CHAPTER IV

EDUCATION

Literacy and education were wide-spread in the Kadamba dominion. The very existence of numerous epigraphical records and copper-plates bears testimony to the fact. Those who erected the stones and created the records would not have taken the trouble to inscribe them on hard stones or copper-plates, if the people were not able to read them.

From the records we find arrangements made for imparting elementary, secondary and higher education. Facilities for students coming from outside were made and free lodging and boarding were arranged within the temple premises or matha compounds. Classes were held within the temple premises or mathas attached to the temples. Temples and mathas attached to them thus formed the earliest stage in education. They were found in every village and thus facilities for primary education were available for everyone.

The next stage of education was formed by the Chatikā-sthānas where education corresponding to the secondary education of the present days was imparted. The Chatikā-sthānas were arranging debates on various subjects so that students could obtain mastery over subjects they studied and also be experts in the art of debating. Soma, grand-son of Lakṣmaṇas, the mane-vergade
Arrangements for the ghatika-sthāna were made in the village of Degave, while converting it into an agrahāra. The village Ghalige in the Kalghatgi tal. appears to be a place, where a ghalige (the Kannada form of ghatika) was being run.

We do not find maha-ghatika-sthānas like those existing in Salotgi in the Bijapur dist., or Balligama in the Shimoga dist., or HuvinaBaghe in the Belgaum dist., in the Kadamba dominion. Their place was, however, filled in by agrahāras and brahmapuris, which were centres of education. We find at least sixteen of them in the Kadamba dominion as discussed further on.

From the qualifications of the sthēn-achāryas, achāryas, tapodhānas, Jain guma, chieftains, officers and others we find that a number of subjects were being taught in the above institutions, besides the education at primary stage of reading, writing and arithmetic. We also find direct references for arrangements made for teaching them as in the Dēgave inscription or the Dōswad plates.

They are enumerated below, as culled out from various inscriptions:

1) Sakala veda (Ṛg-veda and Yajur-veda are specifically mentioned)
(2) Vedāṅgas, i.e.,
   (a) phonetics (b) grammar (c) prose
   (d) etymology (e) astronomy and
   (f) kalpa, i.e., ritual or ceremonial science,
(3) Nyāya, mīmāṃsā, sākhyā, yōga, vēdānta,
(4) Saṁhitā,
(5) Itihasa and purānas,
(6) parājyotishā (higher astronomy),
   — Dēgāve inscription,
(7) Artha śāstra,
   — Hālayāl inscription,
(8) Jain-siddhānta,
(9) Sādhanāsāhasa,
(10) Āhara-śāstra,
(11) Bhaiṣajya-śāstra,
   — Mūgā inscription.
(12) Āgamas, tantras,
   — Amminbhāvi and Dharwar inscriptions.
(13) Sahitya-śāstra,
(14) Alankāra-śāstra,
(15) Authors like Patanjali, Čaṇḍakya and Sukra,
   — Nareśāra inscription.
(16) Veda, Vītis,
   — Kirihalasige and Dodwad plates.
(17) Gītā,
(18) Nṛtya,
   — Dodwad plates.
(19) Nāṭaka,
   — Mūgā inscription.
Some of the above subjects, e.g., the Silpa-sastra, vadya, gita, nitya, etc., appear to have been taught by experts in them admitting the aspirants as apprentices and trainees under their personal guidance.

Agrahāras

Agrahāras were villages or towns, wherein learned brahmans were residing and pursuing their religious and educational activities. They were centres of education at all levels, i.e., primary, secondary and higher. We find in the agrahāra of Degave, arrangements made for bala-ākāsha (primary education), ghatik-adyay-adhyapana (secondary education) and for the teaching of Rig-veda and Yajur-veda and for sastra-vyakhyana (higher education). Adhyayana (studies) and adhyapanas (teaching) were amongst the principal duties of the brahmans of the agrahāra.

The agrahāra of Ammayanabhāvi was called bha-myā-vidyā-nidhi (a store of ample learning), in an inscription of A.D. 1119.

Administratively agrahāras were independent units. To avoid external interference, as it were, their administration was entrusted to a corporate body consisting of selected brahmans resident in the village, called the
mahājanas. The Amminbhāvi inscription of Jayadeva I (A.D. 1071-72) uses the term mahājana in the singular (mahājanaḥ mahājanadā sannidhiyāl), thus indicating the corporate nature of the body. The number of these mahājanas varied according to the size and the importance of the agrahāra. The agrahāra of Amnayabhāvi had four hundred mahājanas. Amminbhāvi was one of the four big towns (maha-pattanas) of the Haladige nādu. The agrahāra of Hubli had two hundred mahājanas. The agrahāra of Kāsurā had two hundred mahājanas. The agrahāra of Kiśavara (Betāna) had sixty-two mahājanas.

It is important to note that the institution of mahājanas is found only in agrahāra village and not in other villages. I have not come across any village, otherwise than an agrahāra, in which mahājanas are mentioned, so far as the inscriptions of the Kadambas of Goa are concerned.

Whether these mahājanas were included in the corporate body by birth or appointed by selection or were elected is not definitely known. In all probability, they were named so by selection in the beginning, when the village was converted into an agrahāra and thereafter, they continued to be members hereditarily. The Amminbhāvi inscription of A.D. 1112 describes them as vahā agrahārayam (the foremost amongst the race), which indicates their hereditary nature.
The mahājanas were extremely well-versed persons having qualified themselves in the various lores of traditional Hindu brahmanical learning, viz., such as the vedas, the vedāngas, the upāṇgas, nyāya, mīmāṃsā, sāṅkhya, yoga, vedānta, smṛti, itiṣā, purāṇa, jyotisha, tarka, vyākaraṇa, artha-sāstra, etc.

It is interesting to note that the mahājanas have been described as worshippers of Viṣṇu, Lākṣmi, Ādityadēva, etc., indicating their Vaishnava leanings. Thus, the Betour inscription describes them as Pundarīkakaṭaka -- Lākṣmi-viśāla-vēka-śaṅkha-saṅcālana-saṁyātra-saṅjana-virājmanar. The Kaminbhavi inscription describes them as kahīra-saṅgara-sīyā-sayan-Orāsthala-śāhīta-Lākṣmi-vaś-a-śaṅkha-śaṅkha-saṁkara. The Hubli charter describes them as sīra-suriṭi-Narayana-deva-labha-vāra-prasadāsana. In the Devarahubli inscription they are stated to have established the idol of Mahālakṣmi along with that of Kāmallā. In the Halvāl inscription they are described as śrimat-Kaṁchidēva-labha-vāra-prasādanā, Bhāskara-deva-charasā-puja-karaṇa-śaṁnata-śaṁkaraṇa, and śrimat-Nāradamaṇḍeṣa-paṭa-śaṁkaraṇa tattvārājyaṃ.

The mahājanas had the power to alienate lands of the village and assign taxes. Thus, they made grant of five wātars of land in Halvāl for the upkeep of the tank called Devīgātera. In Hubli, the mahājanas met in the assembly hall and granted eight wātars of land to god Sēgāṣvara at the instance of the Kurumba-sēgīgar.
At Devarašī Hull they met likewise and made grants of land and shop to the temple of Mahālakṣīmi and Kavaaleswara and assigned taxes for the offering of the deities. In other places (agrāhāras only), grants were made in the presence of the mahājanas, indicating thereby their consent. Likewise, assignments were made to deities at the request of the mīnyadimbaga of Māgad by king Joyiya-bhumas. In the Betāīr inscription, before making the grant, orders of the mahājanas were obtained after making then due payments. Another important duty of the mahājanas was to decide civil disputes. In the Kītāīr epigraph we find that the mahā-pradhana daeṇa-Nāyaka Īśvarārya directed the two contesting parties, Kalyāṇasakti and Sivasakti, over a land dispute to the mahājanas of Dēgabe, who decided the dispute as described in detail while writing about Jayakēśa III. The mahājanas were also to protect the grants. The Betāīr inscription enjoins the mahājanas of the place to protect the grants made. The Amminbhāvi inscription of A.D. 1071 also enjoins the mahājanas to protect the grants made.

The mahājanas were, thus, the administrative as well as judicial bodies meant for running the civil administration of the place without external interference, so that the educational institutions in the agrahāra could carry on their pursuits uninterrupted.

Agrahāras have been distinguished as (1) mañḍa agrahāra, (2) Svāra-namaśaya agrahāra, (3) mahāagrāhāra and
In the Kadamba dominion, ordinary agrahāras of Purvavadavalli (Hubli), and Hambewal (Kurdikeri) are noted. The second category of agrahāras were the one at Kiwarse (Betūr) and the newly created one at Degave. Mahāagrāhāras were those of Pallavali (Pallavali) and Huppavy (Devarabill). Ordinary agrahāras were those at Kanakapura (Kankur), Gudavali (Godihi), Ammanabhavi (Amminbhavi), Tammyuru (Tamuru) and Magada (Devarasigihalli). We have an exact example of a village being created into an agrahāra afresh in the Degave inscription of Permawadeva (A.D. 1169).

For the maintenance of the mahājanas, the village lands were divided into shares called vrittis and the shares were distributed amongst the mahājanas, excluding such shares which were meant for other public purposes. Lands which were already alienated were also left out. The Degave inscription referred to above mentions that the village lands of Degave were divided into forty-seven and three fourths vrittis, each vritti consisting of sixteen nivartanas of paddy lands, sixty nivartanas of lands fit for growing minor grains and garden lands sufficient to plant 150 betel-nut leaves creepers. These vrittis were distributed amongst thirty-one brahmans at the rate of one vritti or three fourths of a vritti per individual. We come across references to vrittis in the agrahāra of Betūr also.
Brahmapuris

Next to the agrahāras, brahmapuris were another important centres of learning. They were localities in a village or town, either agrahāra or otherwise, exclusively meant for the residence of brāhmins. The Goa plates of Āvalādeva III (A.D. 1197), state that Gaṇadhara Kālama created a brahmaṇṭa containing beautiful mansions encircled with a rampart, in Goa, by the side of the tank constructed by him. He brought twelve families of brāhmins from localities in the Goa territory, got them settled in the brahmapuri and made arrangements for their maintenance. These were brahmapuris in the agrahāras of Hubli and Kanakapūra as mentioned in the inscriptions in those places.