

Antique remains of Literacy in Ellore

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Abstract- The word Education originated from the Latin word 'Educare' which means to bring up. Literacy is a major part of modern Education. A person who has the skill of reading and writing is called literate. Historians found inscriptions in Sanskrit, Telugu and Prakrit in the town of Ellore. Inscriptions in Telugu from the 12th century show how the language changed over time.

Ghatikas were learning centers for Hindus. Muslim mosques were great learning centers for Muslims. Mosque-affiliated madrasas taught religion. The presence of inscriptions dispersed across the city is evidence that members of that civilization were engaged in reading and writing.

Key-Words -Ellore, Inscriptions, Prakrit, Telugu

INTRODUCTION

The word Education originated from the Latin word 'Educare' which means to bring up. One more word in Latin, 'Educere' means bring forth. So, education is bringing up and bringing forth. The word entered English in the mid-16th century. ¹ In general terms, getting systematic instruction is Education.

Education enhances life skills as well as life standards. It provides knowledge and common sense that is required to understand the society and responsibilities that are to be performed by a person as a social being. Education gives new ideas to make the world more comfortable and entertaining. It induces confidence levels of the people. Proper education reduces crime levels of the society. Thus reduce the stress and cost of maintaining law and order. At a global level, Education may prevent Battles between nations and control terrorist activities. It empowers women. Removes poverty.

Education is a purposeful activity which directs the person to achieve certain aims like transmitting knowledge or fostering skills and character traits. Education improves a child's critical thinking. Education improves the standards of life in a social

structure. Literacy is a major part of modern Education. A person who has the skill of reading and writing is called literate. As per the available Historical evidence, one may conclude that the town Ellore had literates in it even in the Medieval History. No concrete evidence is available regarding the school that flourished in the town before the British but surely, there were some centers of knowledge sharing and transformation. Historians found inscriptions in Sanskrit, Telugu and Prakrit in the town which go back to the beginning of the second Millenium.

Antique literary evidences in Ellore

Education shapes a child's character. Rulers have always valued education. Ghatikas were ancient educational centres.² Hindu temples were educational institutions. Muslim mosques were great learning centers. Mosque-affiliated madrasas taught religion. In his book Antiquities, Robert Sewell wrote about inscriptions found in the town of Ellore.³ Based on these facts, we can say that there were some people who could write and read in the middle Ages, but the number was small. Some information, like a praise of a local king or a list of donations, written in script in public places like Temples or any other place is a sign that the society has education. These inscriptions show how people in the town of Ellore lived and what their culture was like. The town used to be called either Kamalakarapura or Kolamu.⁴

The writings were done in three different languages: Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Telugu. Because of this, the kings and some of their supporters may know how to read and write in all of these languages. Inscriptions in Telugu from the 12th century show how the language changed over time.

Ellore is a populated village that is home to a modest fort that is claimed to have been constructed from stones that were taken by Muslims from the temples at Vengi. The height of the fort's walls is rather

impressive. They are in a ruinous state currently. The architecture of a Hindu temple has been incorporated into the construction of a mosque. On a single stone that was lying adjacent to the mosque, there were a total of 25 different inscriptions engraved on it. The presence of inscriptions dispersed across the city is evidence that members of that civilization were engaged in the practices of reading and writing.

18 private grants from 12th Century AD to 14th century AD.

SS 1118 (AD 1196) Grant by SomambikaMaha Devi, wife of SrimanMahamandalesvaraMahamandalikaKesavadeva a Raja to a temple.

SS 1122 (AD 1200), Telugu inscription, on a pillar in the masjid denotes the gift of a lamp to KolaniMulasthanaSomeshwaraMahadeva by a Vaisya of the King KesavaDevaraja of Kamalakarapura or Kolanadu. Grant by Somasani, sister of the sovereign mentioned in No.2. Dr. Hultzsch points out that as no trace of this temple remains, it would have been destroyed by the Musalmans.⁵

On the same pillar, S 1116, wife of king Somaraju of Kolanu, donation of a lamp was recorded.

A record of Kesavadevaraju of Kolanu is found on the same pillar. It was written in Sanskrit and Telugu. Mr. Sewell's local list: 17.

One injured inscription, undated, or date lost.

SS 1119 (AD 1197) Grant by a servant of the king mentioned in No.2.

SS 1134 (AD 1212) SS 1114 & SS 1118 (AD 1196) Grants by the king mentioned in no.2.

A CP grant Sanskrit and Prakrit of Salankayana Maharaja of Vengipura, VijayadevaVarman, addressed to the villagers of Elura (Ellore), making a grant of twenty Nivarattnas of land to Ganasarman. Dr. Hultzsch edited it. Kielhorn's List of Brahmi Inscriptions., No 1194.⁶

Slokas in honor of the king mentioned in No.2.

There was an inscription on a stone at the old cutcherry in Ellore. SS 1150 (AD 1228) Grant by Indradeva, son of SrimanmahamandalesvarachodamaharazulainaNarapatirazulungaru or Narapati, the Chola sovereign, In this year, Dr. Burnell thinks, the Cholas lost this part of the country,

On a stone fixed in the verandah of the house of a Mussalman is an inscription SS 1155 (AD 1233), A

charity by MallaPeggada son of AnantaPeggada, described as principal minister to some sovereign not named.

There is a stone inscription at a large mosque in the main street. It is no legible because of its ruined conditions

On a stone in the bazaar is an inscription SS 1545 (AD 1623). Grant by Sri Ranga Raya of Vijayanagar, son of "Gopal Raya" and grandson of "Aruviti Rama RazuRangappaRazu" to his Guru. There is a copy of this on copper in the possession of Kazi Muhammad MiruNazar Ali Saheb of Ellore, who handed over the inscription to Robert Sewell who examined the content. The Kazi also sent some documents of local interest which are in the possession of a Karanam at Ellore. It was a copper plate inscription giving the order of precedence in which betel-leaves were served to various chiefs and people by Ibrahim Qutb Shah after his conquest of this country, about the year 1566 AD.⁷

A C.P grant (Sanskrit and Prakrit) of Vijayadevarman of the Salankayana Maharajas of Vengipura addressed to the villagers of Elora (Ellore), making a grant of 20 nivarattnas of land to Ganasarman. This is Kielhorn's List of Brahmi Inscriptions, No 1194.⁸

In the hands of SrotriyandarPotukuchiKasipati, records that in Angirasa, Ninja-Ashadhabahula 7, Appa Rao gave VenkatesaSambasiva and Mallesa the agrahara of Etur.⁹

In the hands of Tatacharya, grandson of Prativadibhayankara, records that in Srimukha, Jyeshthasuddha 13, Thursday, Appa Raya gave an agrahara to Tatacharya.¹⁰

Lastly a copper plate inscription was given by Mr. Sewell, in the hands of a Karanam, giving the order of precedence in which betel-leaves were served to various chiefs by Ibrahim Kutb Shah after his conquest of this country, about 1566 AD.¹¹

In addition to this, the ruined city of Vegi or Vengi or PeddaVegi may be found in Denduluru, which is located eight kilometers north-east of Ellore. The town is home to a number of temples in various states of disrepair. According to Walter Elliot, the remains that were discovered at the location designated as Ind. Ant. V. 175, which totaled 55, could be the remnants of ancient buildings.¹²

It is reported that the Mohammedans constructed the fort at Ellore using materials salvaged from the demolished temples at Vengi and Denduluru¹³

An enormous statue of Ganapati could be found to the south of the settlement. In the direction of the east can be seen a large pile of earth known as Bhimalingadibba. Inscriptions are carved into two standing pillars and two fallen pillars that can be found to the west of the town. A tank with carved stones is located on the northern side and features a mound in the center of the tank.

CONCLUSION

The above information confirms the existence and importance of the town Ellore from Medieval times onwards. The town seems to be an important treasure to its rulers and an interesting target to its aspirant kings.

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