

HISTORY OF COINS IN TRAVANCORE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE OF CASH

Najmi V N

Guest Lecturer

UC College,

Aluva, Ernakulam, Kerala, India.

Abstract: The Study entitled “History of Coins in Travancore with special reference of Cash” discussed about the history of the issuing of the indigenous coins of ancient Kerala mainly Travancore coins. And it specially studies about cash. Various Travancore rulers issued various types of copper coins. In cash or Kasu coins the different rulers issued different types of cash coins weighed from .65gms to 10gms.

Key words: malanadu, edanadu, theerapradesham, Kasu, velli, Rasi, Anantharamen Fanam, kali Fanam, Chackram, Kasu, cash tutu

Introduction

Coins are an important aspect of the study of archaeology and it is one of the greatest and most valuable source of history. Scholars are paid greater attention to both internal and external evidences of coins i.e. the data provided by their types, symbols, monograms, portraiture, inscriptions, fabric, metrology, its material compositions, weight measures etc... it is very important in the study of ancient political, administrative, economic, and religious histories. The scholars said that without any evidences numismatics is the evidence. The ancient coins are referred in various Vedic texts as pada, suvarna, satamana etc...

Kerala also have rich coin tradition earliest Kerala states like Travancore, Cochin and British Malabar also issued there on indigenous coins. They issued variety of coins like Fanam or panam, Chackram, Ana, Cash etc... they are smallest coins

Travancore

The kingdom of Travancore also known as Thiruvithamkoor was an Indian kingdom from 1729 to 1949 was ruled by the Travancore royal family from Padmanabhapuram that is the modern Trivandrum it was located the extreme southern tip of the Indian sub-continent. Geographically Travancore was divided in to three climatically distinct regions: malanadu; the highland, edanadu; midland, and theerapradesham; the coastal area.

¹“As such little is known of the political history of Kerala prior to the fourth century AD. But a few hoards of coins have been found from various places in Kerala. They suggest that Kerala had a flourish trade and

¹ P.L Gupta, The Early coins from Kerala, The Department of Archaeology, Government of Kerala, Trivandrum, 1965, p. 1

commerce with Northern India and also with the distant Roman Empire in the early centuries of Cristian era. With a flourishing foreign and home trade, Kerala must have been a prosperous state with all the political and social backgrounds". Travancore was the main part of this prosperity.

Travancore coins

According to Sir Walter Eliot ²“according to the general belief of the people, the oldest coin known is the *rasi*. The present circulation is consist of the silver Chackram, in whole and half pieces, and the copper cash in four forms- single, double, quadruple, and the double of the last or eight cash, equal to the half silver Chackram” the silver Fanam is stated to have been issued about 1868-69 equal to four chakrams. It also known a new velli, other important Travancore coins are Anantharamen Fanam, kali Fanam, Chackram, Kasu, cash tutu.

Rasi: is a gold coin weighing 6 grains. Its obverse is the symbol of Travancore sanku. The reverse is like Fanam

Anantha ramen and chinna Fanam: are gold coins and the chinna Fanam is the half of anantha Raman Fanam weighing from 6 and 2 and half grains respectively. The obverse is sanku shell and dots and lines on the reverse

Kali Fanam: also gold Fanam and weighing 6 grains

Velli Fanam: weight is 22 grains. It is a silver coin. Floral wreath round the edge of the obverse and reverse sides

Double Chackram: it is a silver coin weight is 11 grains and the obverse side it is a sanku shell and the reverse side there is two equilateral triangles. Forming a six pointed diagram surrounded by a Malayalam legend

Chackram: a small silver coin weighs six grains. On the reverse there is dots and line. Obverse similar to kali Fanam and also padmanabha

Chinna Chackram: weight is 2 and half grains. It is a small silver coin

Kasu: small copper coin weighs 9 grains. On the obverse there is standing figure of god and on the reverse the hexagonal diagram

Double Kasu: the symbols are same as the Kasu with Malayalam numerals 2 below the standing figure. It weighs 19 grains.

4 cash tutu and 8 cash tutu: in 4 cash tutu Malayalam numeral 4 is seen under the standing figure weighs 39 grains. In 8 cash tutu Malayalam legend *ara* Chackram round it. It weighs 80 grains

Travancore cash coins

Cash or Kasu coins are the round shaped copper coins issued by different rulers of Travancore dynasty. Some of them are very recent coins cash coins. One of them issued by uttrattathi thirunnal gowri Parvathy bayi shows

² Sir Walter Eliot, Coins of Southern India, Prithivi Prakashan, Varanasi, 1970, p. 137

that in the obverse the figure of five headed anantha is depicted, and cash in Tamil also write in this side and in reverse there is the symbolic representation of Mahavishnu and floral symbols and a Tamil legend also seen in this coin.it weights .60 g and its size is 10mm

Swati thirunnal Rama Varma also issued copper cash coins weight is .68g and 8mm size. In obverse there is sankha shell, the symbol of Travancore is depicted and on the reverse a seated two handed Lakshmi on lotus is depicted. In her hand bunch of lotus is seen

Ayilyam thirunnal Rama Varma issued copper cash coins it weighs .6g and 6mm size. A deity depicted on the obverse and a symbol of chakra in the reverse.

Moolam thirunnal Rama Varma and Utram thirunnal Bala Rama Varma also issued cash copper coins both are issued different types of cash copper coins that is 4 cash 8 cash and 1 cash coins and the symbols are almost same. In the obverse there is sankha shell symbol on a round and floral designs on the two sides and also a dotted round.in the obverse cash is written in English and Malayalam and an hexagonal symbol is depicted on a round also two star symbol is also seen

Conclusion

Coins and the study of coins are very important in archaeology. The study of coins are helps to understand about the political, religious, economic and administrative history of a dynasty. Travancore was an important powerful kingdom in the early Kerala. It also known as venadu. It has a powerful administrative system. Travancore rulers issued different types of coins. These coins are also the part of Travancore history. So the study of this coins are very important in the study of numismatics also. These coins also have a good artistic importance.

References

1. Goyal S. R, The Coinage of Ancient India, Kusumanjali Prakashan, Jodhpur, 1995
2. Gupta P.L, The Early Coins from Kerala, Department of Archaeology, Kerala, Trivandrum, 1965
3. Elliot Walter, Coins of Southern India, Prithivi Prakashan, Varanasi, 1970