ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPLORATIONS IN AMARAVATHI RIVER VALLEY

The colonial administrators first brought to light the archaeological wealth of Kongu region in the mid part of 19th century as part of their official work. Breeks reported the first archaeological evidence in this part of region in 1837 and it was followed by the discovery of a Roman coin from a grave packed with cairns in Nilgiris (Congreve 1847:92). Since then several archaeological findings were discovered in pre-Independence era by various explorers like Breeks (1837), William Fraser (1861), Walhouse (1873, 1875), Harding (1889-94), Sandford (1901), Rea (1910-11), Longhurst (1913-14), Khan (1930-35) and Rosner (1937). At the initial stage, their works were concentrated in and around hill resorts like Nilgiri, Anaimalai and Kodaikanal hills. Subsequently, their areas of observation were extended to plains due to infrastructure developmental activities particularly railways. Based on the location of sites that they discovered, one could perceive that their areas of exploration fall in line with Nilgiri-Mettupalayam, Coimbatore-Mettupalayam, Coimbatore-Erode and Coimbatore-Palani railway tracts. Thus, the documentation of archaeological wealth of this region was more incidental rather than any systematic explorations. Irrespective of these lacunae, they exposed due to the basic characteristic features of Iron Age monuments of this region. Irrespective of the hiatus, the systematic explorations and excavations carried out in the post-Independence era provided a good basis to reconstruct the cultural process in this region. Some of the systematic excavations carried out by the Archaeological Survey of India, Tamil Nadu State Archaeology Department, Tamil University and Pondicherry University at Perur, Karur, Kodumanal, Boluvampatti, Nedungur and Porunthal threw up rich data to understand the cultural process of this region. Besides, epigraphical and numismatic studies also received some attention. The chance discoveries like Pugalur and Arachchalur Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions and a large number of temple inscriptions and copper plate inscriptions kindled the interest of many epigraphists. On numismatic front, the discovery of large number of Roman coin hoards attracted the attention of many scholars. Nearly 90% of the Roman coin
hoards encountered in Tamil Nadu came from this region. In post-Independence era, large quantities of coins were brought to light. However, the find spots were mostly restricted to a single site namely Karur, the capital city of Sangam Age Cheras. The excavations of the above said sites hardly provided any coins in stratigraphical context except at Karur, Kodumanal and Porunthal, that too with one or two coins. However, the Tamil-Brahmi inscribed coins, late Roman coins and Satavahana coins collected from Amaravathi river bed at Karur provided a new dimension to the study of Early Historic period.

**Previous Studies**

The archaeological studies of the pre-Independence era, particularly the works of Breeks (1837), Elliot (1844), Congreve (1847, 1878), William Fraser (1861), Walhouse (1873-85), Ramavarma (1878), Turner (1879), Little (1883), Harding (1894), Sanford (1901), Sewell (1904), Hosten (1905), Rea (1910-11), Longhurst (1913-14), Anglade (1928), Khan (1930-34), Ramakrishna Reddy (1931), Richard (1931) and Aiyappan (1941) placed the Kongu region firmly on archaeological map. Their findings were published in Journals and Bulletins like Madras Journal of Literature and Science, Indian Antiquary, Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, Ancient India, Anthropos, Journal of Anthropological Society, Annual Report of the Archaeological Department, Southern Circle, Madras, Man, Memoirs of Archaeological Survey, Bulletin of the Archaeological Survey of India, Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society, Numismatic Chronicle, Epigraphia Indica, South Indian Inscriptions and Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy.

J.W. Breeks surveyed Nilgiri region in 1837 and reported Iron Age burials like cairn circles, stone circles entombing cists and urns. The urns containing bones, pots and lids surmounted with animal figurines, bronze bowls and iron implements like razors, spear-heads, etc., were reported by him (Breeks 1873). W. Elliot reported stone circles, rock-cut caves and topikals in Kerala and Nilgiri region in 1886 (Elliot 1847:211-215). In 1847, Congreve explored Nilgiri region and reported cairn circles and compared these Iron Age monuments with the contemporary tribal burial practices. He also collected a Roman coin from a grave (Congreve 1847:77-146). In 1873-74, M.J. Walhouse excavated a stone circle in Nilgiri region and unearthed um
pieces and miniature buffalo and human figurines in clay. Iron sickles and knives were also obtained. Anaimalai hills were surveyed by Walhouse in 1874, Congreve in 1878 and Turner in 1879 and reported with dolmens, cairn circles and menhirs or slab circles (Walhouse 1873:275-78; 1874:33-36; Congreve: 1878:150-168; Turner 1879:207). Irrespective of their faithful documentation, these four decades of archaeological explorations were concentrated in and around hill resorts and tea growing areas. There were hardly any surveys in the plains of neighbouring Kongu region.

In 1882, Robert Sewell broke this hiatus through his survey in Kongu area. He discovered many Iron Age sites and recorded them faithfully. He reported dolmens, cairn circles and urns at Mettupalayam, Pollachi, Mangalam, Nattukkalpalayam, and Velanpalayam in Coimbatore district; Achhipatti Kaniyampundi, Kanjapalli and Chavadi palayam in Tiruppur district; Nadanamampalayam, Nattupalayam, Neruli, Sadayampalayam, Pachchampalayam, Paranjervali, Peramiyam, Sivammalai, Vellakovil, Mambadi, Nallampatti, Kandiyankoil and Kangayam in Erode district; Modakkur, Pallapalayam, Pavitram and Somur in Karur district; Bolibetta, Janibumbetta, Bilikamer, Billikal hill, Kambatti, Kenteri, Konabetta beak, Muttanadmand, Nadubetta, Paikara, Singur, Tuneri, Achenna, Belliki, Coonoor, Dodduru, Halaiuru, Jatakambe, Kakusi, Kodanad, Kottakiri, Nidukula, Poykumbetta, Udayaraya, Hulikalodurgam, Katikari, Melur, Mikeri, Tudur, Avalanche, Enikal, Melkundha in Nilgiri district (Sewell 1882:70-140). In 1887, Ramavarma explored Coimbatore region and reported urn burials (Ramvarma 1878:26-27). In 1889, H.O.D. Harding explored Coimbatore region and reported Iron Age graves at Makkinaikenpatti and Nattukkalpalayam near Pollachi (Harding 1889:94:13-20). In 1901, J.R. Sandford explored and reported few Iron Age graves at Kannarapalayam, Kodidasanur and Mangalam (Sandford 1901:461-471). In 1905-07, Hosten explored Palani hills and reported dolmens in and around Perumal hills (Hosten 1905:13). In 1928, Anglade and Newton reported few more dolmens in Palani hills (Anglade and Newton 1928:11-12). In 1910-11, Rea excavated stone circles entombing cist burials at Kaniyampundi near Tiruppur (Rea 1910-11:10-13). In 1913-14, Longhurst excavated cist burial at Sirumugai near Mettupalayam (Longhurst 1913-14:43-45). In 1931, Ramakrishna Reddy and Richard reported urn and bowls in Nilgiri region.
In 1930-34, Khan excavated an Iron Age monument at Chettipalayam near Coimbatore (Khan 1930-34:112-113). All the above said reported sites were found both in plains and on hilltops. They were not excavated in a systematic manner. The location of all the reported excavated sites lies on Mettupalayam-Coimbatore, Coimbatore-Pollachi and Coimbatore-Erode railway lines. In all probability, the archaeological sites, particularly the Iron Age monuments, were disturbed while laying railway line in this route. However, the colonial administrators faithfully recorded these sites and provided a good picture on the nature of monuments that prevailed in the western part of Coimbatore region. The lack of developmental activities in Amaravathi valley restricted in reporting any archaeological sites except the chance discovery of coin hoards.

In post-Independence era, Coimbatore region received the attention of different institutions like Archaeological Survey of India, Tamil Nadu State Archaeology Department, Tamil University and Pondicherry University. The systematic explorations carried out in the region and objective oriented excavations carried out at Perur, Karur, Boluvampatti, Kodumanal, Nedungur and Porunthal provided a firm chorological frame to understand various aspects of the cultural life of this people.

In 1954, Anglade excavated Iron Age graves in Palani hills. Three cists were opened on the western slopes of Perumalmalai. They were all already disturbed. More than fifteen urns were excavated in this area. It yielded human bones, and about one hundred small white beads, pots and ring stands. Father Heras excavated a transepted cist with bench and a big urn (Anglade 1954:23-78). Another grave dug in the Ayakudi Zamindari (Palani Taluk) yielded black-and-red ware and iron implements (Anglade 1954:42). In 1959, Rosner surveyed and excavated a cist burial in Anaimalai hill. It yielded black-and-red ware bowls and dish (Rosner 1959:169-182). In the years between 1957 and 1963, Srinivasa Desikan carried out a village-to-village survey and reported several Iron Age sites in Coimbatore and Erode regions like cairn-circles at Virapandi, Gudalur, Billichi and Vellamadai; a double-chambered port-hole cist at Kalapatti; urn-burials at Periyanayakanpalayam; the russet-coated painted ware at Vellaimedu in Kalapatti, at Nattamedu in Sircarsamakkulam and at Ottakalmanthapatam and two Neolithic implements, a celt and a hammer-stone, in the

Karur, the major urban centre and capital city of Sangam Age Cheras, was excavated in 1974 under the direction of R. Nagasamy. Another important archaeological site that received the attention of several scholars was the Kodumal site. Y. Subbarayalu and K. Rajan excavated this site in four seasons in the years 1985, 1986, 1989 and 1990. Subsequently Tamil Nadu State Archaeology Department excavated this site in 1997 and 1998. More than 24 trenches laid in the habitation and fourteen graves opened in graves yielded copper objects, iron implements, semi-precious stones, gold, quartz beads, ivory and terracotta objects. The ceramic assemblage includes black-and-red ware, red ware, black and russet-coated ware and etc. (Rajan 1994:11-129, 1998 65-76; Subbarayalu 2008:189-221). K. Rajan took intensive exploration in this region and discovered more than 200 Iron Age graves like stone circles, cairn circles, cists, urns and menhirs particularly in Coimbatore, Erode and Tiruppur districts (Rajan 1994:11-129, 1997:75-90, 2008:87-235). Archaeological Survey of India under the direction of K.V. Soundra Rajan and B. Narasimhaiah excavated Perur in the years 1970-71 and 1978-79 and subsequently Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology re-excavated the site in the year 2001-02. Both yielded black-and-red ware, red ware, brick structures and terracotta objects (IAR 1970-71:34; 1978-79:100; Shetty 2003). In 2003, Saranya surveyed Lower Palani hills and reported many dolmens, cists and urns in Kodaikanal region (Saranya 2004, 2008). R. Anbarasan explored Karur region along the banks of river Amaravathi in taluks of Karur and Aravakurichi and reported more than 35 sites consist of stone circles, cairn circles with cist and urn burial sites and habitation mounds (Anbarasan 2004). The present researcher explored and reported many Iron Age graves like stone circles, cairn circles, cists, urns and menhirs in Bhavani river valley (Yathees Kumar 2005). In 2005, S. Venkadachalam explored Moyar river valley (Venkadachalam 2005). K. Rajan excavated the site Thandikudi in Kodaikanal region in the years 2004 and 2006 (Rajan 2004:146-148; Rajan 2007:143-150). In 2008, Nedungur was excavated by Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology (Sridhar 2008:1-57). C. Vijayakumar reported Iron Age graves in Aliyar river valley (Vijayakumar 2008). The site Porunthal on the banks of river Porunthalar, a tributary
of Amaravathi river was excavated in the years 2009 and 2010 by the Pondicherry University under the direction of K. Rajan. Thus, the series of explorations and excavations carried out in this region provided a good picture on the archaeological potentiality of the region. However, there are certain gaps and some of the regions were neglected due to paucity of time. One such region is the present study area of Amaravathi river valley.

Coins

Buchanan reported the occurrence of a pot in 1800 unearthed at Pollachi, containing a great many Roman coins of Augustus and Tiberius (Buchanam 1807:318-319). In 1806, Roman coins issued during the regime of Augustus, Tiberius, Antonia and Claudius was reported at Karur (Elliot 1844:121-214; Bidie 1874:1; Walhouse 1876:327-329; Sewell 1882:221; Little 1883:338; Thurston 1883:338; Schulman 1928:199). Elliot reported large hoard of punch-marked coins in 1807 collected from a dolmen at Chavadipalayam about 9 km south of Palladam (Elliot 1844:227-228; Little 1883:237). In 1817, a silver coin of Augustus was unearthed from a cist in Coimbatore (IA., vol. II, pp. 241-242).

In 1842, an earthen pot containing 522 Roman Dinari silver coins was dug up at Vellalur a small village 10 km south of Coimbatore (Bird 1843:294-295; Anon 1843-1844:111-112; Elliot 1844:212-214). A punch-marked coin was reported at Thiruppur in 1843 (Little 1883:237). In 1847, Roman coins were discovered in Udhagamandalam (Congreve 1847:92; Sewell 1882:226; Little 1883:337; Thurston 1888:9-15). Five Roman silver coins were reported from Akilandapuram in 1876 (Turner 1989:47-48). In 1878, Rev. Little also discovered a hoard of 500 coins in this area. In 1912 Roman coins and Punch-marked coins were discovered at Kattanganni near Kangayam, 62 km east of Coimbatore (MMAR 1912-1913:4; ASI Western Circle, Progress Report 1915: 31, 36; Botham and R. Friel 1919:358-359; Turner 1989:60). Pot containing 63 gold coins of early Roman Emperors Augustus and others, was discovered at near the river Sanmuga (Porunthalar) Kalayamputtur, 5 km west of Palani. Nearly 57 coins were in excellent state of preservation (Sewell 1882:286; Turner 1989:58). In 1930, Punch-marked coins were reported at Sulur (Beck...
Vadakku-Budinattam, located 10 km from Udumalaipeitai, reported with 1398 Roman silver coins (MMAR 1946:47:1-8; Turner 1989:50).


All the above said discoveries could be placed under three categories. The first category goes as chance discovery of coin hoards. The second one comes from Iron Age graves. The last category falls under the purchase made at Karur. These purchases are being made even today on the banks of river Amaravathi. Some of the coins found elsewhere also reported as coins of Karur. Except one or two, hardly any coin comes from any archaeological startigraphy. Though several sites have been excavated in Kongu region, only three sites namely Karur, Kodumanal and Porunthal reported a few coins. The site Kodumanal yielded two silver punch-marked coins. One is reported from an archaeological startigraphy and the remaining one comes from a surface collection (Rajan 1997:75-90). In 2008, Rajan reported a copper coin collected from an excavated trench at Porunthal near Palani (Rajan 2009). Due to the nature of occurrence of these coins, one finds it difficult to place them in proper cultural context (Map. 2).

**Epigraphy**

On epigraphical front too, the region contains several Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions. The earliest Tamil-Brahmi inscription comes in the form of pottery
inscription at Kodumanal. Nearly 250 Tamil-Brahmi inscribed potsherds were reported at this site. The highest number in any excavated site of India. Such inscribed potsherds were also reported later at Perur, Boluvampatti and Porunthal excavations. On stone, the earliest Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions of Pugalur were discovered in 1927 close to Chera capital Karur (ARE 1927-28: 342-349). Subsequently, S. Raju discovered at Arachchalur Tamil-Brahmi inscription in 1961-62 (ARE 1962-62:280-281; IAR 1961-62:81). In 1973, a Tamil-Brahmi inscription was reported from Ayyarmalai (ARE: 1973-73:b.231; IAR 1973-74:40; Venkatasamy 1981:142-144; Mahadevan 2003:387). Besides several Tamil-Brahmi inscribed coins and rings were reported at Karur.

Medieval and late medieval temple inscriptions, hero stone inscriptions, trade guild inscriptions and oil-press inscriptions were reported at several places. Among them, important temple inscriptions were noticed at Kadattur, Thirumuruganpundi, Periyasarcapalayam, Karur, Thadikombu and Peramiyam. Trade guild inscriptions were found at Nangavaram, Punutthu, Munnur, Kodaimangalam and Karaiyur. Oil-press inscriptions were reported at Velliyanai, Kudalur and Punutthu. Hero stone inscriptions were found at Kannivadi, Puliyamarathukottai and Perumpulli. Besides, open surface rock inscriptions were found at Velliyanai, Perumpulli, Kalladam and Ramanathapuram.

All the above said findings were identified close to trade routes, trade centres and capital cities. Majority of the excavated sites like Karur, Kodumanal, Perur and Boluvampatti are located on the river bank of Noyyal, a tributary of river Kaveri. Much work has been done on the major tributaries of river Kaveri namely Moyyar, Bhavani and Noyyal, that flows in mid and northern part of Kongu region. There is hardly any exploration in Amaravathi river valley. The solitary excavation carried out by State Archaeology Department at Karur could not be taken as a representative site of the region as Karur lies at the confluence of the river Amaravathi with Kaveri. Likewise the Nedungur excavation carried out in 2007 near Vellokoil also lacks in required information. Keeping these factors in mind, the intensive explorations were planned in the years 2006 and 2008. As a result, several important Iron Age and Early Historic sites were brought to light. Among them, the potential site Porunthal was
selected for excavations, which were carried out at Porunthal in the years 2009 and 2010 (Map 3-4).

The mapping of the archaeological sites supported with two seasons of excavations provided a good picture on the subsistence pattern that prevailed during the Iron Age and Early Historic times. The followings are some of important archaeological features associated with each site. The description of each individual site would help to understand the cultural context as well as the present status of the site.
Present Archaeological Studies

Dindigal District

Ayvarmalai

This place lies 20 km away from Udumalaipettai (77° 24’ 15” E; 10° 28’ 33” N 396 m MSL) and 7 km away from Kolumam. The small hillock (called as Aivarmalai) lies close to the Ayyampalayam village. More than 200 Iron Age graves, mostly of Stone circles entombing cist burials, covering an area of 4 ha. of land are found on the eastern slope of the hillock. The stone circles measure an average diameter of 3 to 7 m (Fig. 3.1). Jain sculptures, sixteen Tirthankaras, with Vatteluthu inscriptions are found in middle of the hillock (Fig. 3.2). Jain beads might have existed earlier but all these beds were covered with later day pilaster.

The small hillock is mentioned in as Ayiramalai Sangam literature (Patirrupattu 3:21, 70) and 8th (792 AD) cent. AD Vatteluthu inscriptions also mention Ayirai-million or Yakshi (Korravai).

Alakapuri

The village Alakapuri (77º 58’ 37” E; 10º 35’ 31” N 456 m MSL) is located 14 km north of Vedasandur. The river Kodavanar flows on western side of the village. The stone circles entombing cist burials are found in the eastern side of the village and near the river (Fig. 3.3). The burial site, covering an area of more than 2 ha. some of the cist burials were exposed on the surface. It yielded black-and-red ware, red ware and black polished ware.

Ambalikkai

The village Ambalikkai (77º 43’ 01” E; 10º 32’ 05” N, 285 m MSL) lies 10 km north of Ottanchathiram on the way to Dharapuram. A medieval inscription mentioned this place as Ampalikkai-kiramam.

The Iron Age and Early Historic habitation mound, locally called as Nattamedu, is found on western side of the village (Fig. 3.4). The mound, gray in colour, covers an area of more than 4 ha. The 2 m high mound yielded black-and-red
ware, russet-coated ware, black polished ware, red slipped ware and shell bangles. The eastern part of the mound is partly disturbed due to cultivation. The section scarping revealed three layers in which the bottom layer yielded black-and-red ware, russet-coated ware and red slipped ware.

**Balasamuttiram**

The village Balasamuttiram (79° 29' 46" E; 10° 25' 02" N, 319 m MSL) is located 4 km west of Palani. The river Porunthalar flows western side of the village. The urn burials are found on eastern side of the village. Most of the urns are disturbed due to cultivation. The graveyard locally called as Pandiyankuli covers an area of more than 2 ha.

**Chinnamarudur**

The village Chinnamarudur (76° 54' 26" E; 11° 14' 10'' N, 353 m MSL) is situated on the Ottanchathiram–Kovilur road at a distance 30 km from Ottanchathiram. The historic habitation mound is found on eastern side of the village. The river Thirumanimuttar flows between the ancient habitation mound and the present village. The mound, covering an area of more than 3 ha, yielded red ware, red slipped ware and black ware.

**I. Vadipatti**

This village I. Vadipatti (77° 45' 20" E; 10° 37' 01" N, 281 m MSL) is situated 22 km from Ottanchathiram. The cairn circles are found on western side of the village near the Sengunram hillock. Most of the burials are disturbed due to cultivation. The graveyard locally called as Pandiyankuttai covers an area of more than 2 ha.

**Jokipatti**

The village Jokipatti (77° 50' 02" E; 10° 33' 39" N, 245 m MSL) is located 8 km from Idayakottai on the way to Pallapatti. The cairn circles are found on southern side of the village. The burials are locally known as Pandiyankottai. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware along with iron slag and iron ore.

A hero stone, locally called as Malakoi, is found on the southern side of the village. It has 12 panels. Besides, two more hero stones are found 3 km north of the
village. These hero stones are known as Appiyakoil. The first hero stone has 5 panels and second hero stone has 7 panels. Based on the sculptural representation, these hero stones could be dated to 16 cent AD (Fig. 3.5).

Kalayamputtur

The village Kalayamputtur (77°14'50" E; 10° 24' 54" N, 311 m MSL) is located on the Palani-Coimbatore road at a distance of 5 km west of Palani. The river Porunthalar (Sanmuganadi) flows southeast of this village. Cists containing urns and covered with capstone are found on southern side of the village (Fig. 3.6). These are locally called as Pandiyankal and Pandiyarasakal. The disturbed cist yielded contains bowls, plates, bones and black-and-red ware pieces. Most of the urns are disturbed due to cultivation. The village lies on the ancient trade route.

During de-siltation of a tank a pot containing 63 gold coins of the early Roman Emperors, Augustus and others was found 6 inches below the surface of the ground, near the river Sanmuganadi. Fifty seven coins were found in excellent state of preservation (Swell 1882: 286).

Kanakkanpatti

The village Kanakkanpatti (77º 34' 46" E; 10º 28' 20" N, 329 m MSL) is located 15 km east of Dindigal. The urns with capstone are found around the village. The burial site is known as Pandiyankuli. Most of the urns are disturbed due to building construction. Black-and-ware, red ware and iron slag were collected in the vicinity.

Kamanur

The village Kamanur (77º 40' 38" E; 10º 17' 37" N, 1215 m MSL) is situated 16 km north of Palani and 4 km west of Theppampatti. The river Porunthalar (Sanmuganadi) flows on northern side of the village. The historic habitation mound is found on northern side of the village. The huge mound yielded red ware and black ware. A Siva (Vakisvarar) temple is found on the habitation mound. The inscriptions on loose slabs are found in and around the temple (Saranya 2009).
Kalkurunaipatti

The village Kalkurunaipatti (77° 48' 21"E; 10° 43' 28"N, 231 m MSL) is located 5 km away from Markkampatti on the way to Kovilur. The cairn circles entombing cist and transepted cist are found on southern side of the village. More than 50 burials are found in this area. The burial site is known as Pandiyankuttai.

Kappalurpatti

The village Kappalurpatti (77º 40' 47" E; 10º 33' 42" N, 309 m MSL) is located 20 km west of Ottanchathiram. The cairn circles, locally called as Pandiyankuttai, are found on western side of the village. Most of the burials are disturbed due to cultivation. It yielded black-and-red ware and black polished ware.

A 10th cent. AD inscription is found on western side of the village and in front of the Thandapani temple (Fig. 3.7). Another inscription is found on the garbha girha walls of the Thandapani temple. A hero stone is found on eastern side of the temple. The hero mounted on horse-back holds an arrow.

Kavalapatti (Narayanamangalam)

The village Kavalapatti (Narayanamangalam) (77º 26' 13" E; 10º 25' 40" N, 333 m MSL) lies 15 km west of Palani town on the way to Kolumam. Both stone circles and cairn circles entombing cist and urn are found on eastern side of the village (Fig. 3.8-10). Generally, a huge capstone is placed on the urns. The diameters of the stone circles are range between 180 m and 9.70 m. The burial site, yielding more than 1000 burials covers an area of more than 25 ha. At present, more than 400 burials are found in excellently state of preservation.

Kiranur

The village Kiranur (77º 35’ 29” E; 10º 40’ 32” N, 359 m MSL) is located on the Palani- Dharapuram road at a distance of 20 km from Palani. The river Sanmuganadi flows on the northern side of the village. The Historic habitation mound is found on eastern side of the village. It yielded red ware and black ware. More than 2 m elevated area locally called Natthamedu is covering more than 3 ha. of land. The medieval period Siva temple with inscriptions is found near the habitation mound (Fig. 3.11).
Kombaipatti

The village Kombaipatti (77° 36' 29" E; 10° 26' 30" N, 339 m MSL) lies 17 km east of Palani and 3 km from Kanakkampatti. The historic habitation mound Nattakadu is found on the eastern side of the village. It yielded red ware and black ware. An inscription datable to 13th cent. AD refer land grant to the Siva temple (Fig. 3.12).

Kodaimangalam

This village Kodaimangalam (77° 30' 59" E; 10° 28' 58" N, 334 m MSL) is located on the Palani–Palaya-Dharapuram road at a distance of 6 km from Palani. The river Porunthalar (Sanmuganadi) flows on northern side of the village. The cairn circles entombing cist with capstone and urns are found on northern side of the village. More than 100 burials, locally called Pandiyantitu, are found in an elevated area covering more than 3 ha. of land. The medieval trade guild inscriptions are noticed near the village (Fig. 3.13).

Kottaipatti

The village Kottaipatti (77° 51' 13"E; 10° 40' 13" N, 202 m MSL) is located 27 km from Ottanchathiram on the way to Pallapatti and 5 km from Idayakottai. The river Nankanji flows on eastern side of the village. The Iron Age and Historic habitation mound covering an area of more than 7 ha. is found on south-eastern side of the village. The mound called Nattamedu is raised 1 m above the ground level. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware.

The cairn circles entombing cist and transepted cist are found on the southern side of the habitation mound (Fig. 3.14-15). The river Nankanji flows between the habitation mound and burial site. More than 50 burials are found in disturbed condition due to cultivation. The medieval period Siva temple is found on eastern side of the habitation mound (Fig. 3.16).

Kovilur

The village Kovilur (77° 49' 42"E; 10° 45' 35"N, 189 m MSL) is located 40 km north of Ottanchathiram and 10 km east of Aravakurichi. The river Thirumanimuttar
flows on northern side of the village. The river flows between the village and the habitation mound rised 2 m above the ground. It yielded red ware and black ware.

The late medieval Siva temple is found near the village (Fig 3.17). The inscription datable to 14th cent. AD refers to the grant made by the residents of Thaliyur-nadu, Venkala-nadu, Araiya-nadu, Idaipulikki-nadu, Vadakarai-nadu, Thattaiyur-nadu and Kilangu-nadu villages for the rituals to be performed at the temple. Four hero stones are found on eastern side of village. These belong to Nayaka period (Fig. 3.18) (Yathees Kumar 2008:7).

Kulipatti

The village Kulipatti (77º 50’ 04” E; 10º 32’ 47” N, 252 m MSL) is located 10 km from Idayakottai on the way to Pallappatti. The habitation mound Nattamedu covering an area of more than 5 ha. is noticed on the southern side of the village. It yielded black-and-red ware, red ware, red slipped ware, black polished ware and russet-coated ware. The habitation mound is raised 1 m above the surrounding surface level. Soil is gray in color.

Urns with lid are found on southeastern side of the habitation mound. Most of the urns, known as Matharrathakasal, are disturbed due to cultivation.

A 7th cent. AD hero stone, facing south, is found on the habitation mound (Fig. 3.19). It is locally known as Muniyappan. Two heroes are depicted in a fighting posture. The first hero facing east holds a sword in right hand and an arrow in left hand. The second hero facing west holds a sword in right hand and a bow in left hand. Above the heroes, an inscription in 11 lines is found engraved on a weathered surface of the slab. Only few scripts are visible (Yathees Kumar 2008:7).

Kuttampundiyanvalasu

The village Kuttampundiyanvalasu (77º 40’ 56” E; 10º 40’ 55” N, 183 m MSL) is located 25 km west of Ottanchathiram and 8 km from Kallimanthayam and 10 km west of Periyakottai. The Thanthonrimalai hillock is found on eastern side of the village. The river Nankanji flows on southeastern side of the village.
The hillock is having three unfinished cave temples (Fig. 3.20-21). Two are found on western side of the hillock, another one is found on eastern side of the hillock. The western side cave temple is carved with four pillars at the centre and two pilasters on the extreme ends of the cave temple. The cave temple is executed 1.50 m above the surface. The cave height is 3.20 m and width is 10.15 m. The pillars are having average thickness of 0.74 m. The average gap between the two consecutive pillars is 1.18 m. A niche consisting of 2.28x1.21 m in size is carved on eastern side of the cave probably to accommodate a dvarapalaka. At the middle of the cave temple 1 m high flight of steps are carved and before the first step an arch (chandrasila) is carved (Yathees Kumar 2008:145-147).

The second cave is found on western side of the first cave. This cave is identical to the first one but only outline of the cave is scooped out. The third cave noticed on eastern side of the hillock is also met with outline. The reason for discarding the execution of the cave in a half way could not be ascertained.

Such unfinished cave temples are earlier noticed at Thanthonrimale in Karur district, at Narthamalai in Pudukkottai district and at Thiraikovil in Tiruvannamalai district. They belong to 8th cent. A.D. In Kongu region, cave temples are very rare.

The habitation mound carrying Iron Age and Early Historic material is found on the eastern side of the hillock and near the first cave temple. The mound covering an area of more than 3 ha. yielded black-and-red ware, black polished ware, red slipped ware and red ware. Local people called this mound as Nattakadu.

**Kuttilippai**

The village Kuttilippai (77° 47’ 30” E; 10° 36’ 22” N, 310 m MSL) is situated 20 km north of Ottanchathiram. The habitation mound known as Nattakattuthottam is found 2 km east of village. A small rivulet flows on northern side of the village. The one meter high mound, gray in color, covers an area of more than 2 ha. More than 10 cairn circles entombing cist or transepted cist are found on eastern side of the habitation mound (Fig. 3.22). The average diameter of the circle is 4 to 7 m. The circle boulders are huge in size and raised 0.30- 0.50 m above the surface level. The graveyard is locally called as Pandiyankutta.
Manur

The village Manur (77° 29’ 10” E; 10° 30’ 48” N, 292 m MSL) lies on the Palani – Palaya-Dharapuram road at a distance of 9 km north of Palani. The river Porunthalar (Sanmuganadi) flows on northern side of the village. The urns are found on eastern side of the village. The burials, locally called as Pandiyankuli, cover an area of more than 2 ha. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. Early Historic brick structures are found near the river.

Melkaraiapatti

The village Melkaraiapatti (77° 28’ 45” E; 10° 35’ 07” N, 282 m MSL) is located 15 km north of Palani on the way to Palaya-Dharapuram. The stone circles entombing urns are found on northern side of the village. Most of the burials are disturbed due to cultivation.

Nallaponnupatti

The village Nallaponnupatti (77° 54’ 47” E; 10° 37’ 38” N, 253 m MSL) is located on the Vedasandur – Idayakottai road at a distance of 15 km from Vedasandur. The stone circles are found on north-western side of the village. The site, called Pandiyankuttai, covers an area of more than 2.5 ha. More than 100 burials are found in well preserved condition. The average diameter of stone circle is 7 m.

Narikkalpatti

This village Narikkalpatti (77° 28’ 34” E; 10° 31’ 54” N, 290 m MSL) is located on the Palani-Palaya-Dharapuram road at a distance of 12 km north of Palani. The river Porunthalar (Sanmuganadi) flows on northern side of the village. Nearly 10 stone circles and cairn circles, locally known as Pandiyankuli are found on western side of the village. It covers an area of more than 5 ha of land. The burial site is known as Pandiyankuli. Most of the burials are disturbed due to cultivation.

Nilankaraivalasu

The village Nilankaraivalasu (77° 43’ 40” E; 10° 39’ 7” N, 290 m MSL) is situated 21 km north of Ottanchathiram and 8 km from Kallimanthayam. The cairn circles are found on western side of the village and eastern side of the hillock.
The burial site covering more than 2 ha. of land is known as Pandiyankottai. Most of the burials are disturbed due to cultivation.

Nochchikattuvalasu

The village Nochchikattuvalasu (77° 43’ 47” E; 10° 40’ 17” N, 278 m MSL) is situated on the Ottanchathiram–Kallimanthayam road at a distance of 12 km from Kallimanthayam. The stone circle entombing cists and cairn circles entombing cists are found on western side of the village (Fig. 3.23-25). The burial site covering more than 3 ha. of land is known as Pandiyankottai. More than 100 burials are noticed in well preserved condition. Few cist burials are exposed on the surface. The average diameter of cairn circles is 7 m. The capstone measures 3.10 in diameter and having a thickness of 0.30 m.

Odaippatti

The village Odaippatti (77° 46’ 38” E; 10° 35’ 01” N, 386 m MSL) is located 16 km north of Ottanchathiram on the way to Kulipatti. The Iron Age habitation mound is found on eastern side of the village. The mound is known as Kottaimedu. The soil is gray in colour. The cairn circle entombing urns are found on western side of the village. The burial site is called as Pandiyankuttai. Most of the burials are disturbed due to cultivation. It yielded black-and-red ware, red ware and black polished ware.

Parumarattupatti

The village Parumarattupatti (77° 48’ 15” E; 10° 33’ 50” N, 246 m MSL) is located 11 km north of Ottanchathiram on the way to Javvathupatti. The medieval period habitation mound is found on the eastern side of the village. The mound covering an area of more than 2 ha. yielded red ware and black ware. An inscribed slab is found on the habitation mound. Besides, a hero stone is found on the habitation mound. The hero in a standing position holds a sword in his right hand.

Porulur

The village Porulur (77° 37’ 01” E; 10° 35’ 45” N, 321 m MSL) is located 23 km west of Ottanchathiram. The river Nankanji flows on the western side of the village. The Iron Age and Early Historic habitation mound found western side of the village. The habitation
mound covering an area of more than 5 hectares yielded black-and-red ware, red ware, red slipped ware, and russet-coated painted ware. The mound with soil grey in colour raised 2 m above the surface level. The stone circle entombing cists are found on western side of the village and inside the tank. Most of the circles are submerged with tank water (Fig. 3.26).

**Porunthal**

The village Porunthal (77° 28’ 38” E; 10° 22’ 58” N, 328 m MSL) lies on the left bank of the river Porunthalar at the foothill of the Western Ghats about 12 km southwest of Palani. This historical village lies close to the major trade routes connecting Pandya capital Madurai on the south and Chera capital Vanji on the west. The site was excavated in two seasons for two months between May and June during the years 2009 and 2010. The details of excavation are discussed in Chapter IV.

**Pettappanayakanpatti**

This village Pettappanayakanpatti (77° 28’ 57” E; 10° 29’ 26” N, 303 m MSL) is located 16 km away from Palani on the way to Dindigal. The stone circle entombing urns, locally called Pandiyankuli, with capstone exposed on the surface are found around the village (Fig. 3.27). It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware.

**Periyaduraikombai**

The village Periyaduraikombai (77° 26’ 36” E; 10° 21’ 55” N, 381 m MSL) is located 7 km south of Palani – Dindigal road and 22 km from Palani. The urns are found on eastern side of the village covering an area of more than 3 ha. of land. Most of the burials are disturbed due to cultivation. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware.

**Puliyamarattukottai**

Puliyamarattukottai, a small hamlet, (77° 53’ 14” E; 10° 33’ 46” N, 281 m MSL) is located 8 km west of Vedasandur. This hamlet can be approached from Acharipudur which lies 2 km away from the hamlet. The Iron Age and Early historic habitation mound called Nattamedu is found on western side of the village. The habitation mound covering an area of more than 10 hectares yielded black-and-red
ware, red ware, red slipped ware, black polished ware and russet-coated painted ware. The mound with soil grey in colour raised 1.5 m above the surface level. Two hillocks are found on western side of the village. A small jungle river flows on southern side of the habitation mound. A perennial pond having a depth of 10 m is found near the habitation mound (Fig. 3.28).

The Cairn circle entombing cist with urn burials are found on the west and northwestern side of the habitation mound (Fig. 3.29). Few burials are noticed within the habitation mound suggesting that this habitation mound was extended well into the graveyard during medieval times. More than 200 cist and urn burials are noticed in various state of preservation. Nearly 50 burials are found in better state of preservation and remaining graves are disturbed due to cultivation. It yielded black ware, miniature bowl, plate, red ware bowl and pots, an etched carnelian bead and bones. The burial site is known as Pandiyankuttai.

A hero stone with inscription datable to 8th cent. AD is found on southern side of the habitation mound close to the iron furnace. Hero stone had two panels. The top panel is shown with two heroes fighting each other. The first hero holds bow on the left hand and an arrow on the right hand. Two arrows, one at the front and another at back side, were pierced well into the body of the hero. In front of this hero, another hero is shown with a sword holding in his right hand. This hero also had an arrow pierced into his body. Below these two heroes, two more heroes holding a sword are shown with fighting each other. An inscription is found engraved on the surface above the two heroes. Four-line inscriptions refer to the heroic act of two heroes namely Nakkam Srikaadan and Kadan who died in the protection of their cattle during a cattle raid (Fig. 3.30).

1. iruvarum sri (pa) irru...
2. niraimittu ..pupadai
3. Sri ikkalnakkam.srikaadan..
4. kaadan

Iron smelting furnaces are found on southern side of the habitation mound covering an area of 0.5 ha. of land. It yielded iron ore, iron slag and iron arrow head and sword pieces (Fig. 3.31). Interestingly, these iron objects are found in different
manufacturing stages thereby suggesting that this site was involved in manufacture of iron tools, during Iron Age times.

**Puliyamarattusettu**

This village Puliyamarattusettu (77º 28’ 07” E; 10º 22’ 08” N, 345 m MSL) is located 15 km south of Palani on the way to Kodaikanal. The river Varathamanadi flows on northern side of the village. The cist burials, locally called Pandiyanthittu, are found in and around the village. Most of the burials are found near Anna Nagar. Some burials are totally disturbed due to cultivation.

**Puliyampatti**

The village Puliyampatti (77º 32’ 29” E; 10º 23’ 10” N, 311 m MSL) is located 17 km south of Palani. The cairn circles entombing cist and urn are found on eastern side of the village and near the small hillock called Kuttikaradu. Around this hillock more than 50 burials are located spreading in an area of 3 ha. It yielded pots of black-and-red ware, plates and bowls of black ware and pots of red ware. The burial site is partially disturbed due to cultivation. The stone circle measures 5 to 7 m in diameter (Fig. 3.32).

**Puliyurnattam**

The village Puliyurnattam (77º 49’ 58” E; 10º 32’ 13” N, 258 m MSL) is located 12 km from Idayakottai. The Iron Age period habitation mound is found in and around the village. It yielded red ware. The iron slag, iron ore, furnace, iron objects like sword, arrow and knife are found on the northern side of the village. This area with iron smelting activities is known as Karuppukallankadu (Fig. 3.33-34).

**Punuttu**

The village Punuttu (77º 58’ 16” E; 10º 37’ 19” N, 203 m MSL) is located 15 km north of Vedasandur on the way to Dharapuram. The river Kodavanar flows on the eastern side of the village. The stone circles entombing cist burial are found on eastern side of the village close to river bank (Fig. 3.35-36). The burial site covering an area of more than 5 ha, yielded more than 200 burials. Some of the cist burials
were exposed due to intensive agricultural activities. It yielded black-and-red ware, red ware and black polished ware.

An oil-press with inscription datable to 12th cent. AD is found near the habitation mound. The oil press mentioned as Chekku and Ural provides important details about the donor (Yathees Kumar 2008:9) (Fig. 3.37).

**Palaya-ayakuti**

The village Palaya-ayakuti (77º 33’ 13” E; 10º 26’ 59” N, 333 m MSL) is located 5 km east of Palani on the way to Dindigal. Um burials are found on southern side of the village. It is locally called as Pandiyankuzhi. Most of the burials were disturbed due to building construction.

**Periyakottai**

The village Periyakottai (77º 37’ 04” E; 10º 25’ 56” N, 381 m MSL) is situated 12 km west of Ottanchathiram. Two temples are found on eastern side of the village. Kathimarasinga temple with inscriptions datable to 14th cent. AD. is found on the small hillock. A 10th cent. AD Vatteluthu inscription is also found on the hillock. Somesvara temple with inscriptions datable to 15th cent. AD is found near the hillock. Besides, a Vatteluthu inscription datable to 10th cent. AD (Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2007: 171) is found engraved on a rocky surface close to Kathimarasinga temple. Three hero stones are located north-western side of the village. On stylistic ground, these hero stones could be assigned to Nayaka period (Fig. 3.38). The area, in which these hero stones are installed, is known as Palayakoil.

**Perumpalli (Palayakarattuppatti)**

The village Perumpalli (78º 3’ 25” E; 10º 29’ 8” N, 291 m MSL) is situated 17 km west of Vedasandur and 2 km east of Thoppampatti on the way to Thennampatti. Two hero stones with inscriptions datable to 8th cent. AD (Ganesan 2007: 21) are found on eastern side of the village near the hillock.

1. Sri araiyansu
2. (li)konthira
3. naan..para
4. nthakap pal
The inscription refers to one Parantakap-palli-velan, probably serving under Sri Araiyan Kondiranaan, died in protection of cattle belongs to the territorial division Pallinadu. Second inscription is found on the rocky surface near to the hero stone. Another inscription found inside the tank refers to a trade guild (Erivirapattinam) (Fig. 3.39-40).

Ramanathapuram

The village Ramanathapuram (78º 5’ 37” E; 10º 23’ 31” N, 287 m MSL) lies 6 km from Vadadamudurai, which lies on the Dindigal –Tiruchirapalli road. An inscription of 8th cent. AD referring to the construction of a tank is located on the rocky surface (Eluttuparai) near the rivulet Van-Kali-Ammasamuttaraodai.

Rangavalasu

The village Rangavalasu (77º 47’ 13” E; 10º 30’ 9” N, 286 m MSL) lies 4 km north east of Ottanchathiram on the way to Vedasandur. The cairn circles are found on southern side of the village and on northern side of the Rangamalai hillock. Most of the cairn circles having average diameter of 6 m are disturbed due to cultivation. It yielded black-and-red ware, red ware and black polished ware. The iron furnace, iron slag and iron objects were collected on northern side of the graveyard (Fig. 3.41). The mound Nattakadu is raised more than 1 m above the surface.

Sappalanayakkanpatti

The village Sappalanayakkanpatti (77º 27’ 05” E; 10º 05’ 31” N, 304 m MSL) is located 15 km northwest of Palani. The historic habitation mound, locally called Nattamedu, is found on western side of the village. The mound covers an area of more than 5 ha. It yielded black ware and red ware. An inscribed slab installed on the habitation mound is noticed. The symbols found engraved on exposed area of the slab suggest that this inscribed slab probably carry trade guild inscription.
Semmankarai

The village Semmankarai (77º 46’ 39” E; 10º 42’ 36” N, 238 m MSL) is situated 30 km north of Ottanchathiram. The cairn circles are found on northern side of the village. The burial site covers an area of more than 3 ha. It yielded black-and-red ware. Most of the burials are destroyed due to cultivation.

Silukkanayakanpatti

This village Silukkanayakanpatti (78º 8’ 40” E; 10º 57’ 19” N, 111 m MSL) lies on the Ottanchathiram – Kannivadi road at a distance of 28 km form Ottanchathiram. The Iron Age habitation mound is found on eastern side of the village near the small hillock. The mound covering an area of more than 2 ha of land is known as Kottaimedu and Natthamedu. It yielded black-and-red ware red ware, and black ware. The urns burials are found near the hillock in disturbed condition.

Thalaiyuttu

The village Thalaiyuttu (77º 26’ 02” E; 10º 31’ 15” N, 321 m MSL) is situated 14 km west of Palani on the way to Coimbatore. The stone circles are found close to the village. The burials are locally called as Pandiyankuli (Fig. 3.42). The average diameter of the stone circle measures to 7 m. The site covering an area of more than 2.5 ha. yielded black-and-red ware and red ware.

Thamaraikulam

The village Thamaraikulam (77º 28’ 40” E; 10º 25’ 25” N, 316 m MSL) is located about 5 km down the stream on the right bank of the river Poruthalar. It is well known for several archaeological findings. The habitation mound, locally called Tukkottai, yielded several graffiti marks engraved on black-and-red ware, russet-coated ware and red ware. Besides, iron furnace, TC pipes, tuyeres, bricks, terracotta figurines, hopscotces, etc., were collected from the disturbed habitation mound covering an area of about 4 ha. Urn burials with skeletal remains are found exposed earlier (Fig. 3.43-48).

Important medieval trade guild inscriptions issued by the celebrated trade guilds Ainurruvar/Tisai-ayirattu-ainurruvar were located about 5 km from Porunthal
down the stream at Thamaraikulam and Rajapuram. The Thamaraikulam lies on the right bank and Rajapuram lies on the left bank opposite to Thamaraikulam. It is quite interesting to note that both the sites have trade guild inscriptions (Seethram Gurumoorthy 2007:149-150, 204) suggesting the east-west trade route that would have crossed the river at this point.

**Vannapatti**

The Vannapatti (77º 45’ 52” E; 10º 42’ 00” N, 247 m MSL) is located 29 km north of Ottanchathiram. The habitation mound is found on northern side of the village. The mound Nattakadu is raised 1.5 m above the surface level. The cairn circles are found on northern side of the habitation mound. Most of the burials are disturbed due to cultivation.

**Vadukapatti**

The village Vadukapatti (77º 39’ 9” E; 10º 6’ 38” N, 278 m MSL) is situated on the Ottanchathiram – Mulanur road at a distance of 30 km from Ottanchathiram. The Early Historic habitation mound is found on the northern side of village. A small rivulet Nallathangaodai flows on northern side of the village. The habitation mound, locally called as Nattamedu, covering an area of more than 4 ha. yielded black-and-red ware, red ware and russet-coated ware.

**Velampadi**

The village Velampadi (77º 27’ 44” E; 12º 14’ 56” N, 402 m MSL) lies 5 km south of Pallapatti on the way to Idayakottai. The historic habitation mound Nattamedu is noticed on northern side of the village. The mound covering an area of more than 2 ha. of land yielded red ware and black ware.
KARUR DISTRICT

The Karur district comprising the present taluks of Karur, Aravakkurichi, Krishnarajapuram and Kulithalai is plain and fertile land and it is known for rice cultivation. The first two taluks come under Amaravathi river valley and the remaining two falls under Kaveri river valley. The fertile alluvial tract to the east of Karur is the zone where one could not find megalithic remains in appreciable numbers. This pattern deserves mention because the maximum number of sites identified during the present exploratory work, lie in the arid region of western and southern parts of Karur.

Anaipalayam

This village (77° 57'28" E; 10° 52'45" N, 245 m MSL) is located 22 km southwest of Karur. The river Amaravathi flows on southern side of the village. The 3 ha. of habitation mound is found on northern side of the village locally called as Nattakadu. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. Most of the habitation mounds are disturbed due to cultivation. The urn burial site is found on northern side of the habitation mound. Few rim portions were collected from the surface. Most of the burials also disturbed due to cultivation. Iron slag and furnace materials were collected from the habitation mound.

Arumaikkaranpatti

Arumaikkaranpatti (78° 3'33" E; 11° 3'15" N, 134 m MSL) is a small village situated about 11 km northwest of Karur on Karur-Pugalur road. The burial site distributed over an elevated field on the eastern side of the village has 15 stone circles found in disturbed condition. A major portion of the complex was converted into agricultural land. The existing burials were identified by the people as Pandiyankuttai (Anbarasan 2004).

Attur

Attur (78° 1'38" E; 10° 59'46" N, 161 m MSL) is located 6 km west of Karur on Karur-Erode road. Investigations carried out in western part of the village revealed a sizeable habitation mound spreading to an area of 8 ha. The mound raising 2 m from the present ground level yielded thick sectioned black-and-red ware, red slipped ware
and black ware. Heap of iron slag scattered all over the mound suggests a factory site existed in earlier times. To the east of the mound, 10 cairn circles are found in a disturbed state. In one of the burials is noticed a cist with a fallen capstone (Anbarasan 2004). The average diameter of the circle varies from 4 to 6 m.

**Bommakinatthupatti (Jekathambi)**

The village Bommakinatthupatti (78° 11’36” E; 10° 50’ 57” N, 156 m MSL) is situated 21 km south of Karur and 2 km south of Porani. The rivulet Bommakinattupatti flows on northern side of the village. More than 200 burials are found in 5 ha. of area. The slab circle with rectangular slabs installed at regular intervals is noticed at this site. Though several slabs were broken still one could see four to six slabs standing intact. Some burials are square and round in shape. Such slab circles are noticed at Kodumanal near Chennimalai, at Nayanur near Tirukkoyilur and Ayyampalayam near Vllupuram district (Fig. 3.48-51).

**Chengalipuram**

This village (77° 59’56” E; 10° 49’ 25” N, 150 m MSL) lies 19 km west of Karur. The river Amaravathi flows on southern side of the village. The Iron Age habitation area covering more than 6 ha. is noticed on northern part of the village and is locally called as Nattakadu. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware.

**Chinnakendampatti**

This village (78° 00’ 04” E; 10° 54’ 19” N, 212 m MSL) is situated 31 km southwest of Karur. The river Kodavanar flows on southern side of the village. The stone circles entombing cist and urn burials are found on northern side of the village (Fig. 3.52-53). The burial site locally called as Kuttai and Pandiyankuli covering an area of more than 7 ha. met with stone circles. The diameter of the stone circle varies from 4-20 m. The orthostats observed in a disturbed cist measures 200x190 cm and 143x120 cm. The 4 ha. habitation mound is noticed on eastern part of the village and it yielded black-and-red ware and red ware (Anbarasan 2004).

**Chinnamanayakkanpatti**

The village Chinnamanayakkanpatti (78° 10’ 09” E; 10° 56’ 36” N, 145 m MSL) is located Karur-Dindigal road at a distance of 22 km southwest of Karur. The site
stands for the biggest burial complex so far identified in the entire Karur region. The huge complex measuring nearly 50 ha. in extent lies to west of the village. It contains three modes of burials namely the stone circles, cairn circles and urn burials. The stone and cairn circles are noticed in the inner part of the complex where as the urn burials occupy the eastern fringe of the complex.

An interesting feature noticed at the site was that of a huge stone circle measuring 14 m in diameter. The stone circle is one of the biggest circles to be found in Karur region. Partially exposed oblong cist burials without any encircling boulders were also noticed within the same complex. Flat capstones were rested on the orthostats. The third variety i.e., urn burials as mentioned above lie on the southern part of the complex. The coarse red ware um is found interred in a shallow pit dug into the natural soil. A medium sized square capstone was placed to cover the mouth. The grave goods such as black-and-red ware bowls and small pots were placed around the urn at its base. The Kodavanar bank flows 2 km north east of the village (Anbarasan 2004). The average diameter of the circle varies from 3.80 to 14 m.

**D. Gudalur**

The village D. Gudalur (77º 49' 53" E; 10º 54' 15" N, 213 m MSL) is situated 23 km southwest of Karur. The Early Historic and historic habitation mound is found on south-eastern side of the village. A huge habitation mound is locally known as Nattamedu (Fig. 3.54). The mound measuring 2.5 m in height and looks grey in colour yielded black-and-red ware, russet-coated ware, black polished ware, red ware and red slipped ware. Six Jain beds were observed in the natural cavern on a hillock namely Tindakal 3 km further east of the village.

**Elavanur**

The village Elavanur (10º 50’ 24” N; 77º 54’ 08” E, MSL 174 M) lies 7 km north-west of Aravakurichi. The historic habitation mound, Nattakadu, is found on eastern side of the village. The 3 ha. of mound yielded red ware.

**Eluppakinatthupatti**

This remote village (77º 58’ 19” E; 10º 56’ 17” N, 150 m MSL) is situated 20 km southeast of Karur. The river Amaravathi flows on south-eastern side of the village.
Five ha. of Iron Age habitation mound is found on northern side of the village. The local people called this mound as Nattakadu. The mound, grey in color, is raised 1.50 m from the surface level. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. Iron slag is found on eastern part of the habitation mound.

**Gudalur**

The village (77° 50’10” E; 10° 54’ 14” N, 210 m MSL) lies about 27 km southwest of Karur. It can also be approached 10 km southeast of Tennilai. The megalithic remains are located in a much disturbed condition half a km west of the village. The very location of the site is intriguing because the settlers choose an arid productive area to the north of the river rather than choosing fertile zone on the south of the river. Such pattern is met with many of the sites in Karur region. The Amaravathi river flows about 3 km southeast of the site (Anbarasan 2004). The historic habitation mound is found on southern side of the village. The mound covering an area of more than 3 ha. is raised 2 m above the surface. It yielded dull red ware and black ware. A Siva temple belongs to 12th cent. AD is found on the habitation mound (Fig. 3.55).

**Kalipalayam**

Kalipalayam (77° 53’28” E; 10° 57’ 39” N, 185 m MSL) lies on Karur-Nerur road at a distance of 12 km northeast of Karur. The megalithic site lies on the bank of Kaveri river 2 km east of the village. Stone circles numbering about 15 are noticed of which only three were in better state of prevention. The diameter of the circles ranges from 4-6 m. The site is fast vanishing due to paddy cultivation (Anbarasan 2004).

**Karaipalayam**

Karaipalayam (78° 3’33” E; 11° 3’ 15” N, 134 m MSL) is situated on the Karur-Coimbatore road at a distance of 26 km west of Karur near to Paramatti. The Iron Age site lies a km east of the village. The rapid expansion of paddy cultivation has almost caused extinction of the burials. The author could locate two such burials. Among the two, one is found to be the usual box-type cist measuring 210 x 110 m. The thickness of the orthostat is varied from 10-15 cm (Fig. 3.56). The Noyyal river flows 10 km away from the site (Anbarasan 2004).
Kariyampatti

This village (77° 52’ 20” E; 10° 57’ 51” N, 182 m MSL) is situated on the Karur-Dindugal road at a distance 25 km southwest of Karur. The Iron Age-cum-historical habitation mounds found on western side of the village locally called as Nattamedu. The mound covering an area of more than 3 ha. yielded black-and-red ware and red slipped ware.

Karudaiyampalayam

Karudaiyampalayam (77°56’50” E; 10° 58’ 80” N, 182 m MSL) lies about 18 km west of Karur and 8 km east of Paramatti on the Karur-Coimbatore road. The impressive Iron Age site covering an area of more than 8 ha. with 50 burials both cairn circles and stone circles is located to the east of the village. Each burial is noticed with an oblong cist covered with a capstone. The villagers identify the burials as Pandiyannadai (Anbarasan 2004). The average diameter of the circle varies from 4 to 13 m (Fig. 3.57).

Kodandur

This village (77° 47’ 53” E; 10° 56’ 07” N, 215 m MSL) lies 13 km east of Vellakoil. The Iron Age habitation mound is found on southern side of the village. The habitation mound covering an area of more than 2 ha. yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. The stone circles entombing cist burials are found on northern side of the village. The burial complex, known as Pandiyankadu covering an area of more than 5 ha. has met with more than 50 burials of which nearly 50% are well preserved.

Kottaimarudur

The village Kottaimarudur (77° 48’ 56” E; 10° 44’ 5” N, 201 m MSL) is located 15 km south of Aravakurichi. The river Tirumani muttharu flows on eastern side of the village but on western side of the habitation mound. The historic habitation mound is found on eastern of the village covering an area of more than 2 ha. The mound called as Natthakkadu, yielded red ware and black ware.
Kottaiyur

This village (78° 00’ 10” E; 10° 54’ 54” N, 124 m MSL) is located 18 km west of Karur. The river Amaravathi flows on southern side of the village. The Iron Age habitation mound is found on western side of the village. It yielded black-and-red ware, red ware and it covers more than 3 ha. Near the habitation mound, Iron Age um burials are also noticed in disturbed condition.

Kottapalayam

Kottapalayam (77° 55’ 23” E; 10° 48’ 24” N, 255 m MSL) is located on the left bank of river Nankanji, a tributary of river Amaravathi on the Karur-Aravakurichi road at a distance of 25 km southwest of Karur. Iron Age burials known as Pandiyankuli, are noticed on the elevated field called Konakalmedu. More than 50 stone circles either entombing simple cist or urns are noticed. In a few cases, cist containing an um is also observed. The placement of an um inside a cist reflects the assimilation of two cultural traits. Some of the circles were found in single, double or triple circles. Such burials are reported in the present exploration at Karattupalayam near Vellakoil. The maximum and minimum diameters of the circles are 11.80 m and 4.60 m respectively. Huge granite boulders were used to form a circle and quartz stone used for cairn packing.

In this area, even today local people collect quartz pieces. Due to these mining activities, several ums were exposed and disturbed. The ums contain skeletal remains with the usual pottery assemblage. During the exploration, an um exposed in a section carries skeletal remains placed at the bottom of the um. This secondary burial does not have a skull. On the skeletal remains, six bowls of black-and-red ware were placed, all facing top. Of six bowls, two bowls were kept on black-and-red ware plates. A fine red soil was filled up to the shoulder portion of the um. A round capstone measuring 2.10 m diameter and 20 cm in thickness was placed over the um. The um measures 1.10x 0.70x 0.10 m. A post firing graffiti mark representing a star is found engraved on the shoulder portion of the pot but on its exterior surface.

A menhir, called Konakal, is observed in one of the graves planted on eastern part of a cairn circle entombing a transepted cist. The height of menhir measures 2.55 m above the ground level and had a breadth of 1.20 m. The cairn circle measures
4.80 m in diameter and cairn packing, mostly of quartz blocks, is raised to a height of 1 m. The associated habitation mound Nattakadu is noticed on the bank of river Nankanji. It yielded black-and-red ware and historical potteries. Some of the sherds are having graffiti marks like star (Fig. 3.58-62).

**Koyampalli**

This site (78° 09’ 01” E; 10° 54’ 14” N, 113 m MSL) lies 10 km east of Karur on left bank of river Amaravathi. A habitation mound covering an area of 7 ha. of land, locally called Nattakadu, lies on eastern side of the village. The soil of this habitation is grey in colour. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. The Iron Age um burials are found further east of the habitation mound covering an area of more than 2 ha. These monuments are known as Muttanthali.

**Kundangkalmedu**

The site (78° 10’ 36” E; 10° 52’ 9” N, 137 m MSL) lies about 25 km south east of Karur and 2 km north of Jekathambi. Five cairn circles in the verge of extinction are noticed amidst the cultivated land to the east of the village. The circles had quartz cairn packing raised 40 cm above the ground. The diameter of the circles measures 4 to 6 m. The megaliths are locally called as Pandiyarvidu (Anbarasan 2004).

**Kurumbapatti**

The village (77° 58’ 17” E; 10° 58’ 33” N, 170 m MSL) is located 12 km west of Karur on the Karur-Coimbatore high road. Stone circles measuring from 4.5-5 m in diameter are found on the elevated rocky field a km south of the village Kurumbapatti. The construction of a textile factory had caused total destruction of the burials (Anbarasan 2004).

**Madaikattupudur**

Madaikattupudur (77° 50’ 02” E; 10° 56’ 30” N, 201 m MSL) lies southwest of Karur at a distance of a km south of Tennilai. The disturbed burials yielded a cist. The disturbed burials yielded a cist. The diameter of the circle varies from 4.00 m to 6.80 m. two cists measure 170x120x15 cm and 100x60x13 cm respectively. Medium sized quartz stones strewn around the circle indicate cairn packing (Anbarasan 2004).
Mahalakshmipuram

It (77° 55’ 51” E; 10° 46’ 49” N, 170 m MSL) lies about 20 km southwest of Karur on the road leading to Aravakurichi. The extensive cemetery complex called Sankaranmedu covers an area of 8 ha. The complex is situated a km east of Nankanji river. It contained more than 30 burials mostly of stone circles devoid of any cairn packing. The diameter of the circles varies from 3 to 8.6 m. One of the circles showed the presence of cist measuring 150x90x16cm (Anbarasan 2004; Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2008:63-65) (Fig. 3.63).

Malaikovilur

This village (77° 58’ 21” E; 10° 50’ 56” N, 151 m MSL) lies on the left bank of river Kodavanar and 22 km southwest of Karur on the Karur-Dindigal road. The Iron Age and Historic habitation mound, called Nattamedu, is found on western part of the village. This huge mound measures 2 m above the ground level. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. The cist burials recognized earlier is now either removed or buried beneath the textile weaving factory. B. Narasimhaiah reported the presence of cist burials with the help of some photographs exhibited in the office of Karur co-operative Spinning and Weaving mills (Narasimhaiah 1980: 119). A Siva temple with Tamil inscription and an Amman temple are noticed near the habitation mound (Fig. 3.64).

Manalmedu

This village (77° 59’ 59” E; 10° 52’ 56” N, 142 m MSL) lies 20 km west of Karur on the right bank of river Amaravathi on Dindigal-Karur road. The Iron Age habitation mound locally called as Nattakadu is found in and around the village covering more than 3 ha. of land. It yielded black-and red-ware and red ware. Major part of the habitation mound was disturbed due to construction.

Manarpadi

The village Manarpadi (10° 46’ 06” N; 77° 50’ 55” E, 241 m MSL) is located 10 km west of Aravakurichi on the way to Satthampadi. The river Sanmuganadi flows on southern side of the village. The habitation mound locally called as Nattamedu is found on northern side of the village. It huge mound rises 3 m above surface level
and covering an area of more than 10 ha. yielded red ware and black ware. A hero stone is noticed on northern side of the habitation mound.

**Manmangalam**

Manmangalam (11° 2’ 9” N; 78° 4’ 2” E, 138 m MSL) lies 8 km northeast of Karur on the Karur-Pugalur road. Megalithic monuments consisting of stone circles, cairn circles and dolmens were earlier located by University of Madras in the year 1960 (IAR 1961-62 : 27). The striking feature noticed at the site was the occurrence of double stone circle. The site was again studied by B. Narasimhaiah in subsequent period. The cist burials noticed here had an oblong chamber oriented north-south with porthole on the east. The thickness of the orthostats measures about 25 cm. The passage in front of the porthole was made up of two vertical slabs measuring 1.70 m in length and closed by a front slab measuring 1.65 m. The whole passage is measured to 1.70x1.50 m (Anbarasan 2004) (Fig. 3.65).

**Melkattalai**

This village (78° 09’ 17” E; 10° 57’ 16” N, 108 m MSL) lies 18 km east of Karur. The river Amaravathi flows on northern side of the village. A habitation mound, locally called as Nattakadu, covering an area of 2 ha. of land lies on southern side of the village. The soil of the habitation mound is grey in colour. It yielded black-and-red ware. A few urn burials, locally called Kulitali, are found further east of the habitation mound.

**Monjanur**

The village Monjanur (10° 58’ 33” N; 77° 47’ 15” E, 192.4 m MSL) lies 13 km northeast of Vellakoil. The historical habitation mound is found on southern side of the village. This mound, covering an area of more than 3 ha, yielded dull red ware only. A Siva temple built during the reign of Kongu-Chola Virarajendara is found on northern side of the habitation mound. Five inscriptions referring to a land donation were engraved at the entrance of the garbha-griha of the temple (Fig. 3.66).

**Mudiganam**

This village (77° 57’20” E; 10° 53’ 05” N, 160 m MSL) is located 24 km southeast of Karur. The river Amaravathi flows on south-eastern side of the village.
The 4 ha. of Iron Age habitation mound locally called as Nattakadu, is noticed on the river bank. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. The urn burials are found on eastern side of the village and locally called as Muttanthali. One of the disturbed urns measures 130x28x2 cm. The interesting feature of this urn is that it is thin in section and very fine in quality. Such urns are unnoticed elsewhere in this region (Fig. 3.67).

**Munnur**

Munnur (77°54'24" E; 10°59'23" N, 163 m MSL) is located 32 km west of Karur and 5 km north of Paramatti. The burial complex lies to the east of the village amidst the huge rocky field called as Karadu. The vast complex was exploited for want of stones in recent times. Out of 12 burials, only two of them retain its form. They belong to the class of cairn circle having a diameter ranging between 5 m to 7 m. One of the disturbed cists measures 160 x 50x14 cm. The huge capstone measuring 118 x 80 cm was placed over it. The complex covers an area of 10 ha. All the burials lie on the bank of Munnur rivulet which flows north of the village (Anbarasan 2004; Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2008:63-65).

**Mukkanankuruchi**

The village Mukkanankuruchi (78°04'24" E; 10°50'30" N, 186 m MSL) is located at a distance of 15 km southwest of Karur on the way to Echchanattam. A jungle stream named Attuvari flows near the habitation mound and it is finally emptied in the tank at Venkatamangalam.

A habitation mound, known as Nattaredu, covering an area of 12 ha. of cultivated land is located on eastern side of the village. It yielded black-and-red ware and black ware, red ware, russet-coated ware, black polished ware and red slipped ware. The present village is located 2 km west of the habitation mound and near the main road.

The Iron Age urn burial site is found further north of the habitation mound in the place called as Thennampillai-thottam covering an area of more than 4 ha. The urns are locally called as Muttanthali. Three urn burials were exposed by the Department of History, Government Arts College, Karur in September 2005. According to the information collected from them, an urn having thick rim facing east covered with a lid was placed in a simple pit over which a capstone measuring
153x89x10 cm was placed. The urn contains a skull, few skeletal remains, a small plate of a black polished ware, black-and-red ware bowls, red ware ring stands, black polished ware ring stands and red slipped ware. All these grave goods were placed at the base of the urn. Interestingly a plough like iron object was also recovered from this urn. The “U” shaped iron plough with 10 cm gap on the top has a sharp bottom. Such plough like object was reported earlier at Kodumanal and in Pudukottai region. Besides, a few iron swords, arrow heads and knives were collected from the disturbed burial site. The burial site yielded black-and-red ware, red ware, russet-coated ware, black polished ware and red slipped ware.

An east facing Siva temple with inscription is noticed behind the habitation. The inscription engraved on the adhisthana portion of the temple is presently embedded into the ground (Anbarasan 2004) (Fig. 3.87-70).

Mulapalayam

This village (10°51' 17" N; 77°44' 15" E; 238 m MSL) is located 18 km south of Vellakoil. The river Amaravathi flows on northern side of the village. The historic period habitation mound is found on southern side of the village. The habitation mound covering an area of 3 ha. yielded red ware and black ware. This mound is locally called as Nattakadu. Major part of the habitation mound was destroyed due to cultivation.

Muttukavundanpalayam

This village (77°55' 16" E; 10°49' 07" N, 146 m MSL) is situated on the Karur – Dindigal road at a distance of 24 km southwest of Karur. The river Nankanji joins with Amaravathi near the village at a place called Kududurai. Historical habitation mound covering more than 5 ha. is found on northern part of the village. The mound, called as Nattamedu, yielded black ware and red ware.

Nagampalli

The village Nagampalli (77°57’20” E; 10°53'05” N, 149 m MSL) stands on the Karur-Arvakurichi road about 15 km south west of Karur and 17 km northeast of Aravakurichi. The megalithic site lies on the left bank of Amaravathi river a km west of the village. Ten stone circles are found on the eastern part of the village in much
disturbed state of preservation. The burial complex covers an area of the more than 7 ha. Another cluster of burials were also observed close to the textile industry. The circles measure an average diameter of 6.2 m (Anbarasan 2004; Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2008:63-65) (Fig. 3.71).

Nallilapalayam

This village (10º 56’ 47” N; 77 º 48’ 41” E, 227 m MSL) is situated 15 km east of Vellakoil. The historic habitation mound called Nattakattuthottam, covering an area of more than 3 ha, yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. The western part of the mound was destroyed due to cultivation.

Nanjaikalakkuruchi

Nanjaikalakkuruchchi (77º 55’ 28” E; 10º 51’ 32” N, 158 m MSL) lies 25 km south of Karur on the way to Venkakalmedu which lies 4 km north of Aravakurichi. The river Amaravathi flows on southern side of this village.

In this village, two habitation mounds respectively belonging to Iron Age Early historic and historic period are noticed in the cultivated field locally known as Pavuthithottam, Muniyanthottam and Nattakathottam. The gap between these two mounds is about 2 km. The Iron Age habitation mound is found on the bank of the river whereas the historic habitation mound is found little interior on the elevated area. The Iron Age habitation mound, grey in colour, yielded black-and-red ware, red ware, russet-coated ware and iron slag. The habitation mound lies in north-south direction covers more than 50 ha. It lies on the bank of river Amaravathi. The burial complex associated with Iron Age habitation mound is found in the cultivated field called Avisasithottam. It yielded exclusively urn burials kept in a pit with skeletal remains. The urns are locally called as Mutthanthal and mathamathakkasal. Besides, a late medieval inscription is noticed on the natural rock named Virapparai.

Another historic habitation mound locally called Nattakadu, covering an area of 2 ha. of land is situated on eastern side of the village. It yielded a Linga, Nandi and Sapthamathurka panel sculptures. Two of the Sapthamathurka panel sculptures were broken and four of them are well preserved. Besides, one Jain sculpture and a Vishnu sculpture are also recorded (Fig. 3.72).
Nadandai

This village Nadandai (10º 54’ 52’’ N; 77º 53’ 34’’ E, 230.5 m MSL) is situated 15 km east of Vellakoil. The Iron Age and historic habitation mound is observed on northern side of the village. The mound covering an area of more than 5 ha. yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. More than 50 stone circles entombing cist burials are found on the eastern side of the habitation mound covering an area of 10 ha.

Nattamedu

The habitation site (78º 4’ 49’’ E; 11º 9’ 51’’ N, 151 m MSL) is located on the Karur-Mukkanankurichi road at a distance 10 km south of Karur and 3 km north of Mukkanakurichi. The name of the village implies for the ancient habitation mound. The habitation mound covering an area of more than 8 ha. lies to east of the village. The mound raised to a height of 60 cm above the ground level fetched black-and-red ware and black slipped ware (Anbarasan 2004; Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2008:63).

Nedungur

The village Nedungur (10º 57’ 20’’ N; 77º 56’ 59’’ E, 171 m MSL) is situated 15 km west of Karur on the way to Coimbatore. Iron Age habitation-cum-burial site is found on western side of the village. The habitation mound covering an area of more than 20 ha. is found on south-western side of the village locally known as Nattamedu. The mound yielded red ware, red slipped ware and black polished ware. The stone circles with cairn backing are found near the habitation mound locally known as Pandiyankulzi and Pandiyanvidu. The stone circles are found in two types, one is small and another is huge circle. The small circles had on average diameter of 12 m. The huge circles measure an average diameter of 25 m (Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2008:1-36). The Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology excavated this site in the year 2006-07. The details of the excavation are dealt in the following chapters (Fig. 3.73).

Nerur

Nerur (78º 09’12’’ E; 11º 00’ 52’’ N, 114 m MSL) lies 17 km east of Karur. The river Kaveri flows on eastern side of the village. The urn burials are found on northern side of the village covering an area of more than 5 ha. The people locally called them
as Mathamathakkasal yielded black-and-red ware, russet-coated ware, black polished ware, red slipped ware and red ware. A north facing Varadaraja Perumal temple with inscriptions is found on right bank of the river Kaveri (Mahalingam 1991:10-12).

Nimithampatti

The village Nimithampatti (77° 56' 12" E; 10° 54' 35" N, 158 m MSL) lies 5 km east of Kasipalayam which is situated on Karur-Chinnadharapuram road at a distance of 15 km west of Karur. The Iron Age habitation mound, locally called as Nattakadu is found on southern side of the village and covering an area of more than 4 ha. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware.

Ondhampatti

Ondhampatti (77° 57’ 30” E; 10° 50’ 34” N, 162 m MSL) lies 16 km west of Karur on Karur- Dindigal road. The five ha. Iron Age habitation mound, called as Nattakadu, is noticed on north part of the village. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. The burials are chiefly consist of stone circles packed with quartz stones. The extensive quarry carried out close to the site has left only traces of burials without any boulders. The diameter of the circle varies from 3.2 to 5.2 m. (Anbarasan 2004; Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2008:63-65). On southern fringe of the village, a hero stone is noticed. The north facing slab carrying both hero and his wife had an inscription datable to 16th cent. AD (Fig. 3.74).

Panapalayam

The small village Panapalayam (77° 55’ 48” E; 10° 58’ 19” N, 188 m MSL) lies about 23 km west of Karur. One can approach this place after crossing the village Ranganathapuram. Among the surviving burials, six stone circles measuring 4.00-6.80 m in diameter are identified. The site is fast disappearing due to the modern construction activities. Some of urn burial components were also found within the complex. Further, the occurrence of the large quantity of iron slags indicates an iron manufacturing centre at the site. The dried-up Molappalayan channel runs near the burials (Anbarasan 2004).
Panchamadevi

Panchamadevi (77° 26' 58" E; 10° 46' 26" N, 200 m MSL) lies about 7 km north-east of Karur and 10 km south west of Nerur. The habitation mound covering more than 2 ha. is found in front of the Government School. The mound yielded the usual potteries like the black-and-red ware and red ware. The mound is locally called as Nattamadu (Anbarasan 2004; Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2008:63-65).

Paramatti

Paramatti (77° 54' 41" E; 10° 57' 44" N, 186 m MSL) is one among the bigger commercial towns in Karur district. It lies at a distance of 21 km west of Karur in Karur-Coimbatore road. The occurrence of cairn circles covering 4 ha. of land is noticed on an elevated field on both side of the village near Murugan hillock. Among the 15 burials noticed at the site, 7 of them are in better state of preservation. The cairn circles measure 5.00-7.00 m in diameter (Anbarasan 2004; Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2008:63).

Pasupathipalayam

This site (77° 55' 50" E; 10° 58' 03" N, 184 m MSL) is situated on the Karur-Coimbatore road at a distance of 22 km west of Karur and 5 km east of Paramatti. A major portion of the complex had been converted into agricultural land. Apart from the site of Manmangalam and Kottapalayam this site also yielded double circle. The boulders were placed without much gap. The diameter of the circles from varies 6.2 to 7.6 m. It yielded black-and-red ware, red ware and russet-coated ware. The eastern part of the mound was disturbed due to construction activities (Anbarasan 2004; Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2008:63-65) (Fig. 3.75).

Periyathirumangalam

The village Periyathirumangalam (77° 40' 46" E; 10° 22' 14" N, 281 m MSL) is located 5 km northeast of Chinnadharapuram. The historic habitation mound is found on southern side of the village covering an area of more than 3 ha. It yielded black ware and red ware. The mound, grey in colour, is locally called as Natthakkattuthottam.
Pilkalmedu

Pilkalmedu (78° 3' 58" E; 11° 1' 16" N, 188 m MSL) is located on the Karur-Pugalur road at a distance of 5 km northwest of Karur and 9 km southeast of Pugalur. Both the village and the habitation mound go by the same name. The habitation mound lies half a km west of the village. Assorted sherds of black-and-red ware, red ware, black slipped ware and terracotta hopscotch were collected from its surface. The mound spreads to an extent of about 4 ha. (Anbarasan 2004).

Pugalur

The historical site (78° 00' 8" E; 11° 4' 26" N, 141 m MSL) Tamil-Brahmi records lies about 18 km northwest of Karur and it is known for Tamil-Brahmi records. (ARE 1927-28: 349, Mahadevan 1971: 71-106, 2003:405-421) A small ash mound is noticed to the north of Arunattar hillock (Velayudhampalayam) and to the right of the main road leading to Salem. Surface collections made at the mound yielded good number of black-and-red ware shreds. Explorations conducted at the site earlier by the State Archaeology Museum, Karur also fetched similar type of ceramics (Fig. 3.76).

Punnam

Punnam (77° 59' 11" E; 11° 00' 59" N, 169 m MSL) lies 12 km west of Karur on Karur-Coimbatore road. Four stone circles were noticed in an elevated field located 1 km north of the village. The stone circles stand above the ground to a height of 50 cm and measure 4.00-5.00 m in diameter (Anbarasan 2004) (Fig. 3.77).

Putthambur

The village of Putthambur (78° 1' 20" E; 10° 53' 4" N, 158 m MSL) lies on Karur-Aravakurichi road at a distance of 17 km southeast of Karur. Due to constant reclamation of the land, the burial complex covering an area of 5 ha. was razed to ground. The surviving specimens are numbering about 10 cairn circles. Quartz pieces were extensively used for cairn packing and it rose to a height of 60-70 cm above the ground level. The cairn circle measure 4.00 to 5.80 m in its circumference (Anbarasan 2004).
Ramanathapuram

The small village Ramanathapuram (77° 5’ 25” E; 10° 46’ 54” N, 161 m MSL) lies 4 km north of Aravakurichi on the Karur-Aravakurichi road. This is the only site so far identified in Aravakurichi taluk to yield high count of burials, about 30 in number. Some of the exposed stone circles contained square chamber (Anbarasan 2004; Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2008:63-65). The average diameter of the circle varies from 4.50 to 10.00 m. One of the disturbed cists measures 1.20 x 0.90 x12 cm.

Ramakavundanpudur

This village (77° 57’ 03” E; 10° 47’ 36” N, 160 m MSL) is situated on the Kariyapatti-Ayyampatti road at a distance of 26 km southwest of Karur. The western part of the village locally called Nattakadu yielded black-and-red ware and historical potteries. It covers more than 10 ha. The western part of the habitation mound was disturbed due to cultivation.

Ranganathapuram

Ranganathapuram (77° 56’ 40” E; 10° 57’ 56” N, 177 m MSL) is situated at a distance of 21 km west of Karur on the Karur-Coimbatore road. The conversion of barren land into agricultural land poses a major threat in most of the sites. Except for limited occurrence of burials within 5 ha of land, many of them were completely dismantled. Some of the burials were identified as cairn circles with dense cairn packing rising up to 70 cm above the ground. Besides, few urn pieces were also collected at the site (Anbarasan 2004; Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2008:63).

Senapiratti

The habitation-cum-burial site (78° 6’ 48” E; 10° 57’ 25” N, 126 m MSL) is situated 7 km east of Karur on the Karur-Tiruchirapalli road. The foundation pits made by the Public Works Department were often met with urn burials with capstone. Grave goods collected from such pits are presently housed in the State Archaeology Museum at Karur. Some of the pots had graffiti marks inscribed at the shoulder portion.

The associated habitation mound is identified a km west of Senapiratti village. In the partially leveled mound, black-and-red ware, black slipped ware and red ware
pieces were collected. The mound is locally known as Kusavanmedu (mound of the potters). Tirumullaiyur canal flows 1.5 km south of the habitation site (Anbarasan 2004).

**Sengalapuram**

This village (77° 58’ 35” E; 10° 53’ 54” N, 150 m MSL) is situated 17 km southeast of Karur. The river Amaravathi flows on southern side of the village. Five hectares of Iron Age habitation mound, locally called as Nattakadu, is found on western side of the village. It yielded black-and-red ware, red ware, russet-coated ware and red slipped ware. A Siva temple with Tamil inscription is found on western side of the habitation mound. The ruined temple is having, Vishnu and Jasta sculptures. It belongs to 8th - 9th cent. AD (Fig. 3.78-79).

**Senkalipalayam**

This village (77° 40’ 20” E; 10° 56’ 02” N, 150 m MSL) is situated 12 southeast of Vellakovil. An Iron Age-cum-historical ash mound covering an area of 3 ha. yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. This habitation mound called Nattakattuthottam is noticed on northern part of the village. The urn burials locally known as Pandiyankuli are located a km southeastern side of the habitation mound. Iron pieces, black-and-red ware and red slipped ware were collected from disturbed burials.

**Somur**

Somur (78° 09’ 45” E; 10° 58’ 31” N, 111 m MSL) is located about 13 km east of Karur. The river Amaravathi flows on southern side of the village. The Iron Age-cum-historic habitation mound, locally called Nattamedu, is found around the village covering an area of more than 2 ha. The Iron Age urn burials are found on southwestern side of the village. The urn burial site is found spread over an area of more than 2 ha. and are locally called as Muttanthali. It yielded black-and-red ware, red slipped ware, red ware and black ware.

A north facing Siva temple with a 10th cent. AD inscriptions (Rajaraja I) is found behind the habitation. The inscription engraved on the adhisthana portion of the temple is presently embedded into the ground (Mahalingam 1991:12-15) (Fig. 3.80).
Thalakkampalayam

This village (77° 53’ 33" E; 10° 55’ 36" N, 186 m MSL) is located 16 km east of Vellakoil. The historic habitation mound is found on southern side of the village. The mound covering an area of more than 5 ha. yielded dull red ware and black ware. A Siva temple is found in a dilapidated condition on western side of the habitation mound.

Thalapatti

This site (77° 58’ 07” E; 10° 51’ 26” N, 147 m MSL) lies 30 km southwest of Karur on the Venjamangudalur road. The river Kodavanar flows on southern side of the village. The Iron Age habitation mound is noticed on northern part of the village. It is locally called as Nattakadu. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. The mound covering 5 ha. of land was disturbed due to cultivation.

Therapatti

This village (77° 56’ 45” E; 10° 48’ 53” N, 171 m MSL) is situated on the Karur-Dindigal road at a distance of 22 km southwest of Karur. The western part of this village called Nattamedu is noticed as the Iron Age habitation mound. The four hectare mound yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. Major part of the habitation mound was disturbed due to cultivation.

Tirumukkudalur

This village (78° 10’54” E; 10° 58’ 31” N, 102 m MSL) is situated 15 km from Karur on the way to Nerur road. It is ideally located at the confluence of river Amaravathi with Kaveri. The Iron Age urn burials are found around the village covering more than 3 ha. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. The habitation mound was partially destroyed due to construction (Anbarasan 2004; Seetharam Gurumoorthy 2008:63-65). A Siva temple with inscription is found on southern side of the village (Mahalingam 1991:15-17).

Thottivadi

The village (77° 56’ 54” E; 10° 54’ 33” N, 150 m MSL) lies 19 km southwest of Karur. The river Amaravathi flows on southeastern side of the village. The Iron Age and Historic habitation mound called Nattakadu is found on southwest of the village.
Seven hectares of Iron Age habitation mound is raised 1 m from the surface level yielded black-and-red ware, red ware and russet-coated ware.

Two east facing hero stones are found on the habitation mound. They are locally called as Ittiyappansami and Amravasai. The size of the hero stones is 112x105 m and 126x8 m respectively. In the first hero stone, the hero holds a sword in right hand. In the second hero stone, the hero holds a sword in right hand and a bow and arrow in left hand. Both are belongs to Chola period. The Medieval period oil-press is found on the habitation mound (Fig. 3.81).

**Thumbavadi**

Thumbavadi (77° 59’ 32” E; 10° 56’ 25” N, 210 m MSL) is located 13 km south of Karur. The river Amaravathi flows south of the village. The 10 ha. of Iron Age and historic habitation mound is noticed on southeastern side of the village. This mound, locally called as Nattakadu, yielded black-and-red ware, red ware and iron slag.

**Udaiyampalayam**

The village Udaiyampalayam (77° 46’ 33” E; 10° 53’ 52” N, 212 m MSL) lies 15 km east of Vellakoil. The river Amaravathi flows 1 km east of the village. Both Iron Age and historic period habitation mounds are found on north eastern side of the village. The habitation mound covering an area of more than 3 ha. yielded red ware and iron ore. The mound is locally known as Nattakkattuthottam.

The stone circle entombing cist burials are found on southern side of the habitation mound. The 2 ha. burial complex met with more than 20 burials. Nearly 60% of the burials are destroyed due to cultivation. Disturbed burials yielded black- and red ware and red ware (Fig. 3.82-83).

**Uppidamangalam**

The habitation-cum-burial site (77° 1’ 20” E; 10° 53’ 14” N, 156 m MSL) lies 14 km southeast of Karur and 7 km northwest of Bommakinattupatti. Both the burial and the habitation complex are located a km west of the village. The habitation mound covering an area of more than 6 ha. is locally called as Nattamedu. Five stone circles partially disturbed were also identified. The average diameter of the circle is 6.00 m.
Another set of burials were identified 1.5 km further south of Uppidamangalam (Anbarasan 2004).

**Valanayakkanpatti**

This village (77° 57’ 7” E; 10° 56’ 34” N, 157 m MSL) can be approached by the cart road from the village Karudaiyampalyam on the Karur-Coimbatore road about 19 km west of Karur. The site is located further 3 km south of main road. The most interesting feature noticed here was the unusual size of the stone circle measuring 13 m in diameter. The Average diameter of the stone circles is 9.00 m. In spite of growing vandalism 25 burials still retain their original form. The site also yielded neck portions of few disturbed urns (Anbarasan 2004). One of the disturbed cists measures 120 x 0.90 x 1 cm.

**Vaduganur**

The village Vaduganur (77° 50’ 16” E; 10° 55’ 25” N, 227 m MSL) is located at a distance of 3 km south east of Tennilai. The ancient grave yard lying south of the village contains both stone and cairn circles entombing cist. The complex spreads to an extent of 4 ha. with 25 burials of which only a few were in better condition. In one of the burials, the capstone of the cist was exposed at the ground level (Anbarasan 2004).

**Velaripatti**

This village (77° 58’25” E; 10° 52’ 55” N, 144 m MSL) is situated 20 km southwest of Karur. The river Amaravathi flows on southern side of the village. Six hectares of Iron Age habitation mound, Nattakadu, is found on western side of the village. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware.

**Velliyanai**

The village Velliyanai (78° 7’ 25” E; 10° 51’ 12” N, 148 m MSL) is situated on the Karur-Dindigal road at a distance of 15 km from Karur. The river Kodavanar flows on north-eastern side of the village. The historic habitation mound is found on northern side of the village. It yielded black ware, red ware and red slipped ware. The height of the mound is 1 m above the ground level. The huge habitation mound known as Natthamedu covers an area of more than 3 ha. (Anbarasan 2004).
Three oil-press stone blocks were reported at this site. Of the three, one oil-press carries an inscription reading Svastha sri somur mahadevarkku ainurruvar ituvi cca cekku. The inscription datable to 10th cent. AD engraved on the oil-press in Vatteluthu character refers to the trade guild Ainurruvar who donated this oil-press to the God Mahadevar located at Somur (Ganesan: 2000:25). The oil-press measures 0.75 m in height and 0.57 m in width and the grinding depth is of 0.28 m. Another two oil-presses are all also same in size but are found without any inscriptions. Another inscription belonging to 6th cent. AD is found on tank bed. It records the construction of this tank by one Solika Araiyan alias Akanitan (Rajavelu 2001:1) (Fig. 3.84).

**Venjamakkudalur**

This village (77° 59'21” E; 10° 49' 08” N, 158 m MSL) lies on the Karur to Aravakurichi road at a distance of 14 km southwest of Karur and 16 km northeast of Aravakurichi. The stone circles were the dominant class of burial found here. The complex covers an area of about 4 ha. Five circles are found to be reasonably in better state of preservation. The diameter of the circles varies from 4.00 to 5.00 m. At present, the circle boulders are being used as boundary stones for the paddy fields. The Kodavanar river flows a km east of the village (Anbarasan 2004). The habitation mound, locally called as Nattakadu, covering an area of more than 10 ha. of cultivated land on the eastern part of the village yielded black-and-red ware and red potteries. Linga, Nandi and Ayyanar are noticed within a habitation field.
TIRUPPUR DISTRICT

Amaravathi Dam

The Amaravathi Dam (77° 14' 50" E; 10° 24' 54" N, 356 m MSL) built across the river Amaravathi lies 20 km southwest of Udumalaipettai. The construction of the Dam led to the submergence of several Iron Age monuments. During summer, the monuments are exposed due to low water level. Iron Age graves are noticed at two locations within a distance of 2 km. First group observed in front of the Sainik School hostel is mainly consisting of cairn circles measuring 5-10 m. Most of the circles were disturbed due to construction activities (Rajan 1997:58). The second group consists of cairn circles encircling dolmen or stone circle entombing cist with urn are found in water spread area of the Dam. The alignment of the graves suggests that these graves would have erected probably on left bank of the river Amaravathi. The stone circle measures 2.50 to 11 m in diameter. The east-facing dolmen is having a "U" Shaped porthole measuring 0.54 x 0.40 m in size. One of the exposed dolmens measures 3.15x 2 x 1.80 m. A few dolmens numbering two or three are found in a group within a rectangular enclosure wall. Some of the dolmens had a passage on the east. The passage covers with cairn packing. Each chamber had an individual capstone. The average measurement of the capstone is 4x3.5x0.20 m. The dolmen was built of four orthostats kept in clockwise direction around a floor slab resulting with a rectangular box-like structure. The boulders were placed around the dolmen in circular form measuring 7.30 m in diameter. The gap between the circle and the dolmen was packed with cairns. Some of the disturbed dolmens yielded iron objects, broken potteries of red ware and bone pieces. More than 80 dolmens are found in the water spread area out of which nearly 30 dolmens are well preserved.

The cist burials are found in east west orientation with passage on the east. It measures 3.10x1.50 m, and passage measures 1.60x.60 m. Most of the cist burials are in good state of preservation. However, a few capstones were missing. Besides cists and dolmens, a few urn burials are also found in this area. All are huge in size, measuring 1.40x0.78x0.5 m. The shoulder portion of the urn, just below the neck, had a thumb nail impression (Fig. 3.85-88).
Andipalayam

The village Andipalayam (10º 52’ 18” N; 77 º 39’ 36” E, 216 m MSL) is located 12 km south of Vellakoil on the way to Dharapuram. The river Amaravathi flows on southern side of the village. The Iron Age and Historic habitation mound, Nattakkattuthottam, is found on eastern side of the village. It yielded black-and-red ware, black ware and dull red ware. The stone circles entombing cist burials are found on eastern side of the habitation mound. The burial site is covering an area of more than 3 ha, with more than 50 burials. Few burials are disturbed due to cultivation.

Ankitoluvu

The village Ankitoluvu (10º 44’ 08” N; 77º 22’ 47” E, 392 m MSL) is located 15 km west of Dharapuram on the way to Pollachi. The historic habitation mound is found on western side of the village, locally called as Nattakadu. The mound covering an area of more than 2 ha, yielded black ware and red ware.

Aricharavalasu

This village (77º 52’ 02” E 10º 47’ 48” N, 160 m MSL) is located 6 km west of Aravakurichi. The river Amaravathi flows on northern side of the village. Urn burials are found on eastern side of the village covering an area of more than two ha. The urns are locally known as Muttanthali. Several urns are disturbed and contain iron pieces like arrow heads and swords, black-and-red ware, red ware and black polished ware pot pieces. The rim of the urn measures 0.8 cm in thickness. Urns are enclosed with a granite boulder. Most of the boulders placed as capstone over the urn were removed and placed as field boundaries.

Ayyampalayam

The village Ayyampalayam (77º 11’ 43” E; 10º 49’ 33” N, 332 m MSL) is located 22 km east of Udumalaipettai and 4 km from Kolumam on the way to Palani. The river Amaravathi flows on the western side of the village. The cairn circles are found on the western side of the village. The burial site is known as Pandiyankadu. Most of the burials were disturbed due to cultivation. On the surface, a few pieces of black-and-red ware, red ware and iron objects were collected. The habitation mound looks grey in color raised 2 m above the ground level and located on the banks the river.
Ayyampalayam

This village (77° 05’ 12” E; 11° 23’ 23” N, 284 m MSL) is located 20 km south of Vellakoil. The river Amaravathi flows on eastern side of the village. The historic habitation mound is found on western side of the village. The mound covering an area of 2 ha. yielded red ware and is locally called as Nattamedu.

Bolarai

The village Bolarai (10° 46’ 15” N; 77° 40’ 09” E, 272 m MSL) is located 18 km east of Dharapuram on the way to Mulanur. The Early Historic habitation mound is found on eastern side of the village locally called as Nattamedu. The mound covering an area of more than 3 ha. yielded black ware and red ware. A hero stone is found on the northern side of the habitation mound. The hero holding sword fights with a tiger.

Budinattam

The village Budinattam (77° 12’ 47” E; 10° 33’ 52” N, 369 m MSL) is located 7 km west of Udumalaipettai. A hoard of 1398 denarii was found at this village and was later acquired by the Madras Museum. As per the Madras Museum Annual Report, the hoard consists of 369 Augustus others coins. None of the coins was slashed (MMAR 1946-47:1, 3, 8; Turner 1989: 50; Suresh 1992: 61) (Fig. 3.89-90).

Chinnavedampatti

The village Chinnavedampatti (77° 15’ 21” E; 10° 36’ 56” N, 384 m MSL) lies 3 km north of Udumalaipettai on the way to Tiruppur. The urns, locally called as Pandiyankuli, are found on southern side of the village covering an area of more than 2.5 ha. Most of the burials were disturbed due to cultivation. It yielded red ware miniature bowls, black slipped ware ring stands and plates.

A huge east-facing slab with an inscription engraved on either side of the slab is found on the habitation mound. This inscription datable to 1450 AD belongs to Vijayanagar period. Moon and Sun are found engraved on the top of the slab. A Siva temple datable to 14-15th cent. AD is found on northeastern side of the habitation mound.
Chinnuttu

Chinnuttu (77° 14’ 06” E; 10° 28’ 20” N, 398 m MSL) lies on the Coimbatore – Munaru road at a distance of 16 km from Udumalaipettai and 5.5 km from Amaravathi-Dam. Nearly 50 dolmens made of dressed orthostats are found on the hillock about 1 km away from the Tollgate. The hillock is locally known as Pappiranparai. The dolmen had a maximum height of 1.20 m (Rajan 1977: 59).

Catthiram

The village Catthiram (11° 38’ 47” N; 77° 26’ 43” E, 238 m MSL) is situated 8 km west of Dharapuram town. The historic habitation mound is found 1 km east of Catthiram. The mound is known as Kottaimedu. The mound covering an area of more than 2 ha. yielded black-and-red ware and red ware.

Dhalakkara

The village Dhalakkara (10° 46’ 51” N; 77° 32’ 9” E, 232 m MSL) is located 10 km north of Dharapuram on the way to Vellakoil. The historic habitation mound local people known as Nattakadu, covering an area of more than 2.5 ha. is found on southern side of the village. A medieval period inscription is found on the habitation mound.

Dhali

The village Dhali (77° 13’ 06” E; 10° 23’ 20” N, 424 m MSL) lies on the Udumalaipettai–Thirumurthimalai road at a distance of 15 km from Udumalaipettai. The Early Historic habitation mound is found on the southern side of the village. The mound locally called as Kottaikadu. It is covering an area of more than a ha. of land. It yielded black ware and red ware.

Dharapuram

The town Dharapuram (10° 44’ 27” N; 77° 31’ 59” E, 327 m MSL) is located 70 km southwest of Erode on the way to Palani. The river Amaravathi flows on eastern side of the town. The historic habitation mound is also found on eastern side of the town. The mound is locally called as Kottai medu. It covers an area of more than 3 ha. The mound yielded black ware and red ware. A Siva temple (Agathisvarar) and
a Vishnu temple with inscriptions datable to 15-16th cent. AD are found respectively near the river and close to the mound Kottaimedu (Fig. 3.91).

**Erachchapadi**

This village (77° 26' 46" E 10° 21' 55" N, 302 m MSL) is located 15 km from Vellakoil on the way to Vellakoil-Nanjaithalaiyur. The historic habitation mound is found on eastern side of the village covering an area of more than 2 ha. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. The mound is locally known as Nattamedu.

**Erakampatti**

It is located (10° 42' 43" N; 77° 35' 07" E, 327 m MSL) on the Dharapuram-Dindigal road at a distance of 9 km from Dharapuram. The cairn circles are found on eastern side of the village. This place is known as Pandiyankadu. More than 5 cairn circles are found. Most of the burials are disturbed due to cultivation. It is covering an area of more than 3 ha.

**Gudimangalam**

The village Gudimangalam (77° 16' 57" E; 10° 41' 19" N, 343 m MSL) lies at the junction of Dharapuram-Pollachi and Palladam-Udumalapettai road at a distance of 28 km west of Dharapuram. The habitation mound, locally called Nattamedu, is found on eastern side of the village near the Govt. Hospital. The 3 m high mound covering 10 ha of cultivated land was partially disturbed due to cultivation and building construction activities.

The habitation mound carries the cultural material of Iron Age, Early Historic and Historic period. The section scrapping made in the disturbed area noticed on the southern part of the mound yielded two floors. The first floor noticed at the depth of 60 cm from the top and it measures 2 m in length and 30 cm in thickness. The fine floor is laid on rubble stones having an average thickness of 80 cm.

The second floor is found at the depth of 1.5 m from the top level. It measures 1.9 m in length and 30 cm in thickness. The exposed section of the mound yielded black-and-red ware, red ware, and red slipped ware. The sepulchral urns are reported on northern part of the village and most of the urns were disturbed.
The Siva temple is found on the eastern side of the habitation mound. A huge rectangular slab measuring 2.5x1.10 m carrying the inscription of Vijayanagar period is found installed on the habitation mound. The inscription refers to a territorial division called Pongalurka-nadu. During the medieval period, the village Gudimanagalam was part of the Pongalurka-nadu (Swell 1882:222; ARE 1915: 135; Vaidyanathan 1983:153-154) (Fig. 3.92-94).

Kadattur

Kadattur (78° 18’ 12” E; 10° 48’ 20” N, 463 m MSL) lies 15 km northeast of Udumalaipttai. There are three temples built during Kongu Chola regime. All the three temples namely Maruthisvarar temple, Tirumaruthudaiyar temple and Kongavidankesvarar temple are found on eastern side of the village, very close to Amaravathi river bank. More than 75 inscriptions are found engraved on the walls of garbha girha and arthamandapa. The earliest inscription found engraved on the adhistana portion belongs to the Kongu Vira Chola. It records the gift of paddy for food offerings and oil for burning perpetual lamp. Kongu Vira Chola-III (1187-89 AD), Vikkarama Chola-II (1263 A.D), Vikkarama Chola-III (1295-97, 1299, 1300,1302 AD), Viranajendira (1217-19, 1222-23, 1229, 1237 AD) and Viranarayana 13th cent. AD (Sridhar : 2006:157-252) also made land grants to the temple the Maruthisvarar temple was built during the reign of Vikkirama Chola-II in 1187 AD (Fig. 3.95-96).

Kallapuram

The village Kallapuram (77° 17’ 31” E; 10° 26’ 07” N, 330 m MSL) is located 12 km southwest of Kolumam. The stone circles encircling cists and transepted cists are found on the eastern part of the village. The average diameter of the stone circle is 8 m. Some of the transepted cists measure 3.10 x2.20x1.00 m and 3.60x1.50x0.70 m. One of the cists had a trapeze shaped porthole measuring 0.47x 0.35 m on the eastern orthostat.

This village is known as Virachola-nallur during medieval times and falls under the territorial division namely Karaivali-nadu. An oil-press and a few red ware pots were recovered around the habitation mound. A fort, probably built during the
reign of Tippu Sultan is found near the foothills. This village lies on the medieval trade route (Vaidyanathan 1983:216-217, 221; Sridhar 2005:104) (Fig. 3.97).

Kampaliyampatti

This village (10° 44' 44" N; 77° 46' 44" E, 216 m MSL) is located 13 km south-east of Mulanur on the way to Kottaimarudur. The river Thirumanimmattar flows on southern side of the village. The historic habitation mound locally called as Nattakadu, is found on the south-western side of the village. It covers an area of more than 2 ha. It yielded black ware and red ware.

Kaniyur

Kaniyur (77° 22' 46" E; 10° 36' 11" N, 293 m MSL) is located on the Udumalaipettai – Kadattur road at a distance of 15 km from Udumalaipettai. The urns were reported earlier from the present burial ground of the village (Rajan 1997: 59). In medieval period, this place is known as Kaniyur and also as Jeyakonda-cholannallur. As per the inscriptive records, this village falls under territorial division Karaivali-nadu (Sewell 1822:222; Sridhar:134; Vaidyanathan 1983:214-215).

Kannivadi

Kannivadi (77° 28' 49" E; 10° 52' 56" N, 295 m MSL) is located on the Dharapuram-Mulanur road at a distance of 8 km from Dharapuram. The Early Historic and Historic habitation mound is raised 3 m above the ground level. The mound covering an area of more than 5 ha. yielded black-and-red ware, red slipped ware, black polished ware, black ware and red ware. A hero stone with Vattelutthu (8th cent. AD) inscription found near the habitation mound (Raju 1996:29-35). A medieval inscription mentioned this place as Taliyur-nadu (Vaidyanathan 1983:169) (Fig. 3.98).

Karaiyur

The village (77° 36' 05" E; 10° 45' 52" E, 245 m MSL) Karaiyur is located 6 km east of Dharapuram on the way to Mulanur. The Early Historic habitation mound is found on eastern side of the village. The mound covering an area of more than 2 ha. yielded black-and-red ware, black ware and red ware. The mound is raised 2 m above
the ground level. The medieval period Siva temple is found near the mound. A slab engraved with trade guild inscription is found near the habitation mound. The slab is depicted with weapons like sulam; sword, bow and arrow. The eight line Vatteluthu inscription could not be deciphered due to its fragile condition. Further, a medieval period hero stone is found on northern side of the habitation mound. Hero holding a sword in his right hand fights with a tiger (Fig. 3.99-100).

**Karatholuvu**

Karatholuvu (77° 20' 29" E; 10° 37'04" N, 319 m MSL) is situated on the Udumalaipettai-Dharapuram road at a distance of 16 km from Udumalaipettai and 22 km from Dharapuram. Cairn circles, completely ransacked, are found in the cultivated field locally called Semmankudikadu, a km away from the village. The river flows near the site (Rajan 1997:59). This village falls under territorial division of Karaivali-nadu during the medieval period (ARE 1920:134; Vaidyanathan 1983:216).

**Karattupalayam**

The village Karattupalayam (77° 43' 31" E; 10° 54, 47 N, 220 m MSL) is situated 6 km southeast of Vellakoil on the way to Mulanur. The habitation mound extends over an area of about 10 ha. is located on either side of the road before the village. The mound is raised 1.5 m above the ground level. On the surface, dull black ware, red ware, black-and-red ware, red slipped ware and black polished ware were collected. The soil of the habitation mound is gray in color and the mound is locally known as Nattakadu. The eastern part of the mound yielded iron ore and iron pieces of arrow heads and swords.

**Grave**

The stone circles entombing cist or transepted cist or urn are found on the south-southeastern side of the village covering an area of more than 50 ha. More than 800 burials were observed at this site. Out of them, nearly 450 burials are found in undisturbed condition. More than 50 graves are partially disturbed and remaining about 300 burials are destroyed completely due to cultivation. The burials are locally known as Pandiyankuli and Pandiyankuttai. The diameter of the stone circle varies from 7 to 19 m.
The interesting feature of this burial complex is the location of various types of graves. For instance, urn burials are confined to the western part of the complex. Stone circles entombing cist/transepted cist are found in the middle and western part of the burial complex. The cairn circles are found on southern part of the burial site.

The urns generally measure 1.00 m to 0.90 m in height, 0.60 m to 0.67m in breadth and with 0.35 m as the average diameter of the mouth. The thickness of the rim measures to 0.10 m. Most of the urns are found in undisturbed condition. The mouths of the exposed urns are found facing east.

An east facing simple cist is built of four orthostats placed in clockwise order and measures 15x13.5x0.25m. A round porthole measuring 30 cm in diameter is scooped out at the centre of the eastern orthostat and about 1.45 m below the top edge of the eastern orthostat. Thickness of some of the orthostats is very thin and in a few cases the thickness is very massive. This observation is made at the surface level while surveying the area. Based on the excavated graves in the places like at Kodumanal, Thandikudi and Porunthal, one could presume that the thickness is related to the size of the cist. Sturdy orthostats generally represents a bigger cist.

The study of undisturbed huge cairn circles reveals three types of cairn packing. The cairn packing was raised 2 m above the ground level. To maintain this level, they followed a particular technique. First, they placed huge boulders around the cist at the ground level thereby forming a circle having a diameter of more than 15 m. Then, the cairns were evenly packed to the height of the boulders. Again, another boulder circle is formed by placing the boulders on the cairn packing. The outer edge of the boulder generally touches the inner top edge of the first boulder circle. The second circle is again packed with cairns. The same way the third circle is also formed. In total, the cairn packing looks like conical/ pyramid in shape. The circle boulders hold the cairns together which avoids any sliding or slippage of the cairns. The double or triple boulder circles were observed at this site. Such type of cairn packing was found at Adanur in Dharmapuri district (Rajan 1997:172-73).

The second types of cairn circles are built of huge boulder circles. The cairn packing is noticed to the level of circle boulders or just below that level. In the third type, the circle stones are missing and only cairn packing is witnessed. These two
types are generally observed in small circles having the diameter of less than 10 m. A systematic excavation alone could reveal the architectural significance of these circles (Fig. 3.101-104).

Karuppanavalasu

This village Karuppanavalasu (77º 42’ 36” E; 10º 50’ 29” N, 194 m MSL) is situated 11 km south of Vellakoil. The river Amaravathi flows on northern side of the village. The stone circles entombing cists are found on western side of the village. The burial site, locally known as Pandiyantittu, covering an area of more than 10 ha. yielded more than 100 burials. The diameter of the stone circles varies from 5-12 m.

Kilankontal

The village (10º 46’ 11” N; 77º 43’ 42” E, 238 m MSL) is located 7 km west of Mulanur. The Iron Age Early Historic and Historic habitation mound, locally called as Nattakadu, is found on northern side of the village covering an area of more than 2 ha. The undisturbed habitation mound, gray in colour, yielded red ware and black ware. The Stone circle entombing cists are found on eastern side of the village.

Kolumam (Kumaralingam)

The village Kolumam lies (77º 22’ 30” E; 10º 29’ 26” N, 324 m MSL) on the Udumalaipettai-Palani road at a distance of 18 km from Udumalaipettai on the way to Kolumam. The river Amaravathi flows on the western side of the village and the river Kudiraiyar merges with river Amaravathi near this place. This place mentioned in Sangam literature as Kulumur and Kolumam. Kolumam is considered as the capital city of chieftain Kumanan during the Early Historic Period (Akananuru 168). In the medieval period it was under the territory Karaivali-nadu, (Manonmani 2007:1-5).

The Vira Cholisvara temple and Kariyavaratharaja Perumal temple with medieval period inscription are found on the eastern side of the village (Fig. 3.105-106).

Kottamutthupalayam

This village (10º 40’ 28” N; 77º 25’ 22” E, 317 m MSL) is situated 20 km southwest of Dharapuram. The historic habitation mound, called as Nattamedu, is
found on eastern side of the village. The soil of the mound is covering an area of more than 2 ha. looks gray in color.

Kotthanur

This village (10º 50' 38" N; 77º 35' 20" E, 208 m MSL) is located 20 km south of Vellakoil and 19 km north of Dharapuram. The river Amaravathi flows on eastern side of the village. The historic habitation mound is found on southern side of the village. The mound locally called as Nattamedu and covers an area of more than 3 ha. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. The iron ore and iron slag are found on eastern side of the habitation mound.

The cairn circle entombing cist burials are found on northern side of the habitation mound. It is locally called as Pandiyankuli. The burial site is covering an area of more than 5 ha, yielded stone circles measuring with average diameter of 5 m. A Siva temple dated to 13th cent. AD is found on eastern side of the village. A hero stone with Vatteluthu inscription dated to 9th cent. AD is found inside the temple. The 16th cent. AD Periyancchiyamman temple is found near the Siva temple (Yathees Kumar 2011: 129) (Fig. 3.107-110).

Kulattupalayam

The village Kulattupalayam (77º 22’ 30” E; 10º 29’ 26” N, 324 m MSL) lies 4 km north of Kolumam. The stone circles with cist are found on western side of the village covering 5 ha. of land locally known as Pandiyankadu. Few burials were exposed due to construction activities. It yielded black-and-red ware, red ware and urn pieces.

Kulalipalayam

The village Kulalipalayam (77º 42’ 13” E; 11º 01’ 48” N, 202 m MSL) is located 4 km south west of Mutthur. The Iron Age habitation mound is found on northern side of the village. This habitation area covers more than 3 ha. of land and locally called as Nattakadu. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. The eastern part of the mound is totally disturbed due to construction activities.
Kundadam

The village Kundadam (10° 50' 43" N; 77° 26' 47" E, 327 m MSL) is located 21 km west of Dharapuram on the way to Coimbatore. Both Iron Age and Historic habitation mounds, respectively called Nattamedu and Sampalmedu, are found on southern side of the village. The mound is covering an area of more than 10 ha, is raised 2 m above the ground level. It yielded microlithic tools, black-and-red ware, black ware and red ware, iron ore, iron slag, shell bangles, shell beads, bead making furnace material, terracotta beads and terracotta figurines. The available archaeological findings suggest that it is one of the important sites having rich historical material (Fig. 3.111-113).

Kurukkutthi

This village (10° 57' 56" N; 77° 43' 13" E, 220.9 m MSL) is located 5 km east of Vellakoil on the way to Karur. The Iron Age stone circle entombing cist burials are found on eastern side of the village. The diameter of the stone circle varies from 5 m to 8 m. Two ha. burial sites are partly disturbed due to cultivation. Of the graves, nearly 40% of them are stone circles. More than 20% of the burials are well preserved.

Kuruvi karanturai

The village Kuruvi karanturai (77° 45' 10" E; 10° 52' 04" N, 195 m MSL) is located 17 km east of Vellakoil. The river Amaravathi flows on northern side of the village. The Iron Age habitation mound is found on western side of the village. It covers an area of more than 3 ha. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. The urn burials are found on northern side of the habitation mound. The urns were totally destroyed due to cultivation. The stone/caim circles entombing cist burials are found 1 km further southwest of the habitation mound covering an area of more than 5 ha. In total 25 circles having diameter ranging from 4-14 m are observed.

Lakkamanayakkanpatti

The village Lakkamanayakkanpatti (10° 52' 09" N; 77° 37' 13" E, 355 m MSL) is situated 3 km south of Vellakoil on the way to Dharapuram. The river Amaravathi flows on southern side of the village. Both Iron Age and historic habitation mound are
found on western side of the village. The mound, locally called as Nattakkattuthottam, covers an area of more than 2 ha. It yielded black-and-red ware, red ware and black ware. The stone circles are found on northern side of the habitation mound locally called as Pandiyankuli. Most of the stone circles are disturbed due to cultivation.

**Maduppalayam**

The Maduppalayam (77°42′36″ E; 11°02′05″ N, 201 m MSL) is situated on the Muttur-Vellakoil road at a distance of 7 km north of Vellakovil. An Iron Age-cum-historical habitation mound is covering an area of 5 ha. is found on eastern part of the village. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware and other historical potteries. This habitation mound is locally called as Nattakadu. The eastern part of the habitation mound called Korankadu is noticed with urns. This urn burial site is covering more than 3 ha. of land was destroyed due to cultivation. The urns found in this village are locally called as Pandiyankuli and Kuyavantali.

**Mamarathupatti**

This village (77°58′36″ E; 10°47′42″ N, 176 m MSL) is located 10 km west of Aravakurichi. The river Sanmugasittaru flows on eastern side of the village. The 10 ha. of historical habitation mound, locally called as Nat takadu and Sambalkadu, is found on eastern side of the village. The total deposit of the habitation mound is raised more than 3 m from the surface. It yielded dull black ware and red ware. Two Chola temples with inscriptions are noticed on northern side of the village. The first one dedicated to Siva had architectural components like Grabha Griha, Mandapa, and Mukharrandapa. The temple is built of stone from Adhisthana to roof and the remaining superstructure is built of brick. Three inscriptions are found engraved on the Adhisthana portion and on pillars. First two inscriptions are issued during the reign of Chola king Virarajendaran (1207-52 AD) (Karunanathan 1993:40-42) and the third inscription is issued during the fifth regnal year of Umatthur-Virananjaraya-Udaiar. The present village is referred to in these inscriptions as Tenkarai-manalur-aana-thalaiyur-nattu-velapundi and temple is known as Kailayamudaiyarkoil. The village Velampundi referred as Velapundi is located near this village. The inscription refers to a trader Thukaiupaiyampukkan who donated the front gate of the garbha
Another person called Naduvilon, son of Durayumutthan, donated 10 Kalanju of gold to this temple.

A Kaliyamman temple is also noticed near to the habitation mound. A 10th cent. AD hero stone is found on southwestern side of the habitation mound. The hero holds a sword in his left hand and a knife in right hand. He is adorned with two garlands in the neck and he wears an earlobe measuring 8 cm in diameter (Fig. 3.114-117).

**Manalur**

The village Manalur (77° 46' 46" E 10° 51' 55" N, 176 m MSL) is located 20 km south and southeastern side of Vellakoil. The river Amaravathi flows on northern side of the village. The Iron Age and Early Historic habitation mound is found on southern part of the village, locally called as Nattakadu. Urn burials are found on northern side of the habitation mound in disturbed condition due to cultivation. The habitation mound presently occupies the cultivated field namely Ramasammi thottam.

**Manpatti**

The village Manpatti (77° 14' 21" E; 10° 28' 58" N, 391 m MSL) is located 13 km south of Udumalaipettai on the way to Chinnar. The dolmen burials are found on eastern side of the village and on western side of the Sambukalalai. Most of the urn burials were disturbed due to cultivation. It yielded red ware and dull red ware (Fig. 3.118).

**Marudur**

The village Marudur (10° 46' 17" N; 77° 22' 23" E, 327 m MSL) is located 15 km west of Dharapuram on the way to Pollachi. The Early Historic habitation mound is found on western side of the village. The mound covers an area of more than 5 ha. The mound, Sampalmedu (ash mound), yielded black ware and red ware. The stone slab having inscription in Grantha character is found on the habitation mound (Fig. 3.119-120).
Mayiladumparai

This village lies 24 km from Udumalaipettai (77º 04' 57" E; 10º 31' 34" N, 356 m MSL) on the way to Pandiyankadu. The cists with urns are found on northern side of the village and on the right bank of the river Palar. One of the disturbed cists had a round porthole. It yielded black-and-red ware.

Mayilrankam

This village Mayilrankam (77º 45' 19" E; 10º 52' 32" N, 176 m MSL) is located 12 km east of Vellakoil on the way to Vadakarai. The river Amaravathi flows on southern side of the village. The Iron Age habitation-cum-burial site is found on northern side of the village. Two ha. of habitation mound is noticed. The mound, locally called as Nattamedu, covers more than 10 ha. of elevated ground. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. The burial site yielded simple cist and most of them were destroyed due to cultivation. A 16th cent. AD Siva temple with inscriptions is found on southern side of the village.

Mulaiyampundi

The village Mulaiyampundi (10º 52' 09" N; 77 º 41' 48" E, 196 m MSL) is located 13 km south of Vellakoil. The river Amaravathi flows on southern side of the village. The Iron Age and Historic habitation mound are found on eastern side of the village. The mound, Nattamedu yielded black-and-red ware, russet-coated ware, dull red ware and black ware. The habitation mound, gray in color, raised 2 m above the surface level. The stone circles and cairn circles entombing cist and urn are found on western side of the habitation mound. The burial site is covering an area of more than 50 ha. met with more than 600 burials in well state of preservation. The burial site is locally known as Pandiyankadu. The diameter of the stone circles varies from 5 to 24 m. A few burials measure 7.20, 12, 12.30, 14 and 18.80 m. One huge stone circle, probably the biggest so far reported in Tamil Nadu, measures 24 m in diameter and it is located on the northern part of the burial site (Fig. 3.121-123).
Mulanur

The Mulanur (10º 42’ 09” N; 77 º 43’ 48” E, 209 m MSL) is located 19 km south east of Dharapuram. The Early Historic habitation mound is found on eastern side of the village. The habitation mound locally known as Nattamedu yielded black- and-red ware and red ware. The present village is referred to in these inscriptions as Mulanur. During the medieval period, this village was part of the Kankaya-nadu.

Muttur

This village Muttur (77º 44’ 25” E; 11º 02’ 36” N, 200 m MSL) is located 11 km north of Vellakoil on the way to Erode. A historic habitation mound is found on southern side of the village. This site is locally called as Nattamedu and covers 3 ha. of land. The mound is raised more than 1 m above the surface level. It yielded red ware only. The western part of the habitation mound is totally destroyed due to construction.

Nakamanayakkanpatti

This village (77º 40’ 18” E; 10º 54’ 46” N, 299 m MSL) is located 8 km south of Vellakoil. The Vattamalai rivulet flows on southern side of the village. Most of the stone circles were disturbed due to cultivation and a few cists were exposed on the surface.

Nallacellipalayam

This village Nallacellipalayam (77º 43’ 15” E 10º 50’ 57” N, 197 m MSL) is located 12 km south of Vellakoil on the way to Mulanur. The river Amaravathi flows on northern side of the village. The habitation site is found on southern side of the village. The habitation mound covering an area of more than 5 ha. yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. Several urns are found on southern side of the habitation mound in disturbed condition. The burial site is locally called as Pandiyankuli.

Nattapalayam

The village ( 10º 49’ 35” N; 77 º 35’ 47” E, 235 m MSL) Nattapalayam is located 21 km south of Vellakoil and 12 km from Dharapuram. The river Amaravathi flows on western side of the village. The historic habitation mound is found on
southern side of the village. The mound, Nattakattuthottam, yielded red ware and dull black ware. The mound covers an area of more than 1 ha.

Olappalayam

This village Olappalayam (77º 38' 43" E; 10º 57' 26" N, 255 m MSL) is located 9 km south of Vellakoil. The Iron Age habitation mound is found south of the village. This area covers more than 3 ha, and locally called as Nattamedu. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. The habitation mound is disturbed due to construction.

Pallipatti

This village (10º 43' 39" N; 77º 40' 27" E, 306 m MSL) is located 20 km east of Dharapuram. The habitation mound is found on eastern side of the village and locally called as Nattakadu. The mound covering an area of more than 7 ha, yielded black ware and red ware. The urns are found on the north-western side of the habitation mound. Few urns are disturbed due to cultivation.

Pandiyankadu

The village Pandiyankadu (77º 04' 20" E; 10º 28' 55" N, 351 m MSL) is located 28 km northwest of Udumalaipettai and 6 km from Devanur. Nearly 30 dolmens, locally called as Pandiyanvidu, are found in disturbed condition on the hillock.

Panjapatti

The village Panjapatti (10º 43' 26" N; 77º 28' 47" E, 327 m MSL) is situated on the western side of the Dharapuram-Pollachi road at a distance of 5 km from Dharapuram. The historic habitation mound is found on southern side of the village and locally called as Sambalthottam. The mound is raised to 1.5 m above the ground level and covers an area of more than 4 ha. It yielded black ware and red ware and a few bone pieces.

Pettampatti

The village Pettampatti (10º 43' 48" N; 77º 21' 53" E, 399 m MSL) is situated 15 km west of Dharapuram on the way to Pollachi. The cist burials are found on
western side of the village, locally called Pandiyankadu. Most of the burials are disturbed due to cultivation. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware.

**Piramiyam**

The village Piramiyam (10° 49' 05" N; 77° 37' 54" E, 229 m MSL) is located 17 km northeast of Dharapuram on the way to Natthapalayam. The river Amaravathi flows on western side of the village. The Iron Age-cum-historic period habitation mound is found on western side of the village. The soil of the mound looks gray in color. The stone circles entombing cist burials are found on eastern side of the village. The burial site covering an area of more than 2 ha. yielded more than 50 burials in well preserved condition. A few disturbed stone circles yielded black-and-red ware and red ware.

A Siva temple is found in dilapidated condition on southern side of the village. Inscriptions in Vatteluthu character are found engraved on pillars (Fig. 3.124).

**Ponnapuram**

The village Ponnapuram (10° 42' 03" N; 77° 23' 21" E, 327 m MSL) is located on the Dharapuram–Pollachi road at a distance of 16 km from Dharapuram. The Early historic habitation mound is found on southern side of the village. The mound, called as Sampalmedu, covering an area of more than 1 ha. yielded black-and-red ware and red ware, polished black ware and russet-coated ware. The cist with urn is found on southern side of the habitation mound. Few burials are disturbed due to cultivation. It yielded plate, dish and bowl. Few orthostats and capstone are found exposed on the surface. Besides, Siva and Perumal temples belonging to medieval period are found on western side of the village (Fig. 3.125).

**Ponneri**

The village Ponneri (77° 15' 39" E; 10° 38' 44" N, 341 m MSL) is located 6 km west of Udumalaipettai on the way to Tiruppur. The dolmen are found on the western side of the village. It is locally called as Pandiyankuli. It covers an area of more than 2 ha with a few cist burials exposed on the surface (Fig. 3.126-127).
Ponnivadi

The village Ponnivadi (10° 41’ 42” N; 77° 38’ 31” E, 285 m MSL) is situated 13 km east of Dharapuram. The Iron Age habitation mound is found on southern side of the village locally called as Nattarredu. It yielded black-and-red ware, red ware and black ware. The mound is covering an area of more than 2 ha. is raised 2 m above the present ground level. The stone circles entombing cist and urn are found on northern side of the habitation mound locally called as Pandiyankadu. The burial site covers an area of more than 5 ha.

Puduppai

This village Puduppai (77° 43’ 11” E; 10° 51’ 43” N, 349 m MSL) is located 10 km south of Vellakoil on the way to Mulanur. The river Amaravathi flows on northern side of the village. The Iron Age burial site is found on northern side of the village. More than 200 burials are found in well preserved condition in an area of more than 5 ha. The burial site, called as Pandiyankuli, yielded stone circles entombing cist burial and urn burials. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware.

Punkadurai

This village (10° 51’ 50” N; 77° 35’ 22” E, 272 m MSL) is located 20 km south of Vellakoil. The river Amaravathi flows on eastern side of the village. The habitation mound is found on southern side of the village. It covers an area of more than 2 ha. The mound is locally called as Nattakadu. The stone circles entombing cists and transected cist burials are found on eastern side of the village. It covers an area of more than 2 ha. and it met with 30 burials. The burials are known as Pandiyankadu.

Punjaitaliyur

This village (77° 24’ 54” E 11° 31’ 31” N, 238 m MSL) is located 22 km south and southeastern of Vellakoil. The river Amaravathi flows on northern side of the village. The historic habitation mound is covering an area of more than 2 ha. found on western side of the village, locally called as Nattakadu. An 18th cent. A.D Siva temple is found on western side of the village. Four fragmentary inscriptions are found.
Rangampalayam

The village Rangampalayam (10° 43’ 26” N; 77° 28’ 47” E, 327 m MSL) is located 6 km from Dharapuram on the way to Uppar Dam. The river Uppar flows on the northern side of the habitation mound. The historic habitation mound is found on southern side of the village. The mound covers an area of more than a ha. It is locally called as Nattakkadu. The mound was totally disturbed due to cultivation.

Rudrapalayam

The village Rudrapalayam (77° 20’ 57” E; 10° 28’ 26” N, 320 m MSL) lies 2 km south of Kolumam on the way to Kallapuram. The river Amaravathi flows on the western side of the village. The cist burials are found on the eastern side of the village. One disturbed cist with capstone dislodged is found in the paddy field of Kallapuram-Kallupattikadu. According to the local people, there were plenty of cist burials earlier but all were removed after the introduction of irrigation canals. A 17th century AD inscription is found on the hillock near the river (Rajan 1997:60).

Sambakalam

The village Sambakalam (77° 19’ 07” E; 10° 27’ 56” N, 314 m MSL) is located 7 km west of Kolumam on the way to Kallapuram. The river Amaravathi flows on the western side of the village. The cists are found on the eastern side of the village. The burials, locally called as Pandiyandurai, were disturbed due to cultivation. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware.

S. Ammampatti

The village S. Ammapatti (78° 11’ 53” E 10° 40’ 16” N, 368 m MSL) is located 14 km north of Udumalaipettai and 3 km west of Peddamangalam. Few cairn circles and a menhir are found on the western side of the village. The menhir measures 3.2 m in height and 1m in breadth with average slab thickness of 20 cm thickness. The menhir is known as Peyikkal (ghost stone). The graveyard covers an area of more than 3 ha. Most of the caims were disturbed due to cultivation. The burials site is locally called as Pandiyankadu (Fig. 3.128).
Senthalaiyampalayam

The village Senthalaiyampalayam (77º 43’ 33” E; 10º 52’ 33” N, 209.1 m MSL) is located 8 km south of Vellakoil on the way to Mulanur. The small rivulet Varattukarai flows on northern side of the village, it merges with river Amaravathi near Mailrangam. The Iron Age habitation mound is found on eastern side of the village covering an area of more than 5 ha. The average height of the mound is 1 m from the present surface level. The habitation mound is locally known as Nattakattuthottam. It yielded black-and-red ware, red ware, red slipped ware, black polished ware, russet-coated ware and gray ware. The northern part of the habitation mound yielded black-and-red ware only. The eastern part of the mound has iron slag and ore.

More than 150 cairn circles entombing cist burials covering an area of more than 10 ha. are found in well preserved condition. The cairn circles are having diameter of 5 to 17 m. A few burials are having double circles. In a few cases, circle boulders are of quartz blocks. One of the important features observed at this site is cup marks found on the cap stone. The burial site is locally called as Pandiyanthottam and cairn circle is known as Pandiyankuttai (Fig. 3.129-131).

Settipalayam

This village is located (11º 31’ 31” N; 77º 27’ 8” E, 238 m MSL) 20 km west of Dharapuram on the way to Pollachi. The historic habitation mound is found around the village locally called as Nattamedu. The mound is covering an area of more than 2.5 ha. yielded red ware.

Silambakavundanvalasu

The village Silambakavundanvalasu (77º 39’ 11” E; 10º 56’ 14” N, 241 m MSL) is situated few kilometers south of Vellakovil. The southern part of the village is known as Nattakadu. This 5 ha. ashy Iron Age-cum-historical mound yielded black-and-red ware and red ware and historical potteries.
Sivanatapuram

The village Sivanatapuram (77° 41' 54" E; 10° 56' 38" N, 250 m MSL) is located 4 km southeast of Vellakoil on Mulanur road. Several stone circles are noticed on northern part of the village spread over more than 3 ha. Out of them, only one circle having a diameter of 7 m is in better state of preservation.

Somalakavundanur

This village (10° 43' 26" N; 77° 28' 47" E, 320 m MSL) is located 8 km from Dharapuram and 2 km from Upper Dam Road. The historic habitation mound, Nattakattuthottan, is found on southern side of the village and a half km north of river Uppar. The soil of the mound is gray in color. Stone circles are found on the northern side of the habitation mound. More than 10 stone circles are found in well preserved condition. The diameter of the stone circle varies from 3 to 6 m.

Somanutthu

The village Somanutthu (10° 40' 43" N; 77° 29' 07" E, 276 m MSL) is located 15 km southwest of Dharapuram on the way to Udumalaiettai. The historic habitation mound is found on eastern side of the village. The mound, known as Nattakadu, occupies an area of more than 2.5 ha. It yielded black ware and red ware.

Somavarapatti

Somavarapatti (77° 13' 02" E; 10° 40' 45" N, 351 m MSL) lies on Coimbatore-Dharapuram road near Pethappampatti at the distance of 62 km from Coimbatore. Quite a number of Iron Age black and red ware was collected from the habitation mound. The mound is presently utilized as a playground by the school (Rajan 1997:60).

Subramaniyakavundanpalayam

This village (77° 43' 25" N; 10° 53' 04" E, 209.1 m MSL) is located 8 km east of Vellakoil on the way to Mulanur. The Iron Age and historic habitation mound is found on western side of the village whereas the graveyard covering an area of more than 2 ha. is found on eastern side of the village. The mound covering an area of more than 3 ha. of unproductive land yielded stone circles entombing cist and transepted
cist. More than 30 burials are noticed in well preserved condition. The stone circles having diameters of 6 to 14 m yielded black- and-red ware, red ware and black polished ware.

**Suntaradivalasu**

The village Suntaradivalasu (77° 45' 06" E; 10° 53' 41" N, 197 m MSL) is located 10 km east of Vellakoil on the way to Vadakarai. The Iron Age and historical habitation mound, grey in colour, covering seven ha. of undulated land, locally called Nattakadu, is found on southern side of the village. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware.

**Sunkuliyampalayam**

The village Sunkuliyampalayam (10° 46' 31" N; 77° 27' 43" E, 259 m MSL) is located 16 km from Dharapuram on the way to Kundadam. The cist burials are found on southern side of the village. The burials, called as Sungili-Pandiyankuli, covers an area of more than 2 ha. Most of the burials are disturbed due to cultivation.

**Tennakaraipalayam**

The village Tennakaraipalayam (77°41'20" E; 11° 00' 55" N, 238 m MSL) is located 12 km north of Vellakoil. The Iron Age habitation mound is found on northern side of the village. The site covers more than 3 ha. of land and locally called as Nattakadu. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. This mound is well preserved.

**Thalavaipattanam**

This village (10° 40' 43" N; 77° 29' 07" E, 399 m MSL) is situated 10 km west of Dharapuram on the way to Udumalaipettai. The river Amaravathi flows on southern side of the village. The historic habitation mound, called as Paliyakadu, is found on northern side of the village. It yielded black ware and red ware. Another habitation mound is found on eastern side of the village locally called as Nattakadu covering an area of 5 ha. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware. This mound lies on the bank of river Amaravathi. It seems the first occupation was taken place close to the river flow and later on they moved towards interior probably due to adverse behavior of the
river. The present village is also found near Palaiyakundu. The late medieval historical period Aranarisvara temple is found near the present village.

Thirumurtimalai

Thirumurtimalai (77° 09' 00" E; 10° 28' 13" N, 368 m MSL) is located 20 km southeast of Udumalaipettai. The Thirumurtimalai Dam is found on the eastern side of the village. The dolmens are found on the two hillocks close to the Tirumurthi temple and the dam. A few Dolmens numbering two or three are found in a group within a rectangular encircle wall. More than 20 dolmens are found on both the hillocks. It measures 3.5-6.30 m in length and 2.50-6.0 m in breadth. The dolmens were built of rough stone and are comparatively lesser in height. A Jain Tirthangara sculpture, locally known as Amanesvarar, is found on the hill top. Besides, Amanalingeswara temple belonging to 15-16 century AD is found near the hillock (Raju 2005:89-91; Sridhar 2005: 107-108).

Thurampati

The village Thurampati (77º 40’ 56” E; 10º 51’ 18” N, 194 m MSL) is located 12 km south of Vellakoil. The river Amaravathi flows on northern side of the village. The historic habitation mound is found on eastern side of the village. The mound, locally called as Nattakattuthottam, covering an area of more than 5 ha. yielded black ware and red ware.

Vairamadai

The village Vairamadai (77º 46’ 45” E; 10º 57’ 03” N, 201 m MSL) is located 23 km southwest of Karur. The Iron Age burial site is found on western side of the village. More than 100 cairn circles entombing cist burials covering an area of more than 10 ha. are found in well preserved condition. The cairn circles are having diameter of 5 to 14 m. Most of the burials circle boulders are having of quartz blocks. The burial site is locally called as Pandiyankuttai (Fig. 3.132).

Vatakurai

The village Vatakurai (77º 46’ 12” E; 10º 52’ 28” N, 188 m MSL) is located 15 km east of Vellakoil. The river Amaravathi flows a few meters southeast of the village.
The habitation mound Nattakadu is noticed on the northern fringe of village covering an area of 2 ha. It yielded black-and-red ware and red ware.

**Velappanayakkanvalasu**

This village Velappanayakkanvalasu (77° 44' 39" E; 10° 54' 22" N, 207 m MSL) is situated 8 km southwest of Vellakoil. On the western fringe of the village, an area called Nattakadu, yielded black-and-red ware and red ware in 5 ha. of area.

**Velampalayam**

This village (77° 43' 20" E; 11° 02' 01" N, 200 m MSL) is located 2 km south of Muttur on the way to Kulialipalayam. A historic habitation mound is found on western side of the village. This site, locally called as Nattamedu, covers more than 5 ha. It yielded dull red ware and black ware. Part of the mound was disturbed due to cultivation and construction activities.

**Vellakoil**

This village Vellakoil (77° 44' 39" E; 10° 54' 22" N, 233 m MSL) is situated 48 km west of Karur on the way to Coimbatore. The historic habitation mound is noticed on eastern side of the town. The habitation mound, locally called as Nattamedu covering an area of more than 5 ha. is destroyed due to construction activities. It yielded red ware only. The Siva temples with late medieval inscriptions are found on northeastern side of the habitation mound.

**Vellavipudur**

The village Vellavipudur (10° 45' 16" N; 77° 41' 00" E, 368 m MSL) is located 22 km east of Dharapuram. The historic habitation mound, gray in colour, is found on eastern side of the village. The mound locally called as Nattakadu covers an area of more than 2 ha. It yielded red ware and dull black ware.

**Velliyampalayam**

The village Velliyampalayam (10° 50' 43" N; 77° 26' 47" E, 329 m MSL) is located 14 km north of Dharapuram on the way to Vellakoil. The river Amaravathi flows on eastern side of the village. The historic habitation mound is found on
northern side of the village. The mound Nattamedu covering an area of more than 2 ha. yielded red ware and black ware.

**Velnaaram**

This village (77° 19' 02" E; 10° 26' 39" N, 341 m MSL) is located 9 km west of Kolumam on the way to Kallapuram. The cairn circles with cist are found in highly disturbed condition on the northern side of the village. The graveyard covers an area of more than 1.5 ha. and is locally called as Pandiyankadu.

**Virakkattuvalasu**

This village (10° 57' 02" N; 77° 46' 46" E, 218.6 m MSL) is situated 8 km east of Vellakoil on the way to Karur. The stone circles entombing cist burials and urn burials are found on eastern side of the village. More than 50 burials are noticed in well preserved condition. The diameter of the stone circle varies from 5 m to 15 m.

**Virappakavundanvalasu**

The village Virappakavundanvalasu (11° 30' 06" N; 77° 34' 55" E, 273 m MSL) is located 10 km west of Mulanur on the way to Palani. The Chithagiri hillock is found on eastern side of the village. The historic habitation mound is found on eastern side of the village locally called as Nattakadu and it covers an area of more than 2 ha. The mound is partially disturbed due to cultivation. It yielded red ware and black ware.