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RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE PALUVUR TEMPLE EPIGRAPHY - A STUDY

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Abstract

The present study deals with "The Paluvur Temples- A study", namely Kilappaluvur Temple, Melappaluvur Temple and Kilaiyur Temple. These temples are historically important and having significant factors. Kilappaluvur, Melappaluvur and Kilaiyur temples are rich in inscriptions. These temples have a continuous history from the 8th century A.D. onwards. The sources for writing the early history of the region are mainly epigraphical records. They throw light on the early history of this region. There are many inscriptions collected from the Paluvur temples. In the Gazetteer and Manual of Trichnopoly district describes the origin and history of the Ariyalur Zamindars which were very useful. Besides, some of the scholars of Ariyalur have made attempts to trace the antiquity of this area.

Introduction

The present study deals with "The Paluvur Temples- A study", namely Kilappaluvur Temple, Melappaluvur Temple and Kilaiyur Temple. These temples are historically important and having significant factors. Kilappaluvur, Melappaluvur and Kilaiyur temples are rich in inscriptions. These temples have a continuous history from the 8th century A.D. onwards. The murthy, sthalam and theertham of the temple are known to be very famous and they add to the sinificance of these temples.

Sources

The sources for writing the history of the Paluvur temples are many fold. The material at our disposol are of considerable value. The information available from different sources relating to Paluvur temples are helpful in bringing out a picture of the early history of the place.

Literature

There are some literary works on Paluvur. The earliest literary reference on the temples is St.Sambandar's Devaram. He has sung about Paluvur and Lord Alandduraiyar. In all the eleven songs Sambandar had sung about the beauty of Paluvur, Chastity of women, and the greatness of Lord

Alanduraiyar. The flourishing condition of the village is also graphically portrayed in his songs. The history of the Kilappaluvur temple is very much steeped in mythological stories and traditions. The importance of the legends in the history of Paluvur has been discussed in the second chapter. The historical significance of legends are very little.

Epigraphy

The sources for writing the early history of the region are mainly epigraphical records. They throw light on the early history of this region. There are many inscriptions collected from the Paluvur temples. The inscriptions of Aditya I, Parantaka I, Uttamacholan and Raja Raja II are found in the Paluvur temples. The inscriptions of Jatarvarman Sundarapandya, the Vijayanagar ruler Mallikarjuna Devaraya and the Mazhavarayas are also found in these temples. They have been reported in the Annual report of epigraphy and South Indian Inscriptions. The inscriptions themselves are mostly engraved on the temple basement walls and pillars in the mandapa and they generally register endowments of money, land, cow, sheep etc. for burning a perpetual lamp, performing pujas and conducting festivals in these temples. They are very useful in giving information about the religious activities, social and economic conditions under the Cholas.

In the Gazetteer and Manual of Trichnopoly district describes the origin and history of the Ariyalur Zamindars which were very useful. Besides, some of the scholars of Ariyalur have made attempts to trace the antiquity of this area. "Udaiyarpalayam taluka varalaru" written by Thiru Konjam M.Somasundaram Pillai and Ariyalur Namin Sarithira Surukkam are worth mention, although these works reproduce the information given in the Gazetteer and Manual.

Scholarly articles about the geological importance of this area has been published from time to time in journals of geographical society, Madras and Newspapers are also utilised in this work.

Location

Kilappaluvur is a small town panchayat in the Trichy district. It is 8 k.m. south of Ariyalur and 4 k.m. east of Kilaiyur and Melappaluvur and 45 k.m. away from Trichy. Melappaluvur and Kilaiyur are situated in

between Trichy and Gangaikondacholapuram. Kilaiyur is about a kilometer from Melappaluvur. There are no legends connected with Melappaluvur and Kilaiyur Temples. Only the importance of the architecture is noted in this work "Palu, Vata and Al" means a banyan tree and the place should have been once a forest of banyan trees, the name of Paluvur or Alanduraiyar. Sthalaviruksham of the Kilappaluvur temple is the banyan tree.

Kilappaluvur is covering an area of 1531.37 Hectares and its total population is 3443. Kilaiyur is having an area of 1160.96 hectares with the total population of 2788 and Melappaluvur covering an area of 409.55 has a total population of 2317. It is well connected with important places of the District on all sides by road. The buses are going through Paluvur to Trichy and Ariyalur. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people. The major crops were the paddy, millet, ragi, and groundnuts are also cultivated. To some extent the village is self-sufficient as the needs of the people are met locally. St. Sambandar has sung about the fertility of the lands.

Temples at Paluvur

The presiding deity of the Kilappaluvur temple is Sri Vatamuleswara. His consort is Sri Arundavanayaki. The main deity of Melappaluvur temple is Sundaeswara and his consort Meenakshi. Agasteswara and Arunachaleswara are the main deities of Kilaiyur, Paluvur is otherwise called in the literature as "Thirupaluvur".

The original name of the place is "Paluvur" The prefix "Thiru" being used to denote its sanctity. Such use of prefix before the place name was very common in South India, Thiruvannamalai, Thirukazhukunram, Thiruchendur, Thiruvaiyaru are places of religious importance. In these names prefix "Thiru" denotes that these are sacred sthalas of Lord Siva and Lord Thirumal.

According to Thiruthandakam, there are six types of temples found in Tamil nadu. Those are Perunkoil, Gazharkoil, Kokudikoil, ilankoil, Alakoil and Poonkoil."

பெருக்காறுசடைக்கனிந்தபெருமான்சேரும்
பெருங்கோயில்கடிபொழில்சூழ்ஞாழற்கோயில்

கருப்பறியபொருப்பனையகொகுடி கோயில்
இருக்கோழிமறையவர்பழிப்பட்டேத்தும்
இளங்கோயில், மணிக்கோயில், ஆலக்கோயில்
திருக்கோயில் சிவதுறையும் கோயில்குழந்து
தாழ்ந்திறைந்தேத்தீவினைகள்தீரும் அன்றோ"

S.R. Balasubramaniyan, Cholar Kalaippani (Tami1),
pp.191-193.

Paluvur belongs to the type of Alakoil. Athala Viruksham of this temple is banyan tree. The other names of the village are Thirupaluvur, Pathivai, Alanduraiyar, Yokavanam, Siru paluvur and mannuperum Paluvur.

Conclusion

In considering cultural developments in India, there has been an unfortunate tendency to take a narrow view of that culture which identifies it merely with the working of metaphysical intellect or speculative genius. In my review I have tried to avoid this tendency by considering the practical aspects of culture, relating them to the phenomena and processes of the world without rather than the world within. I have examined the developments both from the subjective and objective points of view. I have touched on practical subjects like medicine, surgery, applied chemistry and pharmacy besides the arts of civilized life, commerce and social conditions. I have attempted to demonstrate that the Chola period was not one of mere wars, conquests and victories, defeats and failures. It was more a period which saw the growth of a type of national solidarity when the rulers took pointed note of the hopes and aspirations of the common people who formed the backbone of the society. It can be said that during this period there was a fair degree of apotheosis of culture. Arts were developed to make life beautiful,

refined and happy as well as ethically dignified and noble. There was no development in isolation just for the personal gratification of either the artist or the patron. The basic motivating factor was the anxiety to help society evolve aesthetic tastes so that its personality could be uplifted to the sublime regions of spiritual bliss.

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