CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Aim and scope

The need for making an indepth study of an ancient town or a region is a recognised fact now since the events taking place in a particular place or a region affect or influence the history of a dynasty or a geographical unit. Such a study may also point out the special features or peculiarities of the region.

There are already some works in the field which aim at studying the history of a town or a specific region.

The present thesis — "A study of the history of Tizukköyiliρ down to A.D. 1600" — is an attempt to trace the fortunes and the part played by the subordinate families which controlled the town and the surrounding area from the early centuries of the Christian era to the dawn of the 17th century.

The importance of the town has attracted the attention of some earlier writers. A short account of
the town is noticed in the Annual Report on Epigraphy and the Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society.

These were written to emphasize the importance of Tirukkoyilur mostly as a religious centre. But no scholar has so far attempted to sketch its history nor trace the genealogy of the different families of chiefs who controlled it from the early times.

The scope of the present thesis is restricted to the political history of the town comprising the history, chronology and genealogy of the local chiefs. This forms the core of the thesis and incidently happens to be the original contribution of the study.

Since Tirukkoyilur formed part of the ancient territorial division called Mileagu (known also as Melagu) covering roughly the present taluks of Tirukkoyilur and Kallakurichi of South Arcot district and Attur taluk of Salem district and probably was its headquarters, the history of the town is practically the history of the whole of the Mileagu territory or the Tirukkoyilur region. Hence, the political fortunes of the whole of the Mileagu region is taken into account.
Even though the emphasis is on local history, care is taken to outline the major events in the history of the ruling dynasties of the land and to indicate how such events affected the history of the town and its rulers.

Chapterisation

The thesis is divided into nine chapters. This introductory chapter gives a bird's eye view of the thesis explaining the aim and the scope of the subject.

Chapter II deals with the physical geography, political geography of the region in the ancient period and early references to Tirukköyilur.

The early human occupation of Tirukköyilur and its history during the Śāṅkun age, is referred to in chapter III.

The History of Tirukköyilur under the Pallavas is outlined in chapter IV. It is shown how the power struggle between the Pallava ruler Mipatunga on one hand and Kompavarmen and his son Aparajita on the other, led to the ousting of Vēttuvaduraiyan, the subordinate
of Nripatunga from Tirukköyilur by Vayiramëgan alias Vânapkóvaraiyan the subordinate of Kempevarman and Aparâji- tel. The ultimate result of the struggle is also discussed.

In chapter 7 the history of Tirukköyilur during the early Chola period is reviewed. With the advent of the Chólas, a family of chiefs with the title Milâduâciyâr of the Bhärgava gotra emerged on the political arena of Tirukköyilur. The chapter refers to the rule of Kayirur Perumâgâr at Tirukköyilur and later on by Nâttân Siddhavâdaâvânt, one of the most resourceful chiefs of Tirukköyilur who tried to stop the forces of Râshyamakîta Krishna III. It is shown how he was subdued by the latter and forced to acknowledge his supremacy. Besides tracing the genealogy of the family of this chief, it is shown how his descendant Uttemachôla Milâduâciyâr was replaced by Peêtêlagam Râma alias Arumocîdâva Milâduâciyâr, a member of the collateral branch when Râjarâja I assumed power. The events that led to the coronation of Narasimhâvarman alias Rânakövâsa Râma, a descendant of Nâttân Siddhavâdaâvânt, as the ruler of Milâgu 2000 country are also narrated.
When Kulothunga I ascended the Chola throne in A.D. 1070, he replaced the family of Milāḍu chiefs of the Bhārgava gōtra by a new family of chiefs who called themselves as Malaiyamāṇ of Kiliyūr and adopted the distinct titles, 'Chēdiyarāva' and Kovalarāva. It is shown in chapter VI that three different branches of Malaiyamāṇ of Kiliyūr, related to one another, ruled the Milāḍu region from three different places and acquired so much power and prestige in later days, that they were in possession of the adjoining region, Vankopādi, also. The genealogy, chronology and history of these families are discussed in this section.

Chapter VII gives an account of the place under the Kāśiva chief Kopperumjingga II before it was conquered by the Pāṇḍyas and later by the Vijayanager rulers. The nature and effects of the occupation of Tirukkōyilūr and the surrounding region by the Gajapatis of Orissa during the Vijayanager rule is also discussed in this chapter.

The section entitled "Temples of Tirukkōyilūr" forms chapter VIII and deals with the two major temples at the place namely Trivikrama and Tiruvirattinasvara. The legends connected with above temples are discussed.
briefly. The association of the early Ālvāras and Nāyāmārs with the Trivikrama and Tiruvirattanēśvarā temples respectively are narrated. The episode of Meyperul Nāyanaṅr, said to be a chief of Tirukköyilur and considered to be one of the sixty three Śaiva saints is also referred to. The temple rituals, pūja etc are arranged under different heads and the contents of the epigraphs are given. The salient features of the art and architecture of the above mentioned temples are also noticed.

The results of the study are stated in the last chapter.

Sources

Epigraphy: The study is based mainly on epigraphical sources. The epigraphical branch of the Archaeological Survey of India has copied altogether 196 epigraphs from the Tiruvikrama and Tiruvirattanēśvarā temples at Tirukköyilur and published them with remarks in the Annual Reports on Epigraphy for the years 1900, 1902, 1905, 1921, and 1934-35. Out of this collection the texts of 96 epigraphs are published in South Indian Inscriptions Volume VII and 14 in Epigraphia Indica Volume VII.
To study the history of the town in detail the epigraphical material available in the three taluks of Tirukkōyilūr, Kallakurichi and Āttūr is taken into consideration. In view of the fact that the majority of the epigraphs are not published, the writer undertook field study and examined them in situ and at times copied them afresh to grasp and correlate the facts found in them.

In addition to this, the writer has availed of some new epigraphical material that have come out recently. The discovery of hero-stone inscriptions in the Cheengam taluk in the North Arcot district\(^\text{13}\) and the Velachēri copper plates of Aparājita\(^\text{14}\) have necessitated a revision of the chronology of the later Pallavas.

A study of the above inscriptions reveal that there was power struggle between the Pallava kings on the one side and their subordinates on the other side\(^\text{15}\). But for the availability of the above mentioned source material, the interpretation of epigraphical data at Tirukkōyilūr and the surrounding region would have remained a mere surmise.
Epigraphical source was also useful to fix the approximate date of the conquest and occupation of Tirukkōyilūr region by Rāṣṭrakūta Kṛishṇa III and the nature of such an occupation.

The number of epigraphs referring to local chiefs and their activities are not sufficient to give a detailed account of them. There are instances, where we have to depend on a single epigraph to prove the existence of a chief in a particular family.

As far as the Tirukkōyilūr chiefs are concerned, the recent discovery of Sundara Chōla's epigraph from Tirumalai in the North Arcot district and Rājādhārā's (I) epigraph from Chittelūr in South Arcot district are valuable additions in this respect. The transcripts of these two epigraphs have been studied in detail and the information contained in them is suitably used in reconstructing the genealogy of the Mūlāḍu chiefs of the Bhārgava gotra.

Again, it was from the provenance and date of the epigraphs that it was possible to determine the exact period of occupation of the Tirukkōyilūr region by the Gajapatis of Orissa during the 14th century.
Literature: Literary evidence takes secondary place, when compared to epigraphical sources, as far as this thesis is concerned. We have to rely solely on the Śaṅgaṇ literature like Śaṅkaraṇyuka, Purāṇaṃ, Kṛṣṇaṇavā, Śrautasūtra, Kāṇḍaṇaśāstra, Kṛṣṇaṇaśāstra etc., for writing the history of Tirukkoṭiyūr during the early centuries of the Christian era.

We learn above the Śyaṣ and Nōyānāya associated with Tirukkoṭiyūr from the Vaishnava Divya-prabodhābhaṃ and Śaiva Śaṅkara works. The Purāṇaṃ gives an account of one of the Śaiva Nōyānāya, Nōyapura Nōyanār, who is said to have ruled over the Miliṭu territory with Tirukkoṭiyūr as his capital.

The Sthālamūras relating to the Trivi-krama and Tiruviṭṭānāva temple preserved in the Government Oriental Manuscript Library, Madras narrate the legends associated with the above mentioned temples. We have also recent versions brought out by the persons connected with the respective temples. It was not possible to cull out any useful historical material from them. Hence the writer has not attempted to reconcile the slight variations noticed in these works. As K.A. Nilakkantu Sastri remarks, the "Sthālamūras are very late and generally worthless for purposes of history."
Monuments: In the absence of palaeolithic or neolithic sites in the Tirukkōyilūr region, one has to depend solely on megalithic monuments around Tirukkōyilūr to fix, at least roughly, the date of the human occupation of the Tirukkōyilūr area.

The rule of the Pallavas as early as A.D. 610 is attested by the existence of a rock-cut cave near Tirukkōyilūr, assignable to Mahendra Varman I on stylistic grounds.

The two religious monuments, Tiruvirāṭṭānēśvara and Trivikrama temples are very useful for writing the history of the area. Besides their artistic value they have preserved valuable information in the form of epigraphs.

Secondary sources: With regard to the history, chronology and genealogy of the chiefs who controlled Tirukkōyilūr the information contained in the secondary sources are not much.

One may mention the following works which have some bearing on the above mentioned aspects. N. Subrahmanian in his paper, "The Mālayār", in the Journal of Indian history discusses the name and date of Mālayamān Tirumudikkāri, the chieftain who ruled Tirukkōyilūr during Sangam age. K.V. Raman in his brief paper 'Chieftains
of Malāḍu in the Journal of the Madras University refers to some chiefs who held sway over the town during the period of the Chola rule. The author of Malaiyamānkal (in Tamil) mentions about various chiefs who ruled the town.

It is needless to stress the usefulness of works like K.A. Milakantasastri's A History of South India, The Cōlas and The Pāṇḍya kingdom and T.V. Mahalingam's Kāṇchi puram in Early South Indian History for a study of this kind.

All other secondary sources, are mentioned in the relevant places in the footnotes and are collected at the end as bibliography. Unless otherwise stated the dates assigned to various kings in the thesis are based on K.A. Milakanta sastri's works.

Methodology

The first and foremost problem in delineating the history and chronology of different ruling families that controlled Tirukkōyilūr is the task of reconstruction of the genealogies of these families. This, at one time seemed to be formidable except in one or two instances where a few names, can be related filially. In almost all cases, mere names were found. They have remained till today as mere mass of names since no coherent account had been given so far. In the present
thesis, an attempt is made to solve the problem and give the genealogies of different families of chiefs who controlled Tirukkōyilūr.

The writer has based his methodology on a single but time-honoured preposition. If a chief had a name, say, Pattalagān Kāmaṇ alias Arumolidēva Milāḍudaiyār, it was found that Pattalagān denoted the name or part of the name of his father, Kāmaṇ, his personal name, of course with variations and Arumolidēva Milāḍudaiyān, his title. In the above mentioned example Arumolidēva refers to the personal name of Kāmaṇ's overlord Rājarāja I. The suffix Milāḍudaiyār refers to the title adopted by Kāmaṇ's family. Thus, if there were four chiefs in a given period, in a given area, with the names Pattalagān Kāmaṇ alias Arumolidēva Milāḍudaiyār, Kāmaṇ Mummudicholan alias Rājendra Chōla Milāḍudaiyān, Rāmaṇ Maravadiyān alias Mudikonda Chōla Milāḍudaiyān, Rāmaṇ Nattadigal, Kāmaṇ Siddhavodavan alias Vikrama Chōla Milāḍudaiyān, a genealogy can be reconstructed as follows:

```
Pattalagān

Kāmaṇ alias Arumolidēva Milāḍudaiyān
```

```
Kāmaṇ Mummudi alias Arumolidēva Milāḍudaiyān
```

```
Kāmaṇ Maravadiyān alias Mudikonda Chōla Milāḍudaiyān
```

```
Kāmaṇ Nattadigal alias Vikrama Chōla Milāḍudaiyān.
```
The date, contents, location and paleography of the epigraphs are also taken into consideration in the reconstruction of the genealogy.

**Terminology**

The writer has not used the terms such as 'feudatory', 'vassal', 'fief' etc., which are terms with some significance from the western point of view. The present writer has not interpreted the material at his hand to show the presence or absence of feudal system in the Tirukkōyilūr region. Hence the writer has refrained from calling the subordinates of imperial dynasties who controlled Tirukkōyilūr as feudatories and they are referred to as chiefs throughout the thesis.

Thus an attempt is made here to highlight for the first time the history of the region around Tirukkōyilūr on the basis of the available material much of which is studied in detail.
FOOTNOTES


2. We may cite the following works as examples. A History of Ginja and its Rulers by C.S. Srinivasachari (Ammalai University, Annamalainagar, 1943), Medurci Through the Ages From the Earliest Times to 1801 A.D. by D. Devakunjari (Society for Archecological, Historical and Epigraphical Research, Madras, 1979), Early History of Madras Region by K.V. Ramen (Amoda Nilayam Private Ltd., Madras, 1957), A History of South Canara by K.V. Ramsh (Karnatak University, Dharwar, 1970), Chittor Through the Ages by M.D. Sampath (Thesis submitted to the Karnatak University, Dharwar, 1974), Kanchipuram Through the Ages by C.R. Srinivasan (Agam Kela Prakasam, New Delhi, 1979)


5. A short account of this territorial division is given in the succeeding chapter under the head Geography of the region.

6. JAR, 1900, nos. 116 to 131 (Tirukkōyilūr)

7. ibid., 1902, nos. 307 and 308 (Tirukkōyilūr) nos. 230 to 306 (Kīlūr).

8. ibid., 1905, nos. 1 and 2 (Tirukkōyilūr,)
3 to 25 (Kīlūr).

9. ibid., 1921, nos. 308 to 335 (Tirukkōyilūr)

10. ibid., 1934-35, nos.243 to 266 (Tirukkōyilūr),
200 and 201 (Kīlūr)

11. JAR, nos.128 and 129, 133 and 134, 136 to 144, 931 to 937 (Tirukkōyilūr), 82, 857 to 861, 863 to 866, 868 to 895, 898 to 901, 903 to 905, 910 to 927, 929 to 931, 933 to 935 (Kīlūr)
12. F. no. 20, A to J (Kilur), K to N (Tirukkoilur).


15. The struggle for power seems to have started when Kripatunga was made heir-apparent by Nandivarman III probably overlooking K revamped claim to the throne.


18. An account of the event is given in Chapter VII.

20. Tirukko vitality Divyañsac Saivavam (Tamil) and the History of the Trivikrama Temple refers to Trivikrama temple. The Virattänäśvara temple etalapurāṇa (Tamil) was brought out by the Deva-sthanam in 1954.

21. See Historical Method in Relation to Problems of South Indian History (University of Madras, Madras, 1941), p.22.

22. Vol. XLI, pp.205-


24. S. Kuppuswamy, Malayamāndakāl (Tamil, Sekar Pathippagam, Madras, 1978)

25. Burton Stein quotes Coulborn and Strayer (Feudalism in History, (ed) Rushton Coulborn, Reprint, Hamden, Con. : Archon Books, 1965, pp.4 to 5) and states that the term feudal "refers to a political order based upon the distribution of coercive authority
among a large number of agencies (persons and
groups) enjoying a relatively high degree of pri-
vate, local jurisdiction". One of the reasons
adduced by him for rejecting the attempt to justify
the notion of feudalism in India is the absence of
"those binding ties of allegiance which characterize
the lord-vassal relationship of feudal Europe and
Japan". (See his paper, "The state and the agrarian
order" in Essays on South India, Burton Stein (ed)
Vikas publishing House, New Delhi, 1976, p.85).
In recent years an impressive body of literature
on feudalism in India has come up and most of these
are referred to in the paper, "was there Feudalism
in Indian History?" by Harbans Mukhia and by
D.N. Jha in his paper, "Early Indian Feudalism: A
Historiographical critique," (Presidential addresses
of section II and section I respectively in the Indian
History Congress, XL session, Waltair 1979). Even-
though there are differences in the socio-economic
order of medieval India and medieval Europe K. Antenov
asserts that "there were important resemblances between
the social orders of medieval Europe and India. (See
the section "India and the middle ages" in A History
of India, Boo I, English translation; Progress Publi-
sers, Moscow, 1979, pp.181 to 184.)