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Dr. HG Parthasarathi
Assistant Professor,
Department of History,
S. Kariyappa Rural Post
Graduation Centre,
Kanakapura, Karnataka,
India.

Dr. Venkatesha TS
UGC-POST DOCTORAL
FELLOW, Department of
Studies and Research in
History and Archaeology,
Tumkur University, Tumkur,
Karnataka, India.

Dr. Chikkanna
Assistant Professor,
Department of Studies and
Research in History and
Archaeology, Tumkur
University, Tumkur,
Karnataka, India.

Correspondence

Dr. HG Parthasarathi
Assistant Professor,
Department of History,
S. Kariyappa Rural Post
Graduation Centre,
Kanakapura, Karnataka,
India.

Micro level study of Seegalanadu Prabhus of Kanakanahalli

Dr. HG Parthasarathi, Dr. Venkatesha TS and Dr. Chikkanna

Abstract

Kanakapura being the southernmost taluk of Karnataka. It is on the banks of river Arkavathi. Arkavathi was flowing for 45 km in the taluk, Arkavathi had become the cradle of village civilization. It can be rightly called Arkavathi Culture. Kanakapura has its own historical background. Several stone inscriptions found in the region belong to the rule of Ganga dynasty. In the early 16th century Kankanahalli came under the rule of the Palegars of Channapatna. And also some principalities called as 'Nadus' like *Achalunadu, Kelale Nadu, Hommalge Nadu, Chokka Nadu, Seegala Nadu, Haniyuru Nadu, Aralalu Nadu, Chulekana seeme, Noola nadu and Thungani Nadu Palegaras* ruled this Region. So, this paper is made an attempt to explore the contributions and historical significance of Seegala Nadu Prabhus of Kankanahalli.

Keywords: Arkavathi Culture, Seeyala Nadu, Maradevaru, Gangavadi, Seeme, Marasumudra Tank

1. Introduction

Kanakanahalli now Kanakapura being the southernmost taluk of Karnataka. Tamil language and culture are clearly discernable on the land and people. Among the 123 inscriptions discovered in the taluk, a majority of them are in Tamil. The well-known Tamil dynasty of Cholas ruled vast areas of Kannada land for centuries. Even in the medieval period to post independence, Kankanahalli (Kanakapura) has been in the thick of social and political events of the region. It is also notable that Aralalu and Achhalu we had long been the center of political activities during the medieval times.

Kanakapura possesses distinctive natural and geographical features. It became one among the four taluks of Ramanagara the district on 23-09-2007. Earlier it belonged to Bangalore Rural district. Kanakapura is nearly 55k.m from Karnataka's capital city of Bangalore. It is situated to the south east of Bangalore. The river *Arkavathi* flows through the taluk and also the source for the agricultural and domestic utilization. Kankapura is on the banks of river Arkavathi. The river Arkavathi has transformed the dry patches in to green pastures. It is a loon to Kanakapura taluk. Now the river has become polluted beyond redemption. The river waters have become most unhygienic and unfit for human consumption. Arkavathi was flowing for 45 km in the taluk, Arkavathi had become the cradle of village civilization. It can be rightly called "Arkavathi Culture". Kanakapura is 1590sq.km in geographical area and it is 800to 900 meters above the sea level.

Kanakapura has its own historical background. The record History can be traced from the Stone Age period. There are several evidences of every human settlement in and around Kanakapura taluk. *Robert Brace foot*, which is considered as the father of Indian pre-history, has conducted many archeological studies from 1881 to 1896. He had a keen interest to expose the origin and expansion of pre historic civilization. He traveled the leant and breadth of India and conducted scientific surveys to expose the early man's civilization in India. He was a famous geologist but his main interest lay in archeological analysis of early human civilization. He identified several artifacts of the primitive man on the banks of river Arkavathi. The region was very favorable for human settlement. Thus the early man preferred the village along the banks of river Arkavathi for their natural beauty and safe Shelter. There are several early human artifacts which are as old as 10000 years.

There are also many artifacts and weapons found in the Arkavathi basin. This belonged to be 3000years old. There are caves in and around the Stone Age grave yards that are abundantly found at Allimaranahalli, Vadedoddi, Basavanahalli, Sambapura, Hunasanahalli, Harihara, Thattekere, Udarahalli, Gottigehalli.

Several stone inscriptions found in the region belong to the rule of *Ganga dynasty*. Among them an inscription of *Rachamalla, the Ganga king*, extols the martyrdom of Santa in 899AD, who bravely fought off the dacoits during his rule. The name *Sathanur* may owe its origin to this brave soldier. The stone inscriptions found nearby at *Dootur and Therubidhi of Harohalli Hobli of Kanakapura* also belong to the Ganga period. A close study of these inscriptions reveals that *Gangavadi*, the Gangas capital was located in 96000 'Seeme'. In the early 16th century, Kankanahalli came under the rule of the Palegars of Channapatna. Before that the region belonged to chikka gangavadi and Gangavadi jurisdiction and consisted of several some all principalities, known as 'Nadus' like Achalunadu, Kelale Nadu, Hommalge Nadu, Chokka Nadu, Seegala Nadu, Haniyuru Nadu, Aralalu Nadu, Chulekana seeme, Noola nadu and Thungani Nadu. It can also be known that Kankanahalli was ruled Aralalu Nadu and Thungani Nadu Palegars.

As the Chola Empire expanded Kankanahalli and the adjoining areas came under their rule. Many Tamil inscriptions found in Kanakapura taluk celebrate the rule of *Kulothunga Chola, Rajendra chola and Rajaraja Chola* all of them renowned Tamil monarchs. An inscription of 1118AD at village *Elachavadi* in Maralavadi hobli commemorates in Tamil, the bravery of chikka.....Gowda who sacrificed his life in a fight with a tiger. The rule of cholas and Pandyas of Tamilnadu was terminated by the kannadiga dynasty of Hoysalas. The Hoysalas extended their control over the districts of Bangalore and Kolar after ending the Tamil hold over Gangavadi.

Aralalu Nadu, Thungani and Maralavadi areas were prominent centers of Political activity during this time and kankanahalli although endowed with its own importance was yet to come to the forefront. The Nadus were administered by Nayakas, Gowdas and Nada prabhush. The *Seegala Nadu Prabhus* who ruled under the Hoysala and Wadiyar emperors controlled the territories of *Sathanur, Kodihalli, Uyyambahalli, Mullahalli, Doddakoppa and Nayakanahalli* for nearly 400years, have left their indelible footprints on the social and cultural life of people of this area.

Segala Nadu or Seeyala Nadu finds its first mention in an inscription belonging to Hoysala king Veeranasimha I who reigned from 1142AD to 1173AD. Another Tamil stone mentions the principality's existence in 1150AD. It can also be inferred from what another Tamil inscription has recorded, that the territory was ruled by the cholas before the Hoysalas established their empire. It proclaims that one Madevara of Yandihalli ruled over Seegala Nadu and the region belonged to the empire of Rajendra Chola of Mudigonda chola Mandala.

A Tamil inscription of *King Veeraballala II* records the war of Seegala Nadu Prabhu with *Murasadi Raya*. It is a vivid description how the Seegala Nad ruler humbled the army of Murasadi Raya which had assembled in Tubinakere and after inflicting defeat having captured 50 horses that belonged to his cavalry. Many inscriptions of Mummadi Veeraballa's time have been located in various parts of Kankanahalli which elaborate on the reign of Seegala Nadu rulers.

Many inscriptions that belong to the reign of the great Hoysala king veeraballala III who ruled from 1292AD to 1343AD have been found in Nayakanahalli, Marale Bekuppe, Sathanur, Thungani and Hosagurga which mention the glories of historians and as a result no detailed account of their time exist.

Nevertheless the Seegalanadu Palegars did not lag behind in building tanks, temples, and waterways and improved Agraharas. Among them Maradevaru of the dynasty stands out as the most benevolent of them all. But a close examination of these inscriptions reveals the merit of their administration. An inscription unearthed at Nayakanahalli of Uyyambahalli hobli has recorded the presence of *Maradevaru*, and several leading personalities of the times like *Aralalu Marappa, Veerappagowda, Malegowda, Achhapparaya, Kempegowda, Madagowda, chikkagowda, Maruge chanchegowda, sinhagowda, honnamma* and many others at an important meeting which divided upon a gift of wetland one *Modali shetty's* Sons. Evidence of Seegala Nadu, stretching to the Cauvery river are available in an inscription found at *Marale Bekuppe* and in it *Maradevaru* if hailed as *Kaveri vallabha*. It also becomes clear from a *Sathanur inscription* that Sathanur also belonged to the domain of Seegalanadu Prabhu '*Maradevaru*'. The names of *Aralalu Marappa Kanakanahalli*. Chanche gowda and *Thungani Alappa* are sculptured, which is also proof of Confirmation of the name of *Kanakanahalli*.

That *Maradevaru* was benevolent chieftain becomes clear from an inscription execute at the time of building the *Thungani Tank* and that he had liberally honored builders of temples, tanks and wells for the communities welfare. This 1316AD stone has recorded that in the reign of Ballala's *Dananayaka, Maradevaru* who ruled over Seegala Nadu decorated *Emmala shetty of Thungani* who caused the construction of *Thungani tank* with lands, through *Gopiah Nallappa Nayaka* who was his subordinate. A Tamil inscription found at Hosadurga of Kodihalli has preserved for posterity the grant of several villages by *Seegala Nadu Prabhu Maradevaru* a chieftain of Hoysala Empire to found a Agrahara for Brahmins named *chaturvedi Mangalam*. Another inscription at Mullahalli of Uyyambahalli hobli bears the fact that the village of *Andigana Volu* was endowed to *Agarasa Brahmeshwara temple*.

To which 12 prominent Gowdas of that Seegala Nadu, Chieftain *Maradevaru* was a luminary in the court of Hoysala emperor Mummadi Veraballala. After the demise of *Maradeva*, the Hoysala kings dissociated themselves from the territories of Seegala Nadu and the region came under the Vijayanagara Empire. The Vijaya Nagara Empire stretched across much of the Northern and Southern Parts of Karnataka which became the reason for their political integration and stability. One of the early monarchs of the great vijayanagara empire Harihara II finds mention in several inscriptions found in the territories of Seegala Nadu. Aralalu has the distinction of being the location of two of these notable inscriptions. More than once the names of *Aralalu Marappa*. The ruler of *Seegala Nadu Siddaiah* son of Marappa and also *chikka Ianra* occur, further confirming the legend of Aralalu having been the seat of power and politics for long. An inscription found at Aralalu proclaims the place as a Kingdom and goes on to record that one *Allagowda* son of the renowned Mara Gowda constructed the gate of *Marasamudra tank* and also granted wetlands and dry lands in addition to a house measuring three squares to a citizen.

Banni Mukkodlu in Kodihalli hobli has the temple of Sri Rameshwara Swami and one of the temple Pillars bears the inscription that the *SeegalaNadu Prabhus* were not only benevolent but most liberal too for constructed numerous tanks but also concerned with the plight of their subject's during times of natural disasters like floods. *Kumara Veereshwara wodeya son of chennaveeranna wodeya* one of the great chieftains of Seegala Nadu lineage, according to the above inscription donated 120gold sovereigns along with 120grea measures of Paddy during one of the families for helping the subjects. He also reinstalled the stone idol of Sri Rameswara Swami at the temple.

Finally, the history of Seegala Nadu and its rulers is difficult to understand in the absence of written documents. But the large number of inscription found repeatedly the life and times and generosity of Seegala Nadu rulers and their long reign. Researchers and students of history face a stone wall in this direction, but is sustained attempts must be made if recorded history and the lore of those who ruled vast populations and regions are essential for posterity.

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