CHAPTER VI

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The geographical diversity of South Kanara resulted not only in a variety of crops being grown but also in different agricultural practices in the sub-regions. Corresponding to these agricultural variations were patterns of non-agricultural production and urbanization. Development of trade and commerce in the region had far reaching impact on the social structure and the composition of the society. The commercialized nature of agriculture suggested that the more developed areas of the region were urbanized and depended considerably on trade and commerce. These areas had begun to exhibit the characteristics of a commercialized society. The area that was influenced by commercialization, however, was not restricted to that which exhibited these outward characteristics. Many of the social changes in South Kanara are perhaps, traceable to this process of commercialization.

The population of South Kanara - mainly rural in nature, - was woven into a series of intricate social patterns. Position depended as much upon caste as on wealth and as much on land holdings. The inscriptions and folk songs known as Paddanas provide useful sources of information on the nature of caste structure in the region under study. Caste system had taken deep roots in South Kanara and the four principal castes are referred to in the records of the period as nalku-jati. Besides the four principal castes, the lowest stratum of society consisted of untouchables, referred to as horahinavaru.

The society in South Kanara consisted of a number of communities and classes following different religions and cults and ways of life. The Nadavas or Bunts and the Billavas were in the majority. Brahmins and the
Jainas were the two other prominent communities in the region. There were a number of other communities too, such as Mogeras, Ganigas, Kumbaras. Of the untouchables, the significant ones were Holeyas, Pombadas, Bakudas, Nalkes and so on. But the role of Brahmins, Jains, Nadavas, Mogeras and Billavas in the social and cultural life was more marked than those of the rest.

But the epigraphs do not provide sufficient information on the communities who occupied lowest pedestal of the society and their related problems. As the inscriptions are mainly donatives in nature they speak about those communities which were associated with temple or administration. Hence, rarely do the epigraphs refer to the lower stream of the society. Another problem that a researcher faces in this field is the confusion that arises with regard to the surnames. Generally, the root meanings of the surnames being common almost all the communities possess common surnames. The records do not throw much light on the community life of the people. However, with the available sources we may attempt to trace the conditions of the society in South Kanara.

The Brahmins generally settled around the temples and were associated with the religious and cultural activities in the temples. They assumed the role of spiritual guide and religious leaders. They possessed fertile lands which they received mainly in the form of grants known as patti manya, sarvamanya, umbali, uttara brahmasvam, purohita-stala etc., from the rulers and prominent individuals of the society. They received these lands with Ashta Bogatejesvam i.e. eight rights of full possession. They were given grants even for imparting education and they were referred to as Ayyanavaru. Certain areas donated to the Brahmins and the areas
completely inhabited by them came to be known as *agraharas*. The rulers of Vijayanagara and their governors in Mangaluru, Barakuru encouraged the settlements of Brahmins by donating villages. For instance, the Governor of Mangaluru *rajya* granted Paduvagama village to certain Brahmins as agrahara. This was done under the order of Emperor Bukkaraya. The agraharas were created to enable the Brahmins to pursue their studies and agrahara lands could be taxed. Epigraphs refer to the *Ayyanavaru* of Chaulikeri and Mudukeri. Inscriptions also mention the settlement of Brahmins in agraharas in Mudukeri and Manigarkeri in Barakuru *rajya* during the Vijayanagara period. *Brahmasvada Oni* mentioned in an epigraph also evidences such grants to Brahmins. A number of *mathas* built in South Kanara by the rulers and the individuals fed the Brahmins freely, for it was believed that it would bring religious merit.

As a champion of the caste system the Vijayanagara emperors came to the rescue of the Brahmins whenever the latter's position was in danger. In support of this, we have epigraphical evidence which states that, Narasimha Odeya, the Governor of Barakuru, after a thorough enquiry restored to their former status, on a piece of land gifted as *Purohita sthala* in Kundapur. In the course of years, Brahmins acquired proprietary right over the granted lands. This has been substantiated by a number of inscriptions which refer to the paddy fields in the villages possessed by the Brahman communities in different surnames. At the same time, it is interesting to note that the rulers and prominent individuals recognized the property of the Brahmins.

The rulers declared that they were protectors of *Varnasrama dharma*. Distraction of the person and property of Brahmins was considered a great sin (*maha pataka*). The land endowments given to the temple were divided
among the trustees of the temple, generally the Brahmins. The superior land rights were possessed by the Brahmins themselves though the subordinate rights were given to the people of lower classes. That Brahmins also acquired mortgaged lands (aruvara bhumi) from the high caste Sudras, is known to us from the records of Basruru, Kumbhasi, Koteswara, Karkala, Mudabidre, Mangaluru. Gradually they became land holders and enjoyed proprietary right. During the reign of the Keladi Nayakas (1554-1763 A.D), The Brahmins had acquired landed property to such an extent that in some places of South Kanara even the rulers purchased lands from them after paying due payments. For example, Keladi Virabhadra Nayaka purchased land in the Kaombali village in the Sivalli Sime of Barkuru Hobali from Konappa Kollala for hundred Gadyanas, in the year 1639 A.D. Similarly, in 1712 A.D Keladi Basavappa Nayaka purchased land in the Heratala Sime from the Brahmins of Visvanathapura Agrahara for 266 ¾ Varahas.

In the middle of the sixteenth century immigrant Brahmins began to play an important role in the agrarian set up of South Kanara. They were actually from Maharastra. They came here and settled in the interior regions where they introduced arecanut cultivation. For example, it is said that they received hilly regions near Karkala from the chief of that place and converted the region into arecanut gardens. In the course of years, other Brahmin sects, namely Havikas and Habbus, raised coconut, and arecanut gardens on both slopes of the Sahyadri and became the owners of large coconut gardens.

But the cultivation work on the lands of the Brahmins was done by people of lower classes. As serfdom prevailed, it was not at all difficult for them to get the lands cultivated without doing any agricultural work.
personally. It was true that the revenue policy of Hyder and Tippu had adversely affected the Brahmins position\(^1\) in the agrarian set up, yet the Brahmins owned the best quality of lands in South Kanara.\(^1\) Even though Tulu Paddanas mention Brahmapoli\(^1\) which means land cultivated by the Brahmins, the actual tilling was done by the agrarian serfs under the direction of the Brahman landholders.

One interesting feature in the medieval period the region witnessed was the rise of the Brahman councils known as Mahajanjas, Jagattu, Janani, Uru etc. These councils continued to flourish under the Vijayanagara rule. The inscriptions of this period very often refer to Uru of 52, the Jagattu of Nalkuru, Kota Mahajagattu of a thousand and Adivasa of 16000.\(^1\) The very function of these associations indicates that, these bodies were agrarian in character and concerned with land control. An epigraph found in the Gopalakrishna temple at Kanyana registers a sale of land to certain Lingaraj by six Janmis of Nalkuru of Rajadi and five Jagattus.\(^1\) In another circumstances Maledanda Nayaka, the Governor of Barkuru gifted land, which he had bought, to the Mahajanjas of Varambali in Udupi District in 1598 A.D.\(^1\) Besides these bodies, the village officers known as Gramani who used to be a Brahman wielded influence over the land control of the villages. An epigraph in this regard refers that Anna Udupa, the Gramini of the Kandavara village near Kundapur, was stated to have made a sale deed of land to certain Timma Setti.\(^1\)

The huge wealth acquired by the Brahmins in the region under study is due to the fame of the temple deity. The temple with its land control functioned as the central institution to help organize society for agrarian production. All Brahmins were connected to it through property obligation.
Land endowments reaching the temple were divided among the trustees of the temple who were generally Brahmins. The temple distributed superior land rights to the Brahmins and subordinate rights to the ‘clean Sudras’.²⁰

The land gifts to the Brahmins for their learning are known as Bramadayā or Brahmasvom. This became increasingly popular with the advent of the Vijayanagar rule ²¹ and it continued to flourish in the days of the Keladi Nayakas. This type of land tenure was treated as Sarvamanya. The donee received ownership right in the land granted. He was permitted to conduct land transactions such as sale, purchase and exchange.²² The Bramadayā land owners were known as Mahajanās and in certain areas Jannis who wielded considerable influence in land transactions.²³ In the Bramadayā land tenure, we notice the formation of agraharas. The land within the Agraharas was managed by officers chosen by the Brahmins known as Mahajanās. The officers who managed the land are known in the inscriptions as Buddivanta, Sthanikas, Grama Hebbaruva, Hebbar etc.²⁴ Such kind of land was protected and renewed by the Government in case of lapses or usurpations as evidenced by certain epigraphs.²⁵ The striking feature of this Bramadayā land tenure in the seventeenth century onwards was that the Brahman donee was also expected to increase the fertility of the granted land. The donee was expected to plant productive plants and trees. The income derived from such cultivation was to be utilized for religious rituals to be performed in the temple complexes. A record dated 1602 A.D²⁶ found at Udupi informs us of the receipt of the land grant in the village Bennara Bettu of Nada Magani by Appaji Pandita from Keladi Bhadrappa, the son of Keladi Venkatappa. The record further states that the donee was expected to increase the fertility of the land by planting coconut and other
products. Such contracts were prevalent in southern parts of South Kanara as well.27

Brahmins were also entitled to enjoy the provisions of vr̄itti. Vr̄itti generally means the payments of grants from revenue collection to the Brahmins. In many occasions it is also interpreted as a share in a village granted to a Brahmana as a gift.28 The paddy field granted as vr̄itti is known as vr̄itti gadde. The purchase of vr̄itti is termed as vr̄itti-kraya.29 One record from Koteswara dated 1519 A.D states that Vijayappa Odeya, the Vijayanagara governor of Barakuru raja granted vr̄itti worth revenue income of land 72 varahas at Kandavara village to seven Brahmins. It was granted for the prosperity of emperor Krishnadevaraya.30 Those who received vr̄itti were entitled to enjoy it perpetually. The vr̄itti was also treated as Sarvamanya. An epigraph dated 1571 A.D says that Keladi Ramaraya Nayaka granted vr̄itti land worth revenue income of five gadyanas to the Udupi Krishnadeva; four gadyanas to Vadirajasvami and the Bankapura vr̄itti revenue income worth three gadyanas to Raghunidhi tirtha swami. The total gadyanas of the vr̄itti lands came to worth 12 gadyanas. These vr̄ittis were granted in order that Keladi Sadasiva might obtain the abode of Siva.31

The vr̄itti was protected and it was granted for the maintenance of the chattara. But it was not entitled for sale. If it was sold, the royal palace would purchase it. Such vr̄itti could be resumed by the ruler after due enquiry. The practice of exchange of the vr̄itti was also permitted.32 In the eighteenth century, a slight change took place in the transactions of the vr̄itti land. The rulers used to sell vr̄itti land to the Brahmins. For example, an epigraph dated 1729 A.D Keladi Somasekhara Nayaka sold nine vr̄ittis at the
rate of nine varahas to the Agrahara Brahmins for a total of 81 varahas. In return for the sale of the vritti, the ruler received a small fee known as kanike\textsuperscript{33} from Brahmins. This deviation may be attributed to the financial expenditure which the Nayaka incurred on military campaign in Malabar.\textsuperscript{34}

The Brahmins of different groups like Kota, Sivalli, Havika etc., must have settled in different parts of South Kanara and the Brahmins of South Kanara attribute their first arrival owing to certain families brought from Ahichchatra, on a special request made personally by the Kadamba ruler of the region Mayuravarma. Though this account found in Gramapaddati contains an unhistorical statement that Mayurasarma was ruling in the region, it may be believed that Brahmanas had come and settled in South Kanara in early times. Right from the beginning of Alupa rule here in South Kanara we notice the activities of this class in society.

Epigraphs mention a number of surnames of the Brahmins and they are used even today. The most important among are Varambalti, Ungrapalli, Adiga, Hebbara (Hebbarnava), Asrana, Ballala, Basuri, Bayiri, Hande, Hatvara, Goli, Bhatta, Herale, Holla, Joisa, Kalkura, Karanta, Kedilaya, Manja, Mayya, Melanta, Navada, Puranika, Tantri, Sonayaji, Urala, Madhyastha, Vaidya, Tunga, Upadyaya, Nidambura, etc.

Brahmins with these surnames are referred to on different occasions. Their participation in administration, economic activities like land transactions and agriculture and the performance of religious ceremonies are mentioned in records. Two interesting inscriptions from Barakuru and Mandarti reveal the practicing of jyotishya by the Brahmins of this region. An epigraph \textsuperscript{35} of Mandarti reveals that Duggu Binnaniti's son Narasinga Binnani had a great danger to his life on the solar eclipse day which was
obviously known to them through jyotishya. An epigraph of Mudukeri shows that the prediction was true and Narasinga Binnani died on that solar eclipse day. With the help of these two inscriptions we can say that at least a few people followed this profession in the region under study. An inscription of Mudukeri also mentions a gift made to Someswara temple by Jataka Bhattaru.  

Another prominent community was that of the Nadavas or Bunts. The Bunts as their name implies, were originally a military class corresponding to the Nayars of Malabar and the use of the term Nadava instead of Bunt in the northern portion of South Kanara, among other indications refers, to a territorial organization by nads similar to that described by Mr. Logan as prevailing in Malabar. About the Nadavas, Thurston writes thus: they seem to be closely allied to the Bunt caste of which Nadava is one of the sub-divisions. The name Nadava or Nadavaru refer to people of Nadu or country. Regarding their feature and character he continues to say they still retain their mainly independence of character, their strong well developed physique and still carry their heads with the same haughty toss as their forefathers did, in the stirring fighting are among the earliest of Asiatic races.  

But nothing definite is known about the early history of this community. In the early days when there was constant fighting due to political vicissitudes, an important class of the population being known as Buntaru or warriors succeeded in becoming the owners of lands. Their participation in administration must have resulted in the rise of their position in the society. Elsewhere there is a mention of the violence and outrages of Paduva Kona Nadavaru. But the inscription in question only says that
they had occupied certain lands for which they had not been paying taxes. But when the governor Narasimhadeva Odeya enquired about it, they admitted the mistake and agreed to pay certain amount for feeding the Brahmins. But we must note that the extra lands occupied by them mentioned in the inscription were bettu, tittu, kali etc., and this can indicate the creation of the new agricultural land by those Nadavaru. The fact that the Nadavas took interest in agriculture is known to us from this record.

Participation of the Nadavaru in administration of Barakuru is revealed by an inscription of 1399 A.D. They are mentioned as Kattaleyavaru in this record. Today the halaru in the temples here are mainly the people of this community. This may indicate their participation as halaru in the municipal administration in historical times too. They had an important position in the administration of Bhutasthanam too. A number of epigraphs referring to the land grants and transactions refer to the individuals with surnames which are common today among the Nadavas. Among those surnames we may mention the following which occur again and again in records. Adhikari, Ballala, Binnana, Bhandari, Heggade, Kambali, Mada, Nadava, Nayaka, Setti, Kava, Samani (Senani), etc. On the eve of the advent of the English rule, the Settis and the Nadavas gained so much importance in the agrarian set up of South Kanara, that they styled themselves as proprietors and possessed major portion of lands.

The central position occupied by the Nadavas can be understood at the time of the death ceremony of one, who belongs to this community. Thurston records:

*The Holeya conveys to the caste people the news of the death. A carpenter accompanied by musicians proceeds to cut down a mango tree for the funeral*
pyre. The body is bathed and laid out on a plank, clad with new clothes; it is conveyed to the burning-ground with music. A barber carries thither a pot that contain fire. The corpse is set down near the pyre and divested of new clothes which are distributed between a barber, a washer man, a carpenter, a Billava and a Holeya. The pyre is kindled by a Billava. 43a

It may be argued that the Bunta, being a gurikara or guttedara, was entitled for allegiance and assistance from the main occupational groups of the society excepting that Brahmins. 43b Again the position enjoyed by the Nadavas or the Buntas is clearly explained by Sturrock: The Bunts, however, may be said to be the land-owning and cultivating class par-excellence, both on account of their numerical preponderance in their capacity and their almost complete abstention from all other professions and occupations.

The Nadavas followed Aliya Santana system of inheritance in which succession is traced in the female line. The Nadavas were also divided into balis which are like the gotras of the Brahmins.

Among other communities of the Hindu faith the Billavas and Mogeras must have played an important role in society. But epigraphs do not give us much information about them. As pujaris (worshippers in Daivassthanas), toddy-tappers and agriculturists and manual labourers under higher castes, the Billavas rendered useful service to the society. In any celebration of the bhuta (devil or daiva), the presence of a Billava (pujari) is essential. He plays the role of a patri (one who gets possessed of the bhuta, along with the devil-dance).

The term Billava seems essentially a generic term and it simply means, a bow-man or a hunter. To substantiate this we have two epigraphs. The Heruru epigraph mentions billa-biruva, which means the Billava whose chief work is with the bow. 43c Another inscription comes from Chokkadi,
Udupi taluk, which refers to the work of Billavaru and also mentions Billavgudde.\textsuperscript{43d}

The Billavas were employed as cultivators by the people of high castes in the Barakuru region as known from an inscription dated 1420 A.D.\textsuperscript{44} In the Tulu Paddanas they were described as the toddy tapers of the land.\textsuperscript{45} In the Kannada speaking areas of South Kanara, these people are called Halepaikas. The land cultivated by these castes are mentioned in the Paddanas as Mattel Nalaja. Again, Tulu Paddanas refers that the Ballala of Parimale in Sulya, apportioned the fields between the two Billava heroes, Kote-Chennaya and Buddavanta. One of the Paddana further informs us that these two heroes cultivated with interest suggi and yenalu in the fields allotted to them. The study of the same Paddana indicates that the Billavas were aware of a superior system of cultivation.\textsuperscript{46} Between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Billavas or Halepaikas owned lands in different parts of South Kanara.\textsuperscript{47} With the advent of English rule, the land controlling powers of these caste people declined.

The Mogeras or fishermen who had their centre of worship and guru (religious head) near Barakuru (Bennekuduru)\textsuperscript{47a} must have been active in their own field of activity i.e fishing. They were tulu speaking people who follow the aliya-santana law of inheritance. Like other castes, the Mogeras worship bhutas, the principle bhuta of the fishing community being Bobbariya in whose honour the ‘kola’ festival is held annually. The paddana of this bhuta refers that Bobbariya was a Mapillah or Byri (Muslim), who after death, became one of the powerful and also useful bhutas of South Kanara.\textsuperscript{47b} From one of the inscriptions of Barakuru we learn that there was a separate or colony of fishermen in Barakuru called Bestara Bettu.\textsuperscript{47c}
Sturrock observes:

The people of fisher-castes are either fishers or hunters according to the locality they live in. As fishermen, these castes confine their operations mostly to the backwaters, to the sea-shore or to the mouths of rivers. As hunters they frequent the forests and jungles of the interior and some still live by the products of the chase although many have settled down to other occupations, since the forests have decreased.47

The two epigraphs make a passing reference bearing the name Mugera or Mogeyara are a) Muggera-gadde (field belonging to Mugera or Mogera),47b and b) Mogeyara Vira-Nayaka (Vira-Nayaka belonging to the Mogera community)48

Various other communities which had their own role to play in the day to-day activities of the society are also mentioned in some of the inscriptions. Though the details about them are not available; at least we know them by the functions they had to regularly perform. Madivalas or washer men had a separate colony called Madivalabettu.49 Temples also required certain works to be regularly performed by some of the communities. We have reference to devadasis who served as dancing girls in temples. There is also reference to ladies who were fan-bearers to gods in temples (devarige chamarava nikkova hemmakkalu).50 There were pipers or Olagadavaru who formed a separate class of Sappaligas or Seregaras or devadigas. Tulabhara was performed in temples which were nothing but a ceremony of weighing a person against certain goods before god and an epigraph mentions Barakuru Tammana Toladhikari.51 We also come across in epigraphs52 grants given to the persons who cleaned the temples and a mention is made of maletharu which was land granted to the people who supplied male or garland for the worship of god in temples.53 The potters
had to supply *panate* and for this work called *Kumbarike* an epigraph records a separate grant of five *muras* of paddy.  

Carpenters, stone cutters and sculptors were in great demand in those days. In the preparation of the huge wooden cars and wooden images the carpenters exhibited their skill besides doing their part of the work in building temples and other structures. The wooden chain and bud in the Panchalingeswara temple, image of Sadasiva from the same temple (but now preserved in the National junior college, Barakur) and the wooden images in the Mahishasura temple, Mudikeri are some of the examples of their craftsmanship. Huge wooden figures called *Tettirayas*, used for procession etc. in temples (body being made of bamboo) also provided an opportunity for the carpenters to exhibit their skill. In an inscription of Mudukeri we come across a grant of 9 *muras* of paddy per year for the carpentry work in the temple.  

*Acharis* or carpenters are referred to in other inscriptions too. An epigraph of 1402 A.D. mentions *Badagiya bayalu* which reveals the ownership of paddy fields by the carpenters (*Badagis*). Similarly *Kumbaradi*, a place inhabited by the Kumbaras or potters near Mudukeri temple is also mentioned in this inscription. Though the inscriptions mentioning Kallu Kuttigas (stone cutters or sculptors) are rare, we can never undermine their importance in the social and religious life of South Kanara. Beautiful sculptures, stone inscriptions and temples of South Kanara suggest their role in society. Besides doing other works they also served as engravers of inscriptions and thus helped the royal authority to publicise their orders. Kallu Kuttiga Kannappa is mentioned in an inscription of Panchalingeswarara temple.
Ganigas or the oil-men also played an important role in the day to day functions of the society by supplying oil. As they used a hand-operated-machine called *gana* for extracting oil from coconut, the community came to be called Ganigas. An inscription of Mudukeri Someswara temple refers to this community.\(^{58}\)

It has been pointed out that Nayars were an important community which had settled in this region.\(^{59}\) But the reference to *nayarmula* in a number of inscription need not be taken as an evidence to prove the settlement of Nayar community here and *Nayarmula* was nothing but the ploughing right. For example when a certain piece of land was purchased by a certain *Bahiri* (a Brahman) it was recorded in an inscription \(^{60}\) that he took *nayarmula* because it was a temple land or *devaswa* and hence *midi* right could not be purchased. The same epigraph informs us that Kesava Madikukula a Brahman took another piece of land for cultivation but not *mulavagi* but *nayaru mulavagi*. Here also it was temple land and the right of cultivation (or ploughing right) was taken by him. But as mentioned earlier, they got this work done through other lower classes of the society. However, the existence of Nayar community in Barakuru cannot be denied. There exists even today a place called *Nayar bettu* at Hanehalli in Barakuru. It is also believed that this class deteriorated into Nayari (Nairy) community though there is not even the slightest feature either in language or social practices today to connect them with the Nayars of Kerala. However, a reference in an epigraph of Chaulikeri \(^{61}\) dated 1456 A.D. to an individual called *Parapali Nayari Holavanna* helps us to trace the history of the Nayari community back at least till that date. In spite of Nayars on land tenure,\(^{62}\)
their role in the agrarian set up was confined to certain pockets such as Udupi, Barakuru, Brahmavara, Uppunda and Bhatkal.63

The Jains who settled here were a prominent community in South Kanara. This can be ascribed to several factors. From the beginning, the followers of Jainism had royal support. Several governors and high officials in Barakuru and Mangaluru Rajya during the Vijayanagara period were from that community. Moreover, the Jains were a rich community and were mainly business people. Hence, they were in a position to wield considerable influence in the society also. They gave rich grants and participated in all important cultural functions of the region. Agricultural activities of the society were also influenced by the Jains. The basadis owned lands.64 On account of their huge wealth in landed property, the Jain religious institutions were managed by the high caste.65 The priestly class called the Indras also came to possess land. They leased it out to the other people of the community or outsiders for rent.66 Further, the Jain chiefs appointed a Ballala in each Magani.67 Ballalas possessed lands and exercised authority in the land control system in their respective Maganes. They had lower caste tenants, who collected all required for cultivation of lands. The Indras who consider themselves as a superior caste may dine with the laymen, but do not inter-marry with them. They were from the beginning followers of Makkala Santana (patrachal, inheritance through sons) system unlike the other Jainas who follow aliya santhana. The Jaina laymen were called Sravakas and they are mentioned in a number of inscriptions. We have references regarding the participation of Sravakahalaru of Manigarakeri in the administration. The Jains were grouped into balis and many of their ceremonies and practices resemble those of the Nadavas or Bunts.68
In due course, Basadis increased their hold on the society with the distribution of loans to the needy. There were Jaina mathas also which encouraged cultural activities. Jaina munis were fed by the basadis and a grant of 1408 A.D. speaks about the feeding of munis in Chaulikeri basadi in Barakuru. Sallekana was in vogue. In the first half of the seventeenth century, the Jains political power received set back and they were reduced to mere land holders. Thus in administrative, religious, economic and cultural activities the Jains played their role.

Between the seventeenth and the middle of the eighteenth centuries South Kanara witnessed the emergence of the Virasaivas religious institutions in large number. Establishment of Virasaiva mathas – Aradya matha and Mahatina matha – resulted in the spread of Virasaivism. Their Mathas at Koteswara, Basaruru, Barakuru, Baggunje, Gurupura, Siddapura near Shankaranarayana, Udupi, Kalyanapura, Kolluru had donated lands. Some of these Mathas, namely at Basruru, Dharmapur, Koteswara, Bagunje, Kolluru maintained gardens and cultivated lands through tenants. These pontiffs appointed agricultural staff of their communities for the supervision of cultivation and possessed a good number of bullocks. They remained predominant until the fall of Keladi kingdom in 1763. The Keladi rule in the region and the trade contact with the upghat regions, appointment of Virasaiva governors even under Vijayanagara were thus some of the factors that favoured the settlement of Virasaivas in South Kanara.

The Muslim officers and Hanjamana guild also point to the settlement of Muslims from an early period in the region. Their commercial organization known as Hanjamana played an important role in the execution of land grants, aruvara land transactions, the settlements of land disputes.
Muslims generally engaged in rice trade. But in the last decade of the eighteenth century the Muslims contact with the agrarian set up took a new turn. Muslims from the above the Ghat and interior Karnataka became revenue officers and receivers of the land grants to their religious institutions from Tippu Sulthan. But these Muslim officers could not contribute to the agricultural prosperity of the land because of their ignorance of agricultural practices.

Portuguese activities resulted in the spread of Christianity in South Kanara. Some of these Christians took up agriculture and gradually emerged as land holders. The Christian cultivation of land in the village Mondakapu near Buntwal is revealed from an inscription dated 1587 A.D. It is believed that Christians were invited by the rulers of Kanara, particularly the Nayakas of Keladi, because of the former’s skill in the cultivation of coconut. In 1623 A.D Della Valle noticed that the Christian church in Mangalore owned landed property and received rent from the tenants. Further, the religious institution of the Christians managed their landed property through a committee of elders and vicars who supervised coconut gardens and maintained accounts. The Christians possessed landed estates and lived in prosperous conditions till 1792 A.D. They converted many barren lands into cultivable lands in and around Mangalore. However, in the last decade of the eighteenth century, the Christians estates in the places of Manjeswara, Mangalore, Mulki, Kalyanpur, Basrur, Honnavar, were reduced to ruins on account of their captivity at Srirangapattana by Tippu Sulthan.

Among the low castes Malekudias, Holeyas, Bakudas, Pombadas Nalkes are very important. Malekudias are actually a category of people who live mostly in hill areas and they had exclusive right of cultivation. It is said
that they worked for their masters for ten months in a year and eight hours in a day. Their method of cultivation in the hilly region was shift known as Kumri and it was in vogue in the region from the middle of the fourteenth century.

The Holeyas were mostly concerned with servile jobs for the higher castes and they had something to do with the ownership of the land. A few records refer to them as Holeyalu, Mannalu or Alus. Further, the records belonging to the periods between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries often inform us that these Holeyalus were purchased along with lands in which they were attached. This practice was in vogue till the end of the eighteenth century as known from the Kadatas. On the eve of the establishment of the British rule in South Kanara, the Holeyalus used to get one Hane of rice from their masters whenever they were employed in the field. They built their huts near towns or villages. Some of them were permitted to rent lands as Gaynigaras. When their master had no use of their labour, they had to support themselves as well as they can. This they could do by making rope from coconut husks, various kinds of baskets from Ratans (creepers) and climbing trees and constructive mud walls.

Bakudas were the other community closely associated with the agricultural operations. The owner of the land known as Odeya provided each family of the Bakuda a house (thatched hut) and land with sowing capacity of ten Hanes or about quarter of an acre. For the work in the field of their master, the Bakuda received annual wages such as cloth, rice and knife. On the occasion of the marriage of Bakuda, he used to get one Mude of rice from his master. When the Bakuda was not employed by the master he did not get his wage. But he was allowed to hire himself as labourer.
The Pombadas (the traditional devil dancers) were the tenants of the Ballalas (Jain and high caste Sudras). Their services were sought by these Ballalas for agricultural operations, and construction of Bhuta Sthanas (Devil shrines). In spite of the numerical strength, of all these communities, epigraphs relating to them are few and far between. This may be because of their inferior position in society. A true picture of the caste structure of these communities in relation to land control might emerge if the folk songs of these castes are collected and studied.

The Nalkes are actually the chief of the “devil-dancers”, divided into a number of bali and they seem to be of Tulu origin. In the Kannada speaking area, they are called the panaras. They play an important role in the worship of Daivas of South Kanara region. They engaged themselves in making mats, baskets and umbrellas. Like Nalkes, Paravas also were umbrella makers and devil dancers. But they assumed that they were superior to Nalkes. They also officiated on behalf of the devils. They are said to impersonate the so-called Raja-daivas and not the ordinary ones. For instance, Kodamantaya, Raktesvari, Jumadi, Koti-Chennayya etc., are treated as the Raja-daivas.

Society under the Keladi Nayakas:

During the Nayakas of Keladi South Kanara continued to experience inhabitation of a large number of communities and social groups, the traditional four castes having multiplied into various sub-castes and communities. The caste of an individual was generally found out by his surname, which he belonged. Some of the Keladi inscriptions mention 101 kulas and 18 jatis.
As in Vijayanagara period so in the period of Keladi period the Brahmins were a much respected community. Though members of the sacerdotal class, they were found in different walks of life. A few of them were priests and were attached to temples. Some were owners of prosperous agricultural land. A few others took to trade and settled down as merchants while still others remained as monks or sannyasis. Some were active politicians, administrators and generals. Ramakrishna, for instance, was a Brahman minister of Virabhadra Nayaka. A few of them may be mentioned are Rayasam Timmarasayya, Karanika Venkatappayya, Puranika Appu Bhatta, etc. Most of the ambassadors of the Keladi court were Brahmins. Vithula Sinay was one such. The observations of Van Linschoten about the Brahmins is worth citing here:

_The Brahmins are the honestest and most esteemed Nation among the Indian Heathens for they doe always serve in the chiefest places about the king as Receivers, Stewards, Ambassadors and such like officers. They are of great authority among the Indian people, for that the king doth nothing without their counsel and consent._

Grants were made to them, fresh agraharas formed by each ruling sovereign for them and they were held in very high respect. According to Peitro Della Valle the Brahmins, dedicated wholly to learning and the service of the temples, were the most noble of all the races.

Other important communities that existed during the Vijayanagara period continued to enjoy all the privileges even during the Keladi period. There were separate settlements for each of them. An inscription of Somasekhara Nayaka mentions Brahman quarters (Brahamnavada) and quarters for the Sudras (Sudravada).
Professional and merchant guilds also flourished during the period. We get details about an agreement of several settis, and others of the merchantile guild of Bidure from an inscription of Virabhadra Nayaka dated 1640 A.D. The inscription records an agreement made in the presence of Narasimha Odeya who was holding the mudra of Mangaluru by Cikka Raya Odeya of Puttige belonging to the Chauta family with Abhinava Carukirti Panditadeva and the several settis and others of the mercantile guild of Bidure, undertaking not to encroach in future upon the civic rights and privileges hitherto enjoyed by the latter and to preserve intact the property of gods and the priests since the most of his subordinates had abandoned their homes and settled elsewhere.

Thus we get glimpses about the prevalence of various castes and communities during the Keladi period. The above study reveals one significant aspect about the caste composition then existed in South Kanara during the period under study. On the basis of the study one can assume the fact that the society was a hierarchically organized one, in which social differentiation between various communities can be observed. Brahmins were the members of higher orders of the society whose cultural superiority and their dominant role in religious institutions were acknowledged by the rest of the people. People belonged to other castes honoured the property of the Brahmins because it was backed by royal authority. They were entitled to enjoy almost all the privileges sanctioned by the ruling authorities including occupying highest pedestal of the society, tax exemption, right to own a vast track of land, managing the religious institutions, temples and the wealth belonging to these institutions. In terms of wealth, Nadavas were very influential and enjoyed much clout in the political circle during period
under study. They were the landlord community and served the ruling class as the administrators at the provincial level. Economically they the most privileged community but socially compared to the Brahmins Nadavas were underprivileged castes like Billava and Mogara castes. Jains had a predominant position in the society as they were the business communities and produced a number of local chiefs in different parts of South Kanara. This made them earn reputation in the society and their cultural superiority was acknowledged by the rest of the population. They lived in prosperous places and owned huge tracks of land and supervised of Basadis as their cultural as well as religious centers. Like Brahmins and higher Shudra castes, Jains commanded so much influence in the mainstream society of South Kanara. They were all one way or the other economically sound community and had a close alliance with the ruling chiefs during different periods.

However, other castes such as Holeyas, Pombadas, Paravas, Nalkes, Malekudiyas attached to the soil were very dear servants of higher castes. They served the society as well as the higher castes of the region in different capacities such as agricultural labourers in the cultivable land owned by them and different religious institutions. This consequently created social differentiation and imbalance in the distribution of wealth, right to adorn position at the governmental level, enjoying the ownership of land, participation in different forms of religious and cultural activities and so on. Eventually, this resulted in creation of hardships to low caste communities who started to show their displeasure regarding the influence being exercised by the dominant caste groups. The result was a general unrest in the later years of seventeenth and eighteenth century. In order to understand
this protest being organized by the high caste non-Brahman peasants against government, it is important to analyze the relationship between landlords and peasants in South Kanara during the period under study.

**Landlords and Peasantry:**

The early medieval socio-economic formation was marked by a grossly unequal distribution of land rights and also of the agricultural produce. A large number of landlords were not directly engaged in cultivation but lived on rent, mainly in kind, collected from the cultivators. They also exploited the labour of the peasants for various purposes. Peasantry as a class was engaged in agricultural production and possessing the necessary means of production or using them on definite conditions. It is a well known fact that the peasant had been the underdog throughout early history and he had been subjugated and exploited because he had been the chief human agency for producing the items required for the maintenance of life. In the case of South Kanara they included local chiefs and Ballalas who can be classified as rich peasants, middle peasants (who generally use family labour) and wage labourers and agricultural serfs. In this paper an attempt has been made to present an analysis of the life and struggle of the peasantry in South Kanara during medieval and late medieval period. The chief sources of information about social life in this period are inscriptions, Oral literature and Travellers account.

During the period between 1500 and 1800 A.D. South Kanara experienced rise and growth of a large number of major and minor dynasties such as Vijayanagara, Keladi and a number of local chiefs. The region depicts existence of a large number of villages. Here almost all classes of people owned and cultivated dry and wet paddy fields. Usually the
landholders in the region owned paddy field intermixed with sandy land which was too barren to grow coconut palms. In the interior, the landholders owned rice land intermixed with arecanut gardens. Though the agricultural activities affected the economy of all class of people the actual cultivation was done by the lowest caste people.

The Tulu *Paddanas* contains information about the manorial houses of the rich peasantry which was known as *Bidus*. In southern part of South Kanara, Ballalas were recognized by the people as the dominant land owning class and they owned different forms of lands and supervised their cultivation. Further, the *Paddanas* speak of the *Bidus* that were surrounded by tenants 'households who provided free labour on land lords' lands in return for cultivation rights. *Panjurli Paddana* refers to the Mardalla Ballala's *Bidu*\(^1\) which was served by servants such as bondmen, contract labourers, farmer and watermen. These *Alus* lived in their respective huts and received food prepared in the *Bidu*. In another *Paddana*, we get information on the employment of labourers in the agrarian operations by landlords.\(^2\) Kote-Chennaya, who received *Kambala Gadde* from the Ballala, employed tenants for the cultivation of that field. Every one of the tenants who ploughed with buffaloes received three *seers*\(^3\) of rice and a leaf full of boiled rice. Similarly, the foreign travelogues testify the employment of hired labourers in the agricultural operations by the landlords. For instance, Della Valle noticed the employment of hired labourers in the lands of the Jogis at Kadri\(^4\) Similarly, hired labourers cultivated spacious valley around Bhatkal as known from Peter Mundy.\(^5\) Buchanan,\(^6\) another English traveller, in 1800 A.D. gave detailed information on the nature of hired labourers and their wages and the conditions of their work under their
masters. According to him a male servant gets two hanes of rice. They work from seven in the morning until five in the evening with a break of half hour at noon for the rest. In Karwar region, the same traveller observes:

the sizes of the farm vary from one to five ploughs. Two oxen are required to each plough, which cultivates from five to seven candies of land. In general, the family proprietor labours the farm, but a few rich men employ hired servants. Men servants get yearly from two to six Pagodas, but those, who got only the first sum in money, have daily one meal of rice.  

Landowning Ballalas and the middle peasants employed the agrarian, serfs known as Alus in their agrarian operations. Usually, the Alus belonged to the lowest caste people known as Holeyas, the Bakudas, Pambadas, Nalkes and Koragas. They were regarded as the property of the landlords of the South Kanara. There were two classes of serfs known as Huttalu (hereditary serf) and Mannalu (serf attached to the soil and changed hand with it.) The epigraphs and Kadatas often mention the transfer of such serfs with the sale of land. Regarding the nature of the agrarian serfs in South Kanara, we are indebted to the travelogue of Buchanan. He observes:

A male slave is allowed daily 1 ½ Hany of rice or three fourths of the allowance for a hired servants; a women receives one Hany. The man gets 1 ½ Rupees worth of cloth, and two Rupees in cash; the women is allowed only the cloth. They also received trifling allowance of oil, salt and other seasonings. A small allowance is given to children and old people. When a slave wishes to marry he receives 5 pagodas to defray the expense. The wife works with the husband’s master. On the husband’s death, if the wife was a slave, all children belong to her mother’s master, but, if she was formerly free, she and all her children belong to her husband’s master... A good slave sells for 10 pagodas or about 4 Guineas. If he has wife who was formerly free, and two or three children, the value is doubled. The slave may be hired out, and finds him subsistence. Slaves are also
mortgaged; but the mortgager is not obliged to supply the place of a slave that
dies; and in the case of accidents, the debt becomes extinguished.

In the case of the Koragas, the traveller observes when their masters choose
to employ them, they get one meal of victuals and men have daily one hane
of rice and women three quarters of hane. About the slaves working in the
farm of the Brahmins in the Honnavar region, Buchanan says:

(He) Used to get daily 1½ Hany rice, a woman receives one Hany. Each gets
yearly 2½ Rupees worth of cloth, and they are allowed to build a hut for
themselves in the coconut garden. They have no other allowance and out of this
pittance must support their infants and aged people. The women's share is nearly
15 bushels, a year worth rather less 14½ Rupees.

The rich peasant farmers particularly the Brahmins and the high caste
sudras such as Nadavas or Bunts, Billavas and Mogavirs owned paddy
fields, large areas of gardens of coconut, arecanut and other products. The
wealth of these peasants was measured in terms of rice of Muras (Mudes)
and yield from their gardens.

The Brahmins owned garden lands in the interior. Such garden land
cultivation were done by the hired and slave labourers, but under the
personal supervision of landed Brahman communities. Unlike in other
regions of Karnataka, the Brahmins in the South Kanara had thorough
knowledge of the agrarian operations.

The plantations owned by other communities, namely the Jainas and
the high caste Sudras usually depended upon the hired, the slave workers
apart from their own labour. In many cases, the rich peasants depended upon
the rents known as Geni from the tenants.
The rich peasants had manorial houses having many rooms, wide courtyard and Cowpens. The middle peasant's houses were considerably large and often had upper story. In front of the houses of the middle peasants the manoli (coccinia indica) creeper had been trained up a double pendal. The coconut tree bearing red fruit had a circular basin round it. Such descriptions of the middle peasant's houses are mentioned in the Tulu padadanas.105

However, the poor peasantry lived in small thatched huts. According to one of the Tulu Padadanas, the Koragas in the Adakanellinjine village lived in their sheds called Koppa, while the Bakudas lived on the plains.106 Similar descriptions of the dwellings of the poor peasants are mentioned in the travelogues as well. For instance, Barbosa says (the Koragas the agrarian serfs) dwell on the fields and open campaign in secret lurking places which folk of good castes never go save by mischance.107 Linschoten, who passed through Kanara in 1583 A.D. observed that the poor peasantry dwell in little straw houses the doors whereof are so low, that men must creep in and out, their house hold stuffs in a mat upon the ground to sleep upon and a pit or hole in the ground to beat, their rice with a pot or two, to see that in and so they live and gain so much as it is a wonder.108

The rulers in South Kanara followed judicious benevolent policy with regard to the revenue administration which determined the relations between the rulers and the peasantry. Generally, the rulers encouraged the agriculturalists to maximise the produce from the land by advancing loans to them, by constructing and repairing tanks and embankments by encouraging them to cultivate the waste lands and above all, by remitting taxes partially or completely whenever the farmers were in loss due to the damages caused by natural calamities. The Vijayanagara rulers and their feudatories took prompt action against the officers who oppressed the cultivators.109 Those
who extended the cultivation received active encouragement from the Government. The Nayakas of Keladi and the Sultans of Mysore continued the same policy and thus, worked for the betterment of the agriculturalists.\(^{110}\)

Although many historical records stress cooperation and interdependence between the peasantry and the government, there were a few instances of confrontations between the peasantry and the rulers. In these confrontations, the big peasantry took a leading role. They protested against the Government's policy of excessive collection of the revenue. Their protests often led to revolts which are described as political unrests. There were a few examples of the landlord's protests against the Government's taxation policy. A study of an inscription dated 1465 A.D. indicates that the landholders in the Nilavar village protested by referring to pay taxes to the Government angered by stern measures taken by Pandarideva, the Governor of the Barakuru raja. Then epigraph states that Dannayaka Mahamandaleswara Ramachandra intervened and the matter was set right by fixing the revenue and ordered that the stipulated revenue had to be paid to the treasury.\(^{111}\) Such instances occurred often in the South Kanara region under the Vijayanagara rule.\(^{112}\) It is said that in 1606 A.D. the peasantry belonging to the Halepaika caste revolted against the queen of Gerasoppa and Sangitapura. This revolt was against the heavy imposition of taxes by the queen. The Halepaika peasants sought the help of Keladi Venkatappa Nayaka. The latter overthrew the queen with the support of the revolting Halepaikas.\(^{113}\) Further, Venkatappa Nayaka succeeded in consolidating his authority in the Northern portion of Kanara with the support of the low caste peasantry.
However, the revenue policy of Venkatappa Nayaka adversely affected the big landed gentry, namely the feudal chiefs in the South Kanara. For instance, the Jogis of Kadri who owned huge landed property were so much heavily taxed by Venkatappa that the former were driven to poverty. Similarly, Della Valle observed the miserable conditions of the peasantry in the Ghat region of Kollur. Their misery was due to the heavy taxation by the Government. The peasants in the Ghat region of Kollur paid very large tributes to the king so they had nothing but to labour for them and live in great poverty.\textsuperscript{114}

The landed gentry revolted against the Keladi authority when they heard of the death of Keladi Venkatappa in 1629 A.D. According to one of Portuguese records of 1629 A.D.\textsuperscript{115} the kings, queens and the Ballalas engage him (Virabhadra) on different sides and have already blockaded the fortress of seruguo and had fortified all the passes of the Ghats to prevent help coming down so that from Canhoroto to Baticalle every thing is in revolt.

Although the historians dubbed this revolt as ‘political unrests,’ a critical study of the nature and causes of the revolt convinces us that it had an agrarian outlook. This is testified by the following points: all the feudal chiefs and the Ballalas, defeated by Keladi Venkatappa Nayaka, were landed gentries. Keladi Venkatappa Nayaka imposed heavy tributes on them, the tributes imposed by Venkatappa were so heavy that some of them were driven to poverty and even abandoned lands.\textsuperscript{116} They waited for an opportunity to overthrow the Keladi authority. But this revolt of big landlords failed because Keladi Virabhadra, successor of Venkatappa, was rich and those leagued against him were very poor.\textsuperscript{117} Further, it seems that the Halepaika landholders and cultivators, who assisted Venkatappa in
consolidating the Keladi authority in the South Kanara, did not join the revolt. The subsequent revolts of the Tulu Palegars (huge land holders) against the Keladi authority were crushed by the Nayakas with the support of the peasants of the Halepaika caste. The latter gained prominence in the agrarian set up in the coastal region. One such Halepaika leader who supported Keladi authority in South Kanara in 1674 A.D. was Kasaragod Timmanna belonged to Toddy tapper’s family.

The landed gentry in the Keladi Kingdom again revolted when Keladi Virammaji imposed on them additional assessment of tax in 1758 A.D. But it was settled by compromise. According to it, the peasants agreed to pay 50% in four years at the rate of 12 ½ each year. In the fifth year it was to have been remitted. But Haider who conquered the Keladi kingdom in 1763 made it permanent.

In the region of Tippu Sulthan, the big peasantry in South Kanara often revolted against the revenue policy of the Government. For instance, the Jangamas revolt in Karkala, Mulki and Padubidre were agrarian unrests caused by the taxation policy of the Sultan. The unrest in Kodagu against Tipu Sultan was also of the same category. When the Sultan granted lands to non-Kodagu peasants as Jagirs in that region in 1785 A.D., the deprived landholders in collusion with the Holeyas, the agrarian serfs of the region, revolted. But the Tippu Sultan crushed the revolts with great difficulty.

Towards the end of the reign of the Sultan, the landlords abandoned the cultivation and fled. This was due to their inability to pay the increased taxes to the Government.

There were a few instances of the tenant’s discontentment during the period under study. In 1391 A.D., the tenants belonging to the caste of
Devara Makkalu in the Kuduvalli village protested against the landlord, Narasimha Bhatta. The tenants plundered the house of their master and carried off the food and other produce to their houses. It was in this context, Narasimha Bhatt, the landlord, sought the help of the Sringeri Pontiff. The latter settled the dispute between him and the tenants. The settlement was that the tenants rents were fixed based on the sowing capacity of land. The study of an inscription dated 1425 A.D gives an impression that the Purohitasthala in Kundapura was usurped by tenants. Then the Government intervened and restored the confiscated lands to the Purohitas after thorough enquiry with the consult of the Grama Jagatu (the association of the landed gentry). This enquiry was conducted by Pradani Narasimha Odeya, who was administering the Barakuru Rajya.

Tenants’ discontentment also occurred in the Ghat and Malnad regions. For example, in the kingdom of Krishanadevaraya of Vijayanagara, the village headmen and peasants of the Sringeri Matha protested against their Master, the Sringeri Pontiff. Then the Emperor settled the dispute. He gave strict instruction to the village headmen and peasants to obey the Pontiff of the Matha. The tenants’ unrests are also recorded in a few epigraphs from the Shimoga and Chikkamangalur regions. An inscription dated 1577 A.D., states that the tenants in Heddase in Edenad seized the lands of the Agrahara and that they refused to pay the rents due to the master and enjoyed land without legal right. However, this dispute was settled by Keladi Ramaraja Nayaka.

The tenants’ unrests and discontentment again occurred in the Sringeri, Karkala and Mangaluru regions between the years 1565 and 1658 A.D. For instance, an epigraph dated 1621 A.D., informs us that the tenants’
of the Sringeri Matha refused to pay the due rents usurped the landed property and converted them into their private gardens. Further the epigraph also informs us that the tenants mortgaged the usurped lands with one another. Then the matter was settled by Keladi Venkatappa who restored the property to the Matha. In the kingdom of Keladi Sivappa Nayaka, the tenants residing in the Mangaluru and the neighborhood confiscated the lands of the Sringeri Matha. Then the Pontiff appealed to Sivappa. The latter in 1652 A.D., restored the lands to the Matha and ordered the tenants to pay the due rents to the Matha (vakkalu karesi takitu madisi ya the stthiyalli baha hindanavannu kodisi mundu kalakalakku koduvahage kattu madisisuvudu).

Within four years, the tenant’s enmesh of the Sringeri Matha residing in the Karkala Hobali abandoned cultivation of the lands belonging to the Matha. When this was known to Keladi Sivappa, he sent Vengal Bhatt to enquire into the grievances of the tenants. In 1656 A.D. Venga Bhatta settled the grievances of the tenants by refixing their rents.

With an intention of avoiding conflict between the tenants and the land lords, a new device in the form of writing known as Edarunudi came into vogue. The edarunudi defined the agrarian relations between the landlords and the tenants. This was noticed by Buchanan in South Kanara towards the end of the eighteenth century.

We must also note some of the following special features in the social life of the people in South Kanara during period under study. One is the existence of a unique pattern of succession known as Aliya-Santhana system and the other is Bali as a system to determine social position various members within the social groups.
Aliyasantana System:

The Aliyasantana system that has been for generation, the most conspicuous feature of the social system of Tulunadu, especially more prevalent in the district of South Kanara, is a system of inheritance to the family property in which succession is traced in the female line. It is a system of matriarchate. Bhutalapandya is supposed to be the promulgator of this law. The tradition also claims that Bhutalapandya who introduced it was the ruler of Barakuru rajya in South Kanara during the Vijayanagara period. Hence according to this tradition Barakuru was the birth place of Aliyasantana system. But no epigraph anywhere refers to the formal introduction of this system by an arbitrary royal fiat.

According to this aliya-santana system, the right of possession of property goes to the females and there is no provision under this system for male children to inherit property. In case the family becomes heirless, a girl of the same bali would have to be adopted for succession. In other words recognition of consanguinity as the sole basis of relationship and the elimination at each generation from the family pedigree of the husband in the case of a female and of the wife and children in the case of a male constitute the characteristic features of this unique system of family.

Though epigraphically it cannot be proved, the tradition says that this system began as a result of an incident. When Deva-pandya wanted to launch his newly constructed ships with valuable cargo in them, Kundodara, king of the Bhuta demanded a human sacrifice. Deva-pandya asked his wife's permission to offer one of his sons but she refused, while his sister, Satyavati, offered her son Jaya-Pandya for this purpose. Kundodara discovering in the child signs of future greatness, waived the sacrifice and permitted the ships to sail. Later, when the ships brought back immense wealth, on the refusal of his wife again to offer a son to Kundodara and at
the instructions of Kundodara himself, the wealth as well as the kingdom was given to Jaya-Pandya or Bhutala Pandya. The latter who got this kingdom from his maternal uncle and not from his father, made this system of inheritance a rule in his kingdom. Thus came into existence the *aliya-santana* system. Though this legend associated with this system of inheritance has been seriously questioned, there are no two views about the importance of this system in social organization and inheritance among the non-Brahmanical classes of the society of Barakuru.

Alupa inscriptions clearly reveal the importance given to the *Aliyas* or nephews in the court and administration. For example, the role played by *Aliya*-Bankideva during and after the reign of Virapandya. He was so important in this period that he was allowed to rule over the southern part of Alupa kingdom. *Aliya* Bammadeva is known to us from the Cherkady record and he figures as an important person in the royal court. Though the Alupas did not accept this system of succession, the practice prevalent in the society must have influenced them in assigning a place of importance to the nephews in the administration. If the Hoyasala inscriptions here do not refer to the participation of *aliyas* (nephews), it was not because the system declined but because of the political and royal family circumstances. But in the post - Hoysala periods the inscriptions mentioning this practice are numerous though they do not call it by the name *aliya santana*. To give only a few examples we may discuss the contents of a few inscriptions of Barakuru region. An epigraph of Mudukeri refers Bemmanna Kambali. But while introducing him the record does not say that he was the son of somebody but it says that he was the nephew of Narasingalva. The surnames *Binnanati, Kambali* and *Aluva* indicate that they belonged to the Nadava
community and it is clear from this instance that *aliya santhana* system was being followed by them. The predominance of Dugga *Binnanati* here is another evidence for the prevalence of the system. In the same way in another epigraph \(^{132}\) of the same ruler Singara setti is introduced as the *aliya* of Bale Setti. A record of Harihara II mentions an important officer called Pandyappa Senapati who was *aliya* of certain *Adhikari*. \(^{133}\) An inscription of 1502 A.D. refers to Dugga Setti as the *aliya* of Digina Hegde. \(^{134}\) But in the case of Brahmins, name of the father is mentioned instead of that of uncle while introducing an individual, indicating the prevalence of *Makkala Santhana* among the Brahmins, for example, *Kesava Karanthana maga Govinda karantha, Vishnu Karanthana maga Narana Karantha and Krishna Alaseya maga Vasudeva Alase*. \(^{135}\) This practice existed even among some non-Brahman communities. for example a Manigarakeri inscription \(^{136}\) refers to Dharani Setti son of Kotiyappa Setti and Uttama Setti’s son Naga Setti.

**Bali as an Institution:**

Balis which formed the separate groups were like the gotras of the Brahmins.

*The people of Tulu Nadu excluding Brahmins seemed to belong to one bali or the other and this affiliation to a bali has given the people a cohesion, a solidarity in society, and the balis reveal to us many interesting facts of association and groupings and also of migrations to from outside the Tulu country.* \(^{137}\)

P Gururaj Bhat who has studied about the balis in detail has classified them as 1. *Balis* derived from communities; 2. *Balis* derived from personalities; 3. *Balis* derived from divisions; 4. *Balis* derived from places and 5. *Balis* derived from divinities. The tradition recorded in the Manu...
of Madras Administration refers to the controlling of sixteen Balis by the Ballalas. On the basis of epigraphs we can surmise that there were a large number of Balis. Whenever certain individual gained great importance in society in some field, his family came to be referred by his name and all those were mentioned as the members of his Bali. That is how the number of Balis went on increasing. Bali was so important that its name was associated with the name of the person or surname as evidenced Huvabbeya baliya Duggubinnanitti. One could not marry a girl within that bali because the feeling was that once upon a time they belonged to the same family. Thus the balis worked like the gotras in the family organization.

**Society as Seen by European Travellers:**

The most significant of all the materials produced by foreign visitors were the letters of Della Valle in which he relate his experiences on a trip south Goa from October to December, 1623.A.D. After a rather lengthy stay in Goa, the Italian pilgrim wanted “to see some country of the Gentiles where they themselves bore sway, and observe their Rites without any subjection to Christians or Moors... To this end he received permission to accompany “Fernandez Leiton” (Fernandes Leitao), the Portuguese ambassador and his friend, on a mission to the court of “Venkatappa Naieka” (Venkatappa Nayaka I, (1586 – 1629) at Ikkeri. The Portuguese, who had forts at Mangalore, Honnavar and Barcelore (Basrur) along the coast of Kanara, were eager to promote good relations with Ikkeri and other states which controlled the major pepper production centers of the interior. Under Venkatappa Nayaka I the semi-independent princeings of Kanara, whom the Portuguese had previously intimidated or played off against one another, were becoming increasingly hostile, independent and demanding
with respect to deliveries of pepper. Fernandes Leitao, because of Goa’s, recognition of the new power of Ikkeri in north Kanara, was delegated to investigate the situation and to negotiate an agreement with Venkatappa. ¹⁴¹

The Portuguese mission was accompanied and guided by Vithula Sinay, Ikkeri’s envoy to Goa. On October 14 the two ambassadors and their entourages left by sea for “Onor” (Honnavar). Here they remained for almost two weeks awaiting orders to proceed inland to Ikkeri. Honnavar, they report, is “a good port of indifferent capacity” formed by two branches of the Shiravati River which “meet at the Fortress, and are discharged with one mouth into the Sea.” Its fortress, the walls of which are “not very well designed,” was originally a native bastion that the Portuguese simply took over. The dwellings in the town “are rather cottages than houses.” The Portuguese for the most part lived in houses within the spacious fortress, which “stands upon a high Hill of freestone”; it also includes two churches and a great public square. Just outside Honnavar is a hot spring used for bathing and for watering the nearby fields. On October 24 the Hindus celebrate “Davali” (Divali) which Della Valle compares to a festival of lights he had witnessed in Persia. This festival delayed the ambassador as did news from Ikkeri telling of the death of Venakappa’s Chief queen, an aged woman named “Badra-Amma” (Bhadramma). Both the nayak and his queen are ‘Lingavant” (Lingayats), or worshippers of Siva. Della Valle learns that “twelve or thirteen years since” Venkatappa took a Moorish woman as a paramour. The queen, on learning of his defilement by “a strange Woman of impure Race,” took an oath that she should henceforth be daughter rather than wife to the nayak. Although she persisted in this
decision hill her death, she lived with the lover of her husband and had considerable influence over him.142

Finally, the delegation left Honnavar for Ikkeri around November 1. On the way they passed through “Garsoppa” (Gersoppa) one of India’s best pepper-growing regions. Before being conquered in 1606.A.D. by Venkatappa, Gersoppa was ruled by Queen Bhairadevi, known to the Portuguese as the “Reyna da Pimenta”. This queen, so the story goes in Della Valle, “fell in love with a man and a stranger into whose power she resigned herself together with her whole kingdom”. When he tried to overthrow her, the queen appealed for help to the Portuguese; he in his turn, asked for aid from Venkatappa. The prince of Ikkeri responded swiftly, drove out the Portuguese, took the queen prisoner, murdered the traitor, and burnt Ger-soppa along with its royal palace. Thereafter Honavar and other Kanarese ports, as well as most of the pepper exports of the region, came under the control of Ikkeri.143

Along the road, Della Valle notices how little boys study arithmetic in village India. Without the supervision of a teacher, they write their problems in the sand and sing their lessons aloud in small groups to keep from forgetting their assignments.144 On painting the interior of houses with cow dung he writes:

Indeed this is a pretty curiosity, and I intend to cause tryal to be made of it in Italy, and the rather because they say for certain that the houses whose pavements are thus stercorated are good against the plague, which is no despicable advantage... The Portingals use it in their Houses at Goa and other places of India; and in brief, 'tis certain that it is no superstitious custom but Onely for neatness and ornament.
At “Ahinali” (Honnali) the first populous center on the route, the Italian lodges, as a yogi might, on the porch of a Siva temple. Its deity, called “Virena Deuru” (Virana), “the latter of which words signifies God or rather Lord” stands “in a dark place with Candles before him.” There is also “a Brahma with five heads, which in their language they call Nau Brahma” (the new Brahma, or the four-headed Brahma; Siva cut one head off) and another called “Naraina” (Narayana, an epithet of Siva). Della Valle describes a procession he witnessed here and concludes his lengthy discussion with a sketch of the temple’s ground plan.145

The city of Ikkeri, where Della Valle arrived on November 8, 1623, is “seated in a goodly plain” and encompassed by two circuits of bamboo fence and “a wall but weak and inconsiderable.” While it is a city of “good largeness,” Ikkeri’s “houses stand thinly and are ill-built.” At the formal reception of the ambassador, Venkatappa is presented with cloths, a lance, and a horse. Della Valle, the sophisticated Italian and experienced traveller, is un-impressed both by the Portuguese’ handling of the mission and by the nayak and his court. He understands that Venkatappa, who was “sometime vassal and minister of the emperor of Vijayanagar [has] become absolute Prince of that part of the State where of he was Governor.” 146 Thereafter he warred against the other princes of Kanara until his power was recognized even by the Portuguese. 147 Della Valle nonetheless concludes that Venkatappa.

Deserves not the Appellation of king; and the less because he pays tribute to Idal-Sciah ['Adil Shah], who although a greater prince is but small for a king and payes Tribute to the Moghol.... The Portugals, to magnifie their affaires in India..... give the title of king to all those petty Indian princes. 148
During the remaining two weeks of his stay in Ikkeri, Della Valle concentrated his attention upon the daily life of the Hindu city and its vicinity. He visited the new city of “Sagher” (Sagar) being built just to the north of the capital. He observes that the nayak’s palace there is completed and he frequently visits it. A new temple at Sagar is “built upon a great artificial lake, [as well as] a house for his nephews and other grandees.” In Ikkeri itself the leading temple was dedicated to “agore scuara” (Aghoresvara, or the Nonfearful Siva) and served by Giangami (Jangami, or Lingayat priests). Siva here is represented as a man with thirty-two arms. The Jangami, are married ‘Indian Fryers’ who smear their faces with ashes and cultivate “certain extravagant habits, with a kind of peaked hood, or cowl, upon their heads. . . [and] with many bracelets upon their arms and legs fill’d with something that makes a jangling as they walk.” The chief of the Jangami was clad in white, rather than in the saffron-coloured robes of the others, and traveled about “sitting in hand some Palanchino [palanquin] with two white umbrellas held over him, one on each side.” His procession was led by soldiers, accompanied by musicians and followed by a great throng of ‘other Giangami clad in their ‘ordinary habits.’ Della Valle also witnesses a funeral procession in which the corpse is carried seated in a chair, presumably to be buried in a sitting posture. A lavish and somewhat tipsy performance by devadasis is put on for the Portuguese delegation which includes dancing, singing, and a ballet. On November 20-21, Della Valle witnesses the New Moon festivities in which the nayak and his family participated during the second day.

Most poignant is Della Valle’s encounter with a widow who is intent upon becoming a suttee. The Italian met a woman one night riding on
horseback "with face uncovered, holding a looking glass in one hand and a lemon in the other. "While gazing into the glass, she sings or wails a lament accompanied by doleful drumbeats; she is escorted by "many other women and men on foot." She is clothed in white, with a garland of flowers on her head and is bedecked with many jewels; in short, she is dressed in wedding costume, "talking and laughing in conversation as a bride would do in our countries." Several days before her death, and nineteen days after her husband's demise, Della Valle visits the widow in hopes of dissuading her from self-immolation. Her husband, a drummer, had also left two other older wives who intended to make no such sacrifice out of concern for their many children. Della Valle tries to persuade the thirty - year - old widow to abandon her plan for the sake of her two children. She declines and claims that she is doing it voluntarily and joyfully as "Masti" (from Mahasati, or a very virtuous one). 153 Apparently Della Valle chose not to witness her death, for he writes nothing about it.

Just before leaving Ikkeri on November 23, Della Valle is presented with a palm-leaf book "in the canara language (Kannada)" by Vithula Sinay. He had requested the former ambassador to obtain a book for him, "not finding any to be sold in the city," since he wanted one "to carry as a curiosity to my own country for ornament of my Library." On horseback and accompanied by bearers, Della Valle then goes overland to "Barcelor" (Basrur); he gives the names of the places on the route and notes that the "High Ways... are very secure. "From "Barcelor" he takes a ship southward to Mangalore "at the mouth of two rivers", 154 and in the middle of the bay. The Portuguese fort there, captured in 1596, is "the worst built of any I have seen in India". 155 On December 1 visits "Banghal" (Bangara), just north of
Mangalore and at that time within the jurisdiction of Ikkeri. During the conquest of Venkatappa its palaces and fort were destroyed so that only a bazzar remains there.156

Della Valle was especially interested “to see the Queen of Olala (Ullal), whose History and many valiant exploits I read of when I was in Persia. “On December 2 he sets out for Ullal by crossing the river’s mouth a few miles southwest of Mangalore. Since the queen is not there, he contents himself with describing her palace before searching her out. On December 4 he goes upriver to interview her at “Manel,” a place of refuge. Black, corpulent, and about forty years of age, the queen is named “Abag-devi Ciautru (Abaga Devi), of which words Abag is her proper name.” Queen Abaga, who had been married for many years to the ruler of “Banghal”, had fought her husband and his Portuguese allies with aid from Ikkeri. Once she and her ally emerged victorious, Ikkeri assumed control over her and her territory, and now exacts tribute. Her son, “Celuna Rairu” (Saluva Rairu) was raja in name only, for she continued as de facto ruler. Della Valle visited Raja Saluva at his royal lodge, presented the young ruler with a small map of the world in Italian, answered his numerous questions about the outside world, and satisfied his curiosity about European eating habits by dining in his presence with cutlery and table linen. At “Manel” the Italian visited the royal shrine dedicated to the propitiation of the local devils and was intrigued, as other Europeans were, by the numerous evil spirits the Indians seek to placate. In all, he judges “Olala” to be a wretched place.” 157

Back in Mangalore, Della Valle visited on December 11, the hermitage of “Cadiri,” probably a Jain temple on Kadiri hill, as well as the residence of “Batinato” (probably Bhat Nath, or Lord of a Vaishnavite
temple), who was called "king of the Gioghi (Yogi)." He described in some detail this tiny principality on a hill whose "Batinato" was fearful of being forced to pay tribute to Ikkeri. Another petty city-state north of Mangalore is called "Carnate" (Karnad). Its queen accepted vassalage to Ikkeri without putting up a fight. While Della Valle planned to visit "Carnate," a Portuguese fleet arrived at Mangalore on December 18, 1623, on its way to Calicut, and so he left with it on the following day. Della Valle remarks while on shipboard; "at Mangalore ends the Province of Canara and that of Malabar begins."

Vincenzo Maria di Santa Caterina Da siena, a barefoot Carmelite from Rome, was on India's west coast during 1657-58. In his Viaggio (1672) Vincenzo expresses his admiration for the prosperity and order prevailing in the Hindu-controlled states, especially Kanara. All flat country and lying next to the sea, Kanara is densely peopled right up to the mountains. Its land is irrigated by numerous rivers and so fertile that its farmers harvest copious crops of high quality rice three times annually. They gather the grubs of silk worms and make so much material that even the common people wear silk. In the dense jungles they feed herds of animals. Their forests are full of peacocks as well as many wild beasts, mostly tigers and monkeys of extraordinary size and numbers. The roads are so well constructed that they resemble garden paths, being flat, spacious, and lined with shrubs. Every so often one finds a refreshment stand maintained at the king's expense where sour milk and pure water are freely offered to the traveller. No matter how much treasure is carried, it is always safe to travel in Kanara. Its people look out for the travellers' well-being because they fear the royal ire should a traveller is set upon. On the first of his trips around Kanara in 1657,
Vincenzo slept outdoors near a vast temple in “Cagnarotta” (?). In the temple slept many of its prostitutes. From here he went to “Olalla” (Ullal) where he was courteously received in the market place by the governor of the capital city and his secretaries. When in Mangalore, he stayed in the hovel of a Brahman’s widow who was living in perpetual disgrace and had to serve every one. From Mangalore he went overland to Barcelore, noting on the way the temples, fortresses and mud huts.

The people of Kanara were judicious, wise and generally courteous and friendly to strangers. Ordinary men wore tight, short pants and little else; the lords wore long gowns and still others were loose loincloths. The women more sedately wore a skirt from the waist to the knees and a shirt of another colour from the shoulder to the flank which only partially covers the back and breasts. They artfully shaped a tuft of hair on the left side of the head in which they wore flowers, gems and other precious things. Their king was Brahman stock, prudent and of good moral character. His justice was quick and severe. Muslims are treated most rigorously and are required to shave their heads and wear Turkish costumes, presumably to make them more easily identifiable. Verbal affronts and fights between individuals were not punished. Two soldiers who wish to fight should have the prince’s permission. If they fail to obtain it and fight anyway both were condemned to death. Soldiers were well disciplined and were able to keep prevent princes and neighboring states from challenging the royal authority. Kanara was even able within the space of a few years to limit the Portuguese activities at Honavar, Barcelor, and Mangalore.¹⁶⁴

Vincenzo and his companion, Giuseppe di Santa Maria Sebastian, also surveyed the condition of the Christians scattered throughout Kanara. Many
of Goa’s Christians had emigrated to Kanara after the establishment of the Inquisition in 1569. Jesuits and Augustinians based in the Portuguese ports of Kanara had followed these fugitives into the interior to minister them and to seek new converts. But these endeavors did not prosper. When Della Valle visited Kanara in 1623, he found there only three churches and three priests, two Franciscans and a secular. Beginning around 1630, the Franciscans launched a new initiative that fared better, since they were well received by the nayak of Ikkeri. The Jesuits renewed their activities at mid-century, and by 1660, when Vincenzo traveled in Kanara, its scattered Christian communities included around six thousand believers. He and his companion reported back to Rome, however, that the state of Christianity in Kanara nonetheless continued to be deplorable. 165

On January 20, 1672 Gabriel Dellon, while still employed by the French East India Company, left Tellicherry on his way north to Goa. Four days later he arrived at “Mangalore” (Mangalore), one of the most important places in Kanara. It had a good harbour served by a deep and wide river where ships found shelter during the southwest monsoon. On an elevated place stood a large market town of Hindus and Muslims where the Portuguese had their factory. The “king” of Kanara and most of his subjects were Hindus whose castes and customs differ from those of the Malabar Hindus. Their manners and dress were more like those of the Hindu subjects of the Mughul emperor, to whom the “king” of Kanara was a tributary. Constantly at war with the Malabars, the Kanarese followed better order in battle than do the Malabars. But they were less determined to win. 166 Their merchants freely left the country to earn money elsewhere. Those who remained at home spent too much time and effort in their devotion to
processions and festivals. Nonetheless its farmers produced rice which was exported to foreign marts as far away as Acheh in Sumatra and Mozambique. Criminals in Kanara were tied, laid out on the sand and allowed to die slowly in the heat, attacked by ants.

After a three-day stopover at Mangalore, Dellon went on to the port of “Mirseou” (Mirzapur) where the French had previously maintained a factory. He talked with “Cojabdella,” its governor, who expressed his displeasure with the decision of the French company to abandon his port. 167

Fryer, who arrived at Karwar in September 1675 with an English trading mission, relates vividly how the wars of Sivaji had spilled over into north Kanara. Karwar, “Anchola” (Ankola), “Pundit” (Ponda), “Cuderah” (Kardra), and “Semissar” (Shiveshar, or Halekot) had been taken from Bijapur and were subject to Sivaji. When Sivaji burned Karwar and occupied its fort, the inhabitants fled into the interior. The English, who were originally granted the right to build a factory at Karwar by the Adil Shah, were permitted by Sivaji to continue their activities. But commerce, particularly the diamond trade of Goa and Karwar, was cut off by Sivaji’s incursions in the area. In his method of governing these towns Sivaji continues the practices of Bijapur by appointing individual governors for town and fortress who were superintended by “a Commander with a Flying Army.” All offices, both civil and military, were filled by Brahmins and other Hindus interested mainly in lining their own pockets. Under Sivaji’s misadministration the “Desies” (Mahratti, desai, district headmen) were forced to rent land for which they paid twice the previous price. Moneyed men, even Brahmins, who refused to pay these prices were thrown into
prison where they are tortured until they revealed the location of their hords.  

In February 1676 Fryer made a pilgrimage from Karwar southward to “Gocurn” (Gokarna). On the way he and his companions crossed the mountains of Ankola to its flatlands. The town itself was half-burnet and almost deserted. Ankola’s fortress commanded the surrounding countryside as far south as the “Gongole” (Gongavali or Bedti) river, where Sivaji’s dominion ended in the south. On the southern side of this river is Gongola, the first town which remained under the jurisdiction of Kanara. Its people looked cheerful and lived in peace under a quiet Government. The next day the travellers arrived at the Hindu center of Gokama where they changed into Mughul costume so that they could observe the “tomasia” (Hindi, *tamasha*, spectacle) without being taken notice of.  

Gokarna, formerly a splendid city is now most famous for its Hindu temples and relics. Like Benares, it has a “University of the Brahmins” which is well endowed. Throughout the city are many ancient temples, most of them in ruins. Only two that remain “half-standing” are worthy of comment. They are both ancient constructions of “good workmanship in stone.” At the far end in the interior is the idol before which lighted lamps burn constantly. Some of the worshipers bathe and anoint the idol before placing their offerings of oil, rice, and frankincense at its feet. Hindus from all parts of India make pilgrimages to Gokarna at this time of the year to attend the fair and to gain merit. Its temporary bazaar consists of long rows of sheds which line the streets connecting the two functioning temples.  

Fryer records “tides of people sweep from the bazaar to a “large oblong stone Tank” waters and give rice and money to Brahmins. The tame
fish which swim in the tank are held to be sacred. Mourners offer hair as part of their funeral rites. A barber, while standing in the water, shaves the hair off the head and face of the bereaved. It is wrapped and handed over to a Brahman who brings a cow and a calf into the water to receive the offering of hair. The mourners are then taken to the temple, which they enter barefooted with their offering for the idol. On leaving the temple they strike a bell, pick up slippers on the porch and wash themselves in the tank. Near the tank stands a temple around which yogis concentrate. Some, covered with ashes, wear their own plaited hair as turbans. One of the yogis wears a gold ring "fastened into his Virile Member."

At the marketplace of Gokarna a procession of idols passes by. Two “cars” decorated with paintings and streamers carry the idols and their attending Brahmins. The “cars” are accompanied by musicians, dancing girls and ensign-bearers. Five hundred armed men precede and two hundred follow the nayak’s conveyance. This entourage is followed by a medley of male drummers and dancers. As the “cars” pass from one temple to the other, the procession is followed by the “Gentry in Cavalcade,” who pay their respects to the idols and bring the ceremony to an end by discharging their guns. As the formal ceremony proceeds, devotees run about as if possessed and compete with one another in exhibitions of religious fervor. While the ruins of Gokarna are innumerable, one figure escaped destruction and is “therefore highly venerable.” The height of a man, with four heads and hands, it is a “Piece of Admirable Work and Antiquity” cut of black marble."

Although Gokarna is the seat of a Hindu university, it boasts no library to compare to the Bodleian or the Vatican. Their books are generally
old manuscripts of religious texts which include nothing about the history of Gokarna. The students and teachers do not live in colleges but in separate houses with their families.  

Celibacy is not required of their divines. However, a house of the “Sinai” (Mahratti, chhianave, meaning ninety-six) caste is headed by a celibate old man who is attended by a great many ascetics and Brahmins who spend their lives in prayer and abstinence. They count their prayers on a rosary of cowries and wear red caps. The most rigorous and purest of the Brahmins are those called “Butt” (Bhat). All Brahmins are distinguished by the sacred thread they wear, and some, accompanied by music and dancing girls, go to the tank three or four times daily to fetch water for the idols. Dancers, both males and females, are recruited from the caste called “Dowlys” (Mahratti, devali, son of a woman devoted to an idol.) The eldest son daughter of each family in these caste become dancers dedicated to the temple. They may not dance elsewhere. They receive “large dispensations concerning their marriage, or the Liberty of getting Children, being common to all.”

Just south of Gokarna is “Tudera” (Tudri), a small town at the mouth of the “Mirja” (Mirjan) river, slightly upriver is the town of Mirjan, which has an old but excellent fortress with a wide moat around it. Once subject to a Muslim governor (probably of Bijapur), Mirjan was then ruled by the “Canatick Ranna” (Queen Cannammaji of Bednur). The town was a market center and possessed a Muslim cemetery and an “ample Aquaduct of good Stone.” At this town Fryer was told by the natives that Kanara stretched along the coast from the Gongavali River southward to the borders of Calicut and inland to the “Pepper-Mountains of Sunda (Sonda) “The capital and residence of the “Ranna” (queen) is at “Bedmure” (Bednur, now Nagar in Mysore). The queen was widow of “Sham Shanker Naig”
(Somasekhara Nayaka I (r. 1664-71) who was murdered by his own nobles. She ruled the country during the minority of her son “Bassepae Naig” (Basavappa Nayaka I (r. 1696-1714) with the support of “Timi Naig” (Timmanna), her general and protector. Timmanna had concluded an alliance with “Sergi Caun” (Sheriza Khan) of Bijapur and it was rumored that the Kanara general was about to become a Muslim.

In Kanara the leading nobles are called nayaka. The prevailing language is Kanarese, probably the primitive tongue of the coastal region from Malabar to Surath. Other dialects of this area are variations of it. Names of places change with the fortunes of war. Wild elephants, betel nuts, and wild nutmeg, used as a dye, grow in Kanara. The world’s best pepper grows in Sonda; it was known in England as Karwar pepper. The raja of Sonda, a tributary of Bijapur, sold most of his pepper in India, so that little of it arrived in England. The raja of “Saranpatan” (Seringapatam or Mysore) should not be passed by in silence. Since it is against his faith to kill, he trained his soldiers in the use of an instrument to cut the noses of his enemies so as to deform them. He was generally feared and he controlled a vast territory east of Calicut. The Kanarese delighted in arming birds with razors for cockfights. Europeans hunted and fished to obtain meat in this Hindu world. Fryer even has an opportunity to dissect a local tiger and a number of apes. He also provided semi-scientific descriptions of bamboo, the “Cassia Fistula Tree” (Indian Laburnum), the Cassia lignia (false cinnamon), tamarind trees, teak trees and other trees. In their fields the Kanarese grow paddy, various millets and flax,; in enclosures they cultivated turmeric and ginger. Potatoes were served at their banquets.

Despite all the blessings conferred upon them by a generous nature, some Hindus “sink below Brutes” in their superstitions. These “dregs” will
worshiped stalks and made oblations to devils. At “semissar” (Shiveshar) frenzied women copulated with the idol.\textsuperscript{186} Priests of the god were welcomed into the homes of the devout “to the Wife a Kindness”.\textsuperscript{187} Under the banyan tree they sacrificed a cock to placate the devil with blood. Snakes were brought into the house to protect the family from devils. The better sort of people acknowledged a god, lived by their caste rules and followed more “innocent rites.” At the spring festival of \textit{Holi}, they cut down a tree, striped it erect the remaining pole near the temple, decorated it with pennant and bound straw around it which they set on fire. From study of the flame, the Brahmins pronounced their auguries. Then they offered rice and flowers, painted their bodies with the ashes and departed in procession to the accompaniment of drums. In addition to those who believed in the works of the devils and the gods, there were atheists who perversely and wrongly attributed everything to chance.\textsuperscript{188}

Kanara, like Goa and Bijapur, suffered after 1660 from the raids of Sivaji and the civil wars that swept the Deccan and the entire coast of Kanara. The retreat of the Portuguese from Malabar in the 1660’s likewise brought about a shift in the pepper-trading centers so vital to Kanara’s export trade. Through-out the remainder of the century the Portuguese were generally successful in maintaining good relations with Ikkeri despite the efforts of the Dutch and Cochin to sever up (break) this connection. In Europe by end of the century Goa, Bijapur and Kanara belonged to the past and were associated only with the days of Portuguese glory on India’s west coast. Under Dutch and English influence the attention of Europe was drawn almost entirely to the Mughul Empire and the Malabar and Coromandel coasts.
Notes and references:

12. Ibid., p.311, 325, 358.
29. *MAR*, 1933, No.28.
33. MAR, 1933, No.30.
35. Inscription belonging to the reign of Bukka I found about half a mile to the south of Mandarti temple.
37. Ibid., No.311.
40. Ibid., p.149.
43c. ARSIE, 1929-1930, No’s. 588, 579.
43d. Ibid
45. IA, XXIII, p.40; Ibid, XXIV, p.148; XXX, pp.296, 297.
47c. ARSIE, 1931-32, No.282.
49. Ibid,
51. Ibid, No.423.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid, No.324.
57. Ibid, No. 382.
58. Ibid, No. 334.

60. Gururaj Bhat, Studies, pp.234-36.


62. One species of land tenure in South Kanara noticed by Munro is Naya-Geni. This is specially found in Barakuru; Saletore, Op.cit, P.300.


64. SII, VII, No's. 199, 200, 207, 209, 246, 248, 255, 262, 264; EI, VII, No.10; Ibid. XX, pp.88-92.


66. SII, VII, No’s. 212, 242; EI, VII, No.10; Ibid, XX, pp.89-97; KI, III, No’s. 11, 14.


71. EC, VIII, TI, No’s. 83, 92, 97, 88, 63, 75; Ibid, VI, Kp.46; ARIE, 1969, Ap A, No.9

72. MAR, 1923, No’s.104,107.


80. G.M. Mores, Mangalore: A Historical sketch, p. 60; Buchanan, p. 218-19.

81. Buchanan, Ibid; Silva,Ibid, pp.150, 166.


83. Buchanan, Ibid, p.252, 304; Sturrock, South Canara, p.128.


85. IA, XXIII, pp.34-38.


90. IA, XXIV, p.67;
Bidu also means payment of money to manorial house.
93. Seer is one form of rice measurement.
98. Ibid, p.271.
108. The Voyages of Huyghoten to East Indies. II, p.262.
110. Mohibul Hassan, Tipu Sultan, pp.337, 343.
111. ARSIE, 1929, No.495; Ramesh K.V, A History of South Kanara, P. 181.
117. PIHRC XI, P.111-12.
122. EC, Vol.VI, Cm.88.
125. EC, VIII, SB, No. 475, p.213.
129. *Ibid*, p.266.
145. *Ibid*, pp. 234-41. Apparently this is the first Hindu temple which Della Valle had time and opportunity to give his full action. It was dedicated to Vikramadeva, according to Swaminathan, *op.cit*, p. 237.
147. Ikkeri controlled the west coast of Kanara from Gersoppa in the north to Tuluva in the south, Swaminathan, *op.cit*, p. 41.
151. *Ibid*, II, pp. 279-85. These lengthy descriptions of processions and festivals are cited in Swaminathan, *op.cit*, pp. 216-19. They are particularly valuable because of the perspicacity and enthusiasm of the author and because native sources almost never bother to describe such mundane events.
152. Sati, “a woman who is pure” because she is faithful. On the various aspects of suttee see Grey (ed.), op. cit, II, pp. 266-67, 273-77.

153. The Nethravati, with its affluent the Kumaradhari, and the Gurupur river have a common backwater and outlet at Mangalore; S.D. Misra, Rivers of India, New Delhi, 1970, p. 119.

154. Some walls of this ruined fort can still be seen. See Swaminathan, op. cit, P. 55.


163. On the great Mahabaleshwara temple is built in the Dravidian style and is renowned because it contains a fragment of the original lingam given to Ravana by Siva. More than one hundred lamps burn perpetually at this shrine.

164. Fryer in Crooke (Ed.), op.cit, II, pp. 33-34. This is probably the Koti pool, in the center of which lingam stands. Shaving of hair by mourners is not permitted for ten days after the death. With the permission of the Brahmans the chief mourner and his near relatives are thereafter shaved. Cf. the eighteenth- century observations of the Abbe Dubois in H.K. Beauchamp (trans, and ed.), Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies by the Abbe J.A. Dubois (3rd ed., Oxford, 1959). Today this is not a mourning rite, but a votive offering of hair by both men and women asking for special favors. The temple sells this human hair.

165. The matted hair is the Jata or Siva’s knot, which represents Vayu, the lord of wind. See A. Danielou, Hindu Polytheism, New York, 1964. P. 215.

166. Karalingi, a practice followed by certain ascetics of Siva.
172. Possibly a reference to the well-carved figure of Brahma which stands to south of the Mahabaleshwar temple.


174. Probably a sannyasi, a holy man and his followers


176. Mirjan no longer exists. Fryer’s description is one of its few remains.

177. The capital of north Kanara was around 1640 from Ikkeri to Bendur by the Keladi ruling house.

178. On his last days see Swaminathan, op. cit, P. 115.

179. Ibid., pp. 117-18. Basavappa was her adopted son.


181. Ibid., pp. 42-43 Chikka Deva (r. 1672-1704) of Mysore was notorious for his cruelty.

182. Ibid., pp. 68-76. The potato (Solanum tuberosum) was probably introduced to western India by the Portuguese. That they would serve it at banquets is probably an indication of its rarity.

183. Lingam worship.

184. Refers to the Jangam priests of the Lingayat sect.

185. Fryer in Crooke (Ed.), op.cit. II. Pp.77-82.