MADURAI
through the ages
FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO 1801 A.D.

By
Dr. (Miss) D. DEVAKUNJARI, M.A., M.Ed., Ph.D.

General Editor
Dr. R. NAGASWAMY

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PREFACE

The present work, "Madurai Through the Ages" by the late Dr. D. Devakunjari was her doctoral thesis submitted to the Madras University. She was an eminent scholar who served as special officer in the Archaeological Survey of India before death snatched her away. In preparing her thesis, Dr. Devakunjari did extensive field work in the Madurai temple. Her erudition and hard work are evident in every page of her treatise.

This is the first time that a comprehensive treatise, not only on the political history of Madurai, but also on the great temple of Madurai is being published. The temple’s architectural greatness, sculptural splendour and important role it played through the centuries are vividly brought out. Since this thesis was submitted in 1957 only a few finds that are really significant have been reported and few reinterpretations have been attempted by scholars. But the text is as presented by the author. The changes required are very few and moreover, we will not be doing justice to the author who is no more with us if the text is revised.

This excellent thesis on one of the greatest cities of Tamilnadu remained unpublished all these years. The society is thankful to Mrs. Venkatakrishnan, the sister of Dr. Devakunjari for not only permitting it to publish it in its publication series, but also for giving a substantial grant towards its publication. The society places on record its greatful thanks to Mr. Swaminathan (retired Assistant Librarian, Connemara Public Library). But for his keen interest and encouragement, the thesis would not have seen the light of day. Her sister Miss. Sarada took over 1500 Photograph of Madurai and its temple. All the illustrations included in this work are from her photographic collection.
The Society for Archaeological, Historical and Epigraphical Reasearch (SAHER) is a registered society devoted to the study of the art, history, epigraphy and sociology of southern region. It has many branches throughout Tamilnadu.

Recently the Dharmapuri unit of the SAHER established a district archaeological museum at Dharmapuri. This is the first of its kind to be established in the State by the efforts of the society with mostly teachers of the district as members. The establishment of the Dharmapuri Museum will remain a standing witness to the role played by the society in this region, in popularising archaeology among the people.

The society has already established a name for its academic activity through its publications. It has brought out two volumes of "South Indian Studies" in English. The latest of its books is "Natya Brahman" (a work on the ancient Indian theatre), a thesis submitted to the University of New Orleans (U.S.A.) by Anita Ratnam Rangaraj.

The Society has been associating itself with the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology in organising district level seminars on archaeology. It has already published the papers presented at the Chingleput district and the State level seminars. It has also published two books on the historical site of Kudavasal and on the Pallava magnate, Karunakara Tondaiman.

I congratulate Dr. R. Nagaswamy for his inspiring guidance to the SAHER, and its young and energetic Secretary Mrs. Chitra Viji for her active interest in its publications. I also thank Mr. S. Srinivasa Raghavan, who undertook the onerous task of going through the proofs and meticulously verifying the footnotes etc. Mr. Natana. Kasinathan, the Registering officer of the Tamil nadu State Department of Archaeology, who has been a great source of help in seeing the book through the press, also deserves our thanks.

15-10-1979. T. P. MEENAKSHISUNDARAN (President, Saher)
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Madurai, well known as a pilgrim centre today, is one of the oldest cities in South India. For the last two thousand years it has been a great centre of South Indian culture and civilization. In India the history and culture of a region often centres round a temple. This is particularly true of South India where the temple has made a unique contribution not only to the religious life of the people but has also served as the nucleus round which the social and cultural life of the people revolve. Though many cities could boast of ancient origins, not all of them could claim a continuous history. The great cities of Kāñci, Tiruchirappalli, for instance, are unquestionably ancient centres like Madurai. But they have not had an unbroken history and they were pre-eminent only during comparatively short periods. Kāñci was a capital city of the Pallavas and of some of the early Cōlas but faded off as a political capital later. The Cōlas had capitals at various places. The most ancient of them, Uraiyyur, is now only a suburb. Gaṅgaikondaśolapuram, another Cōla capital, had only a very brief life history. Tanjore had a comparatively long history but its origin does not date back earlier than the 8th-9th c. A.D.

Madurai, however, is one of the few cities to have enjoyed a continuous history which could be traced back to prehistoric times. The sthalapurānas speak of its hoary antiquity of when, it is said, Pārvati and Śiva ruled over Madurai and the Pāṇḍya territory. Whether as a temple city or as a capital city, the history of Madurai is distinct from that of other cities. Politically Madurai was the capital of a single dynasty, the Pāṇḍyas, who ruled continuously as far as is known from the early years of Christianity down to the 14th century. This fact alone more than anything else is enough to gain for Madurai a unique place. Even after the Pāṇḍyas Madurai has continued as the capital of some dynasty or other for four centuries more. It has therefore had a continuous history as a political capital for eighteen centuries. At the present day Madurai is still one of the premier cities in the State next only to Madras in importance.
The history of the Madurai city as a religious centre goes back to remote times since when the temple, one of the oldest institutions, has had a coeval history with those of the rulers and remains as important as ever even after the rulers have disappeared. The Madurai temple is not only of hoary antiquity but possesses an entire *purana* of its own relating to the *lilas* of Sundarēśvāra, the deity of Madurai. This *purana* known as *Hālāśya Mahāmya* or *Tiruvilaiyādhal* in Tamil narrates the 64 *lilas* performed by the God. All the *lilas* are centred round the Madurai temple or its neighbourhood. According to the legend Śiva as Sundarēśvāra is said to have married the Goddess Mīnākṣī, the daughter of a Pāṇḍya king, and to have ruled over the kingdom Himself. This divine sovereignty is peculiar to Madurai. The Madurai temple has exercised great influence over South Indian life and culture from the earliest times.

The cultural prominence of Madurai in ancient times has earned for the city the epithet “The Athens of South India”. It has been a great centre of learning from very early times. As the seat of the Tamil academy called the Saṅgam it wielded great influence in the literary and cultural fields. Madurai has been in a sense an international metropolis with overseas commercial and cultural contacts with distant countries of the ancient world both in the east and the west.

Previous writers on the history of the Madurai country have confined themselves to certain periods of its political history. Among the general histories of Madurai and the Pāṇḍya country may be mentioned Nelson’s *Madura Country* and Caldwell’s *History of Tinnevelly*. The Madura and Tinnevelly Gazetteers also give useful general historical sketches. The accounts of Nelson and Caldwell, though still useful and valuable, are out of date since they were written in 1868 and 1881 when sufficient material for the early and mediaeval history of Madurai was not available. These works need a great deal of revision in view of relevant fresh material, epigraphical, archaeological and literary, which have now become available. Nelson’s work is a very full and detailed account and may be termed a classic among historical works. His book covers the wider field of the Madurai country in general and is not a history of the city.

Other available works deal only with one period or aspect of the history of Madurai. Apart from such works as V. Kanaka-
sabhai Pillai's *The Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Ago*, Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar's work, *Some Contributions of South India to Indian Culture* and P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar's *History of the Tamils* which incidentally deal with Madurai in the Śaṅgam Age, there is yet no work treating directly of the cultural contributions of Madurai of the Śaṅgam epoch.

The post-Śaṅgam period and the Kaḷabhra interregnum in Madurai have not yet been fully studied. The *Pandyan Kingdom* by K.A. Nilakanta Sastri gives the history of the early and mediæval Pāṇḍyas. *The Colas* by the same author contains many useful references to Pāṇḍya history. S. Muthuswami's thesis on the *Later Pāṇḍyas* has not yet been published. Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar's work, *South India and her Muhammadan Invaders* and Dr. N. Venkataramanayya's book on *The Early Muslim Expansion in South India* speak also about the Muslim rule in Madurai in the 14th century. Dr. T.V. Mahalingam's paper on *The Banas in South Indian History* treats about the rule of the Bāṇādaṛāyas in the Madurai country. The rule of the Vijayanagara viceroyys in Madurai still remains a dark chapter.

V. Rangachari in the columns of *The Indian Antiquary* and R. Sathianatha Aiyar in the *History of the Nayaks of Madura* have attempted to give a detailed and connected history of the Nāyakas of Madurai. A large amount of original material in the shape of records is available on the history of Madurai in the post-Nāyaka period. But not much work has been done in this field. S.C. Hill's *Yusuf Khan* deals only with a limited phase of this period.

All the available works on the history of Madurai have concentrated more or less on the history of one dynasty or another or to some particular periods. There are still gaps in the history of Madurai which have not yet been touched upon by writers. The history of the city itself has not received adequate attention. A connected history of the great temple city dealing with various aspects of its life and culture such as political, religious, social and economic, is a hard-felt need.

The great temple at Madurai which is one of the oldest in India has suffered much owing to the vicissitudes of fortune. The temple
fabric has been destroyed much through age and more through vandalism. It has been renovated from time to time. Many parts of the temple are therefore of a comparatively late period. Fortunately several vestiges of the early structures still remain here and there. The history of this great temple has not been studied systematically so far. Thus from every point of view Madurai deserves adequate and detailed study.

The present thesis is an attempt to compile a continuous and systematic account of the city and its temple which have not so far received the attention they deserve. This thesis covers the subject in many of the aspects above mentioned. While political history of a general nature has been treated in outline emphasis has been made about the city as a great centre of culture and art during its long history. Its history has been traced from prehistoric times and beginnings of recorded history. The political, literary and social history of the great Saṅgam Age and the contribution of the many poets hailing from the city are considered next. The cultural and social history of the First Pāṇḍyan Empire has been dealt with particular reference to Madurai city and its environs. A feature of the architecture of the period is the large number of rock-cut caves and many of the caves of Tirupparankūram have been dealt with in detail. The building activities of the mediaeval Pāṇḍyas are not so well known and many examples of their buildings have been noticed. The influence of the maṭhas during the mediaeval period is outlined. The connection between Madurai city and Māṭakkūlam is touched upon. The political and social history of the city under the Nāyakas of Madurai is dealt with.

The Madurai temple has been studied in a fairly detailed manner, fully illustrated with photographs and many facets of its history, architecture, iconography and administration are detailed. An attempt has been made to trace some of the earlier features and date many of the temple structures on the basis of their architectural features and available literary evidences. Some of the temples in the neighbourhood of Madurai city have been similarly studied. The city, its old forts and its palaces are covered. An attempt has been made to trace the lay-out of Tirumala Nāyaka’s palace.

Though various types of source materials are available for study of the history of Madurai, yet when they are critically evalu-
ated it is found that they are inadequate or incomplete for giving an accurate and continuous account of the city. Epigraphy is one of the most fruitful sources of the ancient history of South India. The South Indian temple has stood as the very centre of the religious, social and economic life of the people. The temple walls are engraved with many inscriptions dealing with every aspect of South Indian life, from the military campaigns of the king down to the humble gifts of the common folk to the temple. The Madurai temple is one of the largest of its kind, but unfortunately owing to destruction only a comparatively small number of inscriptions have survived. Information — both direct and indirect — bearing on the history of the city has to be pieced together from these and from other epigraphs found in the city and its environs. Inscriptions are invaluable for the mediaeval history of Madurai, when even the chronology of the Pāṇḍya kings has to be fixed only with the help of the astronomical details in the epigraphs. A village-wise epigraphic survey of the Madurai district has not yet been carried out and the texts of a bulk of the Pāṇḍya inscriptions collected still remain unpublished. The texts of a large number of these unpublished epigraphs have, however, been made use of for the purposes of this present study. Besides the Pāṇḍya inscriptions, many Cōla epigraphs throw light on the history of mediaeval Madurai.

The available Pāṇḍya copper plates, though small in number, are invaluable for the light they shed on early Pāṇḍya history. But for the Vēḻikkudi grant, the Madras Museum plates and the larger and smaller Sinnamanūr plates, the history of the First Pāṇḍyan Empire would have almost remained a complete void. Some Pallava copper plates such as the Bāhūr plates are also helpful for the history of this period. Cōla copper plates such as the Anbil, Leyden, Tiruvālangādu and Karandai plates prove useful for mediaeval history. There is hardly any direct epigraphic material available for the period of the Sultanate of Madurai.

Epigraphy becomes a meagre source for the period of the Vijayanagara viceroyds and the Bānādārāyas in Madurai. For the period of the Nāyakas there are many inscriptions as well as copper plates, both of the Nāyakas and of the Vijayanagara rulers. The Vijayanagara charters and epigraphs throw much light on Nāyaka history and help to corroborate or supplement the available information.
The value of literary sources for the history of Madurai during certain periods such as the early Saṅgam and post-Saṅgam ages and the modern post-Nāyaka period cannot be over-estimated. Regarding the Saṅgam period, as far as possible, only references in the works of the poets hailing from Madurai and the Pāṇḍya country or those who have sung of Madurai or its rulers have been made use of in this thesis.

For the later history of Madurai from about the 17th c. when epigraphic evidence dwindles literary sources in the shape of a large number of vernacular chronicles and memoirs are available. These historical works are of particular interest since the bulk of the literary works, especially in South India, is mainly religious in character. Most of these chronicles were collected by Col. Mackenzie and from what is known as the Mackenzie Manuscripts. Abstracts of many of the manuscripts are given in Taylor's Catalogue Raisonne of Oriental Manuscripts, by Wilson in his catalogue of the Mackenzie Manuscripts and in the descriptive catalogues of the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library. Some of them were summarised by William Taylor in 1835 in two volumes called Oriental Historical Manuscripts. Mackenzie's collection included a large number of inscriptions also. These have recently been published in the three volumes of the South Indian Temple Inscriptions. Apart from these two publications the bulk of the Mackenzie Manuscripts have not yet been published.

The chronicles and memoirs included in the Mackenzie collection are of varying historical value. The Pāṇḍya Chronicle and the Mṛtyunjaya Manuscripts contain fairly reliable accounts and their chronology may also be depended upon. The History of the Carnataca Governors gives useful information but its chronology is not reliable. The Taṅjavūrī Andhra Rājula Caritra and the Taṅjavūrivārī Caritra, though dealing with the history of Tanjore, throw some light on Madurai history also. The accounts of Tirumala Nāyaka, his palace and his numerous benefactions given in Taylor's Oriental Historical Manuscripts are useful, though the translation is faulty. A large number of the manuscripts purport to deal with the genealogy and chronology of the Pāṇḍyas, for instance, the Pāṇḍya Rājakkal Purāṇa Caritram, Madurai Pāṇḍya Rājakkal Caritram, Pāṇḍya Pratāpa
Vamśāvalī and others, contain much legendary matter, need a great amount of sifting and are not very dependable. A number of manuscripts contain accounts of the origin and history of the poligars of various regions. These contain interesting and useful information, though one has to exercise care in separating fact from fiction.

Various Sanskrit and Telugu works of the Vijayanagara period, while primarily concerned with Vijayanagara history, help to elucidate the history of Madurai. The Madhurā Vijayam, the Jaimini Bhāratam, the Acyutarāyabhuyadayam and others belong to this class. Besides the MacKenzie Manuscripts, there are other works and manuscripts which are very useful for the later history of Madurai. The Rāmapayyan Ammānai and the Khān Sāyabu Sangai give many details of Tirumala’s military campaigns and the war against Yusuf Khan respectively. Most of these literary works are helpful mainly with regard to political history.

Manuscript records of reports and accounts submitted by various officers to the government on the assumption of Madurai district by the British in 1801 A.D. which are in the Madras Record Office are of great use as authoritative material for the affairs of the period. The Śrīṭāla manuscript appears to be a sort of log book of the Madurai temple. It seems to have been maintained carefully and recopied and brought up-to-date from time to time. It contains many details about the Madurai temple servants and the administration of the temple during the Nāyaka and post-Nāyaka periods. Incidentally it gives many references to the history of the temple under different rulers and of royal customs and ceremonies. The Maduraiṭhalavaralāru, which has been published as a prose introduction to the Madurai Tiruppaṉimāḷai and the Madurai Sthānīkar Vavalāru appear to have been originally parts of the Śrīṭāla. These are reliable accounts and their chronology often closely approximates to the dates found in inscriptions of the period. The brief Tiruppaṉi Vivaram in prose forms an introduction to the more elaborate Tiruppaṉimāḷai in verse. Both together attempt a history of the various structures of the temple and the numerous benefactions made to the temple

1. Sāntāmīl publication No. 27.
by the rulers and nobles as well as by the common folk. They provide a useful supplementation and corroboration of the architectural dating of the temple structures.

Though containing only casual references to historical events, legends and purānas are important sources for the local history of a place. There are many versions of the Madurai Sthala-purāṇa centring round the sixty-four Tiruvilaiyādals. Of these, the most important are Kallāgam dating from about the 9th c. A.D., the Tiruvālavarāyudaiyar Tiruvilaiyādal Purāṇam of Perumparappuliyur Nambi, dating from about the 11th, 12th c. A.D., a later Sanskrit work known as the Hālasya Māhāmya and based on it, the Tamil Tiruvilaiyādal Purāṇam of Paraṇjotti Munivar. Besides these there are a number of ulās, piṭāttamils, kalambakams and other forms of sacred literatures. The Kādal Alagar temple and the Tiruvāppudaiyar temple in the city of Madurai and the Tirupparankunram, Alagarkōyil and Tiruvādavūr temples nearby have their own sthala-purāṇas. The Periyapurāṇam, the Devaram hymns and the Tiruvāiakam of Māṇikka-vācakar also contain many references to Madurai.

The contemporaneous letters and reports of the Jesuit missionaries who worked in the Madurai country have been collected in four volumes called La Mission du Madure by Fr. J. Bertrand. They are useful not only regarding the political history of Madurai in the 17th and 18th centuries but also contain much information about the economic, social and cultural life of the people. Translations of some passages of these volumes are given in Appendix A of R. Sathianatha Aiyar's History of the Nayaks of Madura. A critical English translation of all the four volumes would prove very useful to the student of South Indian History. The contemporaneous Dutch records are of similar value and need to be studied systematically.

Regarding foreign literary sources for the early history of Madurai the most important are the writings of Megasthenes, Pliny and Ptolemy and the work, Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, the Ceylonese Chronicles, Mahāvamsa and Dīpavamsa, and some references in the works of Chinese writers like Hjuan Tsang. The works of the classical writer of the West contain much information about Madurai of the Saṅgam age. Though the chronology of the Ceylonese chronicles still offers some problems, they prove very useful for the history of the post-SAṅgam epoch, the Pāṇḍyan civil wars of the medieval period and
the relations between Madurai and Ceylon. For the mediaeval period the writings of Muslim historians like Wassaf and Ibn Batuta and the notices of travellers such as Marco Polo are very helpful.

As regards archaeological evidence hardly any spadework has yet been done in the Madurai country. The immediate environs of Madurai city, such as Anuppānadi and Madakkuṭlam seem to be rich in prehistoric antiquities and may prove a useful ground for research.

Regarding numismatics, though coins of the various dynasties who ruled over Madurai are available in fair numbers, coins definitely attributable, especially to the early Pāṇḍyas, are rare and many of the coins available are not easy of identification. Roman coins and coins of the Madurai Sultans are very helpful for the history of their respective periods.

Lastly, there are many modern writings—both books and periodicals—which are useful for writing a political and cultural history of Madurai. Of special interest and importance among these are the archaeological and epigraphical reports, both Indian and foreign. The volumes of Indian Antiquary, Epigraphia Indica, Epigraphia Carnatica, South Indian Inscriptions and Ancient India contain a wealth of material.
CHAPTER II

PREHISTORY OF THE MADURAI COUNTRY

A. GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The modern city of Madurai is about 345 miles to the south of Madras, and geographically is located on lat. 9.58 N and long. 78.10 E. The Madurai district of which it is the capital is bounded by the Coimbatore and Trichinopoly districts on the north; by Trichinopoly and Ramnad districts on the east; by the Ramnad district on the south; and by Travancore-Cochin State on the west. The present district is only a very limited portion of the ancient Pāṇḍyam kingdom which comprised the modern districts of Madurai, Ramnad and Tinnevelly. The ancient boundaries of the kingdom were the river Vellaru on the north, the Bay of Bengal and Straits of Mannar on the east, Cape Comorin and the Indian Ocean on the south and the Western Ghats on the west1.

The present district comprises the eight taluks of Dindigul, Kodaikanal, Madurai, Melur, Nilakkottai, Palni, Periyakulam, and Tirumangalam. Besides Madurai city the chief towns in the district are the seven taluk headquarters after which the taluks are named and Bodinayakkanur and Uttamapalayam in Periyakulam taluk.

There are five well-marked natural divisions in the district, viz., the Palni hills; the level expanse of Tirumangalam taluk with black-cotton soil and a few granite hills; the flat tracts of rice-growing areas covering much of Madurai and Nilakkottai taluks and the southern half of Melur; the higher and drier tracts of northern Melur, Dindigul and Palni and lastly the long and fertile Kambam Valley region.

The mountain ranges of Madurai which are mostly outliers of the Western Ghats include the broad mass of the Palni hills on

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1. A Tamil poem by an anonymous author states, "The Pāṇḍyam Territory is south of the river Vellār, east of the town of Pērūr, north of Cape Comorin, and west of the Eastern Sea."
the west; the Varushanad and Andipatti ranges to the south; the Nagamalai range, the Sirumalais to the north-west; and the Alagar-malai, Karandamalais and the “Nattam hills” towards the north and east. These ranges and hills make Madurai a very picturesque country. Some of these like the Sirumalais have been spoken for their fertility even in ancient Tamil works, some like Alagar-malai are famous for their shrines and some like Kondrangimalai, “the handsomest peak of its kind in all Madura”¹ are renowned for their striking appearance. Many of the hills like Anaimalai and Panrimalai have figured in legends².

Some of the chief rivers of the district are the Gundar, flowing through Tirumangalam taluk and town; the Tirumanimuttar and the Palar flowing through northern Melur taluk and the Kodavanar and Shanmuganadi flowing northwards along the plains of Dindigul and Palni. The main river system of the district is the Vaigai and its tributaries. The latter rise in the Palni hills or the Varushanad and Andipatti ranges and join the Vaigai in the valley which lies between these two. The Vaigai flows south-eastwards past Madurai town, and enters the Ramnad district where it joins the Bay of Bengal not far from the town of Ramnad³. The soil of Madurai is mostly of the red ferruginous variety, the black varieties being uncommon and occurring to a considerable extent only in Tirumangalam taluk.

Excepting for the months of November, December and January the temperature is fairly high at Madurai throughout the year. During the summer it is very hot. The rainfall is received chiefly during the North-East Monsoon and averages about 30 to 35 inches annually.

Almost the whole of the Madurai district is covered with gneissic rocks. Minerals are rare. A broad band of white crystalline limestone stretching nearly two miles, occurs at Tirumal, a village

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2. Parañjöti’s *Tirumalaiyadhul*, Nos. 22 and 45.
3. Details of the Kritamal river are given in the Appendix No. 3 to this chapter.
five miles north-east of Kalligudi in the Tirumangalam taluk. This limestone occurs also at Kokkulam, two miles north of Tirumal. Red and white quartz fragments are found at Gopalaswami hill in the extreme south of Tirumangalam taluk. Good building stone is quarried from Tirupparankunram. Iron ore is found near Kottampatti in Melur taluk and gold washing is reported to have been done at Palakkanuttu in Dindigul taluk. In 1899, an iron meteorite weighing about 35 pounds was found near Kodaikanal and was the second one to be so found in India.

Regarding flora, the most interesting parts of the district are the Palni and Sirumalai Hills. Colonel Beddome’s account of the “Flora of the Pulvey Hill” in 1858, enumerates over 700 species of plants.

With regard to the fauna, the indigenous cattle of the district are small in stature. The chief cattle market is the one held at Madurai during the Citra festival (April-May) in the temple there. Madurai is not rich in small game and large game is confined to the hill ranges. Elephants were formerly very numerous. Wild animals such as tigers, reported to have been a menace by earlier writers, have long since disappeared.

**B. PREHISTORIC PERIOD**

The Madurai city, its environs and the Madurai country appear to be rich in material belonging to the prehistoric period though much archaeological exploration and excavation have yet to be done in this region.

Practically no traces of palaeolithic or neolithic man have as yet been found in Madurai district. But palaeoliths were collected by Bruce Foote “from a shingle bed in the alluvium of the Vaigai, on the left bank of the river, immediately north of Madurai town” and also a single palaeolith from Aviyur, 12 miles south of Madurai.

Neolithic finds were made by Bruce Foote at Vellalankulam, south of Madurai, where a gneiss ringstone or mace head was found. In the

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1. Welsh in his *Military Reminiscences* (Vol. I, p. 24) says that in about 1795 A.D. he had hunted tigers on the Secundermalai, i.e., Tirupparankutram Hill.


3. Ibid, p. 52.
Palni hills and their environs many vestiges of settlements of the early iron age people have been found. Stone kistvæns and dolmens are widely found distributed in the Madurai district. They have been reported from many places such as Kalvarpatti and Virali-pattì in Dindigul taluk, Karunagālakkuḍi in Melur taluk and Palni and Kalayamuttur in Palani taluk. Pyriform earthen tombs have been found near Kulaśekharankōṭṭai in Nilakottai taluk, Paravai, Thovaramān, Dadampatti, and Anuppānadi in Madurai taluk, and Sengūlam in Tirumangalam taluk.

South India abounds in what are known as megalithic monu-
ments. While there is a general similarity among these it is possible
to distinguish various types among them in different regions such as Chingleput, Pudukkottai and Cochin. These differences are mainly
due to the influence of weather and geological factors which affec-
ted not only the structural form but also the situation of the megal-
liths.

Megaliths of the Chingleput district are cairn-circles or
dolmenoid cists or barrows or little cairn-mounds. Urns in cairn-
circles or barrows and coffins or sarcophagi in dolmenoid cists are
to be expected. The urns are usually large in size and pyriform in
shape.

The megalithic monuments of the Pudukkottai region consist of “transepted pot-holed dolmenoid cists with urn-burial inter-
ment together with the bounding circles, enclosing single and mul-
tiple urn-burials. The sarcophagi-interment is unknown here.”

Urn-burials are a class of monuments by themselves. While
the form of iron implements, Black-and-red Ware and fragmentary
burials found associated with urn-burials and megaliths bear a close
affinity, urn-burials cannot be included among the real megaliths.
“A comparative study of the pottery from the pure urn-burials of Adichanallūr and the megalithic pottery from Pudukkottai and Chingleput shows a comparative primitiveness of the former.”

2. Ibid, p. 106.
The prehistoric remains and monuments so far unearthed in Madurai and its environs consist mainly of burial urns and urn-burial sites. This type of burial seems to have been in vogue for a long time, from about the 3rd c. B.C. to about the 5th c. A.D. The urn-burials are variously called தலி or mudumakkal-காரி or மாதாண்டு in Tamil works dating from the Śaṅgam period to the 12th c. A.D.

Burial-urn sites have been found in several places near Madurai. The village of Anuppāṇaḍi is about two miles to the south east of Madurai city. About 20 years ago pyriform earthenware jars were unearthed in the village by K. S. Srikantan. The jars were found buried rather shallow and fairly close to one another. The collection consisted of two large jars each 3 feet high and 2 feet 4 inches in diameter at the mouth, smaller vessels, bowls and ring stands of the thin black glazed ware type known so extensively in the Madras State.

As early as 1887 Alexander Rea of the Archaeological Department had unearthed many earthenware sarcophagi in Anuppāṇaḍi as well as in other places around Madurai such as Dādampaṭṭi, Paravai and Tovaraimān. He reports that at Anuppāṇaḍi the tombs appeared above the ground singly and in groups and that they largely varied in size, from a child’s tomb measuring 1 foot 2½ inches in diameter by 1 foot 7 inches deep to a large one measuring 3½ feet in diameter. These were reported to be of a coarse, red earthenware material, of a very different clay from the finely grained light material of the enclosed smaller articles. Some few tombs, however,—always small, which were noticed most particularly at this place, were made of the thin black and red glazed earthenware of the small vessels about 3/16 inch thick. This type of tomb was comparatively limited in number and "were evidently used", says Rea, "by a superior class".

2. A.S.I. 1936-37, pp. 61-62 and plates XXV and XXVI.
4. About 15 miles northwest of Madurai.
5. Five miles northwest of Madurai, near the Vaigai.
6. About six miles northwest of Madurai.
A tomb of the more ordinary variety of earthenware which was complete with its cover, though cracked, was found buried deep in the ground and quite at a distance from the others. Inside this were the remains of a skull and the bones of a skeleton which were large-sized and evidently those of a person over the ordinary height. In other tombs also were found remains of bones and also vessels of different shapes and colours. The predominant colours of these prehistoric pottery appear to be black and red. Some of them were ornamented with dots in diagonal lines which are stated by Mr. Rea to be peculiar. One peculiarity noted by Mr. Rea was the surface glaze on these articles which had the appearance of polish on woodwork or horn. The Black-and-red Ware, as it is called, is a distinctive type among the pottery found in association with megalithic monuments. This ware is common to megaliths all over the south and on the basis of the date of megalithic monuments at Brahmagiri and other evidences can be placed between the third-second century B.C. and the first century A.D.¹.

At Paravai and Tovaraimān were found pyriform earthenware tombs with remains of skulls and bones and also an iron spearhead and a large number of glazed pottery similar to the finds at Anuppānapāṭi.

In 1887 Mr. Bartels, the Divisional Inspector of Police, discovered at Tovaraimān² a large number of earthenware jars and many small earthen vessels also, all glazed inside and outside and some containing remains of bones and a skull. In one jar he also found a stone shaped like a dart.

Inside one of the tombs at Paravai were found a large number of beads. Mr. Rea says that these beads "are of a reddish semi-transparent material with milky streaks through them. A few are of a greenish hue, and others of white crystal. Most of them have a design in white inlaid work; the lines seem to have been graved on the surface, and the white enamel filled in".³ An etched carnelian bead from Sirkap, Taxila, of oblique strokes, enclosed within two mar-

3. Rea, op.cit.
original lines, has been ascribed to the first century A.D.¹ A similar design has been found on a bead from a pyriform tomb at Paravai. This evidence may help one to assign for the time being the date of the urn-burial site at Paravai to the first century A.D. till further evidence becomes available.

On the strength of the discovery of prehistoric sepulchral urns at places like Kil-puliyur, Kilambur and Kil Nattam in Tinnevelly district a suggestion has been made by C. R. Krishnamacharlu² that prehistoric remains may be looked for at places with the prefix kīl which means "lower" or "eastern" in Tamil. He also gives a list of places with such names where prehistoric remains have been found. This statement may probably be held to be true in the case of the prehistoric finds at Anuppānaḍi also since this village is very near to what is known as Kīla-Madurai. In ancient times villages and towns seem to have been divided into two halves called kīl, mēl and to indicate probably the upper and lower halves or the western and eastern halves, e.g., Mēla-Māttur and Kīla-Māttur, Mēlpānaṅgaḍi and Kīlpānaṅgaḍi, Mēlkuyil-kuḍi and Kīlkuyilkuḍi, Mēl Iraṇiyamuttam and Kīl Iraṇiyamuttam. Perhaps the western or upper part was used for human habitation and in the other half were the burial sites.

The prehistoric finds at Anuppānaḍi so near to Kīla Madurai would show that the area Kīla Madurai and the present Madurai town to the west of it, which should thus be Mēl Madurai, have been in continuous occupation by people from prehistoric times.

C. EARLY LITHIC MONUMENTS OF THE MADURAI COUNTRY

The Madurai country abounds in isolated hills, both high and low, with big boulders and natural caverns, often at in accessible heights and positions. Prehistoric man as well as ascetics of the vaidika and avaidika sects appear to have made use of these natural

¹ B.K. Thaper, Portolam 1948; Excavation of a Megalithic Urn-Burial, Ancient India, No. 8, p. 14.
caverns evidently for habitation or for religious purposes. The people
who resorted to these out-of-the-way places seem to have made slight
alterations to the natural caves to suit their purposes. For instance,
rectangular beds, often with pillow lofts, were cut out in the rock sur-
fase, narrow drip lines were made on the overhanging rock to carry
off rain water from the roof and holes were cut on the rock face prob-
ably to put up a wooden structure or shelter. These caverns are
popularly known as "Pañca Pañḍava Pañḍukkai" whatever the
number of stone beds may be. K.R. Srinivasan, while explaining the
Tamil names connected with South Indian megalithic sites, opines
that the term Pañḍava (kūli) may be a corruption of the word māṇḍav-
var, i.e., those dead or pāṇḍava, i.e., those who performed useless
penance, as according to the belief in later times, it was considered
that Ajjivakas or Jainas did penance that was "useless". Perhaps
the term "Pañca Pañḍava pañḍukkai" may have had a similar origin.
When the original meaning was forgotten and the name came to be
associated with the five Pañḍavas the prefix pañca might have been
added to the original term Pañḍava pañḍukkai.

Short Brāhmī inscriptions are found in many of these caverns either
on the beds themselves or on the overhanging rock. These inscrip-
tions have not yet been fully studied and interpreted. Similar caves
with Pāli inscriptions in Brāhmī script have been found in Ceylon
also, for instance, at Vessagiri. But the Buddhist remains found
in conjunction with the caves in Ceylon are absent in the South
Indian caverns.

In Madurai district caverns with Brāhmī inscriptions have
been found at more than a dozen places. In South India the majority

India, No. 2, p. 10.


Māṅgulam; 38 of 1908. Varichchiyūr, 45 of 1908. Mēṭṭupattī; 333 of 1908.
Koṅgar-Puliyankulam; 58-60 of 1910, 865-869 of 1917. Mēṭṭupattī; 561 of 1911.
Karuṅgālakkuḍi, 621-623 of 1926. Nāgamalai Hill. A description of these caverns
is found in M.E.R. 1907, Pt. II, Paras.I-4, 1908, Pt. II, paras 1-8, 1909, Pt. II,
paras. 1-9, 1910, Pt. II, paras 1-5, 1912, Pt. II, paras. 1 & 2, 1918, Pt. I, paras 8 &
of the caverns discovered so far are situated in the Madurai district. Of these, Tirupparankunram, Anaimalai and Muttuppati, a hamlet of Vadapalañji, are within a radius of about five miles from Madurai.

The cavern at Anaimalai is an almost inaccessible natural cave not far from the top of the rock. It is roughly 22 feet long and 18 feet broad. The height at the entrance is about 3 feet but gradually diminishes towards the interior. Inside the cavern are three double beds and one single bed at a slightly lower level, and four other beds covered with earth. A set of eight beds is also found exposed outside the cavern. All the beds vary from about six to seven feet in length and one and a quarter to about two feet in breadth. One end of each bed is a raised portion, chiselled smooth and this probably was meant as a pillow loft. On the overhanging rock is a Brähmi inscription consisting of two lines.

At Tirupparankunram there are two caverns. They are on the western slope of the hill on the steep side and are reached only by rude footholes cut into the rock. Within one cavern there are six stone beds, two big ones and four smaller ones, roughly equal in size and separated only by very thin band of stone. The two bigger ones stretch from east to west and are mutilated on their pillow sides. In the cutting of the rock on the pillow side of the smaller beds is a clear-cut legible Brähmi inscription of one line extending to the full breadth of the beds. The cavern is a spacious one and could afford shelter to a large number of people. On the overhanging rock is chiselled a narrow drain to carry off rain water. There is a similar groove on the floor also at the broad entrance. Higher up on the hill about a hundred yards to the west of the Sikandar mosque is another small cavern with five narrow beds stretching from west to east. Modern mud and stone walls have been erected in this cavern by a Hindu mendicant who had been using this cavern.

The caverns with the old Brähmi inscriptions have a special significance since they are the earliest lithic monuments of the Tamil country. From available evidences the stone beds seem to be as

old as the Brāhmi inscriptions. The script resembles that of the inscription from Bhattiprolu and palaeographically may be assigned to 3rd or 2nd century B.C.

In the Brāhmi inscriptions at Siddharmalai Hill near the village Meṭṭupattaṭi and Aḷagarmalai one gets what are perhaps the earliest epigraphic references to the city of Madurai. One inscription from Siddharmalai is read by H. Krishna Sastry as “Ma dhi r(a)a na t'ai (vi) su va na.” K.V. Subrahmanya Iyer reads it as “Matira Antai” meaning “This is the bed of one belonging to Madirai.”

Of the inscriptions at Aḷagarmalai, inscription A is read by H. Krishna Sastry as “Ma (ta) ti (rai) yi po na ku la va na a (ta) na a t(a) na” and inscription B as “M(a) ta ti rai ko (pa) pu va nī ka na.”

“The expression Matirai occurs in both A and B, the former giving . . . . . . . an extra consonant y after rai which is a feature of Tamil orthography”, says H. Krishna Sastry. Regarding the Aḷagarmalai inscriptions K. V. Subrahmanya Iyer says that the word Mattirai (Madirai) occurs several times in them and also the names of two persons who were ponkulavan and kulavanikan, i.e., “dealers in gold and grains”.

In these inscriptions there seems to be a clear reference to the city of Madurai though the words seem to be slightly different in form. Thus the word Madhira or Matira in the Siddharmalai inscription and the words Matavirai or Matirai occurring in the Aḷagarmalai inscriptions may be the earlier forms of the word “Madura”, the present name of the city. It may be noted that the Cōla,

6. (a) Ma(ta) ti (rai)yi po naku la va na a (ta) na at (a) na.
   (b) M(a)ta ti rai ko (pa) pu va nika na.
Parāntaka I is often referred to as "Madiraikonḍa Köpparakēśarivarman" in his inscriptions.

The Brāhmi records also contain some topographical references to the Madurai country which indicate the antiquity of these regions. For instance, the Ānaimalai inscription refers to the gifts by a person residing at kuniṟatu. This is perhaps a reference to the place Kunṟattūr which is very near Ānaimalai and where there is also an early Pāṇḍya cave temple. A resident of Pākanūr is mentioned in a record from Kongarpuliyankūḷam. This indicates the antiquity of the Pāganūrkūṟam which was situated to the west of Madurai. The Vēḻvikkudī village was in this division. This region seems to have been a stronghold of Brahmans and noted only for Vedic sacrifices but also seems to have been favoured by Hindu ascetics.

These Brāhmi inscriptions have been interpreted variously by several scholars. While the language of the inscriptions in general appear to be Pāli in the Brāhmi script many letters and forms are peculiar and different and make the interpretation difficult. Both Krishna Sastri and K. V. Subrahmanya Iyer think that there were some Tamil words and forms occurring in these records. The latter says that these are probably early Tamil records. Other scholars like Dr. C. Narayana Rao feel that the records are Prākṛtic and that they probably represent what is called the Paiśāci form of Prākṛt. According to Indian grammarians the old Paiśāci dialect was the prevailing language in the Pāṇḍya country.

Eighteen potsherds bearing graffiti were found in the Arikamēdu excavations (1945). Except two among them, it is said that all the others may be reconstructed in Tamil and are among the earliest known examples of the language. They bear a close affinity to the short Brāhmi inscriptions found in the natural caverns of the Pāṇḍya

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1. Siddharmalai, the abode of many Hindu ascetics, was in this division. A place Irudipali now corrupted into Irumpali and meaning the Pāli or residence of ṛsis was also in this region.


country and also the Māmaṇḍūr inscription (3rd c. B.C.), and the Bhattiprolu Brāhmi inscriptions (c. 200 B.C.) Since the Arikameḍu site has been assigned to about the first century A.D., the potsherds may also have to be assigned to the same date. Thus they belong to a slightly later period than the Brāhmi inscriptions of the natural caverns, indicating thereby that there does not seem to have been much development in the South Indian script between the third century B.C. and the first century A.D.¹

Further research may probably help settle the question of the relationship between Prākṛt and Dravidian and the origin of the Dravidian languages.

D. EARLY REFERENCES TO MADURAI

From all available evidences Madurai appears to have been ruled by the Pāṇḍyas from time immemorial. The Pāṇḍyas and their capital Madurai are mentioned in many early Indian works and purāṇas, thus pointing to the antiquity of Madurai and the Pāṇḍyan dynasty. The sthalapurāṇas state that when Agastya and many other ṛṣis had once gathered at Benares, Agastya was requested by his companions to narrate to them the īta of Śiva on the banks of the river Vēgavati (Vaigai). In one chapter of the purāṇa, Agastya eulogises the greatness and glory of the city of Madurai.² The Tiruvilaiyādal Purāṇa states that the Indra Viśnava of the Miṅakṣi temple at Madurai was built under the orders of Indra. The Kūḍal Purāṇa, which is the sthalapurāṇa of the Kūḍal Alagar temple states that the Asṭāṅga Viśnava of the Kūḍal Alagar temple at Madurai was built by Viśvakarma, the divine carpenter. A divine origin is thus attributed to the two ancient temples in the city.

The Madurai country and the Pāṇḍyas find mention in the epics of the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata. Kavāṭapuram, one of the early capitals of the Pāṇḍyas, is mentioned in the Rāmāyaṇa.

¹. Dr. T.V. Mahalingam, Presidential Address of the Dravidian Languages and Culture Section, Proceedings of the seventeenth All India Oriental Conference, 1953, pp. 7-8.
². Paraṇjöti’s Tiruvilaiyādal: Madurai Tirunagarappāṭalam; Nambi’s Tiruvilaiyādal: Tirunagaracciappu.
Surgrīva is said to have told his followers to search for Sīta in kingdoms south of the Vindhya and to look out for “Kavāṭam Pāṇḍyānām” or the Pāṇḍya’s golden gates decked with pearl and gold, on the shore of the ocean.¹ This Kavāṭapuram, later known as Kōrkai, is said to have been submerged by the sea.

In giving a list of the kingdoms to the south of the Vindhya, the poet Vālmīki includes the kingdoms of the Āndhras, the Pūṇḍras, the Cōḷas, the Pāṇḍyas and the Kēraḷas.² In the Mahābhārata also there are many references to the Pāṇḍyas. A Pāṇḍya king is said to have been present at Draupāḍi’s suayavuṇa.³ Sahādēva proceeded on a dig viṣaya to the south and vanquished the Drāviḍas, Cōḷas Kēraḷas and Pāṇḍyas⁴. The Pāṇḍya king is said to have taken part in the great Bhārata battle.⁵ The tradition that the Pāṇḍyas participated in the great war seems to have continued for a long time since one finds it being mentioned in a Pāṇḍya copper-plate grant of the 10th century A.D., viz., the Larger Sinnamānūr plates.⁶ The Mahābhārata further says that Arjuna during a pilgrimage (tīrτyātra) married Cītrāṅgada, the only daughter of Cītravāhana, ruler of Mani-pura.⁷ This place is called Māṇalūr in the South Indian versions of the epic and is taken to refer to Māṇalūr, the ancient capital of the Pāṇḍyas. In another place Cītrāṅgada is spoken of as a Pāṇḍya princess.⁸

Kātyāyana, the grammarian of the 4th century B.C. who was probably a southerner, mentions the countries of the extreme south, Pāṇḍya, Cōḷa and Kēraḷa.

The Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya, while describing the trade between Northern and Southern India, speaks of the pearls and muslins of

¹. Rāmdyana, Kiśk: Kōṇḍ., 43; 13.
². Rāmdyana, Kiśk. Kōṇḍ., 41; 42.
³. Mahābhārata, 1. 189. 7020.
⁴. Ibid, 11. 34. 1968.
⁵. Ibid. v. 19. 576, vi. 50. 2084, vi. 23. 1019, viii. 21. 81.
⁶. "Bhāratattīr pagaḍōṭṭiyum". (1. 96).
⁸. Ibid, Adi Par. vi. 1. 64 (Kumb. edn.)
the Pāṇḍya country. Among the articles that entered the royal treasury Kauṭilya includes varieties of pearls from the Tamraparni river in the Pāṇḍya country, from “Pāṇḍya Kavāṭa” (which is explained in the commentary as the Malayakōṭi mountain in the same area) and from the Cūrṇā river in Kēraḷa.1 He also mentions the cotton fabrics from Madurai (Madhuram)2 as well as Paṇḍraka blankets, black and soft as the surface of a gem.3

The astronomer Varāhamihira refers to the Pāṇḍya kingdom (Pāṇḍyaśāya) in his Brhatasamhita.4 Kālidāsa, the great Sanskrit poet and dramatist, refers to the Pāṇḍya kingdom as one of the provinces overrun by Raghu in his tour of conquest.5 The above accounts indicate clearly that the Pāṇḍyas, their kingdom, and the commercial products of their country seem to have been well known outside their territory and that there were wide contacts between the Pāṇḍya country and the outside world from very early times.

The Mahāvamsa, the Ceylonese chronicle, contains the earliest mention made of the ancient city in a foreign literary work. The date of Buddha’s nirvāṇa has been generally accepted as 483 B.C. The Mahāvamsa states that Ceylon was colonised by her first king, Prince Vijaya, who came to the island from Bengal by sea, with many followers. It is stated that he landed on the north coast of the island on the day of Buddha’s nirvāṇa. Vijaya became king of the country after defeating and slaying the yakka (yakṣa) people in Ceylon. He then sent ambassadors to the city of Madurai in the Dakkhina. They “brought from Daccina Madurai the daughter of the king Pāṇḍya and about 700 daughters of the different chief men of that place, with a train of men of 18 different classes and also five different classes of workmen. The king was afterwards married to the princess, the daughter of the king Pāṇḍya, and was crowned and reigned in tranquillity in the city Tammananah 38 years”.6

1. Kauṭilya’s Arthaśāstra, ii. 11.
2. Ibid, ii, 26, 119.
3. Ibid, Translation. p. 90. Syama Sastri, translator of the Arthaśāstra, say5 these blankets were of Pāṇḍya manufacture.
5. Raghuvamśa, iv. 49.
This reference to Madurai in the Ceylonese chronicle bears testimony to the friendly relations and contacts between Ceylon and South India as well as Northern and Southern India. Incidentally it also shows that the Pāṇḍyas had by now established themselves at Madurai which was designated Dakkina Madura, probably to distinguish it from its northern counterpart.

The Pāṇḍyas and their capital city Madurai were well known to the Ancient Greeks and Romans. The account of Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador of Seleukos, at the court of Candragupta Maurya (320 B.C.), is the first direct notice of a South Indian kingdom made by the classical writers of the West. He gives a quaint and elaborate account of the Pāṇḍyan kingdom, which, according to him, was governed by women. He says: "Herakles begat a daughter in India whom he called Pandaja. To her he assigned that portion of India which lies to southward and extends to the sea while he distributed the people subject to her rule into 365 villages, giving orders that one village should each day bring to the treasury the royal tribute". This statement was probably based on some historical fact and perhaps refers to some mode of payment or tribute in kind. For example, the Silappadikāram refers to an instance of a cowherdess who say that it was her turn that day to supply ghee to the royal household in Madurai.

Strabo (c. 25 B.C.) states that a Pāṇḍya king sent an embassy to the Roman Emperor Augustus. Pliny (c. 75 A.D.) mentions the Pandae, king Pandion and his "Mediterranean emporium of Modou-ra". Ptolemy (A.D. 130) mentions Modoura, the royal city of Pandion. He says that the country of the Pandoonoi was around the Bidaspes. It is not clear whether this is a reference to the river Vaigai. Ptolemy shows great knowledge of the interior of the Tamil

2. Canto 17, line 7.
3. J.W. McCrindle, *Ancient India as described in Classical Literature*, p. 9, para. 4.
5. J.W. McCrindle, *Ancient India as described by Ptolemy*, p. 183, para. 89.
country and mentions a number of inland cities of the Pandionoi, namely, Tainour, Peringkarei, Korindiour, Tangala or Taga and Akour. Tainour is probably Tēnūr in the Madurai taluk of the Madurai district, which is frequently mentioned in Saṅgam works as a flourishing town. Feringkarei may be Perunkarai on the river Vaigai about 40 miles lower down its course than Madurai. Tangala and Akour evidently refer to Taṅgāl and Okkūr in the Ramnad district which were also well-known places in the Saṅgam age and were the home of several Tamil poets.

The earliest datable records in which allusions to the Pāṇḍyas and the Madurai city are traceable are the Aśōkan edicts and the old Brāhmi inscriptions in the caverns in the Pāṇḍya country. The second and the thirteenth rock edicts of Aśōka mention the South Indian kingdoms and Ceylon. The list in the second edict is more complete and includes the names of Cōla, Pāṇḍya, Satiyaputa, Kēraḷaputa and Tāmbapannī (Ceylon). All these countries are distinctly stated to have lain outside the empire of Aśōka. The Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela makes reference to the Pāṇḍya country and to a confederacy of Tamil states (Tramiradhās aśaṅghātam). Kharavela ruled in Kaliṅga in about the first half of the 2nd century B.C. The epigraph records that he caused “numerous pearls in hundreds” to be brought from the Pāṇḍya to Kaliṅga and perhaps also horses, elephants, jewels and rubies.
APPENDIX 1

DERIVATION OF THE TERM 'MADURAI'

Several explanations are given for the derivation of the term Madurai. The word is generally supposed to be the Tamil form of the name of Mathura (modern Muttra), the holy city on the Jumna in Northern India. It is also said that the name Madurai is derived from the Tamil word madhuram meaning sweetness. The Madurai Sthalapurāṇas state that when king Kulaśekhra Pāṇḍya first built the city God sprinkled the whole town with drops of sweet nectar (amṛtam) shaken from his locks, to purify and bless the city. Hence the city came to be known as Madurai. Further, the city was called “the northern Madurai” to distinguish it from a previous capital of the same name, in the extreme south of the peninsula, which is said to have been submerged by the sea. The name Madurai seems to have been a favourite one in early ages for we find several places so called in Ceylon and Malaya. There is a place named Matara in the extreme south of Ceylon, another in Burma and an island called Madura near Java. The term Madurai seems to have had some special significance and meaning which made it very popular in ancient times but which has been forgotten at present.

In the Pāṇḍyan kingdom itself there seems to have been a number of cities with the name Madurai. Their origin is, however, not known. Tenmadurai, a city in the southern part of the kingdom, is said to have been the original Pāṇḍyan capital. This city was swallowed up by the sea. Later another capital of the same name was founded in the north in the interior and this was called Vaḍamadurai to distinguish it from Tenmadurai which was lost in the sea. Perhaps this Vaḍamadurai was in its turn designated Tenmadurai to distinguish it from its counterpart in the distant north, on the banks of the Jumna. Besides, there is a place called Vaḍamadurai, near Dindigul. There is a village called Neḻumadurai about 10 miles south-west of Madura and near to this village are places called Kūṭakkōvil and Periya Kūṭakkōvil. The origin and significance of these places and place names, however, remain obscure. In many yearly Tamil works the city

1. Nambi’s Tiruvilaiyāṭal No. 36, Paraṉjiṉ’s Tiruvilaiyāṭal No. 3.
of Madurai is known as Kūḍal. Kūḍal is a term which refers to the confluence of rivers. Many ancient cities were built at the site of river confluences which were considered ideal for building towns and capitals. Perhaps ancient Madurai was also built at the confluences of the Vaigai and one of the tributaries which may have changed its course during the lapse of centuries.

The city was also called "Nānmāḍakkūḍal" or "the cluster of four towers." The Tiruvilaiyadāl Purāṇas explain the term in the following way:—Once when Varuṇa tried to destroy the Pāṇḍya capital by means of a deluge of rain, God Sundarēśvarā sent four clouds which joined together to form a canopy over Madurai and protected the city from destruction. Hence the city came to be known as Nānmāḍakkūḍal in Tamil and Catuskūḍa in Sanskrit. The earliest reference to the city of Madurai as "Nānmāḍakkūḍal" occurs in the Kalittogai.

Madurai was known by other names which testify to the great sanctity of the kṣētra. Madurai was once covered with kaḍamba forests which were cleared by Kulaśēkhara Pāṇḍya before the city was built on well-planned lines. Hence the city was called Kaḍamba-vanakṣētra. The Tiruvilaiyadāl Purāṇa states that after a deluge, God Sundarēśvarā sent a serpent to point out to the Pāṇḍya king the boundaries of the original city of Madurai as it had existed before the deluge. So the city came to be known as Ālavāy or Tiruvālavāy in Tamil and Hālāṣya in Sanskrit. Goddess Mīnākṣi as the Pāṇḍya princess Taṭātakai had ruled over Madurai when she was a maiden. So the city came to be known as Kannipuram or Kanyakāpuram. The city is also known as Samaṣṭividyānagarī, Sivanagarā, Dvādaśāntastālam, Īvanmuktiyupram and Bhūlākaśivalōkam.

1. Agam 93, 149; Puram 347; Kalittogai 27, 30, 31, 57, 92; Silappadikāram 30, 149 and others.
2. Nambi’s Tiruvilaiyadāl No. 12; Paraṇjoti’s Tiruvilaiyadāl No. 19.
4. Nambi’s Tiruvilaiyadāl No. 53; Paraṇjoti’s Tiruvilaiyadāl No. 3.
5. Nambi’s Tiruvilaiyadāl No. 47; Paraṇjoti’s Tiruvilaiyadāl No. 49.
APPENDIX 2

THE TIRUVILAIYADAL LEGENDS

The great temple at Madurai is considered one of the holiest of Siva temples. Siva as God Sundarēśvara is said to have performed 64 līlas here. These are narrated in various sthalapurāṇas pertaining to the Madurai temple. They have been written in various languages in different periods and vary from the most elaborate versions such as Paraṅjoti's Tiruvilaiyāṭal Purāṇa to the Tiruvulaiyāṭal Nāṁmāṇimālai which devotes just a line or two for each līla. Some of the most important among these are Perumbaṟṟappuliyūr Nambi's Tiruvilaiyudaiyar Tiruvilaiyāṭarpurāṇam whose Sanskrit original, Sarasamuccayam, a section of Uttramahāpurāṇam, is not available at present, and Hāḷaiya Māḥāṭmya, a Sanskrit work based on which Paraṅjoti Munivar wrote the Tiruvilaiyāṭarpurāṇam. Though Paraṅjoti has closely followed the Sanskrit original there are many differences between the two and his work is not a mere translation. For instance, his division of the work into three cantos, Madurai, Kūḍal and Ālasya kāṇḍams is not found in the Sanskrit version. Nambi's work may be assigned to about the 12th-13th c. while Paraṅjoti's was written in the 16th-17th cs.

Kallāḷam, a work of about the 9th c. A.D. is perhaps the earliest attempt to compile a collective narration of the līlas. It narrates about 30 līlas though it makes mention of a total of 64 līlas. In earlier works of the Saṅgam and Post-Saṅgam period and in the Ďevāram hymns there are many stray references to various Tiruvilaiyāṭal legends such as the incident of the Pāṇḍya driving back the sea with his spear.

The works which narrate all the 64 līlas may be broadly divided into two classes according to the order in which the līlas are arranged. Perumbaṟṟappuliyūr Nambi has arranged the līlas in a certain order, while Paraṅjoti Munivar has followed another order in his Tiruvilaiyāṭarpurāṇam.

Works which follow Nambi's order are:- The Līḷasaṅgraḥa chapter of Kaṭambavanapuruṣa written by Vīmanāṭha Paṇḍitar and based on the Sanskrit Kaṭambavanapuruṣa or Nīpāraṇa māḥāṭmya, Tiruvilaī
yādar payakaramālai and Tiruvuḻāttānānāṉmaṇimalai Purāṇattirumalai Nāḍār’s Maduraiccokkanādar Ulā and Nilakanṭha Diksitar’s Sanskrit work Sivaliliṟañava, follow Paraṅjōti’s order of arrangement.

Other works in which the Tiruviḻaiyādal are narrated are Andāri’s Sundara Pāṇḍiyam based on a Sanskrit work of the same name Aṣṭamipradaksīṇa Māṇmyam (both in Sanskrit and Tamil) and Maduraikkalambakam of Kumaraguruparar. There are many differences between Nambi’s and Paraṅjōti’s works. For instance, several ṇilas in Nambi’s work are omitted in the latter and one ṇila of the former is split into three in the latter. While Nambi casually mention only a few names of Pāṇḍya kings, Paraṅjōti’s work and the Ḫāḷasya-Māṉāṭmya mention a list of 72 Pāṇḍya kings which is of doubtful historical value. Paraṅjōti appears to have attempted some chronos logical arrangement of the ṇilas but it is not clear at present how far he has succeeded.

A large number of the ṇilas such as those connected with Tiru-jñaṉasambandar, the Jains, Māṇikkayācaka and the Čēras and the Cōlas, are legends gathered round actual historical events. But at present it is difficult to separate the fact from the fiction completely. Apart from these minor and perhaps major dieffrences, there is much similarity and uniformity about the ṇilas.
CHAPTER III

MADURAI IN THE SANGAM AGE

A. AGE AND HISTORICITY OF THE SANGAM

Madurai was famous as a seat of learning in very early times. Tradition says that the Pândya capitals were the home, at different times, of three different Tamil Saṅgams, i.e., academies of learned men. The first of these was at the old capital of Tenmadurai which was submerged in the sea, the second at Kāṭapuram which was also swept under the sea and the third at the present town of Madurai called Vaṭamadurai to distinguish it from the Tenmadurai lost in the sea. There is a persistent tradition in the Madurai Śṭhala-purāṇas and Pândya epigraphs that a Pândya capital was affected by several deluges. It is said that during one such deluge the whole city was destroyed except the temple and the surrounding parts which were known as Naṭuvur.1 Again it is said that once when Paḷamadurai (old Madurai City) was about to be destroyed by the sea the Pândya threw his spear into the sea which then receded and laved the feet of the king. Hence he got the title Vaṭimbala-bhimamnirṛa Pândyan.2 The Larger Sinnamāṇur Plates state that the ocean, even when agitated at the end of the kalpa, bore the form of the Pândya’s foot-stool3. “At the end of the previous kalpa, it it stated, there was a powerful king named Pândya who was ruling at the entrance into the sea (i.e., on the coast of a gulf) and that the very same king at the beginning of the current kalpa, was born as Budha, the son of the Moon”. The above references would show that while the Pândya territory was perhaps subjected often to

1. Nambi’s Tiruvilaiyāṭal, No. 47; Paraṇjōti’s Tiruvilaiyāṭal, No. 4.
4. Veḷṉvikkuḷi grant, v. 4. E.I. Vol. XVII, p. 293, 304; Verse 5 of the Madrār Museum Plates of Jaṭilavarman also states that the Pândya had survived the disas-
ravages by the sea, owing perhaps to its proximity to the sea, the Pāṇḍyas were quite able to maintain their mastery over the seas.

The submission of the ocean to the Pāṇḍyas seems to have been a strong family tradition owing perhaps to their sea-girt kingdom their naval power and their sea-borne trade from the earliest historical times. These accounts probably testify also to the fact that the Pāṇḍyas had their earlier capitals on the sea coast and that these had to be shifted from time to time owing to the ravages caused by natural forces. The change of capital of the Pāṇḍyan kings is corroborated by Pliny who refers to the transfer of capital from Kōrkaik to Madurai\(^1\). The Śilappadikāram\(^2\) and the Kalittogai\(^3\) state that a portion of the Pāṇḍya country was swallowed by the sea. It is said that the seat of the middle or second Saṅgam was Kavaṭapuram. The Rāmāyaṇa\(^4\) and the Artaśāstra\(^5\) refer to a Pāṇḍya Kavaṭa. Hence the available evidence shows that the Pāṇḍyas had various capitals at different times. Probably the change of the Pāṇḍya capitals led to the belief that there were three different academies.

The whole question of the age and historicity of the Tamil Saṅgam has given rise to a great deal of controversy. The earliest available account of the three Saṅgams occurs in the introduction to the commentary on Iraiyar’s Agäpporu\(\text{u}\) (c.A.D. 650).\(^6\) It states that three Saṅgams lasted for 9,990 years altogether and that 8,598 poets were their members and that 197 Pāṇḍyan kings were their patrons. It states that the Pāṇḍyas founded three Saṅgams or academies—the first, middle and the last. The first Saṅgam which was at Tenmadurai was headed by Agattiyanār, had 549 members, included 4,449 poets and lasted for 4,400 years. It was patronised by 89 kings from Kāyśina Valudi to Kaṭuṅgōn. After Tenmadurai was swallowed by the sea, the second or middle Saṅgam was founded at Kavaṭapuram. It had 59 members such as Agastya and Tolkāppiyananār, included 3,700 poets and lasted for 3,700 years. Its patrons were 59 Pāṇḍya kings

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1. Warmington, Commerce between Roman Empire and India, p. 167.
2. Canto xi, ll. 17-22.
5. ii, ch. 11.
from Vėndércceliyana to Muḍattirumārāṇa. After Kavāṭapuram was lost in the sea Muḍattirumārāṇan made Vaḍamadurai or modern Madurai his capital and set up the third Saṅgam which had 49 members including Nakkirar, Marudananāṇganār and others. There were 449 poets and some of the works composed were Neṭunottai, Kurumottai, Puranaṉūṟu, Kalittogai and others. The Saṅgam lasted for 1,850 years and was patronised by 49 kings from Muḍattirumārāṇa to Ugraperuvāḷudi. This account seems too legendary and artificial to be accepted completely.

The traditional story of the origin of the Saṅgam as given in the Sthalapurāṇas, is equally legendary and does not help much in solving the problem. Obviously both the accounts are an admixture of fact and fiction for eulogising the glory and greatness of the Saṅgam. Since the idea of an organised literary academy was not a strange one in ancient India, a Tamil academy might in all probability have existed in Tamilakam, patronised by all the Tamil kings and perhaps to a greater degree by the Pāṇḍya kings. Possibly three stages in the growth of this academy, along with the change of the Pāṇḍya capitals might have led to the belief that there were three different academies at different times. But there is not much proof of the progressive evolution of the Saṅgam. Most of the extant Saṅgam works belong to what is commonly known as the third Tamil Saṅgam said to have flourished at the present city of Madurai.

The word Saṅgam is the Tamil form of the Sanskrit Saṅgha. While line 762 (panarkuttund aprugal sa) of the Maduraiakkōṇci may by taken to be a reference to some kind of literary academy, the actual usage of the term Saṅgam does not occur in the earlier of the extant Saṅgam works. It probably came into popular use after the establishment of a Jaina Drāvīḍa Saṅgha at Madurai by Vajranandi in A.D. 4702, and after the rise to prominence of Jainism and Buddhism in the Tamil country. The Maṇimēkalai refers to a Buddha Saṅgha in the Tamil country3. These Saṅghas refer to religious organisations and do not refer to any literary academy. Probably in the contest between the Śaiva cults and Jainism and Buddhism in

1. Paraṇjōti's Tiruvilaiyadal, No. 51.
about the 5th-6th centuries A.D. the word saṅgha was also taken up and used by the Hindus and transformed to denote the Tamil academy.

The phrases that one gets in Tamil making use of the term saṅgam are such words as saṅgamalī Tamil1, saṅgamunattamil2, and saṅgotamīl3. Here too the term saṅga seems to mean Tamil verse or poetry. Appar (7th century A.D.), the earliest of the Devaraṃ trio, states that Tarumi, a poor poet, was helped by Siva to gain a purse of gold in the Saṅgam4. This is probably the earliest instance of the term saṅgam being used in the sense of a literary academy. The Larger Sinnamānūr plates while speaking about the achievements of the early Pāṇḍyas, credit the Pāṇḍyas with proficiency in Tamil and Sanskrit5, the translation of the Mahābhārata6, into Tamil and the establishment of the Saṅgam in the town of Madhurāpuri7.

The beginnings of the Tamil Saṅgam go back to 9000 B.C. according to the account in the introduction to Iraiyanār's Agapporul. This date seems to be too early to be accepted. If a careful study is made of the synchronisms between the kings, chieftains and poets suggested by the colophons at the end of many of the poems in the extant Saṅgam works, one finds that the bulk of the literature refers to occurrences within a period of from about 100 to 250 years. Thus all available evidences indicate that the Sangam Age may be taken to have flourished during the early centuries of the Christian era.

The extant Sangam works consist mostly of schematic anthologies such as the Eṭṭuttogai, which includes Narriṇai, Kuruntogai,

1. Jñānasambandar, Tiruttēvūr Devaraṃ, ii. 10: 3-4; Tirumaṅgai Ālvār-Periya Tirumoli. iii. 9-10.
2. Tirumaṅgai Ālvār, Periya Tirumoli. iii. 4-10.
3. Āndal, Tiruppāvai 30. 1.5.
5. Lines 94-95.
6. Ibid. 1. 102.
7. Ibid, 11. 102-103 “Madhurāpuric saṅgam vaittum”.
Aingurunuru, Padiruppattu, Paripadal, Kalittogai, Agananuru, Puras nanuru, and the "Ten Idylls" or Pattuppattu as well as the Tolkappiyam, a comprehensive grammatical treatise. Most of these works may be approximately assigned to the period c. 100-300 A.D.\(^1\) while the Tolkappiyam, Kalittogai and Paripadal appear to be about a century later.

B. PANDYA KINGS OF THE SANGAM AGE

According to tradition 49 Pandyan kings ruled during the third Sangam period\(^2\). From the extant Tamil works of the Sangam Age about twenty names of Pandya kings and princes could be gathered. Some of the kings appear to be notable figures in whose time many interesting and important events took place. The Pandyan kings of the Sangam period were liberal patrons of learning and some of them were poets of no mean order themselves.

Neidyon or Vadimalambanirra Pandya: Among the twenty and odd names of kings available, Neidyon or Vadimalambanirra Pandya\(^3\) seems to be the earliest. He is an almost mythical figure whose achievements are mentioned in the Sthalapuranas of Madurai.\(^4\) Tradition says that Neidyon brought the Pahruji river into existence and instituted a sea festival. Poet Nejtimaiyar mentions the river Pahruji of Neidyon, the sea festivals celebrated by him, and his gifts of gold to nayyiriar or minstrels.\(^5\) Both the Larger and Smaller Sinnamanur plates\(^6\) mention a Pandya who threw the spear into the sea to drive it back. Probably the king referred to here is Vadimalambanirra Pandya.

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1. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, Ilakkiya Dipam, pp. 4-12, 73-74, 77, 80, 103, 107.
2. Introduction to Iravaniyar’s Agapporul.
3. Puram 9; Maduraikkani, 11.61, 763; Silappadhikaram, 22: 60; 15: 1-2; 28: 3;
4. Nambi’s Tiruivilayadal No. 21. Here the poet says that in the reign of Ugraceliyan, Palamadurai was threatened by the sea and that the king threw his spear into the sea and curbed it and that the waves then washed his feet. So he came to be known as Vadimalambanirn. This incident is mentioned in Paranjoti’s Tiruivilayadal and the Halasaya Mahatmya as the 13th lila.
6. Larger Sinnamanur plates, ll. 90-91; Smaller Sinnamanur plates, ll.9-10.
Madurai in the Sangam Age

Muṇṭattirumāṟan: He is the author of Narraḷai 105 and 226. Tradition states that he lived at the end of the second Tamil Sangam and that after Kayāṭapuram was lost in the sea, he came north and made Maṇḍur as the Pāṇḍya capital and that soon afterwards he founded Madurai city and established the third Sangam.

Palyaṅgaṇaḷai Mudukudumip - Peruvāḷudi: The Vēḷvikkudi grant calls this king Palyaṅga Mudukudumip Peruvāḷudi. From Puram it may be inferred that Neṭiyōn was his ancestor but it is not known what distance of time separated these two rulers. Mudukudumi appears to have been an ardent patron of the vaidska religion and of Vedic scholars. The title Palyaṅgaṇaḷai or Palsāḷai indicates that he either performed many sacrifices or helped the performance of sacrifices. He granted the village of Vēḷvikkudi to Naṟkorgar of Korkai to help him complete a yāga.

Mudukudumip-Peruvāḷudi was noted for his generosity and his liberal gifts of gold to the virail, the vayiriyar and other minstrels. He is praised by three contemporary poets in five short poems in Puram. He appears to have been a great conqueror who ruled over a large territory and had powerful armies.

Kārikilār says that "the king's umbrella is lowered only when circumambulating the temple of the three-eyed God". Besides being one of the earliest references to Siva in Tamil literature,

2. Puram 15 refers to the many big yagas which were performed in his day. The Smaller Sinnamanur plates refer to the thousand sacrifices performed by a Pandya ancestor (1.10). This is most probably a reference to Mudukudumip Peruvāḷudi.
4. Puram 9, 15 and 64.
5. Nettimaiyar, Puram 9,12, 15; Nedumpalliyanthanar, Puram 64; Kārikilār, Puram 6.
this also shows that the king was deeply religious and was a devout Saiva. The poet himself appears to be a devotee of Śiva.¹

All available evidences show that Palyāgaśālai Mudukūḍuṃpīr Peruvalūdi was one of the greatest of the early Pāṇḍya kings. He was one of the ancestors of the victor of Talaiyāḷangānām². But it is not known when exactly Mudukūḍuṃ occupied the Pāṇḍya throne.³

**Paśumpūṭ-Pāṇḍyan:** There are several references to this king and a number of poets have sung about him.⁴ He seems to have been a great warrior and conqueror and had the title “he who conquered many lands”.⁵ The most significant event of his reign appears to be his conquest of Adigan⁶ and Kongar.⁷ The king’s capital city was Kūḍal (Madurai).⁸ Since Paśumpūṭ Pāṇḍyan has been sung by Nakkīrār and his father Maduraikkanakkāyānār he

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1. The poet’s name reminds one of Kari Nayanar, one of the sixtythree Saiva saints mentioned in the Periya Parani and of the poet Kariswar who, along with Nariyar, came to Madurai to worship Siva, and for whose sake Siva performed a Ḍāl at Madurai. Nambi’s Tirwilaipadal No. 52.


3. K.N. Sivaraja Pillai in The Chronology of the Early Tamils assigns him to 75-100 A.D. and says that he was the same as Peruvalūdi who died in the Velliyaṉabalam.

4. Ilattup Pūṭdan Devanār, Agam 231; Nakkīrār, Agam 253; Nārāṉīai 358; Paranar, Agam 162; Kuruntogai 393; Maduraikkkanakkāyanār, Agam 338;

5. Agam 253, “Nāduvilatandar Pasumpust Pandiyan”.

6. Agam 162: 18-22. Adigan referred to here was a chief of the Aysi country in the region of the Podiyil mountains in the extreme south of the Tamil country. From the description given in the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea (c. 75 A.D.) it is seen that the Aysi country was included in the Pandyan kingdom, though its name is not specifically mentioned (W.H.Schoff, Ed. The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, para 53-55, 58-59). Ptolemy (190 A.D.) mentions the ‘Aioi’ country (J.W. McCrindle, Ancient India as described by Ptolemy. Section 9, pp. 53-54). After his defeat by the Pandya king, the Aysi chief Adigan appears to have become his feudatory since Kurun-togai 393 refers to him as the Pandya’s “Vinaival Adigan” and says that he fought for the Pandya king against the Kongar. Perhaps the Aysi continued to rule in their country as the feudatories or allies of the Pandyas.

7. Agam 253; Kuruntogai, 393.

may be assigned to the period immediately preceding the reign of Ne đuţi jelyian, the victor of Talaiyālangānam. Most probably he was the immediate predecessor of Ne đuţi jelyian.

It is not known if Pāṇḍya Pannādu Tandān, the author of Kuruntogai 370, who ordered the compilation of Narrinai, is the same as Paśumpūṭ Pāṇḍya.

Talaiyālangānamattuceerwenta Ne đuţi jelyian: Ne đuţi jelyian, the victor of Talaiyālangānam, may easily be called the most renowned Pāṇḍya king of the Sangam age. He may be assigned to the beginning of the 3rd c A.D.1 Māngudi Marudanār and Nakki rar have each written a poem in the Pattuppoṭṭu in praise of this king, besides several minor pieces in the Puram and Agam2. Several other poets have also sung about this king3.

Ne đuţi jelyian was a great conqueror renowned for his heroism. He came to the throne as a youth4. Soon after his accession, the Cēra and Cōla kings as well as many Tamil chieftains tried to form a confederacy against him, taking advantage of his tender age. The enemies invaded his kingdom and seem to have penetrated almost as far inside as the capital city itself. The Pāṇḍya king defeated them in a battle, probably outside the walls of the city5 and then pursued them far into their own dominions. The decisive battle took place at Talaiyālangānam, about eight miles northwest of Tiruvārūr in Tanjore District. The seven enemies who were defeated in the battle of Talaiyālangānam were the Cēra and Cōla kings6 and five

1. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai Ilakkiya Dipam p. 43 ff.
2. Māngudi Marudanār: Maduraikkai, Puram 24, 26, 372; Nakki rar Nedun nalo adai, Agam, 36, 57, 253, 266; Narrinai 358.
3. Idaikkumṛグル Kilār, Puram 76, 77, 78, 79; Kallādanār, Puram 23, 25, 371- Agam 209; Paranar, Agam 116; Podumbil Kilār Maganār, Narrinai 387; Kudapulaviyanār, Puram 18, 19; Alāmbēri Sāttuṇār, Agam 47 and 175.
4. Puram 72, 77, 78.
6. V. Kanakasabhai Pillai in The Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Ago (p. 84) says that Nedunjelyian ascended the throne a few years before the death of Karikāl Cola and that after his victory at Talaiyalanganam the Pandya was friendly with the great Cola.
minor chieftains. The Cēra contemporary of the Pāṇḍya was Śēy who was surnamed "Yānaikkān" ("the elephant eye"). The five chieftains were Tiṣṭyan, Eljini, the chief of Erumaiyūr, Irungōvēnman and Porunan. The victory of the young Pāṇḍya king was so decisive that it made a very lasting impression on the minds of the people. There are many references to this victory by contemporary as well as later poets. By the time the Larger Sinnamānur plates were issued in the 10th century the memory of the battle had become almost a legend so that this victory was enumerated along with many other deeds of the ancestral Pāṇḍya kings.

There are also references to other battles and conquests by Neṭunjeliyan besides the famous victory won by him. It is said that the Cēra king Śēy was taken captive after the battle of Talaiyālagānam and imprisoned by the Pāṇḍya king. The Cēra king, however, managed to escape. Neṭunjeliyan appears to have pursued him up to the shores of the Western sea and defeated him in a battle near the Cēra port of Munṣi and brought away an image (pāvūl). The Pāṇḍya also defeated the people of Kuṭṭanādi. Alumbil Vēl, perhaps one of the feudatory chiefs of the Cēra, was dispossessed of his lands.

Neṭunjeliyan also conquered Miḷalaikkūram from Vēl Evvi and Muttūrkkūram from the Tonmuṭir Vēlir. Formerly these two kūrams were divisions in Pudukkoṭṭai and Arantāngi (Tanjore District) and Tiruvāḍānil (Ramanad District) Taluks. The Maduraiakkānī also refers to Neṭunjeliyan’s capture of the town

2. Maduraiikkānī; 11. 125-129; Agam 175, 209; Puram 19, 26, 76, 371, 372; Narrinai 387.
3. The Larger Sinnamanur plates (11. 100-102) state that the Pandya king won the victory of Talaiyālaganam against two kings who were his equals.
4. Puram 17.
5. Nakkirar, Agam 57 and Tāyankannanār, Agam 149.
7. Ibid. 1. 345.
8. Māṅgudi Marudanār, Puram 24: 18-23. Paranar in Agam 266 refers to the defeat of Evvi, the chieftain of Nīḍīr, by Pasiṃput Porundalar. It is not clear whether this is also a reference to Nedunjeliyan’s victory over Evvi.
Sāliyūr named after the paddy and his taking the rich town of Muduveḷḷilai. The king is called the Lord of Koṅkai, and the warlord of the southern Paradavar. The Maduraikkāṇci also contains a full-length description of the city of Madurai and of the Pāṇḍya country under Neṭunjelīyana’s rule.

Neṭunjelīyana was not only a great conqueror but also a patron of the Vēdas, Brahmans and Vēdic scholars. He helped the performance of Vēdic sacrifices. The king was a great patron of poets and has been eulogised by many famous poets like Māngudi Marudanār, Nakκırar, Praṇar and Kallādrar. Tradition says that Nakκırar was the head of the third Sangam but the king himself says that Māngudi Marudan was the leading poet of his court. Both the poets have sung quite lengthy poems in praise of the king in Pattup-pāṭṭu. Most probably the traditional account is also true. Māngudi Marudan might have been the leading poet in the early part of the king’s reign. Perhaps Nakκırar succeeded to the position after Marudan’s death and was the leading poet in the later years of the king’s reign.

Sittiramāḍattuttuṇiyya Nanmāran: He has been sung by Sittala Sāttanār in Puram 59. It is not certain whether he is the same as Iḷanjelīyana and whether he took the title Nanmāran after ascending the throne. His name indicates that he died in a Citramāḍam.

Iḷavandikaippalluttuṇiyya Nanmāran: He has been sung by as many as five poets, including Nakκırar and Marudan Iḷanāṇganār. This king has been praised as well as censured, by the poets.

1. Lines 87-8.
2. Lines 119-24. This town is not identifiable.
3. Maduraikkāṇci. 11. 138 and 144.
5. Puram 72.
7. Nakκırar, Puram 56, Marudan Iḷanāṇganār, Puram 55; Avūr Mūlankilār, Puram 196; Bēri Sāṭtanār, Puram 198 and Karikkannānār of Kavirippūmpattinam Puram 57.
8. The king has been censured by Avūr Mūlankilār (Puram 196) and Bēri Sāṭtanār (Puram 198) for his illiberality. It is not known how far this was justified.
Nakkīrar compares the king and his good qualities to the gods like Śiva, Viṣṇu, Balarāma and Muruga. The poet also says that the king drank out of gold vessels, wine brought in flasks by the Yavanas.

Nakkīrar has sung about the victor of Talaiyālangānam and the Pāṇḍya who died in the Ilavandigaippalli. Marudan Ilaṅgaṅ, the son of Māngudi Marudan, has also sung about the latter. Hence Ilavandigaippallittuṇjiya Nanmārān may be assigned to the period immediately following that of the victor of Talaiyālangānam. It is not known whether he was his son and successor. Marudan Ilaṅgaṅ has sung about Ilavandigaippallittuṇjiya Nanmārān and Kudakārattut-tuṇjiya Mārān Vāludi. Hence both may be assigned to about the same period and they may have succeeded to the throne at short intervals. Probably Mārān Vāludi was the later of the two. Veljiyambalattut-tuṇjiya Perovaludi may also be taken to belong to the same age since both he and the Pāṇḍya who died in the Ilavandigaippalli, have been sung by Kārikkaṇanār of Kāvirippumpaṭṭinam.

Kudakārattut-tuṇjiya Mārān Vāludi: This king has been sung by Aiyūr Mūḍavanār and Marudan Ilaṅgaṅ. The latter states that the king caused the northern kings ("sādapula manṇar") to "fade away" or in other words, that he conquered them.

Veljiyambalattut-tuṇjiya Perovaludi: He was a contemporary and a fiend of the Cōla King Kurāppallit-tuṇjiya Peruntirumāvaḷavan. Kārikkaṇanār of Kāvirippumpaṭṭinam has sung about the two kings as they were seated together. The poet compares the Pāṇḍya to Viṣṇu and the Cōla to Baladēva and says that they

1. Puram 56: 1-16. The king has also been compared to Viṣṇu in Puram 57, and to Siva in Puram 55 by other poets.
3. Puram 56.
4. Puram 55.
5. Puram 52.
6. Puram 58.
7. Puram 57.
8. Puram 57.
9. Puram 52.
looked like Viṣṇu and Baladeva. While the Cōla is referred to as the king of Uraiyyur, the Pāṇḍya is called the king of Kūḍal (Madurai) noted for its Tamil.

Ugrapperuvaludi who took Kānappēr: This Pāṇḍya king subdued Vēngai Mārban, the chieftain of Kānappēr (Kālaiyārkōi). He has been sung by Auvaivār and Aiyūr Mūlankilār. The king himself was a poet and composed Agam 26 and Nōrīnai 98. Auvaivyār has sung about this king on the occasion when he was seated together with the Cēra King Mārivenkō and the Cōla Rājasūyam Vēṭṭa Perunarkilli. This shows that the three kings were contemporaries. Further it also indicates that the three Tamil kings had friendly relations at that time. Since Bēri Sāttanār has sung about Rājasūyam Vēṭṭa Perunarkilli and Ilavandigaippallittūrition Narināran, Ugrapperuvaludi may also be assigned to the period immediately following that of Neduñjelīyan, the victor of Talaiyālangānam.

Karungai Oōl Perumpeyar Valudi: He has been sung by Irumbidārttaiyār, the uncle of the Cōla Kārikār-Peruvalaṭtān. Hence one may assign this king to about the same period as the Cōla Kārikāḷa or slightly earlier. The poem calls the Pāṇḍyas as the Kauriyar, praises the king for his charity and says that the Pāṇḍya queen was a model of chastity.

While there are references to many other names of the Pāṇḍya kings of the Sangam period it is not clear where they could be placed.

1. Puram 58: 14-17.
2. Ibid 1. 13 “Tamil Kelu Kūḍal”.
6. Ugrapperuvaludi is believed to be the contemporary of Tiruvalluvar, the author of Kūrāl. Tradition says that he caused the anthology of the Aganagāru to be made, with the help of Rudrasanmar, the son of Uppūrikudi Kīlār. He is also considered to be the last Pāṇḍya king of the third Sangam. It is said that the Sangam did not continue to function after his time. From the available evidences these statements appear to be incorrect.
7. Puram 3.
chronologically. Some of these names may even pertain to Pāṇḍya princes and members of the royal family who did not actually reign as kings.

Pāṇḍya Arivudai Nambi: Since he has been sung by Piśirāndaiyār, the great friend of Köpperunjōla, both these kings may be taken to be contemporaries. Piśirāndaiyār advises this Pāṇḍya king on the economy of moderation of taxation. Arivudai Nambi is also the author of a number of small poems, which indicate his wisdom.

Bhātappāṇḍiyān who took Ollaiyūr: Little is known about this king apart from what one can gather from his own compositions. One poem says that he was a loving husband, that his queen was highly cultured, that many princes and chieftains were his friends and that he placed a high value on friendship. He was a great warrior. He conquered Ollaiyūr. On his death his queen committed sati.

ĀryappadaiKaśanda Neṇuñjēliyan: As his name indicates he won a victory against an Āryan army. Nothing further is known about the Āryans who were defeated by this king. It is believed that the tragedy of Kōvalan's death at Madurai occurred in his reign, causing the king to die of a broken heart. His queen, Köpperundēvi, did not survive her husband and died immediately afterwards. A short poem written by this king puts learning above birth and caste. His son Šeliyan, also called Vērri-ver-Celijyan or Ilanjēliyan, was the viceroy of Kōrkai which was the chief Pāṇḍya sea-port as well as a secondary capital.

Ilampeuruvalu who died in the Sea: He was the author of Pari-pādal 15 and Puram 182. Hence he may be assigned to about the

1. Puram 184.
4. Puram 71. His friends were Māran of Maiyal, on the banks of the Vaigai, Āndai of Eyil, Anduvan Sāttan, Ādan Alisi and Iyakkan.
5. Oliyamangalam in Pudukkottai.
7. Silappadikaram epilogue to Canto II.
8. Puram 183.
9. Narrinai 55 and 56 are written by a Peruvalludi. It is not known whether he is the same as Ilampeuruvaludi.
4th-5th century A.D., the age of Paripāṭaḷ. The Puram poem beginning "Ungaḷamma" shows the great wisdom of this king. Paripāṭaḷ 15 is in honour of Viṣṇu and describes the Tirumāliruṇjolai hill near Madurai. The poem shows that the king was a devout Vaishnava.

Nalvaludī: Nalvaludī, the author of Paripāṭaḷ 12, may also be assigned to the age of the Paripāṭaḷ. The poem is in praise of river Vaigai.

The other Pāṇḍyas whose names occur in the Sangam works are Nambi Neḍunjeliyān¹, Anḍar Maṅgaṅ Kuṟuvaḷudī², Māḷai Māraṅ³, and Māraṅ Vaḷudī⁴.

C. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE SANGAM AGE

1. Government

While monarchy was the form of government, the Pāṇḍya king was far from being an irresponsible autocrat. He was guided by the principles laid down in the Dharma Sāstras⁵, and listened to the advice of his wise ministers and poets. There is a reference to a Narperiṅkuḷu⁶, in the Maduraikkāṇci. The commentator takes this to be a reference to the Aimperiṅkuḷu which is generally taken to mean a council of five ministers. He says that since kāvidis or ministers had already been mentioned earlier in the poem⁷, only the other four members of the Aimperiṅkuḷu were being referred to here by the poet as the Narperiṅkuḷu. It is not clear whether this is the correct interpretation of the term or whether the term refers to a body distinct from the Aimperiṅkuḷu which was commonly associated with the government in the ancient Tamil kingdoms. The

1. Puram 239.
2. Author of Puram 345, Agam 228 and Kuruntogai 345.
3. Author of Kuruntogai 245.
4. Author of Narrinai 97 and 301.
kāvidis appear to be ministers in charge of accounts. The Maduraikkānci mentions that the king’s ministers lived in large and luxurious mansions and that they were watchful of the cause of rectitude. Brahmans often acted as mediators and ambassadors and were sent on missions from one royal court to another.

In the king’s court of justice equity was dealt out impartially as though weighed with a pair of scales. The Avaiyattār or assembly called parties to dispute and decided after full enquiry. An instance of this kind is mentioned by Maduraiittamilakkūttan Kaḻuvan Maḻianār. The poets also often advised the king to rule justly and impartially. One poet stresses the need for impartiality in the king’s justice and for valour, grace and liberality in his conduct. Another poet contrasts the good effects of moderate taxation with disadvantages of heavy exactions.

In administration the lot system seems to have been in vogue for certain purposes, as may be inferred from a poem which refers to picking out ēlais or cadjan leaves from a pot and taking oaths thereon.

2. Madurai City in the Sangam Age

A careful examination of the available descriptions of Madurai in the various Tamil works of the Sangam period shows that the city of Madurai was well planned and built according to the principles of town planning laid down in the Silpa Sastras.

1. Ibid 11. 18-20, 499-502. They adjudged between right and wrong and saw to it that the king did not err into wrong judgments and that dharma was protected and good will was encouraged and that no fault ever came their way and thus gained for themselves widespread fame.

2. Puram 305.
4. Agam 256.
5. Puram 55.
7. Agam 77.
Besides many stray references in numerous Sangam works, picturesque and detailed descriptions of the city of Madurai are given in the Maduraiṅkai and Nedunalvadai, both of which may be assigned about the 2nd-3rd c. A.D.

The Maduraiṅkai, the longest poem in the Pattuppattu collection, contains a graphic pen picture, covering 370 lines of Madurai city in the early centuries of the Christian era. Māṅguḷi Marudanār, the author of this poem, states that the city of Madurai stood in the centre of the flourishing Pāṇḍya country which had as many as five different natural regions (tiyais). According to this poem Madurai was a large and beautiful city with a palace, a number of temples, two large crowded bazaars, and many well-laid streets with lofty mansions. The king's courts of justice are also described. The city was surrounded by a deep moat and lofty city walls pierced by huge gates with towers over them. The Vaigai skirted the city walls and formed a natural defence on one side.

Approaching the city from the Vaigai side, the poet describes the various defence works and fortifications surrounding the city. Among the numerous groves and orchards along the banks of the Vaigai lived the Perumpāṇar, a class of panegyrist or minstrels. Madurai was surrounded by a deep moat and a high rampart. The strong and ancient city gateways had high towers and doorways with guardian deities. The heavy doors were blackened by frequent applications of oil. The streets were long and "broad as a river". The houses on either side were well planned and built.

3. Ibid 11.331-42.
4. Ibid 1.351.
5. Ibid 1.352.
7. Ibid, 1.354. It was an ancient belief that guardian deities resided in doorways. A figure of Gajalakṣmi was generally carved on the lintels. Oil (ney) and white mustard (aiyavai) were applied to doorways perhaps as an offering to the guardian deity. Nedunalvadai, 11.85-86; Narrinaī 370: 3-4; Tirumurugāṟṟuppadai, 1.228; Manimēkalai, 3: 134 (Perhaps this application of oil also acted as a preservative of wood).
8. Maduraiṅkai 11. 359; Nedunalvadai, 1.29.
This may mean either that there were different types of houses for different classes of people as prescribed in the *Sāstras*, or as Naccinārk-kiniyār, the commentator, says, that the houses were well built with many different parts such as *mandapam*, hall, kitchen, *manai* and so on, which were essential parts of an Indian house. The houses had many windows¹, and were well ventilated. There were residences for men belonging to different religious orders, both Hindu and also probably non-Hindu orders as well². There were mansions of the officers of the State and leading merchants³. Different localities were assigned to different professions and craftsmen who crowded the streets with their wares⁴.

The streets were always busy and full. The surging crowds speaking in different languages and the sound of the musical instruments and beating of drums rent the air. The two big bazaars⁵ were decorated with many kinds of flags such as those hoisted on the occasion of temple festivals, the flags captured in battle as trophies, the pennants flying over liquor and other shops.

The normal traffic of the streets had to be suspended on the occasions when the king's forces, elephants, war chariots, cavalry and drunken soldiers appeared in the streets and had to be given way⁶. Pedlars and petty traders plied a brisk trade in the shade of the lofty mansions⁷.

In the evenings the sound of the *panai* drum⁸ invited the people of the country to the festivals being celebrated. Rich nobles attended by footmen rode or drove along the streets.⁹ The ladies of the houses moved to the high terraces to enjoy the cool air of the night. In the evenings temple processions passed through the streets.

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². Ibid. 11.467, 474, 487.
³. Ibid. 11. 493-506.
⁴. Ibid. 11.511-522.
⁵. Ibid. 11.365-73; *Agam* 93. 9-10; 149.
⁷. Ibid. 11.405-406.
⁸. A kind of drum used in the marudam region.
Drunken warriors with many scars and wounds roamed about the streets. As midnight approached the sound of the conches and drums ceased, shops were closed, blinds were let down and the citizens prepared themselves to rest. While the city slept the burglars were awake and the poet describes in detail their dress and their mode of operation. But the burglars were foiled very often owing to the alertness of the night watch who went on their rounds unmindful even of the heavy rains and storms that may blow.

Elephants and other wild animals kept in the royal mews disturbed the stillness of the early morning with their roar.

The Maduraikkânci thus gives an account of a day in the ancient city of Madurai and Nakkîrar in Neđunalvădai gives a vivid description of the palace.

Learned silpis designed and constructed the palace strictly according to the rules of the Silpa Sàstras. They began the construction of the palace at an auspicious hour on a day in the Citrai month. The architectural experts stretched a thin thread, marked the directions of the compass, located correctly the gods of the various directions, and set out the plan of a house fit for famous kings.

The lofty gateways of the palace looked like a tunnel through a mountain and were high enough to allow the State elephant to enter with the royal standard carried erect on its back. The strong doors were smooth and well fitted. On the lintel of the doorway was carved the figure of Gajalakṣmî with lotus flowers and flanked by elephants on both sides.

The courtyard of the palace was strewn with sand. Here sported the musk deer and swan. Horses in the stables were restless. There were makara mouthed drain pipes to carry off rain water from the terraces.

1. Ibid. 11.621-33.
2. Ibid. 11. 634-45.
3. Ibid. 11. 645-53.
6. Ibid. 11. 87-88.
7. Ibid. 11. 81-86.
In the inner apartment with many strong, round and black pillars the well-plastered walls were decorated with mural paintings of flowers and other ornamental designs. In the royal bed chamber was a finely wrought ivory cot well curtained, painted, ornamented and cushioned.

The different well-guarded apartments of the palace were lighted up with lamps held by Vilakkup pavais of Yavana craftsmanship. Flags were flying in many parts of the palace.

3. SOCIAL LIFE

(i) Castes and Communities

Madurai, the capital of the Pândyas, was from early times a well-organised city. The Sangam literature gives a fairly complete and true picture of the social and economic life of the age. Most of the people were organised into occupational groups. Māngudi Marudanār says that there were only four castes, viz, tudiyar, pōḷan paraiyan and kālamban and only one God worthy of being worshipped by having paddy strewn before him, viz, the hero-stone erected in memory of the brave warrior who fell in battle. His statement shows the great antiquity of these castes.

The standard of living had reached a high degree of refinement in great cities like Madurai. The Maduraikkāṇci says that people who crowded the bazaars and streets spoke in different languages thus indicating that many nationalities and communities were in the city.

Many classes of artisans and craftsmen lived therein. There were the workers on shells, chanks and pearls, goldsmiths, bullion merchants, clothiers, dealers in perfumes and flowers, and painters and artists.  

1. Ibid 11. 110-113.  
2. Ibid. 11. 115-135, 157-163.  
4. Puram 335.  
5. Maduraikkāṇci, 11. 359-60.  
The Perumpānār, a class of panegyrists, lived on the outskirts of the metropolis, Madurai, along the groves of the Vaigai banks. The Maḷavas and Maṟavas from among whom the warriors were recruited, also resided in the city. Nakkarar refers to the presence of Mēccas and Yavanas also.

The poet says that long before dawn one could hear the Brahmans reciting the Vēdas. From one Puram poem sung by Auvaiyār in praise of the three monarchs of Tamil land, it appears that it was the custom for kings to give Brahmans presents of flowers and gold with oblations of water.

Being the capital city of the Pāṇḍyas, members of the infantry, cavalry, and the elephant corps were frequently in the city and their constant movements added to the bustle of the city life.

(ii) Dress and Ornaments

The Tamils, men and women, were fond of bedecking themselves with flowers and ornaments of various kinds and the extent Sangam works give details about the mode of dress and the kinds of ornaments worn by the ancient Tamils of the Madurai country.

The Nedunzhālai describes the simple manner in which the Pāṇḍya queen dressed herself when she was alone and separated from the king who had gone to fight. She wore only the mangalānāṇi instead of numerous pearl garlands. In place of the big mukarakkuḷai she had on her ears the small vāyurai. She wore bangles made out of the valampuri chank and the kāppputal, perhaps as a talisman for protection, instead of the gold todi on her arms. She put on the vilakkam which was a kind of finger ring bent in the

1. Ibid, 11. 332-342.
2. Ibid, 1. 395.
3. Ibid, 11. 590-599, 725-726.
shape of the open-mouth of the vālai fish. She was clad in a simple cotton dress instead of richly embroidered ones. Her feet were bare of ornaments and were not decorated with the perfumed red cotton pastes.

The good taste and refinement of the period are reflected in the dress of the richer classes. The Maduraikkāñci describing the noblemen of the city, says that they were clad in embroidered red silk dresses with flowing upper garments. Their swords decorated with gold work, hung by their sides. They wore flower garlands and on their legs, the warrior’s anklets. The king’s generals wore pearl and flower garlands and sandal paste on their chests, gem-set gold rings, the todi or viravalai, and well-starched fine dresses over which they wore the appropriate ornaments also. The Maduraikkāñci curiously also gives a detailed sketch of the dark dresses and concealed weapons worn by burglars. Drunken mlēcas are also not forgotten as the Neduvalvadai describes them roaming about the streets with their dress hanging loose on the back and front.

Fine cotton dresses, well starched were greatly used. The men wore a vasra and a flowing upper garment. Often the dresses of the richer classes seem to have been of a very fine texture and richly embroidered. Some sort of turban or head-dress seems to have been in vogue. Flowers were worn by men and women on their hair and head-dresses. Flower circlets for the head were commonly used by men. These were worn by warriors also when going to battle. The hair was often worn in five plaits by women.

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1. Ibid. ll. 143-4.
3. Ibid, ll. 715-26. The todi was a bangle-like ornament worn on the arm near the shoulders.
4. Ibid, l. 634-42.
5. Neduvalvadai, ll. 31-5.
7. Maduraikkāñci, ll. 721-22; Neduvalvadai, l. 134, Kuruntogai, 330; 1-3; Agam 387; 6-7.
8. Maduraikkāñci, l. 494.
10. Maduraikkāñci, ll. 139-140.
Tōḻvalai or toţi in the shape of a ring or circle was worn on the shoulder. The vandigai or kaivandi was worn on the arm above the elbow. Chank bangles and especially of the valampuri chank were used.

The chest and shoulders were ornamented with decorative designs made of perfumed paste and sandalwood paste. The red cotton paste was also used for decorating the body. Pearl and flower garlands as well as gold chains were worn.

The legs were adorned with many kinds of anklets such as gold šilambus with pearls inside them. The men wore the kaḻal.

(iii) Arts and Crafts

Arts and crafts had reached a high degree of perfection and there are references to different classes of artisans and skilled workers living in the Madurai city. Some of the poets of Madurai were also artisans. Skilled craftsmen in gold produced fine gold ornaments. As chank bangles were popular the chank-cutting industry was an important one. There are numerous references to the cutting of chank bangles with the help of peculiar saws. Ashayik Brahmins whose occupation was chank cutting are also referred to. Along the gulf of Mannar diving for chanks and pearls was carried on a large scale. One poet refers to the Šeri of the chank divers at Kørkai. Big chanks were used for blowing during warfare during festivals or such other occasions.

1. Ibid, ll. 597, 712.
2. Ibid, l. 415.
3. Nedunadeai, ll. 141-142.
5. Nedunadeai, l. 151.
7. Maduraikkanni, ll. 443-44.
9. Maduraikkanni, l. 316; Kurunugari 365; l; Aingurumuru 194: 1.
10. Agam 24.
12. Ibid, ll. 182-5.
The artisans made articles of a highly decorative and artistic kind, like the lotus ornaments of the driver’s seat on chariots. These ornaments were known as *kudunji* or *kudunji*.¹ Chariots with beautiful ivory inlay work are referred to.² Statues and images of gold and other metals were of fine workmanship.³ The blacksmiths turned out the requirements of the army such as armour⁴, weapons of offence and defence, as well as articles for domestic use such as lamps.⁵

There was a healthy rivalry among craftsmen and each one tried to do one better than his companions. An instance of this is given in *Neṭunalvaḍai* which refers to the making of a cot for the bed chamber of the Pāṇḍya queen. The cot was finely wrought in ivory, well ornamented, curtained with painted cloth and cushioned.⁶ Doorways of palaces and houses which were decorated with Gaja-lakṣmi panels⁷ gave further scope to display the artistry of craftsmen.

Painting also reached a high degree of perfection. Walls were covered with decorative floral and abstract designs in various colours.⁸ Poets speak highly of the skill of painters. It is stated that the two big bazaars of the Madurai city looked as picturesque as a painting.⁹ Many painters lived in the city of Madurai. The artists understood their subjects so well that they were able to give expression in their paintings even to subtle and hidden characteristics.¹⁰ Stucco work¹¹ and stucco images and statues¹² were erected on walls.

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1. Puram 77: 5, 368: 4; Maduraikkāṇci, l. 752.
2. Kuruntogai 189.
3. Agam 392; Maduraikkāṇci II. 410-12.
5. Neṭunalvaḍai, l. 42.
11. Neṭunalvaḍai, l. 110.
4. LEARNING AND LITERATURE

(i) Literary Conventions

The ancient Tamils had divided Tamilagam into five natural regions or tiṇais called Kuriņji or the hilly country, Pālai or the dry waterless region, Mullai or the wooded land between the highlands and the lowlands, Marudam or the lower courses of rivers, and Neydal, the littoral tract, which skirts the sea. With the geographical differences as a basis, the ancient Tamils evolved a set of literary conventions regarding these tiṇais. These conventions specified the fauna and flora, produce, mode of occupation and industries, type of people, conditions of life, war and marriage and the deities and the kind of poetry to be sung respectively regarding these five natural regions.

The Pāṇḍya dynasty ruled in what may be termed the Madurai country which covers a fair proportion of all the five kinds of regions or tiṇais. Of the five tiṇais, by far the most important is the marudam or river valley region. Riverine areas have made significant contributions towards the progress of human culture and civilization in many parts of the world. The Pāṇḍya country was no exception. Madurai is situated in the heart of the marudam region in the Pāṇḍya country. In fact, to the commoner Madurai is better known as Marudai. Madurai was ideally suited to become the cultural centre as well as the capital of the ancient kingdom.

The literary conventions relating to the marudam region are enumerated in the Poreḷakāram of the Tolkāppiyam. Some of these are that the fields and the tract surrounding them were called marudam and the crops grown were red rice and white rice. The buffalo and the beaver, marudam (Terminalia alata), and kānci and the vanjī creeper, the duck, the water-fowl, the swan and the nightingale, and the lotus and the red water-lily were the characteristic fauna and flora. Rivers, wells and ponds abounded in the region. The occupation of the people was paddy cultivation and their favourite pastime was bull-racing. The chief of the marudam region was known by the terms aran and magilan. The ulavar were the cultivators of the region. The vellalar were the tribesmen.

The formal type of karpu marriage was prescribed for the marudam. The themes for marudam poetry were karpu type of marriage, post-nuptial love and trouble from courtesans.
The deity pertaining to the marudam was "the cloud-compeller, He who breaks with his thunderbolt the rain-bearing clouds": Pongal or rice cooked with pulses was the favourite offering to this deity. The Pongal least in the month of Tai is the harvest festival and is still one of the chief festivals observed in the Tamil country.

Since the uliṇai creeper was worn during military operations the type of warfare in the marudam region was called Uliṇai.¹

(ii) Poets of the Sangam Period

The available Sangam works are all in verse. About 450 names of poets of the period are known and of these nearly 100 are definitely known to have belonged to Madurai or the Pāṇḍya country.² Further:


ther about 20 names of Pandya kings and princes occur in the Sangam works and of these more than ten were poets. The Muse of poetry seems to have inspired its votaries without any distinctions of caste or creed. The poets hailed from all classes and communities of both vaidika and avaidika creeds. Thus there were poems composed not only by kings and princes but also by blacksmiths.

A large number of the poets were Brahmans. Many poets seem to have been teachers as some of their names would reveal. The epithet "Pāḷāśiriyar" probably indicates that the poet was a teacher for young children. Madurai Eluttālanār and Madurai Eluttālanār Śēndan Pudianār were probably writers. A Pāṇḍya


3. Madurai Īḷampāḷāśiriyai Śēndai Kūṭtai, Madurai Īḷampāḷāśiriyai Śēndai Koṛṭṭanār, Madurai Īḷiriyai Koḍīn Koṛṭṭanār, Madurai Pāḷāśiriyar Nāṟṟiṇ manār, Madurai Īḷiriyar Nāḷanduvanār, Maduraikkāṇakkāyanār, Madurai Īḷam pāḷāśiriyai Śēndai, Madurai Pāḷāśiriyar Nappāḷanār, Madurai Pāḷāśiriyar Nāṟṟiṇ manār.
general named Pāṇḍya Ēnādi Nēḻunkaṇṭanār was also a poet. A large number of scholars were Vellālas.

Quite a number of Vaiṣyas, merchants, artisans and craftsmen have also proved themselves to be composers of verses, for instance there were poets who were cloth dealers, dealers in palm leaf products, goldsmiths, gold testers, blacksmiths and grain merchants.

Again, a number of poets appear to have been connected with the performance of various types of religious dances.

Many women including a queen also found a place among the galaxy of poets.

Poets from Madurai: Among the poets hailing from Madurai the most important and celebrated names are those of Madurai Kāṇakkaṇāyanār and his son Nakkīrār, Īrāyanār, Sittālāj Sāṭtanār, Kūlavāṇīgān Sāṭtanār, Māṅguḍī Marudanār and Marudan Iḷanāgaṇār. The chief among the poets of the Pāṇḍya country were Kpilār, Piśirāndaiyār and Vellividiyār.

Madurai Kāṇakkaṇāyanār: He was the father of the great poet Nakkīrār and the grand father of Kīran Kōranār. He has composed

1. Māṅguḍī Marudan, Marudan Iḷanāgan, Madurai Marudankīlār Maganār Sōkutтанār, Madurai Marudankīlār Maganār Perunkaṇṭanār, Madurai Marudankīlār Magan Iḷam Pōṭtan, Kīllimangalen Kīḷār, Kīllimangalen Kīḷār Sōkovanār, Podumbil Kīḷar, Podumbil Kīḷar Maganār, Venkaṇṭṇiyār, Marungūrīkīḷār Perunkaṇṭanār, Podumbil Kīḷar Venkaṇṭanār,
2. Madurai Āruvai Vāṇīgān Iḷavēṭṭnanār,
3. Madurai Oḷaikaṇḍai Kaṇṭāmpugudarāyattanār; Madurai Oḷaikaṇḍai, yattār Nalveḷḷaiyār
4. Madurai Kōţtollan Venṇāganār, Tangāl Pōrkōllan Venṇāganār
5. Vīṟṉīru Vāṇaṅkkan Tattānanār
6. Madurai Kōţtollan Pullan, Maduraippperun Kōllan
7. Maduraipppāṇḍavaṇīgan Iḷamdevanār, Madurai Kūlavāṇīgan Sāṭtanaṇār
8. Madurai Kūṭtanār, Madurai Kūrulaviyakūṭtanār, Maduraiittamakktanār, Maduraiittamalakkttanār, Maduraiittamalakkttanār Nāgan Dēvanār, Vēmbrūr Kāṇṭan Kūtтанār, Kaṭuvan Iḷamajjanār
five poems in *Agam, Narrinai* and *Puram*. He has sung about Paṣumput Pāṇḍyan as well as the Cēra and the Cōla in *Agam*, 338. Kaṇakkāyan means “teacher”. From *Kuruntogai* 304 where the poet’s name is given as Kaṇakkāyan Tattanār, his name appears to be Tattan. In one of his poems he states that elephants from Venkatam hills were brought as tribute to the Pāṇḍya king⁴ and that Koṟkai was famed for its pearls⁵.

**Nakkiṟar**: One of the most pre-eminent and erudite of the celebrities who belonged to the so-called third Sangam at Madurai was Nakkiṟar. Tradition says that he was the head of the third Sangam. But from the poem of the victor of Talaiyālangānam⁶ it is learnt that the leading poet of his court was Māngudi Marudan. Considering that this poem was composed just before the battle of Talaiyālangānam which was fought when the king was yet a mere youth, one may not be far wrong if it is assumed that Māngudi Marudan was the leading poet in the earlier years of the king’s reign and that after his death Nakkiṟar might have taken his place in the later years of the king’s reign.

Nakkiṟar has written about 37 poems among the Sangam works. In the *Pattuppattu* or the Ten Idylls he is the author of *Tirumurugāṟṟuppaḷai*⁷ and *Nedunalvadai*. The *Nedunalvadai* was sung in honour of the victor of Talaiyālangānam. The poem gives graphic descriptions of the country and the people in the rainy season. His description of the Pāṇḍya palace in the evening in the rainy season is very picturesque and his reference to the queen who is feeling lonely while the king is away at the front busy inspecting his troops and arms unmindful of the inclement weather at dead of nights is very vivid. The *Tirumurugāṟṟuppaḷai* is a guide to the chief shrines of God Muruga. Nakkiṟar describes the six places sacred to Muruga, viz. Tirupparankuram, Tirucīralaiyai (Tiruccendūr), Tiruvāvinankūḍi (Palanī), Tiruvēraham, Kuṟutōraḷai and Paḷāmudirśōlai (TirumāḷirūṆjōlai).

1. *Agam* 27.
4. Some scholars hold that this poem was composed by a later poet Nakkiṟar who lived in about 850 A.D.; S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, *Ilakkiya Dipam*, p. 13 ff.
Like his father, Nakkirar has also praised the three kings of the Tamil country in a poem. He has sung about Pasumput Pāṇḍyan as well as the two Pāṇḍyas who were his contemporaries, viz., the victor of Talaiyālangānam and Ilavandigaippallittunjiya Nannmāran. The battle of Talaiyālangānam has been described in detail by the poet. In his poems a number of chiefs and chieftains are mentioned. He also praises the poet Kapilar in an Agam ode. He compares Ilavandigaippallittunjiya Nannmāran and his qualities to the different gods like Siva, Baladēva, Viṣṇu, Muruga, Yama and so on. One finds that it was the fashion for many of the poets of Nakkirar's generation to compare their royal patrons and their qualities to the gods. This is probably an indication of the transition from the simple life close to Nature led during the early Sangam period to the life full of religious fervour led by the Tamils from about the 4th-5th c. A.D. onwards.

Nakkirar's poems contain a fund of information about the topography and the economic and social conditions of his times. One of the earliest references to the term Tamilagam is found in Nakkirar's poems. He says that Kūdal (Madurai) was a city full of mansions. He refers to the Vaigai and the Tirumarudanurūai, Marungai or Marungūr which he mentions was also a flourishing town in the Pāṇḍya country.

1. Maduraiakkapakkāyanār, Agam 338; Nakkirar, Agam 93.
2. Agam 36.
3. Nakkirar refers to Palaiany Maran (Agam 346), Pāri of Parambu (Agam 78), Vānan of Sirukudi (Narrinai 340), Talumban of Unūr (Agam 227), Evvi of Vaippur (Agam 126), the Vadugar chieftain Erumai (Agam 253), Mustundai of Vēmbi (Agam 249) and Tiraiyan of Pavattiri (Agam 340).
4. Agam 78.
5. Puram 56.
8. Tirumurugārruppadi, ll. 70-71; Agam 346.
10. Narrinai 358; Agam 227.
Nakkirar gives graphic pen sketches of the life of the Parodavar and Pánas and Ulavar\(^1\). His description of the Kártigai festival is very interesting\(^2\). He says that during the Kártigai asterism in the month of Kártigai, it was the custom for the new daughter-in-law of the house to boil in milk beaten rice from the new kár harvest and to offer it to God. The houses and streets were lit up with lamps to celebrate the festival.

The poet refers to the Vadavar and Yavanar.\(^3\) The white stone brought by the Vadavar from the north was used for grinding the paste from sandalwood brought from the Western mountains, i.e., Podiyil\(^4\). A statue (vñakkuppávai) of Yavana workmanship is also mentioned\(^5\).

Astronomical phenomena are referred to by Nakkirar. He says that eri kulamí and tál were different kinds of meteorites and that if they appear and blaze away in the heavens they bring drought, famine and misfortune to the world\(^6\).

In a famous Puram poem he seems to reflect modern socialist ideas when he says that the quantity of food and clothing are the same for everybody, viz., "unbadu náli uduppavai irañđe?".

Madurai Marudam Ilanágar: He was the son of Mángudi Marudan, the celebrated court poet of the victor of Talaiyálangánam. Since his father was called Mángudi Kilár, Ilanágan was perhaps a Veñlala. He belongs to the generation immediately following the time of the victor of Talaiyálangánam. In his poems there are many references to gods, mythological legends, and sacred places; for instance he mentions Siva’s Tripura Samhára\(^8\), the story of Kśña hiding the clothes of the Yádava (Añand) women on the banks of

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1. Agam 340, 346 and Puram 395 respectively.
2. Agam 141.
3. Puram 56.
7. Puram, 189.
8. Puram 55.
the Toulunai (Yamuna)\(^1\) Parāśurāma’s performance of a sacrifice at Sellūr\(^2\) and Muruga’s abode at Śendil (Tiruchendūr)\(^3\).

His poems throw much light on the customs and manners of the period. He mentions the kuravaikkāṭtu danced by women around a clay image set up in the drinking water stage of the rivers\(^4\). He refers to the custom of worshipping hero stones or memorial stones, i.e., naḍukals raised in memory of warriors who were killed in action while rescuing cattle and so on\(^5\). Interesting details about the life of the Tamils could be gathered from many of his poems. For instance the mode of taking oaths, palmyra leaf umbrellas, camels and creaking wooden carts carrying merchandise, washerwomen stārching clothes, old men gambling and honey-gathering vēḷar\(^7\) are all mentioned.

Kapilar: Of the poets hailing from the Pāṇḍya country the most outstanding was Kapilar who has written more than 235 poems: the highest individual total among the Śangam poets. He was a Brahman\(^7\) born in Tiruvādavūr. He was an expert in singing about the kurinji tīnai. He has sung the Kurinjippāṭṭu and the Pattuppāṭṭu collection, the kurinji poems in the Kalittogai and the third one hundred poems about the kurinji in the Aṅguruvāru. The Kurinjippāṭṭu, it is believed, was sung by the poet to show the greatness of Tamil to the Ārya King Brahattan. Kapilar has sung about Pārī\(^8\) as well as other chieftains like Kārī, Ori, Evvi, Nāḷḷi and Pēkan\(^9\).

Kapilar’s birth place, Tiruvādavūr, is situated in the division known in ancient times as Tenpacambunādu. Parambunādu was the stronghold of the chieftain Pārī whose name was a byword for liberality. The poet states that there were 300 villages in Pārī’s Paṟambunādu. Kapilar was a great friend of Pārī and helped him

\(^1\) Agam, 59.
\(^2\) Agam 220.
\(^3\) Puram 55.
\(^4\) Agam, 269.
\(^5\) Agam 131, 269, 343.
\(^6\) Agam 77, 121, 245, 343, 387; Puram 52 and Agam 368 respectively.
\(^7\) See Puram 126, 200 and 201.
\(^8\) Puram 106-111, 113-120 and others.
\(^9\) Puram 347, Puram 121-124, Narrinai 320, Puram 202, Agam 238, and Puram 143 respectively.
very much when his mountain stronghold was besieged by the three Tamil monarchs. After Pāri’s death Kapilar is said to have protected his daughters and arranged for their marriage to the Malai-yanmān chief of Tirukōyilūr. Kapilar seems to have been a poet's poet. Nakkirar¹, Perunkūnrū Kilār², Nappaşalaiyar³, and Auvaiyār⁴ speak in glowing terms about him. The names of Kapilar and Paranar often occur side by side in Tamil literature. Both poets seem to have been great friends.

Kapilar’s poems exhibit a characteristic eloquence and beauty as, for instance, when he makes an apt comparison between white herons and white clad infantry.⁵

5. RELIGION IN THE ŠANGAM AGE

The religious life of the Tamils in the Madurai country during the Šangam Age seems to have been a complex of the simple worship of the gods of the five tiṇais or natural regions and the various rites, sacrifices and ceremonies of the Vēdic religion. The worship of primitive gods with offerings of rice, slaughtered animals and toddy went on side by side with the performance of elaborate Vēdic sacrifices. The various gods of the five tiṇais seem to have later merged with the Vēdic gods. For instance the Māyōn of the mullai or woodland region seems to have later become identified with Viṣṇu.

The Pāṇḍya kings were great patrons of the Vēdic lore, the Brahmans and the Vēdic religion. They helped the performance of many Vēdic sacrifices and gave gifts of villages to Brahmans for this purpose. It is stated that long before the citizens stirred from their sleep, Brahmans could be heard chanting the Vēdas early in the morning in the Madurai city⁶. Brahmans devoted their time to Vēdic studies and religious duties and held a high and honoured position in society. There is mention of religious disputations and

1. Agam 78.
2. Padirrupattu 85.
5. Narrinai 291.
discussions also. Men and women visited the temples in the evenings and offered worship. Many festivals were celebrated.

Along with Muruga and Kōrava, who may probably represent indigenous deities, many other gods of the Hindu pantheon such as Śiva, Viṣṇu, Balarāma and Indra were also worshipped. A large number of mythological legends like the stories of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa and the exploits of Muruga were also widely known.

**Primitive Survivals:** The worship of the kandu or kandalī or the pillar was perhaps a survival from primitive times. The commentator Naccinārkkiniyār explains kandalī as “the principle beyond all manifested ones which stands alone without form and without attachment”. If this explanation is correct, the kandalī would represent the Impersonal. There are many references to the “Kandu-daip podiyil”. This indicates that the kandu or pillar was often erected in a podiyil or public place or perhaps the village common for purposes of worship. One poem refers to the old god in the village manram. Trees as well as gods under trees were also worshipped. The rice offered to the household gods was scattered in the courtyard (murram) and was eaten by the crows.

The worship of stones or nādukals erected in memory of warriors who fought bravely and fell in action while fighting or rescuing cattle, appears to have been a very ancient custom. The name and the exploits of the dead hero were written on the stone. The stone was washed and smeared with turmeric paste and decorated with flowers for worship.

Māngudi Marudanār says

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1. Ibid ll. 423-26.
2. At the end of the commentary on Tirumurugappadai.
3. Agam 307; Puram 52.
5. Narrinai 216. The god under the vēngai tree.
7. Agam, 53, 131, 179, 297, 343. Agam 343 says that the letters were engraved by means of a sharp əlī.
8. Agam, 269.
that there is only one god worthy of being worshipped by having paddy strewn before him, namely, the hero-stone of the warrior who fell in battle. This also shows the great antiquity of the worship of hero-stones.

Festivals: The Tamils were very fond of festivals and festivities and one hears of many festivals celebrated in Madurai and the Madurai country. There were frequent festivals accompanied by music and religious dances in honour of Muruga. Even to this day Madurai is a city famed for its festivals. Nearly 300 days in the year are festival days. The city seems to have been equally well known for its festivals even during the Sangam Age. One poet says that festivals occurred ceaselessly in Madurai. The Maduraiikkâñci mentions the vîlâ in Tirupparankanram. This poem also says that the seven day festival and the evening festivals were celebrated in the Madurai city. The poem mentions the onam festival on the day of Ōṇam, the austerism of Viṣṇu, and Nannan’s birthday festival. It is not known whether these took place in the city or elsewhere. The Kârttiga festival was celebrated on the day of Kârttiga asterism in the month of Kârttiga with the lighting of many lamps and offerings of beaten rice prepared from the new harvested kâr paddy and boiled in milk. In the month of Tai women and young girls bathed in the rivers in the early morning and offered prayers to God. This was called Tai nirâdâl.

While there are numerous references to gods, festivals and worship there are not many direct references to temples. From the fact that the drums sounded announcing the beginning of festivals and that many flags were hoisted in the streets of Madurai in honour

2. Lines 262-64; Agam 149.
4. Line 460.
6. Agam, 141.
7. Agam, 269.
of the festivals in the temples and again that the gods went in procession through the streets of Madurai in the evening, one has to infer that there were many temples in the city. There were religious houses of vaidika andavadika sects in the city of Madurai. Till about the 5th c. A.D. the different religions flourished side by side. Harmony and tolerance characterised religious life in the Madurai country.

6. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS—TRADE AND COMMERCE

South India had had trade relations with the West from very early times. The finds of Indian teak in the ruins of Ur, the ancient Sumerian capital, the Babylonian use of the term Sindhu for muslin and similar other evidences are a proof of the very early and extensive contacts South India had with Sumeria, Babylon, Arabia and Egypt. Foreign trade by land and sea was flourishing. Later on Greece and Rome began to have direct contacts with South India.

In the first and second centuries A.D. many references to Madurai and the Pāṇḍya Kingdom are found in the works of Greek and Roman writers. From the time of Emperor Augustus there was great development in South India’s trade with Rome. This was due not only to the consolidation of Roman power in Alexandria, the principal emporium of trade between the East and the West, and the increase of Roman influence at Palmyra, but also to Hippalus’ discovery of the west wind of the monsoon. Thus, sailing routes between South India and the West became regularised and the duration of voyages speeded up. In the time of Claudius (41-45 A.D.) Arabian domination in the Red Sea region was overcome by the Romans and direct sea trade with South India was developed. From now on references to South India, her towns, ports and articles of commerce are very frequent in the works of the classical authors. It is interesting to note that more than one half of the Roman coins found in India date from the time of Augustus and Tiberius. Strabo (c. 25 B.C.) says that during the time of the Roman Emperor Augustus a Pāṇḍya king sent an embassy to Rome.

1. Ibid l. 366.
2. Madurakkanci ll. 461-83.
3. J.W. McGinidie, Ancient India as described in Classical Literature, p. 9, para 4, pp. 77-78, para 73.
Pandion were known to Pliny (c. A.D. 75). He states that "if the wind called Hippalus be blowing, Musiris the nearest mart of India, can be reached in forty days. At the time I was writing this, Caelobothras was the sovereign of that country. Another more convenient harbour of the nation is Neacyndon which is called Becare. There Pandion used to reign, dwelling at a great distance from the mart, in a town in the interior of the country called Madura. None of these names of nations, ports, and cities are to be found in any of the former writers from which it appears that the names (stations) of the places are changed."  

The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea (c. A.D. 75) also states that Muziris and Nelcynda were the ports of leading importance and that Nelcynda belonged to the kingdom of Pandian who lived in the interior. Ptolemy (A.D. 130) shows a greater knowledge of the ports and inland cities of South India. He says that Melkynda and Komaria, a cape and town, were in the country of the Aioi. He mentions the Kolhik gulf, where there was the pearl fishery and Kolkhoi, an emporium. Salour, a mart, is included in the land of Pandian. This is probably Saliyur, the town named after the paddy and mentioned in the Maduraikkulam. Ptolemy refers not only to Madurai, the royal city of the Pandion but also to many inland towns in the Pandy country such as Tainour. Thus by the time of Ptolemy Roman contacts with South India had developed to a wide extent.

1. This was Musiri (modern Cranganore), one of the important Cera port on the west coast.
2. An ancient port very near Kottayam.
4. Schoff, the editor of the Periplus of The Erythraean Sea, says that the date of the Periplus may be taken to be about 60 A.D.
5. Schoff (Ed.) The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, paras 53, 54, 55.
6. J.W. McCrindle, Ancient India as described by Ptolemy, p. 57, para 10.
8. Maduraikkulam, ll. 87-8.
9. J.W.McCrindle: Ancient India as described by Ptolemy, p. 183, para 89.
10. Ibid. p. 183. Tainour is probably Tenur in Nilakkottai taluk, Madurai district, which is frequently mentioned in Sangam works as a flourishing town.
Regarding the nature of the trade between South India and the West there is the valuable testimony of the author of the *Periplus*. After mentioning the ports on the west coast, such as Muziris and Nelcynda, he says, "They send large ships to these market-towns on account of the great quantity and bulk of pepper and malabathrum (to be had there). There are imported here, in the first place, a great quantity of coins; topaz, thin clothing, not much; figured linens, antimony, coral, crude glass, copper, tin, lead; wine, not much, but as much as at Barygaza; realgar and orpiment; and wheat enough for the sailors, for this is not dealt in by the merchants there. There is exported pepper, which is produced in quantity in only one region near these markets, a district called Cottonara. Besides this there are exported great quantities of fine pearls, ivory, silk cloth, spikenard from the Ganges, malabathrum from the places in the interior, transparent stones of all kinds, diamonds and sapphires, and tortoise-shell; that from Chryse Island, and that taken among the islands along the coast of Damirica."¹ The above list clearly indicates the preponderance of spices and articles of luxury among the exports to the Western countries.

Large quantities of pepper were imported by Rome from South India. The use of pepper became so popular among the Romans that it came to be known in Sanskrit as "yananapriya" ("dear to the Romans"). It is said that when Alaric attacked Rome in 408 A.D., he demanded as part of the ransom 3000 pounds of pepper.² Again, Pliny refers to the enormous quantities of spices used at the funeral of Poppaea, Nero's favourite.³ The *Periplus* says that "larger ships" were now needed for the cinnamon trade.

Madurai and Uṟaiyūr were the chief marts from whence pearl was exported to Rome. The important pearl fisheries in the Pāṇḍya country were at Korkai to which both *Periplus* and Ptolemy⁴ refer. The fisheries were worked by condemned criminals⁵.

1. Schoff (Ed.): *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, para. 56.
3. *Natural History*, XII, 41.
4. J.W.McCrindle: *Ancient India as described by Ptolemy*, p. 57, para. 10.
Pearls became so fashionable with the Roman ladies that moralists began lamenting the wearing of pearls by ladies. The trade in gems and pearls grew to such enormous proportion and led to such an adverse balance of trade for Rome that complaints arose about the drain of Roman gold. In 22 B.C. Emperor Tiberius wrote to the Roman Senate complaining that the rage for jewels and precious trinkets on the part of the Roman ladies was draining the empire of its wealth, viz., gold\(^1\). In the time of Claudius and Nero also the import of luxuries continued unabated so that Pliny is found complaining in 70 A.D. that India drained Roman gold to the value of nearly a million pounds a year "giving back her own wares which are sold among us at fully a hundred times their cost." Since the chief imports of the Tamil country were gold and silver Roman coins and wine, Pliny was probably justified in his complaint. Pliny's statement is corroborated by the Chinese annals which tell us that the Parthians and Indians used to derive three hundred-fold profit from their maritime trade with the Roman Empire.\(^2\) While the trade was highly profitable to Madurai and the Tamil countries, the balance of trade was so adverse to Rome that the Indian trade seriously affected the coinage of Rome. Schoff says that this extravagant importation of luxuries from the East without adequate production of commodities was the main cause of the successive depreciation and degradation of the Roman currency.\(^3\)

The impressively abundant Roman coinage found along the breadth of Tamil India from the Malabar to the East coast stands as a silent testimony to the importance of South Indian trade with the West in the 1st c. A.D. Twentynine finds of coins, distributed through Madras State and the States of Hyderabad, Mysore, Cochin, Pudukkottai and Travancore, include among them the Aurei or denarii ranging from Augustus to Trajan.\(^4\)

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1. Tacitus: *Annals* iii, 53.
4. *Ancient India*, No. 2 pp. 118-19, gives a list of the Roman coins of the 1st c. B.C. to 4th c. A.D. found in the Madras presidency. The following is the list pertaining to Madura and Tinnevelly districts:—
There have been some doubts as to what use these foreign coins were put to in the Tamil country. Firstly it is to be noted that, "of the 29 1st-century finds, at least 20 are known to have constituted hoards, ranging individually from four or five coins to 'some hundreds, if not thousands'... Secondly, these 1st-century coins are invariably of gold or silver. There is no authenticated discovery of a Roman 'brass' coin of the 1st or 2nd century in India. Thirdly, coins of Augustus and Tiberius predominate. After Nero they dwindle markedly. Fourthly, the gold coins are liable to be either pierced for suspension or mutilated by a cut across the obverse. Only one of the very numerous Roman silver coins is known to have been similarly mutilated. Fifthly, there is a notable grouping of early coin-finds across Southern India from the Western to the Eastern coasts."

Regarding the imports into the ports of Muziris and Nelcynda, the *Periplus* says, "these are imported here, in the first place, a great quantity of coin." Among the imports into Barygaza the same work mentions "gold and silver coin, on which there is a profit when exchanged for the money of the country." These statements together with the fact that the bulk of the coins have been found in hoards, indicate that the coins were mostly used as bullion and not as currency. Probably they were

(contd.)


2. Schoff (Ed.): *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, para. 56.
3. Ibid. para. 49.
weighed out in exchange for goods. The defacing of the gold coins wholly or mostly by an incision across the head of the Roman emperor, also points to a cancellation of the use of the gold piece as a coin-issue.

Besides the gold and silver Roman coins found in several places of South India "innumerable copper coins have been found in Madurai in the waste places about the town and the sandy bed of the river in the dry months. The presence in many different places in the same town of Roman copper coins found lying in the ground or in the sandy bed of the river, seems to imply that these coins were in daily circulation and were dropped carelessly or otherwise lost by the inhabitants of the place." Since the very large quantity of these coins would have perhaps made it difficult to import this type of currency, it is believed that they might have been minted locally for use by the Roman merchants who had settled there. Hence the presence of these coins seems to indicate also the presence of a local Roman colony at Madurai and its environs. This is not improbable or strange for there is plenty of evidence in the extant Sangam work to show that there were a large number of Roman merchants, soldiers and artisans living in various parts of South India. Ptolemy (c. 130 A.D.) says that he obtained part of his knowledge from people who had resided in India for a long time. This shows that some Romans, probably merchants or sailors, had settled down in the Tamil country for an appreciable time. Roman soldiers were employed as bodyguards and as gate-keepers of palaces by the Pandyas and other Tamil kings. There are also many references to the Yavana ships, their dress, the gold and the wine brought by them, statues

1. Agam, 149, ll. 7-11 refers to the port of Musiri to which came the large beautiful ships of the Yavanas which bring gold and take pepper.


4. Agam 149: 8-11; Nakkirar in Nairinai 31, 48-10, refers to the various articles brought from other countries in ships borne by the wind.

5. Mullaippattu, ll. 59-61; Nedunaleddai, ll. 31-35.

6. Puram 56: 18-20; Agam 149; 8-11.
of Yavana workmanship\(^1\), and the dumb \textit{melēca}s\(^2\) who roamed the streets. The \textit{Periplus} while speaking of the imports into the market towns of the west coast of the Tamil country, says, "There are imported here........wheat enough for the sailors for this is not dealt in by the merchants there."\(^3\) This also shows clearly that there were a large number of Roman sailors in the Tamil country. Recent archaeological discoveries at Arikkamedu\(^4\) near Pondicherry have brought to light the presence of an Indo-Roman trading station of the 1st c. A.D., probably the Podouke\(^5\) of the \textit{Periplus}. Hence the presence of a Roman colony at Madurai or its environs may not be far too improbable.

The flourishing foreign trade led to the growth of many harbours in the Pāṇḍya country such as Korkai famed for its pearls and Sāliyur\(^6\) where large ships with flags flying on their tall masts came with various foreign goods. Marudan Ilanāgan refers to light houses\(^7\) on the shore for the guidance of the big ships at sea. Nakkrar refers to the ships which brought different articles of merchandise from various foreign countries.\(^8\) Horses were also brought by ships to the Pāṇḍyan shores.\(^9\)

Besides the flourishing foreign trade carried on which the East and the West, internal trade during the Sangam Age in the Pāṇḍya country was also well organised and briskly carried on. Merchants travelled from one place to another, carrying their goods in carts

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1. \textit{Nedunalōdai}, ll. 101-102; \textit{Perumpanāruppadaś}, ll. 316-17; in works belonging to a slightly later period there are further references to the Yavanas. The \textit{Manimekalai} mentions the Yavanattacar (xix cl. 107-109). The \textit{Perunkadai} refers to Yavana lamps (i, 47: 173-75), ornaments (i, 32: 76), \textit{vina} (iii, 16: 22-3), chest (iii, 22: 213) and carts (i, st. 101-04), mentions Yavana defence mechanisms; \textit{Silappadikāram} (5: 10) and \textit{Perunkadai} (iii, 4: 8) refer to Yavana quarters.

2. \textit{Nedunalōdai}, ll. 31-35; \textit{Mullaiippattu}, ll. 61-6.
4. \textit{Ancient India} No. 2, p. 17, ff.
5. Podouke may perhaps be equated with Puduccēri or "new town".
7. \textit{Agam} 255.
and on the back of pack-animals. Salt which was produced in abundance in the salt-pan of the East Coast, was an important article of trade. There are many references to the salt produced in the salt-pan and the sellers of salt.¹ The Maduraikkāńci says that the workers in the āḷam or salt pans lived in small huts but carried on a big and important industry². Muduvelļilai was a great salt producing centre.³ Big ships fully laden with salt, tamarind, salted dried fish carried them to other places ⁴. The dealers in salt were known as umanar. They carried their heavy loads of salt in wooden carts⁵ or on the back of asses.⁶ A king is compared to the strong bull which drags out of the ruts and holes of the road the heavy salt laden cart proceeding from the eastern shores to the hill country in the west.⁷ The strings of salt-laden carts always attracted the interest of the youngsters. Kapilar refers to the little girls who keep counting the carts of the salt vendors.⁸ The Sōttuwar or traders also used the long legged camel⁹ as a beast of burden when crossing the arid waste lands with their merchandise. The rice, cotton and cloth produced in the valleys had also to be taken to other regions for sale. There was trade by barter to a great extent. For instance, the pearl oysters fished at Korkai were exchanged for toddy¹⁰. Various types of gold coins seem to have been in use.¹¹ One poet com., pares the neem fruit in the mouth of the parrot to the bright round gold coin newly made by the gold smith¹². Gold coins were strung and used as a waist ornament also.¹³

¹ Maduraikkāńci ll. 117, 318.
² Ibid 117-22.
³ Ibid, ll. 117-22.
⁴ Ibid, ll. 318-22.
⁵ Agam, 343.
⁶ Agam, 207, 343.
⁸ Puram, 116.
⁹ Agam, 245.
¹⁰ Agam, 296.
¹¹ Agam, 363. “Polan cei kāsu”.
¹² Kuruntogai 67.
¹³ Agam, 269: 15.
CHAPTER IV
MADURAI’S BID FOR EMPIRE

A: THE POST-SANGAM EPOCH

1. The Kalabhra Interregnum

With the close of the Sangam age South India including Madurai, was enveloped in a long historical blackout for a period of more than three centuries. During this period Buddhism and Jainism rose to great prominence in Madurai. This period was also characterised by great literary activity in Tamil. Most of the works included in the “Eighteen Minor Works” were written during this period, as also the epics, Silappadikāram, Manimekalai and other works.

After the close of the Sangam Age there was confusion in the political history of Madurai, owing to the Kalabhra invasion and their occupation of the Tamil country. Their onslaught brought about an extensive political revolution and many of the South Indian dynasties including the Pāṇḍyas were adversely affected. For nearly three centuries one gets only stray glimpses into the history of Madurai till political equilibrium was restored by the defeat of the Kalabhars at the hands of the Pāṇḍyas, and Pallavas as well as the Cālukyas of Bādāmi.

Of these mysterious enemies who upset the established political order there is as yet no definite knowledge. From literary and epigraphic evidences the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. appear to be a period when aliens were very active in the Pāṇḍya country. A Jaina sangha for the first time seems to have been established in the Tamil country at Madurai in 470 A.D. In a Digambara Darsanasāra, Devasena says that Vajranandi, the pupil of Śrī Pūjyapāda, founded the Drāvida Sangha in Mathura of the Deccan in the year 525 after the death of Vikrama¹. This was not any literary academy but a religious organisation for propagating the Jaina Dharma in the Tamil country.

Another religious organisation, a Baudhā sangha of the Tamil country is mentioned in the Manimekalai as functioning in Kāvirip-

Pumpattinam\textsuperscript{1}. Thus Jainism and Buddhism seem to have attained a position of prominence in the Tamil land at about this time. Buddhaghoṣa from Uraiyur was a great Pāli writer who had composed many Buddhist works. He appears to have lived in the last quarter of the 5th century and to have been the elder contemporary of Buddhaghoṣa. He mentions as his contemporary a king named Accutha Vikkanta\textsuperscript{2} during whose reign Buddhist monasteries and authors enjoyed much patronage in the Cōla country. This king was probably a Buddhist himself. In the closing passage in the Vinayavinīcāya Buddhaghoṣa says that the work "was begun and finished during the reign of the blemishless Accutha Vikkanta of the Kalabbakula.\textsuperscript{3}

In Tamil literature there is mention of ancient Kaḷappa kings and a Kaḷappa clan as existing till comparatively recent times. There is also a place Kalappal in the Tamil country. Accuta Kaḷappālan was the father of Meykaṇḍadēvar who lived in the 13th Century and was the founder of modern Tamil Śaivism. Late literary tradition in Tamil avers that one Accuta Kaḷappālan kept in confinement the three Tamil kings the Cēra, the Cōla and the Pāṇḍya.\textsuperscript{4} One Ne蹊kunṭram Kīlān, a Kaḷappāla Rāja, has been mentioned in an inscription\textsuperscript{5} Nambi Āṇḍar Nambi in his Tirutṭonaṭar Tiruvondai; calls Kūṟṟuva Nāyanār a Kaḷappālan. The similarity between the names has led some scholars to think that Accuta Kaḷabbha of Buddhaghoṣa must be the same as Accuta Kaḷappālan of the Tamil Nāvalar Caritai and that the Kaḷahbrhas must be a Tamil clan, the Kaḷappālas. But all available evidences seem to point to the Kaḷabhras as a people foreign to South India.

The evidence of the Mahāvamśa also corroborates the fact that there was political disorder in the Madurai country. It says that about A.D. 496 a Tamilian named Pāṇḍu landed in Ceylon, slew king Mittasēna and usurped the throne. Surrounded by Tamils

\begin{enumerate}
  \item Manimēkaḷai VII. 113-114.
  \item Vinayavinīcaya sl. 3168-3179.
  \item Ibid.
  \item Tamil Nāvalar Caritai - Stanzas 154-157.
  \item Sentamil - v. 12, p. 268
\end{enumerate}
he and several successors ruled Ceylon for over twenty years. In about A.D. 517 or 523 Datusëna, the Ceylonese king, succeeded in expelling the Pāṇḍya usurpers from Ceylon. He extirpated the Tamil in his island.¹

Of the Tamil usurpers on the island of Ceylon at this time, as many as five names are mentioned, viz., Pāṇḍu (496 A.D.), Parinda (501 A.D.), Dhudda Parinda (504 A.D.), Tiritara (520 A.D.), Dathiya Il (520 A.D.) and Pithiya (523 A.D.).²

It was probably during the Kaḷabhra interregnum in the Madurai country that Mūrtināyanār³ ruled over Madurai. A Karunāṭa king who was an amaṇa⁴ defeated and expelled the Pāṇḍyas and ruled from Madurai. Mūrtināyanār was a vaniga of Madurai and a devotee of Śiva. It was his custom to supply sandalwood paste every day to the Madurai Temple for the God’s worship. Under the rule of the alien king he suffered many hardships since he was persecuted and prevented from getting supplies of sandalwood for the worship of his favourite deity. Finally after the sudden death of the Karunāṭa King Madurai was without a ruler. Mūrtināyanār was chosen king by an elephant which was let loose for the purpose of choosing a ruler. Mūrtināyanār tried to put down the avaidika religions and restore Śaivism.

The founding of the Jaina Sangam in Madurai in 470 A.D., the Pāṇḍya usurpation of the Singalese throne between about 496 and 523 A.D. and the story of Mūrtināyanār clearly point to the upsetting of the political order in Madurai in about the 5th century A.D. Probably during the Kaḷabhra interregnum Pāṇḍya Kings and princes took refuge in Ceylon and ruled over the island waiting for a suitable opportunity when they could come back and recover Madurai.

¹. Mahāvamsa chap. 38
². R. Sewell and Dr. S.K. Iyengar. The Historical Inscriptions, of South India p. 330.
³. The Kallādam 57, Perumparrappuliyar Nambi’s Tirucikkaiyadal No. 51 and the Periya Puranam. No. 15. Murti: 11, 12, narrate the story of Mūrtinaynār.
⁴. The Kallādam says he was an Aruha. The Periya purāṇam says he was a Vadu gakarunata and a samana.
Epigraphic evidences show that the Kaḷabhras were a source of danger to many of the South Indian dynasties. The Vēlvikkudi grant of the Pāṇḍya Nedunjaḍaiyan roundly denounces the Kaḷabhras as evil kings (kali arasar) who uprooted many adhirājas and abrogated Brahmadēva rights. It says "Then a kali king named Kalabhran took possession of the extensive earth driving away numberless great kings (adhirājas). It also refers to the Kalabhras and their brave oceanlike army." Mr. Krishna Sastri is inclined to the view that kali (kali kula) was the name of a dynasty of kings.

From about the 6th century A.D. the Kaḷabhras seem to have been overthrown by the various South Indian dynasties. In A.D. 575 the Pallava Simhaviṣṇu and the Pāṇḍya king Kāṅungōn defeated the Kaḷabhras. Narasimha Varman I (c. 630-668), the Pallava, again defeated them. Of the Cāḷukyas, Vinayāditya (681-96 A.D.), Vikramāditya II (734-45 A.D.) and Kīrtivarman II (744-53 A.D.) are said to have defeated the Kaḷabhras and Pulakesin II (611-42 A.D.) is credited with the defeat of the Kaḷikula. The Periyaapurāṇams says that Kalippahaiyär, who was engaged to Appar's sister went to fight against the Northerners who had invaded the Tamil region. Appar was a contemporary of Mahēndra Varman I (600 630 A.D.). From all available evidences the Kaḷabhras seem to have been terrible and ruthless conquerors who were regarded as interlopers by the people of the lands they overran.

There has been much controversy over the identification of the Kaḷabhras who have been variously held to be the Karnāṭaka,
the Muttaraiyars, the Vellala Kalapala clan, the Kalvar tribe, the Kadambas and the Pullis of Vengaon. According to a recent view the home of the Kalabhras is thought to be the Kannada country.

Political order was restored in Tamlagam after the defeat of the Kalabhras at the hand of the Pandyas and Pallavas as well as the Calukyas of Badami. The Kalabhras sway in Madurai was put an end to by Kadungon.

While the Kalabhras were initially overthrown by Kadungon (c.590-620 A.D.) and possibly also by his son Maravarman Avanisulaman (620-45 A.D.) mopping up operations seem to have continued in the reigns of his successors. Jainism in the Madurai country received a serious setback in the reign of Arikesari Maravarman (670-700 A.D.) or Kun Pandyaya, when Sambandar defeated the Jains and weaned the king from Jainism to Saivism. His son Koocadaiyan Ranadhiro (700-730 A.D.) had the title Madhurakaranatakan. The significance of this title is not clear. Possibly it may refer to his victories over the Karunatakas, who are stated to have been Jains and to have defeated the Pandyya King. Again during the reign of Parantaka Nejunjadaiyan (765-815 A.D.) it is said that “the power of the Kaliarasam was weakened.” He also had the titles Kalippagai and Kantaka Ništāran. The re-grant of Velvikkudi village by Parantaka Nedunjadaiyan after the Kalabhra interregnum, his assumption of the title Kalippagai, the statement that the Kali King’s power was weakened, as well as the fact that Parantaka undertook the building or reconstruction of Kudal, Vañji and Koli, which possibly led to his title Kutramirjanayan indicate that after the Kalabhra interregnum serious steps for the restoration of social and political order taken in the reign of Parantaka Nejunjadaiyan (765-815 A.D. were whose reign also coincided with one of the greatest periods of temple building in the history of Madurai.

2. Velvikkudi grant 11. 69-70.
3. Kalladam 57; Periyapurānam, No. 15: Murti: 11, 12; Nambi’s Tiruvilaiyadal No. 51.
4. Velvikkudi grant 1. 90.
5. Velvikkudi grant 1. 86.
6. Velvikkudi grant 1. 102.
2. Literary Works of the Post Sangam Age

Under the general heading of Padinen-kiilk-kanakku a number of important didactical works have been grouped together. They are composed in various short metres, generally types of the vembā. They were composed mostly during the epoch 500-851 A.D. The best known of them all and probably also the earliest is the Kural of Tiruvalluvar. There is a tradition that it was published in the court of the Pāṇḍya king Ugrap-Peruvalūdī 450-500 A.D. is the probable date of the Kural.

Of the eighteen works, eight appear to have been written by poets hailing from Madurai and the Pāṇḍya country. The Iiniyai-Nārpadu written by Madurai Tamilāsiriyan Maganār Pūdaṇjēndanār mentions Brahma worship. Eladi literally meaning ‘cardamom and others’ and the Tinaimālairainbadu were written by Kanimēdāviyār, a student of Madurai Āsiriyar Mākkāyanār. It is believed that the author was a Jain, from the introductory verse. But this admits of different interpretations. The Tinaimālai-Nārrainbadu belongs to the class of Agam works. The Kār Nārpadu has also an agam or love theme. It was written by Maduraikkanān Kuttanār, a Vaiṣṇava, Mārōkkattu Mullināttu Nallūrkkāvidiyār Maganār Pullankādanār wrote the Kainnilai. The Sirupancamālam (“the five minor roots”) takes its name from well-known medicinal preparations. The author was Mākkāriyaśān, a Jain and a student of Madurai Āsiriyar Mākkāyanār. Mudumolikkāñci is a short work by Kūdalūr Kīlār of Madurai. It contains nīti maxims in śūtra style.

The Kalittogai and the Paripādal may be assigned to about the 4th-5th century A.D. The Kalittogai belongs to the class of agam works and treats of love in the five tinais. The Paripādal is so named from the metre of the poems in the collection. Originally it had contained 70 poems, but only 24 songs and a few fragments have now survived. About eight poems had been composed in honour of the city of Madurai but unfortunately all of them have been lost to posterity. The Paripādal is the first instance of a work set to music. Of the available portions, eight poems are about the Vaigai. The others are in praise of Muruga at Tirupparankūndram and Viṣṇu at Tirumāliruṇjōlai.

The Tamil epic *Silappadikāram* may be roughly assigned to the 5th-6th century A.D. and is by far the most outstanding work of the Post Sangam epoch. It is said to have been written by Ilangōvadigal, the brother of Śēran Śenguttuvan. It narrates the popular story of the merchant-prince Kōvalan, who neglects his wife Kaṇṇaki and succumbs to the charms of Mādhavi, the famous dancing girl of Puhār. A quarrel between the two and the loss of his fortune makes Kōvalan return to Kaṇṇaki. Then the husband and wife journey to Madurai to sell Kaṇṇaki’s jewels, especially her ankle (śilambu) and to start a new life. In Madurai Kōvalan is executed owing to the treachery of the royal goldsmith who had stolen the Pāṇḍya Queen’s anklet which was similar to Kaṇṇaki’s. When Kaṇṇaki proved the innocence of Kōvalan before the king, the Pāṇḍya king realised his injustice and died on the spot. His queen also died immediately afterwards. Kaṇṇaki then burnt the city of Madurai and moved into the Cēra country where she ascended to heaven with Kōvalan. Śenguttuvan, the Cēra king, brought a stone from the Himalayas, made an image of Kaṇṇaki and set up shrines to her as the Goddess of Chastity.

The *Manimekalai* is a Buddhist poem which tells the life story of Manimekalai, the daughter of Mādhavi by Kōvalan. Its author was Maduraikkūlavānigaṇa Śattanār, a corn merchant. There has been some confusion between this poet and Śittalai Śattanār, some holding that both were the same. Again, it is held that the authors of the two epics *Silappadikāram* and *Manimekalai* were contemporaries and that they read out their works to each other. But an examination of the literary style of the two works shows that *Manimekalai* may be more than a century later than the other epic. In its present form the *Manimekalai* contains a long passage based on the *Nīyaprapāvēṣa* of Dinnāga, a work of the 5th century A.D. It is not clear whether this is an interpolation or not. One learns much about Buddhism in the Tamil country from *Manimekalai*. The poem says that there was a temple to Cintādēvi (Saraswati) in the city of Madurai.1

3. General Considerations of the Post Sangam Age

From the literary works of the Sangam age much interesting information may be gathered about the city of Madurai as well as life in the Madurai country. In the Kalittogai, there are many references to the Vaigai and Madurai. It is learnt that the Vaigai skirted the rampart walls of the city. The Tirumarudanturai in the Vaigai is mentioned. There was a festival in the city during the early summer months, in honour of Kāma, the God of Love. Tirupparankunram is mentioned as sacred to Muruga who felled the mango tree in the ocean, and also defeated Sūran. Besides many references to Kādal and Mādakkudal, the earliest mention of the term Nōnmadākkādal to denote the city of Madurai is found in the Kalittogai.

The Parippadal also gives many interesting details about the city of Madurai and the life of the citizens. The landing stages in the Vaigai, the freshes in the river, the water sports in the Vaigai, and the many festivals celebrated are dealt with in great detail. It was the custom for the bathers to throw in the river, plaques of gold made in the shapes of chanks, crabs and fishes probably as offerings to the river goddess. The Pāṇḍya king also resorted to the Vaigai banks. The Pāṇar on the banks of the river sang the marudam paṇs. In the evening the citizens enjoying themselves on the banks of the Vaigai began moving southwards in order to return to the city. This shows that the Vaigai flowed to the north of the city.

2. Ibid. 67: 1-5; 68: 4-5.
3. Ibid. 26: 13.
4. Ibid. 30: 13-16; 92: 63-68.
5. Ibid. 27: 15-16, 93: 25-8.
7. Ibid. 85:17.
8. Ibid. 92:65.
10. Parippadal, 10; 85-88
12. Ibid. 2:73.
13. Parippadal. 10:121.
The Parippaṭal refers to the temple of Viṣṇu at Irundaiyūr. This is probably the ancient shrine of Kūdal Aḷagar⁴ whose abode has as ancient a history as that of God Sundarēśvara at Madurai. Irundaiyūr⁵ was probably a suburb of ancient Madurai, though at present the Kūdal Aḷagar Temple is in the heart of the city and near the Sundarēśvara Temple.

The Parippaṭal says that the Viṣṇu temple at Irundaiyūr was situated on the turai (ghat) of the river which flowed down from the mountains and was welcomed by the people of Nārāyanaḷuḷiṭal⁶. On one side of the temple was a hill with many trees⁴. On another side was a beautiful lake with lotus flowers.⁵ On another side were agricultural fields.⁶ On yet another side was the city. In the city there were many Brahmans who followed the path of dharma, and recited the Vēdas.⁷ In the vaniga street lived vanigas who sold edible articles, cosmetics, dresses, ornaments, gems, gold, mountain produce and the produce of the seas.⁸ On another side was the street where lived the Kaḷamar and Ulavar who cultivated the wet and dry lands.⁹ There was a temple for Ādisēsa in the city¹⁰.

There is a reference to worship at a temple which was situated at some kulavāy¹¹. The meaning of this word is rather obscure. In ancient times it was often the custom to build a city or town by the side of a big tank, particularly to the east side of it. This was probably done to ensure a good water supply for the needs of the city. This custom seems to have been widely prevalent in the Pāṇḍya country where the names of such towns were also associated with the name of the tank near it. For instance, Vēḷūr-Kulakkil, Rājasimha Kulak-

2. Many Sangam poets appear to have hailed from Irundaiyūr e.g. Irundaiyūr Karunkoli Mōsiyar, and Irundaiyūr Korram Pulavan.
4. Ibid. 1; 7-9.
5. Ibid. 1; 10-13.
8. Ibid. 1: 22-25.
10. Ibid. 1: 48-49.
11. Ibid. 1: 62.
kil and Madakkulakki Madurai. In the Paripādāl the reference to the temple (nagar) at the kulavāy is highly reminiscent of the city to the east of Madakkuḷam, but it is not clear which temple in the city the poet refers to here.

Several modes of travel are mentioned. People rode on horses, elephants, or mules. There were vehicles drawn by horses or oxen, chariots and śivigais.

A pulinugamadām is mentioned. This is probably some high tower or terrace with its front made in the shape of a tiger.

Many new jewels and ornaments are mentioned such as the waist ornament called the mēkalai made up of strings of pearls. Kāmmōdirams refer probably to toe-rings. The mūjam was a jewel worn on the forehead of children. The vāhuvalayam was a kind of armlet.

Many festivals were celebrated in Madurai. In the month of Mārgaḷi during the Tiruvādirai asterism priests well-versed in the Āgamas offered worship to Śiva. The Mārgaḷi festival still continues to be an important one at Madurai. In the early morning the elderly women and young maidens bathed in the Vaigai and performed the Tainirādāl.

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1. “Varaiyaj tājuviya kalśer kidakkaikkulavāy amarndān nagar.”
3. Ibid. 10: 16-17.
4. Ibid. 12:29.
5. Ibid. 10:17.
7. Ibid. 6: 16-17; 7:46-47; 10:10-11; 22:30. The mēkalai is termed ahipadakāl since it was composed of row upon row of stringed pearls from about two to thirtytwo strings.
8. Ibid. 12:24.
9. Ibid. 16:8.
10. Ibid. 7:47.
11. Ibid. 11: 74-79.
12. Ibid. 11: 91, 115.
Eight poems are in praise of Muruga and give many details about Tirupparankunram. In the mornings people crowded on the route from Madurai to Tirupparankunram taking with them food and articles for puja to offer worship at the temple of Muruga at Tirupparankunram.¹ The Pāṇḍya king with his queens and ministers visited Tirupparankunram, went up the hill, circumambulated the temple of Muruga and offered worship.² There was a citra maṇḍapa³ on the hill by the side of the temple. There were paintings here of Sūrya and other planets,⁴ of Rati and Manmata⁵ and of Akaligai⁶ being cursed to become a stone⁷.

Six poems are devoted to the praise of Viṣṇu and the Tirumāl-iruṇjōlai hill. Viṣṇu and Baladeva are said to have been worshipped on the Mālirunkunram.⁸

In the Maduraikkāṇṭam of the Silappadikāram there are graphic pen pictures of the city of Madurai. While the general picture is more or less similar to that given in the Maduraikkāṇṭi, viz., a description of an ancient city which was well planned and built and well defended and was a busy metropolis, more details are added in the epic in highly poetic language.

The poet describes the route from Uṟaiyūr to Madurai⁹. The distance from Uṟaiyūr to Madurai was 30 kādams. The route led through Koḻimbaḷuṟ in Pudukkōṭṭai, from where three alternative routes led to Madurai. The route on the right¹⁰ was along Kaḻamamba forests and jungles, through the abodes of Eynars and along the Sirumalai hills. Another route along the left¹¹ went through fields and jungles to Tirumālkanunram¹² and thence to Madurai. The route

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1. Ibid. 8:90-111; 17:22-25; 19:8-18.
2. Ibid. 19:19-29.
4. Ibid. 19:46-47.
5. Ibid. 19:48.
7. Ibid. 15 : 49-53.
10. Ibid., xi : 68-73.
11. Ibid., xi : 87-140.
12. Tirumālirunjōlai.
midway between these led through villages and groves and on the way the traveller had to overcome the wrath of a fierce deity if he wished to reach Madurai.

The poet approaches the city from the Vaigai side and gives an elaborate description of the Vaigai. At the crowded landing stages were moored boats decorated with different prow-heads of various animal forms. Immediately surrounding the city was a moat and beyond it an impenetrable forest. Lofty flags of victory were flying on the outer walls of the fortress. The fortress gates were well guarded by Yavana swordsmen. A narrow passage (śūranga) connected the moat with the interior of the city. Above the passage there was a street large enough to admit groups of elephant. On the battlements and ramparts of the city there were many mechanical contrivances for defence.

The suburbs (पुराणी) of the city were inhabited by men practising dharma, i.e., ascetics and other sādhus. There were many groves, parks and lakes here and rest houses and bamboo pandals for supplying water.

The city was a well-planned one with bazaars and many broad streets with high and luxurious mansions on both sides. There were the streets where wealthy ladies lived. Accomplished dancers and musicians lived in two big streets. Wealthy merchant princes dealing in gems, diamonds, pearls and gold lived in different streets.

1. Canto xi: 141-149.
6. Ibid. xv: 207-216. There were mechanisms to throw burning oil, molten metal and stones on the besiegers attempting to scale the walls, curious devices such as clutching machines shaped like monkeys, the king fisher device which would pluck out the eyes of the enemy and other mechanisms in the shape of vultures and pigs. There were also mechanical bows with self-projecting arrows.
8. Ibid. xiv. 120-145.
9. Ibid. xiv: 120-145.
10. Ibid. 180-204.
The gold dealers hung flags in front of their shops to indicate the kind of gold available within. The cloth merchants, the corn dealers and the men of the four castes also lived in various streets. Different kinds of cloth made of cotton, hair and silk are mentioned. The high mansions in the city had many storeys with lattice windows and open terraces. Terraces were built in different parts of the house for use during the various seasons of the year. The houses were built by expert architects.

The bazaar was a very busy place where a large variety of merchandise was sold and where numerous types of vehicles plied to and fro constantly. The merchandise included such articles as coats of mail, elephant goads, curved bludgeons, various types of shields and other weapons of war, white yak hair, cauris, incenses, flowers and perfumed pastes, many articles made of copper and bronze and instruments for ivory cutting and woodwork.

Many types of vehicles were available for transport. There were beautifully ornamented chariots, palanquins (śivigais) and covered carts called vaiyam and pāṇḍil, both probably drawn by bullocks. There was constant movement of the king's warriors, horses, and elephants through the city.

The poem gives some information about the Pāṇḍya king's palace also. There was the kādaśmaṇi or the Bell of Justice at the gate of the palace. The purōhita, the astrologer, the Brāhmaṇa judges, the kāvidi or finance minister and other ministers of the king are mentioned. The Pāṇḍya queen was attended upon by a large

1. The varieties of gold known as Jātarāpa, Kilineerai, Adakam and Jambūnādām are mentioned.
3. Ibid. 1. 205.
4. Ibid. 11. 83-125.
5. Ibid. 11. 97-98.
6. Ibid. 11. 169-179.
7. Ibid. 11. 126, 168.
number of maids, companions and body gaurds as well as ladies who sang her praise. It is stated that the cowherdresses had to supply ghee to the palace every day by turns. This probably was some tribute in kind and is reminiscent of Megasthenes' account.

In the morning the Brahmans chanted the Vēdas, drums were beaten and conches blown from the various temples in the city, from the king's palace and from the residence of religious men proclaiming the dharma. There were temples to Śiva with the eye on His forehead, Viṣṇu with the Garuḍa standard, Baladeva who had the plough and Muruga with the cock flag. A temple of Kōravaí and a shrine to Neḍumā on the banks of the Vaigai are mentioned. The latter is probably a reference to the Kūḍal Alagar temple which is identified with the shrine of Śri Irundavalamudaiyar or Andaravānadattemberumān. Balarāma and Viṣṇu are spoken of together showing that the worship of Balarāma continued during the time when the epic was written. There was also a temple to Balarāma in the city. The many legends about Kṛṣṇa, his dances with Nappinnai and the Gōpis, as well as the dances of the cowherdresses in honour of Kṛṣṇa show the prevalence and popularity of the Kṛṣṇa cult. Goddess Madhurāpati was the family deity of the Pāṇḍyan kings. When the city of Madurai was consumed by fire the poet says that the guardian deities closed their doors. This probably means that they gave up their legitimate function of defending the four gates of the city walls. The guardian deities are described in great detail.

5. Ibid. 11. 1-7.
6. Ibid. 11. 1-7.
7. Sentami; Vol. VIII, p. 183.
8. Canto xvii: Kuruṇpam
10. Canto xiv: Aiceiyarkuravai
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid. xii Vēttuwari
The śiccīyarkuravai danced by the cowherdresses\(^1\) in honour of Viṣṇu and the śittuvavari\(^2\) performed by hill tribes like the Maṟa-var in honour of Korra vai are types of religious dances.

**B. THE FIRST PAṆḌYA EMPIRE**

**1. Political History**

The four centuries (roughly 7th-10th cs. A.D.) following the black-out during the Kaḷabhra interregnum were marked by a rapid revival of Pāṇḍya supremacy and in this period a succession of powerful rulers of the dynasty waged battles against their rivals and expanded their domain into the Cōla, Pallava and Kongu countries and into the Ay country in the Tinnevelly-Travancore region.

For the history of this period which may be termed the First Empire one has to depend mostly on the Veḻvikkudi grant of Parāntaka Neḍuṉjaḍaiyan\(^3\), the Larger and Smaller Sinnamānūr plates of Rājasimha II\(^4\), the Madras Museum Plates of Jaṭilavarman\(^5\), the two related Anaimalai stone inscriptions of Maṟaṉjaḍaiyan and Parāntaka\(^6\) and the Aivarmalai inscription of Varaguṇa dated S.792, *i.e.*, 870 A.D.\(^7\) Pallava and Cōla inscriptions and copper plates as well as the account of Mahāvamsa also help to elucidate the history of the period. While the general outline of the genealogy and chronology of the period is more or less clear, there are many problems which are still unsettled. Hence dates could only be provisional and approximate\(^8\).

After the overthrow of the Kaḷabhras and the restoration of the Pāṇḍya dynasty by Kaṟungōn (c. 590-620 A.D.) there were a number

2. Ibid. 1. 16-108.
8. For this section the genealogical and chronological scheme suggested by K. A. Nilakanta Sastri in his works is mainly followed.
of Pāṇḍya rulers with the titles Māraṇjaḍaiyan and Saḍaiyanmārkan alternating. Apart from what is given in the Tamil portion of the Vēlvikkudi grant, little is known about Kaḍungōn and his son Māra-varman Avaniṣṭāman (c. 620-45 A.D.). Sēndan or Jayantavaran (c. 645-70 A.D.) succeeded his father Mārarvarman. The Vēlvikkudi grant calls him Vēndarvēndan and “Silavittadakkaiikkalaiik-kalirucceliyin” (“Seliyian who possessed long hands holding the bow and furious elephants”).1 His title Vānavan seems to indicate some victory over the Cēras.

Sēndan’s successor, evidently his son, was Arikēsari Parānkkuśa Mārarvarman (c. 670-700 A.D.). He was one of the greatest and most renowned of the rulers of this age. The Smaller Sinnamānūr plates call him Arikēsari Asamasaman Alanghiyavikraman Akālakālan Mārarvarman.2 By his conquests he greatly expanded the Pāṇḍyan power. Under him began the Pāṇḍya-Pallava contest for supremacy in the Tamil country. He defeated the Pallavas at Sāṅkaramangai. At this time the Cālūkya Vikramāditya I was also ranged against the Pallava. During his campaigns he appears to have penetrated far into the Tamil country. An allliance between him and his contemporary Pāṇḍya Arikēsari against their common force, the Pallava, is not very improbabable. Arikēsari won successes against the Kēralas several times.3 He also defeated the Paravar and the people of Kuṟunadū. His victory at Nelveli has been mentioned in literary works also. Some of his other successes were at

1. Line 50.
2. Velvikkudi grant, 1.51 says, marravarkuppalippiniri sājittōnri. Dr. Winslow gives under vali, the phrase valittonval in the sense of a “son”.
3. Lines 15-16; The Velvikkudi grant calls him Mārarvarman and Arikeśari Asamasaman (v. 6 and 1.62). While the Larger Sinnamānur Plates call him Arikeśari and Parānkusa (v. 10, 1. 105.)
5. Velvikkudi grant 11. 56-57.
6. The Paravar may be the Paradavar on the southern coastal region of the Pandya country.
7. Velvikkudi grant, 11. 54-55.
8. Periyapurāṇom (No. 50) Ninrasir Nedumārāṇyanār; Sundarar in Tiruttondat-togai (st. 8: 3-4) also mentions this victory.
Pāḷi, Ṣennilam and Puliyūr. The identity of some of these battle fields is not clear. To celebrate his achievements he performed hīraṅ yagārtha and tuḷābhāra several times.

Arikēsari Māravarman has been identified with the traditional Kūn Pāṇḍya or Neṅgaṅīr Neḍumāra Nāyanār who was weaned from Jainism to Saivism by the great Šaiva saint Jñānasambandar. According to the Periyapurāṇam and the Madurai Śthalapurāṇas his queen was a Cōla princess, Mangaiyarkaraśi, and his minister, Kulaccīrōi, both of whom are also included in the list of 63 Šaiva saints.

Arikēsari’s son Jaṭila or Kōccadaiyan alias Raṇadhīra (c. 700-730 A.D.) was also a great conqueror. His aggressive wars helped to expand the Pāṇḍya power in various directions. The Āys of the hilly region between Travancore and Tinnevelly were defeated at Marudūr. His title Kongarkōmān suggests his conquest of the Kongus and Pāṇḍya expansion into Kongu country. The Vēlvikkudi grant says that he defeated the Mahārathar at the big city (mahānagara) of Mangalapuram (modern Mangalore). This probably refers to some expedition to the west coast about which not much is known at present. Kōccadaiyan is called “Tenna-Vānavan Šembaliyan Šōlan”. These indicate that he considered himself the overlord of the Ĉeras and Cōlas. He had the title Madhurakāramātaka. The Vēlvikkudi grant also mentions victories at Šengoḍi and Pudankodu.

Raṇadhīra’s son Māravarman Rājasimha I (c. 730-65 A.D.) was again a powerful ruler. He appears to have supported the cause of Citramāya, a pretender to the Pallava throne. Soon after his accession Nandivarman II Pallavamalla (c. 730-796 A.D.) had to

1. Velvikkudi grant 11. 53, 56 and 58.
2. Ibid. v. 8, 11. 60-61.
3. Probably Tiruppudaimarudur near Ambasamudram. The victory at Marudur is mentioned by the Smaller Sinnamāṇūr Plates (11. 27-28) and Velvikkudi grant (11. 63-64).
5. This had evidently some connection with the defeat of the Kalabhras, as explained earlier in this chapter.
face a hostile combination organised by the Pāṇḍyas. Nandivarman was besieged by Rājasimha at Nandipura (near Kumbakonam) but was released by his general Udayacandra who killed Citramāya and claimed several victories in the Tanjore district, where the two parties seem to have fought many battles. While Pallava copper plates hint at a few Pāṇḍya reverses the Pāṇḍya king claims to have inflicted a number of defeats on the Pallava king Nandivarman Pallavae malla. The Pāṇḍya king had the title Pallavabhāṇjana. The Vēḻvikkuṭi grant mentions a number of victories won by the king. In the Kongu country Pāṇḍya sway may have extended upto Pāṇḍikkōduṇḍi where Rājasimha is stated to have offered worship to Paśupathi.

Malakongam on the borderland between the Trichinopoly and Tanjore districts was subjugated. The Maḷava princess was then married to the Pāṇḍya king. Rājasimha came into conflict with the Cāḻukya Kīrttivarman II and his Gangā feudatory Śripuruṣa, both of whom were defeated at Veṇbāi. He then married a Gangā princess.

Rājasimha was succeeded by his son Parāntaka alias Neṭunjaṭaṇaiyaṇ who was one of the greatest imperialists of the age. He was the son of the Maḷava queen. He was known by many names like Jaṭila, Māraṇjaṭaṇaiyaṇ and Varaguṇa Mahārāja (I). He had a long reign of about 50 years (c. 765-815 A.D.). He was the donor of the famous Vēḻvikkuṭi grant (the earliest of the Pāṇḍya copper plate grants so far found) and the Madras Museum plates.

Early in his reign he won a great victory over the Pallava king (Kāḍava), evidently Nandivarman II Pallavamalla, at Peṇṇāgaḍam on the south bank of the Kāveṇri. The Pallava allied with the kings.

2. Velvikkudi grant, v. 12, 11. 77-78.
4. Lines 71-79 refer to the victories at Neduvayal, Kurumadai, Mannikkuricci, Tirumangai, Puvalur, Kodumbalur and Periyalur.
6. Velvikkudi grant, 11. 128-129.
7. Ibid. 11. 84, 126-127.
8. Velvikkudi grant, 11. 92-94.
of Kongu and Kērala as well as the Adigaimān of Tagaḍūr (Dharmapuri). But the Pāṇḍya defeated them in a number of battles, captured the king of Western Kongu and imprisoned him at Madurai. The Trichinopoly inscription of his 11th year states that the king destroyed Vēmbil and was encamped at Niyamam, both of which are in the Cōla country. A record of the 16th year shows that the king had advanced far into the Pallava domain and fixed his camp at Araṅgu on the banks of the Peṅnār in Toṇḍaināḍ. Parāntaka also defeated the Āy chieftain and the king of Vēṇāḍ and destroyed Vīṭṭiṇam. Perhaps in order to keep these newly conquered southern regions under efficient control, he fortified Karavandapuram (Ukkirankōṭṭai) in Tinnevelly, the home of the Vaidyakula family; many of whose members served in various capacities under the Pāṇḍya rulers of this period. Parāntaka’s extensive conquests led to the expansion of Pāṇḍya territory into Cōla, Pallava, Kongu and Vēṇāḍ countries. The Pāṇḍya empire stretched from the extreme south to a part of Toṇḍaināḍ in the north and included Vēṇāḍ, Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Salem and Coimbatore.

Parāntaka’s indefatigable activities were not confined to mere wars and conquests. He was a great builder and a liberal benefactor of temples. Parāntaka made liberal grants to the temples at Tiruccendūr, Ambasamudram and Trichinopoly. He is stated to have built a large Viṅgu temple at Kāncivāyppēṟūr in the Kongu country. His reign was characterised by much building activity. Many rock-cut temples and shrines were either excavated or added to. For instance, the Narasimha temple on the Ānaimalai hill near Madurai was excavated by the famous Māṟangāri brothers who were the Pāṇḍya Uttaramantrins.

1. Madras Museum plates, ll. 31-33.
4. M.E.R. 43 of 1908; Velvikkudi grant, ll. 94-95.
Some scholars connect the name of Parāntaka with the Saiva saint Mānikkavācakar, who, according to legend, is stated to have been the minister of a Pāṇḍya king.

The son and successor of Neḍuṇjaṭaiyan was Śrīmāra Śrīvallabha (c. 815-862 A.D.) who had the titles Ekaśīra and Paracakrakōlāhala. He won victories at Kūṇṇīr and Vīḷiṇām. The larger Sinnamanūr plates refer to the king’s victory over the king of Simhala (Ceylon). The Mahāvaṃsa gives a fuller account of the Pāṇḍya invasion of Ceylon. Śrīvallabha invaded the island of Ceylon in the reign of Seṇa I (831-51 A.D.), ravaged the northern parts of the island and sacked the capital Anurādhapura. Seṇa I was defeated and fled to the Malaya country. Finally the fugitive king made a treaty with the Pāṇḍya victor.

Śrīvallabha’s reign was marked by victories as well as reverses in the contest against the Pallavas. The Pallava king Nandivarman III (844-66 A.D.) joined with the Gangas and Cōḷas and probably the Rāṣṭrakūṭas also and severely defeated the Pāṇḍya king at Tellāru (North Arcot district). On account of this victory Nandivarman took the title “Tellārērinda”. Later on Śrīvallabha won a great victory at Kudāmūkku (Kumbakonam) in about 859 A.D. against a formidable combination of the Gangas, Pallavas, Cōḷas, Kalingas, Magadhas and others. But subsequently he was defeated at the Aricit by the Pallava Nṛpatungavarman who had succeeded Nandivarman.

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1. While the general opinion now is that Manikkavacakaka succeeded the Devaram trio it is not possible at present to assign the saint definitely to the reign of either of the two Varagunas known to history. If Manikkavacakaka lived in the 9th century A.D. his Pandyan contemporary was most probably Varaguna II (862-80 A.D.)


3. The larger Sinnamanur plates (v.11) state that Śrīmaṇa conquered in battle Mayā Pandyā, the Kerala, the king of Simhala the Pallava and the Vallabha.


7. The river Arisil, a branch of the Kaveri.
The later years of Śrīvallabha were clouded not only by the defeat at Aricuit but also by other reverses. The Mahāvamsa states that Sēna II (851-885 A.D.), the successor of Sēna I, supported the cause of one Māya Pāṇḍya, a pretender, and invaded the Pāṇḍya country. While the Larger Śīnammānūr plates state that the Pāṇḍya king conquered in battle Māya Pāṇḍya and the king of Ceylon, the Mahāvamsa gives a detailed account of Pāṇḍya reverses. It states that the Ceylonese invaded the Pāṇḍya kingdom, surrounded and sacked the capital Madurai, that Śrīvallabha died of wounds and that his son Varaguṇavarman II was placed on the Pāṇḍya throne by the Ceylonese commander-in-chief in 862 A.D. It is not clear whether the highly coloured account of the Ceylonese Chronicle should be accepted in its entirety.

Śrīmāra's successor was Varaguṇavarman II (862-880 A.D.). To check the Pallava power, Varaguṇavarman led an expedition against Iḍavai in the Cōla country (c. 879 A.D.). But soon he had to face a powerful confederacy headed by the Pallava Aparājīta, the son of Nṛpatungavarman, the Cōla Āditya I and the Western Ganga Prithivipati I. At the decisive battle of Śrīpuruṣāmbīyam near Kumbakonam in about 880 A.D. the Pāṇḍya king was completely defeated, although the Western Ganga Prithivipati I lost his life in the battle. Śrīpuruṣāmbīyam was one of the most decisive battles in the history of South India. The Pāṇḍya power was shaken and it took several centuries for the kingdom to assert itself once again.

Parāntaka Vīrānāraṇa Saṭāiyān (880-900 A.D.), the younger brother of Varaguṇavarman, was the next ruler. The Larger Śīnammānūr plates state that he won several successes at Śennilam Kharagiri, Nilamber and Peṇḍāgaḍam as well as in Kongu country.

1. Mahāvamsa chap. li.
2. W. Geiger Tr., Culavamsa p. 150. The Ceylonese senapati is stated to have laid waste the Pandya country and "surrounded the town of Madhura. He blockaded the gates, cut off all traffic and set fire to towers, bastions and gates".
5. Verse 13, ll. 118-121; Verse 13 says that he captured in a battle near Kharagiri the powerful king Ugra.
He was succeeded by his son Māravarman Rājasimha II (900-920 A.D.), the donor of the Larger Sinnamānur plates. He won victories at Ulappiliyanganalam, defeated the king of Tañjai (Tanjore) at Naippūr, fought a battle at Koḻumbai (Koḻumbālūr), the seat of one of the powerful Cōla subordinates, burnt Vaṇji and destroyed the king of Southern Tañjai (perhaps another subordinate of the Cōlas) at Nāvalī. The Pāṇḍya king appears to have had a serious antagonist in the Cōla Parāntaka I (907-955 A.D.) who led several expeditions against the Pāṇḍyas. Parāntaka invaded the Pāṇḍya country soon after his accession and took the title “Madiraikonda” (“who captured Madurai”) as early as his third year. A later successful campaign against Madurai and the Pāṇḍya king is probably the one referred to in the account given in the Udayēndirām plates of Prithivipati. The Pāṇḍya king appealed for help to Kas-sapa V, the ruler of Ceylon who sent an army to his aid. But Parāntaka defeated the combined armies in the decisive battle at Vēḻūr, probably in about 915 A.D. Rājasimha fled to Ceylon first and later to Keralā after leaving behind his crown and jewels in Ceylon. Parāntaka soon completed the conquest of the Pāṇḍya country. This brought about the end of the First Empire of the Pāṇḍyas.

2. ADMINISTRATION AND SOCIAL LIFE IN THE PERIOD OF THE FIRST PĀṆḌYAN EMPIRE

(i) Administration

Details of Government and administration during the post-Sangam period and the age of the First Pāṇḍyan Empire have to be placed together from literary evidences and from stray references in the copper plates and inscriptions pertaining to the period.

The king who was the head of the administration seems to have ruled the kingdom with the help of ministers. The chief minister was called the Uttaramantri. Mārānakāri of the Vaidyakula of Kara.

5. Calavamsa, Chap. 53, vv. 5 ff.
vandapura was the Uttaramantri or the Chief Minister of Parāntaka Neḍunjaṇaiyai. After his death his brother Māran Eynan became the Pāṇḍya Uttaramantri.

Many members of the Vaidyakula family appear to have served as royal ministers or generals under the Pāṇḍyas. Mūrti Eynan, perhaps another brother of Mārankāri, was Mahāśāmantā of the king. Sāṭtān Gaṇapati who was also a Mahāśāmantā in the sixth year of the king’s reign was another member of the same family.

Enādi Sāṭtān Sāṭtān was the brother of Sāṭtān Gaṇapati and was the Sēnāpati or commander-in-chief. Mention is made of a Mahānāyaka whose functions are not definitely known. An inscription of the forty-second year of Māranujaṇaiyan from Kalugumalai refers to “Tirumalai Virar” and “Parāntaka Virar”. Perhaps these are the names of regiments or groups of soldiers. An officer in charge of elephants, the Matangajāthyaṅkṣa, is referred to in the Madras Museum plates.

For local administration the country was divided into vālaṇāṭus, nāḍus kūrram and grāmas. The nāḍu is termed nāṭra in the Sanskrit part of the Larger Sinnamanūr plates. The grāmam or village was the unit of local administration. The names of grāmams usually end in māṇgam, kuṇi, and ār. Generous gifts of whole villages were

4. Dr. T.V. Mahalingam (South Indian Polity, p. 116) says that the mahāsāmanante was probably a minister in charge of the department dealing with feudal vassals and as such had a place in the king’s council.
6. Velvikkudi grant, ll. 139-140.
made by kings to temples and to individuals. Inscriptions of the period give very interesting and minute details about the form and procedure of granting lands and villages. The boundary of the village to be given as a gift was generally fixed by letting loose a female elephant and following its track. The Larger Sinnamanur plates mention that Nakkan Kumān was the master of the female elephant and that Nakkan Kāga, Kon Veḷān and Puṭaran-cōlai were three accountants appointed to supervise the circumambulation of the female elephant. The female elephant referred to here was evidently the one used for fixing the boundaries of the gift villages of Naṟceygaiputtūr. The royal order regarding the gift was called ājāptī or ḍāntī, and was carefully engraved on copper plates, under the supervision of a high officer of the State. The scribes were generally the Perumpaṇaikkārans of the kings. Though paṇai may be rendered as “drum”, it seems to have other meanings also such as “a row of horses” in which case the term may stand for a Chief Cavalry Officer or something similar.

Maṇṇaḍaiyan alias Varaguṇa Mahārāja made liberal gifts to the temples at Tiruccendūr, Ambasamudram, Trichinopoly and Javanthināthapuram. The inscriptions referring to these give many interesting details about the nature of permanent endowments, rates of interest, standards of currency, administration of fixed deposits by temple servants and trustees and details of temple services and offerings. They also mention the sabhā, the sabhai vānīyam and merchant corporations.

1. vv. 35-36.
2. The ājāptis of the Velikkudi grant, the Madras Museum plates and the Larger and Smaller Sinnamanur plates were the minister Marangari, Dhirataraṇ Murti Eynan, a Mahasamanta, Kurrangon (the king’s “servant”) and Tayan Singan, the Uttaramantri of Kundur in Kundur Kurram of Andanadu, respectively.
3. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri: The Pandya Kingdom, p. 88, n. 1; The Velikkudi grant was engraved by Yuddakesari Pandya, Perumpanaikkaran, Madras Museum Plates by Pandupperumanaikkaran alias Arikesari and the Smaller Sinnamanur plates by Arikesari, son of Pandi Perumpanaikkaran.
5. M.E.R. 414 of 1904 from Trichinopoly mentions the Pati of Cirrambar and the servants of the temple or the Padamudattom. The Pati is probably the head of a merchant corporation or a royal officer.
The Mānūr inscription (35th regnal year) of Māraṇjaḍaiyan contains rules for membership of the village sabhā. It is of special significance since it is more than a century earlier than the Uttaramerūr inscriptions of the time of the Cōla Parāntaka I dealing with Cōla village administration. From this record it is learnt that qualifications of property and learning were prescribed for membership of the village sabhā.

A detailed account of membership and the working of the committee are given. "It is stated that of the children of shareholders in the village, only one, who is well behaved and has studied the Mantra Brahma and one dharma (i.e. Code of Law) may be on the village assembly (maṇṭū) to represent the share held by him in the village and only one of similar qualifications may be on the assembly for a share purchased, received as present or acquired by him as strīdhana (through his wife); (2) that (shares) purchased, presented or acquired as strīdhana could entitle one, if at all, only to full membership in the assemblies; and in no case will quarter, half or three-quarter membership be recognised; (3) that those who purchase shares must elect only such men to represent their shares on the assembly, as have critically studied a whole Veda with its parāśīśos; (4) that those who do not possess full membership as laid down by rule (2), cannot stand on any committee (vāṇiyam) for the management of village affairs; (5) that those who satisfy the prescribed conditions should in no case persistently oppose (in the proceedings of the assembly) by saying "nay, nay" to every proposal brought up before the assembly; and (6) that those who do this together with their supporters will pay a fine of five kāḷus on each item (in which they so behaved) and still continue to submit to the same rules". The existence of these village assemblies and their committees in the Madurai country is known from other inscriptions of the period also.

Information regarding other committees are given in some Vatteluttu inscriptions. A damaged Vatteluttu epigraph of Sāḍaiyan Māraṇ gives the name of an assembly called Pāṣupatapperumakkal.

whose function is not given in the record. Another Vaṭṭeluttu record of Mārāṇjaiḍaiyan mentions some provisions for two water sheds of which one is called “munnāṭṭuvapperum pandal”\(^3\). This is presumably named after an assembly of the locality consisting of 300 members (“munnāṭṭuwar”).

The department concerned with the purauward which may be taken to mean land tax or land revenue assessment, became very important during the mediaeval period. Even under the Pāṇḍya of the First Empire there are several references to it\(^3\). Gifts were placed under the protection of the purauward karaṭṭār\(^4\). South India being an essentially rural and agricultural country, land tax was an important source of revenue from very early times. Purauv seems to be a term of great antiquity since it occurs in Saṅgam literature also\(^5\).

Facts about weights and measures and currency could also be gathered from inscriptions. Two Vaṭṭeluttu records of about the 10th c. A.D. refer to the standard measures sōliyan and nāriyanalī\(^6\). Another record mentions the liquid measure Sōlantakan nalī\(^7\). The Mādurai coin with the legend “Śrī Avanipāśekarana Gōlaga”\(^8\) has the emblem of the double fish on its obverse and is evidently a coin issued by the Pāṇḍya king, Avanipāśekhara alias Śrīyallabha, the father of Varaguna II. The gold coin kāśu or kalaṇju\(^9\) known also as kṛṣṇa kāca was in use. The coin dināra is also mentioned\(^10\).

3. M.E.R. 70 of 1905 mentions the purauv variyar, M.E.R. 68 of 1905, the dinikkalattar, M.E.R. 69 of 1905, the karanattar and M.E.R. 74 of 1905, the purauwarrikkaranattar.
5. In Puram 75: 4, purauv means arasirai or tax paid to the kings. In Puram 297: 5 the commentator says that purauv means iraiyili land.
Several epigraphs give the interesting information that gifts and endowments to certain temples were placed under the protection of mercantile corporations and soldiers. Two records register an agreement for the supply of ghee to a temple in return for the gift of 50 sheep. The gift and the inscribed stones were placed under the protection of the *nagaratār* and the soldiers (*madil-eyedgar*, rampart guards)*¹*. Placing temples and temple property also under military protection seems to have been an ancient custom*²*.

Epigraphs refer to the names of various temple functionaries. The temple functionaries mentioned in one of the records include the bodies *Saṭṭappurumakkal*, the *Aganāligaiyār*, the *Padiyār*, the *Paṇcācārīyar*, and the *Uvaṭkar*.*³* In later inscriptions the third and fourth bodies are spoken of together as *paṭipādamālapaṇcācārīyar*.

(ii) Literature

In the field of literature the works of the *Deva†aram* trio and the *Tiruvaiyāgam* and *Tirukkōvai* of *Māṇikkavācaka* as well as the hymns of the *Ālvārs* belong to this period. The writing of poems in the form of a *kōvai* seems to have become very popular during this period. The *Paṇḍikkōvai* which was written during this period is available only in numerous citations. It was sung in honour of a *Paṇḍya* king.*⁴* The commentary of the *Iraiyanār Agapporul* traditionally ascribed to *Nakkirar*, may be assigned to about the 8th c. A.D. It is one of the earliest of Tamil prose commentaries. A record of the reign of Neṭumāran *Śrivallavan**⁵* mentions a chief Etti *Ṣāttan* who came of the family of one (a poet) who had the distinction of being seated on the stone slab at *Kūdal* (*i.e.* Madurai), famous

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2. M.E.R. 167 of 1909 (in Coimbatore District) from Sangramanallur states that the *gopura*, the temple and its precincts were placed under the protection of soldiers. 120 of 1905 from Tiruvalisvaram states that the local temple, its treasury and the temple servants were placed under the protection of the Cola army called *murrukai-mahātēnai*.
4. The hero of the poem was probably Arikesari Maravarman (c. 670-705 A.D.)
for its Tamil. The *Muttollayiram*, of which only 100 verses are known now, was also composed during this age. Originally it was a work of 900 *umbas*, 300 each in praise of each of the three Tamil monarchs. It is not known who was the author of this work. *Kalladham* written by Kallavanar has as its basis Manikkavacakka's *Tirukkovai* and refers to about 30 *Tiruvilaiyadals* of God Sundaresvara. Though its style is rather stilted and pedantic it is the earliest attempt at collecting together the legends regarding the God of Madurai. On the whole the literature of the period is tinged with a sense of deep religious fervour and devotion.

(iii) Religion

As said earlier Hinduism seems to have flourished side by side with Buddhism and Jainism during the Sangam Age in the early centuries of the Christian era. About the 4th and 5th centuries A. D. Jainism, Buddhism and other unorthodox or *avaidika* religious sects seem to have risen to such prominence in the Tamil country that they affected even the established political order of the country. Though there was much literary activity there is hardly any direct information relating to the social and political history during the period commonly designated as the Kalabhras interregnum. After the overthrow of the Kalabhras by Kadungon and his successors many Hindu religious reformers such as the Saiva Nayanars and the Vaishnava Alvars arose and tried to suppress the heretical sects. As a result of their efforts Buddhism declined in South India. Jainism was not, however, completely suppressed though it received a setback and lost the position of predominance it had acquired.

**THE NAYANARS**: It is now generally agreed that of the Saiva Nayanars Appar and Jnanaasambandar were contemporaries and that Sundarar lived two or three decades after Appar's death in about 681 A.D.¹. It is, however, not certain whether Manikkavacakka preceded or followed the Devaram trio. Of the Saiva reformers who belonged to this period Jnanaasambandar, a Brahman youth

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1. In his book *Origin and Early History of Saivism in South India* (p. 462) C. V. Narayana Iyer gives the following dates to the four Saiva saints: Appar (600-681 A.D.), Sambandar (644-660 A.D.) and Manikkavacakka (660-692 A.D.) and Sundarar ("must have lived for 18 years any time between A.D. 710 and A.D. 735").
from Śrīkali (Shiyali) in Tanjore district and Māṇikkavācakar hailing from Tiruvādavūr made the greatest contributions for the Saiva revival in the Madurai country. Jñānasambandar lived in the middle of the 7th c. A.D. He is stated to have composed 10,000 hymns during his brief lifetime of 16 years. Of these only 384 hymns have come down to us today and constitute the first three books of the Saiva canon (Tirumurai). Sambandar denounces the Jains and Buddhists in almost every hymn. He visited a large number of temples singing the glories of Śiva. He is famous for the miraculous cure of Kūn Pāṇḍya1 and the conversion of the king from Jainism to Saivism. According to tradition Kūn Pāṇḍya’s queen Mangaiyarkkaraği and Kulaccirai, the minister, who were ardent Saivas, invited Sambandar to Madurai to free the king and the country from the influence of Jainism which was then predominant there. Sambandar visited Madurai and defeated the Jains in various religious contests and disputes, cured the king of a malignant fever and won back the ruler and his subjects to Saivism. Sambandar’s efforts were largely responsible for the decline and downfall of Jainism in Madurai and the Tamil country. There is a shrine dedicated to Jñānasambandar in the Madurai temple.

Māṇikkavācaka was born in Tiruvādavūr near Madurai in the Mēḻūr taluk. He is also known as Tiruvādavūrar after the name of his native town. He became a great scholar while still in his teens. He is traditionally known to have been the minister of Arimardhana Pāṇḍya. God Sundarēśvara of Madurai is said to have performed many miracles on his behalf.2

Latterly Māṇikkavācaka left the services of the Pāṇḍya king and devoted himself to the service of God. He visited many shrines of South India singing the praise of God. At Chidambaram he is stated to have vanquished the Buddhists from Ceylon, in religious debates. As a poet and mystic Māṇikkavācaka occupies a unique place in the history of Tamil sacred literature. His Tiruvācakam forms the eighth book of the Saiva canon.

1. As stated earlier, Kūn Pāṇḍya is generally identified with Arikēśāri Mara-varman (670-700 A.D.)
2. Nambi’s Tiruvilaiyadal (Nos. 27-30); Paranjoti’s Tiruvilaiyadal, Nos. 58-61.
THE ĀLVĀRS: The revival of orthodox Hinduism in the Tamil country was due not only to the indefatigable efforts of the Saiva Nāyanārs but also to the Vaiṣṇava Ālvārs. Of the twelve Ālvārs, four hailed from the Pāṇḍya country. They were Nammāl- vār, Madhurakavi Ālvār, Periyālvār and Āṇḍāl. Nammāl-vār was the greatest of them all. He was a Vellāḷa from Ālvār Tirunagari (Kuru- gūr) in Tinnevelly district. He wrote the Tiruvāyolveri, the Tiruviruttam, Tiruvāsiriyam and Periya Tiruvandadi. His hymns form the second largest individual total in the Nālāyira Prabandham collection. His disciple was Madhurakavi. Attempts have been made to identify Madhurakavi with Mārānkarī, the minister of Parāntaka Nēduṇjaṉaiyaṉ (765-815 A.D.)¹.

Periyālvār (also known as Viśṇucitta and Bhaṭṭarpirān) was a Brahman of Śrīvilliputtūr (Ramnad district) who lived about the close of the 8th century and the beginning of the 9th century A.D. He wrote the Tiruppallāṇḍu and about 500 hymns in the Nālāyira Prabandham collection. He is reputed to have won in a religious disputation in the court of the Pāṇḍya king, Śrīmāra Śrīvallabha (815-62 A.D.). His daughter Āṇḍāl or Kōdai is one of the greatest of women mystics. Her hymns reflect her intense devotion to Viśṇu. She wrote the Nācchiyār Tirumoli and the Tiruppāvai.

JAINISM: Jainism which had existed side by side with Hinduism in the Śaṅgam Age spread rapidly and gained great prominence in the Madurai country from the 5th century onwards. But owing to the efforts of Saiva Nāyanārs like Sambandar about the 7th c. A.D. it received a serious setback. Jainism continued to survive to some extent in the Madurai country and this is borne out by epigraphic evidences. Many Vaṭṭeluttu inscriptions of about the 8th to 10th c. A.D. found in the Madurai region as well as in other parts of the Pāṇḍya country speak of several Jaina religious teachers, Jain pallis, the erection of Jaina temples and images and the gifts to Jain temples. A record in Tamil verse² says

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that during the reign of Neṣumārāṇ Śrīvallabha, the chief of Iruppaikkudi, Eṭṭi Śāttan erected at Iruppaikkudi a big Jain pālli with a pavilion and a hall. Rājasimha I is also said to have made gifts to Jain or Buddhist temples besides gifts of brahmadeyas and devadānas. The gift to Jain or Buddhist temples was known as pālliccoṇḍam. Often such gifts were placed under the protection of the "Pāḷliccīvignāṉḍr̲". Boundaries of these gift lands were marked by stones with triple umbrellas.

Tradition says that there were 8000 Jains living in eight hills around Madurai. An old poem gives the names of these eight hills as Parangunṟaṁ, Oruvagam, Pappāram, Paḷḷi, Arungunṟam, Pērānda, Yānai and Irungunṟam. Of these Parangunṟaṁ may be identified with Tirupparankunṟam to the south-west of Madurai, Yānai with Anaimalai to the north-east of Madurai and Irungunṟam with Tirumāḻiruṉjōḷai. Paḷḷi probably refers to the Tiruppaḷḷimalai near Nāṟṟāmalai in Pudukkōṭṭai. There was a small Jain mūṭhā and shrine at Tiruppaḷḷimalai. The identification of the other hills is not very clear. Sambandar also refers to the many Jains in Yānaimalai and other places. The numerous Jain inscriptions in Vatṭeḻuttu and figures in high or low relief in many of the mountain regions surrounding Madurai such as Anaimalai, Śamaṇamalai near Kīḷakkuḍi, Kōṅgarpuliyankūḷam, and Muttuppaṭṭi and the names of Jain teachers, disciples and shrines mentioned in these inscriptions indicate that Jainism was prevalent in the environs of Madurai about the 9th c. A.D. The various versions of the Madurai Tiruśvaiyēdal Purāṇa also speak of the 8000 Jains vanquished by Sambandar. The figure 8000 may be merely a convention to indicate a large number of Jains.

3. I.P.S. No. 658.
5. I.P.S. No. 658.
6. Tirumalavay Padigam.
The Jaina Sangha was divided into the Nandi, Sēna, Simha and Dēva gīnas. The names of the religious teachers occurring in the inscriptions from the Madurai country indicate that they belonged to various sects and sections of Jainism. Ajjanandi, Kanakanandi and others belonged to the Nandi gāna. Indrasēṇa and Gūnasēna belonged to the Sēna gana. Those belonging to the Simha gīna had the title vīra. Thus Kanakavīra was of the Simha gana while Baladevaśakuraśāgala probably belonged to the Dēva gana.

The Jaina teacher, Ajjanandi seems to have exercised great influence and is mentioned in a large number of inscriptions from the Madurai district. Names of other Jain teachers could also be gathered from the epigraphs of the region. For instance, Indrasēna, Mallisēnapperiyar, Pārvavādāra, Aritṭānēmipperiyar, pupil of Aṭṭāravāsīgala, Anantavīra Adīgala, Gūnasēnapperiyagala, the pupil of Vardamānavaṇḍitar who was the pupil of Gūnasēnadēva presiding over Kuṇāṭittirukkāṭṭāmbali in Venbu Nādu and Dēvamantadēva, pupil of Gūnasēnadēva who was in charge of a pali. (Since Gūnasēnadēva is said to have been in charge of a local pali it probably indicates a pali at Kongar Puliyankulum itself). Pūvanandikkuratti, Paṭṭinikkurattiyar of Perumpattiyar, Siriviśaiyakkurattiyar and Tiruccāranāttukkurattigai were some of the Jain women teachers.

1. Janasamandar mentions a number of Jains of the Nandi and Sēna gana in his Tirumalavai Padigam.
2. M.E.R. 70 of 1905 (Anaimalai); 692 of 1905 (Avarmanalai); 729 of 1905 (Uttamapalayam); 54 of 1910 (Kongarpuliyangulam); 64 of 1910 (Pecippallam). This record mentions Ajjanandi’s mother Gunamatiyār; 562 of 1911 (Karunkalakudi); 603 of 1915 (Eruvadi).
5. M.E.R. 700 of 1905 (Avarmanalai)
6. M.E.R. 725 of 1905 (Uttamapalayam)
7. M.E.R. 732 of 1905 (Uttamapalayam)
8. M.E.R. 330 of 1908 (Kongar Puliyangulam)
9. M.E.R. 331 and 332 of 1908 (Kongar Puliyangulam); 65 and 66 of 1910 (Kilakkudi or Pecippallam).
10. M.E.R. 701 of 1905 (Avarmanalai)
11. Ibid.
Kurandi¹ Tirukkāṭṭampalli² in Venbūnādu appears to have been one of the most important Jain religious houses of the time. Inscriptions mention a shrine of Tirukkuṅagiridēva³. Most of these Jaina inscriptions are small ones in Vatteluttu characters often engraved in rock below Jaina figures cut in relief.

Sambandar is known to have vanquished the Jains in the Madurai country during the 7th c. A.D. Palaeographically the numerous Jain Vatteluttu inscriptions in the Madurai locality are assigned to the 9th-10th centuries. Jain inscriptions occur again only after a long interval but even then not in the Madurai locality. Since all the Jains may not have left the Madurai region immediately after being vanquished by Sambandar one may safely assign these Jain inscriptions to a period contemporaneous with Sambandar or the period immediately following his time.

RISE OF MATHAS: During the period of the First Empire one notices the beginning of mathas which were destined to play a significant role in the cultural history of the medieval period. Several records mention a matha of Mahāvratins⁴. These records indicate that many unorthodox sects like the Kāḷāmukhas were widely prevalent during this period. A record of the Koḍumbāḷūr chieftain Vikrama Kēsari⁵ states that he presented a big matha (brihanmatham) with eleven villages to Mallikārjuna of Madurai, who was the chief ascetic of the Kāḷāmukha sect. Mallikārjuna belonged to the Āṭrēya Gotra and was the disciple of two teachers named Vidyārasi and Tapōrasi. The Kanarese country was the stronghold of the Kāḷāmukha sect. The above records show that the sect had extended its influence into Madurai, Pudukkōṭṭai and Ramnad also.

2. M.E.R. 330 of 1908 (Kongarpuliyan kulam) ; 63 of 1910 (Kilakkudi)
3. M.E.R. 732 of 1905 (Uttamapalayam)
(iv) Architecture: Cave and Structural Temples

The period of the first Pāṇḍya Empire was one of great significance in the architectural history of the Madurai country. The Pāṇḍya kings were patrons of art and architecture. Many rock-cut caves and monolithic shrines were excavated and structural stone temples built. Though similar stone structures were erected by the Pallavas about the same period it may be noted that the rock-cut caves and monoliths of the Pāṇḍya country lie outside the Pallava domain and form a separate group by themselves with special characteristics of their own. For instance, “some of the distinctive Pallava features, such as kādus on the projecting cornice, embellishments of facade, capitals, pillars etc., are absent in Pāṇḍya caves. The tendency to introduce portrait sculptures in caves is in evidence”,¹ in the Pāṇḍya rock-cut caves. There is also a difference in the figures of dvārapālakas. In the Pāṇḍya caves while one dvārapālaka rests on a club as in the Pallava types, the other has no club and often has his hands folded across the chest. The earliest rock-cut cave temple so far known in the Pāṇḍya country is the one at Pillaiyārpaṭṭi which is about two miles from Kunnakkuḍi in the Ramnad district. An archaic Vatteluttu inscription of about the 7th c. A.D. on a pilaster in this cave indicates that the cave may be assigned to the 7th c. A.D. The inscription is a short label of two lines and mentions a certain Ikkiṭṭurukcorruru Aṉiṉjan who was probably responsible for the excavation of the cave. The rock-cut cave temple has early sculptures carved on its walls.

The plan of the cave temple at Pillaiyārpaṭṭi is rather peculiar. While the main shrine containing the rock-cut linga faces the east, a wing is also cut out of the rock in front of this shrine so as to face the north. On the south wall of this wing or verandah is cut a figure of Gaṇeša, locally known as Karpaga Pillaiyār.

The cave temples at Ānaimalai are about a century later than that at Pillaiyārpaṭṭi. Ānaimalai is about six miles north-east

of Madurai. Two inscriptions\(^1\) in the rock-cut Narasimha temple on this hill refer to the construction of this shrine by Mārangāri, the versatile minister of the Pāndya king Māraṇjaṇaiyan in 770 A.D. and the addition of a mukha mandapa to the shrine by his brother Māran Eyinan. The cave temple with two pillars cut out of solid rock is a small shrine dedicated to Viṣṇu whose image it is said was consecrated in 770 A.D.\(^2\) Since the date of construction of the shrine is known it is of importance in the study of cave temples.

A few yards away from the cave there is another rock-cut cave with a sanctum and an outer porch supported on two square pillars with chambered corners and lotus medallion ornaments. In the central shrine is a relief of Viṣṇu with his consort and within the porch are four figures, two of which probably represent devotees\(^3\).

About the same time as the Ānaimalai shrine was consecrated there were building activities in Tirupparankunram about four miles south-west of Madurai. The rock-cut caves at Tirupparankunram hill form an important group in the Pāndya country and unlike many other cave temples continue in worship even today. The main shrine is a large cave cut on the rock surface facing north but is now hidden behind mediaeval and modern structures in front of it. Longitudinally it runs east-west and consists of a large rectangular opening. On the rock surface facing the entrance are reliefs of Subrahmanya\(^4\) and Gaṇeṣa at the two ends with Durga\(^5\) in the

3. H. Krishna Sastri (South Indian Images of Gods and Goddesses, p. 218, n.1) states that there is also a rock-cut shrine of Subrahmanya at Anaimalai with only one goddess as at Tirupparankuram and that it is now called Sramanankoyil, which is evidently a corruption of Saravanank Koyil.
5. It is not clear whether the excavation of the shrine to Durgādēvi mentioned in M.E.R. 37 of 1908 refers to the central panel of Durga in the sanctum or whether it refers to a Durga shrine which might have been excavated somewhere else on the rock surface. Perhaps it is a reference to the group which is now known as Annapūrṇā Dēvi and which is at a lower level than the sanctum.
centre. In a chamber cut into the eastern wall is an image of Viṣṇu and in a similar chamber cut on the western wall is a linga with a relief of Sūnakaṇḍa on the face of the rock behind it. This group of fire images forms the central shrine. Two dvārapālakas are on either side of the entrance. In front of the chambers to Siva and Viṣṇu there are two dvārapālakas each. These latter dvārapālakas are heavily coated with cement (śāndu), perhaps to repair damaged parts. But the dvārapālakas of the front entrance are undamaged and resemble Pallava work.

A Vaṭṭeluttu inscription¹ of the sixth year of Māranjadaiyan alias Parāntaka records that Sattan Gaṇapati who was the king’s mahāsāmanta and a member of the Vaidya family of Karavandapuram, carried out many repairs (“tiruttuvittadu”) to the temple and tank at Tirupparankunṟam² and that his wife Nakkangoṛī excavated the shrines of Durgādēvi and Jyeṣṭā³. Nakkirar and many other Sangam poets refer to Tirupparankunṟam as the hill sacred to Muruga. The Purīpādal refers to the temple to Muruga, the painting in maṇḍapa near the temple, the springs on the hill and so on. Sambandar in his Dēvāram calls the hill Parankunṟu. Since Sattan Gaṇapati seems to have carried out repairs only to the temple one may infer that the sanctum is probably earlier than the time of Māranjadaiyan (c. 765-815 A.D.)

Outside this shrine are other images carved on the rock surface on the east and west. Narasimha, Viṣṇu and Varāha are carved on the eastern face while on the western face a deity with a bull behind and Naṭarāja are carved. A third figure has been partly covered by a wall, and the reliefs are continued in a small chamber behind the wall.

There are a number of subsidiary caves distributed on different levels below this principal shrine. Though small and difficult of access, they are, however, interesting for their sculptures. Two caves are below the large maṇḍapa which adjoins the sanctum.

2. "Sāttan Gaṇavadi tiruttuvittadu tirukkōyilum sṛtatāgāhamum."
3. "Nakkangoṛirir ceyappattadu Durgādēvi kōyilufiśétai kōyilum."
The cave on the west is stated to have an image of Gajalakṣmi. That on the east, access to which is through an entrance from the maha-
mandapa level, contains a very interesting group of ganaśas, a four-
headed God and a figure on a chariot with a peacock in front (fig. 1).
The identity of this group is not known and this cave does not seem
to have been noticed by scholars. The sculpturing is undoubtedly of
an early period, perhaps of the 7th-8th centuries. The ganaśas have
the ribbon-like sacred thread with a knot over the left shoulder,
characteristic of early sculptures. The anatomical rendering also
represents early work. The figure in the chariot has what looks like
a mace resting on the chariot. The figure is standing with his right
had lifted up and his left hand folded on his chest. The ganaśas and
bhūtas are all suggestive of vigorous action as though attacking and
driving or running away. Their gaze seems to be fixed on some
particular object high above. The whole execution looks very dra-
matic in spite of the damage done to many of the figures. The
four-headed figure which faces the entrance is seated and measures
from waist to head about three feet in height. It is the largest among
the carvings. It is four-handed. On its head is a cylindrical kritas
as in early Pallava sculptures. The figure is much damaged and
part of the head on the right side is lost. Besides, an opening has
been made through the mouth to serve as a drain for water from the
shrines in the tier above. This has completely damaged the front
face. On the left one could see two faces in profile, though even
here the outline is lost in parts. The front right arm is lifted. It is
difficult to make out what it holds. The back right arm rests on the
thigh. The front left arm is thrust behind some figure in the
front. The back left arm hangs free and seems to be lifting some-
thing. The figure wears an yajñāpadita with three thick strands.
Parts of a necklace also are visible. Bracelets and armlets are on
the hands.

The scene probably represents Subrahmanya with his ganaśas fight-
ing Sūrapadma. This group is particularly valuable to scholars.
Though damaged, it is left in the state in which the stone carvers
made it, while most of the other figures in the various shrines have
been heavily restored with cement (śāndu). The figures which are
free of cement, like the Jyeśta group and the group referred to here,
prove the antiquity of the cave.
About the Durga shrine mentioned in the Vatteluttu inscription of Maṇḍaśaiyan one does not know whether it refers to the figure of Durga in the central shrine or to the Dēvi group which is at a lower level (fig. 2). The latter group is a large one and is in a chamber to the west of what, for the present, may be called the Sūra Samhāra group. The group is carved in a recess measuring about eight feet long and about five feet high. Within this space 21 figures have been carved. The Dēvi is seated on a padmāsana. The back of the throne is ornamented with mākaraś and simhas. The Dēvi is four-armed, with a jāta maṇṭa. The front right hand is in the abhayā pose and the back right hand holds the goad. The front left hand rests on the thigh and the back left hand holds the noose. The right leg is bent and rests on the seat while the left leg hangs in front of the seat. On either side of the Dēvi on the wall are reliefs of two āruśi bearers and next to them are two heavenly figures, probably Sūrya and Candra. On the wall to the right of the Dēvi are three standing figures with kriṣṇas and hands in various poses. A similar group of three figures is on the wall on the left side. All these six perhaps represent divine figures. Immediately sitting on the ground next to the Dēvi, on the right and left, are two sages who are perhaps Vēdavyāsa and Parāśara as they resemble similar statues elsewhere in the temple. The front row includes four rśis, two on either side. A figure seated on the ground on the right next to the rśi appears to be playing on the flute while a similar figure on the left appears to have held a vīṇa in the hands. Two standing figures, one on either side in front of the recess, complete this group. The figure on the right holds a sword and shield in his hands while the figure on the left has a goat's head, has his right hand in the vīsnoya pose and the left hand resting on his thigh. These probably are dvarapālaśaś. The Dēvi is described as Annapūraṇa who sometimes has all the attributes as found in this sculpture. It may be also Bhuvanēśvarī who has kudālaś, kaṇkaman, is seated on a padmāsana with pāga and anuśa in two of her hands, the two remaining hands being in the abhaya-vrada pose. In Moore's Hindu Pantheon1 there is an interesting illustration which almost resembles this group in the Tirupparam-kuṇḍam hill. The illustration shows Dēvi worshipped by Sūrya-Candra, and Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Siva on one side, and Indira, Agni

and others on the other side. Rṣis in yōga attitude are seated around the Dēvi.

Below the mahā maṇḍapa on the eastern side is a long, dark, narrow passage which leads to a chamber in the rock face wherein a group of three figures are carved. These represent Jyeṣṭā Dēvi1 with her son and daughter (fig. 3). Jyeṣṭā is seated on a platform with her legs hanging down in front. Her hair which is tied up is surmounted by a makuṭa. She is two-handed and in her right hand she holds a nilōtpala flower. Her left hand rests on the thigh of her daughter who is seated to her left. She wears an yajñopavīta. The sculpture here does not show her with the ponderous belly as usually seen in her representations. Her bovine-faced son is seated to her right. He is also two-handed. His right hand holds a club. He has also the yajñopavīta. His right leg hangs in front of the seat while his left leg is bent and rests on the seat. The Dēvi’s daughter holds a nilōtpala in her right hand while the left hand hangs down and rests on the seat. The right leg is bent on the seat and the left leg hangs in front.

The sculpturing leaves no doubt that it is of the early period, perhaps of the 7th-8th centuries. The group is in a good state of preservation and therefore has not been covered by cement (śāndu).

Just below the floor level of the mahā maṇḍapa and almost in line with the entrance to the sanctum are two big reliefs of seated figures who are called Anḍarābharana and Ugramūrti. One of these carvings, that of Ugramūrti(?), is shown in figure 4. It has a chain and ornaments worn yajñopavīta-wise and is decorated with necklaces, armlets and bracelets. The right hand is held in the suci pose while the left hand rests on the knee of the left leg. The treatment of eyes and nose reveals that these particular carvings may belong to a later period than the carvings in the cave chambers. These two figures are probably dvārapālakas.

The Umaiyaṇḍān cave at the foot of the southern side of the Tirupparankunram hill presents interesting problems. The cave

1. It is evidently this Jyesta group which is referred to in M.E.R. 37 of 1908 where Nak Kangorri, the wife of Sattan Ganavadi, is said to have excavated a shrine to Jyesta.
proper is cut into the rock. The front pillars are of the cubical type with lotus medallions and early Pallava type corbels, all of which are much damaged (fig. 5). On the wall facing the front of the cave are three panels, two of which contain carvings in relief. The first panel on the left is empty. The centre panel has a carving of Naṭarāja and the third panel shows Subrahmanya with his two consorts. The Naṭarāja panel (fig. 6) which is somewhat heavily damaged shows the God from the waist up only. The legs have been destroyed, as also the two front hands. The flaming tiṇavāśi is visible. Muyalagan and Nandi with the drum are not so damaged. Kāli is seen as a small figure above Nandi. The Dēvi who stands on the left of Naṭarāja is without head or hands. On the pilasters on either side of Naṭarāja are carvings of Gaṇeśa and Subrahmanya. Gaṇeśa is ten-handed and Subrahmanya is shown on the peacock. The Subrahmanya panel which is next to this shows him as a two-handed God with this two consorts, Valī and Dēvayāni on either side (fig. 7).

In a niche on the wall on the left side is a figure of Ardhanāri with a bull behind (fig. 8). On top of the Ardhanāri is a piece of scroll ornament which may be taken to be a stylised form of a tree or clouds. It perhaps represents a banyan tree. The wall on the right side contains a long inscription of Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I (1216-1239 A.D.)

Outside the rock-cut cave, are figures carved in niches on either side on the rock surface. On the left side are the figures of Vighnēśvara and two rśis who are perhaps Vēdavyāsa and Parāśara (fig. 9). On the right side in a niche is a solitary figure which could not be identified at present. There were probably other figures on either side of it, but all traces of these are now lost. The surviving relief perhaps represents some royal personage seated on a wide pitāha with the right leg resting on a small pedestal (fig.10). The figure seems to have been well ornamented but no makuṭa or kṛśa is seen at present. The next panel has three figures carved in it which are in a better state of preservation (fig. 11). The first figure has a big chignon and is seen standing in a devotional attitude and perhaps represents a royal donor. The centre figure is perhaps Sambandar or Bālasubrahmanya or Skanda as a dancing child. The third figure is no doubt the Tamil saint Appar. The last niche has a figure of Bhairava with
a dog behind (fig. 12). The figure of Bhairava looks almost like a Jaina tīrthankara.

These images by their subject and style of carving probably belong to a later period than those in the Subrahmanya shrine on the north face of the rock. Also one cannot escape the feeling that the work has been done by a lesser hand. A certain amount of indecisiveness is noticeable, and if one examines the rock surface one could see many incised outlines of figures which were perhaps done as a preliminary to carving or as rough sketches. The Umayāndan shrine is not in worship now.

Among other caves attributable to the Pāṇḍyās is the cave at Sittannavāsal. A damaged record engraved on the wall of the rock-cut Jaina temple, here, which is in Tamil verse¹, mentions the Pāṇḍya king Avanipāśekaran alias Śrīvalluva (Śrīnāra Śrīvallabha, 815-862 A.D.) and records that Madurai āśīriyan Iḻangautaman repaired the inner mandapa and built another mandapa in front of the temple, evidently referring to the rock-cut cave.

Kalugumalai, 12 miles from Śankaranayānkōyil in Kōyilpaṭṭi taluk (Tinnevelly district), is interesting for its rock-cut temples and sculptures. The rock on which these are cut is nearly 300 feet high. Three of its sides are precipitous. The most famous of its rock-cuts is the temple known as Veṭṭuvān Kōvil. This temple which is about 30 feet high and 40 feet deep has been carved on a great ridge of the rock. The solid rock from which it has been cut is left standing surrounding the temple on three of its sides. The temple which is in two parts with a garbhagriha and a chamber in front is unfinished. There is no idol installed in it. The most interesting part is the vimāna which is carved beautifully with karnakādu, pāścaram and sōlai and resembles that of the Arjuna and Dharmarāja rathas in Mahābalipuram. The ornamentation and sculpturing of figures of the Kalugumalai temple are more advanced and better finished. As the sculptured figures are in Śaiva form there can be little doubt that the temple was intended to be for Brahmanical worship. The rock-cut temple is ascribed to the 9th century². It is stated "to

furnish a link between the rock-cut caves and structural monuments in the Pândya country"1.

Higher up on the face of the rock are numerous carvings in relief of Jaina tirthankaras. Old Vatteluttu inscriptions are found below these figures. On the other side of the rock at its foot is a Subrahmanya temple. The sanctum and the manḍapa in front of it are cut into the rock.

Several other rock-cut temples are found in the Pândya country. Most probably they were excavated between the 7th and 9th c. A.D.²

**STRUCTURAL TEMPLES**: A number of epigraphs mention the construction of a structural stone temple at Kilamattur, about eight miles to the north-west of Madurai, during the reign of Vira Pândya "who took the head of the Cōla"². Vira Pândya was the contemporary of the Cōla kings Sundara Cōla and Āditya II Karikāla and may be said to have reigned in about 946 A.D. All the three records are in Vatteluttu. One of the above records which is damaged and is in verse⁴ states that the Śiva temple called Śrīkaṇṭheśvaram at this place was built in stone by the chief Tennavan Tamilevēl. The record also refers to some one who had attained proficiency in the six darśanas, the three kinds of Tamil, Sanskrit works, works on polity, the purāṇas and the intricacies of Patañjali’s yōga system.⁵ The two other records dated in the 4th+5th year of the king and in the 5th+6th year are connected epigraphs and say that the temple was built for the god at Tirumattur.

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1. Ibid. p. 120.
2. List of rock-cut temples in the Pandya country:—
   Madura District: Anaimalai, Tirupparankuram, Kunnattur, Arittapatti.
   Ramnad District: Kunnakkudi, Tirukkalakkudi, Pillaiyarpatti, Mahipalan-
   namalai, Tiruttangal, Piranmalai, Sevillipatti, Tirumalai.
   Tirunelveli District: Tirumalaiapuram, Malaiyadikkuricci, Virasilhamani,
   Vadikkottai, Kalugumalai.
   Pudukkottai (former State): Devarmalai, Malayakkovil, Tirumayam, Sittannava-
   saal.
and that certain arrangements were made for the conduct of worship in the temple. The three records were stated to have been found engraved on the base of the north, west and south walls of the central shrine when copied by the Epigraphy Department in 1926, but as the whole temple has been rebuilt recently many of these 10th century inscribed Vatṭeluttu slabs had been indiscriminately used up in the reconstruction. Only a few slabs could now be seen inside a recently constructed well as also on the wall and basement of one of the shrines (fig. 13). The only survival perhaps of the ancient structure are the few beautiful but weather-worn images of dvārapālakas, Dakṣināmūrti, Lingodbhava, Bhairava Sūrya and other icons.¹

¹ These are dealt with in chapter X sections B & C.
CHAPTER V
MADURAI UNDER THE COLAS

Madurai country which had known no other sovereign except the Pāṇḍya kings, experienced, for the first time perhaps, a change when it came under the sway of the Cōlas early in the 10th c.A.D.

Soon after his accession, the Cōla Parāntaka I (907-55 A.D.) had invaded the Pāṇḍya country as early as 910 A.D. and assumed the title, "Madiraikonā" (capturer of Madurai). But the subjugation of the Pāṇḍyas was a gradual and difficult process which involved much fighting and absorbed many years. Parāntaka's conquest of the Pāṇḍya kingdom was effected only by about 920 A.D.¹ Since then for nearly three centuries (from the early years of the 10th c. (920 A.D.) to the beginning of the 13th c.A.D.) Madurai was practically under the Cōla sway.

Towards the end of Parāntaka's reign there was trouble in the Cōla country due to the invasion of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa Kṛṣṇa III. The Pāṇḍyas took this opportunity to throw off the Cōla yoke and make a short recovery under Vīra Pāṇḍya "who took the head of the Cōla" (c. 946-66 A.D.), Gaṇḍarāditya (c. 949-50 to 957 A.D.) was probably the Cōla king defeated by Vīra Pāṇḍya who had also the surnames Cōḷāntaka² and Pāṇḍimārttāṅḍā³. Mahinda IV, the ruler of Ceylon, was an ally of Vīra Pāṇḍya. Both Parāntaka Sundara Cōla (c. 956-73 A.D.) and his son Āditya II Karikāla (c. 956-69 A.D.) claim to have defeated this Pāṇḍya king. The Leyden grant says that Āditya, while yet a boy, "played with Vīra Pāṇḍya in the battle"⁴. Parāntaka Sundara Cōla had the titles "Madhurāntaka"⁵ and "Pāṇḍiyaneicuram-irakkīna" ("who drove the Pāṇḍya into the forest")⁶ and was probably identical with Madiraikonā Rājakēsari⁷.

¹. M.E.R. 446 of 1917, dated in his 24th year, is the earliest inscription of Parantaka found in the Pandya country.
⁵. M.E.R. 139 of 1907.
Sundara Cōla defeated Vīra Pāṇḍya in the battle of Cēvur. After this defeat Vīra Pāṇḍya was probably forced to flee and seek refuge in the forest. Since the title "Pāṇḍyanaic-curam-irakkina" is found in an epigraph of Sundara Cōla dated in his seventh year, it may be inferred that the battle of Cēvur must have occurred sometime earlier. The Tiruvāḷangaḷu plates state that Āditya II killed Vīra Pāṇḍya. It is not clear whether this is a mere boast and whether Āditya who might have participated in the battle of Cēvur inflicted another defeat on the Pāṇḍya later on. Anyway, from the fact that the incidence of Cōla epigraphs in the Pāṇḍya country, again occurs only from the time of Rājarāja I, it may be seen that the Cōlas were not able to make much headway in spite of the many defeats they claim to have inflicted on the Pāṇḍyas. In fact Rājarāja in his Meykirtis claims to have subdued the Pāṇḍyas even when they were still powerful and illustrious.

Sundara Cōla’s son Rājarāja I (985-1014 A.D.), the great imperialist, subdued the Pāṇḍyas and established Cōla power in the Madurai country. Early in his reign he undertook a southern expedition against the Pāṇḍyas and Kērālas who were probably allies. It might have taken him several years as well as several campaigns for the complete subjugation of the Pāṇḍyas. The earliest record of Rājarāja so far known in the Pāṇḍya country is dated in his eighth year. The Tiruvāḷangaḷu plates which give a detailed account of the king’s southern conquests, state that he captured Madurai and subjugated the Pāṇḍya king Amarabhujanga whose identity, however, is not clear. In his Meykirtis beginning "Tirumagalpōla," Rājarāja boasts, that he conquered the Pāṇḍyas and deprived them of their splendour when they were still illustrious and flourishing in all their glory. This indicates that the Pāṇḍyas were quite powerful at

2. The Karandai plates (vv. 24-25) state that Vīra Pāṇḍya was defeated at Cēvur and forced to climb the peaks of the Sahayadri for refuge.
4. Verses 47 and 78.
6. Verses 76-79.
the time of their defeat by the imperial Cōla. Numerous inscriptions of Rājarāja occur in the Pāṇḍya country ranging from the eighth to the twentieth years of his reign.1

The Pāṇḍyas seem to have continued to rule in a rather subordinate position, though Rājarāja appears to have established with a firm hand Cōla suzerainty over the Pāṇḍya country. Under him the very name of the Pāṇḍya country came to be changed to "Rājarājamaṇḍalam" and "Rājarāja Pāṇḍinādu". Even sub-divisions were called Rājarājavālanādu and Pāṇḍyakulāśanivālanādu.2 During his campaigns against Ceylon between the 17th and 20th years of his reign, Rājarāja appears to have used the Pāṇḍya country as a base of operations.3

Rājendrā I (1012-1044 A.D.), the son and successor of Rājarāja I, inherited the Pāṇḍya kingdom as a part of the extensive empire built up by his father. In about the fifth year of his reign (1017-18 A.D.) Rājendrā led a successful expedition to Ceylon and brought back the crown and the garland of Indra and other jewels which the Pāṇḍya Rājasimha II had previously left behind in Ceylon. Ceylon became a Cōla province.

An inscription of Rājendrā’s third year records a gift by the queen of a Pāṇḍya king named Śrīvallavan. Though the identity of this Pāṇḍya is not clear, it shows that the Pāṇḍyas still continued in a subordinate position. But soon afterwards they seem to have proved refractory so that Rājendrā had to wage war against them and appoint a viceroy over the Madurai country, to keep the Pāṇḍyas under effective control. This expedition appears to have been undertaken in about the sixth or seventh year of Rājendrā. The Tiruvālangādu plates, referring to Rājendrā’s success, state that the defeated Pāṇḍya fled for refuge to the Malaya mountain and

1. M.E.R. 80 of 1910 from Alagarkoyil is dated in his 2(2)nd year.
that Rājendra appointed his own son, Śrī Cōla-Pāṇḍya, for the protection of the Pāṇḍya country. The last statement is confirmed by an epigraph of the tenth year of Rājendra¹ which states that the king established his own son in Madurai as his viceroy with the title Cōla-Pāṇḍya and that Rājendra built a huge palace at Madurai. When the Kērāḷas were defeated soon afterwards, the Cōla-Pāṇḍya viceroy appears to have been placed in charge of the Kērāḷa country also. The practice of Cōla viceroys ruling over Pāṇḍya country with the title Cōla-Pāṇḍya started from this time. These viceroys appear to have enjoyed almost regal status and maintained close contact with the imperial headquarters. But at the same time the Pāṇḍyas also seem to have continued to rule, though in a subordinate manner. Probably the simultaneous rule by several Pāṇḍyan kings and princes over various regions of the kingdom originated about this same period.

Of the available Cōla-Pāṇḍya epigraphs the largest number belong to Jaṭāvarman Sundara-Cōla Pāṇḍya, the son of Rājendra I². He appears to have ruled as viceroy for about 23 years. An inscription of his 30th (?) year from Āttūr in Tinnevelly³, mentions a regiment called “Sundara-Sōlapāṇḍya-terindapalaiyavāl.” Jaṭāvarman Sundara-Cōla Pāṇḍya probably continued as viceroy in the early years of Rājādhirāja I (1018-54 A.D.) who succeeded Rājendra I. The system of Cōla-Pāṇḍya viceroys started by Rājendra I was continued by his sons Rājādhirāja (1018-1054 A.D.), Rājendradēva II (1052-64 A.D.) and Virarājendra (1063-69 A.D.).⁴

In the historical introductions of Rājendradēva II’s inscriptions (1052-1054 A.D.) he is stated to have conferred on his younger brother Mummadi Śōlan the title Cōla-Pāṇḍya⁵. Virarājendra (1063-1069 A.D.) is stated to have conferred on his son Gangaikonda Cōla the

1. M.E.R. 363 of 1917; From M.E.R. 112 of 1905 it may be inferred that Sundara Cōla-Pāṇḍya was appointed viceroy about the sixth or seventh year of Rajendra.
2. Rajendra had several sons. It is not clear which son was appointed as the Cōla-Pāṇḍya viceroy.
Pāndimanaḍalam and the title Cōla-Pāṇḍya¹. An inscription from Shērmāṇēvi² refers to a certain Jaṭāvarman Sōla-Pāṇḍya as the son of Virājēndra Cōla and mentions his palace at Rājēndraśūlapuram. He is evidently the prince Gangai-Kondu-Cōla mentioned above. Inscriptions of the period speak of several other Cōla-Pāṇḍyas such as Jaṭāvarman Vira Sōla Pāṇḍya³, Māravarman Vikrama Sōla Pāṇḍya⁴, and Sundara-sōla Pāṇḍya who had palaces at Mādhakkuḷak-kil Madurai and Rājēndraśūlapuram and who refers evidently to the Cōla emperor as his uncle (anumān)⁵. The identity of these Cōla-Pāṇḍyas is not clear at present.

The Pāṇḍyas could not reconcile themselves to their political subordination by the Cōlas. Whenever there was an opportunity they tried to rebel and overthrow the Cōla yoke. The Kēralas and the kings of Ceylon often came to their aid in their struggle against the Cōlas. Even in the later years of the reign of Rājēndra I there was a joint rebellion by the Pāṇḍyas, Cēras and Singhales against the Cōlas. Rājēndra’s son and heir-apparent Rājādhiraṅga undertook an extensive southern campaign to suppress this. His inscriptions speak of his success and the defeat of the three allied kings of the south (Tennavar), viz., Mānabharana, Virakērala and Sundara Pāṇḍya⁶. Though Tennavar generally means the Pāṇḍyas, it perhaps refers in this particular context to the three allied kings of the south, viz., the Pāṇḍya, the Kērala and the Singhalese kings⁷. Sundara Pāṇḍya appears to be the Pāṇḍya ruler and possibly the leader of the coalition. Mānabharana was perhaps the king of Ceylon⁸. In a Ceylon expedition undertaken after the death of Rājēndra, Rājādhiraṅga is said to have dethroned four Ceylonese rulers, one of whom was Vikrama Pāṇḍya. The Cōla epigraphs state that Vikrama had taken refuge in Ceylon after “having lost the whole of the

2. M.E.R. 642 of 1916
southern Tamil country. The Mahāvamsa on the other hand states that Vikrama Pāñḍya was a Ceylonese prince who had taken refuge in the Duḷu country for some time. Since the Pāñḍyas and the Ceylonese had close political and dynastic connections at his time it is difficult to decide at present whether Vikrama Pāñḍya was a Pāñḍya or Ceylonese prince.

An epigraph of the fourth year of Vīra Rājendrā (1063-69 A.D.) mentions the defeat of a Virakēsari, son of the Pāñḍya, Śrīvallabha. The identity of these Pāñḍyas is also not known.

During the period of confusion in the Cōla country after the death of Virarājendrā, the Pāñḍyas once again tried to regain independence and Kulōttunga I (1070-1120 A.D.) had to subdue them again. After many prolonged and sustained campaigns in the Pāñḍya country Kulōttunga I was able to reassert Cōla suzerainty over the Pāñḍya kingdom. The campaigns against the Pāñḍyas were undertaken between the seventh and eleventh years of his reign. A record of the fifth year of Kulōttunga contains a vague reference to a Pāñḍya king beheaded by him. Kulōttunga is said to have defeated the five Pāñḍyas whose names are not given. Their identity remains obscure. It is said that Kulōttunga fixed the boundaries of the southern (Pāñḍya) country. The Kulōttungaśāsālan Pillaitamil mentions also a battle of Ścimponmāri (Ramanad district).

The Cōlas found it increasingly difficult to maintain their sway over the Pāñḍyas. The system of Cōla-Pāñḍya viceroyalties had apparently been given up and Kulōttunga, finding it impossible to continue with the old administrative arrangements, established military outposts (nilaippaṭai) at strategic points in the Pāñḍya country. The numerous inscriptions of the Pāñḍya kings since the time of Kulōttunga I

2. Geiger Cūlawamsa, vv. 11-14.
show very few signs of their political subjection to the Cōlas, and the provenance of Cōla epigraphs in the Pāṇḍya country also begins to diminish considerably. Hardly any Cōla inscription is found in the Pāṇḍya country after the reign of Kulōttunga I.

The Pāṇḍya epigraphs of the period give the names of a number of Pāṇḍya kings ruling over Madurai during the period when Cōla sway over Madurai was weakening, and the Pāṇḍyas were beginning to reassert themselves once again. A Jaṭāvarman Śrīvallabha seems to have reigned for about 23 years with real power. He appears to have begun his rule sometime after Kulōttunga’s invasion and subjugation of the Pāṇḍya country. The historical introductions of his inscriptions begin with the words “Tirumaṇḍantaiyum Jayamaṇḍandaiyum.” In his epigraphs there are references to the thrones Pāṇḍyarōjan and Kalingarataiyan in the halls of the palace at Madurai to the east of Māḍakkulam, to a royal prince Pillaiyār Sundara Pāṇḍya, to royal officers, coins such as dranmas, irrigation works and improvements and to grain measures.

Jaṭāvarman Śrīvallabha appears to have been succeeded by Māravarman Parākrama Pāṇḍya whose eulogies begin with “Tirumagaḻ puṇara.” The next Pāṇḍya king seems to have been a Jaṭāvarman Parāntaka Pāṇḍya who is known so far by only one epigraph from Kanyākumari, beginning with the words “Tiruvaḷaraceyomvaḷara”, dated in the ninth regnal year. It states that he defeated the Cēras, took Kulam of Telinga Bhima and South Kalinga. Probably these conquests were effected by this Pāṇḍya as a subordinate of Vikrama Cōla. Then there is mention of a Māravarman Śrīvallabha with a eulogy commencing “Puṇmaḻaḻ Jayamagal”. Vira Ravivarman of Travancore was his tributary. Śrīvallabha’s epigraphs

mention a Pillaiyar Kulaśēkhara who is most probably identical with Kulaśēkhara who figures in a civil war in the Pāṇḍya kingdom in the second half of the twelfth century.

The story of the Pāṇḍya succession war has to be pieced together from the account of the Mahāvamsa and from several Cōla epigraphs. Towards the close of the reign of the Cōla Rājarāja II (1146-73 A.D.) a fierce succession dispute broke out between Parākrama Pāṇḍya of Madurai and Kulaśēkhara. Besieged by Kulaśēkhara, Parākrama appealed for help to the Ceylonese ruler Parākramabābu (1153-86 A.D.) But before the Ceylon army could come to his aid, Kulaśēkhara had taken Madurai and killed Parākrama and hiswife and children. The king of Ceylon ordered his general Lankāpura Daṇḍanātha to continue the war against Kulaśēkhara, and bestow the Pāṇḍya crown on a prince of the family of Parākrama. Accordingly Lankāpura carried on the war on behalf of Parākrama’s son Vīra Pāṇḍya, who had fled to the Malaya mountains. Obviously the Singhalese general found the task to be more difficult than he had anticipated and had to send for reinforcements to Ceylon and placate the local Tamil chiefs with presents and honours.

He had to wage many fierce contests against Kulaśēkhara, in the Madurai, Rammad, Pudukkōṭṭai and also the Tinnevelly districts. Kulaśēkhara’s cause was supported by his uncle in Kongu, as well as by the Cōla king. The Mahāvamsa says that Kulaśēkhara and the Cōla army under Pallavarāyar were defeated at Kilenilaya and that after another defeat inflicted on Kulaśēkhara at Pon Amārāvati,

1. Geiger, Culavamsa, chapters 76 and 77.
3. M.E.R. 336 of 1928 from Nerur is a record of the Kongu chief Kulottunga Cōla. It states that the king made to his purohita a yatra dana before he started on anexpedition to Madurai to recover the kingdom for his nephew (marumaganar) karadeva. This evidently refers to Kulasekharadeva who fought against Parakrama in the Pandyā succession war. The Mahāvamsa also states that Kulaśēkhara received reinforcements from the Kongu country which belonged to his maternal uncles; M.E.R. 1899, pt. II, para 24, S.I.T.I. II, No. 716.
5. Modern Kilnilai in Tiruppattur taluk of the Rammad district.
Lankāpura handed over the government of the Pāṇḍya kingdom to Vira Pāṇḍya who had already been crowned king. The kahāpana, the coin of Parākramabāhu, was introduced and Lankāpura sent to Ceylon a vast booty. This account of the Mahāvamsa is rather one-sided and incomplete. While Lankāpura might have scored initial successes, not without difficulty, his final reverses are not mentioned.

Kulaśekhara appealed to the Cōla king for help in regaining his throne. An inscription from Pallavarāyanpēṭṭai states that the Cōla general defeated the Singhalese, reconquered the Pāṇḍya kingdom and carried out the Cōla king’s orders to the letter by nailing the heads of Lankāpura Daṇḍanāyaka and others to the gates of Madurai. These facts are not mentioned in the Mahāvamsa. Kulaśekhara then re-entered Madurai.

The Cōlas then supported the cause of one, Śrīvallabha, a nephew of Parākramabāhu, as a rival claimant to the Ceylon throne, and invaded Ceylon. Finding that his support of Vikrama Pāṇḍya’s cause had proved too costly and detrimental, Parākramabāhu, the king of Ceylon, changed sides and allied with Kulaśekhara, whom he recognised as the king of Madurai. This treacherous move of Kulaśekhara who sided with the Ceylonese enemy against whom the Cōla was fighting, forced the Cōla king to change his policy.

A record of the 12th year of Rājadhirāja gives an account of the events which followed. It states that Kulaśekhara, in alliance with the Ceylonese, drove the Ėlagattār and the Maṇava sāmanṭas (who were in the service of the Cōla king) to the north of the river Veḷḷāru. He also removed the beheaded heads of the Ceylon generals which were nailed to the gates of Madurai. Under the Cōla king’s orders, his general, Anṇan Pallavarāyan, turned out Kulaśekhara and installed Vira Pāṇḍya, the son of Parākrama Pāṇḍya, as the ruler of Madurai.

3. This is obviously a reference to some sections of the troops.
The whole course of the civil war up to the installation of Vira Pāṇḍya may be placed roughly between 1169 A.D. and 1177 A.D. ¹

Soon after the accession of Kulōttunga III in 1178 A.D. the civil war was renewed. Vira Pāṇḍya who had been reinstated with Cōla help, soon changed sides and joined with Parākramabāhu, the king of Ceylon, and with the ruler of Vēṇāḍi also perhaps. Vikrama Pāṇḍya, a relative of Kulaśēkhara who had probably died in the interval, sought the help of Kulōttunga III against Vira Pāṇḍya. The Cōlas invaded the Pāṇḍya kingdom, defeated the Pāṇḍya and Singhalese troops, drove Vira Pāṇḍya into exile and handed over Madurai and the throne to Vikrama Pāṇḍya.² These events probably happened by about 1182 A.D.

A few years later, in about 1189 A.D., Kulōttunga III had to wage a second war against the Pāṇḍyas³. The exiled Vira Pāṇḍya, with the help of his allies, made another attempt to regain the throne. The Cōlas defeated him at Neṭṭūr in about 1189 A.D. Vira Pāṇḍya fled to Ceylon and thence to Travancore. Soon both the Vēṇāḍi king and Vira Pāṇḍya submitted to Kulōttunga. Vira Pāṇḍya's life was spared and he appears to have been rewarded with some land, jewels and other gifts⁴.

A third successful campaign into the Pāṇḍya territory was undertaken by Kulōttunga in about his 29th regnal year, when Jaṭāvarman Kulaśēkhara (1190-1223 A.D.) was ruling in Madurai. But it was soon followed by a signal defeat at the hands of Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I from which time onwards the Pāṇḍya supremacy was re-established.

The Cōla sway over the Pāṇḍya country, though it lasted for nearly three centuries, seems to have been mainly concerned with keeping under control the Pāṇḍyas who frequently rebelled and

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3. M.E.R. 458 of 1902 dated in the eleventh year and 66 of 1892 dated in the 19th year of Kulottunga furnish details about this campaign.
schemed to overthrow the Cōla suzerainty. Under these circumstances the Cōlas could not make any noteworthy contribution to the material progress of the country. The Pāṇḍyas too who could not reconcile themselves to a subordinate position were more concerned with searching for opportunities to put an end to Cōla domination. Thus there was really no union of the two kingdoms and for nearly three centuries the progress of the country was in a state of suspended animation while the rival rulers were carrying on a struggle for mastery.
CHAPTER VI

THE SECOND PANDYAN EMPIRE

A. POLITICAL HISTORY

The end of Cōla suzerainty marked also the end of the Pāṇḍya civil war. The Pāṇḍyas began to recover rapidly and a series of powerful rulers began to rule over Madurai and what may be termed the Second Pāṇḍya Empire (roughly 12th to 14th c. A.D.). During this period the Pāṇḍya kingdom reached its widest extent.

One of the earliest rulers of this period was Jaṭāvarman Kulaśekhara (1190-1223 A.D.), probably the son and successor of Vikrama Pāṇḍya who was supported by Kulōttunga III during the Pāṇḍya Civil War. Kulaśekhara’s inscriptions are found in the Madurai, Ramnad and Tinnevelly districts. His eulogies usually begin “Pūvin kilatti”. In his palace at Mājakkulakkil Madurai there were thrones called Mālavardīyan and Kālingarāyan. The king’s brother-in-law was Kōdai Ravivarman. The Tiruppūvaṇam plates creating Rājagambhirā Caturvedimangalam village were issued during the 25th regnal year of Kulaśekhara. Towards the latter part of his reign Kulaśekhara appears to have been defeated by Kulōttunga III who then performed virabhīṣeka in Madurai city. This campaign might be assigned to about the year 1205 A.D.

Kulōttunga by his repeated expeditions had kept the Pāṇḍyas in subservience. He carried on his campaigns in a ruthless and uncompromising manner destroying almost every vestige of Pāṇḍya


4. I.P.S. 163, a record of the 31st regnal year of Kulottunga III, and I.P.S. 166 of the 34th year mention in detail the king’s activities in the city of Madurai. Records of his 35th year (M.E.R. 339 of 1914, I.P.S. 169) and 40th year (M.E.R. 273 of 1914, I.P.S. 176) state that he performed virabhīṣeka and viṣayabhīṣeka in Madurai.
suzerainty, razing their very palaces to the ground and renaming their country and capital after Cōla epithets. But within ten years of Kulottunga's boasted campaigns the tables were completely turned on him by Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I (1216-39 A.D.) who had succeeded Kulaśekhara and who carried his arms into the Cōla country upto Cidambaram in the north. All that Kulottunga did to Madurai and the Madurai country were re-enacted by Sundara Pāṇḍya against the Cōlas and as early as the third year of his reign he defeated Kulottunga III. The Cōla king was forced to pay homage to the Pāṇḍya victor. The crown and the country were restored to the Cōla Kulottunga on his acknowledging the suzerainty of the Pāṇḍya ruler. Sundara's long and ornate praśasti "Pūmaruviya tirumodandaiyum" gives many interesting details about his Cōla conquest. A record of his seventh year mentions his victory over the Cōlas, the burning of Tanjore and Uṟaiyūr, Sundara's virāhisēka in the coronation hall of the Cōlas at Ayirattali, and the restoration of the Cōla kingdom to Kulottunga III. A part of the Cōla kingdom was given to a Bāna chiefstain perhaps as a reward for the help he rendered during the campaigns. Sundara Pāṇḍya assumed many titles after his conquest of the Cōlas. Some of them were "Sōṇaḍu valangi aruliyā", "Sōṇaḍu koṅḍaruliya" and "Sōṇaḍu koṅḍu muḍikondeśaṇḍolaṇpurattu virar abhisēkam paṇṭiyaruliya " and "Muṇi-valangum perumāil". Kulottunga's successor Rājarāja III attempted to throw off the Pāṇḍyan allegiance and regain independence. Sundara Pāṇḍya then defeated the Cōla king and took him captive and victoriously entered the Cōla capital Muḍikondeśaṇḍolaṇpuram where

1. M.E.R. 322 of 1928 of the 3rd year gives him the title "Sōṇaḍu valangi aruliyā". M.E.R. 47 of 1938 states that this record was engraved in the 3rd year of the Pandyu king who was crowned at Ayirattali.

2. M.E.R. 49 of 1890; M.E.R. 9 of 1926 of the 15th year also mentions Sundara's virahīsaṅka and viṣṇayukhisēka at the Cōla capital at Palaiyaru and the restoration of the crown and the capital city to Kulottunga III.

3. M.E.R. 481 and 482 of 1908, 196 of 1939. A branch of the Banadarayas of Magadaimandalam had migrated south and settled in the Pandyu country. The Bāna chiefstain who helped Sundara Pandya was probably a member of this branch.

4. M.E.R. 77 of 1916 of the 7th year of Sundara mentions a "Muṇi-valangum perumāil" sandhi. Evidently Sundara Pandya took the title "Muṇi-valangumperumāil" to commemorate the restitution of the crown to the Cōla king.
he performed a vijayabhiseka. From the account given in a Tiruvénindiputam inscription dated 1231-32 A.D. and the Gadyakarṇāmṛta of Kālakalabha, it may be inferred that these events probably took place in about 1230-31 A.D. Rājarāja III fled from the capital and was for some time held prisoner in Šendamangalam by the Kāḍava chieftain, Köpperuṇjinga. The intervention of the Hoysala Narasimha II resulted in the release and restoration of the Cōla king. One of Narasimha’s titles was “the establisher of the Cōla kingdom.”

From now onwards Hoysala interference and influence in the affairs of the South Indian kingdoms gradually increases. With a view to increasing their own political influence they seem to have played the strategic game of throwing in their lot with a weaker power as against a stronger one. When warring against the Pāṇḍyas, the Hoysalas appear to have come to the aid of the Cōla often. The Gadyakarṇāmṛta states that Narasimha levied tribute from the Pāṇḍya. There appears to have been a decisive battle between the Hoysalas and the Pāṇḍyas at Mahēndramangalam on the Kāvēri in about 1232 A.D. Here Sundara Pāṇḍya was defeated. This was probably the reason why Sundara Pāṇḍya was not able to annex the Cōla kingdom. When peace was finally made between the Pāṇḍyas, the Cōlas and the Hoysalas it was sealed by many dynastic marriages. Narasimha’s son Vīra Somēśvara is referred to

4. M.E.R. 419 of 1914 dated S. 1152; from Tirucculī mentions the defeat of Janaṇatha (who refused to make obeisance) by Sundar. . . . The record probably relates to Sundara’s campaign against the rebel Cola. The term Janaṇatha might stand for Rajaraja III.
7. Gadyakarṇamṛta, M.E.R. 14 of 1938 from Tiruvananīk-kōvii mentions Bhogaya and Mallaya, two of Narasimha’s dandamayakas who were sent against the Pandyas and who made a gift to Brahmanas at Rameswaram in 1237 A.D. A record dated 1237 A.D. (E.C. Krishnarajapat, 63) states that Somēsvara was in the Pandimandalam.
as *māmādi* or uncle by the successors of both Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I and Rājarāja III.  

The records of Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I mention thrones named *Mālavarāyan* in palaces at Madura² and Pon Amarāvatī³, the king’s officers such as Solan Uyyanin irāduvan *alias* Gurukulattaraiyan⁴ and the court poet Kāraṇai Viḷupparaiyar⁵. The coin *Sōmaḍuṅḍānu* was perhaps issued by Sundara Pāṇḍya.

Sundara Pāṇḍya was succeeded by Jāṭāvarman Kulaśekhara II (acc. 1238 A.D.) who had a short reign, and then by Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya II (1238-53 A.D.) whose eulogies begin with *pāmalartiruvum*. In his reiga the Pāṇḍyas and the Hoysalas were on very friendly terms and Hoysala influence in Pāṇḍya affairs became a dominating factor. Sundara Pāṇḍya II refers to the Hoysala Vīra Sōmeśvara as his uncle⁶ (*māmādi*) and to the Kongu Cōla king Vikrama Cōla as his brother-in-law⁷. When Rājendra Cōla III invaded the Pāṇḍya kingdom, Sōmeśvara intervened and defeated the Cōla. Sōmeśvara also took such titles as *pāṇḍya kulamakṛṣaka* and “who won Rājendra in battle”⁸. There were many Hoysala officers in the Pāṇḍya country now⁹. One of them conquered the Kānanāḍu¹⁰, and there is mention of another settling a Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava dispute in Pudukkōṭṭai¹¹.

Sundara Pāṇḍya II’s records mention many gifts to temples and for promotion of Vēdic studies. There were thrones called *Mala-“

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1. Both Maravarman Sundara Pandya II and Jatavarman Vikrama Pandya call Someśvara their *mamādi* (uncle).
vāryan, Pallavarāyan and Tamilappallavarāyan\(^1\) in his palace at Madurai.

The next ruler was Jatāvarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I (1251-71 A.D.), the greatest of the mediaeval Pāṇḍyas. Under him the Pāṇḍyan empire reached its widest extent and the height of its splendour. He rapidly extended the Pāṇḍyan sway up to Nellore and Cuddapah in the north and to Ceylon in the south.

Sundara Pāṇḍya defeated the Cōlas, Kēraḷas and Hoysalas, and took Kongu and Ceylon. The Hoysalas were confined to the Mysore plateau. One record says that he made his younger brother Vira Pāṇḍya the viceroy of Konkanā Rājya\(^2\). Sundara also defeated the Pallavas, Gaṇḍagōpāla, the Bāṇas, the Kāḍava, Kōpperuḷiṅga and the Kākatiya Gaṇapati. Under him Kānci became almost a secondary Pāṇḍya capital. Both in his wars and in administrative work Sundara Pāṇḍya was helped by other princes of the royal family such as Jatāvarman Vira Pāṇḍya (acc. 1253 A.D.) who undertook an expedition to Ceylon between 1262 and 1264 A.D.\(^3\) Sundara assumed many titles such as "Emmangalalum konḍaruliya" and "Ellantalaivyāṉān" and performed vīrābhīṣekas and vijayābhīṣekas and tula-bhāVAS at many places like Cidambaram, Śrīraṅgam, Kānci and Nellore. His eulogies begin with Samasta Jagadādhāra\(^4\) in Sanskrit and pūnalar vaḷar\(^5\) in Tamil. Long Sanskrit epigraphs of his occur in many of the important South Indian temples such as those at Śrīraṅgam, Tinnevelly, Cidambaram, Kānci and others. In these the king's prodigious activities, his military prowess, and his liberal grants to temples and māṭhas are recorded. He gilded halls and walls in the Cidambaram and Śrīraṅgam temples, made liberal gifts to these and other temples, built the Köyil Ponmadapenmudal māṇḍapa in Aḻagarkōyil temple, instituted many special festivals in his name and issued coins with the legend "Ellantalaivyāṉān", probably he built or completed the eastern Gōpura of the Madurai temple.

\(^3\) K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, The Ceylon Expedition of Jatāvarman Vira Pāṇḍya (Proceedings of the Eighth All India Oriental Conference, pp. 508-26).
\(^5\) M.E.R.: 166 of 1894.
\(^6\) M.E.R.: 45 of 1891.
Many *mathas* were built during his reign. He also carried out reform in the administration of the *Srīrangam temple*.

Three years before his death he made Māravarman Kulaśēkhara the heir-apparent. Māravarman Kulaśēkhara I (1268 to 1310 A.D.) had a long reign of about 42 years. He had the title “Tiger of the Cōlas” and his eulogy begins with *tēṟpōl*. Kulaśēkhara was also a powerful ruler and the extent of the kingdom was maintained fairly intact, but the later years of his reign were a period of trouble. There were many foreign visitors to the kingdom in his reign and their writings form a useful source for the history of this period. The Venetian Marco Polo and the Muslim Wassaf visited the Pāṇḍyan country. They state that five brothers were ruling the kingdom of Mabar or the Pāṇḍyan country. Epigraphs also speak of several Pāṇḍyas ruling probably as sub-kings or co-regents along with Kulaśēkhara. Some of them were Jaṭāvaraman Sundara Pāṇḍya (acc. 1276 A.D.), Māravarman Vikrama Pāṇḍya (acc. 1283 A.D.) and Jaṭāvarman Vīra Pāṇḍya (acc. 1253 A.D.). There are references to several conquests by Kulaśēkhara including that of Ceylon.

Early in his reign Kulaśēkhara led a successful expedition against the Travancore country. This was evidently the reason for his assumption of the titles *"Sēvanaivēra"* and *"Kollam-konḍa"*. Kulaśēkhara defeated both the Hoysala Rāmanātha and his ally Rājendrā Cōla III in about 1279 A.D. An epigraph of the 11th year states that Kulaśēkhara conquered Malaiṇāḍu, Sōṇāḍu, the two Kongus, Iḷam (Ceylon) and Toṇḍaimanḍalam. Taking advantage of a famine at the end of the reign of Ceylonese king Bhuvanai-kabāhu I, Kulaśēkhara sent his minister Ṭīravacakravarti to Ceylon. The island was conquered and the Tooth Relic of Buddha was carried.

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2. Wassaf says that this happened at the close of 709 H., *i.e.*, about May-June, 1310 A.D. Elliot and Dowson: *The History of India as told by its own Historians*, pp. 49-50.
4. M.E.R. 24 of 1927 says that Kulasekhara built a *prakōra* wall of the Tinnevelly temple with the booty he had collected after defeating the Kerala, Cōla and the Hoysala kings.
away to the Pāṇḍya country. For about twenty years Ceylon remained a part of the Pāṇḍya empire. The next ruler of Ceylon Parākramabāhu III had to employ much persuasion and go on a personal mission to the court of Kulaśēkhara to recover the Tooth Relic. It was only during the civil war after Kulaśēkhara’s death that Ceylon regained her independence.

Kulaśēkhara also appears to have maintained diplomatic relations with China. In the later years of his reign troubles started probably due to a weakening of central control over the various co-rulers.

The last years of Kulaśēkhara’s reign were clouded by the jealousies and quarrels of his two sons, Jatavarman Sundara Pāṇḍya and Jatavarman Vira Pāṇḍya. Vira Pāṇḍya was made heir-apparent by Kulaśēkhara though he was only an illegitimate son. Sundara Pāṇḍya became jealous, and murdered his father Kulaśēkhara and tried to seize the throne. Then followed a struggle between the two sons. In 1310 A.D. Vira Pāṇḍya defeated Sundara who fled to the north to get Muslim aid against his brother. With the assassination of Kulaśēkhara the Pāṇḍyas began to decline in power rapidly.

Thus ended a glorious chapter in Pāṇḍyan history when Pāṇḍyan imperialism had extended its control over many dynasties such as the Cōla, the Kēralas, the Kongus, the Hoysalas, the Kākatiyas and others, and even over the island of Ceylon.

B. ADMINISTRATION AND SOCIAL LIFE

The system of administration during the period of the Second Pāṇḍyan Empire seems to have been more or less the same as that followed during the centuries immediately preceding it. The king was helped by royal princes and by ministers in the work of

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1. Kulasekhara's conquest of Ceylon is confirmed by the account of the Mahāvaṃsa (Mahavamsa, xc; Turnour and Wijesinha tr.), pt. ii, pp. 314-15.
3. M.E.R. 235 of 1914, a record of Maravarman Sundara Pandya I says the Pillaiyar (son?) Alagapperumal determined the landed interest of the country amicably; 309 of 1928; I.P.S. 327.
administration. Even thrones in the Pāṇḍyaṇ palaces are often referred to by the same name as that of the royal officer at the time. The administrative machinery was an elaborate bureaucracy.

The village continued to be the unit of local administration, and land tax was the chief source of revenue. Registers showing rights over land were maintained carefully at the capital and detailed records of transactions involving land rights were maintained. Stone inscriptions were probably copies of the original documents written on oḷais.

The king usually transacted business by means of oral orders (kēḷuē). A regular and elaborate procedure seems to have been developed for securing and putting into execution the king's order. The so-called Triple Documents consisting of the kēḷuē, oḷai and uḷvari are one of the most distinguishing features of mediaeval Pāṇḍyaṇ administration. Usually a high official first made a request to the king about a particular transaction and got his oral sanction or order (kēḷuē). The king's sanction was accompanied by an order that the necessary entries should be made in the revenue registers and that the revenue department should issue the oḷai and uḷvari regarding the transaction. The oḷai was an executive order to the officers to give effect to the king's order. The revenue department then issued the document called uḷvari and entered the transaction in the revenue register. The uḷvari was often signed by a number of revenue officers (variyittar). The oḷai and the uḷvari generally did not contain the king's proper name but began with the title "Tribhuvanacakravartin Kōnērinmaikongān".


The word tulūya at the beginning or the end of many mediaeval Pandya epigraphs (M.E.R. 4 of 1915, 270 of 1942) also shows that stone inscriptions were copies of originals on more perishable materials and that copies were maintained carefully.

There are references to various administrative offices such as tirumandira-ōlai, vari-ilār, puravaωari-tiṇɑikkala nāyagam, the tarki office, and varippottaga nāyagam. The officer Tirumandira-ōlai or ōlai as he was sometimes called, was a member of the tirumandira-ōlai nāyagam which was the department in charge of taking down the orders of the king. The puravaωari tiṇɑikkala nāyagam was obviously the Department of Land Revenue or the Department of Revenue Accounts. The varippottagam was the section in charge of the Tax Register. Varippottaganāyagam was apparently the Department of varippottagam. The officers of the revenue department were called variyilār (or puravaωariyār).

The system of local administration by means of the sabhā continued during this period and contributed to the efficient administration of the local areas. Some epigraphs contain interesting details about the activities of the sabhās. One epigraph records the grant of a village as dēvadāna by the assembly of Parāntaka CaturvēDIMangalam in Arinādu for repairs to the temple at Alagar-kōil by Ilaiyavilli Dāsar. There is reference to the executive committee (nirvāha sabhai) of a village. In one case the assembly complained to the king about the improper action of some persons who had dug a subsidiary channel above the main channel called Parākrama Pāṇḍyan kāl.

Many taxes and dues are mentioned in epigraphs of the period. Some of them are kadamai, antarāyam and pañjupli. Not much is

6. Dr. T.V. Mahalingam: South Indian Polity, p. 138. The term ōlai means a palm leaf. In course of time it came to be used to denote a document ("nam ōlaɪyum keloɪyum taraconom"), an office and an officer. For instance, the office of the tirumandira-ōlai department was also called tirumandira-ōlai or simply ōlai.
known at present about their exact nature. Particularly with regard to transactions pertaining to tax-free (iraiyili) gifts of land, the following set of taxes with some modifications, are invariably mentioned:—kadamai, anatarayam, karparaviilai, ponvari, viniyogam, kariya aratici, vettippattam, paniyili, sandivigrahappu, ilancinaippu, tari-irai, sekkirai, tattoli, tatjarappattam, idaiyar vari, inavar, erimipattam, kaniikkai, kartigai paccai, marrum, epperpatra iraigailum mudalad angakkaliy... iraivyilagakkud uttom.¹ This form is especially noticeable in inscriptions of the 12th to the middle of the 13th century A.D. The rates of land tax seem to have varied according to the nature of the soil and crops raised².

Some records refer to the temple’s share of kadamai³. There were different forms of land tenure⁴. On many occasions tax

1. Dr. T.V. Mahalingam: South Indian Polity, pp. 143, 166, 175, 188, 191. The kadamai was the land revenue collected from wet lands and was generally paid in kind. The anatarayam was a local tax payable in cash. The karparaviilai was evidently an import duty on camphor. The ponvari was a tax payable in gold. Viniyogam means distribution. It was a local tax distributed among all the people. The vettippattam was a tax for labour. The sandivigrahahika was a foreign Minister in charge of drafting the charters and epigraphs. The silpis who were the actual engravers on stone or copper, worked under him in the same department. The term sandivigrahahapru is evidently some contribution for the upkeep of the department in charge of drawing up charters and epigraphs which occupied a prominent place in mediaeval Pandyan administration. The ilancinaippu might have been some tax corresponding to the stamp duty levied now. Some of the taxes were in the nature of profession taxes. For instance tari-irai is evidently a tax on looms, i.e., weavers. Perhaps the tax sekkirai was paid by the oil mongers, the tatjarappattam by the goldsmiths, and the idaiyar vari by the shepherds or cowherds. The erimipattam was a tax paid by the fishermen. The inavar was a communal tax. The kartigai paccai and kaniikkai may have been contributions collected and distributed to temples and religious institutions. Since one of the meanings of pili is ‘gold’ panijupili might have been some such tax on cotton yarn or cloth. The word tattu has several meanings such as the loft of house or a potter’s wheel. The term tattoli was apparently a tax on potters.


remissions were made, for instance, on the occasion of a king's coronation\(^1\) or when lands were silted up due to sea action or to floods\(^2\).

Careful and elaborate arrangements were made by the P\(\text{\&}\)ndy\(\text{\&}\)yas for irrigational facilities. Tanks, canals and sluices were built and repaired by them\(^3\). Funds were set apart for maintenance and for repairs and grants were made for laying out streets\(^4\) and for founding villages\(^5\).

There are references to various coins and standards of measurements. Among the numerous types of coins referred to are the following: the *drummas (tiramam)*\(^6\), *dind\(\text{\&}\)ras*, *\(\text{\&}\)nai accu*, *\(\text{\&}\)s\(\text{\&}\)liyan k\(\text{\&}\)s\(\text{\&}\)ya* and the *pu\(\text{\&}\)ukkuligai*\(^7\). Among the measures are mentioned the *pa\(\text{\&}\)linett\(\text{\&}\)adik\(\text{\&}\)s*, the grain measure *Vira P\(\text{\&}\)ndiya k\(\text{\&}\)s*, the Sundara P\(\text{\&}\)ndiya k\(\text{\&}\)s, the Vikrama P\(\text{\&}\)ndiya k\(\text{\&}\)s, the rod *arul nidi*\(^8\), the *s\(\text{\&}\)ula n\(\text{\&}\)ri*, and the *Ka\(\text{\&}\)drattu s\(\text{\&}\)ula ulakku*\(^9\).

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1. M.E.R. 80 of 1905 of the 2nd year of Maravarman Sundara Pandya II records the remission of certain taxes on the occasion of the king's coronation.
4. M.E.R. 431 of 1930 mentions the formation of a street named "*Tirumurai-seppad\(\text{\&}\)-kando-perumal-tirumila vidi*."  
Some records state that during the time of Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I there was a change in the standards of measurement since the people were reduced in circumstances and were in distress. The standard grain measure was changed from 6 kalām to 7 kalām and 3 kurunī and the value of the tiramam was increased from 5 mā to 7 mā of kāṣu. The old 18 span land measure was now changed to one of 24 spans. The new lineal measure was called the kuḍitāngī.

Merchant corporations of various types are also mentioned in mediaeval Pāṇḍyan epigraphs. These mercantile guilds had a strong corporate sense. They were often known as the nagaratār, perhaps by reason of their association with the administration of cities or nagaravas. Certain towns in the Madurai country appear to be the strongholds of such corporations. There is frequent mention of the nagaratār of Dēśippattinam alias Vikramaśoḷapuram (modern Vikkirambangalam in Madurai district). The town appears to have been given the name paltinam because of its connection with the colony of merchants. Two records call the town a Dēśippattinanam alias Jayampolil Vikramaśoḷapuram. Jayampolil is evidently a variation of the term ayvopolil which is the name of a merchant guild. One record also mentions the māsattuvar of the town. Tiṭṭāndatāna puram was another stronghold of the mercantile corporations. Two records from this place furnish very interesting information about the names of the mercantile communities who resided here and the ancient names of this place which point to the high antiquity of the commercial connections of this city. One of these mentions the

3. Dr. T.V. Mahalingam: South Indian Polity, p. 394.
two merchant guilds which have evoked considerable interest among scholars. The other record says that the name of the god of the temple at the place was the God of Širu-
kađar karai in Muttūrūkkūrram. This apparently had been the original name of Tīttāndatānapuram. To the deity in this temple a gift was made of the village Marungūr alias Pañđitaśolacaturvēdi-
mangalam. Perhaps the famous town of the Sangam age, Marungūrta-
ṭṭīnam, was situated near about this village Marungūr.

The meetings of the mercantile guilds were often held in man-
dāpas in temples. One record says that they assembled in a hall called “aṁnūṛruvan-tirukkāṇām” in a temple. There is a refer-
tence to a street called Nānādēśipperunteru.

Regarding the administration of justice, though the nature of the judicial system is not directly referred to, there is much infor-
mation in the inscriptions of the period with reference to cases, es-
pecially criminal, and their disposal. Burning lamps in temples
appear to have been one method of expiation of crime. Con-
fiscation of property and levy of fines were some of the punish-
ments for serious offences. There are references to some cases of
mismanagement and misconduct by temple servants and managers
and of theft of temple jewels. As far as possible, all cases were tried

1. The record (598 of 1926) says that an agreement was made by the mercan-
tile communities (evidently of Tīttāndatānapuram, since the record says “śvaril
tirukkira”) for levying certain taxes on the commodities sold or purchased, to
supplement the expenses of rebuilding in stone the ruined mandopa of a temple.
Those who met for this purpose were the people of the 18 provinces (eisam)
aṁjūram, manigrāmam, Tīrumalaimakākali alias Tīruvambalam Udayyör of
Araisur, the Sāmanta-pandantālī, the Aisur (?) among the Āriyas, the residents of
Kuduttu-Mukamalagiyan-Perunnderu, the Bhattarīyar, the Tōyōvattiratettigal, the
Valanṭṭar of South Ceylon, the kāikkolas, the tūswar the vānijyar and the niydukarai-
yar. M.E.R. 52 of 1929 refers to a merchant of the Manigrāmam of Kodum-
blūr.

by the village officers and the *sabhā*. Only when the case was difficult to solve it was reported to the king and his officers. The ordeal of the ploughshare had been resorted to in some instances. Offenders against the temple were regarded as *Siadrohis* and those against the king and the country as *Rajadrohis* and *Nattudrohis*.

Regarding civil disputes, some epigraphs made reference to disputes over the right of worship in temples, distribution of *prasadams* and temple honours and privileges. There are references to religious disputes. Arbitration was largely used to settle civil disputes.

**LITERATURE**: The mediaeval period was marked by a large output of philosophical works, commentaries, *prudhas* and *prabhanda*s. Scholars were greatly patronised by temples and *maṭhas* which began to take a prominent part in the educational system of the country. Perumbaraṭappuliyar Nambi composed his *Tiruvāḷavāyuḍaiyār Tiruvilaiyāṭal* during this period. The *mekkrittis* of some of the Pāṇḍya kings are good specimens of the poetical compositions of the period. Kings were liberal patrons of scholars. Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I’s high regard for learning and men of letters is revealed by an inscription which states that after he conquered the Cōlas he uprooted all the pillars in the Cōla palace excepting the sixteen which belonged to the *maṇḍapa* where *Paṭṭinappalai* of Kaṇṭan was first pre-

6. The eulogies of Jatavarman Kulasekhara beginning with “Pūtalamadandai” “Pūtinkilatt” and “Pūtalamandai”, the long introductions of Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I beginning “Pumaruvija tirumadandaiyum”, those of Maravarman Sundara Pandya II beginning “Pumalar tiruvum” and the rare Tamil eulogy “Pumalar valartiga” of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I are some of the Tamil *mekkrittis* of the Pandyas. There are also Sanskrit *mekkrittis* such as those of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I beginning “Samasta Jagadadhara” and those of Maravarman Vikrama Pandya beginning “Samasta Bhuvanakavira”.

sented for approval. There are references to the court poet Kāraṇai Viluppāraiyar under this king. Libraries were maintained in temples. There was promotion of Vedic and śāstraic studies.

SOME CONTEMPORARY ACCOUNTS OF THE MADURAI COUNTRY: The writings of foreign travellers such as the Venetian Marco Polo and of Muslim historians like Wassaf, contain much information about mediaeval Madurai and the Pāṇḍya kingdom which was known to them as Ma'bar or Maabar. The Arabic term Ma'bar means ferry or passage, indicative of the facilities for trade obtainable in the Pāṇḍya country. Their accounts show that Madurai was the centre of a kingdom with a flourishing trade, both internal and external. Marco Polo describes at length the kingdom of Ma'bar, its ports such as Kāyal, its pearl fisheries and trade in pearls and horses, the royal court and the king's treasures. His writings contain many details about justice, religion and social life of the mediaeval Pāṇḍya empire. Marco Polo says that "The great province of Ma'bar...is styled India the Greater; it is best of all the Indies...this province...is the finest and noblest in the world. At this end of the province reigns one of those five Royal Brothers, who is a crowned king, and his name is Sonder Bandi Davar (Sundara Pāṇḍya Dēva). In his kingdom they find very fine and great pearls...The king possesses vast treasures and wears upon his person great store of rich jewels. He maintains great state and administers his kingdom with great


2. M.E.R. 75 of 1924; M.E.R. 71 of 1924 refers to a gift made by a chief to a poet Kodikkondan Periyān Adiccadēvan for composing a poem (Pillaikkavai) in his honour; M.E.R. 248 of 1941 mentions a gift of land made by the nagaraṭtar of a place to Tiru-uidaiyan Devan alias Pittai Serakonar as pulamaiyvittī.


7. Wassaf also refers to the flourishing horse trade of the Pandya kingdom Elliot & Dowson, op. cit., III, pp. 33-4.

equity and extends great favour to merchants and foreigners so that they are very glad to visit his city.”

Horses appear to have been one of the chief imports into the Madurai country even as early as the Sangam age. Referring to the import of a great number of horses into the Pândya country, Marco Polo says, “Here are no horses bred; and thus a great part of the wealth of the country is wasted in purchasing horses. The reason why they want so many horses every year is that by the end of the year they all die off... Many feed their horses with boiled rice and boiled meat, and various other kinds of cooked food. That is the reason why all the horses die off.”

Wassaf also remarks on the prosperous trade of the Pândya country, thus: “The curiosities of Chin (China) and Machin (Canton) and the beautiful products of Hind and Sind, laden on large ships, are always arriving there. The wealth of the Isles of the Persian Gulf in particular, and in part the beauty and adornment of other countries, from Irak and Khurasan as far as Rum (Turkey) and Europe are derived from Mabar, which is so situated as to be the key of Hind.”

“Wassaf states that ‘Kales De-war,’ the ruler of Ma’bar, enjoyed a highly prosperous life, extending to forty and odd years, during which time neither any foreign enemy entered his country, nor any severe malady confined him to bed. His coffers were replete with wealth, inasmuch, that in the treasury of the City of Mardi (Madurai) there were 1,200 crores of gold deposited, every crore being equal to a thousand laks, and every lak to one hundred thousand dinars. Besides this there was an accumulation of precious stones, such as pearls, rubies, turquoises and emeralds—more than is in the power of language to express.”

C. MADURAI AND MADAKKULAM IN THE MEDIAEVAL PERIOD

Madurai is frequently mentioned in inscriptions, both Cōla and Pândya, of the mediaeval period. Still, the material available does

1. Ibid, pp. 370-71.
5. This refers to Maravarman Kulasekhara I.
6. Elliot & Dowson, op. cit III, p. 52.
not help one to get a connected picture of the city or the whereabouts of the palaces mentioned therein.

Cōla and Cōla-Pāṇḍya epigraphs throw some light on Cōla palaces in the region and on activities of Cōlas like Kulōttunga III in the Madurai city. A record of the tenth year of Rājēndra Cōla I states that Rājēndra constructed at Madurai a huge palace (māligai) and that he anointed his son as Cōla-Pāṇḍya. A record of Sundara-sōla Pāṇḍya states that the king was at dinner in the Siddharkāṭam in his pleasure garden called puttān on the north side of Māḍakkulakkil Madurai and was seated on “Rājēndraśōla Atimūrkakkaccengirai”. Two records of the 31st and 34th years of Kulōttunga III give some details of the city of Madurai. They mention the outer ramparts of the city and the kāda-māṇḍapam of the Pāṇḍyas. After capturing the city of Madurai, the Cōla worshipped the God (selvāṆudar) at Tiruvālavaṃy and made various gifts to the temple. Further the city of Madurai is stated to have been renamed Mūḍikondagōḷapuram and Pāṇḍimaṇḍalam as Sōla-Pāṇḍimaṇḍalam. The Pāṇḍya king’s māṇḍapam was inscribed with the name of the conqueror as “Sēra-Pāṇḍyan Tambiran.”

Many Pāṇḍya inscriptions refer to the palace of the Pāṇḍyas, the many thrones, halls, gardens, chambers, and palace

3. I.P.S. 163 and 166.
4. Perhaps the audience or durbar hall.


6. There were halls called Manabharanan (M.E.R. 130 of 1910). Srivallabhan (M.E.R. 5 of 1894, 204 of 1933, 450 of 1916), Alagiya Pandiyam (324, 326 of 1908, 393 of 1917, 6 of 1929, I.P.S. 243) and Pugalabharanan (459 of 1909).

7. M.E.R. 316 of 1923 mentions a niravi māṇḍapa in the toppu on the northern side of the palace.

8. I.P.S. 270 mentions an olakkappalliyyarai in the palace at Madakkulakkil Madurai in Maduradaya Valanadu.
maids in this palace. Further, a Tirujnānasambandan maṭha in the city is also mentioned.

The flourishing city of Madurai is invariably termed in mediaeval epigraphs as Maṭakkulakkil Madurai in Madurōdaya Vaḷanāţu. Maṭakkulam appears to have been an important place in the mediaeval period since Madurai and other place names are referred to in relation to it as Maṭakkulakkil Madurai, Maṭakkulakkil Tirupparankunram, Maṭakkulakkil Aṟiyur, Maṭakkulakkil Kulaśēkharapuram and Maṭakkulakkil brahmāḍya Koḍimangalam. The suffix kil may not be merely a reference to the place named being east of Maṭakkulam in which case villages west or north or south of Maṭakkulam should be similarly referred to. On the other hand even Koḍimangalam which is north-west of Maṭakkulam is referred to as Maṭakkulakkil brahmāḍya. The term Maṭakkulakkil may therefore be a reference to a territorial or administrative unit, which included not only the city of Madurai but also other places like Tirupparankunram and Koḍimangalam. Even up to the middle of the 19th century the present Madurai taluk was known as Maṭakkulam taluk.

The modern village of Maṭakkulam is about four miles west of Madurai and is immediately to the east of the large tank from which it takes its name. A Tamil proverb significant of the large size of the tank says that Madurai city would be ruined if the Maṭakkulam tank overflowed. In fact the deity in the Aiyanar Temple

1. M.E.R. 720 of 1916 mentions an agapparisera maid who set up an image of a goddess and presented many jewels to the deity.
6. M.E.R. 243 of 1942. This was a new village created near Tirupparankunram in the time of Jatavarmam Kulaśekhara I.
on the eastern bund of the tank is called Karaikakkum Aiyanar or one who guards the bund.  

B.S. Ward who carried out a survey of the Mādakkulam taluk about 1817 A.D. states that "Madacolum a considerable village west of Madura is situated under the bank of a large tank in the midst of paddy cultivation. It is composed of a few but regular streets .... with a pagoda at the west end of some celebrity." The Mādakkulam village is fairly large and important even today and the Mādakkulam tank still remains one of the chief sources of irrigation in the neighbourhood.

The modern village does not appear to have any visible vestiges of its past glory, but a study of some of the field names here may be of value and may yield interesting information. The southern part of the village called the Palangānattam hamlet is believed to be the older part of the village. The term palangānattam may be a corruption of palangālanattam and may thus refer to the older portions of the place.

There is a tradition that the old Pāṇḍya palace stood somewhere in the neighbourhood of the present Mādakkulam village. There is a tank here called "Vrāṇaṇḍaiyāṉ Kāṇṉōt". Some fields to the east of it are called mānam mutṭi which translated would mean "sky high". This name is rather suggestive. Perhaps it refers to some high tower or palace gate which may have existed here. To the east and north of mānam mutṭi a number of fields are known by the name "Kōvalan Poṭṭal". The local people point to two heavily worn stones here as the place where Kovalan was executed. The name mānam mutṭi as well as the presence of these stones in this

1. He is also called Īḍadi Aiyanār; but the significance of this name is not clear. The temple appears to have an ancient history. R. Sewell, in his List of Antiquities (Vol. I, p. 291) says that it had inscriptions. But the present structure is a modern one.
2. This is a reference to the Aiyanār temple in the village.
4. Perhaps the stone is a menhir and may be worth investigating.
neighbourhood lend some weight to the view that the palace may have been located here in the past.

Other interesting field names found here are paccanācēi, aṭṭagam, alagapattu and marabapattu. Aṭṭagam seems to have some connection with the numeral eight and agam means "house"; but the meaning of the term is not very clear. It is very tempting to take this word as a corruption of aṭṭagāyam (eight elephants). The fields called Alagapattu are probably lands belonging to some temple. The name Marabapattu is perhaps a variation of maravapattu and may have been the quarters of the Maṟavas from whom many warriors were recruited to the army.1 Some fields skirting the eastern bund of the Madakkulam tank are called tamaraiippalām. Evidently there might have been a lotus pond here.

In the absence of visible vestiges above the ground the site of the ancient palace of the Pāṇḍyas may become known only with the help of the archaeologist's spade. However, the evidences mentioned above do not seem to rule out a conclusion that possibly in early days the city or parts of it were located near here.

**D. THE TEMPLE IN THE MEDIAEVAL PERIOD**

There is not much evidence to make a connected account of the great temple at Madurai and of the other temples nearby during the mediaeval period. Some interesting information, however, can be gathered about them from numerous epigraphs of the period. These records mention various gifts and endowments to the temples, constructional operations, names of temple servants, maṭhas and religious teachers, festivals, currency and measures in use and many other customs of the period.

The great temple at Madurai is referred to as the temple of Tiruvāḷavāyuḍaiya Nāyanaṟṟa. In mediaeval epigraphs, shrines of goddesses are often named as Tirukkāmakōṭṭam. The mention

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1. M.E.R. 252 of 1942 refers to the Madakkulakil Korrasal serī maravar and says that Pudukkulam was their jicita. M.E.R. 504 of 1907, a Vattelututtu record of about the 9th c. A.D., refers to the "Korrayayir serī kurram" of Mada Madirai.

of the Tirukkāmakkōṭṭattu Āluḍaiya Nācciyār\footnote{1} in a record from the Madurai temple is apparently a reference to the shrine of Goddess Minākṣi. There is mention of the deity, Adiraviṣi Āḍuvār in the temple\footnote{2}. Since there are as many as five Naṭarāja shrines in the Madurai temple, it is not clear to which shrine the record refers.

A record states that Āluḍaiya Nāyakiyār (Avaiya Nāyakiyār?) was the name of Āluḍaiya Nācciyār of the Tirupparankunramuḍaiya Nāyanār Temple\footnote{3}. The shrine of Kṣētrapāla Pillaiyār in the temple of Tirupparankunram and the provision made for its worship by remitting taxes on the village of Kulaśēkharaṇapuram are mentioned in an inscription\footnote{4}.

Epigraphs from Alagarkōyil refer to the image of Nāyanār Āṭkonda Viṇṇagarr Emberumān set up by one Mahipālar\footnote{5}, a shrine of Śēnaimudaliyār\footnote{6} and the image of Tiruvāli Ādvār\footnote{7}. The deity at Alagarkōyil is stated to have had pithās of various names such as the Kālingarāyan pitha\footnote{8} and the Cēdirāyan pitha\footnote{9}, probably in the Kulaśēkhara pandal.

**GIFTS AND ENDOWMENTS** of different kinds were made to the great temple at Madurai for various purposes such as the maintenance of lamps\footnote{10} (tiruvilakkuppam), the god’s tirumūrjanam\footnote{11} and sandanakkāpppu\footnote{12} for the temple festivals\footnote{13}, for śāndis in the names of kings and private individuals, for the temple musicians\footnote{14}, to the temple servants (cotṭar)\footnote{15}, for gardens\footnote{16} and for maṭhas\footnote{17}.

\begin{enumerate}
\item M.E.R. 278 of 1942.
\item M.E.R. 281 of 1942.
\item M.E.R. 339 of 1918; 238 of 1942 also refers to the Goddess Avaiya Nayaki.
\item M.E.R. 243 of 1942.
\item M.E.R. 317 of 1913.
\item M.E.R. 326 of 1930.
\item M.E.R. 290 of 1930.
\item M.E.R. 284 of 1930.
\item M.E.R. 320 of 1930.
\item M.E.R. 46 of 1890; S.I.I. Vol. IV, No. 369; M.E.R. 275 of 1942.
\item M.E.R. 50 of 1890; S.I.I. Vol. IV, No. 373.
\item M.E.R. 280 of 1942.
\item M.E.R. 278 and 281 of 1942.
\item M.E.R. 276 and 277 of 1942.
\item M.E.R. 140 of 1903.
\item M.E.R. 270 and 278 of 1942.
\item M.E.R. 60 and 62 of 1905; 4 of 1915 : 278 of 1942.
\end{enumerate}
TEMPLE SERVANTS: Many classes of temple servants are referred to; for instance the kanakku bhanḍāri, the dēvakanmis, the pāṭīpādamulā paṭṭuvai paṇcadvārya and the temple tāṇatār are mentioned in the inscriptions in the great temple at Madurāi. These appear to be officials connected with the administration of the temple. The following are mentioned in the epigraphs from other temples in and around the City: the dēvakanmis, Śivabrāhmaṇa, śrīkāryam seyva, Śrīvaishnavas and Nambuṣeyan.

More details are provided by certain epigraphs about the names of the musicians and śilpis attached to the great temple at Madurāi. One inscription refers to the temple musician called Periyān Taniyandān who had the title "Vallānaivēra Pāṇḍya Vādyamānīyan." This title was evidently conferred on him by King Maṇavarman Kulaśekhara I one of whose titles was "Vallānai Venān." Another record granting land as invitakkāri for the maintenance of eleven musicians of the temple gives the names of some musical instruments used in the temple such as vāramadalam, kōl (?), maddalam, timilai, kūsai and tirucinnam. Among the temple śilpis who were often responsible for the inscribing of the epigraphs also, may be mentioned sthāpatiśāriyan, tiruvālávāyāvāriyan, kūdalācāriyan, and Nālmāţakkūdalācāriyan alias Panavallabhan nattu peruntōlan.

1. M.E.R. 272 of 1942
2. M.E.R. 272 of 1942
3. M.E.R. 280 of 1942
4. M.E.R. 50 of 1890
5. M.E.R. 252 and 243 of 1942
6. M.E.R. 252 of 1942
FESTIVALS: The Āvāṇītiṇnukal and the Tirupparattirunōnbu festival in the month of Aippaśi¹ are mentioned in inscriptions of the Madurai temple. Provisions were made for feeding 1000 persons at the rate of 100 per day at the Bhūvanēkhavirān maṭha during the Āvāṇī festival².

Epigraphs from Alagarkōyil mention the Kaṉśikōtsava festival³ and the festivals in Ādī and Aippaśi and the Māṟgaḷi Tiruavadhiyanaṃ⁴.

MATHAS: In the mediaeval period maṭhas, like the temples, played an important role in the promotion of learning, culture and religion. From about the 10th century onwards maṭhas grew in influence and popularity under the liberal patronage of kings and nobles. Many maṭhas attached to temples often had control over temple affairs. The maṭhas welcomed pilgrims and arranged for feeding ascetics. Many religious teachers were maintained and provision was made in them for the study of Vēdas, sāstras and purāṇas. The construction of maṭhas and temples was generally encouraged by kings and nobles.

The mediaeval maṭhas acted as important centres of learning, education and religious activity and helped the growth of religious art and architecture as well as sacred music and dance. The mediaeval epigraphs contain many details of the activities of maṭhas and the religious pontiffs who presided over them in Madurai and the Madurai country. There were many maṭhas representing different sects of Hinduism in Madurai, Tiruppaparāṟukṟam and Tirumāḷiruṅjōlai. The Tiruṅḷānasambandan maṭha situated in Māḍakkugalakkil Madurai is frequently mentioned in epigraphs of the period⁵. This maṭha appears to have wielded great influence on religious and social life in the Madurai country. The maṭha is now situated near the temple between the South Citrai Street and South Āvāṇī Mūḷa Street.

5. M.E.R. 13 of 1894; 62 of 1905; 285 of 1916; There were maṭhas called Tiruṅḷānasambandan maṭha at various places in the Pandya country, e.g., at Tiruputtur, Ramanad District (M.E.R. 129 of 1908) and at Tenkaraik, Madurai District (M.E.R. 126 of 1910).
It still continues to be one of the most important of the maṭhas of the Tamil country. In a record of the second year of Jaṭāvarman Kulaśēkhaṇa (acc. 1190 A.D.) the Tirujñānasambandan maṭha is stated to have been under the control of the ācārya of the Dakṣīṇa Gōḷakimāṭhā of Tiruvārūr.¹

From about the time of Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I many religious teachers belonging to the Bhikṣāmaṭha-santāna of the Gōḷakimāṭhā of Tiruvārūr appear to have immigrated from the north and settled in the Madurai country. A record of the eleventh year of Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I² states that provision was made for feeding of the ascetic Īśanadēva and his pupils who were residing in the Nallaperumāl maṭha at Karuṅgulam alias Śādāvācakanallūr. They had immigrated from the Kṛṣṇa Gōḷakimāṭhā at Tiruvārūr. In another record of the 20th year of the same king³ the chief Maḷavamāṇikkam Tirukkāṇappēruḍaiyān alias Maḷavacakravarti makes a gift of land as guruḍakṣīṇa to a certain Kāvīryar Īśvaraśiva-Uḍaiyār who was a native of the Uttaradēśam. The same chief makes a gift the next year to another Śaiva teacher called Śrīkanṭha Śiva⁴ of the Tirujñānasambandar maṭha at Tirupattūr. Śrīkanṭha Śiva was a disciple of Ācārāmaḷaṇigīyān maṭha at Tiruvārūr. Evidently this was also one of the Dakṣīṇa Gōḷaki maṭhas. Four epigraphs⁵ of Jaṭāvarman Vikrama Pāṇḍya from the Mīnākṣī temple at Madurai state that provision was made for feeding persons looking after the cows which were obtained by begging (irandu) for the temple by Niṟṟayangiyāṉuvar of the Bhikṣāmaṭha santāna and housed in a gōśalai⁶ named after Māmaṭi Śōmēśvara.

Other maṭhas in Madurai city were the Bhuvanēkāvīrīn maṭha⁷ situated to the north of the Tiruceṇḍuveli⁸, the Nāralōkasūryan maṭha⁹.

6. At present there is a gōśalai in the temple in the southern half of the West Adi Street.
8. This is perhaps a reference to a broad processional street in which the god was taken in a vaiyali manner.
the Terkil matha¹, the Sundara Pândyan matha², the Manam Periyän matha³, and the Amunda matha⁴.

During the reign of Máravarman Kulaśekhara I, the Tiru-jñānasambandar matha at tenharai⁵ was presided over by the Mudaliyārs of the Pândarangavanar Santāna. One of them was Umaiuyorupāgar of Kulaśekharapuram.

The Terkil matha at Madurai was in charge of a certain Nilakanṭha Śiva, one of whose disciples, Tirunelveli Uḍaiyār, is mentioned in two records of Máravarman Sundara Pândya II⁶. One record says that jñānamukti Dēva was a disciple of the Ācārya Periyadēva of the Nandikēśvaradēvar Santāna who presided over the Amunda matha⁷.

There were many mathas in Tirupparankūrįm also. There are references to the Kîlai matha⁸ in charge of the Mudaliyārs of the Goḷaki santāna, the Melai matha⁹ under the Mudaliyārs, the Pândanambalankāṭṭina Perumal matha¹⁰ under Mudaliyār Parākramadēva and the Ponnambalankāṭṭīnān matha¹¹ in charge of Irāvalar Paṣupatidēva. A record of Máravarman Sundara Pândya II¹² states that a matha was constructed in the name of Prince Bhagavati Alvār to the north-east of the temple at Tirupparankūrįm.¹³

At Alagarkōyil there were a number of Vaiṣṇava mathhas such as the Kulaśekharan matha constructed by Munaiyadairaiyar alias Śrīrāman Uyyavandān of Kappalur¹⁴, the Tirunāḍudaiyān matha¹⁵

¹. M.E.R. 131 and 132 of 1894.
². M.E.R. 60 of 1905.
³. M.E.R. 560 of 1911. The record states that this matha was built in the name of Viluppadarayar and was in charge of Jnanimukti Deva and his disciples.
⁴. M.E.R. 422 of 1907 and 560 of 1911.
⁸. M.E.R. 15 of 1894; 617 of 1926; and 252 and 253 of 1942. 15 of 1894 and 252-253 of 1942 refer to the tapasvin Tiruccirrambalamudaiyar, while 617 of 1926 refers to Kayilayadevan alias Sivadeva.
built for Tridandi Sanyāsīs and Ėkāṅgis (Ėkākis) by Araiyan Tiranaddaiyān Nilagangan of Kilaikkkoṭumaḷur, the Amaitanārayaṉ maṭha and the Vānādarāyan maṭha.

The Ėkadaṇḍi and Tridandi sanyāsīs appear to have wielded much influence in the Madurai country since many epigraphs refer to them and the provisions made for feeding them.

Liberal provisions were made for the study of the Vēdas, śāstras, purāṇas and the works of the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava saints. A record mentions a gift of land as Mahābhārata viśṭa made by two brothers to provide for the reading of Mahābhārata, the Rāmāyana and the purāṇas in a maṭha built by them. Teachers of the Śastras were maintained in maṭhas. Provisions were made for the recitation of the Tiruṇīnān, the Tiruppāiyan, the Tirumūrai and the Tiruppāṭṭu (Dēvarom).

A record of Māṟavarman Sundara Pāṇḍya II states that Śevasattēvan alias Vānadhiraṉar granted a village for offerings to the god Tiruvāḷavāyudaiyār during the service instituted by him in the temple and for feeding paradesiṅkōvanavar reciting the Tiruvemāvai in Sādārippu in the month of Māṅgali while the deity halted at the Vāndaṟavayar vāsil to the south of the shrine of the Goddess.

2. M.E.R. 1912, pt. II, para 38. The Ekadandis and Tridandis were two orders of Sanyāsīs. The Ekadandis carried in their hands a single bamboo rod as the emblem of the order to which they belonged. The Tridandis carried three such rods tied together into one.
11. M.E.R. 187 of 1944. Sevagattevan is stated to have carried out extensive repairs to the temple of Madurai.
E. BUILDING ACTIVITIES OF THE PANDYAS

The mediaeval Pandya were great patrons of art and architecture. Under them Dravidian architecture developed distinct styles. The garbha griha vimana which became a dominant feature under the Colas gradually gave place to huge gopuras and prakara walls. From this period temple towers and mandapas received greater attention rather than the main shrine. The numerous epigraphs and literary evidences point to the intense building activity of the Pandya rulers who did much to glorify the temples spread throughout their wide empire.

Madurai and its environs suffered much during the Muslim interregnum and very few of the mediaeval structures have survived. Such parts of the Madurai temple as the Kadaka Gopura, the East and West Gopura and the Sangattar temple may be traced back to mediaeval times. These structures are dealt with in detail in Chapter X.

Numerous other buildings could be traced to the Pandya rulers. These show that there was very great activity in such constructions about this time. A mandapa called after the name of Kulašekhara Narasingan was built at Tirupparankundram by Narasinga who was probably an officer under Jatāvarman Kulašēkara I (acc. 1190 A.D.) Some records of 42nd and 1st year of Māravarman Kulašēkara I (about 1309-1310 A.D.) refer to the construction of the shrine of Tirukkāmakkottattu-Āludaiya Nācciyār in the Tirupparankunram temple by Sēndappillai.

A number of inscriptions from Alagarkōyil refer to the building activities of many Pandya kings as well as officers and private persons. Jatāvarman Sundara Pandya I built the "Kōyil Pomēynda Perumāl Tirumandapa" in the temple. A "Sundara Pandyan Mandapa" is mentioned in some records. The Munaiyadaraiyan mandapa was built by Mōnaiappiran Viradamudittaperumāl alias Munaiyadaraiyan. A prakara wall called Kōdanadarāman Tirumadil after

3. M.E.R. 84 of 1929
the name of the king is referred to\(^1\). A record on a dressed slab in the Sundara Pāṇḍya Mandapa gives the name of the slab as Viśrama Arashana Pitham\(^2\). Tondaimanār built the Tondaiman Gopura\(^3\), evidently in the reign of Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya II\(^4\).

The shrine of Tiruvāḷi Ālvān was set up in the Kālamēga Perumāl temple at Tirumōhūr by a certain Gāṅgēya\(^5\). A Vēlanātha shrine was built at Tirumōhūr in the king’s name during the time of Māravarman Kulaśekhara I\(^6\).

A record of Jaṭāvarman Kulaśekhara with the eulogy “Pūtala Maṅandai” etc. states that a mandapa and a hall (mūlīgai) named after the king were built in the temple of Tiruccakkaraatālvār at Sūlāntakacaturvedimangalam\(^7\). During the reign of Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I the garbhagriha, the ardhā mandapa and mahā mandapa of the Nīrtanārāyaṇa Perumāl temple at Tiruttangāl were built by the king’s minister, Gurukulattaraiyan of Taṭangannicirīrūr in S. 1149 (1227 A.D.)\(^8\).

A record of Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I refers to the construction of a mandapa called “Jhōnasamudram” in the king’s name at the temple at Tentiruppērai\(^9\).

The outer main gopura of the Viśrama Pāṇḍyēśvara temple at Sōlapurum was built by a Sundara Pāṇḍya\(^10\). One record refers to the building of several mandapas in the Venkaṭācalapati Perumāl temple at Sōlapurum\(^11\).

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4. Tondaiman figures as an official in records of Maravarman Sundara Pandya II such as M.E.R. 80 of 1905; 668 of 1916, and also in records of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I such as M.E.R. 176 of 1892.
One record of Maṟavarman Kulaśekhara I states that the shrine of the goddess in the temple at Śannavanam was built by the king's aunt. A record from Pirānmalai states that the gōpura of the temple here was built by Bhuvanēkavira alias Rājanārāyaṇa. This perhaps refers to Maṟavarman Kulaśekhara I who had these titles.

There is a reference to a Vira Pāṇdyan Tirumandapam in the temple at Cidambaram. Several records of Vikrama Pāṇḍya with eulogy "Samasta Bhuvanaikavira" etc. refer to the building of the various shrines and parts of Oppilāmaṉiśvara temple at Ara-kaṇḍanallūṟu.

The reign of Jaṭāvarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I was one of the most distinguished periods in the history of Pāṇḍya architecture. The king covered the temples at Cidambaram and Śrīrangam with gold. He took the title "Hemacādarāja" or "Ponmēynda Perumāḷ" ("He who covered the temples with gold"). Epigraphs refer to the images of Kōyil Ponmēynda Perumāḷ and Ellāntalaiyāna Perumāḷ set up by the king at various temples. He also made arrangements for festivals called either after his own name "Sundara Pāṇdyan Sandi" or after some other titles of the king such as Ananiveṇdarāman. A record from Tiruvinţalūṟu (Tanjore district) refers to a royal gift to the temple of Ponmēynda Perumāḷ here and the Ponmēynda Pāṇḍya Caturvēdimangalam founded in the name of the king. During his time many gōpurams, especially outer ones, shrines and mandapas were built in various parts of the Tamil country.

5. M.E.R. 6 of 1937 from Śrīrangam, 150 of 1904 from Tiruvendipuram (S.A.), 531 of 1920 from Kattumannarkoyil (S.A.)
8. M.E.R. 529 of 1922 mentions "Kodandaraman Sandi".
CHAPTER VII

MADURAI UNDER FOREIGN YOKE

A. MADURAI UNDER THE MUSLIMS

1. The Raids of Malik Kafur and Khusru

The Pāṇḍya kingdom or Ma’bar which extended, as Wassaf says, “from Kulam (Quilon) to Nilawar (Nellore) nearly three hundred parasangs along the sea coast,” received a serious setback during the first quarter of the 15th c. A.D. After Mārvavarman Kulaśekhara I’s death the civil war between his two sons, Jaṭāvarman Sundara Pāṇḍya and Jaṭāvarman Vira Pāṇḍya, and the plundering raids of Malik Kafur and Khusru led to the rapid disintegration of the Pāṇḍya empire and paved the way for the foundation of a Muslim Sultanate at Madurai.

Malik Kafur’s raid on Ma’bar is believed to have been the result of Jaṭāvarman Sundara Pāṇḍya’s flight to Delhi to ask Alauddin for help against his brother. But the chronology of the period seems to show that this is incorrect. Sundara may have sought the help of Kafur who had probably encamped somewhere in the Deccan. An epigraph mentions the days when Sundara Pāṇḍya returned with the Tulukkar, and there was distress owing to floods and “kalaham”. The differences between the two Pāṇḍya brothers made the country an easy prey to Kafur. Sundara Pāṇḍya did not benefit much from the selfish Kafur whose only wish was to plunder and raid. Vira Pāṇḍya sent an army to help Ballāla against Kafur. Kafur reached the Pāṇḍyan frontiers in March 1311 A.D. He first marched against Bhir Dhul (identified with Viradhāvalam or Uyyakkonāṭ Tirumalai), the capital of Vira Pāṇḍya, in the neighbourhood of Uṟaiyūr. Vira Pāṇḍya had already fled from the city. The Pāṇḍyas avoided pitched battles and harassed Kafur with guerilla tactics.

Kafur marched towards Madurai, plundering and raiding cities and villages and desecrating temples on his way. When he

2. Dr. N. Venkataramanayya: Early Muslim Expansion in South India, p. 58.
reached Madurai on 10th April, 1311 A.D.¹ he was faced with an empty city from where Sundara Pandyya had fled with his family and treasures. Amir Khusru states that Malik Kafur and his army "arrived at the city of Mathra (Madura), the dwelling place of the brother of the Rai Sundar Pandyya. They found the city empty, for the Rai had fled with the Rânis, but had left two or three elephants in the temple of Jagnar (Cokkanâtha). The elephants were captured and the temple burnt."²

The two Pandyya brothers united together in the face of the formidable danger. Their uncle Vikrama Pandyya assumed command of the army. Hearing of the Pandyya coalition against him, Kafur left the city in a hurry. Soon he was defeated by Vikrama Pandyya. Still Kafur managed to retreat with a large booty. From the available evidence it seems highly improbable that Kafur left a garrison at Madurai or went down to Ramësvaram. His expedition was a mere plundering raid in which Madurai city, more particularly the Madurai temple, suffered very heavily. Kafur's raid helped to add more confusion to the troublesome state of affairs in a country already rent by a bitter civil war.

After Kafur's retreat the enmity between the two Pandyya brothers again broke out. The ruler of South Travancore, Ravi Varman Kulašêkhara who had professed allegiance to the Pandyas till about 1312 A.D. took advantage of the confusion, invaded the Pandyas kingdom and rapidly overran the country from Madurai up to Kañci. The Kêrala ruler claims to have defeated both Sundara Pandyya³ and Vira Pandyya⁴. Sundara Pandyya asked the Kâkatiya Pratâparudra II for help. The Kêrala ruler was ousted from Kañci by Muppiḏi Nâyaka⁵, the Kâkatiya general. Muppiḏi Nâyaka is also stated to have defeated a Pandyya king, perhaps Vira Pandyya. An epigraph states that Sundara Pandyya instituted a service called after Muppiḏi Nâyaka in the temple at

1. Dr. N. Venkataramanayya, op. cit., p. 64.
Vriddhachalam¹. A record of the Kākatiya Pratāparudra from Srirangam dated 5 1239 (March 28, 1317 A.D.)² stated that one Dēvari Nāyaka defeated the five Pāṇḍyas and the Kēraḷa Ravivarman Kulaśēkhara and others during his southern campaign and established Sundara Pāṇḍya at Viradhāvalam. The Kākatiya intervention in Pāṇḍya affairs appears to have resulted in the control of the northern parts of the Pāṇḍya kingdom by the Kākatiyas for a short period as well as the subordination of Sundara Pāṇḍya.

Within ten years of Malik Kafur’s sack of Madurai Ma’bar was again the prey of plundering raids by Muslims. During the reign of Sultan Qutb-ud-din Mubarak Shah of Delhi (1316-20 A.D.), one Khusru Khan was sent to the south. Khusru subjected the northern parts of Ma’bar to his plundering raids³ but his movements were hampered by rains. Further he seems to have contemplated treason. This was discovered and he was carried back to Delhi in fetters.

The Pāṇḍyas continued to rule in the Madurai country during the period of the Muslim raids and of the Sultanate. The series of attacks by foreign invaders one after another led to the rapid decline of the Pāṇḍya sovereignty.

3. Barni gives the following account of Khusru’s raid on Ma’bar: “When Khusru Khan marched from Deogir to Ma’bar it was seen that he acted in the same way as Malik Naib Kafur had done. The Rais of Ma’bar fled with their treasures and valuables; but about a hundred elephants, which had been left in two cities, fell into the hands of Khuaru Khan. On his arriving in Ma’bar the rains came on, and he was compelled to remain. There was in Ma’bar a merchant, named Taki Khan, a Sunni by profession, who had acquired great wealth, which he had purified by paying the a lms prescribed by his religion. Relying on the fact of the invading army being Musliman, he did not flee. Khusru Khan who had nothing in his heart but rapacity and villainy, seized this Musulman, took his money from him by force and put him to death, declaring the money to belong to the treasury. Whilst he remained in Ma’bar he did nothing but plot with his confidants as to the best means of seizing and putting to death those nobles who supported the reigning dynasty.” (Elliot and Dowson: op. cit. p. 219).
Though Madurai and its immediate environs appear to have been lost by the Pāṇḍyas at this time owing perhaps to the establishment of the Muslim Sultanate, they continued to rule in other parts of the Tamil country such as Pudukkōṭṭai, Ramnad, Tinnevelly, Trichinopoly, Tanjore, South Arcot, North Arcot and Chingleput till about the end of the 14th c. A.D.

Jaṭāvarman Vira Pāṇḍya (acc. 1296 A.D.) survived the civil war with his brother Sundara Pāṇḍya and the troubles with the Muslim raids. He had a long reign of about 44 years till 1342 A.D. His inscriptions are found in North Arcot, South Arcot, Trichinopoly, Tanjore, Ramnad and Tinnevelly districts. He appears to have had the surnames Rāṇanukhṛitāma and Kaliyugarama. A record calling the king as Ilaiyālīvān Vira Pāṇḍya and mentioning his 27th regnal year (about 1322 A.D.) refers to some kalāhams or troubles that had occurred some time previously. The king’s epigraphs from Tirupputtur refer to the Muhammadan occupation of the local temple and the reconsecration of images.

Jaṭāvarman Sundara Pāṇḍya, the elder son of Māravarman Kulaśekhara I, ruled from 1303 A.D. to about 1319 A.D. His inscriptions are found in Chingleput, North Arcot, South Arcot, Trichinopoly, Madura and Tinnevelly districts. He had the surname Kōdaṇḍarāman and his natal star was Paṣyā.

1. M.E.R. 119 & 122 of 1908 of 44th year; 393 of 1906 of 4(5)th year; 120 of 1908 of 46th or 49th year.
2. M.E.R. 87 of 1940 from North Arcot; 66, 104 of 1918, 416, 430 of 1921 from South Arcot; 42 to 50 of 1937 from Trichinopoly; 45 of 1906 from Tanjore; 119, 120, 122 of 1908 from Ramnad; & 49, 80 of 1927, and 52 of 1945 from Tinnevelly districts.
4. M.E.R. 42 to 50 refer to the founding of the village “Kaliyugarama Caturvedimangalam” in the king’s name.
7. M.E.R. 189 of 1930, 94 of 1934 from Chingleput; 183, 189 of 1940 from North Arcot; 72, 84, 175 of 1918, 517 of 1920, 415 of 1921, 385 of 1938, 93, 94 of 1944 from South Arcot; 18 to 21 of 1937, 175, 179, 180, 184 of 1939 from Trichino poly; 320, 321, 323 of 1930 from Alagarkoyil in Madurai and 608 of 1915 from Tinnevelly districts.
Some of the other Pāṇḍya rulers of this period were Māra-varman Srīvallabha (acc. 1307 A.D.), Māra-varman Kulaśēkhara (1314-46. A.D.), Jātāvarman Parākrama (1315 to about 1347 A.D.), Māra-varman Vīra Pāṇḍya (1334-1380 A.D.), Māra-varman Parākrama (1335-52 A.D.), Jātāvarman Parākrama (acc. about 1357 A.D.), and Jātāvarman Parākrama (acc. 1367 A.D.).

From about the end of the 14th c. A.D. the Pāṇḍyas began to lose their hold on the northern parts of the Tamil country. Kam-paṇa's overthrow of the Muslim Sultanate and the rise to prominence of the erstwhile Pāṇḍya feudatories, the Bānādarāyas, appear to have forced the Pāṇḍyas to confine themselves to the more southerly regions of the Pāṇḍya country such as Tinnevelly. Here they continued to rule for a long time till about the middle of the 18th c. A.D.

8. The history of these Later or Tinnevelly Pandyas forms a chapter by itself. Since their direct connection with the history of the city of Madurai is only of minor consequence their history is not dealt with here.
2. The Sultanate of Madurai

It was under the Tughlaks that Madurai came to be finally conquered by the Muslims and the Pandy country became one among the many provinces of the Delhi empire. With the aim of the systematic subjugation of the Hindu kingdoms of the south, after another, Sultan Ghias-ud-din Tughlak sent his son and heir Ulugh Khan to the south in 1321 A.D. In the course of his campaigns Ma'bar was conquered in 1323 A.D.¹ The ruling king Parâkrama Pândya² (perhaps Jatâvarman Parâkrama who ascended the throne in 1315 A.D.) was taken as a prisoner, to Delhi. From about 1323 to 1334 A.D. Madurai was a province of the empire of Delhi, along with the other kingdoms of the Deccan and South India. In the conquered provinces, the Delhi Sultan set up Muslim governors called Naibs or Naib-Vazirs, assisted by a staff of quasi-military officials. The capitals of provinces were in charge of Kotwals. The Maduraittalavaralaru says that during the period of three years from Rudhirugari, Anâi to Krâdhana (1323 to about 1326 A.D.) the region from the Himalayas to Sêtu was under Muslim sway and was a period of hostility without anyone gaining a clear ascendancy. Then two Muslim governors, both named Ulâpathi Khan, ruled at Madurai between 1326 and 1334 A.D. Their identity is not quite

¹ The Maduraittalavaralaru and the Pandyan Chronicle state that in S. 1246 in the month of Ani, Adi Sultan and Maluk Nemiyan came from Delhi in the north and having captured and sent Valalvilitturangum Parâkrama Pandy to Delhi, took possession of the raja. The Madurai Stanîkâr Varalaru says that Adi Sultan and Maluk Nemiyan were the Bateha vâsal martri, thus indicating that they were the generals of the Delhi Sultan. The Pandyan Chronicle and the Supplementary Manuscripts assign the date of the conquest of Madurai to S. 1246 Rudhirugari corresponding to 227th year of the Kollam ajïśda era. This works out correctly to 1323 A.D.

² The Tamil chronicles like Maduraittalavaralaru, Pandyan Chronicle and Madurai Shhanikar Varalaru call this king “Valal Vilitturangum Parâkrama Pandy”. This is probably a corruption of the term “Valal vali tirandan” found in some epigraphs of this period. A coin called Valal valitiranden Kulînî pan (or panam) is mentioned in M.E.R. 255 of 1914 and I.P.S. 635, 638. M.E.R. 7 of 1915 in Tamil verse from the Madurai temple mentions a Pandya king Valudi with a surname Valal vali tirandan. From a Tamil inscription, in verse, of Jatavarman Sundara Pandy I it may be inferred that this king had the surname “Valal vali tirandan” (Sêntamîl, Vol. iv, p. 493.)
clear. The Tamil chronicles give the names of the Sultans who ruled during 48 years. There are differences between this list and the names occurring in other literary works and in epigraphs. For about ten years, till the founding of the Sultanate in about 1334-35 A.D., Madurai was directly under the rule of two Sultans of Delhi, viz., Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlak and his son Mahammad bin Tughlak. Then six independent Sultans appear to have ruled for about 38 years.

1. I.P.S. 670 from Panaiyur is dated in the ninth regnal year of one Muhammad Surattan. Two records, one from Rangiam (I.P.S. 669) dated in 732 A.H. (1332 A.D.) and another from Iluppur (M.E.R. 297 of 1944) dated in the 745th year (1345 A.D.? of an unspecified era, state that the ruler was one Adi Surattan. The two dates show that he might have had a reign of at least 13 years. The identity of this ruler among the available names of the Sultans of Madurai is not clear at present. The Maduraiittalavaralaru mentions Adi Sultan and Maluk Nemiyan as the two generals who came from Delhi and conquered Madurai in 1323 A.D.

2. The Maduraiittalavaralaru gives the following list of names:
   Ulapatikhan — for six years from *Aktya* to Pradjiptatti (1326-31 A.D.);
   Ulapatikhan Utasikku Aingurulan — 3 years from Angirasa to Bhana (1332-34 A.D.)

   His nephew Kutipatik (Pandyan Chronicle calls him Sudi) - Tusa to Pramadi (1335-39 A.D.),
   Nakaladik—Vikrama to Vijaya (1340-53 A.D.);
   Savadmalukkan Attumarukan - Sarajit to Vilambi (1347-58 A.D.),
   Pangatik Malukkan - Pikari to Saghdrana (1359-70).

   The Pandyan Chronicle also gives a similar list with a few minor variations.

   Sewell's *Historical Inscriptions of South India* (p. 363) gives the following list of eight names:
   Jalaluddin Ahsan Shah - 1335 - 40 A.D.
   Alauddin Udaju — 1 year—1340-41 A.D.
   Kutbuddin Firoz Shah - 40 days.
   Ghiyasuddin Dhamagani—1340-1 to 1342 A.D.
   Nasiruddin—1342 - ?
   Adil Shah - A coin of his date 1356 has been found,
   Fakruddin Mubarak Shah - c. 1359 - 1368 A.D.
   Alauddin Sikandar. 1368-1378. But his rule must have been purely nominal.

   From the available evidences about six Sultans appear to have ruled from about 1334 A.D.

   Dr. M. Venkataramanayya gives the following list of six Sultans (J.M.U. Vol. XI. p. 65):
   Jalaluddin Ahsan Shah - 1334 - 39 A.D.
   Alauddin Udaiji - 1339-40 A.D.
   Qutubuddin - 1340 A.D.
   Ghiyasuddin Damaghani - 1341- 43 A.D.
   Nasiruddin 1343-52 A.D.
   Gurbat Hasan Kangu - 1353 -71 A.D.
Ibn Batuta\(^1\) says that under Mahammad bin Tughlak one Jalal-ud-din Ahsan Shah was appointed the governor of Ma’bar but as Isamy\(^2\) states, he was most probably only the kotwall of the city of Madurai. Jalal-ud-din rebelled in 1334-35 A.D., murdered the Sultan’s officers treacherously and became an independent ruler of Madurai\(^3\). Thus the Madurai Sultanate came into being, and from now on a number of successive Sultans ruled over Madurai, issuing coins of their own.

The Moor, Ibn Batuta, who visited Madurai in 1342 A.D., has left an account of the first decade of the history of the Sultanate\(^4\). Ibn Batuta says that Jalal-ud-din Ahsan Shah was assassinated in 1340 A.D. after a rule of five years\(^5\), and was succeeded by one of his amirs, Ala-ud-din Udaiji who ruled for about a year and then was killed. He was succeeded by his son-in-law Qutb-ud-din who was put on the throne by the nobles, but since he proved unsatisfactory he was murdered after a brief rule of forty days. Then Ghiyas-ud-din Damaghani became Sultan (1341-43 A.D.). During his reign Ibn Batuta visited Madurai.

At this time the Hoysala Ballāla III invaded the Sultanate, defeated the Muslims near Kobban (Kanmanur-Koppam) and made them retreat to Madurai. Then he besieged the fort of Kobban for nearly six months. Finally Ghiyas-ud-din made a surprise attack on Ballāla, took him prisoner and cruelly put him to

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1. Elliot and Dowson: *The History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vol. III, p. 618.


3. Barzai says that he was Saiyid Hasan, father of Ibrahim the purse bearer, and that he broke out into rebellion in Ma’bar, killed the nobles and seized upon the government (Elliot & Dowson, *op cit.*, p. 243).

4. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri: *Foreign Notices of South India*, pp. 276-283; Elliot and Dowson: *op cit.*, p. 614 ff. Ibn Batuta was the son-in-law of Jalaluddin. In the course of his travels he stayed for sometime in Madurai and Madurai country.

5. Numismatic evidence confirms this since the last date furnished by the coins for his reign is 740 A.H. (1339-40 A.D.), *J.R.A.S.*, 1909, p. 673.
death\(^1\), in 1342 A.D. Ibn Batuta was shocked at the atrocities committed during the Sultan’s rule.

There was a severe epidemic in Madurai and Ghiyas-ud-din succumbed to it soon after Ibn Batuta’s arrival. Ibn Batuta was himself attacked by the disease, but soon recovered. The Sultan was succeeded by his nephew Nasir-ud-din in 745 A.H. (1343-44-52\(^2\)). Soon after his accession, Ibn Batuta left Ma’bar. There is no account available for the subsequent history of the Sultans of Madurai. Further, there is a break in the coinage of the Sultans of Madurai for about twelve years from 745 A.H. to 757 A.H.\(^3\) Hence the history of the later Sultans is not very definite. It is said by Asif that when Feroz Shah became Sultan of Delhi he sent a firman to Ma’bar but Ma’bar was found to be without a ruler at that time. The people of Ma’bar proceeded to Daulatabad and chose one Qurban Hasan Kangu as their king and brought him to Ma’bar\(^4\). But he was a base and unworthy ruler.

Meanwhile the Vijayanagara Empire had been founded in 1336 A.D. Its rulers began a steady contest against the Muslims in the Deccan and the south. Kumara Kampana, the son of Bukka I, the second ruler of the Vijayanagara dynasty, in the course of a series of campaigns, succeeded in the steady overthrow of the Muslims from north to south. Kampana conquered Rajagambhira Rājya, the country of the Sampuvarāyas, in about 1362 A.D. A few years later Kampana marched south, restored and

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1. Ibn Batuta says that Ballala was captured, strangled and flayed and his skin was stuffed with straw and hung up on the wall of Madurai. Ibn Batuta’s account of Ballala’s death in the course of a war against the Muslims is corroborated by the evidence on an inscription of 1342 A.D. which says that Ballāla was killed in the Turuka war at Ciracirāpalli (Trichinopoly); E.C. Vol. VI, kd. No. 75.

2. It must be remembered that one characteristic of the Muslim coinage, that is, the mention of the place of mintage is conspicuous by its absence in the so-called coins of the Sultans of Ma’bar. J.M.U., Vol. XII, p. 53.

reconsecrated God Ranganātha in the temple at Srirangam. Then he marched against Madurai, defeated and killed the Sultan, and freed Ma’bar from Muslim occupation, which had lasted for nearly half a century.

It is rather difficult to fix the exact date of Kampana’s invasion and conquest of Madurai. Most probably Kampan’s southern campaigns started in about 1362 and were steadily continued till about 1378 A.D. when the Muslim power in the south was finally overthrown.

The vanquished Muslims appear to have made a fruitless appeal to Delhi for help.

Madurai had been under Muslim rule for nearly half a century. Ibn Batuta’s account gives a rough idea of the misrule and maladministration of the Muslim rulers. Epigraphic evidence, though meagre, speaks of the suffering and distress in the country. The misrule of the Muslims is variously referred to in inscriptions

1. During the period of the Muslim invasions of the region about 1327 A.D. the images of God Ranganatha and his consorts had been secretly carried away from Srirangam by the priests to Tirupati, by way of Jyotiṣkuḍi, Tirumalirunjolai, Kolikkudu, and Punganur. Madhuravijayam, introd., pp. 12-25; Taylor, Oriental Historical Manuscripts, Vol. II, p. iii; S.K. Aiyangar, South India and her Muhammadan Invaders, p. 116.

2. The Sultan overthrown by Kampana was apparently Qurbat Hasan Kangu. Aṣf says “Bukkan, an enemy, who was on the frontiers of Ma’bar with a large army and powerful elephants, invaded Ma’bar and captured Qurbat Hasan Kangu alive, and after capturing him killed him.” Aṣf: The Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi (Bib. Ind.), p. 262.

3. The overthrow of the Muslim Sultanate and the restoration of Hindu rule are referred to in Tamil chronicles like the Maduraiittalawaralu, Madurai Shanikar Varalaru, the Sritala and many Telugu works like the Jaininibharatam and the Ramahyyudayam as well as in the writings of Muslim historians like Aṣf. It also forms the subject of the Madhuravijayam, a Sanskrit poem in epic style, by Kumara Kampana’s wife Ganga Devi.

4. M.E.R. 64 of 1916, whose date is now generally accepted as 1364 A.D., refers to Kampana’s southern campaigns, the overthrow of the Muslims and the restoration of order. M.E.R. 106 & 111 of 1903, dated 1371 & 1374 A.D. are Kampana’s epigraphs from Tiruppullani (Rennad District).

and chronicles as *tululkāṇiṇam*, *tulukkaṇṇam* and *tulukkar kalaham*. Gangādevi, in the *Madhurāvijayam*, vividly describes the effects of the Muslim invasion and occupation of the Tamil country. Vyaṅghrapuri (Cidambaram) became literally the place for tigers. The temple at Śrīrangam became so dilapidated that the image of God Ranganātha was protected by the hood of Adiśeṣa alone. The shrine at Jambukēśvaram also was in a similar state. The coconut trees of Madurai had been cut down and in their places were erected *gālas* (iron tridents) with garlands of human heads, resembling the coconut trees remotely. Ibn Batuta also confirms Gangādēvi’s account of Madurai when he says that the Sultan of Madurai made the Hindu prisoners carry posts on which they were later impaled.

Social and economic life appear to have been greatly upset during the period of the Sultanate and the country was drained of its treasures and resources. A record, from Tirukkalākkudi dated 1364 A.D., refers to the disorder caused by the Muhammadans. It says that “The times were *Tulukkan* times, the dēvadōna lands of the gods were taxed with *kuṭimai*, the temple worship, however, had to be conducted without any reduction; the *ulavu* or cultivation of the temple lands were done by turns by the tenants of the village”. Further some of the temple lands had to be sold for the preservation of the original status of the temple.

Several epigraphs refer to the sale of *pāḍikāval* rights. Very often the people had to make their own arrangements for protection.

Apart from the stray references by Ibn Batuta and Afi hardly anything is known of Madurai city during the period of the

1. I.P.S. 454 & 669, M.E.R. 119 & 120 of 1908 and 64 of 1916 also refer to the occupation of the country by Muslims. M.E.R. 60 of 1916 dated 761 of an unspecified era (probably it refers to the Muhammadan era and corresponds to about 1361 A.D.) states that a number of Muslim generals were sent to destroy Suraikkudi.
Sultanate. Ibn Batuta says that Madurai was a large town with broad streets and that it was the Sultan’s place of residence. He says that the first prince who made it his capital was his father-in-law, the Sultan Sharif Jalal-ud-din Ahsan Shah, who made it look like Delhi, building it with care. He also mentions a river at a distance of one parasang on the banks of which was a Hindu temple. This is evidently a reference to the Vaigai.

It is interesting to note that Ibn Batuta mentions the use of the coins, drachmas and dinars. An epigraph mentions a kaikkola of the Avanavidipperunteruvu at Madurai.

**The Madurai Temple during the Muslim Rule**

**PRECAUTIONS TAKEN TO SAFEGUARD THE IDOLS:** The Tamil chronicles indicate how the temple at Madurai suffered destruction under the Muslim rule. The Madurai Sthānīkar Varāḻru gives the following account. In the month of Āni of Ś. 1245 (1323 A.D.) the Pādshah adal mantri Ādi Sultan and Malukka Nēmiyār came from Delhi with 60,000 horses, destroyed Siva and Viṣṇu temples and tanks, plundered temple treasuries (ṭrībhāṇḍāram), mutilated images (bimbam) and reached Trichirapalli. There also the sthānīkas were removed and temples were destroyed. Hearing these king Vālal Vilitturangum Parākrama Pāṇḍya was alarmed and left for the fort of Kāḷaiyārkōyil. Unable to stay in the city without the king’s protection, the sthānīkas of the temple of Madurai left the city after making certain provisions for the protection of the deity. They made a kilikkāṇḍu for the Svāmi in the garbhagriha, raised earth mounds, blocked the garbhagriha entrance with a stone wall and set up another Linga in the ardha mandapa. They did aṣṭābbhandana for the Goddess (Mūlappērñācciyār) and set up the Goddess on the upper storey of the vimāna. They did pāpadanam (buried in the ground) for the utsava vigrahas, Īlaiya Nāyinār and other vigrahas near the Muṭukundisvaramuḍaiyār shrine. The Sōliya, Kulaśeṅkarapperumāl, who was formerly

4. The whereabouts of this shrine is not traceable. Most probably it was one of the sub-shrines in the temple itself whose identity is now lost.
doing pūja in the Kariyamānikka Perumāl Temple, was left in charge of the Madurai temple and the conduct of its worship. Then taking the gold vīghraha of the God and a few other gold vīghrahas, the sthānīkās left Madurai and reached the Kilukiluppai forest in Nānjilnādu.

DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE: Tamil chronicles relate how the temple structures and the temple worship suffered during the Muslim regime. According to the account in the Maduraittalavaraḷu and the Pāṇḍyan Chronicle, the 14 gopuras of the temple, the Paṅcakṣara tirumadil and the streets within were destroyed and the garbha griha, the ardhamanḍapa and the mahāmanḍapa escaped the fury of the Muslims.1

While the Pāṇḍyan Chronicle and the Maduraittalavaraḷu merely state that the sanctum and its adjuncts escaped destruction, the Madurai Sthānīkar Varāḷu attempts to give an explanation as to why the sanctum was saved. The story, according to this chronicle, is that the invaders when told the legend about feeding the stone elephant, wanted to test the fact themselves and when they found that the stone elephant did eat the sugarcane offered by them they thought that their own God resided in the shrine and that therefore it must be saved. Whether the story is true or not, the vestiges of older structure still surviving in the garbha griha would indicate that not much damage was done to it.

RESTORATION OF WORSHIP BY KAMPANA: According to the Maduraittalavaraḷu and the Pāṇḍyan Chronicle, the Mysore general Kampaṇa Udaiyār, after driving away the Muslim invaders, restored the worship in the Madurai temple, after purificatory ceremonies.2

All the accounts mention that when the blocked up doorway was opened and the earth which was covering the deity was removed

1. The Supplementary Manuscripts state that the west Gopura and the Sannidhi Gopura also escaped destruction.
2. M.E.R. 64 of 1916 from Tirukkalakkudi states that Kampana Udaiyar destroyed the Muslim power, established orderly government throughout the country and appointed many cheifs (nayakkamārs) for inspection and supervision so that regular worship in all the temples might be restored.
Kampāna Uḍaiyār was surprised to find the lamps still burning and the flowers of the deity still fresh as they would be when the daily pāja is commenced every morning.

**B. Vijayanagara Viceroy**

Kampana’s overthrow of the Madurai Sultanate was completed in about 1371 A.D. From then onwards up to the latter half of the 16th c. A.D. the Madurai country came under the Vijayanagar Empire and was ruled by viceroys appointed by the imperial Government. The early viceroys were members of the Vijayanagara royal family, as, for instance, Kampana, the son of Bukka, and Virūpākṣa, son of Harihara II. These royal viceroys took the title of oḍeṣa or uḍaiyār. The practice of appointing princes of the royal family as viceroys of the provinces was followed by the kings of the Aravidu dynasty also. For instance, Venkaṭa II, the fourth son of Tirumala, was the viceroy of the Tuṇḍirāḷ Cōla and Pāṇḍya countries with his headquarters at Candrawiri. But the Saluvas and the Tuluvas did not follow this practice. Instead, experienced and distinguished officers were appointed as the provincial governors, who were generally designated by the term danḍanāyakas. Their status and position appear to have been the same as those of the royal viceroys. Lakkanā was one of the most eminent of the danḍanāyakas.

Kampana Uḍaiyār was the first viceroy of the south and was a powerful ruler. Epigraphs of the period, the vernacular chronicles and works as well as the Muslim historians describe the restoration of Hindu rule in Madurai and Kampana’s attempts to bring back order and stability in the administration.

Kampana’s epigraphs in about 1371 A.D. are found in Chingleput, North Arcot and Ramnad and show that he was practically master of the whole of South India by this time. Kampana died in 1374 A.D. and his son Jammana or Empana, succeeded him.

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1. Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar: *Sources of Vijayanagar History*, p. 302.
2. M.E.R. 511 of 1913 from Chingleput, 293 of 1895 from North Arcot, and 106, 111 of 1903 from Ramnad; M.E.R. 114 of 1903 dated 1374 A.D. is from Tiruppuljani in Ramnad.
as viceroy. It is not known how long he ruled. The Maduraittalavalaru says that Kampana and his son Empana Udayar and his nephew (marumagan) Porkasudaiyar\(^1\), ruled for a period of 33 years from the year Virōdhikṣṭ to the year Citrabhānu (1371-1402 A.D.).

In about 1385 A.D. Vijayanagar seems to have been losing control over the Madurai country. Hence Harishar II appointed his own sons to govern the various parts of the empire, so that there could be stricter control and more efficient administration. One of his sons, Virupakṣa, was appointed as the governor of the Tamil districts. He is credited with the conquest of Ceylon\(^2\). In the Sanskrit drama, Nārāyanavilāsam, written by Virupakṣa, the author calls himself the governor of the Karnāṭa, Tuṇḍira, Cōla and Pāṇḍya maṇḍalas and claims to have set up a pillar of victory in the island of Simhaḷa (Ceylon)\(^3\).

Some time later, during the reign of Dēvarāya II (1422-46 A.D.), his minister Lakkanāṇa became the viceroy of the Madurai country. According to the Maduraittalavalaru and the Madurai Sthānīkar Varalāru, Madurai was ruled by Lakkanāṇa and his brother Mādanaṇa for 48 years from Ś 1327 to 1375 (1405-1453 A.D.). The earliest record of Lakkanāṇa found in the Madurai country is dated Ś 1360 (1438 A.D.) and is from Ramnad\(^4\). Lakkanāṇa is said to have led a victorious expedition to Ceylon in about 1435 A.D.\(^5\) He ruled over the Madurai province with the title “Dakṣiṇasamuḍḍhīpati” (“Lord of the Southern Ocean”\(^6\).

It is not clear what happened after Lakkanāṇa’s governorship of Madurai was over. Very likely the province of Madurai was reorganised by Lakkanāṇa. The Pāṇḍya feudatories, the Bāṇa-darāyas, seem to have been put in charge of the administration of

\(^1\) The identity of Porkasudaiyar is not clear. Virupakṣa was a nephew of Kampana and was a governor of the Madurai country. It is not known whether Virupakṣa also had the name Porkasudaiyar.


\(^3\) Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, op. cit., p. 53.

\(^4\) M.E.R. 141 of 1903.


\(^6\) M.E.R. 128 of 1901, 141 of 1903, 567 of 1904, 100 of 1911.
the Madurai country by the Vijayanagara viceroy, in the course of his provincial reorganisation. The Madurai chronicles state that the Bānādarāyas were illegitimate sons of the Pāṇḍyas by a dancing girl Abirāmi of Kālaiyarkōyil and that they were brought over to Madurai by Lakkanna and vested with royal power. From about 1450 to 1500 A.D., Vijayanagara inscriptions do not occur in the Madurai region. Inscriptions of the period show the Bānādarāyas ruling in the Madurai, Ramnad region and the Pāṇḍyas in the Tinnevelly areas.

Towards the close of the 15th c. there appears to have been another attempt to bring the southern regions under stricter control of Vijayanagar. Narasa Nāyaka, the powerful minister of Īmmādi Narasimha and father of Kṛṣṇadēvarāya, was the virtual sovereign of the country. He undertook an extensive southern campaign. During the course of this campaign he is said to have conquered the Cōla, Pāṇḍya and Cēra and taken the city of Madurai. While all accounts state that he took the city of Madurai there is no agreement regarding the ruler of Madurai. The Pārijātāpaharanaru says that Narasa killed the Cōla and took Madurai. The Acyutarāyābhīhyadāyam says that he killed the Marava and captured Madurai while the Varadāmbikāparīṇāyam says that when Narasa Nāyaka entered Madurai he was received by the ruler with gilt and presents. According to epigraphical evidence Narasa defeated Mānabhūsa, the king of Madurai. But the texts of the verses containing the reference to Mānabhūsa seem to imply that Manabhūsa was neither a Cōla or Cēra nor a Pāṇḍya but someone other than these three. Probably he has to be considered for the present as an unidentified chief who had control over Madurai.

In 1410 (1493 A.D.) a Mahābali-Vānādaraya was ruling in Madurai. It is not clear whether he continued to rule here for about

1. Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, op. cit. p. 10.
3. During the 15th to 17th cs. the names Cōla and Pandyam seem to have been used rather indiscriminately. Vide Dr. N. Venkataramanayya: Further Sources of Vijayanagar History, Vol. I, p. 169, n.
ten years more till the advent of Narasā or whether he was dislodged by some chief from other regions. Nor is it clear whether the term Mānabhuṣa, being a general title for the Pāṇḍyaś, may be taken to apply to the Bāṇādarāya ruler in the sense that he was ruling over the Pāṇḍya country and thus was entitled to the Pāṇḍya titles.¹

The Pāṇḍya king said to have been defeated by Narasa may have been one of the rulers of Tenkāṣi, perhaps Jatilavaran Parākrama Kulaśekhara Pāṇḍya who ruled from 1479-1499 A.D.²

The probable date of Narasa's attack upon Madurai was about 1496-97 A.D. An inscription dated 18th March 1497 A.D. states that Immaḍi Kācappa Nāyaka had gone to Sethubandha-Rāmēśvaram with Narasa Nayaka³. The Maduraitalavaranāḷau and the Pāṇḍya Chronicle provide a confirmation very closely to this date by saying that in Vaikā of S. 1422 (1497 A.D.) Narasaiyya Nāyakkar (or Narasā Nāyakkar) went and offered worship at Rāmēśvaram and also captured the fort of Madurai. An epigraph dated S. 1420 (1498 A.D.) mentions the collection of tribute for payment to "the Rāya who took Madura". This is evidently a reference to Immaḍi Nārāsimha in whose name Nārāya conquered the southern regions⁴. Following the southern conquests a series of inscriptions of Immaḍi Nārāsimha, beginning with S. 1421 Siddhārthi (1499 A.D.) appear in the Madurai and Ramnad districts⁵.

The Sāluva rule in the Madurai country appears to have been a period of great oppression and heavy taxation. An epigraph⁶ of S. 1423 (1501 A.D.) from Tirukkalākkūḍi in Ramnad district says

¹ Arikasari Parakrama Pandya (1422-63 A.D.), the Tenkasi Pandya ruler who had the titles of Manabhuṣana, Manabharana and Manakavaca is identified with Manabhuṣana who was defeated by Narasa. This identification does not seem to be correct owing to the interval of nearly 30 years between the end of his reign and Narasa's attack upon Madurai.
² K.A. Nilakanta Sastrī, The Pandyan Kingdom, p. 247.
³ M.E.R. 719 of 1917.
⁴ M.E.R. 211 of 1942.
⁵ M.E.R. 89 of 1908 (S. 1421), 139, 151 of 1903, 213 of 1924 (all dated S 1422), 47 of 1916 (S 1424).
⁶ M.E.R. 50 of 1916.
that it was the period of occupation by the Kannaḍagas (Karnāṭakas) and says that the farmers were so harassed by the heavy taxation imposed upon them that they had to sell their lands in order to pay the taxes and had to leave their homes.

During the first half of the 16th c. epigraphs of the Bāṇādarāyas occur side by side with records of various Vijayanagara officers in the Madurai country. The Tamil chronicles mention a list of Vijayanagara officers who ruled over Madurai from about 1497 to 1559 A.D., the period when Kṛṣṇadēvarāya, Acyuta and others also ruled in Vijayanagar. A number of these names may be recognised in the epigraphs of the period. But apart from the meagre information supplied by these epigraphs, not much is known about them.

The Maduraittallavalaru² says that the Nāyaka governors of Madurai were Tenna Nāyakkar (1500-1512 A.D.), Nācciappa Piḷḷai (1513-1517 A.D.), Kūrūkūr Timmappa Nāyakkar (1517-1521 A.D.), Kaṭṭiyam Kāmaiyya Nāyakkar (1521-23 A.D.), Cinnappa Nāyakkar (1524-27 A.D.), Īyakkarai Veiyappa Nāyakkar (1527-32 A.D.), Viśvanāyakkaraiyan (1533-42 A.D.), Varada Mannargal (1542-44 A.D.), Viśvanātha Nāyakkaraiyan (1544-45 A.D.), Viṭṭilūr Rāja (Viṭṭhala Rāja) (1546-57 A.D.)², and Timmappa Nāyakkar, Cellappa Nāyakkar and Paṭṭukkōṭṭai Viṣrappa Nāyakkar (1558-60 A.D.).

Two records of 1516 A.D. and 1519 A.D.³ mention Rāyarvāṅgal Timmappa Nāyaka as the administrator (karitar) of Madurai. These are evidently references to Kūrūkūr Timmappa (1517-21 A.D.) mentioned in the chronicles. In 1522 A.D. Rāyasam Koṇḍamarasa made the gift of a village in Dāḍikkombu in the Dindigul Taluk.⁴ The Cinnappa Nāyaka (1524-27 A.D.) of the chronicles figures in a record of 1526 A.D.⁵ from Tiruvēḍagam, near Madurai, and is mentioned as the king’s vāsāl kāriyam in the reign of Acyuta.⁶

1. The Pandyan Chronicle and the Madurai Sthanikar Varalaru give a similar list with a few minor variations.
2. This is a reference to Ramaraja Viṭṭhala who was in charge of the southern districts during the reign of Sadasiva.
Viśvanāyakkaraiyan (1533-42 A.D.) (also called Viśvanātha Nāyaka) and Viśvanātha Nāyakkaraiyan (1544-45 A.D.) mentioned in the chronicles were evidently Viśvanātha Nāyaka, son of Kōṭiyam Nāgama Nāyaka. For a brief interlude of two years, 1542-44 A.D., the chronicles state that Varada Mannargal governed the Madurai country. During this period Viśvanātha Nāyaka was probably transferred to another region. An epigraph from Śrīrangam dated Ś. 1461 refers to Viśvanātha Nāyaka of Tirucināppalli Cāvaṭi. A record from Alagarkōyil, dated Ś. 1464 (1542 A.D.) mentions an order communicated by Vāraṇāsi Varadappa Anārāyyan who is called the ‘kumāra’ of Acyutadēva Mahārāya. This is probably a reference to the Varada Mannargal of the chronicles. It is not clear whether he was related to Acyuta or whether ‘kumāra’ was merely an endearing term.

When Kṛṣṇadēvarāya died in 1530 A.D. his brother and successor Acyuta had to face a formidable rebellion in the empire, one direct result of which was the establishment of the Nāyaka dynasty at Madurai. Sālūva Vīra Narasimha alias Cellappa was a powerful viceroy in the south during Kṛṣṇadēvarāya’s reign. He allied with Tumbicci Nāyaka of Paramakudi and the Tiruvaṭi king of Vēnād (Travancore), Udayamārttanḍa and rose in rebellion and tried to drive out the Tenkāsi Pāṇḍya ruler Jāṭilavarman Śrivallabha. Acyutarāya sent an army commanded by his brother-in-law Salkaraju Tirumala to put down the rebels. The army progressed up to the banks of the Tāmbraparṇi where a pillar of victory was set up after crushing the rebels. Acyuta restored the Pāṇḍya to his kingdom and accepted his daughter as his bride. Sālūva Vīra Narasimha

2. Dr. N. Venkataramanayya: Studies in the third Dynasty of Vijayanagara, p. 22 ff. for details of Acyuta’s southern campaigns.
3. M.E.R. 91 and 92 of 1908 from Ramnad; 399 of 1906 from Pudukottai.
4. M.E.R. 91 and 92 of 1908 dated Ś. 1432 and 1433 from Tirupputtur (Ramnad District) record gifts and villages to a temple “for the merit of Cellappa alias Vīra Narasimha”; Nuniz and Rajanatha Dindima state that Saluva Nayaka alias Sellappa was the governor of the Cola and the Pandya countries during the reign of Kṛṣṇarāya and that he continued to hold this post even after Acyuta’s accession; Vide Dr. N. Venkataramanayya: Studies in the third Vijayanagara Dynasty, App. B., pp. 453-61.
and his allies were captured and brought as prisoners to the king’s
camp at Śrīrangam. Śāluva Narasimha and Tumbicci Nāyaka
were probably pardoned. The events probably took place in about
1532 A.D. or a little earlier since a number of epigraphs dated
Ś 1454 (1532 A.D.) refer to Acyuta’s victories¹.

Soon after Sadāśiva’s coronation in 1543 A.D. an expedition
was sent against the extreme south, under Cina Timma, the cousin
of Rāmarāja who had raised Sadāśiva to the throne and was the
de facto ruler. A powerful personality who helped Cina Timma in
his victorious southern campaigns was his brother Rāmarāja Viṭṭhala.
Viṭṭhala was then left in charge of the southern region of the empire.
In the later Vijayanagar period, while provinces were given internal
autonomy, the independence of the Nāyakas or provincial governors
appears to have been kept under check by ‘Special Commissioners”².
Side by side with Viśvanātha, the Nāyaka of Madurai, Rāmarāja
Viṭṭhala seems to have been appointed ‘special commissioner’ in
the same locality. He styled himself a Rājādhiraṇa and a Mahāman-
dalesvāna³. Numerous epigraphs of his occur in the Madurai region⁴.
Besides succeeding in his expedition against the Tiruvaṭi country
he also put an end to certain troubles on the fishery coast. Rāmarāja
Viṭṭhala had very wide powers and he enforced the imperial sway
over the whole of South India. During the time of Tirumala,
Prince Venkaṭa appears to have been another “Special Commiss-
ioner” over the Tuṇḍira (Jiṅji), Cōla (Tanjore) and Pāṇḍya
(Madurai) countries with his capital at Candragiri.

C. The Banarāgayas in Madurai

The Bāṇas or Bāṇādarāyās were a family of feudatories who
figure as chieftains under one South Indian power after another. Start-
ing as a political power in the 4th c. A.D., they served as feudatories
successively under the Satavāhanas, the Kaṭambas of Banavāsi,

2. Dr. T.V. Mahalingam: Administration & Social Life - under Vijayanagar, pp.
202-203.
of 1942,
he Cīḷukyas of Vēṭāpi, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas of Malkhed, the Pallavas of Kāṇci, and the Cōḷas, and later on, under the Pāṇḍyas and Vijaya-
nagara kings. They appear to have tried to set up independent
rule whenever the political situation afforded them a chance.

The Bāṇas appear to have been a small tribe whose early home
was in the area round about the modern Kolar and Kurnool districts
during the early centuries of the Christian era. They first served
as the feudatories of the Satavāhanas and the early Pallavas.

The Bāṇas gradually and steadily migrated southwards through
the centuries. When the Cīḷukyas expanded their power in the 7th
c. A.D., the Bāṇas were forced to move south. They migrated
and settled down in the region of the Pāḷār basin with Tiruvallam
as their new capital. This area covered the western part of the
Chittoor district, and the north-west part of the North Arcot
district and was called Perumbāṇappādi in Tamil epigraphs or
Vāḍugavaḷi One Thousand Two Hundred. Between the 8th and
10th cs. A.D., the Bāṇas appear to have changed their allegiance
often, between the Gangas or Pallavas, or Rāṣṭrakūṭas, according
to the exigencies of the time. After the battle of Śripuṟambyiṇam
(c. 880 A.D.), when Pallava power was weakening, the Bāṇas tried
to set up independent rule. But the Bāṇa independence was short
lived since the Cōḷa Parāntaka I conquered Perumbāṇappādi by about
915 A.D. As a result one branch of the Bāṇas migrated to the north
to the present Guntur and Krishna districts. Another branch accept-
ed Cōḷa overlordship and served as loyal feudatories. They moved
to the south and settled in the region of the South Peṇṇar river. This
area came to be called Vāṇagōppādi Magadaimandaḷalam and Maga-
rarājya and appears to have included parts of the modern South
Arcot, Salem and Trichinopoly districts.

In the course of the 13th c. when Cōḷa power declined, the Bāṇas
became the feudatories of the Pāṇḍyas and settled down in the modern
Trichinopoly and Madurai districts. The Bāṇas held various offices
under the mediaeval Pāṇḍyas and bore their titles and names.

1. Dr. T.V. Mahalingam: The Banas in South Indian History. Journal of Indian
Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I (acc. 1216 A.D.) appears to have been helped by a Bāṇa chieftain during his campaigns against the Cōla Kulōttunga III in about 1216-17 A.D. It was perhaps as a reward for this help that he gave a part of the Cōla country to the Bāṇa.1 Under Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I, Sundara Pāṇḍya Vāṇādarāyan figures as an officer.2 A record of Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya II mentions a Sīvalavan Maduraippurumāl alias Vāṇa-kōvaraiyan of Irāsārāsapuram in Kongu maṇḍalam.3 In a record of Vikrama Pāṇḍya4 a Mahabali Vanarayar is referred to as the king’s mudali. Vāṇādarāyas figure in the reign of Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya II and Jaṭāvarman Vikrama Pāṇḍya5 both of whom refer to the Hoysala Sōmēśvara as their uncle māmaḍi.

In the 21st year (1274 A.D.) of Jaṭāvarman Vira Pāṇḍya the officers of a Māvali Vāṇādarāya are stated to have attacked Marava Madurai and led away the livestock.6 In the reign of Māravarman Kulaśēkhara I a Pillai Mahābali Vāṇārāyar was the governor of Kōnāṭu7. He was perhaps also called Pillai Kulaśēkhara.8

Some of the Pāṇḍya kings speak of their Bāṇa feudatories in endearing terms like pillai and makkal.9 Often the names of the kings were also attached to those of the chieftains. Thus they were called Sundara Pāṇḍya Vāṇādarāyar, Parākrama Pāṇḍya Mahābali Vāṇādarāyar and so on. From some of their epigrams it may be surmised that the Vāṇādarāyas had dynastic connections with the Pāṇḍyas. Hence the terms pillai and makkal applied to them may not always mean mere terms of endearment. Four records of Jaṭāvarman Vikrama Pāṇḍya10 mentioned above, refer to the throne

1. M.E.R. 481 of 1908 and 196 of 1939. The latter calls the Bana chief the "Magadarkon". This shows that the Banas hailed from Mgadai country.
7. I.P.S. 375.
8. Dr. T.V. Mahalingam, op. cit., p. 299.
Vaññadarāyana and a royal order made at the instance of Anṇan Vaññadarāyar. In two records of Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya II, one Arulāḷan Sēvagattēvan alias Vaññadhīrāyar of Taccanūr is styled the king’s ammān and is stated to have carried out many repairs to the Madurai temple. These records state that he granted a village for offerings to God Tiruvālavāyuḍaiyār during the service instituted by him in the temple and for feeding Paradēikkōvanavar reciting the Tiruvemēbāvai in Śādāripāṇ in the month of Mārgaḷi while the deity halted at the Vaññadarāyar vāsal (entrance) to the south of the shrine of the Goddess.

Mahābali Vaññadarāyar referred to in a third record of the same king, is evidently the same person. Thus under the mediaeval Pāṇḍyas the Bāṇādarāyas often occupied positions of prominence.

In the latter half of the 15th c. A.D. during the Vijayanagar viceroyalty, many Bāṇādarāya chieftains are found to be ruling over the Madurai region, perhaps as Vijayanagara feudatories. It is not known why or how exactly they happened to be ruling over Madurai at that time. A probable explanation has been attempted earlier in this chapter. The Maduraittalavalaralagu and the Pāṇḍyan Chronicle give the names of the persons brought over by Lakkanāṇa from Kāḷaiyārkōyil to rule over Madurai. They were Sundaratōl Māvali Vañṇādirāyar, Kāḷaiyār Sōmanār, Aṉjāda Perumāḷ, Muttaraśar and Tirumalai Māvali Vañṇādirāyar. They are stated to have ruled for 48 years from Sukla (S. 1374) to Nāḷa (1452-1500 A.D.).

In epigraphs of the period there are references to some of the Bāṇādarāya rulers and their activities. A TirumāliruṆjōlainrān alias Māvali Vañṇādarāyan was called the Madhurāpuri Mahānāyakan and in S. 1350 was a subordinate of the Vijayanagara king “...who witnessed the elephant hunt” (probably Dēvārāya II).

3. The Madurai Sthanikar Varalaru says that Abhirami had six sons and that Sundara Mavali Venadarayar was the eldest.
In 1453 A.D. Uraṅgāvillidāsān alias Mahābali Vāṇādarāyavar was ruling in the Madurai country. He seems to have had the name Tirumāḷirunjōlainingān also since epigraphs call him Tirumāḷirunjōlainingān Māvalivāṇādarāyān alias Uraṅgāvillidāsān or Tirumāḷirunjōlainingān Māvalivāṇādarāyān Uraṅgāvillidāsān. His inscriptions range from S. 1375 (1453 A.D.) to S. 1399 (1477 A.D.). His consort was Śrīraṅga Nāyaki.

He appears to have been a powerful ruler. During the days of the Vijayanagara emperors Mallikārjuna and Virūpākṣa Rāya (1447-85 A.D.) the imperial government was weak. Taking advantage of the political situation the Bāna ruler (or his son Sundarattōḷu-dāiyān) seems to have risen against the imperial authorities, marched as far north as Kāṇci and occupied the city for a brief period. Soon, within a few years, he was beaten back by Sāluva Narasimha.

Two records from Kāṇci bear testimony to the Bāna occupation of the city. One of them dated S. 1391 (1469 A.D.) in which the ruler is styled “Bhuvanēkāvīran Samarakōḷāhalan”, registers the grant of two villages named Samarakōḷāhalanallūr and Bhuvanaikavīranallūr in the Pāṇḍya country to the temples of Ēkāmrnātha and Kāmākṣi at Kāṇci. The other epigraph in Tamil verse is in praise of Māvilivāṇan and seems to refer to the defeat of Valudā (Pāṇḍya).

3. M.E.R. 307 of 1930; M.E.R. 219 of 1939 from Alagarkoyil giving the name Tirumalirunjolaininginrarn Mahavelivanadarayar Uraangavillidasan alias Samarakolalahalan evidently belongs to this ruler.
6. Vijayanagara records dated 1471 and 1472 at Kāṇci show the restoration of the imperial hold over the place; 39 of 1890, 9 of 1911, 613 of 1919 etc.
8. S.I.I., Vol. IV, No. 348A.
The emblem of the Bānas appears to have been that of the Garuḍa as may be inferred from their title Garuḍakētana. The coins with the legends Samarakōlāhalan and Bhuvanaikaviran on the reverse and the figure of a garuḍa kneeling on a fish (the Pāṇḍya emblem) evidently belong to the Bānādārāyas and were probably issued in commemoration of their success over the Pāṇḍyas.

The Bānas assumed many titles such as “Bhuvanēkaviran”, “Samarakōlāhalan”, “Vēdiyar Kāvalan”, “Vīra Kaṅcukan”1, “Sārvabhauma,” “Mūvarāyaraṇaṇaṇ”, “Rājamisaraṇaṇaṇ”, “Bhūpālagōpāla” and so on.

God Aḷagar of Tīrumālirūṅjōlaḷ was the tutelary deity of the Bānādārāyas. Aḷagarkōyil was most probably their political capital. They made numerous benefactions to the temples at Aḷagarkōyil and Śrīvilliputtūr. They had also the Garuḍa banner and Aḷagar Tīrumūllam was their sign manual2. These would indicate that they were ardent Vaiṣṇavas. But their religious toleration is also shown by the fact that they extended their benefactions to the great temple at Madurai also.

The Bānas continued to rule in the Madurai region under Vijayanagara overlordship till about the founding of the Nāyaka dynasty at Madurai.

Tīrumālirūṅjōlaḷainrāṇ was succeeded by his son Sundarattōḷudaiyān Māvalivānādārāyar.3 A record of S. 1438 (1516 A.D.)4 mentions Sundarattōḷudaiyār alias Irandakālāmeḍutta Māvalivānādārāyar. It is not clear whether this has also to be assigned to the ruler mentioned above. At a slightly later period there is mention of another ruler called Sundarattōḷudaiyār whose epigraphs are found from S. 1452 (1530 A.D.) to S. 1458 (1535 A.D.).5

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1. All these titles are attributed to a Virapratapa Sundarattoludaiyan Mahabali Vanadhiraja, in a record dated 1483 A.D. from Nekkonam in Pudukkottai.
2. M.E.R. 25 of 1890; S.I.I. Vol. IV, No. 348. The Tīrumālirūṅjōlaḷ Alagar seems to have been the family deity of the Banadarayas.
3. M.E.R. 573 of 1926; M.E.R. 44 of 1908 dated S. 1410 mentions Timmacci Nāyakar, a feudatory of Mahābalivānādārāja. The identity of this Bāna ruler is not clear.
With the rise of the Nāyakas of Madurai the Bāṇādarāyas declined in power probably due to defeats they might have sustained at the hands of the Madurai Nāyakas or possibly due to failure of heirs in the direct line. During the Nāyaka regime the Bāṇas appear to have made attempts from time to time to reassert their power. Inscriptions of the Bāṇādarāyas continue to occur in the Madurai country as late as 1606 A.D.

1. The Padmaneri grant says that Visvanatha Nayaka defeated a Vanadaraya.
2. Virappa Nayaka (1572-95 A.D.) is stated to have crushed the rebellion of a Mavali Vanadaraya who had fortified Manamadurai and Kalaiyarkoyil, and to have confiscated his palaiyans; *Indian Antiquity*, Vol. XLIV, p. 91; R. Sathianatha Aiyar: *History of the Nayaks of Madura*, p. 79; M.E.R. 1910, para 33.
CHAPTER VIII

THE NAYAKAS OF MADURAI

A. Political History

From about the middle of the 16th c. A.D. the nāyankara system became a prominent feature of the Vijayanagara provincial organisation. Under this system the king was regarded as the owner of the soil and he distributed lands to his dependents, who were called Nāyakas. The Nāyakas ruled over their territories with a great measure of freedom. In return they paid a fixed annual contribution to the imperial government and maintained a sufficient number of troops, and helped the king in his wars. In course of time the Nāyakaship became hereditary when the central control grew weak and inefficient. The Nāyakas of Madurai, Tanjore and Jinji started as the subordinates of Vijayanagar and soon rose to great prominence.

Visvanatha Nayaka, the son of Kotiyam Nāgama Nāyaka, has been credited with the founding of the Nāyaka dynasty of Madurai. From that time the fortunes of Madurai revived again and for nearly two centuries a period of peace and prosperity under the Nāyaka administration was established. After the fall of Vijayanagar the Nāyakas of Madurai tried to protect Hindu independence against the Muhammadans. Administration was improved and a system of feudal service was regularised. There was much building activity in erecting temples and palaces throughout the Madurai country. Artisans and craftsmen found royal patronage everywhere. The literature and art of the period was marked by a synthesis of the two great Dravidian cultures, Tamil and Telugu. This was equally noticeable in the social life of the two peoples who were not brought together under Telugu domination. The rulers, though most of them were Vaiṣṇavas themselves, maintained a certain amount of impartiality and gave their benefactions to Śiva and Viṣṇu temples alike.

The popular version of the origin of the Nāyaka dynasty in Madurai centres round a quarrel between Viraśekhara Coḷa and Candraśekhara Pāṇḍya. The latter appealed to Kṛṣṇadeva Raya for help. It is stated that Nāgama Nāyaka was sent by the Vijayanagara ruler to the south to help restore the Pāṇḍya ruler. Nāgama restored order but not the Pāṇḍya. When Nāgama disobeyed
Kṛṣṇadeva Rāya’s orders to restore the Pāṇḍya king, Visvanātha Nāyaka, the son of Nāgama, was sent by the Rāya to bring back Nagama alive or dead and restore the Pandya ruler. Visvanatha defeated his own father and was made, according to popular version again, the viceroy of the south by Kṛṣṇadeva Rāya. After sometime, the Pāṇḍya ruler having died without a legitimate heir, Visvanātha Nāyaka became the sole ruler of the southern country and thus founded the Nayaka dynasty. This version with minor variations given by the vernacular chronicles, such as the Tanjavūri Andhira Rājula Caritra, is a legendary account drawn up probably on the basis of a few historical incidents. At present one is not able to test the truth of the accounts of the chronicles since other corroboratory sources of information are not available.

Visvanātha Nāyaka was the son of Kōṭiyam Nāgama Nāyaka. He was of the Kaśyapa gōtra and hailed from Kaṁci.¹ Nāgama Nāyaka is mentioned in several inscriptions as an officer of the Vijayanagara rulers² but these do not contain any information about his insubordination. An epigraph dated S. 1485 (1563 A.D.) states that Viṣvanatha Nāyaka had acquired the Tiruvadi-dēsa (Travancore) as amaranāyakam from Rāmarājar Ayyan³. The Padmanēri grant⁴ and the Vellangudi plates⁵ state that Visvanatha conquered in battle the Tiruvadi (i.e. the ruler of Travancore), the Pāṇḍya


2. Nagama Nayaka is referred to in M.E.R. 331 of 1913 (1475 A.D.) and 48 of 1887 and 6 of 1903 dated 1482 A.D. M.E.R. 318 of 1909 (1484 A.D.) says that he was the mudarpavadai (foremost of the servants) of the king; M.E.R. 36 of 1929 (1500 A.D.) M from Sivapuri (Ramnad District) says that Nagama held the Piśirānmalai Sirmai; M.E.R. 192 of 1933, a record of Nagama, is from Nodiyur in Tanjore.

3. M.E.R. 17 of 1912; Tiruppanimalai, v. 49 also states that he conquered the Tiruvadi. Besides Acyuta’s expedition against the Tiruvadi in about 1530-31 A.D. Ramaraja Vitthala also led another expedition against the Tiruvadi in about 1543 A.D. in the reign of Sadasiva. It is not certain in which of these expeditions Visvanatha participated or whether he helped in both.


king, the Vānādarāya and other kings and established his sway over the Madura-rāja. A Sundarattōluḍaiyar Māvalivānādarāyar was ruling in the Madurai country from about 1530 to 1535 A.D. In an epigraph dated S. 145(4)¹, he calls himself the Vijayaragara feudatory. He was probably the Bānādarāya ruler said to have been defeated by Viṣvanātha.

The exact date of the establishment of the Nayaka dynasty at Madurai is another problem which presents many difficulties. The date 1559 A.D. given by Nelson is generally regarded as unsatisfactory. Some scholars are of the opinion that Viṣvanātha established his dynasty at Madurai as early as 1529 A.D. in Kṛṣṇadēva Rāya's reign². Another opinion is that the Nayaka dynasty was founded not by Viṣvanātha but by his son Kṛṣṇappa³. Epigraphical evidences and accounts of the chronicles prove that Viṣvanātha was administering the Madurai country in some capacity or other from about 1532-33 A.D.⁴ onwards. With regard to the events of

¹ M.E.R. 451 of 1924.
⁴ The Maduraiattalavuralur and the Pandyan Chronicle say that Visvanatha Nayaka ruled at Madurai from 1533 to 1542 A.D. and from 1544 to 1545 A.D. and that he again came to Madurai under the Rayar's orders and ruled from 1559 to 1572 A.D. While all these dates cannot be accepted as being accurate, the accounts show that he administered the Madurai country for three terms. The earliest record of Visvanatha in this region is dated 1532 A.D. (M.E.R. 88 of 1929). In this record he says that he was the ulīyan (servant) of Acyuta. In M.E.R. 113 of 1908, dated 1534-35 A.D. Acyuta grants a village to a temple for the merit of his officer Visvanātha Nayaka. In M.E.R. 43 of 1939 dated 1536 A.D. Visvanatha makes a gift to the Srirangam temple, of four silver chains or a swing which had been entrusted to him by Acyuta. M.E.R. 264 of 1930 dated 1540 A.D. refers to Visvanatha Nayaka of Tirucinapalli Gavadi. Then for about ten years epigraphs of the region do not mention him. In M.E.R. 599 and 721 of 1916 dated 1550 A.D. from Tinnevelly district he figures as the agent of Ramaraja Vithala. In M.E.R. 385 of 1916 dated 1558 A.D. from Tinnevelly district he continues as the agent (kāryakarta) of Ramaraja. M.E.R. 622 of 1915 dated 1560 A.D. shows his presence in South Arcot. The above records would show that from about 1532 A.D. Visvanatha served as a loyal Vijayanagara officer in various parts of the empire.
1533 A.D. John Nieuhoff says "there are three Nayaks in this part of India, viz., The Nayk of Madure, the Nayk of Tanjore, and the Nayk of Gingi.... their predecessors having inancient times been only governors of those countries they are now possessed of, under the jurisdiction of the kings of Vidia Nagar, Bisnagar or Narasingha, but having revolted against their liege-lord, each of them assumed the royal power and title". The information contained in Nieuhoff's letter as well as the fact that Visvanatha appears to have occupied a high position of trust and responsibility throughout Acyuta's reign probably would indicate that Viṣvanatha might be credited with the founding of the Nāyakship of Madurai early in the reign of Acyuta, if not earlier.

Viṣvanatha Nāyaka was a good administrator and was ably assisted in his work by Ariyanātha Madali, the well-known dalavāy and pradhānī who served under the first four Nāyaka rulers. With his help Viṣvanatha demolished the old Pāṇḍya rampart and ditch which at that time surrounded the walls of the temple, and constructed an extensive double-walled fortress with 72 bastions. One of Visvanatha's memorable works was the organisation of the Madurai country into pālaiyams. It is said that 72 pālaiyams were created and that each pālaiyagār was left in charge of one of the 72 bastions of the Madurai fort. He improved the great temple at Madurai. He strengthened the defence of Trichinopoly. Ariyanātha suppressed a rising of "five Pāṇḍyas" in the region of Kaṭār in Tinnevelly and restored order. Visvanatha ruled till 1564 A.D. and remained loyal and subordinate to Vijayanagar.

Viṣvanatha was succeeded by his son Kṛṣṇappa Nāyaka I (1564-72 A.D.). It is said that in his reign one Tumbicci Nāyaka rebelled in the region of Paramakudi in Ramnad but was suppressed. The Kṛṣṇapuram plates, dated 1567 A.D. state that Kṛṣṇappa defeated the Tiruvadi king and that he had the title, "Pāṇḍyakulasthā-panḍeśaya"). These facts taken along with the suppression of the rebellion of Tumbicci Nāyaka show that Kṛṣṇappa took part in Acyuta's southern campaign against the Tiruvadi. The Singḥala

Dvīpa Kātha gives a detailed account of the successful Ceylon expedition of Kṛṣṇappa. Not much confirmatory evidence is available regarding this exploit. Ariyanātha Mudali continued as minister.

Kṛṣṇappa Nayaka was succeeded by his son Virappa Nayaka (1572-95 A.D.). A rebellion by Mahābali Vānādāryā in Manamadura region is stated to have been promptly suppressed by Virappa and his territory confiscated. There is an epigraph of a Sundarattōḷudaiyān Māvalivāṇādarajan from Alagarkoyil, dated 1589 A.D.¹ He is probably the Bāṇādāryāya defeated by Virappa. Ariyanatha continued to be the minister. Some epigraphs of Virappa Nayaka mention his Dalavāy Kanakappa Nāyakkar.² The later Pāṇḍya kings Varatunga (acc. 1587 A.D.) and Abhirāma Atīvirarāma Śrīvallabha (acc. 1564 A.D.), the joint donors of the Pudukkotai grant³, were the contemporaries of Virappa. In his 9th and 10th years Śrīvallabha made several grants at Śrīvilliputṭūr for the merit of Virappa Nāyaka.⁴ This evidently indicates that these later Pāṇḍyas considered Virappa as their overlord.

Virappa enjoyed a long reign of peace and prosperity. Virappa, or Kṛṣṇa Virappa as he was called, was an able ruler who made many improvements to the kingdom. He appears to have been an ardent Śaiva and made many additions and improvements to the Madurai temple. He built the Kambattaṛi Manḍapa, the Thousand pillar Manḍapa, the Tirujiṅņaśambandar shrine, the north gōpura and others and gave munificent gifts to the temple. He may be easily ranked among the greatest individual contributors to the temple.

During Virappa’s reign the first attempts were made by Fernandes to establish a Christian mission at Madurai but they turned out to be a failure.

Virappa had three sons, Kumāra Kṛṣṇappa, Viśvappa 2nd Kastūri Rangappa, Kumāra Kṛṣṇappa or Kṛṣṇappa Nāyaka II (1595-

¹ M.E.R. 91 of 1929.
² M.E.R. 323 of 1923; 55 of 1924.
⁴ M.E.R. 591, 592 of 1926.
1601 A.D.) became king in 1595 A.D. Nelson says that there was a joint rule of Kṛṣṇappa and Virappa. With the available evidences it is not possible to assert this fact with certainty. Probably Viśvappa had a brief reign since a statue in the Pudu Manḍapa is said to be a representation of him. Two epigraphs dated 1678 A.D.¹ appear to contain some references to him, as they mention a Viśvappa Nāyaka and a Virappa Nāyaka Visvanātha Nāyaka, son of Viśvanātha Nāyaka Kṛṣṇappa Nāyaka. The Padmanēri² and Vellangudi plates³ were issued in 1598 A.D. during the reign of Kṛṣṇappa Nāyaka and contain valuable information about the genealogy of the Nāyakas of Madurai. One epigraph mentions Mūrti Setti as an agent of the king.⁴ The Tiruppanimalai⁵ states that a Mūrti Setti presented a dīpa stōraṇa to the Swami shrine mahā manḍapa and that he built a manḍapa. It is not clear whether this donor is the same as the king’s agent. During Kṛṣṇappa’s reign Ariyanaththa Mudali died after having rendered noteworthy service under four rulers.

Kṛṣṇappa Nāyaka was a powerful ruler though he had only a short reign of about five years. On his death the throne is said to have been usurped by his youngest brother Kastūri Rangappa but within a week’s time the usurper was murdered and Muttu Kṛṣṇappa (1601-09 A.D.), the son of Viśvappa, was crowned the ruler. During his reign one notable event was the effective organisation of the Mārava country under the Sētupatis of Ramnad. The coastal region was left to the control of foreigners like the Dutch and the Portuguese. The weaknesses and disadvantages of such a policy were only slowly realised by the Nāyakas.

Several epigraphs of Muttu Virappa⁶ come from the old Travancore State and in one of them he is said to have made a gift of lands

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¹ M.E.R. 663 of 1916; 56 of 1932.
⁵ Verse 36.
to the Kanyā Bhagavati temple at Cape Comorin. These epigraphs fall in the reign of Muttu Kṛṣṇappa. From these it may be inferred that his son Muttu Vīrappa as prince was in charge of the Travancore region and that Muttu Vīrappa exercised effective control over these areas. Muttu Kṛṣṇappa is said to have built a town called Kṛṣṇāpuram between Madurai and Tirupparankunram, "the ruins of which bear melancholy testimony to his liberality."

In the reign of Muttu Kṛṣṇappa the Christian missionary activities of De Nobili and his successors met with some amount of success due to the thorough-going schemes of conversion followed by De Nobili.

Muttu Kṛṣṇappa was followed by his son Muttu Vīrappa Nāyaka I (1609-23 A.D.).

Up till now all the Nāyaka rulers had been loyal to Vijayanagar. But troubles started after the Vijayanagara emperor Venkata I died in 1614 A.D. Muttu Vīrappa seems to have taken advantage of the empire's weakness and disregarded the imperial suzerainty. He joined anti-imperialist Jinji against imperialist Tanjore. The war ended with the triumph of the imperialist party and with the marriage of Vīrappa's daughter to Raghunatha Nāyaka of Tanjore. Muttu Vīrappa appears to have changed his capital from Madura to Trichinopoly in about 1616 A.D.

Taking advantage of Muttu Vīrappa's war with Tanjore, the Raja of Mysore launched on a policy of aggression and annexation of the Madurai country. The local poligars of Virūpākṣi and Kannivādi, however, repulsed the invaders.

Muttu Vīrappa tolerated the activities of the Christian missionaries only to a certain extent. De Nobili's work was also hampered by Fernandez's accusations against him, which led to a great


2. There is some uncertainty about the date when Muttu Kṛṣṇappa died. Two letters of the missionary, Robert de Nobili, seem to indicate that he died in Dec. 1606; Rev. A. Saulière: The date of accession of Muttu Vīrappa Nāyaka I of Madurai settled by letters of his contemporary Fr. Robert de Nobili (Journal of Indian History, 1954, p. 83 ff.)

3. R. Sathianatha Aiyar, op. cit., p. 103.
loss of prestige. Faced with failure in Madurai, De Nebili went towards the North.

Muttu Virappa was succeeded by his brother Triumala Nāyaka (1623-59 A.D.), the best known ruler of his dynasty. In the field of art and architecture his reign was a period of pomp, splendour and magnificence. But it is doubtful whether Tirumala was an equally great genius in the sphere of politics, diplomacy and State-craft. He changed his capital from Trichinopoly back to Madura and carefully organised the defences of the kingdom. Ramappaivyyan was the king's dalavāy. Tirumala’s reign was marked by a large number of military campaigns. Tirumala was successful in his wars with Mysore. Ever since the time of Rāmarāja Vitthala’s conquest of the Tiruvadi, Travancore had been loyal to Vijayanagar but now there were signs of insubordination. Tirumala undertook a successful expedition against Travancore in about 1634-35 A.D.1 In Rāmnad region there was a dispute between Sadaika Teva II (Dalavāy Sētpati) and his illegitimate brother “Tambi”. Tirumala at first sided Tambi. The Portuguese and the Dutch also took sides in this war. Rāmappaiyyan, with Ranganna Nāyaka as second in command, was in charge of the successful campaign against the Setupati.2 Sadaika was defeated and Tambi made the ruler. But when Tambi’s rule proved weak and unpopular Tirumala restored Sadaika. The Mārava country was partitioned after Sadaika was murdered in about 1645 A.D. Finally Raghunātha Theva became the ruler and remained a staunch and loyal ally of Tirumala. Raghunātha defeated the Muslims, and crushed a Poligar rising at Ettaiyapuram and was rewarded liberally by Tirumala.

Till about 1634 Tirumala was loyal to Vijayanagar, though it was only a nominal subordination. In later years force of circumstances made him turn actively against Vijayanagar. When Sri-ranga III marched to the south in about the middle of Tirumala’s reign, Tirumala planned an alliance with the Nāyakas of Jinji and Tanjore, to oppose the emperor, but his plans were betrayed by the

2. The Rāmappaiyyan Ammānai gives a detailed account of the war.
Nāyaka of Tanjore. Then Tirumala requested the Golkonda Sultan to help him against the emperor. After defeating the emperors the Sultan turned against the other South Indian kingdoms. So Tirumala was forced to ask the Sultan of Bijapur for help. But all this only led to Muslim extension in the Carnatic.

Tirumala probably remained neutral in the contests between the Dutch and the Portuguese, in the south.

During his reign there was expansion of missionary activities towards the north and the west of Madurai and the Marava country. The missionaries suffered from persecution. In 1639 A.D. Tirumala made promises of freedom but again there was persecution in 1640 and 1644 A.D. De Nobili interviewed Tirumala for freedom of action. But the ruler’s promises did not afford protection from popular persecution. De Nobili died in 1660 A.D.

Tirumala was the master builder of his age and he made significant contributions in the realms of art and architecture. He built the Pudu Mandapa, dug the Vandiyār Teppakulam, carried out many repairs and renovations to the Madurai temple and began the unfinished Rāya Gopura. He also built an extensive palace to the south-east of the temple. Tirumala is credited with the building of many structures—both religious and civilian—not only in Madurai but also in many other places such as Tirupparankunram, Alagarkoyil, Srivilliputtur, etc.

Tirumala’s successor Muttu Vīrappa ruled only for about three or four months, during which period he had to ward off Muslim attacks with bribes. Then he was followed by Cokkanāṭha Nayaka (1659-82 A.D) who was only 16 years old at the time of his accession. A cabal consisting of the pradhānī, rāyasam and dalavāy was formed for administrative work. Cokkanāṭha soon freed himself from their control. Then he had to overcome the conspiracies formed by the Dalavāy Lingama Nāyaka.

In his reign there was much distress in Tanjore due to a severe famine. Madurai was also troubled by wars, wild beasts and epidemics. Cokkanāṭha was a weak ruler. He bought off the Bijapur army besieging Trichinopoly. He then took Vallam. In the Marava country he met with reverses. Cokkanāṭha again changed the
capital from Madura to Trichinopoly. He attempted to remove many of the precious materials from Tirumala Nāyaka's palace at Madurai with the aim of constructing a grand structure at Trichinopoly but he only succeeded in depriving Madurai of some of her precious artistic treasures. Wars with Mysore resulted in the loss of Coimbatore and Salem. Cokkanātha conquered Tanjore and appointed his foster brother Alagiri Nāyaka (Muttu Alakādri) as its viceroy. But the Marathas who were in the Carnatic region, headed by Ekoji, conquered and occupied Tanjore and drove out Alagiri.

Cokkanātha Nāyaka was deposed and imprisoned and his foster brother Muttu Alakādri was made king in 1678 A.D. At this time one Rustam Khan, a Muslim adventurer, usurped the throne and ruled for about two years, with Cokkanātha as a puppet king. Rustam was murdered in about 1680 A.D. Cokkanātha was then besieged in Trichinopoly by the Mysore army and then by the Nāyaka of Jinji. This weak ruler died in 1682 A.D.

Muttu Virappa Nāyaka III or Ranga Kṛṣṇa Muttu Virappa (1632-89 A.D.) succeeded to a much reduced kingdom. Even Madurai town was in enemy hands at the time of his accession. After the end of the war between Mysore and Madurai, the Marathas tried to annex Madurai. But soon order was restored and many possessions were recovered. In the Marava country the Madurai army met with reverses. Ranga Kṛṣṇa's benevolence and enthusiasm helped a great deal in the restoration of order.

During his reign De Britto worked in the Madura mission but returned to Portugal, due to persecution.

Ranga Kṛṣṇa died in 1689 A.D. After the birth of his posthumous son Vijayaranga Cokkanātha, Muttammal, the queen of Ranga Kṛṣṇa, committed suicide. Vijayaranga was crowned when he was barely three months old, and his grandmother Mangammāl ruled as the regent. The tact and diplomacy of Mangammāl helped in maintaining amicable relations with the neighbouring powers. She bought off the Muslims and was subordinate and loyal to them. She also bribed the Mahrattas. She successfully resisted the aggressive policy of Cikkadevarāya of Mysore. She undertook an expedition to Travancore to collect arrears of tribute.1 Her war with Tanjore

ended in peace and an alliance. In Ramnad Kilavan Setupati was becoming more and more independent. In about 1698 A.D. he besieged Madurai city and took it but was soon driven out. In 1702 A.D. he became completely independent.

Mangammal's religious policy was one of toleration. Her liberality regarding charities and public works is proverbial. She is said to have met with a tragic death in 1706 A.D.

From 1706 A.D. to 1732 A.D. Vijayaranga Cokkaraita ruled independently. He was deeply religious minded. His reign is a record of sufferings, steady decline and ruin of the kingdom due to his indifference and weakness. The country suffered from the mal-administration of the ministers. There were also famines and drought in the country. An inscription of 1710 A.D. says that a temple servant fell down from the Madurai temple gopura as a protest against undue taxation. Salem and Coimbatore were permanently lost to Madurai at this period.

Vijayaranga was succeeded by his queen Minaksi (1732 to 39-40 A.D.) whose short reign was marked by internal strife, succession disputes, foreign intervention and occupation. Minaksi had no son. She adopted Vijayakumara, the son of Bangaru Tirumala, who is said to have been a member of another branch of the royal family. Bangaru Tirumala plotted to depose the queen. Chanda Saheb was sent by the Nawab of Arcot to take Madurai and Tanjore. Chanda Saheb posed as an arbitrator between Minaksi and Bangaru. Minaksi tried to bribe Chanda Saheb with a sum of Rs. one crore. In the end Chanda Saheb turned treacherous and imprisoned Minaksi in her own palace at Trichinopoly where she committed suicide. Madurai fell into the hands of the Muslims. Thus the Nayaka dynasty of Madurai came to an end after having ruled for a period of nearly two centuries.

1. S. C. P. No. 47, 19; M.E.R. 733 of 1905; M.E.R. 3 of Appendix A, 1911; M.E.R. 19 of Appendix A, 1911, registering her gift of some villages to the Daraga of Bananatta, shows her liberal religious views.


B. Administration and Social Life under the Nayakas

The Nayakas of Madurai started as subordinates of the Vijayanagara empire. In the later stages of their rule this subordination had become only nominal. Yet one finds during the Nayakas' rule the influence of Vijayanagara reflected in its administration and in the social and economic life of Madurai.

The central government was carried on by the king assisted by his ministers such as the dalavāy or Prime Minister, the pradhān1 or Finance Minister, the rāyasam2 and others3. Very often the office of the dalavāy and the pradhān was found combined in the same person; for instance, Ariyanatha Mudali under the first four Nayakas. Other powerful and talented dalavāys were Rāmappaiya in the reign of Tirumala Nayaka4 and Narasappaiya under Mangammāl.

The nature of the government greatly depended on the influence of the king's personality. This was one prominent source of weakness during the Nayaka rule. Under powerful rulers like Viśvanātha Nayaka and Tirumala Nayaka the kingdom rose to great heights of splendour and glory but under weak personalities like Gokkanatha and Vijayaranga Gokkanātha the kingdom suffered from a lack of strong central control and steadily declined and fell a prey to the aggressions of neighbouring powers.

The kingdom was divided into pālaiyams ruled over by pālaiyagārs (poligars), who had to pay a fixed financial contribution and supply a definite military quota to the Nayaka ruler. Further, they were required to maintain a certain number of troops at the capital for guarding each one of the 72 bastions of the Madurai fort.


2. An officer who was perhaps the head of the secretariat. Dr. T.V. Mahalingam: *South Indian Polity*, pp. 123, 137.


Their power seems to have varied with their distance from the capital. Some of these poligars were very powerful. Under weak rulers they tried to assert themselves and gain independence.

A large measure of local autonomy still continued, with the village as the unit of local administration. From inscriptions of the period it may be inferred that the provinces were divided into nadu, sīmāi or mākāna, and village (variously called grāmam, mangalam, samudram, kudi, ār, kuričci, patti, etc.).

The administrative system was organised with a view to easy and speedy collection of revenue. The village revenue officer was called the maniyakāran or ambalakāran. The collections from villages were sent through the provincial officers to the centre. Land tax was the chief source of revenue. The amount of land tax collected was half of the produce of the land, according to the Jesuit writers.\(^1\) Payment seems to have been in cash. Other sources of revenue were the income from crown lands, tribute from poligars amounting to one-third of the produce of their pālaiyams, revenue from the pearl and chank fisheries, and various taxes.

The chief items of expenditure seem to have been public works and charities. Large sums were expended on temples and irrigation works\(^2\). Salaries of officials, the army and the police and judicial departments do not seem to have been a serious drain on the public revenues.

With regard to commerce and industries the lack of a navy as well as self-sufficiency at home seem to have stood in the way of a vigorous foreign trade. The pearl and chank fisheries were in a flourishing condition and Madurai was famous for her cloth manufacture. The coastal area was left to the control of foreign nations such as the Dutch and the Portuguese.

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2. M.E.R. 314 of 1928 refers to arrangements for feeding from the Nilaiyur channel the ten tanks round the Tirupparankurram hill; S.I.T.I., Vol. II, No. 760 mentions the repairs done to the head-sluice of a channel which had been originally constructed by the Colas and which had fallen into ruins.
The central government did not maintain an elaborate judicial establishment. Justice was mostly administered locally by the village officers. John Nieuhoff says that "each village had two judges". But it is not clear how the two judges were nominated. Bouchet states that "every head of the village was judge of all causes arising within the limits of his village, and heard and determined causes, assisted by three or four experienced villagers selected by him as assessors. Most suits were for debt. Litigants pleaded in person or by a friend. Great order and decorum prevailed during the trial. After hearing the parties and their witnesses, the court dismissed them and took time to consider.............women were to be examined as witnesses only in cases of absolute necessity........... A suitor dissatisfied with the judgment of the head of the village was at liberty to appeal to the maniyakar or intendant of a group of villages. And a further appeal lay to the immediate officers of the Prince, who judge in the last resort".

Sometimes cases involving religious and social rights were heard by the king and his officers. Virappa Nāyaka with his pradhāni Ariyanātha Mudaliyar and others once formed a committee to decide a boundary dispute regarding certain temple lands. On another occasion Virappa Nāyaka decided a dispute regarding the levy of betel leaves and areca nuts. The Jesuit letters also mention that the king heard and decided many complaints carried to him by the missionaries.

The pradhāni appears to have had control over Judicial affairs. Here, the system prevalent in Vijayanagar seems to have been followed in Madurai also. Proenza in his letter of 1655 A.D. makes the following observations about his own trial. "The Pradhāni did not consider the rival plaints........The examination was public.............He sent for the governor, judges, and all the great personages to come to the palace immediately. He came in great pomp........The governor intimidates the witnesses and compels...

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them to depose according to his wishes. All the procedure was sent to Madura, from where the judgement came soon. It proclaimed my innocence and fined the ambalakāran several thousands of ecus.\(^1\)

Arbitration was largely used for deciding cases.\(^2\) Regarding criminal justice there were several ordeals in vogue such as the ordeal of boiling oil fire, water, and weighing, and taking a ring out of a narrow-necked earthen pot containing a cobra\(^3\).

During the period of the Nāyakas a large number of Telugus immigrated and settled down in Madurai\(^4\). Many of the officers and followers of the Nāyakas were Telugus. The influx of Telugus into the Madurai country led to the absorption of various Telugu customs and manners by the Tamils. The observance of Dasara and other festivals which were popular in the Telugu countries was introduced into the Madurai country. The custom of sati seems to have been in vogue. The institution of the harem and the observance of purda and the seclusion of women were due to Muslim influences on social life.

One important Telugu community in the Madurai country was the tottiyans, otherwise known as kambalattār. They had the caste title Nāyakkan. Many of the poligars of the Madurai country hailed from this community, as, for instance, the poligars of Āyku-d-Yedaiyakottai, Virupākṣi, Kannivādi, and Tavaṣimaḍai.

The spread of Vijayānagara influence in the Madurai country also led to the migration of several Kanaresc communities into this

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4. The Vellangudi plates state that Virabhupati Samudram, the newly founded agrahara, was divided among a large number of Brahmans. From the names of these donees it may be seen that they were Brahmans of the Telugu country who might have already migrated to the Tamil country or had come down south at the invitation of the donor. E. I., Vol. XIV, p. 298 ff. Also T.A.S. Vol. I, pp. 85-88, 145-46.
region. The kāppiliyans and the anuppans were the chief among these. Some poligs of the Kambam valley region were of Kana-
rese origin. The accounts of most of the poligs—both tottiyans
and kāppiliyans—narrate a tradition that the poligs fled south
in the face of some oppression by the Mughamadans of the north.
It is said that the kāppiliyans fled across the Tungabhadra and
then travelled through Mysore to Kānci, thence to Coimbatore
and thence to the Madurai country.

The Saurāstras or Patnālkārans are another community which
migrated into Madurai country and soon rose to prominence during
this period. Their members are numerous in Madurai and Dindi-
gul towns and are skilled in the art of weaving. Their vernacular
is Patnūli or Khatri, a dialect of Gujarati, and they are said to have
come from Gujarāt originally. "An inscription dated 473-74 A.D.
at Mandasor in Western Malwa relates how the Paṭṭavāyas, or the
caste was then called, were induced to immigrate thither from Lata,
on the coast of Gujarāt, by King Kumāra Gupta (or one of his lieu-
tenants) to practise there the art of silk-weaving." On the destruc-
tion of Mandasor by the Musalmans, the Paṭṭavāyas seem to have
migrated south to Dēvagiri and thence to Vijayanagar and eventu-
ally to Madurai. The Saurāstras with their flourishing silk-weaving
industry have contributed much to the prosperity of Madurai.

The artisan community figures in several epigraphs of the period.
They are usually referred to as the "Anju jāti Kammālar". Rotter
in his dictionary enumerates the five classes of artisans as the kal
taccar (stone cutters), mrattaccar (carpenters), kollar (blacksmiths),
ṭattār (goldsmiths) and kunnār (brassiers). Two inscriptions dated
1623 and 1625 A.D. state that Muttn Vṛappa Nāyaka issued a royal
writ prohibiting the members of the five subdivisions of artisans
(kammālar) from intermingling (udankūttam) with each other. This
is one instance of the occasional interference of the Nāyakas for

2. Ibid.
checking breaches and violations of caste rules. Otherwise the Nāyakas were generally non-interfering in their social policy and usually tried to maintain the traditional Hindu social pattern.

An inscription of Cokkanātha registers the king's order permitting the five divisions of kammālar (or panaḷattār) the privileges of using the elephant, double cauris, white umbrella, palanquin, tents, and others.

The artisans had also to pay certain specified taxes to the government. On one occasion Tirumala Nāyaka remitted certain taxes due from the five artisan classes for conducting the Mārgaḷī festival in the Cokkanātha temple at Madurai.

One epigraph mentions the remission of caste levy (jāti vari) on the Reddis in the Madurai country. Another mentions a land gift to some washermen to settle down in a village and render services to a certain temple. In about 1569 A.D. certain concessions were granted to the barbers (ambittār) in the suburb of Sṛvilliputtūr, viz., the exemption from the paymet of vittupāṇam (house tax), ṣilpaṇām (poll tax) and some ṣilvarigal (minor cesses). Certain blacksmiths and carpenters were also granted similar concessions.

In about 1665 A.D. there appears to have been a caste dispute between the two castes, dēvendra-kutumbar and the paraiyar in Sṛ-villiputtūr regarding certain social privileges.

Social Rank and Status

Social rank and status seem to have been well recognised and marked by distinctions of title and other honorific perquisites. Apart from the royal household and the palace officials like the dalanāy, pradhāni and others, nobles like the poligars enjoyed many

privileges granted to them by royal favour. These served as an order of precedence.

Among the titles conferred may be mentioned that of "Tirumalai Setupati" given by Tirumala Naýaka to Raghunátha Setupati for faithful service. Cinnapa Naýaka, the poligar of Virúpáksi, is said to have had the titles "Vallacanyah" (Vallakaráya, one valiant and noble), "Níshkílarkí" ("Nískálarkí") and "Nískárlakí Málá" (Nískálarkí målë) and also the dignity of adding the term Tirumala to his own name.1 Uppa Naiker (Appaiyya Naýakar), the poligar of Kannivádi, crushed some marauders who were harassing pilgrims to the shrine at Muruga at Palni, and was rewarded with various honours and the title Kádwañy (Kádwaññi).2 The poligars were awarded many distinctions and honours and gifts for their fidelity and meritorious service. The following honours, granted by the Vijayanagar emperor to an ancestor of the poligar of Yeñaiyakóttai who had helped Viṣvanátha Naýaka in a campaign against the "Pasha of Delhi" give an indication of the titles and paraphernalia that distinguished the recipients. The following titles, Nískálnkó Málán and Vallakaráyan, were conferred and the honours included táníkái or palanquin, a sírassúppattam or golden turban band, rána kántánam or war bracelets, rána pasáñgam or laurel for the head, "Swamy droha Vendium" or a bangle with a clasp like the head of a man, "Niggalum" or a golden string worn above the ankles, víra máni or golden waist belts for warriors, ubaya venjámiram or two white nauris, villái and paccăi "doll" or white and green flags, white and green kótai or umbrellas, white and green surúti or parasols, as well as flags with Garuda, lion and swan emblems, a "moomarshvo"3, "Veera Thunda" or a bludgeon, pagal divátti or day torch, a "panniranádu múgni divátti" or tw ly-reayed torch, and also a 'kauñ vendum undath-muny muryelly pinjelly' which is stated to be a white horse with caparisons. The Poligar of Kannivádi received the title Kádwaññi and many honours for various services rendered. He was given

1. A manuscript in the Madras Record Office.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. The meaning of this word is not clear. It may perhaps refer to a triple drum.
the "Shaumothrogavendium" or golden anklets, Veeracundaumunnee (Viraśīrāmuni) or golden chain, and a "Vella Suckradoll" or white umbrella. This chief is said to have taken part in Viśvanātha Nayaka's campaign against the Pāṇḍyas in the Kaitīr region. After his success in the war, the Nayaka ruler is stated to have allowed the poligar to take away the armour and many of the ornaments of the Pāṇḍya, as a reward. "Tirumalay Coopula Chinnapanikan", the poligar of Virūpākṣi, accompanied Dalavay Rāmappayan in his campaign against the Sētupati and was rewarded by Tirumala Nayaka with the honours of a tassel of peacock feathers set with precious stones, emerald bracelets, a pearl necklace and a bājibandu (a jewel worn on the arm).

Honours and privileges were not confined to the nobility alone. In royal levees particularly, temple priests and officials seem to have enjoyed a priority over laymen.

While poets and literary men were honoured, the sculptor, the painter or the silpi enjoyed a lesser status and were considered only craftsmen. Prosperous merchants enjoyed a better social status and many of them have donated largely to temples. But the vast multitude of humbler folk do not seem to have had any opportunity to rise in social status. The extremely low cost of living when the current fanam equivalent to two and a half annas could buy 8 marakkāls or 96 lb. of rice, seems to have kept the people contented without being more ambitious.

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1. A manuscript in the Record Office.

2. Ibid. The following names of the Pandya king's ornaments are mentioned but some of the names are rather obscure; 1st: Moothoor or a bunch of fine pearls set in gold to be worn on the turban—2nd: Runnapaasugam, an ornament of fine gold set with precious stones, to be worn over the turban—3rd: Undathaumunnee or a fish made in wood etc. and suspended on the point of a stick—4th: Singakodu or a grand umbrella with a lion's head in silver—5th: Mugakode, or a fine coloured (screen) which is thrown in front on public occasions and 6th: Venjamarum or bunch of white fleece, fixed in a silver stick".

3. Ibid.

4. Vide, Chapter X, Section E (4).
Dress and Ornaments of the Period

There are very few contemporary accounts relating to Madurai which give a description of the dress or ornaments worn by the different classes of people. However, the various sculptures, stucco and paintings in the temple mandapas and gopuras afford a more reliable guide than any description could give. The Pudu Manḍapa in the Madurai Temple is a rich source of this kind presenting a vivid record of the contemporary mode of dress and jewellery worn by the kings and queens, their attendants and nobles. Other sculptures and stuccos in the Thousand Pillar Manḍapa and on one of the gopuras give a picture of how some of the common folk looked and lived.

The kings of the period appear to have dressed in a simple manner. Many of them as may be seen from their statues in the Pudu Manḍapa did not wear any dress over their bodies. A tight fitting full sleeved jacket of thin material was sometimes worn as may be seen on the statues of Kastūri Rangappaa and Tirimula Nāyaka. The general mode of royal wear seems to have been a dhōti, angavastra and a head dress. The dhōti was of rich material, silk or brocade, and was worn in the pañcakaceca fashion. The head dress was of the high Vijayanagara type or an ordinary cap or sometimes a turban. A large number of jewels like ear rings, necklaces, shoulder ornaments, armlets, bracelets, finger rings, girdles, anklets and toe rings were worn.

The queens wear a rich blouse and a sari tied in the customary manner with one of the ends gathered into pleats and hanging gracefully from the waist down. Some queens like those of Thirumala Nāyaka appear to wear a full sleeved tight-fitting jacket below their blouses. On a few queens like those of Viśvanātha, Viśvappa and Muttu Viṟappa the other end of the sari is brought over the shoulder and hangs loose on the arm. Kumara Kṛṣṇappa’s queen wears a diaphanous sari covering her body. Most of the queens wear their hair neatly combed and tied in a knot in a big chignon. Some queens wear their hair beautifully plaited and adorned with flowers. But all the queens have on their heads the jewel known as candraprabha and sūryaprabha. Besides ear rings, a number of other smaller jewels are worn on the ears. A prominent jewel worn on the neck-
is the poftu, the matrimonial disc worn by Telugu women. This corresponds to the Tamilian tirumangalaya or tāli. Armlets, bracelets, anklets, finger and toe-rings of various patterns are seen. The ladies favour a number of richly jewelled waist bands or girdles, the lower most one being broader and more ornate than the rest.

The ladies are accompanied by women attendants, some bearing cauris and some preparing betel, like the one on the pillar with the sculpture of Vīrappa Nāyaka. Some of the women, like another figure on the same pillar, carry a fan in their hands. These women attendants are dressed in a simpler manner with a diaphanous drapery covering them and their great big chignons tied with flowers being thrown to the right or left of their shoulders. The male attendants are dressed in plain dhōtis, wear caps on their heads and a dagger on their waist. Some of them carry cauris, or fans; others are adoppams or betel bearers.

The base of the pillar on which the statue of Tirumala Nāyaka stands is interesting as it reveals some of the royal panoply of the period. On the frieze immediately below the standing figures are sculptured 24 women with anjati hastas. These are probably ladies of Tirumala Nāyaka’s harem. The lowermost frieze shows standard bearers. The standards are of different patterns as described in the paraphernalia of royal personages. A big wooden fish carried on the end of a pole seems to have been one of the chief distinctions of the Pāṇḍya rulers and this appears to have been adopted by the Nāyaka rulers also. Two of these mātṛya standards could be seen borne by two of the footmen on this pillar.

Two of the ministers whose sculptured representations are seen are those of Nāraṇappayyar and Ariyanāṭṭa Mudali. These wear turbans, jackets and dhōtis with the aṅgavastra tied neatly round the waist. No footwear could be seen on any of the figures. The warriors as seen below the equestrian statues in the Pudu Manḍapa and before the Palliyarai in Alagarkoyil wear only short pants. They are bare bodied but wear a cap and carry a sword and shield. Some of them are seen wearing the warrior’s garland. The courtiers of the time seem to have adopted the Mogul dress of a long robe, a sort of combination of jacket and skirt, with a cloth tied over it at the waist. Turbans are worn on the head.
The other civilians wear only a dhōti and angavastra with a turban. The women folk seem to have dressed in the same manner as seen today but the chignon appears to have been in universal vogue. A small relief in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa shows women cooking, employing the same type of oven and vessels as in use even today.

The Brahman is usually shown with his pañcakacca, angavastra or shawl and a clean shaven head with a tuft. The rudrākṣa is his only ornament. Some, however, may be seen more richly dressed with cap and jewels as seen on the figure of Subbarayar.

Literature

The period of the Nāyaka regime in Madurai was one of great activity, in various fields of literature. The works were noted for their high literary style and quality. The Nāyakas, though themselves Telugus, patronised Tamil and Sanskrit also. Most of the works were of a highly philosophical and religious nature. Grammatical treatises and many works on Dharmāśāstras were also written.

Of the Sanskrit writers the most outstanding was Nilakaṇṭha Dīkṣita, the great nephew of the celebrated Appayya Dīkṣita. He is said to have been a minister of Tirumala Nāyaka. Some of his works are Sivalīlāmara, the Nilakaṇṭha Vijaya Campu (1637), Gangāvataraṇa and Naḻakaritranaṭaka. A large number of Tamil works were written in praise of the deity of Madurai. Purāṇa Tirumalai Nājār (16th c.) wrote the Cokkanāṭhar Udā and is said to have presented it for approval in the court of Vira Pāṇḍya's. The identity of this king is not clear. Anādari wrote the Sundara Pāṇḍiyam at the request of Maṇḍrā Tiruvirudhān, a general of Vīrappa Nāyaka (1572-95 a.d.). This poem gives an account of the Madurai Tiruvilaiyādals and is based on a Sanskrit work, also called Sundara Pāṇḍiyam. Parāṇjōti Munivar who was born in Vēdāranyam and was the head of a maṭha at Madurai wrote the Tiruvilaiyādal Purāṇam, probably in the early years of the 17th c.

Many sthalapurāṇas were written. Māśilānāṁ Sambardēn (16th c.) wrote the "Uṭṭarakōṣaṁabgai Purāṇam", Bālaśubramanya Kavirāy of Paḻāni, the Paḻāni Talapurāṇam (1628 A.D.), Niramba Aḷāgiya Dēśikar (16th c.), the Sēṭhu Purāṇam, Tiruppārangiri Purāṇam and others, and Kandasāmi Pulavar (1621 A.D.) of Tiruppūvaṇam,
The Nayakas of Madurai

purāṇas on Tiruvāppanūr and Tiruppūvanaṃ. Vikrakavirāyar, a goldsmith of Nallūr in the Pāṇḍya country, wrote the Ariccandra Purāṇam in 1524 A.D.

Madai Tiruvēṅgaḍanātha, said to have been a minister of Rēnga Kṛṣṇa Muttu Virappa, wrote a long Tamil poem based on the philosophical Sanskrit work Prabōdhacandrādaya. Sēvvaicccdūvār (16th c.) of Vēmbārrūr in the Madurai district wrote the Bhāgavatam in Tamil. Kumaragurupara was a 17th c. poet who lived in the time of Tirumala Nāyaka. He was a Vēlāla born in Śrīvalikutam. He spent many years in North India and was engaged in religious disputations. He wrote the Maduraikkalambahakam about Sundarēśvara’s Ḫulas and a large number of poems in praise of Goddess Mīnākṣi such as the Mīnākṣiyammi Kuram, Mīnākṣiyammai Ḫraftaiamānimālai and others.

The pillaittamil, kuram, Ḫraftaiamānimālai, Āmmānai and similar types of Tamil poetry became popular during the 16th - 17th cs. The Rāmappaiyan Ammānai, a ballad by an anonymous author, deals with the exploits of Tirumala’s dalavāy Rāmappaiyyan and is of value since it is one of the few surviving historical works of its class in Tamil. A number of the later Pāṇḍya kings and princes were also of a literary bent and composed many works. Ativirāma, the ruler of Tenkasi (c. 1564 A.D.), wrote the well-known Naṭṭamad, the Kāśikāṅgam, Kūrmapurāṇam, Liṅgapurāṇam and Vāyusamhitai as well as simple works such as Verri Vēkkai for the benefit of young readers. His cousin Varatunga wrote the theological work Piramōttarakāṅgam and three andādis in praise of the deity of Karivalam-vandanallūr. Varatunga’s queen was also an accomplished poetess.

The literature of the Nāyaka period was as varied in form and subject matter as the ranks from which the authors were drawn. The Nāyaka rulers encouraged the propagation of education. Robert de Nobill, the Jesuit missionary, wrote in 1610 A.D.¹ that more than 10,000 students were in Madura, and that they were being taught, boarded and lodged at public cost in Madurai. There was provision for the teaching of philosophy and theology to adults. Many māthas and temples imparted free education.

1. R. Sathianatha Aiyar: History of the Nayaks of Madura, p. 257.
FINE ARTS: Fine arts received liberal patronage from the Nāyaka rulers. Music, dancing, painting, architecture and sculpture were in a flourishing state. The temples at Madurai and in the south are standing monuments to the great building activity of the period and the high level of craftsmanship attained by the stone masons and stūpatis. Few paintings of the period have survived. However, Madurai was a centre noted for its citrakāras who had followed the rulers from the Telugu country and had settled in Madurai. From here they spread to Travancore in the south and to Trichinopoly and Tanjore also. Some families of these artists have survived till recent years in all these centres where they had established the southern school of painting. Two inscriptions from Jambukēśvaram mention Pāṭakam Vaidyappaiyya, the son of Venkaṭēśvarayya, an instructor in the theatre hall (Nāṭakaśala-sīkṣam) of Vijayaranga Cōkkanātha. This theatre was probably attached to the royal palace at Trichinopoly. Many temples and maṭhas were either built or renovated and enlarged. Secular buildings like palaces were also erected,

The Nāyakas tried to maintain and promote the traditional pattern of Hindu social life for nearly two centuries.

RELIGION: The Nāyaka rulers followed a policy of religious toleration. They extended their patronage to a certain extent to non-Hindu religions also such as Islam and Christianity. The early Nāyakas were on the whole ardent Saivas, while the later ones were devout Vaiṣṇavas. From an epigraph it is learnt that Ācārya Vādhūla Cūḍāmaṇi was the religious teacher of Muttu Alakādri.

Christianity was first introduced into the Madurai country towards the close of Virappa Nāyaka’s reign. In about 1592 A.D. a Portuguese missiionary named Father Fernandez began working among the Paravas (fishermen). He was unable to effect any conversions even after working for about fourteen years since the people regarded the Portuguese or Parangis with great contempt. During

the reign of Muttu Krishappa the first Jesuit, Robert de Nobili, an Italian, began to work in 1606 A.D. under the control of the Archbishop of Cranganore. Knowing that Fernandez had been handicapped by the fact that he was one of the unpopular Parangis, De Nobili evolved an original and thorough-going scheme for proselytisation. He openly avoided association with Fernandez, assumed a Hindu name, Tatta Boddagar (teacher of philosophy), proclaimed himself as a "Roman Brahman" and a sanyasi, and adopted the dress and meagre diet of the Hindu ascetics. He also tried to allow Christian converts to retain many Hindu customs and ceremonies. He made a thorough study of the Indian languages such as Tamil and Sanskrit and acquired a knowledge of Hindu literature. De Nobili was able to make some conversions and his fame rapidly spread at first. He built a church and presbytery in 1610 A.D. But soon his popularity waned and persecutions followed. The authorities of the Christian church did not approve of his unorthodox methods such as allowing the converts to retain their old Hindu customs. Many complaints were brought against De Nobili. He was censured in 1613 and finally recalled to Goa. About ten years later he was allowed to resume his work. He then spent most of his time in Trichinopoly where he suffered much from persecution. Once he was also imprisoned. In 1648 he left the Madurai country. De Nobili was the founder of the Madurai Mission whose early history was largely moulded by his great zeal and personal influence. But his experiment of establishing a mission exclusively among the Brahmins and princes proved a failure.

John de Britto and Father Beschi were two other personalities who belonged to the "Madura Mission". Britto was a Portuguese. In 1630 he reached Madurai with Andre Friere. He worked in the Marava country, i.e., Ramnad, in face of strong opposition. He was arrested and executed in 1693 A.D.

Father Bouchet was able to gain some recognition and favours during the reign of Mangammal. He was tactful and had a minute knowledge of court ceremonials. Hence he carefully avoided anything that might offend the ruler or raise suspicions against him.
CHAPTER IX

THE POST-NAYAKA PERIOD

The interval between the end of the Nāyaka dynasty and the cession of Madurai to the British in 1801 A.D. is a chequered period in the history of Madurai. For a major part of this period of about 60 years, Madurai was under the nominal rule of the Nawab of Carnatic.

After the death of Minākṣi in about 1739-40 A.D. the Nāyaka dynasty of Madurai came to an end and for a few years Chanda Saheb was all-powerful in the Madurai country. Chanda Saheb strengthened the defences of Trichinopoly. He appointed his two brothers, Buda Saheb and Saduck Saheb, as the governors of Madurai and Dindigul respectively. The Madurai alavalaṟu says that on hearing that Cāndēkān Bāḍēkān (Chanda Saheb and Buda Saheb) had taken the fort of Dindigul, Baṅgāru Tirumala Nāyaka’s son Vijayakumāra Muttu Tirumala Nāyaka and the Setupati viṣal dalavy Vellaiyan Servakarar, along with the stālattār and pārijana (attendants) left Madurai for Manamadurai on the night of the 30th of Vaikāśi, Siddhārti (1739 A.D.) taking with them the Gods Minākṣi Sundarēvara and Kūḍal Alagar. The Setupati made provisions for the pūjās and for the shelter of the temple servants. From Ani of Siddhārītt to Ani of Dwumati for a period of two years they remained under his protection.

Meanwhile Baṅgāru Tirumala and the king of Tanjore who had suffered defeat at the hands of Chanda Saheb, asked the Marathas for help. The Marathas came to the south with a large army under the command of Raghoji Bhonsle, early in 1740, and defeated and killed the Nawab of Arcot in the pass of Dāmalceruvu in North Arcot. Then they retired for a time. At the end of the same year the Marathas suddenly reappeared and besieged Chanda Saheb in Trichinopoly. They defeated and killed his two brothers who advanced to his aid from Madurai and Dindigul. After three months Chanda Saheb surrendered and was taken captive to Satara. Setting aside the claims of Baṅgāru Tirumala, the Marathas left Morari Rao of

1. R. Orme: History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan p. 44.
Gooty as the governor in charge of the conquered kingdom. Morari Rao remained here for about two years till about 1743 A.D. when the Nizam re-established his control over the Carnatic. Thus between 1740 and 1743 A.D. there was a brief Maratha interlude in the history of Madurai. The Madurai Ittiyalaralari says that Morari Rao sent Appacci Nayakar to Madurai with 2000 horses. To restore temple worship in Madurai, Appacci Nayakar went to Vanaravira-madurai to bring back the idols which had remained in the safe custody of the Setupati. On 17th Ani of Dmmati (1741 A.D.) he returned to Madurai along with the temple servants and restored the pujas, festivals and villages as of old.

In August 1743 the Marathas retired from the south and by March 1744 the Nizam of Hyderabad had reasserted his control over the Carnatic and had appointed Anwaruddin as the Nawab of Arcot. The whole of Madurai also came under the sway of the Nawab of Arcot who ruled the country with the help of his two sons, Mahfuz Khan and Muhammad Ali. The Madurai Ittiyalaralari says that the brothers ruled Madurai for a period of ten years.

In 1748 Anwaruddin, the Nawab of Arcot, was killed in battle. His son Muhammad Ali and Chanda Saheb were rival claimants to the throne and the fierce contest which broke out between them is commonly known as the Carnatic wars. Madurai did not play any direct part in these wars. But Muhammad Ali who had many followers in the Madurai country was a British protege, as a result of which the Carnatic wars led to an increasing influence of the English in the Madurai country.

In 1751 Alam Khan, the brother-in-law of one Mayana and a former employee of Chanda Saheb, marched through the country of the Tonndaiman, took possession of the fort of Madurai, and for a year ruled as far as the Tiruvadi Rajya (Travancore). He acknowledged Chanda Saheb as his sovereign. The loss of Madurai country was a serious one to Muhammad Ali since it constituted more than one half of his dominions. Hence he sent Captain Cope in 1751 to recover the city of Madurai.

The defences of Madurai were underestimated by the English and by the Nawab of Arcot. For three months from February to April, Cope, though ill-equipped, made a brave attempt to
scale the walls where his army had made a breach. The attackers, however, found that the damages were quickly repaired and the defence put up in such a vigorous manner and with such ingenuity that they had to abandon the attempt.

After ruling for a year, Alam Khan went to Trichinopoly leaving his relation Mayana as the governor of Madurai, and one Nabhi Khan in charge of Tinnevelly. With regard to the events from 1751 to 1753, the Maduraittalavaralaru gives the following account. Mayana sold the Madurai fort to the Mysoreans and left for Tirumohur. Then Kuku Saheb of Mysore entered the Madurai fort on 30th Purattasi of the Angarasa year (1752 A.D.) On hearing this, Vellaiyan Servaikkarar, the Setupati’s vāsal talakarittam (commander) and Tandavaraya Pillai, the vāsal pradwani of Udaiya Tevar (Zamindar of Sivanga), came with a large army and besieged Madurai. After holding out for a few months (till Kārttigai of 1752 A.D.), Kuku Saheb handed over the fort to the Setupati as a result of arbitration and left for Dindigul. Then Vellaiyan Servaiikkarar and Tandavaraya Pillai entered the fort of Madurai, opened up the temples, and restored worship and services. Since Kuku Saheb had slaughtered cows, cut down trees and done other such acts during the siege, they ordered the necessary purificatory ceremonies to be done to the seven temples. Since the kingdom was without a ruler they sent for Bangaru Tirumala’s son Vijayakumara Muttu Tirumala who had taken refuge in Vellaiikkuricci, had him crowned king on the 15th Mārgali of Angarasa (1752 A.D.) in the sanctum of the Goddess and invested with the sceptre. Vijayakumara ruled for 18 months till Vaikasi of the year Srīmukha. Then Mayana, Mahadimiya, and Nabhi Khan drove out the ruler to Vellaikkuricci and captured Madurai fort and country. As usual they captured the temple lands destroyed the trade of the merchants, the gardens and the tanks. Kuku Saheb and Vellaiyan Servaiikkarar camped at Panaiyur Anup paddi (Anuppānadi?) for six months and besieged the fort. However, Mayana drove them off and killed both of them in the affray. Thus Mayana remained in possession of Madurai fort and country till Māsi of the year Bhava (1754 A.D.).

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1. He was perhaps the Khub Saheb Jamadar of the Mysoreans mentioned] by the Nawab, Muhammad Ali. Vide S.G. Hill: Tūṣf Khan, p. 31, n.1.
Early in 1755 Muhammad Ali sent Col. Heron on an expedition against Madurai to reduce the country to obedience. Muhammad Yusuf Khan, one of the Company’s officers, was in charge of the 2000 sepoys. Since Mayana who had neglected the defences of Madurai had already fled for refuge to the temple of Kovilkud (Tirumohur), the sepoys under Yusuf Khan easily entered the city of Madurai. Col. Heron pursued Mayana who, however, managed to escape from Kovilkudi. Heron made the mistake of plundering the temple for which he paid dearly in an attack by the “Collories” (Kallars) as he was passing through the Nattam pass, 20 miles away from Madurai.

Before leaving Madurai, Col. Heron placed Mahfuz Khan, the elder brother of Muhammad Ali, in charge of the administration of Madurai. But Mahfuz Khan proved a total failure as a ruler and there were many risings.

The Maduraiittalavaranaru says that when Barukkudilla (alias Danishmund Khan), a relation of Mahfuz Khan, was in charge of Madurai, a Muslim jakir attempted to erect a flag staff on top of the Räyagopura. The temple officials, the city merchants and all the people gathered together and tried to persuade him to give up these activities but the jakir refused to get down from the gopura. Then the temple officials closed the gates of the four gopuras and remained inside the temple.

In 1756 Yusuf Khan was sent to the south to restore order. He reached Madurai in April and found that the garrison, the defences and the stores were in greatest disorder. By July of the same year things seemed tranquil enough and Yusuf Khan went to Tinnevelly and Mahfuz Khan proceeded to Madurai. As soon as he reached Madurai his cavalry force, headed by the governor of the town, surrounded his house and demanded their arrears of pay. The brother of Muhamad Barki who was the son-in-law of Nabi Khan, entered the fort with 2,000 Kallans. Hearing these, Yusuf Khan marched to Madurai, and encamped near Tirupparankunram. Since

he felt that his army was not strong enough to storm the place he sent for Captain Caillaud who was at Trichinopoly to come to his aid. Caillaud tried negotiations with the rebels but failed. Then a desultory war began. In May 1757 Captain Caillaud made an attempt at scaling the walls but was unsuccessful. The enemy who was alerted began to shower on the whole party arrows, stones, lances and the shot of fire-arms. Caillaud ordered the retreat but in July renewed the attack at the same place. The few who managed to scramble up the breach to the rampart were immediately tumbled down dead or mortally wounded. "Whosoever mounted afterwards came down without getting to the top.... for, besides the shower of other annoyance, the enemy had prepared bags and pipkins filled with mere powder, to which they set fire as they tossed them down on the heads of the assailants and the scorch of the explosion was inevitable and intolerable." Finally Caillaud ordered the retreat. Caillaud's own opinion about the affair is summed up in his remarks, "made a breach, attacked it and got a damnable drubbing."

Eventually there were negotiations and on the 8th September the city of Madurai was given up to Caillaud on his paying the rebels Rs. 1,70,000 which was sanctioned by the Madras Council.  

The capture of Madurai did not lead to the complete restoration of order. There was the question of the efficient administration of the province. Disturbances still continued in many parts of the Madurai country. At this time Haidar Ali of Mysore who invaded the Madurai country, towards the end of 1757, marched from Dindigul and took the fort of Solavandan. He spent several days under the walls of the city of Madurai but did not attack it since he found it to be much stronger than he had expected. He plundered the country round about. Then he was beaten back by Yusuf Khan.

Yusuf Khan made arrangements for the restoration of the temple lands to the seven temples. Purificatory ceremonies were performed and pūjas and services were restored. 12,000 pon was

2. R. Orme: Collection of Manuscripts in the India Office (Ms. No. 31) quoted in Hill's Yusuf Khan, p. 68.
given for the annual expenses of the temple. The *fakir's nisān* was pulled down and he was driven beyond the walls of the town.

Yusuf Khan was able to reduce the country and restore some semblance of order but whenever he was absent there was disorder and anarchy. In April 1759 Yusuf Khan was sent back to the Madurai country. Both Madurai and Tinnevelly were rented out to him for an annual sum of Rs. 5 lakhs. Soon he reduced the *Kollans* and the Poligars¹ and restored order. Yusuf Khan had been appointed the renter of Madurai contrary to the wishes of the Nawab of Arcot. The Company repeatedly tried to persuade the Nawab to confirm Yusuf Khan in the rentership but the Nawab was highly reluctant and unwilling to continue Yusuf Khan in the management of the Madurai country. In January 1762 the Nawab agreed to let Yusuf Khan have the rentership for nine lakhs. Though the Company informed Yusuf Khan that he should pay the rents to the Nawab he continued to make the payments to the Company since he distrusted the Nawab and did not like the position of being a servant of the Nawab.

Shortly afterwards Yusuf Khan threw off his allegiance to the English and the Nawab and began to collect troops. In February 1763 the British first heard of Yusuf Khan's public declaration that he had allied with the French. He had also hoisted French colours on his forts and hauled down the English colours.²

In August 1763 a strong force was sent by the English under Preston to put down the rebel. After taking the forts of Tiruvadavur and Tirumohur, Preston came in sight of Madurai on the 28th of August and found Yusuf Khan's army outside the walls and the French colours as well as those of Yusuf Khan flying over the walls³. In September the English began their siege of the fort of Madurai.

Col. Monson who attacked Madurai in 1763 A.D. was repulsed in his first attempt at reconnoitring. Besides, the cavalry and *Kollans* of Yusuf Khan made it difficult to approach near enough

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to the town to begin the siege works. The great extent of the glacis and esplanade made it impossible for the British to fix their camp nearer than 2 or even 3 miles. Nor could they break ground for the trenches closer than 12 or 1500 yards. But when they did cut trenches and begin operations they had to cross a ditch which Monson, after repeated reconnoitrings, thought was impossible to cross. So in October he withdrew his forces from Madurai.

"Thus ended the first siege of Madurai, undertaken in almost absolute ignorance of the difficulties of the undertaking" and though the failure was attributed to lack of ammunition there was really no basis for it and "one can only conclude that the ability and strength of Yusuf Khan had been grievously under-rated."

The siege of Madurai was recommenced by Major Campbell in February 1764. Yusuf Khan had made great additions to the fort and had outposts to a considerable distance. Though the English made many attempts to breach the walls and scale them they were repulsed every time and while the siege was thus hanging on, Marchand, the French Commander under Yusuf Khan, rebelled and treacherously handed over the brave Muslim General into the hands of the British on the night of 14th October and on 15th October 1764 Yusuf Khan was hanged. Thus ended the protracted siege of Madurai, treachery succeeding where valour failed.

After the death of Yusuf Khan the revenue administration of Madurai was carried on for about six years by one Abiral Khan Sahib. From now onwards a number of persons successively administered the Madurai country till the final cession to the British in 1801 A.D.

In 1781 A.D. the revenues of the district of Madurai were assigned to the British by the Nawab of Arcot and a "Receiver of

1. S.C. Hill; Yusuf Khan, p. 152.
2. Ibid., p. 160.
4. The Madurattalaporalaru calls him Mammadu (Mahomed) Abdudullukhan Sayabu and says that he ruled for seven years.
5. The Madurattalaporalaru gives a list of their names along with the period of their administration.
Assigned Revenue” was appointed. The first Receiver sent to Madurai was Mr. George Proctor who was virtually the first Collector. In 1783 he was succeeded by Mr. Eyles Irwin.

In order to restore order before efficient administration could be carried on, Colonel Fullarton undertook an expedition against the Madurai country in 1783 A.D. He subdued the poligars of Melur and Sivaganga and then went to Tinnevelly where most of the fighting took place.

In 1785 the assignment of the revenues was given back to the Nawab of Arcot but again resumed by the British in 1790 A.D. A Board of Assumed Revenue was set up and Collectors were appointed for the various districts. Mr. Alexander McLeod became the Collector of Dindigul in 1790. In 1792, according to the terms of the treaty which concluded the Second Mysore War, the province of Dindigul was ceded to the East India Company.

In 1801 when a junior member of the family was raised to the Nawabship of Arcot, the English entered into an agreement with him. By this he handed over to the Company in perpetuity “the sole and exclusive administration of the Civil and Military Governments of all the territories and dependencies of the Carnatic”. In this way the whole of the Madurai district (except Dindigul which had already been acquired), along with the rest of the Carnatic was formally ceded to the British.

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1. Aitchison's *Treaties, etc.* (1892), viii, p. 56.
CHAPTER X

THE MADURAI TEMPLE

A. TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE

1. INTRODUCTION

The legendary origin of the temple leads one to the discovery by Indra of the Swayambhu linga in the Kadamba forest and its installation in the Indravimāna by him. Ever since the temple has been in continuous worship and has grown to be the enormous complex it is today.

In the early period the temple might have been of moderate proportions confined to the Agamic essential structures for any temple like the garbhagriha, ardha mandapa, kitchen, yāgasāla, tank and so on. From this nucleus the temple must have grown by later additions like maha mandapa, subsidiary shrines and prakāras. The earliest indirect literary reference to the temple occurs in the Maduraikkanci where it is stated that the evening procession of the gods was headed by the God who had the axe (maḻu) and who was the Creator of the five elements. The reference to temple processions necessarily shows an organised temple worship and temple structures. Probably by this time the temple had become well established, with a regular routine of festivals, pājas, and so on.

In the 7th century A.D. Jñānasambandar sang many hymns in praise of the "Alavāy Iraivan" and "Tiruvālavāy Sokkan" at Madurai. By the 7th century the legend of the Alavāy serpent fixing the boundaries of the Madurai city appears to have been well known. Further, the term Alavāy to denote the city of Madurai seems to have become well established by then. One finds that throughout the centuries, the deity of the Madurai temple is called Tiruvālavāyudaiya Nāyanār (or Tambirānār) in the temple epigraphs and records. The Kallādam, a work of about the 9th century A.D., refers to the Madurai temple and nearly 30 litār performed by God Sundaresvara. It mentions the Indravimāna with the aṣṭagajas and says that the God of Alavāy who is called the Mālakāraṇan resided there with Goddess Umā.
In other early works the God of Tiruvālavāy is generally referred to as Sokkar or Sokkanātha, while the term Sundareśvara is found in later works. Even in Jesuit letters the temple is called the Čokkanātha Temple. Goddess Minākṣi is referred to as Angayarkaṇṇammayi in early works. Mediaeval epigraphs from the Madurai temple mention the Tirukkāmakkottattu Āludaiya Nācciyār. This is apparently a reference to Goddess Minākṣi.

It is only in more recent times that the temple has come to be popularly known as the Minākṣi-Sundareśvara temple or even more briefly as Minākṣi temple. This does not, however, mean that Minākṣi Amman came into prominence only in recent times. The very legendary origin of the temple is based on Minākṣi's rule and the marriage of Minākṣi and Sundaresvara.

From available literary and inscriptive references one may conclude that the temple has enjoyed a continuous existence almost from the beginning of the Christian era, though, of course, restored, repaired and extended by the several rulers of the country.

The temple has gone through many vicissitudes. It was despoiled by Muhammadans during Malik Kafur's invasion in 1310 A.D. and again later during the Sultanate period when much havoc was done. On a third occasion the Muhammadans occupied the temple itself.

These raids and destructions caused the disappearance of many of the older parts of the temple. When the temple came to be rebuilt in between the raids and finally after the restoration of Hindu monarchy after about 1370 A.D., that is, about the end of the 14th century A.D., it was almost entirely a new structure, though the old and the new got mixed up in several places in the temple complex. This is evident when one examines in detail carefully the several mandapas, corridors and shrines. One could easily see the great mix-up that has taken place. This was perhaps due to the fact that the people who restored or built anew, found many of the relics of Muslim vandalism handy enough to be used as they were. This led to different styles of pillars and other architectural features being used in a single structure.

It is usual to say that the Madurai temple is largely built at one time and is, therefore, typical of the architectural style of the
period. Many writers also refer to Tirumala Nayaka as the one who had contributed on the largest scale to the temple buildings. Tirumala Nayaka was no doubt a great builder. But there have been other rulers of the dynasty who have contributed as much, if not more, as Tirumala Nayaka himself. Virappa Nayaka, (1572-95 A.D.), for instance had made significant additions to the great temple. Some of his major contributions are the Thousand Pillar Mandapa, the north gopura and the older portions of the kambattadi mandapa.

The later additions like the gopuras and corridors being on an impressive scale dominate the earlier, though smaller, edifices that many people overlook them and attribute the temple to a late period. When one examines the various parts of the temple in detail one may be better able to appreciate the older vestiges still remaining in the temple.

The present temple occupies the centre of the city. The temple is almost a regular rectangle, two of its sides from north to south measure 720 feet and 729 feet, the two east to west sides measure 834 feet and 852 feet. It is a double shrine, as it is called, one devoted to God Sundareshvara and the other to His Consort, Goddess Minakshi. The two shrines face east, the Amman shrine being to the south of that of the God. Besides the two shrines, a third prominent feature of the temple is the Golden Lily Tank which lies to the east of the Amman shrine. Most of the main mandapas occupy the area between the eastern outermost wall and the two sanctums. A tall gopura dominates each of the four outer walls. The main entrance is on the eastern wall. A subsidiary entrance known as the Aṣṭaṣakti Mandapa is at the present day used as the principal entrance. The eastern gopura, for some unaccountable reason, is seldom used by the public. The Aṣṭaṣakti Mandapa could be considered as the entrance to the Amman shrine with which it is in an axially direct line.

From the Aṣṭaṣakti Mandapa one enters the large five aisled Minakshi Nayaka Mandapa. West of this is the Citra Gopura. The Citra Gopura which is seven-storeyed, is the tallest.
gopuras. A somewhat dark passage known as Mudali Mandapa leads from the Citra Gopura to the Citra Mandapa which surrounds the Golden Lily Tank or Porrāmarai Tank. The north and east walls of this colonnade contain modern paintings relating to the 64 lilas of the Tiruvillaiyadal Purana. The Golden Lily Tank which measures an area of 120 feet by 170 feet is one of the most beautiful of temple tanks. From the northern side of the Citra Mandapa a splendid view of the tank and the south Gopura which is just beyond its south-west corner could be had. The Porrāmarai tank is as old as the Saayambhu Linga (God Sundaresvara) and prominently figures in the legends connected with the origin of the shrine. On the western side is a small mandapa which projects over the steps of the tank. This is known popularly as Mangommal Mandapa. The western side of the Golden Lily Tank has also the Mutharli (Muttirulōyi ?) Mandapa, the Ennaiakkupu (or Anjai?) Mandapa, an unidentified mandapa between Mangommal Mandapa and the Ennaiakkupu Mandapa. North-west of the Golden Lily Tank is the famous Kilikatti Mandapa lying north-south in front of the Amman Sannidhi gopura.

At the southern end of the Kilikatti Mandapa, close to the eastern wall of the Amman Sannidhi second prakāra, is the shrine of Siddhi Vināyakar, who is the Sthala Vignēsvara. Further to the north of this shrine is the Amman Sannidhi gopura in line with the Citra Gopura. The Sannidhi gopura leads to the second prakāra (225 feet × 150 feet) of the Amman shrine. Facing the gopura is the ārukāl pītha of the shrine. At the south-east corner of this corridor is the stucco figure of Tirumala Nayaka and his queens facing the Kolu Mandapa in the south-west corner at the other end of the southern prakāra. The Navarātri festival is celebrated in this mandapa. To the north of the Kolu Mandapa is the Kadaka Gopura, entrance through which is now blocked. On the other side of the Kadaka gopura in the north-west corner of the prakāra is the Kūdal Kumāra shrine. Passing along the north corridor and returning to the east side of the second prakāra, and mounting the ārukāl pītha one enters the first prakāra (125 feet by 70 feet) of the Amman shrine with its mahā mandapa. The Palliyanai is on the north side of this mandapa. The sanctum occupies the western half of the enclosure within this prakāra. Outside the south
wall of the second prakāra of the Minakṣi shrine is the Javandisvara shrine and mandapa situated in a garden.

From the Kilikatti Mandapa one could enter the Svami shrine through the nādu kattu gopura. In the second prakāra (420 feet x 320 feet) of the Svami shrine is a huge figure of Vighnesvara popularly known as Mukkuruni Piḷḷaiyar. On the western side of the second prakāra is the Pālaka gopura and a number of Isvarams or subsidiary shrines. In the north-west corner of this prakāra is the Sangattār temple and further down in the north corridor is the Kariyamānikka temple and its mandapa which reaches up to the cinna mottai gopura on the north wall of this prakāra. In the north-east corner is the Mandapa Nāyaka Mandapa or Hunōred Pillar Mandapa with a Sabhāpati shrine. In front of the Mandapa Nāyaka Mandapa in the eastern prakāra is the famous kambattadi mandapa with its Nandi shrine and iconographic sculptures on pillars between the Gopura Nāyaka Gopura and the sannidhi gopura. In the south-east corner is Jnānasambandar temple.

The first prakāra (250 feet x 150 feet) of the Svami shrine is entered through the sannidhi gopura and in the cloisters abutting the south wall of this prakāra are the images of the 63 Saiva saints (Aruvattumūvar). Facing the south corridor at its western end is the Madura Nāyakar shrine where the utsavar or processional image of God Sundaresvara is enshrined. On the north side of this prakāra is the Ellām Valla Slidhar shrine close to the sanctum, and the Kadamba stump. On the eastern prakāra is the Svami Sannidhi ārukāl piṭha which leads to the maha mandapa. The Velliyambala Sabhā with Nataraja dancing on his left leg is in this mandapa. The Sundaresvarar sanctum is next to the ardha mandapa.

Leaving the Svami shrine through the Gopura Nāyaka Gopura one enters the large court wherein a number of mandapas are to be seen. Close to the eastern wall of the second prakāra on the south side of the Gopura Nāyaka Gopura is the kalyāna mandapa. The Subbarāyar Mandapa is between this mandapa and the Gopura Nāyaka Gopura. The large Vīravasantarāya Mandapa lies between the Gopura Nāyaka Gopura and the East gopura. To the north of the Vīravasantarāya Mandapa is the beautiful Thousand Pillar mandapa with its numerous sculptured pillars and its Nataraja
shrine. South of the *Viravasantarāya Mandapa* are the Mutturama Aiyar, Kalyana Sundara Mudaliyar and Servaikar *mandapas*.

Passing out through the east *gopura* into the street, one comes upon the well-known *Pudu Mandapa* built by Tirumala Nayaka. Beyond the *Pudu Mandapa* almost in a line with it and further to its east is the unfinished *Raja Gopura* which leads to the Elukadal and the Kancanamāla shrine still further east. A few other minor structures to be mentioned are the Padinettāmbadiyān or Karuppannasvami shrine and the Madurai Vīran shrine on the east wall between the *Aṣṭasakti Mandapa* and the east *gopura* and the Mottai Gopurattān shrine at the foot of the north *gopura*. Opposite the *Aṣṭasakti Mandapa* is the *Nagarā Mandapa* which leads to the *Vitta Vāsal* which is stated to have run up as far as the gateway of the east wall of the Pandya fortress of the olden days.

*A BRIEF SURVEY*: Dravidian temple architecture falls into five well-recognised evolutionary periods, the Pallava, the Gola, the Pandya, Vijayanagar and Madurai or modern periods. The Madurai Temple belongs to the last three periods, namely, the Pandya, Vijayanagar and Madurai periods. The surviving examples of the Pandya period are very few in number and are fragmentary but the Madurai temple itself with its *prākāras* and high towers is the culmination of the architecture of the Pandya period. The bases of the east and west *gopuras*, the *kadaka* and *palaka gopuras* and some of the shrines retain Pandya features. The Madurai temple has both styles of *gopuras*, the earlier type with straight corner edges and the later ornate type with curved edges. All the inner *gopuras* are of the first type while the outer *gopuras* belong to the latter class. It should also be noted that much of the restoration on the *gopuras* is confined to the outer face which was the one to be damaged most and that the inner core retains the original features in most of them.

The Vijayanagara style which is known for its exuberant and florid manner of decoration became sobered in Madurai and the pillars of the Vijayanagara period in the Madurai temple show this change. For instance, the massive pillar with a slender bulbous column—distinct from it but still carved on a single stone became attached to the cubical pillar in Madurai as a solid square without
any space between them. Similarly the peculiar pillar with a central column and groups of slender columnettes round it which was such a characteristic feature of the Vijayanagara works is almost absent in Madurai. The only examples of this pillar in the temple are the so-called Musical Pillars and two specimens in the Thousand Pillar mandapa. Mandapas and mandapa pillars were the prominent architectural features of the Vijayanagara period. The numerous mandapas erected in the Madurai temple reveal the distinguishing characteristics of this period. In all these one finds the jāli pillar which the Vijayanagara builders favoured so much. It is only in the corridors and mandapas of the succeeding epoch, the Madurai period, that one finds the equestrian motif also on these pillars.

Most of the late 16th century and 17th century structures belong to the Madurai or modern period, of which the best known example is the Pudu Mandapa. The Rayagopura, the south and north gopuras also belong to this period. Many of these evolutionary changes in style are noticeable in the great temple complex of Madurai.

2. OUTER GOPURAS

The four main outer gopuras on the east, west, north and south of the Madurai temple have a singular beauty and grace of their own. They have won the admiration of the visitor and the appreciation of the critic. Many temple gopuras lack in architectural proportion or artistic embellishments. They are either too wide or too narrow in proportion to their height. The builders of the Madurai temple had a fine sense of artistry and the towering outer gopuras are standing monuments to their genius.

THE EAST GOPURA: The base of the east gopura like those of the three other towers is a stone structure consisting of two storeys, a ground floor storey and an upper storey. In the centre of the base is the projecting portico. The height of the entrance runs to the top level of the stone base. Over the entrance is the main śālai flanked on either side with the usual order of śālai, pancaram and kūṭa with a recess between each as on most of the Dravidian gopuras. A detailed examination of the four outer gopuras of the Madurai temple would show that though they maintain this general
scheme of kuta, pancaram and sālai, yet their style of ornamentation differs to some extent, thus revealing subtle changes in their evolution. They differ from each other in a minor key but in their over all size and shape they are in consonance. All the outer gopuras are nine storeys high reaching a height of nearly 150 feet each and all of them have their sloping sides not straight but curved and concave. "A soaring upward sweep which, although not entirely substantial, is very impressive."¹

The east gopura is considered to be the oldest among the outer gopuras but very few vestiges of the earlier structure are in existence today. The east gopura seems to have suffered the most damage as may be seen from the condition in which some of its older parts appear today. It is on the ground floor of the base that some of these early vestiges are seen check by jowl with later repaired work. The devakostas, wall niches and kūdus are all in a much damaged state.

The door of the east gopura of which only one leaf is in position today is a huge specimen (about 35 feet) running the whole height of the entrance way and is a remarkable example of the wood carver's art.

The brick superstructure repeats the kūdu, pancaram and sālai motif in all its nine tiers. Much of the older stucco figures have been replaced by modern figures many of which relate to the Tiruvilāyādal legends. This gopura with its well-marked vertical and horizontal divisions is a very imposing pile.

Inside the entrance to the east gopura or Kilaigopura are two inscriptions. In one of them the gopuram is called "Tribhuvanacakravarti koneri(n) maikkondan Sundaraṇandiyan tirukkopuram."² The other record calls it "(Tribhuvanacakravarti koneri (n) maikkondan Avanivendaraman tirukkōpuram"³ Avanivendaraman was one of the surnames of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I (acc. 1256 A.D.). The Tiruppāṇi Vivaram (No. 3) says that the Svami shrine

nine-storeyed gopura was built by Sundara Pandya in S. 1140 (1218 A.D.). The Tiruppani mala says that the Sundara Pandya gopura was built by Sundara Pandyan. The Sritala says that the Sannidhi big gopura was built by Sundara Pandya. There are also two fish crests in this east gopura. All these evidences and the architectural features of the gopura lead to the conclusion that Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I (acc. 1256 A.D.) was probably the builder of this gopura.

In the second storey of the east gopura there are four inscriptions on five pillars, belonging to the second year of Jatavarman Kulasekhara (acc. 1190), the tenth and fifteenth years of Varman Sundara Pandya I (acc. 1216 A.D.) and the second year of Jatavarman Kulasekhara (acc. 1238 A.D.) whose eulogies began with Patalavaranai. The presence of these pillars with earlier inscriptions probably indicate that the gopura might have been begun by some earlier Pandya ruler and finished during the reign of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I (acc. 1256 A.D.). These inscriptions also push the date of the temple to a period anterior to the end of the 12th century. The inscription of the second year of Jatavarman Kulasekhara is the earliest so far copied in the Madurai temple.

WEST GOPURA: The west gopura also has many relics of an older structure mainly noticeable on the ground floor of its base. The adhishtana of this gopura is buried below the surface of the earth as the road level has considerably risen in later times.

The whole surface of this structure is covered with stucco figures of legendary and iconographic nature. Notable among these are the stucco figure of the "Churning of the Ocean" and figures of Rishabhadar.

The Tiruppani Vivaram (No. 6) says that the Adi Street nine-storeyed west gopura was built by Parakrama Pandya in about

2. M.E.R. 62 of 1905
3. M.E.R. 60 of 1905
1323 A.D. The *Tiruppanimôlai* also states that the *gopura* was built by Parakrma Pandya. Inside the entrance of the *gopura* are a Pandya fish crest and an inscription in verse in praise of Parakrama Pandya. Architecturally the *gopura* may be assigned to about the 14th century A.D. During the 14th century there were several Pandya kings, with the name Parâkrama Pandya*. It is not known which of these rulers was the builder of the west *gopura*.

**SOUTH GOPURA**: Owing to its picturesque situation near the Golden Lily Tank the south *gopura* is the most photographed of all the *gopuras* of the Madurai temple. Structurally it is also one of the most beautiful. The two tiers of its high stone base are well proportioned to each other and are of an imposing appearance. The intervals between projecting bays and recesses are well spaced and architecturally the whole structure is in very good taste. The entire construction is perhaps of late 16th century with late Vijayanagar and early Madurai or Nayaka characteristics. All the wall pilasters of the south *gopura* have the Vijayanagar type of squatting lions at their base.

The brick superstructure is of singular beauty though myriads of stucco figures hide its architectural construction. The sloping edge has a more concave sweeping curve than in the other three *gopuras*. This gives it a peculiar elegance which is admirable.

Architecturally the south *gopura* may be assigned to about the latter half of 16th century. The *Tiruppâni Vivaram* (No. 12) says that the Adi Street south nine-storeyed *gopura* was built by Sirâmalai Sevvandi in about 1478 A.D. The *Tiruppanimôlai* also says that the *gopura* was built by Sirâmalai Sevvandi. The *Srihalâ* calls the *gopura* "*paniârakkaâlai gopura*" and says that Periya Sivandi lingam Setti built it. The Sevvandi family of Trichinopoly have contributed much to the architecture of the Madurai temple. While Sirâmalai Sevvandi might have been the builder of the south

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1. Verse 12.
3. Jatavarman Parakrama Pandya (I) (acc. 1315 A.D.); Maravarman Parakrama Pandya (acc. 1335 A.D.); Jatavarman Parakrama Pandya (II) (acc. 1357 A.D.); the Tenkasi ruler, Parakrama Pandya who renovated the shrine at Kutâlam near Tenkasi, in about 1387 A.D.
4. Verse 27. In the footnote the editor gives the date as 1559 A.D.
"gopura", the date given by the Tiruppani Vivaram seems rather early by about a century.

NORTH GOPURA: The north gopura is also of the uttama class measuring nine storeys high. Till recent years it was without the sikara or roof and was therefore called the mottai gopuram, that is, the bald-headed gopura. It is still known as the mottai gopuram though it has now got a sikara roof which was built by Nāttukottai Sattis about the end of the last century. The stone base of the gopura is in two tiers as on the other gopuras. While the style and scheme of construction are more akin to the south gopura, it may be noted that both these gopuras have not the simplicity and robustness of the base of the east gopura. The ornamentation is more delicate and modern. One noticeable feature on this gopura is that the devakostas in the ground and upper storeys have semicolumns at the niche-openings in addition to the usual corner pilasters.

Getting inside one of the storeys of the north gopura one learns much about the mode of construction of these gopuras. Stone pillars are used on the different floor levels and wooden beams and rafters are used to support the terraces. Wooden corbels cut in the same manner as their stone counterparts are found over these stone pillars. Many types of these corbels, from the simple level and tenon type to the Pāndya fluted type are found. The wooden beams and rafters are joined to these corbels by tenon and socket. The stone pillars at the front of the opening have a bulbous capital and a wooden corbel of the early lotus bud type. This gopura has cubicles and a carved ceiling with stone jambs similar to those in the south gopura.

Architecturally the north gopura might be assigned to the 16th-17th century. Literary evidences also support this date and indicate that KṛṣṇaVirappa, the grandson of Visvanatha Nayaka and the builder of the Kambattadi Mandapa, constructed the north gopura.¹

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1. Tiruppani Vivaram No. 26. It gives the date of construction as 1572 A.D. Tiruppandalai, verse 53; the Śrītala says that the periyā mottai gopura was built, by Sattis and by Abiṣeka Pandaram. This probably refers to some repairs and reconstruction at a later date.
Swāmi Vimāna, Sundaresvara temple, Madurai.
Stone Elephant, Madurai.

Garbhagruha base, Madurai.
Ashtānga Vimāna, Kūdal Alagar temple, Madurai.
Somachanda Vimâna, Alagarkoil.

Sanctum tower, Thiruvadavur.
South Gopura, Madurai.
West Gopura, Madurai.
A view of the towers.

A view of the lotus tank and entrance towers.
Stucco figures on the Vimāna (These have since been redone)

A tower of the temple.
South Outer Gopura base.

North Outer Gopura base.
East Outer Gopura base.

West Outer Gopura base.

East Gopura base.
West Gopura base.

Rāya Gopura.

West Outer Gopura base.

Rāya Gopura.
The small Mottai Gopura.

Gopura Nayaka Gopura.

Naḍukkaṭṭu Gopura.
Entrance—Sangattār temple.

Jnānasambandar temple.

Linga shrine, thousand pillared Maṇḍapam.
Maṇḍapa Nāyaka Maṇḍapam

The Water Chute, thousand pillared Maṇḍapam.

Kilikūṭtu Maṇḍapam.
Composite Pillar, Kambattadi Mañḍapam.

Kambattadi Mañḍapam, view from North West.

Nandi Shrine—Kambattadi Mañḍapam.
Siva as the Cosmic dancer and Parvati as the Universal spectator,
Rock-cut sculpture in an excavated cave, Thirupparamkunram,
near Madurai—8th Century A.D.
Saptamātas—Early Pandya, 8th Century A.D.
(Now in the prākāra of the main temple).

Ugramurti, Thirupparamkunram. 8th Century A.D.
Annapūrna, Thirupparamkunram, 8th Century A.D.

Gajalakshmi, Thirupparamkunram, 8th Century A.D.
Garuda, in the rock-cut cave, Thirupparamkunram.
8th Century A.D.
Manmatha, Thousand pillared hall.

Rathi, Thousand pillared hall.
Ariyanâtha mudaliyar? thousand pillared hall.

(This represents Lord Chokkanâtha bringing horses; one of the sixty four sports—Editor.)
A Lady, thousand pillared hall.

Eunuch, thousand pillared hall.
Nāgarāja, thousand pillared hall.

Sarasvati, thousand pillared hall.
Dvārapāla, Amman Sannathi.

Horse and Chariot, Hundred Pillared mandapam.
Minákshi Kalyáñam in Pudumandapam built by Thirumalai Nayak.
Minākshi Kalyānam, Kambattadi mandapam.
18th Century A.D.
Tripurântaka, Pudumandapam.
Deivayainai Kalyanam, Thirupparamkunram.

Queen Mangammal and Vijaya Ranga
Chokkanatha Nayaka, Thirupparamkunram.
Vishnu, Annakkuli Mandapam.

Vyāgrapādar, Annakkuli Mandapam.

A King, Annakkuli Mandapam.

A queen, Annakkuli Mandapam.
Patanjali, Annakkuli Mandapam.

Brahma, Annakkuli Mandapam.

Chouri bearer Annakkuli Mandapam.

Pandy, Annakkuli Mandapam.

The Annakkuli mandapam has since been pulled down.
Portrait of a Nayak, Pudumandapam.

Portrait of a Nayak, Pudumandapam.
Tirumalai Nayaka with his queens, Pudumandapam.
Portraits of Nayaks, Madurai.
Portraits of Nayaks, Madurai.
Portraits of Marudu brothers.

A sculpture of a horse rider, Thirupparamkunram.
Bronze images, Nāyaka period.

Bronze images, Nāyaka period, Madurai.
Bhuta Vāhana, Madurai.

Wooden Horse Mount, Madurai, covered with metal plates gilded with gold plates.
Pearl Crowns and other ornaments.

Gem set Crowns and other ornaments.
Muthu kondai—Minakshi temple, Madurai.
Pearl Kavacam of goddess Minakshi, Madurai.
Detail of Pearl Canopy, Madurai.
Ornamental metal lamp called Makara torana in front of the Sundaresvara shrine (This work of 17th Century has since been destroyed during renovation).
A view of the Nataka Sala
Thirumalai Nayak Palace, Madurai.
Plan of Madurai City in 1688.

RAYA GOPURA: The Raya Gopura which is to the east of the Pudu Mandapa is nearly twice the size of the base of the east gopura and measures very nearly 200 feet by 120 feet. It is a stupendous structure and if it had been completed it would have been one of the biggest gopuras in South India. The building owes its origin to Tirumala Nayaka who is also reported to have built similar unfinished gopuras in numerous other centres in South India. The monolithic pillars of the Raya Gopuram are over 50 feet high and mark the high degree of proficiency which Dravidian stone masons had attained. The gopura base is highly finished and ornamented. Its pavilion pillars, its lion-based pilasters and the carvings on the jambs display a keen sense of massive proportions and large-scale ornamentation. There are many reliefs of Tirumala Nayaka and his queens and a figure of Minaksi's coronation on the wall surface. In its corbels, cornices and kudus this gopura also establishes the Madurai style of architecture which dates from about this time. It is a pity that this noble pile should be surrounded by sordid human habitations. A comparison with old photographs of the site taken nearly 100 years ago would show that the road level here has considerably risen so that much of the base of the gopura is today below ground level.

3. Inner Gopuras

The inner gopuras are eight in number of which only the Citra Gopura is seven storeys high. The rest are five storeys or less in height. All their corner edges are straight. There are no niche figures or kumbapancaras on some of them.

THE CITRA GOPURA which is in a line with the Amman Sannidhi gopura was perhaps the original entrance to the sanctum. Novestiges of the earlier structure are to be seen now. The present structure is attributed to Kaalatti Mudali, son of Arvyanatha Mudali, about 1570 A.D.¹ The architectural style also supports this date.

¹ The Tiruppani Vivaram (No. 24) states that this gopura was built by Kaalatti Mudali in S. 1492(1570 A.D.). While verse 57 of the Tiruppanimalai says that Kaalattinatha, the son of Ariyanayina Mudali, built the stone base (karapada), verse 51 states that the brick superstructure (sengarpadai) was raised by Krsna Virappa who is evidently the grandson of Visvanatha Nayaka. From verse 51 it may be inferred that the Citra Gopura was also known as the "Muttalakkum Gopura".
The storeys of the *Citra Gopura* are well proportioned and its lines have no rugged edges and it is one of the best of its class.

**GOPURANAYAKA GOPURA**: The *Gopura Nayaka Gopura* which leads to the Svāmi Sannidhi is a five-storeyed one and though it is attributed to a date as early as S. 1294 (1372 A.D.), in *Tiruppānī Vivaram* (No.7), there is hardly any trace of this early work or its later forms. An inscription to the right of the entrance credits Visvappa, the son of Isvarappa, *adappam* of the Vijayanagara king Aycuta (1529-42 A.D.) with having built it for the merit of the king. This would place the *gopura* about the first half of the 16th century. The style also confirms this in many ways and may be said to be a transitional stage leading to the style prevalent in the 17th century.

**NADUKATTU GOPURA**: The *Nadukattu Gopura*, as its name indicates, is between the Amman and Svāmi shrines. It is a five-storeyed structure and its style, like that of the *Gopura Nayaka Gopura*, is that of the mid-sixteenth century.

Both *gopuras* are ornamented with many beautiful niche figures. The stone carving is of a high order. Bhairava and Virabhadra are sculptured in the niches of the *Gopura Nayaka Gopura*, while Nataraja and Saṇmukha are in the *Nadukattu Gopura*. The *Tiruppani Vivaram* (No. 10) mentions this *gopura* to have been built by Sevandī Murti S. 1481 (1559 A.D.).

**KADAKA GOPURA**: Architecturally the *Kadaka Gopura* which was the western entrance to the Amman Sannidhi seems to be the oldest among the *gopuras* but strangely enough it has been overlooked by many writers. All the features point to a rather early date for this edifice which one would like to place between the 13th and 14th centuries. Many of the mouldings of this *gopura* are much mutilated and are now covered with thick coats of whitewash.

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1. The *Tiruppani Vivaram* (No. 7) gives the builder's name as Vasuvappan and the *Tiruppanimalai* (v. 14) as Visvappa Nayaka of Attigiri.


3. The *Tiruppanimalai* (v. 23) also states that this *gopura* was built by Sevandī Murti Setti.
The Tiruppani Vivaram (No 25) refers to one Vira Tummacci as the builder and gives the date as S. 1492 (1570 A.D.) This perhaps refers to the brick structure above and could not in any manner refer to the much older stone base.

Pālaka Gopura: This is next to the Kadakī Gopura and was the western entrance to the Svami shrine. The presence of Pandya kudus, the figures of ganas in the entablature and the vyalavari above the kodungai are early features similar to those in Kadaka Gopura. The mouldings on the base also exhibit forms later than those of the Kadaka Gopura. It would be safe to date the structure to the 14th century. The Tiruppani Vivaram (No. 7) also refers to Mallappan as the builder and its date according to this authority would be about S. 1296 (1374 A.D.) which also corresponds with the style of the Gopura.

The Pālaka Gopura is the model for many of the modern gopuras constructed in the present day.

Cinna Mottai Gopura: The five-storeyed Cinna Mottai Gopura is on the northern side of the Svami Sannidhi praṅkāra. It is in many ways similar to the Gopura Nayaka and the Nadukattu Gopura, being constructed about the same period, though some of its architectural features retain a somewhat earlier type. The Tiruppani Vivaram No. 11 credits Sevvandi Velan as its builder about the year 1560 A.D. Architecturally also it may be assigned to the latter half of the 16th century A.D.

Sannidhi Gopura: The two Sannidhi gopuras are perhaps two of the earliest structures existing in the temple. Much of the architectural details of the Svami Sannidhi Gopura base remain hidden behind later structures and very little of its is visible. The early part of the structure may perhaps date about the 13th-14th centuries.

1. The Śrītala also says that the Kadukkayi (Kadaka) Goupra was built by Virappa Tummisi.
2. The Tiruppanimalai (v. 34) also states that this gopura was built by Sevvandi Vela Setti.
The base of the Amman Sannidhi gopura has also early features. Parts of the two Sannidhi gopuras my perhaps belong to a period between the 12th-13th centuries, the Svami Sannidhi gopura being about the 12th-13th centuries and the Amman Sannidhi may belong to the latter half of the 13th century.

4. The Two Sanctums

Svami Garbhagriha

The sanctum of the Sundaresvarar shrine is a square structure, the exterior walls measuring 33 ft, on all four sides. The base has a upapitha and an adhisthana. On the south, west and north sides of the walls of the garbhagriha are three bays or shrines which project six feet from the wall surface. The bays are 8' 6" each in length. The shrine in the south is dedicated to Dakśināmūrti, that on the west has Lingodbhava while the one on the north has Durga. In front of these shrines is a modern platform to which a ladder gives access.

A niche is on either side of these three central shrines. The niches are plain without any niche pilasters or entablatures. Each niche is filled by a large stone elephant measuring about ten feet high. These elephants are finely sculptured, look realistic and are very impressive. There are slight variations in the ornaments carved on them and in the material held in their trunks. These variations give them a certain individuality. According to legend the vimala in which Somasundaresvara is enshrined was known as Indra vimala as it was made to the order of Indra by Visvakarma. The vimala is supported by eight dik gajas (i.e., the guardian elephants of the eight

1. The Tiruppani Vivaram (No. 4) says that the Amman Sannidhi three-storeyed gopura was built by Anandatandava Nambi in S 1150 (1228 A.D.), while the Tiruppanimalai (v. 13) says that it was built by Anandatandava Nambi's wife. Anandatandava Nambi is said to have belonged to the family of Perumbarrappuliyur Nambi who wrote the "Tiruvalavayudaiyar Tirumilaiyadai".

2. Tiruppanimalai, verse 19, states that the Dakśinamūrti, Lingodbhava and Durga mandapas were built by Kampalaraya Malipati, perhaps a reference to Kumara Kampana, while verse 58 says that the Durga mandapa was built by "Nayina Mudali."
directions). These stone elephants are believed to represent the eight or aṣṭadiggañjas. Six of them are seen on the exterior walls and the remaining two are close to the east wall of the garbhagriha within the ardhamandapa.

The vimāna repeats in all its three storeys, the projections and recesses on the garbhagriha walls. Though it has been renewed a number of times and many stucco figures have been either altered or added, the essential characteristics of an earlier structure have been retained. The stucco figures, though numerous, do not detract from the main lines of the edifice. The gold-plated sikhara is one of the most beautiful and impressive parts in the whole temple.

The adytyum is a small cubicle measuring about 11 feet square. The wall of the garbhagriha is a thick one measuring over 8' 10". The Soyanambhu linga occupies the centre of the garbhagriha and the figure of Manonmani, facing south, occupies the north-east corner of the sanctum. A narrow passage about four feet long leads from the garbhagriha to the antarāla which is a little over 8 feet wide. Just outside the antarāla is the ardhamandapa whose walls are practically in continuation of the garbhagriha. Close to the line where the ardhamandapa joins the garbhagriha is a beautiful stone-pierced window in a niche in the north and south walls. The window opening has its own short semi-pilasters and a torana over its beam. The ardhamandapa floor rises to a level just below the kumudam of the adhisṭhana of the garbhagriha. So the base of the garbhagriha below the kumudam is covered by the floor of the ardhamandapa and could not be seen. The adhisṭhana of the ardhamandapa has the same mouldings as the garbhagriha and the same kind of wall pilasters, corbels and cornice. But there are no niche openings though short niche pilasters with a cornice and a pavilion with sālai roof and central kūdu decorate the wall surface. The cornices of these wall niches have the same kind of simulated timber work as on the under-surface of the main cornice surrounding the wall.

The doorway leading from the ardhamandapa to the garbhagriha has a torana on top, and the cubical pillars flanking the antarāla are just plain square shafts with an over-size bevel and tenon gobel. The two stone elephants mentioned already are on the walls on each side of these square pillars. The nave of the ardhamandapa has a row of three pillars on either side. The inner surface of the walls of the ardhamandapa are plain and undecorated.
In front of the ardhamandapa is a mukhamandapa. The doorway leading from this mukhamandapa to the ardhamandapa has a Gajalakshmi panel on the lintel. On either side of this doorway in the mukhamandapa are two dvārapālaka. Next to the dvārapālaka is Vallaśha Ganapati on the south and next to the dvārapālaka on the opposite side is an image of Subrahmanya on the peacock. Two doorways on the northern and southern side of the mukhamandapa lead to the first prākāra. Four pillars form a square in the centre of the mukhamandapa. The mukhamandapa leads to the large maha mandapa.

The maha mandapa measures about 55 feet in width and 85 feet in length. There are four projecting bays on each of the exterior sides of the four walls of the maha mandapa. The ādīśṭāna of the maha mandapa differs slightly from that of the gaśbagriha. The walls of the maha mandapa are decorated with many stucco panels illustrating the Tiruvilaiyādal legends.

There is an entrance to the maha mandapa from the eastern side of the first prakāra. Access to this entrance is from the ērukāl pitha adjoining the maha mandapa. A second entrance to the maha mandapa is on its southern side. This entrance faces the Sabhāpati shrine which is on the opposite wall in the north. Two rows of pillars on all four sides of the maha mandapa support its ceiling. The Sabhāpati shrine is the famous Velliyambalam where God Sundaresvara is said to have danced as Natarāja to give darśan to the sages Vyāghrapāda and Patañjali who had come to the wedding. Two statues of the sages are close to the shrine. The Natarāja image in the shrine is a large figure nearly 6 feet high and is seen covered by a silver kavaca. The image of the Amman standing by the side of Naṭarāja is well sculptured and appears to be old work. A number of processional bronze images are kept on platforms close to the walls of the maha mandapa. Among these is an image of the Siddhar who figures largely in the Tiruvilaiyādal legends. This idol appears to be an old piece. Among other bronzes are those of the Saiva saints.

1. The Tiruppuri Vivaram, No. 8, says that Mavali built the maha mandapa in S. 1374 (1452 A.D.), while the Tiruppanimalai, verse 20, says that Tirumalirunjola Mahavali carried out repairs to the maha mandapa and ērukāl pitha. This is evidently a reference to Tirumalirunjolaśīn Mavaliyanadaraya who ruled from about 1453 to 1477 A.D. in the Madurai country.
In the north-west corner of the mahā mandapa is a walled up strong room or kāru ālam as it is called in Tamil. This is one of a number of such strong rooms in the temple. The strong room in the mahā mandapa has a collection of brozes of various gods and goddesses. Some of the pillars of the mandapa which are walled up are, however, interesting for they are of the early cubical type with late 13th c. Pandya corbels of the bevel and tenon fluted type. Similar pillars are in the Sangattār temple.

The ārukāl pitha in front of the mahā mandapa is an imposing structure whose bulbous capital octagonal pillars with lotus bud corbels and caryatids over the abacus look very like early pillars but really belong to the 14th or 15th centuries.\(^1\) The bases of these pillars have pavilion ornamentation and the pitha of the mandapa has a frieze of dancing figures in various attitudes with attendant musicians. They are evidently performing before the king who is seated in a panel on the proper left. Smaller friezes of dancing figures are in a row above the kapota which is fully ornamented with a lotus idal motif.

Though all the authorities state that the garbhagriha was spared by the Muslims and that it did not suffer damage, yet one could see that the present structure is not as old as this would make it out to be. Extensive restoration has been done and much of the older work could be seen mixed up with later-day structural additions. It is very likely that the adhisthāna of the garbhagriha retains the largest number of old features though even here a certain amount of repaired work is easily distinguishable. Many of the kādus are of the Pandya type but many others have been recarved. Also the pilasters on the kanta of the upa-pitha appear to be restorations. It is not possible at present to say how the wall of the garbhagriha was originally built up. Many of the stone courses seem to be late insertions as well as

\(^1\) The Tiruppanimalai, verse 21, states that Sundara Mavali renovated the ārukāl pitha. This probably refers to Sundarattoludaiyan, the son of Tirumalarirunjolainiran Mavalivatādarayan, who ruled in the Madurai country in the second half of the 15th century A.D.
the lion bases to the pilasters. The elephants which appear to be old work do not seem to fit in happily in the niches in which they now stand. Very likely there might have been some other arrangement in the wall wherein these elephants could have fitted in better. The ganas which are placed loosely on the vayalavari also reveal that they must have formed part of the original structure and that the restorers not knowing what to do with them just placed them anyhow in the most convenient position they could find. The corbels of the wall pilasters and the associated cornice above are certainly late features and could not have been part of the old structure but the presence of cubical pillars with late 13th century bevel and tenon fluted corbels on some of the walls within the garbhagriha and ardhamandapa prove again the antiquity of the shrine.

**Minākṣi Shrine**

The Minākṣi shrine and its prakāras are smaller than those of the Sundaresvara shrine. The garbhagriha of the sanctum is almost a square measuring about 25 feet each side with the ardha mandapa on its front. It measures about 25 feet by 45 feet.

The garbhagriha entrance has a Gajalaksmi panel on its beam under a torana. On either side of the entrance there seem to be two wall niches without opening but a modern brick wall and wooden shutters hide the wall surface here. The ardhamandapa has a plain interior and there are no pillars in it. Two four-handed dvārapālakas are at the entrance to the ardhamandapa. Four modern pillars support a small entrance mandapa on the east wall of the ardhamandapa.

The garbhagriha walls have three projecting bays with niches. These have short pilasters at the corners and semi-pilasters at the niche openings. In the niche of the central bay on the south is the image of Iccāgakti, that on the west has Kriyāgakti while that on the north has Jñānaāgakti.

The mahāmandapa has six rows of pillars forming a central nave and three aisles on either side. The pillars of the nave are of the same type as those in Kariyamānīkka temple. The pillars of the aisles are of the ordinary cubical type.
The ārukāl pīṭha has four pillars in the front and one each on the two sides. The two central pillars on the front have large yāli figures and the two corner pillars are of the same composite type of rounded columnettes associated with cubical capital pillars as in the ardhamandapa. The two pillars on the sides of the pīṭha are ordinary cubical pillars.

The pāliyārai (bed chamber) and the shrines of Vighnesvara and Subrahmanya which are in the sanctum are in the same style as the rest of the structure. The only additional feature noticeable on the wall surface are kumbapancaras with slender shafts.

The architectural features of the Mīnākṣī sanctum seem to indicate that it may belong to the first half of the Vijayanagar period, about the 15th century or so.

5. Shrines and Isvarams

(i) Sangattar Temple

Quite an important shrine in the Madurai temple and one of the oldest also is the Sangattar temple situated in the north-west corner of the Svāmi Sannidhi second prākāra. The images of the Sangam poets are in this shrine.

The temple has many interesting architectural features. The shrine faces south and is approached by a flight of steps leading to the platform from which another short flight of steps leads to the sanctum doorway. The doorway is flanked by a gobura pillar on either side of it.

Going into the temple one finds a small platform running round the four walls, with images of the Sangam poets arranged along the top. The platform seems to be a late addition and one does not know what the original temple was intended to house. Taking all its architectural characteristics into consideration there should

1. The Tiruppani Vivaram, No. 8, says that the Amman Sannidhi first prākāra, paliyārai and ārukāl pīṭha were built by Māvali in S 1374 (1452 A.D.). The Tiruppaninndalai, verse 22, says that the Amman Sannidhi mahā mandapa, first prākāra and paliyārai were built by Tirumalirunjolai Mahavali.
be no difficulty in believing that the shrine must be a Pandya construction between the 12th and 13th century, especially as it represents the transitional stage from the niche with torana to the niche with pavilion, both of which types are found on the walls of this temple. It is also curious that this early shrine is not mentioned either in the Tiruppani Vivaram or Tiruppanimalai or in the later Sritala. So the Sangattar images might have been put in at a later date from which time it has come to be known as the Sangattar temple. It is not clear to which deity, if any, the temple must have been originally dedicated.

(ii) Kariyamannikka Perumal Temple

This shrine which is to the north of the Swami Sannidhi second prakara on the northern side has at present no deity in it. No authentic information is available at present as to what became of the idols which must have once occupied this shrine and gave it its name. The shrine which faces east has a beautiful five-aisled mandapa in front running to a length of nearly 80 feet.

The sanctum presents again a rather curious mixture of types. This is an enclosed apartment with walls on all four sides, the front wall occupying the width of the central nave and two sides aisles. Thus the two end aisles form a sort of corridor or pradakshina round the central shrine. The corridors are illuminated by clerestory windows on the roof.

The central shrine could be entered through the front entrance on the east side or from the opening on the south side. A short flight of steps leads to the platform. The interior is rather a plain structure, the walls being bare without any ornamentation.

(iii) Visvanatha Shrine

As one enters through the south gopura and turns left one comes upon what is known as the Vighnesvara Mandapa adjoining the wall at the south-east corner of the Javandisvarar garden. An examination of this mandapa reveals many interesting features. This small mandapa now houses a Vighnesvara image with a few Naga images.
The Vighneshvara image is placed on an upturned capital with idol taken from some broken bulbous capital pillar. It looks as though these images have been just collected from similar stray figures in the temple and placed in recent years here.

Just at the back of the wall of this Vighnesvara mandapa is the Visvanatha shrine in the south-east corner of the garden. Entrance to this shrine is from the west colonnade of the Golden Lily Tank. The entrance is on a platform. Going into the shrine one finds four cubical pillars of an earlier type with corbels of the 14th century. The exterior of this shrine as seen from the garden reveals other early features. This medley of early and modern features presents one with a guessing game as to how the original was like or what purpose it served.

The eastern wall of the Svāmi first prakāra presents a similar puzzle. This has a number of shrines erected in front of the wall but a look inside a few of them reveals remnants of early type pilasters and niche pilasters. As the wall on which these are found is an old one and as it has a medieval Pandya inscription of the 12th-13th century the presence of these pilasters points to the existence of some early features here. However, they have been destroyed and their trace except for these pilasters is now lost.

(iv) Isvarams

The Svāmi Sannidhi second prakāra on the west side contains a number of small shrines called Isvarams; all ranged in a row close to the wall on either side of the Pālaka Gopura. There are 14 such shrines, six on the southern half and eight on the northern half of the prakāra. Each of these shrines has a garbhagriha and a chamber in front corresponding probably to an ardhamandapa. There is a linga in most of them. Between the front facade of each shrine a wall has been raised, perhaps at a later date, for security purposes. The shrines therefore must have been free standing originally.

One of the shrines (No. 8) faces south while all the rest face east. All the shrines are on a platform running the length of the wall. There is a row of cubical pillars with bevel and tenon corbel along the edge of the platform. The shrines on the southern half
are set back to the wall of the Palaka Gopura leaving a passage between the pillars of the platform and the front of the shrines themselves. But the Isvarams on the northern side of the prakara wall have their entrance flush with the edge of the platform and there is a wide space between their back walls and the wall of the Palaka Gopura on that side. Many of the shrines now have only a flat roof but a few of them appear to have once had a vimana over them. It is quite likely that the roofs of many of them were damaged some time or other and that new ceilings were put up subsequently. At present shrines Nos. 7, 8 and 12 have vimana. The vimana over shrine No. 8 is of an unusual shape. The other two vimanas are in a very dilapidated condition.

The fourth shrine and the twelfth shrine appear to be older than the rest judging from the architectural features. But it is not known when these shrines were actually built or by whom. In a general way one may say that some of them, especially shrines Nos. 4 and 12, may go back to as early as the 13th and 14th centuries. The others may not be far later, though one may find a pushpa bodigai or a kapota with later kudus on some of them. The Tiruppanimalai mentions a number of persons as having constructed several Isvarams.

It is not known whether these refer to the construction of the Isvarams on the west side. But it is curious that the number of Isvarams mentioned in the Tiruppanimalai tallies more or less with those on the western corridor if one leaves out Shrine Nos. 4 and 12 which, as stated above, appear to be older. But apart from this none of the names mentioned in the Tiruppanimalai could be identified with any

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1. Isvarams mentioned in the Tiruppanimalai:

   Tiruvambalesvaram, built by Sirimalai Sevvandi Murti Setti (verse 29); Murtisvaram and Visvisvaram, by Sevvandi Velan (verse 34); Virisvaram, Kittinivaram and Aiyankarisvaram, by Vira Krsnappa Nayaka (verse 59); Peddisvaram, by Vaiyankappavan, son-in-law of Peddan (verse 73); Velisvaram, by Sirimalai Velappa Simna Sevvandi (verse 74); Virisvaram and Kalatti-isvaram, by Ariyanayina Mudali (verse 56); Ari-isvaram, by Kalattinatha, son of Ariyanayina Mudali (verse 56) and Sevvisvaram, by Krsna Vira Nayaka (verse 53).
of the Isvarams. According to this source the Isvarams would appear to have been built in the latter half of the 16th century. This date may appear to be rather late if one considers the architectural features. As it is evident that quite a lot of restoration and renovation work has been done, it may be that it is this restoration work that the Tiruppanimālai refers to or it may also be that the persons mentioned in the Tiruppanimālai might have added the chamber or ardhamandapa in front of the garbhagriha of the Isvarams. The question, however, should remain an open one for the present.

Shrines No. 7 facing east and No. 8 facing south about each other at the corners and have a smaller mandapa common to both, in front of them. As both these shrines have vimānas also, it may perhaps indicate that the shrines were of some importance either intrinsically or because they might have been built by a royal personage. Similarly shrine No. 12 has a vimāna and in place of a mandapa has cauri bearers on the corridor pillars in front of it. This may indicate that it is also of some importance.

Shrine No. 2 has only a garbhagriha and its ardhamandapa has given place to a rather large pillared hall open to the ceiling. This area reveals the many alterations and additions so characteristic of these shrines. The kapota only of the base of the garbhagriha is visible over the floor. It shows that the base must extend below and that the platform has been raised over it. Similarly extra lengths of pillars have been placed on the garbhagriha roof to support the main ceiling of the corridor.

6. Mandapas

(i) Kambattadi Mandapa

The Madurai temple contains many mandapas and corridors and of these the Kilikatti Mandapa, the Kambattadi Mandapa, the Thousand Pillar Mandapa and the Pudu Mandapa form a famous quartette.

The Kambattadi Mandapa is also known as the Kodikkamba Mandapa, the Sundaresvarar Mandapa or the Dhvajasthamba Mandapa. It is located between the Gopura Nayaka Gopura and the Swāmi Samidhi Gopura in the second prākāra on the east.
The *mandapa* which is in the centre of the *prākāra* has a passageway on each side of it. This *mandapa* which encloses the Nandi shrine with two *dhwajastambhas* and *balipitha* has eight magnificent pillars. Each of these monolithic pillars is adorned with carvings of the twenty-four *Siva Mūrtis*. Noteworthy among the sculptures are those of Rishabhārūḍa, Rishabhāntīka, Minākshi’s marriage, Somaskanda, Kailāsārūḍa, Tripūrārī etc. Four other huge statues of Īrdhva Tāndava, Kāli, Aghora Virabhadrā and Agni Virabhadrā are to be seen in the *prākāra* on either side of the entrance of the *Gopura Nāyaka* *Gopura*. These statues which are over ten feet high are magnificent specimens of sculptural work and are strikingly impressive. A detailed account of these is given in another section elsewhere. The Nandi shrine is a singularly beautiful example of Vijayanagar style.

The Nandi is almost life size and the carving is well finished. The *vimāna* of the shrine is brightly painted with gold and variegated colours. The two *dhwajastambhas* are well proportioned and are gold plated. The ugly iron railings which are used to enclose this part of the *mandapa* is an eyesore and a mockery to the magnificent sculptural work of the pillars.

There is an air of sanctity pervading the whole of the *Kambattadi Mandapa* which is due perhaps to the large group of iconographic sculptures and the exceptionally high ceiling supported by ornamental pillars typical of the Madurai period. The central nave of the *prākāra* has two rows of cubical composite pillars richly sculptured and ornamented and a single row of polygonal pillars just inside the composite pillars on the eastern side. The nave on the southern half of the *prākāra* adjoins the Jñānasambandhar shrine while the nave on the northern side abuts the *Mandapa Nāyaka Mandapa* or the Hundred Pillar *Mandapa* as it is now known. There is a Navagraha shrine and Sattaiyappar shrine within this nave. Sattaiyappar seems to be the guardian deity or one of the *Kshetrapālas* of the temple and the keys are left in his charge every night after the temple services are over for the day. This custom is still observed by the authorities.

At the entrance through the *Sannidhi Gopura* are two gigantic *doṣṭapālakas* which are stated to be the biggest of their kind in the
The Madurai Temple. These are not grotesque like most dvārapālakas but are thoroughly dignified. These are four-handed figures, the two upper hands holding śāla and pāsa while one of the fore arms rests on the gada and the other is held in the suci or viṣṇumaya pose.

The Kambattadi Mandapa was built by Kṛṣṇa Virappa Nāyaṅa (1572-1595 A.D.) according to Tiruppani Vivaram¹; the Tiruppanimalai², the Sritala³, the Dalavāy Agraḥāram plates⁴, the Vellankudi plates⁵, the Padmaneri grant⁶, and an inscription dated S. 1505 (1584 A.D.)⁷ on one of the pillars in the Kambattadi Mandapa. The Madura District Gazetteer mentions that the Nandi Mandapa was built by Nattukottai Chettis in the seventies⁸. Cole, in his Report published in 1884 A.D.⁹, writes that the flooring of the prakāra was renewed lately as also a number of the columns. This evidently refers to the monolithic pillars erected by the Settis about 1870 A.D. This would show that even as late as 1870 A.D. stone carving was a live art and that the craftsmen maintained a high standard.

THE MANDAPA NAYAKA MANDAPA: This mandapa is in the north-east corner of the Śvāmi Sannidhi second prakāra and faces south. It is also called the Hundred Pillar Mandapa. It is

1. The Tiruppani Vivaram No. 26 gives the date of construction as S. 1494-1572 A.D.)
2. The Tiruppanimalai, verse 52, says the mandapa was built by Kṛṣṇa Virappa of Kacci. Verse 54 says he built the Virappa Mandapa before the Kodikkamba. It is not clear whether this refers to any separate mandapa. Most probably it is a reference to the Kambattadi Mandapa itself.
3. The Sritala states that the Śvāmi second prakāra east side, up to Tirunīna-sambandar Mandapa was built by Kṛṣṇa Virappa.
4. E.I. Vol. XII p. 159 ff. The plates state that Virabhuptai built a mandapa of rare sculptures in the front of the shrine of Śundara Nāyaka.
7. M.E.R. 35 of 1908. This record is in Telugu with a Tamil copy below it. It records that in S 1505 expired Virappa, the son of Viśvanatha Nayaka-Kṛṣṇappa Nayaka built the mandapa.
8. Page 270.
on a high platform to which steps lead from the Kambattadi Mandapa. It is a seven-aisled mandapa, at the end of which is Sabhāpathi temple which is built over a low adhisthāna. The Sabhāpathi temple has a large idol of Nataraja well carved in stone. In front of the shrine is a small four-pillared mandapa. The four pillars are of black polished stone and the base of the mandapa is supported by asṭa gaajas. As usual images of Patanjali and Vyāghrapāda are found in this shrine also. The mandapa with its well-spaced pillars has a reputation as one of the most beautiful in the temple. There is a frieze over the lintel at the entrance to the shrine and its small carved figures relate to the legend of Minākshi’s marriage. The Tiruppani Vivaram (No. 9) credits Cinnappan with building the mandapa about the year S. 1448 (1526 A.D.). The Tiruppanimalai adds that Mallaya Cinnappa was from Gooty (Gutti).

**JNANASAMBANDAR TEMPLE:** The southern end of the Kambattadi Mandapa leads to the Jnanasambandar shrine which is situated on the platform of the prākāra. Two elephants nearly five feet high flank the short flight of steps leading to the shrine. This mandapa is stated to have been built by Krsna Virappa Nāyaka about S. 1494 (1572 A.D.) and it is perhaps his statue and that of his minister or son that one finds on two pillars on either side of the entrance. The pillars of this mandapa are now blocked up by a wall with modern windows and doors but it could easily be seen that the mandapa at one time must have been an open one.

(ii) Kilikatti Mandapa

The Kilikatti Mandapa which is west of the Golden Lily Tank leads to the sanctum of the Amman shrine just as the Kambattadi Mandapa leads to the Svāmi sanctum. The Kilikatti Mandapa may be said to be the most ornamental of the mandapas. It is a single corridor with richly carved pillars on two sides. There are ten statues. These are the five Pāndavas, Siva as hunter, Draupati, Purushāmriga, Vāli and Sugriva. Between

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1. Verse 37. Verse 90 gives an elaborate description of the mandapa and says that it was built by Pittuccokkan, the son of Puvanamahamunivan.

some of these pillars are pillars with the usual jāli motif. Two fine sculptures of dvārapālakas are at the entrance to the sanctum from this mandapa. These have two hands only and the workmanship appears to be earlier than those of Kambattadi Mandapa. The Kilikatti Mandapa is also known as the Panca Pândava Mandapa, the Purushāmriga Mandapa or the Kottaimuthu Mandapa. Each of these names has its own reasoning. From the Tiruppanimālai it may be inferred that the mandapa was built by Tiruvambala Setti, the son of Sirāmalai Sevvandi Murti Setti, and that it was called Murti Mandapa, evidently after the name of his father. The mandapa was also known as Sangili Mandapa on account of the sangil kōḻāṭṭam performed here. Though the mandapa is sometimes referred to as the Purushāmriga Mandapa in the present day, the Tiruppani Vivaram (No. 18) and Tiruppanimālai refer to the Purushāmriga Mandapa as having been built to the south of the Sangili Mandapa by Timmappa Nayaka, one of the Vijayanagara viceroys. So the Purushāmriga Mandapa would appear to be an independent structure though it is not possible to identify it today. Quite likely it occupied the site on which the present Mutharli Mandapa stands, as the Tiruppanimālai adds that the Purushāmriga Mandapa, the Gandar Gandan Kuradu and the Gandar Gandan Toppu (garden) were built by Timmappa Nayaka. The Gandar Gandan Kuradu is said to be the high platform in front of the Visvanatha shrine west of Mutharli Mandapa. The Gandar Gandan Toppu is apparently a reference to the garden just behind the present Visvanatha shrine.

The pillars and the ceiling of the Kilikatti Mandapa are painted in brilliant colours. The ceiling paintings are a complete guide to Śrīvai iconography and refer to the various forms of Subrahmanya,

1. Verse 33.
2. The Tiruppani Vivaram (No. 14) says that the Amman Sannidhi Sangili Mandapa was built by Tiruvambala Setti in S 1484 (1562 A.D.).
3. The date is given as S 1486 (1564 A.D.)
5. Verse 25.
Ganesa, Devi etc. There is a story current that the pillars of this mandapa were originally in the Kariyamānikka Perumāl temple from where they were removed to this place. This story is perhaps based on the statements in the Sritāla. The Sritāla says in one place that Abisheka Pandaram took down the front mandapa of the Kariyamānikka Perumāl temple and re-erected it as the Sangili Mandapa in front of the Amman shrine. The Sritāla after enumerating the tiruppānis done till S. 1660 (1738 A.D.), continues with a statement which is unfortunately damaged and incomplete. It says that “Sivandi (—) built the Am (—) Sangili Mandapa after systematically taking down the Kariyamānikka Perumāl temple (—) dar̥m.” These are rather incomplete and broken statements and unless they could be corroborated by other sources one cannot vouchsafe for the story. Cole in his report says that the east wall abutting the Minākshi shrine on the west is covered with inscriptions which could be read but which is completely whitewashed. The presence of medieval inscriptions shows that this is an early wall.

(iii) Thousand Pillar Mandapa

The Thousand Pillar Mandapa is a huge edifice located in the north-east corner of the Ādi Street with its north and eastern side close to the outer walls of the temple. It occupies an area of 240 feet by 250 feet. The mandapa faces south and its entrance on that side leads to a long central nave with two rows of pillars on either side of it. The east and west wings of the mandapa are fully filled with rows of pillars of which there are 985 in the mandapa. The central nave leads to a Sabhāpathi shrine which is over two stages of platforms. The shrine contains a large image of Nataraja showing him dancing on top of a large Kurma Pitha. Yāli pillars flank the approaches of the shrine. The shrine wall is a modern fixture and very likely the shrine was not enclosed by walls in earlier times.

There is a beautiful linga shrine on the eastern wing with finely worked details on its structural members. The jaladvāra especially is a finely sculptured piece showing two mythical beasts.

The shrine is in disuse and probably has remained so for years past. It houses a linga and a goddess whose image lies broken.

The pillars in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa are beautifully sculptured with iconographic figures. The sculpturing is in a class by itself and one could easily notice the difference between them and the other sculptures elsewhere in the temple. They reveal a wonderful sense of form and line. The group of figures on two rows of pillars at the entrance are each one a masterpiece by itself. The carvings on the first row of pillars are Angam Vettina Siva, Kannappar, Kankalamurti, Aryanatha Mudali, Harischandra, Chandramati, Kuratti and Kuravan. On the second row of pillars are the following: Pandya Raja, Tripura Rá, Ganesa, dvadála, Subrahmanya, Nágara and Sarasvati. On the central row of pillars are other fine sculptures of which the following are worth mentioning: Kali age, Draupati, Vedan, Rati, Mamata, Aghora Virabhadra, Mohini and Bishátanar. On some of the plain pillars number of legendary and iconographic figures in low relief are carved on the facets.

The compound pillars have bracketed gryphons and corbels extending from the main shaft. This combination of bracketed beam is architecturally well composed and is a good example of pillars with foliated brackets spreading out like a tree. The base of the mandapa on the western side has a frieze of panels depicting scenes from the legends in low relief.

The Thousand Pillar Mandapa is reported to have been built by Ariyanatha Mudali, the great general and minister of the first four Náyaka rulers of Madurai. An equestrian statue of Ariyanatha Mudali is on one of the front pillars. The Tiruppán Vimánam (No. 26) and the Tiruppánimalai state that the mandapa was built by Krishna Virappa Náyaka and the former gives the date as 1572 A.D. The mandapa was evidently built by Ariyanatha Mudali during the reign of Krishna Virappa Náyaka.

2. Verse 54.
(iv) Pudu Mandapa

One of the most publicised edifices in the Madurai temple is the *Pudu Mandapa* built by Tirumala Nayaka\(^1\) between 1626 and 1633 A.D. This is a large corridor measuring 330 feet by 105 feet and is axially in front of the east *gopura*. Along the length of it is a central nave with an aisle on either side of it provided by four rows of pillars. The *mandapa* belongs to the Madurai period of architecture and has all the four styles of pillars, the decorative compound type, the *jual* type, the iconographic type and the portrait type pillars. The whole *mandapa* is the high watermark of mediaeval building craft. At the western end, that is, at the end next to the east *gopura*, there is a platform with a canopy supported by a number of polished black stone pillars. This canopied *mandapa* is known as the *Vasanta Mandapa* to which the images of Minakshi and Sundaresvara are brought on certain festival occasions. Ten statues of Nayaka rulers of Madurai from Visvanatha to Tirumala Nayaka are on five pillars on either side in the centre of the nave. Equestrian and *jual* pillars are on the outer pillars at the entrance on the east and west side. These areas have also many pillars with iconographic figures details of which are given in the section on Iconographic sculptures (Chapter X, Section c). The whole corridor is a very imposing structure revealing very good planning and excellent execution.

(v) Ashtasakti Mandapa

One of the most beautiful of entrances to the Madurai temple is the *Ashtasakti Mandapa* which is axially in a line with the Minakshi shrine. This *mandapa* is actually the main entrance to the temple in the present day. Its frontage is formed of a high portal with a large tower over it and two smaller towers on either side of it on top of the two side walls. Two stucco figures of Ganesa and Shanmukha are on the upper level on the side walls. Photographs taken about a hundred years back do not show these stucco figures. These and other changes in the stucco decorations of the entrance should therefore have been made within the last hundred years.

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1. *Tiruppanimālai*, verse 80; Sritāla.
Proceeding inside one finds a colonnade of two rows of pillars over which is an arched roof. The front row of pillars have the figures of the eight Ashtasaktis after whom the \textit{mandapa} is named. On four of the second row of pillars on either side there are four statues of Nāyaka rulers. Behind this second row of pillars are shops dealing in a variety of articles. Panels of stucco figures with painted background are now in the clerestory that was once below the arched roof. The ceiling of the roof is decorated with floral designs enclosing five \textit{yantra} designs peculiar to Devi. At the western end are two fine stone figures of Mahā Ganapati and Shanmukha and these perhaps served as the model for the stucco figures on the front walls of the entrance. The \textit{Sritāla} states that the \textit{Ashtasakti Mandapa} was built by a chamber maid of Rudrapati, a lady of Tirumala Nāyakar's harem.

\textit{(vi) Minor Mandapas}

Among the lesser known \textit{mandapas} are the Vira Vasantarāya Mandapa, the Minākshi Nāyaka Mandapa, and the Mudali Mandapa. The Vira Vasantarāya Mandapa is immediately to the west of the east \textit{gopura} and is almost as long as the \textit{Pudu Mandapa} which is on the other side of the east \textit{gopura}. The Vira Vasantarāya Mandapa has a long central nave and an aisle on each side of it and its tall and slender compound pillars which are variously patterned support a high ceiling which is roofed with long slabs. At the entrance to the \textit{mandapa} on the eastern side are the figures of Rudra, Rudrakāli, Kali age (?) and Kālaharamūrti sculptured on pillars. On the ceiling is a large carved panel with dancing gures and lotus medallions. According to the \textit{Tiruppati Vivaram} (No. 32) Muttu Virappa, the brother of Tirumala Nāyaka, is reputed to have built this \textit{mandapa} in S. 1533 (1611 A.D.).

\textbf{THE MINĀKSHI NĀYAKA MANDAPA:} The Minākshī Nāyaka Mandapa which leads to the Amman shrine is between the \textit{Citra Gopura} and the \textit{Ashtasakti Mandapa}. It has six rows of pillars forming a central nave and two aisles on either side. The central nave

1. The \textit{Tiruppanimālai} (v. 83) calls this \textit{mandapa} as the "Toli Ammāl Arai".
2. \textit{Tiruppanimālai} (v. 75) and the \textit{Sritāla} also mention Muttu Virappa as the builder of this \textit{mandapa}. 
is more than 20 feet broad. The pillars are of the square compound type as in other structures in Madurai with a bracketed capital above composed of lions and Madurai corbels with connecting beams. The pillar shafts have delicately carved floral designs. At the western end is a huge tîruvāsi. The present tîruvāsi is a modern one which replaced an older one said to have been donated by Samukam Minākshi Nayakar, son of Tiruvenkadamb. At the entrance to the mandaṇa on the east are two figures of a Vedan and his wife carved on two pillars. They probably represent Isvara and His Devi in this form. The two figures are almost in a similar attitude and are well sculptured with less idealism in their features. On one of the pillars in the central nave is a diminutive figure of Minākshi Amman as she was before she met her future consort Sundaresvara in the course of her dignijaya. It is not a very good piece of work but it gets interest as a representation, of Minākshi in this form within the temple itself. There is, however, a large sculpture of this in the Pudu Mandaṇa. The ceiling of the central nave has a large carving of a rāsi chakra. It is generally thought that Minākshi Nayaka², one of the minister of Tirumalai Nayaka, built this mandaṇa.

**Mudali Pillai Mandapa:** Mudali Pillai Mandapa which lies between the Chitra Gopura and the north-east corner of the Golden Lily Tank is popularly known as the Dark Mandaṇa for it is enclosed by walls and very little light reaches it. It contains six sculptured pillars of which five relate to the Bhikshātana Mohini legend and the sixth pillar has a portrait of the donor probably.

The Tiruppani Vivaram (No. 33)³ and Tiruppanimālai⁴ refer to one Kadandai Mudali (who is the same as the Kālattiyappa Mudali referred to in Sritāla⁵) as the builder and who is also stated to have erected the Chitra Gopura.

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1. Tiruppani Vivaram, No. 34.
2. Tiruppani Vivaram (No. 34) states that the mandaṇa was built in S 1630 (1708 A.D.); The Tiruppanimālai and the Sritāla also say that Samugam Minākshi Nayaka was the builder.
3. The date of construction is given as S 1535 (1613 A.D.)
4. Verse 62
5. The Sritāla also refers to him as Sāmāsigam Mudaliyappan.
THE SERVAIKAR MANDAPA, Mutturama Aiyar Mandapa, Kalyanasundara Mudaliyar Mandapa and Subbarayar Mandapa are a group of modern structures close to one another in the court between the Vira Vasantaraya Mandapa and the Minakshi Nayaka Mandapa. Though these do not look as opulent as the larger mandapas, they have a singular grace of their own with their tall and slender pillars and simple corbels. The bracketed corbel, especially of the Servaiyar Mandapa, is worth noticing. It is so unlike the heavy, massive corbels of the other mandapas that the difference strikes one immediately.

Three mandapas in the Adi Street corners, for instance, the Arumutta Mudali mandapa in the south-east corner built in S. 1681 (1760 A.D.), the Tummacci Nayaka mandapa in the south-west and the Tattu Surru mandapa in the north-east by Venkatatesvara Mudali are worth mentioning. Further details about these structures are not known.

The earliest among these small mandapas appears to be what is now called Peccakkal Mandapa which is in front of the Gopura Nayaka Gopura. According to the Sritala this was built by Pecciyakkā, a woman who supplied dairy products to the temple and who financed Pittu Sokku Pandaram for this purpose. According to the Tiruppani Vivaram (No. 36) the date of its construction would be about S. 1580 (1658 A.D.)

THE KALYANA MANDAPA: The Kalyana Mandapa abuts the eastern wall of the Svami Sannidhi second prakāra. It was originally an open mandapa, but at present it is enclosed by walls on all sides except the east. It has foliated arches. The side walls of the north and south carry two huge paintings of the “Two Worlds” according to Hindu cosmology. In the centre of the mandapa is a large platform with polished black stone pillars and a canopy fully covered with wood carvings of a very high order. The mandapa

1. Tiruppani Vivaram No. 40, says that it was built by Marudappa Servaiyar.
2. Tiruppani Vivaram (No. 38); Tiruppanimalai verse 105.
3. Tiruppani Vivaram, (No. 37) gives the date S 1680 (1758 A.D.).
4. Ibid, (No. 39) says that it was built in S 1694 (1772 A.D.). Fergusson also says that the Tatta Saddhi was built in 1770 A.D. (History of Indian and Eastern Architecture, Vol. I, p. 392).
is reputed to have been built by Vijayaranga Chokkanātha Nāyaka's whose crudely sculptured statue is on a pillar in front of the platform. The important festival relating to Minākshi Sundareswara's marriage takes place here annually. A stone relief of Gundodharā is on one of the side walls and is reported to have been brought here from the Annakkuli Mandapa. A timbered hall has been erected in front of this mandapa by the Nattukkottai Chettiar in recent years. This hall with its timber roofing and beautifully wrought wooden beams is the only structure of its kind in the whole of the temple and is a good specimen of modern craftsmanship.

ANNAKKULI MANDAPA: Scattered about in the environs of the temple are a number of mandapas and shrines. The Annakkuli Mandapa which is just west of the west gopura is the most attractive of these. This mandapa is actually a series of four mandapas one behind the other. There are four large stone elephants at the entrance. These are similar to the two elephants in front of the Jñānasambandar temple in the Svāmi Sannidhi second prakāra. A modern wall has been put up between the pillars on the front of this mandapa. At present the mandapa houses an elementary school. The third mandapa behind has four jāli pillars. The jālis are short and thin and similar to those on some of the pillars in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa. On the central pillars on the northern and southern sides are two figures of Brahmā and Vishnu. Between these pillars is a long platform of black polished stone while in the north-east corner is another small platform.

In the fourth or last mandapa are eight beautifully carved monolithic compound pillars. On the southern side from east to west are the figures of a caurī bearer, Pāndya king, Vyāghrapāda and Brahmā. On the northern side similarly from east to west are a queen, king, Patanjali and Vishnu. This assemblage leaves one in no doubt that the mandapa had some important part to play with the legend of Minākshi-Sundareswarar's marriage. It is known that Vishnu gave away the bride on the occasion and that Brahmā performed the marriage homa, that

1. Sritāla; The Tiruppani pīvaram (No. 35) says that it was built in S 1633 (1711 A.D.); gives the date as 1707 A.D. (History of Indian & Eastern Architecture Vol. I, p. 392.)
Patanjali and Vyāghrapāda who attended the wedding were the principal personsages for whose benefit Siva once again performed the Ānanda Tāndava as at Chidambaram in the Rajata Sabha in the temple. The two figures who look like a king and queen are perhaps Himavat and Menaka, the parents of the goddess. The figure of the Pandya king is probably that of Sundaresvara Himself. The cauri bearer who is on the pillar facing that of the queen is perhaps the queen’s attendant.

All the sculptures are visible only from the waist upwards as the part below is filled with sand. It is a pity that such beautiful work should be hidden in this manner. The sculptures have a distinct character of their own and there is nothing corresponding to their style in the Madurai temple. They are probably the work of one master. The characterisation and the modelling of the figures are admirable. The costume and jewellery are well handled without over-emphasis. One peculiarity that strikes an observer is that the figures do not look Tamilian as earlier sculptures or Telugu as the later Nāyaka sculptures. They have a personality of their own which one must say is the gift of the craftsman who created them. The simple coiffure and diaphanous drapery of the cauri bearer contrast very well with the bejewelled head and rich garments of the queen who stands opposite to her. The manner in which the gossamer substance of the cauri bearer’s saree is rendered is astonishing. All the figures and especially Vyāghrapāda and Patanjali look happy and pleased as they had every reason to be on the festive occasion for which they had all gathered as guests.

The figure of the Pandya king is similar to those of the same figure on the Pāndiyan Paditturai of the Golden Lily Tank and to another figure in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa. The headgear and the necklaces are almost similar to all these figures. Also one finds that in all these three sculptures the right hand holds a lotus bud. This may be the legendary Pāndya king who is reputed to have built the original temple. Excepting the figures of the gods, Brahmā and Vishnu, Pāndya rāja and the attendant cauri bearer, all the other figures have anjali hastas. Most of the figures are mutilated in parts of their limbs.
According to the Tiruppanimalai, Chellappan alias Tirumalai Manikkam is reputed to have built this mandapa in about 1563 A.D. As there are four mandapas here, it is not known which of these is referred to.

**NAGARA MANDAPA**: Facing the Ashtasakti Mandapa is the Nagarā Mandapa or Accaya Mandapa which Kāmāttam Accayarayan, a minister of Mangammāl, is stated to have built. This mandapa which was used for storing the vāhānas, contains a much white-washed statue of Rāni Mangammāl with her grandson, similar to the one in Tirupparankunram, one of the pillars near the entrance.

**B. TEMPLE ORNAMENTATION**

The Hindu temple has to be embellished with ornamentation on almost every part of it as prescribed in the Silpa Sāstras. The temple is thus a complete unification of architectural skill and artistic beauty. According to these sāstras the bases, walls, superstructures, doorways and ceilings of gopuras and garbhagrihas have to be ornamented each with its particular type of decoration. The various mouldings of the upāpitha and adhishṭhāna, the pillars, pilasters, kumbha-pancaras and devakoshtas on the wall surfaces, the karna-kudus, pancarams and sālais on the superstructure and finally the vimāna and its stupis are fully described in the sāstras for the various classes of temple structures. "The Hindu builders never contemplated with satisfaction a building which is divorced from ornament and ornament enters into the very essence of composition". From these one could understand what a large part ornament plays in temple construction. While the general method of temple construction has remained almost the same, the style of its ornamentation has undergone subtle evolutionary changes in the different periods. A study of the important part that the different styles of ornament have played in the evolution of Dravidian architecture is necessary for dating of the buildings. "The history of the architecture of Southern India reduces itself to the history of ornamentation."4

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1. Verse 16.
2. Tiruppanimalai, Verse 96; Sritāla.
3. N. V. Mallaya Tantras; munaya p., 177.
The Hindu temple was not a display of constructional methods. While these were kept in mind they were subordinated to the final appearance of the outer surface as laid down in the śāstras. This does not mean that “the Hindus were not architects. Sculpture was never thought of as a mural decoration but as an integral part of the wall itself, in high or low relief, it accentuates the architectural line without ever damaging it”.

The Madurai temple is an outstanding example of Dravidian architecture as it reached its climax. This vast mass of shrines mandapas, corridors, and gopuras is fully ornamented, the decorations sometimes being in such abundance that no part of the architectural surface underneath is visible. “The great Hindu pagoda with its picturesque gateways and pillared halls produces a grand effect whilst the deeply cut sculptures thrown into strong relief by brilliant sunlight are unsurpassed for variety and elaboration”\(^2\).

Next to its tall gopuras the most interesting feature of the Maduras temple are the pillars of which there are literally thousands. These pillars could be classified into four broad divisions, namely, a simple cubical pillar with or without an attached column; cubical pillars with yālīs or horses substituted in place of the attached column; pillars with iconographic or mythological sculptures; and lastly pillars with portrait statues\(^3\). The compound cubical pillar is fully ornamented exhibiting a high degree of creative designing. The yālī pillars reveal the most fanciful creations. The iconographic sculptures are a synthesis of art and religion, of legend and philosophy while the portrait sculptures show the Indian craftsman’s power of characterisation.

**WOOD CARVINGS:** The ornamental yālī sculptured stone pillars of the Madurai temple exhibit the patience and skill expended

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3. The plain or composite pillars are referred to at different places describing the shrines or mandapas. The pillars with iconographic or mythological figures, are described in the notes relating to *Kambattadi*, the Thousand Pillar and the Pudu mandapas. Pillars with portrait statues are dealt with in the section on Portrait Sculptures.
on these intricately carved and highly finished monolithic piers. They have won praise even from hostile critics, but it is not so well known that the Madurai temple contains some fine specimens of wood carvings, most of which survive at present only on a few doors of different gopuras and in a solitary mandapa. Owing to the nature of the material many specimens of wood carving that must have existed once must have perished and lost for ever. One great piece of wood carving fortunately still exists and this is the door of the eastern gopura. Only one leaf of this huge door is now in its place. The other leaf is kept in an adjoining chamber, access to which is not easy. This huge door is in a rather decayed state. However, one could see how glorious it must have looked in its original state when it was freshly covered and painted. It would be desirable that this old specimen of wood carved and its companion piece could be safeguarded from the ravages of weather and decay before it is entirely lost to posterity.

The Amman Sannidhi gopura has its two doors richly carved and ornamented and most of these carvings are in a better state of preservation. The cross battens are carved with scroll work with ornamental nails fixed at the crossing points. The panels within the framework have carved figures in high relief. These figures appear to have been carved separately and inserted in their places in the door afterwards. Two small ornamental pillars, also carved in wood, are inserted on either side of each figure. This was perhaps done to prevent the carved panel from falling out. However, it gives the whole an appearance of a mandapa with the idol or other figure in its centre. There are 66 panels but six panels on the wicket door are plain. Perhaps the wicket door itself is a late addition.

A similar specimen to that of the Amman Sannidhi gopura door could be seen at the Nadu Kattu Gopura just to the north of it. This door has 72 panels and the carvings on the battens and the panels are in the same manner as those of the Amman Sannidhi door.

One of the chambers in the Radaka Gopura has a smaller door which is very richly carved and ornamented. Its battens carry an all-over pattern and its nails are well finished. The panels are
filled with carvings of lotuses which, however, differ from one another in small details, a fact which could be noticed only if one looks for it. Otherwise the flowers appear to be all alike. This door, owing to its secluded location, is in a very good state of preservation.

The Kalyāna Mandapa in the Madurai temple has a canopy which is the delight of wood carvers. Although modern, it can hold its own with any older specimen. Its multi-foliated corbels, its richly carved and panelled beams, its beautiful lotuses with central pendants and its carved wooden panels require minutest examination before one could see and appreciate all the wealth of detail that has been put into this diminutive structure. The structural form of its ceiling recalls the stone work of the Kilikatti Mandapa and shows that in India the stone mason and the wood carver drew their inspiration from each other.

The Kalyāna Mandapa has another specimen of wood craft. In front of its old mandapa a new hall with a nave and an aisle on each side with timber roofing has been erected in recent years by Nāttukottai Settis.

CEILINGS: Temple ceilings are usually painted with iconographic or legendary subjects as in the Kilikatti Mandapa or with ornamental motifs as in the Chitra Mandapa round the Golden Lily Tank, but the stone ceilings in some of the mandapas have carved panellings. These are not executed just for decorative purposes but follow certain canons of the Silpa Sāstras. Most of these are known as Rāsi Chakras and have the twelve signs of the Hindu zodiac. Many such chakras are to be seen on the ceilings in the Madurai temple. In the Pidu Mandapa itself three such large carvings could be seen in the central nave. One of these is in the middle almost opposite Tirumala Nāyaka's statue. It shows a plot divided into 49 squares with the Brahmasṭhānam occupying the central twenty-five squares. The eight dikpālas, aṣṭāṅgas and aṣṭa rihis occupy the twenty-four squares surrounding the Brahmasṭhānam. The Bhāmasṭhānam has a large figure carved on it but so far it has not been possible to identify this figure. The figure has a hanging jatā, has a moustache and protruding teeth. It has vajnopavaīta and udarabhandā and is seated with feet touching each other and the hands resting on the thighs. On its body are carved several mystic yantras and lingas.
Thus over the feet is a linga and in the abdomen is a segment with another linga and over that a triangle with a linga. Above the triangle is a shatkona with a dancing Natarāja. On the forehead is another linga. Surya and Chandra each carved in a medallion are on the two sides of the head. Above Surya and Chandra are two heavenly rishis each riding a cloud. Between the head and the outer row of squares is a longish panel illustrating evidently the Madurai legend, for it shows the Alavāy snake with Minākshi Amman on the left, Lord Sundaresvarar within a shrine supported by the ashtagajas in the centre and the kadamba tree on the right. The area round this big panel is in an unfinished state. It is a border representing a river or water course with many kinds of fishes, crabs, shells and conches. The western side is partly carved but the other side contain only the preliminary drawing for purposes of carving.

A similar panel could be seen on the ceiling of the Āsthāna Mandāpu at the Tirupparankunram temple. It shows that the plot is divided into sixtyfour squares, the Brahmasthānam occupying is thrty-six squares. The twentyeight surrounding squares are filled with carvings of various animals. The centre panel representing the Brahmasthānam is almost identical with that in the Pudu Mandāpa.

The Minākṣi Nayaka Mandāpa has a more decoratively carved Rāsi Chakra panel. The border squares have the signs of the zodiac carved on them. The centre contains a beautifully carved seated Devi figure with signa in a lotus medallion. A similarly carved Rasi Chakra but with a carving of a seated figure as in the Pudu Mandāpa is in the Muthurama Aiyar Mandāpa. These two panels are smaller in size.

In the Vira Vasantaraya Mandāpa is a panel of nine squares, the eight outer squares each containing a dancing figure. All these figures form one group of kolāttam dancers and the carvings show good action. Unfortunately the carvings are rather mutilated and damaged. It is a pity that electric wiring and pendant blocks have been used indiscriminately on many of these ceiling panels without any regard to their beauty or their importance.

The Thousand Pillar Mandāpa contains a large carving of fortyfour panels which contain not only the zodiacal signs but
also many representations of gods and goddesses and of some important legends, like that of Kannappar, Mānikkavaḷaka Sambandar, and Siddhar. A numbered key drawing is attached which would make the location of the panels easy.

An exquisite piece of stone carving is found in the Kūdal Alagar temple at Madurai. It is a pierced stone window of an intertwined creeper with flower buds, human figures and animal filling the inner spaces. The whole of this foliated niche starts from a base on which Krishna and His two consorts are carved with great care and attention even to minute details. The work on such a small scale is really to be admired.

**PAINTINGS:** The Madurai temple cannot boast of any old frescoes but it does contain quite a large collection of paintings of a legendary or decorative character which are very interesting and instructive provided one does not mind their age or their artistic merits. As the temple centres round the 64 īlās of Sundaresvara it is but natural that one finds wherever one turns some illustration or other of the legends of the Tiruvillaiyādal Purāṇa. In stuccos on the gopuras, in sculptures on the pillars and in paintings on the walls, the mason, the sculptor and the painter have vied with one another in depicting the Lord’s īlās.

The paintings on the walls of the Chitra Mandapa round the Golden Lily Tank have won wide fame from remote times. These panels completely illustrate all the īlās of Sundaresvara as narrated in the Tiruvillaiyādal Purāṇa. As each īla is depicted in detail one could follow the story step by step almost like a cinematographic film. The paintings which one sees today are very recent work having been done about the beginning of this century. They are painted on wooden panels which are fixed to the walls. The older paintings were done directly on the walls in the usual tempera colours but even these paintings were not probably of great age as various authorities have reported that the paintings were renewed frequently. Through chinks in the wooden panels these older painting on the wall surface still remains and that the modern wood panel paintings have been fixed over them. It is quite likely if one of these modern panels is removed one may be able to see
the older painting still underneath it. Some of the old photographs probably represent these older paintings but as the photographs are not colour-correct one could not judge them properly. The whole series of 64 lilas are also carved in small wooden panels in the Kalyana Mandapa.

Perhaps the oldest fragments of painting existing in the temple are the large panels close to the ceiling on the southern wall of the Svami Sannidhi second prakara near the Nadukkattu Gopura. There are about three and a half panels. The rest of the paintings have disappeared. Even these panels that are seen today are in a very bad state with large areas worn out and much of the painted surface spoiled by splashes of whitewash. Enough remains to help us understand what these paintings represent. The first one and a half panels represent Minakshi’s marriage and the next panel represents Sundaresvara with Manonmani and Minakshi. Part of the paintings representing the marriage scene is covered over and later figures probably of a Nāyaka ruler and his ministers are introduced. The half panel on the right depicts a gathering of women (goddesses) at the wedding ceremony. Part of two figures in the front are covered over with a background colour from their waist down. Two figures wearing dhoti and turban with rudraksha necklace and armlets are seen with anjali hastas within this framework. They are probably two of the sthānikas. That this framework with its background colour and two figures is a later addition could be easily seen as traces of the original painting are visible where the background colour has fallen off. In the larger panel which shows Vishnu giving away the bride to Lord Sundaresvara a similar gathering appears but this group is of men (gods) only. The bottom portion of this group from the waist down of the men is covered by a coat of paint over which five figures are painted. The figure on the extreme left appears to have in his hand a crown. The next figure in anjali pose represents perhaps the Nāyaka ruler himself. The next two other figures are in court dress of the period and perhaps represent the Dalavāy and the minister. The last figure again is perhaps that of another sthānika. This scene probably represents the annual mudisupal ceremony at the temple which Tirumala Nāyaka inaugurated for the first time. A description of the ceremony is given elsewhere. This wall painting shows Tirumala Nāyaka himself partici
pating in the ceremony. If so, one can date this painting from Tirumala Nāyaka’s own days, especially as there is no evidence that it has been renewed or restored subsequently. The painting becomes a contemporary record and so is of great value. As this nudisudal scene is an over-painting on an underlying earlier work, the scene depicting Minākshi’s marriage, therefore, must be considered to belong to an earlier period, perhaps of the 15th or 16th century. The style of painting also corresponds to work of that period. The same period should be assigned to the painting of Minākshi and Sundaresvara in the next large panel.

A much smoke-laden series of paintings depicting all the Periya Purāṇa stories is in the first prākāra of the Amman Sannidhi. These may be as old or a little later than the fragmentary painting on the southern wall of the Svāmi Sannidhi second prākāra. This is in any case older than the wood panel paintings in the Citra Mandapa in the Golden Lily Tank. One could see mediaeval Pandya inscriptions on the wall in the places where these paintings have peeled off.

THE TWO WORLDS: On the north and south walls of the Kalyāṇa Mandapa are two large paintings of the Two Worlds according to Hindu Cosmology. These two circles which are about six feet in diameter are well executed but badly damaged. They are of local interest also as the Pandya Kingdom and the Malayaparvata (Podiya hills) are mentioned in this ancient classification of Bhārata Varsha. A number of identifying names are given but as most of these are worn out and as the painting is high on the wall it was difficult to get much help from these names. It is well known that existing texts dealing with this subject are corrupt and imperfect. Other ancient nations and religions have their own theories about cosmography which is receiving increased attention from scientists today. It would be useful if this old painting could be carefully restored and preserved.

The Ashtasakti Mandapa and the Kilikatti Mandapa have two modern paintings which are probably based on older works relating to the Tantric concept of the Goddess. In the Ashtasakti Mandapa the Goddess is shown in the central prabhāvali standing to the right of Lord Sundaresvara and Manonmanī who are seated
on a pitha with puja dharaṇya in front. Below the prabhāvali is a yantra. The prabhāvali is supported by lions. On the right of the prabhāval is Minākshi mounted on a Rishabha while on the left are Minākshi-Sundaresvara in the aspect of Rishabhāruda. In a panel below are Kāmadhenu, Padmanidhi, Gajalakshmi, Sankhanidhi and Cintāmāni. In the architrave of this mandapa are stucco figures showing the birth of Minākshi, her coronation, her rule as queen, her meeting with Sundaresvara, their marriage and their rule, the birth of Ugrapāndya and the investment of Ugrapāndya with weapons. There are some paintings of yantras described as Aśvārūdham, Śyāmalai, Tripurasundari, Vālāparamesvari and Ādīgauri.

The painting in the Kilikatti Mandapa shows Minākshi-Sundaresvara seated on a swing within two enclosures which are described as the Manidvīpaṃ where the Ambika dwells. On the two side panels there are Padmanidhi and Sankhanidhi, Kāmadhenu, Kalpaka Vriksha and Cintāmāni.

**JEWELS:** The Madurai temple is very rich in jewels used for the God and Goddess on different festival occasions. Some of the pieces date back to Tirumala Nāyaka’s time or even earlier, but most of the more ancient jewels have been lost through pillage and plunder during the troubulous times of the mediaeval period. Some of the older jewels have of course been renewed or restored from time to time. Variety of kritis, coiffures and chignons, all set with various gems and pearls on a gold backing, delight the eye of the spectator. Pearl and gold kavacās are other important items besides the usual head ornaments, makara kandis, padakkams, necklaces and pearl hānas. Jewelled symbols for God and Amman form a major part of the collection.

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1. Among the jewels is a gem-studded stirrup presented by Rous Peter, a Collector in Madurai during the early years of the 19th century. Another article which, though not a jewel, is still of some interest is a large silver vessel measuring 30 inches high and 24 inches in diameter with an inscription reading “Presented by Messrs. Katz Bros., owners of ‘SS Meanatchy’ to the temple of the Madura Meanatchy Ummen in token of the satisfaction and pleasure experienced in dealing with the merchants of Southern India and in appreciation of the name given by them to the steamer.” An inscription in Tamil is also engraved on this vessel.
A large pearl canopy measuring about six feet square is an exquisite specimen of Indian needlecraft. This precious piece of velvet has its large central panel worked entirely in pearls. Surrounding this panel are five borders variously worked in gold and silver threads. The outermost border is a narrow one with a scallop motif. The next border has an embroidered floral creeper design worked in silk thread. The third border has hansa motifs worked in gold and silver threads with outlines in pearls. The fourth border has lions and winged kinnaras with creeper ornament in the intervening spaces. This border is intricately worked in silk and silver threads. The fifth border has the design of parrots worked into a floral design. This border is entirely in pearls. The large centre panel has a lotus medallion in the middle surrounding which is a circle of parrots. The corners are filled with leoglyphs and other mythical beasts and figures which are perhaps creations of the artist's fancy. This entire panel is worked in pearls. The designs are so drawn that each enclosing border stands out and the entire canopy presents a very pleasing combination of design and workmanship. This historic and valuable specimen of a not too common Indian craft needs to be preserved more carefully.

Vahanas: As the Madurai temple celebrates one festival or other in all the months of the year there are a large number of vahanas for the God and Goddess. Most of the vahanas are silver or gold plated and are large and heavy. Many of them are very good specimens of craftsmanship. The Rishabha vahana of the Madurai temple is a famed one, but artistically one of the best is the horse vahana. The horse is well proportioned and its trappings richly ornamented. The kariuritha vahana which represents the Gajasura legend is a highly conventionalised form ingeniously worked into the shape of the prabhavali. The Bhuta vahana is another good piece of workmanship very spirited for all its massiveness.

C. ICONOGRAPHIC SCULPTURES

The great wealth of iconographic images found in the Madurai temple is helpful for a study of Hindu mythology. It is doubtful whether any other temple in South India has the same multitude of carvings, stuccos, and paintings of gods and goddesses as the Madurai temple possesses. "The one mahaitya that has contributed very
largely to the multiplication of images of Siva is the Hālāśya Māhātya or the one pertaining to God Siva at Madura, the capital of the Pāṇḍyas." It is no wonder then that the Minākshi-Sundaresvara temple and its neighbourhood should be intimately connected with the many Siva murthams of the āgamas and of the Siva lilas in the purāṇas. Some particular edifices are well known for the iconographic sculptures on their pillars: for instance, the Kambattadi Mandapa and the Thousand Pillar Mandapa. The Pudu Mandapa has iconographic and mythological sculptures as well as portraits of Nāyakas. Many of the gopuras contain stuccos relating to the Saiva pantheon and purāṇas.

The Kambattadi Mandapa being situated just in front of Śvāmi Sannidhi and containing as it does the Nandi Mandapa and the dvajastambhas, naturally has all its sculptures relating only to Siva murthams. Going round the pillars of the mandapa in a pradakšīna the first one on the pillar on the left is the well-known Minākshi-Sundaresvara marriage group. The sculpturing, though done as late as 1870, is a magnificent piece of Hindu craftsmanship and is in some ways better than a similar sculpture in the Pudu Mandapa which, of course, must have been done during Tirumala Nāyaka's days. This scene shows Siva standing on the right with his right hand just holding Minākshi's right hand while Vishnu on the left is pouring the kāṇnikiśāna water out of a pot. Behind the wedding group is sculptured a beautiful decorative tree. This is perhaps the karpaga viśkha presented to Minākshi by Indra during her dīvijaya. The expression on the three principal parties to the happy event is most beautifully rendered and one must note especially the shy face of Minākshi which has yet an expressive smile. Below the group is Brāhma performing the marriage homa while two ladies are busy with the ājya pātrās. Making due allowance for the spatial limitation imposed by the pillar, it could be seen that the sculpturing follows the āgama details closely.

On the same pillar is Tripurāri on the southern face, a devī on the western face and Somasundara on the northern face.

TRIPURANTAKAMURTI: There are a number of sculptures relating to Tripurāntakamurtri in the temple. An identical sculpture like the one in the Kambattadi Mandapa just referred to is in the Pudu Mandapa. Two other forms of Tripurāntaka, one in the Pudu Mandapa and another in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa, are also to be seen. The image refers to the destruction by Mahādeva of the three sons of Tārakāsura. Though the story is given in the Karna Parva of the Mahābhārata, it is stated to be based on much older accounts in the Samhitās and Brāhmaṇas. No less than eight forms of Tripurāntakamurtri are described. The sculpture in the Kambattad Mandapa shows Śiva as driving a chariot. His right foot rests on a part of the chariot and the left leg is planted in the front. Brahmā is the charioteer. Vishnu is the arrow, Agni its barb, Yama its feather, the Vedas make the bow and Śāvitri its bow-string. The Pudu Mandapa statue is better posed and has more action, its ornamental details are more carefully finished than that in the Kambattadi, but unfortunately parts of the sculpture are mutilated. Another beautifully sculptured Tripurāri is also in the Pudu Mandapa. Though the image is in the same pose there is no chariot and the God is mounted only on a pitha. There is a Ganeśa figure just below the Gcc. As a sculpture of Minākshī on her digvijaya is on a pillar just opposite, this image may perhaps be Śiva as He met her on the occasion. The most beautiful of these Tripurāntakamurtis is the one in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa between the figures of Ganeśa and Pāndyarāja. It is one of the most carefully executed sculptures. The whole figure looks more like a goldsmith's work rather than a stone mason's. Its vigour and expression are remarkable. It is full of life. The arrow-head has the figure of Vishnu very intricately carved on such a small scale. Luckily this piece has escaped with only minor damages.

SOMASUNDARA: The label describes this as Somasundara, but evidently it is Umāsahitamurti. The image of Śiva is in the same form as described for Sukhāsanamurti and the Devi is seated on the left of the same seat facing Śiva. Her right leg is bent and the left leg hangs over the seat. The Umāsahitamurti on this pillar may perhaps be taken to represent the form in which

Siva and Parvati gave darshan to their devotees after their marriage, which event is also figured on the same pier.

SUKHASANA: The next pillar in the Kambattadi Mandapa has Sukhasana, Markandeya and Kalaharamurti images. The image which is labelled Sukhasana shows Siva with the Devi on His left. His front hands are in the abhaya and varada pose, His back right hand holds what appears to be an akshamala while his left back hand holds a sula. Siva’s right leg hangs in front of the seat. Devi has two hands. In the right hand she holds a flower, the left hand is placed on the pitha. Devi’s left leg is hanging over the seat. Also Siva’s left leg is resting on the right leg of the Devi. Perhaps this image is a form of Umamahesvaramurti.

KALAHARAMURTI: This image refers to the well-known Markandeya legend when Lord Siva saved His young and ardent devotee Markandeya from the god of death, Yama. The image in the Kambattadi Mandapa shows Siva vanquishing Kala or Yama. In His back right hand Siva holds sula pointing down, the other right hand holds the axe. His back left hand has the marga and the front left hand has the skull. Siva’s right leg is placed on the pitha while the left leg is placed on the neck of Kala. Markandeya clinging to the linga is sculptured on the adjoining face.

NATARAJA: In the third pillar in the Kambattadi Mandapa is the figure of Siva as Nataraja. There are Nataraja images in the Velliyambala Mandapa, Mandapa Nāyaka Mandapa and the Thousand Pillar Mandapa. On the wedding day of Minakshi-Sundaresvara Siva is said to have specially danced as Nataraja to give darshan to the sages Vyaghrapada and Patanjali who had come to attend the marriage and who would not take their daily food without having darshan of the god at Chidambaram. So Siva danced for their sake again at Madurai. This shows that after Chidambaram, Madurai is most intimately connected with the dance of Nataraja. While the Nataraja shrine in Madurai temple is known as the Rajata Sabha or Velliyambalam that of Chidambaram is known as Kanakasabha. “The Sabha at Madurai, the capital of the Pandyas, had a covering of silver. The Cholas might have desired to outdo the Pandyas in their regard for their family deity and hence covered the Sabha,
not with silver as the Pândyas had done but with gold." In the Velliyambalam Siva is shown with the right leg lifted and left leg placed on the apasmâra, but in Chidambaram Siva is shown dancing with the left leg raised. This latter is the most common form of the image seen in Saiva temples. The image in the Kambattadi Mandapa belongs to this popular version. Siva has a jatâmakuta. The back left hand carries agni and the front left hand is in the gujahûta pose across the body. The front right hand is in the abhaya pose and the back right hand holds the damaru. The right leg is placed on apasmâra, the left leg is lifted up and rests on the head of a cobra which apasmâra holds in his hand. The image is somewhat static owing perhaps to the limitations imposed by the narrow width of the pillar. Pârvati stands on the left. Below the dancing Natarâja is Nandi with four hands. His front two hands play on the drum and his two back hands hold the axe and the deer. On each side of Nandi are the sages, Vyâghrapâda and Pâtanjalî. On the adjoining face of this pillar is Vishnu playing on a pataka, a sort of drum perhaps, while Tumburu and Nârada supply vocal music. The emaciated figure of Kâli may also be seen. On the next adjoining face of the pillar is Brahmâ playing on the cymbals. The frieze includes other sages and gods, who attended the dance. The sculpture of Kâma-Dahanar is on the north face of this pillar.

The fourth pillar in the Kambattadi Mandapa has Chandrasekhara, Lingodbhava, Rishabhântika and Râvanânugrahamurti. The Chandrasekharamurti is the form in which Siva is seen with His consort Pârvati and is known as Umâsahita Chandrasekhara. The sculpture on this pillar corresponds with the description given in the āgamas. Siva and Pârvati stand on the same pedestal in the samâpâda pose. Siva’s forehands are in the abhaya varada pose. The back hands hold the tanka and mriga. The god is fully ornamented with pearl necklaces and ratnâhûras with padakkas, with canna vira and udarabandha. The sculpturing is highly conventionalised and modern.

RISHABHÂNTIKA: This is almost like Rishabhâruda with Siva and Pârvati seated on the bull. This is perhaps by the same artist who did Chandrasekhara image as the style is

almost the same. One peculiarity in this form is that the bull lifts its head up as though looking at the seated Lord. This peculiarity is not explained in the published iconographic texts. It may be only a clever devise of the sculptor to get the bull's head out of the way of the Lingodbhava image carved on the same pillar close to this. It may perhaps be a Vrishabhavahana image modified to suit the space available on the pillar. In this image in the Kambattadi Mandapa Siva has an axe and deer in His back hands. The front right hand is in the abhaya pose but the front left hand is resting on His thigh. The right leg of Siva is hanging and the left leg bent on the seat while Pārvati's right leg is bent and the left leg is hanging. Siva's right foot is hanging free without the usual support of the conventional lotus as seen below Pārvati's left foot.

LINGODBHAVAMURTI: The image of Lingodbhava is invariably found on the western wall of the garbha griha of Siva temples. This image in the Kambattadi Mandapa is carved to the right of Rishabhāntika. The linga on which the murti is carved is almost a square pillar with all straight edges rounded off. The figure of Siva is carved as usual in these figures as emerging out of the linga with the feet hidden within the linga.

The Kambattadi sculpture closely follows the āgamas and Siva is represented in the aspect of Chandrashekhar. The parts of His leg below the knee are unsculptured. Siva holds the axe and the deer in His back hands. The front right hand is in the abhaya pose and the front left rests on the thigh. A swan with Brahma's head and arms is carved in low relief on the top part of the linga. Vishnu with the boar's head is shown burrowing at the foot of the linga. Brahma stands in anjali pose on the right while Vishnu in a similar pose is sculptured on the left face of the linga. Lingodbhavamurti is historically an old one and is found sculptured in the Kailasanatha-svāmi temple and in the Dasavatāra cave at Ellora. At Kilamattur in the Siva temple, there is a fine old image of Lingodbhava showing Siva emanating from the pillar of fire with Brahma flying above and Vishnu with a boar's head digging the earth to reach the bottom. Two images of Brahma and Vishnu stand on right and left side of this pillar respectively. The work is perhaps a relic from the 10th century structure.
RAVANANUGRAHAMURTI: Two sculptures of the episode of Rāvana under Kailāsa are in the Madurai temple. One is in the Pudu Mandapa and the other, almost a copy of it, is in the Kambattadi Mandapa. Of the two the Pudu Mandapa relief is more finely executed and is the better known work.

The Pudu Mandapa sculpture shows Śiva seated on the right with Pārvati on the left as in the aspect of Umāsahitamurти. Below their seat is a conventional representation of Kailāsa with many sages praising the Lord while Rāvana kneels below with his ten heads and twenty hands, singing Śiva’s praise.

The Kambattadi Mandapa sculpture is almost similar except for a more elaborately worked pitha. The pose of the front hands of Śiva are also slightly different. While anger and agitation could be seen in the representation of Rāvana everything is calm and wonderfully poised on top of Kailāsa where Śiva sits in company with Pārvati, His consort. Rāvana under Kailāsa is represented even in early works as, for instance, in Ellora where it is a most often repeated subject. The panel in the Dhumarlena cave is the largest and is considered to be the most beautiful. Rāvana in all these earlier specimens is represented as facing the Kailāsa mountain and showing his back to the spectator. His arms are thus grasped round the Kailāsa as though trying to uproot it. The later versions showing him as in the Pudu Mandapa sculpture gives one the impression that he is supporting the mountain.

The next row of four pillars are to the right of the Nandi Mandapa. The first pillar on this side has the sculptures of Chakrādāra, Rishabhāruda, Ekapadamurти, Sankaranārāyana and Ardhanari.

CHAKRADARAMURTI: Chakrādamurти or Vishnu Anugrahamurти shows Śiva presenting the discus to Vishnu.

VRISHABHAVAHANAMURTI: This is one of the most popular forms in which Śiva is worshipped in South India. The Kambattadi sculpture shows Śiva and Parvati seated on the back of the bull. They are represented in the same aspect as that of Umāsahitamurти. Śiva holds the axe and the deer in His back hands while the front hands are in the abhaya and varada
poses. Śiva’s right leg is hanging and the foot rests on a lotus. Pārvati’s left foot rests in a similar manner on a lotus.

**EKAPADAMURTI:** An Ekapādamurti is sculptured on the same side on which Rishabhāruda is sculptured in the Kambattadi Mandapa. Another figure of the same image is also sculptured in the Pudu Mandapa. There is an important difference between the two representations. The sculpture in the Pudu Mandapa has Brahmā issuing from the right side of Śiva and Vishnu from the left. Brahmā and Vishnu have no legs as represented in some of the earlier sculptures but their front hands are held in anjali pose while their back hands hold their respective symbols. Brahmā is represented with only one head in this sculpture. In the Kambattadi Mandapa the Ekapādamurti shows only Śiva. Brahmā and Vishnu are not represented. However, since there are three contiguous shrines, sculptured on the base of the pillar immediately below this figure, it may perhaps be taken as one of the different modes of representing Ekapada Trimurti referred to by T. A. Gopinatha Rao¹.

**ARDHANARI:** Ardhanāri which is sculptured on the north face of this pillar represents the well-known half-woman half-man form of Śiva. The figure in the Kambattadi Mandapa shows Śiva with axe and abhaya pose while Pārvati’s hand is hanging down. Thus the figure has three hands. A similar figure in Pudu Mandapa shows Pārvati with two hands with the front hand hanging down. The Pudu Mandapa statue is not only larger than the one in the Kambattadi Mandapa, but is more carefully finished.

**HARIHARA:** This sculpture which is to the left of Ardhanāri in the Kambattadi Mandapa represents another popular form of composite image with Śiva on the right half and Vishnu on the left half of the figure. The Śiva portion has the attributes of Śiva while the left half has the attributes of Vishnu. The right arm of Śiva is in abhaya pose and its back arm holds the axe. Vishnu has the abhāna in the left back hand and the gada on the left forearm. On a similar statue of Harihara in Pudu Mandapa the left forearm of Vishnu is held in the kataka pose. The idol is a large one and is most finely executed and is a superb specimen of its kind.

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DAKSHINAMURTI: On the north face of the pillar is a sculpture of Dakshināmurthi. The image shows Him seated under a banyan tree on Mount Kailāsa engaged in yoga. His left leg is placed on his right leg which hangs and is resting on a figure of apasmāra. Rshis and sages are seen worshipping. The connected story of how Śiva as Manmatadahanar burnt Kāma who was induced by the devas to tempt Śiva and rouse in Him the creative desire is sculptured on the pillar on the opposite side and facing the Dakshināmurthi image just mentioned. A shrine dedicated to Dakshināmurthi is on the south wall of the garbhagriha of the Sundaresvara shrine. A very old image of Vyākhyāna Dakshināmurthi is in the Kilaṃuttur temple in which Śiva is seated on a rock. Śiva wears a jatābhāra. His front right hand has the jnāna mudra pose and the back right hand is indistinct as it is worn out. The left front hand is in the varada pose with a book resting on the palm. The back left hand holds perhaps the fire or a serpent. It is not very distinct. Śiva’s right leg is hanging and the left leg is in the utkutikāsana pose. There are two hāras on Śiva’s shoulder. The figure may be attributed to the late Pallava or early Chola period.

GAJAHARAR: On the next pillar in the east in the Kambattadi Mandapa is the sculpture of Gajaharar. There are two figures of Gajaharar in the Maduraj temple, one in the Kambattadi Mandapa and another in the Pudu Mandapa. Both are almost similar in treatment, though the Kambattadi Mandapa image is more ornamental and conventionalised. Both suffer from a certain amount of static action. This may perhaps be due to an attempt to carve a large figure within the narrow width of a pillar. Śiva has eight hands and two back hands hold the hide of the elephant. The other three right hands hold the axe, the suła and the arrow. The three left hands hold the deer, the skull and the bow. The left leg rests on the elephant’s head while the right leg instead of being bent is thrown forward to rest on the elephant’s hide. Figures of sages are shown in the act of adoration at the base of the image.

The terrified figure of Pārvati with her child Skanda is carved on a side face of the Kambattadi pillar.
CHANDESANUGRAHAMURTI: The figure of Chandesānugrahamurthi is perhaps based on the story narrated in the Periyā Purāṇam. The carving in the Kambattadi Mandapa shows Siva tying the nīmāḷya garland round Chandesa’s head.

BHIKSHATANA: Coming to the last pillar in the series one finds a concentration of some important iconographic legends just as the opposite member to this pillar has the sculptured panels of Minākshi’s marriage and other important icons. The Madurai temple has a number of sculptures of Bhikshātana of which some of the largest are in the Kambattadi Mandapa, the Thousand Pillar Mandapa, the Mudali Mandapa and in Svāmi shrine first prākāra, not to mention the stucco figures and niche reliefs on the gopuras. The Bhikshātana in the Svāmi Sannidhi first prākāra is a large sculpture and is under worship. A metal image about three feet high which is also by its side is taken out in procession on occasions. As both these images are in a dark and enclosed cubicle one cannot observe them more carefully, but the best of the Madurai temple Bhikshātanās is of course the one in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa. The sculpturing is very well done and the ornaments and the jatābandha are very carefully carved. The figure is more than six feet high. It has four arms, the back right arm holds the dāmaru and the front right hand rests on the head of the antelope. The back left hand holds the sula which is laid across the shoulder. The front left hand has the kāpāla. Bhikshātana is dressed with only a snake coiled round him. He has bells on his leg and stands wearing sandals. On Bhikshātana’s left is a dwarf with a vessel to collect the alms offered by the wives of the rshis. A figure of Anusuya and other rshi patnis are carved on the other faces of this pillar. The Kambattadi sculpture of Bhikshātana stands next to Rudra and though the sculptor had the earlier example of the Thousand Pillar Mandapa to guide him his work is not of a high order. The limbs are disproportionate and not well modelled. The antelope is rather crude. The symbols held in the hands and posture are the same as in the earlier sculpture. There are no rshi patnis, however, in the Kambattadi version.

RUDRA: The figure of Rudra is carved next to Bhikshātana in the Kambattadi pillar. The right arms are mutilated. They have been restored in a crude manner with a stucco or cement perhaps. There
is not much action in this sculpture and it is not known what aspect of Rudra the sculpture represents exactly. A flaming jata mounts the head and the figure has heavy moustaches and fangs. It is heavily ornamented. The following symbols are in the four right hands: the trident, the axe and an arrow with the head of a figure and a sword. The four left hands hold the skull, the deer, the bell and the shield. Rudra stands on a prostrate asura with His trident piercing the asura’s neck. In the Vira Vasantaraya Mandapa are two figures of Rudra and Rudrakali of which the Rudra sculpture is the most spirited of the two. The jata is treated in a very stylised manner as usual in sculptures of this period as may be seen at Tenkasi and elsewhere in this region. The work is very refined and Rudra has not the same fierceness with which he is represented in many of the later works. There is a linga in the jata usually found in statues of Virabhadra. This Rudra figure has only four hands of which the front right hand is broken. Perhaps it held a sword as the corresponding shield is in the front left hand. The back right hand holds the axe and the back left hand holds the deer. His garlands are richly carved. The lowermost garland is strung with heads. The figure of Rudra wears knee ornaments and anklets. Sandals are worn on the feet. Under the feet is a prostrate figure whose left arm is broken. In the right arm the figure holds a dagger. The point of the broken sword of Rudra is seen pierced through the neck of the fallen figure.

KIRATARJUNAMURTI: This represents the story in the Vana-pura of the Mahabhārata which relates how Arjuna did great penance to obtain from Śiva the pāṣupatāstra to destroy his enemies. The scene in the Kambattdi pillar shows Śiva after He had presented the pāṣupatāstra to Arjuna who is seen on His right with the bow and arrow. The left arms of Śiva are mutilated. The Madurai sculpture differs from āgamic descriptions of the figures.

SOMASKANDA: This important sculpture is also one of the best in the Kambattadi Mandapa. Śiva and Pārvati are seated in the sukhasana pose with a dancing figure of Skanda standing between them. Śiva holds the axe and the deer. The front right hand is in the abhaya pose. The front left hand is in the simhakarna pose. Pārvati holds a flower in her right hand and her left hand rests on the pedestal. Skanda holds a flower in each hand. The child wears a karanda makuta.
A fine old bronze of Somaskanda could be seen at the Tiruvāppulaiyār temple on the northern bank of the Vaigāi. The work follows classic lines and the craftsmanship shows remarkable restraint and economy. The front left hand of Siva is in the same simhakama pose as the statue in the Kambattadi Mandapa.

Immediately after entering the Kambattadi Mandapa from the Gopura Nayaka Gopura, one finds four huge figures, two on each side, close to the gopura. These statues which are nearly eight feet high represent Urddhar, Kāli, Aghora Virabhadra and Agni Virabhadra. Urddhar and Kāli are on the left and the two Virabhadras are on the right as one enters. These sculptures belong to the early Nayaka period and are admittedly excellent specimens of monolithic sculptured pillars.

**URDDHVAR:** This sculpture represents one of the dancing forms of Siva. This mode of dancing in which Siva lifted His right leg straight up to the level of His head refers to a contest between Him and Kāli as to who was the better dancer. As Kāli danced equally well in all the forms of dancing, Siva finally began the urddha tāndava which, of course, Kāli, in her modesty, could not perform. There are two statues of Urddhar in the Madurai temple: one is in the Kambattadi Mandapa which is already referred to and the other is in the Pudu Mandapa. In both Siva is represented with ten arms.

The symbols held in the ten arms differ to some extent in the Pudu Mandapa and Kambattadi specimens. In the Kambattadi Mandapa sculpture the five right hands hold the drum, the axe, the arrow, the dagger and the sula. In the five left hands are fire, deer, arrow, shield and bell. Apasmāra is lying below the left foot of Siva. In the Pudu Mandapa statue the five right hands hold the drum, the axe, the sword (?), the abhaya pose. Four of the five left hands hold the fire, pāsa, shield and the bull standard. The front left hand is in the gajahasta pose thrown across the body and right leg. Apasmāra with the snake is lying under the left leg. Kāli is in the right and is playing on the pancamukha vādyā or kudambulā. On the base Nandi is sculptured playing on the drum. Brahmā with the cymbals and Vishnu beating the pataha are sculptured on the sode faces of this pillar.
This sculpture is one of the masterpieces of the Madurai temple. The disposition of the hands and the legs are well thought out to give the whole piece a balanced poise and a fine sense of action found in no other specimen in the Madurai temple or outside it. The modelling reveals a very good knowledge of form and plastic sense. The excellent treatment of surface and the minute finish of symbols and ornaments do not detract from the merits of the sculpture. Above all the craftsman's great masterliness is revealed in the face which is a very expressive one. Its serene dignity, its conscious omnipotence and the benign smile are characteristics which no one will miss to notice. It is a triumph of modern art and this "most well-known example" could share its merits equally with some of the best known bronzes of Nataraja in South India.

KALI: The figure of Kāli in the Kambattadi Mandapa is ten armed just as her figure in the Pudu Mandapa is. These two Kālis are of heroic size and there is no choice as to which is artistically the more meritorious. Perhaps the earlier sculpture in the Kambattadi Mandapa may be said to score on a point or two. The Kāli image in the Kambattadi Mandapa has a flaming jata and in the four right arms it holds the trident, an arrow, a tanka and (?). In the four left arms Kali holds the skull, the bow, the noose and the vajra. The left foot of Kāli rests on a gana who is seen supporting it.

The Kāli in the Pudu Mandapa is more fierce looking than her counterpart in the Kambattadi Mandapa. She has also eight arms. In the four right arms she holds the trident, the arrow, goad and dagger. In her four left hands she holds the kapala, the bow, pasa and the shield. She is fully ornamented and her left leg rests on the hand of a female gana. Both these statues are stated to be forms of Bhadra Kāli.

A figure of Rudra Kali is in the Vira Vasantaraya Mandapa next to the image of Rudra. This Kali has flaming krita with a five-headed nāga behind. She is in the act of dancing and is eight armed. The front right arm is perhaps in the vismaya pose. Her three back right hands hold the dagger, the cakra (broken) and

1. O. C. Gangoly: South Indian Bronzes.
a goad. In her left arms she holds a \textit{kapala}, a shield, a \textit{chank} and a noose. A high \textit{torana} is sculptured over the figure. The dance is not wild and the sculpturing gives a picture of controlled movement.

\textbf{VIRABHADRA}: Images of Virabhadra are more popular in the Telugu districts than in the Tamil country. The \textit{Madurai} temple has a number of sculptures representing some of the forms of Virabhadra. In the \textit{Kambattadi Mandapa} are two forms, Aghora Virabhadra and Agni Virabhadra. These are early specimens and are as large as the \textit{Urdhvar} and \textit{K\=ali} images referred to above. According to legend Daksha, the father-in-law of Siva, slighted Him during the \textit{yaga} as a result of which Um\=a, Siva's wife, sacrificed herself. Siva in anger sent Virabhadra and Bhadrak\=ali to destroy Daksha. The Aghora Virabhadra image in the \textit{Kambattadi} is a noble piece of sculpture full of action in every part of it and with a most expressive face. It is ten-armed and has a \textit{jat\=amakuta} with a \textit{linga} in its centre as usual with Virabhadra figures. Stylised flames arise out of the head. It is a fully ornamented figure. In the five right arms the following symbols are seen: a sword piercing Daksha, an arm lifting an arrow from the quiver, the axe, the \textit{s\=ula} and the drum. In the corresponding five left arms are a large shield with a carved figure, a bow, the deer, and the thunder bolt. Aghora Virabhadra wears many garlands as described in the \textit{\=Agamas}.

A much-mutilated figure of Virabhadra is in the Jayandisvara shrine, to the south of the \textit{Minakshi} shrine. Though more ornate, it is in the same style as the figure in the \textit{Vira Vasantarakya Mandapa} and is probably by the same hand. Excepting two hands all the rest of the ten hands are broken and it is not known what symbols were held in them. The figure of Daksha and his wife standing with \textit{anjali hastas} are on the side face of the pillar base.

The Thousand Pillar \textit{Mand\=ipa} contains a few more images of Daksha Sam\=h\=ara m\=urt\=is and many of these have the severe style of earlier Dravidian sculptures before it gave in to the flamboyant manner of Vijayanagar. The best of them is the image on the pillar at the extreme west end of the entrance. This is a strikingly dignified statue. It has a \textit{jat\=a makuta}, has three eyes and has no fangs. It has the other attributes of Siva on the ears and in the hands. There are four hands. In the two back hands are held the axe and
the deer, the front right hand has a sword but only the hilt and the point are visible and the rest of the sword is broken. The front left hand holds the shield. Siva wears a bell on his right leg and ankle on both the legs. Siva has his right foot on a fallen bearded figure who is perhaps Daksha.

A figure of Aghora Virabhadra is executed in a restrained manner on the first pillar immediately above the first flight of steps in the mandapa. This figure of Virabhadra has a terrifying look with big hanging moustaches, fangs and protruding teeth. The jata is neatly made up with linga in the centre and the circular crown over it has a large simhamukha ornament. In the left hand is a shield and in the right hand is the hilt only of the sword. A big garland of skulls hangs from the neck. The left leg is planted on a figure which is trying to rise up and which Virabhadra is vanquishing for he has his right foot planted firmly on the upraised head. A severed head is already lying near the left foot. This is evidently another reference to the Daksha Samhāra. A sequential representation of another figure relating to Daksha Samhāra is on the south face of this pillar. The figure here has a high jata makula ornamented with a simhamukha on top. It has fangs and only two eyes. It has four hands. The back right hand is seen lifting an arrow from the quiver and the back left hand holds the bow. The front left hand is holding the head of a figure round whom the left leg of the Samhāramūrti is thrown holding him tight. The front right hand is seen cutting off the head of the figure with the sword. The two images on this pillar are alive with action.

Opposite to the Aghora Virabhadra figure is a well-finished and much-ornamented statue with only one of its arms fully visible, the others being broken. The single arm holds a heavy sword lifted high over the head as if to strike. This figure also perhaps refers to Daksha Samhāra as it has a linga on its highly ornamented crown. It has heavy moustaches and fangs, wears many necklaces and garlands including one of skulls. It is bare-footed but has anklets. It wears a yajnopavita.

The fourth statue in the Kambattadi Mandapa (three of which, Órdhvar, Kāli and Aghora Virabhadra, have been dealt with already) is a powerful sculpture labelled Agni Virabhadra. The image
is as large as the rest of its companions and its fierce and vigorous action impresses every one who sees it. It has a flaming jata and a well-shaped face with flying moustaches over a smiling mouth which, however, has fangs on either side. It has eight hands and the two front hands carry a long trident which is piercing the neck of a fallen figure over whom Virabhadr has planted his left foot. The three remaining right hands hold the damaru, sword and (?) The three left hands hold the kapala, the shield and the bell. Many necklaces and garlands adorn the image which is seen with sandals on its feet.

THE ASHTASAKTI: In the Ashtasakti Mandapa is a group of eight sculptures representing the eight sakti goddesses. They are four on each side of the corridor. On the northern side they are, from east to west, Yajnarupini, Syamalai, Mahesvari, Manonmani and on the southern side, from east to west, are Kaumari, Raudri, Vaishnavi and Mahalakshmi. All the sculptured are about five feet in height and are sculptured on the pillars. All these sculptures are in samabhanga pose with four hands and excepting Raudri and Manonmani the front hands of all the goddesses are in the abhayavadarada pose. All the goddesses excepting Raudri and Manonmani wear kritamukta. The Yajnarupini has in her back right hand a swast, the sacrificial spoon, and in her back left hand a flower. Syamalai next to her has a lotus and a nilotpala in her two back hands. Mahesvari has a lotus and a pusa in her two back hands. Manonmani has her front right hand in the cinmudra pose with a rosary and her front left hand holds a nilotpala flower while her two back hands hold lotus flowers. She has a jatamakuta on her head. Kaumari has in her two back hands the sakti and the vajrayudha. Raudri has a jatamakuta with flames and fangs at the corners of her lips. In her front right hand she holds a sula and in the front left a kapala. In the back right hand she holds a damaru and in her back left hand a sanka. Vaishnavi wears a kritamukta tripundra on her forehead, has protruding fangs and in her back right hand she has a sakra and in her back left hand a conch. Mahalakshmi has in her two back hands two lotus flowers.

VIGHNESVARA: There are many images of Vighnesvara and Subrahmanya and many shrines dedicated to these gods in the Madurai temple. The Siddhi Vinayaka shrine
in the Kilikatti Mandapa is the Sthala Vināyaka; but the most popular and the more widely known of these Ganapati images is the Mukkuruni Pillaiyār in Śvāmi Sannidhi second prākāra southern side, opposite to the Nadukattu Gopura. This huge image is reported to have been found when the Vandiyır Teppakulam was dug during Tirumala Nayaka's days. This Vināyaka is four handed and holds in the front right hand the broken tusk and in the back right hand the ankusa. In the left hand he holds the cake and in the back left hand the noose. The trunk is touching the cake in his left hand. This Vināyaka is seated on a padmāsana.

In the Asthasakti Mandapa is a beautiful stone sculpture of Mahā Ganapathi on his vāhana, the musk rat. Seated on his lap on the left side is a goddess. He is ten-armed and only the following weapons are distinguishable: The ankusa, the broken tusk, the cakra are seen in three of the right hands. In the left hand the lotus, sugarcane bow, the pasa are the only symbols distinguishable. The front left hand is hugging the Devi. The trunk which is hooked to the right holds a pot. A similar, but more highly finished, image of Mahā Ganapati without the musk rat vāhana is in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa. In his ten arms he holds the same symbols as in the Asthasakti Mandapa image. On the left leg which is bent, sits the Devi. The ruby pot is in the trunk. Perhaps this image served as a model for the one in the Asthasakti Mandapa. This is one of the best images of Vighnesvara in this temple. Small well-carved images of Nṛtta Ganapatis are sculptured on the walls of the Cinna Mottai Gopura and Nadukattu and other gopuras.

SUBRAHMANYA: An image of Shanmukha riding on his vehicle, the peacock, is also in the Asthasakti Mandapa. This fine stone image has six heads and twelve arms. The front hands are in the abhaya varada pose and the right hands hold the tanka, arrow, sword, discus and noose. The left hands have the sakti, a bow, a shield, a flower and the kukkuta. A fine image of a four-armed Subrahmanya riding his peacock is in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa. This spirited image is full of action and shows probably Subrahmanya as the War Lord. In the two back hands are the sakti and vijrayuda. The front right hand is held aloft as if commanding while the front left hand holds the reins of the peacock. The right leg is bent and placed on the peacock's back while the left leg which is in a
stirrup is urging on the peacock. Equally fine low reliefs of Subrahmanya on the peacock may be seen on the walls of the Nadukattu and other gopuras.

**SARASVATI:** Excellent stone carving of a very high order is seen on the statue of a goddess with a vina in her hands which is in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa. This is usually pointed out as an image of Sarasvati, but it is perhaps Rājamātangi who is described as having one of her feet resting on a lotus and listening to a parrot’s talk while playing on the vina. As this image has all these attributes and has only two hands she is more likely to be Rājamātangi than Sarasvati. Among the many beautiful sculptures in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa this is one of the best. The treatment of surface, form and anatomy and of minutiae is amazing. The absence of crown on the head is, however, to be noted. The sculpture is a harmonious combination of artistry and craftsmanship.

**KANKALAMURTI:** The image of Kankālamūrti in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa differs from āgamic description to some extent. He is commonly represented with four arms. In his left forearm he has the drum which he is seen beating with a stick held in his right arm. His back right arm is touching the mouth of the deer while the back left arm holds the kankāla danda. He is draped in fine clothes and has a sword stuck in his girdle and he wears sandals. The Thousand Pillar Mandapa image shows this mūrti with the drum in his back right hand while the front right hand touches the deer. The front left arm holds a bowl and the sūladanda is in the back left arm. He is draped and has the sword and sandals as described in the āgamas. This image has the same sense of movement as one finds in many other statues in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa, as, for instance, in angam vettina Siva, Kannappar, Subrahmanya and others.

**MANMATA AND RATI:** Two sculptures in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa relate to Manmata and his wife, Rati. Manmata is a mutilated figure and the two hands are broken. The tip only of the sugarcane bow held in his left hand is seen. The right hand probably held the characteristic arrow.

Rati has fortunately escaped mutilation. She is beautifully modelled and is seen riding her vehicle, the hamsa, whose plumes
are individually carved. Rati’s attendant cauri bearer is just back of the bird and is another well-moulded figure. The figure of Subrahmanya riding a peacock which is in the same mandapa should be compared with this figure of Rati. Though both are shown in the same pose, the figure of Subrahmanya is more expressive of action.

The figure of Mohini which is opposite to Bhikshātana is remarkable for its characterisation and the rṣis who were tormented by her charms are sculptured on the remaining sides of this pillar. Among other carvings which are equally beautiful but unfortunately unidentifiable are the figures styled Vedan, Arjuna as Pedi, Kaliage and Nāgarāja. Another relief stated to be the “birth” of Ganesa is in the Pudu Mandapa and in stuccos and gopuras. It shows Ganesa sitting inside the hood of an inverted five-headed snake with Śiva and Pārvati standing on either side. No satisfactory explanation of the legend is available at present. A similar relief relating to Subrahmanya in the Pudu Mandapa is also unexplained. A relief in one of the pillars in the central nave on the Pudu Mandapa shows Hanuman being nursed after his attempt to catch Surya, the sun. This panel which illustrates the whole of the episode from Hanuman trying to catch the sun and his precipitate fall after the attempt and his being nursed is all very dramatically pictured with the sun rising over the clouds.

A relief of a figure with the head of a Vighnesvara, the trunk and hands of a woman and the legs of a tiger is found on one of the pillars of the Kambattadi Mandapa. This same figure is also found in various other places in the temple and yet its exact identification is not available. One bhattar in the temple called it Vyāgraśakti Ganapati, perhaps referring to its three mixed up features. Another bhattar thought it was only a silpi’s fancy.

D. PORTRAIT SCULPTURE

A very significant aspect of the sculptures of the period relates to the portraits of kings and queens, of ministers and generals and of donors and devotees. The Madurai temple is perhaps unique in this respect, though some other temples also possess some groups of sculptures of this description. Even if Tirumala Nayaka had not built any of his gopuras, mandapas or tanks, he would still be famous as the man who had the genius to put up a group of ten statues.
representing his ancestors. These statues of six generations of the
Nayaka rulers of Madurai during a period of a little over a century
is a singular contribution to Dravidian art. The Ashtasakti Mandapa
and the Minakshi shrine prakaras contain some other important
gopuras of portrait statues while numerous other similar sculptures
are to be seen individually or in small groups in various other
places in the temple.

A knowledge of the differences in outlook between Indian and
Western artists is necessary to correctly estimate the true nature
and value of Indian portraiture. Without such a knowledge one is
likely to arrive at mistaken conclusions that our portrait sculptors
produced only conventionalised effigies and not anything like portraits
in the real sense. One may be quite sure that none of the royal
personages represented in the Pudu Mandapa or elsewhere ever
sat for their stapatīs. It was the stapatī who caught glimpses of his
patrons, carried the image in his memory, and having sufficiently
contemplated on the image, transferred it to stone or wall. Sometimes
he produced a few preliminary trials for approval and when these
were approved or passed by the patron, the final work was carried
out from the approved sketch. That this has been the practice till
very recent times may be seen from the scores of these preliminary
sketches still existing in private collections and in the families of
artists. It will thus be seen that every care was taken by the artist
in the production of a likeness and that merely because he did not
work from life one cannot say his portraiture was merely conventional.

Another criticism usually levelled against the Madurai sculptures
and similar other works is that since the portraits represent many
generations of kings the artist who did them must have drawn freely
on his imagination. But it must be remembered that as the art is
carried on for generations in the same family, there usually exist in
the family collections of sketches and pricked tracings of works by the
earlier masters. These are handed down as heirlooms from generation
to generation and a grandson could easily produce with the help of
these pricked tracings a portrait or other work of art just in the same
manner as his grandfather did. Even today such tracings of the
Maharatta rulers of Tanjore could be seen in the family collection
of the artists. One could now easily guess how portraits of the earlier
Nayaka rulers could have been done from similar tracings or sketches
left as a legacy in the families of the artists. As the statues of the Nayaka rulers were done almost within living memory, one may be sure that they are really original pieces of art and not mere stereotyped copies and therefore may be taken to be characteristic portraits in every sense of the word. The treatment of some of the features like the eye-brows, the eyes, the nostrils and cheeks may appear to be conventional, but how far they were conventional and how far true to type could not now be accurately stated. If, however, portraits of the same person are compared it would be seen that convention is only subsidiary to characterisation and the features are individualised. The statues of the Nayaka rulers are life-size and the height of the statues vary from about 7½ to 8 heads each, the length of head being measured on the longest line of the face from head to chin. The width across the shoulders measures a little over 2 heads. These proportions also agree with the Western standards for the human figure. The queens measure about 6 heads each.

The mounting of the statues on high pedestals is appropriate, for when the God is borne in procession high over the shoulders of bearers these royal devotees will be almost on a level and the sight of the God receiving the obeisance of ruler after ruler is a very lasting impression to any one who witnesses it.

Some amount of confusion has been caused by mistaken labelling of a few of the statues. Though this may be important in considering the genealogy of the ten rulers, it is really not so essential for aesthetic consideration of the statues as portraits.

**VISVANATHA NAYAKA:** Visvanatha Nayaka's statue is the first one on the left in the central nave as one enters it from the east. His commanding personality is well portrayed. His lips and chin are individualistic and his build, though strong, is not as adipose as that of many of his successors. He wears a Vaishnava mark. His body appears to be bare and he wears a *vastra* with a richly brocaded *upavastra* tied over it and the whole kept in place by a jewelled waist band and belt. The same kind of dress is worn by all the Nayaka rulers. On his head he wears a bejewelled cap. There is a striking similarity in some of the jewels worn by these rulers, and this leads one to think that they are part of the royal regalia usually worn by successive rulers of the line. Some of these jewels found on the
Nayaka statues are a two-string necklace, gemset kankanas, a five-row bracelet on the left hand, a poniard, a high signet ring and an anklet.

Besides such regalia Visvanatha Nayaka has a richly ornamented gemset necklace, shoulder ornaments, and a pair of armlets on each arm. His poniard is thrust in his belt on his right side. Visvanatha Nayaka has a queen on each side, one of whom may probably be Nāgamā, the mother of Krṣnappa Nayaka.

**KUMARA KRŚNAPPA**: The second statue is that of Kumāra Krṣnappa, the son of Visvanatha. He has a refined face and wears richly ornamented cap, the crest of which leans forward slightly. This style of high cap usually called the Viṭāyanagara cap seems to have been a common type of head gear of the time, only differing in the richness of material and ornamentation. Two strings usually hang from the lining to the cap and this may be seen near the ears of all the Nayaka rulers who wear this high cap. The nominal suzerainty of the Viṭāyanagara rulers was acknowledged by some of the earlier Nayaka rulers down perhaps to Lingama. Kumāra Krṣnappa wears the same costume and jewellery as the last ruler, but prefers plainer armlets and wears his anklet on the left leg. His poniard is, however, tucked on the right side. He seems to be the only one to have whiskers. Two ladies, obviously his two queens, stand on either side with a lady in waiting close behind. Both the royal ladies have comely features and appear quite youthful.

**VIRAPPA NAYAKA**: Virappa Nayaka, the son of Krṣnappa Nayaka, is probably represented by the third statue on the left. He may be said to be sparsely built compared to other Nayakas. His figure is nearly six feet tall. His eyes, his nose, and his mouth are personal. He wears the viṭāti on his forehead and on his body. His high cap is richly ornamented and he wears two necklaces with pendants. One of the pendants is big and looks almost like that worn by the Lingayats. His ear ornament is also different from those of his predecessors and looks more like a pendant of three flower buds as generally seen on "Pāṇḍya" statues. Otherwise his

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1. A statue in the north corridor of the Amman Sannidhi second prakara and another in front of the Jnānasambandar Temple may also be representations of Virappa Nayaka.
jewellery and costumes are the same as those of the other rulers. His queen stands on his right. On his left side stands an attendant woman. Virappa was a great contributor to the temple complex and was perhaps an ardent devotee as may be seen from the Saiva attributes favoured by him.

**KRASNAPPA NAYAKA** : The identity of the fourth statue on the left is not clear. At present the label above the statue reads Krsnappa Nayaka. But at one time the label appears to have been so damaged as to be illegible. In front of the Jnānasambandar Temple are two portrait statues. The one on the left is perhaps that of Virappa Nayaka and is more than life-size. The statue on the right is much smaller in height. In the Pudu Mandapa also the third statue, i.e., the statue of Virappa Nayaka, is nearly 6 ft. tall, while the fourth figure is comparatively very short. Most probably the fourth statue in the Pudu Mandapa and the statue on the right in front of the Jnānasambandar Temple represent a younger brother. He is somewhat thick-set and seems to be practical-minded, though devout and his character is well brought out by the simple and plain jewellery he has chosen. He wears the vibhūti. His brocade cap is almost plain except for a lace band. His armlets are simple. He wears the hereditary jewels and the poniard. His queen on his right side bears a strong family likeness to the queen on the right of Kumāra Krsnappa. He has another queen on his left.

**LINGAMA NAYAKA** : This is the name given to Kumāra Krsnappa II in the modern label of the sculpture. Lingama is a tall man of well-proportioned limbs, not corpulent like many of the Nayakas. He has a rather prominent nose and a not too assertive mouth. He strikes one as a born administrator. He wears the vibhūti and his necklace has also a large pendant and his ear ornament is also like that of Virappa and has three pendant flower buds. His tall cap is embroidered and in addition to the usual regalia he wears necklaces with pendants and shoulder ornaments. A queen stands on each side of him. The queen on his left is tall.

VISVAPPA NAYAKA: The statue opposite to Lingam is that of his brother Visvappa Nayaka. The present label calls him Krsnappa. Visvappa Nayaka is a tall and majestic figure measuring about eight heads in height. His eyes, nose and mouth are quite individualistic, though he has a weak chin. His ears are well formed and his sensitive fingers are each adorned with a ring. He is the first to abandon the Vijayanagara high cap and don a cap or turban which seems to have become the fashion with his successors. He wears a necklace and shoulder ornaments in addition to the usual other jewels common to the Nayaka royal personages. A queen stands on each side of him. He and his successors wear only the Vaishnava mark, and seem to have abandoned the Saiva mark.

KASTURI RANGAPPA: To the left of Visvappa is the statue of his brother Kasturi Rangappa who is a striking personality. His nose is sharp. He has an expressive mouth and keen eyes. The crest of his cap is not tied down and so, as it stands up, it looks almost like a Vijayanagara high cap. He wears necklaces with pendants and two or three other necklaces in addition to the twostream necklace usually worn. He has a tight-fitting garment and his bracelets are well chased and mounted with gems. He has no queen by his side. Kasturi Rangappa has no moustache and is clean shaven.

MUTTU KRSNAPPA: To the left of Kasturi Rangappa is the statue of Muttu Krsnappa, the son of Visvappa, the sixth ruler. Muttu Krsnappa is a tall man and measures eight heads high. His facial features are even more personal and his lips and nose are well-chiselled. One cannot fail to notice the striking resemblance between Muttu Krsnappa and his ancestor, Visvanatha Nayaka, the founder of the line. It is not very clear whether he wears an anklet or not. He has only a cap on his head and has all the usual jewels. Two of his queens are seen on his sides.

MUTTU VIRAPPA: Muttu Virappa looks so different from the other Nayakas that one must say that his statue possesses a distinct personality of its own. His eyes are prominent with a small nose tucked between them but his lips are beautifully modelled. His full cheeks have a prominent chin and his short neck sits on a
narrow chest. He is flabby and is stout. He strikes one as a man of pleasure and not too intelligent. He wears a cap and on his waist there is only a belt without the usual waistband. He has three queens standing beside him.

**TIRUMALA**: Tirumala Nāyaka whose statue must have been the most faithful as a portrait has been completely spoilt by senseless coats of paint and ill-drawn features without any consideration for the lines of the original sculpture. What one sees now is only the painter's version and not the sculptor's. If justice has to be done to this beautiful sculpture these daubs of paint should be removed and the statue left in its original state, or if it is to be pointed the work should be done by an artist who understands the sculpture. As it is, if one has to get a more correct impression of how Tirumala may have looked like, one has to compare the Pudu Mandapa statue with that in the Ashtaśakti Mandapa which fortunately is without any daubs of paint.

Tirumala Nāyaka, though stout like many other Nāyakas, has an individuality of his own different from those of the rest. One could immediately notice that his eyes are set somewhat slanting, that his nose is not sharp like those of his predecessors, and his close-drawn mouth has a small chin below and a wide jaw behind with a rather prominent cheek bone. Tirumala's dress is also different from that of his predecessors. His *vastra* seems to be entirely of brocade and one end of it is taken over the body to pass over the left shoulder and is brought forward to hang loose over the right shoulder. His *angavastra* is tied round his waist like a sash. He wears only a waistband without belt. Besides the usual jewels he wears a number of necklaces, prominent among which is a close-fitting necklace and pendant with three drops. This single jewel serves almost like an identification disc for Tirumala's portraits. He wears a cap, and has two queens on each side with attendant ladies behind. The queens are all well-modelled and have characteristic features. The first queen on the right, however, wears a coiffure different from the rest of the royal ladies of the Nāyaka rulers and so is presumed to be a princess from Tanjore whom Tirumala married. The costume and jewellery worn by these ladies illustrate the prevailing fashion of those days.
The Ashtaḍakti Mandapā which was built about the same period as the Pūdu Mandapā has four statues of Nāyaka rulers standing in a rather undignified position at the entrances to an odd variety of shops. These statues which are only about half the height of the sculptures in the Pūdu Mandapā were perhaps done as preliminary models. They are all well executed and display careful technique. Their characterisation is almost realistic. One may even say that on these points they easily score over the bigger and more publicised statues in the Pūdu Mandapā. Yet their presence in the Ashtaḍakti Mandapā is hardly noticed by passersby. They are each accompanied by their queens who are, however, hidden for the most part behind the framework of doors put up to enclose the shops. These four statues do not bear any labels, but careful comparison with the statues in the Pūdu Mandapā would show that they probably represent Tirumala and his brother, Muttu Virappa, on one side and of Muttu Krsnappa, their father, and Krsnappa, their grandfather, on the opposite side of the manda. These statues being without paint help us to study them as the sculptor finished them.

The statues of Tirumala and his brother Muttu Virappa in the Tirumala Nāyaka Mandapā which are at Alagarkoil are rather degenerate specimens and only show how soon the art had declined. Another statue of Tirumala inside the temple is also a poor specimen. The work is crudely done and the anatomy is disproportionate. A similar specimen of disproportionate and poor work is also to be seen at Tirupparankunram.

Somewhat better characterisation is seen in three bas reliefs of Tirumala Nāyaka on the pillars in the Pūdu Mandapā. In two of them the Nāyaka is worshipping Sri Minākshi-Sundaresvara enshrined in the Ashtagāt Vimāṇa. In the third relief Tirumala is worshipping Vighneśvara. The face bears a close likeness to the statues in the Pūdu and the Ashtaḍakti Mandapās and is remarkable for its portrait qualities. A stucco group of Tirumala and his queens in the second prakāra of the Amman shrine is a very good work of modelling but is unfortunately spoilt by crude painting.

**SCULPTURES IN THE AMMAN SHRINE:** Facing the stucco of Tirumala and his wives is the south side of the Amman shrine second prakāra which contains four other sculptural portraits:
In the north corridor are four other similar sculptures and in the east prakāra five more figures are to be found. So, these corridors round the Amman shrine contain no less than 14 statues which are obviously portraits besides a few others about which one is not sure of their nature. Another interesting fact is that these corridors were built by about the years 1565 and 1569 A.D. and so are earlier than the Pudu Mandapa. The statues in them seem to be earlier work and there is less elaborate carving than in the Pudu Mandapa sculptures. Though the lines of dress and form are conventionalised, yet there is subtle and unmistakable characterisation in each of them that they deserve to be classified as portrait sculptures. Of the four statues in the south corridor two figures represent perhaps Settis and two other represent Vijayanagara viceroys. One viceroy and one Setti figure are on the north side of the corridor. Another viceroy and Setti are on the south side of the corridor. The Setti figures wear turbans, tight-fitting garments, dhotis with angavastram tied on the waist. Though they wear an armlet on the right arm, they have no bangles or bracelets nor do they have anklets on their legs. A study of their face shows that they perhaps belong to the same family. Both of them have thin moustaches. Their nose, mouth and chin are individualistic. They wear vibhuti on their forehead. The viceroys wear the Vijayanagara high cap, and diaphanous drapery. Besides rows of necklaces, armlets and bangles they were the same kind of five-row bracelets as seen on the left hand of the Nāyaka rulers in the Pudu Mandapa. The viceroys wear anklets on both their legs. They wear Vaishnava marks and their faces show very good characterisation. The Nāyaka and the Setti figures on the north side of the corridor wear, in addition to the ornaments mentioned, a jewelled girdle on their waist and obviously are more important personages than the other two. The south corridor is reputed to have been built by Tittiyappa Setti, the son of Perumāl, in about 1565 A.D.¹ Perhaps the figure on the north side of the corridor is that of Tittiyappa Setti himself.

A similar group of four figures on facing pillars are seen in the north corridor. All of them wear the five-row bracelets and are

¹. Tiruppanimam, verse 42.
evidently people of high rank, perhaps princes or viceroys. Of the
two figures on the south side of the corridor one wears a turban and
diaphanous clothing. The figure next to him is the only one of
the four to wear the Vaishnava mark and has unmistakable Telugu
features. He wears an embroidered and jewelled cap and bears a
striking resemblance to Krishna Virappa Nayaka who is reputed to
have built this corridor, probably before he came to the throne.
The remaining three figures wear Saiva marks and are perhaps
persons of high rank. All the four figures wear ear drops different
from those seen on the Nayaka rulers. The two figures on the north
side of the corridor wear the Vijayanagara high cap. One of these
figures is nearly 6 1/2 feet high and the three others are between
5 1/2 and 6 feet high.

On the eastern side of the prakara are some more figures, of
which the one to the left of the Sannidhi Gopura is a much bejewelled
figure, 6 feet high, on a high pedestal. This statue perhaps
represents Settivappan who is reported to have built this side of
the prakara about the year 1563 A.D. The sculpturing is not so
well finished as the other statues found in the prakara, but the
portraiture is good enough no doubt.

On the Tirumalai Vinayaka shrine are two figures which
represent perhaps two donors. Their wives are sculptured in the
corresponding positions on the Tirumalai Subrahmanya shrine.
The sculpturing of the figures is somewhat crude.

OTHER PORTRAIT FIGURES: Standing on the Pandyana
Paditturai of the Golden Lily Tank are two remarkably fine
statues reported to be of a Pandy king and a Dananjaya Setti. These
represent perhaps the legendary Pandy king and merchant
who are connected with the founding of the city. Both are very
carefully done specimens and the face of Dananjaya Setti espe-
cially is very good as a portrait, though it is a pity one cannot
identify the individual. Perhaps Dananjaya Setti is Perumal
who is said to have built the north side of the Golden Lily
Tank in about 1562 A.D. The sculpturing of the two statues is

1. Tiruppani Vicaram, No. 16; Tiruppanimalai, verse 40.
2. Tiruppani Vicaram, No. 13; Tiruppanimalai, verse 31.
different from that of many other portrait sculptures found in the temple and are obviously the work of a master hand.

The figure of the Pāṇḍya king wears a high cap but the rest of the figure is similar to another statue reputed to be that of a Pāṇḍya king in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa. The figure in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa wears a highly ornamented kṛita and the same jewels as the figure on the Golden Lily Tank. Though the Thousand Pillar Mandapa figure has more conventionalised eyes, nose and mouth, the sculptures is even more highly finished than that of the Golden Lily Tank. These two figures afford a striking comparison for study of Indian craftsmanship.

Two very good pieces of portraiture are to be found in the Jñānasambandar Temple at the Kambattadi. There is less conventionalism in the face and the individualisation on the two figures is quite successful. Perhaps the larger statue represents the builder of this temple, Krishna Virapaa, with whose statue in the Pudu Mandapa it has strong resemblances. The similar statue is perhaps that of his younger brother. The drapery and the ornaments are not well rendered. The shrine dates about 1572 A.D. during a period of great building activity which included the Thousand Pillar Mandapa, some of the shrine corridors, the north Gopura, the Ghitra Gopura and others.

Two statues reputedly of Rāni Mangammāl, one in the Nagarā Mandapa and another in the Āstāna Mandapa at Tirupparankunram, afford interesting study. Both compare very well in their characterisation of the Rāni, though the diminutive figure of her grandson Vijayaranga Chokkarāṭṭa is not handled in the same manner. The Rani's immense coiffure and her poise is the same in the two statues.

The Indian sculptor seems to be more successful in the portraiture of private individuals probably because he has more opportunities for closer study of the subject. Sculptures of this class which are scattered in the various mandapas are all very good specimens of portrait work possessing a high degree of characterisation without much conventionalism. First among these one has to notice an equestrian statue in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa reputed to be that of Aryanātha Mudali, the great Nāyika general and
minister. Aryanātha Mudali is credited with having built the Thousand Pillar Mandapa. As there is no other portrait in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa one may take it that this statue represents Aryanātha Mudali himself. He is mounted on a richly caparisoned charger and his bearing is that of a dauntless man. He is dressed in the Mughal style which had by this time greatly influenced Hindu apparel. His well-defined nose sits over a mouth which is slightly opened as though to give a command. He has a neatly trimmed and groomed head and his torso is that of a man of fine physique. Another equestrian figure in the Pudu Mandapa bears some resemblance to Aryanāthah, but is not as carefully executed as the one in the Thousand Pillar Mandapa. The horse is fully prancing and the supporting human figures under it which had perhaps by that time come into fashion for equestrian statuary lend a rather unreal look to what is intended to be a portrait sculpture.

One of the most striking pieces of portraiture is that of Nāranappayyar which is tucked away in the Mangammal Mandapa in the Golden Lily Tank. The statue is slender, its lines rhythmic and flowing and the shapes most beautifully conceived. It is a real masterpiece. It reveals a fine plastic sense and feeling for form. The sculptor has succeeded in portraying with the utmost economy of line a leading personality of the period. Nāranapayyar is dressed as befits his office. He has a turban on his head and has a Mughal style of dress over which he has tied his dhoti. His anga onstra neatly folded is tied round his waist and its ends hang in front in trim style. Nāranappayyar has a necklace with a pendant, a two-row necklaces and a yajnopavita of four strings, perhaps of pearls with gemset tiel spaced at regular intervals. He wears bracelets on his two hands and rings on his fingers. His earrings are kundalos. His legs and feet are bare. He looks most dignified. His face which is adorned with vibhuti shows him as a handsome and intelligent person. His nose, lips, cleft chin and his shapely cheeks show great characterisation by the sculptor.

The statues of Muturama Aiyar and his wife in the mandapa named after him and of Subbarayar with his two wives in the mandapa, also named after him, are two other wonderfus portraits in the temple. The characterisation of the two gentlemen
is very well done and is almost realistic. Mutturama Aiyar wears a 
pancakaccaam and his bare body is adorned with rows of necklaces 
and the usual yajnopavita. He has a bracelet on each arm. His 
sikha is tied in the orthodox manner on a shaven head. Mutturama 
Aiyar seems to be a pious and genial old gentleman and the statue 
perhaps had done him full justice. Subbarayar appears to have 
been a man of some rank. He wears earrings, necklaces and brace-
lets and a jewelled waist band which hangs over his brocade dhoti. 
His yajnopavita hangs in the usual manner. His sculptured features 
are highly individual. His nose, mouth and chin especially are 
drawn perhaps with great truth.

Gurusāmi Setti in Velliyambala Mandapa stands with his wife on 
his side. Another identical figure with a woman is sculptured 
on the adjacent pillar. Though these statues are not of the same 
class as the statues in the Minākshi Temple, yet as portraits they 
rank quite high. One has only to compare all these statues to see 
how much really they are portraits and not merely conventional 
figures.

The statue of Muttambala Mudali in the Vasanta Mandapa 
at Tirupparankunram and of the two soldiers near the palliyarai 
at Alagarkoyil are other works in the portrait class. The statue of 
Muttambala Mudali like that of Nāranappayyar is a very dignified 
piece and shows the same sense of form and economy of line. His 
face is strongly individualistic and the whole work is admirably done. 
The figures of the soldiers at Alagarkoyil are useful as a study of two 
rather unusual subjects though conventionalism is largely em-
ployed. The features of the face belong to portraiture really. These 
statues may be compared with that of Gurusāmi Setti.

Two unidentified Nāyaka figures, also in the Kalyāna Mandapa 
at Alagarkoyil, are perhaps those of Vijayanagara viceroys. If 
they are of the Nāyaka rulers they could not be identified 
with any of the portraits of the ten Nāyaka kings in the Pudu 
Mandapa. These statues are tall and thin and the statues reveal 
them to be the work of a different master. In the Kūdai Alagar 
Temple in Madurai are four more portrait statues, all of them stated 
to be Nāyakas, but who could not in any manner be identified with 
any of those in the Pudu Mandapa. These are perhaps viceroys or 
local chieftains. The workmanship is rather poor.
The decadence of portraiture could be well seen in later works appearing in the Madurai Temple and elsewhere. In the Kalyana Mandapa is a short, squat and flabby figure with a wife and an attendant on either side which is pointed out as that of Vijayaranga Chokkanatha. Whether the statue is of Vijayaranga Chokkanatha or anyone else, the whole work is very decadent, disproportionate and inartistic and certainly bears no comparison with the beautiful work seen in the Pudu Mandapa.

Another statue in the Mudali Mandapa is not identified. Though decadent work it may perhaps be that of Kālatti Mudali, son of Aryanatha Mudali and the builder of this mandapa. More decadent specimens of portraiture are seen in the statues of Periya Marudu and Chinna Marudu in the Tirumohur Temple. More conventionalism and less characterisation mark these statues.

In the same class, though not so decadent, are two other statues in Tirupparankunram. The figures are not identifiable and one does not know whom they represent. However, they strike one as the work of a lesser hand.

E. TEMPLE ADMINISTRATION

1. History of Administration

The administration of the Madurai temple was founded on a well-organised basis. Rules and orders were framed with attention to minute details. While the king was the final authority and his orders were taken on all important occasions, the day-to-day administration was left in the hands of the sthānikas who were seven in number. The rights and responsibilities of each of these sthānikas were well defined and each had administrative authority over groups of servants who were placed under their control. All the facts relating to the temple, its repairs, its endowments, its servants, and its festivals were entered in a temple code known as the Srijāla. The administration was carried on in the manner described in this aide memoire and whenever differences or doubts arose about any question the book was consulted and its regulations followed.
THE SEVEN DEVASTHANAMS: The main devasthanams in and around Madurai were seven in number. The names of these institutions are the Minakshi-Sundareshvara temple at Madurai, the Sundararajaswami temple at Madurai and Kallalagar, the Subrahmanyaaswami temple at Tirupparankunram, the Tirumulanathaswami temple at Tenkaraig Edakanathaswami temple at Tiruvedakam and the Chitrawallabhaswami temple of Kuruvitturai. There were about 16 other minor devasthanams of which the following may be mentioned: Kulasekaraswami temple at Tiruvappudayar, Tirumulanathaswami temple at Madurai, Chokkaratha at Tirumangalam, Chennakesava Perumal at Mullankinaru, Aravatthesvarar at Arayur, Venkatachalapathsavami at Sindupatti, Kailasanathaswami and Gopalswami at Tidiyan, Subrahmanyaswami at Puttur, Karaimelagarswami at Allikundam, Kalameghaswami at Tirumur (Tirumohur), Tirumurinadavam at Tiruvadavur, Kailasanathaswami at Kovilpatti, Agastiswaraswami at Tiruchani (Tiruccunai?), Tirukoithnaswami temple at Tirupakodi, Mangaiapageswaraswami at Perumalai (Pirumalai).

THE KATTALAI: The main sources of revenue for temple administration were the income from lands owned by the temples or endowed by royal and private donors and the offerings in cash or kind made by the public. The villages endowed were of three kinds, namely, Nirothu or Sibbandipuruppu villages granted to certain temple servants who in return had to perform certain temple duties. Other lands called Archanabagha villages owned by the temple were set apart to meet the expenses of the pugas. A third class of grants comprise Arakattalai villages given by donors for specific purposes. These Arakattalai are fixed manyam rent-free lands granted for the purpose of daily offerings and prayers to the deity for the departed donor or rather the continuance of the same mode of worship which the donor observed in his lifetime as the prayer is always as if from the donor himself.

Arakattalai seems to have been of two kinds: (1) Lands granted and added to temple property to pay for the performances of certain religious acts for the benefit of the soul of the departed grantor,

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1. Much of the information is obtained from two original sources, the Sritala and the Manuscript records in the Madras Record Office.
(2) Arakattalai villages which were granted rent-free to individuals in order that they might transfer them to the temples and thus obtain credit for a religious act. Many of these lands had been misappropriated by the servants or managers of the kattalai lands or by the grantees of the kattalai villages. Among the Arakattalai established for the Minākshi temple prior to the time of Yusuf Khan were those of the following: Tirumala Nayaka; Muttamma, mother of Vijayaranga Chokkanatha; Venkatakrishnarma Nayaka, a commandant of the Tiruchi raja (i.e., the Nayaka of Madurai); Madurānāyakam Pillai, a house steward of Tirumala Nayaka; Mannarappaiyan, the vākil of the Tiruchi raja; Minākshi Nayaka, betel bearer to Vijaya Chokkanātha; Alagappa Mudali; Pancāngam Gopala Krishnayyar; Kotosvara Aiyār; Jnanasambanda Pandaram; Muttambala Mudali (Amil of the Tiruchi raja); Dānappa Mudali, a pradhān of the Tiruchi raja; Ariyanayakam Pillai, pradhān of Visvanatha Nayaka, the Raja of Tiruchi; Chinnatambi Mudali, the senāpati of the Raja; Vadamalai Pillai, a pradhān of Tirumala Nayaka, and Dāsi Mutirulayi (who endowed the villages granted to her by Vijayaranga Chokkanātha for her exquisite dance). With the exception of the royal kattalai, the other villages were presented or obtained by the individuals from the king for purposes of their endowments. There have been instances where the grantee retained the lands himself without presenting them to the temple.

The number of these villages is classified as follows: Archanābāga and alankāra grāmas 13 villages; Tiruwilaiyādal grāmas 43; arakattalai villages 66; Tirumala Nayaka's arakattalai 25; tsalattār nirvāka villages 26; minor shrines 12; Tiruppani villages 1. As regards the seven devasthanams it is not clear who were the original donors of the lands. Many of them were usurped during the troublesome times following the disruption of the Nayaka Kingdom. Chanda Saheb seized what remained of the devasthanam lands. Part of these lands were restored to the temple after the capture of Chanda Saheb, but much of the property was again lost. When Yusuf Khan came to Madurai he retained all the temple lands but made a grant of 12,000 cakrams to the seven temples. This amount was reduced to half in the following years. In a cowle written soon after the execution of Yusuf Khan, the Nawab Wallajah directed only the enjoyment of Tirumala Nayaka’s arakattalai and the other grants
were not even mentioned indirectly. When the British took over the administration in 1801 A.D. they ordered the Collector (Hurdis) "to restore to these temples the lands resumed from the pagodas by the late government, but for some reason not traceable. Mr. Hurdis never carried out these instructions and (though the question of its disposal was raised in 1849 and again in 1859) the Hafta Devasthanam land remains in the hands of the Government".

The following statement\(^1\) of the amount fixed in Fusly 1214 (1803 A.D. soon after the British took control) for Tirumala Nāyaka’s kattalai is of some interest as showing the details of the grant and the rate of payments for services. The currency in use at the time were jānams and calli cūkrāms. The relative value in present day currency would be about Rs. 2.12 per chukram

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Āvani Mālam festival</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>To Teppam festival in Tāi</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To adorn the Maiya Mandapam</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>To Chitrai festival</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay for 10 Vedāpārayana Brahmans at 4 c per month</td>
<td>240</td>
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<td>Pay for two Nādaspāram servants at 4 c per month</td>
<td>48</td>
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<td>Pay for one accompanist at 15 fs per month</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
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<td>One dole at 18 fs per month</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One large dole at 15 fs per month</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
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<td>One Kaṭṭalā at 15 fs per month</td>
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<td>One Damārām at 20 fs per month</td>
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<td>One Chank blower at 20 fs per month</td>
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<tr>
<td>One double damārām at 5 c per month</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hire for umbrella or suruti bearer</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elephant feed at 10 c per month</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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1. W. Francis, Madura District Gazetteer, p. 199.
2: Temple Servants

There are stray references to the temple authorities and servants of the Minakshi temple, in inscriptions of the mediaeval period. Apart from this there is not much information about the internal organisation and administration of the temple during the early and mediaeval periods. Probably the general system of temple organisation and administration had become systematised and the same system was followed as in other areas.

From literary and epigraphic evidences a fairly complete picture may be got of the internal organisation of the Minakshi temple during the period of the Nāyaka rulers. The Madurai Sthānikar Varalāru gives an account of the sthānikas who were in charge of the temple management. These facts are supported and corroborated by other literary and administration accounts. It says that prior to the formation of the Madurai Sultanate the management of the Minakshi temple was vested in six persons called Sundara Pāndya Brahmādirāyar, Manunidi Kanda Brahmādirayar, Getti Mudaliyar, Arundaman Viluppādarāyan, Munivariyāda Perumāl and Ulagudaiya Perumāl.

The temple employed a large staff of servants ranging from menials to people well versed in the Śāstras and the arts. They were under the general supervision of seven sthānikas who were each put in authority over specified groups of servants and made responsible for the efficient carrying out of their respective duties by each individual. The seven sthānikas (about 1624 A.D.) were the two battars, Vikrama Pandya Battar, Kulasekhara Battar, Tatpurushadeva Mudali, Periyadeva Mudali, Kanakku Viluppādarāyan, Pāndya Nāttu Mudali and Rajakera Muddirai Kesava Dikshitar. These seven sthānikas were in charge of the seals of the treasury. Apart from the two battars, the insignia of the other sthānikas were the makara mudra (fish seal), makara kodi (fish ensign), pon eluttāni (gold

1. Vide Chapter VI, Section D.
2. Published in Sentamil, Vol. V.
3. The total number of sthānikas seems to have been increased from six to seven at a later date by the inclusion of two descendants of Getti Mudali—Sritala.
scribe), *vrisabha mudra* (bull seal) and *nāga mudra* (serpent seal). The treasury could be opened or closed only in the presence of all these *sthānikas* and when the chief treasury *Sri (Bandāram Karukulam)* is opened the two *battars* should enter it wearing only a *kaupīna* (loin cloth) and bring out the necessary sealed chests in the presence of the other *sthānikas*. They should return the chests sealed in a like manner into the *karukulam*. One *battar* had charge of nearly 20 servants who included the two *nambis* for performing the *pujas* at the two *mulasthānams*. The other *battar* supervised 18 servants including a servant for cleaning the bronze and stone images. *Getti Mudali* had 13 servants who included the man in charge of the provision and condiment stores (*venjana arai*) and a sweep for the kitchen. *Kanakku Viluppādarāyan* had a staff of accountants for the *karukulam*, the surrounding cloisters, the stores for *vāhanas*, umbrellas, palanquins and torches and cowsheds. He had also under him the accountant in charge of the cash accounts for the palace *kattalais* and also the man who reads the daily accounts at the *kedaga pallakku*. *Pāṇiya nāttu mudaliyar*’s staff included an accountant for maintaining credit accounts of palace *kattalais* and also an accountant each for the *Paradesi* and the *vrisabha muddirai* administrations. The *rājakara muddirai* was in charge of the palace *kattalai* and the *puja* priests for the palace.

Among the Brahman servants were astrologers and heralds. The Sudra servants comprised a large number of watchmen and lamp lighters.

The shrines were divided into two groups and were put in charge of each of the two *battars* who had to do the *pujas* and other duties alternately for the two halves of a month. There were a number of *paricharakas* who had various duties to perform such as keeping watch of the *ardhamandapa* and performing *abhisheka* at a number of subsidiary shrines. The shift *paricharaka* had charge of the *dhvajastambha* and attended to the daily duties connected therewith.

There were two *oduvars* who sang *Devāram*, *Tiruvacakam*, *Tiruppallandu* and *Tiruvaisippā* during the daily *pujas*. They had to do similar duties for the *Sribalinnāyakkar*, *Pallakku Chokkar* and during temple processions and *mandagappadis*. They had to read the *purāna* at the *Kulasekkam* festival and the *Sundarar Purāna* on the eighth day festival.
The Kanakkku Viluppādarāyan had to watch all temple activities and maintain full accounts. He had to read out the daily accounts to the Pallakkku Chokkar at the Kambattadi in His daily processions.

The Gadiyāram Muhurttāvadāni (astrologer) should read out the pancengam (calendar) during the vila (morning) puja. He should chant the rudrajapa during abhishekas and read out the time when the Pallakkku Chokkar reaches the Kambattadi. He should fix the auspicious time for festivals and dhvajārohana. He was in charge of the time gong on the Chitra Gopura and had to see that correct time was struck.

The Agamācārya should, in company with the nambiyārs, see that the daily pujas and festivals and samskṛthikās were done according to the Agama sāstras. The nambiyārs should not perform pujas without the permission of the Deiva purohits.

The srayampākis brought the tirumanjanam from the river and served the waters for abhisheka, washed the clothes for the Gec's and served hastodagam during dipa ārādana. They wafted the chāmaraś and bore the kedaka paldaku of Śribali Nāyakar round the prakārās. They had to cook the food properly and tastefully and see that the rice was free of grit. They served as betel bearers, and spread the processional cloths from the Kambattadi on. They had also to take the prasāda to the palace and grind the sandal paste for the worship of the idols.

The adikāra pārapadyam's main duty seems to have been the distribution of cooked rice among the temple servants. The temple watchmen who were mostly Vairāviyans were expected to defend the temple properties even at the risk of their lives in times of danger.

The king seems to have decided the routes by which the temple processions should be taken and the sripādamtaṅgis (bearers) were expected to carry the Gods through those streets only.

There were two sets of melakkāras, one belonging to the temple and the other maintained by the palace. During festivals both melakkāras served together.
The Nattmun with his companions and Dāsis should be in attendance during the daily pujas, nityotsavas and festivals. They should perform outside the Kambattadi Mandapa. They should not enter the mandaapa. The Rudrakanikai on the other hand should perform natanas during all the pujas daily. She should perform the Suddha Nṛtta and ekānta kelikkai from the ārukāl pitha. She should also attend to the niranjana dipā. She should clean the vessels for the nityotsava and distribute the bali at the eight cardinal points during utsavas. During the Āruḍrā festival she should dance the parandu. The Tamil wording is “Parandu ādukiṟadu”. The meaning is not very clear. Possibly the term may have some connection with the description of the God as “Adiṟavāśi ādinār”. She should also perform the Bhairava nāṭaka. She should offer pushpāŋjali and recite slokas when the God arrives at the yāgasāla. The drummer and the Rudrakanikai after performing rakshabhandaṇam should serve at the yāgasāla on the occasion of festivals. She should perform Suddha Nṛtta to Sribali Nāyagar at the eight cardinal points. The cymbalist (ocean) should keep time and should not miss a beat.

The Sirpācāri should see that mandapas, vimānas, and puja vessels and the ashtabandhanam (for mūlavas) and cedibandhanam (for processional images) and similar works were carried out strictly as they are described in the Silpa Śāstras. Without him these works should not be done. He has to undergo Siva Dikshai.

The muddiraikannis, i.e., the sealers of the treasury chests, were under the Nirvāham or Kaiyāli who kept a strict surveillance over the treasury. The Meykaval were special watchers for guarding the jewels. The head karnam and his assistants, the Maniyans kept the accounts of the various kattalais and the day-to-day transactions. A karnam who was in charge of the Pangunimāsa Kattalai met and collected pilgrims from distant country and attended to them.

The temple staff mentioned above seemed to have been continued in the same manner up to the time when the British took over the administration. A statement of servants made in 1981 mentions a number of minor services. These included the temple
potter (kosavan), elephant keepers, tailor, "adorner of car," vai-
ravis, "sacrificer of life at any accident to pagoda" and lamp light-
ters for "cleaning and lighting lamps, carrying torches on festival
days and washing and sweeping pagodas." As the whole temple
was lit with oil lamps, the maintenance of these lamps and the
oil needed for them was an expensive item in the temple budget
and the statement gives an accurate account of all the lamps used
in the temple and the amount of oil consumed by them with the
daily, monthly, and annual cost. Among other servants mentioned
were pujaris who offered puja at the "petty pagodas attached to the
Minakshi pagoda within the town of Madurai," painters "employed
in pagoda business," bazaar man, supplier of timber (firewood?)
and another who supplied punugu or civet, a dyer "employed in
pagoda business," supplier of flowers who supplied flower for each
kattalai, Hanumār pujari whose name, Kesavadas Bhāva, suggests
that he was a northerner, uliyar or peons and ironsmiths.

Most of the temple servants seem to have held their offices
on a hereditary basis. The entries in Sriśala and the manuscript
records mention a number of instances where sons have succeeded
their fathers in the temple service. The word Kāniyātci with reference
to their service signifies that it was a hereditary holding. There is
an instance where the Kulaguru who had no male issue to succeed
him made a dhanaśasana of his Kāniyātci to another battar with the
consent of the committee and the king. There is another instance
where a battar gave part of his puja service as sridana. On another
occasion a battar who was indebted to a colleague mortgaged one
of his puja services to him. There have been instances where battars
have been suspended or removed from service as a result of charges
made against them. One of the battars was charged with the removal
of important āgama and Silpa Sāstra works and other religious litera-
ture on palm leaf which were deposited behind the Sarada pitha.
The same battar was also charged with communicating with the
enemy and is stated to have escaped when summoned by the king.

The duties of these servants were defined very clearly so that
there could be no excuse for their neglect or quarrel arising from any
misunderstanding. Yet quarrels were frequent and it cannot be
denied that temple services suffered sometimes as a result of these
differences.
The rules regarding the qualifications for those who performed the pujas were very strict. The priests were required to have studied the Vedas, Agami Sāstras and nīṭyā pujā vidis under a guru and become proficient by examination. They should be above 40 years and should perform pujas only after ācārya abhishekam (initiation) in the āрукāl pitha of the Amman shrine. A bachelor or widower and people who were lame or short of limbs or who otherwise suffered from any disease should not perform the pujas. The parishtārakas should have undergone diksha and the suyampākis must have had samasa diksha. The ācārya abhisheka seems to have been one of the main conditions for appointment as the first nirvāha or sthānika which office seems to have been held by the two battars in rotation for a term. The battar who had to perform the abhisheka for his term had to pay certain fees which were perhaps of the nature of licence fees. Very often in later years there were frequent quarrels between the two battars over this abhisheka and Tirumala Nayaka appears to have cut the Gordion knot by requiring the two battars to pay the fees and both to undergo abhishekas. The battars should do the puja only on behalf of the king and the dalavāy. Pujas for other people should be done only with the permission of the palace. The offerings made by the king and dalavāy should be remitted to the temple treasury after deducting one-fifth of its fees for the nambiyar and paricārakas. Offerings collected in undials and in festivals should be remitted to the palace but offerings in kind should be entered in the accounts and remitted to the temple treasury.

The paradesi muddirai seems to have been an old institution dating back to Paṇḍya days, when they acted as the guru pitha of the rajas. They had diksha and performed pattābhishēka, were brahma- chāris and resided in the matha. They had the Vrishabha Mudrai and were one of the sthānikas of the temple committee.

This account of the temple servants would show that they were a well-organised body devoted to the safeguarding of the idols and temple property and zealous in carrying out the daily pujas and other festivals according to the āgamas and sāstras. Personal prejudices and influences were prevented by vesting in a body of seven respectable sthānikas the conduct of the material affairs of the temple. The spiritual and āgamic requirements for the worship of the deities and for the numerous festivals were adequately looked after by the battars.
assisted by the Mukurttāvadani, the Agamācārya and the Śilpācārya. Music and dancing were two of the essential requirements in temple services. Vedapārāyana Brahmins and Oduvārs provided the sacred hymns while Melakkāras and Devadāsis performed the music and the dances. The devadāsis belonged to distinct classes like Dāsis, Nāṭakasālai women and Rudrakannis. The Rudrakannis enjoyed higher privileges and actually helped in the yāgasala and also took part in certain festivals.

The king was closely concerned with the affairs of the temple and in the conduct of its business. He granted lands not only for his own kattalais but also for the expenses of the administration, pujas and festivals and the payment of the servants. He presented to the temple many jewels and vāhanas and constructed or renovated many structures in the temple. He also instituted festivals and ordered the routes through which temple processions should be taken. He appointed his own kulaguru and Rājakara Muddinai to look after his temple kattalais and supervise the temple worship generally. The Rājakari Muddinai was a member of the committee of sthānkas. The king took part in many temple festivals as for instance at the annual coronation ceremonies of Minākshi and Sundaresvara and also in some of the festivals enacting the Tiruvilaiyādal legends. The Sriftāla gives a number of occasions when the ruler settled disputes between the battars or other temple servants.

3. PUJAS

The temple pujas fall under three categories, namely, nitya pujas which are done daily, māsa visesha which are performed once a month and thirdly, āndu visesha or festivals which are celebrated once a year. The expenses for these were borne by the temple itself from the income of lands owned by it or from the many endowments and grants made to it by the rulers or the public.

Daily pujas are offered according to the āgamic sastras and are practically the same as they are in many Śaiva temples. The ritual today is practically what it has been for hundreds of years past.

Seven main shrines where daily pujas were offered are mentioned in the Sriftāla and in the early records of British administration. These shrines refer to Sundaresvara and Minākshi shrines, Siddhi Vināyaka,
Dakshināmurti, Sattaiyappar, Bhairava and Surya-Chandra. A number of minor shrines are mentioned in addition to the minor Devas-thānam referred to earlier p. 291. Among these are the Hanumār temple near the Main Guard, Vyāsaraṇya Hanumār, Narasimha-śvāmi, Sūlattamman, Kāṣi Viśvanātha, Sanjivarāyar, Pāndyara Vināyaka, Arasadi Vināyaka, Elukadal Vināyaka, Hanumār temple at the North Gate, Virabhadrāsvāmi and Padinettāmpadi Karuppan.

The puja seems to have been performed six times in the day starting from the vīḻa puja in the early morning to the Mākkutī Kalittal at night. The nitya puja at the two main shrines comprised the abhisheka, dipa-ārādhana and naiyedya. The abhisheka dravyam or articles for abhisheka included honey, tender coconuts, two sorts of sandal, plantain fruits, paccac karpur, civet, sugar, curds, parimīla dravyam or scents, benzoin, and vibhuti. The following were used for preparing the naiyedyas: black gram and green gram, jaggery, tamarind, salt, pepper, cummin, mustard and dil seeds, dry ginger, cardamon and rice. The following among other varieties were prepared for the naiyediya: Dosai and idli, paniyāram, adirasam, tenkulal, puliyodarai, śāmbār sādam, and dadlyonnam. The naiyediya was distributed according to custom among the sīvabandis or employees.

During the day the Nityotsavar, Pallakku Sokkar, was taken in procession three times a day round the prākāras of the temple with music and all honours. These puja and customs are still observed at the present day.

The monthly festivals referred to certain fixed festivals which occurred once every month. For instance, the māsa sankrānti, i.e., the first day of the Hindu month, the Kārtigai nakshatra, being 13 days in the year, the monthly pradosha, being 24 days in the year, Sukraāra, being 52 days in the year, and Full Moon days. The monthly festivals also seem to be conducted more or less in the same manner today.

An important part of temple ritual is the ashtabhandana or the fixing of idols which has to be done strictly according to the ṛgamic śāstras. The ashtabhandana refers to the fixing of mulava bheras or stone images on their pedestals. The chedibhandana refers to the fixing of the processional or bronze images on their pedestals. The Śrītāla says that the temple authorities should draw up an account for gathering the necessary materials for these ceremonies.
according to the uttama, madhyaama, adhama and adhamadhamma classes mentioned in the sastras and for performing the abhishekas, japa-tapas and for paying the customary fees to the nambiyar and silpachari. This account should be submitted to the king and after obtaining his consent, they should perform the necessary rituals in the agamic manner.

4. ANNUAL FESTIVALS

Many festivals of the Madurai temple have an ancient tradition behind them. For instance, the Tiruvadiral festival during the month of Mārgali which is one of the chief festivals at the present day, is referred to in the Paripādal. Mediaeval Pāṇḍya epigraphs from the Madurai temple mention the Aavaittirunal and the Tiruppūrattirunubu festival in the month of Aippasi.

According to the Sritāla the Māri (February-March) festival and muraikotsava seem to have been celebrated from time immemorial. The big car festival also was held similarly from ancient times. The Navarātri festival and the Amman Kolu or Darbār are observed from Purānic times. During Krsnadeva Raya’s time the Adī festival for Amman was inaugurated. During the time of Tirumala Nayaka under the administration of Ayyā Dikshita, grandson of Appayya Dikshita, the Tiruvahadal festivals were instituted as also the Aavani Mula, Cistra and Vaikāši Vasanta festivals held in the Pudu Mandapa. Tirumala Nāyaka also dug the Vandiyur Teppakkulam and originated the big floating festival. During the time of Mangammāl the Uñjal festival in Ani and the Kārttigai festival were founded. The Kodai or summer festival in Panguni is celebrated in the Velliyaambalam. So from Tirumala’s time festivals are celebrated all the twelve months of the year. This was continued by the Carnateka or Muslim rulers.

1. Paripādal, ii. 74-79.
3. Since the Aavani festival is mentioned in mediaeval epigraphs, Tirumala might have revived an old festival or instituted the old festival on a grander scale.
4. The Sangam works state that Madurai was noted for the unceasing celebration of festivals. But there is at present no definite information about the festivals celebrated in the Madurai temple during the Sangam age.
The annual festivals seem to have continued to be observed in the same manner during the years following the Nayaka rulers. An early British record for Fusli 1212 (1802 A.D.), besides giving the names of the festivals gives in detail their expenses also. The annual festivals mentioned below are from this record.

The Citra festival during April-May opens with the reading of the new year’s almanac when a pair of dhotis costing about Rs. 3 was presented to the Jotukar. The main festival was the Tirukkalayana celebrated for ten days and concluding with the big car festival. On the sixth day of this festival is celebrated the victory of Sambandar over the Jains. On the seventh day Kankalanathar alone goes in procession through the streets On the eighth day is celebrated the Pattabhishekam of Mirakshi Amman.

MINAKSHI’S PATTABHISHEKAM: It seems to have been the custom for the rulers of the land to participate in the ceremony. The Sntala manuscripts trace the history and give a lengthy description of the ceremony during Tirumala Nāyaka’s time. They give a picture of royal pomp and pageantry and incidentally reveal a facet of temple administration.

Till the year S. 1544 (1622 A.D) it was the custom for the kings to place the sceptre before their family deity and take it from there but during Tirumala Nāyaka’s days when many new festivals were introduced and celebrated on a large scale a change was made in the celebration of the Pattabhishekam festival. On that day the sthanika and bhattars went to the palace and intimated the king who thereupon had his ceremonial bath and after fasting for the day, used to go to the temple in the evening when the God and Goddess would be seated on a throne in the anikal pitha of the Amman shrine.

At the temple the day would start with the tirumanjana or the abhisheka which would be taken in a procession with many torches and dancing girls singing and dancing and with the music of pipe and drums. Thenambi, the officiating priest, would perform the paja according to the agamas. The seven sthanikas would open the sealed chest in the karunulam and take out the coronation crown, the sceptre and the five seals of office which they would place on a special plate and go in procession to the Amman Sannidhi where after the nambi had
finished the puja the two battars would each place the crown and the sceptre on the Goddess. After the naivedana the kattiyam (heralds) would go to the palace and inform the king. The king would thereupon mount the State elephant and seat himself on a jewelled throne under a golden canopy (howdah) carried by the richly caparisoned elephant. He would go in procession to the temple accompanied by the 72 poligars and their huge fully armed retinue to the music of 18 different instruments. Brilliant torch lights and fire works would illuminate the processions. Many dancing girls would provide dance performances on the way. The splendour of the procession, says the book, cannot be adequately described. Arriving at the temple, Tirumala Nāyaka would proceed with all his retinue to the Amman Sannidhi āṅkāt pitha. Immediately dapārādana with all honours would be performed before the Goddess and after the king had his darsan the two battars would offer him vibhuti prasādas and also the nīlāṅkāta or the big garland and the twin garlands with which the Goddess was decked. Thereafter they would place sādāra and the ceremonial head dress (parivatta) on the king’s head after which they would give him the sceptre. Following this, the sthānīkas would be offered vibhuti prasādas and candana and given the respective seals of their office. The seals of office were Makara Muddirai, Makara Kodi, Ponnelutthi, Vrishabha muddirai and Naga muddirai. After distribution of the seals they would proceed with the king to the Sannidhi Gopura where the king would mount his elephant again. The sthānīkas and the battars would get into palanquins and the rest would be mounted on horses and go in State procession round the town. After going round the town the king would arrive in procession before the Āsthāna Mandapa in the palace. A throne would be placed in this fully decorated Āsthāna Mandapa. The sceptre would now be placed on the throne, the king remaining beside it with the sthānīkas. Naivedya and dipārādana would be offered to the sceptre. The Prabhāni, Dalavāy and the poligars and other chiefs would offer their tribute to the king after which the king would present sādāras and bracelets to the two battars and shawls and ear-rings or necklets to the five nīrāchus. Customary presents would then be made to other people at the Durbār. The king would then permit the sthalattār to take leave and attend to their duties in the temple. Thereafter the palace dignitaries and poligars would be given presents after which only the king would retire to his private
apartments. By this time it would be day dawn and āyās would now be offered to the sceptre which till now had remained on the throne. It would then be taken back in procession to the temple. In this way the coronation of the Amman was used to be celebrated in the month of Citrai. During Mangamal’s reign difficulties arose because being a woman she could not take part personally. Battars or other representatives took part and the ceremony lost much of its pomp. A similar ceremony was done for God Sundareswara and the Goddess in the Svāmi Sannidhi ārukāḷ pātha on the seventh day festival in the month of Āvani. But during this festival the sceptre would remain in the palace on the following day also. On the ninth day when the Piṭṭukku Maṇ Sumandadu festival was celebrated the king would proceed in procession with the sceptre to the Piṭṭutopppu where a symbolic ceremony re-enacting the legend would be held.

On the ninth day of the Citra festival Minākshi’s Digvijaya was celebrated with the God and Goddess seated in the Indra Vimānam. On the tenth day Minākshi’s marriage was celebrated. The entries in the record are interesting. It mentions $3\frac{3}{12}$ in pagodas weight of gold for Minākshi’s tirumangalāsam valued at 5 cakrams (about Rs. 15) was given to the goldsmith who was paid a wage of 1 f. (about 4 as.) The Subrahmanyasvāmi from Tirupparankurum was brought to Madurai for the marriage and the sthalattār of that temple were paid a customary fee of 5 ts. The record mentions in detail the various customary fees paid to the temple servants during this festival. The big car was prepared and a number of artisans like the mason, carpenter, blacksmith and painters were employed, for the purpose. Many of the articles for the car had to be brought from Tirupparankurum. Among other things the account mentions a sheep for bali. The saptāvara cappara festival and the Citra pournima utsava were also celebrated.

In Vaiḷāi (May-June) Vasantotsava was celebrated for ten days. This took place in the Pudu Mandapa. One of the items of expenditure mentioned was the hire fee of 2 ch. paid to the kotton (mason) for fixing the canopy. The record mentions a Fallakkoo Vasanta Utsavam for one day and a Tiruvanandal Vasanta Utsavam also for one day besides a ‘Vedivantco chuppum’.

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The unyal utsava was the highlight of the Āni (June-July) kattalai. This festival which was celebrated for 10 days had no processions in the outer streets. The Uttarā Nakshatra utsava was also performed in the month. The Mulaikkottai Tiruvilā and the chuttu tari were the main celebrations in the Ādi (July-August) month. These also were for ten days. The Purā Nakshatra was celebrated. New account for the year seems to have been started from this month as the record mentions the expenses of a puja for the purpose.

The Āvani month (August-September) opens with Vināyaka Caturī in which the Mukkuruni Pillaiyar occupies the limelight. This is followed by the important eighteen-day Āvani Mula festival. Many incidents from the Tiruvilaiyadal legends are enacted during the different days of the festival. These culminate with the Pīttukku man sumanda līlā in the Pīttuttoperu when the king took part in the festival. The account includes an expense of eight annas paid to bearers for carrying the 48 images of the Sangattār.

The ten day Navarātri festival is the most important in the month of Purattāsi (September-October). The expenses include fees paid to decorators including one to tailors for pith flowers, svatantra for hattas and Brahmins for ten days' alankara of the Amman and presents to dancing girls. The Dasara seems to have been celebrated at the two Hanumān temples at North Gate and Main Guard Gate and also at the Vyasaraya Hanumān temple.

In Aippasi (October-November) Bhairani nakshatra utsavam for Bhairava was celebrated but the festival of the month was the Dipāvali for which oil for abhisheka and clothes for all the shrines, main and subsidiary, in the temples and those in the neighbourhood were bought. The accounts give full details of these purchases. Purā nakshatra utsava was done in a similar manner as for Ādi Pura. The Pāvittrotsava for five days and Skandasashti at the Subrahmanya Svāmi shrine were also performed during the month.

The Karttigai month (November-December) is noted for the Dipotsava when the expenses included fees for building the Chockapana and burning it. Karttigai Somavāra was observed. The Karttigai festival runs for ten days and includes the Tiruvilaiyadal legends of the impalement of Jains. Abhishekas were done for the 63 saints, Aruvattumunar, and the karnam who read out their names was paid two janams or about eight annas.
The *Mārgali* (December-January) festivals included the *Dhanur-māsa pūja* for thirty days and the *Ārada nakshatra* festival for one day. Ten days were devoted to *Mānīkkāca kar uṣaṇa* and one day for the *Rātana* festival when dancing girls took part in a sort of maypole dance. The *nattuvan* and the dancing girls were paid about five rupees each.

A number of festivals were celebrated in *Tōi* (January-February). *Makara Sankrānti* was observed and *māttu-pongal* also for which customary fees were paid to the cow-keepers. A ten day *uṣaṇa* for Sellattamma Durga was held. An entry in the accounts mentions a fee paid to "opening the eyes of the Patalum". It is not clear what is meant by this. A buffalo seems to have been sacrificed and for this ceremony fish, mutton, eggs, and liquor were bought in addition to the usual articles of *pūja*. The main festival of the month was the *Teppal* at the Vandiyyur or Māriyamman Teppakulam. A number of artisans and articles are mentioned for building and decorating the floating *chappam* and these give information about the colours used and the mode of dyeing adopted in those days. The *Tiruvilaiyādal* legends enacted during this festival included the defeat of the Jains and the killing of the *Māya* elephant.

The *Māsi* month (February-March) started with the *Si va rātri*. New clothes were bought for all the deities. The *maṇḍala uṣaṇa* which was held for a period of forty days started in this month and as usual for every other festival this account mentions the customary fees paid to temple servants.

The *Panguni* (March-April) festival was a ten day affair known as the *Vasanta Utsavam*. This month the God and Goddess went to Tirupparankunram for the marriage of Subraṇānāy Saṅkī.

**TEMPLE HONOURS**

The temple observed etiquette as much as the royal court and had its own form of honouring its devotees. The honour shown to the king when he attended the coronation ceremonies in *Citra* and *Avani* months were a *Cātra* and a *megavāna* (blue) silk *parivatta*. The same honours were observed when he took part in the arrow-shooting or
took part in the Tiruvilaiyādāl legends relating to the māya pāsu or snake sent by the Jains. When the king attended the temple for worship on ordinary days the cātra and the silk were brought with him from the palace and these were used and sent back. If sthānikas from other temples or vidyās or dance masters visited the temple or held discourses the temple authorities after taking the permission of the palace would tie a single cloth pārivatta. If Subrahmanyasvāmi or Manikkavacakar attended the Cītra or Āvani month festivals a red silk cloth would be used. On the occasion when a nāmbi or sthānika was newly appointed to fill a vacancy he would be honoured with a silk dhoti pārivatta. Rudrakannis on initiation should have their tirumangalya tied by the nāmbi in the Śvāmī shrine ānukāl pitha and after dhiśka should be honoured with a red silk saree pārivatta. After this initiation she should not mix with Sudras. For the dēvadāsis one of the battars should tie the pottu before the Nayakar Sannidhi and honour them by a five cubit long pārivatta. The same honour was done to the nathwān also. For the Purana Batyar who took part in the kili ānukkum īla one cloth pārivatta was tied and for the man who carried the inexhaustible paddy bundle (ulavāk kottai) a red cloth was tied.

An inventory of coins which remained in the treasury of the temple at the time when the British took over the administration (about 1802) gives a cross section of the currency in use. The following coins are noted. Star Pagodas, P.N. Pagodas, Bahadary Pagodas, Culli Cakrams, Contaroy, New Veroy chs, Old Veroy chs, Gopauly chs, Myely tanams, Company rupees, New P. Rupees, Aroct rupees, Sultanny rupees, Old P. Rupees, Anay cash, and Chillaara cash. The values of these are variously given but the currency in use at the time seems to have been tanams and culli cakrams. According to the Madras Manual of Administration a culli cakram was equal to 10 tanams and was worth about Rs. 2-12.

The details about temple administration, puja and festivals, except where noted specifically, refer to the practice obtaining in the Nayaka and post-Nayaka periods and the years immediately following the assumption of the administration by the British in 1801. They have no reference to the administrative system or to the mode of conducting festivals in the present day.
The Kudal Alagar Temple

The Kudal Alagar Temple which is to the south-west of the Minakshi Temple possesses as ancient tradition as the latter temple. It has its own Sthalapurana called the Kudal Puranam.

The deity of the temple is called Kudal Alagar and is installed in sitting posture in the lowest storey, in reclining posture in the second storey and in standing posture in the third storey of the vimana. It may be recalled here that the deity in the Vaikuntanathaasvami temple at Conjeevaram is also in the three postures of sitting, reclining and standing in three tiers of the sanctum.

Unity and simplicity combined with elegance is the keynote of the architectural style of this temple. Unlike the Minakshi temple with its many lofty gopuras, towering above the central shrine, the outer gopuras of the Kudal Alagar temple are subordinated to the beautiful central vimana which is called the Ashtanga Vimana. The vimana rises from a square basement in the shape of a perfect pyramid and is capped by a circular copula, with a pointed golden stupa on top. The general style of the architecture of this temple seems to be of the late Vijayanagar period. A noticeable feature is the number of tiers on top of the karnakudus, pancharams and sulas which make each of them like a complete miniature shrine by itself. The same treatment is noticeable on kumbapancarams. The kantha of the upapitha is divided into a great number of panels carved in low relief illustrating Vaishnava legends. On the walls of the garbhagriha there are beautifully decorated pierced stone windows.

There are a number of portrait sculptures in the temple probably representing some of the Vijayanagara viceroy. Their identity is not clear at present. On the ceilings of a mandapa with finely polished black stone pillars there is some carved wood work. The wooden ceiling, however, is in a neglected state and many of its carvings are missing. There is, however, a small panel of Rama Pattabhishekam which is beautifully carved and worth noticing.
In the early years of the present century the Amman shrine of this temple was pulled down and completely renovated. Many of the inscribed slabs of this shrine were heaped in a corner of the nearby Madanagopalasvami temple. Subsequently they appear to have been either misplaced or lost.

The Vijayanagara rulers and their officials appear to have made liberal benedictions to the temple as borne out by many of the epigraphs found in this temple. A record of Ramaraja Vithaladeva Maharaja dated S 1469 (1547 A.D.) states that Kandadai Konaman supplied stones for building the artha manda of the temple and that the work was completed during the administration of Immudi Yellappa Nayakkar.¹

The temple seems to have suffered during the various sieges of Madurai in the 18th century. Its outer walls bear marks of gun shots.

The teppakulam of the temple is at a little distance to the north.

**THE MADANAGOPALASVAMI TEMPLE** is very near to the Kudal Alagar temple. Its vimana is a fine piece of architecture. The high circular gopura on its own adhishtanam is a feature worth noting. The present vimana is a restored one but the restoration follows closely the original structure. A picture of the vimana before restoration may be seen in Norman Brown’s book “A Pillared Hall”.² The upapitha below the kapola is under the present ground level. On the walls of the artha manda there are many Ramayana panels in low relief, but the work is not of a very high order. Many parts of the temple are in a bad state of preservation.

**THE NANMAITARUVAR TEMPLE** which is also close by is connected with some of the litas in the Madurai Tiruvillaiyadals. The deity is called Immay Nanmaitaruvar and is said to have been set up at Naduvur and worshipped by God Sundaresvara Himself when He ruled as the Pandya king in Madurai. The present temple does not

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¹ M.E.R. 357 of 1911.
² W. Norman Brown: A Pillared Hall from a Temple at Madura, 1940.
contain ancient vestiges though renovators appear to have attempted to conform to the earlier forms. The outer gopura has at present no brick superstructure. The stone case might be assigned to about late 16th c. architecturally. On the ceiling inside the entrance of the gopura there is a panel of faded and discoloured painting. The stone beam has a beautiful carving of a lake scene with birds, boatmen and lotuses and recalls the painting in Sittannavasal.

THE TEN TIRUVALAYUDAIYAR AND VADA TIRUVALAVAYUDAIYAR temples are also connected with the Tiruvulaiyadal legends. Both are small temples. Except perhaps the garbhagriha which may roughly be assigned to the late 16th c. A.D., the former has no vestiges of older structures. The base of the garbhagriha has a high upana and a chambered kumudam above which are a karthi with lotus medallions and an agripattiyal. The other temple which is now generally called Palaiya Cokkanath Temple is an entirely modern structure built during the early years of the present century.

TEMPLES TO VIRABHADRA are uncommon in the Tamil country1. There are many sculptures of Virabhadra in the Minakshi Temple. There is also a Virabhadra temple in the West Masi Street. The worship of Virabhadra was probably patronised and popularised by the Vijayanagara and Nāyaka rulers who were Telugus and were worshippers of this deity.

THE SELLATTAMMAN DURGA TEMPLE is to the north of the city and is believed to be Kāli, one of the guardian deities of Madurai city, mentioned in early works.

THE TIRUVAPPUDAIYAR TEMPLE on the northern bank of the Vaigai has an ancient history. It has a sthatapurāna. The older name of the place is Tiruvāppanur. The temple is mentioned in the Divyavadāna. A few bulbous capital pillars with large abacus and square basse may be seen in the temple. The corbels are of a later nondescript type. Some of the utvara images in the temple are good specimens of early metal work.

Tirupparankunram

Tirupparankunram which is four miles to the south-west of Madurai is famous for its Subrahmanya temple which is one of the six Padaividas sacred to God Muruga. The temple is at the foot of the hill which rises to a height of 1048 feet. From early times the hill as been regarded has a holy place by the Hindus and by people of other sects. There are evidences that the hill has been resorted to by Jains in the earlier centuries, by the Hindus from very early times and by the Muhammadans also for a considerable time. The Hindus regard the whole of the hill as the sanctum itself and therefore circumambulate the hill. At the top of the hill is a tomb stated to be that of a Muslim Fakir. The tomb is visited by Muhammadan pilgrims who call the hill Sikandermalai. The Hindus call it Skandamalai or the hill of Skanda.

The Jain vestiges are on the western slope of the hill where there are some “Panca Pândava” beds in two natural caverns with a short Brahmi inscription. Further evidences of Jaina association are on the southern face of the hill where near a natural spring known as the Saravasti Tirtha two panels of Jaina figures are carved on an overhanging boulder. The first panel has a standing image of a Jaina Tirthankara probably. Two women attendants are on either side of it and two cobras flank the figure below its knees. The other panel has a similar standing figure with a five-hooded serpent over head with perhaps an umbrella about it. This carving probably represents Pârśvanâtha.

Brahmanic sculptures are found a little way further to the south-west near the Kâsitirtha. The images of Siva, Vinâyaka, Subrahmanya, Bhairava and Visâlakshi are sculptured in low relief in five different cells on a boulder here. There are two other rock-cut Hindu shrines. One is on the southern side of the hill and is called Umaiyaândân Koyil and the other is the well-known Subrahmanya temple at the northern foot of the hill.

1. The rock-cut caves and carvings in the Subrahmanya temple and that at Umaiyanad are described in Chapter IV, Section B: 2 (iv).
A striking feature of the Subrahmanya temple is the number of mandapas which rise one above the other to the level of the rock-cut sanctum itself. The mandapa immediately in front of the sanctum may be said to correspond to the ardhamandapa. It is in the Madurai style and was perhaps built by Tirumala Nayaka whose statue is carved on one of the pillars here. Next to this mandapa is the Mahāmandapa and further on at a lower level is the large Kambattadi Mandapa. There are two unidentified Nayaka figures in this mandapa but the two most interesting sculptures are those of Parāsarar and Vedavyāsar. The sculpturing is probably that of a master hand. The characterisation is remarkable and the features have very little conventionalism. In the adjoining Shanmukha Mandapa are two other portrait statues of donors probably. Lower down than the Kambattadi Mandapa is the Tiruvaiyādal Puṇāna. Prominent among these are Siva feeding the pigs, the tigress suckling the deer, Minākshi’s digvijaya and marriage, Jvaradeva and an Urdhvar. The Urdhvar is a powerful ten-armed, sculpture with two figures of Surya and Chandra in medallions above the prabhāvali. The marriage panel is not a good piece of work, but Minākshi on digvijaya seems to be better. The entire story from the killing of the pig to the feeding of the piglings and their subsequent life as ministers is carved. The Jvaradevar follows the usual style of three-legged figure but the exception is the axe in the back right hand. On the same level of the Tiruvaiyā Mandapa is the Vasantha Mandapa and the tank. In a passage leading to the Vasantha Mandapa are four figures of Ashtasaktis. The other four images are missing. In the Vasantha Mandapa are two finely carved identical figures of which one is stated to be that of Muttambala Mudaliar. The mandapa also contains wooden images of some of the deities in the temple. These are stated to have been made when the temple underwent renovation and worship was offered to these wooden images. Whatever their origin may be they are today rare specimens of wooden images and so have to be taken care of. They are carved.
from the *Kalliati* (*Ficus tommosa*), a tree which abounds in the locality. The images represent two kneeling *dvārapālakas*, and a seated Subrahmanya which is placed on a high pedestal. The pedestal has an elephant and a hippocriff at the corners with two *ganas* between them and in the bottom panel are a peacock and a cock, the symbols of Subrahmanya. Next to this group is a figure of Durgā standing over a buffalo’s head and next to that a Vighnēsvāra.

In front of the *Tiruvaśi Mandapa* is the *gopura* of the temple. It is a seven-storeyed structure. The *gopura* base which is in stone is two-storeyed and is a typical Vijayanagara specimen. Its kutas, *pancarams* and *śālais* stand out well from the wall surface. The wall surfaces have wall pilasters and short pilastered wall niches without niche openings. The order is repeated in the storey above. The projecting bays carry a smaller projection in front of their own wall surfaces. Altogether it is a well-proportioned structure. Instead of the usual *Gangā-Yamuna* motif there are two figures of donors or devotees in their place on the door jambs. From two inscriptions in the *gopura* dated S 1505 (1583 A.D.)¹, it is learnt that the *gopura* and the wall (*tirumalī*) were built by *Kṛṣṇa Virappa Nayaka*, the grandson of *Visvanatha Nayaka*.

A third inscription² in the *gopura* states that *Kṛṣṇa Virappa* built a *kalmatha* near the *gopura* and set up in it the image of Ganesa (Aṅgara) for the merit of *Visvanatha Nayaka* who was an ardent devotee of *Sokkanātha*. There is at present a temple of *Sokkanatha* in the Sannidhi Street, with a large *mandapa* in front of it where sculptures of Ganesa in various forms are found. There are also images of *Indra*, and *Ganesa* in the Śvāmi shrine here. At the entrance to the Śvāmi shrine here are two figures of *Nayakas*. The *kalmatha* mentioned in the inscription may be a reference perhaps to this *Sokkanatha* temple, though its precise location according to the inscription is not certain.

Crossing this *gopura* one enters the *Asthāna Mandapa*. This is the entrance *mandapa* to the temple and is a very impressive building. The front pillars carry equestrian figures in the central

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¹ M.E.R. 262, 263 of 1942.
² M.E.R. 264 of 1942.
members. The two corner pillars carry sculptures of Subrahmanya and Suran each standing within a pavilion. Between these and the equestrian pillars is a yāli pillar on either side. The sculpturing is not of the high standard of the Pudu Mandapa, but the array of pillars on a high base is impressive. The mandapa carries a heavy cornice with a gaily painted parapet ornamentation above it. The interior of the mandapa measures 116 feet by 94 feet with 48 monolithic pillars, each about 25 feet high. The pillars which carry a full compliment of bracketed capitals are sculptured with many iconographic figures. Among the figures in the mandapa are Naṭaraja, Minākshi, Patañjali, Vyāghrapāda, Urdhvar and Kāli. The sculpture of Subrahmanya as Devaseena Kalyānamurti which is in the central nave of this hall needs special mention as it is a particularly fine piece of work and looks almost like that of Minākshi-Sundaresvara’s marriage in the Madurai temple. A statues of queen Mangammāl identical with that in the Nagara Mandapa at Madurai is on one of the pillars of the central nave in the Asthāna Mandapa. The presence of this statue here leads one to infer that this mandapa may have been built during her reign.

During the military campaigns of the 18th c. the temple appears to have been used as a hospital for some time and is referred to as a “Rest House”. One account says that “The hospital was in a great Rest House wherein were at least 300 sick people. I have never seen such a beautiful Rest House. It is all of hewn stone. The roof also of broad hewn stones, which are well fitted together, is supported upon a number of splendid pillars covered with carved figures. At the entrance one sees a crowd of lions and horses with riders all carved in stone. It is lofty, wide and long, but as air can come in only by the entrance, it was very unhealthy for the sick.” The above account evidently refers to the Asthāna Mandapa.

During the several sieges of Madurai in this period Tirupparannurram appears to have served as an outposted a military camping ground. An inscription in the temple dated in S 1714 (1793 A.D.) belonging to the reign of a certain Hazarat Kepilai Nababu Saheb,

states that a European regiment camped near Tirupparankunram, and did much damage to the temple. They demolished the Sekkanathaswamy temple and the Palaniyandavan temple, occupied the town, entered the Āsthāna Mandapa, forced their way through the blocked-up entrance of the gopura, and proceeded towards the Kalyāna Mandapa. At this juncture the various sthānikas of the temple, wishing to save the temple and the town, requested Kuttī, the son of Vairaravi Muttu Karuppan, to sacrifice his life. Accordingly Kuttī ascended the gopura, fell from there as a protest against the demolition of the temples. The European regiment then withdrew. As a reward a rattakkānīkkai was granted to Kuttī’s descendants. Another inscription, probably of about the same date, also refers to a similar incident, and mentions that a rattakkānī was granted to the descendants of one Andarābarana Mudali, the son of Ellappa Mudali, for having fallen from the gopura and sacrificed his life.

Architecturally, the Tirupparankunram hill and its temple afford interesting study since its shrines range from the 7th to 8th centuries to late Nayaka structures. The rock-cut shrines and bas-reliefs may be dated about the 7th or 8th centuries. Of mediaeval Pandya structures there are not many evidences and the survivals are confined to the few pillars with early corbels; for instance in the sanctum are four pillars with 13th c. corbels. Corbels of the early 14th c. type with undeveloped pushpabodigai are at the entrance to the Kambattadi Mandapa. Two corbels of the later 14th century type with pushpabodigai just developing are at the entrance to the Maha Mandapa. The mandapas themselves belong to the Madurai or Nayaka period while the gopura is of the late Vijayanagar period.

Alagarkoil

About 12 miles north of Madurai is the Kallalagar temple in a wide expanse of hilly country. The temple is hugged on the northern and western sides by the hill which bears the deity’s name. The place seems to have been once a prosperous village. The temple and the village were surrounded by a high-walled fort which no doubt was built by some ruler in early times who valued the strategic position of the place. The temple and the ruined

fort walls are the only remains now standing. The village has entirely disappeared leaving only mounds of ruins on either side of the roadway.

One enters the village by the south fort gate. The first object to attract one's attention at the entrance is the Vināyaka shrine known as the Alankāra Vināyaka. The surprise at the presence of this shrine intensifies as one finds more Saiva images and shrines within the main temple itself. The temple is entered by the Hiranyan gate which is in the south wall of the outer prākāra and in a line with the south fort gate. Entering the outer prākāra by this gate one finds to the east of it a large mound of ruins below which is stated to be buried an ancient Subrahmanya shrine.

The main entrance to the temple is the padinettāmbadi vāsal which is on the eastern wall of the third prākāra. This is a seven-storeyed gopura with a stone base two storeys high. The present structure seems to be a 16th century creation. The gopura is remarkable for its clean lines and well-proportioned mass. This doorway, however, is not ordinarily used by the people. The presiding deity of this gopura is known as Padinettāmbadi Karuppannasāmi and next to the Kallalagar himself is the most venerated deity of the place. Strangely there is no idol to Karuppannasāmi. The two doors of the gopura are the only symbols used for worshipping him. He is worshipped by the Kallars and many litigations are settled by the contesting parties taking oaths before this God.

A smaller doorway to the north of the padinettāmbadi vāsal known as the vandi vāsal is now used by the pilgrims. A large open court with many mandaps is seen as one enters by the vandi vāsal. The largest of these mandapas is known as the Kalyana Mandapa with its many monolithic sculptured pillars. The pillars are carved with figures of yālis, iconographic images and portraits of royal personages. Some of these sculptures are those of Narasimhāvatāra, Lakshmi Varāha, Krishna, Garudāruda Mahāvishnu, Anjaneya, Trivikrama, Rati and Manmata. The portrait sculptures are said to represent Krsnappa or Periya Virappa and Visvanatha II, who are stated to have been joint rulers from 1573-1595 A.D. Their identity, however, is not clear. The mandapa could be dated architecturally to the 16th century. Dotted about
this large mandapa are various other smaller mandapas, some of them ranging from early Vijayanagara to the late Vijayanagara periods.

Back of the Kalyāna Mandapa is the Tondamān Gopura¹ which leads to the third prākāra of the shrine. This is a five-storeyed structure. The base of this gopura has an upāna, a high kanta, a chamfered tore and an agrapattiyal. The wall pilasters have square palagai and iadal with a bevel and tenon corbel. The base may be dated about the 13th or 14th century. The brick superstructure above is a later addition. On the south side of this prākāra which is known as the Tirumala Nayaka prākāra are a number of old shrines dating more or less about the same period as the base of the Tondamān Gopura. The first shrine is the Ālvār San ānidhi, the next one the Thāyār Sannidhi with the Sudarsana shrine next to it. In the corner is the palliyyarai. Four portrait statues are in front of the Ālvār shrine. They are two each on either side of the entrance to the shrine. The two figures immediately to the right and left seem to be persons of importance. One of them has the Vijayanagara high cap and a five-row bracelet and is probably a Vijayanagara viceroy. The other one wears a turban and vībhadi and a necklace with a pendant casket like those worn by Lingāyats. Similar figures are also seen in the Madurai temple. There are more statues in front of the palliyyarai. Notable among these is a statue of Tirumala Nayaka and a sculpture of two figures stated to be those of two soldiers. In the north prākāra is the shrine to Sri Godha (Kodaināyaki). In the pillars opposite to the shrine are more portrait statues which are probably those of Vijayanagara viceroys.

In the north-east corner of this prākāra is the Mettu Krishnan Koyil with its large seven-aisled mandapa. On the south wall of the mandapa is an inscription of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya I stating that he built this “Koyil Ponmeynda Perumāl Tīru Mandapam”². The adhisthōna of the Mettu Krishnan shrine has an upāna, padmadala, fluted kumudam, kanyam, and kapota above

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1. M.E.R. 331 of 1929 states that the Tondaiman Gopura was built by Tondai manar, son of Kalingarayar of Sculvattur.
which the wall pilasters rise. The wall pilasters have a *pushpa-bodigai*. The niche opening has its own corbelled short semi-pilasters surmounted by a *kapota*, pavilion and *salai* roof. The *mandapa* here has a curious medley of pillars ranging from the early cylindrical shaft with bevel and tenon corbel to the later composite cubical pillars with bracketed capitals. Two of the pillars are of an early *gopura* type. Others are of the cubical type with early corbels of bevel and tenon or lotus bud type. A characteristic of some of these many-aisled *mandapas* seems to be that the later type of composite cubical pillars usually flank the nave while the side aisles have the earlier types of mixed pillars. This is probably due to the fact that rulers who enlarged an existing smaller *mandapa* into a larger one used the new pillars of the later style in the central nave and the front entrances sometimes. The older pillars of the smaller *mandapa* were used for the side aisles.

The eastern *prākāra* leads to the *Āryan Mandapa* which is another large seven-aisled *mandapa*. This is a characteristic Vijayanagar structure. Its many elegant compound and composite pillars, its lion-based octagonal bulbous capital square *palagai* pillars and its big *cyma-rete* cornice with simulated timber work under the caves all bespeak its Vijayanagara origin. Like the *mandapa* of the Mettu Krishnan Koyil this *mandapa* also has a mixed type of pillars, the nave having cubical composite pillars of the 16th century while the side aisles have cubical pillars with lotus bud corbels of 13th or 14th century type and other pillars with *pushpabodigais* of the 17th century.

The *Āryan vāsal* in the *Āryan Mandapa* leads to the second *prākāra* surrounding the sanctum. Two shrines in this *prākāra* are dedicated to Bhairava or *Kshetrapala* and Valamburi *Vināyaka*. *Vibhuti pratīkās* are given in these two shrines.

The *garbhagnha* has a circular base from which the circular *vimāna* rises. The *garbhagnha* of this shrine is peculiar in this respect because most of the shrines that have a circular *vimāna* have a square or rectangular base. The ambulatory passage in the Alagar temple consequently is circular owing to the shape of its base. This circular *pradakshinagā prākāra* is called *Nangal*
kunram prakāra and contains a number of finely wrought pierced stone windows. Circular or oval vimānas in Vaishnava temples are usually erected over the sayana forms of Vishnu. But here the image is a standing one.

The mūlavar in the sanctum is called Sri Paramasvāmi. He is in the standing posture with Sri Devi and Bhu Devi on either side on the same pitha. The utsavar is called Sri Sundararāja or Alagar. In the sanctum "is kept the wooden image of the god, the processional image (an unusually handsome affair heavily plated with gold), (and) another image, about 15 inches high, made of solid gold and -most beautifully chased." The last-mentioned image is stated to be made of solid aparajī gold and referred to in the Nālāyira Diyā Prabhandam as Sri Solaimalai-karasar.

The vimāna on top of the garbhagriha is known as the Somacandva Vimāna. On the eastern face of it is an arched projecting niche with an image of the God on Garuda Vāhana. On a panel below is a relief of Gajalakshmi. The façade of the projecting arch is an elaborate yāli and makara motif. Three stupas surmount the sikhara. The whole of this vimāna is gilded.

The Rayagopura is on the same south exterior wall as the Hīracanyan gate. This gopura is in complete ruin now. Between the south wall and that of the temple is the Vasantha Mandapa which is another old structure which may be dated about the 14th or 15th centuries. This mandapa is remarkable for its ceiling paintings relating to the Rāmāyana and other Vaishnava episodes. Some of these panels are unfinished. One may notice the artist's mode of work. These paintings are almost similar in style to the Tirupparuttikunram paintings and were probably executed about the same period.

Tirumālirunjolai or Alagār malai has been reputed as a place of great sanctity from ancient times. Natural caverns on the hill appear to have been used as resorts by Buddhists and Jains as well as Hindu ascetics. One such natural cavern has been discovered

with paunca pandava beds, and Brahmi inscriptions of the 2nd-3rd centuries B.C. as well as a Vatteluttu inscription of about the 9th c. A.D. mentioning the famous Jaina teacher Ajjanandi.¹

Sangam works call the hill variously as Māl═kunram, Tirumāl kunnām, and mention shrines to Vishnu, Balarama and Subrahmanya on the hill. Balarama worship has now become extinct in the Tamil country. The site of the ancient Subrahmanya shrine on the hill is not traceable at present. In the Tirumurugāruppadai Nakkarar refers to Tirumālirunjolai as Palamudintolai, one of the six abodes or padaipudus of Muruga. From the available evidences it may be inferred that Alagarmalai must have been a Saivite centre before it was changed into a Vaishnavite one “because (a) the presiding deity is known only as Paramasvāmin in inscriptions, (b) there are shrines to Vighnesvara and kshetrapāla in the temple where the prasādam is still the sacred ashes, (c) there are shrines for all the minor deities of the Saivite hierarchy within the fort, and (d) much importance is attached to Karuppanna sanctum near which a Subrahmanya shrine is also said to have existed.”²

The Vishnu temple at Alagarkoyil is considered to be one of the 108 sacred Vaishnava shrines, of which eighteen are in the Pandya country. All the Vaishnava Ālvārs have visited this temple and six of them³ have sung 123 pāsuvams in praise of the deity here.

The temple contains a large number of inscriptions, of which the earliest is dated in the 23rd year of Rajaraja Chola. A study of these epigraphs would show that from the time of the mediaeval Pandyas the temple has enjoyed the continuous patronage of the various dynasties which ruled over the Madurai country. Māravarman Sundara Pandya I and Jatāvarman Sundara Pandya I made many benefactions to the temple. The Hoysala Vira Somesvara (1234-1264 A.D.), the māmadi of Māravarman Sundara Pandya II, instituted the “Posala Vira Somidevan Sandi” in the temple.⁴

During the 15th c. A.D. the temple received many benefactions from the Bānādarāyās who were staunch Vaishnavas and regarded God Alagar as their tutelary deity. "Alagar tiruvullam" was one of their sign manuals¹. In about the year 1464 A.D. Tirumālirunjolainirān Māvali Vānādarāyan Urangāvillisāsan had the temple renovated from upāna to stupi by Tiruvāl Somayāji². In the pāliyārāi of the temple is a polished black stone platform (pitha) with the inscription "Bālagopālān tiruppallikkalil". Since "Bhupālagopālala" was one of the titles assumed by the Bānādarāyas this pitha was probably also a gift by one of the Bāna rulers.

The Vijayanagara viceroys and the Nayaka rulers also extended their liberal patronage to the temple. The Rāyavādakamu states that Krishnadeva Raya halted at Alagarkoil for three days after attending the Mahāmukha festival at Kumbakonam in 1517 A.D. Many of the temple structures are in the Vijayanagara style. The Vijayanagara emblem consisting of the boar, conch, cakra, crescent and sword is found engraved in the unfinished Raya Gopura in which there is also a Vijayanagara inscription dated 1546 A.D.³

Tirumala Nayaka is said to have built the third prākāra of the temple, and erected the ivory bedstead in the pāliyārāi. A ruined mantapa to the south of the Hiranyan fort gate is called Tirumala Nayaka Mantapa. A much dilapidated structure near it is stated to be a palace built by Tirumala.

**Tirumohur**

The temple at Tirumohur which is situated six miles north-east of Madurai is one of the 108 Vaishnava sthalas. Nammālvār, Tirumangai Alvār and Manavālamāmumi have sung in praise of the deity here. The legendary origin of the shrine traces the story back to the churning of the ocean by the Devas and Asuras to obtain the divine Amirtham or nectar. Lord Vishnu appeared in the form of the beautiful maiden, Mohini. When the nectar was churned out Vishnu as Mohini collected it. While the Asuras were admiring the beauty of Mohini, she distributed the amirtham to the Devas who were waiting ready to receive it. Mohanakshetra, the

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¹ M.E.R. 25 of 1890.
² M.E.R. 307 of 1930.
³ M.E.R. 93 of 1929.
purānic name of Tirumohur, shows that the nectar was distributed at this place. The goddess of the shrine is also aptly called Meharavalli Thāyār. The deity here is called Kālamegha Perumāl.

The Tirumohur temple is not a large one, but it is an ancient shrine, containing vestiges of early structures, dating back to the 14th century. The main shrine is enclosed by two walls which are unusually high and no doubt tempted many invading armies to use it as a fort. There are many beautiful mandapas in the prakāras. At the east entrance is the Kambattadi or Marudu mandapa which has two fine portrait statues of Periya Marudu and Cinnam Marudu, the noble chieftains who helped Kattabommu and his brother of Pancalankuricci tame and who donated largely to the temple here. The Kambattadi Mandapa leads to the Garuda mandapa which contains beautiful carved pillars with figures of Rama with Sita, Lakshmana, Rati and Manmatha. The Mahā mandapa contains some ornate pillars of the Vijayanagar style.

The Kalamaghappurumāl sanctum is almost a square structure. The base has a high upana with a kumuda and a many-panelled kanta with kapota above which are the adhishthāna mouldings. The adhishtāna has upana and padmodala with kumudam, kantam and kapota. The vedi forms the base from which the wall and its pilasters rise. The central salai has a niche opening. The pāncara projection has a kumbhapancara on either side of it and the corner projections have pilasters with pavilion kudus. The corbels are of the early Vijayanagara period. The cornice above has simulated timber work under it. Above this cornice is a vyalatari with many makaras projecting at the cornice. The superstructure is in two storeys. The intervening spaces between the storeys have each a row of yāli kudus which seems rather peculiar. The vimana is circular but has pronounced projecting pavilion kudus on four sides.

Architecturally the temple may be stated to be about the middle of the 16th c. A.D. There are, however, certain Pandya features inside the sanctum. Near the north-eastern corner is the Kshirābdi Sayananar Sannidhi with eight rows of pillars forming seven aisles. The shrine seems to be an ancient structure. The Kshirābdi Sayananar Sannidhi has square pilasters and twin palagais with a primitive idal below. Nāgabandhas are absent. The niches have short semi-pilasters with a torana above. The shrine probably may belong to the 13th or 14th c.
Another old bit of structure remaining is a disused shrine which has similar pilasters with twin _palagais_, with _virakantam_ and bevel and tenon corbels. The semi-pilasters of the niche are surmounted by a _tiruvasi-torana_.

There is a large Sudarsana image which is on a square slab more than four feet high. On the front Sri Sudarsana is carved with sixteen hands within a circle which has many _tantric_ symbols. The flat surface of the square is carved with many figurines in its various boundaries. The back of the Sudarsana is similarly carved, but in the centre is a figure of Yoga-Narasimha. The figures of Sudarsana and Narasimha are somewhat mutilated, but there can be no doubt that this is a unique piece of iconography which should find a more secure place than the ground on which it stands next to the wall of the inner _prakara_. The image resembles very nearly the large and more famous one in the Kallalagar temple at Alagarkovil which is stated to be the only one of its kind in India. A new image has been installed in the temple in place of this mutilated idol.

There are a number of mediaeval inscriptions on the walls of the temple. From them one learns that various gifts were made to the temple throughout the regime of the Pandyas. During the Sangam period in the early centuries of the Christian era, Tirumohur was the well-fortified stronghold of a Tamil chieftain and hero named Palaiyan. Many Sangam age poets have sung about the place. Ptolemy, the Alexandrian astronomer, writing about 140 A.D., mentions an inland place, Magour, in his Geographical Tables. Probably this is a reference to Tirumohur which was known as Mohur in the early ages.

Even as late as the 18th and 19th centuries, Tirumohur was noted for its strong fortifications. The town and the temple played a prominent part during the troublous times that followed the downfall of the Madurai Nayaka dynasty in the middle of the 18th century. Tirumohur was then variously known as Kovilkudi and Tirumbur.

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1. M.E.R. 330 of 1918, from Tirumohur dated in the 7th year of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya, registers a gift of land to the shrine of Tiruvali-Alvan (i.e., Caikrattigalar) set up in the temple by a certain Gangeya. This might probably refer to the square Sudarsana described above, though the identity of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya among the several mediaeval rulers of this name is not clear.
Tiruvādavar

Tiruvādavar which is 16 miles to the north-east of Madurai, is famous as the birthplace of the Sangam poet Kapilar and the Saiva saint Manikkavacakar who figures in the ātis of the Tiruvilaiyadal purana. The presiding deity of the place is known as Vedapurisvara and Vedanādha. The Sanskrit Sthalapavāna states that when Vishnu worshipped the linga here, the sound “Vedaham” emanated from the linga. Hence the deity here was named Vedanātha. The temple is beautifully situated in picturesque surroundings with the Alagar hills as back-drop. The temple which faces east has a prakāra which an entrance gopura, which is five-tiered. The stone base has a single storey with an adhishthana. The superstructure has only an architectural rendering without stucco figures.

The garbhagriha is a square structure with the usual kutas, pancarams, and salais. The vimana is a cubical one. There is an arghya mandapa and maha mandapa in front of the garbhagriha. South of these mandapas is a projecting mandapa known as the ārukal pitha with bulbous capital octagonal pillars. The mandapa is surmounted by a heavy cornice which is a characteristic feature of this temple. The cornices which are of the cyma reta type with timber work imitation on their under-surface, are heavy blocks of granite from 10 to 14 feet in height. The thickness of these cornices varies from a thin section to a very heavy section. Their carving and subsequent mounting on the entablature speak very highly about the skill and constructional methods of Indian masons. The photographs illustrating the Hundred Pillar Mandapa and the ārukal pitha show details of these cornices. The Nataraja Sannidhi has a beautiful mandapa approached by a yali balustrade with composite pillars of the Vijayanagara type with multifoliated corbels of the same period. Between the Nataraja Sannidhi and the eastern wall is the Hundred Pillar Mandapa of which only a fractional part stands today in a ruined state. The rest of the mandapa is in complete ruin and the debris which lies about is covered by earth and shrubbery. In the south-west corner is a Kalisvara shrine. Short bulbous capital octagonal-sided pillars with late 16th c. pushpa-bodigas corbels are in the front mandapa of the shrine. But the shrine itself appears to belong to an earlier period.
The Amman is in a separate shrine outside the wall to the south of the Sâvami sanctum.

A group of early individual sculptures of the Saptamatrikas is found abandoned against the west wall of the prâkâra. Close to the north wall is another abandoned stone sculpture of Manikkavacaka which is mutilated. A new figure of the saint has been installed in place of the damaged one.

Inscriptions are found in many parts of the temple.

The sanctum and the mandapas in the temple are very chaste specimens of the Vijayanagara style as it prevailed in this region and it is a pity that many of these structures should be either completely ruined or seriously damaged. The temple is laid out on simple lines with the main shrine and the other structures forming a unified whole.

A spot is pointed out in the village as the birth place of the saint Manikkavacaka and a shrine now commemorates it.

B. PALACES

1. TIRUMALA NAYAKA’S PALACE

Tirumala Nayaka is credited with having constructed a number of buildings in Madurai and among these, the most outstanding are the Pudu Mandapa in front of the east Gopura, the large Vandiyur Teppakkulam to the south-east of the city, and the palace named after him in the south-east corner within the fort. The palace grounds originally occupied an area of a square mile. But of the many buildings in this immense area some were pulled down and removed to Trichinopoly by Cokkanatha for constructing his palace there. A number of other buildings suffered much damage during the wars in the middle of the 18th century. About the beginning of the 19th century the palace was in ruins and it was difficult to identify the buildings or reconstruct the layout of the original palace.

The only block that has survived today is the enclosed court known as the Svarga Vilasam and a few buildings adjoining it. The rest of the area has been laid out into streets and built up. However, a few remnants of the old palace buildings are dotted about among the street houses and lend an oddly incongruous note to their surroundings.
A detailed description of the layout of the main buildings of the palace is given in Taylor's "Oriental Historical Manuscripts". The English translation of the description in Tamil is somewhat mistaken, but one could get a fairly accurate picture from the description in Tamil. The map of the city of Madurai in 1757 given in Cambridge's "War in India" shows the palace as it existed originally. Another map of about the same time drawn by the French general Marchand gives almost a similar plan of the main parts of the palace buildings. As the Tamil description in Taylor's "Oriental Historical Manuscripts" tallies with these plans it is possible in a way to reconstruct the plan of the original palace.

In the following description of the palace from the Tamil version of Taylor's book the paragraphs relating to the various buildings have been numbered and as the same numbers are marked in the 1757 plan it may be seen how closely the description corresponds with the plan. It may thus be possible to visualise the various buildings of the palace and where they stood. To further elucidate the positions the old plan of the palace has been superimposed on a corresponding area of the plan of the city today. This would show how the precincts have been cut up into streets and where the old buildings would be most likely situated if they had survived today.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PALACE: The following notes are from the description in Tamil given in Taylor's "Oriental Historical Manuscripts."

1. The main entrance was to the east of Ten Pillars in the north-east corner of the palace.
2. 18 different musical instruments used to be played in the entrance portal.
3. Further to the east was the building where the palanquins etc. were kept.
4. To the west of Ten Pillars was the Ranga Vilasam court.
5. To the north-west of Ranga Vilasam was the Candrika (moonlight terrace) platform surrounding which was an arcade with domes.

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6. On its northern side the guardian rajas (Poligars in charge of the bastions) stayed. Also various weapons and State paraphernalia were kept there.

7. To the west of Ranga Vilasam was the apartment for women.

8. To the south of Ranga Vilasam and in the south-west was the Rajarajesvari shrine facing east with a court in front.

9. There were arcades and open courts with ornamental works on the east of Ranga Vilasam.

10. In front of the Rajarajesvari shrine also was a water fountain and a garden with domed buildings.

11. South-west of this, running east to west was a Nataka Sala (hall) wherein Tirumala Nayaka used to spend the evenings watching dancing by nautch girls when he was seated in torch light durbar.

12. To the west of this hall was a big dome with stone pillars and a platform below.

13. To the south of this was Svarga Vilasam.

14. To the west of the enclosed court of Svarga Vilasam was a big dome with stone pillars and a platform.

15. On the platform during the Navaratri celebrations Tirumala Nayaka used to sit in durbar on a gem-studded throne under an ivory canopy.

16. To the north, south and west of this big dome were three other domes with stone pillars under them.

17. On both sides of the central open court were two arcades with rectangular vaults ornamented with equestrian stucco figures.

18. In the north-east corner of this opposite to the entrance was the staircases leading to the terrace. Tirumala Nayaka with his queens used to watch the temple processions from the terrace. There was an arcade and two towers with gilt stupis at either end of the terrace. In the same way the Ranga Vilasam, the Devi Shrine and the Hall had gilt stupis.

19. To the west of Svarga Vilasam were two beautiful buildings with stone arcades where the queen and other ladies of the harem used to listen to musical entertainments.

20. West of this annexe was the armoury. North of the armoury was the Vasanta Vapi, an ornamental tank surrourding which was an arcade with dome.
21. To the north of this was the palace where the ruler witnessed wrestling bouts, ram fights and other sports.

22. West of this was the palace with domes and arcades where the king's relations used to reside.

23. Enclosing all these buildings was a high wall which ran from the south-east to the north-east unto the balcony tower near the entrance.

24. Outside this wall in the south-west was a pleasure garden where there were platforms with arcades and domes and swimming baths where the king spent the time with his ladies.

25. Tirumala Nayaka's younger brother, Muttala Nayaka lived with his family in Ranga Vilas.

The above description would show that the palace was a vast collection of buildings with domes and turrets, of arcades and open courts with gardens and ornamental tanks. It is difficult to believe that Tirumala Nayaka could have constructed all this huge pile of buildings within his own term of sovereignty. It is more likely that Tirumala Nayaka restored, repaired, or added to existing buildings in addition to many new buildings which he himself erected. Most of these older buildings have now disappeared.

The one building that survives today and that is attributed to Tirumala Nayaka is the Svarga Vilasam or Audience Hall. This huge pavilion which measures 235 feet long and 105 feet wide consists of the Audience Hall at the western end, an open court in front of it and surrounding the open court an arcade and pillared cloisters, in the north, south, and east sides. The pillars of the arcade rise to 40 feet from the ground level while the three rows of pillars in the cloister rise from a platform eight feet high from the floor. The pillars are 16 feet to the top of the capital. The roof of the cloisters is terraced but in the centre the roof rises to a vaulted dome 70 feet high. The audience hall or Svarga Vilasam as it is known has five rows of pillars which rise to the same height as those of the cloisters. Immediately in front of the arcade before the Svarga Vilasam is a pillared mandapa known as the Kalyana Mandapa. The beautiful stuccoed arches of this mandapa rest on four graceful composite pillars. In the centre of the Svarga Vilasam is a big dome measuring 60 feet supported by twelve columns forming a square 64 feet across. These columns have heavy foliated arches and the square is converted
into an octagon by four other arches thrown across the corners on the square. An octagonal clerestory rises from here and 45 feet above the ground the octagonal clerestory is changed by a similar device into a sixteen-sided polygon which is converted into a circle above the cornice from where the massive dome arises. Two smaller domes are to the north and south of this. Below the central dome was a black polished stone platform on which was an ivory canopy. Below this canopy sat Tirumala Nayaka in durbar on a bejewelled throne during the Dasara celebrations.

At the north-west corner of Sverga Vilasam is a hall measuring 125 feet long by 69 feet wide and 70 feet in height. This super-columnated building has a narrow gallery running round all its four sides. Foliated arches connect the pillars and support the roof. According to tradition Tirumala Nayaka used to sit in the evenings in torch light durbar receiving the homage of his subjects or watching entertainments and dance performances. Adjoining the Entertainment Hall on the east is a large domed building which must once have formed part of a larger structure. Its facade is now lost and its original design is not known. It is probably the stone-pillared platform referred to in paragraph 12 of the Tamil description of the palace given above.

Behind the domed chamber of the Sverga Vilasam on the western side are other rooms with tall slender black polished stone pillars and an octagonal domed vault. The photograph shows the mode of construction. Though this is now described as the Puja room, it was probably the building referred to in the Tamil description (paragraph 19) where the queen and other ladies used to listen to music.

The old entrance to the Audience Hall was on the west and the present entrance through the cloisters on the east was made about the end of the last century. Most of the stucco and chunam plastering seen today were recently made during extensive repairs to the buildings, but they follow very closely the original designs as they were before they were damaged.

The Naubatkhana referred to in paragraph 1 of the Tamil description was in a much damaged state and was considered to be beyond repair. The site is now occupied by a primary school.
Walking through the bylanes and streets which now fill what was once the palace ground, one comes across many remnants of the palace tucked among modern houses. The photograph taken from the terrace of a house in Pattumulkaran Street looking towards the ten pillars shows a clerestory window on the left. This is part of a vaulted structure. This probably formed a part of the Rajarajesvari shrine mentioned in paragraph 8 of the Tamil description. Further to the west in Nattanmai Krishna Chetti lane is a building with a large dome in figures. This evidently formed a part of the Vasanta Vapi mentioned in paragraph 20 of the Tamil description. The interior view shows how the present floor level is almost close to the capital of the pilasters. The original floor might have been at a lower level leading to the swimming pool in the centre. The photographs of the interior of the dome and the walls show clearly the method by which a circular dome was erected over a quadrangular structure. A curious remnant of the old palace is the Ten Pillars which stand in a narrow lane. It is not known for what purpose these 50-foot tall pillars were erected, though the popular story is that they were for elephant stables. They might have been projected on a grand entrance way and must have been abandoned by a 40-foot high wall which ran from the south-east to the west and thence to the north from where it continued to the east up to the entrance in the north-east corner. After the downfall of the Madurai rulers when the palace was abandoned and had fallen into ruins the grounds were crowded with huts and it is stated that the walls were pulled down early in the 19th century to admit fresh air to the congested locality. The present Singaratoppu Street marks the site of the pleasure garden which was to the south-west, outside the palace wall.

The architecture of the palace has evoked some interesting remarks from European critics. "The style of architecture adapted throughout this palace", says Captain Lyon in the descriptive notes to his photographs, "is an admixture of Saracenic forms with Hindu details which the native princes of India very generally adopted in the 17th century in their secular buildings. Generally it may be said to be deficient in that harmonious completeness which characterizes the true Muhammadan buildings of Agra and Delhi and to want the elaborate finish of the Hindu religious buildings but the combination is always singularly picturesque and has often given rise to forms of
great beauty. Unfortunately the style was never carried to its legitimate issue; it was invented only on the eve of the decline of native supremacy and power and before it had lasted a century and a half, it fell before the debasing influence of the European style of architecture”. James Fergusson writing about the Durbar hall thinks that “it possesses all the structural propriety of a Gothic building. It is evident that if the Hindus had persevered a little longer in this direction they might have accomplished something that would have surpassed the works of their masters in this form of art”.

E.B. Havell, while agreeing with Fergusson about the Gothic character of the building, thinks that “misunderstood the origin of the great Hindu foliated arches and made the usual mistake of calling them Saracenic”. Like other writers Havell also remarks “this great palace was a beginning of a new style fusing into one artistic entity the individual characteristics of the three different cults now prevailing in India—Hindu, Muhammadan and Christian. The arches are Hindu in form but Muhammadan in application, the ‘classic’ columns which support them are Christian by adoption and the whole building is thoroughly European in structural character.”

But, according to Percy Brown, the palace at Madurai “although a work of considerable magnitude, denotes an architectural retrogression”. Secular architectures up to this time like the Lotus Mahal in Hampi or the Chandragiri Palace showed a successful synthesis of the two influences, Dravidian and Islamic by the South Indian craftsman; but in Tirumala Nayaka’s Palace a third influence, the European, becomes apparent and according to Percy Brown “the builders, while competent to bring about a pleasing result when dealing with the two styles of the country.............are unable to assimilate and successfully combine in their composition a third style, and that an occidental one.”

2. MANGAMMAL’S PALACE

To the north-east of the Temple are a block of buildings known as Mangammal’s palace. These are now occupied by a municipal market and other offices. The only remains of the palace that are seen today are certain remnants amidst these modern buildings.

The characteristic features of these old structures are polished black stone pillars and foliated arches with vaulted or circular domes. The surviving buildings are not architecturally of the same great merit as Tirumala Nayaka’s palace. The only room of some considerable dimension is the large hall with eight polished black stone pillars now used by a P.W.D. Office. A larger hall with masonry pillars and heavy arches similar to those in the Tamkam is adjacent to the north-east corner of the Central Market. Close to it is an open area with an arched wall which is now pointed out as the remains of Mangammal’s bathing chamber.

3. THE TAMKAM

The Tamkam is about 12 miles to the north-east of the present Madurai City, across the river Vaigai. Who built it or how it originated are not definitely known, both Tirumala Nayaka and Mangammal being equally credited as the builders of it. Tamkamun is identified by some with Fort Defiance which was erected during the siege of Madurai by Major Campbell in 1764. “It is the only outpost erected during the siege which can be identified with any approach to confidence. Portions of it are said to be included in what is now known as the Tamakam. It was a lofty building, an old pagoda being utilised in its construction and was used as a signal station for communicating rapidly with all the other outposts.”

All accounts describing the building state that it was constructed on the top of a square mound of earth about 15 feet high with a stone facing on the outside. The pillars which are square support crenulated arches above which is a circular dome with a lotus pattern similar to those of Tirumala Nayaka’s palace. Covering the dome a terrace has been put up and over this a sixteen-sided room with modern flat roof has been built. From the terrace at this level one could command a view of a wide expanse of the country for miles around. Originally this building seems to have been open on all sides but as it was surrounded by a colonnade of arched pillars the place was stated to be remarkably cool. The enclosing walls today are modern constructions.

The purpose for which the building was erected is as uncertain as its origin. The popular version is that it was used by the rulers to witness fights between wild animals or other sporting events.

1. S.C. Hill; Fauz Khan, p. 172.
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