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ARCHAEOLOGY OF PALAR BASIN

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FOREWORD

Dr.K.Rajan, who authored the book on “Archaeology of Palar Basin” deserves a special place in the field of archaeology. Besides, he had already published two books namely Archaeology of Tamil Nadu and Archaeological Gazetteer of Tamil Nadu.

Tamil University always played an encouraging role in fulfilling the scholars desire in achieving their goal. The present publication is one among such step. The archaeological studies of Tamil Nadu rely on selective excavations carried out mostly in the urban centres like Madurai, Uraiyur, Poompuhar and Karur. There is hardly any excavation to unravel the rural settlements. The cultural fabric of Tamils lies in villages. The author's intensive field work in the Palar valley and subsequent analytical study served as basic data which would help immensely for future research in Tamilology.

The socio-economic condition of the people that existed in different ecological zones could only be understood in placing the resource based archaeological sites in better geographical position. One such potential region is Palar valley. The author brought to light more than hundred archaeological sites dating from prehistoric times passing

through the neolithic, megalithic and early historic periods. This would enrich the Tamil culture in space and time. Tamil University makes an earnest attempt to meet the aspiration of the different section of the Tamil society by bringing out such outstanding works on Tamilology.

I am quite sure that the study of "Archaeology of Palar Basin", authored by Dr. K. Rajan would create a landmark for further study in this area of research.

Thanjavur
30-06-2000

Vice-Chancellor

Chapter 1

Introduction

The present investigation aims through intensive fieldwork studying the pre and proto historic cultures of the North Arcot district (presently this district is bifurcated as North Arcot district and Tiruvannamalai district). The sporadic explorations and excavations initiated in the region by Richards in 1916 continued in the post independence era. The extensive field work made during the period between 1960 and 1980 by a number of scholars like S.R.Rao, R. Nagasamy, B.Narasimhaiah and R.Poongundran and the Archaeology Department of Madras University and the State Department of Archaeology gave a broad cultural picture of this area. S.R.Rao's work at Paiyampalli added to this a reasonable chronological frame. B.Narasimhaiah's subsequent explorations in selective areas and his scholarly presentation initially revealed the potentialities of this area. The subsequent excavations in the sites like Appukallu, Kallerimalai and Mallapadi by the University of Madras and that of Mottur by the Archaeological Survey of India further brightened the picture of the material culture of this region.

The well documented inscriptional data of the memorial stones discovered by the State Department of

Archaeology under the direction of R.Nagasamy provided insights into the early historical phase here. The recent scholarly work of R.Poongundran on memorial stones with special reference to contemporary Sangam literature has opened a new dimension to this study.

The present study endeavours to continue the above studies to get a better understanding of the cultural traits and to clarify the following points.

1. To locate the earliest settlements of this area.
2. To estimate the potentiality of the palaeolithic sites and its direction.
3. To understand the pattern of neolithic culture.
4. To understand the relationship between the neolithic and megalithic cultures.
5. To identify the typology of the burials and its spatial distribution.
6. To estimate the general distribution pattern of the megalithic monuments.
7. To know the cultural contact with neighbouring regions.
8. To clarify the relationship between the megaliths and the memorial stones, using both the field data and the literary data.
9. To study the spatial distribution, chronology and iconography of the memorial stones and the cultural milieu.

The survey was initiated with the above points in mind and the result was the discovery of about 10 palaeolithic sites, 5 neolithic sites, nearly 120 megalithic sites, 3 sites yielding rock paintings and a host of memorial stones (Map II and Table VI).

The fresh data collected through the field survey has helped to understand various cultures. The following chap-

ters are based mainly on the new data collected in the course of explorations. The picture of the material culture of this area is of course still incomplete due to the lack of sufficient excavations in different zones and periods. For instance, not even a single memorial stone has been opened scientifically to understand the nature and mode of erection. Only the ground survey and the morphological study of the remains in different geographical settings have helped to delineate the evolutionary nature of the various cultural traits of this region.

Physiography

Tamil Nadu (8^0 to 14^0 N and 76^0 to 80^0 E) occupies the southern part of the peninsular India. The physiography, geographical position, drainage system and climatic condition isolate this region from the Deccan plateau. This geographical isolation helps to preserve her own personality and cultural traits.

Geography

Geographically, Tamil Nadu can be divided into two zones:

1. The Tamil Nadu uplands and South Sahyadri region
2. Eastern coastal plains

The present study area comprising the North Arcot district and Tiruvannamalai district (hereafter North Arcot alone) forms part of the first zone which covers an area of 74,254 sq.km incorporating, besides North Arcot, districts Dharmapuri, Salem, Erode and Coimbatore, western part of Madurai and Tirunelveli.

The north western part of Tamil Nadu may be considered to be a continuation of Mysore plateau and falls into two distinct terraces namely the Balaghat and the

Baramahal. The Balaghat is part of the Mysore table land and resembles Mysore in its general features. This tract includes a large portion of the northern part of the Krishnagiri taluk, and Hosur and Denkanikottai taluk of Dharmapuri district.

The Baramahal is an extensive basin comprising the major part of Dharmapuri district and Tiruppattur taluk of North Arcot District. The Baramahal plateau is characterized by hills and hillocks. Notable among them are the Javadis, the Shervarayans, the Kalrayans and the Pachaimalai's which are collectively known as Tamil Nadu hills.

Palar Basin

The region under study is inclusive of North Arcot district and Tiruvannamalai district. The region is situated between $11^{\circ} 58'$ to $13^{\circ} 15'$ N and $78^{\circ} 25'$ to $79^{\circ} 45'$ E and occupies an area of 12,265 sq.km (Map I). It is bounded on the north by Chitoor district of Andhra Pradesh, on the south, east and west respectively by South Arcot, Chingleput and Dharmapuri districts of Tamil Nadu. It comprises the taluks of Chengam, Tiruvannamalai, Polur, Arni, Cheyyar, Wandiwash of Tiruvannamalai district and Tiruppattur, Vaniyambadi, Gudiyattam, Vellore, Walajahpet, Arcot and Arakonam taluks of North Arcot district.

Mountain

The Eastern ghats and Javadi hills form the most extensive range occupying the northern and western part of the region. The Eastern ghat running in east-west direction almost form as the northern boundary of the district. There is a slender connection between Eastern ghats and Javadi hills near the place between Ambur and Vaniyambadi. In fact, the river Palar would have taken its course towards Pennaiyar if this connection was not there.

Javadi hills

A detached group of hills lying between $12^{\circ} 18'$ and $12^{\circ} 54'$ N and $78^{\circ} 34'$ and $79^{\circ} 11'$ E and occupying the southwestern part of the region protrudes in Dharmapuri district. Some of its peaks attain an elevation of over 900 m. They are separated from the Eastern ghats by the broad valley of the river Palar. This narrows in the neighbourhood of Ambur where it almost joins with Eastern ghats, but widens again as it leaves North Arcot and passes into Dharmapuri district. The Javadis are made up of numerous small plateau inhabited by Tamil speaking hill tribe called *malaiyalis*. Spurs from the main range extend in a north-easterly direction as far as the town of Vellore and gradually declining in height as they approach the Palar. A detached peak Kailasadurg about 825 m in height is only 10 km distant from Vellore.

Drainage System

The direction of the watershed of this region is owing to its hilly character. The major river systems in this region are of Palar, Cheyyar and Pennaiyar. The Palar, which has a total length of 295 km. rises near Nandidurg in Karnataka not far from the origin of Pennaiyar. It enters in south-easterly direction into this district through the gorges of Eastern ghats into the Vaniyambadi valley after traversing through the Kolar and Chitoor districts.

The Javadi hills throw it back slightly to the northern direction but it gradually assumes an easterly direction after Vellore. In the ghats its bed is narrow and rocky but on plains it gradually widens. After passing through the Chingleput district it reaches the Bay of Bengal south of Mahabalipuram.

Ponnai river, a tributary of Palar, rises in the rocky hills west of Chandragiri ($12^{\circ} 34'$ N $79^{\circ} 06'$). It flows in

southernly direction and joins with Palar after receiving the waters of numerous smaller streams flowing from the Eastern ghats.

The Pennaiyar takes its rise on the Chennarayana betta in Karnataka and enters Hosur taluk of Tamil Nadu in a south-easterly direction 5 km northwest of Bagalur. After crossing the Malur road, its waters make their way southwards in a very irregular course till the Soolagiri road is crossed. The tributary Markandanadi, otherwise also called Chinnaru, flows due south from the Mysore plateau through the valleys of Tirtam and Veppanapalli and joins into the river Pennaiyar after draining a major portion of Dharmapuri taluk. The Pambar, the third tributary, rises on the Javadis and Velagiris of Tiruppattur taluk and flows through Uttangarai to the Pennaiyar. The fourth tributary Vaniyar rises in the Shevaroy's near Yearcaud and reaches the plains at Venkatasamudram. It passes through Harur and joins the Pennaiyar just below its confluence with the Pambar. The river Pennaiyar enters southwestern part of North Arcot through the Chengam pass between Javadi hills and Shevaroy hills. After a short run it enters South Arcot district and pursues its course to Cuddalore. The Pamban river, the only tributary in this region, rises in the hillock near Thanipadi and joins with Pennaiyar near Thiruvadanur.

The river Cheyyar rises in the Javadi hills and flows southward upto Chengam and takes its course in north-easterly direction. It joins with Palar in Chingleput district after traversing through Polur and Thiruvathipuram.

The river Korttalaiyar, also known as old Palar or the Virddhakshiranadi, has its source in the surplus weir of the Kaveripakkam tank lies about 10 km northwest of Arcot. In Walajah taluk two more streams Mahendranadi and Tappar join it. It enters Chingleput in a west-east course and ultimately merges itself with the backwaters of Ennore near

Madras after receiving waters from Tiruttani and Nagari rivers.

Climate

The temperature fluctuates between 85⁰ F to 65⁰ F in North Arcot region. Weather cools down progressively from about middle of June to December. The district on the whole enjoys a dry climate. The driest months are from January to April, the average relative humidity in the afternoons being less than 40%. Though skies are generally clean they are highly clouded during the period from January to about the middle of April. From October to March winds blow mainly from northeasterly to easterly directions. From April to September south-westerly and westerly predominate.

The annual rainfall varies between 68⁰ and 98⁰ mm depending upon the locality. There are heavy rains during October and November. By June the south-west winds begin to carry up the south-west monsoon with occasional showers upto August.

Geology

The geological formations met with in this district may be conveniently classified into five groups namely (Map I),

1. Gneissic series
2. Upper Gondwana series
3. Lateritic sands, gravels and conglomerates
4. Alluvial deposits
5. Soils and sub aerial deposits

The gneissic series occupies the western part of the district. Eastward of these again are numerous clusters of detached hills, some of considerable size and elevation and remarkable for their bold forms and great ruggedness.

In the southern part of the gneissic area, forming the northern end of the Javadi hills, are great bands of granitoid gneiss, some of them remarkable for their coarseness of texture, which is blotchy and often markedly porphyritic e.g., the rock forming the mass of the Pallikonda and Vaiyambadi hills. In the Pallikonda hill the rock is of a hornblendic variety and of grey colour.

Good examples of quasi conglomeratic and brecciated structure may be seen in the low hills of close to Banavaram and to the south of Chetpet and east-south-east of Arcot.

Beds of Magnetic iron occur to the south of Gudiyattam and in the Vellore hills. The trap dykes rise to several hundred meters above the surface forming bold and striking ridges and crests at Sholinghur.

The upper Gondwana series occurs south of river Palar. There are some twenty five small patches scattered widely over the surfaces of the gneissic area in the Arcot taluk.

The western fringe of the laterite formation of Tamil-Nadu found few kilometers east of Arcot between the north bank of Palar and the alluvium of the Korttalaiyar.

The alluvia occurring within the North Arcot region are all of fluvial origin and occupy the valleys of the principal rivers like Palar.

Flora

The principal forest trees are the accha (*Hardwickia binata*), azhinjil (*Alangium lamarkii*), alli (*Meneylon pinctoria*), bamboo, blackwood (*Dalbergia latifolia*), billu (*Chloroxylon*), buraga (*Bombax malabaricum*), chandanam or red sanders (*Pterocarpus santalinum*), cherunji

(*Buchanania latifolia*), gotte (*Zizyphus xylopyra*), iluppai (*Bassia latifolia*), jambu (*Prosopis picigerta*), karu-vel (*Acacia arabica*), kungili (*Bosuellia glabra*), kattuvagai (*Alzizia oboratissima*), kalturinji (*Albizzia stipitata*), mango (*Mangifera Indica*), mailam (*Vitex altissima*), mushti (*Strychnos nux-vomica*), nalla-maddi (*Terminalia tomentosa*), namma (*Conocarpus talifolia*), neem (*Melia azedarach*), palai (*Mimusops hexandra*), pogada (*Mimusops elengi*), panasa (*Butea frondosa*), padari (*Stereopermum chelonoides*), patsari (*Dalbergia paniculata*), pungam (*Pongamia glabra*), chandra (*Acacia catechu*), satinwood, soapnut (*Sapindus emarginalus*), tella-maddi (*Terminalia arjuna*), turinji (*Albizzia amara*), tandra (*Terminalia valerica*), tamarind, tukki (*Diospyros melanoxylon*), ulinda (*Diospyros capiteilata*), yellituru (*Dichrostachys cineria*), vodisha (*Cluytia collina*), vagai (*Albizzia lebbek*), vel-vegai (*Acacia leucophlea*), vengai (*Pterocarpus marsupium*) and wood-apple (*Feronia elephantum*).

Fauna

There is nothing of special interest in connection with the fauna of North Arcot region except that the bison (*Gavaeus gaurus*) is found on the Javadi hills. The other *ferae* nature much the same as those met with in the eastern districts generally. The tiger (*Felis tigris*) is only occasionally found, but the panther (*Felis pardus*) is common throughout the rocky hills of the district. The ordinary Indian bear (*Ursus labiatus*), the hyaena (*Hyaeana striata*), the sambar (*Rusa aristotelis*), the spotted deer (*Axis maculatus*), the jungle sheep or barking deer (*Cervulus aureus*), the antelope (*Antelope bezoartica*), the hare (*Lepus nigricollis*), the wild pig (*Sus indicus*), the wild dog (*Ceron rutilans*), the jackal (*Canis aureus*) and the common monkey (*Macacus radiatus*) are found to a greater or less extent in different parts of the district. The elephant, it is said, was met with on the Javadis up to comparatively recent times, but there are none now.

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Chapter 2

Present Explorations

ARAKONAM TALUK

Ambarishapuram

It lies about 3 km east of Arakonam on the Tiruvallur road. It lies on the Korthalaiyar valley. Palaeolithic tools like handaxes, cleavers and scrapers were collected from the gravel deposits near the village¹.

Ariyur

It lies 3 km from Sholingur.

A dolmen made of four dressed orthostats enclosed with flat capstone is found in the quarry area. It had a round porthole on the eastern slab. It is locally known as *pandavar koil*.

On the western end of this hillock locally called Mut-tamparai had stone circles on the either side of the road leading to Aiyneri.

Ayepedu

Ayepedu lies on the northern side of Arakonam Sholingur road at distance of 20 from Arakonam.

One dolmen and 3 stone circles were found on the western side of the village locally known as *pandavar vidu*. The dolmen had a round porthole on the east.

Kalathur

It can be approached by 2 km from Ocheri which lies on the Walajahpet - Madras road.

Palaeolithic implements were collected on the northern bank of river Palar about 2 km south of the village. This site also falls in the gravel deposit extended from Tak-kolam, Tirumalpur and Kilvenpakkam.

Karikal

It lies on the Sholingur - Arakonam road at distance of 8 km from Sholingur.

Dolmenoid cist built of multi orthostats found at the foot hill locally known as *pandavar koil*.

The chamber is built of 14 rough slabs with conical top measuring 3.40 m north - south and 2.70 m east-west and surmounted by a huge capstone made of undressed slab. The whole chamber was encircled with stone slabs planted at regular interval. The height of the slab rose upto the capstone level. The inner circle is made of boulders²

Karikanthangal

It lies about 15 km east of Sholingur on the Sholingur -Arakonam road.

There is a dolmenoid cist built of four orthostats with 'U' shaped porthole on the eastern orthostat at the middle of the top edge. The whole chamber is encircled by slab circle rising up to the capstone level. The huge capstone rested on the slab circle instead of orthostats as it was larger in size than the chamber³

Kilvenpakkam

It lies about 5 km east of Pannapakkam on the Arakonam road.

Palaeolithic implements like handaxes, cleavers, ovates and scrapers were collected from the gravel deposits on the southern side of the village⁴.

Mahendravadi

It lies on the Banavaram - Nemili road at distance of the 5 km from Banavaram.

A huge dolmen with round porthole on the east is found near the village. This dolmen is locally venerated as a *pandavar koil*.

Nagavedu

Nagavedu lies on the Arakonam - Panapakkam road at distance of 5 km southwest of Arakonam.

Palaeolithic tools were collected from the gravel deposit on the elevated field. Handaxes, cleavers, scrapers, etc., were collected on the western side of the road leading to Panapakkam.

Paranji

Paranji is situated on the northern side of Arakonam -

Sholingur road at distance of 15 km from Arakonam and 2 km from Paravattur.

Nearly five stone circles measuring 5-8 m in diameter found on the elevated field located about 1/2 km west of the village.

Peruvalayam

It lies 4 km west of Panapakkam and 6 km east of Kaveripakkam.

Megalithic stone circles were observed 1 km east of the village and on the northern bank of river Kaveripakkam (old Palar). These circles were known as *pandavar vidu*.

Polur

The village Polur also known as Thanikai Polur lies on the Tiruttani - Arakonam road at distance of 6 km from Arakonam.

One Jaina Tirthankara sculpture found on the left side of the road adjacent to the Pillaiyar koil.

Tirthankara is found seated in *padmasana* flanked with chowri bearers and it had three umbrella over his head.

Surai

It lies on the Banavaram - Sholingur road at a distance of 5 km from Banavaram.

A dolmen made of four orthostats is found near the tank. It had a round porthole on the east.

Takkolam

It lies about 15 km southeast of Arakonam. Palaeolithic implements were collected on the river beds of the old Palar or Kortalaiyar river. The gravel deposits yielded quite a number of tools like handaxes, cleavers, scrapers, etc. Its ancient name was 'Tiru Ural' and its present name came into existence in the time of Rajendra Chola (1012 - 1044)

Thalikal

It is situated on the southern side of Arakonam Sholingur road at distance of about 20 km from Arakonam.

Megalithic dolmens made of rectangular slabs are found on the northern side of the village. There are left only two dolmens undisturbed. The eastern slab had a round porthole.

Tirumalpur

It is located 6 km east of Panapakkam and 1 km east of Kilvenpakkam.

The same gravel deposit noticed earlier at Kilvenpakkam extended further east into this village. Identical palaeolithic tools like handaxes, cleavers, scrapers were collected from the gravel deposits⁵.

Vettangulam

This village lies on the western side of the Arakonam Panapakkam road about 2 km north of Panapakkam.

Nearly 10 stone circles measuring 5-10 m in diameter were noticed 2 km west of the village near Melvettangulam. These were locally known as *pandavar vidu*.

ARCOT TALUK

Arumbakkam

It lies 5 km east of Kalavai on Wandawash road.

Middle palaeolithic tools like handaxes, scrapers, cleavers were collected near the lake on the northern side of the road leading to Arumbakkam.

Durgam

This habitation-cum-burial site lies 3 km southwest of Timiri.

A habitation mound yielding megalithic black and red ware was found near the village. Iron slags were also collected.

The megalithic stone circles locally called *pandavar vidu* were scattered on the elevated field on the western side of the hillock.

Kaniyanur

It lies 7 km south of Arcot. Palaeolithic tools like handaxes, cleavers, scrapers were collected on the eastern slope of the hillock further 1 km from the village⁶.

Thirupanmalai

It lies 3 km from Arcot on the Kannamangalam road.

Megalithic stone circles were found near the hillock called *pancha pandavar malai*.

One memorial stone called *pulikuttipattan kal* found on the road side before entering the village. The hero is depicted as killing a tiger.

CHENGAM TALUK

Agarampallipattu

It lies 9 km from Thandarampattu and 5 km from Thenmudiyannur. The megalithic cairn circles enclosing east facing cist burial were found at foothill of Pallipattumalai. There are about 10 cairn circles found in disturbed condition.

Adjacent to this burial site about 1 km west of the village is found one uninscribed memorial stone locally called *Vediappan koil*, with a hero holding a bow and arrow in a charging posture.

Anandavadi

The small hamlet Anandavadi lies on the southern tip of the Javadi hill about 32 km from Chengam on the Uttangarai road. An uninscribed memorial stone found inside the temple on the left side of the main deity Hanuman. According to the priest, this rectangular slab having a hero holding sword and shield was brought from the nearest *Vediappan koil*. On the basis of sculptural representation it can be dated to the 16-17 th c A.D.

Andipatti

It lies on the Chengam - Neeppathurai road via Melpalipatti at about 15 km from Chengam. There are cairn circles in two different locations. The first one numbering more than 20 covering an area of 10 acres found on the

western side of the village on the elevated field locally called *kalluddai*. The second group is found near the newly formed colony namely Andipatti Indira Kūdiyiruppu. The habitation mound yielding black and red ware is found behind the village in the cultivated field locally called *natamedu*.

Besides the above megaliths the site is more important because for the first time, in Tamil Nadu, coins with Tamil brahmi legend were discovered here. A hoard of 143 lead coins presently housed in the Govt. Museum was unearthed in 1967⁷. This is the first reported coin of Sangam Age. The obverse of this coin had two wavy lines perhaps indicating river and flanked by two strokes drawn diagonally meeting at the top with wavy or comb like design on these strokes. In fact, this design was reported upside down.

The graffiti marks reported in the sites like Vallam, Uraiyur, Tirukampuliyur, Kodumanal, etc., may suggest that the diagonal strokes only meet at the top and not at the base. On the reverse, there is in the centre *ankusa* with parallel lines to the proper left of it with a circle each above and below the lines. Legend on the rim reads as *Atinnan ediran Chendan*.

Iravatham Mahadevan⁸ and R.Nagaswamy⁹ dates this to 2nd c A.D. whereas K.G.Krishnan dates this to 4th c A.D.^{9a} Even the readings also differ. Iravatham Mahadevan reads as *Tinnan edir ana Chendan a*. He suggests that the final *a* is considered to be genitive suffix *sa* of the prakrit legends of the early period and also argues that the name *Atinnan* was not found in early literature.

K.G.Krishnan refuted that absence of such a name as *Atinnan* in early literature cannot be accepted as sufficient argument to reject it and then justify the use of *a* as a genitive case particle which is equally unknown in numismatic or epigraphical tradition in Tamil Nadu. The only

early coin bearing a legend in tamil language issued by a Saka king is a rendering of the prakrit version appearing on the other side of the coin. The legends of the recently discovered Sangam age coins do not use genitive suffix.

Moreover there is no justification in using the vowel letter *a* separately instead of adding it to the final *n* of the word Chendan¹⁰

The coin was issued by a ruler called Chendan who is described as the *edir* of Atinnan. The expression *edir* of the present coin can therefore be understood to mean 'succeed', making Chendan, the successor of Atinnan.

The geographical location of this site also has some importance as it is located in the Chengam pass which has plenty of memorial stones and megaliths.

Arattavadi

It lies 9 km from Chengam on the Manikkal road. More than 500 cairn circles covering an area of about 100 acres are found in the field, locally called *Arattavai modu*, on the eastern side of the main road. This undisturbed burial complex will be completely destroyed if the proposed housing colony is constructed.

Bontai

The village is located about 3 km east of Tanipadi. There are three memorial stones with *vatteluttu* script in two separate locations. The inscription of the first one called *Manyavediappan koil* was eroded. It mentions the village Naripalli which lies on the right bank of the river Kallai about 20 km west of this site in Harur taluk of Dharmapuri district. The hero holds sword and shield.

The other two identical memorial stones both in content and structure erected for the heroes who died in the same skirmish in the 12th regnal year of Pallava Narasimhavarman (Ch.1971/90 and 91). The sculptural representation had a hero holding bow and sword and penetrated with arrows at his chest and forehead. *Cimil* is placed at his foot.

Chengam

The taluk headquarters Chengam is located on the right bank of river Cheyyar. The Sangam poet Perungausikanar of Palkundrakottam speaks exclusively in *Malaipadukadam* about *Chengammattu vel Nannam cey Nannan*.

There are two habitation mounds locally called *kottaimedu* and *nattaimedu*. The early historic habitation mound (*nattaimedu*) lies a few meters southwest of historical mound (*kottaimedu*). It yielded black and red ware and large bricks comparable to those found at Kaveripattinam.

An exploratory trial dig carried out by Archaeological Department in 1940-41 on the historical habitation mound yielded thick black and red ware, red ware, black ware, brickbats, terracotta beads, etc. A drain made of brick was also unearthed. A Mahavira sculpture was recovered from the accidental digging and it is presently housed in the Govt. Girls Higher Secondary School.

According to the local people, urn burials with skull and bone pieces were recovered. The habitation mound and the burial site are completely encroached by the expansion of the town.

One memorial stone is found on the bank of the tank. It gives a village name Thokkaipadi which lies a km east

of Chengam in the name Thokkavadi.

Chinnayampettai

It lies 4 km from Tanipadi and 2 km from Harur Tanipadi main road. The disturbed burial complex consisting of few cairn circles entombing cist burial is found a few metres away from the village. It yielded black and red ware, red ware, black ware, terracotta beads, bone pieces, etc.

There are two memorial stones called *savumettu vediappan koil* found near the burial complex. The prefix *savumettu*, meaning burial mound, is indicative of a burial ground continued then since the megalithic period.

The two Tamil inscriptions engraved in the 3rd and 6th regnal year of Pallava Kampavarman had identical sculptural representation with hero holding bow and sword. Both are involved in buffalo raid (Ch.1971/56 and 57).

The first memorial stone mentions the village Malaiyaru which lies about 6 km from Tanipadi and 4 km from this village on the road leading to Harur. The cattle raiders came from *eyil nadu* and invaded this area. The *eyil nadu* lies in Tiruppattur taluk. This lithic evidence shows the long distance covered by the cattle raiders:

The second one gives the village name Manikkal in *Melvenadu* which lies on the north side of river Pennaiyar.

There is a fort and Vijayanagara period structural tank found near the main road. On the steps and inner surface slabs had sculptures like gods, goddess, animals, fighting scenes, dancing figures and erotic sculpture. Nearly half of them were erotic sculptures.

Edakkal

It can be approached from Tiruvannamalai - Kallakurchi main road after taking a diversion at Perungal which lies 15 km west of Tiruvannamalai. The memorial stone called *Irattai Vediappan Koil* found on the north bank of river Pennaiyar. The *vatteluttu* inscription also mentions this place as *pennai vadakarai mel*. Hero holds bow and sword with *hendi* at his feet.

Edathanur

Edathanur lies 10 km south of Thandarampattu. A famous memorial stone depicting the hero along with a dog is found on the left bank of the river Pennaiyar about 2 km west of the village. This memorial called *Umai Vediappan* was erected in 34th regnal year of Mahendravarman (Ch.1971/59). The sculptured panel had a hero holding bow and sword. On the left side at his foot there are *cimil* and *kendy*. On the right side had a seated dog.

Elangunni

Elangunni lies 6 km from Neeppathurai which lies 28 km away from Chengam.

The memorial stones with Tamil script are found 3 km away from the village at the foothill locally called *Vediappan koil*. The hero holds bow and sword. The lithic evidence datable to 10th C A.D. mentions the village Manikkal (Ch.1971/118) which lie, about a km east of this village.

Erandanthankarai

The site is found at the confluence of river Toriyaru with river Pennaiyar. As the site lies on both the banks, it is known as Erandanthankarai (banks of two rivers). This

is located in the dense reserve forest area and can be approached by walking about 5 km either from Thalaiyuthu or Karungalipadipatti.

More than 100 cairn circles measuring 5-7 m in diameter are found on the elevated field locally called *panchapandavar vidu*. One of the disturbed cairn circles yielded a cist with round porthole on its eastern orthostat.

According to the local people, there is a memorial stone called *Periya vediappan* on the left bank of the river Toraiyaru but this could not be located due to the nature of the forest.

Kannakandal

The village lies about 5 km east of Sattanur on the way to Tharadappatti village.

There is a memorial stone called *Vediappan* on the road side. This *vatteluttu* script is partly damaged but one could presume that the content is identical to the memorial stone inscription of Se.Gudalore and Kottaiyur. The slab had a hero holding bow in his left hand, the right hand resting on the sword tucked in the waist portion (Ch.1971/48).

Karapattu

It lies 22 km east of Chengam on the Polur road. The memorial stone, locally known as *nattamettu Vediappan koil*, lies one km away from the main road near the Mariamman temple.

The east facing memorial slab had a hero facing north holding bow and sword in his left and right hand respectively. It has a Tamil inscription of Parantaka I, which mentions this area as *palkunra kottatuk ... venattu*

...(Ch.1971/122). This *venadu* must be a *kilvenadu* as another memorial inscription found at Periakolpadi of the same area also refers to the same territorial division. Both the sites, Karappattu and Periakolapadi, is located east of the hillock running between Chengam and Tiruvannamalai.

Manikkal

It lies 20 km southwest of Changam. The *vatteluttu* memorial stone locally called *Viramaiyan koil* is found in the field of Udaiyar. The hero holds bow and sword with lamp on his right and cimil and kendy at his foot. It gives a 6th regnal year but the king's name could not be ascertained (Ch.1971/120).

The earlier mentioned Elangunni memorial stone inscription mentions this village Manikkal.

Karungalipadipatti

The small hamlet Karungalipadipatti can be approached by a mud road from Puliampatti which lies between Manikkal and Ncepathurai. It is about 5 km from Manikkal and 20 km from Chengam.

There are four inscribed memorial stones found in two locations called *Ainarappan koil* and *Vediappan koil*. Both the temples are found inside the dense forest about 2 km away from the village at the foothill of Periyamalai. All the four inscriptions mention this place as Karungalipadi. However the earliest Mahendravarman's inscriptions places this village in *Mivenadu* whereas the other three inscription place this village in *Tenvenadu* and the village had a prefix Melaikarungalipadipatti.

The first memorial stone called *Aiyandarappan* was erected in the 14th regnal year of Mahendravarman (Ch.1971/113) (Pl.I). The village Naripalli mentioned in

this inscription is found on the other side of river Pennaiyar in Harur taluk of Dharmapuri district.

The second memorial called Vediappan belongs to the 10th regnal year of Prithi Gangarayar Athiyay Raman of 10th c A.D. The inscribed stone slab had a hero holding bow in his left hand and right hand rested on the sword tied at the waist portion. The third (Ch.1971/114) and fourth (Ch.116) ones are identical to the second memorial stone.

Kattamaduvu

Kattamaduvu can be approached by a mud road for about 3 km from Elangunni. The memorial with a Tamil inscription engraved in the 8th regnal year of Parantaka I is found near the village locally called *Nondi Vediappan koil*. The hero stands erect and holds a sword in his right hand. Two cattle were shown on his right (Ch.1971/81).

Kilpasar

It lies on the Harur - Tanipadi road about 25 km from Thandarampattu and 7 km from Tanipadi.

The disturbed megalithic sites entombing cist burial are found on the elevated field near the village. These were locally known as *Pandavar vidu*.

Kilravandavadi

It lies 2 km from Thandarampattu on Tanipadi road. The habitation-cum-burial site and memorial stone is found further west and south of the village. The habitation mound covering an area of more than 25 acres yielded black and red ware.

The megalithic cairn circles, locally called *valipar-*

vatam or *valiparuvu*, numbering more than 200 are found on either side of the road leading to Tanipadi. The cairn circle rising 50-100 cm above the ground level had a cist with round porthole on the east. This 50 acre complex is disturbed for slabs.

The memorial stone engraved in *vatteluttu* script in the 44th regnal year of Pallava Nandivarman is found at *Vediappan koil* in the gap between burial and habitation. This village here is mentioned as Iramandaivadi of *Merkovilur nadu* (Ch.1971/51). As stated earlier, Merkovilur lies just 2 km away from the site.

The sculptural panel had a hero holding bow and sword. The *cimil* and *kendy* is placed at the foot on either side. His right shoulder was penetrated with arrows.

Koluthampattu

It lies about 3 km east of Sattanur which lies on the Chengam - Tandampattu road.

The unfinished tools of the pecked and ground stone industry are found at the foothill. The megalithic cairn circle locally called *Kalluddai* is found near the village.

It seems that the Kannakandal memorial stone mentioned above might have belonged to this complex.

Konakuttai lies 9 km from Chengam on Tiruvanmalai road. The disturbed cairn circles numbering 12 are found on the elevated field on the left side of the road leading to Sattanur. The habitation mound yielding black and red ware is found further east of the village.

The memorial stone datable to 10th c A.D. on stylistic ground, locally known as *Vediappan koil*, is found near the burial complex. The fragmented slab had a hero holding

bow and sword and penetrated with an arrow on his forehead. A *cimil*, pot and a lamp placed at his foot.

Kottaiyur

This village lies near Vanapuram about 15 km north of Tiruvannamalai. There are found four memorial stones with *vatteluttu* script in three locations.

The first one found in the *Sirai mittan koil* was put up in 21 st regnal year of Somasiko Thirumagan (Ch.1971/62), palaeographically dated to 6th c A.D. Hero holds sword and shield. The second one engraved in the 33rd regnal year of Pallava Mahendravarman (ch.1971/63) found inside the tank on its southern end had a hero holding bow in his left hand and right hand resting on the sword. Mirror, *cimil* and *kendy* are placed on his left side.

The third one is planted on the eastern side of the tank and is similar to the second. Both were installed in the 33rd regnal year of Pallava Mahendravarman (Ch.1971/54). The fourth one also found on the eastern side of the tank on its southern end and is completely damaged.

Kumbalamaratu

It lies to the north of Chengam and south of Alan-gayam on the Javadi hills. Dolmenoid cists were found on the rocky surface locally called *pandavar parai*. The chamber of the dolmenoid cist is built of multi orthostas placed in rectangular form over which a huge capstone is placed. The eastern side had a passage in the form of wide gap. The total height of the dolmenoid cist varied from 60 to 70 cm.

Melpallipattu

Melpallipattu is located on the Chengam - Neeppathurai

road at a distance of 12 km from Chengam.

The memorial stone, locally known as *Mosa Vediapan*, is found inside the forest area of Anandavadi. The *vatteluttu* script states that it was installed during the 9th regnal year of Pallava Parameshvaravarman I (Ch.1971/78). Here hero holds bow and sword with *cimil* and *kendy* placed at his foot.

Melpasar

It is located 2 km before Mottakkal on the Harur - Tanipadi road about 12 km from Tanipadi. More than 50 cairn circles are found on the elevated field locally known as *periyagounder kadu* on the northern side of the village. One of the disturbed burials yielded cist burial with round porthole measuring 30 cm in dia on its eastern slab.

Melpunjai

The village Melpunjai lies 4 km from Pachchur and 20 km north of Tiruvannamalai.

More than 100 cairn circles locally called *valiparuvu* are found at the foothill of Nandimalai inside the reserved forest area. The cairn circles rising 50-70 cm above the ground level had a diameter of 5-7 m.

One inscribed slab embedded into the soil is found in front of the Mariamman temple.

Melravandavadi

It lies about 3 km from Melvanakkambadi on the Chengam - Manikkal road.

The cairn circles numbering more than 20 are found on the elevated field locally called *kalluddai*. The two

identical inscribed memorial stones, known as *Vediappan*, with hero standing erect and holding bow and sword are found on the eastern side of the tank in the cultivated field.

Mottakkal

Mottakkal lies 12 km from Tanipadi on the Harur road. More than 100 cairn circles locally called *pandiyar vidu* are found on the foot hill of Valachchamalai.

One cist burial with round porthole on the east is exposed with sarcophagus fragments and few bone pieces. The rivulet Athanur *odai* flows near the site.

On the bank of this stream two memorial stones venerated as *Vediappan* were noticed. Both the memorials with *vatteluttu* script were put in the 32nd regnal year of Mahendravarman (Ch.1971/88 and 89).

The first one was raised for the hero who died in cattle raid. The sculptural representation had a hero holding bow and sword. The *kendy* and quiver were placed on the right and left sides of the hero at the foot.

The second one was raised for the hero who died in a tiger animal fighting (*pulikuttipattankal*). The hero holds the charging tiger with right hand holding a sword and left hand inside the mouth of tiger.

Mottur

Mottur, a hamlet of the village T.Velur, lies on the Harur road 5 km north of Tanipadi 25 km west of Tiruvannamalai on the Harur road.

The most interesting and significant discovery made by B.Narasimhaiah at Mottur is that of a unique monolithic

anthropomorphic figure carved out of a huge thick slab.^{11.}

The anthropomorphic figure facing south forms part of the middle of the three concentric circles of a megalith. This site was excavated in the year 1978-79 and it is dealt with separately in the following chapters.^{12.}

Nearly 70 cairn circles ranging from 3.5 to 12 m in diameter were noticed on the eastern slope of the hill Velurmalai. The circles were enclosing a cist with sarcophagus interment. The round porthole is seen on the eastern orthostat.

Munnurmangalam

This habitation- cum - burial site lies 6 km east of Chengam on the Polur road. About ten megaliths mainly of cairn circles are found on the northern side of the village inside the reserved forest area locally called *adipparai*. It seems that there is an inscription near this place engraved on a boulder locally called *eiuttadichchanparai*. But in the present exploration it could not be traced.

The habitation mound covering an area of 10 acres is found 1 km away from the village on the road to Anandapudur village. The mound rising 50 cm above the surrounding ground level yielded black and red ware, red ware and black ware. It is locally known as *nattamedu* or *nattakollai*.

On the way to this mound there is a free standing Vishnu sculpture on the bank of the tank mistakenly venerated as Kaliamman.

Nallapattu

It lies north of Chengam and south of Alangayam on the Javadi hills. Dolmeoid cists were found on the rock

surface locally called *pandavar parai*. The chamber of the dolmenoid cist is built of multi orthostats placed in rectangular form over which a huge capstone is placed. The eastern side had a passage in the form of wide gap. The total height of the dolmenoid cist varied from 60 to 70 cm.

Narayanakuppam

Narayanakuppam is situated about 5 km east of Tanipadi on Harur - Tiruvannamalai road.

Quite interestingly, there is a rectangular stone slab called *sanniyasikal* found in the midst of the village. According to the local people, during the first, second and third Sundays in the month of Adi, 1000 potful of water will be poured on this stone. That the water will be collected and sprinkled over the cattle, house and land seeking rain and prosperity.

On the front side of the *sanniyasikal* there is a grid with 9 vertical and 6 horizontal lines ending with *trishul* forming 54 boxes in total. At the back some unrecognised symbols and letters were observed. It seems there is a cist like box below this stone. It is quite interesting to note that once in three years, the people will open the cist and will push the boar, cock and a goat together inside the chamber alive. Then they will close it with a flat slab and over it soil will be filled up. This chamber or box once again will be reopened after three years to do the same ritual.

This type of ritual is followed at Tanipadi and Thiruvudathanur both respectively lying 5 km west and east of the village Naranayanakuppam.

Neepathurai

Neepathurai lies on the left bank of Pennaiyar at a dis-

tance of 28 km from Chengam. It can also be approached from Harur of Dharmapuri district.

The historical habitation mound covering an area of about 25 acres is found on the eastern side of the village. It yielded black and red ware, red ware and black ware. A disturbed urn burial is found near the habitation.

There is a natural rock locally called *pandukkal* engraved with three inscriptions of later date probably 18th c A.D. Another inscription also found on a rectangular slab. According to the owner, the sick cattle will be cured if one gives the water after reading this mythical word.

Besides, they also worship some natural rocks found inside the river in the name of Chenniamman.

Padi Agragaram (Narasinganallur)

Padi Agragaram lies 22 km from Chengam and 3 km from Thorapadi. Two memorial stones locally called *Vediappan koil* and an inscribed slab are found 1 km south of the village on the left bank of river Cheyyar.

The first *vatteluttu* inscription engraved in the 33rd regnal year of Pallava Simhavarman states that one Pachirappaannan Kurattatan of Thoppuravaruppadi raided this village (Ch.1971/30). As said earlier, Thoppuravaruppadi lies 3 km west of this village.

The inscription on the second one is completely damaged. The sculptural representations on both the memorials are similar in nature. Hero holds sword and shield and cimil and kendy are placed at his foot.

The inscribed slab planted near these memorials is dated to 23rd regnal year of Kampavarman.

Periakolapadi

Periakolapadi lies on the western side of the Chengam Tiruvannamalai main road at a distance of 20 km from Chengam.

There are two memorial stones on the bank of the tank. These were engraved respectively in *vatteluttu* script in the 11th regnal year of Mahendravarman (Ch.1971/96) and in the 2nd regnal year (?) of Eswaravarman (Ch.1971/97). Both had a hero facing north and holds bow and sword with *cimil* and *kendy* placed at his foot.

The first memorial stone mentions for the first time a territorial division called *kilvenadu*. This territorial division falls east of the mountain running between Chengam and Tiruvannamalai. Other than this memorial stone none of them gives this territorial division.

Periyakolutampadi

This can be approached from Sattanur-Chengam main road after taking a diversion about 5 km before Sattanur which lies 17 km from Chengam.

An inscription of Sri Virapratapa Udaiyar Naga Nayakar is found engraved on a natural rock in a cultivated field. The boulder was partially embedded. The exposed 20 line inscription starts with *meikeerthi mahamandaleswarar*. It indicates that this village is belonged to the Chenga nadu of Jayagonda Cholamandalam.

A memorial stone chiselled out of a natural rock is found near this inscription. The hero holds bow and arrow in a charging posture. One arrow found penetrated through his body. On stylistic ground it can be dated to 16-17th c A.D.

Perumuttam

It lies north of Chengam and south of Alangayam on the Javadi hills. Dolmenoid cists were found on the rocky surface locally called *pandavar parai*. The chamber of the dolmenoid cist is built of multi orthostas placed in rectangular form over which a huge capstone is placed. The eastern side had a passage in the form of wide gap. The total height of the dolmenoid cist varied from 60 to 70 cm.

Pinjur

This village lies 8 km from Chengam on the Arattavadi road. The habitation - cum - burial site is found on the southern side of the village.

The extensive habitation mound locally known as *nat-tamodu* occupying an area of more than 50 acres yielded both megalithic and histrocial potteries like black and red ware, black ware, red ware, etc.

The burial complex locally called as *Kalluddai* found on the elevated field one km east of the habitation mound on either side of the main road leading to Arattavadi. More than 100 cairn circles rising 30-50 cm above the ground level were observed. some of the disturbed cairn circles having a diameter of 5-6 m had a capstone. According to the local people, a huge urn was noticed below this capstone.

Two inscribed memorial stones (Pl.II & III) facing each other are found near the habitation mound. According to the land owner, the east facing memorial stone with Tamil script is in original position whereas the west facing memorial stone with *vatteluttu* script was brought from the nearby burial complex. Presently both are venerated as *Vediappaṇ koil*.

The *vatteluttu* memorial stone was broken into four pieces however the hero could be identified with a bow and with *cimil* (small casket) and *kendy* on either side.

The second memorial stone engraved in the 7th regnal year of Pallava Dandivikrama panmar mentions this place as Perumpunji (Pinjur may be a corrupt form of Punjiur) (Ch.1971/72). The hero holds bow and arrow and pierced with two arrows one across the chest another across the leg portion.

Pudurchekkadi

It lies 9 km from Tanipadi. It has to be approached after taking a diversion at Bontai which lies on the Tanipadi - Perungulattur road.

The megalithic cairn circle locally called *pandavar vidu* is found near the village. More than 20 circles measuring 6-12 m in diameter were found.

Pudupattu

This village lies 2 km from Karappattu which is located on the Polur-Chengam road at distance of 22 km from Chengam.

A rectangular stone with a sculptured panel on the obverse and an inscription at the back is found lying in the village near the banyan tree. The front face had sword, sickle, sun, moon, horse, *parasu*, seated goddess and a few unrecognised symbols have been identified. These symbols obviously belongs to a trade guild. The nature of the guild could not be identified as the inscription is hidden below.

Puliyur

It lies north of Chengam and south of Alangavam on

the Javadi hills. Dolmenoid cists were found on the rock surface locally called *pandavar parai*. The chamber of the dolmenoid cist is built of multi orthostats placed in rectangular form over which a huge capstone is placed. The eastern side had a passage in the form of a wide gap and the total height of the dolmenoid cist varied from 60 to 70 cm. In addition to this quite a number of polished stone axes were recovered from the surface.

Reddiarpalayam

Reddiarpalayam lies 20 km from Tanipadi on Harur road. The megalithic cairn circles with cist burial with porthole on the east are found on the elevated field near the village in a disturbed condition.

Samanthapuram

It is located 1 km from Pinjur and 8 km from Chengam on the Arattavadi road. Two identical uninscribed memorial stones datable to 16-17th c A.D. are found near the village. The hero wearing a *chennavira*, a symbol of valour, holds bow and arrow. These are known as *Vediappan koil*.

Sattanur

The important habitation - cum - burial site lies 17 km from Chengam on Tandampattu road. The actual site lies on the way to Sattanur dam near the village Mallikapuram about 3 km from Sattanur.

The habitation mound covering an area of more than 25 acres lies 0.5 km away from the village Mallikapuram. It yielded megalithic black and red ware, black ware, red ware and terracotta beads.

The megalithic cairn circles numbering around 20 are

found in disturbed condition. One of the disturbed circles yielded a cist burial.

Five memorial stones were unearthed near the burial complex and were planted under the shed on the left side of the road locally called *Vediappan koil* (pI. IV). These were engraved in the reigns of Mahendravarman (Ch.1971/35), Narasimhavarman I (Ch.1971/36), Narasimhavarman II (Two memorials) (Ch.1971/37 and 38) and Parantaka I (Ch.1971/39). Except the Parantaka I inscription, all other are engraved with *vatteluttu* script. This village is mentioned as *Merkovilur nattu Sattanur*. Veeranam memorial stones located a few kms away from this village also mentioned this village.

The first memorial stone erected in the 39th regnal year of Pallava Mahendravarman was raised for the hero who died during the raid at Bontai which lies in Mikondrai nadu near Tanipadi about 15 km from Sattanur. Hero holds shield and sword.

The second one planted in the 11th regnal year of Narasimhavarman I mentioned that the people came from Alavirppadi of Merkovilur nadu to raid Sattanur (Pl.V). This Alavirppadi might be near Tandrapattu village. The distance between this site and the Tandrapattu is about 12 km. Besides this evidence, there is sufficient evidence to believe that the cattle raids were generally confined to 10-20 km distance only. The panel had a hero holding bow and sword.

The third and fourth ones are identical, being erected during the reign of Narasimhavarman II. The hero holds bow and arrow.

The last one engraved in the 4th regnal year of Parantaka had a hero holding bow and sword. It seems that during the 7th and 8th century major skirmishes might

have taken place between Sattanur and Alavirpadi.

Se.Gudalore

It lies 10 km north of Tiruvannamalai. The memorial stone called *sanniyasikal* is found on the bank of the tank near the present burial ground about 1 km north of the village. The sculptural panel had a hero holding bow and sword and *cimil* and *kendy* placed at his foot.

The inscriptional data is quite interesting here. As noted earlier the Kottaiyur inscription engraved in the 33rd regnal year of Mahendravarman states that the Kandavinnanar of Kottaiyur attempted to catch the cattle of Ponnarambanar of Se.Gudalore. In this act, Kandavinnanar's brother (uncle's son) died. The memorial is raised for him at Kottaiyur.

It seems that to take revenge of this, Kandavinnanar once again invaded Se.Gudalore after five years in the 38th regnal year of Mahendravarman (Ch.1971/50) in which Ponnarambanar's servant killed and for him the memorial was raised at Se.Gudalore. The inscription mentions this place as Kudal.

Both the inscriptions give them as *Vanakoaraisar marumakkal*, hence Ponnarambanar and Kandavinnanar might be cousin brothers.

The distance between Se.Gudalore and Kottaiyur is about 5 km.

Sembadavankottai

The place called Sembadavankottai lies between Devidiakuppam and Narayanakuppam villages. It can be approached from Tanipadi via Narayanakuppam which lies 5 km from Tanipadi.

About 50 megalithic cairn circles locally called *valiparuvu* are found on the southern side of the road near the hillock. One of the disturbed circles having 6-7 in dia yielded a cist with round porthole on the east. Few bone pieces and bowl pieces of black and red ware were collected. According to the local people, they collected some pots with legs but whether these are legged jars or sarcophagus could not be ascertained.

Tandarampattu

This major village lies on the Tiruvannamalai - Harur road at distance of 15 km from Tiruvannamalai.

There are two identical memorial stones raised in the 7th regnal year of *Narasimhavarman I* for two heroes who died in the battle while Muttaraisar invaded Merkovalur (Ch.1971/68 and 69). Here it is mentioned as Merkovalur but the memorial inscriptions found at Kilravandavadi, Veeranam and Sattanur respectively located 2, 7 and 12 km distance away mentioend as this village belongs to the Merkovalur nadu. Hence the *nadu* division is obviously named after this major village.

These were locally venerated as Krishnarappan. The hero holds bow and sword and *cimil*, *mirror* and *kendy* placed at his foot. His forehead and the body portion were penetrated with arrows.

Tanipadi

This small town lies on Harur - Tiruvannamalai road at a distance of 33 km from Tiruvannamalai.

Cairn circle called *kalluddai* is found in a disturbed condition on the elevated field on the way to Mottakkal.

There is a fertility stone called *sanniyasikal* near

Mariamman koil. The rituals are the same as those followed at Narayanakuppam.

Thalaiyuthu

The major village Thalaiyuthu lies 13 km away from Chengam.

The habitation - cum - burial site is found one km south of the village. The habitation mound covering an area of 20 acres yielded black and red ware, black ware, red ware, etc. The burial complex, locally known as *nachiyakunni modu kalluddai*, having more than 500 cairn circles is found on the elevated field on the southern side of the village.

Memorial stones

There are four memorial stones found in three locations on the southern side of the village and adjacent to the burial complex. All the four were venerated as Vediappan. These were raised for those who died in cattle, sheep, buffalo raids. The terms *toru*, *mari toru* and *erumai toru* found in these inscriptions are quite interesting. Two of the memorial inscriptions referred to this village as Thalai ur. The term *pal kunra kottattu mel venattu talaiyur* gives its territorial position.

The first memorial stone involved in sheep raid in *vatteluttu* script on the regnal year of Pallava Narasimha II had a hero holding bow and sword and *cimil* found near the leg portion (Ch.1971/73).

The second *vatteluttu* lithic evidence engraved in the 2nd regnal year of Pallava Dantivarman had a hero holding bow and arrow with *cimil* and *kendy* on either side of his leg portion (Ch.1971/73).

The third one having Tamil script made in the 23rd regnal year of Chola Parantaka I had a hero holding bow and sword (Ch.1971/75). Interestingly, an arrow is found pierced through his forehead.

The last one with Tamil inscription fails to give any king's name but the hero died in buffalo raid. The hero holding bow and sword is shown with an arrow pierced across the chest. On stylistic ground this can be dated to 10th c A.D.

Thenmudiyanur

Thenmudiyanur is situated about 5 km south of Thandrampattu which lies on the Tiruvannamalai - Hæru road. The burial complex mainly of cairn circles called *valiparuvu mandaka* is found in disturbed condition in front of the tank on the left side of the road.

There is a sluice in the tank with a 21 lines inscription of Vikrama Chola engraved on the outer surface of the standing slab of the sluice.

One damaged memorial stone with *vatteluttu* script is found on the left side of the canal. This memorial stone is locally known as *Kudiyavar Vediappan koil*.

The *sanniyasikal* is found in the midst of the village facing east. This rectangular slab had a *trishul* placed on a pedestal at the centre and flanked with two chauries on the top and two lamps at the base. The left top corner had a crescent and just below this is shown a mountain in triangular form. As at Narayanakuppam, Tanipadi and Thiruviddattalur, here also in the month of Adi water will be poured on this stone as a ritual to pray for rain.

Just opposite to this, there is another rectangular stone with Rajarajan inscription.

Thiruviddattanur

It lies on the right bank of river Pennaiyar about 10 km from Tanipadi via Narayanakuppam.

One *sanniyasikal* identical to Tanipadi and Naranayanakuppam fertility stones is found in the village, Here also the same rituals are followed.

Thondamanur

This small village lies on the right bank of the river Pennaiyar opposite to the village Pallipattu at distance of 10 km from Thandarampattu.

The burial complex covering an area of more than 50 acres is found 3 km further south of the village. This place is locally called as *Sattai parai kalli malai*. The burials are known as *pandavar vidu* or *vali paruvu*.

A cairn circle with two menhirs locally known as *Annan Thambi kal* is found in the midst of the burial complex near the tank. The first menhir measuring 6 m in height is planted on the western side forming an integral part of the circle.

The second menhir measuring 5 m in height is planted adjacent to the earlier one on the southern side. Unfortunately, this is broken into three pieces and fallen on the ground. The dia. of the circle is of about 20 m.

The disturbed circle yielded a cist burial with round porthole on the east closed with a heavy capstone.

The habitation mound locally called *nattamodu* is completely flattened by cultivation. This mound yielded black and red ware.

One memorial stone called *Vediappan* is found on the southern side of the village. This east facing stone with *vatteluttu* script had a hero with sword and shield. *Trishul* like object is shown on the two top corners. This was erected for the hero who died in cattle raid during the period of Pallava Simhavarman.

Thorapadi

Thorapadi lies about 19 km from Chengam and 5 km from Chengam - Tiruvannamalai road.

Two memorial stones, venerated as *Vediappan*, are found on the left bank of the river Cheyyar about 2 km north east of the village.

The first one was engraved in *vatteluttu* script during Mahendravarman's reign (Ch.1971/33). Here the place Perumugai is mentioned. All the Sandur inscriptions mention Perumugai as a part of *Velala nadu*. The Thorapadi inscription says that Ganga *araisar makkal* Ponnanthiyar invaded Perumugai. But Sandur (Perumugai) inscription indicates that Perumugai is invaded by Perubanilavaraisar. Hence it may be suggested that the village Perumugai mentioned here and at Sandur are not one and the same, as Thorapadi and Sandur are located 100 km apart. A close study of the memorial inscriptions suggest that their cattle raids are generally confined to 10-20 km radius.

The sculptural panel in both memorials had a hero holding sword and shield and *cimil* and *kendy* placed at his foot.

The west facing second herostone in *vatteluttu* script was erected in 12th regnal year of Pallava Narasimhavarman (Ch.1971/34).

The village Thorapadi is mentioned as *Thop-*

puruvarupadi in Padi Agragaram (Narasinganallur) memorial stone inscription located 3 km east of Thorapadi.

T.Velur

This small village lies 2 km north of Tanipadi on the way to Veppur.

The memorial stone, locally called Vediappan koil was raised in the 2nd regnal year of narasimhavarman II. The *vatteluttu* inscription mentioned this village as Mel Velur of *Mikondrai Nadu* (Ch.1971/54).

Vedakuppam

This small hamlet lies 2 km north of Melvanakkampadi village which lies on the Chengam-Manikkal road at distance of 16 km from Chengam.

The disturbed megalithic cairn circle locally called *pandavar modu* is found on the elevated field opposite to Vediappan koil. The tall Chola period memorial stone with Tamil inscription is found few meters away from the megalithic burial. The hero holds bow in his left hand and sword in his right kept across the body. The body between shoulder and abdomen was pierced with three arrows. Two cattle were shown at his feet to indicate symbolically his act.

The inscription starting with *meikirthi* of Rajaraja I is found on both sides of the stone. The regnal year of the king could not be ascertained as the slab was buried and concealed with soil and boulders.

Veeranam

It lies 20 km from Chengam on Tandrapattu road. There are here two identical memorial stones both in con-

tent and structure engraved in the 14th regnal year of Palava Kampavarman (Ch.1971/46 and 47). Both the heroes died in the same battle fought at Sattanur near the border of *venadu*. The panel had a hero holding bow and sword. The memorials were locally called as Aiyandarappan.

Veppur

It lies 5 km west of Sattanur dam. The megalithic dolmen with round porthole on the east is found on the top of the reserved forest area called *Esan kanavan kollai*. The disturbed megalithic burial yielded black and red ware and sarcophagus pieces.

There are two memorial stones. The first one called *Periya Vediappan koil* lies 5 km inside the dense forest which could not be approached in the present exploration.

Another memorial stone is found on the road side near the tank. This was raised during the Parantaka I for a hero who died in cattle raid.

Veppurchekkadi

It lies north of Chengam and south of Alangayam on the Javadi hills. Dolmenoid cists were found on the rock surface locally called *pandavar parai*. The chamber of the dolmenoid cist is built of multi orthostats placed in rectangular form over which a huge capstone is placed. The eastern side had a passage in the form of a wide gap. The total height of the dolmenoid cist varied from 60 to 70 cm.

Other sites

Besides the above sites polished stone axes were collected from Palaya Talur, Urkkavundanur and Kuttathur¹³ and cairn circles were noticed at Vallakad, Sennandipatti, Pudur and Namakkal.¹⁴

GUDIYATTAM TALUK

Alanganeri

It lies 4 km north of K.V. Kuppam which lies on the Gudiyattam - Latheri road at a distance of 10 km east of Gidiyattam.

Megalithic stone circles were found on the eastern slope of hillock called *Mayiladummalai*.

Balur

The village lies 5 km south of Peranambut on the road leading to Nariyampattu. Five stone circles measuring 5-8 m dia found on the western side of the hillock further 3 km southeast of the village.

Kallerimalai

The excavation conducted in the year 1978-79 by the Madras University at Kallerimalai near Rajakkal yielded black and red ware and a few ill-fired grey ware sherds resembling the neolithic pottery and polished stone axe in the earliest level of the deposit.¹⁵ However, the excavation could not ascertain whether the lower most level represents the neolithic phase of this region since other associated materials were not encountered.

Karkur

The village Karkur lies on the Peranambut - Melpatti road at distance of 4 km from Melpatti.

The megalithic dolmenoid cists were found further 5 km northwest of the village on the hillock locally called *panduvarar parai*.

The dolmenoid cists totaling more than 100 burials are found in three different locations overlooking the tank *nattankulam*.

The chamber is built of multi orthostats or boulders. There are two types. In the first one, the chamber is built of boulders placed on three sides in rectangular form with wide opening on the east. The huge capstone rested on these boulders.

In the second type, instead of boulders, the chamber walls were made of small rubble or slabs placed in 4 to 5 courses to the height of 40-50 cm. On the eastern side the wall is absent thereby the chamber had wide opening on the east. This again had a huge capstone.

In both the cases, the whole structure or chamber is surrounded with two circles. The inner circle had slabs placed at regular intervals around the capstone except on the eastern side. The slab, 40-50 cm in height, generally touches the capstone. Around this slab circle boulders were placed to form an outer circle (Pl.VI). It seems the boulders were used to keep the slab in its vertical position. Here none of the burials utilized any dressed orthostat.

Kukkal palli

It lies on the Latheri - Paradarami road at a distance of 3 km from Latheri. A cave with stone bed is found in a natural cavern located on the Varimalai hill top. It is locally called *pandavar padukkai*.

Melvaithankuppam

Melvaithankuppam lies on the Ambur- Gudiyattam road at distance of 12 km from Gudiyattam.

There are three memorial stones. The first two in-

scribed memorial stones locally called *silaikal* are found in the midst of the field. The third one called *pattarai amman* is found on the road side near the village.

The first memorial had a hero facing north holding bow and arrow. Besides, two arrows were shown piercing through his body. *Purana khumba* is placed on either side at his foot. The inscription is completely eroded.

The second one had a hero holding bow and sword. Eight arrows were pierced through his body. *Purana khumba* is placed on either side at his foot and one lamp on his right.

The inscription engraved in the *Saka* 832 (910 AD) is in Tamil. The nine-line inscription reads as follows:

1. *Svasta Sri Sakara yandu*
2. *ennurru muppatiranta*
3. *vatu paduvur kottattu adai*
4. *mavalivanarayar*
5. *ala(i) kalarai mangala tiru*
6. *ntu valum kutiri tandikkumanar Se*
7. *ndattur erumai toru kolla*
8. *po toru mittu*
9. *pattar*

The village Sendattur mentioned in this inscription lies a few kms away from the site.

Nagal

It lies on the northern side of Gudiyattam - Latheri road at a distance of 6 km from Gudiyattam. Nearly eight stone circles were found on the northwest of the village near Chendrayampalli. Stone circles measuring 5-8 m in diameter were scattered on the slope of the hillock called *kozhi kuttinamalai*.

Pallalakuppam

It lies 7 km southeast of Peranambut on the Mailpatti road.

More than 60 dolmens made of multiorthostats were found 2 km east of the village on the hillock called *Tenmalai* or *Tengundu*. These were locally known as *pancha pandavar vidu*.

Pallathur

The village Pallathur lies on the Latheri - Paradarami at distance of 8 km from Latheri.

There is the fertility stone called *sanniyasikal* or *nadu veedi ganga amman koil* found in the midst of the village. The rectangular slab had 8 vertical and 9 horizontal parallel lines forming 72 boxes. According to the villagers, on Friday in the month of Adi the festival will take place. All the village members will bring gruel from their house and it will be distributed there to get rains.

Pogalur

The village Pogalur lies 25 km from Peranambut and 10 km from Melpatti. It can be also approached from Pallalakuppam, which lies on the Peranambut - Melpatti road.

The burial site, *pancha pandavar vidu*, lies 5 km east of Pallakuppam and 5 km west of Pogalur on the hillock called *Arunthathi durgam* or *Temal*.

The dolmenoid cist is identical to the one found at Karkur found in disturbed condition on the rocky surface overlooking the tank *Tulukkan kuttai*. The chamber is built of rubble stones or boulders to the height of 40-50 cm with wide opening on the eastern side and enclosed by a capstone.

Rajakkal

Rajakkal lies 14 km from Gudiyattam on the Ambur road.

An inscription is found 1 km east of the village engraved on the natural boulder in the 29th regnal year of Rajaraja I, locally called as *yamankal*.

Sempalli

Sempalli is located on the right bank of river Kaundinya nadi, a tributary of river Palar, about 7 km northwest of Gudiyattam. More than 20 dolmenoid cists made of multi orthostoaes identical to the one found at Karkur were found on the hillock locally called *pandavar parai* located about 2 km south of the village.

Ulli

The village Ulli lies on the southern side of the Madras- Jolarpettai railway line about 6 km south of Gudiyattam near Valuttur railway station.

Disturbed stone circles were found on the eastern side of the Ullimalai.

Other Places

Besides the above said sites, habitation mounds yielding black and red ware were reported from Kavanoor, Sengundram, Malpatti, Kilpatti, Kosavanpudur and Chennarayanapalli. Hero stones were found at Pogalur, Kosavanpudur and Chennarayanapalli.¹⁶

POLUR TALUK

Gudalore

This village lies on the Polur-Arni road via Vinnamangalam. Twelve megalithic cairn circles measuring 5-7 m in diameter are found on the elevated field. They were known as *pandavar vidu*.

Kadaladi

It lies on the Polur - Chengam road at distance of about 20 km from Chengam.

The memorial stone locally called *vediappan koil* is found near the village. This *vatteluttu* script inscription is engraved in the 11th regnal year of Mantaparumar. Hero faces north holding a sword and shield with *cimil* at his foot.

Besides this, seven identical memorial stones of Nayak period were found on the road side near this rivulet about 2 km east of the village on the Polur road. These heroes called *Vadukanathaswamy* hold sword and shield.

Kilpalur

The village lies on the Chengam - Polur road at a distance of 25 km from Chengam.

One unfinished memorial stone called *ellaikal* is found below the water tank. Further 1 km west of the village one Vijayanagar inscription is noticed in front of the Melpalur Panchayat Union Office. The front side of the slab had mirror and *trishul*. The embedded portion had a Tamil inscription.

Kilseppuli

The tribal hamlet Kilseppuli lies on the Javadi hills about 30 km from Jamnamathur which lies 60 km from Tiruppattur. To reach Kilseppuli one has to climb the hill-lock from Pudur located near Pattaraikadu.

The burial site locally known as *valiyarkudam* or *valiyanparai* is located on the rocky surface 4 km from Kilseppuli (Pl.VII).

There are more than 200 burials of two types, namely dolmens and dolmenoid cist.

Dolmenoid cist

There are quite a large number of dolmenoid cists found in undisturbed condition. Based on the method of construction it can be divided into two types.

In the first type, the chamber is built of three orthostats placed on three sides around the basal slab with wide opening on one side (Pl.VIII).

In the second type, instead of orthostats, the chamber is built of rubble wall placed on three sides in rectangular form.

In both the types, a heavy capstone was surmounted. The chamber is enclosed by a rubble wall raised to the height of the capstone. The wall resembles a fort wall (Pl.IX). The enclosing wall also terminates in front of the chamber thereby giving a wide gap or passage. Interestingly, the chamber is oriented in all directions.

The dolmenoid cists were very close leaving a narrow gap. Sometimes, three or more chambers look like a single unit.

Porthole

Though porthole is absent in most of the dolmenoid cists an attempt is made to give such hole in some of the dolmenoid cist where the orthostats are used. The eastern orthostats of some of the dolmenoid cists had a 'U' shaped or pot shaped porthole made at the centre or at the top edge of the orthostat (Pl.X).

In dolmens they were round porthole at the centre of the eastern orthostat.

Dolmen

Few dolmens are found in the midst of dolmenoid cists (Pl.XI). These were built of four orthostats placed around the base slab and enclosed with a flat capstone. The eastern orthostat had a round porthole at the centre (Pl.XII & XIII). The chamber measures 2.50 to 3 m in length 1.25 to 1.50 m breadth and 1.25 to 1.50m in height.

The water source of these people must be the small stream that flows near the site. According to the tribal head man, the burials were still under worship.

The tribal headman says that earlier there were 18 *karai nadu* located in 18 geographical locations on the Javadi hills. The term *karai* is here used for one clan or one group of people. Now, this 18 *nadu* was further divided into 24 *nadus*. Each *nadu* consisted of 24 villages or *ur*. Each *nadu* is headed by one *nattan* and *ur* by *uran*.

Quite interestingly, the *nadu* names and its geographical locations provided by the tribal headman yielded each dolmenoid cist burial. The coincidence indicates their long survival.

For instance, the burial sites like Perumuttam, Nal-

Iapattu, Kumbalamarathu, Athipattu, Veerappanur, etc., located on the Javadi hills come under this *nadu* division.

Mattapattu

Mattapattu lies about 2 km from Karapattu which lies on the Chengam-Polur road at distance of 22 km from Chengam.

A memorial stone found 2 km further away from the village in front of the temple is dedicated to Renukadevi. Hero holds sword and shield.

There is a head of a bull and of a deer placed prominently at the entrance of the Renukadevi temple. According to the priest, a local devotee killed the bull of another devotee who came here for worship. The affected devotee appealed to the goddess to punish the culprit. The local devotee, after realising his mistake, appealed to the goddess to excuse him. To save and satisfy both the devotees, she changed the head of the bull into the head of a deer. Hence, there are two sculptures.

Mettuppalayam

This lies adjacent to the village Kalasapakkam located on the left bank of river Cheyyar about 15 km from Polur on the Polur- Tiruvannamalai road.

Disturbed megalithic cairn circles more than 10, are found in the field adjacent to the village. The cairn raised 20-30 cm above the ground level had a diameter of 5-7 m.

The adjacent site Sanarpalayam also yielded similar burials called *pandavar vidu*.

Murugappadi

Murugappadi lies 2.2 km from Arni and 1 km from

Arni - Polur main road. The megalithic cairn circle locally called is *kalluddai* found behind the village.

One *navakanda* sculpture identical to the sculpture noticed at Penneswaram in Dharamapuri taluk is found near the village. This is locally known as *ellaikal*.

Polur

The taluk head quarters Polur yielded megalithic cairn circles numbering more than 20 on the elevated field at a distance of 1 km from Polur on the Arni road.

The cairn circles locally called *kalluddai* is found in disturbed condition.

Sadupperi

It lies 5 km from Arni - Polur road and 26 km from Arni. The historical habitation mound, called *nattamedu*, is found near the village. It yielded red ware and black ware, terracotta beads and few brick bats.

Tirumalai

Tirumalai lies 20 km from Arni and 6 km from Arni - Polur road.

Both Jaina monuments and megalithic burials are found here in undisturbed condition. The megalithic monuments are found on the eastern side of the village near the present burial ground. Earlier one neolithic celt was collected at this place.

Vasoor

It lies on the Polur-Kadaladi road at distance of 5 km from Polur.

A neolithic celt was collected at the foot hill. One inscribed slab of a Vijayanagar period was found in the field near the Amman shrine. This speaks about the gift made by the trade communities like Vaniyar, Chekkur vaniyar, Kaikolar for the god vishnu located on the northern bank of Cheyyar Muruga Mangalapadi in Vasoor *nadu* of Jayakondacholamandalam. Identical inscription was also noticed at Nandiyandal a few km away from this site.

The front side of the slab had sun, moon, *trishul*, sword, lamp, boar and a mountain in a triangular form.

Veerappanur

The village Veerappanur lies 20 km south of Odugattur and 5 km northwest of Jamnamathur. The burial site is found on the hillock called *tirttamalaikadu*.

The dolmenoid cist found at this site is identical to the one found at Kilseppuli.

TIRUPPATUTUR TALUK

Chandrapuram

The village is located on the Tiruppattur - Barugur road at a distance of 5 km north of Kandili. The habitation mound found at the foothill of Chandrapurmalai yielded black and red ware and neolithic pottery.¹⁷

Chinnakandili

It lies 14 km west of Tiruppattur on the Krishnagiri road.

One east facing dolmen with round porthole was found

on the southeast of the village near the road. This dolmen locally called as *samundi koil*. The dolmen is built of four dressed orthostats and closed with a flat capstone.

Chinnamudalimuthur

It is located 10 km from Tiruppattur on the Singarapettai road.

The megalithic cairn circles were found on the elevated field locally called *panduvarar kuddai* on the western side of road. The circles were raised 30 cm above the ground level and had a diamtere of 5-8 m.

Chinnur

Chinnur lies 3 km from Kandili which lies on the Tirupattur - Krishnagiri road at distance of 15 km from the former.

On the road side one *sati* stone was found. Hero is shown in seated posture with left hand resting on the thigh portion and right hand placed on his chest. Right to him was the *sati* seated in an *anjali* posture. Interestingly, flame or *jwala* is shown above her head in semi circular form to indicate *sati*. Just above her, a panel is shown in which the lady (*sati*) was carried to heaven by *apsaras* flanked on either side of her. This is a rare sculptural representation.

Kakangarai

It lies 10 km west of Tiruppattur on the Dharmapuri road.

Nearly 25 cairn circles were found in disturbed condition on the elevated field near the tank.

Kalathiyur

It lies 8 km from Tiruppattur on the Alangayam road.

One uninscribed memorial stone locally venerated as a *Vediappan* was found on the right side of the road. Hero holds bow and sword.

Kalkuttaipudur

It is situated on the Tiruppattur - Alangayam road at distance of 10 km from Tiruppattur.

There are eight uninscribed memorial stones datable to 16-17th century AD. One was found near the road and the others are found on the bank of river near *vowal thoppu*. Hero holds bow and sword.

Kothur

It can be approached from the Toll gate on the Barugur - Tiruppattur road 10 km from the site.

Megalithic habitation-cum-burial site was noticed at the foothill.

Kurumberi

It lies 13 km from Tiruppattur on the Singarapettai road.

The megalithic cairn circle locally called *panduvarar vidu* were found near the village. Some of the disturbed burials exposed a capstone covering a cist burial.

Mallapadi

Mallapadi lies on the Tiruppattur-Krishnagir road at

the distance of 12 km from Krishnagiri. In fact, it is located on the other side of the hillock opposite to Paiyampalli.

The habitation-cum-burial site was excavated in the year 1977-78 by Madras University. Six trenches laid in the habitation and in the rockshelter yielded four cultural periods. The first occupational period yielded megalithic traits with some lingering traits of the neolithic culture such as the head rest and grey ware.¹⁸

The rock paintings in white kaolin depicting the scene of two horse riders fighting with poles found on the low ceiling of the rock shelter. Another human figure with upraised arm holding a stick or a weapon was also found.

Nellivasalnadu

This hamlet lies on the Javadi hills. Neolithic implements like axes and adzes were recovered from the village.

Paiyampalli

The excavated habitation-cum-burial site lies on the Krishnagiri- Ambur road at distance of 5 km from Barugur and 8 km from Nattrampalli.

The habitations are located on the three terraces of the Talattappumalai hill forming part of the Javadi hills. Megalithic burials are noticed at the foothill in the U-shaped valley below. The excavations conducted during the year 1964-65 and 1967-68 by S.R. Rao brought to light the two overlapping phases namely neolithic and megalithic.¹⁹

The details of the deposits are dealt with in the following chapters.

Recently rock paintings executed both in white and red

pigments were noticed in the cave located on the eastern side of the Sothaimalai which lies on the northeastern side of the Talattappumalai. Red ochre painting depicting a man and holding two persons on his side was found on the northern wall. On the southern wall were found horse, elephant, fighting scene, etc.²⁰

Patchoor

The village Patchoor lies 1 km north of Toll gate which lies on the Barugur - Tiruppattur road at distance of 5 km from Barugur.

The megalithic cairn circle numbering more than 20 were found on the right side of the road.

Pudur

Pudur village lies 9 km from Tiruppattur on the Alan-gayam road.

Six identical memorial stones locally known as *Vediappan koil* were found on the right side of the road. All the six had a hero holding bow and sword.

Pudurnadu

It lies on the Javadi hills about 5 km north of Nellikavasalnadu.

Dolmen were found here built of stone blocks and slabs enclosed with a capstone. The dolmen is squattish in nature.

Sudampattu

Sudampattu is located 7 km from Tiruppattur on *Alan-gayam* road.

There are five identical memorial stones in which hero holds bow and sword. In addition to this, 3 lady figurines on individual slabs were also noticed. The lady holding a *chendu* in her left hand and right hand wide open may be indicative of *sati* stone.

This place is known as *vowal thoppu vediappan koil*.

Vishamangalam

It lies 11 km from Tiruppattur on Singarapettai road.

Nearly 20 cairn circles were found on either side of the road. Circles measuring 5-8 m in diameter had a heavy capstone. According to the local people it entombs a cist burial with round porthole on the east.

TIRUVANNAMALAI TALUK

Kannamadam

This site lies on the Tiruvannamalai - Tirukoyilur road at distance of 8 km from Tiruvannamalai.

The megalithic cairn circles were found in disturbed condition due to the afforestation programme on the east of the *Iyanarappan koil*.

The memorial stone locally venerated as a Iyarappan is found on the road inside the forest. This uninscribed memorial stone had a hero holding bow and arrow just being pulled out of quiver.

Kilkachirapattu

It lies on the Tirukoyilur road about 5 km from Tiruvannamalai. One later uninscribed memorial stone locally venerated as *Ondi Vediappan* is found on the southern side of the road. Here the hero holds bow and arrow. Besides an inscribed slab is found on the road side in a damaged condition.

Mangalam

The village Mangalam lies on the Tiruvannamalai-Aralur road at distance of 13 km from Tiruvannamalai.

One uninscribed memorial stone is found on the southern side of the road near the Primary Health Centre. Hero holds bow and arrow and a conch and *chakra* is shown on the top corners.

An historical habitation mound yielding red ware and black ware was found on the eastern side of the village.

Namindal

This small village lies 10 km from Tiruvannamalai and 2 km from Tiruvannamalai - Mangalam main road.

One later uninscribed memorial stone locally known as *Vediappan koil* was found near the village. The sculptural panel had hero holding bow and arrow. Here the festival is being held in the month of Adi and on the fullmoon day of the month Chitrai.

According to the priest, the god Aiyappan is child, Aiyannarappan is youth and Vediappan is elderly man. The very interesting point to be observed here is that all the three gods are associated with forest environment.

Nasandal

Nasandal is situated about 6 km from Tiruvannamalai on the Tandarampattu road. About 50 cairn circles were scattered on the elevated field on either side of the road. The disturbed megaliths had a capstone.

Tiruvannamalai

The district head quarters yielded a Pallava sculpture *Mahisasuramardhini* locally worshiped as *Vanadurgai amman*. This sculpture was found on the outskirts of Tiruvannamalai on the Harur road near Tenmalai.

The goddess with eight arms stands erect on a head of a buffalo. A deer was shown at his foot. The attributes are bow, arrow, sword, shield, conch and *chakra*. In the rest two arms are shown with *abhayamudra* and *khativalambita*.

VANIYAMBADI TALUK

Ambur

Neolithic implements like axes, chisels, mullars, sling balls, borers, scrappers, etc., were collected at the foothill of Dadi hill located near the Ambur town.

Andiappanur

Andiappanur lies on the Tiruppattur-Alangayam road at distance of 16 km from Tiruppattur.

The habitation-cum-burial site found further 4 km southeast of the village near Nattakoil. The habitation mound covering an area of 20 acres yielded megalithic black and red ware, red ware, red polished ware, etc., This

mound called *nattam* occupies the right bank of the river Pambar.

On the left bank of the river opposite to the habitation completely dismantled dolmenoid cists were noticed on the rocky surface. Dolmenoid cists are shorter in height raised 50 cm above the ground level. The capstone is placed on a small blocks placed in rectangular form. The orthostats were absent. Nearly 20 dolmenoid cists were observed on the rocky surface in two locations called *pancha pandavar parai*.

Eripallam

The village Eripallam is situated about 25 km from Tiruppattur on the Alangayam road.

The megalithic circles were noticed on the elevated field on the left side of the road before the village. They were completely disturbed and capstone is exposed.

Karapattu

It lies 8 km northeast of Vaniyambadi.

More than 25 dolmenoid cists facing east are found on the hill top called Arangal durgam located about 2 km north of the village. The dolmenoid cists are built of multi orthostats or blocks and raised to a height of 50-60 cm above the ground level. The eastern side is open. This site is identical to the one found at Andiappanur.

Kurusilapattu

The village lies 13 km Tirupattur on the Alangayam road.

Megalithic burials were found on the elevated field

further 1/2km northeast of the village. These burials, locally called *pandavar vidu*, are completely disturbed and capstones are projecting out.

According to the cultivator, urns and leg portion of the sarcophagus were unearthed while levelling the ground for cultivation.

Interestingly, a memorial stone is shown with a hero beating a drum called *pambai* and a parrot is seated on his shoulder. His wife is shown on his left.

Two more portrait sculptures were found near the Dur-badi Amman koil.

Malayampattu

It lies 7 km northeast of Vaniyambadi and 1 km south of Karapattu village.

A neolithic celt was collected at this site. One dolmen is identified in disturbed condition on the southern side of the hillock.

Mittalam

Mittalam lies 3km northwest of Ambur and on the western side of the Vaniyambadi - Gudiyattam road.

More than 20 dolmenoid cists were identified near Kailasagiri hill. These dolmenoid cists are locally called as *oddar koil* found on the rocky surface. These are squattish in nature. The chamber is built of multi orthostats or blocks and surmounted by a heavy capstone.

Vedapudupattu

It lies on the right bank of the river Palar and located

about 6 km east of Ambur on the Ambur-Vellore road.

Stone circles were observed on the northern slope of the hill called *panchapandavar malai* located 1 km south of the road. Nearly 3 stone circles were found in undisturbed condition.

Vinnamangalam

It lies on the right bank of river Palar and located on the Vaniyambadi - Ambur road at distance of 9 km Vaniyambadi.

Neolithic celts and urn burials were found 3 km south of the village near *ravuttam pallam*.

VELLOR TALUK

Anaikut

It lies 20 km from Vellore on the Odugattur road.

Nearly 10 stone circles were found on either side of the road leading to Appukkal.

Appukkal

The village Appukkal lies 1 km from Anaicut. Excavation was conducted in two seasons in the year 1976-77 and 1979-80 on the ash mound by the Madras University.²¹ The habitation mound locally known as *nainarkollai* located at the foothill of Ganga Nellur and also known as *paniyara thippai*.

The trenches laid on six locations yielded the maximum deposit of 4.40 m with three cultural periods namely

megalithic, early historical and mixture of early and late medieval cultures. Assemblages are elongated pointed butt celt, black and red ware, terracotta beads, etc.

The nearby megalithic stone circles found in the field between Appukkal and Anaicut were not opened for comparative study.

Ariyur

It lies on the outskirts of Vellore near Thorappadi.

Nearly 10 stone circles and 2 dolmens made of four orthostats were found near the vilage locally called *panchapandavar vidu*.

Elevambadi

It lies on the Vellore-Anaicut road at distance of 10 km from Vellore.

Megalithic stone circle with cist burial are found in disturbed condition adjacent to the village.

Kandaneri

It lies on the Vellore-Pallikonda road at a distance of about 15 km from Vellore.

Megalithic stone circles called *pandavar vidu* were found further 2 km southeast of the village on the northern slope of the hill. They were completely disturbed.

Kanlyambadi

It lies on the Vellore-Tiruvannamalai road at a distance of 12 km from Vellore.

The village in fact is built upon the earlier burial complex. Huge capstones were exposed at many places.

Katharicuppam

The village Katharicuppam lies on the left bank of Ut-tara kaveri. It can be approached from Odugattur. It is about 4 km from Odugattur on the Arsampattu road.

Nearly 50 stone circles measuring 5-10 m in diameter were found on the elevated field on the eastern side of the village. Those were locally known as *pandavar vidu*.

The habitation mound, locally known as *nattamedu*, covering an area of more than 10 acres yielded megalithic black and red ware, red ware and red polished ware.

Keelkothur

This habitation-cum-burial site lies on the Odugattur-Appukkal road via Pinnathurai. This is situated 7 km from Odugattur and 1 km from Pinnathurai.

The habitation mound covering an area of nearly 15 acres found near the pond locally called *desikuttai*. The mound raised 75 cm above the ground level yielded megalithic black and red ware, red ware, black ware, etc.,

Megalithic stone circle numbering more than 50 circles found near the habitation. Few burials which were partially exposed were made of thick slab.

Though the habitation mound did not yield any neolithic ceramics but the location, content and nature of the mound suggest that it may yield neolithic traits also.

Melarasampattu

It lies on the Odugattur-Veerappanur road about 15 km from Odugattur.

On the southern side of the village 3 stone circles were observed measuring 5-7 m in diameter.

Besides the above said sites, Serpadi near Odugattur had 20 stone circles. It lies 1 km southeast of the village near the Harijan colony.

The village Unai near Anaicut yielded 6 stone circles on the eastern slope of the hill 1 km west of the village.

Veppancuppam near Kaniyambadi yielded disturbed stone circle on the northern side of the railway track.

Megalithic habitation mound was noticed at Keelarasampattu.

The village Pennattur located 10 km southwest of Vellore yielded stone circles.

Muthukumaravelmalai

It lies 6 km from Odugattur on the Odugattur-Appukkal road via Pinnathurai. There is a temple on the hillock dedicated to Subramanya.

This is an extensive habitation-cum-burial site. The habitation mound, locally called *attumodu* meaning river mound, was found on the bank of a small river. The habitation mound which rises 2 m above the ground level and covers an area of more than 20 acres yielded megalithic black and red ware, red ware, black ware, etc.

An extensive burial complex of about 100 of stone circles was identified on the eastern slope of the hillock.

The burials measuring 10-15 m in diameter are being disturbed by the local people extracting stone and land.

Odugattur

The major village lies 40 km west of Vellore.

Nearly 20 stone circles with few cairns at the centre were found in the field called *Rangappan kottai*. The disturbed megalithic circle had a cist with 'U' shaped porthole on the top edge of the eastern slab.

F.J. Richards opened three burials in 1916 measuring about 13 m, 10 m and 17 m in diameter. Three legged jar, black and red ware bowls, iron objects conch, shell objects, etc were recovered from them. Graffiti marks were also found on the exterior surface of a small pot.²²

The rivulet Uttarakaveri flows near the site.

Periya Eriyur

This village can be approached by a mud road from Odugattur. It lies 5 km from Odugattur on the Appukkal road via Pinnathrai.

The megalithic stone circle totalling more than 20 burials was found on the eastern side of the village and on the southern side of the road. These are locally known as *panchappandavar vidu* or *pancha pandavar kal*. Near the site there is a temple dedicated to the God Venkatesa.

Pinnathurai

Pinnaturai lies between Appukkal and Odugattur about 10 km from either side.

The habitation-cum-burial site lies further 2 km north

of the village at the foothill of Parangumalai. The place is locally known as *mamarattu kinaru*.

The habitation mound covering an area of more than 10 acres yielded megalithic black and red ware, red ware, black ware, terracotta beads, etc.

Nearly 25 stone circles were found near the habitation in a disturbed condition.

Pulimedu

This village lies near Usoor on the Vellore-Anaicut road at a distance of 10 km from Vellore.

On the eastern side of the village near the hillock is found habitation mound locally called *nattamodu*. It yielded megalithic black and red ware, red ware, black ware, etc. Quite a large number of iron slags was noticed here.

Megalithic stone circles found in disturbed condition.

Four late herostones datable to 13-14th c AD were found in the cultivated field of one Mr.Sekar. Hero holds bow and arrow.

Seduvalai

The village Seduvalai lies on the Vellore - Pallikonda road at distance of 10 km from Vellore.

Disturbed stone circle measuring 7-9 m in dia were found near the Draubati Amman koil. According to the local people, this temple was built in memory of the Pancha Pandavas who came and lived here. The burials are known as *pancha pandavar vidu*.

Sholavaram

It lies 12 km west of Vellore near Kaniyambadi.

An extensive historical habitation mound covering an area of more than 25 acres yielded red ware, black ware, terracotta beads, tiles and shell bangle pieces. A chola temple dedicated to Siva was found near the habitation.

Usoor

The Village Usoor lies on the Vellore-Anaicut road at a distance of 10km from Vellore.

The habitation-cum-burial site lies on the eastern side of the hillock. Many stone circles having 8-11 m in diameter with capstone at the centre were found in disturbed condition. Few sarcophagus pieces were also collected.²³

The habitation mound yielded megalithic black and red ware, red ware and black ware.²⁴

Vannanthangal

It lies on the Odugattur- Arasampattu road at a distance of 5 km from Odugattur.

Nearly 10 stone circles were found in disturbed condition on the bank of the river Uttara Kaveri. A disturbed circle yielded cist burial with a heavy capstone.

Other places

In this district, the fertile valley running between Odugattur and Appukkal yielded very extensive habitation-cum-burial sites like Appukkal, Pinnathurai, Keelkottur, Muthukumaravelmalai, Periya Eriyur, Kathericuppam, Vannanthangal etc., located 5 km apart.

Historical habitation mound noticed at Torappadi, Sembedu and Seduvalai.²⁵

WALAJHPET TALUK

Arappakkam

Arappakkam lies on the Arcot-Vellore road about 10 km from Arcot.

One menhir planted as a part of the cairn circle was found on the northern side of the hillock about 1 km south of the village. The menhir had a round base and tapering body.

Jambukulam

Jambukulam lies 5 km west of Sholingur-Ranipet road. One has to take diversion near Neelakandarapuram.

Microliths were collected on the northern side of the Jambukulam hill in the reserved forest area located about one km south of the village.

Kathiyavadi

It lies about 9 km west of Arcot on the road leading to Ayilam.

Three megalithic stone circles measuring 5-7 m in diameter are found on the elevated field further one km southwest of the village.

Kondakuppam

It lies 1 km from the Ponnai-Ranipet main road and 14 km from Ranipet.

There is a natural boulder inside the local tank which

had an inscription of Raja Raja I engraved in his 27th regnal year. The *eri* (tank) mentioned in the inscription as *parai eri*. Even today the *eri* is also called by the same name.

Krishnapuram

Krishnapuram lies about 4 km southeast of Sholingur.

A historical habitation mound yielded iron slag and furnace materials like terracotta pipes (tuyeres) and furnace bases indicating that once this site flourished as an iron production centre. Besides this, red ware, terracotta beads, etc., were recovered. A mound covering an area of 20 acres is found on the southern side of the *Karikkalmalai*.

Kuppukalmedu

Kuppukalmedu is situated 5 km from Jambukulam on the Jambukulam- Vallimalai road.

On the left side of the road few stone circles locally called *paṇḍavar vidu* were noticed on the elevated field. It had a diameter of 5-8 m.

Melakuppam

It lies 3 km south of Arappakkam which lies on the Vellore-Arcot road and near Perumugai village.

Disturbed stone circles were found 2 km southeast of the village in the field between the two hillocks.

Pahavali

Pahavali is located about 5 km east of Walajahpet and west of Kaveripakkam tank.

Palaeolithic implements were collected from the gravel deposits on the bank of a palaeo channel (Pl. XIV and XV). The old river Palar might have run near this village in ancient times. The tank Kaveripakkam lies east of this village from where the present Kaveripakkam river or Kortalaiyar river originates.

The tool assemblages indicate both lower and middle palaeolithic culture. Some long blades were also recovered. Microliths like blades, points, burins, etc., were collected.

The surrounding villages Anandalai, Chennasamudram, Musiri, Vaniyan Chatiram yielded palaeolithic tools.²⁶

Pandyanallur

The village Pandyanallur lies 2 km away from Sholingur.

There are two megalithic stone circles measuring 5-10 m in diameter found in disturbed condition at the diversion to Kaveripakkam near the Majid gate.

Pulivalam

It lies 6 km south of Sholingur on the Banavaram road.

This village has a dolmen called *pandavar vidu* is built of four orthostats closed with a flat capstone found. It had a round porthole on the eastern orthostat.

Sholingur

This major village lies on the northern tip of the district yielded disturbed stone circles totalling 5 circles on the western side of the *periyamalai* near Padmanathapuram.

Besides this, one neolithic celt was also recovered.

Vallimalai

It lies on the western bank of river Ponnai, a tributary of Palar and is located on the Vellore-Chittor road.

Megalithic cairn circles with a cist burial with port hole on the east were found on the northern slope of the hillock. There are only four cairn circles found in an undisturbed condition.

Walajahpet

The taluk head quarters yielded stone circles in two locations. The first one on the southeastern side of the town near Anaicut road and 1 km from Walajahpet. Another lies on the northwestern side of the town on the way to railway station. Both were at the verge of extinction due to township encroachments.

WANDIWASH TALUK

Mamandur

Mamandur lies on the Wandiwash-Cheyyar road at distance of 8 km east of Wandiwash.

This is a multi-orthostat dolmenoid cist made of eleven rough, unhewn boulders kept as an orthostat at regular interval with wide opening on the eastern side. In front of the opening smaller boulders are flanked on either side to form a passage. Two circles made of boulders encircled the dolmenoid cist. The passage cut through the inner circle and terminates with outer circle. The gap between inner and outer circle is filled up with loose cairns.

The chamber is covered by a heavy capstone having flat base and convex top. The pieces of the sarcophagus collected near the chamber indicate the nature of interment.

Wandiwash

A dolmenoid cist made of unhewn boulders enclosed within a boulder circle was found on the outskirts of the town. These were locally called *panduvar vidu*. The chamber is made of boulders kept at regular intervals. There is a gap on the eastern side. The whole chamber was surmounted by an uneven huge capstone.

The leg pieces of the sarcophagus suggested that it entombs a sarcophagus burial.

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Chapter 3

Paleolithic Culture

The prehistory of Tamil Nadu had come to light since its first discovery on 30th May 1863 by Robert Bruce Foote.¹ Subsequently, Foote and his colleague William King located the famous site of Attirampakkam near Poondi on the bank of the Budi ManuVenka, a tributary of the river Kottaliyar. This led to the discovery of paleolithic sites like Vadamadurai,² Gudiyam,³ Poondi,⁴ Neyveli,⁵ etc., all in Chingleput district. Since then much of the attention was paid only to the lower and middle part of the river. The upper stream of the Kottaliyar valley in this district is not thoroughly explored. Geologically and culturally the upper stream of Kottaliyar valley is similar in nature. The sites mentioned above and the tools collected in gravel deposits at Kilvenpakkam and Tirumalpur in Arakonam by K.D.Banerjee and M.V.N. Krishna Rao of the prehistory Branch of the Archaeological Survey of India⁶ and recent findings of K.Kumar of Madras University at Arumpakkam and Kaniyanaur in Arcot taluk and Pahaveli, Anandalai, Chennasamudram, Musiri, Vaniyan Chatiram in Walajahpet taluk led to believe that they fall in the same group. This basin was characterized by a spread of detrial laterite underlying at certain places by a Quarternary boulder conglomerate deposit overlying pre-Tertiary formations. This situation seemed to provide scope for a correlation with the mid-Pleistocene of boulder conglomerate zone of Potwar and the mid-Pleistocene basal Narmada zone.⁸ Paterson

was the first to point out a quadruple Pleistocene terrace sequence similar to what de Terra had discovered in North-west frontier.⁹ These four-terrace formations were observed at Vadamadurai, Attirampakkam, Erumaivetti palayam, Manjanakaranai, Poondi and at Gudiyam.

The work initiated by V.D. Krishnaswami and followed by K.D. Banarjee yielded good data on stratification. The palaeolithic tools collected at Vadamadurai by V.D. Krishnaswami fall into three groups based on typology and patination.¹⁰

The first group was further subdivided into two. The first division consists of handaxes and cores, typologically similar to Abbevillian, and crude in nature retaining much cortex. The tools were non-lateritized and bear a heavy cream coloured cortex patination. The group belongs to the pre-lateritic age and thus becomes contemporaneous with the boulder conglomerate.

In second division, the handaxes are of regular nature and recall early Acheulian types. Retouching is absent in this group.

The second group tools had primary flaking. The tools are pear-shaped and have step flaking.

In the third group, the handaxes were fashioned through 'wood technique' resembling upper Acheulian type.

The excavations at Gudiyam, Attirampakkam, Vadamadurai, Poondi and Neyveli yielded lower and middle palaeolithic tools. Lower palaeolithic tools consist of handaxes, scrapers, cleavers, ovates and discoid cores. The excavations indicated two industrial traits; the production of long blades during the Acheulian phase; and the predominance of points in the middle palaeolithic phase, handaxes and cleavers being in insignificant numbers.¹¹

The site Pahaveli on the north bank of river Palar few kms east of Walajahpet (Pl.XIV & XV), the site at Varatanapalli in Krishnagiri taluk of Dharmapuri district and the pecked stone industry at Barugur and Kappalavadi in Krishnagiri taluk of Dharmapuri district¹² establish the fact that the prehistoric man extended their dominion as far as Dharmapuri district.

B. Narasimhaiah who explored this region in the later part of the sixties, as part of village-to-village survey initiated by the Archaeological Survey of India, located a middle palaeolithic site at Tirumalai in Tiruppattur taluk similar to the one found at Kappalavadi, 8 km southeast of Barugur in Krishnagiri taluk of Dharmapuri district. In fact, the sites Varatanapalli, Barugur, Kappalavadi, Mallapædi, Paiyampalli, Tirumalai, Chandrapuram, etc., yielding early vestiges are found in the same geographical setting and falls within the radius of 25 km. B.Narasimhaiah collected one handaxe, two ovates, two choppers, one chopper chopping tool, six miniature handaxes, one hammer stone, one wedge, five blade flakes and one cylindrical core totaling twenty-two artefacts.¹³ He placed them in the pre-neolithic phase. He stated further that the nomenclature adopted to identify the above said tools does not suggest any technological similarity, cultural content or conformity of tradition but only indication of similarity in form and function. He suggested but with much reservation that these tools may belong to an early stage of the pecked and ground stone industry when the grinding of the tool was not adopted. Finally, he put these tools in neolithic phase.

The upper palaeolithic tools were not reported so far in this region. The occurrence of upper palaeolithic tools like blades and burins made of milky quartz and crystal collected in number at Renigunta¹⁴ on the other side of the region suggests that future explorations may yield such tools.

K. Kumar claimed that he collected microliths like lunates, scrapers and blades at Vilapakkam in Arcot taluk Pahaveli and Jambukulam in Walajahpet taluk.¹⁵

The limited and sporadic explorations conducted in the Kottalaiyar and Palar river beds and the occurrence of lower and middle palaeolithic tools would suggest that the northern part of this region was widely settled with the palaeolithic people (Map.II). V.N.Misra places the Acheulian culture of the peninsular India to 200,000 BP.¹⁶

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Chapter 4

Neolithic Culture

The end of Pleistocene and the beginning of Holocene period marked by the gradual onset of recent climatic conditions and generally agreed to have occurred around 10,000 B.C. The demographic stresses, proper environment, acquired and accumulated technology would have played a causative role in the shift from predatory hunting and gathering level of subsistence to food production. The food production led to a strong urge to settle down more or less in a permanent place which are conducive for agriculture. The existence of these early farming communities have been established in six different geographical zones or regions of the Indo-Pak subcontinent.¹

1. Northern region, covering the Kashmir valley
2. Vindhyan region, covering the Belan valley and the Vindhyan plateau in districts Allahabad, Mirzapur, Rewa and Sidhi
3. Mid-eastern region, covering the northern Bihar (Dt.Saran)
4. North-eastern, covering Assam and adjacent sub-Himalayan regions
5. Central-eastern region, covering the Chota Nagpur

plateau with its peneplains extending to West Bengal and Orissa

6. Southern region, covering peninsular India

These six regions seem to follow broad physiographic subdivisions displaying an apparent diversity in their ecological setting and cultural equipment.

The results brought forth by the excavations at Nagarjunakonda, Utnur, Maski, Piklihal, T.Narasipur, Sankanakallu, Takkalakotta, Hallur, Paiyampalli, etc., are strikingly similar in its content. The southern region is characterised by a burnished dull grey ware, ground stone implements like axes, adzes, wedges, chisels, picks, grinding stones, ponders, hammer-stone, micro liths, parallel-sided blades, bone points, steatite beads, etc.

Besides the excavated site Paiyampalli B.Narasimhaiah located one more site at Chandrapuram in Tiruppattur taluk. The site Chandrapuram lies on the western border of the taluk about 5 km north of Kandli and 8 km south of Paiyampalli. The habitation site yielding neolithic pottery and black and red ware of megalithic period located at the foothill of Chandrapurmalai.² The stream which flows at Paiyampalli, runs near this site on its way to Pambar.

The Javadi hills also yielded plenty of polished stone axes³ and tools like pointed-butt polished stone axes.⁴

B.Narasimhaiah also located five more neolithic habitation sites in the adjoining region of Tiruppattur taluk. He demarcated the hill tracks of Tiruppattur taluk of North Arcot district and Krishnagiri taluk and Harur taluks of Dharmapuri district to a common ecological zone. The sites like Paiyampalli, Mallapadi, Chandrapuram, Gollapalli, Togarapalli, Pannimaduvu, Dailmalai, Mullikadu, Kapalavadi, Barugur, etc., are included in this zone.⁵ Based

on the occurrence of microliths in the neolithic phase, neolithic celts, neolithic pottery he divided the neolithic culture into five phases and dated them as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Pre-neolithic stone industry | 3500 B.C.(?) |
| 2. Pre-pottery neolithic culture | 3000 - 2800 B.C. |
| 3. Neolithic culture phase I | 2800 - 2200 B.C. |
| phase II | 2200 - 1800 B.C. |
| phase III | 1800 - 500 B.C. |

He felt that the occurrence of large quantity of polished stone axes and microliths in the same stratigraphical position and devoid of any ceramics particularly on the hill top led him to believe that there would be a pre-pottery neolithic phase. Subsequently, the three neolithic phases were respectively identified after a trial dig at Dailmalai, Togarapalli and Mullikadu. He noted that the first phase of the neolithic culture represented at Dailmalai had red ware and the second phase represented at Togarapalli had red ware predominantly along with few grey ware pieces and blades and the third one represented at Mullikadu consisted of grey ware and blades in large quantity. According to him, the third phase noticed at Mullikadu is contemporary to the neolithic phase of Paiyampalli which is dated to 1800 B.C. and based on this he put the date of the second and first phases respectively to 2200 B.C. and 2800 B.C.⁶ However the author had the reservation about this earlier date to this culture. There is no much concrete evidence to prove that neolithic culture is existed to that extent.

The polished stone axes collected on the Javadi hills from the sites like Kilasilambadi, Kilvilampuchchi, Kuttatur, Palaya Talur, Urkavundanur, Koluthampattu show its existence on the hillock.⁷ At Koluthampattu unfinished tools of the pecked and ground stone industry were reported.⁸

The following excavated sites will give the nature of this culture and its transformation into the succeeding megalithic culture.

Paiyampalli ($12^{\circ}30'$ N and $78^{\circ}36'$ E)

The only excavated site in Tamil Nadu showing a clear overlap of the neolithic and megalithic culture lies on the Bangalore - Madras trunk road about .5 km east of Barugur and 8 km west of Natrampalli in Tiruppattur taluk of North Arcot district.

The habitations are located on the three terraces of the Talattappamalai hills forming part of the Javadi ranges. Megalithic burials are noticed at the foot of the hill in the U-shaped valley below.

The excavations by S.R.Rao brought to light the two overlapping cultures, neolithic and megalithic, with two subdivisions in the former.⁹

Neolithic culture

The earlier phase comprises the pale grey, burnished grey and red wares. The red ware is found in a very small quantity. During this phase, according to the excavator, the people lived in pit-dwellings cut into the natural soil. These pits being oval, circular and oblong on plan with their longer axes along the cardinal directions occasionally divided into two equal parts. One stone lined pit shows two occupational phases, the earlier marked by a flat stone at the bottom and the later by a rammed earth floor 50 cm thick. These dwellings had superstructures of perishable materials as evidenced by postholes along periphery.

The writer has some reservation on these pit dwellings. It seems that the result of the Burzahom excavations conducted in the year between 1960 and 1971 made some

impact on the excavator. Considering the climatic and environmental conditions of this region, the pits appear more to be storage bins or refuse pits rather than pit dwellings. In the succeeding phase, huts with floors leveled with stone chips and plastered with a mixture of mud and ash were exposed.

The tool repertoire are of bone points and awls and stone implements like axes, mace heads, short blades, etc.

In the second phase red ware predominates, though the grey ware continues. Some burnished grey ware bear paintings in red ochre on the rims. The legged bowl with round base is the most common shape. The upper level represents the overlap phase yielding iron and megalithic black and red ware. The bone tools disappear and stone blades increase in frequency. Terracotta beads were collected. Metal is absent in both the phases.

The C¹⁴ date range between 1725 + 110 and 1360 + 210 B.C.

Megalithic culture

The succeeding megalithic phase yielded black and red ware, black ware, coarse red ware painted in chocolate or light brown on the exterior surface and russet coated ware on the upper levels.

Following the excavations at Paiyampalli, Madras University opened three habitations at Appukallu, Malapadi and at Kallerimalai. All the three appear to be neolithic sites but the deposit failed to yield any concrete evidence.

Appukallu

The excavation was conducted in two seasons in the

year 1976-77 and 1979-80 on the ashmound, locally known as *Nainarkollai*, located at the foothill of Ganganallur near Appukallu. The trenches laid on six locations yielded the maximum deposit of 4.40 m. The three cultural periods namely megalithic, early historical and mixture of early and late medieval cultures failed to give any survival of pre-megalithic traits.¹⁰

Mallapadi

A megalithic habitation site with a rock shelter with paintings at Mallapadi in Krishnagiri taluk was excavated in 1977-78. The site actually is located on the other side of the hillock opposite to Paiyampalli. Six trenches laid in the habitation and at rock shelter yielded four cultural periods. The first occupational period yielded megalithic traits with lingering traits of neolithic culture such as the head rest and grey ware.¹¹

Kallerimalai

The excavations in the year 1978-79 at Kallerimalai near Rajakkal in Ambur taluk revealed the earliest level yielding black and red ware and a few ill-fired grey ware sherds resembling the neolithic pottery, besides a solitary ground and polished stone axe. However, the excavator could not ascertain that the lower most level represents the neolithic phase of this region since other associated materials were not encountered.¹²

General Observations

The present and previous explorations and excavations carried out in Tiruppattur taluk particularly in the vicinity of Javadi hills and Tirumalai hills suggest the following parameters.

1. The sites are located at the foothill or on the terraces.

2. The hills selected for habitation are bouldery in nature and sometimes met with rock shelters.
3. The habitation is noticed at the proximity of water sources like stream, rivulet and sometimes a perennial pond. But none of them is found on the bank of mighty rivers.
4. They settled in the hilly tracts suitable for terrace cultivation. This system of agriculture is still prevalent in these areas where ragi (*Eleusine corocana*) and Jowar (*Sorghum vulgare*) is being cultivated.
5. The top of the hill yielded polished stone axes in large numbers but failed to yield any habitation.
6. In some of the sites microliths were found along with neolithic implements.
7. The major ceramic type was burnished grey ware hand made or turned on a slow wheel, followed by red ware.
8. Characteristic pot form is the lipped bowl with a rounded base and the short channel spouted vessel.
9. Neolithic folk preferred to live in built-up huts and floors were plastered over with a mixture of ash and earth.
10. The neolithic tools are adzes and axes with pointed, truncated and rounded butt-ended varieties, mace heads, pounders, querns, mortars, pestles, head rest, etc.

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Chapter 5

Megalithic Culture

Megaliths in India, particularly in peninsular India, include a variety of sepulchral and commemorative monuments which are built of large dressed or undressed stones or slabs and associated with a somewhat homogeneous group of black and red ware potteries and iron tools and weapons. They were single or collective secondary burials found with post-excarnation bones placed in articulate or in disarticulate form. Based on the morphology of the burials different types are named. Such types of burials were reported in this region.

The different explorations carried out through the years since the first discovery made in this district by I.J.Richards in 1916, a good number of megaliths have been located over almost the entire district, thereby throwing much light on various aspects of megalithic culture. More than a hundred burial sites were brought to light in the present exploration alone. There are 44 sites yielding cairn circles, 38 sites with stone circles, 11 sites with dolmens, 18 sites with dolmenoid cists and one site with urn burial, each type distributed within some specific geographical zones of this region (Map III and Pl. VI).

Spatial distributional Pattern

Unlike other parts of Tamil Nadu, the present study

area shows the evidence of inflow of three different megalithic traits. These distinct traits are confined interestingly to three separate geographical zones. The first trait which related to the cairn circle category entered into this region along the river Pennaiyar probably from Dharmapuri district via Chengam pass. The second one, that of stone circle variety entered into the eastern part of the region from the Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. The third trait, consisting of dolmen variety entered into this region from the western part of (Palamaner taluk) Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. The dolmenoid cist using multi ortho stats, the degenerated form of cist or dolmen, might have evolved in the region itself or it would have made its way from Chingleput district where one could come across this type profusely. The above said three main traits were superimposed as it were over the earlier sarcophagus burial trait of the area.

The concentration of cairn circles enclosing cist with round porthole on the east could be observed on the west and south of Javadi hills comprising Tiruppattur, Chengam, Polur and Tiruvannamalai taluks. This area is drained by the river Pennaiyar and its tributaries and river Cheyyar, a tributary of Palar. As this area had a wide open pass of Chengam on its western border, naturally the cultural traits here got some inspiration from that direction. The distribution of cairn circles with cists are concentrated in the elevated zone of 200 - 500 MSL. Once the river reaches the plain below 200 MSL the concentration of cairn circles weakens drastically. For instance, the taluks of Arni, Wandiwash and Cheyyar occupying the eastern part of this region fail to yield any megalithic traits. The location of burials were found in river valleys like those of Pennaiyar and its tributaries like the Pamban *aru* in the southern part of Chengam taluk and of the Cheyyar in northern part of Chengam taluk.

The second geographical zone, the Javadi hills lying

between $12^{\circ} 18'$ and $12^{\circ} 54'$ N and $78^{\circ} 35'$ and $79^{\circ} 11'$ E and occupying the 500 m above the MSL had much concentration of dolmens and dolmenoid cists. These types were observed only on the hill tops particularly concentrated west of Gudiyattam and east of Jolarpet and on the Javadi hill tops. The Javadi almost joins with eastern ghats in the region between Ambur and Jolarpet. The other side of the area is in southern part of Chittoor district where a quite number of sites with dolmens and dolmenoid cists were reported. It seems dolmens and dolmenoid cists might have entered this region from the southern part of Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. These types are hardly found in the plain region. They stayed in the vicinity of rivers or perennial ponds.

Another set of dolmens was observed in the northern part of Arakonam and Walajahpet taluk particularly in and around Sholigur. This region is also an offshoot of the Chittoor district.

The stone circles were found in Vellore, Walajahpet and Arcot taluks. Here, the narrow Palar valley leaves its ghat section and widens considerably in this area.

A knowledge of major burial types and subtypes and of its geographical position is necessary to understand the megalithic culture in a better perspective. The various types and their architectural features will help to know their interaction with neighbouring region.

Location of Megaliths

The megalithic people observed certain norms while paying homage to their departed soul. The availability of the raw material for raising their monuments in the nearby area or in some approachable distance was a major factor in selecting the graveyard. Usually in this region, the burial monuments like cairn circle are found on the slopes of the

foothills and on the elevated field generally overlooking water sources like rivers, rivulets and tanks. The stone circles also follow similar geography but mostly they were found on the river banks.

The dolmens and dolmenoid cists exist on top of the hills overlooking a tank or in the vicinity of a perennial pond.

The major part of this district is so undulated and studded with a quite number of hillocks that the megalithic people never found it difficult to select a land to meet their purpose.

Raw material

They utilised the raw material which is locally available and easily transportable. Normally the raw material was available within a distance of one or two kilometers. They used boulders for the circles and slabs for orthostats. The menhirs were made of slab only. The cists were made of both dressed and undressed slabs. The capstones are generally undressed. A majority of dolmens was built of dressed stone only. The dolmenoid cist used boulders, rubble and slabs for chambers.

Distributional pattern

The observation made in a few selective sites comprising about 200 burials of different types yielded some clue on its distributional pattern within a complex. When a site contained more than one type of burial, each type occupied a separate portion within the complex.

Topographically, it seems the earliest megaliths particularly cairn circle or stone circle occupied the most elevated field or were close to the foothills. The distance between two adjacent cairn circles or stone circles were

normally two to five meters. The dolmen or dolmenoid cist varieties were erected close to each other; sometimes the outer edges of the two circles over lap. The cairn circles with cist burial generally rose 1-2 m above the ground level. The pattern of distribution of cairn circles that seemed to emerge from the survey was that for each locality of a 5 km radius there was a somewhat connected cluster of sites. In the case of dolmens they located on hill tops generally having a 10 km radius.

Types of Burial

The burials of this region can be broadly divided into four groups namely cairn circle, stone circle, dolmen and dolmenoid cist.

Cairn circle

The cairn circle were constructed using round boulders with heap of cairns at the centre. As noted above their height above ground depended upon the nature of the burial and the terrain to some extent. For instance, if the terrain was loose in texture then the cairns were less in height and in case of hard soils they were taller comparatively. Generally they had the diameter of 5-15 m. They included the following types:

1. Cairn circle with cist burial
2. Cairn circle with pit burial
3. Cairn circle with menhir
4. Cairn circle with an anthropomorphic figure
5. Cairn circle with slab circle
6. Cairn circle with a sarcophagus

Cist Burial

Here , the cist was a box-like structure constructed of four orthostats kept in clockwise or anticlockwise direction on a floor and was covered by a capstone. The eastern orthostat had invariably a round porthole at the centre. In a few cases like that at Odugattur the cist had a "U" shaped porthole found at the centre but on the top edge of the orthostat. Due to the hidden nature of the cist it is premature to say anything of its further classification. However, The data collected from some excavated burials like at Mottur and in some disturbed cists suggested that the cists were not generally divided further to form what is called the transepted cist.

The excavations conducted in the year 1978-79 by the Archaeological Survey of India at Mottur in Chengam taluk discovered earlier by B.Narasimhaiah of the Survey revealed the nature of the burial in this region. The extensive megalithic site having nearly sixty cairn circle ranging from 3.5 to 12 m in diameter were noticed on the eastern slope of the hill known as Velurmalai. In all four megaliths including the one with anthropomorphic figure were opened.

A pit was dug to an average depth of 75 cm and dressed orthostats of roughly 10-18 cm thickness were placed in *swastika* pattern to form a cist. The floor slab is absent. One or more sarcophagi were placed invariably in all the cists.¹

Pit burial

Three burials were opened at Paiyampalli. Of these one is completely disturbed and the other two yielded a pit lined with stone slabs. One of the burials yielded a sarcophagus having 24 legs.² However the present writer has some reservation about the pit burial. So far no such pit

burial lined with stone slabs were reported in the surrounding regions like Kolar, Chittoor and Dharmapuri districts. It seems the stone slabs may be a part of the orthostat of a disturbed cist. The excavator himself reported that it was ransacked sometime after interment. Since it is a disturbed burial it could not be assessed correctly.

Menhir

Two sites namely Arapakkam in Walajahpet taluk and Thondamanur³ in Chengam taluk are reported with menhir as a part of cairn circle. At Arapakkam the menhir is of pillar type having broad base and tapering body. Whereas at Thondamanur it is a tall slab. Two menhirs having 6 m and 5 m in height respectively were seen planted on the western side as an integral part of the circle. These menhirs were the integral part of the slab circle as reported earlier at Mottur. The menhirs are very few in this district.

Anthropomorphic figurine

A unique discovery of B. Narasimhaiah is a huge monolithic anthropomorphic figure found at Mottur in Chengam taluk lying 5 km north of Tanipadi and 25 km west of Tiruvannamalai.⁴ The anthropomorphic figure forms integral part of the three concentric circles in which the outer two circles are built of stone slabs. This stands in the middle circle facing south. The figure is made of well dressed slab and measures 3.25 m in width and 3.25 m in height and is planted by scooping out the bed rock to a depth of 75 cm to secure it in position besides adequate packing of *murrum* on either side. It has curved arms measuring 0.92 m. Neck and head were represented by a semi-circular projection above the shoulder. A pedestal is provided instead of legs. It looks like in a seated form.

According to the local tradition, once the *Valiyars*, pygmies, came to know that there would be a rain fire at

their original place. They wanted to move southward to save themselves. They requested their God to come with them but He refused. While leaving the place they cut the head of the God and took it to the forest along with them. Hence it stands there without head.

Similar figures were reported elsewhere also. Earlier William king reported cruciform monoliths on the right bank of the river Godavari at Kaperlaguru, located about 13 km southwest of Mungapet in Paluncha taluk of Andhra Pradesh.⁵ Mulhern had also noticed some crosses on the bank of Kaveri at Malur and Katapur.⁶ Sundara and John observed at Ambala Vayal in Kerala certain projections looking like a head on the circular stone.⁷ Recently K.P.Rao reported two identical anthropomorphic figurines at Midimalla near Chittoor.⁸

The first of these forms integral part of the slab circle kept around the dolmen. The dolmen was surrounded by two slab circles. The slabs having semicircular top were placed on the cardinal points around the dolmen, as at Iralabanda⁹ and Mallachandram¹⁰. The anthropomorphic figure stands on the east in the outer slab circle. The second one is also placed on the eastern side. The second one had a dolmen encircled with three slab circles. The circle slabs having semicircular top and flat or rectangular top were planted alternately around the dolmen. The slab having the semicircular top occupies the cardinal point. In the mid-circle the anthropomorphic figure seems to have evolved from the earlier one. The curvature of the arms and shoulders are well turned down. The neck portion had some " V " shape depression.¹¹ But the first one noted above did not have any depression, instead it had a small round projection.

The availability of slab circles in the western part of Chittoor district led to believe that the Mottur anthropomorph might have also derived from there. As of

to substantiate this, recently one more anthropomorphic figurine identical to Mottur type was brought to light at Udaiyarnattam in South Arcot District. This was also planted as part of the slab circle of a cairn circle.¹²

Three cultural traits influenced the region. For instance, the cist with round porthole came from Dharmapuri district via Chengam pass, the sarcophagus is either of a local tradition or derived from South Arcot and Chingleput region and anthropomorphic figure would have come from the western part of Chittoor through the pass near Gudiyattam.

Anthropomorphic figures with head but armless were also reported in northern Andhra Pradesh particularly on the south bank of Godavari bank in the sites like Tottigutta¹³, Dongatogu¹⁴ in Khammam district of Andhra Pradesh.

Slab Circle

At Mottur and Thondamanur the cairn circle had a slab circle also. The slabs planted vertically into the ground had 10 - 20 cm height above the ground level. The excavation at Mottur yielded three concentric circles in which the outer two circles are built of stone slabs.¹⁵ At Thondamanur the outer circle is built of stone slabs. The anthropomorphic figure at Mottur as well as menhirs at Thondamanur are part of the slab circle.¹⁶

The cairn circle having slab circles were reported in Sittannaval in Pudukottai district¹⁷, Nattukkalpalayam in Coimbatore district¹⁸, Mukkudivelanpalayam, Panchalینگapuram, Brough Nagar¹⁹ and Kodumanal in Periyar district²⁰, Mungilpudur, Ittikal Agaram and Kuruvinyanpalli in Dharmapuri district²¹.

The sites like Mallachandram and Maharajakadai in Dharmapuri district yielded slab circles around dolmen.

The site Kuruvinyanapalli had slab circle around dolmenoid cist.²²

The occurrence of slab circles observed in the burial types like cist, dolmen and dolmenoid cist led to believe that these slab circles were planted to impose certain significance to the burial. Because generally the slab circles were found in one or two burials in a burial complex.

Sarcophagus

A Sarcophagus primarily denotes a stone coffin usually adorned with sculpture or inscription but later it includes terracotta as well. In India, these sarcophagi are associated with megalithic burials. There were used for secondary burial placed inside the tomb chambers like cist, dolmen and dolmenoid cists generally in the east west orientation. The grave goods like black and red ware pots, iron swords, spear heads, arrow heads, hoes, sickles, horse bits and stirrups were placed within and outside the sarcophagus.

A vast majority of them were of terracotta while a very few are of stone. The stone ones are monolithic troughs. Such types are reported in Dongatogu,²³ Pandurangapuram,²⁴ Polichetticheugudda²⁵ and Tottigutta,²⁶ all concentrated in the district of Khammam, Andhra Pradesh.

The sarcophagi were mainly concentrated in the eastern coastal plain particularly north of the river Pennaiyar in Tamil Nadu and south of Godavari in Andhra Pradesh. A few were also reported inland regions in the sites like at Maski,²⁷ Sankavaram,²⁸ Jadigenahalli,²⁹ etc. Another set of sarcophagus found against the Palaghat Pass in the districts of Trichur and Kozhikode in Kerala. Those sites are Chevayur,³⁰ Feroke³¹ and Kattankampal.³²

In Tamil Nadu, the sarcophagus is found in abundance in the district of Chingleput and northern part of South

Arcot districts. The occurrence of sarcophagus sites drastically comes down south of the river Pennaiyar. On the other hand the occurrence of urn burial increases south of the Pennaiyar and decreases as are when once moves north of it. It seems that the sarcophagus and urn had similar mode of burial practices with slight variation in its shape.

The available evidence suggests that the sarcophagus had its origin in the eastern coastal plain between Godavari and Pennaiyar and moved slowly westward and merged with the local tradition of the respective area. In district Chingleput and northern part of South Arcot district, particularly in the coastal area, it was found in pits or in pit circles. While moving westward it is found as an interment in the cists, dolmenoid cists and dolmens.

The sarcophagus burials can be divided into the following types:

1. Sarcophagus found in pits.
2. Sarcophagus found in pit circles.
3. Sarcophagus placed as an interment in the cist.
4. Sarcophagus placed as an interment in the dolmenoid cist.
5. Sarcophagus placed as an interment in the dolmen.

The sarcophagus directly placed inside the pits seems indigenous and probably earlier than all other types. These types of burials were reported at Perambair in Chingleput district.³³ Quite interestingly one of the sarcophagi had without legs recalling another form of coffin or urn burial. In addition to this two upturned clay hooks at both the exterior ends of the sarcophagus were noticed. These types of hooks are also found on the interior surface near the rim portion of the urn in some sites like at Kalapatti and Nalurvayal in Coimbatore district.³⁴

The sarcophagi placed in a pit circle were reported at Perambair,³⁵ Kunnattur,³⁶ Sanur³⁷ and Pallavaram³⁸ all located in the Chingleput district.

The above said two types were not noticed in North Arcot district. Obviously the reason is that of its western movement where it mingles or observed along with existing dolmenoid cists and dolmens.

The dolmenoid cist with sarcophagus interment was reported earlier at Karikal, Mamandur, Wandivasal³⁹ and in the present explorations at Karkur, Pogalur and Kilseppuli.

The sarcophagus placed inside the cist in east-west orientation is reported in the excavation at Mottur⁴⁰ and Odugattur⁴¹. The present exploration also revealed such type at Semba davankottai.

The dolmens with sarcophagus were found at Kilseppuli, Ariyur and Karikanthangal. Mallachandram in Krishnagiri taluk of Dharmapuri district,⁴² Devanur in Tirukkivilur taluk of South Arcot district⁴³ and Iralabanda in Palamaner taluk of Chittoor district,⁴⁴ all located in the border area of this district, yielded sarcophagus burial.

The above said sepulchral representations are clearly indicate the adoptability of sarcophagus by various types of burial depending on its local tradition.

Types of Sarcophagus

The sarcophagi are generally a coffin with oblong or bathtub shape having cylindrical leg fluted at the bottom either in one or more rows. The sarcophagus at Paiyampalli had 24 legs⁴⁵

The sites yielding sarcophagus found in the coastal area had domical lid whereas the sarcophagus unearthed at

Mottur⁴⁶ and Paiyampalli⁴⁷ did not yield any lids. It can be conceived in another way too. The pit burial not having any capstone had lids whereas the cist, domenoid cist and dolmens having capstone had sarcophagus without lids.

Sarcophagus without legs was also reported at Perambair⁴⁸. This looks like another form of urn burial.

Dolmenoid cist

This is a burial made of boulders or unhewn stones or rubble both for sides and cap. This oblong chamber generally had passage or wide opening on one side generally on the eastern side. Normally it does not have any porthole. Based on the construction of the chamber it can be divided into three types.

1. The chamber made of multiorthostats
2. The chamber made of rubble stones
3. The chamber made of boulders

The chamber made of multiorthostats with passage on the east is reported earlier at Karikal in the Arakonam taluk. In the present exploration it is found at Kilseppuli and Andiappanur.

At Karikal the chamber measuring 3.40 m north-south and 2.70 m east-west is made of fourteen slabs with gap on the eastern side and encircled by two stone circles.⁴⁹

At Kilseppuli and Andiappanur the chamber is made of multiorthostats with a passage on the east which terminates at the circle. Here the circle is built of small rectangular slabs, almost looking like bricks in size and shape, placed in courses around the chamber upto the capstone. The whole part looks like a fortification wall (Pl. IX). This surrounding wall had a open against the passage. Quite interestingly, unlike in other places here the passage is found

in all directions. Besides this, as a variant, one of the dolmenoid cists had a eastern orthostat with imperfect "U" shaped porthole (Pl.X).

This type of "U" shaped porthole also is found at Karikantagal⁵⁰ and Odugattur⁵¹. Some of the portholes found at Kilseppuli are not perfectly made.

Dolmenoid cists of these type were generally raised 1 m to 2 m above the ground level.

The second type of dolmenoid cists was comparatively more in number and was reported in the sites like at Kilseppuli, Andiappanur, Karkur, Sempalli, etc. In this type, which is raised to a height of 40-70 generally, the chamber is built of four courses to the height of 30-50 cm. Sometimes they were placed like a wall without any gap between the rubble but in some cases they were placed at four corners too. The chamber is surmounted by a huge capstone which generally project well beyond the chamber wall.

The chamber will be encircled by a stone circle or wall like structure as it is noticed at Karkur and Kilseppuli respectively. One of the dolmenoid cists at Karkur had two circles. The inner slab circles is placed around the chamber raised to the height of capstone and the outer stone circle is placed at the base of the slab circle (Pl.VI). In all the chambers the eastern side had a wide gap.

At Kilseppuli the dolmenoid cist had the opening or passage in all directions (Pl. VII).

The third type of dolmenoid cist had a chamber made of granitic boulders placed together or leaving a gap between the boulders. This oblong or a paraboloid chamber with passage or gap on the east is surmounted by a huge capstone (Pl. VIII). One of the dolmenoid cists at Maman-

dur is made of eleven rough and unhewn boulders with passage or gap on the east it was encircled by boulders. Such type was also noticed at Wandivasal.⁵²

Sum-up

All the above said types had the sarcophagus interment. It seems these type of burial might have emerged in the district of Chingleput where there were found in large numbers. The occurrence of such type of burials is found in few numbers while moving southward or westward . It is found in the eastern part of Krishnagiri taluk in Dharmapuri district and Palamaner taluk in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. Beyond this region, the availability of these types is negligible. This type of burial would have emerged out of cist and dolmen type of burials which percolated into the Chingleput region from North Arcot district and merged with the existing sarcophagus burial.

Dolmen

It is a burial chamber made of four orthostats or slabs placed around the floor slab in clock or anticlockwise direction and closed with flat capstone. They were generally raised on the rocky surface on the hill top. The eastern orthostats invariably had a round porthole.

Such type of burials were noticed in the sites like at Ariyur, Ayepedu, Kilseppuli, Mahendravadi, etc. These dolmens were raised 1-2 m above the ground level and porthole had a diameter of 30-40 cm. Most of these sites were found in and around Sholingur on the northern part of Walajahpet and Arakonam.

Urn burial

The only site reported with urn burial is at Kallerimalai excavated by the Madras University in the year 1978-

79. The urn was placed on a bed rock buttressed on all sides by hard rocky soil upto lower half and by red *murrum* at the upper half. The urn was found sealed by a dump of loose grey soil and covered by a capstone. The globular shaped urn contained fragments of bones, a skull and a few black and red ware bowls, cups, etc.⁵³

Porthole

The porthole was only on the eastern orthostat. There were two shapes namely round and " U " shaped porthole.

Round porthole was invariably found in the dolmen (Pl. XIII) and cist. The frequency of occurrence of the round porthole cannot be assessed due to its hidden nature. The sites like Mottur and Sembadavankottai yielded this type in cist burial. The sites like Ariyur, Ayepedu, Ayal, Kilseppuli, etc., yielded on the dolmen.

The "U" shaped porthole was always observed in the dolmenoid cist. They were scooped out at the centre but on the top edge of the orthostat. This type of porthole was found at Odugattur⁵⁴, Karikanthangal⁵⁵ and Kilseppuli. This type was also reported in the neighbouring Dharmapuri district in sites like at Pachchikanapalli, Malththampatti, Pattakapatty, Bodampatti, etc.⁵⁶

Besides this, one more type was also found. At Kilseppuli two dolmenoid cists had a pot shaped porthole on the top edge of the orthostat.

Rock paintings

A megalithic habitation site at Mallapadi in Tirupattur taluk was found with a rock shelter. The rock shelter has on the ceiling paintings in white kaolin depicting the scene of two horse riders fighting with poles and another

human figure with upraised arms holding a stick or a weapon.⁵⁷

Recently one more rock painting site of Paiyampalli was brought to light by K.Kumar of Madras University.⁵⁸ The Paiyampalli rock paintings had fighting scene, dancing figure, horse riders, flora, birds and sun motif. The rock shelter at Chinnarayanapalli near Gudiyattam also had rock paintings.

These rock shelters had the paintings on the roof. It seems that they were executed periodically. The non-occurrence of habitation material in the shelters indicates that these were executed only on some special occasions.

Local Name

The megalithis are locally called as *pandiyar vidu*, *panduvarar vidu*, *panduvarar kuddai*, *panduvarar parai*, *valiyar kudam*, etc.

Habitation

The excavations conducted in the sites like at Odugatur, Paiyampalli, Mallapadi, Appukallu, Kallerimalai and Mottur revealed the nature of the material culture of this region.

In the megalithic levels at Paiyampalli, the residences were circular, oblong or oval in plan as deduced from the disposition of the postholes. Their superstructure again was of perishable materials with a central post resting on a perforated stone. The circular houses measure 1.5 m to 3 m in diameter, while oblong ones vary from 1.7 m to 4 m along the longer axis. The floors are of stone chips with a *murram* spread and are often plastered with lime. A rubble floor has also been noticed on the periphery in some cases rubble foundations for houses are also not unusual. The

houses are normally single-roomed though double-roomed ones are also present. Remains of an oven and storage jars were also seen.⁵⁹

The iron objects are used profusely for making sickles, knives, spear heads, arrow heads, axes, nails, etc., objects of beautification were bangles and beads made of shells, glass and terracotta. Gold ornaments and birds and animals made of terracotta were also unearthed.

The ceramics of the megalithic culture consist of black and red ware, black ware and red ware. Besides a coarse red ware painted in chocolate or light brown exclusively on the outside and in orange pigment has also been noticed. The former is found in the habitation and the later in the burials. In the late level, the russet coated painted ware occurs.

The economy of the megalithic peoples appears mainly to be agricultural and cattle rearing, supplemented by hunting, besides iron working as seen by the profusion of iron slag. Cereals and pulses, horsegram and greengram were cultivated. The animals domesticated or hunted included the cattle, sheep, pig, jungle cat and rhino.

Grave goods

The grave goods are found on the floor slab or base of the cist, dolmen and dolmenoid cists. These were also found inside and outside the sarcophagus. The main pot forms are conical vase, bowls, dishes, tulip-shaped vase, pots of black and red ware. Ring stands and lids all of black ware. Three legged vase in red ware also noticed. Iron implements from the burials are arrow heads, spear heads, chisels, knives and daggers. Beads of etched carnelian and shell were found.

At Mottur, Megalith I yielded a copper bowl and a figure of deer which probably served as the knob of the lid of the copper bowl and Megalith II yielded a copper bangle.⁶⁰

In Megalith I of Paiyampalli, some pots were kept upside down over the skeletal remains. This site also reported graffiti marks.⁶¹

The Odugattur cist burial yielded fifteen iron sheets of various sizes and shapes. This sheet is probably of a plate. One of them had a flattened loop 2.5 inch long and 3.75 inch wide. Some of them had a slightly thickened rim or the rim was recurved. A few plates had small copper discs attached to them, some slightly conical and some flat. The flat discs bore traces of ornamentation on their margin but copper had too much disintegrated to distinguish the character of the decoration. One piece of copper sheet was cut rudely in the shape of a bird of unidentifiable species.⁶²

Origin and Development of Megalith type

It is well known that the early remnants of the iron age culture are found outside the sub-continent even before 1200 B.C. whereas archaeological evidences of iron metallurgy and its profuse use may not go beyond 13th c. B.C. The world wide distribution with a common character posed great challenge to archaeologists about its origin. The occurrence of horse bits and stirrups in megalithic graves clearly suggest the diffusion of foreign elements into India because none of earlier occupants of the Indian peninsular used horse prior to this period.⁶³ Gordon Childe,⁶⁴ Heimendorf,⁶⁵ A.Sundara,⁶⁶ K.N.Dikshit,⁶⁷ Yadu Vanshi,⁶⁸ B.Subbarao,⁶⁹ etc. had the common view that these megaliths originated in the Mediterranean region. K.S.Ramachandran has the opinion that the megalithism must have started in Palestine, also in the Mediterranean.⁷⁰ Haimendorf however suggested two way of in-

roduction. The portholed chamber and dolmen reached from Mediterranean region⁷¹ and rest like menhir entered from the east where it still survives as a living tradition.

Besides the origin, the scholars had different opinion regarding the route followed by the megalithic people to enter into India. Gordon⁷² and Haimendorf⁷³ postulated the theory of sea route. According to Banerjee, in the wake of Aryans, the Dravidians who originally occupied the north were pushed to far south. On their migration they picked up cairn circle and iron from the Baluchi-Makran area and black and red ware pottery from the chalcolithic people.⁷⁴ Gururaja Rao is of the opinion that the after acquiring knowledge of iron and megalithism from South Russia and North Iron in the 1st millennium B.C. the megalithic communities settled in South India. On their way to south they took the black and red ware in Kathiawada region and other chalcolithic traits.⁷⁵

Recently, the extensive survey carried out by A.Sundara in North Karnataka region has yielded a comprehensive picture on the development of various types of megaliths in India. He is of the opinion that there is a two line development. The trapezoidal passage chambers of Konnur type with a passage invariably on the south developed as a squarish or rectangular chamber with port hole either on the southern or eastern side in and around Aihole. It further developed into a Brahmagiri type with circular or round porthole invariably on the east. The second line of development starts with the hexagonal passage chamber of Kaladgi type. It developed as an oblong chamber with porthole on any direction around Rajankolur area. At Hire Benkal further evolution was noticed. Hire Benkal types are oblong in plan and porthole faces any direction. Generally the passage is absent. Vertical slab circle completely encloses the chamber and sometimes the slabs rest against the capstone.⁷⁶

B. Narasimhaiah suggested that the Brahmagiri and Hire Benkal type further developed and entered into Tamil Nadu.⁷⁷ The Brahmagiri and Hire Benkal types found in southern Karnataka are dated to 800 B.C.

The cairn circle with cist burial noticed in the Kaveri basin as stated earlier might have entered into the region from Mysore and Mandya districts of Karnataka along the river Kaveri. However, the developed form nature of the cist, i.e., the transepted variety could not be observed. Because hardly any excavation is conducted in this region.

The dolmens with round porthole on the east noticed in the upper part of Krishnagiri taluk and east of Markandadi might have borrowed this type from Kolar and Chittoor districts of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh respectively via Kuppam and Tiruppattur passes.

Besides at Mallachandram and Maharajakadai, the dolmens encircled by vertical slabs placed alternately with vertical top and arch top are noticed at Iralabanda,⁷⁸ Kavalagunta, Midimalla, Govindareddipalli,⁷⁹ all in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. Interestingly at Iralabanda as at Mallachandaram all three vertical slabs placed against the porthole in concentric circle had round porthole. This unusual phenomenon might have developed in this region only. In the same manner, the anthropomorphic stone figure resting against the porthole as a part of the slab circle discovered at Midimalla also in Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh recalls the Mottur anthropomorphic reported earlier. These similarities recall the close link between the dolmens of the Krishnagiri taluk and Chittoor district.

The cairn circle with urn burial found predominantly in Harur taluk and sarcophagus burial of this district is of an indigenous in nature. They might have interacted with

neighbouring South Arcot and North Arcot districts along the river Pennaiyar.

Chronology

The available C^{14} dates at Paiyampalli and Appukallu for the cultural materials found in the habitation deposits of this region and a comparative study with other dated sites help us to arrive at a satisfactory chronological basis for this culture.

Basing on the archaeological data at Brahmagiri Wheeler assigned 2nd century B.C.⁸⁰ for the megalithic culture in South India. Previously scholars like Krishnan, assigned a date between 2000 B.C. and 200 B.C. to the megaliths at Chandravalli.⁸¹

Based on the references mentioned in the Vedic literature Panchamuki assigned the date to 1200-1000 B.C..⁸² A date of 1000-300 B.C. is assigned by Mitra taking into account of the cultural materials having close affinity with those of Indo-Erythrean culture.⁸³ Gordon and Haimendorf placed it to 1100-700 B.C. linking the origin and diffusion with Mediterranean region.⁸⁴ Sundara, found at Terdal a neolithic barrow and megalithic cairn together and assigned it a period between 1100-1000 B.C. to the beginnings of the culture.⁸⁵ Narasimahaiah also had a similar opinion.⁸⁶ Leshnik who rejected all the above dates provided a date of 300 B.C. - 100 A.D. based on typological similarities.⁸⁷

Regarding the C^{14} dates for the culture, it is assigned to 1100-1000 B.C. at Hallur.⁸⁸ This is the earliest date for the iron using culture in South India. At Takalghat the mid-phase of occupation has been dated to 555 B.C. and 615 B.C..⁸⁹ In Tamil Nadu, at Paiyampalli a date of 315 B.C. is assigned to period II.⁹⁰ Paiyampalli dates for the megalithic culture are 640 ± 105 BC (TF 323) and

380 \pm 105 BC (TF 350) and Appukallu gave a date of 300 BC. None came from burials.⁹¹

At Naikund the habitation yielded 690 B.C. and 300 B.C. and burial to 545 B.C. and 505 B.C.⁹² Thus the above C¹⁴ dates for this culture fall in the time bracket between 600 B.C. and 300 B.C. The terminal date of this culture may be pushed further down to 100 A.D. The recent excavation of a habitation-cum-burial site at Kodumanal yields a date of 300 B.C. - 100 A.D. for this culture. To support this Roman coins were collected from a burial at Chandravalli,⁹³ from cairns in the Nilgiris⁹⁴ and in the Coimbatore district.⁹⁵ Silver punch-marked coin was also collected from *pandukuli* in Coimbatore.⁹⁶

From the foregoing evidence it is quite obvious that the megalithic culture falls in the time bracketed anywhere between 1000 B.C. - 100 A.D. While moving towards south from the north Karnataka the date of this culture also goes down showing its southward migration.

As noted earlier, the transepted cist might have developed somewhere between Brahmagiri and Kollegal before entering into Coimbatore region via Dimbam pass and Moyyar valley. The transepted variety was noticed at Parasagowdanapalayam, Bailur, Gundi Malla, Kallidoddi, Martalli, etc in Kollegal taluk.⁹⁷ These transepted cists can be dated to 5-4th century B.C. as it reached Noyyal river valley in Coimbatore as early as 3rd c. B.C. The likely route followed along the Kaveri river to enter into the Dharmapuri region from Mysore and Mandya districts would have happened prior to 400 B.C. Likewise, dolmen might have entered from Chittoor and developed as dolmenoid cist in the north-eastern region of Tamil Nadu. Owing to contact with the sarcophagus burials of the eastern coast they seem to have absorbed that trait into them. Hence the independent sarcophagus burial without any lithic appendage is indigenous and earlier than dolmen and

dolmenoid cist burial. It can be date to earlier than 500 BC. The dolmen and dolmenoid cist having sarcophagus burial can be dated to 400-500 BC.

It is understood from the foregoing discussion that the intensive field survey, surface collections and topographical examination are still inadequate to arrive at a concrete conclusion. Only a systematic excavation of a few habitation-cum-burial sites assisted by scientific dating of different types of burial can give a clear evolutionary picture.

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Chapter 6

Memorial Stones

Commemoration of heroism is a universal act. Tradition connected with paying a homage to the departed soul and erecting a memorial or edifice in honour of the people who laid down their lives for the sake of their society is an age-old practice in India. The character and design, the media and content are varied through the ages and space. The megalithic tombs, stupas, memorial stones, pillars and other allied ancient architectural edifices found in south India are basically memorials.

The basic theme connected with memorial stones in Tamil Nadu is cattle lifting or cattle retrieving. The earliest available inscribed reference to cattle raid is that found on a memorial stone found in the village of Gangaperur in Siddhavattam taluk of Guddapah district of Andhra Pradesh. The Brahmi inscription palaeographically dated to 4th century A.D. states that the pillar, the *Chaya-khambha* was raised in memory of Gona who died during the cattle raid by Sivadasa.¹

Another memorial pillar dated 2nd century A.D. was reported at Pawni on the bank of Waiganga in Bhandra district of Maharashtra.² The earlier reference to the word *caya-kambha* was found in the Prakrit inscription on this pillar. The erection of such memorial pillars over the dead might have related to the megalithic burials. It seems that this megalithic tradition was borrowed by the Buddhists.

The excavation at Kausambi revealed that in the 5th century B.C. Buddhist monks if dead were commemorated by the erection of small pillars over their relics buried in earthen pots below the floors adjoining small stupas.³ Such a pillar was called *yasti* in sanskrit and *lasti* in prakrit.

A copper plate written in Kharosthi of the 1st century A.D. found in the excavation at Sui Vihar Stupa about 25 km southwest of Bahawalpur in west Punjab now in Pakistan had a reference to a *yasti*.⁴ Another inscribed memorial pillar (*lasti*) dated 122 of Saka era (200 A.D.) was reported from Mulawaser near Dwarka in Saurashtra.⁵ It was erected by the father of Vanijaka who gave his life for the sake of his friend. This may be of the herostone variety. The commemorative circular mound of Lauria Nandargarh also had a wooden post erected at the centre of the mound at the spot where the bones were deposited.⁶

At Nagarjunakonda memorial pillars called *cayastambhas* erected in honour of kings, queens, chieftains, generals, religious personages, artisans and soldiers were reported. These were raised during the rule of Ikshvakus who ruled this valley in the second quarter of the 3rd century A.D.⁷

Sangam and Megalithism

In Tamil Nadu, the earliest record on memorial stone is found in Sangam literature. However the archaeological data so far discovered goes to 4-5th century A.D. Hence the non-availability of the Sangam period memorials posed a greater problem in applying the descriptive data of the Sangam literature upon the later memorial stones. Though the tradition continued in later period there is quite a possibility of minor changes in their tradition in the following years.

The absence of Sangam memorial stones as on today has induced me to have a second look on the descriptive nature of literary data. The occurrence of Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions like that of Jambai belonging to Adiyaman⁸, and of Tamil-Brahmi legends on coins of some Sangam kings found in the area of memorials clearly establish the fact that this area also might have used the Tamil-Brahmi script for their writing during the Sangam Age. The Andipatti coin hoard reading *atinan etir-ana chendan* found in the heart of this zone strengthens this fact.⁹ Further the recent findings of Kiluchcheri memorial stone¹⁰ and Arasalapuram memorial stone found near Ennayiram¹¹ clearly shows the evolution of the *vatteluttu* script from Tamil-Brahmi around 4th century A.D.

Keeping this in mind, an attempt is made here to understand the true nature of the Sangam literary data.

The Sangam works like *Tokappiyam*, *Akananuru*, *Purananuru*, *Malaipadukadam*, *Ingurunuru*, *Pattinapalai*, etc. speak on memorial stones in a detailed manner.

There is an absolute evolutionary process in the erection of memorials, starting from the megalithic period. Broadly speaking there are three stages of development in the erection of memorials.

In the first stage, the megalithic cist was raised and menhir or *nadukal* was planted as a memorial for the people who were killed by the *maravas* or *kanavas* by charging an arrow. However, though the *maravas* involved, these were not raised for those who died in cattle raids. The terms like *ambin visai ida veelndor ennu varambu ariya uval idu patukkai*¹², *vil ida veelndor padukkai*¹³, *al azhittu uyartta anchuyar patukkai*¹⁴, *padukalattu uyartta mayirt talai padukkai*¹⁵, *ambu vida veelndor vamba paduk kai*¹⁶, *uyar padukku ivarnta tadar kodi atiral nedulilai nadukal*¹⁷, etc., found in the *Ahananuru* and *Purananuru*

are clearly indicative of the megalithic burial not of memorial stone.

In the second stage, the megalithic cist was raised and *nadukal* was planted for the people who died generally in the cattle raid. The terms like *naanudai maravar peyarum peedum ezhuthi atharthorum peeli suttiya pirangu nilai nadukal.....nirai kandanna uval idu padukkai*,¹⁸ *padukkai serthi.....peyar porittu ini nattanare kallum kanrodu karayai tandu pakaiyar ottiya neduntakai*,¹⁹ etc., supports this view.

In the third stage, the *nadukal* or memorial stones were raised in memory of the heroes who died in cattle raids. The graphic references like *ezhuttudai nadukal*,²⁰ *mudir nadukal*,²¹ *peyar payam padarat thondru kuyil ezhuttu*²² *kur uli kuyindra kodumai ezhuttu*²³, *nadukal ayinan*²⁴ etc., made on memorial stones speak about their nature and content. In this stage only memorial stones came into existence in large numbers.

Out of the thirty references made in the Sangam literature nearly twenty belong to last stage. Hence it seems that in closing part of the Sangam period the erection of memorial stone proliferated.

Interestingly, the Sangam poets found in the first stage very rarely mentioned the names of any kings or rulers.²⁵ They only recorded the clan names as Cheran, Pandyan, Gangan, Poraiyan, Titiyan, etc.²⁶ But in later stages the kings' names were also referred to.²⁷

From the foregoing discussion it is quite clear that the megalithic burials were slowly transformed into *nadukals* or memorial stones. In all the above said three stages mostly the *marava* or *kadava* community is associated. In the early stage, they were actively involved in killing the people who passed through their area. In later stage, it seems that they were slowly absorbed by the local leaders

or village heads as their servants to protect their cattle. There are references to these maravas fighting each other in a cattle raid.²⁸ These people also served as body guards of a king.²⁹

The *Tolkappiam* speaks of the rites performed during the erection of the memorial as *katchi*, *kalkol*, *nirpadai*, *nadutal*, *perumpadai* and *valttutal*.³⁰ The above said rites are in one order. Here, the *Tolkappiam* does not mention the sculptural representation or inscription. The above said rites may also suggest the rituals adopted in the early stage of the memorials, which were nearer to those associated with the erection of megaliths. In all probability it seems that at the initial stage they would have erected a dolmen or cist in association with menhir or a tall stone slab.

The Sangam literature also gives certain phrases or terms like *eluttudai nadukal*,³¹ *peyarporita*,³² *kuyinra*,³³ *kuyileluttu*,³⁴ etc., which all reveal the nature of memorial. Except the phrase *eluttudai*, the others the act of engraving. The phrase *eluttudai* is always suffixed with the term *nadukal* meaning a memorial but the verbal forms *porita*, *kuyinra*, etc., are found in association with *peyar* meaning both name and fame of the dead.

It seems that the phrase *eluttudai nadukal* (memorial stone with engraving) occurring in the Sangam works can be taken as a reference to an inscription or painting on the memorial or menhir.

The term *eluttu* means either painting or script. The phrase like *eluttunilai mandapam*,³⁵ *kadavul elutiya*,³⁶ *elutiya thoyyil*,³⁷ etc., are indicative of painting whereas *kuyil eluttu*, *kur uli kuyindra kodumai eluttu*,³⁸ etc., are indicative of figure or script. Hence, *eluttudai nadukal* may also signify either painting or script. The Sangam works fail to give any description of the sculpture, if any, chiseled out on the rock.

The Sangam people inherited the technology of cutting, quarrying and lifting huge boulders and slabs from the megalithic people. The latter made beads by boring and polishing the hard materials like carnelian, quartz, beryl, garnet, sapphire, etc.³⁹ But material or literary evidence is absent to prove that they produced sculpture or figure on hard material like granite or quartzite.

So far we have not come across any slab engraved with a figure prior to the 4-5th century A.D. It seems that only during the 4-5th century A.D. was initiated the art of sculpture in hard material.⁴⁰ The Pallava patronization helped to develop it as a fullfledged art in Tamil Nadu. Hence the term *nadukal* mentioned in the Sangam literature may be indicative of stone slab devoid of any sculpture. This may be as suggested earlier an evolutionary form of menhir. The phrase *eluttudai nadukal* may be a stone having painting or script. However, this is only a tentative conclusion.

The writing in the form of painting might have preceded engraving. It seems that in earlier stage memorials would have used painting on the dolmen or menhir and at a later stage they might have engraved letters or figure. To strengthen this fact, orthostats of the dolmen at Kanchenapalli had incised marks which resemble Brahmi letters *ma*, *chcha*, *na* and *tha*. Such early characters were also reported from passage chamber cist at Muktyala village in Nandigama taluk of Krishna district.⁴¹

In this region, particularly Krishnagiri and Tiruppattur taluks, at a number of places like Maharajakadai, Oppattavadi, Oramanagunta, Othikuppam,⁴² Mallapadi,⁴³ Paiyampalli⁴⁴, etc., paintings are noticed on dolmens and rock shelters except in the last two mentioned places where it is found only on the rockshelter. However, the menhir or tall standing slabs placed around the dolmen do not yield any painting. These paintings might have disappeared due to

the long exposure to the sun and rain. Further the earliest memorial stones are also observed in the same geographical area.

Both megalithic burials and memorial stones are raised for the dead. They used common media called stone. The taboo of using stone for Brahmanical structure until the sixth century AD is well attested by the Mahendraverman's Mandagapattu inscription. It states that brickless, timberless, metalless and mortarless temple which is a mansion for the Brahma, Isvara and Vishnu was caused to be made for the first time by the king *Vicitra - cita*.⁴⁵ This implies that stone was exclusively used until then for the burial structures only. The close relation between the megalithic burial and memorial stone can be inferred from the occurrence of cairn circle and memorial stones in close proximity to each other at number places in Chengam area. Even *Ahanianuru* evidence supports this fact.⁴⁶

Post Sangam Memorial Stones

Systematic explorations carried out in this region and the adjoining districts in early 1970's by the State Archaeology Department of Tamil Nadu and followed by Department of Ancient History and Archaeology of Madras University, Mr.R.Poongundran, Registering Officer of State Archaeology Department of Tamil Nadu and by the present writer brought out about 200 inscribed and uninscribed memorial stones dated between the 5th century A.D. and 13th century A.D. Most of them belong to the Pallava period. Pre-Pallava memorial stones were found at Irulapati, dated to the 5th century A.D. All the available *vatteluttu* memorial stones belong to the post Sangam period.

Though most of the memorial stones generally refer to the Pallava king we hardly come across any memorial stone in the Pallava core region i.e., in and round Kanchipuram. Though the Pallavas fought a number of bat-

ties with the Chalukyas there is hardly any memorial stone in memory of their soldiers. Further, the Pallava kings did not prefer the *vatteluttu* script for their official work. Hence it is to be explained that the erection of memorial stones must have been a local tradition confined to the eastern part of Dharmapuri district and western part of North Arcot district and Tiruvannamalai district.

It is noteworthy that very few among these inscriptions speak of any genuine warfare between dynasties so well known to us and that the rest confine themselves to the prosaic pattern of cattle raids and their rescue. Though the Tamil literary conventions held such cattle raids as a preliminary step leading to a battle between the two contending parties, the material evidences so far available fail to support this view.

An attempt is made here to enlist all the available memorial stones, both inscribed and uninscribed, to understand their nature and content (Table 1). Out of the 183 memorial stones 141 memorial stones were raised basically for cattle raids and skirmish. The other 42 memorial stones were later in date. It includes 19 for animal killing, 10 for sati stone and the rest 13 for other activities like *kovukal*, *sanniyasikal*, etc.(Table 2)

Out of 183 memorial stones belong to the period upto Narasimhavarman II and 25 to a period between 729-796 A.D. i.e., and some 42 came into existence in the closing part of the 9th and later (Table 3).

The memorial stones are almost absent in the period between 800-900 A.D. (Table 3). These 100 years seem to be a crucial period in Tamil Nadu history. The rise of Cholas and their political expansion into Thondaimandalam occurred during this period. Based on the script, purpose,

content and sculptural representation memorial stones further can be divided into two stages (Table 4).

1. The earlier memorial stones having *vatteluttu* script. (upto Nandivarman i.e., upto 796 A.D.)
2. The later memorial stones having Tamil script (from Kambavarman onwards i.e., 872 A.D. onwards)

In later memorial stones the following salient features were observed.

- a. The usage of *vatteluttu* script shifted from *vatteluttu* to Tamil.
- b. New territorial divisions emerged.
- c. The memorial stones for other than cattle raids were found in large numbers.
- d. The sculptural representation became elaborate by adding one or more panels on the top.

Territorial Division

The close study of the Sangam literature and the lithic evidence of the memorial give a good picture on the emergence of territorial divisions in this area (Table 5).

The territorial divisions like Mivenadu, Velkalinadu, Ganganadu, Puramalainadu, Koyinurnadu, Merkovalurnadu, Vanakopadi, Nulambapadi, etc., indicate that these were named after some clan, physiography and place names.

Ahananuru (44, 113, 325) gives some names like Nannan, Gangan, Katti, Adiyar, Pannan, etc., who lived as a *vel* in this region.⁴⁷ As stated earlier in the early stage the poets who spoke about the memorials as *padukkai* (megalithic cist) mention only the clan name, not any

king's or chief's name.⁴⁸ Hence it seems that he who lead the cattle raid later became a leader or *vel*.

The territorial divisions like Mivenadu and Kilvenadu found in Chengam area and Velkalinadu and Velanadu found in Dharmapuri area might have been named after a *vel* only. The *vatteluttu* inscriptions give the name of territorial divisions like Mivenadu, Eyilnadu, Kilvenadu, Mikondrainadu, Puramalainadu, Palinadu, Ganganadu, Kovurnadu, Merkovilurnadu, etc., and the later memorial stones had refer to the territorial divisions like Velkalinadu, Koyinurnadu, Thayanurnadu, Bangalanadu, Sirupalnadu, etc.

In some cases the earlier *ur* became *nadu* division. For instance, the Sirupalur of 6th century A.D. became Sirupalnadu in 9th-10th century A.D.⁴⁹ and Koyilur of 7th century A.D. became Koyilurnadu in 9th century A.D.⁵⁰ It seems territorial division around a prominent village had been converted into a small *nadu* division.

In the same manner the suffix *padi* was just a village in earlier stage. For instance, *Mivenattu Karungalipadi*,⁵¹ *Merkovilurnattu Iramandaipadi*,⁵² *Toppuravaruppadi*⁵³, etc. In later inscriptions particularly from the 9th century onwards we come across Vanakopadi and Nulambapadi⁵⁴.

The natural barriers like river and mountains were generally kept as boundary between two *nadus*. (Map IV) The Mikondrainadu (southwestern part of Chengam taluk) and Merkovilurnadu (south eastern part of Chengam) on the east were separated by the Pennaiyar river which runs there from north to south. The Mikondrainadu and Mivenadu occupying the northern part of Chengam again divided by the river Pennaiyar where it runs west to east. Mikondrainadu and Puramalinadu (western part of Harur taluk of Dharmapuri district) were separated by river Vaniyar, a tributary to river Pennaiyar.

Similarly, Ganganadu (western part of Uttangarai taluk of Dharmapuri district) and Mivenadu were separated by the river Pambar, a tributary to Pennaiyar. The Eyilnadu (Tiruppattur taluk) and Mivenadu were separated by the Javadi hills which runs between Chengam and Tiruppattur.

The inscriptions available within one territorial division sometimes are confined to one ruler. The rulers like Perumbanaraisar and Vanakovaraisar ruled Venadu⁵⁵ and Mikondrainadu⁵⁶ respectively. Here too, only *ur* level rulers rather than *nadu* level rulers are mentioned particularly upto Mahandravarman's 20th regnal year.

The suffixes *parumar*, *araisar*, *makkal* and *sevakar* always occur respectively in the same hierarchy thereby indicating some gradation among those whose names had the suffixes.⁵⁷ Majority of memorial stones were raised for the *sevakars* who stand in the lower most stratum of the society.

Purpose of the Memorial Stones

The previous and present explorations carried out in this region brought various categories of memorial stones. Most of the early memorials were the result of feuds between the neighbouring clans which were involved in cattle lifting and retrieving.

Cattle Raids

The early herostones of this group had the following phrases in their inscriptions:

Torukollutpattar or *torukondapodupattan* or
Torukondagnanrupattan, all meaning those who died at
 the time of cattle raid;⁵⁸

Torumettupattar or *toruiduvittupattan* meaning who died at the time of retrieving the cattle;⁵⁹

Torukondagnanru toru iduvittupattan who died after retrieving the cattle.⁶⁰

Torukola pusal senru erindu pattan, meaning those who died in the dual at the time of cattle raids;⁶¹

It may be recalled here that the lifting and retrieving of the cattle are mentioned as two initial stages of war namely *vetci* and *karandai* in Sangam literary works.

There are some other varieties of memorial stones which are as follows:

Raid into the Enemy Territory

The phrases *sangamalathai erindagnanru* is found in Melpunjai *vatteluttu* memorial stone of 7th c. A.D raised for the hero who died in the battle at Sangamalam.⁶²

In Defiance of Aggression

The phrase *ur bontai mer cakkavararu padai vanta gnaru* in Sattanur (Mallikapuram) *vatteluttu* inscription dated in 39th regnal year of Mahendravarman refers to the hero who died in facing an enemy aggression.⁶³

In Defence of Village, Town and Fort

The phrases *ur azliap poken enru pattan* and *ur azhivil pattan* found in Karungalipadipatti⁶⁴ and Chin-nagaundanpatti⁶⁵ (Navalai) memorials respectively mention those who died in protecting their village.

In Defence of Land and Lord

The Kurumpatti⁶⁶ and Tinnahalli⁶⁷ memorials were erected in memory of the soldiers who died in protecting their land and lord.

Rape and Molestation of Women

The memorial stone found at Chengam⁶⁸ and Navalai⁶⁹ were raised in honour of those who laid down their life to prevent the molestation of their women by the enemies. This type is also reported at Korakoda in Karnataka.⁷⁰

Rescuing a Girl from Robbers

The Velur memorial stone records the death of Kaliman, who died after rescuing his elder brother's daughter from robbers.⁷¹

Fight against Wild Animals

The phrases like *pandrikuttipattan*, *pulikuttipattan*, *yanaikuttipattan*, *kutirai-kuttipattan*, etc., commemorated the heroes who died respectively while killing a boar, tiger, elephant and horse. These memorials were found at Thavalam, Devarmukkulam, Sellampatti⁷² and at Navalai.⁷³

Bull Fight

The memorial stone found at Palaya Indur is very interesting. Here the bull is shown in a charging posture on the right side of an unarmed man. The man is said to have died by charging a bull in an open cattle fight. Two identical memorial stones at Kuttapadi commemorate some musicians who died accidentally while playing musical instrument in front of the bull.

Ploughing the Land

The Halepuram memorial stone as said elsewhere is of an unique variety. This was erected in memory of the hero who died while tilling the land.

Memorial for pets

According to Eduttanur memorial stone, one Karundevakkatti died while protecting the cattle from the enemies during the 34th regnal year of Mahendravarman. In this fight, his pet dog Kovivan also died. Hence the dog also got the right place in the memorial of his master.

The Kurusilapattu memorial stone had a parrot seated on the right shoulder portion of the hero.

Other Memorials

Besides the above memorial stones, quite a number of *sati* and fertility stones locally called *silakal*, *sanniyasikal* and *kovukal* were identified. The *sati* stones were generally found in the upper part of the Dharmapuri and North Arcot district whereas the fertility stones were noticed in the western part of the Dharmapuri district.

Sculptural Representations

Sculptures depicted on *vatteluttu* memorials were generally in half relief. They were shown just as emerging out. Sometimes they are even shown by just a line as one found at Panaikulam. The hero mostly holds either a shield or bow in his left hand and sword in his right hand. The body of the hero is shown facing north. The hero is shown usually as moving towards north or as facing north. It may be the symbolic representation of what is known in Sangam literature as *vadakkirundu uyir nittal* i.e., a ritual suicide facing north. In some cases the hero is shown

pierced with so many arrows. He generally wears under garments in case of *sevakar* (servant) who died in the battle. In case of kings or chiefs or local leaders (as at Chennasandiram and Vedakuppam) the upper garment is shown. Opposite to the hero, enemy soldiers were depicted but comparatively smaller in size. Cattles were also represent at the base of the panel to indicate the cattle raid. At the base of the stone one *cimil* (small casket) and *hendi* or a pot of water or *puṇṇaghata* is depicted on either side of the hero .

K.V.Soundara Rajan felt that the occurrence of a pot of water or *puṇṇaghata* or even what looks like Sivaliṅga is showing the transformation of lesser religions to higher religions⁷⁴. But R.Poongundran feels that it is a toddy pot which is mentioned in many poems in Sangam literature as being offered to the hero by their relatives.⁷⁵ This view seems to be correct because in some of the later memorials Sivaliṅga depicted in the upper panel but not at the foot of a hero. The earlier memorials had a *trishul* like object found on top corners of the slab. Head dresses were tied and knotted at the top and spread out on the shoulder.

The concept of *melulagam* or heaven was known to the Sangam people. *Puram* (287) points out that if they fall fighting with out showing their backs to the enemy, they ascend to heaven, marry celestial maidens and attain bliss. In *Puram* (260), the hero who died while retrieving cattle reached heaven. *Puram* (261) mentions the dead warrior's wife cast off her ornaments and shaved her head, the marks of widowhood. This may be due to a process of acculturation in contact with the 'greater' tradition. However in earlier day memorial stones the heaven or *melulagam* is not represented. In later memorials, the upper world is shown by depicting a seated figure at the centre flanked by two *apsaras*. These were further elaborated by depicting Siva, Vishnu, Krishna, Lakshmi, etc., on the 15-16 th century memorial stones⁷⁶

Heroes of same clan who died in a battle were depicted together in a single memorial.⁷⁷ Heroes of different clans were depicted individually in separate memorials.⁷⁸

Location of Memorial Stones

Majority of the memorial stones, nearly 90 % of them, were found near or in association with megalithic burials, clearly establishing nature of their evolution (Map II). Most of them were found away from the village near the tank or in remote places under certain kind of tree called *turunji*. An important fact about these is that most of them are still under worship in the name of Vediappan, Muniappan, Aiyandarappan, Krishnarappan, etc.

Cattle Raids and the Distance Covered

The cattle raids generally confine to 15-20 km radius only. For instance, villages involved in cattle raids like Padiagaram versus Thoppuruvarupadi, Kottaiyur versus Se.Gudalore, Sattanur versus Bontai, etc., are situated at 20 km apart at the maximum.

Finally, the present day worship of folk deities made of stucco like Vediappan, Muniappan, Ainarappan, etc., may be a survival from earlier memorial stones.

Table 1

List of Memorial Stones in Tamil Nadu

S. No.	Place	Taluk	Local Name/ Location	Date c.A.D	Script	Dynasty	King	Purpose	Sculptural representation
1.	Archalvadi	HAR	Vediyappan koyil	11th	T	---	---	Cattle raid (<i>erumai toru</i> head & chest pierced <i>kotii pattan</i>) with arrow	Hero holds bow & arrow
2.	Adanur	PEN	Northern side of the road	10-11th	--	---	---	---	Hero holds bow and stand against two soldiers
3.	Agalakottai	DEN	Near the fort	13-14th	--	---	---	Killing a tiger	Hero fights with a tiger
4.	Agragaram.B	DHA	Silaikal	16-17th	--	---	---	Fertility stone	---
5.	Aiyattam-palayam	CHE	Vediyappan	911	T	Chola	Paran taka I	Cattle raid (<i>toru mittu pattan</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
6.	Alamelu-puram	HAR	Kottaimedu	8th	V	---	---	---	---

7.	Anandur	UTT	Pulikuttikal	15th	T	Vijaya-nagara	Mukka-nna Udaiyar	Killing a tiger	Hero kills the tiger with spear
8.	Asanampattu	VEL	Vediyappan koyil	898	T	Pallava	Kamba varman	Cattle raid (<i>toru rittu paurar</i>)	---
9.	Asanampattu	VEL	Vediyappan koyil	898	T	Pallava	Kamba varman	Cattle raid	---
10.	Baijarahalli	DHA	Bank of the tank	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword
11.	Bairaman-galam	DEN	Inside the temple	13-14th	--	---	---	Killing a tiger	First panel hero performs puja second panel hero with tiger top panel hero worships linga
12.	Balaranda haffi	PAL	In the mandu	11-12th	--	---	---	Cattle raid	Hero holds a sword and bull represented
13.	Barigam	DHA	In the field	1031	T	Chola	Rajendra	Cattle raid	---
14	Belur	DEN	Near the villana	12-13th	--	---	---	---	Hero holds sword and bow

15. Bontai	CHE	Manya Vedyappan koyil	7th	V	---	---	Hero holds sword and shield
16. Bontai	CHE	Vedyappan koyil	703	V	Pallava	Nara simha varmanII	Cattle raid (toru konda gnanru) Hero holds bow and sword
17. Bontai	CHE	Vedyappan Koyil	703	V	Pallava	Nara simha varmanII	Cattle raid (toru konda gnanru) Hero holds bow and sword
18. Chekkara patty	DHA	Kovukal,san niyasikal	16-17th	--	---	---	Fertility stone
19. Chellampatti	HAR	Vedyappan	898	T	---	---	Killing tiger (pui erindu-pattan) Hero holds tiger-pouncing upon him
20. Chellampatti	HAR	Vedyappan	10th	T	---	Ayyappa devan	Skirmish Hero holds bow and arrow
21. Chengam	CHE	On the bank of a tank	10th	T	---	---	Cattle raid (toru mittu pattan) Hero holds bow and sword
22. Chennachan diram	KRI	Mariamman koyil	13-14th	--	---	---	Elobrate sculptured panel (see the site description)

23. Chinnaijadi	HAR	Chelli amman koyil	10th	T	---	---	Skirmish (<i>ur n-hivil pattan</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
24. Chinnaiappettai	CHE	Savumettu Vedyappan Koyil	872	T	Pallava	Kamba varman	Cattle raid	Hero holds bow and sword
25. Chinnaiappettai	CHE	Savumettu Vedyappan Koyil	875	T	Pallava	Kamba varman	Cattle raid	Hero holds bow and sword
26. Chinnakuppam	HAR	Vedyappan Koyil	7th	V	Ganga	---	Skirmish	No Sculptural representation
27. Chinna-kuppam	HAR	Vedyappan Koyil	8-9th	V	---	Purusa Parumar	Cattle raid (<i>toru konda gnanru</i>)	Hero holds sword
28. Devarmukulam	KRI	Yanai kutti pattan kai	13-14th	--	---	---	Killing an elephant	Hero piercing a sword into the head of an elephant
29. Edakkal	CHE	Irattai Vedyappan Koyil	7th	V	---	---	Cattle raid (<i>toru konda gnanru</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword

30.	Eduttanur	CHE	Umai Vedyayappan Koyil	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Cattle raid	Hero holds bow and sword
31.	Elangunni	CHE	Vedyayappan Koyil	9-10th	T	---	---	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword
32.	Elavampadi	KRI	Kattu Vedyayappan koyil	10th	T	---	---	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and shield
33.	Elavampadi	KRI	Vedyayappan Koyil	10th	T	---	---	---	Hero holds bow and shield
34.	Erupalli	PEN	On the tank	12-13th	--	---	---	---	Hero holds sword pointing upward and flanked by two soldiers
35.	Gangadevana halli	DEN	Near the village	13-14th	--	---	---	Killing a tiger	Hero fights with a tiger
36.	Gangavaram	KRI	In the field	11th	T	Chola	Kulottunga I	---	Hero holds bow and shield
37.	Gangavaram	KRI	In the field	11th	T,G	Chola	Rajendra I	Cattle raid	---
38.	Gangavaram	KRI	In the field	13th	T	Chola	Rajendra III	Skirmish	---

39.	Gangavaram	KRI	Field	6-7th	V	---	---	Cattle raid	Hero holds bow and sword - body pierced with arrow
40.	Gudalore.Se	CHE	Near burial ground	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Cattle raid (<i>toru konda gnanru</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
41	Halepuram	PEN	Swamikal	13-14th	--	---	---	Died while ploughing	Man holds stick and two bulls shown with yoke. Sati and dog also represented.
42.	Irulapatti (Pappampadi)	HAR	Vediyappan Koyil	5-6th	V	Banas	---	Skirmish	Hero holds sword and shield
43.	Irulapatti (Pappampadi)	HAR	Vediyappan Koyil	6th	V	Pallava?	Vishnu varmar	Skirmish	Hero holds sword and shield
44.	Kadaladi	POL	Vediyappan Koyil	7th	V	---	Manda parumar	Skirmish	Hero holds sword and shield
45.	Kailavaram	HAR	Kuttathurai Vediyappan	8th	V	Ganga	Kattinai parumar	Cattle raid (<i>toru konda gnanru</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
46.	Kanampatti	UTT	Vilanattam Vediyappan koyil	577	V	Pallava	Simha-vishnu	Cattle raid (<i>toru iduvit tu pattan</i>)	Hero holds sword and sheild

47.	Kanappanur	HAR	Vediyappan Koyil	726	V	Ganga	Siva maran	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword
48.	Kanavapatti	KRI	Oddar koyil	13-14th	--	---	---	---	Hero holds sword and sickle
49.	Kanna-kkandal	CHE	On the road side	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and RH pulls sword from the sheath
50.	Karappattu	CHE	Nattamettu Vedyappan Koyil	917	T	Chola	Paran taka I	---	Hero holds bow and sword
51	Karubayana halli	DHA	In the village	12-13th	-	---	---	---	Hero holds a sword and saddle of a horse
52.	Karungalipadi patti	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	10th	T	Ganga	Pirita ganga rayan	Skirmish (ur azhiyap poken enru pattan)	Hero holds bow in his left hand and right hand pulls sword
53.	Karungalipadi patti	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	10th	T	---	---	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and RH rested on sword
54.	Karungalipadi patti	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	10th	T	---	---	Skirmish (ur azhiya poken enru pattan)	Hero holds bow and RH rested on sword

55.	Karungalipadi patti	CHE	Aiyandarappan koyil	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword
56.	Kathirampatti	HAR	Vediyappan	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Cattle raid (<i>toru kollu</i> <i>pattan</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
57.	Kathirampatti	HAR	Vediyappan Koyil	8-9th	V	Pallava?	Kovisaya	Cattle raid (<i>toru kola</i>)	Two heroes-both hold bow and arrow
58.	Kaththadi kuppam	KRI	in the field	11th	T	Chola	Rajendra I	---	Hero holds bow and arrow pierced with arrow
59.	Kattamathaku	CHE	Nondi Vediyappan Koyil	915	T	Chola	Paran taka I	---	Hero holds sword in his right hand
60.	Kerakodahalli	HAR	Vediyappan	1032	T	Chola	Rajendra I	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword-behind cattle were shown - upper panel apsarar
61.	Kilravandavadi	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	775	V	Pallava	Nandiswa ravikrama parumar	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword

62. Kodugur	KRI	In the village	14-15th	--	---	---	Killing a boar	Hero piercing a spear into the mouth of the boar
63. Kolahattur	DHA	Tammukka-medu	8-9th	V	Mantha parumar	---	Cattle raid	Hero holds bow and arrow
64. Konakuttai	CHE	Vediyappan koyil	10th	T	---	---	Cattle raid (<i>toru nūttu pattan</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
65. Kondal-maduvu	HAR	Vediyappan	8-9th	T	---	---	Cattle raid (<i>toru nūttu pattan</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword. Body pierced with arrows
66. Kondampatti	UTT	Vediyappan koyil	9th	V	Nolamba vira cholan	Nolamba vira cholan	Skirmish (<i>pusali pattan</i>)	Hero charging arrow Body pierced with arrows
67. Koraiyaru	HAR	Vediyappan koyil	564	V	Pallava	Simhavi shnu	Skirmish (<i>pusali pattan</i>)	Hero holds sword and shield
68. Koraiyaru	HAR	Vediyappan koyil	6th	V	Pallava	Simhavi shnu?	Skirmish (<i>pusalicenru pattan</i>)	Hero holds sword and shield

69.	Koraiyaru	HAR	Vediyappan koyil	6th	V	Pallava	Simhavi shnu?	Skirmish (<i>pasatul pattakal</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
70.	Kotrapatti	HAR	On the road side	8-9th	V	Nolambus	---	---	Hero holds bow and sword
71.	Kottaiyur	CHE	Siraimetan koyil	6th	V	---	Somaciko Thiruman	Cattle raid (<i>toiyarusutta gnanru</i>)	Hero holds sword and shield
72.	Kottaiyur	CHE	On the bank of the tank	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Skirmish (<i>kathhi eitu pattan</i>)	Hero holds bow and right hand rested on the sword
73.	Kottaiyur	CHE	On the bank of the tank	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Skirmish	Hero holds sword and shield
74.	Kuchchukal pattur	KRI	Near the village	15th	---	---	---	---	Hero mounted on a horse holds bow and spear
75.	Kudalur	HAR	Palayavedi- appan koyil	13th	T	---	---	In memory of his brother	---
76.	Kuddapatti	KRI	Veeralakudi	14-15th	--	---	---	---	Hero and his wife
77.	Kukkadapatti	HAR	Murivedi- appan, Koyil	7th	V	Pallava	Eswara- paruman	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword

78.	Kukkadapatti	HAR	Murivedi- appan Koyil	7th	V	Pallava	Eswara- paruman	Skirmish	Hero mounted on the horse holds spear and shield
79.	Kundu Reddiyur	TRI	In the field	974	T	---	---	---	---
80.	Kundu Reddiyur	TRI	In the field	1074	T	---	---	Skirmish (<i>erumai toru kolla</i>)	---
81.	Kundu Reddiyur	TRI	In the field	979	T	---	---	Skirmish (<i>erumai toru kolla</i>)	---
82.	Kuppuchetti/ patti	DHA	Virannan Koyil	15-16th	--	---	--	---	---
83.	Kurumpatti	HAR	Murivedi- appan Koyil	8-9th	V	Banas	Mavali- vanarayar	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword. Chest pierced with arrows
84.	Kuttappadi	PEN	In the mandu	13-14th	--	---	---	Died while playing music	Hero is charged by a bull. Musical instru- ment at his foot
85.	Manikkal koyil	CHE	Vediyappan koyil	18th	V	Pallava?	---	---	Hero holds bow and sword

86.	Melpalipattu	CHE	Mosa Vedi- yappan koyil	678	V	Pallava	Parames wara varman	Cattle raid (<i>toru konda ghanru</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
87.	Melpunjai	CHE	Vediyappan koyil	7th	V	---	Manta parumar	Skirmish	Hero holds sword and shield
88.	Melvaithan kuppam	GUD	Silaikkal	910	T	---	---	Cattle raid	Hero holds bow and sword
89.	Menasi	HAR	Vediyappan	1024	T	Chola	Rajendara I	---	Hero holds bow and sword
90.	Meyyandipatti	UTT	Nondi Vedi- yappan koyil	8th	V	Ganga	Siva maran	Cattle raid (<i>toru konda ghanru</i>)	---
91.	Modur	DHA	In the village	6-7th	V	Pallava?	Kovisaya	---	---
92.	Mondukuli	HAR	Vediyappan Koyil	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword
93.	Mondukuli	HAR	Vediyappan Koyil	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword
94.	Mottakkal	CHE	Vediyappan koyil	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Cattle raid (<i>toru konda ghanru</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword

95. Mottakkal	CHE	Vedyappan	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Killing a tiger	Hero fights with tiger
96. Mottur	KRI	Adiparasakti temple	13-14th	--	---	---	---	Hero mounted on horse and holds sword. Two women present
97. Mukkam	DHA	In the village near the road	10-11th	T	---	---	---	Hero holds sword
98. Mukkanur	DHA	Right side of the road	13-14th	--	---	---	---	---
99. Mundachikal	PEN	On the road side	9-10th	V	---	---	---	---
100. Mundachikal	PEN	On the road side	11-12th	T	---	---	---	Hero holds a bow
101. Muttanur	HAR	Near the tank	741	V	Ganga	SriPursa Varmar	Cattle raid (<i>toru konda gnanru</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
102. Muttanur	HAR	Near the tank	925	T	Nolamba	Vira Nolamban	Cattle raid (<i>toru mittud pattar</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword

103. Nadiyanur	UTT	Vedyappan koyil	556	V	Pallava	Simha vishnu	Cattle raid (<i>toru kola</i>)	Hero holds bow
104. Naduchcheri	PEN	On the right side of the road	10th	--	---	---	---	Hero hold bow and arrow
105. Naduppatti	UTT	Muniappan koyil	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Skirmish (<i>fur kola pattan</i>)	Hero holds bow and shield
106. Naduppatti	UTT	Vedyappan koyil	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Cattle raid (<i>toru idu vittu pattan</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
107. Nagaman-galam	DEN	Near the village	13-14th	--	---	---	Killing a tiger	Hero fights with a tiger
108. Narasinga-nallur	CHE	Vedyappan koyil	583	V	Pallava	Simha vishnu	Skirmish	Hero holds sword and shield
109. Narasipuram	PAL	Muniappan Koyil	11-12th	--	---	---	---	Hero holds bow and sword. Above him flying gandharava, are shown

110. Naripalli (Kaithanippadi)	HAR	In the field	6th	V	---	---	Cattle raid (<i>toru konda potu</i>)	Hero holds bow, arrow and sword
111. Nattapati:	DHA	Kovukai	16-17th	--	---	---	Fertility stone	---
112. Navalai (Chinnakaun- danpatti)	HAR	On the itteri	9th	V	---	---	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword. Horse is shown
113. Oddampatti	UTT	Vediyappan koyil	701	V	Ganga	Siva maran	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword. Body pierced with two arrows
114. Oddupathi	HAR	Bank of R Kundaru	7th	V	---	---	Skirmish	Hero holds sword and shield
115. Palavadi	DHA	Vediyappan koyil	8-9th	V	---	---	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword
116. Palavadi	DHA	Perumal Koyil	689	V	Ganga	Sripurusa varmar <i>pattar</i>)	Cattle raid (<i>toru mittu</i> <i>pattar</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
117. Palaya Indur	DHA	Veeraspadran koyil	15-16th	--	---	---	Died charged by the bull	Bull charging a man

118. Panaikulam	PEN	State Archy Dept at DHA	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman	---	Hero holds bow and sword
119. Paparapatti	DHA	Near the tank	7th	V	---	---	---	Hero holds sword
120. Paparapatti	DHA	Near the tank	7th	V	Pallava	---	Skirmish	Hero holds bow
121. Peddatai- palli	KRI	Barber temple	13-14th	--	---	---	---	Hero holds dagger and sword - flanked by two women
122. Periakolap- padi	CHE	Vediyappan	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Skirmish (<i>erindu- pattan</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
123. Periakolap- padi	CHE	Vediyappan	7th	V	Pallava	Eswara varman	---	Hero holds bow and sword
124. Periyapanni maduvu	HAR	Near the Vaniaru river bridge	10th	T	---	Ayyappa devan	Cattle raid (<i>toru mīttup- pattan</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
125. Periyapom- patti	UTT	Periya Vediyappan	9th	T&G	Nolamba	Vira Nolamban	Cattle raius (<i>toru i-aittu pāttar</i>)	Hero holds bow and arrow

126. Periyapom-patti	UTT	Peiriya Vedyappan	9-10th	T & G	Nolamba	Vira Nolamban	Cattle raids Hero holds bow and <i>(toru mittu pattar)</i> arrow
127. Perumbalai	PEN	In front of temple	13th	T	Hoysala	Viraval lala	Hero holds sword
128. Pidehanapalli	HOS	Adjacent to the village	12-13th	--	---	---	Hero is in seated posture and flanked by two apsaras
129. Pidehanapalli	HOS	Adjacent to village	12-13th	--	---	---	Hero - sati seated on hamsa
130. Pinjur	CHE	/edyappan	803	T	Pallava	Dandi vikrama panmar	Hero holds bow
131. Pottankottai	UTT	On the bank river Kallaru	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Cattle raids Hero holds bow and <i>(toru mittu pattar)</i>
132. Puchettipalli	DHA	Bank of the tank	7th	V	Pallava	---	Hero holds bow
133. Pudunattam	HAR	In the field	640	V	Pallava	Narasima havarmar	Cattle raid Hero holds sword and shield <i>(toru kolii pattar)</i>

134. Puliyanur	UTT	Vediyappan vayam	570	V	Pallava	Simha vishnu	Cattle raid (<i>toru kola</i> <i>pusal senru</i> <i>erindu pattan</i>)	Hero holds bow and arrow
135. Puliyanur	UTT	Vediyappan vahan	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Cattle raid (<i>toru konda</i> <i>gnanru</i>)	Hero holds bow and arrow
136. Puliyanur	UTT	Vediyappan	570	V	Pallava	Simha varman	Cattle raid (<i>toru konda</i> <i>gnanru</i> <i>pattan</i>)	Hero hold bow and arrow
137. Rajagollahalli	DHA	Nattankal	9-10th	V	---	---	---	Two heroes both hold bow and sword
138. Ramakrish- nam pati	UTT	Near Vina- yaka koyil	7-8th	V	---	---	Cattle raid (<i>toru mittu</i> <i>pattar</i>)	---
139. Ramakrish- nam patti	UTT	In the field	8th	V	Piruti Ganga	Kattanai parumar	Cattle raid (<i>toru konda</i> <i>gnanru</i> <i>pattan</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
140. Ramavaram	CHE	Nattamettu Vediyappan / Koyil	970	T	---	---	---	Hero holds bow and RH pulls sword

141. Reddiyar	UTT	In the village	10th	T	---	Ayyappa devan	Killing a hoar (<i>pandri kitti pattan</i>) front of him	Hero holds a sword and a boar in front of him
142. Sandur (Vedar Thatta kkal)	KRI	State Archy Dept at DHA	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman	---	Hero holds bow and sword
143. Sandur (Vedar Thatta kkal)	KRI	State Archy Dept at DHA	8th	V	Ganga	Kattanai parumar	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword
144. Sandur (Vedar Thatta kkal)	KRI	State Archy Dept at DHA	8th	V	Ganga	Kattanai parumar	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword
145. Sandur (Vedar Thatta kkal)	KRI	State Archy Dept at DHA	1036	1	Chola	Rajendra	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword
146. Sandur	KRI	State Archy Dept at DHA	8th	V	---	Kattanai parumar	---	Hero holds bow and arrow
147. Sandur	KRI	State Archy Dept at DHA	8th	V	---	Kattanai parumar	Cattle raid (<i>toru mittu pattan</i>)	Hero holds bow and arrow
148. Santanapalli	DEN	Near the tank	12-13th	--	---	---	---	Hero seated - sati is shown

149. Santanapalli	DEN	Near the tank	11th	T	Chola	Rajendra Sati stone	Hero seated posture and 3 sati-horse with royal umbrella
150. Santanapalli	DEN	Near the village	10th	--	---	---	Hero holds bow and sword
151. Sattanur	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra Skirmish varman I (<i>'erindu, pattan</i>)	Hero holds sword and shield
152. Sattanur	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	641	V	Pallava	Nara simha varman I (<i>toru iduvittu pattar</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
153. Sattanur	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	721	V	Pallava	Nara simha varman II (<i>nuru</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
154. Sattanur	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	911	T	Chola	Paran taka I (<i>toru mittu pattan</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
155. Sevvampatti	KRI	Near the deviation road to Pallapur	9-10th	--	---	---	Hero holds shield and bow - Another holds bow and sword

156. Soolagiri	HOS	Left side of the road	14-15th	--	---	---	King holds a sword pointed down and queen stands side by side
157. Tandarai	DEN	Near the village	14-15th	--	---	---	Hero holding sword fights with another soldier
158. Thalaiyuthu	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	701	V	Pallava	Nara simha varmanil	Cattle raid (toru konda gnuru)
159. Thalaiyuthu	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	733	V	Pallava	Nandi varmanil	Cattle raid
160. Thalaiyuthu	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	930	I	Chola	Paran taka I	Cattle raid
161. Thalaiyuthu	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	10th	T	---	---	Cattle raid (erumai miftu pattar)
162. Thalapallam	PEN	Southern side of the road	8th	--	---	---	Hero holds bow and arrow
163. Thandaram-pattu	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Cattle raid (toru konda gnuru)

164. Thandaram-pattu	CHE	Krishna-rappankoyil	637	V	Pallava	Nara simha varman I	Skirmish (<i>erinda gnanru pattar</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
165. Thandaram-pattu	CHE	Krishna-rappan Koyil	637	V	Pallava	Nara Simha varman I	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword
166. Thavalam	KRI	Near the temple	14-15th	--	---	---	Killing a boar (<i>panarikutti pattankal</i>)	Hero holds sword and dagger piercing through the neck of the boar
167. Thenmudianur	CHE	Kudiyanaavar Vedyappan koyil	7th	V	---	---	---	Hero holds bow
168. Thirumulavadi	PAL	Sidal Andi Amman koyil	14-15th	--	---	---	Satikal	Hero in a sitting posture. Right to him was a sati.
169. Thondamanur	CHE	Vedyappan koyil	586	V	Pallava	Simha vishnu	Skirmish (<i>erindu pattan</i>)	---

170. Timileoalli	DEM	Pandata Koyil 1 Km east of the village	14th	T	---	---	---	Hero in seated posture
171. Tinnahalli	HAR	Vediyappan	577	V	Pallava	Simha vishnu	Skirmish	Hero holds sword and shield
172. Tippanapalli	KRI	1 km west of the village	13-14th	--	---	---	---	Hero holds parasu and sword
173. Togarapalli	KRI	Near Samalappa malai	13-14th	--	---	---	---	Hero mounted on a horse kills his opponent
174. Torappadi	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	7th	V	Pallava	Mahendra varman I	Skirmish	Hero holds sword and shield
175. Torappadi	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	703	V	Pallava	Nara simha varmanII	Skirmish (<i>erinda gnanru pattar</i>)	Hero holds sword and shield
176. Varasandiram	KRI	Two km east of the village	12-13th	--	---	---	---	Hero mounted on a horse holds a reign and sword
177. Varatanpatti Nattamedu	UTT	In the field	8-9th	V	Ganga	Siva marar	Skirmish	Hero holds a sword

178. Vedakuppam	CHE	Vediyappan Koyil	1022	T	Chola	Rajaraja I	Cattle raid	Hero holds bow and sword
179. Veeranam	CHE	Aiyana-rappan koyil	883	T	Pallava	Kampa varman	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword
180. Veeranam	CHE	Aiyana-rappan koyil	883	T	Pallava	Kamba varman	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword
181. Veilalapati	UTT	Manjalmettu Vedyappan	9th	V	---	Arimirai Parumar	Skirmish	Hero holds bow and sword
182. Velur.T	CHE	Vediyappan	693	V	Pallava	Nara simha varman II	Cattle raid (<i>toru kondu nanru</i>)	Hero holds bow and sword
183. Venkata-puram	UTT	In the field	14-15th	T	---	---	Killing a boar (<i>pandri</i> with spear. Two dogs <i>kutti putlan</i>) were shown	
CHE	-	Chengam	(Thiruvannamalai District)					
DEN	-	Denkanikottai	(Dharmapuri District)					
DHA		Dharmapuri	(Dharmapuri District)					
GUD		Gudiyatam	(North Arcot District)					

HAR	-	Harur (Dharmapuri District)
HOS	-	Hosur (Dharmapuri District)
KRI	-	Krishnagiri (Dharmapuri District)
PAL	-	Palacode (Dharmapuri District)
PEN	-	Pennagaram (Dharmapuri District)
POL	-	Polur (Thiruvannamalai District)
TRI	-	Tiruppattur (North Arcot District)
UTT	-	Uttangarai (Dharmapuri District)
VAN	-	Vaniyambadi (North Arcot District)
VEL	-	Vellore (North Arcot District)

V - Vatteluttu T - Tamil G - Granta

Table 2

Purpose of Erecting Memorial Stones in Chronological Frame

Purpose	400-900 A.D.	900-1200 A.D.	1200 A.D. onwards	Total
Died in cattle & skirmish	98	38	5	141
Died in wild animal fighting	1	3	12	19
Others (sati & fertility stone)	--	2	21	23
Total	99	43	41	183

Note

1. Heroes died in cattle raid and skirmish are put together as the skirmish also occurred due to cattle raid.
2. The purpose of the memorial stone in uninscribed memorials is evaluated on the basis of a comparative study of the sculptural representation.

Table 3

Talukwise Distribution of Memorial Stones

Taluk Name	400-800	800-900	900-1200	1200 onwards	Total
CHE	34	4	13	--	51
DEN	--	-	2	8	10
DHA	9	-	2	7	18
GUD	--	-	1	-	1
HAR	25	1	7	1	34
HOS	--	-	-	3	3
KRI	6	-	7	13	26
PAL	--	-	2	1	3
PEN	3	-	4	4	11
POL	1	-	-	-	1
TRI	-	-	3	-	3
UTT	15	-	3	2	20
VEL	--	2	-	-	2
Total	93	7*	44	39	183

* Of these seven inscriptions two belong to 883 A.D. and another two belong to 898 A.D. Hence, only three fall in this frame.

Table 4

Distribution of Inscriptions

Total number of inscriptions					
Time frame	Inscribed	Uninscribed	Vatteluttu	Tamil	Grantha
400-800	87	12	79	--	--
800-900	7 [*]	--	1	6	--
900 above	35	42	-	40	3
Total	129	54	80	46	3
Grand total	183		129		

Of these four were Tamil inscriptions falling in the closing part of 9th century A.D. (Two belong to 883 A.D. and the other two belong to 898 A.D.)

Table 5

Territorial Divisions as Gleaned from Memorial Inscriptions

S. No.	Village	Taluk	Nadu	Location
1.	Chindalpadi	HAR	Puramalainadu and west of Vaniyar	South of Pennaiyar
2.	Kailavaram	"	"	"
3.	Kurumpatti	"	"	"
4.	Nadiyanur	"	"	"
5.	Navalai	"	"	"
6.	Bontai	CHE	Mikondrainadu	South of Pennaiyar and east of Vanniyar
7.	Chinnaian- pettai	"	"	"
8.	Kottaiyur	"	"	"
9.	Pudunattam	"	"	"
10.	T. Velur	"	"	"
11.	Aiyattam- palayam	"	Merkovalurnadu	East of Pennaiyar
12.	Kilravandavadi	"	"	"
13.	Sattanur	"	"	"

14. Elangunni	"	Mivenadu	North of Pennaiyar and east of Pambar and west of mountain running between Chengam & Tiruvannamalai
15. Karungalipadi -patti	"	"	"
16. Naduppatti	"	"	"
17. Puliyatur	"	"	"
18. Thalaisyuthu	"	"	"
19. Periyakolapadi	"	Kilvenadu	South of Cheyyar and east of the mountain running between Chengam & Thandrampattu
20. Sandur	KRI	Velalanadu	East of Pennaiyar
21. Karungalipadi -patti	CHE	Tenvenadu (it emerged in 10th c.A.D from Kilvenadu)	North of Pennaiyar and west of the mountain
22. Kundu Reddiyar	TRI	Eyilnadu	North of Javadi hill and west of Vanniyampadi
23. Asanampattu	VEL	Palinadu	South of Palar and north of Javadi hill
24. Ramakrishna -padi	UTT	Ganganadu	North of Pennaiyar and west of Pambar
25. Oddanipatti	"	"	"

CHE	-	Chengam
HAR	-	Harur
KRI	-	Krishnagiri
TRI	-	Tiruppattur
UTT	-	Uttangarai
VEL	-	Vellore

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17. **Puram.** 3.
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19. **Puram.** 264.
20. **Aham.** 53.
21. **Ingurunuru** 352.
22. **Aham.** 297.
23. **Aham.** 343.
24. **Puram.** 221.
25. **Aham.** 109, 157, 215.
26. **Aham.** 289.
27. **Aham.** 53, 131, 297 343, 365, 387; **Puram.** 232, 261, 314, 329, 335.
28. **Aham.** 35.
29. **Padirrupattu** 21, 55.
30. **Tolkappiam, purattinai** 5.
31. **Anam.** 53; **Ingurunuru** 352.
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Chapter 7

Conclusion

The present investigation covering the Palar basin of North Arcot region yielded rich data on the pre and protohistoric cultures of this area.

The palaeolithic tools like handaxes, cleavers, ovates, scrapers, etc., collected on the bank of the palaeochannel of old Palar push the antiquity of this region to .2 million years ago. The tools collected at Kilvenpakkam, Tirumalpur. Pahaveli, Nagavedu, etc., lead to believe that the upper stream of the Kortalaiyar and the region between Walajahpet and Kaveripakkam forms part of the old Palar. This basin was characterized by a spread of detrital laterite underlain at certain places by a Quarternary Boulder Conglomerate deposits overlying pre-Tertiary formations, which helps to determine the age of palaeolithic tools.

The succeeding stage of microlithic period could not be assessed due to lack of convincing evidence.

The findings obtained at Paiyampalli, Chandrapuram, Appukallu, Kallerimalai, Mallapadi, etc., clearly establish the existence of neolithic culture here. The available data suggest their nature of dwelling, usage of pottery like burnished grey ware, short lipped bowl, neolithic implements like adges, axes, and head rest. The overlapping phase of neolithic and megalithic cultures gives the nature of change

from the megalithic culture. The c^{14} date of 1725 ± 110 BC and 1360 ± 210 BC collected at Paiyampalli gives the time range of neolithic culture. The available sites and its locations imply that the neolithic people of this area were settled on Javadi hills and north of Javadi hills.

The advent of megalithic culture as noted earlier could be observed in three distinct ecological or geographical zones. The cairn circle with cist burial might have made its entry through Chengam pass from Dharmapuri district. The dolmens occurred mainly on the Javadi hills and hillocks connecting Eastern ghats and Javadi hills found in the eastern part of Vaniyambadi and western part of Gudiyattam taluks. These dolmens entered through these hillocks in and around Pernambet from Chittoor district particularly from Palamaner taluk. Primarily located on the hill tops they had a round porthole invariably on the east.

The dolmenoid cist made of multi orthostats, voussoirs and rubble walls are generally squattish in nature and devoid of any porthole. The passage or wide opening found in all directions were noticed on the northern part of the district mostly in the regions where dolmen variety occurred.

The sarcophagus was invariably placed as an interment in megalithic burials like cists, dolmens and dolmenoid cists. These coffins, basically a secondary burial, rested on the floor of the megalithic monuments in east-west orientation. These were developed independently in Chingleput and South Arcot district. On moving westwards it merged with local traditions like cist, dolmen and dolmenoid cist burials.

The nature of urn burial and its impact could not be delineated here as the site Kallerimalai is the only site reported with this type.

The rock paintings in white pigments were noticed in natural rock shelters at Paiyampalli, Mallapadi and Chen-narayanapalli. The rock shelters had the painting on the roofs. The major themes are fighting scenes, group dancing, animal hunting and cattle fighting or raiding.

The earliest historical record of this region is of the first reported coin of Sangam Age found at Andipatti. The legend on the reverse written in Tamil-Brahmi script of transitional stage to *vatteluttu* reads as *Atinnan edir ana Chendan*.

The next phase of the historical records comprises memorial stones having Tamil inscriptions engraved in *vatteluttu* script. The occurrence of memorial stones and megalithic burial closely suggests that these memorial stones may be an offshoot of megalithic culture.

The memorial stone inscriptions dating back to 5th c AD give some interesting data on the contemporary society. They speak about cattle raids prominently. This suggests that occupants of this area were very much dependent on the cattle raising. The evolution of *ur* into *nadu* division and territorial divisions of various *nadus* could be determined through careful analysis of memorial stones. A comparative study and a close look at the evolutionary nature of the sculptural representation also help one to date the uninscribed memorials. The concentration of memorial stones on the Pennaiyar river valley against the Chengam pass in the Chengam taluk may give the impression that this area formed a core region.

The descriptive data on memorial stones available in the Sangam literature and the nature of sculptural representation found in the existing memorial stones imply that those Sangam Age memorials are nearer to the megalithic burial. These burials might have degenerated and transformed later into memorial stones.

Besides the above archaeological data, the identification of habitation mounds of neolithic, megalithic and historical periods provide some information about their material culture.

The foregoing account is primarily based on the geographical position, morphological study and topographical feature of the culture. It is rather difficult to give wholesome account of the prehistoric material culture of the people just with this information. Scientifically controlled excavations in some selective sites relating to different cultures are necessary for further advancement of our knowledge.

List of Archaeological Sites in North Arcot Region

S. No.	Site	Taluk	Nature of site
1.	Agarampallipattu	CHE	Cairn circle entomping cist with round porthole on east Memorial stone (1)
2.	Aiyyathampalayam	CHE	Memorial stone (1)
3.	Alanganeri	GUD	Stone circle (3)
4.	Allapuram	VEL	Stone circle
5.	Ambarishapuram	AKM	Palaeolithic tools
6.	Ambur	VAN	Neolithic celts
7.	Anaicut	VEL	Stone circle (10)
8.	Anandavadi	CHF	Memorial stone (1)
9.	Appukkal	VEL	Neolithic celts, Habitation- -cum-burial, Stone circle, Memorial stone (1)
10.	Andiappanur	VAN	Habitation-cum-burial, BRW, Dolmenoid cist
11.	Andipatti	CHE	Habitation-cum-burial, BRW, Cairn circle, 143 lead coin hoard having brahmi legend <i>Atinnan edir ana Chendan</i>
12.	Arappakkam	WPT	Cairn circle with menhir

13. Arattavadi	CHE	Cairn circle (500)
14. Ariyur	VEL	Stone circle (10)
15. Ariyur	AKM	Stone circle, Dolmen with round porthole on the east
16. Attupakkam	AKM	Stone circle
17. Arumpakkam	ACT	Middle palaeolithic
18. Attipattu	POI	Dolmen with round porthole on the east
19. Ayal	AKM	Dolmen with round porthole on the east
20. Ayepedu	AKM	Stone circle (3), Dolmen with round porthole on the east
21. Balur	GUD	Stone circle (2)
22. Bontai	CHE	Cairn circle, Memorial stone (3)
23. Chandrapuram	TIR	Neolithic celts
24. Chengam	CHE	Habitation mound, Urn burial, Memorial stone (1), Fort
25. Chennarayanapalli	GUD	Habitation mound, BRW, Memorial stone
26. Chennasamudram	WPT	Palaeolithic tools
27. Chinnakandili	TIR	Dolmen with round porthole
28. Chinnamudali -muthur.	TRI	Cairn circle

29. Chinnayampettai	CHE	Habitation-cum-burial, BRW, Cairn circle (5), Memorial stone (2), Fort, Erotic sculptures on the tank slabs
30. Chinnur	TIR	Sati stone
31. Durgam	ACT	Habitation-cum-burial, BRW, Stone circle
32. Edakkal	CHE	Memorial stone (1)
33. Edathanur	CHE	Memorial stone (1)
34. Elangunni	CHE	Memorial stone (1)
35. Elavambadi	VEL	Stone circle with cist
36. Erandanthankarai	CHE	Cairn circle with cist with round porthole on east, Memorial stone (1)
37. Eripallam	VAN	Stone circle
38. Govindarajapuram	CHE	Cairn circle
39. Guddalore	POL	Cairn circle (12)
40. Jambukulam	WPT	Microoliths (?)
41. Kadaladi	POL	Memorial stone (8)
42. Kakangarai	TIR	Cairn circle (25)
43. Kalathiyur	TIR	Memorial stone (1)
44. Kalathur	AKM	Palaeolithic tools
45. Kalkuttaipudur	TIR	Memorial stone (8)

46. Kallerimali	GUD	Neolithic celt, Habitation mound Urn burial
47. Kambattu	CHE	Cairn circle
48. Kandaneri	VEL	Stone circle (10)
49. Kaniyambadi	VEL	Stone circle
50. Kaniyanur	ACT	Palaeolithic tools
51. Kannakandal	CHE	Memorial stone (1)
52. Kannamadam	TVM	Cairn circle, Memorial stone(1)
53. Karapattu	CHE	Memorial stone (1)
54. Karapattu	VAN	Dolmenoid cist (25)
55. Karikal	AKM	Dolmenoid cist of multi-orthostats encircled with slab and boulder circle, Sarcophagus
56. Karikanthangal	AKM	Dolmenoid cist with U-shaped porthole on the east
57. Karkur	GUD	Dolmenoid cist (50)
58. Karungalipadipatti	CHE	Memorial stone (4)
59. Kathericuppam	VEL	Habitation-cum-burial, BRW, Stone circle (50)
60. Kathiyavadi	WPT	Stone circle (3)
61. Kattamaduvu	CHE	Memorial stone (1)
62. Kavanoor	GUD	Habitation mound, BRW

63. Keelarasampattu	VEL	Habitation mound, BRW
64. Keelkothur	VEL	Habitation-cum-burial, BRW, Stone circle (50)
65. Kilasilambadi	CHE	Polished stone axes
66. Kilkachirapattu	TVM	Memorial stone (1)
67. Kilpalur	POL	Memorial stone (1), Inscribed slab
68. Kilpasar	CHE	Cairn circle with cist with round porthole on east
69. Kilpatti	GUD	Habitation mound, BRW
70. Kilravandavadi	CHE	Habitation-cum-burial, BRW, Cairn circle with cist with round porthole on the east, Memorial stone (1)
71. Kilseppuli	POL	Dolmenoid cist (200) and Dolmen (10)
72. Kilvilampuchchi	CHE	Polished stone axes
73. Kilvenpakkam	AKM	Palaeolithic tools
74. Kodaikal	WPT	Dolmenoid cist
75. Koluthampattu	CHE	Neolithic celts, Cairn circle, Memorial stone (1)
76. Konakuttai	CHE	Habitation-cum-burial, BRW, Cairn circle (50), Memorial stone (1)
77. Kondakuppam	WPT	Incription on a boulder

78. Kosavanpudur	GUD	Habitation mound, BRW, Memorial stone
79. Kothur	TIR	Habitation mound, BRW
80. Kottaiyur	CHE	Memorial stone (4)
81. Krishnapuram	WPT	Historical habitation mound, Furnace, Iron slag
82. Kukkulpalli	GUD	Rock shelter with stone bed
83. Kumbalamarattu	CHE	Dolmenoid cist
84. Kuppam	VEL	Stone circle
85. Kuppanattam	CHE	Historical habitation mound
86. Kuppukalmedu	WPT	Stone circle
87. Kurumberi	TIR	Cairn circle
88. Kurusilapattu	VAN	Stone circle (?), Memorial stone (1), Portrait sculpture
89. Kuttathur	CHE	Neolithic celts
90. Mahendravadi	AKM	Dolmen with round porthole
91. Malayampattu	VAN	Neolithic celt
92. Mallapadi	TRI	Habitation-cum-burial, Cairn circle, Rock painting
93. Mamandur	WAN	Dolmenoid cist of multi- orthostats with Sarcophagus
94. Mangalam	TVM	Historical habitation mound, Memorial stone (1)

95. Manikkal	CHE	Memorial stone (1)
96. Matheri	AKM	Stone circle
97. Mattapattu	POL	Memorial stone (1)
98. Melpallipattu	CHE	Memorial stone (1)
99. Melpasar	CHE	Cairn circle with cist with round porthole on east
100. Melpunjai	CHE	Cairn circle (100), Memorial stone (1), Inscribed slab
101. Melravandavadi	CHE	Cairn circle (20), Memorial stone (2)
102. Mettuppalayam	POL	Cairn circle (10)
103. Melakuppam	WPT	Stone circle
104. Melarasampattu	VEL	Stone circle (3)
105. Melpatti	GUD	Habitation mound, BRW
106. Melvathankuppam	GUD	Memorial stone (3)
107. Mittalam	VAN	Dolmenoid cist (20)
108. Mottakkal	CHE	Cairn circle with cist with round porthole on the east (100), Memorial stone(2)
109. Mottur	CHE	Anthropomorphic slab, Cairn circle with round porthole on th. east, Sarcophagus
110. Munnurmangalam	CHE	Habitation-cum-burial, Cairn circle (10), Vishnu sculpture

111. Murugappadi	POL	Cairn circle (10)
112. Musiri	WPT	Palaeolithic tools
113. Muthukumara velmalai	VEL	Habitation-cum-burial, BRW, Stone circle (100)
114. Nagal	GUD	Stone circle (8)
115. Nagavedu	AKM	Palaeolithic tools
116. Nallapattu	CHE	Dolmenoid cist
117. Namakkal	CHE	Cairn circle
118. Namindal	TVM	Memorial stone (1)
119. Narasinganallur	CHE	Memorial stone (1)
120. Narāyanakuppam	CHE	Fertility stone (sanniyasikal)
121. Nasandal	TVM	Cairn circle (50)
122. Neepathurai	CHE	Historical habitation mound
123. Nellivasalnadu	TIR	Neolithic celts
124. Odugattur	VEL	Stone circle (20), Cist with U-shaped porthole
125. Padiagraharam	CHE	Memorial stone (2)
126. Pahaveli	WPT	Palaeolithic tools
127. Paiyampalli	TIR	Habitation-cum-burial, BRW Cairn circle, Sarcophagus Rock paintings
128. Palaya Talur	CHE	Neolithic celts

129. Pallalakuppam	GUD	Dolmen (60)
130. Pallathur	GUD	Fertility stone (sanniyasikal)
131. Pandyanallur	WPT	Stone circle, Inscribed slab
132. Paramanandal	CHE	Historical habitation mound
133. Paranji	AKM	Stone circle (5)
134. Patchoor	TIR	Cairn circle (20)
135. Pennattur	VEL	Stone circle
136. Periya Eriyur	VEL	Stone circle (20)
137. Periyakolapadi	CHE	Memorial stone (2)
138. Periyakolthambadi	CHE	Memorial stone (1)
139. Perumuttam	CHE	Dolmenoid cist
140. Peruvalayam	AKM	Stone circle (3)
141. Pinjur	CHE	Habitation-cum-burial, BRW Cairn circle (100), Memorial stone (2)
142. Pinnathurai	VEL	Habitation mound, BRW Stone circle (25)
143. Pogalur	GUD	Dolmenoid cist, Memorial stone
144. Polur	POL	Cairn circle (5)
145. Polur	AKM	Jaina sculpture
146. Pudur	CHE	Cairn circle

147. Pudur	TRI	Memorial stone (6)
148. Pudurchekkadi	CHE	Cairn circle (20)
149. Pudurnadu	TRI	Neolithic celts
150. Pudupattu	CHE	Inscription of trade guild
151. Pulimedu	VEL	Habitation mound, BRW, Stone circle (5), Memorial stone (4)
152. Pulivalan	WPT	Dolmen with round porthole on the east
153. Puliyur	CHE	Neolithic tools
154. Rajakkal	GUD	Inscription on a boulder
155. Reddiarpalayam	CHE	Carin circle with cist burial having round porthole on the east
156. Sadupperi	POL	Historical habitation mound
157. Samanthipuram	CHE	Memorial stone (1)
158. Sanarpalayam	POL	Historical habitation mound
159. Sattanur	CHE	Habitation-cum-burial, BRW Cairn circle with cist, Memorial stone (5)
160. Seduvalai	VEL	Habitation-cum-burial, BRW, Stone circle
161. Se.Guddalore	CHE	Memorial stone (1)
162. Sembudu	VEL	Historical habitation mound

163. Sembadavakottai	CHE	Cairn circle with cist having round porthole on the east with sarcophagi
164. Sempalli	GUD	Dolmenoid cist (20)
165. Sengundram	GUD	Historical habitation mound
166. Sennandipatti	CHE	Cairn circle
167. Serpadi	VEL	Stone circle (20)
168. Sholavaram	VEL	Historical habitation mound
169. Sholingur	WPT	Neolithic celt, Stone circle
170. Sudampattu	TIR	Memorial stone (5)
171. Surai	AKM	Dolmen with round porthole on the east
172. Takkolaan	AKM	Palaeolithic tools
173. Tanipadi	CHE	Cairn circle (5), Fertility stone (sanniyasikal).
174. Thalaiyuttu	CHE	Habitation-cum-burial, BRW; Cairn circle (500), Memorial stone (4)
175. Thalikal	AKM	Dolmen with round porthole on the east
176. Thandampattu	CHE	Memorial stone (2)
177. Thenmudiyapur	CHE	Cairn circle with cist with round porthole on east, Memorial stone (1), Sluice with Inscription, Fertility stone (sanniyasikal)

178. Thiruviddattalur	CHE	Cairn circle, Fertility stone (sanniyasikal)
179. Thondamanur	CHE	Cairn circle with cist with round porthole on east, Two menhir found part of a circle, Memorial stone (1),
180. Thorapadi	CHE	Memorial stone (2)
181. Tirumalai	POL	Habitation-cum-burial, cairn circle, Jain temple
182. Tirumalpur	AKM	Palaeolithic tools
183. Tirupanmalai	ACT	Stone circle (5), Memorial stone (1)
184. Tiruvannamalai	TVM	Mahishasuramardani sculpture of Pallava style
185. Torappadi	VEL	Historical habitation mound
186. T.Velur	CHE	Memorial stone (1)
187. Ulli	GUD	Stone circle
188. Unai	VEL	Stone circle (6)
189. Urkkavundanur	CHE	Neolithic celts
190. Usoor	VEL	Habitation-cum-burial, BRW, Stone circle
191. Vallakad	CHE	Cairn circle
192. Vallimalai	WPT	Cairn circle with cist with round porthole on east
193. Vaniyan Chatiram	WPT	Palaeolithic tools

194. Vannanthangal	VEL	Stone circle with cist
195. Vasoor	POL	Historical habitation mound
196. Vasudevanpattu	CHE	Cairn circle
197. Vedakuppam	CHE	Cairn circle, Memorial stone
198. Vedapudupattu	VAN	Stone circle
199. Veeranam	CHE	Memorial stone (2)
200. Veerappanur	POL	Dolmenoid cist
201. Veppancuppam	VEL	Stone circle
202. Veppurchekkadi	CHE	Dolmen with round porthole on the east with Sarcophagus, Memorial stone (2)
203. Vettangulam	AKM	Stone circle (10)
204. Vinnamangalam	VAN	Neolithic celt
205. Vishamangalam	TIR	Cairn circle (20)
206. Walajahpet	WPT	Stone circle
207. Wandiwash	WAN	Dolmenoid cist of muti-orthostat with sarcophagus

ACT - Arcot

AKM - Arakonam

CHE - Chengam

GUD - Gudiyatam

FOL	-	Polur
TIR	-	Tirupattur
TVM	-	Tiruvannamalai
VAN	-	Vaniyambadi
VEL	-	Vellore
WAN	-	Wan liwash
WPT	-	Walajahpet

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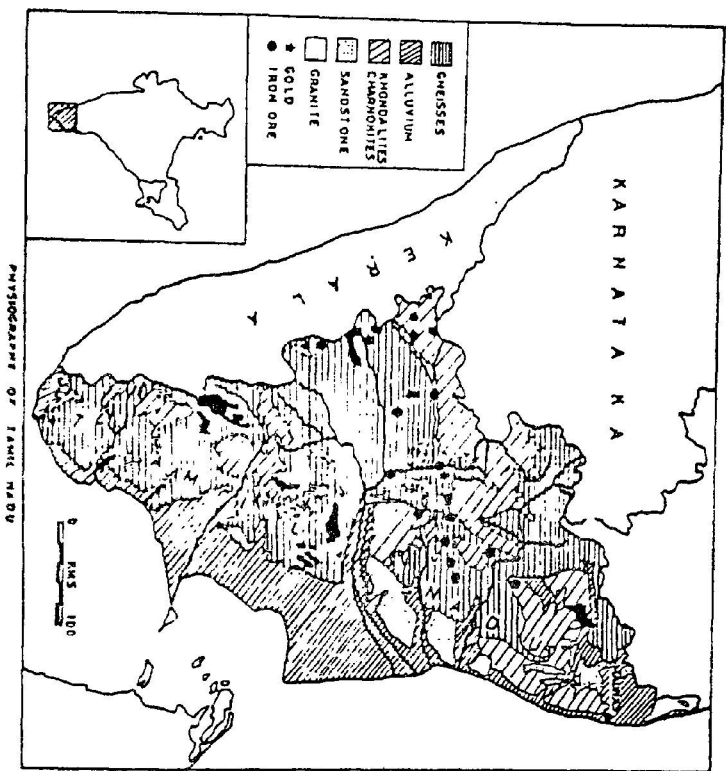
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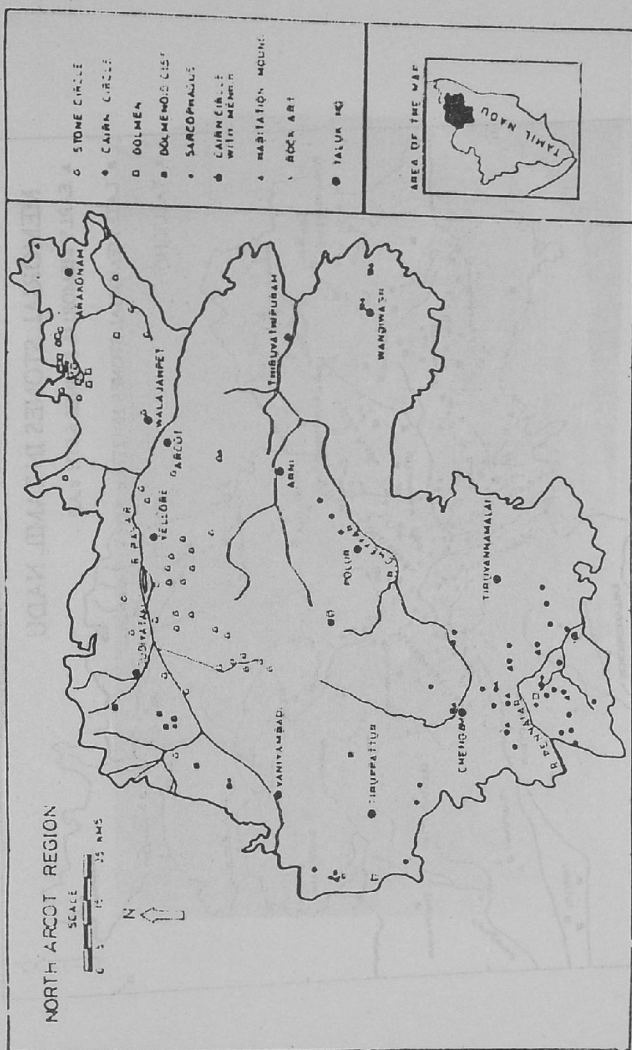
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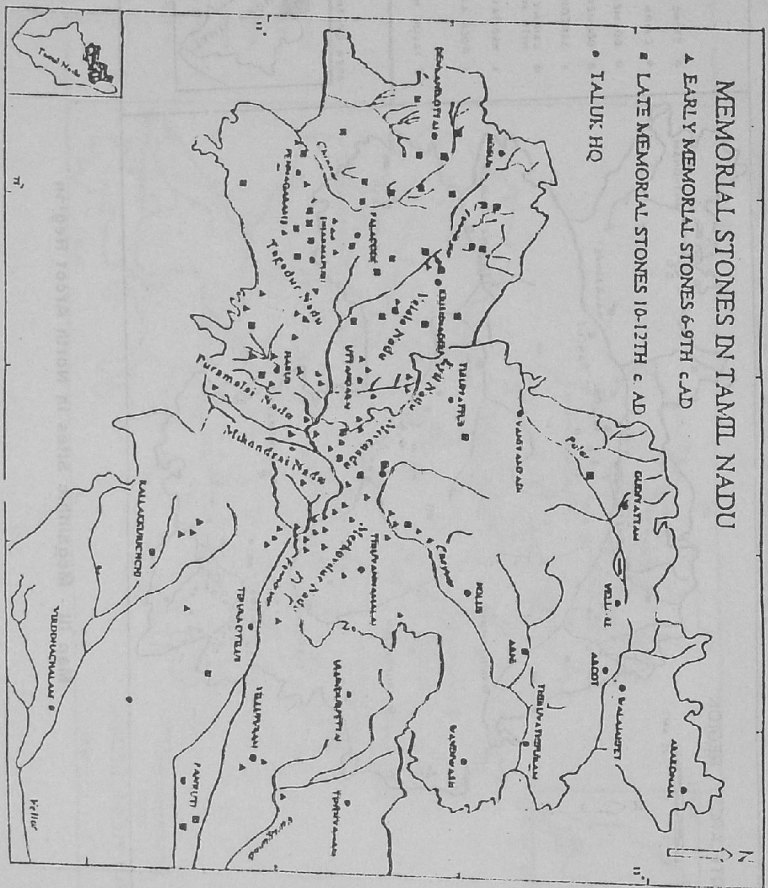
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Map I - Physiography of TamilNadu



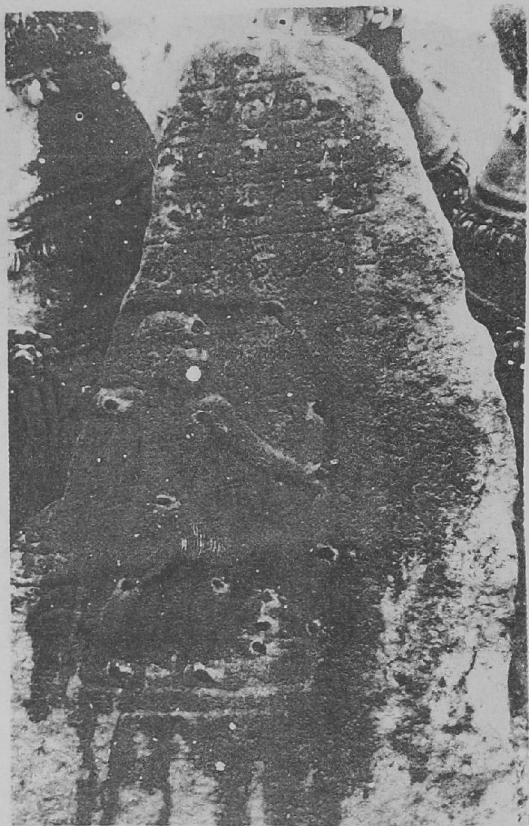
Map III - Megalithic Sites in North Arcot Region



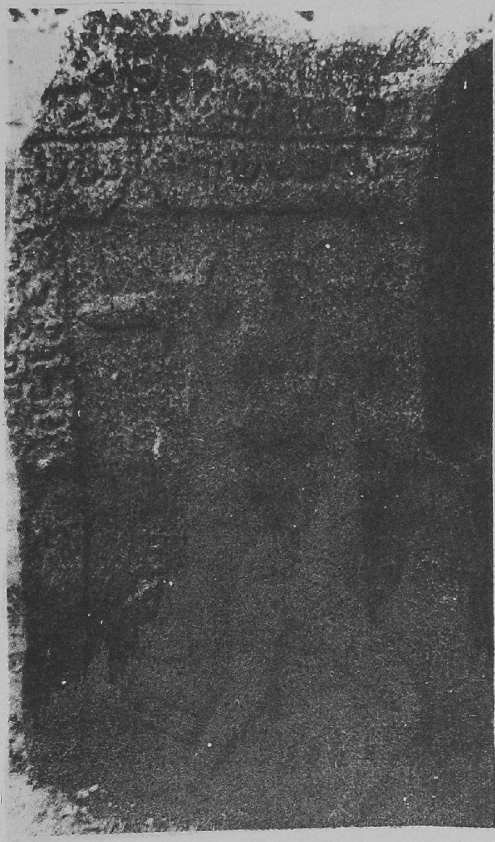
Map IV - Memorial Stones in North Arcot Region



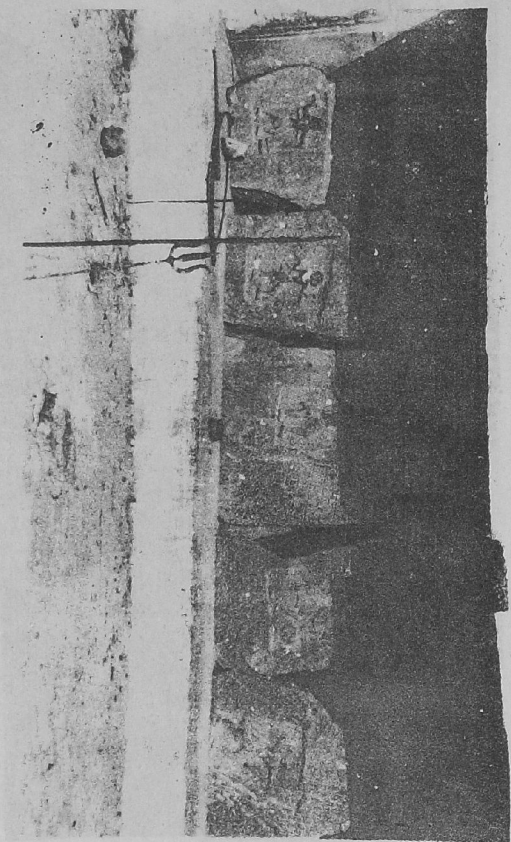
1 Karungallpadipatti: Memorial stone



Il Pinjur: Memorial stone



III. Pinjur: Memorial stone



IV. Sattanur: Memorial stones

III. Pajur: Memorial stones



At Kappal: Dohruvayil eelil subhaleelil kappal eelil

At Kappal: Dohruvayil eelil subhaleelil kappal eelil

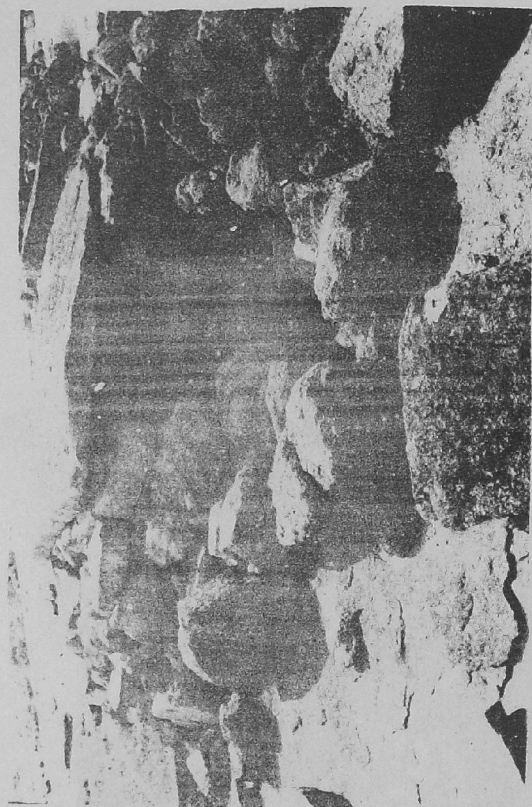
V. Sattanur: Memorial stone of Narasimhaverman period



VI. Karkur: Dolmenoid cist encircled with slab circle



VII. Kilseppuli: General view of the megalithic site



VIII. Killseppull: Dolmenoid cist with opening on the east



IX. Kilegeppuli: Dolmenoid cist encircled with a wall



X. Kilseppuli: Dolmenoid cist having a pot shaped porthole

XI. Kiltseppulii : Dolmen jäänäjä e lõnuq ba. jiljojs



XI. Kiltseppuli : Dolmen facing east



XII. Kiiseppuli : Dolmen having a round porthole



XIII. Kilseppuli : Dolmen having a round porthole



XIV. Pahaveli : Palaeolithic tools



XV. Pahavelli: Palaeolithic tools

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