

# Historiographical Study on Vijayanagara Dynasty: An Empirical Observations

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## Introduction

This work elaborates study of Vijayanagara historiography and its importance from the beginning of human society, the man had to try to live a better life. The human life has transformed through various stages i.e. hunting-gathering to the globalization of the world in the present day. The economy, trade, and commerce had a crucial role to change the structure and thoughts of human society. In the part of developments, man has started barter system in the ancient period to control over the trade and commerce as well as monetary system continuing till today in terms of rupee coins and currency which were issuing by Government of India. The present study focuses on the historical resources during the Vijayanagara period. The VijayaNagara dynasty was founded in 1336 A.D. to protect the Indian culture. Though many dynasties were ruled in South India, there was a vacuum, which was filled by the Vijaya Nagara after Kakatiyas, and the Reddi Kingdoms. There were a disturbance and difficulties in Andhra during 13th Century A.D. after the downfall of powerful kingdoms the local chiefs and feudatories were tried to be independent but it was spoiled by the Muslim invasions. By this time the strong pillars of VijayaNagara founded to foil the enemy's strategy and made the unity among the local people. The political activities of VijayaNagara minted on their coins to prevent the enemies into its territory by showing the strength of the Army of Vijaya Nagara. The entire Paper focuses on the aim of the contributions of the sources of VijayaNagara period which will be understood through the primary and the secondary sources.

## The Primary Sources:

### a) Inscriptions:

Inscriptions are the most authentic sources to construct history. Inscriptions which stand for evidence of every event of the dynasty relates to the kings, chronology and also insight into the matters of political, social, cultural, economic and religious issues of a particular dynasty. For the study of VijayaNagara history we've to look into many records which explains inscriptions of VijayaNagara like South Indian inscriptions, epigraphic carnatica, Karnataka inscription, epigraphic Indica, Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams epigraphical reports, archaeological survey, annual reports, archaeological survey- Memories, reports of Indian antiquity are the most prominent of primary sources of the VijayaNagara history. The copper plates

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of Shimoga, Nagalavaram, Krishnapadu, and Srisailam are the prominent sources of VijayaNagara. All these sources covered important events like accession, expedition, construction of movements and public works. These inscriptions provide us valuable information of VijayaNagara Dynasty.

**b) Numismatic Sources:**

The study of coins called Numismatics. The coins are a very important and authentic source to write the history. Coins are useful to understand the political, cultural, economic, and social aspects of the dynasty. “The introduction of coins is a land mark in the history of civilization and is a great achievement of the human race. (Circar D.C, 1968, P.2)”<sup>1</sup>. It indicates the value of coins issued by different kings and the importance of the money economy which reflects every life of mankind. There are many coins with different types and different symbols issued by the kings of VijayaNagara were discovered in any part of South India. The coins of Vijaya Nagara are the main source of this study, to prove its political and cultural history. The coins which preserved in the Museums of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka are the most important of coins as a source of the study. The images on the coins of Pagoda, Varaha, Doddavaraha have the portrait of Siva Parvathi, Gandabherunda, Boar, Balakrishna, Vishnu, and Venkatesa are important coins which depict not only cultural significance of the Dynasty but also express the Historical, Political and Economic conditions of the Vijayanagara Empire.

**c) Chronicles and Commentaries:**

The chronicles of Paes and Nuniz (Narrates of Domingo Paes and chronicles of Fernao Nuniz) was written in Portuguese and translated by Robert Swell, brought as the Forgotten Empire - VijayaNagara. These chronicles are important to understand the condition of VijayaNagara. Domingo Paes visited VijayaNagara during the period of Krishnadevaraya and noted the report which he has really witnessed the things in the court of VijayaNagara. Nuniz who also visited VijayaNagara and carried out the traditional history of the Dynasty as well as local and current events which he was observed in the dynasty. These chronicles explained the great military expeditions (Digvijaya Yatras) and the political conditions of the Dynasty.

The Portuguese Commentaries focused on History of Vijayanagara in the period of Alfonso de Albuquerque, the Governor of Portuguese. The commentaries refer the expeditions of Albuquerque and also explain the relations of Krishna deva Raya with Adilshah and other neighbor dynasties. A commentary of Albuquerque was translated by Hakluyt society which gives us valuable information on social, economic and religious conditions of the Vijayanagara Empire.

The Persian traveler Muhammad Kasim Ferista have written Tarikhi- I – Ferishta which translated by Briggs. It is an important work which deals with the relations of the Deccan Rulers and the Vijaya Nagara Kings, and also explained major expeditions of both parties. The other Persian travelers Fuzuni Astarabadi had written the book Futuh-I-Adilshahi, which was translated by K.K. Basu, one of the important sources

of the study. Fuzuni who visited the court of Adilshahi of Bijapur explained the political history and the relations of Vijaya Nagara and Adilshahis of Bijapur.

The Arabic work Tohfut-ul-Mujahideen, written by Shaik Zeen Ud Deen, and translated by M.J.Rowlandson. It is focused on the relations of Portuguese and Muhammadan rulers. It was carried out by the author in the court of Adilshahi and it is useful to us to understand VijayaNagara and its contemporary's relations.

The Telugu chronicle Rayavachakamu by Stanapati Nayani Viswanatha Nayaka stands for Krishnadevaraya. This work deals with the events of Krishnadevaraya and traditional history. It will give us valuable information regarding Krishnaraya's relations, the coronation of Vira Narasimha, his relations with the feudatory chiefs, the Gajapatis etc. The author chronicle is Velugotivari Vamshavali. "This Chronicle commences with the reign of Kakatiya Kings. Gajapati and comes to a close with the advent of the British Government. It gives much valuable information about the history of Velugoti family. But its main importance is due to light it throws on the histories of the Kakatiyas, the Reddis, the Rayas (Vijaya Nagara), the Gajapatis and the Bahmanis Sultans with whom the chiefs of this family came into intimate contact (Nilakanta Sastri, K.A,& Venkata Ramanayya.N,1946,P.5)"<sup>2</sup>. By observing above statement we've understood that the importance of this chronicle to write not only Vijayanagara history but also the history of Andhradesa. It clearly describes the political, religious, cultural and socio-economic history of the Vijayanagara and its importance. It collaborates the work of different authors who have written in the style of Biruda-gadya and Eulogistic version. It is an important source for the study of Krishnadevaraya's political policy and his military expeditions.

### **Secondary Sources:**

K.A.Nilakanta sastry's Further sources of Vijayanagar History, focused on the Hindu Literary sources and advance knowledge of the subject. He deals with general literature, Chronicles and the Mackenzie Manuscripts. In the deep length of Vijaya Nagara History, he explained The Kamparaya Charita. The Saluvabhudya, The Raya Vachaka, The Krishnaraya Vijaya, The Vardhambika parinaya, The Achutaraya, and The Sahitya Ratnakara. He saw the forming of the Vijaya Nagara Dynasty as the literary revival in the southern region of India.

The drawback of the book is the author was started to counter the Muslim Chronicles and gave importance to the overall Hindu Literature. To study History all sources are important than the biased views of the authors. When writing history all the writer's views will take consideration for the constructing History. Here the author forgot the political identity and geographical works at the dynasty and didn't give priority to Numismatics which explains the culture of VijayaNagara.

N.VenkataRamanayya's *Studies in the History of the third dynasty of Vijayanagara*, views of the book is to narrate the principles events of VijayaNagara between 1529 and 1543. The second describes the system of Administration under which the empire of the Rayas was governed in the Sixteenth Century and the third deals with the religious and social conditions of the same period. In this book, the author focused only on the Administrative, social and religious conditions of the third dynasty of VijayaNagara. He didn't look into the economy and cultural identity of the dynasty. He looks on only conditions of the third dynasty but he neglected the after the third dynasty which was important to study of VijayaNagara History. I would like to fill this gap and try to explain all fourth dynasties conditions in Vijayanagara.

S.Thiruvenkatachari was translated Gangadevi's authentic work *The Madhura Vijayam or VirakamParaya Charitam* was discovered by accident amidst a heap of worn out Palm-leaf manuscripts as part of Sanskrit works and but for careful scrutiny of the head Pandit of the curator of Sanskrit Miss Trivandrum, it would have gone the way of many other works of the past which are not available to us. The central theme of the book is explaining the destruction of the Sambuvaraya Rule in Tondaimandalam and the destructions of the Madurai Sultanate. It is no doubt the story of Vijayanagara invasions of Tondaimandalam to send away the Muslim Sultanate. This is explained only on invasion but it was neglected by the translations to achieve the social, economic and cultural conditions of the VijayaNagara Dynasty.

William.J.Jackson presents *Vijayanagara visions-Religious experience and cultural creativity in a South Indian Empire* is a series of Vijaya Nagara vision and which explores some of the archetypal attractors of South Indian Culture in the lives of saints and sages and in the images and arts of spiritual creativity. It explores how such voices proved a traditional order, and renew a spiritual pathway in a world of contingencies, chaos, and uncertainty. The author focused on the theme of cultural and lives of the saints. He explained the meaning of the vision to explore the new thoughts and imaginations of the VijayaNagara Priests; he compared the Hindu Culture with China and Christian culture and believes. However, in the short comes of the book is he forgot the patronage of the sainthoods by different kings of Vijayanagara. He did not explain the historical view of Vijayanagara and also not look into the political, economic, social aspects of the Dynasty.

Robert Sewell's description on Vijayanagara was depicted in his book *A Forgotten Empire [Vijayanagara]*. The main aim of the book to explain the original writings of Nuniz and Domingopaes which was in Portuguese and translated in English. The author compared the Dynasty past and present condition and the writers give importance to the ruling of the important rulers. He succeeded to explain the tradition of VijayaNagara, Forts of Vijayanagara etc. However, in the book explanation regarding culture, economy and social issues in the dynasty are very less. He enlarged the political conquests of the Mohammedan Rulers and Counters of Vijaya Nagara rulers in South India.

The author interested to reconstruct the VijayaNagara History which was ignored by the writers in his words he says that “Making the dry bones live but meanwhile the Bones themselves must be collected an pieced together, and my duty is to try to construct at least the main portion of the skeleton (Sewell Robert, 1980, P.3)’’3. But the author did not fulfill the total gap to reconstruct VijayaNagara History.

Yazdani’s The Early history of the Deccan [parts vii-xi] explains the conditions in early times of Deccan. He concentrated to highlight the proportionate things of early Chalukyas, Satavahanas, Yadava’s, Kakatiyas of the Deccan region. He moreover described the literature, polity, architecture, and coins of these Dynasties. But the author did not give elaborate ideas of the rulers of the dynasty and social form of the Deccan region. He did not concede the Geographical differences of the region and in the period of study, he excluded VijayaNagara in this book. This is useful to historians to write history on Deccan but the book should cover more areas to construct an original history of Deccan.

Burton stein’s book peasant state and society in medieval South India examines the circumstances of peasants without lords who established and maintained great states enduring and complex local institutions and elaborate religious institutions. The author trying to explore the political system of South India which was wrongly interpreted by the writers of the past. He examined the present village its local context rural groups have been elaborated but constructions put upon the extent evidence. It assumed that the relationship existing between the social and cultural phenomena comprising medieval South Indian peasant society and other sectors of the social orders was obvious and unchanging. So it was proved by the authors and the social order still exiting today. He tried to explain the agrarian system and its relations with the state. But he did not concentrate on the total political structure of South India and cultural aspects in medieval South India.

The patronization of literature was gone on its peak during the Vijaya Nagara period. The Dravidian Languages was specially recognized by the Kings of Vijaya Nagara.

The poets Ashta Diggajas were patronized by Krishna Devaraya, who also great poet and scholar by the literature, the glory of Vijaya Nagara touched the sky. The political history of Vijaya Nagara was lit the flames of Indian culture which was forwarded to the Marathas. Nevertheless, the ending of the Vijaya Nagara period was panic; still, the fruits of Vijaya Nagara are surviving until today.

Rekha jain’s Ancient Indian coinage is systematic study of money economy from Janapada period to early medieval period deals with the gradual development of money in the form of coins from sixth century B.C. to the 12th Century A.D. The scientific study of ancient coinage of India started from 19th century A.D. onwards. Initially these coins were collected objects for the sake of pleasure but later on attempts were made to decipher their legends. The material regarding money economy in ancient India is scanty. the detailed explanation only come from the source of coins the sources of the book is ancient literary works,

inscriptions, coins and the account of the foreigners etc. is primary sources and catalogues, journals, commemorative volumes etc is secondary sources of the book. The author concentrated on money economy of the Janapada period to the Gupta period. the author didn't describes the study in scientific mode of coins and historical importance is less than the structure of the economic perspective of the said period.

Swami satyaprakash saraswathi and Rajendrasingh's book coinage in- ancient India, highlighted in a description of ancient Indian coins of different period, available in collections of museums. A documental reference to Indian coinage in ancient Indian literature, the covers Vedic Period, Brahmanic Period the periods of Panini and Kautilya and the laboratory work on the chemical and spectroscopic analyses and metallurgical study of Indian Coins as well as an account of the coinage in the ancient neighbouring countries has also been discussed.

A considerable revival of interest in the chemical analysis of ancient coins occurred in the second quarter of the 20th century A.D. Among the more extensive investigations on the Greek bronze coins and Chinese coins. An awaking interest of the composition of ancient Indian coins may be explored in the research scholar's analysis studies only, of course, there is a chance to explore the Indian coins in scientific manner due to the emission spectroscopy manner which applied in the 20th century. The author gives the importance only on the scientific methods but not explained historical background and of the said period.

D.C.Sircar's 'studies in the geography of ancient and medieval India' is contained dissertations on numerous problems relating to India's historical geography of the ancient and medieval period. the author cited important geographical texts. He highlighted to correct the geographical names of the Indian sites in the past. He explained the various Emperors who influenced the early Indian conceptions regarding the earth, the addition number of geographical names, identical names of different locations, cartography and elephant forests. He gave the major sources of historical geography to find the localities in present period. But he did not explain the entire medieval dynasties who ruled in India in medieval period.

Paul herrmann's the great age of Discoveries explains the route map to the world and geographical discoveries. And also emphasis the causes to invent the sea routs to India by the Vascoda Gama, other important routes to the world. He gives the Sketches of maps the linkage of routes in the world which shows the civilization of different countries. This book helps us to understand geographical regions of the world which shakes the world's history from the civilization period to modern period. He explains the relations of navigators with the local Kingdom Authorities and focus on light to development of trade and commerce. Historical geography which depends on each other on the economy and political strategies of the various regions in India as well as in the World History.

B.G.Tamaskar's contributions to historical geography of India is highlighted in the concepts of the ancient Indians on the rising and setting of the sun, directions, the spherodicity of the earth and its support

less ness in space, the southward and northward march of the sun attract the equator, the duration of light of the sun and darkness around the north pole for six months, the spread of the ocean around the land twice as large. There is hardly any direct allusion to the sphericity of the earth in the Upanishads although their author seems to have some vague concept about its Spherical form. The author have seen the geography in the historical texts of Upanishads, Jatakatales, Geographic basis of Kautilya Geo-politics, the concept of Boundaries of India through ages. He critically analyzed the vegetation and forests of Indian part. The Puranic names of the regions, rivers were discussed. But he did not cover the historical sources than geographical explanations.

O.P.Bharadwaj's studies in the historical geography of ancient India explains topography i.e. place names of tribes, rivers, hills, routes, etc. It is general work of geographical dictionary of ancient and medieval India and historical basis of literature of various dynasties. Geographical and linguistics considerations and traces the evaluation of tribal and geographical names through the ages leading in the process in some important conclusions deserving of notice by research scholars in the reconstruction of Indian past. Historical geography reveals its mysteries through more knowledge of the history of the region selected for the study and close acquaintance with the original sources and their medium from the earliest times to almost the present day, access to all branches of Indian Literature familiarity with the philosophical principles of linguistics change, and geographical acquaintance with the region and up to date information on epigraphically and archaeological discoveries needed.

K.Satyanarayana's A Study of the history and culture of the Andhras (from Stone Age to feudalism) vol-1 produce Historical background and cultures of the Andhras. The author mainly concentrated on the lives of the Andhras from the ancient age to medieval feudalism. He mainly focused on the tribes of Andhras i.e. Chenchus, Koyas, Reddis of Bison Hills, Svaras, Khonds and Raj Ghonds. He explained the pre-history of Andhras and directly deals with the Satavahanas but in the gap he did not fulfill the History of the Andhras. He used to say about the social life of the people and not concentrated the political views of the study. He gave only some importance to the political life of the people. He raised the questions of the people existence as the feudal lords, warriors and warlords Devadasis etc. in the society. He tries to explain the rise and Growth of Feudalism and relation between state and peasants, the life of tax collectors etc. The author did not much concentration on the major dynasties who ruled in Andhra Desa. He did not give the historical background of the Andhra Desa after Satavahana in extensive manner.

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Satish Chandra's Essays on medieval Indian history is the study which explores the relations of the state and society. The author explained the medieval economy, the political process of the state up to the end of the Mughal Empire. He concentrated the importance of the taxes like Jizyah and the religious policies of Mughals etc. He highlighted the cultural history and relations of the state, the Raja Putana Policy, the Deccan policy of the Mughals, and the author considered the Bhakti Movement which played vital role in Indian cultural system in economic point of view he focused the money economy, rise of Zamindari systems and importance of cultivation and agriculture etc. He developed the view on village society in Northern India and Marathi Polity and society. He critically examines relations of the Marathas, Jats, Sikhs and the Afghans etc. In Historical point of view, the author did not give much priority to South India and Southern dynasties which played a major role in Indian history especially in Medieval Indian History. He focused only North Indian History and society but did not cover the overall history of India.

H.C.Verma's Medieval routes to India was focused on the Historical routes in the North West Region of Medieval India. The study covers the medieval Khursans, Turkistan, Iran, Afghanistan, part of Russia. Pakistan and India up to Delhi, this study is evidence to development of the economy, military activities in India. The trade activities at one point, the other the establishment of military stations at different places are better to understand of their mercantile and logistic importance of better ascertained. The routing system in medieval India is neither judged in this work by modern standards nor condemned for want of modern technology involved in the preparation of roads. The 18th century A.D. saw the emergence

of a vast Arabian Empire which gave enough space to their adventurous, travelers and merchants to trade and trade in. This resulted in a growth of interest in the study of Geographical science among the Arab Scholars. The Arab Geographical literature composed in the 9th century A.D. drew heavily on the Greek tradition. The author gives good information about the historical geography of medieval India but he did not concentrate on the Southern part of Medieval India.

S.A.Rahman's *The beautiful India-Andhra Pradesh* focuses the History of Andhra Pradesh. It gives the history of different rulers and dynasties who ruled Andhra. He focused the Satavahana, Sakas, Ikshavakas, Eastern Chalukyas, and Kakatiya's contribution to the Andhra. The geographical structure they covered peninsular part of the ancient and stable Deccan block. Though the number of geological formations occur in this region, it is chiefly composed of a genetic complex of pre-Cambrian region. The exposure of the gneisses interspersed with granitic intrusion presents a surface monotony throughout Northern area except on the outskirts where the Archaean basement is overlain by the rock of younger series. The author focuses the natural vegetation, drainage system of the Andhra and he highlighted the ancient Andhra History in Aitereya Brahmana and indicates the Andhra originally Aryan race, but many scholars and archaeological evidence denied this statement and proved the Andhra is originally Dravidians.

M.Naga Bhushana Sarma's *History and culture of the Andhra* explores the cultural history of Andhra. The territory now known as Andhra Pradesh and its surroundings areas occupied a vital position in interesting major cultural currents, thus paving the way for Indian nationhood. For long it stood as a melting pot for diverse, cultural trends not only from within south India but also from the north mainly due to its geographical central position. They focused on the geographical history and relations of the other languages, religions from ancient to the modern period, different dynasties of Andhra and the position of people in socially, politically, economically and culturally etc. They also examined the folklores, tribes, and formation of the tribal density activities etc. The inscription and the Ethnographic study should be extended and it will be good work for the Andhra History if they cover the overall inscriptions and Numismatics.

P.Hymavathi's *Vijayanagara-the life and times of Tuluva Vira Narasimha* focuses the Vijayanagar life and activities during the period of Tuluva Vira Narasimha Raya. The author explores the wide-ranging of Administration, Military Forces, Social, Cultural, Economic aspects under Tuluva Vira Narasimha Raya. Based on Epigraphy, Literary works, Muslim and European sources used to write this book. The author highlighted the origins of Tuluvas through the literary and Puranic style, he linked the origins of Tuluvas with the Moon (Chandra Kumara). She also highlighted that "the Vira Narasimha Raya who was first proclaimed himself as 'Raya'". The author explained the society and culture of Vijayanagara under Vira Narasimha Raya. But she did not completely focus the origin of Vijayanagara and did not give much importance to the Krishna Devaraya.

Kesavan veluthat's 'the early medieval in south India' focus is to present an alternative history of the deep south and re-examines the problems and patterns in the History of Tamilakam, in general, an early medieval Kerala and Karnataka in particular. The author looks into the previous researches on south India to Distinct from the proceedings of early Historical information and explains the structures characterizing early medieval India. He used the sources in epigraphic and literary sources and drawn from the regional languages and inscriptions. He explained the theories of historiography and the history of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka. He explains the cultural history, customs, and constructions of different temples and worship of different deities in three regions. He also explains the social life and economic activities of the people and the rulers of different dynasties. But the author didn't explain the major dynasties in Andhra for historical ground though it is under South India.

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