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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A STUDY ON HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES OF THE MUSLIMS IN TAMIL NADU

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Abstract

In Tamil Nadu, Islam came on the earliest days when Arabs who became the Muslims. The Jumma Masjid, in Keelakarai was built in 7th century C.E., with the prominent architectural characteristics of Tamil, is an oldest mosques of Tamil Nadu. The mosque near to Fort Railway Junction in the Tiruchichirapalli which is also dated 743 C.E. Arabic inscription (AH 116-134 C.E.) at Tiruchy and one of the important inscriptions of 9TH century C.E. at Kayalpattinam in Thoothukudi district about endowment that given to the mosques by Pandya kings are decisive pieces of the evidences about presence of the Muslims of Tamil Nadu that right from 8th century C.E.

Introduction

The growth of Muslim society in Tamil Nadu had to be cleared with the context of the Maritime trades in ancient period between India and Arabia. In the ancient period the Arab traders come to Tamil Nadu by the sea route. From the various references, the northern Arabians profited from the trades in India and they involved in commercial activities in various parts of Tamil Nadu especially on the coastal areas such as Kayalpattinam in Trunelveli district. Then, Arabs became the Muslims and they settled in various towns in Tamil Nadu

Muslims of the Arabs ancestry were the merchants and traders and they who inherited the

dominant positions in Tamil Nadu from Arabs, they had acquired a virtual monopoly in the maritime trade from 3rd century C.E. Muslims of the Tamil speaking community of the ancestry of Arab-Tamil dominated the maritime trading on 'Coromandel' coast region till 15th Century C.E.

The rulers and chieftains of Cheras, Cholas, and Pandyas patronized Muslims and they donated various lands for places of their worship. The rulers in Tamil Nadu and also Kerala who encouraged Arabs traders to settle down in their lands.

Muslims in Trunelveli

The Early Muslims, they settled in the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu, they are also functioned as guild. Then, they were called as Anjuvannam means congregation assembly. The Anjuvannam is found also in some of the inscriptions and copper plates of 12th and 13th century C.E. and these are considered to be 'merchant guild' of Muslims. An ancient mosque in Thenkasi is known as Anjuvannam Pallivaasal (Mosque) that existing even now testify that Anjuvannam, the name is attributed to Muslim society.

Muslims in Madurai

Kazimar Street in Madurai near the Periyar Bus-stand is one of earliest settlements of the Muslims society in the Madurai. The Historians state also that Hazrath Kaazi Syid Taju-din came to the Madurai from the Oman in 13th century and also he established 'Kaazimar Big Masjid on the land was given to Hazrath by a Pandiya monarch.

Even Today, Syed Tajud-din is believed also to be the descendant of the "Prophet Mohammed" and also his descendantS live on Kazimar Street in Madurai they are elected hereditarily as 'Town Kazis'. The current town Kazi namely 'Syed Ahja Mueenudin' said that 'Kazimar Big Mosque' was built by 'Tajuddin' as the thatched structure originally, and first place of Muslims worship for in the Madurai city.

The Kazimar Street has had settlement of the Muslims for over seven hundred years. Thus, the Islam arrived even before the invasion of in Madurai in Madurai in 14th century C.E. The Historians opine that Padiya ruler Maaravarman Sundara Pandian might had been contemporary of the Tajuddin. Even before coming of the Islam in the Madurai, the Arabs who maintained trading relations with Tamil Nadu, particularly for pearls in the Madurai Pandiya empire was very famous for the saints and sufis and they started coming to Tamil Nadu by 9,00 C.E.

The short lived of the Sultanate in Madurai and influence of Islam did have big impact on Madurai, especially on the town planning and warfare. The rulers of Muslim who introduced Arch style construction and they learnt from Romans. Big Mosque is the

architectural attraction of the city, and accommodates Maqbara of Madurai is a dargah of the sufi saints namely of the following

1. Hazrat Meer Ahmad Ibrahim
2. Hazrat Meer Amjath Ibrahim
3. Hazrat Syed Abdus Salam
4. Ibrahim Rahmatulahi Alaihim

Muslims in Tamil Nadu

Muslims in Tamil Nadu can be generally 3 categories.

1. Muslims Arab Tamil ancestry,
2. Local converts,
3. Dakani Muslims - Migrated from various areas of India to Tamil Nadu.

Arab Ancestry

Muslims of the Arabs-Tamil ancestries are Tamil speaking community and they form various distinct categories among them in Tamil Nadu. The important groups of them are following 1. Marakkayars 2.Labbais 3.Rowthers 4.Sonaka Mapillas and 5.Kayalars

Pasmanda Muslims

These Muslims are converts of other religion and such conversions also happened over the centuries during very peaceful preaching by 'Sufi saints' and the Sufis who came from Arabia. The preachers of the Islamic went to sections of t underprivileged in the Hindu society and they converted to Islam

Dakini Muslims

They are the distinct community and they are minority section in the in Muslim society. The significance derives from fact that Dakini Muslims form Political elite in the Muslims of Tamil Nadu. They can speak also Urdu, Tamil and Hindi and they can speak some other regional languages. They have number of sections among themselves namely

1. Syeds 2.Shaikhs 3.Pathans 4.Mughals (Navayats) Among the Dakani one of distinguished group is Pathans and they are settled in the such as Jinji,

Chanji, Arni and Arcot of the fortress centers and Madurai and Trichy have the Pathan settlements.

Conclusion

From this research paper, The Arabs were the traders who had the trade relationship with Indian sub-continent. Thus the Arab traders came to south India by maritime through the India ocean and they arrived the Malabar and Coromandel coastal areas in South India. Kayalpattinam of Thoothukudi is an ancient trading centers of Arabs and they settled in that places also. After arise of Prophet Mohammad, they became Muslim community and they settled in various parts of Tamil Nadu and they had mingled with some of the culture and traditions of Tamil people as well as Tamil people also had accepted the culture of Muslim community.

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