CHAPTER III

THE EARLY PERIOD

The Sangam Age

The historical period of this area begins with the centuries before and after the Christian era. There are no epigraphical sources that shed light on the history of this period. Only the Sangam Tamil classics of this period contain a few references to the conditions obtained in this area. The most important reference in this class of literature occurs in respect of Vêngâdâm. The most ancient work \textit{Tolkâppiyam} refers to Vêngâdâm as the northern boundary of the Tamil speaking area. Vêngâdâm is the ancient name for Tirupati. Geographically speaking, Vêngâdâm is situated to the north-east of the Tamil country and also in the north-east of Chittoor district. The area north of this Vêngâdâm is generally described in the classical works of Sangam age as 'the country where the language changes' (moli-peyar-diyam). This area stated to be beyond Vêngâdâm is also called Vâdugar-diyam. A chieftain called Brumai is referred to in one of the poems as a leader of these Vâdugar. The area under this chief is referred to as Kuça-naçu. Kuça means west. Therefore it seems that the areas north of Tirupati on the east and Kuça-naçu on the west were inhabited by people speaking a language other than Tamil. Thus the Vâdugar are stated to be the neighbours of the Tamil country on the north and the north-west.
These Vājugar are stated to be speaking in a language which is described as *kalla-nīn-moli* i.e., uncultivated long forms of speech. We have no means of deciding the name of the language spoken by them. It is known that at present the area once inhabited by the Vājugar is occupied by people speaking Telugu on the east and Kannada on the west.

These Vājugar are stated to have formed the vanguard of the Māriyars (Mauryas). It is further stated that in order to enable their chariots to pass through towards the south, the high hills were cut and levelled up. It is not improbable that the hills referred to here were part of the eastern ghats including the Tirupati region. The entire statement seems to contain a vague reference to a distant event of the march of the Mauryan army. It is however difficult to be more specific about this in the absence of more evidence.

The Vājugar are once again referred to as having been routed by a Chāla king. Here also the identity of the Chāla king described as *Sūlar-perumagai* and *Ijamperumteppi* is not clear.

The chronology of the above events in which the Vājugar were involved is far from settled. It will be sufficient if we observe that being placed in the frontiers, these people were naturally involved in the course of communication between the north and the south.

The Kōsar have been identified with the Vājugar on the
strength of the fact that both were involved in the southward march of the Mauryan army. But this cannot be substantiated in view of the two following facts: 1) The Kōsar are described as नौ-नलिक-कोसर and अय्यर-नलिक-कोसर while the Vaḍugar are described, as pointed out above, as कल्लू-निप-मो-वाडुगर and 2) The Kōsar could not subdue Palaiyar of Mogūr and the intervention of the Mauryan army, which had the Vaḍugar as their vanguard was sought for.

Pulli was the chieftain known to have ruled next, over the Vēnagām area. He is described in some of the poems as कल्लूर-कोम, कल्लू-ललित-पुरुआन, etc. Since Muttarasavar chieftains of the later times also bore the title कल्लू-कल्लू, it is considered that Pulli and the Muttarasavar were the descendants of a common tribe called कल्लूर. Pulli is said to have conquered मल-पुलम which may mean the area in the east or the territory of Mājavār. Since the name Mājavār is not known to be the name of any tribe in the region of Vēnagām, it is difficult to accept the latter meaning. It is possible that Pulli had conquered the area between Tirupati and the coast which is probably described so.

Pulli is said to have invited many a visitor to his court, offered drinks and made liberal gifts to them. The poet while extolling the valour of this tribe in great length says that they were anklets signifying their war-like spirit. The hill under this chief is described as पुलली-कुपरम in one of the poems.
This tribe is considered to have moved towards the west where they assumed the name Kali-kula and towards the south where they assumed the name Kali-arasa. The word Kalvar is understood to have been possibly mis-spelt in the manuscript as Kalavara and latter as Kalabhras and Kalappirar. On the basis of this information it has been surmised the Kalabhras were no other than the later descendants of these Kalvar chiefs. Chittoor district, however, does not seem to have any connection with the later Kalabhras. Kalabhras and Muttaraiyar are connected on the basis of their common origin from the Kalvar. The name Muttaraiyar in Tamil seem to be echoed in the Telugu name Mutturaju or Muthraju interpreted as Mutta (senior or elder) raju. But the persons bearing the names Gapflara Muthraju, Brikal Mutturaju, etc. cannot be considered to have belonged to the Kalabhras tribes nor are they known to have any connection with the Kalabhras at all. This aspect of the question should await further study only in the light of new discoveries.

The Tamil Saṅgam anthologies contain a poem referring to Tiraiyan, a chieftain ruling over Pavattiri, i.e., the modern Regdisalem in Gudur taluk of Nellore district. Veṅgaṅga hill is said to have belonged to Tiraiyan. Another poem from Kupundoṣai of the same anthology states that his territory bordered the area of Veṅgaṅga. In the Purāṇas we hear of a Topḍaimaṇ chief belonging to the Chāla family, who is said to have been associated with Tirupati. Topḍaimaṇ seems to have
belonged to a tribe called Toppaiyar and the land inhabited by this tribe was called Topēsaimāḍalam or Topēsai-naḍu.

The Paṭṭirappālai, another Tamil Saṅgam work contains a reference to Topēsaimā Ṭḷan-Tiraiyaṅ. He was a ruler of Kāschīpuraṃ and is said to have descended from Viśnu and to have belonged to the family of Tiraiyar who are considered to have originated from Tirai i.e., the waves of the sea. He is eulogised also in another poem called Parumbāpparupādai of Ruvāṇ-καppāṅr. There is, however, no reference in that work to Pavattiri ruled by Tiraiyaṅ. The word Ṭḷan-Tiraiyaṅ meaning 'younger Tiraiyaṅ' seems to suggest that he came in the family of Tiraiyaṅ, the ruler of Pavattiri referred to in the poem of Nakkīrār.

It is stated in a poem of Kappāṅr, son of Kāppūr-kīḷr that Viṅgaḍam was situated in Tiraiyaṅ's territory. From the expression Topēsaimāṅ, it is understood that he ruled over Topēsaimāḍalam in which Viṅgaḍam was a part and this seems to indicate the association of Topēsaimāṅ Ṭḷan-Tiraiyaṅ, the ruler of Kēśchi with the area of Viṅgaḍam. It is therefore possible that Tiraiyaṅ ruling from Pavattiri earlier and Ṭḷan-Tiraiyaṅ ruling from Kēśchi later on had Viṅgaḍam in their territory.

The Gātavāhan Period

The study made so far on the basis of the references in the contemporary literature, makes it clear that the area around
Vengagam and south of it was inhabited and ruled over by Tamil-speaking people or princes respectively. We shall presently see how and when the Telugu speaking people of the north expanded towards the south. All the events described so far may have to be placed before the period when the Satavahanas appeared on the scene.

A study of the coins of Satavahana king Vasishtiputra Satakarni will help us to know the sphere of his influence in the south in general and in particular in the south of the Andhra country. D.C. Sircar and B. Nagaswamy who have recently studied the bilingual silver coins of this ruler (second century A.D.) differ with regard to the language used in the legend on their reverse.

D.C. Sircar who read one of the silver coins of Vasishtiputra Satakarni pointed out that the language of the reverse is Telugu and Dravidian Prakrit and reads:

\[ \text{arahanasha Vahlttl-makana sha tlru-Ha takaniaha} \]

R. Ragaswamy has drawn attention to the fact that it is in early Tamil and has read as follows:

\[ \text{azasapaM SifliSSiBiikapaaa. iizu catahaplaa.} \]

B. Fanneerselvam has read the legend on the reverse side as:

\[ \text{R. Panneerselvan has read the legend on the reverse side as:} \]

\[ \text{Vaciit\'im\'akapana tiru satakapise} \]

\[ \text{Vaciit\'im\'akapaku tiru satakapiku aracanku} \]
It may be noted that he interpreted the text and pointed out that Tolkāppiyam sūtra of using ka as a genitive case ending has been followed in this ease.

According to R. Nagaswamy these bilingual coins have been used by king Satakarni for the use of Tamil knowing section in the Hyderabad region, where they have been found. Another interpretation regarding the issue of these Sātavāhana coins is that they wanted to show their Dravidian character by using Dravidian Prakrit and early Telugu and were meant for circulation in the northern-most areas of their kingdom viz., Nasik-Poona region. Yet another scholar suggested that they were meant for use in a limited area in the north and not for Telugu speaking areas.

If the legend on the reverse of the bilingual coins under study is accepted as Tamil, then it is possible that these coins were issued for the subjects on the border land. In other words, they were used to meet the needs of the subjects of the Tamil speaking area under the control of the Sātavāhanas. That such Tamil knowing subjects lived in the Chittoor region is evident from the ancient Tamil Sangam works as pointed in the section under the Sangam period. Telugu was not certainly in use upto about the 3rd century A.D., the latest limit set for these works in the region of Vengañam and south of it.

The Nasik prāśasti of Siri Poḷumāyi Vasiṣṭhiputa
(Vasishṭhīputra) Pulumāyī dated in the 19th year of his reign which speaks of the conquests of king Siri Satakarpi Gotamīputa (Gautamīputra Satakarpi), the ruler of countries such as Asika, Asaka, Muṣaka, Suraṭha, Kukura, Aparanta, Anupa, Vidabha and Ṛkaṇavantī describes him as tīsamudātōyapītāvahanasa (trīsamaudrātōyapītāvahanasya) meaning that 'his chargers had drunk the water of three oceans'. There is no doubt that the first and the second oceans are the eastern and the western oceans, the third being in the far south i.e., the Indian ocean. From the above reference to the activities of Satakarpi recorded in the Nasik cave inscription that the steeds of the king drank the waters of the three oceans identified above, a fleeting march of this king as far upto Indian ocean should be admitted. If this campaign is admitted, he should be considered to have crossed the area south of the Andhra country and passed through the Tamil country to reach the Indian ocean. It is therefore probable that at least Chittoor region was under the control of the Satavāhanas.

The provenance of this coin in the Hyderabad region may be due to trade contact and may not have any relationship to the language spoken or linguistic affinity of the people of the area around the findspot.

The Pallavas

The Pallavas are known to be the political successors of the Satavāhanas in the lower eastern Dekkan.
We come to know from their Prakrit and Sanskrit grants about four early kings who are said to have issued their records from Kāṇchīpuram. The earliest among these four referred to in the Prakrit grants of Mayidawalu and Hirabājagallī is Siva Skandavarman, who ruled about the first half of the 4th century A.D. The other three Pallava kings are Vijaya Śīśhavarman (I) (c. 430-60 A.D.), son of Vijaya Skandavarman (II), Nandivarman (c. 480-510 A.D.), son of Skandavarman (III) and Kumāravishnu (c. 540-60 A.D.), son of Buddhavarman who issued respectively Vesanta, Udayendiram and Chāndalūr grants. The villages granted by them were situated in Andhipati, Sātāhaniraṭṭha, Dattapati and Kāmā-ṛāṣṭra, all of them located in the Āndhra country.

It is possible that during intervals in this long period of about three centuries, the Pallavas could have lost their hold of Kāṇchi and their far-flung territories. This is suggested by the claim of Kumāravishnu of capturing Kāṇchi. Śīśhavarman’s claims to have captured Chōja country and to have driven the Kaḷahbras also suggest the strains that the Pallava supremacy had to bear. The drift of the Kaḷahbras (Kāḷvar) from the Vēṅgaḷam region to the west and south, as discussed above, appears to be the main cause for these intervals. The Gupta incursion on the north and also affected the Pallava supremacy for a short while as evidenced by the reference to Kāṇcheyaka Vishṇugopa among the Gupta king’s adversaries.
In the midst of all these it is not improbable that the Pallavas had exercised control over Chittoor and around for a nearly long period but for the short breaks as pointed out above. Though there is no direct evidence from the Chittoor region, the fact that they ruled from Kanchi and had exercised control over the regions in Andhra seems to indicate that the intermediary area of Chittoor might have been under their control.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

3. Ibid., 213.
4. Ibid., 263 and 115.
5. Ibid., 107.
6. Ibid., 281 and 69.
7. Ibid., 375.
10. Ibid., 107.
11. Ibid., 281.
16 Er. Ind., Vol. XXVII, pp. 224-25.
17 Ahananuru, 340 and 213.
18 Ibid., 85.
20 Ibid., The Sangam Age - its cults and cultures, Appendix, p. 21, (Madras, 1972).
23 Er. Ind., Vol. XXXV, p. 251.
25 Er. Ind., Vol. VIII, p. 60 ff. and plate.
27 Er. Ind., Vol. VI, pp. 84-89 and plates.
30 Pallavar Chandrāyugaj Nappadu, pp. 310-12.
31 Er. Ind., Vol. III, pp. 142-47.
32 Ibid., Vol. VIII, pp. 233-36 and plate.