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V. Rajendran

Ph.D., Research Scholar,
Thiru. Vi. Ka. Govt Arts
College, Tiruvarur,
Tamilnadu, India

N. Marisamy

Convener/ Research Advisor,
Associate Professor of
History, Thiru. Vi. Ka. Govt
Arts. College, Tiruvarur,
Tamilnadu, India

Perspectives on Socio - Economic condition revealed in the temple rock inscriptions of Manavalesvarar Temple in Thiruvolvikudi

V. Rajendran, N. Marisamy

Abstract

Illuminations of the greatness of the Manavalesvarar Temple. Description of the deeds given by the king's wives. Depictions of the Duke's dynasties and their given deeds to the temple. Description of duchess daughter-in-laws' deeds to the temple such as gold, silver, cattles and twilight lamp. Donated Paddy, lands for build the temple as deed.

Keywords: Socio-Economic, temple rock inscriptions, Manavalesvarar Temple

1. Introduction

Thiruvolvikudi is located in Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam district. It is one of the famous Temples of Lord Siva. It is noted in the 23rd place of Northern bank of Cauvery in Cholanadu. This Siva temple is located 12km West from Mayiladuthurai, 10km East from Aduthurai, 2km North from Kuttalam and 5km South from Thirumananjeri.

This place is being called as Velvikudi because the marriage ceremony of Lord Siva occurred there. It is also called as *Kauthukapanthana Chettiram* because a devotional ritual (Kankana Tharanam) occurred there for the goddess Ambika. So, the rock inscriptions of the temple reputed Thiruvolvikudi is famous.

There is the rock inscriptions about the famous kings among Chola, Kovirasakesarivarman, Kopparakesarivarman, Kopparakesari Uttama Cholan (A.D. 970-985), Rajaraja-I (A.D. 985-1014), Rajendran-I (A.D. 1012-1044), Rajendran-II (A.D. 1052-1064), Kulotungan-I (A.D. 1070-1120), Vikrama Chola (A.D. 1120-1135) and Rajaraja-II (A.D. 1146-1173). It is said that there are two Brahmadeyas found in this temple inscription in Cauvery river, Northern bank. It expresses that in Vadakarai Nallur Nadu, Brahmadeyam Videla Viduku Chaturvedimangalam ^[1], in Vadakarai Korukkai Nadu, Brahmadeyam Videla Viduku Devi Chaturvedimangalam ^[2].

It is known from the inscription no-38 that the above mentioned things, Thiruvolvikudi is located in two Chaturvedimangalam, Korukkainadu. It is clearly understood by the damaged inscription of Koparakesari. In the construction of this temple, one part is constructed by *Valanjiyar* and another by *Nanadesi Tisaiyayirattu Ainnurruvar*. It is noticed that the construction works could be done by Nambiyana Thiruvaiyaru Yogi, Thiruvolvikudi and his son *Srikarralippichchan* ^[3].

This temple's construct in style resembles the Aditya Cholan and hence it could be renovated at the time of Pazhaya Karrali, Uttama Cholan. Thiru S.R. Balasubrahmanyam mentioned in his book (Early Chola Art) that this temple's inscription would be in the period of Aditya-I or Sundara Chola ^[4]. So, it is clear that this temple was built in the 10th century A.D. The rock inscription of Koparakesari is important because it utters the construction messages of this temple. The lines in the rock inscription,

*“Thiruvolvikudi Koodi Piriakkadava Valanjiyar
Nanadesi Tisaiyayirattu Ainnurruvar”.*

By means of these lines, it is known that *Valanjiyarkal* had gone to foreign countries and they had come to their native, and also it is clear that they had double citizenship.

Five rock inscriptions of Rajaraja-I, tells that Kadalangudi was the part of in Korukkai region of Rajendraismha Valanadu. These five rock inscriptions illustrate the iraiyili lands for god donated to Mahadevar who lived in Thiruveruthupaadi (Melathirumananjeri), a part of kadalangudi. In the period of Rajendra, a new administration, namely Rajendra Simha Valanadu was introduced and under them Korukkainadu functioned. The name of the village was also modified as Gangaikondasola Chaturvedimangalam ^[5].

Correspondence

V. Rajendran

Ph.D., Research Scholar,
Thiru. Vi. Ka. Govt Arts
College, Tiruvarur,
Tamilnadu, India

This village was being called as 'Eruthupaadi Mahadevar' in the period of Rajendra-II. In the period of Kulotunga-I, it was called as Rajathiraja Valanattin paguthiyana Korukkainadu, Kadalangudiyan Thirueruthupaadi Mahadevar, Virudaraja Payankara Valanattin Gangaikondasola Chaturvedimangalathu Thiruvetikudi Mahadevar. But in the period of Vikrama Cholan this village was called as "Nallattur Nattu Brahmadeyam Bhulogamanicka Chaturvedimangalam." This research paper portrays the reputed and historical values of the Manavalesvarar temple at Thiruvetikudi.

Temple Construction in the rock inscription: Through this rock inscription it is known that a part of this temple was constructed by Valanjiyar, and their family members. The Valanjiyar sometimes reputed from the villagers and joined together, this message is also inscribed in the rock inscription. The name of the native villager of Thiruvetikudi, Thiruvaiyarru Yogi and his son Thirukarralipichchan, Thiruvetikudi are also inscribed in the rock inscription. This message is shown in the damaged rock inscription of Koparakesarivarman [5].

Kadarai Singam donated the God image for this temple. He was a Valanjiyar society. The lines of the inscription are as follows,

"...Itthevarai Seivithan Valanjiyar Panichei Magan Kaadarai Singam" [7]

A. Padmavathy, a retired Epigraphist tells that this God statue may be the Lord Dakshinamoorthy, because the rock inscription is beside the Lord Dakshinamoorthy.

Duvarapalagar (Mahakaalan) in inscription: Thenkarainattu Aayiramudaiyan Karikala Kannan Muvendavelan donated the statue of the Lord Duvarapalagar. This message is shown in the temple rock inscription located in the northern side of Duvarapalaga [8].

Position of entrance in the rock inscription: Periya Keezhavan Bhattadevan donated the entrance to this temple. He was a document writer in Thinaikalathu Saathu (revenue department) [9]. Raayeri prepared to make two floors in Manavalesvarar temple. This message is witnessed in the southern jagati inscription of the temple [10].

Donation of Stones in inscription: For the construction of this temple many people have donated stones. Maran Chalukki offered four stones [11]. Chevakakandan, Otrikandar Devan and Kanjaran Annaavan of Kaikolan (merchant family) society offered three stones. These people are known as Kandaradittan Terinjavarkal. It is also found from the rock inscription [12]. Kachuvan Kaadan chetti alias Thiruvaiyaru Yogi, Nalloor Nadu donated Valagathadi (compound wall), Thaadipadai (ground portion of wall) to the Manavalesvarar temple at Thiruvetikudi. It is noted that he himself also constructed the temple at Nagareeshwaram in Kanjaru city [13]. Then, Samithan Velaan cholai donated one stone [14] and Soolabani Vellore Kizhavan and Arumpakkamudaiyan donated two stones [15]. Nalloor Yogi donated fourteen stones [16]. Korukkai Nilakkizhaalar Amarneethi, Annaiyoor Nakkal each one stone [17]. These messages are shown in the rock inscriptions of Velvikudi temple.

Nandhavanam(Flower Garden) in inscription: In the 20th regnal year of Rajaraja-I, for making flower garden in Mahadevar temple, Thirueruthupadi, the villagers offered

seven ma (1350 X 7 sq metres approximately). The villagers promised the tax holiday for those lands. It is noted that these lands are related to Iraiylil Lands [18].

The Great Assembly: In the 6th regnal year of Uttama Cholan, Moothachetti promised to offer twilight (Nontha Vilakku) to the Natarajar statue in Velvikudi. Tisaiyayirattu Ainnurruvar accepted these offerings [19]. For these affairs Velvikudi Mahasabhaiyar helped to sell the lands, which is found in the rock inscription of Velvikudi.

Division of Traders: The traders of Thiruvetikudi donated lands for Manavalesvarar temple. They gave this, before the construction of the temple Attikoyattar, for getting paddy to the temple [20]. In the 15th regnal year of Rajakesarivarman, the two sons of Vellinakkan, merchant of Thiruvetikudi, Nakkal Thiruvelli and Nakkal Koothan prayed to burn Holy Lamps to the Lord Manavalesvarar. For which they offered 96 sheeps to the temple, and also they offered a Holy Lamp for their father Vellinakkan [21].

Donation of Land: In the 7th regnal year of Uttama Cholan, Vadakarai Nallur Nattu Chaturvedimangalam Sabhaiyar sold the lands. The officer of Puravuvai Thinaikal (The tax officers of government) received the lands. This message is shown in the rock inscription [22]. Some villagers from Nallattur Nadu, Aalangudi donated 6 X 1350 sq meters (6 ma) to the Lord of Thirueruthupadi. This land was in Alangudi near Keezhooru Mudapanthooru Murugavel Mangalam was the border of the land [23]. This village is located 5km north-west from Kuttalam bus stand.

In the 6th regnal year of Rajendra-I, the land of Mahadevar temple, Brahmadeyam Kalangudi is the own land of Rajendrasimha Valanattu Korukkai division. It is shown in the rock inscription [24]. Bharadaayan Venkadavan, Murugavelmangalam donated the land for cooking and food to the Lord of Sri Koil, Thiruvetikudi. This land was donated to the Lord's name [25], and also some lands were donated to the temple for producing sounds from Conch and making sound from beating drums (Sikandi) at the time of prayer. The donors of the lands are the assembly of Murugavelmangalam [26]. A land was brought from Ayyan Veerasesaran Moovenda Velan, Gunamalpadi. Through this land fifteen bowls of water was received. The general meeting occurred in front of the villagers in the Thiruvetikudi temple hall. This message is known from the northern sanctum wall of the temple inscription [27].

In the 16th regnal year of Rajendra-I, the assembly people of Kalangudi donated free tax land for the temple, to cook food for God and donate people. By this land they created Flower Garden and they formed a mess (feeding center) inside the temple. This message is shown in the Natarajar temple's northern Jagati [28].

In the 4th regnal year of Vikramachola, the assembly of Bhuloga Manicka Chaturvedimangalam, donated land to the Lord of Thiruvavaduthurai temple. For this meeting occurred in Thiruvetikudi. For this land 20 paise had been got from Gnanasivar. This Gnanasivar is called as Paravai Nattu Azhagavidangan. It is a noted affair that the land had been given to Thiruvavaduthurai temple (Thirukeetharam) for Sivalinga pooja. In this land, it was granted to create Thirunanthavanam (Flower Garden), Thirumadai valagam (Surrounded place of the temple), Thirukulam (Pond), Thirumutram (open courtyard), Srikoil (temple). And also the rights were granted to use without tax to Gnanasivar, his family members and Maheswarar also [29]. In the 6th regnal year of

Vikramachola, Apoorvical (Monks), Maheswarargal (Siva Adiyargal) were fed. These statue of Vinayaga and Thirugnanasambandar were installed. For the worship of these statue the lands were given.

Donation for Lighting lamps: In the 27th regnal year of Rajaraja-I, the part of Uyyakondar valanattu peravur, the villagers of Koodaloor donated twilight (continuously lighting lamp) and land also ^[30]. In the 4th regnal year of Koparakesari, Srikaranapichchan of Velvikudi received 42.48 (24 ½) grams kalanji of gold from the girl, Paldevar Ilangaisonai and he sold the lands. Then 20 paisa were received for burning evening lamps(Sandhi Vilakku),arecanut, betel leaf and other making dishes in the temple of Thiruvetikudi. This message is known from the southern wall of the Vinayaga shrine ^[31].

Donation of Paddy: Narana Chetti donated Mukurini Paddy (3 marakkal). By this paddy, the sacred food was prepared to the god and goddess of the temple. These were followed by the assembly men and Sivanadiyargal who in the responsible for the temple administration ^[32]. In the 27th regnal year of Rajendra-II, Kundoor Kiramavittan donated 60 kalam of paddy to this temple, there were a pooja followed in the night time to Chetrapalapuram God or Piravar the needed for ghee food. The offering was shared to the Devaradiyar. These Devaradiyar known as Mahesvarars. This offering food was called as 'Nambimai Tiruvamuthu' ^[33].

Donation by Women: The wife of Veeranarayana Pallavarayan Karaimala Nanagai donated six stones to the temple for construction ^[34]. In the 6th regnal year of Uttama Chola, Sembiyan Mahadeviyar, mother of Uttama Chola donated 142 kalanji silver kalasam (Stupi) ^[35]. She donated this to the temple of Thiruvetikudi. Uma Bhattaragi the servant maid of the queen, also donated lands by receiving 16 kalanji of gold ^[36]. The lady was donated in the name of the temple God. In the 10th regnal year of Kulotunga chola-I, Vellatti Ariyal, Sembiyan Kandivur donated lands to the god and goddess of the Thiruvetikudi temple to light the lamp during night time. Sivabrahmanas of the temple received it and gave the documents ^[37].

Donation of Goat: Sembiyan Arkaadu Vellan donated 36 goats to twilight to the God and Goddess of Thiruvetikudi. This message is shown in the 4th regnal year of Koparakesari, southern wall of sanctum rock inscription ^[38]. The another inscription of Rajakesarivarman, speak of 96 goats donated to this temple ^[39].

Donation of Coins: In the 2nd regnal year of Uttama Chola, Srikaranakarralippichchan donated the land to God and he gave a name as Srikarana peruvallagam. The estimation of the land is 10 ma (10 X 1350 sq.m) and the assembly of Velvikudi had preceded. It is shown in the temple rock inscription ^[40]. It is spoken that Panayan Koothandan is one of the Kaikolars, he donated two paisa to the temple. The estimated weight of the paisa was 34 Nirai (weight). In that paisa was called as kaalanganal ^[41]. A merchant from Ambar village, Thiruvanichakathaal Cheri donated one paisa to the temple ^[42].

In the 4th regnal year of Rajendra-II, Adavallan Bhattan donated Thiruvavar Nambi statue to Thiruvetikudi temple, and donated 30 paisas to prepare Thiruvamuthu. From the taxes of the paisa, they decided to do ritual offering of the food, and it was given to the Devaradiyar. It would be accepted by the assembly men also ^[43].

In the 4th regnal year of Vikrama Chola, Gnanasivar donated land to the Thiruketharam temple (Thiruvavaduthurai) for feeding ritual offering food to Adiyar, Mahesvarar and it is appreciable that 90 paisa was received as the tax for the land ^[44].

Donation of Silver Vessals: Gunamalappadi Udaiyar Ayyan maarasingan Veera Sekara Muvenda Valandoned a silver vessel approximately 400 kalanji. This message is shown in the 4th regnal year of Uttama chola ^[45]. He had also donated a silver plate (Thambulam) ^[46].

Conclusion: It is clearly shown that the donation of things to the temple is not being followed by men only and also by women. They not only donated to Manavalesvarar, Sri Pariwala Suganthanayagi, Thiruvetikudi, but also to other Gods. This rock inscription illustrates not only the donation of Kings and Queen but also the donation of Princes even public of the society. One part of the temple was built by the Traders. The inscription also illustrates that Thenkarai nadu moothavelan, a farmer installed a statue of Mahakaalan alias duvarapalaga. Maaran chelukki, Otrrikandan, Kanjaaran, Annavan of Kaikolar society donated stones to the temple. By means of this rock inscription it is clear that Sembiyan Madevi, mother of Uttama Chola donated 142 kalanji of Gold and a lady, Pala devan Ilangai Sonai donated deeds. It also illustrates the donation of Arkadu Velan, donated goat and cattles. And Veera Chola Muvenda Velan donated a vessel (vunkalam) and silver plate. It also tells about the regional temples of Mayiladuthurai. The rock inscription of Thiruvetikudi traces the socio economic stages and the research illustrates other temples of the area. By means of this research, it could be obvious to understand the historical reputation of the temples.

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