BASAVESVARA
AND HIS TIMES

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Dr. P. B. Desai, M.A., D.Litt.
Professor of Ancient Indian History Culture and Director,
Kannada Research Institute, Karnataka University

Foreword by

Dr. D. C. Pavate
Governor of Punjab State
(formerly Vice-Chancellor of Karnataka University)

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May he confer unswerving devotion
Sangana Basava of auspicious renown
Sporting free with fervent affection
To Puratanas, Jangama and Linga.
DEDICATION

At The Lotus Feet
of the
Sublime God of Kūḍala Sangama
Whose Majestic Touch
transformed
Man Basava to Superman Basavēśvara
Is Dedicated
This Humble Offering
Of Earnest Study
And Objective Research
On the occasion of the
Eighth Centenary Celebrations of
ŚRĪ BASAVA
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FOREWORD

Basaveshwar was a saint, a statesman and an ardent social reformer in the twelfth century in a region now included partly in the present Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra States and mostly in the Mysore State. The earlier Śaiva saints of the South had already developed a philosophy based on the progress of the soul of everybody from the bondage of ignorance and passion into the liberty of light and love, ultimately enjoying the presence of God. To make this philosophy and other tenets of Śaivism practicable for everybody, Basaveshwar organised discourses with several learned Śaiva saints from all over India at Kalyan (now in the North-Eastern part of Mysore State) and thrashed out all the difficult and subtle points about man's relation with God in the famous “Anubhava Mandap”. As a result of these discourses, a vast literature of “Vachanas” developed in Kannada, with the sole purpose of making subtle metaphysical ideas simple and intelligible to the common man.

These saints who participated in the discourses in “Anubhava Mandap” are the real pioneers of Veerashaiva literature. Secondly, they trained a large number of missionaries (Jangamas) to explain the Veerashaiva philosophy to simple, ignorant people all over the region and to convert them to a life of simplicity and beauty, without caste distinctions.

Basaveshwar’s greatest contribution, however, was to bridge the hiatus between the theory and practice in Hindu Religion and Philosophy. He insisted on
ethical virtues being put into practice. He started a reform movement marked by its revolt against the caste system and the supremacy of the Brahmin, maintaining that all people are born equal and die equal. Basaveshwar was himself a Brahmin, but was up against the privileged classes based on birth. The reorganisation of Hindu Society on the basis of equality, kindness and humanity went apace, culminating in a marriage between a ‘low class’ Shudra boy and a ‘high class’ Brahmin girl. His zeal for social reform to bring about the equality of man and man in the twelfth century could only be paralleled with that of Mahatma Gandhi eight hundred years afterwards. Naturally, he met with the same bitter opposition from the orthodox circles as Mahatma Gandhi did. The principles and philosophy of life, as preached by Basaveshwar, are still dear to his more than seven million followers in the South. In the context of the present needs in our country viz. national integration and economic prosperity, the teachings of Basaveshwar are particularly of great value to all of us. Mysore Government, therefore, deserves to be congratulated on its decision to celebrate the octocentenary of Basaveshwar this year on a large scale. It is, therefore, befitting the occasion that a historical account of his life and career, based on authentic sources, should be published. Such historical account as there is at present is either marked by communal prejudices or by excessive deification of his personality.

Actually there are enormous difficulties in compiling a true biography of Basaveshwar; for Basaveshwar does not figure in contemporary inscriptions and the extant literary works do not furnish adequate historical
facts about him. Thus the task poses a grave challenge to the historian and biographer.

Personally I have always felt the need of an unbiased account of Basaveshwar, for such a great man has been maligned by several distinguished scholars either by ignorance or by a partisan spirit. While I was Vice-Chancellor of the Karnataka University, I requested Dr. P. B. Desai, Head of the Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture in the Karnataka University to study this subject purely on the basis of available historical material and to present a clear biographical sketch of Basaveshwar to the public. I am glad that he has taken great trouble over it. He has been able to throw fresh light on the subject and produce an objective study on the basis of epigraphical as well as literary sources. Nobody suggests that his is the last word on this somewhat difficult subject; but the present book is certainly worthy of careful study by all scholars interested in Indian History.

Finally, I must express my great appreciation of Dr. P. B. Desai’s valuable work in uncovering a large volume of historical material and presenting the subject in a clear and concise manner.

Raj Bhavan,
Chandigarh, Punjab,
December 10, 1967.

D. C. PAVATE
PREFACE

With a sense of relief and modesty I present this work to the world of scholars and interested readers. It was the most arduous project of study and research I undertook during my academic career of over past three decades and I am glad to submit that I have been able to complete it to the best of my capacity within my limitations.

Basava, Basavanña, Basavēśvara is an enchanting name not only in the circle of his followers, but also outside to the students of Indian history and culture. Ours is a hallowed land which has given birth to countless devotees of God, saints, religious leaders and philosophers, whose array before and after this teacher is preponderating. But few among them have evoked deeper interest.

Basavēśvara played a significant role in the religious and cultural history of Karnataka for about four decades in the twelfth century, approximately from 1132 to 1167 A.D. His thoughts, teachings, ideals and actions have exercised powerful influence on the generations of men and women in a conspicuous sector of the society to the present day.

The study of such a sensational personality is fascinating and rewarding. An attempt is made in the following pages to collect as many authentic details as possible about the life and personality of this teacher and present them consistently in a compact framework with a historical perspective and from an objective
point of view. This treatment therefore excludes from its scope particulars about many personages, beyond the limited few, who participated in his movement and contributed to its progress. The metaphysics, philosophy, rituals and other aspects of the Vīra-śaiva faith founded by him do not occupy much place in the narration.

The task of a historian of Basavēśvara is extremely difficult. This difficulty is enhanced by the paucity of trustworthy historical sources on the one hand and on the other, profusion of later literary works, saturated with legend and poetic exaggeration. The latter are the products of a devotional mind, susceptible to glorification, indifferent to realistic details, innocent of historical perspective and lacking in chronological sense. Under such circumstances, it would be a venture to reconstruct his biography solely on the basis of literary materials. If one therefore turns for succour to the inscriptions of the period which are available in plenty, here also one is sorely disillusioned. For in none of the epigraphs of the age so far discovered can we trace even a passing reference to this teacher. For these reasons, the quantum of truly biographical information about him is literally ‘precious little’.

Confronted with such a dilemma, I had to take recourse to the acknowledged methods of historical research and proceed with the investigation on the following lines:

1. To gather information from later inscriptions whose authenticity is unquestionable.

2. To study the epigraphs relating to the contemporary personages who were closely or distantly connected with this teacher.
3. To collect epigraphical evidence about the places and areas where he is known to have lived and spent a substantial period of his life.

4. To extract historical facts from the Sayings of the teacher himself and his contemporaries, which contain biographical or autobiographical allusions.

5. To glean biographical details from the writings and literary works of the earlier authors who were nearer to the age of the teacher. To treat the realistic descriptions in such works as nearer to history.

6. To accept the rational and matter-of-fact statements in the later Purānic works and literary traditions as historical probabilities.

7. To reject in toto the works produced in hostile camps, unauthenticated accounts and statements of uncritical and prejudiced writers.

A critical approach cautiously and judiciously made according to the above norms, yielded a number of valuable results which are incorporated in this volume. Before mentioning them here, I would first give in a nutshell the widely believed and most popular account of this teacher.

Basavēśvara was an incarnation of Lord Śāṅkara. He manifested his supernatural powers even from the time when he entered the womb of his mother. He was born to establish the supremacy of the Vīraśaiva faith. He revolted against his father when he was about to be initiated into the Brāhmanical sacrament of Upanayana. Soon he got himself married with the daughter of Baladēva, Prime Minister of the great king Bijjala ruling at Kālīṇa.
Then he visited his favourite deity Sangamēśvara at Kūḍala Sangama. Within a short time his father-in-law died and he was appointed to his high office. He did not pull on well with Bijjala who was a bigotted Jaina. Basavēśvara zealously propagated his Vīraśaiva religion and incurred the displeasure and enmity of his master. Becoming intolerant, Bijjala sentenced two followers of Basavēśvara to cruel death for their crime of inter-caste marriage. Enraged at this Basavēśvara instigated the murder of Bijjala at the hands of one of his followers. Thereupon he left Kalyāṇa for Kūḍala Sangama where he was united with his God. Basavēśvara lived a short life of thirtysix years.

In contrast to the above story, the facts as revealed by the present research may cursorily be summed up as follows:

Basavēśvara was a dynamic personality, intensely spiritual, a fervent devotee of Śiva. He revolted against the traditional religion and social order which he found to be full of evils and inequities. The immediate cause of his rebellion was the Brāhmanical initiation ceremony which was forced upon him. From his native town of Bāgēvādi he went to Kūḍala Sangama, a cosmopolitan pilgrimage centre where he spent a good many years in study and meditation. At the command of his inner voice, he proceeded to Mangalavāḍa (modern Mangalavēḍhe) and took service as an ordinary accountant under Bijjala, the provincial governor and feudatory ruler of the Kalachuri family. By his ability he quickly rose to the enviable office of Chief Treasurer. About this time he started his religio-social reformist movement which treated all devotees of Śiva as equal in
all respects and did not recognize the traditional distinctions of castes, creeds and orders.

This new reformist movement antagonised Bijjala who was a staunch supporter of Śaivism of orthodox traditions. He was in no way connected with Jainism. Another factor that brought about the estrangement between the master and the servant was the unscrupulous and reckless ways of over-ambitious Bijjala who ultimately usurped the throne of his Chālukya overlord by violent means. After a stay of about two decades at Mangalavēḍhe, Basavēśvara went to Kalyāṇa, the imperial capital of the Chālukyas. About this period his movement had gathered strength and momentum. It reached its climax and culmination at Kalyāṇa. Bijjala was now enjoying the position of a sovereign by uprooting the Chālukya dynasty. He took drastic steps to crush the movement of Basavēśvara by doing away with two of his devotees. At this his followers became turbulent seeking revenge on Bijjala. Unable to restrain them Basavēśvatra left Kalyāṇa for Kūḍāla Sangama where he ended his life.

Basavēśvara lived a life of over sixty years. The traditional span of thirty-six years actually refers to the period of his religious career and not his whole life. If we assume that he lived for thirty-six years only, it leads to a number of anomalies and historical contradictions, which are insurmountable. The last year of Bijjala is 1168 A.D. His rule at Kalyāṇa as sovereign extended from 1162 to 1168 A.D. only. From this fixed point we can work out the chronology of Basavēśvara’s life backward and take it to 1105 A.D., which might be his broadly approximate date of birth. On account of the great
service rendered by Basavēśvara to better the lot of his fellow beings and the supreme devotion to Śiva preached by him, he was immortalised and deified by posterity.

The life and personality of Basavēśvara as depicted in the present study and his portrait as revealed here appear to be nearer to reality. This is an earnest effort to approach the historical truth. How far I have succeeded in my endeavour, it is left for the discerning scholars to judge. The fruits of my research may not be acceptable to all. Some may even be unpalatable, particularly, to the orthodox sections. I will, however, consider my labours rewarded, if the student of searching intellect, critical reader and unbiassed scholar is convinced that this subject is worthy of serious thought and judicious enquiry. I am quite aware of the fact that there lies vast scope for further study and exploration and intensive research in this field.

The views expressed and the opinions formulated in this treatise are entirely my own. The authorities of the University or members of the sister faculties should not be tied with any of them.

In the context of this study and its publication I deem it a privilege to record my deep sense of gratitude to the eminent personality of Dr. D. C. Pavate, formerly Vice-Chancellor of the Karnāṭak University and now Governor of Punjab. But for his keen interest in this subject and encouragement it would not have been possible for me to complete and publish this work. He went through the entire press copy and made many valuable suggestions. He readily complied with my request to grace this work with his weighty Foreword. I pay my homage to him.
While preparing this thesis I came into contact with a good number of scholars, colleagues and co-thinkers who offered their useful hints, suggestions, comments and criticisms. I am indebted to them all.

I acknowledge with thanks the willing cooperation and substantial assistance received from the following members of my department in pushing through this publication. Dr. S. H. Ritti, Lecturer in Epigraphy, rendered valuable assistance in finalising the press material, going through the proofs more than once, preparing the map and attending to various other items. He identified himself with this task and his zeal and interest were as good as the author’s. Dr. Gopal, Lecturer in Ancient Indian History and Culture, was equally interested in this publication and his assistance in proof-reading etc. is worthy of appreciation. Miss Leela Shantakumari took the initiative to prepare the Index. Artist Shri. R. S. Desai prepared the cover-design and finalised the map.

My thanks are due to the Manager, Manipal Power Press, Manipal, for printing this book neatly and attractively within a reasonably short time.

*Om Tat Sat*

Karnatak University,  
15th February 1968  
P. B. DESAI
BASAVESVARA AND HIS TIMES
PART I: BIJJALA  
( CHAPTERS I — IX )

This is an auxiliary treatment to the study of Basavēśvara. When Bijjala was ruling as a Feudatory Governor under the Chālukyas, Basavēśvara served under him for over two decades, starting as an ordinary accountant and rising to the high position of Treasury Chief. Historical knowledge about Bijjala is essential for a biographical study of Basavēśvara.
CHAPTER I

THE KALACHURI FAMILY

Bijjala was a scion of the Kalachuri family who ruled in Karnataka with distinction. Unlike the Kadambas or the Chālukyas, there is positive evidence to show that the Kalachuris did not originally belong to Karnataka. They were immigrants from northern region and had settled in Karnataka for generations before they rose to power. To understand the earlier traditions of this Karnataka dynasty and their cultural background we have to look back into their historic past. We may thus briefly trace the origin and early history of the Kalachuris.

Origins

The origins of the Kalachuri dynasty go into the dim past, the period of the Purāṇas. Their descent is traced in the later records from Brahma, followed by Atri and Sōma or the Moon. This entitles them, like other dynasties, to claim their succession in the lunar lineage. Among the members of the subsequent generations, Yadu, Haihaya and Kārtavirya Arjuna attained wide renown. Haihaya, in particular, gave rise to several stocks or branches of families. A number of families ruling in the historical period refer themselves as having been descended in the Haihaya race. The ancestral seat of the Haihayas was Māhishmati in the region of the Narmadā. This place has been famous from very early times as a holy city. It is modern Omkār Māndhāta. To the lineage of the Haihayas
belonged the Kalachuris who are some times mentioned by that broad appellation.

*Kaṭachchuris*

Leaving aside the Puranic accounts, if we enter into the realm of history, the Kalachuris emerge as a political power about the middle of the sixth century. But at this time the family was known more familiarly by the earlier form of the name as Kaṭachchuri and not Kalachuri which came into vogue later. The Kaṭachchuris built a big empire extending over the territories of Malwa, Gujarat, Konkan and Maharashtra including Vidarbha during the reigns of Kṛishṇarāja and his son Śankaragana in the latter half of the sixth century. Śankaragana's son Buddhāraja, however, sustained a crushing defeat at the hands of Mangalēṣa, the Chālukya ruler of Bādami in circa 601 A.D. Consequently, the Kaṭachchuri empire collapsed and not much is known about its subsequent position. The successors of Buddhāraja had to live in obscurity under the suzerainty of the Chālukya emperors.

*The Kalachuris of Tripuri*

After a period of about half a century, a later descendent of Buddhāraja, named Vāmaraja conquered the impregnable fort of Kālanjara and founded a new kingdom which expanded in course of time. Tripuri, modern Tewar, 6 miles west of Jabalpur, became the capital of these rulers. The term Kalachuri replaced the old name Kaṭachchuri and the family thus earned the distinction as the Kalachuris of Tripuri. The territory over which these kings held sway was known as Chēdi-maṇḍala or Dāhala-maṇḍala which included Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand of later days. They
were also closely associated with Kālanjara which was their early stronghold. This was also regarded as a holy place dedicated to the god Śiva. It is now in the Banda District, 90 miles west-south-west of Allahabad. These Kalachuris remained in power roughly from the eighth to the thirteenth century. Of all the Kalachuri families, the Kalachuris of Tripuri were the most powerful and famous, having the longest record of political ascendancy.

More Kalachuri Families

A few more Kalachuri families ruled in different regions during the mediaeval centuries. One was the Kalachuris of Sarayūpāra, also called the Kalachuris of Gorakhpur. Another family was ruling in south Kōsala comprising modern Chhattisgarh in central India and the adjoining tract in the State of Orissa up to the Katak District. The main line of this dynasty is styled the Kalachuris of Ratnapur or Tummāṇ. It was later split up into a younger offshoot which ruled from Raipur. It is interesting to note that, unlike the other branches who claim the lunar lineage, the Kalachuris of Ratnapur alone trace their descent in the solar line in their legendary accounts.

Incidentally, we may note that both the solar and the lunar lineages have common origin. The first ancestor of the Kalachuris was the epic king Kārtavīrya who was a descendant of Purūrava. Purūrava's father Budha was the son of the Moon; and his mother Ilā was the daughter of the Sun. Thus Purūrava's lineage was lunar from paternal side and solar from maternal side.
Kalachuri Relations with Karnataka

As political rivals and rulers of neighbouring kingdoms, the Kalachuris clashed with the kings of Karnataka. Apart from this, the former could also contract matrimonial alliances with the latter. Two princesses of the Haihaya family, Lōkamahādēvi and Trailōkyamahādēvi, were married to Vikramāditya II, the Chālukya king of Bādāmi (733-744 A.D.). They constructed temples at Paṭṭadakal to commemorate the victory of their husband over the Pallavas of Kānchi.

Such marriage alliances became more common during the time of the Rāshṭrakūṭas of Malakhēd. For instance, Kṛishṇa II (877-914 A.D.) married a Chēdi princess, the daughter of Kokalla I. Kṛishṇa’s son Jagattunga espoused Lakshmi and Govindāmbā, daughters of Kalachuri Śankaragaṇa. Jagattunga’s son Indra III (914-28 A.D.) married Vījāmbā, a Kalachuri maiden. Amōghavarsha III (933-37 A.D.) and Kṛishṇa III (937-65 A.D.) had taken Kalachuri princesses for their wives. These alliances were sometimes mutually beneficial to the two houses.

Taila II who overthrew the Rāshṭrakūṭas and founded the second Chālukya empire in 973 A.D. was born of Bonthādēvi, a princess of the Chēdi house.

Their Religious Faith

Copious evidence is available to show that the early Kaṭachchuris and the later Kalachuris were staunch adherents of Śaivism and encouraged this faith. All the three Kaṭachchuri kings, Kṛishṇarāja, Śankaragaṇa and Buddharāja are described in their records as Paramamāhēśvara, i.e. fervent devotees of
Mahēśvara (Śiva). While extolling the religious faith of Kṛishṇarāja the Abhona copper plate inscription states that he had taken refuge in Śiva from his very birth. The names of some of the rulers like Śankaragaṇa indicate their Śaiva leanings. Yaśaḥkarṇadēva of the Tripuri branch, Jājalladēva of Ratnapur branch and many other rulers were noted for their devotion to god Śiva. Nandi, Śiva’s vehicle, was adopted as their royal insignia and displayed on their seals by the Kalachuris of Tripuri and of Gorakhpur. Śaiva temples and centres of Śaivism flourished in the Kalachuri kingdom. From the specific allusions to Paśupati and the Pāśupata sect in their epigraphs, it may be inferred that this school of Śaivism exercised considerable influence over the Kalachuris.

The Name Kalachuri

We have seen that earlier and later forms of the name of this family were prevalent, viz. Kaṭa-chchur and Kalachuri. A good many variants of this name, some of which are fanciful, occur in inscriptions, particularly of Karnataka; for instance, Kālachhuri, Kulachhuri, Kalatsūri, Kalatsūrya, Kalatūrya, etc. It is difficult to offer a satisfactory explanation of their origin. However, it is possible to connect them either with the Sanskrit expression chhuri or chhurikā, meaning dagger or sūri or sūrya, meaning the sun. In an attempt to trace their origin funny legends were invented around these names, some of which are narrated in inscriptions.
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CHAPTER II

THE KALACHURIS OF KARNATAKA

We briefly surveyed so far in the previous chapter the origin and early history of the Kalachuri dynasties that ruled in the northern areas. We have now to consider the origin and rise of a southern dynasty of the Kalachuris that domiciled in Karnataka and played a conspicuous role in its history.

The Southern Migration

It is not known precisely when and under what circumstances the founder of this dynasty left his northern home and migrated to the south. We have therefore to take recourse to a surmise. As stated earlier, the impregnable fort of Kālanjara was an early stronghold of the Kalachuris; precisely, it was in the possession of the Kalachuris of Tripuri. This region which was the homeland of these Kalachuris, remained under their authority for over a century, up to the end of the eighth century A. D. It was then subjugated by the Pratīhāras who retained it for about a century. In the tenth century it was conquered and occupied by the Rāṣṭrakūṭas of Maḷkhēḍ.1

Forced by such adverse circumstances and impelled probably by an ambitious motive to seek fortune elsewhere, a member or a family unit of the Kalachuris appears to have migrated to the south. These emigrants might have belonged to the Kalachuri house of Tripuri. We are in the dark in regard to the details of this event.
Advent in Kuntala

Piecing together the bits of information furnished by later records discovered in Karnataka we can draw up a sketchy account of these immigrants. It seems they wended their way to and settled in the town of Mangalivēḍa, the headquarter of Tarikāḍa Nāḍu or District in the Kuntala territory. Shortly afterwards, they were able to establish themselves as petty local chieftains of some consequence. The above Mangalivēḍa is modern Mangalavēḍhe near Pandharpur in Sholapur District. Though at present situated in Maharashtra, this region was included in and formed part of ancient Karnataka whose northern boundary stretched as far as the river Gōdāvari. It is in the history of this family which later attained prominence as the Kalachuris of Karnataka that we are interested in our present study.

No connected account of this dynasty, starting with the earliest ancestor and mentioning his descendants in succession with chronological details, is available in their records. However, there are a few records of the eleventh century which furnish some details about the later members of this house. With the help of these and others which yield piecemeal genealogical information, we can reconstruct a fairly reliable historical account of this family during the later period.

Early Members

The first notable chief of this family as known from inscriptions was Uchita. With the help of precisely dated later records of this family and by the usual procedure of calculating the generations, we may
place Uchita approximately in the first quarter of the tenth century. 4

Uchita had a brother named Rāja. 5 The succession in the family passed on from Uchita to his son, grandson and great grandson, who were Asaga, Kannama and Kiriyasaga respectively. Of these, the last named is known from a recently discovered inscription at Kāḷagi in Gulbarga District. 6 Kiriyasaga had two sons Rāja and Bijja who ruled after him in successive order. Rāja was also called Rājala and Bijja, Bijjala. Rājala had two sons, namely Ammugi and Śankhavarma or Sankama. But it seems they never ruled.

At this time, the later Chālukyas, known as the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa, had come to power, overthrowing the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. Taila II was the founder of this dynasty (973 A.D.). 7 During the rule of his mighty successors, Satyāśraya and Jayasimha, the Chālukya supremacy was firmly established all over Karnataka. Owing their allegiance to the Chālukya sovereigns, the Kalachuri chiefs of Mangalivēḍa appear to have earned recognition as local potentates. By this time they had fully domiciled and identified themselves with Karnataka.

Few historical facts can be gleaned about Uchita and his successors. No doubt, they figure in inscriptions which some times describe them in vague statements. These descriptions are more or less conventional, containing formal praise in general terms, of their valour and victory. 8 No specific events or exploits are related. However, it is certain that the family was gaining in importance and steadily rising to power in
the political sphere. This becomes clear when we go to the last of the above noted rulers.

*Rise to Power*

Bijja or Bijjala mentioned above is the first ruling chief about whom positive historical details are available. An inscription from Chaḍachaṇa in the Indi Taluka of Bijapur District, dated 1057 A.D., describes the above Bijja or Bijjarasa as Mahāmanḍalēśvara, feudatory of the Chālukya king Sōmēśvara I of Kalyāṇa. He was governing the area from his headquarters at Mangalīvēḍa. In the praṣasti (official eulogy) of this ruler occur the two epithets, Kālanjara-puravarādhiśvara and Dāhaḷabeḍanga which mean “the lord of the foremost town of Kālanjara” and “an ornament of the Dāhaḷa country.” Kālanjara, as noted above, was the early stronghold of the Kalachuris of Tripuri and Dāhaḷa was their home province. From this description it becomes quite evident that the Kalachuris of Karna-
taka hailed from central India and cherished memories of their ancestral region and home town. The epithet Kālanjara-puravarādhiśvara, along with two more, Suvarṇa-
vrishabhadhvaja (having the golden bull as their banner), and Damarugatūrya-nirghōshaṇa (loudly proclaiming with the musical instruments of Damaru and Tūrya), mentioned herein for the first time, continued to be used by the later members of this family in their praṣasti throughout the Kalachuri regime.

Bijjarasa was succeeded by his son Kannama, who held the office of Mahāmanḍalēśvara. For this chief also we have another inscription from the same village Chaḍachaṇa, dated 1067 A.D. The epigraph describes him thus: He was high-spirited and warlike.
He won victories over Kalinga, Vengi, Lāṭa and Chōḷa. He successfully fought in fifty battle-fields and having exterminated the foes, ruled from his capital Mangāḷīvēḍa. The names Krīshṇa and Karṇa are substituted for Kannama in some records. Kannama has a variant in Kannara, both of which could be connected with Krīshṇa and Karṇa.

It becomes clear from these two records that by this time the Kalachuri chiefs had gained prominence and were reckoned among the distinguished nobles of the kingdom. It has also to be noted that they were wielding authority over a large area including, besides their home region of Mangāḷīvēḍa, a portion of Bijapur District.\(^\text{11}\)

Jōgama and Permāḍi

Kannama was succeeded by his son Jōgama. In an inscription of the Davanagere Taluka he is referred to as Tarikāḍa Jōgama (Jōgama of Tarikāḍu) with reference to his home region. His rule, as gathered from inscriptions, extended from 1080 to 1118 A.D. approximately.\(^\text{12}\) He was the most outstanding among the rulers of the family. By his indomitable courage, heroism and farsighted policy, he laid the foundation of the future glory of the family. He was among the trusted generals and feudatories under Vikramāditya VI, the most illustrious king of the Chālukya house of Kalyāṇa. Jōgama participated in the wars and other activities of the emperor and assisted him in many ways. The northern province of Karahaḍa was placed under his charge. He thus became the defender and guardian of the northern frontiers of the Chālukya dominions. Jōgama won the confidence of his over-
lord to such an extent that he could persuade him to accept the hand of his daughter Sāvaḷadēvi in marriage. The Chālukya and Kalachuri houses were thus matrimonially united, and this event further raised the status of both Jōgama and his family.

Jōgama’s son and successor was Permāḍi. He was not endowed with the great qualities of his father. Still, he maintained the prestige and power of his family by virtue of the position of privilege he enjoyed at the Chālukya court, being the brother-in-law of Vikramāditya VI. He was governor of the province of Tardavāḍi which roughly comprised the Bijapur area. An inscription at Muttagi in this district praises Permāḍi in vain terms stating that his feet were adored by the assembly of kings and that in prowess he equalled the god Vishṇu. Permāḍi’s rule may be placed roughly from 1118 to 1130 A.D. This period is assigned on the evidence of the Tadalbāgi inscription to be noticed shortly.

Permāḍi was no doubt favoured by fortune. The old kinship with the Chālukya house he had inherited, appears to have been further strengthened by a fresh matrimonial alliance which was contracted in his favour. An inscription from Wāḷasang in the Jath Taluka of South Satara District sheds new light in this context. According to this record Permāḍi’s son Bijjala was grandson of Chandaladēvi, the senior queen of Chālukya Vikramāditya VI. This relation can be explained on the only assumption that Bijjala’s mother and Permāḍi’s wife was the daughter of the above queen. This appears to be quite logical and natural under the circumstances. For we know that
Jógama had given his daughter in marriage to Vikramáditya VI who in turn, by way of reciprocation, would have given his daughter in marriage to Jógama’s son Permadí. This was a common practice in those days as it is even today in this country. In result, Permadí became son-in-law of Vikramáditya VI. Thus the relation between the two ancient and illustrious families became closer and thicker by this new alliance. Bijjala’s mother was Nágaladévi, as revealed by an inscription at Balgeri in Athni Taluka.¹⁶ This record introduces Rājala and Mālūgi as younger brothers of Bijjala.

The elevated position thus attained by Permadí appears to have made him oblivious of his real state of subordination among the feudatories of the sovereign. After the death of Vikramáditya VI, he seems to have considered himself an independent ruler owing no allegiance to his successor Sómēsvara III who was his suzerain. This circumstance is revealed by an inscription at Tadalbāgi¹⁷ in Jamkhandi Taluka of Bijapur District. The epigraph is dated 1129 A.D. when the Chālukya king Sómēsvara III was actually ruling. But the record makes no mention of this ruler, nor is Permadí associated with the feudatory title Mahāmanḍalēśvara. On the contrary, it cites the twelfth regnal year of Permadí. This is strange and intriguing; for, as a rule, no feudatory ruler was authorised to mention his regnal years in official records. Permadí, as we know, never enjoyed the status of an independent king; he was only a Mahāmanḍalēśvara, a feudatory chief in the official capacity. This is a clear indication of the attitude of insubordination and
defiance developed by this Kalachuri chief. It was a dangerous move paving the way for the catastrophe that befell the Chalukya kingdom within a short time.

Religion and Family Name

We may pause here for a moment to take review of a few more facts about this Kalachuri family. The Kalachuris of Karnataka were, as we saw, lineal descendants of the Kalachuris of central India and inherited many traits and traditions of their ancestors. Like their northern compeers they claimed their descent, characteristically, both in the lunar and solar lineage, as attested by epigraphical allusions. It is shown above that they betrayed their attachment to their original home by mentioning it in their official documents. They were devotees of Śiva and adherents of the Śaivite faith. An inscription from Kukanur states that the Kalachuri family came into being from a portion of Śiva. According to an epigraph from Harasur the Kalachuris sprang in the lunar race and had secured the favour of god Śiva. The same record later speaks of Kannama as having become brave and mighty through the grace of Śiva. As noted above, Nandi or divine bull, the vehicle of Śiva, was adopted as their royal emblem by the northern Kalachuris. The Kalachuris of Karnataka also had the same deity as their royal emblem, which is invariably mentioned as suvarṇavrishabhadhvaja in their prāśasti. The proper names of some members of the Karnataka family like Sankama (cf. Śankara), Sōmeśvara and Mallikārjuna are Śaivite.

Fleet designated the Kalachuri family that ruled in Karnataka as the Kalachuryas of Kalyāna and
this was adopted by subsequent writers. But this nomenclature is not appropriate and needs alteration. The reasons are as follows:

Firstly, in the records of this family, its name is given as Kalachuri in a large number of cases, although Kalachurya which is supposed to be its derivative, also occurs in several instances. Secondly, except for Bijjala who ruled from the Chālukya capital of Kalyāṇa for a brief period of some six years, Mangalīvēḍa, besides being their original seat, was also the well-established headquarters of the family throughout for generations. Even Bijjala had his residence at Mangalīvēḍa for long. The successors of Bijjala did not rule from Kalyāṇa longer. Thus the association of this family with Kalyāṇa was shortlived. Hence, like the Kalachuris of central India, it would be more fitting to call this family as the Southern Kalachuris or the Kalachuris of Karnataka.

Mangalīvēḍa

Mangalīvēḍa or modern Mangalāvēḍhe played a significant role in the early and later history of the Kalachuris of Karnataka. As noted above, it was the first refuge and resort of the Kalachuri immigrants from the north. It was the abode where they settled permanently and established their hold. It soon became the home town and capital city of the family, rising in importance as its members rose to power. From Uchita down to Permāḍi and even during the early career of Bijjala, it retained its importance as the headquarters of the Kalachuris who wielded considerable influence in the Chālukya dominions. Bijjala is stated to have been ruling from Mangalīvēḍa in an
inscription at Sankh\textsuperscript{24} in the Indi Taluka of Bijapur District and in another at Sidhan\text{\=a}th in the former Jath State.\textsuperscript{25} Its importance diminished to an extent during the regime of Bijnala who usurped the Ch\text{\=a}lukya throne and ruled from the capital Kaly\text{\=a}na. After the end of Bijnala, the Kalachuris lost their hold and authority over Kaly\text{\=a}na. Bijnala’s successors did not rule at Kaly\text{\=a}na. They preferred other places like Modeganur\textsuperscript{26} (modern M\text{\=a}dinur near Koppal) for their capitals, besides Mangal\text{\=i}v\text{\=e}\text{\=d}a. Thus throughout the Kalachuri rule, from the beginning to the end, Mangal\text{\=i}v\text{\=e}\text{\=d}a remained their home town, family headquarters and provincial capital.

Mangal\text{\=i}v\text{\=e}\text{\=d}a is also mentioned as Mangalav\text{\=a}da in a few epigraphical records.\textsuperscript{27} In the V\text{\=i}ra\text{\=a}iva literary works, like the R\text{\=e}vana\text{\=s}iddh\text{\=e}\text{\=s}vara Raga\text{\=e} and the Basavar\text{\=a}jad\text{\=e}\text{\=v}ara Raga\text{\=e}, however, the place is invariably named Mangalav\text{\=a}da. Some writers, not conversant with the history of the Kalachuris and the characteristic role played by this town therein, and being unaware of the variant forms of its name, Mangal\text{\=i}v\text{\=e}\text{\=d}a and Mangalav\text{\=a}da, and its identification with modern Mangalav\text{\=e}\text{\=d}he, have erroneously assumed the identity of this town with Kaly\text{\=a}na. This is certainly unacceptable; for Mangalav\text{\=a}da and Kaly\text{\=a}na, for aught we know, are distinctly different places and place-names. There is no mistaking about this historical fact.

The following genealogical statements are useful for a clear understanding of the Kalachuri history discussed in these chapters.
I

Genealogy of the Chalukyas of Kalyana

Taila II (973-997 A.D.)

Satyashraya Irivadeenga (997-1008 A.D.)
Daśavarma

Vikramaditya V (1008-1015 A.D.)
Ayyana (1015 A.D.)
Akkadēvi
Jayasimha II (1015-1042 A.D.)

Sōmesvara I (1042-1068 A.D.)
Jayasimha III

Sōmesvara II (1068-1076 A.D.)
Vikramaditya VI (1076-1127 A.D.)
Jayasimha IV

Sōmesvara III (1127-1138 A.D.)

Perma Jagadekamalla II (1138-1150 A.D.)
Taila III (1150-1162 A.D.)
Sōmesvara IV (1183-1198 A.D.)
Genealogy of the Kalachuris of Karnataka from Uchita to Permāḍi

Uchita (925 A.D.)
   Asaga I (c. 950 A.D.)
      Kannama I (c. 975 A.D.)
         Kiriyasaga (Asaga II) (c. 1000 A.D.)

Rāja II, Rājala (c. 1025 A.D.)
   Bijja, Bijjala I (1057 A.D.)
      Krishṇa, Karṇa or Kannama II (1067 A.D.)
         Jōgama (c. 1080-1118 A.D.)
            Permāḍi (c. 1118-1130 A.D.)

Ammugi
   Śankhavarma, Sankama I
III
Genealogy of the Kalachuris continued from Permaḍi

Permaḍi (c. 1118-1130 A.D.), m. Nāgaladēvi

Bijjala II (1130-1168 A.D.)  Rājala  Maiḷugi (1167 A.D.)

Siriyaḍēvi, m. Vajradēva  Rāya-Murāri  Mallikārjuna,  Sankama II  Āhavamalla  Singhaṇa  daughter
Sinda  Sōvidēva  Mallugi or  (1175-1180  ĀD)  (1180-1183  ĀD)  m.  Barmaṇara
Chāvunḍa  Karna,  (1167-1176  ĀD)  Mailugi  (1175-1176  ĀD)
Kalidēva  Vīra Bijjala  (Bijjala III)  (1193 A.D.)
IV
Matrimonial Alliances between the Chāluṅka and Kalachuri Houses

CHĀLUKYA
Sōmēśvara I

| Vikramāditya VI, married | 1. Sāvaladēvi
married
2. Chandaladēvi |

| Sōmēśvara III | Nāgaladēvi, married | Permāḍi |

|  |  | Bijjala II |

KALACHURI
Jōgama
NOTES AND REFERENCES

N. B.:—The titles of the works have been given in full together with their abbreviations, when they occur for the first time. Only abbreviations are used in subsequent references.

3. Ibid., Vol. XXVIII, pp. 24 & 27.
4. The Chaḍachana inscription gives for Bijjarasa a definite date, namely 1057 A.D. With this fixed point, we can calculate backwards at the usual rate of 25 years per generation and arrive at Uchita’s date approximately.
11. This is seen from the references in the above inscriptions to the grants being made in this tract.
12. Jōgama figures as Mahāmaṇḍaḷēvara in the Koḷagiri inscription (Jath Taluka) of Chāluḥya Vikramāditya VI, dated 1087 A.D. His accession to the office may be placed approximately about 1080 A.D. His son Permāḍi counts his official career from 1118 A.D. See E.I., Vol. XXVIII, p. 27.
13. Sāvaladēvi, Jōgama’s daughter and the queen of Chāluḥya Vikramāditya VI, seems to have been elder sister of Permāḍi.
18. The lunar lineage of the Kalachuris of Karnataka is mentioned in the Anantasayana temple inscription at Harasur, of king Sōma and the Bhōgēśvara temple inscription at the same


20. The Bhōgēśvara temple inscription at Harasur referred to above.

21. On the copper plate records of this family, the figure of a seated bull, suitably decorated, is prominently displayed as the royal insignia. See Desai P. B.: *A Corpus* etc., plate VIII and pp. 62 and 68.


23. See *Basantarājadēvara Ragaṭe* of Harihara, (*Basava Ragaṭe*), Sthala IV, V, etc.

24. *S. I. I.*, Vol. XX, No. 149. The date of the record is lost. It may approximately be assigned to 1156 A.D.


CHAPTER III

1. BIJJALA—EARLY CAREER (1130-56 A.D.)

Permāḍi was succeeded by his son Bijjala II. As we shall see presently, he assumed the office of Mahā-
manḍalēśvara about 1130 A.D. or even earlier. Gran-
ting that his age at that time was about 25 years, he might have been born approximately in 1105 A.D. He was the most ambitious and energetic among the princes of the Kalachuri house. During his time the family rose from the feudatory to the imperial status. This was achieved not by fair means but by intrigue and violence.

Considerable material, mainly comprising epi-
graphical sources, is available to reconstruct Bijjala’s career and personality. Still there are some aspects of his life for which no proper evidence is available. He figures in a prominent role in the Vīraśaiva¹ and Jaina² literary works. But the accounts are more or less legendary yielding few historical facts. Nay, some are even misleading. In spite of these difficulties, exercising our critical judgement, we can draw a fairly reliable picture of his personality, his achievements and colossal failure.

Like his father and grand-father, Bijjala started his career as a Mahāmanḍalēśvara or feudatory chief under the Chālukya emperors of Kalyāṇa. But he was strong and powerful and wielded considerable influence at the Chālukya court and in their dominions on account of the matrimonial alliance of his house with that of his suzerains as seen in the previous chapter.
He inherited his father's office and ancestral kingdom about the year 1130 A.D. According to the Balgeri record cited above, Bijjala was enjoying the office of Mahāmanḍalēśvara even in the reign of Vikramāditya VI. This would be before 1127 A.D., the last date of the Chālukya king. It is interesting to note that in some inscriptions he is styled Kumāra, a title enjoyed by the princes of the royal family of high rank.

The above date of the commencement of Bijjala's career is the earliest so far known. It is derived from a recently discovered inscription at Tambur in the Kalghatgi Taluka of Dharwar District. The epigraph is in the nature of a memorial called hero-stone, set up for the sacred memory of a gallant warrior who put up a brave fight for his master and fell on the battle-field. It is dated the eleventh year of the reign of king Bhūlōkamalla, Nala, Jyēṣṭha 14, Tuesday. This corresponds to 1136 A.D., May 16, the week-day being Saturday.

The hero who died in the defensive operations was Kēteyanāyaka, commanding officer of Mahāsāvanta, governor of the Hānumgal fort, while Malli-kārjuna of the Kadamba family was ruling the kingdom (1132-1146 A.D.) from his capital Hānumgal (i.e. Hāngal). It is stated that Tarikāḍa Bijjaladēva laid siege to the fort and himself led an attack mounting on an elephant. Kēteyanāyaka valiantly opposed the assault and repulsing Bijjala's elephant in a face-to-face encounter with him, succumbed to the injuries.

The cause of the hostility of Tarikāḍa Bijjaladēva with the Kadamba ruler is not known. But the identity of this Bijjaladēva with the Kalachuri Bijjala II
is beyond doubt. The characteristic association of the regional epithet Tarikāḍu with this chief is reminiscent of the ancestral home of this family. As we have noted earlier, Bijjala’s grand-father Jōgama also was similarly known as Tarikāḍa Jōgamarasa.

The memorial stone bearing this inscription depicts the scene of the battle carved out in relief sculptures. Particularly interesting is the encounter of Kēteyanāyaka with Bijjala. The effigy of Bijjala portrayed here, is conventional and not true to the original. Still, it carries some interest, as no figure or form relating to him has so far been traced. Kēteyanāyaka appears to have belonged to the Tambur area, since the hero-stone perpetuating his memory was found here, though he died near Hāngal.

The above date 1130 A.D., proposed for the commencement of Bijjala’s career, is supported on two grounds. Firstly, Bijjala, as seen above, was holding the office of Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara prior to 1127 A.D. Secondly, his father Permāḍi’s latest date, according to inscriptional evidence, is 1129 A.D. It seems, Bijjala was enjoying the high official status even when his father was living.

Bijjala prepared to exploit the favourable situation and his position of vantage to the fullest extent. From a close study of the inscriptions of this period, we can have a fair idea of the working of his mind, his aspirations, his cherished goal and the means adopted by him to accomplish his end. The thoughts that agitated his mind were like this:
'Ambitious Designs

Why should he not become an emperor by occupying the Chālukya throne? What was wanting in him? In what respects was he inferior to the mediocre Chālukya princes? He was a scion of the illustrious family of Kalachuris who enjoyed imperial power. In physical strength, prowess of arms, military organisation, diplomacy, administrative ability and political influence, he was second to none. Sceptre belongs to him who wields it. Why not seize it?

Fired by such an ambition and goaded by an insatiate thirst for power, Bijjala planned and unscrupulously proceeded to achieve his objective. He designed, schemed and conspired. Reflections of his evil designs and imprints of his unholy march towards the Chālukya throne can clearly be detected, through epigraphical passages, although, otherwise, generally speaking, the inscriptions are silent and not elaborate or explicit in such matters.

It may be noted that at this period the glorious days of the Chālukyas had gone by. During the reign of Vikramāditya VI (1076-1127 A.D.), the Chālukya empire attained the zenith of its glory, power and prestige. He was succeeded by his son, the peace-loving and scholarly Sōmeśvara III (1127-1138 A.D.). This prince was son of Chandaladēvi whose daughter was married to Kalachuri Permāḍi. Thus Sōmeśvara III and Permāḍi were brothers-in-law to each other, and the latter’s son Bijjala was the former’s nephew. Sōmeśvara III was followed by his son Jagadēkamalla II (1138-1150 A.D.), who possessed no outstanding abilities. He tried to preserve the Chālukya empire in tact and reigned peacefully.
Bijjala was invested with the office of Mahā- maṇḍalēśvara and governorship of his hereditary chiefdom of Mangalīvēda in the reign of Sōmēśvara III or even earlier. In addition, as in the case of his father and grand-father, other neighbouring tracts like Tardavāḍi, comprising the Bijapur area, were placed under his charge. The two kinsmen, the ruling Chālukya king Sōmēśvara III and Bijjala, must have been more or less of the same age. Except for the status there was hardly any difference between the two.

As seen above, Bijjala started his career circa 1130 A.D. in the reign of Sōmēśvara III. Twelve years later we find him holding an important office as governor of the Karahada-4000 province in 1142 A. D. in the reign of Jagadēkamalla II. Five years later in 1147 A.D., he is seen governing Tardavāḍi-1000 division. This territory continued to be in his charge even subsequently.

In 1150 A.D., Jagadēkamalla’s rule ended and his younger brother Taila III ascended the Chālukya throne. This prince was junior to Bijjala and in no way superior to the latter. He did not possess any outstanding ability as events show.

In which direction Bijjala’s mind was operating at this time? What were his motives and activities? Answers to these questions are furnished in the following manner by an epigraph from Muttagi in Bijapur District:

The early rulers of the Kalachuri family were all great emperors endowed with sovereign authority. The later princes, however, because they were incompetent and lacking in strength of arms, were reduced to a position of
subordination, and had to serve as feudatories to other rulers. But here I am mighty and powerful. Why should I still remain a feudatory? Be done with this subordination. Reflecting thus, invincible Bijjala became the overlord of the earth by the might of his arms.

This inscription, though it belongs to a later date, in the reign of Bijjala’s successor Rāya-Murāri Sōvidēva, gives a correct picture of the former’s mind, his thoughts and activities during the period, when he had started his career as a capable feudatory under the Chālukyas.

Their Execution

The portrait of Bijjala as reflected in another record from Balligāve⁹ is painted in deeper colours. Boldly it proclaims:

Sovereignty deserves to be enjoyed by one who is a true warrior. To vindicate the veracity of this adage, as it were, Lord Bijjala conquered the entire earth bounded by the ocean in the south and the Chālukya capital in the north.

When did Bijjala actually commence the execution of his plans? By what steps did he proceed towards his goal? What were the methods adopted by him to seize power? Happily, epigraphical evidence again comes to our rescue to find the correct answer.

Ever since the starting of his career as Mahāmanḍalēśvara, Bijjala, it appears, was conspiring to usurp power by overthrowing the Chālukya suzerainty. An inscription from Chikkalgi¹⁰ in Jamkhandi Taluka, Bijapur District, sheds clear light on this point. This epigraph is dated 1157 A.D., when king Taila III was on the throne. But his rule is not mentioned in
the record. On the contrary, Bijjala, his subordinate, is introduced with the imperial title Mahābhujabalachakravarti (paramount ruler endowed with the power of mighty arms) and he is stated to have been ruling the kingdom with peace and happiness. In addition, the cyclic year Īśvara of the record is cited as his fifth regnal year. This clearly shows that Bijjala had started his independent reckoning and inaugurated his regnal year in 1153 A.D. There is one more epigraph 11 which stands in support of the above conclusion. This will be discussed later. It has been pointed out by Fleet that Bijjala started his reckoning from 1156 A.D. But, this view has to be modified on the strength of this epigraphical evidence. Bijjala’s reckoning thus commenced three years earlier in 1153 A.D. But, it seems, in this respect, he was rather cautious in the beginning.

In the Chikkalgi opigraph cited above, Bijjala is endowed with the title Rāya-samuddharana, i.e. ‘saviour of the king’. It therefore appears that Bijjala rendered some valuable help to the Chālukya king Taila III in his difficulty, which entitled him to use this epithet. It may also be surmised that, placed in such an advantageous position, he was emboldened to treat himself as an independent ruler defying the authority of the suzerain. This was the precursor of more daring steps he was going to take shortly.

Though the Chikkalgi inscription does not disclose the nature of the service rendered by Bijjala to his overlord Taila III, it is possible to surmise the same from a close study of an epigraph from Anmakoṇḍa. 12 According to this record of 1155 A.D., the Kākatīya
chief Prōla II defeated the Chālukyas who had attacked his capital city and imprisoned Taila III who was his overlord. It is possible that Bijjala sided with his master in this war and negotiated for his release by appealing to the sense of loyalty and mercy on the part of the victor. It is also not unlikely that cunning and treacherous as Bijjala was, he might have ingeniously contrived this debacle and later himself took the credit for his master’s escape.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. For instance, Basavapuruṇa (1369); Singirāja-puruṇa (15th century).
2. Bijjaḷarāyacharite by Dharaṇi Paṇḍita; Bijjaḷarāyapurāṇa by Chandrasāgara Varnī.
10. A. R. S. I. E., 1938-39, B. K. No. 50. We base our observations on a reliable transcript of the record.
CHAPTER IV

2. BIJJALA—TOWARDS USURPATION
(1156-1162 A.D.)

The defeat and discomfiture of Taila III at the hands of his Kākatiya feudatory Prōla II in 1155 A.D. would have given a fillip to the mounting ambition of Bijjala. Soon he resolved once for all to set himself free from the state of subordination and behave like a sovereign king, divested of Chālukya suzerainty. The testimony of epigraphs is eloquent on this point. A good number of inscriptions ranging from 1156 to 1162 A.D. show that Bijjala, during this period of six years, was fully engaged in subverting the Chālukya authority and rapidly consolidating his power and position in the kingdom.

Methods of Usurpation

Bijjala adopted various methods to gain his object. This is indicated by the different phraseology and formulae of inscriptions. For instance, some records contain no reference to the ruling king Taila III. Bijjala’s feudatory title Mahāmāndalēśvara is conspicuously omitted in some inscriptions. Some epigraphs associate him with the sovereign titles, Mahārājādhirāja and Chakravarti. The other significant titles assumed by Bijjala and met with in the inscriptions of this period are Bhujabalamalla, Tribhuvanamalla, Bhuvanaikavira, Tribhuvanaikavira, Bhujabalachakravarti and Mahābhujabalachakravarti. To crown all, he started a reckoning of his own which, off and on, is mentioned
in the epigraphs. Most of the records show that the starting point of his regnal years cited was 1156 A.D. But as we have seen above, it was begun earlier in 1153 A.D.

We may illustrate the above observations by citing a few concrete instances.

1. An epigraph from Baḷḷigāve⁴ dated 1155 A.D., states that Bījjala was governing all the provinces. Taila III was then the reigning king.

2. An inscription from Anṇigeri² of the cyclic year Iśvara corresponding to 1157 A.D., refers to the year cited as the second year of the Kalachuri reckoning. The titles, Tribhuvaṇamalla and Bhujabalachakravarti, are associated with Bījjala in this record.

A Remarkable Instance

3. Another inscription from Baḷḷigāve³ dated 1159 A.D. is highly illuminating. It barely mentions Taila III at the end of the genealogical account of his predecessors who ruled. This is followed by the following passage:

At that time the protector of the earth was Bījjala, who bore up the earth by the power of his might, whose sharp sword was like a serpent swallowing up the air of the breath of his boasting enemies, whose fame filled the ears of the elephants at the points of the compass.

Next comes the statement, "Sovereignty deserves to be enjoyed by one who is a true warrior" etc., cited before. After this we are confronted with the full-length, grandiloquent panegyric of Bījjala, his praśasti
of the Kalachuri pattern, assumed when he actually became the overlord and sovereign and reference to his victorious reign in the usual fashion of a ruling monarch. It reads thus:

Be it well. When, entitled to the five big drums, Mahārājādhirāja, lord of Kālanjarapura, the best of the cities, having the flag of a golden bull, with the sounds of the dāmaruga and tūrya, a sun to the lotus, the Kalachurya lineage, fierce in war, in dignity the golden mountain, a sun to good warriors, an elephant goad to the brave, master of elephants, a cage of adamant to the refugees, Śanivāra-siddhi, Giridurgamalla (wrestler of hill-forts), a veteran warrior like Rāma, a lion to the elephant, his enemies, Niśākamalla, with these and other titles, Bhujabalachakravarti, Tri-bhuwanamalla Bijjaladēvarasa’s victorious kingdom was extending on all sides, to continue as long as the sun, the moon and the stars.

The above description of Bijjala is really astounding. The dignified and lavish manner in which praise is bestowed on him creates the impression that Bijjala, and not Taila III, was the ruling monarch. Especially noteworthy are the paramount titles conferred upon him. The assertion, in particular, relating to his conquest of the entire Chālukya territory, though exaggerated, clearly indicates that Bijjala, at this time, was master of the situation and making rapid progress in his plan of usurping the Chālukya throne.

**Bijjala’s Privileged Position**

From the beginning of his career, Bijjala appears to have enjoyed the privilege of controlling the administration of big areas in the kingdom. In an inscription of about 1145 A.D. from Harihar,⁴ Vijaya-
Pāṇḍya, the governor of the Nolambavāḍi province, is stated to be subordinate to Bijjala. According to another record of 1150 A.D., from the same place, Kasapayyanāyaka, governing the province of Banavāsi, was placed under Bijjala. An epigraph of 1151 A.D. from Bijapur mentions Daṇḍanāyaka Mailārayya, governor of Tardavāḍi (Bijapur area) as a feudatory of Bijjala. According to two inscriptions from Baḷligāve, Mahādēva and Kēśava were governing the Banavāsi region as officers of Bijjala in 1155 and 1158 A.D.

The above instances show that Bijjala, though actually a feudatory, was occupying a special position as that of a prince of the royal family. It may be recalled here that in some inscriptions he is described as Kumāra, i.e. a prince of the royal family. He exercised authority over governors of major provinces like Nolambavāḍi, Banavāsi and Tardavāḍi. The designation Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara indicating his feudatory status, is not mentioned in many records; this is another evidence testifying to his high status. These factors would have helped Bijjala consolidate his power and ruthlessly crush the opposition of his adversaries that crossed his ways, as described in the passage cited above. Bijjala appears to have consolidated his power first in the tract of Bijapur which was his patrimony, and next in the region of Banavāsi.

While Bijjala was proceeding with his aggressive designs, he appears to have sought assistance from other potentates also. Two of them, among others, seem to have readily supported his cause and extended military aid. One was the Śilāhāra prince Vijayāditya of Kāraḍ and another, the Kākatiya king Prōla II.
Culmination

An epigraph from Hūli, dated in July-August of 1162 A.D., introduces Bījjala with the paramount title Kalachuryachakravarti and cites the above date as falling in his seventh regnal year.

Another epigraph from the same place dated December 24, 1162 A.D. endows Bījjala with all the imperial titles, namely, Samastabhuvaṇāśraya, Śrīprithvivallabha, Mahārājādhirāja and Paramēśvara, which are usually found in the praśasti of his Chāluṇḍa suzerains.

It becomes thus clear that by the end of 1162 A.D., Bījjala had accomplished his plan of usurping the Chāluṇḍa kingdom and that he was the overlord of the Chāluṇḍa dominions.

Was this not a supreme achievement? An inscription from Harihar of this period (1162 A.D.) speaks exultingly about the event as follows:

Just as Agastya, sprung from a jar of water, sucked the vast ocean, king Bījjala, born in the family of feudatory chiefs, subjugated the whole earth by dint of his prowess.

Could there be anything more laudable than this? And how did he manage to achieve it? The same record graphically narrates the following story.

With the proud arms by his side, he, at once, unceasingly tormented the petty chieftains who stood hostile to him; and then, gradually, with a firm resolve, burnt the moorings of the local potentates who opposed him; and then finally stepping forth, with one stroke he did away with the ruling king—he, the protector of the world,
Bijjala, the brilliant mark adorning the face of the supreme sovereigns, who had the fillet of imperial eminence fastened on his forehead by destiny.

It is of interest to note that the poet Harihara in his *Basavarājadēvara Ragāle* (Sthala VI) describes Bijjala as Rāvana of the Kali Age and an eagle to the snakes who obstructed his course.

*Plight of Taila III*

Things were thus moving fast against Taila III. If we properly judge all the factors, we can arrive at the conclusion that this Chālukya ruler was not really so incompetent as one is led to imagine on consideration of merely the occurrences and the final outcome. This king appears to have been more or less a helpless victim of the unfavourable circumstances for whose creation we cannot hold him wholly responsible. The stability and integrity of the Chālukya dominions were threatened by disruptive tendencies even from an earlier date. Insubordination among the nobles and officers was growing and some of the feudatories were aspiring to become independent. Prominent among them were the Kākatiya Prōla II, the Śilāhāra Vijayāditya and Hoysaḷa Narasimha I. The first two of these appear to have actively helped Taila’s arch enemy, Kalachuri Bijjala, as stated above.

Taila III was not blind to what was going on around and against him. His defeat and discomfiture at the hands of his feudatory Prōla II fully opened his eyes to the ominous situation. He realised at this juncture that Bijjala had considerably consolidated
his power, preparing to strike. The Chālukya sovereignty and capital were under the grip of a grave calamity. Therefore, with a view to rescuing it from annihilation he adopted precautionary measures. He sent his successor and crown prince Sōmeśvara IV and also other princes of the royal family like Jagadēkamalla III and Bhūlōkamalla II to places of safety in the southern parts of his dominions for protection through his loyal feudatories. Taila III himself appears to have left Kalyāṇa after June, 1157 A.D.

About this time Bijjala might have transferred his centre of activities from Mangalīvēḍa to the royal city of Kalyāṇa.

Some writers have surmised that after his defeat by Kākatīya Prōla II, Taila III shifted his capital from Kalyāṇa to Anṇigeri from where he subsequently ruled. But this view is not correct. Anṇigeri is referred to in inscriptions as rājadhāni, which only means, in such contexts, the headquarters of a district or region and this region, according to the same source, was Belvola. Anṇigeri never became the imperial capital of the Chālukya rulers. Bhandarkar’s statement that Taila III did not go to Kalyāṇa after his defeat by the Kākatīya ruler, but only stayed at Anṇigeri is misleading; for we find the Chālukya king ruling from Kalyāṇa in an inscription dated 1157 A.D.

Striving for more than a decade and overcoming the difficulties, Bijjala succeeded in 1162 A.D. in usurping the throne of his Chālukya masters and acquired sovereignty over their dominions comprising the Kuntala country. Taila III was no more on the scene by this time. What happened to him? Though
the evidence is not explicit on this point, it can be surmised that he became a victim of evil machinations of the usurper and lost his life. The death of Taila III is referred to in an inscription of 19th January 1163 A.D. So he appears to have died about the end of the previous year. This is confirmed by the Hūli inscription of Bijjala II dated 24th December 1162 A.D. which contains no reference to Taila III and wherein the former is given the high imperial titles. 

Victim of Violence

As stated above, it is possible to assume that Taila III was done away with by foul means by the usurper. In the second extract from the Harihar inscription cited above, it is mentioned that Bijjala did away with the ruling king with one stroke (rāyaram kuḍe nirmūlisidam; rāyaram taken as singular). We can also treat the expression rāyaram in the above passage in the plural and interpret it as rulers or princes of the ruling family. The latter interpretation, it may be noted, is supported by other epigraphs.

Two inscriptions from Harasur and Kāḷagi in Gulbarga District throw more light on the point. They are dated 1172 and 1173 A.D. respectively in the reign of Bijjala’s successor Rāya-Murāri Sōvidēva. The texts of these records are identical in some parts. The passage under reference reads thus:

Ā Permāḍi-nṛipālam-g-āpādita-sakāla-Kuntal-ōrvī-rājyam | vyāpādita-Chālukya-ma-hipālaka-nikaran-ādan-ā Bijjanṛipam ||

It means:

King Permāḍi was succeeded by King Bijjala who secured the sovereignty of the entire Kuntala country, having destroyed the host of princes of the ruling Chālukya family.
It thus becomes clear that the coup d'état was accomplished by Bijjala with a diabolical plot in which princes and members of the Chālukya family, including, most probably, king Taila III, lost their lives.

We have tried to reconstruct the account of Bijjala’s rise to power and his usurpation of the Chālukya empire, with the help of inscriptions of the time. The information furnished by the epigraphs in the present case is quite helpful. We have to aver that it is rather unique; for inscriptions generally do not give such minute details. Particularly interesting and of great historical value are the details of psychological background of the act of usurpation, the process of usurpation and its justification. We have therefore to infer that Bijjala being a shrewd politician with forethought and farsightedness, commissioned his court poets to draft the records in his favour, vindicating his actions, and had them engraved on stone. We may also note in this context that many of the statements in the inscriptions are bluntly frank and true to facts. This has given us an advantage in presenting the portrait of Bijjala and narrating the events leading to the usurpation in their proper perspective.

It is of particular significance to note in this context that most of the records referred to in the above account come from Shimoga District which constituted a major portion of the ancient Banavāsi province. This region, as we shall see presently, was the stronghold of Bijjala.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

2. Ibid., p. 474.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
10. Ibid., p. 474.
11. Ibid., p. 475; E. C., Vol. XI, Dg. 84.
12. Ibid., Dg. 42.
13. Inscriptions of these rulers do not allude to their Chalukya suzerain.
14. I have discussed this topic in detail by citing epigraphical records in my lectures on the Kalachuris of Karnataka, delivered in 1951 at the Kannada Research Institute, which are later published. See Kannada Sahitya Parishat Patrike, Vol. XXXVII, Nos. 1-2 (Kalachuris), pp. 117 ff.
21. These inscriptions are included in my unpublished private collection. The passage cited is from my transcript of the records. Fleet has referred to these epigraphs in his account of the family. (B. G., Vol. I, Pt. II, p. 462, n. 5). The texts of these records were available to him in Elliot’s manuscript collection of epigraphs, named the Carnat Des Inscriptions.
CHAPTER V

3. BIJJALA—HIS RULE (1162-67 A. D.)

Evil is a hydraheaded monster spelling disaster all around. Bijjala’s usurpation of the Chālukya throne by unfair means and the atrocities committed by him to achieve his end, contaminated the entire political and social atmosphere in the country, and its effects were far-reaching. This is seen through a series of strange events that followed in quick succession within a short time.

Extent of Bijjala’s Kingdom

Though Bijjala claims to have possessed all the Chālukya dominions,¹ epigraphical evidence shows that the southern areas never passed under his sway. Banavāsi was the southernmost province under him, whose affairs he controlled from the beginning of his career and from where he seems to have derived considerable support in his anti-Chālukya activities. This province comprised large areas of the present North Kanara and Shimoga Districts. The Chitradurg region also readily acknowledged his authority. Further down, it is doubtful if his sovereignty extended over the tracts of Kadur, Hassan, Tumkur, Bangalore, Mysore and Coorg Districts, as no inscriptions of the rulers of this dynasty have been discovered in them.

His Capitals

As shown in an earlier context,² Mangalāvēḍha or modern Mangalavēḍhe was the permanent capital and
headquarters of all the rulers of the Kalachuri family including Bijjala II. In his Basavarājadēvara-ragaṭe, the poet Harihara who was a near contemporary writer, describes the events in the early political career of Basavēśvara when he came into contact with Bijjala, as having taken place at Mangalavāda which is the same as Mangalivēda of inscriptions.

Bijjala, like his grandfather Jōgama and father Permādi, started his political career as Mahāmanḍa-lēśvara at Mangalivēda only. However, on account of his intimate relation with the Chālukya house, his contacts with Kalyāṇa must have been long and frequent.

According to an inscription from Sankh in the Indi Taluka of Bijapur District, Bijjala was ruling from Mangalivēda. The date of the record is doubtful; but it may be assigned to a period between 1156 and 1160 A.D. Bijjala is given the imperial title Bhujabala-chakravarti in this epigraph which also calls him Manḍa-lēśvara. Another lithic record from Sidhanātha in the Jath Taluka adjoining the Bijapur area, speaks of Bijjala as ruling from Mangalivēda. The epigraph which mentions him as Bhuvanaikaviradēva is dated January 1162 A.D. Bijjala’s association with Mangalivēda is also revealed by another epigraph.

After Bijjala assumed sovereignty of the Chālukya empire, he ruled from Kalyāṇa which became his recognized capital. His inscriptions of this period invariably associate his rule with this city.

Political Situation

The political situation in the kingdom was far from satisfactory. Bijjala was not destined to enjoy
the fruits of his ill-gotten prize long and peacefully. He reigned for a short period of six years at the end of which he seems to have been forced to step down from his office in an adverse situation.

In the palace itself, there were parties and factions which were the breeding house of intrigues. The near and dear kinsmen of the Châlukya family had almost all fled for safety. Wherever they went, they gathered around them a group of sympathisers and supporters who detested the Kalachuri house of upstarts and usurpers. The example of perfidy set by Bijnala whipped up impulses of rank selfishness and foul ambition in the hearts of his own brothers and sons who stirred themselves up looking forward for a favourable opportunity to revolt and seize power. The sons were not only not on good terms with one another, but, it appears, were prepared to go to the extent of wresting power from their own father. This point will be made clear while discussing the events leading to the stepping down of Bijnala.

The feudatories, provincial governors and their subordinates were divided into rival camps and warring groups. If some stood in support of the new regime of the Kalachuris, others entrenched in their loyalty to the old house, were desirous of restoring the Châlukya sovereignty.

A noteworthy instance to illustrate the above observations is that of general Kâvanâyya and his son Brahma or Bamma Daŋḍâdhîśa. While the father sided the Kalachuri usurper, the son firmly stood supporting the Châlukya cause. In course of time, we notice that this Brahma succeeded in restoring
the Chālukya sovereignty and installing Taila III’s son Sōmēśvara IV on the Chālukya throne. It may also be noted that Narasimha, another son of Kāvanāyya and brother of Brahma, fought against the Kalachuris. He is said to have opposed Bījjala’s son Sankama and killed him in a battle.⁷

The officers and chiefs who helped Bījjala in his act of usurpation were shown favours and promoted to high positions. Among such was Kasapayya Nāyaka about whom we shall presently speak in detail.

Administration—Disturbances

The well-integrated and efficiently controlled administrative machinery under the Chālukyas was jeopardised on account of the state of confusion and disloyalty caused by the political revolution. The officials tended to become more and more recalcitrant and lawlessness prevailed in some quarters.

Glimpses of this situation are provided by inscriptions. For instance, a hero-stone⁸ in Shimoga District relates that Kariya Kēśimayya, the governor of Banavāsi province, marched against Bandānike. Another epigraph⁹ of the same area narrates the following incident which is rather unusual. Vāmāśakti, a preceptor of the Kālāmukha Śaiva sect of Bālligāve was taken prisoner at the command of Padmarasa, a general of Banavāsi province. A chief named Bābeya Nāyaka of Toṇavatti opposed the servants of the official in this act and died fighting against them. A hero-stone¹⁰ of the same region, dated 1162 A.D., speaks of the assault made by Bījjala’s forces against Tagaraṭe.

Highly interesting in this context is the information let out by a lithic record at Bālligāve.¹¹ This is dated
1162 A.D., precisely the year when Bijjala's aggressive activities had attained culmination. The epigraph states that Bijjala was at that time camping at Balligāve with a view to subjugating the southern region. It is intriguing to note that with all the full praise lavished on Bijjala for the annihilation of his enemies by the might of his arm, the inscription still mentions him by his erstwhile feudatory title Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara.

Though the details of the incidents referred to in the above records are not known, still they can be assumed as indications of the disturbed state of affairs. All these inscriptions and a few more to be cited in the sequel, it may be noted, hail from the Banavāsi region which thus appears to have been more closely connected with the events of the Kalachuri usurpation.

**Innovations**

Bijjala appears to have introduced some innovations in the administration with a view to strengthening his hands against the provincial governors and district officials, who, he suspected, might conspire and join hands to subvert his regime, as he did in the case of the Chāluukyas. One of these was the importance given to the secretaries of the heads of administrative divisions. Bijjala took these secretaries into confidence and secretly entrusted them with the work of spying and keeping watch over the activities of their superior officers. The number of such secretaries who assisted in the administrative work of each provincial units, was generally five. This peculiarity strikingly comes to our notice while studying the inscriptions of this period.
These observations are substantiated by the above mentioned inscription at Balligāve, dated 1162 A.D. This furnishes the following information in explicit terms. Bijjala had a great minister named Kasapayya Nāyaka. Under his instructions, the province of Bana-vāsi was being governed by Bamma-rasa. This officer was controlled by five Karanās (i.e. Secretaries) who are described thus by the epigraph:

They were royal censors and inspectors appointed to see that the goddess of fortune of Bamma-rasa’s government was free from adultery—that is, to ensure his loyalty. And these were like the five senses of Bijjala, unmatched in ministerial skill, bold as fierce lions, able in detecting frauds, superior to all opposition.

An inscription from Kukanur of 1163 A.D. introduces Ammanayya, the governor of Belvala Nādu and Vatseya Nādu, who was furnished with a staff of four secretaries. A subordinate of this officer was Baladēva, holding charge over several villages in the tract of Kukkanur Thirty. This Baladēva, again, was assisted by five secretaries. These secretaries are praised at length for their honesty and truthfulness. The secretaries or Karanās prominently figure in other records also.

Kasapayya Nāyaka

Conspicuous among the chiefs and officers under the Chālukyas in whom Bijjala reposed great trust and who, it appears, helped the latter rise to power was Kasapayya Nāyaka. He was related to Bijjala, as evidenced by inscriptions which speak of his direct dealings with Bijjala and not with the Chālukya
suzerain. The epigraphs containing references to him, numbering about a dozen, hail from Shimoga and Chitradurg Districts which formed the southern part of the Chāḷukya empire. One main fact disclosed by these epigraphs about Kasapayya Nāyaka is that he was intimately associated with the administration and political affairs of the southern dominions including the province of Banavāsi. Described as the governor of Banavāsi in a few inscriptions, he was much more than a mere governor as revealed by other records. For it is stated in the latter that the governors and provincial officers were holding their posts with the approval of Kasapayya. Thus he wielded great influence and enjoyed a rather unique position. He must have been a man of extraordinary ability, though we know nothing about his early career. We are also in the dark as to by what means he became the favourite of Bījjala.

The inscriptions mentioning Kasapayya Nāyaka range from 1150 to 1165 A.D. and this was the period when Bījjala grew from strength to strength. The relevant information furnished by the epigraphical records about Kasapayya Nāyaka may be briefly summed up as follows.

An epigraph at Harihar dated 1150 A.D. introduces Kasapayya as governor of Banavāsi. According to an inscription from Tāḷagund dated 1158 A.D., Kēśirāja Daṇḍanāyaka, the governor of Banavāsi made a grant with the approval of Kasapayya. An inscription from Balligāve dated 1159 A.D., introduces Daṇḍa-nāyaka Kēśimayya, the pergāde of Banavāse Nāḍu, as holding the office with the approval of Kasapayya
Nāyaka. In a third inscription from Beṇṇegere\textsuperscript{18} of 1160 A.D., Kasapayya Nāyaka figures as the high officer of the region. Another inscription from Balligāve,\textsuperscript{19} the fourth in the series, dated 1162 A.D., states that Barmarasa of Bandanike was governing the Banavāsi province with the consent of Kasapayya Nāyaka. This Barmarasa was son-in-law of Bījjala.\textsuperscript{20} An epigraph from Harihar,\textsuperscript{21} which is dated the same year (1162 A.D.), informs that the above named Barmarasa was brother-in-law of Kasapayya Nāyaka. Lastly, in 1165 A.D., when Bījjala was wielding sovereign power, his subordinate Kasapayya Nāyaka was holding charge of the Banavāsi province as its governor from his headquarters at Balligāve.\textsuperscript{22}

Another Officer

Another dignitary who appears to have substantially assisted Bījjala in wresting the sovereignty from the Chālukyas was Madhusūdana Daṇḍanātha. This becomes clear from the following epithet given to him in a contemporary record,\textsuperscript{23} viz. Kalachurirāja-rājya-sampādana-vichakshana, which means “skilful in securing the possession of the kingdom for the Kalachuri ruler.” This description, though it contains little information about the details of the achievement, is significant. One more general who played a principal part in obtaining the kingdom for Bījjala, was Rēcharasa (E. C. VII, Sk. 197).

Rise of Viraśaivism

An epoch-making event full of consequences that took place in the time of Bījjala, was the rise and growth of the Viraśaiva movement. A detailed study of this movement and its leader Basavēśvara is presented in
the subsequent chapters. Though basically religio-social in character, this upheaval assumed proportions making its grave impact felt in the political sphere also. This was mainly due to the fact that its sponsor and guide, Basavēśvara was an officer of state holding an important position in the service of Bijjala.

We are absolutely certain that Bijjala and Basavēśvara were contemporaries and that the latter served under the former. It looks, both were more or less of the same age. They came into intimate contact with each other for a considerable duration and the relations between the two in the early part of their association were cordial. Subsequently, they became strained and the gulf widened in course of time. Their ideologies differed and diverged on a number of issues in the religious and social spheres. These ideological differences, the religious convictions and social conduct in particular precipitated the cleavage. Shortly, the conflict took a grave turn and assumed serious proportions. The entire kingdom and the population convulsed under its impact leading to an all-out chaos. The central figures of the warring factions were caught in the whirlpool and soon vanished from the scene.

*Basavēśvara - His Position*

The exact position held by Basavēśvara in Bijjala’s court is a controversial question. According to an early literary source, Basavēśvara entered service as a junior accountant with subtle talents in the treasury office of Bijjala at Mangalāvāda and was soon raised to a high rank. In this work, he is often described by the epithet *dañḍanātha* or commander of the forces. There are other literary works of a later period which
familiarly describe him as chief minister of Bijjala. Now, it was customary in those days to call a high officer of the state, minister and general. These epithets and titles had, on account of their frequent and almost indiscriminate use, become more or less conventional having little bearing on their real connotation, office or position. If we take into consideration this fact which is revealed from a study of numerous contemporary epigraphical records,\(^{26}\) we have to exercise caution while interpreting the above literary statements which cannot be accepted as literally true.

It is really strange to note in this context that not a single contemporary inscription containing reference to Basavēśvara has so far come to light. We naturally expect that a person holding the high office of a minister should find mention in some connection among Bijjala’s officers who prominently figure in a large number of contemporary lithic records so far discovered. This has created doubts regarding the nature of the post held by Basavēśvara. Was he wielding high executive authority as chief minister or a minister of state? Really not.

A clue to his position is fortunately available in one of his own Vachanas or Sayings. As the story goes,\(^{27}\) Basavēśvara unscrupulously utilised the revenue of the state for his private ends, viz., for feeding the Jangamas, the devotees of Śiva whose interest was dear to his heart. It was probably in this context and in order to refute the allegation, he exclaims in one of his Vachanas thus:\(^{28}\) “Why do I need Bijjala’s treasury?”

From this we can draw the inference that actually he was holding the strings of Bijjala’s treasury. Thus
he might be a high officer of the state in charge of the treasury, i.e. Chief Treasury Officer. In view of this we have to treat the designations daṇḍanātha or general and mantri or minister conferred upon him in literary works, as rather honorific and conventional. Of course, as he was in a key position and Bijjala often took him into confidence, to that extent he may be described as minister.

Recently, some writers, misled by superficial considerations, have tried to identify the above Kasapayya Nāyaka with Basavēśvara. But this view which is put forth on imaginary grounds, is absolutely untenable. Basavēśvara and Kasapayya Nāyaka were two entirely different personalities and the former had nothing to do with the latter. This topic will be discussed in detail while dealing with Basavēśvara.

The events and circumstances reviewed above were responsible to bring the end of Bijjala’s rule. His administrative inefficiency and failure to check the disruptive forces rapidly weakened his political power. Within a short period of six years, the matters came to such a pass that he found himself in a precarious situation unable to continue his rule and govern the kingdom. He was forced to step down and transfer his authority in favour of his second son. Thus ended the ignominious reign of Bijjala about the middle of 1167 A.D. A full picture of this phase is depicted in the ensuing chapters.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

2. See Chapter II above.
5. A. R. S. I. E., 1940-41, B. K. No. 111.
9. Ibid., 139.
10. Ibid., 56.
11. Ibid., 102.
12. Ibid.
13. Desai P. B., Studies in Epigraphy (Kannada) (Studies), No. 49.
17. Ibid., Sk. 123.
18. Ibid., Vol. VIII, Sb. 346.
20. Ibid., Sk. 242.
21. Ibid., Vol. XI, Dg. 42.
25. For instance, the Basavapurāṇa of Bhīma Kavi (1369 A.D.)
26. Any volume of Kannada inscriptions; for instance, S. I. I. Vol. XI, Part II, Nos. 150, 167, etc. etc.
27. Shrinivasamurti, M.R.: Bhaktibhāṅḍāri Basavagnanavaru (Bhaktibhāṅḍāri) (Kannada, 1936), p. 69; Basava Ragaṭe, Sthala VIII.
29. The first suggestion regarding the identity of Basavēśvara with Kasapayya seems to have been made by M. R. Shrinivasa Murti in his above mentioned work (p. 89 n.). It was supported rather indirectly by S. S. Basavanal; see Basavanāḷa Smāraka Sampūṭa (Basavanāḷa Sampūṭa), p. 472. Other writers also have favoured the suggestion without valid grounds.
CHAPTER VI

RELIGIOUS FAITH OF BIJJALA

What were the religious leanings of Bijjala?

Necessity of Investigation

A deep rooted belief is widely prevalent about the religious faith of Bijjala even among the knowledgable circles. The belief is that Bijjala was Jaina by persuasion. Even a scholar like the late B. Lewis Rice speaks of Bijjala as a Jaina. This belief, as will be shown presently, is erroneous, historically unwarranted and contrary to facts. It gained currency at a late period on account of incorrect understanding of the real position, particularly through Jaina writers. Therefore, we feel it necessary to examine it critically and exhaustively to arrive at the historical truth.

This is felt all the more necessary, because it was the major issue and pivot, around which loomed large the conflict of religious faith and conviction between Bijjala and Basavēśvara. If we understand this problem correctly and in all its details, it will help appreciate the crucial events in the life of Basavēśvara in their proper perspective.

While investigating this question we are to draw upon epigraphical and literary sources to focus their light on it. The epigraphical sources, it may be noted, are authoritative and decisive, being contemporary and primary.

To start with, we may peep into the past history of Kalachuri family which is discussed earlier.
Early Findings

As seen earlier, the Kalachuri dynasty originally belonged to central India and it branched off subsequently. The early Kaṭachchuris as well as the members of their later offshoots were all staunch Śaivites in religious faith.

The Kalachuris of Karnataka preserved and faithfully maintained their time-honoured family traditions. Following in the footsteps of their forbears, they were firmly entrenched in the Śaivite faith. We have cited enough epigraphical evidence in support of this position!

Bijjala was Śaiva

Adverting to Bijjala in particular, there is nothing to indicate that he ever deviated from the ancestral faith. The names of three out of six of his sons are Śaivite, viz. Sōmēśvara, Mallikārjuna and Sankama. The name Sankama is nearer to Śankara. All these names are the names of Śiva.

In regard to Sōmēśvara who is familiarly known as Rāya-Murāri Sōvidēva, an inscription in the Shikaripur Taluka reveals that he was born by the grace of god Sōmanātha (i.e. Śiva) of Purikara, i.e. Purigere (modern Lakshmēśvar). The passage in question runs like this:

Having been graced by Sōmanātha of Purikara, the lord of the three worlds, king Bijjala secured a son named Sōma who was hundred fold valiant and an abode of victory.

As in the case of other rulers of the family, the praśasti or official eulogy of Bijjala also contain reference to Śiva's vehicle Nandi, which was the royal insignia,
specifically described as *Suvarṇa-vrishabha* or Golden Bull. Another notable feature of heraldry introduced in the Kalachuri *praśasti* is the sound of the drum shaped like Ṛamaru, a characteristic emblem of Śiva. Few royal *praśastis* contain such references to Nandi and Ṛamaru. An allusion to the Jaina deity Padmāvati commonly occurs in the *praśasti*, if the ruler and his family were adherents of the Jaina faith.⁴ Such an allusion is conspicuous by its absence in the *praśasti* of Bījjala. If Bījjala had ever anything to do with Jainism, a reference to this deity could have been traced in his *praśasti* or description.

I. Evidence of Epigraphs

That Bījjala was never interested in Jainism, nor did he at any time subscribe to this faith, is established by abundance of epigraphical evidence. In a verse extolling the virtues of Bījjala, repeated in two copper plate inscriptions, mention is made of his having bestowed gifts after the performance of sacrifices. One of these records belongs to his son Āhavamalla⁵ and another to his another son Singhaṇa.⁶

Ablur Inscription

At Ablur, in Dharwar District, exists an inscription⁷ on stone, narrating at length the religious dispute between Ėkāntada Rāmayya, a confirmed devotee of Śiva, viz. Sōmanātha of Abbalūr, and the Jaina residents of the place. This militant advocate of Śaivism vanquished the Jainas not only in a polemic bout on the superiority of God Śiva but also by performing miraculous exploits. Undeterred by this defeat
the Jainas lodged a complaint before Bijnala against Rāmayya. After hearing the appeal, Bijnala gave his verdict in favour of Rāmayya and dismissed the suit of the Jainas. He conferred a letter of victory to Rāmayya. And further impressed by the prowess of the god, Bijnala endowed a village to the above named favourite deity of Rāmayya at Abbalur after laving his feet. The above facts clearly show that Bijnala was more disposed to trust a Śaiva devotee than the Jainas. This event could be placed about 1160 A.D.

Balāligāve Record

More confirmatory evidence about Bijnala’s faith in Śaivism and partiality for the Śaiva teachers and institutions is provided by the following two epigraphs. One is from Balāligāve dated 1162 A.D. In the course of his official tour in the southern country, king Bijnala paid a visit to the Śaiva monastery Kōdiya Matha at Balāligāve. Impressed by the religious atmosphere and spiritual grandeur of the place, Bijnala decided, at the instance of his provincial governor Kasapayya Nāyaka, to make a perpetual grant to the religious establishment. Accordingly, after laving the feet of the great Pāṣupata teacher, sage Vāmaśakti, the superintendent of the religious establishment, Bijnala endowed the village Kirugēri in the tract of Nūrumbāḍa for the benefit of the temple of the god Dakshiṇā (Southern) Kēdārēśvara attached to the monastery. The income derived from the endowment was to be utilised for the daily worship and offerings of the deity, for feeding the ascetics and for imparting education.

Further, Bijnala endowed on the same occasion some villages in the area to the Śaiva deities and esta-
blishments at Balligāve and other places. Among them was god Brahmeśvara of Abbalūr figuring in the account of Ėkāntada Rāmayya. Bijjala made donations at this Śaiva centre (Balligāve) on other occasions also.

Another from Kukanur

The other inscription comes from Kukanur⁹ in Raichur District. This is dated 1163 A.D. It registers the gift of the village Edeyahalli to the god Mallikārjuna of the agrahāra town of Kukkanūr, by the officers of the region with the approval of king Bijjala. The approval for the grant was obtained on the holy occasion of a lunar eclipse, when Bijjala was camping at Hampe, a renowned Śaiva centre on the bank of the Tungabhadrā. The grant was registered while the king was engaged in the performance of Mahādānas (great customary gifts) according to the Hindu code of religious ceremonies, in the presence of the god Virūpāksha, the presiding deity of the place.

The above authentic documents which are contemporary and direct, are more than enough to establish beyond all doubt, that Bijjala was a firm adherent of the traditional Śaivite faith.

Besides the epigraphs cited above there do exist a good number of inscriptions of the time of Bijjala, which substantiate the above conclusion. But it is unnecessary to quote them all here and multiply the instances.

About Bijjala’s Sons

Following the traditions of the family and falling in line with the faith of their father, all the sons of Bijjala were Śaivite by persuasion. In the records of
these princes from Rāya-Murāri Sōvidēva to Singhaṇa, many grants made to the Śaiva deities are mentioned. For instance, the Śaiva establishments at Balligāve which was a great centre of Śaivism, received donations not only from Bijjala, but also from his three sons Rāya-Murāri Sōvidēva, Sankama and Āhavamalla. There are inscriptions of Sōvidēva and Sankama at Kukanūr, another Śaiva centre, registering gifts to the Śaiva deities there. We have a copper plate record of Singhaṇa, the last ruler of the family, describing the endowment of the entire village of Kukanur, made by this king, in favour of the Śaiva-Śākta goddess Jyēṣṭhā Dēvi of the place.

II. LITERARY EVIDENCE

Vachanas of Basavēśvara

Passing on to literary sources, we take into account at the outset a reference to the religious leanings of Bijjala made by Basavēśvara himself. According to him, there were two categories of persons in the society: one, Śivabhaktas or the enlightened devotees of Śiva belonging to his new school and the other, Bhavis or those who did not follow the new doctrine of Śaivism as preached by him and were thus condemned to a life of worldly pursuits. The former should keep themselves aloof from the latter and should not associate with them. Basavēśvara was criticised, it seems, by the advocates of the new faith for his contacts with and service under Bijjala who was a Bhavi. In this context he exclaims thus:

O my god of Kūḍalasangama! The great devotees, Pramathas scandalise me as sitting below the throne of Bijjala who is a Bhavi and serving him.
But they do not really know how I ever burn and
boil all for your sake, to serve you and your true
devotees and not to fatten my despicable frame
and swell my kith and kin.

Thus in the opinion of Basavēśvara, Bijjala was
only a Bhavi and not a Jaina.

We may also note the following position in this
context. In his Vachanas or Sayings, Basavēśvara, on
many occasions, attacks and runs down the various
religious faiths and their blind followers. If we care-
fully analyse such passages, we come to realise that the
main targets of his attacks were the blind followers of
the orthodox Hindu religion of Vedic or Brahmanical
traditions. It is true at the same time, he also holds
to ridicule, Jainism and the Jainas. But such passages
contain no reference to Bijjala.

Two Basavapurāṇas

Next in chronological order, we pass on to the
Telugu Basavapurāṇamu of Pālkurike Sōmanātha,
which may be assigned approximately to 1200 A.D.\(^{15}\)
In this work is narrated at length the story of the Šaiva
devotee Ėkāntada Rāmayya and his combat with the
Jainas. The main part of the story agrees in essential
details with the account of the Ablur epigraph noticed
above. The Jaina opponents are mentioned in a
number of passages and the king Bijjala also figures.
But he is not described as Jaina. At a later stage is
related the story of two Šaiva devotees Haralāyya and
Madhuvayya who were punished by Bijjala for following
the faith of Basavēśvara. But in this context also, it
is nowhere suggested that Bijjala was Jaina and his
antagonism to the Šaiva devotees was due to his parti-
ality for Jainism.\(^{16}\)
The Basavapurāṇa again, written in Kannada by Bhīma Kavi, closely follows in the footsteps of its Telugu prototype. Though this work was written as late as 1369 A.D., Bijjala is never mentioned herein as an adherent of Jainism, thus providing another chronological landmark in our study.

**Basavarājadēvara Ragaṇa**

The instances cited above, though they support our thesis that Bijjala was not Jaina, do not, however, enlighten us on the main question, viz., the genesis and character of the conflict that took shape between Bijjala and Basavēśvara. Fortunately, enough light is shed on this point by another near contemporary work, the Basavarājadēvara Ragaṇa of Harihara. This work may be ascribed approximately to the same period as that of Pālkurike Sōmanātha, i.e. 1200 A.D.

It must be noted at the outset that this work contains passages describing Bijjala, but none of them bears even a vague suggestion to his leanings towards Jainism.

The above evidence shows that Bijjala was undoubtedly an adherent of Śaivism. Similarly, Basavēśvara also was a firm devotee of Śiva. If so, a question arises, why should there be a conflict between the two on a religious matter?

The following incident graphically narrated by Harihara provides an insight into the real cause that sharply divided Bijjala and Basavēśvara.

After his appointment as Treasurer, Basavēśvara won the confidence of Bijjala by his ability. The former carried on his work efficiently without let or
hindrance. This afforded him a favourable opportunity to achieve his cherished objective and mission of life, viz. intensive devotion to Śiva and service of His true devotees. Such devotees were called Śivabhaktas or Bhaktas, Śivasaraṇas, Jangamas and Māhēśvaras.

Basavēśvara's zeal and fervour attracted a large number of devotees from far and near places. He treated them all with the highest reverence and fulfilled all their desires and requirements. Whatever their caste and community or social status, he made no distinction among them. Even the so-called untouchables were considered as equal to the high born Brāhmaṇas.

This conduct of Basavēśvara created jealousy and malice against him among the orthodox ranks of the society and particularly in the circle of courtiers and counsellors of Bijjala. Harihara names some of them in one place (Sthala VI) thus: Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, the guru of Bijjala, Mamchyaṇa Kramita, Kūchiga, Pōchipeddiga, etc. These are contemptuously called Vēdajāda, i.e. dunces as a result of mechanically learning the Vēdas.

Basavēśvara became more and more absorbed in devotion to Śiva and service of his devotees. Once in the course of his visits to the houses of the great Māhēśvaras, he stepped into the residence of Kambaliya Nāgīdēva, an untouchable, living in the outskirts of the city. There, he partook of the food that had been offered to Śiva and was given to him.

This act of Basavēśvara provided a golden opportunity to his enemies to conspire against him. The counsellors of Bijjala who were all Brāhmaṇas, such
as Nāraṇa Kramita, Kṛishṇa Peddi, Vishṇu Bhaṭṭa, Vishvaksēna Bhaṭṭa, Saura Peddi and others became jubilant and carried tales to Bijjala. Harihara gives eighteen names of such persons and abuses them as orthodox maniacs, Vedic dunces, showy fools and grassy paupers.

The counsellors complained to Bijjala as follows:

The conduct of Basava is becoming increasingly perverse day by day. He mixes with all and sundry, the riff-raff, calling them Māheśvaras, great devotees of Śiva. For him even an untouchable is a devotee. God, save our souls! We should not call him an untouchable! Just at this moment he has shared the food in the house of an untouchable in the outcasts’ quarter. And presently he is going to attend your court to pollute it. The situation has thus become intolerable. If this continues, we have no place here.

Bijjala listened to this and forthwith sent for Basavaśvara. Lest he would enter into the palace, Bijjala held the assembly in the open court outside.

Basavaśvara arrived there and was interrogated by Bijjala like this.

O Basavaṇṇa! Why do you behave like this? Besides being born in the noble Brāhmaṇa family, you are blessed with the devotion to Śiva. But you are not satisfied with this. Instead of living happily by pursuing the course of good conduct, your head is swollen with the excess of devotion. You are promiscuously mixing with the low-born outcasts calling them great Māheśvaras. You have now eaten food in their house and come here to pollute us all! This is not proper.
Hearing this, Basavarāja retorted with a slant:

O king of borrowed ears, devoid of brains! I have not taken food in the house of such untouchables as are ignorant of Hara (Śiva). Did I enter in the street of your Nāraṇa Kramita? Did I eat in the house of your Mukunda Bhaṭṭa? Did I approach your Saura Peddi? Did I touch your Dāmōdara Bhaṭṭa affectionately? Never, never!

Bijjala burned with rage to hear these words and argued:

O Bhāṇḍāri Basava! Why are you talking like this? Show me your authority to condemn the Brāhmaṇas following the path of the Vēdas, Śāstras, Purāṇas, Āgamas and sacrificial rituals as untouchables and to regard the untouchable devotees of Śiva as superior beings. Does blood ooze out when the body of a Brāhmaṇa is cut? And milk flows from the person of a devotee? Enough of this. Do not aggravate the matters. Indulge not in the superiority of your creed. Live peacefully.

Basavēśvara took up the challenge. He proclaimed:

O king! I take you by your words and demonstrate the truth of your own statement. I swear by God of Sangama and His devotees. Blood shall come out from the Brāhmaṇa’s body and milk shall flow from that of the devotee. Wait a moment.

Declaring thus, Basavēśvara went and fetched Kambaḷiya Nāgīdēva in a palanquin. In the presence of all he called a Brāhmaṇa and made an incision in his body. Instantly blood and worms gushed out in
a mass. They could not bear the sight and closed their eyes. Next he pricked the extremity of Nāgīdēva’s toe. And lo! Milk bubbled forth in a torrent turning into a pool. All looked at it with wonder, fear and astonishment.

Setting aside its miraculous aspect, the episode clearly shows that Bijjala clashed with Basavēśvara, because the latter propounded the new doctrine of Vīraśaivism and its alien social order, that totally differed from the old and orthodox traditions. The change Basavēśvara aimed at bringing about was a drastic reform.

No wonder, the orthodox rank and file of the society, not excluding Bijjala and his advisers, looked down upon this as heterodox and heretical.

The story of Nāgīdēva is also found in the narratives of Pālkurīke Sōmanātha and Bhīma Kavi in the Telugu and Kannada versions of the Basavaprāṇa. But it differs in certain details in these two works. The devotee is called Śiva Nāgimayya in place of Kambalīya Nāgīdēva of Harihara. The account of Harihara, however, is lively and forceful.

Rāghavāṇka, Lakkaṇṭha and Singirāja

Rāghavāṇka who was a junior contemporary of Harihara and lived about the same time (circa 1225 A.D.), refers to the death of Bijjala by Jagadēva, but there is no hint about the former being a Jaina by persuasion.

Next we examine two more literary works which may be assigned to the latter half and end of the fifteenth century. These are the Śivatattvachintāmaṇi
of Lakkaṇṇa Daṇḍēśa (circa 1450 A.D.) and the *Singirājapurāṇa* (circa 1500 A.D.). In these works, although Bijjala is mentioned in various contexts and although we expect a reference somewhere to his religious leanings if he really was a Jaina by faith, no such reference could be traced anywhere.

Thus the above survey of the literary works, which all belong to the Vīraśaiva writers, and scrutiny of references to Bijjala contained in them, right from the twelfth century down to the beginning of the sixteenth century, helps us draw the irresistible conclusion that Bijjala was never considered a follower of Jainism in the knowable circles, particularly among the Vīraśaivas who had a grudge against him, throughout this long period of four centuries. It is also noteworthy in this context that this conclusion stands in support of our earlier findings arrived at from the study of epigraphs.

**Sixteenth Century**

It is only in the sixteenth century that the erroneous belief about the Jaina leanings of Bijjala appears to have gained currency. This is attested by the literary work *Chennabasavapurāṇa* of Virūpāksha Paṇḍita. This again is a Vīraśaiva work dated 1584 A.D. The third *Sandhi* of this work describes the religious conditions prevailing before the advent of Chennabasavaṇṇa, nephew of Basavēśvara and his supporter. In this context, it is stated that the Jaina, Baudhā and Chārvāka creeds were in the ascendancy at that time and the Śaiva faith had declined. In the fifth *Sandhi* of this work, Bijjala is mentioned as Jina Bijjala (verse 6). However, we may note that the
expression ‘Jina’ is absent in a variant reading of the passage given in the footnote. Though this Purāṇa cannot be cited as historical evidence, it may be taken to reflect, to an extent, the belief of the age about the religious leanings of Bijjala.

Seventeenth Century and Later

The Bijjaḷarāyacharite of Dharani Paṇḍita26 is avowedly a Jaina poem written about 1650 A.D. The work is built up on hearsay Jaina traditions and the author’s aim is to establish the superiority of the Jaina creed. The entire set up is Jaina and Bijjala is depicted as a devout follower of this faith. Vīra-śaivism is caricatured and Basavaṇṇa, its sponsor, is shown to be a selfish and incompetent person who was often vanquished by Bijjala in religious argument.

The work is propagandistic in nature, representing a counter attack launched by the Jainas against the Vīra-śaivas. The ascendancy of Śaivism and Vīra-śaivism was among the causes that led to the unpopularity and decline of Jainism from the thirteenth century onwards. In order to defend their creed against the onslaughts of its opponents, the Jainas and Jaina writers adopted the course of vilifying Vīra-śaivism which they thought was their arch enemy. The establisher of this faith also came under their wrath. Not knowing the true nature of the religious conflict between Basavēśvara and Bijjala, the Jainas thought that it was due to the anti-Jaina attitude of the former and the Jaina creed of the latter. Though there are few historical facts in the Bijjaḷarāyacharite, worthy of credence, it serves as a sectarian record of popular belief and legend. It shows that the belief regarding
the Jaina leanings of Bijjala was well established by this period, particularly among the followers of Jainism.

The Jaina portrait of Bijjala is presented on similar lines in the *Bijjalarāyapurāṇa* of Chandrasāgara Varṇi, another Jaina author who lived about 1810 A.D.  

The story that Bijjala was Jaina by persuasion, as propagated by the Jainas and narrated by these two Jaina writers, has apparently made a strong impress on the minds of later generations who, unable to probe into the historical truth of long past, have come to believe it implicitly. It has misled many writers to the present day.

*Other Aspects*

There are other aspects of the question, whose study will enlighten us as to how and why Bijjala was identified, though wrongly, with Jainism by posterity. Let us go into the details.

It may be seen from the above discussion that two schools of Śaivism came to prominence after the advent of Basavēśvara, about the middle of the twelfth century. One that existed formerly, belonged to the conventional orthodox order. The followers of this old Śaivism believed in the *Varṇas* and *Āśramas* of the society and practised the time-honoured rituals and modes of worship emerging from Vedic sources. Bijjala and his counsellors, in fact, almost all the sections of the society were adherents of this type of religious faith and its traditions.

The new pattern of Śaivism ushered in by Basavēśvara, fundamentally differed from the Śaivism of
the old school. It cut asunder at the orthodox traditions, religious as well as social. It did not recognise the old social order of castes and creeds. It created a new religious faith and introduced a new social conduct on the fundamental basis of devotion to Śiva. All the true devotees of Śiva were one and equal without the distinction of caste or community, none high, none low. They were entitled to supreme reverence. All discriminations were eliminated in this new community or brotherhood of Śaiva devotees, known as Vīraśaivas.

Śaivite Upheaval

The age in which Basavēśvara lived was an age of Śaivite upheaval. There were other leaders of Śaivism who were actively working for the revival of Śaivism and the downfall of the heterodox creeds like Jainism and Buddhism that prevailed in the country. Buddhism had already lost its hold and was collapsing. The only other influential religion was Jainism which was still popular and had a large following. The advocates of the Śaivite revival, therefore, directed their attacks against Jainism and Jina’s followers, who thus became their first victims: Besides verbal disputes and theological arguments on the superiority of their creeds, these rival religionists invoked at times the aid of supernatural powers and scored over their adversaries by resorting to ordeals and performing miracles. It may be inferred from inscriptions and literary sources like the Basava-parāṇa, that this movement had started earlier during the eleventh century. It further derived inspiration from the example of the Śaiva movement in the Tamil country, as indicated by the glories of such Śaiva devotees, sung by the poet Harihara and others.
The movement of Śaivite revival gathered force about the middle of the twelfth century. It has to be noted that this movement was independent by itself and belonged to the orthodox order. We are unable to trace its precise relationship with the new Śaivite movement of Basavēśvara, which gained strength later. For instance, Ėkāntada Rāmayya had attained renown as a champion of old Śaivism even before 1160 A.D., as seen above.

Leaders of the Movement

The leaders of the movement of the orthodox school were aggressive and militant. Three such are known from the epigraphical sources. They were Ėkāntada Rāmayya, Goggidēva and Viruparasas. It is rather intriguing that the inscription furnishing details about the first contains no reference to Basavēśvara and the other two are strangers to Vīraśaiva literature.

Ėkāntada Rāmayya

In regard to Ėkāntada Rāmayya, we have noticed a few facts earlier. Originally he hailed from Aļand in Gulbarga District. Subsequently, he proceeded to and stayed for some time performing penance at Purigere or modern Lakshmēśvar in Dharwar District. This experience accentuated his devotion and religious aspirations. Moving further south, he went to Ablur in Hirekerur Taluka, where he succeeded in achieving his life’s mission. The Ablur epigraph graphically narrates his sanguinary combat with the Jainas in that stronghold of Jainism. In an all-out assault he emerged triumphant and converted large numbers of Jainas to Śaivism. Ėkāntada Rāmayya appears to have
been a senior contemporary of Basavēśvara. Along with other Śaiva saints of the Tamil country he is extolled as a great devotee of Śiva in the Vīraśaiva Purāṇas.29

Goggidēva

Goggidēva, styled Vīra (valourous) Goggidēvaras, figures in an inscription at Aṇṇigeri30 in Navalgund Taluka of Dharwar District, dated 1184 A.D. He was a prominent local chief, claiming descent in the lineage of the epic king Sagara. He held trusteeship of the Trīkūṭēśvara temple at Gadag. A formidable warrior on the field of battle, he was a firm devotee of Śiva. He sacrificed his wealth and resources for the promotion of Śiva’s faith. The epigraph describes him in the following terms.

The hunter of the wild beasts, the Jainas; a fire to the Jaina scriptures; an axe to the followers of the Jina; an eagle to the snakes, the adherents of the Jaina doctrine; he was God of Death to those who professed the Jaina creed.

Unshaken in encounters, veritable God of War on the fields of battle, Goggarasa smashed to atoms, the high-souled Jaina deity Ghaṭāntaki and reduced the Jina to an abject state, bereft of grandeur.

Viruparasa

Viruparasa, designated Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara Viruparasadēva, is known from an inscription at Tālīkōṭi31 in Muddebihal Taluka of Bijapur District, dated 1184 A.D. He was leader among the bands of Śaiva devotees who championed the faith of Śiva and waged wars against the supporters of the heterodox creeds of
Jina and Buddha. The following extract from the epigraph describes the activities of such votaries of Śiva.

Viruparasa was endowed with the encomium of the countless advocates of Śiva, who are adamantine hammer to the mountains of adverse doctrines; a conflagration to the wild forest of Jaina creed; quintessence of poison to those who cross their path; adept in crushing the Buddhist tenets; who can pull out the tongue of the God of Death or eat the poison fearlessly; who cause Hara to appear in the hall of contest by their intense devotion and demolish the partisans of hostile faiths; who have harassed the upholders of the alien faiths, encountering them at Pariyaḷige, Anilevāda, Uṇukallu, Sampagāvi, Bēḷūru, Māruḍige, Aṇampūru, Karahāḍa, Kembāvi, Bammakūru and other places in various parts of the country; who have pounded and powdered the Jaina temples and raised the thrones of Śivalingas, and have thus vindicated their conviction of faith and steadfastness of devotion, displaying aloft on the open altar the paramountcy of god Śiva.

It is interesting to note that Pariyaḷige in the above list of place names\textsuperscript{32} figures as the scene of an anecdote narrated in the Kannada Basavapurāṇa (Sandhi 51). More details about the above three Śaiva leaders are given in Chapter X below.

*Jainism versus Śaivism*

The above review clearly indicates that a powerful movement for the revival of Śaivism had been launched even prior to the time of Basavēśvara. It had gathered strength and vigour and was actively operating during the period when Basavēśvara was laying the foundation
of his new movement. The leaders of the old school worked within the sphere of conventional religion and traditional social order. They were intent upon reviving and restoring the Śaivite faith and not reforming the social order. As the greatest common factor between these two movements was the unswerving faith in Śiva, the activities of the orthodox school must have also helped Basavaśvara’s movement.

The leaders of the orthodox school were militant and aggressive. They had less to preach than to take vigorous action. Basavaśvara on the contrary, had to preach his new doctrine. His was a mission of faith and devotion, constructive and peaceful. His Sayings, though impulsive and forceful, do not preach destruction and violence.

The conflict between Bijjala and Basavaśvara was that between an orthodox and bigoted Śaiva and a reformist Śaiva. Simultaneously, at this time, conflicts were raging in other parts of the country, between the Jainas and the orthodox Śaivas. The Śaivas after all were apparently one. Unable to make a clear-cut distinction between the true nature of these conflicts, the difference being rather subtle and unintelligible to ordinary men, the later generations credulously identified the two, making Bijjala a Jaina, inimical to a Śaiva, and Basavaśvara a Śaiva, inimical to a Jaina. The Jainas who woefully suffered at the hands of the followers of the old as well as the new school of Śaivism, readily accepted Bijjala as the sole champion of their faith as against Basavaśvara whose followers had scored a victory, snatching away vast numbers of Jina’s adherents and admitting them in their fold. The results of the above investigation may usefully be summarised thus:
1. Bijjala was not at all a Jaina in religious faith. This fact stands supported by the testimony of contemporary epigraphs. Literary sources also substantiate this position. In the Vira-śaiva works and Purāṇas ranging from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, he is never mentioned as a Jaina. Only from the sixteenth century onwards it came to be believed that he was a Jaina. This belief was due to the misunderstanding and ignorance of the reality. The belief was propagated by the Jainas and Jaina writers who were interested in giving currency to it; since, by doing so, they thought, they could uphold their withering faith.

2. Bijjala, on the contrary, was a bigoted Śaiva. He subscribed to the doctrines and practices of the orthodox Hindu (Vedic or Brāhmanical) religion.

3. Bijjala clashed with Basavēśvara as the latter was intent upon establishing a new religious faith and social order. Basavēśvara preached the abolition of the superiority or inferiority of castes and communities. The soul of his reformist movement was true devotion to Śiva. All true devotees were equal without discrimination. Even an outcast devotee was entitled to supreme reverence. This revolt against the old religious faith and social order resulted in a series of conflicts and grave consequences.

4. In the age of Bijjala and Basavēśvara, Śaivism was being revived and restored by other reli-
gious leaders like Ėkāntada Rāmayya, who incessantly waged aggressive wars against Jainism which still wielded considerable influence. These leaders followed the traditional orthodox creed and were not reformists like Basavēśvara.

5. It was difficult for ordinary persons to properly understand the complicated issues involved in these conflicts. The dispute between the Śaiva reformer Basavēśvara and the orthodox Bijjala was considered as a duel between an ordinary Śaiva and a Jaina as in other cases. Thus Bijjala became a Jaina. This belief gained confirmation by repetition and propaganda.

6. The assumption that Bijjala was a Jaina is historically false and contrary to facts. This is proved by overwhelming evidence.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

2. See above, Chapter II.
4. See for instance the *praśasti* of the Sāntara chiefs who were Jainas; *ibid.*, Vol. VIII, Nr. 35 and 47.
13. Basava Vachanas, No. 710, Bhavi does not bear the devotional symbol Śivalinga on his person, whereas Bhakta does.
16. See Āśvāsa VI and VII.
17. See Sandhi 51 and 60.
19. Basava Ragaṇe, pp. 27, 31, 34, 36, 52. A reference on p. 53 to Jina and Jainas in a general way indicates that no special consideration was shown to the Jaina creed by and in the court of Bijjala. It was one among the many creeds.
23. Siddhārāmacarītra (Shivamogga, 1941), Sandhi VIII, verse 95.
24. See for instance, Śivatattvavachintāmaṇi, p. 253, verse 17; Singi-rājapurāṇa, Sandhi VII.
25. Published by Lingayata Literary Association, Dharwar, 1934.
29. Basavarāṇḍamu; Āśvāsa VI; Basavarāṇḍa, Sandhi 48.
32. Some of the places can be easily identified; for instance, Uṇukallu (Uṇkal near Hubli), Sampagāvi (Sampgaon, Bailhongal Taluka), Anaṃpūru (Alampur in Kurnool District), Karahaḍa (Karāḍ in Satara District), Kembāvi (Kembhāvi in Gulbarga District), Bammakūru (Bankur in Gulbarga District).
CHAPTER VII

LAST DAYS OF BIJJALA

Even from the day of his accession to the throne, clouds of calamity began to gather around the crown of Bijjala as indicated in the previous chapter. Ere long they threatened to rend the firmament bringing the down-pour of deluge on the newly created Kalachuri kingdom. This becomes manifest from a study of the events far and near.

Bijjala's Brothers and Sons

Of the two younger brothers of Bijjala mentioned earlier, Rājala appears to have died prematurely. The other, Maiḷugi, according to an inscription at Baḷgēri, was administering the Mulgund region, with his wife Lakshmādēvi, in 1156 A.D.

Bijjala had six sons, viz. Vajradēva, Sōmēśvara or Sōvidēva, which is a short form of Rāya-Murāri Sōvidēva, Mallikārjuna or Maiḷugi, Sankama, Āhavamalla and Singhaṅa. Vajradēva appears to have been the seniormost of the brothers and there are reasons to believe that he predeceased his father, leaving a grown-up son. This was Karna or Kannara, also called Kalidēva. This point will be elaborated in the next chapter. None of the brothers, it appears, were on good relations with Bijjala and also with one another. Not only were their relations strained, but each one backed by a circle of relatives and interested persons, longed to usurp the kingdom if an opportunity came. It is no wonder, the situation became so per-
fidious, because Bijjala had set an example and shown the way.³

*Family Feuds*

Intrigues and conspiracies among these parties must have been afoot in the palace and royal household soon after Bijjala commenced his rule, though the forces gathered momentum when the Kalachuri monarch actually stepped down from the throne in 1167 A.D. and the choice of his successor was known. The signal for the revolt was sounded when Bijjala nominated his second son Sōvidēva to succeed him. This act was simultaneously opposed by two contestants for the throne from two quarters. One was Maiḷugi, Bijjala's younger brother; and another, his grandson Karna. Both of them must have asserted that they were the rightful successors. The above narration is supported by epigraphical evidence.⁴

In the Balligāve inscription⁵ to be noticed in detail below, Sōvidēva is mentioned as the favourite son of Bijjala. It is also stated therein that the son was invested with authority by his father. This transfer of power, as we shall see, took place about the middle of 1167 A.D. But it is curious to observe that as early as 1165 A.D., that is to say, just three years after Bijjala's accession and two years prior to his withdrawal, Sōvidēva is found ruling with regal title in the province of Tardavāḍi as revealed by an epigraph from Muttagi.⁶ The record expressly states that the prince secured the kingdom by the prowess of his arms. It thus indicates that this dear son had defied the sovereignty of Bijjala and set up his independent rule at least over a part of his kingdom.⁷ It is significant to note in the
context that the Tardavadi province now under the authority of Sõvidēva was formerly governed by his father Bijjala and grandfather Permāḍi.\textsuperscript{8}

This was between father and son; now among the brothers.

What Sõvidēva did against his father, both his younger brothers, Mallikārjuna and Sankama did against him. Hardly had three years of Sõvidēva’s reign elapsed, when Mallikārjuna conspired to dethrone him. Disgusted by his treacherous ways, some of his supporters seem to have deserted Mallikārjuna. One such was general Kēśava. In an inscription from Muttaggi,\textsuperscript{9} dated 1170 A.D., in the reign of Sõvidēva, it is stated that Kēśava Daṇḍanāyaka, the king’s trusted minister and commander of the army, who was formerly in the service of Mallikārjuna gave up his side on account of his treacherous activities and became a follower of Sõvidēva. This attempt of Mallikārjuna must evidently have failed.

Subsequently, Mallikārjuna partially succeeded in another attempt towards the end of Sõvidēva’s reign. Epigraphs\textsuperscript{10} show that during 1175-1176 A.D., when Sõvidēva was the ruling king, his brother Mallikārjuna simultaneously exercised his authority over a portion of the Kalachuri kingdom assuming imperial titles.

Sankama, the fourth son of Bijjala, did not sit quiet in this scramble for power. Like Mallikārjuna, Sankama also raised the standard of revolt and set up his independent rule\textsuperscript{11} during the same closing years of Sõvidēva’s reign, viz. 1175-1176 A.D. We thus witness a strange phenomenon of three princes of the
Kalachuri house warring among themselves for supremacy over the kingdom, unlawfully captured by their father.

But the trouble did not end here. A similar exploit was performed by Āhavamalla, who commenced his independent rule during the reign period of his elder brother Sankama. Thus, when we know from epigraphs that Sankama actually ruled between 1176 and 1180 A.D., we have an inscription from Tāḷḷikōṭī\textsuperscript{12} which makes us believe that Āhavamalla started his regnal year from 1179 A.D.

Though some of the events cited above belong to a later period, they throw light on the realities that did already exist in the time of Bijjala.

**Bijjala Retires**

Under the stress of such circumstances, trapped in the whirlpool of battering relatives, administrative chaos, political confusion and socio-religious commotion caused by the Viraśaiva movement, Bijjala must have found himself in a state of insecurity and impending ruin. Therefore with a view to saving his kingdom from total disruption, he appears to have taken the step to retire and invest his son with regal power. This successor was Sōmeśvara or Sōvidēva.

An epigraph from Balligāve\textsuperscript{13} furnishes positive information on this incident. It introduces Bijjala with the usual eulogy containing sovereign titles and states that he enjoyed the unparalleled mastery of the earth. We are next told that he entrusted the entire responsibility of ruling the kingdom (\textit{samasta-rājya-bhara-nirūpita}) to his dear son Sōvidēva. This is followed by praise of this prince and his successful rule. The
record is dated the 16th year of the Kalachuri reckoning, Sarvadhāri, Vaiśākha Paurṇimā, lunar eclipse, Sunday. As the eclipse actually occurred in Chaitra, the lunar month Vaiśākha cited, is a mistake for Chaitra.\textsuperscript{14} This corresponds to March 24, 1168 A.D. An inscription at Kaḍlevāḍ in Bijapur District, dated September 18, 1168 A.D., mentions the victorious rule of Rāyamurāri Sōvidēva as emperor from Mangalīvēḍa.\textsuperscript{15} This date falling about six months after the date of the Ballīgāve epigraph, confirms its evidence on Sōvidēva’s earlier rule. The record cites the Šaka year 1090 and not the regnal year.

While discussing the initial year of the Kalachuri reckoning inaugurated by Bijjala, we have shown in a former context that it commenced in 1153 A.D., on the evidence of the Chikkalgi epigraph.\textsuperscript{16} The present inscription from Ballīgāve citing Sarvadhāri as the sixteenth year of the Kalachuri reckoning, substantiates our earlier conclusion. It shows that Bijjala was living on that date. We may particularly note that the Kalachuri reckoning started by Bijjala ended with him and we do not find its mention in the subsequent reigns of his sons.

It becomes clear from the Ballīgāve inscription that in March 1168 A.D., Sōvidēva was actually ruling and Bijjala who was alive, was not seated on the Kalachuri throne. He might have nominally relinquished his office and receded to the background some time earlier. This is indicated by the manner of description of the incident as well as the epigraphic evidence to be cited below. This evidence consists of inscriptions which show that, invested with authority, Sōvidēva started counting his reign right from 1167 A.D. itself.
Date of Bījjala’s Retirement

The Balligāve inscription noticed above was written on Chaitra Paunṣimā of the cyclic year Sarva-
dhāri. As Sōvidēva was already ruling on this date, we have to place the commencement of his reign some
time earlier in the previous cyclic year Sarvājit, which
must also be the last year of Bījjala’s reign. The above
assumption is based on the fact that the cyclic years
commenced from Chaitra. This conclusion is substan-
tiated by the following considerations.

Among the records of Sōvidēva yielding an early
date is an inscription from Niḍoṇi in Bijapur District.
It is dated his fourth regnal year, Vikṛiti, Āshāḍha 11,
Friday, corresponding to June 26, 1170 A.D. This
shows that before this tithi in the cyclic year Sarvājit,
he had started his rule. It may therefore be surmised
that Sōvidēva assumed regal authority during the
going months of Sarvājit or approximately between
March to June 1167 A.D. This also indicates the
approximate date of retirement of Bījjala.

It may, however, be noted that we come across
the following epigraphs which, though later than the
above date of retirement, mention Bījjala’s twelfth
regnal year. One such is the Chikka-Mudanūr inscrip-
tion, dated 19th July 1167 A.D. Another is
the Yali-Sirūr inscription of September 30, 1167 A.D.
A third one is the Arasibidi inscription, dated Decem-
ber, 26 of the same year. A record of Nadiharalha-
śli, dated 24th March, 1168 A.D., in his 13th
regnal year, states that Bījjala was ruling from Kalyāṇa
and mentions gifts to a Jaina temple. This date,
except for the regnal year, is identical with that of
the Balligâve inscription cited above. It thus becomes quite evident that though ostensibly Bijjala stepped down from his office, he still wielded political power. He took active interest in the affairs of the kingdom. And who could prevent him from this?

NOTES AND REFERENCES

2. Kalachuris, Chap. VIII.
3. While studying the history of Bijjala and his sons, we are reminded of similar events in the Moghul history, pertaining to Aurangzeb and his sons.
4. We have discussed in detail this episode in the Kalachuri history citing epigraphical evidence; see Kalachuris, Chap. VIII.
7. It has to be noted about this inscription that, though Sōvidēva is praised as the king, the usual formal phrase making reference to his victorious rule is conspicuous by its absence therein.
8. Kalachuris, Chap. V.
10. Kalachuris, Chap. VIII.
11. Ibid.
16. Above, Chapter III.
20. Ibid., No. 108.
21. Govind Pai: op. cit., p. 66; verified from other sources.
CHAPTER VIII

CHAOS AND TURMOIL

This, March 24, 1168 A.D. is the last date so far known from epigraphs about Bijjala's life. There is no other source letting in any more light on this point. Inscriptions afford no further information and we are left in the dark as to what happened to him later and how his life came to an end.

Bijjala's Death

But the end of Bijjala is an important event and we have to ascertain the true facts about it as far as possible. The task, however, is not easy, as the sources which seek to speak about it are literary and of a later period. Furthermore, being sectarian and inspired by different motives, these accounts are coloured with prejudices and overstatements. Hence it is necessary to exercise great caution before we accept them.

The first question one may ask is: Did Bijjala die a natural death? The answer is negative. Whatever their nature, all the sources agree in asserting that Bijjala was violently done away with by his opponents. This seems to be true, for he had created enemies in many quarters and they were waiting for revenge.

The next question we have to answer is: Was he done away with on account of political or religious enmity? We are on the horns of the dilemma while answering this question. The circumstances leading to his death are complicated and it is difficult to analyse them and probe into the mystery of the occurrence.
However, we shall examine the two possibilities with the help of the available information and try to arrive at the most plausible conclusion.

Claimants for the Throne

After the retirement of Bijaḷa and installation of Sōvidēva on the Kalachuri throne disturbances arose. Bijaḷa’s younger brother Maiḷugī appears to have first led the revolt and contested for the throne. But he was soon removed from the scene. Three inscriptions, one from Shikaripur Taluka, another from Davangere and a third one from Honnāḷi, praise Maiḷugī as the king who ruled after Bijaḷa.¹

The next contestant for the prize was Bijaḷa’s grandson, Karṇa or Kannara as disclosed by the first two epigraphs, referred to above. The name of this prince is mentioned as Karṇa in an inscription from Harasur, which will be noticed shortly. In the Shikaripur inscription the name is Kandara which can be derived from Kannara. The name Karṇa can be phonetically turned to yield the form Kannara. However, Kannara is commonly derived from Kṛishṇa and it is conspicuously met with in the inscriptions of the Rāśṭrakūṭa family. The real name of the prince appears to have been Karṇa only; for Karṇa occurs among the names of early ancestors of Bijaḷa. Its another form Kannara also is known from epigraphs. There are other instances wherein a similar confusion between Kṛishṇa and Karṇa is detected.² In the Davangere inscription noted above, this Kalachuri prince is named Kalidēva. This might be his epithet or alternate name. There is no justification to call it a mistake.³ Kali means brave.
Who was this Karṇa? Epigraphs state that he was the grandson of Bījjala. If so, who was his father? That his father must have been Bījjala’s eldest son is supported on two grounds. Firstly, if Karṇa had been born of a junior son of Bījjala, his claim to the throne could not have been justified and gained support in the royal circle and among the nobles. Secondly, the Shikaripur inscription noted above specifies Sōvidēva as the junior uncle of this prince. This is tantamount to saying that he was grandson of Bījjala through a son who was senior to Sōvidēva.

Now, among the sons of Bījjala, the little known name is Vajradēva. This prince appears to have been the seniormost son of Bījjala and would have predeceased his father. This explains the meagre knowledge evinced by the chroniclers of the Kalachuri court about him. Govind Pai while discussing this question, correctly postulates that Karṇa was the grandson of Bījjala through a senior son, but leaves the identity of this son unresolved. But it looks almost certain that Karṇa was the son of the above Vajradēva. Govind Pai’s assumption that Vajradēva was the youngest son of Bījjala is a conjecture without support.

The two inscriptions in question describe the events relating to Mailūgi and Karṇa as if they took place smoothly in the natural course without involving any conflict. They narrate the successive rules like this: Bījjala, then his brother Mailūgi, next the former’s grandson Kannara who was followed by his junior uncle Sōvidēva.

Succession of Events

But if one reads this account critically along with other epigraphs, one can clearly see that there was a
conflict and contest for the throne. The overwhelming evidence of records makes it clear that Bijjala’s nominee and legitimate successor was Sōvidēva. If so, what was the position of Maiḷugi and Karna who are mentioned barely in two or three inscriptions? How could a younger brother rule at any time when Bijjala had sons? Why should this brother be succeeded by Bijjala’s grandson, and he in turn by his junior uncle, i.e., Bijjala’s son again? It has therefore to be conceded that these intervening rulers had illegally seized power.

Govind Pai is misled by the simple narrative of the two inscriptions. He thinks that Maiḷugi and Karna enforced their authority while Bijjala was still ruling and that in order to avoid further crisis he abdicated the throne in favour of Sōvidēva.6 This interpretation does not explain why these princes rose in revolt. But our reading of the events is quite the other way. The revolts of Maiḷugi and Karna and their seizure of power followed as a consequence of Bijjala’s retirement and nomination of Sōvidēva as his immediate successor. The retirement was necessitated as indicated earlier, by the gravity of the situation created by other circumstances.7

An inscription from Harasur,8 discovered and published by us, clearly substantiates the above view. It is dated 1172 A.D. in the reign of Sōvidēva and speaks of the events that took place a few years ago. A high official of the state, a staunch supporter of Sōvidēva’s reign and one who played a leading role by helping this prince through a critical situation and established his authority in the Kalachuri kingdom, was the general Mādhava. The epigraph while narrating the achievements of this officer, states as follows.
We reproduce below the text of the original passage in the Kanda metre (lines 35-38) and also give its translation:

**TEXT**

Kaḻachuri-nṛpakula-rājyam
baḻavad-durmantri-Kasapayādīgaḻīmdam
Gaḻakuḷam-aṅgre nīja-dō-
rbaladind-aḷavaḍisi Mādhavam pesarvaḍedam
Adent-ene
Ākramisi rājyalakshmiya-
nakramadind-aḷda Karṇanam komdu dharā-
chakraman-aḷavaḍisīṭṭaṇ-a
nukramadim Sōma-nṛipana bhuja-mamḍaḷado

**TRANSLATION**

Mādhava became famous by setting right through the might of his arms the sovereignty of the rulers of the Kalachuri dynasty, which had been plunged into chaotic state by the machinations of the powerful, evil minded minister Kasapaya and others. This is how it happened.

Putting to death Karṇa, who having usurped the goddess of royalty, had illegitimately set up his rule, he—the general Mādhava—securely deposited the circle of earth by the rightful procedure within the grasp of arms of king Sōma.

**Opponents of Sōvidēva**

It becomes clear from the above extract that Karṇa led an opposition against Sōvidēva and not Bijjala. This further confirms the above interpretation of events that were in consequence of Bijjala’s retirement, and not leading to it. An important fact, not known hitherto from any other source, but disclosed by this epigraph, is that Kasapaya or Kasapayya played
a leading role in these disturbances. We do not precisely know how he acted and which particular party he assisted and supported.

The inscription describes Kasapayya as durmantri, a wicked counsellor. It seems he was backed by other officers who formed themselves into a ring, as gathered from the description. As seen above, Maiḷugi and Karna were the two main opponents of Sōvidēva. The present inscription tells that Karna was killed in the contest. It is rather intriguing that Maiḷugi does not figure in the account of the Harasur epigraph. Perhaps, his role was not so prominent. No inscription reveals the fate of Maiḷugi. Most probably he also met a similar doom.

It is a matter of guess whether Kasapayya's party first supported Maiḷugi and next turned to Karna after the former was removed from the scene. The impression created by the Harasur epigraph is that Sōvidēva's principal adversary was Karna and that he was done away with by his general Mādhava. We are persuaded to surmise from this that Karna was strong in his position, probably on account of his better claim to the Kalachuri throne. This position justifies our earlier assumption that Karna was the son of Bijjala's eldest son, Vajradēva.

**Role of Kasapayya Nāyaka**

The Harasur epigraph states that a state of confusion had been created in the Kalachuri kingdom by Kasapayya and others of his disposition. It is possible to interpret this assertion as referring to the subversive activities carried on by Kasapayya's group. It is not unlikely that powerful and influential as Kasapayya
was, he took advantage of the confused situation, created by Bijjala’s retirement and made a bold bid to usurp the Kalachuri throne for himself. Thus he would have been one more rival and adversary of Śōvidēva. The Harasur inscription speaks of this evil counsellor and his group first and then describes Karṇa’s usurpation of the kingdom. This is significant. It may possibly be surmised from this that the general Mādhava who successfully fought against the enemies of his master, dealt a fatal blow to Kasapayyya before turning to Karṇa. This surmise stands supported by the fact that this counsellor who figures so conspicuously in the epigraphs of Bijjala’s reign is unheard of subsequently.

There is an allusion to the above incident in the Siddharāmachāritra, a poetic work of Rāghavānka. It is narrated herein that Bijjala’s brother Karṇadēva sent a message to the saint Siddharāma of Sonnalige (modern Sholapur), seeking the latter’s blessings and help for establishing himself on the Kalachuri throne. It is clear from the context that Karṇadēva of the inscriptions and his namesake mentioned in the literary work are identical. Hence the description of Karṇadēva as Bijjala’s brother in the literary work must be an error. The error may be attributed to the confusion caused by the resemblance between the two expressions, momma meaning grandson, and tamma meaning younger brother. It is quite easy to explain the confusion, if we remember that Rāghavānka lived more than half a century later than Bijjala’s time and that the latter’s younger brother and grandson both participated in the struggle for the throne as seen in the above account.
Warring Parties

A review of the political conditions at the time of Bijjala’s retirement thus presents the following spectacle of warring interests and contesting parties:

1. Bijjala who ostensibly stayed away by retirement, still lending his support to his son Sōvidēva.

2. Sōvidēva who was the legitimate successor of Bijjala by nomination, asserting his legal and moral right. His staunch supporters were a band of high officers, prominent among whom was general Mādhava.

3. Bijjala’s younger brother Mailugi, backed by his clique.

4. Bijjala’s grandson Karṇa, son of his eldest son. Taking his stand on the rule of succession by seniority through his father, he appears to have enlisted the largest support among the rival claimants.

5. Minister Kasapayya backed by a ring of officers, intent upon usurping power for himself by a coup or in the event of failure, siding the rival claimants for the throne.

6. Leaders of the Vīraśaiva movement, who had rallied under the banner of Basavēśvara, determined to propagate his religio-social reforms. They were bitterly hostile to Bijjala on account of his opposition to the followers of the new faith.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

3. According to Govind Pai it is a mistake; see his *op. cit.*, p. 91. The name Kalidēva which means ‘valorous’, can be justified by citing his description in the inscription; see *Kalachuris*, Chap. VIII, section I.
5. *Kalachuris*, Chap. VIII, section I; Govind Pai: *op. cit.*, pp. 75 and 89 ff. As we have shown in the above work, Hēmādri’s Vajrin is to be identified with Sōvidēva’s son Vira Bijjala and not with Bijjala’s son Vajradēva. The latter assumption goes against the chronology of events. Govind Pai was not, unfortunately, aware of the existence of this Vira Bijjala who is known from an inscription at Sankh copied by us. See *Kalachuris*, Chap. IX.
7. Above, Chapter V.
8. While I was a student, I visited Harasur and copied this important record some time in 1930. However, I had no opportunity of publishing it immediately. Subsequently, the epigraph was published in the *Śaraṇa Sāhitya*, Vol. VIII, No. 10-11, 1946. I have utilised this discovery fully in my *Kalachuris*. This information has attracted the attention of scholars during recent years and the passage in question has been often cited or mentioned in the articles and books dealing with this subject. But it must be pointed out in fairness that this passage has been noticed and cited by the late M. R. Shrinivasamurti in his *Bhaktibhāṅgārī*, p. 88. The copy of the inscription was available to him in the manuscript collection of Mackenzie, preserved in the Oriental Library, Madras. When I copied the inscription and published it independently, I was not aware of its copy in the Mackenzie collection.
CHAPTER IX

END OF BIJJALA

In the previous chapter we have indicated that Bijjala did not die a natural death; and if otherwise, he was a victim of outside agency, we have posed the two-sided question: whether his death was due to a political or a religious cause. Now, in the light of the foregoing discussion we shall examine the issue critically and try to arrive at the probable truth.

The Sources

As the inscriptions furnish no light on the problem, we have to fall back on literary sources. These are of the nature of Purāṇas composed in Kannada verse. They belong to two schools or religious faiths, viz., Vīraśaiva and Jaina. According to the accounts given by these works which mutually differ in details, Bijjala became a victim of religious animosity. Before we scrutinize such statements, we have to consider the other possibility of his being disposed of by his political opponents.

Theory of Political Conspiracy

It was believed all these days and almost universally accepted that Bijjala was got rid of by the enthusiastic protagonists of the Vīraśaiva faith. But recently, a new theory has been propounded, advocating the view that Bijjala’s death was due to political conspiracy. The ring leader of this conspiracy is said to have been Kasapayya Nāyaka. The sponsor of this theory is apparently actuated by the motive of keeping Basa-
vēśvara and his followers away from the calumny of association with Bijjala’s death. But the theory is based on pure imagination.

Briefly stated, the theory is like this. Though Kasapayya was a trusted officer of Bijjala for some time, later, he became treacherous. He conspired to seize the Kalachuri throne and support Bijjala’s brother to occupy it. He was therefore opposed to the move of Bijjala to nominate Sōvidēva as his successor. He rallied round him a group of conspirators, waiting for an opportunity to play his role.

The situation in the meanwhile became explosive on account of the atrocities perpetrated by Bijjala against the followers of the Vīraśaiva faith. Kasapayya took advantage of the confused state and engineered the assassination of Bijjala at the hands of his mercenaries. The plot was so skilfully organised that nobody suspected Kasapayya’s hand in it. Bijjala’s kinsmen believed that Chennabasavaṇṇa who had become the leader of the Vīraśaiva movement now after the departure of Basavēśvara from Kalyāṇa, was responsible for this act. Sōvidēva therefore turned against Chennabasavaṇṇa and pursued him with his army out of Kalyāṇa to avenge his father’s murder.

At this juncture Kasapayya stepped forward and set up Bijjala’s brother Karṇa on the throne. This prince was killed by Sōvidēva’s general Mādhava. Kasapayya next supported Kalidēva, a minor grandson of Bijjala as the rightful successor to the Kalachuri throne. But he also met with a similar fate. Thus Sōvidēva’s path was cleared of the obstacles and he was enthroned as the Kalachuri king.
The Theory Examined

This theory attributing the assassination of Bijjala to Kasapayya, though ingenious, is imaginary, resulting from a misconception of facts. Particularly erroneous is the historical interpretation of the Harasur inscription. In the previous chapter we have discussed the course of events that appear to have taken place after the retirement of Bijjala, with the help of epigraphical sources. We have also indicated the possibility of Kasapayya's participation in the disturbances and confusion resulting from Bijjala's retirement and nomination of Sōvidēva as his successor.

But the presumption that Kasapayya conspired to seize the Kalachuri throne by engineering the murder of Bijjala, is gratuitous and unreasonable. Bijjala, who lived for about a year after he laid down his office in 1167, A. D. must have lost his political status and prominence. On the contrary, it was Sōvidēva who was now at the helm of political affairs. If Kasapayya did really aim at the Kalachuri throne, his principal target should have been Sōvidēva and not Bijjala. It could have little served Kasapayya's purpose to do away with Bijjala, leaving Sōvidēva free and powerful. Another presumption that the assassins of Bijjala were the agents of Kasapayya bears no scrutiny. Furthermore, this conspirator who shot up the trouble after the nomination of Sōvidēva appears to have been soon removed from the scene.

This theory, in its later construction, no doubt takes into account the facts revealed by the Harasur inscription. But this contains erroneous assumptions; for instance, as shown by us, Karṇa and Kalidēva are
identical and the former was the grandson and not the brother of Bijjala. If we read the epigraphical assertions carefully, we come to realise that Sōvidēva was the central figure and main cause of the disturbed political situation at the end of his father's reign. Thus Bijjala, whatever his former status and responsibility, was now reduced to a secondary position.

What is true of Kasapayya, is true of other political parties and their leaders who fought for the Kalachuri throne. The installation of Sōvidēva on the Kalachuri throne must have considerably subdued the sentiments of mounting hatred and revenge erstwhile directed against Bijjala in the political circles.

Religious Revenge

But the same would not be the case in respect of religious animosity. As described elsewhere, the sharp ideological differences between Bijjala and Basavēśvara in the religio-social matters took such a grave turn that the two stood as enemies to each other.² Bijjala started persecuting the followers of Basavēśvara as the literary accounts indicate. This culminated in inflicting the cruel punishment of torturing to death two innocent devotees of Śiva, Harāḷayya and Madhuvayya who were adherents of the new Vīraśaiva faith. This must have created the bitterest feelings of ill-will against Bijjala among Basavēśvara's followers. It may be emphasized that consistent with his continued hatred of the new faith and the political power which he still wielded, Bijjala was primarily responsible for this episode.

The religious feuds possess sharpest edges which are not easily blunted or broken. The rancour of
hatred against Bijjala could not have been mitigated, because he had stepped down from his office. Bijjala was still a force to reckon with, as he was playing the game behind the curtain. Basavēśvara’s followers vehemently denounced the act and became turbulent. The saner elements lost control over the extremist section. An emotional leader of this group was Jagadēva, who, assisted by his companions, Molleya and Bommaya, came forth to take revenge on Bijjala for his outrageous act. As a result, Bijjala was soon done away with. Some Vīraśaiva Purāṇas have sought to justify this act by showing that Basavēśvara indirectly approved it.

Thus Bijjala, it becomes apparent, became a victim of violence at the hands of religious fanatics and not his political opponents and self-seekers.

*Basavēśvara Not in the Picture*

There seems to prevail a sense of mental reservation in some quarters to admit the fact of Bijjala’s murder by Basavēśvara’s followers. Such an admission, it is presumed, will mean an aspersion on the fair name of Basavēśvara who did not preach violence. The originator of this new theory, reviewed above, is evidently exercised by such a sentiment and has therefore tried to interpret the events in a different way. But this interpretation, as shown above, is imaginary. One need not fight shy of historical facts that occurred centuries ago, simply because they touch the susceptibilities of some people in modern times. It must be borne in mind in this connection that there have been self-willed fanatics in all religious circles and their leaders cannot be held responsible or accused for the wanton acts perpetrated by such followers. The blame
cannot be laid at the door of the teacher if some unworthy persons have wrongly entered into the fold of his disciples, and unwittingly committed crimes against his faith and creed. It is unnecessary to cite many instances. The most convincing evidence would be the well-known incidents in the life of Mahatma Gandhi, the greatest apostle of truth and nonviolence of this century.

Literary Sources

In order to show that Bijjala did not succumb to the machinations of political parties, we have drawn above a brief account of the religious events that brought about his end. This account briefly narrates only one version of the incident according to one literary source, viz. the Basavapurāṇa.

The literary sources describing the incidents relating to the end of Bijjala are many. Chronologically, they belong to different periods and two different schools. It would be interesting to study these in detail as they present different versions of the incident. Such a study will help us find out the truth.

The two different schools into which these sources could be divided are Jaina and Vīraśaiva. We shall examine them one by one. First, the Jaina version.

The Jaina Accounts

Dharani Paṇḍita, the author of the Bijjāḷarāya-chaṁite lived about 1650 A.D. Describing the end of Bijjala, he says that while the king was returning from his victorious expedition from Kolhāpur, a Jaina lay follower sent by Basavēśvara, came to him and offered a poisoned mango fruit. By smelling this Bijjala died.
The story narrated by Chandrasāgara Varṇi, another Jaina writer who lived about 1810 A.D. is different. According to the Bijjarāyapurāṇa of this author, Bijjala abdicated the throne in favour of his son Sōvidēva, and taking the vow of sanyasana at the hands of the Jaina monk Yamadhara, expired by fasting unto death.

Both these accounts have to be rejected as they are untrustworthy in all respects. Firstly, they were written about five and seven centuries respectively after the occurrence of the event and could in no way be taken to relate the historical facts from a reasonable distance. Secondly, the authors were Jaina and never well-disposed towards Basavēśvara and his Vīraśaiva faith. As we have seen earlier, Bijjala was not Jaina by persuasion. But by misrepresentation, an erroneous view dubbing Bijjala as an adherent and advocate of Jainism, gained currency in the later period and was implicitly believed by all writers, Jaina as well as Vīraśaiva. The antagonism between Bijjala and Basavēśvara was consequently attributed to the opposition of these faiths. The two Jaina authors named above were nurtured in such traditional dogma and hence their views and accounts are necessarily coloured and prejudiced. Chandrasāgara Varṇi’s assertion in particular, referring to Bijjala’s demise by fasting unto death according to the vow of sanyasana or sallēkhana bears the typical hall mark of Jainism. Sanyasana is a Jaina technical expression connoting the peculiar vow of fasting unto death by religious rites when one despairs of life. It would be wrong to interpret it in the ordinary sense of renouncing the world and becoming a recluse.
Early Viṣṇava Writers

Now we go to the accounts of Viṣṇava authors. Harihara, the earliest writer, makes a passing reference to Jagadēva and Mollebommayya in one of his Ragālas. The next writer Rāghavānka also (circa 1225 A.D.) simply states that the death of Bijjala took place at the hands of the heroic Jagadēva as ordained by the sage Siddharāma. This statement is evidently intended to glorify the saint Siddharāma.

Next comes the account of Pālkurike Sōmanātha who lived almost about the same period (c. 1200 A.D.). Sōmanātha hailed from the border land between Karnataka and Āndhra and wrote in two languages, Kannada and Telugu. He was a great devotee of Basavēśvara and compiled for the first time an elaborate account of his master’s life in his Telugu work, the Basavapuraṇamu. The episode of Bijjala’s death is described with some circumstantial details in the last section of the seventh Āsvāsa of this work. It was later elaborated in the Kannada Basavapuruṇa. This has been briefly noticed above in our discussion under “religious revenge”. This version differs in minor details from the versions of subsequent Viṣṇava writers.

The evidence of the two Viṣṇava authors, Rāghavānka and Pālkurike Sōmanātha, cited above, is worthy of credence. Being the earliest writers who lived in the age nearer to the time of Basavēśvara and therefore had access to the reliable versions of the incident, we have to treat their narrations as trustworthy. On the contrary, if Bijjala had really died in some other manner, we shall have to assume that Rāghavānka
and Sōmanātha invented or believed a story concocted by interested persons, having no relation to facts. This would be absurd. Further, both being followers of Basavēśvara, they would be the last persons to lend their ears to a fictitious tale involving their master’s followers in the occurrence. A point of vital importance to be emphasized in this connection is that Jagadēva and Molleya-Bommaya, the heroes of the episode, were respectable citizens of social status and not mercenaries, as the author of the Kasapayya Theory has suggested. Jagadēva is referred to as Mantri, i.e. Counsellor, in the Basavapurāṇamu.

*Bhimakavi and Others*

The episode of Bijjala’s death is described on similar lines in the *Basavapurāṇa*, a Kannada work written in 1369 A.D. The author of this work was Bhīmakavi who followed the Telugu model of Pālkurike Sōmanātha.11 The main framework of the story and the narration of events in the Kannada version closely follow its prototype. However, this later work is enlarged by elaboration of details and descriptive embellishments. Minor differences also could be detected by critical examination.

Among the later Vīraśaiva writers, Virūpāksha Paṇḍita who lived in the sixteenth century, speaks of this incident, i.e. Bijjala’s murder by Jagadēva, in his *Chennabasavapurāṇa*12 (1584 A.D.). The episode is mentioned by Shaḍaksharadēva, in his *Vrishabhēndra-vijaya*13 (1655 A.D.). In some Vīraśaiva writings14 the story is related so graphically and with such circumstantial details that we are disposed to believe that it was based on a widely prevalent and persistent tradition.
Reliability of the Episode

No grounds exist to brush aside the Vīraśaiva version of the episode. Bījjala was inimical to Basavēśvara and followed the policy of repression and persecution against his followers. This naturally had its reaction and retaliation took place. Bījjala’s death would have created a feeling of exultation and triumph among some sections at least of the Vīraśaiva fraternity. It is not unlikely, therefore, that the episode in the course of narration by later writers would have lent itself to some colouring, addition of details and exaggeration. But the main facts of the event remained in tact.

In the wake of the catastrophe, a wave of vengeance swept over the followers of Basavēśvara, who abandoned Kalyāṇa and migrated to different quarters. Thus the story of Bījjala’s death, being narrated from mouth to mouth, spread to distant regions. Devoutly cherished in popular memory through generations and diligently preserved in literature, the account has survived as a living tradition worthy of credence.

Date of Bījjala’s Death

When did Bījjala die? It is difficult to give a precise answer to this question. There is no absolutely reliable evidence on this point. As we have noted, March 24, 1168 A.D. is the last authentic date when Bījjala was alive. He appears to have died soon after.

Two more events that deserve consideration in this context are: Basavēśvara’s expiry and Sōvidēva’s assumption of power to the Kalachuri throne. We shall examine the former while dealing with Basavēś-
vara. Suffice it to state here that he predeceased Bījjala and passed away about the end of 1167 A.D. In regard to Sōvidēva’s accession, it would have taken place, as seen earlier, some time between March and June, 1167 A.D.

We may briefly examine a few statements on Bījjala’s death met with in some literary sources, the Vīraśaiva and Jaina Purāṇas.

According to a Vīraśaiva tradition, Bījjala’s death took place in the cyclic year Rākshasa, on the full-moon day of Kārttika, Tuesday, at eighteen ghāṭikās from sunset. This may be scrutinised. The year Rākshasa occurred twice in the twelfth century in which Bījjala lived. This was in 1136 A.D. and 1196 A.D. Neither of these dates can be accepted, since they run counter to the known historical facts. The year 1136 A.D. is obviously out of question. Likewise, by no stretch of imagination one can be made to believe that Bījjala lived as late as 1196 A.D.

What then is the alternative? It is possible to construe the tradition in the following way. The cyclic year named, it appears, was not actual but symbolic. Rākshasa means monstrous, frightful, evil, etc. The year of Bījjala’s death was attended with calamitous events that dealt a severe blow to the newly founded Vīraśaiva faith. Hence it would have been called Rākshasa by its adherents and remembered as such by the generations. It cannot be explained otherwise. We know from our study that the cyclic year when Bījjala died, was actually Sarvadhāri.

Now another tradition comes before us; and this is a Jaina tradition. In his Bījjalārāyacharite, Dharāṇi
Paṇḍita avers that Bijjala died in the Kali year 4255, Prabhava, Kāṛttika śu. 10, Sunday.17 Let us examine this date. In the first instance, the Kali year 4255 corresponds to the cyclic year Bhāva and not Prabhava. This again coincided with 1154 A.D. This date also has to be forthwith discarded as it is contrary to known historical facts.

Similarly, the dates given in many other Vīraśaiva or Jaina works are fanciful and absurd. We shall discuss this question again in the context of Basavēśvara. Some traditions assign Bijjala's death in the month of Phālguna. This appears to be nearer the truth. Approximately, the death of Bijjala would have taken place by the end of March or beginning of April 1168 A.D.18

Three More Bijjalas

It would be befitting to consider in this context, some incidents and personages that were connected with the last days of Bijjala. According to the Chennabasavapurāṇa,19 the death of Bijjala was sought to be avenged by Aļiya Bijjala who marched with an army against Chennabasavaṇṇa, who had become the leader of the Vīraśaiva movement after Basavēśvara. Aļiya Bijjala is also mentioned in the Bijjalarāyacharite in the same context.20 He is said to have ordered the troops to proceed against the Jangamas. The identity of this Aļiya Bijjala is uncertain. He could not be Bijjala's son-in-law Chāvuṇḍa who was a ruler of the Sinda family of Erambarage, as Govind Pai has surmised.21 Firstly because, though the Sindas were matrimonially related with the Kalachuris, there is no evidence to show that the former participated either in the family
affairs or political activities of the latter. Secondly, Aliya Bijjala means son-in-law named Bijjala and not Bijjala's son-in-law. A famous instance is that of Aliya Rāmarāya, son-in-law of the Vijayanagara king Krishṇadēvarāya. Chāvuṇḍa, again, had a son named Bijjala, but his date is later and he cannot be son-in-law.

Another Bijjala is Immaḍi Bijjala who, as the Bijjalarāyacharite describes, was Yuvarāja and succeeded Bijjala to the Kalachuri throne after his father's demise. It is further stated in this work that he was backed by Chennabasavaṇṇa. As Fleet has rightly surmised, this could be Rāya-Murāri Sōvidēva, since the context and other details stand in support of this identification. The son, in this case, would have been styled after his father. Here also, Govind Pai's suggested identity of Immaḍi Bijjala with Sinda Bijjala, son of Chāvuṇḍa is beside the mark. As stated earlier, the Sinda rulers do not figure in any capacity in the Kalachuri affairs. It would be incorrect to assume that this grandson Bijjala of the Sinda family sat on the Kalachuri throne after Bijjala, brushing aside Bijjala's own nominee Sōvidēva and others.

One more Bijjala is introduced for the first time by an epigraphical discovery. This was Vīra Bijjala or Bijjala III, son of Rāya-Murāri Sōvidēva. He figures in an inscription from Sankh in the Jath Taluka of South Satara District, dated 1193 A.D. In the absence of relevant evidence we are not in a position to say whether he participated or was connected with the occurrences reviewed above. We avoid specula-
NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Patil M. P.: 'New light on Basavēśvara’s Life' (Kannada), pp. 109 ff. This account contains some wrong statements. It is needless to correct them all here. Also see Vīraśaiva (Kannada Quarterly), Vol. IV, No. 4, pp. 14 ff.
2. See below, Chapter XVI.
3. Basavēśvara’s precept and practice of non-violence is stressed by many writers. See Bhaktibhāṇḍāri, p. 101. Also see below Chapter XVIII.
4. Bijjarāyacharite, Canto XII, verses 75-79.
6. Bhaktibhāṇḍāri, p. 84.
7. Above, Chap. VI.
15. Above, Chap. VII.
17. Sandhi XII, verses 124-125.
18. Below, Chapter XXIII.
20. Sandhi XII, verse 81.
PART II: BASAVĒŚVARA

( CHAPTERS X—XXVII )

This Part constitutes the central theme of the study on Basavēśvara. The first five chapters (X-XIV) deal with the sources and their evaluation. In the next eight chapters (XV-XXII) is given a biographical sketch of this teacher, depicting his life, personality and the character of his movement. Various aspects and different viewpoints relating to them are duly considered. The chronological position is discussed in the following two chapters (XXIII-XXIV) and tentative dates are suggested for the important events in his life. The last three chapters (XXV-XXVII) expose the fallacies, sum up his contributions and bring out his true character.
CHAPTER X

RELIGION AND SOCIETY

We now commence our study of Basavēśvara. One of the prime objectives of his life as seen through his activities was to reform the religion and society of his age on a spiritual basis. For a proper understanding of his precepts and actions in pursuance of this objective, it is necessary to have a fair idea of the religious and social conditions of the land in his time. Hence a brief review of these is given here to serve as a background to the main theme.

Prior to and during the period of the twelfth century, several religious schools, faiths, creeds, sects and doctrines exercised influence over the minds and hearts of different communities, sections and groups of people. Some of the religious faiths like Buddhism and Jainism may be termed heterodox or heretical since they did not conform to the primary doctrines of conventional religion and ideology, handed down through time-honoured Vedic or orthodox Brahmanical traditions. Even the orthodox faiths and schools themselves were divided into several creeds and cults.

We shall consider the heterodox faiths first.

Buddhism

Though Buddhism never gained popularity and spread to the extent it did in north India, it had its limited appeal and secured a moderate following in many parts of Karnataka.
According to the Buddhist Pali work *Mahāvamsa*, Aśoka sent his missionaries to Banavāsi (North Kanara) and Mahishamanḍala (Mysore) to preach the gospel of Lord Buddha. Thus Banavāsi became the earliest centre of Buddhism. The Buddhist missionaries extended their activities from here and in the course of a few centuries, the neighbouring areas of North Kanara, South Kanara, Shimoga and Chitradurg districts including the Goa territory, came within the orbit of Buddhist faith. Baḷḷigāve was a renowned centre of Buddhism in the 11th century.

Proceeding northward, the areas of Dharwar and Bijapur districts shared their devotion to Buddhism. Buddhist *vihāras* were founded at Ďambaḷ in Mundargi Taluka and at Kōḷivāḍ in Hubli Taluka of Dharwar District. Buddhist antiquities have been traced at Bādāmi and Iṇḍi in Bijapur District. The Buddhist deities, Tārā and Avalokitēśvara were worshipped. The three main sects of Buddhism—Hīnayāna, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna—had their followers.

Inscriptions of Ablur and Tāḷikōṭi specifically mention the *Bauddhas* among the rivals encountered by Ėkāntada Rāmayya and Viruparasa, who were militant advocates of Śaivism. It is, however, interesting to note that the Sayings of Basavēśvara contain no reference to the followers of Buddhism, though allusions to the adherents of Jainism and other faiths are not wanting.

**Jainism**

Jainism enjoyed a more favourable position. As a result of the patronage it received at the hands of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa and Ganga monarchs and their subordi-
nates and the enthusiastic support of the subjects during the eighth to the tenth centuries, it spread throughout the length and breadth of Karnataka and attained the status of an almost universal religion. Though it began to lose its ground from the eleventh century onwards, still it retained its hold for over a century onward. In the period of its glory, Jaina temples and shrines cropped up everywhere; Jaina teachers and Jaina literature flourished.

Among the numerous strongholds of Jainism that came to prominence during this period, two of them attained pre-eminence. They were Kopaṇa or modern Koppal in Raichur District and Śravaṇa Belgoḷa in Hassan District.

Unique in the galaxy of zealous supporters of the Jaina doctrine even during the waning days of its glory, stands out the renowned saintly lady Dānachintāmaṇi Attimabbe. She was the wife of Nāgadeva, a general of the Chālukya king Satyāśraya Irivābeḍāṅga (997-1008 A.D.). After the demise of her husband, she dedicated her life for the promotion of the Jaina faith. Under her patronage, the renowned Kannada poet Ranna wrote the Ajitanāthapurāṇa. She got prepared one thousand copies of the Sāntināthapurāṇa and distributed them. She is said to have erected 1500 Jaina shrines in various places. One of them, it is interesting to note, was at Kalyāṇa. (See Appendix No. 1).

Tolerance in Religion

The Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa, though their dynastic god was Varāha, the Boar incarnation of Vishṇu, and though they worshipped Vishṇu, Śiva and other deities of the Hindu pantheon, followed, like other rulers of
the age, the liberal policy of religious tolerance, encouraging all faiths and creeds including Jainism.

A typical instance of religious tolerance is that of the Chalukya king Vikramāditya VI who practised it even in his own palace. His queen Jākalahēvi was an unswerving adherent of the Jaina creed. Impressed by her implicit faith, he not only permitted, but even afforded facilities to carry on the worship of the Jina according to her wishes in the royal precincts.

An inscription at Balligāve in Shimoga District avers that the city was a repository of shrines dedicated to the gods Vishṇu, Śiva, Brahmā, Jina and Buddha and also monastic establishments belonging to the followers of these sects. The passage in question runs thus:

Hari-Hara-Kamalāsana-Vi-
tarāga-Bauddhālayamgalimd-imtu vasum-
dhareg-esea pamcha-saradam-
tire pamcha-maṭhamga[esevu-v-ā-paṭṭanado]

We shall now deal with the orthodox faiths and creeds.

Vaishṇavism

The doctrine of Vishṇu, advocating the worship of this god in various names and forms like Vāsudēva, Kṛishṇa, Kēśava and Nārāyaṇa had taken root from early times. This was also known as Bhāgavata cult. The famous Halmidi inscription of about the fifth century A.D., commences with an invocation to Vishṇu.

The Chalukyas, one and all, were devotees of Vishṇu. Their tutelary deity was the Boar incarnation (Varāha) of this god whose figure graced their royal
crest and standard. One of the cave temples at Bādāmi is dedicated to this god. Temples and shrines set up in the name of this god, endowed by the rulers and officers, were thriving.

The concept of Hari-Hara, harmonising the cults of Vishṇu and Śiva, goes back to the sixth century. A sculptural representation of this twin deity is found in the Vaishṇava cave at Bādāmi excavated by Mangaliśa.

The character of Vaishṇavism or Bhāgavata cult prevalent at this period prior to the introduction of Vaishṇavism of Rāmānuja, is not known in details. It is interesting to note that in one of his Sayings, Basavēśvara speaks of the followers of Vishṇu who got their shoulders branded with the symbols of this god.

Sūrya, Śakti and other Cults

Epigraphical allusions and survivals of sculptures show that the Sun-god, Sūrya was represented by his images and worshipped in temples. Similarly, icons of Brahmā and Sarasvatī were installed for adoration. Homage was paid to Gaṇēśa also.

The cult of Śakti or mother goddess, glorifying the female energy was prevalent. The cult of Saptamātrikā or Seven Mothers goes to an early period. Śakti was usually conceived as the consort of Śiva, though she was given an independent status. The goddess assumed various forms and names, such as Kāli, Durgā, Chāmuṇḍā, Mahēśvari, Śankari, Mahishāsura-mardini, etc.

The Śakti cult in a special form was promulgated by Matsyēndranātha Siddha in Assam. In course of
time it travelled to the south and spread its influence. This cult, associated with the system of Yōga and developed under esoteric practices and rituals, came to be known as the Tāntric sect. Its followers propitiated the goddess Śakti as Yōgini and her shrines were designated Yōgapiṭhas or Śāktapiṭhas.

Under the impact of this sect, several sacred spots attained prominence as centres of Śakti worship in and around Karnataka. Renowned among them were Karavīra (Kolhāpur), Ankalagi (South Satara Taluka), Kukanur (Raichur District), Dēvēhosur (Dharwar District), Saundatti (Belgaum District) and Alampur (on Andhra border). Nurtured in Śākta environment, Mailāra Linga emerged as a popular deity, believed to be a manifestation of Śiva.

Śaivism

By far the earliest and most widely predominant religious faith was Śaivism. We are not here concerned with the antiquity of the cult of Śiva whose representations are traced in the Indus Valley survivals of the third millennium B.C. and who also figures in early Vedic literature. Suffice it to say that the followers of Śiva flourished in all parts of the country from Kashmir to Kanyākumāri.

Śaivism had branched off into various sects. Chief among them were Śaiva, Pāṣupata or Lākuḷa, Kālāmukha and Kāpālika. Their tenets were based on the Āgama works and they worshipped the god Śiva in various forms such as the Linga, four-armed Śiva, Nātarāja and Bhairava. The Kāpālikas invoked Śiva in his horrid form of Bhairava and indulged in reprehensible rites to propitiate this deity. The most
common ceremony and ritual observed by the followers of Śiva was the worship of Śivalinga enshrined in temples. Śaivism in Karnataka had contacts with and was influenced by Kashmir Śaivism and Śaivism of the Tamil country.

For two centuries and over, from the tenth century onwards, Śaivism of the Pāśupata or Lākūṭa doctrine, introduced much earlier, thrived in many parts of Karnataka. The founder of this sect was Lakulīśa who hailed from Gujarat and lived about the first century A.D. The Pāśupata cult was popularised in Karnataka by the Kālāmukha teachers who belonged to this school. They were erudite scholars, well-versed in many branches of knowledge. They constructed temples, established monasteries and administered as heads of these religious establishments. Their monasteries were repositories of learning and centres of education. Many priests in the Śaiva temples belonged to the Kālāmukha sect. Śrīśaila and Bālli-gāve were pre-eminent strongholds of the Kālāmukha teachers. Among many other foundations of this sect, mention may be made of Śūḍi and Hombal in Dharwar District and Kukanur in Raichur District.

The name Pāśupata of this school is derived from Paśupati (Lord of Paśus, the human beings), an appellation of Śiva. Its founder Lakulīśa was so called because he carried a lakuṭa (i.e. rod) in his hand. On account of the black mark borne on their face, the followers of the sect were termed Kālāmukha. The sculptures of Lakulīśa are found at Ellōrā, Bādāmi, Aihole, Paṭṭadakal and other places. The figures of Kālāmukha divines carved in stone and on inscribed slabs can be traced in many ancient sites.
Degenerate Faiths

Superstitious beliefs and faiths were rampant among the uneducated and un-enlightened sections of the masses. It was believed that diseases and calamities were caused by the evil spirits. Hence, out of fear and with a view to propitiating them, these agencies were worshipped. Deities who were dispensers of the destinies of the inhabitants of the villages and towns, deities who were in charge of thoroughfares and pathways, of rivers, streams and water reservoirs and waste lands, burial grounds and forests were conceived and worshipped. The adoration of Nāga or serpent was prevalent. The superstitions had in some instances descended to such low levels that any object such as ordinary trees and plants, stones in the streets, household articles and utensils, earthen vessels, winnowing baskets and even combs were revered.

The multiplicity of gods and deities had thus become sickening and the pinning of faith in them demeaned and demoralised men. It cut at the root of true religion and led them on wrong tracks.

Social Conditions

The society, as in other parts of India, had lost its elasticity and organised compactness. It was not confined to the main traditional divisions, originally designed on utilitarian grounds, which later crystallized into castes and communities, like the Brāhmaṇa, Kshatriya, Vaiśya, and Śūdra. It was split up into numerous subcastes, sections, coteries and groups, based on the differences of avocations and crafts, religious schools and creeds and also regional diversities. The untouchable class had long come into existence.
Free intercourse among the castes and classes was restricted and the rules regarding interdining and intermarrying were rigid. Ideas of superiority and inferiority of castes and creeds predominated while determining the social status of individuals and women were not considered on par with men.

*Outlook and Insight*

It is common experience that an ordinary man is a helpless creature drifting along the waves of circumstances over which he has no control. He takes for granted the social set up or religious order in which he is placed, never questioning its propriety. Blindfolded by usages and accustomed to trodden paths, he rarely raises his head against the social evils or religious inequities, though more often than not he suffers from them.

To a superficial observer or traditional thinker there was nothing wrong in the beliefs and practices of the religious creeds noticed above. But one endowed with true insight and introspection could discern their defects. For instance, with all their stress on self-reliance and deliverance from worldly sorrows, Buddhism and Jainism were more or less materialistic and lacking in divine grace and splendour. Undesirable rites had crept into the Buddhist fold and practices like nudity in Jainism were repulsive. There was nothing attractive to the common man in these heretic sects.

The orthodox faiths like Vaishnavism and Śaivism had in course of time hardened. Overladen with the exuberance of mechanical ritualism, their enlivening spiritual core was suppressed. Devotion had become an object of outward display and few understood the
inner secret of real faith. The teachers of the Pāṣupata-Kālāmukha school which had latterly gained ascendency, encouraged the temple building activity on a grand scale. This only added to the spectacular aspect of the prevailing faith without touching the inner core of true religion.

A sketch of the social conditions given above clearly shows that all was not well with the existing society. The high or low status of individuals was judged not so much by their merit and actions as by their birth in a particular caste or community. Discrimination stood in the way of treating men and men or men and women as equal. Such inequities did annoy at least some sensitive and discerning souls, though few came forward to raise their voice of dissatisfaction and protest.

Śaivite Revival

About the commencement of the twelfth century, a planned movement in favour of Śaivite faith was gathering force and momentum in the northern parts of Karnataka, viz. in the regions of Bijapur and Dharwar Districts. The spirited leaders of this upheaval belonged to the traditional order of Śaivism. Aggressive and militant, they were intent upon reviving Śaivism and establishing the supremacy of God Śiva, which had been overshadowed by the heretical faiths, Buddhism and Jainism, the latter in particular. Their activities were therefore directed against these heterodox creeds.

The Śaivite crusaders alluded to above were Ėkāntada Rāmayya, Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara Viruparasa and Vīra Goggidēva. Of the triad named, while the
first is known from inscriptions as well as literature, the other two are revealed by epigraphs only. Interesting details are available about the holy wars waged by them. Some of them have been given in an earlier context (Chapter VI above). A few more deserve mention here.

**CHAMPIONS OF ŚAIVISM**

*Ekāntada Rāmayya*

Prominent among the three was Ėkāntada Rāmayya. He was born of Brāhmaṇa parents, Purushottama and Padvamāba, who were residing at Alande, modern Aīland near Gulbarga. His mind was absorbed in Śivayōga (contemplation of Śiva) from his childhood. Subsequently, he went to Huligere, modern Lakshmīśvar in Dharwar District, and there meditated on God Dakshiṇa Sōmanātha. As ordained by this deity, he repaired to Ablur to fulfil his life’s mission.

While at Ablur, a stronghold of the Jainas, he was confronted by Śankara-gāvuna, the headman, along with other followers of Jina, who questioned the efficacy of Śaiva faith. This developed into an acrimonious dispute, in course of which Rāmeyya was challenged to establish the supremacy of Śiva over Jina by a pledge involving the severance of his head from the trunk and its restoration.

Rāmeyya accepted the challenge. The unprecedented miracle, as the story goes, did take place in the presence of the gazing public. His severed head was once again cemented to the body as before after a week. The Jainas who were thunder-struck, ran away helter skelter and many became the followers of Śiva. Rā-
mayya destroyed the Jaina images and shrines, and inflicted punishment on those who opposed him. He then erected a temple in the name of Vīra Sōmēśvara. This achievement made him famous far and wide.

The Jainas tried to raise their head and filed an appeal against Rāmayya before the Kalachuri king Bijjala II. But their suit was dismissed in favour of Rāmayya who snatched the document of victory from his opponents. Subsequently, he was honoured by the Chālukya ruler Sōmēśvara IV and also by the Kadamba ruler of Hāngal, Kāmadēva. On account of such singleminded implicit devotion to Śiva, Rāmayya came to be styled Ėkāntada Rāmayya. We may assign his activities approximately between 1130 to 1190 A.D.

Viruparasa and Goggidēva

Viruparasa held the high office of Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara. He belonged to the Baisa family and held his fief over the region of Hagaraṭage-300 in the Tālīkōṭi-Muddebihāl area. A sworn votary of Śiva, he carried on incessant warfare against the followers of rival creeds. He made various gifts for conducting worship in the temple of Vīra Baisēśvara in the name of all the Śaiva Gaṇas and for maintaining a monastery of the Gaṇas at Tālīkōṭi. So supreme was his faith in Śiva that he earned the encomium of the countless devotees of Śiva of the old (purātana) as well as of the new (nūtana) order.

Viruparasa figures in two inscriptions, one at Tālīkōṭi and another at Miṇajigi in Bijapur District, both dated 1184 A.D. His activities might be placed approximately about the same period as that of Ėkāntada Rāmayya, i.e. 1140 to 1190 A.D.
Vīra Goggidēva was a feudatory chief wielding considerable influence in the region of Gadag-Navalgund Talukas of Dharwar District. He distinguished himself by the prowess of his arms. He surrendered his body and soul, together with the gold he possessed, for the service of Śiva. He contributed to the supremacy of the Śaiva faith by annihilating the Jina and his adherents. We may place Vīra Goggidēva roughly about the same period as that of Viruparasā, i.e. 1140 to 1190 A.D., as the epigraph describing him is also dated 1184 A.D.

It is curious to note that these two champions of Śaivism, who rendered yeoman’s service for its revival, are known from no other source except through three epigraphs. The Vīraśaiva writers never mention them. Their achievements, though outstanding and memorable, appear to have been drowned in the roaring sounds of the drum of Ėkāntada Rāmayya on one side and that of Basavēśvara on another.

*A New Luminary*

On the background of the above phenomena, we have to observe the rise of another luminary on the horizon, who ushered in a new epoch in the history of Śaivism and whose splendour and eminence eclipsed the lustre of his predecessors.

This was Basavēśvara, the saint and seer. He viewed the then existing society and religion with his penetrating insight and at once realised that they were in urgent need of change and improvement. Therefore, he applied himself to the Herculian task of reforming their characters. An attempt is made in the following pages to study his life, career and activities.
A Doubt Cleared

In the above account we have held the view that Ėkāntada Rāmayya, Viruparasa and Goggidēva belonged to the traditional orthodox school of Śaivism, not subscribing to the doctrine of Vīraśaivism propounded by Basavēśvara. It is possible to raise an objection against this view on the following grounds.

First, they were not only contemporaries of Basavēśvara but also lived about two decades later after him. And further, as the main sphere of their activities was in the Bijapur-Dharwar area, not far away from Basavēśvara’s, they must have come under the spell of the latter. Secondly, the expressions like Purātana and Nūtana (ancient and modern galaxy of Śaiva saints), Asamkhyaṭa (devotees of Śiva), Gaṇa (close associates of Śiva) and Gaṇamathā (Śaiva monastic establishments) occurring in their description indicate their Vīraśaiva affinity.

This argument, however, has no basis of facts. In the volume of Vīraśaiva literature, not a single reference could be traced to Viruparasa and Goggidēva. This omission is conspicuous and otherwise inexplicable. Though Ėkāntada Rāmayya is mentioned and described therein, he takes his place among the grand community of Śaiva devotees in general and not as an associate or follower of Basavēśvara. Why so? Devotion to Śiva being a common feature of the old school as well as that of Basavēśvara, the latter freely claimed the members of the former to glorify the Śaiva cult. In the Telugu as well as Kannada Basavapuruṇa, Ėkāntada Rāmayya is said to have secretly visited Basavēśvara to witness his devotion. If the former were a camp
follower of the latter, where was the necessity of paying a secret visit? It is significant that in his account of Ėkāntada Rāmayya, Harihara makes no reference to Basavēśvara. The expressions like Purātana, Nūtana, Gaṇa, etc., do not exclusively go with Viśaśvāivism. They figure in the Śaiva terminology in general. These facts justify our view that the trio stood outside the orbit of Basavēśvara's new faith. We may also note that the inscriptions relating to the last two in particular, register gifts to the Pāśupata temples and teachers.

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CHAPTER XI

HISTORICITY OF BASAVESVARA

Till recently, Basavēśvara was the most controversial figure among the religious teachers of our country. Worst prejudices loomed large around his personality. His religion and philosophy were misunderstood and severely criticised with a perverted outlook. Some of the critics went to the extent of questioning his historicity, taking their stand on the perplexing situation of his not being mentioned in the epigraphs of the period, though religious and poetical works concerning him were available in plenty.

Fortunately, thanks to the painstaking researches and unbiased studies on the life and teachings of this teacher, along with the publication of Vīraśaiva literature by a band of devoted scholars during the past half a century, the mist obstructing the vision of this luminary, has been dispelled and his character and achievements are being viewed in true light with proper perspective.

Need of the Modern Age

Still, a great need is felt to present a historical account of this teacher dealing with his life and activities. The modern generation is not satisfied with legends and colourful stories narrated by our forefathers in different situations to meet the exigencies of the times. The supernatural elements and miraculous performances with which they are saturated, were obviously introduced to captivate the minds of ordinary persons and conventional followers of the faith. But
they fail to convince the inquisitive and the educated sections of the present age. Hence an authentic biography of this teacher based on historical material and projected on a chronological background, with a rational explanation of his personality will be welcome.

But such a venture is in no way easy to undertake. The most reliable sources for reconstructing the history of Basavēśvara in this context would be contemporary epigraphs. But there is the dearth of them. No epigraphs of the period in which Basavēśvara lived, alluding to him, have been discovered so far. Notwithstanding this, there are a good number of other sources which are worthy of study to extract more or less historical substance out of them. These are the religious literature and the Pūraṇas written by Viraṣaiva authors. Among them we have to include Basavēśvara's own Sayings and those of his colleagues and contemporaries like Chennabasavaṇṇa. Herein are scattered some biographical allusions.¹

_Viraṣaiva Purāṇas_

The Viraṣaiva Purāṇas are conceived according to the mythological traditions, their dominant note being devotional deification. The avowed intention of such compositions was to sing the glories of the Master as a superman and not to give historical facts about him. Some of the Purāṇas and poetical works are nearer in time to the theme of their treatment. In such narratives we can read more of history. The later Purāṇas are in general enlarged versions of their prototypes with a liberal admixture of legendary episodes.

By a diligent study of these works we can arrive at some historical probabilities. But our difficulty be-
comes insoluble when we are confronted with statements which are conflicting and contradictory.

Whatever be their value from the historical point of view, the positive merit that one can appreciate in the Vīraśaiva Purāṇas is that they stand testimony to the eminence of Basavēśvara who enjoyed vast popularity and attracted an ever increasing congregation of fervent devotees. Secondly, their purpose. The principal objective of the Purāṇas was to kindle the golden lamp of devotion in the heart of the common man and keep it always burning among the faithful. This aim has been more than fulfilled as attested by their warm reception and extensive appeal to the present day.

_Jaina Purāṇas_

As for the Jaina Purāṇas, they are most unreliable. Hostile in character and perverse in intent, their object was not merely to glorify the Jaina doctrine, but to discredit Basavēśvara and his religion. As a result, the image of Basavēśvara reflected in them is distorted and caricatured.

After the final departure of Basavēśvara, his followers experienced difficulties in propagating his faith for some time. In the fifteenth century, under the benign patronage of the Vijayanagara monarchs prosperity dawned on Vīraśaivism and its advocates. Organised efforts were made to place Vīraśaiva religion and philosophy on a sound footing and to popularise its tenets through monastic establishments and literature. The growth of Vīraśaivism sorely affected Jainism which was already facing disintegration and decay. The adherents of Jina, therefore, mustered strength and
engaged themselves in a struggle for survival. They resorted to the means of extolling their doctrine through legends and Purāṇas, a favourite device of the age. Like Basavēśvara who was the leading light of Vīra-śaivism, they contrived to set up an equally towering personage as his rival and opponent to support their faith. This could be none else than Bijjala who was an inveterate foe of Basavēśvara. The memory of Bijjala’s religious leanings and the true cause of his conflict with Basavēśvara had by this time become dim in the minds of the people. Thus it was easy to convert Bijjala who was really an orthodox Śaiva, into a confirmed Jaina who championed the cause of Jaina religion and philosophy.²

The Jaina works under reference are the Bijjaḷa-rāyacharite of Dharaṇi Paṇḍita and the Bijjaḷarāyapurāṇa of Chandrasāgara Varṇi, which were written about as late as the seventeenth and the nineteenth century respectively. The portraits of Bijjala and Basavēśvara presented in these works are inverted, the opposite of the original. Basavēśvara in particular, it may be noted, figures here as a despicable creature. We have discussed this topic earlier also in Chapter VI.

This literary propaganda achieved success to an extent. Though it could not obliterate the noble image of Basavēśvara, it did create prejudices against him which have persisted till today. In regard to Bijjala the success was complete. The misrepresented Jaina character of Bijjala established such a firm hold on the credulity of the generations that he is almost universally believed to be a Jaina to the present day.
Historicity of Basavēśvara

It is clear as the day that Basavēśvara was a historical personage. He lived, preached, practised and achieved. His personality, religion and philosophy have exercised a powerful influence through centuries on the generations of men to the present day. It would therefore be ridiculous to discuss this topic at this late hour. But since misconceptions die hard and as we have embarked on this study with a historical purpose, it would not be out of place to clarify the issue once for all beyond the shadow of suspicion.

The historicity of Basavēśvara was questioned by scholars who were obsessed with epigraphy, not being conversant with other authorities on the subject. The argument was that, since Basavēśvara is often described as a high official of the state, a chief minister of Bījjala, it is but natural to expect that he should be mentioned in at least some of the lithic records of Bījjala’s reign, which have been found in good number. But this expectation is falsified, since not a single inscription containing allusion to Basavēśvara has so far been traced. It was therefore concluded that this character might have been a product of imagination of the Vīra-śaiva Purānic writers.

It is needless to point out at length the fallacy of this argument; for epigraphs alone do not constitute the essential requisites of historicity. We are going to discuss at a later stage the probable reasons for the non-availability of the lithic records pertaining to Basavēśvara. Fortunately, however, to silence the tongues of the sceptics, a modest number of inscriptions pertaining to Basavēśvara have been brought to light.
True, later by a century or so, they are not contemporary. But this in no way detracts their value as authentic evidence. Unless it is proved otherwise, contemporary and near contemporary literature too is trustworthy in such an investigation.

As authentic as the epigraphs for the matter, we have the testimony of Basavēśvara’s own Sayings and those of his contemporaries like Allama Prabhu, Akka Mahādevi and Chennabasavana. We possess unquestionable evidence about the historicity of Bījjala, with whom Basavēśvara was closely associated for a good number of years. In at least four Sayings of Basavēśvara, Bījjala is mentioned by name. There are Sayings of Chennabasavana wherein both Bījjala and Basavēśvara find mention.

Next to these contemporary literary anthologies come the works of two near contemporary authors, Harihara of Hampe and Palkurike Somanātha of the Andhra region, who lived about 1200 A.D. The Basavarājadēvara Ragaṇe of the one and the Basavapurāṇamu of the other, narrate the episodes relating to Bījjala and Basavēśvara at length.

The foregoing facts are enough to establish the historicity of Basavēśvara beyond doubt. The historical value of the sources indicated in the above discussion will be explained in detail in the following chapters.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Suitable references will be cited wherever necessary in the next chapter wherein these points are treated more elaborately.
2. For details about the religious leanings of Bījjala see above, Part I, Chapter VI.
CHAPTER XII

BASAVĖŚVARA IN EPIGRAPHS

The foundations of the historicity of Basavēśvara are firmly laid in epigraphs and early literature. Before attempting to give a historical sketch of him we have to critically study these authentic sources for the information contained in them.

INSCRIPTIONS

The following inscriptions contain references to Basavēśvara:

1. Kaṇṇānūr inscription of Hoysaḷa Sōmēśvara, dated 1251 A. D.: There is reference to Karasthaḷa Basavidēva, i.e. Basavēśvara, along with other devotees named in this epigraph. The attribute Karasthaḷa is significant.

2. Hiriyūru inscription of Hoysaḷa Narasimha III, dated 1258-59 A. D.: In this record (lines 5-7) Basavayya, i.e. Basavēśvara is mentioned along with the renowned Śaiva devotees like Siriyāḷa, Bāṇa, Chōḷa, etc.

3. Arjunavāḍ inscription of the Sēṇa king Kannara, dated 1260 A. D.: The donee who received the gift, as stated in the epigraph, was Hāla Basavidēva. This was son of Kalidēva and grandson of Kāvarasa, who was son of Dēvarāja Munipa. This Dēvarāja might be an elder brother of Basavarāja, also called Sangana Basava. These two were sons of Mādirāja.

The genealogical sketch of the above details will be as follows:
Mādirāja

Dēvarāja
Kāvarasa
Kalidēvarasa
Hāla Basavidēva (1260 A.D.)

Basavarāja or Sangana Basava

The inscription furnishes some more details about these personages. They are like this. Mādirāja, the earliest ancestor of the family, was the lord of the foremost town of Bāgavāḍi situated in the tract of Tardavāḍi. Bāgavāḍi is modern Bāgēvāḍi and Tardavāḍi roughly corresponds to the area of modern Bijapur District. Basavarāja, an eminent personage of hallowed memory was known as Sangana Basava on account of his absorption in deep devotion to Purātananas (ancient devotees of Śiva), Jangamas (itinerant monks) and Linga (god Śiva in his symbolic form at Kūḍala Sangama) and actions solely dedicated for communion with Him. Dēvarāja is described as Munīpa, lord of the ascetics. Kalidēvarasa and Hāla Basavidēva are introduced with similar epithets of spiritual significance. Kāvarasa is called Jangama-parusa (fulfiller of the wishes of the Jangama devotees of Śiva). Hāla Basavidēva was an ardent follower of this faith.

These characteristic details leave no doubt in regard to the identity of Basavarāja with Basavēśvara whose personality is revealed by countless notices of like nature. We are going to extract more historical information from this record a little later.

4. Chauḍadāmpur inscription 4 of the Sēuna king Mahādēva, dated 1262 A.D.: This epigraph mentions
Basavayya, son of god Sangamēśa (Śiva), who is said to have been a manifestation of Śiva’s prefect Nandinātha. This description is in conformity with similar accounts found in the Basavapurāṇa and other Vīraśaiva Purāṇas. It indicates godly eminence of Basava.

5. Another inscription of the same place and of the same date:5 Sangana Basava, i.e. Basavēśvara is praised in two stanzas of this record, as a fervent devotee of Linga and Jangama, who had attained perfection by the grace of the galaxy of Śiva.

6. Maraḍīpur inscription6 of 1280 A. D.: Among a large number of renowned Śaiva devotees like Siriyāla, Dāśimayya, etc., mention is made of Sangana Basavayya, i.e. Basavēśvara.

7. Kallēdēvarapura inscription7 of Sēupa Rāmachandra, dated 1280 A. D.: The name Basavarāja occurs among the great assembly of Śaiva devotees like Chēra, Chōla, Nambi, etc.

8. Inscription on the boundary stone8 between the villages of Guṭihāl and Kuṇṭōji in Muddebhāl Taluka, Bijapur District: This states that the land, wherein the inscribed stone was originally set up, belonged to the illustrious Sangamanātha Basavarājadēva. Judging from the significant epithet associated with Basavarāja, it becomes clear that he could be none else than Basavēśvara. In the above instances also we can note a reference to Sangamanātha, the favourite deity of Basavēśvara, which is abbreviated as Sanga. It is possible to interpret the above passage either as land donated by Basavēśvara, or in the name of Basavēśvara. It could not possibly be land owned or received as gift by him. The epigraph bears no date; but can be assigned approximately to the 14th century.
9. Soraṭur inscription: This states that Gabbināyaka, an officer of Sidenāyaka of Handiganur had a ruined temple at Soraṭur renovated and the god Basavēśvara installed therein. The date of the epigraph may be equated to 1356 A.D.

Historical Facts

Of all the epigraphs enumerated above, the Arjunavāḍ inscription of 1260 A.D. is the most important historical document on Basavēśvara. It reveals a number of items of historical import about Basavēśvara, his personality and his family. They are as follows:

Basavarāja or Basavēśvara was the second son of Mādirāja, who was a nobleman and lord of the town of Bāgēvāḍi in the tract of Bijapur. Mādirāja had another son, named Dēvarāja, who was senior to Basavarāja. This information is not known from any other source including the Vīraśaiva Purāṇas. According to the description of these Purāṇas, it is interesting to note, the parents of Basavēśvara had no male issue and were favoured with this son by Nandīśvara who was pleased with their devotion.

Basavarāja was a great adherent of the god Śiva, ever absorbed in meditation, contemplating on the ancient Śaiva devotees and rendering service to the Jangamas, the itinerant Śaiva mendicants. His favourite personal deity was Sangamēśvara at Sangama. This name was shortened into Sanga and on account of his inseparable association with the god, he came to be popularly known as Sangana Basava, i.e. Basava of God Sanga. This appellation also yields the sense ‘Basava, son of Sanga’, which is apt as he cherished filial affection for his god. In course of time he rose
to such an eminence of saintly character that his name and memory were considered meritorious, endowed with auspicious sanctity.

The succession of the family continued in the line of the elder son Dēvarāja. We do not know about Basavarāja’s succession. Though he had a son as related in the Vīraśaiva Purāṇas, this inscription is silent about it. But we know that he died in childhood. The aristocratic as well as ascetic traditions were maintained in the family as denoted by their name-suffixes like rāja, arasa and dēva meaning lord, chief, ruler, etc., and epithets like munīpa and muniśa. Dēvarāja’s great-grandson and fourth descendant of Mādirāja was Hāla Basavidēva.

Like his ancestor Basavarāja, Hāla Basavidēva appears to have been an extra-ordinary personality, credited with an elevated secular status and great spiritual attainments. His high-sounding praśasti introduces him as a refuge of the whole earth, overlord of the foremost city of Kavilāsapura, heralded by the banner of Golden Bull and a great Māhēśvara (devotee of Mahēśvara, i.e. Śiva). He is extolled as severe in austerities, supreme in penance, prince of ascetics, god among men in the three worlds, who had conquered the physical needs and material enjoyments. He is further described as worshipper of the feet of Sixty-three Purāṇanas (ancient Śaiva devotees) and ever intent upon receiving the grace of Mahālinga and Jangamas. Though he is called yatirāya, prince of ascetics or monks, we are not sure if he was a householder or a recluse. According to the Vīraśaiva monastic traditions of Gurus or Teachers, even householders held the position as heads of monastic establish-
ments. Such Gurus were distinguished from the order of celebate monks and recluses, called Virakta.

Mādirāja was a resident of Bāgēvāḍi in Bijapur District and Basavarāja was born here. But, subsequently, this family appears to have shifted to the region of Hukkēri in Belgaum district. The village Arjunavāḍ where the present inscription was located is about a mile and a half from Hukkēri. The area of Kavilāsapura whose authority was held by Hāla Basavidēva, seems to have included the present day villages of Arjunavāḍ, Kōchcharige and Mosaraguppi.

The Arjunavāḍ inscription is dated 1260 A.D. On the basis of this year, we can suggest a provisional date for Basavēśvara. For this we have to retrace backward in time. From his description, Hāla Basavidēva appears to have been of a fairly advanced age. Assuming that he was 60 years old at that time, his date of birth would be 1200 A.D. The maximum period for a generation is reckoned to be 30 years and this longer span of calculation can reasonably be adopted in the present case, a family of religious persons. Going reverse, the birth dates of Kalidēva, Kāvarasa and Dēvarāja would be 1170, 1140 and 1110 A.D. respectively. Lastly, Dēvarāja’s younger brother Basavarāja would have been born in about 1115 A.D. This date is close to what we are going to suggest later. All these dates are in round figures, being liberally approximate, permitting margins of a few years this side or that side. It will be proved with the help of epigraphical evidence that Basavēśvara’s last date is 1167 A.D.

The majority of inscriptions listed above belong to a period, more or less a century later than the time
of Basavēśvara. Within this time he was hailed as a supreme devotee of Śiva and a godly personality. He was canonized and given a high rank in the galaxy of Śaiva saints of the past and contemporary age. The galaxy consists of the following names: Siriyāla, Dāsimayya, Ōhila, Udbhāta, Nambi, Kumbāra Guṇḍa, Aṇḍavala, Karikāla Chōla, Bhōja, Bāna, Mayūra, Kālīdāsa, Kēśirāja Daṇḍāyaka, Surigeya Chalvaḍarāya, Kēśavarāja, Jagadēva, Ėkāntada Rāmayya, Sonnaligeya Rāmayya, Huligereya Ponnayya, Neluvigeya Sāntayya, Chēra, Chikka, Kakka, Chenna, Honna, Bamka, Sinda Ballāla.

The reverence for this teacher increased with the passage of time. Consequently, he was deified and temples were erected in his honour to consecrate his memory. This is illustrated by the testimony of a later epigraph of the 14th century, mentioned above.

**Managōli Epigraph**

About eleven miles from Bāgēvāḍi lies a village named Managōli.¹¹ This village contains an inscription of the twelfth century, mentioning Basavarasa who was a devotee of Śiva. The proximity of Managōli from Bāgēvāḍi, the birth place of Basavēśvara, coupled with the identity of the name of this person and his religious leanings, has led some scholars to believe that Basavarasa of the Managōli epigraph was Basavēśvara. This view was first propounded by the late Dr. Fleet while editing the record in 1899. He averred:

The occurrence of the names Basava and Mādirāja in this Śaiva record from the neighbourhood of Bāgēvāḍi and in connection with the foundation and endowment of a Linga temple, is rather
suggestive of our having at last met with an epigraphic mention of the original of that Basava who, according to the Lingayat traditions as embodied in the Basava Purāṇa and Channa-basava Purāṇa, was born at Bāgēwāḍi to a Śaiva Brāhmaṇa named Mādirāja. (The italics are ours.)

This view which was put forth cautiously as a suggestion and not as an authenticated fact, has misled many a later writer on the subject. The opinions are divided and it has become a controversial issue to a certain extent. The Managōḷī inscription is still cited as epigraphical evidence on the historicity of Basavēśvara. This position has made it necessary to examine the issue critically and exhaustively in all its bearings.

The relevant historical information culled out from the Managōḷī inscription would be as follows:

Formerly, Taila II (973-997 A.D.), the founder of the later line of the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa, endowed the agrahāra village of Manigavalli (modern Managōḷī) to Īśvara Ghaliśāsa of Harīta gōtra, who was the principal of the five hundred Mahājanas of the place. A later descendant of this Īśvara was Mādhava or Mādirāja who also held the office of the headman of the Mahājanas of Manigavalli.

A prominent member of this assembly of learned Mahājanas was Basava or Basavarasa of Kāśyapa gōtra and Vāji family. He was son of Chandirāja and Chandrāmbike. Being a great devotee of Mahēśvara, he constructed a splendid temple to the Linga deity named Kalidēva at Manigavalli. A grant of land was made to the deity by Bammaṇayya, an officer of the Chālukya king Jagadēkamalla in his 5th regnal year, corresponding to 1142 A.D. A few years later, in
1161 A.D. during the rule of Kalachuri Bijjala II, members of the mercantile community made donations to this god.

Mādirāja and Basavarasa of the foregoing account belonged to two different families, not related to each other, as seen from their gōtra and other details. In regard to Basavarasa, he was an entirely different person having no connection with Basavēśvara. The reasons are as follows:

1. Basavēśvara, according to Harihara, belonged to Kamme Kula or family. His gōtra is not mentioned by him. Even the Arjunavād inscription is silent about it. Apparently, the reason was that he had severed connection with the Brāhmanic traditions. Only Singirāja refers to his gōtra as Sānkhyaśāyaṇa. But this is wrong, as we shall see below later. (See below Chapter XXII). Basavarasa, on the contrary, was born in the Vāji family and his gōtra was Kāśyapa. We may note that the gōtra of Mādirāja of the record was Harīta.

2. The parents of Basavarasa were Chandirāja and Chandrāmbike, whereas Basavēśvara’s parents were Mādirāja and Mādāmbike.

3. The date of Basavēśvara’s birth is not settled. Still, it is certain that he was living in 1142 A.D., the date of the Maṇagōli epigraph. We know the details of his career also. He did not subscribe to the Brāhmanic creed and remain in that fold. It is therefore absurd to assume that he was a member of the Mahājana assembly of the agrahāra village. Further,
it was against his doctrine and creed to erect a temple for the worship of the god Śiva. Basavēśvara and his followers are worshippers of *Iṣṭa Linga* (consecrated individual Śaiva symbol) which is borne on the body. Worship of god in a temple does not find favour with them. In one of his Sayings, Basavēśvara proclaims that the body itself was the external shrine for the god dwelling within.

4. The temple of Kalidēva belonged to the followers of the Kālāmukha sect of the Pāṣupata school. This is evident from the description of the priest holding charge of the temple, Sadyojāta Paṇḍita, as a Kālāmukha austere ascetic of Brāhmaṇa family. Maṇigavallī was a centre of Pāṣupata Kālāmukha sect. Basavēśvara was in no way a follower of the Pāṣupata school.

5. The Maṇagōḷi inscription describes the erection of the Kalidēva temple by Basavarasa, as an earlier event. Subsequently, a grant was made to this temple in 1142 A.D. Since Basavarasa’s name does not occur in the grant portion of the record, it is doubtful if he was alive at this time; perhaps not. Again, when gifts were made to it later in 1161 A.D., his name is not mentioned. These omissions are noteworthy.

It becomes thus clear that Basavarasa of the Maṇagōḷi epigraph and Basavēśvara were entirely different personages. Arguments put forth to explain away the disparities between them on the ground that Mādi-
rāja of Managōli inscription might be the adopted father of Basavēśvara, etc. are merely speculative and baseless, not supported by reasonable facts. Again, one Mādirāja could not become headman of two agrahāra towns, Maṇigavallī and Bāgēvādi. Such arguments have been advanced by persons who are not conversant with epigraphical literature. A peep into the inscriptions of the period reveals that personal names like Mādirāja, Mādarasa, Basava, Basavarasa, Basavayya, were fairly common. In order to distinguish Basavēśvara from such, his name Sangana Basava gained popular currency. In addition, we may note that Śaivism being the prevalent faith, there were many Śaivite centres like Maṇigavallī and great devotees of Mahēśvara Śiva like Basavarasa. But their Śaivism was different from the Śaivism of Basavēśvara.

In conclusion, it may be positively affirmed that the theory of identity of Basavarasa of the Managōli record with Basavēśvara stands discarded once for all and the fact of their being distinct individuals is established beyond doubt.

Balligāve Inscription

An inscription at Balligāve\(^{12}\) is cited by some writers\(^{13}\) as an epigraphical allusion to Basavēśvara. The passage in question occurring in the context of the recipients of the gift runs thus:

Kāśyapa-gōtrāṇām Basavaṇa
Paṭṭavardhana Pradhāni Nārāyaṇadēva
Mutukuru Hariharabhaṭṭa
Hariyaṇa Māyidēvabhaṭṭānām.

The following five persons all of whom belonged to the Kāśyapa gōtra are enumerated here: 1. Basavaṇa,
2. Pradhāni Nārāyaṇadēva of Paṭṭavardhana family,
3. Muttukūra Hariharabhaṭṭa, 4. Hariyaṇṇa and
5. Māyidēvabhaṭṭa.

Like Hariyaṇṇa and Māyidēva, the name Basavaṇa stands alone without adjuncts. The epithets, Paṭṭavardhana and Pradhāni, go with Nārāyaṇadēva and not with Basavaṇa as in similar instances. Paṭṭavardhana which is a family name, generally precedes the personal name. For instance, a person named Paṭṭavardhana Āditya Ghaḷisāsa figures in a contemporary epigraph at Kukanūr in Raichur District.

**Multiplicity of Basava**

Thus, the only information that can be extracted from this record is of a person named Basavaṇa of Kāsyapa gōtra. By no stretch of imagination he could be connected with Basavēśvara. The record is dated 1118 A.D. This date further militates against the suggested identity. How could Basavēśvara who was just a boy about this date, could be beneficiary of a grant?

In regard to the occurrence of the name Basava during this period, one or two instances among many may be cited. A high officer named Bhaṇḍārada Basavamayya is mentioned in an inscription of 1148 A.D. at Hosur in Gadag Taluka of Dharwar District. In an epigraph at Lakkunḍi in the same district, dated 1184 A.D., figures a coin contractor called Basavarasa Siddhayya. Another person of the same profession named Basavaṇṇa appears in a later context in the same record.

Identity of names is therefore a misleading factor and it cannot be adduced as evidence to prove a historical issue.
Kasapayya Nāyaka

By an ingenious interpretation of the sources, another character is introduced to play the role of a duplicate in the drama of Basavēśvara. This is Kasapayya Nāyaka who is sought to be identified with Basavēśvara. The sponsors of this view were apparently actuated by the motive of providing epigraphical basis for the historicity of Basavēśvara. Its supporters then found in it a welcome feature of novelty, which would give a romantic touch to his personality. Such writings have misled and confused the public mind.

The theory of the identity of Basavēśvara with Kasapayya rests on the fourfold arguments, the pillars supporting it, so to say. They are as follows:

1. The personal name Kasapayya whose Sanskrit original is Kāśyapēya is derived from the gōtra name Kāśyapa. Basavēśvara belonged to this gōtra as disclosed by the Managōli and other inscriptions. Thus Basavēśvara became Kasapayya by assuming the gōtra name as his personal name.

2. Like Basavēśvara, Kasapayya was a high officer of the state in the reign of Bijjala. He was governor of the Banavāsi province and supreme in authority. He is described as Mahāpradhāna, i.e. Great Minister, in epigraphs.

3. As with Basavēśvara, Kasapayya was endowed with religious zeal being a devout follower of Śiva. He made gifts to Śaiva teachers and institutions.
4. As in the case of Basavēśvara, Kasapayya was intimately associated with Bijjala and his career coincides with the rise of the latter in power.

These arguments are superficial and trivial. In regard to the first one, the assumption that Basavēśvara took his gōtra name is simply absurd. It is ridiculous to presume that Basavēśvara who openly revolted against Brāhmanism, had any attachment for the gōtra, which was a traditional symbol of the creed. Moreover, we have conclusively proved that Basavarasa of Managōli and Baḷligāve records belonging to Kāśyapa gōtra, were entirely different individuals.

As for the other arguments, they are of a general nature and possess no specific weight to determine the particular issue. Epigraphical instances may be cited to show that there were other high and trusted officers during this period, who bore the epithet Mahāpradhāna, were endowed with religious zeal and devoted to the Śaiva faith. These qualifications were not the distinguishing features of Kasapayya alone.

It may be added that there are few instances of one and the same person functioning under his proper name in one region and gōtra name in another. In the present case, this is physically impossible. Kasapayya functioned at Banavāsi and Basavēśvara at Kalyāṇa and these places are about two hundred miles away from each other. Secondly, neither in inscriptions, nor in literary works can we trace a single reference to Kasapayya as Basava or vice versa. Thirdly, it is inconceivable why Kasapayya should suppress his proper name Basavēśvara, if that
was really so, instead of feeling proud of it. Lastly, where was the necessity and what was the purpose behind this duplicity?

In our study of Bijjala earlier (Chapter V), we have given a reliable sketch of the political career of Kasapayya with the help of epigraphs and shown that he was a trusted officer of the Kalachuri governor, who supported the latter in his ambition to usurp the Chālukya throne. We have also shown that he played a signal role in the struggle for accession after the withdrawal of Bijjala. We have cited in this context an illuminating passage from the Harasur inscription, wherein he is described as an “evil minister”. It is really unfortunate that such an opportunist and political adventurer has been chosen for identification with a saintly person like Basavēśvara by the advocates of this new theory which is solely imaginary and ill-conceived.

Inscription of Maḍivāla Māchayya

We may close this epigraphical scrutiny by citing an interesting epigraphical discovery which seems to introduce welcome light in our study. The inscription hails from Kalyāṇa or Basavakalyāṇa, engraved on a stone found near the famous Tripurāntaka tank. It registers a gift to Maḍivāla (washerman) Mākeya of the god Tripurāntaka by Maḍivāla (washerman), Basava of king Trailōkyamalla, who must be Taila III. The record bears no date, but palaeographically, it can be assigned right within the twelfth century. As k and ch are interchangeable, it seems likely that Maḍivāla Mākeya mentioned here might be the renowned Maḍivāla Māchayya of Vīraśaiva accounts. He was a great
Śaiva devotee, a companion and follower of Basavēśvara. He figures in the Sayings of Basavēśvara and those of Chennabasavaṇṇa. This epigraph is fully cited in Appendix No. II.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

3. E. I., Vol. XXI, pp. 9 ff. A few letters of the epigraph are damaged.
5. Ibid., p. 73.
7. Ibid., Vol. XI, Jl. 30.
9. Ibid., No. 649.
10. Basavapurāṇa, Sandhi II.
16. Ibid., No. 60.
17. See above, Chapter V, n. 29. Shrinivasa Murti, Chilakuri Narayana Rao, Basavanal and Channamallikarjuna have directly or indirectly advocated this identification.
18. A series of attractive novels on the theme of Basavēśvara have been written in Kannada on this presumption. This has further contributed to the spread of misconception.
19. Above, Chapter VIII.
CHAPTER XIII
BASAVÉŚVARA IN LITERATURE

The Sayings of Basava

Glimpses of Basavēśvara and his personality can be obtained through his own Sayings which constitute an authentic and historical record. Though not set in auto-biographical design and form, they are nevertheless autobiographical in substance, and provide substantial biographical information. Vibrating with emotion and sentiment of a dynamic soul, these utterances reflect various aspects of social and religious conditions of the age and give spontaneous expression to his thoughts and impressions, doctrine and philosophy and above all, his devotional fervour and spiritual aspirations. The image of the teacher presented by these Sayings is lustrous and crystal-clear though partial and incomplete.

Most of the Sayings are social and religious in character. We shall draw upon them while portraying the personality of the teacher in the next chapters. Here we are concerned with such of them as are of a purely historical nature. These are just a few and the following:¹

1. They accuse me of sitting below the royal seat of Bijjala, who is devoid of true faith and serving him! (No. 709).
2. What have I to do with the treasury of Bijjala? (No. 754).
3. Am I to be brow-beaten by this Bijjala? (No. 736).
4. Remember O man! Royalty, wealth and beauty are not everlasting. Behold! The city of Kalyāṇa lost its splendour and became desolate. The rule of the Chālukya king was wrenched, consequent upon the consideration shown to the Jangama fraternity and it was consumed in your eternal bowl, O God of Kūḍala Sangama! (No. 626).

These passages read in the historical setting, reveal the following facts:

Basavēśvara was in the service of Bijjala, holding a high office pertaining to the royal treasury. At the same time he was engrossed in his religious pursuits, viz. intense devotion to Śiva and service of His devotees. In the eyes of the onlookers his loyalty and affiliation were thus divided and he was not true to his profession either way. His Elder colleagues, criticised him on one side for his irreligious act of taking service under Bijjala who was not a faithful devotee of Śiva according to the followers of the new Śaiva school. On the other hand, Bijjala suspected and accused Basavēśvara of squandering the money from the king’s treasury in pursuance of his object of entertaining the large numbers of devotees that he attracted. But Basavēśvara was firm and stood above suspicions and allegations. He acted according to his conscience and convictions.

The ideological differences and divergent religious practices developed into a major conflict between Bijjala and Basavēśvara. During this period, Bijjala was engaged in consolidating his power to usurp the Chālukya throne.

The fourth passage cited above is the observation of Basavēśvara in a moralising tone on the incidents
which appear to have been witnessed by him. It alludes to the end of the Chalukya rule and desolation of the city of Kalyana. These are historical events. But there is divergence of opinion in regard to the details of their identification.

It has to be pointed out in this context that the late Govind Pai’s interpretation of this passage is not correct. He imagines that Taila III persecuted the followers of Basavesvara who, therefore, instigated Bijjala to usurp the Chalukya throne. As we have shown elsewhere, this is farfetched and unnatural. If this view is accepted, Basavesvara becomes a party in the act of usurpation by Bijjala, which is not true. Govind Pai’s interpretation of this passage rests on his construction of the expression Jangamada abhimana as ‘harm to the Jangama fraternity’. But this construction is unwarranted as in none of the Sayings of Basavesvara the word abhimana is used in the sense of ‘harm’.

Chennabasavaṇṇa and Others

Chennabasavaṇṇa was a junior contemporary of Basavesvara. He was the latter’s nephew (elder sister’s son) and closely associated with him. As with Basavesvara, he is credited with a large number of Vachanas or Sayings. His Sayings contain numerous references to Basava, Basavaṇṇa or Basavarāja whose religious pursuits and spiritual attainments are extolled at length. A few also mention Bijjala and the capital city of Kalyana. In one place, king Bijjala and Basavaṇṇa are described as carrying on the administration in peace and happiness.

Basavesvara attracted a large number of Śaiva devotees who were spiritual aspirants, inspired by
similar aims and ideals. This affinity brought them into close contact with him, resulting in the formation of a fraternity. In this organisation were included Allama Prabhu, Siddharāma, Maṇḍivāla Māchidēva or Māchayya, Mahādēviyakka and many others. These associates who observed Basavēśvara at close quarters have described him in characteristic language reflecting his personality. Their observations stand eloquent testimony to the spiritual eminence of the teacher, but contain no biographical details. See below Chapter XXVII.

*Basavarājadēvara Ragañe*

This poetical work, noticed previously, was written by Harihara of Hampe who lived circa 1200 A.D. The author was thus about half a century later than the age of Basavēśvara. Being nearer to this teacher in time and also in space, the biographical information incorporated by him in this narrative, can be treated as fairly reliable. His object was not so much to give a biographical account of Basavēśvara as to sing his glory in poetic emotion and devotional fervour. Hence his composition does not contain all historical details. Still it is useful as a historical source of literary character.

*Basavapurāṇamu*

This is another work, noticed previously, relating to the life and achievements of Basavēśvara, in Telugu. It is also dated about 1200 A.D. Its author Pālkurike Sōmanātha who was conversant both with Telugu and Kannada, hailed from Andhra region. A great devotee of Basavēśvara, he heard the story of this teacher from his followers and narrated it in the Purāṇic form. Though the accounts of Harihara and Sōmanātha agree in their essentials, there are differences of detail. This
might be due to the different traditions current among Basava's followers. On account of its chronological proximity, the Telugu Basavapurāṇamu also can be treated as a source of history with some reservations. It contains more legendary material than the Basavara-jadēvara Ragaḷe.

This work was rendered into Kannada more elaborately by Bhīma Kavi in 1369 A.D. It contains the entire core of the original with more descriptive details added to it. This Kannada Basavapurāṇa has gained sanctity and popularity as a standard biography of Basavēśvara among his followers.

Later Literary Works

Among a good number of later literary works, mention may be made at the outset of two Sanskrit Purāṇic works. One of them named Basavapurāṇa, was composed by a poet who styled himself Bādarāyaṇa or Vyāsa. The author of the other work called Vṛisha-bhēśvara-Purāṇa, was Śankarārādhya of Kanchi. These works may be assigned approximately to 1500 A.D. They describe the life and achievements of Basavēśvara on the same lines as are set forth by Pālkurike Sōmanātha in his Telugu Basavapurāṇamu. Almost all the stories and episodes of the earlier model find their place in more or less detail in these later narratives. These Sanskrit compositions have enhanced the prestige of Basavēśvara and his faith and contributed to their popularity among the non-Kannada educated classes in the Andhra and Tamil regions.

With the revival of Vīraśaivism in the fifteenth century under the patronage of Vijayanagara monarchs, more Purāṇic works in Kannada on Basavēśvara along
with other Śaiva devotees, and his religion and philosophy, were written during the subsequent centuries. The more outstanding among them may be listed here:

1. Śivatattvachintāmaṇī of Lakkaṇṇa Daṇḍēśa (c. 1450 A.D.)
2. Prabhulingalile of Chāmarasa (c. 1430 A.D.)
3. Singirājapurāṇa (c. 1500 A.D.)
4. Chennabasavapurāṇa of Virupāksha Paṇḍita (1584 A.D.)
5. Vṛishabhēndravijaya of Shaḍakshharadēva (1677 A.D.)
6. Śivatattvāratnākara of Keḻadi Basavarāja (in Sanskrit, 1707 A.D.)
7. Śaranālilāmrīta of Chennappadēva (c. 1750 A.D.)
8. Chōrabasavacharitre of Śankara Kavi (1763 A.D.)
10. Basavēśavijaya of Nāgabhūshaṇa Kavi
11. Nandi Āgama of Vīra Sangayya (18th century)
12. Trishasthipurātana-charitram (16th century)
13. Bijjaḷarāyacharite of Dharaṇi Paṇḍita (c. 1650 A.D.)
14. Bijjaḷarāyapurāṇa of Chandrasāgara Varṇi (1810 A.D.)

The last two works written by Jaina authors are rival compositions deprecating Basavēśvara and his faith and glorifying Jainism and Bijjala. We have noticed them in an earlier context (Chapter VI).

The later Vīraśaiva works in general belong to the Purānic category. They were written with the avowed intention of glorifying Basavēśvara as a superhuman divine manifestation of Śiva or Nandi, and describe
in glowing terms his marvellous performances. Their purpose was to arouse and cherish devotional fervour among the faithful devotees and common people and not to present a historical account of the teacher. It is no wonder, they yield less historical information. Some of the above works have been translated into Telugu, Tamil and Marāṭhi.

Even in these devotional writings which treat Basavēśvara as a divinity, one can detect divergent traditions and difference of treatment. According to one group of authors, Basavēśvara was originally a Gañēśvara in the galaxy of Śiva in Kailāsa and took birth in the world of mortals to undergo punishment due to a curse of Śiva. According to another, he was an incarnation of Nandīśvara, the divine vehicle of Śiva. The writers of the third group depict him as a manifestation of Śiva himself. We thus notice a rising pitch in the process of deification.

These works, though not of great historical value, are useful as testimony to the ascending position of popularity enjoyed throughout the long centuries by Basavēśvara and his Viraśaiva faith. However, it must be said to their credit that they occupy a worthy place in the religious and devotional literature.

Ignoring for a moment the devotional status of the Viraśaiva Purāṇas, a historian will notice a few grave discrepancies in them. One of them is the absence of any reference whatsoever to Bijjala’s usurpation of the Chālukya throne and kingdom. Secondly, except in rare instances, they do not specify the Kala-chori dynasty of Bijjala who is generally described as if he belonged to the Chālukya house. Apparently, these are two different dynasties, their mutual relations
apart. This was probably intended to show Bijjala in a good form; because Basava creditably served under him for a number of years. Thirdly, Bijjala is invariably depicted as a sovereign king without the least indication of his being a feudatory ruler, which he was for a long period.

As for the legendary conception of Basava being originally Vṛishabha Gaṇēśvara or Nandi in Śiva’s Kailāsa, the idea appears to have been conveniently suggested from his name Basava, derived from Vṛishabha. The Purānic accounts of his deification, it may be noted, were composed only after his life’s glorious achievements and departure from the mortal world.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *Basava Vachanas*; numbers are quoted in brackets.
3. See for instance, Nos. 249 and 866 in particular. The other Nos. are 217, 340, 732, 830, etc.
6. See above, Chapter VI, note 15.
CHAPTER XIV

Bāgēvāḍi and Sangama

I. Bāgēvāḍi

Four renowned towns and cities played a momentous role in the life of Basavēśvara. They were Bāgavāḍi (modern Bāgēvāḍi) Mangalavāḍa (modern Mangalavēḍhe), Kalyāṇa and Sangama or Kūḍala Sangama. Basavēśvara was born at Bāgēvāḍi. The foundations of his future career and life’s mission were firmly laid at Sangama. The most eventful and fruitful years of his life in the political, religious and social spheres were spent at Mangalavēḍhe and Kalyāṇa. It was at Sangama again that he attained eternal bliss.

We shall deal with Mangalavēḍhe and Kalyāṇa at a later stage (see Appendix I). Here we are mainly concerned with Bāgēvāḍi and Sangama.

There is absolutely no doubt in respect of Bāgēvāḍi being the birth place of Basavēśvara. The fact of its being so is positively established by epigraphical as well as literary sources. The Arjunavāḍ inscription is certain on this point,¹ and the evidence is supported by the Basavarājadēvara Ragaḷe² and the Telugu Basavapurāṇamu.³ Bāgēvāḍi is now the headquarters of the Taluka bearing that name, in Bijapur District. It is popularly called Basavana Bāgēvāḍi, clearly reminiscent of its ancient association with Basavēśvara.

About six miles from Bāgēvāḍi lies a village (formerly a prosperous town) called Ingalēśvara. This place appears to have been more prominent and better
known than Bāgēvādi in the twelfth century. This might be due, in the first instance, to the fact of its being a stronghold of Jainism which was a predominant faith during the period of a few centuries earlier, when Śaivism did not enjoy a favoured position. In the Jaina terminology, a line of teachers who hailed from this place is mentioned as Ingāḷēśvara Balī.⁴ Jaina relics and inscriptions referring to Jaina teachers and devotees are found here. About a mile from the village is situated a laterite cave in the hill, containing an image in siddhāsana posture, of Rēṇukāchārya or Rēvaṇa Siddha who was a renowned Śaiva teacher. In this cave was also found a standing image of Pārśva-nātha Jina and his lion pedestal, placed at a distance from the above. The famous Kannada poet Aggaḷa who was a Jaina, wrote his Chandraprabhāpurāṇa at Ingāḷēśvara ⁵ in 1189 A.D.

Ingāḷēśvara was also a flourishing educational centre with a considerable Brāhmaṇa population and possessed splendid temples and shrines dedicated to Śaiva and Vaishṇava deities, some of which have survived to the present day. Mention may be made in this connection of the temples of Kalmēśvara, Sōmēśvara, Sōbhānēśvara and Nārāyaṇa. The image of Narāyaṇa is an excellent specimen of sculptural art. Epigraphs of the place describe this as an eminent agrahāra which was administered by five hundred learned Mahājanas. The agrahāra is said to have been created in the hoary past by the epic king Janamējaya. It is eulogised as Kāsi of Karṇāṭa and Dakshīṇa Vāraṇasi.⁶

It is usual to introduce a less distinguished village or town with reference to a more renowned city in the
neighbourhood. In keeping with this practice, Bāgēvāḍi which was not so well known as Ingaḷēśvara at that time, was called Ingaḷēśvara-Bāgēvāḍi, i.e. Bāgēvāḍi near Ingaḷēśvara. The earliest literary mention of Bāgēvāḍi with this prefix is found in the Telugu Basavapurāṇam of Pālkurike Sōmanātha who styles it Hinguḷēśvara-Bhāgavāṭi. The same is named in the Kannada Basavapurāṇa of Bhīma Kavi (1369 A.D.) as Inguḷēśvara-Bāgavāḍi. Thus it becomes clear that Bāgēvāḍi was the place where Basavēśvara was born and Ingaḷēśvara was in no way connected with this event. Obviously, one can not be born in two places.

However, in course of time the original significance of this twin name was forgotten by the later generations. Through frequent Purānic recitations the double place-name became universally familiar and the people thought that both Ingaḷēśvara and Bāgēvāḍi were associated with the event of Basavēśvara’s birth. Consequently, superstition and popular imagination invented tales and legends connecting Ingaḷēśvara with Basavēśvara’s birth. For instance, at Ingaḷēśvara, a dilapidated well called Hālabhāvi (milk-well) is said to be the spot where Basavēśvara’s pregnant mother vomitted. Besides the cave of Rēṇukāchārya, two more caves associated with the names of Akkanāgamma, Basavēśvara’s elder sister, and her illustrious son Chennabasavaṇṇa have been located in the same hill. Nearabout is traced a site called Hōriya Moraḍi where Basavēśvara’s birth is alleged to have actually taken place. All such stories bear no relation to truth.

Though Basavēśvara was not born at Ingaḷēśvara, he appears to have visited the place in his childhood, as it is situated close in the neighbourhood of Bāgēvāḍi.
He might have derived here his first-hand knowledge of Jainism and the practices of its followers early in his life. This is suggested by his Sayings wherein he ridicules Jainism and its odd practices like nudity.

Adverting to Bāgēvādi, the ancient relics are not many. There exists an old Śaiva shrine in a ruined state. A fairly old, but not very old, well is associated with Basavēśvara who is said to have performed the miracle in his childhood of reviving his playmate who was drowned in it. Basavēśvara, again, is said to have been born in a house which is pointed out to the visitors and wherein the so-called descendants of his family were living till recently. We have no means to verify these stories which appear to be late and more or less legendary.

We leave the legend behind and proceed to explore the authentic historical material available in the form of one monument of the Chālukyan time and a few trustworthy epigraphs of the period. These sources do not directly focus historical light on the life of Basavēśvara. Still, we consider them of much value, because, they provide circumstantial evidence in our study of his age and personality.

The modern Basavēśvara temple at Bāgēvādi is an extensive monument renovated and enlarged to suit the requirements of the present time. The early nucleus, however, is well preserved for the most part in its essential form inside this monument. The original temple with shrines appears to have been constructed about the eleventh century on the grand pattern of the classical Chālukyan style of architecture. Subsequently, this seems to have undergone more than one renovation. In its early phase, the temple was dedi-
cated to Śiva in the form of a Linga with Nandi in front. The interior halls or manṭapas, the carved pillars supporting them and the entrance door with the figure of Gajalakshmi carved on the lintel, stand testimony to the Chālukyan model. The internal ceiling of the central hall is decorated with the elegantly carved figure of Naṭarāja in the middle, surrounded by the eight Dīkpālas or guardians of the eight quarters. The present Nandi, identified with Basavēśvara, appears to have been later moved to a distance from its original spot. It is now prominently worshipped in the attached shrine. It is not unlikely that the image of Nandi, as it exists today, is a later substitute. Gōpuras of artistic designs and constructions adorn the crests of the shrines of the main temple.

In all eleven inscriptions have been discovered at Bāgévādi. Three of them were recently copied by us during our visit to the town. Excluding some five of them which are causal and scrappy, the remaining six are fairly important, furnishing a good deal of information about the political, social and religious state of affairs at Bāgévādi in the eleventh and the twelfth centuries.

The earliest record, dated 1049 A.D., refers to the five hundred Mahājanas of Bāgévādi. The next, dated 1152 A.D., is of the time of the Chālukya king Taila III, when Basavēśvara was living, though he is not mentioned in the epigraph. The inscription speaks of a rent-free endowment made to Divākara Bhaṭṭopādhyāya. Another record, dated 1169 A.D. in the reign of the Kalachuri king Sōvidēva, son of Bijjala, registers gifts to the god Mallikārjuna of the eminent agrahāra town of Bāgévādi. The deity Gaure-
dēva is also mentioned in the epigraph. The fourth one of 1170 A.D., belonging to the same king, narrates a gift of land to the temples of Sōmanātha and Chenna-kēśava, constructed by Rājādhyaṃkha Rēvaṇayya Nāyaka, the Sēnābōva of the chief queen Sōvaladēvi, wife of Sōvidēva evidently. Bāgēvādi is described as the crest jewel among the agrahāras and its five hundred Mahājanas are praised for their learning and scholarship. The epigraph refers to another temple of Bakuḷēśvara. The fifth inscription dated 1178 A.D., registering a gift to the god Bontēśvara, belongs to the reign of the Kalachuri king Sankama. The last one, bearing the date 1198 A.D., refers itself to the reign of Jaitrapāla, the Sēuṇa king of Dēvagiri. It registers gifts to the god Bontēśvara. In this connection mention is made of an official named Dēsiya Daṇḍanāyaka Madhuvarasayya.

The inscriptions noticed above, apparently furnish no information about Basavēśvara. However, they let in useful side light about the age in which he lived and the region and locality where he was born and spent the early years of his childhood. This is quite interesting and helpful for forming an estimate of his personality. To put it briefly, the epigraphs reveal the following state of affairs.

By the time of the twelfth century, Bāgēvādi had grown into an excellent and top ranking agrahāra town as a result of the royal patronage and progressive activities of its educated residents. A self-contained unit, it was administered by the local representatives, the five hundred learned Mahājanas. State officials in high position like Rājādhyakha Rēvaṇayya Nāyaka took interest in its development and contributed to
its prosperity. Existence of the temples dedicated to the following gods, not traceable now, is disclosed by the epigraphs: Mallikārjuna, Sōmanātha, Chennakēśava, Bakulēśvara, Bontēśvara and Gauredēva. These temples were ably managed by the priests and teachers of the Pāśupata Śaiva sect, also known as Kālāmukha.

II. SANGAMA

Sangama or Kūḍala Sangama, is now a village in the Hungund Taluka of Bijapur District. The name connotes a confluence and the place is situated at the junction of the two rivers, the Krīshṇā with its tributary, the Malaprabhā. The Kannada prefix kūḍala also means confluence. The village Sangama is situated about a furlong away from the confluence. But the temple of Sangamēśvara is erected just on the brow of the confluence itself. The site of the confluence below is graced with a modest maṇṭapa with a Linga installed in it. Sangama is renowned as a great tīrtha or sacred place, visited by thousands of pilgrims all round the year. Its sanctity has been augmented by its later association with Basavēśvara who chose this place for his austerities, spiritual elevation and final beatitude.

The Sangamēśvara temple is of about the eleventh century and presents an interesting spectacle with its artistic and epigraphical treasures. In the sanctuary, Sangamēśvara is seen in the form of a coarse Linga of moderate size and stature. A mark on its top is shown as the spot through which Basavēśvara is said to have merged with the Infinite. Noteworthy among the images set up near about are the figures of ascetics and a deity with eight arms. The pedestal of a Sūrya
image containing a row of seven horses and the chariot-ter Aruṇa, is improvised to provide a base for the later images, set up on it. This shows that, as in many other places, a shrine dedicated to the Sun-god existed in the vicinity several centuries ago. The original Sangamēśvara temple appears to have been built in the Chālukya style of architecture comprising the sanctuary or garbhagriha, the adjoining ante-chamber or antarāla and the main hall or mahāmāṇṭapa. These are preserved almost in tact to the present day. The pillars in the main hall are massive, carved with decorative designs. The superstructure with the row of tapering uneven gōpuras must have been imposed at a later date when the temple was renovated.

The lintel of the main entrance bears the figure of Gajalakshmi. It abuts on a verandah with a stone railing, carved with relief sculptures depicting interesting scenes of religious and secular life. In the facing compound wall of modern construction are fixed odd pieces of sculptures and images, like the hero-stones, the Saptamāṭrikās, Gaṇēśa, etc. Most of the ancient historical relics of Sangama are found in a damaged and mutilated condition. It is likely, a good more number have been destroyed and wiped out of existence.

Within the precincts of the Sangamēśvara temple were discovered four inscriptions, one of which was copied by us for the first time during our recent visit to the place.\(^\text{10}\) It is much damaged and worn out. It is of the time of the Chālukya king Taila III who was a contemporary of Basavēśvara. Bijjala figures in this record, probably, as a donor of gift to the temple. The second epigraph\(^\text{11}\) which is fragmentary, could be assigned to 1158 A.D. Judging from the figure of
Vishṇu carved at the top, this record appears to have been set up with reference to a gift registered in favour of a Vaishṇava deity.

The next two epigraphs furnish more interesting information. One, dated 1160 A.D., registers gifts of land, flower-garden, shop and oil-mill to the gods Kālēśvara and Āchēśvara by Chunchina Ādiseṭṭi and Aivattokkalu oil-merchants. It describes the Mahājanas of Kūḍala Kappaḍi Sangama as devotees of the god Sangamēśvara and reputed for their scholarship. Kūḍala Sangama is stated to have been a primeval (anādi) Brahmapuri or colony of learned Brāhmaṇas, founded by emperors. It was a sarvanamasyada, i.e. entirely consecrated, agrahāra. The above named god Āchēśvara stood installed on the sacred site of Malahāri, i.e. Malaprabhā. The other record of 1213 A.D., of the reign of Singhaṇa, the Sēuṇa king of Dēvaṇa, registers gifts to the same god Āchēśvara on the Malahāri.

Excepting the last one, all the three inscriptions noted above, belong to the time when Basavēśvara was living, though not at Sangama itself.

With the help of the above study, we can draw a historical sketch of Sangama as follows: In the age of Basavēśvara, Sangama was an eminent religious centre renowned for its sanctity and scholarship. It was called Kūḍala Kappaḍi Sangama. This name split up in two ways, is often mentioned as Kūḍala Sangama and Kappaḍi Sangama. Kūḍala and Sangama are synonymous terms, the former being Kannada and the latter Sanskrit. Kappaḍi is derived from Sanskrit karpaṭi, meaning a religious mendicant in patched or ragged clothes (karpaṭa). This expression is illumining as
it points to the fact that this holy place was incessantly visited and inhabited by ascetics and religious mendicants engaged in austerities for generations in the past.

Sangama comprised a centre of education, an agrahāra town of considerable importance. It was under the management of more than a hundred Mahājanas who were chiefs of distinguished Brāhmaṇa families. These Mahājanas were noted for their learning, scholarly pursuits and religious observances. They belonged to the Kāḷāmukha or Pāṣupata Śaiva sect. The presiding deity of the holy place was Sangamanātha or Sangamēśvara whose temple, as described above, has survived to the present day. There were several other temples, some of which could be named. These were Āchēśvara on the bank of the Malaprabhā, Kāḷēśvara, one Vaishṇava temple and another, a Sūrya temple. Āchēśvara appears to have been a famous deity next to Sangamēśvara. He is described as Śiva, Śambhu and Rudra. These gods received gifts from the devotees who hailed from different places and were engaged in various avocations. The Sangama town seems to have been extensive, starting from the confluence of the rivers and spreading right up to the present village and beyond. Vestiges of old habitation are traceable round about.

The above account of Bāgēvāḍi and Sangama is based on epigraphical publications and personal investigations and in situ topographical study by the author during his visit to them in December 1965.

More Agrahāras

Besides Ingalēśvara and Bāgēvāḍi, the region of Bāgēvāḍi contained within short distances, a good
number of other agrahāras which were also strongholds of Brāhmaṇas and centres of traditional learning. Some of these may be noted here: 14 Muttage (Muttagi), Maṇigavalli (Managōli), Elāpura (Yalvār), Kōḷāra (Kolhār). These were severally under the management of hundreds of Mahājanas. The agrahāras were adorned with temples dedicated to Śaiva, Vaishṇava and other deities. Some temples had maṭhas or monasteries attached to them. The priests and preceptors who exercised control over these religious establishments commonly belonged to the Pāṣupata sect of Śaivism.

Such was the general environment in which Basa-
vēśvara was born. He was brought up in this atmosphere saturated with Brahmanic traditions until he grew to boyhood. In what manner his revolutionary mind reacted to such early associations and impressions we shall see in the next chapter.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. See above, Chapter XII.
2. Sthala I, line 97.
7. Āśvāsa I, p. 28.
10. This epigraph is unpublished.
12. Ibid., No. 88.
13. Ibid., No. 160.
14. Ibid., Nos. 24, 32, 37, 97, 98, 101, 105, 169, etc.
CHAPTER XV

1. LIFE AND PERSONALITY

EARLY YEARS AND EDUCATION

In the light of the materials examined in the foregoing chapters we would now portray the life and personality of Basavēśvara, as far as possible from a rational and historical point of view. While presenting the following account, we have adopted the view that Basavēśvara was born as a human being and became great, rising to the height of a divinity by his extraordinary qualities and memorable services for the uplift of his fellowmen. This thesis is contrary to the common belief prevalent among the faithful followers that he was a god superhuman, who came down upon the earth as a saviour of the sinful mortals. This assumption, however, does not appeal to the modern rational mind. The present sketch, therefore, excludes the supernatural agency and miracles commonly attributed to him, as they do not add to his stature of eminence.

Apart from the faith in them, miracles themselves do not constitute the criterion of greatness. Many persons have attained greatness without performing a single miracle and there are instances of persons, who, in spite of the miracles demonstrated by them, are pushed into the background. Two instances may be cited by way of illustration. Ėkāntada Rāmayya, as we have seen, was a unique votary of Śiva, who performed the most astounding miracle of severing his head
and restoring it later. But he pales into insignificance as compared with the position of supreme adoration owned by Basavēśvara. Akka Mahādēvi, Basava's contemporary, did not perform a single miracle; still she ranks high in the assembly of Vīraśaiva saints, esteemed by teachers like Allama Prabhu and Basavēśvara. Where lies the secret of this?

We are confronted with divergent versions of many events in Basavēśvara's life. In such cases we have adopted the method of presenting the more reasonable one here, relegating others for being noticed in a separate chapter. The position in regard to the dates is far from certain. No event of his life could be assigned a definite date. Hence we have given few dates here, and wherever mentioned, they are provisional. The probable dates and chronology are discussed later, separately in another chapter.

Childhood and Boyhood

In the closing years of the glorious reign of the great Chālukya king Vikramāditya VI of Kalyāna, an important event of far-reaching consequence, though nobody could dream that it was such at that time, took place about 1105 A.D. This was the birth of a child in a Brāhmaṇa family at Bāgēvāḍi, a provincial town of the Chālukya empire. This child in course of time turned out to be a great revolutionary.

The parents were Mādirāja and Mādalāmbā. Mādirāja belonged to the Kamme Kula or community. The family consisted of at least two elder children, one, a girl named Nāγamma and another, a boy named Dēvārāja. The child was named Basava or Basavarāja. Basava is a Kannada form of Sanskrit Vṛishabha, the
Divine Bull who is the vāhana or vehicle of god Śiva. Śaivism was a popular faith at that time and the name Basava was fairly common among its followers and in that area. Śaivism was a predominant faith at Bāgēvāḍi too.

An ordinary child in the beginning, Basava soon displayed signs of distinctness and individuality as he grew. He was a precocious child highly sensitive and emotional, endowed with an independent spirit. A keen observer of men, events and nature, he pondered over them in a pensive mood.

Bāgēvāḍi was an agrahāra town of renown, being governed by a representative assembly of five hundred elders. Mādirāja, Basava’s father, was the president of this assembly, the mayor and chief administrative officer who looked after the multifarious affairs of the township. His status was thus more than that of a commoner and therefore aristocratic in some respects.

At home and around in the locality and further in the region and country, time-honoured traditions and conventions, handed down through generations, reigned supreme. Religion, religious dogmas, religious observances and superstitions held men and their minds under their firm grip. Vedic sacrifices were performed and animals were immolated.

Temples of various gods thrived, attracting large numbers of worshippers by glittering ceremonies and rituals. These were under the management of priests with vested interests. The social groups and classes were divided and a wide gulf separated the high-born from the low-born.

Young Basava had his schooling from an early age. Kannada was the common language which was charm-
ingly expressive and had attained a high classical standard. Basava learnt Kannada language and studied Kannada literature, mostly outside the school. The boys in the agrahāra were made to learn Sanskrit from the beginning. The lessons and courses taught included less of secular subjects like language and literature, and more of religious lores like the Vēdas, Āgamas, Epics, Purāṇas and a few disciplines such as lexicon, grammar and logic. While undergoing training, rites and rituals had to be performed. Thus even in education, the atmosphere was not free, being rigid with instructions, restrictions and disciplines.

Young Basava placed in the midst of such circumstances, keenly observed and deeply experienced the varied aspects of life. His highly sensitive mind sharply reacted to the environment. Is it true religion what these people are fervently practising? Are these Brāhmaṇas in particular, who are the custodians of traditional learning and religion, accredited leaders of the society, the guides and gurus of the other classes and communities, discharging their obligations properly? Their precepts and practices are widely divergent, lacking in sincerity. They are as selfish and worldly as the less educated and the low-born. Where exists the superiority of man?

Such doubts and questions perturbed the mind of the boy Basava. He came to know about the ins and outs of the Brāhmaṇical religion and society which failed to appeal to him. Similarly, by his contacts with Jaina community at Ingalēśvara and other places he gained intimate knowledge of Jainism and the religious practices of its followers. There was scarcely anything
commendable in this faith too which was devoid of
godhead and divine grace.

A Turning Point

According to the time honoured custom of the
community, the Brāhmaṇa father of Basava had his
Upanayana or initiation ceremony celebrated with the
usual pomp and eclat. Basava was made to wear the
sacred thread, recite the mystic syllables called Gāyatrī
d and worship the holy fire in the altar, along with a
complex of other rites. He was about eight years old
at that time.

Really speaking, there was nothing basically
objectionable in the Upanayana ritual itself which, if
performed with faith and right understanding of its
ture spirit, purified the mind and the body. This
discipline helped the performer to attain proficiency in
the Vedic studies and also to elevate him spiritually.
The efficacy of the holy incantation of Gāyatrī was of
proved worth and countless generations of men before,
edowed with faith and insight, had benefited by the
practice of this discipline. If studied with proper spirit
and understanding, one need not find fault with the
Vēdic religion and learning. Conviction and sincerity
are the essence of religion whose significance is lost to
one who is devoid of these virtues. Soon after this cere-
mony, Basava’s parents expired and he was brought up
by his aged grandmother.

It was a turning point in the life of Basava. The
Brāhmaṇical religion, Brāhmaṇical teaching and its
pursuits made no impression on young Basava who was
sincere, sensitive and thoughtful. The Upanayana cere-
mony and the subsequent observances did in no way
edify him, because they were administered in a rigid, mechanical procedure by persons who had no true insight. On the contrary, it created a sense of abhorrence for the religious faith and traditions whose symbol it was. It aroused in him the latent spirit of revolt which was directed against the Brāhmanical dogmas and ritualism. He spent a few years in this state of mind.

Young Basava, who now attained his sixteenth year, discarded the sacred thread called Yajnopavīta which marked allegiance and affiliation to the Brāhmanical order. He broke away from the religious traditions and social bonds. He renounced affection and attachment for the family and left his ancestral home once for all in search of light. From Bāgēvāḍi he went to Kūḍala Sangama, a Śaivite stronghold, to which he was attracted on account of its sanctity and seclusion. As a boy, he might have heard much about the glory of Sangama; or, as it is likely, he had occasionally visited the holy place before. There was the inner urge and prompting too.

Stay at Sangama

Sangama was an ideal place to his liking, where he could pursue his cherished objective. Nature and god, all-pervasive and infinite, had joined hands to elevate it from the circumscribed sphere of the material world. Here he could breathe freely, think freely and act freely. He could experience and enjoy the presence of the Almighty in the form of Sangamēśvara who was a perennial fountain of inspiration. He was ever accessible to the devotees, one and all, without the distinctions of castes and creeds, the high and the low.
1. *Life and Personality*

As Sangama was an *agrahāra*, the youth could also derive the benefits of good education and sound scholarship by establishing contacts with the learned Brāhmaṇas of the place, who were, perhaps, on account of its being a cosmopolitan centre of pilgrimage, less orthodox in the social and religious affairs. He could also meet here the wise and holy men who came from various places and regions and gain vast experience of the world, of god and men.

At Sangama, Basava had the good fortune of securing as his guide and preceptor, Īśānya Guru who was Chief of the township, a divine of deep insight and a well-read scholar of catholic views. This teacher, as suggested by the name, appears to have been a follower of the Pāṣupata doctrine. He at once found in this budding youth the promise of an extra-ordinary career. He persuaded Basava to settle at the holy place assuring him of the necessary facilities. Nothing could have been dearer to his heart than this. Thus commenced the evolutionary process in Basava’s revolutionary life.

Basava plunged himself in a course of studies, austerities and devotion. All his attention and activities were focussed on Sangamēśvara, the supreme god who was all in all to him. Absorbed in meditation, he engaged himself constantly in the worship and service of this deity. Often times, he studied the sacred works, conferred with the learned men and discussed the problems staring at him. As Basava was endowed with uncommon intuition and genius, it did not take much time for him to acquire proficiency in secular lores and religious and philosophical literature of different schools. Simultaneously, he advanced in spiritual exercises and progressed in mystic experiences.
Education and Study

We can form a rough idea as to how Basava benefited by his stay at Kūḍala Sangama in respect of his education and study. This information can be derived from a close perusal of his Vachanas in general and the specific allusions to the various branches of knowledge and of the Sanskrit passages illustrated therein. It seems that his study included a wide range of subjects like the Vedic texts, Darśanas, Purāṇas, Āgamas, and literature pertaining to various religious faiths and philosophies.

Of all such works, those dealing with the doctrine and precepts of the Śaiva faith appear to have attracted him most. He studied them critically and was profoundly influenced by their teachings. Among the particular treatises he mastered, the following appear to have been included: Śiva Purāṇa, Śaiva Purāṇas, Linga Purāṇa, Skanda Purāṇa, Vātulāgama, Vātula Tantra, Bhṛigu Samhitā and Vāyaviya Samhitā.

This point may be substantiated by citing a few instances. In the Bhṛigu Samhitā and the Vātula Tantra, occurs the following injunction against the distinction of castes among Śiva’s devotees:

Śivasāṁskārasampannē jātibhēdaṁ na kārayēt ।

In Vachana 603 a similar passage is quoted, which partly runs thus:

Tapasā jāyatē viprakulē ।
Tasmāt jātibhedāṁ na kuryāt ॥

Vachana 607 extracts the following texts:

Na mē priyaś-chaturvēdī mad-bhaktāḥ svapachoṁi vā ।
Tasmād-ēva tatō grāhyam sa cha pūjyo yathā hy-aham ॥
This may be compared with the following excerpt from the *Vaiyavīya Samhitā*:

Chatur-vēdadharō vipraḥ Śivabhakti-vivarjitaḥ  
Bhavī tēna na sambhāshyaḥ Chāṇḍāl-ādhama uchyate

Similar passages from the scriptures are cited in the Sayings, Nos. 197, 224, 591, 609, 645, 709, 717, etc.

**Vision of the Future**

Basava might have spent about twelve years at Sangama. This was the most fruitful period of his life when his ideas matured and actions tended to become resolute. He saw the vision of his future life. He was not an idle philosopher and pious thinker. Impulsive and emotional, he was a man of action, dynamic and determined. His revolutionary mind sought channels to transform the ideas and ideals into deeds.

By the end of the preparatory stage of his life, Basava appears to have come to the following conclusions in regard to the aim and mission of his life. These were twofold, spiritual attainment and religious and social reform.

1. There is one god, real, universal and supreme. He is perfect; omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. He is noble, sublime and compassionate, ever disposed to help the true devotee. He manifests Himself in various forms and aspects. No other god or deity could attain his dignity. He is Śiva, commonly worshipped in the form of a Linga which is a symbol of infinity, light transcendental. As Śiva revealed himself to Basava and blessed him with his infinite grace, assuming the name and form of Sangamanātha or Sangamēśvara of Kūḍala Sangama, this became his personal and specially cherished God.
2. To dedicate his life and soul for the worship and service of this God was his life's mission; to experience His presence and to commune with Him, his life's supreme goal. The true devotees of Śiva, the Jangamas, the selfless itinerant mendicants who propagated his faith also deserved highest respect and unstinted service. The erring humanity who went astray in pursuit of unreal gods and false faiths, should be brought on the right path of real god and true religion.

3. The existing social order based on artificial distinctions and discriminations, was the cause of many an ill and suffering. Hence it needed drastic reform. The social reform thus contemplated could be achieved by inculcating true faith and devotion to Śiva. All who were endowed with this qualification were equal without the distinction of caste, creed, sex, birth or status in life.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Basava Ṛgāje, II Sthala, pages 9-11. That Basava was sixteen years old is mentioned twice by Harihara.

2. Virāśaiva, Vol. V, Nos. 3-4, p. 29. From a perusal of the elaborate description of Basava's stay at Sangama in the service of the God by Harihara, we gather the impression that he spent a fairly long period in this holy place. That this period might be twelve years is suggested by a Saying attributed to Basavēśvara, cited in the above reference. Singirāja’s description also suggests a longer stay of Basava at Sangama.
CHAPTER XVI

2. LIFE AND PERSONALITY

CAREER AND CONFLICT

Basava had attained the maturity of youth and stood at the threshold of life. His stay at Sangama had completely transformed him. When he entered this sanctuary he was a stripling goaded by a feeling of discontent and spirit of revolt, perplexed by a host of insoluble problems which impeded his path of life.

But now, by the infinite grace of the Divine Lord Sangamēśvara, he was able to overcome the obstacles and see his way through. He had emerged as a self-conscious personality instilled with a new faith and inspired by a new ideal, confident of achieving his life’s goal.

At Cross-roads

Still he was at cross-roads. He was to select one of the two paths that lay ahead of him. Being spiritually minded, his goal of life was god-realisation. His devotion to the Lord was all-absorbing, intensive and overwhelming; he pined for Him, he yearned for Him. If permitted, he would have chosen to remain at Sangama permanently and applied himself more and more steadfastly to achieve his objective. But this was not to be. Neither his Lord willed it, nor his impulsive nature would allow it.

He had seen enough of the humanity that lived around. He had experienced the ills of the society
wherein he was born. They were all groping in darkness unable to perceive the true path. His Lord had kindled light into his heart and conferred vision on him. Was it not his duty to hold this spiritual lamp in the open and lead the erring way-farers in the right direction? The consciousness of this social obligation weighed heavily on the mind of grown-up Basava.

Thus there was a conflict of ideals: a life solely dedicated to spiritual attainments or a life devoted to the service of humanity. Basava wavered. But there was a third course in which the two could be harmonized. Basava could not see this clearly in the beginning, though he came to know of it soon after. But Sangamēśvara, his guiding spirit, knew how to shape his destiny.

There were inner promptings, frequent and imperative. The wide world was calling him. He should throw himself in the midst of this world full of stress and turmoil, wherein his fellow-beings were toiling and struggling, folk, ignorant and superstitious, devoid of light and guidance. He repeatedly prayed and implored his Lord to allow him to continue in His blissful presence. But He impelled him to temporal action and urged him to fulfil what He ordained as his life’s mission. So Basava had to leave Sangama and take leave of Sangamanātha with a heavy heart.

Which was his next destination? Where was he to go and start his worldly career?

At this time, Bijjala of the Kalachuri dynasty was a rising star on the political horizon. He had commenced his career as a Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara or provincial governor in circa 1130 A.D. Though he belonged to a
subordinate family of feudatory chiefs, he was wielding considerable power in the Chālukya empire by virtue of his family ties with the imperial house and his own ability and enterprising nature. His capital town was Mangalavāda, modern Mangalavēdhe near Pandharpur in Maharashtra State. This was considered a fitting place for a youth to start his worldly career and Basava was persuaded to go there. Thus he left Sangama for Mangalavāda in circa 1132 A.D.

In the Court of Bijjala

Mangalavāda was a flourishing town where Bijjala ruled with authority and affluence. He had his palace and administrative departments whose officers were engaged in activities like the collection of revenue, accounting and maintenance of the army. As an apprentice seeking employment, Basava secured entry into the Accounts Branch of the secretariat. The employees there were lazy and inefficient and their calculations went wrong. Basava detected their errors and brought this fact to the notice of the treasury officer Siddha Daṇḍādhipa.

Impressed by the intelligence, sincerity and promptitude of the apprentice, Siddha Daṇḍādhipa took him into confidence. He introduced the new entrant to Bijjala and had him appointed as a junior Accountant on a salary of 101 honoraria (gold coins) per year.

Siddha Daṇḍādhipa was immensely satisfied with the outstanding ability, devotion to work and exemplary conduct of Basava. Soon after, it was discovered that the latter was related to the family of the former's kinsmen. Siddha Daṇḍādhipa belonged to the same
Kamme Kula or community to which Basava's father Mādarasa belonged.

This brought Basava into close affinity with Siddha Daṇḍādhipa who took him as a member of his household and having no son, treated him as his own son. He entrusted Basava with more and more responsibilities including the management of his family affairs. Later, when Siddha Daṇḍādhipa expired, Basava inherited all his property in addition to his office. He was forthwith appointed the royal Treasurer by Bijjala who was pleased with his excellent record of service and considered him the fittest person to hold this high office. After this, Basava married two virtuous maidens, Gangādēvi and Māyidēvi who belonged to respectable families.

Chief of the Treasury

Thus, within a short period after his arrival at Mangalavāda, Basavēśvāra rose to a high position in the court of Bijjala who reposed full trust in him and conferred honours upon him befitting his status. Basavēśvāra looked after the revenue transactions and scrutinized the sources of income. He exercised control over the items of expenditure. The subordinate officers and local chieftains brought their collections, levies and tributes which were checked and deposited into the treasury.

It was a key post by holding which Basavēśvāra was placed in an advantageous position, not only over the nobles and officials of the kingdom, but even in relation to Bijjala who could execute his ambitious plans with the support of the treasury, effectively managed by a competent officer. The convention, adopt-
ed by exigency, was prevalent in those days, of designating the high officials of the state as Daṇḍanāṭha or Commander of the Army and Pradhāna or Mantri, a Minister, though such persons, all of them, were not actually in the command of the forces or members of the council of ministers. These titles were more or less customary and formal, but could be justified on the ground that even the officers of the civil service were expected to be conversant with the military art and be in a position to tender wholesome advice to the king, on important matters like the safety and security of the kingdom. According to this practice, Basavēśvara, in spite of his being primarily the Chief of the Treasury, was familiarly addressed as Daṇḍanāṭha and Mantri. But essentially he was a Bhāṇḍāri, Treasurer, or Chief of the Treasury. This becomes clear from a critical study of the literary sources. It may be noted in this connection that Basavēśvara’s predecessor, Siddha Daṇḍādhīpa was called Daṇḍādhīpa, i.e. chief of the army, although he was occupying the position of Treasurer. In about nine years from 1132 A.D., Basavēśvara appears to have risen to the high post of Chief of the Treasury, in 1141 A.D.

Jealousy and Hatred

The sudden rise of this young man, a junior employee, an upstart, so to say, to the high and enviable position of the Treasury Chief, in supersession of many senior officers, embittered the feelings of Bijaḷa’s courtiers, nobles and officers, who nurtured a subtle sense of hatred and jealousy towards him. This took the form of open enmity in course of time as Basavēśvara distinguished himself by his honesty and efficiency in
the discharge of official duties, which endeared him to
the king and by his piety and humanitarian activities
which popularised him among the rank and file of the
society.

True to his religious faith and in pursuance of his
life's main objective, Basavēśvara never slackened his
efforts in his religious practices in the midst of secular
obligations which engaged him since his arrival at
Mangalavāda. As fortune now favoured him with
position and wealth, his devotion to the Lord became
intensive. He directed his resources for the mainten-
ance of the Jangamas, the itinerant devotees of Śiva.
He held them in high esteem as representatives of Śiva
and spared no means to treat them sumptuously with
food and clothing. This movement appears to have
taken a definite shape from 1141 A.D. onward.

Basavēśvara's fame spread far and wide. Allured
by his piety and munificence, the Jangama devotees
came to him in large numbers and stayed with him.
Their swelling strength created suspicion in the minds
of many as to how Basavēśvara could afford to spend
so lavishly on them and whence the funds flowed.
Basavēśvara being in charge of the royal treasury, it
was credulously believed that he must have used the
public funds for the purpose.

This was a golden opportunity for the king's
counsellors who were ever hostile, losing no occasion
to misrepresent him in all possible manners. They
carried tales and made grave allegations against him
before Bijjala. In order to find out the truth, Bijjala
paid a surprise visit to the treasury and had its contents
instantly counted and checked. It revealed that the
entire amount was in tact and the accounts tallied.
Basavēśvara’s honesty was proved beyond reproach. His character thus vindicated, he rose in the estimation of Bijjala.

**Reformist Movement**

Smarting under discomfiture, Bijjala’s counsellors hatched another plot against Basavēśvara. This was built up on the latter’s religious and social conduct which set at nought the traditional beliefs and practices. In the eyes of Basavēśvara all the devotees of Śiva were equal, irrespective of their differences on account of birth, sex, caste, riches or position. Accordingly he entertained high regard even for a low-born or an untouchable and paid scant respect to a Brāhmaṇa who was not a devotee and whose conduct was questionable. Therefore, he mixed freely with the low-born devotees and even dined with them.

The orthodox sections of the society viewed this conduct with alarm. It was considered atrocious and condemned as a sacrilege. Bijjala who belonged to the orthodox fold like others, never favoured such a course.

In the untouchables’ quarters of the city, lived a great devotee, born in a low family, named Kambaḷiya Nāgidēva. One day, while moving about in that area, Basavēśvara entered the house of this untouchable devotee and took his food. This matter was immediately reported to Bijjala by his counsellors. They told him that by his promiscuous intercourse with the untouchables, Basavēśvara was spilling disaster around. He had not only polluted his person by this act, but was going to spread the contamination by attending his court.
Bijjala lost his temper and forthwith sent for Basavēśvara. For fear of contamination, he received him in the open, outside the court hall and reprimanded him for his reckless behaviour. Basavēśvara stood firm and relentless. He justified his conduct proclaiming that as human beings there was no difference between men and men or a lowborn untouchable and a learned Brāhmaṇa. He threw out a challenge that anybody proved it otherwise. He silenced Bijjala and his courtiers by his invincible arguments and concrete illustrations. This incident is narrated more elaborately earlier in Chapter VI.

*The Rift Widens*

Bijjala had to yield. But the rift between the two could not be closed up; on the contrary it widened. Basavēśvara went on preaching and practising his new faith and his reformist teachings appealed to the common man and the masses who rallied round him. Bijjala and his courtiers along with the high born upper classes, who were immersed in orthodox religious traditions and owned vested interests therein, opposed in its earlier stage this new religio-social movement with all their might and tried to arrest its advance. But they failed in their attempts. This resulted in the rise of two sharply divided rival camps, between Bijjala and Basava in the political, social and religious spheres. Basavēśvara’s movement continued and grew.

Bijjala was at this juncture desperately pursuing his ambitious designs of subverting the Chālukya regime. By this course he had antagonised certain political groups. Though he relied mainly on his military organisation to achieve his goal, he was not
prepared to entirely lose the peoples’ goodwill and support for his cause. It was for this reason that notwithstanding his disapprobation and bitter hatred of Basavēśvara and his actions, he did not take to hasty action to suppress the movement, which would have brought dire consequences. He refrained from dispensing with the services of Basavēśvara, which he could have done easily.

Thus on one side Bijjala rose ascendant with his political power and influence as provincial governor at Mangalavāda, poised to strike a deathblow to the Chālukya empire. On the other, Basavēśvara advanced in his spiritual devotion and faith, zealously preaching his doctrine to those interested in it. The two thus stood apart and away, never countenancing each other. This situation developed, it seems, between 1141 and 1153 A. D.

_Anubhava Maṇṭapa_

Basavēśvara was a practical philosopher and consummate organizer. His mathematical talents and accuracy prepared him to organize his spiritual pursuits and religious teachings through systematic channels. This could be done by establishing institutions devoted to the task. Such a project would have mooted in his mind during his stay at Sangama. There, he came into contact with the followers of different faiths and philosophies and held intimate discussions with them. Many of them were interested in spiritual advancement and mystic experiences. Thus a common bond could be established among the aspirants for the promotion of mysticism. The idea thus originating, would have taken concrete shape in course of time.
When Basavēśvara went to Mangalavāda and rose to power as a high officer under Bijjala, he not only continued his spiritual pursuits and religious practices, but considerably enlarged their sphere and influence. Devotees from far and near places came in numbers to meet and seek enlightenment from him. Meetings, assemblies, conferences and congregations were frequently held. Some of the meetings were of a special character in which more advanced persons participated and discussed intricate philosophical and spiritual themes. Out of such activities emerged a spiritual organization known as Anubhava Manṭapa or the Academy of Mysticism. It is difficult to trace the precise origin and evolution of this institution which is described in detail in later literary works. As indicated above, a positive beginning appears to have been made some time after Basavēśvara came to Mangalavāda.

According to a literary tradition, Basavēśvara laid the foundation of this institution nine years after his stay in Bijjala's capital. (See Chapter XXII below.) On this assumption we can place this event approximately in 1141 A. D.
CHAPTER XVII

3. LIFE AND PERSONALITY

TRIUMPH AND CRISIS

In the City of Kalyāṇa

From Mangalavāḍa, the stage is now shifted to Kalyāṇa. This city was the capital of the Chālukya monarchs who had raised it to the zenith of glory. Bijjala's political ambition, his family ties with the Chālukya princes and the deteriorating rule of the last of them, viz. Taila III, had necessitated Bijjala's presence in this city more often than before. He could not now confine himself in his out of the way provincial capital Mangalavāḍa which was too small for his ambitious activities and also disadvantageous, being removed from the centre of the political scene. To fell the tree of Chālukya sovereignty he should wield his axe at close quarters and aim it at the root. Bijjala's stay at Kalyāṇa, almost continuously and for long, might be placed some time prior to 1156 A.D., the year when he inaugurated his independent rule and commenced his own regnal reckoning in defiance of his Chālukya overlord. There is evidence to believe that he had declared his independence three years earlier in 1153 A.D. (See Chapter III above.)

About the same time, Basavēśvara also must have thought of Kalyāṇa as a worthy place for his spiritual work. He was attracted to this city by its favourable environment and his choice was governed by a number of factors. Firstly, from his preliminary
successful experiment at Mangalavāda, he realised that as his new faith readily appealed to the masses, he should extend and widen his sphere of activities for its propagation. This objective could be best achieved by his going to Kalyāṇa. Secondly, no love was lost now between him and Bijjaḷa from whom he could expect little encouragement, but all opposition. The conflict between the two deepened on account of sharp ideological differences and religious practices. Basavēśvara might have left Mangalavāda for Kalyāṇa about 1153 A.D.

Historicity of Traditions

It is quite interesting to note that the above reconstruction of the events from a historical point of view squarely fits in with the literary traditions concerning Anubhava Maṇṭapa. (See Chapter XXII below.) It is said that the presidential seat of this institution was kept vacant for twelve long years after its foundation by Basavēśvara, who it appears, was in search of and waited for a worthy person competent to occupy it. Ultimately, Allama Prabhu came and graced it. This might have taken place at Kalyāṇa about 1153 A.D., by which time Basavēśvara would have left Mangalavāda. The chair remained vacant roughly from 1141 to 1153 A.D.

The new religious doctrine established by Basavēśvara is familiarly known as Vīraśaivism. The later Vīraśaiva works invariably identify Basavēśvara’s propagation of his faith with the activities of the institution of Anubhava Maṇṭapa. In the light of this position, the statements regarding this institution are invested with historical significance. The presidential chair
alluded to before, is described in Vīrāśaiva terminology as Śūnya Sirnhāsana, i.e. Throne of the Absolute. Śūnya, again, has a special connotation in Vīrāśaiva philosophy, which will be explained later. What is the significance of the assertion that Basavēśvara founded Anubhava Maṇṭapa nine years after his arrival at Bijjala’s capital? It means that he inaugurated his movement in right earnest after he was securely established in his official position as Bijjala’s Treasury Chief.

And again, why was the presidential seat kept vacant for twelve years? The answer lies in the following historic circumstances. Basavēśvara’s movement, as we know, was entirely new and free, which radically broke off from the orthodox religious doctrines and social conduct. The experience showed that it was welcomed more by the commoner and the masses. But Basavēśvara was eager to see that it was properly received in the higher circles too and approved of by the wise and saintly persons. He came to know that there lived a few great men who concurred with his religious ideals and social pattern. Supreme among such was Allama Prabhu of Balligāve, the greatest mystic of his age. Basavēśvara conferred with him and persuaded him to bless his movement with his compliance. Time rolled on and ultimately Allama Prabhu met Basavēśvara at Kalyāṇa and extended his whole-hearted support to his movement. This was a memorable victory for Basavēśvara and his new faith.

**Bijjala’s Revolution**

While at Kalyāṇa, Basavēśvara seems to have plunged himself more and more deeply in his religious and social activities. His success might have turned
Bijjala bitterly hostile to him. Bijjala soon succeeded in his political ambition and usurped the Chālukya throne. There was bloodshed and many a member of the royal Chālukya house including Taila III became victims of his violent machinations.

It is doubtful whether Basavēśvara continued in the service of Bijjala after the latter usurped the sovereignty of the Chālukyas. Firstly because, they never agreed with each other and Bijjala was determined to exterminate the new movement. Secondly, a high-spirited person of Basavēśvara’s integrity and piety would not have stooped, at this stage, to serve under a ruler like Bijjala who was wily and treacherous and had occupied the Chālukya throne by unfair means.

Thus an oceanic gulf separated Bijjala and Basavēśvara during the actual reign period of Bijjala from 1162 to 1167 A.D. Bijjala was busy with the governance of his newly acquired kingdom and Basavēśvara was zealously engaged in propagating his new faith which was by this time firmly established and had gained vast popular support in many quarters. Bijjala might have made some half-hearted attempts to suppress this movement, but without success. He could not launch wholesale repression against it, as such a course was fraught with peril.

Triumph of Basavēśvara

This was the most glorious period in Basavēśvara’s life as it marked the culmination and fulfilment of his mission. He preached devotion to and implicit faith in one god, Śiva; reverence to his true devotees, the Jangamas; and equality of all men and women on religious and social plane. He practised what he
preached and carried on a crusade against the unbelievers and vested interests. This movement was a double-edged sword which cut at the religious dogmas from one end and social inequity from another.

Kalyāṇa was now the centre of Basavēśvara’s movement and stronghold of his staunch followers. He was always surrounded by the surging congregation of the Jangama devotees, preaching and kindling divine light. His mystic teachings and performances radiated lustre all around and carried their appeal to spiritual seekers in different parts of the country. They came to Kalyāṇa for enlightenment and edification, to know the mysteries of spiritual experience and to get their doubts and difficulties resolved. Allama Prabhu had paid a visit to the city and set his stamp of approbation on the Jangama fraternity.

The enlightened sages, the saints and seekers of divine realisation who came to Kalyāṇa for inspiration from Basavēśvara and to be benefited by communion with the galaxy of mystics, are described in contemporary and later Vīraśaiva literature. To mention a few of them here: Allama Prabhu, Siddharāma, Maḍivāla Māchayya, Hāvinahāla Kallayya, Aggavanīya Honnayya, Bāhūru Bommayya, etc. (from Karnataka); Urilingadēva, Kumbāra Guṇḍayya (from Maharashtra); Bahurūpi Chauḍayya, Telugēsa Masaṇayya, Sakalēsa Māḍarasā, Šripati Paṇḍita (from Āndhra Dēśa); Mādana Chennayya, Meremīṇḍadēva (from the Tamil Nad); Bhadragāyaka, Chēramarāya (from Kērala); Ādayya, Sōḍjaḷa Bācharasa (from Gujarāt); Mōligeya Mārayya and his wife Mahādēvi (from Kashmir).

There were many distinguished women too; for instance, Mahādēvi, Akka Mahādēvi, Satyakka,
Muktayakka, Guṇḍavve, Remmavve, Ammavve, Kāḷavve, Vaijavve, Aṇṇaladēvi, Piṭṭavve, Śivapriya Nāchi, who came from different parts of the country.

These devotees belonged to all sections of the society, high and low, rich and poor, learned and uneducated. They pursued various vocations and were associated with different skills and crafts. For instance, Mārayya and Sakalēśa Mādarasa belonged to the ruling class; Basava himself was originally a Brāhmaṇa; Ādayya was a merchant; Maḍīvāla Māchayya was a washerman; Kumbāra Guṇḍayya was a potter; Taḷavāra Rāmidēva was a village servant; Kinnari Bommaṇṇa was a goldsmith; Jōdhara Mādaṇṇa was a soldier; Dōhara Kakkayya was a tanner; Mādara Chennayya was a cobbler. Besides these, there were devotees who belonged to the occupations like those of a tailor, weaver, basketmaker, oilmiller, farmer, cowherd, ferryman, barber, hunter, grassrope maker, etc.

*Mysticism and True Religion*

Allama Prabhu who tops the above list was a great mystic; he was highly advanced in spiritual pursuits and had attained perfection therein. He was the leader of the assemblies and presided over the discourses and deliberations of the devotees. His guidance was sought by Basavēśvara. These assemblies, conferences and gatherings exercised vast influence on the masses and different sections of the society. They opened a new outlook in the social order and breathed a new spirit in religion. True religion was different from the traditional religion. This was not the monopoly of the privileged few. It was a process of mental
evolution and spiritual advancement, worthy of attainment by all earnest seekers and true aspirants, irrespective of their high or low position in life and society. True religion was unfettered by theological dogmas and mechanical ritualism.

It would be unhistorical to believe that the colourful details of Basavēśvara’s new movement described at length in later Purāṇas and literary works are all entirely historical. As it is likely in such contexts, legend and exaggeration must have played their role in shaping them. However, we can accept the portrait as true in its essence; because we obtain substantial corroboration of the main subject and some details from the contemporary Sayings of Basavēśvara and his companions.

Thus things moved on swiftly. The new movement of Basavēśvara had come to stay. His followers and admirers swelled in large numbers and his Jangama fraternity grew into a powerful force to reckon with, not only in the social and religious spheres, but also in the political one.

Mission Fulfilled

It was a unique achievement on the part of Basavēśvara. The vision he saw in the prime of his life at Kūḍala Sangama had been virtually realised within the span of about three decades. He had given a staggering blow to the old order, conservatism and dogmas. He had initiated his fellowmen into a new religious faith and social behaviour. He had successfully led them on their onward march to attain their goal. What else could a leader of a new religion and society aspire?
Basavēśvara was always in tune with his favourite god who inspired him into action and guided his destiny. Sangamēśvara had ordained that Basavēśvara should attain his spiritual goal of god-realisation through a worldly career. Basavēśvara could not at the outset probe into the divine intention and dispensation. But he could now clearly see it through. His pursuit of temporal career had brought him quicker success and greater fulfilment than he could ever imagine. By toiling for the fellow-beings he had not only achieved his personal objective of god-realisation, but also helped thousands of yearning souls in their spiritual pursuits. In this wise, he was virtually crowned with success.

Destiny’s Warning

Basavēśvara then had inner promptings indicating that his life’s mission having been as good as fulfilled, he should now return to the asylum of his god. But he could not readily make up his mind to abruptly terminate his worldly career which had reached its finest climax. He was so completely lost in the service of the devotees, the Jangama fraternity, that no other state of mind could be more joyous and blissful. But the parting moment came soon.

It was 1167 A.D., a critical period in the newly established Kalachuri regime, in the reign of the first ruler Bijjala himself. In the course of twelve years from 1156 to 1167 A.D., the political situation had gone from bad to worse. At the end of the first half of this period (1162 A.D.), a violent revolution had extinguished the sovereignty of the Chālukyas. At the end of the second half, Bijjala was preparing for a similar doom for himself.
Bijjala’s Atrocity

Bijjala, who was watching with alarm the enormous growth of Basavēśvara’s movement and its popularity, now became intolerant and restive. He was determined to take repressive measures to arrest its further growth. There lived two prominent citizens in Kalyāṇa, Harālayya and Madhuvayya, who were great devotees of Śiva and devout followers of Basavēśvara. Bijjala summoned them to his court and executed them after extracting their eyes. Their crime was that they were party to an intercaste and intercommunal marriage. Harālayya, an untouchable, had married his son to the daughter of Brāhmaṇa Madhuvayya. It was a Pratilōma marriage forbidden by law-givers. Such alliances violated the legal code and militated against the established religious customs and social practices.

This atrocity stunned the devotees with horror and convulsed the entire community of Jangama fraternity. All were annoyed and every one denounced the heinous act. What next, was the immediate question. It was a formidable challenge and how best they could meet it, was the problem. Whisperings, gatherings and heated arguments raged around like wild fire.

The followers of Basavēśvara were divided into two camps. The extremist section, headed by Jagadēva and his companions, vehemently pleaded for revenge and retaliation. It was the sacred duty of the Śaiva devotees to do away with the wrong-doer who sinned against Śiva. The saner elements, on the contrary, counselled peace and forbearance. Basavēśvara did
not favour the move to punish Bijjala with death. But his words of wisdom were of no avail.

_Crisis Overtakes_

The leader lost control over the movement and thought it prudent to get out of it. The situation became explosive. Violence was bound to bring in its train counter violence and ultimate disaster. He had seen with his own eyes how violence and bloodshed had effaced the Chalukya rule. He did not wish the recurrence of a similar event through his agency. The hour of crisis, however, had approached. Notwithstanding his efforts to stem the tide of violence, the crisis did overtake the movement. Some of his near companions were involved in it. The only course now left open for the leader was to dissociate himself from it.

Basavēswara realised that it was divine dispensation. His life’s mission was over and he should now return to that Supreme Power who had made him his agent.

Basavēswara left Kalyana with a group of followers. He proceeded to Kudala Sangama praying, “Enough of this world, gracious Father, my Lord! Grant me thy asylum”.

Sangamēswara granted his request. The devotee experienced His presence in the shrine. With ecstatic joy his soul was merged with the deity, the Infinite. We might place this event about the end of 1167 A.D.

We close this account by narrating what happened to the movement after its leader’s departure.

Jagadeva, Molleya and Bommaya who led the extremist section of the Jangama fraternity were encouraged to retaliate. A conspiracy was hatched
and Bījjala was murdered in his own palace. Pandemonium ensued. Bījjala’s kinsmen and the troops fell upon Basava’s followers for revenge. The devotees could not withstand the formidable onslaught. They left Kalyāṇa and scattered in different directions. Some had already gone to Kūḍala Sangama. One prominent section of the devotees headed by Chennabasavaṇṇa, Basavēśvara’s nephew, proceeded to Uḷavi. Some went to Śrīśaila. Others went to different places and regions. The movement thus met with temporary reverses. It, however, survived and was restored to greater vigour after a lapse of about two and a half centuries.
CHAPTER XVIII

MARCH OF THE MOVEMENT

We may pause here for a while to retrospect in more details the course of Basavēśvara’s new religio-social movement. In the beginning when this was inaugurated, it appears to have at once evoked favourable response in many quarters. The main reason for this was that it came as a boon which sought to remedy rampant ills then prevailing in Hindu society, by teaching a sound ethical code and devotion to one supreme god Śiva.

Initial Success

It may be noted in this context that Śaivism was gaining ascendancy at this time and Bijjala himself was a staunch supporter of this faith. The originator of the movement whose supreme objective was to rejuvenate the Śaiva faith, was best suited for the task, being a brilliant youth of outstanding abilities, who had risen in the court of Bijjala by virtue of his honesty and loyal service, was himself a great devotee of Śiva and had endeared himself to one and all by his amiable behaviour and kind actions. In consequence, it was welcomed in the higher aristocratic circle as well as by the ordinary people. The official position of the sponsor and his cordial relations with the redoubtable governor, might have contributed to the rapid growth and initial success of the movement.

But, simultaneously, it might also have caused strong reactions in the minds of two classes of persons. The first comprised the officers and chiefs in the admini-
strative departments of Bijjala. They had sufficient reasons to harbour grievances and ill will against the leader, because he had attained the high position within a short time superseding their claims and won laurels from their master. The second included the rigidly Vedic and non-Śaivite sections among Bijjala’s courtiers. This is gathered from the Sayings of Basavēśvara and the descriptions of Bijjala’s counsellors as given by Harihara and other Vīraśaiva writers. They consisted of persons who adhered to the practice of mechanical study of the Vēdas and performance of the Vedic sacrifices and the rest who preferred the worship of Vishṇu and other deities as against Śiva.

**Vital Phase**

Encouraged by the initial success, when the movement took its second momentous stride, it entered into its vital phase. During this phase its profound implications and far-reaching consequences became manifest. Now came the stage when the teacher began to implement the precepts he proclaimed. His activities penetrated into the social strata, cutting across its traditional framework.

For instance, a cardinal principle of the new faith was absolute equality among the devotees of Śiva. As a verbal advice and pious precept, this was quite innocent; nobody could object to it. But it was fraught with grave dangers in its practical application. To enforce it was to confront a host of obstacles. In conformity with the teacher’s convictions and preachings, as soon as persons were initiated into the new faith, they formed a category by themselves, wherein their differentiation as high and low in the manner of the old social order
vanished. They were all raised socially and spiritually and placed on an elevated position, so that they formed one fraternity with equal status for all in all matters including interdining and intermarrying, no matter what community they originally belonged to.

The conduct of the leader of the movement in this respect was exemplary. He implicitly believed and fervently practised what he preached. He abhorred the conventional superiority of the religious and social aristocracy and vested interests and directed a frontal attack to expose the unreality of their claims. In order to atone for the sins of the former generations as it were, he evinced special consideration to persons belonging to the lowest strata of the Hindu society, who had been accustomed to living, for centuries, in conditions of poverty, ignorance, and domination by the superior classes. All these were to disappear in course of time under the new philosophy of life propagated by Basavēśvara.

_Growth and Expansion_

The movement thus suffered reverses after its initial success. But in the long run this proved to be a boon in disguise. It often happens that the greater the opposition to the followers of a new faith or a social reformer, the greater will be the success of the movement in course of time. Basavēśvara now rose to the occasion and ably guided its destiny on the rugged path through thick and thin. The loss in one sector was made good by spectacular gain in another. The gain was its warm reception on a large scale by the untutored masses, the common men and the humbler sections of the society. In this fertile soil the
movement struck deep roots and evinced rapid growth. As days rolled on, the teacher attracted more and more followers, whose numbers swelled and thronged around his magnetic personality. They hailed him as their saviour, listening with raptures, to his soul-stirring discourses and putting into practice his simple precepts.

Basavēśvara was singularly kind and hospitable to the devotees. His test of a devotee was sincerity of faith and unstinted devotion to God. He freely mixed with them and developed personal contacts. He went to their mean dwellings and cottages and partook of the morsel of sacred offering to the god. When they went to his mansion, he rejoiced and welcomed them, attending to their needs with modesty and humility.

This was a unique phenomenon. No religious teacher, holding a high office in government, had preached and practised in the past as Basavēśvara did. His was not the method of delivering hollow sermons from raised platforms or elevated pulpits. He walked into the isolated quarters and peeped into the straggling huts to kindle the lamp of devotion for the enlightenment of the degraded and the downtrodden. He was stern and unbending to the obstinate and arrogant and humbler than the humble and softer than the soft to the sorrowing and the afflicted. Not being pedagogical, his teachings were persuasive. They penetrated the minds and captured the hearts. Though towering high above them, he became a commoner among the commoners.

How strongly Basavēśvara felt and reacted on this question is clearly reflected in his own Sayings. We know for certain that he was born and brought up in an aristocratic Brāhmaṇa family of noble traditions.
But he was keen to draw a dark curtain over his hereditary superiority and forget his past kinship and kindreds. He was practically reborn in a new respectable family, adopting new parents and choosing different kinsmen; and they were all drawn from the low classes and communities, particularly those degraded and segregated as outcasts.

Again and again he pronounces the names of Ḍōhara Kakkayya, a low-born tanner as his father and Mādara Chennayya, a cobra as his grand-father. Their kinship is some times cited the other way round, the latter taking the former's place. In other contexts their relationship is slightly altered, calling them uncles, etc. He also introduces in this connection two other names, Śvapachayya and Dāsayya. These do not seem to have been actual individuals, but only representative pseudonyms. Śvapacha means literally one who eats dog's flesh, a condemned outcast; and Dāsa is a serf, a bond slave. He cherishes a deep sense of gratitude for all these devotees, his kinsmen, who, he says, gave him alms of devotion and brought him up as a devotee.

By way of illustrating the above observations we cite a few of his Sayings below:

The son of a maid-servant in the house of Chennayya, the daughter of a maid-servant in the house of Kakkayya,—I am born from the union of these two, their offspring. God of Kūḍala Sangama is the eye witness to this.

Sire! A slave boy was born in your lineage; I am the son of his bond slave; in lineage, in descent, in kinship, I am nothing but a bond slave. O, God of Kūḍala Sangama! Eternal is Thy Mastery, perpetual is my slavery!
Should I call Siriyāla a banker? Māchayya a washerman? Kakkayya a tanner? Chennayya a cobler? O my dear Sir, Kūḍala Sangayya will laugh, if I call myself a Brāhmaṇa!

There are few precedents of this kind in the annals of our religions. This was a logical step necessitated by the desire of the leader of the movement to bridge the gulf between precept and practice. Its astounding effects must have caused convulsive reactions all around.

(N. B.:— For the sources of the above discussion the reader is advised to refer to the Nos. 342-351 of Basavanal’s collection of original Vachanas.)

Opposition and Persecution

The high lights of the movement, now put on, opened the eyes of the observers. Its real character was fully exposed. The conduct and activities of the teacher evoked a storm of vehement protests and severe criticisms even among his erstwhile admirers. This provided a golden opportunity to the courtiers and counsellors of Bijjala to start a campaign of vilification against him. His very honesty and loyalty were challenged. Bijjala’s mind was poisoned by false tales and foul allegations. Consequently, he began to view with deep suspicion and distrust his most trusted lieutenant and right hand man. He threatened to punish him.

Basavēśvara was a leader of high moral calibre, his character above reproach and his honesty and sincerity beyond calumny. Firm in conviction and courageous in action, he boldly faced the mounting opposition to his movement. With the characteristic zeal of a crusader, he withstood the assaults and forged ahead with unswerving faith.
To the members of the upper classes of the society, the practical side of the movement appeared more reprehensible and shocking than its theoretical and doctrinal character. The adverse reactions, therefore, were immediate and widespread, making themselves felt in diverse forms. The teacher was not only jeered and scoffed at, denounced for his blasphemous precepts and heretical actions, but was also personally harassed and persecuted. They deserted him; they excommunicated him and threatened to deprive him of his high office and means of livelihood. They even thought of putting an end to his life. But the teacher remained unperturbed and unshaken. The following autobiographical pronouncements of Basavēśvara reflect the raging conflagration of opposition he and his movement had to pass through:

They taunt me, nobody is with you, nobody comes to you! But am I really lonely? No; Bāṇa is my friend, Mayūra is my companion, Kālidāsa is my comrade. My senior uncle Kakkayya, junior uncle Chennayya, fondled and brought me up, O Kūḍala Sangayya! (No. 352. Bāṇa, Mayūra and Kālidāsa were devotees of yore.)

Let them be displeased with me; what are they going to do? Let the whole town frown upon me. It will not shatter me. Let them not give their girl to our boy. Let them not offer food to our dog. Can a dog bite him who is riding an elephant—as long as our Kūḍala Sangayya is ours? (No. 752)

One dies when one’s span of life ends; when fortune falters, poverty overtakes. Why should I shake, O God of Kūḍala Sangama! I am Thy servant. (No. 689)
Unnerved by physical torture, I say not, ‘save me’! Anxious of subsistence, I say not, ‘please give’! Whatever is ordained, will take place. I say neither, yes or no. I will not pray, I will not beg of men. O God of Kūḍaḷa Sangama! This is my vow, this is my oath; I swear by Thee. (No. 695)

Truthful and just I am, blunt and outspoken, not cleverly courteous, critical of men’s ways. A true devotee of God of Kūḍaḷa Sangama, I fear none, basking in His divine lustre. (No. 753)

On account of the extraordinary character of the movement the fame of the leader travelled to distant regions and devotees from far and near places assembled in his presence. Several of them were men and women of deep learning and high social status, anxious to participate in the discussions on mystic experience and eternal verities. The teacher received them all. His hospitality was generous to a fault. He forgot himself while entertaining them. Harihara and other Vīraśaiva writers give graphic accounts of such meetings and blissful communions of devotees. In course of time the movement became popular and brought about a great social upheaval. It commanded vast influence making its strength felt in several spheres.

Causes of Success

The factors that contributed to the success of the movement are noteworthy. They may be analysed as follows.

Firstly, the pleasing personality of the teacher. No portrait of Basavēśvara, depicting him in his physical form and features is available today. The literary works nowhere furnish a realistic pen picture
of him. Harihara’s description (Sthala II) is rather conventional, wanting in specific details. It seems, however, that he was a charming figure, creating favourable impression at first sight.

Secondly, his courteous behaviour, sociability and winning manners. He remained tranquil and restrained, though provoked and assailed. We quote his own words.

A devotee is he who folds his hands in respect, seeing a devotee. Polite words are as good as muttering prayers. Gentle speech is not less fruitful than a penance performed. True modesty is divine grace. God of Kūḍāla Sangama never quarters him who is not so. (No. 244)

The teacher must have had many experiences of being accosted by angry persons. In this context says he:

Let them be annoyed with you; why should you fret at this? What is their gain? What is your loss? If irritation takes hold of you, where lies your dignity? Unrestrained mind loses its awareness. O God of Kūḍāla Sangama! The fire inside a house burns that very house and not the neighbouring tenements. (No. 248)

Suave manners and courteous conversation are the essence of social conduct. If you have nothing else to part with, you can offer these at least to your fellowmen. Says he:

Does your skin fly from you and the earth sink under your feet, if you say, ‘please come, take this seat; pray, you are in good health?’ You may not bestow, but you can behave. (No. 241)
It makes a world of difference between good manners and bad manners. With what force he conveys this in the following pithy Saying:

Say 'Dear Sir,' you attain heaven;
Call 'O You,' you go to hell;
It is so simple, to acquire merit or sin,
O God of Kūḍala Sangama! In the words,
'Hail God, Hail the Devotee,' dwells
Kailāsa (Śiva's abode).

(No. 240)

Thirdly, the doctrine and faith he preached was compact. He emphasized that there was only one God, undivided and supreme. Running after many gods is self-deception and self-degradation. His names might be many, but He is one, alone and unique (No. 615). The grand conception of the universal entity is thus visualized.

Wherever I cast my glances,
I see you there, my Lord!
The pattern of endless space,
The light of the cosmic eye,
Universe's resounding voice,
Arms and legs all-engrossing
O Lord of Kūḍala Sangama!

(No. 534)

To worship god you are not required to visit a temple or construct one. By a simple ceremony you can wear on your person the Linga which is His emblem. Thus you will always feel elated with His presence. It is superfluous to entrap yourself in endless rituals and ceremonies. God dwells within you and your body itself is His temple. Focus your thoughts on Him and you see the Light. He avers:

There are some that are rich,
They build temples to Thee,
Stony edifices perishable,
I am not rich, poor me!  
And yet, my temple stands,  
My legs the pillars, body the shrine.  
My head the golden pinnacle,  
Thus do I erect lo!  
Thy imperishable mansion  
O Lord Kūḍala Sangayya.  

(No. 820)

Thinkest thou to bathe  
These stony idols  
And worship God!  
It’s much ado  
And pleaseth not my Lord.  
Not leaves alone,  
Nor baths so many  
But true devotion  
Moves my Lord of Kūḍala Sangama.

Fourthly, the devotional appeal. Devotion, true devotion, intensive devotion to God was the soul of his teaching. Devotion is the most powerful force in a religion. Being a psychological factor and emotional in essence, its appeal is quick and forceful.

People talked of religion and practised it in a haphazard manner. They had not grasped its essence and understood its secret. Basavēśvara weaned them from distractions and freed them from illusions. Devotion was a panacea for all ills. It disburdened their minds of unwholesome accretions. It showed them the true path of God. It raised them on the moral plane. It assured them a better social status.

Sound morals and religion are not apart. By practising the virtues of honesty, truthfulness and non-violence, you acquire outward cleanliness as well as inward cleanliness. This will take you nearer to God.
Steal not, kill not,
Let no untruth stain thy lips
Lose not patience and anger
Praise not self and cavil others.
This is outward purity,
This is inward purity,
Thus thou pleasest our Lord of Kūḍala Sangama.

(No. 235)

With compassion begins religion.

Is that religion which teacheth not compassion?
Compassion is the root of religion.
Be compassionate to all. Not having this,
Thou art away from Kūḍala Sangayya. (No. 247)

Fifthly, his teachings were practical and utilitarian. The purpose of religion, he pointed out, was to lead a better life in this world and not to acquire reward in the other far-off world. He exhorted men and women to live a disciplined life, making the best use of the rare opportunities and privileges conferred upon them by the Creator. He exclaims:

Dear friend! They do not separately exist, the Divine World and the Mortal World. Truth is the Divine World and falsehood Mortal World. Good conduct is Heaven and bad conduct Hell. O God of Kūḍala Sangama! I swear by you.

(No. 239)

This mortal world is the workshop of the Creator. You acquit yourself creditably here; you acquit yourself creditably there. You falter here, you falter there, O God of Kūḍala Sangama!

(No. 155)

Sixthly, he meticulously practised what he preached. His conduct was above suspicion; his
character beyond corruption. He led a holy life, dedicated for the uplift of the people.

Seventhly, he was a gifted speaker and fervent preacher and preached in the people's own language. This can be judged from his Vachanas. Through simple and homely words, he conveyed great truths. It was for the first time that Kannada, the language of the common man, was given a place of honour in the higher spheres of religion, philosophy and mysticism. A master of choice idioms, apt similes and telling figures of speech, he wielded marvellous command over the language. His discourses on religion and philosophy, characterised by sincerity and depth of feeling and delivered with inspiration and eloquence, made a powerful appeal. Furthermore, he was a lover of music and possessed a melodious voice. Many a time he sang and danced with devotional ecstasy in the gatherings. Thus he captivated the hearts of the people.

Eighthly, he conducted his movement systematically by institutional methods. His disciples and followers included different categories of persons, from the unlettered simple folk to the learned and advanced ranks. These were grouped, according to their respective standards, into various orders of monks or householders. Through such channels religions instructions were imparted and doctrines propagated.

Ninethly, the high morale and discipline of true service, maintained by the leader, his companions and the inner circle of his intimate followers. They were all genuine devotees and real servants of God: cultured, spotless in character, free from vice, universal in outlook
and humanitarian in action. The qualifications of a true devotee are stressed in a number of his Sayings. One of them declares:

He who kills is an untouchable Mādiga;
He who eats foul food is an outcast Holeya;
Enquirest thou their birth and family?
High born are the devotees of our Kūḍala Sanga;
Who ever seek the good of all beings. (No. 592)

Lastly, his surpassing zeal, disarmingly passive behaviour even under provocation and guileless modesty contributed their mite to the success of the movement. He stooped to conquer, as it were. The following excerpts speak for themselves.

Smaller than I, is none,
Greater than a devotee, is none,
O God of Kūḍala Sangama, I proclaim!
Your blessed feet are the witness, so is my mind;
This is my supreme ordeal. (No. 334)

Those who defame me, are my kin.
Those who inflict injury, my benefactors.
Those who reproach, my parents.
Those who slight, my patrons.
Those who condemn, my relations.
Those who applaud, do but kill me.
O God of Kūḍala Sangama.

Thus did he preach and propagate his doctrine. This new faith was free and untrammelled by the labyrinth of dogmas and rituals. Prohibitions and inhibitions were few. The sacraments were reduced to the minimum. All work was noble and no avocation mean. Persons from any walk of life were eligible to join the Fraternity of Devotees and seek their salvation.
By virtue of its advantages it attracted large numbers from the unprivileged and unsophisticated sections of the society. Instilled with a sense of self-respect and self-confidence, they welcomed him as their benefactor.

_Crown of Victory_

It is no wonder, the movement was rewarded with success, though not unqualified, within a short period of over two decades. Intelligent men always aspire for progress and betterment and welcome the situations that provide opportunities for development. Rank religious orthodoxy leads to intellectual stagnation. It binds human minds and blinds their reasoning capacity. Therefore, whenever a new reformist movement takes its course, it draws support from the disgruntled followers of the orthodox religion. This phenomenon accounts for the success of Basavēśvara’s new movement.

The movement opened out fresh avenues of progress and betterment in religious and temporal life. The two vital forces that inspired its leaders to action and brought the discerning persons under their spell, were mysticism and social equality, both of which also exercised powerful sway on the simple and credulous multitudes of men and women.

The success of the movement, however, has to be judged not merely by the numbers of followers it attracted. The credit primarily goes to the dynamic leadership of eminent personalities like Basavēśvara and his comrades. Though the movement was inaugurated earlier by Basavēśvara almost single-handed and pushed through with exemplary fervour, it was later
upheld by men of ability and distinction who conformed with his progressive ideology and countenanced his resourceful methods. With the wholesome support of such pioneers, the movement was reinforced, gaining fresh vigour and vision. It became simultaneously broad-based and its foundations were laid deep and unshaken.

Among the galaxy of sages who accelerated the pace of the movement by their participation in it, stands out foremost Allama Prabhu. He was an accomplished Šivayōgi who had realised perfection. The height of spirituality enjoyed by him is described in the following passage:4

Having experienced Reality, he is above thought;
Having vanquished Death, he is high above Death;
Having embodied the Supreme, he is Supreme;
Having embraced the Beyond, he is Blissful;
Having pervaded the void, he is Fullness;
Having absorbed Guhēśvara Linga, the Absolute,
He is Self-begot.

Allama Prabhu’s majestic association with Basavēśvara imparted dignity and grandeur to the movement. Under his guidance, the institution, raised to the status of a classical religious faith, an independent doctrine, and philosophical school, earned recognition in the congregation of the elite.

It was a triumph of the movement that Siddharāma of Sonnalige (the present Sholapur), renowned for his humanitarian works, became the disciple of Allama Prabhu and joined the Fraternity of Devotees. Maḍivāḷa Māchayya heroically defended the faith, repulsing the assaults of shortsighted dialecticians. Chennabasavaṇṇa fathomed its depths with his subtle
exposition of philosophical intricacies and secrets of mysticism. Akka Mahādēvi, a unique representative of the fair sex, exemplified the supremacy of true devotion and demonstrated the parity of womanhood in the realm of religion.

*The Last Phase*

The movement thus ascended to the pinnacle of glory. But as we have already observed, it had a chequered career having traversed through ups and downs. Even the sun has dark spots and this new faith too had to encounter difficulties.

In its final phase the movement suffered from set-backs. The causes of this retreat were two-fold: one was internal and another external. We would first consider the first, the internal causes. We shall deal with the second, the external causes at the end of this chapter and in the next one.

In the strength of the movement itself lurked its weakness. The strength was the magnanimity of its sponsor Basavēśvara. He was too generous and universal to point his finger to the blemishes and foibles of individuals that came to him with the badge of devotees. They came in hundreds and thousands. How to suspect, how to discriminate? All were true, all were great. To him every one of them was Māhēśvara, Jangama, Guru and Linga incarnate. If some of them were black sheep, not true to their profession, but self-seekers and opportunists, it was not his fault. He believed in divine dispensation. Says he:

I see and believe the outward mark. Thou alone knowest their inside. A servant should attend to servant’s job. Why should I dabble
with the Master’s affairs? Thy devotees, O God of Kūḍala Sangama, are the mould of jewels and pearls.

Basavēśvara, however, was not quite unaware of the fact that there were hypocrites who had entered his camp and paraded as devotees. But he was modest and gentle and never harsh. His was the way of forbearance. Here is an instance:

The vow of milk, the vow of milk-cream, in the absence of cream the vow of pudding, the vow of butter and the vow of jaggery—such are their codes and practices. But none have I seen observing the vow of gruel. Outcast Chennayya alone among the devotees of Kūḍala Sanga observes the vow of gruel!

Allama Prabhu, on the contrary, ruthlessly criticises such impostors:

Why should the robed one, donning the garb
Be eaten up with greed?
O Guhēśvara, what shall I say
Of those who wear the elephant hide
And bark as dogs?

Basavēśvara received with both arms all such persons as were willing to join his circle of devotees. He did not put rigid restrictions on their admission. A general code of conduct and a few rules of discipline were prescribed. It was left to the conscience of the individuals to benefit themselves by their practice. With the popularity of the movement, when the numbers of his followers enormously swelled, it became difficult to exercise control and maintain proper discipline. They included persons of high spiritual
qualifications at one end and ordinary mediocres at the other. There were some who were seekers of sensual pleasures, slack in morals and indulging in loose gossip. Such behaviour and conduct was definitely against the precept and example of the teacher.

The above opinion is gathered from the perusal of elaborate descriptions in the Vīraśaiva Purāṇas, which reveal that Basavēśvara had to deal with different categories of persons who approached him with diverse motives, not all of them being honest, pure or noble.

The descriptions also contain allusions to Viṭa Jangamas, Miṇḍa Jangamas and Sukhi Jangamas, all meaning devotees susceptible to sensual pleasures. In this connection is narrated the typical story of Mugdha (innocent) Sangayya who was immune to such temptations.6 If these accounts are not merely poetic, they reflect on the course of the movement.

When the devotees met and sat around, deliberations and discussions took place in regard to the various intricate questions connected with the doctrine and discipline of the new faith. Gradually, differences of opinion arose and it was realised that the elders among them were dogmatic diehards, insisting on a severe code of conduct. They were hyper critical and went so far as to criticise even the conduct of Basavēśvara. They found fault with him on the score that, he being a faithful devotee was serving under Bijjala who was a faithless non-devotee. According to the code of conduct prescribed for a faithful devotee, he should have no connection whatsoever with a faithless non-devotee. Says the teacher:
Since morning when I rise, do I ever brood and pine for my belly, my property, my wife and children? In this, my mind alone is its witness. "Basavaṇṇa is treading the path of eternal damnation"—they protest. "He appeases faithless Bijjala seated under his throne"—blame the prefects. I have my reply to this: I will even enter the mean dwellings of the outcast Holeyas and earn my wages to pine for Thy sake, but never for my gain. Otherwise, my head I offer for retribution, O God of Kūḍala Sangama!

(No. 709)

It was a mental torture for Basavēśvara to be placed in such a predicament—to be suspected and criticised by those very devotees whom he implicitly trusted and adored like God. Poignantly he gives vent to his inner feelings in the following utterances:

If the king is displeased,
One can leave his realm;
If the husband is displeased,
The wife cannot be her self;
O God of Kūḍala Sangama!
If the Jangama is displeased,
How can I live?

(No. 824)

To whom shall I confide my distress, my woe and worry? If I tell the members of the devout circle, jealousy overtakes them. Sugar and co-wife, jaggery and margosa, can they ever go together? To whom shall I confide? O God of Kūḍala Sangama! Come in the form of Jangama and dispel my mental agony.

(No. 389)

Thus in the process of the grand cavalcade of the movement developed a rift, a critical situation when differences and discord got the better of agreement
and accord. The leaders’ wisdom was challenged, the sanity of the veterans questioned. We receive further corroboration of this reading of the events in the utterances of Allama Prabhu:7

Who can succour, if you condemn the elephant and ride the he-buffalo? Who can help, if you cast away musk and besmear mud? Who can rescue, if you shun the dish of milk and drink liquor? Who can save them, O Maṭivāla, if they knowingly argue with the devotees of God Guhēśvara?

The mounting opposition to the movement within the movement itself, launched by the small minded, immature and unbalanced dissident groups, headed towards a crisis. A clear indication of this position is afforded by the following pronouncement, again of Allama Prabhu:7

If I say one thing, they say another,
They say something and I say different.
No agreement exists between me and them.
When agreement exit, holy discourses stop;
When holy discourses cease,
Hear, O Chennabasava!
God Guhēśvara is scarce.

In a Saying attributed to Basavēśvara, cited below in Chapter XXII, we meet with an assertion to the effect that former devotion and holy discourses were extinct for three months during the last days of the teacher’s stay in Kalyāṇa. This was a foreboding of the imminent disaster to the movement. The calamity came in the form of a catastrophe that rent the institution into pieces, scattering its leaders in different
directions. That the movement went out of control and the leaders lost their hold on the followers is clearly demonstrated by the episode of Bijjala’s murder at the hands of the adventurous Jagadēva and his companions.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. This account is drawn up mainly from the interpretation of the original Vachanas of Basavēśvara and Allama Prabhu and the information contained in the literary sources. It supplements what has been narrated in the previous chapters.
2. See chapters VI and X.
3. The translations of the Vachanas (Ed. Basavanal) given in this chapter and elsewhere are mostly by the author. In a few cases he has adapted their renderings by others; for instance, Anubhava Manṭapa publication, Bangalore, 1960. We are indebted to them all. The numbers cited are usually from the said edition.
5. Ibid., p. 23.
6. Basavaṭurdaṇa, Sandhi XI.
CHAPTER XIX

RESPONSIBILITY OF BIJJALA'S DEATH

The logical end of Basavēśvara’s movement was Bijjala’s murder by the former’s so-called camp followers. Considering the unpropitious circumstances in which the movement was nurtured and the grave risks it involved on account of the revolutionary character of the social reforms it sought to introduce, we need not wonder at the tragic outcome. We can even discern divine justice therein.

But, for the purpose of history, it is necessary to critically review the issue from the material and moral point of view and apportion the responsibility on the individuals who were directly or indirectly connected with it. Such an investigation is obligatory, because the subject is of paramount importance, being closely related to the integrity of the teacher.

Common Man’s View

Crime and sin should not go unpunished and the punishment would not be worth the name if it is not commensurate with their gravity. This is both commonsense and legal dictum. Thus if Bijjala who brought about the death of two followers of Basavēśvara, was killed as a retaliatory measure, it should be considered as a commendable and just act. This is the worldly view. According to this ordinary norm, when the assassination of Bijjala took place, many among Basavēśvara’s followers must have rejoiced. The persons who took the lead in the matter and courage-
ously carried out the deed, were praised and honoured as great devotees. But the episode has an important aspect which needs scrutiny. This is the role of Basavēśvara in the affair. Being the originator of the movement, he can not be extricated from his responsibility from the ordinary point of view.

The ringleaders of the murder, Jagadēva and his two companions were camp followers of Basavēśvara. So one naturally expects that directly or indirectly the teacher had his hand in the matter. Without his direction or consent the act could not have been accomplished. This inference is squarely supported by the Vīraśaiva Purānic accounts which relate this event at length in circumstantial details. If we are to believe them, we have to conclude that Bijjala was disposed of with the knowledge and consent of Basavēśvara; not only this, his life was terminated under positive direction with specific command of the teacher.

But the question is not so simple. We have come to realise in our critical study that Basavēśvara’s true personality is thickly coated and it is not easy to get at the correct picture through conventional religious works alone. Hence we have to do some original thinking and carefully analyse the factors that have contributed to the accepted version of the occurrence.

**Purānic Version**

The universally accepted and popular version of the episode is narrated in the Kannada Basavapurāṇa (Sandhi LIX-LX). Its relevant brief summary would be as follows:

One day, Basava’s follower Jagadēva came to the teacher and requested him to dine in his house. Basava consented, adding that if he had
the patience to receive the gathering of Linga and Jangama, he might proceed with the preparations. However when the preparations were completed, Jagadēva, instead of waiting for Basava, invited Brāhmaṇas under the pretext of observing the ritual and washed their feet. Knowing this Basava was wildly infuriated and refused to see Jagadēva who came to apologize for his conduct.

Basava reproached Jagadēva for his sacrilegious act which offended against true devotion to Linga and Jangama and religious observances of the Vīraśaiva faith. A true Vīraśaiva devotee ought to pin his faith in one supreme god Śiva and not to stray by showing respect to the worldly mortals. Repenting for his conduct, Jagadēva prostrated before Basava entreatying his forgiveness. Basava pardoned, but told Jagadēva that shortly was going to take place a crime against Śiva and that the latter should atone for his sin by destroying the criminal.

It so happened. Two great devotees named Harāljaya and Madhuvayya lived in the city of Kalyāṇa. King Bījjala listening to the tales of malicious persons, summoned these innocent persons to his court and with callous indifference to justice blinded them by extracting their eyes.

This incident caused wide commotion and the congregation of Śaiva devotees including Basava was fiercely excited, burning with unrestrained rage, swayed by aggressive emotions. Basava and the council of devotees sent for Jagadēva. They admonished him to fulfil his former pledge by doing away with the offender. Then publicly cursing Bījjala’s kingdom and capital to ruin, the mighty Māchayya, Musuṭi Chauḍayya,
Kakkayya and other devotees of Śiva and the assembly of Jangamas, led by Basava, proceeded to the town of Sangameśvara.

Commissioned thus, Jagadēva, accompanied by two other devotees, Molla and Bommayya, marched to Bijjala’s meeting hall at night. Piercing their sharp weapons into his body they ended his life. Immediately after, to atone for his former lapse Jagadēva severed his own head and went to heaven.¹

Its Critical Examination

This account, though superficially it appears to be genuine and matter of fact, contains serious discrepancies. Therefore, it becomes necessary to examine it in all its bearings.

Firstly, it may be pointed out that it is incompatible with the portrait of the teacher projected by the author himself in the early part of his work. For instance, while describing the installation of Basava as chief minister of Bijjala, the author presents him as holding the unique position of supreme authority over all the affairs of his kingdom. (Sandhi V, verses 9 and 71). If so, we expect that Basava who was all powerful in his high official position and also claimed the support of the vast array of his adherents, would easily chastise Bijjala for his offence, instead of abandoning the city with his followers.

Secondly, we are told that when an offence against Śiva was committed, the code of conduct prescribed for a true devotee who was present at the moment, enjoined upon him either to punish the offender forthwith or to quit the place.² In the present case, Basava could have adopted the first course and done away with
Bijjala. On the contrary, he leaves Kalyāṇa without punishing Bijjala, entrusting his task to his follower in his absence.

Thirdly, Basava’s stature is dwarfed by this behaviour. It shows that he did not rise to the occasion courageously to face the consequences of his movement, standing firm at his post; but shirked his responsibility as leader. Further, he did not maintain his equanimity of mind under provocation, got excited and lost his temper more than once—much against his own teachings.

Lastly, he entertained no scruples about violence. On the contrary he wilfully decreed the assassination of Bijjala.

*Image of Basavēśvara*

We may hold this picture by the side of the image emerging from the teacher’s own heart-pourings. In the last chapter we have seen how steadfastly and valiantly he furthered the movement, encountering stiff opposition and rigorous persecution. He was prepared to face any danger and even to court death for the cause. For instance, explicitly he avers:

What is to befall tomorrow,
Let that occur today;
What is to happen today,
Let it take place this moment.
Who will tremble?
Who will shudder?
One born must die, is the rule.
Powerless are Hari and Brahmā
To obliterate the inevitable writ
Of our God of Kūḍala Sangama. (696)
A servant in master’s pay, I am not;
Not a soldier fleeing in fright;
But one dedicated to Lords’ cause.
Hark, O God of Kūḍala Sangama!
Death to me is festival welcome.  

(No. 698)

Unseemly excitement and loss of temper, he deprecated. Gentle words and polite ways, he exhorted. Violence and harshness he condemned. Compassion is the soul of religion, he preached.

O Lord of Kūḍala Sangama,
Do I fear Bijaḷa? No.
Thee only I fear, for
To one and all art Thou compassionate.  

(No. 736)

This was the concept of God he constantly meditated.

Never shall I take away life.  

(No. 735)

He swore.

He who kills is an untouchable wretch.  

(No. 592)

He denounced.

Not to kill was one of the seven disciplines stressed for the purification of the mind and body which is essential to earn the grace of the god of Kūḍala Sangama.  

(No. 235)

They alone are truly high-born,
The devotees real of
Our Lord Kūḍala Sanga,
Who ever wish
Welfare of all beings.  

(No. 592)

This was his touch-stone of a devotee; and among the devotees he stood high above.
Basava was not a hypocrite; his words mirrored his high ideals and fair actions. Not made of worldly gross, he was not worldly. Noble his character, noble his culture, nobler was his personality. No wonder, he was deemed superhuman in his own life-time and adored as God. Such is the image of Basavēśvara reflected through his Sayings, his very self. Is he the same Basava depicted in the Jagadēva episode of the Basavapurāṇa? Did he bend low to dictate the murder of the miscreant?

Interpretation of Incidents

In our opinion the Basavapurāṇa version of Bijjala’s murder represents the ordinary common man’s view of the occurrence. It is difficult, as shown by the above enquiry, to accept it as historically true. If so, can we explain how the story was conceived and how it gained currency? We think, we can.

The substantial part of the Jagadēva episode is Bijjala’s torture of Haralayya and Madhuvayya and the revenge taken by Jagadēva and his companions for it. This must be historically true. It was a daring act no doubt and the hero who perpetrated it, was looked upon as a great devotee and saviour, since tit for tat is the commonly accepted code of justice. Jagadēva being a follower of Basava, it was believed that he acted according to the injunction of the teacher.

But this belief was not correct. For both the prominent leaders of the movement, Allama Prabhu and Basavēśvara had left Kalyāṇa before the murder was committed. The reason for their departure was, as seen in the previous chapter, indiscipline and
defiant attitude of the followers. Judging from their behaviour, Jagadēva and his accomplices were outside the circle of true followers of the teachers and had not grasped the real spirit of Basava’s teachings. But they were full of enthusiasm and thought that they would promote the faith by removing the wrong-doer from the world. When they succeeded in their objective, majority of the common followers hailed them as the defenders of the faith. In the emotional air of success nobody bothered to find out whether Basava had actually approved of this action.

Over half a century had elapsed when the first Purānic version of this episode was compiled by Pālkurike Sōmanātha in his Telugu Basavapurāṇamu and this author belonged to Āndhra area. Thus he was placed at a distance from the point of time and region of the event. In the meanwhile the story was provided with a legendary background. The legendary elements in the story comprise Jagadēva’s affront of the teacher by honouring the Brāhmaṇas, prophesy of sacrilege against Śiva, pronouncement of curse when it was committed and atonement of the sinner for his offence. The episode was thus rounded off and made into a whole piece. The teacher who was not really in the picture was dragged into it in order to defend Jagadēva and justify his action. It may be noted in this connection that, according to the story, Jagadēva was to make amends for his transgression against the teacher by destroying Bījjala. That was the end of the matter. But it is rather strange that soon after completing his assignment, he goes further to commit suicide. How to account for this? Was it due to the impossibility of his escape from the enemy’s hands?
Jagadēva’s honouring the Brāhmaṇas and insulting his teacher is an ancillary aspect of the main issue. This was obviously introduced to establish the superiority of a faithful devotee to faithless Brāhmaṇas. Jagadēva appears to be a novice to the faith, who had not fully imbibed its discipline and code of conduct. That he insulted the teacher out of ignorance and not deliberately, is evident from the very details of the story. Otherwise, he would not have immediately apologised and surrendered himself to the master. What is expected on the part of the magnanimous teacher in this situation was pity and forgiveness. Unfortunately, it is not so in the above version. Considering the slip—it was a slip evidently—the view taken by the teacher is too grave, and looks unreal. The story appears to have been magnified.

Basava had scant regard for Brāhmaṇas; for majority of the members of this community he had come across, had fallen from their original standards. Without merit or worth, they claimed their superiority as a privileged class merely by virtue of their birth. He condemned them as faithless and worldly (Bhavi). On the contrary, he paid highest respect to a true devotee (Bhakta), who was full of faith, though lowborn and outcast. He insisted on the code of behaviour that a faithful devotee should avoid the company of the faithless. He should not honour them; because, it was obvious that to pay homage to an unworthy person was to demean oneself. Thus, his views are sometimes emphatic and critical due to strong convictions. Here are his relevant Sayings:

You discriminate on caste;
You search darkness with lamp;
Why this, silly man? 
You claim superiority by birth.
Of what use are crores of Brāhmaṇas? 
'Supreme is the Devotee'
Says the authority.
Rely on the feet of our Kūḍala Sanga’s devotees.
Do not ruin yourself, man! (No. 596)

Having joined the devotees
Do not again contact the faithless;
This is the worst sin, mind!
O God of Kūḍala Sangama!
He who dines with the faithless
Loses his place of a devotee. (No. 620)

Calling yourself a devotee
You practise Brāhmaṇic rituals, Labourer!
With the same hands you bathe
God Linga and wash Brāhmaṇa’s feet!
This is atrocity, O God of Kūḍala Sangama!
Avoid the sight of such vicious. (No. 594)

Obviously, the story of Jagadēva was conceived
and collected in such a climate on the background of
such assertions. But as we have shown, it is rather a
caricature and not a true picture of the teacher.

From the above investigation we have to conclude
that the account of Bijjala’s death at the hands of
Basava’s follower Jagadēva, as narrated in the
Basavapurāṇa, is constructed from the ordinary common
man’s point of view of the incident. Ill-conceived
and presented in a legendary fashion, it contains
serious drawbacks. It does not reflect the true image
of the teacher who had no hand in the affair and shows
little respect for the teacher’s Sayings.

To sum up: Basavēśvara’s movement, after its
initial success, suffered heavy reverses. Again it rose
and grew from strength to strength. It attained grandeur when august personages like Allama Prabhu wholeheartedly associated themselves with it and guided its destiny. After some time a critical situation arose, created by its free character and few restrictions. Without rigorous tests, all who professed themselves as devotees were admitted into the fold. Consequently, self-seekers and underserving persons joined this new faith and enormously swelled the numbers of its followers, accruing its benefits. The younger entrants were slow to learn the true spirit of its teachings and indifferent to practise its wholesome discipline and moral code. Sharp differences on various matters developed and the behaviour and conduct of the seniors became the subject of criticism. Even Allama and Basava were not spared. The movement now lost its soul and spirit.⁵

Finding that it served no purpose to remain in the movement, both these leaders decided to quit the scene. Allama was the first to leave. Basava seems to have made one more last effort to restrain his followers and stayed behind for some time. In the meanwhile, Bijjala who was craving to kill the movement, seized this golden opportunity. His inhuman sentence on two prominent followers of Basava was the last straw to break the camel’s back. The air was rent with the outbursts of vengeance. The leaders’s voice was drowned in the din. Overpowered in such an atmosphere, Basava left Kalyāṇa threading his way to his last resort Kūḍala Sangama. Becoming desperate, Jagadēva assumed leadership of the aggressive group and destroyed the arch enemy of the movement. He did not pause to consider whether
his beloved teacher would approve or disapprove of his action. In fact he never approved of it. The movement thus reached its destiny.

The above review of events shows that directly or indirectly the responsibility of Bījjala’s death does not lie on Bāsavēśvara’s shoulders.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The contents of the entire Bāsava purāṇa are summarised in chapter XX.
   The above extract is for ready reference.
3. According to Hardekar the whole account is false; see op. cit. p. 73.
4. Jagadēva, according to the Purānic accounts was given the status of a Gāṇa, i.e. a member of Śiva’s council in Kailāsa; Sānandacharitre, IX, 5.
CHAPTER XX

PURANIC ACCOUNTS

In presenting the above sketch of Basavēśvara’s life and personality in the three earlier chapters XV-XVII we have substantially drawn on the poet Harihara’s narrative, supplementing necessary information from other sources also. We are going to explain the reasons for this position in the next chapter. In the meanwhile it would be interesting to see how the other Purāṇic writers have dealt with the theme in its main aspects. The works to be reviewed here, abound in marvellous incidents and extraneous episodes. As these do not serve historical purpose we have to exclude them in our present study.

We now select the following three representative works and try to extract matter-of-fact stories from them.

1. Basavapurāṇa of Bhīma Kavi (1369 A.D.)
2. Prabhulingalile of Chāmarasa (c. 1430 A.D.)
3. Singirājapurāṇa (c. 1500 A.D.)

BASAVAPURĀṆA

There lived a dignitary named Maṇḍage Mādiraja, a pious Brāhmaṇa and devout follower of Śaivite faith at Imguḷēśvara-Bāgavāḍi in the Karṇaṭāka country. Mādirāja was the chief officer of the town which was a great agrahāra. As they had no issue, Mādirāja’s wife Mādāṃbike observed the vow of Nandikēśvara and was favoured with a son. At the birth of the child, God Sangamēśvara appeared on the scene in the form of a Śaiva ascetic to bless the baby. The child was then named Basava.
Basava was extraordinarily intelligent and intuitive. He learnt in no time reading, writing, arithmetic, poetry, grammar, Vēdas, Āgamas and Purāṇas, various lores and arts. When he attained his eighth year, his father made preparations to celebrate his Upanayana (Brāhmanical initiation) ceremony. Basava who did not like this proposal, argued with his father as follows:

Father, this ceremony would be necessary for those who are not sanctified by Śaivite initiation. But I am already consecrated at my birth by my preceptor God Sangamēśvara who has placed me on the righteous path of Śiva’s faith. Unholy is the Brāhmanic sacrament which entangles a person in the rituals of violent procedures. Having held fast the feet of the Supreme Teacher I can not bow before the sinful mortals. Please do not again talk of this Brāhmanical initiation. Apply your mind to god Śankara. Śiva’s name is the only purifying incantation. I am already committed to the vow of Vīraśaiva conduct.

Mādirāja made vain attempts to convince his son of the virtues of Brāhmanic religion and the importance of the initiation ceremony. Basava did not agree; he remained adamant. When his father urged and pressed further, Basava remonstrated and revolted. He denounced that they were not his real parents. His real parents were Śiva’s devotees. Proclaiming thus Basava left the house with his sister Nāgāmbike.

This act of Basava was welcomed by Śaiva devotees who received him in their fold. His behaviour was appreciated by his material uncle, Mādalāmbā’s brother Baladēva who was Bhāṇḍāri (Treasurer) of King Bijjala and had arrived for the celebration of Basava’s
Upanayana. He decided to give his daughter Gangādēvi in marriage to his nephew who was a great devotee of Śiva.

Immediately arrangements were made for the ceremony which took place according to the Śaiva rites amidst great pomp and felicitations, and was attended by a large number of Jangamas and devotees of Śiva. Basava then took leave of the Māhēśvaras and proceeded with his wife and sister to Kappaḍi Sangama to worship his Master, the Śivalinga.

God Sangamēśvara again manifested himself in ascetic form and sallied forth from the sanctum of the temple. He lifted and embraced Basava who lay prostrate at his feet. He blessed him with divine grace and exhorted him to observe, among others, the vows of unswerving faith in Śiva, truthfulness, austere morality and unstinted service of the Jangama devotees. The image then disappeared.

Basava stayed at Sangama in great joy in the midst of the assembly of devotees singing the glory of his divine Master and incessantly worshipping him.

It so happened that Bhāṇḍāri (Treasurer) Baladēva, the minister who was living in the city of Kalyāṇa after his daughter’s marriage with Basava, expired. The king then held consultations with the relations of Baladēva to find out a worthy successor. They told him that Baladēva’s son-in-law Basava was the fittest person to occupy the office.

Hearing this, king Bījjala forthwith sent his officers to Sangama to request Basava to accept the high post of his chief minister, treasurer and general. Basava complied with the offer and proceeded to Kalyāṇa
where he was welcomed with splendour and felicitations. Installed in the high office, Basava diligently applied himself to his duties. Once, he read a secret document giving information about a buried treasure and procured immense riches for the king.

Simultaneously, Basava was engrossed in intense devotion to Śiva and service of his Jangama devotees in all respects. He took the vow, not to ask anything of anybody, even his God, and to give everything to His servants. The devotees came to him in large numbers and from all parts of the country. They were lavishly treated and sumptuously enjoyed his hospitality. On account of his intensely devotional conduct, Basava earned the appellation Śiva-bhakti-bhāṇḍāri, i.e. Treasurer of Devotion to Śiva.

In course of time a son was born to Basava’s sister Nāgalāṃbā who was also a great devotee of Śiva. The child who was an offspring of Basava’s affection was named Chennabasava. A gifted genius, he was endowed with unusual faculties from his childhood and attained spiritual advance at a young age. A disciple of Basava, he adored his preceptor with intense devotion.

At that time lived a renowned Yōgi, supreme devotee of Śiva, emperor among sages, moving incarnation of Linga, by name Allama Prabhu, who had transcended the worldly bonds and subsisted in a state of eternal bliss. The fame of Basava’s unique devotion reached his ears and he came to see Basava.

Basava received Allama Prabhu with profound veneration and adored his lotus feet proclaiming “My homage to you, my Master, Linga and Jangama”. The preceptor tested Basava’s sincerity; but the disciple came out successful, having dedicated his body and
soul at the feet of the Master. The preceptor was extremely gratified and praised Basava’s absolute faith and devotion. Basava understood the secret of Linga philosophy and experienced the joy of mystic consciousness by his association with the sage.

True to his vow, Basava fulfilled the desires of the devotees that approached him. He freely gave them whatever they asked for, unmindful of the cost or consequence. Some times evil-minded persons came under the garb of devotees to test him. But they were exposed and overpowered by his extraordinary faith and sincerity. Allegations that Basava squandered Bijjala’s treasury to pamper the devotees, were proved baseless. Basava thus demonstrated the supremacy of devotees on many other occasions.

Basava’s reputation spread far and wide. Allured by his eminence, devotees thronged around him and swelled the communion of his followers. He stood prominently in the galaxy of saints and illustrious devotees of Śiva.

Time rolled on. One day, Jagadēva, a dignitary, who was a devotee of Basava invited him to dine in his house at a religious function. However, when the preparations were ready, instead of waiting for Basava, he invited the Brāhmaṇas and fed them. Knowing this, Basava was wildly infuriated and refused to see Jagadēva who came to apologize.

Basava then reproached Jagadēva for his impious act which offended against true devotion to Linga and Jangama and religious observance of Vīraśaiva faith. A true Vīraśaiva devotee ought to pitch his loyalty solely in one paramount god Śiva and not to stray by
showing respect to the worldly mortals. Remorseful for his conduct, Jagadēva prostrated before Basava imploring his forgiveness. Basava pardoned him. However, he told Jagadēva that in a few days there would take place a crime against Śiva and that he should atone for his sin by destroying the criminal.

Two great devotees named Harālayya and Madhuvayya lived in the city of Kalyāṇa. Conversant with the Śaiva philosophy, they participated in devotional deliberations along with Basava.

By this time, Basava’s influence had vastly increased and his firm devotion to Śiva had attained great height. King Bijjala, however, intoxicated with rank ignorance, listened to the tales of malicious persons. He forthwith summoned Harālayya and Madhuvayya to his court and with callous indifference to justice, blinded them by extracting their eyes, though they had committed no offence.

This incident caused wide commotion in the capital city. The congregation of Śaiva devotees, including Basava, was furiously excited, burning with unbounded rage, swayed by aggressive sentiments. The eyes of Harālayya and Madhuvayya were restored. Proclaiming “this is Śiva’s dispensation, we shall leave this place”, Basava and the assembly of devotees called Jagadēva. They admonished him to fulfil his former pledge by doing away with the offender. Bijjala and his sovereignty would thus meet their doom.

Then, they pronounced the curse in public. “This king’s empire and the city of Kalyāṇa shall go to ruin. We have uttered the truth”. Condemning thus, the mighty Māchayya, Musuṭi Chauḍayya, Bommidēva,
Kakkayya, Masanayya and other devotees of Śiva and the assembly of Jangamas, led by Basava, proceeded to the town of Sangamēśvara.

Commissioned thus, Jagadēva, accompanied by two other devotees, Molla and Bommayya, marched to Bijjala’s assembly hall at night. Piercing their sharp weapons into his body, they ended his life. Immediately after, to atone for his previous lapse, Jagadēva severed his own head and went to heaven.

In the wake of this catastrophe, violence and chaos overtook the city which was abandoned by the devotees and other inhabitants. The imprecation of Basava was thus vindicated.

In the meanwhile, Basava reached Kūḍala Sangama. With surging devotion he stayed in the temple of Sangamēśvara. Basava prayed and communed with his God and Guru whose presence he experienced. His mission over, Basava merged with the deity.

Seeing this, all the devotees were overtaken with wonder and joy. They realised that Basava was not an ordinary mortal, but a superhuman divine prophet. They praised and sang his glory.

Then Mādirāja, an adorer of Linga, took leave of the devotees of Linga and Jangama brothers with folded hands, and proceeded to Śrīsaila. The gathering of other devotees, headed by the chief Māchidēva and Chennabasava, left Kūḍala Sangama and arrived at ‘the great abode’ of Uļuve.

PRABHULINGALILE

This work primarily deals with the life and achievements of Allama Prabhu. The narrative pertaining to Basava finds a place in this work so far as he came
into contact with the mystic sage to receive guidance from him in spiritual matters. Here is a brief summary.

At Ingaḷēśvara-Bāgavādi lived the Śaiva devotees, Mādarasa and Mādāmbike. The latter gave birth to a child who remained motionless. Immediately, Śiva came there in person, smeared the holy ashes on the child’s forehead and fastened celestial Linga to his neck. He blessed the baby who was named Basava. Endowed with extraordinary intellect, Basava learnt within a short time all the lores and arts. Soon took place his Upanayana ceremony with pomp.

At this time king Bijjala was ruling in Kalyāṇa. Basava took leave of his parents and went to Kalyāṇa, accompanied by his elder sister Nāgayi. There he met Bijjala. One day, in his court he deciphered a code document giving information about a hidden treasure. This was traced and taken possession of by Bijjala. Impressed by his extraordinary ability, the king straightway took him as his chief minister. He also celebrated his marriage with grandeur.

Basava’s elder sister Nāgayi who partook of the consecrated food shared by Basava, gave birth to a gifted child. He was named Chennabasava. To Basava was born a son called Kūḍala Sangamēśa.

Basava’s precept and conduct aroused intense devotion to Śiva in the minds of men. He freely gave to the devotees all that they desired. The earth was purified by Basava’s devotion.

Allama came to know of Basava’s attainments and was immensely pleased. With heart filled with kindness and eager to fulfil the aspirations of the devotees,
Allama proceeded from Sonnalapura, accompanied by Siddharāma, and reached Kalyāṇa. Basava received the esteemed visitor with implicit veneration. Allama revealed the secret of true devotion to Śivalinga and worship of Ishṭalinga to Basava and other devotees. He then left Kalyāṇa with a promise to come again after some time.

According to the direction of Allama, Basava pursued the practices of Rājayōga and achieved success. However, being eager to proceed further on the path of Nirguṇayōga, he became anxious to meet his Guru. For this purpose, Basava got ready the Śūnya Simhāsana (Throne of the Absolute), based on Yōgic principles; but Basavēśvara had to wait anxiously for twelve long years before Allama came to grace the Throne.

Basava welcomed Allama with great joy. He stood the test of his Guru and showed that he had reached the apex of spirituality and self-realisation. Allama was gratified. He conferred the state of supreme bliss on Basava and other devotees.

SINGIRĀJAPURĀNA

In the great agrahāra town of Ingaḷēśvara-Bāgevāḍi lived an illustrious Brāhmaṇa known as Maṇḍigeya Mādimarasa. His gōtra was Sānkhyāyana. By the grace of Nandiśvara his wife Mādalāmbe gave birth to a son called Vṛishabha or Basava. When born, the child showed no signs of movement. At that moment Jātavēdi Muni, an eminent sage, came there from the sacred place Sangama. He uttered the holy incantation of five syllables (Namāḥ Śivāya) and smeared the sanctified ash over the child’s body. Immediately, the baby opened its eyes and started the movements.
It was the fourteenth day in the bright half of Āśvina, Monday, Śivayōga in lunar Ādrā (constellation), when the child was born. The child grew ever engrossed in the meditation of Śiva.

At the age of eight, the Upanayana ceremony of the boy was celebrated. But he refused to undergo the multiplicity of rituals, proclaiming that he had already been initiated into the unique faith of Śiva according to the scriptures by the venerable Śaiva preceptors. The Brāhmaṇa teachers then came to know that he was an extraordinary personality. They told him that he was free to act as he pleased and advised him not to throw away the sacred thread as it would go by itself in his case.

Once, while playing with his companions, a Brāhmaṇa boy fell into a well and died. The boy’s relations accused that Basava caused his death by pushing him into the well. They chased Basava to punish him. Escaping from their hands, he ran to Sangama. But he was pursued there also. At last God Sangamēśvara himself intervened and declared in an aerial voice that Basava was innocent. The pursuers went back and Basava was left unmolested. This incident revealed the supremacy of Basava as a great devotee of the god and his fame spread far and wide.

Basava remained at Sangama worshipping God Sangamēśvara. His parents could not change his mind to return to his native place. Then they left their daughter Nāgāyi and son-in-law Śivadēva at Sangama to look after Basava.

Basava’s devotion to God was exemplary and unique. He revered and served His devotees, the Māhēśvaras in profound faith.
Basava's reputation reached the city of Kalyāṇa. Bijjala's minister Baladēva was pleased to hear all about him. He came to know that Basava was related to him as his sister's son. Baladēva then decided to give his daughter Gangāmbā in marriage to Basava. Invitation was sent to Basava, but he was rather reluctant to leave the sanctuary. However, he decided to go. As soon as Basava arrived at Kalyāṇa his marriage was celebrated with great festivity.

Impressed by Basava's ability and good behaviour, Soḍḍāja Bācharasa, an officer in charge of the accounts, took the youth into confidence. He pointed out that though spotless in respect of devotion to Śiva, Basava was without employment. Subsistence on father-in-law's means was not commendable. He should live on his own earning. One could attain the bliss of Kailāsa (heaven) only through employment involving physical labour. Bācharasa told Basava that he would employ him in his office; this would lead to his prosperity and he would be able to serve the devotees better. Basava accepted the post offered to him in the accounts department by Bācharasa.

It so happened that once an enigmatic record reached the hand of Bijjala. The king summoned all the ministers, nobles, officers and learned men to his court and asked them to decipher the document and explain its contents. But it was written in such a strange script and unfamiliar language that none could tackle it. At long last Bijjala called Basava and instructed him to unravel its mystery.

Basava took up the challenge. The document contained information about a hidden treasure. Basava not only deciphered the writing, but straightway went
to the spot where the treasure lay buried and pointed it out. The place was dug out instantly and the king procured enormous wealth from the treasure.

Bijjala’s joy knew no bounds. He treated Basava with unique honour. Appointing him his chief minister, he invested him with supreme authority over his treasury, army and other departments. Basava then married Nīlalōchane, the daughter of minister Siddharasa whose wife Padmagandhi had brought her up along with Bijjala’s brother Karṇadēva who had lost his mother.

Basava’s elevation brought him enough means and provided excellent opportunity to pursue his cherised goal of devotion to Śiva and service of his devotees. The devotees thronged around him. Paṇḍitārādhya of Telugu country paid respect to Basava. Basava fulfilled all their wishes and freely gave whatever they asked. He utilised all his resources for this purpose. Many courtiers and counsellors of Bijjala were jealous of Basava. They did not like his behaviour and pursuits. Frequently, allegations were made against him and he was accused of disloyalty, breach of faith and misappropriation of the king’s money. But Basava vindicated that such charges were baseless.

Basava erected a throne called Śūnya Simhāsana for the grace of the Supreme Linga Divinity. All the devotees assembled there. Bijjala bowed before them. He was fully convinced that Basava was a superhuman personality. He fell at Basava’s feet and prayed him not to attend his court any more. He appointed Basava’s nephew Chennabasavaṇṇa to the post. Bijjala returned to his palace and Basava fully engaged himself in his pious pursuits.
CHAPTER XXI

BIOGRAPHICAL THREADS

Confronted with the bewildering situation of paucity of historical details, a biographer of Basava has to trek through vast tracts of epigraphical records and voluminous mass of religious literature to pick up the threads of his narrative. For this purpose we surveyed the epigraphical records at Bāgēvāḍi which enlightened us about the environment in which Basava took his birth and spent his early years. It gave us an inkling of the working of his sensitive mind which reacted to diverse impacts. A first hand study of the antiquities of the holy place Sangama furnished us with an insight into such factors as contributed to the growth of this young man as a fervent devotee, a determined reformer and a dynamic leader. After such a preparatory stage, Basava stepped into the vast world of humanity and started his worldly career.

Harihara’s Merits

For drawing up a rational account of the early life of Basava, his childhood and youth, we have relied on Harihara in addition to the help we derived from the archaeological and epigraphical materials. Harihara’s account in this as well as in other respects breathes with a lively sense of an intimate biographer who was in possession of some matter of fact details. As illustrations, we may refer to the episodes of the premature death of Basava’s parents, his bringing up by the grandmother, his departure for Sangama severing all family bonds from his home town, his
Biographical Threads

reception and stay at Sangama, plunged in devotional pursuits—all described graphically with a depth of feeling and emotion.

Equally realistic is Harihara's sketch of Basava's departure from Sangama to Mangalavāḍa and entering into service in the treasury office of Bījjala. By his ability and devotion to work, favoured by circumstances, Basava rose, within a short period, to the high position of the Chief Treasury Officer of Bījjala, enjoying his full confidence. Basava was thus provided with ample opportunities to pursue his cherished ambition of life, viz. dedication to God and service of His devotees.

There is overwhelming literary evidence, including his own Sayings, to show that Basava served under Bījjala. All the Vīraśaiva Purāṇas describe that Basava's first contact with Bījjala and the subsequent events of his life took place in Kalyāṇa only. But it is only in Harihara's work that we get details of his official career as it commenced at Mangalavāḍa. This is fully borne out by the epigraphical evidence which reveals that Bījjala started his official career as Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara under the Chālukyas at Mangalavāḍa, the ancestral capital of his family, and that he stayed here over two decades until his complete usurpation of the Chālukya throne in 1162 A.D. Thus the period of Bījjala's rightful association with Kalyāṇa, according to inscriptions, would be from 1162 to 1168 A.D. If we are to implicitly believe the statements of the Purāṇas, we have to place Basava's first contact and later stay, all at Kalyāṇa, within this narrow span of about six years. This assumption would push us into an anomalous position in regard to the interpretation of several known events of his life. We are
going to discuss this in a later context. (See Chapter XXIV below.) Therefore we have to treat Harihara’s portrayal of this phase as true to history.

It is proved beyond the shadow of doubt that Bijjala was not a Jaina. If so the question arises, what was the cause of the difference and clash between him and Basavēśvara. Here also Harihara’s narration renders invaluable help. The precise nature of the conflict is characteristically highlighted in his picturesque presentation of the incident of Kambaḷi Nāgīdēva.

_Singirāja’s Contributions_

Singirāja conceives a philosophical background to the story of Basava and Bijjala. He sees in Bijjala a personification of mundane action ( Kıryā) and in Basava an incarnation of pure devotion with knowledge ( Bhāva). The conflict between the two ends in victory for the latter. It is probably on account of this symbolism that this author excludes from his narration the episode of Bijjala’s murder.

However, it is interesting to note that, notwithstanding the divergences, Singirāja concurs with Harihara in some respects. For instance, this author seems to imply that Basava stayed at Sangama for a considerable time (Sandhi V-VI). Another important point of agreement is the commencement of Basava’s career as an ordinary accountant under Soḍḍaḷa Bācharasa. From this humble position he soon rose to the high status by his extraordinary ability.

A valuable contribution made by Singirāja in the study of Basava’s biography is his disclosure about the existence of different versions of Basava’s story in his time. After describing the marriage of Basava, this writer avers thus (Sandhi VI, verses 48-49):
A tradition is current among the people to the effect that Baladeva expired in a few days after he married his daughter to Basava. But this is not correct. In fact he lived on. As for Basava's employment under Soḍḍaḷa Bācharasa we cite the trustworthy testimony of Channabasavaśeśa who proclaims: Though a superman, Basava sought service in the accounts office.

Two points are clarified in the above passage. Firstly, Baladeva did not die soon after his daughter's marriage and Basava did not succeed to his father-in-law's high office within a short time. Basava served like a common man in an humble position and rose to the top after a period of time. It may particularly be noted in this context that the wrong tradition discredited by Singirāja is the most accepted and popular version of the Basavaṇṇa. Secondly, the account of Basava's employment as an ordinary accountant as given by Singirāja, was based on the authority of a Saying of Basava's nephew Chennabasavaṇṇa. Unfortunately, this Saying is not extant.

We may notice another important point about Singirāja. The Vīraśaiva authors in general do not mention the fact that Bijjala belonged to the Kalachuri family. Further, no reference can be traced in this literature to the event of his usurpation of the Chālukya throne. This may be due either to their indifference to historical details, or unwillingness to associate Basaveśvara with a ruler of questionable character. These writers, whenever they refer to his family, mention it as Chālukya only. We have seen in our study that Bijjala was closely related to the Chālukya house by matrimonial alliances. But this relationship does not justify his being called Chālukya.
Singirāja, in one place, describes Bijjala as a scion of Chālukya-Kalachurya houses (Sandhi V, verse 5); and in another place explicitly addresses him as 'lord of the Kalachurya dynasty' (Sandhi XIV, verse 14). Both these statements are historically correct. Another historical reference of Singirāja is the mention of solar lineage of Bijjala (Sandhi XXXVIII, verse 4). This is epigraphically supported as noticed in our study of Bijjala. (See above Chapter II.)

**Excellence of Basavapurāṇa**

Now we pass on to the *Basavapurāṇa*. This work purports to depict Basava as a superman and to extol his divine personality. The author's treatment of the theme is more of a devotee than of a biographer. In a devotional approach, deliberately or indeliberately, the narrator overlooks the minute biographical details, as they are not quite essential for his purpose. With due deference to the sentiments of thousands of followers of the faith who hold this work in great esteem, we have to observe that it contains less biographical details. The events of outstanding importance in Basava's life from a devotee's point of view are his revolt against the *Upanayana* ceremony, his supreme adoration of Sangamēśvara, his marriage with the daughter of Baladēva and consequent elevation in Bijjala's court, his unstinted service of the true devotees and demonstration of the superiority of his faith. Around this core are built up a large number of episodes of legendary significance by the author of the *Basavapurāṇa*.

Even in the midst of such trappings we obtain a splendid vision of Basava's eminent personality in its true perspective in this work. For instance, soon
after assuming the ministerial office under Bijjala, Basava commits himself to a number of vows and pledges and their meticulous observance (Sandhi VI). Among them are mentioned constant devotion to Śiva, truthfulness, self-restraint, worldly detachment, resistance to sensual impacts and above all, the vow of never asking anything of anybody, even god Śiva. The last of these, in particular, is compatible with Basava’s own definition of a true devotee as given by him in one of his Sayings, viz. “he is not a devotee who asks”. A series of incidents are related to illustrate how Basava, true to his vow, never swerved from his righteous conduct. In the closing moments of his life, this fervent devotee stands face to face in the presence of Sangamēśvara and tells him in words full of emotion, with what sincerity of heart he acquitted himself throughout his life without an iota of obligation to anybody including his beloved God (Sandhi LX). This moving scene vindicates the immutable integrity of Basava’s immaculate character.

Advantages of Basavapurāṇa

The above review accounts for the wide appeal of the Basavapurāṇa. Another factor that has contributed to its prevalence, is its charming poetic form and verse, which facilitate its recital in a musical set up. It is composed in simple, flowing Shatpadi metre which gained universal popularity from the thirteenth century onward. In contrast, the Basavarājadēvara Ragałe, though it contains more biographical details, was pushed into the background, as in style and content it does not fully conform to the category of Purāṇa, being composed in prose and Ragałe metre with terse,
old Kannada vocabulary. To add to his disadvantage, Harihara narrates that originally Basava was Gañēśvara, a member of Śiva’s assembly in Kailāsa, and that he was cursed by Śiva to be born in the mortal world for uttering a blatant lie. This presentation indirectly casting aspersion on Basava’s fair character, appears, partly at any rate, to have contributed to the unpopularity of Harihara among the followers of the faith. But such a consideration need not deter a historian from accepting Harihara. Another disadvantage of this author is that his work is not completely available.

**Harihara and Sōmanātha**

It is further argued that, of the two, Harihara and Pālkurike Sōmanātha, the author of the original Telugu *Basavapurāṇa*, the latter represents more authentic biographical tradition of Basava. In support of this the following points are stressed. (Compare *Virasaiva*, Vol. I, No. 2, pages 58-60.)

1. Harihara lived at Hampe and Sōmanātha hailed from Pālkurike in Āndhra. The latter received reliable account directly from Kalyāṇa which was more easily accessible.

2. After the disruption of the Virasaiva movement at Kalyāṇa, the devotees and disciples of Basava went to Śrīśaila and other places. Sōmanātha must have directly heard the story of Basava as narrated by his followers. This fact is mentioned by Sōmanātha in his work. Harihara does not seem to have come into direct contact with Basava’s immediate followers. He might have remained outside the main stream of Basava’s movement. Hence the incidents narrated by him might not be authentic.
These objections are not valid. Sōmanātha’s Pālkurike is situated in Nalagonda District of Andhra Pradesh. This place is about the same distance (roughly 150 miles) from Kalyāṇa as Hampe. The followers of Basava did not directly go to the Āndhra country from Kalyāṇa. As the account of the Basavapurāṇa indicates, most of them first accompanied their master to Sangama and, after his passing away, dispersed in different directions. Those who went to Āndhra must have first chosen Śrīśaila as their resort, as this holy place was a stronghold of Śaivism and exercised great influence on the followers of the faith in Karnataka. From Sangama, Hampe is nearer than Śrīśaila or other places in Āndhra, the distance between the former two being about sixty miles only. It is in the fitness of things to assume that Harihara who was younger than Basava by a few decades, must have heard many reliable episodes of Basava and his extraordinary devotion to Sangamēśvara. Sangama and Hampe being both great centres of pilgrimage for Śaiva devotees and on account of their proximity, we can reasonably surmise that there existed closer contacts among the pilgrims who visited these places. We can affirm that even Hampe was within the range of Śaiva devotees hailing from Kalyāṇa. This is supported by epigraphic evidence. In a former context we have cited an inscription which reveals that Bijjala visited Hampe in 1160 A.D. and made gifts to the God. (See above Chapter VI.) Harihara was, perhaps, a young boy at that time and the memory of this Kalachuri ruler and his visit to the holy place, might have lingered on among the inhabitants of the area.
Relics at Mangalavāda

We have elsewhere explained the reasons as to why Mangalavāda does not find mention in the Purānas describing the events in Basava’s life. (See below Chapter XXII.) It is argued that if Basava had started his movement at Mangalavāda, memories of this event and sites associated with this teacher and his followers would have been preserved in this place as they are at Kalyāna. In the absence of such relics at Mangalavāda, one has to discredit Harihara’s version ascribing the early contacts between Basavēśvara and Bijjala and the rise of his movement to Mangalavāda. But this argument is not sound. We have given a sketch of the archaeological explorations and antiquities of Mangalavāda elsewhere (Appendix I). This survey, while offering an explanation regarding the paucity of Vīraśaiva traditions, lends support to the trustworthiness of Harihara’s description, with the help of surviving relics.

That Harihara was aware of historical facts and did not build up his story on guesswork in regard to Mangalavāda is substantiated by his other works. Rēvaṇasiddha, a great Śaiva teacher and predecessor of Basava, was intimately connected with Mangalavāda in which region he stayed for a considerable period. Rēvaṇasiddha’s gifted son and eminent Vīraśaiva saint Rudramuni was born near Mangalavāda. These events are narrated at length by Harihara in his Rēvanasiddhēśvara Ragaḍe. This is supported by the surviving relics and traditions of the place. Thus Mangalavāda was not merely a political capital of the Kalachuri kings, but was sanctified by the association of illustrious personalities of the Śaiva faith before the
time of Basava. If this background is taken into account, there is nothing strange about Harihara's account in which the early scene of Basava's movement is laid at Mangalavāda. It is all the more creditable that this movement was inaugurated at an auspicious time in auspicious surroundings. If we disbelieve Harihara on this issue, we shall have to brush aside his narration about Rēvaṇasiddha and Rudramuni also. This will land us in an awkward position. Who knows how many footsteps of history are swallowed by the sands of time!
CHAPTER XXII

COMMENTS AND CLARIFICATIONS

In this chapter we focus our attention on certain biographical details relating to Basavēśvara, which require further scrutiny, discussion and elaboration.

Absence of Contemporary Records

There is no dearth of epigraphical references to Basavēśvara as noticed earlier. But these references are of a later period and not contemporary. It was an age of inscriptions when Basavēśvara lived and a good number of inscriptions describing the events of the period have been discovered. But no contemporary epigraphical record in which he figures prominently or incidentally, has been traced so far. This omission appears all the more glaring when we consider that he was holding a high office in the court of Bijjala. But a satisfactory explanation of this situation can be given by a closer study of this teacher and his faith.

Firstly, we may note that the purpose of installing the inscriptions, according to the prevalent practice, was mainly to maintain records of gifts for worship in the temples. Basavēśvara did not favour the time-honoured tradition of worshipping God in external shrines or temples. In its stead, he introduced the worship of personal god called Ishta Linga to lay more emphasis on the philosophical aspect that God dwells within and a devotee should thus meditate on Him. It is therefore enjoined upon a Šaiva devotee to carry always on his person the cherished object of his worship, a Šivalinga, and never to part with it. Thus, as there
was neither the necessity nor the occasion for making gifts to the temple gods, his name does not occur in the inscriptions. This might be the principal reason.

Secondly, in lieu of making gifts to temple gods, Basavēśvara lavishly entertained the Śaiva devotees in his residence and at his expense. Bijjala and his advisers who never countenanced his new faith and his activity, doubted his honesty and suspected that he was misappropriating the royal treasury. We have seen how this suspicion was set at rest. Still, we can expect the mention of his name in some other context. If such inscriptions did ever exist, it is not unlikely that they are destroyed. It is a woeful experience of the epigraphist that thousands of inscriptions have suffered displacement, mutilation and wanton destruction through centuries. Notwithstanding, we may yet hope to discover one day a contemporary record pertaining to Basavēśvara.

*Basavēśvara’s Gōtra*

Basavēśvara was born in a Brāhmaṇa family which must have followed, along with other traditions, the gōtra tradition also. Therefore, a discussion on this problem seems necessary. This necessity has become imperative, because writers have not only erred on this question, but have gone on a wrong track, misleading others. Two gōtra names have been put forth in this connection, one Kāsyapa and another Sānkhyāyana. Both these claims, as we shall see, are unwarranted. The first claim is based on the presumption that Basavarasa of the Managōli inscription who belonged to the Kāsyapa gōtra was the same as Basavēśvara. We have conclusively proved that this
identification is absolutely untenable. (See above Chapter XII.)

The second claim is based on a statement in the *Singirājaapurāṇa* (Sandhi V, verse 12). But if we examine this statement critically and trace its origin, we are convinced that it is wrong. Singirāja appears to have drawn his information from the Telugu or Kannada Basavapurāṇa. In these Purāṇas the incident of Basava’s protest against the performance of the *Upanayana* ceremony, and his arguments with his father are described in detail (Āśvāsa I and Sandhi III respectively). Basava’s father Mādirāja tries to convince his son about the importance of this ceremony and of the sacred incantation of Gāyatrī. In this context he points out that the sacred fire is the mouth of Gāyatrī, Brahmā her head, Vishṇu her heart, Rudra her forehead, the earth her base and Śāṅkhya-yana her gōtra.

It is thus beyond question that Śāṅkhya-yana was the gōtra of Gāyatrī and not of Basava. Persons conversant with the Brāhmanic lore know this fact very well. The Arjunavāḍ inscription is silent on this point. Except Singirāja, no other author mentions Basava’s gōtra. In a late Kannada work called *Nandi Āgama* Basava’s gōtra is said to be Śrīvatsa,1 but this is unfounded. Basavēśvara’s gōtra thus remains unknown; the reason is that even as a young boy he had severed connection with Brāhmaṇism.

*Basavēśvara’s Parents*

Basavēśvara’s father, according to the Arjunavāḍ inscription, was Mādirāja, lord of the excellent town of Bāgavādi. Harihara describes him as the first lord
in the agrahāra of Bāgēvādi. The Telugu Basavapurāṇamu introduces him as Maṇḍega Mādirāja, far famed in the agrahāra Hingulēśvara Bhāgavāṭi. The Kannada Basavapurāṇa names him Maṇḍage Mādirāja and states that he was an illustrious Brāhmaṇa and eminent chief of the famous agrahāra town of Ingulēśvara-Bāgavādi. These details are almost repeated in later works some times with slight variations. Mādirāja’s Kannada equivalent becomes Mādarasa. In the Singirājapurāṇa his name is given as Mādimarasa. The prefix Maṇḍage might be either a place-name or nick-name denoting a dish. Basavēśvara’s mother was Mādāmbā or Mādalāmbā.

It is thus seen that the universally accepted parents of Basavēśvara were Mādirāja or Mādarasa and Mādāmbā or Mādalāmbā. However, recently a doubt has arisen in the minds of some writers who have unnecessarily followed a wrong course and are lost in the wilderness of speculations. This doubt is caused by an assertion of Harihara who avers that Basava lost his parents at a young age and was then brought up by his grandmother. It is only Harihara who says this.

This has led to the following series of surmises and presumptions. Mādirāja and Mādāmbā were not the real parents of Basava. His parents were other than these; Harihara does not name them; he simply mentions them as Śivabhakta and Śivabhakte (devotees of Śiva). The real parents of Basava died in his early childhood. He was then brought up by Mādirāja and Mādāmbā, who thus became his foster parents or adopted parents.

To make the matters worse, it is presumed that Basava or Basavēśvara of Bāgēvādi was identical with
Basavarasa of the Managōli inscription, who bore the Kāśyapa gōtra and was born of the parents, Chandirāja and Chadrāmbike. This Basavarasa was a member of the town assembly of Maṇigavalli (modern Managōli). The chief of this assembly was Mādirāja of Harita gōtra. It is again claimed in this context that this Mādirāja was the same as his namesake of Bāgēvāḍi, who adopted Basava. The question has thus become extremely complicated and presents a case of confusion worse confounded.

All these assertions, as shown before (Chapter XII) are gratuitous assumptions resulting from incorrect understanding of texts and wrong interpretation of facts. Firstly, Mādirāja of Harita gōtra, who was the municipal chief of Maṇigavalli could not be equated with Mādirāja of Kamme Kula who was the municipal head of Bāgēvāḍi. Few instances are available of one and the same person holding the posts of headman of two well-established town assemblies. Secondly, we have established that Basavarasa of Managōli epigraph was not Basavēśvara. Identity based merely on the resemblance of individual names is untenable, for, it is seen from a study of inscriptions that names like Mādirāja and Basava were commonly in vogue at this period.

Demise of the Parents

As for the question of Basavēśvara’s losing his parents in his childhood, a careful reading and understanding of Harihara’s account will reveal the following position.

It is stated in the latter part of the first Sthala of the Basavarājadēvara Ragaḷe that Vṛishabhamukha
Gaṇeśvara came down to the earth in order to undergo a curse as ordained by god Śiva. He entered the womb of Mādāmbe, wife of Mādirāja, the lord of Bāgēvāḍi. He remained there for nine months and was afterwards born as an extraordinary child. He grew in due course and delighted the family by his sportive movements.

The narrative is then continued in the next Sthala. Time moved on and the illustrious child adorned this earth by his graceful demeanour. His person free from impurities and mind joyous, he lived in godly happiness. In order to bring home, as it were, the truth that the divinity of Basavarāja had manifested himself in this mortal world as ordained by Śiva and had really no parents, his father, a devotee of Śiva and his mother devoted to Śiva, were carried away to Kailāsa.

As Harihara refers to Mādirāja and Mādāmbe as devotees of Śiva in the earlier context also, it becomes clear that his present allusion to the parents of Basava by their attribute, the devotion to Śiva, applies to Mādirāja and Mādāmbe only. This bereavement would have taken place when the child was about eight years old; for Harihara addresses him at this stage by the more respectful term Basavarāja (boy Basava) instead of the earlier one, Basava (child Basava). As narrated in the Basavapurāṇa, Mādirāja and Mādāmbe were alive until the age of Basavarāja’s initiation or Upanayana (Sandhi III).

According to the narrative of Harihara, Basavarāja felt relieved and happy at the demise of his parents, as thereby he was disburdened of the family obligations.
He then remained with his grand mother for about four to six years or so, propitiating Śiva. After this, he attained the threshold of youth at the age of sixteen. A point to be stressed in this connection is that if Basava had been brought up by Mādirāja and Mādalāmbe after his parents' death, Harihara would have mentioned this fact in the above context. On the contrary, he mentions the grand mother and not the above two.

Though the Basavapūrana is not explicit on this point, it seems to indicate the early demise of Basavēṣvara's parents; for Mādirāja and Mādambe are not at all mentioned in the whole account, after Basava abruptly broke with his father following his disagreement and protest against the initiation ceremony (Sandhi III). It is noteworthy that Singirāja does not mention the presence of Basava's parents on the occasion of his marriage (Sandhi VI).

Initiation Ceremony

The Upanayana or Initiation is an essential and important ceremony in respect of a Brāhmaṇa boy according to the Vedic traditions, for he becomes qualified to pursue his Vedic studies after this ceremony only. This ceremony should be performed in the eighth year according to Manu and other law givers. As Basava was born in a Brāhmaṇa family of orthodox traditions, it is but natural that his parents had this rite performed in due course.

Did this ceremony actually take place? The Vīraśaiva writers widely differ on this point. According to Harihara the ceremony did take place. Without dwelling upon the details, this author makes an abrupt
statement that Basavarāja tore away the sacred thread and the band of Munja grass that tied him like the fetters of Karma. Then, impelled by surging devotion to Śiva, he left Bāgēvādi for Kappaḍi Sangama, the abode of Kūḍala Sangamēśvara. Chāmarasa in his Prabhulingalile mentions this ceremony as having taken place (Gati IX, verse 18). This position is supported by Singirāja (Sandhi V, verses 81-83).

The narration in the Basavapurāṇa is typical and is followed by many other later writers. It is stated in this work that when Mādirāja arranged to perform the ceremony in the eighth year of Basava, the boy strongly reacted against this move. Heated argument took place between the father and the son. In the end, the young boy protested and left the house. He was warmly received by the sympathetic residents of the town (Bāgēvādi).

This act of Basava was very much appreciated by his maternal uncle Baladēva who had come to attend the initiation ceremony. He was a high officer holding the post of treasurer under Bijjala. Taking advantage of this golden opportunity, he decided to marry his daughter Gangādēvi with Basava. Immediately the marriage was celebrated with great enthusiasm by the devotees of Śiva. After this, Basava left the place with his elder sister Nāgaladēvi and the newly wedded spouse and proceeded to Kappaḍi Sangama to meet his teacher God Sangamēśvara (Sandhi IV).

The Vīraśaiva narrators who have affirmed that the Upanayana of Basavēśvara never took place, were obviously actuated by the motive to place Basava clean
away from this ‘so-called’ stigma of a Brähmanical rite. An objective historian however, will prefer the other, more natural version that Basava actually underwent the ceremony which, true to his experience, created in him a feeling of aversion, leading to his revolt. This conclusion is straightway supported by Basavēśvara’s own admission in a Saying, wherein he exclaims that his god of Kūḍala Sangama took him into the fold of His devotees by purifying him from the impurity of Brähmanical conduct (No. 715). This is substantiated by another Saying (No. 344).

Stay at Sangama

Harihara’s account regarding Basava’s departure to Sangama and stay in that holy place for a considerable time appears to be more reasonable and therefore reliable than that of the Basavapurāṇa which creates the impression that he did not spend many years there. But actually he must have stayed at Sangama for a good number of years, for this was the period of evolution and development of his real personality. According to a tradition, he stayed there for about twelve years. Singirāja seems to support a long stay. Basavarāja’s preceptor at Sangama was Īśānya Guru according to Harihara, whereas the same was Jātavēda Muni in Singirāja’s account (Sandhi V, verse 55). This is generally adopted by all subsequent writers.

In the Court of Bijjala

The rise of Basavēśvara from the post of a junior accountant to that of the Treasury Chief in the administrative service of Bijjala, as depicted by Harihara and supported by Singirāja, is quite natural and therefore worthy of credence. Siddha Daṇḍādhipa of Hari-
hara's account does not figure elsewhere except in Singirāja, where he is called Siddharasa. In the Basavapurāṇa and other works he is substituted by Baladēva whose daughter Basavēśvara marries. According to this work, some time after the marriage, Baladēva suddenly passes away. Then on the advice of his counsellors, Bijjala sends for Basavēśvara who was at Sangama. The latter, immediately after his arrival at Kalyāṇa is appointed chief minister and treasurer. This version, as Singirāja points out, is not correct. (See above, Chapter XXI).

Elsewhere (above, Part I), we have sketched the rise of Bijjala to power with the authentic evidence of contemporary inscriptions. He started his early activities as a subordinate of the Chāluṅgas at Mangalāvāda and later transferred his seat to Kalyāṇa to achieve his ambition. This serves as a background to the study of Basavēśvara.

**Basavēśvara's Family Life**

As for the family life of Basavēśvara, he had two wives. Harihara mentions them as Gangādēvi and Māyidēvi. The former is the same as her namesake described in the Basavapurāṇa. According to this work, she was the daughter of Baladēva. Harihara does not disclose her parentage, nor that of Māyidēvi. The Basavapurāṇa also introduces Māyidēvi (Sandhi X, verse 43). The opinion of the writers is unanimous in regard to Gangādēvi. But there is discrepancy about the name of the second wife.

**Nilādēvi**

According to some writers her name was Nilādēvi or Nilāmbā. We can reconcile the above discrepancy
about her name by treating Nilādēvi as another name of Harihara’s Māyidēvi. Singirāja furnishes some interesting details about her. He names her Nilalōchane and states that she was the daughter of Siddharasa Daṇṭāyaka. She was brought up by her mother Padmagandhi along with Bijjala’s brother Karṇadēva whose mother committed Šati after her husband’s death. Thus informally she was treated as Bijjala’s sister. Bijjala gave her in marriage to Basava to strengthen his relation with the latter (Sandhi VII, verses 52 - 53). This seems to be a late tradition which is not supported by other sources. Bijjala had no brother named Karṇadēva. Nilādēvi, we may note, was an eminent lady. According to Harihara, Basavēśvara had a son by Gangādēvi, named Siddharasa. Chāmarasa calls him Kūḍala Sangamēsa. He is named Chikka-sangayya or Bāla-sangayya by other writers.⁶

**Bijjala’s Identity**

The life and career of Basavēśvara and those of Bijjala run almost parallel and are inseparably linked with each other. Epigraphical sources and literary works to a little extent converge on the fact that this Bijjala was a member of the Kalachuri family, who ousted the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa. The edifice of our study is essentially based on this identity which is supported throughout by adequate evidence.

One or two more points may be noted here, though formerly discussed more than once. From the epigaphs as well as the Basavarājadēvara Ragāle we gather that Kalachuri Bijjala had Mangalavāda as his capital. This was his earlier capital. It is, however, known through inscriptions that the subsequent headquarters
of this king was Kalyāṇa. This city is invariably described as the only capital of Bījjala in later literary works.

Harihara’s portrayal of Bījjala shows that he was not an ordinary chief or petty ruler, but enjoyed the high status of a powerful potentate commanding vast resources. He is depicted in a still exalted position by later composers. All these attributes can be associated with no other king but Kalachuri Bījjala. Furthermore, we have to consider the close contemporaneity of this Bījjala with Basavēśvara.

We have therefore to dismiss the claim advanced by some writers in support of a chief named Bījjala of the Sinda family who was a petty ruler holding his fief over a small tract around Yalburgi in the southern part of Raichur District. He was the grandson of Kalachuri Bījjala through a daughter. The description of Kalachuri Bījjala, again, as a Chālukya by some writers like Singirāja, could be allowed, if we remember his relationship with the Chālukya house of Kalyāṇa.

**Mangalavāḍa and Kalyāṇa**

Mangalavāḍa or modern Mangalavēḍhe and Kalyāṇa are the two important towns which played a momentous role in the lives and careers of Bījjala and Basavēśvara. The former was the early headquarters of Bījjala, as known from epigraphs. There is nothing to disbelieve Harihara who describes how Basavēśvara straightway goes to this place from Sangama and starts his early career under Bījjala. In the Rēvaṇasiddhēśvara Ragaṭe also Mangalavāḍa is described as the capital of Bījjala, by Harihara. After about two decades (1132 to 1153 A.D.) when the conflict with his master
assumed a grave turn, Basavēśvara appears to have left Mangalāvāda and proceeded to Kalyāṇa (circa 1153 A.D.). Bijjala’s ambition and plans to subvert the Chāluṅka sovereignty might have caused dislike about him in the mind of Basavēśvara. Subsequently, to carry out his plans of usurpation, Bijjala also might have firmly transferred his centre of activities from Mangalavāda to Kalyāṇa (circa 1156 A.D.)

Thus for about a decade, Kalyāṇa was the scene of action of these two personages who were pulling in opposite directions. These early episodes and events which are more or less supported by historical sources, were pushed into oblivion, apparently as a consequence of the catastrophe that befell Basavēśvara’s movement. Because of the fact that Kalyāṇa was far more renowned than Mangalavāda and that both Bijjala and Basavēśvara spent the last years of their most eventful careers at Kalyāṇa, the later generations of Vīraśaiva writers who were not familiar with the historical intricacies of more than two centuries ago, assumed that the contacts between Bijjala and Basavēśvara commenced and lasted till the end at Kalyāṇa only. We can thus explain the total absence of reference to Mangalavāda in the Vīraśaiva accounts except that of Harihara.

Another aspect that has misled the writers is the apparent resemblance of the names Mangalavāda and Kalyāṇa. As mangala and kalyāṇa are synonymous, both meaning auspicious, the one could easily be equated with the other. It is interesting to note that Singirāja who was perhaps aware of the distinction of these two place-names, cleverly passes over the issue by a poetic metaphor based on their identical etymology. While narrating the incident of Bijjala’s appointing Basa-
vēśvara as minister, the poet exclaims that the city called Mangalavāḍi assumed the name Kalyāṇa (Sandhi VII, verse 46).

**Basavēśvara’s Official Status**

Without recapitulating the earlier discussions, we may affirm our verdict in regard to the official status of Basavēśvara, letting in more of literary evidence.

Basavēśvara’s actual status and designation in the court of Bijjala was that of Bhāṇḍāri, Treasurer or Chief Treasurer. In a Saying he calls himself Bhāṇḍāri Basavaṇṇa (No. 346). In the numerous contexts whenever he is mentioned in the early literary works, he is referred to primarily as Bhāṇḍāri. Chennabasava, his nephew, also calls him Bhāṇḍāri (Vachana 698). He started his career in the treasury office of Bijjala and rose to the highest rank in that department. Siddha Daṇḍādhipa to whose post he succeeded, was a Bhāṇḍāri as averred by Harihara. A perusal of the passage in Harihara’s account describing how Basavēśvara was installed in the high office, carries the conviction that Bijjala appointed him the sole treasurer of his revenues. In this context, he is more than once addressed as Bhāṇḍāri (Sthala V, lines 117-169). Other passages also from this work concur on this issue.

This position is aptly substantiated by the Telugu *Basavaḥpurāṇamu* which introduces Baladēva, Basavēśvara’s predecessor and father-in-law, as Baṇḍāri. In the Kannada counterpart he is referred to as Bhāṇḍāri Baladēva. In a later context it is clearly stated that his successor Basavēśvara was invested with the office of the Chief Superintendent of the Treasury
(Hiriya Bhāṇḍārādhipatya) and that he had under him twelve treasury officers (bhāṇḍāri) (Sandhi V, verses 18-19). Singirāja mentions him as Rāja-Pramukha-Bhanḍāri (Sandhi VII, 49).

If Basavēśvara’s primary status and designation was that of Mantri or Pradhāni, nothing prevented all these writers including himself to assert it as such, instead of describing him by his rather less important status and designation.

The two other titles with which Basavēśvara is usually associated, namely, Daṇḍanātha or Daṇḍanāyaka, and Mantri, Pradhāni or Amātya etc. were more or less honorific and conventional, as gathered from the contemporary epigraphical allusions in numerous instances of officers holding different positions. It is rather amusing that such instances include officers who were inspectors or superintendents in charge of tolls and taxes. A most convincing case is that of Dāsimayya who was Accounts Officer (Śrīkaraṇa) and Toll Inspector (Sunkavergade) under Bijjala in 1165 A.D., but enjoyed the titles Mahāmātya, Sēṇādhipati and Rājādhyaksha.9

Bijjala-Basava Relations

Bijjala’s relations with Basavēśvara for a good number of years must have been cordial and encouraging in the beginning. In fact, Bijjala must have considered himself fortunate for possessing such a competent official. They were strained subsequently and the rift between the two became wider and wider. Bijjala’s religious begintry and Basavēśvara’s reformist activities were the main causes of this, which is now firmly established. Added to this might be the relentlessly ambitious course of Bijjala who was as unprincipled
in his designs, as he was unscrupulous in their execution. Basavēśvara could not have lent his physical or moral support to the treacherous schemes and machinations of this would-be usurper. When their paths diverged like poles apart and it became impossible to pull together further, Basavēśvara appears to have left Mangaḷavāḍa and parted company with Bījjala for good. As there were few witnesses who knew this part of Basavēśvara's early life, forthcoming to narrate the same, it has remained unrecorded anywhere. But it could be reconstructed with the help available, through the glimpses in Harihara’s account and inscriptions.

In the Vīraśaiva Purāṇas and literary works including Harihara's account, Basavēśvara is often depicted as overpowering Bījjala by his supernatural feats and the latter being subdued and turned submissive thereby. But this is not a historical picture of the real state. The Purāṇas also show that conflicts and clashes were continuously taking place between the two. Basavēśvara calls Bījjala a Bhaṇi (heretic). Chennabasavaṇṇa and others describe him as Paravāḍi (he who opposed the holy doctrine). This shows that they stood in opposite camps. Ever since Basavēśvara became defiant, and finally broke away from Bījjala, the latter was cherishing inveterate hatred and waiting for an opportunity to punish and wreak vengeance on the former. This is explained by the Haralayya-Madhuvayya episode.¹⁰

Incidentally, we may note one or two minor points relating to this episode. In the Telugu Basavapurāṇamu, the names of these devotees are given as Allayya and Madhupayya. In its Kannada counterpart, they are
mentioned as Allāyya or Hallāyya and Madhuvayya. In the hands of the later writers they become Haralayya and Madhuvarasa.

The impetuous followers of Basavēśvara, who murdered Bījala, were not two but three, i.e. Jagadēva, Malla and Brahmayya, as named in the original Telugu Basavapurāṇamu. In its later Kannada version also they are three, namely Jagadēva, Molla and Bommaya. Subsequently, in later works they become two, the second name Mollibommaṇa being the merger of the last two.

Anubhava Maṇṭapa

We have dealt with this topic earlier and shown how the beginnings of this institution go long back into the early part of Basavēśvara’s life when he was engaged in his spiritual pursuits at Kūḍala Sangama. We have also explained its later development. The historicity of this institution has been challenged by some writers who have argued that it is a later conception of Vīraśaiva poets of the fifteenth century.11

It is alleged that the Vīraśaiva propagandists of this period, who were intent upon glorifying their doctrine, propagated the idea about the existence of this well-constituted institution in the time of Basavēśvara himself, wherein problems in Vīraśaiva philosophy and mysticism were discussed.

The unsoundness of this negative argument can be demonstrated by citing numerous references from Basavēśvara’s own Sayings and other early literary works. The expression, anubhava or anubhāva gained currency in Vīraśaiva literature in the technical sense of spiritual or mystical experience. The councils or
conferences wherein the devotees met to consider questions relating to such an experience or pursuit were called gōṣṭhi. Basavēśvara speaks of such councils. Siddharāma, a contemporary of Basavēśvara, affirms the efficacy of such ‘profoundly philosophical assemblies’ (mahānubhāvagōṣṭhi) in dispelling the darkness of ignorance among the aspirants. Harihara describes at length the gatherings of devotees frequently held by Basavēśvara. The Telugu Basavapurāṇamu supports this thesis and further, in one context, uses the expression, saviśēsha-tatvānubhava-bhavya-gōṣṭhi, i.e. ‘august assembly dealing with the intricacies of mystic philosophy’.

The expression Anubhava Gōṣṭhi occurs twice in a Saying of Allama Prabhu. We may cite in this context an extract from a Saying attributed to Nilāmbā, wife of Basavēśvara, which avers thus: “Our Basavayya became a god-realised soul, having set up Anubhava- maṇṭapa in the blessed company of the gifted mystic Chennabasava”. This passage is significant in as much as it provides perhaps the earliest contemporary evidence on the existence of this institution, which is doubted in certain quarters.

From Anubhava one can turn to Śivānubhava which is a specific aspect of mystic experience derived from one’s contemplation of god Śiva. It is interesting to note that the expression Śivānubhava is met with in an inscription at Kukanur, dated 1164 A.D. Though it is difficult to explain the precise significance of this phrase in its context, we can utilise this epigraphical evidence to stress the point that the terms, Anubhava and Śivānubhava, were current in religious parlance and philosophical circles in the age of Basavēśvara.
Now the question remains whether the imposing edifice of Anubhava Maṇṭapa in association with the majestic presidential seat called the Lion’s Throne of the Absolute (Śūnya Simhāsana), housed in the magnificent dome, graphically described in the Prabhulingalile of Chāmarasa, and other works, was actually established and existed in the time of Basavēśvara himself. Such descriptions, it is claimed, have their foundation in concrete tradition. Taking a rational view of the matter, we have to concede the historicity of this institution which came into being in the form of a firm nucleus in the time of Basavēśvara. It is obvious that the later writers endowed with poetic fancy and philosophical metaphor, glorified it by adding colourful details and embellishments, as it often happens. Can one deny the existence of the child simply because it assumes transformed features as an adult?

*Traditions Elucidated*

In the earlier chapters, more than once we have drawn upon the traditions concerning the institution of Anubhava Maṇṭapa and utilised them in reconstructing the historical and chronological framework relating to Basavēśvara. These traditions are imbedded in the Vachanas and Purāṇic works. We focus our attention once again on this topic to elucidate it.

In the collected work of Vachanas called *Mukti-kaṇṭhābharaṇa*, there is a Vachana attributed to Basavēśvara. In this Saying which is said to have been addressed at the time of his final departure from Kalvāṇa, he exclaims thus:

"O my dear one! Kalvāṇa became the abode of devotion for thirty-six years; for twenty seven years it became the resort of Śiva for Salvation."
But alas! during the last three months the former true devotion and mystic experience have become scarce among the devotees; we can not talk of them; such is the plight, hark, O God of Kūḍala Sangama!"

This passage bears profound significance as it sums up in a nutshell the most important period of Basavēśvara’s life of religious pursuits and spiritual attainments. This period comprised of thirty-six years and ran parallel to his temporal career; for according to Harihara and other Purānic writers, it was ordained that he should fulfil his mission through his secular career permeated by spiritual ideals. Himself being a mystic, Basavēśvara laid emphasis on mysticism in his teachings. With the object of promoting mysticism he organized the theosophical institute which came to be known as Anubhava Maṅṭapa or the Academy of Mysticism. There is reference in the above passage to this activity which was carried out for twenty-seven years. It follows from this that Basavēśvara’s intensive spiritual pursuits were given a concrete shape and form of an institute nine years after he started his career. Chāmarasa’s Prabhulingalīle, the Śūnyasampādana and other works show that Basavēśvara was encouraged in his activity by the great mystic of the age Allama Prabhu. This sage gave a start to the institution by his first contact with Basavēśvara which was brief and preliminary. Having initiated the movement, he waited for its development which took twelve years. At the end of this period Allama arrived on the scene to lend his wholehearted support. He now completely identified himself with the movement, graced its presidential seat and guided its destinies.
The thirty-six years of Basavēśvara’s temporal and spiritual career can thus be divided into the following three well-marked stages or periods:

1. Nine years: Commencement and rise to supreme position in his official career; experiments in socio-religious reforms; spiritual advance.

2. Twelve years: Intensive socio-religious reformist activities; spiritual and mystic attainments.

3. Fifteen years: Indifference to secular pursuits; plunge and dedication to serve the devotees and uplift the masses.

We may also note that the subsequent assertions in the above passage indicate that the movement lost its pristine grandeur during its last days on account of unfortunate turn of events. The entire passage is thus endowed with historical implications. The reference to Kalyāṇa herein has to be taken in a general sense and not with particular application to the city itself.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

2. See for instance, P. G. Halkatti; Śivānubhava, Vol. XVI, pp.322 and 567. This view is accepted without scrutiny by almost all later writers; for instance, Basavanāṭa Sampruṭa, p. 479.
3. Ibid., pp. 478–79.
4. Sthala I, line 110, which reads: Mṛiḍana bhaktana puya-satiy-udarav-opputire.
10. The details of this episode as recounted in the later Purānic works are that Brāhmaṇa Madhuvarasa gave his daughter in marriage to the untouchable Haralayya’s son, which was condemned as a sin and crime by the traditionalists including Bījjala. These details are not specified in the earlier works like the *Basavapurāṇa* and *Śūnyasampādane*. This is intriguing.
CHAPTER XXIII

DATES AND CHRONOLOGY

Difficulties

A historical study, if it is not supported by dates and chronology, defeats its very purpose. It is therefore proposed to discuss in this chapter the dates and chronology pertaining to the main events in Basavēśvara’s life.

The task, however, is by no means easy; for there is not a single event to which we can assign a definite date. There are a good number of literary traditions which in their conventional manner cite various names of cyclic years and broadly indicate the time and period of events. But, in many cases their reliability is not beyond question.

Uncertainty of Dates

If one asks the reasons for such an uncertainty, we can offer a historical explanation for the state of affairs. We have seen how Basavēśvara’s life and his movement abruptly came to an end. The year 1167 A.D. was the culminating point in the teacher’s life, when a mighty storm swept his faith. After Basavēśvara’s departure the lights in Kalyāṇa were blown out. His Jangama fraternity was torn asunder and the followers went in different directions for shelter and survival. However, the lamp of faith kindled deep in their hearts never died out. It was devoutly cherished and steadfastly preserved from extinction.

In the meanwhile, political events and Muslim invasions convulsed the entire Southern Peninsula
including Karnataka. Out of this stress and turmoil rose the Vijayanagara empire in 1336 A.D., whose avowed mission was to protect and promote the social and religious traditions and interests of the classes and the masses. It took about a century for the new rulers to settle and consolidate their power and contribute to the well-being and all round progress of their subjects. Thus, approximately the reign of Dēvarāya II (1424-46 A.D.) or roundabout 1425 A.D. may be taken as the beginning of a new era of upheaval or renaissance for Vīraśaiva religion and literature. This may be termed the Age of Revival.

The Dim Age

It is a fairly long period of over two centuries and a half from 1167 to 1425 A.D. This was a Dim Age in the history of Vīraśaivism; for, except for a few lights kept burning here and there, darkness pervaded and predominated. Staunch followers of the creed, wherever they went or settled down, preached the new gospel. Vīraśaiva doctrinal literature, imbedded mostly in the Sayings of the teacher, his companions and disciples, a priceless treasure constituting the core of the new school, was to be saved from oblivion and destruction. To this end, monasteries or Mathas and centres of religious lore were established for the propagation of the faith. The religious works were copied, doctrines were taught and traditions were set up for the continuance of the precepts and the practices of the school. It may be noted that three great authors, Harihara, Rāghavānka and Pālkuri ke Sōmanātha who lived during this Dim Age have illuminated the Vīraśaiva doctrine by their immortal works, the Ragaśes of Śiva-
gaṇa, Siddharāmachārita and Basavapurāṇamu respectively. A volume of literature comprising the Sayings of Basavēśvara and his compeers has also survived almost in tact through this Dim Age.

*Light from Epigraphs*

The new movement had struck deep roots in the soil. Basavēśvara and his contemporaries were hailed as saintly personages, worthy of adoration and ranked among the great Śaiva devotees of yore in many parts of the country. This is seen through a good number of inscriptions of the thirteenth century. In these epigraphs praise is bestowed on Siddharāma of Sonna-
lige, Dōhara Kakka, Mādara Channa and a few others along with Basavēśvara.²

In an earlier context we have described the activities of Viruparasa who figures in an inscription³ of 1184 A.D. This is just within two decades of the teacher’s departure. He was a staunch advocate of Śaivism. He may not have belonged to Basavēśvara’s school. But this much is certain: he was a firm supporter of all Śaiva devotees. It is significant to note that he was a high official under Sōmēśvara IV, son of Taila III, the Chālukya king, whose kingdom was usurped by Bījjala.

Ingaḷagi in Gulbarga District appears to have been a stronghold of the Vīraśaiva faith. This is disclosed by an inscription of 1210 A.D. built into the wall of the Mūlēśvara temple.⁴ After extolling the Mahāvīra Gaṇas who are said to have emanated from the flame of the burning eye of God Mahālinga and the countless Śaiva devotees, the epigraph mentions a gift to the Gaṇamaṭha for the worship of the Śivalingas
set up in honour of Siddharāma, Daśagaṇa Singideva, and Rēvaṇēśvara and other deities.

The popularity of the saint Siddharāma and his adoration is attested by a good number of inscriptions which belong to the thirteenth century. An inscription of 1257 A.D. at Phaḍakanūru⁵ in Muddebihal Taluka of Bijapur District, describes him as Supreme Sovereign among the foremost Siddhas (the Perfect Ones) and mentions a gift to the God Rāmanātha of Sonnaligepura. The Arjunavāḍ inscription ⁶ of 1260 A.D. shows that the traditions of Basavēśvara were preserved in the family by his successors in the Belgaum region. Two inscriptions of 1262 A.D. at Chauḍadāmpur ⁷ adduce evidence on the popularity of Basavēśvara and his faith in the Rāṇebennur area of Dharwar District. Installation of Basavēśvara as a deity in a renovated temple at Soraṭūr in Gadag Taluka of Dharwar District, is revealed by an inscription ⁸ of the place dated 1356 A.D.

Kālajnāna Literature

The value of historical records is some times appreciated even by the credulous and devotionally minded sections. When Basavēśvara, Allama Prabhu and Chennabasavaṇṇa lived and preached, no records seem to have been maintained of the important events and occurrences that were taking place. Perhaps nobody felt the necessity for this.

Indians in general and the religious sections in particular did not develop a keen sense of and urge for historical writing. They were more interested in the subtleties of theology, tenets, dogmas, ritualism and metaphysics, than historiography. On account
of this characteristic disposition of their mental frame, it is no wonder, we possess few biographical or historical facts about most of our religious leaders. The Vīraśaivas were not an exception to this general rule.

As time rolled on, the Vīraśaiva leaders felt the necessity of historical records. The birth of the teacher, his departure to Kūḍala Sangama, his seeking a career under Bijnala, his foundation of the new faith and preaching his gospel, his contacts with Allama Prabhu and Chennabasavaṇṇa and his final departure—all these were epoch-making events. And the most important were the incidents leading to Bijnala’s death. When, in which particular years did they happen? No precise records were available to present the narrative.

But there were some tales and traditions which were handed down from hearsay in the Dim Age through generations. These were broadly remembered and preserved by the elders who passed them on to the younger successors. Thus, when Vīraśaivism was revived in the fifteenth century, some of these traditions were embodied in literary works. Later, attempts were made to render them into a systematic literary form. This is known as the Kālajñāna or prophetic literature. Most of this is in the form of prose; a part of it is in verse also.

*Its Nature and Value*

A special feature of this literature is that it is presented in the form of prophecy or prediction. Accordingly, events that had taken place in the past are represented as occurrences that will take place in the future. We may note in this connection the analogy
of the Sanskrit Purāṇas which might have served as the model. It is well known to the students of Ancient Indian History that accounts pertaining to the dynasties like the Guptas are narrated in this fashion in some of the early Sanskrit Purānic works.

Adverting to the Vīrāśaiva Kālajnāna treatises, after scrutinizing and examining them carefully, we have to pass our verdict that they are not useful as authentic historical sources and, on the whole, cannot be relied upon for reconstructing history. Some of them, for instance, contain allusions to the Moghals, the Marāṭhās and the Pāḷēgārs of Ikkēri. It thus becomes clear that these were compiled late, some as late as the eighteenth century. However, we notice in them attempts to create an impression of antiquity and contemporaneity. For instance, some of the treatises are ascribed to the authorship of Allama Prabhu, Basavēśvara and Chennabasavaṇṇa and Rudramuni. With all this, they have failed to give us accurate historical facts. We need not wonder at this, because we know the reasons, which are explained above. The Kālajnāna treatises, thus, are not historical documents and we cannot accept them unless they are authenticated by other evidences. Calculation of dates mentioned in the Kālajnānas has revealed that they are unverifiable and anomalous.

Now we examine the dates as given in the Vīraśaiva works for some of the important events.

**Date of Birth of Basavēśvara**

We shall first go into the question of the date of birth of Basavēśvara.

Harihara does not mention this. Pālkurike Sōmanātha, however, states in his Telugu *Basavapurāṇamu,*
that it took place on Ardhōdaya. The Kannada Basavapurāṇa,¹⁰ and two Sanskrit Basavaṇpurāṇas¹¹ (circa 15th century) also mention this Ardhōdaya. What is this Ardhōdaya?

Ardhōdaya, like Mahāśivarātri, is an auspicious yōga, i.e. combination, on a Sunday, by day time, of Rōhini nakshatra, Vyatipāta yōga and Māgha amāvāsyā.¹² In the absence of definite Śaka and cyclic years this date cannot be verified. These vague references, therefore, do not help us in any way to solve the question. This Ardhōdaya appears to be an after thought, an attempt to connect Basavēśvara, a great Śaiva devotee with Mahāśivarātri, the most sacred festival dedicated to Śiva.

In his Śivatattvachintāmaṇi, Lakkaṇa Daṇḍēśa (c.1425 A.D.) asserts that Basavēśvara was born at midnight on Monday, Kārttika paurnimā, Kṛttikā nakshatra, Śivayōga and Vṛshabha lagna, of the cyclic year Siddhārthi.¹³ Siddhārthi corresponds to 1140 A.D. in the twelfth century. This year is unacceptable from the otherwise known historical span of Basavēśvara. It is unnecessary to go into the other details. The date, as described in the Singirajapurāṇa (c. 1500 A.D.) is Āśvija śu. 14, Monday, a combination of Moon and Ādrā nakshatra with Śivayōga.¹⁴ As the most important item, the cyclic year, is not mentioned, we can not check these details. The Prabhulingalīle, the Chennabasaṇapurāṇa and some other works do not mention any date about Basavēśvara’s birth. The Kalājnāna treatises mention some dates which, however, do not bear scrutiny and examination as observed above.

In the Sanskrit Basavapurāṇa of Vyāsa, a work of about the fifteenth century, the date of birth of Basa-
vēśvara is cited with astronomical details. According to the calculations made by a modern scholar recently, this corresponds to Vaiśākha śu. 3, Rōhini nakshtra. This date has many loopholes. The cyclic year is unkown and the tithi also is questionable. An important detail, namely, the Ardhōdaya cited therein, is not taken into consideration. This yōga, as stated above, occurs on Māgha amāvasyā and not in Vaiśākha. Hence, we have to set this date aside.¹⁵

According to some Kālajñāna statements, Basavēśvara was born in the year Vikrama and passed away in Rākshasa. This account is apparently based on the presumption that he lived for thirty-six years and the calculation is made backward from Rākshasa which is taken to be his last year. But this presumption is unwarranted, as shown below.

From a critical examination of such passages, we can draw the following deductions. Nobody had any definite information about Basavēśvara’s birth date. Some early authors like Harihara, therefore, did not mention it. Others made an attempt vaguely to record it taking recourse to mere Ardhōdaya which symbolised an auspicious moment for the Śaivas. Lakkaṇṭha Daṇḍēśa and Singirāja, both of whom lived in the Age of Revival during the fifteenth century, with an interval inbetween of two to three generations only, conflict with each other by mentioning the months Kārttika and Āśvija respectively. This points to the prevalence of varying arbitrary traditions. It also prominently brings out the speculative and uncertain nature of the issue. Thus, let alone the day, even the year of his birth, still remains an unsolved problem.
The Date of Expiry

Now we proceed to enquire into the last date of Basavēśvara. But here also, it is unfortunate to note, we are not in a better position.

A good number of passages in the Kālajñāna works mention the cyclic year Rākshasa as the year of passing away of Basavēśvara. To this year also is ascribed the death of Bijjala. In the Kālajñāna chapter of the Chennabasavapurāṇa (1584 A.D.) four versions of the date are found in different manuscripts. They are as follows:

i) Śālivāhana Śaka 607, Raktākshi, Phālguna.
ii) Śālivāhana Śaka 696, Raktākshi, Phālguna.
iii) Śālivahana Śaka 696, Rākshasa, Phālguna.
iv) Śālivāhana Śaka 707, Raktākshi, Phālguna.

In the Saranālilāmṛita (circa 1750 A.D.), the date is stated to be Kali year 3904 and Kilaka.

Let us scrutinize the above dates.

The year Rākshasa of Kālajñāna corresponds to 1135 - 36 A.D. or 1195 - 96 A.D. in the period of Basavēśvara. Both these are unsuitable as could easily be seen. All the above four dates in Śālivāhana Śaka from the Chennabasavapurāṇa have to be totally rejected, since these are too early by four to five centuries, besides being faulty in other respects. The Śaka and the cyclic years in all the cases are conflicting with each other. Raktākshi coincides with 1144 - 45 A.D. and 1204 - 05 A.D. in the period of Basavēśvara. Neither of them will serve our purpose. Similarly Kali 3904 of the above work corresponds to 803 - 04 A.D. and the relevant cyclic year was Subhānu and not Kilaka. In the twelfth century, Kilaka occurred in 1128 A.D. and
1188 A.D. Neither of these is historically acceptable. This is the fate of all other dates cited in various works. We need not, therefore, further examine them here.

Ignoring the Śaka and the cyclic years, we can take up the tithi or the particular month and the day. Here also the assertions in the Kālajñāna passages are divergent and conflicting. For instance, according to some, the tithi on which Basavēśvara was united with Śiva, was Śrāvaṇa śu. 1, Tuesday. According to others, it was Mārgāśira śu. 1, Tuesday. The Chennabasavapuraṇa gives this as Phālguṇa śu. 11. Similarly, the tithi of Bijjala’s death is mentioned in two versions, one Kārttika paurṇimā, Tuesday; and another Phālguna paurṇimā, Tuesday.¹⁹ In all these instances we note the occurrence of Tuesday which was considered evil. It may be noted that the above two sets of dates on the end of Bijjala and Basavēśvara are removed by a period of three and a half months.

Probable Clues

The problem which is thus extremely complicated and confusing, poses a serious challenge to the student of historical research. Is there no solution for this? One may ask. Our answer is in the affirmative. First, we lay down the lines of our investigation.

One thing becomes clear from an examination of the dates as shown above. They are not only divergent but totally incorrect. Further more, they appear to be arbitrary and imaginary. Some scholars, however, might contend like this: It would be wrong to reject or condemn them, simply because they do not stand verification and are found to be inaccurate according to our present method of calculation. Who knows,
they might be correct according to other systems of reckoning and methods of calculation, which were current in those times, but which we are not aware of.

This view is not justifiable. From the study of epigraphical and other sources we know precisely the systems of reckoning and methods of calculation in vogue in those times. If these systems are applicable to all dates and chronology, which yield satisfactory results, it would be strange to argue that the Vīraśaiva writers alone were an exception to the general rule. Such a presumption is thus unwarranted.

Secondly, imagination and speculation have played their role in presenting these dates; otherwise, we cannot account for such huge discrepancies. For instance, in three out of four manuscripts of the Chennabasava-purāṇa, preference is shown to Raktākshi and Rākshasa occurs in one. Rākshasa, however, predominates in other works.20

We feel that the key to the solution lies in these two names Raktākshi and Rākshasa, particularly the latter, as this is cited with reference to both Bijjala and Basavēśvara. Raktākshi means 'one with red or blood-shot eyes'. Rākshasa means 'monstrous, demoniacal, destructive', etc. These names are significant in the historical context of events. The last year in Basavēśvara’s life was ominous and spelt utter disaster to his mission and movement. It let go the flood gates of violence and revenge to which his followers fell a victim. They did not spare even the opponent Bijjala. Hence in the Vīraśaiva circles, this year was nicknamed symbolically with reference to the infamous names of the cyclic years. The expressions lingered on; but the later generations forgot their
original sense and symbolisim. The names were taken to be the actual names of the cyclic years in which the events occurred. For instance, Basavēśvara is said to have arrived at Kālyāṇa in the year Vikrama and stayed there thirty-six years. Now, in the reverse order from Rākshasa to Vikrama it is precisely thirty-six years. But Vikrama actually falls in 1100 or 1160 A.D. We have explained the significance of Rākshasa. In regard to Vikrama, we may note that the expression connotes achievement, victory or glory. We are going to discuss in the next chapter the implications of the span of thirty-six years.

Another clue is offered by the oft repeated statement in the Kālajñāna works that Basavēśvara passed away three and a half months before the death of Bījjala. This appears to be more or less a historical fact. In this context we may note the Vachana discussed towards the end of the previous chapter. A third clue is the statement that Basavēśvara’s association with Bījjala and his religious activities as a whole covered a period of thirty-six years. Fourthly, we have the statement of Harihara to the effect that Basavēśvara left Bāgēvāḍi for Kūḍala Sangama at the age of sixteen. Add to this his stay at the latter place for about twelve years.

Approximate Dates and Chronology

Now we can work out the chronology backwards from a fixed point which is the death of Bījjala. In this respect help is rendered by two epigraphs. One is the familiar inscription (discussed earlier), Shikāripur 192, dated 24th March 1168 A.D. It is clear that Bījjala was alive and functioning on this date, though he had seemingly transferred his royal authority to his
son, Rāya-Murāri Sōvidēva. Another record from Nādharaḷahāḷi in Dharwar District (discussed earlier), bearing the same date as the above, registers gifts to a Jaina temple. The epigraph clearly states that Bijjala was ruling at this time. This must be an actual fact and not a reference to past event. There is no reference to Sōvidēva in this inscription. This means that Bijjala had not altogether retired from political life. In support of this we have earlier cited other epigraphs (Chapter VII). On this unquestionable evidence we have to place the occurrence of Bijjala's death some time later than this date, about the end of March or the beginning of April, 1168 A.D., permitting a narrow margin.

Assuming that Basavēśvara passed away about three and a half months before Bijjala, we may tentatively assign the last date of Basavēśvara at the end of 1167 A.D., approximately in the month of December.

According to the Hindu reckoning, the last known date of Bijjala, as cited by the above epigraphs is Śaka 1090, Sarvadhāri, Chaitra paurnīmā, Monday. So, if he died soon after this, the event would have occurred in the latter half of this month, i.e. Chaitra. Going back by three and a half months, Basavēśvara would have passed away roughly in Pausha of Śaka 1089, Sarvajit. It may be noted that the above closing dates of Bijjala and Basavēśvara are quite within the margin of a few weeks of some Kālajnāna statements which cite Phālguna and Mārgaśirsha respectively, as the months in which these two personages were no more. Of course, we are aware of the disparities also.

Retracing our steps, we have to accommodate the thirty-six years of Basavēśvara's career. This can be
divided into two stages: the first, of 21 years at Mangala-
väda; and the second of 15 years at Kalyāṇa. It
would have commenced about 1132 A.D. at Mangala-
väda, under Bijjala to start with. On the evidence of
Tambūru record, we have placed the beginning of
Bijjala’s rule as Mahāmanḍalēśvara about 1130 A.D.
This date is backed by the Balgēri record (Chapter III).
Basavēśvara’s new religious movement appears to have
taken a definite form and shape about 1141 A.D. The
conflict between Bijjala and Basavēśvara seems to have
taken a serious turn about 1153 A.D. when the latter
left Mangalavāda once for all and went to Kalyāṇa.
It is interesting to note that according to epigraphical
evidence, Bijjala started his defiance of Chālukya
authority from 1153 A.D. The above dates are also
partly suggested by the assertions in the literary works,
noticed earlier, that Basavēśvara founded the Śūnya
Simhāsana of Anubhava Maṇṭapa in the ninth year
of his official career and that it remained unoccupied
for twelve years more until the advent of Allama
Prabhu.24

Basavēśvara, according to Harihara, went to
Mangalavāda directly from Kūḍala Sangama. There
is no evidence as to precisely how many years he stayed
at the latter place. However, there are indications
that he stayed there about twelve years.25 Harihara
states that he went to the holy place from Bāgēvādi in
his sixteenth year. If his Upanayana ceremony took
place in his eighth year, he lived at Bāgēvādi with his
grandmother for eight years more, performing the
Brāhmaṇical rituals which were forced upon him, as
gathered from his Sayings. The expression, ‘twenty-
five years of age’ is met with in Harihara’s narrative
(Sthala VIII). This refers to the description of the Māhēśvaras, and not to Basava as some writers have assumed.26

The consolidated results of the foregoing discussion will be given at the end of the next chapter.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. This is attested by the ascendency of Vīraśaiva teachers, institutions and literature. Organized efforts were made to place this faith on a firm footing through scientific works explaining the religious and philosophical aspects. See Desai P. B.: Vijayanagara Sāmrājya (Kannada), p. 64.

2. See above Chapter XII, the list of inscriptions mentioning Basavēśvara.


4. For this information and epigraphical notices about Siddharāma, see my article, ‘New Facts on Vīraśaiva History’, published in the Śaraṇa Sāhitya (Kannada Monthly), July 1957. Some of the views expressed in this article need to be revised in the light of subsequent study. For instance, the section on ‘Prabhulingadēva’ has to be cancelled, since the text of the inscription correctly reads ‘Panchalingadēva’ and not ‘Prabhulingadēva’.


6. See above, Chapter XII.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Āśvāsa I, p. 36.


16. Kālajñānāna Vachanagaḷu (Kannada), pp. 1 and 41.
17. Lingayat Vidyabhivṛiddhi Sansthe publication, Dharwar, 1934, Sandhi, LXII (62), verse 18.
20. Ibid., p. 133.
22. Kālajñānāna Vachanagaḷu, pp. 34, and 44.
26. Ibid., p. 37.
CHAPTER XXIV

THIRTY-SIX YEARS

Here we focus our attention on ‘thirty-six years’

The period of thirty-six years is an important chronological unit in the biography of Basavēśvara. Though the dates of many specific incidents and events in the life of this teacher cannot be settled in a satisfactory manner, the period of thirty-six years is often stressed in almost all traditional sources. This being a well defined, clear cut and conspicuous time unit, its memory must have remained fresh and green among his faithful followers through generations.

There is justification in our accepting it as a probable historical and chronological fact.

Basavēśvara’s personality as a supreme devotee and mystic and establisher of a new religious and social order attained such a surpassing grandeur that it overshadowed many incidents of his earlier life. The episodes and biographical intricacies of early life of this teacher might be of interest to a historian from his historical point of view, but a devotee and a layman are not ordinarily curious about them. It is for these reasons that except for a few salient landmarks, his early life is enveloped in darkness, giving ample scope for superstition and fertile brain to play their part in weaving out imaginary tales and legendary episodes.

Under these circumstances we need not feel surprised for the differences and divergent accounts presented in respect of this teacher in the various literary works and Purāṇas themselves. Queerly enough, even
in the case of crucial events, we meet with conflicting statements. For instance, the important landmarks in Basavēśvara’s early life are his birth at Bāgēvādi, spiritual acquisition at Kūḍala Sangama and rise in the court of Bījjala and marriage. The four representative authors who have dealt with this subject, sketch these events in the following order.

Divergent Accounts

1. According to Harihara, Basava leaves Bāgēvādi in his sixteenth year after his Upanayana; stays at Sangama in the service of the god Sangamēśvara for a considerable time; and from there he goes to Manga-

lavāda where Bījjala was ruling. Soon, he begins his official career and then gets married.

2. According to Bhīma Kavi, Basava clashes with his father at Bāgēvādi on the question of Upanayana; his marriage is celebrated within a short time after the revolt; he goes to Sangama with his spouse; and from there, after some time, he proceeds to Kālyāṇa to occupy forthwith the office of minister under king Bījjala.

3. According to Chāmarasa, Basava’s Upanayana takes place at Bāgēvādi; he then proceeds to Kālyāṇa; and by performing an extraordinary feat, becomes the chief minister of Bījjala. After this is narrated Basava’s marriage.

4. According to Singirāja, Basava’s Upanayana is performed at Bāgēvādi; from there he goes to Sangama after an unfortunate incident. He stays at Sangama for some time; from Sangama he goes to Kālyāṇa for his marriage with the daughter of Bījjala’s minister. After this he accepts an humble appointment in the accounts office; and then by exibitiing his extraordinary ability, he becomes chief minister of king Bījjala.
The variations in the accounts of the above outstanding events are self-explanatory. However, we may emphasize one or two points. It is noteworthy that Bhīma Kavi denies the occurrence of Upanayana whereas others substantiate it. Chāmarasa does not allude to Basava’s visit to Sangama and his devotion to the god Sangamēśvara. This author, like Harihara, places the event of Basava’s marriage after his appointment to the high office under Bijjala. We have already commented on the divergency between Bhīma Kavi and Singirāja on the question of Basava’s rise to ministerial position.¹

In the light of the above findings we need not discredit Harihara’s account wherein Mangalavāḍa and not Kalyāṇa occupies a prominent place. We shall be committing a grave error if we brush aside this testimony of Harihara for the simple reason that he alone among all the traditional biographers of Basavēśvara, mentions Mangalavāḍa. On the other hand, we have shown how Harihara’s narration is not only trustworthy but also historically sound.²

Two View-points — Their Scrutiny

Reverting to the theme of thirty-six years, opinions are divided in regard to its interpretation. They belong to the following two categories.

1. According to one view-point, the thirty-six years in question comprise the span of Basavēśvara’s life. He lived for thirty-six years and fulfilled his mission within this time. A person of extraordinary capabilities as he was, it is no wonder he achieved what he did during this short period. Such exceptionally gifted personalities are not unknown to history; for example, Jesus Christ and Śankara.³ We may call this Life Theory.
2. According to the other view-point, Basavēśvara lived a longer life. The thirty-six years in question refer to his secular or official career as well as his spiritual career and the establishment of a new religious faith, which are inseparably united. This may be designated Career Theory.

We shall critically scrutinize these views in the light of historical facts based on unchallenged epigraphical evidence and the descriptions in the literary works and the Purāṇas.

**Life Theory**

According to the first view, Basavēśvara was born in 1131 or 1132 A.D. As narrated in the Basavapurāṇa which does not explicitly furnish the precise details, the course of events was probably like this: After the Upanayana episode, the marriage and visit to Sangama take place in quick succession without much intervening gap. There is no indication to assume the passage of many years before his appointment as minister. By a liberal calculation of intervals, we may postulate that Basavēśvara was about sixteen years old when he became minister of Bijjala at Kalyāṇa. This brings us to the year 1148 A.D. At this time who was ruling at Kalyāṇa? Not Bijjala, but the Chālukya king Jagadēkamalla II.

Bijjala assumed sovereignty and occupied the Chālukya throne right royally in 1162 A.D. only, and not before. Bijjala must have been a sovereign ruler, at Kalyāṇa, as the Purānic accounts show, when he took Basava as his minister. If so, the latter must be thirty-one years old at this time, i.e., 1162 A.D. The question now poses itself, where was he from 1148 to 1162 A.D. and what was he doing during this time?
Further, if he started his movement in right earnest at Kalyāṇa in 1162 A.D., how can we accommodate the eventful and grand course of his movement within the narrow span of six years from 1162 to 1167 A.D.? This anomaly is heightened if we believe the Prabhu-lingalīle and other literary works which indicate that Allama’s second august visit to Kalyāṇa to grace the Śunya Simhāsana erected by Basava, took place twelve years after his first and preliminary visit to the city. If we lean on the Purāṇas alone, this riddle becomes an insoluble problem. The above arguments apply to all the writers including the Purāṇic authors who portray the main events in Basava’s career as having solely occurred in the city of Kalyāṇa without reference to Mangalavāda.

An assertion referring to thirty-six years as having elapsed at the time of Basavēśvara’s final departure from Kalyāṇa since his advent into the mortal world, occurs in a Vachana attributed to Chennabasavaṇṇa and in other statements. This is advanced as a supporting evidence for the thirty-six years’ period of Basavēśvara’s life. But the evidence of such statements is vitiated on account of the mention generally of the cyclic year Rākshasa in the same context. For as we have shown earlier, the years Vikrama and Rākshasa often cited as the years of birth and final departure of Basavēśvara have no historical foundations, being gratuitous assumptions of a more or less speculative character. The sponsors of this theory have first assumed that Basavēśvara lived for thirty-six years and then, in order to justify this presumption, have cited the Vikrama-Rākshasa cycle. But the very ground of this assumption is shaky and challengeable.
This becomes clear if we again note that the cyclic year Vikrama occurs in 1100 and 1160 A.D. and Rākshasa in 1135 and 1195 A.D. respectively. Neither of these sets of dates are compatible with the known historical range of Basavēśvara’s age.

This view therefore evidently appears to be a clever adaption of the original fact of the career of Basavēśvara extending for thirty-six years. Unable to make a distinction between the eventful span of thirty-six years of his life and the earlier less conspicuous period of preparation, his followers conveniently ignored the latter. This admirably fitted in and became easily acceptable to the followers in view of the eminent personality of the teacher.

**Career Theory**

As for the second view, it seems to rest on solid foundations. We have not only accepted it, but also worked out on this basis a few details of his life. We have cited at the end of Chapter XXII a passage from the *Muktikanṭhäbharaṇa* and elucidated it. In conformity with this testimony, we have divided Basavēśvara’s spiritual career into two parts. The first part comprising twenty-one years, was characterised by his stay and association with Bijjala in his court at Mangalavāda. The second part extending over fifteen years was more radiant, when his movement attained full bloom and maturity. During this period Kalyāṇa became the scene of his triumphant spiritual achievements. As we have pointed out with the help of inscriptions, this interpretation fairly harmonises the evidence of epigraphs and the traditional accounts of Anubhava Manṭāpa by Vīraśaiva writers.
There are instances to show that even in the traditional school, some believed that the span of thirty-six years was the period of Basavēsvara’s temporal career and not his whole life. For example, in the literary work named the Niranjanavamśaratnākara, it is stated that Basavēsvara served under Bijjala as his minister for thirty-six years.10

The entire chronological position of Basavēsvara’s life, discussed so far in the foregoing pages, may be summed up as follows for ready reference.

I. EARLY LIFE OF PREPARATION
(1105-1132 A.D. with a margin of few years on either side)

1. Year of birth at Bāgēvādi. 1105 A.D.
2. Upanayana or Brähmanical Initiation ceremony: as indicated by literary sources. 1113 A.D.
3. Death of the parents: as indicated by the accounts of Harihara, Bhīma Kavi and others. 1114 A.D.
4. Stay at Bāgēvādi with the grandmother: as indicated by Harihara’s account. 1114 - 1120 A.D.
5. Departure for Kūḍala Sangama: as indicated by the above. 1121 A.D.
6. Stay at Kūḍala Sangama: as indicated by literary sources. 1121 - 1132 A.D.

II. OFFICIAL CAREER FROM MANGALAVĀDA TO KALYĀŅA (1132 - 1153 A.D.)

7. Departure from Kūḍala Sangama to Mangalavāda, the capital of the Kalachuri governor Bijjala: as indicated by the literary and epigraphical evidence. 1132 A.D.
8. Accepts employment as a junior accountant on a salary of 101 ḫoms under Siddha Daṇḍādhipa, the Treasury Chief of Bijjala: as indicated by Harihara and Singirāja. 1132 A.D.
9. Demise of Siddha Daṇḍādhipa and rise to high office of Treasury Chief under Bijjala: as indicated by Harihara and the
literary traditions relating to the institution of Anubhava Maṇṭapa. 1132 - 1141 A.D.

10. Service under Bijjala as Treasury Chief: as indicated by the above, supported by epigraphical evidence. 1141 - 1153 A.D.

11. Leaves Mangalavāḍa for Kalyāṇa on account of conflict with Bijjala due to political and religious differences: as indicated by the literary and epigraphical evidence. 1153 A.D.

III. RELIGIOUS CAREER AT KŪḌALA SANGAMA, MANGALAVĀḌA AND KALYĀṆA
(1121 - 1167 A. D.)

12. Preparation as a supreme devotee of Sangamēśvara and socio-religious reformist at Kūḍala Sangama: as indicated by literary and epigraphical evidence. 1121 - 1132 A.D.

13. Starts the secular career to serve as basis for the future religious activities: as indicated by literary and epigraphical evidence. 1132 A.D.

14. Inaugurates his new movement of religious and social reforms: as indicated by the literary traditions relating to Anubhava Maṇṭapa. 1141 A.D.

15. The new movement gains popularity and support from the masses; the Jangama devotees join the movement in large numbers; attempts to secure recognition and approval from the great leaders of religious faith of the time: as indicated by Harihara and the literary sources pertaining to the institution of Anubhava Maṇṭapa. 1141 - 1153 A.D.

16. Departure to Kalyāṇa: see No. 11 above. 1153 A.D.

17. Arrival of Allama Prabhu at Kalyāṇa who blesses the movement with his full support: as indicated by the literary sources pertaining to Anubhava Maṇṭapa. 1153 A.D.

18. Preaching the new faith and success of the movement: as indicated by the literary and epigraphical sources. 1153 - 1167 A.D.

19. Bijjala's atrocity of punishing the devotees Haraljayya and Madhuvayya: as indicated by literary evidence. 1167 A.D.

20. Reign of confusion, differences among his followers, move to avenge Bijjala, the movement getting out of control, departure to Kūḍala Sangama and union with Sangamēśvara: as indicated by literary and epigraphical evidence. December, 1167 A.D.
Conclusion

Thus Basavēśvara appears to have lived an intensively active life of about sixty years.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. See above, Chapter XXI.
2. Ibid. In a passage ascribed to Siddharāma mention is made of the followers of Linga at Mangalavāda.
4. Basavanāṭa Sampṭa, pp. 475-76.
5. See above, Chapter IV.
6. See above, Chapters XVII and XXII.
8. See above, Chapter XXIII.
9. See above, Chapters XVI, XVII, XXI and XXII.
CHAPTER XXV

PREJUDICES AND MISCONCEPTIONS

The Causes

Reviewing historically, among the religious teachers and social reformers of our country Basavēśvara appears to be most unfortunate in respect of proper understanding and sympathetic appreciation of his precepts and performances. This is understandable as he was centuries ahead of the society he wanted to reform. What he preached was meant to be actually carried out in practice in respect of moral and social behaviour. But the society was unprepared for it. In this respect we can compare him with Mahatma Gandhi of our time, who tried to practise what he preached. Both had ardent admirers and devoted followers on the one hand and bitter enemies on the other and both encountered grave opposition.

A characteristic feature of Basavēśvara that has contributed to this situation was his temporal career. Essentially he was a saintly person inspired by spiritual idealism. If he had detached himself from the world and preached like Buddha and Śankara or like Kabir and Nanak, the situation perhaps would have been different. A saint and a politician are paradoxical; and it is a strange phenomenon to see the one play the role of the other. Add to this the zest of a social reformer and the whole drama being enacted in the twelfth century in a country like India. The complication becomes worse complicated, leading to confusion and misunderstanding.
In an earlier context (Chapter XVIII) we have seen how, in his own life time, ever since Basavēśvāra started his movement after he was well established in the court of Bījāla, the seeds of misunderstanding, prejudices, allegations and accusations sprouted up. They developed in course of time into a wild growth of thick forest. The lapse of eight long centuries has not been able to clear this jungle.

Perhaps this is human nature all over the world and there are some outstanding instances in other countries. Socrates was administered poison for teaching the truths of life and Jesus Christ was crucified for preaching his gospel of love and peace. Martin Luther was similarly victimized. The forces of conservatism and reaction incessantly try to obstruct the course of progress and reform. That is why great men have to suffer.

Coming to the recent times, we see modern writers and historians of the last and present century holding wrong views and making prejudiced statements in respect of this teacher and his teachings without properly studying the subject in an unbiased manner. This is quite unfair and unfortunate. What is really deploring in this context is that once a wrong view is expressed by an earlier writer, it is repeated almost blindly by the later ones without a searching enquiry. This tendency has to be deprecated in the interest of historical truth. It is for these reasons that we propose to deal with this topic here at some length.

*How They Started*

The Viraśaiva literary works and Purāṇas recount a number of incidents in the life of this teacher indi-
cating how he was misunderstood and criticised. Though such accounts are presented in a legendary fashion and usually exaggerated, they reveal the central fact behind them. Before we peep into such works, it would be interesting to note that we can gather some information on this topic even from the Sayings of Basavēśvara himself.

When he raised the standard of revolt against the superiority of the privileged classes by virtue of birth and declared that he was not a Brāhmaṇa, but an untouchable among the untouchables, ominous clouds of suspicion and misunderstanding began to gather around him. When his movement became popular attracting larger and larger numbers of followers, it was alleged that he was a hypnotist practising black magic. The following assertion of his is illuminating in this context.

O, you say, I know a secret charm,
Not knowing the secret of the charm;
Silly mortals, cheated dullards!
Listen, ‘Homage to Śiva’ is the holy spell
Bewitching all, O Lord of Kūḍala Sangama!

When he began to welcome the devotees who came to him in hundreds and thousands and treated them well, he was accused of squandering Bijjala’s treasury. The gravest charge that was levelled against him, was that for selfish ends he served under a master who was a faithless heretic. As this was made by the respectable members of his own faithful circle, it hurt his feelings most, which he has given vent to in one of his Vachanas (No. 709, cited in Chapter XVIII). Basavēśvara himself has refuted these charges and shown that they were ill-founded and malicious.
Viraśaiva Purāṇas

A universal accusation often repeated in all Purāṇic accounts is the alleged misuse of king’s public funds placed at his disposal as Treasury Chief. This is invariably linked with his feeding of the devotees on a large scale. Truly, this is an indication of the wide response and popular enthusiasm his movement evoked. It would be poor imagination to draw the inference from this that the royal treasury was his only source. Feeding freely in unlimited numbers may be a problem in modern times; but it was not so in olden days. It was the simplest affair when the land was providing good harvest, the people were swayed by religious faith and the springs of generosity were never dried up. Even now, some of the Viraśaiva Maṭhas are feeding thousands of poor people of all communities without depending on government grants. Feeding the poor is always regarded as one of the sacred duties in all religions.

The Purāṇic writers, and Harihara in particular, describe at length another ‘undesirable’ activity of Basavēśvara, viz. his liberal social contacts including interdining with the low-born and the untouchable devotees. This was a major social reform he had set his heart on. But it aroused storms of protest and opposition against him. Prejudices were hardened and controversies raged on this issue, which have not been completely eradicated even now after eight hundred years!

The Viraśaiva Purāṇas, like similar works of other religious faiths, indulge in fanciful accounts saturated with supernatural elements and extraordinary feats centering round the teacher. In them are narrated perhaps the largest number of miracles performed by
Basavēśvara and conventionally they are assumed to be eighty-eight. This was evidently due to the belief, really a superstition, prevalent among the followers of various creeds that saints and religious teachers possessed occult powers and that their greatness consisted in exhibiting them on a large scale. Consequently, Basavēśvara's followers sought to establish the superiority of their master by attributing numerous supernatural incidents to him. Such stories were obviously meant for the consumption of ordinary credulous persons. The same is the case with other religious teachers like Śankara, Madhva and Rāmānuja.

Typical Instances

A few typical instances occurring in the Purānic works like the Basavapurāṇa and Singirājapurāṇa may be mentioned here.

1. Basava used money and gold from the king's treasury. But he proved his honesty by miraculously replenishing it when accused of misappropriation.

2. He entertained as many as 12000 licentious Jangama devotees and fulfilled their desires (Basavapurāṇa, Sandhi VI, verse 33). It was alleged by opponents that these formed his private army.

3. He drank strongest poison and remained unaffected.

4. He revived dead animals and men.

5. He stopped the motion of the moon for seven days.

6. He made sterile cow yield milk and dry wood sprout.
7. Brinjals, lemons and grains of Jawar were turned into Lingas. Some devotees worshipped as Lingas even dungs of goats and sheep and were rewarded for their devotion.

_Not True To Basavēśvara_

Such stories were invented to impress the pre-eminence of Basavēśvara, his implicit faith in the Jangama devotees and the supremacy of the worship of Linga. But an intelligent and rational critic of modern age will fail to appreciate their propriety.

The genuine objection against them would be that they do not correctly represent the teacher and his teachings. For instance, let us take the case of his misappropriation of royal treasury. It is one thing to say that he was too honest to lay his hand on them and another that he first utilised the money without consulting the king and later made amends for this by working the miracle of replenishing it, when questioned. One may legitimately ask: If the miracle was at his command, why did he not earlier resort to it straightway to feed the Jangamas instead of going to the royal treasury? This is quite contrary to the evidence of the teacher’s own declarations in his Sayings. He emphatically expresses his aversion to others’ money and that he never touched Bijjala’s treasury.

(Nos. 446, 640, 754).

The accounts of licentious Jangamas appear to be illconceived accretions of overzealous devotees. How could a strict moralist and saint like Basavēśvara permit and encourage sensual pursuits among his followers? He unceasingly emphasized true devotion;
and how can a lascivious person cultivate true devotion? In one Saying he forbids looking at and conversing with others' wives (No. 643). In another he un-mistakably censures sexual laxity in a devotee thus:

How can one who calls himself lover of Linga be slave to passion? (No. 118)

There are Sayings which testify to his keen repulsion to twofold lust—for money and woman. (Nos. 446, 640, 642).

Such tales have done more harm than good to the great teacher. They have provided material to his opponents to misunderstand him and carry on counter propaganda. It must be said in fairness that the Vīraśaiva Purāṇas do recount Basava's integrity, his unswerving faith in God and His devotees, his high moral calibre, his generosity, his humanity for the uncivilized, lowly and down-trodden and compassion for all beings. Still, his true image is blurred by the overgrowth of unreal legends and exaggerated tales of miracles which stand no test of reason or common sense. How such descriptions helped the enemies to discredit the teacher and his faith is illustrated by two works of Jaina writers.

Miracles in General

A word may be said in passing in regard to the miracles in all religions and about all religious teachers. Such miracles are to be deprecated while assessing the intrinsic worth of particular doctrines or religious faiths and the superiority of the great men who sponsored them. The reasons are as follows:

Firstly, the miracles in their very nature are unnatural in character and beyond the pale of human experience in ordinary life. Secondly, they are so
profusely recounted without the sense of proportion that suspicions are aroused regarding their genuineness. Thirdly, if one is to regard the greatness of a teacher on the basis of his miraculous performances only, for similar reasons, another teacher who belongs to the rival creed and preaches a different doctrine, deserves to be given equal credence. Thus one miracle may be advanced to cut another and sterilise it straightforward.

The miracles might have served their purpose once in the past age for the establishment and propagation of different doctrines and faiths. But they have outlived their utility in the modern times when rationalism and critical approach have got the better of credulity and superstition. Therefore, it would be safe to keep them out of bounds in our historical and objective studies.

Jaina Writers

The Jaina writers referred to above are Dharaṇi Paṇḍita and Chandrasāgara Varṇi. The former wrote his Bijjalarāyacharite about 1650 A.D. and the latter the Bijjalarāypurāṇa in c. 1810 A.D. We have noticed these writers in an earlier context (Chapter VI). There we have shown that these authors were mainly responsible for the firmly rooted, current belief that Bijjala was a Jaina by persuasion, which is wrong. We have now to take into consideration the views expressed by them concerning Basavēśvara and his faith.

According to Dharaṇi Paṇḍita, Basava was a man of low position without ability and character. He secured the post of Chief Minister under Bijjala on account of the contrived marriage of his sister Padmāvati with the king. Doctrinal disputes took place
between Bjjjala, who was a firm upholder of Jainism and Basava, a Śaivite by tradition. Bjjjala often established the superiority of his faith by vanquishing Basava. The latter founded a new Śaiva faith to show his importance. He admitted into his fold all kinds of undesirable persons and converted them by besmearing the ash on their person and placing on their palms useless matter called Linga. Bjjjala lost his life as the result of a conspiracy hatched by Basava who in turn drowned himself in a well at Ujavi to escape from the revenge of Bjjjala’s successor. The basis of this wild tale, as Dharaṇi Paṇḍita admits, was the story narrated by his mother who had received it from another old lady. Thus it becomes plain that the work is of little worth as a historical document.

The Bijjalarayāpurāṇa differs from the Bijjalarāya-charite in certain respects, but it agrees with the latter in its central theme depicting Bjjjala as a Jaina and deprecating Basava and his faith. Both these works were the offsprings of propagandistic zeal, devoid of historical substance.

The intention of the authors of these works obviously was to uplift the Jaina faith which had lost its ground and fallen into disrepute, consequent on the rise and growth of Vīraśaivism in large proportions. At the same time they aimed at discrediting Vīraśaiva faith which was the main cause of the decadence of their creed. Although these writers failed in their first objective, they succeeded to a greater extent in the second. The misunderstanding and prejudices created by them against Vīraśaivism became widespread and did considerable harm to the real history of Karnataka.
Modern Writers

Many modern writers of the last and the present century have been misled by the Jaina accounts and made prejudiced statements in their writings in respect of Basavēśvara and his teachings. It would be illuminating to examine as to why and how they were influenced by such accounts.

As a result of Western education and contacts, scholars and historians of the nineteenth century became interested to know more and more about our history, culture and religion. Among the subjects of their interest was one about Basavēśvara and his faith.

From the twelfth century onwards a large volume of literature pertaining to Basavēśvara and his contemporaries and successors, who contributed to the spread of his doctrine, was produced. This literary output comprised firstly the teacher's own Sayings and those of his comrades, companions and disciples, known as Vachana literature. It also included the Purānic works and philosophical treatises. All this literature was composed in ancient Kannada language and inscribed on palm leaves or crude paper in old Kannada script. The manuscripts containing such writings were preserved securely in institutions and Maṭhas of Viraśaiva orthodox traditions, scattered in villages and out of the way places. Consequently, the entire material was beyond the reach of English educated public.

In the seventies and eighties of the last century commenced the work of collecting the literary works and publishing their descriptive catalogues with English annotations. Jaina works like the Bijjalarāyācharite
were among the first to be included in such collections on account of their late period and easy availability. Similarly, copies of the more popular Vīraśaiva works like the *Chennabasavapurāṇa* and the *Basavapurāṇa* found their way in the collection of manuscripts. Abstract translations of these works were published in the *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. VIII, Wilson’s *Descriptive Catalogue of the Mackenzie Collection* and the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. IV.

Relying on such sources R. G. Bhandarkar and J. F. Fleet made erroneous and damaging observations in their writings relating to Basavēśvara about the close of the last century. For instance, the former in his *Early History of the Dekkan* (pages 224 - 227) and *Vaishnavism, Saivism and Minor Sects* (pages 188 - 189) betrays his inclination to believe the story of Bījjala and Padmāvati, who he thinks might be the former’s mistress. After narrating the account of Basava’s embezzlement of the king’s treasury and entertaining the profane Jangamas, he concludes that Basava was a scheming politician who could hardly have been the propounder of a new system of doctrines. Fleet follows Bhandarkar in his belief regarding the unfair Bījjala-Padmāvati relationship.¹

A passing reference may be made here to some of the Western scholars who have expressed wrong views on this subject while assessing the religions of India and their founders. A. Barth, a French scholar, describes Bījjala as a defender of the Jainas, who was assassinated at the instance of Basava. He calls the Lingayat faith grossest superstition and confused mass of legends.² The American author, E. W. Hopkins notices cruelest form of Śiva worship in
Basava’s teachings and describes his adherents as phallus-wearers and idolatrous deists.³

If the Jaina accounts have misled the scholars of the last century, they have further carried astray the historians of the present century, who more or less repeat the views of their predecessors with some additions. A few notable writers to be mentioned are B. L. Rice, Vincent Smith, K. A. Nilakanta Sastri and A. L. Basham. Rice considers Basava as an Ārādhya and Bijjala as a Jaina. He believes in the matrimonial relation of Bijjala and Basava and depicts the latter as a political opportunist.⁴ Besides accepting the Jaina faith of Bijjala, some have detected the influence of Jainism and Islam in Basava’s religion and philosophy.⁵ Judaism and Christianity are also added to the list by one writer.⁶ A most recent historiographer, Dr. (Mrs.) Romila Thaper of Delhi University, describes Basava as an apostate Jaina and observes cynical strain in his teachings.⁷

In the above sketch we have noticed in some detail the opinions of writers who occupy a position of merit in the world of scholarship and whose statements are generally accepted as authentic without scrutiny and questioning. Another point in their favour is that they are in English, a language which has universally wide circulation. The views once pounded in this speech by writers of note, get into the minds of the intellegentsia of the global countries and it becomes difficult to dislodge or mend them.

As the present study furnishes an effective refutation of such misconceived and prejudiced notions, we desist from again entering into a detailed discussion
on them. However, we may briefly indicate the correct position.

1. The writings of Jaina authors like the Bijaḷa-
rāyacharite are motivated and propagandistic fallacies. Basavēśvara and his teachings should be judged by a critical study of epigraphical and Vīraśaiva literary sources which are now available.

2. Basavēśvara had no sister called Padmāvati which is a typically Jaina name. Chandrasāgara Varni calls her Guṇavati which is also imaginary. Basavēśvara was not an unprincipled, political opportunist. He was born in an orthodox Brāhmaṇa family of Śaiva traditions and not an Ārādhya.

It is not possible to connect Basavēśvara’s family before he discarded his ancestral faith, nor himself after he founded his new religious order, with the Ārādhyaśas who were and are characteristically a Brāhmaṇical Śaiva sect. The predominant faith of the agrahāra of Bāgēvāḍi was Pāṣupata and Basavēśvara’s father Mādi-
rāja who was president of the town assembly, apparently professed the same faith. The Ārādhyaśas wear on their person the sacred Brāhmaṇical thread and believe in the Vēdas. They observe death pollution and perform Brāhmaṇical ceremonies for their progenitors. These practices are not observed by the followers of Basavēś-
vara. The Ārādhyaśas cherish implicit faith in the Linga and always carry the symbol on their person. This has to be treated more as a distinguishing feature of their staunch adherence to the Śaiva cult than as their leaning towards Vīraśaivism.8

3. It would be improper to suggest the influence of Jainism, Islam and other religions on the movement
of Basavēśvara on the ground of analogies, which is a deceptive phenomenon. Many things are common in many religions and it would be a hazardous hunt to go in search of impact and influence of the one on the other merely on this consideration. Basavēśvara’s movement was essentially a self-initiated, self-inspired, original contribution of a revolutionary personality who thought independently and acted independently. In regard to the Islamic contact, some appear to have been misled by the term Allama in Allama Prabhu. As we have shown elsewhere, Allama has nothing to do with Allah. It has to be derived from the Sanskrit or Dravidian word ālā meaning mother with the suffix ma denoting respect.\(^9\)

The above discussion, it is hoped, will help clear the deeprooted prejudices and misconceptions about Basava. It is high time the critics and historians view this teacher of spirituality and humanism in proper perspective and impartially judge his precepts and practices. It is a happy augury that organised efforts to restore the role of this teacher to its legitimate status are well on their way. Some Western and Indian critics of the present time have registered unqualified appreciation about him and paid glowing tributes to his achievements. We quote one of the former class below:\(^{10}\)

Whatever legend may say of Basava, the fact is pretty clear that he was the first Indian free-thinker. He might be called the Luther of India. The acknowledged leadership of the priests was in full swing when Basava came upon the scene, and there was a movement on foot to replace caste and priestly authority with intelli-
gence and free thinking. He mounted the rostrum for the abolition of caste and ceremonies, and preached that all men were by birth equal and that one sex was as important as another.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

3. Religions of India (1894), p. 482.
10. Arthur Miles: The Land of the Lingam (1937), p. 111. It has to be observed that we do totally differ from the author in his approach to and presentation of many aspects relating to Hinduism in the above work. In fact, he has misunderstood and grossly misrepresented this religion.
CHAPTER XXVI

CONTRIBUTIONS

Great men usher in a new age and breathe out a fresh atmosphere. With his intensive zeal, penetrating vision and dynamic action, Basavēśvara opened out a new horizon in the cultural world. His contributions conspicuously stand out in the spheres of religion, philosophy, mysticism, society, language and literature. These may be briefly reviewed here.

Religion

India is a land of religions. From time to time many religious teachers have appeared on the scene and exerted their influence for the uplift of the masses on a moral and spiritual plane. Though the basic principles governing most of the religious faiths are the same, the tenets of the new faith take their individual shape and form and differ from others in certain pronounced features that characterize them. Such characteristics are determined by the regional environment and cultural background of the age. These factors we have to bear in mind while judging the new faith inaugurated by Basavēśvara.

Viṇaśaivism

The religious faith and philosophical school that came to prominence through the teachings of Basavēśvara is known as Viṇaśaivism or Valiant Śaivism. The attribute Viṇa has a political touch with historical associations of the period. It connotes strength, firmness, valour and superiority over the common and
ordinary. Though this expression is rarely met with in the Sayings of Basavēśvara, it is found in good number in those of Chennabasavaṇṇa. Vīraśaivism is also known as Lingāyatism. The follower of this faith is a Vīraśaiva which means a sworn votary of Śiva. According to Chennabasavaṇṇa, the justification for a Vīraśaiva to so call himself lies in the rigorous observance of moral codes (Vīrāchāra) like non-covetousness, non-violence etc.\(^1\)

Śaivism is one of the oldest and widely prevalent religions, whose origin can be traced to hoary antiquity.\(^2\) Śiva is the supreme deity and principle to the followers of this faith. The basic Śaivism branched off into a number of schools like Śaiva Siddhānta, Kashmir Śaivism, Pāśupata, Kāpālika etc., which are distinguished by doctrinal modifications and the modes of worship of the deity. Vīraśaivism differs in certain crucial respects from the other schools of Śaivism.

**Support of Scriptures**

Though Basavēśvara pronounced a new religious faith, which departed from the orthodox doctrine and practice, it was in reality not an absolute repudiation of the earlier religious traditions. It would have been difficult for him to preach his new doctrine and attract followers for it, particularly in that age and in this country, unless he could support it with the authority of the scriptures or accepted sacred texts. He courageously took the initiative to propagate the precepts of equality in religious and social order, which already existed in the Purāṇas and Āgamas of the traditional Śaiva school. The fact seems to be that he received inspiration from them and was deeply inbued with
their spirit during his stay at Sangama in the formative years of his early life. We cite a few such passages.

The *Skanda Purāṇa* contains the following assertion proclaiming that an untouchable devotee of Śiva is superior to a Brāhmaṇa and that a Brāhmaṇa without devotion is meaner than an untouchable.

Śvapachō-pi muniḥ śrēśṭhaḥ Śiva-bhaktyā Dvij-ādhikaḥ  
Śiva-bhakti-vihīnaḥ-cha Dvijō-pi śvapach-ādhamaḥ

Basavēśvara cites a similar text in one of his Vachanas (No. 606).

According to the *Vātulāgama*, a person becomes high born by virtue of God Śiva and all devotees of Śiva become his kinsmen. The original reads:

Mātā Gaurī Pitā Rudraḥ  
Īśvaraḥ kulam-ēva cha  
Bāndhavāḥ Śiva-bhaktās-cha

In another Vachana, Basavēśvara quotes an analogous text (No. 717). The *Śivarahasya* describes a dedicated devotee of Śiva as a part of the God and Śiva as a part of the devotee. Here is the extract:

Śivāṅgam Śaranāḥ sākshāt  
Śaraṇāṅgam Śivō Bhavēt

A few extracts of similar character are quoted above in Chapter XV.

The essentials of the Vīraśaiva faith are enunciated in the following excerpt from a Śaiva Āgama:  

Be they Brāhmaṇas, Kshatriyas, Vaiśyas, Śūdras or born of any other community, as soon as they fasten the Linga on their person, they become Śiva incarnate, there is no doubt about it.
He who offers devotion to Śiva as described in the Vīraśaiva doctrine—all such are purified on account of that very act of devotion. They are all entitled to equal privileges.

He who is thus consecrated by the ceremony of initiation into the Śaiva fold through the grace of the teacher, is divested of his earlier mundane associations of a particular caste or community, because he is now elevated.

In religious observances and the ritual worship like obeisance to the God, there is no distinction of young and old, or virgin and widow. All are worthy of respect.

Such doctrines and injunctions which were revolutionary and even revolting according to the orthodox Hindu religionists, existed from earlier times in the works of Śaiva schools. But few had come forward to put them into practice and preach them on a popular pedestal. Basavēśvara proceeded to enforce the revolutionary ideals into the religious and social life and the credit for this bold innovation goes to him. He may thus be described as the originator of the Vīraśaiva movement which was essentially self-initiated and self-inspired. This opinion, it may be asserted, is not at variance with our remarks regarding the influences on Vīraśaiva philosophy and metaphysics in the sequel.

Significance of Linga

A word seems necessary about the concept of Linga. Many archaeology-minded scholars have traced the phallic root in the physical form of Linga, which is considered to be a relic of primitive religion. This view has given an opportunity to some hostile
observers to indulge in gross misrepresentation of Hindu religion.\textsuperscript{5} This assumption, however, is not accepted by all.\textsuperscript{6} For instance, while discussing the interpretation of the Linga-shaped objects found in the Indus Valley excavations, Sir John Marshall warns against the mistake of seeing a phallic meaning in such sacred stones.\textsuperscript{7} A. Barth considers the Lingas as pure symbols, neither indecent nor offensive to look at.\textsuperscript{8}

Even granting for a moment its primitive concept or association, it may be noted that like the artist who creates a superb image out of uncouth stone, the Hindu devotional mind in the ancient period conceived the Linga as a sublime, spiritual emblem, a divinity par excellence, to be adored and meditated upon with pure and noble faith, divested of crude accretions. Countless devotees in India, who worship Śīvalinga in the temples and households or wear it on their person, are never for a moment perturbed by the thought that the object of their veneration is a phallic emblem. Their abiding conviction enables them to visualise that they are in the presence of the transcendant god Śiva himself in His divine splendour. Could it ever have occurred for a moment to Basavēśvara who dedicated himself, body and soul, to Sangamēśvara Linga, that it was a phallic object in origin? Never, we affirm.

\textit{Main Features of Vīraśaivism}

The main features of Vīraśaiva philosophy and religion as preached by Basavēśvara and his colleagues may briefly be summed up here.\textsuperscript{9}

According to Vīraśaivism the Supreme Soul in the form of Śiva or Linga is the only eternal and real
entity. The individual soul is Śiva coming to the worldly existence under the influence of Avidyā or illusion. Avidyā is also called Māyā and Śakti or energy, the origin of matter. The individual soul can be freed from the influence of Māyā by Jñāna, knowledge of the Supreme Soul and Kriyā, proper observance of prescribed rules. The individual soul can thus attain Mukti or liberation and be united with Śiva. This union is described as Bāyalu or Nirbāyalu, the state where existence is non-existent.

The symbolic Linga, an oval round object, duly consecrated, has assumed the highest importance in the terminology of Vīraśaiva philosophy and religion. It stands for a column of divine light, the mystic emblem of the supreme god Śiva, not his image but He himself. Śiva is to be worshipped in the form of Linga, secured only through the Guru, the spiritual preceptor and guide, at the time of Dikshā or initiation. This is called Ishṭa Linga. This is to be worn on one’s person at all times and never to be separated. On account of this symbolic emphasis which is its outstanding characteristic, the followers of this system are aptly described as Lingāyats. Worship of Linga consecrated in a temple or shrine is not favoured in Vīraśaivism. Strictly speaking, it is even prohibited. This Linga is called Sthāvara or immovable Linga.

The goal of human life is the union of the individual soul with the Supreme. This can be achieved by observing the rules of Ashṭāvaranās, the eight-fold coverings or spiritual aids,10 which are the means of developing one’s individuality; the Panchāchāras11 or the five-fold conduct which elevate the individual in his social environments and Šaṭsthālas,12 the six-fold
stages which lead him on the path of spiritual progress and perfection. Among the Ashṭāvaraṇas, the triad, Guru (the spiritual guide), Linga (the mystic emblem of the Supreme) and Jangama (itinerant minister of religion and morality), occupy a prominent place.

Un-orthodox Deviations

Vīraśaivism differs from the orthodox creed of Vedic traditions in essentials. It deviates even from the other kindred faiths of Śaivism which do not completely break off from the Vedic foundations. This is therefore disparaged as heterodox Śaivism and its founder ridiculed as Śaiva heretic (Śaiva-pāshaṇḍi)¹³ by the staunch traditionalists. In this new faith there is no place for the sacred fire and the sacrificial rituals. The social gradation or rank such as a Brāhmaṇa or a Śūdra and the fourfold scheme of life like the celibate, householder, etc., are not entertained. The sacraments and the rituals are reduced to the minimum, the most essential being only three, initiation, marriage and funeral. The soul being pure, it is free from physical pollutions or impurities which need not be observed. No privileges of birth, sex or religious order are recognised on the spiritual plane; all are treated on the footing of equality. Consequently, a woman, a low-born or a lay householder is entitled to spiritual elevation to the same extent as a man, a high-born or an ascetic monk, provided he follows the proper discipline.

Pillars of the Faith

Besides Basavēśvara, two other divines who contributed to the finished framework and pristine grandeur of Vīraśaivism, were Allama Prabhu and Chenna-
basavaṇṇa. This triad enriched the faith individually and collectively by their devotional fervour, depth of mystic knowledge and philosophical expanse. Basavaśvara, however, was its heart and soul and poured life into it. But for him, it is doubtful if the doctrine could have attained its full growth, strength and vigour. The three may thus be styled the pillars of the faith.

Rule of Kāyaka

Viraśaivism laid stress on non-violence. Killing of animals and non-vegetarian diet were tabooed. Faith, knowledge and manual work were given due importance for the attainment of salvation. Physical labour was insisted upon for earning one’s livelihood. Thus it attained dignity and was endowed with the sanctity of religious observance. This is known as the rule of Kāyaka.

Merit of Mass Appeal

The new faith thus sponsored by Basavaśvara was a departure from the labyrinth of mechanical ritualism of Vedic traditions. It was spiritual in essence and based on democratic principles which were applicable in social as well as in religious orders. Liberal in outlook and simple in practice, it afforded equal opportunities for all without distinction. It is no wonder, this new faith exercised a quick and powerful influence over the common man and the masses that were excluded from the privileged precincts of vested interests in the old social order. The humbler sections and those who were kept under barriers found in him their benefactor and saviour. Inspired by his ideals and full of hope to better their lot, they entered the fold of his followers in increasing numbers. Apart
from the ideals and principles preached, the teacher’s spiritual eminence, spotless character, sincerity and earnestness, charming personality and benevolent activities vastly contributed to the propagation of the faith (see Chapter XVIII above).

**Basavēśvara’s God**

Basavēśvara’s God was the Lord of Kūḍala Sangama, the Linga enshrined in a temple. A critic is prone to accuse him of inconsistency, because, in his teachings he discredited worship of external Linga and advocated that of personal Linga (Ishṭa Linga). But, it seems, he himself would defend his position like this. He cites in one context:

The Linga is what you conceive;  
And you attain what you contemplate.

**TEXT**

Yathā bhāvas-tathā Lingam ¹  
Yathā Bhaktis-tathā siddhiḥ ²  
(No. 268)

Basavēśvara was fully aware that his god was basically impersonal and spiritual, Absolute, Infinite and Ultimate Reality. He was Beyond, beyond all material forms and names and divinities like Rudra or Nārāyaṇa (No. 391). He was Lustre among lustres, Mighty Glorious Lustre (Nos. 944 and 956). At the same time, He was personal also and conferred the boon of eternal bliss upon his devotees. What pleased Him was sincere devotion, and not mere Vedic learning or recital (No. 181). Basavēśvara visualised his God Linga in anthropomorphic form with body, heart and soul. This God spoke to him. He smiled at him and frowned upon him, sharing his joys and sorrows.
Scholars have pointed out that in its metaphysical and philosophical concepts and terminology, Vīraśaivism is influenced to a certain extent by Buddhism, Śaivism, Śankara's Monism and Tantricism. But it has to be noted that this new faith has not only adapted itself to such impacts, but assimilated them all, presenting its own individual pattern with marked features. An outstanding instance is the state of final liberation of the soul. This is described by the Buddhists as Śūnya and Nirvāṇa. The Vīraśaivas call it Bayalu or Nirbayalu. But the two concepts are divergent and their contrast is distinct. The former is negative and the latter is positive. Śūnya in Buddhism means extinction and non-entity. Śūnya of Vīraśaivism is an entirely different, grand and sublime entity. This Śūnya is here equated with Śiva, the Infinite and Supreme Soul. It is reminiscent of the Upanishadic Brahman. There is no comparison of Vīraśaivism which is positive, zealously theistic and robustly optimistic with Buddhism which is negative, atheistic and pessimistic.

**Basavēśvara and Vīraśaivism**

From a perusal of the array of facts so far presented in the foregoing study, it becomes clear that Basavēśvara played a pre-eminent role in inaugurating the new religious faith that came to be known as Vīraśaivism and that he was entitled to be considered as its originator, founder and organizer. In this connection it has been argued and disputed that Vīraśaivism existed prior to Basavēśvara and therefore the credit of its foundation does not go to him. It is therefore necessary
to examine this issue at some length. The antiquity of Vīraśaivism in a period anterior to that of Basavēśvara is stressed on the following grounds:

1. Vīraśaivism existed in the pre-historic times and its traces are discerned in the cult objects discovered in the relics of the Indus Valley civilization.

2. Some characteristic features of Vīraśaiva religion and metaphysics find mention in the epic and Āgama literature.

3. A few Vachanakāras or writers of Vachanas pertaining to Vīraśaivism lived before Basavēśvara. Hence this teacher was not the first to preach his faith through the Vachanas.

4. The accounts narrated in the Vīraśaiva Purāṇas show that when Basavēśvara started his movement, there already existed a good number of Vīraśaiva devotees and followers who welcomed his faith and rallied around him in large numbers.

5. Five great teachers known as Panchāchāryyas of ancient times preached and propagated Vīraśaivism before Basavēśvara. Thus they are the real founders of Vīraśaivism.¹⁵

**Scrutiny of the Arguments**

Let us subject the above arguments to scrutiny and find out whether they are really justifiable.

1. Archaeologists who have examined the cult objects in the Indus Valley remains have observed in a few of them some affinity with the later traits of Śaivism. But it would be
a tall claim to propose the antiquity of Vīra-śaivism on this basis, for this faith is positively distinct from Śaivism and historically a later offshoot of the latter.

2. It is pointed out in this connection that some practices akin to those of the Vīraśaivas were being followed by some religious sects, noticed in the Mahābhārata. The Śaiva Āgamas which are earlier, contain allusions to some of the dogmas of the Vīraśaiva school. These assertions do not prove the antiquity of Vīraśaivism. This thesis can be established only by demonstrating the existence of the earlier traces of the creed as an organized sect and its subsequent historical evolution or continuous presence. The protagonists of Vīraśaivism do not deny the influence on it of earlier Śaiva doctrines. But this can not be stressed as cogent argument in favour of its antiquity. Some things are common in some form in different religious faiths and creeds. This position itself is not enough to postulate firm correlation among them. There is hardly any religion whose roots can not be traced in the past.

3. As for the pre-Basava Vachanakāras, only Jēdara Dāsimayya figures prominently. He is said to have lived about the middle of the eleventh century. But, there is difference of opinion among the scholars regarding his date. Some state that he was a contemporary of Basavēśvara. He is no doubt mentioned in the Vachanas of Basavēśvara. But this
does not prove the antiquity of Dāsimayya; for Basavēśvara speaks of his contemporaries also in his Vachanas. Granting the existence of Vīraśaiva doctrine prior to Basavēśvara, there is no evidence to show that formerly, this faith had ever been so systematically promulgated and zealously preached in its full-fledged form as was done by Basavēśvara and that it had struck root as an independent school, religion and philosophy, as it did later.

4. The religious minded persons who admired and rallied around Basavēśvara, were no doubt Śaiva devotees, but there is no positive evidence to believe that they were all Vīraśaivas. They might have included his followers who joined his new movement and were initiated into his fold. Devotion to Śiva being the criterion of a Śaiva devotee, Basavēśvara welcomed and entertained all the devotees of Śiva without distinction. As we have seen above (Chapters VI and X), Śaivism was being revived and an upsurge of Śaiva faith was taking place in the age of Basavēśvara. It is no wonder large numbers of persons thronged under the banner of this dynamic leader who was the most fervent and supreme champion of Śaiva faith. The descriptions in the Vīraśaiva purāṇas show that Basavēśvara did not discriminate among Śaiva devotees.

Even in Basavēśvara’s Vachanas, we meet with a good number of references to
devotees, many of whom belonged to the general Śaiva category; others were Vīraśaiva devotees. The terms occurring in this context are: Bhakta, Śiva-bhakta, Śaraṇa and Śiva-saraṇa. These are to be distinguished in some respects from the venerable and elderly class of devotees who probably belonged to the old school of Śaivism. The following expressions are noteworthy in this context: Pramatha (prominent devotee), Ādya (first or foremost devotee), Purātana, Purāta or Purātavaḷi (elders or seniors of the old order), Munninavaru (predecessors), Oḍeya (master). In some places there are references to both the new and the old orders of devotees (nūtana-purātana). A good number of devotees, however, are mentioned by their names and these might have belonged to his fold; for instance: Maḍivāla Māchayya, Mādāra Chennayya, Dōhara Kakkayya, Kinnara Bommayya, Chikkayya.

Five Teachers

5. According to later traditional accounts, the five teachers who founded the Vīraśaiva faith in the Kali Age, are Maruḷasiddha, Ėkōrāma, Rēvaṇasiddha, Paṇḍitārya and Viśvēśvara. These names are also given with the ending suffix ārādhya, e.g. Maruḷārādhya, Ėkōrāmārādhya, etc. They are said to have emanated from the five mouths of Śiva. They propagated the faith from the five centres, Ujjjani, Kēdāra, Bāḷēhaḷi, Śrīśaila and Kāśi. Two
of these Ujjani and Balkhali are in Karnataka and the rest outside. The successive preceptors of these establishments enjoy the title Jagadguru (World Teacher). They own pontifical status and claim a large following in many parts.

Many marvellous achievements are attributed to these teachers and legendary tales narrated about them. For instance, Rēvaṇa-siddha is said to have lived in the time of the Rāmāyāna, taught the sage Agastyā and had three crores of Lingas installed by Vibhīṣaṇa.

Brushing aside such mythological stories, modern research has revealed that these teachers were historical personages. However, they did not precede Basavēśvara from the point of time. Rēvaṇasiddha, Maruḷasiddha and Paṇḍitārya were his seniour contemporaries and the remaining two appear to be later. These teachers, it may be noted, do not find mention in the works of Basavēśvara's school like the Basavapuruṇa (1369 A.D.) and Śivatattvachintāmani (c. 1450 A.D.) The belief regarding the Five Teachers as founders of the faith, appears to have gained currency in the late Vijayanagara period, about the sixteenth century when, as it was thought necessary, the leaders of the faith were invested with classical dignity and thus the supremacy of the pontiff-preceptors was propagated.

On the other hand, more reliable traditional literary evidence of Basavēśvara's school shows that this teacher was acclaimed as the
premier preceptor (pūrva-āchārya), honoured as the first preceptor (prathama-āchārya) and credited with the foundation of the faith (dharmaṁ samsthāpayāmāsa) throughout the centuries by the faithful adherents of his order. Such compliments are paid to Basavēśvara even in his own life-time by eminent theologians like Allama Prabhu and Chennabasavaṇṇa.¹⁶

Religious Democracy

Religion is a democratic unifying process, for its aim is to educate and elevate by far the largest number of persons coming under its impact. But on account of its tendency to conserve and monopolise, it succumbs, in course of time, to the forces of stagnation, decay and fossilization.

The vital strength of religion lies in faith which develops into fervent devotion to concrete symbols and ritualism. Almost all religions in India are supported by the cardinal tenet of the existence of one eternal Being of God and this belief is enshrined in the cult of devotion or Bhakti. The Bhakti cult has enlivened the religion and contributed to its popularity, thus accelerating its pace of democratisation.

Basavēśvara ranks high among our religious teachers who propagated the cult of Bhakti by noble precept and shining example. Like his successors of a different school in the sixteenth century, viz. the Haridāsa devotees of Vishṇu, he gave a mighty impetus to the Bhakti movement which struck deep roots in the soil. His Bhakti movement was free from the fetters of orthodoxy and therefore rapidly exercised vast influence among
the masses. The institution of Anubhava Maṇṭapa originated by him, did immense service by its high idealism, literary inspiration and unrestricted social activity.

Institutions

Basavēśvara emphasized faith in one Supreme God and unswerving devotion to him. Though this God was known by many names and attributes, to him He was Śiva only. Basavēśvara insisted on the firm necessity of irreproachable conduct and moral purity in a devotee. He favoured strictly vegetarian food and condemned non-vegetarian diet which involves violence.

The Vīraśaiva religion was a well-organised movement which spread throughout the length and breadth of Karnataka and the neighbouring areas like Andhra and Maharashtra. Monastic institutions called Maṭhas were established on a large scale for the propagation and popularising of the tenets of the faith. Almost every village even in the remotest corners of the land had one such institution or Maṭha. Many of them have survived to the present day. Though religious in character, the Maṭhas largely contributed to the promotion of learning and education, secular as well as sacred. In them Sanskrit had its due share, but more emphasis was laid on studies in Kannada. Every Maṭha was presided over by a priest or teacher of the Vīraśaiva order, who was pious and well-read. The Maṭhas were also noted for their humanitarian service like giving free food and welcome shelter to the travellers and the poor and needy. These institutions played an important part till the present age in educating the masses and the promotion of Kannada language and literature.
Kannada Language and Literature

Basavēśvara was born and brought up in the agrahāra town of Bāgēvādi and spent his years of growth and adolescence in another agrahāra town of Kūḍala Sangama. Both these places were noted as centres of Sanskrit learning. Here he studied this divine language and mastered various branches of knowledge. If he had solely devoted himself to Sanskrit, he would have emerged with his great intellectual capacities as a renowned Sanskrit scholar. But it redounds to his credit that he directed his energies in favour of Kannada which was his native tongue and the language of the common man.

Basavēśvara and the generations of his followers have rendered enormous service to the Kannada language and literature. Vīraśaiva writers departed from the old traditions of expression and opened out fresh channels of free and simple literary composition. Acknowledging the due status of Sanskrit, which could never be dispensed with, Kannada language now attained for the first time its genius and displayed its innate simplicity, chastity and beauty. Vīraśaiva authors vindicated that Kannada was capable of conveying complex religious ideas, highly philosophical thoughts and subtle mystical experiences.

Among the literary contributions of Basavēśvara and his adherents, the Vachana compositions stand out foremost. Vachana is generally rendered into English as Saying or Rhapsody; but this term does not adequately reflect its full import. Though apparently prose in character, Vachanas are not mere prose. They are literary gems, simple, terse and pithy, often endowed with lyrical charm and poetic rhythm and beauty,
embodying great truths of religion, philosophy, mysticism, human conduct and social behaviour.

As an illustration we cite one Saying:17

Mighty is the elephant; but could you say
Less mighty the goad ?
Nay, not so !
Mighty is the mountain; but could you say
Less mighty the thunderbolt ?
Nay, not so !
Mighty is the darkness; but could you say
Less mighty the light ?
Nay, not so !
Mighty is oblivion; but could you say
Less mighty the mind that contemplates Thee ?
Nay, not so !
O God of Kūḍala Sangama !

(No. 6)

In Chapter XVIII and elsewhere we have quoted a good number of Sayings in translation. They will help the reader form some idea about their merit. But their excellence could well be appreciated by going to the originals themselves.

To Basavēśvara goes the credit of inspiring and initiating this literary renaissance which was the outcome of spiritual and intellectual awakening. Though a few composers of Vachanas are believed to have preceded him, the mighty impetus he gave to the Vachana composition can never be under-estimated. The Vachanas of Basavēśvara, which number over a thousand, are spontaneous, direct and emotional, with a personal touch about them. They are quintessence
of his personality, so to say. Besides the Vachanas, a few more compositions are ascribed to him.

Basavēśvara is described as the father of Kannada prose. His literary fervour and sprightly diction instantly appealed to his companions and disciples, who zealously followed in his footsteps. The Vachana tradition was earnestly nurtured by the devout Viraśaiva preachers through centuries. These anthologies secured in course of time an esteemed position, being recognized as splendid literary product of manifold merits, ethical, religious and philosophical. The authors of Vachana compositions number over two hundred.

The Viraśaiva literature developed other forms with a variety of subject matter, like Ragaḷe and Shaṭpadi. A large number of works were written on these lines, relating to the lives of great personages, religious exhortations and philosophical expositions. Most of these are Purānic in nature. All these products constitute a preponderating unit in the entire volume of Kannada literature.

Status of Women

Improvement in the status of women in the social and religious walks of life, was another notable contribution of the Viraśaiva movement. In the society of orthodox traditions women were not generally endowed with social status of rights and privileges in the modern sense. They enjoyed enough freedom in the family and were respected in the society. However, there did not exist public or private institutions to impart general education to girls. But facilities were provided to train talented and earnest girls in general knowledge, literary subjects and fine arts.
Instances are available in inscriptions and literature of a good number of accomplished ladies who were highly learned and proficient in dance, music and other lores.

Basavēśvara’s liberal outlook proved an incentive to womenfolk to push forward in the fields of knowledge, secular and religious, and spiritual attainment. They were treated on par with men and encouraged in their devotional pursuits. As a result, we find a large number of ladies among his followers, who actively participated in the movement. Some of them were well-read and distinguished themselves by their contribution to philosophical discussions and Vachana literature.

Message to Posterity

There are over five million traditional followers of Basavēśvara. Many of the teachings of Basavēśvara are of more than regional and temporary appeal. They are not confined to the narrow limits of a bygone historic age and a particular sect or set of persons. The teachings possess the merit and force to echo through long centuries, worthy of being heard and acted upon by men of the modern age, though placed in different circumstances. The conservatism, orthodoxy and vested interests, this teacher crusaded against, and the defects and ills of the society he endeavoured to eradicate still persist among the people, including his own followers. Spirituality and equality of man is yet to be achieved in this modern age of democracy and materialism. Differentiations like the castes and communities, the rich and the poor, the high-born and the low-born have not become obsolete. We are still far away from the spirit of true religion. Faith in one Supreme Being,
sincerity of heart, and real devotion need to be emphasised once again. There is vast necessity of bettering the lot of human beings at the material, moral and spiritual levels. It was not that he preached impracticable, Utopian ideals, but enjoined practical remedies for the ailments of mankind.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

3. Hardekar Manjappa (English translation), *op. cit.*, pp. 24-25. Though we are not sure in regard to the position of dates of the texts cited here, it may be assumed that broadly they reflect the teachings of Viraśaivism as preached and practised by Basavēsvara. The renderings of the passages are ours.
9. This account is mainly based on Dr. Nandimath’s above mentioned work.
11. These are *Śivāchāra, Lingāchāra, Sadāchāra, Bhṛityāchāra and Gaṇāchāra*, having technical interpretations.
12. These are *Bhakta, Māhēśvara, Prasādi, Prāṇalingi, Śaraṇa and Aikya*, having technical interpretations. This is described
as a pilgrim’s progress through six stages. Here an aspirant starts as a devotee and attains the ideal of union with Śiva, passing through different stages of spiritual elevation.

13. Śivatattvavāhini, Sandhi 33, verse 5.


15. For No. 1 see Vīraśaiva, Vol. III, No. 9, pp. 25-26. For other arguments see Dr. Nandimath’s above mentioned work, pp. 3 ff, and Basavanāṭa Sampūṭa, p. 436.


CHAPTER XXVII

WE CONCLUDE

The foregoing investigation has abundantly revealed the fact that Basavēśvara was essentially a historical personage and not a legendary deity or mythological demigod. We can obtain a better view of his image if we push aside the mask of supernatural trappings that cover him. His was a life dedicated to the realisation of the Supreme Being that pervades and guides the destiny of the Universe.

Basavēśvara accomplished his cherished goal not by engaging himself solely in religious practices like ritual worship and meditation, but by actively and vigorously applying his energies for the service of his fellowmen. He was a teacher par excellence, not simply a preacher of precepts, but a dynamic leader who preached and practised.

In the historical portrait of Basavēśvara revealed here, we obtain glimpses of a child with extraordinary perception, a boy of uncommon aptitude, an adult of revolutionary ideas and ideals, a youth of unswerving faith and action, a high dignitary of state, adept in administration, a heroic leader of a new religious movement, an unyielding advocate of social reform, a courageous fighter against orthodoxy, ignorance and vested interests, a relentless crusader against shams and superstitions, an upholder of dignity of man, a champion of equality of persons with faith and character, an establisher of a new religious and social order, a literary genius, a mystic and a saint who fulfilled his
mission and left a trail of its flame for the enlightenment of posterity.

Sangamēśvara was the guiding spirit that shaped Basavēśvara’s life and inspired his movement. His personality was moulded and framed at Kūḍala Sangama, the abode of this god whose presence he felt and experienced throughout his uneven life of storm and stress and joy and tranquility.

New light is focussed here on the parallel streams of his worldly career and spiritual pursuits, which commence at Mangalāvāḍa, a provincial seat of the feudatory ruler Bijjala. Flowing smoothly for some time in the beginning, they encounter obstruction and break through the rock of heavy odds and obstacles. The duel between Bijjala and Basavēśvara was not a conflict of heterodoxy with orthodoxy, but a war of uncompromising ideologies and actions. It was a battle between the old and the new, a conservative and a reformer, forces regressive and progressive. The latter triumphed in the end.

Mangalāvāḍa was the scene of pregnant events in the early career of Basavēśvara. It was in this town that the new movement was initiated and nourished. It struck root and grew on this soil. Subsequently, the sapling was transplanted in the majestic garden of Kalyāṇa. Basavēśvara did not remain in the employ of Bijjala in the latter part of his career when the evil machinations and reckless ambition of the Kalachuri usurper became manifest. Some time before Bijjala seized the Chālukya throne, Basavēśvara had severed all connections with him. Bijjala’s mounting animosity against Basavēśvara’s movement reached its climax with the unprovoked atrocity of condemning two
innocent followers of Basavēśvara. This was a bolt from the blue which spelt utter disaster. Violence and vengeance loomed large. The aggressor met his doom. The movement and its leader dispersed.

The institution of Anubhava Maṇṭapa was inseparably associated with the new movement of Basavēśvara. The traditions relating to this foundation and its activities are replete with historical import. Viewed from this angle, the historical interpretation offered here brings into high relief the important land-marks traversed through the leader and his movement.

Basavēśvara was fortunate in being placed among a circle of discerning companions and faithful devotees. Luckily enough, they have bequeathed their approbation of the teacher through literary passages of choicest words. A few of them reflect his image in true line and colour. Their merit is that they have come forth directly and spontaneously from persons who lived and moved with him. That the diction is not a bare metaphor, but a reality, is attested by the facts verified in the life of the teacher from other sources.

We briefly quote below a few of them. Allama Prabhu, the guiding star of the new movement, exclaims:

O Basavaṇṇa! Unsullied by the gross earth, you remained on this earth like the potter’s beetle; in and outside, and untouched by water like lotus; in the manner of the pearl, emerging from the ocean, yet undissolved in it: O Sangana Basavaṇṇa! Ordained by Guhēśvara Linga, how you pounded the creed of the insolent, blind with opulence!!
Thus warbles the soft-tongued Akka Mahādevi:

He is revealed through the Guru’s grace; a daily worshipper of Linga; a fervent devotee of the Guru; pure in body, mind and word; he never contemplates on any other god; he holds no relation with persons who are not devotees; he never covets the wealth of others; he never censures others; he never speaks untruth; he never torments others; he never ruins others; he is never swayed by passions; he never harbours the pride of high family and other vanities. Master Basavanaḍha! Knowing your path of true devotion, I grasped the truth. In the name of God Channamallikārjuna you became my Guru. Thus I mutter and incessantly repeat my prayer—“Homage to your glorious feet.”

Here applauds Siddharāma, the sage of Sonnalige:

Say, Basava is the Saviour, and you are freed from worldly bonds. O God Yōginātha!
Saluting Basavayya, seeking protection of Basavanaḍha I survive!

We now hear the thundering voice of Maḍivāla Māchidēva:

He acts under divine grace; so I never go beyond his words. What a wonder, O Basavanaḍha!
You live in space transcendent. You identify yourself with me and I identify myself with you. How to praise you? Look Sangana Basavanaḍha!
Through thee only I realised the manifestation of God Kalidēvara Dēva in physical form.

A brilliant theologian and mystic philosopher himself, Chennabasavanaḍha pays his tribute:
Linga was born in the belly of Basavaṇṇa; Jangama was born in the belly of Basavaṇṇa; Grace descended through the favour of Basavaṇṇa. All these three owe their origin to Basavaṇṇa, O Chennasangamadēvayya of Kūḍala.

None but Sangana Basavaṇṇa could efface the darkness of my eye of knowledge. None but Allama Prabhu could sterilise my emotions and grant supreme bliss. Hence I bow to the glorious feet of Basava and Prabhudēva in the presence of Chenna Sangayya of Kūḍala and therefore breathe.

Thus flows the poet Harihara’s effusion:3

The assembly of Māhēśvaras who were immensely gratified with the conduct of Basavarāja, blessed him and with their heart brimming with joy acclaimed.

"O Basava, Basavaṇṇa, Basavayya, Basavarasa, Basavarāja, Basavidēva, please listen. Who can equal you in spiritual discipline! You differentiate not between Guru and Linga; you treat the devotees as god Sanga himself; you deeply revere the devotees who have arrived and joyfully welcome those on their way; you give whatever they ask for, never refusing; you pay supreme respect to such as do not ask; you smell not, look not, talk not, touch not, hear not whatever is not offered to Śivalinga; you never stray in your conduct; you never utter untruth; you harbour no ill will in your mind; you have no crooked intellect; you are never elated; you are free from passion; you never lose your temper; you are free from greed, lust, arrogance, and jealousy. O Basavarāja! It is beyond our power to adequately describe your virtues. You are the chosen devotee of God."
Spirituality was the soul of Basavēśvara and God-realisation his life's mission. He gathered around him a galaxy of persons with the same idealism, who were as much interested in ameliorating the lot of common man as in accomplishing their spiritual goal; for like all other sages they believed in the unity of humanity through divinity. A modern philosopher of our land aptly observes.\footnote{4}

These God-realisers constitute a blessed community, and on account of their intense love for afflicted mankind, they live only for its benefaction and betterment, proclaiming from pole to pole, like a rumbling cloud, the eternal Gospel of God from everlasting to everlasting.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The following four extracts are adapted from Bhaktibhāṇḍāri, pp. 75 - 77.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX I

ANTIQUITIES OF MANGAĻAVĒḌHE AND KALYĀṆA

1. MANGAĻAVĒḌHE

The ancient name of this town was Mangaḷavāḍa, meaning abode of good. Its variant Mangaḷivēḍa is more commonly met with in inscriptions.

Mangaḷavēḍhe is at present situated in the Pandharpur Taluka of Sholapur District in Maharashtra. It is about twelve miles from Pandharpur. Although predominantly a Māraṭhī area now, there is incontrovertible evidence to show that like Lātur, the home of the Rāshṭrakūṭas in Osmanabad District and a good many other outlying tracts, Mangaḷavēḍhe formed an integral part of Karnataka until the fifteenth century. A few instances may be cited in support of this.

Frontier of Karnataka

The earlier name of Pandharpur was Paṇḍarange, a Kannada form which is mentioned in a Sanskrit-cum-Kannada inscription of Hoysaḷa Sōmēśvara, dated 1236 A.D., found in the Viṭṭhala temple here. The poet Chauṇḍarasa (c. 1300 A.D.), author of the Kannada Abhinava-daśakumāraracharita, was associated with Pandharpur. The Maharashtrian saints like Tukārām have explicitly stated that the god Viṭṭhala of Pandharpur belonged to the Kannada region, nurtured in Kannada environment. Māchanur or Māsanur on the river Bhīmā, which was the capital of Bijjala’s son Mallikārjunā and figures in Kannada literature and inscriptions, is about nine miles from Mangaḷavēḍhe.
An investigation into the geographical periphery and cultural range of Kanataka in the historic past has revealed the fact that its boundaries stretched far beyond their present positions, and that they have considerably shrunk in dimensions on account of political vicissitudes, migrations of population due to famines and other calamities, settlement of new immigrants from outside, etc. One such affected region of former Karnataka is Mangalavēḍhe.

_A Historical Study_

We present here the following information, which is the outcome of the author’s visit to Mangalavēḍhe, archaeological explorations and historical study of the materials relating to the subject.

The tract is favoured by Nature; the soil is rich and fertile; it is a vast even plain stretching miles around. This feature, according to a local imaginative legend, is the effect of the massive mace of the epic warrior Bhīma, which is said to have moved here rolling about. A small river called Māṇa flows near the town. It is pointed out that there existed a shrine dedicated to the goddess Mangalādēvi, after whom the place might have been originally named. Conversely, the shrine might have been erected in honour of the presiding deity of the place bearing the name. The original temple of the deity is said to have been completely destroyed and a dargah built in its place in the Muslim rule. The remnants of forifications of the town are not ancient.

_The Ruins_

Going back to the olden times, large quantities of ruins are scattered in different places. These comprise
remains of temples of artistic construction, constituent pillars, door jambs, lintels and other parts, pedestals of images and sculptures of deities, some in a preserved state, some partly preserved and some fragmentary and mutilated, and in addition, a few inscriptions. They show that a good number of temples constructed in the ornate Chālukyan style of architecture, tastefully decorated and gracefully adorned with beautiful sculptures, had come into existence and flourished in this town during the period from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries. These temples belonged to various faiths, Jaina, Śaiva, Vaishnava and Śākta. Noteworthy among the images and sculptures of different creeds are the following few: Pārśvanātha and other Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras in standing and sitting postures, Naṭarāja, Bhairava, Durgā, Mahishāsuramardani and Vishnū. Of particular interest are the sculptures of Brahmā with four hands and Śiva-Pārvati, Śiva bearing five faces and ten hands. Another interesting sculpture is that of a devotee worshipping a fiery object in the palm of the right hand, seated in padmāsana posture. Memorial stones set up in honour of heroes and Satis (devout wives), which are commonly found in many parts of Karnataka, were also noticed here.

The Inscriptions

As for the epigraphs, it is a deplorable story. The reports show that, till recently, a good number of inscriptions existed here. But most of them have disappeared on account of wanton destruction carried on by the hostile elements and the ignorant folk. According to one typical report, large slabs of inscribed stone were used for the foundations of a hall in a dargah. Two of the inscriptions belonging to this place, were
lying in fields far away from the town. The existence of inscriptions in the roundabout villages also was reported.

Eight Kannada inscriptions were discovered at Mangalavēḍhe. Two are of the times of Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara Jōgamarasa and Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara Kannapayya, who were grand-father and great-grand-father respectively of the Kalachuri usurper Bījjala. Pergade Dēvarasa, a subordinate of Jōgamarasa figures as a donor in the first of them. An epigraph of 1113 A.D., of the reign of Chālukya Vikramāditya VI, registers a grant for performing some religious ceremony. Another is of the time (c. 1241 A.D.,) of the Sēuṇa king Singhaṇa II, which registers a gift to the god Tripurāntaka of Bōrivāḷa by Parasurāma Daṇḍanāyaka and others. One more in Nāgari characters and Kannada language, of about the 12th century, mentions a donation by an officer named Rēvanādēva, worshipper of the god Mallikārjuna. The interesting Kannada phrase, Kanvāleya Temkaṇēri is met with in another record. Two inscriptions in Nāgari script, which are much worn out, were also noticed.

The Temples

The epigraphs collectively reveal the existence of the temples dedicated to the gods, Tripurāntaka, Bhōgēśvara, Sāmantakēśvara, Nārāyaṇa and Gōpatīśvara in the eleventh century. No trace of them is left at present. The temple of Rēvanāsiddha may perhaps be included in the category of old temples. The Chālukyan temple of Siddhēśvara at Māchanur is also noteworthy.

The extant temples at Mangalavēḍhe belong to the late and modern period, indicating the impact of
Marāṭhā and Muslim cultures. Among such, mention may be made of the shrines of Dāmāji, Tukāyi, Gaṅēsa, Khāṇḍōbā etc., besides mosques and dargahs. The temple of Kāśi Viśvēśvara, however, is originally a Chālukyan monument of architectural merit. It has been renovated later in the sixteenth century with a Marāṭhi inscription engraved in it. The monastery called Kēdāra Maṭha is a modern construction.

This town is hallowed by its association with many a scholar and saint of Karnataka and Maharashtra. Jayatīrtha, a great scholar and exponent of Madhvāchārya’s philosophy (14th century), hailed from this place. A temple erected in honour of Gahinīnātha, a famous teacher of the Nātha school, existed here. Dāmāji, Kānhō Pāṭrā, Chokhā Mēḷā and Akkalakot Mahārāj had their contacts with this place.

In his Rēvaṇasiddhēśvara Ragaḷe, Harihara speaks of Rēvaṇasiddha, the renowned Śaivā teacher, as having spent many years at Mangālavāḍa and Māsanur (Māchanur). Rēvaṇasiddha’s son Rudramuni, a famous Vīraśaiva saint, is said to have been born at Siddhanakere about eight miles from Mangālavēḍhe. It appears that a temple in honour of Rēvaṇasiddha was later constructed at Mangālavēḍhe. The temple is under the management of Lingāyat priests. Some vague traditions seem to preserve the memory of Bijjala’s rule from this capital town.

Later Vicissitudes

As for the later vicissitudes, the region was ruled by the Mughals and then by the Marāṭhās. Subsequently, it was included in the Marāṭhā State of Sangli. In the fifteenth century Mangālavēḍhe was frequently
visited by a series of famines. In consequence, the place was deserted for twenty years. The only family that braved the distress was that of Chaṇḍarasā (a Kannada name) Kuḷakarāṇī. Later, many new families from the Marāṭhi areas came and settled here. A few among them were Kannada; e.g. Mudgal, Nāḍagaṇḍa, Tippa Nāyaka and Bommaṇṇa. Among the present population we can detect the following as Kannada: Lingāyat 500, Vhalar (Holeyaru) 100, Jaina 50.

This note serves as a supplement to all that we have said at various places in the foregoing chapters of this book.

**Basavēśvara at Mangalavēdhē**

Basavēśvara lived at Mangalavēdhē for over two decades roughly from 1132 to 1153 A.D. These were the most propitious years of his life, when he rose to a supreme position in the court of Bijjala and made preparations for his social and religious movement, which matured and bore fruit at Kalyāṇa. Though Bijjala’s records mentioning Mangalavāḍa as his capital have been found elsewhere, it is unfortunate that no inscription of Bijjala could be traced at Mangalavēdhē itself. This can be explained, as shown above, by the fact of large scale destruction of the antiquities. It is glaring in this context to note that, except for some surviving relics of Kannada culture, no memory of Basavēśvara has lingered on here. This may be due, in the first instance, to the radical transformation in the political and cultural set up of this area from the 14th century onward, when the old traditions were completely effaced. Secondly, since Basavēśvara’s movement took its proper form and developed vast
proportions, creating great commotion soon after at Kalyāṇa, the later event overshadowed and obliterated its earlier track. Further, the movement eventually suffered temporary set back and disruption. All these factors pushed this place into the limbo of oblivion.

In one place (Sandhi VII, verse 46), Singirājapurāṇa seems to refer to Basava’s early stay at Mangalavāḍa. Some modern writers haveerroneously identified Mangalavāḍa with Kalyāṇa.

Still, there is much scope for an archaeologist to explore and probe into. Here exist ancient sites which, if excavated, are likely to yield historical treasures. Who knows, his spade may turn up new inscriptions and old structures that would throw new light on the Kalachuri regime that extended here for more than two centuries. It is not unlikely that these discoveries might also throw new light on Basavēśvara’s early life and activities.

2. KALYĀṇA

This town stands out as a great centre of historical importance on account of the fact that it had the privilege of becoming the capital city of the extensive empire of the Chālukya monarchs who are known in history as the Later Chālukyas or the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa. It enjoyed this position during the eleventh and the twelfth centuries. Bijjala of the Kalachuri dynasty, who usurped the Chālukya kingdom in 1162 A.D., also made this city his capital. Bijjala’s successors too ruled here for a few years.

Basavēśvara’s Vīraśaiva movement received firm support at Kalyāṇa where it grew from strength to
strength. On account of this event it has attained sanctity as a pilgrimage centre for the followers of this faith.

_Early History_

This town must have been a place of some importance even before it was selected as their capital by the Chālukyas. This is supported by an inscription at Kālīṇa itself. It is interesting to note that this epigraph speaks of a Jain temple constructed at Kālīṇa by Attimabbe, the reputed Jain philanthropist and patron of the famed Kannada poet Ranna. An inscription at Lakkuṇḍi near Gadag in Dharwar District, dated 1007 A.D., informs that this lady built 1500 Jain temples in various places. One of them must be at Kālīṇa as mentioned above.

_Historical Sites_

The historical sites at Kālīṇa are not in a preserved state. They are in ruins, spread over an extensive area including the adjoining villages of Śivapur, Nārāyaṇapura and Pratāpapur. Few secular antiquities have survived. No structural remains of the Chālukyan times, like the palace, administrative buildings and fortifications are extant. An open, slightly elevated spot is pointed out as the site of Bijjala’s palace. The three villages named above must have been formerly included in the capital city. Their names bear historical significance. Pratāpapur is reminiscent of the Chālukya title _Pratāpachakravarti_. Nārāyaṇapura, as revealed by an epigraph, is a short-form of Rāyanārāyaṇapura, named after another Chālukya title _Rāyanārāyaṇa_. We shall refer to Śivapur later.
**Temples and Images**

Inscriptions occupy an important place among the antiquities. Twenty-two of them, some in good condition and some damaged, have been discovered in all. Majority of them are of the Chālukya rulers. One can be connected with Basavēśvara’s circle of followers. No inscription of Bijjala or rulers of the Kalachuri family has been found. This is rather strange. Could they have been all destroyed?

Glimpses of the political, religious and economic life of the time are available from these inscriptions. A large number of temples of various persuasions and denominations must have adorned this capital city. However, names of only a few temples could be collected from the epigraphs. These belong to Jaina, Vaishṇava and Śaiva deities, the last named predominating. It would be interesting to mention the following: Bhīmēśvara, Chandraprabha, Hāṭakēśvara, Madhukēśvara, Mahākālēśvara, Pampēśvara and Rāvaṇa Siddhālaya. The last one was apparently erected in honour of the epic hero Rāma’s adversary Rāvaṇa who was a great Śaiva devotee. Generally speaking, temples dedicated to Rāvaṇa are very rare. The Rāvaṇa temple must have existed here in about the eleventh century.

Relics of structures of none of the temples alluded to above, or for the matter, of any temples of the Chālukyan age could be traced. However, a large number of sculptures of the period, which must have originally belonged to them, have been discovered in several places. Though many of them have been picked up and deposited in the enclosure of the modern fort, they are in an indifferent state of preservation. Notable among the surviving sculptures are Varāha, who was
the tutelary deity of the Chālukyas, Naṭarāja, Bhairava, Sūrya, Mahishāsuramardani, Chauvīsa Tīrthānkarā, Anantaśayana, Kēśava with ten Avatāras of Vishṇu in the halo, Śiva-Pārvati and Rāvana. It is of interest to note that two sculptures of Rāvana have been found.

Relics Relating to Basavēśvara

Antiquities relating to Basavēśvara and associated with his movement are found in a large number. An open site is pointed out as the mansion or residence of Basavēśvara. No structural remains have survived. In this site are seen two laterite caves, said to have been used by Basavēśvara for his religious worship and meditation. At some distance is another site said to have been the dwelling of Akkanāgama, mother of Chennabasavaṇṇa and elder sister of Basavēśvara. Here, if the visitor gets down through the opening, he enters into a spacious underground temple excavated out of laterite rock. The front portion of the cave presents a decorative specimen of Chālukyan architecture. There stands a female image holding a fly-whisk in her hand inside the temple. This figure is inaptly identified with Akkanāgama.

Prabhudēvara Gaddige or the seat of Allama Prabhu is a late memorial structure erected in honour of Allama Prabhu, mystic saint and senior contemporary of Basavēśvara. It is both a shrine and a monastery, the main attraction of the pilgrims being a raised platform associated with this teacher. The establishment belongs to the monastic order of Viraktas or recluses.

Maḍivāla Māchayya of the washerman community was a staunch adherent of Basavēśvara. On the site relating to this devotee stands an old shrine of Śiva and
a modern memorial structure comprising an arched Nandimanaṭapa. Māchayya is said to have washed the clothes of Śaiva devotees in a tank nearabout.

The temple of Tripurāntaka Śiva was farfamed among the temples of Kalyāṇa. This is often mentioned in the Vīraśaiva literary works including the Sayings of Chennabasavaṇṇa. On the site of this establishment now stands a small shrine of this deity. Nearby are a few dwellings and a big tank both named after the god.

It is of interest to note here the discovery of an inscription recently found near the Tripurāntaka tank. The epigraph speaks of a gift made by Basava, the royal washerman of king Taila III, to Maḍīvaḷa Mākeya who, in all probability is Maḍīvaḷa Māchayya mentioned above. Though the record is not explicitly dated, it can approximately be assigned to 1160 A.D. The epigraph is edited in Appendix II.

A number of well dressed stone pillars of a Hindu religious establishment are set up on a large platform in the precincts of Pir’s Dargah containing funeral tombs of the Nawabs or Muslim chiefs of Kalyāṇa. A few early inscriptions also were noticed here. The pillars are said to have originally belonged to Anubhava Maṇṭapa. But this can not be verified.

A raised platform called Parusha Gaṭṭi (Mystic Seat) is associated with Basavēśvara who, according to tradition, distributed money to the devotees from this spot. According to another version he initiated his disciples from this pulpit. Parusha means the miraculous touch-stone which turned iron into gold. It is interesting to note that six-fold unique powers (parusha) associated with the person, mind, sense, move-
ment, sight and speech of Basavēśvara are mentioned in the Singirājapurāṇa (Sandhi VII, verse 45).

At Śivapur stands a temple of Śiva, said to have been erected to perpetuate the memory of the great saint Siddharāma who visited Kalyāṇa from Sonnalige (modern Sholapur).

A number of spots including underground caves hallowed by the memories of Basavēśvara’s companions and followers are scattered roundabout Kalyāṇa, some of them being even miles away. To mention a few: Bilva grove of devotees; Cave of Ghanalinga Rudramuni, son of Rēvanaśiddha; cave of Nūli Chandayya; cave of Mugdha Sangayya; cave of Ambigara Chauḍayya; cave of Haralayya; cave of Mōligeya Mārayya. It is not unlikely that, if not contemporary, many of these were excavated or erected at a later period to preserve the memories of the illustrious Vīraśaiva devotees who participated in and contributed to Basavēśvara’s movement. It is rather amusing that the visitor to Kalyāṇa is shown a group of dilapidated tenaments, carved out in laterite rock in the outskirts of the town. They are said to have been the dwellings of free women, visited by the merrygo Jangamas. This information, if not a later invention, fits in with the recurring descriptions of sensual devotees in the literary works like the Basavarājadēvara Ragaśe, Basavapurāṇa, Prabhulingalile and Singirājapurāṇa.

The above brief sketch of the antiquities is based on the author’s investigations and study made in the course of his visits to Kalyāṇa in 1956 and 1960.
APPENDIX II

INSCRIPTIONS

No. 1

INSCRIPTION AT KALYĀNA, DATED 1100 A.D.,
MENTIONING THE CONSTRUCTION OF A
JAINA TEMPLE BY ATTIMABBE

This inscription was found engraved on two fragments of a stone slab, built into the top portion of a well in the ditch of the fort at Kalyāna. This was discovered and copied by us in 1960. The record is slightly damaged and a few letters are lost in a good number of lines. Otherwise, the epigraph is well preserved. The script and the language are Kannada. Excepting the first sentence in prose, the entire record is composed in verse of different metres. From the point of poetic style and expression, the composition on the whole is good.

Commencing with homage to Vītarāga or Jina, the composer expresses his felicitations to the Jaina community of Kalyāna, who accomplished the meritorious work of erecting a Jaina temple, in honour of Chandraprabha Jina. Reviewing the past events, it is stated that many persons had created Jaina shrines in this place. Among them was the illustrious Dānachintāmaṇi (Attimabbe). We are then told that the credit of having the temple of Chandraprabha reconstructed in the present time went to Rachchhamalla, Permādi, Īsvara Seṭṭi and Raviyaṇa. Among the other members of the Jaina community who contributed their mite to the sacred cause were Abhimanyu, Dēva-
pārya, Chaṭṭapa, Bharata and Śrīpati. Jakkanabbe made due provision for feeding the ascetics attached to the establishment. Hirapa executed the erection of the Sahasrakūta column (studded with one thousand minature carved images of the Jina). Highly creditable on this occasion were the services of the philanthropist Īśvara Sēṭṭi who came forward to set up the Mānasambha pillar in the Jaina temple and rendered valuable help in other ways. The text of the record was composed by Mūkarāja.

The epigraph is dated the Chālukya Vikrama year and the cyclic year Vikrama. The Chālukya Vikrama year, however, is lost; but it appears to have been 25. This corresponds to 1100 A.D.

**TEXT**

1. [Translation:] I... II... [1*]... [transliteration...]
2. [Translation:] II...
3. [Translation:] II...
4. [Translation:] II...
5. [Translation:] II...
6. ಕೆಲವು ವರ್ಷಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಅಮಕಿಗೆ ವರ್ಷಾಸ್ವಂಧ್ಯ  ನೀರಿನ ಆರೋಗ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ
ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದವರು, ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ [ಸಾಂಧ್ಯ]ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದವರು[೨]ಂದಾಗಿ ಬೇಡಬೇಡಿಸಿದವರು
ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕ್ಕಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಇವು ಕೊನೆಗೊಂಡಿದ್ದು ಇನ್ನೂ ಇತರೆಗಳು ಸಹಜಾತವಾಗಿ
7. ಒಂದು ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದವರು, ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ [ಸಾಂಧ್ಯ]ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದವರು[೨]
ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದವರು ಮತ್ತು ಕೆಲವು ವರ್ಷಗಳಿಗೆ ವರ್ಷಾಸ್ವಂಧ್ಯ  ನೀರಿನ
ಸಂಯೋಜನಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದವರು. ಸರ್ವಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು[೨]ಂದಾಗಿ ಬೇಡಬೇಡಿಸಿದವರು,
ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ.
8. ಇದು ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕ್ಕಿರುತ್ತಾರಿದ್ದು ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವರ್ಷಾಸ್ವಂಧ್ಯ  ನೀರಿನ
ಸಂಯೋಜನಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದವರು. ಸರ್ವಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು[೨]ಂದಾಗಿ ಬೇಡಬೇಡಿಸಿದವರು,
ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ.
9. ಇದು ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕ್ಕಿರುತ್ತಾರಿದ್ದು ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವರ್ಷಾಸ್ವಂಧ್ಯ  ನೀರಿನ
ಸಂಯೋಜನಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದವರು. ಸರ್ವಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು[೨]ಂದಾಗಿ ಬೇಡಬೇಡಿಸಿದವರು,
ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ.
10. ಇದು ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕ್ಕಿರುತ್ತಾರಿದ್ದು ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವರ್ಷಾಸ್ವಂಧ್ಯ  ನೀರಿನ
ಸಂಯೋಜನಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದವರು. ಸರ್ವಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು[೨]ಂದಾಗಿ ಬೇಡಬೇಡಿಸಿದವರು,
ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ.
11. ಇದು ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕ್ಕಿರುತ್ತಾರಿದ್ದು ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವರ್ಷಾಸ್ವಂಧ್ಯ  ನೀರಿನ
ಸಂಯೋಜನಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದವರು. ಸರ್ವಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು[೨]ಂದಾಗಿ ಬೇಡಬೇಡಿಸಿದವರು,
ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ.
12. ಇದು ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕ್ಕಿರುತ್ತಾರಿದ್ದು ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವರ್ಷಾಸ್ವಂಧ್ಯ  ನೀರಿನ
ಸಂಯೋಜನಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದವರು. ಸರ್ವಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು[೨]ಂದಾಗಿ ಬೇಡಬೇಡಿಸಿದವರು,
ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ.
13. ಇದು ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕ್ಕಿರುತ್ತಾರಿದ್ದು ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವರ್ಷಾಸ್ವಂಧ್ಯ  ನೀರಿನ
ಸಂಯೋಜನಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದವರು. ಸರ್ವಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು[೨]ಂದಾಗಿ ಬೇಡಬೇಡಿಸಿದವರು,
ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ.
14. ಇದು ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕ್ಕಿರುತ್ತಾರಿದ್ದು ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವರ್ಷಾಸ್ವಂಧ್ಯ  ನೀರಿನ
ಸಂಯೋಜನಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದವರು. ಸರ್ವಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು[೨]ಂದಾಗಿ ಬೇಡಬೇಡಿಸಿದವರು,
ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ.
15. [ಸಾಂಧ್ಯ]  ಇದು ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕ್ಕಿರುತ್ತಾರಿದ್ದು ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ವರ್ಷಾಸ್ವಂಧ್ಯ  ನೀರಿನ
ಸಂಯೋಜನಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಿದವರು. ಸರ್ವಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು[೨]ಂದಾಗಿ ಬೇಡಬೇಡಿಸಿದವರು,
ವರ್ಷಾನಾಯಾಂತರವೊಂದುಕಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ.
No. 2

INSCRIPTION OF MAḌĪVALA MĀKEYA

Near the Tripurāntaka tank at Kalyāṇa a small inscribed stone was found in 1962. The stone has subsequently been removed and kept in the Fort. The stone measures 30 cms by 25 cms. At the top are carved the figures of a Śivalinga and a cow with a calf standing in front of it. Such figures are generally associated with a religious gift.

The inscription below the above figures consists of five lines. It is engraved in Kannada characters of the twelfth century. The engraving is done neatly and carefully. The language is Kannada.

The epigraph begins with the auspicious word svasti. It then states that a grant was made by Maḍīvala (washerman) Basava of the illustrious king Trailōkyamalla to Maḍīvala (washerman) Mākeya of the glorious God Tripurāntaka.

The record is interesting in many respects. The donor was Basava, a washerman of king Trailōkyamalla. Trailōkyamalla is a title and the king bearing this has to be identified with the Chālukya monarch Taila III who ruled from 1151 to 1162 A.D. It was this Trailōkyamalla or Taila III whose kingdom was usurped by Kalachuri Bijjala as shown in Part I of this book. This identification is supported by the fact that the record might be assigned to the twelfth century on palaeographic grounds and that no other king bearing the title Trailōkyamalla ruled at Kalyāṇa during this period. The epigraph is not dated. However, we may place it approximately round about 1160 A.D.
Basava, the donor, was the king’s washerman and must evidently have been a man of means and piety. The donee Mākeya was a washerman who was attached to the religious establishment of the God Tripurāntaka. This was a deity of great renown at Kalyāṇa.

The subject of the gift is not specified in the record. But it may be inferred from circumstantial details that it comprised a plot of land. It, therefore, appears that this inscribed stone was originally set up in the gift land to indicate its ownership. We may also surmise that the gift land was situated nearabout the Tripurāntaka tank and that the stone was removed from its original place and brought to the tank, on account of its suitability for washing the clothes. Incidentally, the epigraph corroborates the evidence that Basava was rather a common name at that time.

The donee Maḍīvala Mākeya may be identified with Maḍīvala Mācheya or Māchayya, also called Māchidēva. The phonetic change of the gutteral k to palatal ch and vice versa appears to be according to the linguistic adjustments. Maḍīvala Machayya was a great Śaiva devotee, a devout follower and colleague of Basavēśvara. He figures prominently in the Vīra-śaiva literature. He used to render service to the Śaiva devotees by washing their clothes. He held an exalted position in the circle of Basavēśvara. In one of his Sayings (No. 192), Chennabasavanṇa pays high compliments to him along with Allama Prabhu and Basavēśvara. Maḍīvala Māchayya is also author of several Vachanas.

The epigraph thus substantiates the information furnished by Vīra-śaiva writers. Maḍīvala Māchayya is mentioned in a few Sayings of Basavēśvara, e.g.
No. 889. He also figures in a number of Sayings of Chennabasavaṇṭa, e.g. Nos. 194, 246, 249 etc. (Karn. Uni. Pub.)

Our thanks are due to Dr. M. Chidananda Murthy of the Kannada Department of Mysore University, who drew our attention to this epigraph and to Shri M. Hanumantarao, M.A., Assistant Director, Department of Archaeology, Mysore, who sent the impression of the epigraph and accorded permission for its publication.

TEXT

1. ವತೆ [1*] ಜ್ಞದವಂತೆ ಜ್ಞಾನೋಜ್ಞದವಂತೆ-
2. ಒ(ಯ)ನ್ನರ ರಜಯಾತ್ಮಕ ನಮಸ್ತೇ ಇ-
3. ಕುಂದಾಲನಾರಿಯ ನೈದ್ರರ-
4. ಇದೇತಂತು ಇದೇ(ನಂತು)ಎರುವರ-
5. ನಿತ್ಯ ದೇವ, ದೇವಿ [1*]

No. 3

INSCRIPTION OF 1113 A.D., AT MANGALAVEDHE

This epigraph is kept in the premises of Mamalatdar's office at Mangalavēdhe. It was copied by Dr. Ritti of our Department in June 1967. It is engraved in neat Kannada characters of the twelfth century and consists of nine lines. The language of the record is Kannada. The writing is faulty.

Commencing with the auspicious expression svasti, it registers a gift of land for the observance of some religious ceremony by Pandarasa and Pergaḍe Śivarimayya. The ceremony is referred to as utsrāvana, the exact significance of which can not be determined. It
may have been some ritual associated with the lunar month of Śrāvaṇa.

The epigraph bears the date, Vīra-Vikrama year 39, Vijaya, Jyēṣṭha ba. 5, Sunday. Vīra-Vikrama year appears to be the same as Chālukya Vikrama year. The date corresponds to 1113 A.D., June 6, the weekday being Friday.

The inscription stands testimony to the fact that in the twelfth century, Mangalāvēḍhe was predominaatly a Kannada tract.

TEXT

1. बृही [1*] से से केंद्रिता संस्कर । राजा वंश बलाकृष्ण[2*]से लग्ने ।
2. [४] से से केंद्रिता संस्कर । राजा वंश बलाकृष्ण[४]से लग्ने ।
3. बृही बलाकृष्ण संस्कर । राजा वंश बलाकृष्ण संस्कर ।
4. आदि(बृही)कंटक(वाच)संस्कर । राजा वंश बलाकृष्ण संस्कर ।
5. काम(वाच)कंटक(वाच)संस्कर । राजा वंश बलाकृष्ण संस्कर ।
6. आदि(बृही)कंटक(वाच)संस्कर । राजा वंश बलाकृष्ण संस्कर ।
7. आदि(बृही)कंटक(वाच)संस्कर । राजा वंश बलाकृष्ण संस्कर ।
8. आदि(बृही)कंटक(वाच)संस्कर । राजा वंश बलाकृष्ण संस्कर ।
9. बृही संस्कर । राजा बलाकृष्ण संस्कर [ || ]

No. 4

INSCRIPTION AT MANGALAVĒḌHE PERTAINING TO RĒVĀṆADĒVA; CIRCA 12TH CENTURY

This inscription was found in the premises of Mamalatdar’s office at Mangalāvēḍhe. It was copied by Dr. Ritti of our Department in June 1967. The inscribed portion of the stone is partly broken at the extremeties, causing damage to the writing. A few
letters in the first four lines and elsewhere also are lost. The epigraph consists of ten lines, the last one being an extremity of the previous line.

In the top portion of the slab containing the epi-
graph, is engraved the figure of a male deity seated on
a pedestal. It is adorned with a decorated head-dress
and wreaths hanging around the neck, the lowermost
with a pendant. Seated in the padmāsana posture, it
has four hands, of which the two lower ones are joined
together below the navel with open palms, the right
one above.

The record is engraved in Nāgarī characters of
about the twelfth century. The language, however,
is Kannada only. The writing is faulty on account
of wrong spelling. The entire composition is in prose.

The charter commences with the auspicious word
svasti. It registers a gift of land together with the
customary gift of one thousand cows to Gōvindu Svāmi
who was a devotee of the god Gaṇēśa and a pious person.
The donor was Rēvaṇadēva, a worshipper of the feet
of the god Mallikārjuna. The donated land was
procured from the concerned authorities and the chari-
table function was performed in the presence of the
local officials and the inhabitants of the town. Though
not precisely stated, Rēvaṇadēva himself appears to
have been a dignitary of some status. Permission for
making the grant was obtained from the regional officer
Kēśavadēva Nāyaka, who was a subordinate of another
higher officer of the area. The name of the latter,
however, is lost.

TEXT
1. सुपु( haciendo) यु(होई) [1*] महाक (प)व(ह्र)व(ह)...
2. ...काह(होई) व(प)व(ह्र)व(ह).....
No. 5

ARJUNAVÄḌ INSCRIPTION PERTAINING TO BASAVEŚVARA; 1260 A.D.

The massive stone pillar bearing this inscription was noticed about four decades ago in the site of Arjunaväḍ, a village about three miles from Hukkeri, headquarters of Hukkeri Taluka, Belgaum District. The credit of this epigraphical discovery goes to the late Shri. N. S. Rajapurohit and Shri. Chennamallappa of Halasangi and to Dr. S. C. Nandimath. The late Rao Sahib P. G. Halakatti also soon took note of it. The inscription was subsequently removed for safe custody to the Taluka Office at Hukkeri. Recently, it has been brought and installed in the gallery of the museum of the Kannada Research Institute of Karnataka University.

The epigraph is engraved on a thick, roughly dressed rectangular column of stone in the area measuring 69.5 inches in length and 14 inches in breadth. At the top are carved the figures of the Sun and the Moon to right and left and below them in a row a cow, Śiva-linga and a dagger in erect position. These indicate that the charter comprises a religious grant to a Śaiva
establishment, issued under the authority of the state or ruling king.

The epigraph consists of eighty lines of writing. It is engraved in old Kannada characters of the thirteenth century. On account of roughness of the stone and the limitations of space, the engraving lacks in uniformity and elegance. The lettering also has not attained good form. A few letters in lines 35 - 36 are damaged. In other respects the record is fairly preserved. Cursive forms are used for the letters v, m, etc.

The language is old Kannada of the mediaeval period. The composition is both prose and verse. For versification different metres are used. There are some clerical errors.

The inscription commences with the familiar invocation to the god Śambhu, the origin pillar supporting the three worlds. This is followed by a verse in praise of the god Śankara named Kallinātha, in close association with his consort Gaurī.

Next is introduced Basavarāja, son of Mādirāja, lord of the foremost town of Bāgēvādi, situated in the district of Tardavādi. Also called SanganaBasava, he was supreme in eminence, auspicious in renown, and absorbed in intense devotion to the Purātanas, Jangamas and Linga.

Then comes a brief description of the kings of the Yādava dynasty and the reigning king. These kings held sway over a vast territory. Illustrious among them was Singhaṇa, whose grandson Kannara was now reigning. He chastised his adversaries and supported the Brāhmaṇas with munificent gifts. Endowed with great prowess, the emperor Kannaradēva was ruling the kingdom with peace and happiness from the capital city of Dēvagiri.
This king had in Nāgarasa, son of Divākara, a trusted regional officer, who belonged to the Vāṇasa family. His virtues of loyalty, generosity and devotion to God Janārdana are extolled and he is described as Mahāpradhāna (great minister) and establisher of the Raṭṭa kingdom.

Reverting to Sangana Basava, his descendants are recounted. At this point the record is damaged. Dēvarāja appears to be the elder brother of Basavarāja. The former’s son seems to be Kāvarasa or Sōvarasa, whose son was Kalidēva. The latter’s son was the sage Hāla Basavidēva, a god among men, widely reputed for his devotion and piety. He is eulogised as an asylum of the universe, a great devotee of Mahēśvara (the supreme Lord Śiva), overlord of the foremost town Kavilāsapura, endowed with the insignia of Golden Bull, worshipper of the feet of Sixty-three Purātanas, unceasing partaker of the consecrated offering of Mahālinga and Jangamas, enriched by unswerving faith of the creed, a scion of Basavarāja’s lineage, emperor among the performers of penance and valiant observer of vows.

The above Nāgarasa contacted the provincial authority, Chauḍiseṭṭi in the presence of the god Sōmanātha at Puligere (modern Lakshmēśvar in Dharwar District) and explained to him the importance of the holy place Kavilāsapura, situated in Nūle Nāḍu. Its antiquity was traced back in the Purānic literature, when it was known by different names in the past ages. It was originally endowed by the emperor Māndhāta of epic fame. Many sages and Gaṇēśvaras had attained beatitude by propitiating the Lord in this sacred place.
Impressed by this report Chaudīseṭṭi approved Nāgarasa's proposal of making a benefaction. Accordingly, the entire estate of Kavilāsapura was conferred and confirmed as a rent-free endowment to the great sage Hāla Basavidēva. Provision was made for the daily worship and offerings to the gods, Svayambhu Mallikārjuna, Sangamēśvara and Nāgēśvara at Kavilāsapura, for repairs to the temples, for feeding the Jangamas after fasts, and other items. After recounting some details regarding the boundaries, privileges and preservation of the endowment estate, belief is expressed that the meritorious Basavarāja was its arbiter and dispenser.

The epigraph cites the following date, Śaka one thousand, one hundred and eighty-two, Siddhārthi, Chaitra ba. amāvāsyā, Monday, solar eclipse. The cyclic year was Raudri and not Siddhārthi which occurred the previous year. With this modification, the corresponding Christian equivalent would be Monday, 12th April, 1260 A.D.

This epigraph was critically edited and published with a supplementary note for the first time in English in the *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXI (1931 - 32), pages 9-17, by Shri. S. Srikantha Sastri and Shri. N. Lakshminarayana Rao. The late P. G. Halakatti published it in Kannada in his monthly journal, Śivānubhava (1928, March). It has been frequently mentioned by many writers. We have discussed its relevant contents in Chapter XII of this book. The facsimile of the inscription, not published so far, is published here for the first time. The text given below is also critically checked with reference to the original.
Appendix II

The composition of the epigraph and its engraving are not flawless. It contains many mistakes of wrong spelling. Some of them have been corrected in the body of the text itself. A few more may be indicated here. For instance, Tadavādi in line 8 should be Tardavādi; tapachakravatti in lines 43-44 should be tapaschakravartti; manitanadi in line 49 appears to be a mistake for mannetanada; niruvarie in line 68 should be niruvwariye; so on.

A matter of vital importance, however, is the reading in the damaged spots in lines 35-36, mentioned above. In line 35 we confirm the reading of the letter gra after a, after careful examination of the original. The next letter which is completely damaged may be ja. The word thus would be agraja, as no other alternative seems possible. In line 36, the hitherto accepted reading of the name is Kāvarasa. This was proposed by the veteran epigraphist Shri. Lakshminarayana Rao. We have also accepted it in our discussion in Chapter XII of this book. But after close examination we now think that it might be Sōvarasa, as the letter read as kā looks more like sō.

TEXT

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 
9.
10. ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಸಮಾರುದ್ರ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
11. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
12. ಸ್ಥಾಪನೆ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
13. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
14. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
15. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
16. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
17. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
18. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
19. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
20. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
21. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
22. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
23. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
24. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
25. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
26. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
27. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
28. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
29. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
30. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
31. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
32. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
33. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
34. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
35. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
36. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
37. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
38. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
39. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)
40. ಕಾಲ್ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಗುಂಪುಳಿ ಜಿಲಾದ ಮಟ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಶಾಲಾರ ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು. (ಸ್ಥ-)

* This letter is doubtful. It can be read as ಸೋ also. In that case this name would be ಸೋವರಾಸಾ instead of ಕ್ವರಾಸಾ.
41. ಎಂದು ನಿಳ್ಳಿಸಿದ ಸುತ್ತರು ರೇಲಿನ ಕಾರ್ಯಗಿರಿಯಾದ (ಇ)ಮುಂದು ಮೂರ್ತಿ
42. ತನ್ನ ವಿಶೇಷಕ್ತಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ಸ್ವತನ್ತು ರುದ್ದರ
43. ಯುನ್ನಡು ಸುತ್ತರು, ಹೆಸರು ರಚಿಸಿದನ್ನು ಕೇಂದ್ರಿಸಿದ ಅನುಮಾನ
44. ಆಕೃತಿ, ವಿಮರ್ಶನಿಸಿದ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು ವಿಷಯವಲ್ಲದ ಎಂದು
45. [ಇ]ಎಂದು ತನ್ನದೇ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಸಿನಹಿತ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲದ ಎಂದು
46. ಆಕೃತಿ, ವಿಮರ್ಶನಿಸಿದ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು ವಿಷಯವಲ್ಲದ ಎಂದು
47. ಈ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲದ, ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲದ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು ವಿಷಯවಿದ್ಯೆ ಜೋರಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ
48. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು ವಿಷಯವಲ್ಲದ ಎಂದು ಮೂಲಕ ಮೂಲಕ
c
49. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು [ಇ]ಎಂದು [ಯಾವುದೇ] ಮೂಲಕ ಮೂಲಕ [ಇ]ಎಂದು
50. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಮೂಲಕ ಮೂಲಕ ಮೂಲಕ [ಇ]ಎಂದು
51. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ವಿಷಯವಲ್ಲದ ಎಂದು
52. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಕಾರ್ಯಸಾರವಾಗಿ ಎಂದು
53. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ವಿಷಯವಲ್ಲದ ಎಂದು
54. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ವಿಷಯವಲ್ಲದ ಎಂದು
55. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಕಾರ್ಯಸಾರವಾಗಿ ಎಂದು
56. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ವಿಷಯವಲ್ಲದ ಎಂದು
57. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ವಿಷಯವಲ್ಲದ ಎಂದು
58. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಕಾರ್ಯಸಾರವಾಗಿ ಎಂದು
59. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ವಿಷಯವಲ್ಲದ ಎಂದು
60. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ವಿಷಯವಲ್ಲದ ಎಂದು
61. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ವಿಷಯವಲ್ಲದ ಎಂದು
62. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ವಿಷಯವಲ್ಲದ ಎಂದು
63. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಬದಲಾಯಿತು ಎಂದು
64. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಬದಲಾಯಿತು ಎಂದು
65. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಬದಲಾಯಿತು ಎಂದು
66. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಬದಲಾಯಿತು ಎಂದು
67. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಬದಲಾಯಿತು ಎಂದು
68. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಬದಲಾಯಿತು ಎಂದು
69. [ಇ]ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, [ಇ]ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು
70. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಬದಲಾಯಿತು ಎಂದು
71. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಬದಲಾಯಿತು ಎಂದು
72. ಎಂದರೆ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಅನುಮಾನಗಳು, ಬದಲಾಯಿತು ಎಂದು
73. ಧುರುಬೀರ ಎಷ್ಟು ಮಸ್ತ ನೀರಿನ ಗಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಯುಕ್ತ ಸಮೂಹ ಸಿಹಿ ಮನೋಭಾವ-
74. ಈ ಕಾಲದಾರಿ ಮಾರಾಟದ ಸಮಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಅದ್ಭುತ ಅಸ್ಮರಣವಾಗುವಿಕೆ.
75. ಇತ್ತೀಚೆ ಎಷ್ಟು ಎಸ್ಸುಗಳ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ತಾನೆ ಮಾರಾಟದಂತೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯಾಗದು.
76. ಮತ್ತು ಮನೋಭಾವ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯಾಗಿ ಸಂಘಟಿಸಿ ಸಂಘಟಿಸಿದವರ ಸಂಘಟಿಸಿದವರ.
77. ಕೇವಲವೇ ಮತ್ತು ಕೇವಲವೇ ವಿಶೇಷವಾಗಿ ಸಂಘಟಿಸಿದವರ ಸಂಘಟಿಸಿದವರ.
78. ಚಿತ್ರವಾದರಿಂದ ವಿಶೇಷವಾಗಿ ಸಂಘಟಿಸಿದವರಿಗೆ ನಿಂದೆ ಎಸ್ಸುಗಳು.
79. ಈ ಕಾಲದಾರಿಗೆ ಸಂಘಟಿಸಿದವರ ಮಾರಾಟದಂತೆ ಮಾರಾಟದಂತೆ.
80. ಎಂದರೆ ಈ ಕಾಲದಾರಿಯ ವಿಶೇಷವಾಗಿ ಸಂಘಟಿಸಿದವರ ಸಂಘಟಿಸಿದವರ [ಭೇ]ಜೂ [೧೦]
APPENDIX III

NOTE 1

KAMME KULA

While introducing Basava’s father Mādirāja, the poet Harihara states that he belonged to Kamme Kula. Later, in describing Siddha Dańḍādhipa, Bijjala’s treasurer, he refers to the Kamme Kula of this officer. Further on, when the young apprentice was taken into confidence by this dignitary, it was realised that both belonged to the same Kula, i.e. Kamme Kula (Basava. Ragañe, Sthala I and V). Thus it becomes plain that Basavēśvara belonged to Kamme Kula or community according to Harihara.

This information of Harihara like that on many other items, may be accepted as historically correct; because we find corroboration for it from corresponding accounts in epigraphs and literature.

For example, a peep into the inscriptions brings out, among others, the following instances.

An epigraph from Ālur in Gadag Taluka of Dharwar District, of the time of Chālukya Vikramāditya V, dated 1010 A.D., introduces Mahāśēnādhipati Veṇṇeyav- bhaṭṭa, a high officer of state who belonged to Kamma Kula. He is praised as the sun to the family of Brāhmaṇas and favourite of the Goddess of Learning. This is the earliest epigraphical reference to Kamme Kula so far known to us. Mention is made of another officer of Kamma Kula in an inscription of 1074 A.D. at Niṅdagundi in Ron Taluka of the same district. A record of 1096 A.D. of the reign of Chālukya Vikra-
māditya VI, from Shikaripur Taluka of Shimoga District, speaks of two army officers, Sarvadēva and Chāvuṇḍa of Kamme Kula. It is unnecessary to multiply such instances. Suffice it to say that state officials and respectable citizens who were members of Kamme Kula, figure in inscriptions, hailing from Dharwar, Chitradurg, Hassan, Chikkamagalur and Mysore Districts, and ranging from the eleventh to the thirteenth century. From the mention of their gōtra and other details it becomes manifest that all of them were learned Brāhmaṇas of Vēdic traditions. Like Basavēśvara’s father, some of them were members of agrahāra towns. Taking the clue from Harihara, it may be surmised that members of Kamme Kula were also residing in the northern areas of Karnataka like Bijapur and Sholapur Districts.

Passing on to literature, Attimabbe, patron of the reputed Kannada poet Ranna (993 A.D.), hailed from Punganur in Kamme Nāḍu of Vengi Maṇḍala or province. Attimabbe’s father Mallapa of Kamme Nāḍu was a patron of the eminent Kannada poet Ponna (c. 950 A.D.). Vengi province was also the home of the ancestors of two illustrious literary figures in Kannada, viz. Ādi Pampa (941 A.D.) and Nāgavarma I (c. 900 A.D.), Vengipāḷu in this region being their native village. Ādi Pampa belonged to a family of Kamme Brāhmaṇas.

Kamme Nāḍu was an ancient territorial unit. Its Sanskrit equivalent was Karma Rāśṭra. It is also mentioned in its earlier form Kamma Nāḍu. This region roughly comprised the northern part of Nellore District and southern part of Guntur District. The emigrants of this area constituting a community of family units by themselves, were apparently styled with
reference to their original territory as belonging to Kamme Kula or Vamsa meaning Kamme lineage. Durgasimha (c. 1025 A.D.), an erudite scholar and author of the Kannada Panchatantra, was a scion of Kamme Kula. The famed Kannada poet Janna (1209 A.D.) is described as of Kamme Vamsa.

The Vengi province with its component Kamme Nāḍu has later completely merged in Andhra country. But as revealed by the above brief investigation, a part of it, at least, appears to have formerly belonged to Karnataka, forming its border land contiguous to Andhra. Deeply imbued with Kannada literary traditions and Kannada culture, its devout inhabitants and faithful emigrants, made memorable contributions to the language, literature and religion of Karnataka. Among such, Basavēśvara stands out foremost.

REFERENCES


NOTE 2

A HISTORICAL VACHANA OF BASAVĒŚVARA

A Vachana of Basavēśvara bearing historical significance (No. 626) reads thus:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ಅಸೆನ ಕರಿಸುತ್ತಿರುತ್ತಾ ಮೇಲೆಯೇ ಕೂಡಾಗಿದ್ದು ಹಾಸ್ಯ ನಂಬಲುವಾಡಿದ್ದು} \\
\text{ಸರ್ವ ಸಾಗಳಿನ ಸಸ್ತನ ಕೈಯಾಗಿದ್ದು ಸನಾಡುತ್ತದೆ} \\
\text{ಸರ್ವ ಸಾಗಳಿನ ಸಸ್ತನ ಕೈಯಾಗಿದ್ದು ಸನಾಡುತ್ತದೆ} \\
\text{ನಾಲ್ಕೇ ದೇವಾಸ್ಮಾನ್ಯ ನಿರ್ಣಯಿಸಿ ಸೇವೆಯಾಗಿದ್ದು,} \\
\text{ಸನಾಡುತ್ತದೆ, ಸಸ್ತನಾಸ್ಮಾನ್ಯ ಸೇವೆಯಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಸನಾಡುತ್ತದೆ.}
\end{align*}
\]
Its rendering would be like this:

Remember O man! glow of royalty, and lustre of wealth are not everlasting. Behold! The city of Kalyāṇa lost its splendour and became desolate. The rule of the Chālukya king was wiped out on account of the regard shown to the Jangama brotherhood and was consumed in your eternal bowl, O God of Kūḍala Sangama!

This Saying contains allusions to the following contemporary historical incidents and observations.

1. Transitory nature of royalty and wealth and their splendour, as attested by concrete instances.
2. Ruin and desolation of the city of Kalyāṇa.
3. State of importance gained by the body of Jangamas.
4. Extinction of the rule of a Chālukya king.

The interpretation of the passage has led to a divergence of opinions in regard to the historical incidents alluded to therein. Hence it is necessary to examine them critically. We shall first state some different interpretations and then scrutinize them.

First Interpretation

This was put forth by the late Govind Pai. Basing his remarks primarily on the assumption that the word abhimāna meant ‘injury’, he argued thus: The Chālukya king Taila III harassed the Jangama followers of Basavēśvara. Annoyed at this, Basavēśvara instigated Bijjala to punish his Chālukya overlord by usurping his throne. The Chālukya rule was thus wiped out.

Second Interpretation

The Chālukya ruler mentioned in this passage is not Taila III but Bijjala. He tortured and executed
the Jangama followers of Basavēśvara, viz. Haralayya and Madhuvayya. In retaliation, Bijjala was murdered and the city of Kalyāṇa was devastated. Here also the word abhimāna is taken in the sense of injury.

**Third Interpretation**

This is advanced on the basis of the modified text of the Vachana, as quoted in a Śūnyasampādane compilation. The modified main clause reads: Śivāchārada abhimānadalli Jagadēva Molleya Bommaṇṇagala kaiyallī maḍidihana Bijjaḷanu (Prof. Bhoosnurmath’s revised edition, 1965, p. 390). It means: Bijjala died at the hands of Jagadēva, Molleya and Bommaṇṇa, who were actuated by devotion to Śaiva conduct.

**Their Scrutiny**

These interpretations are unhistorical and faulty. Govind Pai’s opinion, as pointed out above (Chapter XIII), makes us believe that Basavēśvara was an unscrupulous politician. This is contrary to his true character and personality. Secondly, there is no indication to believe that the Chālukya king was opposed to Basavēśvara’s movement. Thirdly, in none of the Sayings of Basavēśvara the word abhimāna is used in the sense of injury. Fourthly, this meaning, though cited in the lexicons, is unfamiliar and its usage is of rare occurrence.

The second interpretation can be challenged on two grounds. One, it is incorrect to identify the Chālukya king as Bijjala. Two, the word abhimāna, in the present context does not yield the queer sense of injury or torture as pointed out above.

The third interpretation, again, is vitiated by the unwarranted assumption that the Chālukya king was
Bijjala. Further, the original text of the Vachana has been tampered with by subsequent accretions to support its alleged meaning, as imagined by the later copyists or compilers. It may, however, be noted that these later interpreters did not take the world *abhimāna* to mean ‘injury’, but took it in the familiar sense of affection or devotion.

**Historical Interpretation**

The Chālukya king mentioned in the Saying, could be a Chālukya king only and none else. If Basavēśvara meant Bijjala, he would have mentioned him explicitly as Bijjala, as he has done in other Sayings. It would be ridiculous and ungenerous to presume that Basavēśvara who served under Bijjala as his Treasury Chief, for a number of years and came in close contact with the affairs of Bijjala and those of his Chālukya overlords, was ignorant of their family affiliations.

We have seen that two violent revolutions which had devastating effects on the city of Kalyāṇa, took place during the period under review. One was Bijjala’s usurpation of the Chālukya throne in 1162 A.D. That this event was violent and destructive is supported by epigraphic evidence. (See above Chapter IV.) The second was Bijjala’s murder and its revenge on Basavēśvara’s followers in 1168 A.D. This is amply substantiated by epigraphical and literary sources. But when this latter occurred, Basavēśvara had not only left Kalyāṇa but this material world too. Therefore it would be inaccurate to read a reference to this episode in his Vachana. Thus the only revolution which caused the end of the Chālukya rule and the consequent devastation of the city of Kalyāṇa, was Bijjala’s usur-
pation in 1162 A.D., when Basavēśvara was alive and also present. It is clear that the Chālukya king who fell a victim to this atrocity was Taila III.

The question now remains, how to connect this event with Basavēśvara’s movement. We have seen that Bījjala was an intolerant, orthodox Śaiva, who opposed this movement. Epigraphical evidence shows that the Chālukya rulers were liberal in religious outlook and tolerated different faiths and creeds, even the heterodox ones, in their empire. It, therefore, seems probable that Taila III was sympathetic and not adverse to Basavēśvara and his movement in general. The special reason for this favourable attitude might be Bījjala’s antagonism to Taila III. If the latter showed consideration to Basavēśvara and directly or indirectly supported his movement, that would cripple Bījjala’s power and subdue his ambition. In view of this historical probability, we can explain the words Jangamada abhimāna in the Saying as consideration or regard shown to the Jangama brotherhood.

We have come to realise that on account of the dire catastrophe that befell the movement, many historical facts relating to it, remained unknown to the generations of Basavēśvara’s followers. We can simply note, but not justify or criticise their innocence. The present one is a typical instance. Not being conversant with historical details, the later interpreters of the above Vachana, as seen before, have wrongly assumed the revolution at Kalyāṇa as referring to Bījjala’s murder. But in reality, it was the first revolution of 1162 A.D., in which Taila III and members of his royal family were massacred by Bījjala in the course of his act of usurpation. This must have convulsed
the city of Kalyana, leaving the shadow of desolation on it.

NOTE 3

VISHNU WITH LINGA

The devotees of Siva stressed the supremacy of their god by creating sacred literature comprising the Saiva Agamas and Puranas, extolling the deity. The cult of Siva in the form of adoring the Linga penetrated into the sphere of iconography too. When the followers of Vishnu indulged in the glorification of their god, the votaries of Siva came forward with anecdotes depicting that Vishnu himself owed his eminence to the grace of Siva. A unique iconographic specimen illustrating the above observation is found at Haveri in Dharwar District.

The Siddhesvara temple at Haveri has treasured a sculpture in stone, of Vishnu in the act of worshipping a Sivalinga. It is an elegantly carved and sumptuously embellished idol. The god is seated on a lotus pedestal and possesses six hands, this being a rare phenomenon. He bears the crown and ornaments over neck, hands, ears and fingers. The two upper hands are broken and lost and the two lower ones placed by the side of the knees, carry the mace and the disc. The lower left of the two middle hands holds Sivalinga in the palm and the same of the upper one shields it with hood posture. The sculpture may be assigned approximately to the thirteenth century. For illustration see Plate.

From a study of literature and sculptures, it is seen that worship of Sivalinga on palm of hand was practised
before the time of Basavēśvara. This teacher, however, by introducing the cult of Ishṭalinga in his new faith, no doubt on the authority of Śaiva Āgamas, invested it with special significance and dignity.
ILLUSTRATIONS

THIS INCLUDES TWENTY FOUR PLATES AND ONE MAP
K. R. I. Museum: Bijjala on elephant, combating a warrior (Chap. III)
Golden Bull, Royal Emblem of the Kalachuris  (Chap. VI)
Kalachuri copper plate grant:
Line 17 mentions Bijjala as performer of sacrifices  (Chap. VI)
Ingaḷēśvar: Rēvaṇasiddha (Chap. XIV)
Kūdala Sangama: Sangamēśvara Temple (II) (Chap. XIV)
Kūḍala Sangama: Maṇḍapa with Linga in river

(Chap. XIV)
PLATE X

Mangalavēṣṭhe: Temple of Rēvaṇasiddha  (App. I)

Mangalavēṣṭhe: Kāśi Viśveśvara Temple  (App. I)
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Nāgari inscription in Kannada, mentioning Rēvaṇadēva (App. I)
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(App. I)

Kalyāṇa: Pillars of a temple in a dargah  
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Kalyāṇa: Entrance of Basavēśvarā’s cave (App. I)
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K. R. I. Museum: Arjunavāḍ inscription pertaining to Basavēśvara (I—upper half) (App. II)
K. R. I. Museum: Arjunavād inscription pertaining to Basavēśvara (II—lower half) (App. II)
Hāvēri: Vishnu adoring Śivalinga (App. III)
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[The following abbreviations are used: au., author; ca., capital; ch., chief; ci., city; co., country; de., deity; di., district, division; dy., dynasty; f., family; k., king; myth., mythical; n., name; off., office, officer; pr., prince, princess; q., queen; ri., river; s.a., same as, te., temple; tit., title; tk., taluka; tn., town; vi., village; wk., work.]

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