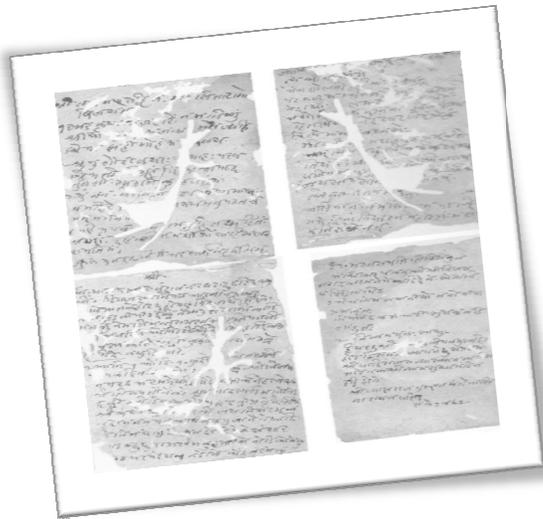


In Search of Sri Jayatirtha's Brindavana Book 2

A Critical Analysis of Sri Nārāyana Tirtha Manuscript and Jayasthambha at Mulbagal



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MadhvaHistory.com

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Prologue

The issue of Sri Jayatirtha's Brindavana location is as important as the study of his Nyaya Sudha. Theologically, Mādhvas are the staunch followers of 'saguNopAsana' and revere all types of physical insignia or monuments that are associated with the Gods and enlightened souls. In 'saguNOpAsana' as the physical world can't be disassociated with philosophy, the search for the original location of Sri Jayatirtha's Brindavana shall become part and parcel of Sādhana. And hence the present on-going researches can't be termed as 'waste of time' or 'frivolous, petty job' as described by some disgruntled voices. In order to save ourselves from 'mithyOpAsana' such researches shall become imperative and important from time to time.

By keeping this need of the hour in view, an eBook titled **"In Search of Sri Jayatirtha's Brindavana"** was published in MadhvaHistory.com on 16/08/2015. As a number of topics need to be discussed threadbare and the explanations of which can't be comprehended in a single-take, the whole context has been divided in to individual topics which have been further arranged into meaningful chapters and thereafter being published as eBooks. The present eBook is second in the series that discusses a particular context of the on-going "In Search of Sri Jayatirtha's Brindavana."

The Malkhed camp has a huge database of evidences that are of post-Vādiraja period and majority of their evidences have started coming from late 17th century AD onwards. On the other hand, Anegundi camp has heavily relied upon the stone carvings on the 14th century Brindavana-in-question and 16th century Tirtha Prabhandha shlokas (17th & 18th of Purva Prabandha) of Sri Vādiraja. The lack of evidences drawn from 14th to 16th centuries has caused considerable hindrance for Malkhed camp.

As if to alleviate this shortcoming, Malkhed camp has come up with two paper manuscripts of Sri Nārayana Tirtha (NT) of Kudli Arya Akshobhya Matha as early as 1980 and 1982. They have projected these manuscripts as contemporaneous 'evidence' that belong to the period of Sri Vādiraja. Sri Vyasanakere Prabhanjanacharya has published the scanned copies of these manuscripts in his 2014 published "Sri Jayatirthara Mulabrindavana sthala Malkheda" (SJMBM).

As Sri NT and his handwritten manuscripts are not that famous and familiar as that of Sri Vādiraja and Tirtha Prabhandā, the authenticity of Sri NT's manuscripts can tilt the scale and can alter the course of on-going discussions.

From this perspective, in the previous eBook, some of the contents of NT's second paper manuscript and its inconsistencies have been presented through a critical analysis. Also, the usage of paper by South Indian Brahmans, particularly by Mādhyas and other allied subjects have been discussed in detail. Also, the then manufacturing methodologies of the paper and the associated taboos have also been discussed in detail.

In this eBook, an exclusive study of the first paper manuscript of Sri NT has been taken up to gain proper insight of its contents.

I felt that a dedicated eBook is highly essential for the readers to understand the criticality of the document-in-question i.e. Sri Nārayana T's first paper manuscript, its contents and the conflicts that it creates for a genuine enthusiast. It becomes fundamental to understand the veracity of this manuscript as it is not neutral in nature but explicitly supports Malkhed argument. Therefore an impartial scrutiny of these documents is required to remove wishy-washy usage of them.

This topic has been discussed through an independent exploration with the support of authentic sources. Many of the evidences furnished hitherto are of third-party in nature to the Mādhyas and thereby I have tried to eliminate the element of 'bias.'

Some of the contents of this eBook have already been published in the form of individual articles in MadhvaHistory.com and hence the regular readers of MadhvaHistory.com may take a note of the same.

I appeal to the seekers of truth to deploy their own reasoning and logic to come to a rational conclusion on the location of Sri Jayatirtha's brindavana in light of the contents provided herein.

C. Raghothama Rao

Introduction

“The very ink with which history is written is merely fluid prejudice.” – Mark Twain

I don't know what made Mark Twain to say so but it successfully describes the topic that I am presenting in this eBook.

Sri Vyasanakere Prabhanjanacharya (VP) in his book “Sri Jayatirthara Mulabrindavana sthala – Malkheda” (SJMBM) thus writes in Page 211 (*request readers to read the whole content given hereunder including footnotes*)

೨.೨. 'ಮೂಲರಾಮಸ್ತು ಮನ್ಮಥೇ' ಕೃತಿಯಲ್ಲಿನ ತಪ್ಪು ಉಲ್ಲೇಖ

ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ನಂಬನಗೂಡಿನ ಶ್ರೀರಾಘವೇಂದ್ರ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ಪರಿಷತ್ತು ಪ್ರಕಾಶನಪಡಿಸಿರುವ 'ಮೂಲರಾಮಸ್ತು ಮನ್ಮಥೇ' ಎಂಬ ಪುಸ್ತಕದ ಪ್ರಸ್ತಾವ ಬಂದಿದೆ (ಪು. ೨೧೧). ಮೂಲರಾಮ ಮೊದಲಾದ ಮನಮಠಗಳ ವಿವಾದಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಗುವ ವಿಚಾರಗಳ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ನನ್ನದು ಯಾವಾಗಲೂ ತಟಸ್ಥ ಧೋರಣೆ. ಸೂಕ್ತ ವಿಚಾರಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಮಠಕ್ಕೂ ನೋವಾಗದಂತೆ ನಡೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದನ್ನು ನಾನು ನನ್ನ ಲೇಖನ, ಪ್ರವಚನ ಮೊದಲಾದವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವ್ರತದಂತೆ ಪಾಲಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಬಂದಿದ್ದೇನೆ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಎಲ್ಲರೂ ಬಲ್ಲರು.

ಆದರೆ, ಆ ಪುಸ್ತಕದ ಮುನ್ನುಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ದೊಡ್ಡ ದೋಷ ಇರುವುದನ್ನು ಮಾತ್ರ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಉಲ್ಲೇಖಿಸಲೇಬೇಕಿದೆ :

“ಶ್ರೀಅಕ್ಷೋಭ್ಯತೀರ್ಥರು ವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯರನ್ನು ಸೋಲಿಸಿದರು ಎಂಬ ವಿಷಯವನ್ನು ಕಳೆದ ನೂರಾರು ವರ್ಷಗಳ ಹಿಂದೆ ಉತ್ತರಾದಿಮಠೀಯರು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸಿದ ಸುಳ್ಳು ಕಥೆಯು ಕೃತಿಮತೆಯನ್ನು ಪರಿವರಿಸುವುದು ಈಗ ನುಂಗಲಾರದ ತುತ್ತಾಗಿದೆ” (ಮೂಲರಾಮಸ್ತು ಮನ್ಮಥೇ - ಪ್ರಕಾಶನ ಪು. ೭, ದ್ವಿತೀಯಾವೃತ್ತಿ ೨೦೧೦).

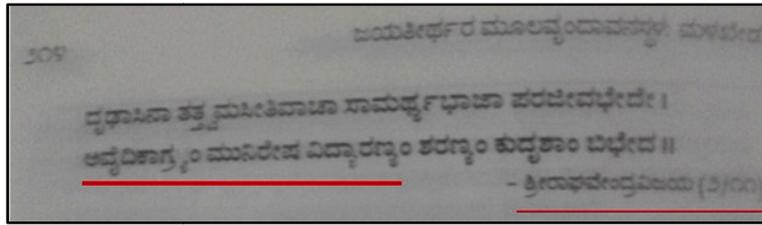
- ಎಂದು ಬರೆದಿರುವುದು ಮಾತ್ರ ಸರಿಯಲ್ಲ; ಅದು ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟವಾಗಿ ಶ್ರೀರಾಘವೇಂದ್ರ-ವಿಜಯದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಬಂದಿರುವ ಉಲ್ಲೇಖ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಆ ಕೃತಿಯ ಸಂಪಾದಕ -

೧ ನನ್ನ ಹಸ್ತಪ್ರತಿ ಸಂಗ್ರಹವು ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ ಅನೇಕ ಹಸ್ತಪ್ರತಿ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಫುಟ್ಟಗಳ ಮೇಲಿನ ಮಠತ್ರಯಗಳ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಚಿತ್ರವಿಚಿತ್ರವನ್ನಿಸುವ ಕೆಲವು ದಾಖಲೆಗಳು ಕಂಡುಬರುವವು; ಅವುಗಳ ಯಾಥಾರ್ಥ್ಯವೇನಿದ್ದರೂ ಅವುಗಳ ಪ್ರಕಾಶನವು ಪುಠುಗಳ ಸಾಮರಸ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಮಾರಕ ಎಂಬ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿಂದ ಅವುಗಳನ್ನು ಬೆಳಕಿಗೆ ತರುವ ಕಾರ್ಯವನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿಲ್ಲ.

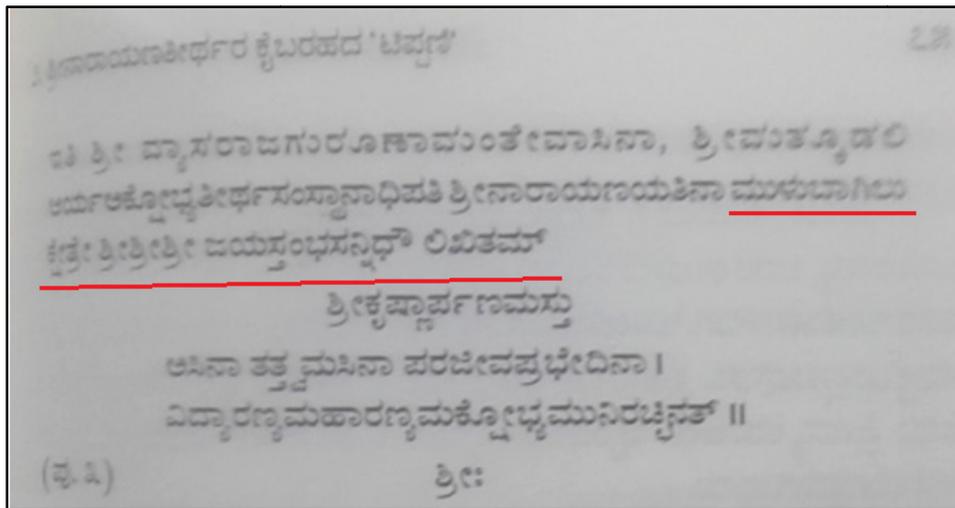
೨ 'ಶ್ರೀಜಯತೀರ್ಥರ ಮೂಲವೃಂದಾವನಸ್ಥಳ ಗಜಗಪ್ಪರ' ಎಂಬ ಈ ಕೃತಿಯ ಸಂಪಾದಕರಲ್ಲಿ ಒಬ್ಬನಾದ ಶ್ರೀ ಜಿ. ವಿ. ನವಲಗುಂದ ಅವರು ಅಕ್ಷೋಭ್ಯವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯರ ವಾದದ ಐತಿಹಾಸಿಕತೆಯನ್ನು ಅಲ್ಲಗಳೆಯುವ ಗುಂಪಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿದವರು; “ಶ್ರೀವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯ ವಿಷಯಕೆ ಅಕ್ಷೇಪ ನಿರಾಸೆ”- ಶ್ರೀ ಜಿ. ಆರ್. ಪಾಟೀಲ್, ಪ್ರ: ಬೃಹವಿದ್ಯಾಪ್ರಕಾಶನ, ಶ್ರೀಮಜ್ಜಗದ್ಗುರುಶಂಕರಾಚಾರ್ಯಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಪಾಠಶಾಲೆ, ಧಾರವಾಡ (೨೦೦೬) ಎಂಬ ಪುಸ್ತಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಉಲ್ಲೇಖಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟಿರುವ ಶ್ರೀ ಜಿ. ವಿ. ನವಲಗುಂದ ಅವರ ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ಮಾತುಗಳು ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಗಮಕ:

“ಈ ವಾದ ಅಕ್ಷೋಭ್ಯವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯರ ಮಧ್ಯೆ ನಡೆದಿರಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವೇ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಅದನ್ನು ನೀವು ಸರಿಯಾಗಿ ಊಹಿಸಿ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಉಪಸ್ಥಾನಗಳಾದ ಅನೇಕ ಪ್ರಮಾಣ ಹಾಗೂ ಯುಕ್ತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಕೊಟ್ಟಿದ್ದೀರಿ. ಅವೆಲ್ಲಾ ಖಂಡಿತವಾಗಿಯೂ ಸ್ವಾಗತಾರ್ಹವಾಗಿವೆ. ಅಲ್ಲದೇ ಶ್ರೀರಾಘವೇಂದ್ರವಿಜಯದ ಕರ್ತೃಗಳಾದ ಶ್ರೀನಾರಾಯಣಾಚಾರ್ಯರು “ಅವೈದಿಕಾರ್ಥ್ಯ ಮುನಿರೇಷ ವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯಂ” ಎಂದು ಬರೆದದ್ದು ಶ್ರೀಮಾಧವವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯರನ್ನು ಕುರಿತು ಖಂಡಿತವಾಗಿಯೂ ಅಲ್ಲ. ಆ ಶ್ಲೋಕವೇ ಹೇಳುವಂತೆ ಅದು ಯಾರೋ ಅವೈದಿಕರನ್ನು ಕುರಿತದ್ದು. ಸಮಗ್ರ ವೇದಭಾಷ್ಯ ಬರೆದ ವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯಮಹಾಸ್ವಾಮಿಗಳು ಅವೈದಿಕರು ಹೇಗಾದರು? ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಈ ವಾದ ನಡೆದದ್ದು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಿಂಹಾಸನಸ್ವಾಮೀಶಾಚಾರ್ಯ ಮಾಧವವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯ ಹಾಗೂ ಅಕ್ಷೋಭ್ಯರ ಮಧ್ಯೆ ಅಲ್ಲ ಎಂಬುದು ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟವಿದೆ” (ಪು. ೨೫)

VP says that the author of “Mula Rāmasthu Manmathe” book has termed the much famed disputation between Sri Akshobhya Tirtha of Dvaita school and Sri Vidyāranya of Advaita school as a mythical story created by a particular Matha. In addition to this, in 2nd footnote, VP quotes a statement made by Sri G.V. Navalagunda (GVN), one of the two editors of the book “Sri Jayatirthara Mulabrindavana – Gajagahvara” (SJMBG), that he called the alleged Akshobhya-Vidyāranya debate as a hoax. VP substantiates his criticism of these statements by giving a reference of a shloka from Sri Rāghavendra Vijaya. He says that the Akshobhya – Vidyāranya debate and the defeat of the latter have been mentioned by Sri Nārayanachārya, the biographer of Sri Rāghavendra Tirtha in that shloka of ‘Sri Rāghavendra Vijaya.’



Curiously, one of the purported handwritten manuscripts of Sri Nārayana Tirtha (NT) of Kudli Akshobhya Matha mentions the Victory Pillar that was said to be erected in memory of Akshobhya’s victory against Vidyāranya. Also, at the end of the said ‘TippaNi’ there is a reproduction of the shloka purportedly written by Sri Vedānta Deshika as his judgment on Akshobhya-Vidyāranya debate. Hereunder is an excerpt of the page from VP’s book SJMB-M:



According to VP, NT’s paper manuscript not only confirms the presence of Jayatirtha’s Brindavana at Malkhed but also validates the Jayasthambha and the legend associated with it.

Now this is quite paradoxical for a layman such as me to see the conflict of this sort where not only Jayatirtha's Brindavana but his Ashrama Guru's achievement too becoming controversial.

Initially, I was a bit perplexed to witness the love of VP towards Akshobhya's Jayasthambha and the detestation of the same by GVN. But after another round of contemplation, I have understood that there is an invariable connection between Jayatirtha's Brindavana and the Jayasthambha of Akshobhya.

This challenge of knowing the facts behind that love of VP and odium of GVN has led me to get involved in a daunting task of history hunt. As result of this effort, I have written three articles in MadhvaHistory.com under the section of "[Saints & Life History Accounts.](#)" Now, by writing this eBook I have renewed my efforts to elaborate the discussion with some new found evidences and references which the reader shall be reading in the ensuing chapters.

Gist of Previous Efforts

In the previous eBook, the authenticity of the paper manuscripts of NT has been critically reviewed from historical and scientific perspectives and certain validation methods of their antiquity have been suggested.

Whether VP wishes to subject his manuscripts for scientific scrutiny or not, a critical appraisal of its contents can replace the scarcity of not submitting them for such modern technical assessments.

In the previous eBook some of the contents of said paper manuscripts have been examined for their relevance and consistency but found out that there are many discrepancies that are not easy to justify.

In this eBook, I shall be discussing about a particular context of the aforesaid manuscript i.e. “Jayasthambha” at Mulbagal. Based on the exploration of this Jayasthambha and its historical accuracy, I shall be submitting my opinion on the authenticity of NT’s paper manuscript.

If the said MS stands its ground on the issue of Jayasthambha, well, I am ready to accept its genuine nature else said MS must be either subjected to the scientific tests recommended in the previous eBook or Sri VP must announce the truth with no strings attached.

In order to carry out the estimation of “Jaystambha” I have used the sources of history that are available at present to me and the relevant citations have been provided from the sources directly.

Brief Story of Jayasthambha

For those readers who are new to this subject, I wish to give them the gist of the story.

Sri Akshobhya Tirtha, the 4th successor of Acharya Madhva has ascended the Dvaita Vedanta Peetha in the year c.1350. He has succeeded Sri Mādhava Tirtha (Ascendance:1333 Brindavana: 1349/50) and prevailed over the Peetha till c.1365.

The fables of Mādhva community say that there ensued a great debate between Akshobhya and Vidyāranya, the two stalwarts of Dvaita and Advaita schools, at a place called Hunchadakallu Gudda, a small hillock in Mulbagal (Purva Kavatapuri). Kumara Kampana, purportedly the then Governor of Mulbagal and many other royal dignitaries have gathered to witness this grand fiesta of polemic dispute. Vedanta Deshikan of Srivaishnava school has been chosen as the “referee” but he was not physically present at the venue and was purportedly staying at Srirangam. The 40 days of close contest between the two saints has touched upon every book of Vedanta and finally Akshobhya came out victorious while discussing Upanishad statement of “tattvamasi” and a ‘pillar of victory’ (image shown below) has been erected at the very spot where the arguments took place.



Riposte from Advaitins

The story of Vidyāranya's alleged defeat started spreading its wings in contemporary times and a few organizations such as Madhva Siddhanta Vijaya Sthambha Samsevana Samiti have come up to further the purported victory of Mādhvas over Advaitins. Books and pamphlets have started flying thick and fast through the rank and file of Mādhva community.

Then it was the turn of Advaitins to make a '*quick return thrust*' to stop the onslaught of Mādhvas and this has resulted in publishing a book titled '**Akshobhya Vijaya Vibhrama**' (AVV) by Mr. G.R. Patil which has been followed up with another booklet by the same author, rebutting the objections raised by few Mādhvas on AVV.

In this book, I will not be discussing about AVV or the objections raised by the Mādhvas and not even about the subsequent rejoinder written by Mr. Patil. Instead this book shall make an independent inquiry on the said topic with a fresh mind and new perspective.

Now, in to the topic.....

Religious Distinctions in Early Vijayanagara Empire & Confounded Identities

Before I present the case study of particular religions that are internal to Sanatana Dharma (Hinduism), it will be appropriate to give a brief synopsis of religious environment during Sangama dynastic rule of Vijayanagara.

Krishnaswamy Aiyangar in his work [Some Contributions of South India](#) writes...

“During the age of Vijayanagara the Lingayats certainly existed and flourished. We know of contemporaries of Vidyāranya belonging to this sect occupying high positions in the service of the state. Several sovereigns of the first dynasty of Vijayanagara seem to have patronized this particular creed. But it does not appear to have been exactly what might be called the state religion.” Page 205

From the above statement, we can understand that the family members of Sangama dynasty at personal level were followers of Veerashaiva cult of Lingayats but were secular in their approach towards other religious denominations that are either sacrosanct or not and either conforming to Sanatana Dharma (Hinduism) or not.

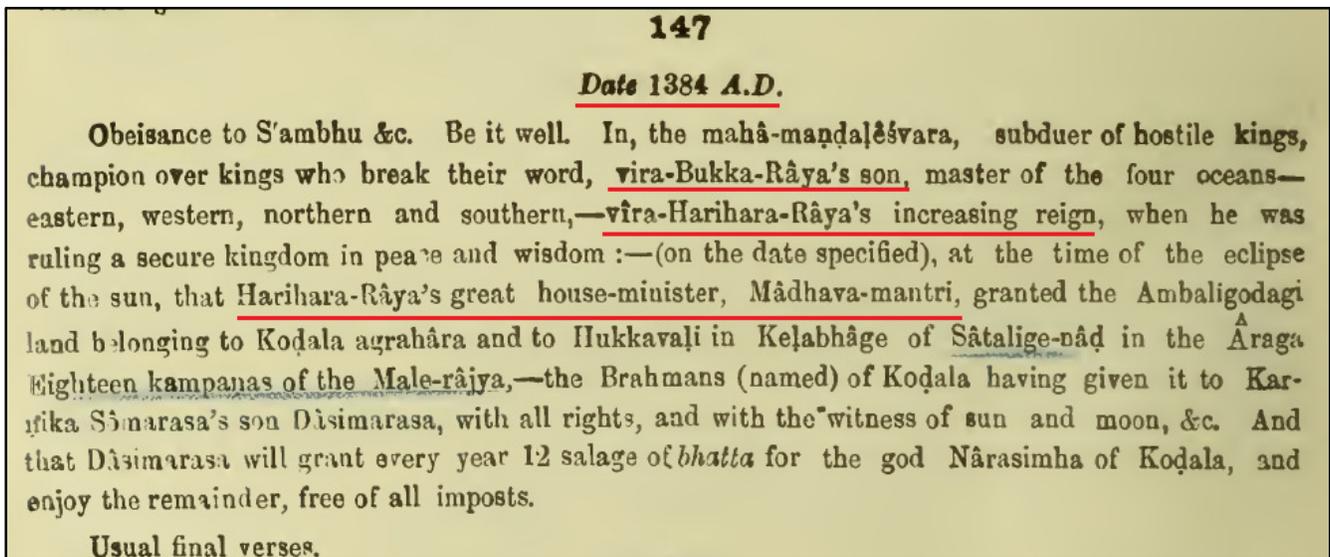
In his introduction to “The Elements of Hindu Iconography” Mr. T.A. Gopinatha Rao introduces the Saivite sects as under:

INTRODUCTION.

ONE of the oldest as also the most widely spread cult in India is that of Śiva. It consisted once of several sects, of which only a few have survived to the present day. Some of them had the sanction of the Vēdas while others were classed as outside the Vēdas or as opposed to them; again, some of them had milder forms of worship, while others practised horrible and shocking rites. The ideas about life, action and liberation differed from sect to sect. It will not be without interest to examine in some detail the history, the main tenets and the ceremonies of a few of the leading sects of Śiva in the following paragraphs.

The above narrative by a renowned historian and epigraphist of Mr. Gopinatha Rao's stature causes us to take a closer look at the various denominations of Veerashaivism in Vijayanagara that flourished during Sangama dynasty. A detailed study of these sects shall definitely lead us to understand as to with whom Akshobhya Tirtha might have argued and won subsequently.

Krishnaswamy Aiyangar writes in Page 309 of **Some Contributions of South India** about a certain **Kriyāshakti Pandita** who guided **Harihara I**. Kriyāshakti Pandita's reference comes in connection with a certain minister called *Mādhava Mantrin* who was a minister-cum-general working under Harihara II and a contemporary to Mādhava Vidyāranya. This Mādhava Mantrin was a Brahmin and a disciple of Kriyāshakti Pandita, a Saivācharya, heading Kriyāshakti Peetha that was belonging to a Veerashaiva sect called **Kālamukha** (*More details about Kriyashaktis and Kalamukha cult have been given in subsequent chapters of this book*). As per Krishnaswamy Aiyangar, this Mādhava Mantrin might have passed away in c.1384. Probably the following inscription could have been one of the last inscriptions issued by Mādhava Mantri.



(Page 192 of Epigraphia Carnatica Vol 8 – Inscriptions of Shimoga Dist (Vol. 2); 1904)

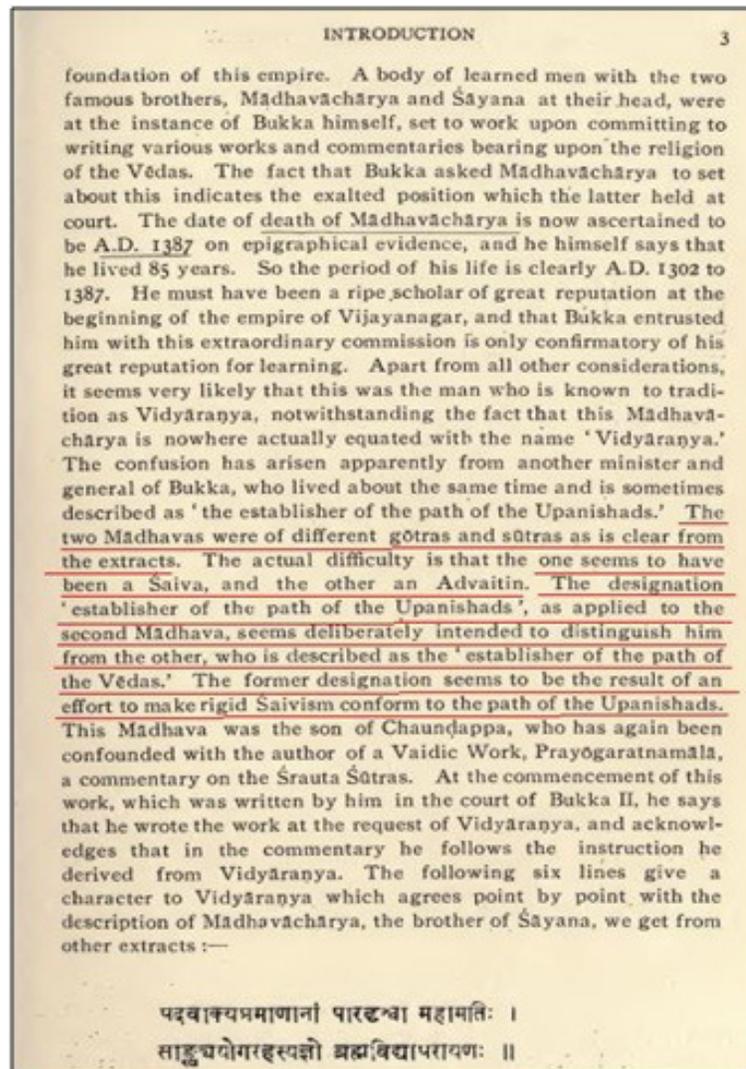
Thus we get two Mādhavas i.e. Mādhava Mantrin and Mādhava Vidyāranya existing at almost same time and both were contemporaries to Akshobhya T. at one point of time, presumably between c.1350-65. *Readers must keep this crucial aspect in mind all along the reading of this book.*

Now getting along with the history, Advaitin accounts say that Mādhava Vidyāranya acted as Rāja Guru and guided Harihara and Bukkarāya. That means **Mādhava Vidyāranya must have replaced Kriyāshakti Pandita** as Rāja Guru and thence guided **Harihara-I** and **Bukka-I** while his

brother **Sāyanāchārya** mentored **Kumāra Kampana** who was the governor of Udayagiri at that time. The authenticity of this version shall be discussed in ensuing chapters.

As for now, readers have been introduced to those two powerful Mādhavās of early Vijayanagara period. At this juncture, it appears that there prevailed a thorough confusion for sometime in the past in distinguishing Mādhava Vidyāranya and Mādhava Mantrin and the present disputed victory of Akshobhya is a result of such confounded identity.

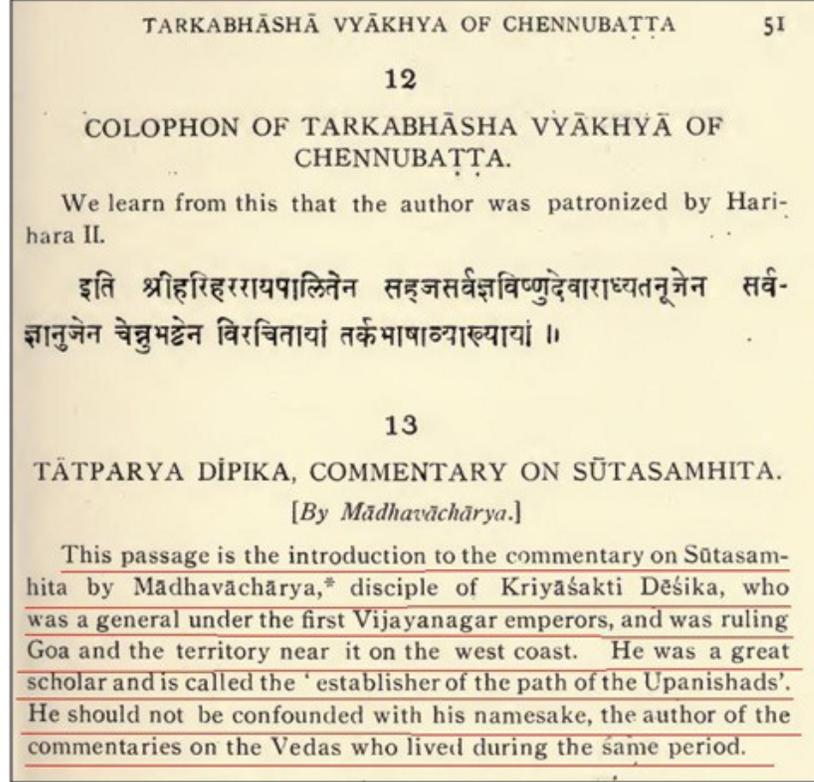
Here, it is worthwhile to quote Krishnaswamy Aiyangar's narration from his "**Sources of Vijayanagara Empire.**" In Page 3, he offers a solution to distinguish two Mādhavās who lived at the same time and in same place. Read the following excerpt:



Thus "***The two Mādhavās were of different gotras and sutras as is clear from the extracts.[...] The designation "establisher of the path of the Upanishads", as applied to the second Mādhava, seems deliberately intended to distinguish him from the other.[...]***"

From this narration it can be safely concluded that there is a perfect demarcation between those two Mādhavas i.e. **Mādhava Mantri** was enjoying a title “*Upanishan mārgapratisthāpanāchārya*” and **Mādhava Vidyāranya** was credited with title of “*Vedamārga-pratishthapanāchārya.*”

Krishnaswami Aiyangar, in Page 51 of **Sources of Vijayanagara**, gives further details of Tātparya Dipika, a commentary written by Mādhava Mantrin and offers further clues to distinguish both the Mādhavās.



Thus those two Mādhavachāryās who almost co-existed at same time and in same place have been perfectly distinguished by their works and titles. According to Krishnaswamy Aiyangar one was representing ‘rigid Saivism’ and another was from ‘Advaita’ school. In other words **Mādhava Mantrin was from rigid Saivism** and **Mādhava Vidyāranya was an Advaita scholar**. This distinction is crucial and serves as the perfect differentiator in understanding the phrase “ಅವೈದಿಕಾಗ್ರ್ಯಂ ಮುನಿರೇಷ ವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯಂ.”

Getting back to the history, in his book “**A History of Vijayanagara – The Never to be forgotten Empire**” Bangalore Suryanarayana Row writes about **Mādhava Mantri** as below:

This Madhava Mantri, although a Brahmin, appears to be quite different from Vidyaranya. The reasons for this will be explained in the next chapter under Harihara II. This important fact has not been noticed by any of the European writers, and I myself should have missed it, but for the long discussion I had on these inscriptions with Messrs. Chedalwada Sundara Ramasastry and Narain Row, B. A. Madhava Mantri seems to have been a Saraswath Saiva Brahmin, who is called Mada Ursa in the sale deed of the village in question, and a learned Brahmin in the Vedas and Vedantha. He also appears to have been Minister to the provincial ruler in the north-west of Mysore. I draw the attention of the readers to this important discovery and the arguments I have advanced as regards the separate individuality of Vidyaranya from Madhava Mantri.

Further to the above observation, Mr. Row offers another support for establishing Mādhava Mantri as a learned Upanishad expert. In Page 234 of his book, Mr. Row writes as below:

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solved, and we see that Madhava Mantri is the author of "Tatparya Deepika" and not Madhavacharya. The commentator commences with hailing his Guru as "Kasivilasa Kriyasakti Parama Bhakta Padabja Sevaka," adjectives which are totally absent in all the accredited works of Vidyaranya.*

A reference to the inscriptions will show that this Minister Madhava, was for some time serving under Sangama, that he was a great warrior, that he appeared on the political stage of Vijayanagar some years after its foundation with the approval of Vidyaranya, that he wielded supremacy over Goa and Chandragutti under the authority of the Vijayanagar Kings, that he was apparently a Saraswatha Brahmin from his grant to and employment of purely Cashmere Brahmins, and that he was also called Vira Vasanta Madhava. The following records are also to the point:—

"Marappa having conquered the kingdom of the West, established himself at Chandraguttapura; to this King was the Minister Madhava, whose Guru was Kriyasakti. . . . He compiled the "Saivamnayasara." †

Most important lines that the readers must read are:

"[...]and we see that Mādhava Mantri is the author of [Suta Samhimta]"Tatparya Dipika" and not Mādhavāchārya. The commentator commences with hailing his Guru as "Kāsivilāsa Kriyāsakti Parama Bhakta Pādābja Sevaka," adjectives which are totally absent in all the accredited works of Vidyārayana."

Thus the observations made by Krishnaswamy Aiyangar proved to be correct with the above statement of B. Suryanarayana Row. Also, all the above sources successfully establish the connection between Kriyashakti Pandita of Kālamukha sect and Mādhava Mantri. Thus, I have concluded that one of these two Mādhavācharyas must be the “ಅವೈದಿಕ ವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯ” stated in Sri Rāghavendra Vijaya.

I must draw the reader’s attention to the carefully written phrases of Krishnaswamy Aiyangar while describing these two Mādhavāchāryās. I once again reproduce the text such that the reader can redeem the second reading:

The confusion has arisen apparently from another minister and general of Bukka, who lived about the same time and is sometimes described as 'the establisher of the path of the Upanishads.' The two Mādhavas were of different gōtras and sōtras as is clear from the extracts. The actual difficulty is that the one seems to have been a Śaiva, and the other an Advaitin. The designation 'establisher of the path of the Upanishads', as applied to the second Mādhava, seems deliberately intended to distinguish him from the other, who is described as the 'establisher of the path of the Vēdas.' The former designation seems to be the result of an effort to make rigid Saivism conform to the path of the Upanishads.

I wish to draw the reader’s attention for a careful study of the last sentence. The phrase ‘**rigid Saivism**’ is the key that can unlock the mystery of “ಅವೈದಿಕಾಗ್ಯಂ” used in Sri Rāghavendra Vijaya.

From the above narration of Krishnaswamy Aiyangar it becomes very clear that Mādhava Mantrin who was also called as ‘Mādhavacharya’ had attempted to elevate his ‘**rigid Saivism**’ in conformity with the path of Upanishads. In other words, it becomes apparently clear that the **said ‘rigid Saivism’ practised by Mādhava Mantrin appears to be non-Upanishadic in nature.**

Therefore it can be understood that the Kālamukha sect headed by a certain Kriyāshakti Pandita who was the Guru of Mādhava Mantrin must be a non-Vedic sect and so gets qualified to be called as “ಅವೈದಿಕ”.

Based on these facts, I presume that at Mulbagal, **Akshobhya Tirtha might have got engaged into an argument with Mādhava Mantri and not with Mādhava-Vidyāranya.**

Another fact behind this assertion is that the sentence “tat tvam asi” or “tattvamasi” from Chandogya Upanishad has been quoted as the crucial debate between Sri Akshobhya and ‘Avaidika’ Vidyāranya. As Mādhava Mantrin being hailed as the ‘Establisher of Upanishad Path’, I am in no doubt to conclude that this Mādhava Mantrin must be the “ಅವೈದಿಕ ವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯ” and not Mādhava Vidyāranya of Advaita school.

How Mādhava Mantrin can be the Avaidikottama or Avaidikagyam?

Now the moot point to be addressed here is – **“Why was Mādhava Mantri referred to as Avaidikottama or Avaidika Vidyāranya?”**

For finding an answer for the above question, I have drawn some insight from a highly resourceful book called **“The Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas: Two Lost Śaivite Sects”** by **David N. Lorenzen** wherein in Page 173, the author establishes the link between Pāshupata sect and Kālamukha:

CHAPTER VI
LAKULĪŚA AND THE PĀŚUPATAS

We have noted more than once that Rāmānuja describes four sects as following the doctrine of Pāśupati : the Kāpāla, the Kālāmukha, the Pāśupata, and the Śaiva. The Pāśupata sect is the oldest of the four and was the spiritual parent of the Kālāmukha sect, if not of the others. In the period of Kālāmukha dominance in Mysore, which is also the time in which Rāmānuja preached, the epigraphs of the Pāśupatas and Kālāmukhas display many similarities. Both sects revere the legendary teacher Lakulīśa. The ascetics of both bear similar or identical names and undertake pilgrimages to Kedāranāth and Śrīparvata.¹

Pāshupata is the oldest school of ‘rigid Saivism’ aka ‘Veerasaivism.’ As it is but natural for any organized religion to break into many sub-sects even this rigid Pāshupata Saivism also branched out by giving a birth to Kālamukha sect.

Readers must remember this **parent-child relationship between Pāshupata and Kālamukha** throughout the reading of this eBook. This becomes highly crucial for understanding the ‘Avaidika’ status of Kālamukha sect which will be discussed subsequently in the following chapters.

Now, returning to David Lorenzen and his narrative of Kāpālikās and Kālāmukas, in page 162 he describes the Kriyāshaktis of Vijayanagara and their elevated status in the then religious environment. Read the following excerpt:

The Kriyāśaktis of Vijayanagar

A priesthood the heads of which each bore the name or title Kriyāśakti played an important part in the religious life of the early Vijayanagar empire.⁹¹ Many Kālāmukha and Pāśupata priests called themselves by this name and there is little doubt that the Kriyāśaktis of Vijayanagar also belonged to one of these two related sects. The term *kriyāśakti*—like *jñānaśakti*, another common Pāśupata-Kālāmukha name—denotes an important concept in Pāśupata theology.⁹² One of these Kriyāśaktis is said to have

⁸⁸See above, pp. 108–109.

⁸⁹Trans. *ARMAD* 1914, p. 36.

⁹⁰Ed. and trans. Rice, *EC*, XII, Tp. 91.

induced his disciple Mādhava-mantrin to give a village to eighty learned Brāhmaṇas from Kashmir, another fact which suggests a connection with the Kālāmukhas.⁹³

It must be admitted, however, that a few sources imply the existence of a close relation between these Kriyāśaktis and the advaita gurus of the famous Śringeri maṭha founded by Śaṅkarā-cārya. Vidyāraṇya, the famous scholar and Vijayanagar guru, was one of the heads of this maṭha. A Sanskrit work called *Vidyāraṇya-kārajñāna* actually claims that Kriyāśakti was the disciple of Vidyāraṇya and states that these two were revered by the first thirteen kings of Vijayanagar, who were worshippers of the god Virūpākṣa.⁹⁴ An inscription of A.D. 1390 seems to record a grant

Such was the importance of Kriyāśaktis in early Vijayanagara history. Also, the above narrative confirms that Mādhava Mantri was a disciple of Kriyāśakti and was wielding lot of power in emperor's court.

As the Sanātana Dharma is known for its intra-religious disputes and polemical war of words, these Pāśupata, Kālamukha and Kāpālika sects have come under heavy criticism by the Vedic cults such as Vishista Advaita and Dvaita.

David Lorenzen says that **Rāmānujachārya** and his preceptor **Yāmunāchārya** were highly critical of Kālamukhas that they were adherents of non-Vedic teachings. Kalamukhas have been accused of being practitioners of vicious Tāntric practices. Though Lorenzen differs with this presentation of Kālamukhas by Ramanuja, he agrees to a fact that the Kālamukha followers were widely adhering to their own doctrine called **Lakula-Siddhānta** instead of Vedas and were having some Buddhist Tāntric influences as well. This detour of Kālamukhas from **Vaidika** practice could have caused Rāmānuja to relegate them as Avaidika with an added vehemence sprang out of his anti-Saiva stand.

T.A. Gopinatha Rao gives a very interesting account of why and how the later date Saivites tried to emulate their cults as Vedic cults. First he narrates how these rigid Saivite sects have been grouped as *Shudras*.

among Śūdras.⁽¹⁾ At any rate, these Śaivas did not evidently hold a high place in the system of castes; the *Sūta-saṁhitā* also states that very low classes of Brāhmaṇas alone underwent the *dīkshā* or initiatory ceremony in the Pāśupata, the Pāñcharātra and other *tantras*. It is therefore clear that inferior Brāhmaṇas embraced some of the non-Āryan cults and became Pāśupatas and Pāñcharātras.

Subsequently Gopinatha Rao narrates the efforts made by the Saivites to add some Vedic relevance to their cults:

At a later stage of their history, they probably adopted a few of the *hōmas* and the *mantras* appropriate to them from the *Gṛihya-sūtras* and created for themselves some others in imitation of the *mantras* of the Vēda. This explains the eagerness with which these *anārya-sampradāyas* were somehow classed in the *ārya-sampradāyas*. But, their system of *dīkshā*, Anku-rārpaṇa with which the ceremonies are begun, the philosophy of *Shaḍadhvās*⁽¹⁾ and many others are not found in the Vaidik religions and therefore mark off Āgamānta as being different in essentials from the Vaidik religion.

In the present context, it is interesting to note that Mādhava Mantri, though being an Sāraswat Brāhman, was actually a **practising Kālāmukhi**. Owing to his original roots as an Sāraswath Brahman he was well versed with the Upanishads and also wrote a commentary on Suta Samhita that has classified Pāshupatas, Kālamukhas, Kāpālikas and many other rigid Savities as “*Shudras*.” Given his strength of Upanishadic knowledge, Mādhava Mantri had tried to promote Kālamukha practice as a practice that is in agreement with Vedas and also might have tried to brand the Kālamukhas as “Brahmins.”

One may question me that a stand-alone case of Mādhava Mantrin's attempt to promote Kālamukha as Vedic cult is being blown out of proportion only to suit my argument of calling him as "Avaidika Vidyaranya." To clear such doubt, I present the following statement of T.A. Gopinatha Rao:

proper intonation or *nāda*." Though the Avaidika Śaivaism was essentially different in tenets at the beginning, attempts have been made at later times to identify Avaidikas with the Vaidikas. Śrikānthā-Śivāchārya who wrote a Bhāshya on the Brahma-sūtras in accordance with the Āgamānta Śaiva teachings exclaims, na vayam vēda-śivāgamayōrbhēdam paśyāmah vēdasyāpi śivāgamatvāt, (we do not perceive any difference between the Vēdas and the Śivāgamas, Vēdas are also as authoritative as the Śivāgamas); and at a

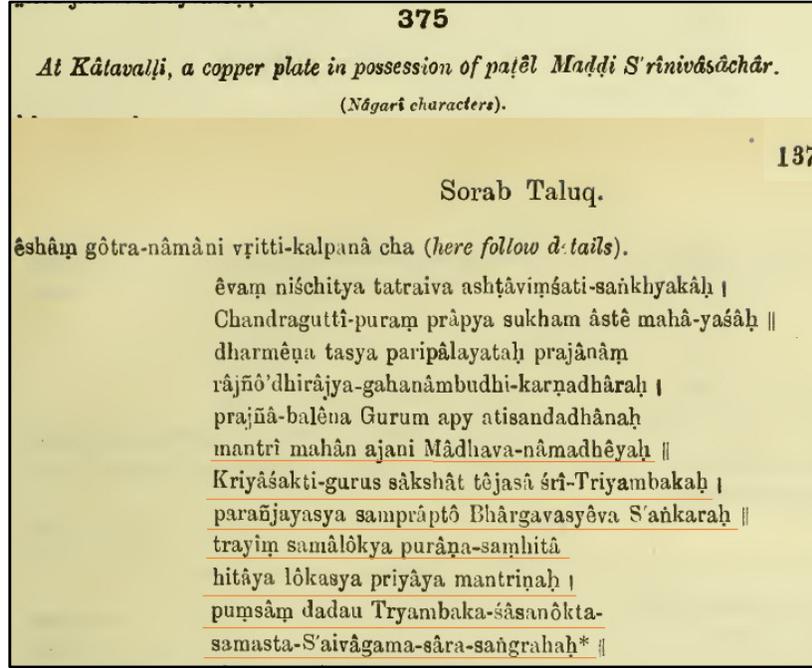
There was one Srikānthā Sivācharya who wrote Bhāshya on Brahmasutras in accordance with rigid Saivism (Āgamanta Saivism) thus not leaving Mādhava Mantrin all alone in Kālamukhas' pursuit or elevating their cult as a Vedic one.

Here I wish to present the following excerpts from [Epigraphia Carnatica Vol VIII – Inscriptions of Shimoga Dist \(Part 2\)](#) edited by B.L. Rice and published in 1904. The first excerpt is from the Page 12 of the introduction written by B.L. Rice in which an important reference to Mādhava Mantri was made by him.

Most of the Vijayanagar inscriptions in this volume are concerned with the ^AArāga kingdom, or as it is sometimes called, the Male-rājya or hill kingdom, of which ^AArāga (in the north of Tirtahalli taluq) was the capital. This is said in **Tl 166** to be situated in the ^AAvanya-dēśa, to the east of Bhuvana-giri (Kavale-durga). In **Nr 34** the ^AArāga-Gutti kingdom is said to be bounded by the Konkana and Hoysana kingdoms.

The early viceroys were princes of the royal family. Thus in 1347 we find (**Sb 375**) the king Mārāpa (Sangama's fourth son) established in Gōmanta-śaila or Chandragupti (Chandragutti, commonly called Gutti, in the west of Srab taluq), which is described as the chief capital (pradhāna rājadhāni) of the Banavāsi Twelve Thousand. Defeating the Kadamba king, he went on to see Gōkarṇa, where he bathed in the sea, and honouring the god Mahābala, granted an agrahāra named Mārāpapuri to Brahmans who were emigrants from the ^AĀndhra country. Returning to Chandragutti, he, in conjunction with his great minister Mādhava, whose guru was Kriyāśakti, compiled the Saivāgama-sāra-sangraha, after comparing the three vēdas and the purānas. In 1362 we find (Tl 37)

Following is an edited version of inscription from the same volume of Epigraphia Carnatica that shows the original content of inscription no. 375 found at Sorab Taluq.



Here the name of Kriyāshakti appears as the Guru of 'Mantri Mahan' Mādhava and it also gives the name of 'Saivāgama Sāra Sangraha' as being written after reviewing three Vedas, Puraṇās and Samhitās (*trayam samAlOkya purANa saMhitA*). Thus the authorship of Mādhava Mantri of writing a book that tried to elevate Kālamukha sect as an Upanishadic sect can be easily established and the Kālamukhas had a specific plan of employing a learned Brahmin for accomplishing their task.

From the above, it can be understood that in 1347 Mādhava Mantri was actually at Chandragutti province and was assisting Mārāpa, brother of Harihara and Bukka. Both Mārāpa and Mādhava have compiled a book called 'Saivāgama Sāra Sangraha' by reviewing three Vedas and probably all 18 Puranas.

Most importantly, here Mādhava has been identified as a disciple of Kriyāshakti. Subsequently the inscription of c.1384 (given in Page 13) shows this Mādhava Mantri as the great minister of Harihara-II who became the emperor of Vijayanagara in c.1379. From this epigraph it can also be concluded that Mādhava Mantri must have got a promotion during Bukkraya – I's regime i.e. sometime between c.1350 to c.1365 i.e. during the period of Akshobya Tritha sitting on the throne of Dvaita Siddhanta.

With these epigraphic evidences I have deduced an inference that Mādhava Mantri was an important minister at Vijayagara court and he followed an Avidic sect called Kālamukha and he was well versed with Vedic scriptures which he tried to use in elevating his Avidic cult to the status of Vedic cult.

Further to this, I understood that many of 'rigid' Saivite sects were readily initiating non-Brahmins as ascetics. As these sects were not strictly adhering to the teachings of Vedas and Upanishads but to their own Likula-Agama, they had the liberty to recruit non-Brahmins as well. At one point of time, Kālamukhas might have thought of qualifying their sect at par with the rapidly growing communities of Advaita, Vishishta Advaita and Dvaita. In order to do this, they needed the help of Brahman who can bring-in the vast knowledge of Vedas into Kālamukha fold and I presume that Mādhava Mantrin was their champion to accomplish this daunting task.

I am, once again, calling-in the remarks made by Krishnaswami Aiyangar in **Sources of Vijayanagara**. He states that the purpose for which Mādhava Mantri gained mastery over Upanishads is **to make the rigid Saivism (here it is Kālamukha Saivism) to correspond with the Vedic Upanishads**. Read the following excerpt from 'Sources of Vijayanagara'.

The confusion has arisen apparently from another minister and general of Bukka, who lived about the same time and is sometimes described as 'the establisher of the path of the Upanishads.' The two Mādhavas were of different gōtras and sūtras as is clear from the extracts. The actual difficulty is that the one seems to have been a Śaiva, and the other an Advaitin. The designation 'establisher of the path of the Upanishads', as applied to the second Mādhava, seems deliberately intended to distinguish him from the other, who is described as the 'establisher of the path of the Vēdas.' The former designation seems to be the result of an effort to make rigid Śaivism conform to the path of the Upanishads.

The last sentence sums it all that **Mādhava Mantri tried to elevate his belief system (Kālamukha) by writing "Saivāgama Sāra Sangraha"**. Kālamukhas might have hoped that such a clever work by a qualified Brahmana Kālāmukhi can erase the stigmas created by Rāmānuja and Yāmuna on their cult. Also they might have wished that the ministerial power of Mādhava Mantri might earn many followers for them. Yet it appears that Mādhava Mantri could not successfully remove the stigma created by Yāmunāchārya and Rāmājūnāchārya that Kālamukhas are Avidiks.

I am of the belief that these revival efforts of Kālamukhas to project themselves as a Vedic cult must have taken severe blow from the Dvaita preachers whose intellect was causing hardest challenges to other established Vedic schools of Advaita and Vishishta Advaita. Thus Dvaitins of that time too must

have considered Mādhava Mantri as “**Avaidika**” and hence Nārāyanachārya in his Sri Rāghavendra Vijaya aptly called him as “Avaidikagryam.”

In addition to this, the following shloka from the commentary by Chalāri Sankarshanāchārya on his own work of Jayatirtha’s biography should be read with utmost care:

“ಅಸಿನಾ ತತ್ತ ಮಸಿನಾ ಪರಜೀವ ಪ್ರಭೇದಿನಾ| ಅವೈದಿಕೋತ್ತಮಾರಣ್ಯಮಕ್ಷೋಭ್ಯ ಮುನಿರಚ್ಛಿನತ್”

In the above shloka it is interesting to note that the word Vidya is missing and only ‘Aranya’ has been mentioned. This gives rise to an extrapolation of the meaning and articulation of the word ‘Aranya’ in Saiva and/or Advaita sects.

Dashanāmi Sanyāsa (System of Ten names) has been established by Adi Shankarāchārya and till date the same system is being followed by Saiva and Advaita sects for initiating new incumbents into asceticism. Mr. A.L. Ahuja in his “Eminent Indians: Saints and Sages” gives the 10 names of this system as under:

Vaishnava, Saiva, Sakta, etc. Sakta modes of worship had degenerated and the Divine Mother in many temples had been transformed into a blood-thirsty Goddess. Sankara introduced reforms in the ways of worship, and reconverted the deity into the benign World-Mother that She is. He also sang beautiful hymns in praise of the Godhead in its various manifestations for the benefit of devotees. Following the model set by the Master, his disciples have given us expositions of *Advaita* in the form of glosses on his works and also in a series of independent treatises. With a view to safeguard India’s cultural unity based on *Advaita*, and to hold aloft the ideal of spirituality, Sankara founded monastic orders and institutions that have lasted through the centuries. The ten orders are collectively referred to as *Dasanami*: Sarasvati, Puri, Bharati, Vana, Aranya, Tirtha, Asrama, Giri, Parvata, and Sagara. He established *mathas* (monastic centres) and charged his principal disciples to head them so that in each center there would come into being an unbroken succession of *Advaita* preceptors. The most important of these are at Badari-kshetra, Dvaraka Puri, Jagannatha-Puri and Sringeri (Sringeri) besides Kanchi

Thus ‘Aranya’ is one of the 10 names that a Saiva or Advaita ascetic can choose from. In accordance to this the usage ‘**ಅವೈದಿಕೋತ್ತಮಾರಣ್ಯ**’ in Chalāri shloka must be interpreted as a [Vira]Shaiva sanyasi who took initiation under ‘Aranya’ order and not a Advaita ‘Aranya’sanyasi. Therefore, amongst two Mādhavacharyas that I have spoken of in the above paragraphs, Mādhava Mantrin comes closer to be identified as Avaidika Aranya. As there are no concrete details available as to whether this Mādhava Mantrin was married or not, I have taken a benefit of doubt that he is unmarried and got initiated into ‘Aranya’ order of Dasanami system of asceticism by Kriyāshakti Pandita.

Even with all these suppositions my argument may still fall short while interpreting the usage of “ಅವೈದಿಕಾಗ್ಯಂ ಮುನಿರೇಷ ವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯಂ” wherein the word “**Vidyāranya**” appears to be having a direct reference to the famous Mādhava Vidyāranya. But I trust that my argument is not suffering from total

disintegration as the other key word “Avidika” is still prefixed to Vidyāranya. It must be recalled here by the reader that Krishnaswamy Aiyangar has specified that **Mādhava Vidyāranya has “Vedamarga pratishthanacharya’ title to his credit.** Hence, a person **who established a ‘Vedamarga’ can never be called as ‘Avidika.’**

If this argument can be accommodated in lieu of the other vital leads furnished hitherto that Mādhava Mantri is the Avidik Kālāmukhi, readers can make their own assessment that Nārāyanachārya, the biographer of Sri Rāghavendra and Chalāri Achārya were referring to Mādhava Mantrin only.

On contrary to this, David Lorenzen informs that Kālamukhas were following ‘Dualist’ theory which is in direct confrontation with the ‘Monist’ theory adhered to by Advaitins.

The Pāśupatas and Kālāmukhas were philosophical dualists and for this reason were regarded with disfavour by *advaita* theologians such as Śaṅkarācārya and Sāyaṇa-Mādhava, the author of the *Sarvadarśanasamgraha*. This latter priest has been identified

(Page 162 – The Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas: Two Lost Śaivite Sects By David N. Lorenzen)

Now the above narrative throws up a highly interesting aspect that a staunch Advaita Saivite such as Vidyāranya has rejected ‘rigid Saivites’ of Kālamukha sect. In other words, Vidyāranya too not considered Kālāmukhis as ‘Vaidikas.’

On the other hand Dvaita preached ‘Dualism’ but found to be confronting another ‘Dualist’ philosophy i.e. Kālamukha albeit was a Saivism cult. If Acharya Madhva declared ‘Dualism’ as the essence of Vedas, why did Dvaitins not only challenge ‘Dualist’ Kālāmukhis but also mercilessly brand them as ‘Avaikdikas”?

Kālamukha as an Avaidika doctrine

After giving the initial fall-out between Dualist Kālamukha and Monist Advaita, David Lorenzen explains further in the same paragraph as below:

The Pāśupatas and Kālāmukhas were philosophical dualists and for this reason were regarded with disfavour by *advaita* theologians such as Śaṅkarācārya and Sāyaṇa-Mādhava, the author of the *Sarvadarśanasamgraha*. This latter priest has been identified as either Vidyāraṇya himself or his nephew.⁹⁹ If Kriyāśakti was a Pāśupata, it is highly unlikely that he was Vidyāraṇya's disciple or that a temple of Vidyāśaṅkara was set up in Kriyāśakti's memory. On the other hand, there is no need to assume that the two groups were overtly hostile to each other. Relations between the various Hindu sects in the early Vijayanagar empire were generally cordial.

Thus the dualist Kālamukhas and monist Advaitins were not as hostile to each other as they were with Dvaita or Visishta Advaita schools. Having resolved the first conflicting statement of Lorenzen, now it is time to deal with the other i.e. “Why dualist Dvaitins considered dualist Kālamukhas as Avadikas?”

T.A. Gopinatha Rao in his “**Elements of Hindu Iconography**” makes following important statement on how to distinguish Vadika Advaitins and Avadika Saivites:

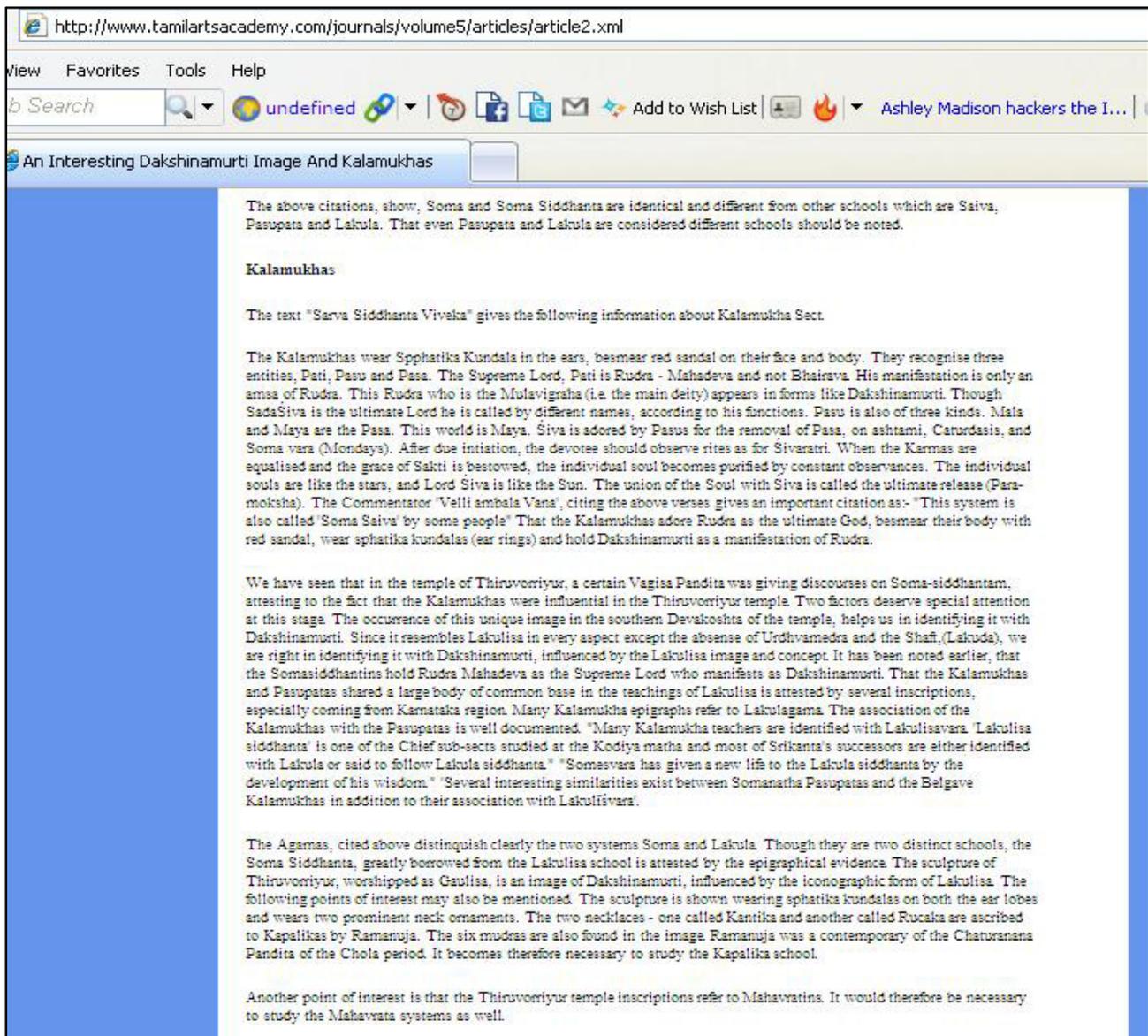
These Śaivas should be carefully distinguished from the Vēdānta Śaivas, who base their philosophy on the Vēdas and the Upanishads. These two schools are diametrically opposed to each other on many points. From the statement, *Yasya-niśvasitam-vēdāh*, of the Advaitins the followers of the Āgamānta considered Vēdas as inferior to the Āgamas; for they assert that the former came out of Śiva as unconsciously as His breath, whereas the twenty-eight Āgamas were personally and consciously dictated by Śiva. Besides, the Āgamāntins consider the Advaitins and the Mimāṃsakas as *paśus* or unevolved souls and to be therefore unfit for receiving *Śaiva dīkshās* or initiations. The Āgamāntins are in their turn reviled by the Vaidikas as being heterodox; Kumārila-bhaṭṭa classes them among atheists and we read Amarasimha accordingly classing Dēvalas who are generally the Pāśupatas, the Pāñcharātras and other Tāntrikas that are addicted to image worship, among Śūdras.⁽¹⁾

It is for the view of treating Vedas as inferior to Agamas the rigid Saivites have been classified as “Avadikas” by Vedic scholars.

Though Gopinatha Rao says that Kumarila Bhatta rejected rigid Saivites as “Avidik” but according to David Lorenzen, the first rejection of Kālamukha as a non-Vedic sect has come from Yāmunāchārya and his disciple Rāmānujachārya. Hereunder is what Lorenzen records in “The Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas: Two Lost Śaivite Sects”

Although these descriptions, like those of the Kōḍiya-maṭha, tend to run counter to some of the accusations made against the Kālāmukhas by Rāmānuja, there are also several points of agreement between his account and the epigraphs. First, both the Kālāmukhas of Rāmānuja and the priests of the Kedāreśvara temple are worshippers of Śiva. Furthermore, however great the learning of the Kōḍiya-maṭha priests, the essential feature of their faith seems to be personal devotion or *bhakti* to Śiva rather than metaphysical speculation or a religion of sacrifice and ritual observance. In this respect these priests bear resemblance to their famous opponent who at this time was preaching his *bhakti-yoga* at Śrīraṅgam some 250 miles to the south-east.

Other sources such as [Tamil Arts Academy](#) say that Rāmānuja had a contemporary Kālamukha scholar by name Chaturānana Pandita who wielded greater influence on the then Chola monarch Rajendra.



With this we can understand that Rāmānuja must have had the first hand information on the doctrines and practices of Kālamukhas and then only rejected them as ***Avoidiks***.

Encyclopedia Britannica says that the **Kālamukha** and **Pāshupata** sects have fallen from their reputation due to extreme forms of worship that included **human sacrifice**. Though the human sacrifice by these sects has so far not been proven but it appears that this stigma had loomed large on them during medieval periods.

Hereunder is the screen grab of Britannica's online encyclopedia that serves the much needed clarification on Kālamukha sect:

www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/446153/Pashupata

POPULAR TOPICS QUIZZES GALLERIES LISTS PROJECTS Search Britannica...

The ascetic practices adopted by the Pashupatas include the thrice-daily smearing of their bodies with ashes, meditation, and chanting the symbolic syllable *Om*. The school fell into disrepute when distortions of some of the mystical practices gave rise to two extreme sects, the Kapalika and Kalamukha. Some of the Pashupatas also developed the more moderate Shaiva-siddhanta school, whose philosophical teachings became not only acceptable but also central to modern Shaivism. The Pashupatas and the extreme sects were called Atimargika ("Away from the Path"; i.e., antinomian) to distinguish them from the Shaiva-siddhantas.

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Britannica also informs that these extreme sects have been termed as **"Atimārgika"** (Away from the path).

An article published in **Shodhganga** website has the following description for Kālāmukhas and their practices:

shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/9646/11/11_chapter%203.pdf

Suggested Sites Re: Re: Vidyanaya The Kāpālikas and K... Publishers admin area South Indian Inscript... Vedic Cafe : May 20... Darbandi Belula's A...

that the three shrines were actually built by the chief Vikramakesari in his own name and in the names of his two wives. Having built three shrines (vimanas) in his own name and in the names of his two wives, he set up Mahesvara (Śiva) and presented to a big matha (brihan-matham) to Mallikarjuna of Madurai who was the chief ascetic of the Kalamukha (sect) with eleven villages for feeding fifty ascetics of the Kalamukha sect. The Kalamukha sect is a division of Saivism. The Kalamukhas appear to be so called because they marked their forehead with a black streak, and they are said to be born of nara (human) and rakshasa (demonical) parents. The Kalamukhas teach that the means of obtaining all desired results in this world as well as the next are constituted by certain practices such as using a skull as a drinking cup, smearing oneself with ashes of the dead body, eating the flesh of such a body, carrying a heavy stick, setting up a liquor-pot and using it as a platform for making offerings to the Gods, and the like.

If the above statement is true then the reasons for the extinction of Kālāmukha sect along with Kāpālika can be easily understood. This also strengthens my argument that Mādhava Mantrin had intentionally tried to qualify such a horrendous Saiva cult as a Vedic cult.

I wish to present an extract from a Telugu book titled **"Sri Virupaksha – Sri Rama Tamra Sasanamulu"** (**Sri Virupaksha – Sri Rama Copperplate Inscriptions**), by Dr. Vadlamudi Gopalakrishnaiah (VG), published in 1973 by Andhra Pradesh Govt. Oriental Manuscript Library and Research Institute, Hyderabad. In his introduction to Aravidu dynasty, Dr. Gopalakrishnaiah talks about a particular Somanatharaju who is an ancestor of famous Aliya Ramaraya of Vijayanagara. This Somanatharaju

was an independent king during early Vijayanagara time but his successors have been subdued and were brought under the fold of Vijayanagara. In his introduction to Aravidu dynasty, in Page No. LXI GV quotes an interesting poem from a 16th century Telugu book called “**Dwipada Bala Bhagavatamu**”

అంతేకాక ఒకానొక శత్రువు శిరస్సును భైరవదేవుని ముందట ఛేదించి బలి యిచ్చినట్లు ద్విపద జాల భాగవతంలో ఈ క్రింది ద్విపదల్లో వర్ణించబడింది.

“మణిగిల్ల దుర్గంబు మదిలోనఁ గలుగు
కణక దాడిగ నేడి కైకొని నిలిచి
గోసంగి మన్నేని గుపినాత్య నృపతి
శాసకుండగుట మస్తకము గొట్టించి
ఆరసి తత్పట్టణాగ్ర తటాక
భైరవు ముంగల బలి యొసఁగించె.”

మహావీరుడైన యీ సోమదేవరాజును ఆరవీటి నగర పరిపాలకులలో తొట్టతొలి వ్యక్తిగా కొందరు చరిత్రకారులు పేర్కొన్నారు.

Hereunder I give the Kannada translation of the underlined prose text:

[సోమనాథరాజు] ఒందానోందు శత్రువిన శిరస్సున్న భ్యైరవదేవర ముందే ఖండిసి బలియన్న కౌట్టంధ విచర ద్విపద బాల భాగవతదల్లి వణిసలగాదే.

The above narrated incident may not amount to human sacrifice as that killing was a politically motivated execution of the enemy. But the striking aspect is the **existence of Bhairava worship during Somanatharaju’s time i.e. between c.1358 to 1375.**

This Bhairava is a central theme of Pāshupata and Kāpalikās’ rituals with variants such as Ugra Bhairava, Ananda Bhairava etc. Therefore, it must be understood here that in line with North India where Veerashaiva sects have a sway till to this day, even in South India there was a bustling activity of these sects during medieval times.

A noted historian from Andhra Pradesh, Mr. B.S.L. Hanumantha Rao in his article “**Kālamukhas in Andhradesha**” written for the Oriental Journal Volume XXVIII published in the year 1985 by Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati states that Pāshupata sect had some practices that were socially boycotted as ‘immoral’.

satya, asteya, brahmacarya, aparigraha which constitute *yama*.²¹ It is rather interesting to note that the five principles that constitute *yama* of the Kālamukhas are the same as the *pañca-yamas* of Jains.

It may be added that even the Pāsūpata system was not altogether free from unsocial activities. The system is two - fold: (i) disciplinary and (ii) ritualistic. The former consists of *yama* and *niyama*. *Yama* consists of *ahiṃsā, śtīya, brahmacarya, asaṃvyavahāra* and *asteya*²² whereas *niyama* is made up of *akrodha, gurusūśrūṣā, śauca, āhāralāghava* and *apramāda*. But their ritual which is made up of *upāhāra* and *dvāra* consists of several unsocial and meaningless practices verging on insanity. They are *krāthana* (snoring as if in sleep), *spandana* (shaking), *śṛṅgārāna* (making amorous gestures to ladies), *avitarkarāna* (thoughtless behaviour) and *avitabhāṣāna* (foolish speech). By such mad behaviour, the Pāsūpata tries to make himself disagreeable or even detestable, with a view to develop total detachment with the world so that the journey to the goal, *Śivasāyujya* would be cut short.

But Mr. Hanumantha Rao supports David Lorenzen's view that Kālamukhas were not as bad as Pāshupatas or Kāpalikās but were quite pious in nature and highly learned in studies. But the irrefutable fact remains that they have followed a book called 'Lakulisa Agama' which was an independent work of Saivite saint called Lakulisa who prevailed in Western India during 2nd century AD.

But there is a vital clue available in Mr. Hanumantha Rao's article that must be studied carefully. Hereunder is that very important hint as to what could have become of Kālamukha sect during medieval periods:

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outspoken when he remarks that "At the time of Yāmuna and Rāmānuja the Kālamukhas were rapidly gaining popular or even royal support in South India. The two Vaiṣṇava priests may have purposely confused the two Śaivite sects in order to discredit their more important rivals".²⁵

Mr. Hanumatha Rao quotes from David Lorenzen's book that both **Rāmānuja and his preceptor Yāmunāchārya have 'purposely' superimposed the immoral practices of Pāshupata sect over Kālamukha sect and have caused a great distortion about the latter sect.**

So, by and large Kālamukhas have been branded as 'Avidikas' though they appear to be practising the extreme rituals adopted by Pāshupatas. In my opinion, the mere absence of heinous rituals such as making amorous gestures to ladies etc. can't qualify Kālamukha sect on par with Advaita, Vishishtadvaita or Dvaita for a simple reason that this Kālamukha sect has been built around Lakulisa Agama which is an independent work of a human being called Lakulisa lived sometime in 2nd century AD and was not based on *Apaurusheya scriptures such as Vedas*.

Following narrative from the Introduction to Gangadevi's Madhura Vijaya, it can be understood beyond any doubt that Madhva Mantrin has been hailed as the Establisher of Upanishad Path as he tried to set right the 'deranged' Upanishadic lore which unmistakably points towards the Kalamukha's tenet that Vedas are inferior to Saiva Agamas. It also confirms that Madhava Mantrin wrote a commentary to this effect.

Madhava-Mantrin, the son of Unanda-Bhatta of the Angirasa-gotra, was a minister of Bukka I and Harihara II, and he appears to have done much for the consolidation of the Vijayanagara Empire. Himself a great warrior, he waged war with the Turusikas in the province bordering on the western ocean and conquered them and was made Governor of the province by Bukka I. He was also a renowned scholar,

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wrote the commentary called 'Tatparyadipika on the Sutasamhita, set in order the deranged Upanishadic lore, and was consequently known as the उपनिषद्मार्गप्रतिष्ठागुरुः ।

(Page 8 & 9 – Introduction – Madhura Vijaya by Gangadevi – Edited by G. Harihara Sastri & V. Srinivasa Sastri – Pub in 1924)

The above inputs hint that Kālamukha had been branded as “Avidika” for being “Atimārgika” which is actually not as per Lorenzen and Hanumatha Rao but certainly for its adherence to a non-Vedic and non-Upanishadic Agama called Lakulisa Agama.

Mādhava Mantri though being a Vedic Sāraswat Brahman had tried to uphold an Atimārgika and Avidic cult as a cult that conforms to Upanishads. Thus I wish to identify “Avidika Vidyāranya” as Mādhava Mantrin and not Mādhava-Vidyāranya who is indeed a Vaidika Vidyāranya as he commented upon Vedas.

At this juncture it would not be out of context to mention another important aspect that the life account of Vidyāranya too is not devoid of confusions and controversies. Having to deal with such distorted versions of the bygone eras there ought to be many myths and mirages that mar the reality.

In the next chapter I have briefly discussed the mixed-up versions of Vidyāranya's life history and his position during first dynastic rule of Vijayanagara.

Vidyāranya – Confusions & Mystifications

In this chapter, several distortions that are associated with the life history of Sri Vidyāranya are being presented such that readers can familiarize themselves with the factual account of Vidyāranya.

After reading considerable amount of literature on Vidyāranya, I have been given to an understanding that there are certain confusions among the public about the history of Sri Vidyāranya. And the Advaita community too is not an exception to this bewilderment of their Guru who is considered as the second greatest seer after Adi Sankara himself.

Following are the confusions that are usually associated with Vidyāranya and can dazzle not only the common readers but the faithful followers of Advaita as well:

- 1. Vidyāranya and Mādhavacharya are different persons.**
- 2. Vidyāranya and Mādhavacharya is one and the same person.**
- 3. Sāyana & Mādhava are the brothers who have been jointly ordered by Bharati Tirtha & Vidyāranya to write Veda Bhashyas.**
- 4. Mādhava was a minister in the court of Vijayanagara emperor and later became Vidyāranya.**
- 5. Kriyāshakti is another name of Mādhava Vidyāranya.**

I found some of these riddles in an online discussion that was held almost 20 years ago while some were found while researching the topic. Interested readers can read through the following discussions to get a feeling of what I just narrated.

<http://www.ramanuja.org/sv/bhakti/archives/may96/0022.html>

<http://www.ramanuja.org/sv/bhakti/archives/may96/0016.html>

From the above it becomes evident that Advaitins too are confused with regard to the life history of Vidyāranya. There is certain amount confusion as to whether a scholar named Mādhava became Vidyāranya and whether this Mādhava was a minister at Vijayanagara court? It also becomes evident that the various Advaita Mathās have had different versions.

From 1996 i.e. the year in which above online discussions were held and up to 2015, in the last 19 years I hardly see any greater clarity prevailing over the obscurities of Vidyāranya's life and his 'royal preceptor' status.

I shall be discussing these questions under a separate chapter but for now, let me put some light on Kālamukha cult as it qualifies as the “Avadik” sect of Saivism.

For the misunderstanding that Kriyashakti is Vidyaranya, the erudite Kannada scholar DVG has made it clear that Kriyashakti is different from Vidyaranya. Hereunder I produce the screenshot of English translation of Mr. Venkatasubbaiah’s book on DVG:

Many of these findings have been recorded in the three books of DVG, namely, Vidyaranya and his Times, (1920), Vidyaranya’s Contemporaries (1933), and Vidyaranya Vijaya (1946).

DVG has made extensive research mainly in respect of Vidyarannya and Vijayanagara Empire. He maintains that Madhava and Vidyarannya are one and the same, and Kriyashakti and Vidyarannya are two different persons.

(Page 31 of D.V. Gundappa by Venkatasubbaiah – English translation by S.G. Mysroe Math)

Venkatasubbaian also informs that in his Vidyaranya Vijaya drama, DVG presented a concerted effort put by the then heads of various communities of Hindu fold. Following excerpt from Page 33 of above mentioned English translation is quite remarkable.

Vidyaranya Vijaya was a dramatized version of his research material. But the play is not a play in the strict sense. It is a good readable play. The play is about how a Hindu kingdom was established and developed in the face of Mohamman invaders. It narrates the story of how Vidyarannya with the cooperation of Saiva Gurus of Kalamukha branch, Vedanta Desikar and Thatacharya of Visishtadwaita and Akshobhya Thirtha of Madhwamatha established a Hindu kingdom. It clearly depicts how these eminent scholars admirably conducted themselves in cordiality and mutual respect.

Interestingly, Kannada University at Hampi has named its campus as Vidyaranya and its Administrative building as Kriyashakti. Readers can check up the About Us page of the University.

With all this, its my conclusion that Vidyaranya and Kriyashakti are different and I personally don’t think that between c.1310 to c.1350 i.e. till the Vijayanagara is firmly established, no religious head would have engaged in polemical disputes as the very Dharma was at peril. The stark reality of 14th century during which carnage caused by Islam incursion is quite evident till this day stands testimony for this inference.

Evidences for the influence wielded by Kālamukhas in Vijayanagara Empire

David Lorenzen informs that the existence of Kālamukhas in South India goes back to 9th century AD and many inscriptions have been indentified to this effect. These inscriptions have been found from **Belagavi, Mysore and up to Mulbagal**. Few inscriptions have been found in **Kolar District** as well.

From the sheer geographical stretch of these inscriptions we can understand the spread of Kālamukhas throughout the Karnataka. According to an inscription belonging to 810AD, certain Kālamukha practitioners were operating from **Nandi Hills** (famous hill station & a most frequented tourist destination in Kolar Dist.)

The below mentioned inscription of Devarigi Yadavas exemplify the exalted status of Kriyāshaktis during 13th century.

ಶ್ರೀವಿದ್ಯಾ ವಶೋದ್ಭವರುಂ	[14] ಸುವರ್ಣಾ ಗರುಡದ್ವ(ಧ್ವ)ಜರುಂ	ಯಾದನಕುಲಕಮಕಳಕಾಂವಿಕಾಸಭಾಸ್ವರುಂ	ಯ(ಅ)-
[15] ರಿಯಾಯಜಗರುಂಪ(ಪಂ)	ವಾಳವಿ(ವ)ರಾಯಮದನಶ್ರೀಶೇತ್ರ(ತ್ರಂ)	ಸೂರ್ಜ್ಯರರಾಯಭಯಂಕರಂ	ಕೊಂ [16] ಕಣರಾಯಭಯು-
ಜ್ವರಂ \ ಚೋಟರಾಯದಿನಾ(ಶಾ)ಪಟ್ಟನುಂ	ತೇಲುಂಗರಾಯನಾ(ನ್ಯಾ)ಪನಾಜಾಯ್ಕ(ಯ್ಯಂ)	ಯ(ಅ)ರಿಬ [17] ಒತ್ತಿಪುರಶ್ರೀಶೇತ್ರಂ	
ವೇದೋದ್ಧಾರಕಂ	ನಿಖಿಳಧರಾಭಾರಂ	ರಾಜಮನೋಜಂ	ಯ(ಇ) [18] ಶ್ಯಾದಿನಾವಾಳನಮಾಳಂಕ್ರಿ(ಕ್ರ)ತ ಭುಜುಟ-
ಪ್ರಾತ್ಯ(ಫ)ಪ್ರಶಾಪಜಕ್ರನಕ್ರೀ	ಶ್ರೀಕಂ(ಕ) [19] ನ್ಧರಾಯರಾಜೋದಯ(ಯಂ)	ಚಂದ್ರಾಕೃತಾರಂ	ಬರಂ ದೇವಗಿರಿಯ
ನೇವೀದಿನೋಳ	ನುಖನಂ [20] [ಕಥಾ] ವಿನೋದದಿಂ	ರಾಜ್ಯಂಗಿಯುತ್ತಮಿರ	ಸ(ಶ)ಕವರ್ಷ ೧೦೨ ಫನೆಯ ವಿರೋ-
[21] ದಿಕ್ಪತ್ಸಂವತ್ಸರದ	ಜೇ(ಜೈ)ವ್ಯ(ವ್ಯ) ಬಹುಕ	ಯ(ಅ)ಮಾವಾಸ(ಸಿ)	ಸೂರ್ಯ್ಯಗ್ರಹಣ ಸು(ಶು)ಕ್ರವಾ-
[22] [ರದಂ]ದು	ಶ್ರೀಮತ ಸಂ(ಶಂ)ಕರನಾಮ್ಯರೂಪನೋಟ(ಃ)	ಕೊಂಡೀನಾ(ಶಾ)ನ್ಯದೇವಾಗೈ(ಜೈ)ಯಿಂ	ಕಾಮ-
[23] [ಕೋಧ]ಮದಾರ್ಥಿ(ತ್ಥ)ನೋಡಭಯರೋಭಂ	ದೂರ	ಸವ್ವೀರ್(ವ್ವೀರ್)ಸ(ತ್ವ)ನ(ರಂ)	ಧೀಮಾನ ಸದಗ(ಸು)-
ರುವಾದನಂ [24] [ದೇನ]	ತಪ(ಪ)ಶ್ರಿಂ(ಶ್ರಂ)ಗಾರನಂ	ಸಜ್ಜನಂ(ನ)ವ್ರೇಮಾಂಭೋನಿಧಿಯಂ	ಶ್ರಿಯಾಸ(ಶ)ಕ್ರಿಯಂ* ಬಂ-
ಸ್ಥಿ ಪ(ಪ್ಪ)ನಂ	[25] [ಬಣ್ಣಿ]ವಂ	ವಿ(ವ್ರ)ತಂ	ವಿನಯಾಂಭೋರಾಸಿ(ಶಿ)ಸವ್ವೀರ್ತ್ವರಯಶಿವಶಿವಶ್ರತ್ರಂ
ಶ್ರಿಯಾಸ(ಶ)ಕ್ರಿಯಾ [26] [ದಂ]	ತನಯಂ	ಸೋಮೇಶ್ವರಂ	ಸಜ್ಜನನಭನವದಾಂಭೋಜನೀವಾಸಮಗ್ರಂ
[27] ಸತ್ಯಮುಂ	ವಿಶ್ವತಶಿವತಪಮುಂ	ಭಾಗ್ಯಮುಂ	ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿಯೊಳ್ಳುಂ ಸನಮಾಗ್ಗಂ † ಬುಂ [28] [೩] ರಲ

* To be read, for the sake of the metre, as if written—ಕರಿತಿಯಂ.
 † To be read, for the sake of the metre, as written,— 'sanumārggam' for 'sanmārggam.'

(Page 35 – Inscriptions of Yadavas of Devagiri)

Further to this, a clinching evidence of the Kālamukha sect being flourished in Mulbagal region can be found from the below shown Kannada inscription of **Immadi Bukka Raya**, son of **Harihara II**. This inscription has been erected in the year 1390AD and was found on the southern wall of a ruined temple near **Lakshmi Narayana temple** located on the banks of **Shankara Tirtha** (south-east of Mulbagal town)

ಅದೇ ಶಂಕರತೀರ್ಥದ ಬಳಿ ಇರುವ ಪಾಳು ದೇವಾಲಯದ ಗೋಡೆ ಮೇಲೆ.

ಪ್ರಮಾಣ 7' 3" x 3' 4".

1 ಓಂನಮಃಃವಾಯ || ಪರಂನನಿಧಿಂಸಂನಿಧಿಯಃ

2 ಣ್ಯರವೀಶ್ವರಶ್ರೀಮನ್ಮಹಾಶಂಕರಃಶಂಕರೋಪು

3 ಶಕಾಬ್ದ ಭಾಜಿವಿಭವೇನಂವತ್ಸರೇಶ್ರಾವಣೇಮಾಸೇಽಠಾಸಿತಪಕ್ಷಮನ್ಮಠದಿನೇವಾರೇಭ್ಯಗೋಕೋಭನೇಪ್ರಾತಾಪೇಮಡಿಬು
ಭೂಪ

4 ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶಕ್ತಿ ರಿತ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾತಸ್ಯಗುರೋರ್ಗುರೋರಿವಸತಾಂಶಕ್ರೋಬ್ಯಧತ್ತ ಕ್ರಮಾತು || ಶ್ರೀಮತ್ಪಾದ(೦)ಬನೀಯಕೇಜನ

5 ಪದೇಕುಂವಾಯಿಪಲ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಯಾಖ್ಯಾತಂಗ್ರಾಮಮಸೇಪದಾನಸುಭಗೇಕಾಲೇತದಾನೀಂಶುಭೇವಿದ್ಯಾ

6 ಶಂಕರವಿಗ್ರಹಾಯಗುರವೇವಿದ್ಯಾಧಿಕವ್ಯಕ್ತ ಯೇಪ್ರಾತಾಪೇಮಡಿಬುಕ್ತ ಭೂಪತಿರಸೇಷೋಪಾಧಿಮುಕ್ತಂಮು

7 ದಾ || ಸ್ವಸ್ತಿ ಶ್ರೀಜಯಾಭ್ಯುದಯಶಕವರಾಪ ೧೩೯೦ ನೆಯಶುಕ್ಲ ಸಂವತ್ಸರದಆಷಾಢಬ ೪ ಶು ಶ್ರೀಮಂತ್ಯ(೦)ಹಾ

8 ರಾಜಾಧಿರಾಜರಾಜಪರಮೇಶ್ವರಶ್ರೀವೀರಹರಿಹರಮಹಾರಾಯರವರಕುಮಾರಶ್ರೀಮನ್ಮಹಾಮಂ

9 ಡಳೇಶ್ವರಂಶ್ರೀವೀರವಾಯಯಿಂಮಡಿಬುಕ್ತ ರಾಯಬಜೆಯರುವಿದ್ಯಾಶಂಕರವೇವರಿಗೆಕೊಟ್ಟದಾನಪತ್ರಶಾ

10 ಸನ್ನದಕ್ರಮವೆಂತೆಂದರೆಮುಳುವಾಯಿರಾಜ್ಯದಆವನಿನಾಡಕುಂವಾದೇವಿಯಹಳಿಯಗ್ರಾಮ

Lorenzen has mentioned this inscription in Page 162 of his book and commented as under:

Virūpākṣa.⁹⁴ An inscription of A.D. 1390 seems to record a grant by Immaḍi Bukka, son of Harihara II, to a shrine of Vidyāśaṅkara erected in memory of the guru Kriyāśakti, who had died the previous year.⁹⁵ Vidyāśaṅkarācārya was the title of the guru Vidyāraṇya's predecessor at Śringeri, Bhārati-Kṛṣṇa-Tīrtha. Another reading of this record, which is evidently badly edited, concludes that Immaḍi Bukka made his grant with the permission of, rather than in memory of, Kriyāśakti.⁹⁶ A grant of Harihara II dated A.D. 1384 states that the king listened to the teachings of both Vidyāraṇya and Kriyāśakti.⁹⁷ A grant issued in the year 1403 registers gifts of land both to Kriyāśakti-deva-rāya-voḍeyar and to the guru of the Śringeri maṭha.⁹⁸

The above inscription of Immaḍi Bukka confirms that Kālamukha sect had their center at Mulbagal and the head of this cult has been greatly revered by the then ruling Sangama dynasty of Vijayanagara.

I wish to present one more inscription from Sangama dynasty that has been erected in the year 1378AD in Chennarayaattana:

Date 1378 A. D.

(Nāgarī characters.)

Obeisance to Gaṇādhīpati. Praise of Śambhu. He who when drinking from his mother's breasts lets fall from the corners of his mouth two streams of milk that look like a garland for her, the milky froth round his lips resembling teeth,—the elephant-faced, may he grant pleasant good fortune to the three worlds. He who, as if in sport, when the Earth as though from shame had hidden herself in the ocean as if in a pond, lifted her up tenderly on his strong right tusk, and placed her, whose breasts were swelling as the mountains, on the couch of a lotus leaf,—the Boar, may he grant increase of wealth to the good.

In the Lunar race was born Yadu, in whose line was descended Saṅgama. He had five sons, like the five Pāṇḍavas, the eldest of whom was Haryapa, who appointed his younger brother Bukka-Rāja as Yuva-rāja. The rut from his elephants formed a stream as black as the Yamunā and filled the ocean, which other rivers could not do, else how could rain clouds be so black?

Having received from him the wealth of the empire, Bukka-Rāja in valour and glory eclipsed all past and future kings. When he was reigning, the earth brought forth abundantly, all troubles ceased, the people were happy and wealth increased. Having conquered all the world, he built a splendid city called the city of victory (Vijayanagari). Its fort walls were like arms stretching out to embrace Hēmakūṭa. The points of the battlements like its filaments, the suburbs like its blossom, the elephants like bees, the hills reflected in the water of the moat like stems,—the whole city resembled the lotus on which Lakshmi is ever seated. There, with the Tuṅgabhadra as his footstool, and Hēmakūṭa as his throne, he was seated like Virūpāksha for the protection of the people of the earth. The dwelling-place of justice and policy, an ornament to the Lakshmi of victory of the kingdom, was Muddapaḍḍanātha, his minister, the refuge of those who did obeisance, (his farther praises). Committing to him the burden of the world, the king Bukka remained at ease like Vāsudēva. The king Bukka's wife was Honnāyi, in accomplishments like the science of love, in wisdom like the vēdas; and though the king possessed many wives, she was the chief, and the fulfiller of his desires.

Then, like Harihara, their son Harihara was triumphant as a king. Inheriting from his father the wealth of the kingdom, together with the minister Mudda-daṇḍādhīpa, for the purpose of clearing away all darkness (or evil), he as king was the cause of joy to all the people. Virūpāksha himself as the supreme deity of his family, Kriyāśakty-āchārya as his family guru, and the minister able in protecting and punishing, did he inherit, along

The last but one sentence carries the name of **Kriyāshakty-acharya as the family guru of Harihara II.**

This inscription confirms that **Kriyāshakthi** was holding the position of **royal preceptor** and was enjoying the patronage of the then royal family. Also, the deep veneration of Sangama dynasty towards Kriyāshaktis can be understood from the 1390AD inscription of Mulbagal, wherein the then head of Kriyāshakthi Peetha has been hailed as **“Preceptor of Preceptors”**

‘ಕ್ರಿಯಾಶಕ್ತಿ ರಿತ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾತಸ್ಯಗುರೋರ್ಗುರೋರಿವಸತಾಂಶಕ್ತೋಬ್ಯುಧತ್ತ ಕ್ರಮಾತು || ಕ್ರೀಮತ್ಯಾಜ(೦)ಬನೀಯಕೇಜನ

The below mentioned excerpts from the **Annual Archeological Report of Mysore District, 1941** establish the fact that it was (were) Kriyāshakti(s) that was (were) revered as Rājaguru(s).

Evidence 1:

The importance of the record lies in its containing the gôtra and sūtra of the royal preceptor Kriyâsakti, not found so far in the inscriptions and literary references to that guru. He is stated in this record to belong to Kâsyapa-gôtra and to have been a follower of the Yajur Vêda. He is also honoured in this record with the appellation bhuvana-guru or world-preceptor. Among the other donees are some names ending in ârâdhya (cp E C XI, Davangere 23 of 1410).

Kriyâsakti was a famous teacher who belonged to the Suddha Śaiva sect of Śaivism, evidently the same as the Kâlâmukha sect

Evidence 2:

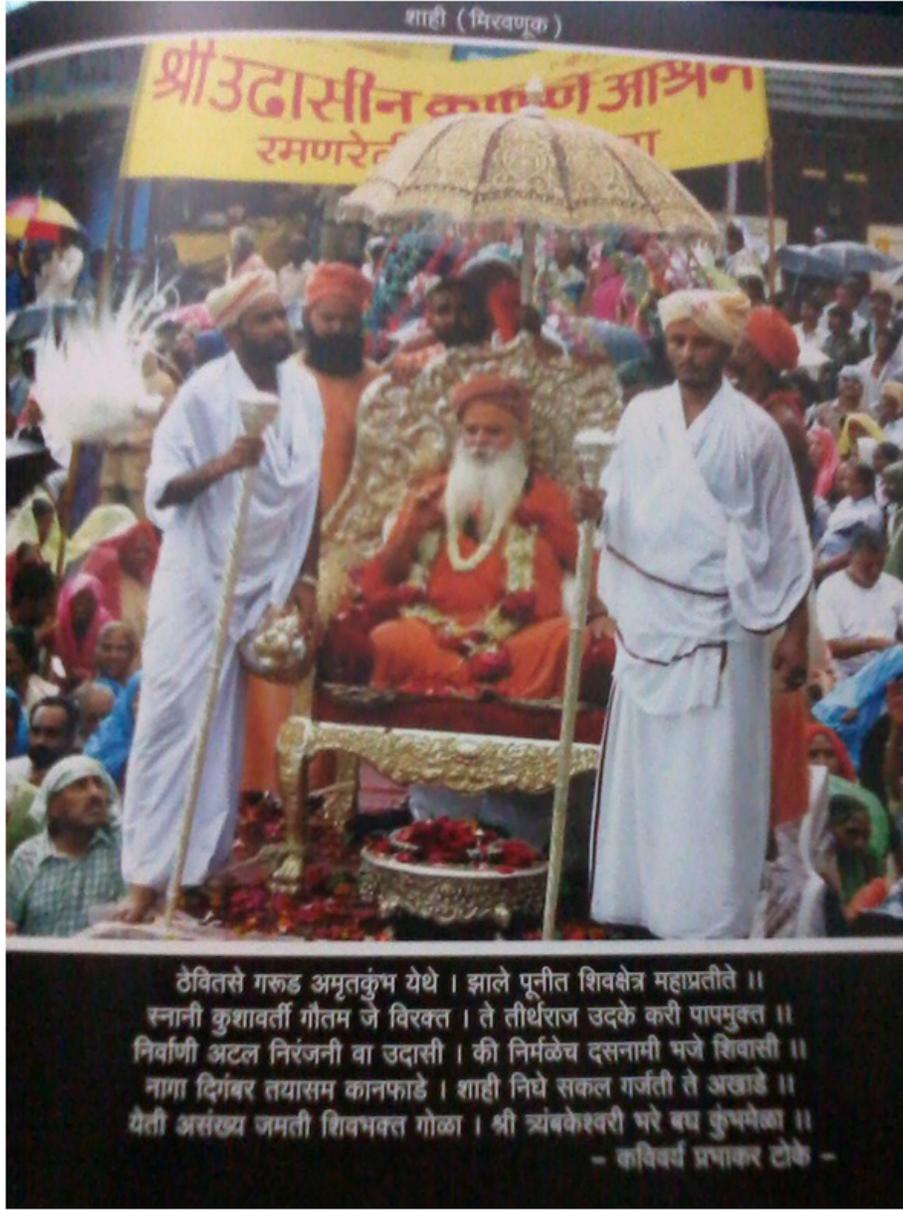
VII Shikarpur 281) A copper plate grant of Harihara II dated 1378 speaks of Kriyâsaktiâchârya as the kula guru (family preceptor) of the king (E.C V, Channarayapatna 256) The Gadag Plates of Harihara II, dated 1379, refer to a grant made by the king at the instance of his preceptor srimad rajaguru mahamandalacharya Vanivilâsa Kriyâsakti. This is believed to be different from Kâsi Vilâsa Kriyâsakti (M E R 1925, p 88)

Evidence 3:

After this we have two copper plates of Harihara, dated 1398 and 1399 which also praise Harihara II as the worshipper of the feet of râja-râja-guru-pitâmaha Kriyâsaktidêva who was the worshipper of the feet of Svayambhu Triyambakadêva (M A.R. 1912, P 47).

It must be noted here that the terms "mahā manDalEshwara" cited in Evidence 2 clearly points towards the 'Akhāda' culture of Veerashaiva sects of North India. A mahā manDalEshwara in Akhāda tradition is equivalent to a Peethadhipati in South Indian tradition. Thus the connection between Kālamukha and the weapon wielding, militant Saiva sects of North Indian Akhādas can be established without any doubt. Also, the mention of 'Svayambhu Triyambakadeva' as shown in Evidence 3 further substantiates that the Kālamukhis of Karnataka were having their roots in Trimbakeshwar near Nashik, Maharashtra which has got maximum number of Akhadas in India.

Hereunder I am quoting from a Maratha book called "Trayambakam Gautami Thate" which lists the staunch Saiva Akhādās at Trimbakeshwar that are active to this day. Read the Maratha text given below the image that is self-explanatory:



(Page 67 – Trayambakam Gautami Thate: 2013 Edition – Rajesh Suresh Dixit)

It appears that the Kriyāshaktis of Vijayanagara were part of those militant Nāga Sadhu type of North Indian Akhādās that have not gone well with the extremely Vaidic community of South India. This also can contribute to the dogma of Kālamukhas of South being branded as ‘Avadikas.’”

Alongside of the above, I wish to furnish the extract of Dharwad District Gazette that confirms Kriyashaktis as Gurus of Sangama Dynasty

THE VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE

The Vijayanagar Empire was founded in 1336 A.D. and it is a popular belief that Vidyanarya helped it founded. But the founders of the Empire, the Sangama brothers-Harihara and Bukka asserted their authority only in 1346 A.D. when they made a grant to the pontiff of Sringeri, Bharatiteertha. That was the year when Virupaksha Ballala had expired. Still both Harihara and Bukka called themselves only as 'Mahamandaleshwaras'. The title 'Rajadhiraja' indicative of paramount power was assumed by Bukka's son Harihara II. Thus it is not possible to say that the empire was founded in 1336 A.D. But this is the traditionally accepted date.

The Sangamas were the followers of the Kalamukha sect. Kashivilasa Kriyashakti was their 'guru'. It is surmised that there must be very strong reasons for the Sangama brothers for making grants to Bharatiteertha Swamiji (1346 A.D.), a pontiff of the Dharmapeetha of Sringeri established by Shankaracharya, for pursuing his religious activities (*anushthana*). It is said that a further grant was made by Krishnayitayi also called as Kikkayitayi who was the Queen of Hoysala King Ballala-III to this Swamiji in 1346 A.D., who was displaced by the raids of the Delhi Sultans with a view to help and enable him to settle down in Sringeri. Perhaps Vidyanarya, who was a disciple of this Mutt must have rendered some help to the Sangama brothers in their political activities. Later in the days of Bukka and Harihara II, Vidyanarya and his brother Sayanacharya took the lead in writing the commentaries on the Vedas called '*Vedartha Prakasha*'; and Vidyanarya wrote '*Parashara Madhaviya*', among other

(Page 72 of Chapter 2 – History of Dharwad, Dharwad Dist Gazette as put up in Dist's official website)

Last but not least, now I wish to quote Madhura Vijaya, a historical work by Gangadevi, wife of Kumara Kampana who drove away the Muslim marauders from Srirangam and other parts of present day Tamil Nadu.

HISTORICAL VALUE. Let us now proceed to examine critically the contents of the poem and show their great value for the construction of the history of the Vijayanagara kingdom for a short time after its foundation.

Be it noted that the invocations at the commencement of the work are addressed to Ganesa, then to Parvati and Paramesvara and then to the guru Kriyasakti. Kriyasakti was a famous Saiva teacher and a Kulaguru of the kings of the first Vijayanagara dynasty. He was held in very high esteem and veneration by them, as is evident from the way in which he is referred to in the inscriptions of Harihara II,

“विरूपाक्षः साक्षात् कुलपरमदेवं कुलगुरुः

क्रियाशक्त्याचार्यः कलिकलभकण्ठीरवयशाः”

“श्रीक्रियाशक्तिदेवदिव्यश्रीपादपद्मः राधकः श्रीवीरहरिहरमहाराजः”

(Page 8 – Introduction – Madhura Vijaya by Gangadevi – Edited by G. Harihara Sastri & V. Srinivasa Sastri – Pub in 1924)

From the contemporary writing of 14th century and by a member of Sangama family I don't think further more evidences are needed to know the influence wielded by Kriyashakti Kalamukhas during first dynastic rule of Vijayanagara.

Thus my supposition that Akshobhya Tirtha must have debated with Mādhava Mantrin at Mulbagal stands ratified in light of the above Archeological, Epigraphical and Gazette's information.

Evidences from Literary Sources for Kriyashaktis' Presence at Vijayagara Court

The famous Telugu poet Kavisārvabhauma Srinātha (15th century AD) who was the poet laureate of Reddy Kings of Kondavidu mentions a particular Kriyāshakti Acharya in his chATu poem.

దీనారటంకాల దీర్ఘమాడించితి
దక్షిణాధీశు ముత్యాలశాల,
పలుకు తోడై తాండ్రభాషా మహాకావ్య
వైషధగ్రంథ సందర్భమునకు,
పగులగొట్టించి తుద్భట వివాద ప్రౌడి
గౌడ డిండిమభట్టు కంచుడక్క,
చంద్రభూష క్రియాశక్తి రాయలయొద్ద
పాదుకొల్పితి సార్యభౌమ బిరుద,
మెటుల మెప్పించెదో నన్ను నింకమీద
రావు సింగ మహీపాలు ధీవిశాలు
నిండుకొలువున నెలకొనియుండి నీవు
సకల సద్గుణ నికురంబ! శారదాంబ!

Srinātha says that it was “**చంద్రభూష క్రియాశక్తి**” who gave the title “శవీసావర్ణభౌమ” to him in the court of Devarāya – II. In fact, Srinātha Kavi was a staunch Virashaiva follower.

Here an important question may arise that **were Kālamukhas engaged in any religious debates as their parent sect i.e. Pāshupatha never built any Matha nor maintained Gurukulas?**

For an answer to this question, I wish to quote David Lorenzen’s following statement:

The Kālamukhas are frequently extolled for their debating skill, but most of their debates—like that between Bonteyamuni and some rival logicians¹³²—seem to have been peaceful ones.

With all these various evidences I have concluded that Akshobhya Tirtha had a debate with Mādhava Mantrin who has been called as ‘Avaidikottama’ and ‘Avaidikagryam’ by then Mādhva writers.

Doubtful claim of Vidyāranya as Rajaguru of Sangama dynasty

All the inscriptions, archeological and gazettes and the salutations and appellations awarded to Kālamukha Kriyāshaktis presented in the above chapters can pose a serious question as to “**who, in reality, was (were) the royal preceptor(s) for Sangama dynasty?**” Was it Vidyāranya as Advaitins claim through their legends or Kriyāshakti(s) whose direct references are overwhelmingly available in inscriptions & literature that are contemporaneous to the Sangama dynasty?

The extract of Dharwad Dist Gazetteer makes it clear that Advaitins claim of Vidyāranya’s Rājagurutva is unsubstantiated. In Page 73 of the same gazetteer, it is mentioned that the Sangama emperors have persuaded great scholars such as Vidyāranya and Sāyana to build repositories of Vedic wisdom such that its extinction in the hands of Muslim marauders could be averted.

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things elaborating the principles of polity, and they must have guided these rulers about the objectives of founding the new empire.

When the founders of Vijayanagar had been fully convinced of the threat posed by the Delhi Sultans to the Indian way of life and culture, they took the initiative to protect all religious cults. They put an end to the political vacuum created in the South. (The encouragement and the urge to Vidyāranya to compile 'Sarva Darshana Sangraha' and Sayana to compile works like 'Yajnyatantra Sudhanidhi', 'Prayashchitta Sudhanidhi', 'Ayurveda Sudhanidhi' and other such compendia by the Emperors has to be viewed in this background of protecting and conserving the Indian tradition).

But some Advaitins argue that Vidyāranya became Rājaguru after the death of Kriyāshakthi Pandita who mentored Sangama dynasty and Mādhava Mantri. But according to the 1390AD inscription of Immadi Bukka Raya, it becomes evident that a specific **Kriyāshakthi Pandita had died in 1389AD**. Read the following narration of David Lorenzen on this inscription:

An inscription of A.D. 1390 seems to record a grant by Immadi Bukka, son of Harihara II, to a shrine of Vidyāśaṅkara erected in memory of the guru Kriyāśakti, who had died the previous year.⁹⁵ Vidyāśaṅkarācārya was the title of the guru Vidyāranya's predecessor at Śriṅgeri, Bhārati-Kṛṣṇa-Tīrtha.

It is accepted by all the stakeholders that Vidyāranya attained **videha mukti** in the year **1387AD**. If Kriyāshakthi Pandita, the Rajaguru of Sangama dynasty, had passed away in 1389AD, then Vidyāranya does not stand to become Rājaguru as he himself left the world two years before Kriyāshakthi i.e. in 1387AD.

If that Kriyāshakthi Pandita mentioned in 1390AD inscription of Mulbagal has also been the mentor of Mādhava Mantri then it becomes clear that Vidyāranya had never been a royal preceptor as claimed by the Advaitins.

Also, the 1378AD inscription of Chennarayapattana clearly shows that Kriyāshakthi was still being hailed as Rājaguru even while Vidyāranya was alive and seated in his hermitage at Hampi. This also points towards a supposition that Vidyāranya had never been a full time Rājaguru of Sangama dynasty!

With these epigraphic and archeological evidences I have arrived at a conclusion that Kriyāshakthis have been the royal preceptors for Sangama dynasty at least up to the time of Harihara II and Vidyāranya could have been honoured by the royal dynasty as a great intellect but not as their royal preceptor or guardian saint.

This understanding gives rise to my earlier observation that the purported “tattvamasī” debate must have occurred between Akshobhya and Mādhava Mantri as the latter had been hailed as the “**Establisher of the path of Upanishads**” and also tried to elevate Kālamukha as a Vedic cult. Hence this Mādhava Mantri must have been the “ಅವೈದಿಕಾಗ್ರಂಥಂ” or in simple terms the “**Avaidika Vidyāranya**” as he belonged to a cult that had been labeled as “**Atimārgika**” i.e. Away from the [accepted] path.

This supposition gains more weight for the irrefutable fact that the pontiffs of Kālamukha cult were the actual royal preceptors of the then Vijayanagara royal family.

The said defeat of an Avaidika scholar (Mādhava Mantri) must be treated as the defeat of the cult’s head himself. Thus the grandeur of Akshobhya’s win over a Rājaguru of that time would never get diminished or demeaned even if we accept Mādhava Mantri as Avaidika Vidyāranya. And I am of strong belief that for this great achievement of his guru that Sri Jayatirtha had praised Sri Akshobhya with as eloquent term as “ದರ್ವಾದಿ ವಿದಾರಣ ದಕ್ಷದೀಕ್ಷಃ”

Madhva Vijaya and Usage of word “Avadika” to refer Advaita:

So far my argument on the extrapolation of “Avaidika” word was based on the inscriptions and other scriptural references. But as I was discussing this topic with other learned pundits one of them has given me a ‘fore-part-of-the-debate’ (pUrva paksha) that Sri Narayana Panditacharya (NP) in his Sri Madhva Vijaya (SMV) has called Advaitins as Avaidikas. He quoted the following shloka from Prathama Sarga:

ಅವೈದಿಕಂ ಮಾಧ್ಯಮಿಕಂ ನಿರಸ್ತಂ
ನಿರೀಕ್ಷ್ಯ ತತ್ಪಕ್ಷ ಸುಪಕ್ಷಪಾತಿ
ತಮೇವ ಪಕ್ಷಂ ಪ್ರತಿಪಾದುಕೋಽಸೌ
ನೈರೂಪನ್ಮಾರ್ಗಮಿಹಾನುರೂಪಮ್ (1/50)

Here the word “ಅವೈದಿಕಂ” denotes Advaita while “ಮಾಧ್ಯಮಿಕಂ” signifies Bauddha religion. Thus, the pundit said that the SMV can successfully nullify my arguments.

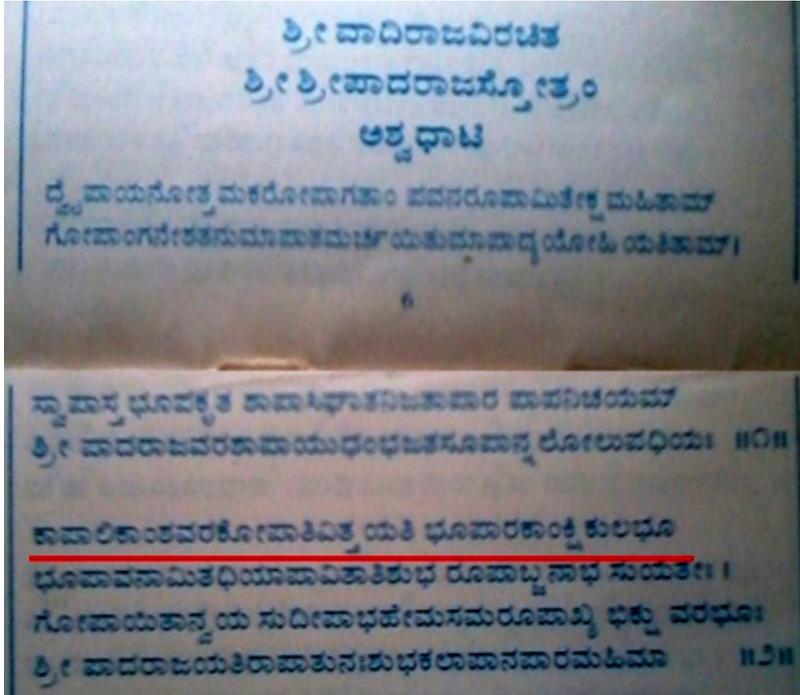
As SMV being the irrefutable and accurate biography having written during the life time of Acharya Madhva, its contents and the veracity can never be ignored. I have spent many an hour to understand the nuances of Narayana Panditacharya and have discussed with scholars to remove the traces of my own ignorance from the subject matter and thereafter have finally arrived at the following conclusion:

- The usage of “Avadika” for Advaitins by NP in SMV is from the theological angle only and not from worldly view.
- Advaitins, though ‘deviate’ from the final teachings of Vedas i.e. Dvaita, never refute Vedas nor criticize them and not even undermine their importance in understanding the *Brahman*.
- Advaitins do generally follow the Vedic procedures and practices such as Shodasha Samskaras.
- To given an example for their adherence to Vedic practices, during Upakarma, Advaitins also make a Sankalpa as “ಶ್ರೌತ ಸ್ಮಾರ್ತ ಕರ್ಮಾನುಷ್ಠಾನ ಯೋಗ್ಯತಾ ಸಿದ್ಧಿ ಧ್ವಂ .”
- **Thus they are not ‘Avadikas’ in their worldly affairs.**
- While deciphering the real purports of Vedas, they claim certain things that are not agreed to by Dvaita.
- The contradictions of Advaitins in their worldly practice of Vedic teachings and their theological interpretations are well known.
- From this standpoint, NP called Advaitins as Avadika as there is a disconnection between what they preach and practice.
- **On the other hand, the rigid Saivites such as Kalamukhas did not adhere to any Vedic practices or procedures nor have they held Vedas as paramount. Instead they followed a man-made Lakulisa Agama. Also, they had some socially boycotted practices as part of their ‘Sadhana.’**

- Thus there is a great difference between Saivites and Advaitins as the former is Avidika by all means while the latter is Vaidika in worldly affairs but 'Avadika' in theological terms.

Continued trail of Kāplikās during Sripadaraya's time

Sri Sripadaraja Stotram written by Sri Vādiraja clearly exhibits the existence of Kāpalikās in Mulbagal region during Sripadaraya's life time. The following underlined portion of the stotra supplies this all important information:



In the above stotra, Vādiraja informs that Sripādarāya has defeated a great Kāpālika scholar whose extreme asset was “Anger” (ಶೋಪಾತಿವಿತ್ತ). We can see the evidences for this narrative in the present day Sripādarāya Matha at Narasimha Tirtha which features Saiva insignia and sculptures.



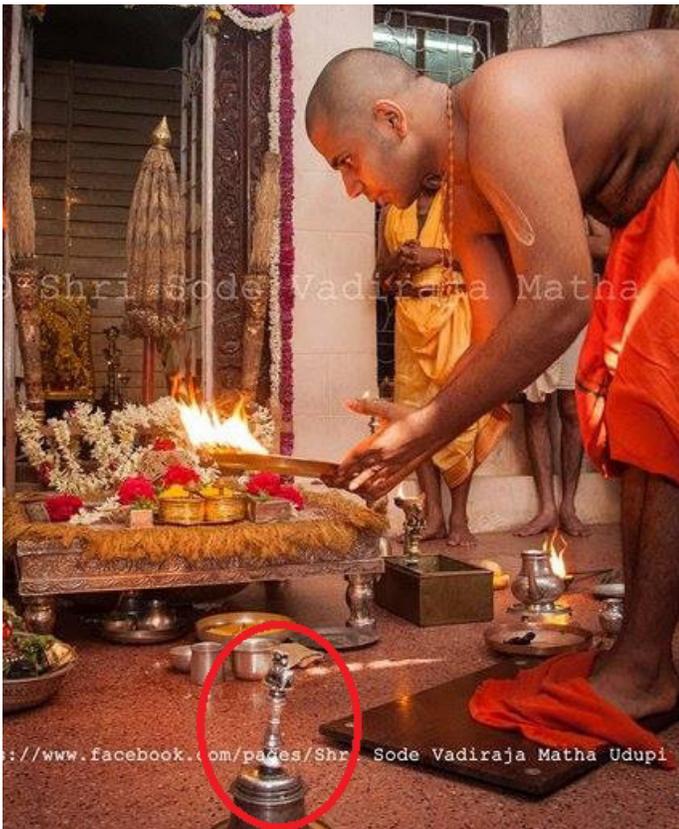
The above image has been taken from photo gallery of Sripadaraja Matha's official website and some of the Saivite carvings have been marked in red. Following are the close-up images of the two pillars that contain the marked images in the above photograph.



The striking feature of these images is the Shiva Linga and being worshipped by a snake, a lion, a cow and a monkey. Other images such as the Dancing Shiva and a cross legged mendicant in sitting posture also point towards Saiva culture. A detailed study must be conducted in deciphering this iconography of Kāpālikas.

These images and many others carved on the other faces of these pillars confirm that the place was once used by Saivite followers. (For more images please see Appendix – I) Therefore this ancient structure had been a Kāpālika Matha that has been forfeited to Sripādarāya after their defeat with him in polemical debates.

Dvaita's victory against Avidika cults has not stopped with Sripādarāya but continued with his disciple Vyāsatirtha who defeated a Lingayat scholar "Suri Linganna" and received an emerald Shiva linga as a gift. Usually, Mādhvas don't worship Shiva in Linga form but in Vyāsarāja Matha this Shiva linga is being worshipped as a token of remembrance of Vyāsatirtha's victory. Similarly, in Sode Vādiraja Matha, the pontiff uses a Basavana Gante (a bell embellished with Bull on top) which is squarely in contrast with Mukhyaprāna Gante (bell with Hanuman with folded alms). This Basava bell was belonging to a Veerashaiva scholar whom Vādiraja defeated and started using it upon the request made by the defeated Veerashaiva.



With all these archeological evidences, it can be understood that Mādhva Yatis were consistently had debates with Veerashaivas alongside of Advaitins and the memorabilia of Veerashaivas are in vogue to this day in the respective Mādhva Matha.

Now, I wish to present an epigraphic evidence to prove that the today's Sripādarāya Matha at Narasimha Tirtha was belonging to Kāpālikas. Below shown inscription found in Sri Venkateshwara temple of Kurijili village, Vayalpad Taluq, Chittoor Dist of Andhra Pradesh. This inscription belongs to Sripadaraya's time and makes a curious reference to his Matha.

ಮನೆಯನೂಕಟ್ಟುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಸ್ಥಳವನೂ ತೋರಿಸಿ ಕೊಡಲುಳವರು ಆ ವೊಕಲ ಕಯಲ
ಮನೆದೇಹಿ

೧೯ ಬಟ ಬಡಾರ ಕಾಣಿಕೆ ಕಂದಾಯ ಎನನೂ ನಾಲುಕೊಳ ಸಲದು ಯೀ ಕಟ್ಟು ಗೊಡಗಿ
ಗದೆ ಹೊಲಲು ನಿವುಗೆ ಆಚಂದ್ರಾಕ್ಯಸ್ಥಾಯಿಆಗಿ ನಿಂವು ಪುತ್ರಪವು
(ಪರಂ)ಪರಂಪರಾಭಿಲ್ಯಧಿಯಾಗಿ ದಾನ ವಿಕ್ರಯಂ ಗಳಗೆ ಯೋಗ್ಯವಹಂತಾಗಿ ಸಲಲುಳ

೨೦ ಎಂದು ವೊಡಂಬಟು ಕೊಟ ಕಟ್ಟುಗೊಡಗೆಯ ಸಾಧನಯಂ ತೊಪುದರೆ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿಗ
ಮುಳುವಾಗಿಲ ಕಲಮರದ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೀನಾರಾಯಣ ತೀರ್ಥ ಶ್ರೀಪಾದವೊಡೆಯರು ಅಂದ
ವೊಡೆಯರ ಮಕಳು ದೇವರಾಯಗಳು ಲಬಪ-

೧ ಗಳ ಮಕಳು ಅಚಯ ತಿಂಮಣಗಳು ಕಾಲುನಾಥ ದೇವಗಳ ಮಕಳು ಚೆನಯ
ಯಂತಿವರು ಭಯಾನುಮತದಿಂ ಪುಟರಸರ ಮಗ ದೇವರಸನು ಸುಹಸ್ತದ ವೊಪ
ನಾರಸಿಹ್ವ ಕಾಣಿಯಾಚಿ -

೨ ಕಾಣ ನಂಬಗಳವೊಪ್ಪಗಳು ಅಪಚಿಯ ಬರಹ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿಗಳ ವೊಪಗಳು ವೊಡೆಯರ
ದೇವರಾಯಗಳ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿ ತಿಂಮಯನ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿ.

೩ ಶ್ರೀ ಕದಿರಿ ನಾರಸಿಹ್ವ ಮಂಗಳ ಮಹಾಶ್ರೀ ಶ್ರೀ ಶ್ರೀ

Here **Sripadaraya's Matha** has been called as **"Kala Matha"**(ಕಲ ಮಠ) which must be a variant of **"Kallu Matha"** (ಕಲ್ಲು ಮಠ) meaning a religious institution constructed with stones.

It is a well known fact that all Mādhva Mathas are named after the place or person but have never been called with objects such as stone. On the other hand, many Veerashaiva Mathas have such names that are prevalent to this day. Thus it can be confirmed that the place where the present Sripādarāya's Matha is existing at Narasimha Tirtha has been won by Sripādarāya from Kāpālikās who's Matha was being called as "Kallu Matha." The Saivite images carved on some of the ancient pillars of Sripādarāya Matha stand testimony for this narration.

Here I wish to highlight a quite heartening feature of Sripādarāya Matha successors. The subsequent seers of Sripādarāya have left these Kāpālika carvings untouched. Their great gesture has proved two worthy traits of Dvaitins i.e. (1) tolerance towards other religions and (2) a sense of historicity to keep those carvings as the living testimony of Sripādarāya's greatest achievement.

On the contrary, defacing of the carvings on the Brindavana-in-question on the back cover page of VP's SJMBM has left a bitter taste.



When seen in the light of how Sripadaraya Matha seers have left the Avidika carvings to bear a testimony of their history, I severely condemn the highly deplorable act of defacing the carvings done on back cover of VP's book. VP can't get away by saying that this shameful act has been done by someone else. The buck stops at him as he is the author, editor and publisher of SJMBM and so can't escape from the responsibility of removing the images from the photograph.

Going back to the core topic, with the archeological evidences at Sripadaraya Matha and with the literary evidence furnished by Vadiraja it can be confirmed that Mulbagal was a hot seat of hardcore, rigid Saivites such as Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas than being an active religious center of Advaitins. Hence it is but logical to arrive at a conclusion that Sri Akshobhya Tirtha visited Mulbagal to get engaged in a debate with a Kālamukha scholar and in this process he drew God Narasimha on boulder. Narasimha is the Bimba Rupa of Mahā Rudra whom Kālamukhas worship as the Supreme Godhead and thereby the Narasimha drawing made by Akshbhya Tirtha on the banks of Narasimha Tirtha is well placed with the context and content.

Vidyāranya's tryst with Jayatirtha - Evidences from Dāsa Sāhitya:

In order to come to a logical conclusion about the truth in Akshobhya-Vidyāranya debate, so far, I have extensively used various Archeological and Epigraphic records and the books written for and against the purported debate.

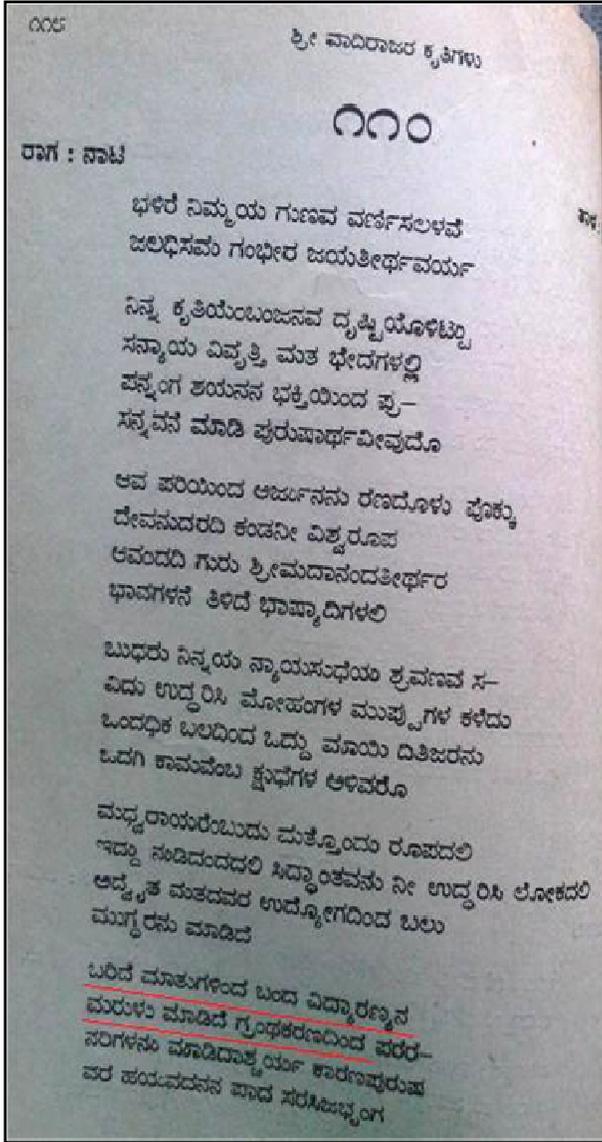
Subsequently, I have tried to look for some clues in Dāsa Sāhitya as it has been the most widely used tool by the Dvaita School to spread its message in the masses. In this connection, I have looked to the *kritis* on Sri Jayatirtha by referring to the following Dāsa greats:

1. Sri Vādiraja Tirtha
2. Sri Purandara Dāsa
3. Sri Kanaka Dāsa

The reason for which I have chosen the above is that they were the most popular and prolific kritikārās in Kannada language and have been known for their accuracy and *eye-for-things*. Also, all of them were closely associated with Vijayanagara Empire and Hampi. They have traveled extensively and more importantly to Tirumala which can be accessed through Mulbagal.

It has been found that Purandara and Kanaka have not written much about Jayatirtha but Vādiraja wrote two *kirtanas*.

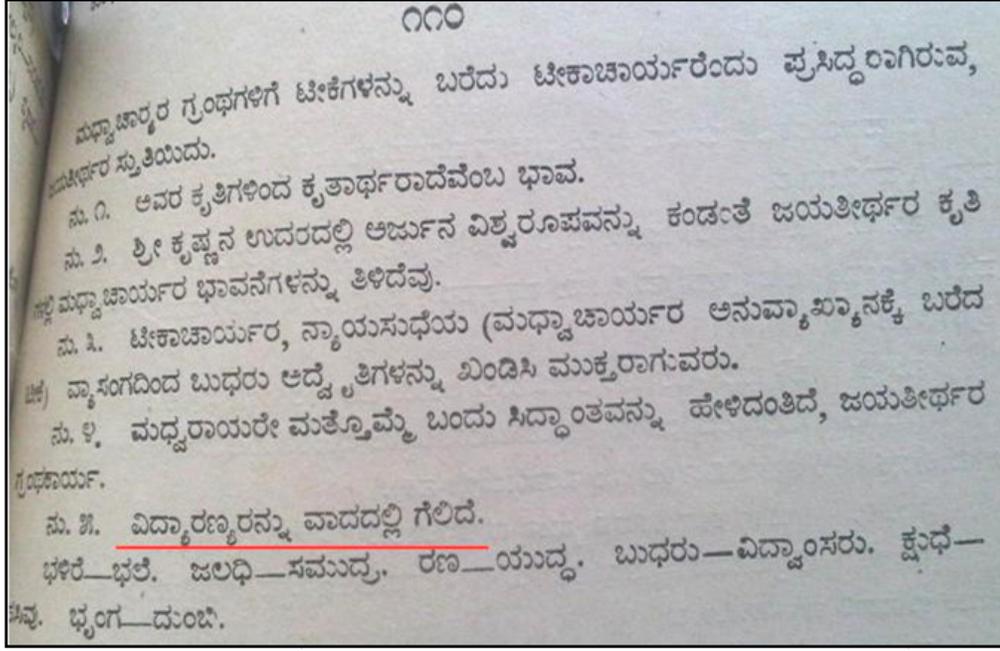
In these two kirtanas one was a regular kriti written with traditional fervor and eulogizes Jayatirtha with all adjectives that befit his accomplishments. But the following kirtana is the crucial one which spills beans about Akshobhya – Vidyāranya debate. Hereunder is the reproduction of the kriti from [Sri Vādirajara Kritigalu](#), published by the Mysore University under the editorship of Dr. Nagaratna.



A rough English translation of the underlined text is as under:

“[with your] skillful works you have infatuated Vidyāranya who came [to you] with empty words.”

The editorial team of this compilation has given the following meaning to this stanza:



Thus the last stanza says it all!

It is Jayatirtha with whom Vidyāranya interacted and got becharmed by the authorship of the former. Sri Vādiraja did not mince his words like how he did in Tirtha Prabandha and has not concealed the incident but made it crystal clear.

If the debate between Akshobhya and Vidyāranya had been a truth then Vādiraja would have credit Akshobhya Tirtha too but here he gave the credit to Jayatirtha alone. Should this not be treated as yet another clarification that Vādirajaru is offering to us to know the truth in its originality?

Alongside of this I wish to quote the very Dāsa Sāhitya evidence that Malkhed supporters extensively use i.e. “ಟೀಕಾರಾಯರ ಪಾದ ಸೋಕಿದ ಕೊನೆ ಧೂಳಿ...” The very first stanza of this kirtana reads as:

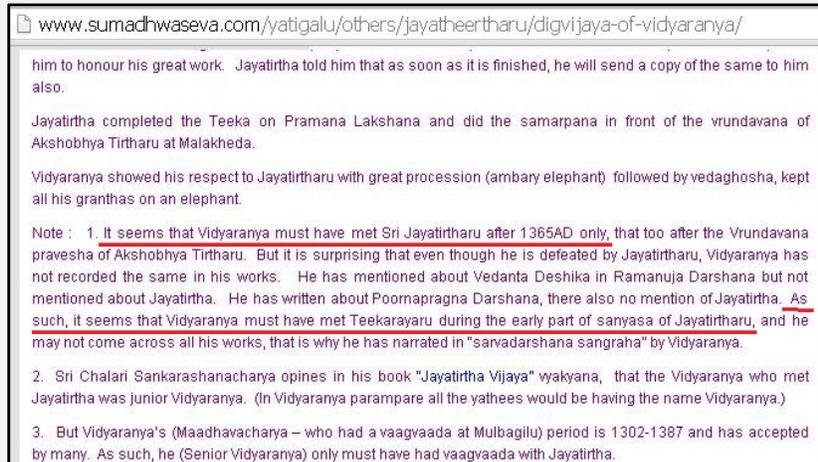
ಮಧ್ವಮತವೆಂಬೋ ದುಗ್ಡಾಭಿಯೊಳು
 ಉದ್ಧವಿಸಿದ ಚಂದ್ರನೋ
 ಅದ್ವೈತ ಮತ ವಿಪಿನ ಭೇದ ಕುಠಾರಾ
 ವಿದ್ಯಾರಣ್ಯನ ಗರ್ವಕ್ಕೆ ಪರಿಹಾರಾ

Thus even Vijayadāsarū too has upheld the same fact that Vādiraja mentioned in his kriti that it is with Jayatirtha to whom Vidyāranya lost supremacy.

Here the moot issue that must be understood is **when did Vidyāranya meet with Jayatirtha?** This question has been discussed in detail in the previous eBook but I am reproducing the same text here for ready reference of the readers.

Thus in all probability Vidyāranya must have met with Jayatirtha before c.1365 and not anytime later to this. At this time Jayatirtha might have not yet completed his Nyaya Sudha but would be in the process of writing it. Hence the purported debate between Jayatirtha and Vidyāranya needs a thorough investigation.

Narahari Sumadhwa of Sumadhwiseva.com opines that Vidyāranya must have met Jayatirtha after c.1365 but strangely contradicts by offering another opinion that the said meeting might have happened during early years of Jayatirtha's ascendance i.e. in c.1365 during which Yaragola has gone in to Bahamanis!



The screenshot shows a webpage with the URL www.sumadhwiseva.com/yatigalu/others/jayatheertharu/digvijaya-of-vidyaranya/. The text on the page includes:
him to honour his great work. Jayatirtha told him that as soon as it is finished, he will send a copy of the same to him also.
Jayatirtha completed the Teeka on Pramana Lakshana and did the samarpana in front of the vrundavana of Akshobhya Tirtharu at Malakheda.
Vidyaranya showed his respect to Jayatirtharu with great procession (ambary elephant) followed by vedaghosha, kept all his granthas on an elephant.
Note : 1. It seems that Vidyaranya must have met Sri Jayatirtharu after 1365AD only, that too after the Vrundavana pravesha of Akshobhya Tirtharu. But it is surprising that even though he is defeated by Jayatirtharu, Vidyaranya has not recorded the same in his works. He has mentioned about Vedanta Deshika in Ramanuja Darshana but not mentioned about Jayatirtha. He has written about Poornapragna Darshana, there also no mention of Jayatirtha. As such, it seems that Vidyaranya must have met Teekarayaru during the early part of sanyasa of Jayatirtharu, and he may not come across all his works, that is why he has narrated in "sarvadarshana sangraha" by Vidyaranya.
2. Sri Chalarī Sankarashanacharya opines in his book "Jayatirtha Vijaya" vyakhyana, that the Vidyaranya who met Jayatirtha was junior Vidyaranya. (In Vidyaranya parampare all the yathees would be having the name Vidyaranya.)
3. But Vidyaranya's (Maadhavacharya – who had a vaagvaada at Mulbagilu) period is 1302-1387 and has accepted by many. As such, he (Senior Vidyaranya) only must have had vaagvaada with Jayatirtha.

In lieu of such contradictions, I have tried to build a simulation for this Jayatirtha-Vidyāranya meet which is as under:

In the biography of Sri Vidyāranya posted in Sringeri Peetha's official website, it is said that Sri Vidyāranya has undertaken a pilgrimage to Kashi but rushed back to Sringeri as the then pontiff Sri Bharati Tirtha has sensed his death and wanted Vidyāranya to come back forthwith. This is the only travel of Vidyaranya that is cited in that short biography. With this alone one may not be able to make an assertion but I have tried to build the simulation with this fractured info:

- The time line of Bharati Tirtha is c.1333-1380.
- Vidyāranya ascended Sringeri Peetha in c.1380.
- Assuming that Vidyāranya might have undertaken pilgrimage a year or so before c.1380 then his journey would have begun in c.1379.
- By making a wild assumption that he would have undertaken pilgrimage to North five years prior to his ascendancy for all sorts of 'Vadaas' & 'Digvijayas' then the year would be c.1375.
- The purported meeting of Vidyāranya and Jayatirtha might have occurred during this travel.
- The political situation says that by c.1375 Yaragola was under Bahamani Sultanate. (*which can negate the possibility of Sri Jayatirtha staying in Yaragola at this time*)
- Muhammad Shah Bahamani died in c.1375 and Mujahid Shah (c.1375-78) sat on the throne and his reign was full of pitched battles with Vijayanagara particularly in Telangana areas (*again ruling out the possibility of Sri Jayatirtha staying in Yaragola*).
- After Mujahid's murder in c.1378 Mahmood Shah I ascended and ruled the sultanate till c.1397. (As per Sringeri and Hampi Vidyāranya Matha's websites *Vidyāranya appeared to have not undertaken any major travel between c.1380 – 87 i.e. till his demise. Thus ruling out the meeting with Sri Jayatirtha during this period.*)
- On the other hand, Jayatirtha would have been in Hampi or Aneondi between c.1370-88 as he might have moved there owing to the political insecurity and religious proselytization in Telangana region including the areas of Yaragola & Malkheda.
- It has been witnessed in above paras that Vidyāranya spent his last years in Hampi by building an Ashram for himself.
- So, in this period i.e. between c.1370-87 only there are some chances for both of them coming face-to-face.
- If this becomes true then the presence of Sri Jayatirtha in Hampi or Aneondi areas gets confirmed.

All said and done the purported meeting of Vidyāranya and Jayatirtha is another confusion that needs thorough probe[...]

Vedanta Deshika's Judgment – A Myth of Confounded Identity!

Another important character in this episode is Sri Vedanta Deshika of Shrivaisnava school of Vedanta. An impartial assessment of his life history, epigraphy and archeological evidences can lead us to know whether he was really involved in the disputation of Akshobhya and Vidaranya as judge. This chapter shall briefly discuss the important and critical anecdotes of Vedanta Deshika.

It is quite striking to note that majority of the ancient Madhva authors be it Vyasatirtha, direct disciple of Jayatirtha or Chalari Sankarshanacharya or Narayanacharya of Sri Raghavendra Vijaya did not give out the name of Vedanta Desika as the Judge. This reference comes only in Vedanta Desika Vaibhava Prakashika written by Srinivasa Mahasuri alias Doddaiyachar who hailed from Sholingar (Ghatikachala) and lived during 16th century. This sole reference is making it as a one-sided story. It must be noted that this story has been picked up by the Madhva writers of our time only. This selection of Srinivasa Mahasuri's narration is in contrast with the earlier Madhva writers. This difference in approach towards Vedanta Desika should not be taken lightly.

As far as the books and articles that I have read in good numbers about Vedanta Desika quote "Vedanta Desika Vaibhava Prakashika" as the only earliest source for his purported role of Judge in the said disputation. In my opinion an incident of the stature of Akshobhya-Vidyaranya debate can't be decided by citing a lone reference such as Srinivasa Mahasuri's work.

The consistency in several Madhva narratives that a particular "Avadika Vidyaranya" has been defeated by Akshobhya Tirtha is not being found in the account of Vedanta Deshika as the Judge. Many other Shrivaisnava texts are silent on this achievement of Vedanta Deshika. Hence the validity of "Vedanta Deshika Vaibhava Prakashika" becomes doubtful and I believe that a separate study is needed to trace the source material of Srinivasa Mahasuri based on which he told that story.

I have gleaned through the famous disputes of Madhva scholars with their opponents in pre-Akshobhya and post-Akshobhya periods and found that none of them had a referee from some other Vedantic school to give out judgment on the winner. This uniformity of polemical disputes of Madhvas puts a question mark on Vedanta Deshika's role as a judge.

In addition to these facts, the entire Haridasa Sahitya is silent about the whole incident let alone taking the name of Vedanta Deshika as the Judge. Hence I am of the opinion that the claim made by Srinivasa Surin in his "Vedanta Deshika Vaibhava Prakashika" has something to do with his personal aberration with Advaitins and particularly with the successors of Vidyaranya at Hampi Virupaksha Matha. An in-depth study in this angle can shed light on this doubtful narration.

With this, I wish to conclude here that the story of Vedanta Deshika is doubtful and its exclusion from this study shall not alter or hamper the central theme.

Silence of Dāsa Sāhitya on Jayasthambha

The same Dāsa Sāhitya that shed much light on Jayatirtha-Vidyāranya debate has remained silent on Akshobhya-Vidyāranya debate and more importantly on Jayasthambha. This an important point that the reader must take a note.

The silence from Sri Sripādarāya who was the native of Mulbagal and the subsequent quietness on this topic from Sri Vyāsaraja, Vādiraja, Vijayindra and Purandara Dāsa must be understood carefully. This silence has been held by them alone but also by the later date Dāsa greats such as Vijayadāsa, Gopāla Dāsa, Jagannatha Dāsa, Pranasha Dāsa etc. These Dāsarāyās too have never written or hinted about the existence of a victory pillar of Akshobhya Tirtha at Mulbagal.

This deafening silence of Dāsa Sāhitya stands as an irrefutable evidence that there was **no Jayasthambha existing during their periods** and there was **no story in vogue that involved Akshobhya's victory over Mādhava Vidyāranya**.

Here comes the moot question as to why Dāsa Sāhitya didn't praise the chronicled victory of Akshobhya over an Avadika Pandit of whose reference can found in Sanskrit literature of Dvaita?

Though I can't answer this question as confidently as I could for the question of "who is Avaidika Vidyāranya", I can only ascribe the reason of **very few kirtanas written on Padmanabha, Narahari, Mādhava and Akshobhya Tirtha**. It is interesting to note here that after Acharya Madhva it is Jayatirtha who got more kirtanas to his credit but those four direct disciples of Madhva were somehow left out by the Dasa parampara. In addition to these facts, we could have lost some kirtanas on the quartet in the gush of negligence to preserve our literature.

Why Jayasthambha story is dubious?

There are many reasons that could be ascribed to prove Jayasthambha fiction:

1. There are no such other pillars existing anywhere in India though many Dvaita stalwarts such as Sriyuta Jayadhwaja, Vibhudendra, Sripadaraya, Vyasatirtha, Vādiraja, Vijayendra, Raghuttama, Raghavendra and other great scholars have traveled all over India and have defeated many opponents.
2. The Grantha and Tamil characters used for writing the purported Shloka of “ಅಸಿನಾ ತತ್ವಮಸಿನಾ” on Jayasthambha don't conform to the usage of these scripts during early Vijayanagara period.
3. If the said shloka and the pillar have been erected during Akshobhya T's time then the shloka must have been written in Nagari or Nandi Nagari of Kannada script. *In Book 1, I have presented a brief study on popular scripts of Vijayanagara. Readers may peruse the same for further info.*
4. Mulbagal had been an integral part of Kannada tradition and language during the entire sustenance of Vijayanagara Empire. Hence the usage of Grantha characters on Jayasthambha renders it as a dubious structure.

Conclusion on Avidika Vidyāranya and Jayasthambha

In light of all the evidences and inferences furnished above, I have come to a conclusion that the story of Jayasthambha and its alluded association with the defeat of Vidyāranya of Advaita School is mythical and not factual. Hence the mysterious mention of such a mythical victory pillar in the paper manuscript of Nārayana Tirtha renders that manuscript as dubious and concocted which in turn casts a dark cloud of suspicion on its claim of Jayatirtha's Brindavana being located at Malkhed. Unless and until this juggernaut is not properly solved by VP and other Malkhed supporters, Anegundi argument does not lose its ground but can make in-roads into the minds of many serious readers who wish to know the truth and nothing but truth.

APPENDIX - I

SAIVITE CARVINGS ON PILLARS OF SRIPADARAYA MATHA

