CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Moving frontiers of history gave emphasis not only to empires and emperors but also for the presentation in chronological order of successive developments in the means and relations of production. Since history includes all activities of man, it should look beyond government to people, beyond laws to legends, beyond religion to folklore and arts. It deals with every phenomenon intellectual political, social, philosophical, material or emotional relating to man in society. This changing scope of history has provided new dimensions to historical research. This resulted in the preparation of blue print in history to conquer and colonise the new green pastures and virgin lands.

The most valuable offshoot of the nationalist school of historiography is the growth of interest in regional history. Study of regional histories of smaller geographical areas has become more common. This is a useful departure because it corrects the tendency to generalise about the entire Indian subcontinent. It leads to the discovery of new source material in local archives and to great archaeological excavations in the region. The results of these studies fill not only many lacunae in historical knowledge of early period but also act as a corrective to some of the earlier generalisations in history. It also leads to the recognition of the
fact that an area as large as the Indian sub-continent will show evidences of regional variations in the cultural pattern and reveal that historical changes need not be identical nor occur simultaneously.

During the post independence era Indian history is viewed with new perspective with micro and macro level studies receiving special impetus. Keeping pace with trend and to fill the lacunae in Karnataka history the topic HALASI- A STUDY has been chosen for the present study. Though there is no dearth of original sources very few works on the regional history have been produced. In course of the historical evolution of the country, the regions came to acquire special cultural features as well and in many ways a sense of shared historical traditions in language, in social organisations and in art form.

Lying between the far south and Uttarapatha, Deccan had played the significant role in changing the face of the history of peninsular India right from the rise of Nandas in Magadha. Playing the role of an intermediary in the cultural transmission of the life and times of the people of the land beyond the Narmada to the south, it gave rise to the blend of Dravidian and Aryan elements of culture. The Deccan plateau in the centre of which Karnataka is situated is one of the oldest spots on earth where human culture first appeared.
The history of Karnataka presents glorious picture of achievements of man in all fields of activity. In administrative machinery, political institutions, empire building, religious and spiritual activity, philosophical excellence, literature, fine arts, art and architecture as well as cultural integration Karnataka held a unique place of honour in the sub-continent of India which made a solid contribution to the purity and greatness of Indian culture.

The rise of Nanda empire had a background of what is usually called the second urbanisation. Expansion of kingdom by means of conquests, the rising tide of commercial activities, emergence of merchant community and its patronage to Buddhism and Jainism coupled with the well-established network of trade routes and the rise of international trade facilitated the birth of cities and towns. One such city, which found a proud place even in the accounts of Greek geographer Ptolemy, was Halasi.

Celebrated as Śrīvijaya Palāśika the secondary capital in the copper plate records of the early Kadamba King Mṛgēśavarman¹ and Ravivarman² and described as Halasige-12000,³ the head-quarters of the division in the kingdom of the Kadambas of Goa Palāśika is modern Halasi (Lat 15°31', Long 74°39')⁴ now a small town in Khanapur taluk of Belgaum district.

Halasi, a sparkling star in the sky of north Karnataka was held in high esteem for sacredness, power, plenty and prosperity all through the
ages from the dawn of civilisation to the successive centuries of the historical period. Being proximate to Banavasi, Halasi had the privileged position of the secondary capital of the early Kadambas. Halasi might have been a religious centre of considerable importance from early times. Epigraphical records of the 5th century AD furnish details regarding the religious activities in the region. The increasing size of the congregation at the place appears to have encouraged the traders as a profitable centre of commercial exchange. The growing importance of mercantile settlement can be seen from the presence of several groups of traders who besides carrying trading activities even shared the administration of religious and administrative affairs of the town and its surroundings. The proximity of Halasi to Honnavar, Karwar and Goa connected the coastal parts with the plateau region. The religious sanctity of the place and the commercial transactions attracted the attention of the royal families like the Kadambas. Royal administration helped the prosperity of the city, which ultimately was made the capital town. Thus the revival of large-scale commercial activities at both the local level and over long distances did contribute to urbanisation.

Vadagaon-Madhavpur, a suburb of Belgaum city, situated 50 kms north of Halasi was a renowned Satavahana site known for commercial
activities⁶. The declining trend of the Satavahana settlement might have signalised the growth of Halasi as commercial centre in the initial stages.

Geographically the area has been favoured by long stretch of unbroken forest with rich mineral resources and soil formation and watered by the rivers like Malaprabha and Mahādayi known for fertility since the dawn of civilisation. Besides geographical factors political stability and military supremacy of the Kadambas who made Halasi their second home enabled it to bring to the ports the rich products. The description by Greek geographer Ptolemy corroborated by inscriptions, testifies to the vast quantity of mercantile activities in the region.⁷

Halasi had the fortune of being the secondary capital of the early Kadambas, a status it enjoyed even during the rule of the Kadambas of Goa. Surrounding thick forests of the region provided strategic importance. It was a vanadurga i.e., a fortress created by the surrounding forests. Thus the geographical, strategic, commercial and religious importance of Halasi region might have induced the early Kadamba rulers to select it as their secondary capital. From the earliest times, with paucity for a brief while and again under the Kadambas of Goa it was at the pinnacle of its glory.

Present study is aimed at understanding political and cultural aspects of the region Halasināḍu that included parts of Belgaum, Uttara Kannada and Dharwad districts.
During the rule of \textit{yuvarāja} Kākūsthavarma Halasi reached the heights of glory in various facets of culture, art and architecture, which continued for over two centuries till the reign of Harivarma. Banavasi was their main capital while Halasi was the sub-capital. Similarly Uchchangi and Triparvatanagara were also their sub-capitals. Later the vast kingdom of the Kadambas of Goa included Konkan-900 and Halasi-12000. These study aims at throwing light on the role played by \textit{Halasinādu} in the political and cultural history of Karnataka.

\textbf{Earlier Attempts}

A number of scholars have concentrated their attention on the virgin soil of Karnataka and have thrown light on many facets of its history. Francis Buchanan's work \textit{A Journey from Madras Through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malbar} published in 19\textsuperscript{th} century is one of the earliest works, which contains some information about the early Kadambas. Most significant of all the works published in the later half of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century was \textit{The Dynasties of Kanarese Districts of Bombay Presidency} by eminent scholar John F. Fleet. This work further deals with the political history of the Kadambas apart from other dynasties. R.G. Bhandarkar's \textit{The Early History of Deccan}, Gribble's \textit{History of Deccan} and Jouveau Dubreulii's \textit{Ancient History of Deccan} dealt at some length the role played by this part of Deccan during the rule of the early
Kadambas. Sircar in his monumental work, *The Successors of the Satavahanas in the Deccan* has made an excellent review of the political history of the early Kadambas without throwing light on Śrīvijaya Palāsika, the secondary capital. The credit of revealing the panoramic history of the Kadambas for the first time with lot many details goes to George Moraes. His work *Kadamba Kula*, for the first time attempted to reveal the political, military, administrative and cultural history of the early and later Kadambas in a most meticulous way. This work also provided a considerable body of fresh material in the form of epigraphs, coins and art remains. After Moraes, B. R. Gopal published brief but authentic history of the early and later Kadambas. The credit of making the political and cultural study of the early Kadamba inscriptions goes to Gopal. His work *A Corpus of Kadamba Inscriptions* essentially concentrating on the history of the Kadambas, makes incidental references to Śrīvijaya Palāsika. Phanikantha Mishra's *The Kadambas* is a vague and ambiguous work dealing with the Kadamba rule in Karnataka. It makes stray reference to the region under study. Publication of useful articles by Sundara on the archaeological and epigraphical aspects of the region deserves special mention.

For the first time we get the glimpses of Halasi-12000 in the thesis *Kadambas of Goa and Their Inscriptions* by Gurav. A dedicated scholar
and an eminent epigraphist he has deciphered and brought to light many inscriptions of the Kadambas of Goa pertaining to Halasi region. But once again his emphasis is on the dynastic history though he makes incidental references to Halasige–12000 along with Konkan–900. Publication of the papers presented at a seminar on the Kadambas held at Sirsi though reveal various facets of the Kadamba history and culture, Halasi never received deserved attention of the scholars. Deviating from the dynastic history of the Kadambas, S.R. Shetty for the first time attempted to study the regional history, but his emphasis was on the capital city Banavasi. He has not discussed about Halasi.

The earlier works of scholars like Yazdani, P.B. Desai, Suryanath Kamat, H.V. Srinivas Murthy and K.R. Basavaraj on Karnataka and South India make incidental references to Halasi in a general way.

A perusal of the above mentioned works would clearly indicate that in none of these works Halasi itself is the central or exhaustive theme. They restrict themselves particularly to the early Kadamba period or the later Kadambas or both. A detailed historical and cultural study with Halasi as the centre of attention has not been attempted so far. This inspite of the availability of rich source material in the form of epigraphs, coins and structural remains. Knowing the potentiality of the source materials of
Halasināḍu which were not tapped properly, the topic HALASI- A STUDY has been selected for the study.

The region under study has witnessed the fleeting fortunes of the Kadambas and other dynasties. It is an attempt to meander through the myriad of bylanes of history and presentation of vast vistas of political and cultural vicissitudes from earliest times through the ages.

While choosing the title, the numerical suffix 12000 is intentionally excluded because the practice of attaching numerical suffix to the place name became the hallmark in Karnataka from 7th–8th centuries onwards and our study of Halasi region is from the dawn of history. Keeping the present town of Halasi as the core area the present dissertation aims to deal also with the periphery of the region.

It is but obvious that a detailed and multi dimensional study of Śrīvijaya Palāśika of the early Kadambas and Halasi –12000 of the Kadambas of Goa further enriches the panoramic history of Deccan.

Scope of the Study

History is no more a descriptive catalogue of political events relating to the rise and fall of empires, emperors, war and peace but is the study of society in its aspect of promoting culture. All human achievements – political developments, cultural attainments, constitutional management, the economic endeavours and the social changes form the main scope of
history. The ever-expanding scope of history presents before us an exciting picture of the march of man across the centuries. The archaeological excavations and explorations have further expanded the scope of history. Keeping pace with the changing scope the present study attempts to trace the evolution of culture and history in Halasi region. Magnificent temples, majestic fort and scenic splendour have made Halasi region a fairyland of beauty. The period covered in this work extends from earliest times to 13th century AD. The existence of two megalithic sites with, once, full of port-holed chamber tombs indicate the antiquity of human habitation in the region.23

During the historic period Halasi region was subjected to the rule of the Kadambas of Banavasi followed by Chalukyas of Badami, Rāṣṭrakūṭas, Kalyāṇa Chalukyas, Kadambas of Goa, Kālachuris, Hoysalas and Sēṇas. The analyses of the epigraphical records of the region reveal that the copper plate record of early Kadamba ruler Kākusthavarma dated 5th century AD is the earliest available inscription pertaining to Halasi region.24 The epigraphical evidences reveal the political history of the region from 5th century AD down to 13th Century AD i.e. upto the fall of Goa Kadamba dynasty. An inscription dated 1264 AD mentions that the last ruler of the Kadambas of Goa to rule over Halasi region was Śaṭṭadeva-III.25 For over two centuries the early Kadamba rulers of
Banavasi like Kakusthavarma, Šantivarma, Mrigēśavarma, Ravivarma and Harivarma had made Halasi their secondary capital. During the reign of these monarchs Halasi has reached the pinnacle of glory.

In about C. 535-36 AD Kṛṣṇavarma II of the Triparvata branch was setting out on an expedition to Banavasi. By then Harivarma had passed away and Kṛṣṇavarma II probably decided to annex that part also. Probably as Harivarma had no issues Śrīvij Palāśikasi came under the rule of Kṛṣṇavarma II. Thus after Harivarma several changes took place because of which Halasi lost its significance and was taken over by Kadamba feudatory Chalukya Pulakēśi I. Kṛṣṇavarma II loosing his possessions including Halasi region to Chalukyas in about C. 540 AD signalises the downfall of the early Kadambas. That the Rāstrakūtas had their sway over the region is evident from their epigraphical records found in the region. The Kadambas reappeared towards the downfall of the Rāstrakūtas. With the rise of Kalyāṇa Chālukyas two principal Kadamba families shine with the outstanding career and they are the Kadambas of Goa and Kadambas of Hāngal. One of the resurgent families is Kadambas of Goa who established their sway over Halasi as one of their administrative divisions along with Konkan- 900. For over three hundred years from 10th-13th century AD Halasi-12000 was subjected to the rule of
the Kadambas of Goa, which in fact became their commercial capital. It was during this period Halasi was also subjected to the rule of the Chalukyas of Kalyāṇa, Kalachuris, Hoysaḷas and Śeṇas. Later around 14th century AD Halasi came under the sway of the mighty Vijayanagara empire and ultimately under the Bahmani and Adil Shahi Sultans.28

Sources

History of Karnataka is rich with abundant sources of different denominations and Halasi region is no exception. For a proper understanding of the history of the Halasi region as in respect of others, it is necessary to possess a perspective of the sources that help to furnish a fairly accurate account. The sources may be broadly classified into two categories namely archaeological and literary. Archaeological sources may be further subdivided into epigraphs, coins, art and architectural remains and excavations.

Inscriptions are veritable mine of information on political, military, religious, social, economic and administrative aspects of the region. They are authentic records of the life of the people and subject dealt in them are also as much elaborate and varied as their life.

A good number of epigraphs, which help to reconstruct the history and culture of the region are found in the core area of the study i.e. Halasi itself and also in its periphery including Dharwad, Karwar, Bailhongal and
Khanapur taluks. That Halasi was the epicentre of activity under the Kadambas is evident from as many as nine epigraphical records issued from this place and all are discovered in the present town of Halasi. Of the nine epigraphs seven are copper plate records and two are lithic records. All these inscriptions are in Sanskrit. Copper plate inscriptions were discovered from the outskirts of the town at Chakratirtha and a lithic record in two parts with different dates in the sabhāmandapa of the Bhūvarāha-Narasirīha temple at Halasi. In addition there are numerous inscriptions pertaining to the region under study found in the villages of Bailhongal, Khanapur, Kalghatgi, Dharwad, Hubli, Karwar and Haliyal taluks.

The inscriptions of the region reveal interesting cultural aspects, the determination of the frontier of the Halasi division, brisk political activity of early Kadamba rulers, construction of Jaina basadi, religious conditions and so on. The Halasi copper plates of Mrigēśavarman dated in his 8th regnal year states that he got a Jinalaya constructed in honour of his father Śāntivarman (C. 430-455 AD) in Śrīvijaya Palāśika for the use of Yāpaniya, Nirgranha, Kūrčaka and donated land to "Bhagavadarhanta."30

Ravivarman after having completely vanquished the Kanchiśvara Chandādanda actually ruled from Palāśika. And his brother Bhānuvarman
evincing no less interest in the religious faith granted a land for the
performance of prescribed worship without fail on every pournima day.\textsuperscript{32}
The last king Harivarma made gift of a village \textit{Vasantvātika} in
\textit{Suddikunduru viśaya} for regular worship to the \textit{Kūr̥chaka Sangha} of
\textit{Vārisēṇāchāryya paṇṭha} in \textit{Arhadayatana} got built by Mrigēśavarma.\textsuperscript{33}

The lithic record kept leaning against the right back wall of the
\textit{sabhāmaṇḍapa} of Bhūvarāha-Narasin̄ha temple states that the Kadamba
king Śivachitta Permaḍīdeva at the direction of his mother, with the
consent of his ministers, councillors, in the presence of the learned men,
honouring the \textit{Pur̄hiṭa Vindhyavāsi}, granted after the rite of \textit{tribhūga}
Sindhavāḷi (village) in the \textit{kampana} of Kalagiri in the division of Palāśika
free from taxation, for the due performance of the \textit{Pañcōpachāra} and all
other rites to the Holy Narasin̄ha, the temple of which was got built by
Matayogī.\textsuperscript{34}

In the second, it records that Viśvuchitta the younger brother of
Śivachitta, a devotee of Viśvū in 1171 AD made a land grant from the
village Bhālika in Kalagira for the \textit{aṣṭōpachāra} to Narasin̄ha.\textsuperscript{35}

Other inscriptions of the region reveal interesting aspects like
establishment of an \textit{agrahāra} at Dēgāve in the vicinity of Halasi, different
kinds of taxes prevalent in the region, collection of tax called *aputrakara* from the childless couples in the region during the early Chālukyan period, the settlement pattern of the society, construction, maintenance and renovation of several temples and so on. These significant aspects of the region have been hardly studied in detail by the scholars.

The epigraphical records pertaining to Halasi region are published in various epigraphical volumes. Volume IX (parts I & II) in the series of 20 volumes of *South Indian Inscriptions* published by Archaeological Survey of India, *Epigraphia Indica* volume XIII (EI) and *Indian Antiquary* volume VI (IA) mainly edited by J.F. Fleet and L.D. Barnett, *Journal of Bombay Branch of Royal Asiatic Society* volume IX (JBBRAS) and many other.

Of the six volumes of *Karnatak Inscriptions* (KI) published by Kannada Research Institute of Karnatak University, volume V contains inscriptions pertaining to Halasi and surrounding regions. In addition to these epigraphical volumes, epigraphs pertaining to Halasi region are also published in *Kadamba Kula* by G.M. Moraes, *Kadambas of Goa and Their Inscriptions* by R.N. Gurav, *A Corpus of Kadamba inscriptions* and *Banavāsi Kadambaru* (Kan) by B.R. Gopal.

Most of the inscriptions are donatory in nature and did not evince much interest in recording political events. Hence historical material has to be gleaned from the passing references contained in the records.
Remains of art and architecture shed flood of light on the socio-religious aspects of the region under study. Archaeological remains of the region reveal the footprints of early human habitation. The remains of port-holed chamber tombs throw light on the existence of megalithic culture in the region. A mud wall of low height with rounded top probably a citadel noticed to the west of Halasi reveals the beginning of historical age. The architectural and sculptural remains of Halasi region besides giving an insight into the artistic achievements also help in identifying the iconographical aspects, dress habits, types of ornaments, hair style, war-weapons, religious faiths and beliefs prevalent in the region. Right from early historical period structures began to appear, culminating in the famous Bhūvarāha- Narasiṁha temple. Every brick and stone of these monuments will tell the story of its own in a silent manner and reveals us that there existed a glorious culture in the past.

Numismatics comes to the aid to reconstruct the political outline of the region. Kadamba coins throw light on the genealogy and chronology of the Kadamba rulers. The Bombay Branch of Royal Asiatic Society has several coins with lion in the obverse pertaining to the dynasty of the Kadambas of Goa. One of these coins reveals the name of king Viṣṇuχitta.
Since literature is the reflection of life contemporary works like Hemachandra’s *Dvayāsraya Kāvyā*, Varahamihira’s *Bṛhatsaṁhitā*, Chāmarasa’s *Prabhuliṅgalīla* and Pampa’s *Vikramārjunavijaya* help to reconstruct the socio-religious aspects. Glimpses of otherwise unknown facets of the society can be had from these works. A rare specimen of historical poetry in Sanskrit is Bilhaṇa’s *Vikramāṅkadevacharīta*, which deals with life and accomplishments of poet’s patron Chālukya Vikramāditya VI to whom Kadambas of Goa were feudatories. Similarly *Mānasollāsa* by later Chalukyan king Somēśvara III is a contemporary work which is encyclopedic in nature. Varied subjects like polity, architecture, painting, ethics, music, sports and entertainment are dealt at length in this work. Hence it is of considerable use to trace the cultural history of the region under study. *Lōkōpakāram* of Chāṇḍārāya throws flood of light on contemporary agricultural practices, plant protections and many other aspects.

Some of the above mentioned contemporary literary works provide noteworthy cultural sketches of the period.

*Foreign accounts containing the notices about Halasi are not exhaustive. The mention of Halasi by Greek geographer Ptolemy is of special importance.* He mentions Halasi as a town of considerable commercial importance in *Dakṣiṇāpatha*. Similarly the accounts of
Buddhist pilgrim from China Hiuen Tsang, though not directly refer to Halasi give information about the religious aspects of the early Kadambas who also ruled over Halasi region.\(^40\)

If the literary tradition can relevantly be used for proper understanding of archaeological remains the picture that emerges from out of the fruitful coordination will be much better, more meaningful and interesting. In recent years realising the importance of literary and oral tradition for the better understanding of the archeological remains of a given region, more attention is being given in this area. Oral traditions cannot be over looked as myths concocted and floated in course of time. For instance the famous Bhūvarāha-Narasinā temple though contains the icons of Yōgi-Nārāyaṇa and Bhūvarāha of 11\(^{th}\)-12\(^{th}\) century AD in two garbhāgrihas it is noteworthy that the temple is known as only Bhūvarāha-Narasinā. Earlier therefore in the same place there must have been a brick temple of Narasinā, which later was replaced and enlarged by stone temple. The temple therefore probably continued to be called by the name of the original temple there i.e. Narasinā.

The folklore throws light on customs and traditions of the people in the region and about the grāmādevatas. (village deities). That Śākta tradition or Śakti cult in Halasi region was prominent through out the
historical period is evident from the fact that even now goddess Lakṣmi is
the grāmadevatā of the Halasi town whose fair the people of the region
celebrate every year with full pomp and glory. Thus archaeological
remains, oral tradition and folklore mutually help each other and provide a
very interesting and reliable historical account of the region.

All the above-mentioned sources have been made use of in the
following pages in presenting the history and culture of the region under
study.

Methodology

Historical method is a technique developed in order to present the
past events in correct perspective. In tracing the vicissitudes of the region
like Halasi one has to be descriptive, but this description will have to pass
through antecedent stages which foster the ideas which ultimately
crystallize into a coherent description.

Two basic tools of research have been made use of in pursuing the
present work - (i) collection of published data and (ii) collection of field
data. The collection of published data includes both the relevant
epigraphical records bearing on the history and culture of the Halasi region
as well as the modern relevant works on the subjects. For the collection of
data the method of card system has been adopted as cards are easy to shift
and arrange according to any scheme, chronological, geographical,
biographical or topical. The collected data has been carefully scanned, analysed and interpreted in order to cull out worthy information. The technique of field study has resulted to notice not only several temples, icons, and hero stones, sati stones and niśidhis but also resulted in discovering megalithic site in the region. Several visits are made to the place to make a detailed study of architectural remains. These architectural details of the temples and the sculptures and other antiquities have not only been critically examined but also attended to the photographic documentation and taken the line drawings of the ground plans of the temples at Halasi. All these are incorporated in the present dissertation.

A blend of published and field data resulting in a descriptive account of Halasinaḍu and its culture where in all important stages of research like collection of contemporary and authentic data from epigraphs and literary works, classification and analysis of the collected data, interpretation of the same and synthesis have been employed. The broad generalisations have been based on factual findings.

Historical background

Carved in the foothills of the Western Ghats, Halasi is a fairy land of beauty with her magnificent temples, majestic sculptures, scenic splendour and serene tranquility. Grown in the cradle of the valour and prowess of the Kadamba kings and the patriotism, religious loyalty and
spiritual values of her people Halasi is also a place of strategic importance. The austere beauty of the evergreen forests is enchanting, more majestic and fabulous, which appeared to have defeated the nandanavana as revealed from the inscriptions of the region.

The archaeological evidences push back the antiquity of the Halasi region to about 4th century BC As evinced from the accounts of Ptolemy it was also active in brisk maritime trade with South India as well as Greco-Roman empire.41

That Halasi was politically active and culturally sensitive right from the dawn of history is evident from archaeological remains. Two kilometers to the west of Halasi town there is a early Kadamba habitation site locally called as Bodke-Tembe. There are the remains of the fort.42 This site probably is the ancient Palasika 43

The first available epigraphical record of the region is the Halasi copper plates of Yuvarāja Kākusthavarman, the Kadamba prince.44 For over two centuries Halasi was the secondary capital of the early Kadambas. Even though Halasi region enjoyed the fleeting fortunes of many royal houses like the early Kadambas, Chalukyas of Bādami, Rāṣṭarakūtas, Kalyāṇa Chalukyas, Kadambas of Goa, Hoysalas and Seunias, it maintained its identity with its individualistic culture. Halasige -12000 reached the zenith of glory under the Kadambas of Goa. The Kadamba
kings of Goa who were the feudatories of the Chālukyas of Kalyāna ruled over Halasige-12000 along with Konkan –900.45

Thus Halasi was a town, *mapšala, nādu, dēsa*, royal capital and ultimately became *Palāśika* *Pannichchāsira* i.e. a unit of 12000 villages.

The Name Halasi

Almost all the place names of ancient and medieval times have the significance of their own. Place names are rarely arbitrary or accidental. It has the geographical, literary, religious, cultural or even economic background. Each place has its own story to tell regarding its name. It may also be an oblique reference to a tradition prevalent among the people or its association with a historical event or personality or it may even indicate its physical setting.

In the records of the early Kadambas it figures in various forms like Palāśika, Palasige, Palasi and Halasige. It is abbreviated to Halasi in modern times. Palasa means a particular type of tree called *muttage* or *muttala*. *Palāśa* is also a type of flower available in abundance in Malnad region. Its Kannada variant Halasige seems to associate itself perhaps *halasu* i.e. jackfruit (tree). Halasige being in Malnad area under the heavy rain belt, is indeed known for the profuse growth of jackfruit trees. Thus it is ventured to hazard that the original name of the place was Halasige and
Halasi has been connected with Purānic and mythological tradition. Rāmatīrtha near Halasi is described as being visited by Rāma who is said to have installed Rāmalīṅga in this place.

**Description of Halasi in the Inscriptions**

Being fascinated by its enchanting beauty, serene tranquility, its flora and fauna, its lakes, meadows, perennial springs, its bravery, prowess, heroism, its villages, towns, cities and agrahāras the composers of the inscriptions of the region have given beautiful description of *Halasināḍu*.

“Containing many great and charitable persons praised by many in different ways, containing penance forest of great fame, and brave warriors the country of Palasige is beautiful like the desire-yielding tree.”

(*Kalpavṛkṣa*)

Halasi has been described as the abode of happiness to the people with sportive and beaming lotuses with its multitude s of cities, town, villages and hamlets.

“The whole land of Halasige sparkles like the ornament of the entire world, and can, with its leaves, creepers, areca palms, mango and citron trees, ponds adorned with vast cluster of lotuses, streams and torrents,
sandy banks and parks outside the town, can be compared to the \textit{nandanavana}.” (garden of heaven).\textsuperscript{48} Describing further the poet says “A stream lost itself in the limpid waters of a pool and flowed on; feeding on its water grew plants heavy with fruits and leaves hiding the sky, creepers, banana plants, betel nuts, coconut palm, citron, sugarcane, and so on; with all this that part of the earth had produced for its inhabitants perennial spring.”\textsuperscript{49}

Further Halasi is described as “wealthy and beautiful for having been replete with cities, villages, hamlets, and market towns; with people in the town always laughing and engaged in pleasing conversation (\textit{subhāṣīta}), singing and playing and with the amorous activities of ornamented courtesans.”\textsuperscript{50}

An inscription describes king Gövaladeva of the Kadambas of Goa as ruling over Palāśika-12000, one of the best cities.\textsuperscript{51}

From the above description of Halasigenādu as documented in the inscriptions of the Kadambas of Goa it is evident that Halasi was a cultured and prosperous city.

\textbf{Geographical and Geological Background}

Geography is the stage on which the drama of history is enacted. No region rises to the heights of culture except under the influence of
climatic stimulus. The very survival as a species in the process of evolution was conditioned by geographical and geological factors. The physical formation of a region had a powerful impact on its history. Hence it becomes necessary to appreciate and understand the geographical, environmental and physical aspects that had a bearing on the history and culture of the region.

Three rivers, the Krishna in the North, the Ghataprabha in the centre and the Malaprabha (river Prehāra of historical fame) drain the district of Belgaum in which Halasi is located to the South. A small river Mahādayi originates in Degāon village in Khanapur taluk. River Malaprabha, which had contributed for the growth of human habitation, has its source in Kanakumbi near Halasi in the Western Ghats. It flows almost in northwestern direction and passes throw Khanapur near the town of Halasi. Described as a sacred river in Banaśankari Mahāme, it ultimately joins river Krishna in Kūḍalasangama in Bijapur district. Flanked by two rivers the area in and around Halasi must have been very fertile producing variety of crops. The rainfall is heavy in southwestern part of the district (where Halasi is located). Being in the close proximity of Western Ghats the periphery of Halasi records 1683.3 mm rainfall every year. The region has wetter climate with higher rainfall and this enabled the civilization to give
itself a high standard of living. Thus the region under study has hospitable topography.

The geological formation found in the district belongs to the variety of the Dharwars, Gneissic system, Kaladgi series and Deccan traps. The Dharwar formations are mostly seen in parts of Sampagaon and Belgaun taluks and westernmost parts of Khanapur taluk. The schistose rocks are assisted with crystalline rocks in Nagargali near Halasi in Khanapur taluk. Khanapur region is full of granite and laterite rock formation, which ultimately gives rise to clay deposits. The granite belt exposes at Ganibail hill, 20 km south of Belgaum and pass through Khanapur to the Nandagad hills. The granite-gneiss found near Khanapur shows massive hill features composed of rounded boulders. The China clay deposits mostly occurring near Halasi and Khanapur taluk is suitable for making high-class pottery.

The branded granite gneiss deposits exposed near the south of Belgaum between Ganebail and Khanapur are said to be of excellent quality. It is extensively quarried in several places including Halasi, Bidi, Kittur and surrounding areas. It provided good raw material for construction. Most of the temples in the periphery of Halasi are built of granite blocks that were easily available in required size and shape. This type of stone is specially suited for foundations and pillars. These rocks
must have been quarried by sculptors from the quarries situated near the place of temple construction.

Though the distribution of the forests in the district is uneven Halasi region including Khanapur, Gōlihaḷi, Nāgaragāḷi has thick evergreen forests being in the spur of Western Ghats. These forests provide timber, firewood and bamboo.

Thus the landscape of Halasi region must have been more pronounced with inaccessible evergreen forests and youthful, virulent rivers. At Halasi green is not a colour but a feeling; and granite is not just dead stone, it is history. Its lush green forests and hills unravel nature at its best.52

Megalithic Age and the Dawn of Historical Age

Surrounded by wild thick evergreen forests with extensive rocky hills and knobs of granite some with bare surface, the place must have attracted even from the remote past. Existence of two megalithic sites with once full of port-hold chamber tombs prove the antiquity of human habitation in Halasi. The most striking feature of the megalithic culture is the burial monument built with rough huge stone slab. The architectural style varies from region to region. Among the types of megalithic tombs in northern Karnataka passage chamber and porthole chamber are of prominent type.53
Of the two megalithic sites traced in the region under study the first
site is located to the south of the present town of Halasi in a cultivated
terraced field where paddy is now grown. When the site was brought
under cultivation every chamber tomb had been dislodged and a few of the
orthostatic slabs two with port-holes are lined in vertical position along the
eastern edge of the field. It is from these extant remains the existence of a
megalithic site with port-holed chamber tombs in the field could be
surmised. This reveals the footprints of the megalithic culture in the
region under study. Prior to the discovery of the above said megalithic
site, sites with port-hole chamber tombs are known as far north as Aihole
in Bijapur district and Kundapur in Dakshina Kannada district in
north-east south-west line across Karnataka. No megaliths of this type
were found to the north of the line although the region comprises
innumerable granite hills providing suitable slabs for the construction of
such orthostatic megaliths. The discovery of megalithic site in Halasi
sheds light on the geographical extent of the spread of this type. This site
is the northwestern most known limit so far as the type is concerned.

The second megalithic site was brought to light during the course of
extensive field survey of the region undertaken for preparing the present
dissertation. The above said newly discovered megalithic site is to the
northernmost outskirts of the town of Halasi. It is in the vicinity of the
Kalmēśvara temple about 100 meters in the pit. Aligned north south there
are three rows of stone slabs with a gap of two to three meters in between the row. First, second and third rows have respectively ten, seventeen and seventeen stone slabs. There are in all forty-four orthostatic slabs. The slab with porthole is lined in vertical position along the eastern edge of the pit. Of the orthostatic slabs few are of uneven square and are ten to fifteen c.m. thick. The port-holed slab is in the first row. It measures one meter by one meter and is 12–15 cm. thick. These are definitely the remains of megalithic port-holed chamber tombs. When the site was brought under cultivation every chamber tomb has been dislodged. Looking at the number of the orthostatic slabs (44) it appears there might have been at least 8-10 such tombs. The remains of black-red wear pottery are found in the vicinity. One of the slabs contains a knob at the top resembling roughly the human head. Looking at the character of megalithic remains it appears that it belongs to C 800-400 BC. Though the evidence is fragmentary and slender it is important, for, the discovery of two megalithic sites suggest the possibility of some such sites in the region under study. 60

The remains of ancient human habitation site in Halasi have been traced to the west of the town about 1 km. away at the foot of the hill and on the hilltop within the scattered forest. 61 The whole site locally known as “Bødke Ḫembe” is about 50 hectares in area enclosed by apparently a mud wall of low height with rounded top perhaps a citadel. There appears to
have a thick depth of cultural debris containing potsherds of exceedingly red wear in the southern part of the site. The type and fabric are characteristic of the late and post Satavahana period. Brick-wells in ruins are traceable in the pits dug by local people for domestic use. A brick-lined circular well was found a little away from this site in the terraced field. Similar circular brick-wells have been unearthed during the course of excavations at Vadgaon-Madhavpur, a suburb of Belgaum City about 50 km north of Halasi. Further, in Halasi on the top of hill are also at three or four place heaps of brick structural remains. The nature and characteristics of the cultural remains of the site, therefore, seem to imply that it may be the site of ancient Palāśika – the capital city. It can also be suspected that the brick structural remains here may be of the Jaina basadis referred to in the copper plates.

The Plan of the Work

Present study is aimed at understanding the political and cultural aspects of the region Halasinaḍu that included parts of Belgaum, Dharwad and Uttara Kannada districts. Owing to the brisk political and culture activities during the ancient, early medieval and medieval periods the scope of the study has been restricted from the earliest times to the 13th century AD.
The work has been arranged in various chapters, which deal with specific aspects of the history and culture of Halasi region.

In the first Chapter attempt has been made to trace the footprints of ancient human habitation on the sand of time in Halasi beginning with the megalithic age. The archaeological remains in the region support this.

The second Chapter begins with a kaleidoscopic picture of the general conditions of Karnataka in the Nanda Era. The political history of the region includes from earliest times to the decline of the dynasty of the Kadambas of Goa. The political history of the region through the ages under various dynasties has been discussed at length.

The third Chapter describes the administration of Halasi region against the chronological background. The office of the king, ministers, crown prince, central, provincial and local administration as prevailed in the region are discussed at length.

The fourth Chapter depicts the social milieu of the region under study. Various facets of society resulting in the social solidarity of the region covering the social classes, status of women, modes of entertainment, culinary skill, dress, ornaments, customs and manners of the people, institution of marriage and also the social values of the people are dealt with.
Educational system and educational institutions including the agraḥāras, brahmaṇapuris and mathas, women education, propagation and spread of education under the royal patronage are emphasised in the fourth Chapter. The development of language and blossoming of literature under the kingly attention also forms the theme of this chapter.

Major religions that existed in Halasi region and the catholic policy of religious toleration followed by the successive rulers, religious faiths and beliefs of the people find place in the sixth Chapter.

The material prosperity of the region with special reference to agriculture, trade, industry, trade and merchant guilds, taxation system, weights and measures and other economic aspects are discussed in the seventh Chapter on the economic conditions.

Art, architecture and sculpture of Halasi region with special reference to its architectural legacy is examined in the eighth chapter. Religious, civil, defence and aquatic architecture as existed in the region has been analysed.

A brief resume and concluding remarks are given in the ninth Chapter. The work is illustrated with necessary line drawings and ground plans of the temples, photographs and maps. Select bibliography in English and Kannada is appended at the end of the work.
Geographical Limits of Halasi–12000

The jurisdiction of Palaśika Pannichchāsira was not confined to the present town of Halasi alone. The disappearance of many ancient villages, the destruction of number of inscriptions and the fact that many of the already discovered inscriptions have not seen the light of the day, has made the task of tracing the geographical limits and the extent of Halasige–12000 kingdom and its borders herculean.

River Prehāra mentioned in the Taḷagunda inscription seems to stand for Malaprabha flowing across the Belgaum district to the north of Halasi. Though Halasi was the secondary capital and headquarters under the early Kadambas it is not sure whether the Halasi province was formulated under them. There was no clearly defined division with numerical suffix called Palaśika-12000 in the early Kadamba period.65 The province appears to have formed in the time of the Chalukyas of Badāmi who succeeded the early Kadambas.66 The earliest reference to the Palasige–12000 province is the undated inscription of Gandamahārāja (C 850 AD)67 and the Tambur Rāstrakūṭa fragment inscription of C. 932-36 AD.68
Sub-divisions of Halasige-12000

Division of empire into various units for administrative convenience was in practice from the earliest times. In Karnataka the early Kadambas initiated the practice of dividing the large provinces into the smaller ones to each of which revenue values were attached. Looking at the sub divisions of the Kadamba kingdom like desa, visaya, nāḍu, kampaṇa and maṇḍala Halasi seems to have been their administrative division. Harivarma’s Halasi copper plates refer to the grant of the village Vasanta vāṭika in Suddikundūru visaya. So it is evident that Palāśika was in Suddikundūru (present Narāṃdra in Dharwad taluk) visaya. In the inscriptions of the Kadambas of Goa Halasige province is referred as nāḍu and desa. Though there are different systems of grouping villages into higher division, decimal system was more prominent. The division generally got its number from the number of villages within it and its headquarters. They were named after the important place serving as the centre of activity in that division. For instance Gangavādi–96000, Banavāsi–12000, Palasige–12000 and so on. Each of these had sub divisions with some important places as the headquarters. Thus Mugunda–30 was located in Maharājavadinaṇḍu which itself was a part of Halasige–12000. There has been some controversy regarding the numerical suffixes. Rice has identified nāḍu as a division comprising of 1000 villages. But this
number not always remains 1000. *Halasigenāḍu* is referred as Halasige-12000.

Fleet cautiously states that the smaller numbers, like tens and hundred, attached to the names of places probably marked the cities, towns and villages.75 Bigger figures were either conventional or traditional and were greatly exaggerated.76

Palasige-12000, the sub-capital of the Kadambas of Goa was a nāḍu of considerable size comprising 12000 villages. During the days of Kadambas of Goa it included northeastern part of Uttara Kannada district, parts of Khanapur and Bailhongal taluks in Belgaum district and western parts of Dharwad district.77 The approximate number of villages in Palasige-12000 country of Goa Kadamba period would be about 1100 villages, made up of about 400 villages in Uttara Kannada district, about 400 villages in Dharwad district and about 300 villages in Belgaum district. The number fall far short of the intended number 12000. The division might have included 12000 villages in it in a much earlier period, say the early Kadamba or so.78 It might have included in it the larger provinces such has Karahāḍ-4000, Kūṇḍi-3000 and so on.79 Gurav opines that when once the division came to be called as Palasige-12000, it continued to be called so even in later days, although it was much reduced in area.80 The number 12000 can therefore be considered as a traditional or
conventional one. In Kadamba records we have specific reference to the number of villages in such appellation.

In the inscriptions of the Kadambas of Goa issued when they were ruling as feudatories of the Chalukyas of Kalyãna, Halasi is described as Palasige Pannichchāsira. So also in many of the inscriptions of Vikramaditya VI. From this it is evident that Halasi division comprised of 12000 villages even during the period of Chālukyas of Kalyãna.

Palasige-12000 division comprised of many sub-divisions and kampañas.

1. Kundur-500

Kundur-500 has been described as a division in Palasige 12000.

Koṭabāgi inscription states that Koṭabāgi village was in Kunduṛ viṣaya of Palasigenāḍu. Kaulageri, Kanakapur (modern Kanakur in Dharwad taluk) were in Kunduṛ- 500. Other villages in Dharwad taluk which are incidentally referred as included in Kunduṛ-500 are –

Eranigeraya halli (Momigaṭṭi)

Mareyavāḍa

Chaugāve
Kauvalagēri
Taḍakōḍu
Ammīnbhāvi
Hulgunḍī
Narendra

Thus the taluks of Dharwad, Hubli and part of Kalghatgi formed Kundur-500.

2. Mārajaavāḍināḍu or Mahārājavāḍināḍu

Mahārājavāḍināḍu was the sub-division of Palasige-12000. Number of villages included in it is not clear. An inscriptions states that

Palasige Pannichchāsiradolage Mahārājavāḍināḍembudu... Mugunda muvattu. It is evident that Mugad village in Dharwad taluk was included in it. Gurav opines that Mahārājavāḍināḍu was either part of Kundur-500 or another name for Kundur-500. Pullambe-70, Mugund-30 and Kahavāḍa-12 are stated to have been situated in Mahārājavāḍināḍu.

3. Hullambe-70

The reference to Hullambe-70 is given in an inscription of the Kadambas of Goa. Following villages were situated in Hullambe-70.
Muttage (Kalghatgi North)

Sigigaṭi (Kalghatgi North)

Maṇīgunda (Dharwad South)

Hullambe-70 had a smaller sub-division Hagadage. Thus with the smaller division of Hagadage-12 in Kalghatgi taluk and Kahavād-12 in the east of Hāliyāl, Hullambe-70 would have comprised of villages in southern part of Dharwad taluk, parts of Kalghatgi taluk and a few villages in eastern part of Hāliyāl taluk.

Kittūr-30

Kittūr-30 comprised of 30 villages was a sub-division of Halasi-12000. Its reference appears in Siddapur inscription dated 1158 AD with the village Hosavojāl. Hosavojāl is between the south–west of Bailhongal taluk and border of Dharwad taluk.

Mugunda-30

Nigumbe (modern Nigadi) is the only village mentioned in Mugund-30 that is four miles west of Maṇīgunda. It was to the northwest of Pullambe-70 and a unit of 30 villages all situated in Dharwad west.
Mavale-500

Tambur inscription refers to Mavale-500. 98

Tambur-12

Bharaṇi-12

Hoḷīgōḍu-12 (Yallapur taluk)

were the four sub-divisions of Mavale-500. 99

Bharaṇi-12

Bharaṇipur (Mammigaṭṭi)

Sovanhaḷḷi

Honnehaḷḷi

Nandigaṭṭa (border village in Mundagod taluk)

These villages were included in Bharaṇi-12. 100

Degāve Kampana

Degāve Kampana had Degāve as its principal town as mentioned
in the inscription of the place. 101 The following villages appear to be in the
Degāve Kampana.

Mindavalli (Bailūr)
Kulavalli (Kulvalji)
Basurikođa (Basarakhođi)
Degulavalli (Déglolli)
Keravada (Kerwād)
Sigēri (Siragāpur).

**Kelageri Kampana**

*Kelagēri Kampāṇa* had its main area in Khanapur taluk. Kelageri was the main village of this *kampāṇa* which is referred in the Halasi inscription. Following villages were included in it –

- Kuppatageri - 3 miles to the east of Khanapur.
- Sindhoji – about 7 miles to the southwest of Halasi.
- Bhālike – about 3 miles to the west of Halasi
- Kirihalasige – about 3 miles to the south of Halasi
- Māgodu (Dēvarśighalḷi) in Bailhongal taluk near the border of Khanapur taluk.

Other villages mentioned in Khanapur taluk are

- Halasige (Halasi)
- Sampagāḍi (Bīḍi)
Kirusampagadi (Golihalli)
Kerewada (Kerwad)
Kakkere (Kakkeri)
Godhavalli (Godholli)

Kampana Raji

Raji was the Kampana of Mahārājāvadīnāḍu in Palasige-12000. It is referred in Tegur inscription. Kolalur (present Tegur in Dharwad taluk) was in Raji Kampana of Mahārājāvadīnāḍu.

Unakallu-30

Unakallu -30 was an administrative unit of 30 villages included in Halasige – 12000. Amargol village near Dharwad was in Unakallu-30.

Sabbi-30

Sabbi is present Chabbi in Hubli taluk. It was a unit of 30 villages that were to the south- east of Hubli taluk and border villages to the west of Kundagol taluk.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

4. *Indian Atlas Sheet* No.41, Hulsee.
19. Sundara, A., “Archaeology of Halasi with Special Reference to Temples and Sculptures”, *Indian History and Archaeology*, Delhi, 1987, pp.197-213
23. Sundara, A., “Ittichina Kelavu Mukhya Purātattva śodhanegalu” (Kan), *Karnāṭaka Bhārati*, Vol.8, p.11. The second site was discovered during the field survey of the region under study.
35. *Ibid*.
40. *Ibid*.
41. *Ibid*.
43. *Ibid*.
47. *Ibid*.
49. *Ibid*.
52. The information pertaining to the geography and geology of Belgaum district has been summarised here from *Belgaum District Gazetteer*, Kamat, Sunayath, U. (Ed.), Bangalore, 1987 and *Karnataka State Gazetteer: Belgaum District*, Bangalore, 1985.
55. *Ibid*.
56. *Ibid*.
60. The conclusion has been arrived at after a detailed and relevant discussion with Sundara, A.
64. Sundara, A., Archaeology of Halasi with Special Reference to Sculptures and Temples, *History and Archaeology*, New Delhi, 1987, pp.210-211.
73. SII, Vol.XI, No.78.
81. For detailed discussion on the numerical suffix see Note 2 on page 292 of *BG*, Vol.I, p.II wherein Dr. Fleet as come to the conclusion that the reference to such applications is to the numbers real exaggerated or traditional of cities, towns and villages.
89. *Ibid.*, No.177.
105. *Ibid.*, "Mahārājaśāṃda Kampanaṃ Raṇjī bāliya bādam kōṇānūr"