

Unit 1- Vijayanagaram and Bahmani

Introduction

- The political condition of India in the fourteenth century provided great opportunities for the rise of new kingdoms in the south. The repressive measures of the temperamental Muslim king Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq led to the rise of many new independent states. In the south, Vijayanagar and Gulbarga or Bahmani emerged as two great kingdoms. The Bahmani kingdom spread all over the Maharashtra region and partly over Karnataka. Ruled by 18 monarchs, it lasted for nearly 180 years. Early in the sixteenth century, it collapsed and split into five sultanates – Bijapur, Ahmednagar, Golconda, Bidar and Berar. The state of Vijayanagar continued to flourish for nearly 200 years. Ultimately Vijayanagar's wealth and prosperity induced the Muslim Deccan kingdoms to launch a combined war against it. In 1565, the battle of Talikota, finally they could succeed in crushing Vijayanagar Empire.

Foundation of Vijayanagar Empire

- Vijayanagara, the 'city of victory', was established in southern Karnataka by two brothers named Harihara and Bukka. According to one tradition, Vidyanaraya, head of the Saivite Sringeri mutt, instructed them to abandon their service to the Tughluqs and rescue the country from Muslim authority. The new kingdom was called Vidyanagara for a time in honour of the spiritual teacher Vidyanaraya, before it came to be called Vijayanagara. Four dynasties, namely Sangama (1336–1485), Saluva (1485–1505), Tuluva (1505–1570) and Aravidu (1570–1646), ruled this kingdom.
- The fertile regions between the rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra and the Krishna- Godavari delta were the zones of conflict among the rulers of Vijayanagar, Bahmani and Odisha. The valour of the first two brothers, Harihara and Bukka, of the Sangama dynasty protected the new kingdom from the superior forces of the Bahmani sultanate, which had been established about a decade after the foundation of Vijayanagara.

Bukka I's son Kumara Kampana ended the sultanate in Madurai and succeeded in establishing Nayak kingdom there. The conquest of the Madurai Sultanate by the Vijayanagara empire is described in detail in the poem Madura Vijayam composed by Kumara Kampana's wife Gangadevi.

End of Sangama Dynasty

- When King Bukka died, he had left behind a large territory to his son Harihara II to rule. Harihara II's impressive achievement was securing Belgaum and Goa from the Bahmani kingdom. Harihara's son Devaraya I defeated Gajapati kings of Odisha. His successor Devaraya II was the greatest ruler of the Sangama dynasty. He began the practice of recruiting Muslim fighters to serve him and to train him in the new methods of warfare.

Rise of Saluva Dynasty

- After Devaraya II, the Vijayanagar Empire went through a crisis. The able commander of the Vijayanagar army, Saluva Narasimha, making use of the situation declared himself the emperor, after murdering the last ruler of Sangama dynasty, Virupaksha Raya II. But the Saluva dynasty founded by Saluva Narasimha came to an end with his death. When Naras Nayaka, his able general, seized power, it ushered in the Tuluva dynasty.

Krishnadevaraya

- Krishnadevaraya who reigned for 20 years was the most illustrious ruler of the Tuluva dynasty. His first step after ascending the throne was to bring under control the independent chieftains in the Tungabhadra river basin. After succeeding in this effort, his next main target was Gulbarga. The Bahmani sultan, Mahmud Shah, had been overthrown and kept in imprisonment by his minister. Krishnadevaraya freed the sultan and restored him to the throne. Similarly, he forced a war on Prataparudra, the Gajapati ruler of Odisha. Prataparudra negotiated for peace and offered to marry off his daughter to him. Accepting the offer, Krishnadevaraya returned the territory he had conquered from Prataparudra. Krishnadevaraya, with the assistance of the Portuguese gunners, could easily defeat the Sultan of Golconda and subsequently take over Raichur from the ruler of Bijapur.

A Great Builder

- Krishnadevaraya built huge irrigation tanks and reservoirs for harvesting rainwater. He built the famous temples of Krishnaswamy, Hazara Ramaswamy and Vithalaswamy in the capital city of Hampi. He distributed the wealth he gained in wars to all major temples of South India for the

purpose of constructing temple gateways (gopura), called 'Rayagopuram,' in his honour.

- He recruited a large army and built many strong forts. He imported large number of horses from Arabia and Iran, which came in ships to Vijayanagar ports on the west coast. He had good friendly relationship with the Portuguese and Arabian traders, which increased the Empire's income through customs.

Patron of Literature, Art and Architecture

- Krishnadevaraya patronised art and literature. Eight eminent luminaries in literature known as astadiggajas adorned his court. Alasani Peddana was the greatest of them all. Another notable figure was Tenali Ramakrishna.

Battle of Talikota and the Decline of Vijayanagar

- Krishnadevaraya was succeeded by his younger brother Achtyuda Deva Raya. After the uneventful reigns of Achtyuda Deva Raya and his successor Venkata I, Sadasiva Raya, a minor, ascended the throne. His regent Rama Raya, the able general of the kingdom, continued as a de facto ruler, even after Sadashiva Raya attained the age for becoming the king. He relegated Sadasiva Raya to a nominal king. In the meantime, the sultans of Deccan kingdoms succeeded in forming a league to fight the Vijayanagar Empire. The combined forces of the enemies met at Talikota in 1565. In the ensuing battle, known as Rakasa Tangadi (Battle of Talikota), Vijayanagar was defeated. There was terrible human slaughter and pillaging the capital city of Hampi. All the buildings, palaces and temples were destroyed. The beautiful carvings and sculptures were desecrated. The glorious Vijayanagar Empire had ceased to exist.

The site of the city of Vijayanagar on the bank of the river Tungabhadra in eastern Karnataka is now called Hampi. Hampi is in ruins and the UNESCO has declared it a heritage site.

Aravidu Dynasty

- Rama Raya was killed on the battlefield and his brother Tirumaladeva Raya managed to escape along with the king Sadasiva Raya. Tirumaladeva Raya moved to Chandragiri carrying all the treasures and wealth that could be salvaged. There he began the rule of Aravidu dynasty.

- The Aravidu dynasty built a new capital at Penukonda and kept the empire intact for a time. Internal dissensions and the intrigues of the sultans of Bijapur and Golconda, however, led to the final collapse of the empire about 1646.

Vijayanagar Administration

State

- Kingship was hereditary, based on the principle of primo geniture. But in some instances, the reigning rulers, in order to ensure peaceful succession, nominated their successors. There were also instances of usurpation. Saluva Narasimha usurped the throne and it led to the replacement of Sangama dynasty with Saluva dynasty. The practice of appointing a regent to look after the administration, when a minor succeeded the throne, was also prevalent.

Structure of Governance

- The empire was divided into different mandalams (provinces), nadus (districts), sthalas (taluks) and finally into gramas (villages). Each province was administered by a governor called Mandalesvara. The lowest unit of the administration was the village. Each village had a grama sabha. Gauda, village headman, looked after the affairs of the village.
- The army consisted of the infantry, cavalry and elephant corps. The army was modernised and Vijayanagar army began using firearms. The combination of firearm and cavalry made them one of the most feared armies in India.

Economic Condition

- The Vijayanagar Empire was one of the richest states then known to the world. Several foreign travellers, who visited the empire during the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, left behind glowing accounts of its splendour and wealth. The emperors issued a large number of gold coins called Varahas.

Agriculture

- It was the policy of its rulers to encourage agriculture in different parts of the empire by following a wise irrigation policy. Apart from the state, there were wealthy landholders and temples that invested in irrigation to promote agriculture. Abdur Razzaq, the visiting Persian emissary to

Krishnadevaraya's Court, records the huge tank built with the help of Portuguese masons. Channels were constructed to supply water from the tank to different parts of the city. The city was well stocked with a variety of agricultural goods.

Cottage Industries

- Vijayanagar's agricultural production was supplemented by numerous cottage-scale industries. The most important of them were textile, mining and metallurgy. Crafts and industries were regulated by guilds. Abdur Razzaq, the makes a reference to separate guild for each group of tradesmen and craftsmen.

Trade

- During the Vijayanagar Empire, inland, coastal and overseas trade flourished in goods such as silks from China, spices from the Malabar region and precious stones from Burma (Myanmar). Vijayanagar traded with Persia, South Africa, Portugal, Arabia, China, Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka.

Contribution to Literature

- Under the patronage of Vijayanagar rulers, religious as well as secular books were written in different languages such as Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada and Tamil. Krishnadeva Raya wrote Amuktamalyada, an epic in Telugu and also a Sanskrit drama Jambavati Kalyanam. Tenali Ramakrishna authored Pandurangamahatyam. Scholars like Srinatha, Pothana, Jakkama and Duggana translated Sanskrit and Prakrit works into Telugu.

Amuktamalyada is considered a masterpiece in Telugu literature. It relates the story of the daughter of Periazavar, Goda Devi (Andal), who used to wear the garlands intended for Lord Ranganatha before they were offered to the deity, and hence the name Amuktamalyada who wears and gives away garlands.

Contribution to Architecture

- The temple building activity of the Vijayanagar rulers produced a new style called the Vijayanagara style. Prominence of pillars and piers, in large numbers, and the manner in which they were sculptured are hallmarks of the Vijayanagara style. Horse was the most common animal to be depicted on the pillars. The structures have a mandapam (open pavilion) with a raised platform, generally meant for seating the deity on special occasions. These temples also have a marriage hall with elaborately carved pillars.

Bahmani Kingdom

Foundation and Consolidation of the Bahmani Kingdom

- Ala-ud-din Hasan, also known as Hasan Gangu, seized Daulatabad and declared himself sultan under the title of Bahman Shah in 1347. In his effort, this Turkish officer of Daulatabad (Devagiri) was supported by other military
- leaders in rebellion against the sultan of Delhi, Muhammad bin Tughluq. In two years, Ala-ud-din Hasan Bahman Shah shifted his capital to Gulbarga. His successors found it difficult to organise a stable kingdom even around Gulbarga. So the capital was again shifted to Bidar in 1429. There were 18 monarchs of the Bahmani dynasty.

Ala-ud-din Hasan Bahman Shah (1347–1358)

- Ala-ud-din Hasan ruled for 11 years. His attempt to exact an annual tribute from the state of Warangal, the Reddi kingdoms of Rajahmundry and Kondavidu, led to frequent wars. Ala-ud-din Bahman Shah divided the kingdom into four territorial divisions called tarafs. A governor was appointed for each province. He commanded an army, was solely responsible for its administration and for the collection of the revenue. The system worked well under a powerful king, but its dangers became apparent during the reign of a weak ruler.

Muhammad Shah I (1358–1375)

- Muhammad Shah I succeeded Bahman Shah. He waged two wars with Vijayanagar but couldn't gain from it. But his attack on Warangal in 1363 earned him a large property and wealth, including the important fortress of Golconda and his treasured turquoise throne, which thereafter became the throne of the Bahmani kings.

Turquoise is a semi-precious stone sky blue in colour. Turquoise throne is one of the bejewelled royal seats of Persian kings described in Firdausi's Shah Nama.

- Muhammad Shah laid a solid foundation for the kingdom. His system of government continued even after the Bahmani kingdom disintegrated into five sultanates. He built two mosques at Gulbarga. One, the great mosque, completed in 1367, measures 216 by 16 feet and has a roofed courtyard. A large number of Arabs, Turks and notably Persians began to immigrate to the Deccan, many of them at the invitation of Sultan Muhammad I and there they had a strong influence on the development of Muslim culture during subsequent generations.

The Golconda Fort is located about 11 kilometres from Hyderabad on a hill 120 meters height. The fort is popular for its acoustic architecture. The highest point of the fort is Bala Hissar. It is believed that there is a secret underground tunnel, which leads from the Durbar Hall to one of the palaces at the foot of the hills.

Successors of Muhammad Shah I

- Mujahid, the son of Muhammad Shah, ascended the throne. However, on his return to Gulbarga from the expedition against Vijayanagar, he was assassinated and the nephew of the conspirator, Daud, the uncle of Muhammad, was enthroned in 1378 as Muhammad II. Muhammad II's reign was peaceful, and the sultan spent much of his time building his court as a centre of culture and learning.
- There were constant wars between the Bahmani and Vijayanagar rulers over the fertile Tungabhadra-Krishna region. The threat also came from the north, especially from Malwa and Gujarat. The noteworthy ruler after eight and a half decades (1377 to 1463) was Muhammad III (1463-1482). Muhammad III reigned for 19 years. For most of these years, the lieutenant of the kingdom was Mahmud Gawan, the most notable personality of the time.

Eight ministers of the Bahmani state:

1. Vakil-us-saltana or lieutenant of the kingdom, who was the immediate subordinate authority of the sovereign.
2. Peshwa who was associated with the lieutenant of the kingdom;
3. Waziri-kull who supervised the work of all other ministers;
4. Amir-i-jumla, minister of finance;
5. Nazir, assistant minister for finance;

6. Wasir-i-ashraf, minister of foreign affairs;
7. Kotwal or chief of police and city magistrate in the capital; and
8. Sadr-i-jahan or chief justice and minister of religious affairs and endowments.

Mahmud Gawan

- A Persian by birth, Mahmud Gawan was well-versed in Islamic theory, Persian and Mathematics. He was also a poet and a prose writer. The Bahmani king Ala-ud-din Hasan Bahman Shah greatly impressed by his wisdom and military genius, recruited him. He served with great distinction as the Prime Minister under Muhammad III and contributed extensively to the development of the Bahmanikindom.
- Gawan was known for his military campaigns as well as administrative reforms. He used Persian chemists to teach the Bahmani army about the preparation and the use of gunpowder. In his war against the Vijayanagar kings in Belgaum, he used gunpowder. In order to tighten the administration and to curb the power of provincial governors, who often functioned as virtual kings, Gawan divided the existing four provinces of the Bahmani Sultanate into eight provinces so as to limit the area under the rule of each governor and to make the provincial administration more manageable.
- He also placed some districts in the provinces directly under the central administration. Gawan sought to curtail the military powers of the governors by allowing them to occupy only one fort in their territory. The sultan kept the other forts under his direct control. The royal officers who were given land assignments as pay were made accountable to the sultan for their income and expenditure.
- The administrative reforms introduced by Gawan improved the efficiency of the government, but curtailed the powers of the provincial chiefs, who were mostly Deccanis. So the already existing rivalry among nobles such as Deccanis and Pradesis (foreigners) further intensified and conflicts broke out. Gawan became a victim of this tussle for power. The Deccani nobles grew jealous of his success and considered him as an obstacle to their rise. They manipulated by forging a letter to implicate Gawan in a conspiracy against the sultan. Sultan, who himself was not happy with Gawan's dominance, ordered his execution.

Decline of Bahmani Kingdom

- Gawan's execution prompted several of the foreign nobles who were considered the backbone of the state to leave for their provinces. After Sultan Muhammad III's death, Mahmud or Shihab-ud-din Mahmud reigned as the sultan until his death in 1518. His long rule is noted for the beginnings of the process of disintegration. After him, four of his successors on the throne were kings only in name. During this period, the Sultanate gradually broke up into five independent Deccan kingdoms: Bidar, Bijapur, Ahmednagar, Berar and Golconda.

Contribution of Bahmani Sultans

Architecture

- The contribution of Bahmani kings to architecture is evident in Gulbarga. Archaeological excavations done in the site of the kingdom has helped to unearth palaces, halls of public audience, ambassadors' residences, arches, domes, walls and citadels. These finds are illustrative of their architectural skill.

Education

- The founder of the Bahmani kingdom Alaud- din Hasan Shah was educated at Multan at the initiative of Zabar Khan, a general of Alaud- din Khalji. On his accession, he took special care in founding a school to educate his sons. His son Muhammad I was a patron of learning. He opened institutions for the purpose of educating the children of noble families in the art of soldiery. Sultan Firoz, the eighth Bahmani king was a linguist and a poet. Later his successors founded schools in Gulbarga, Bidar, Daulatabad and Kandahar. Boarding and lodging at the king's expenses were provided in these schools. Mahmud Gawan's world famous madrasa in Bidar, with a large library, containing a collection of 3000 manuscripts, is illustrative of the importance given to scholarship and education by Gawan.
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11th Volume I

Unit 9 –Cultural Development in South India

Introduction

- The political history of south India during the sixth century to ninth century CE was marked by conflicts between the Chalukyas of Badami (also known as Western Chalukyas), and the Pallavas of Kanchi. At the same time, the period also saw great advancements in the field of culture and literature. It also broke new grounds in areas like devotional literature, art and architecture. The Bhakti movement, which impacted the entire sub-continent, originated in the Tamil country during this period.

Sources

- Inscriptions on copperplates, on temple walls and pillars form a major source of historical information for this period. Inscriptions issued by Chalukyas in Kannada, Telugu, Tamil and Sanskrit languages, and Pallavas in Tamil and Sanskrit, recording land grants to Brahmins, as well as the royal and the non-royal gifts made to religious establishment are equally important sources. The Aihole inscription of Pulikesin II composed by his court poet Ravikirti in Sanskrit is among the most important of Chalukyan inscriptions. Kavirajamarga, a work on poetics in Kannada, Vikramarjuna-vijayam, also called Pampa-bharata, by Pampa in Kannada, which were all of a later period, and Nannaya's Mahabharatam in Telugu also provide useful historical data.
- However, pride of place must go to Tamil literature. The Bhakti movement which originated in South India found its greatest expression in the songs composed by the Azhwars and Nayanmars. The poems of the Vaishnavite Azhwars were later compiled as the Nalayira Divya Prabhandam. The Saiva literature was canonized as the Panniru Tirumurai. The Thevaram, composed by Appar (Thirunavukkarasar), Sambandar (Thirugnanasambandar) and Sundarar; and Thiruvavasagam by Manickavasagar are prominent texts which are read as sacred literature to this day. Periyapuram written by Sekizhar, in a later period, also provides much historical information. The Mathavilasa Prahasanam written

by Mahendravarman I in Sanskrit, is an important source for the Pallava period.

- Many inscriptional sources including the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta and the Aihole inscription of the Chalukya king Pulakesin II provide details of Pallava - Chalukya conflict. The Kuram copper plates of Parameshwaravarman and the Velurpalayam copper plates of Nandivarman III record their military achievements. Coins help us to understand the economic condition of the period. Buddhist sources such as Deepavamsa and Mahavamsa, written in Pali, the accounts of Chinese travellers Hiuen Tsang and Itsing give us details about the socio-religious and cultural conditions of the Pallava times. The ninth and tenth century writings of Arab travellers and geographers such as Sulaiman, Al-Masudi, and Ibn Hauka also tell us about the socio-political and economic conditions of India of this period. The sculptures in the temples in Aihole, Badami, Pattadakal reflect the culture of the times.

I Chalukyas and Pallavas

Chalukyas

- There are two Chalukya families: Chalukyas of Badami (Vatapi) and Chalukyas of Kalyani. This lesson concerns only the Chalukyas of Badami. Chalukya dynasty emerged as a strong power with its founder Pulikesin I (c. 535- 566 CE) fortifying a hill near Badami. He declared independence from the Kadambas. It is said that he conducted yagnas and performed the asvamedha sacrifice. The capital Badami was founded by Kirtivarman (566-597).
- Pulikesin I's grandson Pulikesin II (609-642), after defeating Mangalesha, proclaimed himself as king, an event that is described in the Aihole inscription. One of the most outstanding victories of Pulikesin II was the defeat of Harshavardhana's army on the banks of the Narmada. The kings of Malwa, Kalinga, and eastern Deccan accepted his suzerainty. His victories over Kadambas of Banvasi, and Gangas of Talakad (Mysore) are also worthy of note. However, his attempt to attack Kanchipuram was thwarted by Mahendravarman Pallava. This led to a prolonged war between the Chalukyas and the Pallavas. Narasimha Varman I (630-668), the Pallava King, attacked and occupied Badami. Pulikesin II died in the battle. Pallava control over Badami and the southern parts of the Chalukya empire continued for several years. In the mid-eighth century, the Badami Chalukyas were overpowered and replaced by the Rashtrakutas.

From Kuram Copper Plate

(Line 12). The grandson of Narasimhavarman, (who arose) from the kings of this race, just as the moon and the sun from the eastern mountain; who was the crest-jewel on the head of those princes, who had never bowed their heads (before); who proved a lion to the elephant-herd of hostile kings; who appeared to be blessed Narasimha himself, who had come down (to earth) in the shape of a prince; who repeatedly defeated the Cholas, Keralas, Kalabhras, and Pandyas; who, like Sahasrabahu (i.e., the thousand-armed Kartavirya), enjoyed the action for a thousand arms in hundreds of fights; who wrote the (three) syllables of (the word) vijaya (i.e., victory), as on a plate, on Pulikesin's back, which was caused to be visible (i.e., whom he caused to turn his back) in the battles of Pariyala, Manimangala, Suramara, etc., and who destroyed (the city of) Vatapi, just as the pitcher-born (Agastya) (the demon) Vatapi.

Chalukya Administration

State

- The king was the head of the administration. In dynastic succession primogeniture was not strictly followed. Generally, the elder was to be appointed as yuvaraja while the king was in the office. The heir apparent got trained in literature, law, philosophy, martial arts and others. Chalukyan kings claimed to rule according to dharma-sastra and nitisastra. Pulikesin I (543-566) was well-versed in manu-sastra, puranas, and itihisas. In the beginning, the Chalukya kings assumed titles such as Maharajan, Sathyasrayanand Sri-Pritivi-Vallaban. After defeating Harshavardhana, Pulikesin II assumed the title of Parameswaran. Bhattarakan and Maharajathirajan, soon became very popular titles. In the Pallava kingdom, kings took high-sounding titles such as Dharmamaharajaadhi raja, Maharajadhiraja, Dharma maharaja, Maharaja. In the Hirahadagalli plates the king is introduced as the performer of agnistoma, vajapeya and asvamedha sacrifices.
- The wild boar was the royal insignia of the Chalukyas. It was claimed that it represented the varaha avatar of Vishnu in which he is said to have rescued the Goddess of the Earth. The bull, Siva's mount, was the symbol of the Pallavas.

Aihole Inscription of Pulikesin II

The Megudi temple at Aihole (in Karnataka) stands on top of a hill. On the eastern wall of this Jaina temple is a 19-line Sanskrit inscription (dated to 556 Saka era: 634-635). The composer is a poet named Ravikriti. The inscription is a prashasti of the Chalukyas especially the reigning king Pulikesin II, referred to as Sathyasraya (the abode of truth). It highlights the history of the dynasty, defeat of all his enemies, especially Harshavardhana.

Royal Women

- Chalukya dynasty of Jayasimhan I line appointed royal ladies as provincial governors. They also issued coins in some instances. Vijaya Bhattariga, a Chalukya princess, issued inscriptions. Pallava queens did not take active part in the administration of the kingdom, but they built shrines, and installed images of various deities, and endowed temples. The image of Queen Rangapataka, the queen of Rajasimha, is found in the inscription in Kailasanatha temple in Kanchipuram.

The King and His Ministers

- All powers were vested in the king. Inscriptions do not specifically speak of a council of ministers, but they do refer to an official called maha-sandhi-vigrahika. Four other categories of ministers are also referred to in the epigraphs: Pradhana (head minister), Mahasandhi-vigrahika (minister of foreign affairs), Amatya (revenue minister), and Samaharta (minister of exchequer). Chalukyas divided the state into political divisions for the sake of administration: Vishayam, Rastram, Nadu and Grama. Epigraphs speak of the officials like vishayapatis, samantas, gramapohis and mahatras. Vishayapatis exercised the power at the behest of the kings. Samantas were feudal lords functioning under the control of the state. Gramapohis and gramkudas were village officials. Mahatras were the prominent village men.

Provincial and District Administration

- Generally, the king appointed his sons as the provincial governors. The governors called themselves raja, marakka-rajan and rajaditya-rajaparameswaran. Some governors held the title maha-samanta and maintained troops. The chief of vishaya was vishayapati. In turn, vishaya was divided into pukti. Its head was pogapati.

Village Administration

- The traditional revenue officials of the villages were called the nalakavundas. The central figure in village administration was kamunda or pokigan who were appointed by the kings. The village accountant was karana and he was otherwise called gramani. Law and order of the village was in the hands of a group of people called mahajanam. There was a special officer called mahapurush, in charge of maintaining order and peace of the village. Nagarapatis or Purapatis were the officials of the towns.

Religion

- The Chalukyas patronised both Saivism and Vaishnavism. They built temples for Siva and Vishnu. Brahmin groups were invited from the Gangetic regions and settled to perform regular pujas and conduct festivals and ceremonies in the temples. Notable Chalukya rulers like Kirtivarman (566-597), Mangalesa (597-609), and Pulikesin II (609-642) performed yagnas. They bore titles such as parama-vaishana and parama-maheswara. Chalukyas gave prominent place to Kartikeyan, the war god. Saiva monasteries became centres for popularising Saivism. Chalukyas patronised heterodox sects also and lavishly donated lands to the Jain centres. Ravikirti, the poet-laureate of Pulikesin II, was a Jain scholar. In the reign of Kirtivarman II (744-755) a Jain village official built a Jain temple in a place called Annigere. The prince Krishna (756-775) appointed Gunapatra, a Jain monk, as his master. Pujoyatar the author of Jainentriya-viyakarnam was a Jain monk, a contemporary of Vijayadityan (755-772). According to Hiuen Tsang, there were many Buddhist centres in the Chalukya territory wherein more than 5000 followers of the Hinayana and Mahayana sects lived.

Literature and Education

- Chalukyas used Sanskrit in pillar inscriptions such as in Aihole and Mahakudam. A seventh-century inscription of a Chalukya king at Badami mentions Kannada as the local prakrit, meaning the people's language, and Sanskrit as the language of culture. A chieftain of Pulikesin II authored a grammar work Saptavataram in Sanskrit.

Chalukya Architecture

- Historically, in Deccan, Chalukyas introduced the technique of building temples using soft sandstones as medium. In Badami, two temples are dedicated to Vishnu and one each to Siva and to the Jaina tirthankaras. Their temples are grouped into two: excavated cave temples and structural

temples. Badami is known for both structural and excavated cave temples. Pattadakal and Aihole are popular for structural temples.

Aihole (Ayyavole)

- Built in 634, Aihole, the headquarters of the famous medieval Ayyavole merchants' guild was an important commercial centre. About seventy temples are located in Aihole. The earliest stone-built temple is Lad Khan temple. Its unique trait is a stucco pillar with a big capital distinct from northern style. A temple dedicated to the goddess Durga was built on the model of Buddha Chaitya. It stands on a raised platform in the form of semi-circle. Another temple, dedicated to the same goddess is called Huccimalligudi, which is rectangular in shape. Chalukyas also built Jain temples. Megudi Jain temple is illustrative of the evolution of temple architecture under the Chalukyas. The mandapa-type caves are preserved at Aihole.

Badami (Vatapi)

- There are four caves in Badami. The largest cave temple built by Mangalesa is dedicated to Vishnu. The reclining posture of Vishnu on the snake bed and Narasimha are exquisite examples of Chalukya art. Irrespective of religion, architectural features share a common style. It establishes the technical importance and the secular attitude of both patron and architect.

Pattadakal

- Pattadakal, a quiet village in Bagalkot district of Karnataka, is famous for its exquisite temples. Pattadakal was a centre for performing royal rituals. The Virupaksha temple was built at the order of queen Lohamahadevi to commemorate the conquest of Kanchipuram by her husband Vikramaditya II. The unique feature of the structural temple built by Rajasimha at Mamallapuram was adopted here by the Chalukyas. Monuments are generally associated with the rulers who built them. However, here we also have signatures of the architects who conceived the edifices and the skilled craftspeople who created them. The east porch of the Virupaksha temple has a Kannada inscription eulogizing the architect who designed the temple. The architect was given the title Tribhuavacharya (maker of the three worlds). Several reliefs on the temple walls bear signatures of the sculptors who carved them.
- At the south-eastern corner of the village is the Papanatha temple. Similar to the Virupaksha temple in its basic plan, it has a shikara in the northern

style. The outer walls are richly decorated with many panels depicting scenes and characters from the Ramayana. The eastern wall has a short Kannada inscription, giving the name of the architect Revadi Ovajja, who designed the shrine. In Pattadakal, Chalukyas built more than ten temples which demonstrate the evolution in Chalukya architecture. On the basis of style these temples are classified into two groups: Indo-Aryan and Dravidian.

Painting

- Paintings are found in a cave temple dedicated to Vishnu in Badami. Chalukyas adopted the Vakataka style in painting. Many of the paintings are of incarnations of Vishnu. The most popular Chalukya painting is in the palace built by the King Mangalesan (597-609). It is a scene of ball being watched by members of royal family and others.

Pallavas

- There is no scholarly consensus about the origin of the Pallavas. Some early scholars held the view that the word Pallava was a variant of Pahlava, known as Parthians, who moved from western India to the eastern coast of the peninsula, during the wars between the Sakas and the Satavahanas in the second century CE. But many scholars today regard them native to south India or "with some mixture of north Indian blood".
- The Pallavas were associated with Tondaimandalam, the land between the north Pennar and north Vellar rivers. Simhavishnu is believed to have conquered the Chola country up to the Kaveri and consolidated his dynastic rule, started by his father Simhavarman. Simhavishnu, vanquishing the Kalabhras, conquered the land up to the Kaveri, thereby coming into conflict with the Pandyas. Simhavishnu's successor Mahendravarman I (590-630), whom Appar, converted from Jainism to Saivism, was a patron of arts, and a poet and musician in his own right.
- During Mahendravarman's reign, the army of Pulikesin II annexed the northern part of Pallava kingdom and almost reached the Pallava capital of Kanchipuram. Subsequently, during the reign of Narasimhavarman I (630-668), the Pallavas managed to settle scores by winning several victories over the Chalukyas with the aid of their ally Manavarman, a Sri Lankan prince, who later became ruler of the island kingdom. The climax was Narasimhavarman's invasion of the Chalukyan kingdom and his capturing of the Badami. Narasimhavarman claims to have defeated the Cholas,

Cheras and Kalabhras. Two naval expeditions despatched to help Manavarman were successful, but this Sri Lankan ruler subsequently lost his kingdom.

- The Pallava-Chalukya conflict continued during the subsequent decades, with some intermittent peace. During the reign of his grandson, Paramesvaravarman I (670-700), Vikramaditya of the Chalukya kingdom invaded the Pallava country. Paramesvaravarman fought against him with the support of the Gangas and Pandyas. As a result, the Pallavas came into conflict with the Pandyas in the south. In the early ninth century, the Rashtrakutaking, Govind III, invaded Kanchi during the reign of the Pallava Dantivarman. Dantivarman's son Nandivarman III aided by western Gangas and Cholas, defeated the Pandyas at the battle of Sripurambiyam or Thirupurambiyam. Aparajita, grandson of Nandivarman III, lost his life in a battle fought against Aditya I of the Chola kingdom who invaded Tondaimandalam. This sealed the fate of the Pallavas. Thereafter, control over Tondaimandalam passed into the hands of the Cholas.

About the Cheras

Though the Kerala region seems to have been under the rule of the Chera Perumals during the period from sixth to ninth century little is known about its history until the beginning of the ninth century.

Pallava Administration

- Under the Pallavas, kinship was held to be of divine origin and was hereditary. The king took high-sounding titles, some of which, such as maharajadhiraja, were borrowed from north Indian traditions. The king was assisted by a group of ministers, and in the later Pallava period this ministerial council played a prominent part in state policy. Some of the ministers bore semi-royal titles and may well have been appointed from among the feudatories.
- Distinctions are made between amatyas and mantrins. While a mantri is generally understood to be a diplomat, amatya is a counsellor. Mantri Mandala was a council of ministers. Rahasyadhikrita was a private secretary of the king. Manikkappandaram-Kappan was an officer in charge of the treasury (Manikka - valuables; Pandaram - treasury; Kappan - keeper). Kodukkappillai was the officer of gifts. They were central officers under the Pallava king. Kosa-adhyaksa was the supervisor of the Manikkappandaram-kappan. Judicial courts were called Adhikarna Mandapa and judges called Dharmadhikarins. Fines are mentioned in the

Kasakudi plates of Nandivarman Pallava as Karanadandam (fine in superior/ higher court) and Adhikaranadandam (fine in district level).

- The governor of a province was advised and assisted by officers in charge of districts who worked in close collaboration with local autonomous institutions, largely in an advisory capacity. They were built on local relationship of caste, guilds, craftsmen and artisans (such as weavers and oilmongers), students, ascetics and priests. There were assemblies of villagers and also representatives of districts. General body meetings of the assembly were held annually, and meetings of smaller groups were responsible for implementing policy.

Land Grants

- Land ownership was with the king, who could make revenue grants to his officers and land-grants to Brahmans, or else continue to have land cultivated by small -scale cultivators and landlords. The latter was the most common practice. Crown lands were leased out to tenants-at-will. The status of the village varied according to the tenures prevailing. The village with an inter-caste population paid land revenue. The brahmadeya villages were donated to a single Brahman or a group of Brahmans. These villages tended to be more prosperous than the others because no tax was paid. There were devadanavillages, donated to a temple, and the revenue was consequently received by the temple authorities and not by the state. The temple authorities assisted the village by providing employment in the service of the temple. This last category of villages gained greater significance when in later centuries the temples became the centres of rural life. During the Pallava period the first two types of villages were predominant.

In 1879, eleven plates held together by a ring of copper, its two ends soldered and stamped with a royal seal depicting a bull and a lingam (the Pallava symbol) were discovered in Urrukkattukottam, near Puducherry. It records a grant of a village made in the twenty-second year of the king Nandivarman (753 CE). The inscriptional text commences with a eulogy of the king in Sanskrit, followed by the details of the grant in Tamil, and a concluding verse in Sanskrit.

Village Life

- In the village, the basic assembly was the sabha, which was concerned with all matters relating to the village, including endowments, land, irrigation, cultivated, punishment of crime, the keeping of a census and other

necessary records. Village courts dealt with petty criminal cases. At a higher level, in towns and districts, courts were presided over by government officers, with the king as the supreme arbiter of justice. The sabha was a formal institution but it worked closely with the urar, an informal gathering of the entire village. Above this was a district council which worked with nadu or district administration. Villages populated entirely or largely by Brahmans preserved records of the functioning of assemblies and councils. The link between the village assembly and the official administration was the headman of the village.

Tank Irrigation

- A special category of land, eripatti or tank land, was known only in south India. This land was donated by individuals, the revenue from which was set apart for the maintenance of the village tank. Rainwater was stored in the tank so that land could be irrigated during the annual long, dry spell. The tank, lined with brick or stone, was built through the cooperative effort of the village, and its water was shared by all cultivators. The maintenance of these tanks was essential to the village. Practically every inscription from the Pallava period pertaining to the rural affairs refers to the upkeep of the tank. Next in importance came wells. Water was distributed by canals, which were fitted with sluices to regulate the water level and prevent overflowing at the source. The distribution of water for irrigation was supervised by a special tank committee appointed by the village. Water taken in excess of allotted to a particular cultivator was taxed.

Revenue and Taxation

- Land grants recorded mainly on copperplates provide detailed information on land revenues and taxation. Revenue came almost exclusively from rural sources, mercantile and urban institutions being largely unplanned. Two categories of taxes were levied on the village. The land revenue paid by the cultivator to the state varied from 1/6th to 1/10th of the produce, and was collected by the village and paid to the state collector. In the second category were local taxes, also collected in the village but utilized for services in the village itself. The tax money was spent for repairing irrigation works, illuminating the temple, etc. When the state land tax was inadequate, the revenue was supplemented by additional taxes on draught cattle, toddy-drawers, marriage parties, potters, goldsmiths, washermen, textile-manufacturers, weavers, brokers, letter-carriers, and the makers of ghee.

- The loot and booty obtained in war added to the revenue of the state. Pallava considered war to be very important and a series of sculptures depicting the important events connected with the reign of Nandivarama Pallava, notably Pallava troops attacking a fort are seen in the Vaikunta Perumal temple at Kanchipuram. This fort is depicted in the sculptures as having high ramparts with soldiers attacking it and elephants standing near it.

Pallava Army

- Much of the state revenue went to maintain the army. The king maintained a standing army under his direct control. The army consisted of foot-soldiers, cavalry and a small force of elephants. Chariots were by now almost out of use and in any case were ineffective in the hilly terrains, as much of the fighting took place there. Cavalry, though effective, was expensive, as horses had to be imported. The Pallavas developed a navy and built dockyards at Mamallapuram and Nagapattinam. However, the Pallava navy was inconsiderable compared to the naval strength of the Cholas who succeeded them.

Trade

- Kanchipuram was an important trading centre in the Pallava period. The merchants had to obtain license to market their goods. Barter system generally prevailed but later the Pallavas issued gold and silver coins. Merchants had their own organizations such as Manigramam. In foreign trade, spices, cotton textiles, precious stones and medicinal plants were exported to Java, Sumatra, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, China and Burma. Mamallapuram was an important seaport.
- Traders founded guilds and called themselves as sudesi, nanadesi, ainurruvarand others. Their main guild functioned at Aihole. Foreign merchants were known as Nanadesi. It had a separate flag with the figure of bull at the centre, and they enjoyed the right of issuing vira-sasanas. The jurisdiction of this guild stretched over entire south-east Asia. The chief of this guild is registered in the inscriptions as pattanswamy, pattnakilar, and dandanayaka. Its members were known as ayyavole-parameswariyar.

Maritime Trade

- Unlike in the Ganges plain, where large areas were available for cultivation, the regions controlled by the Pallavas and the Chalukyas commanded a limited income from land. Mercantile activity had not developed sufficiently

to make a substantial contribution to the economy. The Pallavas had maritime trade with south-east Asia, where by now there were three major kingdoms: Kambuja (Cambodia), Champa (Annam), and Srivijaya (the southern Malaya peninsula and Sumatra). On the west coast, the initiative in the trade with the West was gradually passing into the hands of the foreign traders settled along the coast, mainly Arabs. Indian traders were becoming suppliers of goods rather than carriers of goods to foreign countries, and communication with the west became indirect, via Arabs, and limited to trade alone.

Society

- Brahmins as learned scholars in literature, astronomy, law and others functioned as the royal counsellors. Not only were they in the teaching profession, they were also involved in agriculture, trade and war. They were exempted from paying taxes and capital punishment. The next important social group which ruled the state was called sat-kshatriyas (quality kshatriyas). Not all the kshatriyas were of warring groups; some of them were involved in trading as well. They also enjoyed the right to read the Vedas, a privilege denied to lower varnas. The trading group maintained warriors for protection and founded trade guilds. The people who were at the bottom of the society worked in agriculture, animal husbandry, and handicraft works. People engaged in scavenging, fishing, dry-cleaning and leather works were positioned outside the varna system.

Most scholars agree that Aryanisation or the northern influence on the south picked up pace during the Pallava period. This is evident from the royal grants issued by the kings. The caste structure had firmly established. Sanskrit came to be held in high esteem.

Kanchipuram continued to be a great seat of learning. The followers of Vedic religion were devoted to the worship of Siva. Mahendravarman was the first, during the middle of his reign, to adopt the worship of Siva. But he was intolerant of Jainism and destroyed some Jain monasteries. Many of the great Nayanmars and Alwars, Saiva and Vaishanava poet-saints lived during his time. Buddhism and Jainism lost their appeal. However, Hiuen-Tsang is reported to have seen at Kanchi one hundred Buddhist monasteries and 10,000 priests belonging to the Mahayana school.

Growing influence of Brahmanism

- Perhaps the most obvious sign of the influence of Aryan culture in the south was the pre-eminent position given to Brahmins. They gained

materially through large gifts of land. Aryanisation is also evident in the evolution of educational institutions in the Pallava kingdom. In the early part of this period education was controlled by Jains and Buddhists, but gradually the Brahmins superseded them. The Jains who had brought with them their religious literature in Sanskrit and Prakrit, began to use Tamil. Jainism was extremely popular, but the competition of Hinduism in the succeeding centuries greatly reduced the number of its adherents. In addition, Mahendravarman I lost interest in Jainism and took up the cause of Saivism, thus depriving the Jains of valuable royal patronage. The Jains had developed a few educational centres near Madurai and Kanchi, and religious centres such as the one at Shravanabelagola in Karnataka. But a vast majority of the Jaina monks tended to isolate themselves in small caves, in hills and forests.

Monasteries and Mutts

- Monasteries continued to be the nucleus of the Buddhist educational system and were located in the region of Kanchi, and the valleys of the Krishna and the Godavari rivers. Buddhist centres were concerned with the study of Buddhism, particularly as this was a period of intense conflict between orthodox and heterodox sects. But Buddhism was fighting a losing battle. Royal patronage, which the Buddhists lacked, gave an edge to the protagonists of Vedic religions.
- Apart from the university at Kanchi, which acquired a fame equal to that of the Nalanda, there were a number of other Sanskrit colleges. Sanskrit was the recognized medium, and was also the official language at the court, which led to its adoption in literary circles. In the eighth century the mathas (mutts) became popular. This was a combination of a rest house, a feeding-centre, and an education centre, which indirectly brought publicity to the particular sect with which it was associated.

Growing Popularity of Sanskrit

- Mahendravarman I composed Mathavilasa Prahasanam in Sanskrit. Two extraordinary works in Sanskrit set the standard for Sanskrit literature in the south: Bharavi's Kiratarjuniya and Dandin's Dashakumaracharita. Dandin of Kanchipuram, author of the great treatise on rhetoric Kavyadarsa, seems to have stayed in Pallava court for some time.

Rock-cut Temples

- Mahendravarman I is credited with the introduction of rock-cut temples in the Pallava territory. Mahendravarman claims in his Mandagappattu inscription that his shrine to Brahma, Isvara and Vishnu was made without using traditional materials such as brick, timber, metal and mortar. Mahendravarman's rock temples are usually the mandapa type with a pillared hall or the mandapa in front and a small shrine at the rear or sides.

II. Ellora – Ajanta and Mamallapuram

- Aurangabad district in Maharashtra is the centre of the groups of caves in Ellora and Ajanta. The Ellora group of caves are famous for sculptures while the Ajanta group of caves are famous for paintings. The dates of these temples range from c. 500 to c. 950 CE. But the activity of creating cave temples may have started two hundred years earlier. The first cave temple was created for the Ajivikas. Some of the temples are incomplete.

Ellora

- The rock-cut cave temples in Ellora are in 34 caves, carved in Charanadri hills. Without knowledge of trigonometry, structural engineering, and metallurgy, the Indian architects could not have created such exquisite edifices. The patrons of these caves range from the dynasties of Chalukyas to Rashtrakutas. The heterodox sects first set the trend of creating this model of temples. Later, orthodox sects adopted it as a medium of disseminating religious ideologies. These temples were linked to Ajivikas, Jainism, Buddhism, and Brahmanism. The earliest temples are modest and simple with no artistic claims. But, the later temples are elegant edifices.
- Mural paintings in Ellora are found in five caves, but only in the Kailash temple are they preserved. Some murals in Jain temples are well preserved. Not only animals, birds, trees, flowers are pictured elegantly, but human emotions and character - greed, love, compassion are depicted with professional skill.

The Ellora caves were designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983.

Heterodox I / Buddhist caves

- There are 12 Buddhist caves. Every Buddhist cave temple is of a unique model in architecture. Some are modest; while others are double-storeyed

or triple-storeyed. The plans of the caves demonstrate that these were designed as religious centres where monks stayed and the disciples were trained in religious treatises and scriptures. The main hall in the centre and the cubical rooms on either side were used as monasteries for teaching and preaching. This is attested by a figure, in cave number six, of man reading a manuscript on a folding table. The panels in these caves portray scenes from the life of the Buddha. Three different characters are indentified by the sculptures in the caves. The central figure is Buddha found in three sagacious postures: meditating (dhyana mudra), preaching (vyakhyana mudra) and touching the earth by index finger of right hand (bhumi-sparsha mudra). Goddesses Buddhist caves represented goddesses by way of the carved images of Tara, Khadiravanitara, Chunda, Vajradhat-vishvari, Mahamayuri, Sujata, Pandara and Bhrikuti. In cave twelve, a stout female figure is depicted wearing a waistband and headgear of a cobra. Khadrivani-tara also holds a cobra in one of her hands in the same cave.

Heterodox II / Jain caves

- A few Jain caves are also seen in Ellora group and are distinct from others. But they are incomplete. The figures of Yakshamatanga, Mahavira, Parsvanatha, and Gomatesvara are surrounded by attendants.

Caves of Vedic Religions

- The earliest caves in these groups are modest and simple. Mostly, they are square-shaped except Kailasanatha cave (cave-16), which is a massive monolithic structure, carved out of a single solid rock. This temple is said to represent Kailash, the abode of Lord Shiva. The temple is two storeyed and the Kailasa temple is on the first one. The lower storey has carved life-size elephants, which looks like they are holding up the temple on their backs. The temple exterior has richly carved windows, images of deities from the Hindu scriptures and Mithunas (amorous male and female figures). Most of the deities to the left of the temple entrance are Saivite and the deities to the right of the entrance are Vaishnavite. The courtyard has two huge pillars with the flagstaff and a Nandi mandapa. The wedding ceremony of Siva-Parvati, the attempted lifting of the Kailasa mountain by Ravana, and the destruction of Mahisasura by the goddess Durga are beautiful specimens. Weapons and musical instruments of the gods are also depicted through the panel sculptures. An interesting sculpture is that of the river goddess Gangamounted on a crocodile and the river goddess Yamuna mounted on a tortoise.

Ajanta

- The Ajanta caves are situated at a distance of about 100 km north of Aurangabad in Maharashtra. Totally 30 caves have been scooped out of volcanic rocks. Though chiefly famous for mural paintings, there are some sculptures too. The Hinayana sect of Buddhism started the excavation of caves in Ajanta. The patrons were the kings who ruled the Deccan plateau during the period c. 200 BCE to 200 CE. Inscriptions speak of the patrons who range from kings to merchants. First phase of the caves belong to the period from c. 200 BCE to 200 CE. The second phase started from c. 200 CE to 400 CE.

Paintings

- Ajanta caves are the repository of rich mural paintings. Paintings of the early phase are mostly in caves nine and ten, which belong to the period of the Satavahanas. The authors of Ajanta paintings followed ingenious techniques. First, they plastered the ridged surface of the volcanic rock. This plaster was made of vegetable fibres, paddy husk, rock-grit, and sand. This surface was overlaid with a thin layer of lime, ready to receive the pigment. Recently it was noticed that a stretch of cloth was reinforced on the surface for the application of pigment.
- The colours were extracted out of natural objects and minerals. The prominent colours used are black, red, white, yellow, blue and green. The aesthetic features of the paintings are garland, necklaces, headgear, earrings and the perfection of the movements of the human hands. The story panels are attractive and informative. Scenes from the Jataka stories and select episodes from the life history of Buddha are the central theme of the paintings.
- The celestial figures of Kinnaras, Vidyadharas and Gandharvas are depicted in paintings and sculptures. In the paintings of the later period Bodhisattva is shown in larger relief. Though a variety of human moods are presented, the dominant ones are of compassion and peace. Light and shadow are intelligently used. Human figures depicted in different colours have been interpreted to mean that they are from different ethnicities.

Architecture and Sculpture

- Architecturally, Ajanta caves are grouped into two: chaityas and viharas. The chaityas have vaulted ceilings with long halls. In the rear end of the

halls the statue of Buddha is seen. The sculpture of Buddha in the garbagriha is in the classical model. His image is the embodiment of benevolence. Heaviness is the general character of the sculptures. Sculptures of Yakshis and Hariti with children are significant. Bodhisattva carved out independently is another important feature. The popular Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara is depicted in painting and sculpture.

Mamallapuram

- The iconic Shore Temple of Pallavas at Mamallapuram (Mahabalipuram) was constructed during the reign of Rajasimha (700-728). The temple comprises three shrines, where the prominent ones are dedicated to Siva and Vishnu. The exterior wall of the shrine, dedicated to Vishnu, and the interior of the boundary wall are elaborately carved and sculpted. In southern India, this is one amongst the earliest and most important structural temples. Unlike other structures of the region, the Shore Temple is a five-storeyed rock-cut monolith. The monolithic vimanas are peculiar to Mamallapuram.
- The Rathas there are known as the Panchapandava Rathas. The Arjuna Ratha contains artistically carved sculptures of Siva, Vishnu, mithuna and dwarapala. The most exquisite of the five is the Dharmaraja Ratha, with a three-storied vimana and a square base. The Bhima Ratha is rectangular in plan and has beautiful sculptures of Harihara, Brahma, Vishnu, Skanda, Ardhanarisvara and Siva as Gangadhara.
- The most important piece of carving in Mamallapuram is the Descent of the Ganga (variously described as 'Bhagirata's Penance' or 'Arjuna's Penance'). The portrayal of puranic figures with popular local stories reveals the skill of the artists in blending various aspects of human and animal life. The sculptural panel in the Krishna mandapa, where village life with cows and cowherds is depicted with beauty and skill, is yet another artistic wonder to behold.

Conclusion

- Rock-cut temples were common in the Pallava period. The structural temples and the free-standing temples at Aihole and Badami in the Deccan and at Kanchipuram and Mamallapuram provide testimony to the architectural excellence achieved during the period.
- The Deccan style of sculpture shows a close affinity to Gupta art. Pallava sculpture owed a lot to the Buddhist tradition. Yet the sculpture and the

architecture of the Deccan and Tamil Nadu were not mere off shoots of the northern tradition. They are distinctly recognizable as different and have an originality of their own. The basic form was taken from the older tradition, but the end result unmistakably reflected its own native brilliance.

Devotional Movement and Literature

Tamil Devotionalism

- The emergence of regional polities in south India necessitated the establishment of states based on a certain ideology. In the context of the times religion alone could be the rallying point. The Pallavas of Kanchipuram in north and the Pandyas of Madurai in south of Tamil country patronised the religious movement of Bhakti, spearheaded by the elite and the wealthy merchant class. The local temple became the nucleus of this movement. Bhakti became the instrument to touch the hearts of people emotionally, and mobilize them.
- Bhakti cult as a religious movement opened a new chapter in the history of Tamil Nadu in the early medieval period. A strong wave of Tamil devotionalism swept the country from the sixth through the ninth centuries. The form was in hymns of the Nayanmars and the Azhwars. The saints of Saivism and Vaishnavism simplified the use of Tamil language with the application of music. They brought the local and regional ethos into the mainstream. Azhwars (totally 12) and Nayanmars (totally 63), came from different strata of Tamil society, such as artisans and cultivators. There were women saints as well like Andal, an Azhwar saint. The poet Karaikkal Ammaiyar (Tilakawathi), and the Pandya queen Mangayarkkarasiyar were prominent female Nayanmar saints. The refashioning of Saivism and Vaishnavism by the Bhakti saints effectively challenged Buddhism and Jainism. The influence of the Bhakti movement is still discernable in Tamil Nadu.

Sources

- Hymns of Thevaram corpus; Nalayiradivya prapandam; Periyapuranam; Tiru-thondarthogai; Manickavasakar's Tiruvasagam; Hymns engraved on the walls of temples. Miniature sculptures in the circumambulation of temples; paintings in the temples.

Bhakti as Ideology

- The term Bhakti has different connotations. It includes service, piety, faith and worship. But it also has an extended meaning. It is an enactment of emotion, aesthetics and sensitivity. Bhakti hymns have three major themes: First and foremost is the idea of devotion to a personal god. The second is a protest against orthodox Vedic Brahmanism and the exclusiveness of the Brahmans in their access to divine grace and salvation. The third is the outright condemnation of Jains and Buddhists as heretics.

Bhakti and the Arts

- Originating with folk dancing, the choreography of temple dancing became highly sophisticated and complex renderings of religious themes as apparent in the final form. From the Pallava period onwards trained groups of dancers were maintained by the more prosperous temples. Classic scenes from puranas, and itihisas were sculpted on the walls of the temples, in bronze and stone. Subsequently, artists were attached to the temples with state patronage in order to promote the fine arts like music, dance and others. Religious hymns set to music were popularized by the Tamil saints, and the singing of these hymns became a regular feature of the temple ritual. The veenawas probably the most frequently used instrument. Sometime around the fifth century CE, it was replaced in India by a lute with a pear-shaped body. Some two centuries later it took the form in which it is found today—a small gourd body with a long finger-board.

Azhwars and Nayanmars

Azhwars

- Azhwars composed moving hymns addressed to Vishnu. They were compiled in the Nalayira Divvityaprabandham by Nadamuni, at the end of the ninth century. Nadamuni who served as a priest at the Ranganatha temple in Srirangam is credited with compiling this work comprising four thousand poems. Periyalvar lived in Srivilliputtur during the reign of Pandyan king Maravarman Srivallabha in the ninth century. The themes are mostly Krishna's childhood. Krishna is the hero in Andal's hymns. Her songs convey her abiding love for Krishna. Nammalvar, from Kurugur (Alvar Tirunagari), now in Thoothukudi district, is considered the greatest amongst Alvars. Nammalvar authored four works that include the Tiruvaymoli. Vaishnava devotees believe that his hymns distil the essence of

the four Vedas. From the twelfth century, the Vaishnava hymns were the subject of elaborate and erudite commentaries.

Nayanmars

- The prominent Saiva poets include Tirunavukarasar (Appar), Tirugnanasambandar and Sundarar, and Manikkavasagar. Nambi Andar Nambi compiled their hymns into an anthology of eleven books, towards the end of tenth century. The first seven books, commonly known as Thevaram, contain the hymns of Sambandar (I to III), Appar (books IV to VI) and Sundarar (book VII) and Manikkavasagar (book VIII). Sekkilar's Periyapuram is the twelfth thirumurai of the Saiva canon. It is a hagiography of the sixty-three Nayanmars but contains an undercurrent of historical information as well. This collection of 12 books is named Panniru Tirumurai. The Periyapuram relates many stories about Nayanmars and the miraculous episodes in their lives.

Impact

- The devotional movement manifested itself as a great social transformation. The apogee of its movement was the coming up of temples that became prominent in the Tamil landscape. Temples, in later Chola times, became great social institutions. Politically, the Bhakti movement prompted the rulers to establish the settlements for the invited Brahmin groups from the north of the Indian sub-continent. Royal members, local administrative bodies and individuals initiated the calendrical celebrations and festivals to be conducted in the temples for which they started making endowments to meet their expenditure. It directly speeded up the emergence of state in Tamil country and indirectly integrated the different social groups into the religious fold through the instrumentality of temple institutions. Over the centuries the Bhakti movement spread all over India, and resulted in a transformation of Hinduism.

Adi Sankara (788-820)

- Bhakti or devotional movement incorporated different sections of the society into mainstream politics through the motto of service, surrender and sacrifice. Every layman could understand this motto because Bhakti literary canons were composed in Tamil in simple syntactic and semantic style. But, with the arrival of Adi Sankara Bhakti discourse began in Sanskrit in a philosophical mode.

Advent of Adi Sankara

- Against the background of the emerging pan-Indian need for an ideology to evolve statehood, a new doctrine was expounded by Sankara from Kaladi, Kerala. With his new doctrine of Maya (illusion) he held debates with his counterparts from different sects of religions and won over them. Fundamentally, Sankara's Advaita or non-dualism had its roots in Vedanta or Upanishadic philosophy. His attempts to root out Buddhism and to establish smarta (traditionalist) mathas resulted in the establishment of monasteries in different places viz., Sringeri, Dvaraka, Badrinath, and Puri, which were headed by Brahmin pontiffs. Sankara looked upon Saiva and Vaishnava worship as two equally important aspects of the Vedic religion. Monastic organization and preservation of Sanskrit scriptures were the two major thrusts of Sankara school.

Sri Ramanujar (1017-1138)

- Sri Ramanujar, a native of Sriperumpudur, underwent philosophical training under Yatavaprakasara in Kanchipuram in Sankara school of thought. The young Ramanujar did not agree with the teachings of his guru and was fascinated by the teachings of the Srirangam school of thought. Yamunacharya who once found him in Kanchi invited him to Srirangam. But as soon as he reached Sri Rangam, Yamunacharya passed away. Ramanujar was then declared the head of monastery in Srirangam. He took control of monastery, temple and united the sect with efforts at modifying the rituals in temples. Ramanuja was a teacher-reformer and a great organiser. He challenged the monist ideology of Adi Sankara and in his effort to widen the social base to include social groups other than Brahmins. Described as qualified monism, his philosophy of Visishtadvaita influenced many thinkers and developed into a separate tradition. A century after his death, there was a schism which developed into two separate schools under Vedanta Desikar and Manavala Mamuni. Ramanuja took interest in propagating the doctrine of Bhakti to social groups outside the varnashrama system. He influenced some temple authorities to permit the social groups outside the varnashrama system to enter into temple at least once a year. It is believed that due to the perceived threat to their religious faith and existence, Ramanujar had to leave his place of residence.

Conclusion

- The developments in south India that took place during this time facilitated the fusion of north Indian and south Indian traditions and paved the way

for the evolution of a composite Indian culture. The popularity of the bhakti cult in various parts of India was inaugurated by the Tamil devotional cult, indicating that 'maximum of common characteristics was beginning to merge in the various regions of the sub-continent'. Quoting M.G.S. Narayanan and Kesavan Veluthat, we can sum up the significance of bhakti ideology as 'the cementing force bringing together kings, Brahmin priests and the common people in a harmonious manner to strengthen the rule of the newly established Hindu kingdoms based on the caste system.'



11th Volume I
Chapter 11 – Later Cholas and Pandyas

Introduction

- The Cholas belonged to one of the three mighty dynasties that ruled the Tamizhcountry in the early historical period. Described as the Muvendhar in the Sangam literature, they were known for the valour and for their patronage of the Tamil language. Many songs were composed in high praise of their glories. However, after the Sangam period until about the ninth century CE, there are no records about them. Changes that overtook Tamizhagamin the intervening period brought about a major transformation of the region and enabled the emergence of big, long-lasting monarchical states. The Cholas were one among them.
- The river valleys facilitated the expansion of agriculture leading to the emergence of powerful kingdoms. The agricultural boom resulted in the production of considerable surplus of predominantly food grains. But this surplus in production resulted in unequal distribution of wealth. Society gradually became highly differentiated unlike in the earlier period. Institutions and ideas from the north of India, such as the temple and the religion it represented, emerged as a new force. The Bhakti movement led by the Nayanmars and Azhwars popularised the ideology and the faith they represented. Similarly, political ideas and institutions that originated in northern India soon found their way to the south as well. The cumulative result of all the new developments was the formation of a state, which in this case was a monarchy presided over by the descendants of the old Chola lineage.
- After the eclipse of the Chola kingdom, Pandyas, who began their rule in the Vaigai river basin at Madurai, wielded tremendous power during the 14th century. Like the Cholas, the Pandyas also realised substantial revenue from agriculture as well as from trade. Trade expansion overseas continued in the Pandya rule. Tirunelveli region, which was part of the Pandyan kingdom, exported grain, cotton, cotton cloth and bullocks to the Malabar coast and had trade contacts with West and Southeast Asia. Pandya kings produced a cultural heritage by synthesising the religious, cultural and political elements, and it differed totally with the assumed homogeneity of classical age of Guptas.

I CHOLAS

Origin of the Dynasty

- Records available to us after the Sangam Age show that the Cholas remained as subordinates to the Pallavas in the Kaveri region. The re-emergence of Cholas began with Vijayalaya (850–871 CE) conquering the Kaveri delta from Muttaraiyar. He built the city of Thanjavur and established the Chola kingdom in 850. Historians, therefore, refer to them as the Later Cholas or Imperial Cholas. In the copper plate documents of his successors that are available, the Cholas trace their ancestry to the Karikala, the most well-known of the Cholas of the Sangam age. In their genealogy an eponymous king 'Chola' is mentioned as the progenitor. The names of Killi, Koc-cengannan and Karikalan are mentioned as members of the line in these copper plates.
- Vijayalaya's illustrious successors starting from Parantaka I (907–955) to Kulothunga III (1163–1216) brought glory and fame to the Cholas. Parantaka Chola set the tone for expansion of the territory and broadened the base of its governance, and Rajaraja I (985–1014), the builder of the most beautiful Brihadishvarar temple at Thanjavur, and his son Rajendra I (1012–1044), whose naval operation extended as far as Sri Vijaya, consolidated the advances made by their predecessors and went on to establish Chola hegemony in peninsular India.

Sources

- More than 10,000 inscriptions engraved on copper and stone form the primary sources for the study of Chola history. The inscriptions mainly record the endowments and donations to temples made by rulers and other individuals. Land transactions and taxes (both collections and exemptions) form an important part of their content. Later-day inscriptions make a mention of the differentiation in society, giving an account of the castes and subcastes and thus providing us information on the social structure. Besides stone inscriptions, copper plates contain the royal orders. They also contain details of genealogy, wars, conquests, administrative divisions, local governance, land rights and various taxes levied. Literature also flourished under the Cholas. The important religious works in Tamil include codification of the Saivite and Vaishnavite canons. The quasi-historical literary works Kalingattupparani and Kulotungancholan Pillai Tamizh were composed during their reign. Muvarula, and Kamba Ramayanam, the great epic, belong to this period. Neminatam, Viracholiyam and Nannul are

noted grammatical works. Pandikkovai and Takkayagapparani are other important literary works composed during this period.

Territory

- Traditionally, the area under the Chola dynasty in the Tamizh country is known as Chonadu or Cholanadu. Their core kingdom was concentrated in the Kaveri-fed delta called Cholamandalam. This term came to be corrupted as "Coromandel" in the European languages, which often referred to the entire eastern coast of South India. The Chola kingdom expanded through military conquests to include present-day Pudukkottai– Ramanathapuram districts and the Kongu country of the present-day western Tamil Nadu. By the 11th century, through invasions, Cholas extended their territory to Tondainadu or the northern portion of the Tamizh country, Pandinadu or the southern portions of the Tamizh country, Gangaivadi or portions of southern Karnataka and Malaimandalam, the Kerala territory. The Cholas ventured overseas conquering the north-eastern parts of Sri Lanka, bringing it under their control and they called it Mummudi-Cholamandalam.

Empire Building

- Rajaraja I is the most celebrated of the Chola kings. He engaged in naval expeditions and emerged victorious in the West Coast, Sri Lanka and conquered the Maldives in the Indian Ocean. The military victory of Raja Raja I over Sri Lanka led to its northern and eastern portions coming under the direct control of the Chola authority. Rajaraja I appointed a Tamil chief to govern the annexed regions and ordered a temple to be built. It is locally called Siva Devale (shrine of Siva). The Chola official appointed in Sri Lanka built a temple in a place called Mahatitta. The temple is called Rajarajesvara.
- Even as he was alive, Rajaraja I appointed his son, Rajendra I, as his heir apparent. For two years, they jointly ruled the Chola kingdom. Rajendra I took part in the military campaigns of his father, attacking the Western Chalukyas. Consequently, the boundary of the Chola Empire extended up to Tungabhadra river. When Rajaraja I attacked Madurai, the Pandyas escaped with their crown and royal jewels and took shelter in Sri Lanka. Thereupon, Rajendra I conquered Sri Lanka and confiscated the Pandya crown and other royal belongings.
- Rajendra I conducted the most striking military exploit after his accession in 1023 by his expedition to northern India. He led the expedition up to the Godavari river and asked his general to continue beyond that place. The

Gangaikonda Chozhapuram temple was built to commemorate his victories in North India.

- During the Chola reign, the naval achievements of the Tamils reached its peak. The Cholas controlled both the Coromandel and Malabar coasts. The Chola navy often ventured into Bay of Bengal for some decades. Rajendra's naval operation was directed against Sri Vijaya. Sri Vijaya kingdom (southern Sumatra) was one of the prominent maritime and commercial states that flourished from c. 700 to c. 1300 in South-east Asia. Similarly, Kheda (Kadaram), feudatory kingdom under Sri Vijaya, was also conquered by Rajendra.
- The Chola invasions of Western Chalukya Empire, undertaken in 1003 by Rajaraja I and 1009 by Rajendra I, were also successful. Rajendra sent his son to ransack and ravage its capital Kalayani. The dwarapala (door keeper) image he brought from Kalayani was installed at the Darasuram temple near Kumbhakonam, which can be seen even today. Rajendra assumed the titles such as Mudikonda Cholan (the crowned Chola), Gangaikondan (conqueror of the Ganges), Kadaramkondan (conqueror of Kadaram) and Pandita Cholan (scholarly Cholan).

Chola Administration

King

- Historians have debated the nature of the Chola state. Clearly, it was presided over by a hereditary monarchy. The king is presented in glowing terms in the literature and inscriptions of the period. Venerated on par with god. The kings were invariably addressed as peruman or perumagan (big man), ulagudaiyaperumal (the lord of the world) and ulagudaiyanayanar (the lord of the world). Later, they adopted the titles such as Chakkaravarti (emperor) and Tiribhuvana Chakkaravarti (emperor of three worlds). At the time of coronation, it was a practice to add the suffix deva to the name of the crowned kings. The kings drew legitimacy by claiming that they were a comrade of god (thambiran thozhar).
- Chola rulers appointed Brahmins as spiritual preceptors or rajagurus (the kingdom's guide). Rajaraja I and Rajendra I mention the names of rajagurus and Sarva-sivas in their inscriptions. Patronising Brahmins was seen to enhance their prestige and legitimacy. Chola kings therefore granted huge estates of land to Brahmins as brahmadeyams and caturvedimangalams (pronounced chatur-vedi-mangalam).

Provinces

- As mentioned earlier, the territories of the Chola state had been expanding steadily even from the time of Vijayalaya. At the time of conquest, these areas were under the control of minor chiefs described by historians as “feudatories”. Rajaraja I integrated these territories and appointed “viceroys” in these regions: Chola-Pandyain Pandinadu, Chola-Lankeswara in Sri Lanka, which was renamed as Mummudicholamandalam, and Chola-Ganga in the Gangavadi region of southern Karnataka. In other less prominent regions, the territories of chiefs such as the Irukkuvels, Ilangovels or Mazhavas or Banas were made part of the Chola state and their chiefs were inducted into the state system as its functionaries.

Army

- Cholas maintained a well-organised army. The army consisted of three conventional divisions: infantry, cavalry (kudirai sevagar) and the elephant corps (anaiyatkal). There were also bowmen (villaligal), sword-bearers (valilar) and spearmen (konduvar). Two types of ranks in the army are also mentioned: the upper and the lower (perundanam and cirudanam). According to a Chinese geographer of the 13th century, the Chola army owned “sixty thousand war elephants that, when fighting, carried on their backs houses, and these houses are full of soldiers who shoot arrows at long range, and fight with spears at close quarters”. The overseas exploits of the Cholas are well known and it led historians to refer to their navy “with numberless ships”. Generally, soldiers enjoyed padaipparru (military holding) rights. Cantonments, which were established in the capital city, were known as padaividu. Military outposts in the conquered territory were called nilaipadai. The captain of a regiment was known as nayagam and later he assumed the title of padaimudali. The commander-in-chief was senapati and dandanayagam.

Local Organisation

- Various locality groups functioned actively in the Chola period. These were bodies such as Urar, Sabhaiyar, Nagarattar and Nattar. They were relatively autonomous organisations of the respective groups. They are considered the building blocks using which the edifice of the Chola state was built.

Urar

- With the expansion of agriculture, numerous peasant settlements came up in the countryside. They were known as ur. The urar, who were landholders in the village, acted as spokesmen in the ur. The urar were entrusted with the upkeep of temples, maintenance of the tanks and managing the water stored in them. They also discharged administrative functions of the state such as collection of revenue, maintenance of law and order, and obeying the king's orders.

Sabhaiyaar

- If the ur was a settlement of land holders, largely consisting of peasants of vellanvagai, the brahmadeya was a Brahmin settlement. The Sabha looked after the affairs of the settlement, including those of the temples at the core of brahmadeya and its assets. It was also responsible for maintaining irrigation tanks attached to the temple lands. Like the ur, the Sabha also functioned as the agents of the state in carrying out administrative, fiscal and judicial functions.

Nagarattaar

- Nagaram was a settlement of traders. However, skilled artisans engaged in masonry, ironsmithing, goldsmithing, weaving and pottery also occupied the settlement. It was represented by the Nagarattaar, who regulated their association with temples, which needed their financial assistance. In the reign of Rajaraja I, Mamallapuram was administered by a body called Maanagaram. Local goods were exchanged in nagarams. These goods included silk, porcelain, camphor, cloves, sandalwood and cardamom according to Chinese accounts. In order to promote trade, inland and sea way, Kulotunga revoked the collection of toll fee (sungam). Hence he was conferred the title Sungam Thavirtha Chozhan.

Nattar

- Nadu was a grouping of several urs, excluding brahmadeyas formed around irrigation sources such as canals and tanks. Nattar (literally those belonging to the nadu) were the assembly of landholders of vellanvagai villages (urs) in nadu. Nattar functioned as pillars of the state structure under the Cholas. They discharged many of the administrative, fiscal and judicial responsibilities of the state. They held hereditary land rights and were responsible for remitting the tax from the respective nadu to the state. Landholders of the nadu held the honorific titles such as asudaiyan (possessor of land), araiyan (leader) and kilavan (headman). There were

functionaries such as the naattukanakku and nattuviyavan, recording the proceedings of the Nattar.

Economy

Agriculture

- One of the major developments in this period was the expansion of agriculture. People settled in fertile river valleys, and even in areas where there were no rivers, and arrangements were made for irrigation by digging tanks, wells and canals. This led to the production of food grain surplus. Society got differentiated in a big way. The Chola state collected land tax out of the agrarian surplus for its revenue. There was an elaborate "department of land revenue" known as puravuvvari-tinaikkalam, with its chief called puravuvvari-tinaikkalanayagam.

Land Revenue and Survey

- For the purposes of assessing tax, the Cholas undertook extensive land surveys and revenue settlements. Rajaraja I (1001), Kulotunga I (1086) and Kulotunga III (1226) appointed people for land survey so that the land could be classified and assessed for the purposes of taxation. Like other functionaries of the state, the surveyors of the land called naduvagaiseykira too hailed from the landholding communities. Various units of the land measurement such as kuli, ma, veli, patti, padagam, etc. are known, with local variations. Generally, taxes were collected in different forms. The taxes collected included irai, kanikadan, iraikattina-kanikadan and kadami. An important category of tax was kudimai. Kudimai was paid by the cultivating tenants to the government and to the landlords, the bearers of honorific titles such as udaiyan, araiyan and kilavar. The tax rates were fixed depending on the fertility of the soil and the status of the landholder. Opati were levied and collected by the king and local chiefs. Temples and Brahmins were exempted from paying the taxes. The tax paid in kind was referred to as iraikattina-nellu. All these were mostly realised from the Kavery delta but not widely in the outskirts of the kingdom. At the ur (village) level, urar (village assembly) were responsible for collecting the taxes and remitting them to the government. At the nadu level, the nattar were responsible for remitting taxes.

Local Elections and Uttaramerur Inscriptions

Two inscriptions (919 and 921) from a Brahmadeya (tax-free land gifted to Brahamans) called Uttaramerur (historically called Uttaramallur Caturvedimangalam) give details of the process of electing members to various committees that administered the affairs of a Brahmin settlement. This village was divided into 30 wards. One member was to be elected from each ward. These members would become members of different committees: public works committee, tank committee, garden committee, famine committee and gold committee. The prescribed qualifications for becoming a ward member were clearly spelt out. A male, above 35 but below 75, having a share of property and a house of his own, with knowledge of Vedas and bhasyas was considered eligible. The names of qualified candidates from each ward were written on the palm-leaf slips and put into a pot (kudavolai). The eldest of the assembly engaged a boy to pull out one slip and would read the name of the person selected.

Irrigation

- Cholas undertook measures to improve the irrigation system that was in practice. As the state was drawing most of its revenue from agriculture, the Cholas focused their efforts on managing water resources. Vativaykkal, a criss-cross channel, is a traditional way of harnessing rain water in the Kavery delta. Vati runs in the north-south direction while vaykkal runs in the east-west direction. Technically, vati is a drainage channel and a vaykkal is a supply channel. The water running through vaykkal to the field was to be drained out to vati and to another vaykkal. Rain water would flow from where the natural canal started. Many irrigation canals are modifications of such natural canals. The harnessed water was utilised alternately through vati and vaykkal. Here the mechanism designed was such that water was distributed to the parcelled out lands in sequel.
- Many canals were named after the kings, queens and gods. Some examples of the names are Uttamacholavaykkal, Panca-vanamadevi-vaykkal and Ganavathy-vaykkal. Ur-vaykkal was owned jointly by the landowners. The nadu level vaykkal was referred to as nattu-vaykkal. The turn system was practiced for distributing the water. Chola inscriptions list some big size irrigation tanks such as Cholavaridhi, Kaliyaneri, Vairamegatataka created by the Pallavas, Bahur big tank and Rajendra Cholaperiyaeri. For the periodical or seasonal maintenance and repair of irrigation works, conscripted labour was used.

Paddy as tax was collected by a unit called kalam (28 kg). Rajaraja I standardised the collection of tax. He collected 100 kalam from the land of one veli (about 6.5 acres), the standard veli being variable according to fertility of the soil and the number of crops raised.

The irrigation work done by RajendraChola I at Gangaikonda Chozhapuram was an embankment of solid masonry 16 miles long. Rajendra described it as his jalamayam jayasthambham, meaning "pillar of victory in water". The Arab traveller Alberuni visited the place a hundred years later. On seeing them he was wonder-struck and said: "Our people, when they see them, wonder at them, and are unable to describe them, much less construct anything like them", records Jawaharlal Nehru in The Glimpses of World History.

Water Management

- Different kinds of water rights were assigned. These rights regulated the share of water from the tanks and wells; it also entailed the right of deepening and broadening the channels and repairing the irrigation system. The allotment of water is described as nirkkiintavaru (share of water as allotted). The water was released through kumizh (sluice) or talaivay (head-channel). Royal orders warned the people against the violation of water rights and encroachment of water resources gifted to the brahmadeya settlements. Commonly owned village tank was called enkalkulam (our tank). Land transaction in the form of donation and endowment were accompanied by water rights as well. For the periodical and seasonal maintenance and repair of the irrigation tanks, rendering free labour was in practice. Vetti and amanji were the forms of free labour related to public works at the village level.
- Village assemblies under the Cholas collected a tax called eriyam, which was utilised for repairing irrigation tanks. Sometimes local leaders like araiyan repaired and renovated irrigation tanks destroyed in a storm. There were instances of the water from a tank shared by villagers and the temples. Special groups known as talaivayar, talaivay-chanrar and eri-araiyarkal were in charge of releasing the water through the head channel and sluice from the rivers or tanks. A group of people who were in charge of kulam was called kulattar. In later period, temples were entrusted with the upkeep of the irrigation sources.

Society and its Structure

- In the predominantly agrarian society prevailing during the Chola period, landholding was the prime determinant of social status and hierarchy. The Brahmin landholders called brahmadeya-kilavars at the top brahmadeya settlements with tax exemption were created, displacing (kudi neekki) the local peasants. Temples were gifted land known as devadana, which were exempted from tax, as in brahmadeyams. The temples became the hub of several activities during this period.
- The landholders of vellanvagai villages were placed next in the social hierarchy. Ulukudi (tenants) could not own land but had to cultivate the lands of Brahmins and holders of vellanvagai villages. While landholders retained melvaram (major share in harvest), the ulukudi got kizh varam (lower share). Labourers (paniceymakkal) and slaves (adimaigal) stayed at the bottom of social hierarchy.
- Outside the world of agrarian society were the armed men, artisans and traders. There are documents that make mention of cattle-keepers who apparently constituted a considerable section of the population. There certainly were tribals and forest-dwellers, about whom our knowledge is scanty.

Religion

- Puranic Hinduism, represented by the worship of Siva, Vishnu and associated deities, had become popular by the time of the Cholas. A large number of temples dedicated to these deities were built. The temples were provided vast areas of land and a considerable section of population came under their influence.
- Chola rulers were ardent Saivites. Parantaka I and Uttama Chola (907–970) made provisions and gifted the lands to promote religion. In a fresco painting in which Rajaraja I is portrayed with his wives worshipping Lord Siva in Thanjavur Brihadishvarar temple. One of the titles of Rajaraja I is Siva Pada Sekaran, i.e. one who clutches the foot of Lord Siva.
- Siva was the preeminent god for the Cholas and he was represented in two forms. The iconic form of Siva was Lingodhbhava, and the Nataraja idol was the human form. A trace of the locations of temple centres in Kavery delta could provide us the map of an agrarian-political geography spatially and temporally. The repeated representation of Tripurantaka (the destroyer of three mythical cities of asura) form of Siva in sculpture and painting gave him a warrior aspect and helped in gaining legitimacy for the ruler.

- The representation of Nataraja or Adal Vallan (king of dance) in the form of idol was the motif of Tamil music, dance and drama with hymns composed by Nayanmars, the Saiva saints. These hymns sang the praise of Siva and extolled the deeds of god. They held great appeal to the devotees from different social sections.
- The Saiva canon, the Thirumurai, was codified after it was recovered by Nambi Andar Nambi. Oduvars and Padikam Paduvars were appointed to sing in the temples to recite Thirumurai daily in the temple premises. The singers of hymns were known as vinnappamseivar. The players of percussion instruments also were appointed. Girls were dedicated for the service of god. Musicians and dance masters also were appointed to train them.
- A highly evolved philosophical system called Saiva Siddhanta was founded during this period. The foundational text of this philosophy, Sivagnana Bodham, was composed by Meikandar. Fourteen texts, collectively called Saiva Siddhantha Sastram, form the core of this philosophy. In later times, many Saiva monasteries emerged and expounded this philosophy.
- The devotion of Chola rulers to Saivism became a strong passion in due course of time. Kulothunga II, for instance, exhibited such a trait. The theological tussle was fierce between state religion, Saivism, and Vaishnavism so much so that Vaishnavism was sidelined to the extent of its apostle Sri Ramanujar leaving the Chola country for Melkote in Karnataka.

Builders of Temples

- The Cholas built and patronised innumerable temples. The royal temples in Thanjavur, Gangaikonda Chozhapuram and Darasuram are the repositories of architecture, sculpture, paintings and iconography of the Chola arts. The temples became the hub of social, economic, cultural and political activities. The paraphernalia of the temples including temple officials, dancers, musicians, singers, players of musical instruments and their masersheaded by the priests worshipping the gods reflect the royal court. In the initial stages, architecturally, the Chola temples are simple and modest. Sepulchral temples (pallip-padai) also were built where the kings were buried.

Temple as a Social Institution

- Chola temples became the arena of social celebrations and functioned as social institutions. They became the hub of societal space in organising social, political, economic and cultural activities. The prime temple officials were koyirramar, koyilkanakku (temple accountant), devakanmi (agent of god), srivaisnavar, cantesar (temple manager) and others. They promoted the development of learning, dance, music, painting and drama. A play called Rajarajanatakam, based on the life of Rajaraja I, was performed in the Thanjavur temple. The festivals of Chithirai Tiruvizha, Kartigai and Aippasivizha were celebrated. It is said that singing hymns in temple premises promoted oral literacy. Traditional dance items like kudak-kuthu and sakkaik-kuthu were portrayed in the form of sculptures and paintings in the temples in Kilapalivur, Tiruvorriyur. Nirutya and karna poses are shown in sculptural forms in the Thanjavur big temple. Traditional Tamil musical instruments also were portrayed in this way.
- The pastoral group, as a mark of devotion, donated livestock of specified number to the temples so as to maintain the perpetual lamp to be lit in the temple. To record their gift, their names were engraved in the inscriptions of royal temple. Thus, they earned royal affinity. The oil pressers called Sankarapadiyar supplied oil to the temple and became part of the functionaries of the temples. In times of famine, some of them sold themselves to the temple as servants.
- Temples functioned as banks by advancing loans and by purchasing and receiving endowments and donations. They also became educational centres as training was imparted in Vedas, music and the arts. Sculpture and metal work too were promoted. Temple accounts were audited and the auditor was called koyilkanakku.

Gangaikonda Chozhapuram

- In commemoration of his victory in North India, Rajendra I built Gangaikonda Chozhapuram on the model of Brihadisvarar temple in Thanjavur. He built an irrigation tank called Cholagangam near the capital called Jala-stambha (water-pillar). It became the coronation centre, which was a Chola landmark. The sculptures of Ardhanariswarar, Durga, Vishnu, Surya, Cantesa Anugrahamurty are the best pieces of the idols of gods placed in the niches of the outer wall of sanctum.

Brihadishvarar Temple

The Grand Temple of Thanjavur, known as Rajarajisvaram and Brihadishvarar Temple, stands as an outstanding example of Chola architecture, painting, sculpture and iconography. This temple greatly legitimised Rajaraja's polity. The sanctum with a vimana of 190 feet is capped with a stone weighing 80 tons. The figures of Lakshmi, Vishnu, Ardhanarisvara and Bikshadana, a mendicant form of Siva, on the outer walls of the sanctum are some unique features. The fresco paintings and the miniature sculptures of the scenes from puranas and epics in the temple walls reveal the religious ideology of the Chola rulers. Dancing girls, musicians and music masters were selected from different settlements cutting across the nadu divisions and were attached to this temple. Singers had been appointed to recite the bhakti hymns in the temple premises.

Darasuram Temple

- Darasuram Temple, built by Rajaraja II (1146–1172), is yet another important contribution of the Cholas to temple architecture. Incidents from the Periyapuram, in the form of miniatures, are depicted on the base of the garbhagriha (sanctum sanctorum) wall of the temple.

Trade

- Increased production in agriculture as well as artisanal activities led to trade and growing exchange of goods for goods. This trade activity involved the notions of price, profit and market, which were not known in South India in the earlier period. Two guildlike groups are known: anjuvannattar and manigramattar. Anjuvannattar comprised West Asians, including Jews, Christians and Muslims. They were maritime traders and were settled all along the port towns of the west coast. It is said that manigramattar were busy with trade in the hinterland. They settled in interior towns like Kodumbalur,
- Uraiyur, Kovilpatti, Piranmalai and others. In due course, both groups merged and got incorporated under the banner of ainutruvar, disai-ayirattu-ainutruvar and valanciya functioning through the head guild in Ayyavole in Karnataka. This ainutruvar guild controlled the maritime trade covering South-east Asian countries. Munai-santai (Pudukkottai), Mylapore and Tiruvotriyur (Chennai), Nagapattinam, Vishakapattinam and Krishnapattinam (south Nellore) became the centres of the maritime trade groups. In the interior, goods were carried on pack animals and boat. The items exported from the Chola land were sandalwood, ebony, condiments, precious gems, pepper, oil, paddy, grains and salt. Imports included camphor, copper, tin, mercury and etc. Traders also took interest in

irrigation affairs. Valanciyar, a group of traders, once dug an irrigation tank called ainutruvapperari in Pudukottai.

Cholas as Patrons of Learning

- Chola kings were great patrons of learning who lavished support on Sanskrit education by instituting charities. From the inscriptions, we see that literacy skills were widespread. The great literary works Kamba Ramayanam and Periyapuram belong to this period. Rajendra I established a Vedic college at Ennayiram (South Arcot district). There were 340 students in this Vaishnava centre, learning the Vedas, Grammar and Vedanta under 14 teachers. This example was later followed by his successors and, as a result, two more such colleges were founded, at Tribuvani near Pondicherry in 1048 and the other at Tirumukudal, Chengalpattu district, in 1067. In Sanskrit centres, subjects like Vedas, Sanskrit grammar, religion and philosophies were taught. Remuneration was given to teachers in land as service tenure.

The End of Chola Rule

- The Chola dynasty was paramount in South India from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries. By the end of the twelfth century, local chiefs began to grow in prominence, which weakened the centre. With frequent invasions of Pandyas, the once mighty empire, was reduced to the status of a dependent on the far stronger Hoysalas. In 1264, the Pandyan ruler, Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan I, sacked the Chola's capital of Gangaikonda Chozhapuram. With Kanchipuram lost earlier to the Telugu Cholas, the remaining Chola territories passed into the hands of the Pandyan king. 1279 marks the end of Chola dynasty when King Maravarman Kulasekara Pandyan I defeated the last king Rajendra Chola III and established the rule by Pandyas.

Sambuvarayars

Sambuvarayars were chieftains in the North Arcot and Chengalpattu regions during the reign of Chola kings, Rajathiraja and Kulothunga III. Though they were feudatories, they were found fighting sometimes on the side of their overlords and occasionally against them also. From the late 13th century to the end of Pandya ascendancy, they wielded power along the Palar river region. The kingdom was called Raja Ghambira Rajyam and the capital was in Padaividu. Inscriptions of Vira Chola Sambavarayan (1314–1315CE) have been found. Sambuvarayars assumed high titles such as Sakalaloka Chakravartin Venru Mankonda Sambuvarayan (1322–1323 CE) and Sakalaloka Chakravartin Rajanarayan Sambuvarayan (1337–1338 CE). The latter who ruled for 20 years

was overthrown by Kumarakampana of Vijayanagar. It is after this campaign that Kumarakampana went further south, as far as Madurai, where he vanquished the Sultan of Madurai in a battle.

II PANDYAS

- Pandyas were one of the muvendars that ruled the southern part of India, though intermittently, until the pre-modern times. Ashoka, in his inscriptions, refers to Cholas, Cheras, Pandyas and Satyaputras as peoples of South India. Korkai, a town historically associated with pearl fisheries, is believed to have been their early capital and port. They moved to Madurai later.
- Many early Tamil inscriptions of Pandyas have been found in Madurai and its surroundings. Madurai is mentioned as Matirai in these Tamil inscriptions, whereas Tamil classics refer to the city as Kudal, which means assemblage. In one of the recently discovered Tamil inscriptions from Puliman Kompai, a village in Pandya territory, Kudal is mentioned. In Pattinappalai and Maduraikkanchi, Koodal is mentioned as the capital city of Pandyas. It finds mention in Ettuthogai (Eight Anthologies) also. So, historically Madurai and Kudal have been concurrently used.

Sources

- The history of the Pandyas of the Sangam period, circa third century BCE to third century CE, has been reconstructed from various sources such as megalithic burials, inscriptions in Tamil brahmi, and the Tamil poems of the Sangam literature. The Pandyas established their supremacy in South Tamil Nadu by the end of the sixth century CE. A few copper plates form the source of our definite knowledge of the Pandyas from the seventh to the ninth century. The Velvikkudi grant of Nedunjadayan is the most important among them. Copper plates inform the essence of royal orders, genealogical list of the kings, their victory over the enemies, endowments and donations they made to the temples and the Brahmins. Rock inscriptions give information about the authors of rock-cut cave temples, irrigation tanks and canals. Accounts of travellers such as Marco Polo, Wassaff and Ibn-Batuta are useful to know about political and socio-cultural developments of this period. Madurai Tala Varalaru, Pandik Kovai and Madurai Tiruppanimalai provide information about the Pandyas of Madurai of later period.

- Though pre-Pallavan literary works do not speak of Sangam as an academy, the term Sangam occurs in Iraiyanar Akapporul of late seventh or eighth century CE. The term Sangam, which means an academy, is used in late medieval literary works like Periya Puranam and Tiruvilaiyadal Puranam.

Seethalai Saththamar, the author of epic Manimekalai, hailed from Madurai.

Territory

- The territory of Pandyas is called Pandymandalam, Thenmandalam or Pandynadu, which lay in the rocky, hilly regions and mountain ranges except the areas fed by the rivers Vaigai and Tamiraparni. River Vellar running across Pudukkottai region had been demarcated as the northern border of the Pandya country, while Indian Ocean was its southern border. The Western Ghats remained the border of the west while the Bay of Bengal formed the eastern border.

Pandya Revival (600–920)

- The revival of the Pandyas seems to have taken place after the disappearance of the Kalabhras. Once hill tribes, the Kalabhras had soon taken to a settled life, extending their patronage to Buddhists and Jains. Kadunkon, who recovered Pandya territory from the Kalabhras according to copper plates, was succeeded by two others. Of them, Sendan possessed warlike qualities and his title Vanavan is suggestive of his conquest of Cheras. The next one, Arikesari Maravarman (624–674), an illustrious early Pandya, ascended the throne in 642, according to a Vaigai river bed inscription. He was a contemporary of Mahendravarman I and Narsimhavarman I. Inscriptions and copper plates praise his victory over his counterparts such as Cheras, Cholas, Pallavas and Sinhalese. Arikesari is identified with Kun Pandian, the persecutor of Jains.

Saivite saint Thirugnanasambandar converted Arikesari from Jainism to Saivism.

- After his two successors, Kochadayan Ranadhira (700–730) and Maravarman Rajasimha I (730–765), came Jatila Parantaka Nedunjadayn (Varaguna I) (756–815), the donor of the Velvikkudi plates. He was also known as the greatest of his dynasty and successfully handled the Pallavas and the Cheras. He expanded the Pandya territory into Thanjavur, Tiruchirappalli, Salem and Coimbatore districts. He is also credited with building several Siva and Vishnu temples. The next king Srimara

Srivallabha (815–862) invaded Ceylon and maintained his authority. However, he was subsequently defeated by Pallava Nandivarman III (846–869). He was followed by Varaguna II who was defeated by Aparajita Pallava (885–903) at Sripurmbiyam. His successors, Parantaka Viranarayana and Rajasimha II, could not stand up to the rising Chola dynasty under Parantaka I. Parantaka I defeated the Pandya king Rajasimha II who fled the country in 920CE.

Rise of Pandyas Again (1190–1310)

- In the wake of the vacuum in Chola state in the last quarter of 12th century after the demise of Adhi Rajendra, Chola viceroyalty became weak in the Pandya country. Taking advantage of this development, Pandya chieftains tried to assert and rule independently. Sri Vallaba Pandyan fought Rajaraja II and lost his son in the battle. Using this situation, the five Pandyas waged a war against Kulotunga I (1070–1120) and were defeated. In 1190, Sadayavarman Srivallabhan, at the behest of Kulotunga I, started ruling the Pandya territory. He was anointed in Madurai with sceptre and throne. To commemorate his coronation, he converted a peasant settlement Sundaracholapuram as Sundarachola Chaturvedimangalam, a taxexempted village for Brahmins.
- After the decline of the Cholas, Pandya kingdom became the leading Tamildynasty in the thirteenth century. Madurai was their capital. Kayal was their great port. Marco Polo, the famous traveller from Venice, visited Kayal twice, in 1288 and in 1293. He tells us that this port town was full of ships from Arabia and China and bustling with business activities.

Marco Polo, a Venetian (Italy) traveller who visited Pandya country lauded the king for fair administration and generous hospitality for foreign merchants. In his travel account, he also records the incidents of sati and the polygamy practiced by the kings.

Sadaiyavarman Sundarapandyan

- The illustrious ruler of the second Pandya kingdom was Sadaiyavarman (Jatavarman) Sundarapandyan (1251– 1268), who not only brought the entire Tamil Nadu under his rule, but also exercised his authority up to Nellore in Andhra. Under his reign, the Pandya state reached its zenith, keeping the Hoysalas in check. Under many of his inscriptions, he is eulogized. Sundarapandyan conquered the Chera ruler, the chief of Malanadu, and extracted a tribute from him. The decline of the Chola state emboldened the Boja king of Malwa region Vira Someshwara to challenge Sundarapandyan,

who in a war at Kannanur defeated him. Sundarapandian plundered his territory. He put Sendamangalam under siege. After defeating the Kadava chief, who ruled from Cuddalore and wielded power in northern Tamil Nadu, Sundarapandyan demanded tribute. He captured the western region and the area that lay between presentday Arcot and Salem. After killing the king of Kanchipuram in a battle, Pandyas took his territory. But, by submitting to the Pandyas, the brother of the slain king got back Kanchipuram and agreed to pay tribute. Along with him, there were two or three co-regents who ruled simultaneously: Vikrama Pandyan and Vira Pandyan. A record of Vira Pandyan (1253–1256) states that he took Eelam (Ceylon), Kongu and the Chola mandalam (Chola country).

Maravarman Kulasekharan

- After Sundarapandyan, Maravarman Kulasekharan ruled successfully for a period of 40 years, giving the country peace and prosperity. We have authentic records about the last phase of his reign. He ascended the throne in 1268 and ruled till 1312. He had two sons, and in 1302, the accession of the elder son, Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan III, as co-regent took place. The king's appointment of Sundarapandyan as a co-regent provoked the other son Vira Pandyan and so he killed his father Maravarman Kulasekharan. In the civil war that ensued, Vira Pandyan won and became firmly established in his kingdom. The other son, Sundara Pandyan, fled to Delhi and took refuge under the protection of Alauddin Khalji. This turn of events provided an opening for the invasion of Malik Kafur.

Invasion of Malik Kafur

- When Malik Kafur arrived in Madurai in 1311, he found the city empty and Vira Pandyan had already fled. In Amir Khusru's estimate, 512 elephants, 5,000 horses along with 500 mounds of jewel of diamonds, pearls, emeralds and rubies are said to have been taken by Malik Kafur. The Madurai temple was desecrated and an enormous amount of wealth was looted. The wealth he carried was later used in Delhi by Alauddin Khalji, who had then taken over the throne, to wean away the notables in the court to his side against other claimants.
- After Malik Kafur's invasion, the Pandyan kingdom came to be divided among a number of the main rulers in the Pandya's family. In Madurai, a Muslim state subordinate to the Delhi Sultan came to be established and continued until 1335 CE when the Muslim Governor of Madurai Jalaluddin Asan Shah threw off his allegiance and declared himself independent.

State

- Pandya kings preferred Madurai as their capital. Madurai has been popularly venerated as Kudal and Tamil Kelukudal. The kings are traditionally revered as Kudalkon, Kudal Nagar Kavalan, Madurapura Paramesvaran. The titles of the early Pandyas are: Pandiyatirasan, Pandiya Maharasan, Mannar Mannan, Avaniba Sekaran, Eka Viran, Sakalapuvana Chakkaravarti and others. Titles of the later Pandyas in Sanskrit include Kodanda Raman, Kolakalan, Puvanekaviran, and Kaliyuga Raman. Titles in chaste Tamil are Sembian, Vanavan, Thennavan and others. The Pandyas derived military advantage over their neighbours by means of their horses, which they imported through their connection to a wider Arab commercial and cultural world.

Palace and Couch

- Royal palaces were called Tirumaligai and Manaparanan Tirumaligai. Kings, seated on a royal couch, exercised the power. The naming of couches after the local chiefs attests to the legitimacy of overlordship of the kings. The prominent names of such couches are Munaiya Daraiyan, Pandiya Daraiyan and Kalinkat Traiyan. The king issued royal order orally while majestically seated on the couches. It was documented by royal scribe called Tirumantira Olai.

Royal Officials

- A band of officials executed the royal orders. The prime minister was called uttaramantri. The historical personalities like Manickavasagar, Kulaciraiyar and Marankari worked as ministers. The royal secretariat was known as Eluttu Mandapam. Akapparivara Mudalikal were the personal attendants of the kings. The most respected officials were Maran Eyinan, Sattan Ganapathy, Enathi Sattan, Tira Tiran, Murthi Eyinan and others. The titles of military commanders were Palli Velan, Parantakan Pallivelan, Maran Adittan and Tennavan Tamizhavel.

Political Divisions

- Pandya Mandalam or Pandya Nadu consisted of many valanadus, which, in turn, were divided into many nadus and kurrams. The administrative authorities of nadus were the nattars. Nadu and kurram contained settlements, viz., mangalam, nagaram, ur and kudi, which were inhabited by different social groups. A unique political division in Pandya Mandalam

is Kulakkil, i.e. area under irrigation tank. For instance, Madurai is described in an inscription as Madakkulakkil Madurai.

- The duty of the nattar was to assess the qualities of land under cultivation and levy taxes. In surveying the lands, the officials used rods of 14 and 24 feet. After the measurement, the authorities donated the lands. Salabogam land was assigned to Brahmins. The land assigned to ironsmiths was called tattarkani; for carpenters, it was known as taccu-maniyam. Bhattavriutti is the land donated for Brahmin group for imparting education.

Administration and Religion:

Seventh to Ninth Centuries

- An inscription from Manur (Tirunelveli district), dating to 800, provides an account of village administration. It looks similar to Chola's local governance, which included village assemblies and committees. Both civil and military powers were vested in the same person. The Pandya kings of the period supported and promoted Tamil and Sanskrit. The great Saiva and Vaishnava saints contributed to the growth of Tamil literature. The period was marked by intense religious tussles. The rise of the Bhakti movement invited heterodox scholars for debate. Many instances of the defeat of Buddhism and Jainism in such debates are mentioned in Bhakti literature.

Economy

Society

- Kings and local chiefs created Brahmin settlements called Mangalam or Chaturvedimangalam with irrigation facilities. These settlements were given royal names and names of the deities. Influential Brahmins had honorific titles such as Brahmmadhi Rajan and Brahmmaraiyan.

Trade

- It was not the Khalji's invasion from the north that brought the Muslims into Tamil country for the first time. Arab settlements on the west coast of southern India, from the seventh century, led to the expansion of their trade connection to the east coast of Tamil country. This was because the governments of the east coast pursued a more liberal and enlightened policy towards the overseas traders. Their charters exempted traders from various kinds of port dues and tolls. In Kayal, there was an agency

established by an Arab chieftain by name Maliku-I-Islam Jamaluddin. This agency facilitated the availability of horses to Pandya kings.

Horse trade of that time has been recorded by Wassaff. He writes: "...as many as 10,000 horses were imported into Kayal and other ports of India of which 1,400 were to be of Jamaluddin's own breed. The average cost of each horse was 220 dinars of 'red gold'."

- In the inscriptions, the traders are referred to as nikamattor, nanadesi, ticai-ayiratu-ainutruvar, ainutruvar, manikiramattar and patinen-vishyattar. They founded the trade guilds in Kodumpalur and Periyakulam. The goods traded were spices, pearls, precious stones, horses, elephants and birds. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, horse trade was brisk. Marco Polo and Wassaff state that the kings invested in horses as there was a need of horses for ceremonial purposes and for fighting wars. Those who were trading in horses were called kudirai-chetti. They were active in maritime trade also.
- The busiest port town under the Pandyas was Kayalpattinam (now in Thoothukudi district) on the east coast. Gold coins were in circulation as the trade was carried through the medium of gold. It was variously called kasu, palankasu, anradunarpalankasu, kanam, kalancu and pon. The titular gods of the traders are Ayirattu Aynurruvaar Udaiyar and Sokka Nayaki Amman. The periodically held fairs were called Tavalamin settlements called teru where the traders lived.

Irrigation

- The Pandya rulers created a number of irrigation sources and they were named after the members of the royal family. Some of them were Vasudeva Peraru, Virapandya Peraru, Srivallaba Peraru and Parakirama Pandya Peraru. The tanks were named Tirumaleri, Maraneri, Kaliyaneri and Kadaneri. On either side of the rivers Vaigai and Tamiraparni, canals leading to the tanks for irrigation were built. The Sendan Maran inscription of Vaigai river bed speaks of a sluice installed by him to distribute the water from the river. Sri Maran Srivallabhan created a big tank, which is till now in use. Like Pallavas in northern districts, Pandyas introduced the irrigation technology in the southern districts of Tamil country. In building the banks of the tanks, the ancient architect used the thread to maintain the level. Revetment of the inner side of the banks with stone slabs is one of the features of irrigation technique in Pandya country. In the time of the later Pandyas (around 1212), an official constructed a canal leading from river

Pennai to the lands of Tiruvannamalai temple. In dry-zone Ramanathapuram also, tanks were created. In these areas, such irrigation works were done by local administrative bodies, local chiefs and officials. Repairs were mostly undertaken by local bodies. Sometimes, traders also dug out tanks for irrigation.

- Iruppaikkuti-kilavan, a local chief, built many tanks and repaired the tanks in disrepair. The actual landowning groups are described as the Pumipittirar. Historically they were locals and hence they were referred to as nattumakkal. The communal assembly of this group is Citterameli-periyanattar.

Literacy

- The mission of promoting literacy was carried on through many ways. Appointment of singers to recite the Bhakti hymns in temple has been seen as the attempt of promoting literacy. In theatres, plays were staged for a similar purpose. Bhattavirutti and salabogam were endowments provided for promoting Sanskrit education. Brahmins studied the Sanskrit treatises in educational centres kadigai, salai and vidyastanam. From 12th century, monasteries came up and they were attached to the temples to promote education with religious thrust. A copper inscription says that an academy was set up to promote Tamil and to translate Mahabharatam. The important Tamil literary texts composed in the reign of the Pandyas were Tiruppavai, Tirvempavai, Tiruvasagam, Tirukkovai and Tirumantiram.

Religion

- It is said that Pandyas were Jains initially and later adopted Saivism. Inscriptions and the sculptures in the temples attest to this belief. The early rock-cut cave temples were the outcrop of transitional stage in religion and architecture. Medieval Pandyas and later Pandyas repaired many temples and endowed them with gold and land. The vimanam over the sanctum of Srirangam and Chidambaram temples were covered with golden leaves. Sadaiyavarman Sundarapandyan was anointed in Srirangam temple, and to commemorate it, he donated an idol of Vishnu to the temple. The inner walls of this temple and three other gopurams were plated with gold.
- Pandyas extended patronage to Vedic practices. Palyagasalai Mudukudumi Peruvaluthi, who performed many Vedic rituals, is identified with Pandyas of the Sangam period. Velvikkudi copper plates as well as inscriptional sources mention the rituals like Ashvamedayaga, Hiranyagarbha and Vajapeya yagna, conducted by every great Pandya king. The impartiality of

rulers towards both Saivism and Vaishnavism is also made known in the invocatory portions of the inscriptions. Some kings were ardent Saivite; some were ardent Vaishnavites. Temples of both sects were patronised through land grant, tax exemption, renovation and addition of gopuras and spacious mandapas.

Temples

- Pandyas built different models of temples. They are sepulchral temple (e.g. Sundarapandisvaram), rock-cut cave temples and structural temples. Medieval Pandyas and later Pandyas did not build any new temples but maintained the existing temples, enlarging them with the addition of gopuras, mandapas and circumambulations. The monolithic mega-sized ornamented pillars are the unique feature of the medieval Pandya style. The early Pandya temples are modest and simple. In these temples of the Pandya country, the sculptures of Siva, Vishnu, Kotravai, Ganesa, Subramanya, Surya and Brahma are best specimens. Pandyas specially patronised Meenakshi temple and kept expanding its premises by adding gopuras and mandapas.
- The prominent rock-cut cave temples created by the early Pandyas are found in Pillayarpatti, Tirumeyyam, Kuntrakkudi, Tiruchendur, Kalugumalai, Kanyakumari and Sittannavasal. Paintings are found in the temples in Sittannavasal, Arittaapatti, Tirumalaipuram and Tirunedunkarai. A 9th century inscription from Sittannavasal cave temple informs that the cave was authored by Ilam Kautamar. Another inscription of the same period tells us that Sri Maran Srivallaban renovated this temple. The fresco paintings on the walls, ceilings and pillars are great works of art. These paintings portray the figures of dancing girls, the king and the queen. The painting of water pool depicts some aquatic creatures, flowers and birds and some mammals.
- The maritime history of India would be incomplete if the history of the Pandyas of Tamil country is skipped. The busiest port-towns were located all along the east coast of the Tamizh country. By establishing matrimonial link with Southeast Asian dynasties, Pandyas left an imprint in maritime trade activities.

Cintamani, Mylapore, Tiruvotriyur, Tiruvadanaï and Mahabalipuram are busy coastal trading centres recorded in inscriptions

11th Volume II

Chapter – 12 Bahmani and Vijayanagar Kingdoms

Introduction

- At the beginning of the fourteenth century, when the Delhi Sultanate was preparing to extend southwards, the Deccan and south India were divided into four kingdoms: the Yadavas of Devagiri (Western Deccan or present Maharashtra), the Hoysalas of Dvarasamudra (Karnataka), the Kakatiyas of Warangal (eastern part of present Telengana) and the Pandyas of Madurai (southern Tamil Nadu). During the two expeditions of the general Malik Kafur, first in 1304 and then in 1310, these old states faced defeat one after another and lost most of their accumulated wealth to the plundering raids of the Sultanate army. The Tughluq dynasty continued its southern expeditions into southern India under the rule of his military officers. Muhammad Tughluq (1325–51) even tried to make Devagiri (renamed as Daulatabad) as the capital to command the vast conquered territory more effectively. But his experiments failed and brought misery to the people. When he shifted the capital back to Delhi, his subordinates in the south declared independence. Thus Madurai became an independent Sultanate in 1333. Zafar Khan who declared independence in 1345 at Devagiri shifted his capital to Gulbarga in northern Karnataka. He took the title, Bahman Shah and the dynasty he inaugurated became known as the Bahmani dynasty (1347– 1527). A few years earlier, in 1336, the Vijayanagar kingdom was inaugurated by the Sangama brothers Harihara and Bukka at Vijayanagara (present day Hampi) on the south bank of Tungabhadra. During the next two centuries these two states fought continually and bitterly, to control the rich Raichur *doab*, and also the sea ports of Goa, Honavar, etc. on the west coast, which were the supply points of the horses needed for their army.

Sources

- There are several kinds of sources– literary, epigraphical, and archaeological– available for the study of this period. Several Persian accounts written by the court historians of the Bahmani Sultanate, relating to Bahmani– Vijayanagar conflicts have survived. Though they contain some biased and exaggerated information they provide eye-witness accounts relating to the battles, the palace intrigues, the life and sufferings of the people on either side, etc. which are lacking in inscriptions. The

Kannada and Telugu literature, like Manucharitram, Saluvabhyudayam, etc., patronized in the Vijayanagar court, give genealogical, political and social information. The Telugu work Rayavachakamu gives interesting details about the Nayak system under Krishnadevaraya. Several foreign visitors who came to South India during the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries wrote about their travels which throw useful light on the political, social, and cultural aspects. Of them, Ibn Battutah a Moroccan traveller (1333-45), Abdur Razzak from Persia (1443-45), Nikitin, a Russian (1470-74), the Portuguese visitors Domingo Paes and Nuniz (1520-35) provide remarkably rich information.

- Thousands of inscriptions in Kannada, Tamil, and Telugu, besides a number of copper-plate charters in Sanskrit are available and the above sources add to the epigraphical information. There are a rich variety of archaeological sources in the form of temples, palaces, forts, mosques, etc. Numismatic evidence is also available in abundance.

The Vijayanagara kings issued a large number of gold coins called Varaha (also called Pon in Tamil and Honnu in Kannada). These gold coins have the images of various Hindu deities and animals like the bull, the elephant and the fabulous gandaberunda (a double eagle, sometimes holding an elephant in each beak and claw). The legend contains the king's name either in Nagari or in Kannada script.

Bahmani Kingdom

Alaudin Hasan Bahman Shah (1347-1358)

- Rivalry with the Vijayanagar kingdom over the fertile Raichur doab, lying between the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers, not only marked the early history of the Bahmani kingdom, but continued to be an enduring feature over two centuries. Bahman Shah had also to contend in the east with the rulers of Warangal and Orissa. In order to facilitate smooth administration, as followed in the Delhi Sultanate, he divided the kingdom into four territorial divisions called *tarafs*, each under a governor. Each governor commanded the army of his province (Gulbarga, Daulatabad, Bidar, and Berar) and was solely responsible for both its administration and the collection of revenue. The system worked well under a powerful king, but its dangers became apparent under a weak ruler. For the greater part of his reign of eleven years Bahman was engaged in subduing the unruly in his kingdom and in establishing order. His attempt to exact an annual tribute from the state of Warangal, the Reddi kingdoms of Rajahmundry

and Kondavidu, led to frequent wars. Bahman Shah emerged victorious in all these expeditions and assumed the title Second Alexander on his coins.

Mohammed I (1358–1375)

- Mohammed I succeeded Bahman Shah. There was a decade-long war with Vijayanagar, most of which related to control over the Raichur doab. Neither side gained lasting control over the region, in spite of the huge fatalities in battles. Two bitter wars with Vijayanagar gained him nothing. But his attack on Warangal in 1363 brought him a large indemnity, including the important fortress of Golkonda and the treasured turquoise throne, which thereafter became the throne of the Bahmani kings.
- Mohammed I established a good system of government that was followed by all the successor sultanates as well as by the Marathas later. He appointed a council of eight ministers of state: 1. Vakil-us-saltana or lieutenant of the kingdom, the immediate subordinate of the sovereign. 2. Waziri-kull, who supervised the work of all other ministers; 3. Amir-i-jumla, minister of finance; 4. Wasir-i-ashraf, minister of foreign affairs and master of ceremonies; 5. Nazir, assistant minister for finance; 6. Peshwa who was associated with the lieutenant of the kingdom; 7. Kotwal or chief of police and city magistrate in the capital, and 8. Sadr-i-jahan or chief justice and minister of religious affairs and endowments. He took strong measures for the suppression of highway robbery. Institutional and geographic consolidation under Muhammad Shah laid a solid foundation for the kingdom. He built two mosques at Gulbarga. One, the great mosque, completed in 1367, remains an impressive building.
- The next hundred years saw a number of Sultans one after another, by succession or usurpation. All of them fought with their southern neighbour, but without gaining much territory. In 1425 Warangal was subdued and their progress further eastwards was challenged by the Orissan rulers. The capital was shifted from Gulbarga to Bidar in 1429. The rule of Mohammad III (1463–1482) is worthy of mention because of his lieutenant Mohammed Gawan, a great statesman.

Mohammed Gawan

- A Persian by birth, Mohammed Gawan was well-versed in Islamic theology, Persian, and Mathematics. He was also a poet and a prose-writer. The Mohammed Gawan Madrasa in Bidar, with a large library, containing 3000 manuscripts, is illustrative of his scholarship. Gawan served with

great distinction as prime minister under Mohammad III and contributed extensively to the dynamic development of the Bahmani Kingdom.

- Gawan fought successful wars against the rulers of Konkan, Orissa and Vijayanagar. He was known for his administrative reforms. He used Persian chemists to teach the preparation and the use of gunpowder. In his war against the Vijayanagar Kings in Belgaum, he used gunpowder. In order to tighten the administration and to curb the power of provincial governors, who functioned virtually as kings, Gawan divided the existing four provinces of the Bahmani Sultanate into eight. This not only limited the area under the rule of each governor but also made the provincial administration more manageable. He placed some districts in the provinces directly under central administration. Gawan sought to curtail the military powers of the governors by allowing them to occupy only one fort in their territory. The other forts remained under the Sultan's direct control. The royal officers who were given land assignments as pay were made accountable to the Sultan for their income and expenditure.
- The administrative reforms introduced by Gawan improved the efficiency of the government, but curtailed the powers of the provincial chiefs, who were mostly Deccanis. So the already existing rivalry among the two groups of nobles, Deccani Muslims and Pardesi (foreigner) Muslims, further intensified and conflicts broke out. Gawan became a victim of this tussle for power, although he remained fair and neutral in this conflict. Jealous of his success they forged a letter to implicate Gawan in a conspiracy against the Sultan. Sultan, who himself was not happy with Gawan's dominance, ordered his execution.
- Gawan's execution augured ill for the Sultanate. Several of the foreign nobles who were considered the strongest pillars of the state began to leave for their provinces, leading to the disintegration of the Sultanate. After the Sultan's death five of his descendants succeeded him on the throne but they were kings only in name. During this period the Sultanate gradually broke up into four independent kingdoms: Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, Berar and Golkonda. Bidar where the Bahmani Sultan ruled as a puppet became the fifth one. Among these Bijapur became powerful by annexing Bidar and Berar in course of time. Though Ahmadnagar and Golkonda acted independently they finally joined with Bijapur to fight with their common enemy, Vijayanagar. Vijayanagar was utterly routed in the battle of Talikota or Rakshashi-Tangadi in 1565. Thereafter, within a century, the Sultanates were vanquished one after another and taken over by the Mughal state.

Vijayanagar Empire

Origin and Expansion

- There are different traditions regarding the foundation of the Vijayanagar kingdom. It is now generally accepted, on the basis of contemporary inscriptions, that the two brothers Harihara and Bukka, the eldest sons of one Sangama, earlier serving the Hoysala rulers of Karnataka, asserted their independence and laid foundation for a new kingdom in about 1336. This happened soon after the death of the Hoysala king Ballala III at the hands of the Madurai Sultan. Initially the capital was in or near about Anegondi on the north bank of the Tungabhadra river. But soon it was shifted to the Hoysala town Hosapattana (near Hampi) on the south bank. The capital was expanded and renamed Vijayanagara, the city of Victory. Thereafter, they proclaimed themselves the rulers of Vijayanagara or of Karnata-Vijayanagara. Harihara celebrated his coronation in 1346 at this city. Historians call this dynasty started by Harihara as Sangama after the name of his father or forefather. Vijayanagara rulers adopted the emblem of the Chalukyas, the boar, or varaha as their royal insignia.
- The Vijayanagar kingdom was successively ruled by four dynasties over a period of more than three hundred years: the Sangama dynasty (1336–1485), the Saluva dynasty (1485–1505), the Tuluva dynasty (1505–1570) and the Aravidu dynasty (1570–1650). The history of this kingdom can be narrated in four stages.
- In the beginning, the Vijayanagar kingdom was one among many small principalities of the time, under the rule of some local chiefs in different parts of south India. The three big states of the thirteenth century, the Pandyas in Tamil Nadu, the Hoysalas in Karnataka and the Kakatiyas in Andhra had almost been destroyed by the military expeditions of the Delhi Sultanate in the first three decades of the fourteenth century, leaving a big political vacuum. The turbulent political situation provided an opportunity to the five Sangama brothers, headed by Harihara, to consolidate and expand the territory. Besides, the Muslim Sultanate that had been established in Madurai a little earlier and the Bahmani Sultanate that came up in 1347 started to rule independently of Delhi. The Delhi Sultanate itself became weak and did not take much interest in the south.
- Within the first four decades the small principality became a big kingdom through the military activities of the five brothers in different directions. First the entire core area of the Hoysala kingdom in Karnataka

was incorporated into Vijayanagar. The coastal parts of Karnataka were soon taken over and remained an important part of the kingdom until the end. As this gave access to several port towns, good care was taken to administer this part under a successive line of pradhani or governors. Under Bukka I, attention was turned to Tondai-mandalam, covering the northern districts of Tamil area, which was under the rule of the Sambuvaraya chiefs. The prince Kampana (usually called Kumara Kampana), son of Bukka I, carried out this work successfully with the help of his faithful general Maraya- Nayak. He is also given credit for slaying the Madurai Sultan and bringing to an end that Sultanate in about 1370. This is mentioned in Madura-vijayam, a Sanskrit work written by Kampana's wife, Gangadevi. But strangely, the Pandya country including Madurai was not annexed to the Vijayanagar kingdom at that time. It became a part of the kingdom only around 1500, more than a hundred years later. Until then only the northern and central parts of the Tamil country up to the Kaveri delta were under the direct administration of the Sangama and Saluva dynasties.

Vijayanagar – Bahmani conflict

- From the beginning, both the Bahmani and Vijayanagar kingdoms were in constant conflict. The contest for territory, tribute, and the control of horse trade were the major subjects of conflict. Each of them wanted to annex and dominate the fertile area between the Krishna and the Tungabhadra (the Raichur doab). Though neither of them succeeded fully, much bloodshed took place for some transitory success. Some historians argue that religious rivalry between the Hindu Vijayanagar and the Muslim Sultanate was the basic cause of this continuous fight. Actually the Vijayanagar kings fought also with many Hindu, non-Muslim rulers, like those of Warangal, Kondavidu, Orissa, etc., in which Muslim rulers took part as allies sometimes and as enemies on other times. The control of horse trade that passed through Goa and other ports was another reason for the fighting. Horses were necessary for the armies of both sides. In spite of continuous fighting, the Krishna river was more or less the dividing line between the two powers.
- In coastal Andhra, the power struggle was between the Gajapati kingdom of Orissa and Vijayanagar. Vijayanagar could not make much headway until the time of Devaraya II (1422–46), who defeated the Orissan army in some battles. But these conquests were only to extract tribute, and no territory was added. Devaraya II was the greatest ruler of the Sangama dynasty. He strengthened his cavalry by recruiting trained Muslim cavalry for his army and giving archery training to his soldiers. Abdur Razaak, the

Persian ambassador who visited the Zamorin of Kochi and the Vijayanagar court during this time states that Devaraya II controlled a vast area. He received tribute from the king of Sri Lanka too.

- Vijayanagar empire went through a crisis after Devaraya II. Quarrels on account of succession and the inefficient successors encouraged the Gajapati king to dominate the coastal Andhra. Between 1460–65, the Gajapati army attacked many times and it conducted a victorious expedition even up to Tiruchirappalli on the Kaveri river, causing much destruction on the way and plundering the wealth of many temples. Taking advantage of the situation, the feudatories assumed independence. Thus, Tirumalaideva and then Konerideva began to rule independently in the Thanjavur– Tiruchirappalli area for some decades, during the interregnum before the rise of the Saluva rule.
- Power passed on to the trusted commander Saluva Narasimha who defended the kingdom from the Gajapatis and recovered parts of coastal Andhra. Around 1485 Saluva Narasimha usurped the throne and declared himself as king, starting the short-lived Saluva dynasty. He was assisted by his general and great warrior Narasa Nayak, who tried to quell the rebellious local chiefs in the south. Saluva Narasimha died in 1491 leaving his young sons under the care of Narasa Nayak. Narasa Nayak became the de facto ruler and took several steps to safeguard the country until his death. In about 1505, his elder son Viranarasimha started the third dynasty, known as the Tuluva dynasty. He had a short but eventful reign and was succeeded by his younger brother Krishnadevaraya.

Krishnadevaraya (1509–29)

- Krishnadevaraya is considered the greatest of the Vijayanagar kings. He built upon the strong military base laid by his father and elder brother. He tried to keep the greatness of the kingdom intact, by undertaking many military expeditions during much of his reign. Early in his reign he fought with the rebellious Ummattur chief (near about Mysore) and brought him to submission. He then had to fight almost continuously on two fronts, one against the traditional enemy, the Bahmani Sultans and the other against the Orissa king Gajapati. There are several inscriptions graphically describing his seizure of many forts like Udayagiri, under the control of Gajapati, during the course of this eastern expedition. Finally, he put a pillar of victory at Simhachalam.
- Krishnadevaraya had to undertake more than one expedition to repulse the Bahmani forces, which were intruding into his territory on a regular

annual basis. In some of these ventures the Portuguese, trying to establish their power in the Malabar and Konkan coast, helped Krishnadevaraya with military aid, and got permission to build a fort at Bhatkal. Though he was quite successful for a time, his victories made the warring Bahmani sultans to become united for their survival.

- There are some other reasons for the celebration of Krishnadevaraya as the greatest ruler of Vijayanagar. He made very large donations to many of the greatest Siva and Vishnu temples of the day- Srisailam, Tirupati, Kalahasti, Kanchipuram, Tiruvannamalai, Chidambaram, etc. He added towering gopuras to many of those temples, which survive to this day. Contemporary foreign visitors like Paes and Nuniz, who visited Vijayanagar left glowing tributes to his personality, and the grandeur and opulence of the city. His court was also adorned by some great poets like Allasani Peddana. He himself is considered a great scholar and is author of the famous poem Amuktamalyada (the story of Andal). But his crowning achievement, as a clever administrator, was the reorganization of the Nayak or nayankara system and giving legal recognition to the system. This is explained below under administration.

The battle of Talikota

- At Krishnadevaraya's death, his son was a small child and so his younger brother Achyutadevaraya became king. Soon some succession disputes started as Ramaraya, the son-in-law of Krishnadevaraya wanted to dominate the affairs by crowning the infant as king. Achyutadevaraya was however supported by Chellappa (also known as Saluva Nayak), the greatest Nayak of the day who controlled a major part of the Tamil area. Soon after, however, Chellappa became a rebel himself and Achyutadevaraya had to take a big expedition to the south to subdue him. He had some encounters with the Deccan sultans too. After his death in 1542, his nephew Sadasivaraya succeeded him and ruled for about thirty years (1542-70). But real power lay in the hands of Ramaraya, who got support from many of his close kinsmen (of Aravidu clan) by appointing them as Nayak of many strategic localities.
- Ramaraya, a great warrior and strategist, was able to play off the Bahmani Muslim powers against one another. He entered into a commercial treaty with the Portuguese whereby the supply of horses to the Bijapur ruler was stopped. He fought with the Bijapur ruler and after some time, he allied with the Bijapur ruler against Golkonda and Ahmadnagar. This divide and rule policy provoked much enmity against Vijayanagar. Forgetting their mutual quarrels, the Deccan states, joined hands to wage

the last great battle against their common enemy. The battle was fought at Talikota or Rakshasi-Tangadi in January 1565 in which Ramaraya, in spite of his old age, personally commanded the forces along with his cousins and brothers. In the final stages, the battle was lost. Ramaraya was imprisoned and executed immediately. The victorious Bahmaniarmies entered the Vijayanagar city for the first time in their history, and ransacked it for several months laying it waste.

- This battle is generally considered the signal for the end of Vijayanagar. The king Sadasiva and some of his retinue escaped to Penugonda. Tirumala, brother of Ramaraya, declared himself king in 1570, starting the Aravidu, that is the fourth dynasty. After this his sons and grandsons ruled the truncated kingdom for two generations, probably up to 1630. There were some more kings who ruled as fugitives until 1670 without a permanent capital. Real power was wielded by the many Nayak chiefs in various parts of the country. Some of them feigned loyalty to the king while others opposed him. There were fights between the loyalists and others. In 1601 there was bitter fighting near Uttaramerur between the loyalist Yachama Nayak of Perumbedu and the Nayak of Vellur (Vellore). In this quarrel Vellur Nayak was supported by Tanjavur, Madurai and Senji Nayak, who had become independent rulers.

Administration

- The king was the ultimate authority in the kingdom. He was also the supreme commander of the army. He was assisted by several high-ranking officers. The chief minister was known as the mahapradhani. He led a number of lower-ranking officers, like Dalavay (commander), Vassal (guard of the palace), Rayasam (secretary/ accountant), Adaippam (personal attendant), and Kariya-karta (executive agents). As Harihara I and his immediate successors consolidated their territorial acquisitions, they tried to organize the territory by creating administrative divisions called rajyas or provinces each under a governor called pradhani. Some of the prominent rajyas were the Hoysala rajya, Araga, Barakur (Mangalur), and Muluvay. As and when new conquests were made they were put under new rajyas. By 1400, there were five rajyas in the Tamil area: Chandragiri, Padaividu, Valudalampattu, Tiruchirappalli and Tiruvarur. The pradhani was either a royal member or a military officer not related to the royal family. The pradhani had his own revenue accountants and military to assist in his administration. Within each rajya, there were smaller administrative divisions like nadu, sima, sthala, kampana, etc. The lowest unit was of course the village. The rajyas lost their administrative and revenue status

under the Tuluva dynasty due to the development of the Nayak system under Krishnadevaraya.

Nayak System

- The term Nayak is used from thirteenth century onwards in Telugu and Kannada areas in the sense of a military leader or simply soldier. Assigning the revenue of a particular locality to the Nayak for their military service is found in the Kakatiya kingdom during the thirteenth century. This is similar to the iqta system practiced by the Delhi Sultanate at that time. But in the Vijayanagar kingdom the regular assignment of revenue yielding territory in return for military service is clearly found only from about 1500 or a little earlier. Inscriptions refer to this revenue assignment as nayakkattanam in Tamil, Nayaktanam in Kannada, and nayankaramu in Telugu. The practice became established during the reign of Krishnadevaraya and Achyuta Devaraya. This is supported by the evidence of inscriptions and by the accounts of Nuniz and Paes. Nuniz says that the Vijayanagar kingdom at that time was divided between more than two hundred captains (his translation for Nayak) and they were compelled in turn to keep certain number of military forces (horses and foot soldiers) to serve the king in times of need: they were also required to pay certain amount of the revenue to the king in particular times of a year, like during the nine-day Mahanavami festival. Nuniz' statement is also supported by Telugu work Rayavachakamu, which refers to the practice during the time of Krishnadevaraya. Later-day vamsavalis (family history) of the Palayagars, who were mostly successors of the old Nayak families, support the fact that the Nayak system was perfected during the time of Krishnadevaraya. Most of these Nayak were the Kannadiga and Telugu warriors besides some local chiefs. They belonged to different castes, Brahmana as well as non- Brahmana. The non-Brahmana Nayak again had different social backgrounds: traditional warrior groups, pastoral and forest clans (Yadava, Billama), peasant families (Reddi), merchants (Balija) and so on. Some of the prominent Nayak, like Chellappa under Krishnadevaraya, were brahmanas.
- This system worked smoothly as long as there were strong kings like Krishnadevaraya. These chiefs controlled production within their Nayaktanam territories by creating commercial centres (pettai) and markets, by encouraging settlement of cultivators and artisans with tax concessions, by creating and maintaining irrigation facilities, etc. Many of them started as high officials (commander, governor, accountant, etc.) and served as the king's agents. After the Talikota battle, the Nayak chiefs became more or less independent of the Vijayanagar king. Some of them,

like those of Madurai, Tanjavur, Ikkeri, etc. established powerful states controlling many smaller chiefs under them. The seventeenth century was the century of these bigger Nayak kingdoms.

Society and Economy

- Continuous warfare and the resultant widespread sufferings were common features of all early and medieval societies. Bahmani and Vijayanagar period is no exception to this. Perhaps the scale looks larger due to the availability of many eye-witness accounts. The other consequences which were enduring over the centuries were the displacement and migration of people. During the three centuries of this chapter, we find such migrations everywhere. The conflicts in the Bahmani courts were much due to the migration of Turks, Afghans and Persians into the Deccan. As far as the Vijayanagar area is concerned there took place migrations of Kannada and Telugu warriors and their followers into Tamil areas and elsewhere. Many of the Nayaka chiefs belong to these language groups. Peasants, artisans and other toiling groups were also part of this migration. The other consequence was the widening gap between the ruling class and the ruled. All the foreign visitors refer to the enormous riches and affluence enjoyed by the rulers, the officials and the upper echelons in the capital cities like Vijayanagar, Bijapur, and the like, in contrast to widespread poverty among the masses. They also refer to the prevalence of slavery.
- The state had to derive their revenue only by taxing the people. It is found that during the Sangama dynasty when the Vijayanagar rule was extended to new areas, their officers were harsh in tax collection, which provoked the toiling people to rise in revolt. One such revolt took place in 1430 in central parts of Tamil Nadu. This was the revolt in which all the basic producers joined forgetting their caste differences. The revolt took place due to the unjust and arbitrary tax demands of the government including the pradhani (governor), his military bodies, and the landlords. It is said the Vijayanagar Prince intervened and pacified the revolting people by allowing tax reduction. During the sixteenth century, under the Nayak system, the local Nayakas tried to encourage craft production, like weaving, by giving tax concessions now and then.

Little Kingdoms in Ramanathapuram and Pudukottai

The kingdom of Ramnad was inaugurated by the Madurai Nayak Muthu Krishnappa in the early years of the seventeenth century. The inhabitants with martial tradition had served as soldiers under Pandyan, Chola and

Vijayanagar kings, and were spread into Tirunelveli and other southern parts of Tamil country. They also served in the armies of Nayak rulers and were traditional Kavalkarars, whose responsibility was to give protection to village, temple and other administrative bodies. The temple at Rameswaram was under the protection of a kaval chief who also assumed the title of Udaiyan Sethupati (meaning the Chief who was lord of bridge or causeway, as he controlled the passage between Rameswaram and Ceylon).

Pudukottai was a small principality situated between the Nayak kingdoms of Thanjavur and Madurai. It constituted a buffer between the Chola kingdom and the Pandyas. Like the inhabitants of Ramanathapuram, Pudukottai also had inhabitants belonging to martial tradition. Hence their region could attain the status of "little kingdom" under Tondaimans. The Tondaimans served great royal households of Raja Sethupathi and Nayak kings of Madurai and Thanjavur.

- The Vijayanagar period witnessed striking development in the field of non-agrarian crafts. Until the thirteenth century the economy was mainly agrarian. From the fourteenth onwards the economy became more commercial. With the beginning of the era of money economy, circulation and use of coined money increased manifold. Artisans like weavers, smiths, and masons became more prominent in the society. These non-agrarian groups were generally called the pattadaior (workshop people) and kasaya-vargam -that is- the group that pays taxes in cash. Large number of commercial and weaving centres came up in northern Tamil Nadu, Rayalasima and coastal Andhra. Naturally the textiles formed an important commodity exported from south Indian ports. Textiles became main commercial attractions for the Portuguese and other European traders who started coming from the early sixteenth century.