

Chapter II

HISTORY OF KANCHIPURAM

Tamil Country in the ancient period was divided into 5 regions according to the nature of its soil. Each region was named Tinai, and the five regions were called (i) Kurinji, the hilly country, (ii) Palai, the dry waterless region, (iii) Mullai, the wooded lands between the highlands and the lowlands, (iv) Marudam, the lower courses of rivers and (v) Neydal, the littoral tract that which skirts the sea.¹ According to artefacts from archaeological finds, the earliest inhabitants of South India or the earliest stage of human culture, the Palaeolithic age are found in abundance in the Kurinji regions, this region covers the whole of Cuddapah, Nellore, North Arcot and Chengalput districts.² In this Chengalput district of Kurinji region lies Kanchipuram the oldest city of South India.

Kanchipuram is surrounded on the four sides by Sriperumbudur Taluk in the North, Chengalput Taluk in the East, Madurantakam Taluk in the South and North Arcot district in the West. The Main river that passes through this city is Palar river which has its origin in Karnataka. It is joined by one of its tributaries, Vegavati river at a place called Tirumukkūdal a few miles away from Kanchi. Another river that joins Palar is the Cheyyar river at a place

called Palayasivaram. In between Vegavati and Palar rivers lies Siva Kanchi and Vishnu Kanchi.³ The special feature of this city is that there is no hill or mountain nearby on its four sides. The nearest one is the Sivaram hills, sixteen kilometers away in the East.

Sources from early tamil literature and inscriptions give various names for this city. The earliest seems to be KACHI. The other names referred to are Kamakottam, Kamapeetham, Pralaya Sindhu, Shivapuram, Brahmapuram, Indupuram, Tundirapuram, Dandakapuram, Mummurteeswaram, Thapomayam, Sakalasiddhi, Kannikappu, Satyavratashetram and Bhulokakailasam⁴.

The term Kānci has two different meanings in Tamil and in Sanskrit. In Tamil the word is split into two 'ka' and 'añci'. *Ka* means Brahma and *añci* means worship, showing that Kānci stands for the place where Lord Shiva was worshipped by Lord Brahma. In Sanskrit the term Kānci means girdle and explanation is given that the city is like a girdle to the earth.⁵

As mentioned earlier Kanchipuram is the only Mokshapuri in South India.

Ayodhyā, Mathurā Māyā Kāsā Kāñcī Avantikā

Durīpvārāvati Caiva Saptaitā Mokṣadāyikāh !⁶

Death in anyone of these Mokshapuris gives salvation to an individual. Of these seven Mokshapuris three of them Maya, Kasi and Avanti are sacred to Shiva and the other three Ayodhya, Mathura and Dwaraka are sacred to Lord Vishnu, but Kanchi is the only city that is not only sacred to both Shiva

and Vishnu but also to Goddess Kamakshi and Lord Subrahmanya. The other significance is that it is one of the eighteen Sakthi Peetams in India.⁷

1.0 Political History

Kanchipuram gained importance in the field of politics, education and pilgrimage on account of its physical and geographical position.

The Kadambas of West coast, the Western Gaṅgas of Talakkadu and the later Gaṅgas of Kuvalālapura (Kōlār) have some connections with this city. In the North-West the Chalukyas of Badami, the Rāshtrakūṭas of Malkhēd, the Kākatīyas of Warrangal and the Telugu Chōḍas in the North, the Vijayanagar rulers of Hampi, the Cherās, the Chōḷas and the Pāṇḍyas of the South came into contact with this city in different periods of South Indian History.⁸

Though the city of Kanchipuram was known from very earliest times, it rose to eminence for the first time only during the Pallava rule in the 7th century A.D.

Tracing the history of Kanchipuram prior to the Pallavas we find that the Satavahanas the successors of Mauryas in the deccan might have had connections with the city. Archaeological excavations in Kanchi have led to finding of copper coins belonging to the Satavahanas, on one side of the coin is inscribed the legend Rudra Satakarni of second century A.D.⁹ The Nagas were feudatories of the Satavahanas. It is known that the Satavahanas entrusted their kingdoms to their feudatories. Thus if the Satavahanas did not bring the region around Kanchi under their direct control it is probable that

they had entrusted it to the Naga feudatories or military governors. These Naga feudatories later became independent rulers.¹⁰

The successors of the Satavahanas were the Ikshvakus (200-260 A.D.) with their capital as Vijaypuri (modern Nagarjunakoṇḍa). They patronized Mahāyāna Buddhism at Kanchi.¹¹

1.1 Kanchi and the Sangam Age

Mention has been made about the city of Kanchi in Sangam works like Periyapuranam, Manimekalai, Perumbāṇāṟṟupadai, Pattinapalai and Silappadikaram.

The Periyapuranam, Manimekalai and Tirugnanasambandar's hymns mention of Chōla king Karikāla to have renovated and embellished with gold the city of Kanchi.

*கல்லாலின் வேளார் கரிகாலனை நன்னுவர்
எழில்கோல் கச்சி மாநகர்¹²*

The above fact finds place in the Tiruvālaṅgāḍu plates¹³ of Parakēsari Rājēndra Chōla I in the late 11th century A.D. As mentioned in the Silappadikaram Karikāla, is said to have obtained a weapon called Chaṇḍu from the deity Śāttan of Kanchi and with this weapon achieved victory over the Northern Kings easily.

*கச்சி வளைகச்சி காமகோட்டன் காவல்மெச்சி
இனிதிருக்கு மெய்ச்சாத்தான்
கச்செண்டு கம்பக்களிற்றுக் கரிகார் பெருவளத்தான்
செம்போர்கிரிதிரித்த சண்டு.¹⁴*

The Perumbāṇārṟupadai another sangam work gives the name of another king Tiraiyan in association with Kanchi. He has other names Kacchiyōṇ to show that his capital was Kachchi (Kanchi) and Tondaiyarmarugan meaning a nephew or a son-in-law.

கச்சியோனே கைவண்டென்ற நுச்சிசென்றோர்க்கீ கீமாமாகிய
கொண்டியுற்றொண்டையர் மருக¹⁵

Based on the above literary evidences, it is not clear who ruled Kanchi first whether it was Karikāla or Tiraiyan. In this regard Sri C.R. Srinivasan has put forth the following questions (i) the controversial question of the lineage of Chōla and Iṅantiraiyan (ii) the descendency of Iṅantiraiyan from Karikāla-Chōla and (iii) the synchronism of the two kings and finally the theory that, after Karikāla's conquest of Kanchi, Tiraiyan was appointed as his viceroy at Kanchi.¹⁶

The Andhra country as we see has been under the sway of three dynasties during the first, second and third century A.D. The Satavahanas, followed by the Ikshvakus who ruled for nearly sixty years and the Sālaṅkāyanas. The above dynasties extended their empire down further and had connections with Tamilnadu. According to some scholars the Pallavas were subordinates or feudatories of the Satavahanas and after the latter's downfall they became independent and established their dominance in South India.

1.2 Origin of the Pallavas

There are different views put forth by various historians regarding the origin of Pallavas.

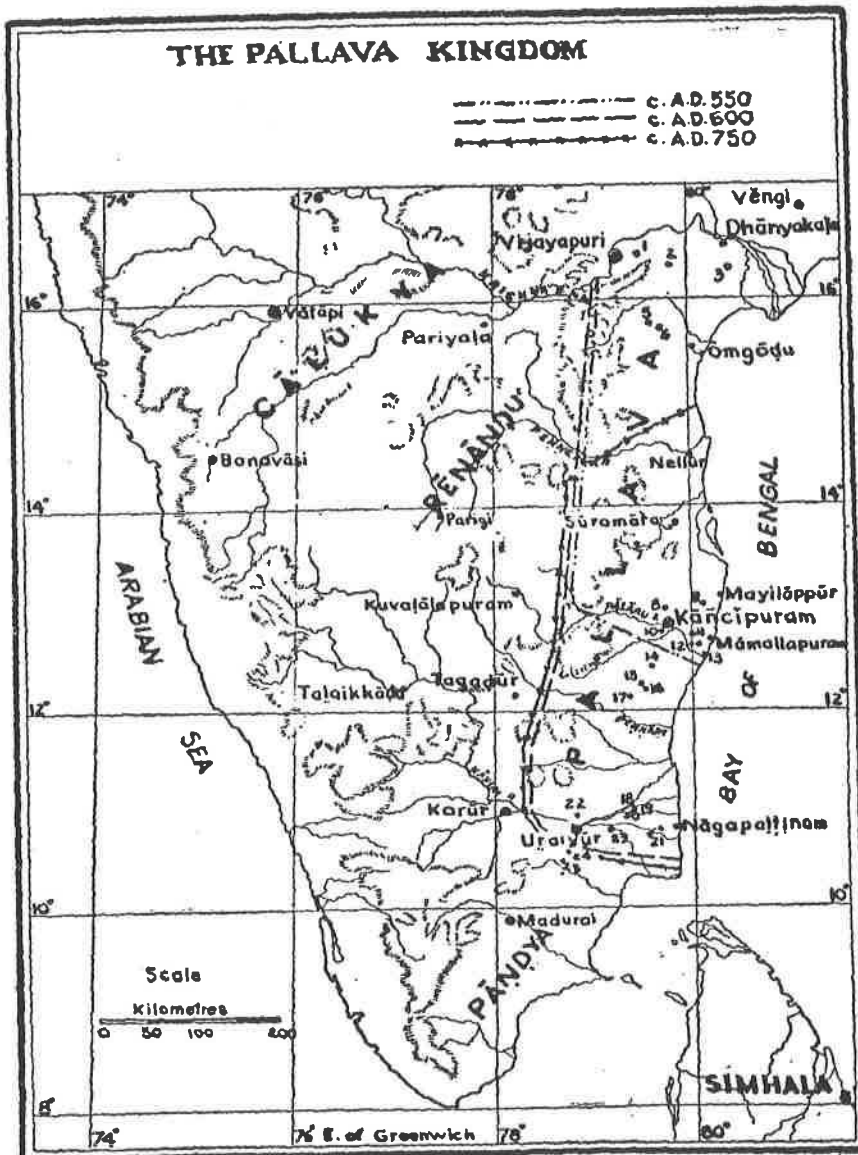


According to P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar, the Saka-Pallavas were adventurers who brought the Andhra power under their control and overthrew them completely during the first, second and third centuries A.D. They assumed Prakrit as their court language and Sanskrit as their cultural language. They were acknowledged as Kshatriyas of Bharatvaja Gotra and called them Pallavas. The very first ruler of Kanchipuram was probably Bappa. His immediate successor was Siva-Skanda Varman who is said to have ruled his dominion with Kanchi as his headquarters.¹⁷

The Pallavas had connections with Andhra dynasty. In the year 150 A.D. we can see that the Andhrabritya king Rudradāman had a minister by name Suviśāka who was Pallava. He was entrusted with the rule of the provinces of Anarta and Saurāshtra.¹⁸ The Satavahanas then realized that due to the administrative ability of the Pallavas, they were becoming a source of danger for them (the Satavahanas) and expelled them out of their kingdom. The Pallavas then came down and settled near Kanchipuram. They soon established their supremacy here and founded a dynasty of their own. The grazing bull, the noble lion and the axe, all figure in the insignia of their royalty.¹⁹

According to T.V. Mahalingam the Pallavas may be connected with Sālaṅkāyanas because of affinities in their names, pedigrees, the administrative system, languages used in epigraphs, the royal emblem, the political geography and above all their gotra affiliation. In the words of T.V. Mahalingam “Thus the Pallavas who seem to have had some relationship with Sālaṅkāyanas, must have been the feudatories under the Satavahanas in

Fig. (i) South India during the reign of Pallavas



INDEX TO NUMBERS

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|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Mañcikalū | 9. Mañimañgalam | 17. Panamalai |
| 2. Cezarla | 10. Mañandūr | 18. Tiruppuṅbiam |
| 3. Guṅṭūr | 11. Vallam | 19. Kuṇḍamūkkū |
| 4. Śrīparvata | 12. Tīrukkaḷukkuṅgam | 20. Nandipuram (Paḷaiyāṅṅu) |
| 5. Cēndalūr | 13. Vayalūr | 21. Tiruvārūr |
| 6. Dasanapura | 14. Tellāṅṅu | 22. Peruvaḷanallūr |
| 7. Tīrumanācādam | 15. Dalavānūr | 23. Tañjāvūr |
| | | 24. Cīttannāvāsal |

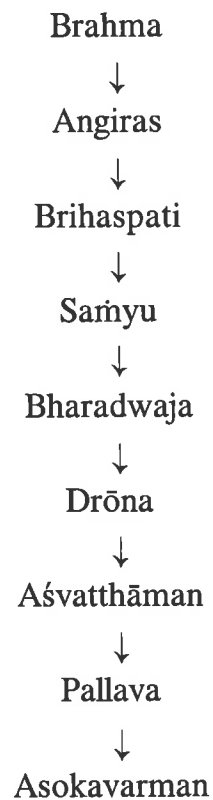
Source : Mahalingam T.V. Kanchipuram in Early South Indian History, Madras 1968

the Nellore District until they moved South to Kanchi to start a new independent line after a rewarding matrimonial alliance with the Nagas.”²⁰

1.3 Genealogy of Pallavas

The Pallavas ruled Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam with Kanchi as their Capital and Māmallapuram as their Chief port for over six centuries between third century A.D. to Ninth Century A.D.²¹

Tracing the genealogy of Pallavas, the stone inscriptions and copper plate grants help a lot in determining the pedigree of the Pallavas. The Udayendiram²² and Kasakudi²³ plates of Nandivarman Pallavamalla gives us the same mythical names of ancestors of Pallavas.

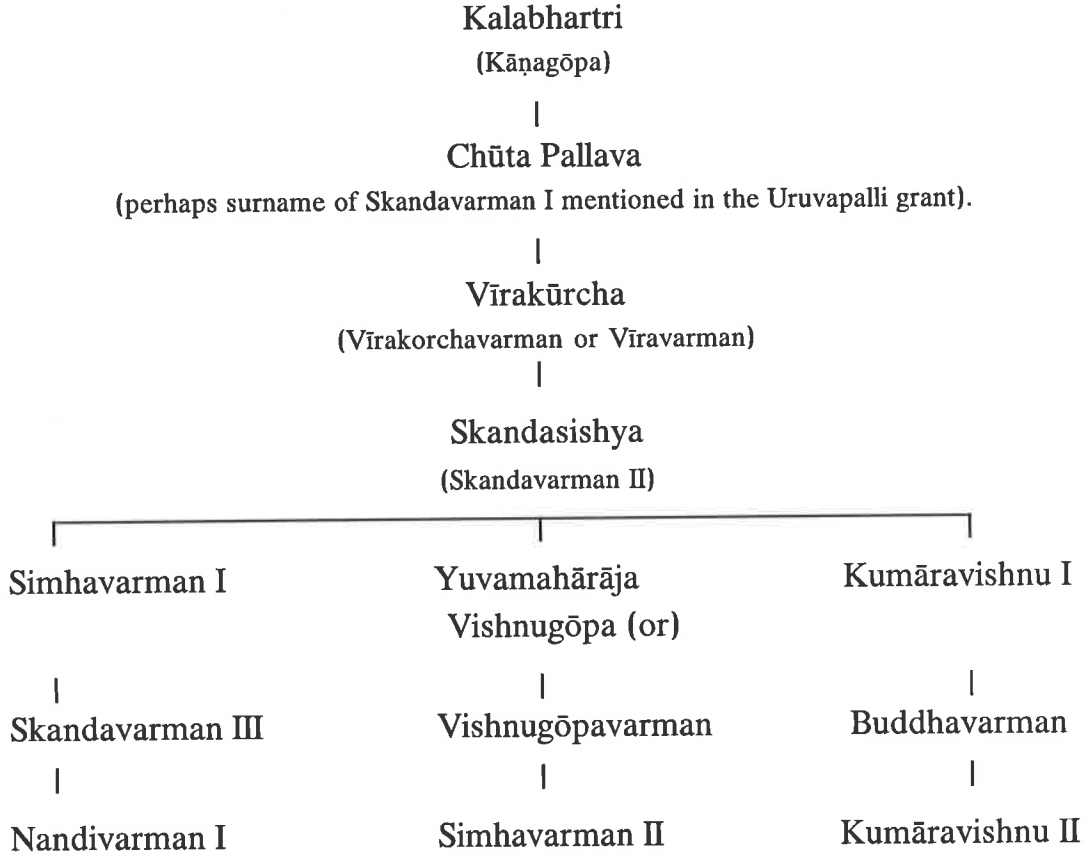


The Kasakudi plates further states that the last king mentioned (Asokavarman) cannot be considered a historical person but appears to be a modification of Mauryan king Asoka. Following this there is a passage in prose which gives us the successors of Asokavarman viz., (S)Kandavarman, Kal(i)ndavarman, Kanagopa, Vishnugopa, Vīraku(r)cha, Vīrasimha, Simhavarman, Vishnusimha and others. Some of the names appear in the inscriptions of ancient Pallavas whose grants are from Palakkada, Dāsanapura and Kanchipuram.²⁴

Further the Kasakudi and Udayendiram plates of Nandivarman Pallavamalla gives the names of seven generation of kings from Simhavishnu to the immediate predecessor of Nandivarman.

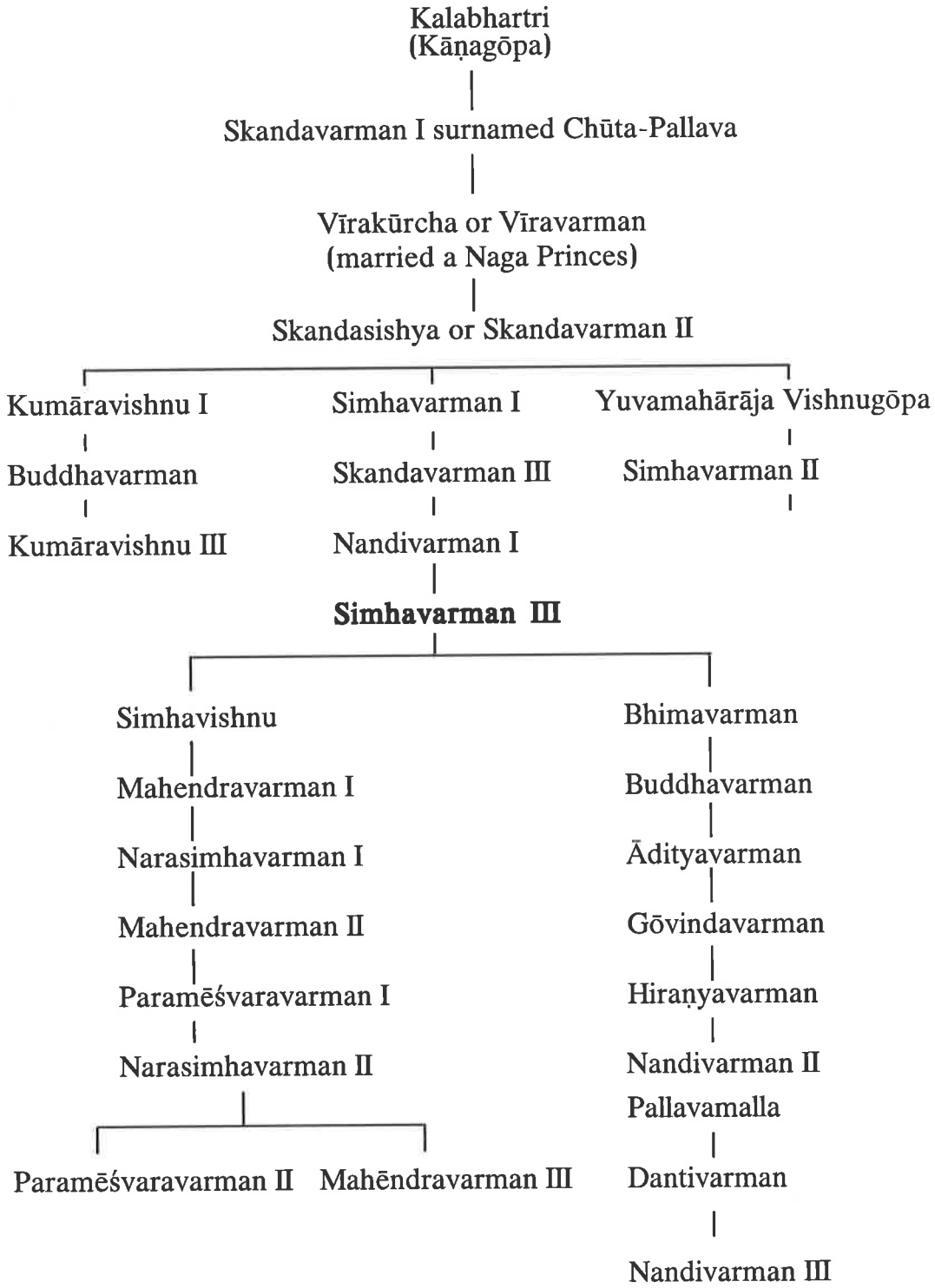


The Velurpalayam plates²⁵ and the Sanskrit charters of Pikira, Mangalur, Uruvapalli and Chendabu grant²⁶ have given a pedigree of the Pallava Kings which is as follows:



The rest of the genealogy of the Pallava kings agree with that of the Kasakudi, Udayendiram plates of Nandivarman Pallavamalla and Kurram plates²⁷ of Paramēśvaravarman I.

Taking into account the various charters and inscription issued by the Pallava kings the whole genealogy of Pallavas²⁸ might be arranged as follows :-



1.4 Brief Account of Pallava Kings

Even though the Pallavas came to settle down in Kanchi during 3rd century A.D., only the later kings of the dynasty were able to carve a niche for themselves in the history of the city. Hence from various accounts of historians and the number of inscriptions and grants we can clearly say that the period of rule of Pallava kings after Simhavishnu was a golden era. There were changes and improvements in Religion, Art & Architecture and Education. According to Taḷangunda²⁹ inscription of Kadamba Kakusthavarman, Kanchi is called “Pallavendrapuri”, the city of the Lord of the Pallavas.

Simhavishnu

He is the successor of Simhavarman III. The Kasakudi plates states that Simhavishnu was also known as Avanisimha and destroyed the armies of Malaya Kalabra, Malava, Chōḷa, Pāṇḍya the Siṃhala and the Kerala.³⁰

During the rule of Simhavishnu the Chalukyas under Kirtivarman might have come into contact with the Pallavas. Both the kings were ambitious rulers and a clash between them is possible and Kirtivarman lost his life in the battle.³¹ But this view is refuted by C.R. Srinivasan³² Simhavishnu is credited with the conquest of Chōḷamandalam and defeated the kings of Ceylon.³³ According to the Udayendiram plates Simhavishnu was worshipper of Vishnu.³⁴

Mahendravarman I

He was also known as Lalitānkura, Śatrumalla and Guṇabhara.³⁵ He was an art loving person and possessed great talent. This is known by the various

titles he is attributed with like Chitrakarapulli (tiger among painters), Mattavilasa (addicted to enjoyment) and Vichitrachitra (myriad-minded)³⁶. The important event during his reign was the conflict with Western Chalukya King Pulakēśin II and the defeat he (Mahendravarma I) inflicted upon him at Pullalur.³⁷ Pullalur is situated in Kanchipuram Taluk. The battle between the two lasted for 150 years probably began during the reign of Mahendravarman I.³⁸

Narasimhavarman I (Māmalla)

This king is credited with defeating the Chalukyan king Pulakēśin II in three successive battles at Pariyala, Maṇimangala and Śūramāra.³⁹ Another greatest achievement during the reign of this king is destruction of Vatapi (modern Badami in Bijapur district) which was founded by Pulakēśin I. After defeating the enemies in Vatapi another attack was launched near the town to cripple the growing power of the Chalukyas. This attack was commanded by Sirutonda alias Paranjoti who captured Vatapi and got the title Vatapikoṇḍa for his master.⁴⁰ During the reign of Narasimhavarman I we can see that the hostility of Chalukyas came to an end with the conquest of Vatapi. The Kasakudi plates states that Narasimhavarman I also conquered Ceylon during his reign. His reign lasted for about 50 years.⁴¹

Mahendravarman II

He was the successor of Narasimhavarman I. His reign must have been a short and an uneventful one as nothing much has been said about him in any of the inscriptions or grants. The only information about him is that he continued the hostility with Vikramadityā I (Chalukyan ruler) and his nephew Siladitya.⁴²

Paramēśvaravarman I

He was the son and successor of Mahendravarman II. With the accession of Paramēśvaravarman to the throne we find that the Pallava Chalukya conflict reached its Zenith. His contemporary was Vikramadityā-I.⁴³ According to the Gadval plates⁴⁴ he defeated Paramēśvaravarman (Iśvarapōtarāja) conquered Kanchi and destroyed the Māmalla family.

But on contrary to this the Kurram plates and Velurpalayam plates⁴⁵ assert that Paramēśvaravarman defeated and expelled the Chalukyan army under Vikramadityā I just as the sun expels the mist. It is difficult to ascertain whether the battles mentioned in the Gadval and the Kurram and Velurpalayam plates are one and the same or whether they both are two different encounters with the Chalukyan King.

Narasimhavarman II

He is otherwise known as Atyantakāma, Atiranachanda, Kālakāla Ranajaya, Srībhara, and Rājasimha.⁴⁶ The reign of Narasimhavarman II was an uneventful one. There were not many wars fought. He was more inclined towards art and architecture and is said to have built many famous temples around Kanchipuram and Mahabalipuram of which will be dealt with later in the chapter. He was succeeded by his son Mahendravarman III his eldest son who in turn was succeeded by Paramēśvaravarman II. Both of them ruled for a very short period. The last king in the Simhavishnu line, Paramēśvaravarman II was defeated by Yuvamahārāja Vikramadityā in the course of his invasion of Kanchi in the year 731 A.D.⁴⁷.

Nandivarman II Pallavamalla

After the reign of Paramēśvaravarman II we see a dynastic revolution in the history of the Pallavas of Kanchi. The lineage of Simhavishnu ended with Paramēśvaravarman and the next King to rule Kanchi was Nandivarman II Pallavamalla the son of Hiraṇyavarman who was a descendent of Bhimavarman the younger brother of Simhavishnu by several generations as we see from the genealogy tree.

The rule of Nandivarman II extended for a period of 65 years.⁴⁸ His period was full of warfare and it was during his reign that the Pallava kingdom expanded to its maximum. The important developments during his reign was the disappearance of the Western Chalukyas, the rise of the Rāshtrakūṭas and continuous warfare with the Pāṇḍyas for more than two decades.⁴⁹

The Chalukyan King Vikramadityā II attacked Nandivarman II and seized the city of Kanchi. Nandivarman II was forced to flee the capital. But Kanchi was not destroyed, instead Vikramadityā II made liberal endowments to the Kailasanatha temple and to the people of the city.⁵⁰ Kīrtivarman II, the son of Vikramadityā II took an expedition against the Pallava King and defeated and drove the latter into exile. The inscriptions in the Kailasanatha temple refer to the conquests of both the Chalukyan kings.⁵¹ The date of invasion of Kanchi varies according to various historians. Nandivarman II took refuge in the court of Dantidurga⁵² and later recovered the city of Kanchi from Vikramadityā II.

Nandivarman II came back to rule the city of Kanchi with more power and rigour. His general Udayachandra defeated several kings in the battles at

Nimbavana, Chūtavana, Sankaragrāma, Nellore, Nelvēli, Sūrāvaḷundūr and many other places.⁵³

Udayachandra was a very loyal and able general of Nandivarman, his son Avanichandra also served the Pallava Kingdom along with his father during the reign of Nandivarman atleast for fifty years probably from the 33rd year of Nandivarman's rule till the 17th year of rule of his successor Dantivarman.⁵⁴ It was Udayachandra who rescued and restored the Pallava King when he was in exile.

Indrāja Dantidurga (725-58 A.D.) was a Rāshtrakūṭa contemporary of Nandivarman II. Initially he invaded Kanchi but according to some scholars, both the King's later on became friends and entered into matrimonial alliance.⁵⁵

The reign of Nandivarman also witnessed remarkable improvements in the field of education, art and architecture.

Dantivarman

The rule of Dantivarman saw the rise of the Rāshtrakūṭas, the Chōḷas and Pāṇḍyas in South India. Dantivarman was the son of Nandivarman II and Rāshtrakūṭa Princess Rēva. He ruled the city for fifty one years and married the Kadamba princess Aggalanimadi.⁵⁶ Despite the alliance with Rāshtrakūṭa family, the city of Kanchi was invaded during Dantivarman's reign by Govinda III and the former was defeated in the battle.⁵⁷

So far we can see that the Pallava empire was dominated by powerful monarchs and as a result of which the kingdom extended far and wide in the

Tonḍaimaṇḍalam region. After the reign of Dantivarman from historical sources we have names of four other kings of Pallava dynasty namely Nandivarman III, Nripatuṅgavarman, Aparajitavarman and Kampavarman. Throughout the reign of Pallavas we could see that they were in constant warfare with their arch-rivals the Chalukyas. The later kings of the dynasty saw the rise of the Chōḷas, the Pāṇḍyas and Rāshtrakūṭas. The city of Kanchi which was once the stronghold of the Pallavas slipped out of their control and was conquered by the rising powers. This could be because of the weakness of the later monarchs of the dynasty.

The legacy of the Pallava rule could be seen in the art and architectural splendour of the city. Their affinity towards their religion prompted them to build beautiful temples around the city. Thus we see the rise and decline of the Pallavas of Kanchi.

1.5 Kanchi and the Chōḷas

The City of Kanchi served as a secondary capital of the Chōḷa empire and a seat of royal power.

Vijayālaya, Aditya I (871-907 A.D.) and Parāntaka I (907-955 A.D.)

During the last quarter of 8th Century and beginning of 9th Century A.D. there was restlessness in South India as the dominant powers were engaged in a struggle to assert one's supremacy over the other. During this period the Pallava dominion was declining, they had waged extensive wars with the Chalukyas that by the end of the 8th Century A.D. they were totally exhausted.

An inscription of Parākésari Vijayālaya states the first Chōḷa occupation of Kanchi.⁵⁸ During the reign of Vijayālaya the Rāshtrakūṭa powers tried to enter the city and establish their dominion. The Rāshtrakūṭa king tried to make incursions into both Thanjavur and Kanchi the capitals of Chōḷas.⁵⁹

Aditya I the successor of Vijayālaya is said to have defeated the Pallava king Aparajitavarman and taken possession of the whole Pallava dominion, according to the Tiruvālaṅgādu plates⁶⁰ of Rājarāja I.

The next ruler in the Chōḷa dynasty was Parāntaka I. He had a peaceful reign, but during the closing years of his rule the Rāshtrakūṭa king Krishna III conquered Kanchi and took full possession of it and claimed the title 'Kachchiyum Tañjaiyum Koṇḍa.'⁶¹

Krishna III held the city of Kanchi and the surrounding areas pertaining to it for more than a decade. The Chōḷas could not regain much of the lost city after Parāntaka's I reign. The supremacy of the Rāshtrakūṭas was felt very much in the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam region and the Chōḷas could consolidate their position to an extent only during the reign of Uttamachōḷa (970-85 A.D.).⁶²

Rājarāja I (985-1012 A.D.)

The city of Kanchi came back to the Chōḷas during Rājarāja's rule. He extended the Chōḷa territory far and wide towards North and it is very probable that due to the geographical position of the city, Rājarāja might have made Kanchi as his military base.⁶³ It is also possible that he stayed in the city for a long time. An inscription in the Kamakshi temple at Kanchi records a gift of land for endowment in the king's name in his 14th year of reign.⁶⁴

Rajēndra I (1012-44 A.D.)

Rajēndra I was the successor of Rājarāja I. Following his predecessor he stationed a huge army at Kanchi for military reasons. He stayed in Kanchi and sent military orders for the conquest of Northern territories. During the rule of Rajēndra I, we find the practice of appointment of viceroys or provincial governors for the first time. The first viceroy was Jātavarman Sundara Chōḷa Pāṇḍya son of Rajēndra I.⁶⁵ The next king in the line of Chōḷas was Rājādhirāja I (1018-1054 A.D.) He is said to have administered over Kanchi records of which are found in temples at Kanchi.

Rajēndra II (1052-64 A.D.)

Rajēndra II did not stay in Kanchi for a long time. During his reign, the Chalukyas and Chōḷas entered into a matrimonial alliance to put an end to the Chalukyan advance and reduce enmity. The Chalukyan king Vikrama married the Chōḷa princess at the banks of Tuṅgabhadrā.⁶⁶ Rajēndra II had two sons, Vīrarājēndra and Rajāmahēndra. After the death of Vīrarājēndra, there was a fight between Rajēndra (later Kulōttuṅga I) and Adhirājēndra to claim the throne. Vikramadityā VI intervened in the fight and Adhirājēndra was installed on the throne at Gangaikoṇḍachōḷapuram.⁶⁷ But unhappy with the rule of Adhirājēndra, there arose a second rebellion and Kulōttuṅga I ascended the throne of the Chōḷa empire.

Kulōttuṅga I (1070-1122 A.D)

Under the reign of Kulōttuṅga Kanchi became an important place for all political activity. The temples were enriched with grants and the people were gifted for the help he received from them during the rebellion.

An important event that took place during the reign of Kulōttuṅga I was the two Kalinga wars. These two wars were fought in the years 1096 and 1111 A.D. respectively.⁶⁸ The war was led by one of the most important and loyal Generals of the Chōḷas, Karunākara Toṇḍaiman against the Kalingas for having failed to pay the arrears of tribute to the king.⁶⁹ The Kalingas were defeated in the war and were forced to surrender. Vikramachōḷa Parakēsari (1118-35 A.D.), Kulōttuṅga Rajakesari (1133-50 A.D.) and Rājarāja Parakēsari (1146-63 A.D.) were the successive kings after Kulōttuṅga I in the Chōḷa dynasty.

Rājādhirāja II (1163-78 A.D.) and Kulōttuṅga III Parakēsari (1178-1218 A.D.)

During the reign of Rājādhirāja II, some parts of North and South Arcots and Chengalput districts were administered by Saṃbuvarāyas. (1123 A.D. to 1363 A.D.). This marked an important turning point in the history of Chōḷas. The Saṃbuvarāyas took advantage of the later weak monarchs of the Chōḷa lineage annexed Kanchi and made it their second capital. Saṃbuvarāyas were originally minor feudatories of the Chōḷas.⁷⁰ With regard to Kanchi, the records of Kulōttuṅga III speak of the Saṃbuvarāyas Śēngēṇi Ammaiappan alias Kaṇṇuḍaiyapperumāl alias Vikrama Chōḷa Saṃbuvarāya and Śōḷappillai alias Aḷagiyasōḷa Saṃbuvarāya as the subordinates of Chōḷas.⁷¹ These Saṃbuvarāya Chiefs took advantage of the declining power in the later years of Chōḷa rule and asserted their independence in the region.⁷²

1.6 The Telugu Chōḷas

Kanchi was firmly in the hands of the Chōḷas till 1191 A.D. The Telugu Chōḷas tried to make incursion in the city of Kanchi during the reign of

Kulōttuᅅga III. The Chōda incursion lasted for only few months. This is proved by the records of Kulōttuᅅga III which states that Kulōttuᅅga received tributes from all the kings in Kanchi after his victory over the Northern kings.⁷³

Rājarāja III Parakēsari (1216-46 A.D.)

This period marked an era of turmoil in the history of Kanchi. There were conflicts between major powers and their feudatories to take control over the region. The major powers in this struggle for supremacy were the Chōlas, the Hoysalas and the Pāᅇᅇyas and the feudatories were the Kādavarāyas, the Vāᅇakōvaraiyars and the Kākatīyas. The result of this struggle was loss of Kanchi by the Chōlas.⁷⁴ Rājarāja III faced opposition from all these powers. He was once imprisoned by Pallava Kōpperuᅅjᅅga near Śēdamangalam. Vīra-Narasimha the father-in-law of Rājarāja III intervened and reinstated him on the Chōla throne.⁷⁵

The successor of Rājarāja III was Rajēndra III (1246-79 A.D.). He was the last known king of the Chōla dynasty. During his reign the Chōla dynasty was annexed to the Pāᅇᅇyan Kingdom and thus the former became a feudatory to the Pāᅇᅇyan King Jaᅇavarman Sundara Pāᅇᅇya in 1264 A.D.

Thus with the onslaught of the Pāᅇᅇyas, the Chōlas once and for all lost its stronghold in Kanchi. With this we come to the end of a glorious epoch in the history of South India.

1.7 The Pāᅇᅇyas in Kanchi

The Pāᅇᅇyan Kingdom established their hold in South India and came to be connected with Kanchi after the fall of the Chōlas

The first monarch of this dynasty was Māṛavarmaṅ Sundara Pāṇḍya (1216 A.D.). The Ulagaḷandaperumāl temple inscription speaks of his connection with Kanchi. The successor to the throne was Jaṭavarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I (1251 A.D.).⁷⁶ His main adversaries in the region were the Telugu Chōda and the Kākatīyas. Vijayagaṇḍagōpāla held sway over North Arcot and Chengalput districts. But later on Jaṭavarman Sundara Pāṇḍya brought complete South India under his control between 1251 and 1257 A.D. The Pāṇḍya king did not stop with this, he advanced further to Nellore destroyed the forces of Kākatīyas, the Sēūṇas and the Bāṇas in 1263 A.D.⁷⁷ During the reign of this Pāṇḍya King Kanchi became the military base for his expedition.

Jaṭavarman Sundara Pāṇḍya has earned the titles, Kāñchīpuranara dhiśvara and Kāñchīpuramkoṇḍāṇ.⁷⁸

Jaṭavarman Vīrapāṇḍya (1253 A.D.), Māṛavarmaṅ Kulasēkhara I (1268-1310 A.D.) and Māṛavarmaṅ Parākrama Pāṇḍya (1335-52 A.D.) succeeded the Pāṇḍya throne one after the other. After this period there was lot of confusion in South India as muslim incursion was felt. The Pāṇḍyas had control of Kanchi atleast till 1341-42 A.D., after which their power waned away. Slowly Muslim rulers made inroads into all parts of the Peninsula. But fortunately not much was felt in South as Vijayanagar empire set its supremacy in the Dekhan in 1336 A.D.

1.8 Kanchi and Vijayanagar Empire

The first known governors are Gōpaṇṇa and Sōmappa. Before the actual rule of Vijayanagar Kings, the Sambuvarāya chiefs of Padaivēdu had control of Kanchi.⁷⁹

Kumāra Kampaṇa, Harihara II (1377-1404 A.D.), Virūpāksha I, Bukka II, Devarāya I and Rāmachandrarāya or Vijayarāya I were the rulers of Vijayanagar dynasty till 1422 A.D. All these above rulers could not concentrate on the city of Kanchi because they were busy with the Muslim occupation in the Northern parts of their empire. Devarāya II (1422-46 A.D.) was the next monarch of whom there are several inscriptions in Kanchi.

It was during the reign of Mallikārjuna (1447-65 A.D.) that the Gajapati King of Orissa Hamvīra attacked the City of Kanchi, and had control of it for a period of one year. Śāḷuva Narasimha who was a general of Mallikārjuna re-established supremacy of Vijayanagar over Kanchi.⁸⁰

Virūpāksha II (1465-85 A.D.) the successor to the throne usurped power from Mallikārjuna and established him as the king. During his reign the city of Kanchi came under two major attacks. One by the Bāṇas under the king Bhuvanēkavīra Śamarakōlāhala.⁸¹ The Bāṇas were subordinates of the Vijayanagar king. The second attack on Kanchi came in the year 1481 A.D. by the Bahmini Sultan Mahmud III (1463-82 AD.). The Sultan looted the treasures of Kanchi but was confronted by Isvara Nāyaka a general of Śāḷuva Narasimha who was an officer of Virūpāksha II. The former (Isvara Nāyaka) recovered most of the looted treasure.⁸² Vīra Narasimha succeeded to the throne of Vijayanagar and ruled from 1505-09 A.D. He was succeeded by his brother Kṛishṇaḍēvarāya (1509-29 A.D.) He was the most famous and greatest of all kings of the Vijayanagar dynasty. Throughout the reign of Kṛishṇaḍēvarāya there was more religious activity in the city and less of political turmoils. We could call his reign a very peaceful and prosperous one.

After the death of Kṛishṇaḍēvarāya, Achyutarāya ascended the throne. He faced some rebellions from one of his ministers Śāḷuva Nāyaka (Chellappa) which was put down by the former. After his reign the power of Vijayanagar empire started declining slowly. The Musilm powers wrought havoc over the empire. The last known king of Vijayanagar in Kanchi was Venkata I. After the famous battle of Rakkasa-Taṅgaḍi in the year 1565 A.D. the Nayaks of Keḷadi, Gingee, Vellore, Thanjavur and Madurai asserted their independence.⁸³

Just like the Pallavas, the Vijayanagar rulers showed lot of interest in art and architecture. Throughout the reign of Vijayanagar dynasty we find that the kings were busy keeping away the incursion of Musilms, as a result of which the city of Kanchi was saved from destruction. Hinduism spread in the minds of the people and literature was also given importance in their period. Thus the credit for preserving and developing one of the oldest cities in South India goes to the kings of Vijayanagar.

So far we have seen the four important kingdoms which had control of Kanchi. Let us now have a brief account of other dynasties which had a role to play in the history of the ancient city.

1.9 The Rāshtrakūṭas, the Hoysaḷas and the Kākatīyas at Kanchi

Dantidurga (733-55 A.D.) was the founder of the Rāshtrakūṭa dynasty. During the rule of Dantidurga he made two expeditions to Kanchi and succeeded in occupying it. It was during his reign that Nandivarman Pallavamalla entered into a matrimonial alliance with his (Dantidurga's)

daughter Rēva⁸⁴. The next king to occupy the throne was Krishna I (756-72 A.D.) the nephew of Dantidurga and his successor Govinda II (773-80 A.D.) did not make much of an impact on the political arena of the city. Realising the weakness of Govinda II, Dhruva (780-93 A.D.) usurped the throne from the former with the help of some feudatories.⁸⁵ Govinda III (793-814 A.D.) the next ruler in the line expanded the Rāshtrakūṭa empire. He led an expedition against the Pallavas, Pāṇḍyas and Gaṅgas as a result of which Kanchi was occupied by him and the city served him as a military base for his operation as far as Thanjavur.⁸⁶

Krishna III (939-67 A.D.) the last known king of the Rāshtrakūṭa dynasty had control of the whole of Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam. He is said to have earned the title *Kachchiyum Tañjayum Koṇḍa Kaṇṇaradēvar*.⁸⁷ meaning the conqueror of Kanchi and Thanjavur. With the death of Krishna III the Rāshtrakūṭa connection with Kanchi comes to an end.

Next we come to the Hoysaḷas and their connection with the city of Kanchi.

The Hoysaḷa king Vishṇuvardhana is said to have led an expedition to the city of Kanchi. Some inscriptions describe him as 'Kanchigoṇḍa' or 'Conqueror of Kanchi'.⁸⁸ But some historians contradict the view of the title of Vishṇuvardhana. The period of Hoysaḷa attack on Kanchi coincided with the declining power of the Chōḷas in the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam region. Narasimha II (1220-35 A.D.) who succeeded to the throne is said to have ruled over Kanchi as his Eastern limit.⁸⁹ He is also described as '*Kanchi Kāñchana and Kāḍavukulāntaka*'.⁹⁰

During the reign of Narasimha II and his successor Sōmēśvara there were several Hoysaḷa generals in the city of Kanchi at different times. These generals while they were in the city made various gifts to the temples in the city.

Ammaṇṇa Daṇḍanāyaka, Daṇḍina Jagadobha Gaṇḍa Gōpayya, are two important generals during the reign of Narasimha II.

Sōmēśvara (1235-60 A.D.) maintained a good relationship with the Chōḷas in the first phase of his reign. He was hostile towards Māṛavarmaṇ Sundara Pāṇḍya but later became his ally too. This brought change in his relation with the Chōḷas in particular Rajēndra III. But when Jaṭavarman Sundara Pāṇḍya ascended the throne the Chōḷas could not stand the onslaught of the power of the Pāṇḍyas, as a result of which Rajēndra III was defeated and Sōmēśvara was killed in the battle of Kaṇṇaṇur.⁹¹ Under Sōmēśvara, Pōlālva was a very able military general. The others were a Daṇḍinagōpa Mādāya Daṇḍanāyaka, Vallāya, Mallāya, Kēśava Daṇḍanāyaka and Gōpaya.

During the reign of the Hoysaḷas, the city of Kanchi passed into the hands of the Pāṇḍyas and the Chōḷas by the time were completely driven away from the territory. Ballāla III was the last Hoysaḷa king after which the city passed into the hands of the Sambuvarāya Chiefs and then to Vijayanagar.

The Kākatīya connection with Kanchi is very limited. From inscriptions of the year 1213 A.D.⁹² we come to know of Gaṇapati (1199-1261 A.D.) the Kākatīya king to be associated with Kanchi in that he bears the title '*Kanchi-*

chūrakāra’ (plunderer of Kanchi) and 1220 A.D.⁹³ a Kākatīya general Mūche Nāyaka is titled *‘Kāñchīpura-Nirjīta-jayāṅganā-Vallabha*’ meaning Lord of the lady victory by conquering the city of Kanchi. The next Kākatīya king to be associated with Kanchi was Pratāparudra (1295-1323 A.D.). During his reign the Muslim invaders started making inroads into Southern states as a result of which there was confusion in Deccan. Taking advantage of the situation, the Kerala king Ravivarman led an expedition towards Kanchi subdued the Saṁbuvarāyas, the Pāṇḍyas and Telugu Chōdas and celebrated his coronation on the banks of river Vegavati in 1311 A.D.⁹⁴ Pratāparudra appointed Mānavīra, his protegee as the governor of Kanchi. Thus we can see that the Kākatīyas had a role to play in the political affairs of the city of Kanchi but they had little opportunity to contribute to art and architecture of the city.

1.10 Foreign Invasion at Kanchi

The fall of Vijayanagar empire saw the supremacy of Golconda power in the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam region. By this time the English and the Dutch had already established their trade in South India and were seeking new territories to expand further.

The combined troops of Bijapur and Golconda besieged Vellore from Sriranga, the last king of Vijayanagar in the year 1645 which was the end of the empire. By the year 1672 the whole of Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam had come under the rule of Golconda. Podella Lingappa a hindu officer was in charge of Poonamallee which included Kanchipuram also. During the rule of Abdul Hassan Kutub Shah the last ruler of Golconda, Lingappa assumed vast powers over all the territories and often clashed with European powers.⁹⁵ The Maratta

soldiers under their ruler Shivaji marched into the Carnatic region in the year 1676. Shivaji pledged his support to Adbul Hassan Kutub Shah. In the year 1677 Shivaji besieged Vellore and proceeded upto Thanjavur where he put his brother Venkaji incharge of the territory. The following year the Bijapur forces under commander Abdullah Khan surrendered to Shivaji. Later on he stationed his forces at Kanchipuram to capture Poonamallee which was the headquarters of Lingappa.⁹⁶ All his further plans to capture the entire region came to an abrupt halt by his sudden death in the year 1680.

The combined forces of Bijapur and Golconda could not control the region for a long time. The Mughal forces under the guidance of Aurangzeb annexed the kingdoms of both these forces and continued to march into the Carnatic. In the year 1687 they had advanced upto Kanchipuram in the South after taking the Golconda king prisoner. The Mughal flag was hoisted on the fort of Poonamallee after defeating the Hindu Chieftain of that region.⁹⁷ In the South the Mughals were restricted by the forces of Shivaji's son Sambaji. General Santoji Rau led the Maratta forces to stop Mughal incursions. During the warfare considerable damage was done to the city of Kanchi. In the end Sambaji was captured and tortured to death.⁹⁸ Defeating the powers, of Golconda, Bijapur and Marattas, Aurangzeb established himself as supreme in the Deccan region. Zulfikar Khan, his general was appointed the Chief of Deccan provinces. Khan faced a small resistance from the Nayak of Gingee which was successfully put down and the fort of Gingee besieged in the year 1698.⁹⁹ With Zulfikar Khan becoming the Chief of all Southern provinces he was called the Nawab of Carnatic. Arcot Nawabship is said to be founded by

him. Zulfikar Khan was succeeded by Daud Khan under whom Arcot became the capital of the Carnatic Nawabs. Later in the year 1710 Daud Khan was succeeded by his Civil Officer-Sayyad Muzaffar with the name Sadat-Ullakhan.¹⁰⁰

The district under the rule of the Nawabs faced a lot of political uncertainty. There was constant warfare in the region resulting in exploitation of the masses causing them misery and poverty. The Mughal invasion affected Kanchipuram very much as many of the Hindu temples were destroyed by the invading forces. Some of them shifted the images and idols of these temples to safer places.¹⁰¹

Sadat-Ullakhan's reign saw some peace and good administration in the region. His successor Dosti Ali Khan was a tolerant Nawab and like his predecessor he was a good administrator as well. He was the Nawab of Arcot between 1732 and 1740. During his reign the Marattas rose against the Muhammadens and a battle was fought between the two at Damal Cheri Pass in which Dosti Ali Khan was defeated. Later peace was made and the Nawab's son Safdar Ali was recognized as the new Nawab.¹⁰²

During this period, the region saw constant warfare between the French and the English to conquer as many territories as possible. In the year 1751 Robert Clive directed the English forces to proceed to Arcot and capture the fort. The Arcot fort was defended by the then Nawab Chanda Saheb and his son Raja Saheb. Raja Saheb led the Indian forces while the English were led by Lieutenant Innes under the command of Captain Kilpatrick. The English forces were successful in Arcot while Robert Clive inflicted a crushing defeat

at Kanchipuram bringing the region totally under his control. There was an attempt by the French to capture the region of Uttiramerur in the year 1754. The French succeeded to an extent. But in the year 1756 the English returned to recapture it. The French forces were helped by forces from the neighbouring region of Wandiwash. But the English were stronger. They defeated the French forces at Wandiwash then proceeded to Uttiramerur. On the way the French forces clashed with the British and the former retired to Uttiramerur destroying Kanchipuram. The English made Kanchipuram their stronghold.¹⁰³

Lally took office as Governor General of French possession in the year 1758. The French forces under Lally decided to recapture the districts possessed by the British. Lally concentrated his forces on Karunguli, Salavakkam and Kanchipuram. The English requested the Marattas to help them in resisting the French for which in return the Marattas demanded compensation for expenses incurred by them. The French were successful in their expedition. On the other hand the English stationed their troops into cantonments at Kanchipuram, Chengalput, Ponnammallee and Sriperumbudur.¹⁰⁴ Sir Eyre Coote had arrived from England to take control over the forces. He went straight to Kanchipuram where the troops were stationed. At this point part of the French forces were away at Trichy. Coote took advantage of this situation and under Major Brereton attacked Thiruvallur, after which they proceeded to Wandiwash. The fort was brought easily under his control even before Coote's men stormed it. He then turned his attention towards Karunguli where there was some resistance from Lally's

men. Later truce was established and French marched out of the fort, in return for which the English had to grant the terms requested. In the year 1760 there was severe struggle between the French and the English to buy the services of Marattas under Innis Khan. The French were successful in obtaining the services. The two forces were ready to attack each other. Lally marched upto Kanchipuram but Coote was able to arrive to that place only after Lally had departed. In the meantime Lally had lost Wandiwash and Karunguli. He committed a mistake by dividing the army thereby weakening it. Coote started from Kanchipuram and halted at Uttiramerur. In the battle that followed the French were defeated.¹⁰⁵ By the end of the year all the territories in the Chengalput, Arcot region had come under the control of the English including Gingee and Mahe.

Between the years 1767 to 1799 the British were engaged in battle with Hyder Ali and his son Tipu Sultan in what is called the Anglo Mysore wars. Initially Hyder Ali was successful against the foreigners. In the year 1782 he died and the fight was carried on by his son till 1799 when he succumbed to the British.

After establishing its supremacy all over the region, the British made some territorial changes. In the year 1784 the district was divided into 14 farms and each was rented. After four years, it was changed into two collectorates and in 1793 it was made into one district. Later on Pulicat was added to the district.¹⁰⁶

During the end of 18th century and beginning of 19th Century there was widespread rebellion in the country against British rule. The Chengalput MGR

district also played a role in fighting the foreigners. The peasant rebellion against the East India Company received strong support from the Mirasdars of this district. During the peasant rebellion the locals protested against the collection of revenues and taxes by the British. They wrote to higher authorities, explaining their hardship and the oppression meted out to them. The end of 19th Century saw the birth of the Indian National Congress. In the year 1925 Kanchipuram was the venue of congress conference. It was during this Conference that E.V. Ramaswamy popularly known as 'Thanthai Periyar' started the famous Self-Respect Movement.¹⁰⁷

The Civil Disobedience Movement and the Quit India Movement too received strong support from the region. Several meetings were organized in Kanchipuram during which many patriots were put behind bars.

O.V. Alagesan and M. Bhaktavachalam were prominent freedom fighters of the region who took active part in the Quit India Movement. Between August and December of 1942 the movement was at its peak. The National Youth League branch of Kanchipuram condemned the British by organizing a procession. This was dispersed by the police. Many freedom fighters were arrested. The movement gained momentum in areas in and around Kanchipuram like Ponvilaintha Kalathur, Sembium, Madurantakam, Karunguli, Chengalput and Thiruvottiyur.¹⁰⁸

In May 1944 Gandhiji was released and in 1945 there were political changes in England. After lot of struggle and loosing several hundreds of thousands of precious lives, India was freed from foreign rule.

After independence, the first General elections for Indian Union for both Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha was held in the year 1952. The following is the list of general elections held between the year 1952 to 2001 in Kanchipuram and the party that won the seat.

Sl. No.	Year of Election	Party Won
1.	1952	Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party
2.	1957	Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)
3.	1962	Congress
4.	1967	DMK
5.	1971	DMK
6.	1977	All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)
7.	1980	AIADMK
8.	1984	AIADMK
9.	1989	DMK
10.	1991	AIADMK
11.	1996	DMK
12.	2001	AIADMK

Source : Gazetteers of India - Part II - PP - 1646-1655

1.11 Dr. C.N. Annadurai

Dr. C.N. Annadurai deserves a special mention in the history of Kanchipuram as he played an important role in Tamilnadu politics. Here is a

brief note on his life. Born on 15th September 1913 at Kanchipuram, his father was Thiru. Natarajan and his mother was Bangaru Ammal. Endearingly called 'Anna' he was educated at Pachaiyappa's High School and later he joined Pachaiyappa College at Madras and completed his intermediate in 1931. He did his B.A. Honours and M.A. Economics and Politics in the same college. Earlier he was associated with Justice party founded by Sri. P. Theagaraya and Dr. T.M. Nair in the year 1917. He was also the Sub-Editor of the Party's English daily 'Justice'. He first met Periyar E.V. Ramaswamy in 1934 at Tiruppur. Later on Anna associated himself with several journals and weeklies. He became the editor of 'Viduthalai' and contributed to Tamil weekly 'Kudiarasu'. In the year 1942 he started his own weekly 'Dravidanadu' at Kanchipuram. In 1949 he became the editor of 'Malai Mani'. He was also the founder and editor of Tamil Daily 'Nam Nadu'. Editor of Tamil Weekly 'Kanchi' he also edited two English weeklies 'Home rule' and 'Homeland'. In the year 1944 the Justice Party was renamed Dravida Kazhagam. In the year 1949 there was a split in the party and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam was formed under Anna's leadership. He then became the General Secretary of the Party. He was a Member of Madras Legislative Assembly from 1957-1962 and Member of Rajya Sabha from 1962-1967. He became the Chief Minister of Tamilnadu in the year 1967. Besides being a politician, he was a playwright, a novelist and an actor. He died on February 2-3 in the year 1969.¹⁰⁹

With this the political history of Kanchipuram comes to an end. The political history has thrown light on the importance of this city in that it has

been ruled by all the dynasties of India. We can conclude by saying that the City's contribution to Indian history is nonetheless great.

Every empire of South India had its own emblems and crests engraved upon the royal flags, copper plate inscriptions records and royal seals. These emblems signified the dynasty that ruled a particular territory. Since Kanchi was the stronghold of almost all the important dynasties of not only South India but also from North the following are the emblems and crests of the empires that ruled the city

Empire	Emblems & Crests
Satavahanas	Lion
Pallavas	Bull and Khaṭvānga-a club or staff with a skull on the top and one of the weapons of Lord Siva.
Chalukyas of Vatapi, Vengi and Kalyani	Varaha or Boar
Rāshtrakūṭas	Crest-Garuda seated on a rising Lotus Flower
Hoysaḷas	Tiger
Pāṇḍyas	Fish
Chōḷas	Tiger with its mouth open seated (facing right), on its hind legs with its tail drawn through them and reaching to very near its mouth
Vijayanagar	Boar facing either the right or the left and surmounted by the figure of a sword and dagger and those of the moon and the sun.

Source : Mahalingam T.V. - South Indian Polity, 1955, Madras, PP 84-89

As a result of the influence of various dynasties the city has been an abode of many religions and has flourished as a centre of educational learning.

2.0 Education and Religion of Kanchi

Religion and Education were interlinked with one another in ancient Kanchi. It is interesting to note that all the four major religions Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism and Vaishnavism flourished in Kanchipuram. Of the four religions, Saivism and Vaishnavism is still very much a part of the life of people of Kanchi till today. As a result of these religious influences Kanchi flourishes as an important centre of Pilgrimage in South India attracting travellers from all over the World. Below is a brief study of the religious history of Kanchi.

2.1 Buddhism

Buddhism entered Tamilnadu through Andhra Pradesh.¹¹⁰ That Buddhism was deep rooted in Kanchipuram is proved by the fact that several Buddhist scholars were associated with this city. Some historians are of the view that according to tradition Buddhism in Kanchi dates back to the days of its founder Buddha and is also believed that he himself visited the place and converted many people.¹¹¹ The Chinese traveller Hieun Tsang who visited India between A.D. 629-645¹¹² confirms this belief in his account.

The Chinese traveller who also visited Kanchi describes the influence of Buddhism in the city. He says the city consisted of about 100 Buddhist

monasteries and about 10,000 monks. Further South of the city there was a large Sanghārāma or a meeting place for eminent Buddhist scholars of the country. This place had an Asoka tope about 100 feet high where Buddha himself had defeated many people by his preaching's and converted them.¹¹³

As far as Buddhism is considered it has the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna and Hīnayāna sects. The Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna sects worshipped deities such as Avalokiteśvara, Tārā and Hārīti, whereas the Hīnayānists worshipped Dharma-chakra, Buddha-Pāda and portrayals from Jataka tales. The city of Kanchi popularized and patronized all sects of Buddhism. It was a meeting place not only for scholars from all over India but also from foreign countries like Srilanka, China, Burma, Java and other Eastern Countries.¹¹⁴

The following is an account of the famous scholars of Buddhism who propagated the religion throughout the world who belonged to Kanchipuram.

Aṛavaṇa Aḍigaḷ

He belonged to the second century A.D. (Sangam Age). He stayed at Kanchipuram and preached Buddhism. One of the famous classics of Tamil literature Manimekalai by Sīttalai Sāttaṇār mentions the meeting of Manimekalai with Aṛavaṇa Aḍigaḷ. The 28th chapter of the work is titled '*Kacci Mānagar Pukka Kathai*' meaning the story of entering into the city of Kanchi which narrates meeting of Manimekalai and the Buddhist monk.

Manimekalai came to Kanchipuram from Vanji, she was received by Ilankilli the viceroy of the city and was accommodated in the South-Western corner in a grove called Dharmadāvana.¹¹⁵ It was in this grove that she realized the details of her previous birth. She asked the king to build a Buddha Pitikai where a two feet high statue of Buddha is laid and also two temples were built for Goddess Manimekalai and Thipathilakai. During her visit to Kanchi the city was facing severe famine and people were dying of starvation. She had with her a bowl 'Amudhasurabhi' which never got emptied and was always filled with food, with the help of this bowl she fed the people of Kanchipuram.¹¹⁶

Aṛavaṇa Aḍigaḷ met Manimekalai at the grove where she was staying and preached her on the Buddhist doctrines and after listening to his discourses she renounced the world to become an ascetic. Some scholars are of the view that the name Aṛavaṇa Aḍigaḷ could be the tamil translation of the Dharmapala a famous Buddhist scholars. But the time period of both the scholar differ. The former belonged to 2nd century A.D. whereas the latter belonged to the 7th Century A.D.

Aṛavaṇa Aḍigaḷ was closely associated with famous cities like Puhār, Vanji and Kanchi. Though he was the head of monastery at Puhār he attained Nirvāṇa at Kanchi.¹¹⁷

Ārya Deva

He belonged to the second and third century A.D. He was the successor of Acharya Nagārjuna of University of Nalanda. He contributed a lot to Buddhist literature. Hieun Tsang considered him as one of the 'four suns

which illuminated the world' the others being Nagārjuna, Asvagōsha and Kumāralabdha.¹¹⁸

Buddhadatta and Buddhagōsha

Both lived during 5th Century. The former was patronized by a Kalabra King Achyuta Vikranta and his contribution to Buddhist literature include Vinayavinichchaya, Buddhavamsattagatha, Anagata-vamsa and commentary on Buddhavamsa Abhidammavatara.

Buddhagōsha's work include a commentary on Anguttara, Nikaya both mention Kanchi in their works.

In his work the latter refers to a place called Morandakhetaka as his native and some historians identify this place as Moranam near Kanchi in North Arcot district.¹¹⁹

Bodhidharma

He lived in the 6th Century. Hieun Tsang and I-Tsing who visited India in the 7th Century have mentioned about Bodhidharma. I-Tsing says that he was a certain Prince of Kanchi and that he visited China in 520 A.D. and during his visit he converted the Southern Chinese emperor, Wu-Ti of Lyang dynasty to Buddhism. He founded Ch'an Buddhism or Dhyānamarga. It was called Ch'an by the Chinese and 'Zen Shu' by the Japanese. He was highly revered in China and was considered the 28th apostle. Temples were constructed in his memory.¹²⁰ He held the highest office of the supreme head of the monks and spent his life in the famous monastery call Kiu-Kiang.¹²¹

Diñnāga (6th Century)

One of the greatest scholars of Buddhism, he was a native of Simhavakra probably the present Singaperumal koil of Kanchipuram. He was a student of Vasubandhu (420-500 A.D.) a scholar in Buddhist philosophy and logic.¹²² According to C.R. Srinivasan “he is regarded as the father of Medieval Nyāya or a link between the Buddhist and Orthodox Nyāya systems of India.” His works are Pramāṇa-Samuchchaya, the Nyāyappravēśa, the Hētuchakra-damaru, the Pramāṇa-sastranyāya Pravēśa, the Ālambanaparīkshā.¹²³

Vajrabōdhi and Dharmapala

A contemporary of Pallava king Narasimhavarman II, Vajrabōdhi belonged to 7th century. He travelled to many countries to propogate this religion. He was a native of Kanchi. Dharmapala a very famous Buddhist scholar also hailed from Kanchi and belonged to the 7th Century. He was a very good commentator.¹²⁴ He was the son of a high official of Kanchi. As already mentioned before there is a view upheld by the historians that Aṛavaṇa Aḍigaḷ and Dharmapala are one and the same. But their period differs. Dharmapala joined a Buddhist monastery at Kanchi and was ordained by Bhavaviveka later on he became the Chief of the University of Nalanda. He was also known as Dharmapala Phusa or Dharmapala Boddhisattva.¹²⁵

Siddha Nagārjuna, Anuruddha and Buddhatiya

Siddha Nagārjuna belonged to 7th Century and was born in a place called Kahora a part of Kanchi. He excelled in Tantric Buddhism. Legend has it that he became a monk at the age of seven. Anuruddha a renowned scholar of 12th century originally belonged to Pāṇḍya country. He was the head of the

Mulasomavihara of Kanchi. He was an ordinary priest and rose to the position of high priesthood (Saṅghanāyaka). Buddhatiya also belonged to the same period. He hailed from Sadvihara of Kanchi and was the author of Bhogavali.¹²⁶

Apart from these literary evidences there are also sculptural evidences to show that Buddhism was once a predominant religion in Kanchi.

There were a number of Buddha images found in and around Kanchipuram. The one discovered in Kamakshi amman temple is considered the most remarkable by T.A. Gopinath Rao eminent archaeologist. It was 7' 10" in height. Both the hands of the image was broken. "It is considered the earliest known example of Buddhist sculpture found in Tamilnadu." With this discovery the archaeologists are of the view that there could have existed a very important and a big Buddhist temple dated before 600 A.D. in the city.

This image is presently placed at the Amaravati Gallery in the Madras Museum. Another image discovered near the Kanchipuram police station was in the Padmāsana pose and could have belonged to the 11th Century A.D. An unique image of Buddha found in the Ekamareswarar temple at Kanchipuram is an example of late Cōḷa period. Here Buddha is in reclining posture representing parinirvāna attitude. There are seven other images of seated Buddha found in the same temple. All these above are evidences to show how deep-rooted Buddhism was in Kanchipuram between 7th century to 15th century A.D.¹²⁷

Kanchi was also an important seat of Buddhist learning and culture. Buddhist monasteries at Kanchi preached the philosophies of the religion and encouraged people to convert. It received the patronage of the Pallava Kings as well, due to which Buddhism was at its peak in the city between 7th to 12th century A.D. Slowly its popularity declined and now it no more exists as a living religion. There are several reasons for it. Growth of other religions, people losing faith in this religion, royal patronage received by other religions could be some of them.

2.2 Jainism

Just like Buddhism, Jainism was very popular in the city of Kanchi. M.S. Ramaswamy Ayyangar, mentions that Badrabāhu was a very important figure in Jaina history because it was this saint turned Acharya who was responsible for migration of Jainism to South India in the days of Chandragupta Maurya.¹²⁸ This religion came to prominence during the period of Pallavas. The Pallava king Mahendravarman was a follower of Jain faith but he was later converted to Saivism by Appar. The Kalabras and Pāṇḍyas also patronized this religion as a result of which Jaina literature flourished in the city. The Pallankoil copper plates of Pallava king records the grant of a village called Sramarasrama alias Amanserkai in Perunagar to a Jain monk called Vajranandi of Nandisangha for the worship of Lord Jina.¹²⁹ The 5th and 6th centuries A.D. could be stated as period of Jainism. As the religion spread slowly throughout the city many Jains came and settled down here and the place where they occupied came to be called as Jina Kanchi on the Southern bank of river Vegavati. An important centre of Jaina learning it came to be known as Thirupparutikunram.

Besides Pallavas, the Chōlas under Kulōttuṅga I and Vijayanagar empire under Bukka II and Krishṇaḍēvarāya supported this religion and granted gifts of land for construction of Jina temples.

Jainism met stiff opposition from the Nayanmars, which was one of the reasons for its decline in Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam. The Periyapurānam gives an account of how Mahendravarman was converted to Saivism by Appar. It is stated here that after being converted to Saivism Mahendravarman went to the extent of destroying Jaina Monastery at Thirupatiripuliyur and building a Siva temple called Guṇadharavīccuram out of its ruins.

வீடறியாச்சமணர் மொழி பொய்யென்று மெய்யுணர்ந்த
காடவனுந்திருவதிகை நகரின்கட் கண்ணுதற்குப்
பாடலி புத்திரத்தி லமண் பள்ளியொடு பாழிகளுங்
கூடவிடித்துக் கொணர்ந்து குணதர வீச்சுரமெடுத்தான். ¹³⁰

The date of Appar alias Thirunavukkarasar is first quarter of seventh century. The story of this Nayanmar is given in Periyapurānam. The Purānam states that he himself was first a convert to Jainism. He is said to have studied at Pataliputra all books relating to Jainism and was himself a Jaina teacher, and was then known as Dharmasena,¹³¹ belonging to Sena Sangha. It is worth mentioning here that the Jaina monks divided themselves into four groups or Sanghas which were Nandi Sangha, Sena Sangha, Simha Sangha and Deva Sangha.¹³² Returning to the story of Appar, the saint had an attack of stomach ache and he was unable to cure it by reciting all Jaina Mantras. He then came to his sister an ardent Siva devotee. She took him to the Siva temple at

ThiruvadigaiVirattānam where he gained the power of singing hymns. After singing one of the hymns Appar found that his disease had left him and from then on he became a follower of Saivism.¹³³

Another famous Nayanmar Sambandar and contemporary of Appar is said to have converted a Pāṇḍya King Niṇṇa Śīr Neḍumāra Nāyanār to Saivism. The Periya Puranam gives an account of how this Pāṇḍya King was converted to Saivism from Jainism. In this story the Pāṇḍya King was attacked by a disease whereby he experienced a burning sensation all over his body. All efforts by the Jains to cure the disease failed. The king then announced that he would declare that religion superior which could relieve him of this suffering. Sambandar succeeded in curing the King of the disease. From the above it is clear that the Jains condemned Vedic practices and rituals and that Sambandar put an end to Jain influence in Pāṇḍya's court thereby making the king help in spreading Saivism not only in his territory but throughout Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam.¹³⁴

The temples attributed to Jainism are found in Jina Kanchi. One is Vardhamana Mahavīra temple dedicated to the twenty third Tirtankara and the other is Chandraprabha temple dedicated to the eighth Tirtankara. But the remains of these temples are no longer found here. There was also a Jain monastery situated here with succession of Pontiffs. Jina Kanchi was a seat of Jaina learning and is considered as one of the Vidyasthanas of Digambara Jains.¹³⁵ Unlike Buddhism we can see that even to this day this religion is being followed in some parts of the city.

2.3 Saivism

Saivism in Kanchipuram dates back to very ancient times and it is still very much a living religion in the city. It was because of growth of Saivism and its popularity that Jainism and Buddhism came to an end here. The Nayanmars and their hymns had a great impact in the minds of the people thereby enabling the growth of this religion.

The Silappadikaram and Manimekalai, classical epics belonging to Sangam period mention about the prevalence of Saivism in this city. It must be noted that these works were composed by non-saivite authors.

When we come to the period of the Nayanmars, Saint Tirumular is said to have visited Kanchi on his way to Thiruvaduthurai to darshan Ekāmrēśvara and also had religious discourses with yogis. In his work 'Tirumandiram' Tirumular mentions about prevalence of Six branches of Saivism in Tamil country, Pāsupatam, Mahāvartam, Kāpālikam, Vāmam, Bhairavam and Saivism. It is also probable that these sects could have existed in Kanchi.¹³⁶ In the 6th century there is a mention of a king Karikāla who is said to have beautified this city with gold.¹³⁷

During the period of the Pallava rule Kanchi became the strong hold of Saivism. That the kings were staunch saivites is proved by names they bore like Sivaskandavarman, Skandasishya, Nandivarman, and Mahendravarman etc. Another example is the emblem on their royal flag that of Khaṭvāṅga, a weapon of Siva.¹³⁸ It has been already mentioned how the Pallava king Mahendravarman and Pāṇḍya king Ninṛa Śīr Neḍumāra Nāyanār was



Fig 1
Buddha, Kamakshi Amman Temple
Late Chola, 11th, 12th Century A.d.

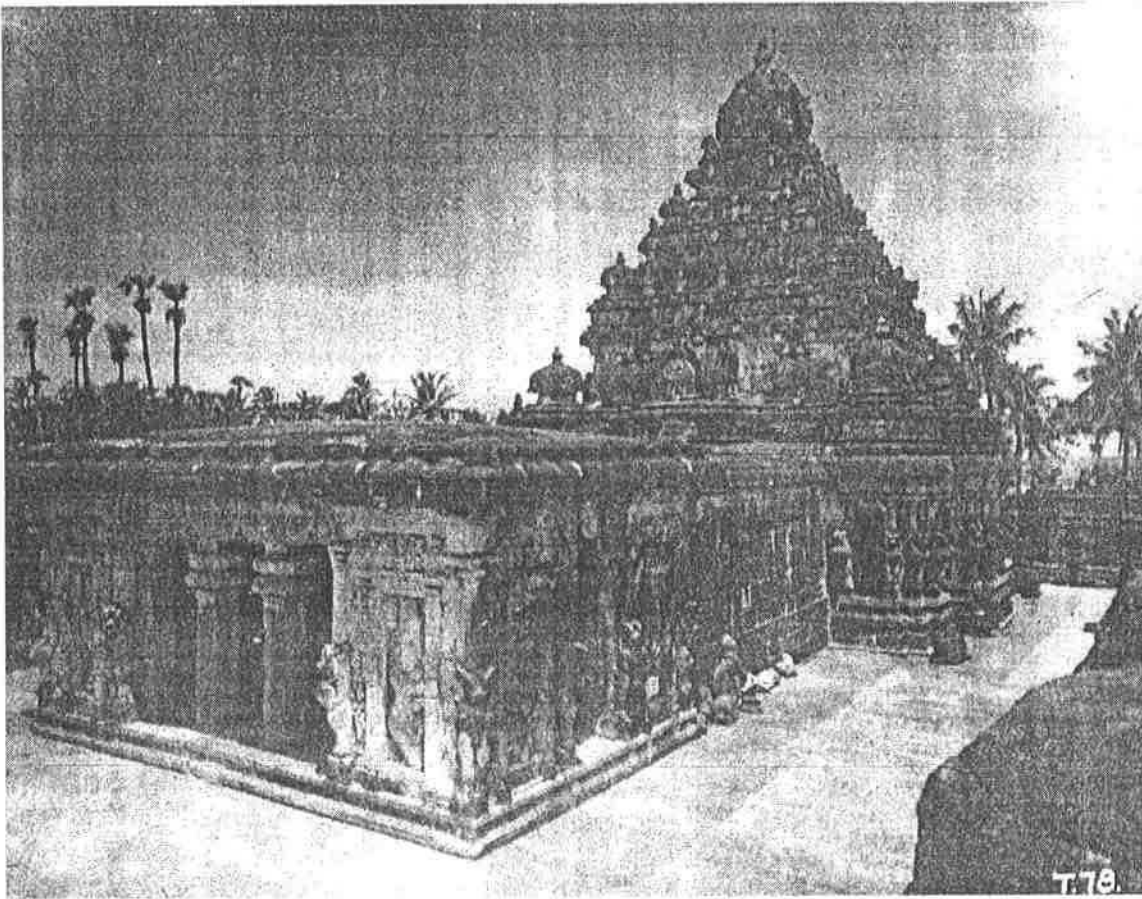


Fig 2. Kailasanatha Temple, Pallava, 7th Century A.d.

converted to Saivism by Appar and Sambandar respectively. This period was a period of great renaissance for Saivism. In the 8th century there were over ten temples built by the Pallava rulers. Most of them were built by king Rājasimha. The greatest that he built was Kailasanatha temple in the year 700 A.D.

Another greatest contribution made to Saivism was by Sri Sankara Bhagavatpadacharya. He established the Shanmatha or six ways of worship which included Saivism. The Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam at Kanchi with its successive Acharyas is a glaring example of predominance of Saivism in Kanchi.

Apart from constructing temples the Pallavas have granted lands as gifts for maintenance of these temples.

During Chōḷa rule, they built structural temples in stone and gave priority to those sung by the Nayanmars.

Separate Shrines were built for the Parivāradēvatas, Chaṇḍīśvara in the North, Moon in the North-East, Sun in the South-East, Gaṇēśa and Saptamāṭṛikās in the South-West, Subramnya in the West and Jyeshta in the North-West.¹³⁹ Almost all the Saivite temples had images of the 63 Nayanmars in their Prakaras.

The Chōḷa rulers have granted several lands as gifts to Kailasanatha temple, Ekamaranatha temple, Phaṇimanīśvara temple and Sökkisvara temple. During the reign of Rājarāja I he gifted sheep to individuals who in return had

to supply ghee for lighting lamps in temples.¹⁴⁰ The inscriptions of Rājādhirāja II and Kulōttuṅga III also records gift of 32 cows and 1 bull as fee for lighting twilight lamps in temples.¹⁴¹ The records of Kulōttuṅga I states that he improved the Ekamareswara temple at Kanchi. These are few examples as to show how the Chōlas patronized Saivism.

During the rule of the Pāṇḍyas and Kākatīyas they contributed a lot for the growth of Saivism. Māṛavarmaṅ Kulaśēkhara and Māṛavarmaṅ Parākrama Pāṇḍya is said to have gifted cows for lighting lamps in the Kamakshi Amman temple¹⁴² and Jaṭavarman Sundara Pāṇḍya II has granted two Vēlis of lands to Ekamaranatha.¹⁴³

The kings of Vijayanagar have also contributed to the growth of Saivism in Kanchi. There are several records of Kamakshi Amman Temple, Arulala Perumal Temple and Ekamarēśvara temple which state that the monarchs have gifted several lands for offering food to the devotees of the temple, for lighting lamps in the temple and so on.

Thus we see that every empire that ruled the city has patronized this religion thereby making it a predominant one. There are about 108 Saivite temples in the city.

The art and architecture of the temples of Kanchi is by itself an extensive study of research and it is not possible to cover the whole lot here. Each kingdom has added to the architectural splendour of Kanchipuram. The Pallavas are major contributors to the architecture of this city and the Kailasanatha, Mukteswara, Matangeswara, Valishwara (within Ekamarēśvara),

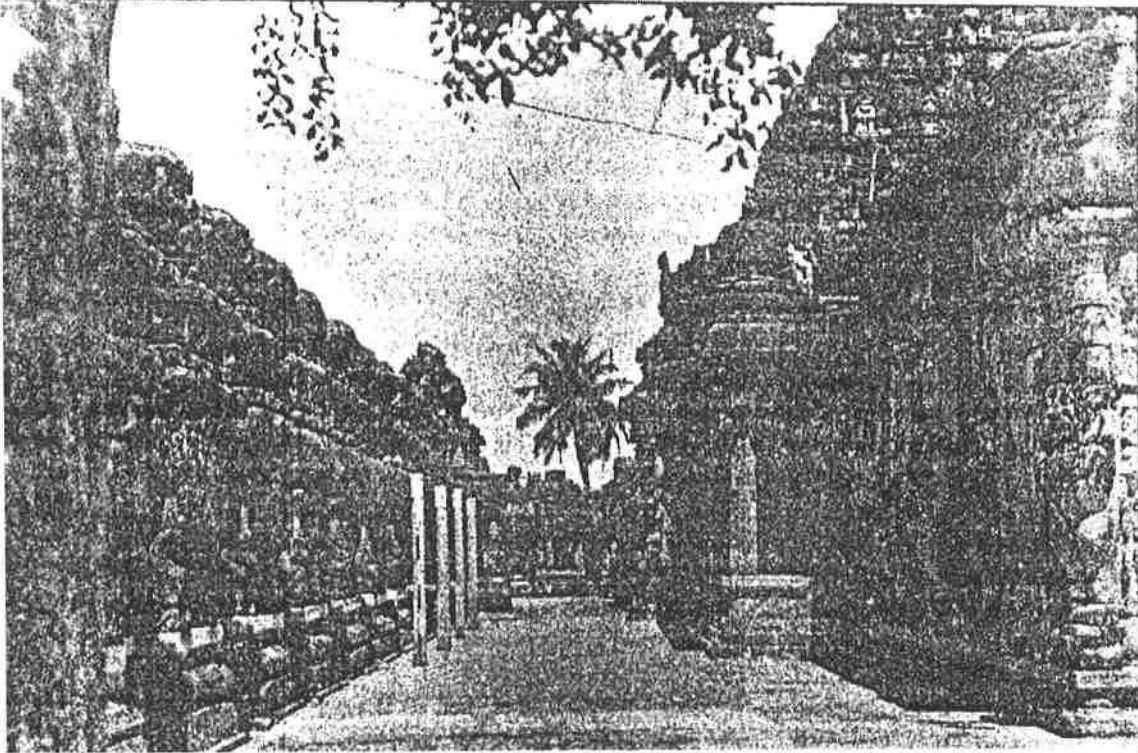


Fig 3.1 Kailasanatha Temple with the cloisters to the left, Pallava, 7th Century A.d.



Fig 3.2 Nandi, Kailasanatha Temple



Fig 4.1 : Ekambreshwara Temple
Entrance Goupra
Vijayanagara, 16th Century A.D.

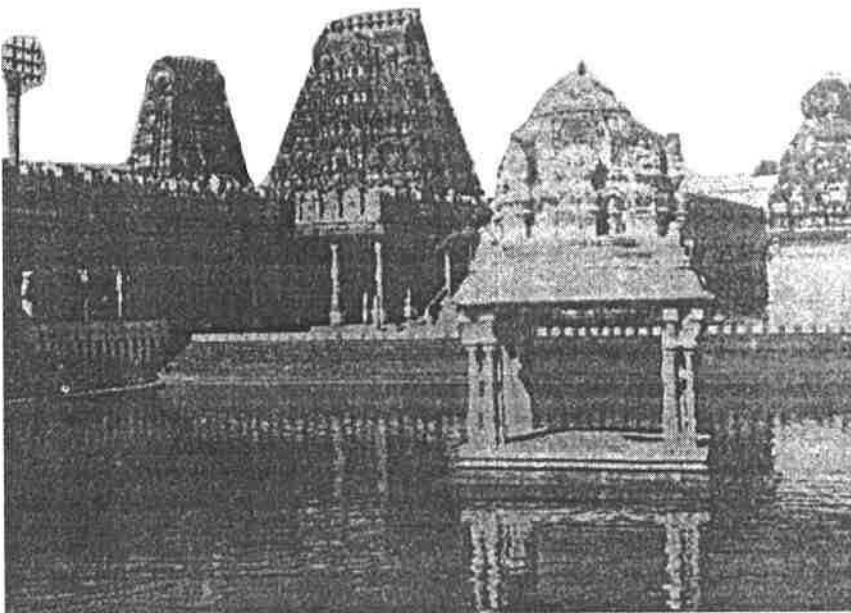


Fig 4.2
Ekambreshwara
Temple Tank
Vijayanagara, 16th
Century A.D.

Airavatesvara, Piravatana and Iravatana temples are specimens of their grandeur.¹⁴⁴ Among these the Kailasanatha temple holds some of the finest sculptures which are unique to Kanchi. Two forms of Siva depicted in this temple built by Rājasimha are found only here. They are the Jalandhara Samhārā, and Gangādhara. Unlike any other Pallava temple the Jalandhara Samhārā, the destruction of Manasaputra or the mind born son of Siva by Siva himself is very elaborate here. The second one the Gangādhara, bringing down Ganga from heaven by Bhagiratha is very rare because in this panel is found the figure of two dogs as guardians and messengers of Yama which is not found anywhere else. Another rare sculpture is that of Mahakālā or Kapalika form of Lord Siva in the Ekamareswara temple. Here the uniqueness is that the Kapalika appears with his consort.¹⁴⁵ The other famous Saivite temple at Kanchi are Chokesvara and Javarahreshwara built during Chōla and Vijayanagar period, the Ekamareswara temple was built by the Pallavas and expanded during Chōla and Vijayanagar period and the Kamakshi Amman temple belongs to the later Chōla and Vijayanagar period.

2.4 Vaishnavism

Kanchipuram, Srirangam and Tirupathi are the three most important centres of Vaishnavism in South India.¹⁴⁶ Just like how Saivism was popularized due to the unstinted efforts of the Nayanmars, Vaishnavism was spread throughout Kanchi by the efforts of the Aḷwars. The Aḷwars are twelve in number and among them the first three are Poygaiyaḷvar, Bhūtataḷvar and Pēyaḷvar. They are contemporaries to one another and it is significant to note that Poygaiyaḷvar was born in Kanchipuram.¹⁴⁷

The fourth among the Aḷwars is Thirumazhisai Aḷwar who is said to have lived at a place called Tiruvekka in Kanchi. A very interesting story¹⁴⁸ connected to this Aḷwar shows the greatness of his bhakthi to the lord. Thirumazhisai Aḷwar was living in Kanchi with his disciple called Kanikannan. Kanikannan had the ability of composing songs in Tamil, knowing this the king wanted him to sing a song in his (the king's) praise, but he (Kanikannan) refused saying that his composition were only in praise of the Lord and no human beings. An angry king ordered the exile of the poet. Thirumazhisai Aḷwar, very upset at this says to the Lord, that since his disciple was leaving he has also decided to leave with him and asked the Lord to leave the city with them. The Lord obeyed the orders of Aḷwar and left Kanchi plunging the city into darkness. The king ran behind the Aḷwar after realising his mistake and asked him not to leave the city. As Thirumazhisai Aḷwar and his disciple was called back, the former asked Lord to return. Due to the greatness of his devotion the Lord obliged and he came to be known as '*Sonna Vannam Seidha Perumal*'. (The Lord who did what he was told to do). The other speciality of this temple is that the Lord's reclining posture is reversed. Usually he is seen with his head on the left and feet on the right but here his head is on the right and feet on the left. This is to show that he always pays heed to his devotees pleas.

Among the Vaishnavite temples at Kanchi fourteen were sung in hymns of the Aḷwars and six out of them by Thirumangai Aḷwar alone.¹⁴⁹ No other city has such a great honour.

Apart from the Alwars several Acharyas contributed to the growth of Vaishnavism in Kanchi. The first and foremost among them was Sri Sankara Bhagavatpadacharya. He was responsible for the spread of Vaishnavism throughout the country through his Shanmatha or six ways of worship which included worshipping Lord Vishnu. It would not be an exaggeration if we said that all the others followed in the footsteps laid by this universal teacher. If Sri Rama Navami, Krishna Jayanthi, Narasimha Jayanthi is celebrated by both Saivites and Vaishnavites alike then we owe it to this Adi Guru.

Sri Ramanuja was born in Sriperumbudur near Kanchi and had his education and enlightenment at the feet of Lord Varadaraja at Kanchi.¹⁵⁰ His preceptor Yadavaprakasa was born near Kanchi and lived there. Follower of advaita he was converted to Viśiṣṭa-advaita philosophy. It is at Kanchi that a great devotee Thirukachchinambi lived and learnt the six principles of Viśiṣṭa-advaita philosophy from Lord Varadaraja himself. He was a contemporary of Sri Ramanuja.¹⁵¹ The last of the Vaishnavite Acharyas Sri Vedanta Desika was also born here. From the above facts we can say that Vaishnavism had its roots at Kanchi, because most of the stalwarts of this faith were either born here or lived in this holy city propagating Vaishnavism.

The dynasties of Kanchi have not ignored this faith, though Saivism was predominant, Vaishnavism was also supported. We do not find many inscriptions during the rule of the Pallavas. The earliest inscription we find is during the rule of Hiranyavarman. Moving on to the period of the Chōlas we find that though their records are confined to Saivite temples they have also supported the growth of Vaishnavism by granting villages and lands as gifts.

The inscriptions of Kulōttuṅga I are found at important Vaishnavite temples at Kanchi. His records at Ulagalanda Perumal temple speaks of the grant of Village Kaṁpadēvinallur and made it tax free for celebration of festivals. Another inscription records the visit made by the king with his queens to this temple.¹⁵² His other inscriptions are found at Aṣṭabhujā Perumal, Arulala Perumal, Pandava Perumal and Vaikunta Perumal temples. The inscriptions of Vikramachōḷa at Arulalaperumal temple records the gift of gold for making a vessel for god Sriraṅgāsāyi by an individual.¹⁵³ The inscriptions of Rājādhirāja II found at Pandava Perumal, Ulagalanda Perumal and Arulala Perumal temples, records the grant of 32 cows for lamp by the King's Chief Śēdiyarāyan, the reclamations of temple lands and granting lands for maintaining a garden.¹⁵⁴ There are as many as twenty one inscriptions of Kulōttuṅga III at Arulala Perumal temple alone showing his patronization for this faith.

Under the Vijayanagar monarchs Vaishnanism was enriched in Kanchi. It is said that Vaishnavism reached its zenith during the period of Venkata I. This was because of the efforts of Tātachārya. He was a very learned scholar at Venkat's Court. His full name was Ettūr Kumara Tirumala Tātachārya. He was the most revered person in Venkata's Court as he was the royal guru. He officiated at the King's coronation. A staunch Vaishnavite, he was the manager of the Vaishnava temples at Kanchi. He was responsible for erecting the Kalyana Koti Vimana in gold for goddess Lakshmi at Varadaraja Perumal temple. This Vimana was finished in the year 1614 A.D.¹⁵⁵ During the reign of Kṛiṣṇaḍēvarāya, his records register the gift of golden Vimana or

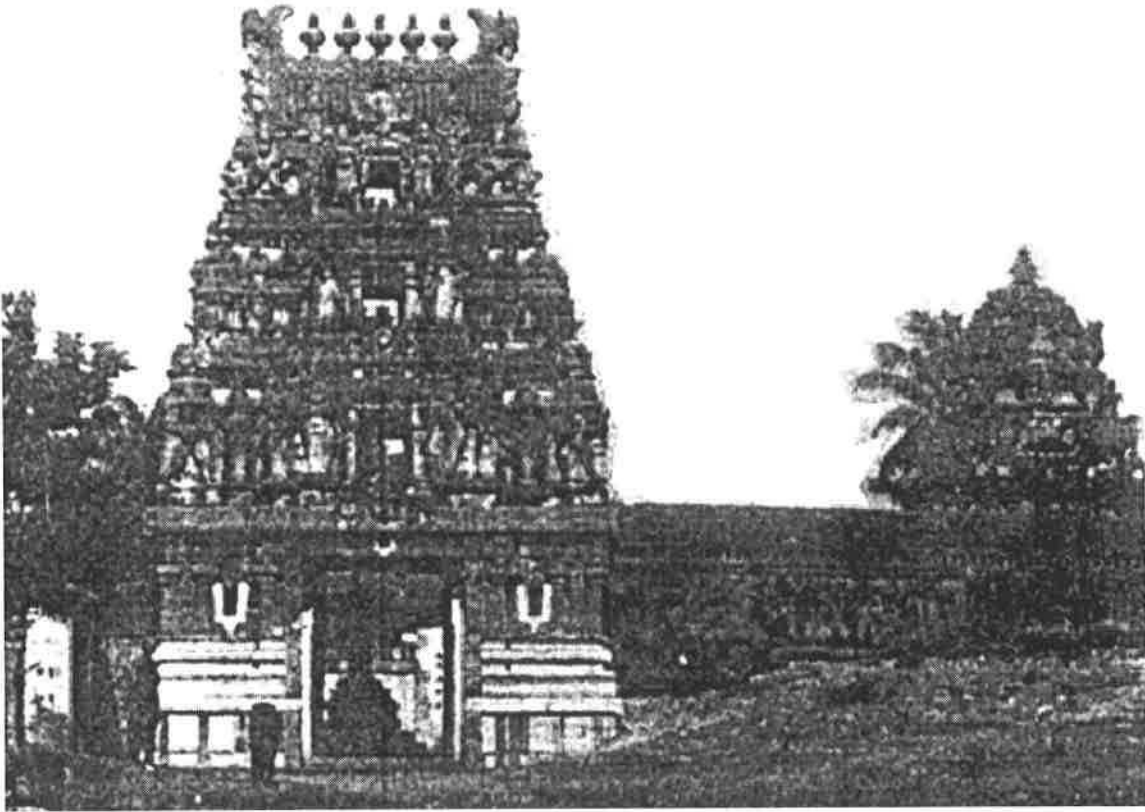


Fig 5.1 Ulagalanda Perumal Temple Gopura
Vijayanagara, 16th Century A.D.

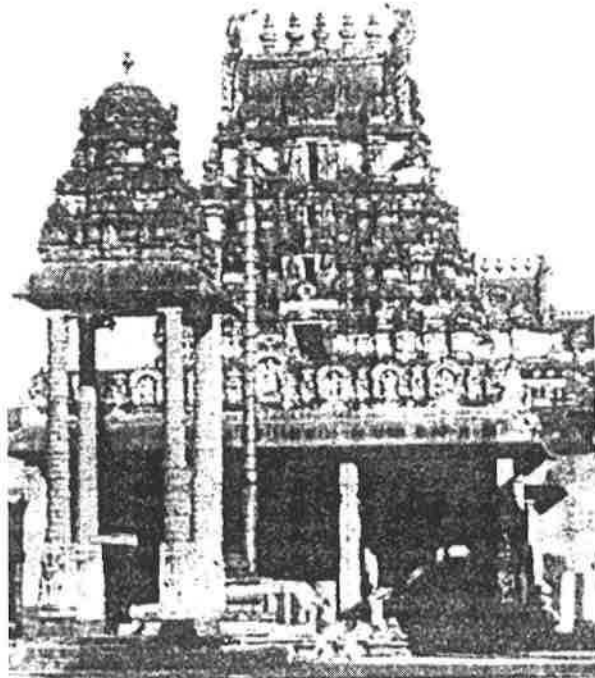


Fig 5.2 Varadaraja Perumal Temple Gopura
Vijayanagara, 16th Century A.D.

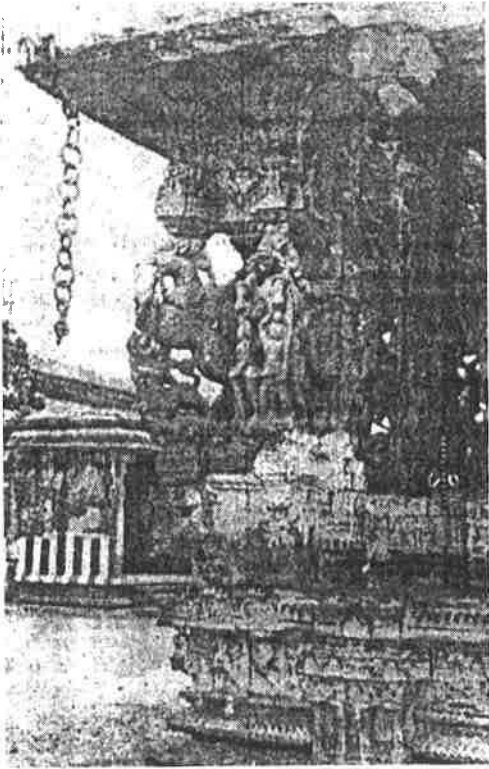


Fig 6.1 Stone Chain and Pillar Carvings
Varadaraja Perumal Temple
Vijayanagara, 16th Century A.D.



Fig 6.2
Rearing Yali
Pillar Carving
Varadaraja Perumal Temple
Vijayanagara, 16th Century A.D.

Punyakoti-Vimana at the Vardadaraja Perumal temple for the merit of his parents.¹⁵⁶ Later on it was Tātachārya who repaired this Vimana which was in a dilapidated condition. The period of Tātachārya is from 1574-1630 A.D.¹⁵⁷

Thus we see that like Saivism Vaishnavism has taken deep roots at Kanchi and is still very much a living faith. Both in case of Saivism and Vaishnavism the inscriptions mentioned above are just an attempt to throw light on the royal support both the faiths received. Only very few are mentioned here as it is difficult to describe all the records which are thousands in number.

As each religion reached its peak, the city became a great centre of learning. There is ample evidence from the copper plate inscriptions of the Pallavas about the existence of a 'Ghatika' at Kanchi. It was a seat of Sanskrit learning in South India. As Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism and Vaishnavism all the four had the seat of educational learning in this city it would not be incorrect if we said that Kanchipuram is the 'Banaras of the South'.

3.0 Conclusion

So far we have traced the political and religious history of this illustrious city. We have seen that Kanchi has carved a niche for itself in the annals of South Indian History. This city was regarded as one of the important cities for invaders from North India. They were attracted by the city's sacredness power and prosperity and it enjoy's the same status till today. Thus we can conclude by saying that this small city has contributed in a big way to add to the rich cultural heritage of our country.



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