

THE PANDYAS OF MADURAI (AD 590-1323)

The Pandyas were one of the most ancient dynasties to rule South India and are mentioned in Kautilya's Arthashastra and Megasthenes Indica. The Sangam age started from a Pandya king and as per Sangam literature there were at least 20 kings in this dynasty. The most prominent among these was, **Nedunzalian**, who made Madurai his capital. Other figures who find some mention in history are **King Bhootapandya** and his queen Kopendu. **King Ugraperavaluta** and poet **Rudrasharman**. The early Pandya rulers made a significant contribution to Tamil literature. After the Sangam Age, this dynasty lost its significance for more than a century, only to rise again at the end of the sixth century. Their first significant ruler was Kundungan (AD 590-620) who defeated the Kalabras and brought the Pandyas back to the path of glory. The significant later Pandya kings were **Varaguna I** (AD 765-815); **Srimara Sri-vallabha** (AD 815-862); **Varaguna Varmann** (AD 862-880); **Prantaka Veeranarayanan** (AD 880-900). **Rajasimha Maravarma** (AD 900 -920); **Maravarma Sundra Pandya** (AD 1226-1238); **Jatavarma Sundra Pandya** (1251 to 1268 AD) and **Kulashekhra** (AD 1281-1311). The last known Pandya king, **parakramadeva**, was defeated by **Usaf Khan** (a Victory of muhammad-bin-Tughlaq) when the Tughlaq Dynasty was in the process of extending their kingdom upto kanyakumari.



Map 1. 10 Various Kingdoms Ruling south India

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