

Significance of New Inscriptions from Koppaḷa, Karnataka

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PREAMBLE

- 1.0 Koppaḷa, in the newly formed district bearing its name in the State of Karnataka, is an ancient Jaina centre and in importance next only to Śravaṇabelgoḷa, from the late centuries of B. C. Reputed as 'Ādi-tīrtha' and 'Mahā-tīrtha,' one of the holiest pilgrimage places, it continued to be a centre of eminence for almost 1500 years. Kopaṇa, Kopaṇādri, Kopaṇagiri, Kupaṇācala, and Kopaṇatīrtha are the variant applications that figure in the inscriptions.
- 1.1 "Inscriptions hailing from the Mysore state speak of the usually large number of Jaina temples, which was a characteristic feature of this holy place. Reminiscence of this past phenomenon is still preserved in a local saying which avers that the town contained 772 Jaina temples and was regarded by the Jaina community as sacred as Kāśī-Kṣetra or Banares, the famous holy place of the Hindus." [P. B. Desai : 1957; 203; also cf. B. A. Saletore : 1938 : 190; and C. Krishnamacharlu. 1935 : 14; N. B. Sastry : 1954 :]
- 1.1.1. Out of the hundreds of *Jinālayas* that traditionally existed at Koppaḷa, only the following names, each bearing a cognomen, are reported in the inscriptions : Arasiya-basadi (temple of the queen), Kuśa-Jinālaya, Candranātha-basadi, Jayadhīra-Jinālaya, Timabbarasiya-basadi, Tīrthada-basadi, Daṇṇāyaka-basadi, Nāgadevana-basadi, Neminātha-Jinālaya, Puṣpadanta-Jinālaya, Śāntinātha-basadi, and Sātāladevīya-basadi. ('Basadi' is the Kannaḍa form of the Sanskrit 'vasatī', meaning a Jinālaya. Incidentally, Jayadhīra-Jinālaya was

constructed by the famous general Śāṅkara-gaṇḍa-daṇḍanāyaka in A. D. 960. [Desai, : 1957 : 372; Hampa. Nagarajaiah : 1998 A : 165]).

- 1.1.2. “With its caverns inhabited by *śramaṇas* and the two huge rocky hillocks in close proximity as an abode of peace and penance, Koppaḷa attracted monks and nuns. Particularly, the Nirgrantha friars had always a preference for such secluded places and obviously Koppaḷa became a major Jaina resort, a sacred hillock of excellences. Koppaḷa was completely overrun by Jainism. Besides, on account of its geographical position Kopaṇa seems to have been placed in very congenial circumstances, especially political, that contributed to its rapid growth as a *Mahā-tīrtha*.” [Desai : 1957 : 157]
- 1.2 Because Koppaḷa was a preëminent place and a treasure-house of Jaina art, sculpture, architecture, and literature, it has, through the ages, produced an immense wealth of significant archaeological and art historical material. Hundreds of Jaina shrines, monasteries, feeding houses (*satras*), friaries [*muni-nivāsas*] in this principal town, ranging in date between the seventh and the 16th century, attracted men and women votaries. “We note that in the seventh century A. D. Kopaṇa was essentially a Jaina tīrtha. Epigraphic evidence prove this. In the Halageri inscription of the western Chalukya king Vijayaditya [A. D. 696-733] mention is made of this great Jaina sanctuary.” [Saletore 192]
- 1.3 Though Koppaḷa was reckoned as the foremost and supremely sacred tīrtha, a holy resort of Jaina order, solid and valid proof to establish it as an historical truth was lacking. Koppaḷa has not yet been properly surveyed and examined with extensive and intensive field work, the researches conducted since the days of B. L. Rice are scanty and meagre.

NEW MATERIAL DISCOVERED

- 2.0 In the year 1992, unprecedented clouds burst occurred at several parts of the Karnataka State in general and at Koppaḷa in particular. As a result, a portion of the old-Fort at Koppaḷa collapsed. Surprisingly enough, a hoard of inscriptions on slabs and pillars,

about 70 in number, fell out of the Fort-Wall. Curiously, all of these inscriptions, without a single exception, are Jaina epigraphs, that too *niśidhikās*, some of which throw fresh light on the historical facts of Koppaḷa as a Jaina centre.

- 2.1 Coming to know about this fortunate happening, I visited the site, took estampages of all these newly exposed epigraphs, deciphered and read the content of text, and next edited all the inscriptions and published. (Nagarajaiah, Hampa : 1998-A.). I next studied these inscriptions in the context of the known southern Nirgrantha tradition and other available contemporaneous supporting evidence before arriving at the conclusions.
- 2.2 The epigraphs under discussion abundantly speak for the powerful and pervasive influence wielded by Jainism. The present discovery adds fresh material, augmenting the mass of the already known information and thus must help revise some of the supposedly well-established facts, positions, and postulates. These inscriptions endorse that Koppaḷa was a place of sanctity *par excellence*, informatively reporting about the monks and mendicants, nuns, and lay disciples of various ascetical orders who continually conducted their religious sessions and who ceremoniously ended their life by *sanyāsana* i.e. *sallekhanā*.
 - 2.2.1. These inscribed memorial columns have a special place in the ethos of Jaina culture and tradition, and are an abiding element vital to the religious history of Jainism in southern India, more precisely epitomizing the quintessence of *syādvāda*. Their impressiveness, even in ruins, bear testimony to the past glory of Jainism in Karnataka. With the availability of this new material, Koppaḷa can now be said to possess many more *post-mortem* memorial stones [*niśidhikās*] giving details of the purpose for which they were set up; some of these bear a *caityālaya* motif. They also reveal certain significant socio-historical and cultural issues.

CHRONOLOGICAL SPAN

- 3.0 These new epigraphs belong to different periods, covering a fairly wide range of five centuries, from the ninth to the 13th to be precise. And they beyond doubt prove that Koppaḷa served for ten centuries

as one of the primary centres of disseminating Jaina teaching of *ahimsā*, non-injury.

RELIGION

- 4.0 As already mentioned in para 2. 0., all the new records without exception belong to Jainism, and all of them are *niśidhi* memorials. There are only a few casual references to any particular primordial works of canonical nature, but the apostles and pontiffs of the Jaina church are remembered and a number of friars and preceptors are mentioned. Koppaḷ itself was a big friary-centre for the Jainas and also was a seat of the Yāpanīya sect. The present Koppaḷa hoard also provides reliable and useful information about some of the friars and cohorts of the Yāpanīya ecclesiastical institution. Indeed, much new material is available for reconstructing the hagiography of some Jaina *ācāryas* which praise the virtues of sterner monastic order. Asceticism was held in high esteem, its votaries firmly believed in the cycle of births and rebirths, and the inexorable operation of *karma* in successive births.

POLITICAL HISTORY

- 5.0 Main purport of these new epigraphs is not to deal with the political affairs. Of course, the present collection does afford casual references to some of the royalties and noble men of those centuries in Karnataka, among them the Gaṅgas being the main. Though the kings traditionally were duty bound to support all religions, their active patronage of a particular sect can also be clearly perceived.
- 5.1 Although a pro-Jaina dynasty, the Western Gaṅgas evinced equal respect for other religious sects. Under their protection and patronage, Jainism flourished without let or hindrance. Gaṅgas declared their devotion to Jainism from the beginning, taking as they did the rôle of a saviour. As a consequence, it turned out to be the period of Jaina ascendancy and soon it became one of the few dominant creeds in Karnataka in all walks of life. Thus Gaṅgas gave a signal contribution to the prevalence of Jainism.
- 5.1.1. Historians, while discussing the controversy regarding the authenticity of some of the Gaṅga copper plates, have by and

large accepted that most of them are genuine records. Besides a large number of copper plates charters, there are some stone epigraphs found at different places [Ramesh, K. V. (Ed) : 1984]. Albeit, nowhere, until the present discovery, the number of Gaṅga inscriptions exceed a score and more. A close perusal of the present epigraphical references clearly establish, in fact substantiate and corroborate, the credibility of the Jaina oriented statements in early copper plates; hence, much weight will be attached to the historical information of these charters.

- 5.2 A large number of mendicants and their lay followers constituted a significant force at Koppaḷa. Jainas had an easy access to the machinery of political power. Koppaḷa was echoing the voice of *samavasaraṇa*, assembly of listeners to the Jina's sermon. Banners of *ahiṃsā* were fluttering atop temples and friaries. Integration of lay followers [*upāsakas*] of all ranks into the religious life is very clearly present in the *niśidhi* inscriptions now discovered.

LITERATURE

- 6.1. The tenth and 11th centuries were an epoch-making period, of staunch advocates of *anekāntamata*, in all walks of life including political, social, religious, and cultural sphere. A cursory glance at the present collection of the new charters is enough to substantiate this statement.
- 6.1.1. Besides, the period between the tenth and the 12th century is characterised by intensive literary activity. Most of the major Kannaḍa *campu* epics and other classics embodying the lives of the *śalākāpuruṣas* were composed during this period. It is under the stimulus of Jainism that remarkable advances were registered in art and architecture, sculpture and painting. The religious impulse freely flowed into the numerous branches of knowledge which generated a powerful cultural impact.
- 6.2. Most of these newly discovered inscriptions at Koppaḷa are not lengthy records; on an average, the number of lines in each inscription is around 25. Though the language of most of the epigraphs is Kannaḍa, the regional language of Karnataka, there also are some inscriptions in Sanskrit. These epigraphs look heterogeneous from the point of

view of style; yet there is a common, recognized, standard pattern as far as the subject matter is concerned; the language and the style are cast in an archaic mould which also include a few verses. Some of the inscriptions vouchsafe the poetic genius of those who composed them, who indeed had a sound knowledge of the Jaina tradition and the skills at handling prosody.

- 6.3. Many of these inscriptions contain Jaina invocatory verses, but none of these show any imprecatory phrases, because these are all *niśidhi* memorials.
- 7.0 Medieval Jainism in Karnataka saw stormy centuries. The alien Coḷas and the local Śaivaites demolished Jinālayas and Jaina monasteries, and ransacked their treasures. Therefore, the strong walls of the Nirgrantha fort were hit hard. With all this devastation, Jainism had an innate strength to sustain and did manage to survive and thrive at other centres. What remains today in and around Koppala are the scattered ruins which are like a picture book for recalling the significant events of the past history, of the *syādvāda* consistency in ancient Karnataka.
- 7.1. It is somewhat difficult to determine the exact date of the destruction of Jaina temples and the *niśidhi* columns at Koppala. It is equally difficult to state whether the destruction was the result of a single catastrophe or due to a series of incidents. But it is neither the callousness nor the handiwork of art-robbers that is responsible for the disappearance and physical ruin of the significant irreplaceable art-historical evidence. The only reliable hint for the dilapidation and final annihilation of the Jaina monuments is from the statement made in a Persian inscription [AREP 1963-64. No. 173. 1779 C. E], which states that the main fort at Koppala was constructed in the shape of a battery in the European fashion along with two gateways; one more epigraph, in a chronogram recording the date of construction of a *burj* [bastion] in the year 1785-86 C. E [ibid., No. 174], also endorses it.
- 7.2 These two records help surmise that a complete or final destruction of the then existing Jaina monuments, including the present *post-mortem* memorial stones, took place during the last two decades of

the 18th century. Obviously, the fort-builders started their operations of constructing the bastion with the material pilfered from the Jaina temples. Moreover, the carelessness on the part of the masons involved in the construction was to such an extent that they recklessly cut and damaged these archaeological documents of sterling significance.

CONTENTS

8.0 I shall now take a bird's eye view of the contents of the new epigraphs; the number in the brackets indicate the number of the concerned inscription in the printed text; e. g. K. 1. = Koppala No. 1.

8.1 [K. 1] Nayanandi Bhattāraka of Kundakunda-anvaya, Desiga-gaṇa, had two lay disciples, Cinnakabbe and her son Dilīpa (?), *daṇḍanāyaka* (general), who had a number of titles; *satya-sauca-sampannam*, *kali-kāla-Karṇan*, *āśrita-kalpavṛkṣam*, *patikārya-dakṣam*, *piridittu-marevam*, *naya-mummerevan*, *pati-hitāñjaneyam*, *guṇada-bedaṅgam*, *nīti-parāyaṇam*, *gaḍiyaṅkamallam*, *gaṇḍa-pracaṇḍam*, *kīrtige-nallam*, and *paricchedi-gaṇḍan*. He was a bee at the lotus feet of Jina the Conquerer and an ocean of virtues : and he worshipped the three jewels of Jaina faith. He died in Śaka 953 [1032 C. E.] at Koppala by the religious rite of *Vīra-sanyasana-vidhāna* [ritual death by fasting and while in meditation].

This inscription belongs to the period of the Kalyāṇa Cālukya king Jagadekamalla-Jayasimha [1016-42].

8.1.1. An undated and a fragmentary inscription [K. 61] states that Dorayya was an ardent worshipper of Jinendra, the destroyer of all sins, and a lay disciple of Śrīdhara-deva. Dorayya was also the father of Bonthādevī and father-in-law of Jayasimha-deva, an ornament of the emperors [*cakreśvara-ābharāṇam*]. It is obvious that the Cālukya king Jagadekamalla Jayasimhadeva had married Bonthā-devī; this is the only inscription giving this information not earlier known. Dorayya mentioned elsewhere [MAR. 1915. No. 19. 1050; EC. V. Hassan. 185] is different from this Dorayya.

8.2. [K.2] In the year Śaka 913 [990. C. E.], a nun by name Jakkiyabbe-kanti and another nun [whose name is lost], both disciples of

Nemicandra-Bhaṭāra of Balātkāra-gaṇa, attained *sanyasana-maraṇa*. Revabbe, respected by the three worlds, erected a *niśidhi* stone.

- 8.3. [K.3] Gaṇḍavimukta-ācārya of Baḷagāra (Balātkāra-gaṇa), a profound scholar, gained the abode of *mokṣa-lakṣmī* (emancipation from the cycle of births and deaths) in the year Śaka 899 (977 C. E). His lotus feet had the dust of the crown of *māṇḍalikas*; his character was so transparent that he was praised by the world at large.

This *ācārya* is identical with the Gaṇḍavimukta-deva mentioned in the later inscriptions of Gāvarwād [E1. XV. 23. 1071-72. C. E], Mugud [S11. XI-i. 78. 1045 C. E] and of Bodan [ARIE 1961-62. B-113. 1041 C. E].

- 8.4. [K. 4] Devanandi-Bhaṭāra, a disciple of Vimalacandra-Bhaṭāra of Krāṇūr-gaṇa, attained the world of gods in the year Śaka 926 (1004. C. E); Deyakabbe-kanti, a nun in obeisance to her teacher, erected this *post-mortem* memorial column.

Krāṇūr-gaṇa is one of the prominent cohorts (*gaṇas*) of friars and nuns of the Yāpanīya-saṅgha; Kānūr, Kaṇḍūr, Kādūr are the other variants for that *gaṇa*. [Nagarajaiah : 1997 -B- : 234-48].

- 8.5. [K. 5] This epitaph records the death of three different persons on three different dates :

- a. In the Śaka year 946 (1024 C. E), Revaseṭṭi of Kelleṅgere achieved *ratnatrayas*, holy death, the day synchronising with the auspicious day of the *parinirvāṇa-mahākalyāṇa*, one of the five sacred events in the life of a Tirthaṅkara : *Parinirvāṇa* is the final emancipation of an enlightened being followed immediately by salvation (*mokṣa*).
- b. Madurāntaka-seṭṭi, the son-in-law of Noḷambaseṭṭi, died in meditation in the year 1023 C. E. He was a repository of humility, birth place of pleasantness, a heap of religious merit, an asylum of knowledge, the first in the path of Manu.
- c. Noḷamba-seṭṭi was the son of Revaseṭṭi, a bee at the lotus feet of Nemicandra-Siddhāntadeva. He was courteous, mild, just, liberal, worthy of merits, and of impeccable character. At the time of his

death he went to the *Jinagrha* (Jaina temple), and at the feet of his revered teachers attained the holy death in the year 1039 C. E.

- 8.5.1. It is important to note that Revasetṭi voluntarily went to the *caityagrha* six months prior to his death, practiced the vow of gradual suspension of aliment unto death, listening to the reading of the *Ārāḍhanā* text, and thus carried out the ritual prescription under the supervision of his teachers. With the consecrated act of *sallekhanā*, renunciation of all profane possessions and associations, Revasetṭi was considered a *mahāpuruṣa*, a noble-minded eminent person. He was a disciple of Abhayanandi-panḍitadeva who is identical with Abhayanandi-panḍita mentioned in SB inscriptions [EC. 11 (R) 51 (48), 156 (127) and 173 (140)]. (It is astonishing how a good number of lay-followers also, indeed courageously and comprehendingly undertook the vow of *Sanyasta-dharma* for attaining salvation.)
- 8.6. Abhayanandi-panḍita was one of the foremost Jaina mendicants in the Gaṅgavāḍi 96000 region (K. 9). He was a disciple of Traikālyayogi and a grand disciple of Gollācārya [EC. II (R) 51 (48) IIth cent. C. E. P. 17; *ibid.*, 156 (127). p. 94; *ibid.*, 173 (140) P. 119]. All these pontiffs accomplished the three-jewels by observing the ritual of meditation and fasting unto death at Koppaḷa.
- 9.1. [K. 6 and K. 27] These two inscriptions of Koppaḷa vividly describe Kundaṇarasi *alias* Kundaṇa-somidevi, elder daughter of Būtuga-permāḍi II (938-61 C. E). Koppaḷa inscription No. 6 is undated and fragmentary but on palaeographic grounds it can be assigned to the end of the tenth century. Kundaṇarasi, a *caladaṅkagārti*, by totally renouncing food and drink, patiently awaiting her inevitable end, achieved the three-jewels and entered the world of gods. This is the summary of the four lines traceable in the above *nīśidhi*.
- 9.1.1. Another inscription (K. 27) is dated Śaka year 929 (1007 C. E), but that is the year of the death of Caṅgala-devi *alias* Caṅgambe who was a contemporary of Kundaṇa-somidevi. As recorded in the epitaph, both of them died by undertaking *sallekhanā* rite and were renowned personages during the second half of tenth century. Maladhārideva was the teacher, Rāya was the master, Mācaṇa was the son, the best religion of the Lord Jina the Victor was the religion

consciously chosen by Cangam̐be. She was regularly distributing charities at will. Her name indeed was justified, her birth was accomplished. Considering that there are no takers in the heaven, she had the refined taste of charitable disposition. By folding both the lotus-like hands, she went to the higher world. With the passing away of the virtuous women like Kundana-somidevi and Caṅgaladevi, who were even famous with the aerial nymphs dwelling in the sky, the very words of charity and righteousness also disappeared from the face of earth.

9.1.2. Kundasāmi (Kundaṇa-somi, Kundaṇarasi) a charming lady of beauty and benevolence, daughter of Būtuga II (*EI. XXXVI. PP. 97-110; MAR 1921 PP. 8-16; EC. VIII (BLR) Nagara 35*), younger sister of Maruḷadeva II [*MAR 1921, Kūḍlūr plates; EI. XXVII*], elder sister of Mārasimhadeva II [*EC. IV (R), 138. 965. CE III. XI. 42/43 970. CE*] and wife of Rājāditya is introduced at length in the Kukknūr copper plates [*AREP 1969-70. Nos. 4-5, 968-69 C. E; IWG; 1984 : No. 159, p. 504*]. A beautiful bronze image of Māṇikya-Jina with an inscription on its back, of about 970 C. E, gifted by her to some temple, was discovered in a coffee estate of Crawford saheba, is preserved in the Jaina Maṭha-temple at ŚB [*EC. IX (R) Sakalespur 31 (V Manjrābād 67) 10C. C. E. Bāllu (Hassan Dt/Sakalespur Tk) P. 519*]. It is one of the rare and early (Jaina) metal images in Karnataka. With the discovery of these two new inscriptions, now a fuller biographical sketch of Kundana-somidevi, from cradle to grave, is available.

9.2. [K. 12] Bāsa-bhūpati, the son of Caladaṅka-Gaṅga-mahipa (Būtuga II), had the impeccable fame equal to that of Kupaṇācala (Koppaḷa). His wife was Kāvaṇabbarasi. Their daughter Rambaladevi *alias* Rambhā a gem of a woman, a beautiful nymph, had the charm of a plaintain tree. Rambhā was a goddess of learning and her benevolence knew no bounds.

There is a pun in the use of this name Rambhā, which was also the name of an *apsaras*, consort of Nalakūbera, and she was considered the most beautiful celestial lady in the paradise of Indra.

- 9.2.1. Rambaladevi's husband, Bīrala-deva, a prince of the illustrious Cālukya-varṁśa, a head-jewel of kings and a submarine (fire) in the sea of enemies. Rambaladevi was the disciple of the preceptor Śrī Candra-Bhaṭṭāraka. She observed the vow of fasting unto death; while meditating the holy feet of the spiritual victor (Jina); like the fragrance of the flower, she departed from this mundane world only to be born as the best of celestial beings.
- 9.2.2. This inscription of poetic excellence is of historical importance. The name of Bāsa, as a son of Būtuga (II) is not mentioned in any inscription except this one. Of course, one of the inscriptions mentions the name of Vāsava as the last son of Būtuga II [EC. VII (BLR) Nagara 35. 1077 C. E.]. This Vāsava's wife's name is mentioned as Kañcaladevi; Vāsava and Kañcaladevi had two sons, Rakkasagaṅga (=Govindaradeva) and Arumuḷideva. It is quite possible that Bāsa and Vāsava are one and the same person; but, whether Kañcaladevi and Kāvanabbarasi stand for one and the same lady or not, is still a problem which requires more corroborative evidence to decide. [Nagarajaiah, 1997-A : 107-10]
- 9.3. [K. 39] The accomplished Pallava-rāma-mahīpāla was a scion of royal stock. His three consorts—Pariyabbarasi, Asagabbarasi, and Revakayye—embellished with the three jewels of right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct, were gems of amiable disposition among the virtuous women folk.
- 9.3.1. These three queens of the king's seraglio constructed Jaina temples, arranged festivals to worship Jina, consecrated and anointed the images of Jina, and in the same vein showed devotion to Jaina ascetics. All the three spouses joined the ascetic order at Koppaḷa, renouncing the *mahiṣī-pada*, the first properly consecrated queenship of a *maṇḍalesvara-duke*, and preferred the *mahendra-pada*.
- 9.3.2. Revakayye listened to the three ritualized confession, sitting on the thighs, one leg being on the other, a heroic posture practiced by ascetics of higher hierarchy, breathed her last. Even the gods celebrated Revakayye's holy death by singing and dancing, repeatedly uttering 'Jayajaya-nanda-varḍha' (victorious-auspicious). Drums and other rare instruments of heaven made the sacred sound to

the rhythm of the mellifluous music of Tumburu the Gandharva and Nārada the Devarṣi, to the tune of which the *apsarases* danced and thus, the paradise above rejoiced the festival of the arrival of Revakayye-āryikā from the earth below.

- 9.3.3. Pariyabbarasi, also accepting the difficult vows of the willing submission to the inevitable death, engrossed in deep meditation, walked into the company of deities in the year Śaka 911 (989 C. E.)
- 9.4. [K. 40] The renowned Padmabbarasi, consort of Gaṅga-Gāṅgeya-Permādi-Būtuga II, an ideal lay votary of Jaina order, reached Koppaḷa (Koppaḷa), and amidst the all around applause and admiration, embraced the rite of *sallekhanā*. Her teacher Maladhārideva administered the ritual, and Padmabbarasi, while in meditation, passed away in the year Śaka 894 (973 C. E). Padmabbarasi had also built a Jaina temple at Naregaḷ and endowed it with several gifts [SI. XI-i. 38. C. E. 950 Naregaḷ, PP. 23-24]
- 9.7. [K. 44] Revakanimmaḍi, consort of Būtuga II (939-61 C. E), had patronised and popularised Jainism on such a generous scale that it was she whose good deeds were considered on par with those of Būtuga, Śāṅkaragaṇḍa, Mārasimhadeva, Maruḷadeva, Cāmuṇḍarāya, Rājamalla, and *guṇadaṅkakārti* Attimabbe. Revakanimmaḍi, in the prescribed manner of *sanyasana-vidhāna*, died at Koppaḷa in the Śaka year 953 (1030 C. E)
- 9.5.1. [K. 44] Revakanimmaḍi was one of the four consorts of Būtuga II, the other three being Padmabbarasi and Kallabbā [EI. XV. 23. 1071-72. PP. 337-48; SI. XX. 35. 1055; EI. XXXVI. PP. 97-110; IWG : 1984 : No. 139. 962 C. E and *ibid.*, No. 138; EI. VI. P. 71; EI. IV. P. 352; Fleet, DKD p. 304; EC. VIII (1902) Nagara 35. 1077]. And Dīvalāmbā who commissioned a Jinālaya at Sūḍi (Sūṇḍi) and her spouse Būtuga made a donation of land in C. E. 938 [IA. Vol. III. p. 184. C. 960 C. E.] Koppaḷa inscription no. 40 has recorded the death of Padmabbarasi (*vide* paras no. 9, 4). Būtuga II, too, may have passed away at Koppaḷa by persuing the path of *sallekhanā*.
- 9.5.1.1. Regarding the identity of Revakanimmaḍi [K. 44] there is a problem which needs clarification. In the text of the inscription, this

Revakanimmaḍi is compared to a well-known lady of the same name (i. e. the wife of Būtuga); besides, the date of the death of this Revakanimmaḍi is 1030 C. E. It is impossible for the Revakanimmaḍi, wife of Būtuga, to live up to that period. Hence, Revakanimmaḍi of K. 44 may be a namesake and hence a different lady.

9.5.1.2. There are three Revakas mentioned in the present collection : Revakayya-Revakayye (K. 39), Revakabbe (K. 45) and Revakanimmaḍi; all these three are separate persons and also died on different dates.

9.6. [K. 47] Gaṅga-māṇḍalika Rājamalladeva, a bee at the lotus-feet of Arhat-Parameśvara, was a chief disciple of Ajitasena-muni. He had crushed his enemies with his valour, washed off Maṇḍaleśvaras with his matchless bravery, annexed the kingdom of his opponents. Even Hari and Hara of the eternal-trinity, happily joined Rājamalladeva and such was his prowess, an elephant in rut.

9.6.1. Kañcabbarasi, wife of Rājamalladeva, an ornament to the glorious royal family, upheld her magnificence and lost all terrestrial interest after the death of her husband. She approached the stainless Ajitasena-muniśvara, listened to his sermon on the good consequences of the virtuous life, voluntarily took to austerities, achieved the most coveted three jewels, and walked into the eternal world in the year Śaka 945 (1023 C. E.)

9.7. [K. 53] Gonambe, daughter of Ereṅga of the Gaṅga dynasty, wife of the valiant Ajavarmā, and mother of Kṣatriya-Rāma, relinquished the profane life and took to the hard life of a nun. After practising severe austerities, she died in the year Śaka 914 (992 C. E.) at Koppaḷa.

9.7.1. Ereṅga is mentioned in other inscriptions [IWG : 1984 : No. 120 : PP. 337-78; MAR. 1921. PP. 8-16. 962 C. E.; EC. IV (R) Chāmarājanagara 354. 962-63 C. E.]. Ajavarmā is identical with the Ajavarmā of Kūḍlūr inscription [MAR 1921. PP. 8-16. 962 C. E.]. Ereṅga is the son of Būtugendra and Candrobalabba.

9.8. [K. 60] Bijjāmbikā (Bijjāmbarsi), daughter of Būtuga Permādi II and Padmāvati (Padmabbe), elder sister of Mārasimha II, wife of Hariga-Mallapa and a lady disciple of pontiff Śrīdhara-deva, earned

the appreciation of scholars and poets. After freely distributing her entire property, said adieu to every day worldly life. She took the vow of *sallekhanā*, achieved the three jewels, and met her end in the manner prescribed in the *Ārāḍhanā* text at Koppaḷa in the year Śaka 931 (1009 C. E).

- 9.8.1. [K. 60] This is the first and the only inscriptional reference to Bijjāmbikā as the daughter of Būtuga and Padmāvati (Padmabbe). Padmāvati is elsewhere mentioned as Padmabbarasi [SIH. XI-i. 38. 950 C. E]. So far, it was known that Būtuga had only one daughter (Kuṇḍaṇa-sāmidevi), who was elder to all his children except Maruḷadeva, who was the eldest among all his six children. But the present inscription has supplied an extra information that Būtuga had one more daughter (Bijjāmbā).
- 9.8.2. Both mother Padmāvati (Padmabbarasi, K. 40) and daughter Bijjāmbikā (K. 60) had died at Koppaḷa by the rite of *sallekhanā*. Sisters Kuṇḍaṇasāmidevi and Bijjāmbikā, and the co-wives Padmāvati and Revakanimmaḍi, similarly have met with the coveted end at Koppaḷa. (The royal ladies, as is surprisingly clear, were equally firm-willed in ritually meeting the death as prescribed by the sacred text.)
- 9.9. Paragraphs from 9.1 to 9.8.2 provide reliable historical information casting fresh light on the history of the Gaṅga family, facilitating an authentic reconstruction of the family tree of Būtuga. There were a good number of luminaries in the royal house of the Gaṅgas who heralded the glory of Jainism. Būtuga bequeathed a rich legacy for his successors to emulate and keep the lamp of *syādvāda* burning bright.
- 9.9.1. Būtuga himself was well-versed in Nirgrantha religion. His consorts and his daughters were the benefactors of the Nirgrantha Church [IWG : 1984 : No. 138 : 962 C. E. PP. 411-28]. Būtuga's sons, Maruḷadeve II *alias* Puṇuseya-gaṅga [EC. VIII (1902) Nagara 35. 1077, Hombuja (Shimoga dt); El. XXXVI. No. 13. 963. C. E.; MAR 1921. PP 8-16, 962-63 C. E], Mārasimha II [SIH. XI. 42. 970. Savadi. P. 28.; EC. IV (R) Ch. 138. 965; *ibid.*, No. 79. 971-72; EC. II (R)=64=(59). 975. PP. 20-22 etc], Rājamalla [EC. VIII (BLR). Nr. 35.

1077], Nītimārga-Goyīndara [*ibid*], Vāsava [*ibid*] *alias* Bāsa [K. 12.]—all the five vigorously followed Jainism. [Nagarajaiah : *Sāntararu-ondu Adhyayana* : 1997-A]. Rambaladevi, grand daughter of Būtuga, Rakkasa-gaṅga-Goyindaradeva II, and Arumuḷideva—grandsons of Būtuga—were ardent protagonists of Jainism. Caṭṭaladevi, a great-grand-daughter of Būtuga and wife of Kāḍuvetti, built Jinālayas, patronised and encouraged the clergy of Jaina faith [*ibid*].

- 9.9.2. To put it in a nut-shell, these new inscriptions unambiguously prove that the Gaṅgas were devout Jainas. It was because of the sustained support of the stalwarts of the Gaṅga dynasty that Jainism could flourish and attained unparalleled magnitude in Karnataka. On the luminous spectrum of the Gaṅga royalties, prince Būtuga shines like a pole star.
- 10.1. While elucidating the socio-cultural prominence of the present anthology, some of the achievements and active participation of women of all ranks, from the lay votaries to the queens, in the religious activities deserve prominent place. On par with men, Jaina ladies made liberal grants to temples, took part in religious ceremonies, followed the path of renunciation, and embraced the hard discipline of recluses. Women of the Gaṅga family always were in the forefront in perpetuating the light of the Jaina church.
- 10.1.1. Like monks, the nuns, too, used to change their personal names on the sacred occasion of their initiation to the nunhood; however, the change of nomen was not obligatory. Women were never restricted from entering nunhood in Jainism. Ladies of the Gaṅga household, by and large took the vow of *sanyāsana*. Some of them had renounced the worldly interests in their early age to practice yoga, meditation, and the methodical study of scriptures. This fact is lucidly illustrated in the corpus of Koppal inscriptions.
- 11.1. An added interesting point of the recently discovered epigraphs is that most of them contain graphic portraits of some illustrious preceptors who were held in high reverence by their contemporary ruling class, particularly the Gaṅgas, the Rāṣṭrakūtas, and the Kalyāṇa Cālukyās.

- 11.2. These friars were master exponents of Nirgrantha philosophy. Through their austerity, simplicity, and transparent character they commanded instant respect. They inspired their devotees by thought, word, and deed. Most of the monks mentioned in these memorial columns were the preceptors of the Gaṅga rulers.
- 11.3. Among the holymen mentioned, the following were outstanding pontiffs of those times : Abhayanandi paṇḍita, Ajitasena muni, Gaṇḍa-vimuktadeva, Gollācārya, Maladhāri-deva, Mauni-bhaṭṭāraka, Meghacandra, Nayanandideva, and Nemicandra-Siddhāntadeva; also Padmanandi-Siddhāntadeva, Śrīdharadeva, Indranandideva, Siddhasena-Bhaṭṭāra, Trikāla-yogi, and Tribhuvanacandra Bhaṭṭāra. More, indeed considerable information à propos of the spiritual pedigree of these ācāryas, is available from other inscriptions, particularly from Śravaṇabelagoḷa.
- 11.3.1. Some of these friars are either confrères or contemporaries or belong to the successive generation as teacher and disciples. Among them only a few were the pontiffs of Koppala diocese.

SALLEKHANĀ OF SOMADEVA-SŪRI

- 11.4. Till today the exact date and place of the death of Somadeva sūri of the *Yaśastilaka* fame and of Gauḍa Saṃgha (eastern India) was not known. But Koppala inscription No. 34 has supplied this information; following is the summary of that incomplete inscription :

‘Vādībha-Pañcānana’ was a teacher to poets and to the emperor. A terror to the disputants was Mahendradeva, a disciple of Nemideva, whose disciple was the famous Somadeva-sūri. Victory to Somadeva who with his prudence became the emperor of logicians. Even Kṛṣṇarāja (Rāṣṭrakūṭa Kṛṣṇa III) had praised Somadeva (-sūri) who was also the preceptor of Nolambāntaka (Mārasīmha-deva II, son of Būtuga II).

- 11.4.1. Somadeva was conversant with poetry, dramaturgy, *nāṭya-sāstra*, and grammar. He was a king among poets; never before and never after, a talented person so deserving as Somadeva existed. Tārka-cakravarti Somadeva-paṇḍitadeva passed away at Koppala in the year 984 C. E.

- 11.4.2. Somadeva sūri and his classic *Yaśastilaka* are famous [vide Krishnakant Handiqui's *Yaśastilaka and Indian culture* (1949)]. Somadeva earlier was patronised by Arikesari, vassal of the Rāṣṭrakūtas. Somadeva sūri completed his work at Gaṅgādharam [Andhra-Pradesh] in the year 959 C. E. The aforementioned Arikesari, who was a Vemaḷavāda-Calukya prince, after washing the feet of Somadeva sūri, made a gift of a village in the year 966 C. E., to the Śubhadhāma-Jinālaya built by his father. Earlier, Somadeva sūri had composed another work, the *Nītivākyāmṛta* when he was at the court of the Pratīhāra potentate Mahendrapāla II. The date of composition of this work is sometime before 949 C. E.
- 11.4.3. Samadevasūri was a contemporary of another great Jaina poet, Pampa (940 C. E.), who had composed two Epics—the *Ādipurāna* and the *Vikramārjuna-vijaya-campu-kāvaya*—both in Kannada. Pampa, too, was a court poet of the above-noted Calukya Arikesari.
- 11.4.3.1. Pampa's younger brother Jinavallabha constructed Tribhuvanatilaka-Jinālaya in the year 950 C. E.; He had also composed the text of an inscription containing Sanskrit, Kannada, and Telugu verses which is engraved on the Rṣabhagiri hill at the outskirts of the village Kurkyāl, very near Gaṅgādharam of Somadeva sūri [I. A. P. Karimnagar dt No. 3. C. 950 C. E]. On the same Rṣabhādri is carved in bas relief a huge figure of the Cakreśvarī and the images of six Jinas, three on the right and three on the left side of the yakṣī, each being six feet tall. This shows that the area in and around Gaṅgādharam associated with Somadeva sūri was a Jaina centre. In spite of it, the great *ācārya* had selected Koppala for his final destiny, implying thereby that Koppala was considered a more important site among the sacred places for attaining the *Samādhi-marana*, indeed a site on par with Śravaṇabelagoḷa.

NIRGRANTHA VESTIGES AROUND KOPPALA

12. A cursory glance at the surrounding Jaina places of pilgrimage will justify in assuming the existence of a strong nucleus at Koppala. Within the radius of about 100 kms with Koppala as a central point, exist a good number of other ancient and major centres, clearly showing that Jainism had a firm foothold in the region. Towards

north-west are Aihole, Paṭṭadakal, Bādāmi, Aṇṇigere, Ādūr, Lakṣmeśvara (Puligere), Hungund (Ponnugunda), Gadag, Ron etc; towards north-east are Liṅgasūr, Māsiki (Piriya-Mosaṅgi) etc. These were the nerve centres of the 'ism' of non-absolutism (*anekānta*). A bronze image from Liṅgasūr (No. 16) has been dated to the sixth century C. E. [U. P. Shah, "Jaina Bronzes—a brief survey," in *Aspects of Jaina Art and Architecture*, Eds., U. P. Shah and M.A. Dhaky, Ahmedabad 1975, pp. 269-98]. Apart from an active movement of Jaina missionaries, many champions of Jainism were holding sway over these parts for several centuries, and Jainism thus continually had received a powerful stimulus. An extensive and systematic survey of the scattered Jaina vestiges in and around these sites is still a desideratum. Because of the lack of such a consistent and methodical study of the available epigraphical, literary, and archaeological data, much remains to be known about the nature of the growth and spread of the Nirgrantha religion. This paper is an attempt in this direction to show that this hoard of *nīśidhikās* offer indubitable proof of the resurgence and supremacy of Nirgrantha cult at Koppaḷa.

Abbreviations

<i>AREP</i>	:	<i>Annual Report on Epigraphy</i>
<i>ARIE</i>	:	<i>Annual Reports on Indian Epigraphy</i>
<i>BLR</i>	:	Benjamin Lewis Rice Edition
<i>Ch</i>	:	Chāmarājanagara
<i>CKI</i>	:	<i>Corpus of Kadamba Inscriptions, 1985</i>
<i>DKD</i>	:	<i>Dynasties of Kanarese Districts</i>
<i>EC</i>	:	<i>Epigraphia Carnatika</i>
<i>El</i>	:	<i>Epigraphia Indica</i>
<i>IAP</i>	:	<i>Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh</i>
<i>IWG</i>	:	<i>Inscriptions of Western Gaᅅgas, 1984</i>
<i>K</i>	:	Koppaḷa
<i>MAR</i>	:	<i>Mysore Archaeological Report</i>
<i>Nr</i>	:	Nagara (Hosanagara)
<i>SB</i>	:	Śravaᅇabelagola
<i>SII</i>	:	<i>South Indian Inscriptions</i>

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