

## History

The history of Tiruvannamalai dates from the early Chola period, the period of Aditya I and Parantaka I (871-955 AD) when the Chola empire had expanded northwards to include practically the whole of Tondaimandalam. After Parantaka I till the reign of Rajendra I, the rule of the Chola Empire is not confirmed by inscriptions inside the Arunachaleswarar Temple. Possibly on account of the Rashtrakuta invasions and occupation of this area by Krishna III. This is perhaps indicated by a single inscription of Kannaradeva (Krishna III) found in the Temple.

The recovery of the region by the Cholas was a slow process and reached its successful conclusion only towards the close of the reign of Rajaraja I approximately. AD 1014, but even Rajaraja is conspicuously absent in the inscriptions of Tiruvannamalai. While the rule of Rajendra I and Rajadhiraja I over this area is attested by their inscriptions, once again a fairly long gap of over a hundred years is indicated by the absence of any Chola inscriptions till the beginning of Kulottunga III's reign (AD 1183)

Large scale activities in the period of Kulottunga III and Rajaraja III are indicated by a number of records in the Temple. Further, the frequent references to a number of Chola feudatories of this period would also show a gradual ascendancy in their power and importance till the final establishment of independence by the Kadavaraya chieftains in the second quarter of the 13th century AD. In this connection mention may be made of an interesting inscription at Tiruvannamalai, which records an agreement entered into by a number of feudatory chieftains to support one another and swearing allegiance to the ruling Chola king (Kulottunga III of AD 1210), pointing to a period of great political tension under the late Cholas.

The inscriptions of Kopperunjinga clearly show that by the second quarter of the 13th century, the Kadavarayas had established complete mastery over this region leading to the final decline of Chola power.

A brief period of Pandya supremacy over this region is indicated by the inscriptions of the Pandyas of the second empire such as Jatavaraman Srivallabha and Tribhuvanachakravartin Kulasekhara in the 13th century AD.

The Hoysalas under Vira Vallaladeva (Ballala III) of around AD 1340 also exercised sway over this area which indicates that the Hoysalas continued to influence Tamil politics even after the Muslim invasions of Malik kafur. After the Hoysalas, Tiruvannamalai passed into the hands of the Vijayanagar rulers, whose southern invasions under Kampana led to the establishment of Vijayanagar authority over practically the whole of Tamil Nadu.

Vijayanagar inscriptions in Arunachaleswarar Temple are large in number and range from the period of Harihara II to the late Vijayanagar ruler Venkatapatideva Maharaya of the late 14th to the 17th Centuries AD. Following them, the Kayak feudatories of Tanner, established their independent sway over this region and under Sevvappa Nayaka, carried out large scale renovation and building activities in the Temple. During the British period, Dupleix followed Dumas as Governor of Pondicherry. Then, in 1748, British reinforcements, intended for the recovery of Madras, arrived with a new fleet under Boscawin, Pondicherry in its turn was besieged, but once more French enterprise was aided by British ineptitude in securing a French success.

Due to the differences between Dupleix and the French naval head La Bourdanna in 1748, Madras was restored to the English and maintained the status quo. But the restoration revealed a profound change in the politics of South India. Three taluks adjoining Pondicherry viz., Valudavur, Villianur and Bahur were handed over to Dupleix as reward for his kind assistance during the Ambur battle in 1749.

Dupleix refused to be content and with infinite resource, continued the struggle. He even besieged Trichinopoly a second time in 1753. The British triumph of Arcot during the Carnatic wars, though was followed by more victories at Arni, Kaveripakkam and Valikandapuram over the forces of Chanda Sahib and the French. So the campaigns continued throughout the year 1753. And early in 1754, Dupleix was forced to open negotiations with the British. Meanwhile, the French company had decided upon his recall.

D' Auteuil, one of the officers of Duplex, captured Elavanasur. The French then took Tiruvannamalai and other forts, threatened Thyaga Drug, attacked Fort David, in spite of the fact that their fleet was defeated by the English Fleet in an action off Nagapattinam. After Nayak rule, this region seems to have gradually passed into British hands except for a brief period of subordination to the Mysore Odeyars (1816 AD).

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