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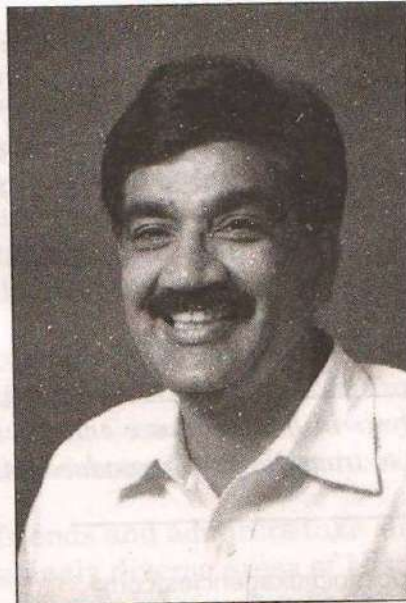
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Cultural Contours of History and Archaeology

Volume - IX : Vijayanagara Period

(In honour of Snehasiri Prof. P. Chenna Reddy)



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Economic toponymy of Andhra under the rule of Vijayanagara

E. SREEDHAR AND K. KRISHNA NAIK

The current trend in Historical research is to focus attention on the social, economic and environmental aspects of history, which are directly connected with the progress of human civilisation. This is being done through different approaches, and the study of toponymy is one among them. Toponymy is a science which studies the place names. It has been noticed that every place-name has one or more than one implications, which are related to religion, history, geography, ethnography, society as well as to flora, fauna and natural resources.

SJ Mangalam¹, SSR Murthy² made an attempt to discuss cultural aspects of place names in Andhra up to the 13th century A.D. As far as the place names in Andhra under the Vijayanagara rule, no serious attempt was made. Some studies have been carried on the place names with different approaches, but cultural aspect was not properly attempted. Therefore, in the present paper an attempt is made to study the place names, with an economic perspective that might throw light on some of the factors that contributed to the economic life of the Andhra under the Vijayanagara rule.

The present study is to consider the meaning of the place names, with the help of Telugu dictionaries and classifying according to the contents and to analyze each group in cultural angle, which gives us to form some idea about the topographical features, flora of different species, domesticated faunal species, irrigation facilities, forested hills and cottage industries that prevailed in the region. But the classification of names is a matter of not a little difficulty. The meaning which the dictionaries suggest has their limitations. They may not be giving really usages as old as the inscriptional name itself. Very often a name has more than one meaning and that it becomes almost impossible to decide the intended connotation. Hence the interpretations suggested here are of provisional in nature due to these limitations. The study does not aim at a conclusive inference on the economic standard of the society. But it is only conducive to highlight certain economic aspects of the region. The place names are divided in to the following categories.

While classifying the names of place, the entire name i.e., the name proper and the suffix as well is taken into consideration and because of this system some place names are bound to appear in more than one list. For example, the place name Gundlamadugu finds the place in the list containing the names denoting rocky surrounding as well as in the list containing the names after nearness water.