

1 TRADE AND MERCHANT GUILDS IN MEDIEVAL SOUTH INDIA: AN INCISIVE INSIGHT

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Abstract

In the economic history of Medieval South India the term 'guild' (*sreni*) has assumed importance. The genesis for this etymology goes back to the time the Pre-Christian era when expression *nagaram* is found mentioned in the Tamil Bhrami inscriptions of the second century BC . The mercantile organization has gained momentum on account of the urbanization and economic growth. This paper discusses the major trade and mercantile guilds such as, *Nagarams*, *Ainnurruvar*, *Padinenvishayam*, *Manigramam*, *Valanjijyar*, *Erivirathalam*, *Nanadesi* and the like which acted in the ancient days as potential centres for urban growth.

Introduction

The term 'guild' (*sreni*) has gained importance in the economic history of Medieval South India, The genesis for this etymology goes back to the time the Pre-Christian era when the expression *nagaram* is found mentioned in a Tamil Bhrami inscriptions of second century BC . This mercantile organization has gained momentum on account of urbanization and economic growth since then the *nagarams* acted in those days as potential centres for urban and business growth. These served as marketing centres in order to enable the agrarian people to sell their products. With the advancement of *nagaram* units as a nodal point with which several networks were created, had assumed the status of *managaram* is an apex central unit. This *managaram* was corporate body

the small units which functioned at village levels.

In the beginning of the establishment of the *nagaram* units, members of the mercantile organizations framed the code of conduct or rules, regulations, qualifications and so on. The South Indian inscriptions enable us to visualize the picture of such organizations that existed in South India.

The term dharma has been attributed to the merchants (*vaniks*). This was closely followed by even the itinerant merchant bodies. Inscriptions from 8th – 12th centuries or even little later, trace the development of the *nagaram* and its members who are called *nagarattar*. Their establishments came to be called '*angadis*'. Names of several organizations figure in the inscriptions of the medieval period. The expressions *vanik*, *sreni*, *apanika*, *nauvittaka*, *sarthavaha* do indicate the different categories of trade with which the merchants were associated in Medieval South India. Many scholars have attempted to trace their trade activities.

Messrs K.V. Subramanya Aiyar, R. Champakalakshmi, Y. Subbarayalu, P. Shanmugam, M.D. Sampath and others have made rich contributions to understand the merchant guilds of South India.

From among the records available to understand the distribution of merchant guilds Karnataka stands first followed by Tamil Nadu and other states (for details see Table 1).

The urban centres had bigger merchant

units called '*perangadi*' which are known to have had control over smaller markets. Instances may be quoted to prove the mercantile transactions, the mode of their transactions and the developments witnessed during the medieval periods. To cite a fitting example for the function of the *managaram*, eleventh century inscriptions from Palamangalam in Erode District (Tamil Nadu) may be studied. The text reads:

***tisai-ayiratt-ainnuruva-nanadesiy-adaikkalam
Kilanganattu Nittavinodatt-irundu***

***valum Vellalar Venduvan- Tairukkuraiyan
eduppichcha-managaram***

Inscriptions from South India indicate the commercial activities which were vigorously carried out under the umbrella of merchant guilds coinciding with the rule of the Cholas in Tamil Nadu, Chalukyas and Rashtrakudas in Karnataka, Kakatiyas and Telugu Chodas in Andhra and Cheras in Kerala. It is also known from inscriptions of South Asia and South East Asia about the interactions with these countries that the South India had.

As for the commercial transactions are concerned South Indian merchants travelled to far off islands and were involved in long distance trade. Dr. G. Coedes Dr. B. Ch. Chhabra, Dr. R.C. Majumdar and K.A.N. Sastri have contributed in their monographs on the nature of settlements of Indian merchants in South Asia and South East Asia. A number of inscriptions have come forward to attest the findings of these scholars. Inscriptions from Pagan Myanmar, China, Thailand and Indonesia refer to the activities that these countries had with South India and Sri Lanka. It is interesting to find from the records that they have not yielded to any political power. Inscriptions of Medieval South India trace their trade centres, mercantile towns and the commercial activities of the itinerant and local traders. It cannot be set aside that there was no royal patronage in promoting

the mercantile activities. The mercantile guilds gradually built up their organizations and entered into the mercenary activities in order to protect and themselves and their commercial interests.

Inscriptions from South India give a clear picture about the functional modalities, characters, power and about the activities of the following mercantile guilds, *viz., Ainnuruvar, Nanadesi, Manigramam, Vaniganagarattar, Valanjijar, Padi nenvishayam, Padinenbhumi, Anjuvannam ubhaya nanadesi and samasta or Nanadesala pekkamdr.*

Nagarams

Besides these mercantile organizations, the *nagarattar* organization gradually developed through the different centuries. The *nagarattars* had interaction with some of the above mercantile organizations and seem to have had a wider network. For instance, there is a reference to the *nagaram* being controlled by *Aiyavole* as at Karavandapuram in Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu. Another group of merchants (Sankarappadinagarattar) was involved in the distribution of oil etc., and they carried on oil trade in 11th century AD at Uyyakondan- Tirumalai and Valikandapuram in Tiruchi District, Sripurambiyam in Thanjavur District and Tirukkalatti (Kalahasti) in Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh. Among the *nagarams, Saliya nagaram and Sattam-parisatta-nagaram* may be mentioned. The discussion about vanika-*nagaram* can be found from Salem records.

The mercantile organizations represented by the weaving community grew gradually on account of the patronization of the Chola rulers. They were responsible for the textile production in weaving centres. The weavers in the different states under the Cholas, the Pandyas, the Kongu Vellala in Tamil Nadu, the Kakatiyas in Andhra had developed their trade activities and establishments. They had also expanded their activities to Karnataka on account of the

interaction between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Their activities were involved in the marketing of cloth in Karnataka due to various factors like the contiguous areas, transportation, migration and settlement of the weavers and so on.

The weaving traders took keen efforts to promote the trade by establishing **nagaram** centres : '**Saliya nagaram**' **Sattam-parisatta-nagaram** etc. Instances may be quoted for the establishment of such centres at Gangaikondacholapuram in Tiruchi District, Pattamadai in Tirunelveli District and Chidambaram, Tirukkoyilur in South Arcot District and Sripurambiyam in Thanjavur District. In Tamil Nadu not only the Cholas but also the Pandyas took keen interest in promoting the weaving trade.

Inscriptions of the period of Maravarman Virapandya (13th century) refer to the establishment of a weaving centre called **Saliyanagaram**. Saliyars are generally called the weavers. They had an established trade centre in the Salem region. The trade of the saliarys received the patronage of the rulers from the time of the Cholas till the period of Vijayanagar ruler Krishnadevaraya (1509 – 1529 AD). Like Salem in Sela nadu, Kanchipuram in Chengalpat District was also known for its weaving activities during the pre-Chola periods.

Ainnurruvar

From among the various organizations one of the biggest organizations is known as Ainnurruvar (a group of 500) This number 500 indicates the epigraphs from Andhra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. It is an organization which consists of itinerant merchants with which several other organizations were linked. The above organization assumed different roles in different areas at different periods. On account of the insufficient commercial growth this organization has drawn a blank in Andhra as far as the interactions are

concerned. The activities were confined to coastal regions of Andhra Pradesh. Inscriptions from Karnataka give a clear picture about the activities of the Ainnurruvar guild.

Being one of the biggest organization in South India, is the Ainnurruvar, it is an over-arching organization of itinerant merchants with which other organizations co-opted in several ways. It enjoyed different status in different areas so as to suit the local agrarians and their functions. The activities of the Ainnurruvar from Karnataka are revealed through early inscriptions prior to 10th century. Aiyavole (one of the inscriptions from Karnataka belonging to Satyasraya dated Saka 931, 1009 AD) speaks of this guild. There was a gradual increase in the number of inscriptions referring to Ainnurruvar. This rise may be attributed to the fact that there was Chola incursion in to the Karnataka territory which resulted in the diversion of their activities. Three inscriptions from Mysore and Mandya districts of Karnataka stand testimony to the Chola occupancy during the first half of the 11th century .Of the two inscriptions from Aihole in Hungund taluk of Bijapur district datable to 8th century AD, one refers to the donations made by the Chaturvedis of Aryapura to Bennama Somayaji, thanks to the goddess Durgabhagavati. These Chaturvedis formed into a group of organizations and donated to a Brahmin for the purpose of carrying out some Samavartana suggested in Vedic literature. It is clear from this text that the Ainnurruvar Chaturvidya Samudaya is a Brahmanical organization whose mercantile activities are not definitely known in the early period. The eulogy of Ainnurruvar referred to in the inscriptions of the 10th century and thereafter refers to Aihole/ Aryapura on the basis of Bedkihal record of the 10th century. The record from Kamudi in Ramanadapuram District in Tamil Nadu gives the earliest reference to the term Ainnurruvar. This does not mention the eulogy of the organization.

Another earliest reference about this

organization comes from a record of Chola King Parakesarivarman identical with King Vijayalaya (870 AD) from Munichandai in Tirumeyam taluk of Pudukottai district in Tamil Nadu. The Ainnurruvar organization of merchants known from several parts of South India claim their origin to be from Aiyavole i.e. the present Aihole in Bijapur district of Karnataka. The eulogy of the Ainnurruvar started appearing in Tamil Nadu from the latter half of the 10th century, while in Karnataka and Maharashtra from the first half of the 12th century. However, the inscriptions from Kolhapur and Miraj in Maharashtra of the above period quote the eulogy which has relevance to these eulogies from Kannada records. The Kamudi epigraph, though do not mention the name Aiyapolil or Aihole, it has been considered as a merchant guild inscription of the group Ainnurruvar on the basis of the name *gamundasvami*, which is known from Kannada records. The Kolhapur record of Gandaraditya dated Saka 1058 (1136 AD) (Ep.Indi. Vol XIX, No. 4d) refers to Ahichchhatra, also called Ayyavolepura, where the *ayinurvva svamigal* existed, while the Miraj inscriptions dated 1142 AD (Ep.Ind. Vol XIX. Pp.37 – 41) mentions that the five hundred *svamis* have come out of Ahichchhatra, who are the supreme lords of the town of Ayyavole.

On the basis of the composition of the merchant groups and their associated groups, the role of Ainnurruvar guild and their activities could be assumed. As merchant group, it possesses 500 charters (*panchasata virasasana*) and have Lakshmi in their chest. They are the descendants of *Vasudeva*, *Khandali* and *Mulabhadra* and as the sons of Parameshvari. They transacted with a wider areas including 18 *pattanam* (towns), 32 *velapuram* (coastal towns) and 64 *kadigaittavalam* (camping places). This organization also includes the *chetti*, *chettiputrar*, *kavarai*, *gamundasvami*, *siriyatolil varyiar*, *ariyar*, and *avanakkaran*. The Ainnurruvar merchants consisting of these people, chettis, and the load carriers (*ulpasumbaikkaran*), store keepers (*avanakaran*) or registrar, the

brokers (*ulagar*), security persons (*angakaran*), representatives (*senduvadu*), etc. took part in the business transactions in order to increase the wealth or monetary conditions with minimum loss (*kalimeliya*), and by keeping up the reputation and by establishing the righteous business (*samayadharmam*). This clearly establishes the fact that the Ainnurruvar was a central chamber of commerce with governing bodies.

The only inscription from Andhra Pradesh that mention about the Ainnurruvar guild is from Tripurantakam, dated Saka 1214 (1292 AD). In this record the Ainnurruvar of the fifty guilds included the representatives from the *Reddi*, the *Setti*, the *Nayumdu*, the *Boyamdu* (cowherds) and *dasari* from different regions. The Ainnurruvar organization is referred to as the protectors of the *chatur varnasrama dharma*. This guild was associated with another guild, *nanadesa pekkamdru* and they took common decisions on the temple management at Tripurantakam. As far as the Karnataka inscriptions are concerned groups like *gavaregaru*, *gatrigaru*, *velakararu*, *biraru*, *biravanigaru*, *gavumdaru*, *gavunda swamigalu* and so on are known to have association with the Ainnurruvar for the purpose of trade transactions. The *prasasti* found in the inscription of Bedkihal, Hanamanhal Managoli in Bijapur and Belgaum district, datable to 10th - 12th centuries AD, mention about the *entunada padinaruvaru* who took interest in the activities Ainnurruvar organization.

The composition of Ainnurruvar group while making grant is compact. According to a record of 1142 AD, several groups supported this organization in Karnataka. Of the 16 places where these organizations functioned, three are from Tamil Nadu, two from Maharashtra, one from Andhra, while ten places are from Karnataka. This was an effective organization which was initially started at Karnataka and spread to other areas. In Tamil Nadu, the Ainnurruvar body acquired a

composite status. As an example a record from Tirumalai from Ramanathapuram district may be cited to reveal the composition. In the 12th and 13th centuries these organizations seem to have functioned in a unified way with different aims and objectives concentrating more on the large-scale trade and spreading the business to several areas.

The members belonging to the group *padinen vishayam* supported this organization. It may be inferred from the way in which Ainnurruvar and *padinen vishayam* shared the responsibilities in organizing the trade (elaborately mentioned in the Piranmalai records and other inscriptions). The Ainnurruvar were the itinerant merchant guilds which took active part in organizing both the itinerant as well as the external trades and has close links with other groups. The five hundred traders of the thousand directions from various quarters were powerful international merchant guilds which mainly functioned from Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu and managed the transactions both inland and across the seas. As a proof of this, it may be quoted that the inscriptions from Barus in Indonesia, dated Saka 1010 (1088 AD). Padaviya, in Srilanka (dated 1200 AD) shows that Ainnurruvar seem to have functioned conjointly with Padinenbhumi (same as *Padinenvishaya* group) besides the minor groups like *nattu chetti*, *kavarai*, *gatrivan*, *angakaran*, *avanakkaran*, (registrar of accounts), *ulpasumbaikkaran* (merchant with sack) etc. during 11th and 12th centuries AD.

The merchant guilds with mentioned overseas contact from 11th to 13th centuries are *tisai ayirattu ainnurruvar*, *ayirattu ainnurruvar*, *nanadesi* and *ubhaya nanadesi*. They were the itinerant merchant guilds which took active part in internal as well as external trade. They had close links with each other. The trade guilds like the thousand five hundred (traders) of all the quarters or the five hundred traders of the

thousand quarters and the Ainnurruvar were powerful international merchant guilds which mainly functioned from Tamil Nadu and controlled commercial activities in various places both inland and across the seas. These merchant guilds in the course of their movement assumed importance and took the armed forces with them in order to protect their goods. The necessity for the creation of protected warehouses indicates the steps taken by the organizations on their trade routes.

The Ainnurruvar organizations have established centres in several places in Tamil Nadu. The ainnurruvar guilds like the five hundred merchants of Ayyavole, i.e. the present Aihole in Bijapur district, Karnataka, had its centres from about the 9th century to 14th century in places included in *Kana-nadu*, *Nallur-nadu*, *Kilar-kurram*, *Pundurai-nadu*, *Uraiyur-kurram*, *Mulli-nadu*, *Kurumbur-nadu*, *Vadakalavali-nadu*, *Annalvayil-kurram*, and *Kil-kundaru-nadu*. while the *tisaiyirattu-ainnurruvar* organization functioned from places included in *Ven-nadu*, *Kurukkai-nadu*, *nallarru-nadu*, *Van-nadu*, *Kongu-nadu*, during the same period.

The eulogy found in the inscriptions of the Ainnurruvar guild from Tamil Nadu are repeated in a similar fashion in the eulogy of the Pekkamdru as seen in the Nellur inscriptions of the Andhra Pradesh. The *nagara pekkamdru* stands for the representatives of the merchant community or guild of merchants with representatives of the town. This is a local organization, which is associated with *settikara* during the medieval period.

Manigramam

The merchant organization called Manigramam had its beginning in the Pallava period and became an organized group in Tiittandadanapuram (Tondi), Manigramam was one of the groups which represented the assembly. In the middle Chola period, it is from Manigramam

centre that the merchants traded, improved their activities and interacted with other groups. The island areas like Kodumbalur in Urattur kurram, Uraiyur in Uraiyur kurram, Sundarapandyapuram, Valikandapuram etc. had established trade links with other organized centres. The Manigramam kodumbalur in early Chola period was one of the same merchant group which functioned during the Pandya period also. There is a reference to this organization in the Tamil epigraph from Takuapa, Southern Thailand which has already been discussed at length by Prof. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri. It states that the guilds Manigramattar and Senamugattar were given protection in the matter of transporting their products without any problem.

The reference to Senapati in the Takuapa inscription of the 9th century AD and the Senapati mentioned in Barus record of the 11th century AD. edited by Dr.Y Subbarayalu show that this mercantile guild had its own defense forces and the army chief in order to protect the commodities as well as the business and privileges. In this way the expansion of the mercantile activities as far up to South-East Asia during the Chola period is interesting to note. This was possible on account of the militant exertions of the Cholas, especially under Rajendra I (1012 AD) and the main aim was to carry on an unhindered trade between the Tamil country and South-East Asia.

The Manigramam and the Anjuvannam organizations transacted together on several occasions and particularly while collecting the taxes due to a local chieftain. If we examine the association of these guilds with another big organization called Anjuvannam or padinenvishaiyattar, it may be said that the bigger groups had control over smaller groups. The kodumbalur which acted as the centre of the organization gradually spread to other areas like Kovilpatti, Vanikkiramam, Tiruvellarai, Salem etc. in Tamil Nadu and to places like Kollam, Kottayam,

Ramantali in Kerala and so on. The Manigramam differs from the body called Padinenvishaittar.

Valanjiyar

The merchant organization called Valanjiyar figures the inscription of the 11th to 13th centuries from Andhra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. They had **Dharma** as a protective measure which is referred to as Vira Balanjiya-dharma in Nellore copper plates inscriptions. These groups followed the code of conduct of the central chamber of commerce the Balligam record dated Saka 978 (1056 AD) while describing the Ainnurruvarsvamigal of the Ayyavole emphasizes the fact that they were the Vira Bananja-dharma. The Dambal inscriptions of the Chalukya Vikramaditya VI dated Saka 1017 (1095 AD), the Chintapalle record of Saka 1162 (1240 AD) and Tripurantakam inscription of Saka 1214 (1292 AD) all refer to Valanjiyar group of merchants. Its composite nature and activities are known through Nellore copper plate inscriptions of the 13th and 14th centuries AD.

The Prasasti of Vira Bananja conforms to a pattern found throughout Andhra and Karnataka. Their virtues, qualities and heroism are discussed in their eulogy. They are said to have immigrated from Ahichchhatra. Though they had leanings towards Jainism, they were also devoted to Shiva, Vishnu. The Mummuridamdagalu mentions of Vira Bananja dharma and also speak of them as Jinendra puja nirantarum. They have been controlled by central organization Ayyahole. They have been maintaining Samaya dharma by imposing punishment to those who violated the code of conduct.

Erivirapattinam

Like the valanjiyar, the merchant component of the settled group also traded from Erivirapattinam centres during the Chola and the Pandya periods particularly in the 13th century. It was an organized trade that was undertaken

by these militant groups. The Eriviratanam or Erivirathalam were conferred to a mercantile settlement apart from the composition of Ainnurruvar is attested to by the records from Sri Lanka. A number of Erivirappattinam centres are found mentioned in the inscriptions of Samuttirapatti in Madurai district, Vembati in Coimbatore district, Singalantapuram in Trichy district all in Tamil Nadu. Basinikonda in Chittoor district in Andhra and Kempanapura in Karnataka. The Erivirappattinam centres are also referred to as Virakavalam kottai of Ramanadapuram district, Uttattur in Tiruchirappalli district, Tirumalugandankottai in Ramnad district and Kattur in Chingleput district.

The earliest occurrence to Erivirappattana is from the inscriptions of Chola Rajendhiraja I from Basinikonda in Chittoor district and Kempanapura in Mysore district, Karnataka. The former record states that the thousand five hundred merchants of the four quarters including nadu, nagara and nanadesi met at Siravalli in Mugainadu in Purani Marayapadi in Jayangondasolamandalam and resolved to convert the village Siravalli into a Nanadesiya Dasamadi Erivirappattana and to grant certain privileges to the residents of that village.

Two more mercantile towns figure in the inscriptions of eleventh century from Uruguppe near Kempanapura and Aiyapolil Kattur in Chingleput district. They had been established in order to create protected warehouses for merchant groups on major trade routes. The militant character of the guild and the trade centres like Erivirappattanas as well as the movement of the caravans with arms can be better understood from the description given in the prasasti portion of the Kattur inscription. The trade centres which have been converted as Erivirappattanas were associated to with the mercenary troops called Eriviras. These troops are provided with arms as protective measures and for their own defense.

During the period of Maravarman Sundarapandya, the Rajaraja Erivirappattanam was included in Mulli nadu and the place was known as Virakavalan kottai. The fort together with a mercantile town must have been established here in order to provide the mercenary troops with warehouses. When the caravans moved with armed forces, these centres had been placed under their use. Thus the centres of Erivirappattanam, served the army personnel, on trade routes. The sale transaction executed from Virakavalan kottai in Rajaraja erivirappattana, clearly shows that erivirappattana centres were under the control of trading guilds.

They are normally located on major trade routes. The reference of Erivirappattana in connection with its bestowal on Valanjiyas of Vikkiramapallavapuramis of particular significance. The group called Nirperunniraviyom is said to have conferred the status of Erivirappattanam on the aforesaid village, which was a hamlet of Saiyamurinadalvar-nadu in the fourth year of Rajendrachola who is identical with Kulottungal. The members like nandesikavarai-vitankar, Ainnurruvar-uyyakkondan and several others are known to have killed several persons. It is these persons who have taken a joint decision. They seem to have been the warring personages as is clear from their activities; and they have been extended to the sphere of militant guilds located in the different centres of trade.

Nanadesis

The mercantile corporations like Nanadesi, the Ayirattuainnurruvar and Ainnurruvar and Aiyampolil were active in some parts of Tamilnadu from 11th to 13th centuries AD. They were protecting the Samaya dharma in addition to the militant character. The Svadesi and paradesi merchants formed the Ubhaya nanadesis and the members of this guild are known as Ubhaya nanadesi pekkamdr. They are mentioned in the

inscriptions of the Kakatiya Ganapatideva, Prataparuda and others. They had their own autonomy and unlimited power in the matters of justice. It is learnt from the records of Belgaum in Karnataka that these nanadesi guilds took initiative in carrying out the repairs in the temple of Ganapesvara. The nanadesi coopted with the militant groups settiguttas in contributing the revenue to the temples. This merchant guild took initiative in several socio-cultural activities and mentioned as status in the protection of the Samaya.

Mention may be made of the guilds from Alampur, Warrangal, Ganapesvaram, Chintapalle, Tangeda, Animala, Yanamandala, and Tripurantakam in the West and the records from Appapuram, Boggaram, Nellore etc. from coastal Andhra region. Nangegadda near Tangeda is an important port where the guild ubhaya nanadesi actively conducted their trade. Tangeda in Guntur district and Tripurantakam in Kurnool district were the main gateways where the dues were collected on the commodities purchased or sold. Merchant organizations like nanadesi pekkamdru, nanadesi nagara sandha, etc. were in charge of the collection of sumka on products. Nanadesi guild had desi merchants who worked in collaboration with Ayyavole guild. Desi uyyakyonda is the same as the nanadesi. The nanadesi organisation in Andhra Pradesh is referred to by several terms like Ubhaya nanadesi pekkamdru, ubhaya nanadesi, nanadesi pekkamdru etc.

Conclusion

In the foregoing discussion, the role played by *Ainnurruvar*, *Padinenvishayam*, *Manigramam*, *Valanjiyar*, and *Nanadesi*. as merchant organizations/guilds overarching all the other organizations formed in a particular area during the 11th to 13th centuries in South India. Their role account for the economic growth of the princely States. This period coincides with the growth of power by the Chalukya, Chola, Pandya and Kakatiya who patronized the development of the agrarian conditions as well as the trade activities of the respective regions.

Table 1
District-wise Distribution of Merchant Guild Inscriptions

| Area | Inscriptions | Area | Inscriptions |
|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| ANDRA PRADESH | | | |
| Anantapur | 7 | Chittoor | 3 |
| Cuddapah | 2 | Guntur | 6 |
| Hyderabad | 1 | Khammam | 3 |
| Kurnool | 3 | Mahbubnagar | 1 |
| Nellore | 3 | Prakasam | 1 |
| Warangal | 1 | Visakhapatnam | 4 |

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| Area | Inscriptions | Area | Inscriptions |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| KARNATAKA | | | |
| Bijapur | 18 | Belgaum | 7 |
| Bellary | 13 | Bangalore | 5 |
| Chikmagalur | 1 | Chitradurga | 6 |
| Dharwar | 19 | Gulbarga | 7 |
| Hassan | 11 | Kolar | 9 |
| Mysore | 20 | North Kanara | 1 |
| Raichur | 5 | Shimoga | 8 |
| Tumkur | 3 | | |
| KERALA | | | |
| Cochin | 2 | Kottayam | 2 |
| Kazikkodu | 2 | Palghat | 2 |
| MAHARASHTRA | | | |
| Kolhapur | 1 | Sangli | 1 |
| TAMIL NADU | | | |
| Coimbatore | 6 | Chingleput | 5 |
| Dharmapuri | 1 | Madurai | 16 |
| North Arcot | 6 | Pudukkottai | 10 |
| Erode | 3 | Ramanathapuram | 12 |
| South Arcot | 9 | Salem | 03 |
| Thanjavur | 15 | Tiruchirappalli | 25 |
| Tirunelveli | 7 | | |
| SRI LANKA | | | |
| 15 | | | |
| SOUTH EAST ASIA | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| Total | | | 314 |

(The districts refer to the old districts as referred to in the epigraphical publications, for convenience's sake. Many of them have been bifurcated during the three decades.

Source: Ancient and Medieval Commercial Activities in the Indian Ocean : Testimony of inscriptions and Ceramic-sherds, Chennai.)

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