

APPOLO STUDY CENTRE

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Marathas

7th term 2

Unit 3 - Rise of Marathas and Peshwas

Introduction

The rising power of the Marathas in the south-west posed the real danger to the Mughal Empire. Shahji Bhonsle, Shivaji's father, an officer of the Ahmednagar State and

later Bijapur, proved to be a thorn in the flesh of the Mughals, even in Shah Jahan's period. But it was his son, Shivaji, who attained glory among the Marathas as he could stop the Mughal Empire's expansion in the Deccan. Shivaji was a gallant fighter, army general and a guerilla leader. He built up a band of brave mountaineers, who were loyal to him. With their help, he captured many forts and gave Aurangzeb's commanders a tough time. As Marathas grew stronger, the Mughal Empire weakened. The Mughal Emperor had to recognise the right of the Marathas to collect their Chauth tax all over the Deccan. Warfare opened opportunities for talented commanders who contributed to the vigorous expansion of Maratha power early in the eighteenth century. The prime minister of Maratha rulers, called the Peshwas from the time of Shahu, held real power. Under the aegis of Maratha power, the Peshwas continued their supremacy until 1761.

Factors Responsible for the Rise of Marathas

Geographical Features

The physical features of the Maratha country developed certain peculiar qualities among the Marathas, which distinguished them from the rest of the people of India. During the sixteenth century, the sultans of Bijapur and Ahmednagar had recruited them to serve in cavalry. Their presence was helpful to the sultans in balancing the political ambitions of the Muslim soldiers in their service. The rocky and mountainous terrain gave protection to the Marathas from invaders. It proved to be advantageous in guerrilla warfare for Marathas.

Bhakti Movement and the Marathas

The spread of the Bhakti movement in Maharashtra helped the Maratha people develop consciousness of their identity and oneness. It promoted a feeling of unity, especially in terms of social equality, among the Marathas. In the Maratha region, the religious leaders were drawn from different social groups. Eknath, Tukaram and Ramdas were the noted Bhakti saints. Tukaram and Ramdas had considerable influence on the life of Shivaji.

Literature and Language of the Marathas

Marathi language and literature also served to develop unity among the people. Hymns composed in the Marathi language by Bhakti saints were sung by people of all castes and classes.

Shivaji

Shivaji, born in 1627, grew up under the care of his mother, Jijabai, who influenced him with stories from the Hindu epics, Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Shivaji's teacher and guardian, Dadaji Kondadev, trained him in the art of horse riding, warfare and state administration. At the age of eighteen in 1645, when he had just entered the military career, he successfully captured Kondana, a fort near Poona. The

following year, he took the fort of Torna. Then he succeeded in conquering Raigarh, which was rebuilt by him.

Shivaji's Confrontation with Sultan of Bijapur

Shivaji became totally independent after the death of his guardian Kondadev (1649). He also got his father's jagir transferred to him, which was earlier looked after by Kondadev. The strength of his army was Mavali foot soldiers. With their help, Shivaji conquered many of the hill forts near Poona. He captured Puranthar from the Mughals. Shivaji's military raids angered the Sultan of Bijapur. He held Shivaji's father captive and released him only after Shivaji promised to suspend his military raids. Shivaji kept his word and remained at peace with Bijapur from then on till his father Shahji's death. During this period he toned up his administration.

Consolidation of Maratha Power

Shivaji resumed his raids after his father's death and conquered Javali (1656) from the Maratha chief Chandrarao More. He also reduced all the lesser Maratha chiefs around Pune to subordination. The soldiers of Bijapur from the hill fortresses acquired by Sultan of Bijapur were driven out and replaced with his own commanders. These moves and the defeat of Bijapur army sent to punish Shivaji alarmed the Mughal officials. When the Mughals made a punitive expedition, Shivaji boldly confronted them. In 1659 he killed Afzal Khan, a notable general of Bijapur. In 1663 he wounded and chased away the Mughal general and Aurangzeb's uncle Shaista Khan. To cap these bold acts, he audaciously directed his soldiers to plunder Surat (1664), the major Mughal port on the Arabian Sea.

Shivaji and Aurangzeb

After Shivaji plundered Surat, Aurangzeb swung into action. An army under the command of a Rajput general, Raja Jai Singh, was ordered to destroy Shivaji and annex Bijapur. Shivaji finally sought peace, yielded the fortresses he had seized and accepted service as a mansabdar in the Mughal service for the conquest of Bijapur. He also agreed to visit the imperial court at Agra, on the advice of Jai Singh only to suffer humiliation, which led him to escape, by hiding in a basket.

Aurangzeb was determined to stop the Maratha interference in his expeditions against the Deccan kingdoms. He attempted to patch up with Shivaji, but those efforts failed. In 1670, the Mughal army was helpless when Shivaji again plundered Surat. In 1674, Shivaji crowned himself by assuming the title of Chhatrapati and the coronation of Shivaji was celebrated with great splendour at Raigarh, as the occasion was the founding of a new kingdom and a new dynasty. Shivaji's aged mother Jijabai, who had lived to see her son crowned the king, passed away a few days after the coronation, with her life wish fulfilled. Shivaji spent his last year trying to bring his son Shambhaji into his ways as he had defected to the Mughals. He fell ill with fever and dysentery and died in 1680.

Chhatra (parasol) pati (master or lord), is the Sanskrit equivalent of king or emperor, and was used by the Marathas, especially Shivaji.

Maratha Administration under Shivaji

Shivaji's political system consisted of three circles. At the centre was the swaraj. Shivaji was caring and would not allow the people to be harassed in any way. In the second circle, Shivaji claimed suzerainty, but he did not administer them himself. He protected the people from loot and plunder for which they were required to pay Chauth (one-fourth of the revenue as protection money) and Sardeshmukhi (an extra one-tenth, as the chieftain's due). In the third circle, Shivaji's only objective was plunder.

Deshmukhs held sway over rural regions and their control was over between twenty and hundred villages. Each village had a powerful headman (Patil), who was assisted by a village accountant of a keeper of records (Kulkarni). In the absence of a strong central government, these local community level officials functioned as the true government.

Army

Shivaji gave utmost attention to his army and training of its personnel. In the beginning, the backbone of his army was the infantry. But as his campaigns extended into the plains, his cavalry grew in size and importance. Every soldier was selected personally by Shivaji and was taken into service on the assurance of a soldier already in service. Shivaji took great care in the maintenance and security of his forts. Retired captains holding a high reputation were put in charge of guarding the forts.

Ashtapradhan

Shivaji designated eight ministers as the Ashtapradhan, each holding an important portfolio. Peshwa was the equivalent of a modern prime minister in the Maratha Empire. Originally, they were subordinates to the Chhatrapati. But, in course of time, especially from the time of Sahu Maharaja, Peshwa became the de facto Maratha ruler while the Chhatrapati was reduced to the position of a nominal ruler.

Shivaji was influenced by the Mughal revenue system. The assessments were made on the actual yield, with three-fifths left to the cultivator and two-fifths taken by the government. In judicial administration, civil cases continued to be decided by the panchayat, the village council, while criminal law was based on the shastras, the Hindu law books.

Responsibilities of the Ashtapradhan

Pantpradhan / Peshwa	Prime Minister
Amatya / Mazumdar	Finance Minister

Shurunavis/Sacheev	Secretary
Waqia-Navis	Interior Minister
Sar-i-Naubat / Senapati	Commander-in- Chief
Sumant / Dubeer	Foreign Minister
Nyayadhish	Chief Justice
Panditrao	High Priest

Shambhuji

Shambhuji succeeded Shivaji after a succession tussle with Anaji Datto. There were family feuds splintering the Maratha kingdom. Durgadas of Rathore Marwar and Aurangzeb's rebel son Akbar arrived in Maharashtra and took shelter in Shambhuji's court. Aurangzeb viewed these developments very seriously and took all out efforts to finish off Shambhuji. Marathas under Shambhuji were in no position to resist the Mughals. Aurangzeb himself arrived in the Deccan in 1681. Aurangzeb's main goal was the annexation of Bijapur and Golconda. These two sultanates fell to Aurangzeb by 1687. In little over a year, Shambhuji was captured by the Mughals and, after torture, put to death.

Shambhuji was under the wicked influence of his family priest Kavi Kalash. Kavi Kalash was the caretaker of Shambhuji in Varanasi during Shivaji's flight from Agra. He later brought Shambhuji safely to Raigarh. His dominance in the Court became absolute in course of time, as Shambhuji looked to his advice for everything. Kavi Kalash was a distinguished scholar and poet. But he was a practitioner of witchcraft. So the orthodox Hindus in the court had developed a deep hatred for him. When Shambhuji was captured by the Mughal army, he was found to be in the company of Kavi Kalash. So both of them were subjected to all forms of torture and then executed by the orders of Aurangzeb.

Shahu Maharaja

Shivaji's grandson Shahu means honest, originally a name given by Aurangzeb to contrast his character with that of Shivaji) ruled from 1708 to 1749. During the first half of the eighteenth century, consolidation of royal power was achieved through conferment of royal entitlements upon those who served Shahu.

During Shahu's 40-year reign there was increase in the territory under the Maratha control, from which tribute was regularly extracted. More centralised and strong state structure also began to take shape. Every household, including that of landed household, profited from state employment.

Peshwas

Balaji Vishwanath (1713-1720) began his career as a small revenue official and became Peshwa in 1713. Much against the advice from his close circles, Shahu appointed 20-year-old Viswanath's eldest son Bajirao to occupy the office of Peshwa.

Bajirao (1720–1740)

Bajirao decided to launch a major Maratha onslaught against the Mughals and the Nizam of Hyderabad. He assumed the powers of the commander-in-chief. He was wise in his choice of commanders for these campaigns. Instead of relying on the traditional elite group, namely

Deshmukhs, he gave commands to the Gaikwad, Holkar and Shinde or Scindhia families who had been loyal to the emperor Shahu, his father Balaji Viswanath and to him.

The Prominent Maratha families

- Gaikwad at Baroda
- Bhonsle at Nagpur
- Holkar at Indore
- Shinde or Scindhia at Gwalior
- Peshwa at Pune

Bajirao proclaimed wars against Malwa and Gujarat and freed them from Mughal domination. The Mughal army and the troops of the Nizam that intervened on behalf of the Mughals were defeated. Bajirao succeeded in getting the recognition of Shahu as the king of Maharashtra and overlord of the rest of the Deccan, from which the tribute of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi could be legally collected by the Maratha officials. Bajirao centralised the fiscal functions in Pune. This helped to receive the prompt transmission of tribute from the Deccan.

The Maratha army, which consisted of no more than 5000 horsemen and no artillery, had by 1720 had doubled in its size. Yet they were no match for the Mughals and the Nizam. The success of Marathas against the Mughals was mainly due to the weakness of the latter. The Maratha dominance in the Deccan is also attributed to the qualities of Maratha officials and generals who grew up under Shahu and the Peshwas.

Balaji Bajirao (1740–1761)

When Balaji Bajirao was the Peshwa, Emperor Shahu died (1749). A possible succession struggle among factions of the royal family was averted, thanks to the timely intervention of Balaji Bajirao. He summoned all the contending factions and forced them to accept the conditions he laid down. He decided that the capital of the kingdom would henceforward be Pune, not Satara. All power and authority was now concentrated in the Peshwas's office. Balaji Bajirao now commanded an army of paid soldiers. The Maratha peasant warrior band was reconfigured and its run came to an end. Maratha soldiers were not permitted now to retire from battle fields each year for the purpose of cultivating their land. Soldiers were required to live in forts and towns far away from their home. They were trained as infantrymen as well as horsemen. The large guns were nominally under the command of Maratha officers. But those who fired and maintained them were mostly Portuguese, French and British

During the period of the Peshwa Balaji Bajirao, the northern frontiers of the Maratha state were rapidly touching Rajasthan, Delhi and the Punjab. At some point, the Maratha tributary regime extended itself to within fifty miles of Delhi. The Marathas launched raids from Nagpur against Bihar, Bengal and Odisha. Notwithstanding the conflict between the Marathas and the Nizam over Karnataka, Tamil, Kannada and Telugu regions were effectively brought under the control of the Marathas. Between 1745 and 1751 plundering expeditions were launched yearly by the Maratha chieftain Rahuji Bhonsle.

Maratha Administration under Peshwas

The revenue administration of Peshwas was headed by a key official called the Kamavisdar. He was appointed by the Peshwa. He was empowered to maintain a small body of soldiers to police the administrative area, from where tribute or tax had to be collected. A small staff of clerks and servants were employed to maintain the revenue records. These records were randomly checked by the office of the Peshwa. The contracts for revenue collection was auctioned annually after the revenue for a particular place was estimated by the Peshwa's civil servants, based on previous years' yields. A prospective tax or revenue collector who won the contract was expected to have a reputation for wealth and probity. He was required to pay a portion of the whole of the anticipated revenue – one-third to one half – either out of his own wealth or from the money borrowed from bankers. Judging from the ledgers of correspondence and account books, it is evident that the Peshwas were keen on accurate recordkeeping. The Peshwa regimes looked distinctly modern in comparison with the Mughals to whose fall they contributed militarily.

The Fall of Marathas

The imperial moment of the Marathas sadly ended at Panipat near Delhi in 1761. The Marathas' attempt to extend their domain beyond Punjab was checked by the king of the Afghans, Ahmad Shah Abdali.

Abdali invaded eight times before finally marching onto Delhi. The Marathas were now divided among several commanders, who approached the battle with different tactics. Artillery decided the battle in January 1761. The mobile artillery of the Afghans proved lethal against both Maratha cavalry and infantry. The Maratha army was shattered and the surviving men took six months to return to Maharashtra from Panipat to report the tragedy. By then Maratha supremacy over the sub-continent was effectively over.

11th vol 2
15. The Marathas

Introduction

The Marathas played a major role in the decline of Mughal power. Under the dynamic leadership of Shivaji, they posed a strong challenge to Mughal power during the 1670s. By the middle of the 18th century, they had succeeded in displacing Mughal power in central India. Nayak rule ended in 1674 in Thanjavur, when the Maratha General Venkoji (half brother of Shivaji) leading the Bijapur forces invaded Thanjavur and succeeded in establishing Maratha rule in the Tamil region. Maratha rule in Thanjavur which started from 1674 continued until the death of Serfoji II in 1832.

Causes of the Rise of the Marathas

Physical features and Nature of the People

The region of the Marathas consisted of a narrow strip of land called Konkan. Its precipitous mountains, inaccessible valleys and impregnable hill-forts were most favourable for military defence. The Marathas claimed a long tradition of military prowess and prided themselves on their loyalty, courage, discipline, cunningness, and endurance. They had earlier served under the Bahmani Sultans and later, after its disintegration, under the Sultans of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Golconda, Bidar and Berar.

Marathas avoided direct battles with the Mughal armies that were equipped with strong cavalry and deadly cannons. "Guerrilla warfare" was their strength. They possessed the ability to plan and execute the surprise lightning attacks at night. Further, they exhibited skills to change their tactics according to the battle situation without waiting for orders from a superior officer.

(b) Bhakti Movement and its Impact

The spread of the Bhakti movement inculcated the spirit of oneness among the Marathas. Tukaram, Ramdas, and Eknath were the leading lights of the movement. The hymns of the Bhakti saints were sung in Marathi and they created a bond among people across the society.

"The religious revival [in Maratha country] was not Brahmanical" in its orthodoxy, it was heterodox in its spirit of protest against forms, ceremonies and class distinctions. The saints sprang chiefly from the lower order of the society other than Brahmins. - Justice Ranade.

I External causes

The degeneration of Bijapur and Golkonda prompted the Marathas to unite and fight together. The Deccan wars against the Sultans of Bijapur, Golkonda and Ahmednagar had exhausted the Mughal treasury. Shivaji rallied the Marathas who lay

scattered in many parts of Deccan under his leadership and built a mighty kingdom, with Raigad as the capital.

Shivaji (1627–1680)

Shivaji was born in Shivner near Junnar. He was the son of Shahji Bhonsle by his first wife Jijabai. Shahji was a descendant of the Yadava rulers of Devagiri from his mother's side and the Sisodias of Mewar on his father's side. Shahji Bhonsle served under Malik Ambar (1548–1626), former slave, and the Abyssinian minister of Ahmed Shah of Ahmednagar. After the death of Malik Ambar, Shahji played a vital role in its politics. After the annexation of Ahmednagar by the Mughals, he entered the service of the Sultan of Bijapur.

Shivaji and his mother were left under the care of Dadaji Kondadev who administered Shahji Bhonsle's jagirs (land grants given in recognition of military or administrative services rendered) at Pooná. Shivaji earned the goodwill of the Mavali peasants and chiefs, who were a martial people with knowledge about the hilly areas around Pooná. Shivaji made himself familiar with the hilly areas around Pooná. Religious heads, Ramdas and Tukaram, also influenced Shivaji. Ramdas was regarded by Shivaji as his guru.

Military Conquests

Shivaji began his military career at the age of nineteen. In 1646, he captured the fortress of Torna from the Sultan of Bijapur. The fort of Raigad, located five miles east of Torna, was captured and wholly rebuilt. After the death of Dadaji Kondadev in 1647, Shivaji took over all the jagirs of his father. Subsequently, the forts of Baramati, Indapura, Purandhar and Kondana came under his direct control. The Marathas had already captured Kalyan, an important town in that region.

Shivaji's father had been humiliated and imprisoned by the Sultan of Bijapur. He negotiated with Prince Murad, the

Mughal Viceroy of the Deccan and expressed his wish to join Mughal service. The Sultan of Bijapur released Shahji in 1649 on some conditions. So, Shivaji refrained from his military activities from 1649 to 1655. During this period, he consolidated his power and toned up his administration.

In 1656, Shivaji re-started his military activities. He captured Javli in the Satara district and the immense booty that he won made him popular among the Marathas. Many young men joined his army. A new fort, Pratapgarh, was built two miles west of Javli.

Confrontation against Bijapur

After Mohammad Adilshah of Bijapur died in November 1656, Adilshah II, a young man of eighteen, succeeded him. Aurangzeb captured Bidar, Kalyani and Parinder in 1657. So, both Shivaji and the Bijapur Sultan were forced to make peace with Aurangzeb. At this time Shah Jahan fell ill, and a war of succession was imminent in Delhi. Aurangzeb left for Delhi to take part in it. Using this opportunity, Shivaji invaded north Konkan and captured the cities of Kalyan, Bhivandi and fort of Mahuli.

Shivaji and Afzal Khan, 1659

As there was no danger from the Mughals, Bijapur Sultan decided to attack Shivaji. Afzal Khan was sent with a huge army. He boasted that he would bring the "mountain-rat" in chains. But, he found fighting in the mountainous country extremely difficult. So, he planned to trick Shivaji but he was outwitted. The Maratha forces ravaged South Konkan and Kolhapur district and captured the fort of Panhala. The Sultan of Bijapur himself led the army and the war dragged on for more than a year. Nothing substantial was gained. Finally, after negotiations, Shivaji was recognised as the ruler of the territories in his possession.

Shivaji and the Mughals

In July 1658, Aurangzeb ascended the throne as the Emperor. Shaista Khan was appointed the Governor of the Deccan in 1660 with the main purpose of crushing Shivaji. Shivaji hit upon a bold plan. He entered Poona at night with 400 soldiers in the form of a marriage party and attacked the home of Shaista Khan. Aurangzeb was forced to recall Shaista Khan from the Deccan in December 1663.

Shivaji and Jaisingh

In 1664, Shivaji attacked Surat, the major Mughal port in Arabian Sea and his soldiers plundered the city. Aurangzeb despatched an army under the command of the Rajput general Raja Jai Singh to defeat Shivaji and annex Bijapur. At that time, Prince Muazzam, later Bahadur Shah I, was the Governor of the Deccan. Jai Singh made elaborate plans to encircle Shivaji on all sides. Even Raigarh was under threat. Purandar was besieged in June 1665. The heroic resistance of Shivaji became futile. Therefore he decided to come to negotiate with Jai Singh. According to the treaty of Purandar signed on 11 June 1665 Shivaji yielded the fortresses that he had captured and agreed to serve as a mansabdar and assist the Mughals in conquering Bijapur.

Visit to Agra

Jai Singh persuaded Shivaji to visit the Mughal court. He fed Shivaji with high hopes and took personal responsibility for his safety at the capital. Shivaji and his son Sambhaji reached Agra in May 1666. But, they were not shown due respect. Humiliated, he burst out and abused the Emperor. When Shivaji was imprisoned, he managed to escape.

In 1666, Shivaji resumed his belligerent policy and led Maratha soldiers in new conquests. As the Mughals were busy with the Afghan risings in the North-West, they could not deal with Shivaji. Shivaji also occupied himself with the re-organisation of his internal administration. Prince Muazzam, Viceroy of the Deccan, was weak and indolent. Raja Jaswant Singh was friendly towards Shivaji. Sambhaji was also made a mansabdar of 5000.

Conflict with the Mughals (1670)

Aurangzeb took back a part of the jagir in Berar which was once given to Shivaji. Shivaji got annoyed and recalled his troops from Mughal service. He recovered almost all the forts he had ceded to the Mughals by the treaty of Purandar. In 1670, he again sacked Surat, the most important port on the western coast. In 1672, the Marathas imposed chauth or one fourth of the revenue as annual tribute on Surat.

Coronation

On 6 June 1674, Shivaji was crowned at Raigad. He assumed the title of "Chhatrapathi" (metaphor for "supreme king").

Deccan Campaigns

In 1676, Shivaji began his career of conquests in the south. A secret treaty was signed with the Sultan of Golkonda. Shivaji promised him some territories in return for his support. He captured Senji and Vellore and annexed the adjoining territories which belonged to his father, Shahji. He allowed his half-brother Venkoji or Ekoji to carry on administering Thanjavur. The Nayaks of Madurai promised a huge amount as tribute. The Carnatic campaigns added glory and prestige to Shivaji. Senji, the newly conquered place, acted as the second line of defence for his successors.

Last days of Shivaji

Shivaji's last days were not happy. His eldest son Sambhaji deserted him and joined the Mughal camp. Although he returned, he was imprisoned and sent to Panhala fort. The relentless campaigns affected Shivaji's health. He died in 1680 at the age of 53.

At the time of his death, Shivaji's kingdom comprised the Western Ghats and the Konkan between Kalyan and Goa. The provinces in the south included western Karnataka extending from Belgaum to the bank of Tungabhadra. Vellore, Senji and a few other districts were not settled at the time of his death.

Marathas after Shivaji

A year after the death of Shivaji, his eldest son and successor Sambhaji led a Maratha army into Mughal territory, captured Bahadurpur in Berar, and plundered its wealth. Provoked by this humiliation, Aurangzeb struck a compromise with the Mewar Rajputs and led an army into the Deccan. Bijapur and Golkonda were annexed in 1686 and 1687 respectively. The next task of Aurangzeb was to punish Sambhaji for giving protection to his rebellious son Prince Akbar. In 1689 the Mughal forces captured Sambhaji and killed him.

Sambhaji's death did not deter the Marathas. His younger brother Rajaram renewed the fight from the fortress of Senji in the Tamil country. The fight continued for many years. After the death of Rajaram in 1700, resistance continued under the leadership of his widow, Tara Bai. Acting on behalf of his infant son, she despatched an army of 50,000 horsemen and infantry to Hyderabad. The capital was plundered and, as a result, trade in Masulipatnam, the major port of the region, remained disrupted for years. At the time of Aurangzeb's death in 1707 Marathas still had many fortified places under their control.

After Aurangzeb's death, Sambhaji's son Shahu was released from prison and claimed the Maratha throne. Tara Bai objected and it led to a civil war, in which Shahu emerged victorious and ascended the throne in 1708. Balaji Viswanath was very supportive of Shahu and helped him ascend to the throne in 1708. As a gesture of his gratitude Shahu appointed Balaji Viswanath as the Peshwa in 1713. In course of time, the Peshwa became the real ruler. Shahu retired to Satara and the Peshwa started to rule from Poona.

Tara Bai carried on a parallel rival government with Kolhapur as capital. But Raja Bai, the second wife of Rajaram and her son Sambhaji II imprisoned Tara Bai and her son in 1714. Sambhaji II ascended the throne of Kolhapur. However he had to accept the overlordship of Shahu. After Shahu died in 1749, Rama Raja who ascended the throne, made a pact with the Peshwa, according to which he became a titular head. Tara Bai was disappointed. Tara Bai and Rama Raja died in 1761 and 1777 respectively. Shahu II, the adopted son of Rama Raja, ruled till his death in 1808 as a nonentity. His son Pratap Singh who came to the throne next was deposed by the British government in 1839 on the charge that he plotted against the British Government. Pratap Singh died as a prisoner in 1847. His younger brother Shaji Appa Saheb, Shaji II, was made king by the British in 1839. Shaji II died in 1848 without a successor.

Maratha Administration Central Government

Shivaji was a not only a great warrior but a good administrator too. He had an advisory council to assist him in his day-to-day administration. This council of eight

ministers was known as Ashta Pradhan. Its functions were advisory. The eight ministers were:

- The Mukhya Pradhan or Peshwa or prime minister whose duty was to look after the general welfare and interests of the State. He officiated for the king in his absence.
- The Amatya or finance minister checked and countersigned all public accounts of the kingdom.
- The Walkia-Nawis or Mantri maintained the records of the king's activities and the proceedings in the court.
- Summant or Dabir or foreign secretary was to advise king on all matters of war and peace and to receive ambassadors and envoys from other countries.
- Sachiv or Shuru Nawis or home secretary was to look after the correspondence of the king with the power to revise the drafts. He also checked the accounts of the Parganas.
- Pandit Rao or Danadhyaksha or Sadar and Muhtasib or ecclesiastical head was in charge of religion, ceremonies and charities. He was the judge of canon law and censor of public morals.
- Nyayadhish or chief justice was responsible for civil and military justice.
- Sari Naubat or commander-in-chief was in charge of recruitment, organization and discipline of the Army.

With the exception of the Nyayadhish and Pandit Rao, all the other ministers were to command armies and lead expeditions. All royal letters, charters and treaties had to get the seal of the King and the Peshwa and the endorsement of the four ministers other than the Danadyksha, Nyayadhisha and Senapati. There were eighteen departments under the charge of the various ministers.

Provincial Government

For the sake of administrative convenience, Shivaji divided the kingdom into four provinces, each under a viceroy. The provinces were divided into a number of Pranth. The practice of granting jagirs was abandoned and all officers were paid in cash. Even when the revenues of a particular place were assigned to any official, his only link was with the income generated from the property. He had no control over the people associated with it. No office was to be hereditary. The fort was the nerve-centre of the activities of the Pranth. The lowest unit of the government was the village in which the traditional system of administration prevailed.

Revenue System

The revenue administration of Shivaji was humane and beneficent to the cultivators. The lands were carefully surveyed and assessed. The state demand was fixed at 30% of the gross produce to be payable in cash or kind. Later, the tax was raised to 40%. The amount of money to be paid was fixed. In times of famine, the government

advanced money and grain to the cultivators which were to be paid back in instalments later. Liberal loans were also advanced to the peasants for purchasing cattle, seed, etc.

Chauth and Sardeshmukhi

As the revenue collected from the state was insufficient to meet its requirements, Shivaji collected two taxes, Chauth and Sardeshmukhi, from the adjoining territories of his empire, the Mughal provinces and the territories of the Sultan of Bijapur. Chauth was one-fourth of the revenue of the district conquered by the Marthas. Sardeshmukhi was an additional 10% of the revenue which Shivaji collected by virtue of his position as Sardeshmukh. Sardeshmukh was the superior head of many Desais or Deshmukhs. Shivaji claimed that he was the hereditary Sardeshmukh of his country.

Military Organization

Shivaji organized a standing army. As we have seen, he discouraged the practice of granting jagirs and making hereditary appointments. Quarters were provided to the soldiers. The soldiers were given regular salaries. The army consisted of four divisions: infantry, cavalry, an elephant corps and artillery. Though the soldiers were good at guerrilla methods of warfare, at a later stage they were also trained in conventional warfare.

The infantry was divided into regiments, brigades and divisions. The smallest unit with nine soldiers was headed by a Naik (corporal). Each unit with 25 horsemen was placed under one havildar (equivalent to the rank of a sergeant). Over five havildars were placed under one jamaladar and over ten jamaladars under one hazari. Sari Naubat was the supreme commander of cavalry. The cavalry was divided into two classes: the bargirs (soldiers whose horses were given by the state) and the shiledars (mercenary horsemen who had to find their own horses). There were water-carriers and farriers too.

Justice

The administration of justice was of a rudimentary nature. There were no regular courts and regular procedures. The panchayats functioned in the villages. The system of ordeals was common. Criminal cases were tried by the Patels. Appeals in both civil and criminal cases were heard by the Nyayadhish (chief justice) with the guidance of the smritis. Hazir Majlim was the final court of appeal

Rule of the Peshwas (1713-1818)

The Peshwa or the prime minister was the foremost minister in the Ashta Pradhan, the council of ministers of Shivaji. The Peshwas gained more powers and became dominant in the eighteenth Century. Balaji Viswanath was the first powerful Peshwa.

Peshwa is a Persian word which means
“Foremost” or the “First Minister”.

Balaji Viswanath (1713–1720)

Balaji Viswanath assisted the Maratha emperor Shahu to consolidate his control over the kingdom that had been plagued by a civil war. Kanhoji Angre was the most powerful naval chief on the western coast. During the civil war Kanhoji had supported Tarabai. The Peshwa convinced him of the common danger from the Europeans and secured his loyalty to Shahu.

The practice of granting jagirs was revived. And the office of Peshwa was made hereditary.

Baji Rao I (1720–1740)

After Balaji Viswanath, his son Baji Rao I was appointed Peshwa in 1720 by Shahu. Baji Rao enhanced the power and prestige of the Maratha Empire by defeating the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Rajput Governor of Malwa and the Governor of Gujarat. He freed Bundelkhand from the control of Mughals and for this the Marathas got one third of the territories from its ruler. The commander-in-chief, Trimbak Rao, who troubled the Peshwa, was defeated and killed in the battle of Dabhai near Baroda in 1731. And the Peshwa assumed the office of the commander-in-chief also. By the treaty of Warna signed in 1731, Sambhaji of Kolhapur was forced to accept the sovereignty of Shahu. Thana, Salsette and Bassein were captured from the Portuguese in 1738 and they were driven out of the Konkan coast. At the same time, the English made friendly overtures to the Marathas and got the right to free trade in the Deccan region.

Balaji Baji Rao (1740–1761)

Balaji Baji Rao succeeded as the Peshwa after the death of his father Baji Rao. Known as Nana Sahib, he proved to be a good administrator and an expert in handling financial matters.

Carnatic Expedition

Chanda Sahib, son-in-law of the Nawab of Arcot, after capturing Tiruchirappalli threatened to lay siege to Thanjavur. Its Maratha ruler appealed to Shahu for help in 1739. Responding to this appeal, the Peshwa sent Raghoji Bhonsle (Shahu's brother-in-law) to Thanjavur. Raghoji Bhonsle defeated and killed the Nawab of Arcot, Dost Ali, in 1740. Tiruchirappalli was captured and Chanda Sahib imprisoned. As the Peshwa was subsequently engaged in military expeditions in Bundelkhand and Bengal, Mohammed Ali, who succeeded Dost Ali, could easily retake Arcot and recapture Tiruchirappalli in 1743. The Peshwa then sent his cousin Sadasiva Rao to the Carnatic. Although the authority of the Marathas was re-established, Tiruchirappalli could not be regained.

Battle of Udgir, 1760

A war of succession broke out after the death of Nizam Asaf Jah in 1748. Peshwa supported the eldest son of the Nizam. The army sent by Peshwa under Sadasiva Rao won the battle of Udgir in 1760. This success marked the climax of Maratha military might. The Peshwa took over Bijapur, Aurangabad, Dulatabad, Ahmadnagar and Burhanpur.

The Marathas had brought Rajaputana under their domination after six expeditions between 1741 and 1748. In 1751 the Nawab of Bengal had to cede Orissa and pay an annual tribute to the Marathas. As the Marathas were always after the Mughal throne they entered Delhi in 1752 to drive out the Afghans and Rohillas from Delhi. Imad-ul-Mulk who was made the Wazir with the help of Marathas became a puppet in their hands. After bringing the Punjab under their control, they expelled the representative of Ahmad Shah Abdali, the founder of the Durani Empire in Afghanistan. A major conflict with Ahmad Shah Abdali became therefore inevitable.

The Marathas tried to find allies among the powers in the north-west. But their earlier deeds had antagonized all of them. The Sikhs, Jat chiefs and Muslims did not trust them. The Marathas did not help Siraj-ud-Daulah in the battle of Plassey in 1757. So no help was forthcoming from Bengal either. A move on the part of the Peshwa against the British, both in Karnataka and Bengal, would have probably checked their advance. But the Peshwa's undue interests in Delhi earned the enmity of various regional powers. Ahmad Shah Abdali brought about the disaster at Panipat in 1761.

The Third Battle of Panipat, 1761

The third battle of Panipat, 1761 is one of the decisive battles in the history of India. The defeat in the battle dealt a severe blow to the Marathas and the Mughal Empire and thereby paved the way for the rise of the British power in India.

Circumstances

The tottering Mughal Empire neglected the defence of the North-West frontier areas. This prompted Nadir Shah, the then ruler of Afghanistan, to invade India. In spite of his repeated demands, the Mughal ruler, Muhammad Shah, provided asylum to the Afghan rebels. So, his invasions started in 1739. Delhi was plundered. The Kohinoor diamond and the valuable peacock throne were taken away by Nadir Shah.

When Nadir Shah was assassinated in 1747, one of his military generals, Ahmad Shah Abdali became an independent ruler of Afghanistan. After consolidating his position, he started his military expeditions. The Mughal emperor made peace with him by ceding Multan and the Punjab. Mir Mannu, appointed by the Mughal Emperor as the governor of Punjab, was to act only as an agent of Ahmad Shah Abdali. On Mir Mannu's death, the widow of Mir Mannu, with the help of the Wazir of Delhi, Imad-ul-Mulk, appointed Mir Munim as the Governor of the Punjab, without the consent of Abdali. Infuriated by this move Abdali invaded India and captured the Punjab. Mir Munim fled

to Delhi. Pursuing him Abdali captured Delhi and pillaged it in January 1757. Mathura and Brindavan were desecrated.

Before leaving Delhi, Abdali appointed Mir Bakshi as his agent in Delhi. Timur Shah, his son, was made the Viceroy of Lahore. An expedition under Malhar Rao Holkar and Raghunatha Rao reached Delhi after Abdali had left. They removed the agent of Abdali at Delhi and appointed a man of their choice as the Wazir. Thereafter they captured Sirhind and Lahore in 1758. The Afghan forces were defeated, and Timur Shah deposed.

So, Abdali returned to India in October 1759 and recovered the Punjab. The Marathas were forced to withdraw from Lahore, Multan and Sirhind. The wildest anarchy prevailed in the region. So, the Peshwa sent Dattaji Scindia, the brother of Mahadhaji Scindia, to the Punjab to set matters right. But Abdali defeated and killed him in the battle (1760). Malhar Rao Holkar was also defeated at Sikandara. Thereupon the Peshwa recruited a huge army under the command of Sadasiva Rao.

Abdali responded by forming an alliance with Najib-ud-Daulah of Rohilkhand and Shuja-ud-Daulah of Oudh. The Marathas could not find allies among the northern powers, as they had already alienated from the Nawab of Oudh, the Sikh and Jat chiefs and gained the distrust of the Rajputs.

The Maratha army was under the nominal command of Vishwas Rao, the young son of the Peshwa. The real command, however, was in the hands of Sadasiva Rao. On their way, they were joined by the Holkar, Scindia and Gaikwar. Around this time, Alamgir II, the Mughal Emperor had been assassinated and his eldest son crowned himself as Shah Alam II. But the Wazir who manoeuvred the assassination enthroned Shah Jahan III. Sadasiva Rao intruded and deposed Shah Jahan III and proclaimed Shah Alam II as Emperor. After the preliminaries were settled, Sadasiva Rao, instead of attacking the forces of Abdali, remained quiet for a long time, until the scarcity of food became acute. Abdali stationed his troops in the fertile doab from where he could get food without interruption.

Effects of the Battle of Panipat

The third battle of Panipat was fought on 14 January 1761. The Maratha army was completely routed. The Peshwa's son Viswas Rao, Sadasiva Rao and numerous Maratha commanders were killed. Holkar fled and the contingents of Scindia followed him. The Peshwa was stunned by the tragic news. The Peshwa died broken hearted in June 1761.

After the battle of Panipat, Abdali recognized Shah Alam II as the Emperor of Delhi. He got an annual tribute. The Marathas, though they received a severe blow initially, managed to restore their power within ten years in the north by becoming the guardian of the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam.

Peshwa Madhav Rao I (1761-1772) and His Successors

In 1761, Madhav Rao, the son of Balaji Baji Rao, became the Peshwa under the regency of Raghoba, the younger brother of Peshwa. Madhav Rao tried to regain the Maratha power which was lost in the battle of Panipat. In 1763 a fierce battle was fought with the Nizam of Hyderabad. His expeditions (1765–1767) against Haider Ali of Mysore were successful. However Haider Ali soon recovered almost all his lost territories. But Madhav Rao regained them in 1772 and Haider Ali was forced to sign a humiliating treaty.

The Peshwa reasserted control over northern India by defeating the Rohillas (Pathans) and subjugating the Rajput states and Jat Chiefs. Shah Alam II, the fugitive Emperor, was in Allahabad under the protection of the British. In 1771, the Marathas brought him back to Delhi. The Emperor ceded Kora and Allahabad to them. But the sudden death of Peshwa in 1772 brought an end to his glorious career.

As Madhav Rao I had no sons, his younger brother Narayan Rao became Peshwa in 1772. But he was murdered the next year. His posthumous son Sawai Madhav Rao (Madhav Rao II) was proclaimed Peshwa on the 40th day of his birth. After the death of Madhav Rao II, Baji Rao II, the son of Raghunath Rao became the Peshwa and was the last Peshwa.

The Anglo-Maratha Wars

The First Anglo Maratha War (1775-1782)

Madhav Rao Narayan was an infant Peshwa under the regency of Nana Fadnavis. The usurping of power by Ragunath Rao, uncle of the former Peshwa Madhava Rao I, provided the scope for the Company administration to fish in the troubled waters. The Company administration in Bombay supported Ragunath Rao in return for getting Salsette and Bassein.

As Mahadaji Scindia and the Bhonsle of Nagpur turned pro-British, the Marathas had to concede Thane and Salsette to the latter. By the treaty of Salbai, in 1782, Ragunath Rao was pensioned off. Following this, peace prevailed between the Company and the Marathas for about two decades.

(b) The Second Anglo-Maratha War (1803-1806)

The death of Nana Fadnavis resulted in a scramble for his huge possessions. Peshwa Baji Rao II was dethroned. In the then trying circumstances, he had to accept the help of the British. Wellesley, the then Governor General, forced the Subsidiary Alliance on the Peshwa. The treaty of Bassein was signed in 1802. According to the treaty the territory to be ceded should fetch an income of Rs. 26 Lakhs. The leading Maratha States regarded the treaty as humiliating and hence decided to defy it. So the second Anglo-Maratha war broke out. In spite of the brave resistance put up by the Marathas, the Maratha leaders were completely routed. The Subsidiary Alliance was accepted. The British got Doab, Ahmadnagar, Broach and all of the hilly regions.

The Third Anglo-Maratha War (1817-1819)

Peshwa Baji Rao II became anti-British, as the prime minister of the Gaikwar (ruler) of Baroda Gangadhar Sastri was killed by Trimbakji, a favourite of Peshwa. At the instance of the Resident at Poona, Mountstuart Elphinstone, Trimabakji was imprisoned. The murderer however managed to escape from the prison with the assistance of the Peshwa. Peshwa was also charged with creating the Maratha confederacy and plotting with Scindia, Bhonsle and Holkar against the British. So, the British forced the Peshwa to sign a new treaty at Poona in 1817. Accordingly,

- The Peshwa resigned the headship of the Maratha confederacy.
- Ceded Konkan to the British and recognised the independence of the Gaikwar.

Baji Rao was not reconciled to this humiliation. So when the British were busily engaged in the suppression of the Pindaris, Baji Rao II burnt down the Poona Residency. General Smith rushed to Poona and captured it, with the Peshwa fleeing to Satara, which was also captured by General Smith. Baji Rao fled from place to place. General Smith defeated his forces at Ashta, Kirkee and Korgaon. Finally, Baji Rao surrendered to Elphinstone in 1818.

Outcome of the Third Anglo- Maratha War

- The British abolished the Peshwai (office of the Peshwa) and annexed all the Peshwa's dominions. But the jagirs of the fief holders were restored.
- Until his death in 1851 Baji Rao II remained a prisoner with an annual pension.
- Pratap Singh, a descendent of Shivaji, was made the king of a small kingdom carved around Satara.
- The Maratha Confederacy organised by Baji Rao I comprising Bhonsle, Holkar and Scindia was dissolved.
- Mountstuart Elphinstone, who had been Resident at Poona, became Governor of Bombay.

Maratha Administration under Peshwas (1714-1818)

The Peshwa was one of the Ashta Pradhan of Shivaji. This office was not a hereditary one. As the power and prestige of the king declined, the Peshwas rose to prominence. The genius of Balaji Vishwanath (1713-1720) made the office of the Peshwa supreme and hereditary. The Peshwas virtually controlled the whole administration, usurping the powers of the king. They were also recognized as the religious head of the state.

Central Secretariat

The centre of the Maratha administration was the Peshwa Secretariat at Poona. It dealt with the revenues and expenditure of all the districts, the accounts submitted by

the village and district officials. The pay and rights of all grades of public servants and the budgets under civil, military and religious heads were also handled. The daily register recorded all revenues, all grants and the payments received from foreign territories.

Provinces

Provinces under the Peshwas were of various sizes. Larger provinces were under the provincial governors called Sar-subahdars. The divisions in the provinces were termed Subahs and Pranths. The Mamlatdar and Kamavistar were Peshwa's representatives in the districts. They were responsible for every branch of district administration. Deshmukhs and Deshpandes were district officers who were in charge of accounts and were to observe the activities of Mamlatdars and Kamavistars. It was a system of checks and balances.

In order to prevent misappropriation of public money, the Maratha government collected a heavy sum (Rasad) from the Mamlatdars and other officials. It was collected on their first appointment to a district. In Baji Rao II's time, these offices were auctioned off. The clerks and menials were paid for 10 or 11 months in a year.

Village Administration

The village was the basic unit of administration and was self-supportive. The Patel was the chief village officer and was responsible for remitting revenue collections to the centre. He was not paid by the government. His post was hereditary. The Patel was helped by the Kulkarni or accountant and record-keeper. There were hereditary village servants who had to perform the communal functions. The carpenters, blacksmiths and other village artisans gave 20 eggar or compulsory labour.

Urban Administration

In towns and cities the chief officer was the Kotwal. The maintenance of peace and order, regulation of prices, settling civil disputes and sending of monthly accounts to the governments were his main duties. He was the head of the city police and also functioned as the magistrate.

Sources of Revenue

Land revenue was the main source of income. The Peshwas gave up the system of sharing the produce of the agricultural land followed under Shivaji's rule. The Peshwas followed the system of tax farming. Land was settled against a stipulated amount to be paid annually to the government. The fertility of the land was assessed for fixation of taxes. Income was derived from the forests. Permits were given on the payment of a fee for cutting trees and using pastures. Revenue was derived even from the sale of grass, bamboo, fuel wood, honey and the like.

The land revenue assessment was based on a careful survey. Land was divided into three classes: according to the kinds of the crops, facilities for irrigation, and productivity of the land. The villagers were the original settlers who acquired the forest. They could not be deprived of their lands. But only the Patel could represent their rights to the higher authorities.

Other sources of revenue were Chauth and Sardeshmukhi.

The Chauth was divided into

- i. 25 percent for the ruler
- ii. 66 percent for Maratha officials and military heads for the maintenance of troops.
- iii. 6 percent for the Pant Sachiv (Chief, a Brahman by birth)
- iv. 3 percent for the tax collectors.

Customs, excise duties and sale of forest produce also yielded much income. Goldsmiths were allowed to mint coins on payment of royalty to the government and getting license for the purpose. They had to maintain a certain standard. When it was found that the standard was not being met all private mints were closed in 1760 and a central mint was established.

Miscellaneous taxes were also collected. It included 1. Tax on land, held by Deshmukhs and Deshpandes. 2. Tax on land kept for the village Mahars. 3. Tax on the lands irrigated by wells. 4. Housetax from all except Brahmins and village officials. 5. Annual fee for the testing of weights and measures. 6. Tax on the re-marriage of widows. 7. Tax on sheep and buffaloes. 8. Pasture fee. 9. Tax on melon cultivation in river beds. 10. Succession duty. 11. Duty on the sale of horses, etc. When the Maratha government was in financial difficulty, it levied on all land-holders, Kurja-Patti or Tasti-Patti, a tax equal to one year's income of the tax-payer.

The administration of justice also earned some income. A fee of 25% was charged on money bonds. Fines were collected from persons suspected or found guilty of adultery. Brahmins were exempted from duty on things imported for their own use.

Police System

Watchmen, generally the Mahars, were employed in every village. But whenever crime was on the rise, government sent forces from the irregular infantry to control crimes. The residents of the disturbed area had to pay an additional house tax to meet the expenditure arising out of maintaining these armed forces.

Baji Rao II appointed additional police officers to detect and seize offenders. In the urban areas, magisterial and police powers were given to the Kotwal. Their additional duties were to monitor the prices, take a census of the inhabitants, and conduct trials on civil cases, supply labour to the government and levy fees from the professional duties given to the Nagarka or police superintendent.

Judicial System

The Judicial System was very imperfect. There was no codified law. There were no rules of procedure. Arbitration was given high priority. If it failed, then the case was transferred for decision to a panchayat appointed by the Patel in the village and by the leading merchants in towns. The panchayat was a powerful institution. Re-trial also took place. Appeals were made to the Mamlatdar.

In criminal cases there was a hierarchy of the judicial officers. At the top was the Raja Chhatrapati and below him were the Peshwa, Sar-Subahdar, the Mamlatdar and the Patel. Flogging and torture were inflicted to extort confession.

Army

The Maratha military system under the Peshwas was modelled on the Mughal military system. The mode of recruitment, payment of salaries, provisions for the families of the soldiers, and the importance given to the cavalry showed a strong resemblance to the Mughal military system.

The Peshwas gave up the notable features of the military system followed under Shivaji. Shivaji had recruited soldiers locally from Maratha region. But the Peshwas drafted soldiers from all parts of India and from all social groups. The army had Arabs, Abyssinians, Rajputs, Rohillas and Sikhs. The Peshwa's army comprised mercenaries of the feudal chieftains. As the fiefs of the rival chiefs were in the same area, there were lots of internal disputes. It affected the solidarity of the people of the Maratha state.

Cavalry

The cavalry was naturally the main strength of the Maratha army. Every jagirdar had to bring a stipulated number of horsemen for a general muster, every year. The horsemen were divided into three classes based on the quality of the horses they kept.

Infantry and Artillery

The Marathas preferred to serve in the cavalry. So men for infantry were recruited from other parts of the country. The Arabs, Rohillas, Sikhs and Sindhis in the Maratha infantry were paid a higher salary compared to the Maratha soldiers. The Maratha artillery was manned mostly by the Portuguese and Indian Christians. Later on, the English were also recruited.

Navy

The Maratha navy was built for the purpose of guarding the Maratha ports, thereby checking piracy, and collecting customs duties from the incoming and outgoing ships. Balaji Vishwanath built naval bases at Konkan, Khanderi and Vijayadurg. Dockyard facilities were also developed.

Maratha Rule in Tamilnadu

Circumstances leading to its establishment

Krishna Devaraya, during his reign (1509- 1529), developed the Nayankara system. Accordingly, the Tamil country was divided into three large Nayankaras: Senji, Thanjavur and Madurai. Under the new system the subordinate chieftains were designated as Palayakkarars and their fiefdom as Palayams. Thanjavur which remained as a part of the Chola territories first and then of the Pandya kingdom became a vassal state of the Madurai Sultanate, from which it passed into the hands of Nayaks. The rivalry between the Nayaks of Madurai and Thanjavur finally led to the eclipse of Nayak rule of Thanjavur in 1673. Troops from Bijapur, led by the Maratha general Venkoji, defeated the Nayak of Madurai and captured Thanjavur. Venkoji crowned himself king, and Maratha rule began in Thanjavur in 1676.

When Shivaji invaded the Carnatic in 1677, he removed Venkoji and placed his half-brother Santaji on the throne. But Venkoji recaptured Thanjavur and, after his death, his son Shahji became the ruler of Thanjavur kingdom. Shaji had no heir to succeed. So his brother Serfoji I became the next ruler and remained in power for sixteen years (1712-1728). After him one of his brothers Tukkoji succeeded him (1728), followed by Pratap Singh (1739- 1763), whose son Thuljaji ruled up to 1787. Serfoji II aged 10, was then crowned, with Thuljoji's brother Amarsingh acting as Regent. Disputing this succession, the English thrust an agreement on Serfoji II, according to which the latter was forced to cede the administration of the kingdom to the British. Serfoji II was the last ruler of the Bhonsle dynasty of the Maratha principality of Thanjavur.

Raja Desinghu:

The Maratha king Rajaram, threatened by Mughal forces, had to flee from Raigarh and take asylum in Senji. Pursuing him, the Mughal forces led by General Zulfikar Khan, and then by Daud Khan, succeeded in taking over Senji. During the Mughal expedition against Senji, a Bundela Rajput chieftain, Swarup Singh was employed as Kiladar (fort commandant) of Senji in 1700. In due course Swarup Singh gained control over the entire Senji. After his death in 1714, his son Tej Singh (Desinghu) assumed the governorship of Senji. Desinghu refused to pay tribute to the Mughal emperor and invited the wrath of Nawab Sadat-ul-lah Khan. In the ensuing battle Raja Desinghu, who was only twenty two years old then, was killed. His young wife committed sati. The gallantry displayed by the daring Rajput youth against the Nawab is immortalized in many popular ballads in Tamil.

Serfoji II

Serfoji II was a remarkable ruler. He was educated by the German Christian missionary Friedrich Schwartz, Serfoji. Similarly Serfoji II turned out to be a well-known practitioner of Western science and medicine. Yet he was a devoted keeper of Indian traditions. He mastered several European languages and had an impressive library of books in every branch of learning. Serfoji's modernising projects included the establishment of a printing press (the first press for Marathi and Sanskrit) and

enrichment of the Saraswati Mahal Library. His most innovative project, however, was the establishment of free modern public schools run by his court, for instruction in English and the vernacular languages.

Serfoji II found in his contemporary missionary scholar C.S. John in Tranquebar, an innovator in education. John carried out reforms and experiments in schooling ranging from residential arrangements for students and innovations in curriculum and pedagogy. But his most important proposal was a project submitted to the English colonial government in 1812, urging it to sponsor free schools for Indian children, for instruction in Tamil and English. This was at a time when English education was not available to non-Christian Indians.

Thomas Munro, governor of Madras, proposed a scheme for elementary public schools in the 1820s, but the Company government did not establish a modern school for natives in Madras till 1841. In contrast, from the start, the German missionaries had run several free vernacular and English schools in the southern provinces since 1707. Serfoji II was in advance of both the missionary and the colonial state, for as early as 1803 in Thanjavur he had established the first modern public school for non-Christian natives. While Indian rulers often endowed educational institutions of higher learning, they did not establish elementary schools, nor did they administer any schools or colleges. Serfoji's most striking initiative was the founding and management of free elementary and secondary schools for orphans and the poor in Thanjavur city and other adjacent places. Included were schools for all levels, charity schools, colleges and padashalas for Sanskrit higher learning. The schools catered to the court elites, Vedic scholars, orphans and the poor.

A second innovation was the introduction of navavidya ('modern' or 'new' learning) in the state-run schools.

According to an 1823 report produced for Governor Munro's census of education, 21 of the 44 free schools in the wider Thanjavur district were run by Serfoji's government, 19 by the missionaries, one by a temple. There were three schools that were run by teachers themselves free of cost. In the state-run free schools Serfoji made modern education available to all.

In 1822, at the free school in Muktabal Chattiram the king's favourite almshouse established in 1803, 15 teachers taught a total of 464 students of diverse castes, in two classes, in the morning and in the evening. Serfoji also supported a free school for needy Christians, run by missionaries in the village of Kannandangudi.

Serfoji II established Dhanvantari Mahal, a research institution that produced herbal medicine for humans and animals. Maintaining case-sheets of patients was introduced. Physicians of modern medicine, Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha schools undertook research on drugs and herbs for medical cure. They produced eighteen volumes of research material. Serfoji also catalogued the important herbs in the form of exquisite hand paintings.

Serfoji's strategic initiatives in modern education enabled the Thanjavur court elite and subjects to enter and benefit from the emerging colonial social and economic order. The court officials, mostly Brahmins, trained in European knowledge, technologies and arts became leading agents of colonial modernity, equal to the English-educated dubashes, writers and interpreters, both Hindu and Christian, who mediated between the Europeans and Indian courts. Two of Serfoji's pandits (one of them was Kottaiyur Sivakolundu Desigar) joined the Company's College of Fort St. George and became leaders in translation and print culture. The careers and projects of Serfoji and John illuminate the important roles that enterprising individuals, and small places, such as a Danish-Tamil fishing village and a Maratha-Tamil principality, played in the history of change in colonial Tamilnadu.

Serfoji II was a patron of traditional Indian arts like dance and music. He authored Kumarasambhava Champu, Devendra Kuravanji, and Mudra rakshaschaya. He introduced western musical instruments like clarinet, and violin in Carnatic music. He is also credited with popularising the unique Thanjavur style of painting. Serfoji was interested in painting, gardening, coin-collecting, martial arts and patronized chariot-racing, hunting and bull-fighting. He created the first zoological garden in Tamilnadu in the Thanjavur palace premises.

Serfoji II died on 7th March 1832 after almost forty years of his rule. His death was mourned throughout the kingdom and his funeral procession was attended by more than 90, 000 people. At his funeral, Rev. Bishop Heber observed: 'I have seen many crowned heads, but no one whose department was princelier'.

SOUTH INDIAN HISTORY
Sangam And Pallavas

Age of vijayanagaram and Bahmani south Indian History	7th Term II	Unit 1- Vijayanagaram and Bahmani
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7th Term II
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 Sadasiva 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 Pandurangamahatya. 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 Periazhvar, 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. Wakil-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 Bahmani kingdom.
- 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.

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. Periyapuranam 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 Mahendravarma 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 itihasas. 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-raja-parameswaran. 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 Gunaputra, a Jain monk, as his master. Pujyapatar 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 rrukkattukottam, near Puducherry. It records 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-sanas. 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 Alvars, 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 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 werelocated 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 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. Twoextraordinary 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 identified 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, ear-rings 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 garbhagriha 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 offshoots 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 Tamilnadu 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 Tamilnadu.

Sources

- Hymns of Thevaram corpus; Nalayiradivya prapandam; Periyapuram; 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 Divviyaprabandham 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 Periyapuranam 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 Periyapuranam 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 evolvestatehood, 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.

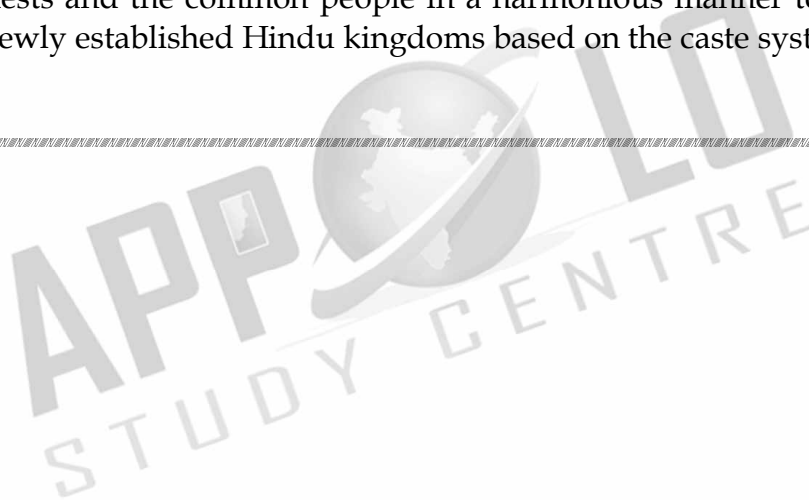
Sri Ramanujar (1017-1138)

- 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 Brahmans. 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 RajaRaja 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 I 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 caturvedimangalam (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, Ilangovals 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 type 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 administrated 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 Brahmins) 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 Rajendra Chola 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-politicalgeography 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 Brihadishvarar 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,
- Uraiur, Kovilpatti, Piranmalai and others. In due course, both groups merged and got incorporated under the banner of ainutruvar, disai-ayirattu-ainutruvar and valanciyar 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 Pudukkottai.

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 Tamiraparani. 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 Tamil dynasty 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. Sundarapandyan 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 present-day 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 Cholamandalam (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, Sakalapurvana 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 Brahmamathi 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-l-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 Cittirameliperiyannattar.

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, Tiruvempavai, 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 Saivites; 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 circumbulations. 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 Sittannaval. Paintings are found in the temples in Sittannaval, Arittaapatti, Tirumalaipuram and Tirunedunkarai. A 9th century inscription from Sittannaval 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 (presentday 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-Tangadiin 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 Bahmani armies 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.

SOUTH INDIAN HISTORY - PANDYAS

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Unit 4

Ancient Cities of Tamilagam

Like Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro in ancient India, there were famous towns in ancient Tamilagam too. Madurai, Kanchi and Poompuhar are prominent among them.

Tamil literature, accounts of foreign travellers and archaeological finds provide us information about the ancient towns of Tamilagam.

Mesopotamian civilisation is the earliest civilisation in the world. It is 6500 years old.

Poompuhar

Poompuhar is one of the oldest towns in ancient Tamilagam. This is the place where well known characters of Silapathikaram, Kovalan and Kannagi lived. It was also a port town along the Bay of Bengal. The ports were established for facilitating maritime trade. Even in times past, countries began to export their surplus products and import the scarce commodities by sea. Poompuhar is one such historic port that emerged in the wake of increasing maritime trade. It is a coastal town near the present-day Mayiladuthurai and is located where the river Cauvery drains into the sea.

Poompuhar Port

Poompuhar was also known by names such as Puhar and Kaveripoompattinam. It served as the port of the early Chola kingdom. One of the popular Sangam Literature. Pattinappaalai and Tamil epics, Silappadikaram and Manimegalai, have references to the brisk sea-borne trade that took place in the port city, Puhar.

Silappadikaram, in particular, speaks about the greatness of Poompuhar. The lead female character of Silappadikaram is Kannagi. Her father is Maanaigan. Sea traders are known by the name Maanaigan. The male character Kovalan's father is Maasathuvan. Maasathuvan means a big trader. It is clear from the text that Poompuhar was a place where big traders and sea traders had settled down.

Numerous merchants from foreign countries such as Greece and Rome landed at Poompuhar. Due to busy and continuous trade, many of them stayed on indefinitely in Poompuhar. There are evidences of foreigner settlements in the town. People speaking many languages inhabited Poompuhar in its glorious days. As loading and unloading of ships took some months, the foreign traders began to interact with the local people during that period. This enabled the natives to learn foreign languages for communication. Similarly, the foreigners also learn Tamil to communicate with the natives. This contact facilitated not only exchange of goods but also languages and ideas resulting in cultural blending.

The traders of Poompuhar were known for their honesty and integrity. They sold goods at legitimate prices. Pattinappaalai states that "selling any commodity at a higher price was considered bad". The author of Pattinappaalai, Kadiyalar Uruttirangannanar, belonged to 2nd century BCE. This is indicative of Puhar's antiquity. Horses were imported by sea. Pepper was procured through the land route. Gold that came from Vadamalai was polished and exported to the overseas countries. Sandal from Western Ghats, pearls from southern sea, corals from eastern sea and food items from Eelam were imported.

Poompuhar had been built differently from other towns. Each social group had a separate settlement. Streets were broad and straight, dotted with well-designed houses. There was also a dockyard.

We can learn about the life of the people of Puhar by reading Pattinappaalai and "Puhar Kandam" of Silappathikaram. Puhar was a busy port upto 200 CE. It might have been either washed away by sea or destroyed by big shore waves. The remains of that destruction can still be seen in the present Poompuhar town.

Madurai

Madurai has been one of the oldest cities in India. Its antiquity can be understood from the sobriquet “Sangam Valartha Nagaram” it has earned. Pandyas, the Cholas and later the Kalabras ruled Madurai in the ancient period. During medieval times, later Cholas and later Pandyas followed by the Nayaks ruled this historic town. This has resulted in cultural blending. Trade flourished and evidence for this has been unearthed in archaeological excavation done in Keezhadi near Madurai.

Madurai is proudly associated with Tamil sangam (academies), which worked for the promotion of Tamil language. Forty-nine poets were associated with the last Sangam. Ahil, fragrant wood, was brought from Port Thondi to Madurai. King Solomon of ancient Israel imported pearls from Uvari near the Pandyan port, Korkai.

Madurai had Naalangadi and Allangadi.

- ❖ Naalangadi – Day Market.
- ❖ Allangadi – Evening Market.

Madurai is known as Thooga Nagaram (the city that never sleeps). Madurai was a safe place where women purchased things from Allangadi without any fear.

A mint of Roman coins was present at Madurai. The coins of other countries were also minted at Madurai, which is a proof for the glory of Madurai. The fame of Madurai is attested by the accounts of the Greek historian Megasthenes. Chanakya, Chandragupta’s minister, makes a mention of Madurai in his book, Arthashastra. In the moat around the town, tunnels had been constructed in such a way that even elephants could comfortably enter.

Kanchi

A place of learning is called school. Several schools were established in great numbers for the first time in Kancheepuram. Jains studied in Jainapalli, and Buddhists studied in Viharas.

The greatness of Kanchi as an educational centre can be understood from the fact that the Chinese traveller Hieun Tsang who studied at Nalanda University visited Kanchi ‘Kadigai’ to pursue his further studies. Poet Kalidasa says, “Kanchi is the best of the towns”. Tamil poet saint Thirunavukarasar praises Kanchi as “Kalviyil Karaiillatha Kanchi”.

Hieun Tsang remarked that Kanchi can be counted as one among the seven sacred places like Budh Gaya and Sanchi. Kanchi is the oldest town in Thondai

Nadu. Scholars like Dharmabalar, Jothibalar, Sumathi and Bodhi Dharmar were born in Kanchi.

Kanchi is also known as the temple town. The famous temple of great architectural beauty, Kailasanathar temple, was built by later Pallava king Rajasimha at Kanchi. During the Pallava period, a large number of cave temples were built. The Buddhist monk Manimegalai spent the last part of her life at Kanchi speaks highly of that town.

Water management played an important role in the agrarian society of those times. Hundreds of lakes were created for storing water around the town of Kanchi. These lakes were well connected with canals. During the later period, Kanchi came to be known as the district of lakes. Water management skills of the ancient Tamils can be understood from the construction of Kallanai in the Chola country and the lakes and canals in Kanchi.

Apart from Poompuhar, Madurai and Kanchi, there were other towns too in ancient Tamilagam. Korkai, Vanchi, Thondi, Uraiyur, Musiri, Karuvur, Mamallapuram, Thanjai, Thagadoor and Kaayal are some of them. By conducting archaeological research, more information can be gathered about these places.

Poompuhar was a port. Madurai was a trading town. Kanchi was an educational centre.

Tamil sayings represent the uniqueness of each ancient Tamil kingdom

- ❖ Chola Nadu - sorudaithu (rice in abundance).
- ❖ Pandya Nadu - muthudaithu (pearls in abundance).
- ❖ Chera Nadu - vezhamudaithu (elephants in abundance).
- ❖ Thondai Nadu - Saandrorudaithu (scholars in abundance)

- ❖ **Chera Nadu** Comprised Malayalam-speaking regions and Tamil districts of Coimbatore, Nilgiris, Karur, Kanniyakumari and Some parts of present Kerala.
- ❖ **Chola Nadu** Present-day Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Nagai, Trichy and Pudukkottai districts.
- ❖ **Pandya Nadu** - Erstwhile composite Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Sivagangai, Thuthukkudi and Tirunelveli districts
- ❖ **Thondai Nadu** - Present-day Kancheepuram, Dharmapuri, Tiruvallur, Tiruvannamalai, Vellore and northern parts of Villupuram districts.

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6th term 3

Unit 1- Society and Culture in Ancient Tamizhagam: The Sangam Age

The Sangam Age

The word 'Sangam' refers to the association of poets who flourished under the royal patronage of the Pandya kings at Madurai. The poems composed by these poets are collectively known as Sangam literature. The period in which these poems were composed is called the Sangam Age.

Sources

Inscriptions	Hathigumpha Inscription of King Karavela of Kalinga, Pyugalur (near Karur) Inscription, Ashokan Edicts II and XIII, and inscriptions found at Mangulam, Alagarmalai and Kilavalavu (all near Madurai)
Copper Plates	Velcikudi and Chinnamanur copper plates
Coins	Issued by the Chera, Cholas, Pandyas and the chieftains of snagam age as well as the Roman coins
Megalithic Monuments	Burials and Hero stones
Excavated Materials from	Adichanallur, Arikamedu, Kodumanal, Puhar, Korkai, Alagankulam, Uraiyur
Literary Sources	Tholkappiyam, Ettuthagai (eight anthologies), Pathupattu (ten idylls), Pathinankeezhkanakku (A collection of eighteen poetic works), Pattinapalai and Mazduraikanji, Epics silapathikaram and Manimegalai.
Foregin Notices	The Peripuls of the Erythrean Sea, Pliny's Natual History, Ptolemy's Geography, Megasthenes' Indica, Rajavali, Mahavamsa and Dipavamsa

Time Span : 3rd Century BC (BCE) to c, 3rd century AD (CE)
 Tamizhagam : Vengadam (Tirupathi hill) in the north to Kanyakumari(Cape Comorian) in the south,
 Bounded by Sea on the east and the west.

Age : Iron Age
 Culture : Megalithic
 Polity : Kingship
 Dynasties ruled : The Cheras, the Cholas and the Pandyas

Tholkappiyam is a work on Tamil grammar. It represents the quality of Tamil people of the Sangam Age.

George L. Hart, Professor of Tamil language at the University of California, has said that Tamil is as old as Latin. The language arose as an entirely independent tradition with non-influence of other languages.

Cheras

Muvendaras (Three Great Kings) controlled the territories of Tamizhagam during the Sangam Age. The Tamil word 'Vendar' was used to refer to three dynasties, namely the Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas. The Cheras ruled over the central and north Travancore, Cochin, south Malabar and Kongu region of Tamil Nadu. The Pathitirupattu (a collection of ten decades of verses) provides information about the Chera kings. It is known that the Chera king Senguttuvan went on a military expedition to North India. He brought stones from the Himalayas for making the idol of Kannagi, an epic character from Silappathikaram. He introduced pattini cult. Chera Senguttuvan's younger brother was Ilango Adigal. He was the author of Silappathikaram. Another Chera king, Cherallirumporai, issued coins in his name. Some Chera coins bear their emblem of bow and arrow.

Prominent Chera Rulers

- Udayan Cheralathan
- Imayavaramban Netun Cheralathan
- Chera Senguttuvan
- Cherallirumporai

Cholas

The Chola kingdom of Sangam period extended upto Venkatam (Tirupathi) hills. The Kaveri delta region remained the central part of the kingdom. This area was later known as Cholamandalam. Karikal Valavan or Karikalan was the most famous of the Chola kings. He defeated the combined army of the Cheras, Pandyas and the eleven Velir chieftains who supported them at Venni, a small village in the Thanjavur region. He converted forests into cultivable lands. He built Kallanai (meaning a dam made of stone) across the river Kaveri to develop agriculture. Their port Puhar attracted merchants from various regions of the Indian Ocean. The Pattinapaalai, a poetic work in the Pathinenkeezhkanakku, gives elaborate information of the trading activity during the rule of Karikalan.

Prominent Chola Rulers

- Ilanchetsenni
- Karikal Valavan
- Kocengannan
- Killi Valavan

- Perunarkilli

Pandyas

The Pandyas ruled the present-day southern Tamil Nadu. The Pandya kings patronized the Tamil poets and scholars. Several names of Pandya kings are mentioned in the Sangam literature. Nedunchezhiyan is hailed as the most popular warrior. He defeated the combined army of the Chera, Chola and five Velir Chieftains at Talayalanganam. He is praised as the lord of Korkai. Pandya country was well known for pearl hunting. Pandya kings issued many coins. Their coins have elephant on one side and fish on another side. MudukudimiPeruvazhuthi issued coins to commemorate his performance of many Vedic rituals.

Prominent Pandya Rulers

- >Nediyon
- >MudukudimiPeruvazhuthi
- >Nanmaran
- >Nedunchezhiyan

The Titles Assumed by the Muvendars

Cheran	Cholan	Pandiyar
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhavan • Kuttuvan • Vanavan • Irumporai 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senni • Sembian • Killi • Valavan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maran • Valuthi • Sezhiyan • Tennar

Royal Insignia

Sceptre (kol), drum (murasu) and white umbrella (venkudai) were used as the symbols of royal authority.

Muvendar	Garland	Port	Capital	Symbols
Cheras	Palmyra flower	Muziri / Tondi	Vanchi / Karur	Bow and arrow
Cholas	Fig (Athi) flower	Puhar	Uraiyur/ Puhar	Tigar
Pandyas	Margosa (Neem) flower	Korkai	Madurai	Two Fish

Minor Chieftains - Ay, Velir and Kizhar

Apart from three great kings, there were several brave independent minor chieftains. The name 'Ay' is derived from the ancient Tamil word 'Ayar' (meaning shepherd). Among Ay chiefs of Sangam Age, Anthiran, Titiran and Nannan were the important names. The Velirs-Vellalars- constituted the ruling and land-

owning class in the ancient Tamizhagam. The famous Velirs were the seven patrons (KadaiyechuVallalgal). They were Pari, Kari, Ori, Pegan, Ay, Adiyaman and Nalli. They were popular for their generous patronage of Tamil poets. Kizhar was the village chief.

Sangam Polity Kingship

The kingship was hereditary. The king was called Ko. It is the shortened form of Kon. Vendan, Kon, Mannan, Kotravan and Iraivan were the other titles by which the king was addressed. The eldest son of the reigning king generally succeeded to the throne. The coronation ceremony was known as arasukattilerudhal or mudisoottuvila. The crown prince was known as komahan, while the young ones were known as Ilango, Ilanchezhiyan and Ilanjeral. King held a daily durbar (naal- avai) at which he heard and resolved all the disputes. The income to the state was through taxation. Land tax was the main source of revenue and it was called 'Irai'. This apart, the state collected tolls and customs (sungam), tributes and fines.

The kings and soldiers wore the heroic anklet (Veera kazhal). On the anklet, the name and achievement of the wearer were blazoned. Spies were used not only to find out what was happening within the country, but also in foreign countries. A wound in the back was considered a disgrace and there are instances of kings fasting unto death because they had suffered such a wound in the battle.

The Court

The king's court was called Arasavai. The king occupied a ceremonious throne in the court called Ariyanai. In the court, the king was surrounded by officials, distinguished visitors and court poets. The rulers had five-fold duties. They were encouraging learning, performing rituals, presenting gifts, protecting people and punishing the criminals. Ambassadors were employed by the kings. They played a significant role. The king was assisted by a number of officials. They were divided into Aimperunguzhu (five-member committee) and Enberaayam (eight-member group).

Army

The king's army consisted of four divisions, namely, infantry, cavalry, elephants and chariot force. The army was known as 'Padai'. The chief of the army was known as Thanaitalaivan. The prominent weapons used during this period were sword, kedayam (shield), tomaram (lance), spears, bows and arrows. Tomaram is mentioned as a missile to be thrown at the enemy from a distance. The place where the weapons were kept was known as paddaikottil. The forts were protected by deep moats and trenches. The war drum was worshipped as a deity.

Law and Justice

The king was the final authority for appeal. In the capital town, the court of justice was called Avai. In the villages, Mandram served as the place for dispensing justice. In civil cases, the method of trial followed was to call upon the plaintiff to thrust his hand into a pot containing a cobra. If the cobra bit him, he was sentenced; if the cobra did not bite him he was considered innocent and acquitted. Punishment was always severe. Execution was ordered for theft cases. The punishment awarded for other crimes included beheading, mutilation of the offending limbs of the body, torture and imprisonment and imposition of fines.

Local Administration

The entire kingdom was called Mandalam. Mandalam was divided into Nadus. Kurrm was subdivision of Nadu. The Ur was a village, classified into perur (big village), Sirur (a small village) and Mudur (an old village) depending upon its population, size and antiquity. Pattinam was the name for a coastal town and Puhar was the general term for harbour town.

Important Towns

Puhar, Uraiyur, Korkai, Madurai, Muziri, Vanji or Karur and Kanchi.

Thinai (tract)-based Sangam Society

The land form was divided into five thinais (eco-regions).

Eco -region (Thinai)	Landscape	Occupation	People	Deity
Kurinji	Palmyra flower	Hunting /gathering	Kuravar / Kurathiyar	Murugan
Mullai	Forest region	Herding	Aayar /aaichiyar	Maayon
Marutham	Riverine track (plains)	Agriculture	Uzhavan /uzhathiyar	Indiran
Neithal	Coastal region	Fishing / salt making	Parathavar / Nulathiyar	Varunan
Palai	Parched land	Heroic deeds	Maravar / Marathiyar	Kotravai

Land was classified according to its fertility. Marutham was called menpulam (fertile land). It produced paddy and sugarcane. The rest of the landscape, excluding Neithal, was called vanpulam (hard land), and it produced pulses and dry grains.

Status of Women

There was no restriction for women in social life. There were learned and wise women. Forty women poets had lived and left behind their valuable works. Marriage was a matter of self-choice. However, chastity (karpu) was considered the highest virtue of women. Sons and daughters had equal shares in their parents' property.

Religious Beliefs and Social Divisions

The primary deity of the Tamils was Seyon or Murugan. Other gods worshipped during Sangam period were Sivan, Mayon (Vishnu), Indiran, Varunan and Kotravai. The Hero stone (natukkal) worship was in practice. Buddhism and Jainism also co-existed.

Dress and Ornaments

The rich people wore muslin, silk and fine cotton garments. The common people wore two pieces of clothes made of cotton. The Sangam literature refers to clothes, which were thinner than the skin of a snake (Kalingam). Women adorned their hair plaits with flowers. Both men and women wore a variety of ornaments. They were made of gold, silver, pearls, precious stones, conch shells and beads. The People were fond of using aromatic perfumes.

Arts

There are many references to variety of musical instruments such as drum, flute and yazh. Karikalan was master of seven notes of music (EzhisaiVallavan). Singing bards were called panar and vraliyar. Dancing was performed by kanigaiyar. Koothu (folk drama) was the most important cultural practice of the people of Sangam Age. They developed the concept of Muthamizh (Iyal, Isai, Naatakam).

Occupation

The major occupations of the people were: agriculture, cattle rearing, fishing and hunting. Other craftsmen like carpenter, blacksmith, goldsmith, and potters were also part of the population. Weaving was the most common part-time occupation of the farmers and a regular full time job for many others.

Festivals and Entertainments

People celebrated several festivals. The harvest festival, (Pongal) and the festival of spring, kaarthigai, were some of them. Indira vizha was celebrated in the capital. There were many amusements and games. This included dances,

festivals, bull fights, cock fights, dice, hunting, wrestling and playing in swings. Children played with toy cart and with the sand houses made by them.

Trade

Trade existed at three levels: local, overland and overseas. The extensive and lucrative foreign trade that Tamizhagam enjoyed during this period stands testimony to the fact that Tamils had been great seafarers. Warehouses for storing the goods were built along the coast. The chief ports had light houses, which were called KalangarailanguSudar. Caravans of merchants carried their merchandise to different places in oxen-driven carts. Barter system was prevalent.

There were two kinds of markets or bazaars in the leading cities like Puhar and Madurai. In Madurai they were Nalangadi (the morning bazaar) and Allangadi (the evening bazaar). In these markets large varieties as well as large quantities of goods were sold and purchased. Major Ports: Musiri, Tondi, Korkai

Main Exports: Salt, pepper, pearls, ivory, silk, spices, diamonds, saffron, precious stones, muslin, sandal wood

Main Imports: Topaz, tin, wine, glass, horses

Trade Contact with Overseas Countries: Archaeological excavations have confirmed the trading relations between the Tamizhagam and the countries such as Greece, Rome, Egypt, China, South East Asia and Sri Lanka.

Kalabhras

Towards the end of the 3rd century AD (CE), the Sangam period slowly went into a decline. Following the Sangam period, the Kalabhras had occupied the Tamil country for about two and half centuries. We have very little information about Kalabhras. They left neither artefacts nor monuments. But there is evidence of their rule in literary texts. The literary sources for this period include Tamil NavalarCharithai, Yapernkalam and Periapuranam. SeevakaChinthamani and Kundalakesi were also written during this period. In Tamizhagam, Jainism and Buddhism became prominent during this period. Introduction of Sanskrit and Prakrit languages had resulted in the development of a new script called Vattezhuththu. Many works under PathinenKeezhkanakku were composed. Trade and commerce continued to flourish during this period. So the Kalabhra period is not a dark age, as it is portrayed.

NOTE

- ArumugaNavalar (Jaffna), U.V.Swaminatha Iyer and Damodharam Pillai (Jaffna) strove hard and spent many years in retrieving and publishing the

Tamil classics and the ancient Tamil texts, which were originally present as palm leaf manuscripts.

- Tholkappiyam is a work on Tamil grammar. It represents the quality of Tamil language and the culture of Tamil people of the Sangam Age.
- George L. Hart, Professor of Tamil language at the University of California, has said that Tamil is as old as Latin. The language arose as an entirely independent tradition with no influence of other languages.
- **Kallanai:** It was a dyke, built with stones. It was constructed across the Kaveri to divert water throughout the delta region for irrigation. When it was built, Kallanai irrigated an area of about 69,000 acres.
- **Women Poets of Sangam Age:** Avvaiyar, VelliVeethiyar, Kakkaiadinaiyar, AathiManthiyar, PonMudiyar.
- **Veerakkal/Natukkal:** The ancient Tamils had a great respect for the heroes who died in the battle field. The hero stones were erected to commemorate heroes who sacrificed their lives in war.
- **Malabar Black Pepper:** When the Mummy of Ramses II of the Egypt was uncovered, archaeologists found black pepper corns stuffed into his nostrils and in his abdomen (as a part of embalming process practised in olden days).
- Silk supplied by Indian merchants to the Roman Empire was considered so important that the Roman emperor Aurelian declared it to be worth its weight in gold.
- **Muziris - First Emporium:** The Roman writer Pliny the Elder writes of Muziris in his Natural History as the 'first emporium (shopping complex) of India'. A temple of Augustus was built at Muziris, which had a Roman colony. A papyrus document (now in Vienna museum) of 2nd century BC (BCE) records the agreement between two merchants' shippers of Alexandria and Muziris.

6th term - 3
Unit 4
South Indian Kingdoms

By the early 7th century, synchronising with the Harsha's reign in the north, the far south had come under the control of the Pallava kings of Kanchipuram. Pallava sovereignty included the domains of the Cholas and the Pandyas. The latter were then emerging as ruling dynasties in their respective river valley regions. Much of the central and eastern Deccan was under the Chalukyas of Badami (Vatapi), who were then pushed away by the Rashtrakutas. The medieval period in India was marked by the emergence of regional centres of power. There was no single imperial power like Mauryas or Guptas who exercised control over the greater part of India in this period.

The Pallavas

The Pallava kings ruled around the prosperous agrarian settlement and important trade centre of Kanchipuram on the southeast coast of India. Kanchipuram was well known to Chinese and Roman merchants. From the flourishing trade centre of Kanchipuram, the later Pallavas extended their sovereignty over all the Tamil-speaking regions during the 7th and 8th centuries. The central part of their kingdom, however, was Thondaimandalam, a large political region comprising northern parts of Tamil Nadu and the adjoining Andhra districts.

Inscriptions	Mandagapattu Cave, Aihole Inscription of Pulakesin II
Copper Plates	Kasakudi Plates
Literature	MattavilasaPrahasana, Avanthi Sundarakatha, Kalingathu Parani, Periya Puranam, Nadi Kalambagam
Foreign Notice	Accounts of Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang

Pallava Genealogy (Prominent Kings)

There were early Pallava rulers who were feudatories of Satavahanas. Simhavishnu, son of Simhavarman II (around 550 AD (CE)), created a strong Pallava kingdom after destroying the Kalabhras. He defeated many kings in the south including the Cholas and the Pandyas. His able son was Mahendravarman I. He was succeeded by his son Narasimhavarman I. The other prominent Pallava rulers were Narasimhavarman II or Rajasimha and Nandivarman II. The last Pallava ruler was Aparajita.

Mahendravarman (c.600–630AD (CE)) contributed to the greatness of the Pallava kingdom. Mahendravarman I was a follower of Jainism in the early part of his rule. He was converted to Saivism by the Saivite saint Appar (Tirunavukkarasar). He was a great patron of art and architecture. He is known

for introducing a new style to Dravidian architecture, which is referred to as 'Mahendra style'. Mahendravarman also wrote plays, including (c.620) MattavilasaPrahasana. (The Delight of the Drunkards) in Sanskrit, which denigrates Buddhism.

Mahendravarman's reign involved constant battles with the Western Chalukya kingdom of Badami under Pulakesin II. Pulakesin seems to have defeated Mahendravarman in one of the battles and taken over a large part of his territory (Vengi) in the north. His son Narasimavarman I (c. 630-668) avenged the defeat by capturing Vatapi, the capital of Chalukyas. He set Vatapi on fire, killing Pulakesin in the process. Narasimavarman II (c. 695-722), also known as Rajasimha, was a great military strategist. He exchanged ambassadors with China. His reign was comparatively free from any political disturbance. Therefore, he could concentrate on temple-building activities. During his reign, the famous Kailasanatha temple at Kanchipuram was built.

Name of the King	Title/s Adopted
Simhavishnu	Avanidimha
Mahendravarman I	Sankirajati Mattavilasa Gunabhara Chitrakara Vichitra Chitta
Narasimavarman I	Mamalla, Vatapi Kondan

Pallava's Contribution to Architecture

Pallava period is known for architectural splendour. The Shore Temple and various other temples carved from granite monoliths and the Varaha cave (7th century) at Mamallapuram, are illustrious examples of Pallava architecture. In 1984, Mamallapuram was added to the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Pallava architecture can be classified as

1. Rock-Cut temples - Mahendravarman style
2. Monolithic Rathas and Sculptural Mandapas - Mamalla style
3. Structural Temples - Rajasimhan style and Nandivarman style

Mahendra Style

The best example of MahendraVarma style monuments are cave temples at Mandagapattu, Mahendravadi, Mamandur, Dalavanur, Tiruchirapalli, Vallam, Tirukazhukkundram and Siyamangalam.

Mamalla Style

The five rathas (chariots), popularly called Panchapandavar rathas, signify five different style of temple architecture. Each ratha has been carved out of a single rock. So they are called monolithic. The popular mandapams (pillared pavilions) they built are Mahishasuramardhini mandapam, Thirumoorthi mandapam and Varaha mandapam. The most important among the Mamalla style of architecture is the open art gallery. Several miniature sculptures such as the figure of lice-picking monkey, elephants of huge size and the figure of the ascetic cat have been sculpted beautifully on the wall of a huge rock. The fall of the River Ganga from the head of Lord Siva and the Arjuna's penance are notable among them. The Great Penance panel is considered to be the world's largest open-air bas relief.

Rajasimha Style

Narasimhavarma II, also known as Rajasimha, constructed structural temples using stone blocks. The best example for the structural temple is Kailasanatha temple at Kanchipuram. This temple was built by using sand stones. Kailasanatha temple is called Rajasimheswaram.

Nandivarma Style

The last stage of the Pallava architecture is also represented by structural temples built by the later Pallavas. The best example is Vaikunda Perumal temple at Kanchipuram.

Society and Culture

The Pallavas supported Jainism, Buddhism and the Vedic faith. They were great patrons of music, painting and literature. Some of the Pallava kings patronised the Azhwars and Nayanmars. These exponents of Bhakti Cult preached a new form of Vaishnavism and Saivism. Among the Saivites were Appar and Manikkavasakar. Among the Vaishnavites were Nammazhvar and Andal. The Bhakti movement aimed at preaching a popular faith, in which prayers in Tamil were preferred to those in Sanskrit. Women were encouraged to participate in the religious congregations. The Tamil devotional cult was competitive with Buddhism and Jainism. Therefore the latter suffered a gradual decline in most parts of Tamil country.

Education and Literature

- ✓ Gatika (monastery or centre of learning) at Kanchi was popular during the Pallava times and it attracted students from all parts of India and abroad. Vatsyaya who wrote Nyaya Bhashya was a teacher at Kanchi

(Gatika). The treatise on Dakshin Chitram (Paintings of South India) was compiled during the reign of Mahendravarma I.

- ✓ The great Sanskrit scholar, Dandin, lived in the court of Narasimhavarma I. Dandin composed Dashakumara Charita.
- ✓ Bharavi, the great Sanskrit scholar, lived in the time of Simhavishnu. Bharavi wrote Kiratarjuniya, an epic in verses.
- ✓ Tamil literature had also flourished during the Pallava rule. Thevaram composed by Nayanmars and Nalayradivyaprabantham composed by Azhwars, which are still chanted by devout people. Perundevanar, who was patronized by Nandivarman II, translated the Mahabharata into Tamil as Bharathavenba.

Pallava Art

The Pallava kings had also patronised fine arts. The music inscriptions in Kudumianmalai and Thirumayam temples show Pallavas' interest in music. The famous musician Rudracharya lived during Mahendravarma I. The sculptures of this period depict many images in dancing postures.

The Chalukyas

The Chalukyas ruled larger parts of west and centre of South India, consisting of Maratha country with Vatapi (Badami) as their capital. There were three distinct but closely related and independent Chalukya dynasties. They were (1) Chalukyas of Badami, (2) Chalukyas of Vengi (Eastern Chalukyas) and (3) Chalukyas of Kalyani (Western Chalukyas). These Chalukyas held Harsha in the north, the Pallavas in the south and Kalinga (Odisha) in the east.

Sources

Inscriptions	Badami Cave Inscription of Mangalesha Kanchi Kailasanatha Temple Inscription Pattadakal Virupaksha Temple Inscription Aihole Inscription of Pulakesin I
Foreign Notice	Accounts of Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang

The Chalukyas of Vatapi

Pulakesin I, a petty chieftain of Pattadakal in the Bijapur district, took and fortified the hill fort of Vatapi around 543 AD (CE). He soon conquered the territory between the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers and the Western Ghats. His son Kirtivarman I (c. 566 to 597) brought the Konkan coast under Chalukya control. Pulakesin II (c.610 to 642) emerged as the most powerful ruler of the dynasty. The Persian (Iran) king Khusru II sent an embassy to the court of Pulakesin II. Pulakesin succeeded in seizing parts of Gujarat and Malwa. He defied the North Indian ruler Harsha and according to an agreed understanding Narmada river was fixed as the boundary between the two. About 624, Pulakesin

II conquered the kingdom of Vengi and gave it to his brother Vishnuvardhana, the first Eastern Chalukya ruler.

During 641–647 the Pallavas ravaged the Deccan and captured Vatapi, but the Chalukyas had recaptured it by 655. Vikramaditya I (655 to 680) and Vikramaditya II, the successor of Vikramaditya I captured Kanchipuram but spared the city. Kirtivarman II, the successor of Vikramaditya II was defeated by Dantidurga, the founder of the Rashtrakuta dynasty.

Western Chalukyas of Kalyani

They were the descendants of Badami Chalukyas ruled from Kalyani (modern-day Basavakalyan). In 973, Tailapa II, a feudatory of the Rashtrakuta ruling from Bijapur region defeated Parmara of Malwa. Tailapa II occupied Kalyani and his dynasty quickly grew into an empire under Somesvara I. Somesvara I moved the capital from Manyakheta to Kalyani. For over a century, the two empires of southern India, the Western Chalukyas and the Chola dynasty of Thanjavur, fought many fierce battles to control the fertile region of Vengi. During the rule of Vikramaditya VI in the late 11th century, vast areas between the Narmada River in the north and Kaveri River in the south came under Chalukya control.

Contributions to Art and Architecture

As supporters of both Saivism and Vaishnavism, the Chalukyas contributed richly to art and architecture. A new style of architecture known as Vesara was developed. Vesara is a combination of south Indian (Dravida) and north Indian (Nagara) building styles. They perfected the art of stone building without mortar. They used soft sandstones in construction. They built a number of rock-cut cave-temples and structural temples dedicated to Siva, Vishnu and Brahma. The structural temples of Chalukyas exist at Aihole, Badami and Pattadakal. The important stone temples are the Vishnu temples at Badami and Aihole and the Virupaksha or Siva Temple at Pattadakal in Bijapur district in present-day Karnataka.

The Vishnu temple at Badami was built by Mangalesa of the Chalukya Dynasty and contains the Aihole inscription of Vikramaditya II. Their cave temples are found at Ajanta, Ellora and Nasik. The cave temples at Badami contain fine sculptures of Vishnu reclining on Sesha Nag; Varaha, the Boar; Narasimha or the lion-faced man; and Vamana, the dwarf. The Kasi Vishweshvara Temple at Lakkundi, the Mallikarjuna Temple at Kuruvatti, the Kalleshwara Temple at Bagali and the Mahadeva Temple at Itagi represent well-known examples of the architecture of Western Chalukyas of Kalyani. Chalukyas adopted the Vakataka style in paintings. Some of the frescoes of the caves of Ajanta were created during the reign of Chalukyas. The reception given to the Persian embassy by Pulakesin II is depicted in a painting at Ajanta.

The Rashtrakutas

The Rashtrakutas ruled not only the Deccan but parts of the far south and the Ganges plain as well from 8th to 10th century AD(CE). They were of Kannada origin and their mother tongue was Kannada. Dantidurga was the founder of Rashtrakuta dynasty. He was an official of high rank under the Chalukyas of Badami. Krishna I succeeded Dantidurga. He consolidated and extended the Rashtrakuta power. He was a great patron of art and architecture. The Kailasanatha temple at Ellora was built by him.

Rashtrakuta Kings

The greatest king of the Rashtrakuta dynasty was Amogavarsha. He built a new capital at Manyakheta (now Malkhed in Karnataka) and Broach became the port. Amogavarsha (c. 814–878) was converted to Jainism by Jinasena, a Jain monk. Krishna II, who succeeded his father Amogavarsha, suffered a defeat in the battle of Vallala (modern Tiruvallam, Vellore district) at the hands of Cholas under Parantaka in c. 916. Krishna III (c. 939–967) was the last able ruler of Rashtrakuta dynasty. He defeated the Cholas in the battle of Takkolam (presently in Vellore district) and captured Thanjavur. The Chalukyas under Krishna III contested with other ruling dynasties of north India for the control of Kanauj. He built Krishneshwara temple at Rameshwaram. Govinda III was the last ruler to hold the empire intact. After his death, the Rashtrakuta power declined.

Contribution of Rashtrakutas to literature, art and architecture

Literature

Kannada language became more prominent. Kavirajamarga composed by Amogavarsha was the first poetic work in Kannada language. Court poets produced eminent works in Kannada. The three gems of Kannada literature during the period were Pampa, Sri Ponna and Ranna. Adikavi Pampa was famous for his creative works Adipurana and Vikramarjunavijaya. The life of Rishabadeva, the first Jain Tirthankara is depicted in Adipurana. In Vikramarjunavijaya Pampa's patron, Chalukya Arikesari, is identified with Arjuna, epic hero of Mahabharata.

Art and architecture

The Rashtrakutas made significant contribution to Indian Art. The art and architecture of the Rashtrakutas can be found at Ellora and Elephanta.

Kailasanatha Temple - Ellora (near Aurangabad, Maharashtra)

Kailasanatha Temple was one of the 30 temples carved out of the hill at Ellora. It was built during the reign of Krishna I. The temple is known for its

3. Early Tamil Society and Culture

Introduction

Tamil civilization, as we have seen, begins at least three centuries before the Common Era (CE). As seafaring people, Tamil traders and sailors established commercial and cultural links across the seas and merchants from foreign territories also visited the Tamil region. The resulting cultural and mercantile activities and internal developments led to urbanization in this region. Towns and ports emerged. Coins and currency came into circulation. Written documents were produced. The Tamil-Brahmi script was adopted to write the Tamil language. Classical Tamil poems were composed. In the unit one, we studied the cultural developments in the Tamil region from the prehistoric period to the beginning of the Iron Age. In this lesson, we will learn about the development of Tamil culture in the Early Historic Period also known as the Sangam Age.

Sources for the study of early Tamil society

The sources for reconstructing the history of the ancient Tamils are:

1. Classical Tamil literature
2. Epigraphy (inscriptions)
3. Archaeological excavations and material culture
4. Non-Tamil and Foreign Literature

The Classical Sangam Tamil Literature

The Classical Sangam corpus (collection) consists of the Tholkappiyam, the Pathinen Melkanakku (18 Major works) and the Pathinen Kilkanakku (18 minor works) and the five epics.

Tholkappiyam

Tholkappiyam, attributed to Tholkappiyar, is the earliest written work on Tamil grammar. Apart from elaborating the rules of grammar, the third section of Tholkappiyam also describes poetic conventions that provide information on Tamil social life. The texts of Pathinen Melkanakku include Pathupaattu (ten long songs) and Ettuthogai (the eight anthologies). These texts are the oldest among the classical Tamil texts. The texts of Pathinen Kilkanakku belong to a later date.

The Ettuthogai or the eight anthologies are

1. Natrinai
2. Kurunthogai
3. Paripaadal
4. Pathittrupathu
5. Aingurunuru

6. Kalithogai
7. Akanaanuru
8. Puranaanuru

Pathupattu collection includes ten long songs

1. Tirumurugatrupadai
2. Porunaratrupadai
3. Perumpanatrupadai
4. Sirupanatrupadai
5. Mullaipaattu
6. Nedunalvaadai
7. Maduraikanchi
8. Kurinjipaattu
9. Pattinappaalai
10. Malaipadukadam

Pathinen Kilkanakku (18 minor works)

The Pathinen Kilkanakku comprises eighteen texts elaborating on ethics and morals. The pre-eminent work among these is the Tirukkural composed by Tiruvalluvar. In 1330 couplets Tirukkural considers questions of morality, statecraft and love.

The Five Epics

The epics or Kappiyams are long narrative poem of very high quality. They are,

1. Silappathikaaram
2. Manimekalai
3. Seevaka Chinthamani
4. Valaiyapathi
5. Kundalakesi

Epigraphy

Epigraphy is the study of inscriptions. Inscriptions are documents scripted on stone, copper plates, and other media such as coins, rings, etc. The development of script marks the beginning of the historical period. The period before the use of written script is called prehistoric period. Tamil-Brahmi was the first script used for writing in Tamil Nadu. Inscriptions in Tamil-Brahmi are found in caves and rock shelters, and on pottery and other objects (coins, rings and seals).

Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions

Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions have been found in more than 30 sites in Tamil Nadu mostly on cave surfaces and rock shelters. These caves were the abodes of monks, mostly Jaina monks. The natural caves were converted into residence by cutting a drip-line to keep rain water away from the cave. Inscriptions often occur below such drip-lines. The sites have smooth stone beds carved on rock surface for monks who led a simple life and lived in these shelters. Merchants and kings converted these natural formations as habitation for monks, who had renounced worldly life. Mangulam, Muttupatti, Pugalur, Arachalur and Kongarpuliyankulam and Jambai are some of the major sites of such caves with Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions. Around Madurai many such caves with Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions can still be seen. Many of them are located along ancient trade routes.

Note: You will notice that among the old inscriptions, people (both local and tourists) have marked their names thereby destroying some of the ancient inscriptions. Such acts of destruction of heritage property or property belonging to others are called vandalism.

Hero Stones

Hero stones are memorials erected for those who lost their lives in the battles and in cattle raids. As cattle were considered an important source of wealth, raiding cattle owned by adjoining tribes and clans was common practice in a pastoral society. During the Sangam Age, the Mullai landscape followed the pastoral way of life. Tribal chieftains plundered the cattle wealth of enemies whose warriors fought to protect their cattle. Many warriors died in such battles and were remembered as martyrs. Memorial stones were erected in their honour. Sangam literature vividly portrays these battles and clashes, and describes such hero stones as objects of worship. Tholkappiyam describes the procedures for erecting hero stones.

Hero stones of the Sangam Age with Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions can be found at Pulimankombai and Thathapatti in Theni district and Porpanaikottai in Pudukkottai district. Those of the Sangam Age discovered till now do not have images or sculptures. Hero stones of the post-Sangam Age and the Pallava period occur in large numbers in pastoral regions especially around the Chengam region near Thiruvannamalai district. These hero stones have inscriptions and the images of warriors and names of heroes.

Inscriptions

Pottery vessels from the Early Historic Period have names of people engraved on them in Tamil-Brahmi script. Potsherds have been discovered in Arikamedu, Azhagankulam, Kodumanal, Keezhadi, and many other sites in Tamil Nadu. Pottery inscribed with names in Tamil-Brahmi script have also been found in B erenike and Quseir al Qadhim in Egypt and in Khor Rori in Oman indicating that early Tamils had trade contacts with West Asia and along the Red

Sea coast. People etched their names on pottery to indicate ownership. Many of the names are in Tamil while some are in Prakrit.

Prakrit

Prakrit was the language used by the common people in the Northern part of India during the Mauryan period.

Archaeology and Material Culture

Archaeology is the study of the past by interpretation of the material cultural remains. Such remains are unearthed by the systematic excavation of old inhabitation sites called archaeological sites. Archaeological sites have mounds which are an accumulation of soil, pottery, building and organic remains and objects. In many parts of Tamil Nadu they are called Nattam, Kottai and Medu. Such sites provide evidence of how people lived in the past.

Archaeological Sites

Archaeological excavation refers to systematically digging a site to recover material evidence for exploring and interpreting societies of the past. Archaeological excavations at the early historic sites are the source of evidence of the activities of the Sangam Age people. Excavations at Arikamedu, Azhagankulam, Uraiyur, Kanchipuram, Kaveripoompattinam, Korkai, Vasavasamudram, Keezhadi, Kodumanal in Tamil Nadu, and Pattanam in Kerala provide the evidence we have of this period. Arikamedu, near Puducherry, is a Sangam Age port, excavated by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). British archaeologist, Robert Eric Mortimer Wheeler, French Archaeologist, J.M. Casal, and Indian archaeologists, A. Ghosh and Krishna Deva, excavated this site. They found evidence of a planned town, warehouse, streets, tanks and ring wells

The Archaeological Survey of India

(ASI) is a Central government agency that manages archaeological sites and monuments in India. The Government of Tamil Nadu has its own department for archaeology called the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology. The Indian Treasure Trove Act (1878), the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act (1972), the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act (1958) are legislation related to the preservation of archaeological remains in India.

Material Culture

Archaeologists have found evidence of brick structures and industrial activities, as well as artefacts such as beads, bangles, cameos, intaglios, and other materials in these sites. Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions on pottery and coins have also been unearthed. Evidences of the various arts, crafts and industries together help

us reconstruct the way of life of the people of those times. From this we learn and understand how they might have lived. **Cameo** – an ornament made in precious stone where images are carved on the surface. **Intaglio** – an ornament in which images are carved as recess, below the surface.

Coins

Coins as a medium of exchange were introduced for the first time in the Sangam Age. The coins of the Cheras, the Cholas and the Pandyas, punch-marked coins, and Roman coins form another important source of evidence from the Sangam Age. Punch-marked coins have been found at Kodumanal and Bodinayakkanur. Roman coins are concentrated in the Coimbatore region, and are found at Azhagankulam, Karur, and Madurai. They were used as bullion for their metal value and as ornaments. **Bullion** means precious metal available in the form of ingots. **Punch-marked coins** are the earliest coins used in India. They are mostly made of silver and have numerous symbols punched on them. Hence, they are known as punch-marked coins

Non-Tamil Sources (Foreign Accounts)

Non-Tamil literary sources also offer information on early Tamil society. The presence of the non-Tamil sources reveals the extensive contacts and interactions of the early Tamil society with the outside world.

Arthasastra

Arthasastra, the classic work on economy and statecraft authored by Chanakya during the Mauryan period, refers to Pandya kavataka. It may mean the pearl and shells from the Pandyan country.

Mahavamsa

Mahavamsa, the Sri Lankan Buddhist chronicle, composed in the Pali language, mentions merchants and horse traders from Tamil Nadu and South India. Chronicle is a narrative text presenting the important historical events in chronological order.

Periplus of Erythrean Sea

Periplus of Erythrean Sea is an ancient Greek text whose author is not known. The term Periplus means navigational guide used by sailors. Erythrean Sea refers to the waters around the Red Sea. It makes references to the Sangam Age ports of Muciri, Thondi, Korkai and Kumari, as well as the Cheras and the Pandyas.

Pliny's Natural History

Pliny the Elder, was a Roman who wrote Natural History. Written in Latin, it is a text on the natural wealth of the Roman Empire. Pliny speaks about the pepper trade with India and he states that it took 40 days to reach India, from Ocellis near North East Africa, if the south west monsoon wind was favourable. He also mentions that the Pandiyas of Madurai controlled the port of Bacare on the Kerala coast. The current name of Bacare is not known. Pliny laments the loss of Roman wealth due to Rome's pepper trade with India – an indication of the huge volume and value of the pepper that was traded.

Ptolemy's Geography

Ptolemy's Geography is a gazetteer and atlas of Roman times providing geographical details of the Roman Empire in the second century CE. Kaveripoompattinam (Khabaris Emporium), Korkai (Kolkoi), Kanniyakumari (Komaria), and Muciri (Muziris) are some of the places mentioned in his Geography.

Peutingian table

Peutingian table is an illustrated map of the Roman roads. It shows the areas of ancient Tamilagam and the port of Muziris.

Note: Taprobane refers to Sri Lanka as Island. Muziris refers to the port of Muchiri.

Vienna Papyrus

Vienna papyrus, a Greek document datable to the second century CE, mentions Muciri's trade of olden days. It is in the Papyrus Museum attached to the Austrian National Library, Vienna (Austria). It contains a written agreement between traders and mentions the name of a ship, Hermapollon, and lists articles of export such as pepper and ivory that were shipped from India to the Roman Empire. Papyrus, a paper produced out of the papyrus plant used extensively for writing purposes in ancient Egypt.

The Sangam Age

The Sangam Age or the Early Historic period is an important phase in the history of South India. This period is marked out from prehistory, because of the availability of textual sources, namely Sangam literature and Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions. Sangam text is a vast corpus of literature that serves as an important source for the study of the people and society of the relevant period.

Chronology

There is considerable debate among scholars about the age and chronology of Sangam society. The Sangam texts are generally dated to between third century BCE and the third century CE. The references in Greco-Roman texts, Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions and the references to the Cheras, Cholas and the Pandyas in the Ashokan inscription corroborate this date. It is generally agreed that the Sangam poems were composed in the early part of the historical period, but were compiled into anthologies in the later period. **Ashokan Brahmi** - the script used in Ashokan edicts or inscriptions.

The Thinai : The concept of Thinai is presented in the Tamil Grammar work of Tholkappiyam and this concept is essential to understand the classical Tamil poems. Thinai is a poetic theme, which means a class or category and refers to a habitat or eco-zone with specific physiographical characteristics. Sangam poems are set in these specific eco-zones and reveal that human life has deep relationships with nature. The themes of the poems are broadly defined as akam (interior) and puram (exterior). Akathinai refers to various situations of love and family life, while Purathinai is concerned with all other aspects of life and deals particularly with war and heroism.

Ainthinai

The Five Thinai or landscapes. Tamilagam was divided into five landscapes. Each region had distinct characteristics - a presiding deity, occupation, people and cultural life according to its specific environmental conditions. This classification has been interpreted by scholars to reflect real life situations in these landscapes. The five landscapes are Kurunji, Mullai, Marutham, Neythal and Paalai.

- ✓ Kurunji refers to the hilly and mountainous region.
- ✓ Mullai is forested and pastoral region.
- ✓ Marutham is the fertile riverine valley.
- ✓ Neythal is coastal region.
- ✓ Paalai is sandy desert region.

Sangam Age Polity: Political Powers of Tamilagam

The Sangam Age has its roots in the Iron Age. In the Iron Age people were organised into chiefdoms. From such communities of Iron Age emerged the Vendhars of the early historic period and the Velirs of the Sangam Age were chieftains. The Mauryan emperor, Asoka, conquered Kalinga (Odisha) and parts of Andhra and Karnataka regions. Ashokan inscriptions found in present day Odisha, Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are not seen in Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Therefore, we may conclude that the Tamil rulers were independent of Mauryan authority.

The Muvendhar

Among the political powers of the Sangam Age, the Cheras, the Cholas and the Pandyas occupied pre-eminent positions. They were known as Muvendhar (the three kings). The muvendhar controlled the major towns and ports of the Sangam period.

The Cheras

The Cheras, referred to as Keralaputras in the Ashokan inscriptions, controlled the region of present-day Kerala and also the western parts of Tamil Nadu. Vanci was the capital of the Cheras while Muciri and Thondi were their port towns. Vanci is identified with Karur in Tamil Nadu while some others identify it with Thiruvanchaikalam in Kerala. Pathirtruppathu speaks about the Chera kings and their territory. The Cheras wore garlands made from the flowers of the palm tree. The inscriptions of Pugalur near Karur mention the Chera kings of three generations. Coins of Chera kings have been found in Karur. The Silappathikaram speaks about Cheran Senguttuvan, who built a temple for Kannagi, the protagonist of the epic. The bow and arrow was the symbol of the Cheras. Legend has it that Ilango who composed the Silappathikaram, was the brother of Cheran Senguttuvan.

The Cholas

The Cholas ruled over the Kaveri delta and northern parts of Tamil Nadu. Their capital was Uraiyyur and their port town was Kaveripoompattinam or Pampuhar, where the river Kaveri drains into the Bay of Bengal. Pattinappalai is a long poem about Kaveripoompattinam composed by the poet Kadiyalar Uruthirankannanar. Silappathikaram describes the trading activities at Kaveripoompattinam. Karikalan is notable among the Chola kings and is credited with bringing forestlands under the plough and developing irrigation facilities by effectively utilising the water from the river Kaveri.

The foundation for the extensive harnessing of water for irrigation purposes, which reached its zenith in later Chola times (10th to 13th centuries) was laid in his time. Karikalan fought battles with the Pandyas, Cheras and other chieftains. The Chola emblem was the tiger and they issued square copper coins with images of a tiger on the obverse, elephant and the sacred symbols on the reverse.

The Pandyas

The Pandyas who ruled the southern part of Tamil Nadu are referred to in the Ashokan inscriptions. Madurai was the Pandya's capital. Tamil literary tradition credits Pandyan rulers with patronizing Tamil Sangams (academies) and supporting the compilations of poems. The Mangulam Tamil-Brahmi inscription

mentions the king Nedunchezhiyan. Nediyan, Mudathirumaran, Palayagasalai Mudukudumipperuvazhuti were some of the important rulers of the dynasty. The Pandyan symbol was the fish. Velirs / Chieftains Apart from the Vendhars, there were Velirs and numerous chiefains who occupied territories on the margins of the muvendhar. The velirs were the seven chiefs Pari, Kari, Ori, Nalli, Pegan, Ai and Athiyaman. Sangam poems write extensively about the generosity of these velirs. Tese chiefs had intimate relations with the poets of their time and were known for their large-heartedness. Tese chiefains had alliance with one or other of the muvendhar and helped them in their battles against the other Vendhars.

Society in Sangam Age

Many of the communities of the Iron Age society were organised as tribes, and some of them were Chiefdoms. The Sangam Age society was a society in transition from a tribal community ruled by a chief to a larger kingdom ruled by a king

Composition of the Society

Social stratification had begun to take root in Tamil society by the Sangam times. There were several clan-based communities including groups such as Panar, Paratavar, Eyinar, Uzhar, Kanavar, Vettuvar and Maravar. The Vendhars, chiefs, and their associates formed the higher social groups. There were priests who were known as Antanars. There were artisan groups specialising in pottery and black smithy. The caste system we find in northern India did not take root in Tamil country as social groups were divided into five situational types (Tamil) and related occupational patterns.

Even though Sangam society was characterized by limited consumption of commodities, the kings, chiefs and merchants led a prosperous life. People at the margins lived in poverty. Panars depended on their patrons for their livelihood. The development of agriculture and pastoral ways of life might have harmed the eco-system and the naturally available forest and wild animals. It is possible that some of the hunter-gatherers might have been pushed to the forest areas and a few might have taken up the occupation of manual labourers. The development of agriculture in the wet-land region depended on the use of certain groups of people as labourers.

Women

Women are frequently referred to in Tamil texts as mothers, heroines, and foster-mothers. Women from Panar families, dancers, poets, and royal women were all portrayed in Sangam literature. There are references to women from all five eco-zones. For example, Vennikkuyathiyar is identified as a poetess from the village of Venni. There are references to women protecting Thina fields from birds and Umanar women selling salt showing that women were involved in

primary production. Instances where women preferred to die along with their husbands also occur in the literature of the times.

Economy

The economy was mixed as elaborated in the Thinaï concept. People practiced agriculture, pastoralism, trade and money exchange, hunting-gathering, and fishing depending upon the eco-zones in which they lived.

Primary Production

Agriculture was one of the main sources of subsistence. Crops like paddy, sugarcane, millets were cultivated. Both wet and dry land farming were practiced. In the riverine and tank-irrigated areas, paddy was cultivated. Millets were cultivated in dry lands. Varieties of rice such as sennel (red rice), vennel (white rice), and aivananel (a type of rice) are mentioned in the literature. Rice grains were found in burial urns at excavations in Adichanallur and Porunthal. People in the forest adopted punam or shifting cultivation. **Pastoralism** – nomadic people earning livelihood by rearing cattle, sheep, and goat.

Industries and Crafts of the Sangam Age

Craft production and craft specialization were important aspects of urbanization. In the Sangam Age there were professional groups that produced various commodities. The system of production of commodities is called industry.

Pottery

Pottery was practised in many settlements. People used pottery produced by Kalamceyko (potters) in their daily activities and so they were made in large numbers. Black ware, russet-coated painted ware, black and red ware potteries were the different types of pottery used.

Iron Smelting Industry

Iron manufacturing was an important artisanal activity. Iron smelting was undertaken in traditional furnaces and such furnaces, with terracotta pipes and raw ore have been found in many archaeological sites. For instance evidence of iron smelting has been found in Kodumanal and Guttur. Sangam literature speaks of blacksmiths, and their tools and activities. Iron implements were required for agriculture and warfare (swords, daggers, and spears).

Stone Ornaments

Sangam Age people adorned themselves with a variety of ornaments. While the poor wore ornaments made of clay, terracotta, iron, and leaves and flowers,

the rich wore jewellery made of precious stones, copper, and gold. Quartz, amethyst (sevvantikkal) and carnelian (semmanikkal) were some of the semi-precious stones used for making ornaments. Diamond drills were used to pierce holes in the hard stones and etched carnelian beads have been found in the megalithic monuments.

Gold jewellery

Gold ornaments were well known in this period. A gold coin from Roman was used to make jewellery. Evidence of gold smelting has been found at Pattanam in Kerala. Gold ornaments have been unearthed at the megalithic sites of Suttukeni, Adichanallur and Kodumanal, and towns of Arikamedu, Keezhadi and Pattanam in Kerala.

Glass Beads

The presence of glass beads at the sites reveals that people of the Sangam Age knew how to make glass beads. Glass material (silica) was melted in a furnace and drawn into long tubes which were then cut into small beads. Glass beads came in various shapes and colour. Arikamedu and Kudikkadu, near Cuddalore show evidence of glass beads industry. It is possible that people who could not afford precious stones used glass beads instead.

Pearl Fishery and Shell Bangle

The Pamban coast is famous for pearl fishery. A pearl has been discovered in recently excavated Keezhadi site. Shell bangles were very common in the Sangam Age. The Parathavars collected conch shells from the Pamban Island, which were cut and crafted into bangles by artisans. Whole shells as well as fragments of bangles have been found at many sites. Sangam literature describes women wearing shell bangles.

Textiles

Textile production was another important occupation. Evidence of spindle whorls and pieces of cloth have been found at Kodumanal. Literature too refers to clothes called kalingam and other fine varieties of textiles. Periplus also mentions the fine variety of textiles produced in the Tamil region. **Spindle** whorls were used for making thread from cotton.

Exchange, Trade, Merchants, and Trade Routes

We saw the primary production of grains, cattle wealth, and various commodities. These goods were not produced by everybody and were not produced in all settlements. Resources and commodities were not available in all regions. For example, the hill region did not have fish or salt and the coastal

regions could not produce paddy. Therefore trade and exchange was important for people to have access to different commodities. Specialised groups called vanikars (traders) travelled in groups trading goods and commodities between regions.

Traders

The terms vanikan and nigama (guild) appear in Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions. There were different types of merchants: gold merchants, cloth merchants, and salt merchants. Salt merchants were called Umanars and they travelled in bullock carts along with their family.

Means of Transport

Bullock carts and animals were used to transport goods by land. Trade routes linked the various towns of Tamilagam. Various types of water crafts and sea-going vessels such as Kalam, Pahri, Odam, Toni, Teppam, and Navai are also mentioned in Tamil literature.

Barter and Coins

Barter was the primary mode of exchange. For instance, rice was exchanged for fish. Salt was precious and a handful of it would fetch an equal amount of rice. The extensive availability of coin hoards of the Sangam Age of the Cheras, Cholas, Pandyas, and Malayaman indicates that they were used widely.

Tamilagam and Overseas Interactions

Tamil country had connections with countries overseas both in the east and west. Roman ships used monsoon winds to cross the Western Sea or the Arabian Sea to connect Tamilagam with the Western world. Spices including pepper, ivory, and precious stones were exported. Metal including gold, silver and copper and precious stones were imported. Yavanar referred to the Westerners, including the Greeks, Romans and West Asian people. Yavana derives from the Greek region of Ionia.

Tamil Nadu to Red Sea Coast

An Indian jar with 7.5 kg of pepper, teak wood, a potsherd with Tamil-Brahmi inscription and Indian pottery have been discovered at Berenike, a port on the Red Sea coast of Egypt. At Quseir al Qadhim, another port located north of Berenike on the Red Sea Coast, three Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions, Panaiori, Kanan, and Cattan, have been found on pottery discovered here. A stone with the name "Perumpatankal" has been found at Khuan Luk Pat, Thailand. Southeast Asia was known as Suvarna Bhumi in Tamil literature. This stone was used by a person

called Perumpattan, probably a goldsmith. It was a touchstone used to test the purity of gold.

Emergence of towns and ports

The Sangam Age saw the first urbanization in Tamilagam. Cities developed and they had brick buildings, roof tiles, ring wells and planned towns, streets, and store houses. The towns worked as ports and artisanal centres. Arikamedu, Kaveripoompattinam, Azhagankulam and Korkai on the east coast and Pattanam in Kerala were port centres. Kanchipuram, Uraiyur, Karur, Madurai and Kodumanal were inland trade centres. Many goods and commodities were produced in these centres and were exported to various regions. Though few in number, large towns appeared in the Sangam Age. Small villages however were found in many areas. Bronze vessels, beads, shell bangles, glass beads, pottery with names of people written in Tamil-Brahmi script were found at these sites.

Pattanam, Kerala

Pattanam is located near North Paravur in Vadakkekara village of Ernakulam district of Kerala. It was an ancient port town that had overseas connections with the western and eastern worlds.

Kodumanal, Tamil Nadu

Kodumanal is located near Erode in Tamil Nadu and is identified with the Kodumanam of Pathitrapattu. Evidence of iron, stone bead and shell work, as well as megalithic burials have been discovered at this site. More than 300 pottery inscriptions in Tamil-Brahmi have also been found.

Faith and Belief System

Like the diverse nature of the society and economy, the belief system of the Sangam Age was also diverse. It consisted of animism, ancestor worship, hero worship and worship of several deities. Tolkappiyam lists the presiding deities of Kurunji, Mullai, Marutham, Neythal and Paalai landscapes, as Murugan, Tirumal, Indiran, Varunan and Kotravai, respectively. However, people also worshipped natural forces and dead heroes, and ancestors. The force of anangu is mentioned in the literature which indicates the prevalence of animistic beliefs. Jainism was present as evidenced by the caves with Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions. Performance of Yagna is also evidenced. Buddhism was also present in certain centres. Different groups practiced various forms of worship

Culture of Arts

Various art forms too existed in the Sangam Age. Performances of ritual dances called Veriyatal are referred to in the literature. Composition of poems,

playing of music instruments and dances were also known. The literature mentions the fine variety of cuisine of the Sangam Age. People took care of their appearance and evidence of antimony rods (kohl sticks) made of copper has been found in archaeological sites. They were used by women for decorating their eyebrows.

NOTE

- ❖ **Pulimankombai Hero stone:** Pulimankomba is a village in the Vaigai river valley in Theni district. In 2006, rare hero stone inscriptions in Tamil- Brahmi script were discovered in this village. One of the inscriptions from Pulimankombai reads “Kudalur Akol pedu tiyan antavan kal”. It means "The stone of Tiyan Antavan who was killed in a cattle raid at the village of Kudalur".
- ❖ **Akanaanuru poem 149 describes the trading at the port of Muciri as follows:**
“the well crafted ships of the Yavana came with gold returned with pepper at the wealthy port of Muciri”
- ❖ **What is an urban centre?** A planned town with brick architecture and a proper layout. Urban centres have a larger population involved in non-agrarian, commercial and political occupations. Various industrial activities are seen in these towns.
- ❖ **Pattanam, Kerala:** Pattanam is located near North Paravur in Vadakkekara village of Ernakulam district of Kerala. It was an ancient port town that had overseas connections with the western and eastern worlds.
- ❖ **Kodumanal, Tamil Nadu:** Kodumanal is located near Erode in Tamil Nadu and is identified with the Kodumanam of Pathitrapattu. Evidence of iron, stone bead and shell work, as well as megalithic burials have been discovered at this site. More than 300 pottery inscriptions in Tamil-Brahmi have also been found.
- ❖ **Keezhadi near Madurai, Tamil Nadu:** Keezhadi is located near Silaimaan east of Madurai, on the highway to Rameswaram. In a large coconut garden, called Pallichandai Tidal, the Archaeological Survey of India excavated an ancient town dating to the Sangam Age. Archaeological excavations have produced evidence for brick buildings, drainage, Tamil-Brahmi inscription on pottery, beads of glass, carnelian and quartz, pearl, iron objects, games pieces, and antimony rods. Further excavation may shed light on the nature of the craft production and the cultural activities undertaken at this settlement.

APPOLO STUDY CENTRE

9TH - HISTORY
UNIT - 7
State and Society In Medieval India

Introduction

The 'medieval' period from the 7th century A.D.(CE) till the beginning of Mughal rule in the 16th century. The Mughal era, from the 16th to 18th century is referred to as the early modern period.

The political scenario in all parts of India underwent momentous, definitive changes which transformed the social and economic fabric and development of the country.

Major Political Changes

- The expansion of the Chola empire from the time of Rajaraja I which eclipsed the Pandyan and Pallava kingdoms, extending north till Orissa.
- From the twelfth century, the beginning of several centuries of Muslim rule in Delhi, extending throughout north India and the spread of Islam to different parts of the country.
- By the end of the 13th century the eclipse of the great empire of the Cholas and the consequent rise of many Religious kingdoms in south India. This ultimately culminated in the rise of the Vijayanagar empire which exercised authority over all of south India and came to be considered the bastion of Religious rule in the south.
- The consolidation of Muslim rule under the Mughals in the north, beginning in 1526 A.D. (C.E.) with the defeat of the Ibrahim Lodi by Babur. At its height, the Mughal empire stretched from Kabul to Gujarat to Bengal, from Kashmir to south India.
- The coming of the Europeans, beginning with the Portuguese who arrived on the west coast of India in 1498.

Political Changes (1000-1700)

(a) North India: The Advent of Islam

Muslim rule was established in Delhi at the end of the 12th century by **Muhammad Ghori**, Arab Muslim merchants had been trading in the ports of the west coast, especially Kerala, as early as the 9th century. Similarly, Muslim invaders from west Asia had set up Sultanates in Gujarat and Sind since the 8th century.

The impact of Muslim rule was felt during the reign of **Alauddin Khalji** (1296-1316 A.D. (C.E.)) who sent military campaigns to the south. The primary objective was to plunder the wealth, rather than to expand his territory.

Devagiri (near Aurangabad) was captured by Alauddin Khalji. Renamed Daulatabad, it was the second stronghold of his growing kingdom. Alauddin Khalji's slave and commander, Malik Kafur, was sent on military expeditions further south in the first decade of the 1300s A.D. (C.E.).

The Tughlaq kings who came after Alauddin also sent their armies to the south. As a result, the generally more isolated southern part of the country came into the orbit of the rulers of the north. Governors were appointed in various provinces in the Deccan region, and a Sultanate was even established in Madurai.

During the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq, there was a revolt in Daulatabad. Alauddin Bahman Shah set up the Bahmani sultanate in 1347 A.D. (C.E.), with his capital in Bidar. The Bahmani kingdom survived for nearly a century and a half, mainly due to the able administration of **Mahmud Gawan**, a great statesman and loyal minister. After his death, many viceroys declared their independence, and by the end of the fifteenth century, five sultanates came up in the Deccan: Bijapur, Golkonda, Ahmednagar, Berar, and Bidar. Bijapur and Golkonda were the largest of these sultanates and the region entered a phase of considerable economic growth and expansion of trade. The Deccan sultanates were conquered by Aurangzeb in the 1660s A.D. (C.E.), and the entire region, as far south as Madras (Chennai) became a part of the Mughal empire.

(b) The Chola Empire in the South

The territorial expansion of the Chola empire began under **Rajaraja I**. The Pallava kingdom had already been assimilated into the Chola kingdom. The Pandya kingdom remained independent, but was subservient to the Cholas. The empire expanded further under **Rajendra I** who had successfully taken his armies as far to the northeast as the river Ganges. He had also sent naval expeditions against the Sailendra Kingdom of Sri Vijaya (in Indonesia), Kadaram (Kedah) and Ceylon. This earned him the title "the Chola who had conquered the Ganga and Kadaram" (*gangaiyum kadaramum konda cholan*). Ceylon remained a province of the Chola empire for a few decades. The empire was further consolidated through marriage with the eastern Chalukyas under Rajendra's grandson **Kulottunga I**, and extended up to the border of Orissa.

Maritime trade with south-east Asia and China expanded greatly during the Chola period. The continued interaction with Tamil merchants resulted in the spread of the influence of Indic culture and art into south-east Asia, as seen in the magnificent temples of Angkor Wat in Cambodia.

(c) Vijayanagar and South India after the Cholas

The Chola Empire began to decline after the middle of the 13th century. The last known Chola emperor was Rajendra III. The empire died out in 1279 A.D. (C.E.). Several power centres came up after this in the region. Further to the south, the Pandya kings again sought to regain the glory they had lost under the Cholas.

Many brilliant Pandya kings like Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan ruled at the end of the 13th century. Further to the north was the Hoysala kingdom, with its capital at Belur and later Halebidu. This kingdom extended through much of the present day state of Karnataka. The Kakatiyas ruled from Warangal (Telangana) while the Yadavas ruled in Devagiri until Devagiri fell to Alauddin Khalji's forces at the end of the 13th century. These states did not exist in peaceful cooperation, and the region was beset by many internal wars and conflicts.

The establishment of the kingdom (subsequently empire) of Vijayanagar was the most momentous development in the history of south India in the medieval period. The kingdom was established by Harihara and Bukka, two brothers. They were the first rulers of the Sangama dynasty. They founded a new capital city on the southern banks of Tungabhadra which they named Vijayanagara (city of victory). Harihara was crowned in 1336 A.D. (C.E.). The Sangama dynasty ruled Vijayanagar for nearly one and a half centuries. This was followed by the Saluva dynasty which was in power only for a brief period. The Tuluva dynasty then succeeded as rulers. Krishnadeva Raya, the greatest ruler of Vijayanagar, belonged to this family.

As the empire expanded, kingdoms to the south, such as the Hoysalas and the Tamil region, were also assimilated into Vijayanagar. The rulers of Vijayanagar were almost continuously at war with the Bahmani sultanate as well as with the Religious based kingdoms of Kondavidu and Orissa. Finally, the combined forces of the five Deccani Sultanates defeated Vijayanagar in 1565 A.D. (C.E.) at the Battle of Talikota. The Vijayanagar emperors then shifted their capital further south to Penugonda, and eventually to Chandragiri near Tirupati. The empire (or what remained of it) finally withered away in the middle of the seventeenth century.

(d) The Mughals (1526-1707 A.D. (C.E.))

The Mughal empire was founded by Babur in 1526 A.D. (C.E.) after he defeated Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat. The first six Mughal emperors are referred to as the 'Great Mughals'. Aurangzeb was the last of the great Mughals. Akbar consolidated the Mughal empire through conquests and through a policy of conciliation with the Religious based kingdoms of Rajasthan. The Mughal empire though began to disintegrate after Aurangzeb, continued to exist nominally till 1857 A.D. (C.E.) when the British finally ended the virtually non-existent empire.

A new power centre rose in Maharashtra in the seventeenth century, and the Marathas under the leadership of **Shivaji** seriously undermined the authority of the Mughals in western India. At its height, the empire stretched over most of the Indian sub-continent. Only the south-western region of Kerala and southern Tamilnadu were not directly under Mughal rule.

(e) The Arrival of the Europeans

During the fifteenth century the Europeans were pre-occupied with trying to find a direct sea route to India, bypassing the overland route through west Asia and the Mediterranean. The spice trade from India was controlled by Muslims up to Alexandria. By gaining direct access to India the Europeans could exercise more direct control over the spice trade and obtain the spices at more favourable prices. In 1498 A.D. (C.E.), Vasco da Gama landed on the Kerala coast having sailed around the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa. Barely five years later, the Portuguese built their first fort at Cochin in 1503 A.D. (C.E.). Goa was captured in 1510 A.D. (C.E.) and became the centre of the Portuguese state in India. Because of their naval superiority, the Portuguese were able to conquer many ports from east Africa up to Malacca, and could effectively control the maritime trade over the entire region.

Other European nations soon followed the Portuguese, most notably the Dutch, English and French. The activities of the latter were carried on through the respective East India Companies. While these were all private trading enterprises, they all had a strong political agenda. During the seventeenth century, when Mughal authority was still powerful, the European companies were able to trade in the Mughal empire, but could not have their own territorial base within the boundaries of the empire. In South India, however, political authority was fragmented and much less cohesive, and they had their own enclaves over which they exercised complete authority. The Dutch were in Pulicat (and later Nagapatnam), the English in Madras, the French in Pondicherry and the Danes in Tarangampadi (Tranquebar).

Impact on Polity

In Indian history had far-reaching consequences on administrative institutions, society and the economy across the sub-continent.

The CHOLA PERIOD was an enterprising period when trade and the economy expanded, accompanied by urbanization. The administrative machinery was re-organised during Chola rule. The basic unit of local administration was the village (ur), followed by the sub-region (nadu) and district (kottam). Tax-free villages granted to Brahmins were known as brahmadeya. Marketing centres and towns were known as nagaram. The ur, nadu, brahmadeya and nagaram each had its own assembly. They were responsible for the maintenance and management of the water resources and land; the local temples; resolving local issues and disputes; and for collecting the taxes due to the government.

The Cholas notable feature was the great increase in the construction of temples. This had two dimensions: new temples were constructed, and existing temples became multi-functional social and economic institutions. The construction of great temples also was a reflection of the growing prosperity in the kingdom, since the activity involved great expenditure. The temple was no longer a mere place of worship, but became an important economic entity as an employer, consumer and land-owner.

The establishment of Islamic Rule in Delhi made a big impact on Indian society. Initially, Islam did not cause any social tension. Arab merchants, for instance, when they came and settled on Kerala coast, married local women and led a peaceful life. The situation changed when Islam became a state power. For a medieval ruler one way of asserting imperial authority was to demolish the place of worship of the enemies. Otherwise Islam as a monotheistic religion had its positive impact in Indian society. It played a decisive role in the evolution of a composite culture.

Muslim kingdoms in Delhi, as well in the Deccan, also attracted migrants from Persia and Arabia who moved to India and took up service in these states and many became important and well-known statesmen. This also opened up Indian society to steady interaction with west Asia resulting in the transfer of cultural and technical influences. Muslim merchants and craftsmen also migrated from the north of India to the south in the wake of the military expeditions. Society became more heterogeneous and hybrid in character. A new composite culture evolved. This could be seen most vividly in the Deccan sultanates of Bijapur and Golkonda whose rulers were extremely broad-minded and secular in outlook.

A notable development was the profusion of contemporary historical accounts of the Muslim Sultanates by Arab and Persian historians. Al beruni, Ibn Batuta, and Ferishta are among the best known of the Muslim historians. These historians provide valuable information about the rulers and events of the medieval period. They also provide an alternate historical point of view of Islamic rule in India as seen through the eyes of Muslim writers.

The establishment of the VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE changed the administrative and social institutional structure of south India, especially in the Tamil country. Perhaps because the new kingdom was threatened from the beginning by the hostility of the Bahmani sultanate in the north, Vijayanagar evolved as a militaristic state. This empire needed two kinds of resources to feed its military establishment – revenue and men. This was achieved through re-organizing the administration of the conquered territories, especially in the Tamil region. Military officers, known as '*nayakas*' were appointed as chiefs of various localities in Tamilnadu and received land grants from the emperor. There were also lesser military leaders known as *palayakkarar* who essentially supplied the

manpower for the army. Many forts were also built which were under Brahman commanders.

Three major nayaka kingdoms, owing allegiance to the Vijayanagar emperor, came up between 1500 A.D. (C.E.) and 1550 A.D. (C.E.) in Madurai, Tanjavur and Gingee (Senji). These nayakas had formal roles in court ceremonies at Vijayanagar. This became the new political order in Tamilnadu during the sixteenth century. The nayaka chieftains as well as the three nayaka kings were all strong supporters of Hindu temples. The three capitals became great cultural centres under the patronage of the nayaka rulers who promoted literature and the performing arts.

Resources realized from the land were transferred to the empire by the nayakas not as tax revenue, but as tribute. Thus, the resources of the core regions, especially in the Tamil region, were utilized for military purposes. This administrative set-up effectively destroyed the decentralized, local institutions which managed local resources, temples and affairs which had come up during Chola rule. The appointment of Telugu nayakas also resulted in the migration of Telugu-speaking people from the north. These included soldiers, agriculturists, craftsmen and Brahmins.

The MUGHAL EMPIRE transformed the economy and society of north India. The empire was consolidated under Akbar through his policy of co-opting the Hindu Rajput rulers under the umbrella of Mughal rule. At the height of its power the Mughal empire was one of the largest, richest and most powerful empires in the entire world.

In part due to Aurangzeb's reversal to orthodox Islamic principles of governance which alienated the Rajput rulers and the Hindu subjects, the over-extended empire began to collapse under its own weight by the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The ARRIVAL OF THE EUROPEANS in India ultimately culminated in the establishment of colonial rule in India under the British, and this is what is considered foremost when discussing the impact of the European presence. There was an explosion in the demand for Indian textiles in the European markets, often referred to as the 'Indian craze'. This led to a significant expansion of textile production in India, which was accompanied by an expansion of the production of commercial crops like cotton and indigo and other dyes.

Society

(a) Caste

Caste is the most distinctive aspect of Indian society. We first need to understand two dimensions of the term 'caste'. First, the four-fold division of society as specified in the religious texts, referred to as varna.

Improving the status of their jati was a major pre-occupation for all caste groups. This is particularly evident after the fourteenth century when the traditional local assemblies which controlled the resources and social interactions began to weaken. In traditional society many castes were denied various social rights and privileges. Caste also created a mythical genealogy to establish its origins; this was used to justify the claim for the right to a higher status in the hierarchy. These genealogies are found in many of the manuscripts collected by Colin Mackenzie.

(b) Religion

Diverse institutions with different ideologies came up within the bhakti movement during the medieval period. Mathas or mutts were established under different gurus or religious leaders like Vidyaranya; Saivite movements came up like the Tamil Saiva-siddhanta, and the Virasaivas in Karnataka; in Maharashtra the Varkarisampradaya (tradition) of the devotees of Vithoba arose in the 14th century.

Buddhism had faded out in India. Jainism also lost ground in most parts of India due to emergence of bhakti movement under Sankara and Ramanuja. However, it continued to thrive in parts of Gujarat and Marwar, especially among the trading communities. With regard to Christianity, there were a small number of Christian groups in Kerala claiming their origins to the time of St Thomas, the disciple of Jesus. But Christianity took roots when the Portuguese arrived in Kerala and set themselves up in Goa. In Goa itself the local population was under great pressure to convert to Christianity, among the fishing communities on the Pandyan coast. The best known among the Jesuit missionaries was St Francis Xavier who was instrumental in making the fishing community to take to Christianity in the Tuticorin region. Another notable Jesuit was Roberto de Nobili, a scholar, who was based in Madurai.

In the north a new religion, Sikhism, was founded by Guru Nanak, who lived during 15th and 16th century. Sikhism grew in strength in spite of severe repression by Aurangzeb. Foreign religions also came to India when Jews and Zoroastrians (Parsis) migrated to India. The Parsis, who fled Persia to escape persecution, settled in Gujarat, while the Jews lived in Kerala. Parsi merchants were among the richest and most prominent in the port of Surat, and subsequently, in Bombay under the British.

Culture

Literature, Art and Architecture

The Chola period was an era of remarkable cultural activity. These were the centuries when major literary works were written. The best known classical poet, Kampan, wrote Ramayana in Tamil which was formally presented

(Arangetram) in the temple at Srirangam. Sekkilar's Periyapuram, similarly was presented at the temple in Chidambaram. Among the other great works of the period is Kalingattup-paraniand Muvarula.

The monumental architecture of the Cholas is visible in the great temple of Tanjavur, Gangai-konda-cholapuram and Darasuram, to name only a few. Stone images were sculpted on the temple walls and pillars. Bronze images of great beauty and artistry were made by the 'lost wax' process. The best known of them is the iconic representation of Siva as Nataraja, performing the cosmic dance.

A distinct Islamic cultural tradition developed in India with the establishment of Muslim rule. The sultans built forts, tombs, mosques and other monuments in Delhi as well as in south India which came under their rule. The Mughal period particularly was a brilliant epoch in the cultural history of India.

The Mughals were well-known for their aesthetic values, and were great patrons of the arts. They left behind numerous monuments, in addition to constructing entire cities like Shahjahanabad (Delhi) and Fatehpur Sikri, gardens, mosques and forts. Decorative arts - especially jewellery set with precious and semi-precious gems for items of personal use - flourished under the patronage of the royal household and urban elites. The art of painting also flourished in the Mughal period. Primarily known as Mughal miniatures, they were generally intended as book illustrations or were single works to be kept in albums. A large volume of literature was produced, especially in Persian, and also in Urdu, Hindi and other regional languages. In the performing arts, like Hindustani the name of Tansen is well-known indicating the patronage extended to classical music under Akbar.

In south India, the Vijayanagar rulers and their military chiefs actively supported temple construction. Many new temples were built by them. Besides this, new structures like pavilions and halls with many pillars were added extensively to existing temples, with elaborately carved pillars. Art historians point to the distinctive style of the temple sculptures of the Vijayanagar period. The intricately carved lofty towers or *gopurams* at the entrance to temples were all added during the Vijayanagar period. The walls of the temples were embellished with paintings.

A large volume of religious literature, especially in Sanskrit, was produced under the patronage of the nayakas and the Vijayanagar rulers. Telugu literature flourished under royal support. A new style of Tamil literature called Prabandham emerged during this period. The great commentaries of the epic Silappadikaram and Tirukkural were also written during this period. Venkatamakhi, son of Govindha Dikshidar who codifying the ragas of Carnatic music had lived in this period.

Economy

(a) Agriculture

India was predominantly an agricultural country, and a very large proportion of the population lived in rural areas and depended on agriculture for their livelihood. Both in the north and the south, agriculture depended heavily on irrigation. Canals and wells added to the water sources in addition to rainfall and rivers. The biggest network of canals known in India was built in fourteenth century by Firuzshah Tughluq in the Delhi area. Construction of lakes, tanks and reservoirs with sluices to let out the water as well as the use of check dams all increased the availability of water for irrigation. Cultivators were also encouraged to dig wells. Lift irrigation was used to draw the water. In the north, the Persian wheel was used for lifting water from wells. In the Tamil region, the connecting the tributaries of Kaveri. Lakes and tanks also added to the water sources.

An important feature of Indian agriculture was the large number of crops that were cultivated. The peasant in India was more knowledgeable about many crops as compared to peasants in most of the world at the time. A variety of food grains like wheat, rice, and millets were grown apart from lentils and oilseeds. Many other commercial crops were also grown such as sugarcane, cotton and indigo. Other than the general food crops, south India had a regional specialization in pepper, cinnamon, spices and coconut.

In general, two different crops were grown in the different seasons, which protected the productivity of the soil. Maize and tobacco were two new crops which were introduced after the arrival of the Europeans. Many new varieties of fruit or horticultural crops like papaya, pineapple, guava and cashew nut were also introduced which came from the west, especially America. Potatoes, chillies and tomatoes also became an integral part of Indian food.

(b) Non Agricultural Production

Up to the end of the seventeenth century, India was one of the largest manufacturing countries in the world though the economy was primarily agricultural. Non-agricultural production refers to both processed agricultural products and craft production. Primarily the products can be grouped under: processed holas had created a network of canals for irrigation agricultural products like sugar, oil, textiles; metal work; precious gems and jewellery; ship building; ornamental wood and leather work; and many other minor products.

The organization of production basically depended on the nature of the market for which it was produced. A large part of the production was intended for local use in the village, or at most a rural region. These goods were basic utilitarian goods like pots and pans, implements like ploughs, basic woodwork and coarse textiles. Generally the producer marketed the product himself, and exchange was probably conducted on barter.

In economic terms, what was important was specialized production by skilled craftsmen for an external market, especially in demand among the high income rural and urban upper classes. Such craft production was generally located in cities, or in rural settlements close to the cities. Craftsmen generally worked on an individual or family basis from their homes or workshops though larger manufacturing units (*karkhanas*) employing many craftsmen were set up under the Mughal state.

(c) Textiles

Nearly all the cloth that was produced was of cotton, though silk weaving had developed in Bengal where silk was produced, and in Gujarat. Each region of India produced a range of highly specialized local varieties of cotton cloth ranging from the coarse to the superfine, but all were intended for an external market. Dyed and printed/patterned cloth involved the use of vegetable dyes. India had two natural advantages in cotton weaving. The first was that cotton grew in almost all parts of India, so that the basic raw material was easily available. Second, the technology of producing a permanent colour on cotton using vegetable dyes was known from very early times in India. Cotton does not absorb dyes without a preparatory process using mordants, which was not known in the rest of the world. Indigo was the most important dye crop that was grown in India, but other dye crops (like the chay root for red colour) were also grown in India. Dye woods and resins like lac were imported. In addition, a range of colours were produced by using flowers and fruits, and products like turmeric in various combinations.

(d) Commerce

The large manufacturing sector essentially produced goods for exchange, and not for self-use. Therefore, India had an extensive network of trade for marketing these goods. The village was the basic geographical unit of production, and was essentially a subsistence economy and barter was the medium of exchange.

Big cities were usually major commercial centres, with bazaars and shops. They were also intermediate points in inter-regional trade since they were connected by a network of roads to other centres in other parts of the country. In addition to such overland trade, smaller ships and boats were used in coastal trade along both the western and eastern coasts of the country. Finally, the major ports (Surat, Masulipatnam, Calicut etc.) were the nodal points in international, maritime trade.

Maritime trade across the Indian Ocean, extending from China in the east to Africa in the west, had flourished for many centuries. Thus ports like Malacca, Calicut etc. were 'entrepots' or intermediate points in this regionally segmented trade. In the seventeenth century, Surat in Gujarat, Masulipatnam in the Golkonda

kingdom, Chittagong in Bengal, Pulicat (Pazhaverkadu) and Nagapatnam on the Coromandel Coast, and Calicut in Kerala were all major ports in Asiatic trade.

India was also a major exporter of textiles, pepper, precious and semi-precious gems – especially diamonds which were then found only in India – and iron and steel which were greatly in demand in the entire Asian region. Textiles accounted for nearly 90 per cent of the total exports from India. The major imports from China and the east were silk, Chinese ceramics, gold, spices, aromatic woods and camphor. Silk, drugs, dye woods and sugar were the main imports from Persia, while gold, ivory and slaves were brought in from east Africa.

Urbanization

Travellers coming to India in the medieval period noted that there were a number of urban centres of various sizes, from cities to small market towns throughout India, though the country was primarily rural. The urban population was probably quite small as a proportion of the total, but it had an economic and cultural significance which was much greater than its actual size.

What were the factors which facilitated urbanization? It has been observed that cities and towns fulfilled diverse and overlapping roles in the economy. The large cities were centres of manufacturing and marketing, banking and financial services. They were usually located at the intersection of an extensive network of roads

In South India, especially the Tamil region, urbanization went hand in hand with temples. Temples were large economic enterprises requiring a variety of goods and services to function. They needed and employed a large number of people to man the religious services, the kitchens and for other work. Devotees coming to worship at the temple needed many services and goods, so that temple towns also became marketing centres.

Conclusion

The medieval period covering more than seven hundred years of Indian history was a time when momentous changes took place in the political landscape which also transformed the social and economic fabric of the country.

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11th vol
Lesson V
Evolution of Society in South India

Introduction

In the Deccan region, encompassing major parts of present day Andhra, Karnataka and Maharashtra, the Satavahanas established a powerful kingdom in the first century BCE. In the south, the three family ruling houses, the Cholas, the Cheras and the Pandyas were their contemporaries, ruling the fertile parts of Tamizhagam. But the Tamil rulers started two centuries earlier as they figure in Asokas inscriptions of the third century BCE. There were many common things as well as differences in the polity and society of the Deccan and Tamil regions.

Stupas. The stupa is a heap of clay that evolved out of earthen funerary mounds, in which the ashes of the dead were buried. Buddhist stupas evolved out of the burial of the ashes of the mortal remains of the Buddha. Buddhist sacred architecture originated with the eight stupas where the ashes were divided. Hemispherical shape, the stupa symbolizes the universe; and the Buddha represents the emperor of the spiritual universe. The stupa has a path around it for devotional circumambulation.

Sources

Archaeological

- The megalithic burials sites of the early historic period.
- Excavated material from ancient sites, including ports, capital towns, with architectural remains, such as in Arikamedu, Kodumanal, Alagankulam, and Uraiyur.
- Buddhist sites with stupas and chaityas located in Andhra and Karnataka regions (Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda, etc.)

Numismatic

- Coins of pre-Satavahana chieftains and of the Satavahanas from Andhra-Karnataka region.
- The coins issued by the Cheras, Cholas, Pandyas, and the chieftains of the Sangam Age.
- Roman copper, silver and gold coins.

Epigraphic

- The Asokan inscriptions, written in Prakrit, found in Andhra-Karnataka regions.
- The Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions found in the caves of Tamil Nadu and Kerala such as in Mangulam, Jambai, and Pugalur.

- The Satavahana inscriptions and other Buddhist inscriptions of the Andhra region
- Short inscriptions found on pottery and rings and stones in Tamil Nadu and some sites outside India, like in Berenike, and Quseir al Qadhim (Egypt).

Literary

- Tamil texts including the Sangam and post-Sangam literature
- The Arthashastra, the treatise on economy and statecraft authored by Kautilya
- The Puranas which mention the genealogy of the Andhras/Satavahanas,
- Buddhist Chronicles such as Mahavamsa.
- Gatha Saptasati, a Prakrit text composed by the Satavahana king Hala

Classical Tamil Literature

The Classical Sangam corpus consists of Tolkappiyam, the eight anthologies (Ettuththokai), Paththuppattu. Tolkappiyam, attributed to Tolkappiyar, is the earliest extant Tamil grammatical text dealing not only with poetry but also the society and culture of the times. The Pathinen Kilkanakku (18 minor works) and the five epics belong to post-Sangam times (fourth to sixth century CE) and describe a different social and cultural set-up.

Foreign Notices

The following Greek and Latin sources inform us about the long distance cultural and commercial connections.

- The Periplus of Erythrean Sea, an ancient Greek text of the first century CE.
- Pliny the Elder's Natural History, first century CE
- Ptolemy's Geography, second century CE
- Vienna Papyrus G 40822, a Greek document datable to the second century CE.
- A Roman Map called Peutingerian Table

South India during Mauryan Times

The Asokan edicts (c. 270-30 BCE) present for the first time a picture of the political condition in south India. Rock Edict II lists the Tamil ruling houses Cholas, Pandyas, Keralaputras and Satiyaputra as neighbour rulers, lying beyond his domain, where he is said to have made provision for two types of medical treatment: medical treatment for both humans and animals. The Mauryan empire at that time included northern parts of Karnataka and Andhra, while the Tamil kingdoms were treated as independent neighbours.

Ettuthogai and Pathupattu collections have about 2400 poems. These poems, varying in length from 3 to 800 lines, were composed by panar, the wandering bards and pulavar, the poets.

The Eight Anthologies are 1. Natrinai; 2. Kurunthogai; 3. Aingurunuru; 4. Patitruppathu; 5. Paripadal; 6. Kalithogai; 7. Akananuru; 8. Purananuru.

Pathupattu (ten long songs): 1. Thirumurugatrupatai; 2. Porunaratrupatai; 3. Sirupanatrupatai; 4. Perumpanatrupatai; 5. Mullaipattu; 6. Maduraikanchi; 7. Nedunalvadai; 8. Kurinjipattu; 9. Pattinappalai; 10. Malaipadukadam.

Patinen Kilkanakku texts, which are post-Sangam works, include eighteen texts, which mostly deal with ethics and moral codes. The most important of them are Thirukkural, and Naladiyar.

Silappathikaram and Manimekalai are the two important epics useful for insights into cultural and religious history.

Women Poets of the Sangam Age

Of the over 450 poets who contributed to the corpus of Sangam poetry about thirty are women. They composed more than 150 poems. The most prominent and prolific among them was Avvaiyar. Others include Allur Nanmullaiyaar, Kaakkaipadiniyar, Kavarendu, Nalveliyyaar, Okkur Masaathiyar, and Paarimakalir.

After the decline of the Mauryan power, and before the rise of the Satavahanas, many small principalities emerged. Although not much information is available about their rulers, their coins and inscriptions reveal that they were chiefs who controlled small territories.

South India under the Satavahanas

The Satavahanas emerged in the first century BCE in the Deccan region. They ruled over parts of Andhra, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. From recent archaeological evidence it is understood that the Satavahanas started to rule in the Telengana area and then moved to Maharashtra to rule in the Godavari basin with Prathistan (Paithan in Maharashtra) as their capital. Later they moved eastwards to control coastal Andhra also. The work of Pliny talks about 30 walled towns, a large army, cavalry and elephant force in the Andhra country.

Gautamiputra Satakarni was the greatest of the Satavahana kings. He defeated the Shaka ruler Nahapana and reissued the coins of Nahapana with his own royal insignia. The inscription of his mother Gautami Balashri at Nashik mentions him as the conqueror of the Shakas, Pahlavas, and Yavanas. He is also said to have performed the prestigious Vedic asvamedha sacrifice.

Vasishthiputra Pulumavi, the successor of Gautamiputra Satakarni, expanded the frontiers of the Satavahana Empire. The coins issued by him are found scattered in many parts of south India. Yagnashri Satakarni was another

famous ruler who issued coins with a ship motif, indicating the importance of the overseas trade during his reign.

King Hala is credited with the writing of Gatha Sattasai, a collection of 700 love poems. Written in Maharshtri Prakrit dialect, it has themes similar to those found in the Tamil Sangam poetry.

The Satavahana Empire declined around the 3rd century CE and was replaced by the Ikshvakus, followed by the Pallavas, in Andhra and the Kadambas in northern Karnataka.

Importance of Satavahana Period

Offering land grants was an important development of the Satavahana times. The beneficiaries of these grants were mostly Buddhists and Brahmins. The Naneghat inscription refers to tax exemptions given to the lands granted to Buddhist monks. Thus we notice the beginning of priestly groups attaining higher status. These land donations created a group of people who did not cultivate, but owned land. This led to the development of land-based social hierarchy and divisions in the society.

For the first time a big state covering a major part of the Deccan was established. Several rock-cut caves dedicated to the Buddha sangha bear evidence that they were situated in the trade routes linking the interior to the coastal parts of Konkan region. It was also a period of brisk Indo-Roman trade.

The Sangam Age

The first three centuries of the Common Era are widely accepted as the Sangam period, as the information for this period is mainly derived from the Sangam literature. More correctly this has to be called as the early historical period and starts one or two centuries earlier, from the second century BCE, as we have clear epigraphical and archaeological evidence, in addition to literary evidence.

The Muvendar

Though the three Tamil ruling families were known to Asoka in the third century BCE itself, some individual names are known only from the Sangam poems of the first century and later. Known as muvendar, 'the three crowned kings', the Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas controlled major agrarian territories, trade routes and towns. But the Satiyaputra (same as Athiyaman) found in the Asokan inscription along with the above three houses is a Velir chief in the Sangam poems.

The Cholas controlled the central and northern parts of Tamil Nadu. Their core area of rule was the Kaveri delta, later known as Cholamandalam. Their capital was Uraiyur (near Tiruchirapalli town) and Puhar or Kaviripattinam was an alternative royal residence and chief port town. Tiger was their emblem. Kaviripattinam attracted merchants from various regions of the Indian Ocean. Pattinappalai, composed by the poet Kattiyalur Uruttirankannanar, offers elaborate descriptions of the bustling trading activity here during the rule of Karikalan.

Karikalan, son of Ilanjetchenni, is portrayed as the greatest Chola of the Sangam age. Pattinappalai gives a vivid account of his reign. Karikalan's foremost military achievement was the defeat of the Cheras and Pandyas, supported by as many as eleven Velir chieftains at Venni. He is credited with converting forest into habitable regions and developing agriculture by providing irrigation through the embankment of the Kaveri and building reservoirs. Kaviripattinam was a flourishing port during his time. Another king, Perunarkilli is said to have performed the Vedic sacrifice Rajasuyam. Karikalan's death was followed by a succession dispute between the Puhar and Uraiyur branches of the Chola royal family.

The Cheras controlled the central and northern parts of Kerala and the Kongu region of Tamil Nadu. Vanji was their capital and the ports of the west coast, Musiri and Tondi, were under their control. Vanji is identified with Karur, while some scholars identify it with Tiruvanchaikalam in Kerala. Now it is accepted by most scholars that there were two main branches of the Chera family and the Poraiya branch ruled from Karur of present-day Tamil Nadu.

The Patitrupathu speaks of eight Chera kings, their territory and fame. The inscriptions of Pugalur near Karur mention Chera kings of three generations. Chellirumporai issued coins in his name. Imayavaramban Nedun-cheralathan and Chenguttuvan are some of the prominent Chera kings. Chenguttuvan defeated many chieftains and is said to have ensured the safety of the great port Musiri by putting down piracy. But the great north Indian expedition of Chenguttuvan mentioned in Silappathikaram is however not mentioned in the Sangam poems. He is said to have ruled for fifty-six years, patronising the orthodox and heterodox religions. Some Cheras issued copper and lead coins, with Tamil-Brahmi legends, imitating Roman coins. There are many other Chera coins with their bow and arrow emblem but without any writing on them.

The Pandyas ruled from Madurai. Korkai was their main port, located near the confluence of Tamraparani with the Bay of Bengal. It was famous for pearl fishery and chank diving. Korkai is referred to in the Periplus as Kolkoii. Fish was the emblem of the Pandyas. Their coins have elephant on one side and a stylised image of fish on the other. They invaded Southern Kerala and controlled the port of Nelkynda, near Kottayam. According to tradition, they patronized the Tamil Sangams and facilitated the compilation of the Sangam poems. The Sangam poems

mention the names of several kings, but their succession and regnal years are not clear.

The Mangulam Tamil-Brahmi inscription mentions a Pandya king by name Nedunchezhiyan of the second century BCE. Maduraikanchi refers to Mudukudumi-Peruvazhuthi and another Nedunchezhiyan, victor of Talaiyalanganam, and a few other Pandya kings. Mudukudimi-Peruvazhuthi is referred to in the Velvikkudi copper plates of eighth century for donating land to Brahmans. He seems to have issued coins with the legend Peruvazhuthi, to commemorate his performance of many Vedic sacrifices.

Nedunchezhiyan is praised for his victory over the combined army of the Chera, the Chola and five Velir chieftains (Tithiyan, Elini, Erumaiyuran, Irungovenman, and Porunan) at Talayalanganam. He is also given credit for capturing Milalai and Mutthuru (Pudukottai district) two important places from a Vel chief. He is praised as the lord of Korkai, and as the overlord of the southern Paratavar, a martial and fishing community of the Tirunelveli coast.

Social Formation in Tamil Eco-zones

Sangam poems help us understand the social formation of the time. According to the thinaiconcept, Tamilagam was divided into five landscapes or eco-regions namely Kurinji, Marutam, Mullai, Neytal and Palai. Each region had distinct characteristics – a presiding deity, people and cultural life according to the environmental conditions, as follows:

Kurinji: hilly region: hunting and gathering

Marutham: riverine tract: agriculture using plough and irrigation.

Mullai: forested region: pastoralism combined with shifting cultivation

Neythal: coastal land: fishing and salt making.

Palai: parched land. Unsuitable for cultivation and hence people took to cattle lifting and robbery.

Tamil Polity

In a way this thinaiclassification is said to reflect the uneven socio-economic developments of the different localities. That is seen in the political forms too. Three levels of rulers are found: 1) Kizhar, 2) Velir, 3) Vendar. Kizhar were the heads of the villages or a small territory, later known as nadu. They were the chiefs of tribal communities living in specific areas. The Vendar were kings controlling larger, fertile territories.

The Velir, who were many in number, controlled the territories of varied geographical nature, mainly hilly and forest areas, that were in between the muvendar's fertile territories. Chiefs like Athiyaman, Pari, Ay, Evvi and Irungo each commanded a big area, rich in natural resources. They were generous

patrons of the poets and bards. They had military power and there were frequent wars among these chiefs on account of capture of cattle. On many occasions they seem to have united and confronted one or other of the three kings.

There are differing views among scholars, with regard to the political organization of the three kingdoms. The earlier and dominant view is that the Sangam Age society was a well-organised state society. The other view which is put forward in recent decades is that the polities of the Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas were pre-state chiefdoms. The arguments for the latter view are:

1. No social stratification is noticed.
2. Proper territorial association is absent.
3. Destructive warfare did not allow the development of agriculture and surplus production for the emergence of the state.
4. No evidence of taxation as in the governments of North India.

The following counter arguments are presented in response:

- A closer look at the Sangam literature reveals that social differentiation is evident in the Marutham region.
- The territorial associations are very clear in the case of the Muvendar, and their important position is corroborated by the Greco-Roman texts from the first century CE.
- Warfare for territorial expansion was a major theme of Puratthinai
- Evidence for taxation at the highways and in the port of Kaviripattinam is cited. The Chera king is spoken as receiving the resources from the hills and the port of Musiri.
- Trade played an important role between the late first century BCE and third century CE.

Political Ascendancy of the Vendar

From the chiefs of the Iron Age (c. 1100-300 BCE) emerged the Vendar of the early historic period. While certain chiefs attained higher status (vendar) through the larger and effective control of pastoral and agricultural regions, others in the marginal regions remained as chieftains (velir). For example, Athiyamans, mentioned as Satiyaputra in the Ashoka inscriptions, became weak and did not attain the status of kings like the Chola, Pandya and Chera vendar.

The Vendar subjugated the chieftains and fought with the other two Vendars. For this they mobilized their own warriors, besides seeking the support of some Velir chiefs. The adoption of titles was one of the measures adopted by the Sangam Age Vendar to display their power. Titles such as Kadungo, Imayavaramban and Vanavaramban and Peru Vazhuthi distinguished themselves from the ordinary people and the Velirs.

The patronization of bards and poets and entertaining them in their courts (avaiyam) was probably a step undertaken by the kings to glorify their name and fame and also their territories and towns. For example, the Chola king Karikalan is said to have offered a huge amount of gold coins to Uruttirankannanar who composed Pattinappalai.

Society and Economy

In the Sangam Age the wars waged by the Vendar were involved in expanding their territorial base by annexing the enemy's territories. Endemic warfare presumably created conditions for social disparities. War captives serving in some cult centres are mentioned. Some references to slaves are also found there. Women were actively engaged in economic production and there were a significant number of women poets in the Sangam Age.

There is evidence of craft production such as bronze vessels, beads and gold works, textiles, shell bangles and ornaments, glass, iron smithy, pottery making. Craft production was common in the major urban centres such as Arikamedu, Uraiyur, Kanchipuram, Kaviripattinam, Madurai, Korkai, and Pattanam in Kerala. Maduraikanchi speaks about day markets as well as and night markets selling several craft goods. Raw materials for the production of various objects and ornaments were not available everywhere. Precious and semi-precious stones were collected, which were exchanged for other commodities. Such raw materials reached the industrial centres, where various objects were made, and they were again exchanged for some other produce.

The names of persons mentioned in inscriptions on pottery reveal the presence of non-Tamil speakers, mostly traders, in certain craft centres and towns. Traders from faraway regions were present in the Tamil country. Manimegalai refers to Magadha artisans, Maratha mechanics, Malva smiths and Yavana carpenters working in cooperation with Tamil craftsmen. Trade-related terms such as vanikan, chattan and nigama appear in the Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions. Salt merchants called umanar, travelled in bullock carts along with their families for trade activities. Chattu referred to the itinerant or mobile merchants.

In trade, barter system was much in vogue, though coins were also in use. Roman coins circulated as bullion. Long distance trade existed and the connections with the Roman empire and southeast Asia are in evidence at many archaeological sites. The southern part of India, because of its easy access to the coast and location in the maritime trade route connecting the East and the West, played an important role in the overseas contacts. The major early historic ports have evidence of Roman amphora, glassware and other materials suggesting active maritime activities. The wealth brought by the Romans and the arrival of foreign merchants is evidenced in archaeology as well as literature. Roman gold and silver coins have been found in many hoards in the Coimbatore region and in many other places in south India.

Ideology and Religion

The earliest evidence of the appearance of formal religious activities appears in the time of the Asoka, when Buddhism reached south India and Sri Lanka. Asoka's daughter is considered to have taken the Bodhi tree to Sri Lanka. There is a legend associated with the movement of Chandragupta Maurya to Karnataka region before the time of Ashoka. The Satavahanas, Sangam kings and Ikshvahas supported Vedic sacrifices. The evidence for the movement of Brahmins and the performance of Vedic ritual practices is found in the Sangam texts. But the varnasrama ideology was yet to take root in the Tamil region.

Evidence of Buddhism is widely found in south India. The Krishna and Godavari delta of Andhra had many important Buddhist centres. Archaeological excavations conducted in Amaravathi, Nagarjunakonda, etc. show how deep-rooted was Buddhism. In Tamil Nadu, Kaviripattinam and Kanchipuram have evidence of Buddhist Stupas. But compared to Jainism, the evidence for Buddhism is restricted to a few sites in Tamil Nadu. The numerous cave shelters with Tamil Brahmi inscriptions found in Tamil Nadu show that Jainism was more influential in the Tamil country. Their influence on the common people is not known but we have evidence for the merchants and lay devotees supporting Jain monks by providing rock shelters and offerings. In the post-Sangam centuries

Age of Kalabhras - Post Sangam Period

The period between the Sangam Age and the Pallava-Pandya period, roughly between c. 300 CE and 600 CE, is known as the age of Kalabhras in the history of Tamizhagam. As the three traditional kingdoms disappeared in this interval due to the occupation of their territory by a warlike group called the Kalabhras, this period was called an interregnum or 'dark age' by earlier historians. It was also supposed that many good traits of earlier Tamil culture disappeared in this interval. This idea of the Kalabhra interregnum is no more accepted as correct.

Rather this is the time when the greatest Tamil work Tirukkural was written along with many other works grouped as the eighteen minor works. The epics Silappathikaram and Manimekalai also belong to this period. As this was the time when the non-orthodox religions, Jainism and Buddhism became more influential, the scholars of the orthodox Vedic-Puranic school seem to have created the impression that the ruling Kalabhras of the time were evil in nature.

The recent interpretation of the period takes it as a period of transition leading to enlarged state societies under the Pallavas ruling over northern Tamilnadu and the Pandyas in the south from the sixth century onwards. To start with, the rulers of these new states were patrons of the Jain and Buddhist religions and gradually they came under the spell of the orthodox Vedic-Puranic religion

emerging in the form of the Bhakti cults of Saivism and Vaishnavism. But the influence of Jain and Buddhist religions on the general society was so strong as to evoke much aversion from the Bhakti saints.

A group of inscriptions found at Pulangurichi in Sivagangai district datable to about the middle of the 6th century, name two kings. They are Chendan and Kurran. Though there is no mention about their family or dynasty name, some scholars identify them as Kalabhra rulers. The Kalabhra kingdom seems to have been uprooted by Pandyas around the third quarters of sixth century CE.

Emergence of New Kingdoms in South India: Later Cholas and Pandyas

I. The Later Cholas

Introduction

The Cholas are one among the popular and well-known Tamil monarchs in the history of South India. The elaborate state structure, the extensive irrigation network, the vast number of temples they built, their great contributions to art and architecture and their overseas exploits have given them a pre-eminent position in history.

Revival of the Chola Rule

The ancient Chola kingdom reigned supreme with the Kaveri delta forming the core area of its rule and with Uraiyr (present-day Tiruchirappalli) as its capital. It rose to prominence during the reign of Karikala but gradually declined under his successors. In the 9th century Vijayalaya, ruling over a small territory lying north of the Kaveri, revived the Chola Dynasty. He conquered Thanjavur and made it his capital. Later Rajendra I and his successors ruled the empire from Gangaikonda Cholapuram, the newly built capital. Rajaraja I (A.D. (CE) 985 - 1016) was the most powerful ruler of Chola empire and also grew popular beyond his times. He established Chola authority over large parts of South India. His much-acclaimed naval expeditions led to the expansion of Cholas into the West Coast and Sri Lanka.

He built the famous Rajarajeswaram (Brihadeshwara) Temple in Thanjavur. His son and successor, Rajendra Chola I (A.D. (CE) 1016 - 1044), matched his father in his ability to expand the empire. The Chola empire remained a powerful force in South India during his reign. After his accession in A.D. (CE) 1023, his striking military expedition was to northern India, capturing much territory there. He proclaimed himself the Gangaikondan (conqueror of the Ganga region). The Gangaikonda Cholapuram temple was built to commemorate his victories in North India. The navy of Rajendra Chola enabled him to conquer

the kingdom of Srivijaya (southern Sumatra). Cholas' control over the seas facilitated a flourishing overseas trade.

Decline of the Chola Empire

Rajendra Chola's three successors were not capable rulers. The third successor Veerarajendra's son Athirajendra was killed in civil unrest. With his death ended the Vijayalaya line of Chola rule. On hearing the death of Athirajendra, the Eastern Chalukya prince Rajendra Chalukya seized the Chola throne and began the rule of Chalukya-Chola dynasty as Kulothunga I. Kulothunga established himself firmly on the Chola throne soon eliminating all the threats to the Chola Empire. He avoided unnecessary wars and earned the goodwill of his subjects. But Kulothunga lost the territories in Ceylon. The Pandya territory also began to slip out of Chola control. Kanchipuram was lost to the Telugu Cholas. The year 1279 marks the end of Chola dynasty when King Maravarman Kulasekara Pandyan I defeated the last king Rajendra Chola III and established the rule of the Pandyas in present-day Tamil Nadu.

Administration

The central administration was in the hands of king. As the head of the state, the king enjoyed enormous powers. The king's orders were written down in palm leaves by his officials or inscribed on the temple walls. The kingship was hereditary in nature. The ruler selected his eldest son as the heir apparent. He was known as Yuvaraja. The Yuvarajas were appointed as Governors in the provinces mainly for administrative training. The Chola rulers established a well-organised system of administration. The empire, for administrative convenience, was divided into provinces or mandalams. Each mandalam was sub-divided into naadus. Within each naadu, there were many kurrams (groups of villages). The lowest unit was the gramam (village).

Local Governance

Local administration worked through various bodies such as Urar, Sabhaiyar, Nagarattar and Nattar. With the expansion of agriculture, numerous peasant settlements came up on the countryside. They were known as Ur. The Urar, who were landholders acted as spokesmen in the Ur. Sabhaiyar in Brahman villages also functioned in carrying out administrative, financial and judicial functions. Nagarattar administered the settlement of traders. However, skilled artisans like masons, blacksmiths, goldsmiths, weavers and potters also lived in Nagaram. Nattar functioned as an assembly of Nadu and decided all the disputes and issues pertaining to Nadu. The assemblies in Ur, Sabha, Nagaram and Nadu worked through various committees. The committees took care of irrigation, roads, temples, gardens, collection of revenue and conduct of religious festivals.

Uttiramerur Inscriptions

There is a detailed description of how members were elected to the committees of the village sabha in the inscriptions found there. One member was to be elected from each ward. There were 30 wards in total. The eligibility to contest was to men in the age group of 35-70, well-versed in vedic texts and scriptures, and also owned land and house. The process of election was as follows: The names of qualified candidates from each ward were written on the palm-leaf slips and put into a pot. The eldest of the assembly would engage a boy to pull out one slip and declare his name. Various committees were decided in this way.

Revenue

The revenue of the Chola state came mainly from the land. The land tax was known as Kanikadan. The Chola rulers carried out an elaborate survey of land in order to fix the government's share of the land revenue. One-third of produce was collected as land tax. It was collected mostly in kind. In addition to land tax, there were taxes on profession and tolls on trade.

Social Structure Based on Land Relations

The Chola rulers gifted tax-free lands to royal officials, Brahmins, temples (devadana villages) and religious institutions. Land granted to Jain institutions was called pallichchandam. There were also of vellanvagai land and the holders of this land were called Vellalars. Ulu-kudi, a sub-section of Vellalar, could not own land but had to cultivate Brahmadeya and vellanvagai lands. The holders of vellanvagai land retained melvaram (major share in harvest). The ulu-kudi got kil-varam (lower share). Adimai (slaves) and panicey-makkal (labourers) occupied the lowest rung of society. In the intermediate section came the armed men and traders.

Irrigation

Cholas gave importance to irrigation. The 16-mile long embankment built by Rajendra Chola in Gangaikonda Cholapuram is an illustrious example. Vati-vaykkal, a criss-cross channel, is a traditional type of harnessing rain water in the Cauvery delta. Vati is a drainage channel and a vaykkal is the supply channel. The commonly owned village channel was called ur-vaykkal. The nadu level vaykkal is referred to as nadu-vaykkal. The turn-system was in practice in distributing the water.

Religion

Chola rulers were ardent Saivites. Hymns, in praise of the deeds of Lord Siva, were composed by the Saiva saints, the Nayanmars. NambiyandarNambi codified them, which came to be known as the Thirumurai.

Temples

The Chola period witnessed an extensive construction of temples. The temples in Thanjavur, Gangaikonda Cholapuram and Darasuram are the repository of architecture, sculpture, paintings and iconography of the Chola art. Temples during the Chola period were not merely places of worship. They were the largest landholders. Temples promoted education, and devotional forms of art such as dance, music and drama. The staff of the temples included temple officials, dancing girls, musicians, singers, players of musical instruments and the priests.

Cholas as Patrons of Learning

Chola kings were great patrons of learning. Rajendra I established a Vedic college at Ennayiram (now in Villupuram District). There were 340 students learning the Vedas, grammar and Upanishads under 14 teachers. This example was later followed by his successors and as a result two more such colleges had been founded, at Tirubuvanai near present-day Puducherry and Tirumukkoodal in present-day Chengalpattu district, in 1048 and 1067 respectively. The great literary works Periyapuram and Kamba Ramayanam belong to this period.

Trade

There was a flourishing trade during the Chola period. Trade was carried out by two guild-like groups: anju-vannattar and mani-gramattar. Anju-vannattar comprised West Asians, Arabs, Jews, Christians and Muslims. They were maritime traders and settled on the port towns all along the West Coast. It is said that mani-gramattar were the traders engaged in inland trade. In due course, both groups merged under the banner of ai-nutruvar and disai-ayirattu-ai-nutruvar functioning through the head guild in Ayyavole, Karnataka. This ai-nutruvar guild operated the maritime trade covering South-East Asian countries. Through overseas trade with South-East Asian countries elephant tusks, coral, transparent glass, betel nuts, cardamom, opaque glass, cotton stuff with coloured silk threads were imported. The items exported from here were sandalwood, ebony, condiments, precious gems, pepper, oil, paddy, grains and salt.

II. The Later Pandyas

Introduction

Pandyas were one of the three ancient Tamil dynasties that ruled southern India since the 4th century B.C. (BCE) but intermittently. Korkai, associated with pearl fisheries, is believed to have been their early capital and port. They moved to Madurai later, as many early Tamil inscriptions of Pandyas have been unearthed in Madurai and its surroundings. Under the Pandya kings of the Sangam Age, Madurai was a great centre of culture. Poets and writers of Tamil language gathered there and contributed to the development of Tamil Classics. The Pandyas had re-established their strong position in south Tamil Nadu by the

end of the 6th century A.D. (CE), after eliminating the rule of Kalabhras. But they could not resist the rising power of the later Cholas who ruled South India from 9th to 13th century. Thereafter taking advantage of the decline of Chola power, the later Pandyas re-established their authority. Their rule continued until 16th century.

Revival of Pandya Kingdom (A.D. (CE) 600 - 920)

Kadunkon recovered Pandya territory from the Kalabhras towards the close of 6th century. He was succeeded by two others. Arikesari Maravarman was the first strong Pandya ruler who ascended the throne in A.D. (CE) 642. He was a contemporary of Mahendravarman I and Narsimahvarman I. Inscriptions and copper plates praise his victory over his counterparts: Cheras, Cholas, Pallavas and Sinhalese. Arikesari Maravarman is identified with the Kun Pandian, the persecutor of Jains.

After Arikesari, the greatest of the dynasty was Jatila Parantaka Nedunjadayan (Varaguna I) (756-815), the donor of the Velvikkudi plates. Nedunjadayan expanded the Pandya territory to include Thanjavur, Tiruchirappalli, Salem and Coimbatore districts. Nedunjadayan's successors Srimara Srivallabha and Varaguna II, were successively defeated by Pallavas. Later they could not face the rising Chola dynasty under Parantaka I. Parantaka I defeated the Pandya king Rajasimha II who fled the country in 920. Thus ended the Pandya rule revived by Kadungon.

Rise of Later Pandyas (1190 - 1310)

The Chola viceroyalty became weak in Pandya country after the death of Adhirajendra (the last king of Vijayalaya line). Eventually the Pandya kingdom could emerge as the only leading Tamil dynasty in the 13th century. Madurai continued to be their capital. Now Kayal was their great port. Marco Polo, a famous traveller from Venice, visited Kayal twice, in 1288 and 1293. He tells us that this port town was full of ships from Arabia and China and bustling with business activities.

Sadaiyavarman Sundarapandyan

The illustrious ruler of the second Pandya Kingdom was Sadaiyavarman (Jatavarman) Sundarapandyan (1251 to 1268). He brought the entire Tamil Nadu under his rule, which extended up to Nellore in Andhra. He held the Hoysalas in check. The Chera ruler, the chief of *Malanadu*, accepted his feudatory position and paid tribute to Sundarapandyan. Emboldened by the decline of the Chola state, the Boja King of Malwa region Vira Someswara challenged Sundarapandyan. In a war at Kannanur, Sundarapandyan defeated Someswara. Sundarapandyan succeeded in establishing his authority over the chieftains of Cuddalore, Kanchipuram in northern Tamil Nadu, Arcot and Salem in the western region.

There were two or three co-regents who ruled simultaneously along with Sundarapandyan: VikramaPandyan and ViraPandyan. After Sundarapandyan, MaravarmanKulasekaran ruled successfully for a period of 40 years, giving the country peace and prosperity. He had two sons. The king's appointment of ViraPandyan as a co-regent provoked the other son Sundara Pandyan who killed his father Maravarman Kulasekaran.

In the civil war that ensued, ViraPandyan won and became firmly established in his kingdom. The defeated SundaraPandyan fled to Delhi and took refuge under the protection of Ala-ud-din Khalji. This provided the opening for the invasion of Malik Kafur. After Malik Kafur's invasion, the Pandyan Kingdom came to be divided among a number of kings from the main ruling Pandya's family. In Madurai, a Muslim State subordinate to the Delhi Sultan came to be established.

Polity and Society

State

Pandya kings preferred Madurai as their capital. Madurai has been popularly venerated as Koodal. The kings are traditionally revered as Koodal-kon, Koodal Nagar Kavalan. The Pandyas derived military advantage over their neighbours by means of their horses. They imported these horses through Arabs with whom they had commercial and cultural contact. The king claimed that he was ruling according to Manu Sastra.

This doctrine supported the social hierarchy in the society. Kings and local chiefs created Brahmin settlements called Mangalam or Chatur-vedi-mangalam with irrigation facilities. The actual landowning groups are described as the Bumiputtirar, otherwise called the vellalar. Historically they were locals and hence they were referred to as nattu-makkal. The communal assembly of this group is Cittira Meli Periyannattar.

Royal Officials

A band of officials executed the royal orders. The prime minister was uttara-mantri. The historical personalities like Manickavasagar, Kulaciraiyar and Marankari worked as ministers. The royal secretariat was known as eluttu-mandapam. 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-palli-velan, maran-adittan and tennavan-tamilvel.

Administrative Divisions

Pandya nadu, as in Chola state, consisted of many provinces known as vala-nadus, which, in turn, were divided into many nadus and kurrans. The

administrative authorities of nadus were the nattars. Nadu and Kurram contained settlements, viz. mangalam, nagaram, ur and kudi, where different social groups inhabited.

Village Administration

An inscription from Manur (Tirunelveli district) dated A.D. (CE) 800 provides an account of village administration. It looks similar to Chola's local governance that included village assemblies and committees. Both civil and military powers seem to have been vested in the same person.

Irrigation

The Pandya rulers created a number of irrigation sources. On either side of the rivers *Vaigai* and Tamiraparani, channels leading to the irrigation tanks were built. In southern Tamilnadu, like the Cholas, Pandyas introduced the new irrigation technology. 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.

Religion

Pandyas extended patronage to vedic practices. Velvikkudi copper plates as well as inscriptional sources mention the rituals like Asvamedha yaga, Hiranya garbha and Vajapeya yaga, 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. Temples of both sects were patronised through land grant, tax-exemption and renovation.

The great Saiva and Vaishnava saints (Nayanmaras and Alwars) combined contributed to the growth of Tamil literature and spiritual enlightenment. The period was marked by intense religious conflict. The Bhakti movement of the time prompted the heterodox scholars for a debate. Many instances of the defeat of Buddhists and Jains in such debates are mentioned in Bhakti literature. The Pandya kings of the period supported and promoted Tamil and Sanskrit.

Temples

Medieval Pandyas and later Pandyas did not build any new temples but maintained the existing temples, enlarging them with the addition of gopuras, and mandapas. The monolithic mega size ornamented pillars are the unique feature of the medieval Pandya style. The sculptures of Siva, Vishnu, Kotravai, Ganesa and Subramanyar are the best specimens in these temples. Pandyas specially patronised the historic Meenakshi temple at Madurai and kept expanding its premises by adding gopuras and mandapas.

Trade

Arab settlements on the west coast of southern India, from 7th century, had led to the expansion of their trade connection to the east coast because the governments of the east coast pursued a more liberal and enlightened policy towards overseas traders. Their charters exempted traders from various types of port dues and tolls. In Kayal, there was an agency established by an Arab chieftain by name Malik-ul-Islam Jamal-ud-din. This agency facilitated availability of horses to Pandya kings.

In 13th and 14th centuries, horse trade became brisk. Marco Polo and Wassaff state that the kings invested in horses as there was a need of horse for ceremonial purposes as well as for fighting wars. Those who were trading in horses were called kudirai chetties. They were active in maritime trade also. The busiest port town under the Pandyas was Kayal Pattinam (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, kalanchu and pon.

NOTE

- ❖ Matrimonial alliances between the Cholas and the Eastern Chalukyas began during the reign of Rajaraja I. His daughter Kundavai was married to Chalukya prince Vimaladitya. Their son was Rajaraja Narendra who married the daughter of Rajendra Chola named Ammangadevi. Their son was Kulothunga I.
- ❖ Uttiramerur presently in Kanchipuram district was a Brahmadeya village (land grants given to Brahmins).
- ❖ Saivite saint Thirugnanasambandar converted Arikesari from Jainism to Saivism. On his conversion, Arikesari is alleged to have impaled around 8000 Jains on stakes. Though the number is an exaggerated one, the anti-Jain attitude of Arikesari after his conversion to Saivism cannot be doubted.
- ❖ Marco Polo hailed the Pandyan Kingdom as 'the richest and the most splendid province in the world'. Together with Ceylon, he added, it 'produced most of the gems and pearls that are found in the world'. In his travel account he recorded the incidents of *sati* and the polygamy practiced by the kings.
- ❖ The vast trade in horses 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 Jamal-ud-din's own breed. The average cost of each horse was 220 dinars of "red gold".'

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Lesson XI
Later Cholas and Pandyas

Introduction

The Cholas belonged to one of the three mighty dynasties that ruled the Tamizh country 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 Tamizhagam in 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 sub-castes 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 I 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-vedimangalam).

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-Pandya in Pandinadu, Chola-Lankeswara in Sri Lanka, which was renamed as Mummudi-cholamandalam, and Chola-Ganga in the Gangavadi region of southern Karnataka. In other less prominent regions, the territories of chiefs such as the Irukkuvels, Ilangovals 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 Tavirtha 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.

Local Elections and Uttaramerur Inscriptions

Two inscriptions (919 and 921) from a Brahmadeya (tax-free land gifted to Brahmans) 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.

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.

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.

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 Uttamachola-vaykkal, 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.

The irrigation work done by Rajendra Chola 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 masers headed 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), deva-kanmi (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 sakkai-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 Chola-gangam near the capital called Jalastambha (water-pillar). It became the coronation centre, which was a Chola landmarks. 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 valanciyar functioning through the head guild in Ayyavole in Karnataka. Tis 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. Te 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 Pudukkottai.

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. Te great literary works Kamba Ramayanam and Periyapuram belong to this period. Rajendra I established a Vedic college at Ennayiram (South Arcot district). Tere were 340 students in this Vaishnava centre, learning the Vedas, Grammar and Vedanta under 14 teachers. Tis 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.

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. Te 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.

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.

II PANDYAS

Pandyas were one of the *muvendaras* 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, Wassaf 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 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 Tanjavur, 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 fed 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 tax-exempted village for Brahmins.

After the decline of the Cholas, Pandya kingdom became the leading Tamil dynasty 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. Sundarapandyan 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 present-day 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 Cholamandalam (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 of 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, Tennavan 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

Pandy 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 Brahmamathi Rajan and Brahmamaraiyan.

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 Tamizh 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-l-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 Jamaluddins 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 Wassaf 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 Cittirameliperianattar.

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 Saivites; 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 circumbulations. 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 Pillayarpati, 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 Tamil country. By establishing matrimonial link with Southeast Asian dynasties, Pandyas left an imprint in maritime trade activities.

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

Socio - Religious Movement

8th history

UNIT - 8 Status of Women in India through the ages

Introduction

Generally human society is constantly changing with additions, assimilations and omissions from within and outside. Women constitute half of the population. It is imperative to have a historical understanding of the status of women through ages.

The position of women was not uniform in all periods, differed with regional variations. In ancient India particularly early Vedic period women enjoyed equal rights. But with the passage of time their status in the society found deteriorated as a result of frequent foreign invasions. They were subjected to subjugation and subordination. New social practices, customs and systems which crept into the society in turn put limitations and restrictions on the liberty of women.

During the British Raj, many socio-religious reformers like Raja Rammohan Roy, Dayananda Saraswathi, Keshab Chandra Sen, Iswara Chandra VidyaSagar, Pandita Ramabai, Dr. Muthulakshmi Ammaiyar, Jyotirao Phule, Periyar E.V.R, Dr. Dharmambal were the prominent leaders who fought for the upliftment of women. Raja Rammohan Roy's efforts led to the abolition of sati in 1829. Vidyasagar's crusade for the improvement in the condition of widows, led to the passing of Widow Remarriage Act in 1856. These reformers rightly realized that female education as an emancipating agent in eradicating social evils. So they started girls' schools in various parts of the country, which brought significant changes in the lives of women.

Women played an important part in Indian Freedom struggle. Until independence, there was no radical changes in the status of women. In independent India, last few decades have witnessed the all round development of women. Women are now making their presence felt in every walk of life.

The position of women

a) Ancient Period

In the ancient Indus civilization of India, evidences show the worship of the mother goddess. Hence, the adoration for the mother is evident during that period. During the Rig Vedic period, it is believed that the position of wife was honoured and women's position was acknowledged, especially in the performance of religious ceremonies.

During later Vedic age witnessed a transitional development in the status of women restricting her role in the social life except in the performance of religious

sacrifices. Her social and political freedom was restricted. Sati became popular during the later Vedic period where the widows either chose for themselves or were forced to jump into the pyre of their husbands. The patriarchal system became rigid. Women were denied to study Vedic scriptures.

b) Medieval Period

The position of women in the society further deteriorated during the medieval period and they suffered from many social evils such as sati, child marriages, female infanticide, and slavery. Normally monogamy was in practice but among the rich polygamy was prevalent. 'Sati' was in practice particularly among the royal and upper strata of the society. Widow re-marriage was rare. Devadasi system was in practice in some parts of India. Among the Rajputs of Rajasthan, the Jauhar was practiced. The condition of widow became miserable during the medieval period. But we don't ignore the fact that the Mughal ruler Akbar attempted to abolish sati. In fact very little attention was paid to female education.

Jauhar refers to the practice of collective voluntary immolation by wives and daughters of defeated Rajput warriors, in order to avoid capture and dishonour.

In spite of general determination, we can find some exceptions Razia sultana, Queen Durgavati, Chand bibi, Nurjahan, Jahannara, Jijabai and Mira bai.

During medieval times Women's education was not completely ignored, though no regular separate school seems to have existed. Female education was informal. Girls usually had their lessons from their parents in their childhood. The rich appointed tutors to teach their daughters at home. The daughters of Rajput chiefs and Zamindars studied literature and philosophy.

c) British Period

For centuries women in India had been subordinated to men and socially oppressed. The major effect of national awakening in the nineteenth century was seen in the field of social reform. The enlightened persons increasingly revolted against rigid social evils and outdated customs. Numerous individuals, reform societies and religious organisations worked hard to spread education among women, to encourage widow remarriage, to improve the living conditions of widows, to prevent marriage of young children, to enforce monogamy and to enable middle-class women to take up professions or public employment.

In the beginning of nineteenth century female literacy was extremely low when compared to male literacy. The Christian missionaries were the first to set up the Calcutta Female Juvenile Society in 1819. The Bethune school was founded in 1849 by J.E.D. Bethune, who was the president of the council of education in Calcutta.

Charles Wood's despatch on education in 1854 laid a great stress on the need for female education. Indian Education Commission (Hunter) of 1882 recommended to start primary schools for girls and teacher-training institution and suggested special scholarships and prizes for girls. In 1880's Indian women began to enter universities. They were also trained to become doctors and teachers. They began to write books and magazines. In 1914 the women's medical service did a lot of work in training mid-wives. In the 1890s D.K. Karve established a number of female schools in Poona. Prof D.K. Karve, Pandita Rama bai, made sincere effort to emancipate women through education was really remarkable. The Indian women's university was started by Prof. D.K. Karve in 1916. It was an outstanding institution imparting education to women. In the same year Lady Harding Medical College was started in Delhi.

Major Social Evils

a) Female infanticide

Female infanticide was another inhuman practice afflicting the nineteenth century Indian society. It was particularly in vogue in Rajputana, Punjab and the North Western Provinces. It was mainly to avoid economic burden.

Factors such as family pride, the fear of not finding a suitable match for the girl child were some of the major reasons responsible for this practice. Therefore, immediately after birth, the female infants were being killed.

The company administration in India took steps to ban this practice by passing the Bengal Regulatory Act XXI of 1795, the Regulating Act of 1802 and the Female Infanticide Act of 1870.

b) Female Foeticide

Female foeticide is also an inhuman practice which cuts across the caste, creed, class and regional boundaries. Whether it is female infanticide or female foeticide the prime motive remained the same. In order to ban the female foeticide and sex-determination the central Government passed various Acts.

c) Child marriage

The practice of child marriage was another social disgrace for the women. In 1846, the minimum marriageable age for a girl was only 10 years. The native marriage Act was passed in 1872. It fixed the minimum marriageable age of girls at 14 and boys at 18. In 1930, the Central Legislative Assembly passed Rai Saheb Harbilas Sarada's child Marriage Bill fixing the minimum marriageable age for boys at 18 and 14 for girls. It was later amended to 18 for girls and 21 for boys according to Hindu Marriage Act 1955.

Akbar prohibited child marriage and made it obligatory for the parents to obtain the approval of both the bride and the bridegroom before the marriage. He prescribed 14 years as the age of consent for girls and 16 years for boys

d) Sati

Sati was social evil that prevailed in Indian society especially among the Rajputs. Earlier it was a voluntary act but later by the relatives forced the widow to sit on the funeral pyre. The Italian traveler, Niccolo Conti, who visited Vijayanagar about the year A.D. (C.E) 1420, notes that 'the inhabitants of this region marry as many wives as they please, who are burnt with their dead husbands'.

In the early years of 19th century, sati was in practice in various Parts of Bengal, western India and southern India. In 1811, Jagan Mohan Roy, brother of Rammohan Roy, passed away and his wife was burnt along with him. Rammohan Roy was moved to the extreme at the sight of it and took an oath that he would have the cruel practice abolished by law. He carried on a continuous agitation through press and platform for the abolition of Sati.

Raja Rammohan Roy published his tracts in 1818-20, making the point that the rite of Sati was not enjoined by the Sastras. This material was used by the Serampore missionaries to shatter the generally accepted view that Sati was an integral part of the Hindu religion. Orthodox Hindu opinion against the abolition was advocated by Radhakanta Deb, and Bhawani Charan Banerji.

When Lord William Bentinck took up the question of Sati, he found that the abolition had been recommended by the judges of the criminal courts. He passed Regulation XVII on December 4, 1829 'declaring the practice of Sati or burning or burying alive the widow of Hindus, illegal and punishable by Criminal Courts'. Similar legislative measures were enacted soon after in Bombay and Madras.

e) Devadasi System

The word Devadasi (Sanskrit) or Devaradiyal (Tamil) means "servant of God" dancing girl dedicated to the service of god in a temple. Devadasi system was a social evil. There was also tradition of dedicating one daughter to the temple. In addition to taking care of the temple, they learnt and practiced Bharatha Natiyam and other classical traditional Indian arts.

Later on they were ill treated and humiliated. The Devadasis lost their dignity, sense of pride, self-respect and honour.

Dr. Muthulakshmi Ammaiyar who was the first woman doctor in India, dedicated herself for the cause of abolishing the cruel practice of Devadasi system from Tamil Nadu. Appreciating her role in the agitation against Devadasi system she was nominated to the Tamil Nadu legislative council in 1929. Periyar E.V. Ramasamy was instrumental in passing the "Devadasi abolition bill". Dr. Muthulakshmi Ammaiyar proposed the bill to the Madras legislative council in 1930.

Moovalur Ramamirtham was yet another woman who fought for the emancipation of the Devadasi. With the continuous moral support rendered by Rajaji, Periyar and Thiru.Vi.Ka, she raised slogan against this cruel practice. As a result the government passed the “Devadasi Abolition Act”.

The Madras Devadasi Act was a law that was enacted on 9th October 1947. The law was passed in the Madras presidency and gave Devadasis the legal right to marry and made it illegal

Role of Social Reformers

From the second half of the nineteenth century, a number of social reformers and social reform movements sought to promote the upliftment of women by giving them education, raising their marriageable age and taking care of widows, as well as to remove the rigidity of caste and raise the suppressed class to a status of equality. The reformers who led the movements were the forerunners of modern India.

a) Raja Rammohan Roy

There were some enlightened Indians who supported the British attempt to reform the oppressive social order of India. The first was the abolition of sati by law, on humanitarian grounds. Raja Rammohan Roy, the pioneer of Indian social reform movement was a casteless crusader of sati after having seen this practice in the case of his own sister-in-law. He started his campaigning against this inhuman evil practice. Influenced by the ruthless attack of the movement led by Rammohan Roy the British government declared this act as “culpable Homicide”. Raja Rammohan Roy is most remembered for helping Lord William Bentinck to declare the practice of Sati a punishable offence in 1829. He also protested against the child marriage and female infanticide. He favoured the remarriage of widows, female education and women’s right to property. Thus the evil practice of sati on any scale was wiped out.

b) Ishwar Chandra Vidhyasagar

Ishwar Chandra Vidhyasagar carried on the movement for female education, widow remarriage and abolition of polygamy in Bengal. He submitted petitions to this effect to the Indian Legislative Council and to the passing of the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act in 1856. His son Narayanachandra set an example to others by marrying a widow of his choice. To promote female education, Vidhyasagar founded several girls’ schools in the districts of Nadia, Midnapur, Hugli and Burdwan in Bengal.

c) Kandukuri Veeresalingam

Kandukuri Veeresalingam Pantulu was the earliest champion in South India of women’s emancipation. He published a journal vivekavardhani. He opened his first girls’ school in 1874 and made widow remarriage and female education the key points of his programme for social reform.

d) M.G. Ranade and B.M. Malabari

In Bombay presidency, M.G. Ranade and B.M. Malabari carried on the movement for the upliftment of women. In 1869, Ranade joined the Widow Remarriage Association and encouraged widow remarriage and female education and opposed child marriage. In 1887, he started the National Social Conference, which became a pre-eminent institution for social reform. In 1884, B.M. Malabari, a journalist, started a movement for the abolition of child marriage. He published pamphlets on this subject and appealed to the government to take action.

e) Gopal Krishna Gokhale

In 1905, Gopal Krishna Gokhale started the Servants of India Society which took up such social reform measures as primary education, female education and depressed classes' upliftment. The spread of female education further led to the participation of women in the freedom struggle.

f) Periyar E.V.R.

Periyar E.V.R. was one of the greatest social reformers of Tamil Nadu. He advocated women education, widow remarriage and inter-caste marriages and opposed child marriages.

g) Women Reformers

Most of the reform movements like Brahma Samaj (1828), PrarthanaSamaj (1867) and AryaSamaj (1875) were led by male reformers who set the limit of the freedom and development of women. Women reformers like PanditaRamabai, Rukhmabai and TarabaiShinde tried to extent further. In 1889, PanditaRamabai opened SaradaSadan (Home of Learning) for Hindu widows in Bombay. It was later shifted to Poona. Her greatest legacy was her effort, the first in India, to educate widows. Theosophical society was established at Chennai and Dr. Annie Besant who came from Europe and joined it. It also developed general social reform programme.

Dr. S. Dharmambal was another reformer who was very much influenced by the ideas of Periyar. She showed great interest in implementing widow remarriage and women education. Among 'MoovalurRamamirdhamAmmaiyar' raised her voice against Devadasi system along with Dr.MuthulakshmiAmmaiyar. In her memory, the government of Tamil Nadu has instituted the "MoovalurRamamirdhaAmmalNinaivu Marriage assistance scheme", a social welfare scheme to provide financial assistance to poor women as poverty was the root cause for all these evils. Thus women reformers also contributed a lot for winning their own rights.

Leading women realized the need of forming their own associations in order to safeguard their interests. As a result three major national women's organizations - Women's India Association, National Council of Women in India and the All India Women's Conference were founded.

Women in the freedom movement

In the early anti-colonial struggle women played major roles in various capacities. Velunachiyar of Sivaganga fought violently against the British and restored her rule in Sivaganga. Begum Hazrat Mahal, Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi led an armed revolt of 1857 against the British.

In the freedom struggle thousands of women came out of their homes, boycotted foreign goods, marched in processions, defied laws, received lathi charges and Courted jails. Their participation in the struggle added a new dimension of mass character.

Impact of reform movement

- ❖ Significant advances were made in the field of emancipation of women.
- ❖ It created of national awakening among the masses.
- ❖ It created the feeling of sacrifice, service and rationalism.
- ❖ The practice of sati and infanticide were made illegal.
- ❖ It permitted widow remarriage.

Women in Independent India

Women in India now participate in all activities such as education, politics, medical, culture, service sectors, science and technology.

The constitution of India guarantees (Article 14) equal opportunity and equal pay for equal work.

The National policy for empowerment of women was passed under the National Policy on Education (1986), new programme was launched called Mahila Samakhyas, its main focus was on empower of women. Reservation of 33 percent to women envisaged an improvement in the socio-political status of women.

The National Commission for women was set up January 1992. Its main functions is to review women related legislation and intervene in specific individual complaints of atrocities and denial of rights.

The following legislations have enhanced the status of women in matters of marriage adoption and inheritance.

legislation	Provisions
Bengal regulation of XXI, 1804	Female infanticide was declared illegal
Regulation of XVII, 1829	Practice of sati was declared illegal
Hindus Widow's Remarriage Act, 1856	It permitted widow remarriage
The Native Marriage Act, 1872	The Child Marriage was prohibited
The Sharda Act, 1930	The age of marriage was raised for boys girls
Devadasi abolition Act, 1947	It abolished Devadasi system

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5- Social and Religious Reform Movements in the 19th Century

English education, introduced with the object of producing clerks, also produced a new English-educated middle class. This class came under the influence of western ideas and thoughts. Christianity also had its effect on the newly emerging middle class. Though small in number, the educated middle class began to take a lead in political as well as in reform movements. The Indian reformers were, however, quite hesitant to subject their old notions and habits to critical scrutiny. Instead they attempted to harmonize both Indian and Western cultures. Their ideas and their actions helped to mitigate social evils such as sati, female infanticide, and child marriage and various superstitious beliefs.

The reform movements of nineteenth century in the realm of religion fall under two broad categories: reformist movements like the Brahmo Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj and the Aligarh Movement; and the revivalist movements such as the Arya Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission and the Deoband Movement. There were also attempts to challenge the oppressive social structure by Jyotiba Phule in Pune, Narayana Guru and Ayyankali in Kerala and Ramalinga Adigal, Vaikunda Swamikal and Iyothee Thassar of Tamil Nadu.

Raja Rammohan Roy and Brahmo Samaj

Rammohan Roy (1772-1833) was one of the earlier reformers influenced by the Western ideas to initiate reforms. He was a great scholar, well-versed in Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, and English apart from his knowledge in his mother tongue, Bengali. Rammohan Roy was opposed to meaningless religious ceremonies and all forms of pernicious social customs. Yet he wanted to preserve continuity with the past. In his religio-philosophical social outlook, he was deeply influenced by monotheism and anti-idolatry. Based on his interpretation of the Upanishads, he argued that all the ancient texts of the Hindus preached monotheism or worship of one God.

Deeply concerned with the prevailing customs of sati, child marriage, and polygamy he published tracts against them and petitioned the government to legislate against them. He advocated the rights of widows to remarry. He wanted polygamy to end. His opinions were resisted fiercely by orthodox Hindus. He appealed to reason and humanity and compassion of the people. He visited the crematorium of Calcutta to try and persuade the relatives of widows to give up their plan of self-immolation. His campaign played a key role in forcing the Governor-General William Bentinck's legislation abolishing sati in 1829.

Ram Mohan Roy condemned the subjugation of women and opposed the prevailing ideas that women were inferior to men. He strongly advocated education for women. He gave his full support for the introduction of English language and western sciences in schools and colleges. Rammohan found in the Upanishads a new revelation of one infinite, divine Being, the eternal Brahman, while Hinduism as he saw in the daily life around him was a perversion of their teaching.

Ram Mohan Roy founded the Brahmo Samaj in 1828. On 20 August 1828 he opened a temple in Calcutta, where there was no image. There he laid down that 'no religion should be revered or slightly or contemptuously spoken of for alluded to.' The Samaj forbade idol-worship and condemned meaningless religious rites and ceremonies. However, from the beginning, the appeal of the Brahmo Samaj remained limited to the intellectuals and enlightened Bengalis. Though the Samaj failed to attract the people from the lower sections of society, its impact on the culture of modern Bengal and its middle class was quite significant.

Maharishi Debendranath Tagore

After the death of Ram Mohan Roy (1833), Maharishi Debendranath Tagore (1817-1905), the poet Rabindranath Tagore's father, carried on the work. He laid down four articles of faith:

1. In the beginning there was nothing. The one Supreme Being alone existed who created the Universe.
2. He alone is the God of Truth, Infinite Wisdom, Goodness, and Power, eternal, omnipresent, the One without second.
3. Our salvation depends on belief in Him and in His worship in this world and the next.
4. Belief consists in loving Him and doing His will.

Keshab Chandra Sen & Brahmo Samaj of India

Debendranath was a moderate reformer. But his younger colleagues in the Sabha were for rapid changes. The greatest of these, Keshab Chandra Sen, (1838-84) joined the movement in 1857. He was greatly influenced by Christianity, believing in its spirit but not in the person of its founder. But in 1866 a split occurred in the ranks of Brahmo Samaj. Keshab left the Samaj and founded a new organization. Debendranath's organization, thereafter, came to be known as Adi Brahmo Samaj. After Keshab had his fourteen-year-old daughter married to an Indian prince, in contravention of the Samaj's condemnation of child marriages, the opponents of child marriage left the Brahmo Samaj of India and started the Sadharan Samaj, which developed anti-Christian tendencies.

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar

Another outstanding reformer in Bengal was Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820-1891). While Ram Mohan Roy and others looked to western rationalist ideas to reform society, Vidyasagar argued that the Hindu scriptures were progressive. He provided evidence from scriptures that there was no sanction for burning of widows or for the prohibition on the remarriage of widows. He wrote a number of polemical tracts, and was the pioneer of modern Bengali prose. He played a leading role in promoting education of girls and helped them in setting up a number of schools. He dedicated his whole life for the betterment of the child widows of the Hindu society. The movement led by Vidyasagar, resulted in the Widows' Remarriage Reform Act of 1856. This Act was intended to improve the lot of child widows and save them from perpetual widowhood.

Prarthana Samaj

The Maharashtra region was another region where reform activities gained Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar steam. A movement similar to the Brahmo Samaj, but founded in Bombay in 1867, was Prarthana Samaj. Its founder was Dr. Atma Ram Pandurang (1825–1898). The two distinguished members of this Samaj were R.C. Bhandarkar and Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade. They devoted themselves to activities such as intercaste dining, inter-caste marriage, widow remarriage and improvement of women and depressed classes. Ranade (1842–1901) was the founder of the Widow Marriage Association (1861), the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha (1870) and the Deccan Education Society (1884).

While the above reformers worked among the upper castes, during the same time Jyotiba Phule worked for the uplift of depressed castes and the cause of women. His book *Gulamgiri* ('Slavery') is an important work that condemned the inequities of caste.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati and Arya Samaj, 1875

In the Punjab, the reform movement was spearheaded by the Arya Samaj. It was founded (1875) by a wandering ascetic in the western Gangetic plain, Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824–83). Swami Dayanand later settled in the Punjab to preach his ideas. His book, *Satyarthaprakash*, enjoyed wide circulation. He declared the practices such as child marriage, the prohibition of widow remarriage, and the alleged polluting effects of foreign travel had no scriptural sanction. The positive principles enunciated by Dayanand were: strict monotheism, condemnation of idolatry, and rejection of Brahman domination of ritual and social practices. He also rejected superstitious beliefs in Hinduism, especially Puranic literature and his cry was "go back to Vedas."

Arya Samaj attempted to check the incidence of religious conversion in British India. One of its main objectives was counter-conversion, prescribing a purificatory ceremony called *suddhi*, directed at Hindus who had converted to Islam and Christianity. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were a period of great turmoil in undivided Punjab with intense debates between Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. The primary achievements of the Arya Samaj were in the field of social reform and spread of education. The Samaj started a number of Dayananda Anglo-Vedic schools and colleges.

Ramakrishna

As we saw earlier, the Brahmo Samaj, as a response to Christian and rationalist criticism had criticised idolatry and other orthodox Hindu practices. The popularity that Ramakrishna (1836–86), a simple priest of Dakshineswar near Kolkata, gained in the latter half of the nineteenth century was a response to this. He emphasised the spiritual union with god through ecstatic practices such as singing bhajans. An ardent worshipper of goddess Kali, the sacred mother, he declared that the manifestations of the divine mother were infinite. In his view, all religions contain the universal elements which, if practised, would lead to salvation. He said, "Jiva is Siva" (all living beings are God). Why then talk of showing mercy to them? Not mercy, but service, service for man, must be regarded as God.'

Ramakrishna Mission

Ramakrishna's primary achievement was his ability to attract educated youth who were dissatisfied with the rational orientation of religious reform organizations such as the Brahmo Samaj. After his death in 1886, his disciples organised themselves as a religious community and undertook the task of making his life and teaching known in India and abroad. The chief spirit behind this task was Vivekananda. Following the organizational structure of Christian missionaries, Vivekananda established the Ramakrishna Mission which did not restrict itself to religious activities but was actively involved in social causes such as education, health care and relief in times of calamities.

Swami Vivekananda

Narendra Nath Datta (1863–1902), later known as Swami Vivekananda, was the prime follower of Ramakrishna Paramahansa. An educated youth, he was drawn to Ramakrishna's message. Dissatisfied with conventional philosophical positions and practices, he advocated the practical Vedanta of service to humanity and attacked the tendency to defend every institution simply because it was connected with religion. He emphasized a cultural nationalism and made a call to Indian youth to regenerate Hindu society.

His ideas bred a sense of self confidence among Indians who felt inferior in relation to the materialist achievements of the West. He became famous for his addresses on Hinduism at the 1893 World Congress of Religions in Chicago. Despite his fame, he was condemned by orthodox Hindus for suggesting that the lower castes should be allowed to engage in the Hindu rituals from which they were traditionally excluded. Vivekananda's activist ideology rekindled the desire for political change among many western-education young Bengalis. Many of the youths who were involved in the militant nationalist struggle during the Swadeshi movement following the Partition of Bengal were inspired by Vivekananda.

Theosophical Movement

During the nineteenth century, Hindu religion and culture were being discredited in the West, especially due to missionary propaganda. However, some Western intellectuals looked to the East for spiritual salvation as a remedy to the materialistic orientation of the West. The Theosophical Society, founded by Madame H.P. Blavatsky (1831–1891) and Colonel H.S. Olcott (1832–1907) played a key role in this. Founded in the USA in 1875, it later shifted to India at Adyar, Chennai in 1886. Theosophical Society stimulated a study of the Hindu classics, especially the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. The Theosophical Society also played an important role in the revival of Buddhism in India. Western interest in Hindu scriptures gave educated Hindus great pride in their tradition and culture.

Contribution of Annie Besant

In India the movement became further popular with the election of Annie Besant (1847–1933) as its president after the death of Olcott. She played a role in Indian

nationalist politics, and formed the Home Rule League demanding home rule to India on the lines of Ireland. Annie Besant spread Theosophical ideas through her newspapers called New India and Commonweal.

Jyotiba Phule

Jyotiba Govindrao Phule was born in 1827 in Maharashtra. Phule is chiefly known as Jyotiba Phule and Savitribai Phule as the earliest leader of the non-Brahman movement. He opened the first school for “untouchables” in 1852 in Poona. He launched the Satyashodak Samaj (Truth-Seekers Society) in 1870 to stir the non-Brahman masses to self-respect and ambition. Phule opposed child marriage and supported widow remarriage, which was prohibited particularly among high-caste Hindus. Jyotiba and his wife Savitribai Phule devoted their lives for the uplift of the depressed classes and women. Jyotiba opened orphanages and homes for widows. Unlike many contemporary nationalists he welcomed British rule and missionary activities on the ground that British rule enabled lower castes to challenge the supremacy of Brahmins. His work, *Gulamgiri* (Slavery) is an important text that summarized many of his radical ideas.

Narayana Guru

Born to poor parents in Kerala, Narayana Guru (1854– 1928) evolved into a poet and scholar in Malayalam, Tamil and Sanskrit. In his days the people of depressed classes had no access to temples, streets, public tanks and wells and educational institutions. Men and women belonging to lower castes were not allowed to wear the upper garments. Disturbed by the terrible caste tyranny, that the lower caste people suffered, he dedicated his whole life for the betterment of the oppressed. He set up the Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam, an organization to work for the uplift of the “depressed classes”. He established a grand temple at Aruvipuram and dedicated it to all. His movement inspired a radical transformation of Kerala society, especially among the Ezhavas. Thinkers and writers such as Kumaran Asan and Dr Palpu were influenced by his ideas and carried forward the movement.

Ayyankali

Nineteenth - century Kerala region was plagued by caste discriminations of worst kind. Certain social groups were not only considered untouchable but also un-seeable. However, the strident campaigns by thinkers such as Narayana Guru and Ayyankali (1863–1941) in the context of larger political and economic changes ushered in tremendous social changes, especially in the caste structure. Ayyankali was born in 1863 at Venganoor in Thiruvananthapuram then in the princely state of Travancore.

The discrimination he faced as a child turned him into a leader of an anti-caste movement and who later fought for basic rights including access to public spaces and entry to schools. Ayyankali challenged many caste conventions such as clothing style; he wore clothes associated with upper castes that were prohibited for lower castes. He rode on an ox-cart challenging the ‘ban’ on untouchables from accessing public roads used by caste Hindus. Inspired by Sree Narayana Guru, Ayyankali founded the Sadhu Jana Paripalana Sangam (Association for the Protection of the Poor) in 1907 which campaigned and raised funds to educate the lower caste Pulaya people.

Islamic Reforms

After the suppression of great revolt of 1857 Indian Muslims looked to Western culture with suspicion. The community feared that Western education, Western culture and Western ideas would endanger their religion. Therefore only a small section of Muslims accepted the new avenues for modern education. Consequently, Indian Muslims as a community lagged behind in comparison to the Hindu elite of various parts of India.

Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan

As Indian Muslims steadily lost ground in education, in the public services and in general leadership in India, there was a realization that there was no alternative but to accept modern education if the community was to go on the path of progress. The man who gave life and soul to it was Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan (1817-1898). Born in Delhi into a noble Muslim family, Sayyid Ahmed Khan thought that lack of education, especially modern education, had harmed the Muslims greatly and kept them backward. He exhorted the Muslims to accept Western science and take up government services. He founded a scientific society and translated many English books, especially science books into Urdu. He believed that the interest of the Muslims would be best served if they bonded with the British Government rather than pitch in with the rising nationalist movement. So he advised the Muslims to take to English education and to concentrate on it.

Aligarh Movement

Say id Ahmed Khan's movement, the "Aligarh movement," is so called because it was centred around the Aligarh Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental college founded by him in 1875, which is a landmark in the history of Indian Muslim education. The college was raised to the status of a university in 1920. Aligarh produced a huge body of intelligentsia over successive generations who played a key role in public life.

Deoband Movement

Deoband was a revivalist movement organized by the orthodox Muslim Ulema with the twin objectives of propagating the pure teachings of the Quran and the Hadith as well as encouraging the spirit of Jihad against the foreign and un-Islamic elements. The Ulema under the leadership of Muhammad Qasim Wanotavi (1832-80) and Rashid Ahmad Gangotri (1828-1905) founded the school at Deoband in the Saharanpur district of the U.P in 1866. The school curricula shut out English education and western culture. The instruction imparted was in original Islamic religion and the aim was moral and religious regeneration of the Muslim community. The Deoband School did not prepare its students for government jobs but for the preaching of Islamic faith.

In politics, the Deoband School welcomed the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. In 1888 the Deoband Ulema issued a religious decree (fatwa) against Syed Ahmed Khan's Organisation called "The United Patriotic Association" and "The Muhammeden Anglo - Oriental Association." It is said the Deoband Ulema were mainly

influenced by their determination to oppose Sir Syed Ahmed's activities. Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hassan became the new Deoband leader. The Jamait-Ul-Ulema (council of theologians) led by him gave a concrete shape to Hassan's ideas of protection of the religious and political rights of the Muslims in the overall context of Indian unity.

In the middle of the nineteenth century the reform activities of the educated Parsis (the Zoroastrians who had fled from Iran in the tenth century in the face of religious persecution) began in Mumbai. Furdunji Naoroji founded the Rahnumai Mazdayasnan Sabha (Parsis' Reform Society) in 1851. Rast Goftar (The Truth Teller) was the main voice of the movement. The leaders of the Sabha criticized elaborate ceremonies at betrothals, marriages and funerals. They opposed both infant marriage and the use of astrology. Behrramji Malabari organized a campaign for legislation against the practice of child marriage. The community produced many leaders such as Pheroza Shah Mehta and Dinshaw Wacha who played a big role in the early Congress.

Sikh Reforms Movement (Nirankaris and Namdharis)

The wave of reform movements did not leave any community untouched. Among the Sikhs of Punjab too there were attempts to reform. Baba Dayal Das, founder of the Nirankari Movement, stressed the worship of God as Nirankar (formless). Rejection of idols, rejection of rituals associated with idolatry, reverence for the authority of Guru Nanak and of the Adi Granth formed the essence of his teachings. He reiterated the prohibition on meat-eating, and liquor consumption. The Namdhari Movement, founded by Baba Ram Singh, was another socio-religious movement among the Sikhs.

The Namdharis insisted on wearing the symbols of Sikhism except the kirpan (sword). Instead Baba Ram Singh wanted his followers to carry a lathi. It considered both men and women equal and accepted widow remarriage. It prohibited the dowry system and child marriage. In the wake of the gathering influence of Arya Samaj and the Christian missionaries, the Singh Sabha of Amritsar was established. Its main objective was to restore the purity of Sikhism. With the support of British, it established Khalsa College for the Sikhs in Amritsar. Singh Sabha was a forerunner of Akali Movement.

Ramalinga Swamikal

Popularly known as Vallalar, Ramalinga Swamikal or Ramalinga Adikal (1823-1874), was born in Marudhur, a village near Chidambaram. After his father's death, his family moved to his brother's house at Chennai. Despite having no formal education he gained immense scholarship. Ramalinga emphasised the bonds of responsibility and compassion between living beings. He expressed the view that 'those who lack compassion for suffering beings are hardhearted, their wisdom clouded'. He showed his compassion and mercy on all living beings including plants. This he called jeevakarunya.

He established the Samarasa Vedha Sanmarga Sangam in 1865 and it was renamed "Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Satya Sanga" which means "Society for Pure Truth in Universal self-hood". Ramalinga also established a free feeding house for everyone irrespective of caste at Vadalur (1867), in the wake of a terrible famine in south India in

1866. His voluminous songs were compiled and published under the title Thiruvartpa (Songs of Grace). His radical views deeply disturbed Saiva orthodoxy, who condemned his writings as Marutpa (songs of ignorance).

Vaikunda Swamikal

Vaikunda Swami (1809–1851), one of the earliest crusaders for social justice in south India was born at Sasthan Koil Vilai, the present Samithoppu, a village near Kanyakumari. His original name Mudichudum Perumal was changed to Muthukutty by his parents due to objection raised by the upper caste Hindus. Muthukutt had no opportunity to have any systematic schooleducation but acquired knowledge of variousreligious texts. He preached the ideas of equalityand advocated the rights of depressed classpeople in the face of stiff opposition from uppercastes as well as the princely state of Travancore.Vaikunda Swamikal criticised therule of the British and the rule of Rajah ofTravancore as the rule of White devils andBlack devils respectively.

He visited Tiruchendur temple andexperienced a new vision. Calling himselfVaikundar, he requested the people to give up allthe irrelevant rites and rituals in their worship.His preaching's against the prevailing religiousorder brought about a considerable changein the attitude of the lower caste people. In1833, Vaikundar commenced his meditation atSamithoppu for the abolition of caste differencesand social integration of the society. During thisperiod, he led a life of a hermit.In south Travancore, there were manyrestrictions on lower caste people such as whatthey could wear and not wear. At a time whenthere was prohibition on certain sections onwearing headgear he advocated the wearing of a turban in protest. It gave a sense of honourto the oppressed people and offered a spirit ofself-respect.

A new confidence was installedin the minds of his followers. Like the other contemporary reform movements of India in the 19th century, Vaikunda Swamigal condemned the worship of idols. Thelow caste people had no temples for their gods,they erected small pyramids of mud or bricks in their honor, plastered and white-washed. He considered this kind of worship as an uncivilized custom. The people sacrificed goats, cocks and hens. He condemned these religious customs and campaigned against animal sacrifice.

Vaikunda Swamigal founded Samathuva Samajam to unite all the people of variouscastes. He organized inter-dining to accomplish it. Even though he was imprisoned by theMaharajah of Travancore, he never gave up his principles. His followers called him respectfullyas Ayya (father). His cult was also known asAyya Vazhi (The Path of Ayya). His messageemancipated the people from the unjust socialcustoms and superstitious beliefs. His ideas arecollected into a text called Akila Thirattu.

C. Iyothee Thassar

Pandithar Iyothee Thassar (1845–1914) was a radical Tamil scholar, writer, siddha medicine practitioner, journalist and socio-political activist. Born in Chennai, he was fluent in Tamil, English, Sanskrit and Pali languages. He initiated a new knowledgepractice by using journalism as a tool to make inroads into the print public

sphere, which, was hitherto an upper caste domain. He campaigned for social justice and worked for the emancipation of the “untouchables” from the caste clutches.

He worked for the construction of a casteless identity and castigated caste hegemony and untouchability. He considered education as an important tool for empowerment and became the driving force behind the establishment of several schools for the “untouchables” in Tamil Nadu. Pandithar Iyothee Thassar founded the Advaidananda Sabha to raise the voice for the temple entry of the “untouchables”. In 1882, John Rathinam and Iyothee Thassar established a movement called, Dravida Kazhagam and launched a magazine called Dravida Pandian in 1885. He founded the Dravida Mahajana Sabhain 1891 and organised the First Conference of the association at Nilgiris.

He started a weekly journal, Oru Paisa Tamilan, in 1907 and published it until his demise in 1914. Pandithar Iyothee Thassar was disappointed with the Hindu dharma, which served as the basis for propagating and validating caste in Hindu society. Influenced by the Theosophist organizer, Colonel H.S. Olcott, he went to Sri Lanka in 1898 and converted to Buddhism. In the same year, he founded the Sakya Buddhist Society at Madras to construct the rational religious philosophy through Buddhist religion. He argued that the so-called untouchables were originally Buddhists who were stigmatized by Brahminism.

He further constructed an alternative history through the interpretation of Tamil literature and folk traditions of Tamil from a Buddhist standpoint. In addition, he stated that the revival of Buddhism could liberate the people from the evil of caste that afflicted the Hindu society. He called the “untouchables” Sathi Petham Atra Dravidar (Casteless Dravidians) and urged them to register as casteless Dravidians in the Census.

19. Towards Modernity

Introduction

By the first quarter of the nineteenth century, India had produced a small English-educated intelligentsia, closely associated with British administration or British trade. The ideas and the work of the Christian missionaries had already begun to have its impact. Bengal was the first province to be affected by the British influence and so it was here that several ideas of reform originated. British administration, English education, and European literature brought to India a new wave of thoughts that challenged traditional knowledge. Rationalism as the basis for ethical thinking, the idea of human progress and evolution, the concept of natural rights associated with the Enlightenment, were the new ideas which led to what has been termed as Indian Renaissance. The spread of printing technology played a crucial role in the diffusion of ideas.

Emergence of Reform Movements

The British characterized Indian society in the nineteenth century as being caught in a vicious circle of superstitions and obscurantism. In their view idolatry and polytheism reinforced orthodoxy impelling the people to follow them blindly. The social conditions were equally depressing. And the condition of women was deplorable. The practice of sati came in for particular condemnation. The division of society according to birth resulting in the caste system was also criticized. Most importantly, the British argued that without their intervention there was no possibility of deliverance from these evils for Indians. Needless to say, this was a self-serving argument, articulated by missionaries and Utilitarians to justify British rule.

Utilitarians: believers in the doctrine of greatest happiness of the greatest number

India was a much bigger, more complex and diverse country in the early nineteenth century. Conditions varied vastly across it. The social and cultural evils had been fought by Indian reformers through the ages. But the advent of the British with their Enlightenment ideas undoubtedly posed a new challenge. This chapter looks at how social reform movements emerged in various parts of the country.

The development of the Western culture and ideology forced the traditional institutions to revitalize themselves. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the expression of protest and desire for change were articulated through various reform movements. These movements aimed at reforming and democratizing the social institutions and religious outlook of the Indian people. The emergence of new economic forces, spread of education, growth of nationalist sentiment, influence of modern Western thoughts, ideas and culture, and awareness of the changes taking place in Europe strengthened the resolve to reform.

What gave these reform movements an ideological unity were rationalism, religious universalism and humanism. This perspective enabled them to adopt a rational

approach to tradition and evaluate the contemporary socio-religious practices from the standpoint of social utility. For example, Raja Rammohun Roy repudiated the infallibility of the Vedas and during the Aligarh Movement, Syed Ahmed Khan emphasized that religious tenets were not immutable. As Keshab Chandra Sen said, 'Our position is not that truths are to be in all religions, but that all established religions of the World are true.'

These movements enveloping the entire cultural stream of Indian society brought about significant practices in the realms of language, religion, art and philosophy. These reform movements can be broadly classified into two categories:

1. Reformist Movements
2. Revivalist Movements

Both the movements depended in varying degrees on an appeal to the lost purity of religion. The primary difference between them lay in the degree to which they relied on tradition or on reason and conscience. The social reform movements formed an integral part of the religious reforms primarily because all the efforts towards social ills like caste- and gender- based inequality derived legitimacy from religion. Initially, the social reform movement had a narrow social base – they were limited to the upper and middle strata of the society that tried to adjust their modernized views to the existing social reality. From then on, the social reform movements began to percolate to the lower strata of society to reconstruct the social fabric. Heated debates among the intellectuals expressed in the form of public arguments, tracts and journals played a big role in taking new ideas to large sections of the people, as well as to reformulate older ideas in a new form.

At the start, organizations such as the Social Conference, Servants of India and the Christian missionaries were instrumental in giving an impetus to the social reform movements along with many enlightened individuals about whom we dwell on in the following pages. In later years, especially by the twentieth century, the national movement provided the leadership and organization for social reform.

Brahmo Samaj (1828)

Raja Rammohun Roy was a man of versatile genius. He established the Brahmo Samaj in August, 1828. The Brahmo Samaj was committed to "the worship and adoration of the eternal, unsearchable, immutable Being who is the Author and Preserver of the Universe". His long term agenda was to purify Hinduism and to preach monotheism for which he drew authority from the Vedas. He emphasized human dignity, opposed idolatry and social evils such as sati. A retired servant of the East India Company, he was conversant in many languages including Persian and Sanskrit. His ideas and activities were aimed at the political uplift of society through social reform. He was a determined crusader against the inhuman practice of Sati. His tract written in 1818, A Conference Between an Advocate for and an Opponent of the Practice of Burning Widows cited sacred texts to prove that no religion sanctioned the burning alive of widows. His efforts

fructified and the Company through an enactment of law (1829) declared the practice of sati a crime.

The overall contribution of Brahma Samaj can be summed up as follows

1. It denounced polytheism, idol worship, and the faith in divine avatars (incarnations)
2. It condemned the caste system, dogmas and superstitions.
3. It wanted the abolition of child marriage, purdah system and the practice of sati
4. It supported widow remarriage

Inspired by the ideals of the French Revolution, Rammohun Roy left for Europe and died in Bristol. After his death there was a steady decline but for the new lease of life given to it by Devendranath Tagore (father of Rabindranath Tagore). After him the organization was taken forward by Keshab Chandra Sen from 1857. The strength of the organization is known from the number of branches it had in 1865, 54 Samajas (fifty in Bengal, two in North West Province, one each in Punjab and Madras). In course of time, the Brahma Samaj broke into two namely Devendranath Tagore's, 'Brahma Samaj of India' and Keshub Chandra Sen's 'Sadharan Brahma Samaj'.

In Tamilnadu, Kasi Viswanatha Mudaliar was an adherent of the Samaj and he wrote a play titled Brahma Samaja Natakam to expound the ideas of the Samaj. He also wrote a tract in support of widow remarriage. In 1864, a Tamil journal titled Tathuva Bodhini was started for the cause of the Brahma Samaja.

The Brahma Samaj met with great opposition from orthodox elements in Bengal society such as the Hindu Dharma Sabha. However, there were also reformers such as Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, who advocated the same ideas but drew on Hindu scriptures as authority.

Even though the Brahma Samaj did not win many adherents, it had a big impact on the intellectuals. In the early stages, many young men seized of the radical ideas avidly propagated them. Tagore's family was a Brahma family and its influence can be seen in his writings and ideas.

The Prarthana Samaj (1867)

An off-shoot of the Brahma Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, was founded in 1867 in Bombay by Atmaram Pandurang (1823- 98). The Prarthana Samaj as an organization never had any great influence but its members, like M. G. Ranade (1852-1901), R. G. Bhandarkar, and K.T. Telang, were among the great leaders of nineteenth-century Maharashtra and they became the founders of the social reform movement in later years.

Prarthana Samaj was similar to Brahma Samaj, but it was consciously linked with the bhakti tradition of the Maharashtrian saints. The Prarthana Samaj continued its work mainly through educational work directed at women and workers at the lower level. It concentrated on social reforms like inter-dining, inter-marriage, remarriage of widows, and uplift of women and depressed classes.

The National Social Conference organized at the initiative of M.G. Ranade met each year immediately after the Indian National Congress (1885) annual sessions. Justice Ranade was an erudite scholar with a keen intellect and under his able guidance the Prarthana Samaj became the active centre of a new social reformation in western India. He was one of the founders of the Widow Marriage Association and was an ardent promoter of the famous Deccan Education Society. Its object was to impart such education to the young as would fit them for the unselfish service of the country. When Ranade died in 1901, his leadership was taken over by Chandavarkar.

Arya Samaj (1875)

The founder of the Arya Samaj was Dayananda Saraswati (1824–83). Dayananda, a Gujarati, left home in his youth to become an ascetic. For seventeen years he wandered around India. In 1863 he became a wandering preacher, and five years later he added the establishment of schools to his activities. In 1872 he met the Brahmos in Calcutta. In 1875 he founded the Arya Samaj and published his major work the Satyarth Prakash. In his view, contemporary Hinduism had become degenerate. Therefore he rejected puranas, polytheism, and idolatry, the role of Brahmin priests, pilgrimages, many rituals and the prohibition on widow marriage. As a good Sanskrit scholar, he made a call to “Back to the Vedas”. He wanted to shape society on the basis of the Vedas. He disregarded the puranas. Like the other social reformers, he encouraged female education and remarriage of widows.

Swami Dayananda’s sphere of influence was largely in the Punjab region where the trading community of Khatri experienced great mobility in colonial times. However, in the Punjab region, there was much communal conflict among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Dayananda’s Shuddhi (purification) movement i.e., conversion of non-Hindus to Hindus was controversial and provoked controversies especially with the Ahmadiya movement.

Arya Samaj is considered to be a revivalist movement. Dayananda’s influence continued into the twentieth century through the establishment of Dayananda Anglo Vedic (DAV) schools and colleges.

Ramakrishna Mission (1897)

As we saw above, the early reform movements in Bengal were radical, questioning and criticising tradition very strongly. In response to this emerged the Ramakrishna Mission as an important religious movement. Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836–1886), a poor priest in a temple at Dakshineswar near Kolkata, had no formal education but led an intense spiritual life. He had a deep faith in the inherent truth of all religions and tested his belief by performing religious service in accordance with the practices of different religions. According to him ‘all the religious views are but different ways to lead to the same goal.’ In a backlash, the later generation of Western educated intellectuals were drawn to Ramakrishna’s broad view, mysticism and spiritual fervour.

He expounded his views in short stories and admirable parables which were compiled by an admirer as Ramakrishna Kathamrita (The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna).

The most famous among his disciples was a young graduate of the Calcutta University named Narendranath Dutta, afterwards famously called Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902). Emphasising practical work over philosophizing he established the modern institution of the Ramakrishna Mission. He carried Ramakrishna's message all over India and the world. His learning, eloquence, spiritual fervour and personality gathered round him a band of followers across the country, many of whom also joined the national movement. He attended in 1893 the famous, 'Parliament of Religions' at Chicago, and made a deep impact on those congregated there. The Mission opened schools, dispensaries and orphanages and helped people during their time of distress caused by calamities.

Theosophical Society (1886)

Even as Indian intellectuals felt challenged by western Enlightenment and rationalistic movements, there was a strain of thinking in the West which looked to the East for spiritual salvation. From this idea emerged the Theosophical Society, founded by Madam H.P. Blavatsky and Colonel H.S. Olcott in the United States of America in 1875. They came to India in 1879 and established their headquarters at Adyar in 1886. Under the leadership of Annie Besant, who came to India in 1893, the Theosophical Society gathered strength and won many adherents. The Theosophical Society started associations across south India. Though involved in many controversies, the Society played an important role in the revival of Buddhism in India. Iyothethoss Pandithar, the radical Dalit thinker, was introduced to modern Buddhism through his interaction with Colonel Olcott who took him to Sri Lanka. There he met many Buddhist monks including the renowned revivalist Anagarika Dharmapala and Acharya Sumangala.

Swami Vivekananda was a personification of youth and boldness and referred to as the Morning Star of the Modern India. In the words of Valentine Chirol, 'the first Hindu whose personality won demonstrative recognition abroad for India's ancient civilization and for her newborn claim to nationhood.'

Satya Shodhak Samaj (1873)

While the movements discussed above were largely focussed on upper castes there were some exceptional movements which mobilized lower castes and articulated their perspective. The most important among them was Jyotiba Phule, who belonged to the Mali (gardener) community. Born in 1827, he received initial education in a mission school but had to discontinue it in 1833. Jyotiba Phule waged a life-long struggle against upper caste tyranny. In his quest for the truth, Phule read the Vedas, the Manu Samhita, the Puranas, and the thought of Buddha, Mahavira and the medieval Bhakti saints extensively. He also acquainted himself with Western thought, and Christian and Islamic religions. Phule judged the whole culture and tradition through the spirit of rationality and equality. While the principle of equality called for a total rejection of caste system,

authoritarian family structure and subordination of women, the principle of rationality demanded the removal of superstitions and ritualism.

Phule held radical views on social, religious, political and economic issues. He considered the caste system as an antithesis of the principle of human equality. He sought to raise the morale of the non-Brahmins and united them to revolt against the centuries old inequality and social degradation. Towards this end Phule founded the Satya Shodak Samaj (Society for Seeking Truth) in 1875. His most important book is Gulamgiri (Slavery).

Phule looked upon education of the masses as a liberating and revolutionary factor.

Since women and deprived and downtrodden were the worst sufferers in the society, Phule argued that women's liberation was linked with the liberation of other classes in society. Equality between classes as also between men and women was stressed by Phule. During marriages he asked the bridegroom to promise the right of education to his bride.

Phule also tried to translate his ideas into actual struggles. He urged the British Government to impart compulsory primary education to the masses through teachers drawn from the cultivating classes. He started a school for girls in Poona in 1851 and one for depressed classes with the assistance of his wife Savitri. He also started schools for the "untouchables" and founded a home for widow's children.

In his work we find the beginnings of the later day non-Brahman movement of Maharashtra.

Pandita Ramabai (1858-1922)

Pandita Ramabai was foremost among the Indian leaders who worked for the emancipation of women. She came from a learned family and was a great scholar of Sanskrit and addressed many learned groups in different parts of the country. She was given the title of "Pandita" and "Saraswati" for her deep knowledge of Sanskrit. After the death of her parents she and her brother travelled to different parts of the country. They went to Calcutta in 1878. Two years later her brother also died. A little later in 1880 she married a Bengali belonging to a family of lower social status. Thus, even at that time she was bold enough to marry a man of a different caste and different language. After the death of her husband two years later she returned to Poona and started the Arya Mahila Samaj with the help of leaders like Ranade and Bhandarkar. 300 women were educated in the Samaj in 1882.

Ramabai started the Sharada Sadan (shelter for homeless) for the destitute widows with the help of Ranade and Bhandarkar. But soon she was accused of converting Hindu women to Christianity and hence had to shift her activities to Khedgoan near Poona. She established a Mukti Sadan (freedom house) there. Soon there

were 2000 children and women in the house. Vocational training was given make them self-reliant.

Sri Narayana Guru

This movement emerged in Kerala and was born out of conflict between the depressed classes and the upper castes. It was started by Sri Narayana Guru (1854- 1928) spearheading a social movement of the Ezhavas of Kerala, a community of toddy tappers. The Ezhavas were the single largest group in Kerala constituting 26% of population. A great scholar in Malayalam, Tamil and Sanskrit, Sri Narayana Guru established the Sri Narayana Guru Dharma Paripalana (SNDP) Yogam in 1902. The SNDP Yogam took up several issues such as (i) right of admission to public schools. (ii) recruitment to government services. (iii) access to roads and entry to temples; and (iv) political representation. The movement as a whole brought transformative structural changes such as upward social mobility, shift in traditional distribution of power and a federation of 'backward classes' into a large conglomeration. As a response to the prohibition on Ezhavas into temples, Sri Narayana Guru established new temples, and empowered the community to modernize itself. Great personalities such as the poet Kumaran Asan Dr. Palpu and Sahodaran Ayyappan emerged from the movement, and made a lasting impact in the democratization of Kerala Society. Even though the Guru himself was not directly involved in the movement, the Vaikom Satyagraha, organized to protest against the ban on the entry of Ezhavas on the templestreets of Vaikom made a deep impact on subsequent temple entry movements.

Islamic Reform Movements

The Revolt of 1857 and its brutal suppression by the British had an adverse impact on the Muslims of South Asia. While they were viewed with suspicion by the British for the 1857 insurgency, the Muslims themselves withdrew into a shell and did not use the opportunities opened up by colonial modernity. Consequently, they lagged behind in education and attendant employment opportunities. In this context, a few decades later some reform movements emerged among the Muslims.

Aligarh Movement (1875)

Aligarh Movement was started by Syed Ahmad Khan in 1875. He wanted to reconcile Western scientific education with the teachings of the Quran. The Aligarh movement aimed at spreading (i) Modern education among Indian Muslims without weakening their allegiance to Islam, and (ii) Social reforms among Muslims relating to purdah, polygamy, and divorce.

Syed's progressive social ideas were propagated through his magazine Tahdhib-ul-Akhluq (Improvement of Manners and Morals). Syed Ahmad Khan's educational programme emphasized from the outset the advantages of the use of English as the medium of instruction. In 1864 he founded a Scientific Society of Aligarh for the introduction of Western sciences through translations into Urdu of works on physical

sciences. The same year he founded a modern school at Ghazipur. In 1868 he promoted the formation of education committees in several districts, to initiate modern education among the Muslims.

During his visit to Europe in 1869–70 he developed the plans of his life-work, a major educational institution for Indian Muslims. In order to promote English education among the Muslims, he founded in 1875 a modern school at Aligarh, which soon developed into the Muhammdan Anglo–Oriental College (1877). This college was to become the Muslim University after his death. It became the nursery of Muslim political and intellectual leaders.

In 1886 Syed Ahmad Khan founded the Muhammedan Anglo Oriental Educational Conference as a general forum for spreading liberal ideas among the Indian Muslims. He rejected blind adherence to religious law and asked for a reinterpretation of the Quran in the light of reason to suit the new trends of the time. He attempted to liberalize Indian Islam and made it amenable to new ideas and new interpretations. In this mission he had to face the brunt of vehement attacks of orthodox theologians.

Ahmadiya Movement (1889)

The Ahmadiya movement founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmed (1835–1908) in 1889 established a different trend. While emphasizing the return to the original principles enunciated in the Quran, Ghulam Ahmed became controversial when he claimed to be a Messiah, which was considered heretical by mainstream Islam. But he won many converts. His primary work was to defend Islam against the polemics of the Arya Samaj and the Christian missionaries. In social morals the Ahmadiya movement was conservative, adhering to polygamy, veiling of women, and the classical rules of divorce.

The Deoband Movement (1866)

The Deoband movement was organised by the orthodox section among the Muslim ulemas as a revivalist movement with the twin objective of propagating the pure teachings of the Quran and Hadis among Muslims. The movement was established in Deoband in Saranpur district (by Mohammad Qasim Nanotavi (1833–1877) and Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (1828–1905) to train religious leaders for the Muslim community. In contrast to the Aligarh Movement, which aimed at the welfare of Muslims through Western education and support of the British Government, the aim of the Deoband Movement was religious regeneration of the Muslim community. The instruction imparted at Deoband adhered to classical Islamic tradition.

The seminary at Deoband was founded in 1867 by theologians of the School of Wali-Allah. Muhammad Qasim Nanotavi took a prominent part in counter-polemics against the Christian missionaries and the Arya Samajists. The principal objectives of the seminary at Deoband were to re-establish contact between the theologians and the educated Muslim middle classes, and to revive the study of Muslim religious and scholastic sciences. As a religious university Deoband soon became an honoured institution, not only in Muslim India but also in the world of Islam at large.

Nadwat al-'ulama

A school less conservative than Deoband and more responsive to the demands of the modern age was the Nadwat al- 'ulama,' founded in 1894 at Lucknow by the historian Shibli Nu'mani and other scholars. The school aimed to offer an enlightened interpretation of religion in order to fight the trends of agnosticism and atheism which had followed the advent of modern Western education.

Farangi Mahal

The third famous traditional school is the much older one at Farangi Mahal in Lucknow. Farangi Mahal accepted Sufism as a valid experience and a valid field of study. Another traditionalist movement was the ahl-i-hadith or of the followers of the dicta of the Prophet.

Parsi Reform Movements

Zoroastrians, persecuted in their Persian homeland, migrated in large numbers to the west coast of India in the tenth century. As a trading community they flourished over the centuries. A close-knit community it too was not left untouched by the reform movements of the nineteenth century.

The Rahnumai Madayasan Sabha (Religious Reform Association) was founded in 1851 by a group of English educated Parsis for the "regeneration of the social conditions of the Parsis and the restoration of the Zoroastrian religion to its pristine purity". The movement had Naoroji Furdonji, Dadabhai Naoroji, K. R. Cama and S.S. Bengalee as its leaders. The message of reform was spread by the newspaper Rast-Goftar (Truth Teller). Parsi religious rituals and practices were reformed and the Parsi creed redefined. In the social sphere, attempts were made to uplift the status of Parsi women through education, removal of the purdah, raising the age of marriage and the like. Gradually, the Parsis emerged as the most westernised section of the Indian society. They played a key role in the nationalist movement and in the industrialization of India.

Sikh Reform Movement

The Sikh community could not remain untouched by the rising tide of rationalist and progressive ideas of the nineteenth century. The Singh Sabha Movement was formed in 1873, with a two-fold objective (i) to make available modern western education to the Sikhs (ii) to counter the proselytizing activities of Christian missionaries as well as Hindu revivalists. A network of Khalsa Schools was established throughout Punjab. The Akali movement was an offshoot of the Singh Sabha Movement. The Akali movement aimed at liberating the Sikh Gurudwara from the corrupt control of the Udasi Mahants (priests). The Government passed the Sikh Gurudwara Act in 1922 (amended in 1925), which gave control to Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) as the main body.

Reform Movements in Tamilnadu

As we saw earlier, the reform movements of the north India had its own impact on Tamilnadu. Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj had their branches. Keshab Chandra Sen visited Madras and lectured here. But Tamilnadu also saw its own reform movements.

Vaikunda Swamigal (1809-1851)

The Sri Vaikunda Swamigal's cult, which survives to this day, was organized in the 1830s. Born in a poor family (1809) at Sastankoil Vilai (now known as Swamithoppu), a village then in south Travancore (the present day Kanyakumari district), Muthukutti, spent his childhood in the village pial school, learning religious and moral texts. He also learnt the Bible and became well-versed in Christian theology. At the age of twenty two, Muthukutti, cured of a skin disease, after a holy bath in the sea during his visit to the Murugan temple at Tiruchendur (Thoothukudi district), claimed that Lord Vishnu had given him a rebirth as his son. On his return from Tiruchendur, assuming the new name of Sri Vaikundar, he practised austerities for two years. Soon his fame spread far and wide.

In his preaching Vaikundar attacked the traditional caste-ridden Travancore society and its ruler for collecting excessive taxes from the lower caste people. He was arrested and jailed by the Raja of Travancore for his "seditious speeches". When he was released from jail (1838) he became more popular among the people. His followers called him Aiya (father) and his cult came to be known as Aiya Vazhi (path of the father). His teachings were compiled as a text called Akila Thirattu which is recited religiously to this day.

Vaikunda Swamy instructed his followers to give up worship of pudams. He also exhorted them not to offer animal sacrifices to their deities. He advocated vegetarianism.

As a symbol of protest, Vaikunda Swamy urged his followers to wear a turban, a right which was permitted only to upper castes in those days. As a part of his effort to practice equality, Vaikunda Swamy regularly organized inter-dining through his Samathuva Sangam, among different castes. In his feeding centres called NilalTangals, caste-based restrictions were broken down. The Vaikunda Swamy cult posed a serious challenge to the spread of Christianity in south Travancore even after his death in 1851.

Vallalar Ramalinga Swamigal (1823-1874)

Ramalinga Swamigal was born in a modest family near Chidambaram and spent his early life in Madras. He never had formal schooling, but exhibited great scholarship. Inspired by the Saiva Thevaram and Thiruvagasam hymns, he began to compose moving poems on his own. In his time, Saiva religion was in the grip of Saiva monasteries such as those at Thiruvaduthurai, Dharumapuram and Thiruppanandal. Ramalinga Swamigal's poems expressed radical ideas and condemned bigotry and irrationality. He underwent certain mystical experiences which he expressed in his poems. This was

resented by the orthodox elements in Saiva religion. He established the Sathya Dharma Salai at Vadalur where he began to feed poor people, especially in the context of the 1860s famine and pestilence, irrespective of caste and creed. He founded the Sathya Gnana Sabhai to organize his followers. This brought him into conflict with established Saivite orders, and matters came to a head when his followers published his poems under the title of Thiruvartuppa (Songs of Grace) in 1867. Orthodox Saivites under the Sri Lankan reformer Arumuga Navalar criticized this as blasphemous and launched a tract war. But ultimately, Ramalinga Swamikal's contribution was recognized and his writings inspired universal ideas, and undermined sectarianism in Saiva religion.

Buddhist Revivalism and Iyothethoss Pandithar (1845-1914)

As we saw in an earlier lesson, Buddhism had been practically wiped out in the Tamil country by the beginning of the second millennium. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, there was a revival of Buddhism. The publication of the complete edition of Jeevaka Chintamani (1887) and Manimekalai (1898) were landmarks in the recovery of heterodox traditions.

But the most important figure was Iyothethoss Pandithar (1845– 1914). A native doctor by profession, he was an erudite scholar. He also came under the influence of Colonel Olcott of the Theosophical Society. In the 1890s he began a movement among the Adi Dravidars arguing that they were the original Buddhists who had been consigned to 'untouchability' due to their opposition to Vedic Brahminism. He re-read classical Tamil and other texts to make his case. He also encouraged the conversion to Buddhism. He found the greatest following in north Tamilnadu and among the working classes of the Kolar Gold Fields. In this movement, M. Singavelu and Prof P. Lakshmi Narasu also played an important role. Pandithar ran a weekly journal called Oru Paisa Tamilan (later Tamilan) from 1908 until his death.

Christian Missionaries

The official religious policy of the East India Company was one of neutrality towards the native religions. Their reason for continuing this policy was the belief that the earlier Portuguese rule had come to an end because of their attempts to forcibly convert people to Christianity. As a result of this concern, the Company government prohibited the entry of missionaries into the territories under their control.

In 1793 two English missionaries, William Carey and John Thomas, both Baptists, set out to India with the intention of starting a mission. In view of the ban on missionary activity they settled down in the Danish Colony of Serampore, north of Calcutta. Carey, along with two other missionaries, Joshua Marshman and William Ward established the Serampore Mission in 1799.

The Serampore missionaries were the first evangelical Baptist missionaries in India. They were followed later by other missionary groups belonging to different Protestant denominations. Before the arrival of the Serampore missionaries, several

centuries earlier, there were Christian missions in the Portuguese territory of Goa, and also on the Malabar Coast and the Coromandel Coast. The work of the earlier missionaries was limited both geographically and in terms of the number of conversions to Christianity. Thus major attempts at proselytization began during the nineteenth century.

The missionaries organised schools for the socially and economically and pleaded for their economic improvement through employment in the state service. They also fought for their 'civil rights' that included access to public roads, and permission for the women of these groups to wear upper garments.

The missionaries gave shelter to orphaned children and other destitute widows in their missions and provided education for them in their boarding schools. Particularly after the famines which were quite common during the nineteenth century, about which we discussed in the previous lesson, the missionaries organized relief. Providing shelter and succour gave these an opportunity to convert people to Christianity. In Tirunelveli district many villages took to Christianity during famines, especially in the last quarter of nineteenth century. The same phenomenon was witnessed in Andhra where Malas and Madigas embraced Christianity in a big way.

The Company government did little to provide modern education for the native population. For a long time, the provision of elementary school facilities to the native population, especially in the interiors for the disprivileged and the poor people, was a responsibility willingly accepted by the Christian missionaries. It must be noted that the Christian Missionaries took the initiative of establishing Hospitals and Dispensaries.

Significance of the Reform Movements

The orthodox sections of the society could not accept the scientific and ideological onslaught of the socio-religious reformers. As a result of this, the reformers were subjected to abuse, persecution, issuing of fatwas and even assassination attempts by the reactionaries. However, in spite of opposition, these movements contributed towards liberation of the individual from the conformity born out of fear. The translation of religious texts into vernacular languages, emphasis on an individual's right to interpret the scriptures, and simplification of rituals made worship a more personal experience. The movements emphasised the human intellect's capacity to reason and think. By weeding out corrupt elements in religious practices, the reformers enabled their followers to counter the official taunt that their religions and society were decadent and inferior. It gave the rising middle classes the much needed cultural roots to cling to.