

## CHAPTER III

### PEOPLE

**T**HE earliest known census of the Bombay Karnatak (which **Population** included the district of Bijapur) dates back to 1825. This census, being rather limited in nature, took into consideration only three taluks. It was only in 1872, that the first census, on a definite scientific principle, was taken in this area. Even the figures of this census came to be criticised at the next census in 1881 since the data were found to be not very reliable. Regarding the density of population per square mile in 1872, Belgaum and Dharwar were above the average and Bijapur was near it.

In the census of 1881, the population had fallen to 2,385,414 in the Bombay Karnatak districts. The decrease in population was 365,444 and was to be attributed to the severe famine that swept across this part of the land in 1876-77. The scanty and ill-timed rainfall in 1876 led to failure of crops and resulted in distress amounting to famine over the whole of Bijapur. It is said that out of the total decrease in population in the Bombay Karnatak districts given above, Bijapur suffered the most and the loss was estimated at 147,000. The decade ending 1891, though not marking any great economic progress, was a normal period. The effects of a programme of reforms in land assessment and in other directions, resulted in a normal revival in population. From 1901 and onwards, the population figures for the district are available and according to census publications, the population of the district in 1901 and 1961 was 903,092 and 1,660,178 respectively. The following table gives the figures of population for the district as per the latest census.

#### Population—Rural and Urban (1961)<sup>1</sup>

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Taluk</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Total</i>	
1.	Badami	...	131,608	24,292	155,900

<sup>1</sup> Census Report (1961), Vol. XI, Part II-A, 1964, PP. 22-23.

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Taluk</i>		<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Total</i>
2.	Bagalkot	...	80,486	39,934	120,420
3.	Bagewadi	...	152,119	12,009	164,128
4.	Bijapur	...	172,053	78,854	250,907
5.	Bilgi	...	68,160	...	68,160
6.	Hungund	...	113,195	46,973	160,168
7.	Indi	...	165,474	10,616	176,090
8.	Jamkhandi	..	102,663	65,056	167,719
9.	Muddebihal	..	121,830	12,811	134,641
10.	Mudhol	...	76,374	22,861	99,235
11.	Sindgi	...	162,810	...	162,810
<b>Total</b>		...	<b>1,346,772</b>	<b>313,406</b>	<b>1,660,178</b>

The density of population per square mile in 1961 was 253 as against 212 in 1951. Density of population in the rural areas in 1961 was 210 and that of the urban areas was 2,001.

**Growth of  
and variation  
in population**

As in the case of all other districts of Mysore State, the population of Bijapur has also recorded an appreciable increase during the present century. It is seen from the figures of the 1961 census that the total population increased from 1,396,678 in 1951 to 1,660,178 in 1961 giving a percentage increase of 18.87. The reasons for the growth of population are generally the excess of births over deaths, and the general improvement in public health and personal hygiene. The following table<sup>1</sup> gives an idea of the variations in the population of the district since 1901.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Decade variation</i>	<i>Percentage decade variation</i>
1901	903,092	...	...
1911	1,026,505	+123,413	+13.67
1921	958,263	-68,242	-6.65
1931	1,046,926	+88,663	+9.25
1941	1,175,757	+128,831	+12.31
1951	1,396,678	+220,921	+18.79
1961	1,660,178	+263,500	+18.87

It is seen from the above table that there was a rise in population between 1901 and 1911 by 13.67 per cent. There was a fall by 6.25 per cent between 1911 and 1921 and thereafter there was continues increase up to 1961. The fall in population

1. Op. cit. Census Report (1961) Vol. XI, Part II-A, 1964, P. 70.

between 1911 and 1921 was mainly due to the fact that the district was badly hit by the influenza epidemic<sup>1</sup> and it is estimated that the loss of population due to this was 93,097<sup>2</sup>. The following statement relates to the percentage variations of population between 1901 and 1961<sup>3</sup>.

*Percentage variation of population during  
1901-61 (+increase, — decrease).*

<i>Period</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Total</i>
1901 to 1911 ...	+14.66	+ 7.57	+13.67
1911 to 1921 ...	— 8.63	+ 6.24	— 6.25
1921 to 1931 ...	+ 3.42	+13.93	+ 9.21
1931 to 1941 ...	+10.63	+21.22	+12.31
1941 to 1951 ...	+10.24	+60.37	+18.79
1951 to 1961 ...	+25.26	— 2.50	+18.87
1901 to 1961 ...	+73.53	+146.79	+83.83

It is clear from the above table that the growth of population from 1931 to 1961 has been more rapid than the growth during the thirty years from 1901 to 1931 as is more clearly evident from the following table<sup>4</sup> :—

*Growth of population in the period  
1901 to 1931 and 1931 to 1961  
(+increase, — decrease).*

	1901 to 1931	1931 to 1961
Urban ...	+ 13.59	+ 52.77
Rural ...	+ 15.93	+ 58.58
District ..	+ 30.21	+ 89.53

According to the 1961 census, there were 840,180 men and 819,998 women as against 705,771 and 690,907 men and women respectively, in 1951. **Population by sex**

The following table relates to the changes in the proportion of the sexes between 1901 and 1961 in Bijapur District<sup>5</sup> :—

1. Economic Life in the Bombay Karnatak by R. D. Choksey, 1963, P. 39.
2. Ibid, p. 40.
3. Culled from the table on page 66 of 1961 Census Report, Vol. XI, Part II-A, 1964.
4. Op. cit., 1961 Census Report, Vol. XI, Part II-A, P. 67.
5. Ibid, p. 68.

*Women per 1,000 men*

	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961
Rural ...	996	992	967	976	964	979	984
Urban ...	1005	978	959	953	958	979	942
District ..	997	990	966	973	963	979	976

**Rural and urban population**

Of the total population of 1,660,178 in 1961, as many as 1,346,772 persons lived in villages and 313,406 lived in towns. The urban and rural percentages of population to the total population in the district were 19 and 81, respectively. The density of population per square mile in rural and urban areas was 210 and 2,001, respectively, whereas the average density per square mile worked out to 253. The following are the details of towns and villages in the district, according to the 1961 census.<sup>1</sup>

1. Number of inhabited villages	..	1,245
2. Number of villages included in towns—		
(a) Partly	...	21
(b) Fully	...	1
3. Number of uninhabited villages	..	36
4. Number of towns	...	14

The following table gives details of rural and urban population as per the 1951 and 1961 censuses :—

<i>Year</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage of urban population to the total population.</i>
1951 ...	1,074,731	321,454	1,396,185	23%
1961 ...	1,346,772	313,406	1,660,178	19%

It is revealed by the above table that there is a drop in the urban population of the district between 1951 and 1961. This is because many places which were formerly classified as urban in the previous censuses have now been put in the rural category by the adoption of a more rational definition of the term 'urban'. With the adoption of the new definition, Bijapur district has been left with a smaller number of towns than before and consequently shows a fall in the urban population. The number of towns in the district according to the 1961 census was 14 as against 25 in 1951.

1. Op. cit., 1961 Census Report, Vol. XI, Part II-A, p. 11.

It is appropriate here to give the population figures of towns in 1951 and in 1961.

No.	Towns under the classification of the 1961 Census	Population in 1951	Population in 1961
1.	Bagalkot	32,285	39,934
2.	Bagewadi	9,702	12,009
3.	Bijapur	65,734	78,854
4.	Guledgud	21,972	24,292
5.	Hungund	8,046	10,432
6.	Ilkal	20,747	24,222
7.	Indi	8,169	10,616
8.	Jamkhandi	20,865	24,017
9.	Mahalingapur	9,378	10,761
10.	Mudhol	9,886	12,100
11.	Rabkavi-Banhatti	11,551	28,871*
		9,136	
12.	Sulibhavi	10,762	12,319
13.	Talikota	10,154	12,811
14.	Terdal	10,387	12,168

\* Rabkavi and Banhatti merged with each other forming Rabkavi-Banhatti in 1961.

The classification of the 1,245 inhabited villages in the district according to their population is as follows:—

Population	Number of villages
Less than 200	77
Between 200-499	309
Between 500-999	391
Between 1,000-1,999	317
Between 2,000-4,999	125
Between 5,000-9,999	26

The number of households in Bijapur district in 1961 was 301,078 which was made up of 245,529 rural and 55,549 urban households. The following table gives taluk-wise details of urban and rural households in the district.

Residential occupied houses in Bijapur district in 1961:—

Taluk	Rural	Urban	Total
Badami	25,338	4,613	29,951
Bagalkot	15,034	7,432	22,466

1. Op. cit., 1961 Census Report, Vol. XI, Part II-A, pp. 102-103.

2. Op. cit., Report of 1961 Census, Vol. XI, Part II-A, pp. 22-23.

<i>Taluk</i>		<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Total</i>
Bagewadi	...	27,881	2,280	30,161
Bijapur	...	30,654	14,051	44,705
Bilgi	...	12,860	...	12,860
Hungund	...	21,784	8,414	30,198
Indi	...	28,657	1,869	30,526
Jamkhandi	...	17,582	10,446	28,028
Muddebihal	...	22,714	2,329	25,043
Mudhol	...	13,673	4,115	17,788
Sindgi	...	29,352	...	29,352
<b>Total</b>	...	<b>2,45,529</b>	<b>55,549</b>	<b>3,01,078</b>

It is clear from this statement that nearly one-sixth of the total number of houses are situated in towns, the remaining being in villages. Bijapur town has the largest number of houses in the district.

**Distribution  
of population  
on the basis  
of mother-  
tongue**

The following table gives the distribution of population according to language in Bijapur district at the time of the 1951 and 1961 censuses :—

<i>Language</i>	1951		1961 <sup>2</sup>	
	<i>Persons</i>		<i>Persons</i>	
Kannada	..	1,177,356	1,356,914	
Urdu	..	128,433	184,942	
Marathi	..	38,403	45,232	
Telugu	..	13,420	16,063	
Gujarati	..	6,274	4,670	
Hindi	..	2,676	3,037	
Tamil	..	1,625	2,046	
Malayalam	..	100	176	
Oriya	..	59	..	
Punjabi	..	24	76	
Bengali	..	21	8	
Other languages and dialects	..	28,287	47,014	
<b>Total population</b>	..	<b>1,396,678</b>	<b>1,660,178</b>	

1. Bijapur District Census Hand—Book, 1951, pp. 103—108.
2. 1961 Census, Vol. I, Part II-C(ii), p. 14.

The following table gives distribution of the population of **Religion and Caste** Bijapur district on the basis of religion according to the 1951 and 1961 censuses :—

## POPULATION BY RELIGION.

1951 Census.<sup>1</sup>

Sl. No.	Category	Males	Females	Total
1.	Hindus	611,226	598,147	1,209,373
2.	Muslims	86,986	85,731	172,717
3.	Jains	6,174	5,649	11,823
4.	Christians	1,007	973	1,980
5.	Sikhs	51	27	78
6.	Others	82	132	214
Total		705,526	690,659	1,396,185

1961 Census.<sup>2</sup>

1.	Hindus	727,769	710,670	1,438,439
2.	Muslims	104,000	101,085	205,085
3.	Jains	7,131	7,128	14,259
4.	Christians	959	833	1,792
5.	Buddhists	283	265	548
6.	Sikhs	38	17	55
Total		840,180	819,998	1,660,178

The term "Scheduled Castes" includes such castes, races or tribes or parts of or groups within such castes, races or tribes as are deemed under Article 341 of the Constitution of India to be the Scheduled Castes. According to the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, and the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) (Part C States) Order of 1951 as modified by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists Modification Order, 1956, the following castes have been declared Scheduled Castes in the district of Bijapur<sup>3</sup>.

**Scheduled  
Castes and  
Scheduled  
Tribes**

- (1) Ager.
- (2) Bakad or Bant.
- (3) Bhambi, Dhanbhi, Asadaru, Asodi, Chamadia, Chamar, Chambhar, Chamgar, Haralayya, Khalpa, Machigar, Mochigar, Madar, Madig, Mochi, Telegu Mochi, Kamati Mochi, Ranigar, Rohidas, Rohit or Samgar.

1. Statistical Abstract of Mysore, 1960-61, 1963, pp. 36-37.

2. Census of India (1961), Paper No. 1 of 1963, p. 28.

3. This applies to Belgaum, Dharwar and North Kanara Districts also.

- (4) Bhangi, Mehtar, Olgana, Rukhi, Malkana, Halal'chor, Lalbegi, Balmiki, Korar or Zadmalli.
- (5) Chalvadi or Channayya.
- (6) Chenna Dasar or Holaya Dasar.
- (7) Dhor, Kakkayya or Kankayya.
- (8) Garoda or Garo.
- (9) Halleer.
- (10) Halsar, Haslar, Hulasvar or Halasvar.
- (11) Holar or Valhar.
- (12) Holaya or Holer.
- (13) Lingader.
- (14) Mahar, Tardal or Dhegu Megu.
- (15) Mahyavanshi, Dhed, Vankar or Maru Vankar
- (16) Mang-Garudhi.
- (17) Mang, Matang or Minimadig.
- (18) Meghval or Menghvar.
- (19) Murki.
- (20) Nadia or Hadi.
- (21) Pasi.
- (22) Shenva, Chenva, Sedma or Ravat.
- (23) Tirgar or Tirbanda.
- (24) Turi.

The term "Scheduled Tribes" includes such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes. According to the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950, and the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) (Part C States) Order, 1951, as modified by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists Modification Order of 1956, the following castes have been declared as Scheduled Tribes in Bijapur district<sup>1</sup>.

- (1) Barda.
- (2) Bavacha or Bamcha.
- (3) Bhil, including Bhil Garasia, Dholi Bhil, Dungeri Bhil, Dungri Garasia, Mewasi Bhil, Rawal Bhil, Tadvi Bhil, Bhagalia, Bhilaya, Pawra, Vasava and Vasave.
- (4) Chodhara.
- (5) Dhanka including Tadvi, Tetaria and Valvi.
- (6) Dhodia.
- (7) Dubla, including Halavia or Halpati.
- (8) Gamit or Gamta or Gavit including Mavchi, Padvi, Vasava, Vasave and Valvi.
- (9) Gond or Rajgond.
- (10) Kathodi or Katkari including Dhor Kathodi or Dhor Katkari and Son Kathodi or Son Katkari.
- (11) Kokna, Kokni Kukna.
- (12) Koli Dhor, Tokre Kodi, Kolcha or Kolgha.

1. This applies to Belgaum, Dharwar and North Kanara Districts also.

- (13) Naikda or Nayaka, including Cholivala Nayaka, Kapadia Nayaka, Mota Nayaka and Nana Nayaka.  
 (14) Pardhi, including Advichincherg and Phanse Pardhi.  
 (15) Patelia.  
 (16) Pomla.  
 (17) Rathawa.  
 (18) Varli.  
 (19) Vitolia, Kotwalia or Barodia.

The total number of persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the district, according to the 1951 census was 121,521 and 205, respectively. This worked out to 4.70 and 0.25 per cent, respectively, of the total population of Bijapur district in 1951<sup>1</sup>. The corresponding figures of the 1961 census are 163,472 (Scheduled Castes) and 9,405 (Scheduled Tribes), respectively<sup>2</sup>. The following table gives detailed figures for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes in the district in 1961<sup>3</sup>.

## Scheduled Castes—

		<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Rural	..	71,357	73,558	144,915
Urban	...	9,238	9,319	18,557
Total	...	80,595	82,877	163,472

## Scheduled Tribes—

Rural	...	4,398	4,147	8,545
Urban	...	447	413	860
Total	..	4,845	4,560	9,405

The following table relates to the percentage of population of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes in the district in 1961.

<i>Scheduled Castes or Tribes</i>		<i>Sex</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Urban</i>
Scheduled Castes	..	Males	10.51	5.72
		Females	11.01	6.13
Scheduled Tribes	..	Males	0.67	0.28
		Females	0.62	0.27

1. Statistical Abstract of Mysore, 1960-61, Department of Statistics, 1963, p. 38

2. Op. cit., Census of India, 1961, Vol. XI, Part II-A, General Population Tables. 1964, P. 172.

3. *Ibid* p. 172.

**Religion**

Hindus form the major part of the population of the district ; next come the Muslims and then the Jains. The Christian population is not very large.

The Hindu community in the district, as elsewhere in the country, is organised on the basis of castes and sub-castes. The term 'Hindu' itself is wide in meaning and comprises many faiths. In the religious practices and beliefs of the Hindus, acts of adoration and appeasement play a prominent part. The old idea of *homa* has been replaced to a certain extent by the ritual of *vigraha puja* (image worship). Among the Brahmins in Bijapur, the Deshasthas are found in large numbers. The Brahmins follow two religious faiths—Smartha and the Vaishnava. The Smarthas of Bijapur include a small sect called Kanvashakha who worship at the great shrine at Pandharapur. The Smarthas are followers of Sri Shankaracharya who is the apostle of the *Advaita* theory that the soul and the Supreme Being are the same. The Vaishnavas follow the faith as propounded by Madhvacharya, who was the apostle of *Dvaitavada*, that the soul and the Supreme Being are different. In Bijapur, among the Brahmins, the images of family gods are kept in the house and are worshipped every day.

The religious life of the higher Hindu sections in the district is influenced to a large extent by the institution of a *matha*. The *mathas* of the Veerashaivas in particular are found in all parts of the district. Each *matha* is an independent institution whose head is a *guru* who is highly venerated. There is rarely a village in the district which is without a Veerashaiva *matha*. These *mathas* (monasteries) are generally one-storeyed buildings, kept scrupulously clean and are in charge of a *mathadhipathi* (monastery chief).

**Veerashaivism**

Veerashaivism as a faith has its basis in the original Shaivism and was largely built on the sayings and teachings of Sri Basaveshwara and other *Shivasharanas*. The main features of the faith are what are known collectively as *Ashtavaranas* and *Shatsthalas*. *Ashtavaranas* or the eight emblems comprise the aids to faith and protection against sin and evil. They are (1) devotion to a *guru*, (2) worship of the *linga*, (3) reverence to the Jangamas or priests, (4) use of *vibhuti* or holy ash, (5) wearing of *rudraksha*, (6) use of *padodaka* or holy water (7) partaking of *prasada* or sanctified food and (8) *mantra* or the uttering of a mystic formula called *panchakshari*. Many of these observances are to be found in Brahmanism also. *Shatsthalas* may be described as the six stages of elevation towards union with the Lord ; they are *bhakta*, *mahesha*, *prasadin*, *pranalingin*, *sharana* and *aikya*. There are three degrees of manifestation of the deity, some times described as the *Bhava-linga* corresponding to the

spirit, *Prana-linga* corresponding to the subtle body, and *Ishta-linga* corresponding to the material body. The wearing of a *linga* on the person is the distinctive external mark of the Veerashaiva faith. The doctrines and rules of Basaveshwara's faith were that there is one God who guards man from evil, that between this God and his worshipper there is no need of middleman and no need of sacrifices, penances, pilgrimages or fasts.

As an exposition of this faith, Dr. S. C. Nandimath says : "The Virasaiva religion as practised in Karnatak during the past several centuries forms a significant chapter in the history of Indian culture. The *Ashtavaranas*, the *Shatsthalas*, the worship of *linga*, the various Virasaiva rites—all these in some form or other may be found perhaps in the practices of other Hindu religious sects, but never quite in the same way, and the emphasis too varies. Its puritan fervour is duly marked ; so is its essentially democratic spirit. Caste and sex differences are obliterated and this spiritual progress is not hindered in the least by accidents of caste or sex. Religious life is not necessarily to be divorced from the commitments of family and society ; to labour and to serve is also an aspect of religious life ; and, in fact, the business of life and spiritual endeavour are harmonized into the pilgrim's progress towards realisation. Democratic in spirit, puritanic in fervour, with service for its watchword and the *Shatsthalas* for its signposts, Virasaivism firmly blends together man's spiritual and social life and thus teaches all the art of right living."<sup>1</sup>

The Jains are dispersed throughout the country and their number in the district according to the 1961 census was 14,259. There are two sects among the Jains, *viz.*, the Digambaras and Svetambaras. The *Yatis* form the religious order. The moral code of the Jains holds existence as divisible into two heads, namely, *Jiva* (life) or the living and sentient principle and *ajiva* (inanimate) or the various modifications of inanimate matter. These are imperishable, though their forms and conditions may change. Their philosophical tenet is designated *Syadvada* as we can neither affirm nor deny anything absolutely. Absolute knowledge is attained only by *Thirthankaras*. All others have only relative knowledge. *Dharma* is virtue and *Ahimsa* is the highest virtue (*ahimsa paramo dharmah*). *Adharma* is vice. Although their objects of worship are the *Thirthankars*, they pay their devotion to some of the gods of the Hindu pantheon also. They visit a temple where the image of any *Thirthankara* is erected, walk round the image three times, make an offering of fruits and flowers, and sing praises in honour of the saint. Their

Jainism

1. Dr. S. C. Nandimath—Commemoration Volume presented to the Rajasaheb of Vantmuri, pages 180–181.

*japa* is known as *Panchanamaskara* and they make obeisance to *Arahanita*, *Siddha*, *Acharya*, *Upadhyaya* and *Sarva Sadhu*.

#### Muslim faith

The Muslim population in Bijapur was 205,085, according to the 1961 census. They are spread both in the urban and rural areas. Most of the Muslims in the district belong to the Sunni sect. There are four classes of Muslims, *viz.*, Mughals, Syeds, Sheiks and Pathans. The essential Muslim beliefs are six in number, namely, faith (1) in one God, Allah, (2) in angels, (3) in the Quran, (4) in the Prophets, (5) in judgment, paradise and hell, and (6) in the divine decrees. The five primary duties called the five pillars of Islam are (1) repetition of the creed, *Kalimah*, every day. (2) prayer, (3) fasting during the month of *Ramzan*, (4) the giving of alms and (5) pilgrimage to Mecca. Apart from *Ramzan*, two other principal public feasts are the *Bakrid* and the *Shab-e-Barat*. According to Islam, the daily prayer called *Namaz* has to be performed five times a day and men should go to the mosque to say their prayers. In addition to the usual *Namaz* of every day, special *Namaz* is held in the mosques every Friday and generally the Muslims make it a point to attend this prayer. The *Kazi* is the main religious dignitary of the Muslims. He has no judicial powers now, his main duty being to lead the *Jumma* and *Id* prayers and to officiate at the marriage and funeral ceremonies.

#### Christian faith

The Christians, like the Muslims, are strict monotheists. There are both Catholics and Protestants in the district.

Catholics are the followers of Jesus Christ. They believe in one God-in three persons *viz.*, Father, Son and the Holy Ghost, as they believe these three comprise one God. They owe their allegiance to the Holy Church founded by Jesus Christ entrusted to Peter, the first Vicar (the Pope). The Pope is the supreme head of the Catholics. His headquarters are at Vatican City in Rome. They worship God in these three persons and venerate saints and follow the teachings and gospels preached by Christ contained in the 'Bible', which is their holy book.

Protestant Christians are those who follow the teachings of Jesus Christ, as found in the 'Holy Word of God'—Bible. They believe Jesus Christ as the Lord and Saviour, and have faith in His death, resurrection and ascension. They believe in His second coming and judgment. They have faith in the Holy Trinity, Nicene creed and Apostles' creed. Their faith and order of worship depend on two important commands given by Jesus Christ :

“The Lord, our God, is one Lord and thou shalt love the Lord, thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul

and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”.

The names of the several Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have already been given previously. Among the other backward classes in the district are the *Naikmakkalu* or *Talwar*, *Bhoi*, *Burud* or *Meda*, *Chapra*, *Dasa*, *Golla*, *Gondali*, *Ghaisadi*, *Girniwaddar*, *Jatiga*, *Jogi*, *Joshi*, *Killiket*, *Korwa*, *Kunchi*, *Lamani* and *Wadda*. Each of these backward communities has its own peculiar manners and customs. Most of the backward classes subscribe to a type of popular faith which has spread in the district and can be termed as “spirit worship”. This consists essentially of a belief in the existence of spirits, secondly of a fear of the evils which they can inflict and thirdly their propitiation through sacrifice. The spirits worshipped are many and usually take the forms of goddesses. Among the most common goddesses of this type are Mariamma, Durgamma, Yellamma and Kalamma. Almost every village in the district has its own goddess known as the grama-devata. Some of these goddesses are associated with epidemic diseases like cholera, small-pox, chicken-pox and measles, and the function of the goddess is to protect her devotees from these pestilences. There is no actual priesthood attached to these temples of gods and goddesses. Animal sacrifice was in the past considered the main accepted doctrine of this cult. But with the passage of time and with the enactment of legislation, these sacrifices are now no longer offered.

**Backward  
Classes**

A detailed description of each and every community in the district is not possible, in the absence of population figures of all the castes and sub-castes. We have to confine ourselves only to a general discussion of the traditional social structure, the customs and manners of the people who profess the main religions and the nature of inter-caste and inter-communal relations.

The type of marriage generally followed by the Brahmin community approximates to the *Brahma* form which postulates the giving away of the daughter to a learned person. Marriages are celebrated before the fire god (*Agni*) who is recognised as a witness to the unalterable bond of unity between the bride and the bridegroom. The two persons to be married undergo many rituals like *nandi* which invokes the ancestors of the bridal couple, *kankana-dharana* symbolising the couple's entry into the marriage state, *akshata* or the sprinkling of a few grains of reddened rice by the couple on each other's head and also by the invitees over the couple and the tying of the *mangalasutra* followed by *lajahoma* and *sapthapadi* which marks the end of the marriage. The evil of the dowry system cannot be said to have been entirely done away with, though legislation has prohibited giving of

**Marriage.**

the dowry. In certain cases, it is the bride that has got to be paid for. The amount thus paid is commonly known as *tera* or *teravu*. Occasionally, in certain castes, when the bridegroom is too poor to pay, he is allowed to work in his father-in-law's house, being fed and clothed by the latter. There is no specified period of service but usually the son-in-law should serve until he begets a female child and presents her to his brother-in-law. Monogamy is the key-note of Hindu marriages. The marriage customs of the other caste groups in the Hindu community do not differ in important details from marriages among the higher castes. If *sapthapadi* is important among the Brahmins, the throwing of sacred grains of rice over the heads of the bridegroom and bride is equally important among certain other castes.

The main feature of the Veerashaiva marriage is the total absence of the sacred fire. The place of fire is taken by the *Panchakalashas* or five sacred pots. The form of marriage amongst the Veerashaivas differs slightly in that elaboration and ostentation are reduced to the minimum. In the more educated and advanced families, there is a freedom of choice whereas among the backward sections, the choice of the bride and bridegroom rests entirely with the parents of each party. Marriages between close relatives are not encouraged. After the usual negotiations, there is an engagement ceremony followed by a betrothal. The actual marriage is celebrated on an auspicious day and the chief invitee is the *guru* of the family who comes with his retinue to take part in certain religious ceremonies. The most important part of the marriage ceremony is the tying of the *mangalasutra* by the bridegroom around the neck of the bride. The priest then invokes the divine blessings and all the people present throw *akshata* or sacred rice on the couple and bless them.

Among the Muslims of the district, there is no strict rule enjoining early marriage. Marriages are celebrated according to the Islamic rites. Some, in addition to Islamic rites, retain some of the old practices like the spraying of turmeric, applying mehandi, sandal and the like. Formal proposals for the marriage come from the bridegroom's father. Like other communities in the district, Muslims erect large temporary pandals in front of the marriage house. The bridegroom arrives in a procession on the day of the marriage and is met by the bride's people. The bridegroom's party is seated on one side of the pandal and the bride's party on the other. In the space between are three seats. The bridegroom is led to one seat and the bride's representative to the other. The *Kazi* takes the third seat. The *Kazi* asks the bride's representative whether the bride agrees to the marriage. The representative obtains the consent of the bride in the presence of a witness and conveys it to the *Kazi*. The same question is put to the bridegroom and his consent obtained. The *Kazi* obtains the

signatures of the bridegroom, the bride's father and two witnesses, one from each side. The proceedings are recorded and the guests raise hands in approval. The *Kazi* reads out the *nikha* and invokes the blessings of the Holy Prophets. In the afternoon, the bridegroom is taken to the *zenana* to perform the face-showing ceremony which is called *Jalwa*. He is led into the women's room where the bride is seated with her face covered. A copy of the Quran is placed between them on a low wooden stool. The bride's face is then uncovered and the groom sees his bride for the first time in a mirror, but before doing this he puts a gold ring on the bride's finger. Then chapters from the Quran are read. The bride is seated in a carriage or palanquin and the bridegroom accompanies her in procession to his own house.

There are many restrictions among the generality of castes and tribes in regard to marriage alliances. A man must not marry outside the limits of his caste. In respect of several castes, linguistic, territorial, religious and occupational differences have proved an effectual bar to inter-marriage. The rule that the bride and the bridegroom should not belong to the same *gotra* (sept) prevails. Among some castes and tribes in the district, a woman's brother enjoys an important position in the family. It might be said that the practice of a man to ask for the hand of his sister's daughter either for himself or his son is wide spread. Among certain sections, the *thali* is tied to the bride by the maternal uncle. Among certain castes, the bride is brought to the marriage pandal by her maternal uncle.

In the past, a number of castes were celebrating child marriages or pre-puberty marriages. But now in actual practice, as also under the law, child marriages have vanished. The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 has fixed the marital age for girls at 16 and for boys at 21.

The old ideas of ostentation in marriages are being replaced by more rational ideas. The rituals are being simplified and expenditure is kept as low as possible, though the very affluent still incur enormous expenses on grand receptions and processions. Views are also changing regarding inter-caste relations. The number of inter-caste marriages may not be very large but it is significant that it is increasing.

All the Hindu castes and communities in the district are governed by the Hindu Law, inheritance being in the male line. No other forms of inheritance such as matriarchy and the like are in vogue in Bijapur district. The affiliation of a son-in-law in the family is even now prevalent in some castes, particularly the *Kapus*. Among some sections of the Scheduled Castes, a resident son-in-law receives an equal share of his father-in-law's property

**Property and  
inheritance**

with his brothers-in-law. A similar custom is prevalent in certain other communities. According to this custom, when a man has no sons, a daughter is married to a man who agrees to become a member of the family and who thereafter resides with his father-in-law and inherits his estate for his children. In case any sons are born to the father-in-law after such affiliation, his property is equally divided among the sons and the affiliated son-in-law.

**Joint family System**

The joint family system, so characteristic of the *Mitakshara* law of inheritance, was predominant among the Hindus of the district till very recently and even now, quite a few households accept this system unquestioningly and give due respect to the accepted head of the family. But changes in the pattern of society and the new laws of inheritance have been responsible for the splitting up of families. This process was accelerated by the abolition of *Jagirs* and *Inams* which gave a vigorous jolt to the old system. There is now a perceptible tendency among the propertied members of families to get themselves partitioned out as early as possible and one of the reasons for such haste may be ascribed to the uncertainty that prevailed for some time in regard to ownership of agricultural land. Ownership of large estates was the *raison d'être* of the joint family system and once these estates were abolished, the joint family system tended to collapse. The Hindus in the district follow the Hindu Law in matters like succession, partition and privileges of minors. The Hindu Succession Act of 1955 gives equal rights to the son and the daughter in the event of the propertied owner dying intestate. The impact of this new law, which is an off-shoot of the codification of the Hindu Law, is being felt in the district and signs are not wanting of big property holders settling the question of inheritance through wills. But, by and large, the vast changes in the pattern of Hindu Law have not been unwelcome in the district. The Muslims who form a sizable population in the district are governed by the Muhammedan Law.

**Divorce**

Marriage being considered a sacrament, the higher castes eschew divorce. But among certain castes divorce is easy. It can be brought about at the instance of either party. According to the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, divorce is provided on certain specific issues to be determined by the courts.

**Monogamy and Polygamy**

As a rule, monogamy prevails among most of the castes. The reasons that might sanction a second wife are the failure of the first to bear a son, or her affliction by an incurable disease. The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 forbids polygamy. Although the Muslims are permitted to have more than one wife many observe monogamy in actual practice.

The district is not entirely free from social evils, though strenuous efforts are being made through legislation and otherwise to put down these evils. Prostitution is prohibited by law but this evil has not disappeared completely. Though Prohibition is in force, the number of cases of illicit distillation and smuggling of liquor is not small. Gambling is yet another evil which is prevalent to a certain extent in the district. **Social Evils**

In Bijapur district, the village sites are usually situated a mile or two apart from one another. Favourite location for the villages is along the rivers, especially at the bend of the river where floods have piled high banks. Many of the villages are walled. Stone being found abundantly, a large number of villages have stone walls. In the old days, due to unsettled conditions the population was always in fear of attacks. Traces of the stone walls and the circular watch towers still exist. There is usually one entrance in the village wall, a plain deep flat-topped gateway. A temple of Hanuman is usually found in a place either inside or outside the walls of the village near the gate. The dwellings line both ends of a narrow rough path, the houses varying in style from neat, stone-built structures to rough, mud-roofed sheds. Usually, each dwelling comprises two partitions, one or two rooms serving for the members of the family, the other being used as a kitchen and room of worship. Big landlords, merchants and money-lenders own big houses with a large number of rooms. Cattle are tied in enclosures inside the house or very near the house and add to the generally prevailing insanitary conditions. **Housing**

The houses in the urban areas are constructed in stone or brick set in cement or lime mortar. The floor is kept at a higher level than the outside ground level. The roof also is of a superior type. More attention is paid to ventilation and sanitation in the urban areas. The houses in the urban areas do not differ very largely from the rural pattern, except that they are better built and have more accommodation. Cement concrete-roofed houses are becoming more and more common. Modern concepts of house building are gaining ground and in Bijapur town itself there are quite a number of houses which are really sound structures.

The houses of the upper and middle class families have articles of furniture like chairs, sofas, tables, beds, cots and shelves. In the rural areas, however, there is not much furniture to be found in the houses, except perhaps for a rude bench or two and some shelves. In recent decades, the items of furniture in the houses of the richer sections of the people have increased considerably. Radio sets and costly mirrors, chests of drawers and coat stands and the like are now considered as being almost indispensable. The advent of electricity in the urban areas has made the kerosene oil lamp a matter of the past. The poorer classes usually have vessels made of earth or of aluminium. The more

well-to-do are now beginning to use vessels of stainless steel but it may be said that, generally, brass utensils are in use in a very large measure.

#### Dress and ornaments

The dress of the Hindus of Bijapur district is a blend of different items of dress shared in common with people all over the country. The generality of the orthodox Hindus use a *dhoti*, which is a sheet of white cloth covering the lower limbs. In the Bijapur district it is worn generally in the *katche* style, *i.e.*, one end of it being gathered into folds in front and the other passed between the legs and tucked in at the waist behind. A shirt, either half or full, covers the upper part. While attending offices or other places of work, the Hindus usually wear either a turban or a cap and a long close-collared coat. The merchant classes dress more or less in the same manner. Among the younger generation, the western type of dress consisting of a pair of trousers and a shirt and a coat or a bush-shirt has become quite common. Boys wear half pants or pyjamas and a cap when attending schools. Many youths prefer to be bare-headed. In the rural areas, the cultivator dresses himself in thick coarse cotton cloth and wears a turban. Even the Muslims in the rural areas wear the *dhoti*. The elder Muslims usually shave their heads. Their dress consists of a pair of pyjamas and a long shirt. The younger generation goes in for a mixture of the traditional and western styles. Muslim women wear sarees and blouses and in the rural areas the *purdah* is not so prevalent as in towns.

The women of Bijapur district dress in the traditional Deccani style with sarees of about eight to nine yards in length. These sarees have attractive borders. In recent years, the length of the saree has shortened to five or six yards. Brahmin women generally do not draw a portion of the saree over their heads but ladies of other communities do it as a rule. With the saree is worn a bodice which is called *kuppasa*. The saree is worn both in the *katche* fashion and without *katche*. The usual dress of the girls consists of a *langa* or skirt (called *parakara* or *zaga* in the district) and a jacket. Occasionally, frocks are also worn. The middle and the Lower middle classes usually use cotton sarees for daily wear whereas the well-to-do go in for costly silk or rayon sarees. In the last ten or fifteen years, fashions have changed enormously and modern women choose voils or art silks for their daily dress. The fashionable sections go in for elegant foot-wear.

The passion for ornamentation of the human body has come down from ancient times. It is as strong today as in the old days and if there has been any change, it is only in the style of ornamentation. The wearing of ornaments by menfolk is not so extensive as was the case about half a century ago. But even today, in rural areas of the district, the habit of men wearing ear

ornaments has not entirely disappeared. Barring fashionable women in the urban areas who now use fancy ornaments, the rural women mostly wear rude ornaments made of silver. Every village has its silver-smith and gold-smith. Gold ornaments of today usually consist of ear rings, nose studs, necklaces, bangles and rings. Silver ornaments consist of chains and heavy rings for the ankle. There has been a perceptible tendency in recent times for women to prefer lightness and fineness to heaviness in the matter of ornamentation.

The food habits of a people of a particular area are usually **Food** studied on the basis of their classification into vegetarian and non-vegetarian. But this description cannot be very rigid as some of the non-vegetarians take meat only on a few days of the week. Generally conforming to the regional pattern, the food habits of the Hindu population of Bijapur district are not very different from those in the contiguous regions. Even as between Brahmins and Lingayats, there is not much difference. These two communities and the Vaishyas and Jains are strict vegetarians, while many of the pastoral, artisan and agricultural classes are non-vegetarians. The staple food in the rural areas is *jowar* which is ground into flour and made into a type of bread or cake (*rotti*). This is eaten with condiments and vegetables. The poorer sections of the community who cannot afford vegetables eat the cakes with some type of *chutni*. The well-to-do communities take rice, wheat as also *jowar*. With the spread of cosmopolitanism, the vegetarian sections of the population have started taking a kind of standard meal consisting of rice, *chapati* or *rotti*, *sambar*, vegetables, pickles and butter-milk or curds. This is so specially in the urban areas, though even here the use of the *jowar* cake is still quite common. Most people take their meals on leaf platters, but, of late, plates made of stainless steel are coming into vogue. Some of the Veerashaivas use the *addanige* which is a small three-legged wooden or metal stool for placing the plate in which they take their food. On occasions of important feasts or festivals, the normal meal is supplemented by sweets and savouries. Each community has a special culinary item to suit the occasion. These festive dishes vary according to one's taste and purse. Most people have two meals a day, one at noon and the other in the night. In addition to these principal meals, they take a small breakfast in the morning and coffee or tea in the evening. In the rural areas, those who are engaged in manual labour generally take three meals—a breakfast in the morning, lunch at mid-day and dinner in the night. Except the Veerashaivas, Vaishyas, Brahmins and Jains, most of the other communities eat meat and fish.

The number of restaurants and hotels in the urban and rural areas of the district serving the needs of all categories of people is steadily on the increase. Beverages such as tea, coffee and

cocoa are served in big restaurants, while in the villages the customers are content with tea. Meat and egg preparations such as *biryani*, *kurma*, cutlet, chops and omelette are popular in the non-vegetarian restaurants. Bijapur gets to be very hot in summer and the people quench their thirst with cool drinks, sherbets and aerated waters. Smoking, chewing of betel leaves and use of snuff are common all over.

### Festivals

The Hindus have many festivals spread throughout the year. While some festivals are common to all the castes, others are observed only by a few. Although these festivals are mainly religious in nature, they afford ample scope for social inter-course. *Yugadi* or the first day of the month of *chaitra* is observed as the new year day. The Hindu almanac is read on that day and all the members of the family take rich food. *Ramanavami* is observed as the birthday of Sri Rama. Relatives and friends are invited on this occasion and are served with soaked and spiced gram dhal called *kosambari* and given sweet drinks. *Hanuma Jayanthi* is observed on the full moon day of Chaitra. *Basava-Jayanthi* is celebrated on the third day of Vaishakha Shuddha. This is a sacred day for all Lingayats and on that day large numbers go to Basava-Kalyan in Bidar district to pay homage to Basaveshwara. *Narasimha Jayanthi* on the full moon day of *Vaishakha* is observed by some Brahmins. *Mahashivaratri* is the most important festival for Shaivites. On that day, they fast and worship Shiva at home or in a temple. The next day they break the fast with a munificent meal. *Nagapanchami*, the fifth day of *Shravana*, is observed by almost all sections of the rural population. *Gokulashtami*, the birthday of Sri Krishna, is yet another important festival. *Ganesha Chaturthi* is observed by many castes as a day of feast and worship. *Navaratri* which begins from the first day of *Ashvina*, is observed throughout the district. *Deepavali* is observed as a festival of lights. Among the other important festivals, *Makara Sankranthi* and *Holi* are important. In addition to these, each community has some kind of festival or the other connected with the gods and each festival is observed scrupulously by members of that particular community. Three important Muslim festivals are *Ramzan*, *Bakrid* and *Shab-e-Barat*. Both the Catholic and Protestant Christians observe Christmas, the birth-day of the Christ and Easter, the day of Resurrection.

### Entertainment

Games and recreation form part of the daily entertainment. Amongst the popular out-door games played by boys in Bijapur district are the *neralu bisilu* (shade and light), *guler jumpi*, *gangala muragi*, *kudure savara* (horse-rider), *sari badigi* and *chini pani*. Among the other major games may be mentioned *hututu*, *kho-kho* and *langdi* that are played all over the district. There are many wrestling clubs in the district. These are called *garadimanes*. The girls play a sort of dance game called *adakala*.

*gadagi*. The *gangala muragi* is a group game played by girls forming two teams of equal numbers. The *kolata* is also a popular pastime. In the urban areas, modern games like cricket, foot-ball, hockey and volley-ball are common. The usual indoor games played in the clubs are carrom, table tennis and card games. The *lambani* dance and the hand-clapping dance are also popular in the rural areas and no public function in the village is complete without an exhibition of these colourful dances.

In the rural areas, the elders spend their leisure hours in listening to religious discourses like the *puranas* and *kirtanas* and *in bhajans*. The *bayalata* and *doddata* are rural dramatic performances peculiar to the Karnatak region. With the increasing popularity of organised dramatic companies, and the advent of the cinema, the old-time dramatic performances are slowly disappearing from the scene. The recitation of *lavanis* is the most popular form of recreation in the rural areas. Festivals like *Ganesha Chaturthi* and *Navaratri* are utilised for arranging public lectures, variety entertainments and sports events. Hunting in a limited way is also popular among the Bedas and the Bhois, who go into the scrub jungles to catch pigs, bears and other animals.

Fairs (Jatras) are held in all parts of the district. These **Fairs** are annual occasions got up in reverence to a local god or goddess. In most cases these fairs are held when the idol is taken in a procession through the streets of the town. Cattle fairs are also held on specified days and are a source of large trade and commerce.

Funeral ceremonies of the various communities residing in the district vary according to their religious beliefs and faiths. **Funerals** Differences in detail are noticed in the matter of burial or cremation. The Brahmins cremate their dead and remain in mourning for twelve days. On the thirteenth day, a mass feast is arranged to which all the relatives are invited. The Brahmins consider it inauspicious to keep the dead body for long and arrange for the cremation as quickly as possible. The eldest son is the chief mourner and has to perform all the ceremonies on the days specified. The dead body is carried on a bamboo bier by four men and is followed by the near kinsmen. The eldest son sets fire to the pyre. After the body is completely burnt, the ashes of the dead are gathered and immersed at the confluence of sacred rivers or in a tank.

The Veerashaivas have their own mode of disposing of their dead. The dead are buried. The dead body before burial is generally bare except for a loin cloth. The body is set in the niche in the grave and filled with holy ashes and fresh *bela* leaves, after which it is filled with earth. The mourners wash the guru's feet

and purify themselves by sipping consecrated water. The Veerashaivas have no *shraddha* ceremonies and they do not observe the death anniversary.

The funeral ceremonies of the Muslim community are quick and simple. The dead body is washed with perfumed water and is covered with a white shroud. After a last look by the relatives, the body is laid on a bier, which is raised on the shoulders of four men and borne away. At the grave yard, the body is buried with the face to the west. The grave is covered with planks or stones. When it is being filled with earth, the mourners recite the Arabic text, philosophising the end of an earthly career. After three days, a ceremony is held. Dinner is given on the 10th, 20th and 40th day after the death and also on the day of the half-year and year after death. The widow of the dead has to be in strict seclusion for four months and ten days.

Funeral ceremonies amongst the other communities in the district differ in small details from those described above. Each of these communities has its own peculiar manners and customs. In essence, however, they do not differ very widely from the practices of the Brahmins and the Lingayats.

**Special  
features**

A significant feature of social life in the district is that the old habits of reverence and obedience to elders have not yet completely died out. The advice of elders is often sought by the younger members and this is characteristic of all communities in the district. One reason for the retention of this pleasant aspect may be the influence of the many saints and holy men who lived in the district. The influence of Sri Basaveshwara, in particular, who spread his message of correct conduct has been very great not only among the Veerashaivas but also among members of other communities.

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