**Kishkinda:** An ancient kingdom of the monkeys in South India.

**Krishna:** The eighth and the most popular incarnation of Vishnu.

**Lakshmi:** Consort of Vishnu, goddess of fortune and prosperity.

**Linga:** Phallus, a symbol of the male principle. Linga is worshipped as a symbol of Śiva.

**Madhva:** A teacher or Āchārya of Vaishnavism, born at Udupi in Karnataka in the 13th century who propounded the Dvaita or dualistic school of philosophy.

**Mahābhārata:** An epic revolving around the war between the Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas.

**Mahānavami:** Nine day festival, also known as Dussera or Navarātri.

**Mandapa:** Open or closed pillar hall.

**Matha:** Hindu religious monastery. In the Vijayanagara period, mathas of Śaiva and Vaishnava sects existed and were patronized and generously endowed by the rulers.

**Mukhamandapa:** Frontal Mandapa

**Mūrti:** Image of a deity

**Narasimha:** Man-lion, the fourth incarnation of Vishnu.

**Nāyaka:** ‘lord’ term form for a vassal or chief in Vijayanagara administration. When the central polity of the Vijayanagara empire became weak, the Nāyakas asserted their independence and formed independent successor states.

**Nāyanār/Nāyammār:** Śaiva saint. According to the South Indian tradition there are 63 Nāyanmārs.

**Pārvati:** Daughter of the mountain (Himalaya). She is the gracious friendly aspect of Śiva’s consort.
**Pāśupata:** A sect of Śaivism

**Prakāra:** Courtyard

**Pūja:** Honour, worship or adoration of the gods.

**Purāṇa:** A group of Sanskrit texts dealing mainly with mythology.

**Rāma/Rāmchandra:** The hero of the Rāmāyana. The Seventh incarnation of Vishnu.

**Rāmānuja:** A Vaishnava teacher or Āchārya who propounded the Visishtādvaita (qualified monism) philosophy and who founded the Śrī Vaishnava sect.

**Rāmāyana:** ‘Rāma’s career’. A famous epic in seven books dealing with the adventures of Rāma.

**Ranganātha:** one of the reclining forms of Vishnu.

**Śāstra:** Sacred texts.

**Śiva:** ‘auspicious’, usually included in the Hindu triad as the ‘destroyer’ along with Brahma the creator and Vishnu the preserver.

**Śrī Vaishnavas:** Vaishnava Brahmins of Southern India, followers of Rāmānujas philosophy of Visishtādvaita.

**Sthalapurāṇa:** Text that recounts the mythic origin and traditions of a sacred spot or temple.

**Sukhanasi:** Inner antechamber of a South Indian temple.

**Tala:** Storey, during Vijayanagara period multi storeyed temple gōpuras were constructed.

**Tīrtha:** ‘Bathing Place, passage’, a shrine or sacred bathing place, a place of pilgrimage.

**Tiruvengalanātha:** A form of Vishnu, also known as Venkatēswara and Śrīnivāsa worshipped at the famous temple at Tirumala-Tirupati.

**Vāhana:** Vehicle, mount of a deity :the animal on which the deity rides.

**Varāha:** ‘Boar’, the third incarnation of Vishnu. The gold coin under Vijayanagara was also known as Varāha or gadyāna.

**Venkatēswara:** Same as Tiruvengalanātha. God residing at Tirumala hills.

**Vīrāsāiva:** A Śaivite sect found by Bāsava in Karnataka in the 12th century.
Virāpāksha: ‘of misformed eyes’, a form of Śiva

Vishnu: all pervading. The preserver of the universe, a member of the Hindu triad consisting of Brahma, Vishnu and Śiva.

Viśishtādvaita: qualified monism, one of the important schools of Vēdānta philosophy.

Viṭhala: a form of Vishnu, especially worshipped worshipped at Pandharpur (Mahārāṣṭra).

Yajna: Sacrifice, oblation, offering.