CHAPTER - ONE

PUDUKKÓTTAI DISTRICT - TOPOGRAPHY
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1.1. Introduction

Pudukkóttai town is the headquarters of the pudukkóttai district. Once a princely State, the area, which comprises the district, is of absorbing interest to historians, anthropologists, archaeologists and lovers of art. The numerous dolmens, stone circles and other forms of megalithic burials in the district indicate the antiquity of this region dating back to pre-historic and proto-historical times.

This tract is mentioned in the Sangam classics. The archaeological and cultural remains at Kodumbálur, Nárthámalai, Kudumiyánmalai, Kunnándárkoil, Śittannavásál, Thirumayam and Avudaiyarkoil are proof of its rich cultural heritage. The origin of Pudukkóttai as a Princely state in the 17th Century A.D. is only one colourful aspect of the past of the region. Pudukkóttai town lies on the Chennai - Rameswaram Railway line. It is 390 kms from Chennai. 53 kms from Tiruchirappalli and 57 kms. from Thanjavur. The rulers of Puukkóttai have built several beautiful places and also constructed tanks canals and palaces.

1.2. Location and Area

Pudukkóttai is one of the new districts formed after the 1971 census on 14th January, 1974. It is one of the small districts of Tamil Nadu with an area of 4661 Sq.Kms. The district lies between 78 degrees 25' to 79 degrees 15' of the eastern longitude and 9 degrees 50 to 10 degrees 40' of the northern latitude. This district is bounded by Tiruchirappalli in the north,
Thanjavur in the north-east, Bay of Bengal in the east and Ramanthapuram in the south. It has a coastline of about 39 Kms.

1.3. Communications

There are no national highways passing through the district. The total length of roads in this district is 3243 Kms. Comprising of 78.10 Kms. of state highways, 434.30 Kms. of major district roads and 2730.60 Kms. of panchayat roads.

The total length of Broad-guage railway line in the district is about 84 Kms. with 12 railway stations connecting Pudukkóttai town with Tiruchirappalli as also Karaikkudi and Manamadurai in the adjacent Ramanathapuram district. Arantángi is connected with Thiruvarur in the adjacent Thanjavur district. The Broad-guage railway line from Madras to Rameswaram passes through this district. The transport handled by the railways in the district is very merge on account of the low route length and limited potential for transportation in the hinterland.

1.4. Season and Rainfall

The year may be divided into four distinct seasons. The first period January to March is relatively dry and cool. In the second, April to May, though more rain is to be expected, the heat steadily increases. The second half of the year comprises the two monsoons. Practically, the hot season extends from March to October, with occasional intervals of rain, while the rainy season properly so-called extends over October, November and December, and sometimes into January. Such “cold weather” as there is sets in December and lasts till March.
1.5. Hills in Pudukkóttaï District

The District contains a few hills and high rocks of which the most important are the following:-

1. Piránmalai, the highest hill in the State, on the south-west border and reaching a height of 2,119 feet above sea-level.

2. Nárttámalai, lying west of the road from Tiruchirappalli to Pudukkóttaï.

3. Áluruttimalai close to Nárttámalai.

4. The sevalúr hills in Tirumayam Taluk, which are low craggy ridges covered with jungle, of which the kánjáttimalai is an off-shoot.

5. The Śittannavásal hill near Annavásal.

6. The Puram hills, in the Arimalam vattam of the Tirumayam Taluk—a low ridge.

7. Kunnattúrmalai, a flat topped rock in the vattam of the same name in the Kolattúr Taluk.

8. The Sampatti hills, in the north-west of the State, in Kilaiyúr vattam in the Kilaiyúr Taluk.

On the tops or slopes of the rocks at Virálimalai, Nedungudi, Kudumiyánmalai, Tirugókarnam, Vaiyápuri, Ténimalai, Kumaramalai, Kunnándárkóil, Malayakkóvil and Malayadippatti are well-known temples.

1.6. Rivers in Pudukkóttaï District

Most of the so-called rivers of the state are only jungle streams that remain dry for most of the year.
The Vellár is the longest stream in the state. It rises in the vélamalai in the Marungámuri Zamindári of the Kulitalai Taluk of Tiruchirappalli District and falls into the Bay of Bengal near Manamélkudi in the Tanjore District, after a course of about 85 miles. The river separates Tirumayam Taluk on the South from the Kolattúr and Álangudi Taluks on the North. It is torrential in character, suddenly rising in high fresher of short duration. In the Tirupperundurai Puránam this river is said to have been sent down to the earth by Śiva in answer to the prayer of king svétakétu for a river that would confer salvation on people bathing in it. The Sanskrit name of the river is Svetanadi (white river). A few places on the banks of the river are considered particularly sacred such are Péraiyúr, Pushyatturai near the town, Kadayakkudi, and Tiruvidayápatti. The Kundáru takes its rise from the Kavinád tank, and after a course of about five miles joins the Vellár near Kadayakkudi.

The Pámbáru (called in Sanskrit Sarpanadi) is the surplus of the Perundurai tank near Mélú in the Tirumayam Taluk. It empties itself into the Támaraikanmói tank near Tirumayam, and issuing from it flows in a south-easterly direction till it joins the Vellár near Arantángi. It takes off once again as a separate stream, and dividing into five branches fall into the Bay of Bengal.

The Agnánvimóchani or Agniár is the surplus of the Kolattúr tank. After passing through Perungalúr, Malaiyúr and Karambakkudi, it falls into the Bay of Bengal, south-west of Adrámpatnam, in the Tanjore District after a course of only about fifty miles.

The Mahárájasamudram river is narrow torrential stream taking its rise from the highlands of Vallam in the Tanjore District. After flowing through Kilánkadu and Sengalmédu in the Álangudi Taluk, it falls into the
Agnánnavimochani to the south of Sándákóttai in the Tanjore District. According to Pharoach’s Gazetteer of Southern India (1855), this stream was originally a branch of the Uyyakkondan channel in the Trichirappalli District but “it has been for ages long past in a total state of decay west of Vellum.”

The Ambuliyáru has its source in Mánjanviduthi tank in the forest to the east of Tiruvarangulam, and after passing through Álangudi, Vadakádu and other villages falls into the Bay to the north of Sulóchana Báy chattram in the Tanjore District.

The Kóraiýáru is the surplus of a tank in the Virálimalai firka. It passes to the west of Rajágiri, and to the east of Kattalúr in the Kilaiyúr Taluk, and falls into the Uyyakkondán, three miles to the south of Trichirappalli.

The Siraiyáru is another stream in the Kolattkur Taluk which falls into the Samudramkulum of the Trichirappalli District.

The Manimukta river, or Tiruppattúr river, gathers the drainage of the eastern end of the Sirumalai and of the hills lying north of Nattam, both in the Madura District. The river carries the surplus water of a tank in Váráppúr, Zamindári passes through Várput and Tirukkalambúr under the name of Yenádiáru and falls into the Neikkuppaikkanmói in the Tiruppattúr Taluk of the Śivaganga Zamindári.

1.7. General History of the pudukcóttai District

Pudukcóttai was organised as a separate district, on 14th January, 1974 comprising the former Pudukcóttai division of Tiruchirappalli district with some additions from Thanjavur district. At present the district is
composed of two revenue divisions, Pudukkóttai and Aranthangi and nine taluks, Kulathur, Iluppur, Álangudi, Pudukkóttai, Gandarvakóttai, Thirumayam, Aranthangi, Avudaiyarkovil and Manamélkudi. There are about 765 revenue villages.

A very brief sketch of the political history of the region is necessary in order to appreciate and understand the mixed legacy of antiquities, monuments, epigraphs and the like of which the only most important instances are hilighted here. The history of Pudukkóttai is an epitome of the history of South India. In and around Pudukkóttai there are many vestiges of the oldest habitations of man and some of the lithic records known in the south. The Pallavas, Pándyas, Cholas, Hoysalas and Vijayanagar and Madurai Náyaks ruled over this part of the country and fostered its communal organisations trade and industries and embellished it with temples and monuments of outstanding merit.

Pudukkóttai as a political unit is of recent origin. The history of the State begins with the foundation towards the close of the 17th century of the two independent Tondaimán principalities of Pudukkóttai and Kolattúr and their amalgamation about the year 1750 A.D.

The Pándyas, the Cholas and the Pallavas were the three principal powers that shared this territory till the 15 or 16th century, and here were fought a number of battles that decided the supremacy of one or other of these dynasties the Muhammadans, Vijayanagar Kings and Náyaks, and Sétupatis (of Ramnad) ruled later. In the following sections are briefly traced the vicissitudes through which this territory passed from prehistoric times till the 18th century A.D. When Tondaimán rule was firmly established over it under the suzerainty of the British Crown.
1.8. Pre Historic and Proto – Historic- Burial Urns and Dolmens

Though we are not at present in possession of direct evidence in the shape of Paleolithic implements, etc., yet the existence of many natural caverns and rock shelters, for example, those at Šittannavásál, Nárttalmalai, Ténimalai, Ševalimalai and Kudumiyánmalai, such as were the earliest abodes of man, and the density of population that the territory seems to have had in Neolithic and iron ages, lend plausibility to the conjecture that this tract must have been the home of Paleolithic man. Professor P.T.Srinivasa Iyengar holds this belief strongly.¹ There are a number of burial sites awaiting the spade of the archeologist, and further excavations may confirm this view.

We are on surer ground when we come to Neolithic times. The few burial sites so far opened have disclosed neolithic celts, pottery and ornaments, some of which are exhibited in the State Museum. “The best district for the study of the burial customs of Neolithic man”, Observes Prof. P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar, is the Pudukkóttai State.

1.8.1. The Megalithic Burials

Megalithic burial is a typical mode of disposing the dead in most part of Tamilnadu in the past. Some suggest the period 3rd century BC to 1st century AD is considered to be when this was practised. It may be remembered that this period is also the period of Sangam. Loosely called ‘dolmans’ these are stone-capped burial monuments with chambers and similar interment arrangements in stone. These monuments are found in
many places in Tamilnadu like the districts of Chengalpattu, Vellore, Pudukkóttai, Ramanathapuram, Salem, Coimbatore and Tirunelveli.

Locally known as Pandavakuzhi (pits of Pandava’s) mandavarkuzhi (pits of the dead) Kurangup-pattadai or Kurangup pattarai (Monkey’s workshop) and mudu makkal thaazhi ‘burial pots of the old people’. The last name is the most widely used.

1.8.2. Megalithic Burial Sites in Pudukkóttai

The Pudukkóttai district was a home of the pre-historic man. A very large number of megalithic burial have been found in the district, generally near watercourses. One can see a number of burial sites even today in several places like Ambur – patti, Ammáchatram, Annavásal, Kizhaiyur, Melur, Mootamapatti, Narangianpatti, Perungalur, Peyal, Poyyámani, Puttambur, Sathyamangalam, Sengalur, Śittannavásál, Tayinipatti, Tekkattur, Tiruppur, Vadaguppatti, Vattanakuruchi and Vilappatti. They are easily identifiable by the appearance of a circle of laterite or granite stones and small boulders on the surface of the spot.

A few burial sites, belonging to the 1st century BC- 1st century AD, have been excavated, revealing pottery and ornaments, some of which are exhibited in the Government Museum at Pudukkóttai.

1.8.3. Burial Customs in Sangam Literature

There are mentions about the various burial customs like urn-burial in the Sangam literature. Mani-mekhalai one of the twin epics of the post Sangam Period, enumerates classes practising different modes of disposing of the dead, namely those who cremate (Suduvor) those who simply expose
Though the first mode of cremation came to be adopted under the influence of Vedic culture, the other methods were also being practised. Exposing the dead body to natural decay was in vogue till recent times. Burial is common even today in Tamil Nadu.

1.8.4. General Description of the Burial Sites

Excavations have revealed three types of burials in Pudukkóttai region. They are 1. grave-burials 2. urn-burials and 3. burials in depestone chambers formed of stone slabs (cists).

1.84.1. Grave – burials

This mode of burial is simple, where the body interred in a horizontal posture. Some experts feel that this was adopted by the poor. There is another view that women were buried in this way and men were normally buried in urns. The finding of urn-burials side by side with these sites might have contributed to this view.

1.84.2. Urn-burials

The urns were earthen pots, large enough for a man in a sitting posture. They varied in size, the largest measuring 4 feet in height and 3 feet 6 inches in diameter.
Srinivasa Ayyangar who was among the people who did excavations here, The dead men were placed in a sitting posture in an earthenware pot. The pot was then let into a pit and half filled with sand and rice, and other grains on a tray were placed before the dead man. His stone tools were also inserted at the side of the pot.

The foodstuff and the tools were no doubt, intended for the use of the dead man in his post-mortem life, for they believed in life of the spirit of men after death. Then more sand was poured into the pot till it was full and the pot covered with an earthenware lid. The pit was then filled in and a stone slab placed on it. Then more sand was poured and another stone slab, this time very large and oval in shape, was placed above the grave and upright stone about a cubit long planted all round the slab.

Most urns did not contain any ornaments, but some did, such as bracelets made of bronze or chank shells, nose-rings, and cornelian and glass beads bored with a hole. Some times elegant bronze vessels were found. In some places iron swords, daggers, spear-heads and arrow heads with spiked or hollow handles, Valari and other weapons were found buried round the urns with their point downwards. Less usually similar but smaller and more elegant weapons were found inside the urns themselves.

The urns generally contained human bones, and two in the Pulvayal forest contained complete skeletons, seated and holding short swords in their right hands, while the left arm rested on the things. In one of the Pulvayal urns was found a sword 18 inches long with human teeth adhering to the blade which bore embossed decorations near the handle.
1.84.3. Burials in subterranean chambers formed of stone slabs (cists)

A number of burials of this type have been excavated. The main burial chamber, as large as 8 feet square and 7 feet deep, was placed at about 2 to 3 feet below floor level. In addition were elaborate smaller chambers and partitions, and access between chambers in the form of manholes. The slabs that enclose the cists project to a height of two to three feet above the ground.

All finds of any importance are found at a depth of about four to five feet below the ground level and only in the two partitions of the main chamber. Surprisingly no traces of human bones were found, but only some baked earthenware etensils and iron weapons of different sorts. Among the findings were corroded weapons, saucer like iron vessel about 7 ½ diameter, thin bronze plates and a stone ball, evidently a missle.

1.85. The Megalithic Burial Sites In Śittannavásál

There are extensive Megalithic burial sites near the hillock in the village. It contain both cists and urn burials.

The visitors are suggested to visit these burial sites while they are returning from the visit to the other monuments. One can locate them on both the sides of the road leading from the monuments to the main road, after about 100 meters from the Ezhadippattam. More of such burials can be located on the left side of the main road, leading to Pudukkóttai, after about 200 meters from the junction. Some of these were excavated in 1934-35.
Specimens of garnet, red jasper and rock crystal have been picked up near the foot of the hill. Pieces of pottery coated inside with molten and coloured glass, and loose pieces of coloured glass have been found in the fields opposite the hill. These indicate that in olden times glass making was probably a flourishing industry in these parts.

1.9. Some place names in the sangam works

Puranánúru describes the Ollaiyúrnadu with its capital Ollaiyúr (the modern Oliyamangalam) and refers to it as the birthplace of the Sangam poet Ollaiyúrkilan makan Peruncattan (Peruncattan, son of the Kilan – chief of Ollaiyúr). This stanza is of particular interest on account of the reference to the Ilaiya clan who inhabited this tract. Śittannavásál Brahmi inscription.

One of the Pándyan chiefs, named Ollaiyúrtanda Bhútapándyan (Bhuta Pándyan who gave Ollaiyúr), was a poet of the Sangam age and the author of one verse in Ahanánúru and three in Puranánúru. His queen, who committed Sati on his death, also wrote poetry Puranánúru vers 246 and 247. Ahanánúru too (poems 25 and 279) refers to Ollaiyúr, which was probably one of the capitals of the Pándyas. Inscription No. 309 of the Pudukkóttai State list calls it also Madurai.

Alumbil, another town mentioned in Ahanánúru 14 and situated in the Pándya country according to the commentary, may be identified with the modern Ambukkovil. Pudukkóttai State Inscriptions Nos. 458, 522 and 580 refer to it as Alumbil. In the Ammácatram copper plate grant, Ramasvami, Tondaimán, the donor, traces his descent form the chief of Alumbilnadu to the south of the Kaveri.
Another town in the State referred to in the Sangam works is Kodumbai (modern Kodumbálúr). Śilappadikáram mentions it as an important place on the high road from Uraiyúr to Madura.

With mention this about 11 lines 65 – 91 of the Śilapadikáram verses one can easily recognise the high road from Tiruchirappalli to Madura that traverses the State and passes Kodumbálúr.

Four other places also find place in the Sangam classics. They are Ambukkovil, the ancient Alumbil, referred to in Ahanánúru; Ávur the home of the poets by name Ávurkilár, Ávur Mulamkilar. Erichi, the ancient Erichalur which had been identified with the Erichi village on the Pudukkóttai - Aranthangi road. But the discovery of an inscription in Ponvasinatha temple at Iluppur, tell us that Erichalur was a village near Iluppur. It was probably the home of the poet Madalan Madurai Kumaranár. Avayapatti is traditionally associated with Avvaiyar, who is believed to have lived here for some time.

This District was under the Pândyas of the first empire during the Sangam period but some part of its' northern boundary had been under the influence of the Cholas of Uraiyúr, since a few villages here bear the prefix and suffix, Killi and Valavan, both of which are the titles of the Cholas.

1.10. Maritime Trade

The District shared the large prosperity of the maritime trade of the Tamils. Karukkakurichi, the place of find of a treasure trove of more than 500 Imperial Roman Gold and Silver Coins, the largest ever recorded from a single hoard deserves notice in the context of the early history of the District. This place lies in the Álangudi taluk, a short distance north of
Aranthangi and the adjoining old ports of Mimisal, and Saliyur in the same area and Tondi farther south. The site of find would mark an important Indo-Roman trading centre, through which the inland trade route ran between the western and eastern ports during the time. This is indicated by a chain of such Roman coin hoard sites such as Korkai, Kkilakkarai, Álagankulam, all on the eastern sea coast. While Karukkakurichi is a bit inland but not far away from port like Mimisal.

There are also a few other sites of such finds in the east coast. These while pointing to the exchange of exportable products for Roman gold and silver currency, also indicate the places mentioned to have been active trade centres. The Karukkakurichi hoard contained the issues of the Roman emperors and their queens successively from Augustus (BC 29-14 AD) up to Vespasianus (69 - 79 AD) the last indicating the peak of Indo Roman trade contacts from the close of the first century A.D. to the middle of the second. It could have continued for some time later.

1.11. Historical sketch of Pudukkóttai

1.11.1. The Kalabhras Interregnum

Sangam literature takes us to the end of the third century A.D. or the beginning of the fourth. From the fourth to about the last quarter of the sixth century is the ‘dark age’ in South Indian History. There came on the scene a ‘military tribe’ known as the Kalabhras who overran the Pándya country and broke up the Chola kingdom.

What little we know of the Kalabhras is learnt from the Velvikkudi grant of the Pándyas and some Pallava charters. Literary tradition and the writings of the Buddhist monk Buddhadatta tell us of an Accuta Kalabhra who kept the three Tamil kings, Chera, Chola, and Pándya in cofinement.
Some time after this Accuta’s rule, how long after we cannot say exactly, the Pallavas and the Pándyas overthrew the interlopers, and the first Pándya empire founded by Kadungón (590 A.D.) and the Pallava line of rulers headed by Simhavisnu (575 A.D.) came into importance.

1.11.2. The Cholas

The Cholas remained in obscurity for some centuries longer, except for some chieftains ruling in Kodumbálúr, Shiyali, Malepadu and other places. They regained their importance in the ninth century under Vijayálaya⁵ (850 A.D.), the founder of the dynasty popularly known after him.

1.11.2.1. Karikála

Karikála’s escape from prison, into which he was thrown by his enemies early in his youth, and his coming to power are a favourite theme with bards. At Venni (Kovilvenni) he defeated the Pándya and Chera kings with whom were allied eleven minor chieftains.

He destroyed the power of the many Oliya chiefs, of the ancient lords of the Aruva country, of “the kings of the North” and those of Kudanadu, and of the herdsman dynasty including the chief of Irungovel (Pattinanappalai lines 274 – 282), who ruled over a district the capital of which was Kodumbálúr. Karikála extended his conquests to Kánci (Conjeevaram), and into the country of the Poduva chiefs (the modern Cuddappah and Kurnool districts). The territories over which he held direct stay extended from the Pálár almost to the southern boundary of the modern Pudukkóttai State.
1.11.3. The Pallavas

Though Mahéndravarman I Pallava (600-630 AD) inherited from his victorious father Simhavishnu the Pallava Empire that reached up to the banks of the Cauvery, Cholamandalam could not be retained by his immediate successors, as it was overrun by the Pándyas of the farther south. The tract north and south of river Vellár were in the hands of the Mutharaiyar chieftains who till their annihilation by the resurgent Chola line of Vijayálaya, were owing alternate allegiance to the super powers. The Irukkuvels became the firm allies of the Cholas when they came in to their own at the close of ninth century.

Thus one cannot expect to find early Pallava monuments, antiquities and inscriptions in the Pudukkóttai region but only those of the contemporary Pándyas along with those of Mutharaiyars and Irukkuvels and later Pallavas who wrested the tract from the hands of the Pándyas.

The tract came under the Pallavas during the time of Nandhivarman-II (710-775 A.D.) when the Pallava power reasserted itself in Cholamandalam and the tract south of Cauveri, reaching a little south beyond Vellár, comprising the northern half of Pudukkóttai district. This period is thus marked by the presence of rock cut cave temples of the Pándyas and Mutharaiyars with their inscriptions and the early Karralis or stone structural temples, sculptures and inscriptions of the Pándya-Mutharaiyar - Irukkuvel genre, as also of the later Pallava inscriptions on pre existing and contemporary monuments.

There are different theories about the origin of the Pallavas, but the scope of this work does not permit us to discuss them. The history of the
Pallavas including those mentioned in the Prákrt and Sanskrit records up to about the last quarter of the sixth century does not directly concern us.

1.11.3.1. Mahéndravarman I (C. 600 to 630 A. D.)

Mahéndravarman or Mahéndravikrama was a remarkable personality in the history of Southern India. His great rival was the Cálukya Pulakési II who had become master of Vengi. The conflict between the Pallavas and Pándyas described above in this section began in this reign, and was continued during those of Mahendra’s successors. From the presence of cave temples in places in South India so far apart as vallam in the chingleput district and Mahéndravádi in North Arcot and Śittannavásál in Pudukkóttai State, we may infer how widely Mahéndravarman had spread Pallava influence and authority.

Mahéndravarman was not eminent for his military exploits alone. Two of his titles are significant. Cetthakári or Caityakári means temple builder’ and Vicitracitta means ‘inventive or versatile.’ These refer to the cave-temples that he had excavated in various parts of the country under his sway. Before his time, temples were built of perishable material so that no traces of them remain. Mahendra is said to have been the first to cut shrines out of the solid rock.

1.11.3.2. Nandivarman II (C. 710 to 775 A. D.).

Nandivarman II. Pallavamalla – About 710 A. D., there was a dynastic revolution. Nandivarman of a collateral line tracing descent from Bhimavarman, the brother of Simhavisnu, became king and ruled for about 65 years. The Pallava-Chalukya hostilities were renewed, and Chalukya VikramÁditya II actually occupied Káncipuram, which Pallavamalla
subsequently recovered. Nandivarman was an ardent vaisnavite. The famous Tirumangai Alvar was contemporary with him.

The Visnu temples of Káncipuram, such as the Vaikuntha Perumál and Kesava Perumál temples, were built in his reign, to which the rock-cut Śiva temple of Kunnándárkóvil also may be assigned. P. S. I. 15 in the Kunnándárkóvil temple mentions a gift of rice by a chief, probably the viceroy of the province, for feeding people on the Ardhra festival day. The inscription is dated the third year of Nandipottaraiyar, who may have been either Nandivarman II or Nandivarman III. P. S. I. 16 mentions the construction of a stone sluice for a tank near Rasalipatti.

1.11.3.3. Dantivarman (C. 775 to 826 A. D.)

In this reign the Pándya Varaguna Maharaja made considerable inroads into the Pallava Empire, and had penetrated as far north into Tondáimándalam as Araisur on the bank of the Pennar, but an inscription of the sixteenth year of Dantivarman at Malaiyadippatti in the State shows that the northern part of the State was still under Pallava domination.

1.11.3.4. Nrpatungavarman (C. 849 to 875 A. D.).

Nrpatungavarman also won victories over the Pándyas and defeated them on the banks of the Arichit (Arasalar near Kumbakonam). An inscription of Nrpatunga’s seventh year at Narttamalai ( P. S. I. 19) shows that his empire extended south into the Pudukkóttai territory in spite of the Pándya inroads. Its northern limit was Gudimallam.
1.11.3.5. Later Pallava Monuments

An inscription at Kunnándárkóvil dated the fifth year of Dantivarman’s reign (P. S. I. 17) records the digging of a tank by a subordinate of the Muttaraiya chieftain Maripidugu. P. S. I. 18 in Malaiyadippatti Śiva cave-temple dated the sixteenth year of Dantivarman’s reign records that the temple excavated by videlavidugo mutharaiyan also called kuvavan satton and the Idol consecrated.

The god is this temple was named Vagisvara, evidently after Appar who was called Tirunavukkarasar. P. S. I. 19 at Narttamalai dated the seventh year of Npratunga’s reign mentions that the cave-temple there, called Paliyili-Iśvaram, was excavated by Šattan Paliyili son of Vidélavidugu Muttaraiyan, and his son and daughter extended and endowed it. Paliyili-Iśvaram must have been excavated in the time of Nandivarman III.

According to tradition Perumilalaikkurumba Nayanar stayed at Devarmalai in the Pudukkóttai State, and there is a portrait sculpture of him on the wall to the left of the entrance to the shrine in the rock-cut temple. This saint was a contemporary of Sundarar. Sundarar is believed to have lived in the middle or towards the close of the eighth century A. D. Thus it is probable that the temple was excavated in the time of Dantivarman or Nandivarman III.

There are some hymns in the Divya-prabhandam, in praise of the God in the Tirumayam Visnu temple, composed by Tirumangai Alvar who according to Gopalan ‘Pallavas of Kanchi’ was a contemporary of Nandivarman Pallavamalla (C.710-775 A. D.).
An inscription (P. S. I. 13) on a slab in the temple records that when Śattan Maran, also called Vidēlavidugu Vilupperadi araiyan, made some improvements to the temple, his mother Perumbidugu Perundevi gave some gifts of lands to it. Śattan Maran’s reign may be assigned to the eighth century as shown below, and the paleographical evidence also indicates that the inscription belongs to the same period. The Visnu temple at Tirumayam must, therefore, have been built early in that century.

The Pallava references to places and incidents in the District are equally scanty. The earliest reference to the historical events in the District find a place in the Pándya records of Velvikudi and Sinnamanur plates which say that Máravarman Rájasimha defeated Nadhivarman Pallava Malla at Kodumbálúr. The inscriptions of his successors are found in Kunnándárkóvil, Malayadippatti and Rasalippatti.

The age of the Pallavas and the Pándyas of the first empire, the Mutharaiyars and Irukkuvels, was the age of the Tamil Bhakthi Movement. The Thevaram mentions several temples in the District. The three Nayanmars from this District were Idangalinayanar of Kodumbálúr, Perumizhalai Kurumanayanar associated with Devarmalai and Kulachirai Nayanar of Manamélkudi.

1.11.4. The First Pándya Empire

The available historical evidences under the first Pándya Empire is rather scanty. The best known is the inscription in Kudumiyanmalai of the reign of Kochadayan Ranadheeran or Sadayan Maran (C.700-730 AD) and in Śittannavásál of the reign of Srimara Srivallaba (815-862 AD). In the reign of Máravarman Rájasimha I (C.730-760AD) a number of battles were fought against the Pallavas, one of the sites being Kodumbálúr.
The inscription of the reign of Nedunchadayan, (C.765-815AD) the greatest king of the dynasty is found in Thirugókarnam and Nirpalani. After the reign of the three successors of Srimara Srivallaba, ending with Rájasimha II (C.920 AD) who lost his knigdom to the resurgent Cholas, there are no references about the Pándya rulers in the District.

The seventh to ninth centuries A.D., mark the ascendancy of the Pándyas who extended their conquest much beyond their traditional boundary of the Vellár, far into the Trichirappalli and Tanjore districts and as far north as Kongunadu in the modern Coimbatore and Salem districts. The Pallavas of Káncipuram were also expanding and extending their conquests as far south as modern Pudukkóttai State. The two powers often came into conflict. Parts of Pudukkóttai were under local chieftains who ruled either independently or as vassals of the Pallavas or Pándyas.

1.11.4.1. Arikésari Márávarman (C.670 to 710 A.D)

Arikésari Márávarman or Arikésari Parankusa Nedu Maran fought against the Pallavas, defeated the Paravar tribes of the South, conquered Kurunadu and defeated the Chera King. He was the first to expand Pándya rule beyond its traditional limits. This king is identified with the celebrated Kun Pándyan of the Periyapuranam. He was at first a Jain, but was converted to Saivaisam by the Saint Tirugnana Sambandar who was invited to Madura by Mangayarkkarasi, the Chola queen of Maravarman, and Kulaccirai Nayanar, his minister.
1.11.4.2. Kóccadaiyan Ranadhira (C.710 to 740 A.D)

Kóccadaiyan Ranadhira or Sadaiyan Maran assumed the titles of Vanavan, Sembiyian and Cholan which imply that he was supreme over the Chera and Chola countries. He defeated the Maharattas at Mangalore. P.S.I. 238 dated in his 9th year records that he made a gift of gold to maintain an “ever-brining” lamp in the Mélaikkóvil at Kudumiyanmalai and to celebrate a festival of seven days.

1.11.4.3. Márvavarman Rájasimha (C. 740 to 765 A.D)

Márvavarman Rájasimha claimed to have defeated Nandivarman Pallavamalla in a number of battles, one of which was fought at Kodumbálúr. His incursions extended to the Kongu country. He subjugated Malakongam, the land on the border of Tiruchirappalli and Tanjore districts, which probably included part of the present Pudukkóttai State, and Married a Malava princess. He performed many Gosahasras, Hiranyagarbhas and Tulabharas and patronised learned Brahmins.

1.11.4.4. Máranjadaiyan (C.765 to 815 A.D)

Máranjadaiyan or Nedunjadaiyan otherwise known as Jatila, Parantaka, or Varanguna Maharaja defeated the Pallavas on the south bank of the Kaveri. He annexed Kongunadu. He was unquestionably the most powerful ruler of the dynasty, and his sway extended from Venadu or South Travancore which he conquered, as far as the modern Coimbatore and Salem districts. There are two inscriptions (P.S.I. 239 and 240) of the 17th and 23rd years of his reign relating to gifts of gold to temples, one in the Gókarnéśvara temple of Tirugókarnam, and the other in Mélaikkóvil at Kudumiyanmalai.
1.11.5. Jainism

Form the vestiges found in almost all parts of the State; it is clear that Jainism had a large following in the State during these centuries. We have mentioned in the last section a few centres of Jainism-Tenimalai, Śittannavásál, and Annávasal-which flourished before the 9th century and retained their importance till about five centuries later.

The recent excavations at Chettipatti, formerly known as Tiruvennayil, have brought to light three Jain temples. An inscription in one of these temples has a fragment of the prasasti of Raja Raja I, which confirms the conclusion based on their architectural style, that they may be assigned to the 10th century A.D. Several Jain images were found here of which one of Parsvanatha is specially attractive. Attached to these temples was a monastery called Ainnurruva-perumpalli built or endowed by Jayavira Perilamaiyan, a merchant belonging to the famous guild of Aififiurruvars. This monastery was associated with the name of matisagara, a celebrated Jaina Acarya of the 10th century.

Narttamalai was another important Jain centre with two flourishing monasteries, one at Aluruttimalai, then called Tirumanamalai or Vadatituppallimalai, and the other at Bommpimalai, then called Tentiruppallimalai. In P. S. I. 474, an inscription of the reign of an unidentified Sundara pandya, we have the names of two Acaryas, Dharmadeva Acarya of the Tirupallimalai monastery and his preceptor Kanakacandra Pandita.

The fortunes of Jainism seem to have declined in the State during the 12th century. Inscription on the basement of the samanarkudagu on the Melamalai at Narttamalai, dated A. D. 1115, we learn that in this cave
which was previously a Jain shrine, images of Visnu and the Devi were consecrated. The Jaina fortuned revived later under the Pandyas. P. S. I. 530 is a royal order of an unidentified Pandya ruler granting tax-free lands to the priests of the monastery and temple of Sadaiyaparai. P. S. I. 658 is another royal order granting the village of Korramangalam to the priests of the monasteries of Tiruppallimalai.

1.11.6. The Muttaraiyars

The Muttaraiyars were an influential line of chieftains who in these centuries ruled in the borderland between the Pândya and Pallava kingdoms. For many generations they held large portions of the Tanjore and Tiruchirappalli districts and of the Pudukkóttai District. "The centre of their power was some-where in the District of Tanjore. Sendalai, at present a small-village near Tirukkattupalli, appears once to have been a flourishing town with the beautiful name of Candralekha, and either this place or Niyamam in its neighbourhood was most probably the centre of the Muttaraiya rule.

Thus the District became a kind of buffer land between the Pândyas and Pallavas. The Pândyas and Pallavas carried on the wars by proxy through their subordinate chiefs the Mutharaiyars and Velirs. Among the Velirs the most well known are the Irukuvels of Kodumbálúr. The Kodumbálúr Velirs located in the political buffer zone between the kingdoms of the Cholas and Pândyas formed the family of nobility from which kings and other chiefs made matrimonial alliances.

The line of Mutharaiyar chiefs also extended their rule in to parts of Pudukkóttai area. The centre of Mutharaiyar power was Senthalai near Thanjavur and this geographical location between the Pallava and Pândya
kingdoms involved them in the contests of the two powers.

The Mutharaiyars mostly favoured the Pallavas. The celebrated Sendalai inscription states that the 3rd Suvaran Maran fought on the side of the Pallava overlords against the Pándyas in a number of places in Pudukkóttai district such as Kodumbálur, Karaiyur and Annavásal. The political significance of this dynasty is considerable. The great eclipse of the Chola subordination to the Pallavas must be explained with particular reference to the Mutharaiyar rule over portions of the Chola country. In other words the Muthariyars were a formidable obstacle to the rise of Cholas. The removal of the obstacle in the middle of 9th century ushered an era of Chola expansion. The Mutharaiyars have made some classical monuments in the District.

1.11.7. The Chola Empire

1.11.7.1. Parakésari Vijayálaya (C. 850-871 A. D.)

The first capital of the Cholas after the revival of their power under Vijayálaya, the first of a line of rulers who are known in history as the Imperial Cholas, was at Uraiyúr. Vijayálaya defeated the Muttaraiyars who had thrown in their lot with the Pándya king Varagunavarman, and captured Tanjore. Though nominally a Pallava vassal, Vijayálaya was practically the independent ruler of the territories comprising the modern districts of Trichirappalli, Tanjore and South Arcot, and parts of North Arcot and the Pudukkóttai State.
1.11.7.2. Monuments in the state of Vijayálaya’s Time

Nilakanta Sastri observes, “Possibly Vijayálaya, though a vassal of the Pallava ruler, still dated his records in his own regnal years—a privilege exercised by certain vassals at all times and by all of them when the power of their suzerain was on the decline.

It is certain, however, that some of the Parakésari records nearer home (Uraiyúr) are really his.” On this assumption, we may conclude that some of the Parakésari inscriptions, P. S. I. 61 for example, and perhaps many of those found in the Pallava rock-cut shrines in the State belong to the reign of Vijayálaya.

1.11.7.3. Monuments in the state of Áditya’s Time

The Anbil plates proclaim Áditya as the famous builder of tall rows of stone temples from the Sahyadri mountains or the western ghats to the sea. The sundaréśvara temple at Tirukkattalai called Karkuricci Tirukkarrali in the inscriptions, has two early Parakésari inscriptions and one of Rajakesarivarman (P. S. I. No. 21). The paleographical features of the Rajakesari inscription enable us to assign it to Áditya Rajakesari.

The Mucukundéśvara temple at Kodumbálúr, named Tiruppusidvaram in the earliest inscription there-P. S. I. 33, is similar to the Tirukkattalai temple in style and ornamentation, and may be assigned on architectural grounds alone to the middle of the 9th century. The earliest inscription in this temple (P.S.I. 33) is dated the 21st yuear of a Rajakesari. The two other Rajakesaris of this century, i.e., those before Raja I, were GandarÁditya and Sundara Chola the first ruled for eight years, and the second for 18 years, and it is therefore evident from this inscription, in
which a much higher regnal year is given, that the temple must have been built in the time of Áditya Rajakesari, and named after Mucukunda, the legendary ancestor of the cholas.

In the Balasubrahmanya temple of Kannanur, there are two inscriptions of a Rajakesari which have not been included in the ‘Chronological list of Inscriptions’, or published in the volume of the ‘Inscriptions-Texts of the Pudukkóttai District.’ The paleographical features of the inscriptions, the style of architecture and the details of decoration clearly indicate that the Rajakesarivarman referred to in the newly discovered inscriptions is none other than Áditya Chola I.

With the exit of the Pallavas from the scene and the subsequent elimination of the Pándya power, the Cholas established themselves with Thanjavur as their capital at the close of ninth century and by eleventh century they had extended their sway even beyond Tamilakam. Pudukkóttai among many other places came under them, Their rule extended till about the middle of thirteenth century when the Pándyas staged a comeback.

Under Vijayálaya this District formed part of his dominion but perhaps fitfully. The notion that some temples of ninth century in the District, belong to the early Chola period, is erroneous. The Pándyas still held power in the region. It was in the reign of Parantaka I (907-955 A.D), Vijayálaya's second successor the Cholas conquered the entire Pándya land. The Kodumbálúr chiefs helped Parantaka in his campign and remained faithful to the Cholas thereafter.

After the battle of Thakkolam in 949 A.D., the Cholas lost Thondaimándalam and the Pándyas in the south made head way. Rajaraja I came to the throne in 985 A.D., and the Cholas made their kningdom more
extensive and the mightiest in South Indian history. The thirtysix years of interrugged by marked an unsettled phase. But in Pudukkóttai District there are inscriptions of Gandarathithya (949-57 AD.) Sundarachola (956-973 AD.) and Uthamachola (970-985 AD.).

The rule of Raja Raja I marks a brilliant part in the history of the District in common with that of Tamil Nadu. The full benefaction of the Chola rule is revealed in their inscriptions in the District. These inscriptions are of great value in showing how effectively local administration functioned in this part of the Chola Kingdom.

There are several inscriptions of the reign of Rajaraja I (1012-1044 AD). His son was appointed as the viceroy of the conquered Pándya and Chera lands. The entire district formed part of the Chola kingdom until the last year of Kulothunga III (1178-1223 AD).

There are three inscriptions of the reign of Rajadhiraja (1018-1054 AD), six of Rajendra (1063- 1069 AD) and eleven of the great Kulothunga I. Some of these inscriptions give detailed information about the performance of Santhikkoothu, a special type of dance in the temples here of the reign of Raja Raja II (1146-73 AD) An inscription at Ponnamaravathi introduces a family of chieftains by name Nishadharajas who distinguished themselves for some time in the southern part of the district. At the death of Raja Raja II and the succession of Rajadhiraja II the Chola power began to decline. This was combined with the civil war in Madurai led to rapid changes.
1.11.8. The Irukkuvels

There is a legend in the Puranánúru (No.201) which tells how the Velir came out of the sacrificial fire-pit of a sage from Northern India, and reigned for forty-nine generations over Tuvarai, which commentaries on the Sangam poems identify with Dvaraka in Gujarat, but modern historians with Dvarasa-mudra in mysore. Naccinarkkiniyar, the commentator, adds that eighteen families of Velirs came south with Agastya, and established their rule in different parts of Tamilakam. Some of them were connected with the Pudukkottai District.

The only velar family about whom we have much information is that of the Irukkuvels, who ruled over Kodumbálúr in the Konadu. They claim to belong to the Yadava clan, and hence one of them, named Samarabhirama, was styled Yaduvalsaketu.

The Periyapuranam gives a brief account of another named Idangalinayanar, who ranks as one of the 63 Saiva saints, and in whose family was born Áditya, who may be identified with Áditya Chola I, father of Parantaka I. On the south wall of the central shrine of the Muvarkovil at Kodumbálúr, there is a Sanskrit inscription (P.S.I. No. 14) in Grantha characters, the opening verses of which give a genealogical table which starts from a chieftain whose name is lost, who “vanquished the Pándya elephants.”

P.S.I. 63 and 65 at Kudumiyanmalai, of the twenty-first year of the reign of a Parakessari believed to be Parantaka I (928 A.D.) mention madurantaka Irukkuvel also known as Accan or Adittan Vikramakesari or Tennavan Irukkuvelar. He was a con-temporary of Rajakesari Áditya I and
Parakésari Parantaka I, and his daughter Adicca (Adittan) Pidari was married to Arikulakesari, a son of Parantaka I.

Another Irukkuvel contemporary of Parantaka I and of GandarÁditya was Mahimalaya Irukkuvel also called Parantaka Vira Cholan or Kunjaramallan. P. S. I.22 at Kudumiyanmalai, of the third year of Rajakesari Gandaráditya, corresponding to 951-952 A.D., refers to a gift by Tirai Amman Udaiyal, a female relative of the Udaiyar or chief Mahimalaya Irukkuvel. P.S.I. 24 records a gift of land by this chief to the Tiruvaganisavara temple at Cittur. P. S. I. 30 at Nirpalani records a gift to the temple made by this chief at his camp at Triuppalatturai in the Trichirappalli district. P. S. I. 255 is another of his records, but it was later reinscribed by Máravarman Sundara Pándya I in 1221 A.D. It mentions the chief’s title Kunjaramallan.

The velar chiefs of Kodumabalur aided Parantaka I in his Pándyan campaigns. The Sinnamanur plates of the sixth year of Pándya Rájasimha (c.916 A.D.) give an exaggerated account of a surprise Pándyan victory at Kodumbálúr. It is not known whether Mahimalaya and Madurantaka belonged to the main ruling family of Kodumbálúr or to a collateral one.

Bhuti Vikramakesari of the Muvarkovil inscription referred to above, was also known as Tennavan Ilanguvelar or Maran Pudiyar, or Parantaka Ilangovelar, and was a contemporary of Rajakesari Sundara Chola Parantaka II (C.956 A. D. to 973 A. D.) and Parakésari Áditya II (C. 956-969 A. D.). Vikramakesari was an ally and vassal of the Chola emperor, and, as the following genealogical table shows, was closely connected with the chola royal family.
1.11.9. The Second Pândya Empire

The Pândyas began to assert their independence from the time of Kulothunga I. Towards the end of the reign of Raja Raja II, Kulasekara one of the two contenders for the Pândya throne appealed to the Cholas for help. His rival Parakrama turned towards Srilanka. Pudukkóttai also became the seat of this civil war.

Parakrama Babu the Srilankan king sent an army to assist Parakrama Pândya. According to Culavamsa, the Sinhalese Chronicle, the Sinhalese army engaged itself in the war in the parts of the District and burnt down the three storeyed palace at Ponnamaravathi. Kulasekara captured Parakrama and killed him and crowned himself. Parakrama's son ViraPândya with the help of Sinhalese army defeated Kulasekara and crowned himself at Madurai.

Vikrama Pándya a son of Kulasekara sought the help of Kulothunga III. The Chola army placed Vikrama on the Madurai throne, Virapandiya was defeated and he surrendered to Kulothunga. Kulothunga surrounded Madurai swiftly, drove away Vikarama Pándya and his brother and took up the crown, after taking the title Chola Pándya, as mentioned in the Kudumiyanmalai inscription. But at the end of his reign Máravarman Sundara Pándya who suffered during the Chola invasion along with his brother Vikarama Pándya carried fire and sword in to the Chola country. Thus the outcome of the civil war became disastorous to the Cholas.

Sundara Pándya came to the throne in 1216 A.D. and carried arms as far north as Chidambaram and took over the Chola country. An inscription in Pudukkóttai, states that the Pândya ruler restored to the Chola, his throne, from the city of Ponnamaravathi. Kulothunga III has built temples in
Seranur, Adanakkottai, Perungalur and Vaithur all known as Kulothunga Cholisvaram. With the reign of Kulothunga III^{19} Chola history virtually ends in the District.

The history of the District after the fall of the Cholas cannot be told in detail for the records are comparatively meagre. The Pândyas of the second empire spread their influence in the district gradually. After Kulothunga III, the Pândyas were the real rulers in the District. The extent increased under Máravarman Sundarapândya I^{20}, and his inscriptions are found in a wider area. By the reign of Jatavarman Sundara I who acceeded in 1281 AD, the entire district had come under the Pândyas.

Thus with the reemergence of the Pândyas to total power in the 12-13th centuries and the exit of the Cholas, we get Pândya inscriptions in large numbers not to speak of structural temples or additions to the existing ones and sculptures. The Gangaiaraiyar chiefs came in to view during this period and they have also renovated many temples in the District.

The Pândya power reached its height under Jatavarman Sundara Pándya I and Jatavaraman Vira Pándya I, the joint rulers. The inscription of ViraPándya in Kudumiyanmalai, throws much light on his relationship with Srilanka and Hindu kingdoms across the seas. During the reign of Máravarman Kulasekara I who acceeded in 1268 A.D., Marcopolo, the Venetian traveller visited the Pândya country. Towards the end of Kulasekara's reign, Jatavarman ViraPándya II and Jatavarman Sundara Pándya II, the brothers, quarelled. This led to a civil war in the Pândya country resulting in political unrest and cownfusion Malikafur, the general of Alaudeen Khalji, the Sultan of Delhi, took advantage of this and invaded the Pândya country. This led to the incorporation of the Pândya country in the Delhi Empire in subsequent years.
1.11.10. The Muslim Invasion in the Pudukkóttai District

A Sultanate was established at Madurai. There are two inscriptions relating to the period of the Sultans of Madurai in the District one at Rangiam (1332 AD) and another at Panaiyur (1334-A D).

It is said that Malikafur marched through the District and the temples in Kudumiyanmalai, Kodumbálúr, Nárhámalai and Ponnamaravathi were sacked. But a close scrutiny of the available records and original manuscripts will show that Malikafur did not pass through these places and he might have marched to Madurai through the Uraiyúr-Madurai high road running on the outskirts of Kodumbálúr and there is no possibility of destruction of temples by the Muslim army in the above places.

There was a brief spell of Muslim rule (Sultanate of Madurai) at Madurai for about 75 years and again there was political unrest and cholasand the Pudukkóttai region also shared the fate.

The country south of the Kaveri, including Pudukkóttai was under Mussalman rule for nearly half a century. That the rule of the Sultans was one of unbridled oppression is shown by the writings of Ibn Batuta, the historian and traveler, who stayed in Malabar for several years, and by a number of inscriptions in the State and the adjoining districts of Madura and Ramnad.

P. S. I. 669 at Rangiyam states that in consequence of the confusion and troubles caused by the Muslim raids, the residents of Adanur placed themselves under the protection of the assembly of Rajasingamangalam in Ponnamaravati and sold their padikaval right to the latter. An inscription at
Tirukkolakkudi, Tiruppattúr Taluk, Ramnad district, situated just beyond the State limits, records the destruction of Suraikkudi by the Muslim soldiery, and an agreement by which the citizens of Virachilai and Kottiyur placed themselves under the protection of those of Ponnamaravati. A Tiruppattúr inscription records how temples were ruined during the tulukkavanam or encampment of the Muslims, and were subsequently renovated and reconsecrated by Araiyan Periyanayanar of Suraikkudi. Two inscriptions at Kalaiyarkovil, Ramnad district, and two at Neivasal in the State, P. S. I. 452 (A. D. 1374-75) and 454 (A. D. 1381-82), also mention the destruction of villages during the tulukkarkalakam or Muslim incursions.

1.11.11. The Hoysalas

The Hoysalas arrived in the southern part of Tamil Nadu and actively intervened in the Chola - Pándya feuds and soon they came to occupy the region on either banks of river Cauvery with the capital at Kannanur. (Samayapuram) They established themselves in the area by the middle of thirteenth century and much of the Pudukkóttai area was under their sway since an inscription at Thirugókarnam records a gift to the temple by Somala Devi, a sister of the Hoysala king, Narashimha II (1220-1238 A.D).

There are many references to the Hoysalas, in Máravarman Sundara I inscription. Some of the Hoysala generals and princes have made gifts to the temples in the District. With the defeat of Hoysala Ramanatha (1254-1295 A.D) by Jatavarman Sundara Pándya I, the Hoysala power in the region virtually came to an end.
1.11.12. The Vijayanagar

The Vijayanagar Rayas centered in Hampi took over Madurai, from the Muslims when the whole of southern Karnataka, Andhra and Tamil Nadu came under one rule - the Vijayanagar Empire. Under the Vijayanagar Sangama dynasty (1336-1485 AD) the inscriptions in the District refer to many local chiefs such as those Suraikudi, Perambur, Sendavanmangalam, Vanadaraiyar, Gangaiaraiyar and the Thondaimáns of Aranthangi.

There are about 12 inscriptions of the period in the District. They record the construction of new shrines, temples, the consecration of divine images and the establishment of mathas. During the brief Saluva rule (1485-1505 AD) Narasimha Raya the first Saluva emperor, during a tour of his dominion, passed through the Pudukkóttai District on his way to Madurai. Vira Narasimha Náyak, the Tuluva usurper and the general of Saluva Narasimha lied a campaign against the Pándya chiefs and marched through Pudukkóttai.

A great personality of the Tuluva dynasty (1505-1570 AD) was Krishna Devaraya (1509-1529 AD). He visited the Brahadamba - Gokarnesa temple at Thirugókarnam on his way to Ramesvaram and gifted many valuable presents to the temple. Under his successor Achutha Raya the Thanjavur Náyak Kingdom was created and the eastern part of Pudukkóttai district formed part of the Thanjavur kingdom for sometime and the rest was under the Madurai Náyaks. The Thondaimáns of Pudukkóttai rose to power by about the end of the seventeenth century.

The provincial viceroys of the Vijayanagar Empire, the Náyaks of Madurai and Thanjavur asserted independence after the downfall of the empire. The Pudukkóttai area thus came under the Náyaks of Madurai
nominally and under the Thanjavur Náyaks frequently. The Náyaks maintained the same trends in art and architecture as their political masters.

The Vijayanagar epoch is one of great temple building, extension of temple complexes by addition of new shrines and mandapams, prakarams, gopurams, teppakulams etc., The pillared halls in most of the temples in the district belong to the Vijayanagar style. The mandapams took the form of long corridors, examples of such corridors are to be found at Thirugokamam, Thriuvéngaivásal, Kudumiyanmalai, Thiruvarankulam and Avudaiyarkovil. There are portrait sculptures in many of the temples, such as Kunnándárkóvil, Thirumayam, Thirugókarnam, Kudumiyanmalai and Avudaiyarkovil. The portrait sculptures are generally made in the pillars of the mandapams development in Vijayanagar period.

1.11.13. The Náyak kingdom of Tanjore

Sevvappa’s son, Acyutappa, assisted his father in the administration of the country. When he became ruler, he was fortunate in the possession of an able minister in Govinda Diksita. A Malayadippatti inscription (P. S. I. 912) records a gift of nine villages by this chief to the Visnu temple there, and there is another, much damaged, in the same place (P. S. I. 757 dated 1586?) which mentions him. These show that the eastern part of the State was under the rule of the Tanjore Náyak. The next ruler was Raghunatha who remained loyal when the Náyak of Madura headed a combination against the Vijayanagar emperor Rama in a war of succession.

Vijaya Raghava who succeeded Raghunatha joined in an unsuccessful conspiracy against Cokkanatha Náyak of Madura. When the Muslims devastated Trichirappalli, Madura and the Pudukkóttai District, Cokkanatha
of Madura had to buy them off, but he punished Vijaya Ragahava for assisting them.

1.11.14. Tondaimán Rules in the Pudukkóttai District

The ancestors of the Pudukkóttai ruling line of Thondaimáns, were migrants from the Thondaimándalam region the northern stretch of the ancient Tamil kingdoms. They came along with the Vijayanagar army, which was in engagement in this part of territory in the early seventeenth century.

It is probable that one among them, got some tract assigned to him by the local Pallavarayar chieftain and settled down at Karambakudi and Ambukovil area, and became the chieftain of the area. Later he came to be called the progenitor of the Thondaimán ruling house. According to the legendary accounts found in a Telugu poem, Thondaimán Vamsavali, written by the Thondaimán's court poet Venganna in 1750, that the Pudukkóttai Thondaimáns belong to Indira Vamsa and the name of the first chieftain of the line settled at Ambukovil was Pacchai Thondaimán.

Though the contribution of the Thondaimáns to architecture is less, a brief sketch of the history of this dynasty, which ruled for about three centuries till 1948, is given here to give a complete picture about the history of the District.

1.11.14.1. Avadai Raya Thondaimán

Avadai Raya Thondaimán, the successor of Pacchai Thondaimán, with the favour of Venkata Raya III (1630-1642 AD) the king of Vijayanagar and the suzerain of the Náyak kingdoms of Gingee and
Thanjavur, got extended the tract of land in his possession in the region and he was also conferred the title 'Raya'. Thus Avadai Raya Thondaimán inherited the Vijayanagar tradition and the Thondaimáns of the later period adopted it. Avadai Raya Thondaimán ruled the Karambakudi tract from about 1640 A.D., and his son succeeded to the estates of his father under the title Raghunatha Raya Thondaimán.

1.11.14.2. Raghunatha Raya Thondaimán

Raghunatha Raya Thondaimán (1686 -1730 AD.) became close to the Náyak ruler of Thanjavur and Rangakrishna Muthuvirappa Náyak of Tiruchirappalli. The Thondaimán was appointed as the arasu kavalar of Tiruchirappalli. Vijaya Raghunatha Kilavan Sethupathi (1673-1710 AD) the Sethupathi ruler of Ramanathapuram married Kathali Nachiar, the sister of Thondaimán.

This marriage strengthened the ties between these dynasties. The Sethupathi, desired, to present a Palayam to the Thondaimán. The tract of land to the south of Vellár which was held by Seventheluntha Pallavarayar as a fief of Ramnad, was taken away from him and handed over to the Thondaimán. Thus the Pudukkóttai territory was enlarged with the help of the Sethupathi. The Thondaimán rule was established south of the Vellár and Raghunatha Raya Thondaimán was in estimation nearer to the status of a chief of a bigger territory by about 1686 AD., and he ruled up to 1730 AD.

About the time Raghunatha Raya Thondaimán became the ruler of Pudukkóttai, Namana Thondaimán, his brother became the chief of Kulathur Palayam (present Kulathur taluk area) with the blessings of the Náyak king Ranga krishna Muthuvirappa of Trichirappalli (1682-89 AD), and Kulathur continued as a separate principality - with Its ruler known as
Kulathur Thondaimán - till about 1750 AD., when it was annexed to Pudukkóttai.

Raghunatha also got some territories by victory, consolidating Pudukkóttai rule with a sizable territory comprising regions of Pilaviduthi, the lands south of Vellár, the tract up to Adanakkottai, Álangudi, Virálimalai, Ammankurichi and the area around Kulathur, roughly constituting the former Kulathur, Álangudi and Thirumayam taluks. The tract contained in these taluks, later came to be known as Pudukkóttai District (Pudukkóttai Samasthanam).

1.11.14.3. Vijaya Raghunatha Raya Thondaimán

Vijaya Raghunatha Raya Thondaimán (1730-1769 AD) was the second in the line of Thondaimáns. During his period the whole of India come under the umbrella of the Mughals. The Náyakingdoms of Ginjee, Thanjavur and Madurai were subjugated and became tributaries of the Mughal rule as also the smaller palayams which were under them.

The Nizam of Hydrabad was appointed as the Mughal representative for South India and in turn the Nizam entrusted the Tamil Nadu region then known as the Carnatic to the Nawabs of Arcot. So Pudukkóttai became a tributary to the Arcot Nawab. Many of the tributary states did not remit the tributes regularly and such provinces were invaded by the Nawab's forces. Nothing like this happened in the case of Pudukkóttai and was left undisturbed by the Nawab.

The famous war of succession to the office of the Nawab of the Carnatic between Mohamad Ali and Chanda Sahib, became in due course a war for supremacy between the English and the French in South India
which resulted in the Carnatic wars. The French supported the cause of Chanda Sahib and the English were on the side of Mohamed Ali the war lasted for many years mainly around Trichirappalli. The Thondaimán was firmly on the side of the English at this time while the rulers like the Thanjavur Marathas were wavering. At last the English emerged as the masters of this land. This firm help of the Thondaimán to the English was rewarded with exemption from tribute by the victorious Nawab and later this was continued by the English.

1.11.14.4. Raya Raghunatha Thondaimán

The Thondaimán's act of friendship towards the English was continued by the next ruler Raya Raghunatha Thondaimán (1769-1789 AD). Because of this the Thondaimán had to encounter the strong forces of Hyder Ali.

1.11.14.5. Vijaya Raghunatha Thondaimán

Vijaya Raghunatha Thondaimán (1789-1807 AD.) helped the English and the Nawab. The Nawab Mohamed Ali conferred on the Thondaimán the title 'Raja Bahadur'. The political wind was in favour of the English, the entire Carnatic region was taken over by the English by 1800. During the process of consolidation of the English rule, the Thanjavur Maratha kingdom was taken away, Ramanathapuram was reduced to a Zamindári but Pudukkóttai was on the firm grounds and if was allowed to be a separate principality (not as a part of British India) with honours, and was high in British favour. Pudukkóttai was treated as a State, and the Raja was as a quasi-independent ruler with full powers of administration.
It was during the time of this ruler Vijaya Raghunatha Thondaimán, that the poligar war took place between the English and the rebellious Palayakars of Thirunelveli, the most significant of whom was Veerapandia Kattabomman or Kattabommu Náyak. Kattabomman defied the authority of the English in collecting revenues on the Sircar lands and also defalted the tributes. Hostilities commenced against him, and the Panchalamkurichi fort was attacked, Kattabomman escaped to Śivaganga through the forests in the Thondaimán country.

At the request of the English administration Kattabomman was captured by the soldiers of the Thondaimán and handed over to the English at Madurai. Later Kattabomman was hanged at Kayattar. The defiant valour of Kattabomman came to be better appreciated with the passage of time.

Kattabomman has risen in general estimation as a hero while the image of the Thondaimán, as reflected in the events of the time has suffered a fall because the capture of Kattabomman, has come to be regarded as betrayal and an unpatriotic act. Seen however in the political background that prevailed then, in the context of Thondaimán's fidelity to the English in prosperity and adversity, and the fact that Kattabomman never sought assylum with the Thondaimán the Thondaimán's role may be objectively summed up as the reflex action of an ally and does not amount to betrayal.

1.11.14.6. Raja Vijaya Raghunatha Raya Thondaimán

The next ruler Raja Viajaya Raghunutha Raya Thondaimán (1807 - 1825 A.D.) was crowned when he was a minor and the British government appointed Major John Black Burne, to undertake the management of the province of Pudukkóttai. Since he was the Resident of Thanjavur he brought to Pudukkóttai a good many conventions of Thanjavur
administration. Marathi became the language of administration in Pudukkóttai for about seventy five years. Revenue and judicial administration of the same method and complexity as that of Thanjavur were also introduced in Pudukkóttai.

A palace with citadels and a broad moat was constructed for the Thondaimán, i.e., the old palace in the centre of the town. The town was planned with straight roads bisecting each other, in the four directions of the palace and thus Black Burne laid the foundation for the modern town of Pudukkóttai. This palace, "The old Palace," has disappeared completely, we can see the remnants of the high wall in a few places in the vicinity of the present West Main Street and North Main Street.

1.11.14.7. Raghunatha Thondaimán

Raghunatha Thondaimán (1825-1839 A.D.) was conferred the title 'His Excellency' by the British Government. He planned in 1830 to bring the Cauvery water to Pudukkóttai through a new canal but could not succeed due to paucity of funds. Raghunatha Thondaimán was succeeded by his son Ramachandra Thondaimán (1839-1886 AD.). His long tenure of office was marked by extravagance and gross mismanagement. An administrator, Seshaiyah Sastri arrived on the scene as Dewan in 1878 and carried out many reforms.

Among them was the remodelling of Pudukkóttai town incorporating the principles of town planning which were little followed in the country at that time. The towering administrative office buildings in red brick colour in Pudukkóttai were constructed under the supervision of Seshaiyah Sastri. The Pudukkulam, the big lake in the town was another creation of Seshaiyah Sastri, Ramachandra Thondaimán renovated many temples in the State. He was succeeded by Marthanda Bhairava Thondaimán.
1.11.14.8. Marthanda Bhairava Thondaimán

Marthanda Bhairava Thondaimán (1886-1928) became the ruler of the state at the age of eleven. The administration was looked after by a council with the approval of the British government. He toured in Europe extensively. He married an Australian lady by name Esme Moly Fink in 1915 at Melbourne city in Australia. A son was born to him through this marriage ‘later known as Sydney Marthanda’. But his succession was opposed by the public. The British administration also refused to recognise the marriage. Hence the Raja abdicated the throne left the country, settled in Paris died in 1928 and was cremated in London.

1.11.14.9. Raja Rajagopala Thondaimán

Raja Rajagopala Thondaimán (1928-1948) the last and ninth in the line of Thondaimán rulers, was selected by the British government and was crowned when he was six years old. The administration was looked after by English administrators. Among them Alexandar Totenham was noteworthy. The important architectural presentation of this period is the modern building - The New Palace - which was built in 1930 in IndoSaracenic Dravidian style. This beautiful granite structure now houses the District Collector's Office. Pudukkóttai got some modern amenities during this time. After Indian independence in 1947. The Princely State of Pudukkóttai was amalgamated with the Indian Union on 4.3.1948 and became a division in Tiruchirappalli district. Thus the long history of the Thondaimáns came to an end.

The significane landmarks of the Thondaimán’s modern architectural works are the new place, the public administrative office building. H.H. The
Rajah’s college, the Collectors residence College of education, the buildings in the District Head Quarters Hospital, Ranees Girls School and the taluk administrative offices at Kiranur, Thirumayam and Álangudi.

1.12. Granite Economy In the Pudukkóttai District

Granite and laterite are used for building purpose, in the construction of sluices, kaligulas or surplus weirs, revetments of tank bunds, etc. Granite of so fine a quality as to be suitable for delicate carving is quarried in the State. The laterite quarries yield stones of a very large size. Granite is now quarried under Government licenses at the following places – Thirugókarnam, Puttambur, Tirumayam, Lambalakkudi, Konapet, Malayakkóil, Péraiyúr, Usilamalaipparai, Virálimalai, Vittampatti, Kuduimiyanmalai, Panangudimalai, Ammachatram, Virappatti, Chittambur, and Kiranur.

Laterite quarries are to be found near Arimalam. The stones quarried in the State are much in demand in surrounding districts on accounts of their quality and excellence. The rocks in the State yield for road metal.

1.13. Industries

Pudukkóttai district is not gifted with manorial wealth. There are no mineral deposits worth mentioning in the entire area of the district. However, a narrow belt of good grade feldspar and quartz is reported to be available in Kulattur taluk pink granite deposit is reported to be available in Ponnamaravati area of Tirumayam taluk. The reserves of limestone reported to be available in Adanakkottai area of Álangudi taluk is estimated at about 8230 tonnes and the present level of exploitation is only 200 tonnes. The district is industrially backwards and the three taluks, viz. Álangudi,
Tirumayam and Kulattur had already been declared by the State government as backward area entitling industrial units to be set up there for a central subsidy of 15% on fixed capital investment.

There are six large scale industries in the district as given below: 1. Cauvery Spinning and Weaving Mills Ltd., Cauvery Nagar, Pudukkóttai. 2. Pudukkóttai Textile Mills Ltd., Pudukkóttai. 3. Sri Nadiambal Textile Mills Ltd., Arantángi. 4. Ramachandran Chemicals (P) Ltd., Kiranur. 5. Sundaram Industries Ltd., Pudukkóttai. 6. The State Government Printing Press, Pudukkóttai. Among the six large scale industries mentioned above, three are located in Pudukkóttai itself. There are 392 small scale units.

The main industries in which they are engaged are wood based industries, tinkering, fabrication of metal products, printing and binding, manufacture of agricultural implements, manufacture of cement tiles and other cement products, automobile servicing and repairing and safety matches. A few oil and rice mills are concentrated in Álangudi taluk, Thiruvarangulam a Pudukkóttai blocks.

In addition to the small scale industries, there are a number of village and cottage industries. Prominent among them are pottery, blacksmithy, carpentry, small lime kilns, small brick kilns, basket making, rope making and synthetic gem cutting. Important Industries, 1996 National Oxygen Ltd. No. 1. Trichy Pudukkóttai Road, Mathur Village, Pudukkóttai, Tamil Nadu. Manufacturer and traders of industrial gases such as Oxgen gas, dissolved acetylene gas, medical Oxygen, Nitrogen gas, liquid Oxygen, liquid Nitrogen high purity Nitrogen. Srf Ltd, Formerly known as Shriram Fibers Ltd., Virálimalai, District.
Pudukkóttai, Tamil Nadu, Manufacturer, Nylon industrial yarn tyre cordfabrics leather auxiliaries, fluro carbon refrigerant gases and hydrofluoric acid, besides nylon moulding powder in technical collaboration with chemtex fibres Inc. USA. Srf Nippondenso Ltd. is a joint venture with Nippon Denso Co. Ltd. of Japan for manufacture of automotive electricals. Srf Transnational Holdings Ltd. is a subsidiary company.

1.14. Education

In the urban areas Pudukkóttai, there are 0.59% Higher Secondary Schools, 0.85% Secondary Schools, 1.24% Middle Schools and 2.02% Primary Schools per every 10000 population. Kiranur, Alagapuri and Álangudi have the highest proportion of Higher Secondary Schools 1.51%, Secondary Schools 3.27% and middle Schools 3.47% respectively per 10000 urban populations. But the case of primary schools the highest proportion of 9.93% schools per 10000 population is found in Kadiapatti.


1.15. Pudukkóttai Museum

The establishment of a State Museum was first mooted in 1896. It was proposed to locate it in the Ananda Bagh. Nothing was done till 1909, when it was decided that the Museum should be located in the small “Palace” in the Main Street of Tirugókarnam. The Museum was opened in 1910. In that year there were nearly 38,000 visitors to it. The economic section was improved in 1912-13 by the addition of 80 plants collected in
the State and identified by Dr. C.A. Barber, Government Botanist Coimbatore In 1914 – 15; it was further enriched by a number of useful exhibits sent by Dr.Henderson, Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras.

In 1919-20 the Art and Industries Section was opened with specimens of the products of cottage industries carried on by women in the State, originally – collected for the South Indian Exhibition of Women’s work in Madras.

The building is unfortunately by no means suitable for its purpose though considerably improved between 1934 and 1937. A new building specially designed for its purpose is a desideratum that the Darbar are prevented by the present condition of their finances from providing. In the Archaeological Section was considerably improved. Pudukkóttai District in the yearly the number of visitors exceeded a one lakh.

1.15.1. Eight different Section of the Museum

1.15.1.1. Art and Industries:- Specimens of the products of almost all the industries carried on in the state are exhibited side by side with specimens from outside the state for comparison and study. These include specimens of very attractive baskets of various shapes and sizes made by Nagarathar women from strips of the leaf of the palmyra palm (Borassus flabellifer) and wood and ivory carvings, bell metal ware, and bronze figures of local origin.

1.15.1.2. Economic section:- This contains a large collection of the cereals grown in the State including 69 varieties of paddy. Similar but
superior varieties grown elsewhere are also exhibited. There is a good collection of medicinal herbs found in the state. There are also indigenous vegetable fibres, and fibres and basts made in the Museum itself from Agave americana, Abutilon indicum and Calotropis gigantea. A collection of tan stuffs (in which the state is particularly rich) is exhibited with labels explaining how each is used for tanning and with what results. There are also models of agricultural implements and water lifts.

1.15.1.3. Natural History (including Entomology):- The Mammalian gallery has not many specimens. Two of the more interesting are an Indian Pangolin (Manis pentadactyla) a Porcupina (Hystrix leucura) and an articulated skeleton of a der.

The gallery of birds contains a representative collection of the avifauna of the state. The more important and interesting specimens are those of the species of Perchers, Fowls and Ducks.

The Museum had a good collection of live snakes among which were a good sized python and some varieties of the colubride. Under the orders of the Darbar, these collections were sold or presented to other Museums in 1923, and only stuffed specimens and skeletons of reptiles are now exhibited.

The fresh water fish found in the State are of genera belonging to the siluroids and the Cyprinoids. Specimens of these are exhibited in bottles. There are also a few specimens of big sea fish mounted in cases. The groups Arachnida, Myriopoda and Crustacea are also represented.

The entomological specimens belong mostly to the families of Diptera, Lepidopetera and Coleoptera.
1.15.1.4. Ethnology:- This section is steadily growing in popularity. It includes a good collection of musical instruments, of arms and armour formerly used by the Sardars and Servaikars of the State, and of Votive offerings of different castes, and jewels, especially talis, used by women of different castes and tribes.

1.15.1.5. Numismatics:- In this section are collections of Roman coins discovered in the state and of those of the Vijayanagar, Andhra and other South Indian dynasites. Moghul and Bahmini coins and those of the French, Dutch, and English East India Companies are also represented.

Many of the coins were presented to the Museum by the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society the Madras Government Museum and other institutions.

1.15.1.6. Archealogy:- This is a very popular section and has expanded considerably within the last few years. Prehistoric burial sites are found in many parts of the State. The dead were buried in large pyriform urns, or in subterranean cells formed of stone-slabs. A number of urn-burials were opened about 1917, and more than 30 megalithic tombs in 1935. 152 specimens of old pottery and 72 iron weapons of different sorts and sizes discovered in the 1917 and 1935 excavations are preserved in the Museum. 37 fragments of wood-work carved with floral designs and human and animal figures which once formed part of the Kalyana mantapam in the old place are exhibited in the Museum. Among the bronzes mention may be made of the images of Appar, Mánikkavácagar, Biksátanamúrti, Álingana Candrašékhararamurti ‘Śiva embracing Parvati’, Somaskanda and Sukhasanamurti. A bronze relievo of the 24 Jain Tirthankaras arranged within a tiruvacika frame with Risabhadeva in the centre is of special
interest. There are fine images of the Tirthankaras Adinatha and Parsvanatha.

The stone gallery contains a mymber of images of Jain Tirthankaras found in different parts of the State. Among those of Hindu deities, mention may be made of figures of Jyestadevi, Biksatanamurti, Ardhanarisvara, Surya, Agoravirabhadra and the Saptamatrikas.

There is a collection of specimens of Buddhist sculptures in marble from Amaravati, kindly presented by the Madras Museum.

1.15.1.7. Paintings:- There is a small collection of paintings including ministures specimens of the Tanjore school of painting and oil paintings by the Curator which are of ethnological interest as illustrating local types.

1.15.1.8. Library:- The library contains 350volumes, mainly works of reference.