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RESEARCH ARTICLE

HISTORY OF THAGADUR NADU – A STUDY Karpakam K¹ and DR. P.Kalaichelvan²

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Abstract

This paper focuses on Historical Background of North Medieval Thagadur Nadu. The English word 'history' comes from the Greek historia (inquiry or investigation). History is essentially a discipline that inquiries into the experiences of people who lived in the past. Historians often classify the past by dividing it into different periods. Labels are convenient, but they should be meaningful and consistent, and it is necessary to be aware of their limitations. Medieval period is an important period in the history of India because of the developments in the field of art and languages, culture and religion. Also, the period has witnessed the impact of other religions on the Indian culture. Beginning of Medieval period is marked by the rise of the Rajput clan. This period is also referred to as Postclassical Era.

Keywords: Historical background, Medieval period, Thagadur Nadu

Introduction

Medieval period lasted from the 8th to the 18th century CE with early Medieval period from the 8th to the 13th century and the late medieval period from the 13th to the 18th century. During the Sangam age, apart from the great rulers of Chera, Chola, and Pandiya Kingdoms, many chieftains were ruling in the Tamil country. Among these chieftains, the most celebrated chieftains were Adiyaman Neduman Anji and his son Pohuttu - Elini of Tagadur (Dharmapuri), who ruled practically over all the Baramahal region. The present Krishnagiri district of Tamil Nadu

comes under North Medieval Thagadur Nadu. Archeological evidence confirms the presence of human habitats during the Paleolithic, Neolithic, and Mesolithic epochs. Various rock paintings and rock carvings of the Indus Valley civilization and Iron Age seen in this district support the historical significance of this district.

The erection of memorials to the dead is an ancient custom and found all over the world. These memorials took different forms in different countries and times. In Tamil Nadu the custom of erecting memorials first introduced in the megalithic period.

Even though there is no written document to assess this custom. But in Sangam literature it is clearly mentioned. From fifth century BC onwards the aim of constructing the sepulchral monuments developed in to hero stone cult. The practice of hero stone cult is noticed in the literature and more in the hero stone inscriptions. It helps to study the contemporary society, political history, the development of the script, language and evolution of iconography of the hero stone figures.

Ainnurruvar the Ainnurruvar were the most important mercantile communities in South India. More than eighty inscriptions were collected in Tamil nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. These inscriptions were engraved between the eighth and seventeenth century. The Ainnurruvar, Nanadesi, Valanjiyar and the Nagarattar were found in the majority of inscriptions in South India. The earliest inscription of the Ainnurruvar was collected in Aihole which is in Karnataka. The name of this community has been the subject of various interpretations by different scholars. In most of the inscriptions it appears as the Five Hundred Svamins of Ayyavale. Several variants of the name occur in the Tamil epigraphs, such as Naanaatecithicai-Aayiraththu Ainjujutturar, that is, the Five Hundred of the thousand directions of the Five quarters. The Ayyavole-500 guild became a big over reaching guild of Southern India and most of the existing indigenous and local trade guilds became associated with it.

The Manigramam, nagarathar and nanadesi guilds joined with the Ayyavole-500. The Ayyavole guild emerged as a maritime power and continued to flourish in the Kingdom of Srivijaya. This is well documented in an inscription of the Ayyavole guild of the year 1088 AD found in Barus of West Sumatra, Indonesia. South Indian merchants were also active in Burma and the Thai peninsula. The maximum number of Ainnurruvar inscriptions have occurred during the Chola dynasty that lasted between the 10th and 13th centuries. Most importantly the 1088 inscription of Sumatra (reign of Kulothunga I) and the 1036 A.D.(Rajendra I) inscription in Sri Lanka establish the close association between the Ainnurruvar community and the Cholas beyond doubt. According to

Prof.Champakalakshmi, the Ainnurruvar moved in wherever the Cholas had conquered.

Seven guild inscriptions were collected in Dharmapuri district. The names of the places are Kadagattur, Kottaibhairahalli, Poochetti patti, Mallasamudram, Vellichchanthai, Padihagraharam and Sindalpadi. Kadagattur inscription alone inscribed in the Siva temple but other inscriptions are engraved in the stone slabs. Kadagattur guild inscriptions are engraved in the adhishtana of the Cholisvara Temple which is constructed near the village. A tax called Tari-irai was collected from the Nagarattar of the village. Tari-irai means a tax for the wavers community. It records the tax of the income derived though the tari-irai from the Tirumadai-vilagam of the temple of the god Mudikonda cholisvara mudaiya-nayanar. It is also collected to conduct the Tiruveluchchi and Tiruchandu and also to take the deity to the citadel of the nagarattar of the village. Two highway inscriptions were recovered in Dharmapuri district. They are erected in a single highway called Athiyaman Peruvali i.e. Athiyaman Highway.

A highway between Thagadur and Navar thavalam was found in the 13th century and it was named after the Athiyaman king. One among the two inscriptions is now exhibited in the Archaeological site museum at Dharmapuri and another one is in the field near Chettaikulam. In Dharmapuri district most of the trade inscriptions collected are engraved in two portions. Symbol like axe, plough, lamp, mother goddess, horse etc. are carved in upper portion of the inscriptions. Inscriptions are engraved in the lower portions. Most of the inscriptions are found in the stone slabs. So inscriptions are in damaged condition. Among the seven inscriptions four inscriptions are engraved in the Chola king Kulothunga III period. Most of the inscriptions are not in good condition.

There are some stray occurrences of regional trade guilds like Vellarai Nigamaththor in the TamilBrahmi inscriptions. From 9th century onwards, such trade guilds started functioning in a somewhat autonomous or distinct manner. They convened their meetings, took decisions, engraved them in separate inscriptions and installed such inscribed slabs in public

places. Ayyapozhil Ainnurruvar (The five hundred of Aihole), Tisaiyirathu Ainnurruvar (The five hundred of the thousand directions), Nanadesi (those of various countries), Valanjiyar (Balijas or Banajigas), Pathinenvishayathar, and Manigramathar are some of the trade guilds that functioned in such a manner. Chitramezhipperiya nattar, another guild, but of the agriculturists, started functioning from 11th century onwards. It had its own conventions and functions, and its functions were at times complementary to, and at usually in combination with, those of the trade guilds.

These guilds had their own militia, and other paraphernalia. Thus arose various occupational groups of the Vaisyas and the Sudras, which were engaged in the processes of production, distribution and exchange. The Vaisyas and the Sudras were dominated and even exploited by the higher varnas and they were subjected

to social and legal discrimination. Under such circumstances the Vaisyas and the Sudras engaged in various professions would have realized the advantage of forming guilds for safeguarding their interests.

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