CHAPTER - I

1.1. Introduction:

As of September 2013, India had a population of 1.7 billion, in 28 states, with a population of 61,130,704 in Karnataka State.

Karnataka is situated south of Maharashtra State, south-east of Goa, west of Andhra Pradesh, north and northwest of Tamil Nadu, north-east of Kerala, and east of the Arabian Sea. Karnataka has about four hundred kilometres of coastline; wedged between the Arabian Sea and the Western Ghats with the temple town of Udupi being one such jewel on the coast.

1.2. A brief background of Udupi

Udupi district was established in 1997, on August 7. Udupi, Kundapur and Karkala - three northern taluks - were bracketed in one unit, separate from Dakshina Kannada district, to form Udupi district. The latitude for Udupi is 13.35 and the longitude is 74.75.

Udupi district is surrounded by Uttara Kannada district in the north, Dakshina Kannada district towards south, its north east side is bordered by Shivamogha district and Chikamagalur district is on the east. The Arabian Sea laps the shores of Udupi on its west. The temple town of Udupi is famous for Udupi cuisine, and Udupi is home to the Ashta Matha or eight Matts, which take care of the world famous Udupi Sri Krishna temple.

Udupi is also the address of some of the best educational institutions in the country, the town being a stone’s throw away from Manipal. The administrative headquarters of Udupi district is Udupi town. Udupi had a population of 11,77,908 (year unverified). Males constituted 49% of the population and females 51%. The
average literacy rate was 83%, higher than the national average of 59.5%; male literacy was 86% and female literacy 81%. Eight percent of the population was under 6 years of age. Udupi has had a City Municipal Council since 1995 when Manipal, Malpe and Santhekatte merged with it to form the Municipal Council. The Udupi Urban Development Authority (UUDA) is in charge of town planning and other related development activities.

The Western Ghats in the vicinity have forests with rattan cane and bamboo, which tribes like the Koraga use to make baskets with. The tribes and the forests have had a symbiotic relationship for several centuries, may be even millennia. The forests are also home to various fig species like the country fig (*atti*), the sacred fig (*aralimara*), and *Ficus bengalensis* (the Banyan). The typical weather of this area is marked by intense rainfall and high levels of rainfall, plus unvarying humidity.

### 1.3. A brief history of Udupi

Udupi was named for its Tulu name ‘Odipu’, which in turn is associated with a temple at Malpe, devoted to Vadabhandeshwara. Another story is that the name Udupi came from the combination of the Sanskrit words ‘Udu’ and ‘Pa’, which mean "stars" and "lord." This has its basis in mythology - the moon's brightness diminished when cursed by King Daksha, whose 27 daughters were married to the moon. The moon prayed to Lord Shiva, who pleased with the moon's devotion, restored its radiance and glow. Legend says that the moon and his wives did the praying at the Chandramouleeshwara temple, Udupi, creating a linga that can be seen even today. According to this story, Udupi stands for the land of the "lord of the stars," the moon.
Udupi was carved out as a separate district from the erstwhile Dakshina Kannada district on 25 August 1997. Udupi, Kundapura and Karkala were bifurcated from the Dakshina Kannada District and Udupi District was formed.

1.4. The Koragas – a brief introduction

Partly within Karnataka, nestled in the former Tuluva Nadu area, are the tribal community – Koragas – found mainly in the Dakshin Kannada, Udupi district of Karnataka, and Kasarod district, in Kerala. Spread over two states, they are a community of around twenty two thousand people (in 2013) subdivided into three groups in Udupi – Sappina, Ande, and Kappada/Vastra Koraga. (Kapada in Hindi means ‘cloth’ and Vastra in Sanskrit means ‘clothing’ or ‘cloth’ suggesting a north Indian connection.) The Koraga are one of two tribal groups in Karnataka called Primitive Tribes, the other one being the Jenu Kuruba. The Koragas have a collective memory of a tribal chieftain called Hubbashika who was treacherously betrayed and killed, after which the community was turned into bonded labor or something approaching slavery.

The Koraga tribe, the subject of this study, lives in and around Udupi district. The total population of the Koragas was 2800 families as per the report collected from Spoorthidhama, an NGO of Kundapur taluk. To get a robust coverage of the community, 10% urban population and another 10% of rural population were taken for intensive study of the Koragas in Udupi district.

In the years 2010-13, a field study was done on the Koragas of Udupi district, to estimate how globalization had impacted socio-cultural life in the community. A questionnaire, fourteen field visits, interviews of 540 heads of families, plus contact with important officials who were working with and for the Koragas resulted in the following thesis.
MAP OF KARNATAKA
1.5. Hypothesis

‘A hypothesis is a tentative proposition formulated for empirical testing… It is a tentative answer to a research question. Its veracity can be tested only after it has been tested empirically.’ Krishnaswami, p 81

This thesis covers two aspects: the historic and the present – the diachronic and synchronic.

The Koragas, a tribe in Udupi district, studied by scholars and government officials, from written records from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century onwards have undergone massive change. Today’s Koragas are said to have changed under the winds of globalization. How far true, we can only guess with a bit of research into their history, their present status, and their current environment. What we call globalization may actually be nationalization or modernization…

1.6. Change among the Koragas – is it globalization or something else?

The effect of globalization on all aspects of human being is supposedly far and wide. In anthropology, many studies point to the overwhelming wave-like impact of globalization on indigenous communities. But globalization may actually be nationalization, or modernization, or something totally different (for the Koragas).

Globalization or nationalization means also that traditional stigmas like untouchability, lack of clothing, lack of access to temples have been completely left behind, maybe even (hopefully) gone extinct.

Signs of globalization percolate to socio-cultural and economic aspects. Economic indicators must include better housing, diverse occupations that have left the past behind, and a lifestyle that includes travel, higher education, access to better schooling, regional and local political rights and representation. For the Koragas,
change in access to forest produce, or a lack of raw material for their traditional occupations of basket- and mat-making may be incentive to change to other occupations, with a resultant push towards globalization or modernization, long term. In the past, the world view of the Koragas was Udupi-Kasargod districts, the coast, the villages, the nearby towns and forests of Karnataka and Kerala.

If travel, technology and TV bring the outside world to the Koragas, can the Koragas long insulate themselves from globalization, or modernization or Indianization?

Neither the rural nor the urban respondents have a monopoly on socio-cultural changes triggered by globalization, modernization or nationalization.

Illiteracy is being replaced by literacy and education. So, is the effect of globalization through education, schooling, going to college, slowly replacing the ethnic identity of the Koragas through regionalization via education? May be yes, or may be no.

The Koragas, a tribe residing in the former Tulu Nadu for a few centuries, have been documented by scholars and government officials who studied them, and we can detect change in the community from written records from the nineteenth century onwards. Today’s Koragas are said to have changed. How far true, we can only guess with a bit of research into their history, their present status, and their current environment. What we call globalization may actually be nationalization or modernization… we need to study this seriously to be able to pinpoint the exact influence that has impacted the Koragas.

Koraga presence in Tulu Nadu could be either due to external migration - due to trade from outside India to within, or, an internal historic migration - as a sub-caste
of defeated warrior tribes forced to move south after their fabled chieftain Hubashika was killed treacherously.

One way to gauge change is to look at historic and current day references not only on the Koraga but also on other related groups; and written records on them by both Europeans and Indians from the 19th to the 21st centuries. A few of these records support the premise of internal migration for the Koragas. Whether the changes in the Koragas status and lifestyle over time are due to colonization, nationalization, or globalization, we need to check and see how much each has impacted the tribe.

1.7. Primary and secondary research

Most research builds on past research. This thesis uses primary research and secondary research, and both have been used to explain if, and how much, there is of the long-term effect of globalization on the Koragas. Subjects of anthropological studies in the past were most likely to be local communities and cultures.

Today, though numbering barely about 22,000, the Koragas nevertheless have a distinct identity. How this identity has been (or not), impacted by globalization is at the core of this thesis. The Koragas are called a Scheduled Tribe today, but they were called, and emancipated from the category of, a ‘slave caste’ in the past, as recently as the time of The East India Company.

When change happens, there is some type of protest or adaptation, assimilation or local ethnic community groupings, anger and fury on the one hand and peaceful acceptance and embrace of change on the other. To recognize and comprehend globalization, we must connect to real people – Koraga housewives in modern kitchens, Koraga workers with modern implements and basket work designs, Koraga students getting scholarships to go to school, youngsters networking with the
Internet or cell phones, Koragas travelling on buses, plying rickshaws, riding bikes, etc. In practice, globalization makes a difference to lifestyle. Whether globalization is actually modernization or nationalization or localization, we cannot predict in the community – the Koraga - it is applied to. Consumerism is on the increase, and consumerism is a trademark feature of a globalized world. We need to study and conclude for ourselves what actually is happening. From slave caste of the past to a modern ‘Indian citizen’, charting the ‘progress’ of the Koragas gives us a hint of the increasing ‘Indianization’, or globalization, or modernization, or any other influence on these people.

1.8. Globalization in anthropology

In the history of anthropology, the classic era covers the period from 1900 to 1945, where primitive tribes, clans, etc. were studied. As of today – 2013 – globalization is one of the rising sub-disciplines in anthropology, and has been since 1990. Traditional anthropology always studied ethnic groups; globalization studies Diaspora, travel for economic purposes, communities like the Palestinians – a nation without a country, trans-nationals and many other ethnic groups who have lost their native lands. Globalization helps us understand modern day change better. In the continuum of influence, localization is succeeded by regionalization, nationalization and lastly, but not least, globalization… a single unified system. The identity change of the Koragas can be explained top down, from globalization to ethnic tribal identity, or wave like, from side to side, regionalization to localization.
1.9. Objectives of the study

This study had the following objectives:

a. To analyze the social and cultural aspects of the Koraga tribe like their history, origin, migration, social stratification, and food habits through records in the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries

b. To observe changes in settlement patterns and housing

c. To examine changes in the institution of marriage

d. To examine changes in their economic activities

e. To analyze the political exposure and civic authority among Koragas

f. To understand health care practices, the influence of modern medicine

g. To study the impact of globalization on the Koragas, on all six topics mentioned above, and record it on videos and in photographs – a sort of audiovisual record of a tribe

1.10. Aim and scope of the study:

The present study aimed to understand the impact of these various forces, global (and maybe national), on the life style and living conditions of Koragas at present. The study has focused on both rural and urban Koragas to find out changes (either from globalization or nationalization or something else) that have taken place in the life of the Koragas at Udupi town as well as in neighboring villages. The research is aimed at assessing change, always an indicator. It also sums up the historic influences, which have now gone hopefully into extinction.
1.11. Importance of the study

Globalization, and its influence on the socio-cultural life of Koragas in Udupi district, is topically important. The study on the Koragas is a small study, equally distributed between urban and rural areas which has social relevance because it contributes towards better understanding of a tribal group changing from primitive to mainstream, though there is some way to go before they arrive at being completely mainstream.

The future progress of any human group can only be planned after collecting necessary basic information. This is pertinent for a tribe like the Koragas. Any plan or action designed to upgrade living conditions, economy, education, health standards, eradication of prejudices, will be a monumental failure unless backed with important basic information, which should be obtained before the plan is structured together and implemented. Development must be based on the local parameters of the tribe, if not it will leave the tribe high and dry, and result in a waste of energy and resources. How is development taking place? What impact are different agencies like the government, NGOs having on their subjects?

In the twenty-first century, many governmental and NGO programs have been implemented and many initiatives undertaken to improve the lot of the Koragas. However, the ‘trickle down’ effects are not uniform. The reason may be the pull between tradition and modernity, or the widening influence of globalization in the garb of modernity. Audiovisual anthropology can save, record, and depict basic conditions that help make the policy makers formulate informed decisions, and this thesis has made use of this.
1.12. Limitations of the study:

One limitation is that all the Koragas were not covered, because, the Koragas of Kasargod, in Kerala, were left out. Besides this, only heads of households (mostly men) answered the questionnaire in a majority of cases. Had the women exclusively replied, this would probably have been a different thesis.

Most of the changes the Koragas display, which can be marked, can be the result of simultaneously, various other influences. There could have been an attempt to study the effects of regionalization, nationalization or modernization, but that would have widened the scope too much to be tied up neatly. Also, the anthropology of globalization is more like a wind than a wave. It is the context against which tradition, development and progress must be viewed.

Though geneticists and ethno-historians posit a common connection between the prehistoric Koraga and the ancient Abyssinians, not much work has been done to prove this historic connection. What studies have been done is very minimal. Nothing about the origins of the Koragas connecting them to a distant land has been proved on this issue though it has been discussed.

No where through the questionnaire and subsequent interviews has the word ‘globalization’ been covered. All our findings on spread and influence of globalization are deduced from an analysis of the answers. The effects of globalization show up in Koraga beliefs and attitudes, in external features like an increased age span, never seen before affluence, an increase in different forms travel and communication and thanks to a wave of consumerism, they have become ‘a modern’ community ruted in both the past and present.
So as not to influence the respondents, the researcher conducted all interviews without mentioning the term globalization.

1.13. Status change

The Koragas are a community that have had several changes in status as historic accounts and official reports relate… from warrior tribe (of Hubbashika fame) to slave caste, primitive tribe to Scheduled Tribe. Numbering a bare 21,000, this study tries to assess how much globalization has made a change in their socio-cultural and economic aspects.

1.14. Diversification of occupations

Occupations of the Koragas have diverged from the traditional basket making, scavenging, mat making, etc. Any divergence of occupation can be attributed to a community becoming more specialized and therefore more complex. The data shows that most of the Koragas had jobs like laborers, innovative basket makers, shop assistants, hospital attendants, auto rickshaw drivers, etc., a change from the past. The data also shows that both in rural and urban areas, the Koraga community is not involved much in government white collar posts, community service or civic responsibility. Less than 10% of Koragas are involved in work that can make a difference and bring about a change in their own community.

Wage labor has been a good incentive for the Koragas to change from traditional occupations to other occupations. (Maralusiddaiah had already taken note of the trend of changing occupations from traditional to non-traditional for better wages in 1997.) There is a possibility that as occupations, and therefore incomes, and places of residence diverge, the Koraga will change or lose many features that classify them as a Scheduled Tribe today. But it may be a slow process, and may take another
two or three generations. What makes a Koraga a Koraga is something they carry with them, and may be their ethnicity can stand up to the influences of time and distance.

1.15. Education and literacy

In this particular study, literacy levels of the younger generation in the data show a refreshing turn for the better. In rural areas, more children were admitted to government schools than private schools. In urban areas, this trend continues but the ratio for private schools is higher in urban areas, probably because urban respondents earned better and could afford the higher private school tuition fees and/or lived closer to the schools. Most private schools are English medium helping the children assimilate better with non Koragas and outsiders. Eighty two percent of school-going Koragas of Udupi district receive scholarship. Scholarships range from government grants to NGO scholarships from Rotary, Lions club, etc. The exact sums were not revealed. Dr. Babu is the first Koraga to attain a Ph.D. His thesis is in the field of applied chemistry, and was submitted to Mangalore University. In December, 2013, Sabitha of Gundmi village, Brahmavar, Udupi district, was appointed as an assistant professor in the post-graduate department of Sociology, Mangalore University. She had cleared the NET (National Eligibility Test) in 2010. In 2011, she cleared the state level eligibility test conducted by Mysore University. Sabitha rued the fact that many Koraga children discontinued their studies for reasons like migration, or certain demeaning practices imposed on them by the upper castes. Sabitha has now been awarded a fellowship to do her Ph.D. *(The Times of India, December 29, 2013)*

On the downside, NGOs like Spoorthidhama stated (in 2006) that there is a real need for an alternative educational structure for the Koragas. Firstly, the language spoken by Koraga children is Koraga, which puts them at a disadvantage in regular three-language formula schools. Teachers in the schools that Koraga students
regularly go to, also need to be more compassionate and accepting of the shy introvert tribal children. When there is no inbuilt compassion, there is no connect, and the Koraga students end up dropping out. Besides this, there is the problem of poverty, where the children are used as unskilled labor to help their parents do labor work, and the distance factor, where the children have to go long distances to attend school. A probable solution would be exclusive Koraga primary schools, or separate units where Koragas are taught within the normal tri-language school system.

1.16. Participation in self-governance activities

On the rise, slowly, are awareness and participation in self-governance activities. There are very few appointments in local governance bodies like co-operative societies, membership in local self government, and in NGOs like Spoorthidhama, which only works for Koragas. The reason for this is Koragas have begun to participate in elections for grama panchayath and taluk panchayath posts only recently in the 21st century and do not always win the elections.

Two self help groups with Koraga participation are Dharmasthala Gramabivriddi Yojana and Navodaya Swasahaya Sanga who give personal loans for marriage, education, healthcare, etc. up to the sum of one lakh. Payment terms are easy, and result in less indebtedness. More than half the urban respondents and less than quarter the rural respondents were aware of democratic institutions, knew their rights as a Scheduled Tribe and actively participated in voting. One unusual finding - one fifth of rural and one fourth of urban respondents are members of different political parties. All are primary members (primary membership means voluntary membership through token payment).
1.17. A brief review of past stereotypical features of the Koraga

Primitive and Scheduled Tribes come with a few stereotypical features in their past… features like backwardness, untouchability, illiteracy. Do these features still continue, or should we change the status of the Koraga, without stopping Union Government benefits, from Scheduled Tribe to merely another tribe? When speaking to heads of households, these backward features did not show up. Just a few years back in 1998, when Maralusiddhaiah Patel and his research partners studied the Koragas, the tribe had a 21% literacy rate. In 2013, this has changed dramatically (as seen in the small sample studied) with both government and NGOs dangling the carrot of scholarship to motivate the Koraga youngsters to complete their schooling, and study further.

1.18. What exactly is impacting the Koragas?

Globalization, nationalization, regionalization, modernization? What?

Since the 1990s, globalization has been one of the key issues of anthropology. The present study has tried to cover socio-economic changes in far flung areas of the country, on Koragas who were considered a Scheduled Tribe, impacted (or not) by the wind of globalization.

1.19. Data Collection

Primary data was collected through questionnaires, with photographs, videos, and extensive note taking. Secondary data came from newspaper reports, books, journals, the Internet, and other sources. The 1997 thesis of Maralusiddaiah on *Socio-economic changes among the Koraga* is a good field study on the Koragas. This study is a post 2012 update on the Koragas. And it covers the effects of globalization, modern travel, better access to modern amenities and healthcare, and other features.
Also, in the present study, much information has been gleaned from the Internet. Change has happened. How much influence globalization has on far flung communities like the Koragas is something this study will attempt to analyse. Ethnography as empirical data on human societies and culture was pioneered in the socio-cultural branches of anthropology.

1.20. Review of literature of Koraga history

*The Arthasastra* of Kautilya, written in the 300s BCE, in North India, mentions the four *varnas* – Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra. Intermarriage between women of a higher *varna* with men of the Sudra *varna*, was called *Pratiloma*, or ‘against the natural order.’ *Pratiloma* children were grouped in the Chandala category.

During the time of Chandragupta Maurya, when *The Arthasastra* was written, the Chandala came under the category of ‘untouchable’ as evidenced by statements like - ‘the well of a Chandala is of use only to the Chandala’. If a Chandala touched an Arya woman (Brahmin, Kshatriya, or Vaishya), he was fined a 100 *panas*. The Chandala could eat meats prohibited for the other communities. The Chandala were used for humiliating punishments – dragging the body of a suicide through the streets; publicly whipping a woman accused of bad behavior. Walhouse quotes from the Brahmins that the Koragas were the lowest of fifteen Chandala groups.

Prior to Independence, both East India Company officials and officials appointed by the crown have written about the Koragas. Ullal Raghavendra Rao (1874), Walhouse (1878), Oppert (1893), Sturrock (1894), Thurston (1909), and Saletore (1936) have all made contributions to our understanding of the Koragas. Thurston, quoting Oppert, 1893, says that, ‘the Koragas are now the lowest of the
slave divisions, and regarded with such intense loathing and hatred, that up to quite recent times, one section of them called Ande, continually wore a pot suspended from the neck, into which they were compelled to spit, being so unclean as to be prohibited from spitting on the highway; and to this day their women continue to show in their leafy aprons a memorial of the abject degradation to which their whole race was doomed.'

Coming closer to the present, according to Balfour and the first *Administration Report* (1893) of the Madras Presidency (after the British Government took over the administration of India from the East India Company in 1857), an Abyssinian brought an army from Ananthapur (Shimoga district) in which the Koragas formed a part; that the army was at first victorious but later was defeated and that the Koragas were driven to the jungle. It refers to the Koragas’ origin as antecedent to the early population of the area (probably one of the first indigenous tribes of India).

Gustav Oppert (1893), a Sanskrit scholar, has a different take. While he agrees that little is known about the Koragas’ previous history, he suggests a new theory about the Koragas. He points out that though there are contradictions in the different versions of the story connecting Hubbashika with several Kadamba rulers - that by itself need not make the main tradition regarding Hubbashika, unauthentic. His new theory covers the Scythian (Shaka) King Kanishka. King Kanishka or Kanerkes of the Korano or Kushan tribe in the north western India (undivided) started the Saka Era in A.D.78, and, was succeeded by Huviska or Hoverkes. His reign in the second century A.D. corresponds to the reign of Trinetra Kadamba of the Kadamba dynasty. The similarity of names of the two tribes Korano and Koraga coupled with the similarity of the two names Huviska and Hubbashika makes one suspect these two personages to be identical.
To quote Oppert, “If this is the case, we must consider whether there existed one or two or more kings of this same name. If only one king of the name rules, his exploits must consider whether there existed one or two or more kings of this same name. If only one king of the name ruled, his exploits must have been transferred to a subsequent period in order to confer on the then reigning dynasty (in this circumstance on the race of the Kadambas) the glory of having slain such a distinguished sovereign. The invasion of the Korango, can thus be appropriately explained as an inroad into India made by a kindred tribe and leads to the suggestion that Hubbashika, king of the Koragas, may be identified with Huviska, king of the Korano or Kushan. If we can trace more than one ruler of the name Huviska (Hubbashika), the difficulty as to the date is removed. Yet, I feel inclined that only one king of this name did exist and that Hubbashika or Huviska’s invasion is separated from Lokaditya’s reign by a long intervening period. The identity of the original Hubbashika’s with Huviska will be of considerable historical interest, as it proves the great impression which the invasions of the Indo-Scythians made on the mind of the Indian people”.

Hayavadana Rao, while referring to the same story mentioned in the Mackenzie Collections, points out that “These traditions, no doubt, include much that is entitled to credit”. But, quoting from the Epigraphica Carnatica, he points out that the finding of the Talgunda stone inscription in Shikarpur of Shivamogha district makes the story regarding the period and dynasty as mentioned above, not correct.

Saletore claims the Koragas to be the original and earliest inhabitants of Tuluva Nadu. In support of this, he points out that the Paddadanas, which are “Panegyrical songs sung in honor of the great heroes and heroines of ancient and medieval Tuluva”, in the Tulu language, abound in songs describing the brave deeds
of the heroes who belonged to Tuluva, the prominent ones being the Koragas, Holeyas, Billavas, Bants, etc. The traditions, according to him, “eulogize the powerful Koragar king named Hubbashika and his nephew”. The Koragas had some part in running the administration and also had rights of the soil and proprietary rights long before the Alupas became the rulers of Tuluva. They were also addicted to warfare. But Saletore dismisses the story of the defeat of a Kadamba king at the hands of Hubbashika, claiming the story to be of a later period. The word ‘Hubbusika’ according to him is given to Abyssinia (Ethiopia). He thinks that the Koragas of South Kanara are Bhils and that one subdivision among them, called Soppu Koragas, belongs to the Parna Sabara group by which name the wild tribes were known throughout India.

According to “A Tuluvite”, the Koragars and the Holeyas were the early settlers of Tuluva. “They are not to be judged by the conditions they are reduced to by the subsequent Dravidian invaders in Tuluva. Even in their subsequent abject conditions, they exhibit a high degree of physical stamina and a rare spirit of initiative. These qualities are the legacy left of their former glory”. The tenor of the writings of these authors referred to above goes to show their oscillation between disbelief and probability of the story, legends and the traditions about Hubbashika, which lead them to the question whether such a person did really exist, ruled for only twelve years and left an imprint, leaving nothing regarding himself or his community either before or after his foray into history. Duarte Barbosa was the first European to refer to the Koragas, though indirectly. Barbosa wrote The Book of Duarte Barbosa (original title, Livro de Duarte Barbosa) in 1516. Barbosa visited Kasargod in 1514. The Koragas were bracketed under the bigger, more encompassing Holiyar category.
However, as the differences between Holiyar and Koragas developed, they split and became two separate castes later.

While Buchanan (1801) describes them as “good looking”, calls them “savage”, and their dress as “rude”, Lavie (1833) portrays them as “savage” like Buchanan. Balfour (1858) calls them a “servile race”, while Rao (1871) describes them as “an uncivilized and uneducated hill tribe peculiar in manners, dress and dialect, lowest and most despised” but extols the tribal for his qualities as “illiterate as he is, in his circle virtue thrives in the proper soil”. He is as “frank as a dove, mild as a lamb”… Lying, stealing, adultery and other evils which society is heir to’, he knows not, “He has never appeared in Court of Justice as a defendant in a suit”, “While every nation, every society, nay every individual is striving for honor and improvements, the Koraga bred as a slave, is richly content with his ignorance, his Koppu and squalid poverty. Persuade him to change his clothing, lecture him on his nakedness; and he will run away, or say with his child-like simplicity, ‘I am well off with my poverty’.

Walhouse (1875) points out that they are “a very quiet and inoffensive race, unswerving and trustful” and their word has become “proverbial”. Sherring (1876), a sociologist, describes them as “a strange people, ignorant and superstitious, yet remarkable for the rigid practice of some of the most prominent virtues”. For this remark, he acknowledges the source of Rao’s writings, which he quotes. “An interesting tribe” is the epithet conferred by Stuart (1893), while Oppert (1893) describes them as “shy and retiring”. Thurston (1909) quotes Buchanan, Rao and Walhousie profusely to give a fairly descriptive account. Saletore, who too hails from South Canara district, describes them as a “tribe noted for their honesty and straight dealings”, “well known for their truthfulness and whose word has become
proverbial”, but classifies them as “belonging to the larger group of wild tribes of India” and that “the Koragas were addicted to warfare”.

Coming to the official reports, the first mention about Koragas as “hill tribe” is found in the first regular Census Report of 1871 in which they have been described as the “wild race of Koragas” and Rao’s description account has been quoted ‘in extenso’. In the 1881 Census, they have been described as Aborigines. In both these Censuses, they have been included under the main caste “Pariah” in which several other communities like Kadu Marathis, Male-Kudias have been included. The 1901 census describes them as a “wild tribe of basket makers…”, in the 1931 census, a “caste which pollutes without touching but do not eat beef”. Subsequent censuses do not seem to have made such descriptive or qualitative remarks, especially after 1947.

*The Administration Report* (1893) of the erstwhile Madras Presidency describes them as “a low set of people’ based on the meaning of the word Cora as “defective, narrow, sharp, rude”, and also mentions the tale of an Abyssinian who brought an army from Ananthapur (Shimoga district) in which the Koragas formed a part; that the army was at first victorious but later was defeated and that the Koragas were driven to the jungle

Whatever little historical gleanings that have trickled through the sands of time, about the Koragas, they hinge on Hubbashika who is variously described as a hero, Pariar King invader, chief of savages, distinguished sovereign, King of mountain slave caste, Slave caste prince, wicked chieftain of the mountain slave castes, king of Koragas, Koragar chieftain, etc. The most intriguing factor known about him is that he ruled for twelve years with his nephew Sidha Bhyru, that he demanded a girl of the upper caste in marriage for his nephew (another version being that to get rid of him, he was offered a girl in marriage) and he along with his
followers was trapped and murdered. His twelve year rule, which looks like a speck in the history of mankind, can only be judged by a discerning mind. Nothing is known about the Koraga king either before or after his twelve year rule. Probably his activities for this short period did not qualify him to be considered as a “Ruler” to be given a place in the royal pedestal and to find a place in historical sketches. His story does not have the status of a myth.

But the fact is that it has a place in the chronicles written by the orthodox sections. And some activities of the Koragas, even the fact that the Koragas - now in a wretched condition - are called upon by the upper class to do religious and social ceremonies to ward off certain evils, such as the successive loss of children in a family, show that there is a cultural memory that links today’s Koraga to the glory of their past. And as observed by Rao, “very likely, it is I think, that Hubbashika and his successors ruled very cruelly and ever since their fall, the Hindus, destitute of mercy and eager to revenge themselves upon a fallen victim, must have kept the Koragas under a very rigid surveillance”.

It has already been described that Hubbashika suddenly appears in the pages of written history for a brief period, and vanished equally fast. Where did he come from? Authors differ. The most reliable authority, Ramappa Vormika, while mentioning the fifteen subdivisions of the ‘slave castes’ (of which the last two are the Koragas) says that only four sub divisions viz., Holeyeya, Asadi, Madiga and Nuliga are the aborigines of the (Western) Ghats, the remaining eleven classes being inhabitants of the plains. Therefore the Koragas are from the plains.

Buchanan assembled them at Udupi on the western seacoast - already famous then as a pilgrim town in South Canara - to study their life and manners. Both *Mackenzie Collections* and Wilks refer to the “mountain slave caste chief”. Lavie and
Rao as well as the *Administration Report* mention Hubbashika having marched from Anantpur (in Shimoga district of the then Mysore State), which implies that he was from the Ghats. But Rao says that the Koragas “were forced to become denizens of jungles and hills”. Saletore’s reference to the Koragas and their chieftain as belonging to a branch of the wild tribes spread throughout India, too points towards the above mentioned theory. This is against the ancient documents and the personal researches by western scholars. That the sources of the ancient documents were mostly Brahminical, only strengthens their authenticity leaving a margin for hyperbolic descriptions. As Saletore said, there were rulers who belonged to the tribal class and who were a source of trouble to the local rulers. One has to bear in mind that the introduction of Hubbashika is in serious works like *Vidyaranya Sicca* and *Gramma Paddhati*, both in Sanskrit and some versions of the latter in Kannada too. Buchanan, while referring to these two works, does not make any adverse remarks about their authenticity except that the dates may not be reliable because of the system then prevailing. Lavie’s and Rao’s versions also give credence to this. *Mackenzie Collections* also mention such a person.

Saletore, while claiming that Koragas were the original inhabitants of his own native district in the country of Tuluva, speaks of the antiquity of their community, as even before that of the regular rulers - the Alupas who emerged between the second and fifth century A.D. He confers rulership on them (Koragas), the natural corollary of which is that there must have been a chieftain who guided them. Thus the emergence of a chieftain of the description of Hubbashika cannot be ruled out. It is further stated that he brought an army consisting of several subdivisions of the ‘slave caste’ of which the Koragas formed a part. Of these, special mention has been made about the work allotted to the Koragas only. One section called Marimansa or
Kappata Koragas was made to watch the crops and cattle belonging to the village. Another section, the Headmen, who were raised by Hubbashika to the highest place, were taken to the seashore, naked, to be hanged. The wearing of leaf aprons is ascribed only to the Koraga women and not others (*Memoirs*). Hence, if the story of humiliation by way of forcing them to go naked even while marching towards the gallows is to be believed, the conclusion can be only that he belonged to the Koraga community, because the “privilege” of being humiliated is ascribed only to the Koragas and nobody else.

Saletore’s reference to a stone inscription of the Saka Era 1331 (A.D. 1608) about a grant given by King Vira Bhairava Ksampala of Santra, ruling from Kervashe unearthed in Koraga at Marane (Karkala Taluk) lends significance to the influence of the name and this place within a radius of ten kilometers. It is reported that there are several Koraga families there even today. Evidently this area was in those days predominantly inhabited by the Koragas. A place called Koragara Hade (Koragas’ place) about 1½ km. from Barkur in Udupi Taluk, associated with the rule of a Nicha king 1000 years back, according to oral tradition, still retains that name. A locality called Koragara kote (Fort of Koragas) is reportedly situated inside a Reserve Forest at Shankaranarayana, about 12 km. from Kundapur town. Similar names associated with the name of Koragas, such as Koragara Cheri, and Koragara Kere are there in Mangalore Taluk.

It has already been mentioned that the *Paddadanas* contain narrations of the heroic deeds of certain Tuluva communities such as Bunts, Billavas, Koragas etc. But several *Paddadanas* have been lost as the system of traditional singing of such songs has declined with the passage of time. However there are references about the Koragas in the *Paddadanas*. “In the *Paddadanas*, warlike people are mentioned. Thus
the... Brahmin astrologer had warned Koti and Chennaya that they would have to fight certain people in the Koppu, in the Vani and on the plains. These were the Bakudars, the Koragars and the Mogars.” “Again”, Chennaya took a berry, threw it up, and speared his dagger through the berry, which was reduced to a fine powder like red turmeric.’ (Indian Antiquary, Vol.XXIV (Feb. 1894, p 41). On seeing this, the Koragas and others who had come to fight, took to their heels saying “All our ability and skill would be as nothing in comparison to theirs”. These instances are proof of the fighting temperament of the Koragas, even as late as the seventeenth century when the heroes Koti and Chennaya lived. Unless they were of a warlike nature, the Koragas would not have attempted to attack them, though they gave up the attempt with prudence.

Now to fix the period of reign of Hubbashika - the earliest date is 1450 B.C.E. according to Wilks. Though Ramappa Vormika in the “Memoirs” does not refer to the era when Hubbashika subdued Lokadiraya, Wilk’s account relied on earlier historical records viz., Mackenzie Collections, refers to the record maintained by Ramappa Vormika. Ramappa Vormika’s version is the most ancient one available. Buchanan mentions Hubbashika, does not refer to any period, but quotes from Vidyaranya Sicca according to which Hubbashika’s family was destroyed after B.C.E. 1440. (Buchanan also quotes the Grama Paddhati according to which Hubbashika governed till B.C.E. 447.)

According to Lavie and Rao, Hubbashika ruled Tuluva about 900 years before Christ. In Oppert’s view, it is between the second and fifth century A.D. These different versions of the rule of Hubbashika, based on reliable documents in the eighteenth century and research by scholars who studied the documents, both oral and documentary, range from 1450 B.C.E. to the fifty century A.D. In most chronicles,
Hubbashika is connected with the rule of the Kadambas, and though historians are not unanimous on the period of the Kadambas, most of them agree that it was between the second and sixth century A.D., in which case Hubbashika’s period cannot be before that.

Koraga punishment by the Kadamba regime in ancient times may be fact or may be myth. Either way, it serves to reinforce the crushing of a proud independent tribe to the status of bonded labor or slavery. The Koragas have a collective memory or myth about an ancestral homeland, where there was both power and independence, which is regarded as the real homeland. It is a common occurrence – people once dispersed cannot go back and claim their past homeland.

But the Mackenzie Collections (based on Ramappa Vormika’s version), Wilks, Lavie and Rao refer to the Kadamba story, which places the rule between 1450 B.C.E. and 900 B.C.E. Because of these two different viewpoints, the rule of Hubbashika can fall anywhere between the period 1450 B.C.E. and sixth century A.D. Saletore’s theory that the Koragas, original inhabitants of Tuluva, must have ruled before the Alupas ruled (i.e. between the second and fifth century A.D.), is another point of view of the time frame. Significantly, Rice mentioned four heroes of Tuluva tradition, namely ‘Mayuravarma, Chandragada, Lokaditya and Hubasiga.’ All four are mentioned in the notes above.

As covered above, many, many writers have written about the Koragas; however, no one has attempted a study of the effects of modernization and globalization on them. So, a study of the effect of globalization on 560 families was done via questionnaires, and this thesis is the result.
The Koragas in the twenty-first century have changed. In 2006, NGOs like Spoorthi dhama stated the need for an alternative educational structure for the Koragas because Koraga children speak Koraga, a disadvantage in three-language formula schools. Teachers need training in the schools that Koraga students go to, need to be more compassionate of shy introvert tribal children so that they do not drop out. There is also the problem of poverty, where children are used as unskilled labor to help their parents do labor work, and the distance factor, where the children have to go long distances to attend school. A probable solution would be exclusive Koraga schools or a separate unit where Koragas are taught within the usual school system.

1.21. Chapters covered

Chapter 1 contains an introduction to the topic, and covers a brief background of Udupi, an introduction to the Koragas, aim, scope, importance, limitations, and objectives of the study, globalization and its effects on the Koragas.

Chapter 2 covers methodology, all its various components. Questionnaires, induction and deduction, participant observation and interview techniques, data collection and audiovisual material are all touched upon concisely.

Chapter 3 analyses Koraga origins in history, migratory patterns, social stratification in written records of the past as well as of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Chapter 4 details Indian features of primitive tribes, castes, scheduled tribes, slavery, ethnic groups…

Chapter 5 traces the evolution of the Koragas from nineteenth century, twentieth and twenty-first centuries from caste to tribe or tribe to caste.

Chapter 6 covers globalization and the extent of its impact on the Koragas.
Chapter 7 covers marriage among the Koragas in history and in the present, in written records of the nineteenth, twentieth, twenty-first centuries as well as through news, interviews and data collection in 2010-2013. Has globalization impacted Koraga customs, and rituals, especially the institution of marriage? The chapter also briefly touches upon Hindu-Aryan marriage types, the social milieu in the Koraga, etc.

Chapter 8 is a brief description of language, education and literacy, concentrating on the Koragas.

Chapter 9 captures changes like the impact of globalization through audio-visual anthropology records on the Koraga through pictures, CDs, etc.

Chapter 10 covers data analysis and statistics.

Chapter 11 details findings and conclusion.