4 Heredity, Genealogies, and the Advent of the New Monastery

Bandēnavāz Gēsūdarāz initiated the practice of hereditary succession in his hospice, which was a new development in the Deccan region. That the hospice received a perpetual land grant from Ahmad Śāh Bahmani (r. 1422-1436) was historically decisive in this context. Succession to the control of land reinforced the principle of heredity, and consolidated the position of the hospice as a political force in the region, placing the hospice on a firm footing. It led to the creation of strong images of tradition and continuity that came to be explored through representational strategies deployed in the legends and hagiographies. A compelling model, based on heredity and succession to landed wealth, was created for other monastic traditions to emulate. Among the fallouts of this far-reaching development was the evolution of lineages of succession within the monastery, both real and imagined.

The principle of hereditary succession to landed wealth was pregnant with potentials to bring forth radical transformations, not just in the realm of monastic establishments, but also in other institutional domains. In an insightful study of the emergence of the aṃbalavāśi (temple-dwelling) castes in Kerala, Kesavan Veluthat has shown that groups like the poduvāḷs, the vāriyars, etc., did not enjoy the status of distinct castes during the ninth, the tenth and the eleventh centuries, when the Čēras of Mahōdayapuraṃ (ca. 844-1122) held sway over large parts of Kerala. These groups were recognized as so many brāhmaṇas, carrying out secular functions related to the temple. In the course of time, they gained hereditary access to land by way of service tenures granted in lieu of periodic remuneration. Hereditary control over land consolidated their position within the temple and also as a closely-knit endogamous group, leading to their evolution as castes.263 This is the most ingenious explanation to date for the emergence of castes in India before the institution underwent the great transformation of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a result of the decennial census and the introduction of electoral politics.264 There seems to have been no caste in premodern India that did not enjoy hereditary access to land in some capacity or the other. This does not mean that all castes owned land. Our emphasis is on hereditary access and not on ownership. It involved a wide range of access in a variety of capacities like owners, rentiers, tenants, occupants, holders of cultivation rights, and agrestic labour, both bonded and free. There were a large number of groups that exercised no hereditary control over land. Modern ethnography identifies them as

263 Veluthat 2013: 132-144 (i.e., chapter 9).
264 Cf. Talbot 2001: 48-86 (i.e., chapter 2) for a discussion in the context of Andhra, where it is argued that caste was amorphous and less frequently invoked. Stress is instead laid on ‘a typology of statuses’ (Ibid., 55-61). It may, however, be noted that many of these ‘status’ titles are now caste titles. Also see Sharma 2007: 5-7 for an argument against the status theory.
tribes. Thus, the nature of access to land is crucial for any discussion on caste in premodern India.

The practice of granting land for religious purposes is as old as the later *vaidic* period in India (ca. 800-600 BCE), and making land grants with the generation of agrarian resources and revenue in mind, as old as the first century BCE. In the Deccan region, land grants were widely prevalent after the fourth century. Among the recipients of these grants were individual brāhmaṇas, the corporate group of brāhmaṇas, temples, and Buddhist and Jaina establishments. The grant made to the brāhmaṇas was called *brahmadēya*. The temple grant was originally called *dēvabhōga*, and later, *dēvadāna*. Historians identify these as eleemosynary grants. In Tamilnadu, there were a few other forms of eleemosynary grants like *palliccandaṃ*, *śālābhōgaṃ*, *kaṇimuttūṟṟǔ* and *veṭṭāppēṟǔ*. The *palliccandaṃ* was a Jaina grant, and the *śālābhōgaṃ*, an endowment made to a school (*śālā*) that had apart from imparting religious and secular knowledge, a leading military function to perform. The nature of *kaṇimuttūṟṟǔ* and *veṭṭāppēṟǔ* are not clear from the records. In Karnataka, inscriptions speak of grants like *kilgunte* (to the family of a soldier who died fighting), *bittuvatā* (for the maintenance of a tank), *bāḻgaḻccu* (a form of subsistence grant, or pension), *aṇugajīvita* (given to a relative or a member of the royal family or an elite), and *parōkṣavinaya* (in honour of someone else).

At least since the ninth century, the potential of money and gold as interest-bearing capital made the emergent elites gradually withdraw from the practice of granting land. Land grants were made extensively, but endowments of money or gold in lieu of land were made in greater numbers, registering a new development in the praxis of charity. In many cases, a fixed share of revenue or produce from a piece of land was also set aside as grant instead of transferring ownership or cultivating rights. Inscriptions provide us with numerous instances of land being given away for religious purposes. But after the tenth century, it had turned into a less preferred practice vis-à-vis the practice of granting revenue or gifting money and gold.

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265 Examples occur in texts like the *Aitarēya Brāhmaṇa* (Sharma 2007: 97) and the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (Ibid., pp. 90-91). That the practice was known is confirmed by the reservations against it in some of the text, although Sharma notes that “actual instances of land gifts are lacking” (Ibid., p. 91). Land grants continued in the 600-300 BCE period, as suggested by stray references like the Buddhist ‘Lohicca Sutta’, *Dīghanikāya* 12.

266 The earliest known instance of this kind comes from the later half of the first century BCE. An inscription of the Sātavāhana queen Nāganīka records the grant of two villages as part of a series of *vaidic* sacrifices organized under her aegis. At least 64,503 *kārṣāpaṇas* were spent on these sacrifices, in addition to 44,340 cows, and a number of horses, chariots, elephants, pots, silver containers and clothes. See No. 3 in Mirashi 1981.

267 On the military roles of the schools, see Veluthat 2013: 152-164 (i.e., Appendix II).

268 Devadevan 2009a: 60.
The rank and file of landholders had already swollen by the twelfth century, making individual landholders a force to reckon with.\textsuperscript{269} Holding land on a hereditary basis also made the family a deeply entrenched institution. Inscriptions begin to enumerate family lines with much greater frequency. Genealogy had until this time remained the preserve of kings and saints. In the case of the later, it was the succession of saints or the \textit{guruparamparā} that was emphasized, not the order of succession in a given monastery. In instances not related to kings and saints, records only named the Ego, and in many cases, his or her father. Cases of enumerating more than two generations were altogether rare. The Bedirūr grant of the Ganga king Bhūvikrama, dated 634, provides one such example, in which five generations are named, beginning with Bāṇa Vidyādhara Prabhumēru Gavuṇḍa, and ending with the recipient of the grant, Vikramāditya Gāvuṇḍa.\textsuperscript{270} An interesting instance from a village near Dāvaṇagere gives the genealogy of a family of courtesans. It reads: “Maidamarasa’s concubine Kāḍacci, Kāḍacci’s daughter Kāḷabbe, Kāḷabbe’s daughter Åycabbe, Åycabbe’s daughter Kaḷiṅgabbe, Kaḷiṅgabbe’s lord Pallaharaki Paraki’s daughter Kaḷiṅgabbe, Kaḷiṅgabbe’s son Parakayya”. This genealogy was doubtless a result of the control over land the family enjoyed. The inscription is found in a village called Kāḍajji, a clear indication that the village was founded by or in honour of Maidamarasa’s concubine.\textsuperscript{271}

After the twelfth century, inscriptions carrying genealogies of the families concerned increased in number by leaps and bounds. An inscription from Gōvindanahalḷi, dated 1236, mentions Kētaṇa and Bōgayya I as the father and grandfather, respectively, of the recipients of the grant, Bōgayya II and his brother Murāri Mallayya.\textsuperscript{272} Note that Ego carries his grandfather’s name, a common practice in southern India until recently. An inscription from Beḷḷūru in the Nāgamaṅgala district is a veritable feast for the historian hunting for genealogies. It commences with the name of Sindeyanāyaka, who excelled in cattle-raids. He has three sons, matchless in valour: Māceyanāyaka I, Ādityadēva, and Valleyanāyaka. Māceyanāyaka I’s sons are Rāceyanāyaka, Māceyanāyaka II, Manaha, Malleyanāyaka, Cikkēnāyaka, Sindeya, Śrīraṅga, Āditya, and Ballāḷa. Such was the Beḷḷūru family, which in all likelihood established the village. In that village lived Bhaviseṭṭi. His wife was Sūcikabbe. Their son, Kētiseṭṭi married Maṅcave. Paṭṭaṇasvāmi and Maṇḍalasvāmi were their sons. Maṇḍalasvāmi was the donor of the grant. He was married to Mallave. His sons were Kētamalla and Kāḷeya. Maṅcaseṭṭi and Māḷeya were his sons-in-law.\textsuperscript{273}

\textsuperscript{269} Karashima 1984 discusses the evidence in the context of Tamilnadu. See also Karashima 2009: 9-10 for an interesting summary. No comparable study exists for Karnataka.

\textsuperscript{270} No. 29, Ramesh 1984.

\textsuperscript{271} Dg. 17, \textit{Epigraphia Carnatica}, Vol. 11.


\textsuperscript{273} Ng. 80. \textit{Epigraphia Carnatica}, (revised edition), Vol. 7.
This description of the family, bordering on madness, was unthinkable in the ninth or the tenth century. Hereditary access to land had begun to find a number of reified expressions, among them religious genealogies, castes, and entrenched familial legacies. Understandably enough, the past, upon which stories of succession are based, was also gaining in importance. It was in this context that the invention of traditions, discussed in the preceding chapter, took place.

Complementing this development was the increasing monetization of economic transactions. This process had commenced in the late ninth and the early tenth century. By the late eleventh century, the value conversion of coins had become possible. A glaring example of this is found in an inscription dated 1098, where the conversion of loki-pomnu (the coin minted at Lokkigūndi, now Lakkuṇḍi) into navilu-pomnu (the coin minted at Navilūru?) is mentioned. Transactions were now being made increasingly in cash. By the close of the fourteenth century, inscriptions came to be suffused with details of payment in cash. Under the Vijayanagara rulers, remittance of revenue to the treasury was invariably in cash, although collection continued to be in kind. As early as 1348, an inscription from coastal Karnataka spoke of “bārakūra parivarttanakke saluva bārakūra gadyaṇa”, i.e., the Bārakūru Gadyaṇa payable at the Bārakūru exchange. An inscription from 1458 mentioned “bārakūra parivarttanakke saluva kāṭi gadyaṇa”, i.e., the Kāṭi Gadyaṇa payable at the Bārakūru exchange. Prescribed in an inscription of 1386 was “maṅgalūru kāṭi gadyaṇa”, which brings to light the Kāṭi Gadyaṇa of Maṅgalūru. The Kāṭi Gadyaṇa, circulating in coastal Karnataka, had therefore different values at Bārakūru and Maṅgalūru, and the difference was reckoned through the expression parivarttana, exchange or circuit. The liquidity and exchange rate of coined money had attained remarkable complexity by the fourteenth century.

Trading initiatives also became increasingly specialized. A thirteenth-century inscription from Haḷēbiḍu refers to Akkiya Cavuḍiseṭṭi (Cavuḍiseṭṭi, the rice merchant), Āneya Hariyaṇṇa (Hariyaṇṇa, the elephant trader), Hattiya Kāmiseṭṭi (Kāmiseṭṭi, the cotton merchant), Nūlara Nakharaṅgaḷu (the yarn dealers collective), Meṇsina Pārisadēva (Pārisadēva, the pepper merchant) and Nūlara Nāgiseṭṭi (Nāgiseṭṭi, the yarn merchant). Rural markets to the south of the Tuṅgabhadra were effectively under the control of local traders. Merchants were also beginning to make their supralocal presence felt. In the thirteenth century, some of them like Ēcayya and

274 Bellary 20, Kannada University Epigraphical Series, Vol. 1.
275 No. 231, South Indian Inscriptions, Vol. 7. The inscription does not give us the exact date, but only states that it was issued in the Sarvasdāri year, when the Vijayanagara king Harihara held the throne. Sarvasdāri occurred in 1348 and 1408. Harihara II ruled from 1377 to 1404, but Harihara I was the king between 1347 and 1356, which enables us to identify the date as 1348.
276 No. 336, Ibid.
277 No. 189, Ibid.
Baladēvaseṭṭi from Kopaṇa (Koppaḷa on the northern banks of the Tuṅgabhadra) and Kētiseṭṭi of the shop in Koṭṭuru (in the Tungabhadra valley) were active in Haḷēbīḍu.279 Merchants from northern Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamilnadu traded frequently in the south. However, such supralocal mobility was not seen on the part of merchants from southern Karnataka, which reinforces our suggestion (made in chapter 3) that the southern merchants came from the peasant proprietor class, whose interest in the local agrarian networks made them less prone to take up itinerant pursuits.

In this context of monetization, alienating money by way of making endowments to religious establishment was perhaps losing its preference. The practice continued, but on a substantially lesser scale. By the late fourteenth century, the older practice of making landed endowments returned to the centre-stage. Brāhmaṇas, temples, and other religious establishment began to receive land once again. In most cases, the grants were perpetual, providing hereditary control to the recipients. The grants made to the monastery of Śṛṅgēri by Harihara I and Bukka, and the endowment made to the Uḍupi temple during the reign of Harihara II,280 are noteworthy examples of land grants regaining their lost importance. These instances contrast sharply with the grants made by the Cōḷa king Rājarāja I to the Bṛhadīśvara temple of Taṅjāvūr281 or the celebrated Tiruvālaṅṅāḍu copperplate grant of his son Rājēndra I,282 where only a part of the revenue from the villages earmarked for the purpose was made over. They also stand out vis-à-vis the 1117 grant of the Hoysaḷa king Viṣṇuvardhana to the Cannakēśava temple he built at Belūru, where only the transit toll (suṅka), including the revenue payable in cash (ponnāya) from the villages listed, were given away.283

By the late fifteenth century, the effects of hereditary control over land, acquired through various means such as gift, purchase, and inheritance, were also seen on the monasteries. A number of new monasteries emerged, each with its own land, genealogy of seers, and stories about the past to tell.

While these developments were common to large parts of the Deccan, the region to the north of the Tuṅgabhadra experienced two other developments that had a telling effect on its political economy. The expansion of the jāgīrdāri system under the Bahmani rulers rooted the already-strong landed interests even more deeply. Given the large land holdings and the militia that the landlords commanded, the possibilities of insubordination or unrest among the subject peasantry were remote. At the same time, the Bahmani state embarked upon a new enterprise. Under the merchant from Iran, Mahmūd Gavān (1411-1481), who entered Bahmani service in 1453 and became chief minister in 1458, the state became a preeminent trader, exercising considerable

279 Ibid.
280 No. 299, South Indian Inscriptions, Vol. 7.
282 No. 205, South Indian Inscriptions, Vol. 3, Part III.
control over long-distance trade, including naval trade. This initiative was different from the earlier ones in South India during the Cōḷa and the Cēra rule, where the state only facilitated trade and enlisted traders into its service as revenue farmers. Under Gavān, the state became a de facto trader, filling the vacuum left behind by the decline of great trading syndicates such as the Ayyāvoḷe Ainūrvar, the Maṇigrāmam, etc. Gavān was in fact honoured with the title Malik al-Tujjar, Prince of Merchants, by the Bahmani ruler Humāyūn (r. 1458-1461 CE).284

This was a pioneering development. Soon, the prospects of trade came to be exploited by more and more states and chiefdoms, and many of them became active traders in the course of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries.285 The arrival of the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the British facilitated the expansion of this process.

In contrast to the Vijayanagara state, which promoted rural monetization and minted coins of lower denominations that circulated in the networks of local trade, the Bahmani state was more drawn towards supralocal transactions. The use of coined money by the Bahmanis in rural transactions was less impressive. Coins uttered by the Bahmani mints were of higher denominations, and used in large-scale trading and revenue transactions. Their presence in routine local-level market transaction networks was feeble. In a richly documented study, Phillip B. Wagoner has shown that it was the Vijayanagara honnu that circulated in the local market networks of the Bahmani territory.286 A large segment of the peasantry remained unorganized and outside of the purview of active interventions from the state and the great landed interests of the day. This peasantry inhabited the harsh terrains of northern Karnataka, where the presence of the state had remained poor for centuries. Recalcitrance was rife here. At the same time, expansion of agriculture was also possible in these areas, although poor rainfall and the absence of effective irrigational installations affected the volume of surplus generated. Yet, there existed the strong likelihood of merchants—who turned increasingly to the local markets after the state moved out of them to turn into a major supralocal trader—to be attracted towards this virgin field. To what extent this possibility was explored by the merchants is not clear. Like many other aspects of the fifteenth and the sixteenth century political economy, it continues to await study. There is, however, at least one major instance of mercantile involvement with the peasantry that culminated in a significant transformation of monasteries in the region.

Sometime in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, a saint called Ārūḍha Saṅgamanātha arrived in Vijayanagara. He was also known as Diggi Saṅgamanātha after the village Diggi in the Yādagiri district, where he lived for some time. We know next to nothing about his life. Legends concerning his acts float in abandon.

285 Subrahmanyam 1990.
286 Wagoner 2014.
in the Yādagiri, Kalaburagi, Vijayapura, Bāgalakōṭe, and Rāyacūru districts. As his name indicates, he belonged to the Ārūḍha tradition, although legends told by the khānkāh of Candā Sāḥēb of Gūgi (Shaikh Candā Hussaynī) consider him to be a Virakta. Saṅgamanātha and Candā Sāḥēb were close friends, and influenced each other deeply. The name Hussaynī suggests that Candā Sāḥēb belonged to the family of Bandēnavāz. Saṅgamanātha’s influence on him was so deep that he accepted a saffron headgear, worn to this day by descendants of his khānkāh. Candā Sāḥēb’s influence on the Ārūḍha was as profound. Saṅgamanātha adopted the green robe, cap, and other paraphernalia of a Sūfi.

At Vijayanagara (Haṃpi), Saṅgamanātha met a merchant called Basava. It is likely that Saṅgamanātha gave him the name Basava. The twelfth century Basava was a devotee of lord Saṅgamanātha of Kūḍalasaṅgama, whom he also regarded as his guru. Was this old relationship being reenacted in the late fifteenth century between the Ārūḍha and the merchant? Yes, as we shall presently see.

Basava was the son of Malliśeṭṭi and Liṅgamma of Vijayanagara. He is known to the vernacular academia as Koḍēkallu Basava after the place on the river Kṛṣṇa where he eventually came to rest. We, too, shall call him Koḍēkallu Basava to distinguish him from the Basava of the twelfth century. The account of his life is known to us from the Nandiyāgamalīle, composed by his descendent Virasāṅgayya. According to Basavalinga Soppimath, who has carried out a mediocre study of Koḍēkallu Basava (under the guidance of the illustrious M.M. Kalburgi!), Virasāṅgayya completed the work in 1589. This conclusion is based, according to him, on the reference to the Rudra Besiki ‘year’ mentioned by Virasāṅgayya. As an expression, Rudra Besiki is not easily decipherable. But the stanza in question identifies Virōdhi as the year. Virōdhi fell in 1589-90, but the other details do not correspond with this year. The work was completed on a Monday on the fourteenth lunar day in the month of Kārtīka.

287 Bijāpura (Bijapur), as renamed by the Government of Karnataka in 2014.
289 Ibid.
290 Such exchanges are taken to be instances of religious synchronism by the vernacular academia. In an important, but poorly articulated critique of this position, Tarikere 1998 argues that the synchronism thesis regards different traditions as autonomous and watertight entities, which however was hardly the case in practice. Religious traditions were porous and, at the popular level, they tended to enmesh into one another in complex ways that involved conflict, negotiations, exchanges, conciliation, acceptance, and assimilation to an extent that made a distinction between one tradition and the other impossible.
291 Virōdhi is the twenty-third in a cycle of sixty years, used in traditional calendar systems in India.
292 Nandiyāgamalīle, 15.50.
day in Kārtiika. This must be identified as the date when the poet completed the *Nandiya gamalile*. Soppimath argues that the poet was the great grandson of Koḍēkallu Basava, although the person named here is neither the poet nor the great grandson of Koḍēkallu Basava. The description in the *Nandiya gamalile* is as follows: Koḍēkallu Basava’s son was Saṅgāyya I, his adopted son Appājayya, his son Saṅgāyya II, his son through his wife Liṅgājamma, Virasaṅgāyya, the son (not named) borne him by his wife Nilājamma, his son Basavarājayya, his married son (not named), and his son Virasaṅgāyya, the poet. The poet is, therefore, eighth in line after Koḍēkallu Basava, meaning that at least two centuries had elapsed between the time of our hero and his hagiographer. A date of ca. 1450 for the birth of Koḍēkallu Basava, therefore, does not seem to be unreasonable.

According to the poet, Liṅgāamma and Mallišeṭṭi found Koḍēkallu Basava in a forest, after the children they brought forth and the ones they adopted had all died young. Mallišeṭṭi was a successful trader. Koḍēkallu Basava was also trained to become one. At a young age, he is said to have come into contact with the saint, Emme Basava. The poet does not supply us with sufficient information on the nature of this contact. It is known that Emme Basava was the proponent of *kālajñāna*, i.e., prophecy, as a form of knowledge. Many of his *kālajñāna* compositions have come down to us. He also received a grant from the Vijayanagara ruler Tirumalarāya, which seems to have been confiscated by another maṭha under circumstances that are not known to us. Later in his life, Koḍēkallu Basava emerged as a major advocate of *kālajñāna*, which does not of course make it likely that he learnt it from Emme Basava. For, Tirumalarāya’s inscription recording the land grant to Emme Basava is dated 1543, when Koḍēkallu Basava, had he been alive, would be an old man in his eighties or nineties. We must therefore concede, against the testimony of the hagiographer, that it was the hero of the *Nandiya gamalile* who influenced Emme Basava, and not the other way round.

Koḍēkallu Basava was married to Kāśamma, the daughter of the merchant couple, Saṅgājamma and Paṭṭaṇaśeṭṭi Liṅgaṇṇa. Liṅgaṇṇa was perhaps a moneylender, and known for the compound interest he charged, if the expression *cadura badaṭi* is any

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293 For some reason, Soppimath declines to read the next stanza, and identifies this Virasaṅgāyya, Koḍēkallu Basava’s grandson’s grandson, as his great grandson and the poet. Soppimath 1995: 46.
294 *Nandiya gamalile*, 15.48-49.
295 Ibid., 8.7. Such tropes are not unknown in hagiographic literature from the region.
296 Ibid., 10.19.
Kāśamma was still a child at the time of marriage. In the course of time, Koḍēkallu Basava became a leading trader. It was at this juncture in his life that Ārūḍha Saṅgamanātha reached Vijayanagara. Koḍēkallu Basava was immediately drawn towards the Ārūḍha’s magnetic persona. Saṅgamanātha trained him in his system of renunciatory practices, provided him with four ‘invisible’ servants, gave him the eleven variants of his new script, and made him wear the robe of skin (carmāṃbara). Before doing so, the saint made Koḍēkallu Basava realize who he was in his fourteen previous births. In his first birth, Koḍēkallu Basava was the embodiment of the letter Ōṃ (ōṃkārarūpa). In the second birth, he was the thousand-headed one (sahasraśīrṣa). And then, he was born as Pūrvācārya, Vṛṣabhēndra, Nandi, Atuḷabhadra, Bhōgēśa, Tirujnāṇi Sammandhi, Hanuma, Rōmakōṭi, Allama Prabhu, Basava, Muhammad, and Guptagaṇēśvara in that order. Note that four of them are historical figures. Tirujnāṇi Sammandhi was one of the sixty-three Śaiva Nāyanārs of Tamilnadu, Tirujñānasaṃbandhar. Allama Prabhu and Basava were contemporaries in the mid-twelfth century. And Muhammad was the great prophet who founded Islam.

Koḍēkallu Basava’s relationship with Saṅgamanātha does not seem to have augured well with others in the city. A certain Gāṇigara Niṅgaṇṇa (Niṅgaṇṇa, the oil presser) asked Koḍēkallu Basava to stay away from the saint, and in consequence, lost his life. The merchant’s wife Kāśavva levelled charges against Saṅgamanātha, and, like the oil presser, had to pay with her life. Koḍēkallu Basava is said to have sent her to Śiva’s abode. After killing his wife, Koḍēkallu Basava left Vijayanagara on horseback, and reached Baḷḷigāve (where Allama had lived over two centuries ago). Here, he met Nīlamma and expressed his desire to marry her. Nīlamma seems to have been reluctant. When she asked why he sought her hand, Koḍēkallu Basava replied that she was his wife, Nīlamma, in his previous birth as Basava, and had angrily left him for not bestowing children upon her; he had returned to redress her grievance. What transpired thereafter is not clear. There was resistance to the alliance, either from Nīlamma, or from her parents, the pañcavaṇṇige couple Cannājamma and

298 Ibid., 10.32. The word cadura is used elsewhere in the text the mean ‘clever’ (cf. 10.52 and 10.53). So, it is not unlikely that the Paṭṭaṇaśeṭṭi who collected interest (baḍdi) is referred to as the clever one. Soppimath however reads baḍdi (or vaḍḍina, as it apparently occurs in the version he consulted) as the name of a town to which Saṅgājamma and Liṅgaṇṇa belonged! See Soppimath 1995: 50.

299 Nandiyāgamalīle, 10.49; 10.66.

300 Ibid., 11.26.

301 Ibid., 11.34-35.

302 Ibid., 11.32-33.

303 Ibid., 11.30.

304 Ibid., 11.44.

305 Ibid., 11.65.
Siddhayya, or from both daughter and parents. Koḍēkallu Basava carried the girl away, forcefully. They were pursued. In the encounter that followed, Koḍēkallu Basava’s men succeeded in repulsing those who came looking for them. Some of the pursuers (one hundred, according to the Nandiyāgamalīle) died fighting.\footnote{Ibid., 11.71.} Cannājamma and Siddhayya gave in. Koḍēkallu Basava and Nilamma returned to Ballīgāve, where their marriage was solemnized with great pomp and show.\footnote{Ibid., 12.16-38.}

After their marriage, Koḍēkallu Basava and Nilamma set out on a long voyage along with their followers. They came to Rācōṭi (perhaps Rāyacōṭi in the Kaḍapa district of Andhra),\footnote{Ibid., 12.44.} where Nilamma gave birth to a son.\footnote{Ibid., 12.52.} The boy was called Rācāṇṇa or Rācappa, possibly named after the place of his birth. Their next station was Soṇḍūru (Sanḍūru in the Baḷḷāri district, famous for its Kumārasvāmi temple).\footnote{Ibid., 12.57.} The second son, Guhēśvara, was born here.\footnote{Ibid., 12.63.} Kappaḍī (Kūḍalasaṅgama in the Bāgalakōṭe district) was their next stopover.\footnote{Ibid., 12.65.} Here, Nilamma gave birth to the third son, Saṅgayya I,\footnote{Ibid., 12.70.} also known as Cannasaṅgayya and Karasaṅgayya.\footnote{Ibid., 12.69. The expression Karasaṅgayya suggests that the boy was a karajāta, i.e., an adopted son. An alternate and less persuasive version refers to him as Karisaṅgayya, i.e., Saṅgayya, black (kari) in complexion.}

The journey continued. It brought Koḍēkallu Basava to a coastal town in the Koṅkaṇa country, which attracted rich trade and enterprise. Here, he met a certain Kaṅcagāra Kaḷīṅga, who was obsessed with the desire of having a vision of Lord Śiva. He had tried many paths, including Jaina and Muslim, but without success. Koḍēkallu Basava showed him the right path, and Kaḷīṅga had a glimpse of Śiva.\footnote{Ibid., 13.24.} Further on, Koḍēkallu Basava reached Vaḍabāḷa, found the saint Nāganātha hidden in a forest in the form of a serpent, fed him milk, and transformed him into a man.\footnote{Ibid., 13.24.} According to Soppimath, the legend suggests that Koḍēkallu Basava initiated Nāganātha into the Nātha tradition and sent him to Vaḍabāḷa.\footnote{Soppimath 1995: 53.} While this is an interesting suggestion, there is no evidence either in the Nandiyāgamalīle or in any other sources that Nāganātha of Vaḍabāḷa belonged to the Nātha tradition.\footnote{Soppimath in fact believes that Koḍēkallu Basava also belonged to the Nātha tradition. This only points to his poor understanding of both the Koḍēkallu and the Nātha traditions.} The encounter itself is

\footnotesize{
\begin{enumerate}
  \item [306] Ibid., 11.71.
  \item [307] Ibid., 12.16-38.
  \item [308] Ibid., 12.44.
  \item [309] Ibid., 12.52.
  \item [310] Ibid., 12.57.
  \item [311] Ibid., 12.63.
  \item [312] Ibid., 12.65. It is here that Basava had died in 1168.
  \item [313] Ibid., 12.70.
  \item [314] Ibid., 12.69. The expression Karasaṅgayya suggests that the boy was a karajāta, i.e., an adopted son. An alternate and less persuasive version refers to him as Karisaṅgayya, i.e., Saṅgayya, black (kari) in complexion.
  \item [315] Ibid., 13.3-23.
  \item [316] Ibid., 13.24.
  \item [317] Soppimath 1995: 53.
  \item [318] Soppimath in fact believes that Koḍēkallu Basava also belonged to the Nātha tradition. This only points to his poor understanding of both the Koḍēkallu and the Nātha traditions.
\end{enumerate}}
unlikely although Soppimath affirms its likelihood, as studies place Nāganātha and his disciples in the period between 1354 and 1458. It must be noted here that according to oral legends, Nāsir-ud-dīn Cirāg-e-Dilli (d. 1356) moved to the Deccan and settled down here, where he came to be worshipped as Nāganātha. It is believed that in the fair of Nāganātha, the palanquin cannot be lifted unless the following din is called: “nāsiruddin cirāg ki dōstāra din haraharā”. Similar calls of Nāsir’s din are made in the traditions of Māṇikaprabhu and Bakaprabhu in the Bīdara district.

From Vaḍabāḷa, Koḍēkallu Basava went to Ujjayini, where two traders welcomed him, and offered him hospitality. We do not know if Ujjayini is the famous town known by that name in Mālava, or Ujini in Baḷḷāri district, which is known as Ujjayini in the Vīraśaiva literature. The former is not unlikely in view of the fact that the next leg of his tour took Koḍēkallu Basava to northern India. From Ujjayini, he is said to have gone to Ausikandara. It is not possible to identify this place, although it seems to be hinting at a name such as Sikandarābād, Sikandarpur or Sikandrā. It is tempting to identify Ausikandara with Sikandrā, the new town built by Koḍēkallu Basava’s contemporary and the Lodi Sultān, Sikandar Lōdi (r. 1489-1517). This is supported by the fact that the next town in the journey was Pulabhāra where Koḍēkallu Basava succeeded in winning over the Vaiṣṇavas through a miracle. Pulabhāra is certainly Bhilvāḍā in Rajasthan, known for its Vaiṣṇava connections. However, the poet says that Koḍēkallu Basava helped a family of peasants, Bommagoṇḍa, his brother Basavagoṇḍa, elder sister Maiḷaladēvi, and a younger sister, in augmenting their agrarian income, and received a gift from them. This makes the identification of Ausikandara with Sikandrā tenuous. We must, however, bear in mind that the Nandiyāgamalīle was composed nearly two centuries after the events recorded there had taken place. The legends, under oral circulation, are likely to have undergone a number of changes in the course of transmission. The route described by the poet is also irregular, and shows no signs of coherence. Koḍēkallu Basava left Pulabhāra and reached Mahā Cinna, which in all likelihood is Mahā Cīna, the name by which China was known in India. That Koḍēkallu Basava visited China cannot be accepted as a fact of history. It had, however, a function to serve in the hagiography’s order of things, viz., the visit of a saint to places strange and unknown, and finding acceptance there. After Mahā Cinna, Koḍēkallu Basava turned to the south, reached Kurukṣētra where by

319 Ibid., 54.
320 Ibid., 53, n. 40.
321 Tarikere 1998: 4; 42. The historical Nāsir is not known to have travelled to the Deccan region.
322 Ibid., 42.
323 Ibid.
324 Ibid., 13:40-42.
325 Ibid., 13:34-40.
326 Ibid., 13:43.
327 Ibid., 13:63.
the touch of his feet, those who had died in the battle of Kurukṣētra—the Pāṇḍavas, the Kauravas, and their allies—came back to life.328 He then continued the southward journey to reach Kalyāṇa.329

At Kalyāṇa, he sat down to copy the scripts found engraved on a stone. Soppimath posits that Muslim invaders were destroying the vacanaś of the twelfth century śaraṇaś, and that Koḍēkallu Basava’s visit to Kalyāṇa was meant to salvage as much of this literature as possible by copying them into the obscure script, amaragannaḍa.330 There is no evidence to substantiate this argument. When Koḍēkallu Basava was at Kalyāṇa, the lord of the world (lōkapati) sent words for him. The name of the lōkapati is recorded as Isupāśca. This, certainly, was Yūsuf Bādšāh or Yūsuf Khān, who founded the Ādil Śāhi state of Vijayapura in 1489. Koḍēkallu Basava was not keen on meeting the king. He was, however, forcibly taken to the Sultān’s palace (perhaps in Vijayapura). Koḍēkallu Basava reached the royal harem, where Isupāśca struck him with a dagger. Predictably enough, the dagger did not hurt the saint. It passed through his body as if moving through water, in a manner that brings Allama’s encounter with Gōrakṣa to mind.331 The king became his devotee, and asked for a gift of five bundles of vacanas, and some hair.

Inasmuch as Koḍēkallu Basava was hailed as an incarnation of Muhammad the Prophet, the hair he gave Isupāśca came to be preserved in Vijayapura as a relic of the Prophet’s. We know that the hair now preserved in the Hazratbal mosque of Kashmir as Muhammad’s relic was brought from Vijayapura. In all likelihood, this is the hair of Koḍēkallu Basava.

Koḍēkallu Basava was now on the final leg of his journey. He had travelled widely, and performed many miracles. Nowhere did he convert people to his faith. Even at Pulabhāra, where the Vaiṣṇavas became his devotee, it is a glimpse of Viṣṇu that he showed the Vaiṣṇavas. In other words, he made them gain a better understanding of their own faith. Did he really travel to far off places like Bhilvāḍā and Kurukṣētra? Or was it only a fiction introduced by the poet, or a figment of the imagination that crept into the legend in the course of the two centuries when it transmitted orally? These questions may be of interest to the positivist historian. What is more interesting for our purpose is that in this long journey, his meeting with only four classes of people are reported: merchants and artisans, peasants and their family, saints and the saintly ones, and rulers and their men. If the poet did not have a historically credible picture of the events concerning Koḍēkallu Basava’s life, he certainly knew the classes that the merchant-turned-saint engaged with, which might well have been those same...
classes that patronized the maṭha in the poet’s own lifetime. Herein lies the real significance of the *Nandiyāgamalīle*, as far as our analysis is concerned.

Having seen the world extensively, Koḍēkallu Basava decided to settle down. He reached Sagara, near Diggi, where there was a settlement of soothsayers. Very little is said about the soothsayers. Koḍēkallu Basava criticized them for trading off great secrets (*parama rahasyagaḷu*) for a few grains of millet. He told them that they could not achieve *amaratva* (immortality) just by calling themselves (members of) Amara Kalyāṇa. We thus learn that the soothsayers had constituted an assembly called Amara Kalyāṇa. Koḍēkallu Basava prevailed upon the soothsayers, and succeeded in transforming them into peasants. The soothsayer-turned-peasant families came to be known as *ettinavaru*, ‘those with the ox’. This was the beginning of Koḍēkallu Basava’s efforts to build a group of followers and found an establishment of his own. The *ettinavaru* have remained devotees of Koḍēkallu Basava to this day.

From Sagara, he moved northeastwards to Nāgāvi, where he won over a certain Guṇḍa Basava and his son, Īrappayya, to his fold. This family is known as *kattiyavaru*, ‘those with the donkey’. The family has retained its ties with the monastery at Koḍēkallu to this day. The present pontiff of the Koḍēkallu maṭha belongs to this “family of donkeys”. We know from other sources that Guṇḍa Basava was a revered saint in and around Nāgāvi. He was also a poet, who composed many *ḍaṅgura* songs. In these songs, he referred to Nāgāvi as Dharma Kalyāṇa. His tomb is worshipped in Nāgāvi by descendants of his family. Īrappayya is also held in high regard by the Nāgāvi tradition.

It is of great interest that the first two groups of followers, whom Koḍēkallu Basava enlisted into the service of his project, claimed affiliation with Kalyāṇa. In the case of the soothsayers of Sagara, the word might not have meant anything more than a congregation. Guṇḍa Basava’s allusion to Dharma Kalyāṇa, on the other hand, seems to be making the claim that Nāgāvi was as great, or as sacred, as Kalyāṇa itself.

After leaving Nāgāvi, Koḍēkallu Basava passed through Kulakundi, and arrived at Koraḷibeṭṭa, where he cured a merchant called Maliśeṭṭi or Mallaṇṇa of leprosy. He then reached Ikkaḷi, and brought the family of a certain Mādappa into his fold. Mādappa’s father Rāghappa was initially reluctant to join the Order, but became a devotee following a miracle in which Koḍēkallu Basava appeared before him in the form of Śiva. Seven families from Ikkuḷige are believed to have moved with him to

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334 Ibid., 14.22.
336 Ibid., 14.37.
337 Songs sung to the accompaniment of a percussion instrument called *ḍaṅgura*.
339 Ibid., 14.40-49.
Koḍēkallu as devotees. Their descendants now live in Koḍēkallu, and the number of families has increased to fifty.340

The great journey ended at Koḍēkallu. This was a pastoral settlement, controlled by a hunter called Hanuma Nāyaka.341 Koḍēkallu Basava bought land from the hunter, and also conferred recognition upon him as a king.342 With Hanuma Nāyaka’s help, he transformed Koḍēkallu into a flourishing village of trade and enterprise.343 Then he sat down at the hadduguṇḍu rock on the outskirts of the village to compose his poems (vacanavākya).344 But he was back in action soon, perhaps for want of resources. He raised a band of troops, raided villages, and sent the troops to fight the Bādšāh.345 The Bādšāh was defeated, and forced to grant a few score (kelavu viṃśati) villages to Koḍēkallu Basava.346

What followed next was crucial. Although this is not explicitly stated in the Nandiyāgamalīle (composed by a man poor in intellect), there is circumstantial evidence in support of this development. Koḍēkallu Basava believed in the legend, narrativized in Bhīma’s Basavapurāṇa and the works of the great Vijayanagara project sponsored by Jakkanā and Lakkaṇṇa Danḍēśa, that Basava hosted a large number of śaraṇas in Kalyāṇa in his day, and organized the anubhava maṇṭapa in which the great pioneers of Vīraśaivism discussed and debated on spiritual and worldly matters that were of concern to them. Lakkaṇṇa Danḍēśa had perhaps believed that the Vijayanagara project of compiling the vacanas, and consolidating the floating legends on the śaraṇas into standardized hagiographies, were an attempt to relive the great experiment of Kalyāṇa which, according to him, was a historical fact, but as a matter of fact, was imagined into existence in the late fourteenth and the early fifteenth century. Lakkaṇṇa Danḍēśa considered Vijayanagara to be the new Kalyāṇa. He called it Vijaya Kalyāṇa.347 We cannot be certain on whether or not he had developed a systematic view on the idea of Vijaya Kalyāṇa. This seems unlikely indeed. By the time of Koḍēkallu Basava, Kalyāṇa had turned into a powerful metaphor, and was deployed to signify such villages, congregations, etc., as were sought to be represented as sacred. Amara Kalyāṇa and Dharma Kalyāṇa are instances in this regard that are known to us. The image of Kalyāṇa as sacred was not restricted to narratives and traditions centering on Basava and Allama Prabhu. The Saundaryalahari, a major text

341 Nandiyāgamalīle, 15.15.
342 From this humble beginning, Hanuma Nāyaka and his successors grew in strength, and eventually established the chieftdom of Surapura. On the Surapura chieftdom, see Aruni 2004.
343 Nandiyāgamalīle, 15.18.
344 Ibid., 15.19.
345 Ibid., 15.20-21.
346 Ibid., 15.24-25. Later on in the narrative, it is stated that the number of villages granted was eighteen (daśa-aṣṭa), a conventional number. Ibid., 15.28.
347 See the articles in Bhusanuramatha 1988.
of the Śrīvidyā tradition, composed sometime in the fifteenth century (and attributed to Śaṅkara by Vallabha and many others who came after him) enumerates it in a list of eight holy cities. Koḍēkallu Basava aspired to build upon this image. The idea that occurred to him was ingenious. He decided to reenact the (imagined) anubhava maṇḍapa of Basava. This would be the last Kalyāṇa, and the most perfect. He called it Kaḍeya Kalyāṇa (the Last Kalyāṇa). It was also known as Amara Kalyāṇa, which is perhaps due to the role played in the project by the soothsayers of Sagarā, who had once identified themselves as Amara Kalyāṇa.

As part of this initiative, Koḍēkallu Basava set up an anubhava maṇḍapa. He put himself in the shoes of Basava. His wife Nīlamma might have played the role of Nīlamma and Akkamahādēvi. An anubhava maṇḍapa was not complete without an Allama or a Cannabasava. Who were to occupy these positions? This question led to a dispute, which only points to the significance of the experiment in the eyes of the participants. Koḍēkallu Basava chose Paramānanda Guru of Hebbāḷa, a saint who hailed from Tamilnadu and was teacher to his guru Ārūḍha Saṅgamanātha, to occupy the position of Allama. A recalcitrant saint from Tamilnadu, Maṇṭēsvāmi or Maṇṭēliṅga, appears to have claimed this position for himself. In hagiographic accounts of Maṇṭēsvāmi, he is represented as Allama. We may venture the guess that one of Koḍēkallu Basava’s sons, Guhēśvara, also aspired to the position of Allama. The name Guhēśvara, which in all likelihood was a title, seems to be pointing in this direction.

The position of Cannabasava was also in demand. Who occupied it is not known. Koḍēkallu Basava’s son Saṅgayya I was known as Cannabasava. And so was a saint from Sālōṭagi, known for his daṅgura songs. Cannabasava of Sālōṭagi was familiar with Koḍēkallu Basava and his project, although there is no indication that he was a claimant to the office of Cannabasava. A third Cannabasava lived in the village of Galaga. He was a member of the Maṇṭēsvāmi faction. This is confirmed by the presence of the shrine of Maṇṭēsvāmi’s disciple Gurubhāra Liṅgayya within the shrine housing his tomb. He is likely to have been a candidate put up by Maṇṭēsvāmi for the position of Cannabasava.

Following his failure to be crowned Allama, Maṇṭēsvāmi moved to the south to establish a tradition of his own. He might have wished to call it the First Kalyāṇa (Ādi Kalyāṇa) in striking contrast to Koḍēkallu Basava’s Last Kalyāṇa. In the oral epic sung by the nīlagāras, he is said to have visited the chaotic Ādi Kalyāṇa, and restored order.

348 Saundaryalahari, 49. The other seven cities are Vaiśāli, Ayōdhyā, Dhāra, Mathurā, Bhōgavatī, Avanti and Vijayanagara. It is the reference to Vijayanagara and Kalyāṇa (Kalyāṇi in the text), which enables us to place the text in the fifteenth century.
349 Cannabasava was Basava’s nephew through his sister Nāgavva.
350 It has also been argued that Maṇṭēsvāmi was of Telugu origin. See Jayaprakash 2005: 7:32 (i.e., chapter 2).
351 Guhēśvara is a corruption of Goggēśvara, the signature used by Allama in his vacanas.
Maṇṭēsvāmi succeeded in winning the support of Rācappa, the son of Koḍēkallu Basava. Rācappāji rebelled against his father, left for the south with Maṇṭēsvāmi, and became a revered saint among the small group of nilagāras devotees who hold him and his master Maṇṭēsvāmi in great esteem. It is not expressly stated anywhere that Rācappāji rebelled against his father; however, to this day, the Koḍēkallu and Maṇṭēsvāmi traditions share relationships that are far from cordial, pointing to the unpleasant circumstances of the departure of Maṇṭēsvāmi and Rācappāji from Koḍēkallu. Rācappāji and Siddappāji, another of Maṇṭēsvāmi’s disciples, established close relationships with an emerging family of chiefs in the Maisūru region. Ties of matrimony were also forged. It is this family that eventually rose into prominence under Rāja Oḍeya (r. 1578-1617) and his successors, and built the Woḍeyar (sic) state of Maisūru.

What became of Koḍēkallu Basava is not known. According to the Nandiyāgamalīle, after obtaining villages as grant from the Bādśāh, Koḍēkallu Basava met a certain Majeya Prabhu, who was eager to see Śiva and fell at his feet to help him. Koḍēkallu Basava sent him to the abode of Śiva. The reference, here, is to Majeya Mallēṣa, a ubiquitous rainmaker whom it is difficult to locate in history. His encounter with, and his death at the hands of, Koḍēkallu Basava may point to a hostile encounter our hero had with devotees from the Majeya Mallēṣa tradition. Next, Koḍēkallu Basava began to attract devotees from far and wide. Maṇṭēsvāmi of the Drāviḍa country (Tamilnadu) was afflicted with leprosy, and was on the verge of death. He asked his disciple Gurubhāra Liṅgayya to offer him a vision of the guru. Gurubhāra Liṅgayya remembered Koḍēkallu Basava, and Koḍēkallu Basava appeared in his mind to tell him where he lived. Accordingly, Maṇṭēsvāmi left for Koḍēkallu, where he was received with kindness by Koḍēkallu Basava and Nilamma. The couple nursed him back to health, and adopted him as a son. And then Koḍēkallu Basava left the world, asking Maṇṭēsvāmi to raise an army and take care of it until his return in the next birth. Before passing away, he sealed his writings in three boxes, had them dumped into the river Kṛṣṇa, and asked king Bali of the Nāga world to preserve and worship them until his return.

Koḍēkallu Basava, “the incarnation of Muhammad the Prophet”, had lived a fabulous life indeed. He was endowed with a fertile imagination and a sharp intellect. He composed poems that were splendid pieces of craftsmanship, innovative in form, rigorous in semantic pursuit, and at times more modern than most ‘modernist’ poetry of the twentieth century. But Maṇṭēsvāmi’s rebellion and Rācappa’s departure might

352 On Maṇṭēsvāmi, see Indvadi 1999 and 2004.
353 On Rāja Oḍeya and the consolidation of Oḍeya political influence, see Simmons 2014.
354 Ibid., 15.29.
355 Ibid. 15.30-41.
356 Ibid., 15.43-46.
have left him dejected. Kaḍeya Kalyāṇa collapsed. His third son Saṅgayya I also left Koḍēkallu along with the Va întava saint-poet Kanakadāsa for reasons that are not clear. It will not be wrong to guess that Koḍēkallu Basava died a rich man, powerful, influential, learned, and saintly, but profoundly sad.

What did Koḍēkallu Basava accomplish in the course of his seemingly disoriented life that bordered on the tempestuous? In trying to address this question, we must at the outset place the fact in bold relief that he came from a family of merchants. The two women he married were also from merchant families. Vijayanagara and Baḷligāve, the locations of his early years, were flourishing centres of commerce. Among the places he visited was a coastal town, bristling with trade and enterprise. When he finally settled down at Koḍēkallu, he transformed the village into a trading centre. It was the interests of the mercantile and artisan groups that Koḍēkallu Basava's enterprise represented.

In the course of his journey, he met an artisan, Kañcagāra Kaḷiṅga, who's spiritual needs he fulfilled. Towards the end, he met a trader, Maliseṭṭi, whom he cured of leprosy. Neither of them made any presents to Koḍēkallu Basava. They were not brought into the fold of the Koḍēkallu maṭha in any capacity either. The Nandiyāgamalīle and other surviving traditions (both written and oral) do not recognize any merchant or artisan group as early followers of the Koḍēkallu tradition. We must then say that this was a monastery of the mercantile groups, not a monastery for them.

This contrasts with Koḍēkallu Basava's engagement with the peasantry. At Ausikandara, he helped a peasant family to expand their agrarian income, and secured their allegiance, although they were not made followers of the monastery. The peasants showered rich gifts on him. At Sagara, he made the soothsayers take to agriculture, and brought them into his fold. The Nandiyāgamalīle captures in a nutshell the historical process through which mercantile groups in northern Karnataka tried to establish coercive relationships of dependence with the peasantry. It also demonstrates how monasteries in the region were powerful enough to facilitate the expansion of agriculture in the drier belts, regulate production relations of the day, coerce the complacent peasantry to build ties of dependence with the enterprising mercantile and artisan groups, and act as powerful centres of surplus appropriation and redistribution.

Koḍēkallu Basava was also the representative of a major centrifugal tendency. We have seen that a number of saintly genealogies and practices had appeared in the region in the preceding centuries. Under Jakkaṇa and Lakkaṇṇa Daṇḍēśa, earnest attempts were made to integrate many of these into a single system called Vīraśaivism through new narratives, which were polyphonic, had multiple nodes and internodes, but at the same time, centered on the figure of Allama Prabhu or Basava. Disputes raged, concerns varied, and the points of emphases differed from author to author. Nevertheless, the narratives shared strong intertextual linkages, which enabled the development of a semiotic pool from which participants in this great project drew their vocabulary with gay abandon. In the process, the cryptic and the inaccessible were being rendered familiar, if not always intelligible. Koḍēkallu Basava's project struck
at the very heart of this centripetalism. He drew from the same narrative structures, borrowed his vocabulary from the same semiotic pool, but deployed them to charge traditions of renunciation at various places such as Nāgāvi, Vadabāḷa, Galaga, Sālōṭagi, and Sagara—which had never developed fully or had lost their original fortune—with a new energy. He invested these traditions with a sense of autonomy in their own right, and made them locally entrenched and capable of regulating production relations, surplus appropriation, and redistribution. The production of narratives was also scrupulously abjured, which explains why few among these new saints had hagiographies composed in their honour, and none before the seventeenth century.

That the Koḍēkallu tradition represented mercantile interests in the expansion of agriculture in the drier reaches of northern Karnataka did not exhaust its entrepreneurial spirit. Equally significant was the fact that it represented mercantile interest in the emerging military labour market. Mercenary recruits from the peasantry were a common feature of the armies of the subcontinent until the end of the eighteenth century when, beginning with Lord Wellesley’s Subsidiary Alliance, these armies began to be systematically disbanded. It was common for renouncers to appear in the army as warriors. They were also instrumental in recruiting mercenaries from the peasantry. It is not surprising, then, that Koḍēkallu Basava is credited in the Nandiyāgamalīle with raising an army. He helps Hanuma Nāyaka in building a station of troops (pāḷya) that functioned as the headquarters of a chiefdom.357 Besides, he gathered people to form a militia for himself, with which he raided villages in the area.358 Koḍēkallu Basava is also said to have sent his troops to fight the Bādšāh, i.e. Yūsuf Khān.359 We do not know if Koḍēkallu Basava was alive in 1565, when decisive battles were fought in the backyard of Koḍēkallu at places variously identified as Tāḷikōṭe, Rakkasagi, Taṅgaḍagi, and Banahaṭṭi between a confederacy of the Deccani Sultāns, and the Vijayanagara forces led by Rāmarāya, which culminated in a fatal blow to Vijayanagara and the death of Rāmarāya. It would not surprise us to learn that the Koḍēkallu militia had participated in this battle, although this is not borne out by evidence.360

Warrior-saints were found across many parts of south Asia between the fifteenth and the nineteenth century.361 “After the creation of the Delhi Sultanate around the fifteenth century,” writes Carl Olson, “warrior ascetics became significant participants in the political realm, and they were identified by carrying an iron lance.”362 As early as the late thirteenth century, warrior-Sūfis like Shaikh Sarmast accompanied the

357 Nandiyāgamalīle, 15.20.
358 Ibid., 15.21.
359 Ibid.
360 Kodekallu lies at a distance of less than an hour’s journey on horseback from all these places.
361 Lorenzen 2006: 37-63, (i.e., chapter 2).
362 Olson 2015: 93.
invading Sultāns of Dilli. The cult of the warrior-saint was certainly entrenched in various parts of the subcontinent by this time. By the fifteenth century, it had evolved into a form of military labour entrepreneurship. This entrepreneurship was dependent upon the peasantry, which provided mercenary labour. Thus, the peasant was the backbone of the warrior-saint cult.

It is in this context of military labour entrepreneurship that another of Koḍēkallu Basava’s initiatives assumes its importance. Northern Karnataka has a rich tradition of fortunetellers, or people endowed with the knowledge of time (kālajñāna). They were itinerant men and women who played a significant role in the exchange of information and spread of rumours. The men, known as sāruvayyas (i.e., ‘those who spread the word’), trace their origin to Koḍēkallu Basava. The women, called koravis, begin their prophecy by invoking the goddess Mahālakṣmī of Kolhāpura and Koḍēkallu Basava. The sāruvayyas and koravis were not Koḍēkallu Basava’s innovations; the latter are, for that matter, found even in other parts of south India. The tradition of soothsaying seems to have existed in Karnataka before the time of Koḍēkallu Basava. Its origins remain obscure. In all likelihood, their role in the circulation of information and rumour was of no mean consequence. The genius of Koḍēkallu Basava rests in the facts that he was able to give the practice a new shape in the form of kālajñāna, and succeeded in organizing a network of sāruvayyas and koravis, who brought their charismatic presence as ‘knowers of time’ to bear upon the assignment given to them of gathering information and spreading rumour. For, as an entrepreneur in the military labour market, Koḍēkallu Basava is sure to have known the importance of information and rumour in the art of warfare. The invoking of his name by sāruvayyas and koravis to this day is evidence for the foundational role he played in orchestrating this network.

We must now ask an important question: What did Koḍēkallu Basava represent? He was a successful merchant. He travelled widely, and succeeded in convincing people of his greatness. He was devoted to his teacher, and killed people who came in his way. He dressed weirdly, caused bloodshed, performed miracles, cured people of diseases like leprosy, built a settlement of flourishing trade and enterprise, conferred ‘kingship’ on a hunter, confronted the king and brought him into submission, obtained land grants from the king, bestowed riches upon the believers, caused people to change their vocation, initiated the process of agrarian expansion in one of the driest areas of the region, built a militia, raided villages, reinforced local production relations and surplus appropriation, established a monastery, created new forms of knowledge, divined the future, wrote poetry, and made Śiva appear in front of his

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364 In the context of north India, William Pinch has documented and commented upon the relationship, which the warrior-saint shared with the peasantry. See Pinch 1996. Also see Pinch 2006.
devotees. There should be no harm in suggesting, sarcastically, that our hero might as well have found proof for Fermat’s Last Theorem, had he been presented with it. Koḍēkallu Basava represented the acme of a new selfhood that had begun to register its presence in the literary traditions of the early fifteenth century and snowballed, from the late fifteenth century onwards, into an ethic that would underwrite the dimensions of the individual and his or her self-awareness.

Our protagonist’s case is by no means an exceptional one. William Pinch makes the following observation in the context of renouncers in the Gaṅgā valley:

Monks...had strong opinions that informed and were informed by the goings-on in Gangetic society. They were willing and able (indeed expected) to leave behind the secure confines of the monastery, the contemplation of sacred texts and images, and the cycles of ritual and worship, to engage themselves in society’s all-too-temporal concerns. Prior to 1800, such engagements included soldering, trade, banking, protecting pilgrimage sites and religious endowments, and enlisting as mercenaries in the armies of regional states.366

In the course of the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, the political economy in the region underwent further changes. With a substantial segment of long distance trade coming under the state’s control, wherein the state either traded directly or functioned as regulator with an eye on the revenue, the exercise of control over rural markets began to develop a measure of autonomy in its own right. This was especially true of transactions in grain and sundry supplies, including oil and coarse cloth. Local trading networks were now centred on agrarian products, which brought them under the control of the landed elites. The increased demand for cash crop products reinforced the local trader’s dependence on landlords. Among these cash crops were cotton, oilseed, and betel leaves. New crops introduced by the Portuguese, like red chili and cashew nut, might also have been under circulation, although it is unlikely that these were in great demand before the nineteenth century. In a hagiography of the seventeenth-century saint Sāvalagi Śivaliṅga, we find mention of the peasant landlords bringing a group of traders under their control. These were itinerant traders. They were many in number,367 and dealt in nutmeg, masālā leaves, clove, areca nut, coconut, koraku, sugar, manaki, etc.368 The peasantry had come under increased control of military entrepreneurs and landlords through processes that we will take up for discussion in chapter 5. In the new dispensation, where local mercantile groups in northern Karnataka became increasingly dependent on agrarian products, landlords found themself placed in an advantageous position that was historically decisive.

From the sixteenth century, a large number of monasteries began to appear in northern Karnataka. These represented the interests of the landed classes, as they

367 The expression is nūrāru, literally 106, but used colloquially to indicate ‘hundreds’.
368 Sāvalagi Śrīśivaliṅgéśvarapurāṇa, 4.43.
supplied agrarian products on the one hand, and controlled the peasantry that supplied military labour on the other. Like the monastery founded by Koḍēkallu Basava, these establishments functioned in a centrifugal manner.369 There was another respect in which the new monasteries were fundamentally different from the ones that existed in earlier centuries. The older monasteries drew their authority from their scriptures or textual traditions, or from the vision (darśana) they sought to accomplish, or the practices of renunciation they had developed. The new monasteries also had scriptures and books that were regarded as sacred. They developed their own unique visions of the Supreme, as well as practices of renunciation that led to the realization of these visions, but the scriptures, visions, and practices were no longer sources of authority. They were only among the essential functional components of the monastery, not the defining feature of what the monastery represented. The new source of authority was the figure of the individual in the form of a guru. The founder of the monastery was often the most revered of the gurus. His word, both written and oral, and his ideals, represented through legends, were worthy of adoration by the followers—notably worthy of adoration, not emulation. The works of Koḍēkallu Basava and his son Rācappa were preserved in the monastery in the form of manuscripts. The manuscripts were worshipped during festival and other special occasions, and read out like the chanting of mantras. Their study was open only to the pontiffs and aspirants to the pontificate, and not to the followers.

The emphasis on the individual as the source of authority had two important consequences: (1) having lost their authority, texts, visions, and practices were now only secondary in importance, with bars removed from subjecting them to revision, discarding them at convenience, and drawing authority from sources of any other tradition; and (2) archetypal guru figures could be brought into the imagined genealogies of these traditions, irrespective of which tradition they actually belonged to. Thus, in the Mahānubhāva tradition, we have the following genealogy of teachers:370

Nāsir-ud-dīn Cirāg-e-Dillī alias Ādinātha alias Nāganātha
↓
Macchēndranātha
↓
Gōrakhanātha
↓
Gahinānātha

369 This tendency was by no means restricted to saints and their establishments. It also governed the political developments of the day. See Wink 1986.
370 Tarikere 1998: 56.
Nivṛttinātha
↓
Jñānēśvara
↓
Sōpāṇa
↓
Muktābāyi
↓
Visōbā Khēcara
↓
Cāṅgadēva
↓
Nāmdēv Siṃpi

The genealogy commences with a fourteenth century Sūfi saint of the Chisti order from Dilli, who is regarded as the teacher of Macchēndranātha or Matsyēndra, the mythical guru of the (eleventh-century?) founder of the Nātha tradition, Gōrakhanātha. Saints of the Vārkarī tradition of Maharashtra, such as Nivṛttinātha, Jñānēśvara, and Muktābāyi, also figure in this line of teachers.

The Chisti Order metamorphosed into the Caitanya tradition in parts of the Deccan. Here, as in the case of the Mahānubhāva line, Nāsir-ud-dīn Cirāg-e-Dillī alias Nāganātha was identified as the founder. His disciples were Ala-ud-dīn Lāḍlē Maśāik or Rāghava Caitanya of Āḷande, Bandēnavāz or Kēśava Caitanya of Kalaburagi, and Śahāb-ud-dīn Bābā or Bābājī Caitanya of Mayināḷa. Rāghava Caitanya’s line of disciples included Siddaliṅga of Āḷande and Majuṃdār of Junnār, Bandēnavāz was teacher to Navakōṭi Nārāyaṇa of Kalaburagi, and Śahāb-ud-dīn, the teacher to Tukārāṃ. In addition to the Caitanya tradition, Nāsir-ud-dīn Cirāg-e-Dillī appears as the teacher of a number of other traditions founded by the following gurus:

1. Datta Caitanya of Vaḍabāḷa
2. Rāmabhaṭṭa of Māṅgāvi
3. Raghunātha of Khilāri
4. Timmaṇṇa Dhanagāra of Indūru
5. Kṛṣṇābāyi of Hirve

371 Of course, this was not a fully developed tradition in its own right and, in addition, it should not be confused with the Gauḍīya Caitanya tradition.
372 Interestingly, Navakōṭi Nārāyaṇa is a title given to a chief called Śrīnivāsa Nāyaka, who later became a popular saint, Purandaradāsa.
373 Tarikere 1998: 56.
374 Ibid.
6. Ēkaliṅga Tēli of Maṇūru
7. Hegrāsasvāmi of Mahōla, and his three khalīfās, viz., Ajñānasiddha of Narēndra, Narēndrasiddha of Vaḍabāḷa, and Siddhaliṅga of Mahōla
8. Varadamma of Maṇūru
9. Baḍavva of Mārḍi
10. Narasiṃha of Apēgāv
11. Bahirāṃbhaṭṭa of Paiṭhān

In another legend, Allama Prabhu is represented as Alaṃ Kamāl-ud-dīn and as the progenitor of five traditions:375

1. Himavanta Svāmi of Muḷagunda
2. Siddharāma of Sonnalāpura
   ↓
   Basava of Kalyāṇa
   ↓
   Cannabasava of Ulavi
3. the sixty-three purātanaś (i.e, the Nāyanārs of Tamilnadu)
4. Amīn-ud-dīn of Vijayapura
   ↓
   Fakīrappa of Śirahaṭṭi
   ↓
   Māliprabhu of Muḷagunda
5. Rāmaliṅga Āḷe of Kōlhāpura

That Sūfis like Nāsir-ud-dīn Cirāq-e-Dillī, Alā-ud-dīn Lāḍlē Maśaik, Bandēnavāz, and Śahāb-ud-dīn Bābā were worshipped as Ādinātha or Nāganātha, Rāghava Caitanya, Kēśava Caitanya, and Bābāji Caitanya respectively, corresponds to the fact that many Siddha saints were worshipped as Sūfis with Islamic names. Prominent among them were Allama Prabhu, regarded as Alaṃ Kamāl-ud-dīn, and the seventeenth-century saint poet Mōnappa or Mōnēśvara of Tinthiṇi, worshipped as Mōn-ud-dīn or Maun-ud-dīn. The annual fair of Mōnappa at Tinthiṇi is also referred to as urus, a Sūfi expression. The urus commences with the following call of dīn:

ēk lākh aiśī hazār pāñcō pīr paigaṃbar
jitā pīr maun-ud-dīn kāśipati har har mahādēv

This may be loosely translated as: there are 1,80,000 saints, five of them are prophets, Maun-ud-dīn is the living prophet, hail Mahādēv, the lord of Kāśi.

375 Ibid.
These historical developments cannot be attributed to the singular initiatives of Koḍēkallu Basava, as antecedent developments are known to have taken place. Ahmad Śäh Bahmani (d. 1436), who patronized Bandēnavāz, is buried in Aṣṭūru in the Bīdara district. On his tomb is inscribed the word ‘Allamaprabhu’ in Devanagari letters. The centripetalist initiatives of Jakkaṇārya and Lakkaṇṇa Daṇḍēśa also involved the use of teachers from diverse traditions, among them Gōrakṣa (Gōrakhanātha) and Muktāyakka (Muktābāyi), and adherents of īṣṭaliṅga, like Allama, and followers of prāṇaliṅga, like Siddharāma. There is a tomb-replica in Māḍyāḷa, where Koḍēkallu Basava is worshipped as Allama. It was in the hands of Koḍēkallu Basava, though, that these developments found systematic expression and reinforcement. His ability to thoroughly integrate them with the class interests of the day served as a model for organization of class relations, and made the new monasteries of northern Karnataka a historically decisive force and an entrenched phenomenon.

Even as Koḍēkallu Basava was refashioning the praxis of renunciation in the north, the southern and coastal parts of Karnataka saw the rise of a diametrically opposite tendency in the praxis of sainthood. This was the Vaiṣṇavite dvaita sainthood promoted by the Kṛṣṇa temple of Uḍupi. Vyāsarāya, Vādirāja, Śrīpādarāya, Purandaradāsa, and Kanakadāsa were the preeminent representatives of this tendency, although all of them were not adherents of dvaita. The lives of these saints shed precious light on the concerns of this emergent tradition, and its spheres of engagement.

Vādirāja was the pontiff of the Sōde maṭha, one of the eight monasteries of Uḍupi. He was a disciple of the guru, Vāgīśa Tīrtha. The guru was a devotee of Viṣṇu in his form as Bhūvarāha (the boar). Once, when he was observing his four-month monsoon retreat at the Kuṃbhēśvara temple in Kuṃbhāśi, a couple from the village of Hūvinakere, Sarasvatī Dēvi and Rāmācārya, arrived to seek his blessings. They had no children. Vāgīśa Tīrtha prophesied that Bhūvarāha would bless them with two sons. He urged them to offer the first son to the Sōde maṭha. In due course, Sarasvatī Dēvi gave birth to two sons. The elder son, born in ca. 1480, was named Bhūvarāha. The couple handed him over to the guru. Vāgīśa Tīrtha initiated the young boy into sainthood and renamed him Vādirāja, literally ‘a king among debaters’.

Vādirāja studied under Vāgīśa Tīrtha and evolved into a master of orthodox learning (such as logic, rhetoric, poetics, grammar, literature, and vēdānta). His skills
in debating were exceptional, and regarded within the tradition as second only to Ānanda Tīrtha’s. The Vijayanagara king is believed to have conferred upon him the title of Prasaṅgābharana Tīrtha, a jewel of oratory.

It is believed that each of the eight monasteries of Uḍupi was given charge of the affairs of the Kṛṣṇa temple for a period of two months in a circular roster. Vādirāja extended the period to two years. This was apparently done to provide time for the pontiffs to travel far and wide to engage in debates, and win over followers to their creed. Or so the modern-day hagiographer of Vādirāja, Aralu Mallige Parthasarathy, would have us believe.³⁸⁰ A pontiff, who was in charge of the temple for two years, would take charge again only after fourteen years. Vādirāja put this valuable time to use, travelled to Kerala in the south and Gujarat in the north, and toured extensively in the Koṅkaṇ region, including Goa. At all places, he allegedly excelled in debates, and defeated numerous rivals. As a result, the rank of his followers began to swell.

Vādirāja visited many centres of pilgrimage across the subcontinent, and wrote an account of these centres, entitled Tīrtha Prabandha. Divided into four parts, the west, the north, the east, and the south, this work is of considerable interest for understanding the significance of a centre of pilgrimage to the dvaita practitioners of Uḍupi in the sixteenth century. Table 10 provides a list of these centres.

The list in the Tīrtha Prabandha includes not only place-names, but also a number of rivers: Nētrāvati, Payasvini, Suvarṇā, Varadā, Dharmagaṅgā, Śālmali, Tāpti, Narmadā, Bāṇagaṅgā, Gōmati, Kṛṣṇā, Gōdāvari, Kālindī, Gaṅgā, Phalgu, Tuṅgabhadra, Kāvēri, Tāmraparṇi, and Ghṛtamālā. It also refers to the mountain range of Sahyācala, and a forest, Naimiṣāraṇya.

It is clear from Table 10 that Vādirāja’s interest was mostly in coastal Karnataka, which should not be surprising. What is of interest, though, is the conspicuous absence of centres of pilgrimage in mainland Karnataka. Harihara, Baṅkāpura, and the little-known Bidirahali (Vēṇugrāma) are the only places named. We shall return to this question in chapter 6. Even more conspicuous is the absence of leading centres of pilgrimage such as Kēdāra (Kedarnath), Ṛṣīkēśa, Haridvāra, Gaṅgōtri, and Yamunōtri in the north. Śrīśailam occurs in the list, but Siṃhācala does not. Śrīraṅgam finds mention, but not Kāḷahasti, although the river Suvarṇamukhi flowing nearby is noticed. Uḍupi’s rival, Śṛṅgēri, is also missing.

³⁸⁰ Parthasarathy 2011: 34.
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<td>Suvarṇamukhi</td>
<td>Dhanuṣkōṭi</td>
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<td>41.</td>
<td>Siddhapuri</td>
<td></td>
<td>Suvarṇamukhi</td>
<td>Dhanuṣkōṭi</td>
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<td>42.</td>
<td>Puṣkāra</td>
<td></td>
<td>Suvarṇamukhi</td>
<td>Dhanuṣkōṭi</td>
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381 Source: *Tīrtha Prabandha.*
During his sojourn at Pūnā, Vādirāja noticed that Māgha’s Sanskrit work, the Śiśupālavadha, was being honoured by the learned men of the city. He challenged the greatness of this work, and spread the falsehood that a greater work exists at Uḍupi and would be produced before them within nineteen days. He then sat down to compose the Rukmiṇiśavijaya, completed it in nineteen days, presented it to the scholars of Pūnā, and won praise for it. In the following years, he wrote a number of other works, like the Yuktimalikā, which was a summary of the essence of the Brahmasūtras, the Laksābharaṇa, a commentary on the Mahābhārata, the Gurvarthadipikā, a commentary on Jaya Tīrtha’s Nyāyasudhā and Tatvaprakāśikā, and the Pāṇḍamatakhaṇḍana, a critique of rival schools. More than seventy works in Sanskrit are attributed to him, many of them short stōtras in praise of god. Vādirāja also wrote numerous songs in Kannada, and a handful of longer devotional works too, like the Bhramaragīte, the Lakṣmiśōbhāne, the Vaikuṇṭhavarṇane, the Tatvasuvvāli, the Svapnapada, the Guṇḍakriye, etc.

Vādirāja’s oeuvre was remarkable for its vast and encyclopedic learning. His defence and exposition of the dvaita system were admirable for the deep understanding they presented. However, Vādirāja was only adhering to the system developed by Ānanda Tīrtha and Jaya Tīrtha, too faithfully so to speak, without making original contributions to develop the system further. He made no innovations in terms of arguments or descriptions of the cosmology to expand and refine the system. On rare occasions, he used proverbs with rustic wisdom as metaphors in his work. One such instance, meant to proclaim Kṛṣṇa’s immanence, occurs in the Bhramaragīte: the wise ones say that the aśvattha (pipal tree), which confers the required boon upon the world, was born of crow’s droppings. In the Lakṣmiśōbhāne, he says: who has ever hidden an elephant in a measuring bowl? Can a mother’s womb hold Śrīhari, who ruled many ten million unborn eggs and atoms from the pores of his body? One may certainly wish that this use of rusticity could be consistently found in his works.

Some incidents in the life of Vādirāja are of interest to us. Once a jāgīrdār in a town was celebrating his son’s wedding. Unfortunately, a snake bit the groom, and he fainted. Learning that Vādirāja was camping in the town, the jāgīrdār carried the groom to him. Vādirāja placed the groom on his lap, and prayed to Goddess Lakṣmi for a remedy. Lakṣmi instructed him to sing a song that described her marriage with Viṣṇu. Vādirāja sang the Lakṣmiśōbhāne he had composed earlier. The groom was miraculously freed of the venom.

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382 Māgha’s Śiśupālavadha is generally regarded as the most difficult text in Sanskrit kāvya literature. To produce a work that excels the Śiśupālavadha was to outshine and dethrone the best. This is not an uncommon tendency in hagiographic convention.
383 Bhramaragīte, 46.
384 Lakṣmiśōbhāne, 544.
On another occasion, a childless jāgīrdār approached Vādirāja with the request to confer a son upon him. Vādirāja sent him back saying that he was not destined to have a child in this life, and that he had to wait until his next birth to have his wish fulfilled. The disappointed jāgīrdār met a magician, who fulfilled his wish in exchange for an amount of five thousand gold coins. Two thousand coins were paid immediately with the agreement that the rest of the money would be paid after the child was born. When the child was born, the contented jāgīrdār gave eight thousand gold coins to the magician, far in excess of what he had originally promised. He showed off the child proudly to Vādirāja, when the latter visited the village again. Vādirāja told the jāgīrdār that it was not really a child but a demon implanted by the magician with instructions to return back to him after slaying the jāgīrdār and his wife at the age of six. He then sprinkled holy water from his jar on the child, and lo!, the child was transformed into the demon. Vādirāja conferred special powers on the demon and instructed him to kill the magician. The story urges us to concede that Vādirāja’s timely intervention saved the jāgīrdār and his wife from disaster.\footnote{Ibid., 104-105.}

Vādirāja was once hosted by the Jaina chief Tirumalarasa Cauṭa of Mūḍabidari. In the pūjā chamber of the chief’s house was the beautiful image of a Jina, made of emerald. “What image is this?” Vādirāja asked the chief. “It is the Jina I worship,” Tirumalarasa replied. “No”, Vādirāja refuted, “this looks like the image of Viṭṭhala”. He urged the chief to gift him the figure if upon closer examination it turned out to be an image of Viṭṭhala. The chief agreed. Vādirāja took the Jina image in his hands, where it transformed miraculously into an image of Viṭṭhala. Tirumalarasa had no choice but to forego the cherished emerald image.\footnote{Ibid., 105.}

Vādirāja spent his last years in Sōde. The chief of Sōde, Arasappa Nāyaka, built the Trivikrama temple and installed the Lakṣmī Trivikrama image there in honour of Vādirāja. In these years, Vādirāja oversaw the construction of the Candramauḷīśvara, the Māruti, and the Śrīkṛṣṇa temples, and the Dhavaḷagaṅga lake at Sōde. He passed away at Sōde, sometime after 1571.\footnote{In 1571, Vādirāja received a grant from the Keḷadi chief Rāmarāja Nāyaka (No. 34, Jois 1991). So his death might have occurred after this date.} Conventional accounts have ascribed him a long life of 120 years, placing his death in the year 1600.

There are many points of convergence between the lives of Koḍēkallu Basava and Vādirāja. Both were great masters of their respective systems. Both composed poetry, travelled widely, defeated adversaries, built temples or monasteries. Yet, it is the differences that strike us most. Koḍēkallu Basava was hostile to the king, although he promoted a petty chief. He built an army and functioned as a leading warriorsaint. He performed miracles, and caused qualitative changes in the economic conditions of his followers. Vādirāja on the other hand maintained cordial relations
with the Vijayanagara rulers and the chiefs under them, such as the Nāyakas of Sōde and Keḷadi. Building an army was not his forte. Nor are anecdotes told of how he brought material prosperity into the lives of his followers. Vādirāja did not perform miracles, certainly not on a scale comparable to Koḍēkallu Basava’s. He was able to miraculously cure the son of a jāgīrdār of snakebite, but only with the blessings of Lakṣmi, and by following a course mentioned by her. The story of rescuing a jāgīrdār from the demon-child and the incident where the Jina image metamorphosed into an image of Viṭṭhala have enough supernatural content in them to qualify as miracles. But, Vādirāja is not revered within the tradition as a miracle-worker. The respect he commands comes from the fact that he was an embodiment, and vigorous promoter, of orthodox knowledge and submissive devotion. To put the contrast between the two saints in a nutshell, Koḍēkallu Basava represented the ethic of enterprise, Vādirāja, the ethic of complacency.

Let us briefly examine the life of another major saint of the dvaita tradition. Śrīpādarāya was born sometime in the early fifteenth century (perhaps 1404) at Abbūru on the banks of River Kaṇvā in the Cannapaṭṭaṇa tālūk of Rāmanagaraṃ district, between Beṅgalūru and Maisūru. His parents Giriyamma and Śēṣagiriyappa gave him the name Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa. Giriyamma’s elder sister was the mother of the saint Brahmaṇya Tīrtha, whose maṭha exists in Abbūru.389

Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa’s childhood seems to have been spent in poverty. His parents owned a herd of cattle, which the boy took out for grazing. Once, the saint Svarṇavarṇa Tīrtha of Śrīraṅgaṃ happened to be visiting Abbūru to meet with Puruṣōttama Tīrtha, who had attained some renown in the region. On the way, he chanced upon Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa and was attracted by the boy’s character. He expressed his desire to have the boy as a disciple. Puruṣōttama Tīrtha summoned Giriyamma and Śēṣagiriyappa, and urged them to hand over Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa to Svarṇavarṇa Tīrtha, as he would initiate the boy into brāhmaṇahood through the rite of brahmōpadēśa, and take care of his schooling. That the boy’s cousin Brahmaṇya Tīrtha had to be given away to the monastery was already cause for bitterness in the family. Giriyamma was reluctant to give her son away. But the request had come from the revered Puruṣōttama Tīrtha. She had no choice but to yield.

Svarṇavarṇa performed the rite of brahmōpadēśa, and began training the boy. In some years’ time, Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa was initiated into renunciation and recognized as Svarṇavarṇa’s successor to the pontificate. He was sent to Vibhudēndra Tīrtha for higher learning. Under Vibhudēndra’s tutelage, Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa became an expert in the dvaita system. A test of his knowledge was held under the supervision of Raghunātha Tīrtha. Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa excelled in the test by commenting upon a major text of the system. It was Raghunātha Tīrtha who conferred upon him the name

389 Varadarajarao 1987: i.
Śrīpādarāya. In the course of time, Śrīpādarāya succeeded Svarṇavarṇa to become the eighth pontiff of the monastery at Śrīraṅgaṃ.390

Some years later, Śrīpādarāya set out on a long pilgrimage, which brought him to Paṇḍharpur in southern Maharashta, which was the preeminent centre of the Vārkhari tradition. Here, he found two large chests on the banks of the river Bhīma. One of them contained an image of Raṅgaviṭṭhala. Śrīpādarāya became a devotee of this deity and began worshipping him. However, he failed to open the other chest.

In the course of his tour, Śrīpādarāya reached Muḷabāgilu in the Kōlāra district of Karnataka. The place was associated with another saint, Akṣōbhya Tīrtha, who is said to have drawn an image of Yōgānarasiṃha with cinders. Akṣōbhya is also said, in a fictitious story, to have engaged Vidyāraṇya in a debate at Muḷabāgilu, in which the redoubtable viśiṣṭādvaita master, Vēdānta Dēśikan, acting as referee, declared Akṣōbhya victorious. Śrīpādarāya decided to settle down here, and built a monastery on the outskirts of the town.

The reasons for Śrīpāda’s migration from Śrīraṅgaṃ to Muḷabāgilu are not clear from the hagiographies. In the early decades of the fourteenth century, the Uttamanaṃbi family of Śrīvaiṣṇavas (of the Rāmānuja tradition) had become powerful at Śrīraṅgaṃ. They were also successful in attracting Vijayanagara support for their cause.391 It is likely that the Uttamanaṃbis entered into conflicts with the dvaita school of Śrīpāda, forcing him to move out of Śrīraṅgaṃ. Alternately, Śrīpāda might have aspired for patronage from the Vijayanagara rulers. If he sought out royal support, we must conclude that he made little gains until the 1470s and 80s, when the Saṅgama control over southern India declined and the Sāḷuva aspiration to replace them became manifest. Many a saint seems to have succeeded in forging a strategic alliance with the Sāḷuvas. Kandāḍai Rāmānujadāsar was one such saint. “The available evidence”, writes Arjun Appadurai, “makes it difficult to identify this person. But it seems fairly certain that he rose from obscurity to prominence by the appropriate manipulation of his “discipleship” to prominent sectarian leaders and his trading of this credential for political currency under the Sāḷuvas at Tirupati”.392 It is for this reason that the Uttamanaṃbis had to make concessions for Rāmānujadāsar, although they were still in control of Śrīraṅgaṃ.393 Like Rāmānujadāsar, Śrīpādarāya was also successful in establishing a close relationship with the Sāḷuva state.

Sometime around the year 1475, Brahmaṇya Tīrtha passed away. His young disciple Vyāsarāya (b. ca. 1460), whom Brahmaṇya had nominated his successor, left for Kāṅcipuram to continue his studies. From there, he reached Muḷabāgilu, where

390 This monastery is believed to have been founded by Ānanda Tirtha’s disciple Padmanābha Tirtha.
392 Ibid., 89.
393 Ibid.
he accepted Śrīpādarāya as his teacher. Śrīpāda turned out to be a foundational influence on Vyāsarāya.

The relationship the guru shared with his new disciple was divinely ordained, and is exemplified by a story. Once, Śrīpādarāya entrusted Vyāsarāya with the task of carrying out the daily worship at the monastery in Muḷabāgilu. In the course of his pūjā, Vyāsarāya chanced upon an unopened chest. This was one of the two chests Śrīpādarāya had found at Paṇḍharpur. No one had succeeded in opening the chest. Vyāsarāya picked up the chest, and opened it effortlessly. From the box emerged Lord Veṇugōpāla, playing his flute. In his ecstasy, Vyāsarāya picked up a sāḷagrāma stone placed nearby, and began beating it like a drum and dancing it to the tunes. The other disciples in the monastery were surprised by the miracle, and reported it to Śrīpādarāya. No sooner did Śrīpādarāya arrive on the scene than Vēṇugōpāla froze into an image. Śrīpādarāya realized that of the two images he had retrieved from Paṇḍharpur, the image of Raṅgaviṭṭhala was meant for him and that of Vēṇugōpāla for his disciple. Vyāsarāya was permitted to own the image and worship it.394

It was around the time when Vyāsarāya reached Muḷabāgilu that the Saṅgama state of Vijayanagara was disintegrating. Sāḷuva Narasiṃha, who had designs to establish a kingdom of his own, was very active during this period. He established contacts with Śrīpādarāya and became one of his leading benefactors. According to a legend, Sāḷuva Narasiṃha had put to death the Tirupati temple priest and his son on charges of corruption. Thus, he incurred the sin of killing a brāhmaṇa (brahmahatyādōṣa), which was one of the five great sins (pañcamahāpātaka). He found no help from anybody in securing release from this sin. At this time, news reached him that Śrīpādarāya of Muḷabāgilu had freed a person from brahmahatyādōṣa with the holy water from his conch. Sāḷuva Narasiṃha sought his help. Śrīpāda sprinkled him with water from his conch, and released him from the great sin.395 Whether or not this story is true, it clearly points to the favourable nexus Śrīpāda was able to forge with the Vijayanagara state.

It is said that Śrīpādarāya’s opponents ridiculed him for making false claims that he was endowed with powers to release men from the sin of slaying a brāhmaṇa with water from his conch. Śrīpādarāya challenged them to clean the dark spots caused on a white piece of cloth by the oil from the gēru fruit. The opponents failed. Now, Śrīpāda poured water from his conch and cleansing the white cloth, and brought the opponents into submission.396

The rest of Śrīpādarāya’s life was spent in teaching, devotion, composition of poetry, and defeating rivals. In one story told of him, Śrīpāda figures as a glutton, like Ānanda Tīrtha, consuming huge quantities of raw fruits and vegetables. When rivals

395 Ibid., viii-ix.
396 Ibid.
ridiculed him for this, he is said to have produced back from his belly all the food he had consumed. The fruits and vegetables remained fresh. The rivals were beaten once again.

A long life of ninety-eight years is assigned to Śrīpādarāya, which places his death in ca. 1502. Before his death, he nominated Hayagrīva Tīrtha as his successor. Vyāsarāya would have been the ideal choice, had he not already been pontiff of the maṭha at Abbūru when he had accepted Śrīpāda as his teacher.

An important achievement of Śrīpādarāya was forging for the *dvaita* tradition healthy ties of patronage and reciprocation with the Vijayanagara state. To what extent was his role significant in the rise of Sāḷuva Narasimha to the centre-stage of Vijayanagara polity can only be speculated. There is no evidence that helps us to reflect upon this question at some length. But Śrīpāda introduced Vyāsarāya to Sāḷuva Narasimha, which must be considered a decisive move. In the years to come, Vyāsarāya became an important mouthpiece, as it were, of the religion promoted by the state. It is a matter of regret indeed that he ended up as one of the two greatest masters of existing knowledge in the history of the *dvaita* system (the other being Vādirāja), without causing innovations in the system built by Ānanda Tīrtha and Jaya Tirtha.

Śrīpādarāya’s life, like Vādirāja’s, stands out for the manner in which it contrasts with Koḍēkallu Basava’s. Although a traveller, poet, and a leading representative of his system, traits that most respected saints shared, Śrīpādarāya raised no army, fought no battles, and performed no miracles that was striking enough for him to be recognized as a miracle-worker. Nor is he credited with public works like excavating tanks or causing agriculture to expand. Unlike Koḍēkallu Basava’s engagement with Isupāśca and the other kings he met during his fabled voyage, Śrīpāda’s ties with the state was cordial and patronizing. References to the peasant and mercantile classes do not occur in the stories told of him. He was, like Vādirāja, the figurehead of orthodox learning that laid stress on the ethic of submission and complacency.

The comparison between Koḍēkallu Basava on the one hand, and Vādirāja and Śrīpādarāya on the other, leads us to an important conclusion. There had occurred in the course of the late fifteenth and the early sixteenth century, a great divergence in the praxis of sainthood in the Deccan region. Two distinct tendencies had emerged and gained deep roots: the first centered on the ethic of enterprise, which involved acts and initiatives ranging from public works and agrarian expansion to warfare and murder; the other revolved around the ethic of complacency, which called for devotion, submission, and singing praise of the Lord. This was a distinction of no mean consequence. The image of the saint would henceforth oscillate around these conflicting ethics. It is to this divergence that we must now turn.