CHAPTER – VII
CONCLUSION

Now, we have come to the end of our study. It is necessary to present some important, broad and general conclusions which emerge out of the present study. First land grants of Karnataka during Vijayanagara period were continuation of the grants which existed in the pre-Vijayanagara period and they in turn were part of the main. Indian stream and rooted in the Aryan Concepts of the ancient period.

Secondly, in Karnataka during the Pre-Vijayanagara period we see the origin and evolution of Brahmadaya, Devadaya, and Mathapura and service grants of various kinds. They were crystallized into institutions and embedded in the socio-economic structure of Karnataka. On this foundation Vijayanagara rulers further extended the complexities of these land grants and created the new ones to meet military and political contingencies of the times. Likewise collective, individual and state ownership in land during the pre- Vijayanagara period became much sharper and complex in the Vijayanagara period.

Thirdly, there was an intense Brahmanization process in Karnataka during the Vijayanagara period, which was in tune with the declared ideals of protecting, conserving and promoting Hindu Dharma. It does not mean that the Brahmanization process in Karnataka began only during the Vijayanagara period. But the point is the process was very intensive during this period as revealed in land grants. Extensive creations of Brahmadaya, Devadaya, and Mathapura land grants were a product of this Brahmanization process.

Fourthly, the widespread practice of making land grants in the Vijayanagara period paved the way for the rise of Brahmana landed
intermediaries. They performed administrative functions within their settlements called Agraharas almost independently of royal control. Whatever might be the intentions of the royal donors and their agents, the land grants helped to create a group of influential landed intermediaries. They performed administrative functions within their settlements called Agraharas almost independently of royal control. Whatever might be the intentions of the royal donors and their agents, the land grants helped to create a group of influential landed intermediaries who were wielding considerable economic and political power in their segments called Agrahara. Thus centralized control gave way to decentralization.

The inscriptions of the period from Karnataka which created the Brahmadaya grant record the time limit as Achandrarkavagi or as long as sun and moon which implies the perpetual nature of this tenure. Under this tenure, in return from land grants, the Brahmanas were obliged to render religious services which might secure spiritual welfare of the donors or their ancestors. The secular obligations of the Brahmanas landed intermediaries under this tenure are rarely laid down. But it is natural to expect that the Brahmana landed intermediaries more than repaid their generous donors and patrons of Sangama, Saluva and Tuluva dynasties by maintaining law and order in their segments and impressing upon the people the sacred duty of carrying out their Varna or Jati functions and obeying the Vijayanagara monarch who in this period as recorded in Amuktamalyada of Krishnadevaraya, was believed to have embodied in his person the attributes of various Gods. Hence, whatever may have been the intentions of the royal donors, it would be wrong to think that the Brahmadaya land served only religious purposes during the said period. Certainly the Brahmana landed intermediaries prayed for the spiritual well being of the royal donors and their ancestors and never supplied any soldiers as the Bishops in
England did, but there was no need for military service if the people could be persuaded to behave themselves and to acquire in the existing order. The same remarks hold good in the case of Devadaya land tenures.

Fifthly lands held by the Mathas or Monastries of different sects of Hinduism is known as Mathapura land tenure, of all the Mathas in Karnataka during the Vijayanagara period, Shringeri Matha was a very famous and it emerged as a very big landed magnate as a result of extensive donations made by the Vijayanagara rulers and their feudatories, being mainly a center of religion and philosophy. Shringeri math acquired many lands and villages and temporal power within its jurisdiction.

The annual income of about 750 tolas of gold from landed estates, Birudus and other trappings of Monarchical like powers converted the simple heritage into samsthana, a Murusavira sime and a state within a state. The pontiff became Jagadguru who become a very important instrument in the intensification of Brahmanization of the area in the Vijayanagara Empire. Thus the Brahmadaya, Devadaya and Mathapura land grants created by the Vijayanagara rulers in Karnataka helped to strengthen the Brahmanization process which in turn helped the rulers in secular field. They represented the strong conservative forces in rural areas. As a result of this process the peasants were ideologically controlled by the non-producing classes and institutions of the society.

The common practice of granting lands instead of money as now happens in lien of services rendered to the state or society by individuals in various capacities led to the emergence of service tenures. They were known as Umbali, Manya and Kodage. There was either total exemption or a token collection of taxes from persons who held lands under these
tenures. As a result, the state not only incurred loss of revenue but also created a class of landed intermediaries who came to control the means of production, but actually did not till the lands themselves. They were mostly absentee landlords and as such leased lands to tenant farmers on the basis of guttige, geni, yara and gadi.

Thus a little more than two centuries of the history of land tenures (grants) in Karnataka during the Vijayanagara period shows that though the changes in this field were not a swift and repaid as in political life, but they were not altogether absent. We can notice a few marked developments in this survey, namely, intensive Brahmanization process through landgrants, the emergence of Shringeri Matha as a Samsthana or Jagir and varieties of service tenures and land leases.

Women with material wealth and social position often appear as generous donors in the inscriptions of the said period. Gifts to temples were in the form of lands, villages, income from villages, proceeds from the remission of taxes, ornaments, cloth, articles, etc. These were made over to the deities in the temples by the kings officials, chiefs, Mahamandaleshwara queens, common women with different religions motives. The benefactions made and endowments created were generally entrusted to the trustees of the temples for arranging regular worship of the deity, for burning perpetual lamp, for conducting temple festivals and for remunerating temple servants for their services in the temple. Women made liberal grants, i.e. queen Tirumaladevi Amman, Varadajidevi Amman, and other royal women, as well as common women and Devadasis made liberal grants to temples, to commemorate, their visits to temples, to secure a strong empire, to acquire religious merit, to celebrate their birthday, and for realizing the four objects of human desire namely, Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha.
From the above study, it is clear that the construction of temples was not the right of any individual or a group of people in the society. People of all the classes like the king and servants, the rich and poor, the merchants, the artisans, and the priests contributed their share to the main stream of the constructional campaign. Thereby, a large number of temples came to be set up throughout Karnataka during the period under study.

The temples were erected largely to earn blessings of the God or to acquire merit for oneself or for their elders. Lamp columns or temples were erected to cherish the memory of their preceptors or teachers. Sometimes temples were erected as an act of expiation or to overcome sin. A peaceful situation was conducive for the construction of the temples. During the time of Harihara II, Devaraya II and Krishnadevaraya there was a general peace throughout the country. Thereby, one can notice the construction of a large number of temples during the period of these rulers.

Liberal grants were given for the development of Virupakshapura, somalapura, Krishnapura, Vitthalapura, Achyutapura, Varadadevi-ammana pattana, Tirumaladevi Ammana pattana, Chinnadeviammanapattana, and Nagalapura. Construction of wells, tanks and Keres were meant very auspicious so many important people during the said period were involved in it.

Vijayanagara rulers followed the policy of religious tolerance. Shaivism, Virashaivism, Vaishnavism, Srivaishnavism, Jainism, Islam, and Christianity flourished side by side. Festivals like Rathasaptami, Shivaratri, Mahanavami, Holi, Dipavali, were celebrated on a grand scale during the said period. Beside state support, the people of Vijayanagara made liberal endowments to institute such festivals and rituals. The
observance of festivals and rituals in temples, the exuberant celebration by the public and lively accompaniment of dance and music that added colour was integral aspects of life in the city. These demonstrate the vigour and vitality of religious life in the Vijayanagara city.

Tirumala temple like others in our country bears on its walls several epigraphs of various kings, queens, generals, other royal benefactors and common men who made gifts and endowments to the temple. There are 169 inscriptions of the period of Saluva Narasimharaya, 229 of Sri Krishnadevaraya, 251 of Sri Achyutaraya, 147 of Sadasivavaraya and 135 of the kings of Aravidu Dynasty. The Tirumala Temple achieved its full fame and glory during the Vijayanagara period, due to patronage of the ruling Emperors. Both Krishnadevaraya and Achyutaraya made several pilgrimages to the temple and offered priceless jewelleries and also endowed several valuable property for carrying on the services of the temple on a grand scale.

Thus, most of the Vijayanagara inscriptions in one way or other visualized the concept of Dana or gifts. These concepts viz Dana as an instrument of state policy in a way constitutes the central theme of the present work.