



HISTORICAL RE-INTERPRETATION OF LOCAL HERITAGE-SIGNIFICANCE OF REGIONAL HISTORY STUDIES - WITH SOCIAL REFERENCE TO KOLAR REGION

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the historicity of Kolar region and spot lights the voyage of the region from an insignificant region to a major provincial city during the regime of Vijayanagara Empire. Archaeological affluence of the sources of this region supports in the reconstruction of the history of this region and amply assists in spotlighting the political pre-eminence of the Kolar region during Vijayanagara rule. These archaeological sources are not only multi-dimensional but they are highly constructive and resourceful. The Kolar region after it came under the famous Vijayanagara Empire gained historical significance and gradually marched ahead. The inscriptional evidences available in Tamil, Telugu and Kannada languages speak about the region's passage towards progression and development. This study gains importance because Regional history studies is considered imperative to increasing one's understanding of local reflection of historical processes, empirical research inputs and interpretation of the local history as a national or international picture in a broader sense. But, historical sources are prone to broaden knowledge about regional studies, only when new found sources are corroborated with older available published sources. There is a need to appropriately validate and authenticate the newly found evidences in reconstructing the historic march of the region in a broader aspect with proper application of regional studies.

Key words: *Kolar Region, Historical Reinterpretation, Regional History.*

Introduction

The Kolar district has several names linking it to Purana and Later Vedic Period. It is known as Kuvalayapura seems to be linked with Epic age. It is also known as Kolahalapura. Kolar has a elongated history of several centuries. There are references to Ramayana and Mahabharatha as well. It is considered a great seat of Provincial capital of several dynasties.

References in Wesleyan Tamil Mission Records-

The early history of Kolar can be read through the Wesleyan Tamil mission superintendent Fred Goodwill. Archaeological affluence of the Kolar region is not only multi dimensional but they are constructive and resourceful and assist in the reconstruction of historicity of this region.

Inscriptional Sources- According to Epigraphist Benjamin Lewis rice, Kolar region holds various inscriptions and there are nearly 1,347 inscriptions in this region which can be classified as under.

Tamil Language Inscriptions	Telugu Language Inscriptions	Kannada Language Inscriptions
422	211	714

He compiled these inscriptions with their textual meaning in the 10th volume of Epigraphia Carnatica. These inscriptions and such other archaeological sources belong to various dynasties listed as below;

1. Cholas.
2. Western Gangas.
3. Hoysalas.
4. Vijayanagara Empire.



5. Wodeyar kings -Mysore.
6. Marathas.
7. Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan .
8. East India Company.

References to Ganga Period

The inscriptions of this region vehemently deal about the rule of western Gangas. Western Ganga kings had made Kolar as their capital city. The famous Kolaramma temple dedicated to Goddess Shakthi, is the oldest temple, and is built by Ganga kings. Their sovereignty lasted from 350 to 550 AD. The initial western Ganga king Kongani Varma Madhava built his capital here and ruled for 20 years. His son Madhava I also made Kolar his capital city. The inscriptions of the region speak about land grants to temples in the area. Uttara Rameshwara temple was built by them.

References to Chola Period

Later, this region came under the Chola rule. Chola kings have also made significant contributions to local culture. The inscriptions of the region showcase restoration works to Kolaramma temple. The presence of several Chola inscriptions inside the temple complex also speaks about periodical renovation work taken up by different Chola kings. These inscription mention reconstruction of the temple by Chola King through re-decoration, re-installation of idols etc., The earliest reference to Chola King Rajendra Chola(1012 to 1045 AD) is of good mention. There are nearly 30 inscriptions in Tamil and Kannada languages found inside the temple complex.

References to Kolar during Hoysala Region–

According to Inscriptional evidences, in 1117AD Kolarregion became part of the Hoysala Empire. Hoysala Empire had reached a zenith during this period and they were mastering whole of south India. In 1254 A D, this region was bestowed to Ramanatha, son and successor of Hoysala king Someshwara. The Hoysalaking were defeated by the Vijayanagara rulers. These kings ruled Kolar 1336 to 1664 AD. They built several temples including Sri Someshwara temple in this region. Hoysala kings built Sri Someshwara temple and Mulbagal was also one of the important cities during Hoysala kings.

References To Vijayanagara Rule- After the decline of the Hoysalarule, the region came under the rule of Vijayanagara kings. Vijayanagara king Sri Krishnadevaraya supported consecration of a 14 ft high Kurudumale Ganesh idol sculpture in Kurudu male temple in Mulbagal taluk and built a Ganesh temple here. Other Viajaynagara Kingsalso supported restoration work of other nearby temples. The Kurudumale temple was erected during Chola kings. There are different types of architecture with in the temple precincts. It was completed byrenowned sculptors Jakkanachariand his son Dankanachari who were the famous sculptors not only during Hoysala period but had reputation across southern India.

References To During Maratha Rule-

The Kolar region came under the Marathas. Maratha ruler Shahaji had received these places of Kolar region as Jagir(landdonation).The Kolar region came under Muslim rule. The **Nawab of Cuddapah, Nizam of Hyderabad** and **Hyder Ali** ruled here. In 1720 AD, it became a part of the Sira province with **Fateh Mohammad** who was the father of **HyderAli**, who was acting as Foujdar(Military commander) gained control of this region. His father **Fateh Mohammad** was a chief of Budi Kote and BoodiKote was the birth place of **Hyder Ali**.It is also said that there was an inscription dating his



birth here. In 1791 A D, British Administrator Lord Cornwallis conquered Kolar region and later returned it to Kingdom of Mysore as a part of the peace treaty of 1792 with **Tipusultan**.

The wider archaeological sources of the region lead one to understand the variety of dynastic incursions and how they have impacted the structural construction. Kolar region is a house to quite a good number of monument and structural legacy which reflect the rainbow of cultural synthesis. The following is a very brief list of legendary temples which reflect various dynastic supports.

1	Kolaramma Temple
2	Someshwara Temple
3	AntharaGange Temple
4	ShathaShringaparvatha
5	Kotilingeshwara Temple
6	BangaruTirupathi Temple
7	Budi Kote Fort
8	ChikkaTirupathi Temple
9	Varadaraja Temple Tekal
10	MarikamabhaTemlemulbagilu
11	Kurudu male Temple
12	Ramalingeshwara Temple
13	Kshetrapalaka Anjaneya temple
14	Sripadaraja mutt
15	Narasimha theertha Mutt
16	Avani temple
17	Antara gange Temple
18	Rameshwara temple
19	Shivaparvatheshwara
20	Lavakusha betta temple
21	Someshwaranatha temple

Why study regional History?

Thus, reconstructing history through these archaeological sources is imperative to knowing the passage of this region to becoming a heritage destination heralding rich cultural vibrancy of Ganga period, Hoysala period, Vijayanagara period and such others.

Relevance of Studying Regional History of Kolar

1. Regional history is considered a wealth of details which facilitate to disclose how societal changes impacted the lives of local people.
2. Regional history is necessary because it reflects representation of large patterns of socio - economic transformation on a small scale and mirrors the gradual and phase-wise development of regional culture and historical incidents.
3. Regional history studies turns the grand patterns of historical change into concrete stories that tell the lives of individuals.
4. Regional history is thus vital to increasing one's understanding of historical processes and empirical research inputs.



Historical Relevance of Regional History - The importance of regional history becomes relevant historically because

1. Regional history assists in developing a sense of historical place, position and unique identity.
2. Regional history assists in linking the study of local monuments and public structures which reveal a great deal about use of land pattern, land donations, land endowment, land gifts by royal and nobility.
3. Regional history assists in linking the study of local monuments and public structures about local and advanced technology conceived for construction.
4. Regional history assists in understanding buildings and landscape processes and reveals extensive inheritance about the place.
5. Regional history assists in spotlighting monument and local heritage records which focus on individual local heroes their valour, their sacrifice, their struggles etc.
6. Regional history assists in providing a window into the lives of ordinary local people who were commoners but acted as great link as accompanying evidences in reconstructing history.
7. Regional history assists in interpretation of the local history as a national or international picture in a broader sense.

If viewed in this context, regional history of Kolar will yield descriptive evidences to rediscover the past of this region. The following sources can be of greater significance.

1. The diaries or writings of Baptist Missionaries.
2. The diaries or writings of British German mining engineers at Kolar Gold filed.
3. The travel accounts of Italian / Dutch / Portuguese Traders who visited Vijayanagara Empire.
4. The travel accounts of other foreign visitors especially Persian horse traders.
5. Anglo Indian writings.

Conclusion: Thus, Kolar region has a great inheritance and chronological journey through the ages. There are several archaeological sources which reflect the journey of this place from historical times to most diversified Vijayanagara rule and further. But, there is a need to re-explore all these sources and re-analyse for further evidences and sources to find additional descriptive focus about this historical place.

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