

## Poets and Engravers (Kandaranekaras) of Huvinahadagali Taluk Inscriptions

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Huvinahadagali is one among the seven taluks of Ballari district. It is 341 KMs away from the state capital Bengaluru. The geographical area of the taluk is 2,34,317.17 sq.km. The taluk is bounded on the south by the Harpanahalli tauk of Davanagere district, on the north by Mundargi of Gadag district, on the east by the Hagaribommanahalli taluk and on the west by Haveri and Ranebennur taluks of Haveri district. This taluk has three Hoblis; Huvina Hadagali, (99,406.18) Hirehadagali (68,262.12) and Itagi (648.12). As per the 2011 census, the total population of the taluk is recorded 1,95,219 (98,853 Male and 96,366 Females). This taluk was ruled over by many dynasties such as Mauryans, Shatavahanas, Badami Chalukyas, Dwarasamudra Hoysalas, Kings of Kummatadurga, Kurugodu Sindhs, Rashtrakutas, Kalyani Chalukyas, Devagiri Yadavas, Kakatiyas, Nolambas, Sevunas, Vijayanagra Kings, and feudal lords, Mysore Wodeyars, Mysore Sultans and the British. All these dynasties have contributed their bit for the cultural exuberance of this area. The inscriptions available in this taluk are instrumental in understanding the significance of this place.

Inscriptions were mostly commissioned by Kings and poets, Pandits and Shilpis played a vital role in engraving an inscription either on a rock or a bronze plate. The writers of inscriptions were called *Kandaranekara* in Kannada. The inscriptions yielded in Huvinahadagali taluk have references to many poets, epigraphists and *Kandaranekaras*. Following is the details of poets and epigraphists who have been made a mention in the inscriptions yielded in the taluk.

### **Bhojaka Bhattasarma of Koliwala (Inamdar):**

The bronze inscription, corresponding to 3<sup>rd</sup> century, is written in Prakrit language. It reveals that Hirehadagali was under the rule of Channappa, a businessman by profession. However, this inscription refers to the rule of Pallava King Shivaskandavarma. The inscription records that this was engraved by Bhojaka Bhattasarma of Koliwala (Inamdar)<sup>1</sup>.

### **Nagawara Nagaverma:**

Yielded at Somalingeshwara Temple at Mylara village, this inscription corresponds to 1046 and refers to the rule of Chalukya King Trilokyamalla. There are 56 lines written in prose. It records that the inscription was engraved in memory of the grant made to God Swayambhu. It states that the inscription was composed by Nagawara Nagaverma<sup>2</sup>.

### **Srikanthasuri:**

Yielded at Kalleshwara Temple at Kuruvatti village, this inscription corresponds to 1099 AD. it has 81 lines and the matter written on the inscription looks similar to Champu Kavya. Written in Kannada language, the writer of this inscription Srikanthasuri has called himself a son of Brahmin Kalidasa<sup>3</sup>.

### **Kavikantabharana:**

This inscription is yielded at Panduranga Temple in Huvinahadagali village dated 1110 corresponding to the rule of Tribhuvanamalla. It has 39 lines and written by Kavikantabharana.<sup>4</sup>

### **Shankaradeva:**

This inscription is available at Koteshwara temple in Kotnakal village dated 1148 corresponding to the rule of Chalukyan Kings. It has 68 lines. It records that this inscription was engraved by Shankaradeva.<sup>5</sup>

**Devanna:**

The inscription at Gowrishwara temple in Holalu village dated 1178 corresponds to the rule of Nolambawadi King Vijayapandaydeva. The inscription makes a mention of Tunga Bhadra River. It also records that it was written by Devanna.<sup>6</sup>

**Engravers (Kandaranevara)**

Lipikars (writers) are as important as poets. Kandaranevras were basically persons who engraved on metal or stones. The name of *Kandaranevara* appears at the end of the inscription.

**Chavundoja:**

At an inscription yielded at Someshwara temple corresponding to the rule of Chalukya king Trilokyamalla says that this was engraved by Chavundoja.<sup>7</sup>

**Kaloja:**

The inscription at Kalleshwara temple in Kuruvatti village records that this was engraved by Kaloja.<sup>8</sup>

**Mariyoja:**

The inscription at Gowrishwara temple in Holalu village dated 1178 corresponds to the rule of Vijayapandya. It has recorded that this was engraved by Mariyoja.<sup>9</sup>

**Devoja:**

Situated at the left pillar of Navaranga Mantap at Uttangi Rameshwara temple dated 1226 corresponding to the rule of Immadi narasimha says that this was engraved by Devoja.

**Chavioja:**

The inscription yielded at Koteshwara temple in Kotnakal village dated 1262 corresponding to the rule of Yadava King Mahadevaraya, says that it was engraved by Cahvoja.<sup>10</sup>

The inscriptions reveal that Lipikars, engravers and poets played an important role composition of inscriptions. It can be deciphered that sometimes a single person donned the role of writer, donor and engraver. The inscriptions which were hitherto limited to decipher historical events, have been used to political and religious system of the erstwhile period. Inscriptions compared to manuscript of texts, have advantage of durability. Hence Inscriptions are one of the most important sources of Indian history especially of ancient times. The inscriptions throw a sudden light and provide magnificent information about the time, place and situation connected with the inscriptions. In the absence of contemporary historical writings, the inscription stands out as a reliable source for the knowledge of political history as well as socio economic history of ancient times. The scribe was a prominent figure in the ancient world. In many cases ornamental letters were written with the greatest care and dexterity by Scribe. Literary evidences mention the greatness of the Scribes, who were identifiably qualified with literary talents. Though many times, the scribes of inscriptions were illiterates, they held in high esteem in the society and they formed a respectable group of non-agricultural mode employees. Against this backdrop, it is imperative to explore more on the scribes and writers of inscriptions to decipher more about inscriptions.

**Footnotes**

1. Kannada University, Shasana Pamputa-1 Hadaga 3<sup>rd</sup> Century
2. Ibid 1046 BC
3. Ibid 1099 BC
4. Ibid 1110 BC
5. Ibid 1148 BC
6. Ibid 1178 BC
7. Ibid 1046 BC
8. Ibid 1099 BC
9. Ibid 1262 BC