



The Role of Brahman & Management of an Agrahara –With Special Reference to Agraharas of Hassan District

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Abstract

During Hoysala period several Agraharas were set up all over their vast empire to boost the educational standards. Hailing from vibrant scholastic backgrounds, various geographic localities and from many cultural standards they assembled under one singular learning point. They were very exceedingly dedicated to the work of teaching. They reserved their lives in providing their pupils a great standard of schooling which instilled in them a sense of good and virtuous upbringing. They reserved their lives in providing their pupils a great standard of schooling which instilled in them a sense of good and virtuous upbringing. Epigraphs of this place mention several Royal grants to educational centers which helped the development of the Agrahara. Many royal dignitaries visited the area to see the developmental activities. Setting up an agrahara & supervising its maintenance were taken seriously by the donors. During Hoysala period several Agrahara centers were set up all over their vast empire to boost the educational standards which helped thriving of scholastic centers. Great men of letters flourished hailing from vibrant scholastic backgrounds, various geographic localities and from many cultural standards they assembled under one singular learning point. They were very exceedingly dedicated to the work of teaching & this was the reason for foraying of great literary contributions during this period. This paper reviews the importance of Brahmins in managing a Agrahara.

Key words; Agrahara, Brahman, education, management scholastic temperaments

1. Introduction

During Hoysala period several Agraharas were set up all over their vast empire to boost the educational standards. Koravangala, Hergu, Kadaluru, Shantigrma, Hiriyuru etc were some of the popular centers. Great men of letters flourished here. Hailing from vibrant scholastic backgrounds, various geographic localities and from many cultural standards they assembled

under one singular learning point. They were very exceedingly dedicated to the work of teaching. There are diminutive substantiation about all the residents in the Agrahara belonged to the Brahman community They reserved their lives in providing their pupils a great standard of schooling which instilled in them a sense of good and virtuous upbringing. They reserved their lives in providing their pupils a great standard of schooling



which instilled in them a sense of good and virtuous upbringing. The Heragu record is very interesting because it mentions the teacher from the province of Kashmir. It mentions a donor who was a scholar and belonged to village Darusa and maha Agrahara in Lolaya desha of Kashmira rastra. They were honored through many titles and many benefits by elite class and by Royal Court.

2. Promotion of Agraharas through Royal Grants

Epigraphs of this place mention several Royal grants to educational centers which helped the development of the Agrahara. Many royal dignitaries visited the area to see the developmental activities.

1. The Heragu record is very interesting because it mentions the teacher from the province of Kashmir. It mentions a donor who was a scholar and belonged to village Darusa and maha Agrahara in Lolaya desha of Kashmira rastra
2. ¹. They were honored through many titles and many benefits by elite class and by Royal Court.
3. Another record from Koravangala refers to Grant of land and money income by Kallayya, an officer in charge of state affairs, for several services in the temples and for feeding Brahmans of this place².
4. Another record from this place refers to an officer of the mint granting oil mills to temple and for feeding Brahmans of the place.³ Land was

given freely to this Agrahara and the income from the nearby villages was attached to it⁴.

5. The Kommenahalli inscription refers to a grant of village to Bhattara Chikkannadeva of Kommenahalli free of all imposts converting the village into an Agrahara⁵.
6. A record refers to a gift of land as Sarvamanya to the scholars of Chikka kadaluru which was a agrahara and it was renamed as Arundhatipura ⁶. The income from these villages was enjoyed in perpetuity by the descendants of the original donors⁷.
7. Thus Agraharas were the most important centers of education and learning⁸. They were villages⁹ given to Brahmans for their maintenance while they engaged themselves in learning and education. The setting up of an Agrahara had enormous manifestation on society as these centers contributed to the cultural enlargement of the area.
8. A record from this place mentions Honnavara agrahara which was a famous learning center of this period. This place was made a sub urban center through building a temple & consecrating deities here ¹⁰.
9. Gift of lands for building this temple and for maintaining livelihood of Brahman scholars of this Agrahara is mentioned¹¹.
10. A small town developed around an Agrahara gradually as pupils came



- from far off places in search of knowledge.
11. Gift of lands to Madiraja as Devadatti & to Brahma bhatta is mentioned in a record¹². This record mentions very clearly the names of engravers and composers as Panditha Madiraja of Saligame, engraved by kalukutiga Devoja and Ruviri Nanjaya¹³.
 12. Another record refers to conversion of Village into an Agrahara in memory of Udayadiya who died in Kelavatti . It was divided in to vrittis. Out of 18 vrittis 2 were made to the temple of Janardhana for worship and maintenance of priests and other temple servants¹⁴.
 13. A record from this place mentions Kriya shakti panditha, learned scholar as being honored through lands for his daily needs and for food offering to his followers¹⁵.
 14. A record from this place mentions Reciter of Kamba Ramayana as being honored¹⁶.
 15. A record from this place mentions Honnavara agrahara which was a famous learning center of this period. This place was made a sub urban center through building a temple here¹⁷.
 16. Lands for building this temple and for livelihood of Brahmans of this Agrahara is mentioned¹⁸.
 17. Honnavara record registers the installation of Nandi image in front of the deity in Mahadeva temple of Honnavara¹⁹.
 18. A record refers to a gift of land as Sarvamanya to the scholars of Chikka kadaluru which was a agrahara and it was renamed as Arundhathipura²⁰.
 19. Another record mentions gifts which were bestowed to Brahmans and the village Maidanpura was converted into an agrahara. Maidanpura was renamed as Hariaharapura²¹.
 20. Jakkenahalli record mentions consecration of image of god Kaleshwara at Jakkeyanahalli belonging to Koravangala attached to the great Agrahara of Shantigrama by Mahapradhana Kalimayya.
 21. It also mentions grants to Shivashakti panditha who was appointed as Sthanapati of the temple The gift was meant for the worship of and offerings to the deity and feeding ascetics. It gives the genealogical account of the beneficiary who was famous for his scholastic attributes²².
 22. The Lakshmi sagara record mentions the grant of a village to Bhatta who was well versed in Vedas for maintaining a chattra or a feeding house for students²³.
 23. The Kommenahalli inscription refers to a grant of village to Bhattara Chikkannadeva of Kommenahalli free of all imposts converting the village into an Agrahara²⁴.



24. To make Shantigrama which was a hiriya agrahara of Seege nadu the village of Koravangala excepting it from all imposts to Devi shakti pnditha who was also made the Sthanika meaning resident supervisor of the temple of Bucheshwara²⁵.
25. The beneficiary and his son Kalyana Shakti were said to be disciples²⁶ of Vamashakti²⁷. He belonged to Gangavadi 96 000²⁸. It records the consecration of govardhaneshwara temple In Koravanagala which was famous agrahara of Seege nadu
26. It further registers a gift of Lands for Vidya bharana panditha deva²⁹. His scholastic attributes are specified.
27. Another record from Koravangala refers to Grant of land and money income by Kallyya for several services in the temples and for feeding Brahmans of this place³⁰.
28. Another record from this place refers to an officer of the mint granting oil mills to temple and for feeding Brahmans of the place.³¹ Another record from Mudugere records the construction of the temple and some lands to ascetic Nagarashi pandithadeva³² who belonged to Koravanagala Agrahara³³.
29. The Heragu record is very interesting because it mentions the teacher from the province of Kashmir. It mentions a donor who was a scholar and belonged to village Darusa and maha Agrahara in Lolaya desha of Kashmira rastra³⁴.
30. The epigraph from Agrahara Shantigrama eulogizes an ascetic named Achalaprakasha who was a pontiff to Hoysala king Veera Ballala II. A grant was made to him on a copper plate which is very interesting³⁵. Mentions the grant of land tax free for the temple of Narasimha by the Mahajanas of Shanthigrama described as Anandi hiriya Agrahara³⁶. The teacher Paramahansa came from kashi who was the teacher of Achala prakasha set up the image of Varada Narasimha³⁷. This person established a Brahmapuri meaning an higher educational unit, where in 24 Brahmans settled³⁸. For feeding 10 brahmans who were well versed in all shastras, Schloar Deva bhatta was provided with Vogarahalli in Shanthigrama seeme³⁹. The inscriptions refers to a grant of the Vilalge Hiruvanahalli and others attached to the village Shanthi grama of Seegeandu by Hoysala Vishnuvardhana made over to queen Shanthala devi for 220 Brahmans⁴⁰.
31. The records from Goruru mentions that it was an agrahara earlier which was in ruins and the Mahajans of this place made a request to the Royal court and got it renovated by consecrated an image in the temple.

3. Conclusion

Thus setting up an agrahara & supervising its maintenance were taken seriously by the donors. During Hoysala period several Agrahara centers were set up all over their vast empire to boost the



educational standards which helped thriving of scholastic centers. Great men of letters flourished hailing from vibrant scholastic backgrounds, various geographic localities and from many cultural standards they assembled under one singular learning point. They were very exceedingly dedicated to the work of teaching & this was the reason for foraying of great literary contributions during this period.

¹ EC Vol VIII Hergu 144 p367 371

² EC Vol VIII 130 Koravangal (V Hn 73) p 351

³ EC Vol VIII Hn 130Koravangala (V HN73)p 351 -352

⁴ EC Vol VIII Hn130Koravangala (V HN73)p 351 -352

⁵ EC Vol VIII Kommenahalli 126 (V Hn 64) p 341 -342

⁶ EC Vol VIII Hn 112 hiri kadaluru (v hn 84) p 319-323

⁷ Because he had a lion's share of this income

⁸ The word literally means first food

⁹ Villages or sometimes hamlets or settlements

¹⁰ EC Vol VIII Hn p 306 95 (V hn 65 &66)

¹¹ EC Vol VIII Hn Honnavara 96 V hn67 p 309

¹² EC Vol VIII Hn 53 Kadaga (R 1926 -49) p 271

¹³ EC Vol VIII Hn 53 Kadaga (R 1926 -49) p 271

¹⁴ EC Vol VIII Hn 76 (V Hn 102)p 286

¹⁵ EC Vol VIII Hn 88 (v hn 114)Poomagame pp 301-302

¹⁶ EC Vol VIII Hn 89 (V Hn 77 0 p 303Anugavalli

¹⁷ EC Vol VIII Hn p 306 95 (V hn 65 &66)

¹⁸ EC Vol VIII Hn Honnavara 96 V hn67 p 309

¹⁹ EC Vol VIII Hn 98 (r 1942 -40) p 310

²⁰ EC Vol VIII Hn 112 hiri kadaluru (v hn 84) p 319-323

²¹ EC Vol VIII Hn 115 (V hn 86)p 325 - 331

²² EC Vol VIII Hn 116 Jakkenahalli (V Hn 53)pp 331 -315

²³ EC Vol VIII Lakshmi sagara 12 5 (V Hn 16) p 340-341

²⁴ EC Vol VIII Kommenahalli 126 (V Hn 64) p 341 -342

²⁵ Their genealogy is recounted in this epigraph.

²⁶ EC Vol VIII who is called here as Jnana putra

²⁷ who was a protector of Shiva dharma

²⁸ EC Vol VIII 128 Koramangala (V Hn 71) pp 343 -347

²⁹ EC Vol VIII 129 Koravangala (V HN 72) pp 347 -351

³⁰ EC Vol VIII 130 Koravangal (V Hn 73) p 351



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- ³¹ EC Vol VIII 130Koravangala (V HN73)p 351 -352
- ³² EC Vol VIII 141 Mudugere (V Hn 69)pp 361
- ³³ EC Vol VIII 141 Mudugere (V Hn 69)pp 361
- ³⁴ EC Vol VIII Hergu 144 p367 371
- ³⁵ EC Vol VIII Hn 158 Shantigrama (R 1940 -1) pp386 -390
- ³⁶ EC Vol VIII Hn 159 Shanthigrama (R 1940-2) p 390
- ³⁷ EC Vol VIII Hn 160 Shanthigrama (R 1940-3)pp 390 393
- ³⁸ EC Vol VIII Hn 161 Shanthigrama (R 1940 -4) pp 393 398
- ³⁹ EC Vol VIII Hn 166 Shanthigrama (V Hn 115) p 399-400
- ⁴⁰ EC Vol VIII Hn 167 Shanthigrama (V Hn116) pp401 404