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ROMAN SETTLEMENT IN EARLY TAMIL NADU

As gleaned from the Coins (100 CE – 500 CE)

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ABSTRACT

Tamil Nadu has been famous for its maritime trade since ancient times. Three crowned kings The Cheras, the Cholas and the Pandyas kept the sea under their control after their ruling period. The richness and prosperity of Tamil Nadu attracted the attention of foreigners. The immigrants did business and set up their residences. The name for this is 'Yavanacherry'. They have bought the things they need with their country's currency. As a result, foreign currencies are found a lot in Tamil Nadu. Therefore, this article explores the Yavanacherry the Roman settlement and their coins and the spread of Tamil business culture across the seas. This article highlights that not only Roman coins are available here. The Romans, who love the spices and resources of Tamil Nadu, have set up their residences in Tamil Nadu. Have lived for 400 years. They have issued coins to spend during their stay here. This can be confirmed by the fact that later Roman coins were available in the commercial cities of Tamil Nadu, and also emphasizes or confirms that the term yavanas referred to in the Sangam Tamil literature were Romans who made trade conduct and finally settled in Tamil Nadu.

Introduction

Tamil Nadu has been famous for its maritime trade since ancient times. Three crowned kings The Cheras, the Cholas and the Pandyas kept the sea under their control after their ruling period. Tamil Nadu has been famous for its maritime trade since ancient times. Three crowned kings The Cheras, the Cholas and the Pandyas kept the sea under their control after their ruling period. It is said that the Chera king Kuttuvan controlled the trade route to the mountains and the trade route to the sea. The Pandya king's capture of the port of Musiri, which was well known for its Greek trade, refers to the Akananuru as 'valankazu mucirinedunel yanai Aduborch Cheliyan'. "naliyiru muunniir naavaay otti valitozilanta uravon maruka" purananuru describes as the Chola king Karikalan as a descendant of those who knew the direction of the wind and drove the Ships into the sea. The richness and prosperity of Tamil Nadu attracted the attention of foreigners. The immigrants did business and set up their residences. The name for this is 'Yavanacherry'. They have bought the things they need with their country's currency. As a result, foreign currencies are found a lot in Tamil Nadu. Therefore, this article explores the Yavanacherry the Roman settlement and their coins and the spread of Tamil business culture across the seas.

Although the word Yavanar generally refers to the Strangers or foreigners, it first refers to the Ionians who lived in the Ionian region of Greece. Then it refers to the Egyptians and the Arabs as it also refers to the Roman (T.N. Subramaniyan, 1990, p.716.)

The term is entirely applicable to the Romans, who were more interested in the spices of Tamil Nadu than the Egyptians and Arabs, who brought their country's wealth here in heaps. These are what the Sangam literature says in Agananuru, "yavanar tanta vinaiman nankalam ponnoduvantu kariyodup peyarum " (Agam 149: 9-11). Hundreds of songs point out that the Roman Ships took the pepper of Tamil Nadu and brought the gold of Romania here. It was through the Greeks that the Romapuri people learned about the taste of Tamil Nadu spices and the pride of other exports. Also the Greeks called them "Sonagar" (Kambara , Oortedu.112); And "Milacher;" (Agam: 149: 9); - The Greeks also understood the police.

Tamils have done business traveling along the coast and in the Mediterranean. The Tamil word 'navai' is derived from the Latin word 'novice'. This word is a testament to the connection of the Greeks and Roman with the Tamil Nadu shipping business ". (Poornalingam Pillai, 1963,p.77)



Greek Trade

Although it is generally believed that the Romans had close trade relations with Tamil Nadu, the Greeks were the first to establish trade relations with Tamil Nadu before them. It was through the Greeks that the Romans came to know the taste of Tamil Nadu spices and the pride of other exports. (C.K. Sircambalam, 1991, p.218)

Foreign Trade in Tamil Nadu It has been going on since the 7th century BCE. In the first century BCE. The Yavanas traded with Tamil Nadu from the beginning of the 5th century. The Greek sailor Hippolus discovered that ships could easily sail from the Red Sea to India via the Indian Ocean through the monsoon winds. The invention was used not only by the Greeks but also by the Romans. After this the maritime trade of the Greeks with Tamil Nadu flourished. In the travelogue Indica, written by the Greek ambassador Megasthenes, who visited Pataliputra during the Mauryan period of ChandraGupta, he wrote about the harbor of Pandya and the well-known pearl fishing and pearl industry in that country. (M. Rasamanikkam, 2014, p.47.)

Many Tamil words have entered the Greek language through these merchants. Words such as 'rice', 'injuiver', 'arisa', 'ginjiparas' were used as guides for the arrival of the Romans in Tamil Nadu (P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar, 1983, pp.193-194). Greek coins found in Tamil Nadu are the main evidence of maritime trade with this State as early as 300 BCE, before the Romans.

Greek coins include Thrace, located in the northeastern part of Greece, ancient Salucia in Iraq in the northern part of the Gulf of Persia, the Cretaceous in southern Greece, and in the central part, Thessaly, Ancient Phoenician (present-day Syria). The coins of these areas of the Jewish state were also found in the Karur river in Tamil Nadu. (R. Krishnamurthy, 2001, pp.53-56)

Egyptian trade:

Egypt is one of the most remarkable countries in the Red Sea. Along with these, the potsherds narrate the business culture of the Tamils. The inscribed pottery of the Tamil inscription "Kannan Sadan" in Quasir-al-Qadim, Egypt, speaks of the recent cross-border cultures of the potsherd Tamil "Panaiori", (V. Vedachalam, 2008, pp. 137-138) as well as Greek coins found in Tamil Nadu. (R. Krishnamurthy, 2001, pp.53-56)

Literary Evidences for the Yavanas

References to Yavanas are found in six places in eight anthologies and ten idylls. Refers to the gold coins imported by the Yavanas (*akam*:149). *Purananuru* (56) records that the Pandyan king Nedunchezhiyan drank in beautiful Roman wine jars. There are references in *Nedumalwadai* (10.2) to beautiful figures resembling Roman animals. Perumpanarupadai verses (315 - 317) refers to the swan shaped lights as used in Rome placed on the fire altar to illuminate the place. *Mullaipattu* (59 - 63) shows that the Yavanas worked as bodyguards. According to the report, the Cheras captured the Roman emperor Neduncheralathan, punished them with tied their hands and poured boiling ghee on their heads and seized rare gems and their ornaments from them. In Sangam literature the Yavanas are portrayed as rude and speak a language they do not understand. '*nayanil vancol yavanarp pinittu neyalaip peytu kaiyir kolii e*' (patirrupattu - pathikam 2: 8-9) An envoy of the Pandya king went to see the Roman king Augustus. The Sangam literature speaks volumes about their Urns, their beautiful carvings on pottery, and their carpenters' handiwork and their workmanship, how they worked as a warrior. Much research has been done so far on the Greeks in terms of trade.



Romanian trade and currency

Roman trade with Tamil Nadu did not flourish until the 1st century AD. Coins of Roman kings dating back to this period are not yet available in Tamil Nadu. The direct contact of Romans has been associated with Tamil Nadu since the time of King Augustus of Romapuri (34 BC). In Tamil Nadu, Akilandapuram, Anaimalai, Kallaginar, Chavadipalayam, Tiruppur, Boodi Natham, Pennar, Pollachi, Vellalur (Coimbatore), Uthamapuram (Madurai), Kathanganni (Erodu), Karivalamvanda Nallur (Tirunelveli), Karur, Kalaiyambathur (Dindigul), Karukakurichi (Pudukottai), Krishnagiri (Dharmapuri), Konerippatti (Salem), Soraiyapattu Thondaimanatham (Cuddalore), Bishoptown (Ooty), Madurai. Romanian coins are available in places like Mambalam (Chennai). (K. V. Raman, 1992, 19 - 34; R. Champakalakshmi, 1996, pp. 158 -174; P.V. Radhakrishnan, 1999,p.13) Trade between the two countries flourished under the support of the empire. The envoy of the Pandya king has gone to the Roman country.

However, they have lived in Tamil Nadu longer than the British. In the early days (1st to 5th century BCE) they stayed and traded in the Chera, Chola and Pandya countries on the faces of the sector such as Musiri, Kavirippattinam and Korkai. Have used gold coins to trade. Their copper coins are found in Kurur and Madurai. Were in use until the 5th century. So far 6800 Roman coins have been recovered from 75 Roman coin hoards found in South India. They include 90% gold coins (Aureus) and 70% silver (Dinar). These mostly belong to the Julio-Claudian period. (K. Rajan, 2019, p.75)

Kongu Country and the Palakatt Passes

The Palakkad Pass plays an important role in the history of the Congo. The Kongu Highway from this junction reaches Poompuhar via Madukkarai, Vellalore and Uraiyur. It is on this highway that Roman coins and ornaments became widely available. So far 1500 Romanian coins have been found here (The Hindu, 19.03.2015)

Roman Settlement

Silapathikaram the post sangam literature mentioned about "Yavanacheri" and Yavanappadi". (UV.Saminatha Iyer, 1974, p. 576) It reveals the settlement of Romans in this region. Ptolemy mentions that it was located in Kavirippattinam, Thanjavur district, and that it was very close to Cauvery. The place was very beautiful and attract the trespassers. The epic Perunkatai on the story of Udayanan speaks of the "Yavanacheri" and the Yavanappadi in Rajagruha. (UV.Saminatha Iyer, 1968, p. 505) Sivaka Chintamani, the 9th century CE literature mentioned, that there were strong forts built by the Yavanas to the extent that the weapons of the invading enemy could bend themselves. It described the finess of the technology they used. Madurai also has a solitary settlement for the Yavanas Yavanas. (K.K. Pillai, 2008, pp.55-56.) Archaeological excavations have revealed that a warehouse and a

shop were located at Arikamedu during the heyday of the Roman trade, and that Roman vessels were found here. Annually 600,000 worth of gold from Rome was spent on Tamil trade. Thus the wealth of the Romapuri went to Tamil Nadu and the Romans' desire for goods in Tamil Nadu was strongly condemned by some people. In Kavirippoompattinam (present name Poompuhar) the name of the place is still given as 'Vellaiyan Iruppu'. There is an opinion that the Romans lived in this place. (C.K. Sirkambalam, 1991, pp. 219 - 220) It is noteworthy that a Roman coin was found here to reinforce this view. (P. Jayakumar, 2001, p.24.)

After the death of Roman Emperor Nero (68 AD), Vespasian became emperor he loved simplicity. The Roman trade in Tamil Nadu declined for some time due to various reasons such as the political turmoil that followed. K.K. Pillai said that coins issued after the third century were not available in Tamil Nadu. Pillai mentions and does not say that the trade was cut off for this reason alone. He also mentions that trade with Tamil Nadu resumed during the reign of Emperor Constantine (324-333 AD). (K.K. Pillai, 2008, pp.55-56.) Proof of this view, later Roman copper coins are discovered in towns like Madurai, Tirukoilur, and Karur. (R.Krishnamurthy, 2007,pp.1-117)

Conclusion:

Thus Tamils have had trade relations with the West and the eastern Countries for over 2500 years. The potteries of the Tamils available in the neighboring countries has also left its mark on the culture of the Tamils along with the coins. Neighboring coins and their art styles have been adopted in Tamil Nadu. Looking at Yavana and Roman coins, our Chera kings have issued coins engraved with the image. The Greeks came here for business purposes. The "Greeks" are an example of how the wealth of Tamil Nadu has made them stay here. This article highlights that not only Roman coins are available here. The Romans, who love the spices and resources of Tamil Nadu, have set up their residences in Tamil Nadu. Have lived for 400 years. They have issued coins to spend during their stay here. This can be confirmed by the fact that later Roman coins were available in the commercial cities of Tamil Nadu. By the above statements this article emphasizes or confirms that the term yavanas referred to in the Sangam Tamil literature were Romans who made trade conduct and finally settled in Tamil Nadu.

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