

The Legacy of Sambuvaraya Rule in Arani Gleaned from Epigraphical Insights

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Abstract

This paper has attempted to analyse the epigraphical sources of Sambuvaraya in Arani region, and trace historical and political influence over the region. The Sambuvaraya are the feudatories whom ruled Arani region under Thondiamandalam division from 12th century C.E., The rudimentary Kingship of Sambuvaraya begun under the headship of Sengeni Sathan Nalayiravan, whom ruled from the capital Munnoor near Tindivanam in South Arcot district. Gradually, they attained political influence and gained supremacy over Tondaimandalam, erected the capital in Marudarasarpadiavdu near Polur in North Arcot District. ¹Sambuvarayas ruled over Northern Tamil Nadu more than hundred years, both independent regime and chieftain under the Cholas and Pandyas, and their territories comprises Polur, Arani, Vandavashi, Vellore, Virunchipuram, and Villupuram, Kanchipuram, and Cheengalputtu district. Moreover, the Sambuvaraya inscriptions around 160 inscriptions were found in the religious places, located all over the Northern Tamil Nadu, and their rule signified in the History of Tamil Nadu and Arani over the years.

Keywords: Rajagambira Rajyam, Epigraphical insights, Sambuvaraya rulers, Murugamangalapparru, Tondaimandalam,

Introduction

Arani has been sanctified region placed astounding position from Archaic to Modern era. The inhabitants settled from nomadic, where genesis of Kingship and political hegemony from Sangam Age, and carry on with Nayak period. On the whole, the major Kingdoms and minor Kingdom, feudatories were ruled in the region, especially 'trio' Kingdoms namely Pallava, Chola, and Pandyas, above the rule the territorial division renowned as 'Thondaimandalam' then 'JayankondaCholamandalam'. On the consequences, the Sambuvarayafeudatories ruled Arani region under Thondiamandalam division from 12th century C.E., The rudimentary Kingship of Sambuvaraya begun under the headship of Sengeni Sathan Nalayiravan, whom ruled from the capital Munnoor near Tindivanam in South Arcot district. Gradually, they attained political influence and gained supremacy over Tondaimandalam, erected the capital in Marudarasarpadiavdu near Polur in North Arcot District. ²Sambuvarayarsruled over Northern Tamil Nadu more than hundred years, both independent regime and chieftain under the Cholas and Pandyas, and their territories comprises Polur, Arani, Vandavashi, Vellore, Virunchipuram, and Villupuram, Kanchipuram and Cheengalputtu district. Moreover, the Sambuvaraya inscriptions around 160 inscriptions were found in the religious places, located all over the Northern Tamil Nadu, and their rule signified in the History of Tamil Nadu and Arani over the years. This paper has attempted to analyse the epigraphical sources of Sambuvaraya in Arani region, and trace historical and political influence over the region.

Physical Setting

Arani was under the territorial division of Tondaimanalam in Pallava period.³ Then it was converted as Jayankonda Chola Mandalam during Chola rule. While the Sambuvaraya rule it was renowned as 'Rajagambira Rajyam' and it was a part of revenue village Murugamangalapparru.⁴ Arani and the taluks namely Chengam, Polur, Thandrampet, Cheyyar, Vandavashi, Kilpennathur, Kalasapakkam, Chetpet, Vembakkam, Jamunamaratur and Tiruvannamalai are under premises of Tiruvannamalai District in contemporary period,⁵ before that it came under the North Arcot District⁶. Over the years, Arani acted as a buffer zone between Kingdoms and capitals of north and south Arcot districts.⁷

Sambuvaraya Rule

Sambuvarayas are the feudatories of Cholas and their regime was named as 'Rajyam' and 'Rajagambira Rajyam' (Padaivedu Rajyam). The epigraphical sources depicted in and around Arni region exhibited the rule existed in this area. Their territorial division was covered River Kaveri at Trichy to River North Pennar. Sambuvarayas were ruled under the titles namely 'Nalayiravan', 'Ammayappan', 'Attimallan' and 'Attiyandan'.⁸ The Tamil notion Padaivedu has the meaning 'House of cantonment'.⁹ Every Sambuvaraya has the separate clan, whom followed the cultural attributes especially wear the ornaments and named itself as family name. When the Sambuvaraya wore the gem (called Tamil as Manickam) and his Sambuvaraya Kingdom known as Manika Sambuvarayar.¹⁰ Sambuvaraya introduced a separate currency system such as "Virachampan Kuligai" and revenue village was known in the name of *Paaru*.

Rajagambira Sambuvaraya (1236-1268 C.E.,)

The last Chola emperor Rajaraja III who ascended the throne in 1216 C.E., while Rajagambira Sambuvaraya crowned the Sambuvaraya chieftainship attribute the Cholas authorship in 'Padaividu'. The inscriptional sources mentioned him as 'Athimallan Sambukula Peruman'. There are six inscriptions were found in the Arani region, namely Thirumalai, Rendereppattu, Padaiveedu and Vrinchipuram. According to Thirumalai and Rendereppattu Inscription he was chieftain under the Chola ruler Rajaraja-III. Padaividu inscription clarifies that later he turned into Independent ruler in 1258 CE. From 1242 C.E., Kadavaraya King Koperunjan from Senthamangalam, became independent ruler and took control over some places in Thondaimandalam.¹¹ The Telugu Chola ruler Vijayakanda Gopalan (1250-1285 C.E.), who was previously a chieftain under the Cholas also became the independent ruler and captured some parts of Kanchipuram and Chengalpattu. In circumstances Rajagambira Sambuvaraya took advantage and turned into independent ruler in Padaiveedu (1258 C.E.). Arani and Polur region were under his territory.

During the rule of Kundraththur (alias Rajagambira Nallur) was donated to Bangalarayar near Rendereppattu¹². An inscription near slab set up in front of the Draupadi Amman shrine in Rendereppattu, records an endowment of 1300 *kuli* of land by Salimeyan alias Tondaiman to Lord Tirukamisuram-Udaiya-Nayanar at Sambukulapperuman Tirumuppudi¹³. Also, he had created a Brahmadeyam alias Rajagambira Chathurvethimangalam and donated to Brahmin, now this Brahmadeyam is known as Sambuvarayanallur¹⁴ near Arani. Another inscription in Tirumalai near door way of painted cave, Records gift of lands by Rajagambira Sambuvarayan alias Attimallan Sumbukula Perumal to Andangal Pangalarayar of Viranpakkam in Tamanurnadu¹⁵.

Rajagambira Sambuvaraya donated to his family deity of Ammaiappaiswara Temple in Padaividu¹⁶. Payyur village was donated to Ammaiappaiswara-Nayanar by Rajagambira Sambuvaraya¹⁷. The North wall of central shrine in the Maragasahayesvara Temple in Virunjipuram inscription mentioned that, Records gift of cows by Arayumperumal wife of Rajagambira

Sambuvaraya for a perpetual lamp in the temple¹⁸. Rajagambira Sambuvaraya declared as independent ruler (1258 C.E.) his rule only lasted for 10 years, later Padaividu regime was occupied by Telugu Vijayakanda Gopala. So, the independent rule came to an end and Rajagambira Sambuvaraya was under the control of Telugu King (1267-1285 C.E.). This can be known from Virunjipuram inscription¹⁹

Virachampan (1306-1317 C.E.,)

Virachampan was in power from 1306 CE to 1317 CE in Padaividu. He was known as 'EdirilicholaSambuvarayan' under the rule of Pandya referred in Virunjipuram inscription. Built in by a wall in the middle, seems to record a tax free gift of the village Arani in Murugamangalam Paaru to the god by VirachampanEdirilicholaSambuvarayan, regarding this information it is known that Arani was under Virachampan²⁰ In another inscription at the same place, seems to record grant of certain specified taxes from the village Korramangalam in Karaivali Andi Nadu in Pangalanadu, a subdivision of Paduvurkottam by Virachampan alias Edirilichola Sambuvarayan²¹. At Kunnattur north and west wall of central shrine of the Virajambukesvara temple, records an order of Sambuvaraya remitting taxes on several bits of Devadana lands belonging to godVirachampesvaramudaiya Nayanar²², at the same place the levy of 6 *Panam*(Money) and mentions godVirachampa Nayanar during the period of Maravarman alias Thirubhuvanachakkravathy Parakramapandiyan 8th regnal year²³.

The inscription on ThiruvotturVedapurishvara Temple north wall, record gift oftax-free land for forty lamps by Virachampa alias Sambuvarayan²⁴. In near Arani at Pundi village, on the west wall of the Jain temple of Ponnezhilnatha which records the construction of Jaina temple called Viravira Jinalaya named after the chief in Pundi in Meyurnadu of Palkunrakkottam and the tax free lands are gifted together with some privileges such as build houses, to plant coconut, areca palm trees, set up oil mills and to cultivate sugarcane and paddy crops. The lands in boundaries are mentioned as Narpakkam, the river Punal, Kulamanikundigai and Adityamangalam²⁵. These are all the inscriptions found near Arani region, this explains that Arani was under the rule of Virachampan Sambuvarayan.

Kulasekara Sambuvarayar (1306-1330 C.E)

Kulasekara Sambuvarayan was a chieftain under the Pandya Kings Sadavarman Veerapandiyan and Sadavarman Sundarapandiyan. He was originally known in the name of Ekampara Nathan according to Virinchipuram Inscription²⁶, he declared himself as Ekampara Nathan Kulasekara Sambuvarayan by combining the name of his predecessor Maravarman Kulasekarapandiyan. To know about him there are 15 inscriptions in various places of Pallikonda, Virinchipuram, Vedal, Thiruvotur (Cheyyar), Ukkal and Uttiramerrur.

The inscription in Virinchipuram at Margasahayaeswara temple, records an order by Sambuvaraya to collect the tax from Murungaiyur village for managing the expenses of festival called Andalilvendran Thirunal²⁷ Seems record an order of Kulasekara Sambuvarayar to Ulligai village assembly for making a gift of some taxes due from them to the temple²⁸. In the inscription of Pandiya King MaravaramanVirapandiyan during regnal year saka-1239 mentioned that Ekampara Nathan Sambuvarayar reduced the tax in favour of Valittunai Nayanar at Tiruvirinchipuram²⁹

In1313 C.E., the king Ravivarman Kulasekaran of Travancore invaded into Tamil Nadu and captured the areas up to Kanchipuram, his rule lasted till 1316 CE. In this situation the Pandiya Kings Sadavaraman Veerapandiyan and Sundarapandiyan requested the military assistance from Kagathya King Pratapa Rudra Devaraya, he accepted the request and sent a large army under the leadership of General Muppidi Nayaka.

The war occurred at the banks of Cheyyar River, Kulasekara Sambuvaraya also took place in this war and won by defeating Ravivarman Kulasekaran. By following this victory, a street in Virinchipuram was named as Cheyyartraivendranthiruveethi (Street)³⁰. In Vedal inscription of Kulasekara Sambuvaraya records gift of land for conducting the festival called CheyyattaraiVendran Thirunal³¹. And another inscription on the south wall of the mandapa in front of the central shrine of Vedapurishvara temple in Tiruvottur, records an order of Kulasekara Sambuvarayan³². From these inscriptions it is well clarified that Arani, Cheyyar, Virinchipuram, Pallikondaetc. Were under Kulasekara Sambuvaraya territory

Venru Mankonda Sambuvaraya (1322-1340 C.E.,)

Kulasekara Sambuvaraya established an independent regime in 1322 CE, Venru Mankonda Sambuvaraya continued after him. There was a panic situation spread over Tamil Nadu due to the Muslim attacks by Malikkafur(1310-11), Khusrau Khan (1319) and the forces of Muhammad-bin-tughluq (1324) this results to establishment of Madurai Sultanate. There are several inscriptions mentions about him found on Vellore, Tiruvannamalai, Kanchipuram and Chegalpattu District in Tamilnadu. A inscription on door jambs at entrance into the central shrine of ruined Kuntisvara temple at Mandakulattur, records that the façade (Mugavanai) and pillars (Thirunilaikal) gifted to Sokkanar³³. Another inscription in Azhagamperumal Temple in Ponnur, records gift of land for sacred lamp by Sembi-Jadaraiyar-Perumalpillai, the headman of Ponnur³⁴. Followed by an inscription on Ulakalanth Perumal Temple at Kanchipuram, records the grant of permission to unspecified individuals to enact street plays in Kanchipuram and Thondaimandalam³⁵.

RajananarayanaSambuvaraya I (1337-1363 C.E)

Thirumallinathan as known as Rajananarayana Sambuvaraya I, he was the eldest son of Venru Mankonda Sambuvaraya. Many inscriptions erected in Arani region during his period. An inscription on the east wall of the Alagapperumal Temple, it states that gift of land by Verasampattapatiyaraya of Perumbudar, a mudali of Tyagayaraya of Thondaimanadalam for burning lamp in the temple³⁶. On the Sarukkamparai near the refugees camp at Osur, Sambuvaraya Rajananarayana during his Regnal year-3 (1340 CE), Records a gift of taxes such kadamai, Ponvari and including all taxes as Sarvamanya AgaraIrayili by Rajananarayana, from wet land, dry land and garden lands of Osur such as Kalingarayanallur and Sirukulattur. This revenue income divided into 88 shares among that one share was given as Devadana, another one share was given as Tiruvidaiyattam and remaining 86 shares were distributed to 86 Bhattars of Nanagitra of Osur village³⁷.

Another inscription on the same place, An order of the chief communicated to the Variyan and Karnattan of Osur alias Kalingaraya Chaturvedimangalam³⁸. On the north wall of Vedapuriswara temple mantapa at Thirvottur, Gift of land by Sakalalokachakravarthi Rajananarayana during his Fourth and Seventh regnal year³⁹ A slab setup on Indiravanam village near Arani, States that free of all specified taxes in village and divided into 32 shares with 32 house sites as Sarvamanyaagrahara, among the Sarvarnas headed by Mangaladarayar⁴⁰. An inscription in Ukkal of Vaidyanathiswara temple at North and East walls describes about the sale of village Padiritangal by the assembly of Ukkal alias Virkramabharana Chaturvedimangalam in Pagurnadu to two persons for 200 Virachampankuligai (Money) to provide funds for renovating the sluice of the tank to the south of the village⁴¹. On the south wall of the central shrine in the Tirukkalisvara temple at Kalavai, States that Rajananarayana Sambuvarayan during his seventh regnal year remitted certain taxes on fields and crops of which had suffered⁴².

Rajanarayana Sambuvaraya-II (1338-1363 C.E.)

Rayanarayana Sambuvaraya II was the younger son of Venru Mankonda Sambuvaraya, his actual name was Ponnin Thambiran. His inscription on pillar set up on the land in Sadduperi village, Records gift of tax free sarvamanya among 54 Brahmans of the Lada and Vaduga in Sadupperialias Rajanarayana Chathurvedimangalam in Murugamangalapparru, Palkunrakkottam of Jayangondacholamangalam⁴³. On the East wall of the second Prakara in Margasahayaiswara temple at Virunchipuram, explains about grant of land and house site by the trustees of the temple of Valittunai Nayanar at Thiruvirinchipuram to Arippalideva of Perumbarrappuliyur for the consideration of a Tuni of Paddy every day and 20 Panam per year to be by him to the temple⁴⁴. The inscription of Devanur mentioned about some tax to the temple Thirunagisvaramudaiya Nayanar⁴⁵. So from all these inscriptions it is well known that Arani region was under the rule of Rajanarayana Sambuvaraya-II.

Rajanarayana Sambuvaraya III (1356-1379 C.E.)

Tirumallinathan Thiruneetruchamban alias Rajanarayana Sambuvarayan III was the Grandson of VenruMankonda Sambuvaraya. According to Vasur Muththalamman temple inscription the Rajanarayana Sambuvaraya-III donated the land for the worship purpose of Tiruvegambamudaiya Nayanar ⁴⁶. The inscription on Vedapuriswarar temple explains about the taxes collected on loom from Kaikolas of Tiruvottur⁴⁷. And another inscription of RajanarayanaSambuvaraya III in Madam is about the appointment of accountant in Tatakapuriswara temple⁴⁸.

Conclusion

Indeed, the epigraphical sources insights the rule of Sambuvarayas in the Arani region and its hinterlands. They have been played significant role in the fields of society, economy, politics and region over the years. Moreover, the cultural attributed were impacted in the society through the ages. The Sambuvaraya Kings have been focused to the endowment of the people in habitat in the region and Arani. The Endowment was related to Chathurvediamanlam, Devadana and Brahmadevyam. The remarkable rule of “Rajagambira Rajiyam” which were lasted for more than 10 decades got declined (1362 CE) by the invasion of Vijayanagar. Thus, the rule of Sambuvarayas might be the legacy in the history of Tamil Nadu and Arni region, which depicted the inscriptional sources.

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