

INSCRIPTION RELATED TO THE PALLICHANDAM GRANTED BY THE PANDIAS IN THE 13TH CENTURY

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Abstract

The Pandiyas of the Sangam and the early Pandiyas donated lands and jewels to various temples. The later Pandayas also continued this tradition and donated lands, prestigious Jewels to the temples. The donations given to the temples as land were known as Palli chandam. The early Pandayas and the Cholas constructed innumerable Saivite and Vaishnavite temples throughout the Tamil country. For the better administration of the temple and the local governance, the kings rendered many endowments, i.e cash, jewels, lands, etc. During the period of the second Pandya empire, the kings continued and carried out religious work with pious towards god. They imprinted the details of the donations in inscriptions. This article highlights such an inscription of the second Pandya reign discovered at Vadakkunatham village in Virudhunagar district.

Keywords: Sangam, Administration, Inscriptions, Endowments, Reign

Introduction

The Pandyas have continuously saved themselves from the invasions of various dynasties and have effectively ruled the southern parts of Tamil Nadu, emerging as an empire. They have ruled Tamil Nadu continuously as the Sangam Pandyas, the Early Pandyas (First Pandya Empire), the Second Pandya Empire and the Later Pandyas. During the rule of the Pandyas, they have continued to carry out their religious work despite the invasions of various countries. They have also built temples in them and given donations to encourage worship and have ruled by maintaining religious harmony. In this article, we will look in detail at the inscription related to “Palli Chandham” given in the 13th century AD, the reign of the Later Pandya kings.

Later Pandya Kings

Tamil Nadu was under the control of the Kalapras for some time after the Sangam Pandyas. The Velvikudi Seppedu states that a Pandya king named Kadungona recovered this from Kalapra and re-established the Pandya rule in Tamil Nadu. The tradition that originated through Kadungona continued until the 10th century AD. Then the Pandya country that came under the control of the Cholas began to be ruled by the Cholas under the name Chalapandiyar. The rule of the Cholas continued until 1279 AD. Later, the Pandyas, who rose up in power, recovered the Pandya country from the Cholas and began to rule themselves. Among them, Sadiyavarman Sundarapandiyar I, Maravarman Kulasekaran I, Maravarman Sundarapandiyar I are notable.

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Emmandalamum Kondaruliya Kulasekarana

The Second Pandya Empire began in 1160 AD. In this dynasty, Sadiyavarman Sundarapandiyan I ruled from 1261 to 1271 AD. Sadiyavarman Sundarapandiyan I is considered to be the greatest king of the Second Pandya Empire. Because during his reign, this king's dominance spread throughout Tamil Nadu. He reached a high level in all fields. The inscription in the northern language found in the Srirangam temple indicates that he conquered various countries. Due to this, Sadiyavarman Sundarapandiyan I has been given the title “Emmandalamum Kondaruliya Sundarapandiyan”. Sadiyavarman Sundarapandiyan spent three years with Sadiyavarman Sundarapandiyan. The reigning king, Maravarman Kulasekara I, continued for forty years after him. This king is also called “Kales Devar” and “Ashaar”. In the inscriptions, the words that begin with “Ther Bol” can be found, which describe the true glory of this king.

Victories

“Kanilai sempian kadumpuli yalavum
Meenam Ponvarai Meruvi Longavum
Singanam Kalinganth Thelinganj Sethipum
Konganal Kuthiram Posalang Kucharam
Muraimaiyi nana Muthunal venthal
Thirai murai katti Sevadi vananga”

According to the above lines, it can be seen that he had conquered and made all the countries like Chola Nadu, Kongu Nadu, Maladu (Chethinad), Thondai Nadu, Telugu Nadu, and Malai Nadu to pay tribute. Due to this, like his predecessor, Sadayavarman I Sundara Pandian, Maravarman I Kulasekaran also received the title of “Emmandalamum Kondaruliya” Kulasekaran, which can be seen through the inscriptions of this king. He also received the title of “Tollam Konda Pandian”. The reign of this king, who has conquered Eelam, can be seen through the inscriptions found in those areas and has conquered not only Tamil Nadu but also various countries. Information about the donations of this king can be seen through the stone carvings found in areas like Madurai Alagar Kovil, Virudhunagar Srivilliputhur, and North Natham near Paralachi.

Religion in the 13th century

The Pandya kings were generally considered to be admirers of Shaivism. They supported other religions as well, and they provided various donations to the temples. Especially during the reign of Maravarman Kulasekara I, the Pandian king in the 13th century A.D, Vaishnavism flourished. This is because Maravarman Kulasekara I donated many donations to Vaishnavism temples, as can be seen from the inscriptions found in the Perumal temples in places like Azhakar Kovil and Srivilliputhur.

At the same time, he provided donations to the Jain religion to the extent that it is said that he did not harm the Shaivism, Jainism, or Buddhism.

An inscription related to Pallichandham, which proclaims religious harmony

Four fragmentary inscriptions are found in the “Weir” (Kalingu) built in a way that water flows out of the Kanmai, located in the forest area of Vadakku Natham near Paralachi in Virudhunagar district.

One of them is found with the beginning with the auspicious word. The other three inscriptions are found without the beginning and end, with only the middle part. The word “Pallichandham” is found in one of these four fragmentary inscriptions.

The inscription reads:

“Svathi Sri Komara Panmarana Thiripuvana Sakkavarthikal
Emmandalang kondaruli sri Kulasek
Udaiyar Thiruvala vayudaia Nayanar Thenma Alatru
Nattup Pallachilan Pallava kula
Singalaraya Makal kotriyammai Ezhutharulavitha Sri vitha theva
Nambimeesiyammaiyai Padikku kondittu..ikkuyakkumpaadi.
karuthanudaiya .Ulakku zhei Sri .. Nam petrudaiya Seythu
Merkum therku Nellai vitran seya .. yei
kkara Rettai... Therku Vadakku...Seyvithu
Utpatta kupayattum Pallichanthamaka ko”...

The above six-line Tamil verses begin with the auspicious words “Emandalamum Kondaruliya”, the title of the Pandya king Maravarman Kulasekaran I, and include a message about the land donation made by “Kotriyammai, the daughter of the Sinhala Rayan”.

Pallichandham

The above inscription contains the word “Pallichandham”. The sacred lands given to Jain and Buddhist schools are called “Pallichandham”. Evidence related to the Pallichandham given in this way has been found in a rock inscription dated 8th century A.D in the town of “Kundu Reddiyur” in Tirupattur district. Similarly, there is an inscription related to Pallichandham in the Perumal temple found in the town of Thoppalakkarai, which is located near the inscription we have found now.

Thoppalakkarai Jain School

There were divisions like Alatru Nadu, Venpu Nadu, Paruthikudi Nadu among the Pandya Nadu divisions. Out of these, areas like Paralachi and Thoppalakkarai were divisions of Alatru Nadu. The Pandya kings in this region had promoted religious harmony in the 13th century A.D. As a result, there was a Jain school called “Virpori Veerar Perumpalli” in the village of Thoppalakkarai, according to the inscriptions related to the Pallichandham of Maravarman Kulasekara Pandyan from the 13th century found in the Perumal temple in Thoppalakkarai. These stone carvings contain information that lands in the Paralachi area were given as sacred lands to the Jain school.

Virpori Veerar Perumpalli

The Jain school in Thoppalakkarai must have been built by warriors who were excellent in archery and they must have made this donation while staying in the Thoppalakkarai area while helping the merchants of that time. There are currently two Jain sculptures and inscriptions. All of these were donated during the reign of Maravarman I Kulasekara Pandya. Some inscriptions related to this donation are found in the Perumal temple here. To prove the claim that some of these inscriptions are missing, those inscriptions have now been found in an area called Vadakku Natham near Paralachi.

In that inscription, “Emmandalamum Kondaruliya” was “Singalarayan Makal Kotriyammai” during the reign of King Kulasekara Pandya. It has clarified the fact that the Jain school was given lands as a donation and the four directions were mentioned and the Pallichandam was given.

Conclusion

Through the above inscriptions and the Jain sculptures currently in worship at Thoppalakkarai and the Perumal temple worship, it is clear that religious harmony was maintained in this area during the rule of the later Pandya kings around the 13th century A.D.

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