

## VAIṢṆAVISM IN VIJAYANAGARA

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Elsewhere I have shown that Śaivism, through the efforts of its most powerful socio-religious custodians the Sthānikas, had maintained for centuries its great status in the history of the land.<sup>1</sup> Since the days of its early success over Jainism,<sup>2</sup> it had to contend with its great rival Vaiṣṇavism for quite a long time; but on the appearance of the founders of the famous Vijayanagara Empire in A.D. 1346,<sup>3</sup> Śaivism again gathered renewed strength. And for nearly two centuries after that date, it was the most prominent religion of the country. In the course of the long supremacy which Śaivism maintained in southern and western India, even the magnificent achievements of such intellectual and spiritual giants like the great Madhvācārya,<sup>4</sup> failed to dislodge Śaivism from the paramount position it had occupied in the land.

But this prolonged supremacy of Śaivism received a shattering blow in the first quarter of the sixteenth century A.D., when the great Hindu royal family that ruled over practically the whole of southern India exchanged a Vaiṣṇava god for a Śaivite deity. The reigning Hindu imperial House was that of Vijayanagara, and the monarch, Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya the Great.

Before we elucidate this assertion with the help of historical data, it is worthwhile to reject here the statement made by some that the Vijayanagara royal House had espoused the cause of Vaiṣṇavism in the days of king Virūpākṣa. According to the Rev. Heras, this ruler was responsible for making Vaiṣṇavism the State religion. 'In spite of this Jaina influence, the Vijayanagara sovereigns remained faithful to the cult of Śiva till they became disciples of Śrī Vaiṣṇavism towards the close of the 15th century.' The Rev. Heras then describes the advent of two brothers from Eṭṭūr, by name Nṛsimhācārya and Śrīrangācārya, at the Vijayanagara court; and

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<sup>1</sup> Read Saletore, *The Sthānikas and Their Historical Importance*, in the *Journal of the Bombay University*, VII, Part I.

<sup>2</sup> Read Saletore, *Medieval Jainism*, Chs. VII and VIII.

<sup>3</sup> Read Saletore, *Social and Political Life in the Vijayanagara Empire*, I, pp. 13, seq. The date A.D. 1336 given for the foundation of Vijayanagara has no basis in history.

<sup>4</sup> On the life and achievements of this remarkable Vaiṣṇava teacher, read Saletore, *Ancient Karnataka*, I, pp. 416-449.

their success in converting the Vijayanagara monarch Virūpākṣa from Śaivism into Vaiṣṇavism. He then concludes thus—‘Accordingly the sovereign (King Virūpākṣa) foreswore Śaivism and became a fervent Vaiṣṇava. On this occasion, the majority of his subjects also became followers of Vaiṣṇavism<sup>1</sup>.’

The above conclusion which is no doubt based on Anantācārya’s work called *Prapannāmṛtam*, is untenable. Anantācārya gives the entire story of the alleged conversion of King Virūpākṣa from Śaivism into Vaiṣṇavism. He relates that the two brothers named above, on entering a haunted palace in the city of Vijayanagara, pacified the ghosts that resided in it. The two brothers then related the story of the *Rāmāyana* to King Virūpākṣa who, we are told, had ascended the throne after murdering his relatives. The ruler stupefied with the miraculous work of the two brothers, felt great reverence for the *Rāmāyana*, the god Rāma, and the preceptor Eṭṭūr Nṛsimhācārya. He forthwith became a staunch Vaiṣṇava, and in token of his new creed, exchanged the time-honoured Vijayanagara sign-manual of Virūpākṣa—which was the name of the celebrated deity in the temple of that name at the great capital itself—for the new one of Śrī Rāma. And on the king renouncing the Śaiva faith for the Vaiṣṇava creed, his subjects followed suit; and after him, the Vijayanagara monarchs, who till that time had been devotees of Śiva, became adherents of Viṣṇu.<sup>2</sup>

Entire credence cannot be given to the above story of the alleged conversion of the Vijayanagara royal House from Śaivism into Vaiṣṇavism in the reign of King Virūpākṣa, as given by Anantācārya in his *Prapannāmṛtam*. King Virūpākṣa reigned from A.D. 1467 until A.D. 1478. His reign was not only short but uneventful.<sup>3</sup> Even the uncritical foreign traveller, Fernão Nuniz, gives a very gruesome account of the reign of King Virūpākṣa. He relates thus about that ruler—‘As long as he reigned he was given over to vice, caring for nothing but women, and to fuddle himself with drink and amuse himself, and never showed himself either to his captains or to his people; so that in a short time he lost that which his forefathers had won and left to him’. And Nuniz continues to relate how King Virūpākṣa ‘in mere sottishness slew many of his captains’, and ultimately gave an opportunity to ‘one of his captains who was called Narsyngua, who was in some manner akin to him’, to attack and dethrone the useless monarch.<sup>4</sup> The reference here is to the famous

<sup>1</sup> Henry Heras, *The Aravidu Dynasty of Vijayanagara*, pp. 540-541.

<sup>2</sup> S. K. Aiyangar, *The Sources of Vijayanagara History*, pp. 77-79.

<sup>3</sup> Rice, *Mysore and Coorg from the Inscriptions*, p. 177.

<sup>4</sup> Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire—Vijayanagara*, pp. 305-306.

usurpation by Sāḷuva Nṛsimha, also called Narasinga Rāya Oḍeyar, the most powerful noble of the times, of the Vijayanagara throne.<sup>1</sup>

For our purpose we may note, therefore, that King Virūpākṣa's reign being utterly devoid of any importance, could never have been marked by such outstanding event like the conversion of the monarch and of the people from Śaivism into Vaiṣṇavism. Secondly, it is not correct to say that the Vijayanagara monarch Virūpākṣa and his successors used the new sign-manual *Śrī Rāma* instead of the old one *Śrī Virūpākṣa*. If it were really so, then, one should not have found the sign-manual *Śrī Virūpākṣa* being in vogue for nearly 120 years after King Virūpākṣa. The fact that even Emperor Sadāśiva Rāya used the well-known sign-manual *Śrī Virūpākṣa* (in Kannaḍa), so late as A.D. 1545,<sup>2</sup> is enough to disprove the statement of Anantācārya that the Vijayanagara monarchs beginning with King Virūpākṣa used *Śrī Rāma* as their sign-manual.

What seems more probable is that the gradual decline of Śaivism among the members of the Vijayanagara royal family, and consequently among the people of the Empire, began after King Virūpākṣa's reign. The very fact that the famous Sāḷuva usurper named above called himself after one of Viṣṇu's names—Nṛsimha or Narasinga—suggests that an anti-Śaivite tendency had already begun to set in among the royal personages at Vijayanagara. It is precisely this slow change in the monarchical attitude that is bemoaned by Vīra Śaiva authors like Virūpākṣa Paṇḍita (A.D. 1584), who in his well-known work called *Cenna Basava Purāṇa* relates that after the death of Prauḍha Rāya (*i.e.*, evidently Immadi Rāya or Mallikārjuna, who ruled from A.D. 1446 until A.D. 1467), came King Virūpākṣa and Narasaṅga (*i.e.*, Sāḷuva Nṛsimha), when Śaivism declined and *anācāra* raised its head.<sup>3</sup> The *anācāra* referred to here was evidently the name given by the Vīra Śaivas to the rising tide of Vaiṣṇavism.

But it must be confessed that the monarchs of Vijayanagara were too broadminded thus to throw overboard suddenly Śaivism which had been the State religion since the date of the foundation of the Vijayanagara Empire (A.D. 1346). Hence we find that in the reigns of the rulers who succeeded Sāḷuva Nṛsimha, the Tuḷuva Narasa (A.D. 1496–A.D. 1503) and the latter's eldest son Vīra Narasimha (A.D. 1504–A.D. 1509), nothing happened in the capital to

<sup>1</sup> Rice, *Mysore and Coorg from the Inscriptions*, p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> *Epigraphia Carnatica*, IV, Ng. 58, p. 128.

<sup>3</sup> Virūpākṣa Paṇḍita, *Cenna Basava Purāṇa*, 63, 40 seq.; Sadakṣaradeva, *Rājasekharavilāsa*, I, v. 17; Adṛśyakavi, *Prauḍharājacarite*, (or *Prauḍharāyanakāvya*) I, 41; I, 12.

create the impression that the old faith of Śaivism had been driven into the background by the monarchs. But there were, however, two events which clearly showed which way the wind was blowing. One was the notable success which the Vaiṣṇava teacher Śrīpāda met with at the hands of King Sāluva Nṛsimha. It is related that this Vaiṣṇava *guru* Śrīpāda sat on the throne on the occasion of an evil *muhūrta* (*kūhayoga*) to avert disaster to the monarch, and that consequently he was honoured with the title of *Rāya*. The exact date when Śrīpāda Rāya sat on the Vijayanagara throne is, however, still a matter of uncertainty.<sup>1</sup> The success which crowned the efforts of Śrīpāda Rāya in averting the danger to the Vijayanagara monarch may have been partly responsible for the keen desire which the ruler Sāluva Nṛsimha showed to Vaiṣṇavism. Indeed, Rājanātha Diṇḍima in the 9th Canto of his work called *Sāluvābhyudayam* relates that the Emperor Sāluva Nṛsimha, while on a visit to the famous temple of Tirupati in the south, gave a new crown to the god Śrīnivāsa, when he himself was assuming an imperial crown after his glorious victories.<sup>2</sup>

The other fact which added to the strength of Vaiṣṇavism was the marked favour Vyāsarāya, the great Vaiṣṇava teacher who will figure presently, secured at the hands of the ruler King Narasa. Somanātha in his work called *Vyāsayogicaritam* tells us that King Narasa took the advice of Vyāsarāya every day in private (*evam-eva bhaktiā sambhāvayantam rahasyenam dharma-paropadeṣena pratyaham-anugrhanan*).<sup>3</sup> There cannot be any doubt about the powerful hold Vyāsarāya had on the Vijayanagara court in the days of King Narasa and King Vīra Narasimha.<sup>4</sup> But the fact that King Narasa took secretly (*rahasyena*) the advice of Vyāsarāya suggests also that the great Vaiṣṇava teacher had not yet completely succeeded in winning over the illustrious royal House of Vijayanagara to his side. For he had to wait just a few years before he could finally unfurl the Vaiṣṇava banner in the great capital, thereby proving himself to be the greatest enemy Śaivism ever had in the mediæval times. And this opportunity he got in the reign of Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya.

It was really in the reign of this great ruler Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya that Śaivism gave place to Vaiṣṇavism as the State religion, although, as said above, the monarchs continued to use their old sign-manual

<sup>1</sup> *M.A.R. for 1919*, p. 36; B. Venkoba Rao places this event in A.D. 1471. *Vyāsayogicaritam*, Intr. pp. xcvi, xcvi, xciv. But this date falls within the reign of King Virūpākṣa, and, therefore, cannot be accepted.

<sup>2</sup> Venkoba Rao cites the relevant verses in *Vyāsayogicaritam*, Intr. p. x.

<sup>3</sup> Venkoba Rao, *ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>4</sup> Venkoba Rao, *ibid.*, pp. 57-58, 66.

*Śrī Virūpakṣa* at the end of their official grants, down till the days of Emperor Sadāśiva (A.D. 1543–A.D. 1567). The magnanimous Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya never failed to use the same sign-manual, as his numerous grants amply prove.<sup>1</sup> But two causes brought about the downfall of Śaivism in the Vijayanagara Empire. The first was the continued presence of great Vaiṣṇava teachers in the capital itself. One of these was the *guru* named above—Vyāsarāya. This learned man was the disciple of Brahmaṇya Tīrtha, and was the founder of the well-known Vyāsarāya *matha* at Sōsale, Tirumakūḍlu-Narsīpura tāluka, Mysore State. A remarkable incident is narrated about him by his disciple and successor Śrīnivāsa Tīrtha in the latter's work called *Vyāsavijaya*. It is the following:—That the Vijayanagara monarch Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya was once warned of an evil *muhūrta* (*kuhayoga*) approaching, and was advised to put someone on the throne during that time. Not knowing what to do, the Emperor sent his State elephant with a garland which the animal presented to Vyāsayogi, who was then in the capital. Vyāsatīrtha being an ascetic felt shy at the prospect of being asked to sit on the throne, and hid himself in a cave. But the State elephant, which was sent a second time, again went near him but this time to the cave. Vyāsatīrtha now deemed it prudent to obey the divine summons, and was, therefore, requested to sit on the throne and thereby avert the evil *muhūrta*. In order to manifest the danger, Vyāsatīrtha instead of sitting on the throne, threw his *kāśāya* or red garment, which immediately was burnt. He then took his seat on the throne, and in the short time left to him, gave grants of land to Brahmans who had anointed him.<sup>2</sup>

It is not surprising that Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya should have considered such a teacher, who was the second Vaiṣṇava *guru* who had averted calamity to the imperial House on the occasion of a *kuhayoga*, his tutelary deity (*kuladevata*), and that he should have vowed to devote everything he had for the worship of Vyāsarāya.<sup>3</sup> To this Vaiṣṇava teacher Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya granted lands in A.D. 1516, 1520, 1523 and 1527.<sup>4</sup>

Another remarkable Vaiṣṇava teacher who toured the Vijayanagara Empire, and is said to have received honours at the hands of the same monarch, and of his successors too, was Vallabhācārya, about whom we shall deal with at some length in a separate paper.

<sup>1</sup> Witness, for instance, *E.C.*, IV, Ng. 81 dates A.D. 1513, p. 133 and quite a number of others.

<sup>2</sup> *M.A.R. for 1919*, p. 36; Venkoba Rao, *op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Venkoba Rao, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

<sup>4</sup> *M.A.R. for 1919*, pp. 34-35; *ibid. for 1920*, pp. 50; *E.C.*, VII, Sh. 84, Sh. 85,

These and others were the Vaiṣṇava champions who weaned Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya from Śaiva faith and who brought him within the fold of Vaiṣṇavism. This ruler gave public expression to the new creed he adopted in three ways—Firstly, he built and renovated temples in honour of Vaiṣṇava deities; secondly, he ordered the construction of a prominent image in honour of Viṣṇu; and, finally, he made public his Vaiṣṇava tendency in his coinage. One of the most well-known edifices in the city of Vijayanagara was the Kṛṣṇasvāmi temple. Even now it is one of the best-liked buildings amidst the ruins of that city. Sewell opined that it was constructed in A.D. 1513 by Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya after his successful return from his eastern campaigns.<sup>1</sup> While Sewell is correct in maintaining that the ruler constructed that temple on the latter's return from the eastern campaigns, he is incorrect in dating that structure to A.D. 1513. For two stone records in that temple dated A.D. 1515 inform us that the monarch set up in that temple the image of Kṛṣṇa which he had brought from Udayagiri.<sup>2</sup> This year A.D. 1515, therefore, was eventful in the history of Vaiṣṇavism. The construction of the Kṛṣṇasvāmi temple in the capital by Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya signified the triumph of Vaiṣṇavism in that city as well as in the Vijayanagara Empire. Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya seemed thereby to give public proof of his Vaiṣṇavite leanings; and he showed it further by a change in his coinage to which we shall presently turn. In the meanwhile we may observe that the Kṛṣṇasvāmi temple was not the only building which attested the change in the creed of the Emperor. It was about this time too that the additions to the Viṭṭhalasvāmi temple, also in the same city, were made by Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya. The work of this most ornate of all religious edifices in the Vijayanagara Empire, however, was continued by Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya's son and successor Acyuta Deva Rāya, and the latter's nephew Emperor Sadāśiva Rāya; and, as Sewell surmises, was probably stopped only by the destruction of the great city in A.D. 1565.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sewell, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> *M.A.R. for 1920*, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Sewell, *op. cit.*, p. 163. Some maintain that Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya brought the image of Viṭṭhala, popularly called Viṭṭhoba, from Pandharpur. (G. H. Khare, *Kṛṣṇadevarāya of Vijayanagara and the Viṭṭhala image of Pandharpur* in *The Vijayanagara Commemoration Volume*, pp. 191-196.) That this is all wrong—based as it is on a misleading statement in the *Annual Report of the Archt. Dept. for 1922-1923*, para 67, has been amply proved by Dr. C. Nārāyana Rao in his article on *An Identification of the Idol of Viṭṭhala in the Viṭṭhala temple at Hamp*, in the *Proceedings and Transactions of the Eighth All-India Oriental Conference* held at Mysore, pp. 715-726. But while Dr. Nārāyana Rao has succeeded in proving the prevalence of Viṭṭhala worship in Karnāṭaka long before the days of Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya, he has not

The second method by which Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya demonstrated to the world his new creed was by constructing a monolithic image of the god Narasimha in the capital. According to Sewell, it was in A.D. 1528 that this monolithic stone image of the god Viṣṇu in His *avatāra* of Narasimha, the man-lion, was constructed out of a single boulder of granite that lay near the south-western gate of the Kṛṣṇasvāmi temple.<sup>1</sup>

But the most successful means Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya the Great adopted to signalize his conversion from Śaivism into Vaiṣṇavism was in his coinage. In the first five years of his reign, he minted coins of what are known as the Umāmaheśvara type. That is to say, coins which had on their obverse Śiva and Pārvatī, with a trident in the hand of Śiva; and on the reverse, bearing the legend *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Rāya* in Nāgari. On his bringing the image of Kṛṣṇa from Udayagiri, the Emperor began to mint coins which belong to the Bālakṛṣṇa type. These coins contain on the obverse the following—the divine baby Bālakṛṣṇa seated on a seat, with one knee bent and resting on the seat, and the other raised up and supporting the left arm which is stretched out at ease. The right hand holds a lump of butter. The Child wears large ear-rings, a girdle of gingles, gingled or beaded bracelets, armlets and anklets on his fat little body and limbs; and on His head a crown of peacock's feathers with a string of flowers above. In field there is a conch to the right and a discus to the left. And on the reverse is a larger three lined Nāgari legend—*Śrī Pratāpa Kṛṣṇa*.<sup>2</sup>

No other proclamation was necessary to show that the Emperor was now a staunch devotee of Viṣṇu, although, as related above, he never left off using the time-honoured sign-manual of *Śrī Virūpākṣa* at the end of his royal grants, down till the last days of his reign. But so far as the rivalry of Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism is concerned,

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given proof to show that there was Viṭṭhala worship in Vijayanagara itself. This may be given here. A copper-plate grant dated A.D. 1408 relates that in the reign of the Vijayanagara ruler Deva Rāya, there was a temple of the god Viṭṭhala on the bank of the Tungabhadra. In the presence of this god Viṭṭhaleśvara a specified grant was made by some citizens of the Āraga Eighteen Kampana. (*E.C.*, VIII, Pl. 222, p. 211.) This inscription proves not only that there was the god Viṭṭhala in the great capital in A.D. 1408, but that the famous temple in that god's name existed also in the first quarter of the fifteenth century. In view of this, Sewell's assertion that Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya commenced the building of the Viṭṭhalasvāmi temple (Sewell, *Forg. Emp.*, p. 163) has to be abandoned. The Viṭṭhala temple at Vijayanagara does not seem to have been in any way prominent in the first quarter of the fifteenth century. And it cannot be maintained on the strength of the above inscription that Vaiṣṇavism was powerful in the capital in A.D. 1408.

<sup>1</sup> Sewell, *ibid.*, p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> *M.A.R. for 1930*, p. 70.

Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya's reign marked an epoch. The success of Vaiṣṇavism was now unchallenged. And although Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya's successors strenuously endeavoured to work for the common welfare and to give equal patronage to all religions, yet the days of Śaivism were numbered. Truly it may be said without any exaggeration that after that great monarch's time, Śaivism lay beaten and humbled for over three centuries. A negative factor which added to the success of Vaiṣṇavism was this—That Śaivism did not produce any remarkable intellectual giant who could successfully meet and overthrow men like Vyāsātīrtha and others. This told sadly on the career of the old faith, and especially on its socio-religious custodians the Sthānikas, who had so successfully and creditably maintained, as is undoubtedly proved by the many epigraphs we have cited elsewhere, the Śaivite supremacy all over southern and western India for nearly ten long centuries.

And when once thus the Śaivite hold on the great capital was shaken, its grip over the rest of the Vijayanagara Empire was simultaneously loosened. To the Sthānikas, who were always in the van-guard of Śaivism, this meant everything: with the transference of the allegiance of the monarchs of Vijayanagara from Śaivism to Vaiṣṇavism meant the disappearance of the most solid support they had in the land. And their success or failure in the country depended on the whims of the provincial rulers and the general public, and on the nature of the propaganda their rivals—the leaders of Vaiṣṇavism—made in the different parts of the country. It is in the examination of the last factor that we come to the saddest feature in the history of the rivalry between Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism. We can best illustrate this point by restricting ourselves to one particular province of the great Vijayanagara Empire, where the growing influence of Vaiṣṇavism practically annihilated the Sthānikas. This province was the well-known Tuḷuvanāḍu which now goes by the name of South Kanara. A careful and detailed investigation of the facts to be presently narrated has revealed to the writer that in this distant province of Vijayanagara was waged perhaps the bitterest part of the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava struggle.

A few details are to be explained before we enumerate concrete cases of the intensity of the struggle between the two great creeds of the land. In Tuḷuva is the famous seat of Vaiṣṇavism—Uḍīpi—from where the great Madhvācārya had preached the gospel of Dvaitism. We have elsewhere given all available details connected with the life and achievement of this greatest son of Tuḷuva.<sup>1</sup> Uḍīpi before and during the early years of Ānandatīrtha was, as we have amply

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<sup>1</sup> Saletore, *Ancient Karnāṭaka*, I, pp. 416-449, *op. cit.*



proved in the same work,<sup>1</sup> essentially a Śaivite centre. Indeed, it was from the Śaivite ranks that that great Teacher had recruited followers into his fold. Notwithstanding the activities of this celebrated Vaiṣṇava teacher, it must be admitted that for nearly three centuries after him the Śaivites of Tuḷuva, especially in and around Udipi, managed to hold their own against their growing rivals—the Vaiṣṇavites.

Two causes enabled them to resist stubbornly the rising tide of Vaiṣṇavism in Tuḷuva. One was the fact that the ruling dynasty of the province—the Ālupas—were essentially Śaivites; and when they did evince a strong desire to change their faith, it was Jainism, and not Vaiṣṇavism, that they patronized.<sup>2</sup> The other cause was that the strength of the Śaivites of Tuḷuva lay not so much in the State patronage as in the support they secured from corporate bodies of Tuḷuva. Of these corporate bodies the most powerful was that of the Niṭṭuru people. Niṭṭuru is a village about a mile and half to the north of Udipi proper. The leaders of the Niṭṭuru village came into serious conflict with one of the most remarkable Vaiṣṇava leaders of Tuḷuva—Vādirāja. We must now explain the events that brought about the downfall of the Sthānikas of Tuḷuva in the days of Vādirāja.

Vādirāja lived from A.D. 1539 until A.D. 1597.<sup>3</sup> This famous *guru* along with Vijayendratīrtha had studied under the celebrated Vyāsātīrtha.<sup>4</sup> The extraordinary influence which Vyāsarāya wielded at the court of Vijayanagara and the conversion of Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya from Śaivism into Vaiṣṇavism must have had the inevitable effect of creating in the mind of Vādirāja a desire to do for Tuḷuva what his teacher Vyāsarāya had done for Vijayanagara. Vādirāja was correct: after all Tuḷuva was his own province, and the spread of Vaiṣṇavism in it was his own concern. And it was not a superhuman effort for Vādirāja to achieve as signal a success in Tuḷuva as Vyāsarāya had won in Vijayanagara, especially when we remember that his fame had spread throughout the land as one of the most learned men of the times, and as one who had thousands of followers, especially in the whole region of Karnāṭaka. Vādirāja soon got some excuse to execute his plans.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 449, and *ibid.*, n. (2).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 413-414.

<sup>3</sup> On Vādirāja's date, read *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, XVII, pp. 203-210, where Mr. Gode utilized my note on Vādirāja. Prof. B. N. Krishnamurti Sharma of the Annamalai University has, since then, conclusively proved that Vādirāja lived in the sixteenth century. *Annals of the B.O.R.I.*, XVIII, pp. 187-197; *The Poona Orientalist*, II, pp. 1-21.

<sup>4</sup> Venkoba Rao, *op. cit.*, Intr. p. ciii; Pandit Shrinivasa Bhat, *Life of Vādirāja* (in Kannada), pp. 22, 35.

In Tuluva the great Śaivite, and, therefore, the Sthānika, centres were Uḍipi itself, Udayāvāra (the ancient capital of the Ālupas), Niṭṭūru, Malpe (Koḍāvūru), Baṇṇiṇje, Uppūru, Mangalore, Ullāla, and Śubrahmaṇya. The Sthānika temples in these centres were the following:—the celebrated Rajatapīṭha (Ananteśvara) temple at Uḍipi, the Mahādeva temple at Udayāvāra, the Somalingeśvara temple at Niṭṭūru, the Oḍabhāṇḍeśvara temple at Malpe (or Kroḍāśrama, as it was also called),<sup>1</sup> the Īśvara temple at Uppūru, the Īśvara temple at Baṇṇiṇje, the Triśuleśvara and Śarabheśvara temples at Mangalore, the Someśvara temple at Ullāla, and the famous Kārttikeya or Subrahmaṇya temple at Subrahmaṇya.

The strength of the Sthānikas was centred at Rajatapīṭha (Uḍipi) and Subrahmaṇya. Vādirāja knew it, and at one stroke destroyed the Sthānika, and, therefore, the Śaiva influence at both the centres practically at the same time.

The position of the two parties was the following: Vādirāja led the Vaiṣṇavites, while the Niṭṭūru leaders championed the cause of the Śaivites. Vādirāja was assisted by two powerful local leaders—the Ciṭṭupāḍi Ballāla and the Niḍambūru Ballāla; while the Niṭṭūru Śaivites were helped by the people of Malpe (Kroḍāśrama), Ananteśvara (*i.e.*, Uḍipi itself), and a vast number of Holeyas (now called in our own days Harijans). The Niṭṭūru corporate assembly had owned the Ananteśvara temple and the site upon which it stood, the whole *varga* of Uḍipi having been made in the name of that temple. It was the Niṭṭūru corporate assembly that had originally given to the Vaiṣṇavites the site for building a tank near that temple. In grateful acknowledgement of this fact the Vaiṣṇavites gave annually a specified rent for that piece of land to the Ananteśvara temple and offerings to the deity of Jūmādi (a powerful *bhūta* or devil) of Niṭṭūru. In course of time the Vaiṣṇavites built the now-famous temple of Kṛṣṇa and the eight *māṭhas* for the eight disciples of the great Madhvācārya. These events seem to have taken place some time after that learned *guru*. The Kṛṣṇa temple thus constructed faced eastwards after the manner of the Ananteśvara temple of the locality. With the intense propa-

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. V. R. R. Dikshitar calls this well-known Tuluva temple, probably on the information supplied to him by Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, Uḍabhāṇḍeśvara. (Dikshitar, *The Śilappadikāram*, p. 50, Oxford Uny. Press, 1939.) This is an error for *oḍa + bhāṇḍa-Īśvara* (*Boat + wares-Īśvara*) referring to a famous incident in the life of the great Madhvācārya concerning the ship which contained the image of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and which foundered near the Somalingeśvara temple at Kroḍa (Malpe). Personal investigations conducted in and around Malpe between the years 1922 and 1924, and again in 1933, have shown me the correctness of the name Oḍabhāṇḍeśvara.

ganda which the Vaiṣṇava Svāmīs of Uḍipi made, especially by the Svāmīs of the Uttarādi *maṭha*, a need arose for building a larger tank opposite the Kṛṣṇa temple. And it was precisely around the question of building a larger tank opposite the same temple that the quarrel between the Śaivites and the Vaiṣṇavites was centred. The Vaiṣṇavites insisted on utilizing the space a larger part of which had been used by the Śaivites for dragging the great temple car of Ananteśvara, and another portion of which had been reserved for throwing the plantain leaves used for dining, for building the proposed tank. The Vaiṣṇavites were determined to dig the tank, and the Śaivites as determined to oppose them. The question became serious, and is said to have been reported to Vādirāja, who was then on the Western Ghats. Being unable to come himself, he, however, is alleged to have given an order to his followers in the shape of a poem (obviously addressed to the god Kṛṣṇa) in four stanzas,<sup>1</sup> directing them to oppose the Śaivites and to build the tank. The Vaiṣṇavites carried the day, built the tank in the teeth of the Sthānika opposition, and even wrested the famous Ananteśvara temple itself from the hands of the Śaivites. And about the same time (middle of the sixteenth century A.D.) the Vaiṣṇavites became masters of the Ananteśvara temple, they managed to wipe out the last traces of the Śaivite influence at Subrahmaṇya. But as regards the exact circumstances of this Śaivite-Vaiṣṇavite struggle at Subrahmaṇya, however, we have no traces in tradition. It was probably due to the fact that Subrahmaṇya lay in an out-of-the way corner of Tuḷuvanāḍu.

The causes of the defeat of the Sthānikas, and, hence, of the Śaivites in Uḍipi were the following :—Although the Niṭṭūru people were supported by the leaders of Kroḍāśrama (Malpe) and Ananteśvara, yet they were numerically inferior to the Vaiṣṇavites, whose leaders were busy adding to their fold on the Ghats. Secondly, the

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<sup>1</sup> The first stanza of the poem, which is now sung on the Tuḷsi *pūjā* days in a slightly altered form, is said to have run as follows:—

*Kollu Kollu Kollu Kollu Kaliyugada kaḷḷarannu |*  
*Kolladiddare Ninna pūjege kaḷḷu hākulīrpparu ||*  
*Kollu bēga kaḷḷaran-ella Madhva-Śrī-Vallabha |*  
*Kolladiddare nillaravaru Kaliyugada kaḷḷaru ||*

I owe this poem and many details concerning this Śaivite-Vaiṣṇavite struggle to the late Mr. Paḍamunnūr Rāmacandrayya, himself a learned and benevolent Sthānika of Niṭṭūru and afterwards of Mangalore. Now-a-days the following variant of the poem is sung:—

*Kōlu kōl-enniṛo Sad-guru tīle mēlu mēl-enniṛo |*  
*ādhārava kaṭṭi cakrava bhedisi nāda-dināda sunāda kēli |*  
*sādhisi supumma mārga maneya pokku bodheya beḷakili beḷa beḷagoḷḷiṛo ||*

Niṭṭūru people did not possess the financial resources which the eight Svāmis of Uḍipi could command. And, finally, the Sthānikas were lacking in a leader who could match the redoubtable Vādirāja in wisdom and diplomacy.

We can well understand the above traditional account of the downfall of Śaivism and its civil custodians the Sthānikas, when we remember the few facts we have given above concerning the activities of the Vaiṣṇava leaders like Vyāsarāya in the Vijayanagara capital. The downfall of Śaivism and the Sthānikas in Tuḷuva in the second half of the sixteenth century A.D. followed closely on the heels of the success of Vyāsarāya, who had converted Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya the Great into Vaiṣṇavism. The new creed which that monarch embraced may have been partly responsible for the apathy which the provincial viceroys of Tuḷuva placed over the Bārakūru and Managaḷūru provinces showed to the high-handedness of the Vaiṣṇavites in the matter of settling their disputes with the Śaivites.

But that the Vaiṣṇavites had, indeed, dispossessed the Śaivites from their temples in Tuḷuva is proved not only by the poetic command given to the Vaiṣṇavites by Vādirāja referred to above, but also by the following which indicate that there was an element of force in the Śaivite-Vaiṣṇavite struggle of Tuḷuva. The fate that befell the Śaivite deities in the Sthānika strongholds mentioned above clearly proves this. Tradition relates that in the course of the struggle centering around the question of the construction of the tank at Uḍipi, the Subrāya stone (*Nāga-kallu*) in the Ananteśvara temple was removed from its place on the south-east of the same temple, and hidden behind a large stone slab to the north-east of the *bhojana-sāla* (dining hall) adjoining the *badagu māḷige* (northern storey). Next the Somalingeśvara image of the temple of the same name at Niṭṭūru was thrown out about twenty yards to the north-east of the same temple, where it still can be seen. A similar fate befell the deities of the Sthānikas elsewhere in Tuḷuva. At Udayāvara the god Mahādeva was removed in order to make room for the god Gaṇapati. The former image may now be seen in the vicinity of the Gaṇapati temple at Udayāvara. The image of Īsvara at Uppūru near Uḍipi was relegated into a heap of ashes in the outer yard (*pauli*) to the north-east of the temple. The Mahāśeṣa image at Oḍabhāṇḍeśvara was thrown into the tank near the temple.<sup>1</sup> It cannot be made out whether the image of Mallikārjuna now found to the north-west of the neighbouring Śankaranārāyaṇa temple was thrown out there at the same time.

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<sup>1</sup> It was discovered some thirty-five years ago while repairing the tank, but being broken, so the report runs, was thrown into the sea.

The traditional evidence, therefore, seems to point out to the use of force by the rivals of the Sthānikas in their attempt to oust the latter from the premier position they had held in the province for centuries as custodians of the Śaivite religion. We are to assume that a similar fate overtook the deities and temples of the Sthānikas and the Śaivites in other parts of southern and western India, where undoubtedly the Vaiṣṇavites were gaining more and more strength, although it must be confessed that direct evidence concerning this aspect of the Śaivite-Vaiṣṇavite struggle outside Tuluva is not forthcoming. While the decline of the Sthānikas in the distant province of Tuluva may be definitely dated to the second half of the sixteenth century A.D., it is not possible at the present stage of our investigations to say when exactly their downfall in other provinces of southern and western India began. We may surmise that it began a century and a half later, since we have ample evidence, as the reader must have gathered from the numerous instances cited in my monograph on the Sthānikas referred to at the beginning of this paper, to show that they continued to wield powerful influence in the land down till the eighteenth century A.D. But they were fighting a losing battle, notwithstanding the fact that the powerful Keladi royal family of Ikkeri, which followed the Vīra Śaiva faith, guided the destinies of a very large part of Karnāṭaka, and the kings of Mysore, who were, as they are now, well-known for their religious toleration and broad-mindedness, ruled from Mysore. Neither the royal House of Ikkeri nor that of Mysore made any conscious endeavour to save the Sthānikas and the Śaivites from annihilation; but at the same time no Hindu royal family deliberately added to the difficulties of the Śaivites and brought about their ruin. The downfall of the Śaivites was to some extent inevitable; and, if it is permissible to say so, it may even be maintained that Nemesis had overtaken them. For just as in the seventh and eighth centuries of the Christian era, the Śaivites and the Sthānikas had violently uprooted the Jainas, dispossessing the latter of the shrines and images, both in the Tamiḷ land and Karnāṭaka,<sup>1</sup> so now in the sixteenth century A.D. and after, the Vaiṣṇavites drove into the background the Śaivites not without a show of violence all over the land. But the fact remains that throughout Indian history, the Sthānikas, as the most influential section of the Śaivites, had remarkably succeeded in maintaining the dignity and power of their office all over southern and western India.

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<sup>1</sup> Read Saletore, *Mediæval Jainism*, pp. 278-279 and *passim*.