CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

Comparatively Anthropology is a new comer for those who study cultures, societies and civilizations. In the past Anthropologists focussed their attention on the study of primitive communities. As the subject matter of Anthropology went on expanding, they took up the study of different aspects of societies the peasant, the rural and the urban. In recent writing Redfield and Singer (1955 and 1956) are engaged in the study of the civilizational aspects of societies.

The present work entitled Hindu Muslim Religious synthesis in Rajabag sawar temple of Yamanur is a study which is connected mostly with the people of village communities and to some extent, as it involves the religious matters of Hindus and Muslims, it also deals with the urban people of this part of the country.

It is true as mentioned by L.P. Vidyarthi (1961: XIV) "Redfield develops in his propositions about a civilization on the concept of great and little traditions cultural specialists, style of life, cultural performances and cultural media". In this context the researcher likes to mention here that the temple of Rajabag sawar of
Yamanur is situated in the village context but its devotees are spread throughout this part of the country comprising the people belonging to both great tradition and little tradition. Moreover, it is very significant to note that the devotees who form the major part of the cult are largely Hindus and Muslims, and the cult is spread irrespective of caste, creed and religion. For a student of Anthropology this temple poses many problems, like:

i. Historical background of the temple.

ii. Why Hindus and Muslims come together on this worship?

iii. The beliefs and practices connected with the cult reveal a particular type of culture.

iv. The cultural specialists or priests that are organised in this temple show a particular type of tradition.

v. Moreover there is a continuation of the tradition even after the scientific development and reformation that has gone through the centuries.

**Methodology:**

In this study the researcher is going to examine the hypothesis that is mentioned here. The aim of the study is to solve the problem of the cult which involves mostly both Hindus and Muslims. We say that India is a secular country, but here in this religious worship we
find the secularism that has been developed since long time. This reveals that the people were merely interested in solving their day to day problems by being devotees, irrespective of their caste creed and religion.

In this cult of Changadeva temple of Yamanur is referred in the great tradition, and the practices that are carried on in this cult are generally formed the people of little tradition. Therefore we have to take into account both the great and little traditions and also both the people who belong to Hinduism and Islam. The main temple and its branches are the sacred centres for both Hindus and Muslims, where the priesthood is mainly organised under the Hindu priests and another one under the tradition of Muslim priests.

These sacred specialists have maintained certain elements of the great tradition which are transmitted to the rural population at large and devotees in general. The sacred centre has become the place of pilgrimage for many, not only for devotees but also for those who go there in order to get certain wishes of their life fulfilled. Here we find that the sacred complex and its branches are not merely related to religion, but also for the sake of magical performances and for the cultural spread of the particular cult.
This sacred centre and the sacred complex of Yamanur has become a place of pilgrimage for both Hindus and Muslims in particular and all others in general and acts as a carrier of culture for both populations belonging to great tradition and little tradition. There are some other specialities such as the trade of donkies, the marriage alliances of certain communities like Helawar in the sacred complex, which are peculiar to this centre of pilgrimage. Moreover, this centre has many branches of its sacred centres in this part of the country, thereby they carry on a particular type of culture and the tradition which is both magical and religious.

In the formation and testing of these hypotheses the researcher has depended mainly on the field work and on the study of similar works produced by the scholars. The researcher has visited these places of sacred centres and specialists on the subject and has made enquiries and observations with the help of the questionnaires, which were administered to the priests, the devotees and other local people. Moreover, the researcher is a resident of Navalgund which is a near by town to Yamanur i.e. 5 Kilometers from Navalgund. When the researcher took up the study of this sacred complex the facts were buried in the myths told about the sacred complex and the deity. The researcher employed both historical and empirical methods...
to bring to light the facts relating to this religious place. Therefore, the intensive field work had to be undertaken to gather the material for the thesis.

The researcher met the professors in the Karnataka University, Dharwad who were interested in such type of studies. The discussions and the writing of those people were taken into account to build up his own study. As the researcher is a lecturer in the degree college of Navalgunj, it was very easy for him to gather the material. The students and the members of the staff of the college helped him to collect the data regarding this thesis.

The researcher made short trips with his guide to the sacred places in Karnataka which were similarly engaged in bringing about the synthesis of Hindu-Muslim traditions. They will be discussed later in this thesis. The literary sources in the central library of the Karnataka University, Dharwad and in his own college library were very much helpful in studying the data about the subject. He could collect manuscripts from the temple itself in different languages like, Kannada, Marathi and Modi. Modi is a particular type of script which was prevalent in the past in Southern Maharashtra and Northern Karnataka. The gazetteer, the census reports and the literary works on the Hindus-Muslim synthesis both
in social sciences and in literature (Kannada and Marathi), some of the historical facts narrated by the priests and other information was very much useful for the study.

The material thus collected has been analysed to test the hypothesis as mentioned above about the sacred complex and the Hindu-Muslim Religious synthesis. Some of the books as mentioned in the reference were very helpful for the study. The universe of our study was the main temple of sacred complex of Yamanur and its branches. Therefore, the sacred geography of this sacred temple will be illustrated in our study. The elements of sacred complex, the folk belief, sanskritic tradition will be helpful to describe the nature of the cult. Thus, the study is one of cross regional and cross cultural. The historical development of the sacred complex and the biography of the saint who was responsible for the building up of this cult will be discussed in detail.

The study has dealt with the different phases of Indian History, because it is said that the cults or religion followed the flag. That is India has gone through the Hindu, Muslim and British rule. The forty years of this period of Independence has also been taken into account to study the process of development and change about the religious synthesis. It is needless to say
that during the Muslim period, the Hindu-Muslim-Religious synthesis took its vigorous forms, but later (we find) during the British period there was a policy of non interference in the field of religion by the British. Therefore, during the British period also the Hindu-Muslim Religious synthesis continued as before. After the independence as India declared herself as a secular country, there is a continuation of this cult. So the vivid picture of the development and change of the cult and tradition belonging to this temple will be discussed in detail. By the by industrialisation, modernisation, urbanisation and such other recent process of change in the country have played a greater role regarding the temple and the cult. So these things will be discussed in the forthcoming chapters.

Interestingly enough the sacred complex and the cult have particular days of the week as sacred and the annual fair is observed with certain peculiarities that are connected with the existing traditional cults of India like Sidha Natha and other magical and religious cults of India. In course of our discourse the connection of these cults with the existing cults can be given in the light of literature existing about these cults.
Whether this sacred complex should be called a temple, a shrine, a monastery is a controversial matter which has got its own development through the centuries. It is quite interesting to note that in spite of the spread of education, awareness in the religion and modernisation, the cult is undisturbed and carried on in the same old fashion by the ignorant, illiterate, peasant folk and the educated elite.

In the sacred complex of Yamanur, the profession of priests has spread in about forty families and the people of same caste namely Marathas, act as priests elsewhere in the branches of this monastery. However, exceptionally a disputed Muslim priest-hood act as main priest in one of the branches of this temple in Yamanur and a large number of peers, Phakeers, Mulas etc. are also the secondary part of the priesthood of this cult. Therefore, the organisation of the priesthood will be discussed in course of time and historical development of this Hindu-Muslim synthesis of priesthood and their devotees and the laity.

Peculiarly in this temple, there are ancient deities of Hindus and the tomb of a Hindu saint viz. Changadeva, and the sacred palms of Hassain and Hussain are being worshiped mainly by Hindu priests and rights and
duties have been distributed to Muslim priests as well. Not only magico-religious developments have taken place in this cult, but also social and commercial interest have been involved there. The devotees from Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu follow this cult, and this poses the problems for social scientists of such a secular development in the sacred complex. The microcosm of Hinduism gives place to the macrocosm of Indian civilization, we also find a process of Hindu-Muslim synthesis not only on the ideological basis, but also in the practices of the people which involved the magical, religious, social, cultural and commercial activities of the people.

The sacred centre of Yamanur:

The village of Yamanur is located in the taluka of Navalgund of Dharwad district in Karnataka State of India. (please see map No.1) The place is situated where the hilly areas of Karwar district end and the plains of Bijapur districts begin. So actually this is called Gadinadu (The lands between the forests and the plains) As per enquiry the place exists an ancient centre of religious place on the bank of the river (stream) Benni halla. The village is 5 kilometres away from the west of Taluka head quarters.
FIG. MAP OF YAMANR VILLAGE
Though the place is not very important from the point of view of political movements, it seems, the saints have chosen this place as it is quiet and calm. Etymologically Yamanur means a corrupt word of Yammiganur meaning the place of Buffaloes. It is learnt that the Buffaloes were reared, plenty in number here and that is why the place was called by that name. Yamanur also meant the place of God of death namely Yama. It is mentioned that in olden days Yamanur was also called Yammigahatti meaning the place, where in Buffaloes of Lingaraj Desai of Sirasangi a near by taluka of Soundatti, were kept within a fence.

There is nothing here to trace the worship of Yama at present here; however, it is quite possible that the people might have worshiped Yama also here. The idol of deity in the sacred complex that of Bruhma is still being worshipped at the entrance of the sacred complex. It is also mythologically narrated that, saint Markhandeaih defeated God Yama, the God of death and hence the place was also called Yamanur. (Dixit: 1977: 40)

The following temples and shrines were found in Yamanur belonging to Hindus and Muslims. Though the population is very less in this village there are many temples and shrines. This shows the importance of religion in this place.
Hindu Religious places

1. Ishwar Temple
2. Basaveshwar Temple
3. Sharanabasaveshwar Temple
4. A monastery of Lingayats called as Hiremath
5. Maruti Temple
6. Gramadevate Temple
7. Tangamma Temple
8. Udachamma Temple
   (Belonging to Kuruba caste)

It may be noted here that among the Hindu temples the first four belong to Veerashaivas in particular and shaivas in general. The Maruti temple is for all the Hindus. The temple of Gramadevata is a village Goddess. Tangamma and Hemaraddi Mallamma temples are generally worshiped by all Hindus.

Udachamma is a Goddess worshiped by a Kuruba caste. The monasteries of Lingayats called as Hiremath are generally found in all the villages of North Karnataka.

Though there are only ten families of Muslims in this village there are four religious places of worship including the Rajabag Sawar temple worshiped by Muslims.

Muslim Religious places

1. Rajabag Sawar Temple (of Muslims)
2. Peerasab Darga
3. Bara Imam (Muslim monastery)
4. Idaga Maidan
5. Two tombs of peeras Religious monks of Muslims.
This shows that Yamanur has played a great role in invoking the religious movement in this part of the country.

It is noted that the major castes in this village are Kurubas, Lingayats, Raddis, Marathas, Brahmins, Holiyas, Madigas and Muslims. The temple of Hemaraddi Mallamma is associated with the Reddis. There are numerous temples of Lingayats. Marathas and Brahmins are mainly the devotees of Changadev temple which is the main subject of our study.

The untouchables like Holiyas and Madigas are also found. There are ten families of Muslims but the surrounding villages having the Muslim population also co-operate with the Muslims of Yamanur. In this way there are different castes sects and religious groups in the village and ultimately providing a place of secular worship like Rajabag Sawar temples in this village.

All this shows that the place might have been a sacred centre of Hindus from ancient period. In the Taluka place of Navalgund, there is a temple of Nagalingaswami belonging to 19th century (1821 to 1881), who also was a secular saint. He was also a person of magico-religious activities. He was the first man to bring the Bible of Christianity to Navalgund which is still found in his monastry which is printed in Kannada language at Mangalore (South Kanara District) in the year 1865.
According to the records, the village constitutes the area of about 50 acres. The village panchayat records give the exact area of the village and the cultivable and non cultivable lands as follows.

Table No.1 Cultivable land

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultivable (in acres)</th>
<th>Non cultivable</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irrigated</td>
<td>Non Irrigated</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2467.07</td>
<td>1154.11</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the census reports for the last two decades the population of this village is as follows.

Table No.2 Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Total Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1977 Total</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>761</td>
<td>1590</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987 Total</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>734</td>
<td>1612</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>1404</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The area of the temple complex consists of 5125 Sq ft.
Besides they have assylums (Dharmashalas) and other fallow lands for the temporary stay of the devotees during festivals and annual fair. The sacred centre has the branches in the following places:

### Table No. 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Taluka</th>
<th>Dist.</th>
<th>State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Rajabag Sawar Temple of Ramadurga (Branch)</td>
<td>Ramadurga</td>
<td>Belgaum</td>
<td>Karnataka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Rajabag Sawar Temple of Koppal (Branch)</td>
<td>Koppal</td>
<td>Raichur</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Changadeva or Rajabag Sawar Temple of Hubli (Branch)</td>
<td>Hubli</td>
<td>Dharwad</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Rajabag Sawar Temple of Hipparagi (Branch)</td>
<td>Basavan-Bagewadi</td>
<td>Bijapur</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Changadeva or Rajabag Sawar Temple of Yamanur (Main)</td>
<td>Navalgund</td>
<td>Dharwad</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Rajabag Sawar Temple of Yamanur (Branch)</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Yamanurappa Gudi of Doddamagadi-Halli (Branch)</td>
<td>Ramadurg</td>
<td>Belgaum</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Changadev Temple of Nippani.</td>
<td>Nippani</td>
<td>Belgaum</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Rajabag Sawar Temple of Chinchali.</td>
<td>Gadag</td>
<td>Dharwad</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Rajabag Sawar Temple of Malasamudra.</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FIG. MAP SHOWING DIFFERENT BRANCHES OF RAJABAG SAWAR TEMPLES IN KARNATAKA

* BRANCHES

* CONNECTED PLACES
According to our study, out of the fourteen temples belonging to Changadev or Rajabag Sawar, ten are found in Karnataka State and the other four are found in Maharashtra State. As per the origin of Changadeva, this saint was born in the ancient village called Sundarpur near Edalabad in Khandesh district of Maharashtra State. Hence, Changadev temple of Sundarapur is the original temple and Changadev or Rajabag Sawar temple of Yamanur is the main temple in this part of the country; and other temples are only its branches. According to some scholars Changadeva was born in the village called Narayan Dhoti in Maharashtra State.

According to Mythology Changadeva lived from 1st Century to 14th Century (Dixit: 1977 : 3), but historically he was a contemporary of Jnanadeva, a famous Maharashtra Maratha saint, who lived during 13th Century. The temples of Changadeva are to be found all over India, but however for our study we
FIG MAP SHOWING THE DIFFERENT BRANCHES OF RAJABAG-SAVAR TEMLES IN MAHARASHTRA

1 - SATARA
2 - KOREGAON
3 - KHANDESH
4 - EDALABAD
5 - SUNDARAPUR
6 - KATAGOON
have recorded only 12 temples found in Karnataka and Maharastra. His temple in Sundarapur is on the bank of the river of his own native place. The village Changadev came to be the corrupt form of Sundarapur. In his native place the ruined temple of Changadev is said to be existing even today. It seems that in olden days this temple was very big. The ruins of this temple testify to this fact very clearly. There is also an inscription on the stone of the door. This inscription is not very clear. This scripture on the stone has been edited by Dr. Pleet and Mr. Burges; in their book "Pali Sanskrit and old Kannada inscriptions" numbered 284th scripture. It is said that this inscription on the door might have been carved during 1128 A.D. In this inscription the donations made to the temple are mentioned.

There was another person by the same name Changadev who was an Astrologer of the royal family of Yadav's or Jadhav's of Shingan clan. His ancestors belonged to the family of Bhaskaracharya, the father of Leelavati, who were astronomers and had built a school for the study of Astronomy in Sundarapur. So it seems that there were two different Changadevas, the earlier one was an Astronomer and the later one, who was a contemporarary of Jnanadev, was a magico-religious saint.

This much is true that the saint Changadev was born in the family of the Astronomer Changadev, and in the
same village. The Astronomers of Changadev family had taken shelter in the courts of Peshwas in the later times (Dixit: 1977: 5). The inscription found in this temple is of historical importance, because it is written in the Marathi language, when the Marathi literature was being developed. It is clear from the above discussion that there were many Changadevas in the family of Changadev in the that village, therefore we can say that the Mythological developments of the birth of Changadev starts from 1st or 2nd Century B.C. it self. Contemporay to Jnanadev there were two Changadevas one was Changavatheshwar and the other was Changakeshavadas, but after the period of Jnanadev there were also persons called Changavateshware was nothing but the saint among the saints, the Changadev himself. Laxman Rao Panjarkar in his book "Marathi Vangmayacha Itihas" bhag one (the history of folk Marathi literature part one) says that the name of Changadeva came to be given to the children of succeeding generations.

As we know the Kshetroji Rao Burge of Katagoon place in Koreganv taluk of Satara district of Maharashtra State took this cult to Yamanur and settled their. It is also said that Changadev himself had travelled and stayed in Yamanur on the bank of Bennihalla. Thus we find similarity between the temple at Yamanur and the temple at Sundarapur in
Khandesh district of Maharashtra state. It is needless to say that the relatives of Burge family and the disciples of Burge family took the cult and spread it in Karnataka state, where Yamanur becomes the central of the cult. In other four temples of Maharashtra also the Burge family played a very important role in spreading the cult.

About Changadev temple or Rajabag Sawar temple of Yamanur, it is said that Kshetroji who is also mentioned as Chitroji was really the disciple of the saint of saints, Changadev who was contemporay to Jnanadev. This priest or disciple came to Yamanur as he was told by Changadev in his dream to go to Yamanur and spread his philosophy and cult. After the death of Kshetroji his son Ranoji (of the family of Kshetroji belongs to the Marathas of Maharashtra).

Ranoji in the way of his father kept the idol of the statue of Narashimha in the underground, in the sacred place and on that he built a platform and kept the Trident (Trishula) staff (Danda) Damaru, (Small drum) the bamboo stick bent towards left were kept on the platform for the worship, and then the Burge family developed in Yamanur and the members of their family went to Ramadurg in Belgaum district of Karnataka state. The disciples of this family went to Hubli in Dharwad district of Karnataka state and built up a Changadev temple in the same fashion that we see in Yamanur.
The other members of the Burge family or clans remained at Katagoon in Koreganv taluka, Satara district of Maharashtra state. Some of them went also to the then Hyderabad state; and others went towards the old Mysore state and settled there. Wherever the members of these families went, they continued the spreading of the cult and the philosophy of Changadev.

After the death of Ranoji his son Baba Burge continued the worship of Changadev in Yamanur. After some generation when Narashing Roy was the priest, Changadev appeared in his dream and told him to build the temple of Changadev. Accordingly Narashinga Roy in the year 1758 A.D. built a huge temple in Yamanur, and after that the devotees have carried on the repairs and the extensions of the temple in Yamanur.

At the time of Adilshai of Bijapur the members of Royal family used to visit this sacred centre of Yamanur. At the time of the war of Talikoti (early 17th century) in Bijapur district the Vittappa of Sirasangi in Soundatti taluka of Belgaum district helped Adilshai against Marathas and got this place for himself. In 1679 the king Shivaji came to Bhadrapur in Navalgund taluk, Dharwad district of Karnataka state, and appointed Lingappa and Sangappa as
village headman and village accountant respectively.
While returning he paid a visit to the sacred centre of Yamanur. It is mentioned (Dixit: 1977: pp.40) that Changadev had actually came to Yamanur and had constructed the place of meditation (Tapovana) here in Yamanur.

Here the people suffering from different diseases come to get themselves cured. The Desai of Sirasangi in Soundatti taluka, Belgaum district of Karnataka State, the adjoining district of Dharwad donated four hundred acres of land to this temple. The priests of this temple would visit the court yard of Desais and were honoured by the Desai and with rich presents from them.

The Baba Saheb of Nargund of Dharwad district in Karnataka State, donated one hundred acres of land to this temple. But in 1858 after the First War of Independance, the British took over all the lands of the princely states and as a consequence many lands of the temple were also taken over by the British. But any how the British recognised the Burge family as the priestly family of this temple.

During 18th Century Tippusultan, the son of Hyder Ali made his expedition to Hampi, Mundaragi, Nargund, Navalgund in Karnataka State and robbed these places and
while returning to Hubli, he heard the greatness of the temple of Yamanur the Rajabag Sawar, and paid a visit to it. He had already respected by giving presentations and kept up warm relationship with the Swamiji of that Shringeri Math; and accordingly he had respected Nanjundeshwar in Nanjanagudu near Mysore, and he had called that temple Hakeem Nanjunda and had offered the lace of Pachas (Lace of green pearls) and had installed a lingam called Pucha Lingam.

In the same way Tippu Sultan offered Punjas (palm leaves) to this temple and even today these punjas or palms are being worshiped here. As already noted this temple was a secular one, because Changadev himself had his own, magico-religious secular cult. People of all religions began to worship here and mainly there of Hindu and Muslims and these bought about the Hindu Muslim Religious synthesis in this temple.

It is true that Changadev was born in the family of Vishwakarama Brahmins (Smiths). At the time of Adil Shahi's the person belonging to Vishwakarma called as Mouneshwar of Navalgund had blessed a woman of Pinjara caste of Muslims, and her son become a saint called Khadiralinga in Huigur, Kundgol taluka of Dharwad district, Karnataka state.
The famous secular saint of Navalgund called Nagalingaswamiji was also born in Vishwakarma caste. The branches of Mouneshwar temple are found in various places in this part of the country. The Kalamma of Sirasangi is also being worshiped mainly by Vishwakarma Brahmins in this region.

All these great personalities in the region try to bring the synthesis of religions, cast and creeds. As Changadev also blessed the Muslims, the Muslims began to hold this place as a sacred place for themselves. In 1784 the Muslims of Mulgund in Gadag taluk of Dharwad district, Karnataka state submitted the petition in the court of Soundatti in Belgaum district of Karnataka state, claiming the sacred centre of Yamanur as their own. But the members of the Burge family proved that the temple belongs to them, and the court has given the decision as this temple belong to Burge family. In 1826, the case of disputes between Hindus and Muslims as to who were the priests of the temple was brought before the Mameladar of Navalgund, district Dharwad in Karnataka, called as Shri Ram Rao. The bearing took place and after verifying the records made by the Channappagouda Patil and Veerappayya Kulkarni of Yamanur taluk Navalgund, Karnataka state, it was decided that the temple of Yamanur, Rajabag Sawar or Changadev, belonged to the priesthood of Burge family. This decision was taken
on the basis of the statements of the above mentioned persons. This statement (Kaifhiyat) is very important because it mentions that a British official named Thakarson visited the temple in 1823. Also there is a mention of the rule of the Peshwas and Tippu Sultan in this region and therefore this record has got its historical importance. Before 20 years the local Muslims again approached their Wokf Committee and complained about the ownership and priesthood of the temple. It has been heard that the members of the Wokf Committee who visited the temple could not help the local Muslims.

At present the place is called Yamanur, the sacred centre of Changadev or Rajabag Sawar in this village though having many branches throughout this part of the country does not have any control in the administration of the branches of other temples.

According to Dharwad district gazeteer, 1893, the place has been described as having the population of 850. It is said that every year a big fair takes place of a peer (Muslim saint) for four days starting from the third day of Holi festival in the last month of Hindu calendar. In this fair as described in that gazeteer the people used to gather during the annual festival comprising about 20,000 to
1,00,000. According to the estimation of the researcher even today in 1987 the people gathered for annual fair numbering about 50,000 to 1,00,000. In the same gazeteer it is mentioned that there used to be the commerce valued about Rs.25,000 but today this has gone up and at least one crore rupees of different articles are sold during annual fair. In the same gazeteer it is mentioned that there used to be the sale of grains, grocery and fruits.

The researcher has observed that the prostitutes and the mendicants (Jogatis) of Yallamma deity in Belgaum district and many other mendicants of different cults also visit this temple on different occasions and during the annual fair.

The same gazeteer mentions that the temple of the deity as peer and the story of this peer runs as follows.

The Kingdom of Adil Shai's was ruined in 1690. At that time there was a Muslim saint (Walli) in Bijapur named Kwaza Bandhe Nawaz and at the same time there was another Muslim saint in Gulbarga called Shaha Meerzha Abdul Raja Khadri. It is said that this saint, Shaha Meerzha Abdul Raja Khadri used to ride a tiger with a serpent whip in his hand and with the controlling rope made of scorpions. Therefore, he was called Rajabag Sawar (the one who rides the
tiger). This saint went to meet the saint of Bijapur Kwaza Bandhe Nawaz. This was seen by his grandson of seven years old and as a counterpart, that boy sat on a wall and made it run and went to receive the saint of Gulburga Shaha Meerzha Abdul Raja Khadri. When this was seen by the saint, Shaha Meerzha Raja Abdul Khadri of Gulburga was ashamed and returned to Gulburga, and he died sorrowfully. This the saint of Bijapur namely Kwaza Bandhe Nawaz, came to know it by his intuition (conscience) and cursed the boy and reduced him to ashes. In course of time that boy saint who used to ride a wall and a tiger, become the saint for many people and his Durgas (tombs) were built in different places.

In the same way the headman of the village of Katagoon Koreganv taluk in Satara district of Maharashtra state, named Chitroji, began to worship this Rajabag Sawar. It is said that one day this saint (Walli) appeared in the dream of Chitroji and asked him as to what he wanted to which Chitroji answered that the saint should remain always with him. Then the saint said that there would appeared a Panja (his palm) near his pillow, and he also told him to take this Panja to Yamanur and worship it there. When Chitroji was awakened from his dream he saw near his pillow a panja along with two wooden sticks and a silver tiger.
It may be mentioned here that these are found even to
day in Rajabag Sawar temple of Yamanur. They were gathered
by Chitroji and as per the order of the saint he came to
Yamanur and began to worship them, and incourse of time a
person of his dynasty built a Darga for these in 1720. In
this Darga even to day the descendants of Chitroji are the
main priests of this temple. Nowadays we find about forty
families of priests around the sacred complex of Rajabag
Sawar temple in Yamanur.

It is said that the famous secular saint shareef
saheb of Shishuvinal, Dharwad district, in Karnataka state,
who was known for his synthetic religion of Hinduism and
Islam used to visit this temple of Rajabag Sawar.

**Historical Background:**

Navalgund, the taluka head quarter of Yamanur is
situated (15° 30' North, 75° 20' East) in Dharwad district
of Karnataka state, to the north east of Dharwad at the
distance of 25 miles and it is having the population of
18,758. Navalgund is chiefly an agricultural town.

The earliest mention of the town is made in 1454 as
the head quarters of a province (Sarkar) governed under the
Bahamani king Alhaudin the II (1435 - 1457) by his brother
in law Jalal Khan. In the same year Jalal Khan and his son Sikandar hearing a false report that the king had died, seized on several districts around Navalgund.

The king promised a free pardon to the rebels if they submitted. Instead of submitting, Jalal Khan called for the aid from the Malwa king telling him that Alhaudin was dead and that the ministeres were dividing the kingdom. The Malwa king crossed Khan Desh and came to the Deccan in 1457. But learning that he had been deceived, retreated leaving secret orders to capture Sikandar and bring him to Mandu. Sikandar retreated to Navalgund and on the promise of a free pardon gave up Navalgund port. Even today there are the remains of the Navalgund fort. In the distribution of governerships and commands which followed the death of Alhaudin II, and the succession of his son Humain Zelim (1457), Sikandar Sha suffered a disapplintment and joining his father at Navalgund began to raise troops. He defeated the force sent against him. Then the king advanced in person and offered to pardon the rebelled father and son is they submitted. As they refused to submit, Humain ordered an attack and the insurgents fought with bravery. After a long indesciplined action the king who mounting an elephant, was pressing forward in the centre was attacked by Sikandar.
The Sikandar's life was saved by his elephant which seized Sikandar in his trunk and threw him from his horse. Sikandar was killed and his followers fled. Next day the seize of Navalgund was begun and at the end of the week having no hope of relief Jalal Khan submitted, his life was spared but he remained a prisoner for the rest of his days.

About 1690 under Aurangjeb's governership of Savanur, Navalgund was the head quarters for revenue division managed by a heredity lingayat officer called the Desai of Navalgund. In 1747 the Savanur Navab was obliged to a treaty ceding to the Peshwa the whole of present subdivision of Navalgund along with other parts of Dharwad district.

In 1778 when Haider Ali became the master of the country South of Krishna river, Navalgund was left to its chief on the condition that he should acknowledge Haidar's supremacy and pay him tribute. In a Maratha revenue statement of about 1790 Navalgund appears in Thorgal district (Sarkar) as a head of pargana with a revenue of Rs.75,420. In the struggle between 1795 and 1800 which convulsed the Maratha state, Dhondopanth Gokhale took Navalgund and Gadag from the Desai.

In Nov. 1817 General, Munro appointed one Ram Rao as the military officer and Amaldar of Navalgund. After his appointment Ram Rao quickly took possession of more
than half of the district and attached Navalgund on 19th Dec. 1817. Gokhale's son who was in charge of Navalgund fled with his horseman on hearing his son's defeat Gokhale came from Badami to join him and after gathering the fugitives reached Navalgund on 22nd Dec. 1817. Ram Rao retired into the fort and on 23rd Dec. 1817 his ammunition was exhausted and he was hardpressed by Gokhale. But the blockade was raised on the arrival of General Munro from Dharwad to Ram Rao's help.

The above mentioned political history of Navalgund must have surely impressed the religious and social life of the people of Navalgund taluk.

As Yamanur comes under the jurisdiction of Navalgund taluk the political movement as discussed above must have surely affected the socio-religious life of the people of Yamanur. Here we see the confluence of three political (rules) chiefs, one is that of Muslims, the second one is that of Marathas and the third one was that of local Lingayat heredity chief.

There is no doubt that the political influence as discussed above must have influenced (impacted) the socio-religious life of the people of Yamanur, and there by the temple complex of our study, may not be altogether free from the above said impacts of different kinds of religious and it
is also quite possible that the cult of Rajabag Sawar temple remained a secular one where the people of all religions could take shelter.

**Anthropology of Religion in India:**

One of the fields of social Anthropology called Anthropology of Religion; which reflects the British and American influence needs to be studied separately. The study of premitive religion in India on the objective basis was initiated by Majumdar and his explanation of Bongaism in its final form in the Affairs of a Tribe, falls in line with the modern Anthropological trends in the study of religions. The full length of a tribal religion however was published by Werrier Elwin. The study of religion in the context of Indian villages was initiated by Prof. M.N. Shrinivas in his book Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India. Where he had developed the concept of sanskritisation to explain the process of change in Hindu villages. In the same way this study of Rajabag Sawar temple in a Karnataka village is taken to explain the religious synthesis of two great religious of India, namely Hinduism and Islam.

If the interest of cultural Anthropology in the study of religion is taken in to account, that kind of process
is seen in the book edited by Prof. L.P. Vidyarthi called "One Aspect of Religion in Indian Society". The other one is edited by Edward B. Harper the volume known as Religion in South Asia. Both of these volumes include papers on different aspects of tribal and rural religions; which are based upon the original investigation in the same way this study of Rajabag Sawar Temple is a monograph describing the religious harmony and culture of the rural people in Karnataka. No doubt the work is based upon the original investigation done similar to those of L.P. Vidyarthi and E.B. Harper.

Another volum edited by Milton Singer is called "Traditional India". Structure and change has a great relevance to the contemporary study of religious tradition in India. This book includes papers which contain both textual and contextual analyses of oral and recorded traditions. In the study of Rajabag Sawar Temple the traditions of India have been also dealt with while studying the religious synthesis of Hindus and Muslims.

Recently the Doctoral Thesis are being studied on the religious Anthropology of the people of India. Such type of studies have taken up by the scholars from India and abroad. They have focused their mind on studying the sacred centres in India which include the rural and the urban. In this way the religious Anthropology in India
has contributed to the study of great and little traditions. The famous sacred centres like Chamundeshwari in Karnataka (Goswamy and Morab 1968) Dwaraka in Gujarat (Upadhyaya 1974), Kashi in Uttar Pradesh (Shinha and Saraswati 1967), have been studied. Besides Narayan 1974, Jha 1974, Prasad 1974, have contributed to the study of religious centres in India. The similar studies were carried on by Patnaik 1977, Mahapatra 1979. These studies have elaborately explained and identified the forces of spiritual moral cultural national and intellectual integration of the people of the different regions of India. No doubt this was possible by those people while studying the sacred centres located in different parts of India.

The present study on the sacred complex of Rajabag Sawar Temple of Yamanur represents the Zeal of such studies in India while finding and interpreting the cultural and religious activities of the people connected with a cult. It has been shown here how the religion and politics are interrelated in the development of the religious activities of the people. The importance of such sacred centres in affecting the integration not only at the religious level but also at the level of human existence. If Durkheim is correct to say that religion is the invention of many
and the God is the creation of man, it is certainly true in case of this study that the people belonging to different castes, sects and religions have invented a way of synthetic religion where Hindus and Muslims can come together and worship the polytheistic deities of Hindus and Muslims in one sacred centre as a result of a religious movement which was essential for the co-existence of the peasants villagers and rural and urban people of this part of the country.